

Census – key statistics published December 2012

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Summary

- The Office for National Statistics (ONS) published significant further details of the 2011 census on 11th December 2012. This included [Key statistics for England and Wales](#) covering age, health, ethnicity, religion, marital status, accommodation, skills etc., supported by 44 data tables; three reports on [international migration](#), [religion](#), and [ethnicity and national identity](#); and a [comparison of labour force survey \(LFS\) and census labour market indicators](#) in England and Wales
- These publications stimulated important debates about the changing character of Britain/England – e.g. the impact of increasing migration, the ‘loss’ of religion and particularly Christianity as a majority characteristic in significant areas, differences between London and the rest of the country etc.
- In December, ONS also published its [revised mid-year estimates for 2002-10](#) (to reconcile these with the 2011 census), and [UK census 2011](#) which added results from Scotland and Northern Ireland to England and Wales results
- Understanding the general analysis of census 2011 is hugely important to all local government policy makers – members and officers – in terms of ongoing debates determining economic and social policy. A fine grain analysis of your local area is similarly crucial for all those involved in local leadership and service developments

Briefing in full

Introduction

This is the third LGIU briefing on census 2011. The first – in August 2012 – provided considerable [detail on the first release](#) of results. This was followed in October by an [analysis of mid-year estimates 2011](#) – the first annual results produced using the 2011 census results – together with sub-national population projections to 2021. Office for National Statistics (ONS) has now published its [‘key statistics for local](#)

[authorities in England and Wales](#)'. This adds much greater detail to the first release in terms of 'who we are', 'how we live' and 'what we do' in a portfolio of reports and data tables.

This briefing will both describe the contents of the latest releases and comment on the issues raised by them. These both affect the general character of social and economic policy debate in England (and Wales), and are also vital to a deep understanding of changes occurring to the populations of local authorities across the country.

What is in the 'key statistics'?

The December 11 release includes the following documents:-

- A [statistical bulletin](#)
- Three reports (termed 'short stories') and accompanying video summaries on [ethnicity](#), [international migrants](#) and [religion](#)
- A [comparison of census and Labour Force Survey \(LFS\)](#) labour market indicators
- [Forty four reference tables](#) (and accompanying interactive data visualisations) covering (by local authorities – LADs – in England and Wales):-
 - Usual resident population
 - Age structure
 - Marital and civil partnership status
 - Living arrangements
 - Household composition
 - Dependent children, adults not in employment, those with disability and/or long-term health problems
 - A range of tables on ethnicity, national identity, country of birth, passports held, household language (and welsh language skills and profile for Wales)
 - Religion
 - Health and provision of unpaid care
 - A range of tables on dwellings, tenure, rooms, central heating, car ownership, and communal establishments

- Qualifications and students
- A range of tables on economic activity, hours worked, industry and occupational characteristics each broken down by gender
- A range of tables on socio-economic classification, ethnic diversity, country of birth, year and age of arrival, length of residence in the UK, detailed religion, and detailed welsh language skills (in Wales)

This is a huge, key data source for local analysis and policy development – and also provides a detailed national picture of how Britain (or rather England and Wales) is changing in terms of population and households.

For completeness, it should also be recognised that shortly after the release of the key statistics, ONS also produced [revised mid-year estimates](#) (MYE) for 2002-10. This was an exercise explained in the previous MYE briefing to reconcile MYEs from the previous decade with the 2011 census results. They also published a [UK census bulletin](#) (at first release level of detail, bringing in results from Scotland and Northern Ireland).

What are the major messages of the ‘key statistics’?

The statistical bulletin restated earlier releases about the overall size of population, its rate of growth, gender, age, numbers of household and average household size (see August LGIU briefing). It then goes into greater detail on a range of factors grouped around ‘who we are’, ‘how we live’, and ‘what we do’.

Who we are...

- **Health:** 81% of residents describe themselves as being in good or very good health, whilst 6% describe themselves as in bad or very bad health (the remainder are ‘fair’). In general respondents in London and the south-east record the ‘best’ health and lowest levels of ‘very bad’ health respectively, whilst Wales and north east have lower levels of very good health and higher levels of very bad health. These geographical trends are also reflected in the figures on with a long-term limiting illness around an average of 18% for the population as a whole, and 13% for those of ‘working age’ (16-64).
- **Religion:** The key features of analysis of declared religion is the decline of those identifying themselves with Christianity and the rise of those expressing no religious affiliation. Christianity remains the main religious affiliation at 59.3%, but this ranges from 67.5% in the north east (a decline of 12points over 2001) to under half – 48.4% in London (a decline of ten points). Naturally, however, at the LAD level there is huge variation in levels of those identifying themselves as Christian – from 81% in Knowsley to 27% in Tower Hamlets. After Christians, Muslims (4.8%) and Hindu (1.5%) are the most populous religious affiliations, with the Muslim affiliation in Tower Hamlets

(34.5%) being higher than Christian, and the Muslim and Hindu affiliations in Leicester jointly (33.8%) being higher than Christian (32.4%). As expected from the Christian figures, London has the highest proportion of all other major religious groups except Sikhs (West Midlands). Perhaps, more striking, however, is the increase in those expressing no religious affiliation at all – up ten points over the decade to stand at 25% overall (and 32% in Wales). It needs to be recognised, however, that this question (as with others) is self-answering and therefore not entirely reliable. For instance, the [Guardian highlights that 176,632 self-proclaimed Jedi Knights](#), are the largest religious grouping after the mainstream religions (and well ahead of well-established religions such as Rastafarians, scientologists, Bahai etc). However, this grouping has itself suffered from the general religious malaise – down from 330,000 in the 2001 census (when there was a campaign to register as a Jedi if you disagreed with the religion questions).

- **Ethnic Groups:** The majority of residents regard themselves as 'White' (86% - down five points from 2001), and of these the vast majority (94%) classify themselves as White British. In Wales over 96% of residents regard themselves as White – whilst in London, 'White British' fell to just 45%. Other major ethnic groups are Indian (2.5%), Pakistani (2.0%), African (1.8%), and 'Other Asian' (1.5%). Over 12% of households (i.e. 2million) have members of more than one ethnic group in the household – a rise of 30% (i.e. 600,000) since 2001. Questions asked on national identity reveal that, in England 60% of residents regard themselves as English (only), a further 9% as English AND British, and a further 19% as British only. The equivalent figures for Wales and Welsh are 57%, 8% and 17%.
- **Residents born outside the UK:** 13% of residents (7.5million) were born outside the UK (of which 3million are resident in London – 37% of the capital's population). Most of these came to UK either as children (27% were under the age of fifteen) or from 15-44 (68%). Just over half of residents born outside the UK arrived from 2001-11 (3.8 million). The most reported countries of birth of residents born outside the UK are India, Pakistan, Ireland and Germany, but the most notable change from previous decades was the rise in the number of Polish immigrants, which at 579,000 over the decade made them the second highest country of origin.
- **Household language:** English is the main language in 91% of households. In a further 4% of households English is the main language of at least one resident adult, and in a further 1% at least one child spoke English as their main language. Again the incidence of households where languages other than English are spoken was focused on London (26%) and is as low as 3% in the north east.

How we live...

- **Accommodation and tenure:** 98% of residents in England and Wales live in households, with the remaining 2% (1million) living in communal

establishments. Of the 24.4million households, 78% are houses (down 2.4% since 2001). This relative decrease is matched by an increase of 2.7% in the proportion of blocks of flats to 16.3%. 33% of homes are owned with a loan or mortgage, 31% are owned outright, 15% are in the private rented sector whilst 9% are rented from the council. Ownership with a mortgage fell by 6% during the decade, with a corresponding rise in private rented accommodation. As ever, there are significant regional variations. Outright ownership in Wales and South West is higher than owned with a mortgage (linked to the older populations in these regions), whilst London has a much higher proportion of flats (37.6%) and private rented (24%) than the national average.

- **Rooms, bedrooms and central heating:** There are an average of 5.4 rooms per household and 2.7 bedrooms. In terms of occupancy, the ONS rated overcrowding in homes highest in London (up to 22% on rooms and 12% on bedrooms), with the north east, Wales and south west least overcrowded. 97% of homes have central heating – up 5% from 2001.
- **Cars and van availability:** There is on average 1.2 cars or vans per household in England and Wales (27.3million). London is the only region where households outnumber cars and vans, with 42% of households having no cars or vans (up 5% from 2001). Nationally, 26.4% of households have no cars or vans, whilst 29.4% have two or more.
- **Marital status:** 47% of residents over 16 are married (down four points over 2001), 35% are single (up five points), 9% are divorced, 7% widowed, and 3% separated. London is the only region where married adults are under 40% of the population.
- **Household composition and communal establishments:** 62% of households are family households. Within this category, though, there has been a shift away from married households (down four points) towards single parents (up one) and co-habiting (up two). Of the one million people living in communal establishments 57% are in non-medical establishments (like prisons or student accommodation) whilst, of medical establishments, over 36% are in care homes.

What we do...

- **Unpaid care:** 10% of residents (5.8million) provide care (12% in Wales), of whom 2.1million provide over 20 hours per week (an increase of five points or 473,000 over 2001). Again the difference with London is striking, where only 8% of residents provide care, and only 3.1% provide over 20 hours per week – compared to 3.8% nationally and 5.2% in Wales.
- **Economic activity:** 70% of residents aged 16-74 are economically active, ranging from 72% in the south east to 66% in Wales. Of economically active residents, 55% are full-time employees, 20% are part time, 14% are self employed, 6% are unemployed, and 5% are students. Female residents are

much more likely to be part time (33%) or students (5.7%) whilst males are more likely to be full time employees (62%), self employed (18%) or unemployed (7%). Of the 1.8million unemployed, over 700,000 were long-term unemployed whilst almost 300,000 had never worked. Unemployment rates ranged from 8.1% in the north east to 4.7% in the south west. Atypically, London has relatively high rates of unemployment (7.3%). The ONS points out that due to the self-completion character of the census, employment estimates differ from Labour Force Survey which they consider a more reliable source of intelligence on this.

- **Qualifications:** On qualifications, those with a degree or above (i.e. Level Four and above) outnumber those with no qualifications by 27.2% to 22.7%. Level four and above qualifications range from 38% in London to 22% in the north east and those with no qualification from 18% to 27% over the same regions. Given the current government emphasis on apprentices, it is also noteworthy that 1.6 million apprentices are recorded, with the highest density in the north east (4.7%) and the lowest in London (1.6%).
- **Industry and occupation:** In terms of industrial classification, the five largest sectors are wholesale and retail (15.9%), health and social work (12.5%), education (9.9%), manufacturing (8.9%) and construction (7.7%). Again, the London profile is very different to national averages with Professional, Scientific and Technical services being the second largest industrial sector (10.9% compared to a national average of 6.6% and 4.3% in Wales), and Financial and Insurance Services being in the top five (7.7% compared to 4.3% nationally). In occupational groupings, Professional occupations (17.4%) are the largest of nine groupings, with process plant and machine operatives the smallest (7.2%). The most extreme regional groupings, again for London, are 22.5% and 4.7% respectively.

Next steps

Following the December releases, the future programme for census releases is to extend the analysis presented to ward and output area geographies on 30 January 2013. Thereafter, multivariate analysis (i.e. where you can cross-analyse data by a variety of variables – e.g. age by geography, sex and religious group) is scheduled for release in March-June 2013. A fourth release from July-October 2013 will complete the detailed characteristics analysis. Further themed analysis (e.g. armed forces, students etc) and ‘short stories’ (on particular topics) is also planned for 2013, along with further work on reconciling 2011 census with both 2001 and with international partners. Data releases for Scotland follow their own pattern, typically several months after England and Wales, and Northern Ireland. ONS will produce consolidated UK census tables when this is available.

Comment

The latest release of census data gives LADs a much richer picture than hitherto of medium term changes taking place in their area. This will be further augmented at sub-district levels in subsequent releases. The summary above cannot do justice to the depth and breadth of analysis that can be undertaken at LAD level, and all the general points highlighted have specific local dimensions.

Major themes picked up by the media focused, amongst others, on immigration, diversity, religious affiliation, the housing 'crisis', health and social care, marital status, qualifications, part-time working, the role of London (and to a lesser extent other metropolitan centres) as major social and economic policy issues. There has been considerable 'heart-searching' broadly around the theme(s) of different characters of two-tier Britain. These types of national debate work at a level of generalisation. But how this plays out locally is subject to huge variation, and a much more complicated set of stories.

For local authorities, one needs to get beyond national and even regional generalisations, and look at the finer grain of what the figures tell us. For instance, for LADs outside London it will often be worth while making principal comparisons with national figures excluding the hugely distorting London effect, with neighbours, and with a relevant comparator group. And within London, the differences across boroughs can be as large as (if not even more extreme than) inter-regional variations.

To take one example, much has been made of London now having a 'white british' minority of only 45% against a national average of 80% as a whole, but this encompasses a range from only 17% in Newham to over 83% in Havering (i.e. above national average). The East, with over 85% classified as 'white british' ranges from only 45% in Luton to 97% in North Norfolk. The same point can be made of almost all the census data, and ONS have provided a range of rang tool and interactive visualisations to help the analytic process.

Finally, these briefings have made the point several times about the case for local statistical services. Provision of sub-national statistical services is particularly challenging in the current public finance and local government financial climate. However, so much of ONS data's apparent precision is based on assumptions and inferred understandings. For instance, the revised mid year estimates 2002-10 has distributed the 464,000 2001 under estimations roll-forward across the nine years, and will, in early 2013, extend this distribution between geographies. Similarly, self completed census data on, for example, caring or industry sector employment need local interpretation. This requires a deep understanding of how the ONS interpreted the responses on the census questionnaires.

There is also the huge issue of how to develop robust statistical intelligence for service planning and policy development over the long decade between 2001 and 2021. The lessons of 2001, and the drift of inaccuracies over the 'noughties' had

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profound implications for many councils. It is clear that the ONS wants to do better this decade, but assuring this will require an involved, intelligent, and concentrated local government contribution.

For more information about this, or any other LGiU member briefing, please contact Janet Sillett, Briefings Manager, on janet.sillett@lgiu.org.uk