

PRESS INFORMATION NOTICE

8th January 2024

Intercensal population revisions: 2012 – 2021

The National Statistics Office (NSO) has carried out intercensal benchmark revisions of population and migration statistics for the time-series 2012 to 2021. These will be published on 26 January 2024.

Intercensal revisions are standard practice in demography and are conducted to align official statistics on population and migration between the two decennial Censuses. The Census of Population and Housing is a form of national stocktaking which provides a complete count of the population and living quarters. The most recent Census of Population and Housing was conducted in November 2021. Benchmarking against the Censuses ensures a continuous series that is aligned to the changes between the two time-points. The previous intercensal revisions were conducted in 2012 to align the 2006 – 2011 time-series between the Censuses conducted in 2005 and 2011.

Annual population and migration data published by the NSO is estimated using the Census of Population and Housing as a base. Several administrative sources are used to estimate, on an annual basis, the components of the population which are added and subtracted to the base population. These registers are not designed for direct compilation of population statistics in line with the required definitions, therefore complex estimation techniques are used to derive meaningful population statistics from these sources. Moreover, when no appropriate sources are available, auxiliary sources like surveys are used to address data gaps.

While the NSO makes every effort to ensure the production of demographic statistics is of high standard, it is possible that the sources and methods used may contain quality limitations and error margins. The intercensal revisions thus adjust for possible errors in the annual estimation of the population count arising from over or under coverage in administrative data sources and inaccuracies in the mathematical models used to estimate components not available in the administrative sources.

The revised total population counts from 2012 to 2021 were only marginally adjusted through the intercensal revisions. On average, the revised estimates counted 684 less persons annually when compared to the estimates produced prior to the 2021 Census. The components of population change were examined and analysed as part of the revisions process. Annual counts of resident live births and resident deaths were not revised, however fertility and mortality indicators estimated over the population were revised, since the computation of these estimates depend on population counts which were directly affected by these revisions.

The list below provides a summary of the data which were revised and will be published in the forthcoming release. Once published, the revised estimates supersede the previous estimates for the series from 2012 to 2021. Data for reference year 2022, which were estimated using the 2021 Census of Population and Housing, will also be included in the release.

- End of year and mid-year population estimates by age, sex, broad citizenship group and LAU1: 2012 – 2022.
- End of year and mid-year population estimates by sex, broad citizenship group and LAU2: 2012 – 2022.
- Population density by LAU and NUTS geographical breakdowns: 2012 – 2022.
- Migration flow estimates by age group, sex, and broad citizenship group: 2012 - 2022.
- Fertility indicators (total fertility rate and crude birth rate): 2012 – 2022.
- Mortality indicators (life expectancy and crude death rate): 2012 – 2022.

Since population-based surveys are benchmarked against estimates of the resident population, revisions of the social surveys will be conducted to align them to the revised time-series for 2012 to 2021. More details related to the revision of the social surveys will be communicated at a later date.

Further information can be made available upon written request to: nso@gov.mt.