

Liquor Licences in Northern Ireland 2022

Annual publication

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Coverage: Northern Ireland

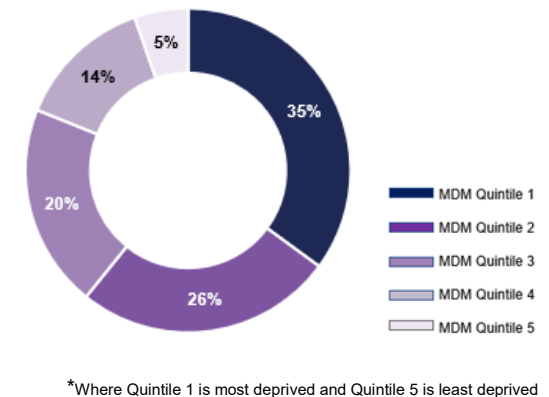
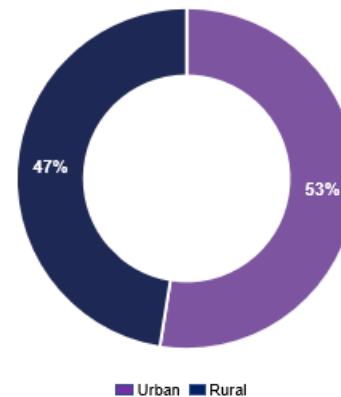
Key points:

- At December 2022, there were 1,089 liquor licences for public houses.
- The Local Government District (LGD) with the most liquor licences for public houses was Newry, Mourne and Down (166).
- The split between urban and rural locations was 47% rural and 53% urban.
- The District Electoral Area (DEA) with the most liquor licences for public houses was Botanic in Belfast LGD (57).
- At December 2022, there were 641 liquor licences for off-licences.

Northern Ireland

Urban / Rural Classification

Multiple Deprivation Measure (MDM) Rank



*Where Quintile 1 is most deprived and Quintile 5 is least deprived

In Northern Ireland there were 1,089 liquor licences for public houses as of December 2022, down from 1,193 in December 2021. Of these, 53% were in areas classified as urban and 47% were in areas classified as rural. Just over a third, 35%, were located in areas within the most deprived quintile, based on Multiple Deprivation Measures (MDM), while one in twenty were located in areas within the least deprived quintile based on MDM. There were 641 liquor licences for off-licences in Northern Ireland as of December 2022, an increase of 4 since December 2021.

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Introduction

This is the second publication providing the number of liquor licences in Northern Ireland. Legislation passed by the NI Assembly specified that the Department for Communities (DfC) must publish information on the number of liquor licences held by off-licences, and the number of liquor licences held by public houses annually. It further specified that data in relation to public houses should be available at the District Electoral Area (DEA) level¹.

This publication includes information on:

- Number of liquor licences by public house by various geographies
- Number of liquor licences by off-licence

Data in relation to liquor licences was provided to DfC by the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS). The NICTS hold data on the number of liquor licences that are held in Northern Ireland by various types of premises. As more data becomes available analysis of trends will be incorporated into the commentary.

More information relating to the data, definitions and the interpretation of the figures can be found in the [Definitions and technical notes](#) section. Data tables are available in [Excel](#) and [ODS](#) format on the publication web page.

1. There are 80 District Electoral Areas (DEAs) in Northern Ireland. All Local Government Districts have 7 DEAs in total, with the exception of Belfast which has 10.

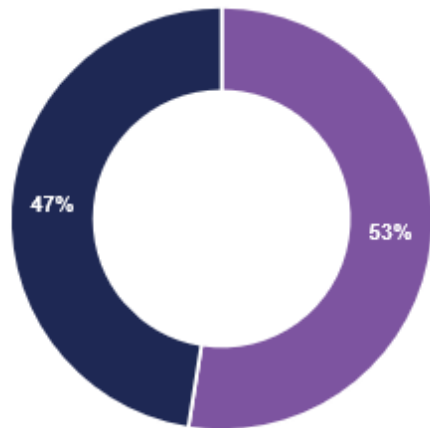
Liquor licences at Northern Ireland level



As of December 2022, there were 1,089 liquor licences for public houses, a decrease of 104 (9%) on the December 2021 figure (1,193).

As of December 2022, there were 641 liquor licences for off-licences, an increase of 4 since December 2021.

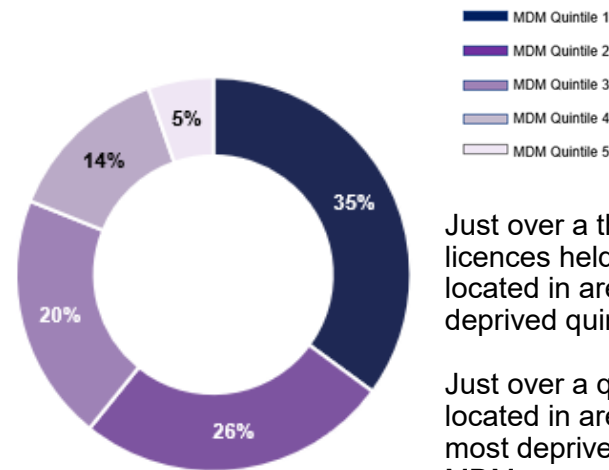
It should be noted that liquor licences for public houses and off-licences expired on 30 September 2022 and, as a result, licences had to be renewed. The decrease in the number of liquor licences held by public houses may in part be due to late applications, and applications that were still being processed as of 31 December 2022.



Urban Rural

Just over half, 53%, of liquor licences held by public houses are located in areas classified as urban, with the remaining 47% in areas classified as rural.

This is a slight change from 2021, where 52% were in areas classified as urban and 48% were in areas classified as rural.



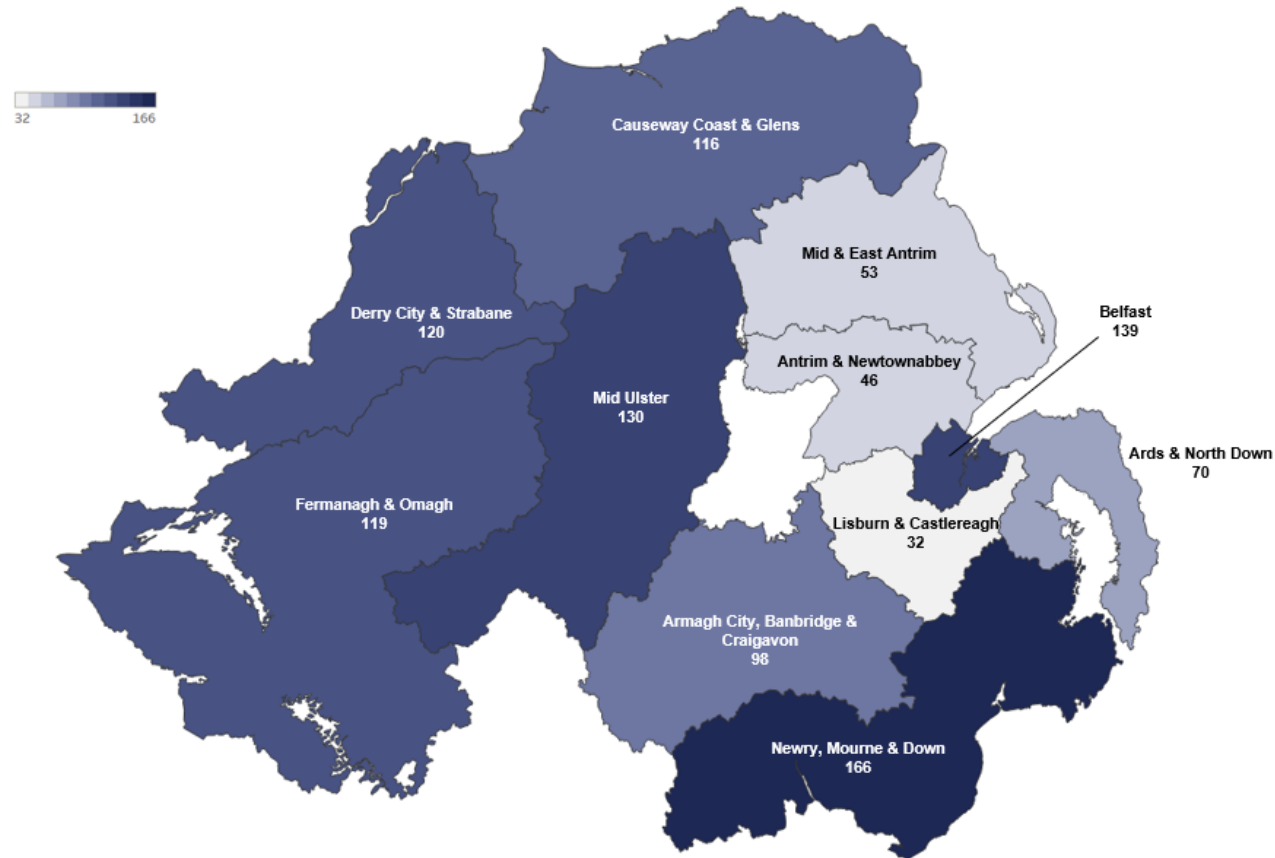
Just over a third, 35%, of liquor licences held by public houses are located in areas within the most deprived quintile based on MDM.

Just over a quarter, 26%, are located in areas within the second most deprived quintile based on MDM.

One in twenty, 5%, liquor licences held by public houses are located in areas within the least deprived quintile based on MDM.

Liquor licences at Local Government District (LGD) level

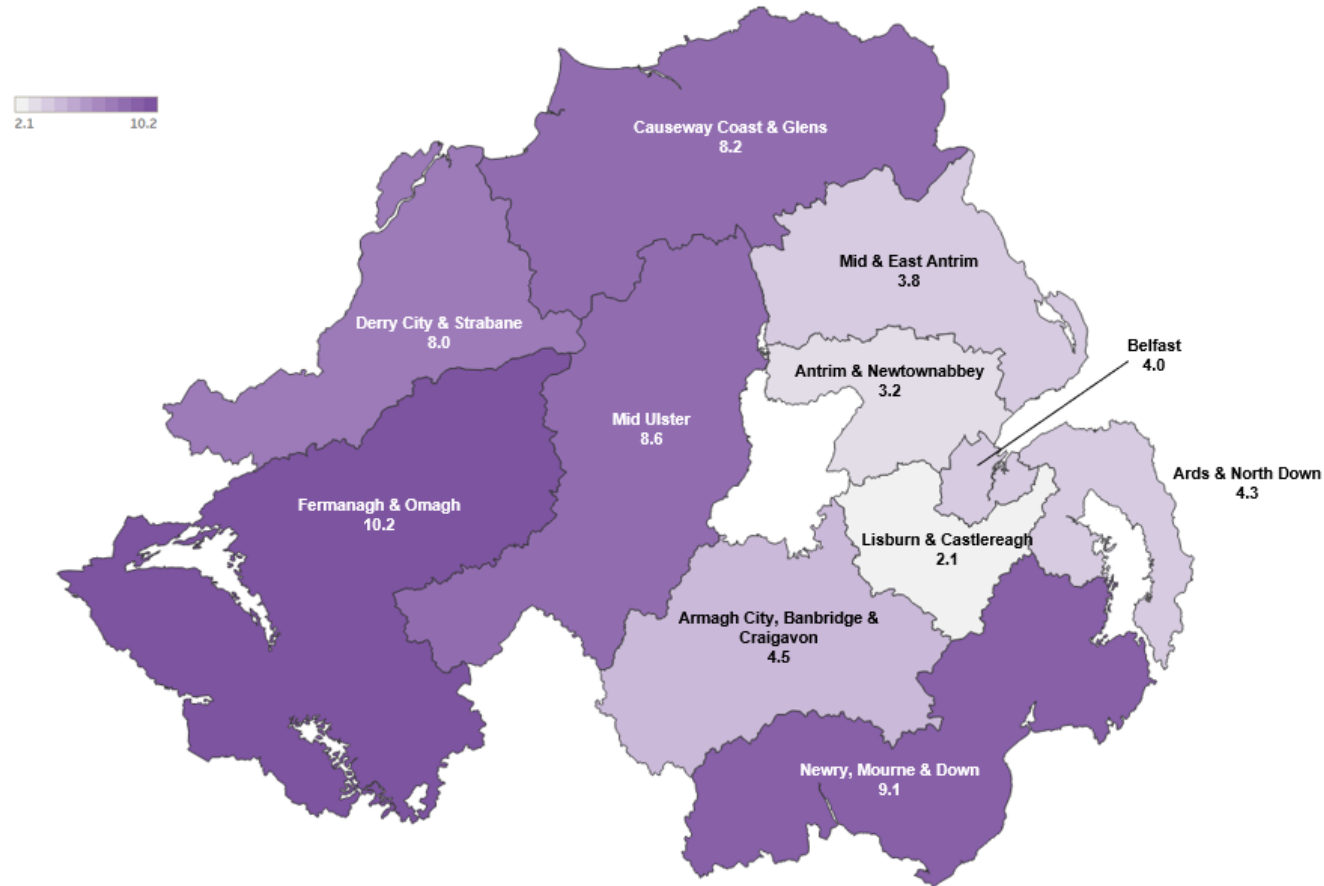
Liquor licences held by public houses by LGD



There is variation in the number of liquor licences held by public houses in each LGD, with 32 in Lisburn and Castlereagh and 166 in Newry, Mourne and Down.

Liquor licences at Local Government District (LGD) level

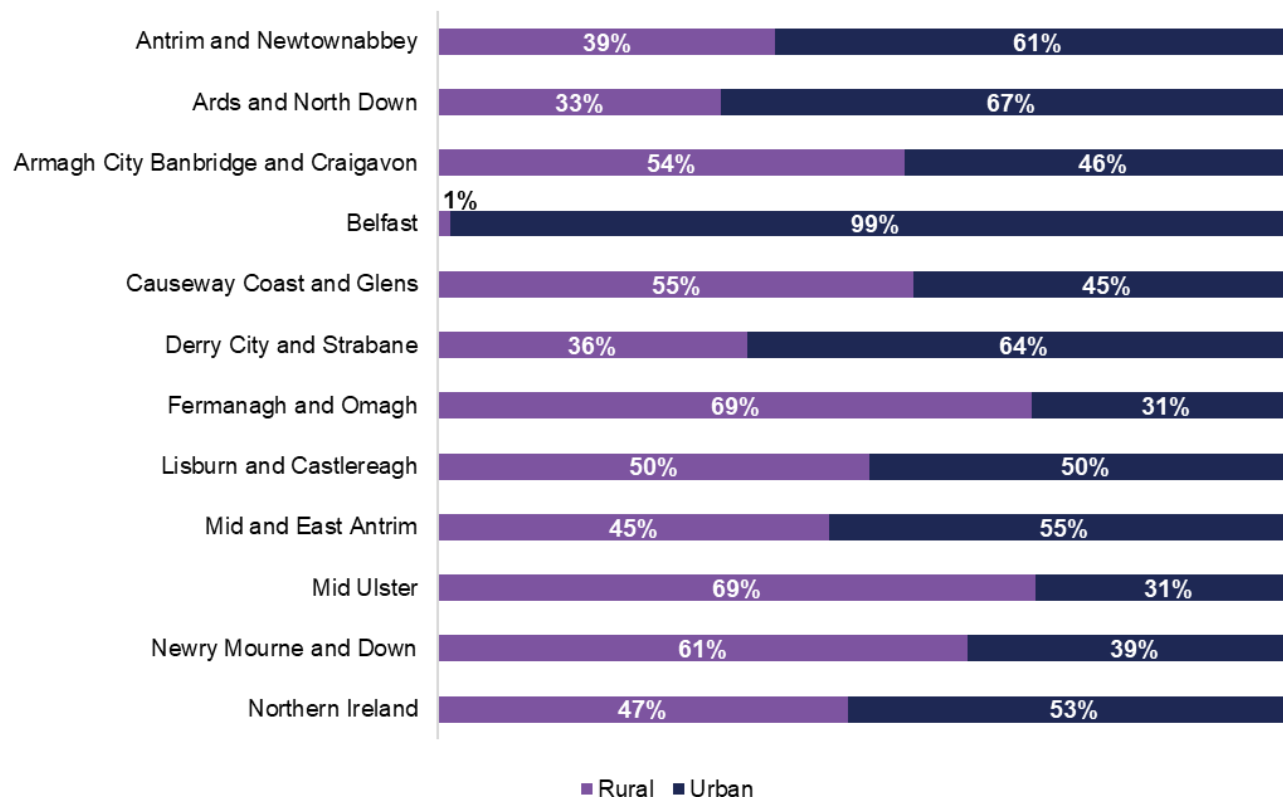
Liquor licences held by public houses per 10,000 of population by LGD



Analysis of the number of liquor licences held by public houses per 10,000 of the population, shows a range from 10.2 in Fermanagh and Omagh to 2.1 in Lisburn and Castlereagh. In 2021, the range was from 11.8 in Fermanagh and Omagh to 2.5 in Lisburn and Castlereagh.

Liquor licences at Local Government District (LGD) level - Urban / Rural Classification

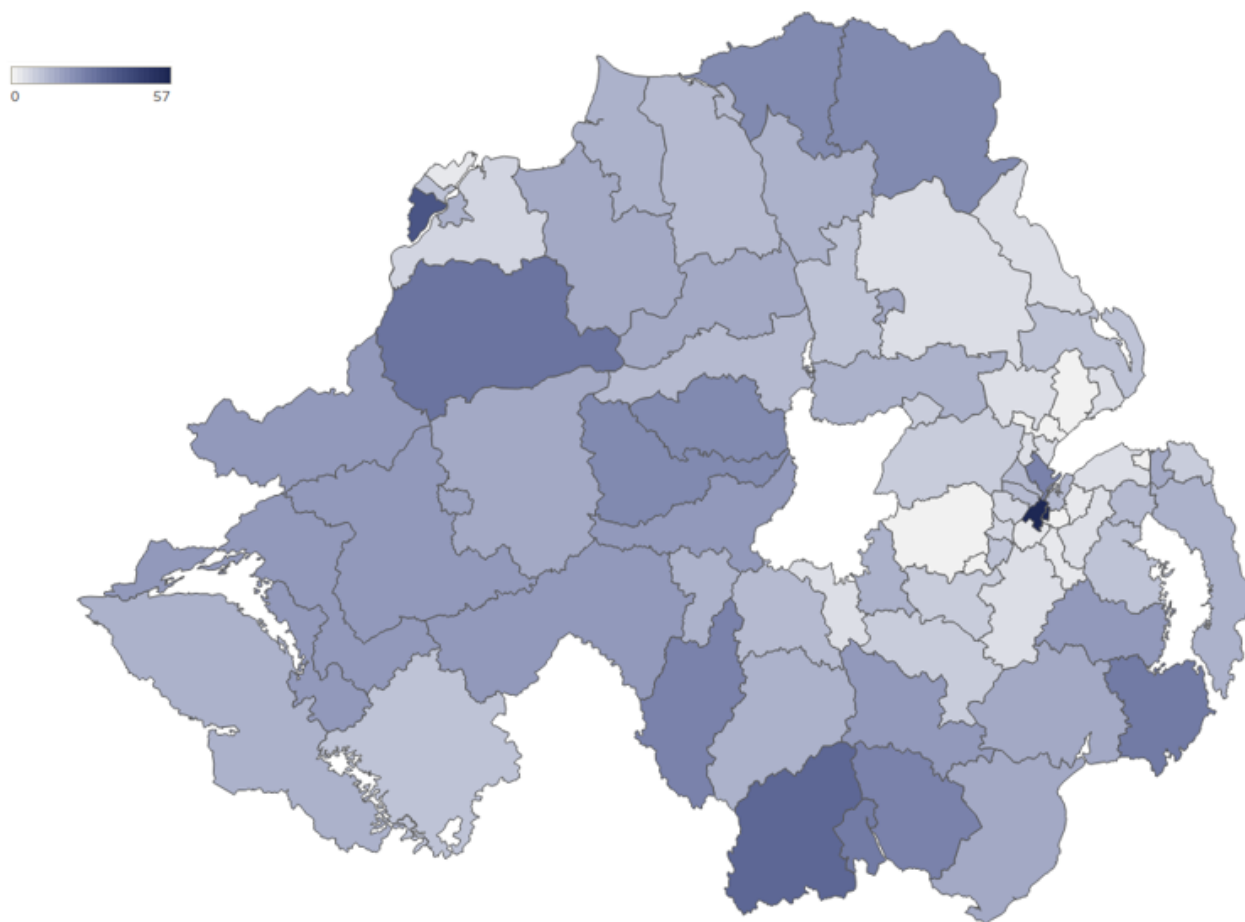
Percentage of liquor licences for public houses by Urban / Rural Classification per LGD



- Of the eleven LGDs, five have a higher percentage of liquor licences held by public houses within areas classified as urban, five have a higher percentage within areas classified as rural, and one LGD, Lisburn and Castlereagh has even split with 50% in urban areas and 50% in rural. This is a slight change from 2021, where six of the eleven LGDs had a higher percentage within areas classified as rural.
- Almost all (99%) liquor licences held by public houses in Belfast are in areas classified as urban.
- Just under seven in every ten liquor licences held by public houses in Mid Ulster and Fermanagh and Omagh (both 69%) are in rural areas. This is a slight decrease from 2021, where 72% and 71% were in areas classified as rural respectively.

Liquor licences at District Electoral Area (DEA) level

Liquor licences held by public houses by DEA

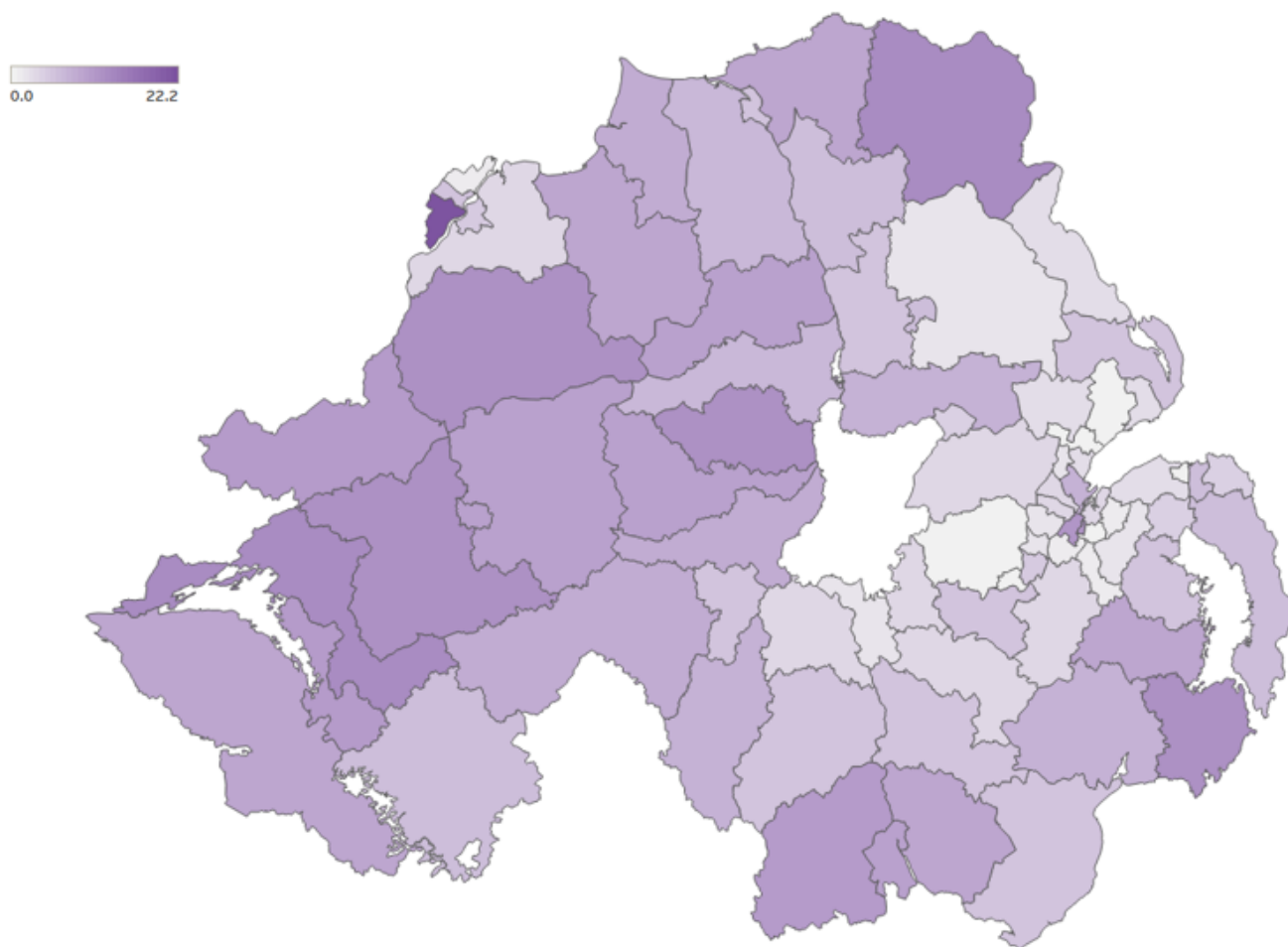


The DEA with the highest number of liquor licences held by public houses remains the same as in 2021, being Botanic (Belfast LGD) with 57. This is followed by The Moor, (Derry City and Strabane LGD) which has 38. While these DEAs remain the highest, both have less than they did in 2021, when Botanic held 59 and The Moor held 42.

As in 2021, there are no public houses holding a liquor licence in Lisburn South DEA (Lisburn and Castlereagh LGD), while there is only one public house holding a liquor licence in each of Bangor West (Ards and North Down LGD), Knockagh (Mid and East Antrim LGD), Lisnasharragh (Belfast LGD) and Three Mile Water (Antrim and Newtownabbey LGD). Additionally, Killultagh (Lisburn and Castlereagh LGD) now only holds one licence whereas it held 2 as at December 2021.

Liquor licences at District Electoral Area (DEA) level

Liquor licences held by public houses per 10,000 of the population by DEA



The DEA with the highest number of liquor licences held by public houses per 10,000 of the population is The Moor (Derry City and Strabane LGD), with 22.2. This is followed by Erne North (Fermanagh and Omagh LGD) which has 13.3. These have reduced since 2021 from 24.7 and 14.4 per 10,000 respectively.

Lisburn South (Lisburn and Castlereagh LGD) has no liquor licences held by public houses per 10,000 of the population. Lisnasharragh (Belfast LGD) has the second lowest concentration of liquor licences held by public houses per 10,000 of the population, with 0.3. This has remained unchanged since 2021.

Definitions and technical notes

Basis for publication

The Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 states that the Department for Communities must, as soon as reasonably practicable, publish a statement of each of the following as at 31st December in the previous year –

- (a) the number of licences in force for premises of a kind mentioned in Article 5(1)(a) of the Licensing Order;
- (b) the number of licences in force for premises of a kind mentioned in Article 5(1)(b) of the Licensing Order;
- (c) the number of premises of a kind mentioned in Article 5(1)(a) of the Licensing Order in each district electoral area or, if the Department considers that it is feasible to reckon the number of such premises by reference to smaller areas, in each of those areas;
- (d) the trends which may be observed from the numbers referred to in paragraphs (a) to (c).

Premises under article 5(1)(a) are premises in which the business carried on under the licence is the business of selling intoxicating liquor by retail for consumption either in or off the premises i.e. public houses.

Premises under article 5(1)(b) are premises in which the business carried on under the licence is the business of selling intoxicating liquor by retail for consumption off the premises i.e. off-licences.

District Electoral Area (DEA)

There are a total of 80 DEAs across Northern Ireland. Ten of the eleven Local Government Districts have seven DEAs, while Belfast has a total of ten.

Urban/rural classification

The urban or rural classification of a public house has been determined by using the property postcode, the Central Postcode Directory and the [Review of the Statistical Classification and Delineation of Settlements](#) published by NISRA.

Deprivation

The data have been analysed by which deprivation quintile the public house is located in. This is estimated using the [Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2017](#) which is a weighted combination of seven domains of deprivation. Rank 1 indicates the most deprived Super Output Area (SOA) , while rank 890 denotes the least deprived SOA. These are then grouped into 'quintiles', with the first quintile being the most deprived and the fifth quintile being the least deprived.

Licences per 10,000 population

By examining the number of liquor licences per 10,000 of population it is possible to take into account different populations across the various DEAs and LGDs. Since each DEA and LGD will have different population sizes, and they will also have a different number of public houses with a liquor licence, it is difficult to make meaningful comparisons across DEAs or LGDs simply by looking at overall numbers alone. As such, by calculating the rate of licences per 10,000 population, more appropriate comparisons across the various geographies that this publication reports on can be made.

Renewal of liquor licences

The Licensing (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 states that every five years, all licensed premises must renew their liquor licence. Licences expired on 30 September 2022. Applications to renew a licence must be submitted to the magistrate's court by 9 August 2022. However, there may have been delays in applications being submitted, applications being granted or licence details being updated on to NICTS databases. As such, the number of liquor licences for public houses and off-licence as of 31 December 2022 may not be a true reflection of the number of liquor licences in force.

Other notes

The following should be noted when interpreting figures and tables:

- Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.