

# Profiling the Ulster-Scots language in Northern Ireland

A research report was published on 29 July 2022 adding new evidence on socio-demographic, household, geographical and health factors in relation to Ulster-Scots language knowledge in Northern Ireland. This work was led by Queen's University and was supported by researchers in the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). The research was endorsed by the Department for Communities. The study used Census data via the Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study (NILS), a large sample (28%) of the Northern Ireland population.

The key objectives of the research were:

- To assess the socio-demographic, household and health associations of Ulster-Scots language knowledge in 2011; and
- To examine (model) the associations of socio-demographic, health and area characteristics with self-reported Ulster-Scots language knowledge in Northern Ireland in 2011.

## Key Findings

- Of those with Ulster-Scots language knowledge, nearly two-thirds (65.1%) reported living with others who had knowledge of Ulster-Scots language (36.1% with 1 other, 13.0% with 2 others and 16.0% with 3 or more others).
- **After taking account of other factors,** the main factors linked to having Ulster-Scots language knowledge in 2011 were: increasing age, in particular being older than 50 years, being male, others with Ulster-Scots language knowledge in the household, Protestant religion/religion of upbringing, Scottish and British national identities, degree-level qualification and residence in the north-east of Northern Ireland.
- **After taking account of other factors,** positive health was positively associated with Ulster-Scots language knowledge. Having a communication difficulty was negatively associated but having a hearing difficulty was positively associated with Ulster-Scots language knowledge.

## Impact and Next Steps

The analysis in this report is cross-sectional as the Ulster-Scots language question was only included in the Northern Ireland Census for the first time in 2011. This report, and a separate report published on the Irish language will assist with the interpretation of the results from the 2021 Census on the Ulster-Scots/Irish languages. The two research reports will be helpful to the development of strategies for the Ulster-Scots and Irish languages led by the Department for Communities (DfC).

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