

Article

Families and Households in England and Wales: 2011

We analyse families across England and Wales by marital status, living arrangements, households and children at national, regional and local levels. Comparisons are made with the 2001 Census and the Labour Force Survey (LFS), where possible. Main findings show a decrease in the number of married persons, whereas the number of persons cohabiting (both same and opposite sex couples) has increased.



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1. Correction

04 March 2014 14:40

A small error has been identified in the published short story on families and households in England and Wales; 2011. The Cohabitation figure for 2001 should state 4.0 million and not 4.1 million as appeared in the key points and section on cohabitation.

ONS apologises for any inconvenience.

2. Foreword

This analysis presents the current picture for families in England and Wales using 2011 Census data; analyses of marital status, living arrangements, households and children are reported at national, regional and local levels

3. Key points

- In 2011, 47 per cent (21.2 million) of the usually resident adult population¹ of England and Wales were married; this was a decrease from 51 per cent (21.2 million) in 2001
- In 2011 cohabiting people (both same and opposite sex couples) accounted for 12 per cent (5.3 million) of the adult population living in households in England and Wales, compared to 10 per cent (4.0 million) in 2001
- The total number of households² in 2011 was 23.4 million, an increase of 7.9 per cent from 21.7 million in 2001. In 2011 there were 14.4 million one family households^{3,4}, 7.1 million one person households and 1.9 million 'other households'. The largest percentage increase was for 'other households' (including households of unrelated adults or more than one family), which rose 28 per cent between 2001 and 2011
- As a proportion of all households, one person households aged 65 and over have decreased by 2.8 percentage points between 2001 and 2011; those aged 16-34 declined by 2.5 percentage points; however those aged 35-64 increased by 6 percentage points
- Of the 23.4 million households in England and Wales, 1.7 million (7.2 per cent) consisted of lone parents with dependent children; this increased from 2001 when comparable figures were 1.4 million (6.5 per cent). Around 9 in every 10 lone parent households were headed by a woman, both nationally and across English regions and Wales
- Over half (54 per cent) of the 14.4 million one family households⁴ in England and Wales consisted of married couples (7.7 million) or civil partners (32 thousand). Of these, 46 per cent had dependent children living in the household
- Between 2001 and 2011 the number of married or civil partnered one-family households declined by 2 per cent; cohabiting family households increased by 28 per cent; lone parent family households increased by 21 per cent.
- Compared to all other English regions and Wales, London is distinct as it had a higher proportion of its adult population that are single or in a civil partnership. London also had the highest proportion of lone parent households with dependent children and the highest proportion of families with at least one dependent child. Conversely, London had the lowest proportion of older people living alone. This corresponds to the younger age structure of the population in London

Notes for key points

1. The usually resident population refers to people who live in the UK for 12 months or more, including those who have been resident for less than 12 months but intend to stay for a total period of 12 months or more. The population base for the 2011 Census was the usually resident population of England and Wales, defined as anyone who, on the night of 27 March 2011, was either (a) resident in England and Wales and who had been resident, or intended to be resident in the UK for a period of 12 months or more, or (b) resident outside the UK but had a permanent England and Wales address and intended to be outside the UK for less than a year. Those aged 16 and over will be referred to throughout this report as the adult population
2. Definition of a household: one person living alone; or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room or sitting room or dining area. The household population excludes those persons living in a communal establishment
3. Definition of a family: a married, civil partnered or cohabiting couple with or without child(ren), or a lone parent with at least one child. Child(ren) may be dependent or non-dependent
4. Family households include one family only. Multiple family households are included in 'other households'

4. Animated YouTube video

A podcast explaining this analysis using audio commentary and graphical animations is available on the [ONS YouTube channel](#).

5. Introduction

This analysis summarises the first data on families and households from the 2011 Census for England and Wales, conducted on 27 March 2011. This report is derived from the census releases 2.1 (11 December 2012) and 2.2 (30 January 2013), consisting of univariate tables. Comparisons are made with the 2001 Census where possible¹, and with other relevant data sources, notably the Labour Force Survey (LFS)². The LFS provides regular reports on families and households, but the census provides more robust estimates down to lower levels of geography enabling us to understand similarities and differences in the population's characteristics locally, regionally and nationally. This information is used for planning and delivering services, for example information about household size is used for housing provision, and data on children is used for education planning.

The resident population³ of England and Wales grew by 4.0 million (7.8 per cent)¹ between the censuses of 2001 and 2011. This population consists of persons in households and persons in communal establishments⁴. Table 1 summarises the usually resident population^{3,5} of England and Wales for 2001 and 2011. The household population is the resident population excluding those living in communal establishments. The household population grew by 7.8 per cent.

A household was defined in the 2011 Census as one person living alone, or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room, sitting room or dining area. Table 1 divides the household population into one person households, one family households and other households. A family consists of at least two people and is defined as an adult married, civil partnered or cohabiting couple with or without children (including step children), or a lone parent with at least one child (including step children). One family households had the smallest percentage increase between 2001 and 2011 (5.3 per cent).

'Other households' are made up of people who are not living in one family households, even though they may be related (for example siblings), or consist of more than two generations. This category includes multi-generational families and unrelated persons sharing a household (such as students or others flat or house sharing); this category had the largest increase in 2011 compared to 2001 (28 per cent) ⁶.

Table 1: Overview of usually resident population, households and families, England and Wales, 2001 and 2011

	Thousands			
	2001 Census total	2011 Census total	Numerical change 2001-2011	Per cent change 2001-2011
Usual resident population	52,042	56,076	4,034	7.8
Persons in communal establishments	934	1,005	71	7.6
Persons in households	51,108	55,071	3,964	7.8
Persons in households aged 16 and over	40,667	44,533	3,867	9.5
Usually resident population aged 16 and over	41,553	45,497	3,944	9.5
Households, all types	21,660	23,366	1,706	7.9
One person households	6,503	7,067	565	8.7
Family households	13,716	14,449	733	5.3
Other households	1,442	1,850	408	28.3
Families in households	14,682	15,764	1,082	7.4

Sources: 2001 Census of England and Wales, 2011 Census of England and Wales Note: The 2001 Census household definition differed slightly from the 2011 definition and was: one person living alone, or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address with common housekeeping - sharing either a living room or sitting room, or at least one meal a day.

The 2011 Census tables used in this section are KS102 (Age structure), KS103 (Marital and civil partnership status), KS104 (Living arrangements), KS105 (Household composition), KS405 (Communal establishment residents), QS114 (Household composition – people) and QS118 (Families with dependent children).

Notes for introduction

1. This analysis uses the 2001 Census estimates of population to ensure consistency with the population characteristics reported, such as living alone. The 2001 Census estimates sum to a total of 52.0 million. The statistical bulletins use the 2001 mid-year estimates (MYEs) for the 2001 population. Using the 2001 MYE figure of 52.4 million for the resident population of England and Wales, the population grew by 3.7 million (7.1 per cent) between 2001 and 2011.
2. The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a sample survey primarily used to provide information on the UK labour market. The Labour Force Survey is a household survey of people in the UK. It covers people in private households, NHS accommodation and students in halls of residence whose parents live in the UK. Such students are included through proxy interviews with their parents. However people in other communal establishments such as prisons are excluded.
3. The usually resident population refers to people who live in the UK for 12 months or more, including those who have been resident for less than 12 months but intend to stay for a total period of 12 months or more. The population base for the 2011 Census was the usually resident population of England and Wales, defined as anyone who, on the night of 27 March 2011, was either (a) resident in England and Wales and who had been resident, or intended to be resident in the UK for a period of 12 months or more, or (b) resident outside the UK but had a permanent England and Wales address and intended to be outside the UK for less than a year.
4. A communal establishment is an establishment providing managed residential accommodation. 'Managed' in this context means full-time or part-time supervision of the accommodation. Communal establishments include sheltered accommodation units, hotels, guest houses, B&Bs and inns and pubs, and all accommodation provided solely for students (during term-time). More information is available in the 2011 [Census Definitions](#).
5. The usually resident population will be referred to throughout this report as the resident population.
6. Some numbers and percentages throughout this report may not sum due to rounding.

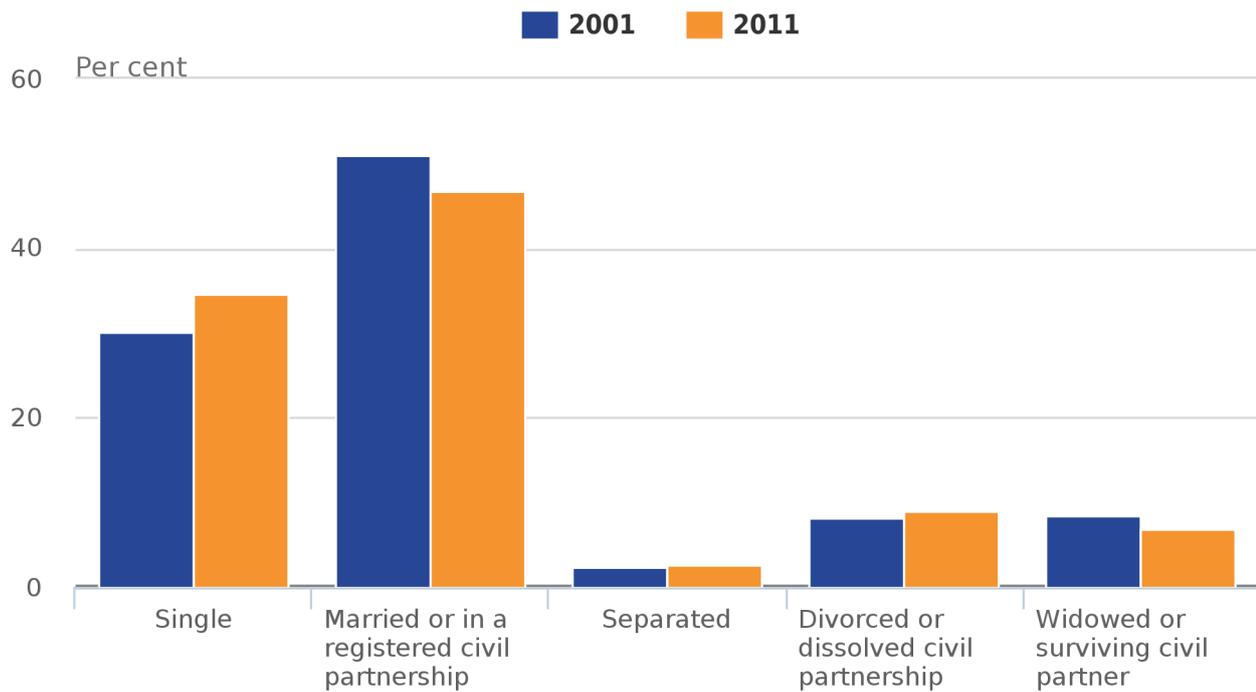
6. Marital and civil partnership status

A key change since 2001 is the introduction of civil partnerships in England and Wales in 2005. In the 2011 Census of England and Wales the largest marital and civil partnership status group was those who were married, forming 47 per cent (21.2 million) of the resident adult¹ population². This was a decrease of four percentage points by comparison with the 2001 Census estimate of 51 per cent (21.2 million)³ (see Figure 1), even though there was a numerical rise of 38 thousand over the period 2001-2011. A recent ONS publication⁴ (February 2012) has described the declining marriage rates since the 1970s in detail, providing analysis of the underlying reasons, including people choosing to cohabit rather than enter into marriage.

In 2011 there were 105 thousand (0.2 per cent) adults in civil partnerships; this figure cannot be compared with 2001 as the legal state of civil partnership was only introduced in 2005.

Of all the marital status categories, the greatest increase between 2001 and 2011 was for single people (those who have never married or entered a civil partnership). These numbered 15.7 million (35 per cent) in 2011, a rise from 12.5 million (30 per cent) in 2001. The only category to show a numerical decline was widowed or surviving civil partner (falling by 8.8 per cent between 2001 and 2011); a possible explanation for this may lie with rising [life expectancy](#), especially for males.

Figure 1: Marital and civil partnership status of the resident adult population in England and Wales, 2001 and 2011



Source: Census - Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Civil partnerships were introduced in 2005; therefore, there are no civil partnership data for 2001.
2. In 2011 divorced includes dissolved civil partnerships.
3. In 2011 widowed includes surviving civil partners.
4. Separated is not a legal marital or civil partnership status; individuals in this category are still legally married or in a civil partnership.
5. Marital and civil partnership categories do not include cohabitation; accordingly those cohabiting may be categorised as single, separated, divorced or dissolved civil partnership, widowed or surviving civil partner or married or in a registered civil partnership.

Table 2 summarises the proportions of the adult population in each marital status category for English regions and Wales for 2001 and 2011. The region with the highest proportion of its resident adult population married was the East of England, for both 2001 and 2011, while the lowest proportion was in London for both censuses. This may be partly due to the lower average age in London in 2011 (median age for London is 33 years compared to 39 for England and Wales) as younger people are less likely to be married; additionally the [average age at marriage](#) increased overall between 2001 and 2011. However, the highest proportion of the resident adult population in civil partnerships in 2011 was found in London, with the lowest in the West Midlands. London had the highest proportion of single adults for both censuses, while Wales and the North East had the highest proportion of widowed people. For divorced people, there were modest proportional increases for all regions and Wales, with the exception of London which remained stable at a lower level than other regions.

Table 2: Percentage of resident adult population by marital and civil partnership status in English regions and Wales, 2001 and 2011

2001	Single	Married	Civil Partnerships	Separated	Divorced	Widowed	Total
North East	29.0	50.8		-2.4	8.5	9.3	100
North West	30.1	49.8		-2.5	8.6	9.0	100
Yorkshire and the Humber	28.6	51.9		-2.3	8.5	8.7	100
East Midlands	27.7	53.4		-2.3	8.2	8.4	100
West Midlands	28.8	52.4		-2.3	7.8	8.7	100
East of England	27.1	54.3		-2.3	8.2	8.1	100
London	41.2	41.7		-2.9	7.4	6.7	100
South East	28.4	53.0		-2.3	8.2	8.1	100
South West	26.8	53.3		-2.2	8.8	8.9	100
Wales	28.0	52.0		-1.9	8.7	9.4	100
England and Wales	30.1	50.9		-2.4	8.2	8.4	100
2011	Single	Married	Civil Partnerships	Separated	Divorced	Widowed	Total
North East	34.4	45.6	0.2	2.6	9.4	7.8	100
North West	35.6	44.8	0.2	2.7	9.3	7.5	100
Yorkshire and the Humber	33.9	46.8	0.2	2.6	9.3	7.2	100
East Midlands	32.3	48.5	0.2	2.6	9.3	7.2	100
West Midlands	33.7	47.5	0.2	2.6	8.7	7.3	100
East of England	31.1	49.9	0.2	2.5	9.2	7.0	100
London	44.1	39.8	0.4	3.2	7.4	5.0	100
South East	31.9	49.3	0.2	2.5	9.1	6.9	100
South West	31.1	49.0	0.2	2.3	9.8	7.5	100
Wales	33.5	46.6	0.2	2.2	9.7	7.9	100
England and Wales	34.6	46.6	0.2	2.6	9.0	7.0	100

Sources: 2001 Census of England and Wales, 2011 Census of England and Wales

The 2011 Census table used in this section is KS103 (Marital and civil partnership status).

Notes for marital and civil partnership status

1. The adult population refers to those aged 16 and over.
2. The usually resident population refers to people who live in the UK for 12 months or more, including those who have been resident for less than 12 months but intend to stay for a total period of 12 months or more. The population base for the 2011 Census was the usually resident population of England and Wales, defined as anyone who, on the night of 27 March 2011, was either (a) resident in England and Wales and who had been resident, or intended to be resident in the UK for a period of 12 months or more, or (b) resident outside the UK but had a permanent England and Wales address and intended to be outside the UK for less than a year. Those aged 16 and over will be referred to throughout this report as the adult population.
3. While the number of married people in both 2001 and 2011 was 21.2 million, the percentage was lower in 2011 due to the overall increase in the adult population.
4. ONS report [Marriages in England and Wales, 2010](#).

7. Living arrangements - Cohabitation

In 2011, the total household population¹ aged 16 and over was 44.5 million (see table 1); of these, 25.7 million (58 per cent) were living as part of a couple, either married, civil partnered or cohabiting². Although the number has increased from 2001 they are a smaller proportion of all adults: in 2001 there were 24.6 million (61 per cent) people living as part of a couple. However, when cohabiting couples alone are considered, there has been an increase since 2001: in 2011 cohabiting couples accounted for 12 per cent (5.3 million) of the adult household population in England and Wales, compared to 9.8 per cent (4.0 million) in 2001.

The census figures are consistent with the proportion for the whole of the UK in a recent publication³ by ONS, which analysed LFS survey data⁴. This publication estimated a cohabiting population of 5.9 million people for the UK in 2012, forming 12 per cent of the adult population. This had increased from 6.5 per cent in 1996. The report noted that cohabitation was the fastest growing family type.

Estimates for cohabiting people in English regions and Wales are presented in figure 2 for 2001 and 2011. There have been increases for all areas, though London has increased only slightly; in 2001 it had one of the highest proportions of cohabiting people and now has the lowest in England and Wales. Broadly, this rise in cohabitation is likely to be the result of a combination of people cohabiting as a prelude to marriage or civil partnership, people cohabiting long-term without formally committing to marriage and also those cohabiting following divorce or dissolution. Table 3 presents the ten local authority areas with the highest and lowest proportions of those cohabiting in the adult household population; local authorities with the highest proportions cohabiting are found across much of England, although eight of the ten lowest proportions are London boroughs. The remaining two, Chiltern and East Dorset, both have high [median ages \(458.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) (44 and 49 respectively); these higher [median ages](#) may depress the percentage of those cohabiting as the proportion married there is quite high (both 64 per cent of the adult population).

Further analyses by age and gender following later census releases may reveal underlying structural reasons for regional and local authority variations.

Figure 2: Percentage of people who are cohabiting in the resident adult household population in English regions and Wales, 2001 and 2011



Source: Census - Office for National Statistics

Table 3: Percentage of cohabiting people in the resident adult population in local authorities, 2011

Highest 10 LAs	Per cent of adult resident population cohabiting	Lowest 10 LAs	Per cent of adult resident population cohabiting
Norwich	16.3	Harrow	5.7
Brighton and Hove	15.9	Redbridge	6.9
Lincoln	15.8	Newham	7.5
Corby	15.5	Brent	7.6
Kingston upon Hull	15.4	Barnet	8.3
Ipswich	15.2	Enfield	8.4
Islington	15.2	Chiltern	8.8
Wandsworth	14.9	East Dorset	8.8
Hastings	14.6	Ealing	8.9
Cannock Chase	14.6	Hillingdon	9.1

Source: 2011 Census of England and Wales

Notes for living arrangements - Cohabitation

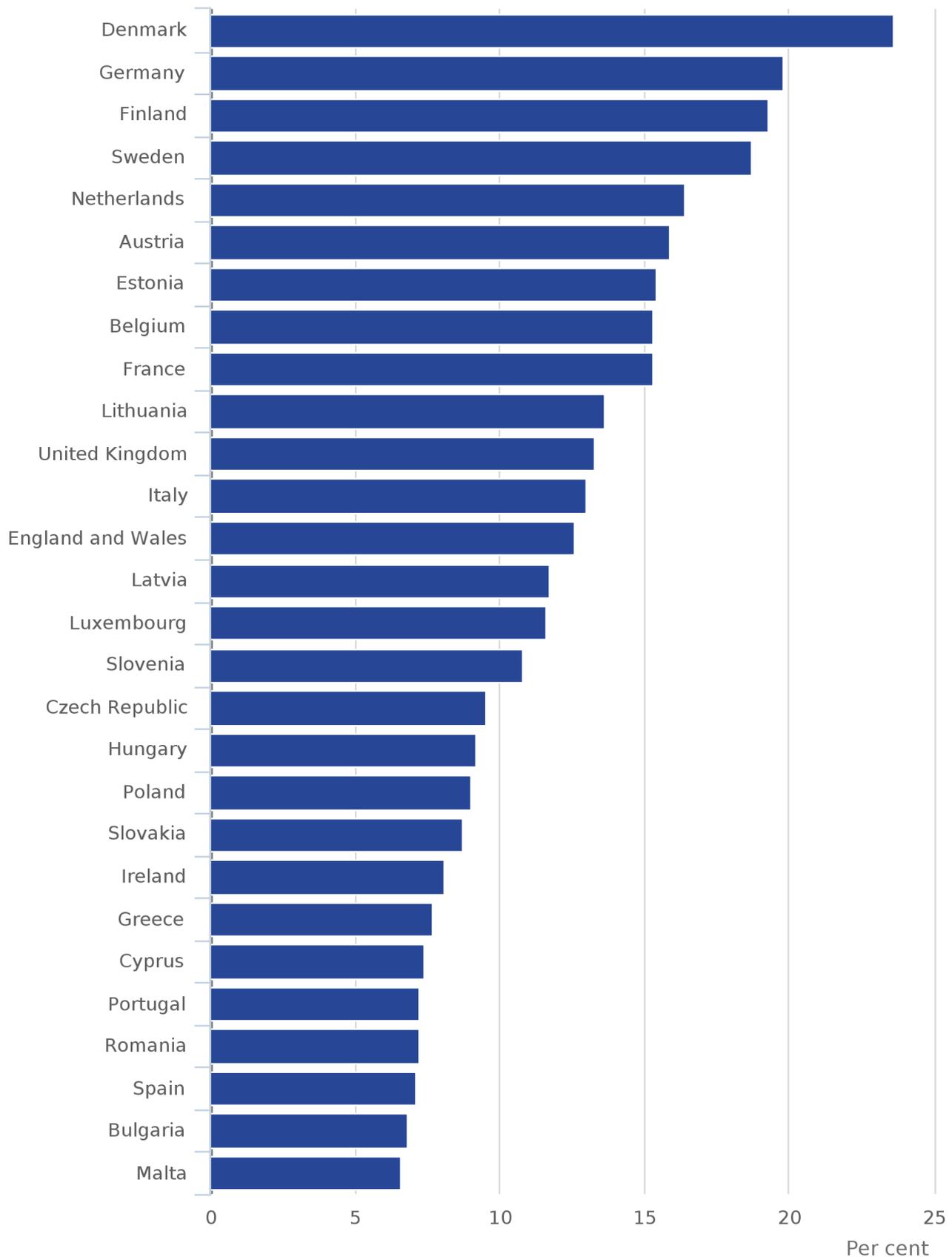
1. Definition of a household: one person living alone; or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room or sitting room or dining area. The household population excludes those persons living in a communal establishment.
2. Cohabitation is considered to be living with a partner (opposite or same sex), but not married to or in a civil partnership with them. It includes people who may still be legally married or in a civil partnership but who are now living with a new partner.
3. ONS Short Report [Cohabitation in the UK](#) in 2012.
4. The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a sample survey primarily used to provide information on the UK labour market. The Labour Force Survey is a household survey of people in the UK. It covers people in private households, NHS accommodation and students in halls of residence whose parents live in the UK. Such students are included through proxy interviews with their parents. However people in other communal establishments such as prisons are excluded.

8. Living arrangements - Living alone

There were 23.4 million households¹ in England and Wales in 2011, with an average of 2.4 residents per household. Some 7.1 million (30 per cent) consisted of one person households. This is an absolute increase from 2001, when there were 21.7 million households, with 6.5 million (30 per cent) consisting of one person households. Therefore the relative proportion of one person households has not increased.

Comparisons with other EU countries are shown in figure 3 for the usually resident population. In 2011 16 per cent (7.1 million) of the resident adult population of England and Wales (45.5 million) were living alone; this is 13 per cent of the total resident population (56.1 million). Denmark has the highest proportion, with 24 per cent of its total resident population living alone; England and Wales ranks between Italy and Latvia. The entire United Kingdom (UK) is included for comparative purposes. Broadly, countries with a higher percentage of usual resident population living alone compared to England and Wales tend to be northern or western European countries. Countries with lower percentages than England and Wales tend to be eastern or southern European countries. Eurostat data² for people aged 65 and over living alone show a broadly similar ranking to that in figure 3.

Figure 3: Percentage of usually resident population living alone in EU27 countries, 2011



Source: Census - Office for National Statistics, Eurostat

Notes:

1. Data for Republic of Ireland and Italy are for 2010.
2. Eurostat figures for the United Kingdom are not based on the 2011 Censuses.

Table 4 shows the age distribution of those living alone in 2001 and 2011 from the census and LFS. In the 2011 Census those aged 65 and over (2.9 million) formed the largest of these groups (41 per cent). Comparisons between the 2001 and 2011 census figures show a 2.8 percentage point decrease in those aged 65 and over living alone. This decrease may be a result of less people being widowed in this age group owing to rising life expectancy, and notably rising [male life expectancy](#) over recent decades.

Those aged 16-34 living alone decreased by 2.5 percentage points; rising costs of housing and greater numbers in higher education may have contributed to this decrease³.

The 35-64 age group has increased by 6 percentage points; this may be a result of an absolute rise in the numbers in this age group, plus a rise in the number of divorced people and those remaining single⁴.

Analysis of the Labour Force Survey 2011 (LFS)⁵ data for England and Wales presents a broadly similar picture. The LFS has identified 6.6 million people living alone, of which 2.9 million (44 per cent)⁶ were aged 65 and over (see table 4). Comparison with 2001 LFS data shows the proportions of those living alone aged 65 and over and aged 16-34 have decreased, while the proportions of those aged 35-64 have increased.

In 2011 5.2 per cent (2.9 million) of the usually resident population of England and Wales were living alone and aged 65 and over; this is very close to the EU27 average of 5.5 per cent.

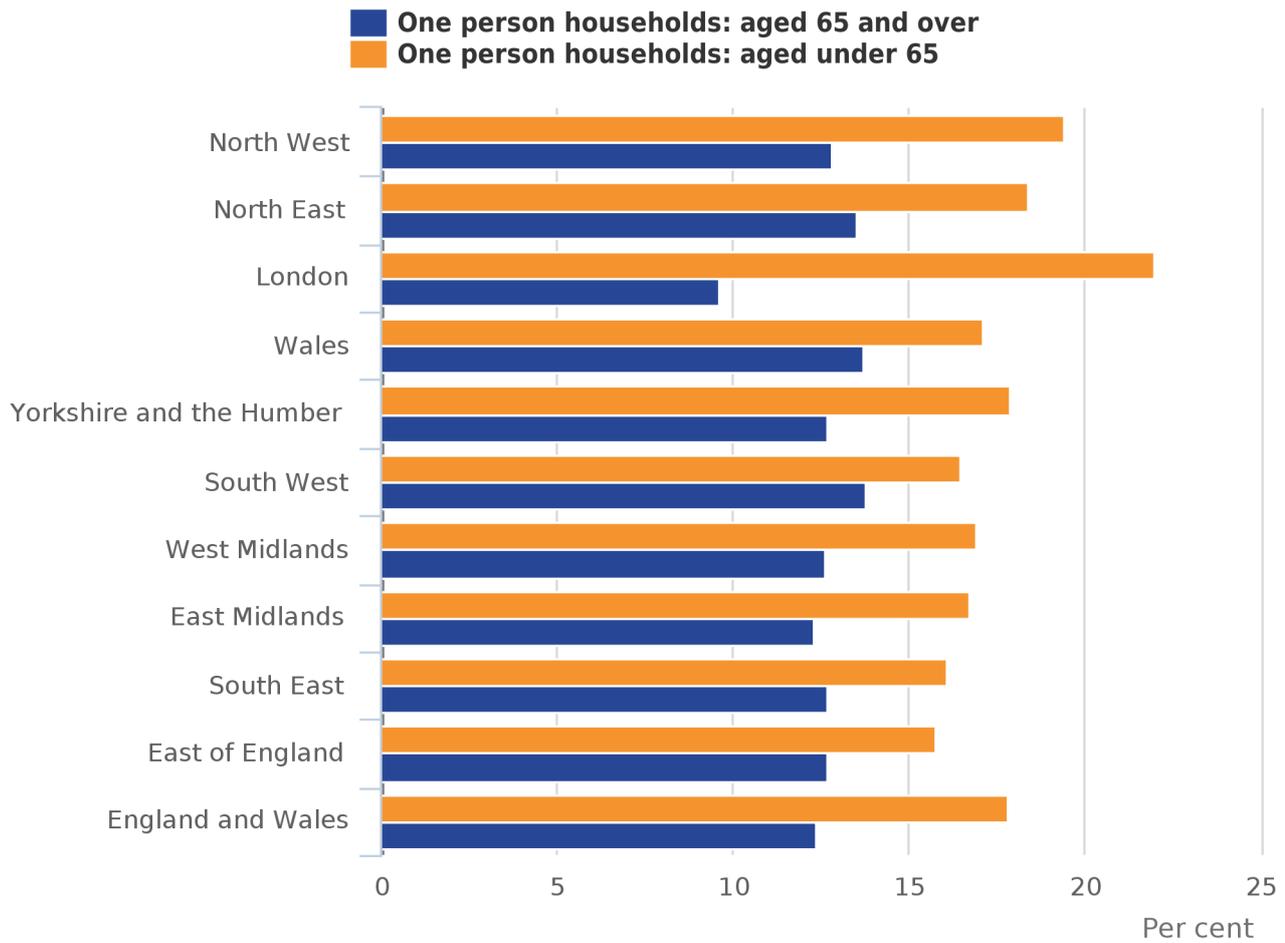
Table 4: Age categories of those living alone in England and Wales, Census and LFS, 2001 and 2011

Census				
Age Group	2001 (Thousands)	Per cent of persons living alone	2011 (Thousands)	Per cent of persons living alone
16-34	1,082	16.6	1,002	14.2
35-54	1,676	25.8	1,997	28.3
55-64	890	13.7	1,165	16.5
65+	2,855	43.9	2,904	41.1
Total	6,503	100.0	7,067	100.0
Age Group	2001 (Thousands)	Per cent of persons living alone	2011 (Thousands)	Per cent of persons living alone
16-34	964	15.8	837	12.7
35-54	1,435	23.5	1,709	25.8
55-64	822	13.5	1,134	17.1
65+	2,890	47.3	2,938	44.4
Total	6,111	100.0	6,619	100.0

Sources: LFS 2001 and 2011, 2001 and 2011 Census of England and Wales

One person households are summarised in figure 4 for English regions and Wales in 2011; this group is sub divided into those aged 65 and over and those aged under 65. Nationally, 30 per cent of all households are one person households; the regional variation is from 28 per cent in the East of England to 32 per cent in the North West. London has the lowest proportion of persons living alone aged 65 and over (9.6 per cent of all households), but also the highest proportion of persons living alone aged under 65 (22 per cent). The South West, Wales and the North East have a high proportion of those living alone aged 65 and over, approaching 14 per cent.

Figure 4: One person households as a percentage of all households, divided into those aged 65 and over and those aged under 65, for English regions and Wales, 2011

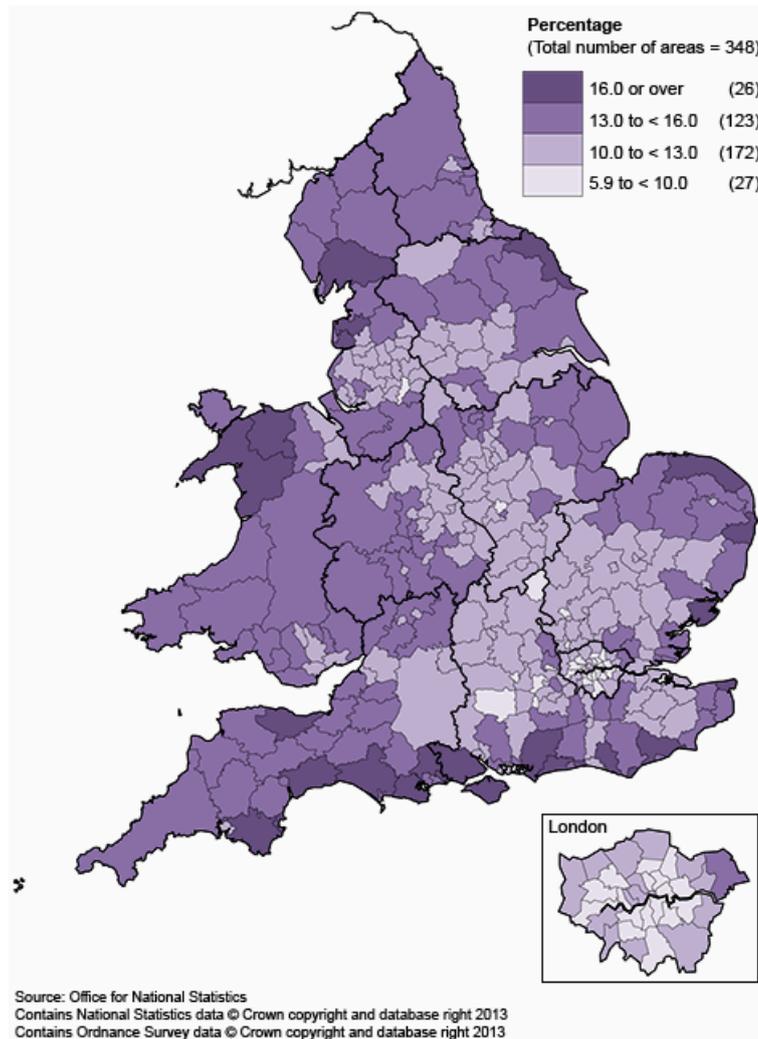


Source: Census - Office for National Statistics

Map 1 summarises the distribution of the 65 and over population living alone across England and Wales; the lowest levels are found in London, Leicester, Nottinghamshire, Manchester and the Thames Valley. The very high levels of age 65 and over living alone in the coastal areas of England and Wales are apparent, reflecting the high concentrations of older people living in these locations. An interactive map is available showing the distribution of persons living alone aged 65 and over and under 65.

[Census - Living alone interactive map](#)

Map 1: Percentage of all households made up of lone persons aged 65 and over, England and Wales, 2011



The 2011 Census tables used in this section are QS111 (Household lifestage) and QS113 (Household composition – households).

Notes for living arrangements - Living alone

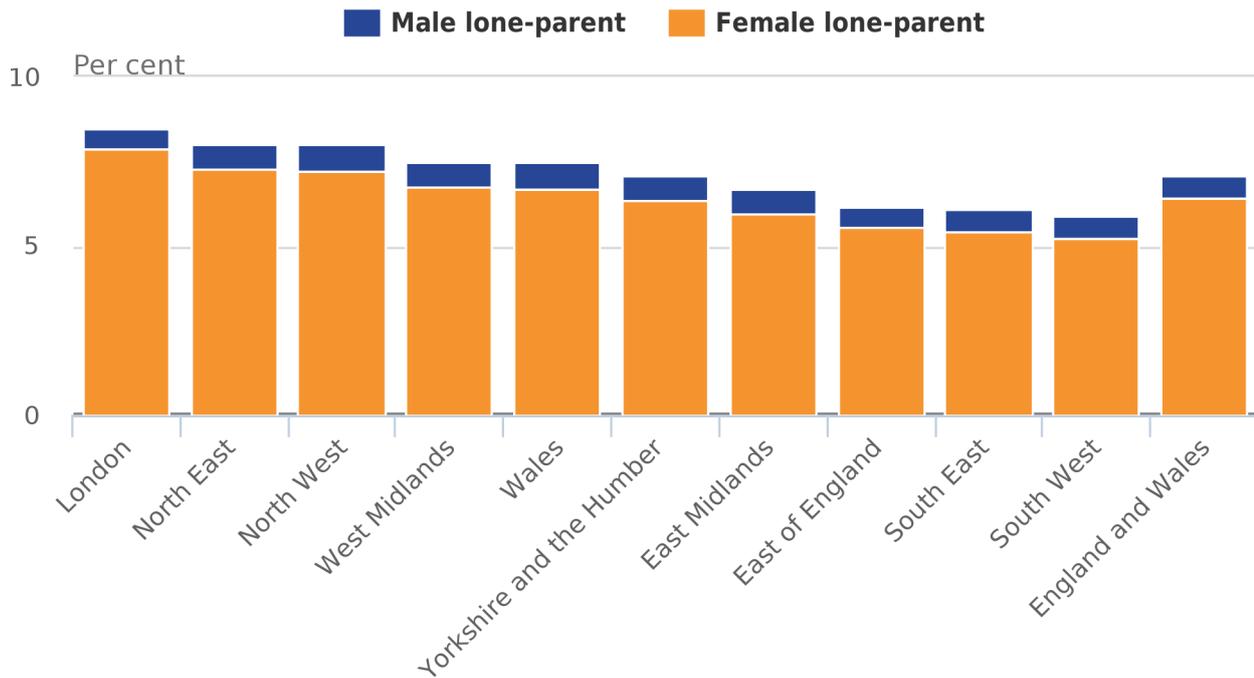
1. Households may be families or they may consist of one person living alone or unrelated adults sharing. Household composition refers to the usual residents in a household and their relationship to each other. A family is a couple (married, civil partners or cohabiting) with or without children, or a lone parent with at least one child. Children may be dependent or non-dependent. Dependent children are those aged under 16 living with at least one parent, or aged 16 to 18 in full-time education, excluding all children who have a spouse, partner or child living in the household.
2. See [Eurostat](#) data.
3. ONS report [Young adults living with parents in the UK 2011](#).
4. ONS report [Marriages in England and Wales, 2010](#).
5. The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a sample survey primarily used to provide information on the UK labour market. The Labour Force Survey is a household survey of people in the UK. It covers people in private households, NHS accommodation and students in halls of residence whose parents live in the UK. Such students are included through proxy interviews with their parents. However people in other communal establishments such as prisons are excluded.
6. Some numbers and percentages throughout this report may not sum due to rounding.

9. Living arrangements - Lone parent households

In 2011 there were 23.4 million households in England and Wales. Of these 2.5 million were lone parent households, 1.7 million (7.2 per cent of all households) consisted of lone parents with dependent children ¹. This has increased from 2001 where comparable figures were 2.1 million lone parent households; of these 1.4 million (6.5 per cent of all households) included dependent children. An estimate for the entire UK, derived from the LFS for 2012, was 1.9 million lone parent households with dependent children, a rise from 1.5 million ² in 1996.

Figure 5 summarises lone parent households with dependent children. Nationally, 7.2 per cent of households were lone parent with dependent children; this ranged from 5.9 per cent in the South West to 8.5 per cent in London. Around 9 in every 10 lone parent households were headed by a woman, both nationally and across English regions and Wales.

Figure 5: Percentages of all households consisting of lone parents with dependent children, English regions and Wales, 2011

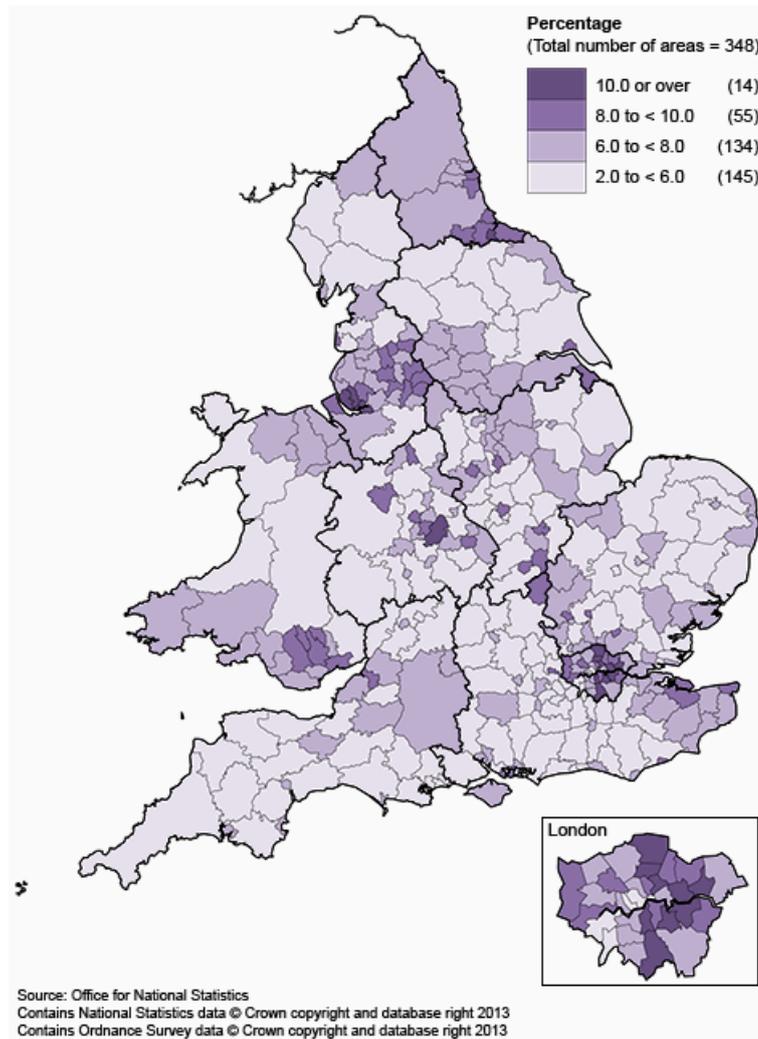


Source: Census - Office for National Statistics

The distribution of lone parent households with dependent children across England and Wales is summarised in map 2; higher levels are noteworthy in London and other conurbations (Bristol, Birmingham, Nottingham/Derby, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Tyneside/Wearside and Teesside) and also South East Wales and North Kent. Barking and Dagenham (14 per cent) and Knowsley (12 per cent) were the local authorities with the highest concentrations in England and Wales. The lowest levels of lone parent households are generally in the more rural areas of England and Wales. Some of these areas also have a higher proportion of older people, thus lowering the relative proportion of younger people with dependent children. An interactive map is available showing the distribution of lone parent households headed by men and headed by women.

[Census - Lone parents interactive map](#)

Map 2: Percentage of all households consisting of lone parents with dependent children, England and Wales, 2011



The 2011 Census tables used in this section are KS105 (Household Composition), KS107 (Lone parent households with dependent children) and QS115 (Household composition – households). Table KS107 covers lone parent households aged 16-74; this data is used in map 2 and the lone parent interactive map.

Notes for living arrangements - Lone parent households

1. Dependent children are those aged under 16 living with at least one parent, or aged 16 to 18 in full-time education, but excluding all children who have a spouse, partner or child living in the household.
2. ONS release [Families and Households 2012](#).

10. Children and families

There are many different types of families: those with no children, dependent children¹, non-dependent children², or a combination of dependent and non-dependent children living with them. Additionally people may have children living elsewhere.

In 2011 there were 14.4 million one family households in England and Wales. Table 5 summarises this by family type and presence of children for 2001 and 2011. Overall, 43 per cent of one family households had dependent children, 28 per cent had no children, and 16 per cent had non-dependent children only. The remaining 13 per cent were families made up solely of all persons aged 65 and over.

Within these one family households, 54 per cent were married couple (7.7 million) or civil partnered (32 thousand) families; of these 46 per cent had dependent children, while 37 per cent had no children and 17 per cent had non-dependent children only. Cohabiting couples account for 16 per cent of family households; just over half of these had no children in the household and 41 per cent had dependent children. Lone parent family households formed 17 per cent of the total family households; within this group 67 per cent had dependent children, therefore 33 per cent had non-dependent children only. There were also 613 thousand 'other households' with dependent children.

The equivalent census data for 2001 are not completely comparable since the status of civil partnership was only introduced in 2005. Overall, the main changes from 2001 to 2011 have included a relative decline of married couple family households (by 2.0 per cent) despite 2011 Census data including civil partnerships; a relative increase of cohabiting family households (up by 28 per cent); and a rise in lone parent families (up by 21 per cent).

Table 5: One family households by type in England and Wales, 2001 and 2011

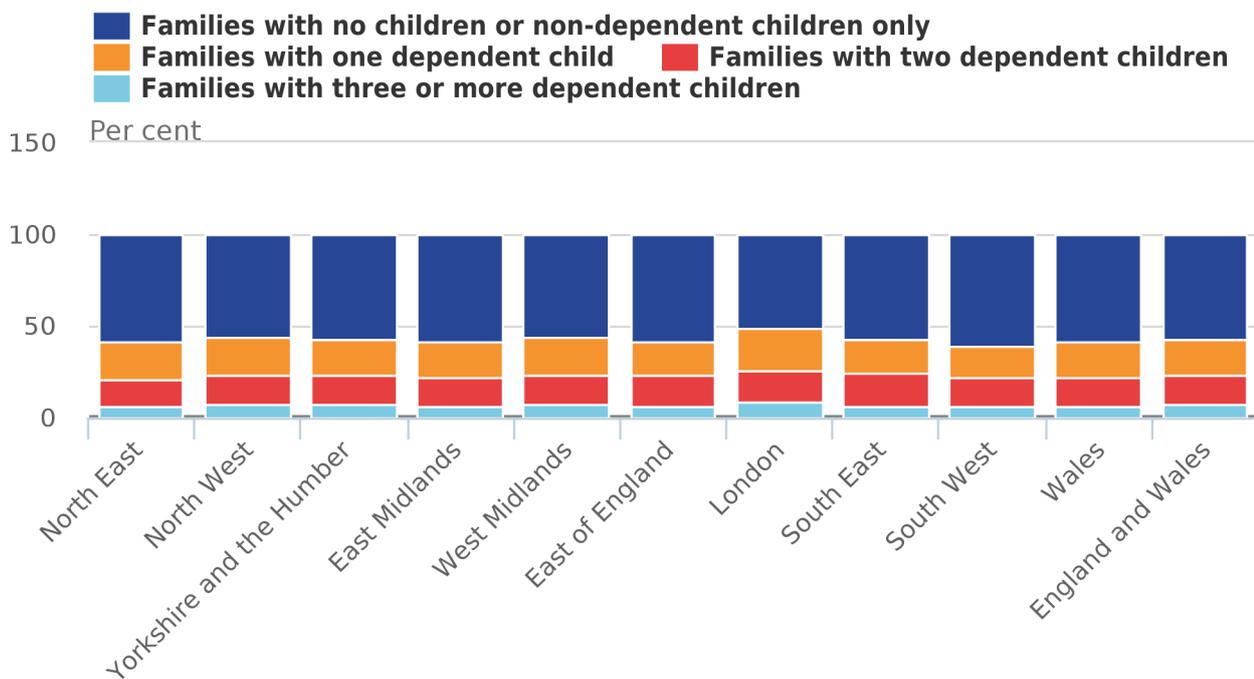
	2001			Thousands
	No Children	Dependent children	Non Dependent children only	2001 Total
Families ages 65 and over	-	-	-	1,943
Married couple or civil partnerships	2,815	3,803	1,297	7,915
Cohabiting couple	1,023	702	70	1,794
Lone parent family	-	1,400	664	2,063
Total family households	3,838	5,904	2,031	13,716
	2011			
	No Children	Dependent children	Non Dependent children only	2011 Total
Families ages 65 and over	-	-	-	1,905
Married couple or civil partnerships	2,883	3,557	1,317	7,757
Cohabiting couple	1,234	950	115	2,298
Lone parent family	-	1,671	816	2,488
Total family households	4,117	6,178	2,248	14,449

Sources: 2001 and 2011 Census of England and Wales Notes: 1. Non-dependent children are those over age 16 if not in full time education or those over age 18. 2. Families aged 65 and over do not include children.

In 2011 there were 15.8 million families in England and Wales; of these, 14.4 million were one family households and therefore there were 1.3 million families living in 'Other households'³. These will include multi-generational households such as grandparents, parents and dependent children.

Figure 6 divides all families (15.8 million) by number of dependent children nationally, and for English regions and Wales. Around 57 per cent of families nationally had no children or only non-dependent children living in the household. Dependent children families accounted for 43 per cent of all families. Families with one dependent child were more common than those with two dependent children; however the number of dependent children is not necessarily the total number of children as some may be older and therefore non-dependent. Regionally London had fewer families with no dependent children or non-dependent children only (51 per cent) than any other part of the country, and the highest proportions of families with one, two, and three or more dependent children. By contrast, the South West had the highest level of families nationally with no children or non-dependent children only (61 per cent). This may reflect a more aged population structure in the [South West](#), leading to a lower number of dependent children.

Figure 6: Percentages of families by number of dependent children in English regions and Wales, 2011



Source: Census - Office for National Statistics

The 2011 Census tables used in this section are KS105 (Household composition), QS113 (Household Composition – Households) and QS118 (Families with dependent children).

More complex analyses will be possible following publication of multivariate tables in subsequent data releases in 2013.

Notes for children and families

1. Dependent children are those aged under 16 living with at least one parent, or aged 16 to 18 in full-time education, excluding all children who have a spouse, partner or child living in the household.
2. Non-dependent children are those over age 16 if not in full time education or those over age 18.
3. The number of families is not the same as the number of family households as it is possible for a household to contain multiple families. For example, a married couple with children and grandparents living together would be one household but two families. This is included in the category of 'other households'.

11. More Census analysis

[Census Analysis landing page](#)

12. Background notes

1. This publication follows the [2011 Census Population and Household Estimates for England & Wales](#). The census provides estimates of the characteristics of all people and households in England and Wales on census night. These are produced for a variety of users including government, local and unitary authorities, business and communities. The census provides population statistics from a national to local level. This analysis discusses the results for England & Wales.
2. 2001 Census data are available via the [Neighbourhood Statistics](#) website. Relevant table numbers are provided in all download files within this publication.
3. Interactive [data visualisations](#) developed by ONS are also available to aid interpretation of the results.
4. Future releases from the 2011 Census will include more detail in cross tabulations, and tabulations at other geographies. These include wards, health areas, parliamentary constituencies, postcode sectors and national parks. Further information on future releases is available online in the [2011 Census Prospectus](#).
5. ONS has ensured that the data collected meet users' needs via an extensive [2011 Census outputs consultation](#) process in order to ensure that the 2011 Census outputs will be of increased use in the planning of housing, education, health and transport services in future years.
6. Any reference to local authorities includes both local and unitary authorities
7. Some numbers and percentages throughout this report may not sum due to rounding.
8. ONS is responsible for carrying out the census in England and Wales. Simultaneous but separate censuses took place in Scotland and Northern Ireland. These were run by the National Records of Scotland (NRS) and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) respectively.
9. A person's place of usual residence is in most cases the address at which they stay the majority of the time. For many people this will be their permanent or family home. If a member of the services did not have a permanent or family address at which they are usually resident, they were recorded as usually resident at their base address.
10. All key terms used in this publication are explained in the [2011 Census glossary](#). Information on the [2011 Census Geography Products for England and Wales](#) is also available.
11. All census population estimates were extensively quality assured, using other national and local sources of information for comparison and review by a series of quality assurance panels. An extensive range of [quality assurance, evaluation and methodology papers](#) were published alongside the first release in July 2012 and have been updated in this release, including a [Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\) document. \(152.8 Kb Pdf\)](#)
12. The 2011 Census achieved its overall target response rate of 94 per cent of the usually resident population of England and Wales, and over 80 per cent in all local and unitary authorities. The population estimate for England and Wales of 56.1 million is estimated with 95 per cent confidence to be accurate to within +/- 85,000 (0.15 per cent).
13. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html or from the Media Relations Office email: media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk

These National Statistics are produced to high professional standards and released according to the arrangements approved by the UK Statistics Authority.