

Lowest teen birth rate on record

9:30am – Wednesday, 7 November 2018

2017 saw the number of births to teenage mothers decrease to the lowest on record. This is one of the findings of the statistics published today by the Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

The report reveals that just 692 of the 23,075 births in Northern Ireland in 2017 were to mothers under the age of 20. This is less than half the number that was recorded a decade previously (1,405) and 65 per cent fewer than three decades ago (2,008).

The average age of first-time mums has continued to increase, up from 25.0 years in 1987 to 28.7 years in 2017. The average age of all mums has similarly risen, from 27.6 years to 30.8 years over the last three decades. Moreover, the average number of children per woman of child bearing age (15-44 years) has reduced from 2.39 to 1.87 between 1987 and 2017.

Of the 23,075 births registered in 2017 (11,898 baby boys and 11,177 baby girls), 23 per cent were to mums aged 35 and over. Some 43 per cent of all births occurred outside of marriage, compared to 14 per cent three decades ago. Tragically 102 stillbirths were registered in 2017, equivalent to a stillbirth rate of 4.4 per 1,000 births in Northern Ireland.

The NISRA report also highlights that life expectancy has been increasing for both males and females over the years and this is reflected to a degree in the age profile of those that died. For example, 35 per cent of the 16,036 people who died in 2017 were aged under 75, compared with 50 per cent thirty years ago in 1987.

Cancer continued to be the leading cause of death in 2017, accounting for 28 per cent of all deaths; 2,356 men and 2,104 women died from cancer in 2017.

Both men and women are waiting on average six years longer to tie the knot compared to thirty years ago, with the average ages of first-time brides and grooms now being 30 and 32 years respectively, up from 24 years for brides and 26 years for grooms in 1987.

A total of 8,300 marriages and 92 civil partnerships were registered in 2017, equivalent to roughly 1 every hour. While July and August were the most popular months to get married, Saturday 2nd September and Saturday 16th September were the most popular days to get married, with 102 couples having married on each of these days.

There were 2,089 divorces and 13 civil partnership dissolutions granted in 2017, with non-cohabitation remaining the most frequently recorded reason for separation.

In terms of population change, the estimated population of Northern Ireland rose by 8,700 people to reach 1.871 million in the year ending 30 June 2017. This increase can mainly be attributed to the difference between births and deaths, with 89 per cent of the growth being due to this natural change.

Projections indicate that the population of Northern Ireland will reach 2 million people by mid-2040, with the number of people aged 65 and over projected to overtake children by mid-2028.

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. This is the 96th Annual Report of the Registrar General for Northern Ireland.
2. This release provides statistics on a number of areas which have policy relevance. In particular, the number of births has implications for planning maternity services and schools, whereas the number of deaths has implications for hospital and palliative care strategies. Population estimates, projections and life expectancy statistics are all of policy interest because of their implications for pensions and the delivery of front line services for the population in areas such as housing, health care, education and transport.
3. The Report of the Registrar General is published annually and is available [here](#). The report includes commentary and infographics designed to bring out the key demographic trends and issues. Detailed statistical tables are also available.
4. Corresponding information for England and Wales is published by the [Office for National Statistics](#) (ONS) and for Scotland by the [National Records of Scotland](#) (NRS). Similar figures for the Republic of Ireland are available from the [Central Statistics Office](#) (CSO) Ireland.
5. Interactive content, including population pyramids, infographics and interactive maps are available at the [NINIS website](#).
6. Follow NISRA on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). We welcome feedback on the content, format and relevance of this release. Users can send feedback directly to info@nisra.gov.uk.
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