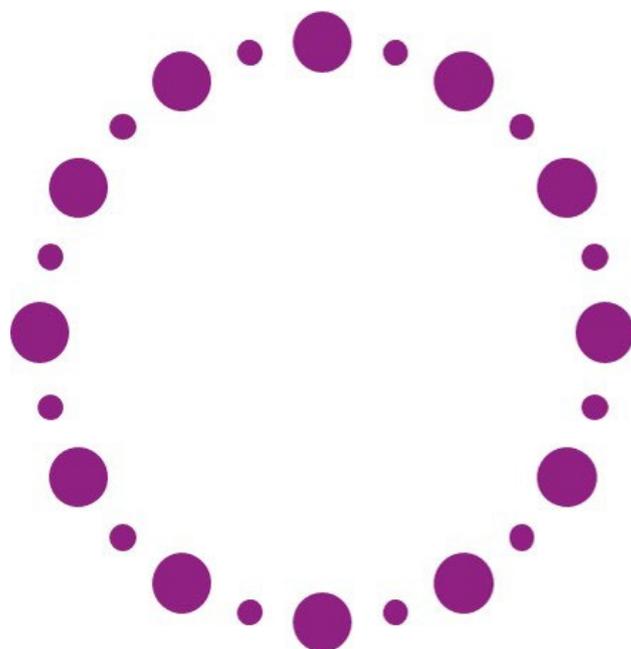


census
2021



Main statistics for Northern Ireland
Statistical bulletin -
Country of birth

22 September 2022



[nisra.gov.uk/Census2021](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/Census2021)

1. Introduction

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) today released further results from Census 2021, which was held on 21 March 2021. The statistics released today provide a profile of the Northern Ireland population covering demography, ethnic group, identity, language and religion. The information covers Northern Ireland and the 11 Local Government Districts (LGDs).

This report relates to country of birth – for display purposes figures are appropriately rounded but full figures are available in the [Census 2021 tables](#) on the NISRA website.

2. Key points

The key points relating to the country of birth topic are as follows:

- The number of people living in Northern Ireland who were born outside the United Kingdom and Ireland has grown from 81,500 people (4.5%) in 2011 to 124,300 people (6.5%) in 2021.
- Taken together the bulletin reports and tables released today show an increasing diversity from 2011 to 2021 in the population across statistics on ethnic group, main language, country of birth and passports held. This increasing diversity is evident to a greater or lesser degree across all 11 Local Government Districts.

3. Questions asked

Census 2021 included a question on country of birth which is presented in Figure 1 (online) and Figure 2 (paper).

Figure 1: Census 2021 question on country of birth - online

What is your country of birth?

Northern Ireland

England

Scotland

Wales

Republic of Ireland

Elsewhere
You can enter your country of birth on the next question

Save and continue

Figure 2: Census 2021 question on country of birth - paper

7 What is your country of birth?

Northern Ireland ➔ **GO TO 9**

England

Scotland

Wales

Republic of Ireland

Elsewhere, write in the current name of the country

4. Country of birth – Census 2021

In 2021, the number of people resident in Northern Ireland who were themselves born in Northern Ireland was 1,646,300. In contrast, the number of people born outside Northern Ireland was 256,900 or 13.5% of the population – of these, 92,300 people were born in Great Britain, 40,400 in the Republic of Ireland and 124,300

outside UK and Ireland. Of this latter group, 67,500 people were born in other European Union (EU) countries, 3,700 in other non-EU European countries and 53,100 in other parts of the world (see Table 1).

Table 1: Country of birth of usual residents - Census 2021

Country of birth	Number	Percentage
Northern Ireland	1,646,300	86.5%
Great Britain	92,300	4.8%
England	72,900	3.8%
Scotland	16,500	0.9%
Wales	2,800	0.2%
Republic of Ireland	40,400	2.1%
Outside United Kingdom and Ireland	124,300	6.5%
Europe (other EU countries)	67,500	3.5%
Europe (other non-EU countries)	3,700	0.2%
Other Countries in the World	53,100	2.8%
All usual residents	1,903,200	100.0%

5. Historical pattern

The census has included a question on country of birth since 1851. This question helps to provide information on the migration of the population. In the last decade the number of people living in Northern Ireland who were born outside the United Kingdom and Ireland has grown from 81,500 people (4.5%) in 2011 to 124,300 people (6.5%) in 2021. Looking further back at country of birth data from the 1851 to 2021 Censuses, it shows that in 1851 around 0.1%, or one person in 1,000 living here, was born outside what is now the United Kingdom and Ireland. The time trend in this percentage is shown graphically in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Percentage of population born outside United Kingdom and Ireland (1851 - 2021)

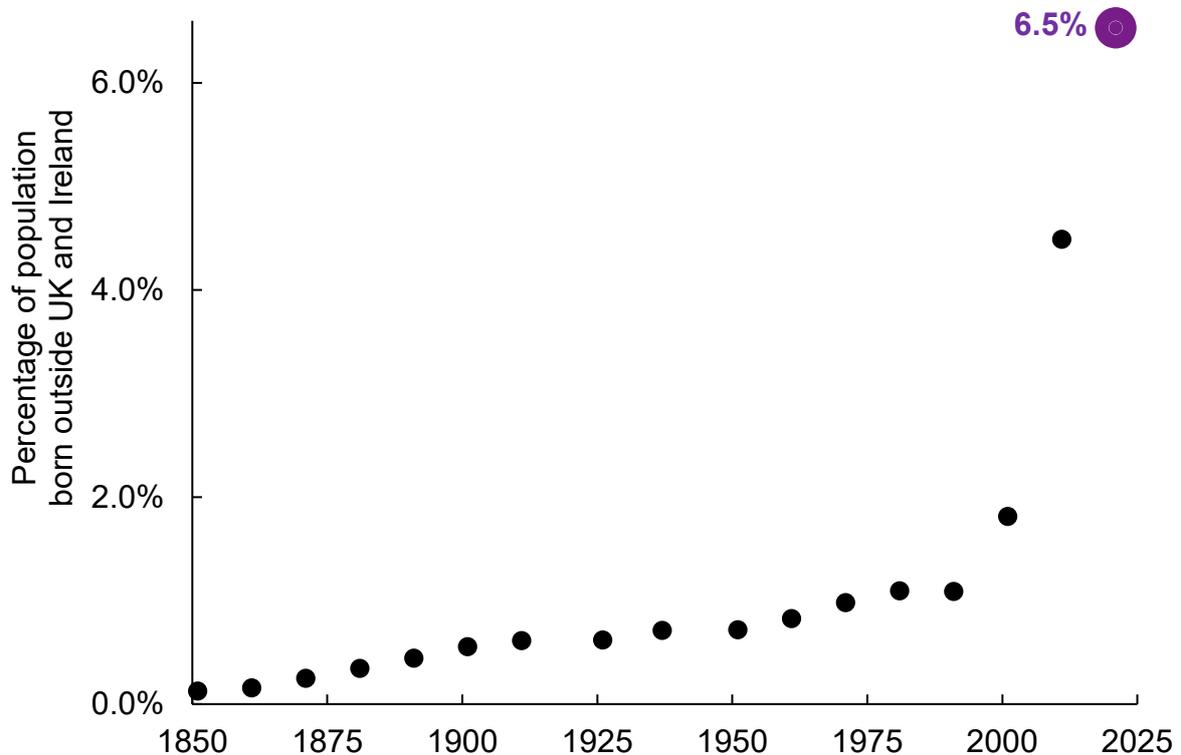


Figure 3 shows that as recently as 1991 the percentage of people living in Northern Ireland, born outside the United Kingdom and Ireland, was just over one person in 100 (or 1.1%), whereas in 2021 it stands at one person in 15 (or 6.5%). This indicates the extent of the recent increases and points to the increasing diversity in the population.

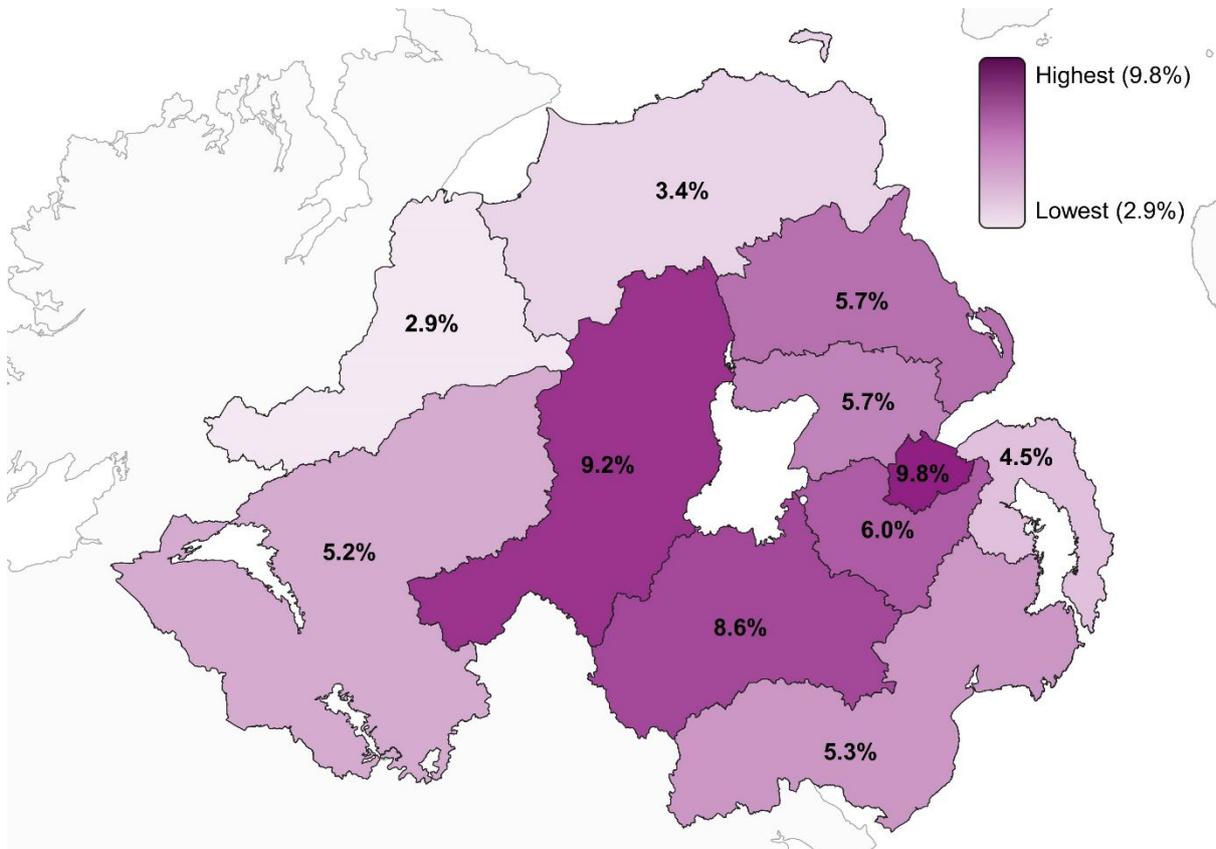
6. Specific countries of birth for Census 2021

In 2021, the largest numbers of people living in Northern Ireland who were born outside the United Kingdom and Ireland were born in Poland (22,300), Lithuania (10,500), India (6,900), Romania (6,600) and the United States (5,000). Over the last decade (2011-21) there have been large percentage increases in people living in Northern Ireland who were born in Syria, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Nigeria, Spain, and East Timor – all of which have at least doubled in number from 2011. The detailed tables published show that while some of the recent increase is related to people born in EU expansion countries coming to live in Northern Ireland, not all of the increase is due to this factor alone.

7. Local Government District (2021 and change over time)

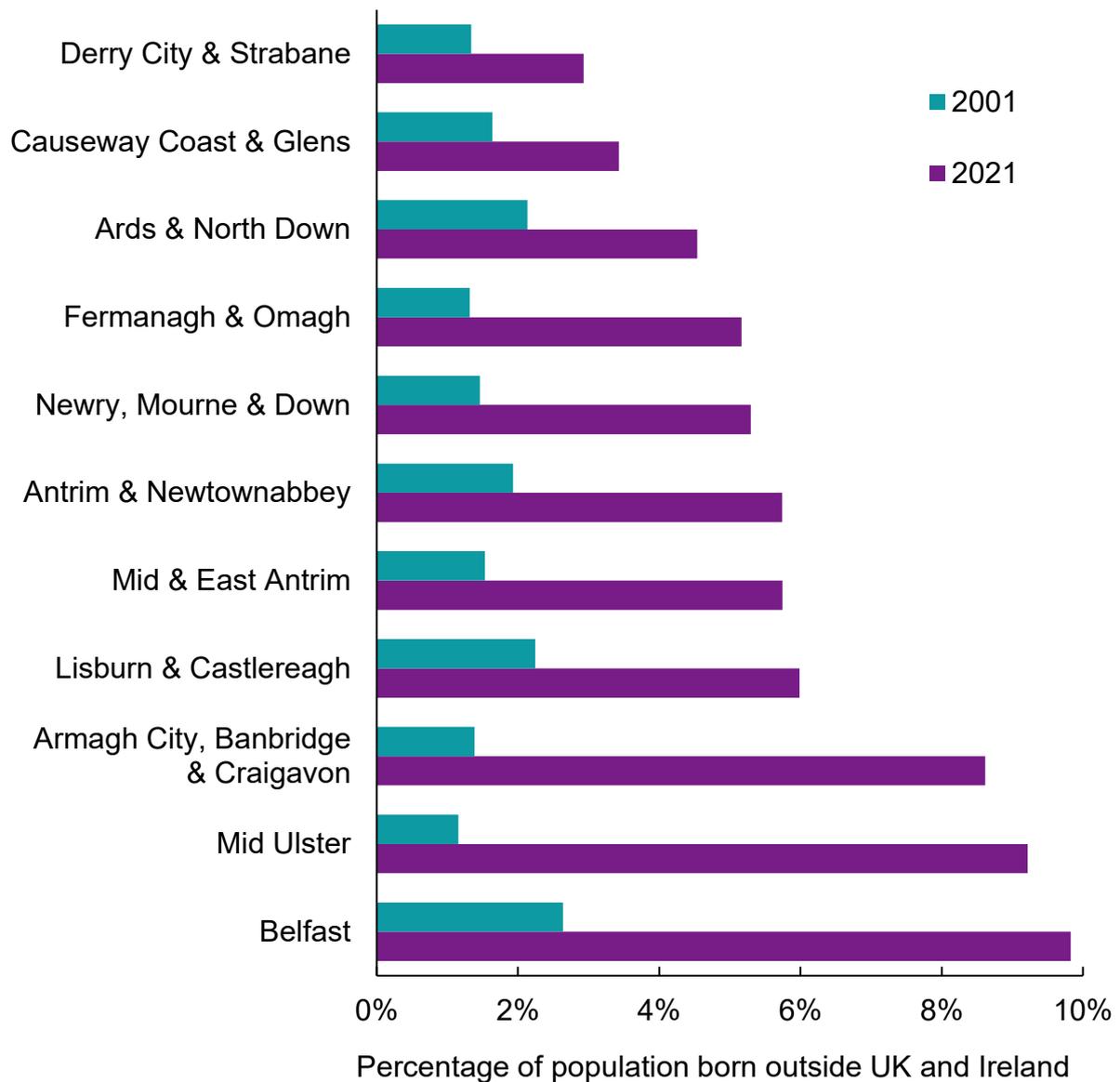
The percentage of the population born outside the United Kingdom and Ireland is greatest in Belfast (9.8%), Mid Ulster (9.2%) and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon (8.6%). In contrast the percentage is lowest in Derry City and Strabane (2.9%), and Causeway Coast and Glens (3.4%). Figure 4 displays this statistic for all Local Government Districts from Census 2021.

Figure 4: Percentage of the population born outside UK and Ireland, by LGD (Census 2021)



Looking in even more detail at geography, all 11 Local Government Districts are more diverse on this indicator than they were 10 or 20 years ago. Figure 5 shows the percentages of the population born outside the United Kingdom and Ireland by Local Government District in the 2001 and 2021 Censuses.

Figure 5: Percentage of population born outside UK and Ireland by LGD (2001 and 2021)



8. Associated outputs

[Country of birth outputs from Census 2021](#) are available to download from the NISRA website, they include:

- MS-A16 Country of birth - basic detail
- MS-A17 Country of birth - intermediate detail
- MS-A19 Country of birth - 1851-2021

9. Further information

Census statistics are produced by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency free from political influence. In May 2022, following a full assessment, the United Kingdom Statistics Authority designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the [Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007](#) and the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). National Statistics status means that the statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

The census plays a fundamental role in the provision of official statistics – census data are used to inform key policies, plan key services and allocate public funds.

9.1. Quality of the results

The census data collection operation was supported by an independent [coverage survey](#). The coverage survey along with administrative data and information from the field operation were combined to allow statistical estimates to be made of the small proportion of people who did not make a return. The statistical estimates discussed here, as with all Census 2021 outputs, reflect the full population of Northern Ireland.

Further information on accuracy, coverage and imputation is provided on the NISRA website in the [Census 2021 quality assurance report \(PDF 275 KB\)](#).

9.2. Confidentiality

Census Office has taken steps to ensure that the confidentiality of respondents is fully protected. All published results from the census have been subject to statistical processes to ensure that individuals cannot be identified. For more information,

please refer to the [statistical disclosure control methodology](#). These processes may result in very marginally different results between tables for the same statistic.

9.3. Comparability with previous censuses

The census is designed to provide the most accurate possible picture of the population on the day the census is taken. Whilst this report contains a small number of historical tables that give comparisons at the Northern Ireland level of some key demographic statistics, users should be aware that comparisons may be affected by other differences, in particular, between the census questionnaires, impacts of issues of the day, etc.

As the last three censuses (2001, 2011 and 2021) were all adjusted for under-enumeration and reflect the Northern Ireland population on census day, this supports comparisons between those censuses.

9.4. Supporting material

A number of [supporting documents](#) are available on the census pages of the NISRA website. These documents describe the census methodology in more detail, the quality assurance processes applied, the paper questionnaire used in the census, and a full list of definitions and output classifications.

9.5. More details

Further information on the statistics provided in this publication can be obtained from Census Customer Services at:

Telephone:	028 9025 5156
Email:	census@nisra.gov.uk
Responsible Statistician:	Dr David Marshall

This report was made possible by the co-operation of the public in responding to the census, the commitment of the census field and headquarters staff, and the assistance of many other people and organisations throughout all aspects of the census. The Registrar General for Northern Ireland, who is responsible for the planning, conduct and reporting of the census, would like to thank all of those who contributed to the census.