

Statistical bulletin

Births by parents' country of birth, England and Wales: 2020

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



Contact:
Peter Synowiec
health.data@ons.gov.uk
+44 1329 444110

Release date:
14 October 2021

Next release:
July to August 2022 (provisional)

Table of contents

1. [Other birth outputs in this release](#)
2. [Main points](#)
3. [Live births to UK and non-UK-born women](#)
4. [Mother's country of birth by age](#)
5. [Country of birth of non-UK-born mothers and fathers](#)
6. [Live births to non-UK-born mothers by geography](#)
7. [Births data](#)
8. [Glossary](#)
9. [Measuring the data](#)
10. [Strengths and limitations](#)
11. [Related links](#)

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

2 . Main points

- In 2020, 29.3% of all live births were to women born outside the UK; this is the highest since records began in 1969, continuing the general long-term increase.
- The total fertility rate (TFR) decreased for UK-born women to 1.50 children per woman and increased slightly to 1.98 children per non-UK-born woman.
- Pakistan was the most common country of birth for both non-UK born mothers and fathers for the first time since 2009; the second most common country of birth was Romania for both parents.

Delays in birth registrations because of the coronavirus pandemic [have affected 2020 data](#).

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

In 2020, there were 434,024 live births to UK-born women and 179,881 live births to non-UK-born women. The percentage of live births to non-UK-born women continued to rise, increasing from 28.7% in 2019 to 29.3% in 2020.

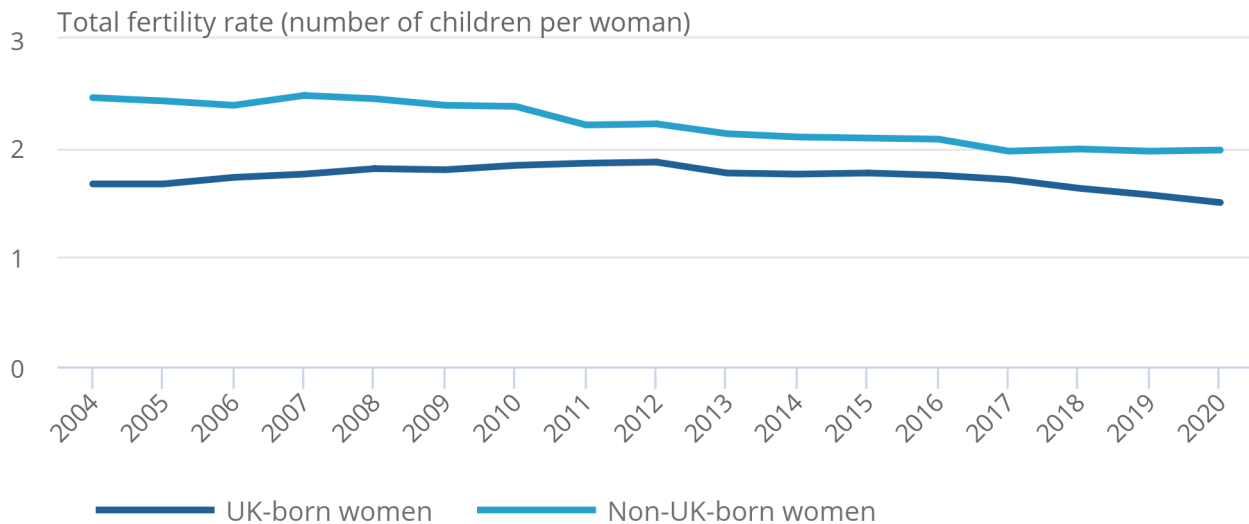
In 2020, the estimated [total fertility rate \(TFR\)](#) for UK-born women decreased to 1.50 children per woman, down from 1.57 children per woman in 2019, which is a decrease of 4.5%. While for non-UK-born women the TFR increased slightly to 1.98 children per woman, up from 1.97 in 2019, this is an increase of 0.5% (Figure 1).

Figure 1: The gap between UK-born and non-UK born TFRs continued to widen for the third consecutive year

Estimated total fertility rate (TFR) for UK-born and non-UK-born women, England, and Wales, 2004 to 2020

Figure 1: The gap between UK-born and non-UK born TFRs continued to widen for the third consecutive year

Estimated total fertility rate (TFR) for UK-born and non-UK-born women, England, and Wales, 2004 to 2020



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

Notes:

1. The TFRs for 2020 are calculated using 2020 [Annual Population Survey](#) data.

4 . Mother’s country of birth by age

In 2020, [age-specific fertility rates](#) among non-UK-born women were higher for every age group, compared with UK-born women. When broken down by world region, women of all ages born in the “Rest of Europe” (non-EU) region had the highest fertility rate at 84.2 births per 1,000 women; this pattern is consistent with 2019.

Table 1: Age-specific fertility rates (ASFR) by mother’s country of birth and age of mother
England and Wales, 2020

| Country of birth of mother | All ages | Under 20 years | 20 to 29 years | 30 to 39 years | 40 years and over |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| United Kingdom | 43.4 | 9.6 | 60.3 | 79.1 | 13.5 |
| Total outside United Kingdom | 60.6 | 14.5 | 95.4 | 88.1 | 22.0 |
| European Union (EU) | 56.5 | 27.0 | 79.1 | 75.6 | 19.6 |
| Rest of Europe (non EU) | 84.2 | 10.8 | 200.4 | 105.6 | 22.7 |
| Africa | 60.3 | 6.0 | 108.1 | 96.6 | 28.1 |
| The Americas and the Caribbean | 39.9 | 4.7 | 43.2 | 69.3 | 20.5 |
| Middle East and Asia | 71.0 | 6.7 | 127.4 | 103.6 | 21.8 |
| Antarctica and Oceania | 32.2 | 1.9 | 23.4 | 78.3 | 15.8 |

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

Notes

1. The ASFRs for 2020 are calculated using 2020 Annual Population Survey data.

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

In 2020, 34.8% of all children born in England and Wales had either one or both parents born outside the UK; up from 34.3% in 2019.

In 2020, Pakistan became the most common country of birth for non-UK-born mothers for the first time since 2009, followed by Romania in second place and Poland in third. Despite Romania’s rise to second place, the number of births to women born in Romania decreased by 2.2% compared with 2019, falling for the first time since entering the top 10 in 2012.

Figure 2: Pakistan became the most common country of birth to non-UK-born mothers

Ten most common countries of birth for non-UK-born mothers, England and Wales, 2011, 2014, 2017, 2020

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

Pakistan (first) and Romania (second) remained the most common country of birth for non-UK-born fathers in 2020. The number of births to fathers born in Romania decreased by 2.8% between 2019 and 2020, falling for the first time since entering the top 10 in 2012. Births to fathers born in India and Afghanistan continued to increase.

Figure 3: Afghanistan rose to eighth place after only entering the top 10 for non-UK-born fathers in 2019

Ten most common countries of birth for non-UK-born fathers, England and Wales, 2011, 2014, 2017, 2020

Notes:

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

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

6 . Live births to non-UK-born mothers by geography

In 2020, the percentage of live births to non-UK-born mothers increased slightly for England, while it decreased slightly for Wales from 2019.

Figure 4: Percentage of live births born to non-UK-born mothers by local authority district

England and Wales, 2007 to 2020

Notes:

1. Figures are based on mothers' usual area of residence, based on boundaries as of May 2021.

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

7 . Births data

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

Dataset | Released 14 October 2021

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:

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

8 . 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 average number of live children a group of women would have if they experienced the age-specific fertility rates for a specific calendar year 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. More information about how we calculate a completed family size is available in our [National population projections, fertility assumptions: 2018-based methodology](#).

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

9 . Measuring the data

Our data are for live births occurring in each calendar year, plus a very small number of late registrations from the previous year. 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.

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

Coronavirus (COVID-19) and birth statistics

Delays in birth registrations because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic have affected 2020 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, registrations services restarted where it was safe to do so. In line with the Office for National Statistics' (ONS') response on [COVID-19 and the production of statistics](#) during the coronavirus pandemic, we have been monitoring the implications of any delays in births registrations. In 2020, 42% of registrations came in after 42 days (the usual legal limit). Therefore, we decided to include all births registered up to 12 August 2021 in the 2020 dataset to ensure that our birth statistics for 2020 are as complete as possible and comparable with previous years. For more information, please see [Births in England and Wales explained: 2020](#) article and our [User guide to birth statistics methodology](#).

10 . 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.

Our most recent [UK Statistics Authority full assessment](#) that was published in September 2011 is available to view.

Improvements since last review:

- 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 to birth statistics](#) and [Births 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. Five [explorable datasets](#) are now released in October alongside the first release of annual births data. This means more detailed birth data (including small area geographies) are now available in a timelier manner.

11 . Related links

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

Bulletin | Released 14 October 2021

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

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

Datasets | Updated as new data become available

Nomis datasets on life events in England and Wales.

[Baby names in England and Wales: 2019](#)

Bulletin | Released 26 August 2020

Most popular first names for baby boys and girls in 2019 using birth registration data.

[Birth characteristics in England and Wales: 2019](#)

Bulletin | Released 16 November 2020

Annual live births by sex, 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 from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

[Vital Events - Births in Scotland](#)

Web page | Updated as new data become available

National Records of Scotland's (NRS's) statistics on births.