

Statistical bulletin

# Births by parents' country of birth, England and Wales: 2013

Annual statistics on live births. Includes countries of birth for non-UK born mothers and fathers.



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# 1 . Key findings

- Over a quarter of births (26.5%) in 2013 were to mothers born outside the UK, a slight increase from 2012 (25.9%)
- The number of live births in England and Wales to UK born women decreased by 5.0% compared with 2012, while live births to non-UK born women fell by 2.1%. This represents a change from the general trend of increasing numbers of births to both UK and non-UK born women over the previous decade
- The total fertility rate (TFR) for UK born women has fallen to 1.79 from 1.90 in 2012. The TFR for non-UK born women has fallen to 2.19 from 2.29 in 2012
- Poland, Pakistan and India were the three most common countries of birth for non-UK born mothers in 2013
- Pakistan remains the most common country of birth for non-UK born fathers between 2008 and 2013, followed by Poland and India
- Newham remains the local authority with the highest percentage of births to non-UK born women (76.1%) in 2013. South Staffordshire has the lowest percentage (3.5%)

## 2 . Summary

This bulletin presents annual statistics on live births in England and Wales in 2013 by parents' country of birth. In particular, it reports the 10 most common countries of birth for non-UK born mothers and fathers, and the age of mothers by country of birth, as well as total fertility rates (TFRs) for UK born and non-UK born women. The percentage of births to non-UK born mothers is also provided at local authority level.

Parents' country of birth statistics have been compiled from final annual birth registration data, which include all live births occurring in England and Wales in a calendar year.

This is the first time that detailed 2013 birth statistics for England and Wales on parents' country of birth have been published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Only figures for the overall proportion of births to mothers born outside the UK have been previously published in the [Birth summary tables - England and Wales, 2013](#) in July 2014.

## 3 . Live births to UK and Non-UK born women

The total number of live births in England and Wales decreased by 4.3% in 2013 to 698,512, compared with 729,674 in 2012. This decrease in births resulted from a 5.0% fall in live births to UK born women (27,161 fewer births) and a 2.1% fall to non-UK born women (4,004 fewer births).

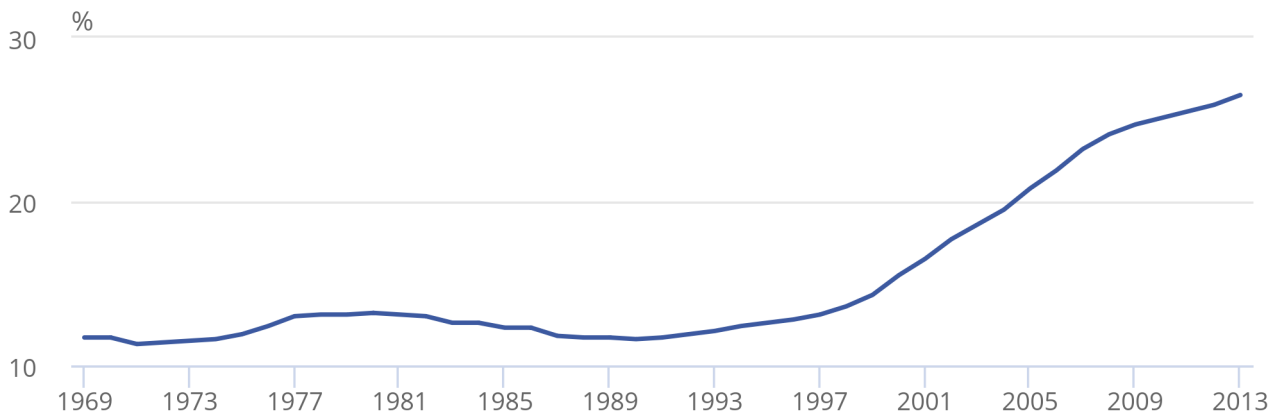
In 2013, there were 513,411 live births to UK born mothers compared with 185,075 to non-UK born mothers. Births to non-UK born mothers accounted for 26.5% of all live births in 2013, compared with 25.9% in 2012. This is the highest proportion of births to mothers born outside the UK since information on parents' country of birth was first collected at birth registration in 1969 (Figure 1). This proportion has increased every year since 1990, when it was 11.6%, with a marked rise since the turn of the century. In 2000, the proportion of births to non-UK born mothers was 15.5%.

**Figure 1: Percentage of live births to mothers born outside the UK, 1969–2013**

England and Wales

Figure 1: Percentage of live births to mothers born outside the UK, 1969–2013

England and Wales



Source: Office for National Statistics

The fall in the number of births to UK born women represents a change to the increasing numbers of births to UK born women recorded since 2002 (490,711 live births) with the exception of small declines in 2005, 2009 and 2011. In contrast, the number of births to women born outside the UK has risen every year since 1995 until the drop in 2013.

## 4 . Why have births to UK born and non-UK born women fallen in 2013?

The decreases in births to both UK born and non-UK born women in 2013 were due to falling fertility (that is, women having fewer births each on average in that particular year). The estimated total fertility rate (TFR) in England and Wales (see background notes 3 and 4) for women born in the UK fell to 1.79 children per women, from 1.90 in 2012. As in previous years, the estimated TFR for women born outside the UK but living in England and Wales was higher, at 2.19 children per woman in 2013, but fell from 2.29 in 2012. This is the lowest non-UK born TFR recorded (figures available back to 2004).

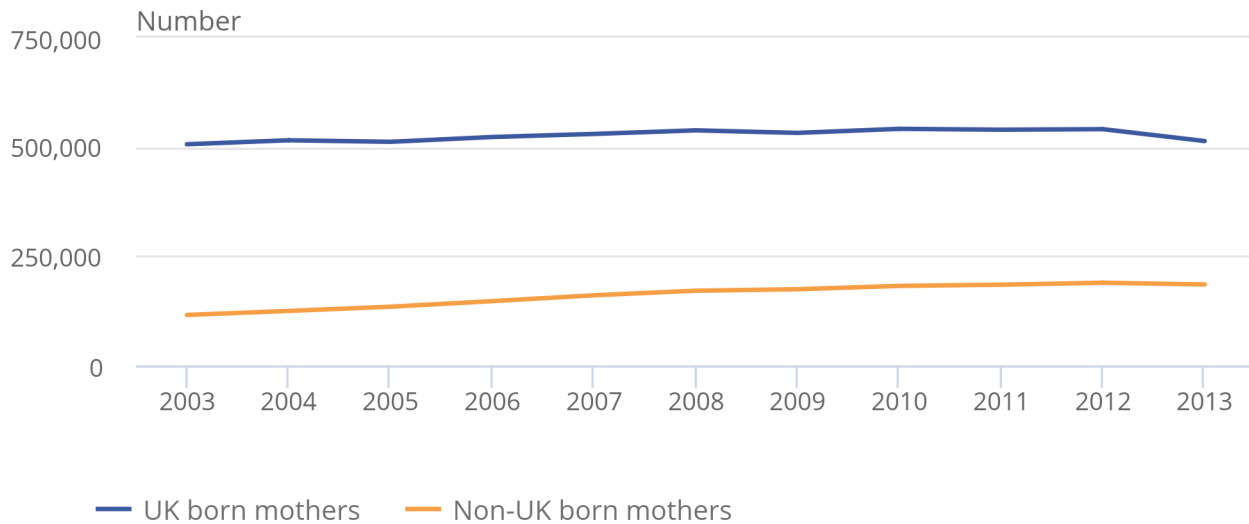
The number of births depends on the size of the female population of childbearing age and the TFR. For UK born women, the 5% fall in births between 2012 and 2013 was mainly because of the substantial fall in the fertility rate, since the size of the UK born childbearing population remained relatively stable (0.7% decrease to 8.78 million). For non-UK born women the 2.1% fall in births over the same period was also due to a drop in fertility rate. This meant a fall in the number of births even though the population of non-UK born women of childbearing age continued to increase by 2.8% from 2012 (reaching 2.20 million in 2013).

**Figure 2: Number of live births to UK born and non-UK born women, 2003–2013**

England and Wales

Figure 2: Number of live births to UK born and non-UK born women, 2003–2013

England and Wales



Source: Office for National Statistics

For non-UK born women, the drop in births in 2013 represents a change in trend, as the number of births to this group had been increasing annually over the decade to 2012 (Figure 2). Between 2004 and 2010 the TFR for non-UK born women remained relatively stable but then began to decline from 2011. Therefore the increasing number of births to non-UK born women up to 2012 was entirely due to their rising population - the number of non-UK born women of childbearing age in England and Wales increased by 55% between 2004 and 2012, as a result of international migration. This population increase continued in 2013 but was outweighed by falling fertility, leading to the small drop in births.

The larger fall in births to UK born women in 2013 also represents a change in recent trends. In the decade to 2012, the number of babies born to UK born women increased in most years, with the exception of small drops in 2005, 2009 and 2011. In contrast to non-UK born women, the rising number of births to UK born women up to 2012 was due to their TFR increasing from 1.69 children per woman in 2004 to 1.90 in 2012, a trend which reversed in 2013. Since 2005 there has been a continuous decline in the number of UK born women of childbearing age in England and Wales (8% lower in 2013 than in 2005). This mainly results from larger groups of women leaving the childbearing ages (the 'baby boomers' born in the 1960s) and smaller groups reaching childbearing age (those born just prior to 2001 when births were approaching a low point).

The majority (80%) of women of childbearing age living in England and Wales were born in the UK. As a result, UK born women continue to make the largest contribution to the overall TFR, by a large margin. It is not just recent migration that has an impact on the childbearing age population; the current size and age-structure of the foreign born population is in part determined by levels of earlier in-migration of children and younger women between the 1970s and 1990s. In addition the descendants of past in-migrants are likely to constitute an increasing share of the UK born population ([Tromans et al, 2009 \(2.08 Mb Pdf\)](#)).

Estimated TFRs for UK and non-UK born women are sensitive to changes in the timing of births within women's lives. For example, research has noted that immigrant women typically have low fertility prior to immigration, followed by high fertility immediately after immigration ([Toulemon, 2004](#)). If this were also the case in England and Wales, the estimated TFR for non-UK born women could be inflated by this timing effect.

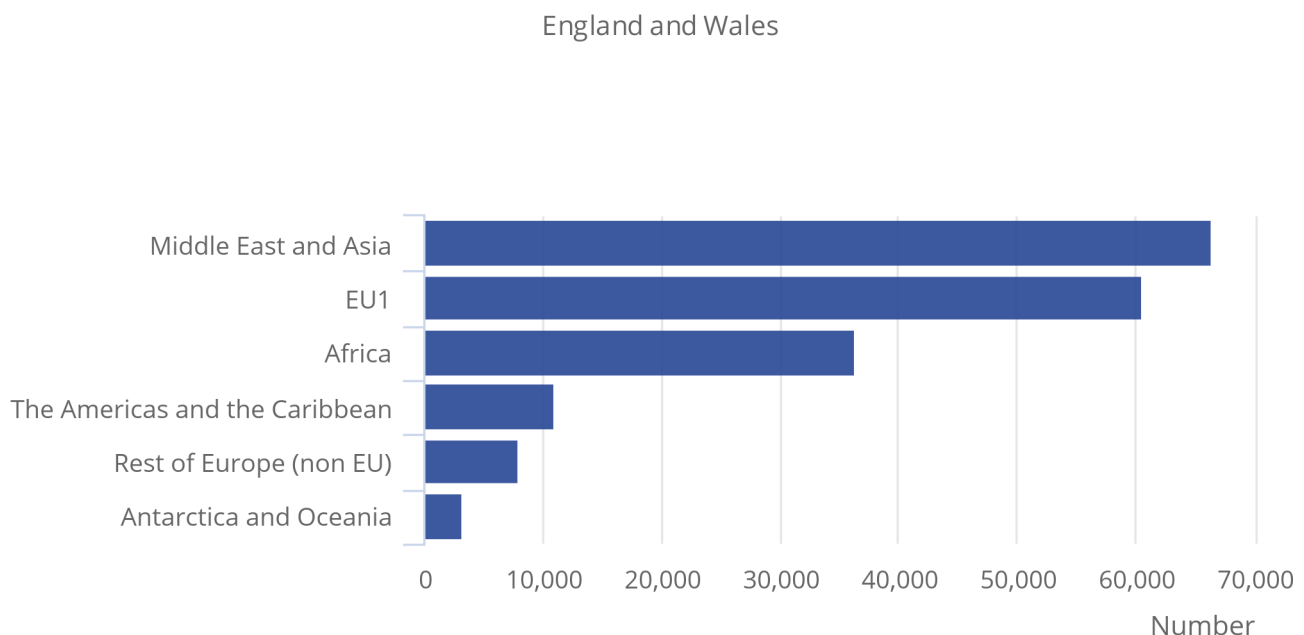
## 5 . Country of birth of foreign born mothers

In England and Wales in 2013, births to mothers born in the European Union (EU), excluding the UK, represented 8.7% of all live births (Figure 3). Births to mothers born in one of the 13 countries that have joined the EU since April 2004 represented the majority of these births (6.1% of all live births). Mothers born in the Middle East and Asia contributed 9.5% of all live births while mothers born in Africa contributed 5.2%.

**Figure 3: Number of live births to mothers born outside the UK, by country group, 2013**

England and Wales

Figure 3: Number of live births to mothers born outside the UK, by country group, 2013



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. EU figures are based on the EU as constituted in 2013 for comparability. See background note 5 for a list of the countries included.

In 2013, Poland, Pakistan and India were the three most common countries of birth for non-UK born mothers (Table 1). Between 2001 and 2006, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh were consistently the three most common countries. However, in 2007, Poland replaced Bangladesh as the third most common country, rising to second place in 2008 and first place in 2010.

**Table 1: Ten most common countries of birth for non-UK born mothers, 2013**

England and Wales

	Country of birth of mother	Number	Percentage of all live births
1	Poland	21,275	3.0
2	Pakistan	18,578	2.7
3	India	14,044	2.0
4	Bangladesh	7,982	1.1
5	Nigeria	7,267	1.0
6	Romania	4,956	0.7
7	Somalia	4,897	0.7
8	Germany	4,838	0.7
9	Lithuania	4,595	0.7
10	South Africa	3,824	0.5
Total outside the UK		185,075	26.5

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Figures by country include births to mothers whose usual residence is outside England and Wales. The total outside the UK excludes those births where the mother's country of birth was not stated.

Poland appeared in the top 10 most common countries of birth for non-UK born mothers in 2005 when it was ninth. In 2003 there were 1,392 live births in England and Wales to Polish born mothers, compared with 1,830 in 2004 when Poland joined the EU and 21,275 in 2013.

Between the year ending December 2003 and the year ending December 2013, the estimated total Polish born population of the UK increased from 75,000 ([ONS, 2011](#)) to 679,000 ([ONS, 2014c](#)). It should be noted that when you look at the populations of the A8 countries that joined the EU in 2004 (Poland, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia), Poland accounts for more than half of the total population of those countries (see international comparisons within the [Eurostat database](#)). This partially explains why the Polish born population in the UK has increased so much more than that of other countries.

In 2013, Romania was the sixth most common country of birth for non-UK born mothers, rising from ninth position in 2012. Romania was the highest climber within the top 10 in 2013 and this represents a 12% rise in the number of births to Romanian born women compared with 2012. Romania first appeared in the top 10 non-UK countries of birth of mother in 2012 when it replaced China (figures available back to 2001), having gradually increased in the rankings. In 2006 there were 772 live births in England and Wales to Romanian born mothers, compared with 1,248 in 2007 (when Romania joined the EU) and 4,956 in 2013. Between the year ending December 2007 and the year ending December 2013, the estimated total Romanian born population of the UK increased from 23,000 ([ONS, 2011](#)) to 130,000 ([ONS, 2014c](#)).

The top 10 non-UK countries of birth of mother have remained fairly similar across the 10-year period since 2003, with seven countries remaining constant: Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Somalia, Germany and South Africa. Jamaica left the top 10 in 2004, while the United States left in 2005 and Ireland in 2007. Ghana and Sri Lanka joined the top 10 in 2004 and 2007 respectively and both left in 2011. China only entered the top 10 for 2009 and 2011.

The diverse fertility levels of migrants born in different countries are important when analysing the impact of migration on fertility in recent years. The report on “Childbearing of UK and non-UK born women living in the UK, 2011” ([ONS 2012](#)) examined fertility patterns in the UK for UK born and non-UK born mothers in the period 2007-2011, using Annual Population Survey (APS) data. Figures within the report are directly comparable to fertility rates reported in this release as both use population data from the same source (APS). The report includes an investigation of fertility patterns at the country level, and also of specific non-UK maternal countries of birth.

A similar but more recent report on “UK and non-UK born women living in the UK – 2011 Census data” ([ONS 2014a](#)) covers just England and Wales using 2011 Census data. Figures in this report are therefore not directly comparable to fertility rates reported in this release as they use population data obtained from different sources (APS in this release and 2011 Census in the report). However, the use of census data does allow for more detailed examination of individual countries with a greater level of precision, and [table 5 \(540.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) within this release shows some summary information from this report.

[Table 5 \(540.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#) shows that the TFRs for women born in different parts of the world but living in England and Wales vary widely, from very low levels such as those for women born in Australasia (TFR of 1.3 in 2011) to much higher levels such as those for women born in North Africa (3.9 in 2011). This table also provides comparable TFRs for 2001, which can give added insight into specific fertility trends. Further breakdowns, including by individual country, can be found in the table published in February ([ONS 2014a](#)).

## 6 . Country of birth of foreign born fathers

In 2013, there were 172,139 babies born to non-UK born fathers, which represents 24.6% of all live births. A smaller proportion (19.1%) of babies born had both parents born outside the UK. Information for fathers is not available for births registered solely by the mother (5.6% of all live births in 2013).

The top 10 most common countries of birth of non-UK born fathers consisted of the same countries between 2008 and 2013, with the exception of Romania, which replaced Ghana in 2012 after gradual increases in ranking. Pakistan was the most common country of birth in 2013, followed by Poland, India and Bangladesh (Table 2). The top 10 countries of birth of non-UK born fathers in 2013 are similar to those of non-UK born mothers, with the inclusion of Sri Lanka rather than Lithuania and some differences in rankings.

**Table 2: Ten most common countries of birth for non-UK born fathers, 2013**

England and Wales

	Country of birth of father	Number	Percentage of all live births
1	Pakistan	20,068	3.0
2	Poland	16,436	2.5
3	India	13,662	2.1
4	Bangladesh	8,776	1.3
5	Nigeria	8,397	1.3
6	Somalia	4,540	0.7
7	Romania	4,387	0.7
8	Germany	3,957	0.6
9	South Africa	3,885	0.6
10	Sri Lanka	3,530	0.5
	Total outside the UK	172,139	24.6

Source: Office for National Statistics

**Notes:**

1. Figures by country include births to fathers whose usual residence is outside England and Wales. The total outside the UK excludes those births where the father's country of birth was not stated.

2. The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008 contained provisions enabling two females in a same-sex couple to register a birth from 1 September 2009 onwards. Due to the small numbers, births registered to a same-sex couple (914 in 2013) are included in the figures with the country of birth of the second female parent being included under the country of birth of father.

## 7 . Age of mother

In 2013, the most common age group of both UK born mothers (29%) and non-UK born mothers (34%) was 30 to 34 years (Figure 4). A much higher proportion of UK born mothers were aged under 25 (24%) in comparison to foreign born mothers (13%). This is a similar pattern to recent years. This reflects the lower proportion of women aged under 25 in the non-UK born population of childbearing age.

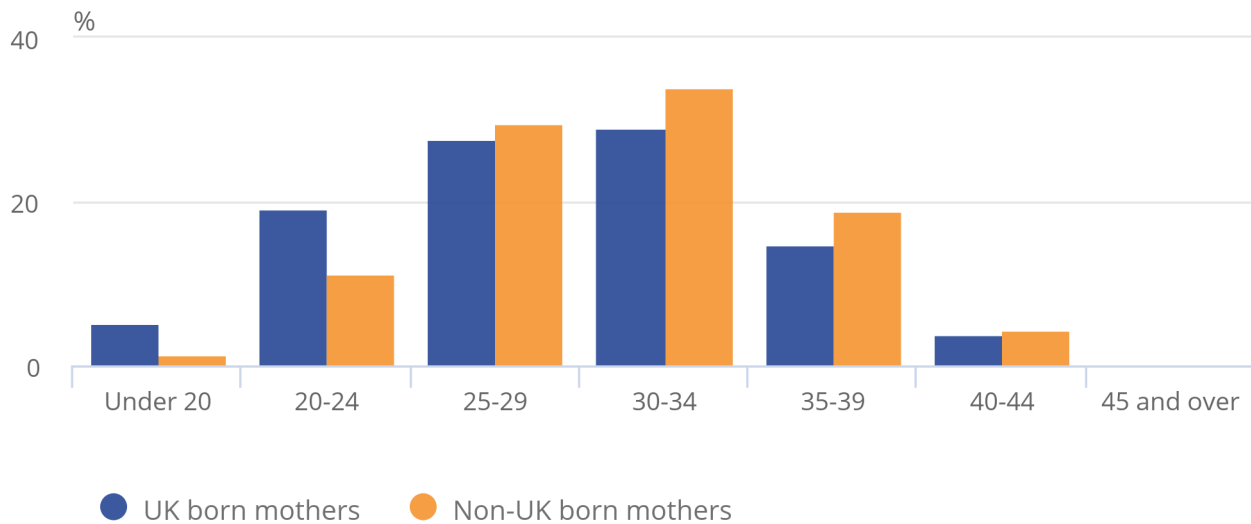


**Figure 4: Percentage of live births by age of mother for UK and non-UK born mothers 2013**

England and Wales

Figure 4: Percentage of live births by age of mother for UK and non-UK born mothers 2013

England and Wales



Source: Office for National Statistics

## 8 . Mother's area of usual residence

In 2013, the region with the highest percentage of live births to mothers born outside the UK was London (57.7%). The North East had the lowest percentage (10.0%). London and the North East have, since 2001, consistently shown the highest and lowest percentages respectively of live births to mothers born outside the UK.

Since 2004, Newham has been the local authority with the highest percentage of births to non-UK born mothers. In 2013, over three quarters of births (76.1%) were to non-UK born mothers. Outside of London, Slough had the highest percentage in 2013 (59.9%), followed by Luton (55.8%). Slough has had the highest percentage of births to non-UK born women outside of London for over 10 years. Luton replaced Forest Heath to become the area with the second highest percentage of births to non-UK born mothers in 2007. The area with the lowest percentage of births to mothers born outside the UK in 2013 was South Staffordshire, with 3.5%. In 2011 and 2012 Redcar and Cleveland had the lowest percentage.

In Wales, the percentage of live births to foreign born mothers was 10.9%. Of the local authorities in Wales, Cardiff had the highest percentage of births to mothers born outside the UK (26.6%) and Torfaen had the lowest (3.7%). Cardiff and Torfaen also had the highest and lowest percentages respectively in 2012.

Geographical variations in the proportion of births to mothers born outside the UK are to be expected, due to local differences in the proportion of people born outside the UK. This can be seen in the indicators of migration at local authority level ([ONS 2014b](#)). In addition, the composition of the foreign born population, in terms of individual countries of birth, will vary considerably between local authorities.

## 9 . Births within marriage/civil partnership

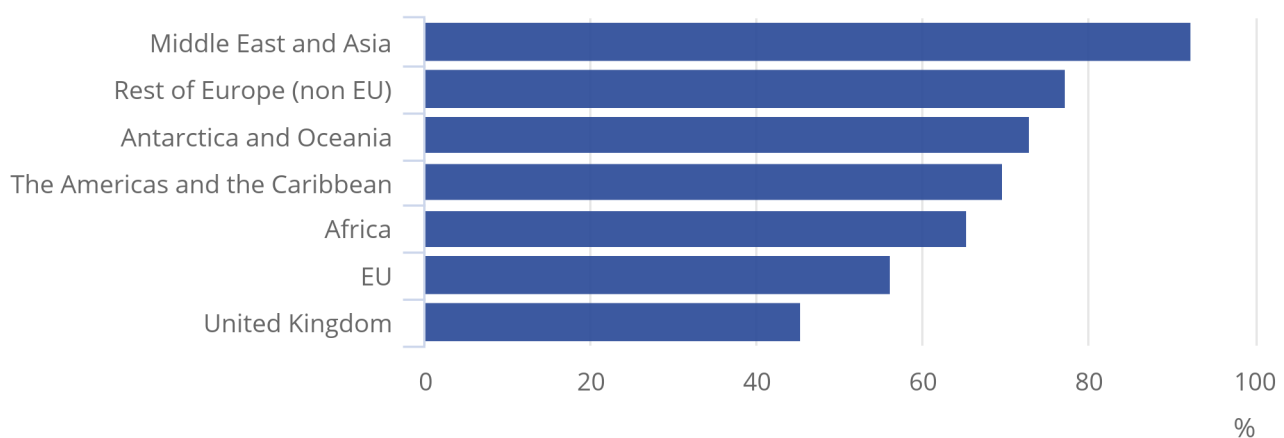
In 2013, a much higher proportion of births to non-UK born women took place within marriage/civil partnership (73%) than for UK born mothers (45%) (Figure 5). This is a similar pattern to previous years. There is considerable variation in the proportion of births within marriage/civil partnership depending on the country of birth of the mother. For example, 97% of births to mothers born in India took place within marriage/civil partnership in 2013 in comparison to 38% of births to mothers born in the Caribbean. These variations reflect different societal expectations between cultures, for example, the acceptability of cohabitation.

**Figure 5: Percentage of live births within marriage/civil partnership, by country group of birth of mother, 2013**

England and Wales

Figure 5: Percentage of live births within marriage/civil partnership, by country group of birth of mother, 2013

England and Wales



Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. EU figures are based on the EU as constituted in 2013 for comparability. See background note 5 for a list of the countries included.

## 10 . Live births to Non-UK born women in the UK

The percentage of live births to non-UK born women in the UK was 25.3% in 2013. For comparison, Scotland was 15.4% and Northern Ireland was 12.6%.

## 11 . Users and uses of parents' country of birth statistics

The Office for National Statistics uses data on parents' country of birth to:

- report on social and demographic trends
- analyse recent trends in births to UK and foreign born women

The Home Office is a key user of birth statistics by parents' country of birth. Data are used to inform policy decisions and help to estimate the size of migrant communities. Other key users of the data are local authorities and other government departments who use the data to inform planning and resource allocation.

Other users include academics, demographers and health researchers who conduct research into trends and characteristics. Lobby groups use the statistics to support their cause or campaign; for example, organisations supporting parents from black and minority ethnic groups' access to maternity services. The media also report on key trends and statistics.

## 12 . Planned changes to birth outputs

During May 2012 changes were made to the Population Statistics Act, which mean that information on the number of previous children and whether previously married are now collected from all mothers at birth registration and not just from married women. This will have an impact on a number of [tables and proposals for changes \(66.2 Kb Pdf\)](#) to outputs for 2012 and 2013 data were outlined on the ONS website in July 2012. Feedback from users was invited. No feedback was received so the proposed changes are being implemented. As a result of these changes, table 8 in this release now includes figures on the number of previous children for all women. Only data for 2013 are available on this basis although a time series will be built up over time.

## 13. Further information

More detailed data on [live births by parents' country of birth are available on the ONS website. \(540.5 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

[Quality and Methodology Information \(275.2 Kb Pdf\)](#) for births is available on the ONS website. Further information on data quality, legislation and procedures relating to births is available in Births Metadata (439.7 Kb Pdf) .

Further [birth statistics](#) for England and Wales are available on the ONS website.

Further 2013 birth statistics will be published later in 2014 see the [release calendar](#) for more details on releases.

[National Records of Scotland](#) provides statistics on births for Scotland.

[Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#) provides statistics on births in Northern Ireland.

International comparisons of live births are available in the [Vital Statistics: Population and Health Reference Tables](#).

International migration data are available in the [Migration Statistics Quarterly Report](#) on the ONS website.

## 14. References

Office for National Statistics (2014a) 'Childbearing of UK and non-UK born women living in the UK, 2011 Census data', available at: [www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/fertility-analysis/childbearing-of-uk-and-non-uk-born-women-living-in-the-uk/2011-census-data/index.html](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/fertility-analysis/childbearing-of-uk-and-non-uk-born-women-living-in-the-uk/2011-census-data/index.html)

Office for National Statistics (2014b) Local Area Migration Indicators Suite – August 2014, available at: [www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/migration1/migration-indicators-suite/index.html](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/migration1/migration-indicators-suite/index.html)

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Office for National Statistics (2011) Migration Statistics Quarterly Report, August 2011, available at: [www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/migration1/migration-statistics-quarterly-report/august-2011/index.html](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/migration1/migration-statistics-quarterly-report/august-2011/index.html)

Toulemon L (2004) 'Fertility among immigrant women: new data, a new approach, Population and Societies', 400, INED, Paris, available at: [www.ined.fr/en/publications/pop\\_soc/bdd/publication/540/](http://www.ined.fr/en/publications/pop_soc/bdd/publication/540/)

Tromans N, Natamba E and Jefferies J (2009) 'Have women born outside the UK driven the rise in UK births since 2001?', Population Trends 136, pp 28–42, available at: [www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/population-trends-rd/population-trends/no--136--summer-2009/index.html](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/population-trends-rd/population-trends/no--136--summer-2009/index.html)

## 15. Background notes

1. Country of birth of mother is used for this analysis since this information is collected at birth registration, unlike ethnicity or migration history. Care is needed in interpretation as country of birth should not be used as a proxy for these variables. For example, not all women born outside the UK will be recent in-migrants. Similarly, the UK born will include the children of earlier in-migrants (the second and third generation).
2. Birth figures are based on births occurring in the data year, but incorporate a small number of late registrations from births occurring in the previous year.
3. The total fertility rate (TFR) is the average number of live children that a group of women would each bear if they experienced the age-specific fertility rates of the calendar year in question throughout their childbearing lifespan (ages 15 to 44). It provides a snapshot of the level of fertility in a particular year and does not necessarily represent the average number of children that a group of women will have over their lifetime.
4. The estimated TFRs for UK and non-UK born women have been produced using estimated populations from the Annual Population Survey (APS) for the denominators. The APS is a combined survey of households in Great Britain, comprising the Labour Force Survey (LFS) plus various sample boosts. These boosts increase the size of the sample, meaning that more robust estimates are available from the APS than from the main LFS. TFRs estimated using population denominators from household surveys may differ slightly from TFRs based on population estimates. This is because population denominators derived from the APS are produced before the mid-year population estimates are available. See notes to Table 6 for more information. The 2013 TFRs (published August 2014) are calculated using the 2013 Annual Population Survey (APS) dataset. The 2011, 2012 and 2013 TFRs are all weighted using 2011 mid-year population estimates and projections, which were calculated prior to the availability of the Census 2011 results. The TFRs for 2004 to 2010 were previously calculated in August 2011, using the latest available APS datasets at that time. The APS datasets will be reweighted in 2015 to take account of the revised population estimates following the 2011 Census. The intention is to rebase the figures in Table 6 in summer 2015.
5. EU figures are based on the EU as constituted in 2013 for comparability. The countries in the EU are listed below, by the year they joined.

2013 - Croatia 2007 - Romania, Bulgaria 2004 - Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia 1995 - Austria, Finland, Sweden 1986 - Portugal, Spain 1981 - Greece 1973 - Denmark, Ireland, UK 1958 - Belgium, France, (West) Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands

6. Live births to UK born mothers and non-UK born mothers do not sum to total live births because a small number of records do not have mother's country of birth stated. In 2013, there were 26 records where the mother's country of birth was not stated.
7. There is a large degree of comparability in birth statistics between countries within the UK. However, there are some differences although these are believed to have a negligible impact on the comparability of the statistics. These differences are outlined in the [Quality and Methodology Information \(275.2 Kb Pdf\)](#) document for births.
8. A list of the names of those given pre-publication access to the statistics and written commentary is available in [Pre-release Access List – Parents' Country of Birth 2013](#). The rules and principles which govern pre-release access are featured within the [Pre-release Access to Official Statistics Order 2008](#).
9. Special extracts and tabulations of births data for England and Wales are available to order (subject to legal frameworks, disclosure control, resources and agreements of costs, where appropriate). Such enquiries should be made to:

Vital Statistics Outputs Branch Life Events and Population Sources Division Office for National Statistics  
Segensworth Road Titchfield Fareham Hampshire PO15 5RR

Tel: +44 (0)1329 444110 E-mail: [vsob@ons.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:vsob@ons.gsi.gov.uk)

The [ONS charging policy](#) is available on the ONS website. In line with the [ONS approach to open data \(166.9 Kb Pdf\)](#), ad hoc data requests will be published onto the website.

10. We welcome feedback on the content, format and relevance of this release. Please send feedback to the postal or email address above.
11. Follow ONS on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).
12. 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)

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs
- are well explained and readily accessible
- are produced according to sound methods
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.