

Statistical bulletin

# Population estimates for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland: mid-2024

National and subnational mid-year population estimates for the UK and its constituent countries by age and sex.

Contact:  
Demography team  
[pop.info@ons.gov.uk](mailto:pop.info@ons.gov.uk)  
+44 1329 444661

Release date:  
26 September 2025

Next release:  
To be announced

## Table of contents

1. [Overview](#)
2. [Comparisons over time](#)
3. [Contributors to population change](#)
4. [Age structure of the population](#)
5. [Revisions to population data](#)
6. [Future developments](#)
7. [Definitions](#)
8. [Data on population estimates](#)
9. [Data from other statistics producers](#)
10. [Quality, methods and data sources](#)
11. [Related links](#)
12. [Cite this page](#)

# 1 . Overview

The population of the UK continued to grow in the year to mid-2024, reaching an estimated 69.3 million people (69,281,400). The size of the population increased by 755,300 (1.1%) from mid-2023. The population grew faster in England (1.2%) than in Scotland (0.7%), Wales (0.6%) or Northern Ireland (0.4%).

The growth in the UK population represents the second-largest annual numerical increase for over 75 years. These figures reflect [revisions for mid-2011 to mid-2023](#) population estimates following improvements to migration estimates and rebasing of estimates after Scotland's Census 2022.

## Figure 1: The size of the UK population continues to grow

Annual population change, UK, mid-1949 to mid-2024

[Download the data](#)

Changes in the size of the UK population are mainly determined by [international migration](#), births and deaths.

## Figure 2: Population growth resulted mostly from net international migration

Components of population change, UK, year to mid-2024

Notes:

1. "Other changes" include changes in armed forces personnel and dependants.

[Download the data](#)

Although estimated net international migration was lower in the year to mid-2024 compared with the previous year, it continued to contribute most to population growth in all four countries.

## International migration

The number of people immigrating to the UK decreased compared with the previous year while the number emigrating from the UK increased. Overall, net international migration declined but continues to remain high compared with historical levels.

We estimate that in the year to mid-2024:

- 1,235,300 people arrived in the UK to live for 12 months or more
- 496,500 people left the UK for at least 12 months
- net international migration to the UK was 738,700

These estimates differ slightly to our provisional UK [Long-term international migration estimates dataset](#). This is because of a different method and data source used in Northern Ireland to produce migration estimates. Read more in Section 11 of the [2024 mid-year population estimates for Northern Ireland bulletin](#).

Our [Long-term international migration estimates bulletin](#) explains how net migration has declined because the number of non-EU+ nationals who arrived on work- and study-related visas decreased compared with earlier years, and more people departed who originally came on study-related visas.

## Births and deaths

There was a decrease in both the numbers of births and deaths in the year to mid-2024, compared with the previous year.

We estimate that:

- there were 662,100 births, a decrease of 2,300 compared with mid-2023 and the lowest number for at least 42 years
- there were 645,900 deaths, a decrease of 34,800 compared with mid-2023 and the lowest number since mid-2019 before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic
- natural change, the difference between births and deaths, contributed an increase in the population of 16,200

These estimates differ slightly to other birth and death statistics, which are reported by calendar year.

We have revised UK population estimates from mid-2011 to mid-2023. These estimates are consistent with the latest international migration estimates for each country. Read more in [Section 5: Revisions to population data](#).

## Share your feedback

We have updated the structure and content of this statistical bulletin and welcome your feedback to help us improve it. Share your thoughts by emailing [pop.info@ons.gov.uk](mailto:pop.info@ons.gov.uk).

## 2 . Comparisons over time

The population of the UK has increased each year since mid-1982. The greatest percentage increase over this period (1.3%) was in the year to mid-2023. The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic led to smaller population increases in the years ending mid-2020 and mid-2021.

### Figure 3: Net migration has contributed most to population growth from mid-1999 except for mid-2012

Components of population change, UK, mid-1982 to mid-2024

#### Notes:

1. "Net-migration and other" includes international migration, changes in armed forces personnel and dependants, and unattributable population change.

**Download the data**

### 3 . Contributors to population change

In all countries of the UK, net international migration contributed most to population growth in the year to mid-2024. The rate of population change from net international migration was highest for England (1.2%) and lowest for Northern Ireland (0.3%) while Scotland and Wales had similar rates (0.8% and 0.7%, respectively). Rates of population change by component are explained in [Section 7: Definitions](#).

Natural change and [internal migration](#) contributed less than international migration to the population growth of all countries in the year to mid-2024. They partially offset the increase in population from international migration in two instances:

- for Wales and Scotland, natural change was negative; the population of Wales and Scotland is older on average than the population of England or Northern Ireland, leading to a slightly higher rate of deaths and lower rate of births; the average number of children that are born to women in Wales and Scotland is also lower than the rest of the UK, which contributes to fewer births
- for England and Northern Ireland, internal migration was negative; there was a small net outflow of people migrating to the rest of the UK

#### Figure 4: The contribution from each component of population change varies by country

Population change, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, mid-2002 to mid-2024

##### Notes:

1. Rates are expressed as negatives where their impact is to reduce the population size.
2. “Other changes”, which includes changes in armed forces personnel and dependants, and unattributable population change are small and not displayed.

[Download the data](#)

### 4 . Age structure of the population

The age structure of the population is determined by the patterns of births, deaths and migration in previous years. The sizes of population cohorts at different ages vary.

The number of people aged 65 years and over increased in all countries, in the year to mid-2024. This continues the long-term trend of an ageing population. The number increased by:

- 2.0% in both Scotland and Northern Ireland
- 1.8% in England
- 1.5% in Wales

The population aged 16 to 64 years also increased in all countries at a slightly slower rate, in the same period. The number of people aged 15 years and under increased in England by 0.6%, but decreased in Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland, by 0.9%, 0.7% and 0.1%, respectively.

#### Figure 5: Population by single year of age and sex, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, mid-2020 to mid-2024

The median (average) age increased in all UK countries over the decade 2011 to 2021. Following this, the median age decreased slightly in all UK countries to mid-2024, except Northern Ireland where it has continued to rise. The median age in mid-2024 was:

- 42.8 years in both Scotland and Wales
- 40.3 years in Northern Ireland
- 40.2 years in England

## **5 . Revisions to population data**

### **Revisions to population estimates for mid-2022 and mid-2023, England and Wales**

Mid-2022 and mid-2023 population estimates for England and Wales were revised in July 2025 to include improved international and internal migration estimates. Information on the impact of the revisions is available in Section 5 of the [Population estimates for England and Wales: mid-2024 bulletin](#).

### **Revisions to population estimates for mid-2011 to mid-2023, Scotland**

Mid-2011 to mid-2022 population estimates were rebased in July 2024 following Scotland's Census 2022 and then revised in January 2025 to include the latest international migration estimates. Information on the impact of these revisions is available in [Rebased population estimates, Scotland, mid-2011 to mid-2021](#).

Mid-2023 population estimates for Scotland were revised in August 2025 to include the latest international migration estimates. Information on the impact of these revisions is available in the background notes of [Mid-year population estimates for Scotland: mid-2024](#).

## **6 . Future developments**

We are aiming for [Admin-based population estimates](#) (ABPEs) to become the official mid-year population estimates for England and Wales in 2026. The ABPEs were released alongside the accredited official [Population estimates](#) in July 2025.

Population estimates for the UK are created by aggregating the official mid-year estimates for each country. Estimates for the UK will be compiled using ABPEs for England and Wales when they become the official population estimate. The National Records of Scotland (NRS) and Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) are also investigating alternative methods and data sources for producing population estimates. The NRS has published research on [Administrative data based population, household and ethnicity estimates](#), and NISRA has also published [Research into using administrative data for population estimates](#).

We are all sharing information to support each other's work, in line with the [Concordat on Statistics](#) and its supplementary [Statement of agreement](#). By taking similar approaches, we will be able to maximise the coherence of UK estimates.

## **7 . Definitions**

## Components of change

The factors that contribute to population change. This includes births and deaths (commonly referred to as natural change) and net migration. Migration includes movements of people between countries of the UK and the rest of the world (international migration) and between the UK countries (internal migration).

### EU+ migration

Refers to the migration of people from all current EU countries plus Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland. Non-EU+ is the sum of the rest of the world, including the rest of Europe, not included in the EU+ category. British nationals are excluded from these numbers. More information is available in [Long-term international migration, provisional: year ending December 2024](#).

### Internal migration

Describes moves made between countries of the UK. Unlike international migration, there is no internationally agreed definition.

### International migration

We use the United Nations (UN) recommended definition of a long-term international migrant: "a person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence."

### Natural change

The difference between births and deaths. If natural change is greater than zero, then there have been more births than deaths. If natural change is negative, then there have been more deaths than births.

### Net migration

The difference between the number of people coming to live in an area (immigration) and the number of people leaving to live elsewhere (emigration). When more people are coming to the area than leaving, net migration is above zero and so adds to the population. Net migration takes account of both international and internal migration.

### Net international migration

The difference between the number of people arriving in the UK from the rest of the world and leaving the UK for the rest of the world.

### Rate of population change by component

We use these rates to compare how the different components of population change have contributed to changes in the size of the population in different areas. Rates for mid-2024 are calculated by dividing the estimated number of events for each component in the year to mid-2024 by the mid-2023 population estimate. We then multiply this figure by 100 to present the rate per 100 population.

The annual percentage change in the size of the population is the sum of all rates of change for each component. Figures may not sum exactly because of rounding.

### Usually resident population

These data estimate the "usually resident population". This is the standard United Nations definition outlined on page 40 in the [Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses \(PDF, 2.36MB\)](#). It includes only people who reside in a country for 12 months or more, making them usually resident in that country. Visitors and short-term migrants are excluded.

## 8 . Data on population estimates

[Estimates of the population for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland](#)

Dataset | Released 26 September 2025

National and subnational mid-year population estimates for the UK and its constituent countries, by age and sex.

## 9 . Data from other statistics producers

[Mid-year population estimates for Scotland: mid-2024](#)

Report | Released 14 August 2025

The latest annual mid-year population estimates for Scotland and its constituent NHS Board and council areas, produced by the National Records of Scotland.

[Mid-year population estimates for Northern Ireland: mid-2024](#)

Report | Released 11 September 2025

The latest annual mid-year population estimates for Northern Ireland, produced by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.

[Mid-year population estimates for Wales: mid-2024](#)

Report | Released 30 July 2025

Commentary on the latest population estimates for Wales, produced by the Welsh Government.

## 10 . Quality, methods and data sources

[Mid-year population estimates quality and methodology information \(QMI\) report](#)

Methodology | Last revised 26 September 2025

Quality and methodology information for mid-year population estimates in the UK, detailing the strengths and limitations of the data, methods used, and data uses and users.

[Population estimates for England and Wales, mid-2024: methods guide](#)

Methodology | Last revised 30 July 2025

Covers the concepts and methodologies underpinning the population estimates for England and Wales in more detail.

[Mid-year population estimates Scotland: methodology guide \(PDF, 262KB\)](#)

Methodology | Released 14 August 2025

Covers the concepts and methodologies underpinning the population estimates for Scotland in more detail.

[Mid-year population estimates for Northern Ireland: methodology paper](#)

Methodology | Released 11 September 2025

Covers the concepts and methodologies underpinning the population estimates for Northern Ireland in more detail.

## Accredited official statistics

These [accredited official statistics](#) were independently reviewed by the Office for Statistics Regulation in November 2020. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) and should be labelled "accredited official statistics".

## 11 . Related links

### [Population estimates for England and Wales: mid-2024](#)

Bulletin | Released 30 July 2025

National and subnational mid-year population estimates for England and Wales by administrative area, age and sex, produced by the Office for National Statistics.

### [Long-term international migration, provisional: year ending December 2024](#)

Bulletin | Released 22 May 2025

Estimates of UK international migration. These are official statistics in development.

### [Population estimates by output areas, electoral, health and other geographies, England and Wales: mid-2021 to mid-2022](#)

Bulletin | Released 19 March 2024

Population estimates for small geographical areas in England and Wales (Super Output Areas, health geographies, electoral wards, Parliamentary constituencies and national parks). The next release of mid-2023 and mid-2024 estimates is planned for 24 October 2025. Estimates for mid-2022 will be revised.

### [Small area population estimates, Scotland: mid-2022](#)

Report | Released 21 November 2024

Population estimates for data zones and other geographies across Scotland. The next release of mid-2023 and mid-2024 estimates is planned for late 2025 or early 2026.

### [Population estimates for small geographical areas within Northern Ireland: mid-2023](#)

Datasets | Released 29 May 2025

Population estimates for small geographical areas within Northern Ireland. The next release of mid-2024 estimates is planned for autumn 2025.

### [Nomis website](#)

Datasets | Updated regularly

The mid-year population estimates will also be available on the Nomis website where you can use the "Query data" option to create customised extracts for your chosen year, area, sex and age combination.

## 12 . Cite this page

Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 26 September 2025, ONS website, statistical bulletin, [Population estimates for the UK, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland: mid-2024](#)