

# The Northern Ireland Town Centre Database Background Paper



**Note: Town Centre Database is still under development (see introduction)**

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## 1. Introduction

The Town Centre Database (TCD) has been produced by Analytical Services Unit (ASU) within the Department for Communities (DfC). The Database aims to provide a clear, consistent set of statistics relating to the 41 urban towns and cities in Northern Ireland. Statistics include demography, crime, business data and information relating to non-domestic properties.

The Department and its partners, in particular local councils, invest a lot of resources on programmes of physical regeneration activities in cities, towns and villages across Northern Ireland. As there was no easily accessible source for statistics around town and city centres, it is hoped that TCD will help promote an evidence based policy environment for policy makers and provide useful information to councils, researchers and the public.

The database is currently released in its development stage in order to demonstrate to users the range of analyses possible in the future and to seek feedback to inform the future presentation of town centre statistics.

### Data sources and quality

The statistics in the database have been mainly compiled from data sources held by Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA) branches across a number of Departments in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS).

The database is being published in its current format in order to involve users and stakeholders in its development as a means to build in quality at an early stage'. Whilst data is compiled from high quality sources and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of data contained in the TCD, the nature of the data analysis involved means that the quality has yet to be determined.

### Release Schedule

The database is still in development and will be updated as improvements are developed or as feedback is taken into account.

ASU plans to create an update schedule when the database moves into regular production.

### Feedback and mailing list

We welcome and encourage feedback from potential users of the database. Please provide feedback and sign up to be notified of updates to the TCD via the link below:

[https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Town\\_Centre\\_database\\_Jun16](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Town_Centre_database_Jun16)

### Contact us

If want to receive the feedback questionnaire in an alternative format or have any queries, please contact us via the email address below:

[towncentre@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:towncentre@communities-ni.gov.uk)

## 2. Towns and cities

The database contains details of 41 urban towns and cities shown across Northern Ireland. An urban town or city is defined as one located within a settlement with a population of 5,000 or more based on the 2011 census. These towns and cities are shown on the map below:



The full list of towns can be found in annex 1 at the end of this report.

## 3. Geography

There are 3 levels of geography used to report statistics in the TCD:

### Town centre boundary

The town centre boundary used is taken from latest active development plans. These are usually drawn to encompass the traditional concentration of retailing and other city/town centre functions such as entertainment, leisure, cultural, civic, residential and office routes.

### Settlement boundary

We have provided some census statistics at Settlement Boundary – used for some demography and crime comparisons

### New catchment areas

The town/city centre boundary allows us to provide information on what takes place in the town/city centre. However, it is important to get information about the people who actually

use the town/city centre to access goods and services. Most of these users will not live within the relatively small town/city centre boundary, but will travel in from surrounding areas.

To enable a consistent approach to reporting statistics about the users of a town/city centre, ASU has created new catchment areas. To create these catchment areas, we have used drive time analysis i.e. the average amount of time it takes to drive to the central point of the town/city centre map.

Initially the size of the boundary has been designed based on the size of the town/city. The view being that the larger the town/city, the longer people are prepared to travel to access its goods and services.

For small towns there has been a distinction made between towns that are within 20 minutes from a settlement of over 10,000 people and those that are more remote.

The breakdown of catchment areas by category of town is as follows:

<b>SDL Class</b>	<b>Catchment Boundary A (mins)</b>	<b>Catchment Boundary B (mins)</b>
<b>A - Belfast</b>	45	60
<b>B - Derry City</b>	30	45
<b>C - Large Town</b> (e.g. Coleraine, Lisburn, Ballymena)	20	30
<b>D - Medium Town</b> (e.g. Cookstown, Enniskillen)	15	20
<b>E - Small Town</b> (e.g. Magherafelt, Portrush) (within 20 minute drive-time to the town centre of a settlement with a population of at least of 10,000)	10	15
<b>E - Small Town (e.g. Ballynahinch, Newcastle)</b> (NOT within 20 minute drive-time to the town centre of a settlement with a population of at least of 10,000)	15	20

## 4. Data

The database includes statistics sourced from Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA) branches across a number of Departments in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS).

The TCD is initially built and presented in following sections:

Section	Statistics	Source	Geography presented		
			Town Centre boundary	Settlement (SDL) boundary	Catchment area boundary
Crime and road traffic collisions	Crime	www.police.uk	Y	Y	
	Road traffic collisions	NISRA - PSNI	Y	Y	
Business data	Business Turnover	NISRA - ELSMB	Y		
	Business Demography	NISRA - ELSMB	Y		
	Employee Jobs	NISRA - ELSMB	Y		
Rates, vacant buildings and planning statistics	Non Domestic Net Asset Values (rateable value)	NISRA - LPS	Y		
	Planning Applications	NISRA - DfI	Y		
	Vacancy Rates	NISRA - LPS	Y		
Town centre user statistics	Demography	NISRA - NINIS		Y	Y
	Benefit claimants	NISRA - DfC		Y	Y

A brief summary of all the data currently held in the database is as follows:

### a. Crime and road traffic collisions

#### Crime

Crime data is sourced from Police UK. These figures are collated by the Home Office based on returns from the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI).

#### Road traffic collisions

**The Police Service of Northern Ireland** provides statistics on injury road traffic collisions. These are the main source of information used in Northern Ireland for monitoring and tracking trends on the number of persons killed, seriously and slightly injured as a result of collisions on our roads. In relation to statistics in this report all incidents need to have been reported to have occurred within the town centre boundary.

### b. Business data

#### Business Turnover

The annual turnover of businesses located in the town centre by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Industry Section. The data is sourced from **The Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry (NIABI)** which collects both financial and employment information from businesses and other establishments and covers about two thirds of the economy. This includes the production, construction, distribution and service industries in Northern Ireland but excludes public sector activity for the most part.

### Business Demography

The number of businesses located in the town centre by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Industry Section. The data is sourced from **the Inter-Departmental Business Register** contains information on all businesses in the UK which are VAT registered or operating a PAYE scheme. The register is the sampling frame used for the vast majority of government statistical surveys to businesses.

### Employee Jobs

The number of employee jobs located in businesses in the town centre by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Industry Section. The data is sourced from **the Census of Employment** is a two yearly survey of all employers in Northern Ireland which must be completed by law. Jobs are not presented as full time equivalents and an individual may

## c. Rates, vacant buildings and planning statistics

### Non Domestic Net Asset Values (rateable value)

This section provides a breakdown of the total rateable value of each non-domestic property by Primary Class Description. **Land & Property Services (LPS)** provides a valuation for all properties in Northern Ireland which are subject to rates. Non domestic property in Northern Ireland is assessed on the basis of its rental value (known as the **net annual value or NAV**). The current valuation list for non domestic properties became operative on 1 April 2015 and is based on rental values as at 1 April 2013.

### Planning Applications

This section shows the volume of planning applications received and decisions issued within the town centre boundary as reported by The Department for Infrastructure (formerly called was the Department of the Environment prior to 8 May 2016) .

### Vacancy Rates

The breakdown of non-domestic properties and vacancy rates supplied by **Land & Property Services (LPS)** and they are based on Property IDs identified through Pointer from the Town Centre Maps provided by Department for Communities.

## d. Town centre user details

### Demography

This section contains age and gender breakdowns of the population living within the given catchment area of a town centre. The population figures are then taken from mid-year estimates by Super Output Area (SOA) which is published on the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS). If the centroid of the SOA lies within a catchment boundary, the entire population of the SOA is allocated to a town centre.

For towns closer to the border with the Republic of Ireland (e.g. Newry), the population data will include data supplied by Central Statistics Office.

### **Benefit claimants**

This section contains benefit claimants living within the given catchment area of a town centre. Benefit data is held by Analytical Services Unit within the Department for Communities. All statistics are based on 100% extracts from the benefit administrative systems. Data is partially validated and is deemed of sufficiently high quality to report on. The postcodes within the catchments are then used to determine benefit claimants in each area.



## Annex 1 List of towns and cities contained in the Town Centre Database

Classification	Settlement Development Limit (SDL)	2011 Census Population
<b>Band A - Belfast</b>	Belfast City	280,211
<b>Band B - Derry City</b>	Derry City	83,125
<b>Band C - Large Town</b> (Population 18,000+)	Craigavon Urban Area - Craigavon, Portadown, Lurgan	64,193
	Bangor	61,401
	Lisburn City	45,410
	Ballymena	29,467
	Newtownards	28,039
	Carrickfergus	27,903
	Newry	26,893
	Coleraine	24,630
	Antrim	23,353
	Omagh Town	19,682
Larne	18,705	
<b>Band D - Medium Town</b> (Population 10,000 - 17,999)	Banbridge	16,653
	Armagh	14,749
	Dungannon	14,332
	Enniskillen	13,790
	Strabane	13,147
	Limavady	12,047
	Cookstown	11,620
	Holywood	11,332
	Downpatrick	10,874
	Ballymoney	10,393
<b>Band E - Small Town (accessible)</b> (Population 5,000 - 9,999) (within 20 minute drive-time to the town centre of a settlement with a population of at least of 10,000)	Ballyclare	9,919
	Comber	9,078
	Magherafelt	8,819
	Warrenpoint / Burren	8,721
	Portstewart	8,029
	Carryduff	6,947
	Donaghadee	6,869
	Portrush	6,442
	Dromore (Banbridge Lgd)	6,011
	Coalisland	5,700
	Randalstown	5,099
<b>Band E - Small Town (remote)</b> (Population 5,000 - 9,999) (NOT within 20 minute drive-time to the town centre of a settlement with a population of at least of 10,000)	Newcastle	7,743
	Kilkeel	6,521
	Ballynahinch	5,715
	Ballycastle	5,238
	Crumlin	5,099