

Key findings

State of the nation

- There are 250,000 owned cats in Northern Ireland; the same as last year
- The age split of cat owners in Northern Ireland has moved away from older age groups; cat owners in Northern Ireland tend to be younger than the general population of Northern Ireland
- Cat owners in Northern Ireland are more likely to be female than male

The cat market

- Pedigrees now represent 30% of the total cat population in Northern Ireland; an increase from last year
- The popularity of buying cats has increased faster in Northern Ireland than all other devolved nations, with bought cats now representing 30% of all cats in Northern Ireland (15% in 2024)
- The gap between purchase and adoption is wider for cats in Northern Ireland acquired in the last 12 months, compared to the entire cat population in Northern Ireland

Veterinary care

- Neutering numbers have fallen in Northern Ireland to 80%

- Microchipping numbers have dropped in Northern Ireland to 60%. Compared to the UK as a whole (13%), significantly more owners in Northern Ireland have simply not thought about microchipping their cat
- Insurance and vaccination numbers have increased in Northern Ireland but still lag behind the UK as a whole

Cat care, welfare and behaviour

- Cat owners in Northern Ireland are researching the needs of their cats more, both before and after acquisition
- While owners in Northern Ireland still primarily turn to their vet for advice, this percentage has dropped to 56%
- Northern Ireland has the lowest rate of indoor-only cats of all the UK nations at just 28%

Companionship

- Companionship is still the leading reason that people in Northern Ireland choose to own a cat

To read the full **CATS Report UK** visit cats.org.uk/cats-report

