

Counting Everyone In – The Big Challenge

Our aim is maximum coverage of the population and to avoid under-representation of any one group



The Census challenge

The vast majority of people are successfully enumerated in the Census. In 1991 it is estimated that only about 1% were not enumerated in Northern Ireland. However, there is a tendency for those not enumerated to be concentrated in particular sections of the community, rather than being spread uniformly across society. This bias against certain groups might affect the amount of resources they receive which is assessed with the help of census information.



Underenumerated groups

Groups prone to underenumeration include:

- Young people (aged 20 to 29) with a bias towards males and also in inner-cities. Reasons include difficulty in gaining access because of lifestyle and multi-occupied housing.
- Babies (under 14 months). Reasons include baby being at hospital on Census Day and being left off the form by parents.
- The elderly, in particular elderly women. Reasons include living alone, difficulties answering the door or filling out the form.
- Students. Reasons include confusion over whether resident at parents' or term-time address.
- Ethnic communities. Reasons include language difficulties, suspicion.



Action to minimise underenumeration

The Community Liaison programme

Northern Ireland has a range of voluntary organisations with the potential to provide reassurance about the aims of the Census for the people they work with, and to offer help in completing the form for those who require it.



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Other factsheets:

1. *The Census*
2. *Why we need a Census*
3. *Census 2001 – What's New?*
5. *The Census Organisation*
6. *Census Jobs*
7. *The Census and the Law*
8. *Census Taking Through the Ages*
9. *The Census Questions*

As well as practical help they can also offer public support for the Census in their communities and help to promote the Census publicity campaign. The Census Office is contacting a range of such groups to enlist their assistance with the Census.

The Census publicity campaign – 'Count Me In'

A major advertising and PR campaign will be launched aimed at creating widespread awareness of the Census but also specially targetted at those members of society most likely to have doubts about involvement. The 'Count Me In' campaign stresses the need for everyone to be counted in the Census and the benefits that the Census brings. The aim is for the 'Count Me In' message to be picked up and passed on by voluntary organisations to the communities they serve.

Special population groups – counting in the exceptions

There is a range of groups for which the Census has to make special arrangements if they are to be counted.

Special procedures are being developed and agreed with relevant Government departments, agencies and outside bodies in relation to the following:

- People sleeping rough – relevant authorities and homeless charities are being consulted to identify appropriate method, time and places to count persons sleeping rough;
- Prisons – arrangements are made through the Prison Service.
- Commercial Shipping

Liaison will also take place with other groups who represent the travelling community.



Contact for further information:

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