

2018 Registrar General's Annual Report Published

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Couples are waiting on average seven years longer to tie the knot in 2018 compared to thirty years ago. Of the 7,966 marriages (roughly one every hour) in 2018 the average age for brides and grooms is now 33.1 and 35.2 years respectively, compared to 25.5 years for brides and 27.7 years for grooms in 1988. This is one of the findings of the statistics published today by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). August was the most popular month to get married in 2018 and Saturday, 18th of August was the most popular day, with 111 couples having married on that date. There were 108 civil partnerships registered in 2018 and 15 civil marriages conducted by humanist celebrants.

The report further reveals that the number of births to teenage mothers (mothers less than 20 years of age) continues to fall to a record low at 659 (2.9 per cent) out of the total 22,829 births registered in 2018. This is less than half the number recorded a decade previously (1,426) and 67.9 per cent fewer than three decades ago (2,053).

The average age of first-time mums has continued to increase, up from 24.9 years in 1988 to 28.8 years in 2018. 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 2.35 to 1.85 between 1988 and 2018.

Of the 22,829 births registered (11,613 males and 11,216 females) 44.5 per cent occurred outside of marriage, compared to 16.2 per cent three decades ago. Tragically, 79 stillbirths were registered in 2018, equivalent to a stillbirth rate of 3.4 per 1,000 births in Northern Ireland.

The number of deaths from suicide in Northern Ireland remains constant with 307 of the 15,922 deaths registered in 2018 compared to 305 in 2017. Of the 11 Local Government Districts (LGDs), Belfast remains the area with the highest number of deaths from suicide with 92 of the 307. For further details please refer to the webpage: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/suicide-statistics>

Cancer continued to be the leading cause of death in 2018, accounting for 27.9 per cent of all deaths; 2,326 men and 2,122 women died from cancer in 2018.

There were 2,073 divorces and 10 civil partnership dissolutions granted in 2018, with non-cohabitation remaining the most frequently recorded reason for separation.

In terms of population change, the estimated population of Northern Ireland rose by 10,800 people from mid-2017 to reach 1.88 million in the year. This increase can mainly be attributed to the difference between births and deaths, with 62.0 per cent of the growth being due to this natural change.

Projections indicate that the population of Northern Ireland will reach 1.99 million people by mid-2043, with the number of people aged 65 and over projected to overtake children by mid-2028.

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. This is the 97th 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 at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/births-deaths-and-marriages/registar-general-annual-report>. 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](#).
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