

POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND, 2014



Northern Ireland population to reach 2 million by 2034

9:30am – Thursday, 29 October 2015

The population of Northern Ireland is projected to reach 2 million by mid-2034. This is one of the findings of the 'Population Projections for Northern Ireland' published today by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). It is anticipated the 1.9 million milestone will be reached five years from now, in mid-2020.

Over the 25 year period (mid-2014 to mid-2039), the population is projected to increase by 180,800 people to reach 2.021 million, which is a 0.4% annual rate of growth. Natural growth is projected to be the main reason for this increase, with 169,300 more births than deaths predicted.

During this time the population will continue to age, with those aged 65 and over projected to increase by 74.4% to reach 498,500. The number of people in this age group is expected to exceed the number of children (i.e. those aged 0-15 years), by mid-2028, with the gap projected to widen. In 25 years time, it is projected that almost one in four of the population (24.7%) will be aged 65 and over, whereas 18.4% will be children.

By mid-2039 the group aged 85 and over is projected to increase from 34,400 to 88,600 (an increase of 157.3% or 54,200 people), which means 4.4% of the population will be aged 85 and over (up from an estimated 1.9% in mid-2014).

Although the life expectancy of females continues to be higher than that of males on average, the gap is closing. In 2039 it is projected that males will account for 42.9% of the population aged 85 and over, rising from an estimated 32.1% in mid-2014.

While the overall growth in the Northern Ireland population through to mid-2039 is projected to be lower than that for the rest of the United Kingdom (9.8% compared with 15.1%), the extent of ageing in the Northern Ireland population is projected to exceed that in the rest of the United Kingdom. For example, growth among the Northern Ireland population aged 65 and over (74.4%) and the population aged 85 and over (157.3%) is projected to exceed that in the rest of the United Kingdom (57.8% and 136.7% respectively).

Northern Ireland's share of the United Kingdom population is projected to decrease from 2.85% in mid-2014 to 2.72% in mid-2039.

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. 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]).
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 [mid-2014 population estimates](#) as the base population. See the [Background and Methodology Paper](#) 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 results would result: a series of alternative population projections (variants) are also produced by the ONS and are available on the [ONS website](#).
5. 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. Statistics for Northern Ireland population projections are available on the [NISRA Website](#). An [infographic](#) highlighting the important figures and trends in the data has also been released, as well as an [interactive population pyramid](#).
7. Full results of the 2014-based national population projections for the United Kingdom and all UK countries, including variant projections, are available on the [ONS website](#). Population projections and additional analyses specific to Scotland can be found on the [NRS website](#).
8. 2016-based national population projections are expected to be published around Oct/Nov 2017.
9. The revisions policy for Northern Ireland migration statistics is available [here](#).
10. We welcome feedback from users on the content, format and relevance of this release. Please complete a short [survey](#) or send feedback directly to census.nisra@dfpni.gov.uk.
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