Statistical bulletin

Admin-based household estimates by size for local authorities in England and Wales: 2021

Number of households estimates by size based on administrative data sources for 2021. These are official statistics in development.

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To be announced

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1 . Main points

- We are developing admin-based household estimates by size for England and Wales with the potential to provide more granular statistics between census years.
- This bulletin builds on our Admin-based household estimates for local authorities in England and Wales: 2021 article, by applying an estimation technique that uses the Labour Force Survey (LFS) household-size distribution for England and Wales; this distribution influences the pattern of over- and underestimation across the three geographies we present.
- For England and Wales, admin-based estimates are within 0.5% of Census 2021 for two- and three-person households but differ more for other household sizes; a similar pattern exists for Wales and the regions of England, although with greater variation.
- At the local authority level, the pattern of over- and underestimation still broadly holds across the household sizes, although with greater variation; local authorities in London account for many of the largest differences for one-, two- and three-person households.
- The admin-based and survey-based estimates have a comparable alignment with Census 2021 for England and Wales, while the administrative data show some marginal improvements for Wales and the regions of England; an important strength of the admin-based estimates is the local authority-level household size breakdown.
- Differences between the admin-based estimates and Census 2021 reflect the LFS household-size distribution for England and Wales, as well as local factors including complex address structures and living arrangements, and high population turnover; more detailed analysis is available in our accompanying supporting methodology article.
- These findings demonstrate the potential of administrative data to provide more granular household statistics, while identifying where further methodological development is needed.

These are official statistics in development. These estimates are published to support comparison with existing official household estimates and should not be used for decision-making.

2 . Data on admin-based household estimates by size

Admin-based household estimates by size for local authorities in England and Wales: 2021
Dataset | Released 10 November 2026
Estimates of the number of households by size based on administrative data sources. These estimates are official statistics in development.

3 . Data sources and quality

Data sources

This section lists the data sources used to produce our admin-based household estimates (ABHE) by size.

Admin-based living arrangements dataset

The admin-based living arrangements dataset (ABLAD) is a record-level dataset that aims to assign people in the Statistical Population Dataset (SPD) to addresses using a Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN).

Admin-based occupied address dataset

The admin-based occupied address dataset (ABOAD) is a subset of ABLAD that contains record-level data of people linked to private residential addresses (known as occupied addresses) using administrative data.

Admin-based communal establishment dataset

The admin-based communal establishment dataset (ABCED) is a subset of ABLAD which contains record-level data of people linked to communal establishments (for example, care homes, student halls of residences, and prisons) using administrative data.

Admin-based population estimates

Admin-based population estimates (ABPEs) are estimates of the total population of England and Wales, disaggregated by local authority, sex, and birth cohort, based on administrative data and statistical modelling (Dynamic Population Model).

ABPEs will not be adopted as official population estimates, as explained in our Assessment of criteria for moving to admin-based population estimates as official estimates of population, England and Wales article, published in March 2026. We will continue to improve the population estimates using administrative data, and we will aim to use the mid-year population estimates in future ABHE releases.

Annual Population Survey

The Annual Population Survey (APS) is a UK household survey that combines Waves 1 and 5 from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) with a local sample boost.

Lower achieved sample sizes in recent years have increased uncertainty in APS estimates, particularly at the local authority level. However, achieved sample sizes began to improve following the implementation of our surveys and economic statistics improvement plan. All APS-derived outputs are now labelled as official statistics.

The APS local sample boost has been reduced from 2026 onwards.

APS household data for 2011 to 2026 will be reweighted following Census 2021.

Labour Force Survey

The LFS is the UK's largest household study, providing official employment and unemployment measures. For household statistics, we use April to June data to produce intercensal household estimates, excluding most communal establishments. These estimates are not the official household estimates for Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland, as each produces its own official household statistics.

Statistical Population Dataset

The Statistical Population Dataset (SPD) is tabular data that aims to capturethe usually resident populationon a reference date (30June)for a given year within England andWales.It is constructed from administrative sources that are linked together, and the combined evidence is used to derive who is usually resident and their characteristics of age,sexand geographic location.

More information on Version 4.0 of the SPD is available in our Developing SPDs, England and Wales: 2021 article . Version 5.1 of the SPD is used for the estimates produced in this release.

Household and occupied address definition

The harmonised definition of a household is:

One person living alone or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room or sitting room or dining area.

An occupied address is an address with at least one usual resident.

Multiple households can be present within a single occupied address.

In administrative data, occupied addresses are often used as a proxy for households because administrative data cannot identify whether residents share facilities. In this publication, we use a method that aims to align the admin-based household estimates with the harmonised definition of a household.

Quality

Our methods are detailed in our accompanying supporting methodology article. They have been reviewed by the independent Methodological Assurance Review Panel (MARP). The reviewed papers are available on the UK Statistics Authority's MARP Papers web page.

The latest update on the ABHE methods is available in our Research on producing admin-based estimates of the number and size of households for local authorities in England and Wales (PDF, 268KB).

Official statistics in development

ABHE by size statistics are labelled as "official statistics in development". They are based on information from administrative data sources. They are published to support comparisons with existing methods and should not be used for decision-making.

We are developing how we collect the data and produce the statistics to improve their quality. Once we have completed the developments, we will review the statistics with the Statistics Head of Profession.

If the statistics meet trustworthiness, quality and value standards based on user feedback, we will remove the "official statistics in development" label to publish them under the "official statistics" label.

If they do not meet trustworthiness, quality and value standards, we will further develop them and might stop producing them.

We will inform users of the outcome of any review or changes undertaken by us or the Office for Statistics Regulation.

More quality and methodology information

Information on the official household estimates for England and Wales is provided in our Household estimates and projections across the UK: user guide.

4 . Related links

Development of admin-based household estimates by size for local authorities in England and Wales: 2021
Supporting methodology article | Released 10 November 2026
Estimates of the number of households by size for 2021, based on administrative data sources and compared with Census 2021 and other official statistics.

Admin-based household estimates for local authorities in England and Wales: 2021 to 2023
Bulletin | Released 8 September 2026
Number of household estimates based on administrative data sources for 2021 to 2023. These estimates are official statistics in development.

Admin-based household estimates for local authorities in England and Wales: 2021
Article | Released 8 December 2025
Estimates of the number of households for 2021, based on administrative data sources compared with Census 2021 and other official statistics.

Household and resident characteristics, England and Wales: Census 2021
Bulletin | Released 2 November 2022
Household size, household composition, household deprivation status, and people's marital and civil partnership status, Census 2021 data.

Welsh Government household estimates
External webpage | Released 28 January 2026
Data by household type, population and average size.

Families and households in the UK: 2025
Bulletin | Released 17 April 2026
Estimates of families (with and without children) and household types, including people living alone in the UK in 2025.

5 . Cite this statistical bulletin

Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 10 November 2026, ONS website, statistical bulletin, Admin-based household estimates by size for local authorities in England and Wales: 2021