



Foreign &  
Commonwealth Office  
London

INSIGHT UK

# People

## POPULATION

| Age Range   | Age Structure<br>(% of population)                     | Ratio                    |
|-------------|--|--------------------------|
| at birth    |  | 1.05 males to one female |
| 0–14        | <b>19%</b><br>5,816,313 (males); 5,519,479 (females)   | 1.05 males to one female |
| 15–64       | <b>65%</b><br>19,622,152 (males); 19,228,938 (females) | 1.02 males to one female |
| 65 and over | <b>16%</b><br>3,864,612 (males); 5,459,479 (females)   | 0.97 males to one female |

**OVERALL RATIO – 97 MEN FOR EVERY 100 WOMEN**

Life expectancy now and in 1900 (in brackets)  
**MEN: 74 (45)      WOMEN: 79 (50)**

The number of years a person can expect to live in good  
or fairly good health – 1995 (1981)  
**Men: 66.4 (64.4)      Women: 68.7 (66.7)**

There is a 33% chance a UK citizen will develop some kind  
of cancer during their lifetime. Cancer is responsible for 25% of all deaths.

**Number of people aged 100+**  
**1996 – 5,500      1951 – 300**

Total population:  
59.5 million people.

Population density:  
373 people per square km.

Birth rate:  
12.3 births per  
1,000 people – low.

Infant mortality:  
6.3 boys and 5.0 girls  
respectively per 1,000 live  
births (1999).

28 years – average age of  
women having first child.

Most popular boys' names in 2000:  
England and Wales:  
Jack; Thomas; James.  
Scotland: Jack; Lewis; Ryan.

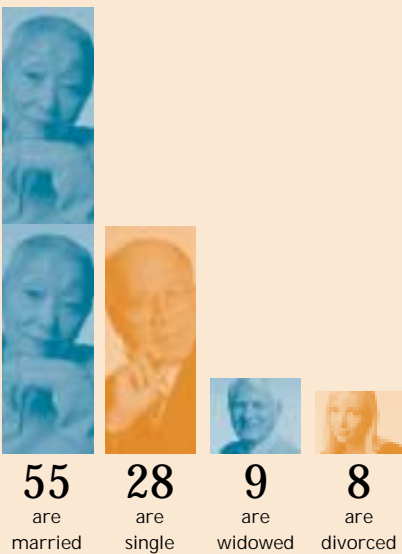
Most popular girls' names in 2000:  
England and Wales:  
Chloe; Emily; Megan.  
Scotland: Chloe; Rebecca;  
Lauren.



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## HOME and FAMILY

Out of 100 people aged 16 and over



309,000 marriages each year. Two in five involve one or both partners remarrying.

An estimated 1.5 million couples were cohabiting in England and Wales in 1996 – the number is expected to double by 2021.

**Average Household:**  
 1925 = 4.6 people  
 1998/99 = 2.4 people

Over 14,200,000 homes are owned by the people living in them – 68% of all dwellings. This figure doubled in the period 1961–97.

Over 90 in every 100 households own a television, telephone, deep freezer/fridge freezer and a washing machine.

Over a third of households have a computer.

**Seven in ten households own a car or van.**

Half the households in Britain own a pet:

**8 million have a cat**

**7 million have a dog**

**3 million keep fish**

1 million keep budgerigars

## EMPLOYMENT

***In spring 2000: 36.3 million people of working age in the UK; 27 million people in employment.***

Part-time working by men has tripled since 1986.

Part-time working by women has gone up 25% since 1984.

**Types of Employment – winners and losers (1901–1999)**

Agriculture down 83% – only 2 in 100 people currently work in this sector

Mining and transport – workforce halved

Office work doubled – 4 in 10 people work in offices.



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## 1.5 million men in the UK work more than 60 hours a week (spring 2000).

In the week prior to a survey in spring 1999 – 5% of women and 3.8% of men had taken a day off work.

Peak average income for men in their 40s is almost twice as high as that of women of the same age: £392 compared to £201 a week.

### RIGHTS

October 2000 – Human Rights Act becomes law.

It contains 14 articles guaranteeing people's civil liberties, including guaranteeing rights to privacy and freedom of expression.

**Free elections: everyone over 18 has the right to vote both locally and nationally.**

### LIFESTYLES

The average UK adult spends over 8.5 hours asleep each day.

People in the UK watch on average 25 hours of TV every week.

People in the UK listen to an average 15 hours and 50 minutes of radio each week.

*The top 'take-away' food in the UK is fish and chips.*

There are two weekly draws in the National Lottery – Wednesdays and Saturdays. In 1998/99 over half of the UK's households bought at least one lottery ticket a week.

The most common activity away from home is going to the pub:

18% of people questioned in 1998/99 had done this the previous day.

Britons made 123 million visits to the cinema in 1998 making it the most popular cultural activity in the UK.

In 1998, 27 in every 100 holidays abroad taken by UK citizens were in Spain.

Walking is the nation's most popular form of exercise yet the average distance walked each year continues to fall:  
1985/86 – 138km;  
1995/96 – 124km.  
For men snooker or pool comes second and for women it is yoga or keep fit.

There are 112 million credit and other kinds of plastic card in use in the UK – eight in ten Britons have more than two kinds of 'plastic'.

Meanwhile two thirds of all payments over £1 are still made in cash.



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## ATTITUDES to the UK

**Eight in ten of the general population declare themselves very or fairly strongly attached to the UK.**

Two thirds of young people (15–24) feel attached to the UK.

*'I call myself British because the terms British and British-Somalian mean the same thing to me. I have lived here for four years and my father moved here in the 60s.'*

NOORA AHMED (age 18)

*'It's difficult to find symbols that accurately represent Britain.'*

WILLIAM COOPER (age 19)

*'We are not just one homogeneous people any more. Just look at the cuisine – we've got Kurdish, Greek, Chinese. That's one of the great things about being British.'*

JASBINDER SINGH (age 22)

## CITIZENSHIP and SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

**One in five people do unpaid charitable work each year.**

Three quarters of people think 'doing voluntary work is a good thing'.

More than 6 million people – one in seven of the UK adult population – are carers. Three quarters of this group are looking after elderly relatives.

Under the new Citizenship Curriculum, teachers are expected to learn about 'fairness, social justice, respect for democracy and diversity at school, local, national and global level, and through taking part responsibly in community activities.'

There are 7,000 youth clubs in the UK with a membership of 650,000 young people. Through them people become involved in a wide-range of community and environmental projects.

## Sources

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# BRITAIN

*Creativity, innovation and quality*