

Statistical bulletin

# Civil Service statistics, UK: 2016

Employment statistics for the Civil Service population, providing regional analyses, diversity and earnings data.



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## Notice

### 1 October 2018

Responsibility for the collection and publication of Civil Service Statistics transferred to Cabinet Office from the Office for National Statistics with effect 1 October 2018.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/civil-service-statistics>

Please contact [civilservicestatistics@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:civilservicestatistics@cabinetoffice.gov.uk) for further assistance.

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# 1 . Main points for 31 March 2016

Civil Service employment was 418,343, down 15,469 (3.6%) on 31 March 2015.

There were 316,792 full-time civil servants, 6,198 (1.9%) fewer than 31 March 2015. The number of civil servants working part-time fell by 9,271 (8.4%) to 101,551.

Of those who declared their ethnicity, 11.2% were from an ethnic minority.

Of those who declared their disability status, 9.2% were disabled.

Over half (50.6%) of all employees leaving the Civil Service were from the Administrative responsibility level. The administrative level makes up 36.8% of the Civil Service.

More than 80% of civil servants were aged 30 to 59. The number of civil servants aged 60 or above made up 8.3% of the workforce.

Median gross annual earnings (excluding overtime or one-off bonuses) for Civil Service employees were £25,350, an increase of £370 (1.5%) on 31 March 2015.

## 2 . Understanding Civil Service Statistics, 2016

This bulletin contains an overview of Civil Service employment statistics on 31 March 2016 in context with statistics from previous years. The earliest available data on a consistent basis are for 31 March 2008. Data prior to this were collected for different reference dates in the year. There were also changes in coverage prior to 2008. Longer time series for total Civil Service employment are available from the Public Sector Employment release. The latest published statistics are for Quarter 2 (June) 2016 when Civil Service employment was 415,730 (384,250 on a full-time equivalent basis).

The release counts all home Civil Service employees. It excludes the Northern Ireland Civil Service, other Crown servants and employees of the wider public sector. There are home Civil Service employees based in Northern Ireland and Overseas.

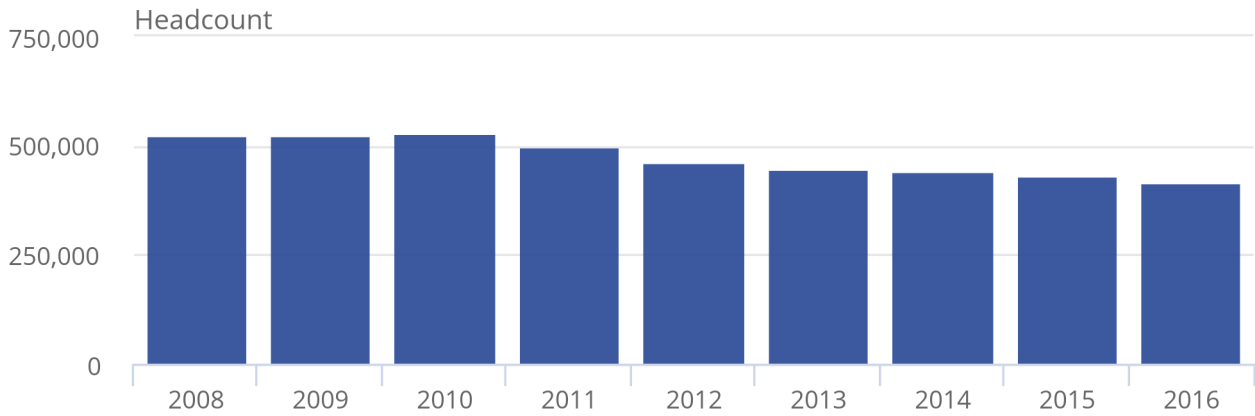
Statistics are presented on a range of factors including working pattern, gender, ethnicity, disability status, earnings and location of the Civil Service workforce.

For 2016, there are two annexes included for the first time. Annex A shows Civil Service employment by responsibility level and sexual orientation (table 1) and responsibility level by religion or belief (table 2). Annex B shows each government department and their respective agencies or organisations by organisational median pay and a ratio to the highest earner in that organisation. The estimates for the highest earner and departmental median pay are calculated using a differing methodology than those used in annual reports and accounts. Further information on the methodology used is supplied within the annex.

### 3 . Civil Service Workforce

Figure 1: UK Annual Civil Service Employment Survey time series, 2008 to 2016

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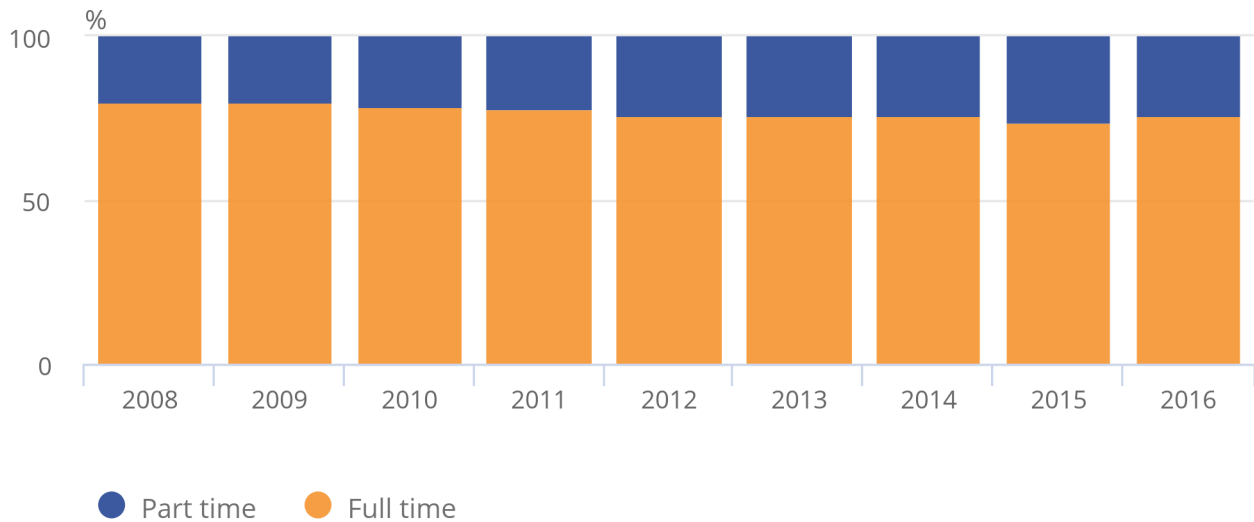


Source: Office for National Statistics

Figure 1 shows the number of Civil Service employees from 2008 to 2016. At 31 March 2016, there were 418,343 civil servants, down 15,469 (3.6%) on 31 March 2015. Since 2008, the Civil Service workforce has decreased by 106,814 (20.3%) from 525,157.

**Figure 2: UK Civil Service employment by working pattern, 2008 to 2016**

Figure 2: UK Civil Service employment by working pattern, 2008 to 2016



**Source:** Office for National Statistics

**Notes:**

1. The calculation of part time and full time employees is based on permanent employees only for 2008 and therefore is not equal to the reported headcount of all employees for this year.

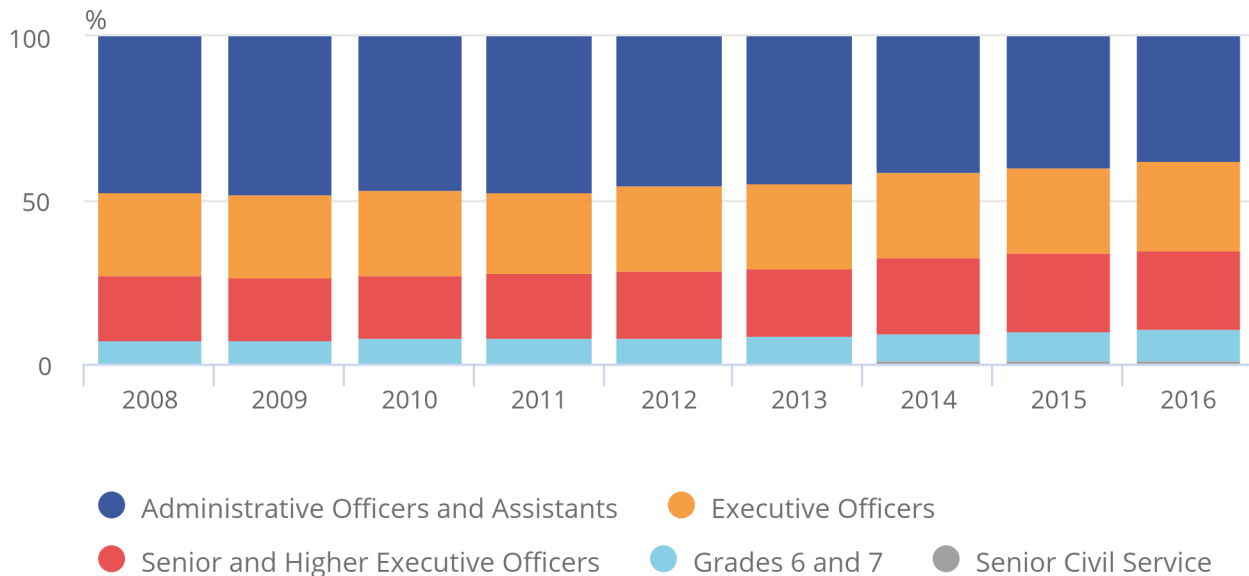
## Working pattern

Figure 2 shows the change in working pattern from 2008 to 2016.

There was a decrease of 6,198 (1.9%) in the number of civil servants working full-time to 316,792 from 31 March 2015 to 31 March 2016. There was also a decrease of 9,271 (8.4%) in the number of part-time civil servants, to 101,551 over this period.

**Figure 3: UK Civil Service employment by responsibility level, 2008 to 2016**

Figure 3: UK Civil Service employment by responsibility level, 2008 to 2016



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Headcount totals used for calculating this chart is based on known responsibility level.

## Responsibility level

Figure 3 shows Civil Service employment by known responsibility level.

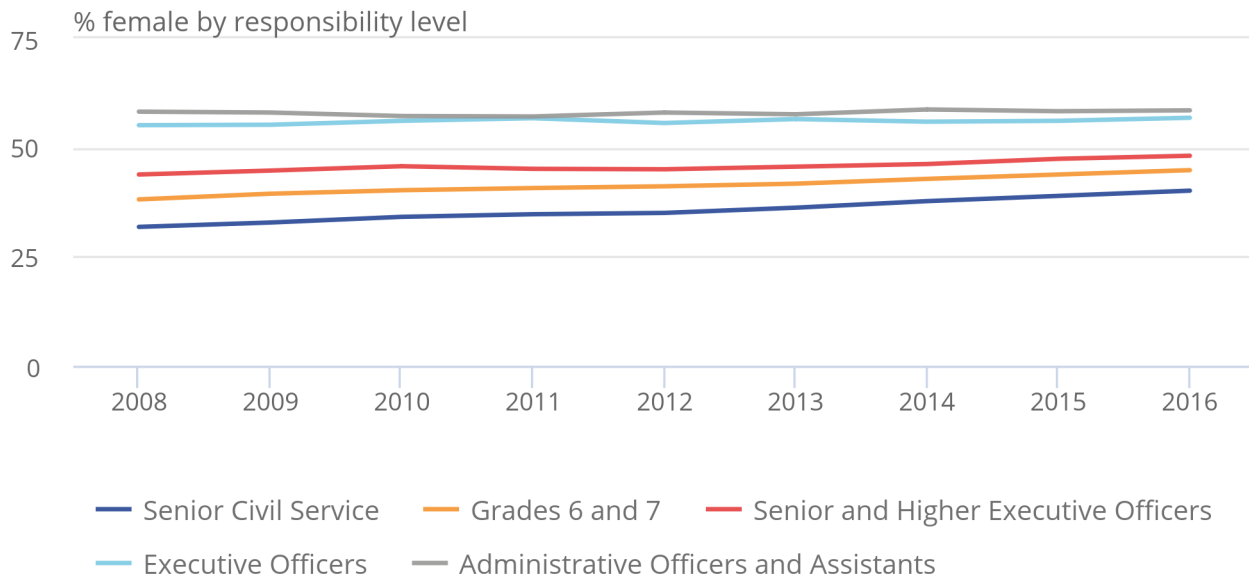
As at 31 March 2016, 36.8% of the Civil Service worked at the Administrative responsibility level, 26.2% worked at the Executive Officer level, 23.3% worked at Higher or Senior Executive Officer level and 9.4% worked at Grade 6 or 7 level. The remaining 1.2% worked at Senior Civil Service level with 3.1% in the 'not reported' category.

From 31 March 2015 to 31 March 2016 employment increased in the Senior Civil Service responsibility level by 59 (1.2%) and by 432 (1.1%) at the Grade 6 and 7 responsibility level.

Over the same period, employment decreased by 1,289 (1.3%) in the Senior and Higher Executive Officer responsibility level, 597 (0.5%) in the Executive Officer responsibility level and by 14,069 (8.4%) in the Administrative responsibility level.

**Figure 4: UK Civil Service employment, proportion of females by responsibility level, 2008 to 2016**

Figure 4: UK Civil Service employment, proportion of females by responsibility level, 2008 to 2016



Source: Office for National Statistics

## Gender

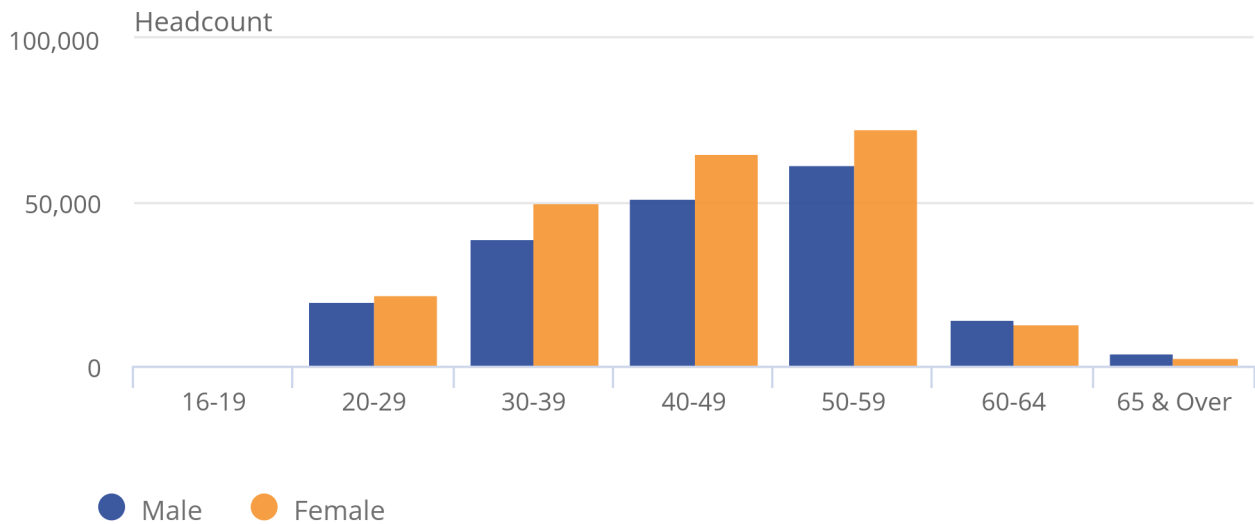
At 31 March 2016, 54.2% of all Civil Service employees were women, up 0.4 percentage points from 31 March 2015.

The proportion of women working at Senior Civil Service level on 31 March 2016 was 40.1%, an increase of 1.2 percentage points from 31 March 2015 and 8.2 percentage points on 31 March 2008. The proportion of female Grade 6 and 7s has been steadily increasing, from 38.1% on 31 March 2008 to 44.8% on 31 March 2016.

There were more women than men in the Executive Officer and Administrative responsibility levels. The proportion of women increased in all responsibility levels in the year to 31 March 2016, as shown in figure 4.

**Figure 5: UK Civil Service employment at 31 March 2016, distribution by age and gender**

Figure 5: UK Civil Service employment at 31 March 2016, distribution by age and gender



Source: Office for National Statistics

## Gender and age

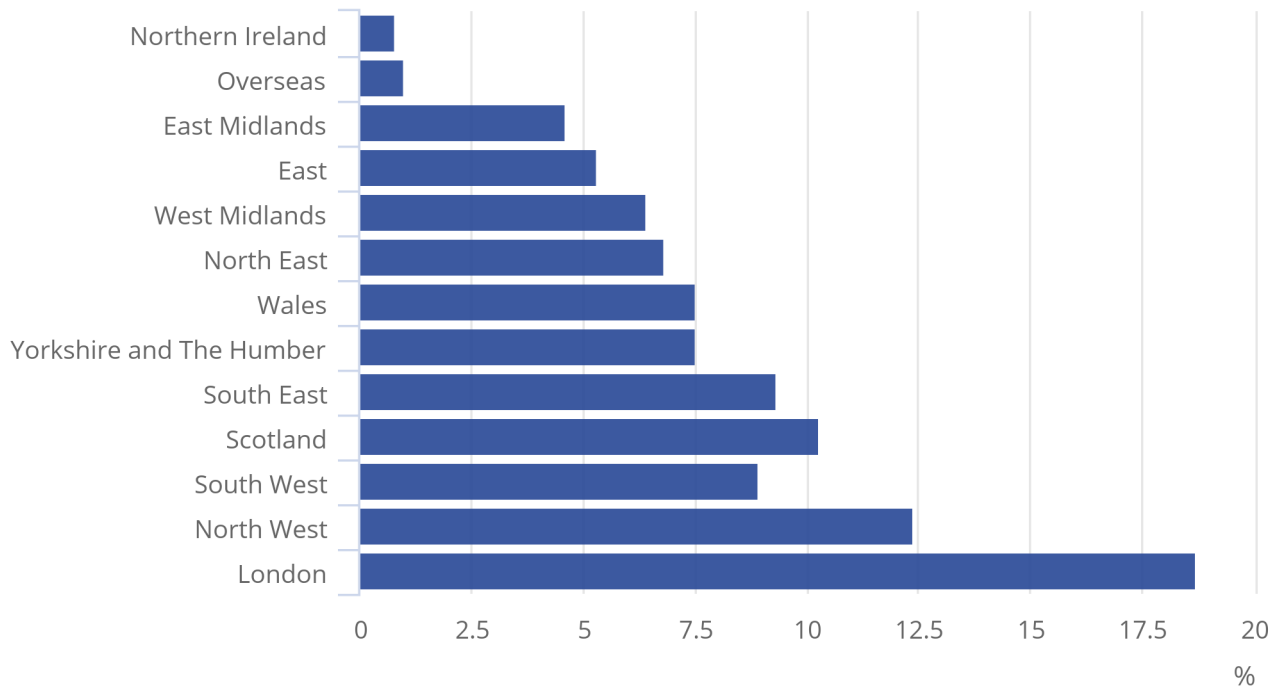
More than 80% of civil servants were in the 30 to 59 age group on 31 March 2016. Since 31 March 2015 there has been an increase in age band 16 to 19 of 330 (27.5%) and age band 20 to 29 of 2,590 (6.5%). All other age bands showed a decrease in employment.

There were more women than men in the 20 to 29, 30 to 39, 40 to 49 and 50 to 59 age bands. There were more males than females in the other age bands, as shown in figure 5.



**Figure 6: UK Civil Service employment at 31 March 2016, distribution by region**

Figure 6: UK Civil Service employment at 31 March 2016, distribution by region



Source: Office for National Statistics

## Region

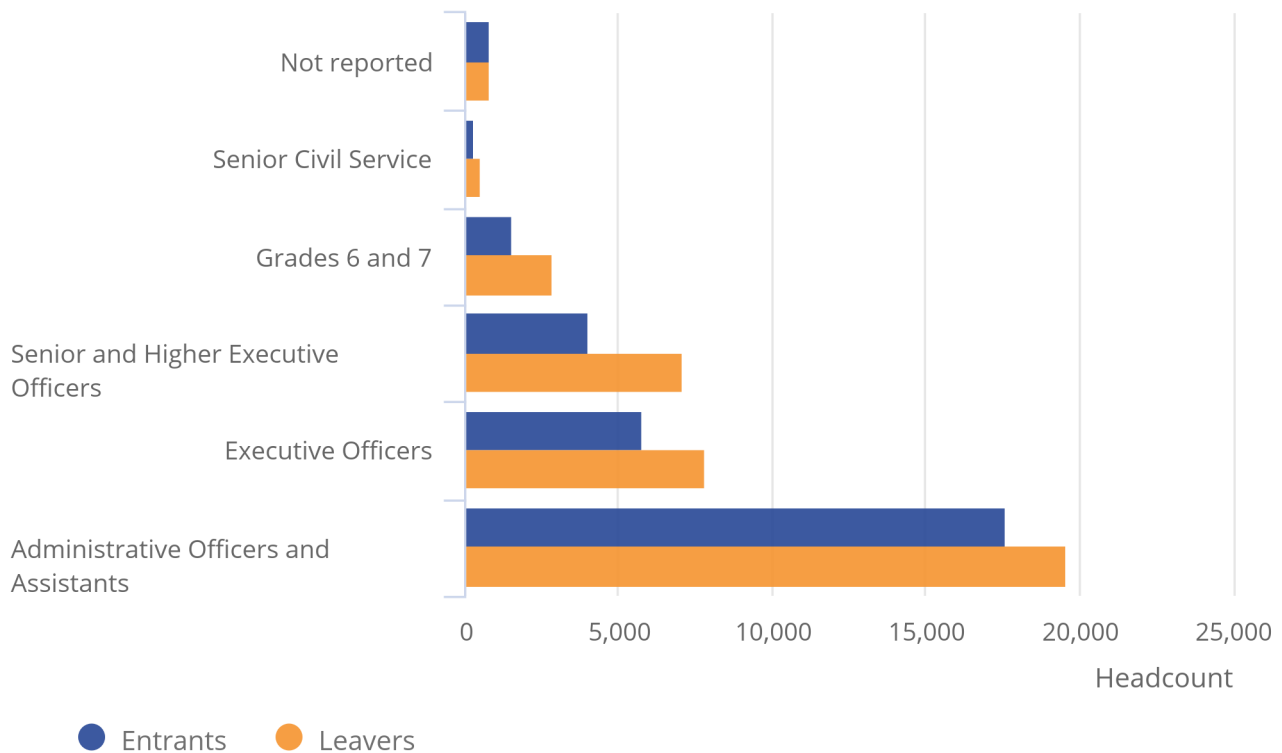
On 31 March 2016, there were 43,050 Civil Service employees in Scotland, 31,170 in Wales and 3,530 in Northern Ireland.

The English region with the highest number of civil servants on 31 March 2016 was London with 78,230 (18.7%) employees. The lowest was the East Midlands with 19,420 (4.6%); this is shown in figure 6.

The number of civil servants in Wales increased by 1.2%. All other regions showed a decrease in employment, the largest decreases (excluding overseas) being West Midlands which decreased by 3,260 (10.9%) and South East which decreased by 3,560 (8.3%). The number of civil servants employed overseas decreased by 490 (10.3%).

**Figure 7: UK Civil Service employment; entrants and leavers at 31 March 2016**

Figure 7: UK Civil Service employment; entrants and leavers at 31 March 2016



Source: Office for National Statistics

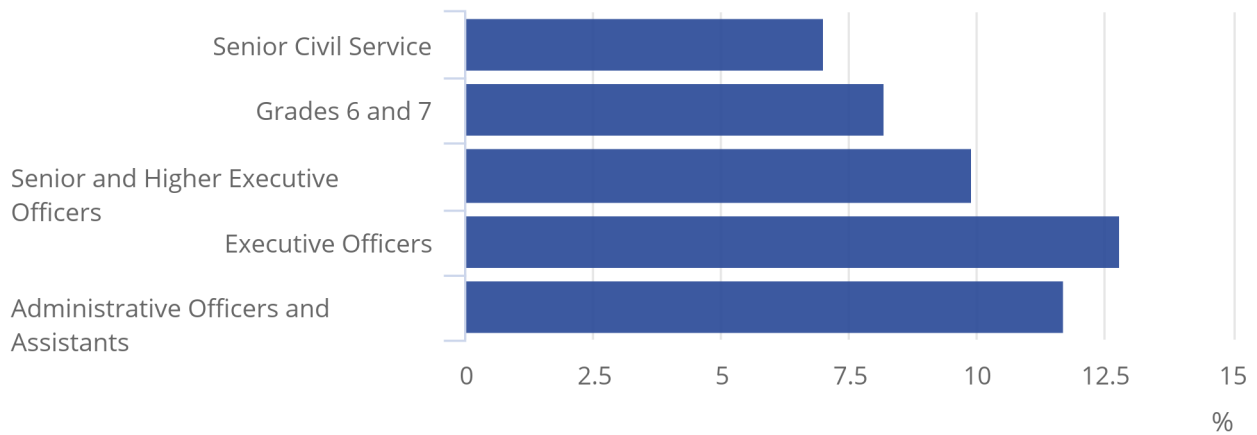
## Entrants and leavers

There were 8,677 more leavers from the Civil Service than entrants between 31 March 2015 and 31 March 2016. A total of 38,708 people left the Civil Service whilst 30,031 people joined.

Employees at the Administrative responsibility level accounted for 58.6% of entrants compared with 50.6% of leavers. For all other responsibility levels there were fewer entrants than leavers between 31 March 2015 and 31 March 2016, as shown in figure 7.

**Figure 8: UK Civil Service employment; ethnic minority employees as a proportion of employees with known ethnic origin by responsibility level at 31 March 2016**

Figure 8: UK Civil Service employment; ethnic minority employees as a proportion of employees with known ethnic origin by responsibility level at 31 March 2016



Source: Office for National Statistics

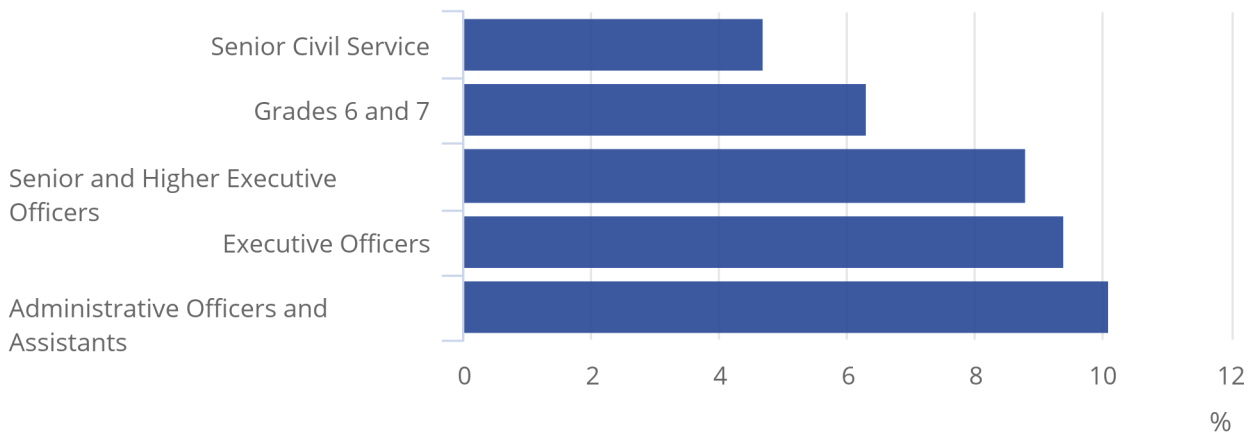
## Ethnicity

Figure 8 shows the proportion of civil servants with known ethnic origin by responsibility level. Of the Civil Service employees as of 31 March 2016 who declared their ethnicity, 11.2% were from an ethnic minority, an increase of 0.5 percentage points on March 2015.

At 31 March 2016, 12.8% of employees at Executive Officer responsibility level and 11.7% at Administrative responsibility level were from an ethnic minority. In comparison, 7.0% of those at the Senior Civil Service level were from an ethnic minority, an increase of 0.4 percentage points from 31 March 2015. All other responsibility levels showed an increase in the proportion of ethnic minority employees from last year to this year.

**Figure 9: UK Civil Service employment; disabled employees as a percentage of employees with known disability status by responsibility level at 31 March 2016**

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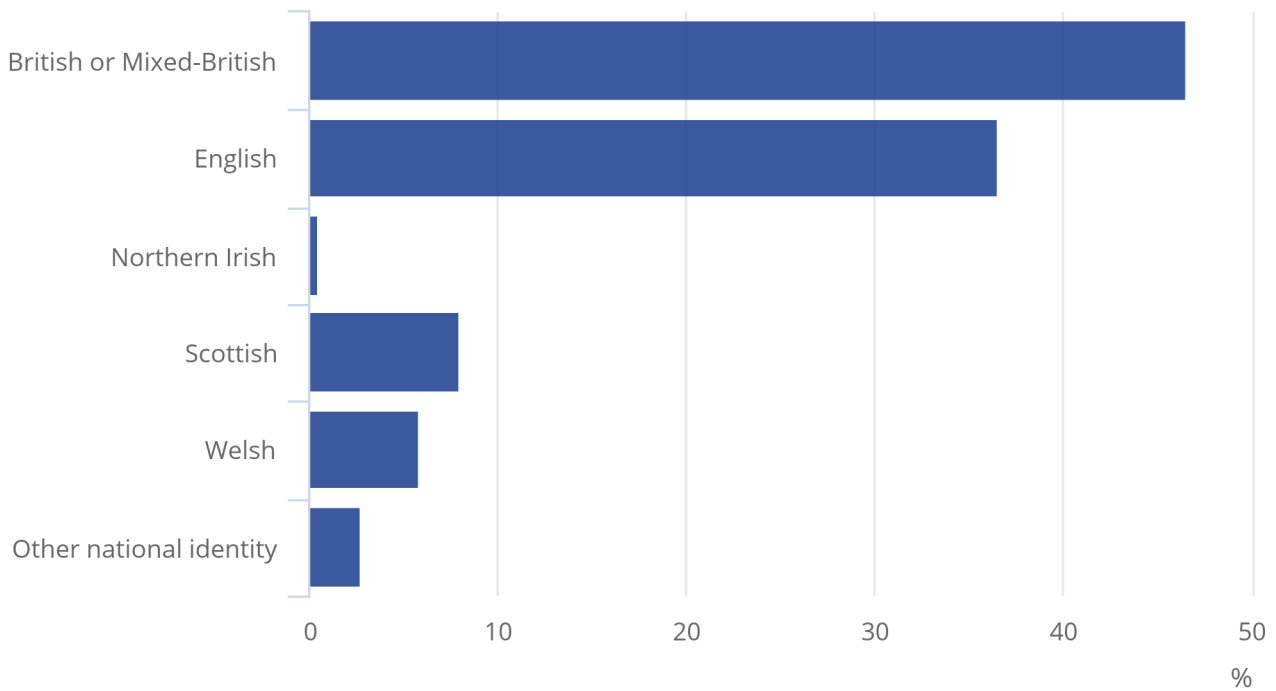
Source: Office for National Statistics

## Disability status

On 31 March 2016, 9.2% of civil servants who declared their disability status were disabled, an increase of 0.3 percentage points compared with March 2015, this is shown in figure 9. The proportion of employees with a declared disability was greater in lower responsibility levels. At the Administrative responsibility level, 10.1% of employees who declared their disability status were disabled. This compares with 4.7% of employees at Senior Civil Service level.

**Figure 10: UK Civil Service employment; national identity as a proportion of employees with a declared national identity at 31 March 2016**

Figure 10: UK Civil Service employment; national identity as a proportion of employees with a declared national identity at 31 March 2016



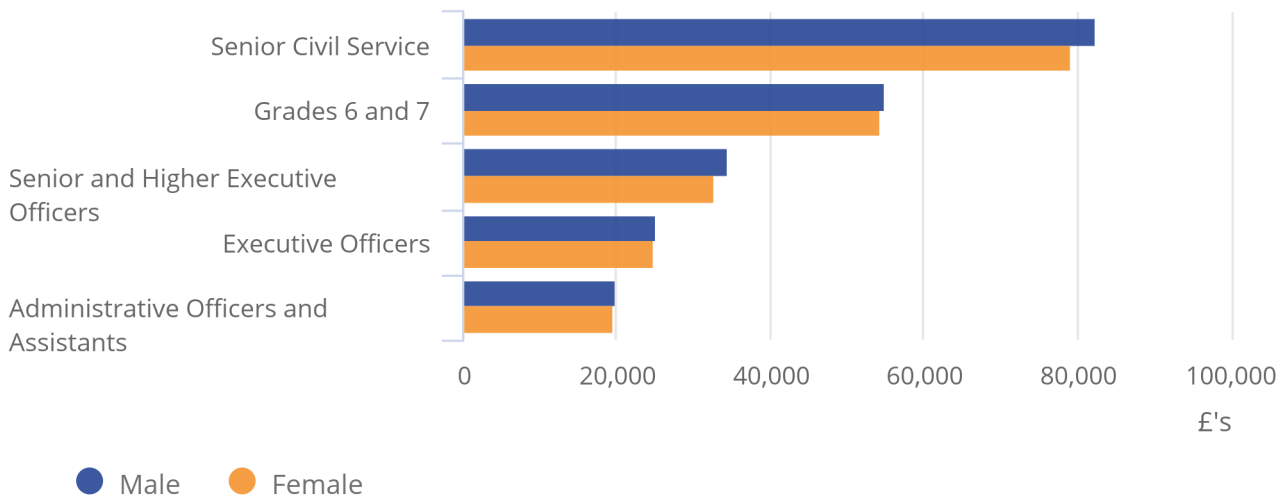
Source: Office for National Statistics

## National Identity

At 31 March 2016, 46.5% of civil servants with a declared national identity declared themselves as British or Mixed British. Employees alternatively declared themselves as English (36.6%), Scottish (8.0%), Welsh (5.8%) or Northern Irish (0.5%). The remaining 2.7% recorded another national identity, as seen in figure 10.

**Figure 11 : UK Civil Service employment; median annual gross salary of all employees by gender and responsibility level**

Figure 11 : UK Civil Service employment; median annual gross salary of all employees by gender and responsibility level



Source: Office for National Statistics

## Salary

Figure 11 shows the median annual gross salary of all employees by gender and responsibility level. The median gross salary of civil servants on 31 March 2016 was £25,350, an increase of £370 on 31 March 2015. Employees overseas had the highest median earnings (£39,920), followed by employees in London (£33,030). The regions with the lowest median earnings were North East (£20,190), Northern Ireland (£23,240), North West (£23,240), Scotland (£23,480) and Wales (£23,580). The increase in median pay should be considered alongside the compositional impact on the make-up of the civil service workforce by responsibility level, whereby the number of employees working at the Administrative level decreased by over 14,000, while there were increases in employment for the Senior Civil Service level and Grades 6 and 7.

The gender pay gap for all employees, calculated as the difference between the median pay for males and females, increased from 12.0% in March 2015 to 13.6% in March 2016. This measure depends on the pay of part-time employees being converted to full-time equivalent salaries. The gender pay gap for full-time employees increased from 9.0% to 12.0%. There was a fall from 15.4% to 11.5% for part-time employees. For the “all employees” category the largest gender pay gap is for Senior and Higher Executive Officers, increasing from 3.8% to 4.6%. The Senior Civil Service level gender pay gap fell from 4.9% to 3.7% from March 2015 to March 2016.

# Reconciliation of Annual and Quarterly Civil Service Employment Statistics (Table 11)

This statistical bulletin presents a range of statistics for the year ending 31 March 2016, based on findings from the Annual Civil Service Employment Survey (ACSES).

We also collect and publish quarterly Civil Service employment statistics as part of the [Public Sector Employment \(PSE\) statistical bulletin](#). These quarterly statistics should be used when seeking to measure the size of the Civil Service over time. The latest published statistics are for Quarter 2 (June) 2016 when Civil Service employment was 415,730 (384,250 on a full-time equivalent basis).

The difference between the ACSES and Quarter 1 (March) PSE figures, which use the same reference date, is less than 0.1% headcount and less than 0.1% for full-time equivalents.

Table 11 provides a full breakdown of the differences between the two sources by department.

## 4 . Review of Civil Service statistics

ONS will shortly be reviewing the Civil Service statistics, and as part of this has set up a short [questionnaire on Survey Monkey](#). Your views would be appreciated.

## 5 . Quality and methodology

The Civil Service statistics [Quality and Methodology Information document](#) contains important information on:

- the strengths and limitations of the data and how it compares with related data
- users and uses of the data
- how the output was created
- the quality of the output including the accuracy of the data

Civil Service Statistics are sourced from the Annual Civil Service Employment Survey (ACSES). This, following a development programme in 2007, replaced the Mandate Collection and departmental returns. For general issues regarding the interpreting of data, please see Background Note 2, 'Common pitfalls in interpreting the series'.

## 6. Background Notes

### 1. Relevance to users

In consultation with the Cabinet Office and government departments, the content of the survey is continuously reviewed.

Civil Service Statistics 2016 covers the 12-month period to 31 March 2016. When comparing Civil Service Statistics over time it is important to note that the reference periods of the collections have varied for years prior to 2008.

ACSES offers the benefit of uniform collection for the whole of the Civil Service. Previously, two collection tools were used (1970 to 2006). The Mandate Collection accounted for approximately 85% of the Civil Service and comprised comprehensive anonymous datasets extracted directly from the HR systems of

government departments and their agencies. For historical reasons, some departments supplied summary tables instead. These were called departmental returns and covered only a limited subset of data.

## 2. Common pitfalls in interpreting the series

This release counts all home Civil Service employees. Civil Service Statistics excludes the Northern Ireland Civil Service, other Crown servants and employees in the wider public sector, for example, employees of Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) and the National Health Service (NHS).

Statistics are published on the gender, ethnicity, disability status and age of the Civil Service workforce. All diversity statistics relate to civil servants counted on a headcount basis. Employees declared as disabled are presented as a percentage of known disability status. Those employees who have either not responded or actively chosen not to declare their status are excluded from the calculation. The same applies when calculating the percentage of civil servants from an ethnic background. This should be considered when interpreting the statistics.

## 3. Concepts and definitions

Further details can be found in the Quality and Methodology Information note for Civil Service Statistics

## 4. Accuracy

All government departments and agencies responded to the survey for the year ending 31 March 2016.

Departments are not always able to provide complete information for every variable and users should consider this known under-coverage and non-response issue when interpreting the statistics, particularly over time.

**Table 1: Non-response comparison 2015 to 2016**

Per cent non-response	2015	2016
Gender	0	0
Age	<0.1	<0.1
Responsibility level	3.0	3.1
Disability status	13.4	14.4
Ethnicity	8.3	9.0
National Identity	24.6	24.9
Profession	3.9	3.9
Gross salary	0.2	0.2

Source: Office for National Statistics

The main reason for under-coverage and non-response is that it can take time for HR systems to “catch up” when a new employee joins their department. Departments are also increasingly moving to self-service systems which require individuals to maintain their personal information via an intranet service. While it is the responsibility of departments to review the quality of information held and encourage regular updates, an element of non-response is expected.

## 5. Reliability

For operational security reasons, Central Government Security workforce numbers will no longer be reported as part of the Civil Service. As a result, there have been revisions to the 2015 Civil Service statistical bulletin reference tables, enabling like for like comparisons with 2016. However, Central Government Security remains for years prior to 2015 so this should be borne in mind when analysing data on a time series basis.



## 6. Coherence

A key measure of quality is the reconciliation between the two sources of Civil Service employment statistics, the annual and quarterly surveys. Despite departments supplying both sets of data and our continuing work with departments to minimise any differences between the two sources, some differences still remain. Disparities arise due to timing differences between the two sources and the nature of the data collections. The quarterly survey is published eleven to twelve weeks after the end of the reference period. As only summary statistics are required, data can often be sourced by departments directly from payroll systems rather than HR systems which are commonly used to supply data for ACSES. The timeliness of the survey also means that HR systems continue to be updated after the snapshot date. This live updating of systems means there is always the possibility of differences arising before the more comprehensive annual collection is completed.

## 7. Notes on tables

Due to rounding, the sum of constituent items in tables may not always agree exactly with the totals shown due to rounding.

Symbols

.. Figures suppressed to avoid disclosure of information relating to individual departments.

- Data not available.

## 8. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the Media Relations Office.

National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.