

**STATISTICS PRESS NOTICE –  
REGISTRAR GENERAL  
QUARTERLY REPORT  
(Provisional Statistics for Quarter 4  
2021)**



**9:30am Thursday 17 January 2022**

**Registrar General Quarterly Report:  
Provisional Statistics for Quarter 4 2021**

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) has today published the Registrar General Quarterly Report: Quarter 4 2021.

These vital events statistics, which cover 1 October to 31 December 2021, show that there was a provisional total of 4,626 deaths registered in that period. The rate of deaths per 1,000 population increased from 9.1 in Quarter 3 2021, to 9.8 in Quarter 4 2021. Covid-19 was the underlying cause of 468 (10.1%) of these registered deaths. This brings the provisional total number of registered deaths with an underlying cause of Covid-19 to 1,849 for the calendar year 2021, and 3,475 since the start of the pandemic.

In comparison, the provisional number of deaths where Covid-19 was *mentioned anywhere* on the death certificate since the beginning of 2020 was 4,015. This means that Covid-19 was the underlying cause of death in 86.5% of all deaths that mentioned Covid-19 on the death certificate.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, deaths due to influenza and pneumonia have decreased. Total deaths due to these underlying causes have reduced from 667 in 2019, to 454 in 2020, and to a provisional total of 402 in 2021. It is likely that pandemic related factors such as mask wearing, increased hand hygiene and social distancing

have also impacted the numbers of deaths due to other infectious respiratory diseases such as influenza and pneumonia.

The provisional number of deaths in Quarter 4 2021 where the underlying cause was cancer was 1,187 (25.7%), while 471 (10.2%) were due to non-covid respiratory conditions and 374 (8.1%) were due to ischaemic heart disease. On average, over the previous five years (2016-2020) 26.7% of deaths in Q4 were due to cancer, 12.1% from respiratory conditions and 9.6% from ischaemic heart disease.

There were 42 suicide deaths (excluding events of undetermined intent) registered in Quarter 4 2021, an increase of 7 from the number registered in Quarter 3 2021 (35). It brings the 2021 provisional total of deaths due to intentional self-harm to 220, which is an increase of 22 from the provisional 2020 total. These data should not be interpreted as the number of suicides *occurring* during Quarter 4, however, due to the time lag for such deaths to be investigated by the Coroner and then subsequently registered.

Quarter 4 2021 saw 5,418 births registered, which brings the total for 2021 to 22,092. This is an increase from the 20,815 births registered in 2020, but more similar to the level registered in previous years. It should be noted that birth registrations in 2020 were impacted by the temporary closure of registration offices at the beginning of the pandemic.

During the Quarter, 1,852 marriages and 9 civil partnerships were registered. For comparative purposes there were 1,294 marriages and 12 civil partnerships registered in the same Quarter of 2020. Following 2020 when the number of marriage registrations was 3,714, around half the usual expected number (due to the pandemic and associated social restrictions), the total for 2021 (7,921) is now more in line with previous years.

Of the 1,852 registered marriages in Quarter 4, 59 (3.2%) were same sex marriages (including both civil and religious marriages). Over half (55.9% or 33) of the 59 same-sex marriages were female unions. Almost two-fifths (37.3%) of same-sex marriages

were conversions from a previous civil partnership. Seven opposite-sex civil partnerships were registered in Quarter 4 2021 and there were no conversions from a previous marriage.

**NISRA**

**February 2022**

## NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The "Registrar General Quarterly Report - Quarter 4, 2021" contains standard, provisional statistics based on information sourced from the General Register Office relating to vital events in Northern Ireland which were registered from 1 October to 31 December 2021. Quarterly statistics on births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships registered in Northern Ireland can be found at:  
<https://www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/registrar-general-quarterly-tables-quarter-4-2021>
2. Comparisons with 2020 data are, where possible, based on final numbers published in the Annual RG Report for 2020, rather than the provisional totals in the RG quarterly tables.
3. Differences between NISRA's weekly provisional COVID-19 death statistics and the quarterly provisional totals reported here are as follows:
  - NISRA weekly, provisional death statistics, which are based on death registration information collected by the General Register Office, count all deaths where COVID-19 was **mentioned** on the death certificate by the doctor who certified the death, whether or not COVID-19 was the primary underlying cause of death. The figures include cases where the doctor noted that there was suspected or probable coronavirus infection involved in the death.
  - Statistics quoted in the Quarterly Report are presented based on the **primary underlying cause** of death, which have been classified using the tenth revision of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries and Causes of Death (ICD10). As a result the weekly totals will usually be higher than the quarterly figures quoted - because the weekly mentions include cases which go on to be coded as not having COVID-19 as the underlying cause of death.
  - From the week beginning 22 March 2021 (week 12), new ICD-10 codes issued by the World Health Organisation (WHO) were also used alongside the two codes that were previously used to code deaths involving COVID-19. The new code contributing to the total number of deaths due to Covid-19 is U10.9 (Multisystem inflammatory syndrome associated with COVID-19, also referred to as the 'Kawasaki-like syndrome', which is an uncommon effect of COVID-19). These are counted in addition to the existing codes U07.1 (COVID-19, virus identified through laboratory testing) and U07.2 (COVID-19, virus not identified, but COVID is suspected through clinical or epidemiological diagnoses). In addition, the following new codes have also been introduced: U08.9 Personal history of COVID-19, unspecified; U09.9 (post-COVID condition, where the death occurred after rather than during acute, or ongoing COVID-19); U11.19 Need for immunisation against COVID-19, unspecified; and U12.9 COVID-19 vaccines

causing adverse effects in therapeutic use, unspecified. (ICD-10) codes U08.9, U09.9, and U11.9 can't be assigned the underlying cause of death.

4. Death Statistics in Northern Ireland are based on deaths which have been registered with the General Register Office (GRO). There are some situations where the registration of the death can be delayed, specifically where the death has been accidental, unexpected or suspicious, and must be referred to the Coroner. A death which is suspected to be suicide must therefore be referred to the Coroner and can only be registered after the Coroner has completed his/her investigation. The time taken to carry out this investigation can result in a delay in registration. Given the delay in registration of suicide deaths, these deaths may not appear in published statistics until subsequent years.
5. Since 2001, in line with the rest of the UK, the tenth revision of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries and Causes of Death (ICD10) is used to classify cause of death. The codes used for 'Suicide and self-inflicted injury' are X60-X84 and Y87.0 and the codes used for 'Undetermined intent' are Y10-Y34 and Y87.2. At present, NISRA recommends that users of suicide statistics wishing to carry out *trend analyses* refer to the subset of **self-inflicted harm only (ICD-10 codes X60-X84, Y87.0)**. This is due to an ongoing review in relation to the quality of reported suicide figures relating to the 'undetermined intent' subseries, for the period 2015-2018 and 2020. Details of the review are outlined in the 'Guidance Note to Users on Suicide Statistics in Northern Ireland' last updated on 19 October 2021 and available at: [Guidance note to Users on Suicide Statistics in Northern Ireland | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/guidance-note-to-users-on-suicide-statistics-in-northern-ireland)
6. Due to the coronavirus situation, a number of registrations offices reduced routine processing of births and marriage registrations with effect from 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020, and continued priority was given to death registrations. As a result, the number of births and marriages registered during Quarter 2 2020 were unusually low and birth registrations during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2020 unusually high.
7. Corresponding information for England and Wales is published by the [Office for National Statistics](https://www.ons.gov.uk) and for Scotland by the [National Records of Scotland](https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk). Similar figures for the Republic of Ireland are available from the Central Statistics Office Ireland.
8. The Northern Ireland (Executive Formation etc) Act 2019 enabled same sex civil marriages through the Marriage (Same-sex Couples) and Civil Partnership. The regulations came into force on the 13 January 2020 with the first same sex civil marriage taking place on the 11 February 2020. The legislation also enabled opposite sex civil partnerships to take place. On the 1 September 2020 the

Marriage and Civil Partnership (NI) Regulations 2020 introduced same sex religious marriage. From the 7 December 2020 the Marriage and Civil Partnership (NI)(No2) Regulations 2020 allowed a same sex couple to convert a previous civil partnership to a marriage. The regulations also permitted opposite sex couples to convert a previous marriage to a civil partnership.

9. This quarter's update does not contain the usual detail on marriages, which will be release separately following additional quality assurance.
10. All media queries to Department of Finance Press Office at [dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk](mailto:dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk) or on Tel: 028 90816724. The Executive Information Service operates an out of hours service **For Media Enquiries Only** between 1800hrs and 0800hrs Monday to Friday and at weekends and public holidays. The duty press officer can be contacted on 028 9037 8110.
11. Further information on the statistics provided in this publication can be obtained from NISRA Customer Services at:  
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