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Coverage

United Kingdom

Theme

Population and Migration

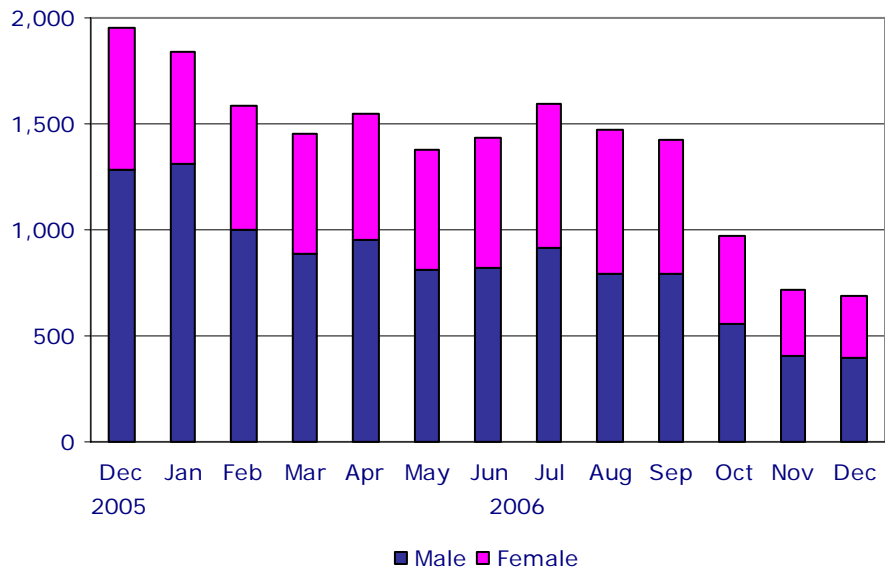
More than 18,000 civil partnerships formed

Same-sex couples formed 18,059 civil partnerships in the UK between December 2005 and the end of December 2006, according to provisional figures released today by the Office for National Statistics. Of these, 16,173 took place in England, 627 in Wales, 1,131 in Scotland and 128 in Northern Ireland.

A total of 1,953 partnerships were formed in the UK in December 2005. There were 16,106 in 2006. The average number of partnerships formed each month between January and March 2006 was 1,623, falling to 1,476 between April and September and 794 between October and December.

Civil Partnerships, UK

Numbers



Up to the end of 2006, there were more male civil partnerships formed than female in all four countries of the UK. In December 2005, 66 per cent of all people forming partnerships were male. In 2006, this proportion was 60 per cent.

In England, 9,913 male and 6,260 female partnerships were formed up to the end of 2006. The corresponding figures were

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318 and 309 in Wales, 633 and 498 in Scotland and 71 and 57 in Northern Ireland.

The average age at formation in the UK in December 2005 was 53.9 years for men and 46.1 years for women. In 2006, it was 47.0 and 43.6 years respectively. The average age of all partners in 2006 was highest in England (45.8) and lowest in Northern Ireland (41.3). The average age in Wales was 45.3 and in Scotland, 44.4 years.

London had the highest proportion of male civil partnerships (79 per cent in December 2005 and 76 per cent in 2006). Slightly more women than men (51 per cent) registered a partnership in both Yorkshire and The Humber and the East Midlands up to the end of 2006.

London was the most popular region within the UK in which to register a partnership between December 2005 and the end of 2006. A quarter of all civil partnerships took place there (3,429 male and 1,059 female), more than twice the proportion of the population of the UK aged 16 and over living in this region.

The most popular areas in which to form a civil partnership up to the end of 2006 were Greater Manchester Metropolitan County (430 male and 304 female partnerships), Brighton and Hove Unitary Authority (453 male and 236 female partnerships) and the London Borough of Westminster (514 male and 88 female partnerships). The proportion of male partnerships in these areas was 59, 66 and 85 per cent respectively.

Up to the end of 2006, 10 per cent of men and 24 per cent of women forming a civil partnership in the UK had been in a previous marriage (see background note 8). In 2006, 21 per cent of people entering a partnership in Wales had previously been married compared with 16 per cent in Scotland, 15 per cent in England and 12 per cent in Northern Ireland.

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. Civil Partnership data released today are provisional. Civil partnership data released today are available at:
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=14675>
2. The Civil Partnership Act 2004 came into force on 5 December 2005 in the UK, the first day couples could give notice of their intention to form a civil partnership. The Act enables same-sex couples aged 16 and over to obtain legal recognition of their relationship. The first day that couples could normally form a partnership was 19 December 2005 in Northern Ireland, 20 December 2005 in Scotland and 21 December 2005 in England and Wales (18 civil partnerships were formed under special arrangements before these dates. These are included in the figures. All were in England and Wales).
3. The figures relate only to civil partnerships taking place in the constituent countries of the UK. They do not include civil partnerships of UK residents taking place abroad but will include non UK residents who form a partnership in the UK.
4. Data are based on area of formation and not area of residence.
5. The average (mean) ages presented in this first release are not standardised and therefore take no account of the structure of the population by age or legal partnership status.
6. Population data are mid-year 2005 population estimates for the resident population of the UK.
7. Areas are defined as unitary authorities, counties and London boroughs (within England and Wales), council areas (within Scotland) and health boards (within Northern Ireland)
8. Up to the end of 2006, six people forming a civil partnership in England had previously been in a civil partnership formed outside the UK.
9. National Statistics on dissolutions of civil partnerships are not yet available.
10. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the press office.
11. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular



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