



National
Records of
Scotland



Scotland's Population

The Registrar General's Annual
Review of Demographic Trends

2019



165th Edition



Preserving the past | Recording the present | Informing the future

Annual Report of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths and Marriages for Scotland 2019

165th Edition

To Scottish Ministers

I am pleased to present to you my Annual Report for the year 2019, which will be laid before the Scottish Parliament pursuant to Section 1(4) of the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Scotland) Act 1965.






Paul Lowe

Registrar General for Scotland
06 October 2020

Published 06 October 2020

SG/2020/74

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Foreword from the Registrar General

I am pleased to introduce the 165th Registrar General's Annual Review, my second since taking up post.

Since the last review we have continued to build on our strong reputation for the production of high quality and trustworthy statistics through the work of our talented teams.

We are living in highly unusual and challenging times, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought huge loss, uncertainty and change to society. It has also brought into even sharper focus the vital importance of the civil registration system and of the statistics and analyses that we produce on a range of issues. As a result our statistics continue to shape and inform public policy and debate. This year, perhaps more than ever, we have seen an increase in demand for our statistics, analysis and advice. In response to the pandemic our weekly publication of COVID-19 statistics has played a key role in supporting everyone's understanding of the spread and impact of the virus.

COVID-19 has also brought significant personal and professional changes for our people at NRS. I am immensely proud of the ways in which colleagues have risen to the challenge, delivering services innovatively and differently and responding to the changing needs and priorities for registration and statistical analysis.

We have included a chapter at the end of the report, which describes the significant changes that have been made to the registration service, delivered in close partnership with our colleagues in Local and Central Government, in response to the pandemic. A complete reconfiguration of registration services has taken place across the country to protect the integrity of the system, while safeguarding public health. These revised provisions have worked extremely well, enabling registrars to obtain the required information and complete registration by phone or electronically. I particularly want to thank our registration services staff for the significant changes in working patterns, including operating a 7 day service for a number of months during the height of the pandemic.

With significantly increased numbers of deaths being registered, it was vital for the registration service to focus its energies on registering deaths and still-births. Consequently, NRS took the decision to postpone birth registrations during the initial period of the lockdown. The registration of marriage and civil partnerships was also temporarily suspended. More recently we have worked with Local Government and stakeholders to allow marriage and birth registration to recommence within the boundaries of current public health guidance.

While a focus on COVID-19 has been our major challenge we have continued to respond to interest in the wider statistics and analytical projections that we produce. Trends in death rates, our growing and ageing population, and changes in household sizes are all providing insights not only into the pandemic but also the future of Scotland's population.

Each chapter provides a review of statistics, trends and analysis for 2019. We have added a new chapter which provides analysis of the deaths involving COVID-19 during March to September 2020. Together, these provide a picture of Scotland prior to the pandemic and a summary of the spread and impact of COVID-19 on mortality across Scotland.

For 2019, our statistics also show a number of 'first on record' results. The population of Scotland is at a record high at 5.46 million, with the rate of population growth increasing following two years of slow growth. At just under 50,000, we recorded the lowest number of births since records began in 1855. The registration of marriages was also at an all-time low of just over 26,000. The number of households is growing faster than the population, with one-person households becoming the most common type in recent years.

We are living in unprecedented and uncertain times but I know that all at NRS are working together as a team and playing a significant role in informing the important decisions that affect the people of Scotland, now and in the future.



Paul Lowe
Registrar General and Chief Executive
National Records of Scotland



Headline Messages



Deaths involving COVID-19

- Up to Sunday 27 September 2020, there were 4,257 deaths registered in Scotland where the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was mentioned on the death certificate.
- Adjusting for age, people in the most deprived areas were twice as likely to die with COVID than those living in the least deprived areas.
- Mortality rates were over four times higher in large urban areas than in remote rural areas.
- Males were significantly more likely to die with COVID-19 than females once age was taken into account. Also, the average age at death for those who died with COVID-19 was 79 for males and 84 for females.
- 47% of COVID-19 deaths registered to date occurred in hospitals. Another 46% of deaths took place in care homes and 7% at home or non-institutional settings.
- Adjusting for age and population, Scotland had the third highest excess death rate in Europe for COVID-19.

[read more on Deaths involving COVID-19](#) 



Population

- Scotland's population is at a record high of 5.46 million as of mid-2019. The rate of population growth increased in the year to mid-2019 following two years of slowed growth.
- Population growth in Scotland is driven by migration. There is no natural growth as deaths have outnumbered births for the fifth consecutive year.
- Scotland's population is ageing. The number of older people in Scotland has been increasing for decades and continues to do so.
- The population of Scotland as a whole is projected to continue to grow, but this isn't the case in all parts of the country. It is projected that by mid-2028 more council areas will experience population decline than in previous years. Areas projected to see population decline are concentrated mainly in the west and south-west of the country.

[read more on Population](#) 

Births

- There were just under 50,000 births recorded in 2019 - the lowest number since records began in 1855.
- Scotland's total fertility rate is the lowest in the UK. Since 2008, fertility rates have been declining in all UK countries, with Scotland's falling at the fastest rate. The lowest total fertility rates were found in major cities.
- In 2019, 73% of births in Scotland were to mothers born in Scotland. A further 9% were to mothers born elsewhere in the UK.

[read more on Births](#) 

Deaths

- Scotland has consistently had the highest rate of age-standardised mortality of all UK countries. The rate has improved steadily over the last few decades, but has been stalling in recent years.
- Over the last 4 decades, death rates in most age groups have been declining. However, since 2011, mortality among 45 to 59 year old males has increased and there has been very little change for females in this age group.
- 2019 saw the lowest ever recorded rate of stillbirths in Scotland. Both stillbirths and infant death rates have fallen greatly since the Second World War, with infant death rates in particular improving markedly in the last 30 years.

[read more on Deaths](#) 

Life Expectancy

- Life expectancy in Scotland has increased but improvements have stalled in recent years. In Scotland in 2017-2019, life expectancy at birth was 77.1 years for males and 81.1 years for females. There was only a very marginal increase (less than 0.1 years) for both males and females in the last year.
- The gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas was 13.3 years for males and 10.0 years for females.
- Since the beginning of the 1980s, life expectancy at birth has increased by 8 years for males and just over 5 years for females.
- Life expectancy in Scotland has been lower than any other UK country since the beginning of the 1980s. The gap between Scottish life expectancy and the UK average was 1.9 years for females and 2.2 years for males in 2017-2019.

[read more on Life Expectancy](#) 

Migration

- Migration has been the main driver of population growth in Scotland for the past 19 years.
- In the year to mid-2019, 30,200 more people moved to Scotland than left. This is an increase in net migration following two years of lower levels.
- In 2019, there were approximately 388,000 non-British nationals living in Scotland, accounting for 7% of the population. Of these 388,000 people, 60% were EU nationals and 40% were non-EU nationals.
- Following travel restrictions put in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been widespread decline in international air travel. At Scottish airports, there was a reduction of over 98% in monthly passenger arrivals between April to June 2020 compared to the same months in 2019.

[read more on Migration](#) 

Marriages and Civil Partnerships

- The number of marriages in Scotland in 2019 was just over 26,000, the lowest number since 1881. This continues the long-term downward trend and marks a decrease of a third in the last 50 years.
- There are just under 1,000 same-sex marriages taking place each year, and the number of civil partnerships is around 70 to 80 a year.

[read more on Marriages and Civil Partnerships](#) 

Adoptions

- There were 472 adoptions recorded in 2019. This was around half the number recorded per year in the mid-1980s, and less than a quarter of the number recorded in the late 1960s.

[read more on Adoptions](#) 

Households and Housing

- The number of households is growing at a faster rate than the population. This is due to increasingly smaller household sizes. One person households have become the most common type of household in recent years.

[read more on Households and Housing](#) 

Statutory Registration

- The COVID-19 pandemic, and subsequent lockdown, has had a very significant effect on the registration of births, deaths and marriages since March 2020. However, remote registration has been very successful, with similar levels of accuracy for death registrations.

[read more on Statutory Registration](#) 



Deaths involving COVID-19

*"There have been 4,257 deaths
involving COVID-19 as at
27 September 2020."*



Introduction

Scotland continues to be challenged by the wide ranging impact of COVID-19. This chapter brings together the evidence and learning that National Records of Scotland (NRS) has gathered through its registered deaths data between mid-March and mid-September. In providing this overview, NRS's aim is to draw together our understanding of how COVID-19 related mortality impacted and spread across Scotland. This information provides a summary which allows a clearer understanding of what has happened, and may also inform further planning and support.

This chapter explores the key findings from NRS analysis. A summary of these are:

- COVID-19 related mortality increased sharply in the first 6 weeks of the pandemic and then fell at a slower rate, taking 11 weeks to get back to the level seen in the first week. Since then numbers have remained very low.
- The oldest age groups have been most affected, with more than three quarters of deaths among those aged 75 and over.
- After adjusting for age:
 - Males were 1.4 times as likely to die than females
 - People in large urban areas were more than 4 times as likely to die than those in remote rural areas
 - People in the most deprived areas were over twice as likely to die as those in the least deprived areas
- In the early stages of the pandemic most deaths took place in hospitals but this was then overtaken by care home deaths. The proportion of COVID-19 deaths in each of these settings are now almost equal at 47% and 46%, with only 7% of COVID-19 deaths taking place at home or in a non-institutional setting.

Many of these factors are interdependent, for example, the relationship between urban mortality and deprivation, however each serve to highlight the overall impact of COVID-19 related mortality on Scotland, and how it has changed during the past 6 months.



Different ways of measuring the impact of COVID-19 on deaths

There are 3 key measures of deaths involving COVID-19. The first – deaths within 28 days of the first positive COVID-19 test – has been reported daily on the [Scottish Government website](#). This measure reports on deaths registered up to the previous day and provided valuable early information on COVID-19 deaths, especially in the earlier stages of the pandemic.

The second is deaths where COVID-19 is mentioned on the death certificate by the doctor who certified the death. This measure is more comprehensive as it includes those deaths where a test wasn't necessarily carried out, but where the medical professional considered COVID-19 as being relevant to the cause of death. This was particularly the case during the earlier stages of the pandemic when testing was less widespread.

3 Measures

- 1 – Death within 28 days of the first positive COVID-19 test - the HPS measure
- 2 – Death where COVID-19 is mentioned on the death certificate (regardless of testing) – the NRS measure
- 3 – Excess deaths (deaths from all causes minus the 5 year average)

What are “Excess Deaths”?

The total number of deaths registered in a week in 2020 minus the average number of deaths registered in the same week over the period 2015 to 2019.

The third – excess deaths – is useful for measuring the broader impact of the pandemic on levels of mortality, picking up deaths which are directly and indirectly related to COVID-19. It is also a helpful measure when comparing with other countries as differences in definitions and death registration practices may make direct COVID-19 mortality comparisons misleading.

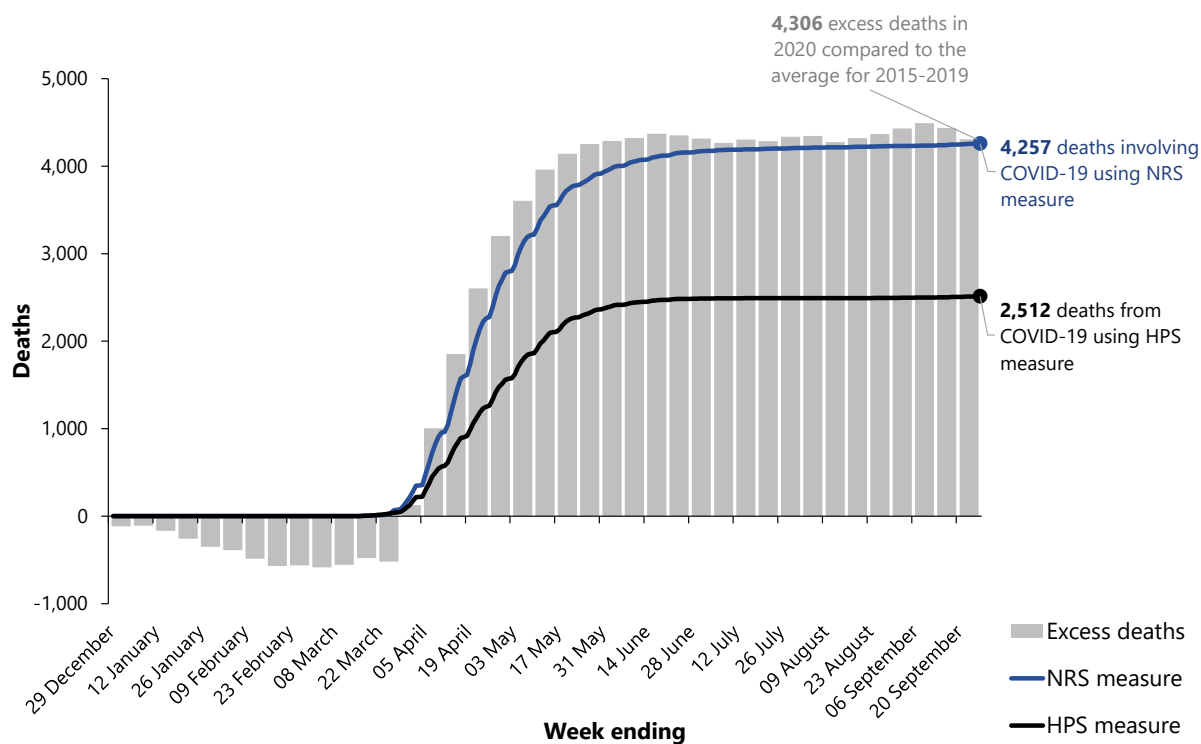
How many deaths have there been?

Since mid-March there have been 4,257 deaths registered where coronavirus was mentioned on the death certificate (the NRS measure). This compares to 2,512 deaths within 28 days of a positive test (the HPS measure).

As the NRS measure also includes deaths where the certifying doctor recorded probable or suspected COVID-19 without a positive test taking place, the number of deaths counted on this basis diverged from the HPS measure early in the pandemic.

The two measures have been broadly aligned since July, as the number of deaths reduced to low levels. Only a small number of additional deaths have since been captured by the NRS measure, largely due to people dying more than 28 days after their first positive test. Also, testing has become more widely available, increasing the likelihood of a COVID-19 death being included under both measures. Both of these figures are valuable: the HPS measure because it's available earlier and gives an indication of those who are dying after catching the virus recently (within 28 days before their death); and the NRS measure because it allows more detailed analysis by linking to information such as location of death, underlying health conditions and so on.

Figure 1.1: Comparison of cumulative COVID-19 deaths using different measures



The third measure, excess deaths, is useful in assessing the wider impact of the pandemic, both directly (through deaths due to COVID-19) and indirectly (through changes in deaths due to other causes).

In the early part of 2020, the number of deaths was lower than the average number of deaths over 2015 to 2019 for the same period, meaning there were no excess deaths. In April, excess deaths began to increase rapidly and continued to be above average until mid-June after which point they returned to the average levels of the last 5 years. The cumulative number of excess deaths for the year to date remain considerably higher than usual with 4,306 more deaths registered (as at 27

September) than would have been the case if numbers were similar to the average over the last five year years.

Ninety-one percent of excess deaths had COVID-19 recorded as the underlying cause of death. However, the remaining proportion of excess deaths were due to other causes.

[A report by Public Health Scotland](#) has looked into the excess deaths not attributable to COVID-19 and suggested five possible reasons:

1. Artefact: deaths directly due to COVID-19 that were not certified as such in the provisional data.
2. Unintended consequences (social determinants): deaths are due to unintended consequences of the non-clinical responses to COVID-19.
3. Service supply/access: deaths due to problems with health and social care service access.
4. Service demand: deaths of individuals not presenting to health and social care services as they would at other times.
5. Other: other causes that have not yet been identified.

Characteristics of those whose deaths involved COVID-19

Males were significantly more likely to die with COVID-19 than females once age was taken into account. Although there were broadly similar numbers of deaths of males and females (2,098 males and 2,133 females as of the end of August), comparisons are more helpfully drawn on the age-standardised death rate which shows that for males (193 per 100,000 population) the rate was 42% higher than that for females (136 per 100,000). This is because there are less males in the older age groups so their deaths account for a larger proportion of the male population.

The average age at death for those who died with COVID-19 was **79 for males** and **84 for females**.

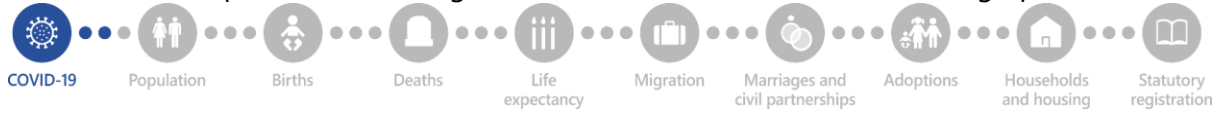
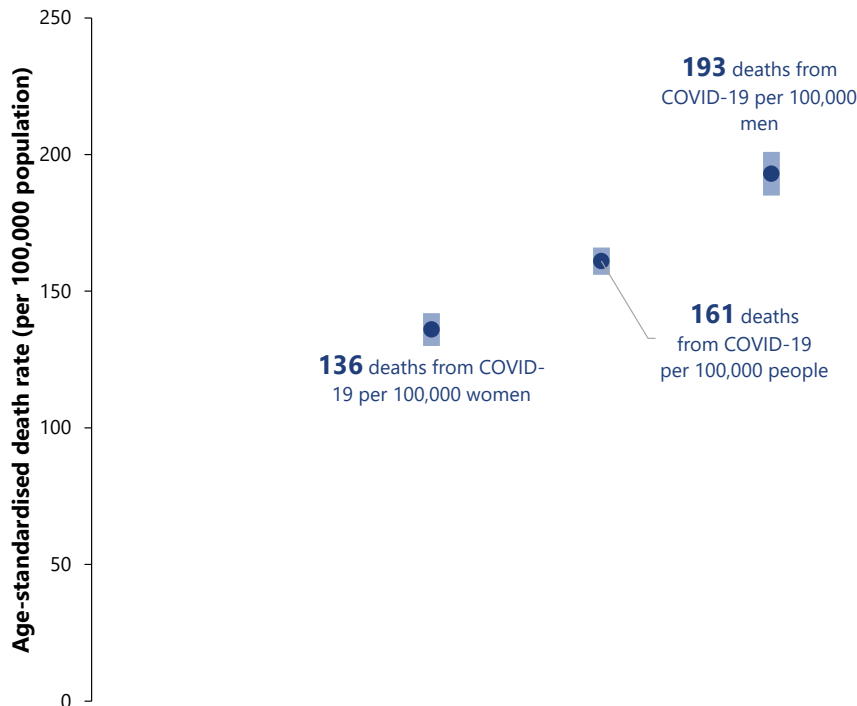


Figure 1.2: Age-standardised death rates from COVID-19 by sex

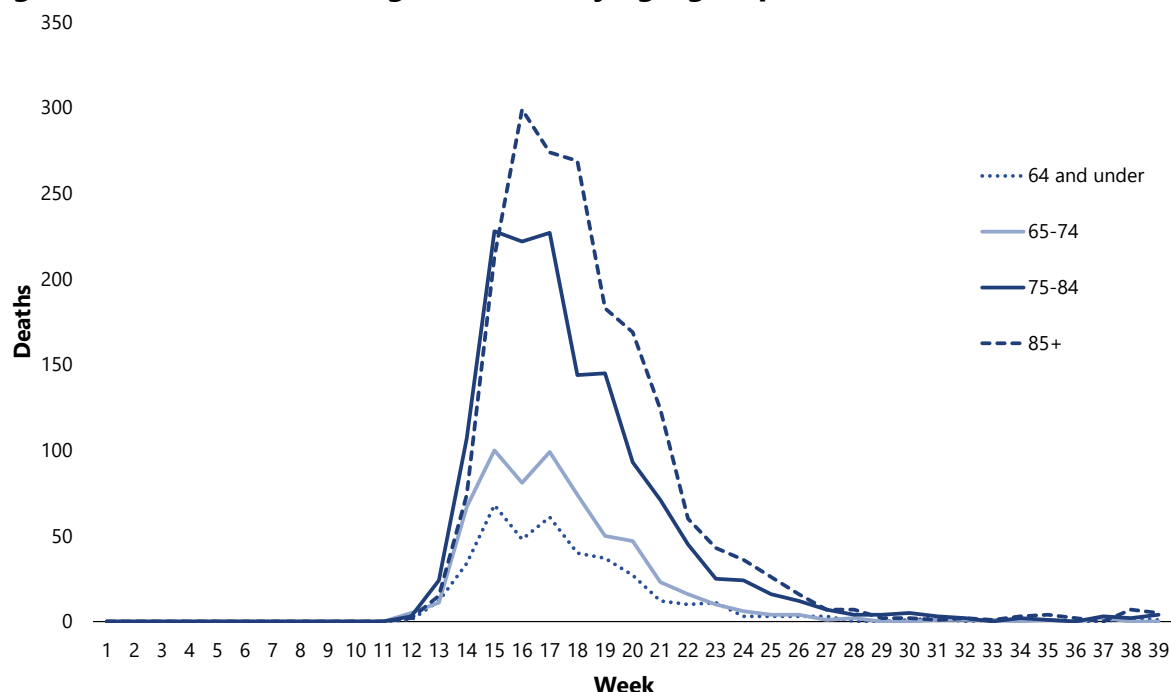


The age profile of those dying with COVID-19 was significantly older than that for deaths in general. More than three quarters (77%) of all those who died were aged 75 or over and 43% were aged 85 or over. Compared to all deaths in 2019, 63% of those who died were aged 75 or over and 33% were aged 85 or over.

In the early weeks of the pandemic most deaths occurred within the 75-84 year old age group but by mid-April most deaths were occurring among 85+ year olds, aligning with the increase in deaths in care homes at this time.

There were very few deaths among those aged under 65 (382, 9% of all deaths) and no deaths under the age of 25.

Figure 1.3: Deaths involving COVID-19 by age-group



Whilst the numbers of deaths among working people in the 20-64 year old group were proportionately small (233, 6% of all COVID-19 deaths up to the end of August) a broad analysis by occupation group identified that those working as “process, plant and machine operatives” had the highest age-standardised death rate with 25.8 deaths per 100,000 people. This was the only major group which had a significantly different rate to the average rate for all occupations (10.3 per 100,000 people).

What are “process, plant and machine operatives”?

This group covers occupations whose main tasks involve operating and monitoring industrial plant and equipment, assembling products from component parts (i.e. factory workers), and driving and assisting in the operation of transport vehicles and other mobile machinery.

In addition to the major occupational groups, an analysis of two specific groups of occupations, health care workers and social care workers, was undertaken using [groupings developed by ONS](#). Given the relatively small numbers involved, death rates for these two groups were not significantly different from the average.

Figure 1.4 shows the age-standardised death rates from COVID-19 for major occupational groups as defined by the ONS [Standard Occupational Classification \(SOC2010\)](#).

Figure 1.4: Age-standardised death rates from COVID-19 for major occupational groups



Note: no rates could be calculated for the group "professional occupations" as there were fewer than 10 deaths in this group.

Death certificates of those who died with COVID-19 were also examined to look at their pre-existing conditions. Of all COVID-19 deaths occurring between March and August, only eight per cent had no pre-existing condition.

Of the 92% who did have a pre-existing condition recorded on the death certificate, we looked at the main condition. The most common main pre-existing conditions were:

1. Dementia and Alzheimer's disease (affecting 31% of those who died)
2. Ischaemic heart disease (13%)
3. Chronic lower respiratory diseases (11%)
4. Cerebrovascular disease (stroke) (6%) and
5. Diabetes (4%).

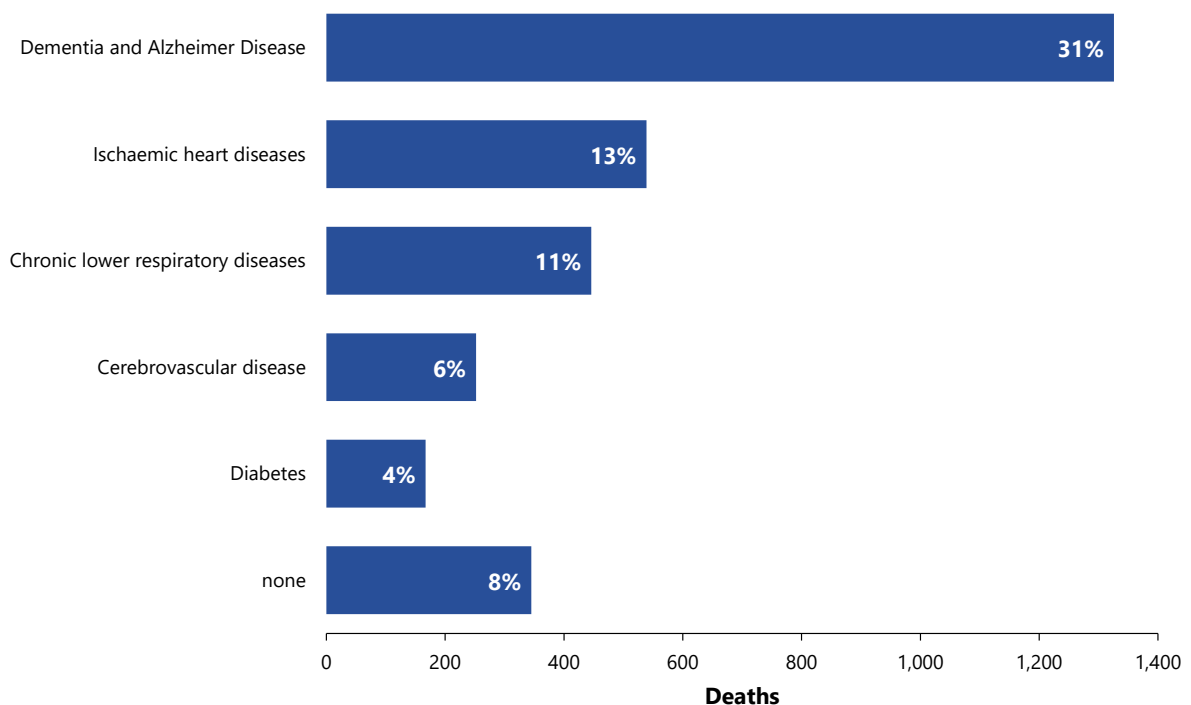


What are pre-existing conditions?

Pre-existing conditions are defined as a health condition mentioned on the death certificate which either came before COVID-19 or was an independent contributory factor in the death. Where only COVID-19 was recorded on the death certificate, or only COVID-19 and subsequent conditions caused by COVID-19 were recorded, these deaths are referred to as having no pre-existing conditions.

We have used methodology developed by ONS to determine the main pre-existing condition. This is defined as the one pre-existing condition that is, on average, most likely to be the underlying cause of death for a person of that age and sex had they not died from COVID-19. For more detail on how pre-existing conditions and main pre-existing conditions are derived, refer to the [methodology paper](#).

Figure 1.5: Main Pre-existing condition of people dying with COVID-19, March to August 2020



Ethnic Group and COVID-19

An emerging body of international evidence showed an increased risk of death from COVID-19 for specific ethnic groups. In response, NRS conducted an analysis of the ethnicity data collected through the death registration process. Although the process is statutory, ethnicity information about the deceased person is collected by registrars on a voluntary basis. In May 2020, NRS published a [note](#) on the limitations of the ethnicity information collected through the death registration process. Ethnicity was not recorded for 8.9% of deaths involving COVID-19 registered up to 26th April 2020. NRS is continuing to work with registrars to ensure the importance of the data is clear and that all those gathering and providing the data are able to take an informed decision regarding provision, or otherwise, of ethnicity data.

To make analysis by ethnicity possible, death records were linked to 2011 Census records. This allowed census data on self-reported ethnicity to be used, and reduced the number of records with no ethnicity data substantially – from 8.4% to 1.3% for deaths involving COVID-19.

[NRS analysis](#) showed that deaths amongst people in the South Asian ethnic group were almost twice as likely to involve COVID-19 as deaths in the White ethnic group, after accounting for age group, sex, area-level deprivation and urban rural classification.

An independent Expert Reference Group on COVID-19 and Ethnicity (ERG) was established to consider and inform the Scottish Government's approach in relation to the impacts of COVID-19 on Minority Ethnic (ME) communities.

The ERG put forward initial advice and recommendations on several areas, including data and evidence. NRS is happy to be part of the discussions and work to respond to the recommendations of the ERG, including exploring how census data can be used to improve data quality and facilitate timely and responsive analysis of inequalities in health, as set out in the Government's response to the ERG and reinforced in the Programme for Government.

The use of data for statistical and analytical research is a key component of the public value of gathering data. The Expert Reference Group recommendations have shone a light on areas where important decisions require improved evidence, and NRS will play its full role in helping to improve the quality of relevant datasets.



Where did people die?

In 2019 almost half (48%) of deaths from all causes took place in hospitals, a quarter (24%) in care homes and 28% in home or in non-institutional settings. In the first four weeks of the pandemic (16th March to 12th April 2020) almost two-thirds (62%) of COVID-19 deaths took place in hospitals. However, between 13th April and 14th June the pattern changed as more than half (53%) of COVID-19 deaths occurred in care homes. From mid-June onwards there have been slightly more COVID-19 deaths in hospitals, although the number of deaths was much lower in this period. Over the course of the whole pandemic the proportion of COVID-19 deaths has been similar in both care homes and hospitals (47% in hospitals and 46% in care homes) and only 7% occurring at home or in non-institutional settings.

West Dunbartonshire had the highest age-standardised death rate of all council areas with 314.3 deaths per 100,000 population. This was closely followed by Midlothian (294.3), Glasgow City (291.0) and Inverclyde (280.0). Highland (37.5), Moray (40.4) and Dumfries and Galloway (50.1) had the lowest rates (in addition to Orkney and Shetland whose numbers were too low to calculate rates, and Na h-Eileanan Siar where there were no deaths). After adjusting for age, people in West Dunbartonshire were eight times as likely to die compared to those in Highland.

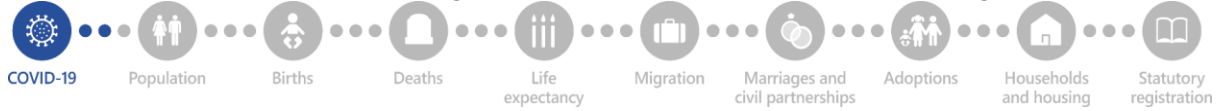
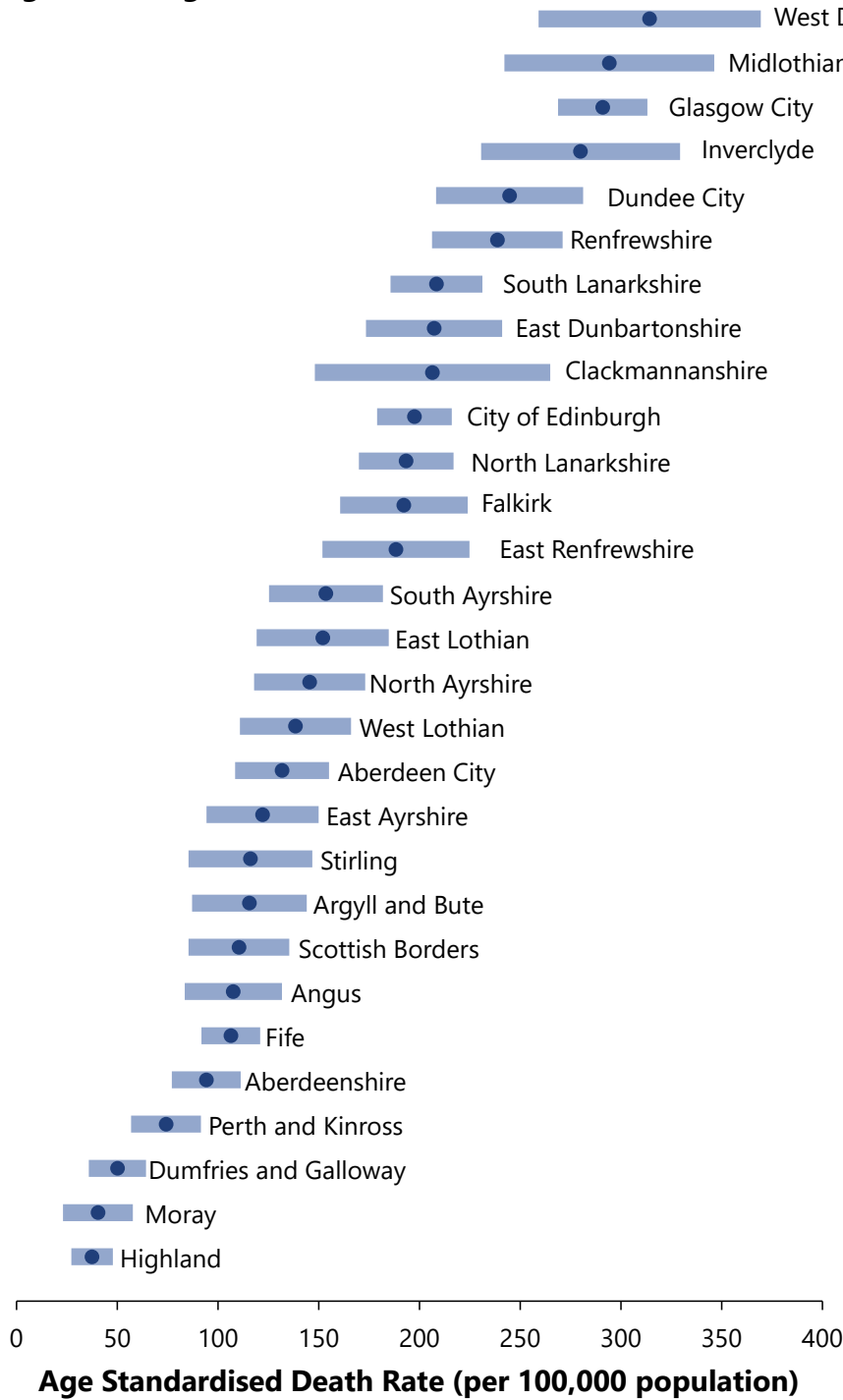


Figure 1.6: Age-standardised death rates from COVID-19 by local authority



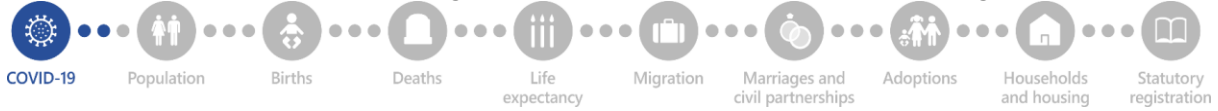
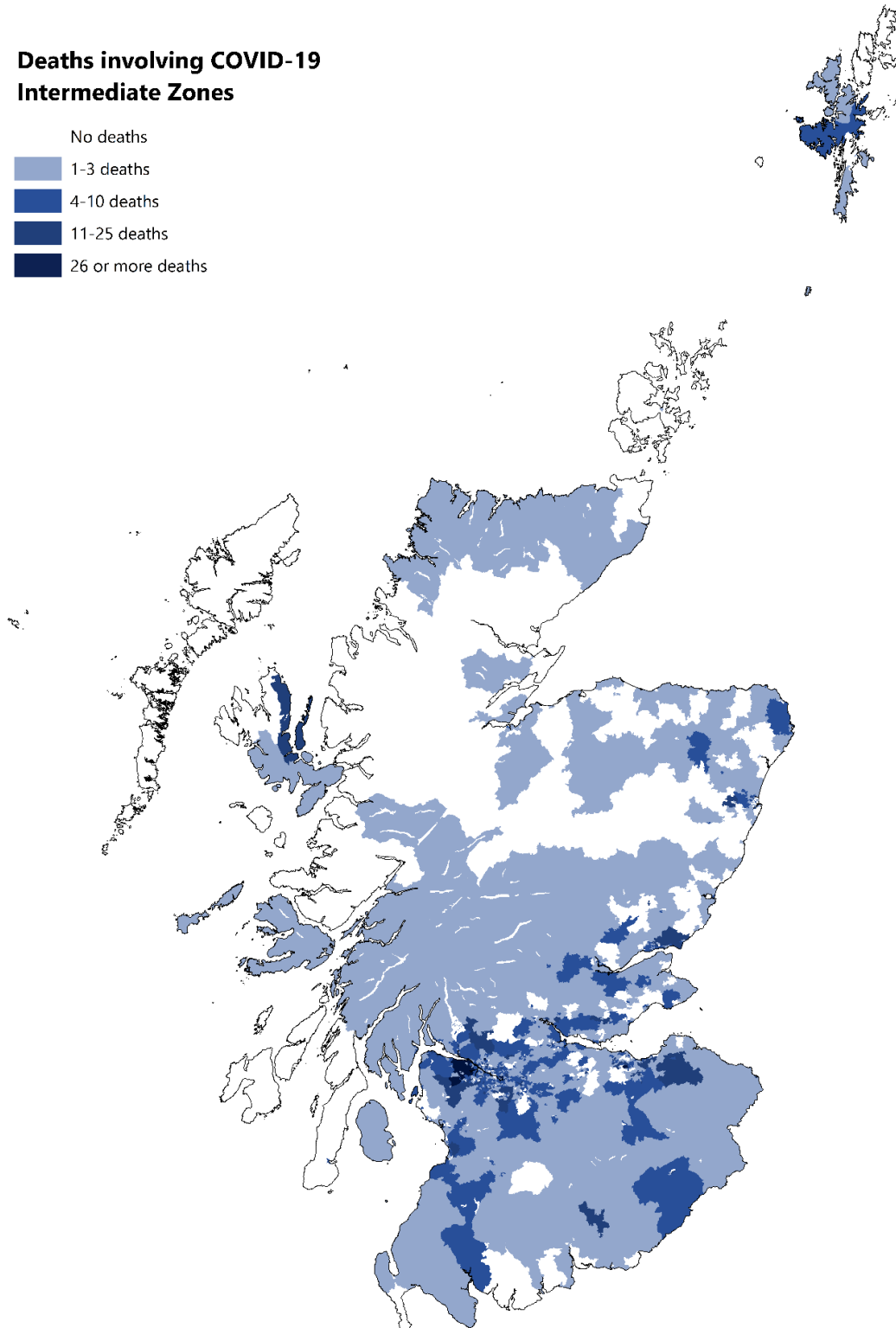
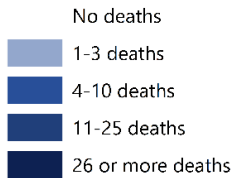
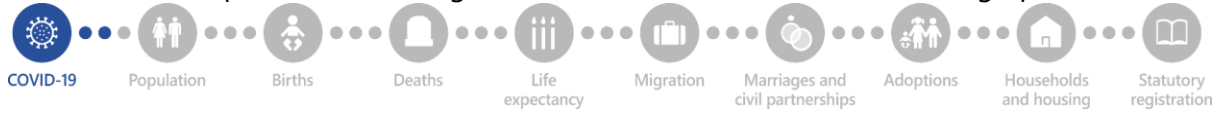


Figure 1.7: Deaths involving COVID-19, Intermediate zones, March to August 2020

**Deaths involving COVID-19
Intermediate Zones**



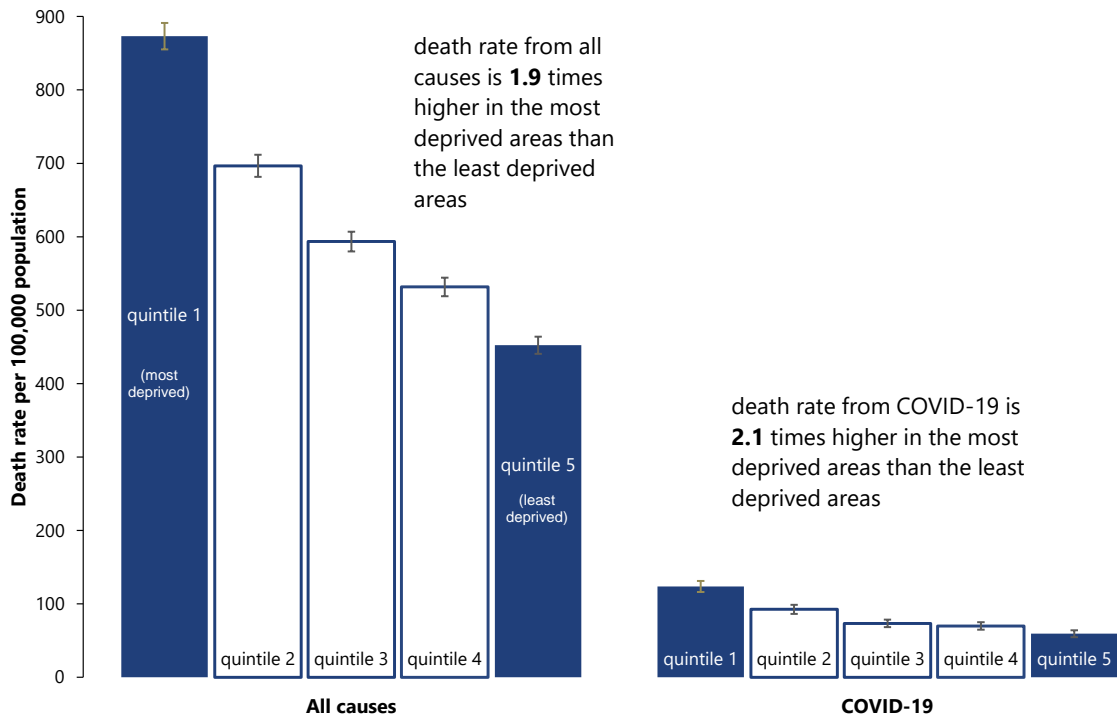
The map in [Figure 1.7](#) details COVID-19 deaths by intermediate zone – a statistical geography that sits between data zones and council areas, in terms of size. There are 1,279 intermediate zones covering the whole of Scotland and their populations range between 2,500 and 6,000.



The darker areas of the map indicate larger numbers of deaths and it is clear that deaths were higher in the more populated urban areas and the central belt with fewer deaths in the rural areas of the highlands and islands.

There was a clear pattern when analysing by areas of multiple deprivation (Figure 1.8). Age-standardised rates in the most deprived quintile (124 per 100,000 population) more than double those in the least deprived quintile (59 per 100,000).

Figure 1.8: Age-standardised death rates from COVID-19 by SIMD Quintile



The age-standardised rate for deaths involving COVID-19 in large urban areas (116 deaths per 100,000 population) was over four times that in remote rural locations (27 per 100,000 population). The gap was substantially smaller when considering the rate of deaths from all causes (1.3 times as high in large urban areas compared to remote rural areas).

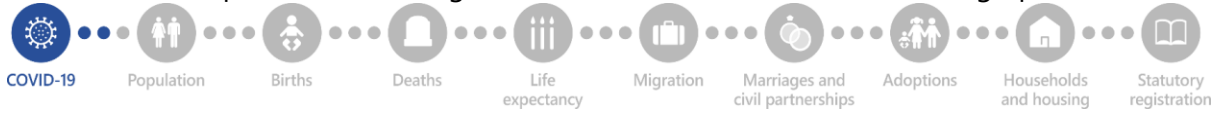
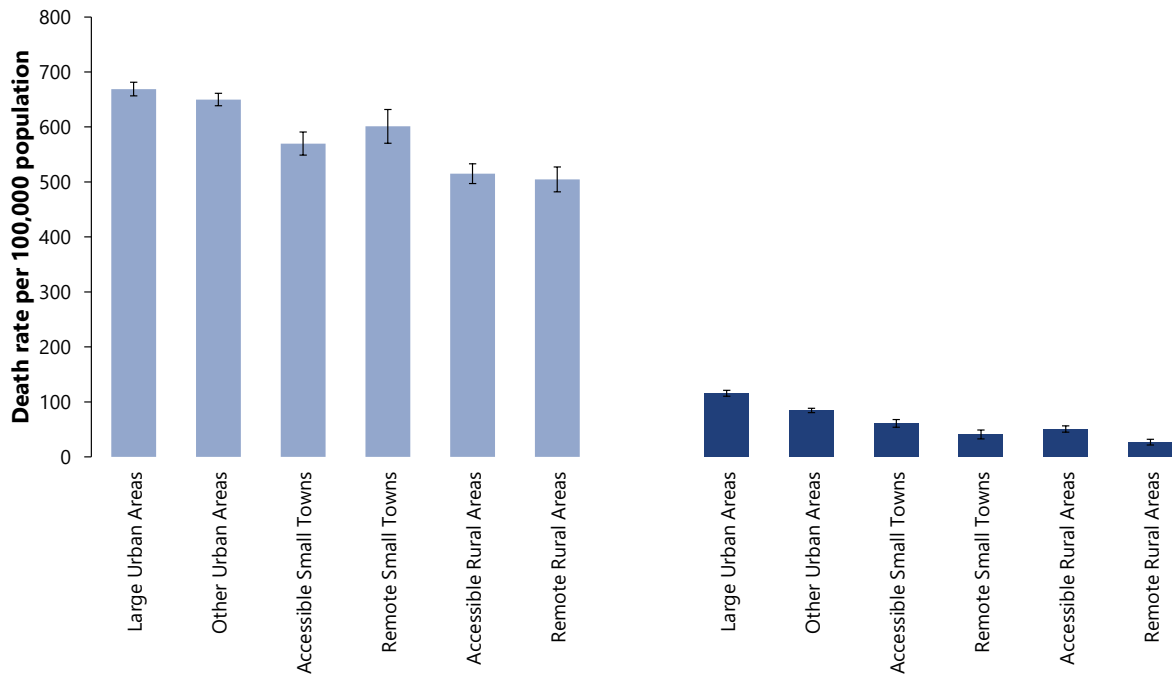


Figure 1.9: Age-standardised death rates from COVID-19 by Urban Rural classification

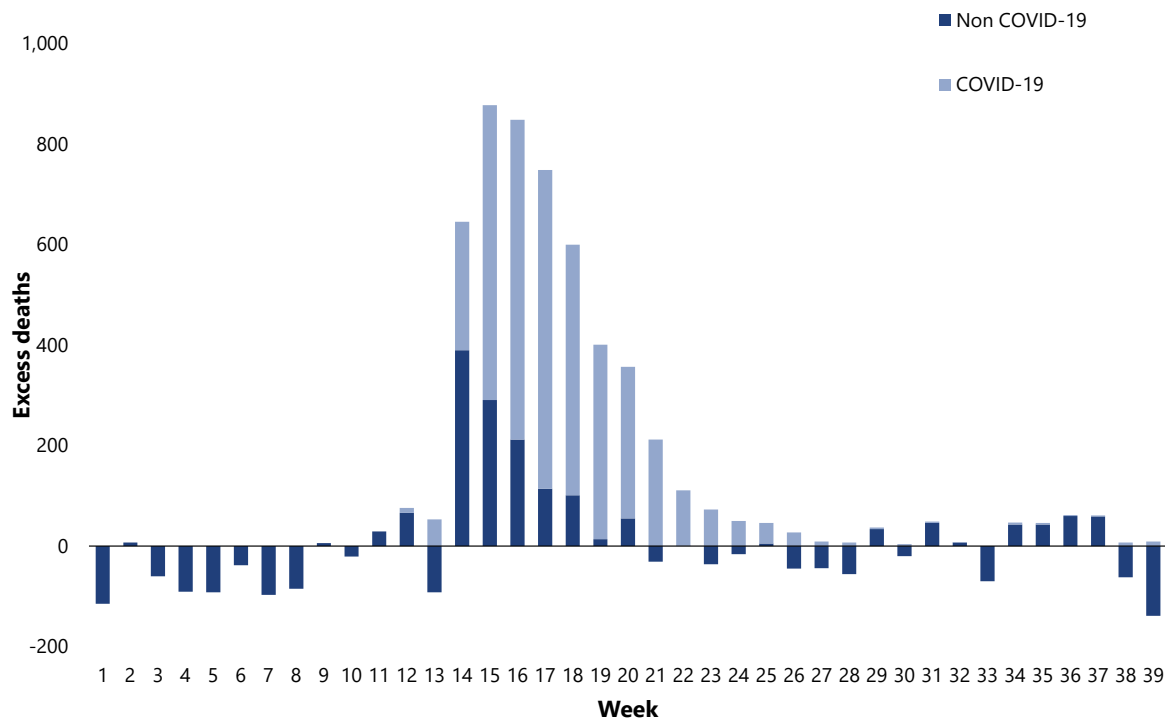


Excess Deaths

Between January and March 2020 there were 520 fewer deaths compared to the five year average for the same period. This changed dramatically from week 14 (beginning 30th of March) onwards. Excess deaths reached a peak of 858 in week 15 and remained high for several weeks before dropping back to broadly average levels (within +/- 5% of the five year average) from week 23 (beginning 1st of June) onwards. Since week 23, deaths have fluctuated marginally above or below average, suggesting that COVID-19 did not bring forward deaths of people who would have died within a few months from other causes. If that were the case, we would expect to see deaths fall considerably below the five year average.



Figure 1.10: Excess deaths by cause



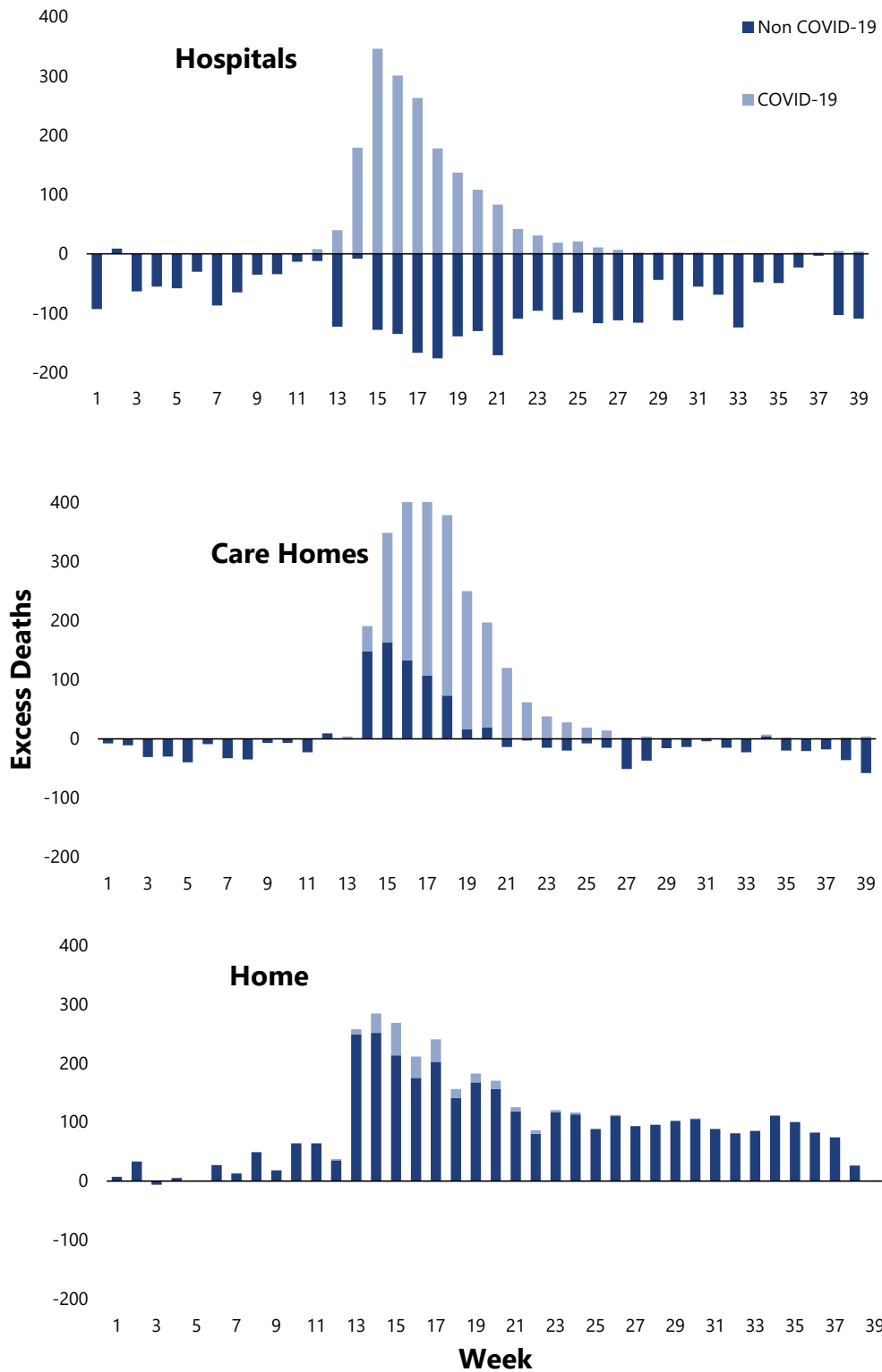
The pattern of excess deaths varied depending on the location of death. An early peak (week 15) in excess hospital deaths was driven entirely by COVID-19 related deaths. Non COVID-19 deaths in hospitals were below average throughout the whole period, leading to overall hospital deaths falling below average from week 19 (beginning 4th of May) onwards.

Conversely, deaths at home or in non-institutional settings have continued to be above average since week 13 (beginning 23rd of March), with very few of them due to COVID-19. This suggests that the measures taken to tackle the pandemic have displaced deaths due to non COVID-19 causes (i.e. cancer, heart disease etc.) from hospitals into home settings.

Excess deaths in care homes peaked slightly later than in hospitals (week 17, beginning 20th of April) and also took longer to return to average levels (week 24, beginning 8th of June). The majority of excess deaths in care homes were COVID-19 related although there were notable numbers of non-COVID deaths in the early weeks. This may be partly due to undiagnosed COVID-19 at a time when testing was less prevalent

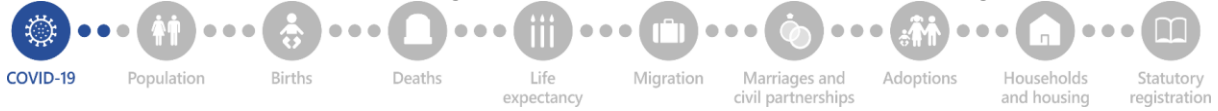


Figure 1.11: Excess deaths by cause and location



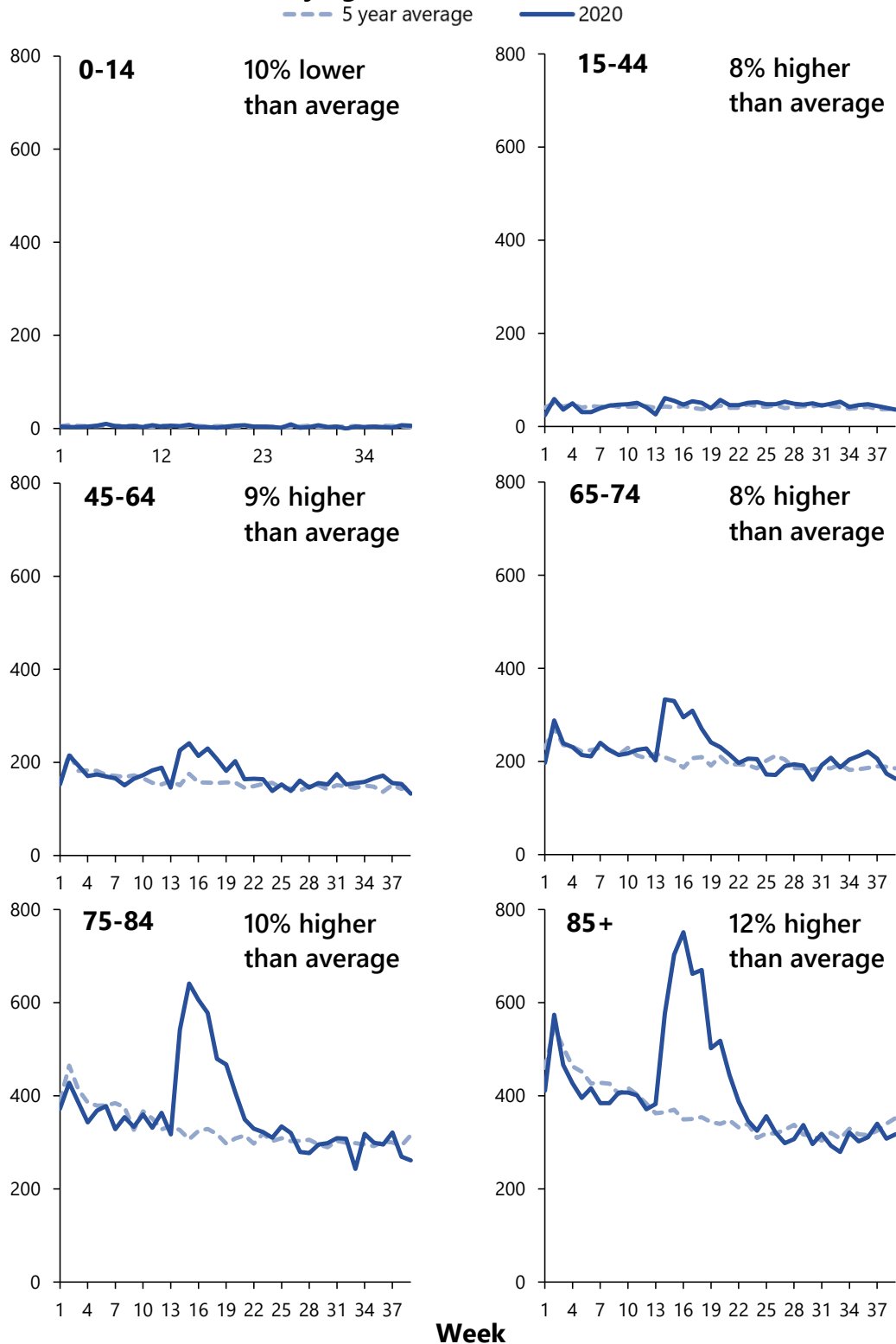
Further detail on excess deaths by specific causes of death is available in our monthly publication [“Deaths involving coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in Scotland”](#).

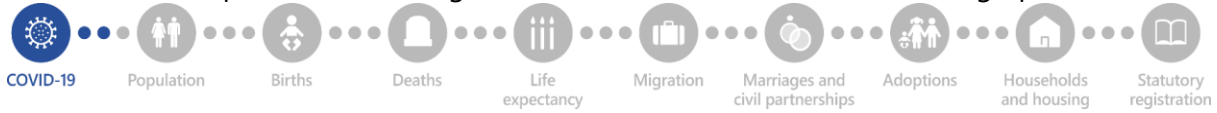
The majority of excess deaths occurred in the oldest age groups with the greatest excesses seen among the 75-84 years and 85 and over age groups. There were no



excess deaths among children and very few among 15-44 year olds. The number of excess deaths among 45-64 year olds and 65-74 year olds was relatively low in comparison with the oldest groups but there were still notable excesses compared to the average number of deaths from all causes for these age groups.

Figure 1.12: Excess deaths by age





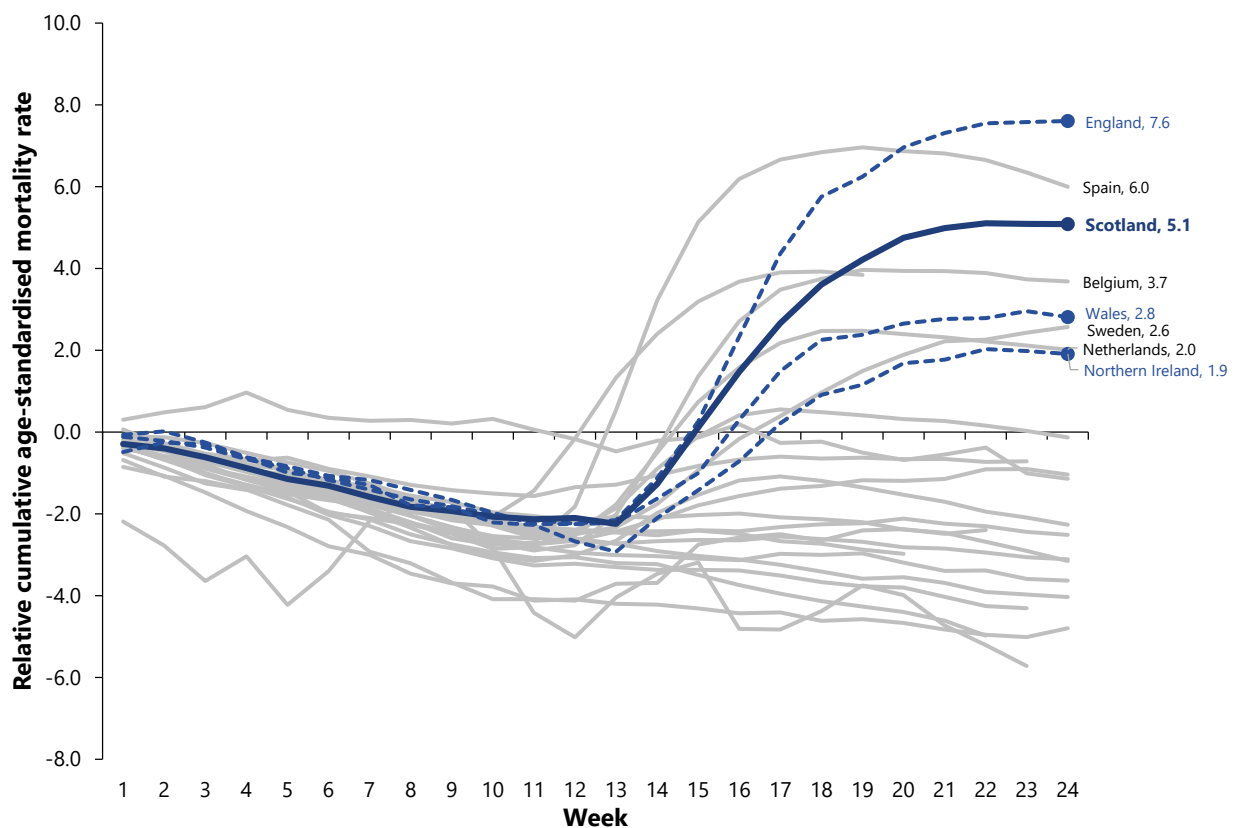
How does Scotland compare with other countries?

ONS published [analysis](#) comparing excess mortality rates between European countries covering the period from January to mid-June 2020. The analysis found that Scotland had the third highest excess mortality rate in Europe, behind England and Spain.

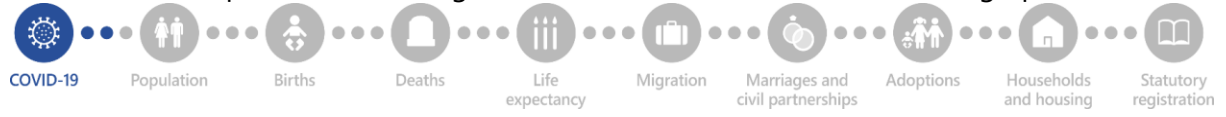
This measure takes into account the fact that countries have different sizes of populations, and different age structures. By week 24, Scotland's age-standardised mortality rate for the year to date was 5.1% higher than the five year average. Spain was 6.0% above average and mortality in England was 7.6% higher than the five year average.

Comparing excess deaths rather than COVID-19 deaths avoids the problem of different countries recording COVID-19 deaths in different ways, and it also takes into account the indirect impact of the pandemic, such as deaths from other causes that might be related to delayed access to health care.

Figure 1.13: Relative cumulative age standardised mortality rates, selected European countries



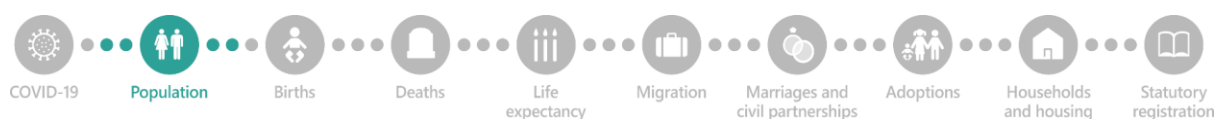
Scotland's Population – The Registrar General's Annual Review of Demographic Trends





Population

“Scotland’s population increased in the year to June 2019, and has continued to age.”



Population and COVID-19

This chapter explores the size and characteristics of Scotland's population. The population estimates are updated each year, with the latest figures relating to the population as at 30 June 2019 (commonly referred to as mid-2019). Population projections are published every two years, and the most recent projections are based on the mid-2018 population.

As a result, these statistics do not take into account recent changes, such as the increase in deaths due to COVID-19, or the changes to migration as a result of travel restrictions imposed during the pandemic. Further information on the latest deaths involving COVID-19 can be found in [Chapter 1 – Deaths involving COVID-19](#), and some insights into recent travel patterns can be found in [Chapter 6 – Migration](#).

Next year, we will be able to use the mid-2020 population estimates to improve our understanding of the impact of the pandemic on Scotland's population. Nevertheless, the latest statistics in this chapter can provide some helpful insights into the current demographic makeup of Scotland. We know that older people are more at risk of becoming seriously ill from COVID-19, so these statistics can be used to quantify the older population, and how this varies across different areas of Scotland.

Scotland's population

As seen in [Figure 2.1](#), Scotland's population experienced growth each year between mid-1855 and mid-1911, when it reached 4,751,100. Population growth slowed until mid-1975, when there was over a decade of population decline. Between mid-1988 and mid-2000, the growth in Scotland's population stalled.

Scotland's population reached its **highest ever level** in mid-2019

The population has grown each year since mid-2000. According to most recent estimates, Scotland's population was 5,463,300 in mid-2019. This was an increase of 0.5% (25,200 people) on the previous year.

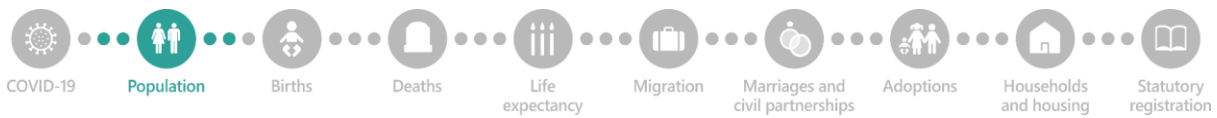
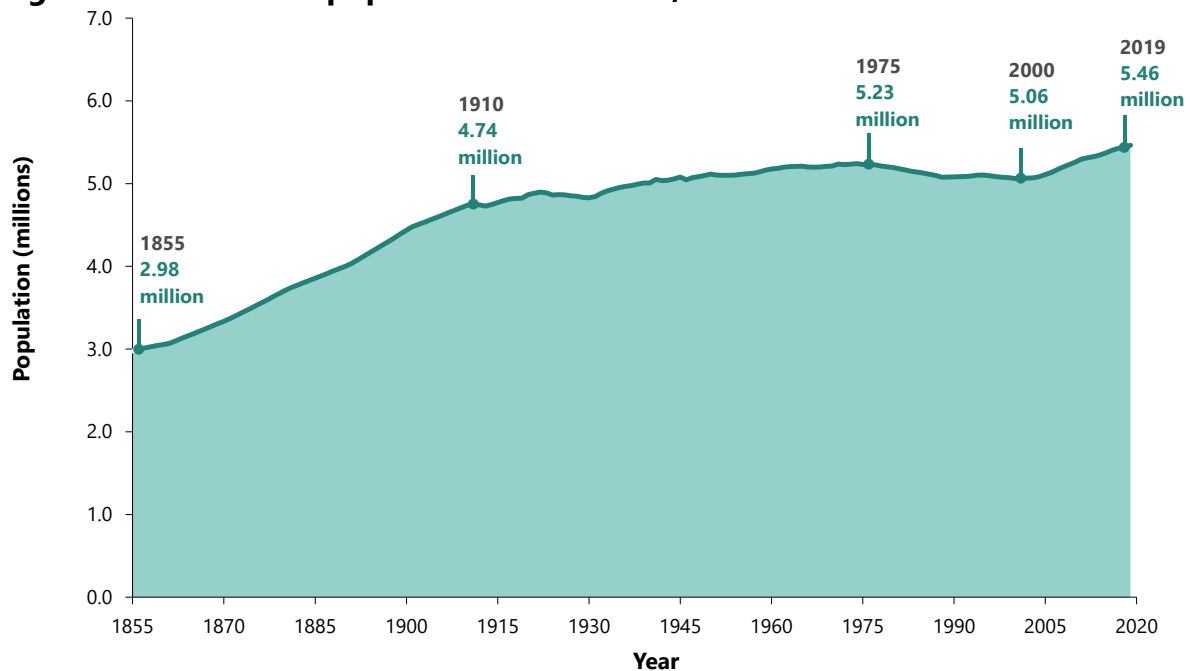


Figure 2.1: Estimated population of Scotland, mid-1855 to mid-2019



Note: The populations for 1940 to 1946 are imputed due to estimation issues during World War Two.

Over the past ten years (mid-2009 to mid-2019), Scotland's population has increased by 4% (231,400 people). However, population change has varied across Scotland. A total of seven (out of 32) councils have experienced population decline (Figure 2.2). These councils are predominately located in the west and south-west of the country. The councils which experienced greatest population decline over the past decade were:

7 councils have experienced **population decline** over the past ten years

- Inverclyde (down by 5%)
- Argyll and Bute (down by 4%)
- Na h-Eileanan Siar (down by 3%)

Councils which experienced population growth above the Scottish average (4%) were mainly in the central belt or east of the country. The fastest growing councils were:

- City of Edinburgh and Midlothian (both up by 13%)
- Glasgow City and East Lothian (both up by 9%)

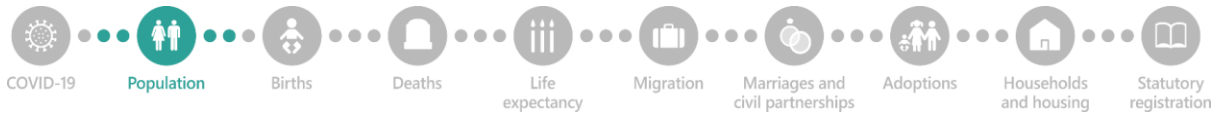
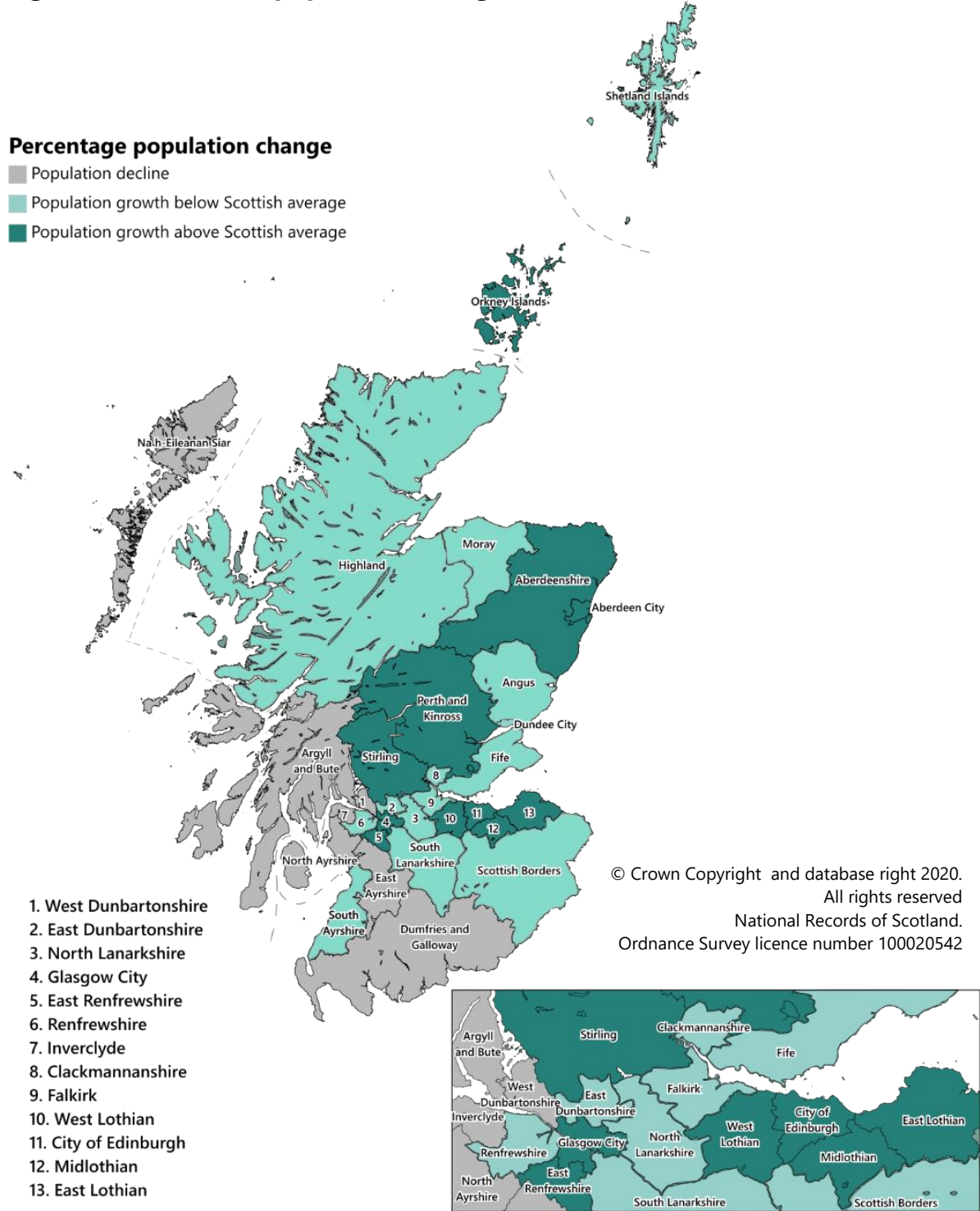
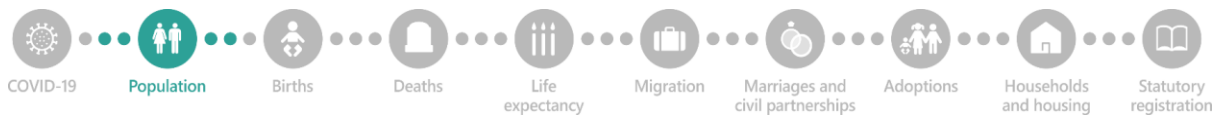


Figure 2.2: Estimated population change, council areas, mid-2009 to mid-2019





Every council area had pockets of population growth as well as population decline

Councils are made up of small areas called data zones. They are designed to have a population of around 500 to 1,000 people. NRS publish [small area population estimates](#) for these data zones annually, which can be used to understand how communities are changing.

Over the past decade¹ to mid-2019, over half (54%) of all data zones in Scotland experienced population decline (3,795 out of 6,976 data zones). In every council area, there were some data zones where the population grew, and some where it declined.

Remote small towns² had the highest proportion (70%) of data zones which experienced population decline. In contrast, large urban areas (57%) and accessible rural areas (56%) had the highest proportion of data zones which experienced population growth. This is illustrated in [Figure 2.3](#).

¹ Data zone boundaries are reviewed after each census. Mid-2009 population estimates have been rebased using the 2011 Data Zone boundaries.

² According to 6-fold urban rural classification. Further information on the Scottish Government Urban Rural classification can be found on the [Scottish Government website](#).

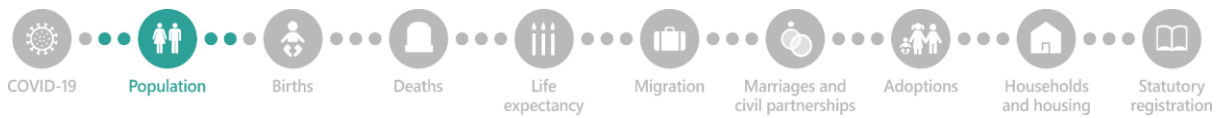


Figure 2.3: Percentage of Data Zones and population change by 6-fold Urban Rural Classification, mid-2009 to mid-2019

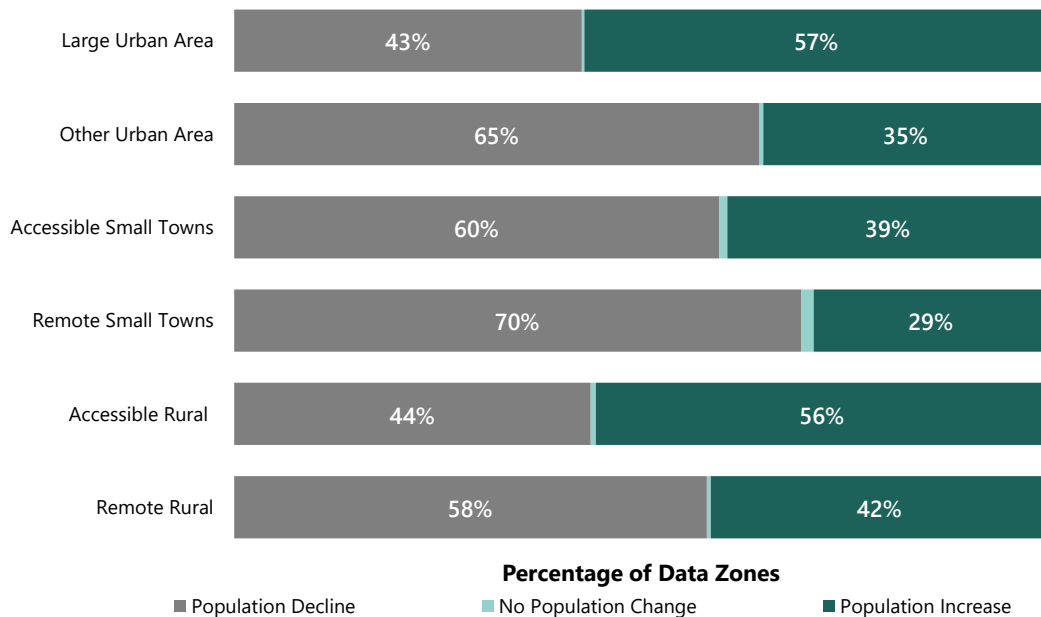


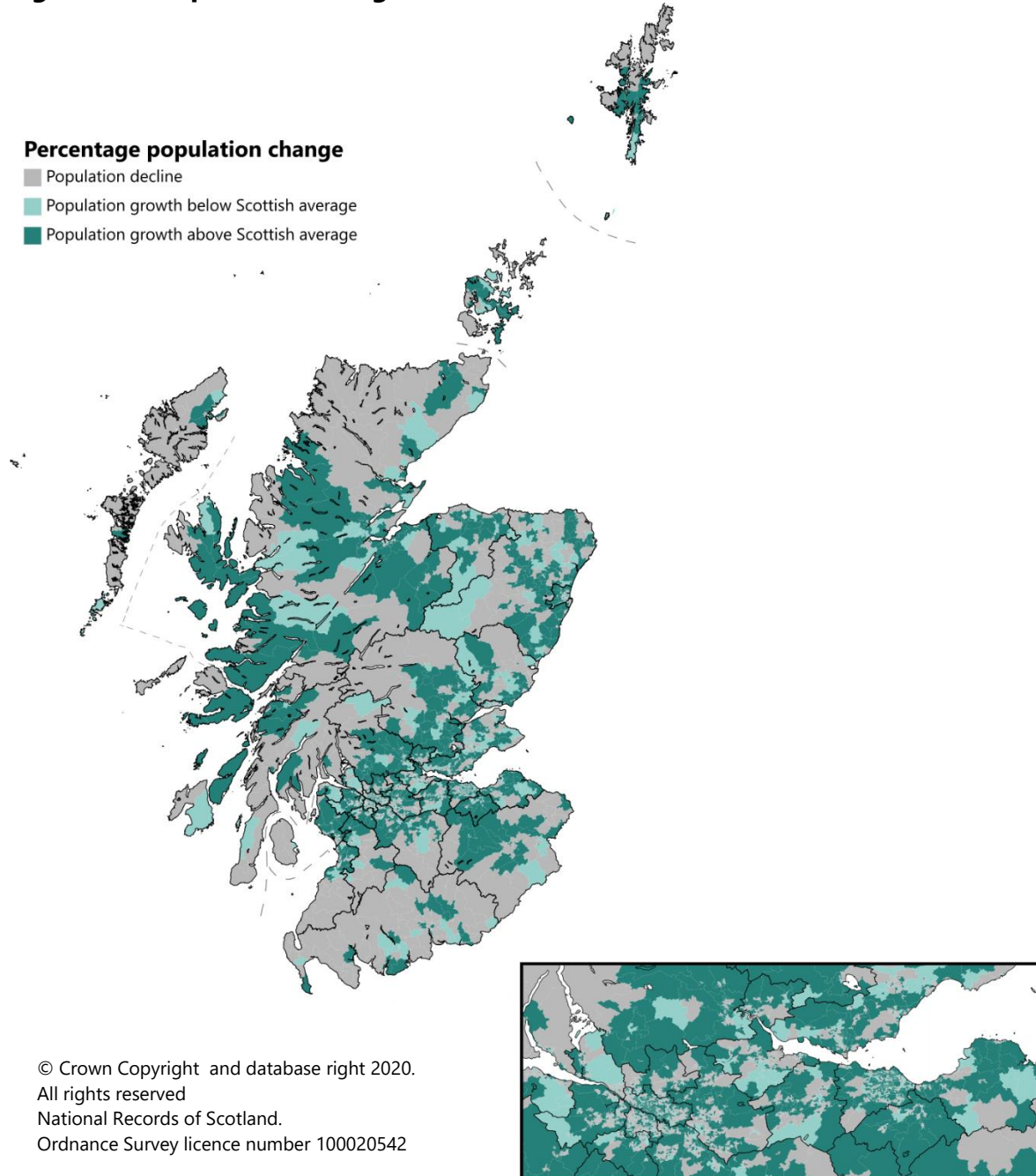
Figure 2.4 shows that there have been pockets of population growth and population decline in Scotland over the past ten years to mid-2019.

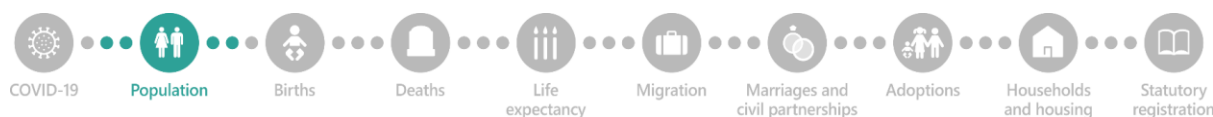
The data zones which experienced population growth are mostly concentrated in Scotland's Central Belt (Figure 2.4). There are also more pockets of these data zones located in the north and north-east of Scotland. Population decline mostly occurred in data zones concentrated in the south of the country. There were also large pockets of data zones which experienced population decline to the north of the country and in the islands.

Did you know? You can use [NRS' interactive tool](#) to explore the small area population estimates in more detail? It allows users to enter a postcode, find out the data zone it falls within and how the population of the local area is changing.



Figure 2.4: Population change, data zone, mid-2009 to mid-2019





Scotland's National Performance Framework (NPF) includes a population indicator reflecting the importance of monitoring progress and understanding the demographic challenges in Scotland

The [NPF indicator](#) measures the number of councils experiencing population decline. Over the latest year to mid-2019, 8 council areas experienced a falling population (mostly island and rural areas, as well as areas in the west of Scotland). This is an improving position from 14 council areas in mid-2018.

The Scottish Government's [Population Taskforce](#) uses the NPF and other indicators to monitor progress and understand the challenges facing Scotland's population. Through this Taskforce, the Scottish Government will work closely with partners to develop and publish a Population Strategy in early 2021 as set out in '[Protecting Scotland, Renewing Scotland: The Government's Programme for Scotland 2020-21.](#)' The strategy will set out the actions the Scottish Government and local partners will take to address Scotland's demographic challenges.

Why is the population changing?

Migration is driving the growth in Scotland's population

There are two main components which drive change in the population. These are natural change (births minus deaths) and migration. As shown in [Figure 2.5](#), net migration has been positive (more people arriving than leaving) in Scotland since the year ending mid-2001. In the latest year to mid-2019, 87,400 people came to Scotland and 57,100 people left, meaning net migration was 30,200. Further information on migration can be found in [Chapter 6 - Migration](#). Natural change remained relatively stable until the middle of the 1960s, at which point it began to decline ([Figure 2.5](#)). This was because birth rates started falling. The first time natural change did not contribute to population increase was in the year to mid-1977, when there were more deaths than births. In the most recent year to mid-2019, there were 5,600 more deaths than births. This is the fifth consecutive year that there have been more deaths than births. More detailed information about trends in births and deaths can be found in [Chapter 3 – Births](#) and [Chapter 4 – Deaths](#).

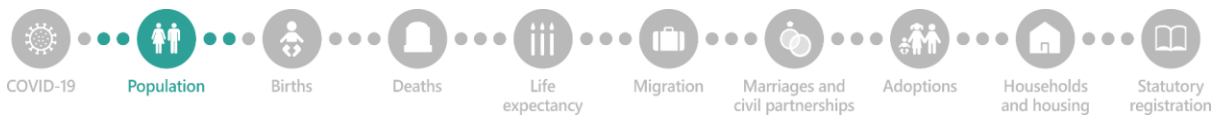
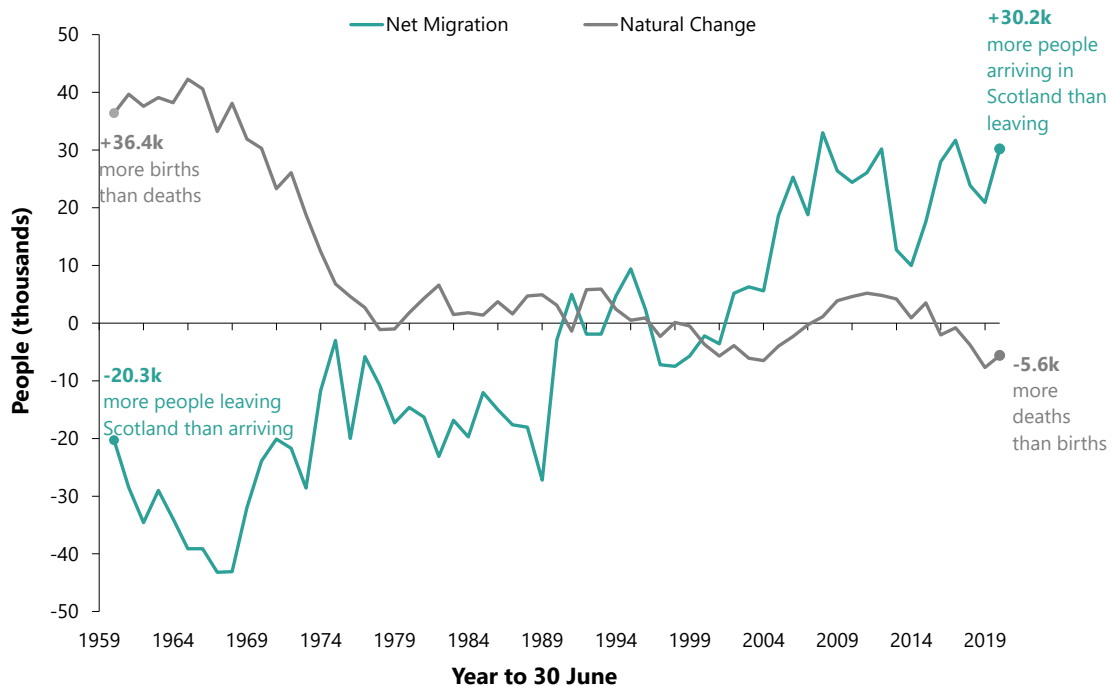


Figure 2.5: Estimated natural change and net migration (thousands), mid-1959 to mid-2019



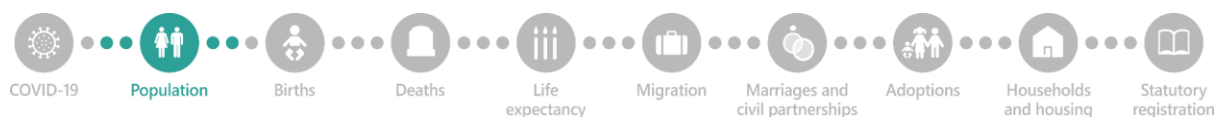
Migration has driven population change in most areas of Scotland over the past ten years to mid-2019. As seen in [Figure 2.6](#), only five councils had more people leaving than arriving:

- Inverclyde (1,530 more people leaving)
- West Dunbartonshire (1,270 more people leaving)
- Shetland Islands (300 more people leaving)
- North Ayrshire (250 more people leaving)
- Clackmannanshire (80 more people leaving)

Most councils (21 out of 32) had **more deaths than births** over the past decade

Areas with the greatest population change due to positive net migration (more people arriving than leaving) were the City of Edinburgh and surrounding councils - Midlothian and East Lothian ([Figure 2.6](#)).

Only one third (11 out of 32) of councils experienced population growth as the result of natural change (more births than deaths) over the past decade ([Figure 2.6](#)). In the majority of these council areas, this growth was lower than growth due to migration.



Where are people moving from and to?

Most **overseas** and **UK** moves are to and from the city councils. Between mid-2009 and mid-2019, the highest number of moves were:

Most common moves to Scotland	Number of moves
Overseas to Glasgow City	98,840
Overseas to City of Edinburgh	96,730
Rest of UK to City of Edinburgh	92,290

Most common moves from Scotland	Number of moves
City of Edinburgh to Rest of UK	74,960
Glasgow City to Rest of UK	55,820
City of Edinburgh to Overseas	43,700

The most common moves **within Scotland**, with the exception of Aberdeenshire to Aberdeen City, were from cities to neighbouring council areas.

Most common moves within Scotland	Number of moves
Aberdeen City to Aberdeenshire	35,600
Glasgow City to South Lanarkshire	26,170
Aberdeenshire to Aberdeen City	22,900

Further information on migration in Scotland can be found in [Chapter 6 - Migration](#)

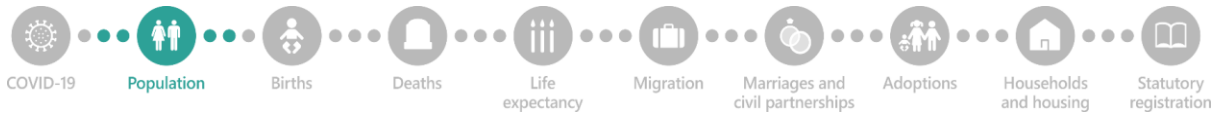
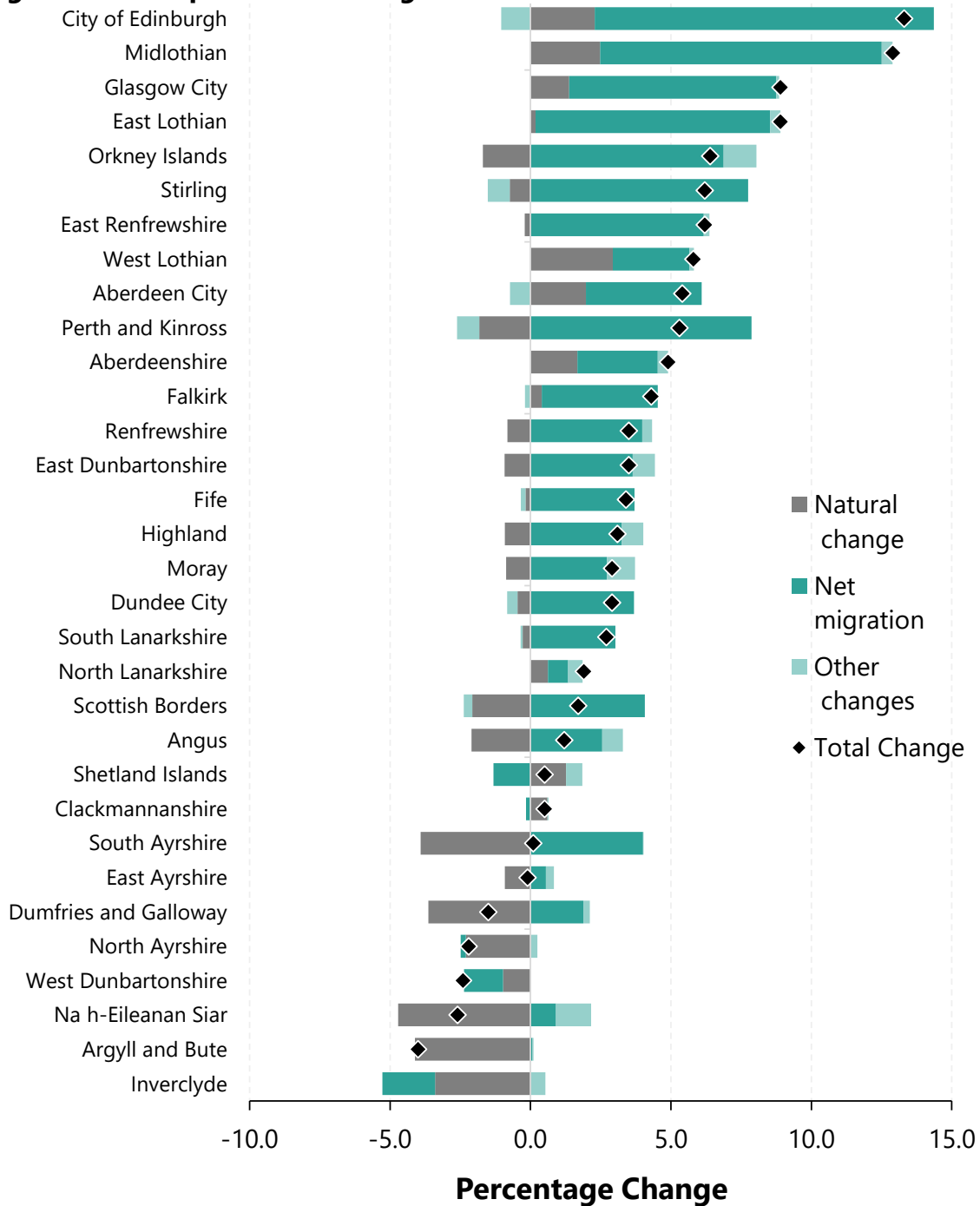
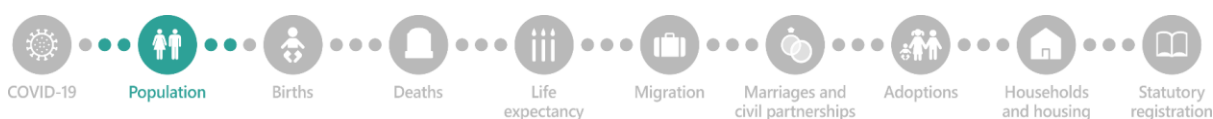


Figure 2.6: Components of change², council area, mid-2009 to mid-2019



² Other changes include changes to the prison and armed forces population as well as small rounding adjustments.



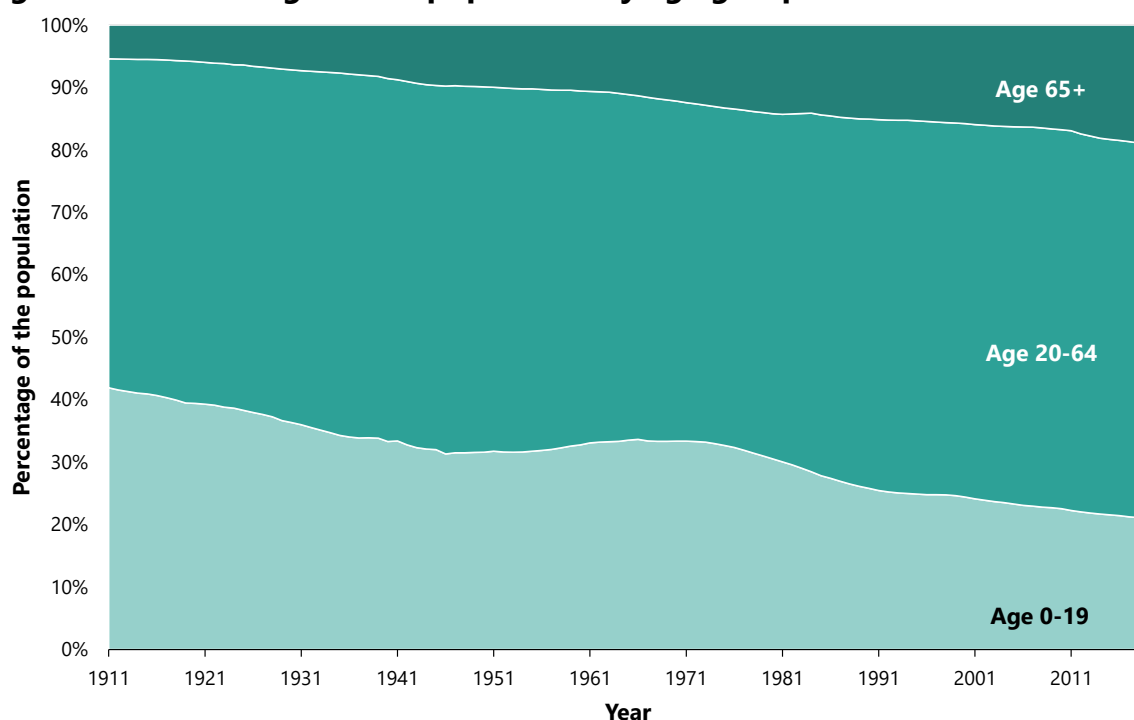
Population ageing in Scotland

The number of older people in Scotland has been increasing for decades (Figure 2.7). In mid-1911, only 5% of Scotland's population was aged 65 and over. This age group now makes up 19% of the population, according to the most recent estimates in mid-2019. In comparison, people aged 0 to 19 has shrunk from 42% to 21% of Scotland's population during this same time period.

Over the past ten years to mid-2019, Scotland's population has changed as follows:

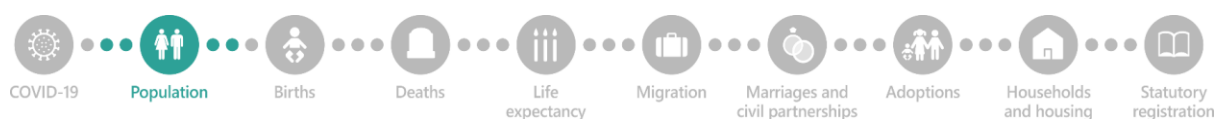
- 4% decrease (-41,900 people) in people aged 0 to 19
- 3% increase (+99,700 people) in people aged 20 to 64
- 20% increase (+173,600 people) in people aged 65 and over

Figure 2.7: Percentage of the population by age group, Scotland, 1911-2019



We know older populations are more at risk of COVID-19. In Scotland, there are 465,800 people aged 75 and over as at mid-2019. From the latest death statistics, we know that more than three quarters (77%, 3,269 people) of all deaths involving COVID-19 up to the 27th of September were of people aged 75 and over. Further information on COVID-19 deaths by age group can be found in [Chapter 1 – Deaths involving COVID-19](#).

[Table 2.1](#) shows the top 10 data zones in Scotland with the highest proportion of people aged 75 and over. The data zones with the highest proportion of people aged



75 and over are mostly located in other urban areas according to the Scottish Government 6-fold Urban Rural Classification³. Each of these data zones contain care homes or other developments aimed at older populations.

Further information on the age distribution of data zones in Scotland can be found in [Small Area Population Estimates](#) on the NRS website.

Table 2.1: Top 10 data zones with highest proportion of population aged 75+

2011 Data Zone	Council	Population	Proportion aged 75+
Ayr South Harbour and Town Centre – 07	South Ayrshire	670	42%
Falkirk – Town Centre and Callendar Park – 02	Falkirk	760	40%
Kessington West – 01	East Dunbartonshire	630	33%
Dundyvan – 08	North Lanarkshire	1,050	33%
Elgin Cathedral to Ashgrove and Pinefield – 04	Moray	710	32%
Blairgowrie West – 07	Perth and Kinross	870	32%
Bothwell South – 04	South Lanarkshire	410	32%
Monifieth East – 02	Angus	750	30%
Earlsferry	Fife	380	30%
Helensburgh North – 07	Argyll and Bute	870	30%

How is Scotland's population projected to change?

Scotland's population is projected to **increase** at a slower rate than seen in recent years

Scotland's population is projected to increase by 2% (+99,000 people) over the 10 year period between mid-2018 and mid-2028, and increase by a further 0.7% (+37,700 people) to mid-2043 (Figure 2.8).

Whilst Scotland's population is projected to increase in future, the rate of population growth is projected to be slower than in recent years. If the projections are realised, growth could stall by mid-2043.

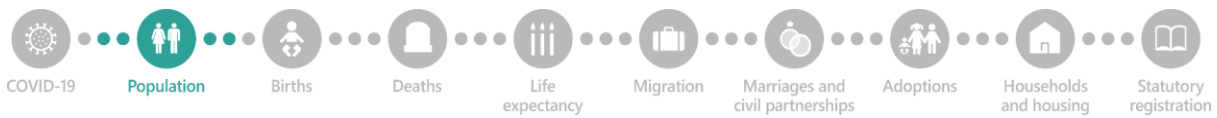
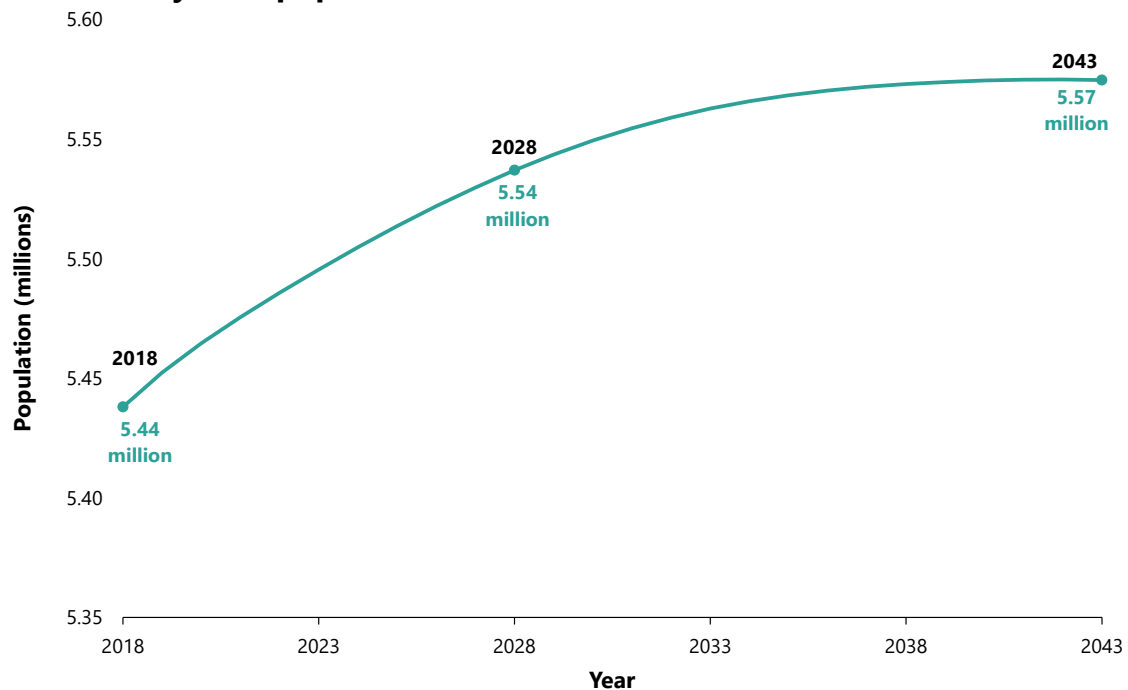


Figure 2.8: Projected population of Scotland, mid-2018 to mid-2043



More councils are projected to have population **decline** in future

Population change is projected to vary across Scotland, with some councils projected to increase whilst others decrease.

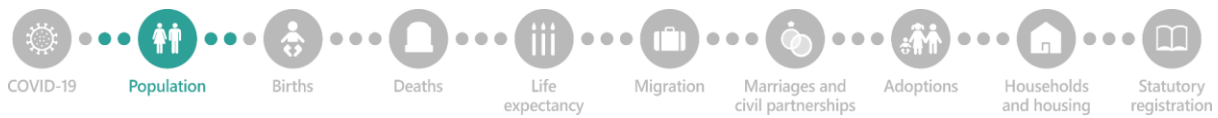
The areas which are projected to experience population decline between mid-2018 and mid-2028, are mainly concentrated to the west and south-west of Scotland (Figure 2.9). There are projected to be more councils (14 out of 32) facing population decline in the 10 years to mid-2028, than between mid-2009 and mid-2019 (7 out of 32).

In contrast, councils which are projected to experience the greatest population growth are the cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Stirling, and the surrounding councils (Figure 2.9).

How is population projected to change within councils?

Working in collaboration with NRS, the Improvement Service have produced a set of 2018-based sub-council area population projections, using a standard geography specified by users in each council across Scotland.

These projections are available on the [Improvement Service website](#).



Scotland's population is projected to continue to age over the 25 year period between mid-2018 and mid-2043 (Figure 2.10). Between mid-2018 and mid-2028, there is projected to be a 19% (198,000 people) increase in people aged 65 and over in Scotland. This is projected to continue increase but at a slower rate of 14% (166,600 people) over the next 15 years to mid-2043 (Figure 2.10).

The 20 to 64 year age group is projected to decrease by 2% (64,100 people) between mid-2018 and mid-2028. This age group is projected to decrease a further 2% (53,600 people) over the next 15 years to mid-2043 (Figure 2.10).

The youngest age group, those aged 0 to 19 is projected to have the largest decrease during this period. It is projected to decrease 3% (34,800 people) between mid-2018 to mid-2028 and continue to decrease by 7% (75,200) until mid-2043 (Figure 2.10).

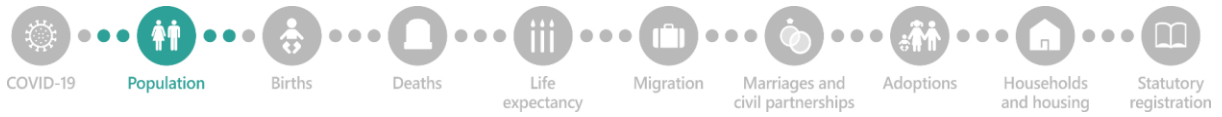
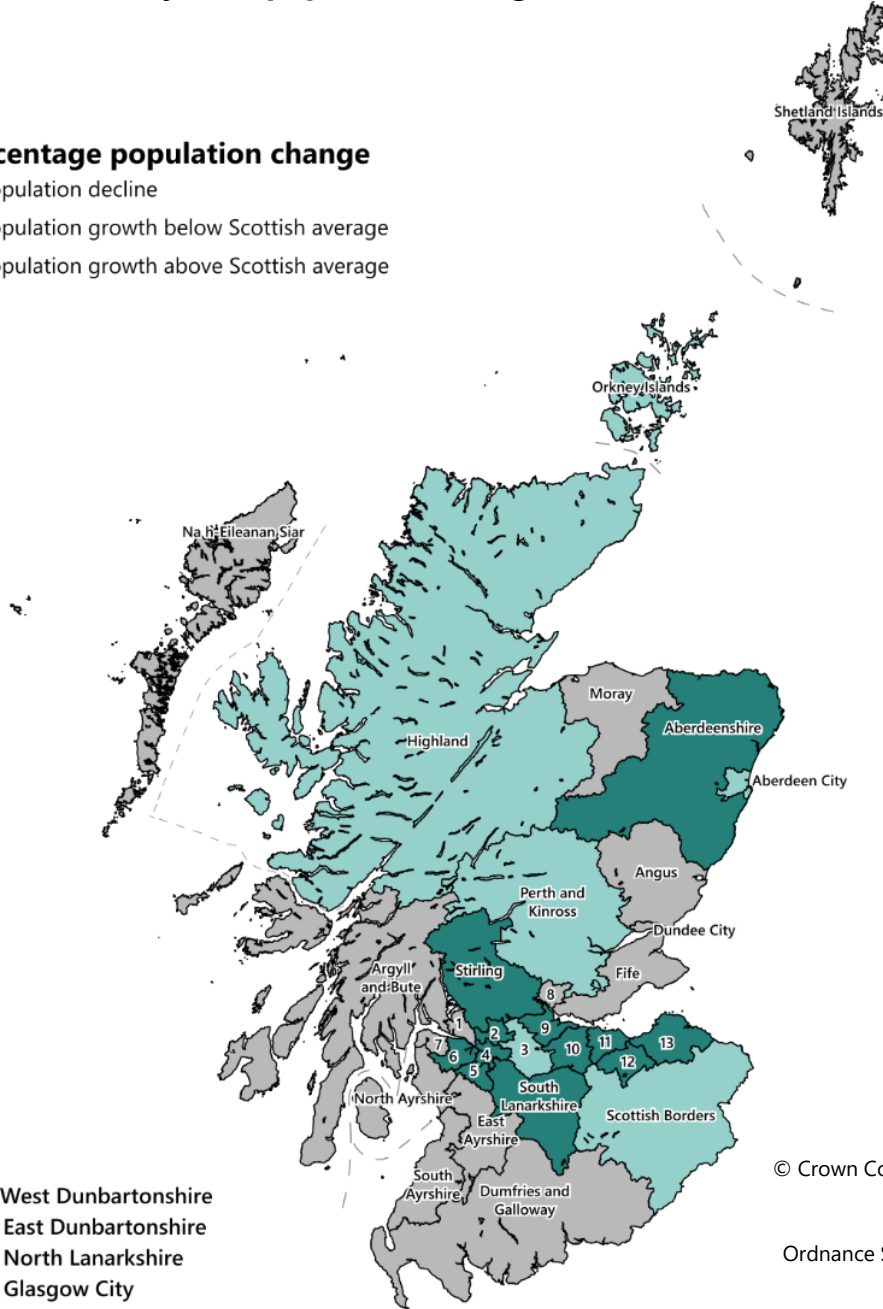


Figure 2.9: Projected population change, council area, mid-2018 to mid-2028

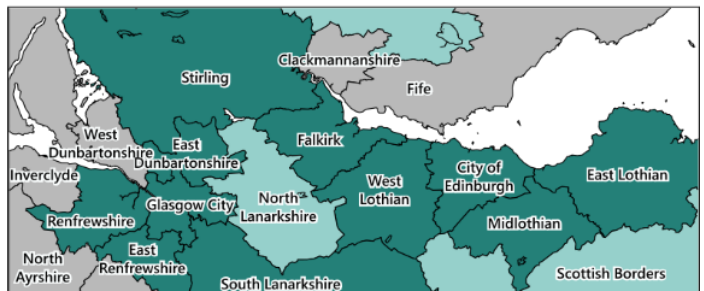
Percentage population change

- Population decline
- Population growth below Scottish average
- Population growth above Scottish average



1. West Dunbartonshire
2. East Dunbartonshire
3. North Lanarkshire
4. Glasgow City
5. East Renfrewshire
6. Renfrewshire
7. Inverclyde
8. Clackmannanshire
9. Falkirk
10. West Lothian
11. City of Edinburgh
12. Midlothian
13. East Lothian

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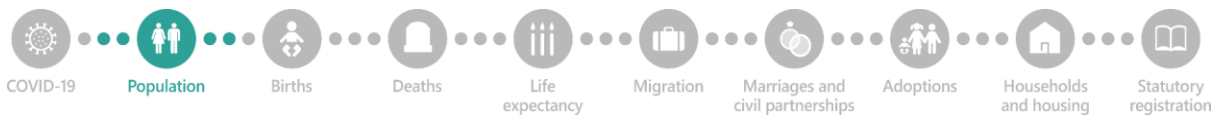
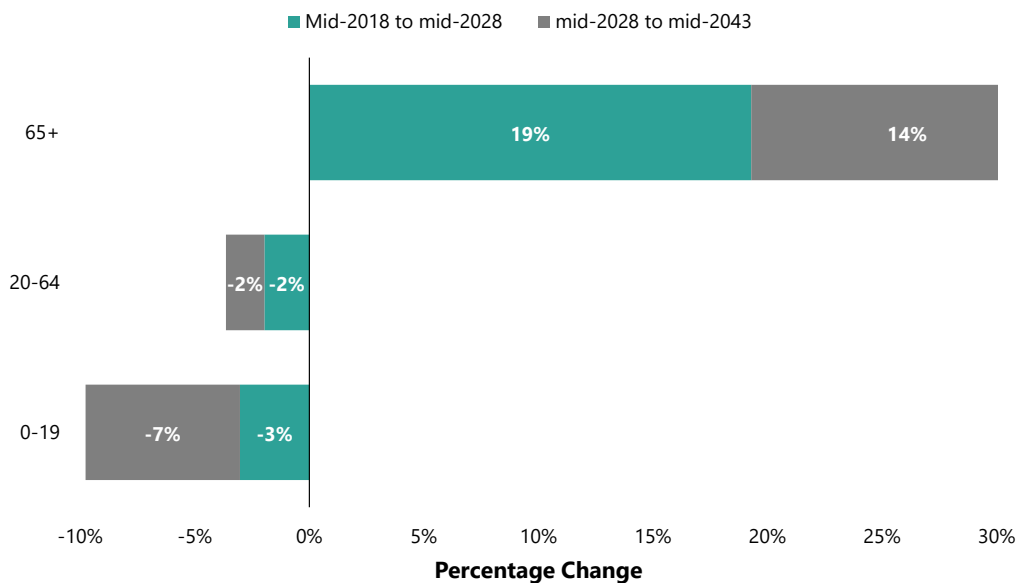


Figure 2.10 Projected percentage change by age group, Scotland, mid-2018 to mid-2028



How is population changing in Scotland compared to the rest of the UK?

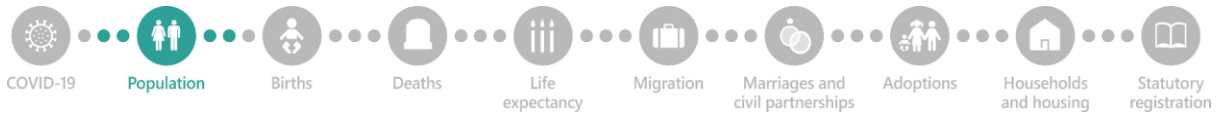
Between mid-2009 and mid-2019, all countries in the UK experienced population growth. Of the constituent countries in the UK, Wales had the slowest population growth (+3.8%), followed by Scotland (+4.4%). Scotland was the only country where

How do population projections compare to estimates?

Population projections are statistics on the potential future size of Scotland's population. They are based on past-trends and assumptions of fertility, mortality and migration.

Population estimates often differ from population projections due to changes in fertility, life expectancy and net migration. The 2018-based projections, projected that the mid-2019 population would be 5,452,400. This is 0.2% lower than the actual mid-2019 estimate (5,463,300). This difference can be explained by higher migration than projected.

Variant projections are produced based on alternative assumptions of future fertility, mortality and migration. They show other plausible scenarios of what the future could look like. Explore the variant projections using our [interactive visualisation](#).

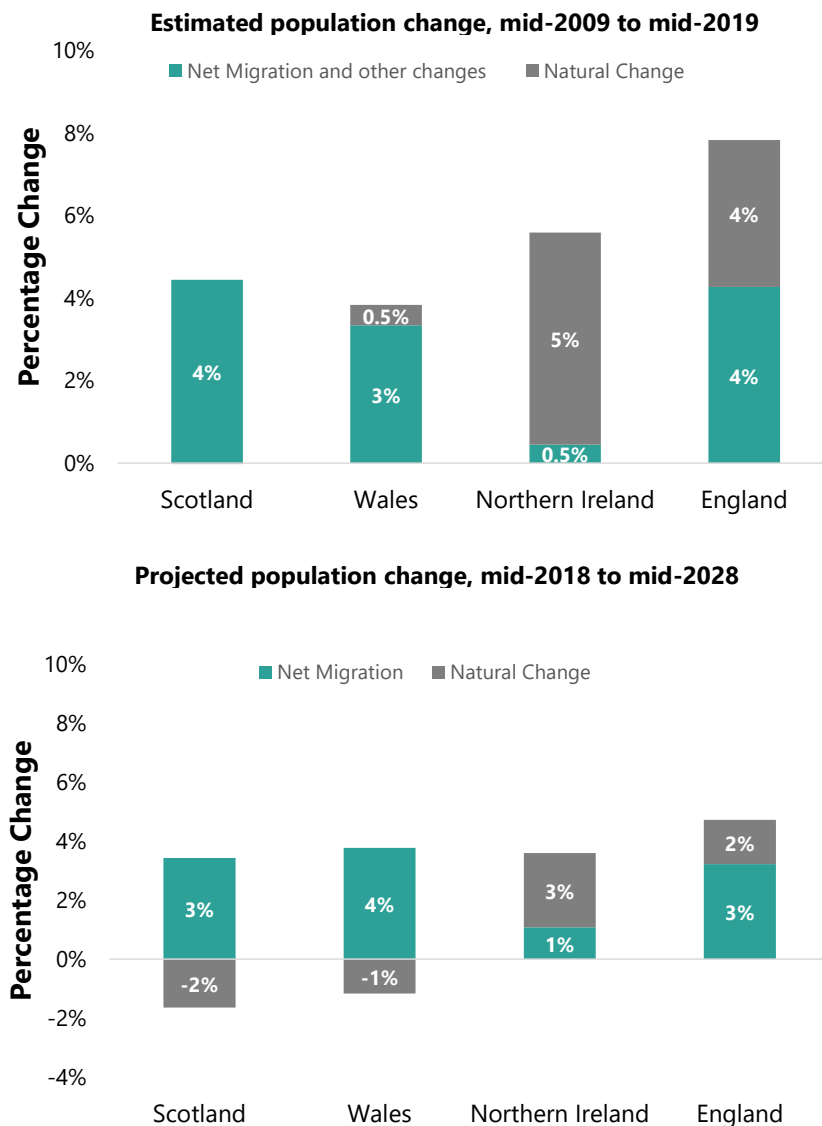


natural change (births minus deaths) did not contribute to population growth (Figure 2.11).

Between mid-2018 and mid-2028, all countries in the UK are projected to increase in population, but at a slower rate than the previous decade (Figure 2.11). Scotland's population growth is projected to be the slowest in the UK.

Scotland is projected to have the greatest decrease in population due to natural change (more deaths than births). As a result, Scotland is the most reliant on migration for population growth.

Figure 2.11: Estimated and projected population change⁷ in Scotland and constituent countries in the UK

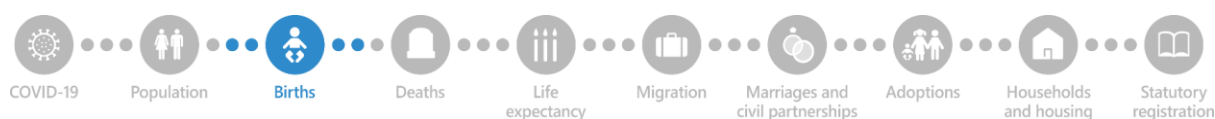


³ Other changes include changes to the prison and armed forces population as well as small rounding adjustments



Births

"The number of births in Scotland in 2019 was the lowest ever recorded"



Births and COVID-19

The latest annual figures available on births in Scotland are for 2019. It is expected that the number of births in 2020 will not have been affected greatly by the COVID-19 pandemic, as most babies born in 2020 were conceived before the pandemic started.

Although there are provisional figures on births available for 2020 (up to end June), it is worth noting that most [birth registrations](#) were postponed from the second part of March 2020 due to the pandemic. In late June, a staggered reintroduction of birth registrations was introduced. This means that the [weekly and monthly data on birth registrations](#) and the [quarterly births data](#) don't reflect the true number of births during this period.

The impact of the pandemic on the number of births in Scotland will only begin to become clearer when the first provisional 2020 data is published in Summer 2021.

Births up to 2019

There were 49,863 births recorded in 2019, which is the lowest number ever recorded.

The changes since 1855 are illustrated in [Figure 3.1](#). During the 20th Century, the number of births fell by 60%, from 131,000 in 1900 to 53,000 in 2000. This reflects a number of substantial changes such as improvements in healthcare and reductions in child mortality, improved access to contraception, changes in attitudes and more career opportunities becoming open to women.

The number of births in Scotland in 2019 was the **lowest ever recorded** – the first time there have been fewer than 50,000 births

During the 21st Century, the number of births rose from a low of 51,270 in 2002 to a peak of 60,041 in 2008, before falling steadily to 49,863 in 2019. Until the 1970s, there were far more births than deaths each year in Scotland, but this gap then began closing. And now, since 2015, there have been more deaths than births (also known as negative natural change) each year, and the gap has widened to 8,245 in 2019.

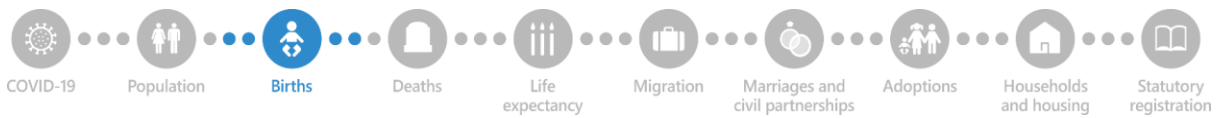
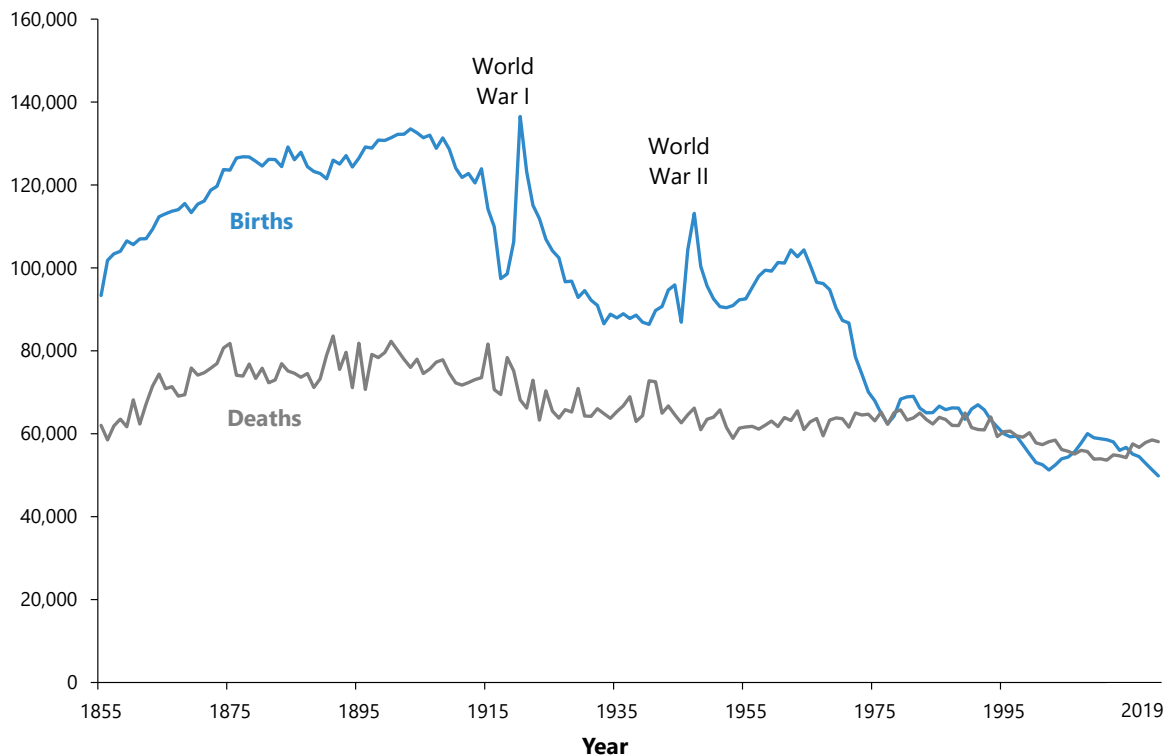


Figure 3.1: Births and deaths, Scotland, 1855-2019



Age of parents

As well as having fewer children, people are tending to have children at older ages. [Figure 3.2](#) shows that the number of births to females aged under 30 has fallen in recent years. The number of births to females aged 30-39 has fallen since its peak in 2014, having steadily risen since the 1980s before this. Females aged 30 and over accounted for over half of all births in 2019. The number of births to mothers aged 40 and over has also steadily risen since the 1980s, but fell slightly in the past year.

On average, people are having children later in life, and having fewer children overall.

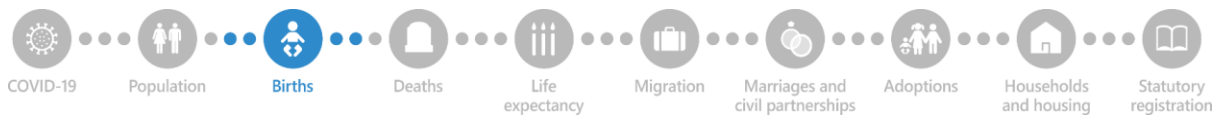
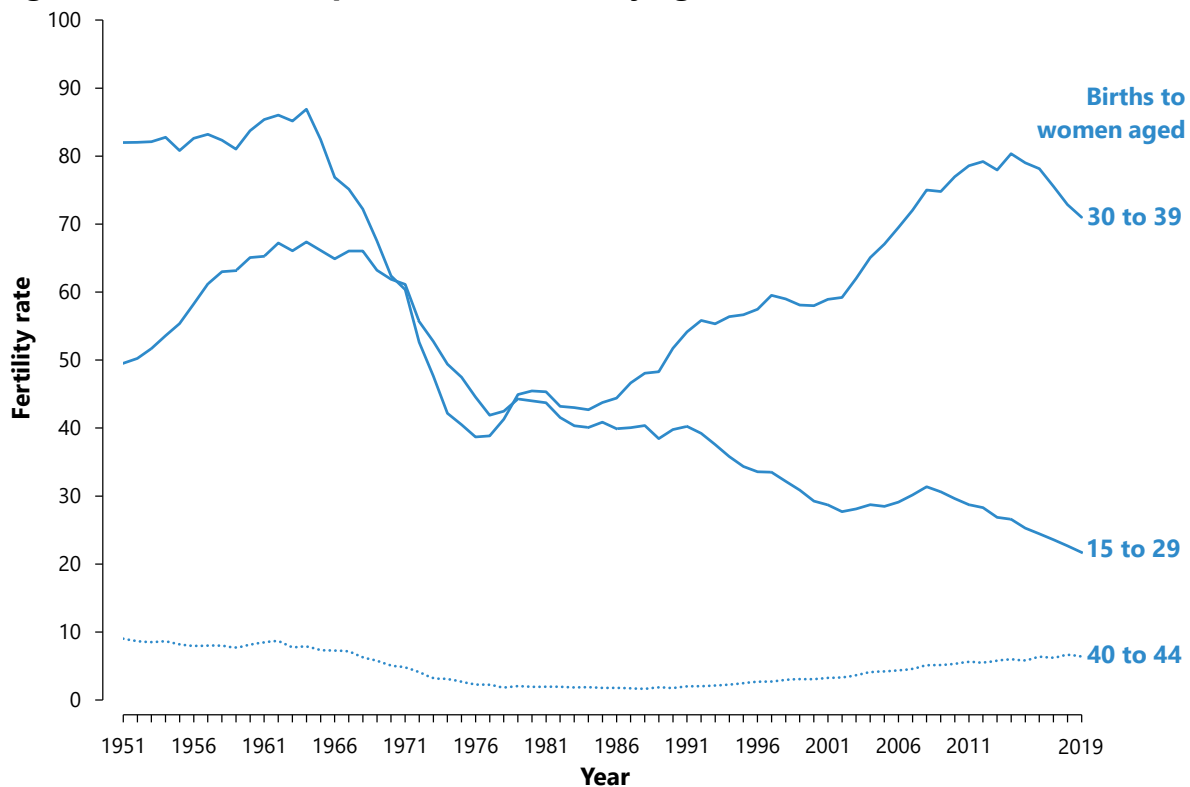


Figure 3.2: Live births per 1,000 women, by age of mother, Scotland, 1951-2019



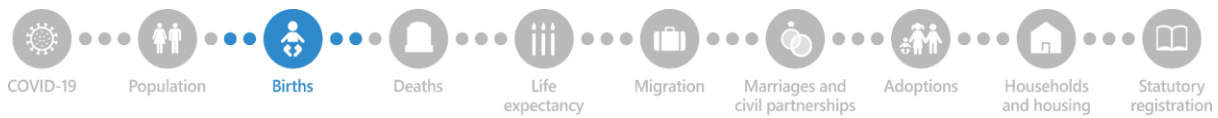
The average age of mothers rose from 26.0 in 1975 to 30.7 in 2019. Similarly, the average age of fathers rose from 28.4 in 1975 to 33.2 in 2019. This excludes births registered in the mother's name only, where the father's details were not provided.

How does fertility vary across Scotland?

The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) gives the average number of children per woman, that a group of women would expect to have if they experienced the observed Age Specific Fertility Rates in each of their childbearing years. Using the Total Fertility Rate makes it easier to compare different areas and changes over time.

In 2019, the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) for Scotland was **1.37 children per woman**. For a population to replace itself, this figure needs to be around **2.1**.

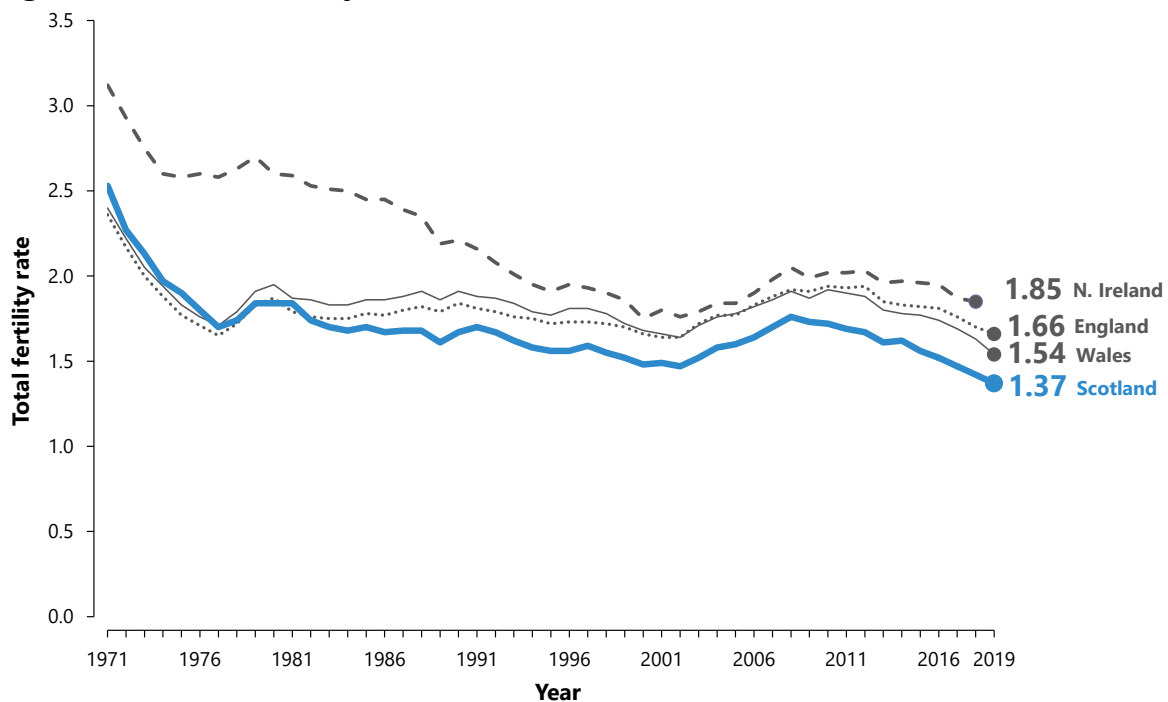
In Scotland, the Total Fertility Rate is lowest in the cities. The lowest is the City of Edinburgh, with a Total Fertility Rate of 1.01 children, followed by Glasgow City at 1.18. The highest figures tend to be in areas outside the main cities, such as Midlothian (1.77) and Aberdeenshire (1.68).



How does fertility in Scotland compare with the rest of the UK?

Figure 3.3 shows that in the 1970s, the Total Fertility Rate in Scotland was slightly higher than in England and Wales. Through the 1980s, fertility rates fell further in Scotland, and have continued to remain lower than in other parts of the UK. Fertility rates for all UK countries have fallen since 2008, with Scotland falling at a faster rate than the other countries.

Figure 3.3: Total fertility rates, UK countries, 1971-2019



Footnote: The label for Northern Ireland quote the 2018 total fertility rates because at the time of writing the 2019 figure was not available.

Country of birth of parents

Country of birth of mothers

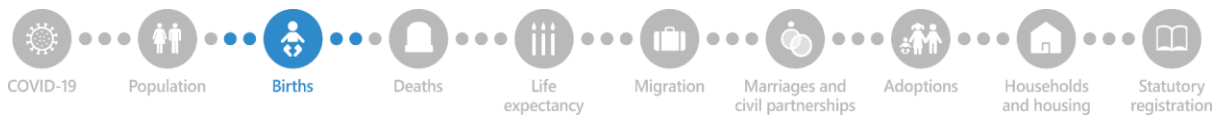
73% born in Scotland

9% born in the rest of the UK

8% born in the rest of the EU

9% born outside the EU

Of the mothers who had children in 2019, 73% had been born in Scotland. A further 9% were born in the rest of the UK and 8% elsewhere in the European Union (EU), including 5% from the countries which joined the EU in 2004 or later (the largest number were to mothers born in Poland). Commonwealth countries were the birthplace of 5% of mothers, including 3% from the Indian sub-continent. In the cases where the



father's country of birth was known, 83% had been born in the UK, including 73% who were born in Scotland.

In 17% (8,079) of births in 2019 neither parent was born in Scotland, including 12% (5,864) of births where neither parent was born in the UK. These figures compare to 14% and 9% respectively in 2009. These statistics only consider the births for which both the mother's and the father's countries of birth were known (47,713 out of 49,863).

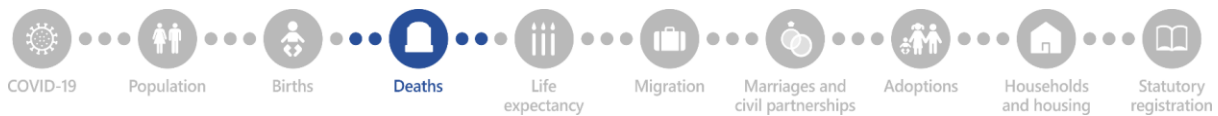
More information about birth statistics

More detailed information about Scotland's births can be found in the [Vital Events – Births section](#) or in the [Births section](#) of the Vital Events Reference Tables on the National Records of Scotland website.



Deaths

"Scotland has the highest age-standardised mortality rate of all the UK countries with 1,108 deaths per 100,000 population."



Deaths involving COVID-19

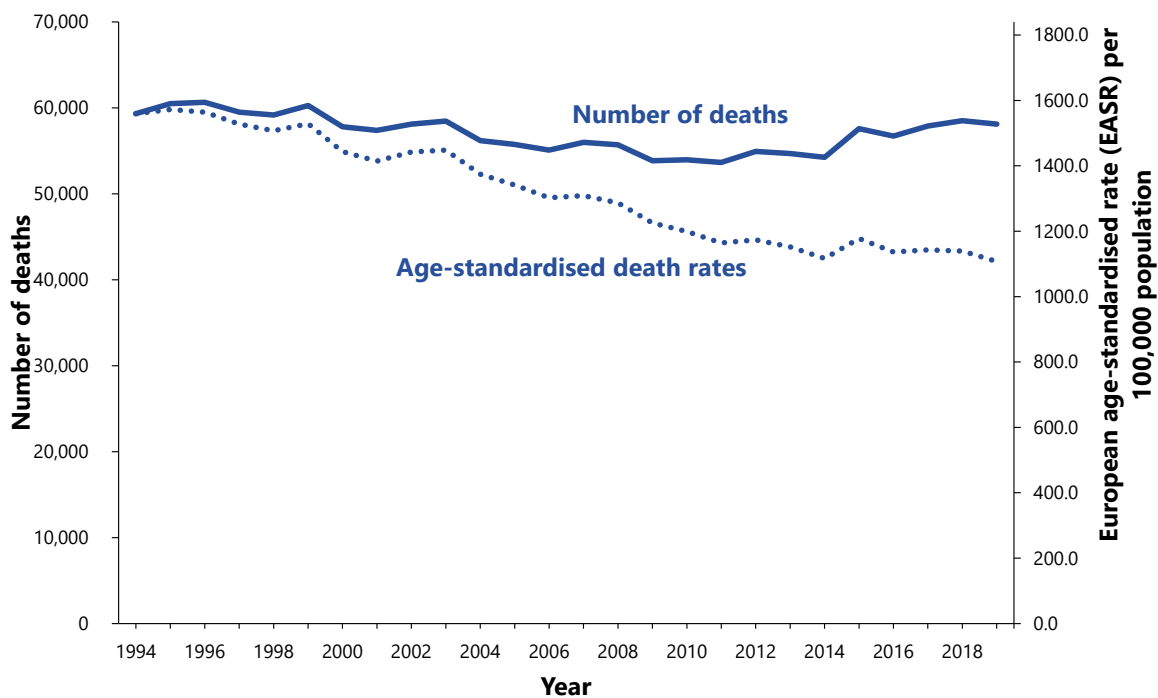
Chapter 1 provides an overview of deaths involving COVID-19. This chapter covers figures up to 2019, so it doesn't include any deaths involving COVID-19. Instead, it gives an overview of overall death rates in Scotland in the years before the pandemic.

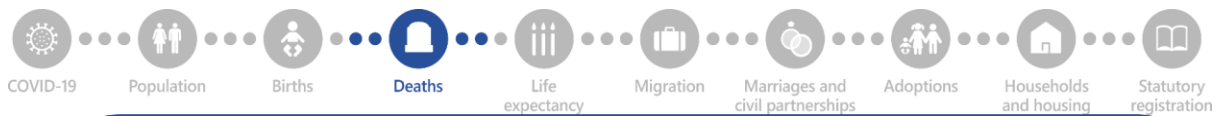
Deaths in Scotland, pre-pandemic

The number of deaths registered in 2019 was 58,108, a decrease of 0.7% on the number in 2018. This represented the second highest annual total since 1999, which might be expected, given our ageing population. The age-standardised death rate (which accounts for this) decreased consistently between 1999 and 2014, but has not changed much since. This suggests mortality rates have stopped improving.

After decreasing steadily over recent decades, there has been little change in the age-standardised death rate since around 2014 – in other words, it has stopped improving.

Figure 4.1: Deaths in Scotland, 1994-2019, numbers and age-standardised death rates





Why are age-standardised rates better than numbers for measuring mortality trends?

The population has been growing and ageing in recent years, and this will have an effect on the number of deaths. A larger population with a greater proportion of older people is likely to lead to more deaths each year. To account for this, we calculate age-standardised death rates which adjust for changes in the age structure of the population and show what the trend would be if the population had remained stable. We use the 2013 European Standard Population to calculate our rates. More information on how this is done is available in our web section on [age-standardised mortality rates](#).

When did the mortality trend change?

NRS worked with colleagues in the NHS to identify whether the mortality trend has changed. Segmented regression models were applied to the age-standardised mortality rates to identify turning points in the trend between 1990 and 2018. The results showed a statistically significant break in the mortality trend during the period 2012-2014. More detail is available in the article "[Recent adverse mortality trends in Scotland: comparison with other high income countries](#)".

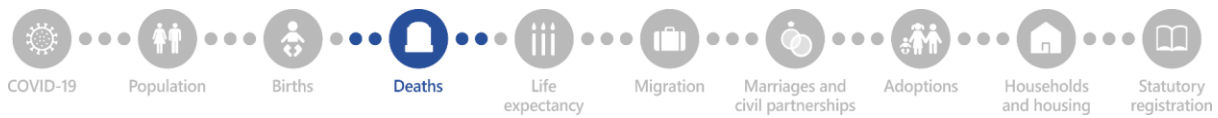
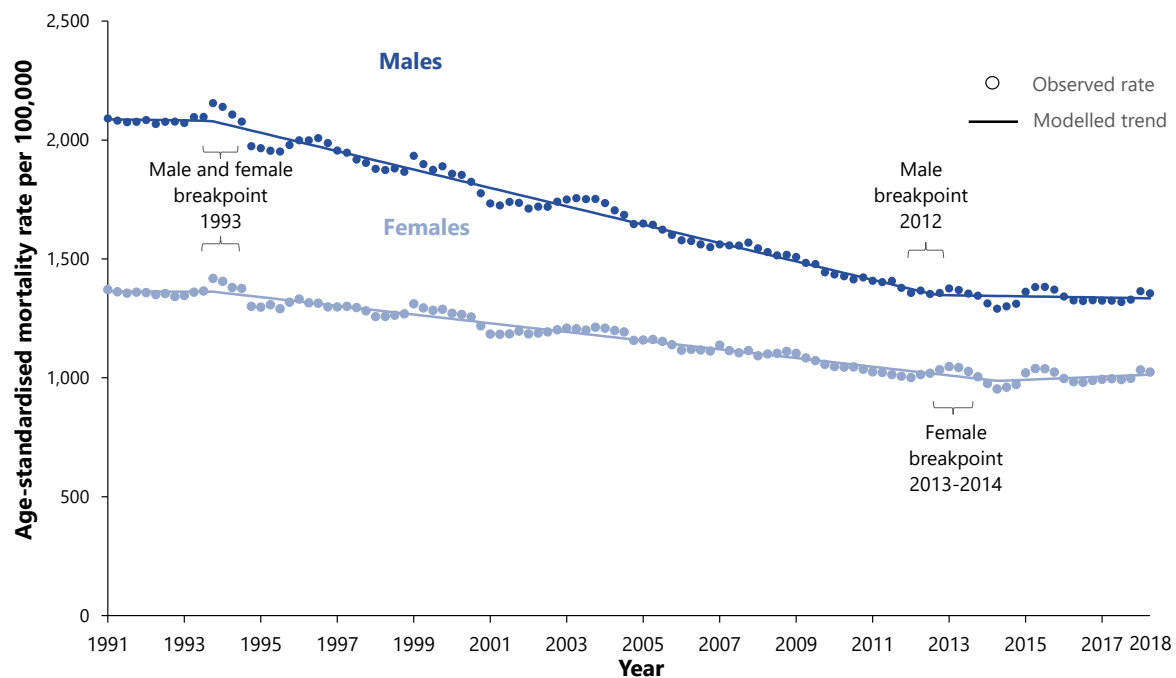


Figure 4.2: Breakpoints in age-standardised mortality trend, 1991 to 2018



Mortality by age

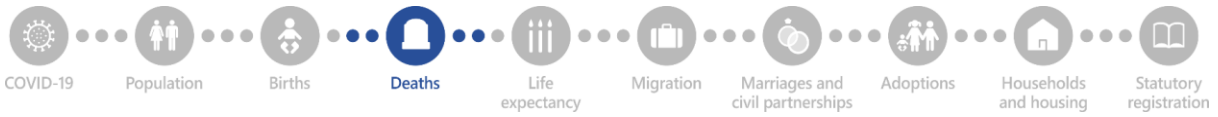
Figure 4.3 shows selected age-specific mortality rates over the last 38 years relative to the 1981 rates, for males (4.3a) and females (4.3b).

The greatest percentage decreases have occurred in the 0 to 14 age group with a decrease of 71% for males and 73% for females since 1981. Proportionately, however, the number of deaths in this age group is very small.

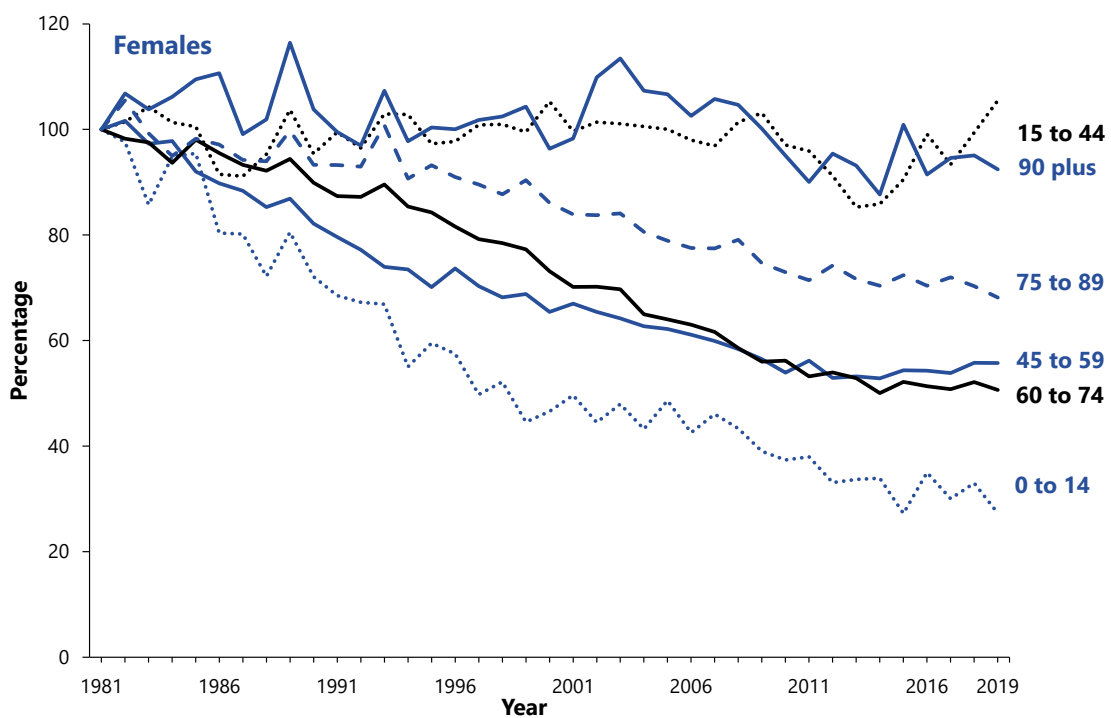
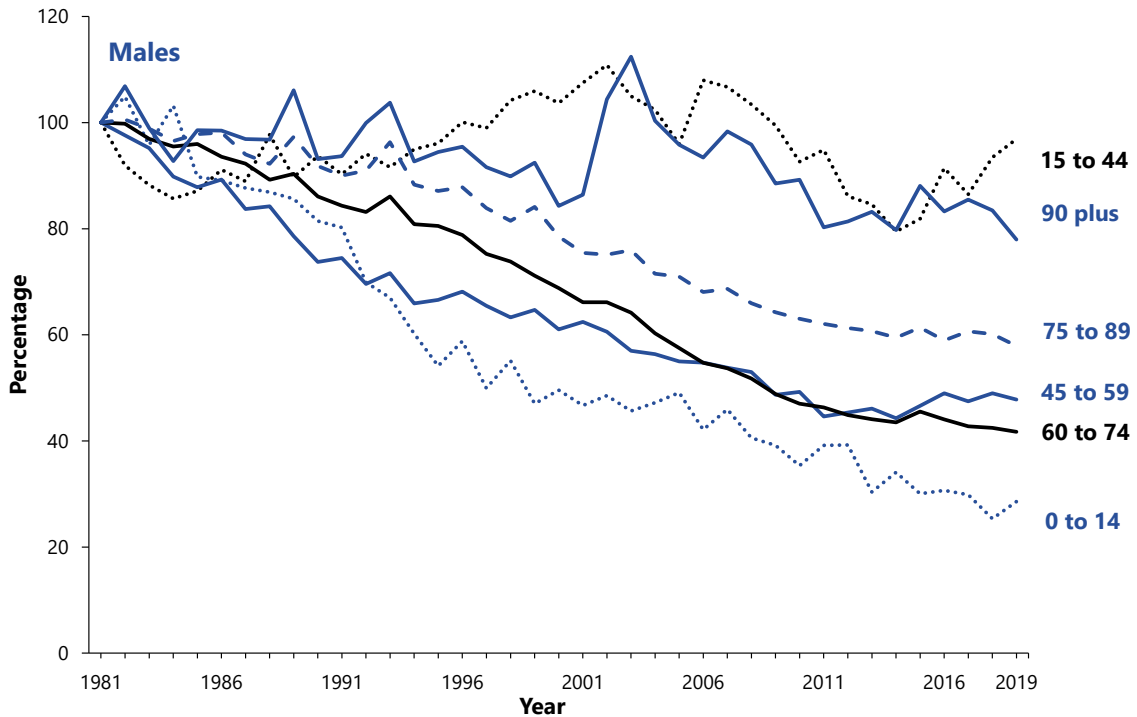
Excluding the youngest age group, the greatest decreases over the last 38 years have been in the 60 to 74 and 45 to 59 age groups. However, since 2011, mortality among 45 to 59 year old males has increased and there has been very little change for females. Mortality among 60 to 74 year old males has continued to decrease since 2011 but there has been a smaller decrease for females.

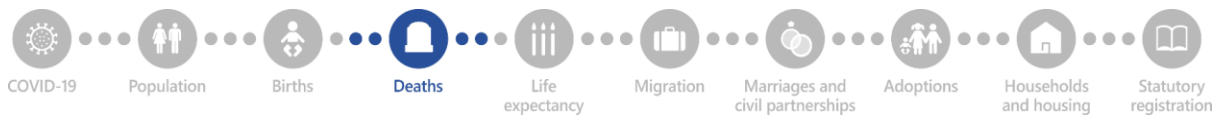
Mortality rates among 15 to 44 year olds have fluctuated over time due to the relatively low numbers of deaths in this age group compared to older groups. There are signs of increases in recent years (since 2014 for males and 2013 for females) but these should be interpreted with caution due to the small numbers.

Death rates in the 90 plus age group have decreased at a greater rate for males (by 22%) than for females (8%).



Figures 4.3a and 4.3b: Age specific mortality rates as a proportion of 1981 rate, 1981-2019





Deaths of People Experiencing Homelessness

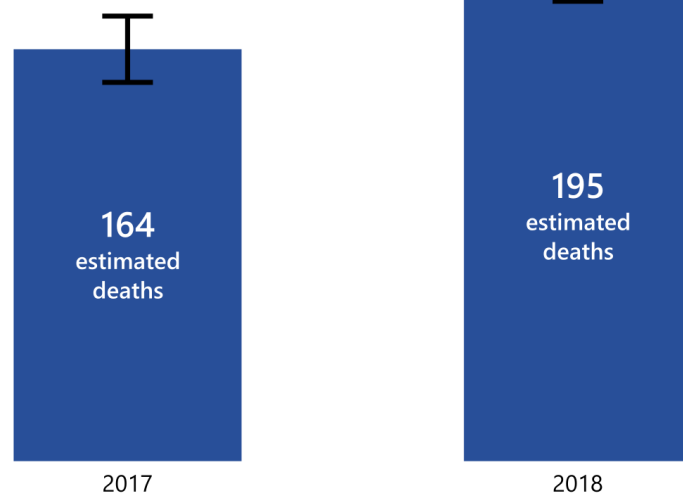
In February 2020, we published statistics on homeless deaths in Scotland for the first time. The report provided experimental statistics on deaths of people experiencing homelessness, with breakdowns by sex and age-group, local authority and cause of death. Please refer to the [report](#) for an explanation of the methodology used.

There were an estimated 195 deaths of people experiencing homelessness in Scotland in 2018. This was an increase of 19% on the estimate of 164 in 2017. Around three quarters of homeless deaths were males (74% of the total in 2017 and 79% in 2018).

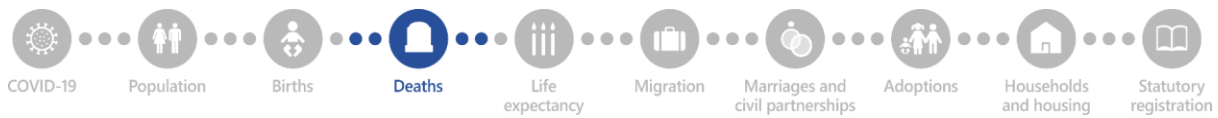
In 2018, Glasgow City (100.5) and Aberdeen City (67.8) had the highest homeless death rates per million population. More than half of homeless deaths in 2018 were drug-related (53%, 104).

The mean age at death was 43 for females and 44 for males.

Number of homeless deaths per year*



* Error bars are 95% confidence intervals around the estimates.

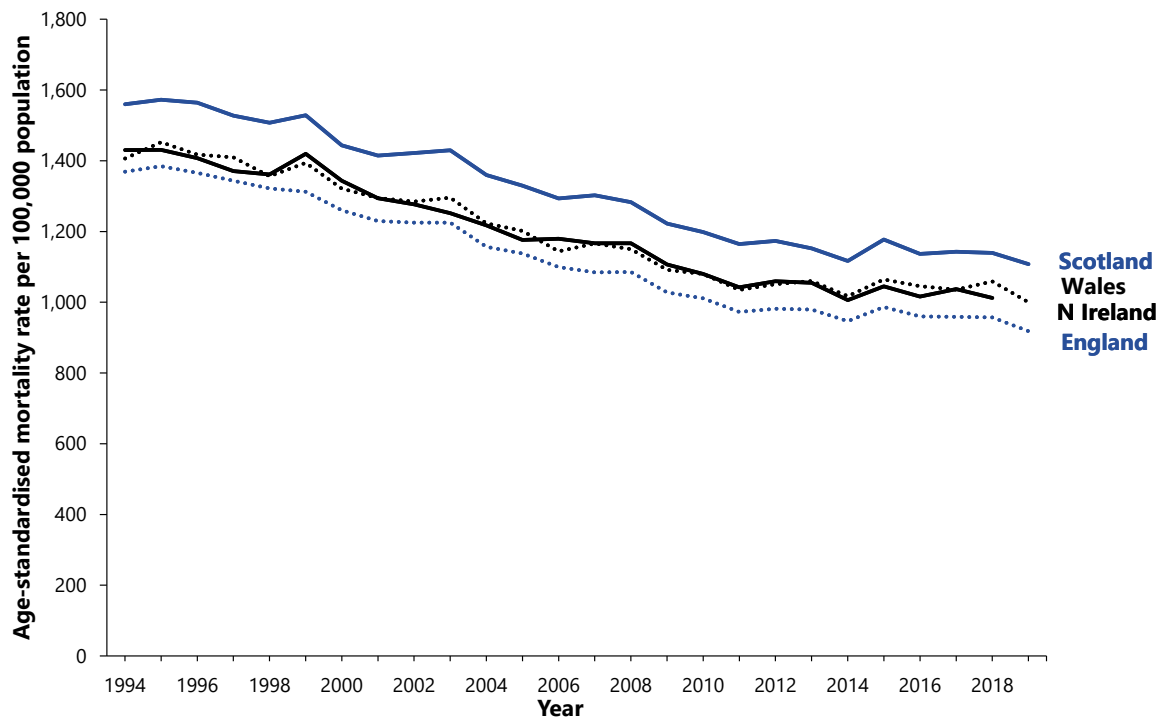


Cause of Death

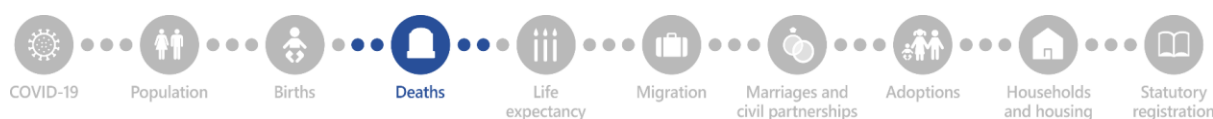
Due to delays in publishing cause of death statistics for 2019, there are no cause of death breakdowns included in this chapter. NRS has not received some of the information that it relies on to categorise many deaths. More detail on the [reasons for the delay](#) in publication of these statistics is available on our website. We hope to be able to publish the 2019 cause of death statistics in November and December 2020. The latest figures on cause of death are available from the '[Deaths](#)' sections of our website.

Geographical variations in mortality

Figure 4.4: Age-standardised mortality rates for UK nations, 1994 – 2019



Scotland has consistently had the highest rate of age-standardised mortality of all UK countries. The current rate of 1,108 per 100,000 population is the lowest ever, but improvements have stalled in recent years. England had the lowest age-standardised mortality with 918 per 100,000 population.



How does Scotland compare to other European countries?

[Appendix 1 – Table 3](#) shows the death rate for each of the EU member states, and for some other countries in Europe. These are crude death rates. They are calculated by expressing the number of deaths per 1,000 population. They do not take account of differences in the age structures of the countries' populations. All else being equal, a country with an unusually high proportion of its population in the younger age groups could have unusually low crude death rates. So, although the figure for Scotland is higher than those for most of the countries that are shown, this could be partly explained by the structure of the Scottish population. A better way to compare Scotland's mortality with other countries' is to use the estimates of life expectancy for each country (please refer to [Chapter 5 – Life Expectancy](#)) or to consider age-standardised death rates.

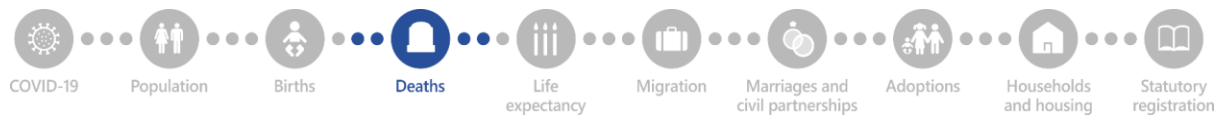
Stillbirths, perinatal deaths and infant deaths

There were 174 stillbirths registered in Scotland in 2019. Stillbirths (where a child born after the 24th week of pregnancy does not breathe or show any other sign of life) are registered separately from live births and from deaths, and so are not included in either of those figures.

Perinatal deaths include stillbirths plus deaths in the first week of life (the latter are registered as live births and deaths). There were 84 deaths of children who were aged under one week old, so there was a total of 258 perinatal deaths.

Infant deaths are deaths in the first year of life, all of which are registered as live births and as deaths. In total, 165 infant deaths were registered in 2019 (including those who died in the first week of life).

[Appendix 1 – Table 1](#) shows that in 2019 the stillbirth rate (3.5 per 1,000 live and still births) was the lowest rate ever recorded. The infant death rate (3.3 per 1,000 live births) was slightly higher than the previous year but very low in historic terms. Both rates have fallen greatly since the Second World War. The stillbirth rate has fallen slowly in the past 30 years but the infant death rate has continued a steeper decline over the same period.



[Appendix 1 – Table 3](#) shows that the stillbirth rate for Scotland in 2019 (3.5 per 1,000 live and still births) was lower than that for the UK as a whole (4.0) but higher than those of 15 of the 27 EU countries. The infant death rate for Scotland in 2019 (3.3) was below the UK rate (3.9) but higher than those of 12 of the 27 EU countries.

All data on deaths, including previous year's statistics on cause of death are available on the [NRS website](#).

Scotland's Population – The Registrar General's Annual Review of Demographic Trends





Life expectancy

"Life expectancy in Scotland is lower than anywhere else in western Europe. It has increased over the last few decades, but improvements have stalled in recent years"



COVID-19 and life expectancy in Scotland

The life expectancy statistics in this section are available up to the three year period 2017-2019, and do not include any data on deaths during the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 was first mentioned on a Scottish death certificate in March 2020. In future years, these statistics will be able to show some of the effects of the pandemic on life expectancy in Scotland.

Life expectancy at birth in Scotland

Why do we report life expectancy for three year periods?

Official life expectancy statistics for Scotland are calculated by aggregating the latest three years of deaths and population estimates. This increases the sample size and improves the reliability of the results. It also reduces the effect that years with more 'extreme' values have on the data.

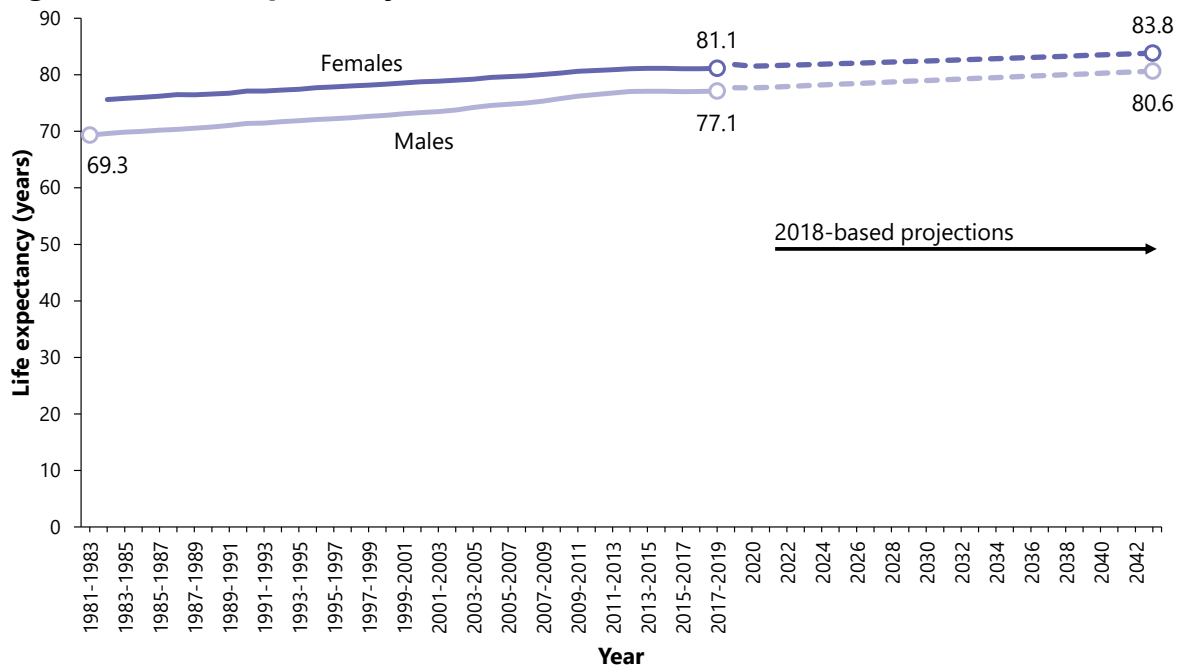
[The most recent statistics](#) show that life expectancy at birth in Scotland in 2017-2019 was 81.1 years for females and 77.1 years for males. This means that a baby girl born between 2017 and 2019 could expect to live for an average of 81.1 years, while a baby boy born at the same time could expect to live for 77.1 years.

[Figure 5.1](#) shows that life expectancy has increased in Scotland from 75.3 years for females and 69.1 years for males born between 1980 and 1982. After 2017-2019, NRS use population projections to estimate how life expectancy will change in the future.

[The latest projections are based on the year 2018](#) and show that by 2043, life expectancy in Scotland is expected to reach 83.8 years for females and 80.6 years for males. Although female life expectancy has always been greater than male life expectancy in Scotland (and globally), the gap between sexes has become smaller as life expectancy has increased. For babies born in 1981-1983, there was a gap of 6.2 years between males and females. In 2017-2019, this gap has narrowed to 4.0 years and the projections show that is expected to decrease further to 3.2 years by 2043.



Figure 5.1: Life expectancy at birth, Scotland, 1981-1983 to 2043



Figures to 2017-2019 are three year life expectancies from the National Life tables for Scotland (NRS). Figures from 2020 onward are projected single year life expectancies from the 2018-based population projections (ONS).

Life expectancy at older ages in Scotland

As well as looking at life expectancy at birth, we can look at the life expectancy for those who have already survived to older ages. In 2017-2019, a man aged 65 in Scotland could expect to live for another 17.7 years on average, 5.3 years longer than they would have done in 1981-1983. A woman of the same age could expect to live 19.8 more years in 2017-19, 3.8 years longer than in 1981-1983. At age 85, men could expect to live for a further 5.7 years and women for a further 6.4 years in 2017-2019, 1.4 and 1.2 years longer respectively than in 1981-1983.

What is 'period' life expectancy?

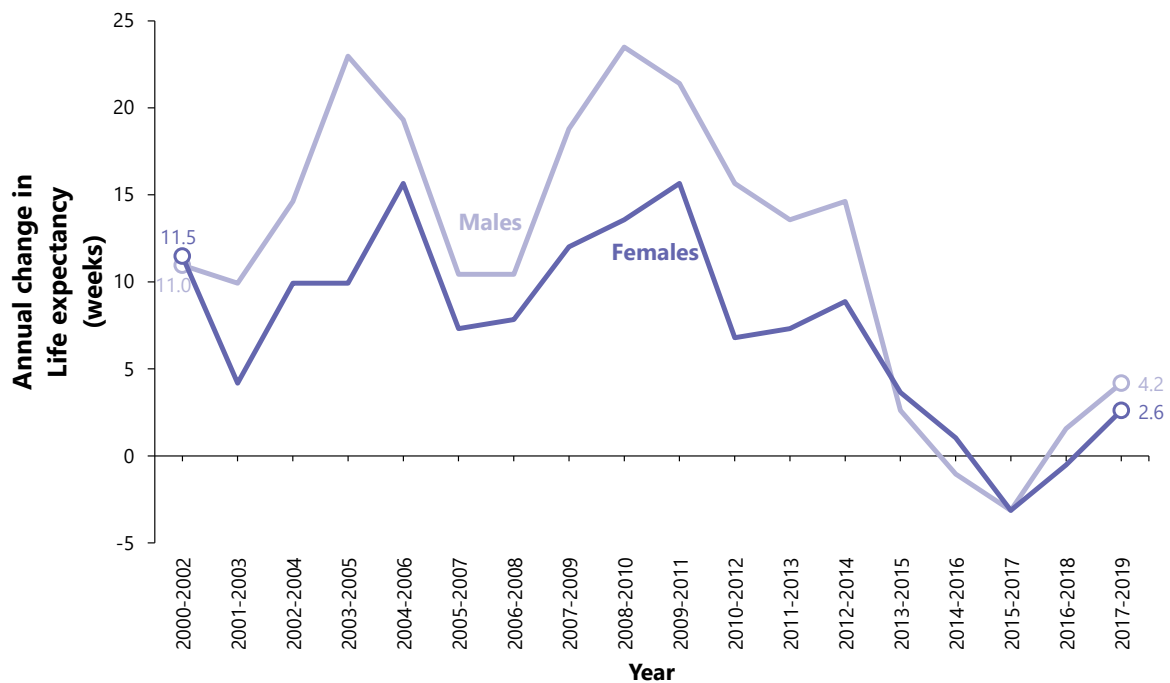
All of the estimates presented in this chapter are 'period' life expectancy. They are calculated assuming that mortality rates for each age group in the time period (here 2017-2019) are constant throughout a person's life. This means that future changes in things such as medicine and legislation are not taken into consideration. While this means that period life expectancy is not an accurate prediction of how long a person will actually live, it is a useful measure of population health.



Recent changes in Scottish life expectancy

Although life expectancy in Scotland has increased over the long term, in recent years this growth has slowed and stalled. Figure 5.2 shows that between 2000-2002 and 2012-2014, life expectancy grew by an average of 9.9 weeks every year for females and 16.3 weeks every year for males. However, after 2012-2014, life expectancy grew by an average of 0.7 weeks per year for females and 0.8 weeks per year for males. This means that life expectancy in Scotland has remained virtually unchanged from 2012-2014 to 2017-2019.

Figure 5.2: Annual change in life expectancy at birth in Scotland, 2000-2002 to 2017-2019, males and females



Why has life expectancy in Scotland stopped increasing?

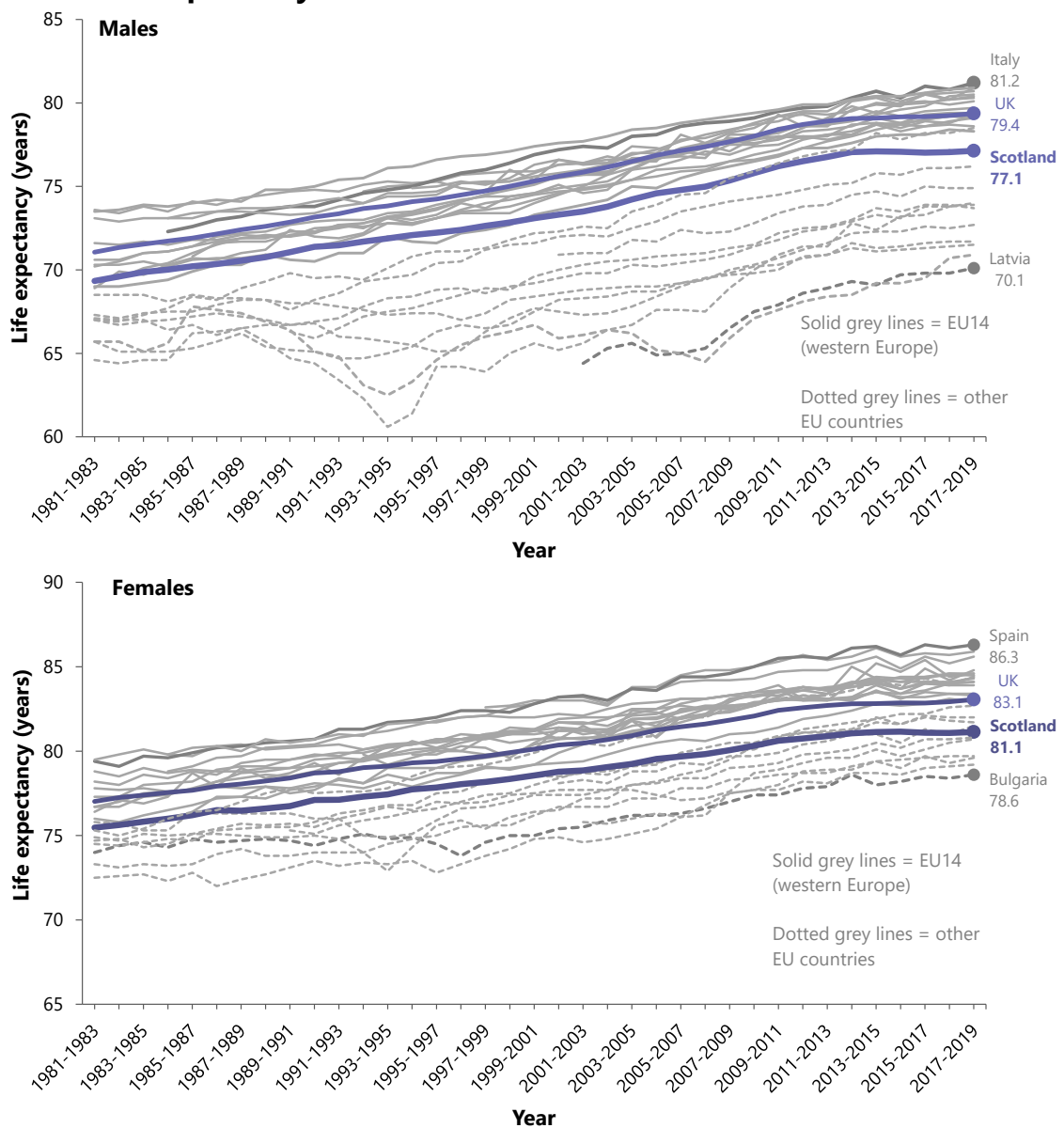
NRS has been involved in a collaborative project with a range of health organisations to investigate why life expectancy has stopped increasing. We found that since 2012-2014, there has been a slowdown in the rate of improvement of deaths from heart disease, especially in people aged between 55 and 74. There has also been an increase in the number of younger people aged 35-54 dying from drugs and in people over 75 dying from dementia. More analysis on this can be found in our [blog](#) post.



Life expectancy across Europe and the UK

Life expectancy has increased for all countries in the European Union and the UK since the early 1980s. The majority of countries have seen a slowdown in life expectancy growth since 2012-2014. In most cases this was not to the same extent as seen in Scotland and the rest of the UK. [Figure 5.3](#) shows how life expectancy in Scotland compares with EU countries. You can see that life expectancy in Scotland is lower than any other country in western Europe (the EU14 countries, indicated by solid grey lines).

Figure 5.3: Life expectancy at birth in EU countries 1980-1982 to 2017-2019

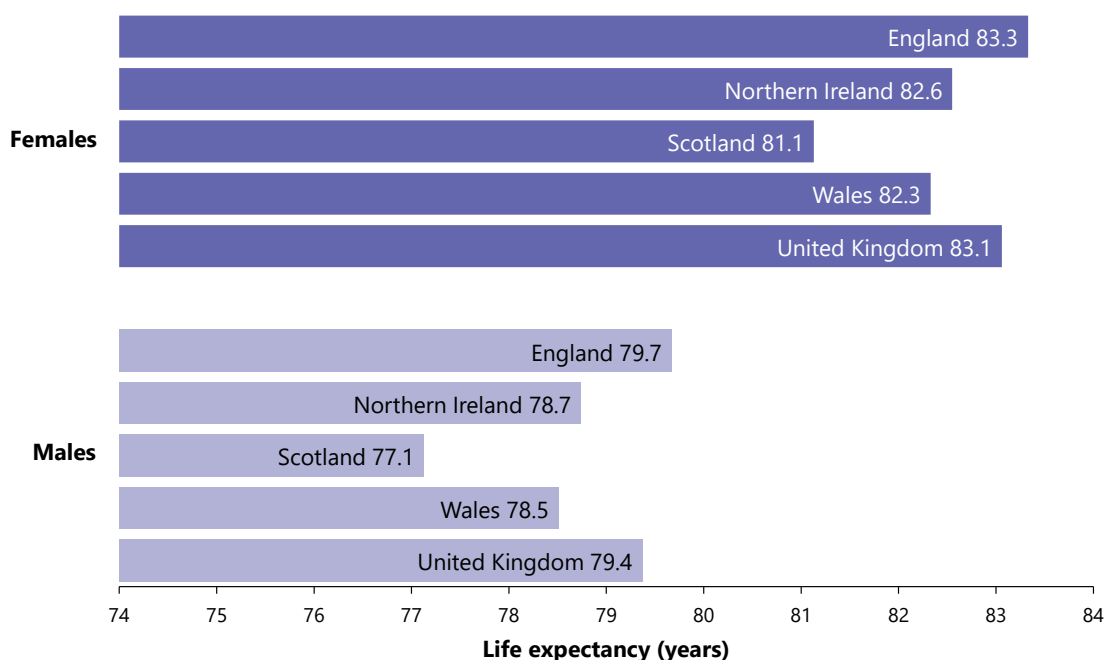


Source: National life tables for Scotland (NRS), National life tables for the UK (ONS), Eurostat (tps00025)



Scotland has the lowest life expectancy of all UK countries for both males and females. [Figure 5.4](#) shows that average life expectancy at birth in the UK was 83.1 years for females and 79.4 years for males in 2017-2019. This is higher than the Scottish figure by 2.2 years for females and 1.9 years for males.

Figure 5.4: Life expectancy in the United Kingdom and constituent countries, 2017-2019, males and females

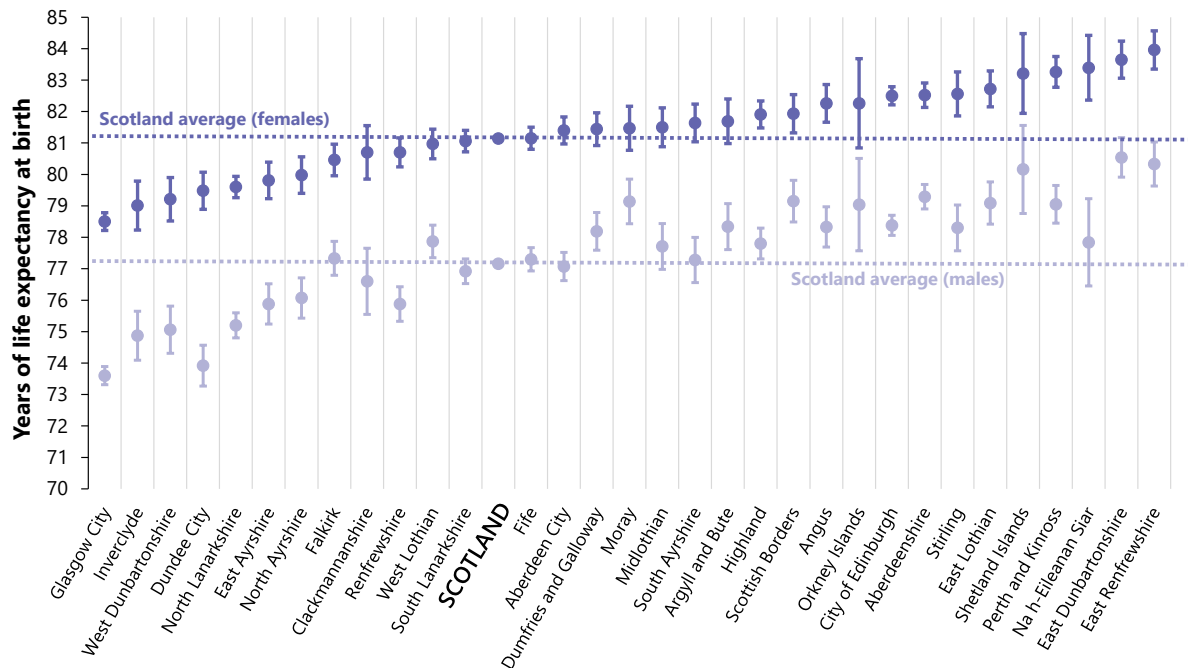


Life expectancy in council areas

[Figure 5.5](#) shows that the council area where life expectancy at birth was highest for females was East Renfrewshire. Here, a girl born in 2017-2019 could expect to live for 84.0 (± 0.6) years. The council area where life expectancy was highest for males was East Dunbartonshire, where a boy born in 2017-2019 could expect to live for 80.5 (± 0.6) years. In contrast, life expectancy was lowest in Glasgow City, where females could expect to live for 78.5 (± 0.3) years and males for 73.6 (± 0.3) years. This represents 5.5 fewer years of life for females and 6.9 fewer years of life for males compared with East Renfrewshire and East Dunbartonshire respectively.



Figure 5.5: Life expectancy at birth in council areas with 95% confidence intervals (ordered by female life expectancy)



How reliable are the life expectancy estimates?

NRS publish 95% confidence intervals around life expectancy in smaller areas - this helps us to understand how accurate the estimates are.

For example, males in Midlothian have a life expectancy of 77.7 and the confidence intervals are 77.0 and 78.4. This means that there is a 95% chance that the 'true' value lies between 77.0 and 78.4 and the most likely value is 77.7. This is often written as the value plus or minus the confidence interval: **77.7±0.7 years**.

Life expectancy figures for **smaller** populations have **larger** confidence intervals. For example, Orkney Islands, which has a relatively small population, has quite a large confidence interval of ±1.5 years for males. In contrast, Glasgow City, which has a much larger population, has a smaller confidence interval of ±0.3 years for males, as the figures will be more precise for larger populations.

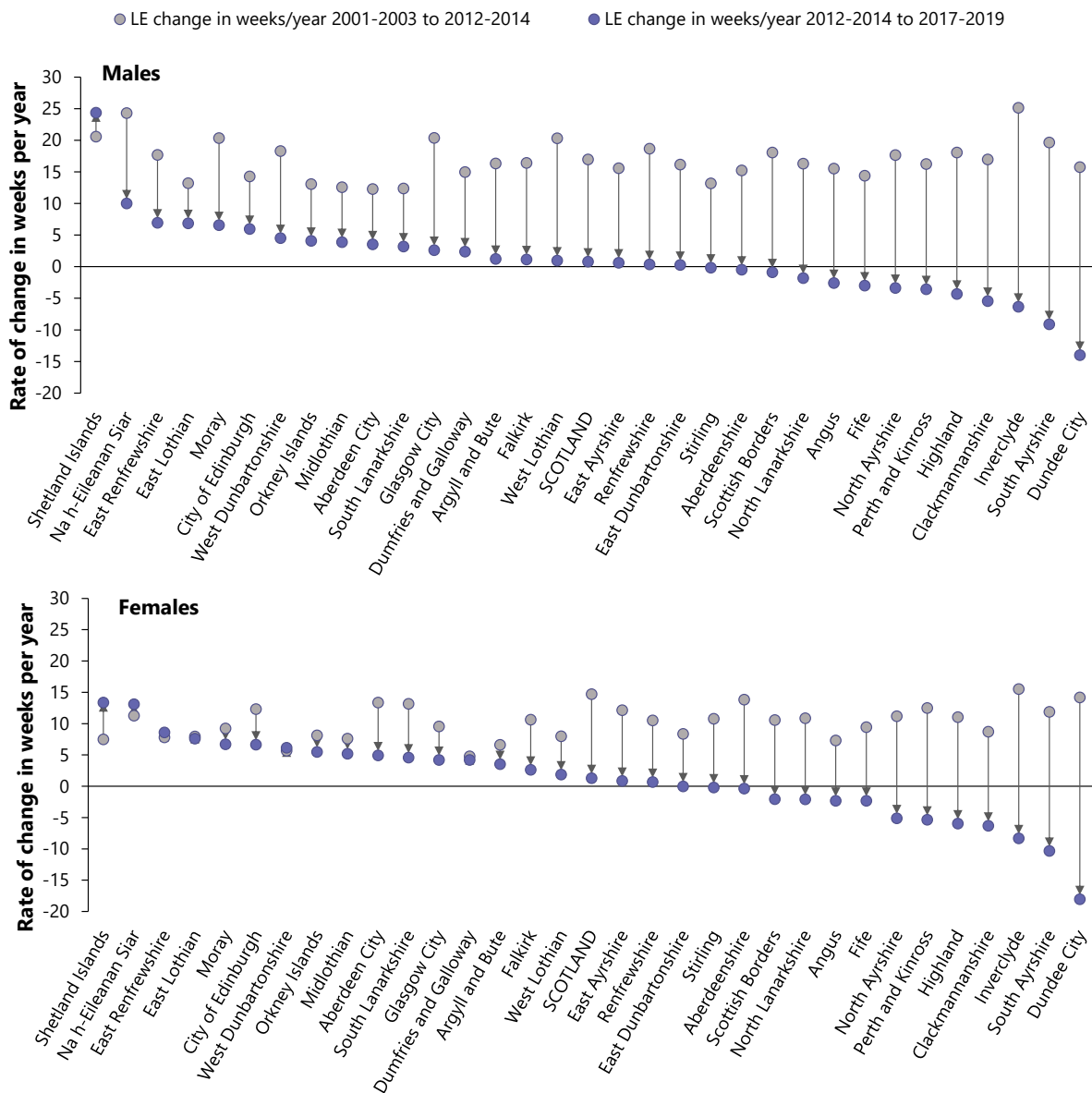
We say that the difference between two values is statistically significant if their confidence intervals do not overlap with each other.

As can be seen in [Figure 5.2](#), the improvements in life expectancy have stalled over the last few years in Scotland. This trend has been seen across Scotland, however, in



some areas the change has been greater than others. Figure 5.6 shows that in some council areas, for example Dundee City and Inverclyde, the rate of growth has fallen dramatically since 2012-2014. Figure 5.6 also shows that while some council areas have seen modest increases in the rate of change (for example, Shetland Islands), the vast majority of areas are now experiencing a slower rate of growth in life expectancy and many areas now have decreasing life expectancy.

Figure 5.6: Rate of change in life expectancy, by council area, males and females





Why are there two male life expectancy estimates for Scotland?

The headline life expectancy figure is calculated using single year of age data. However, life expectancy for areas within Scotland is calculated using 5 year age groups ('abridged life tables'). We also produce a Scotland level estimate using abridged life tables so that it can be properly compared with subnational life expectancy.

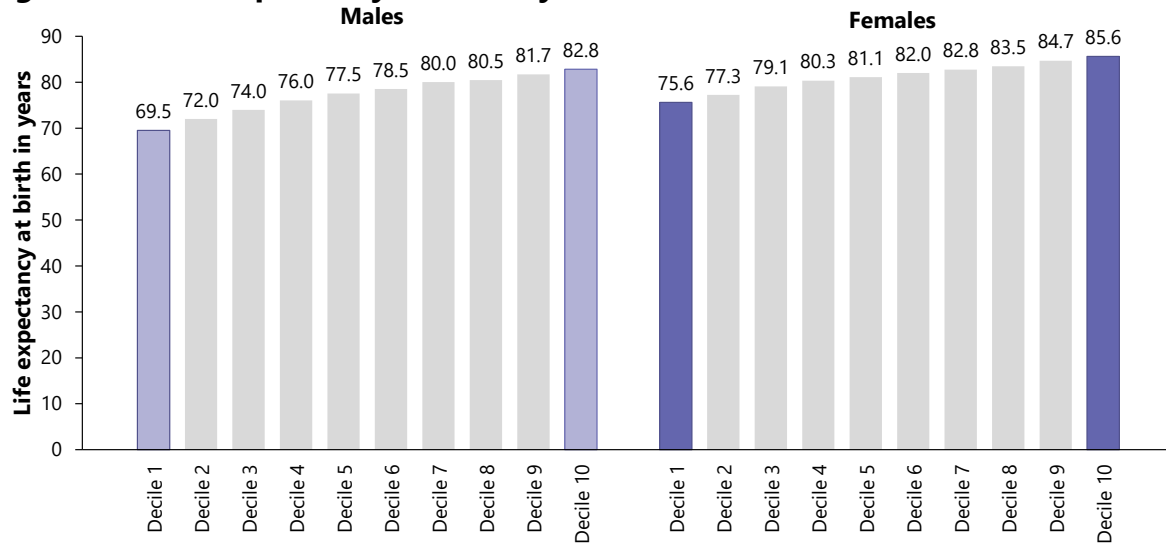
So, if we want talk just about Scottish life expectancy (as in figure 5.1), we use the figure from the figure derived from single year data. If we are comparing with subnational life expectancy (as in figure 5.5), we use the abridged life tables. The figures are always very similar, but this year male life expectancy at birth rounds to **77.1** in the national life tables and **77.2** in the abridged life tables. The equivalent female figures round to the same number (81.1)

Life expectancy and deprivation

While life expectancy varies between geographical areas like council areas and health boards, the difference in life expectancy is far greater when we split Scotland by deprivation. [Figure 5.7](#) shows life expectancy at birth in SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) deciles. For males born in 2017-2019, life expectancy at birth was 69.5 (± 0.3) years in deprivation decile 1 (the 10% most deprived areas) compared with 82.8 (± 0.3) years in decile 10 (the 10% least deprived areas), a gap of 13.3 years. For females born at the same time, life expectancy was 75.6 (± 0.3) years in decile 1 and 85.6 (± 0.2) years in decile 10, a gap of 10.0 years.



Figure 5.7: Life expectancy at birth by SIMD decile 2017-2019



Male life expectancy in decile 10 (least deprived) was 13.3 years higher than in decile 1 (most deprived)

Female life expectancy in decile 10 (least deprived) was 10.0 years higher than in decile 1 (most deprived)



Migration

"Migration has been the main driver of Scotland's population growth for the past 19 years"



Migration and COVID-19

The first part of this chapter summarises the latest migration statistics up to December 2019, prior to the outbreak of COVID-19 in the UK. In 2020, it is expected that migration to and from Scotland (especially overseas migration) will decline due to travel restrictions having been put in place by most countries during the pandemic.

The last two sections of this chapter present alternative data covering a time period up to June 2020. However, it is important to note that these are not direct measures of migration but rather provide some partial insights as to how the COVID-19 pandemic is impacting other areas, including international air travel and National Insurance number allocations to overseas nationals entering the UK.

Scotland's migration trends

Net migration (the difference between inward and outward migration) has been fluctuating in recent years; however, there are still more people coming to Scotland than leaving, adding to Scotland's population, as shown in [Figure 6.1](#). In the year to June 2019, 30,200 more people moved to Scotland than left, an increase after two years of decline in net migration following the UK's decision to leave the EU.

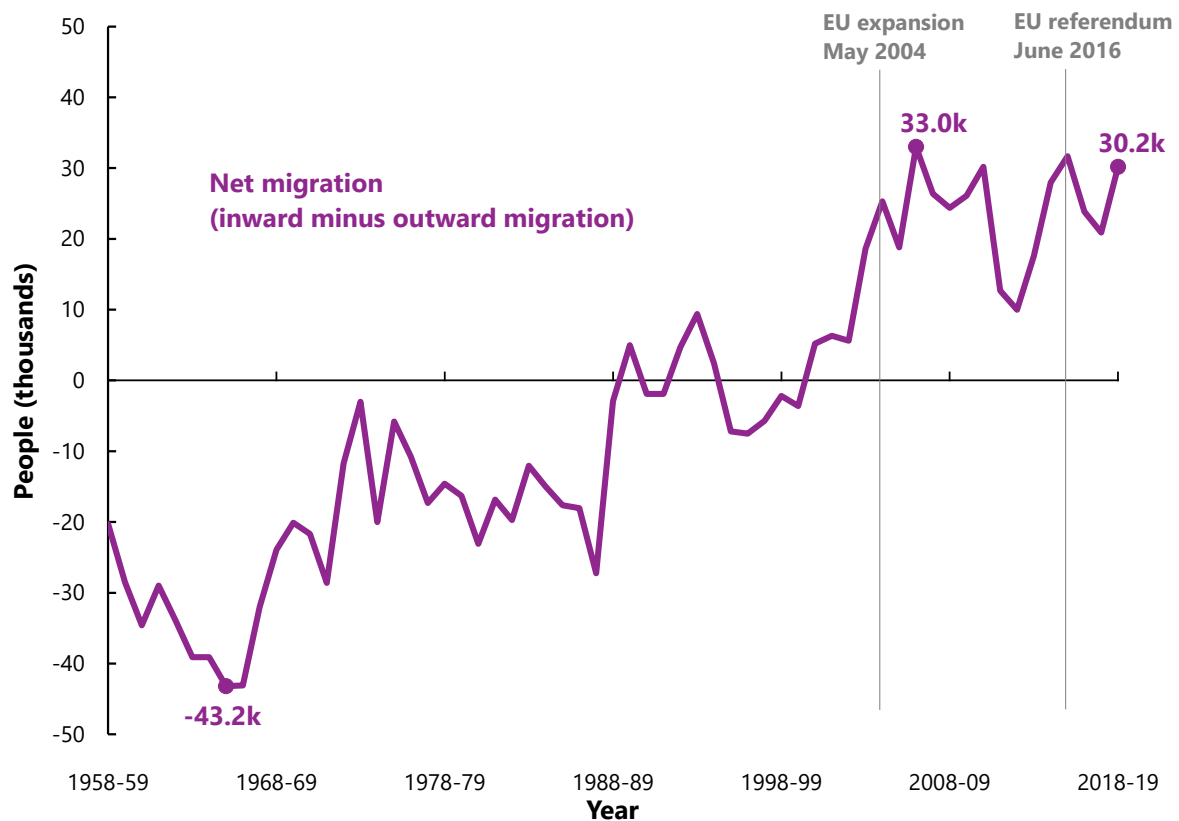
Before the early 1990s, more people left than moved to Scotland. Net migration was at an all-time low in 1966 (-43,200 people), but then began increasing steadily over time. Since mid-2001, net migration remained positive and increased over the next decade, especially in the years after the expansion of the EU in 2004. Net migration peaked in mid-2007 when 33,000 more people moved to Scotland than left.

Net migration is the difference between the number of long-term migrants entering Scotland and the number of long-term emigrants leaving the country.

A **long-term migrant** is defined as someone who changes their usual country of residence for a period of 12 months or longer.



Figure 6.1: Net migration, Scotland, mid-1959 to mid-2019



Note: The EU has expanded a number of times throughout its history. The 2004 enlargement was the largest single expansion of the EU. More details of which countries are part of the EU can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

Where are people coming from and going to?

As well as looking at trends in overall net migration, we can look at migration flows in a little more detail to understand what drives the change in net migration. [Figure 6.2](#) shows where people were coming from and going to in the year to June 2019.

Over the year to June 2019, there were small decreases in migration flows between Scotland and the rest of the UK:

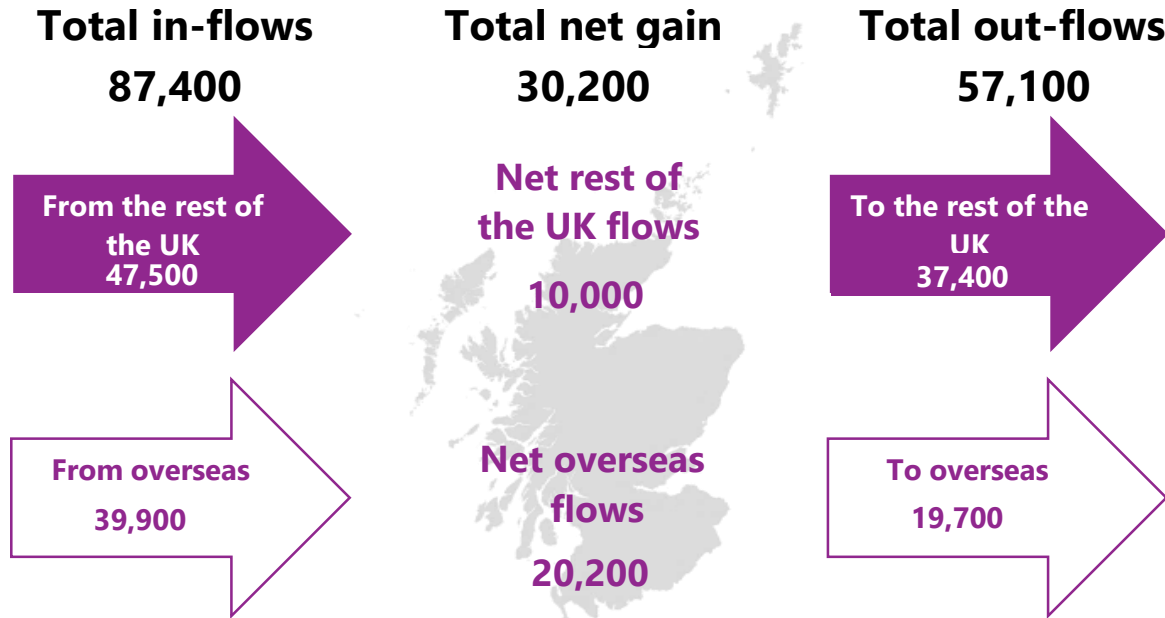
- 47,500 people came from the rest of the UK to live in Scotland; 200 fewer than in mid-2018
- 37,400 people left Scotland to move to another UK country; 300 fewer than in mid-2018

Migration flows vary across Scotland. Breakdowns at council area and health board level can be found on the [NRS website](#).

This means that net migration from the rest of the UK to Scotland remained positive and unchanged from the previous year, with 10,000 more people moving to Scotland than leaving for other UK countries.



Figure 6.2: Migration between Scotland, the rest of the UK and overseas, year to mid-2019



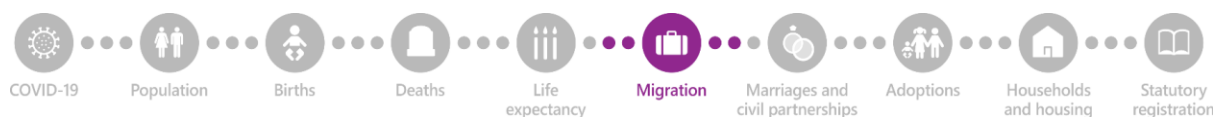
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Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

The number of people moving to Scotland from overseas increased while the number of people leaving Scotland to move overseas decreased over the most recent year to June 2019:

- 39,900 people moved to Scotland from overseas; 7,000 more than in mid-2018
- 19,700 people moved from Scotland to overseas; 2,300 fewer than in mid-2018

Therefore, 20,200 more people moved to Scotland from overseas than left in mid-2019. This is an increase of 9,300 from the previous mid-year period.



How do we measure migration?

- **International migration** estimates reported in this chapter are based primarily on the [International Passenger Survey \(IPS\)](#). This is a sample survey conducted at the channel tunnel, main ports and airports across the UK. The sample size for Scotland is very small which means there is a higher degree of uncertainty around the estimates, and less detailed breakdowns available for Scotland compared to the UK overall.
- **Migration within the UK** is calculated using patient records from the [NHS Central Register](#) (in Scotland), the Personal Demographic Service (in England and Wales) and the Medical Card register (in Northern Ireland).

Future developments

- The Office for National Statistics (ONS) are developing new measures of international migration based on administrative data from November 2020. This is part of a broader [transformation programme](#) for population and migration statistics which has been ongoing for several years. However, the programme's timeline has altered due to the suspension of the IPS in March 2020 because of COVID-19.

More detailed information on how we measure migration can be found in the [mid-year population estimates methodology guide](#).

Non-British nationals living in Scotland

As well as understanding the flows of people entering and leaving Scotland over a period of time, it is also useful to look at the number of people currently living in Scotland who are non-British nationals. This information comes from the Annual Population Survey (carried out by the Office for National Statistics) where respondents self-report their nationality.

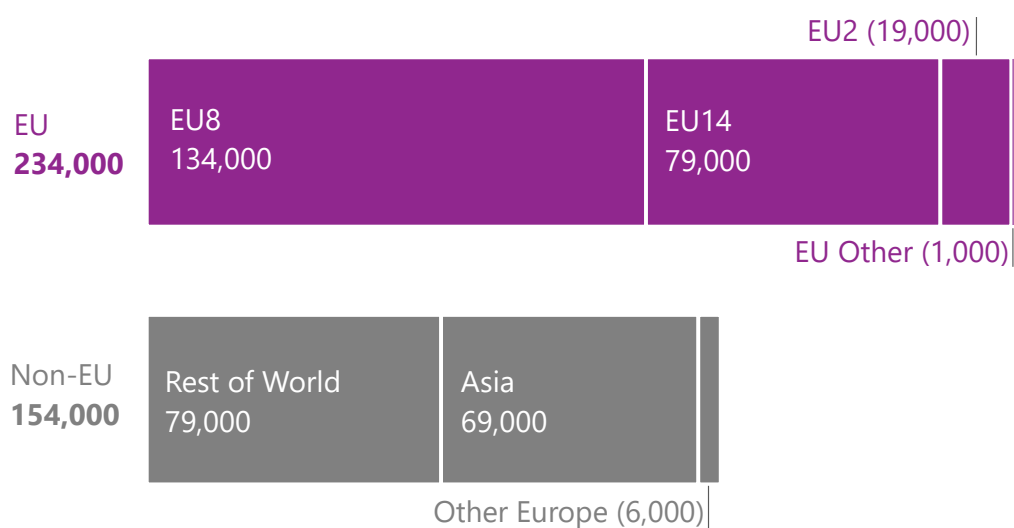
More detailed tables on the Scottish population by nationality, as well as country of birth, can be found on the [NRS website](#).

In 2019, there were about 388,000 non-British nationals living in Scotland, which accounted for 7% of the Scottish population. This was an increase of 36,000 people from

2018, which was mainly driven by an increase in non-EU nationals. [Figure 6.3](#) shows how many EU and non-EU nationals were estimated to live in Scotland in 2019.



Figure 6.3: Number of non-British nationals living in Scotland, 2019



Source: Annual Population Survey, January to December 2019, Office for National Statistics

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding. More information on which countries are part of the EU and specific country groupings can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

Of all non-British nationals living in Scotland in 2019:

- 234,000 (60%) were EU nationals, and
- 154,000 (40%) were non-EU nationals.

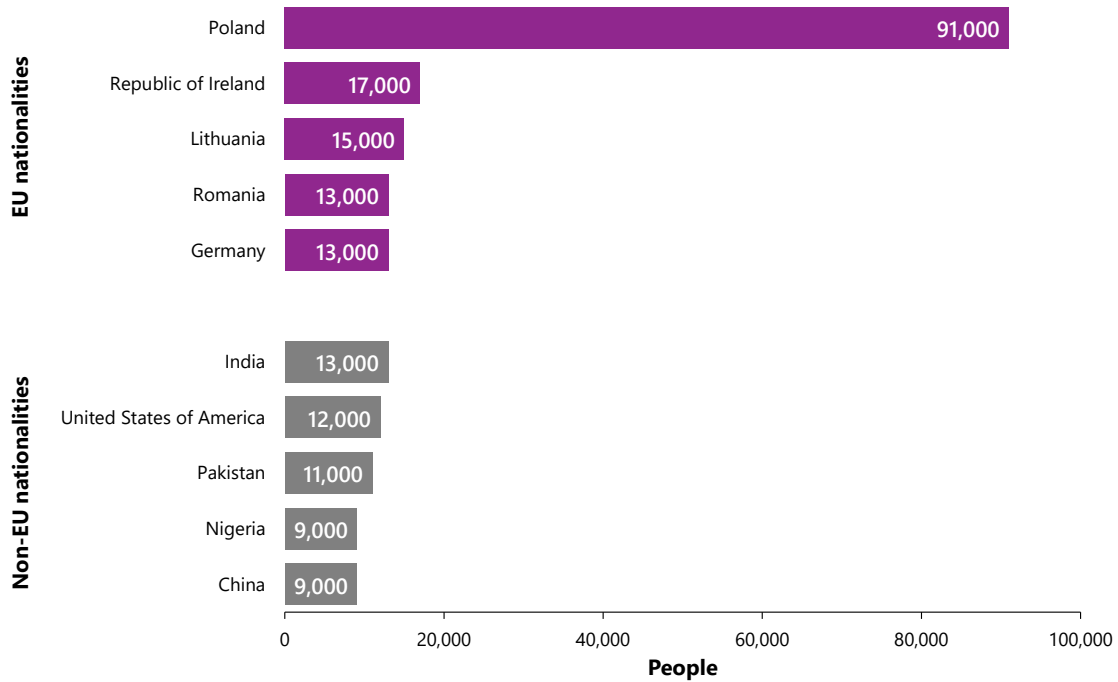
Most EU nationals were from EU8⁴ countries (134,000) – these are countries that became member states of the EU in 2004. Nationals of the Rest of the World (79,000) and Asia (69,000) made up similar proportions of the non-EU population.

Polish (91,000) remained the overall most common non-British nationality and accounted for almost one quarter (23%) of all non-British nationals living in Scotland. Indian (13,000) was the most common non-EU nationality in 2019. The top 5 EU and non-EU nationalities in Scotland can be seen in [Figure 6.4](#), and more information on which countries are part of the EU and specific country groupings can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

⁴ EU8 refers to 8 of the 10 countries that became member states of the European Union on 1 May 2004. These are Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.



Figure 6.4: Most common non-British nationalities, Scotland, 2019

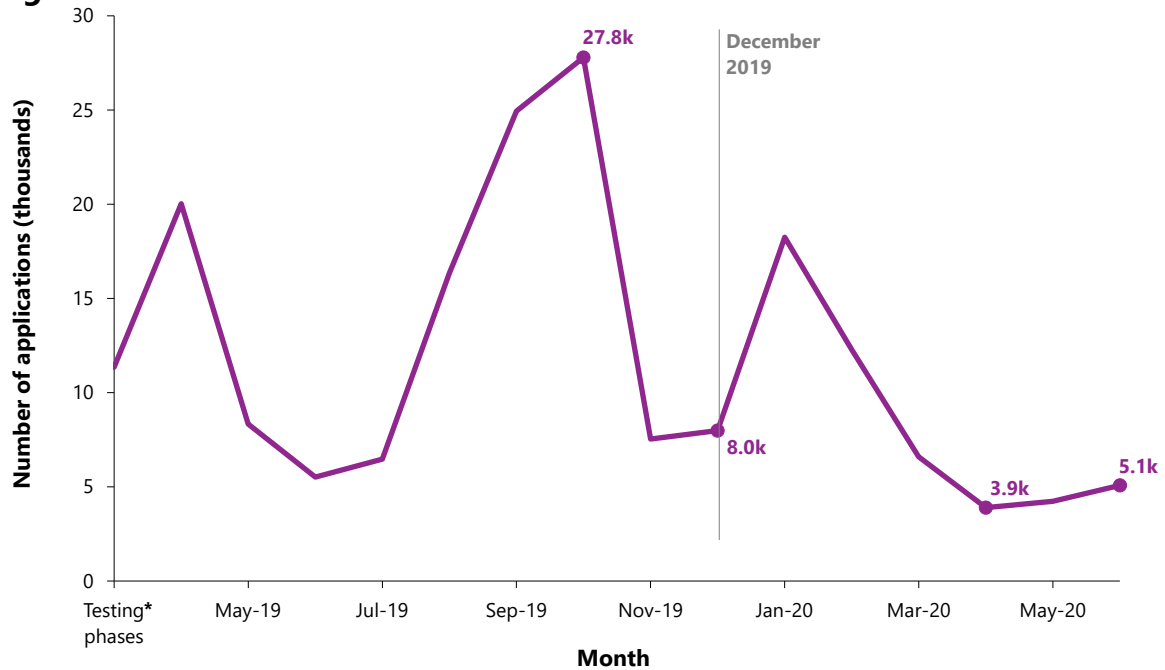


Source: Annual Population Survey, January to December 2019, Office for National Statistics

Following the UK's departure from the EU, non-British nationals need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) to secure their right to remain in the UK. So far, 196,600 applications have been received in Scotland as of 31 August 2020.



Figure 6.5: EU Settlement Scheme applications received each month, Scotland, Aug 2018 to Jun 2020



* 'Testing phases' refers to the period covered by the two private beta testing phases and the public beta testing phase which collectively ran between 28 August 2018 and 29 March 2019.

Source: EU Settlement Scheme quarterly statistics, June 2020, Home Office

Figure 6.5 shows how the number of applications received in Scotland has varied since the beginning of the scheme in August 2018. A peak of 27,790 applications was recorded in October 2019, the month the UK planned to leave the EU after the first extension and before the final extension to 31 January 2020. After another high in January 2020 (18,250 applications), the number of applications started declining again. In April 2020, the lowest number of applications (3,890) was recorded since the scheme fully opened. In more recent months, applications have been slowly rising again, with 5,080 applications having been received in June 2020.



While some support services and application routes for the EUSS may have been affected by COVID-19 from late March onward, individuals were still able to apply to the scheme using a laptop or the mobile phone app.

EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS)

Since the UK left the EU and free movement is coming to an end, EU citizens living in the UK are required to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) in order to stay in the UK. EU and EEA citizens (or qualifying family members) who are living in the UK are eligible to apply; although it is possible to apply from abroad.

The EUSS and the Annual Population Survey estimates

There are some important differences between the EUSS statistics and estimates of the number of EU nationals from the Annual Population Survey (APS), which means these data sources are not directly comparable and cannot be used as a proxy for estimating the proportion of eligible people who have applied for the EUSS. Whilst there is a broad overlap between those who need to apply to the EUSS and those EU nationals captured by the APS as living in Scotland, there are important differences in coverage, accuracy and timing. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) have published a [note](#) highlighting the differences between the two datasets.

More information on the EUSS and the latest statistics can be found on the [UK government website](#).



How have National Insurance number allocations to overseas nationals changed since the COVID-19 pandemic?

The following section presents data up to June 2020. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) National Insurance number (NINo) statistics count the volume of

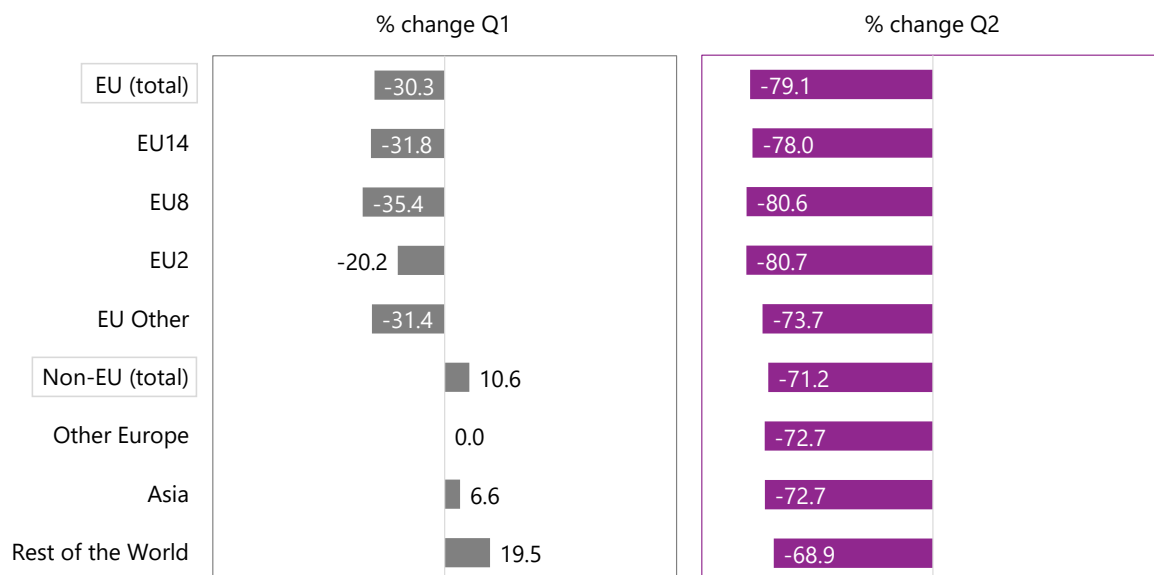
More information on NINo allocations to overseas nationals entering the UK can be found [on the UK government website](#).

registrations to adult non-UK nationals over a calendar quarter. Overseas nationals generally require a NINo to work in the UK or to claim benefits and this can therefore provide a view on work-related immigration. The statistics are not a count of the number of overseas nationals currently living in Scotland, and there can often be a lag between arrival in the UK and when someone registers for a NINo.

As can be seen in [Figure 6.6](#), the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted NINo allocations to non-British nationals. NINo allocations to EU nationals were lower in Quarter 1 of 2020 compared to the previous year and, as expected, from Quarter 2, fewer allocations from all country groups were recorded. Most recently, in Quarter 2 of 2020, there was a 79% decrease in NINo allocations to EU nationals and a 71% decrease in allocations to non-EU nationals compared to the same quarter in 2019.

Figure 6.6: Percentage change in quarterly National Insurance number allocations to non-UK nationals, Scotland

Quarter 1 (January to March) and Quarter 2 (April to June), 2019 and 2020



Source: National Insurance number allocations to adult overseas nationals entering the UK to June 2020, Department for Work and Pensions

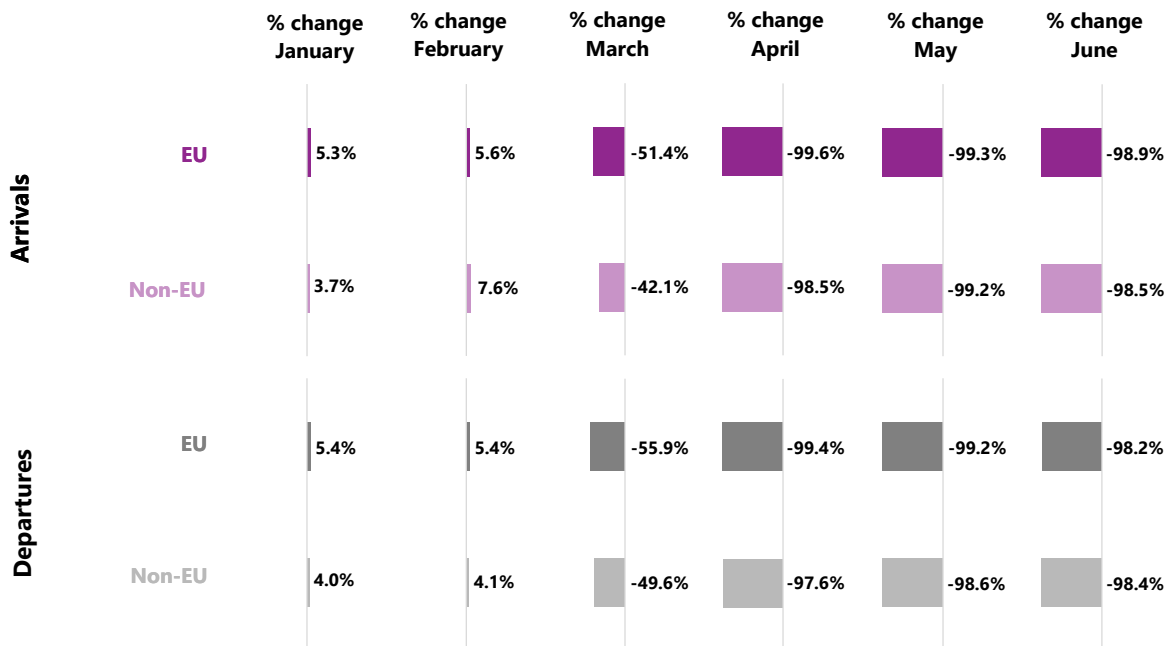


While these are the largest decreases in quarterly allocations since the start of the time series in 2002, it is important to acknowledge that the NINo allocation process was severely disrupted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with DWP staff being redeployed to other priority areas (e.g. to work on Universal Credit applications given the unprecedented demand for financial assistance). So these operational disruptions are also influencing the figures shown in [Figure 6.6](#) as well as changes to demand for NINo services.

How have international travel patterns changed since the COVID-19 pandemic?

Statistics on passenger numbers generally show variability in trends due to seasonal effects or various social and economic factors, but can be used to provide early insight and context to the official migration statistics reported earlier in this chapter.

Figure 6.7: Annual percentage change in monthly air passenger movements between Scottish airports and EU and non-EU airports, January to June, 2019 and 2020



Source: Migration Statistics Quarterly Report, August 2020, ONS, Civil Aviation Authority data

Due to COVID-19, travel restrictions have been implemented in many parts of the world and this has had an impact on the volume of passengers flying between Scotland and other non-UK countries. As expected, total passenger numbers arriving to and departing from Scotland were significantly lower in March 2020 compared with March 2019 ([Figure 6.7](#)). Following this, in the months of April to June 2020,



there were further reductions, with a decline of over 97% in both passenger arrivals and departures at Scottish airports from/to EU and non-EU countries compared with the same months in 2019.

Civil Aviation Authority statistics

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) collects statistics from over 60 UK airports. This includes total passenger numbers for international air travel between most UK and foreign airports ([Table 12.1](#)) as reported by airlines.

Importantly, they cover international air travel by all passengers, not just international migrants. They do not provide information about a passenger's nationality or country of residence, and are not a direct measure of international migration.

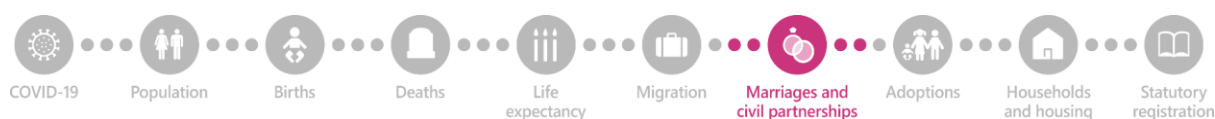
Also, the figures may not reflect the complete air journey of a passenger: the point at which they disembark from one service may not represent their ultimate destination. Additionally, passengers might continue their travel by other means. For example, visitors might arrive at an English airport and continue their journey to Scotland by rail. Some airlines, aircrafts and passengers are also excluded from CAA data.

More information can be found on the [CAA website](#).



Marriages and civil partnerships

*“The number of marriages taking place
in Scotland has decreased by around
one third in the last 50 years”*



Marriages and COVID-19

The analyses in this chapter are largely based on data up to 2019. However, in 2020 we expect the number of marriages to drop dramatically due to restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 crisis.

How has the number of marriages changed over time?

There were 26,007 marriages in Scotland in 2019, 1,518 (6%) fewer than in 2018. Of these, 912 were same sex marriages involving 347 male couples and 565 female couples. This is 67 (7%) fewer same sex marriages than the previous year, continuing the decline since the peak in 2015.

Figure 7.1 shows that, following a decline from over 40,000 marriages a year in the early 1970s, the annual total levelled out at around 30,000 in the mid-1990s. The highest total recorded in recent years was 32,154 in 2004 (the highest total since 1993), whilst the highest ever recorded was 53,522 in 1940. The 2019 figure (26,007) is the lowest figure since 1881 and 6% below the recent low of 27,524 in 2009. The lowest ever recorded was 19,655 in 1858.

Since the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014 was passed, there have been 5,909 same sex marriages in Scotland, including 1,737 civil partnerships which were changed to marriages. The peak was in 2015 when there were 1,671 same sex marriages, followed by a drop off to 998 in 2016 and a slow decline year on year since then.

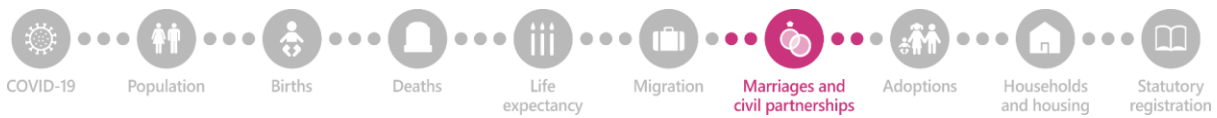
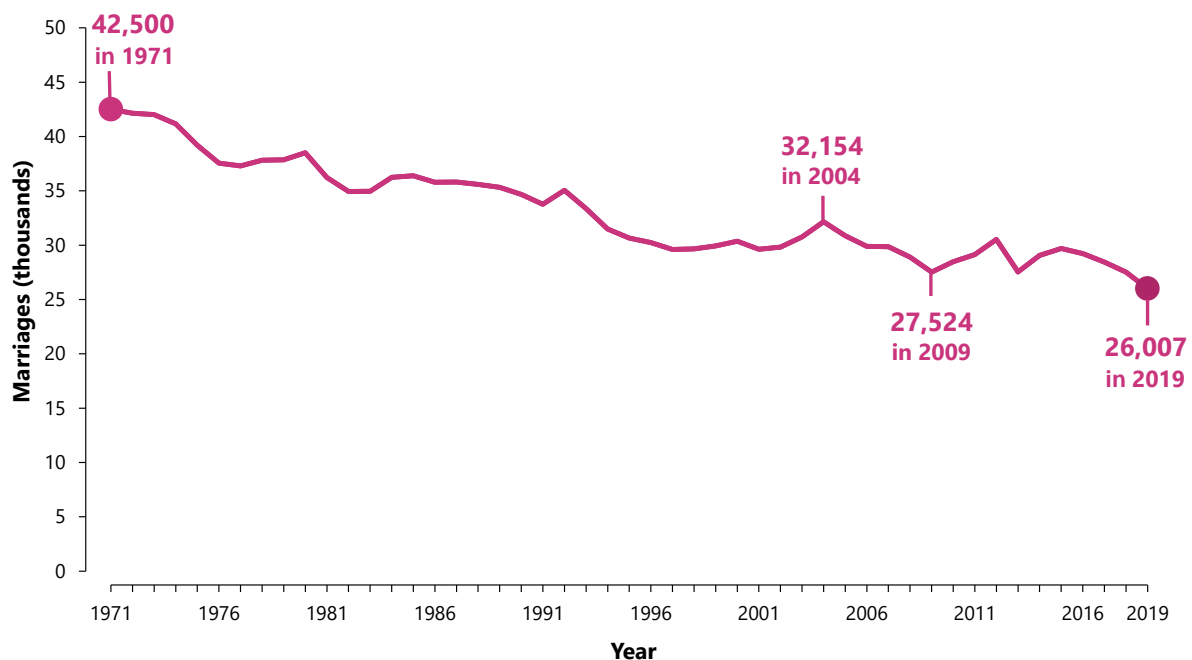


Figure 7.1: Marriages, Scotland, 1971-2019



The information in this section covers all marriages registered in Scotland, regardless of where the couple lived. In 2019, there were 6,027 'tourism' marriages (23% of all marriages) where neither partner was resident in Scotland. This represents a slight rise in number from 5,907 (21% of all marriages) in 2018.

Marriages at Gretna

As marriage was outlawed in England without paternal consent before the age of 21, some young couples chose to elope to Scotland, where they could still marry at 16 years of age. Gretna was located on an old coaching route between London and

Edinburgh, and was the first village reached on entering Scotland, so became a common place for English couples to marry.

13% of all marriages in Scotland in 2019 were registered at Gretna.

Nearly half (2,927) of 'tourism' marriages (where neither partner was resident in Scotland) in 2019 took place in Gretna.

Figure 7.2 shows the number of marriages at Gretna, by the country of residence of couple getting married, between 1974 and 2019.

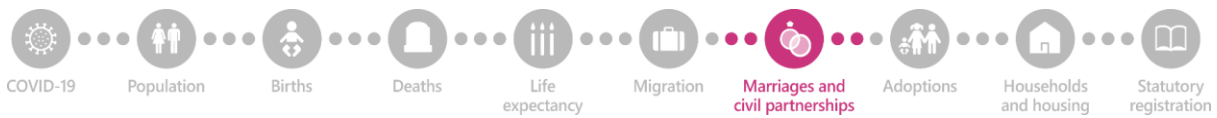
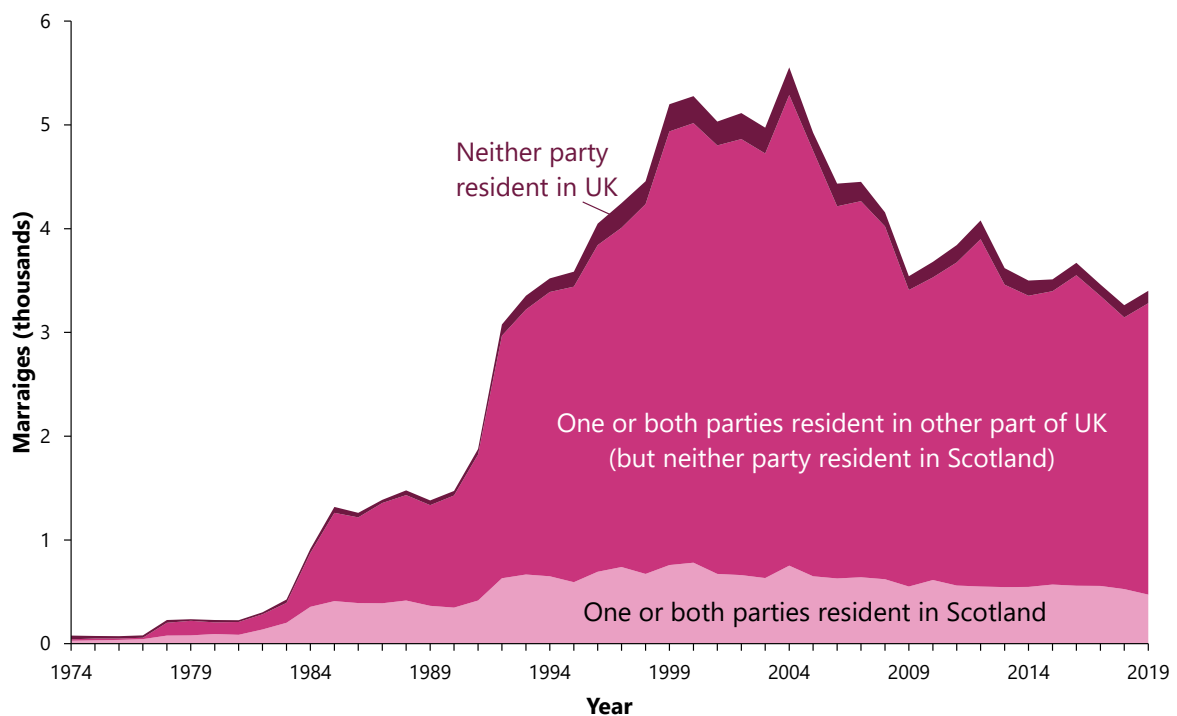


Figure 7.2: Marriages at Gretna, by country of residence of parties, 1974-2019



Gretna continues to be a popular venue for marriages and the 3,401 registered in 2019 (13% of all marriages in Scotland in 2019) was 5% higher than the 3,232 registered in 2018. However, the 2018 figure was the lowest number of marriages in Gretna since 1992 and was 42% lower than the record total of 5,555 in 2004 (17% of all marriages in Scotland in 2004). Over the longer term, the number of marriages at Gretna increased from only 79 in 1974 to a peak of 5,555 in 2004. In 2019, 86% (2,927) of the marriages at Gretna did not involve a resident of Scotland. For the vast majority of these marriages, both of the parties were resident in another part of the UK.

Of course, many couples who live in Scotland go abroad to be married. These marriages are not included, and only some come to the attention of the Registrar General through notification to British consular authorities.

How is the average age at marriage changing?

The average age at marriage has risen for both males and females. For first marriages, the average age of males has risen from 24.3 in the mid-1970s to 34.5 in 2019; the comparable figures for females are 22.4 in the mid-1970s and 32.9 in 2019.

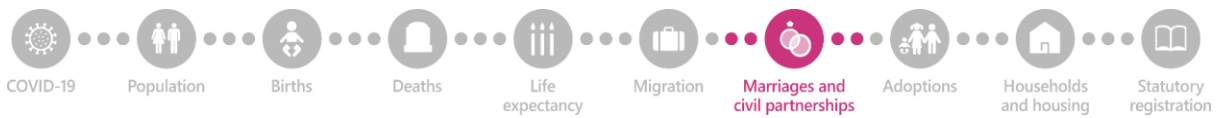
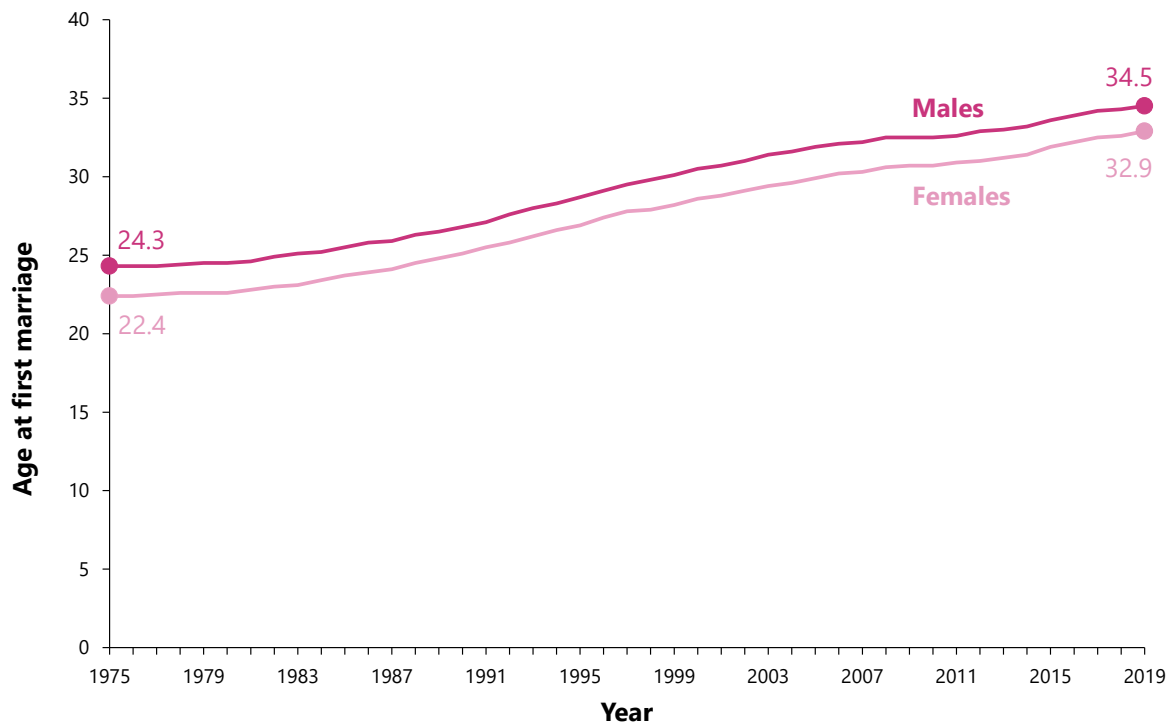


Figure 7.3: Age at first marriage, 1975-2019



Marriages by type of ceremony

Of all marriages conducted in Scotland in 2019, almost half were civil ceremonies compared to 35% in 1975.

The number of marriages conducted by the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church have declined over time. These now represent 9% and 4% of all marriages in 2019 respectively.

Since 2005 the number of humanist marriages has increased considerably with a range of organisations conducting humanist ceremonies. These now account for 23% of all marriages in 2019.

How are marriage statistics used?

These statistics are used by a wide range of users. For example, they help inform Scottish Government policy on marriage and civil partnership. They are also used by religious and other belief organisations to monitor trends and plan their services.

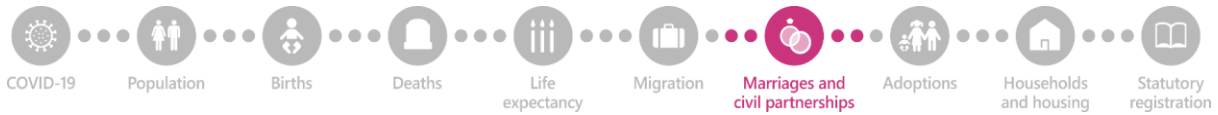
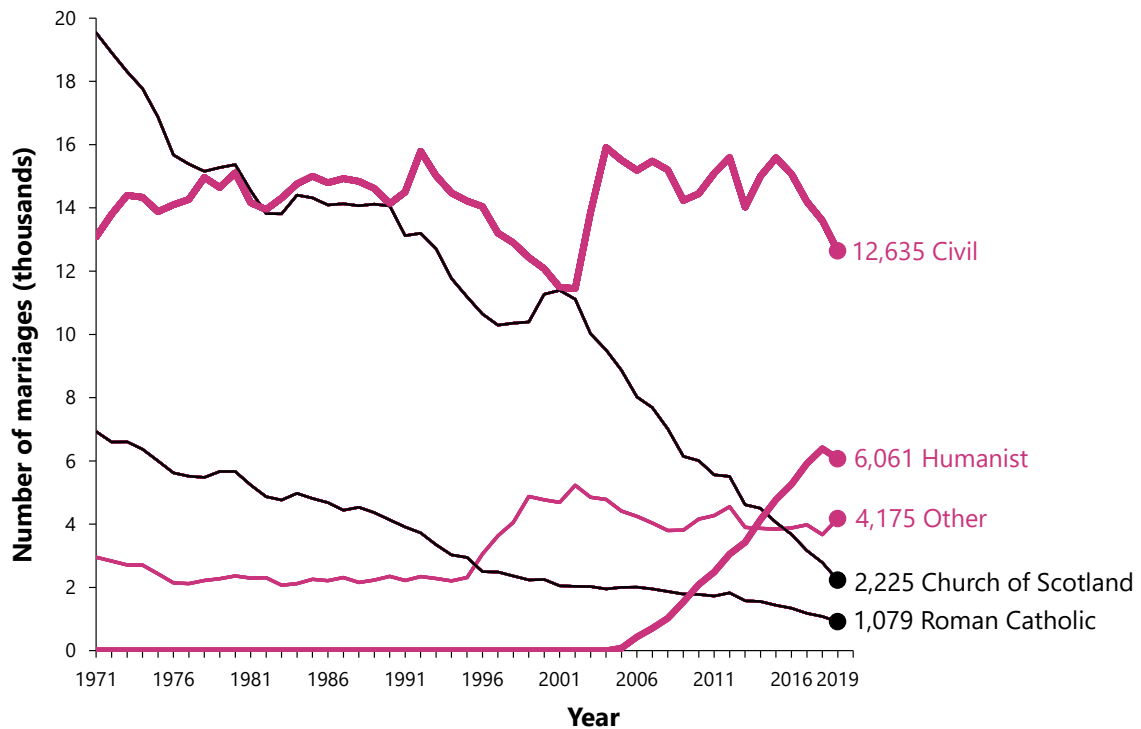


Figure 7.4: Marriages, by type of ceremony, 1971-2019



Civil partnerships

There were 83 civil partnerships registered in Scotland in 2019, 18 more than in 2018. The Civil Partnership Act 2004, which applies throughout the UK and came into force on 5 December 2005, allows same-sex couples to register their partnership.

Since the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014 was passed, the number of civil partnerships in Scotland has remained at a low level compared to the numbers previously recorded.

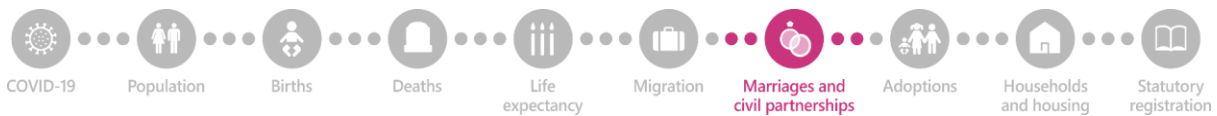
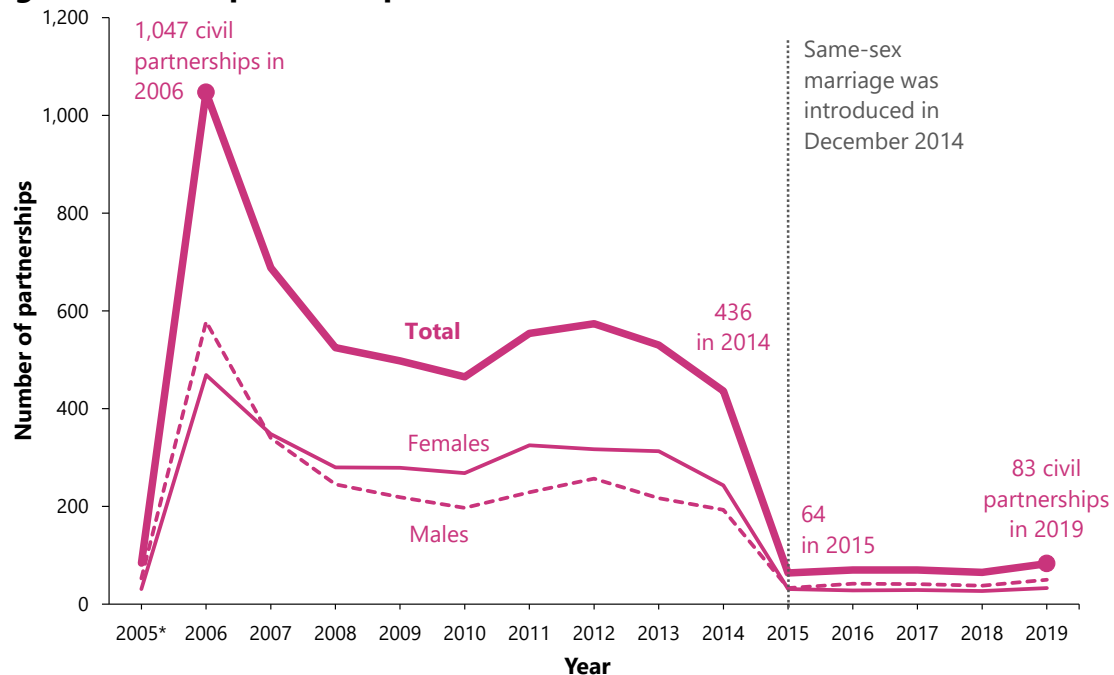


Figure 7.5: Civil partnerships, 2005-2019



* The Civil Partnership Act came into force on 5 December 2005.

At the time of publication, work is underway on planning future developments in the registration service, including plans to implement mixed-sex civil partnerships over the coming year. More information on the registration service can be found in [Chapter 10 – Statutory Registration](#).

More detailed information can be found in the [Vital Events – Marriages and Civil Partnerships section](#) or in the [Marriages and civil partnership section](#) of the Vital Events Reference Tables on the National Records of Scotland website.

[Statistics of divorces and dissolutions for Scotland](#) are published by the Scottish Government (section 2.2.3).

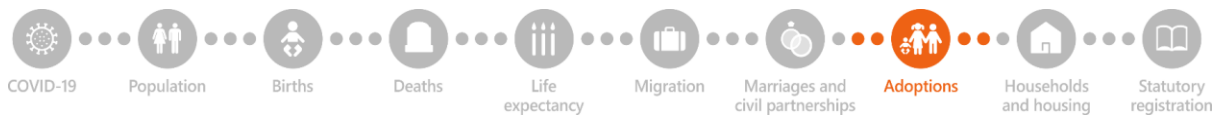
Scotland's Population – The Registrar General's Annual Review of Demographic Trends





Adoptions

"There were 472 adoptions in 2019 - half the number in the mid-1980s, and less than a quarter of the number in the late 1960s."



Adoptions and COVID-19

The registering of new adoptions and the issuing of new adoption certificates was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This chapter contains information on adoptions registered up to 2019, so does not cover the period affected by the suspension. More information about Registration is available in [Chapter 10 – Statutory registration](#).

Adoptions up to 2019

The Registrar General recorded 472 adoptions during 2019, which is one more than in 2018. This is around half the number recorded per year in the mid-1980s, and less than a quarter of the number recorded in the late 1960s.

Adoptions of children have been registered by law in Scotland since 1930. Today the Registrar General for Scotland registers them under the Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007.

Adoptions include cases of step-parents adopting the children of their spouse or partner, and relatives adopting children of other family members, as well as people adopting children who are not related in any way to them. The figures include small numbers of foreign adoptions registered in Scotland, and parental orders granted following a birth by a surrogate mother.

Figure 8.1: Adoptions, Scotland, 1930-2019

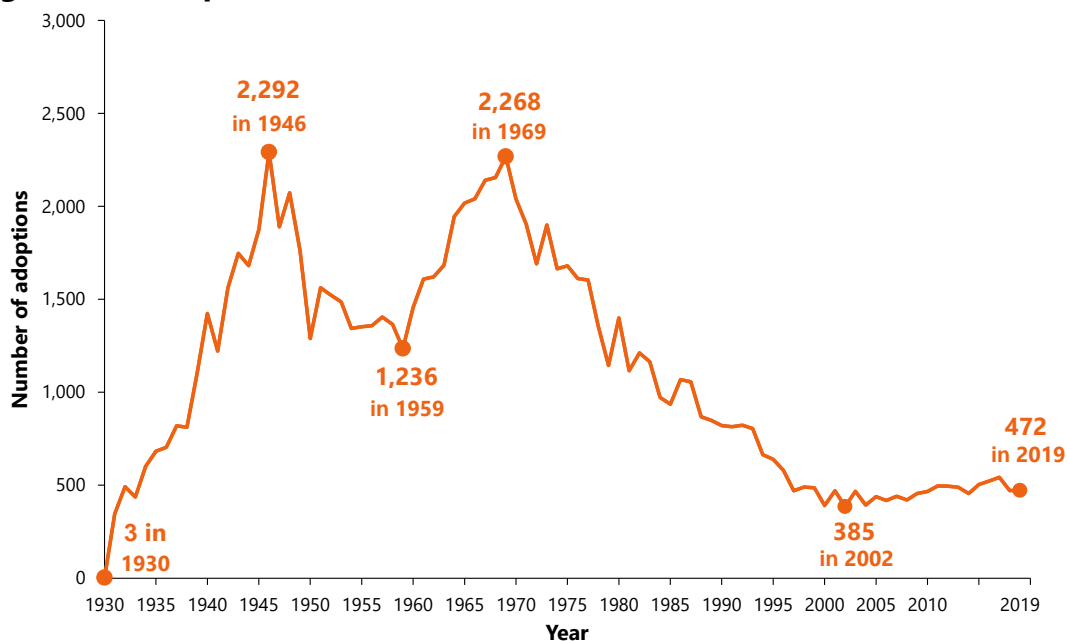
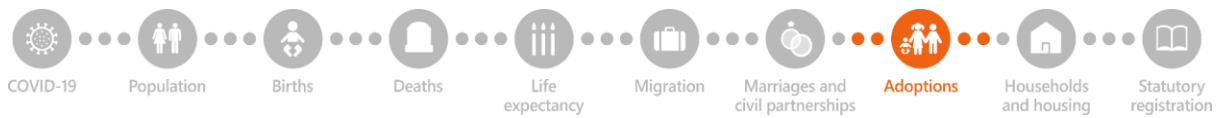


Figure 8.1 shows that following a steady rise to a post-war peak of 2,292 in 1946, the total number of adoptions fell back to lower levels over the next few years, falling to



1,236 in 1959. The total number of adoptions then rose again, reaching 2,268 in 1969. After this time, increased access to birth control and changing public attitudes towards single or unmarried parents led to a decrease in the number of children available for adoption. The annual number of adoptions declined fairly steadily to around 400 in the year 2000. There has been a gradual increase in adoptions since then, up to 543 in 2017, before falling again to 472 in 2019.

Figure 8.2 shows the ages of adopted children. In 2019, 15% of children adopted were aged under two, and from age three onwards the numbers tend to fall with age. Seven per cent were aged 15 or over.

Figure 8.2: Age at adoption, Scotland, 2019

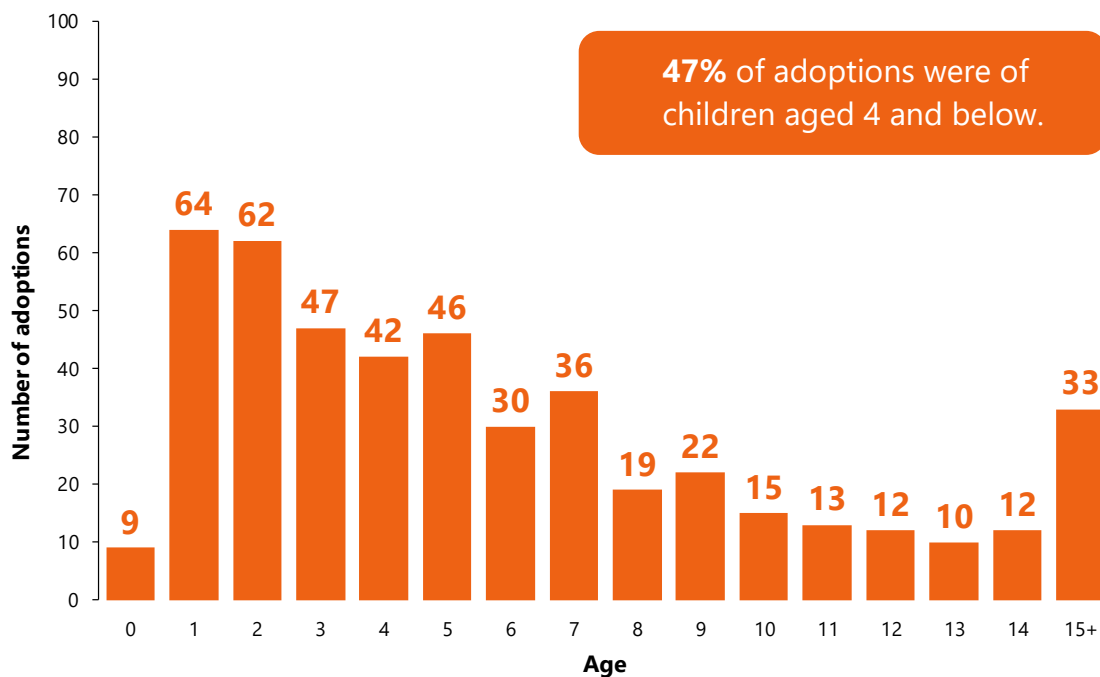


Figure 8.3 shows the age of the child and the relationship to the adopter(s). Of the 73 children aged under two, 79% were adopted by non-relatives. In contrast, only 18% of the 95 children aged 10 or over were adopted by non-relatives.

Of the 472 children adopted in 2019, 32% were adopted by a step-parent and 64% were adopted by non-relatives of the child.

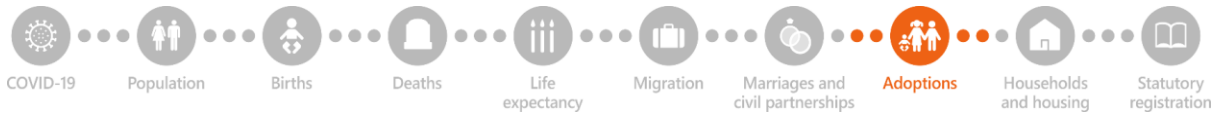
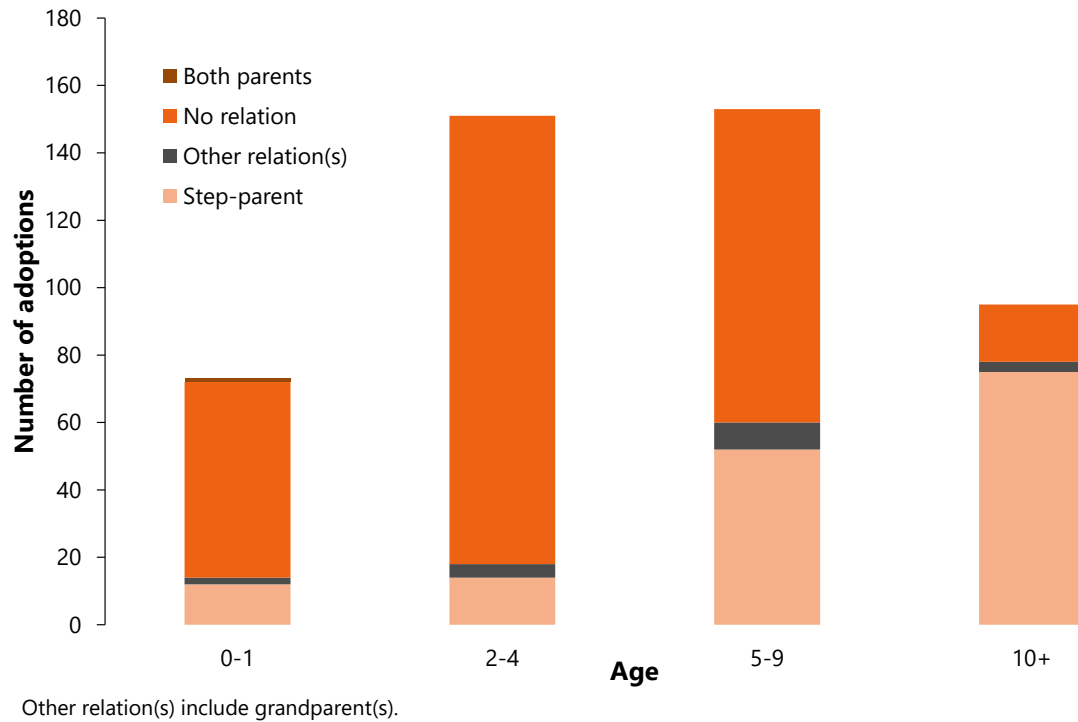


Figure 8.3: Adoptions by age of child and relationship of the adopter(s), 2019

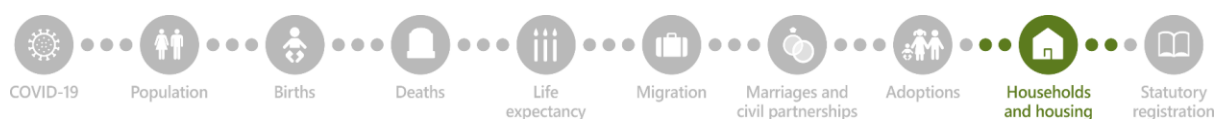


More detailed information about Scotland's Adoptions can be found in the [Vital Events - Adoptions section](#) and the [Adoptions chapter](#) of the Vital Events Reference Tables on the National Records of Scotland website.



Households and housing

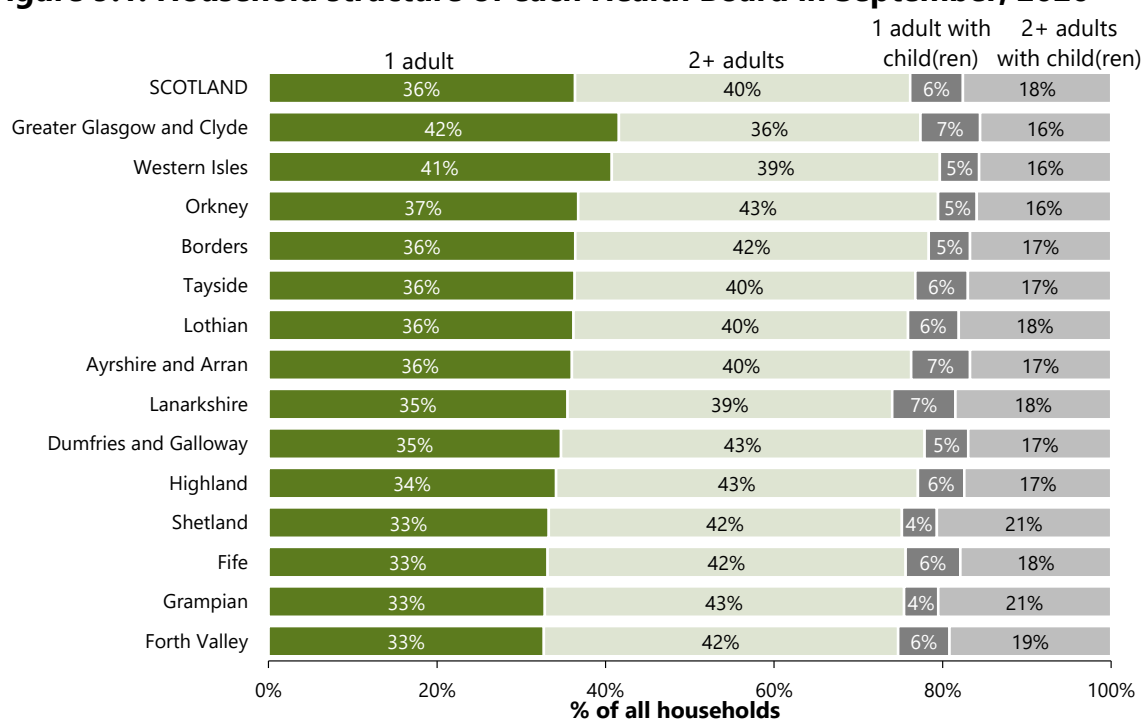
"In 2019 there were 2.50 million households in Scotland, 6.1% more than in 2009."

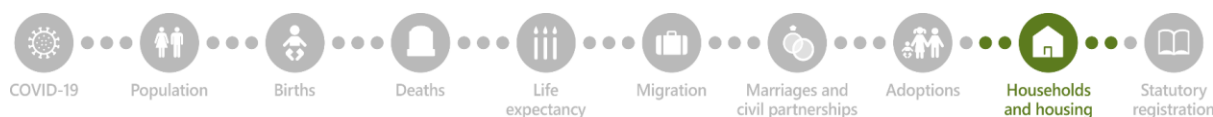


Households and COVID-19

The statistics included in this chapter relate to the estimated number of households as at 30 June 2019 and to 2018-based projections of households numbers. So they do not take into account the impact of COVID-19, but they can be helpful for understanding some of the impacts of the pandemic. For example, people living alone may have found self-isolation especially difficult. The [2018-based household projections](#) indicate that about 1 in 5 people live alone. Single person households makes up over a third of Scotland's households. Older people are more likely to live alone: in the 70 and over age group, nearly 1 in 2 women live alone, and around 1 in 4 men do. Households containing children will have been affected by the school and nursery closures - nearly a quarter of households contain children under the age of 16. These projected figures can be seen in [Figure 9.1](#).

Figure 9.1: Household structure of each Health Board in September, 2020





Links to other useful data on households:

- [Open data](#) (of household projections) showing the number of households by household type and age of household structure in each council area.
- Check out our [blog](#) for more information about the range of NRS statistics that are useful for understanding COVID-19.
- [Research](#) published by the Centre for Population Change analysing household vulnerability – on dimensions of health, employment, housing, finance and digital - to the effects of COVID-19 by household type.
- [Household estimates and projections](#) – reports, charts and data
- [Open data](#) – household estimates based on Council Tax data which show the proportion of households which receive single adult discounts. Most are households containing one adult or one adult with children. This can also be viewed as a map.

Scotland's households: past, present and future

There were 2.50 million households and 2.64 million dwellings in Scotland in 2019. Over the last 10 years the number of households in Scotland has grown by 143,800 (6.1%), and it is projected to continue growing to 2.60 million in 2028 and to 2.71 million by 2043, see [Figure 9.2](#).

The household projections (which are based on past trends) project the number of households in Scotland increasing on average by around 12,000 per year between 2018 and 2028 and by 7,800 between 2028 and 2043.

A 'household' refers to a group of people living together in a dwelling. This could be one person living alone, or a group of people who may or may not be related to each other.

The number of households in Scotland is projected to increase by 5% between 2018 and 2028. The corresponding percentage increase is 7% in England, 4% in Wales and 4% in Northern Ireland.

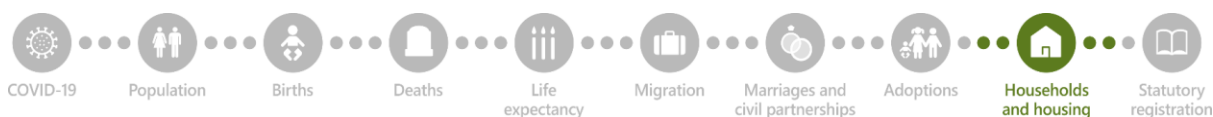


Figure 9.2: Number of households in Scotland, 2018, 2028 and 2043



Source: National Records of Scotland (NRS) Household Estimates (2019), Household Projections 2018-based

Over the last decade the number of households increased faster than the population (6.1% compared to 4.4%) - see [Figure 9.3](#).

The growth in households has been faster than the population growth because people are increasingly living alone or in smaller households. One person households have become the most common type in recent years. The number of single person households comprised of males aged 30 to 64 has also increased relative to the population in this group ([Figure 9.4](#)).

The average household size (number of people per household) has been on a downward trend for many years, although recently the rate of decrease has been slower. However, there are some exceptions across Scotland – the average household size has been increasing in Edinburgh and Glasgow (4.7% and 5.0% increase from 2009 to 2019).

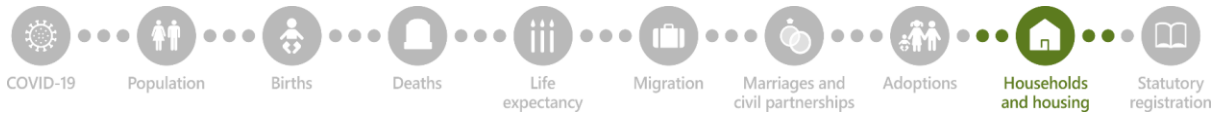
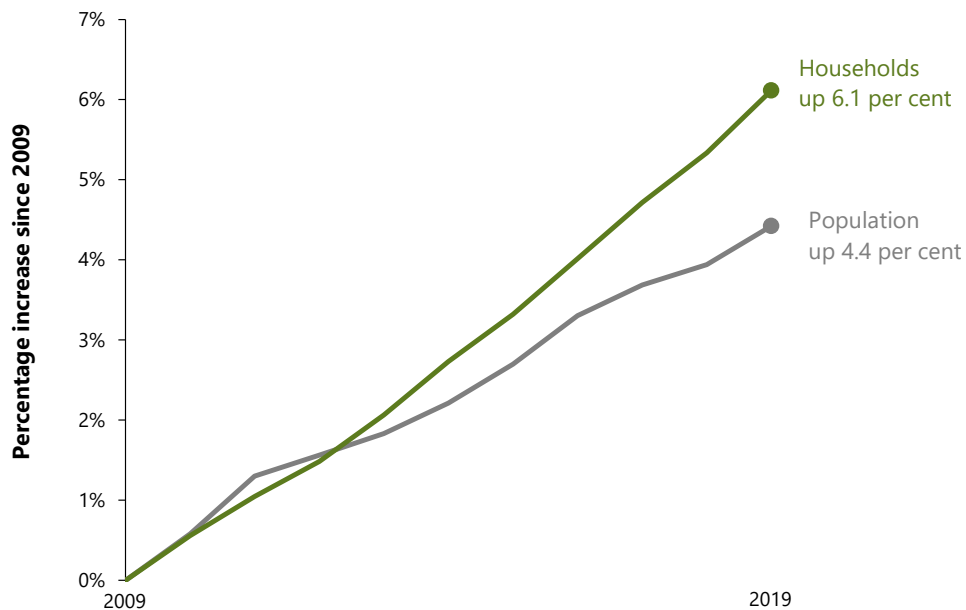
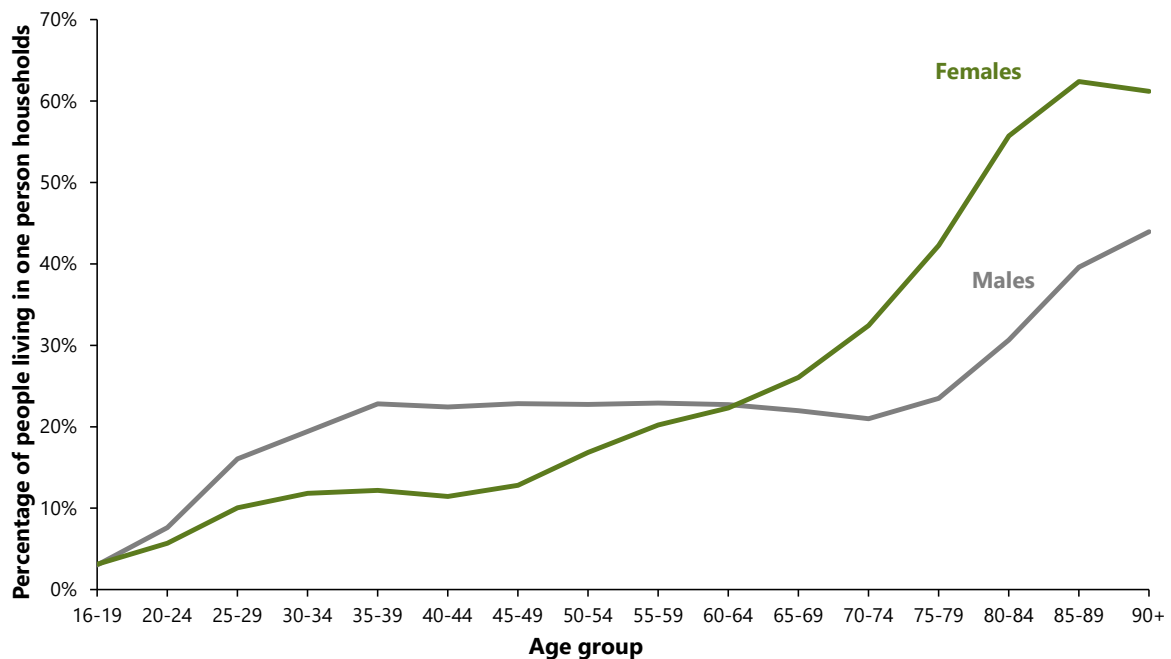


Figure 9.3: Trends in households and population, mid-2009 to mid-2019



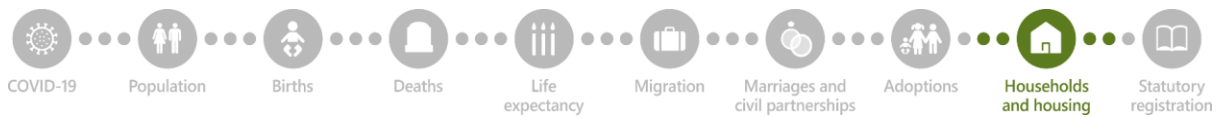
Source for population: National Records of Scotland Mid-Year Population Estimates

Figure 9.4: Percentage of people living alone in Scotland by age and sex, 2019



Numbers are given as a percentage of adults in age group, not as a percentage of households.
 Source: National Records of Scotland (NRS): Household projections, 2018-based.

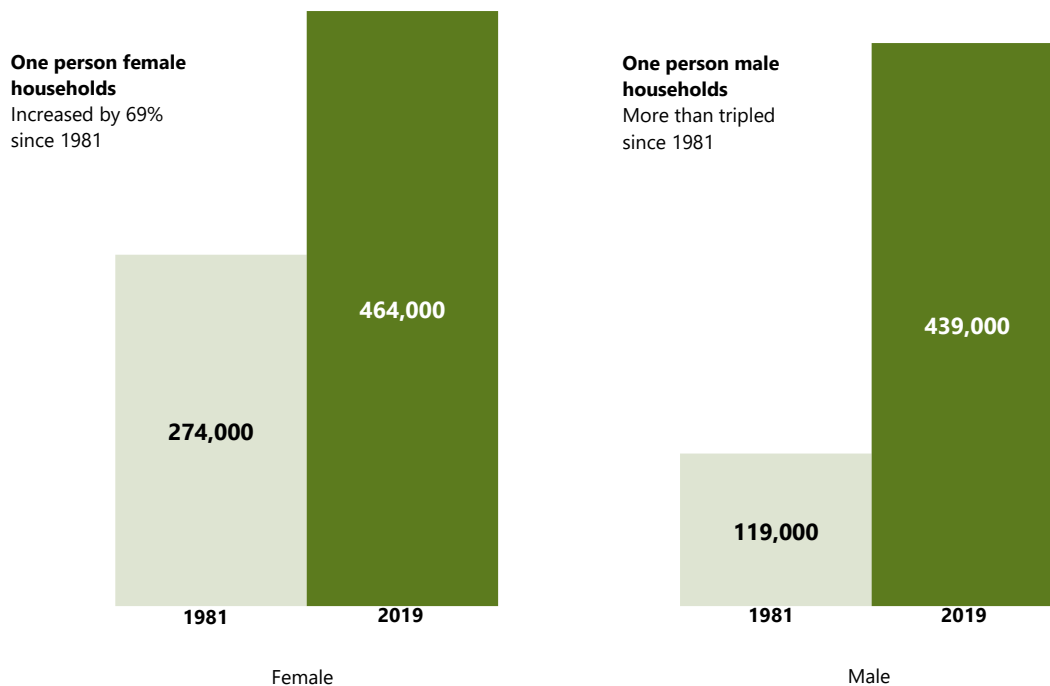
Over the last decade, the average household size fell from 2.18 people per household in 2009 to 2.15 people per household in 2019. This is projected to fall further to 2.08 people per household by 2028 and to 2.00 by 2043. These changes are partly due to the ageing population, as elderly people are more likely than



younger people to live alone or with just one other person.

The split by sex of people living alone is now close to 50:50. The proportion of people living alone who were female fell from 70% in 1981 to 51% in 2019. The higher number of females living alone is mainly due to females outliving their partners. [Figure 9.5](#) shows the number of single person households by sex.

Figure 9.5: Number of women and men living alone in 1981 and 2019



Source: Scottish Household Survey, National Records of Scotland (NRS), Household Projections 2018-based

Projected changes in household type

The numbers of some household types are projected to increase more than others by 2028, as illustrated in [Figure 9.6](#).

The largest projected increase in households (in both number and percentage terms) is for those which contain one person only. As a proportion of all households, single person households are projected to increase from 36% in 2018 to 37% in 2028 and to 38% in 2043. The number of households containing two adults only is projected to rise, while the numbers of larger households are projected to fall slightly.

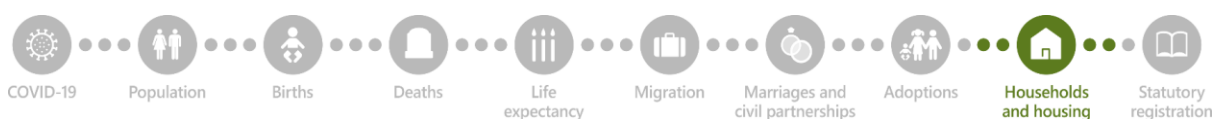
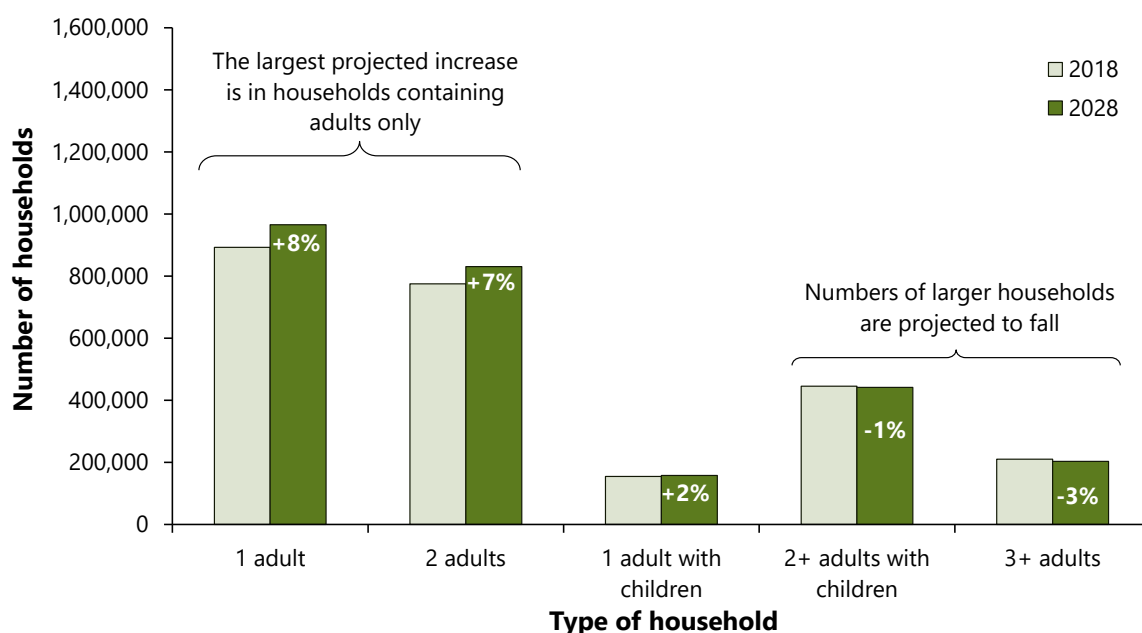


Figure 9.6: Households in Scotland by household type: 2018 and 2028



Source: National Records of Scotland, Household Projections 2018-based

Projected changes by age group

Figure 9.7 shows the projection of the number of households from 2018 to 2028, by the age of the household reference person (HRP). The number of households with older HRPs is projected to rise, reflecting the ageing population in Scotland. The number of households where the HRP is someone aged 65 or over is projected to increase from 689,600 in 2018 to 824,300 in 2028 (an increase of 20%) and to 965,700 in 2043 (an increase of 40% compared with 2018).

The household projections use the 2011 Census definition of a **household reference person (HRP)**; that is the eldest economically active person in the household, then the eldest inactive person if there was no economically active person.

The increases are particularly large in the oldest age groups, with the number of households where the HRP is someone aged 85 or over projected to rise from 95,800 in 2018 to 116,800 in 2028 (an increase of 22%), and to 178,400 in 2043 (an increase of 86% compared with 2018). In contrast, the number of households where the HRP is someone aged under 65 is projected to decrease only marginally (0.8%) from 1.79 million in 2018 to 1.77 million in 2028, and then to around 1.75 million by 2043 (a decrease of 2.2% compared with 2018).

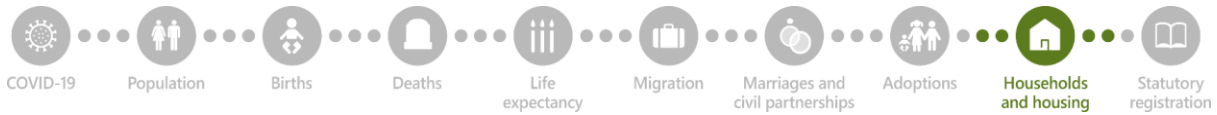
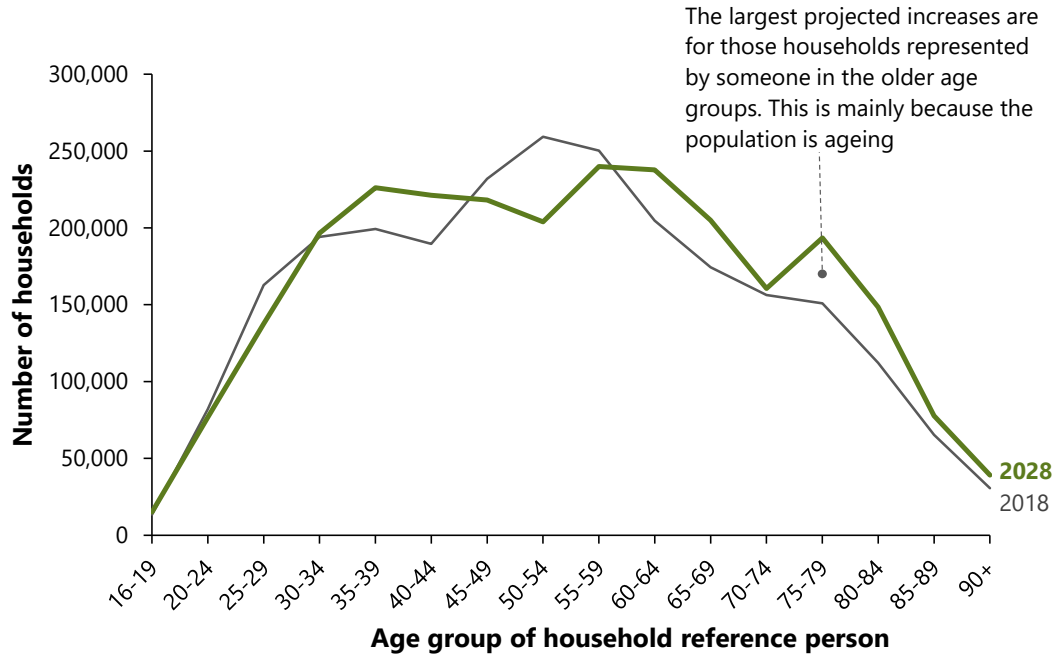
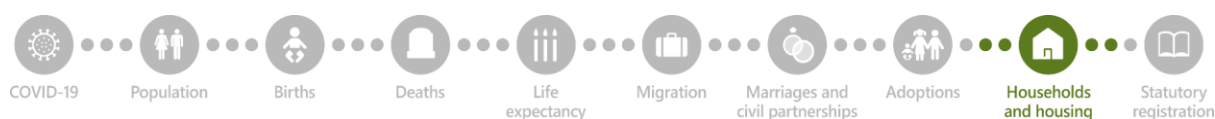


Figure 9.7: Households in Scotland by age of household reference person: 2018 and 2028



Source: National Records of Scotland, Household Projections 2018-based

A total of 342,900 people aged 65 or over were estimated to be living alone in 2018. This number is projected to rise to 405,500 in 2028 (an increase of 18%) and to 488,300 by 2043 (an increase of 42%). This is mainly due to the growth in the number of older people, rather than because the proportion of older people living alone is changing. Increases are particularly large in the oldest age groups (85 or over) where the number of people living alone is projected to rise from 67,200 in 2018 to 81,400 in 2028 (an increase of 21%), and to 124,700 by 2043 (an increase of 85%).



Household numbers across Scotland

The number of households has grown in every council area over the 10 years to 2019. The areas with the greatest increase in households in percentage terms have been:

- Midlothian (an increase of 15.6%, 5,400 households)
- Orkney Islands (an increase of 11.3%, 1,100 households)
- East Lothian (an increase of 10.8%, 4,600 households).

City of Edinburgh has seen the largest increase in terms of absolute numbers (17,800 households, an increase of 8.1%).

The number of households is projected to increase in almost every council area between 2018 and 2028, as shown in [Figure 9.8](#). The largest percentage projected increases are in:

- Midlothian (16%)
- East Lothian (11%)
- City of Edinburgh (10%)
- West Lothian (10%).

In contrast, household numbers are projected to fall between 2018 and 2028 in:

- Inverclyde (3%)
- Argyll and Bute (2%)
- Na-h Eileanan Siar (2%)
- North Ayrshire (0.1%).

Over a longer projection period (2018 to 2043) the numbers of households are also projected to fall in:

- West Dunbartonshire (0.9%)
- Dumfries and Galloway (0.8%)
- East Ayrshire (0.3%).

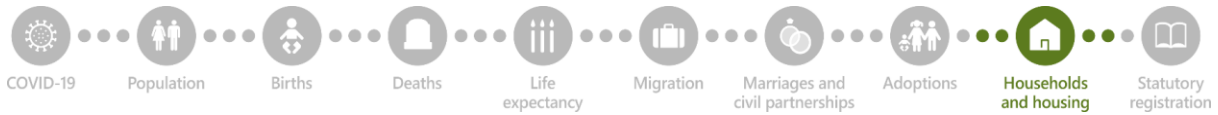
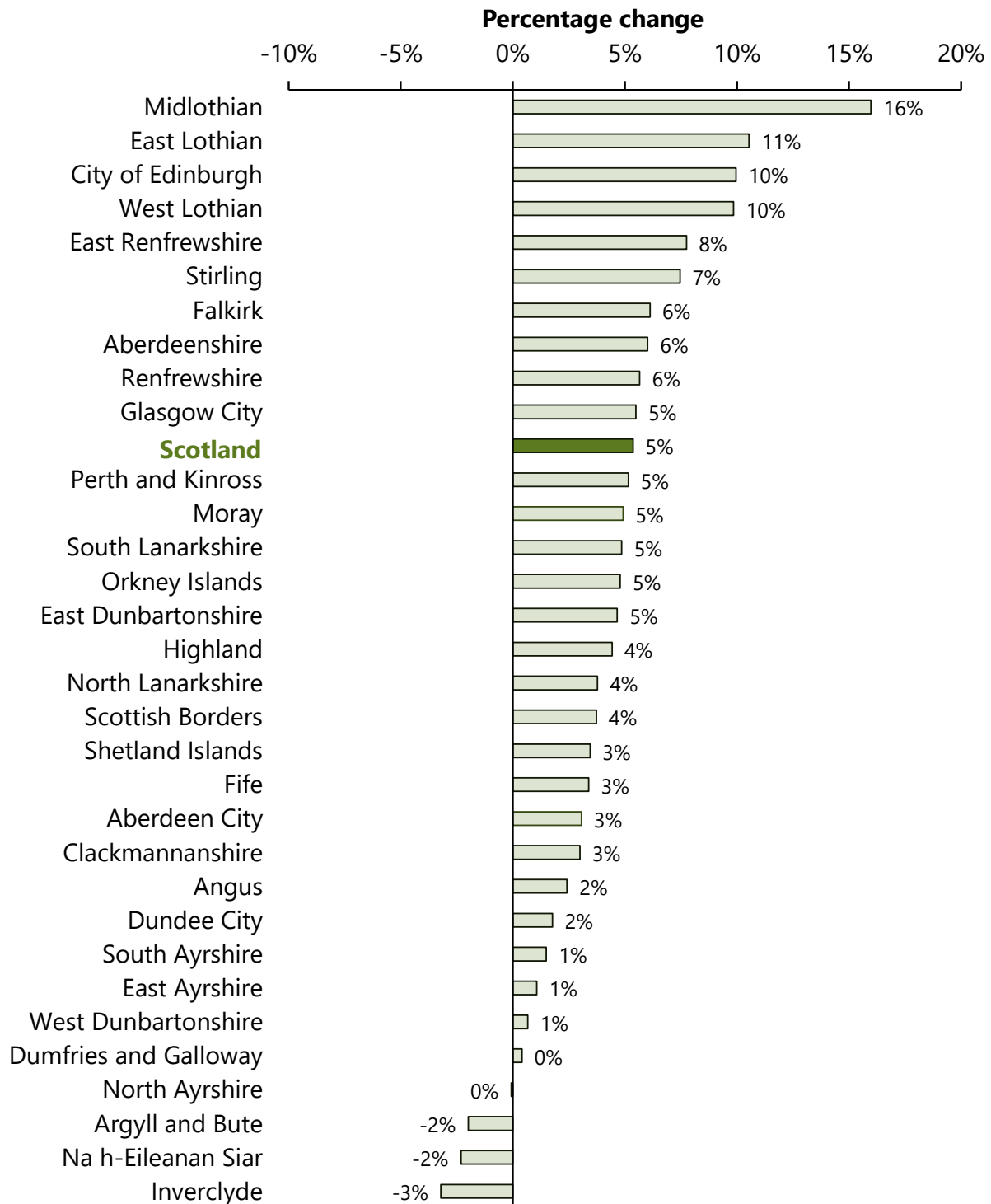
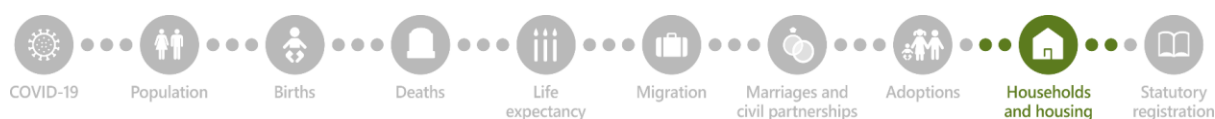


Figure 9.8: Projected percentage change in the number of households by council area, 2018 to 2028



Source: National Records of Scotland (NRS) Household Estimates (2019), Household Projections 2018-based (2028)



More detailed information about Scotland's households can be found in the [Households section](#) on the National Records of Scotland website. Statistics on housing in Scotland are available from the [Housing and Regeneration Statistics page](#) of the Scottish Government website.

A cross-government working group on housing statistics exists to provide an improved coherent picture of the UK housing landscape for users of statistics on this topic. Further information on the work of this group is available on the [Government Statistical Service website](#).

Vacant dwellings and second homes

Across Scotland, just under 96% of dwellings were occupied in 2019, while 3.2% of dwellings were vacant and 0.9% were second homes. Remote rural areas had the highest percentage of dwellings that were vacant or second homes (5.5% and 6.3% respectively, compared to 2.9% and 0.4% in large urban areas). The areas with the highest proportion of second homes are:

- Earlsferry, Fife (53%)
- Largs Central and Cumbrae, North Ayrshire (41%)
- Elie, Fife (33%).

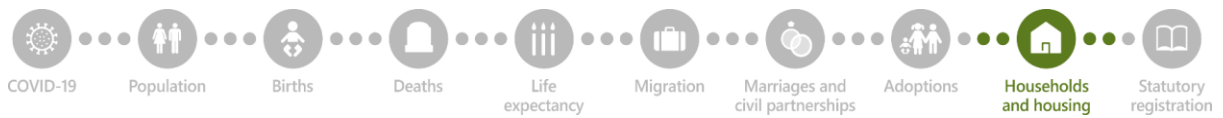
See our publication on [Small area statistics](#) and our [interactive map](#) to discover other places of interest. Over the past four years, the number of vacant dwellings has increased very slightly, from 78,500 (3.1% of total dwellings) in 2015 to 84,600 (3.2%) in 2019. Over the same period the number of second homes has been steadily decreasing, from 27,300 (1.1% of total dwellings) in 2015 to 24,500 (0.9%) in 2019.

Households vs. Dwellings – what's the difference?

A 'dwelling' refers to the accommodation itself, for example a flat or house.

A 'household' refers to a group of people living together in a dwelling.

The number of dwellings in an area includes second homes and vacant dwellings; some dwellings may contain more than one household.



How are household statistics used?

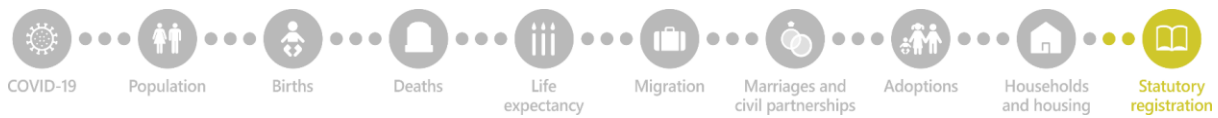
Household estimates and projections are used by central government, councils and others for a variety of purposes, including:

- informing councils about housing need and provision of services (including housing, waste collection and community care)
- land use allocation and planning
- assessing demand for water and sewerage services
- risk analysis by Fire and Rescue Services



Statutory registration

"The COVID-19 pandemic, and subsequent lockdown, has had a very significant effect on the registration service since March 2020"



Registration

At National Records of Scotland (NRS), the Registration business area is responsible for:

- The administration of births, deaths, still-births, marriages, civil partnerships and gender recognition, as well as statutes relating to the legal preliminaries to marriage/civil partnership and solemnisation of civil marriages
- Business input to IT systems which enable the electronic capture and distribution of information for registration purposes
- The professional training and development of registrars, and support for their progress towards the longstanding registrar's qualification, the Certificate of Proficiency in the Law and Practice of Registration in Scotland.

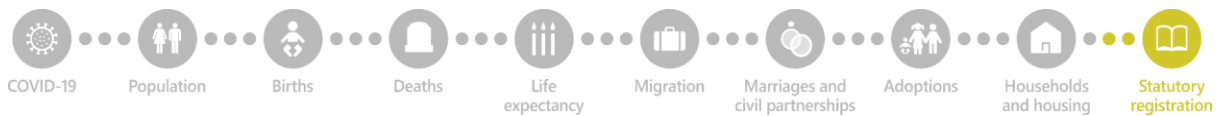
Each of the 32 local council areas in Scotland is a registration district. Councils can operate their registration service from a single office or multiple sites, depending on the size of the council area and how each authority chooses to configure its services. Registrars are appointed and remunerated by each local authority, which appoints

Uses of Registration data

There are a number of significant and important uses of the data generated by the Registration service in Scotland. This includes:

- Extracts from the registers (birth/death certificates etc) used by members of the public to attest to the true occurrence and details of different life events
- A key data source for the demographic statistics produced by NRS
- The base for future family history research
- To provide significant input to the promotion of positive social goods such as public health, justice and medical research.
- Prevention of social ills such as forced marriage, fraud and the subversion of immigration law.
- Underpinning the NHS Central Register (NHSCR)
- Used by a range of other government departments, such as the Department for Work and Pensions via the Tell Us Once scheme, and HMRC as part of the tax-free childcare and child benefit data verification schemes.

NRS continues to work on expanding the reach and impact of Registration data through these and other channels.



registration staff for their registration district as they deem necessary, receiving policy and process guidance from NRS, as well as extensive IT and training support.

More than 98% of all civil status events are recorded by registrars using a secure network (the Forward Electronic Register – FER). Remaining events are recorded manually by home-based registrars, and these manual records are then transcribed into FER. Outputs are register pages, extracts and computer data.

Every entry in the registers of birth, still-birth, death, marriage and civil partnership is examined individually by the team of District Examiners. These staff quality assure information recorded by registrars, and make strategic visits to registration districts during the year. Once they have been examined, register pages are sent to NRS, where they are digitally imaged and made available to family history researchers through [ScotlandsPeople](#), as well as more widely through a secure network to computerised registration offices. The original records are stored permanently in NRS.

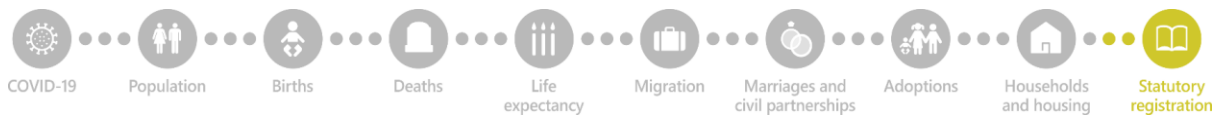
Registration and COVID-19

The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, and subsequent lockdown, has had a dramatic effect on the registration service since March 2020. It has required a complete reconfiguration of registration services across the country, beginning in March and continuing through summer 2020.

Throughout this unprecedented period, the normal work of registering events has continued, alongside other important developments such as legislative work on mixed-sex civil partnerships, and the ongoing programme of examination of register entries.

The new challenges this presented included:

- Making an urgent assessment of those aspects of registration which were essential, which were less so and could be suspended or postponed, and how to immediately order these priorities
- Engaging rapidly with policy and legal colleagues to develop provisions in the first [UK Coronavirus bill](#) to facilitate remote death registration, a key public health priority
- Communicating NRS's broad thinking on registration priorities, programmes of change and implementation tasks to local authority registrars and registration managers
- Responding to changes in guidance and regulations to rapidly reconfigure services to match circumstances, and then producing detailed registration-



specific guidance on aspects of the service

- Communicating with a wide range of external stakeholders to ensure changes were understood, grounded in real experience and sensitive to the needs of different groups and communities. For example, religious or cultural reasons can mean that burial or cremation must happen quickly; this concern was played into remote death registration preparations.

Key impacts of the pandemic on registration

1. Prioritising Death Registration

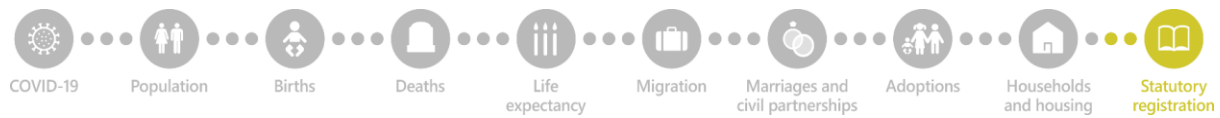
Continuing death and still-birth registration was an essential public health priority during the pandemic. With significantly increased numbers of deaths, it was vital for the registration service to focus its energies on registering deaths and still-births. (Following implementation of the [Certification of Death \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#), people can only be buried or cremated after registration has taken place.)

Registration worked with legal and policy colleagues to develop provisions in the first UK Coronavirus bill which allowed deaths and still-births to be registered remotely (as opposed to by means of a person coming in to a registration office, which would have involved unnecessary exposure of registrars and members of the public to COVID-19).

These provisions have worked extremely well, affording registrars the ability to obtain the required information from families by phone or other remote means, send on and receive key documents electronically and complete registration by means of a transcribed signature (again, avoiding the need for a person's physical presence to sign the register page). We intend to maintain their use through to the expiry of the UK Coronavirus Act in May 2022, and are also exploring the possibility of introducing parallel systems of remote and in-person death and still-birth registration for the future.

2. Postponement of Birth Registration

As a consequence of focusing primarily on death registration, and as births can already be registered up to three months after occurrence, NRS took the decision to postpone birth registrations during the initial period of the lockdown. This enabled greater focus on deaths, and we worked to communicate this policy effectively to stakeholders and the general public. In addition, we ensured that key benefits flowing from birth registration such as eligibility for child benefit (UK departments confirmed applications could still be made, in the absence of a birth certificate) and

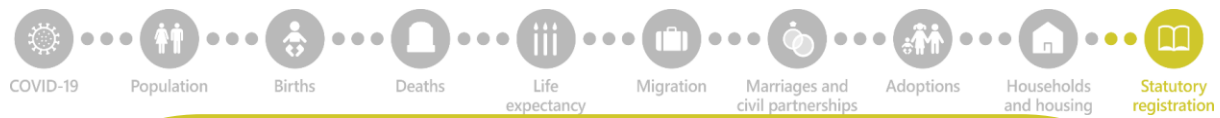


GP registration of new-borns (children could be registered at the doctor's surgery without a birth certificate) were not interrupted, and families did not suffer any detriment.

As the lockdown period moved on, we worked with local authorities on planning for the gradual reopening of registration offices – each council opening and configuring a number of offices matching local needs – and as of June 29, offices began to reopen for high-priority activities, including birth registration. NRS also developed a new hybrid system of birth registration under which much of the required information could be gathered from parents over the phone, prior to a short, focused in-person appointment to check and sign the register page, again intended to minimise exposure to COVID-19.

3. Suspension of work on Marriage and Civil Partnership

The third key aspect of registration affected by the pandemic was marriage and civil partnership, work on which was temporarily suspended to allow for the initial focus on death and still-birth registration. As lockdown progressed, we worked extensively with Scottish Government policy leads to implement changes to registration practice required by the developing phases of the Routemap through and out of the COVID-19 crisis. This work has been complex and fast-moving, with initial household and travel limitations around ceremonies gradually giving way to attendee caps, indoor marriages and safety measures such as the wearing of face coverings, ensuring that registrars, celebrants, marriage parties and guests can participate in a safe environment. Work on marriage and civil partnership is ongoing, with restrictions developed for phase three of the Routemap still in force.



What have NRS learned from the COVID-19 pandemic?

As at October 2020, we remain in phase three of the Routemap, and work is in hand across the registration service to maintain delivery to the public, ensure safe operations and engage on future developments. This will include plans to implement mixed-sex civil partnerships over the coming year, and further work on marriage authorisations. In addition, numbers of key policy, process and training priorities which have had to be postponed in the face of the pandemic will be resumed, as the registration service works towards the 'new normal'.

- Registration is planning to engage in early 2021 with all of our main stakeholders – particularly chief and senior registrars, registration managers, and policy/legal colleagues within Scottish Government – to determine key lessons from the pandemic period, and how best to apply them to the new context of registration services.
- This is likely to encompass learning around issues that developed differently to expectations, as well as interventions (such as remote death registration) which were very successful from the start.
- It will be important to understand the different challenges likely to be placed on registration in coming years, and to ensure we maintain the excellent partnership working which has allowed us to work through the pandemic, and which will set us in good stead for the future.

Appendix 1 – Summary Tables

Table 1: Population and vital events, Scotland, 1855 to 2019

Year	Estimated population ('000s)	Live births ¹		Stillbirths ^{1,2}		Infant deaths		Deaths		Marriages ³	Civil Partnerships ⁴	
		Number	Rate ⁵	Number	Rate ⁶	Number	Rate ⁷	Number	Rate ⁵		Male	Female
1855-60	3018.4	102,462	34.1	-	-	12,250	119.6	62,644	20.8	20,645	-	-
1861-65	3127.1	109,764	35.1	-	-	13,166	119.9	69,265	22.1	22,013	-	-
1866-70	3275.6	114,394	34.9	-	-	13,971	122.1	71,974	22.0	22,832	-	-
1871-75	3441.4	120,376	35.0	-	-	15,314	127.2	77,988	22.7	25,754	-	-
1876-80	3628.7	126,086	34.8	-	-	14,921	118.3	74,801	20.6	24,956	-	-
1881-85	3799.2	126,409	33.3	-	-	14,864	117.6	74,396	19.6	26,176	-	-
1886-90	3943.9	123,977	31.4	-	-	14,943	120.5	74,320	18.8	25,702	-	-
1891-95	4122.5	125,800	30.5	-	-	15,895	126.4	78,350	19.0	27,962	-	-
1896-1900	4345.1	130,209	30.0	-	-	16,857	129.5	78,021	17.9	31,771	-	-
1901-05	4535.7	132,399	29.2	-	-	15,881	119.9	77,313	17.1	31,838	-	-
1906-10	4679.9	128,987	27.6	-	-	14,501	112.4	75,534	16.1	31,811	-	-
1911-15	4748.3	120,654	25.4	-	-	13,604	112.8	74,466	15.7	33,857	-	-
1916-20	4823.8	109,750	22.8	-	-	10,869	99.0	72,365	15.0	37,437	-	-
1921-25	4879.6	112,245	23.0	-	-	10,299	91.8	67,652	13.9	34,720	-	-
1926-30	4845.1	96,674	20.0	-	-	8,260	85.4	66,017	13.6	32,605	-	-
1931-35	4905.1	89,306	18.2	-	-	7,212	80.8	64,839	13.2	34,986	-	-
1936-40	4956.8	87,734	17.6	-	-	6,650	75.8	67,166	13.5	42,941	-	-
1941-45	4711.9	91,593	19.4	3,393	35.7	6,202	67.7	66,302	13.8	43,772	-	-
1946-50	5054.3	101,222	20.0	3,047	29.2	4,789	47.3	63,854	12.6	43,206	-	-
1951-55	5103.6	91,366	17.9	2,390	25.5	3,009	32.9	61,838	12.1	41,718	-	-
1956-60	5145.2	98,663	19.2	2,307	22.9	2,755	27.9	61,965	12.0	41,671	-	-
1961-65	5201.0	102,642	19.7	2,000	19.1	2,568	25.0	63,309	12.2	40,235	-	-
1966-70	5204.3	93,033	17.9	1,415	15.0	1,970	21.2	62,797	12.1	42,832	-	-
1971-75	5234.7	75,541	14.4	939	12.3	1,421	18.8	63,808	12.2	41,404	-	-
1976-80	5213.9	65,758	12.6	529	8.0	900	13.7	64,343	12.3	37,801	-	-
1981-85	5151.9	66,422	12.9	389	5.8	695	10.5	63,723	12.4	35,756	-	-
1986-90	5089.5	65,544	12.9	350	5.3	550	8.4	62,796	12.3	35,440	-	-
1991-95	5093.5	63,571	12.5	382	6.0	418	6.6	61,171	12.0	32,866	-	-
1996-2000	5077.5	56,856	11.2	327	5.7	316	5.6	59,478	11.7	29,965	-	-
2001-2005	5078.6	52,914	10.4	297	5.6	275	5.2	57,178	11.3	30,648	-	-
2006-2010	5200.0	58,270	11.2	311	5.3	245	4.2	54,920	10.6	28,934	316	329
2011-2015	5332.4	56,891	10.7	249	4.4	205	3.6	55,023	10.3	29,195	186	246
1991	5083.3	67,024	13.1	369	5.5	473	7.1	61,041	12.0	33,762	-	-
1992	5085.6	65,789	12.9	356	5.4	449	6.8	60,937	11.9	35,057	-	-
1993	5092.5	63,337	12.4	409	6.4	412	6.5	64,049	12.5	33,366	-	-
1994	5102.2	61,656	12.0	381	6.1	382	6.2	59,328	11.6	31,480	-	-
1995	5103.7	60,051	11.7	397	6.6	375	6.2	60,500	11.8	30,663	-	-
1996	5092.2	59,296	11.6	381	6.4	365	6.2	60,654	11.8	30,242	-	-
1997	5083.3	59,440	11.6	319	5.3	316	5.3	59,494	11.6	29,611	-	-
1998	5077.1	57,319	11.2	351	6.1	320	5.6	59,164	11.6	29,668	-	-
1999	5072.0	55,147	10.8	286	5.2	276	5.0	60,281	11.8	29,940	-	-
2000	5062.9	53,076	10.4	298	5.6	305	5.7	57,799	11.3	30,367	-	-
2001	5064.2	52,527	10.4	301	5.7	290	5.5	57,382	11.3	29,621	-	-
2002	5066.0	51,270	10.1	278	5.4	270	5.3	58,103	11.5	29,826	-	-
2003	5068.5	52,432	10.3	296	5.6	265	5.1	58,472	11.5	30,757	-	-
2004	5084.3	53,957	10.6	317	5.8	266	4.9	56,187	11.1	32,154	-	-
2005	5110.2	54,386	10.6	292	5.3	284	5.2	55,747	10.9	30,881	53	31
2006	5133.1	55,690	10.8	296	5.3	248	4.5	55,093	10.7	29,898	578	469
2007	5170.0	57,781	11.2	327	5.6	272	4.7	55,986	10.8	29,866	340	348
2008	5202.9	60,041	11.5	325	5.4	253	4.2	55,700	10.7	28,903	245	280
2009	5231.9	59,046	11.3	317	5.3	235	4.0	53,856	10.3	27,524	219	279
2010	5262.2	58,791	11.2	291	4.9	218	3.7	53,967	10.3	28,480	197	268
2011	5299.9	58,590	11.1	299	5.1	238	4.1	53,661	10.1	29,135	229	325
2012	5313.6	58,027	10.9	274	4.7	217	3.7	54,937	10.3	30,534	257	317
2013	5327.7	56,014	10.5	234	4.2	186	3.3	54,700	10.3	27,547	217	313
2014	5347.6	56,725	10.6	228	4.0	207	3.6	54,239	10.1	29,069	193	243
2015	5373.0	55,098	10.3	211	3.8	175	3.2	57,579	10.7	29,691	33	31
2016	5404.7	54,488	10.1	236	4.3	181	3.3	56,728	10.5	29,229	42	28
2017	5424.8	52,861	9.7	225	4.2	176	3.3	57,883	10.7	28,440	41	29
2018	5438.1	51,308	9.4	190	3.7	163	3.2	58,503	10.8	27,525	38	27
2019	5463.3	49,863	9.1	174	3.5	165	3.3	58,108	10.6	26,007	50	33

Footnotes

- 1) Live births only, prior to 1939.
- 2) Refer to Notes, definitions and quality of statistics.
- 3) Figures for 2014 onwards include opposite-sex and same-sex marriages.
- 4) The Civil Partnership Act 2004 came into effect in December 2005.
- 5) Rate per 1,000 population.
- 6) Rate per 1,000 live and still births.
- 7) Rate per 1,000 live births.

Table 2: Estimated population, births, total fertility rate, stillbirths, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships, numbers and rates, by council area, Scotland, 2019

Area	Estimated population at 30 June	Live births			Stillbirths		Infant deaths		Deaths			Marriages ⁵	Civil Partnerships	
		Number	Rate ¹	Standardised Rate	Total Fertility Rate ²	Number	Rate ³	Number	Rate ⁴	Number	Rate ¹			Standardised Rate
SCOTLAND	5,463,300	49,863	9.1	9.1	1.37	174	3.5	165	3.3	58,108	10.6	10.6	26,007	83
Council areas														
Aberdeen City	228,670	2,260	9.9	7.9	1.20	8	3.5	4	1.8	2,161	9.5	10.8	651	5
Aberdeenshire	261,210	2,400	9.2	11.1	1.68	10	4.1	8	3.3	2,534	9.7	9.7	1,164	1
Angus	116,200	965	8.3	10.3	1.59	2	2.1	2	2.1	1,410	12.1	9.9	391	2
Argyll and Bute	85,870	631	7.3	10.9	1.67	4	6.3	1	1.6	1,094	12.7	9.9	995	1
City of Edinburgh	524,930	4683	8.9	6.4	1.01	20	4.3	17	3.6	4,266	8.1	9.5	2618	23
Clackmannanshire	51,540	414	8.0	9.5	1.44	2	4.8	1	2.4	607	11.8	11.9	186	0
Dumfries and Galloway	148,860	1,153	7.7	10.2	1.54	3	2.6	6	5.2	1,932	13.0	10.0	4108	5
Dundee City	149,320	1,417	9.5	7.9	1.20	5	3.5	13	9.2	1,688	11.3	11.7	440	2
East Ayrshire	122,010	1,176	9.6	10.7	1.63	4	3.4	1	0.9	1,499	12.3	12.0	493	0
East Dunbartonshire	108,640	910	8.4	11.1	1.66	2	2.2	3	3.3	1137	10.5	8.6	198	0
East Lothian	107,090	973	9.1	10.4	1.58	2	2.1	1	1.0	1,024	9.6	9.0	521	0
East Renfrewshire	95,530	808	8.5	10.8	1.63	2	2.5	2	2.5	923	9.7	8.7	292	0
Falkirk	160,890	1,460	9.1	9.8	1.50	6	4.1	2	1.4	1,786	11.1	11.4	635	1
Fife	373,550	3,325	8.9	9.7	1.46	19	5.7	18	5.4	4,155	11.1	10.6	1490	2
Glasgow City	633,120	6,553	10.4	7.7	1.18	32	4.9	20	3.1	6,314	10.0	13.1	2295	17
Highland	235,830	1,966	8.3	10.1	1.54	1	0.5	6	3.1	2,635	11.2	9.8	1,487	6
Inverclyde	77,800	615	7.9	9.2	1.39	-	-	3	4.9	1,079	13.9	12.4	168	0
Midlothian	92,460	1057	11.4	11.8	1.77	2	1.9	-	-	929	10.0	10.7	382	0
Moray	95,820	816	8.5	10.1	1.54	3	3.7	1	1.2	1044	10.9	9.7	301	1
Na h-Eileanan Siar	26,720	200	7.5	10.5	1.66	-	-	-	-	358	13.4	9.9	118	0
North Ayrshire	134,740	1,124	8.3	9.9	1.49	6	5.3	3	2.7	1,740	12.9	11.5	632	1
North Lanarkshire	341,370	3,438	10.1	10.4	1.59	11	3.2	12	3.5	3,689	10.8	12.3	750	1
Orkney Islands	22,270	182	8.2	10.1	1.51	-	-	-	-	232	10.4	8.6	77	0
Perth and Kinross	151,950	1,197	7.9	9.7	1.47	4	3.3	4	3.3	1,694	11.1	8.9	959	3
Renfrewshire	179,100	1,693	9.5	9.8	1.47	7	4.1	10	5.9	2,039	11.4	11.4	603	3
Scottish Borders	115,510	916	7.9	10.8	1.65	2	2.2	1	1.1	1,299	11.2	9.1	675	1
Shetland Islands	22,920	205	8.9	10.8	1.65	-	-	1	4.9	199	8.7	8.5	70	0
South Ayrshire	112,610	837	7.4	9.5	1.44	1	1.2	3	3.6	1,513	13.4	10.3	793	1
South Lanarkshire	320,530	3,109	9.7	10.8	1.62	7	2.2	5	1.6	3,522	11.0	10.9	1038	2
Stirling	94,210	737	7.8	8.0	1.25	3	4.1	3	4.1	968	10.3	10.2	554	2
West Dunbartonshire	88,930	845	9.5	10.0	1.50	4	4.7	4	4.7	1,046	11.8	12.2	268	1
West Lothian	183,100	1,798	9.8	10.3	1.58	2	1.1	10	5.6	1,592	8.7	10.2	655	2

Footnotes

1) Rate per 1,000 population.

2) The total fertility rate is the average number of children (per woman) that would be born to a cohort of women if they experienced, throughout

their childbearing years, the age-specific fertility rates of the calendar year in question.

3) Rate per 1,000 live and still births.

4) Rate per 1,000 live births.

5) Includes opposite-sex and same-sex marriages.

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Table 3: International populations and vital statistics rates, selected countries, latest available figures

Country	Estimated population 2019 ('000s)	Live births		Stillbirths ¹		Infant deaths		Deaths		Marriages	
		Year	Rate ²	Year	Rate ³	Year	Rate ⁴	Year	Rate ²	Year	Rate ²
Scotland	5,463	2019	9.1	2019	3.5	2019	3.3	2019	10.6	2019	4.8
European Union											
Austria	8,859	2018	9.7	2018	2.2	2018	2.7	2018	9.5	2018	5.3
Belgium	11,456	2018	10.4	2014	3.2	2018	3.8	2018	9.7	2017	3.9
Bulgaria	7,000	2018	8.9	2018	6.1	2018	5.8	2018	15.4	2018	4.1
Croatia	4,076	2018	9.0	2018	4.4	2018	4.2	2018	12.9	2018	4.9
Cyprus	876	2018	10.7	2018	-	2018	2.4	2018	6.6	2018	7.8
Czech Republic	10,650	2018	10.7	2018	2.4	2018	2.6	2018	10.6	2018	5.1
Denmark	5,806	2018	10.6	2018	3.3	2018	3.7	2018	9.5	2018	5.6
Estonia	1,325	2018	10.9	2018	2.0	2018	1.6	2018	11.9	2018	5.0
Finland	5,518	2018	8.6	2018	2.1	2018	2.1	2018	9.9	2018	4.3
France	67,013	2018	11.3	2010	10.4	2018	3.8	2018	9.1	2017	3.5
Germany	83,019	2018	9.5	2015	3.8	2018	3.2	2018	11.5	2017	4.9
Greece	10,725	2018	8.1	2018	3.9	2018	3.5	2018	11.2	2018	4.4
Hungary	9,773	2018	9.6	2018	4.1	2018	3.3	2018	13.4	2018	5.2
Irish Republic	4,904	2018	12.5	2016	2.7	2018	2.9	2018	6.4	2017	4.6
Italy	60,360	2018	7.3	2012	2.7	2018	2.8	2018	10.5	2018	3.2
Latvia	1,920	2018	10.0	2018	3.7	2018	3.2	2018	15.0	2018	6.8
Lithuania	2,794	2018	10.0	2018	4.1	2018	3.4	2018	14.1	2018	7.0
Luxembourg	614	2018	10.3	2018	5.9	2018	4.3	2018	7.1	2018	3.1
Malta	494	2018	9.2	2011	4.3	2018	5.6	2018	7.6	2018	5.8
Netherlands	17,282	2018	9.8	2018	3.0	2018	3.5	2018	8.9	2018	3.7
Poland	37,973	2018	10.2	2018	2.4	2018	3.8	2018	10.9	2018	5.1
Portugal	10,277	2018	8.5	2018	2.6	2018	3.3	2018	11.0	2018	3.4
Romania	19,414	2018	10.4	2018	3.4	2018	6.0	2018	13.6	2018	7.4
Slovakia	5,450	2018	10.6	2018	2.9	2018	5.0	2018	10.0	2018	5.7
Slovenia	2,081	2018	9.4	2018	1.8	2018	1.7	2018	9.9	2018	3.5
Spain	46,937	2018	7.9	2017	3.2	2018	2.7	2018	9.1	2018	3.5
Sweden	10,230	2018	11.4	2018	3.8	2018	2.0	2018	9.1	2018	5.0
United Kingdom	66,797	2018	11.0	2018	4.0	2018	3.9	2018	9.2	2017	4.2
Other Europe											
North Macedonia	2,077	2018	10.3	2018	7.0	2018	5.7	2018	9.5	2018	6.5
Norway	5,328	2018	10.4	2018	2.7	2018	2.3	2018	7.7	2018	4.3
Switzerland	8,545	2018	10.3	2018	4.3	2018	3.3	2018	7.9	2018	4.8
Turkey	82,004	2018	15.3	2018	-	2018	9.3	2018	5.2	2018	6.8

Footnotes

1) The definition of a stillbirth varies from country to country and over time. The position in the UK is described in Appendix 2 - Notes, definitions and quality of statistics.

2) Rate per 1,000 population.

3) Rate per 1,000 live and still births.

4) Rate per 1,000 live births.

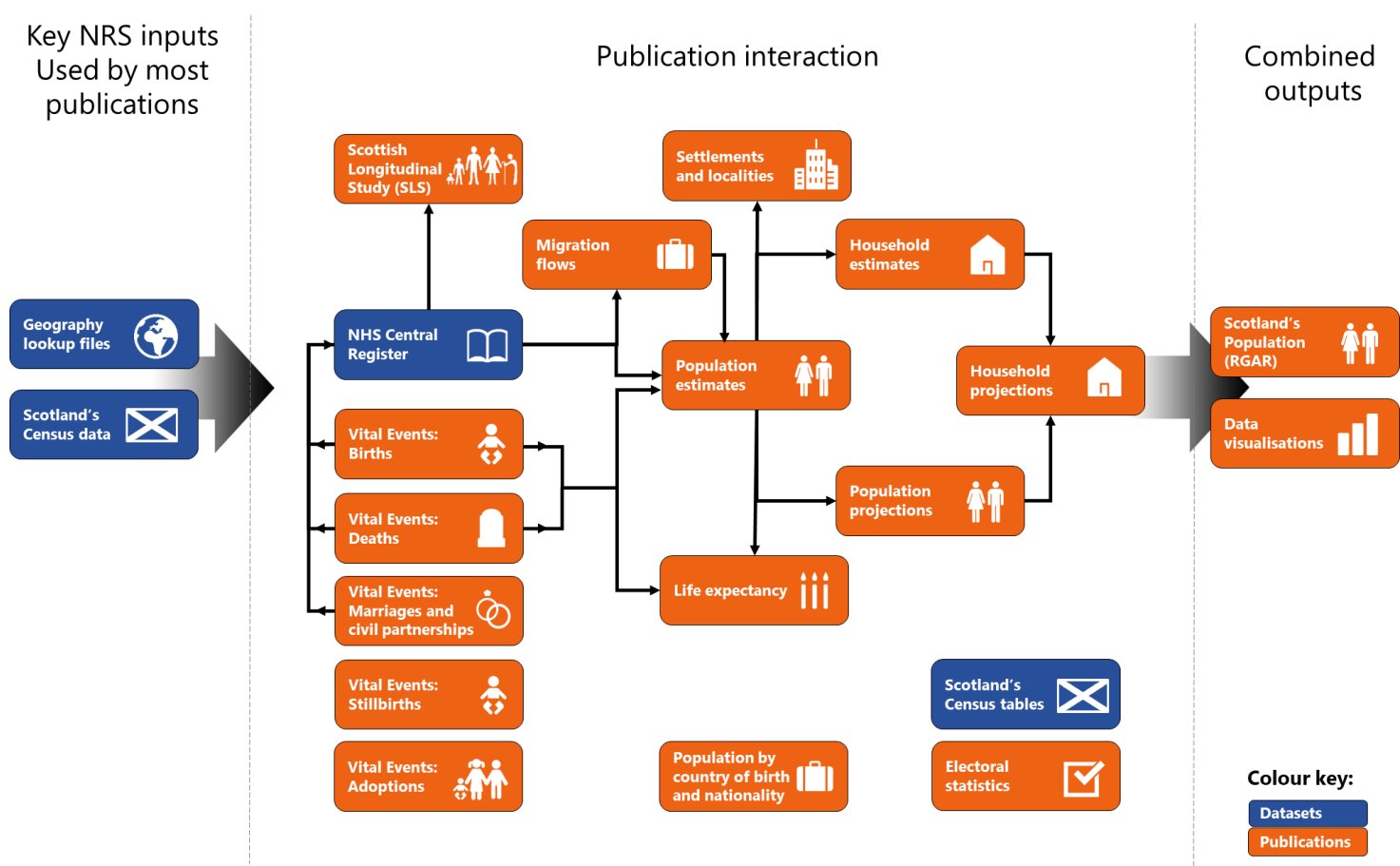
Sources: Eurostat, Office for National Statistics, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.

Appendix 2 – NRS Statistics Flowchart

This year, we have developed a flowchart that maps out all the demographic statistics produced by NRS and shows how information is passed between our key publications.

Each box represents a publication topic (orange) or dataset (blue). The arrows represent the flow of data between publications and datasets.

The chart only shows how information is used within NRS; each publication also depends on data sharing with many vital external organisations.



Appendix 3 – Notes, definitions and quality of statistics

This appendix gives general notes on some of the information and conventions used in this report, and defines some of the terms.

General

Rounding

Figures are calculated using unrounded data.

Conventions for tables

Where a range of years is listed in a table (for example, '2018-19'), the information we have given will be an average for that length of time or in the case of non-census migration it will refer to migration between 1 July (2018) to 30 June (2019).

In all tables 'year' means 'calendar year' unless otherwise stated.

The date events happen and the date of registration

The statistics about births and deaths in the Population chapter are for mid-year periods (from 1 July of one year to 30 June of the next) and relate to the date the event happened and not to the date the event was registered. For example, a birth on 29 June 2019 which was registered on 4 July 2019 would be included in the mid-2019 figures, which relate to the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019.

All the other statistics about births and deaths, as well as the statistics about stillbirths, marriages and civil partnerships, are for calendar years and relate to the date the event was registered, not the date the event actually happened. For example, a birth on 31 December 2018 which was registered on 4 January 2019 would be included in the 2019 figures. By law, births and stillbirths should be registered within 21 days, marriages and civil partnerships should be registered within three days, and deaths should be registered within eight days. Almost all births, stillbirths, marriages, civil partnerships and deaths are registered on time.

The place the relevant person usually lives and the place the event happens

Births, stillbirths, and deaths are generally allocated to the area in Scotland where the relevant person (the mother for births and stillbirths, and the person who has died for deaths) usually lives. If the relevant person does not usually live in Scotland, the event is allocated to the area in which it happened. However, a death may be allocated to the area where the person used to live if the area is in Scotland and the person had lived away from that area for less than 12 months.

Marriage and civil partnership figures relate to the area where the event took place.

Age

Ages relate to the person's age on their last birthday.

When working out average ages (such as the average age at death and the average age of mothers at childbirth) we have added half a year to people's age at their last birthday. For example, to work out the overall average age at death, we have assumed that the average age of 77-year-olds who died was 77 years and six months.

Age standardisation

A straight comparison of rates between areas may give a misleading picture because of differences in sex and age between the different populations. For example, it would be unreasonable to expect a high birth rate in an area with a high proportion of elderly people. Because of this, we have standardised information in certain tables and charts. Standardisation allows areas with different age and sex structures to be easily compared, comparing the actual number of events that happen in an area with the total number of events that would be expected if the area had the rates of the standard population. Various standard populations can be used for age standardisation. We use both the Scottish population (for the year in question) and the European Standard Population 2013 to calculate age-standardised rates.

Lists of groups of countries

EU-2 refers to the countries that became member states of the European Union on 1 January 2007, which were Bulgaria and Romania.

EU-8 refers to the countries that became member states of the European Union on 1 May 2004, which were Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

EU-14 refers to the countries that were member states of the European Union before 1 May 2004 and are still members. These are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

Urban and rural classifications

'Large urban areas' are settlements of over 125,000 people.

'Other urban areas' are settlements of 10,000 to 124,999 people.

'Accessible small towns' are settlements of 3,000 to 9,999 people that are within a 30-minute drive of a settlement of 10,000 people or more.

'Remote small towns' are settlements of 3,000 to 9,999 people that are not within a 30-minute drive of a settlement of 10,000 people or more.

'Accessible rural' settlements are areas of fewer than 3,000 people that are within a 30-minute drive of a settlement of 10,000 people or more.

'Remote rural' settlements are areas of fewer than 3,000 people that are not within a 30-minute drive of a settlement of 10,000 people or more.

You can get more information about the [Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification](#) in the Methodology section of the Scottish Government (SG) website.

Deprivation

The Scottish Government produces the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation to define small-area concentrations of deprivation across all of Scotland. The index is based on 38 indicators in seven fields – income, employment, health, education, skills and training, housing, geographic access and crime.

You can get more information about the [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation](#) on the SG website.

Chapter 1 – COVID-19 Deaths

COVID-19

COVID-19 is a highly infectious respiratory disease which spread globally in 2020, causing an unprecedented public health crisis. Deaths involving COVID-19 are defined as any death where codes U07.1 or U07.2 are mentioned on the death certificate according to the WHO International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems 10th Revision (ICD-10).

Excess Deaths

Excess deaths, or excess mortality, are terms used in epidemiology and public health that refer to the number of deaths above and beyond what would be expected under 'normal' conditions. In this report, excess deaths are calculated by comparing the number of deaths in the current year (2020) to the average of the past five years (2015-2019).

HPS

Health Protection Scotland is the organisation that coordinates activities aimed at protecting the people of Scotland from infectious and environmental hazards. It is a part of Public Health Scotland.

Sources and quality of statistics – COVID-19 Deaths

Deaths involving COVID-19 are discussed in terms of 3 key measures:

- Deaths within 28 days of the first positive COVID-19 test.
- Deaths where COVID-19 is mentioned on the death certificate by the doctor who certified the death.
- Excess deaths.

More information on the source and quality of the data used in this chapter can be found below under the heading: [Sources and quality of statistics – Deaths](#).

You can find more information on the quality of data for [COVID-19 deaths in Scotland](#) on the NRS website.

Chapter 2 - Population

All population figures refer to estimates at 30 June of the relevant year.

Population covered

The estimated population of an area includes all those who usually live there, whatever their nationality. Students are treated as living at their term-time address. Members of UK and non-UK armed forces stationed in Scotland are included, but UK forces stationed outside Scotland are not. Short-term international migrants (people who move to Scotland for less than 12 months) are also not included.

Population projections

Population projections are estimates for future years largely based on past trends. The Registrar General asks the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to prepare population projections with input from his own experts. The latest national projections were published in October 2019, and were based on the mid-2018 population estimates. Sub-national population projections were published in March 2019 and cover council areas, health boards, national parks and Strategic Development Plan Areas.

Sources and quality of statistics – population

Population estimates are based on the 2011 Census and are updated each year by adding one year to the age of everyone in the population and including information on births, deaths and migration (people moving to or away from an area). Births and deaths are estimated using information from the civil registration system, which is virtually complete. Migration is more difficult to estimate because there is no complete migration registration system in the UK. Further information about the sources used to estimate migration is included in Chapter 6.

There is more information about the quality of population statistics in the [Mid-Year Population Estimates for Scotland: Methodology Guide](#) and [About this Publication](#) paper for the Mid-Year Population Estimates for Scotland, available on the NRS website.

Sources and quality of statistics – population projections

More information about the quality of population projections can be found in the [Uses and Limitations of Population Projections](#) section on the NRS website.

Chapter 3 - Births

Cohort

A cohort is a well-defined group of people with a common characteristic. For example, 'the birth cohort of 1976' refers to the people born in that year.

General fertility rate (GFR)

The number of births per 1,000 women of childbearing age (15 to 44).

Total fertility rate (TFR)

The average number of children who would be born, per woman, to a cohort of women who experienced, throughout their childbearing years, the fertility rates for the calendar year in question.

Age specific fertility rate (ASFR)

The number of births per woman for a specific age during a set time.

Marital status of parents

'Married parents' means parents who are married to each other. 'Unmarried parents' refers to parents who are not married, or who are married but not to each other.

Sources and quality of statistics – births

Statistics about births in Scotland are produced from information collected when the births are registered. The information should be very accurate as it is almost always provided by one or both of the baby's parents, and the parent (or parents) and the registrar should check the details that will appear on the child's birth certificate before the certificate is produced. Also, each record of a birth is checked by one of our district examiners.

The statistics will cover almost 100% of all births in Scotland – because of the importance of a person's birth certificate, there will be very few births that are not registered, and they are likely to be the result of extremely unusual circumstances.

You can get more information about statistics on births from the Vital Events [Births – Background](#) section on the National Records of Scotland (NRS) website.

For general information on all vital events statistics please go to the Vital Events - [General Background](#) Information section of the NRS website.

Chapter 4 – Deaths

Cause-of-death coding

Since 1 January 2000, deaths in Scotland have been coded in line with the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (Tenth Revision), also known as ICD10. We put the underlying causes of death into classes based on information collected from the Medical Certificate of the Cause of Death (MCCD), together with any extra information the certifying doctor provides later. We also take account of changes that Procurators Fiscal tell us about.

You can get more detailed information about [death certificates and coding the causes of death](#), and how we produce statistics of deaths from certain causes from the Vital Events Deaths - Background Information section of the NRS website.

Stillbirth

Section 56(1) of the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Scotland) Act 1965 (as amended by the Still-Birth (Definition) Act 1992) defines a stillbirth as a child born after the 24th week of pregnancy which does not breathe or show any other sign of life.

Perinatal deaths

This refers to stillbirths and deaths in the first week of life.

Infant deaths

This refers to all deaths in the first year of life.

Sources and quality of statistics – deaths

Statistics about deaths in Scotland are produced from information which is collected when the deaths are registered. Details of the causes of death come from the Medical Certificate of the Cause of Death (MCCD), and so represent the results of a doctor's clinical judgment. In some cases, the doctor, a Procurator Fiscal or a pathologist provides extra information about the cause of death later, for example following further investigations.

Other information about the person who has died will be provided by the person who registers the death (who is usually a son or daughter, sometimes a husband,

wife or partner, another relative or a friend, or occasionally, someone like a police officer or a care-home manager) or the registrar can get the information from existing registration records (if the person who has died was born or married in Scotland). In a small percentage of cases, some of the information about the person who has died may not be complete or accurate (for example, if the person registering the death did not know the person very well, and the registrar could not get details from previous registration records). The person registering the death and the registrar should check the details before the certificate is produced. Also, each record of a death is checked by one of our district examiners.

The statistics will cover almost 100% of all deaths in Scotland, as a cemetery or a crematorium will not accept a body unless the death has been registered. However, occasionally a death may not be recorded (for example, because the authorities do not know that someone who is missing has died).

You can get more information about statistics on deaths from the Vital Events [Deaths – Background Information](#) section of the NRS website.

You can also get some general information on all vital events statistics from the [Vital Events – General Background Information](#) section of the NRS website.

Chapter 5 - Life expectancy

Period Life expectancy

The average number of further years a person can expect to live based on the age specific mortality rates for their area and time period. Life expectancy can be calculated at all ages but is most commonly referred to in relation to life expectancy at birth.

Healthy Life expectancy

The average number of further years that a person can expect to remain in 'good health'. The age specific prevalence of good health is estimated from survey data and assumed to remain constant throughout the person's life.

Sources and quality of statistics – life expectancy

The life expectancy estimates are based on the projected trends in the number of deaths, formulated using the death records from the previous three years. For example, the estimates based on the figures for 2017-2019 for administrative areas were published in September 2020. Population data is drawn from the mid-year population estimates and population estimates in small areas. Self-assessed health data comes from the health question in the Annual Population Survey.

You can get more information about the quality of statistics on life expectancy in the [Life Expectancy for Scotland: Methodology Guide](#) (PDF document) and on the [Life Expectancy at Scotland Level Methodology](#) page both available on the NRS website.

Chapter 6 – Migration

Net migration

The difference between the number of long-term migrants entering Scotland and the number of long-term emigrants leaving the country.

Long-term migrant

Someone who changes their usual country of residence for a period of 12 months or longer.

Sources and quality of statistics – migration

Estimates of internal migration (that is, people moving between Scotland and the rest of the UK) are based on General Practitioners (GP) registrations and are considered reasonably accurate for most groups. They may be less accurate for young men, as they tend not to register with a GP immediately after moving.

The National Health Service Central Register (NHSCR) system records the movements of patients between NHS Board areas in Scotland. Anonymised extracts from the National Health Service Central Register (NHSCR), linked with Community Health Index (CHI) postcodes that are shared by NHS National Services Scotland with NRS NHSCR are used to calculate moves between NHS Board areas within Scotland.

The CHI holds records of people registered with an NHS doctor in Scotland. Unlike the NHSCR, these records contain the postcode of the patient's address. Migration at council area level and below is estimated using anonymised data from the CHI supplied with the permission of the Scottish Directors of Public Health.

Cross-border migration estimates (that is, people moving from one constituent country of the UK to another) are also based on patient records. The NHSCR system records the movements of patients between NHS Board areas in Scotland, whereas the movements for patients in England and Wales are recorded in the Personal Demographic Service (PDS). The PDS holds the master demographics database for the NHS in England and Wales. Each time a patient transfers to a new NHS doctor in a different NHS Board area, the NHSCR and PDS are notified and then the patient is considered to have made a migrant move. Counts of these re-registrations are used as a proxy indicator for moves between Scotland and the rest of the UK. Estimates from the country receiving the migrants are said to be more accurate, due to the fact

that someone is more likely to register with a new GP than de-register with their old GP. For this reason, estimates from the PDS are used to measure migration flows from Scotland to England and Wales, and health card data from the Health and Social Care Northern Ireland (HSCNI) database is used for moves to Northern Ireland.

International migration estimates (that is, people moving between Scotland and countries outside the UK) are based largely on the International Passenger Survey (IPS), which is a small sample survey so the estimates are subject to a degree of uncertainty.

The population estimates of non-British nationals living in Scotland are sourced from the Annual Population Survey (APS). These figures differ from the official mid-year population (MYE) estimates as the APS is a household survey, so does not include most communal establishments, so will exclude students in halls of residence who do not have a parent resident in the UK. The nationality reported refers to that stated by the respondent during the APS interview (self-reported). As the APS is a sample survey these estimates are subject to a degree of uncertainty.

You can get more information about the quality of statistics on migration from the [Migration - Methodology](#) page and [Migration Statistics - About this Publication](#) (PDF document) on the NRS website.

Chapter 7 - Marriages and civil partnerships

Civil marriages were introduced by the Marriage (Scotland) Act 1939, which came into force on 1 July 1940.

The Civil Partnership Act 2004, which applies throughout the UK, came into force on 5 December 2005. The act allows same-sex couples aged 16 and over to get legal recognition of their relationship. In Scotland, the first civil partnership was registered on 20 December 2005.

The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014 came into force on 16 December 2014, allowing same-sex couples to marry.

Sources and quality of statistics – marriages and civil partnerships

Statistics about marriages and civil partnerships in Scotland are produced from information which is collected when the marriages and civil partnerships are registered. The information should be very accurate as it will be provided by both parties to the marriage or civil partnership, and the couple and the registrar will check the details that will appear on the certificate before the certificate is produced. Also, each record of a marriage or a civil partnership is checked by one of our district examiners.

The statistics cover 100% of all marriages and civil partnerships in Scotland as a marriage or civil partnership is not legally formed unless a district registrar has carried out all the legal requirements.

You can get more information about statistics on marriages and civil partnerships from the Vital Events [Marriage and Civil Partnerships – Background Information](#) section of the NRS website.

You can also get some general information on all vital events statistics from the [Vital Events – General Background Information](#) section of the NRS website.

Chapter 8 – Adoptions

The Registrar General for Scotland registers adoptions under the Adoption of Children (Scotland) Act 1930.

Sources and quality of statistics – adoptions

Statistics about adoptions in Scotland are produced from information which is received from Scottish Courts in order to register adoptions.

You can get some more information about these statistics from the [Vital Events Adoptions – Background Information](#) section on the NRS website.

Chapter 9 - Households and housing

Household estimates

Household estimates are produced every year from information on occupied and empty homes taken from council tax billing systems. An occupied home is roughly equivalent to a household. The estimates are used for a range of purposes including informing local authority decisions about housing needs and providing services (including housing, planning waste collection and community care). Information on types of housing is taken from the [Scottish Assessors' Portal](#). The latest household estimates are for 2019.

Household projections

We produce household projections (estimates for future years largely based on past trends) every two years. These are mainly used for informing decisions about future housing need and providing services. The latest household projections, covering the period 2018 to 2043, take account of the results of the population projections and the number of residents in communal establishments. They use information from the household estimates and from the last two censuses to project trends in how

households are structured by type of household and by the age of the household reference person. The household reference person is defined in the census as the eldest economically active resident of the household or, if there are no economically active people, the eldest economically inactive person. The projections give an indication of what would happen if past trends continue. They do not take account of policy initiatives, or other factors that may affect future populations. Projections for small groups are likely to be less reliable than those for larger groups, and will also be less reliable for years further into the future.

Sources and quality of statistics – households and housing

Information on occupied and empty homes and on housing type comes from council tax billing systems and from the Scottish Assessors' Association, and then goes through a thorough process of quality assurance. It is possible that not all of the information held on the billing systems is up to date. There can also be small differences in the definitions used for various categories in the billing systems. The details can change over time as a result of reviews of council tax discounts and exemptions and year-on-year differences in the way second homes and empty homes are classed by some local authorities. This can have a small effect on the percentages of homes which are classed as empty or second homes.

You can get more information from 'Background Information' (section 6) of the [Estimates of Households and Dwellings, 2019](#) publication which is available on the NRS website.

Household projections are based on the numbers of people living in private households. These are estimated by taking the population projections for each year and subtracting the proportion of people living in communal establishments, such as student halls of residence, care homes or prisons. Data on the numbers of residents in communal establishments are collected from a range of data sources, depending on the establishment type. The data are chosen to represent, as closely as possible, the census definition of residence, that is those individuals 'staying, or expecting to stay, in a residential establishment for six months or more'. Data are collected from a range of administrative data sources and surveys and refers to 2018, where possible. For some establishment types, however, no such source is available, or 2018 data is not available, and in these cases earlier administrative data or 2011 Census data is used.

You can get more details on the sources communal establishment data from the Background section of the [Household Projections for Scotland \(2018-based\)](#) publication which is available on the NRS website.

Chapter 10 – Statutory Registration

Registrar

An official responsible for keeping a register or official records.

Registers

Registrars maintain current registers of births, stillbirths, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships. They also conduct all civil marriages and civil partnership registrations. All births, stillbirths, deaths, marriages (both civil and religious) and civil partnerships occurring in Scotland must be recorded in these registers. The original registers are preserved and held centrally by the Registrar General.

You can find more information about registration in Scotland on the [registration](#) section of the NRS website.

Notes on statistical publications

National Statistics

The UK Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in line with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#) (available on the UK Statistics Authority website).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is National Records of Scotland's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Information on background and source data

Further details on data source(s), timeframe of data and timeliness, continuity of data, accuracy, etc can be found in the About this Publication document that is published alongside this publication on the NRS website.

National Records of Scotland

We, the National Records of Scotland, are a non-ministerial department of the devolved Scottish Administration. Our purpose is to collect, preserve and produce information about Scotland's people and history and make it available to inform current and future generations. We do this as follows:

Preserving the past – We look after Scotland's national archives so that they are available for current and future generations, and we make available important information for family history.

Recording the present – At our network of local offices, we register births, marriages, civil partnerships, deaths, divorces and adoptions in Scotland.

Informing the future – We are responsible for the Census of Population in Scotland which we use, with other sources of information, to produce statistics on the population and households.

You can get other detailed statistics that we have produced from the [Statistics](#) section of our website. Scottish Census statistics are available on the [Scotland's Census](#) website.

We also provide information about [future publications](#) on our website. If you would like us to tell you about future statistical publications, you can register your interest on the Scottish Government [ScotStat website](#).

You can also follow us on twitter [@NatRecordsScot](#)

Enquiries and suggestions

Please get in touch if you need any further information, or have any suggestions for improvement.

For media enquiries, please contact communications@nrscotland.gov.uk

For all other enquiries, please contact statisticscustomerservices@nrscotland.gov.uk

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