

Statistical bulletin

Births by parents' country of birth, England and Wales: 2021

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



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Next release:
July to August 2023 (provisional)

Correction

17 August 2023 10:26

An error was identified for figures and ranks for the years 2017 to 2020. This happened because of a human error. The error affected data for Somalia in Table 2 of the 2021 edition of this dataset (Parents' country of birth: 2021). The incorrect figures have been revised in the dataset.

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1 . Other birth outputs in this release

Other commentary from the latest births data can be found on the following pages:

- [Births in England and Wales: 2021](#)

2 . Main points

- In 2021, 28.8% of live births were to non-UK-born women; this is a decrease from 29.3% in 2020.
- The total fertility rate (TFR) increased for UK-born women to 1.54 children per woman; the TFR for non-UK-born women remained at 2.03 children per woman.
- In 2021, Pakistan remained the most common country of birth for non-UK-born fathers; Romania was the most common country of birth for non-UK-born mothers, and this was up from second in 2020.
- Albania moved into the top ten most common countries of birth for both non-UK-born mothers and non-UK-born fathers for the first time.

Delays in birth registrations because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic have affected 2020 and 2021 data. See Section 8: [Measuring the data](#) for more information.

3 . Live births to UK and non-UK-born women

There were 445,055 live births to UK-born women and 179,726 live births to non-UK-born women in 2021. The percentage of live births to non-UK-born women decreased to 28.8% in 2021 from 29.3% in 2020; this was similar to the percentage in 2019. This is the result of a higher number of births to UK-born women. Compared with 2020, there were 11,031 more births to UK-born women in 2021, whereas for non-UK-born women, the total number of births remained similar to the numbers seen in 2020.

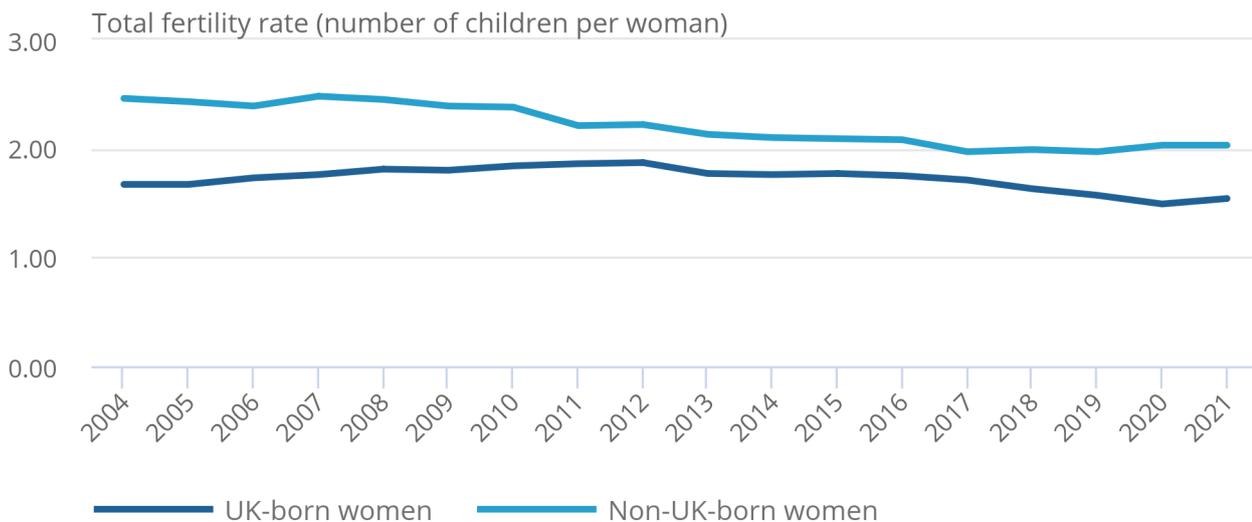
In 2021, the estimated [total fertility rates \(TFR\)](#) for UK-born women increased to 1.54 children per woman, compared with 1.49 children per woman in 2020., This was below the TFR of 1.57 children per woman in 2019. For non-UK-born women, in 2021, the TFR remained the same at 2.03 children per woman (Figure 1). [Age-specific fertility rates](#) among non-UK-born women remain higher for every age group compared with UK-born women in 2021.

Figure 1: Total fertility rate (TFR) of UK-born women increased for the first time since 2015

Estimated total fertility Rate (TFR) for UK-born and non-UK-born women, England and Wales, 2004 to 2021

Figure 1: Total fertility rate (TFR) of UK-born women increased for the first time since 2015

Estimated total fertility Rate (TFR) for UK-born and non-UK-born women, England and Wales, 2004 to 2021



Source: Source: Office for National Statistics – Births in England and Wales, and the Annual Population Survey (APS)

Notes:

1. The TFRs for 2021 are calculated using our [2021 Annual Population Survey data](#).

4 . Country of birth of non-UK-born mothers and non-UK-born fathers

In 2021, 34.2% of all children born in England and Wales had either one or both parents born outside the UK; this is a decrease from 34.8% in 2020.

Romania became the most common country of birth for non-UK-born mothers in 2021, from second in 2020 with a 1.2% rise in the number of births. Albania moved into the top 10 most common countries of birth for both non-UK-born mothers and non-UK-born fathers for the first time. Births to mothers from Poland saw the largest decrease in 2021, with an 8.6% decrease.

Figure 2: Romania became the most common country of birth to non-UK-born mothers for the first time

Ten most common countries of birth for non-UK-born mothers, England and Wales, 2012, 2015, 2018, 2021

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

Pakistan remained the most common country of birth for non-UK-born fathers, however the number of births decreased by 4.5% between 2020 and 2021. India became the second most common country of birth for non-UK-born fathers in 2021. Births to fathers born in Poland had the largest decrease, falling by 10.3% from 10,542 in 2020 to 9,458 in 2021. This has been decreasing since 2015.

Figure 3: Albania enters the top 10 most common country of birth for non-UK-born fathers for the first time

Ten most common countries of birth for non-UK-born fathers, England and Wales, 2012, 2015, 2018, 2021

Notes:

1. Figures for fathers include a very small number of births to second female parents.

Download the data

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5 . Live births to non-UK-born women by geography

In 2021, the percentage of live births to non-UK-born women decreased for England, dropping from 30.2% in 2020 to 29.6% in 2021. Whereas in Wales, the percentage of live births to non-UK-born women increased from 11.8% in 2020 to 12.4% in 2021.

Figure 4: Percentage of live births born to non-UK-born women by local authority district, England and Wales, 2007 to 2021

Notes:

1. Figures are based on mothers' usual area of residence, based on boundaries as of May 2022.

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6 . Births data

[Births by parents' country of birth, England and Wales](#)

Dataset | Released 9 August 2022

Annual data on live births in England and Wales by parents' country of birth.

Please filter the explorable datasets for births in England and Wales, 2021 data will be added as soon as it is available:

- [Live births in England and Wales: birth rates down to local authority areas \(2013onwards\)](#)
- [Live births in England and Wales by sex and characteristics of mother: national and regional \(2013onwards\)](#)
- [Live births in England and Wales by characteristics of mother and father \(2013onwards\)](#)
- [Live births in England and Wales down to local authority local area \(2013onwards\)](#)
- [Live births in England and Wales for small geographic areas \(2013onwards\)](#)

7 . Glossary

Age-specific fertility rate (ASFR)

The number of live births to mothers of a particular age per 1,000 women of that age in the population. Useful for comparing fertility of women at different ages or women of the same age in different populations.

Live birth

A baby showing signs of life at birth.

Total fertility rate (TFR)

The TFR is the average number of live children a group of women would have if they experienced the age-specific fertility rates for the calendar year in question throughout their childbearing lifespan. TFR is a better measure of trends than the number of livebirths, since it accounts for size and age structure of the female population of childbearing age. The rate provides a timely measure of fertility levels and can be affected by changes in the [timing of childbearing](#), [completed family size](#) and the population structure.

A more complete glossary is available from our [Userguide to birth statistics](#) methodology.

8 . Measuring the data

Our data are for live births and stillbirths occurring in each calendar year, plus late registrations for the previous year. Because of delays in birth registrations caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in 2020, the number of late registrations from the previous year included in the 2021 dataset was higher than usual but still accounted for less than 1% of all births and does not affect the headline trends discussed. Figures include mothers and fathers whose usual residence is outside England and Wales.

Birth statistics represent births that occur and are then registered in England and Wales. Figures are derived from information recorded when live births and stillbirths are registered as part of civil registration, which is a legal requirement. These data represent the most complete data source available.

The registration of births is a service carried out by the Local Registration Service in partnership with the General Register Office (GRO), in England and Wales. Birth registration is linked to the NHS birth notification within the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to obtain the age of the mother where this was missing on the birth registration. It also enables the analysis of further characteristics such as birthweight, ethnicity of the baby and gestation of live births.

The ONS has identified an error in the calculation of population weights in the Annual Population Survey in some recent periods, affecting the age breakdown of the population in Wales to a small extent. The most recent datasets are not affected, and breakdowns for the UK, and England and Wales as a whole, would be largely unaffected. The affected datasets will mean that the 2020 and 2021 data presented in Table 6 in this data release will need to be revised. For our births statistics presented here, we will revise the data in the next update of this data release.

More quality and methodology information (QMI) on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in our [Birth statistics QMI](#).

Coronavirus and birth statistics

Delays in birth registrations because of the coronavirus pandemic affected 2020 and 2021 data; in normal circumstances, births should be registered within 42 days, and our annual data extract only includes births registered before 25 February.

Birth registration services in England and Wales were temporarily suspended in March 2020. From June 2020, registration services restarted where it was safe to do so. In 2020, 42% of registrations came in after 42 days (the usual legal limit) and in 2021, 26% came in after 42 days. Therefore, we decided to include all births registered up to 12 August 2021 in the 2020 dataset and all births up to 15 May 2022 in the 2021 dataset to ensure that our birth statistics are as complete as possible and comparable with previous years. For more information, please see our [Births in England and Wales explained: 2020 article](#) and our [User guide to birth statistics](#) methodology.

9 . Strengths and limitations

Our [User guide to birth statistics](#) methodology provides further information on data quality, legislation and procedures relating to conceptions, and includes a glossary of terms.

National Statistics status for Births in England and Wales

[National Statistics status](#) means that our statistics meet the highest standard of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

Date of most recent full assessment: [September 2011](#)

Most recent compliance check, which confirms National Statistics status: [September 2011](#)

Improvements since last review include that:

- revisions to the way statistics are produced are explained in the user guide, detailing the year the change took place and reason why
- in cases where corrections were implemented, they were accompanied by explanations of the change and the reasons why
- where applicable, we added additional background information into our [User guide](#) and [QMI](#) to inform the user of the differences in methods between the UK countries, and the reasons underlying these differences
- following [a consultation on proposed changes to statistics](#), we made changes in 2018 to the way that birth statistics are published, and five [explorable datasets](#) are now released alongside the first release of annual births data; this means more detailed births data (including small area geographies) are now available in a timelier manner

10 . Related links

[Births in England and Wales: 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 9 August 2022

Live births, stillbirths and the intensity of childbearing, measured by the total fertility rate.

[Provisional Births in England and Wales: 2021](#)

Article | Released 22 March 2022

Provisional analysis of births occurring between January and December 2021 in England and Wales using NHS birth notifications.

[Explorable datasets for births in England and Wales](#)

Datasets (Nomis) | Updated as new data become available

Datasets on life events in England and Wales.

[Baby names in England and Wales: 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 18 October 2021

Most popular first names for baby boys and girls in 2020 using birth registration data.

[Births characteristics in England and Wales: 2020](#)

Bulletin | Released 13 January 2022

Annual live births in England and Wales by sex, birthweight, gestational age, ethnicity and month, maternities by place of birth and with multiple births, and stillbirths by age of parents and calendar quarter.

[Births in Northern Ireland](#)

Web page | Updated as new data become available

Births statistics from 1887 onwards and baby names statistics from 1997 onwards for Northern Ireland.

[Births in Scotland](#)

Web page | Updated as new data become available

National Records of Scotland's statistics on births.

[User guide to birth statistics](#)

Methodology | Released 13 January 2022

Supporting information for birth statistics, which present figures on births that occur and are then registered in England and Wales. Figures are based on information collected at birth registration.