

Scotland's Census 2022 – Demography and migration in Aberdeenshire

On 1 August 2024 data on [demography and migration](#) from Scotland's Census 2022 was published. These statistics outline the characteristics of people who live in Scotland, how they reside and how they came to live in Scotland. This report highlights some of the main results for Aberdeenshire. All data is available to download from [Scotland's Census website](#).

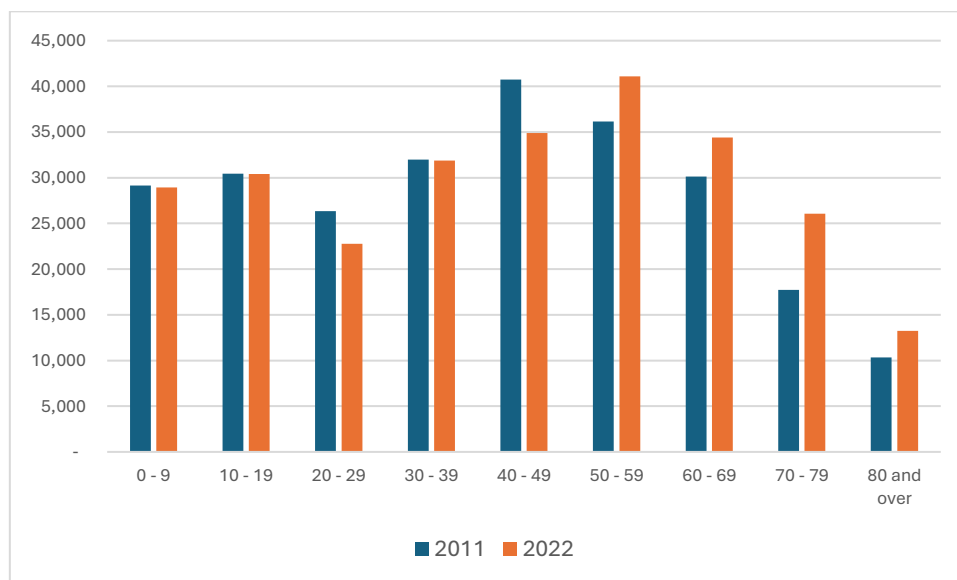
Population

On Census Day (20 March 2022), Aberdeenshire had a recorded residential population of 263,723, an increase of 10,750 (or 4.2%) from 2011. This is above the Scottish rate which increased by 2.7% between 2022 and 2011.

Figure 1 below shows people in their 50s made up the greatest number of Aberdeenshire's population with 41,091 (15.6%). This corresponds with the fact that those in their 40s represented the largest age bracket in Aberdeenshire in 2011 with 40,726 (15.4%). In 2022, people in their 50s were also the largest age bracket across Scotland but overall had a lower proportion at 14.7%.

Like Scotland, Aberdeenshire's population is ageing. There are 73,736 people (28.0%) now aged over 60, a significant increase from 58,191(23.0%) in 2011. For those aged 75 and over they represent 9.2% of the population which is more than the number of people in their 20s at 8.6%. The percentage of people in their 20s in Aberdeenshire has decreased from 10.4% in 2011. Compared to Aberdeenshire, Scotland overall has a higher proportion of people in their 20s at 12.5%.

Figure 1: Aberdeenshire Population by Age, 2022 and 2011



In Aberdeenshire, there are slightly more women (50.8%) than men (49.2%). This difference was more pronounced in the older age brackets, with 52.2% of people aged 60 or above being female. Males tended to outnumber females in the younger age brackets, for example, 51.4% of those in their 20s are male.

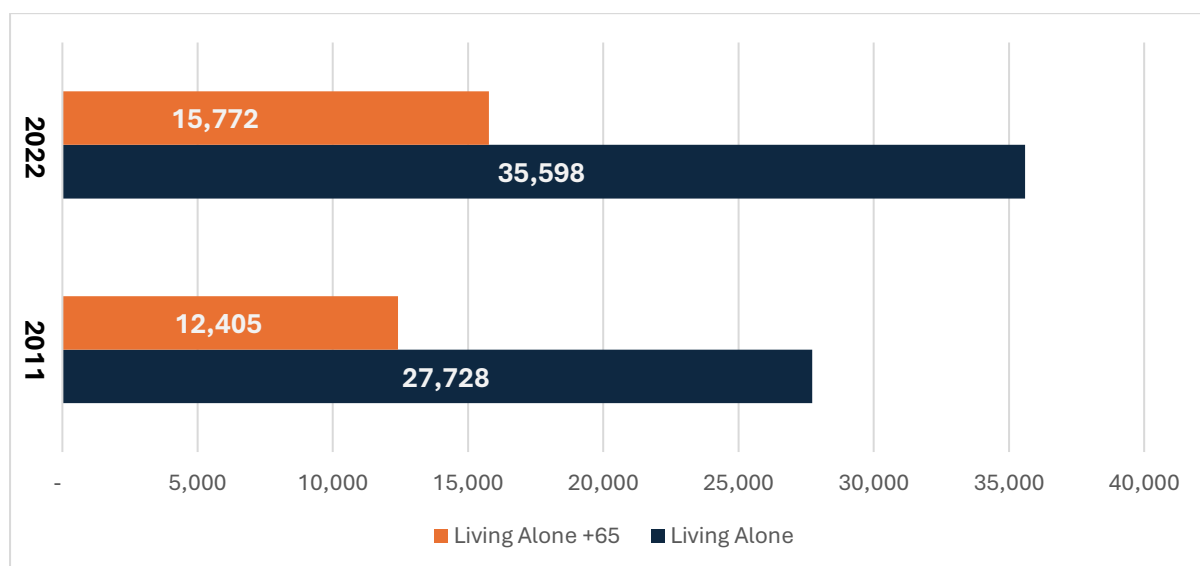
Households

There was a total of 115,769 households with at least one usual resident in Aberdeenshire on Census Day.

Living alone

Like Scotland, Aberdeenshire has seen a significant increase in the number of lone person households. Figure 2 below, shows between 2011 and 2022 the number of lone person households increased by 28.4% (from 27,728 to 35,598), which was more than double the national rate of 13%. A significant portion (15,772 or 44.3%) of people living alone were aged 65 or more.

Figure 2: Aberdeenshire Number of Lone Person Households, 2022 and 2011



2 or more people

In Aberdeenshire, for households with two or more people, couples¹ with children were most common at 22.4%, followed by couples without children at 14.2%. The rate of couples with children in Aberdeenshire is well above the national rate of 17.5%, which was also the most common household type for 2 or more people across Scotland.

Dependent children

Since 2011 there has been a 7.6% increase in the number of households with dependent children (that is those under the age of 16, or aged 16-18 in full time education) in Aberdeenshire. Aberdeenshire has one of the highest rates of households with dependent children in Scotland at 26.9%. Only two councils on the outskirts of Greater Glasgow and Edinburgh (East Renfrewshire at 31.4%, and Midlothian at 28.7%) had higher rates than Aberdeenshire.

4.7% of all households in Aberdeenshire (5,484 households) contain dependent children with one parent only, this is an increase from 4.5% in 2011 (4,722 households). This contrasts with the national rate which decreased from 7.2% in 2011 to 5.8% in 2022.

¹ Couples (married/civil partnership)

Non-dependent children

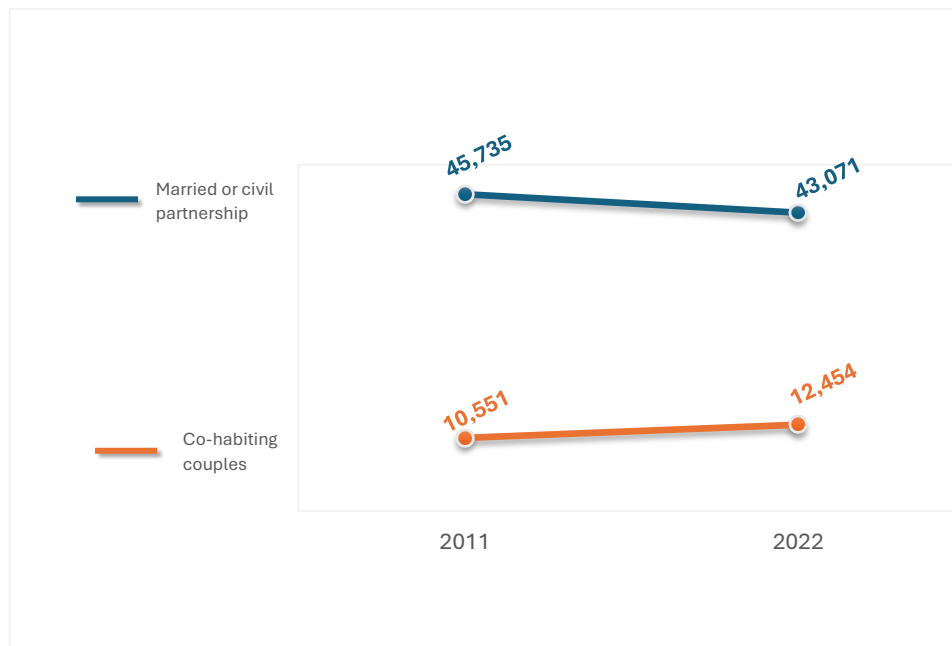
The number of households in Aberdeenshire with non-dependent children has marginally decreased by 0.1 % since 2011, with a total reduction of 15 households. The minor decrease in non-dependent children households, is not reflective of the national trend which saw an overall increase of 3.8%.

Relationships status

The Census data from 2022 shows the most common household relationship status in Aberdeenshire Council was married/civil partnership. This was also true in 2011, however as Figure 3 below shows, there were 2,664 more married/civil partnership households in 2011 compared to 2022. The 5.8% decrease in Aberdeenshire was more pronounced than the Scottish rate of 4.6%.

There was an 18.0% increase in the number of co-habiting households in Aberdeenshire between 2011 (10,551) and 2022 (12,454). Whilst this was a large increase, it was still below the national rate which was an increase of 25.6%.

Figure 3: Relationship status of couple households in Aberdeenshire, 2011-2022

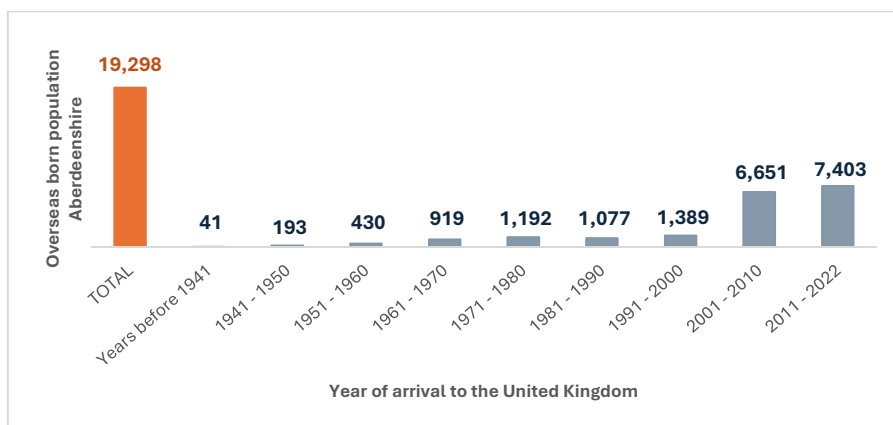


Migration

Population change

Aberdeenshire's population increased by 10,750 people between 2011 and 2022 due to migration, and the majority of this 68.9% (7,403) was migration from outside the United Kingdom. Figure 4 shows, that for Aberdeenshire, the period between 2011-2022 also had the highest number of immigrants arriving than any 10-year period dating back to 1941.

Figure 4: Overseas born population of Aberdeenshire by year of arrival to the United Kingdom, before 1941 to 2022



Length of time living in the United Kingdom

As of 2022, there were 19,298 residents in Aberdeenshire who were born outside of the United Kingdom. This accounts for 7.3% of the total residential population. This is below the Scottish figure of 10.2%.

As Figure 4 shows, for Aberdeenshire, 7,403 (38.4%) of those born overseas have arrived since 2011, and nearly three quarters 14,054 (72.8%) have arrived since 2001. The Aberdeenshire rate of 38.4% is still well below the Scottish rate of 53.4% of overseas born residents arriving between 2011 and 2022.

Age of arrival in the United Kingdom 2001-2022

Figure 5 below shows, in Aberdeenshire, those currently aged between 40-44 make up the largest cohort (15.6%) of overseas born residents who have arrived in the United Kingdom since 2001, this is followed closely by those aged 35-39 with 15.2%.

Across Scotland, those aged 35-39 make up the largest cohort (14.2%) of overseas born residents who have arrived in the United Kingdom since 2001, followed by those aged 30-34 (13.3%) and 20-24 (13.0%).

Figure 5: Percentage of overseas born population of Aberdeenshire and Scotland by current age, 2022

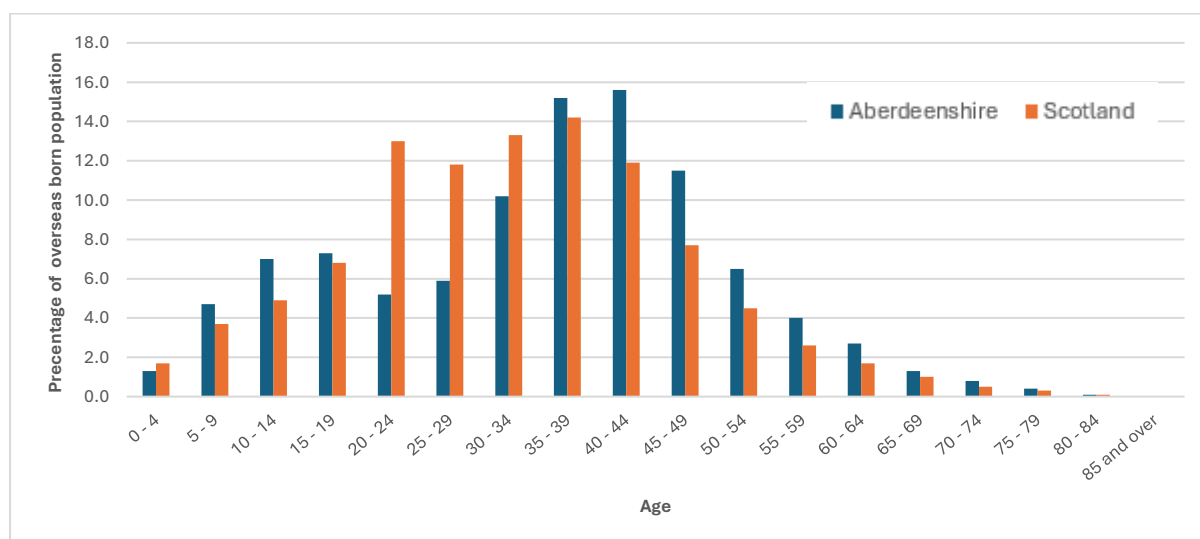


Figure 5 also shows that proportionally there are more people currently aged 20 – 34 in Scotland than in Aberdeenshire who were born overseas. Whereas, Aberdeenshire has a higher proportion of people who were born overseas compared to Scotland for all other age brackets (with the exception of 0-4 year olds).

Country of Birth

Aberdeenshire saw a slight reduction in the proportion of residents identifying Scotland as their country of birth, from 80.5% in 2011 to 80.0% in 2022, but an overall increase in the number of people born in Scotland. The decrease in proportion of the population born elsewhere in United Kingdom was larger, from 13.5% in 2011 to 12.7% in 2022, and this coincided with a total loss of 771 people.

After the United Kingdom, Poland is the most common country of birth for residents of Aberdeenshire with 3,169 (1.2%) residents. This is an increase of 424 residents from 2011, or 15.4% increase. Poland was also the most common country of birth (after the United Kingdom) for Scotland, accounting for 1.4% of the population. As with Aberdeenshire, Poland was also the most common country of birth (after the United Kingdom) in Scotland in 2011.

For Aberdeenshire, Lithuania represents the next most common country of birth after Poland with 1,478 residents. This is a 50.7% increase from 2011 when there were only 981 people listing Lithuania as their country of birth. At a national level, India was the next most common country of birth after Poland.

Table 1: Numbers and percentages of Aberdeenshire population by country of birth, 2011-2022

Country by birth	2011 Count	2022 Count	2011 Percentage	2022 Percentage
TOTAL	252,973	263,723		
Scotland	203,656	210,926	80.5%	80.0%
<i>Rest of United Kingdom</i>	34,270	33,499	13.5%	12.7%
Poland	2745	3,169	1.1%	1.2%
Lithuania	981	1,478	0.4%	0.6%
Germany	1039	974	0.4%	0.4%
Latvia	802	965	0.3%	0.4%
United States of America	780	813	0.3%	0.3%
South Africa	526	810	0.2%	0.3%
Republic of Ireland	572	684	0.2%	0.3%
Nigeria	223	600	0.1%	0.2%

Report produced by the Planning Information & Delivery Team, Aberdeenshire Council. For more information, please contact statistics@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or visit [Scotland's Census 2022](#) website.