

Article

# Cornish identity, England and Wales: Census 2021

Exploring characteristics and outcomes for people who identified as Cornish in Census 2021.

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# 1 . Main points

- 117,350 people identified as Cornish in Census 2021 through the national identity, main language or ethnic group questions (0.2% of the usual resident population of England and Wales).
- 88.0% of people who identified as Cornish were located in Cornwall; this was 18.1% of Cornwall's population.
- People who identified as Cornish had an older age profile; those located within Cornwall had a median age of 49 years and those located outside Cornwall had a median age of 46 years, compared with a median age of 40 years for the population of England and Wales.
- People in Cornwall reported different life outcomes to the overall population of England and Wales, and this may reflect differences in age, and access to work and housing; these differences were more noticeable for those in Cornwall who identified as Cornish.
- In Cornwall, people who identified as Cornish were more likely to work in skilled trades than people in Cornwall who did not identify as Cornish (18.1% compared with 14.7%).
- 16.7% of people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish reported having no qualifications compared with 4.9% of people outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish.

## 2 . Definition

In this publication, we talk about people who identified as Cornish in Census 2021.

People were able to identify as Cornish through write-in response options under the ethnic group, national identity and main language questions. More information can be found in [Section 7: Glossary](#) and our [Census 2021 paper questionnaires](#).

## 3 . Cornish identity in Census 2021

In the 2021 Census, 117,350 people (0.2% of the [usual resident population](#) of England and Wales) identified as Cornish.

### **Figure 1: Most people who identified as Cornish did so through the national identity question**

**Percentage of people who identified as Cornish through national identity, ethnic group or main language, England and Wales, Census 2021**

The doughnut chart in Figure 1 shows that over 9 in 10 people who identified as Cornish did so through the national identity question (92.8%; 108,860). Of those who identified as Cornish, more than half identified through only the national identity question (58.1%; 68,205) and a third through both the national identity and ethnic group questions (34.2%; 40,135).

A further 7.2% (8,440) of people who identified as Cornish did so through only the ethnic group question. Finally, 0.5% (565) of people who identified as Cornish did so through the main language question, either alone or in combination with other questions.

## 4 . Cornish identity in Cornwall

In this section we consider the characteristics and outcomes of people located within Cornwall who did and did not identify as Cornish. We explore how these groups compare with each other and with the overall England and Wales population.

There were 570,305 people located in Cornwall according to Census 2021. Of these, 103,230 identified as Cornish, this was 18.1% of Cornwall's population.

### Sex and age

#### Figure 2: People in Cornwall who identified as Cornish had an older age profile

Percentage of people in Cornwall who did and did not identify as Cornish, and the total Cornwall and England and Wales populations, at each year of age, split by sex, Census 2021

The population pyramid in Figure 2 shows that within Cornwall, those who identified as Cornish had an older age profile than those who did not. They also had an older age profile than the population of England and Wales overall.

Within Cornwall, those who identified as Cornish had a median age of 49 years. This was three years older than those in Cornwall who did not identify as Cornish, and nine years older than the overall population of England and Wales.

### Location

For areas smaller than local authority districts, we can use statistical geographies called Middle Layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs). MSOAs include between 5,000 and 15,000 usual residents. Information about different geographies and how we link them can be found on our [Census 2021 geographies](#) web page and our [Cornwall geographic area](#) web page.

#### Figure 3: Almost a quarter of people in Penzance North identified as Cornish

Percentage of people in each Middle Layer Super Output Area (MSOA) who identified as Cornish, Cornwall, Census 2021

The map in Figure 3 shows that the MSOA with the largest percentage of residents who identified as Cornish was Penzance North (Cornwall 067). Almost one in four people in this area identified as Cornish (24.9%). Newquay West (Cornwall 020) was the MSOA with the smallest percentage of residents who identified as Cornish (9.2%).

### Outcomes

Within Cornwall, both those who did and did not identify as Cornish reported different life outcomes to the overall population of England and Wales. This may reflect differences in age, access to work, housing and other factors. However, across many outcomes these differences appeared more notable for those who identified as Cornish, compared with those who did not.

## Education

### Qualifications

In this section, we look at the qualifications achieved by people aged 16 years and above. [More information about the different levels of qualifications can be found on our Highest level of qualification variable: Census 2021 web page.](#)

People in Cornwall were less likely to have no qualifications (16.3%) than people in England and Wales overall (18.2%).

Within Cornwall, people aged 16 to 59 years who identified as Cornish were less likely to have no qualifications (7.5%) than people who did not identify as Cornish (9.0%). In contrast, people aged 60 years and over, who identified as Cornish, were more likely to have no qualifications (30.6%) than people who did not identify as Cornish (27.9%).

People in Cornwall were less likely to have a Level 4 or above qualification, in comparison with the overall population of England and Wales (30.6% compared with 33.8%). Examples of these qualifications include: Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma, bachelor's degree, or post-graduate qualifications.

Within Cornwall, people who identified as Cornish were less likely to have a Level 4 qualification or above (27.2%) than those who did not identify as Cornish (31.3%). This trend was evident across all age groups.

### Full-time education

#### **Figure 4: In Cornwall, young adults who identified as Cornish were less likely to be in full-time education**

**Percentage of people who did and did not identify as Cornish who were full-time students in young adult age groups, Cornwall, Census 2021**

The range plot in Figure 4 shows that, within Cornwall, people who identified as Cornish and were aged 19 to 24 years were less than half as likely to be in full-time education (14.1%), compared with those in the same age group who did not identify as Cornish (30.8%). They were even less likely to be in full-time education than the population of England and Wales aged 19 to 24 years (33.9%).

### Labour market

This section looks at the employment, economic inactivity and occupation among those aged 16 to 64 years based on Census 2021 data.

Census 2021 was conducted during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and it is possible that this affected the way people responded. Further information about interpreting census labour market data [can be found in our Comparing Census 2021 and Labour Force Survey estimates of the labour market, England and Wales article.](#)

### Employment status

Three quarters (75.0%) of people aged 16 to 64 years in Cornwall who identified as Cornish were in employment. This compares with 70.8% for people in Cornwall who did not identify as Cornish and 70.9% for people in England and Wales overall.

People in Cornwall who identified as Cornish were more likely to be employed in all age groups between 16 and 64 years than people who did not identify as Cornish. The largest differences were for people aged 16 to 19 years (34.9% in employment compared with 29.2%) and 20 to 24 years (74.0% compared with 62.1%). This is likely to be related to a lower proportion of people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish in these age groups who were in full-time education.

A smaller percentage of people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish were unemployed (3.0%) or economically inactive (22.0%) compared with people who did not identify as Cornish (3.8% and 25.4%, respectively). This trend was evident across all age groups.

## Occupation

Working in skilled trade occupations (such as electricians, bricklayers, and farmers) was more common in Cornwall (15.4%) than in England and Wales (10.1%).

In Cornwall, 18.1% of employed people who identified as Cornish worked in skilled trades. This compares with 14.7% of those who did not identify as Cornish. Across age groups, the largest difference for this occupation between those who did and did not identify as Cornish was among 60- to 64-year-olds (20.7% compared with 15.1%).

### **Figure 5: Working in skilled trade professions was more common for female and male residents in Cornwall who identified as Cornish**

**Percentage of employed people aged 16 to 64 years who did and did not identify as Cornish, in each occupation type, split by sex, Cornwall, Census 2021**

The range plots in Figure 5 show that in Cornwall males were more likely to work in skilled trade occupations than females. This was also true in England and Wales overall.

Within Cornwall, 30.2% of male residents who identified as Cornish worked in skilled trade occupations, compared with 25.6% of male residents who did not identify as Cornish.

Female residents in Cornwall who identified as Cornish were also slightly more likely to work in skilled trade occupations (4.3%) than female residents who did not identify as Cornish (3.6%).

## Housing

This section is about people living in households. It does not include data on people living in communal establishments, such as university halls of residence or care homes.

## Tenure

Tenure is whether a household rents their accommodation or owns it, either outright or with a mortgage, loan or shared ownership.

People in Cornwall were more likely to live in accommodation that their household owned outright (35.6%) compared with the population of England and Wales (27.1%).

### **Figure 6: People in Cornwall who identified as Cornish were more likely to live in owned outright accommodation**

**Percentage of people in households who did and did not identify as Cornish, in each tenure type, Cornwall, Census 2021**

The stacked bar chart in Figure 6 shows that people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish were more likely to live in accommodation that their household owned outright (39.3%) compared with those who did not identify as Cornish (34.8%). They were less likely to live in accommodation that their household privately rented or lived in rent free (15.1% and 20.9% for those who did and did not identify as Cornish, respectively). These trends were evident across all age groups.

The largest differences were among 20- to 24-year-olds:

- Around 26.5% of people in this age group who identified as Cornish lived in owned outright accommodation compared with 16.1% of people in this group who did not identify as Cornish
- Overall, 19.5% of people in this age group who identified as Cornish lived in accommodation that was privately rented or lived in rent free, compared with 41.2% of people in this group who did not identify as Cornish

## Overcrowding and under-occupancy

We compared the number of bedrooms a household requires with the number of available bedrooms to provide a rating of whether accommodation was overcrowded, ideally occupied or under-occupied. More information on how this was calculated can be found in [Section 7: Glossary](#).

Living in overcrowded accommodation tended to be more common in younger age groups in both England and Wales, and in Cornwall.

In Cornwall, people aged 0 to 19 years who identified as Cornish were less likely to live in overcrowded accommodation than those who did not identify as Cornish (7.6% compared with 8.5%). The same was true for those aged 25 to 39 years (5.2% compared with 5.7%).

In contrast, people aged 20 to 24 years who identified as Cornish were more likely to live in overcrowded accommodation than those who did not identify as Cornish (9.5% compared with 8.7%).

## Health

People in Cornwall who identified as Cornish were slightly less likely to report "very good" health (43.9%) compared with people who did not identify as Cornish (46.1%). This trend was evident across all five-year age bands between 25 and 84 years. The difference was largest for those aged 40 to 44 years, where 43.2% of those who identified as Cornish reported their health to be "very good", compared with 48.1% of those who did not identify as Cornish.

## Disability

In line with the Equality Act (2010), people who assessed their day-to-day activities as limited by long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses were considered disabled. Those who stated that they had a condition that did not limit their day-to-day activities or had no condition were considered non-disabled.

### Figure 7: People in Cornwall who identified as Cornish were more likely to be disabled

Percentage who did and did not identify as Cornish in each disability status, Cornwall, Census 2021

The bar charts in Figure 7 show that, within Cornwall, the largest difference was among disabled people who were limited a little. Around 13.8% of those who identified as Cornish reported this, compared with 11.9% of those who did not identify as Cornish.

Disability was more common among people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish compared with people who did not identify as Cornish across all five-year age bands between 0 and 79 years. Within these age groups, the largest differences were among younger adults where 7.0% of people aged 20 to 24 years who identified as Cornish were disabled and limited a lot, compared with 5.3% of people in this age group who did not identify as Cornish.

## Unpaid care

For unpaid care, we looked at individuals aged five years and over.

People in Cornwall who identified as Cornish were more likely to provide unpaid care than those who did not identify as Cornish (12.7% compared with 9.4%). This trend was evident across all age bands. The largest difference was among those aged 55 to 59 years, where 21.5% of those who identified as Cornish provided unpaid care compared with 15.8% of those who did not identify as Cornish.

The group most likely to provide unpaid care in both populations was females aged 55 to 64 years; 25.4% of this group who identified as Cornish and 18.6% of this group who did not identify as Cornish provided unpaid care.

## 5 . Cornish identity outside Cornwall

There were 14,120 people who identified as Cornish who were located outside Cornwall. These make up 12.0% of all people who identified as Cornish.

In this section we compare this group with those in Cornwall who identified as Cornish and the overall England and Wales population.

### Sex and age

#### **Figure 8: People outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish had an older age profile than the population of England and Wales**

Percentage who identified as Cornish in and outside Cornwall, and the England and Wales population, at each year of age, split by sex, Census 2021

The population pyramid in Figure 8 shows that a larger proportion of those outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were males (56.8%) compared with females (43.2%). In comparison, in England and Wales a slightly larger proportion of residents were female (51.0%).

It also shows people outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish had an overall younger age profile but a much smaller proportion aged below 18 years than those in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (1.6% compared with 18.7%).

People located outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish had a median age of 46 years. This was six years older than the overall population of England and Wales but three years younger than those in Cornwall who identified as Cornish.

### Location

#### **Figure 9: How people who identified as Cornish were distributed across England and Wales**

Number who identified as Cornish in each Lower Tier Local Authority (LTLA), England and Wales, Census 2021

The map in Figure 4 shows how the 117,350 people who identified as Cornish were distributed across England and Wales. It shows that the largest concentrations of people who identified as Cornish outside Cornwall were in the South West: Plymouth (1,155), Bristol (555) and Exeter (340).

Outside Cornwall, the Lower Tier Local Authority with the largest proportion of people that identified as Cornish was the Isles of Scilly (6.8%).

## Outcomes

In this section, we compare outcomes for those who identified as Cornish and were located outside Cornwall, with those who identified as Cornish and were located within Cornwall. The two groups have different outcomes in areas such as education, occupation and housing.

## Education

### Qualifications

In this section, we look at the qualifications achieved by people aged 16 years and above.

#### **Figure 10: People located outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were more likely to hold Level 4 or above qualifications**

Highest level qualification percentages for people who identified as Cornish in and outside Cornwall, Census 2021

The bar chart in Figure 10 shows 4.9% of people outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish had no qualifications. This is lower than the percentage for people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (16.7%) and the overall population of England and Wales (18.2%). This trend was evident across all age groups.

It also shows that the majority of people outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish held a Level 4 or above qualification (56.6%). This was higher compared with people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (27.2%) and the overall population of England and Wales (33.8%). This trend was evident across age groups from 20 years and above. More information about the different levels of qualifications can be found on our [Highest level of qualification variable: Census 2021 web page](#).

### Full-time education

Those aged 19 to 24 years outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were more likely to be in full-time education (64.8%) than people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (14.1%) and in England and Wales overall (33.9%).

The same trend was true for those aged 25 to 29 years: 8.8% of those located outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were in full-time education compared with 3.4% of people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish and 5.6% of the overall England and Wales population.

## Labour market

### Employment status

In this section, we look at the employment status of people aged 16 to 64 years.

People outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were more likely to be employees (65.4%) than both people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (58.5%) and the overall population of England and Wales (59.6%).

People outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were less likely to be self-employed (10.4%) than both people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (16.5%) and the overall population of England and Wales (11.3%).

People outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were slightly less likely to be economically inactive (21.0%) than both people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (22.0%) and the overall population of England and Wales (24.7%).

### Occupation

In this section, we look at the occupations of employed people aged 16 to 64 years (including self-employed).

## Figure 11: People outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were more likely to be in professional occupations

Percentage of employed people aged 16 to 64 years who identified as Cornish in and outside Cornwall, in each occupation type, Census 2021

The bar chart in Figure 11 shows the most common occupations for those outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were professional occupations, such as teachers, doctors and lawyers (34.1%). This was a larger percentage compared with people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (13.8%) and the overall population of England and Wales (20.4%).

These occupations were particularly common for people outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish in the 25 to 29 years age group (38.9% were in these roles).

Those outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were almost three times less likely to work in skilled trade occupations (6.2%) than people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (18.1%).

## Housing

This section is about people living in households. It does not include data on people living in communal establishments, such as university halls of residence or care homes.

## Tenure

### Figure 12: People outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were less likely to live in social rented accommodation

Percentage who identified as Cornish in and outside Cornwall, and the population of England and Wales, in each tenure type, Census 2021

The stacked bar chart in Figure 12 shows people outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were:

- less likely to live in social rented accommodation (7.6%) than people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (13.7%) and the overall population of England and Wales (16.6%)
- more likely to live in accommodation that was privately rented or lived in rent free (27.5%) than people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (15.1%) and the overall population of England and Wales (20.7%)
- less likely to be in accommodation that was owned outright (29.9%) than people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (39.3%), but more likely than the overall England and Wales population (27.1%)

## Overcrowding and under-occupancy

People outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were less likely to live in overcrowded accommodation (2.1%) compared with those in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (3.9%) and the overall population of England and Wales (8.4%). More information on bedroom occupancy rating can be found in [Section 7: Glossary](#).

## Health

Almost 8 in 10 people (79.3%) outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish reported "very good" or "good" health. This is slightly higher than the percentage for those in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (77.5%). This trend was apparent across most age bands but was largest for those aged 65 years and above: 65.4% compared with 58.0%.

People outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were also more likely than the overall England and Wales population to report "very good" or "good" health in the youngest age groups: 0 to 14 years (100% compared with 97.3%) and the oldest age groups: 60 years and above (66.8% compared with 60.9%).

## Disability

People outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were more likely to be disabled (25.3%) compared with those in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (23.1%) and people in England and Wales overall (17.5%).

This trend was apparent across most age groups but was most notable for the population aged 15 to 24 years. In this age group the percentages of people who were disabled were:

- 23.0% for those outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish
- 16.7% for those in Cornwall who identified as Cornish
- 12.3% for people in England and Wales overall

More information on the census questions these figures came from is available on our [Disability variable: Census 2021 webpage](#) and in [Section 7: Glossary](#).

## Unpaid care

For unpaid care, we looked at individuals aged 5 years and over.

Young people (aged 5 to 17 years) outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish were more likely to provide unpaid care (4.0%) than young people in Cornwall who identified as Cornish (2.8%) and England and Wales overall (1.4%).

In most other age bands, the opposite was true. Those in Cornwall who identified as Cornish were more likely to provide unpaid care. The difference was largest in the 45 to 49 years age group where 11.6% of those outside Cornwall who identified as Cornish provided unpaid care compared with 17.5% of those in Cornwall who identified as Cornish.

## 6 . Cornish identity data

### [Cornish identity by age and sex in England and Wales: Census 2021](#)

Dataset | Released 8 December 2023

Cornish identity based on how people identified as Cornish, with age and sex breakdowns, across different geographical areas.

### [Cornish identity by education in England and Wales: Census 2021](#)

Dataset | Released 8 December 2023

Cornish identity by highest level qualification and full-time student status, with age and sex breakdowns, across different geographical areas.

### [Cornish identity by labour market in England and Wales: Census 2021](#)

Dataset | Released 8 December 2023

Cornish identity by employment status and occupation, with age and sex breakdowns, across different geographical areas.

### [Cornish identity by housing in England and Wales: Census 2021](#)

Dataset | Released 8 December 2023

Cornish identity by tenure and bedroom occupancy rating, with age and sex breakdowns, across different geographical areas.

### [Cornish identity by health, disability and unpaid care in England and Wales: Census 2021](#)

Dataset | Released 8 December 2023

Cornish identity by health, disability status and unpaid care, with age and sex breakdowns, across different geographical areas.

### [Cornish identity outside Cornwall, in England and Wales: Census 2021](#)

Dataset | Released 8 December 2023

Cornish identity among people located outside Cornwall, by age, sex, education, labour market, housing, health, disability and unpaid care, across different geographical areas.

## 7 . Glossary

### **Cornish**

Recorded by the person completing the census. Respondents could choose to self-identify their national identity, ethnic group or main language as Cornish. To do this, respondents had to identify through one of the write-in response options to the national identity, ethnic group or main language questions. These questions included search-as-you-type functionality in the online questionnaire, presenting a drop-down list of suggestions based on the text being typed.

### **Usual resident**

A usual resident is anyone who on Census Day, 21 March 2021, was in the UK and had stayed or intended to stay in the UK for a period of 12 months or more, or had a permanent UK address and was outside the UK and intended to be outside the UK for less than 12 months.

### **National identity**

Someone's national identity is a self-determined assessment of their own identity; it could be the country or countries where they feel they belong or think of as home. It is not dependent on ethnic group or citizenship. Respondents could select more than one national identity.

## Ethnic group

The ethnic group that the person completing the census feels they belong to. This could be based on their culture, family background, identity or physical appearance.

Respondents could choose 1 out of 19 tick-box response categories, including write-in response options.

There were two stages to the ethnic group question. The respondent identified first through one of the following high-level options before selecting a tick-box:

- "Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh"
- "Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African"
- "Mixed or Multiple"
- "White"
- "Other ethnic group"

Some of the tick-boxes required further identification through a write-in response.

The ethnic group question on the household, individual and Welsh questionnaires, can be found on our [Census 2021 paper questionnaires webpage](#).

## Main language

A person's first or preferred language. This question was only asked for those aged three years and over.

## Sex

The sex recorded by the person completing the census. The options were "female" and "male".

## Age

A person's age on Census Day, 21 March 2021, in England and Wales. Infants aged under one year are classified as aged zero years.

## Highest level qualification

The highest level of qualification is derived from the question asking people to indicate all qualifications held, or their nearest equivalent. This is used to calculate the highest level of qualification (the highest level of qualification that an individual reported regardless of previous qualifications listed) using the following categories:

- no qualifications – no formal qualifications
- Level 1 – one to four GCSE passes (grade A\* to C or grade 4 and above) and any other GCSEs at other grades, or equivalent qualifications
- Level 2 – five or more GCSE passes (grade A\* to C or grade 4 and above) or equivalent qualifications
- apprenticeships
- Level 3 – two or more A Levels or equivalent qualifications
- Level 4 or above – Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma, Bachelor's degree, or post-graduate qualifications
- other qualifications, of unknown level (more information can be found in [Section 8: Measuring the data of our Education, England and Wales: Census 2021 bulletin](#))

## In full-time education

Indicates whether a person aged five years and over was in full-time education on Census Day, 21 March 2021. This includes schoolchildren and adults in full-time education.

## Employment status

People are economically active if, between 15 March and 21 March 2021, they were:

- in employment (an employee or self-employed)
- unemployed, but looking for work and could start within two weeks
- unemployed, but waiting to start a job that had been offered and accepted

It is a measure of whether or not a person was an active participant in the labour market during this period.

More information can be found in our [Economic activity status, England and Wales: Census 2021 bulletin](#).

Economically inactive people are those who did not have a job between 15 and 21 March 2021 and had not looked for work between 22 February and 21 March 2021 or could not start work within two weeks.

People are inactive if they were recorded as being one of the following:

- retired (whether receiving a pension or not)
- studying
- looking after home or family
- long-term sick or disabled
- another reason

For information on how a respondent's reason for inactivity was recorded, please read our [Comparing Census 2021 and Labour Force Survey estimates of the labour market, England and Wales: 13 March 2023 article](#).

## Occupation

Classifies what people aged 16 to 64 years do as their main job. Their job title or details of activities they do in their job and any supervisory or management responsibilities form this classification. This information is used to code responses to an occupation using our [Standard Occupational Classification \(SOC\) 2020](#).

It classifies people who were in employment between 15 and 21 March 2021 by the SOC code that represents their current occupation.

In this publication, we use nine "high-level" categories for the types of work people do:

- "managers, directors or senior officials"
- "professional occupations"
- "associate professional and technical occupations"
- "administrative and secretarial occupations"
- "skilled trades occupations"
- "caring, leisure and other services"
- "sales and customer service"
- "process, plant and machine operation"
- "elementary occupations"

More information, can be found in our [Industry and occupation, England and Wales: Census 2021 bulletin](#).

## Tenure

Whether a household owns or rents the accommodation that it occupies.

Owner-occupied accommodation can be:

- owned outright, which is where the household owns all of the accommodation
- owned with a mortgage or loan
- part owned on a shared ownership scheme

Rented accommodation can be:

- private rented, for example, rented through a private landlord or letting agent
- social rented through a local council or housing association
- lived in rent free, which is where the household does not own the accommodation and does not pay rent to live there

This information is not available for household spaces with no usual residents.

## Occupancy rating bedrooms

Whether a household's accommodation is overcrowded, ideally occupied or under-occupied. This is calculated by comparing the number of bedrooms the household requires with the number of available bedrooms.

The number of bedrooms the household requires is calculated according to the Bedroom Standard, where the following should have their own bedroom:

- adult couple
- any remaining adult (aged 21 years or over)
- two males (aged 10 to 20 years)
- one male (aged 10 to 20 years) and one male (aged 9 years or under), if there are an odd number of males aged 10 to 20 years
- one male aged 10 to 20 years if there are no males aged 0 to 9 years to pair with him
- repeat the third, fourth and fifth bullets for females
- two children (aged 9 years or under), regardless of sex
- any remaining child (aged 9 years or under)

An occupancy rating of:

- -1 (minus 1) or less implies that a household's accommodation has fewer bedrooms than required (overcrowded)
- +1 (plus 1) or more implies that a household's accommodation has more bedrooms than required (under-occupied)
- 0 suggests that a household's accommodation has an ideal number of bedrooms

## Health

A person's assessment of the general state of their health from "very good" to "very bad". This assessment is not based on a person's health over any specified period of time. More information can be found in our [General health, England and Wales: Census 2021 bulletin](#).

## Disability

People who assessed their day-to-day activities as limited by long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses are considered disabled. This definition of a disabled person meets the harmonised standard for measuring disability and is in line with the Equality Act 2010. More information can be found in our [Disability by age, sex and deprivation, England and Wales: Census 2021](#) article.

## Unpaid care

A person is a provider of unpaid care if they look after, or give help or support to anyone because of long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, or problems related to old age. This does not include any activities as part of paid employment. No distinction is made about whether any care that a person provides is within their own household or outside the household. More information can be found in our [Unpaid care, England and Wales: Census 2021 bulletin](#).

# 8 . Data sources and quality

Quality considerations for Census 2021 and its strengths and limitations can be found in our [Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\) for Census 2021](#).

Information about our quality assurance processes can be found in our [Maximising the quality of Census 2021 population estimates](#) methodology.

More specific quality information can be found in our [Ethnic group, national identity, language, and religion quality information for Census 2021](#) methodology.

## Comparisons with 2011

In both Census 2011 and Census 2021, respondents could choose to use write-in response options to identify their national identity, ethnic group or main language as Cornish.

In 2021, in response to consultation and respondent research, search-as-you-type functionality was added for these write-in response options in the online questionnaire, which presented a drop-down list of suggestions based on the text being typed.

## Labour market variables

Census 2021 was conducted during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, a period of unparalleled and rapid change, and it is possible that this affected the way some people responded to the labour market questions on the census.

Estimates from the census will also differ to those collected on the [Labour Force Survey](#), because of a range of conceptual differences between the two sources. Our [Comparing Census 2021 and Labour Force Survey estimates of the labour market, England and Wales: 13 March 2021 article](#) has further information about interpreting census labour market data.

## Census data collection and response rate

The census provides estimates of the characteristics of all people and households in England and Wales on Census Day, 21 March 2021. It is carried out every 10 years and gives us the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. The person response rate for Census 2021 was 97% of the usual resident population of England and Wales, and over 88% in all local authorities. Most returns (89%) were received online. The response rate exceeded our target of 94% in England and Wales and 80% in all local authorities.

## 9 . Related links

### [How life has changed in Cornwall: Census 2021](#)

Article | Released 19 January 2023

Cornwall's population increased by around 38,000 between the last two censuses (held in 2011 and 2021). This semi-automated article highlights some of the most notable changes among the local population.

### [Small populations, England and Wales: Census 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 25 September 2023

Statistics about small population groups, defined by ethnic group, religion, national identity, main language, or country of birth, Census 2021 data.

### [National identity, England and Wales: Census 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 29 November 2022

The national identity of usual residents in England and Wales, Census 2021 data.

### [Ethnic group, England and Wales: Census 2021](#)

Bulletin | Released 29 November 2022

The ethnic groups of usual residents and household ethnic composition in England and Wales, Census 2021 data.

## 10 . Cite this article

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