

# ESTIMATES OF THE POPULATION AGED 85 AND OVER, 2017



Northern Ireland  
Statistics and Research Agency  
Gníomhaireacht Thuaisceart Éireann  
um Staitisticí agus Taighde

9:30am – Tuesday, 25 September 2018

## The population aged 85 and over continues to increase

By June 2017 the population aged 85 and over living in Northern Ireland was estimated to be 37,200. This is a 2%, or 700 person, increase on the mid-2016 estimate.

This is one of the findings of statistics published today by the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA).

Over the last decade (2007-17) the population aged 85 and over has increased by 9,200 people or 33%. This population, sometimes referred to as the oldest old, has grown over five times faster than the rest of the population. This faster growth is being driven by historical improvements in longevity.

In 2017, Northern Ireland's oldest old made up 2% of our population. This is the lowest percentage of the four United Kingdom countries. However, the growth rate over the last decade in Northern Ireland (33%) was significantly higher than in Great Britain (25%).

While last year women accounted for two thirds (66%) of the population aged 85 and over, the proportion of men in this age group continues to rise.

The statistics indicate that there were 274 centenarians (i.e. those aged 100 years or more) living in Northern Ireland. This is equivalent to 1 centenarian for every 10,000 people living in Northern Ireland.

Responding to the statistics, a NISRA statistician said: "The new figures released today indicate that the population aged 85 or more continues to rise, reaching over 37,000 people in 2017."

"Indeed over the decade (2007-17) this population sub-group has grown over five times faster than the rest of the Northern Ireland population."

"Despite the rapid growth, those people aged 85 or more only make up around 2% of our population in 2017."

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

1. Statistics for the population aged 85 and over for Northern Ireland were released on 25 September 2018 and are available at <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/estimates-population-aged-85-and-over-northern-ireland-2017-and-2001-2016-revised>. An infographic highlighting the important figures and trends in the data is available at <http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/interactiveMaps/DataVis/85andover%20Population%202017.pdf>
2. Mid-year population estimates are produced by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). The estimates refer to the size of the usually resident population at 30 June and are therefore often referred to as the mid-year estimates. The most recent estimates, published in June 2018, relate to the population at mid-2017 (<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/population/mid-year-population-estimates>).
3. The method used to estimate the age distribution of the population aged 90 and over is an internationally recognised standard approach known as the Kannisto-Thatcher Survivor Ratio Method. This method requires previous years' estimates to be revised when new death registration data becomes available. Estimates of the population aged 90 and over, by single year of age and sex, are constrained to mid-year population estimates for the entire 90 and over age group.
4. Whilst this report concentrates on the significant increase in the population aged 85 and over, it is still important to recognise that the number of people aged 85 and over represents a small proportion of the total population (i.e. 2% in mid-2017).
5. Equivalent and comparable estimates of the population aged 90 and over for England and Wales (<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/mortality-ageing/estimates-of-the-very-old--including-centenarians-/index.html>) by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), and for Scotland (<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates/centenarians-population-estimates/population-estimates-for-scottish-centenarians>) by National Records Scotland (NRS) have also been released on 25 September 2018. A UK comparison paper analysing the comparability of these estimates between the four UK countries is available at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/ageing/methodologies/comparisonpaper90andoversingleyearofageandsexpopulationestimatesproducedbyonsnrsandnisra>
6. Estimates of the population aged 85 and over for mid-2018, as well as a revised series for mid-2001 to mid-2017, are expected to be published in September 2019.

7. The revisions policy for Northern Ireland population statistics is available at <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/sites/nisra.gov.uk/files/publications/populationstatisticsrevisionspolicy2014.pdf>.
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