

# Record number of centenarians in UK

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**Coverage:** United Kingdom **Theme:** Population and Migration

More people than ever are on the Queen's birthday card list, as the number of people living to 100 years old in UK reached a record high.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has released new data showing that since 1981 the number of centenarians in the UK has more than quadrupled from 2,600 to 11,600.

According to the latest 2008-based national population projections, the number of centenarians in the UK will reach 87,900 by mid-2034 if current demographic trends continue.

Female centenarians have always outnumbered male centenarians, but the ratio has fallen in recent years. Since 2000 the estimated number of male centenarians has more than doubled from 700 to 1,700 in 2009, while the number of female centenarians increased by 62 per cent from 6,100 to 9,900.

The estimated number of centenarians has increased in all the UK countries. Between 2000 and 2009 the largest increase occurred in England and Wales (73 per cent), with the smallest increase in Northern Ireland (28 per cent).

In addition, to coincide with Older People's Day, ONS has also released data today showing that life expectancy in 2007-09 for both men and women hit record levels. Life expectancy at birth was 77.7 years for a man and 81.9 for a woman, up from 77.4 for a man and 81.6 for a woman in the previous year. Although women continue to live longer than men, since 1980-82 the gap has narrowed from 6.0 to 4.2 years.

Within the UK, life expectancy varies by country. England has the highest life expectancy at birth, 78.0 years for males and 82.1 years for females, while Scotland has the lowest, 75.3 years for males and 80.1 years for females.

As well as new data, ONS today launched 'version 2' of the ageing mapping tool allowing users to compare indicators of population ageing for different areas of the UK online. The new tool, which is available to everyone, includes the new variables 'sex ratios at age 65' and 'old age support ratio'. It also includes extra functions such as a new facility to locate local areas and the facility to download maps.

Commenting, senior ONS statistician Roma Chappell said: 'Everyone knows that people in the UK are living longer. The interactive mapping tool allows us to see clearly how things have changed over the years and which areas have been most affected by the increase in the number of older people.'

The full Older People's Day Statistical Bulletin includes other data on older people such as healthy life expectancy, living arrangements, employment data and pensioner income. It is available at: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdftdir/age0910.pdf>

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## Background Notes

1. For full data on topics covered in this news release, please see the links below:  
Interim Life Tables: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=14459>  
Estimates of the Very Elderly: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=15003>  
Life Expectancy: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/nugget.asp?ID=168>  
Centenarians: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=1875>
2. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the media office.
3. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.  
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