

ONS - Create a Custom Dataset Navigation Instructions

From the Office for National Statistics (ONS) website, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/> find the purple banner towards the top of the page.

Click the [Data and analysis from Census 2021](#) link.

The screenshot shows the ONS website header with the logo and navigation menu. The menu items are: Home, Business, industry and trade, Economy, Employment and labour market, People, population and community, and Taking part in a survey?. Below the menu is a search bar with the text 'Search for a keyword(s) or time series ID'. A purple banner below the search bar contains the text 'census 2021 Data and analysis from Census 2021', with the link 'Data and analysis from Census 2021' circled in red. Below the banner is a yellow box for 'Coronavirus (COVID-19)' and a section for 'Main figures - From our time series explorer'.

Employment	Inflation	GDP	
Employment rate Aged 16 to 64 seasonally adjusted (Nov 2022 - Jan 2023) 75.7% ↑ 0.3% on previous	Unemployment rate Aged 16+ seasonally adjusted (Nov 2022 - Jan 2023) 3.7% ↓ -0.3pp on previous	CPIH 12-month rate Feb 2023 9.2% ↑ 0.4pp on previous month	Quarter on Quarter Oct - Dec 2022 0.0% ↑ 0.2pp on previous quarter

On the next page, under the **Census 2021 data** heading, click on the [Create a custom dataset](#) link.

The screenshot shows the 'Census' section of the ONS website. It features a large image of three children eating ice cream. Below the image is the heading 'Census' and a short description: 'The census takes place every 10 years. It gives us a picture of all the people and households in England and Wales.' Below this is a grid of four sections: 'About the census', 'Census 2021 data', 'Census releases', and 'Geography'. The 'Census 2021 data' section contains a list of links: 'Get census data', 'Create a custom dataset' (circled in red), and 'Bulk data'. The 'About the census' section has a link 'About the census'. The 'Census releases' section has a link 'See what we've published, and our plans for the future.'. The 'Geography' section has a link 'Find Census 2021 data for different areas.'.

On the following page, there is a selection of population types to choose from, with a description of each.

Select the appropriate population type for your needs and click the green continue button at the bottom of the page.

Depending on your choice, a range of variables will be available to select from which you can build a dataset.

Select population type

- Households
Either one usual resident living alone or a group of people who share cooking and living facilities, where that group includes at least one usual resident.
- Household reference persons
A person who serves as a reference point, mainly based on economic activity, to characterise a whole household.
- Usual residents in communal establishments
A usual resident who lives in a place that provides managed full-time or part-time supervision of residential accommodation such as a university hall of residence, care home or prison.
- Usual residents in households
A person who usually lives in England or Wales, and in a household.
- Usual residents
The main population base for census statistics. It includes people usually living in England and Wales and excludes non-UK born short-term residents and visitors.

Continue

For the remainder of this example, we will be constructing an ethnic group by age custom dataset. We will be selecting usual residents, as this is the main population base for census statistics.

The next page will show you several options.

You will notice at towards the top of the page there is a green box showing how many areas are available, this may change throughout the process. The number will change depending on the adjustments made to the area type and the coverage that is selected.

When the variables are selected, this will show how many areas are available out of a total, because some of the areas will be unavailable due to statistical disclosure control measures to protect personal data.

We will now look at changing the area type; click on the **Change** link within the red circle in the image below.

Custom dataset

All 331 areas available

Variables

Population type	Usual residents	
Area type	Lower tier local authorities	Change
Coverage	England and Wales	Change

> [Variable and dataset information](#)

Add a variable

From here, you will be presented with a list of all available area types.

When selecting an area, you will see a description of that area. Choose the area type that you are interested in and then click the green continue button at the bottom of the page.

Area type

Select area type

- England and Wales (1)
- Countries (2)
- Regions (10)
- NHS England regions (8)
- Local health boards (8)
- Integrated care boards (43)
- Sub-integrated care board locations (107)
- Upper tier local authorities (174)
- Lower tier local authorities (331)
Lower tier local authorities provide a range of local services. There are 309 lower tier local authorities in England made up of 181 non-metropolitan districts, 59 unitary authorities, 36 metropolitan districts and 33 London boroughs (including City of London). In Wales there are 22 local authorities made up of 22 unitary authorities.
- Westminster Parliamentary constituencies (573)
- Electoral wards and divisions (7,638)
- Middle layer Super Output Areas (7,264)
- Lower layer Super Output Areas (35,672)
- Output Areas (188,880)

Continue

Next, we will look at changing the coverage. By default, the coverage will be set to England and Wales. Click on the **Change** link in the “coverage” row to begin.

The first option will select all your chosen area type within England and Wales. To narrow the coverage, you can select by searching for the name of the specific location you want, or by selecting all areas within a larger area.

Coverage

Select the geography you would like your dataset to cover

- All lower tier local authorities within England and Wales
- Search for lower tier local authorities by name
- Select all lower tier local authorities within a larger area

Continue

For this example, if you select **“Search for lower tier local authorities by name,”** a search box will appear.

Type in the area you are looking for and click search.

A list of results will appear with an add button. When you have found your desired area, click the grey “add” button and your selection will be moved into the “added areas section.”

You can use this function multiple times to add further areas to your dataset.

Coverage

Select the geography you would like your dataset to cover

- All lower tier local authorities within England and Wales
- Search for lower tier local authorities by name

Enter an area name or code

Results

Portsmouth

Areas added

Fareham X Portsmouth X

- Select all lower tier local authorities within a larger area

Continue

If instead you choose **“Select all lower tier local authorities within a larger area”** you will be presented with a dropdown box and a search box.

The dropdown box will allow you to select a larger area type from where the area type you've selected can be found.

For this example, we will be using regions. You can use the search box here to find a specific region. Using the add button will then include that region in your dataset.

You can repeat this process to add multiple regions or larger areas. Once done, click the continue button.

Coverage

Select the geography you would like your dataset to cover

- All lower tier local authorities within England and Wales
- Search for lower tier local authorities by name
- Select all lower tier local authorities within a larger area

Larger area type

For example, a region or local authority

Regions

Enter an area name or code

East Midlands

Search

Results

East Midlands

Remove

Area added

East Midlands

Continue

Now that you have adjusted the geography by area type and coverage to meet your needs and preferences, you can begin to start adding the variables you wish to include in your dataset.

To begin, start by clicking the green “**Add Variable**” button as shown on the screenshot below:

Custom dataset

All 35 areas available

Variables

Population type	Usual residents	
Area type	Lower tier local authorities	Change
Coverage	East Midlands	Change

> [Variable and dataset information](#)

Add a variable

From here, you will be presented to a page that gives you the option to either **Search for a variable** of your choice or choose to **Browse available variables**.

Add variables

Data in some geographic areas may not be available if you increase the number of variables.

Select to search or browse variables

Search for a variable

Enter a variable name

▼ **Ethnic group**

The ethnic group that the person completing the census feels they belong to. This could be based on their culture, family background, identity or physical appearance. Respondents could choose one out of 19 tick-box response categories, including write-in response options.

Browse available variables

Continue

If you choose to search for a variable by name, after clicking the search button any relevant variable should appear with a grey “add” button next to it.

You can see a description of what this variable covers by clicking on the blue arrow next to the name. This has been highlighted on the Image above.

Alternatively, you can browse through the list of all available variables. Upon selecting this, a list of variables in alphabetical order will be visible. From here, the process of selecting and adding a variable you want is the same.

To proceed with your first variable, click continue. At this stage, it is also possible to add more than one variable should you choose to do so.

Add variables

Data in some geographic areas may not be available if you increase the number of variables.

Select to search or browse variables

Search for a variable

Browse available variables

> Age	Add
> Age of arrival in the UK	Add
> Country of birth	Add
> Country of birth (extended)	Add
> Disability	Add
> Distance travelled to work	Add
> Economic activity status	Add
> Economic activity status last week	Add
> Employment history	Add
> Ethnic group	Add

After you have added your first variable, you will be presented with a page that displays a summary of your current dataset.

Next, you can either download your current dataset, choose to add further variables (subject to disclosure control), or choose to remove a variable you no longer need.

If you wish to add or remove variables, then click on the “**Add or remove variable**” button towards the end of your current dataset summary.

If you are ready to download the dataset, you can select the green “**Get the data**” button.

All 35 areas available

Variables

Population type	Usual residents	
Area type	Lower tier local authorities	Change
Coverage	East Midlands	Change
Ethnic group	8 categories	Change

- Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh
- Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African
- Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups
- White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British
- White: Irish
- White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other White
- Other ethnic group
- Does not apply

> Variable and dataset information

Add or remove variable

Get the data

To add another variable, repeat the process on pages 6-7.

Please note that as you add more variables, the number of areas available that you can view this dataset for may be reduced, due to disclosure control measures that are in place to [protect personal data](#). You may see a message like the one below:

Add or remove variables

26 out of 35 areas available

[Protecting personal data](#) will prevent 9 areas from being published.

> How to improve your results

Variables added

Age ×

Ethnic group ×

Religion ×

If this happens you can still download the dataset for the available areas, or you can choose to remove a variable or reduce the number of categories within a specific variable to enable you to download the data for all the areas you require.

In the example below, by only including the variables “age” and “ethnic group” the data is not disclosive at the geography selected, so it is possible to download the data for all the required areas.

All 35 areas available

Variables

Population type	Usual residents	
Area type	Lower tier local authorities	Change
Coverage	East Midlands	Change
Age	6 categories	Change
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Aged 15 years and underAged 16 to 24 yearsAged 25 to 34 yearsAged 35 to 49 yearsAged 50 to 64 yearsAged 65 years and over	
Ethnic group	8 categories	Change
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Asian, Asian British or Asian WelshBlack, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or AfricanMixed or Multiple ethnic groupsWhite: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or BritishWhite: IrishWhite: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other WhiteOther ethnic groupDoes not apply	

To **remove a variable**, simply click on the small “x” that is displayed next to the label of the selected variable and click continue. This is shown highlighted on the image below:

Add or remove variables

Data in some geographic areas may not be available if you increase the number of variables.

Variables added

Ethnic group **x**

To provide more or less detail for any variable you have included, select 'Change' next to that variable.

Variables

Population type	Usual residents	
Area type	Lower tier local authorities	Change
Coverage	East Midlands	Change
Age	6 categories <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aged 15 years and under• Aged 16 to 24 years	Change

The Age variable has a range of detail available, from 2 to 101 categories, depending on the geography and other variables included in your dataset.

Age

Select the number of categories

2 categories

- Aged 49 years and under
- Aged 50 years and over

3 categories

- Aged 15 years and under
- Aged 16 to 64 years
- Aged 65 years and over

3 categories

- Aged 15 years and under
- Aged 16 to 49 years
- Aged 50 years and over

3 categories

- Aged 24 years and under
- Aged 25 to 49 years
- Aged 50 years and over

- Aged 44 years
- Aged 45 years
- ...
- Aged 88 years
- Aged 89 years
- Aged 90 years and over

[Show all 91 categories](#)

101 categories

- Aged under 1 year
- Aged 1 year
- Aged 2 years
- ...
- Aged 48 years
- Aged 49 years
- Aged 50 years
- ...
- Aged 98 years
- Aged 99 years
- Aged 100 years and over

[Show all 101 categories](#)

Continue

Select the level of detail you are interested in, and click the green **Continue** button.

The dataset summary page will be updated to show if all areas are still available or not. You can decide to keep the changes or make further changes to the level of detail for each variable as required.

Custom dataset

All 35 areas available

Variables

Population type	Usual residents	
Area type	Lower tier local authorities	Change
Coverage	East Midlands	Change
Age	101 categories	Change
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aged under 1 year• Aged 1 year• Aged 2 years	

Once you have chosen the geography and variables you require, you can download the dataset you have just created. To do this, select the green “**Get the data**” button at the end of the data summary page. This will then bring you to a page where you can select your format for downloading the data.

Get the data

If you are not seeing an **xlsx** download file, please [refresh the page](#). If the number of rows within the data set exceeds 1 million, the **xlsx** download file will not be available.

Download the data in the following formats

- XLSX format (53.0 KB)
Dataset and supporting information
- CSV format (145.2 KB)
Machine readable dataset
- TXT format (5.1 KB)
Supporting information
- CSVW format (3.8 KB)
Machine readable supporting information

 **Download**

Click the green “**Download**” button to download the file. Alternatively, you can get a unique link to the dataset to share or use to return to your dataset at a later date.

Dataset link

Bookmark or copy the link to return to this dataset

ons.gov.uk/datasets/create/filter-outputs/3c3c3574-259e-45f7-845d-8a10d694ab30

Copy link