

TTP DEMOGRAPHIC DATA QUALITY REPORT

DATA SOURCE

DATA SUPPLIER:	General Register Office (GRO)
DESCRIPTION:	All marriages registered in Northern Ireland since 2005
COVERAGE:	Northern Ireland
NUMBER OF RECORDS:	Approximately 8,300 marriages each year http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/vital/marriages/marriages1887_2014.xls

DATA BACKGROUND

Registration of marriages in Northern Ireland is a legal requirement under the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003. Each party to an intended marriage in Northern Ireland must submit a separate completed marriage notice and relevant documents to the Registrar for the district in which the marriage will take place in advance of the intended date of marriage. A Marriage Schedule is then issued in advance of the marriage date. A marriage cannot take place in Northern Ireland unless Marriage Schedule has been issued.

All marriages are registered within 3 working days of the ceremony upon return of the Schedule. During registration all information is entered on to an electronic system. Validation checks are built into the system to help the Registrar with this process.

Information supplied at marriage registration is generally believed to be correct since wilfully supplying false information may render the informant liable to prosecution for perjury. Additional quality assurance checks are carried out by statisticians within NISRA. e.g. large differences in age, period of notice given before the ceremony and place of birth checked against country of birth to make sure they correspond.

Published marriage rates relate to the number of marriages solemnised and not to the number of persons married. The number of marriages relates to those registered in Northern Ireland, thus it does not include Northern Ireland residents who get married outside Northern Ireland, but does include non Northern Ireland residents getting married in Northern Ireland.

In view of the legal requirement to register all marriages, the coverage of data is complete for all marriages. The content of the information collected reflects what is possible legally and the ongoing needs of users.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Information available to the TTP for linkage purposes -

- Bride Name which includes Forename, Midname, Surname and Maiden Name
- Groom Name which includes Forename, Midname, Surname
- Current Address information for both the Bride and Groom
- Future Address information for both the Bride and Groom(non compulsory)
- Gender
- Date of birth for both the Bride and Groom

DATA QUALITY & PRE-PROCESSING

Record linkage is highly dependent on the quality of the data being linked. Many key variables can be presented quite differently between datasets as the information has been collected and recorded using different methods. This can greatly complicate record linkage unless understood ahead of time. Pre-processing can be used to standardise these variables into a consistent format prior to linkage.

NAME INFORMATION- This is required to register a marriage and therefore Bride's Forename and Surname is available for all records. Midname and Maiden Name are populated where applicable. Groom's Surname is available for all records.

- In some instances multiple names will be recorded as the Forename. This can be edited to leave the first name that appears as the Forename and any additional names as the Midname;
- Punctuation and characters which do not appear in the English alphabet (e.g. Á , %, \$...) can also appear in the name information. A function can be used to replace these with usable characters;

ADDRESS INFORMATION- All records have address information available for the Bride and Groom's current addresses. 57% Brides and 59% Grooms have also supplied future address information. It should be noted that for individuals who are usually resident outside of Northern Ireland, it will be unlikely to match these to another data set as the usual address will be outside Northern Ireland.

Around 5% of Bride and Groom address information do not contain a valid NI postcode. This is mostly down to persons not being NI residents.

- Postcode information is standardised prior to linkage.
- Both current and future addresses of Bride and Groom's may be used for matching.

GENDER- All records contain the gender of both the Bride and Groom.

- Gender information is standardised prior to linkage.

DATE OF BIRTH- All records contain the Date of Birth of both the Bride and Groom.

- Date of birth is provided in date-time format. It can be parsed into its constituent parts (day, month and year) prior to linkage

MATCHING METHODS

Using the demographic information provided the following matching can be undertaken-

- Person matching
- Address matching
- Associative matching -using bride/groom match to find spouse

PREVIOUS LINKAGE MATCH RATES

The marriage information provided by GRO is currently being matched to health data as part of the Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study (NILS). Match rates will be updated when they become available. More information can be found on the [NILS Metadata](#).

EVALUATION

The demographic data from the marriage registration for 2005 onwards, provided by GRO, is of very good quality and can be used for matching without extensive pre-processing. However, it should be noted that for a small number of record it will not be possible to match to another Northern Ireland dataset. These records relate to individuals usually resident in Northern Ireland who married and registered their marriage in another country. It



also relates to individuals from outside Northern Ireland who got married and registered their marriage in NI.

From March 2016 onwards, 'Future Address' will become a compulsory field which may further enhance the matchability of this data.