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**NORTH WALES** SOCIAL CARE AND WELL-BEING  
SERVICES IMPROVEMENT COLLABORATIVE

# 2021 Census

## Topic summary: demography & migration

### November 2022



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Betsi Cadwaladr  
University Health Board



Iechyd Cyhoeddus  
Cymru  
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# Introduction

This bulletin looks at the demography and migration topic summary data from the 2021 Census for England and Wales that was published on 2 November 2022 by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). It provides unrounded population and household estimates at North Wales and unitary authority level, including characteristics of households and residents, and an overview of the non-UK born population.

The ONS has also published [Demography and migration: Census 2021 in England and Wales \(Office for National Statistics\)](#) which includes some data down to output area.

We have also produced a [statistical bulletin looking at population change since 2011 by broad age group](#), following the release of 2021 Census first results.

More data will be released in phases until the end of 2023 and will include detailed data at small area level about people, households and living arrangements, work, and housing/amenities.

Changes between 2011 and 2021 may reflect how the Covid 19 pandemic affected people's choice of usual residence on Census Day (21 March 2021). Census results for Gwynedd in particular are likely to have been affected by where students were counted. Information about migration and country of birth outside the UK will also have been impacted by population movements as a result of the pandemic. These changes might have been temporary for some and more long-lasting for others. It is also not clear how exiting the European Union has affected population change in Wales and across the UK.

# Main points

- The population structure in North Wales is significantly older than the national average, with a median age of 46 in 2021 (Wales = 42; England and Wales = 40). Conwy County Borough has the oldest median age (49) and Wrexham the youngest (42).
- Average household size has decreased since 2011. About two thirds of all households contain only one or two people. The proportion of households containing five or more people has decreased.
- The proportion of households made up of only pensioners increased to 27.1%, which is high compared to national figures (Wales in 2021 = 24.8% and England and Wales = 22.1%). Pensioners living alone made up the majority of these households (47,676 or 15.8% of all households). Conwy County Borough had the second highest percentage of pensioner-only households in Wales in 2021.
- The proportion of households containing dependent children in 2021 was lower in North Wales than the national average (North Wales = 24.0%; Wales = 26.5%; England and Wales = 28.4%). The number and proportion of households containing dependent children has decreased since 2011 for all North Wales unitary authority areas. However, the number and proportion of lone parent families has increased.
- The proportion of usual residents born outside the UK increased between 2011 and 2021 from 4.5 to 5.8%. This proportion is low when compared to national figures (England and Wales = 16.8%). The proportion was highest in Wrexham at 7.9% and lowest in Anglesey at 3.3%.
- For North Wales as a whole, Poland remained the most common country of birth outside the UK in 2021 (7,423 people, 1.1% of all usual residents). Poland was also the most common result for Wrexham, Flintshire, and Gwynedd. In Conwy County Borough and Anglesey it was Ireland, and for Denbighshire it was the Philippines.

# The key results for North Wales

## Population

- On Census Day, 21 March 2021, the size of the usual resident population in North Wales was estimated to be 686,909.
- The population has decreased by -1,028 (-0.1%) since the last census in 2011, when it was 687,937. Wales saw an increase of 1.4%, and England and Wales an increase of 6.3%.
- In 2021, the average (median) age was 46 years. This is higher than the median age of 43 years in 2011. The median age in Wales in 2021 was 42 years, and 40 in England and Wales.

## Household composition

- 675,094 usual residents (98.3%) lived in households and 11,814 (1.7%) lived in communal establishments.
- There were an estimated 301,381 households with at least one usual resident on Census Day.
- Average household size is the average number of persons per household. In 2021, this was 2.24 residents per household in North Wales, which is slightly smaller than in 2011 when it was 2.29.
- 68.1% of all households (205,086) contained only one or two people. This compares to 66.7% in 2011. Households containing five or more people made up only 5.3% of all households and reduced from 18,138 in 2011 to 16,042 in 2021.
- Overall, 63.4% of households (191,084) were single family households, 32.2% (97,002) were one person households and 4.4% (13,295) were multiple family or other household types.
- 47,676 or 15.8% of all households were pensioners living alone (people aged 66 years and over). This has increased from 43,932 in 2011, even though the pension age was lower in 2011.
- In addition, there were 33,993 or 11.3% of households containing families made up of only people of pension age or older.

- Together, pensioners living alone and pensioner-only families make up 27.1% of all households in the area. This compares to 24.6% in 2011 (Wales in 2021 = 24.8% and England and Wales = 22.1%).
- 76,924 or 25.5% of households contained dependent children (down from 80,257 or 27.2% in 2011). Households containing dependent children in Wales as a whole = 26.5%; in England and Wales = 28.4%.
- In 2021 21,621 or 7.2% of all households in North Wales were lone parent families with dependent children (2011 = 6.6%).

## Migration

- The percentage of usual residents born outside of Wales has increased slightly from 39.7% (273,387) in 2011 to 40.3% (276,695) in 2021. Most of these were born in England (229,078 or 33.3% of all usual residents).
- 39,765 (5.8%) residents were born outside of the UK. This is an increase from 2011 when the figure was 4.5%. (Wales in 2021 = 6.9%, England and Wales = 16.8%).
- Poland remained the most common country of birth outside the UK in 2021 (7,423 people, 1.1% of all usual residents). Poland was the most common country of birth outside the UK for Wales as a whole, and India for England and Wales.
- The number of residents in North Wales listing Romania as their country of birth increased almost fivefold (471.2%) between 2011 and 2021, increasing by 1,720 to 2,085 or 0.3% of the population.
- 25,801 usual residents (3.8%) held a non-UK passport, with the most common non-UK passport held being Polish.

## Legal partnership status

- In North Wales, 44.8% of all usual residents aged 16 or older were married or in a civil partnership. This was the largest group in 2021. However, this has decreased since 2011, when 48.1% were married or in a civil partnership.
- The percentage of people who have never married or registered a civil partnership increased by 3.6 percentage points, from 31.6% in 2011 to 35.2% in 2021.



# The key results for the Isle of Anglesey

## Population

- On Census Day, 21 March 2021, the size of the usual resident population was estimated to be 68,875.
- The population has decreased by -876 (-1.3%) since the last census in 2011, when it was 69,751. Wales saw an increase of 1.4%, and England and Wales an increase of 6.3%.
- In 2021, the average (median) age was 48 years. This is higher than the median age of 45 years in 2011. The median age in Wales in 2021 was 42 years, and 40 in England and Wales.

## Household composition

- 68,184 usual residents (99.0%) lived in households and 694 (1.0%) lived in communal establishments.
- There were an estimated 30,823 households with at least one usual resident on Census Day.
- Average household size is the average number of persons per household. In 2021, this was 2.21 residents per household, which is slightly smaller than in 2011 when it was 2.25.
- 69.5% of all households (21,435) contained only one or two people. This compares to 68.1% in 2011. Households containing five or more people made up only 5.4% of all households and reduced from 1,844 in 2011 to 1,668 in 2021.
- Overall, 63.1% of households (19,438) were single family households, 33.1% (10,189) were one person households and 3.9% (1,196) were multiple family or other household types.
- 5,223 or 16.9% of all households were pensioners living alone (people aged 66 years and over). This has increased from 4,802 in 2011, even though the pension age was lower in 2011.
- In addition, there were 3,901 or 12.7% of households containing families made up of only people of pension age or older.

- Together, pensioners living alone and pensioner-only families make up 29.6% of all households in the area. This compares to 26.3% in 2011 (Wales in 2021 = 24.8% and England and Wales = 22.1%).
- 7,401 or 24.0% of households contained dependent children (down from 7,763 or 25.4% in 2011). Households containing dependent children in Wales as a whole = 26.5%; in England and Wales = 28.4%.
- In 2021 2,087 or 6.8% of all households were lone parent families with dependent children (2011 = 6.0%).

## Migration

- The percentage of usual residents born outside of Wales has decreased slightly from 33.6% (23,448) in 2011 to 33.4% (23,015) in 2021. Most of these were born in England (19,942 or 29.0% of all usual residents).
- 2,295 (3.3%) residents were born outside of the UK. This is the same percentage as in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 6.9%, England and Wales = 16.8%).
- Ireland remained the most common country of birth outside the UK in 2021 (338 people, 0.5% of all usual residents). Poland was the most common country of birth outside the UK for Wales as a whole, and India for England and Wales.
- 1,073 usual residents (1.6%) held a non-UK passport, with the most common non-UK passport held being Irish.

## Legal partnership status

- 46.5% of all usual residents aged 16 or older were married or in a civil partnership. This was the largest group in 2021. However, this has decreased since 2011, when 49.2% were married or in a civil partnership.
- The percentage of people who have never married or registered a civil partnership increased by 3.2 percentage points, from 29.8% in 2011 to 33.0% in 2021.

# The key results for Gwynedd

## Population

- On Census Day, 21 March 2021, the size of the usual resident population was estimated to be 117,397.
- The population has decreased by -4,477 (-3.7%) since the last census in 2011, when it was 121,874. Wales saw an increase of 1.4%, and England and Wales an increase of 6.3%.
- In 2021, the average (median) age was 45 years. This is higher than the median age of 42 years in 2011. The median age in Wales in 2021 was 42 years, and 40 in England and Wales.

## Household composition

- 113,682 usual residents (96.8%) lived in households and 3,711 (3.2%) lived in communal establishments.
- There were an estimated 51,107 households with at least one usual resident on Census Day.
- Average household size is the average number of persons per household. In 2021, this was 2.22 residents per household, which is slightly smaller than in 2011 when it was 2.25.
- 69.0% of all households (35,276) contained only one or two people. This compares to 68.3% in 2011. Households containing five or more people made up only 6.2% of all households and reduced from 3,682 in 2011 to 3,142 in 2021.
- Overall, 60.0% of households (30,661) were single family households, 34.6% (17,664) were one person households and 5.4% (2,782) were multiple family or other household types.
- 8,472 or 16.6% of all households were pensioners living alone (people aged 66 years and over). This is the same proportion as in 2011, even though the pension age was lower in 2011.
- In addition, there were 5,354 or 10.5% of households containing families made up of only people of pension age or older.

- Together, pensioners living alone and pensioner-only families make up 27.1% of all households in the area. This compares to 26.0% in 2011 (Wales in 2021 = 24.8% and England and Wales = 22.1%).
- 12,110 or 23.7% of households contained dependent children (down from 13,014 or 24.8% in 2011). Households containing dependent children in Wales as a whole = 26.5%; in England and Wales = 28.4%.
- In 2021 3,202 or 6.3% of all households were lone parent families with dependent children (2011 = 5.8%).

## Migration

- The percentage of usual residents born outside of Wales has increased slightly from 33.2% in 2011 to 33.4% (39,179) in 2021. Most of these were born in England (31,796 or 27.1% of all usual residents).
- 6,365 (5.4%) residents were born outside of the UK. This is an increase from 2011 when the figure was 4.7%. (Wales in 2021 = 6.9%, England and Wales = 16.8%).
- Poland was most common country of birth outside the UK in 2021 (495 people, 0.4% of all usual residents). Poland was the most common country of birth outside the UK for Wales as a whole, and India for England and Wales.
- 4,078 usual residents (3.5%) held a non-UK passport, with the most common non-UK passport held being Polish.

## Legal partnership status

- 41.5% of all usual residents aged 16 or older were married or in a civil partnership. This was the largest group in 2021. However, this has decreased since 2011, when 44.1% were married or in a civil partnership.
- The percentage of people who have never married or registered a civil partnership increased by 3.7 percentage points, from 36.4% in 2011 to 40.1% in 2021..

# The key results for Conwy County Borough

## Population

- On Census Day, 21 March 2021, the size of the usual resident population was estimated to be 114,741.
- The population has decreased by -487 (-0.4%) since the last census in 2011, when it was 115,228. Wales saw an increase of 1.4%, and England and Wales an increase of 6.3%.
- In 2021, the average (median) age was 49 years. This is higher than the median age of 46 years in 2011. The median age in Wales in 2021 was 42 years, and 40 in England and Wales.

## Household composition

- 112,917 usual residents (98.4%) lived in households and 1,824 (1.6%) lived in communal establishments.
- There were an estimated 52,237 households with at least one usual resident on Census Day.
- Average household size is the average number of persons per household. In 2021, this was 2.16 residents per household, which is slightly smaller than in 2011 when it was 2.20. This was the smallest average household size in Wales.
- 71.1% of all households (37,158) contained only one or two people. This compares to 70.3% in 2011. Households containing five or more people made up only 4.7% of all households and reduced from 2,802 in 2011 to 2,478 in 2021.
- Overall, 61.4% of households (32,089) were single family households, 34.3% (17,909) were one person households and 4.3% (2,239) were multiple family or other household types.
- 9,318 or 17.8% of all households were pensioners living alone (people aged 66 years and over). This has increased from 8,748 in 2011, even though the pension age was lower in 2011.
- In addition, there were 6,674 or 12.8% of households containing families made up of only people of pension age or older.

- Together, pensioners living alone and pensioner-only families make up 30.6% of all households in the area. This compares to 28.7% in 2011 (Wales in 2021 = 24.8% and England and Wales = 22.1%).
- 12,010 or 23.0% of households contained dependent children (down from 12,513 or 24.5% in 2011). Households containing dependent children in Wales as a whole = 26.5%; in England and Wales = 28.4%.
- In 2021 3,504 or 6.7% of all households were lone parent families with dependent children (2011 = 6.2%).

## Migration

- The percentage of usual residents born outside of Wales has decreased slightly from 45.6% (52,508) in 2011 to 44.5% (51,017) in 2021. Most of these were born in England (43,529 or 37.9% of all usual residents).
- 5,939 (5.2%) residents were born outside of the UK. This is an increase from 2011 when the figure was 4.1%. (Wales in 2021 = 6.9%, England and Wales = 16.8%).
- Ireland remained the most common country of birth outside the UK in 2021 (688 people, 0.6% of all usual residents). Poland was the most common country of birth outside the UK for Wales as a whole, and India for England and Wales.
- 3,174 usual residents (2.8%) held a non-UK passport, with the most common non-UK passport held being Irish.

## Legal partnership status

- 45.6% of all usual residents aged 16 or older were married or in a civil partnership. This was the largest group in 2021. However, this has decreased since 2011, when 48.5% were married or in a civil partnership.
- The percentage of people who have never married or registered a civil partnership increased by 3.6 percentage points, from 28.9% in 2011 to 32.5% in 2021.

# The key results for Denbighshire

## Population

- On Census Day, 21 March 2021, the size of the usual resident population was estimated to 95,816.
- The population has increased by 2,082 (2.2%) since the last census in 2011, when it was 93,734. Wales saw an increase of 1.4%, and England and Wales an increase of 6.3%.
- In 2021, the average (median) age was 47 years. This is higher than the median age of 44 years in 2011. The median age in Wales in 2021 was 42 years, and 40 in England and Wales.

## Household composition

- 94,182 usual residents (98.3%) lived in households and 1,635 (1.7%) lived in communal establishments.
- There were an estimated 42,389 households with at least one usual resident on Census Day.
- Average household size is the average number of persons per household. In 2021, this was 2.22 residents per household, which is slightly smaller than in 2011 when it was 2.28.
- 69.2% of all households (29,321) contained only one or two people. This compares to 67.5% in 2011. Households containing five or more people made up only 5.6% of all households and reduced from 2,491 in 2011 to 2,386 in 2021.
- Overall, 62.4% of households (26,437) were single family households, 33.3% (14,107) were one person households and 4.4% (1,845) were multiple family or other household types.
- 6,982 or 16.5% of all households were pensioners living alone (people aged 66 years and over). This has increased from 6,147 in 2011, even though the pension age was lower in 2011.
- In addition, there were 5,027 or 11.9% of households containing families made up of only people of pension age or older.

- Together, pensioners living alone and pensioner-only families make up 28.3% of all households in the area. This compares to 25.6% in 2011 (Wales in 2021 = 24.8% and England and Wales = 22.1%).
- 10,665 or 25.2% of households contained dependent children (down from 11,020 or 27.2% in 2011). Households containing dependent children in Wales as a whole = 26.5%; in England and Wales = 28.4%.
- In 2021 3,235 or 7.6% of all households were lone parent families with dependent children (2011 = 7.0%).

## Migration

- The percentage of usual residents born outside of Wales has decreased slightly from 41.9% in 2011 to 41.2% (39,445) in 2021. Most of these were born in England (33,749 or 35.2% of all usual residents).
- 4,512 (4.7%) residents were born outside of the UK. This is an increase from 2011 when the figure was 4.0%. (Wales in 2021 = 6.9%, England and Wales = 16.8%).
- The Philippines remained the most common country of birth outside the UK in 2021 (418 people, 0.4% of all usual residents). Poland was the most common country of birth outside the UK for Wales as a whole, and India for England and Wales.
- 2,271 usual residents (2.4%) held a non-UK passport, with the most common non-UK passport held being Polish.

## Legal partnership status

- 44.5% of all usual residents aged 16 or older were married or in a civil partnership. This was the largest group in 2021. However, this has decreased since 2011, when 48.3% were married or in a civil partnership.
- The percentage of people who have never married or registered a civil partnership increased by 3.8 percentage points, from 30.5% in 2011 to 34.3% in 2021.



# The key results for Flintshire

## Population

- On Census Day, 21 March 2021, the size of the usual resident population was estimated to be 154,965.
- The population has increased by 2,459 (1.6%) since the last census in 2011, when it was 152,506. Wales saw an increase of 1.4%, and England and Wales an increase of 6.3%.
- In 2021, the average (median) age was 44 years. This is higher than the median age of 41 years in 2011. The median age in Wales in 2021 was 42 years, and 40 in England and Wales.

## Household composition

- 153,947 usual residents (99.3%) lived in households and 1,015 (0.7%) lived in communal establishments.
- There were an estimated 66,911 households with at least one usual resident on Census Day.
- Average household size is the average number of persons per household. In 2021, this was 2.30 residents per household, which is slightly smaller than in 2011 when it was 2.38.
- 65.5% of all households (43,811) contained only one or two people. This compares to 63.5% in 2011. Households containing five or more people made up only 5.1% of all households and reduced from 4,018 in 2011 to 3,388 in 2021.
- Overall, 66.7% of households (44,660) were single family households, 29.1% (19,471) were one person households and 4.2% (2,780) were multiple family or other household types.
- 9,639 or 14.4% of all households were pensioners living alone (people aged 66 years and over). This has increased from 8,200 in 2011, even though the pension age was lower in 2011.
- In addition, there were 7,314 or 10.9% of households containing families made up of only people of pension age or older.

- Together, pensioners living alone and pensioner-only families make up 25.3% of all households in the area. This compares to 22.0% in 2011 (Wales in 2021 = 24.8% and England and Wales = 22.1%).
- 18,306 or 27.4% of households contained dependent children (down from 18,917 or 29.7% in 2011). Households containing dependent children in Wales as a whole = 26.5%; in England and Wales = 28.4%.
- In 2021 4,706 or 7.0% of all households were lone parent families with dependent children (2011 = 7.0%).

## Migration

- The percentage of usual residents born outside of Wales has increased slightly from 50.0% (76,263) in 2011 to 52.1% (80,713) in 2021. Most of these were born in England (68,709 or 44.3% of all usual residents).
- 10,011 (6.5%) residents were born outside of the UK. This is an increase from 2011 when the figure was 4.1%. (Wales in 2021 = 6.9%, England and Wales = 16.8%).
- Poland was the most common country of birth outside the UK in 2021 (2,344 people, 1.5% of all usual residents). Poland was the most common country of birth outside the UK for Wales as a whole, and India for England and Wales.
- The number of residents listing Romania as their country of birth increased almost fivefold (425.7%) between 2011 and 2021, increasing by 911 to 1,125 or 0.7% of the population.
- 7,067 usual residents (4.6%) held a non-UK passport, with the most common non-UK passport held being Polish.

## Legal partnership status

- 47.0% of all usual residents aged 16 or older were married or in a civil partnership. This was the largest group in 2021. However, this has decreased since 2011, when 50.4% were married or in a civil partnership.
- The percentage of people who have never married or registered a civil partnership increased by 3.3 percentage points, from 30.3% in 2011 to 33.6% in 2021.

# The key results for Wrexham

## Population

- On Census Day, 21 March 2021, the size of the usual resident population was estimated to be 135,115.
- The population has increased by 271 (0.2%) since the last census in 2011, when it was 134,844. Wales saw an increase of 1.4%, and England and Wales an increase of 6.3%.
- In 2021, the average (median) age was 42 years. This is higher than the median age of 40 years in 2011. The median age in Wales in 2021 was 42 years, and 40 in England and Wales.

## Household composition

- 132,182 usual residents (97.8%) lived in households and 2,935 (2.2%) lived in communal establishments.
- There were an estimated 57,914 households with at least one usual resident on Census Day.
- Average household size is the average number of persons per household. In 2021, this was 2.28 residents per household, which is slightly smaller than in 2011 when it was 2.34.
- 65.8% of all households (38,085) contained only one or two people. This compares to 64.2% in 2011. Households containing five or more people made up only 5.1% of all households and reduced from 3,301 in 2011 to 2,979 in 2021.
- Overall, 65.3% of households (37,799) were single family households, 30.5% (17,662) were one person households and 4.2% (2,453) were multiple family or other household types.
- 8,042 or 13.9% of all households were pensioners living alone (people aged 66 years and over). This has increased from 7,334 in 2011, even though the pension age was lower in 2011.
- In addition, there were 5,723 or 9.9% of households containing families made up of only people of pension age or older.
- Together, pensioners living alone and pensioner-only families make up 23.8% of all households in the area. This compares to 21.1% in 2011 (Wales in 2021 = 24.8% and England and Wales = 22.1%).

- 16,432 or 28.4% of households contained dependent children (down from 17,030 or 29.9% in 2011). Households containing dependent children in Wales as a whole = 26.5%; in England and Wales = 28.4%.
- In 2021 4,887 or 8.4% of all households were lone parent families with dependent children (2011 = 7.4%).

## Migration

- The percentage of usual residents born outside of Wales has increased slightly from 30.8% (41,478) in 2011 to 32.1% (43,326) in 2021. Most of these were born in England (31,353 or 23.2% of all usual residents).
- 10,643 (7.9%) residents were born outside of the UK. This is an increase from 2011 when the figure was 6.1%. (Wales in 2021 = 6.9%, England and Wales = 16.8%).
- Poland remained the most common country of birth outside the UK in 2021 (3,516 people, 2.6% of all usual residents). Poland was the most common country of birth outside the UK for Wales as a whole, and India for England and Wales.
- The number of residents listing Romania as their country of birth increased almost eightfold (788.4%) between 2011 and 2021, increasing by 339 to 382 or 0.3% of the population.
- 8,138 usual residents (6.0%) held a non-UK passport, with the most common non-UK passport held being Polish.

## Legal partnership status

- 43.8% of all usual residents aged 16 or older were married or in a civil partnership. This was the largest group in 2021. However, this has decreased since 2011, when 48.0% were married or in a civil partnership.
- The percentage of people who have never married or registered a civil partnership increased by 4.3 percentage points, from 32.6% in 2011 to 36.9% in 2021.

# About the Census

The census happens every 10 years and gives us a picture of all the people and households in England and Wales.

Your answers to census questions help organisations make decisions on planning and funding public services in your area, including transport, education, and healthcare.

Census Day was on Sunday 21 March 2021.

[As data from the 2021 Census becomes available, the Regional Innovation Coordination Hub website will be publishing key results and providing analysis for North Wales and our unitary authority areas.](#)

(<https://www.northwalescollaborative.wales/census/>)

[A statistical bulletin summarising the key results for Wales is available.](#)

(<https://gov.wales/demography-and-migration-wales-census-2021>)

[The main census website](#) is:

<https://census.gov.uk/>

[Welsh Government's main Census website](#) is:

<https://gov.wales/census-population>

The full [release schedule for the 2021 Census](#) is available.

(<https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/censustransformationprogramme/census2021outputs/releaseplans>)