

Northern Ireland population to reach 2 million by 2040

9:30am – Thursday, 26 October 2017

The population of Northern Ireland is projected to reach 2 million people by mid-2040. This is one of the findings of the statistics published today by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

The 25 year projections highlight that the Northern Ireland population is projected to increase to 2.003 million by mid-2041, an average annual rate of growth of 0.3 per cent. Natural growth is projected to be the main driver of this population increase of 141,300 people, with 127,300 more births projected than deaths.

The projections between mid-2016 and mid-2041 also point to:

- A 5.8 per cent reduction in the number of children (i.e. those aged 0 to 15 years), falling from 388,000 people to 365,400.
- A 2.6 per cent reduction in the number of those aged 16 to 64 years, falling from 1.176 million people to 1.146 million.
- A 65.1 per cent increase in the number of people aged 65 and over, rising from 297,800 people to 491,700. This marked increase, coupled with the projected reduction in the number of children, will see the number of people aged 65 and over exceeding the number of children from mid-2028 onwards.
- The proportion of the population aged 85 and over will double from 2.0 per cent to 4.1 per cent.
- The ratio of those aged 65 and over to those aged 16 to 64 increasing from 25 per 100 to 43 per 100.

While the overall growth in Northern Ireland will be lower than that in the rest of the UK (7.6 per cent compared with 11.2 per cent), our population is projected to age at a faster rate. For example, our number of people aged 85 and over is projected to grow by 127.2 per cent, compared with 107.1 per cent in the rest of the UK.

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. Statistics for the 2016-based Population Projections for Northern Ireland were released on 26 October 2017 and are available at <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/2016-based-population-projections-northern-ireland>. An infographic highlighting the important figures and trends in the data is available at <http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/interactiveMaps/DataVis/Population%20Projections%202016.pdf>
2. Northern Ireland population projections provide an estimate of the future size and age structure of the population of Northern Ireland which is used as a common framework for national planning in a number of different fields.
3. Projections are the result of applying long-term assumptions based on recent trends in fertility, mortality and migration to the base population. These projections use the <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/2016-mid-year-population-estimates-northern-ireland> as the base population. See the <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/methodologies/nationalpopulationprojectionsqmi> for further information.
4. **These projections are not forecasts and do not attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors might have on demographic behaviour. If different assumptions are used, different statistics would result: a series of alternative population projections (variants) are also available at <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/2016-based-population-projections-northern-ireland>**
5. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) calculates national population projections for the UK and UK countries at the request of the Registrars General for England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. National population projections are calculated in collaboration and agreement with statistical organisations for Northern Ireland (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency [NISRA]), and National Records of Scotland [NRS]). The calculation of population projections for all UK countries at the same time ensures that the many users of population projections can work on consistent assumptions.
6. Full results of the 2016-based national population projections for the United Kingdom and all UK countries, including variant projections, are available on the <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections>. Population projections and additional analyses specific to Scotland can be found on the <http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-projections/population-projections-scotland>.
7. 2018-based national population projections are expected to be published around Oct/Nov 2019.
8. The revisions policy for Northern Ireland population statistics is available at <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/populationstatisticsrevisionspolicy2014.pdf>.

9. We welcome feedback on the content, format and relevance of this release. Users can send feedback directly to census@nisra.gov.uk.
10. Follow NISRA on Twitter (<http://www.twitter.com/NISRANINIS>) and Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Belfast-United-Kingdom/Northern-Ireland-Statistics%20-Research-Agency/131044496943228?v=wall>).
11. All media inquiries should be directed to the DOF Communications Office:
Telephone: 028 9016 3389
12. Further statistical information can be obtained from NISRA Customer Services:
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