

Census 2021 outputs update

Third Sector Statistics User Panel

28 April 2022

On 1 March 2022, the Office for National statistics published an [update on progress we are making towards publishing Census 2021 results](#). A huge amount of work is undertaken to compile, clean, complete, cross-check, ensure confidentiality and continue consultations with users, to make sure that Census 2021 results will give us the richest picture of society.

For the first time, we have offered the opportunity for local authorities to work in partnership and help us in the quality assurance process. At the start of April, we shared aggregate, anonymised provisional data, under controlled access, with over 250 local authorities, combined authorities and county councils across England and Wales. Drawing on their unique insight and expertise, over a three-week period we are asking them to investigate the data for their local area and provide feedback to us on the data quality. We want to consider every piece of insight, where supported by evidence, that these organisations have to offer, before we begin publishing Census 2021 outputs.

On 31 March, we also published the [second part of our response](#) to the public Census 2021 outputs consultation we held in summer 2021. Across both parts of our response, we share the feedback users provided about our plans for the release schedule and design of Census 2021 outputs. We also list the changes we are making or considering making based on this feedback.

Census 2021 outputs release schedule

We aim to release the first results for Census 2021 data on the population of England and Wales in early summer 2022, and all other main Census 2021 data in a phased approach within two years of census. We will provide a further update on our plans later in May.

Phase 1

First results

The first results for Census 2021 will aim to include rounded population and household estimates for England and for Wales, at local authority level and cross-tabulated by sex and age.

Alongside the data, we will also publish information to support users in understanding the results. These include a statistical bulletin on population and household estimates for Wales, in both Welsh and English, and supporting reports about Census 2021 data quality and methods. We are also hoping to have information in alternative accessible formats available about Census 2021 data.

Topic summaries and area profiles (primarily univariate data)

Later in the year, we will begin a staggered release of simple topic summaries. A topic summary is a set of data and supporting commentary, grouped by a similar theme.

We propose to cover these topics in the order listed:

- demography and migration
- ethnic group, national identity, language, and religion
- health, disability, and unpaid care
- housing
- labour market and travel to work
- sexual orientation and gender identity
- education
- UK armed forces veterans

From the topic summary data, we will create dynamic area profiles. Area profiles will allow users to view statistics from across different topics for a particular area and compare local statistics for an area against national statistics.

We provide more information about the topic summaries and area profiles, including the variables and classifications we plan to include in them, on [topic summaries and area profiles](#) page of the ONS website.

Phase 2

Multivariate data

During phase two, we will release multivariate data based on the usual resident population of England and Wales. These releases will allow users to combine variables and explore relationships between the data.

Alongside standard datasets that users can view and download, we will be introducing new functionality for Census 2021. This new functionality will allow users to make their own datasets, by selecting or changing different combinations of variables, classifications and geographies. More information about this new functionality and the automated statistical disclosure checks that underpin it, can be found on the [multivariate datasets](#) webpage.

Phase 3

Alternative and small population data

In phase three, we will begin releasing data on alternative population bases. These are different geographical locations where individuals could have been counted for Census 2021. Examples of alternative population bases include workplace, workday, out-of-term and short-term populations.

We will also begin releasing data on small populations. Small populations are groups which are defined by their cultural background, including characteristics such as ethnic group, country of birth, religion and national identity. Examples of small populations include Cornish, Kashmiri, Nepalese, Sikh, Ravidassia and Jain.

More information can be found on the [alternative and small populations](#) webpage.

Origin-destination data or ‘flow’ data

Other phase three releases include origin-destination data, which describe the movement of people from one location to another. Examples of origin-destination data we plan to release include migration flow data, workplace flow data, second address flow data and student flow data. Origin-destination data will be classified in three ways: public, safeguarded, or secure. More information can be found on the [origin-destination](#) webpage.

Microdata samples

We will also make available microdata samples, which are anonymised records for individuals and households, which include a selection of associated census characteristics. As with the origin-destination data, microdata samples will be classified in three ways: public, safeguarded or secure. More information can be found on the [microdata](#) webpage.

Beyond March 2023: UK data

The censuses of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland took place on 21 March 2021 and Scotland's census took place on 20 March 2022. This means that there is a one-year difference in reference dates and that the first outputs of Scotland's data will not be published before March 2023. All of the UK census offices are working closely together to understand how this difference in reference date will affect our ability to produce UK data. More information can be found on the [UK Census Data](#) webpage.

More information

We are continuing to promote new information about Census 2021 outputs through our email bulletins. To receive the latest updates on Census 2021 outputs, products, release plans and events, please register to receive the free GovDelivery bulletins.

You can do this by:

- visiting the [GovDelivery website](#)
- entering your email address in the field provided
- selecting the option to subscribe to ‘2021 Census outputs’
- selecting submit at the bottom of the page

If you have any questions about our plans for Census 2021 outputs, you can also email us at: census.outputs@ons.gov.uk.