

1. Purpose

The Advisory Group will advise the Census Office for Northern Ireland on all matters relating to the conduct of the decennial census of population and housing in Northern Ireland under the Census Act (Northern Ireland) 1969.

The Advisory Group will also advise how to maximise the relevance, quality and usefulness of selected national and sub-national demographic statistics compiled and released by NISRA.

2. Scope

The Census Act (Northern Ireland) 1969 enables the Registrar General to make the arrangements necessary to carry out the census in Northern Ireland and to prosecute individuals who fail to comply. However, throughout the preparations for and conduct of the Census in Northern Ireland, Census Office seeks to maintain contact with its users through regular meetings of the Demographic Statistics Advisory Group (DSAG).

The Advisory Group will provide advice on a wide range of census topics including the development and testing of questions, changes in definitions and classifications as well as methodological developments such as census under enumeration and the Census Coverage Survey.

The Advisory Group also will be a key consultative forum providing technical advice and guidance on methodological issues relating to the NISRA Demographic Statistics work programme (including population estimates, population projections, fertility and mortality measures).

Outside Scope

Agenda items regarding the Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study (NILS) and the Administrative Data Research Centre (ADRCNI) may on occasion be brought to the group for information, but these two projects have their own separate governance arrangements.

3. Membership

The Advisory Group is made up of interested users and specialist advisors drawn from central and local government, health authorities and the commercial and academic sectors as well as representatives from specialist agencies, charities and voluntary organisations.

The Advisory Group will be jointly chaired by the Head of Census and the Head of Demographic Statistics, or appointed delegates.

Members have been invited to participate in the Advisory Group based on their:

- knowledge of demographic statistics, in particular their technical expertise
- understanding of quality issues surrounding statistics

On occasion, the membership of the Advisory Group may be temporarily expanded to assist with specific matters.

The membership of the Advisory Group will be reviewed on an annual basis, occurring after the last meeting of the year.

4. Frequency

The Advisory Group will meet at key planning times associated with the 2021 Census and Demographic Statistics work program. It is anticipated that the Advisory Group will hold two meetings per year, but this will be subject to demand. To supplement meetings, NISRA may consult key groups, organisations and individuals, including those unable to attend specific meetings.