

Proposed changes to ONS Birth Statistics

We are planning to change the way in which birth statistics for England and Wales are published from 2017 data year onwards. The first births release containing 2017 data is planned for July or August 2018.

We plan to make explorable datasets for live births available in [NOMIS](#). These will provide detailed birth statistics and some historic data for comparison. We currently use this approach for [marriage, divorce and mortality statistics](#).

We intend to make four explorable datasets available for live births, with 2017 datasets being available from July or August 2018 – which will be earlier than similar data are currently available. The specification for these datasets and consequential changes proposed to our annual publication tables are outlined below along with some new tables which we are proposing. We encourage feedback on these proposals and will take account of all feedback received before making any changes.

Please complete the feedback form on our [consultation hub](#).

Explorable datasets proposed for live births in England and Wales

The four explorable datasets which we hope to make available in NOMIS are outlined below. These have been designed to protect the confidentiality of individuals.

i) National/Regional dataset: live births (mothers)

- Year of birth
- Region of usual residence of the mother
- Age of mother:
Under 20, 20 to 24, 25 to 29, 30 to 34, 35 to 39, 40 to 44, 45 and over, Not stated
- Country of birth of mother:
UK, EU (excluding UK), Other, Not stated
- Marital status/Registration type:
Inside marriage or civil partnership and joint registrations where parents live at same address
Joint registrations where parents live at different addresses and sole registrations
Not stated
- Sex of baby:
Male, Female, Not stated
- Multiple birth:
Yes, No

ii. National dataset: live births (mothers and fathers)

- Year of birth
- Age of mother:
Under 20, 20 to 24, 25 to 29, 30 to 34, 35 to 39, 40 to 44, 45 and over, Not stated
- Age of father (if fathers details present):
Under 20, 20 to 24, 25 to 29, 30 to 34, 35 to 39, 40 to 44, 45 to 49, 50 to 54, 55 and over, Not stated
- Country of birth of mother:
UK, EU (excluding UK), Other, Not stated
- Country of birth of father (if father details present):
UK, EU (excluding UK), Other, Not stated
- Marital status/Registration type:
Inside marriage or civil partnership and joint registrations where parents live at same address
Joint registrations where parents live at different addresses and sole registrations
Not stated

iii. Local area dataset: live births

- Year of birth
- Age of mother:
Under 18, 18 to 19, 20 to 24, 25 to 29, 30 to 34, 35 to 39, 40 to 44, 45 and over, Not stated
- Area of usual residence of mother:
Countries, Regions, Counties, Local authorities

iv. Small area dataset: live births

- Year of birth
- Area of usual residence of mother:
Middle layer super output area (MSOA)
Electoral ward
Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

We also plan to make the following rates available for countries, regions, counties and local authorities:

- Crude birth rate
- General fertility rate (GFR)
- Total fertility rate (TFR)
- Age-specific fertility rates (ASFRs)

Proposed changes to published tables providing birth statistics for England and Wales

[Birth summary tables:](#)

Table	Time series	Publish or discontinue?
Birth summary tables: Table 1 Summary of key live birth statistics, England and Wales	1938 onwards	Publish; add in extra figures to enable other tables to be discontinued: live births by sex live births within marriage live births outside marriage stillbirths by sex stillbirths within marriage stillbirths outside marriage
Birth summary tables: Table 2a Live births by age of mother, England and Wales	1938 onwards	Publish
Birth summary tables: Table 2b Age-specific fertility rates, England and Wales	1981 onwards	Publish
Birth summary tables: Table 3 Live births and stillbirths by area of usual residence of mother (numbers, general fertility rate (GFR), total fertility rate (TFR)), regions and local authorities within England and Wales	current year only	Publish. Table 3 would provide number of stillbirths and stillbirth rate only. Number of live births, TFR and GFR would be available from NOMIS.

Parents' country of birth:

Table	Time series	Publish or discontinue?
Country of birth: Table 1: Live births, by country of birth of mother, England and Wales	2008 onwards	Publish
Country of birth: Table 2: 10 most common countries of birth of mother for non-UK born mothers, England and Wales	2003 onwards	Publish
Country of birth: Table 2a: 10 most common countries of birth of father for non-UK born fathers, England and Wales	2008 onwards	Publish
Country of birth: Table 3: Country of birth of mother and father in combination, England and Wales	current data year only	Publish
Country of birth: Table 3a: Country of birth of mother and father in combination, England and Wales	2008 onwards	Publish
Country of birth: Table 4: Age and country of birth of mother, England and Wales	current data year only	Publish
Country of birth: Table 5: Total fertility rates by Country of birth of mother, England and Wales	2001 and 2011, only available for Census years	Publish
Country of birth: Table 6: Total fertility rates for UK and Non-UK born women, England and Wales	2004 onwards	Publish
Country of birth: Table 7a: Country of birth of mother and area of usual residence, regions and local authorities in England and Wales	current data year only	Publish
Country of birth: Table 7b: Country of birth of parents in combination and area of usual residence, regions and local authorities in England and Wales	current data year only	Publish
Country of birth: Table 8: Country of birth of mother, marital status and previous live-born children, England and Wales	current data year only	Discontinue, unless user requirements are identified.

Births by mothers' area of usual residence:

Table	Time series	Publish or discontinue?
Area of usual residence: Table 1: Live births summary by area of usual residence, regions and local authorities in the UK	current data year only	Publish; add in an extra column providing percentage of home maternities. Publish this table as part of Birth characteristics release since table 2 would be available from NOMIS.
Area of usual residence: Table 2: Age of mother by area of usual residence, regions and local authorities within England and Wales	current data year only	Discontinue. Statistics available from explorable datasets in NOMIS.

Birth characteristics:

Table	Time series	Publish or discontinue?
Birth characteristics: Table 1: Stillbirths (numbers, rates and sex ratios): occurrence within and outside marriage or civil partnership and sex, England and Wales	1927 onwards	Discontinue. This information is available in Birth summary tables: Table 1.
Birth characteristics: Table 2: Stillbirths: quarter of occurrence, England and Wales	1964 onwards	Discontinue, unless user requirements are identified.
Birth characteristics: Table 3: Stillbirths: age of mother and of father, England and Wales	current year only	Publish
Birth characteristics: Table 4: Maternities in hospitals and communal establishments: live births and stillbirths, and area of occurrence, England and Wales	current year only	Discontinue, unless user requirements are identified - table only provides births in hospital or communal establishments.
Birth characteristics: Table 5: Live births (numbers and percentages): birth weight and area of usual residence, Regions within England, Wales	current year only	Publish, but modify table so based on term births only (37 to 41 weeks gestation) using birth registrations linked to birth notifications dataset.
Birth characteristics: Table 6: Stillbirths (numbers and percentages): birth weight and area of usual residence, Regions within England, Wales	current year only	Publish
Birth characteristics: Table 7: Live births and stillbirths by gestational age at birth and ethnicity for live births, England and Wales	current year only	Publish
Birth characteristics: Table 8: Live births by sex, England and Wales	1938 onwards	Discontinue. This information is available in Birth Summary Tables: Table 1.
Birth characteristics: Table 9: Live births (numbers and rates): quarter of occurrence, England and Wales	1992 onwards	Discontinue. Numbers of live births by month are available in Birth characteristics table 10; quarterly TFRs would not be available elsewhere.
Birth characteristics: Table 10: Live births (numbers and rates): month of occurrence, England and Wales	1992 onwards	Publish numbers but discontinue quarterly TFRs unless user requirements are identified.
Birth characteristics: Table 11: Maternities with multiple births (numbers and rates): age of mother, England and Wales	1940 onwards	Publish
Birth characteristics: Table 12: Maternities with multiple births: whether live births or stillbirths, multiplicity, age of mother and sex, England and Wales	current year only	Discontinue. The majority of figures can be derived using Birth characteristics: Table 14 - except the figures for each sex separately.
Birth characteristics: Table 13: Maternities with multiple births (numbers and rates): age of mother and number of previous live-born children, England and Wales	current year only	Publish
Birth characteristics: Table 14: All maternities: age of mother, multiplicity and type of outcome, England and Wales	current year only	Publish

Table	Time series	Publish or discontinue?
Birth characteristics: Table 15: Maternities: age of mother, number of previous live-born children and place of birth, England and Wales	current year only	Publish, but change previous children groupings to be: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 and over, not stated. There is no separate source of data against which we are able to verify information on the number of previous children. We are working with the General Register Office (GRO) to ensure the accuracy of information on previous children.
Birth characteristics: Table 16: Maternities: place of birth and whether area of occurrence is the same as area of usual residence, or other than area of usual residence, Regions within England, Local Health Boards within Wales	current year only	Discontinue. Percentage of home maternities by local authority would be available in Area of usual residence: Table 1 which is proposed to form part of Birth characteristics release in future.

Births by parents' characteristics

Table	Time series	Publish or discontinue?
Parents characteristics: Table 1: live births by ages of mother and father, within and outside marriage, England and Wales	current year only	Discontinue. Analysis has shown that births registered by parents living at the same address were similar to those within marriage, and that a more meaningful distinction could be drawn from whether the father was living at the same address. NOMIS dataset (2) provides married and living together in one group and living apart and sole registrations in another group by ages of parents in combination.
Parents characteristics: Table 2: Live births by age of mother and registration type, England and Wales	1938 onwards	Publish
Parents characteristics: Table 3: Maternities (total), live births (total and female) and stillbirths (total): Single year of age of mother and occurrence within and outside marriage or civil partnership, England and Wales	current year only	Publish, but remove 5-year age group summaries.
Parents characteristics: Table 4a: Unstandardised mean age of mother by birth order, England and Wales	1938 onwards	Discontinue. Standardised mean age at birth is published and this should be used for comparisons over time.
Parents characteristics: Table 4b: Standardised mean age of mother by birth order, England and Wales	1939 onwards	Publish

Table	Time series	Publish or discontinue?
Parents characteristics: Table 5: Components of TFR by birth order and age of mother, England and Wales	2013 onwards	Discontinue, unless user requirements are identified.
Parents characteristics: Table 6: live births (numbers and rates) by age of mother, within and outside marriage, England and Wales	1999 onwards	Discontinue. NOMIS dataset (1 and 2) combine married and living together in one group and living apart and sole registrations in another group. Births by single year of age, inside and outside marriage are published for current data year in Parents' characteristics: Table 3.
Parents characteristics: Table 7: Live births: number of previous live-born children and age of mother (5-year age groups), England and Wales	current year only	Publish, but extend top age group to 45 and over.
Parents characteristics: Table 8: Live births by previous children and age of mother (single year of age), England and Wales	current year only	Discontinue. Figures by 5-year age group and previous children up to 4+ are available in Parents' characteristics: Table 7.
Parents characteristics: Table 9: Live births and stillbirths by number of previous children, age of mother and sex, England and Wales	current year only	Discontinue, unless user requirements are identified.
Parents characteristics: Table 10: Median birth intervals, England and Wales	2001 onwards	Publish. Data obtained from HM Revenue and Customs.
Parents characteristics: Table 11: Measures of Male Fertility, England and Wales	1964 onwards	Publish
Parents characteristics: Table 12: Paternities, live births and stillbirths by age of father and occurrence within and outside marriage or civil partnership, England and Wales	current year only	Publish, but remove 5-year age group summaries.
Parents characteristics: Table 13: Rates of paternities within marriage or civil partnership by age of father, and rates of live births and stillbirths within marriage or civil partnership by age, England and Wales	current year only	Discontinue, unless user requirements are identified. Numbers are available in Parents' characteristics: Table 12.
Parents characteristics: Table 14: Live births by age of mother, registration type and National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC), England and Wales	current year only	Publish, but modify so age groups are under 25, 25 to 34 and 35 and over. Change to using 3-class version of NS-SEC: (1) Higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations, (2) Intermediate occupations, (3) Routine and manual occupations

Table	Time series	Publish or discontinue?
Parents characteristics: Table 16: Unstandardised mean age of mother at live birth by NS-SEC, England and Wales	current year only	Discontinue, unless user requirements are identified
Parents characteristics: Table 17: Live births by birthweight and NS-SEC, England and Wales	current year only	Publish, but use 3-class NS-SEC version instead: (1) Higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations, (2) Intermediate occupations, (3) Routine and manual occupations

New tables proposed

Possible new tables which we may consider publishing in the future are listed below.

Table	Time series	Production
Live births, stillbirths and the stillbirth rate by Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), England and Wales	Build up a time-series.	Produced from annual birth registrations dataset
Term births of low birth weight by mother's area of usual residence, local authorities in England and Wales	current year only	Produced from dataset which links birth registrations to birth notifications.
Live births by gestation (Under 24 weeks, 24 to 36 weeks, 37 to 41 weeks, 42 weeks and over) by area of usual residence, regions in England, Wales	current year only	Produced from dataset which links birth registrations to birth notifications.
Stillbirths by gestation (24 to 36 weeks, 37 to 41 weeks, 42 weeks and over) by area of usual residence, regions in England, Wales	current year only	Produced from dataset which links birth registrations to birth notifications.
Live births by number of previous children (0, 1 or more), gestation (Under 24 weeks, 24 to 36 weeks, 37 to 41 weeks, 42 weeks and over) and age group (under 25, 25 to 34, 35 and over)	current year only	Produced from dataset which links birth registrations to birth notifications.