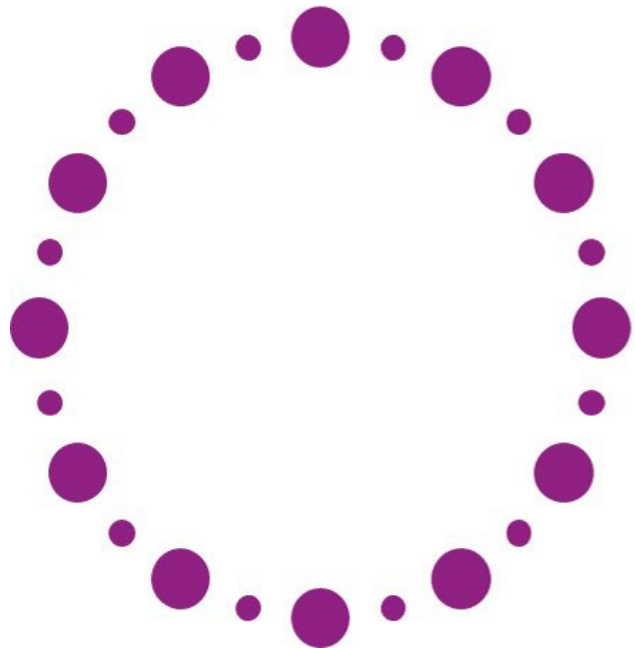


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Release plans for Census 2021 statistics

Latest release

[Census 2021 public microdata teaching sample for Northern Ireland](#) was published at 9.30 am on 16 January 2025. This is a 1% sample of individual records from Census 2021 with no identifying information and available to all for teaching of statistics and social sciences.

Previous releases

[Census 2021 alternative populations for Northern Ireland](#) were published at 9.30 am on 8 August 2024. Data includes Census 2021 estimates showing people counted at their daytime and workplace locations.

[Census 2021 origin-destination data for Northern Ireland](#) were published at 9.30 am on 9 July 2024. Data includes Census 2021 estimates showing the movement of people from one location to another to migrate or work.

Summary of the release plans

[Table 1](#) provides a summary of the release plans. More detail on the content of each of the Census 2021 releases is outlined after the table. The exact date of each release of outputs depends upon the ongoing processing, coding and quality assurance of census data.

If you have comments on this outputs prospectus, email us at census@nisra.gov.uk.

Census data collection was carried out safely and effectively during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has had impacts on our population and census outputs will help us understand them. As we produce census outputs, we will aim to present commentary on the impacts of the pandemic on our population.

This document will be updated as more information becomes available. Detail of the changes made can be found in the [updates register](#).

Table 1: Release schedule of Northern Ireland Census 2021 statistics – summary

Release	Title and content	Planned release	Geography
Release 1	<p>Population and Household Statistics (rounded)</p> <p>Headline population statistics by age and sex, number of households with usual residents, and communal establishment population. Estimates in this release will be published in rounded form.</p>	Published on 24 May 2022	NI
Release 1 – additional geographies	<p>Population and Household Statistics (small area geographies)</p> <p>Headline population and household data for Data Zones (DZ), Super Data Zones (SDZ) and District Electoral Areas (DEA).</p>	Published on 21 Feb 2023	DEA, SDZ and DZ
Release 1 - postcodes	<p>Population and Household Statistics (postcodes)</p> <p>Estimates of usual residents by sex and households for unit level postcodes, postcode sectors and districts in Northern Ireland.</p>	Published on 29 Feb 2024	Unit level postcodes, postcode sectors and districts
Release 2 – Phase 1	<p>Main Statistics (Phase 1)</p> <p>Key statistics for ethnicity; country of birth; passports held; religion; religion or religion brought up in; national identity; and language.</p> <p>This release will include finalised, unrounded estimates for population and household statistics.</p>	Published on 22 Sep 2022	NI, LGD
Release 2 – Phase 2	<p>Main Statistics (Phase 2)</p> <p>Key statistics for health, disability and unpaid care, and housing and accommodation.</p>	Published on 15 Dec 2022	NI, LGD
Release 2 – Phase 3	<p>Main Statistics (Phase 3)</p> <p>Key statistics for marital and civil partnership status, household composition and living arrangements,</p>	Published on 21 Mar 2023	NI, LGD

Release	Title and content	Planned release	Geography
	sexual orientation, qualifications, labour market, travel to work or study, communal establishments, and migration.		
Release 2 – supplemental	Main Statistics (supplemental) Release will include an additional set of main statistics tables from Census 2021, including further detail on a number of census topics for Northern Ireland, such as, demography, ethnicity, national identity, language and religion.	Published on 31 May 2023	Various geographies
Release 2 – additional geographies	Main Statistics (settlements and wards) Publication of a selection of main statistics tables for settlement and electoral ward geographies.	Published on 30 November 2023	Settlement and ward
Release 2 – additional topic	Main Statistics (approximated social grade) Publication of Census 2021 data for approximated social grade in Northern Ireland.	Published on 30 November 2023	Various geographies
Release 3 – Phase 1	Selected multivariate data Publication of a selection of multivariate tables ahead of the release of the Flexible Table Builder, topics will include religion, national identity and economic activity.	Published on 31 May 2023	NI
Release 3 – Phase 2	Flexible Table Builder Publication of an online application that will incorporate variables for all census topics to allow users flexibility to build tables on demand.	Published on 22 Jun 2023	All available geographies
Release 3 – Phase 3	Flexible Table Builder update Data for the new parliamentary constituencies will be added to the Flexible Table Builder.	Published on 26 September 2023	PARLCON2024

Release	Title and content	Planned release	Geography
Release 3 – Phase 4	Flexible Table Builder update Data for approximated social grade, former occupation, and former industry; and new census Data Zone geography aggregations: Urban Status and 2011 Travel to Work Areas will be added to the Flexible Table Builder.	Published on 3 April 2024	Various geographies
Specialist releases	Census 2021 Grid Square Product This release will include spatial lookups based on a Grid Squares aggregation method.	Published on 14 December 2023	100 metre and 1 kilometre grids
Specialist releases	Census 2021 origin-destination data Estimates showing the movement of people from one location to another to migrate or work.	Published on 9 July 2024	Various geographies
Specialist releases	Census 2021 alternative populations Estimates showing people counted at their daytime and workplace locations.	Published on 8 August 2024	Various geographies
Specialist releases	Census 2021 public microdata teaching sample 1% sample of individual records from Census 2021 with no identifying information	Published on 16 January 2025	Microdata

NI = Northern Ireland; LGD = Local Government District

Census 2021 First Release: Population and household statistics

Census 2021 population and household estimates for Northern Ireland

On 24 May 2022, the first release of statistics from Census 2021 were published. [‘Census 2021 population and household estimates for Northern Ireland’](#) are available to download from the NISRA website. The statistics are published in rounded form and include the following:

- the population of Northern Ireland by age and sex;
- the household and communal establishment population of Northern Ireland; and
- the number of households for Northern Ireland.

Census Office published a statistical bulletin to accompany this release, which highlights key trends or changes in our population and housing. Data visualisations, such as population pyramids, and information on the changes in the Northern Ireland population from Census 1851 to Census 2021 were also provided.

Initial reports on [quality assurance](#) and [methodology](#) were also published as part of the first release.

Census population statistics are complemented by the NISRA population estimates series. For further detail, see the [NISRA Population and Migration estimates section](#).

Census 2021 person and household estimates for Data Zones in Northern Ireland

Two new statistical output geographies – Data Zones (similar to Census 2011 Small Areas) and Super Data Zones (similar to Census 2011 Super Output Areas) have been developed for Census 2021.

[Person and household estimates from Census 2021](#) were published at 9.30 am on 21 February 2023 to accompany the release of the new geographies, and are available for Data Zones, Super Data Zones and District Electoral Areas.

A number of [information papers](#) explaining how the new geographies have been developed and how other Northern Ireland geographies can be approximated are also available.

Users can also download digital boundaries for:

- [Data Zones](#); and
- [Super Data Zones](#).

Census 2021 person and household estimates for postcodes in Northern Ireland

[Census 2021 person and household estimates for postcodes in Northern Ireland](#) were published at 9.30 am on 29 February 2024, and include estimates of usual residents by sex and households for unit level postcodes, postcode sectors and districts in Northern Ireland.

Census 2021 Second Release: Main Statistics

The second release of Census 2021 statistics was published in phases. These data include key summary statistics for each of the main census topics for a number of geographies including Northern Ireland, and Local Government Districts.

All tables in this release are based on either the usual resident population, households containing usual residents, or on household spaces. Tables are primarily univariate statistics, meaning they contain data from just one variable.

The table specifications for the second release are provided in [Census 2021 draft table specifications for main statistics \(Excel, 172 KB\)](#).

The delivery of the second release was split over three main phases. Additional phases have extended the data and geographies available to users.

Main Statistics (Phase 1)

[Main Statistics \(phase 1\)](#) were published at 9.30 am on 22 September 2022. This release included a number of census topics:

- ethnicity;
- country of birth;
- national identity and passports held;
- religion, religion or religion brought up in;
- language (main, and knowledge of Irish and Ulster-Scots); and
- finalised, unrounded estimates for the population and household statistics published in the first release.

[Final table layouts \(Excel, 283 KB\)](#) for this release are available to download.

Main Statistics (Phase 2)

[Main Statistics \(phase 2\)](#) were published at 9.30 am on 15 December 2022. This release included a number of census topics:

- health, disability and unpaid care; and
- housing and accommodation.

[Final table layouts \(Excel, 124 KB\)](#) for this release are available to download.

Main Statistics (Phase 3)

[Main Statistics \(phase 3\)](#) were published at 9.30 am on 21 March 2023. This release included a number of census topics:

- marital and civil partnership status;
- household composition and living arrangements;
- sexual orientation;
- qualifications;
- labour market;
- travel to work or study;
- communal establishments; and
- migration.

[Final table layouts \(Excel, 142 KB\)](#) for this release are available to download.

Main Statistics (supplemental)

[Main statistics \(supplemental\)](#) were published at 9.30 am on 31 May 2023. This release included an additional set of main statistics tables from Census 2021, providing further detail on a number of census topics:

- demography;
- ethnicity;
- national identity;
- language;
- religion, religion or religion brought up in;
- sexual orientation;
- housing and accommodation;
- qualifications; and
- labour market.

[Final table layouts \(Excel, 15 MB\)](#) for this release are available to download.

Main Statistics (settlements and wards)

[Census 2021 data for settlement and electoral ward geographies in Northern Ireland](#) was published for selected main statistics tables at 9.30 am on 30 November 2023.

A two-stage process using spatial analysis techniques was used to assign Census 2021 usual residents to settlements: Data Zone approximation and Grid Square approximation. More information on this process is available in our [Settlement methodology paper](#).

Data for the current electoral wards, based on a grid square aggregation method, are also part of this release. More information on this process is available in our [Ward methodology paper](#).

Main Statistics (approximated social grade)

[Census 2021 data for approximated social grade in Northern Ireland](#) was published at 9.30 am on 30 November 2023.

Census 2021 Third Release: Flexible Table Builder and multivariate data

Given the revised timescales for census dissemination, and as most of the information planned for the multivariate data release can be serviced by the [Flexible Table Builder](#), Census Office merged the previously titled 'Census 2021 Third release: Multivariate Data Tables' and 'Census 2021 Fourth Release: Flexible Table Builder' into one multi-phase release. The table list in [Census 2021 table specifications for multivariate statistics \(Excel, 24 KB\)](#) includes an indication of the tables that will be available in the Flexible Table Builder.

The Flexible Table Builder includes variables for all census topics across a range of geographies including Local Government Districts, District Electoral Areas, Super Data Zones and Data Zones. These data are available to cross-tabulate within the system, allowing users to produce their own multivariate data tables on demand, within set table disclosure rules.

Multivariate tables which cannot be serviced by the Flexible Table Builder can be requested through the [Census 2021 commissioned table service](#).

The delivery of the Flexible Table Builder and multivariate data was split over two main phases. Additional phases have extended the data and geographies available to users.

Selected multivariate tables for Northern Ireland (Phase 1)

In advance of the release of the Flexible Table Builder, a [small set of multivariate tables](#) were made available to users at 9.30am on 31 May 2023. The tables show the type of information that the Flexible Table Builder will provide. These tables are at Northern Ireland level and include topics such as religion, national identity and economic activity.

[Final table layouts \(Excel, 40 KB\)](#) for this release are available to download.

Flexible Table Builder (Phase 2)

Census Office launched the [Flexible Table Builder](#) on 22 June 2023. This new tool allows users to build Census 2021 tables for Northern Ireland on demand, users can modify tables by selecting the geographic level of interest (including the new Data Zone and Super Data Zone geographies) and then adding individual or multiple census variables. There is also a facility to find [ready-made Census 2021 tables](#) that can be adapted to suit user requirements.

The Flexible Table Builder allows for some settlement data, specifically those approximated from Data Zones. Smaller settlements, approximated from Grid Square, are included in the [Main statistics \(settlements and wards\)](#) released on 30 November 2023.

Flexible Table Builder – new parliamentary constituency geography data (Phase 3)

On 26 September 2023, Census 2021 data for the new parliamentary constituencies (PARLCON2024) was added to the [Flexible Table Builder](#).

Flexible Table Builder – minor changes and enhancements (Phase 4)

On 3 April 2024, Census 2021 data for: approximated social grade, former occupation, and former industry; and new census Data Zone geography aggregations: Urban Status and 2011 Travel to Work Areas were added to the [Flexible Table Builder](#).

Census 2021 specialist releases

After the publication of the main releases, work began on the creation of a number of specialist products, including Grid Square, origin-destination and alternative populations. Further information for these publications can be found in this section.

Initial proposals for other planned specialist products are also listed, with more detailed plans for these specialist releases still in development. Plans will be published when available. If you wish to request further information on any specialist release, or you have proposals for a different one, please get in touch via email census@nisra.gov.uk.

Census 2021 statistics for Grid Squares

To support the examination of trends over time, Census Office has published grid square statistics for the last five censuses (since 1971). The geographic base for these outputs is the Irish Grid, and census statistics are produced for 100 metre and 1 kilometre grids.

The [Census 2021 Grid Square product for Northern Ireland](#) was released at 9.30 am on 14 December 2023. It provides basic census statistics for a combination of 1 kilometre and 100 metre grid squares. As with Census 2011, the published Census 2021 Grid Square product provides a more restricted range of mainly univariate outputs, compared to the standard outputs; this is to ensure the confidentiality of individual census returns.

Census 2021 origin-destination data

[Census 2021 origin-destination data](#) were published at 9.30 am on 9 July 2024. Data includes Census 2021 estimates showing the movement of people from one location to another to migrate or work.

[Final data specifications](#) (Excel, 53 KB) for this release are available to download.

Census 2021 alternative populations

[Census 2021 alternative populations](#) were published at 9.30 am on 8 August 2024. Data includes Census 2021 estimates showing people counted at their daytime and workplace locations.

[Final data specifications \(Excel, 89 KB\)](#) for this release are available to download.

Census 2021 microdata products

A [Census 2021 microdata strategy](#) has been published on the NISRA website. The microdata strategy sets out the delivery of Census 2021 microdata products, including:

- The Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study (NILS) – NILS is a dataset incorporating a sample of data from the 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011 Censuses. Census Office have enhanced this resource with data from Census 2021. The enhanced NILS (including Census 2021) was launched 16 April 2024. For more information on this product please see [Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study \(NILS\)](#).
- Samples of anonymised records, including:
 - [Public microdata teaching sample](#) – A publicly available microdata file containing anonymised records on a limited set of variables for a random sample of 1% of individuals from Census 2021 for Northern Ireland. This product was published at 9.30am on 16 January 2025.
 - Safeguarded microdata file – A safeguarded microdata file which will consist of a random sample of 5% of individuals from Census 2021 for Northern Ireland. This file will not be made publicly available and will only be made available under licence and control from Census Office.
 - Secure microdata file – The secure microdata file will consist of two random samples of 10%, one a sample of the individuals and one a sample of households from the 2021 Census for Northern Ireland. This file will not be made publicly available and will only be made available under licence and control from Census Office.

Census 2021 UK Armed Forces veterans

By using information from the Ministry of Defence with census data, Census Office will create a number of tables on UK Armed Forces veterans living in Northern Ireland. These statistics will be subject to enhanced disclosure control, but where possible will include statistics on veteran status by demography, employment status, qualifications and health, disability and unpaid care. Further details of these plans will be released as they become available.

United Kingdom 2021/22 Census data

The Northern Ireland and Scotland Registrars General and the United Kingdom National Statistician released a ["Statement of Agreement"](#) on the conduct of the 2021 round of UK censuses. Whilst the census in Scotland was held in March 2022, officials are still planning for 2021/22 United Kingdom census data outputs to be produced.

This work is being driven by a UK census data group. If you use United Kingdom census data and wish to contribute to this group, please get in touch via email census@nisra.gov.uk.

Ireland and Northern Ireland 2021/22 Census data

NISRA and Central Statistics Office (CSO), Ireland, presented a joint [Ireland and Northern Ireland 2011 Census report \(PDF 5.6MB\)](#). This presented analysis across demography, ethnicity, place of birth, religion, health and care, housing and travel to work or study.

In 2018 an [agreement between the CSO Director General and the Registrar General](#) was signed on Census 2021. Whilst the census in the Republic of Ireland was held in April 2022, officials are still planning to produce a joint report on statistics from the 2021/22 censuses.

Census 2021 Commissioned table service

Where it is not possible for users to create the outputs they need themselves, users can request that Census Office produce and supply them. The statistics will only be released if the requested data passes statistical disclosure checks. This service is now open.

We recommend that you review the [Census 2021 table lookup](#) before submitting your commissioned table request. This will ensure that the information you require is not already available in our published tables.

You can also use our [Flexible Table Builder](#) to create your own Census 2021 table.

If the data you require is not available through these resources please email [census customer services](#) with the details listed on the [Census 2021 commissioned outputs](#) page.

We may apply a charge for this service, depending on what you need and how long it would take us. A definitive cost will not be provided until a final specification has been agreed. The customer may be liable for any costs incurred if the order is cancelled at any time.

Once we have created the tables, we publish them for all to use under [Open Government Licence](#). Tables will be published on the NISRA website.

Census 2021 statistics on small populations

Census Office will, where possible, produce bespoke tables for small populations. Small populations can be defined by country of birth, ethnic group, religion, or any other characteristic or geography recorded on the census form. If you wish to request bespoke tables for a small population group, please get in touch via email census@nisra.gov.uk.

NISRA Population and Migration estimates

Following the publication of [2021 Census estimates](#), NISRA population statistics carried out a rebasing exercise to revise the population estimates time series from 2012 to 2020 in line with the most recent Census 2021 population estimates.

The [rebased time series up to 2021](#) was published on 29 June 2023. This was followed by the [2022 mid-year population and migration estimates](#) for Northern Ireland and the 11 Local Government Districts rolled forward from Census 2021 on 31 August 2023. [2022 Mid-Year Population Estimates for Small Geographical Areas within Northern Ireland](#) were published on 25 July 2024.

Publication of the [2023 mid-year population and migration estimates for Northern Ireland](#) were published on 19 September 2024. The mid-year estimates now include estimates of those aged 85 and over, by single year of age up to 104 years, and for those aged 105 and over.

The publication of 2023 population and migration estimates for the 11 Local Government Districts has been delayed and will follow in due course.