

Men in Northern Ireland: Report 1 November 2004

Paula Devine, ARK

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ARK is a joint project between Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster. Its aim is to make material on the social and political life of Northern Ireland available to the widest audience.

www.ark.ac.uk

The Men's Project within Parents Advice Centre aims to increase awareness of the issues facing local men and boys and to promote their social inclusion.

www.mensproject.org

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All reports are available online on the ARK and Men's Project websites.

Men's vital statistics

Key facts

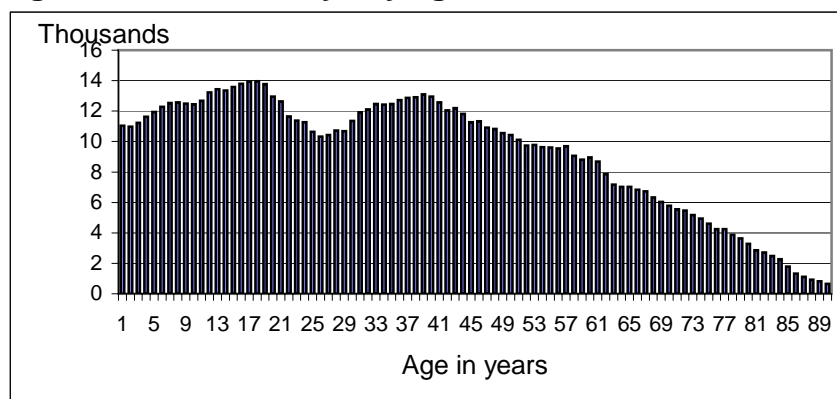
- Men constitute 48.9% of the population, but only 22.4% of people aged 90 years and over.
- Boys account for 51.9% of live births.
- At birth, the life expectancy for boys is 76.1 years.
- The major cause of death for men is ischaemic heart disease.

Data from the 2003 Mid Year Population Estimates indicate that there were 832,822 men in Northern Ireland, out of a total population of 1,702,628. Thus, men constituted 48.9% of the population.

However, there was some spatial variation. Within the Western Education and Library Board, 49.8% of the population was male, compared with only 46.9% within the Belfast Education and Library Board. A similar pattern is found when population figures within Health and Social Services Boards are examined: the Western Board contained the highest proportion of males (49.8%), while the Eastern Board contained the lowest proportion (48.0%).

Figure 1 shows the wide distribution of men and boys by age. The number of boys rises from birth (11,039 males) to age 17 (13,959 males). The numbers then drop until age 25 years, and then start to increase. However, there is a sharp decrease in the number of men in the population over the age of 40 years – for example, there are only 650 men aged 89.

Figure 1: Men and boys by age



Source: 2003 Mid Year Population Estimates, NISRA

Males outnumber females in the population from birth until age 24, and then from age 47-52 years. However, after retirement age, there is a sharp fall in the proportion of men. In particular, only 22.4% of the population aged 90 years and over are men (see Table 1).

Table 1: Number and proportion of males by age group

Age group	Number of males	Total population	% male
0-4	56,808	110,632	51.3
5-9	62,318	121,162	51.4
10-14	66,256	129,374	51.2
15-19	68,408	133,336	51.3
20-24	57,578	112,804	51.0
25-29	53,512	107,999	49.5
30-34	61,393	124,704	49.2
35-39	64,511	131,058	49.2
40-44	59,883	122,543	48.9
45-49	54,046	108,332	49.9
50-54	48,854	98,116	49.8
55-59	46,072	94,200	48.9
60-64	37,776	78,221	48.3
65-69	31,734	67,469	47.0
70-74	25,743	58,418	44.1
75-79	19,297	47,521	40.6
80-84	12,108	33,179	36.5
85-89	4,836	16,023	30.2
90+	1,689	7,537	22.4
All	832,822	1,702,628	48.9

Source: 2003 Mid Year Population Estimates, NISRA

Ethnic group

The 2001 Census of Population records information on ethnic group. The majority of males (99.1%) said that they were white. The next most frequent ethnic group is Chinese (2,193 males). Other ethnic groups with more than 250 males included mixed ethnic group (1,674 males), Traveller (894 males), Indian (839 males), Pakistani (378 males) and Black African (277 males).

Also based on the 2001 Census of Population, Table 2 shows that the majority of males were born in Northern Ireland, followed by England and the Republic of Ireland.

Table 2: Country of birth

	Number of males		Number of males
Northern Ireland	749,632	North America	2,761
England	32,200	Wales	1,751
Republic of Ireland	14,522	Africa	1,645
Scotland	8,406	Oceania (including Australia and New Zealand)	1,070
Asia	3,565	Eastern Europe	336
Other Western Europe	3,133	South America	140

Source: 2001 Census of Population

Live births

Registrar General data for live births show that in 2003, 11,244 boys were born, representing 51.9% of births. There has been a 25.5% drop in the number of boys born since 1922, when 15,098 boys were born (see Table 3). During the same time period, there has been a larger fall (27.9%) in the number of girls being born. Thus, in 1922, there were 1,046 male per 1,000 female live births, and this has increased to 1,081 male per 1,000 female live births in 2003.

Table 3: Live births

	Number of live births			Male per 1,000 female live births
	All	Male	Female	
1922	29,531	15,098	14,433	1,046
2003	21,648	11,244	10,404	1,081

Source: NISRA

Infant deaths

In 1922, there were 1,277 deaths of infant boys (that is, in the first year of life), which represented 56% of the 2,280 total number of infant deaths (see Table 4). By 2002, there had been an extremely large fall in the number of infant deaths to 100, of which boys made up 52%. This proportion is consistent with the proportion of live births of boys.

Table 4: Infant deaths

	Number of infant deaths		
	All	Male	Female
1922	2,280	1,277	1,003
2002	100	52	48

Source: NISRA

Still births

In 2002, there were 71 male still births (defined as 24+ weeks gestation), representing 58.2% of the total. This proportion is slightly less (54.5%) based on 28+ weeks gestation.

Life expectancy

Life expectancy at birth has increased significantly since the late 1800s (McWhirter, 2004). A boy born in 1890-92 could expect to live for 47 years (46 years for a girl). By 1980-2, these figures had risen to 69.17 years for a boy and 75.54 years for a girl. The most recent figures for 2003-4 indicate that life expectancy at birth for a boy is 76.1 years, and 80.5 years for a girl. By 2041-3, these figures are expected to rise to 81.4 years for boys and 85.4 years for girls. The differential between the life expectancy of men and women has fallen, from over 6 years in 1980-2 to 4.4 years in 2003-4. However, by 2041-3, there is still expected to be a differential of 4 years.

Deaths

In 2003, there were 6,920 male deaths in Northern Ireland, representing 47.8% of all deaths. There are significant variations in the age-specific death rates of men and women. Table 5 is based on data from 2002, and shows that from the age of 15 years, the proportion of male deaths per 1,000 is much higher than for women.

Table 5: Age-specific death rates (per 1,000 population)

	Age group											
	0	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+
Male	4.8	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.8	1.1	1.7	4.2	11.0	28.6	73.0	190.2
Female	4.5	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.5	1.0	2.5	6.5	17.8	51.8	164.7

Source: Registrar General Annual Report, 2002

The cause of death varies greatly between males and females. Where the cause of death is ischaemic heart disease, the age standardised death rates per 100,000 men aged 15-75 years is 134.1 – nearly three times the figure for women (49.8). Other causes of death where there is a higher rate for men include suicide and road traffic accidents (21.2 and 15.7 men per

100,000 respectively). In particular, death by suicide per 100,000 population aged 25-34 years is 42 for men and 10 for women. Data over time relating to cause of death indicate that the number of deaths from ischaemic heart disease has fallen since 1992, as well as the number of deaths through respiratory diseases (see Table 6). In contrast, the number of deaths due to cancer has increased, as well as the number of deaths due to suicide.

Table 6: Number of deaths among males by cause

Cause of death	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Ischaemic heart disease	2,365	2,323	2,205	2,175	2,049	2,064	1,996	1,936	1,771	1,693	1,569
Cerebrovascular disease	673	649	627	627	597	635	593	619	527	581	579
Other circulatory diseases	476	525	480	522	509	467	481	475	465	489	528
All circulatory diseases	3,514	3,497	3,312	3,324	3,155	3,166	3,070	3,030	2,763	2,763	2,676
Chronic lower respiratory diseases	401	432	371	363	428	366	380	440	372	345	301
Other respiratory diseases	724	812	713	770	801	756	767	899	956	546	505
All respiratory diseases	1,125	1,244	1,084	1,133	1,229	1,122	1,147	1,339	1,328	891	806
Cancer (malignant neoplasms)	1,835	1,875	1,854	1,841	1,903	1,846	1,921	1,793	1,755	1,934	1,908
Motor vehicle traffic accidents	110	110	119	104	92	111	96	98	98	91	91
Suicides	90	103	107	91	99	95	95	103	130	119	132
Undetermined	13	17	10	14	15	13	18	24	10	13	10
Other external causes of death	184	209	252	250	194	185	179	185	159	148	197
All external causes of death	397	439	488	459	400	404	388	410	397	371	430
All other causes of death	598	676	624	725	731	706	795	892	885	1,048	1,128
All causes	7,469	7,731	7,362	7,482	7,418	7,244	7,321	7,464	7,128	7,007	6,948

Source: NISRA

Glossary

Ischaemic heart disease is an inadequate flow of blood through the coronary arteries to the heart.

Age-specific death rates are the number of deaths in a specific age group per 1,000 (or 100,000) of the estimated population in that age group. Using these rates allows comparison of death rates between groups with different age structures.

Useful sources of information

McWhirter, Liz (ed.), 2004, 'Equality and Inequalities in Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland', Belfast: Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

www.equality.nisra.gov.uk The Equality Research and Information website produced by NISRA was designed with the aim of collating and disseminating statistics and research relevant to equality of opportunity and its promotion within the public sector. Data are disaggregated by all Section 75 equality groups, including gender.

www.nisra.gov.uk The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is Northern Ireland's official statistics organisation. The NISRA website contains a comprehensive range of official Northern Ireland statistics and survey information.

www.nisra.gov.uk/census/start.html Background information, as well as data, are available online for the 2001 Census of Population.

www.research.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/gender.pdf 'Gender Equality Indicators for Northern Ireland: A Discussion Document', by Esther Breitenbach and Yvonne Galligan, provides an overview of information on and patterns of gender inequality across a range of topics.