



## **Consultation document**

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The 2011 Census:

Initial View on Content for England and Wales

– Socio-Demographic Context

# Socio-Demographic Context of the 2011 Census

## 1. Introduction

When designing the 2011 Census it is important to consider how society may look in 2011. In recent decades there have been major socio-demographic changes including an ageing population, higher proportions of people cohabiting, increased mobility, increasing numbers of overseas visitors, and technological advances.

It is important to consider what society will be like in 2011 as we need to understand the population we are trying to measure and the information we need to collect to comprehend an increasingly diverse society. We need to consider the implications that the diverse society we live in has for Census enumeration, and the questions that policy makers will want to address in 2012 and beyond.

This paper discusses some of the main changes that are likely to occur to our society by 2011, and the implications that these changes have for the Census. The evidence for these changes is based both on past trends and, in some cases, on projections from the Government Actuary's Department. It is important to note that these projections are dependent on the assumption that current trends will continue. They do, however, provide us with a picture of how society may look in 2011.

## 2. National Population Projections

The most recently published national population projections are an interim set of 2003-based projections published by the Government Actuary's Department (GAD). These projections are based on assumptions about fertility, mortality, and net migration, which are agreed in consultation with the statistical offices of the UK. The population includes all usually resident persons, whatever their nationality.

Table 1 below shows the projected population of the UK and the constituent countries in 2011, and the comparison with the 1991 and 2001 populations.

**Table 1: Projected population for 2011 and comparison with the 1991 and 2001 populations (thousands)**

**Source: Office for National Statistics, Government Actuary's Department**

	1991 Population	2001 Population	2011 Population	Difference between 1991 and 2001	Difference between 2001 and 2011
<b>United Kingdom</b>	57,439	58,837	61,401	1,398 (2.4%)	2,564 (4.4%)
<b>England</b>	47,875	49,181	51,595	1,30 (2.7%)	2,41 (4.9%)
<b>Wales</b>	2,873	2,903	3,020	30 (1.0%)	117 (4.0%)
<b>Scotland</b>	5,083	5,064	5,034	-19 (-0.4%)	-30 (-0.6%)
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	1,607	1,689	1,753	82 (5.1%)	64 (3.8%)

We can see that the population of the UK is projected to increase between 2001 and 2011, at a faster rate than it did between 1991 and 2001. The UK population is projected to rise by approximately 2.6 million between 2001 and 2011. This increase is reflected in the populations of England, Wales and Northern Ireland, however the population of Scotland is projected to decline by 30,000 between 2001 and 2011.

The following table details the projected population of the UK by age.

**Table 2: Projected population for 2011 by age and comparison with the 2001 population (thousands)**

Source: Office for National Statistics, Government Actuary's Department

Age	1991	2001	2011	Difference between 1991 and 2001	Difference between 2001 and 2011
<b>0-14</b>	11,008	11,106	10,385	98 (0.9%)	-721 (6.5%)
<b>15-29</b>	12,858	11,177	11,988	-1,681 (-13.1%)	811 (7.3%)
<b>30-44</b>	12,125	13,405	12,446	1,280 (10.6%)	-959 (7.2%)
<b>45-59</b>	9,500	11,168	12,325	1,668 (17.6%)	1,157 (10.4%)
<b>60-74</b>	7,955	7,832	9,327	-123 (1.5%)	1,495 (19.1%)
<b>75-84</b>	3,119	3,296	3,519	177 (5.7%)	223 (6.8%)
<b>85+</b>	873	1,130	1,412	257 (29.4%)	282 (25.0%)
<b>Median age (years)</b>	34.8	36.9	40.5	2.1 (6.0%)	3.6 (9.8%)
<b>Under 16</b>	11,685	11,863	11,118	178 (1.5%)	-745 (6.3%)
<b>Working age</b>	35,197	36,406	38,100	1,209 (3.4%)	1,694 (4.7%)
<b>Pensionable age</b>	10,557	10,845	12,182	288 (2.7%)	1,337 (12.3%)

Table 2 shows that the population became older between 1991 and 2001, and is projected to age further between 2001 and 2011, with the median age of the population increasing from 36.9 years in 2001 to 40.5 years in 2011.

The biggest projected change between now and 2011 is in the number of people of pensionable age, which is projected to increase by 12.5 per cent. The population aged 65 and over increased from 7.4 million in 1971 to 9.4 million in 2001, and is projected to increase further to 10.5 million in 2011. This is as a result of falling mortality rates due to advances in medical technology and improvements in the standard of living.

In 2001 there were around 1 million more children aged under 16, than people of pensionable age. However, the number of people of pensionable age is projected to exceed the number of children by approximately 1 million in 2011.

Of those people of pensionable age, it is the number of the very old i.e. those aged 85 and over, that is projected to increase the most, with a 25.1 per cent projected increase between 2001 and 2011.

The elderly may have sight problems or need help to complete the Census questionnaire. Therefore the increasing number of such people may have implications for the enumeration operation.

### 3. Household Size

Average household size has been declining in recent decades. This decline is likely to continue due to changes in the demographic structure of the population and changes in household formations, however the rate of decline is likely to slow down. More pensioner households and more people living alone has increased the number of households, but reduced the average household size.

Projections of average household size have been produced for England by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), for Wales by the National Assembly for Wales (NAW), for Scotland by the Scottish Executive, and for Northern Ireland by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

Table 3 below shows the projected average household size for the constituent countries of the UK in 2011, and the comparison with the average household size in 2001, taken from the 2001 Census.

**Table 3: Projected average household sizes for 2011 and comparison with the 2001 average household sizes**

Source: ODPM, NAW, Scottish Executive, NISRA

	2001 Average Household Size	2011 Average Household Size	Percentage Change
<b>England</b>	2.36	2.23	-6.1%
<b>Wales</b>	2.37	2.31	-2.5%
<b>Scotland</b>	2.27	2.10	-7.5%
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	2.65	2.42	-8.7%

We can see from the figures above that the average household size is projected to fall by 2011 for all of the constituent countries of the UK. This change is smallest in Wales and largest in Northern Ireland, with a projected 8.7 per cent decline in average household size.

Table 4 below shows how the projected number of households in the constituent countries of the UK for 2011, and the comparison with the number of households in 1991 and 2001.

**Table 4: Projected number of households for 2011 and comparison with the 1991 and 2001 household numbers (thousands)**

Source: ODPM, NAW, Scottish Executive, NISRA

	1991 Households	2001 Households	2011 Households	Difference between 1991 and 2001	Difference between 2001 and 2011
England	19,210	20,750	22,520	1,540 (8.0%)	1,770 (8.5%)
<b>Wales</b>	1,130	1,190	1,280	60 (5.3%)	90 (7.6%)
<b>Scotland</b>	2,050	2,190	2,410	140 (6.8%)	220 (10.0%)
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	530	627	711	97 (18.3%)	84 (13.4%)

It can be seen that the number of households increased much faster than the size of the population between 1991 and 2001, and is also projected to do so between 2001 and 2011. This is due to the trend towards smaller household sizes.

The distribution of household sizes is an important issue to consider as it has implications for how many people should be included on the Census questionnaire.

#### **4. Families and Households**

In the 2001 Census a family was defined as a group of people consisting of a married or cohabiting couple with or without child(ren), or a lone parent with child(ren), whether the children are dependent or non-dependent.

In England and Wales in 2001 there were 42.2 million people (82.6 per cent of the population living in households) living in 14.7 million families. Although the overall population increased in the decade to 2001, the number of people living in families decreased slightly. Growth in the number of one-person households accounted for most of this decrease, along with growth in the number of people living in other household types, such as groups of unrelated adults.

Married couple families continue to account for the majority (70 per cent) of all families, however recent trends show increases in the numbers of cohabiting couples and lone-parent families.

The 2001 Census identified 6.4 million families with dependent children, of which couple families make up the majority. This is similar to the situation that existed in 1991, however there are now fewer couple families and more lone-parent families. Trends in partnership formation and separation mean that children are now more likely to experience family disruption, and some will experience it more than once.

The number of couples without children increased over the decade from 5.7 million in 1991 to 6.1 million in 2001. 81 per cent of these couples were married, however the number of cohabiting couple families with no children nearly doubled over the decade.

We can see that living situations are changing, with an increase in the number of people not living in families, and changes in the types of families that exist, such as more cohabiting and lone-parent families. However, the majority of children still grow up in a family, although this may not be the family that the child was born into.

The definitions and questions used in the 2011 Census will need to recognise the different family and household situations that may exist.

#### **5. Legal Marital Status**

Marital status projections for England and Wales were published by GAD in March 2005. These projections are based on statistics that only cover marriages occurring in England and Wales. There are currently no reliable statistics available on marriages taking place abroad involving residents of England and Wales. This can lead to underestimation of the married population and corresponding overestimation for other marital statuses. However, ONS have introduced a question on reason for travel into the International Passenger Survey that is hoped will yield usable information on marriages taking place abroad.

The tables below show the projected adult population (those aged 16 and over) of England and Wales in 2011 by sex and legal marital status, and the comparison with the 2003 figures. These projections include some marriages of people who are usually resident abroad.

**Table 5: Male population of England and Wales by legal marital status (thousands)**

Source: Government Actuary's Department

	Never married	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Total
2003	7,262 (35%)	10,940 (53%)	728 (4%)	1,590 (8%)	20,520
2011	8,707 (40%)	10,465 (48%)	729 (3%)	1,910 (9%)	21,810

**Table 6: Female population of England and Wales by legal marital status (thousands)**

Source: Government Actuary's Department

	Never married	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Total
2003	6,128 (28%)	11,000 (50%)	2,668 (12%)	2,096 (10%)	21,893
2011	7,470 (33%)	10,525 (46%)	2,406 (11%)	2,484 (11%)	22,886

It is projected that in 2011 a higher proportion of the population will have never been married. The figures do not show any significant changes in the proportions of widowed or divorced people.

Patterns of marital status differ for males and females. More males than females have never been married and a higher proportion of females are widowed. Marital status varies considerably by age, and the fact that more women than men are widowed reflects the fact that, on average, women live longer than men, and for the majority of couples, the husband is older than the wife.

These projections give us an insight into the number and type of households and families that may exist in England and Wales in 2011.

## 6. Cohabitation

Growth in cohabitation over the last twenty years or so means that legal marital status by itself no longer gives a complete picture of relationships and family circumstances.

Data on cohabitation formation and separation is limited. Therefore assumptions are made about the proportions cohabiting in each age/sex/legal marital status group to produce cohabitation projections.

The projected cohabiting population in 2011, by sex and legal marital status, is shown in tables 7 and 8 below. The figures for the cohabiting population in 2003 are also provided so that the change over time can be seen.

**Table 7: Male cohabiting population by legal marital status (thousands)**

Source: Government Actuary's Department

	Never married	Separated	Widowed	Divorced	Total
2003	1,406 (70%)	85 (4%)	31 (2%)	478 (24%)	2,000
2011	2,128 (77%)	74 (3%)	28 (1%)	527 (19%)	2,756

**Table 8: Female cohabiting population by legal marital status (thousands)**

Source: Government Actuary's Department

	Never married	Separated	Widowed	Divorced	Total
2003	1,428 (71%)	50 (3%)	43 (2%)	480 (24%)	2,000
2011	2,165 (79%)	44 (2%)	36 (1%)	512 (19%)	2,756

The total number of cohabiting couples is expected to rise significantly between 2003 and 2011, with a projected increase of 38 per cent. The proportion of the cohabiting population that have never been married is expected to increase, with the other significant change being the projected fall in the proportion that are divorced, with a 5 per cent decrease for both males and females.

Although it is projected that there will be more cohabiting couples in 2011, an emerging trend is that of 'living apart together'. This is where two partners regard themselves as a couple, but each of them maintains their own separate household or lives in a different home. If this growing trend continues, living apart together will be more prevalent in 2011. This will have an impact on the way in which we collect and disseminate data about partnerships and living situations.

## **7. Civil Partnerships**

The Civil Partnership Act comes into force in December 2005. The act allows same-sex couples to make a formal legal commitment to each other by forming civil partnerships. This gives the couple similar legal rights to married couples, such as property rights and pension benefits. The 2011 Census must reflect this change when collecting relationship information.

The marital status question on the 2011 Census questionnaire will need to take account of the Civil Partnership Act.

## **8. Migration**

The United Nations recommended definition for an international migrant is someone who changes their country of usual residence for a period of at least a year, so that the country of destination effectively becomes the country of usual residence. Migration is the most difficult component of population change to measure accurately due to the lack of high quality data sources, particularly on emigration.

In recent years the UK has experienced higher levels of both inward and outward international migration than previously. Migration into the country increased from 314,000 in 1994 to 513,000 in 2003. Out-migration also increased over the period, but to a lesser extent – from 238,000 in 1994 to a record 362,000 in 2003.

Net migration flows are therefore increasing, with a net inflow of 151,000 people in 2003. Between 1991 and 2003 the net inflow of people into the UK was more than double the net inflow between 1994 and 1998.

Increases in net international migration to the UK mean that migration has become a more important factor in determining the country's population change. In 2003, 65 per cent of the UK's population increase was attributable to net international migration.

The recent enlargement of the European Union may increase the number of languages spoken throughout the UK, therefore changing the language support that is required to ensure that migrants are able to complete the 2011 Census questionnaire.

## **9. Ethnicity**

Immigration from different parts of the world has helped to shape the ethnic mix of the UK. In the UK as a whole, the 2001 Census found that 8 per cent of the population were from a non-white ethnic minority. However, in London, as many as 29 per cent of the population are from a minority ethnic group.

There is a tendency for ethnic minority populations to be clustered in specific geographical areas. This highlights a need for ethnicity data to be collected from the 2011 Census to ensure that small area population estimates for ethnic minorities can be produced.

## 10. Second Residences

The number of second residences in the UK has increased in recent years. Diverse employment patterns and an increase in international commuting have given rise to people having second residences for work purposes, either in the UK or abroad. An increased number of divorces have increased the number of children whose parents live at separate addresses, and in many cases the children divide their time between the two homes. There are a large number of people in residential homes who may also have an address at a private residence, and many elderly people who spend large parts of the year living abroad. There has also been an increase in second residences used for work purposes, both in the UK and abroad.

Recent data show that approximately 1 per cent of households in the UK are second homes. Although this is only a small percentage overall, the proportion of second homes in some Local Authorities is significant, with some having as many as 26 per cent second homes. There is an increasing trend in second home ownership, and if this increasing trend continues, there will be a significant proportion of second homes in the UK in 2011.

For more information on the incidence of second residences in the UK and the implications they have for the Census, please refer to the document 'Second Residences in the UK', which can be found from the following link:

[http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/consultations/downloads/2011Census\\_consultation\\_second\\_homes.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/about/consultations/downloads/2011Census_consultation_second_homes.pdf)

## 11. Employment

The UK employment rate has remained fairly stable over the past 30 years, only varying between 68 per cent and 76 per cent. However, figures from the Labour Force Survey show that the employment rate for women has changed significantly, from 56 per cent in 1971 to 70 per cent in 2004.

The increase in women's economic activity is mainly due to an increase in part-time working, although there has been a small rise in full-time working as well.

This will have implications for Census enumeration as it will be harder to make contact with households where all members of the household are out at work.

## 12. Internet Access

Rapid technological change in recent years has transformed society and the way we communicate with each other. Computers are now commonplace in homes in the UK, as well as in schools and the workplace.

The level of internet access has increased dramatically in recent years. Figures from the Family Expenditure Survey show how the percentage of households with internet access at home has changed in recent years:

**Table 9: Percentage of households with internet access at home**  
**Source: Family Expenditure Survey, Expenditure and Food Survey**

	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
<b>United Kingdom</b>	10	19	32	40	46
<b>England</b>	11	20	34	41	47
<b>Wales</b>	7	15	22	32	37
<b>Scotland</b>	8	14	24	37	42
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	5	11	20	31	35

The proportion of households in the UK with access to the internet more than quadrupled between 1998/99 and 2002/03. Findings from the Omnibus Survey show that, in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2004, 52 per cent of households in the UK could access the internet from home. Access to the internet is set to continue to increase, however it is likely that the increase will be at a slower rate.

With an increasing number of people having access to the internet at home, there is expected to be demand for an option to complete the 2011 Census questionnaire via the internet.

### **13. Conclusions**

It is clear that society is changing continuously and will be different in 2011 to the society we live in today. The questions on the Census questionnaire, and the definitions and population bases used, will need to reflect this and will need to capture the different living arrangements and requirements for services that exist.

Population projections suggest that the population will age by 2011, with a sharp increase in the number of very old people (those aged 85 and over). This has implications for the Census enumeration as some of these people may need assistance to fill in the Census questionnaire.

With improved health, older people are much more active participants in society. Higher life expectancy means there is a longer period between departure from the work force and becoming highly dependent on services. More people want to work past retirement age, which means that there may be a need to ask labour market questions of the older population. In 2001 these questions were only asked of those aged 16-75.

Family and household situations are becoming increasingly complex. The definitions and questions used in the 2011 Census need to recognise the different family and household situations that may exist. However, it may not be possible to capture all aspects of the complex living patterns via the Census.

The distribution of household sizes is an important issue to consider when determining how many people to include on the Census questionnaire.

The marital status question on the 2011 Census questionnaire will need to take account of the Civil Partnership Act which comes into force in December 2005. We also need to consider what information, if any, we could collect to understand couples who are living apart together.

It is important to consider the implications of migration when designing the 2011 Census. Migration may increase the number of languages spoken throughout the UK, therefore changing the language support that is required to ensure that migrants are able to complete the 2011 Census questionnaire.

As ethnic minority populations tend to be clustered in specific geographical areas, therefore making sizeable minorities in some areas of the UK, there is a strong case for ethnicity data to be collected from the 2011 Census to ensure that small area population estimates for ethnic minorities can be produced.

Second residences are becoming an increasingly important issue. Additional residency questions on the Census questionnaire would not only provide a better understanding of the complex living arrangements that exist in the UK, but could also provide a better understanding of coverage.

Changing employment patterns may affect Census enumeration as there is an increased number of households where all household members go out to work. It may be difficult to make contact with such households.

Technological advances have changed the way we communicate with each other. Increased levels of access to the internet could lead to a demand for the internet to be used for capturing information for the 2011 Census.

We will continue to review the changing society as the Census questionnaires are developed. As new data becomes available and new trends in how people are living emerge, we will consider the implications this has for the Census questionnaires.

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