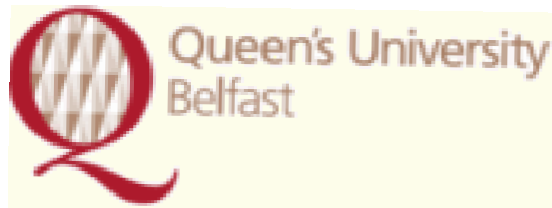


# Religious Affiliation in Northern Ireland 2001-2011: A Longitudinal Perspective

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NORTHERN IRELAND LONGITUDINAL STUDY  
RESEARCH SUPPORT UNIT



# Background

- Project is about changing religious affiliations and national identity in Northern Ireland
- Today we deal only with the first theme and only for the period 2001-2011 – later work will cover 1991-2011
- Religious affiliation is, of course, important in NI because of its political implications – demography = politics

# Background

- Overall population numbers are important as is geographical distribution (segregation)
- Despite this, there have been few/no studies of population dynamics using data for a large part of the population because the Census is cross-sectional and data have been unavailable
- The linkage of the Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study (NILS) to the 2001 and 2011 Censuses means it is now possible for the first time to analyse these issues

# Contents

- We consider two main themes in this presentation
- Explaining changing population numbers by religion 2001-2011: Components of change (natural increase, migration, changing religious affiliation)
- Analysing changing religious affiliation 2001-2001: Who and in what places?

# The Data

- The NLS is a 28% sample of the population (104/365 birthdates)
- For the first part of the presentation (components of change) we deal with all NLS members who had a Census record in 2001 or in 2011 (2001 n=447,536, 2011 n=475,176)
- For the second part of the presentation (changing religious affiliation) we deal with all NLS members aged => 18 in 2001 who had a Census record in 2001 and 2011 (n=264,610)

# Population accounts: How the numbers of Catholics and Protestants changed 2001-2011

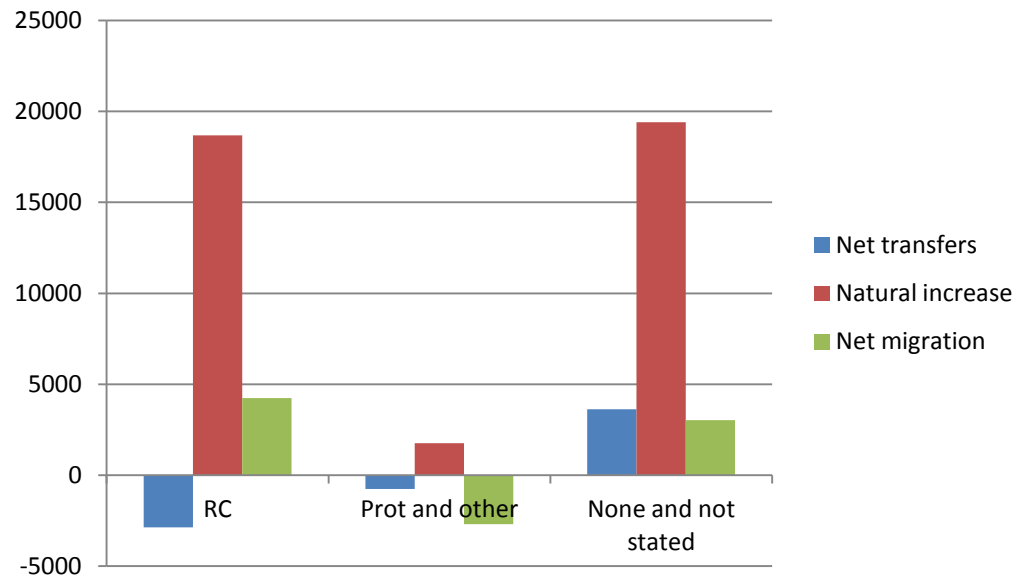
	2001	2001 PC	2011	2011 PC	Total difference
RC	179504	40	192799	41	13295
Prot and other	209486	47	205788	43	-3698
None and not stated	58546	13	76589	16	18043
Total	447536	100	475176	100	27640

## Method:

1. Add and subtract the effects of transfers between the three groups
2. Subtract deaths to NLS members registered between 2001 and 2011 from the 2001 population
3. Add births (population aged < 10) in the NLS in 2011
4. Subtract emigrants
5. Add immigrants and re-entrants
6. Remove double counting – some of the population aged < 10 might be immigrants or re-entrants

**Work in progress and details difficult to tie down**

# Population accounts: How the numbers of Catholics and Protestants changed 2001-2011



Nevertheless, the general picture is clear and makes sense given what is known about Northern Ireland

1. Natural increase is most important followed by migration and then transfers
2. Roman Catholics and 'Nones' have higher natural increase because they have relatively young age structures compared to Protestants (eg more births and fewer deaths)
3. Protestants tend on average to be older – more deaths and fewer births everything else being equal – and to lose also by net out-migration

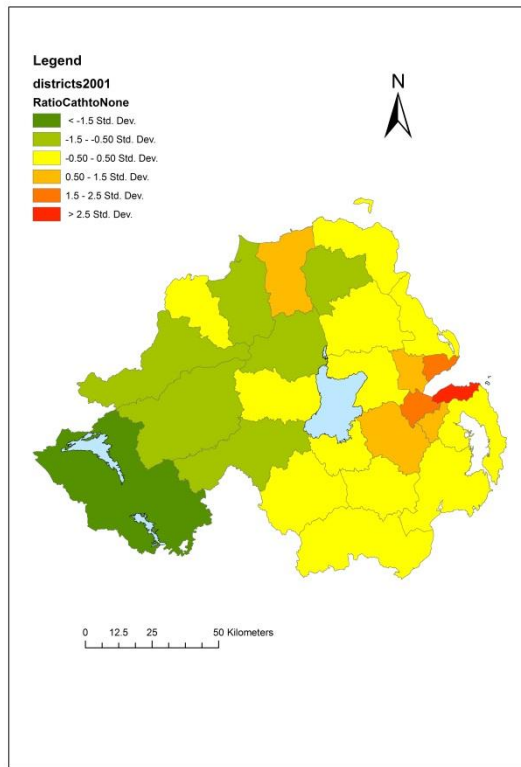
# Changing religious affiliation 2001-2011

- We now concentrate on religious affiliation using the smaller sample
- **Headline results**
  - There are considerable transfers between Protestant denominations
  - Taking Catholics and Protestants as two blocks, most transfers are to the ‘nones’
  - Protestants are more likely to transfer to ‘nones’ than Catholics but ‘nones’ are more likely to change their affiliation (back?) to a Protestant denomination
  - There are similarities but also differences in the ‘switching’ behaviour of Catholics and Protestants

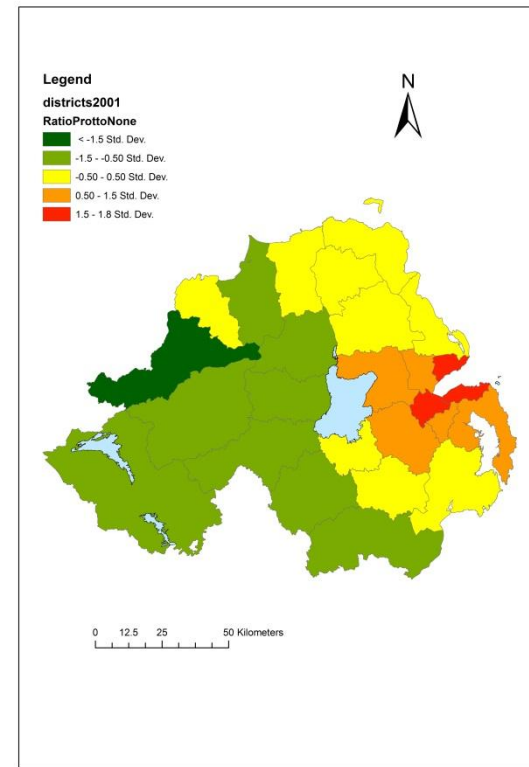


# The geography of denominational switching in Northern Ireland

Catholic 2001 to None 2011



Protestant 2001 to None 2011



	Odds ratio	Odds ratio	Odds ratio
	Seceding	Catholic to none	Prot to none
Catholic_01			
protestant_01	1.29		
reli_other01	1.99		
No quals			
degree01	1.15	0.97	1.25
ed_level3_01	1.18	0.92	1.23
ed_level2_01	1.16	0.98	1.22
ed_level1_01	1.12	0.95	1.16
AGEP0	0.99	1.00	0.99
Male			
Female	0.75	0.78	0.75
Employed			
selfemployed01	1.12	1.17	1.10
unemployed01	1.32	1.34	1.33
student01	0.73	1.17	0.76
Inactive01	1.34	1.42	1.26
retired01	1.20	1.29	1.17
Married			
single01	1.44	1.53	1.42
divorced01	1.74	2.01	1.56
widowed01	1.43	1.46	1.48
Private rent			
socialrent01	1.18	1.17	1.17
houseowner01	0.86	0.89	0.83
Not change address			
Change address	1.37	1.29	1.51
Rural 2001			
urban2001	1.36	1.08	1.19
intermed2001	1.13	1.40	1.39

### Similarities:

1. Not being married increases the chances of 'secession'
2. Age decreases the chance....
3. Living in a non-rural area increases the chances....
4. Changing address increases secession chances....
5. Being a social renter increases the chance, being a home owner decreases the chance

### And differences:

1. Protestant students show less chance of secession
2. Education has a statistically insignificant effect for Catholics
3. Being divorced has a bigger effect for Catholics

### And questions for further investigation:

1. Ecological effects are small but statistically significant
2. Both Protestant and Catholic odds of secession fall in more Catholic areas

# Discussion

- The main driver of change in the numbers and proportions of Catholics and Protestants is a differential in births and deaths
- This is a function of the older average age of the Protestant community which means they experience more deaths and fewer births
- This is followed by migration, and then by switching
- There is evidence of NI becoming more secular between 2001 and 2011
- The maps and models suggest that religious identities are more constant in rural areas but more liable to change in urban areas and the East

# Discussion

- Transfers from Catholics to the 'nones' tend to be more of a one-way street than from Protestants to 'nones' – between which there is greater circulation
- Certain common factors were associated with increased odds of declaring oneself to have no religion in 2011 for those who were Catholic or Protestant in 2001
- However, there were also some differences, suggesting that different processes might be at work by denomination
- Descriptive statistics show some return to religion for older age groups
- The effects of neighbourhood need further exploration

# Acknowledgement

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