

**Subject:**

**Circular Number: 2025/07**

**Guidance on the recording of country of birth and the use of the data collection form in the School Management System.**

**Date of Issue: 28 May 2025**

**Target Audience:**

- All EOTAS centres
- Principals and Boards of Governors of all grant-aided schools (excluding nursery schools);
- Education Authority;
- Governing Bodies Association
- Teacher Unions.
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
- Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta

**Summary of Contents:**

This Circular provides guidance on the recording of the country of birth.

**Enquiries:**

Any enquiries about the contents of this Circular should be addressed to:

Statistics and Research Team  
Department of Education  
Rathgael House  
43 Balloo Road, Rathgill  
BANGOR, BT19 7PR

**Governor Awareness:**  
Essential

**Status of Contents:**  
Information for schools

**Related Documents:**  
Not applicable

**Superseded Documents:**  
Not applicable

**Expiry Date:**  
Not applicable

**DE Website:**  
[www.education-ni.gov.uk](http://www.education-ni.gov.uk)

**Email:**  
[census@education-ni.gov.uk](mailto:census@education-ni.gov.uk)

## Introduction:

1. The first objective of this circular is to inform schools of the requirement to gradually populate the **Country of Birth** field in the School Management System (SMS). This will be phased in, starting now with any new entrants to schools, predominantly pupils in Year 1 and Year 8.
2. The second objective is to highlight the Data Collection Form that should be used by schools.

Note: The current School Management System is SIMS. A new SMS system, Bromcom, is being introduced. School data will be migrated from SIMS to Bromcom.

## Country of Birth

1. There is currently a Country of Birth field in the SMS. Schools are now being asked to populate this field for all new entrants. This will result in a gradual population of this field over the next few years. Country options are available as a drop down for selection.
2. The information is required to comply with introduction of public sector Ethnic Equality Monitoring (EEM). Ethnic Equality Monitoring (EEM) is the process of collecting personal ethnicity information from service users to identify and monitor inequalities, develop evidence-based policy and plan service delivery. The implementation of EEM remains one of the most important priorities for the racial equality sector in NI. It was also agreed by all departments in the Northern Ireland Executive as part of its Racial Equality Strategy in 2015 which included a commitment to explore the feasibility of introducing EEM in the public sector by 2025. <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/articles/ethnic-equality-monitoring>
3. The information may also be used by the department to inform the development of policy in relation to Newcomer Pupils and subsequent implementation and monitoring of the same.
4. This information will be collected as part of the annual school census data collection starting in October 2025.

## **Data Collection Sheet**

1. To assist schools with collecting Country of Birth information from parents/guardians, a Data Collection Sheet can be generated from the SMS. Guidance on generating the Data Collection Sheet report and updating pupil records in the SMS is available on C2k Exchange. The Blank Data Collection Form on C2k Exchange has also been updated to include Country of Birth.

Note: Country of Birth information recorded in the current SMS (SIMS) will migrate to the new SMS (Bromcom).

2. Any queries with regards to recording Country of Birth information in the SMS should be directed to the C2k Service Desk: 0800 0931 541 or via the Online Service Desk Portal (available through MySchool)