

# Annual Report of the Registrar General (2021)



## 100<sup>th</sup> Registrar General's Annual Report Published 9:30am – Wednesday, 21 September 2022

The average age of brides, grooms and first time mums continue to rise, Saturday 28 August was the most popular day to get married and the number of births to teenage mothers fell to a record low. These are some of the findings published by NISRA in the Registrar General's 100<sup>th</sup> Annual Report today.

7,962 marriages were registered in 2021 with over half of the marriages registered (3,700) occurring between July – September, reflecting the easing of Covid restrictions. There were 396 same-sex marriages and 207 conversions from civil partnerships to marriage. The average age for brides and grooms increased to 33.4 and 35.4 years respectively, compared with 26.5 years for brides and 28.6 years for grooms in 1991.

July was the most popular month to get married in 2021 and Saturday 28 August was the most popular day, with 107 couples having married on that date. There were 37 civil partnerships registered in 2021 (down from 43 registered in 2020), 3 of which involved male partnerships, 6 involved female partnerships, but the majority, 28, were opposite-sex partnerships.

There were 2,040 divorces granted in 2021. This was an increase on the previous year (1,507), but 30.0 per cent lower than the peak number of 2,913 in 2007.

The report shows that the number of births to teenage mothers (mothers under 20 years of age) continued to fall to a record low at 474 (2.1 per cent) out of the total 22,071 births registered in 2021. This is less than half the number recorded a decade previously (1,170) and almost 75% less than three decades ago (1,783).

The average age of first-time mums continued to rise, up from 25.5 years in 1991 to 29.2 years in 2021. The average age of all mums similarly rose, from 27.9 years to 31.2 years over the last three decades.

Of the 22,071 births registered (11,340 males and 10,731 females) 47.3 per cent occurred outside of marriage/civil partnership, compared to 19.2 per cent three decades ago. 2021 saw the stillbirth rate increase from 3.3 per 1,000 births in 2020 to 4.0 per 1,000. A total of 89 stillbirths were registered in Northern Ireland in 2021.

The number of deaths registered in 2021 (17,558) was similar to the level in 2020 (17,614) but was 21.0% more than two decades ago in 2001 (14,513). Cancer continued to be the leading

cause of death in 2021, accounting for 26.1 per cent of all deaths and was the most common cause of death for both sexes, with diseases of the circulatory system (such as heart disease and cerebrovascular disease) the second most common cause for both (21.1%). Final figures show that, for the first time, Covid-19 overtook respiratory disease as the third most common cause of death, accounting for 10.5% (1,850) of all deaths registered in 2021 with over a third (36.5%) accounted for by people aged 85 or over.

Tragically, there were 237 registered deaths due to suicide (including deaths from self-inflicted injury and events of undetermined intent) in Northern Ireland in 2021, compared with 219 in 2020. Males accounted for three quarters of all deaths due to self-inflicted injury (176).

In terms of population, the first results from Census 2021 were released in May 2022. The 2021 Census showed that 1.903 million people were resident in Northern Ireland on 21 March 2021.

### **Notes to editors:**

1. This is the 100<sup>th</sup> 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/registrars-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.
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