Additional analysis annex to 'Family and its Protective Effect: Part 1 of the Independent Family Review'

September 2022

CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER
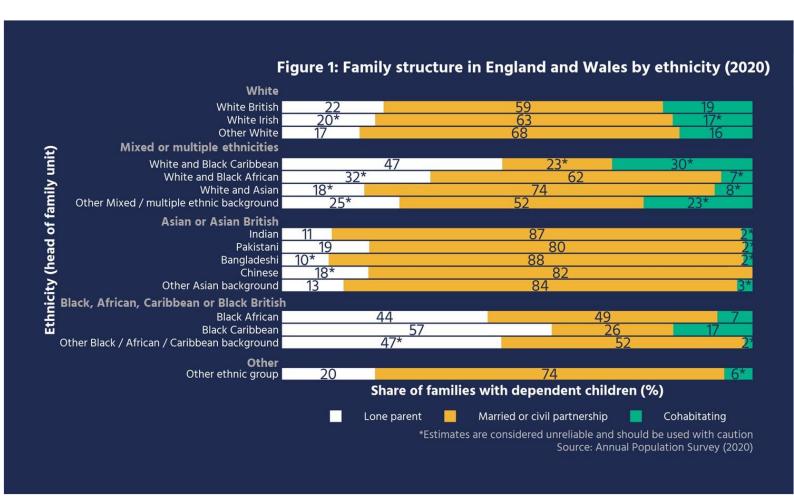
Contents

Introduction

To support Part 1 of the Family Review, the Children's Commissioner's office (CCo) has undertaken additional analysis of the Annual Population Survey, birth registration data, Understanding Society, and the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LYPSE).
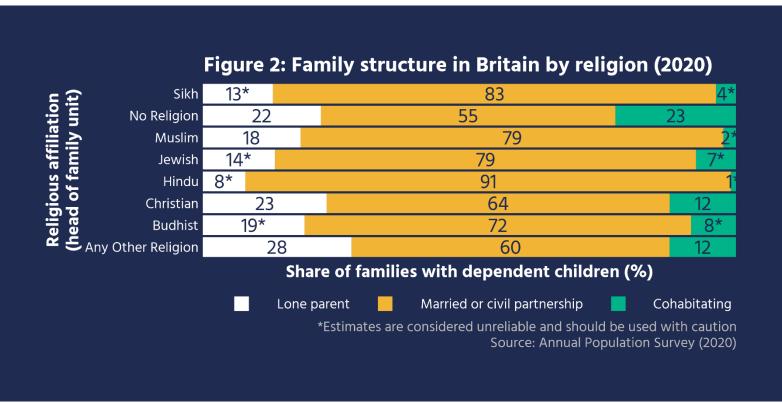
1. Annual Population Survey

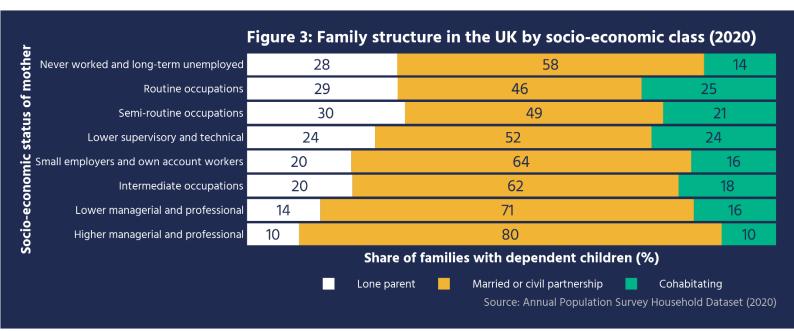### 1.1 Breakdown of family structure by ethnicity, religion and socio-economic class

Estimates from the Office for National Statistics on family life are not broken down by ethnicity, religious affiliation, or socio-economic status. The CCo uses the 2020 household-level Annual Population Survey to construct a breakdown of family composition by ethnicity, religion and socio-economic status, shown in Figures 1, 2 and 3.[1] All breakdowns on the share of lone parent families, married or civil partnership families and cohabiting families are weighted at the household level. Estimates where the coefficient of variation is over 20% are denoted with a star as being unreliable.

To breakdown family structure by socio-economic status, the office restricts the sample to mothers instead of head of family unit as the default head of family unit is the father and gender correlates with both socio-economic status and probability of being in a lone parent family.

Figure 1: Family structure in England and Wales by ethnicity (2020)

Ethnicity (head of family unit)	Lone parent	Married or civil partnership	Cohabiting
White			
White British	22	59	19
White Irish	20*	63	17*
Other White	17	68	16
Mixed or multiple ethnicities			
White and Black Caribbean	47	23*	30*
White and Black African	32*	62	7*
White and Asian	18*	74	8*
Other Mixed / multiple ethnic background	25*	52	23*
Asian or Asian British			
Indian	11	87	2*
Pakistani	19	80	2*
Bangladeshi	10*	88	2*
Chinese	18*	82	
Other Asian background	13	84	3*
Black, African, Caribbean or Black British			
Black African	44	49	7
Black Caribbean	57	26	17
Other Black / African / Caribbean background	47*	52	2*
Other			
Other ethnic group	20	74	6*

Share of families with dependent children (%)

Legend: Lone parent ■ | Married or civil partnership ■ | Cohabiting ■

*Estimates are considered unreliable and should be used with caution
Source: Annual Population Survey (2020)

Figure 2: Family structure in Britain by religion (2020)

Religious affiliation (head of family unit)

Religion	Lone parent	Married or civil partnership	Cohabitating
Sikh	13*	83	4*
No Religion	22	55	23
Muslim	18	79	2*
Jewish	14*	79	7*
Hindu	8*	91	1
Christian	23	64	12
Budhist	19*	72	8*
Any Other Religion	28	60	12

Share of families with dependent children (%)

☐ Lone parent ☐ Married or civil partnership ☐ Cohabitating

*Estimates are considered unreliable and should be used with caution
Source: Annual Population Survey (2020)

Figure 3: Family structure in the UK by socio-economic class (2020)

Socio-economic status of mother

Status	Lone parent	Married or civil partnership	Cohabitating
Never worked and long-term unemployed	28	58	14
Routine occupations	29	46	25
Semi-routine occupations	30	49	21
Lower supervisory and technical	24	52	24
Small employers and own account workers	20	64	16
Intermediate occupations	20	62	18
Lower managerial and professional	14	71	16
Higher managerial and professional	10	80	10

Share of families with dependent children (%)

☐ Lone parent ☐ Married or civil partnership ☐ Cohabitating

Source: Annual Population Survey Household Dataset (2020)

1.2 Decomposing variation in the lone parent rate and marriage rate

Using the sample of mothers with dependent children, the CCo regressed an indicator for lone parenthood and an indicator for marriage on a set of demographic variables including detailed ethnicity, age, socio-economic status, education, religion and region and decomposed the variation in lone parent rates and marriage rates.

Table 1 shows that controlling for mothers' age, ethnicity, religion, education, region, and socio-economic class (SEC) explains 8% of the variation in lone parent rates. Of this variation, 30% can be explained by socio-economic status, 27% by ethnicity, 25% by education, 8% by religion, 8% by region and 3% by age.

Table 1 also shows that controlling for mother's age, ethnicity, religion, education, region, and socio-economic class (SEC) explains 14% of the variation in marriage rates. Of this variation, 20% is explained by differences in mothers' religion, 20% by differences in age, 19% by ethnicity, 18% by education and 17% by socio-economic status and 6% by region.

Table 1: Correlates of lone parent rate and marriage rate among families

	Dependent variable:	
	Lone parent	Married
Ethnicity: Black African (ref: Bangladeshi)	0.292***	-0.295***
	(0.033)	(0.037)
Ethnicity: Black Caribbean (ref: Bangladeshi)	0.467***	-0.510***
	(0.040)	(0.045)
Ethnicity: Chinese (ref: Bangladeshi)	0.033	0.017
	(0.044)	(0.050)
Ethnicity: Indian (ref: Bangladeshi)	0.017	0.006
	(0.034)	(0.039)
Ethnicity: Other Asian background (ref: Bangladeshi)	-0.001	0.016
	(0.035)	(0.040)
Ethnicity: Other Black / African / Caribbean background (ref: Bangladeshi)	0.386***	-0.370***
	(0.061)	(0.070)
Ethnicity: Other ethnic group (ref: Bangladeshi)	0.064**	-0.088**
	(0.032)	(0.037)

Ethnicity: Other Mixed / multiple ethnic background (ref: Bangladeshi)	0.144***	-0.225***
	(0.048)	(0.055)
Ethnicity: Other White (ref: Bangladeshi)	0.059*	-0.128***
	(0.032)	(0.036)
Ethnicity: Pakistani (ref: Bangladeshi)	0.039	-0.025
	(0.029)	(0.033)
Ethnicity: White and Asian (ref: Bangladeshi)	0.205***	-0.248***
	(0.057)	(0.065)
White and Black African (ref: Bangladeshi)	0.197***	-0.195**
	(0.074)	(0.084)
White and Black Caribbean (ref: Bangladeshi)	0.274***	-0.388***
	(0.052)	(0.060)
White British (ref: Bangladeshi)	0.109***	-0.181***
	(0.031)	(0.035)
White Irish (ref: Bangladeshi)	0.034	-0.170***
	(0.047)	(0.054)
Age	-0.002***	0.009***
	(0.0003)	(0.0004)
Religious affiliation: Buddhist (ref: Other)	-0.119***	0.121**
	(0.045)	(0.051)
Religious affiliation: Christian (ref: Other)	-0.070***	0.092***
	(0.022)	(0.025)
Religious affiliation: Hindu (ref: Other)	-0.092***	0.152***
	(0.033)	(0.038)
Religious affiliation: Jewish (ref: Other)	-0.105**	0.195***
	(0.044)	(0.050)
Religious affiliation: Muslim (ref: Other)	-0.097***	0.184***
	(0.028)	(0.031)
Religious affiliation: No Religion (ref: Other)	-0.021	-0.021
	(0.022)	(0.025)
Religious affiliation: Sikh (ref: Other)	-0.078*	0.136***

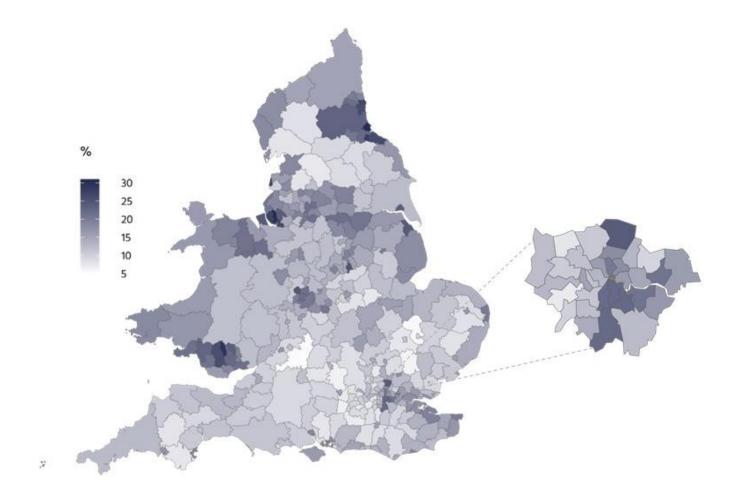|		
	(0.040)	(0.046)
Highest qualification: No degree (ref: Degree)	0.095***	-0.121***
	(0.006)	(0.007)
SEC: Lower managerial and professional (ref: Higher managerial)	0.025***	-0.045***
	(0.009)	(0.010)
SEC: Intermediate occupations (ref: Higher managerial)	0.041***	-0.065***
	(0.010)	(0.011)
SEC: Small employers and own account workers (ref: Higher managerial)	0.058***	-0.067***
	(0.013)	(0.014)
SEC: Lower supervisory and technical (ref: Higher managerial)	0.099***	-0.125***
	(0.016)	(0.018)
SEC: Semi-routine occupations (ref: Higher managerial)	0.151***	-0.171***
	(0.011)	(0.012)
SEC: Routine occupations (ref: Higher managerial)	0.151***	-0.176***
	(0.014)	(0.015)
SEC: Never worked or unemployed (ref: Higher managerial)	0.130***	-0.120***
	(0.011)	(0.012)
Region: Eastern (ref: East Midlands)	-0.033**	0.034**
	(0.014)	(0.016)
Region: London (ref: East Midlands)	0.039***	-0.021
	(0.014)	(0.016)
Region: Merseyside (ref: East Midlands)	0.068***	-0.071***
	(0.018)	(0.021)
Region: North East (ref: East Midlands)	0.061***	-0.066***
	(0.014)	(0.016)
Region: North West (ref: East Midlands)	0.029**	-0.053***
	(0.013)	(0.015)
Region: South East (ref: East Midlands)	-0.029**	0.038**
	(0.013)	(0.015)
Region: South West (ref: East Midlands)	-0.027**	0.041***
	(0.014)	(0.016)

Region: Wales (ref: East Midlands)	0.006	-0.008
	(0.013)	(0.015)
Region: West Midlands (ref: East Midlands)	0.013	-0.018
	(0.014)	(0.016)
Region: Yorkshire and the Humberside (ref: East Midlands)	0.006	0.006
	(0.014)	(0.016)
Constant	0.102**	0.544***
	(0.041)	(0.047)
Observations	24,644	24,644
R^2	0.081	0.135
Adjusted R^2	0.080	0.134
Variation due to:		
Ethnicity	27%	19%
Age	3%	20%
Region	8%	6%
SEC	30%	14%
Religious affiliation	8%	20%
Education	25%	18%
Residual Std. Error (df = 24602)	0.398	0.452
F Statistic (df = 41; 24602)	53.173***	94.045***

Note: $^{*}p^{**}p^{***}p<0.01$

2. Birth registration data

ONS birth registration data includes number of births by local authority and registration type (within marriage or civil partnership, joint registrations at the same address, joint registrations at a different address and sole registrations). The CCo combines the number of sole registrations and joint registrations at a different address to generate a share of births to single mothers at a local authority level in 2020.[2] Figure 4 shows that this share varies from 5% to 31%.

Figure 4: Share of births to lone mothers (%) in 2020 by local authority in England and Wales

3. Understanding Society

Understanding Society is a longitudinal household survey which includes questions on family dynamics and subjective well-being.[3] The CCo examined the relationship between elements of family life and subjective well-being across income levels.

Frequency of eating dinner with children

Parents were asked: "In the past 7 days, how many times have you eaten an evening meal together with your child and other family members who live with you?" in six different survey waves (waves 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11). In the most recent wave (2019-2020), 51% had dinner with their child at least 6 times a week. Among parents who ate dinner with their child at least 6 times a week, 75% were satisfied with life overall, compared to those who didn't where 70% were satisfied with life overall.

Extent to which parents can rely on immediate family or friends when there's a problem

People with immediate family were asked "How much can you rely on [immediate family] if you have a serious problem?" in three waves (waves 2, 5 and 11). In Wave 11 (2019-2020), 57% could rely on family a lot. Figure 5 shows that the likelihood of being able to rely on your family a lot is similar across income groups.
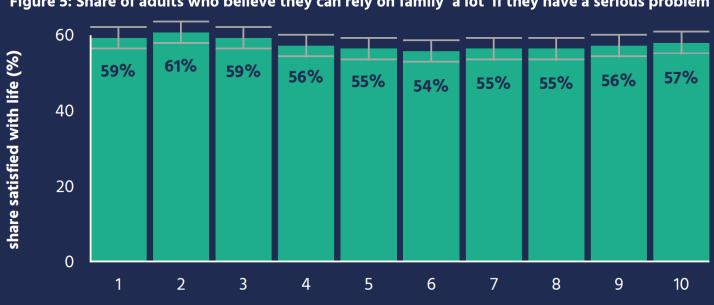
Figure 5: Share of adults who believe they can rely on family 'a lot' if they have a serious problem

Source: Understanding Society, Wave 11 (2019–2020)
Number of observations: 27953, 95% confidence intervals in grey

Among people who could rely on their family a lot, 80% were satisfied with life overall, compared to those who didn't where 66% were satisfied with life overall. Figure 6 shows that across all household net income deciles, but particularly lower income deciles, there was a significant gap in the likelihood of being satisfied with life overall between those who could and could not rely on their family.
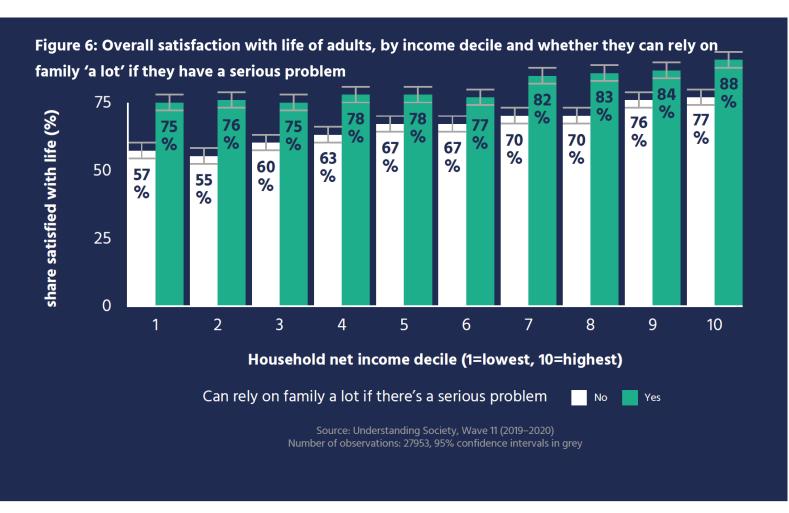
Figure 6: Overall satisfaction with life of adults, by income decile and whether they can rely on family 'a lot' if they have a serious problem

Source: Understanding Society, Wave 11 (2019–2020)
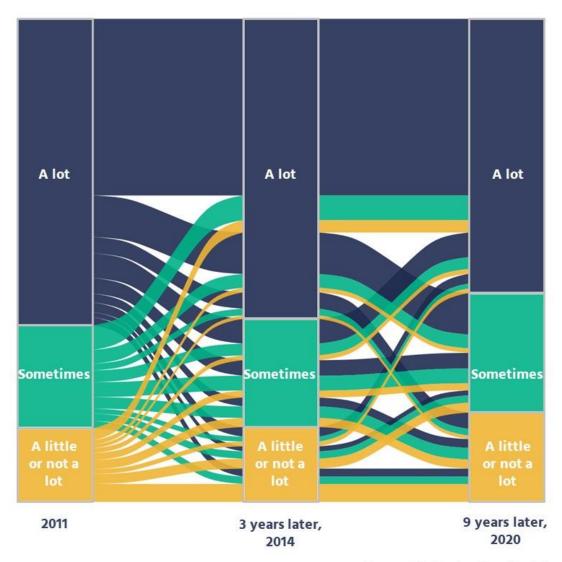Number of observations: 27953, 95% confidence intervals in grey

Figure 7 plots the breakdown of responses to the question on how much people can rely on their family in Wave 2, Wave 5 and Wave 11 for the cohort of people responding to this question in all three of these waves. This shows that the extent to which people can rely on their family changes over time.

Figure 7: How much can you rely on your family if you have a problem?

Source: Understanding Society

4. Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE)

The Longitudinal Study of Young People in England is a longitudinal survey of 16,000 young people starting at age 13-14 and running to age 25-26.[4] Using LSYPE, Rothon, Goodwin and Stansfeld (2012) found that good parental relationships at age 13-14 were associated with a higher probability of passing five GCSEs.[5] We extend this analysis by examining the relationship between how well a young person gets on with their parents at age 13-14 and their hourly wage at age 25. Regression results in Table 2 show that controlling for household socio-economic status, household type, gender and ethnicity, getting on well with at least one of your parents is associated with 2% higher income at age 25.

Table 2: OLS regression results

	Dependent variable:
	Log(Hourly wage at age 25)
Gets on fairly well with at least one parent (ref: doesn't get on well with parent(s))	0.153***
	(0.059)
Gets on very well with at least one parent (ref: doesn't get on well with parent(s))	0.177***
	(0.058)
Household type: Lone parent (ref: cohabitating)	-0.074***
	(0.027)
Household type: Married (ref: cohabitating)	-0.009
	(0.025)
Mixed (ref: White)	0.031
	(0.044)
Indian (ref: White)	0.124***
	(0.046)
Pakistani (ref: White)	-0.058
	(0.051)
Bangladeshi (ref: White)	0.156**
	(0.073)
Black Caribbean (ref: White)	0.047
	(0.065)
Black African (ref: White)	0.146**
	(0.061)
Other (ref: Male)	0.186***
	(0.054)
Female (ref: Male)	-0.052***
	(0.014)
Parental SEC: Lower managerial (ref: Higher professional)	-0.040

	(0.031)
Parental SEC: Intermediate (ref: Higher professional)	-0.089***
	(0.033)
Parental SEC: Small employers (ref: Higher professional)	-0.064*
	(0.037)
Parental SEC: Lower supervisory (ref: Higher professional)	-0.131***
	(0.037)
Parental SEC: Semi-routine (ref: Higher professional)	-0.062**
	(0.032)
Parental SEC: Routine (ref: Higher professional)	-0.152***
	(0.034)
Parental SEC: Long term unemployed (ref: Higher professional)	-0.137***
	(0.042)
Constant	2.028***
	(0.067)
Observations	4,774
R^2	0.024
Adjusted R^2	0.020
Residual Std. Error	0.465 (df = 4754)
F Statistic	6.186*** (df = 19; 4754)

Note: Model weighted using wave 8 final weights. Hourly income generated by dividing weekly take-home pay by number of hours worked per week in the respondents main job.

*p**p***p<0.01

[1] Office for National Statistics. (2021). Annual Population Survey Household Dataset, January - December, 2020. UK Data Service. SN: 8861, DOI: 10.5255/UKDA-SN-8861-1

[2] Office for National Statistics. 2022. Birth characteristics dataset, available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/livebirths/datasets/birthcharacteristicsinenglandandwales

[3] University of Essex, Institute for Social and Economic Research. (2022). Understanding Society: Waves 1-11, 2009-2020 and Harmonised BHPS: Waves 1-18, 1991-2009. [data collection]. 15th Edition. UK Data Service. SN: 6614, http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-6614-16.

[4] University College London, UCL Institute of Education, Centre for Longitudinal Studies. (2021). Next Steps: Sweeps 1-8, 2004-2016. [data collection]. 16th Edition. UK Data Service. SN: 5545, DOI: 10.5255/UKDA-SN-5545-8

[5] Rothon, C., Goodwin, L. and Stansfeld, S. 2012. 'Family social support, community "social capital" and adolescents' mental health and educational outcomes: a longitudinal study in England.' Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology. 47:5. 697-709.