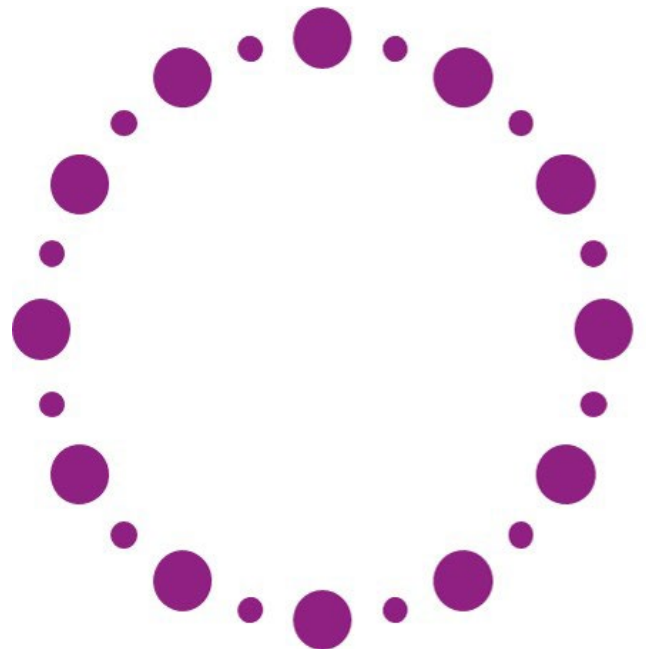


**census**  
2021



**Main statistics for Northern Ireland**  
**Statistical bulletin**  
**Passports held**

**22 September 2022**



## 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 passports held – 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 passports held topic are as follows:

- In Census 2021, 1,484,700 people (78.0%) held a **single passport**, while 116,300 people (6.1%) held **more than one passport**. In contrast 302,200 people, or 15.9% of our population, did not hold a passport.
- Over the last decade the number of people holding a **United Kingdom (UK) passport solely or jointly** has decreased from 1.07m in 2011 to 1.00m in 2021.
- In contrast the number of people holding an **Ireland passport either solely or jointly** has increased from 375,800 in 2011 to 614,300 in 2021. This is consistent with the increasing demand for Ireland passports since the United Kingdom left the European Union in 2016.
- In 2021 there were 92,500 people resident in Northern Ireland (or 4.9% of our population) who held a **non-UK/Ireland passport only**. This is a marked increase from ten years earlier when 54,200 people resident in Northern Ireland (or 3.0% of our population) held a non-UK/Ireland passport only.
- 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 passports held. The question allowed the respondent to select multiple responses if they held multiple passports. The question is shown in Figures 1 (online) and 2 (paper).

**Figure 1: Census 2021 question on passports held – online**

**What passports do you hold?**

[What passports and travel documents to include](#)

Select all that apply

United Kingdom

Ireland

Other  
You can enter your passports on the next question

Or

None

**Save and continue**

**Figure 2: Census 2021 question on passports held – paper**

**10** What passports do you hold?

Tick all that apply.

United Kingdom       Ireland

Other, write in

None

In Census 2021, 1,601,000 people (84.1% of the population) held one or more passports. Of these, 1,484,700 people (78.0% of the total population) held a single passport, while 116,300 people (6.1% of the total population) held more than one passport. The remaining 302,200 people (15.9% of the population) did not hold a passport.

The analysis of the passports question produces two sets of statistics. The first is how many people have a United Kingdom (UK), Ireland, etc., passport irrespective of

whether they have a single passport or not. These statistics are entitled Passports held (passport based) and in this classification respondents can be in more than one group if they hold more than one passport.

#### 4. Passports held (passport based)

In total, just over one million people (52.6% of usual residents) held a UK passport as either their sole passport or along with a passport for another country. Similarly, 614,300 people (32.3%) held an Ireland passport either solely or jointly. There were 74,400 people (3.9%) who held a European (non-UK/Ireland) passport and 29,900 people (1.6%) who held passports from other countries in the world.

**Table 1: Passports held (passport based) of usual residents - Census 2021**

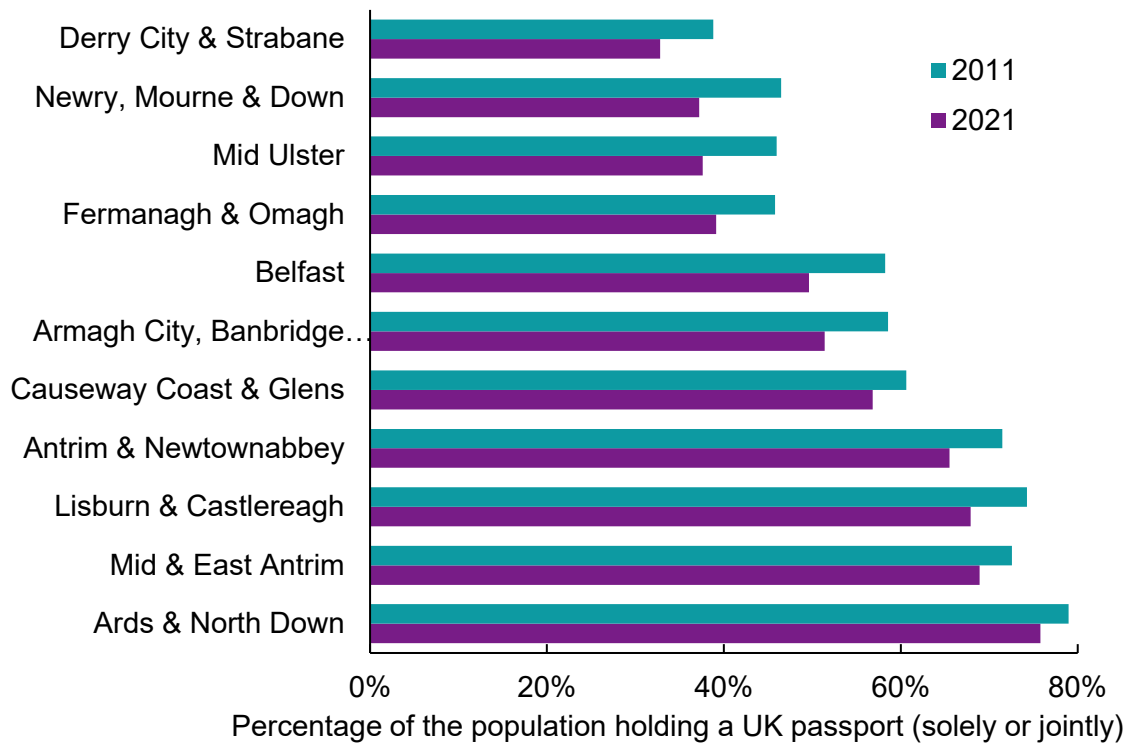
<b>Passports held (passports based)</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
United Kingdom	1,000,200	52.6%
Ireland	614,300	32.3%
European countries	74,400	3.9%
Other countries in the world	29,900	1.6%

#### 5. Passports held (passport based) – change over time by Local Government District

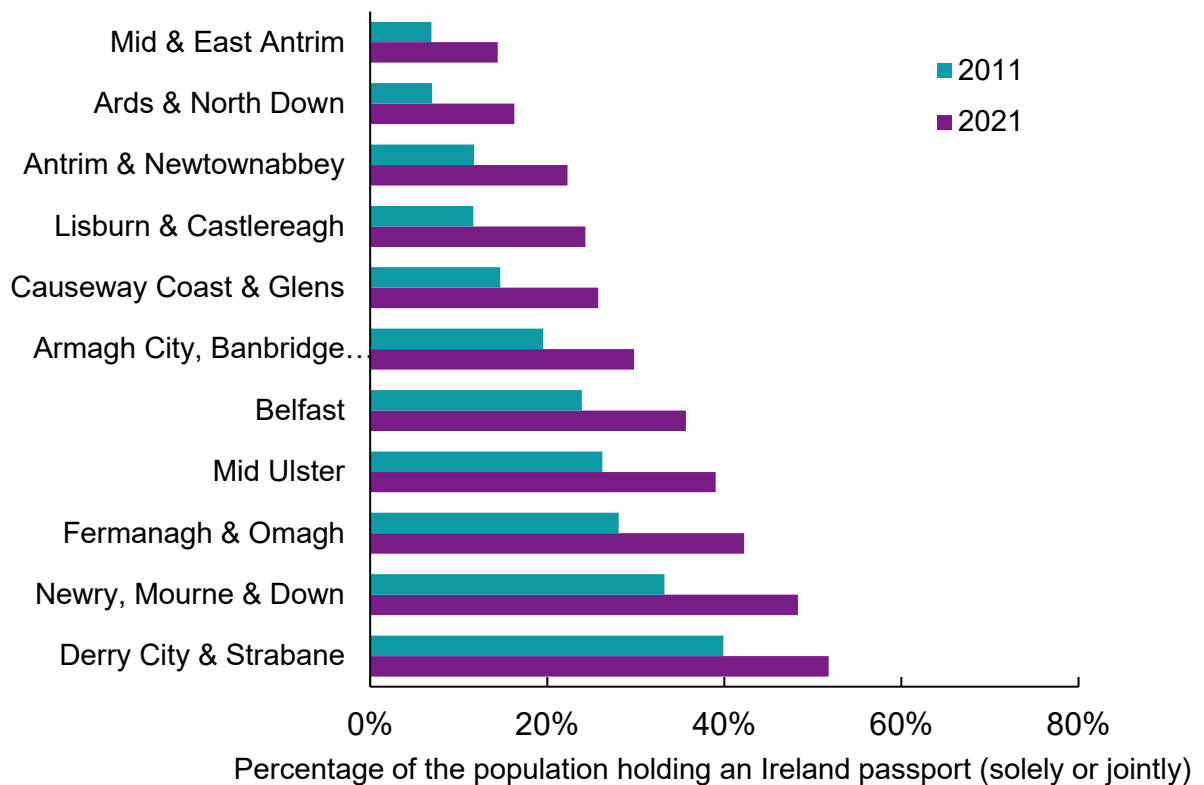
Over the last decade the number of people holding a UK passport, either solely or jointly, has decreased from 1,070,400 in 2011 to 1,000,200 in 2021. The number of people holding an Ireland passport, either solely or jointly, has increased from 375,800 in 2011 to 614,300 in 2021. This is consistent with information from the Department for Foreign Affairs (Ireland) on the increased demand for Ireland passports from people living in Northern Ireland. This pattern is seen across all Local Government Districts – see Figures 3 and 4.

As noted, there were 74,400 people (3.9%) who held a European (non-UK/Ireland) passport and 29,900 people (1.6%) who held passports from other countries in the world. This is an increase on 2011 when 40,600 people (2.2%) held a European (non-UK/Ireland) passport and 20,200 people (1.1%) held passports from other countries in the world.

**Figure 3: Percentage of the population holding a UK passport (solely or jointly) by LGD (2011 and 2021)**



**Figure 4: Percentage of the population holding an Ireland passport (solely or jointly) by LGD (2011 and 2021)**



## 6. Passports held (person based)

The Passports held (passport based) classification is not mutually exclusive and a large number of people hold two or more passports (e.g. holding both UK and Ireland passports). This leads to the second set of statistics entitled Passports held (person based). In this classification, respondents are included in one group only (e.g. this classification includes a “United Kingdom only” group, “Ireland only” group, and “United Kingdom and Ireland only” group). The relevant Census 2021 statistics are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Passports held (person based) of usual residents - Census 2021**

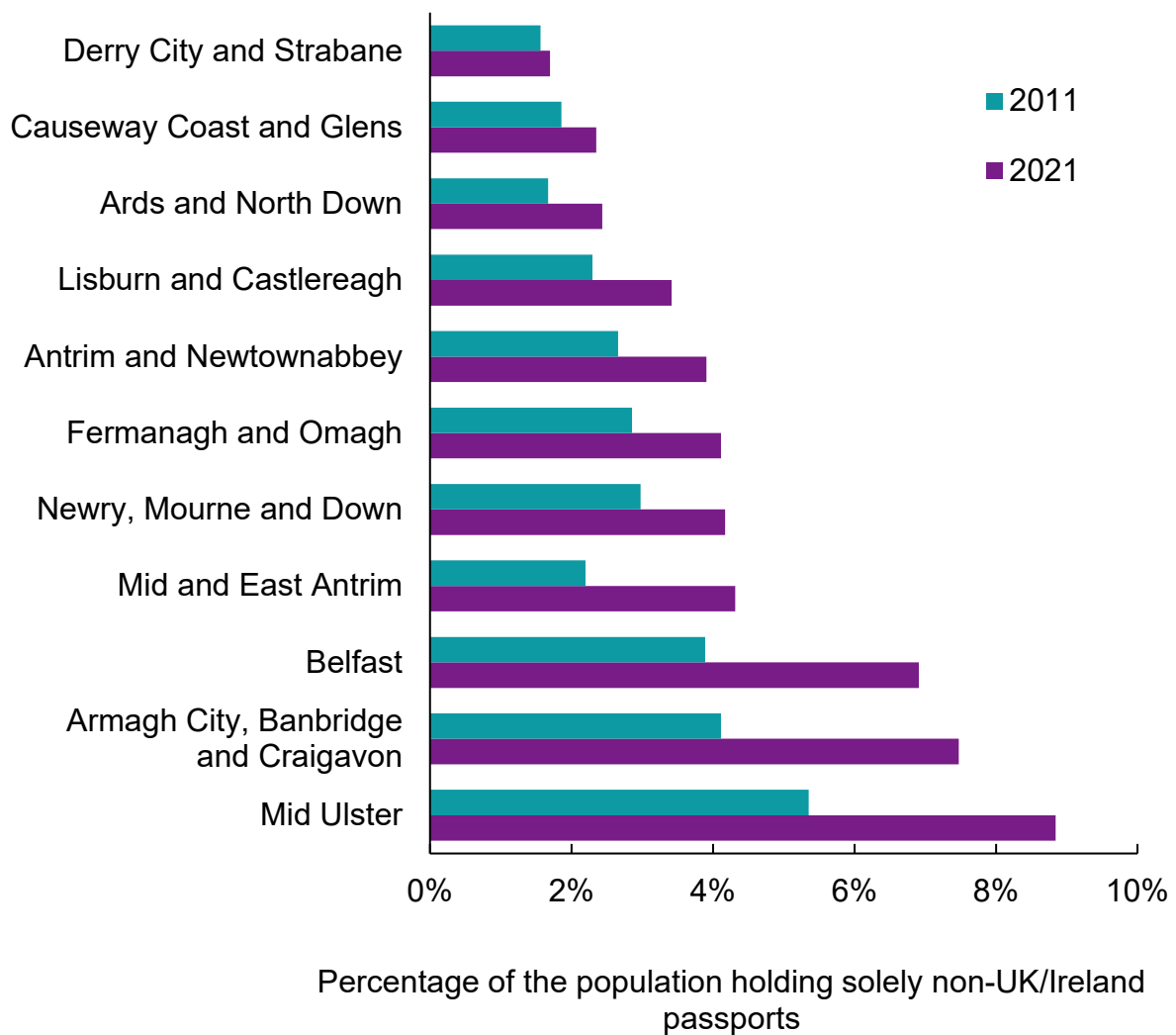
<b>Passports held (person based)</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>United Kingdom only</b>	<b>887,600</b>	<b>46.6%</b>
<b>Ireland only</b>	<b>504,500</b>	<b>26.5%</b>
<b>United Kingdom and Ireland only</b>	<b>104,500</b>	<b>5.5%</b>
<b>United Kingdom and other (not Ireland)</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>0.3%</b>
<b>Ireland and other (not United Kingdom)</b>	<b>3,700</b>	<b>0.2%</b>
<b>United Kingdom, Ireland and other</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>0.1%</b>
<b>Other only</b>	<b>92,500</b>	<b>4.9%</b>
Poland only	23,800	1.2%
Lithuania only	11,900	0.6%
Portugal only	7,000	0.4%
Romania only	6,400	0.3%
Other countries only	43,400	2.3%
<b>No passport</b>	<b>302,200</b>	<b>15.9%</b>
<b>All usual residents</b>	<b>1,903,200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 2 shows that 1,484,700 people (78.0%) held a single passport, while 116,300 people (6.1%) held more than one passport. Of the latter, 106,000 people held both a UK and Ireland passport (either with or without another passport). This is up from 30,700 in 2011. In total there are 92,500 people (4.9%) living here who hold a non-UK/Ireland passport only.

## 7. Passports held (person based) – change over time by Local Government District

Figure 5 shows the percentage of the population holding solely a non-UK/Ireland passport by Local Government District in the 2011 and 2021 censuses. This shows that all 11 Local Government Districts are more diverse in 2021, on this statistic, than they were ten years ago. The biggest increases were in Mid-Ulster, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, and Belfast Local Government Districts.

**Figure 5: Percentage of the population holding solely non-UK/Ireland passports by LGD (2011 and 2021)**



## 8. Associated outputs

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

- MS-A20 Passports held (person based) - basic detail (classification 1)
- MS-A21 Passports held (person based) - intermediate detail (classification 1)
- MS-A22 Passports held (passports based) - (classification 2)

## 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 NISRA's 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](mailto: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.

## 9.6. Copyright

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the [Open Government Licence v.3](#). Where any third party copyright information is identified, you need to obtain permission from the copyright holders.