Quality and Methodology Information

General details

Title of output: Birth Statistics
Abbreviated title: Births
Designation: National Statistics
Geographic coverage: England and Wales
Date of last SQR or QMI*: October 2014
Contact details: vsob@ons.gsi.gov.uk

Executive summary

Birth statistics present data on births that occur and are then registered in England and Wales. Statistics are based on information collected at birth registration.

Annual data are released in a series of theme-specific packages, usually between July and December. Information on different packages is covered under the Relevance section. The packages contain historical data, where available, giving as long a time series as possible.

Annual birth statistics for the UK and its constituent countries are published in the vital statistics: population and health reference tables.

Birth statistics are based on the number of births occurring in a given year. More information on processing is available within each birth package and in the births metadata.

This document contains the following sections:

- Output quality
- About the output
- How the output is created
- Validation and quality assurance
- Concepts and definitions
- Other information, relating to quality trade-offs and user needs
- Sources for further information or advice

Output quality

This document provides a range of information that describes the quality of the data and details any points that should be noted when using the output.

Office for National Statistics (ONS) have developed guidelines for measuring statistical quality; these are based upon the 5 European Statistical System (ESS) quality dimensions. This document addresses these quality dimensions and other important quality characteristics, which are:

- Relevance
- Timeliness and punctuality
- Coherence and comparability

* “Quality and Methodology Information” (QMI) replaced “Summary Quality Reports” (SQR) from April 2011
• Accuracy
• Output quality trade-offs
• Assessment of user needs and perceptions
• Accessibility and clarity

More information is provided about these quality dimensions in the sections below.

About the output

Relevance
(The degree to which statistical outputs meet users’ needs.)

Birth registration is a legal requirement under the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1836. The registration of births occurring in England and Wales is a service carried out by the Local Registration Service in partnership with the General Register Office (GRO). Information collected at birth registration is recorded on the Registration Online (RON) system by Registrars. Most of the information is usually supplied by the parent(s). For live births, details of the birthweight are passed to us from the NHS birth notification.

Annual birth outputs represent births occurring in England and Wales in a given year. A package containing summary figures is released in July, supported by a statistical bulletin providing commentary on the data. Following this, more detailed figures are released between August and December in a series of theme-specific packages. Each package consists of a number of data tables and each release is generally accompanied by a statistical bulletin. The tables released show the latest year’s figures with some tables also showing historical data for comparison, sometimes back to 1837.

The published packages are:

• **Birth summary tables**: provide summary figures including the number of live births and stillbirths, fertility rates, percentage of live births outside marriage/civil partnership, mean age of mother and percentage of live births to non-UK born mothers – live births (number and rate) are also provided by age of mother and by local area

• **Parents’ country of birth**: includes births by country of birth of mother, by local authority as well as total fertility rates for UK born and non-UK born women – we publish detailed analysis on parents’ country of birth because this information is collected at birth registration and does not change over time, while their nationality or ethnicity may change

• **Characteristics of birth 1**: provides summary statistics on stillbirths – tables also provide birthweight data for live and stillbirths by mother’s area of usual residence and maternities, live births, and stillbirths in hospitals by area of occurrence

• **Births by area of usual residence**: provides summary data for live births down to local authority level including figures by age of mother – figures are published using boundaries in place during the year the birth occurred

• **Characteristics of mother 1**: provides live birth, stillbirth and maternity statistics by age of mother, type of registration (within marriage/civil partnership, joint, sole), and mean age of mother by birth order

• **Characteristics of birth 2**: provides live birth statistics by month and quarter of occurrence, and maternity figures for multiple births and by place of birth

• **Characteristics of mother 2**: provides live birth statistics (numbers and rates) within and outside marriage/civil partnership. It also provides data on live births by age of mother and number of previous live-born children along with median birth intervals

• **Further parental characteristics**: provides age-specific fertility rates for men, the mean age of father, and paternities within and outside marriage/civil partnership – from 2012 data year, it also provides data on live births by National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) of parent(s) as defined by occupation; prior to 2012 data year, live births by National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) of father as defined by occupation was found in **Births by socio-economic status of father**
• **Childbearing for women born in different years** (formerly known as Cohort fertility): presents data on fertility by year of birth of mother rather than the year of birth of child – this package includes the average number of live-born children and the proportion of women remaining childless for women born in different years

From the 2014 data year, there will be some changes to the published packages. Packages that will remain unchanged are:

- Births summary tables
- Parents’ country of birth
- Births by area of usual residence
- Childbearing for women born in different years

From October 2015, a number of birth packages will be combined into 2 packages: Birth characteristics and Births by parents’ characteristics. Details of what will be included in these packages are shown below:

- **Birth characteristics:** will provide summary statistics on stillbirths, including birthweight data for live and stillbirths by mother’s area of usual residence and maternities, live births, and stillbirths in hospitals by area of occurrence – these tables will also provide live birth statistics by month and quarter of occurrence, and maternity figures for multiple births and by place of birth; prior to the 2014 data year these statistics were published in separate releases: Characteristics of birth 1 and Characteristics of birth 2

- **Births by parents’ characteristics:** will provide live birth, stillbirth and maternity statistics by age of mother, type of registration (within marriage/civil partnership, joint, sole), and mean age of mother by birth order – it will also provide live birth statistics (numbers and rates) within and outside marriage and civil partnership, data on live births by age of mother and number of previous live-born children along with median birth intervals; prior to the 2014 data year these statistics were published in separate releases: Characteristics of mother 1, Characteristics of mother 2 and Further parental characteristics

To aid with user interpretation, we also publish [an interactive fertility mapping tool](#), which enables users to analyse trends in fertility by county district and unitary authority.

Prior to the 2009 data year, detailed birth figures for England and Wales were published in December in the annual reference volume [FM1: birth statistics](#). This volume has now been discontinued.

Published figures do not include births to women usually resident in England or Wales who give birth abroad. They do include births to women whose usual residence is outside England and Wales where the birth occurred in England or Wales (such births are included in total figures for England and Wales, but excluded from any sub-division of England and Wales).

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008 contained provisions enabling 2 females in a same-sex couple to register a birth from 1 September 2009 onwards. Because of the small numbers of births registered to same sex couples, births to same sex couples in a civil partnership are included with marital births and births occurring to same sex couples outside of a civil partnership are included with births outside marriage. The Marriages (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 enabled same sex couples to get married in England and Wales from 29 March 2014. Due to the small numbers of births registered to same sex couples, births occurring inside marriage are not separated in the tables by opposite sex or same sex marriage. The number of births to same-sex couples is footnoted on relevant tables to assist users. Given the relatively small numbers of births registered to same sex couples, the impact on statistics is negligible.

During May 2012 changes were made to the Population (Statistics) Act 1938, so information on the number of previous children and previous marriages/civil partnerships is now collected from all mothers at birth registration. Previously this information was only collected from married women. This impacts on a number of tables and proposed changes have been implemented.

We have made changes to the method used for reporting the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) for birth statistics from the 2012 data year – we are now using the combined method for reporting NS-SEC. The combined approach uses the most advantaged NS-SEC of either parent rather than just the father’s. The Population (Statistics) Act 1938 also means that improved statistical information on the number of previous live births is now collected at birth
registration. These data are of interest when analysing births by socio-economic classification. Changes have been made to the existing tables to ensure they continue to meet user requirements and are detailed in an information note on our website.


Local authorities and other government departments are important users of birth statistics and use the data for planning and resource allocation. For example, local authorities use birth statistics to decide how many school places will be needed in a given area. The Department for Work and Pensions uses detailed birth statistics to feed into statistical models they use for pensions and benefits. The Department of Health uses the data to plan maternity services and inform policy decisions.

Other users include academics, demographers and health researchers, who conduct research into birth trends and characteristics. Lobby groups use birth statistics for their cause, for example, campaigns against school closures or midwife shortages. Special interest groups, such as Birth Choice UK, make the data available to enable comparisons between maternity units to help women choose where they might like to give birth and work closely with health professionals. Charities, such as the Twins and Multiple Births Association provide advice and support to multiple birth parents and use the data to monitor trends. Organisations such as Eurostat and the UN use our birth statistics for international comparison purposes. The media also report on main trends and statistics.

**Timeliness and punctuality**

(Timeliness refers to the lapse of time between publication and the period to which the data refer. Punctuality refers to the gap between planned and actual publication dates.)

In order to provide timely data to users, ONS has implemented a package approach. Final annual summary figures are published in July, 7 months after the end of the reference year following the full quality assurance of the data. These summary figures are laid before Parliament pursuant to Section 19 of the Registration Services Act 1953 as amended by the Statistics and registration Service Act 2007. Theme specific packages are then released between August and December, which means users are able to access many figures earlier than in previous years.

Prior to 2010, all detailed tables with the exception of parents’ country of birth figures, were published on a single date in December as part of an annual reference volume which was required to be laid before Parliament. Figures by parents’ country of birth were made available in August alongside the annual release of migration statistics.

Only the birth summary tables are now laid before Parliament. These cannot be published until after the laying process has been completed. The Journal Office is responsible for laying documentation before Parliament and does not open until 9:30am. Consequently figures are not released until 11:00am, once it has been confirmed by the Journal Office that they have been laid. All other packages are published at 9:30am.

For more details on related releases, the GOV.UK release calendar is available online and provides 12 months’ advance notice of release dates. In the unlikely event of a change to the pre-announced release schedule, public attention will be drawn to the change and the reasons for the change will be explained fully at the same time, as set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

**How the output is created**

Birth statistics present data on births that occur and are then registered in England and Wales. For live births, details of the birthweight are passed to us from the NHS birth notification (completed by the midwife or doctor in attendance at the birth). For more detailed information on the production of birth statistics, see the births packages and the Births metadata.
Validation and quality assurance

Accuracy
(The degree of closeness between an estimate and the true value.)

Our birth statistics are based on registrations provided by the GRO. These data represent the legal record, making it the best and most complete data source. These data are then supplemented by linking the birth registration to the NHS birth notification to obtain birthweight data.

As part of the birth registration process, before data are submitted through the RON system, the registrar asks the informant to verify that all data entered are accurate. The registrar is then able to correct any errors. There are some validation checks built into RON to help the registrar with this process. Information supplied at birth registration is generally believed to be correct since willfully supplying false information may render the informant liable to prosecution for perjury.

When we receive birth registrations, a number of checks are carried out on records to ensure that they are valid. Checks are more frequent on those records with extreme values for main variables (such as age of mother and age of father) as these have a greater impact on published tables. For example, when looking at multiple births, checks are carried out to ensure that the number of triplets is divisible by 3 and that there is one maternity recorded for each set of triplets. Any birth records which appear questionable are raised with GRO on a monthly basis for further investigation.

The annual subset used for publications is a static file of birth registration records available at the time the subset is closed. Revisions to records can still be made after the subset has been finalised but these will not be reflected in the file or used to compile statistics. Since 2001, the annual dataset has included:

- births occurring in the reference year which were registered by 25 February the following year (parents are allowed 42 days to register a birth)

- births occurring in the year before the reference year which were registered between 26 February in the reference year and 25 February the following year, that is, births in the previous year which had not been tabulated previously

Any proposed changes to the recording and collection of birth registration data are carefully managed and involve ourselves, GRO and other stakeholders. This ensures that any implications on birth statistics are taken into full consideration.

Changes recently made to the Population (Statistics) Act 1938 mean that improved data on previous children has been collected since May 2012. The changes will improve the accuracy of birth statistics by birth order and feed into estimates for family size and measures of fertility.

Before May 2012, missing data items collected under the Population (Statistics) Act 1938, 1960 required for the production of birth statistics were imputed (age of mother, age of father, number of previous children both live-born and stillborn, and duration of marriage/civil partnership). Since the introduction of RON, the proportion of missing data for age of mother and age of father has fallen below 1%. Details on the method and level of imputation undertaken each year on birth data are available in the births metadata.

From May 2012, changes to the Population (Statistics) Act 1938, 1960 mean that previous children are no longer imputed, because only a small number of records are missing this information, however age of mother and father are still imputed.

Information on occupation of the father and the mother is coded for a 10% sample of births. Sample figures in tables providing birth statistics by socio-economic classification are grossed-up to agree with known totals derived from the 100% processing of birth registrations by mother’s age and previous live-born children. This ensures consistency with sub-totals, and improves the quality of sample estimates. Tables for standard errors for selected numbers of births and percentages are published alongside the statistics by socio-economic classification.

The Population estimates by marital status used in the calculation of birth rates within and outside of marriage/civil partnership are the latest available when the statistics are published. We recently completed a consultation surrounding the population estimates by marital status. This resulted in a change in the methodology used to produce the estimates for the years 2002 onwards. The new method involves using the marital status distribution from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and...
applying this to published population estimates (by five-year age group and sex) for England and Wales. Population estimates by marital status for the years 2002 to 2010 have been revised and published in July 2015 alongside new population estimates by marital status for the years 2011 to 2014. As a result of the change in the methodology, birth rates within and outside of marriage/civil partnership will be revised back to 2002 to reflect the revised population estimates by marital status.

All of our tables on birth statistics adhere to the disclosure control guidance for birth and death statistics (revised January 2014).

**Coherence and comparability**

(Coherence is the degree to which data that are derived from different sources or methods, but refer to the same topic, are similar. Comparability is the degree to which data can be compared over time and domain for example, geographic level.)

The Births and Deaths Registration Act 1836 made it a legal requirement for all births to be registered from 1 July 1837. Registration requirements have changed over the years, for example, the introduction of the Population (Statistics) Act 1938, 1960 allowed for more detailed information to be requested from the informant. Historical data are available in each of the births packages. Some tables provide data back to 1837, although more detailed tables have a shorter time series.

Over the years the format and content of tables has changed. The most recent review of tables took place in 2010 and was implemented for 2009 birth outputs. A summary of the 2010 review was published alongside a look up file for Birth tables, detailing how the birth packages compare to the now discontinued FM1 birth statistics publication. Where possible, historical data are provided as part of the table to ensure users have a comparable time series. Changes to methodology which mean that figures are not directly comparable are noted on the data tables and in the general metadata document.

Revisions to birth statistics occur infrequently and generally only take place following revisions to the mid-year population estimates, which result in revised fertility rates. Footnotes are added to tables where revisions have taken place and information is also included in the metadata accompanying the release. Errors are rare but any identified are corrected and clearly marked on the release.

Births outputs are produced to geographic boundaries in place during the year the birth occurred. This approach means that changes in boundaries can affect the comparability of statistics over time.

The Stillbirth Definition Act 1992 changed the definition of a stillbirth from a child being born after 28 weeks to a child being born after 24 weeks (which did not breathe or show any other signs of life). This means that data for 1992 onwards are not directly comparable with data for stillbirths before the introduction of the Act.

There is a large degree of comparability in birth statistics between countries within the UK. Annual birth statistics for the United Kingdom and its constituent countries are all based on the details collected when births are registered. We quality assure data for England and Wales enabling detailed birth statistics to be published. Similarly, National Records of Scotland (NRS) and Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) quality assure data for their own countries and subsequently publish detailed birth statistics.

For England and Wales, birth statistics are based on the number of births occurring in the year, while Scotland and Northern Ireland statistics relate to the number of births registered in the quarter or year. In England and Wales where a birth is registered too late to be included in the count for the year of occurrence, it will be included in the count for the following year. The differences between reporting occurrences and registrations are relatively minor and figures are broadly comparable (in 2009 and 2010 differences between registrations and occurrences of live births in England and Wales were around 0.2%). We produce figures for the UK by compiling data for England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The definitions and classifications used across the UK in the production of birth statistics are consistent (for example, definition of a stillbirth, use of the standard occupational classification) but there are some differences in the methods used. For example, we code only 10% of job titles using our standard automatic coding tool whereas NRS and NISRA fully code 100% of job titles and use different coding tools. We impute missing values for some data items whereas NRS and NISRA
carry out no imputation. These differences are believed to have a negligible impact on the comparability of the statistics.

To enable users to make within-UK and international comparisons, the Vital statistics: population and health reference tables provide, among other statistics, birth rates for different countries. We produce the UK birth rate in the table. All other figures are obtained from the United Nations Monthly Bulletin of Statistics.

Internationally, we provide data to Eurostat each year to allow publication of UK birth figures alongside those for other European countries.

We publish several internationally recognised indicators such as the crude birth rate, age-specific fertility rates and the total fertility rate (although there is some variation in the age groupings used to derive this internationally). We also publish a standardised mean (average) age of mother to enable comparisons to be made over time and between different areas.

We investigated and identified problems with the recording of birthweight data in some hospitals in Wales between 2008 and 2010. The National Community Child Health Database, maintained by NHS Wales, provides improved birthweight data for children born, resident or treated in Wales. This database has been used to validate birthweights and correct figures entered incorrectly on the birth notification. There is no alternative source for birthweight data in England.

In 2010, we changed the country groupings for the Parents’ country of birth package. The new groupings are in line with the national statistics country classification.

Amendments to the Population (Statistics) Act 1938 mean that, from May 2012, information is now collected at all birth registrations on the total numbers of previous live births and previous stillbirths that the mother has had (not just those with the current or former husband). This has simplified the question asked by registrars and provides improved coverage. A paper describing the changes that have occurred to our birth statistics as a result of improvements to the Population Statistics Act is available on our website. It provides background to the changes and provides high-level findings from the new data collected in 2012 and 2013.

The difference, between the old and new data, in the proportion of married women reporting previous births is larger than was expected purely from the question change. More information can be found in this methodology paper on Quality assurance of new data on birth registrations, as a result of changes to the Population Statistics Act – from May 2012 onwards.

An investigation of childbearing by registration status in England and Wales, using birth registration data for 2012 and 2013 examines the patterns and characteristics in birth registrations following the improvements to the data collected at birth registration. The principal characteristics explored in the paper relate to whether a woman has been previously married, and whether the birth is the mother’s first child or subsequent child.

NS-SEC and Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) are used in our birth statistics. NISRA publish birth statistics by father's NS-SEC. National Records of Scotland do not publish birth statistics by father's NS-SEC but such information is available upon request.

Concepts and definitions
(Concepts and definitions describe the legislation governing the output and a description of the classifications used in the output.)

For information on UK legislation relating to birth statistics and for definitions of terms please see the Births metadata and the tables for the appropriate births package.

For the definition of a stillbirth, please see the Coherence and comparability and coherence section.

Birthweight categories in our birth statistics conform with low birthweight definitions set by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The lowest category for our published birthweight statistics is “under 1,500 grammes”. Figures are also published for 1,500 to 1,999 grammes and 2,000 to 2,499 grammes.

The WHO definitions of low birthweights are:

- low birthweight is defined as less than 2,500 grammes
• very low birthweight is less than 1,500 grammes
• extremely low birthweight is less than 1,000 grammes

NS-SEC and Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) are used in our birth statistics. We derive a code for socio-economic classification (or social class in previous volumes) by combining the information on parent's occupation coded for 1 in 10 births with the employment status. From 1991 to 2000, occupation was coded using the Standard Occupational Classification SOC90, and occupation codes were allocated to the Registrar General's Social Class.

The Standard Occupational Classification is revised every 10 years and in 2001 SOC2000, replaced SOC90. The coding of employment status also changed in 2001 to be consistent with the 2001 Census and SOC2000. Since 2001, the NS-SEC has categorised the socio-economic classification of people, and has replaced the Registrar General's Social Class and the Socio-economic Group (SEG). SOC2000 and employment status are used to derive NS-SEC for births.

The new classification is based not on skills but on employment conditions, which are now considered to be central to describing the socio-economic structure of modern societies. Details of the implications of changes in the UK social and occupational classifications in 2001 for vital statistics are available through our website. SOC2010 has been used for coding 2011 data onwards and a document detailing the implications for births and deaths datasets of the change from SOC 2000 to SOC 2010 was published in December 2014.

We developed NS-SEC and use it for all official statistics and surveys. The classification was developed from a sociological classification used in pure and applied research, known as the “Goldthorpe Schema”. The decision to adopt the Goldthorpe classification as the basis for the NS-SEC was made because it is widely used and accepted internationally, is conceptually clear, and has been reasonably validated both in criterion terms as a measure and in construct terms as a good predictor of health and educational outcomes. NS-SEC improves on the Goldthorpe Schema in terms of more thorough validation. Therefore, although the NS-SEC classification is not used internationally, it is based on a classification which is internationally accepted.

Other information
Output quality trade-offs
(Trade-offs are the extent to which different dimensions of quality are balanced against each other.)

We carry out quarterly checks on the births dataset. These checks pick up any suspect records or information within a record that needs to be queried with the General Register Office (GRO). These records are then corrected where appropriate. This process ensures that when the annual extract is taken, the data are of the highest quality.

Any birth records which are still missing an age of mother, age of father, marital status or duration of marriage are imputed. The advantages of imputation are that all records can be published by these variables and time (and money) is not spent trying to obtain missing information. The disadvantage is that the data are not exact. For more information on the method used for imputation and the level of imputation each year see the Births metadata.

The information on occupation of the mother and father is coded for a 10% sample of births. This has been shown to give a good approximation to the actual data while being cost effective. Combining occupation with employment status means that a code for socio-economic classification can be derived.

Each year a certain number of births are not included in the published figures because they have been registered later than the date on which the annual dataset is taken. A table is published in the Births metadata which details the number of records excluded from statistics each year for this reason. Although this means that some births are not included in the statistics, it is a compromise which must be taken in order to publish timely data.

Assessment of user needs and perceptions
(The processes for finding out about uses and users, and their views on the statistical products.)

A feedback survey for birth statistics took place in July 2011 and results and responses to this survey have been published in a Birth summary tables user feedback survey report.
All statistical bulletins on births seek feedback from users with the inclusion of a standard statement within the background notes, “We welcome feedback from users on the content, format and relevance of our releases.”

User feedback is requested at the bottom of all emails sent by customer service teams within Vital Statistics Output Branch (VSOB). The standard wording is as follows, “We welcome feedback on the content, format and relevance of the data provided. Please provide any feedback and state whether you would like your contact details to be added to our list of users. All known users will be invited to participate in any consultations that are run.”

User feedback was requested on a recent published information note, detailing how changes to the population statistics act will affect birth statistics. No feedback was received so the proposed changes have been implemented.

Feedback is also received through our regular attendance at user group meetings and conferences. We maintain a list of known users of birth statistics, including which statistical outputs they use and the use made of them.

Sources for further information or advice

Accessibility and clarity
(Accessibility is the ease with which users are able to access the data, also reflecting the format in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information. Clarity refers to the quality and sufficiency of the release details, illustrations and accompanying advice.)

Our recommended format for accessible content is a combination of HTML web pages for narrative, charts and graphs, with data being provided in usable formats such as CSV and Excel. Our website also offers users the option to download the narrative in PDF format. In some instances other software may be used, or may be available on request. Available formats for content published on our website but not produced by us, or referenced on our website but stored elsewhere, may vary. For further information please refer to the contact details at the beginning of this document.

For information regarding conditions of access to data, please refer to the links below:

- [terms and conditions (for data on the website)]
- [copyright and reuse of published data]
- [pre-release access (including conditions of access)]
- [accessibility]

In addition to this quality and methodology information, basic quality information relevant to each release is available in the background notes of the relevant statistical bulletin. An example can be seen in the birth summary tables.

Special extracts and tabulations of births data for England and Wales are available to order (subject to legal frameworks, disclosure control, resources and agreements of costs, where appropriate). Such enquiries should be made to:

Vital Statistics Outputs Branch
Life Events and Population Sources Division
Office for National Statistics
Segensworth Road
Titchfield
Hampshire
PO15 5RR
Tel: +44 (0)1329 444 110
E-mail: vsob@ons.gsi.gov.uk

Special extracts and tabulations of births and infant deaths by ethnicity and gestation for England and Wales are available to order for a charge (subject to legal frameworks, disclosure control, resources and agreement of costs, where appropriate). Such requests or enquiries should be made to: Life Events Analysis Team: CIM@ons.gsi.gov.uk.
The ONS charging policy is available on our website. In line with our approach to open data, ad hoc data requests will be published onto the website.

We welcome feedback on the content, format and relevance of releases. Please send feedback to the postal or email address above.

**Useful links**

For information on data quality, legislation and procedures relating to birth statistics, please see births metadata.

The vital statistics: population and health reference tables provide annual births data for the United Kingdom and its constituent countries.

An interactive mapping tool, which enables trends in fertility to be analysed at the local level are available on our website.

For births data for other UK countries please see the latest birth statistics for Northern Ireland and the latest birth statistics for Scotland.