

Statistical bulletin

# 2011 Census: Population and household estimates for the United Kingdom, March 2011

Estimates of the usually resident population, by five-year age bands and sex, as well as household estimates for all local authorities.



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# 1. 2011 Census: Population and household estimates for the United Kingdom, March 2011

- The population of the UK on census day, 27 March 2011, was 63.2 million; the largest it had ever been.
- The estimated population of England was 53.0 million people, 5.3 million people in Scotland, 3.1 million people in Wales and 1.8 million people in Northern Ireland. Further details of UK population estimates accompanied the first release of UK population statistics published on 17 December 2012.
- The number of households in the UK on census day was 26.4 million.
- There were 22.1 million households in England, 2.4 million households in Scotland, 1.3 million in Wales and 0.7 million in Northern Ireland.
- The number of people living in households in the UK on census day was 62.1 million.
- The average household size in the UK was 2.3 people per household, compared to 2.4 in 2001.
- The number of people living in households in the UK increased by 7.5 per cent since 2001, whilst the number of households has increased by 8 per cent resulting in a decrease in average household size for the UK.
- Two person households accounted for the largest number of households in the UK, at 9.0 million households (34 per cent of all households with usual residents).
- The average UK population density was 261 people per square kilometre; an increase of 7 per cent since 2001 when it was 244 people per square kilometre.
- In England the average population density was 407 people per square kilometre, in Wales it was 148 people, in Northern Ireland 134 people and in Scotland 68 people per square kilometre.

## 2. Summary

The statistics released today are further results from the 2011 Censuses of the United Kingdom (UK).

These statistics follow the release of the population estimates for the UK, which were published on 17 December 2012.

This bulletin describes key features of the household estimates for the UK and its constituent countries, and provides information on average household size and the number of people in households, and how these have changed over time. Information on UK population density is also provided.

Censuses were undertaken by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in England and Wales, National Records of Scotland (NRS), and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). The 2011 Census data for the UK are based on the combined results of these individual censuses, which were all held on 27 March 2011. The 2011 Census outputs for the UK are delivered by the Office for National Statistics.

## 3. Introduction

The statistics released today build on the first phase of results, [2011 Census: Population Estimates for the United Kingdom, 27 March 2011](#) (rounded to the nearest thousand), which was published on 17 December 2012.

Today's release provides estimates for the UK, its constituent countries and all local authorities or their equivalents of the usually resident population by five-year age bands and sex (with Scotland data and UK totals rounded to the nearest hundred), along with household estimates (with Scotland data and UK totals rounded to the nearest ten) on census day, 27 March 2011.

As part of this release, reference tables which accompanied the first phase of UK results have been re-issued with this lower level of rounding.

Additional tables are also now available, giving household estimates at UK, country and local authority level.

The publication of these data coincides with [Scotland's Release 1B](#) of 2011 Census statistics, also published today, 21 March 2013.

It should be noted that when local authorities (or equivalents) are mentioned throughout the bulletin this refers to local authorities in England and Wales, council areas in Scotland and local government districts in Northern Ireland.

## 4. Future UK releases

The next release of UK 2011 Census statistics will provide unrounded population estimates by single year of age and sex for the UK, its constituent countries and local authorities.

An outline of the timetable for subsequent UK releases has been published via the [ONS Census Prospectus \(754.4 Kb Pdf\)](#).

Due to the breadth and depth of census data, results from the 2011 Census are being released in stages. Subsequent releases of UK census data will be available as soon as all constituent country data are available.

## 5. Releases for England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

2011 Census data for England and Wales and Northern Ireland have been published in the Key and Quick Statistics products. For England and Wales these are Key [Statistics for Local Authorities](#) and [Key Statistics and Quick Statistics for Wards and Output Areas](#), and for Northern Ireland [Key Statistics](#) and [Quick Statistics](#).

There will be further releases of data from the 2011 Census; information is available online in the 2011 Census prospectuses for each country: [England and Wales \(754.4 Kb Pdf\)](#), [Scotland](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).

## 6. Households

### Number of households

On census day, 27 March 2011, 98 per cent of usual residents were living in households (62.1 million), with 2 per cent living in communal establishments (1.1 million).

There were 26.4 million households in the UK with at least one usual resident in 2011, compared to 24.5 million households in 2001, an increase of 8 per cent.

The number of people living in households in the UK has increased by 7.5 per cent since 2001.

Table 1 shows that for each of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the proportionate growth in the number of households has exceeded population growth, whereas in England the proportionate increase in the number of households has been in line with population growth.

**Table 1: Number of usual residents in households and number of households, with percentage change**

**United Kingdom and constituent countries, 2001 - 2011, Usual residents in households, households**

	People living in households			Number of households		
	2001	2011	Percentage change (2001 - 2011)	2001	2011	Percentage change (2001 - 2011)
United Kingdom	57,742,457	62,055,900	7.5	24,479,439	26,442,100	8.0
England	48,248,150	52,059,931	7.9	20,451,427	22,063,368	7.9
Wales	2,859,489	3,011,182	5.3	1,209,048	1,302,676	7.7
Scotland	4,976,005	5,196,400	4.4	2,192,246	2,372,780	8.2
Northern Ireland	1,658,813	1,788,339	7.8	626,718	703,275	12.2

1. The number of households is the number of households with at least one usual resident.

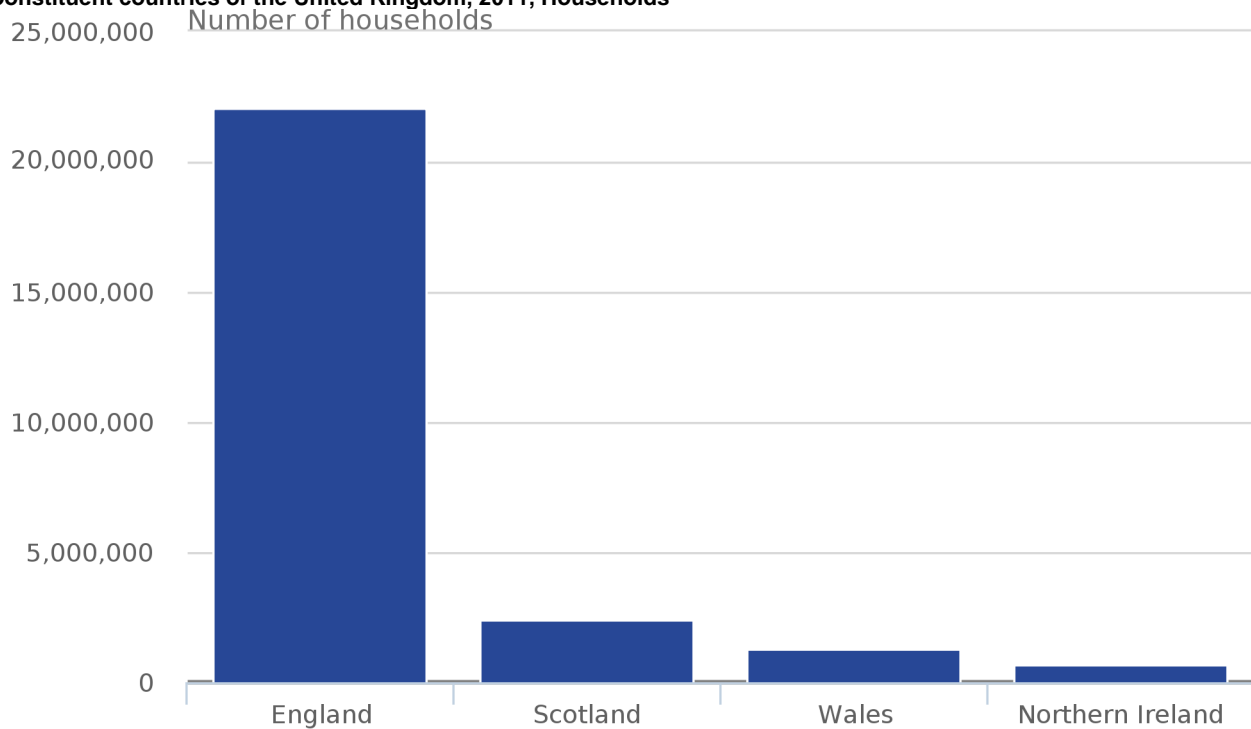
**Source: Office for National Statistics**

Between 2001 and 2011, the proportionate growth of number of households was greatest in Northern Ireland at 12.2 per cent, with the smallest increase in Wales at 7.7 per cent.

Figure 1 shows the number of households in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland on 27 March 2011.

**Figure 1: Number of households**

Constituent countries of the United Kingdom, 2011, Households



Source: Census - Office for National Statistics, National Records of Scotland, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

**Notes:**

1. The number of households is the number of households with at least one usual resident.

## 7. Geographical differences in growth of number of households in the UK, by local authorities

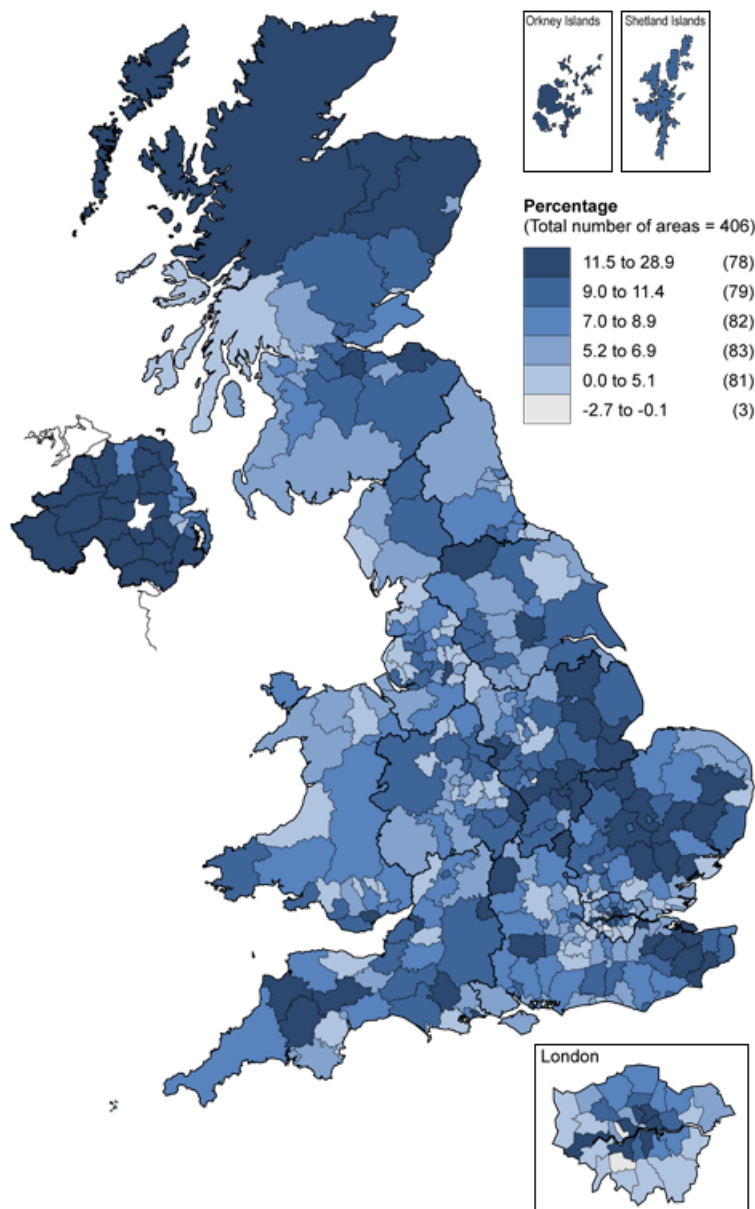
Map 1 shows the percentage difference in number of households (2001 – 2011) by local authorities in the UK.

Three local authorities in England and Wales showed a decrease in number of households between 2001 and 2011. Oadby and Wigston in the Midlands decreased by 2.7 per cent (583 households); the London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea decreased by 0.8 per cent (610 households); and, the London Borough of Merton by 0.2 per cent (127 households).

In Scotland and Northern Ireland all local authorities (or equivalent) showed an increase in number of households.

The highest percentage increases in number of households across the UK were in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets at 29 per cent (22,727 households), Dungannon in Northern Ireland at 25 per cent (4,011 households) and Manchester in the North West of England at 22 per cent (37,518 households).

## Map 1: Percentage difference in the number of households 2001-2011, local authorities in the United Kingdom



Source: Office for National Statistics, Northern Ireland Statistics and National Records of Scotland © Crown copyright 2013  
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### Notes:

1. The number of households is the number of households with at least one usual resident.

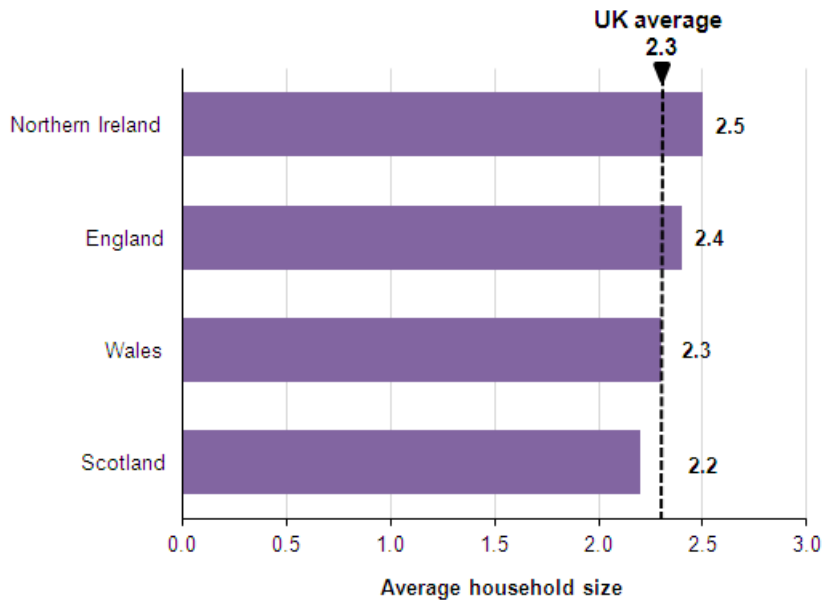
## 8. Average household size

With 62.1 million usual residents living in 26.4 million households in the UK in 2011, the resulting average household size was 2.3 people per household.

Figure 2 shows that Wales had the same average household size of 2.3 people per household as the UK average, both Northern Ireland and England were above the UK average, and Scotland below.

## Figure 2: Average household size

Constituent countries of the United Kingdom, 2011, persons per household



Source: Census - Office for National Statistics, National Records of Scotland, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

### Notes:

1. Average household size is calculated as the total number of residents in households divided by the total number of households with at least one usual resident. This measure excludes residents in communal establishments.

In 2001 the UK average household size was 2.4 people per household.

Between 2001 and 2011, the average household size decreased in all countries except England. The largest decrease was in Northern Ireland where it fell from 2.6 people per household in 2001 to 2.5 in 2011. This was driven by a larger increase in the number of households (12 per cent) than in the number of people (8 per cent).

In 1961 the average household size for the UK was 3.0 people per household. Between 1961 and 2001 the average UK household size decreased steadily to 2.4, but it has fallen less rapidly between 2001 and 2011.

## 9. Number of people in households

In 2011, two people households in the UK accounted for the largest number of households (9.0 million), followed by one person households (8.1 million).

These were both substantially higher than households of three (4.1 million), four (3.4 million) and five or more people (1.8 million).

Average household sizes have shown a declining trend over the last fifty years. The number of households is increasing more rapidly than the number of people, which means that household sizes are getting smaller. Figure 3 shows that the percentage of smaller household sizes in the UK has increased, whilst the percentage of larger households has seen a general decline.

In 1961, 13 per cent of households contained only one person, compared with 31 per cent in 2011.

Households containing five or more people represented 17 per cent of the household population in 1961, compared to 7 per cent in 2011.

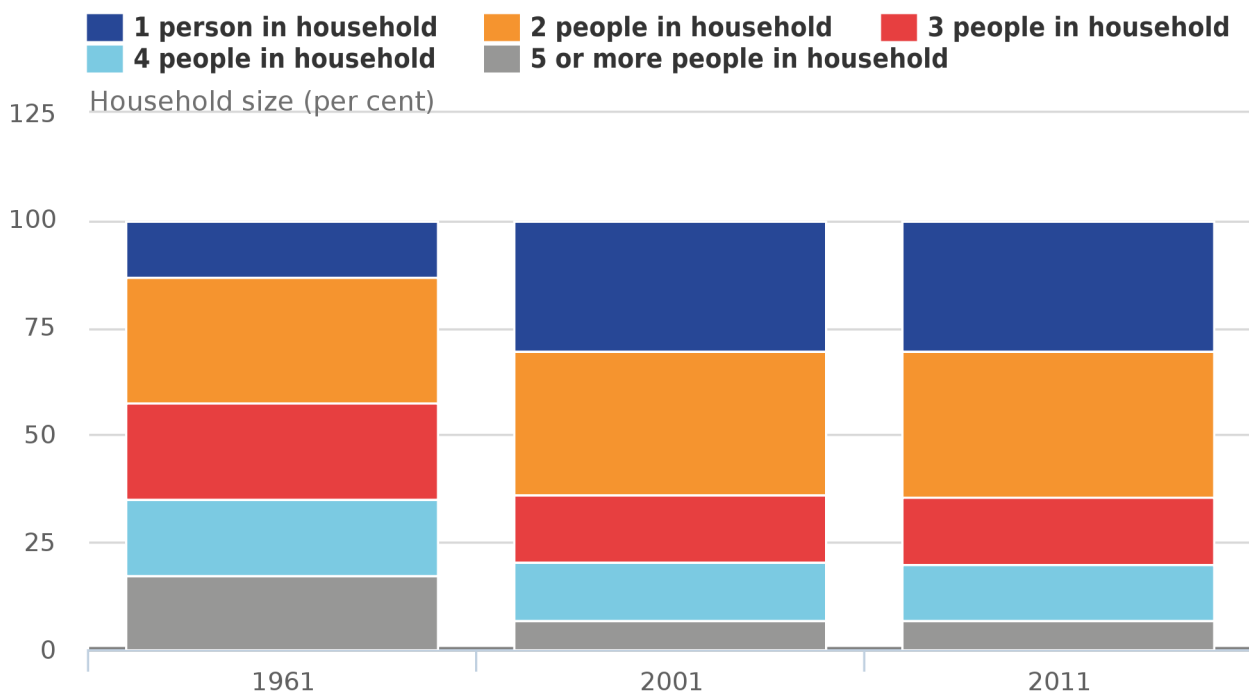
Between 2001 and 2011, the proportion of different household sizes in the UK has remained relatively constant.

Figure 3: Household size by number of people in household as a proportion, UK

1961, 2001, 2011

**Figure 3: Household size by number of people in household as a proportion**

United Kingdom, 1961, 2001, 2011, Households



Source: Census - Office for National Statistics, National Records of Scotland, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

Notes:

1. Estimates are sourced from 1961, 2001 and 2011 Census results for England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.



In 2011, the City of London had the highest proportion of one person households (56 per cent), followed by two other London Boroughs: Kensington and Chelsea (47 per cent) and Westminster (45 per cent). In contrast, the London Borough of Newham had the highest proportion of households with five or more people (21 per cent); this was closely followed by Magherafelt (19 per cent) and Cookstown (17 per cent), both in Northern Ireland.

## 10. Population density

The population density of the UK in 2001 was 244 people per square kilometre. As the population of the UK increased by 4.1 million (nearly 7 per cent) between 2001 and 2011, accordingly population density has also increased by nearly 7 per cent to 261 people per square kilometre.

Comparing the UK with other countries helps to put the UK figure into perspective: the most densely populated European country is Malta, with a population density of 1,316 people per square kilometre, whilst the most sparsely populated country, Iceland, has 3 people per square kilometre.

Table 2 shows population density for the UK and each of the constituent countries for 1961 to 2011.

1961 - 2011

**Table 2: Population density**

**United Kingdom and constituent countries, 1961 - 2011, Persons per square km**

Country	Land area (square km)	Population density (persons per square km)					
		1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
United Kingdom	242,509	217	229	227	237	244	261
England	130,278	334	353	351	367	380	407
Wales	20,735	128	132	133	139	140	148
Scotland	77,933	66	67	65	65	65	68
Northern Ireland	13,562	105	113	114	119	125	134

1. Area figures are the most recent estimates of area and these have been used for calculations of population density for all years presented in the bulletin. They do not incorporate any small changes to the land area since 1961

**Source: Office for National Statistics, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, National Records of Scotland**

Population density in England has consistently been the highest of the UK constituent countries, and has remained well above the UK figure.

Scotland has retained the lowest population density over time, with little change between 1961 (66 people per square kilometre) and 2011 (68 people per square kilometre). This reflects that Scotland's population has only grown by 2.2 per cent (0.2 million) over the last fifty years.

### Notes for population density

1. The usually resident population totals, in conjunction with land area, information allow the calculation of population density.
2. UK tables published on 17 December 2012 and with this bulletin on 21 March 2013 provide population density in persons per hectare.
3. Population density figures for Malta and Iceland are sourced from Eurostat and are based on 2010 mid-year estimates for each country.
4. Land area figures are the most recent estimates of area and these have been used for calculations of population density for all years presented in this report. They do not incorporate any small changes to the land area since 1961.

## 11. Geographical variation across the UK

The UK population is not evenly distributed. There is considerable variation across countries, regions and local authorities.

The population density of the UK ranges from 13,871 people per square kilometre in the London Borough of Islington to 9 people per square kilometre in the two Scottish local authorities of Highland and Eilean Siar. Excluding London Boroughs, the most densely populated local authority was Portsmouth in the South East of England with 5,074 people per square kilometre.

## 12. Background notes

1. 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).
2. ONS is responsible for the publication of UK statistics (compiling comparable statistics from the UK statistical agencies above)
3. Figures may not sum due to rounding. The numbers presented in this statistical bulletin have been rounded to the nearest hundred (for population estimates) or to the nearest ten (for household estimates). Similarly, percentages have generally been rounded to the nearest whole number to ease readership. Unrounded data from England and Wales and Northern Ireland have been added to rounded data from Scotland then a rounded UK total created. As a result, final unrounded data may be slightly different to data in this report. Percentage figures are similarly affected. It should be noted that all graphs and percentage calculations in this report have been created using unrounded data.
4. Population comparisons with 2001 are made using 2001 mid-year population estimates.
5. Household estimates and estimates of usual residents in households for the UK are sourced from 1961-2011 Census results.
6. For the 2011 Census, a usual resident of the UK is anyone who, on census day 2011, was in the UK and had stayed or intended to stay in the UK for a period of 12 months or more, or had a permanent UK address and was outside the UK and intended to be outside the UK for less than 12 months.
7. 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 armed 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.
8. A household resident is a person whose place of usual residence is in an individual household, and not within managed residential accommodation, i.e. in a communal establishment (for example, a care home, hospital or hostel). As such, household resident estimates exclude people living in communal establishments.

9. Average household size is calculated as the total number of residents in households divided by the total number of households with at least one usual resident. This measure excludes residents in communal establishments.
10. Further information on the methodology and quality assurance processes used to produce 2011 Census estimates is available from the [ONS](#), [NRS](#) and [NISRA](#) websites for their respective countries.
11. [The Statement of Agreement \(65.7 Kb Pdf\)](#) of the National Statistician and the Registrars General for Scotland and Northern Ireland ensures that the independent censuses carried out in each constituent country of the UK are able to provide consistent and high quality statistics that meet user requirements for UK level data.
12. There will be further releases of data from the 2011 Census; information is available online in the 2011 Census prospectuses for each country: [England and Wales \(754.4 Kb Pdf\)](#), [Scotland](#) and [Northern Ireland](#). Further information on forthcoming UK releases can be found within the [ONS Census Prospectus \(754.4 Kb Pdf\)](#). Census statistics for the UK will be produced when estimates are available for all countries.
13. The census provides estimates of the characteristics of all people and households in the UK on census day, 27 March 2011. These are produced for a variety of users including government, local authority areas, business and communities. The census provides statistics from a national to a local level. This bulletin discusses the results for the UK as a whole, for the four UK constituent countries and for local authority areas. Future releases from the 2011 Census will include tabulations at other geographies, more detailed statistics (such as by single year of age) and additional variables (such as socio-economic characteristics).
14. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting [www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html](http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html) or from the Media Relations Office email: [media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

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This document is also available on our website at [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk)

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20. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting [www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html](http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html) or from the Media Relations Office email: [media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

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