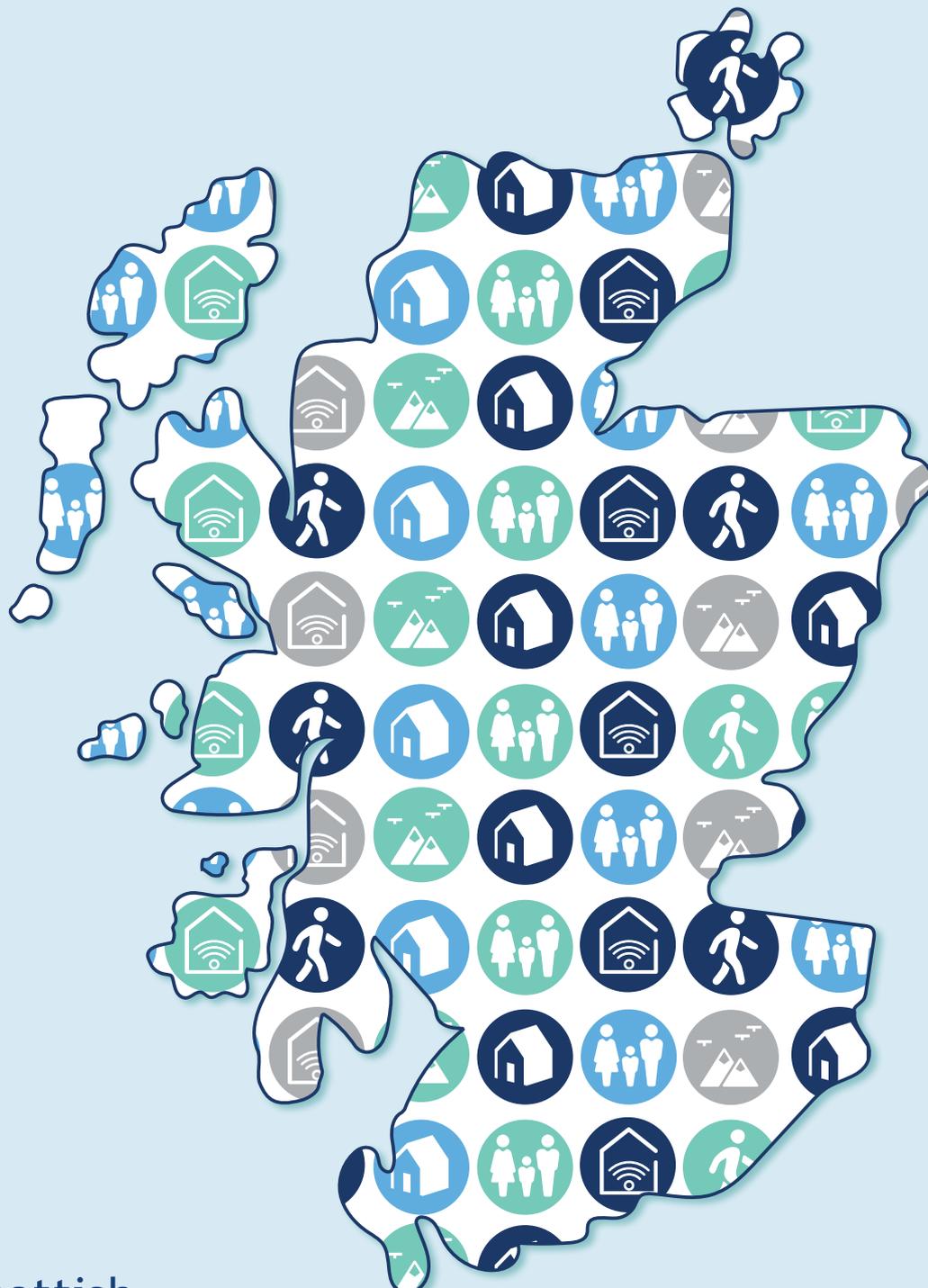


Scottish Household Survey: Twenty Years of Scotland's People: 1999-2019

A National Statistics publication for Scotland



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Household
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Scottish Household Survey Project Team

Communities Analysis Division

The Scottish Government

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Thank you to all the people involved in the development, implementation and reporting of the Scottish Household Survey results.

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1 Introduction

The Scottish Household Survey began collecting data in 1999. In 2019, it celebrated its 20-year anniversary. This publication synthesises 20 years of change in Scottish society as measured by Scottish Household Survey data.

In twenty years of Scottish life, much has changed and this report highlights the different experiences and views of diverse household types in Scotland between 1999 and 2019 with a focus on housing, neighbourhood rating, economic activity and how households are managing financially. It has a particular emphasis on single parent households, older people (over 60 years old), younger people (16 to 24 years old), women in the workforce and inequality.

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) was introduced in 2004. To measure how inequality has changed between 1999 and 2019, the methodology of the comparison of the 20 per cent lowest income household and the 20 per cent highest income households was adopted. This publication will give a brief overview of the increasing and decreasing trends over the 20 years for each topic then a more in-depth breakdown of each significant change.

This publication accompanies the Scottish Household Survey Data Comic: Twenty Years of Scotland's People and an Excel Spreadsheet containing detailed tables on 20 year change.

The SHS uses eight household types defined as follows:

- A **single adult** household – contains one adult aged 16 to 64 and no children.
- A **single parent**¹ household – contains one adult of any age and one or more children.
- A **single older** household - contains one adult of pensionable age and no children. Pensionable age is 65 and over for both women and men.
- A **small family** household – contains two adults of any age and one or two children.

¹ It should be noted that the definition of a single parent does not make any distinction between situations where a child has regular contact and/or partly resides with their other parent and a child who solely resides with and is cared for by one parent.

- An **older smaller** household – contains one adult aged 16 to 64 and one of pensionable age and no children, or two adults of pensionable age and no children.
- A **large adult** household – contains three or more adults and no children.
- A **small adult** household – contains two adults aged 16 to 64 and no children.
- A **large family** household – contains two adults of any age and three or more children, or three or more adults of any age and one or more children.

2 Housing

2.1 Household type

Over 20 years, households in Scotland have been getting smaller. There has been an increase of adults under 65 living alone. In 1999, this was 16 per cent and grew to 20 per cent in 2019. However, single pensioner households have decreased from 16 per cent in 1999 to 14 per cent in 2019.

Household type by 20 per cent highest/lowest income households

Changes vary by income group. For people in the 20 per cent lowest income households, the proportion of adults under 65 living alone increased from 25 per cent to 32 per cent. In the 20 per cent highest income households, this increased from four to six per cent.

In the 20 per cent lowest income group, the proportion of single pensioner households decreased from 43 per cent in 1999 to 32 per cent in 2019, while the proportion of single and small adult households both increased. In the 20 per cent highest income group, there has been much less change. The most notable change is a decrease in large family households, from 15 per cent in 1999 to 11 per cent in 2019.

2.2 Tenure of household

Overall, there has been a large increase in the number of households in Scotland, from 2.2 million in 1999 to 2.5 million households in 2019². Large shifts in home tenure have also occurred over time. The proportion of socially rented households has declined significantly between 1999 and 2019 from 32 per cent to 24 per cent. Since 1999 the Private Rented Sector (PRS) has risen significantly, in 1999 five per cent of households rented privately, in 2019 this increased to 14 per cent.

² <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/households/household-estimates/2019>

The percentage of owner occupiers was highest from 2001 to 2011, it has since declined to the around the same proportion of 1999 (61 per cent). Between 1999 and 2019, the overall percentage of households that own their homes outright increased from 22 per cent to 33 per cent. There was also a ten percentage point decrease in households that bought their home with help of a loan or mortgage (from 39 per cent in 1999 to 29 per cent in 2019).

Tenure of household by age of highest income householder (HIH)

From 1999 to 2019 there was a significant decrease in owner occupiers in the 16 to 34 (54 per cent to 38 per cent) and 35 to 59 (69 per cent to 63 per cent) age groups. For households where the highest income householder (HIH) was 60 or over, there was a substantial increase in the proportion of owner occupiers, from 56 per cent in 1999 to 72 per cent in 2019.

For households where the HIH was 60 or over the proportion of households that owned their home outright rose from 46 per cent in 1999 to 66 percent in 2019.

The proportion of households that bought their home with the help of a loan or mortgage decreased from 39 per cent to 29 per cent between 1999 and 2019. Where the HIH was aged between 16 and 34 this declined from 48 per cent to 35 per cent, and from 54 per cent to 45 per cent where with the HIH was aged 35 to 59. Where the HIH was aged 60 and over this dropped from ten per cent to six per cent.

The proportion of households socially renting, where the HIH is aged between 16 and 34 has declined from 32 per cent to 23 per cent over the 20 years. Where the HIH was aged 60 or over this declined from 39 per cent to 22 per cent.

The proportion of households in the PRS has grown for all age groups in the last 20 years. The largest increase can be seen in the youngest age group - where the HIH was aged 16 to 34 the proportion increased from 13 per cent in 1999 to 38 per cent in 2019. For households where the highest earner was 60 or over this has remained relatively low – rising from two per cent in 1999 to four per cent in 2019.

Tenure of household by urban/rural classifications

Small variations occurred in tenure when comparing by urban and rural classifications. In 1999, 21 per cent of households were owned outright in urban areas and 31 per cent were owned outright in rural areas. In 2019 for urban areas this had increased to 31 per cent and in rural areas this had increased to 43 per cent.

In 1999, 39 per cent of households in urban areas were buying their homes with help of a loan or a mortgage, with 37 per cent in rural areas. In 2019, urban and rural households buying their home with help of a loan or mortgage had decreased to 29 per cent and 28 per cent respectively.

The proportion of households socially renting in urban areas has decreased from 34 per cent in 1999 to 25 per cent in 2019. While in rural areas the proportion had decreased from 19 per cent to 15 per cent between 1999 and 2019.

In 1999, the proportion of households privately renting was higher in rural areas (eight per cent), compared to in urban areas (five per cent). Both areas show an upward trend in private renting households over the last 20 years. The PRS has increased to 14 per cent in urban areas and 11 per cent in rural areas.

Tenure for 20 per cent highest and lowest income households

Notable variations can be identified in tenure when comparing the 20 per cent lowest and 20 per cent highest income households. Both income groups show upward trends in the proportion of households owning their homes outright and renting privately over the 20 years, and both show a decrease in the proportion of households buying their homes with help of a loan or a mortgage between 1999 and 2019.

In 1999, six per cent of households in the 20 per cent lowest income group were in the PRS. In 2019 this grew to 13 per cent. Three per cent of households in the 20 per cent highest income group were in the PRS in 1999 and this increased to nine per cent in 2019.

While social renting has remained at low levels for the 20 per cent highest income households over the 20 years there has been a significant decrease in the 20 per cent lowest income households socially renting, from 51 per cent in 1999 to 40 per cent in 2019.

In 1999, 41 per cent of households in the 20 per cent lowest income group were owner occupied. In 2019 this had increased to 45 per cent, however this has decreased from 50 per cent in 2009. In 1999, 93 per cent of households in the 20 per cent highest income group were owner occupied. This has decreased to 87 per cent in 2019.

Tenure for single parent households

Between 1999 and 2019 there was a decrease in single parent households socially renting their home. In 1999 this was 69 per cent and in 2019 it decreased to 51 per cent.

Over the last 20 years single parent households renting privately has increased from six per cent in 1999 to 20 per cent in 2019.

Tenure for young households (HIH aged 16 to 24)

In 1999, 28 per cent of young households (where the highest earner was aged 16 to 24) were owner occupied, in 2019 this decreased to 17 per cent. However, this has increased over the latest five years.

Between 1999 and 2019 the proportion of young households buying their home with the help of a loan or mortgage dropped from 23 per cent to 14 per cent.

In 1999, 39 per cent of young households were socially renting their homes; in 2019 this decreased to 24 per cent.

There has been a significant increase in the proportion of young households privately renting their homes over the last 20 years. In 1999 this was 30 per cent and this increased to 56 per cent in 2019.

3 Neighbourhoods & Communities

In 2019, the majority of households in Scotland rated their neighbourhood as a very good place to stay (57 per cent). This had increased from 49 per cent in 1999.

In 1999, 58 per cent of households in the 20 per cent highest income group rated their neighbourhood as a very good place to live. This increased to 66 per cent in 2019. For households in the 20 per cent lowest income group, 46 per cent rated their neighbourhood as a very good place to live in 1999 and this rose to 53 per cent in 2019.

Households from rural areas were more likely to rate their neighbourhood as a very good place to live compared to households in urban areas – this has been a consistent finding over the last 20 years.

4 Economic Activity

Overall, the economic status of adults in Scotland has remained relatively stable over the last 20 years with some small proportional changes. There were small increases in adults reporting to be self-employed, working full-time, permanently retired from work and in higher or further education. Decreasing trends over the 20 years can be seen in adults reporting to be unemployed and seeking work and adults who reported they looking after the home or family. Variations become more apparent when we analyse economic activity by gender, age, income and households with or without children present.

Economic activity of adults by age

This section analyses economic activity by age group, categorised first into the age group 16 to 64, then into age bands of 16 to 39, 40 to 59 and aged over 60. There is a more in-depth analysis of the age groups 16 to 24 and over 60 in further sections.

Aged 16 to 64

There has been a two percentage point increase in adults aged 16 to 64 that report self-employed status, rising from six per cent in 1999 to eight per cent in 2019.

In 1999, 49 per cent of adults aged 16 to 64 reported working full-time, this increased to 49 per cent in 2019.

In 1999, nine per cent adults aged 16 to 64 reported they were looking after the home or family, this declined to five per cent in 2019.

In 1999, six per cent of adults aged 16 to 64 reported being unemployed and seeking work, this declined to four per cent in 2019.

Ages 16 to 39, 40 to 59 and over 60

Increasing trends were marked in self-employment over all three age cohorts.

For adults who are employed full-time, there were increases for the age groups 40 to 59 and over 60, while this has remained stable for the 16 to 39 age group.

Over the 20 years, only adults aged 60 plus displayed a change in reporting to be employed part-time over the 20 years, rising from three per cent to six per cent.

All age groups show a decline in adults reporting to look after the home or the family.

Adults aged 40 to 59 reporting to work full-time had increased from 46 per cent in 1999 to 54 per cent in 2019. For adults aged 60 and over, those reporting to work full-time increased from four per cent to seven per cent in 2019. Those in the younger age cohort, 16 to 39, show no marked change in the proportion who reported being full-time, remaining around a half over the last 20 years.

Between 1999 and 2019, adults reporting to look after the home or family had decreased from nine per cent to six per cent for adults aged 16 to 39.

For adults aged 16 to 39 in 1999, nine per cent reported that they were looking after the home or family. This decreased to six per cent in 2019. In 1999, ten per cent of adults aged 40 to 59 reported to be looking after the home or family. By 2019, this had decreased to five per cent. For adults aged 60 and over this decreased from five per cent to one per cent over the 20 years.

For both age cohorts 16 to 39 and 40 to 59 there was a decrease in adults reporting to be unemployed and seeking work over the 20 years. For adults in the 16 to 39 age cohort this decreased from seven per cent to five per cent and for those in the 40 to 59 age cohort this decreased from five to three per cent.

The proportion of adults aged 60 and over reporting to be permanently retired from work decreased over the past 20 years. This was 80 per cent in 1999 and dropped to 77 per cent in 2019.

Economic activity of adults by gender

Over the last 20 years there have been declining trends in men reporting to be employed full-time, unemployed and permanently sick or disabled. Increasing trends over the 20 years are evident in men reporting to be employed part-time and permanently retired. For the economic activity of women, there was an increase in the proportions of those in self-employment and working full-time, and a decrease in women looking after the family or home.

In 1999, half (50 per cent) of men reported working full-time, while only a quarter (25 per cent) of women reported working full-time. In 2019, men reporting working full-time had decreased to 46 per cent, while for women it had increased to 31 per cent. For women aged between 16 and 64 with children in their household the figures were similar – 22 per cent in 1999 and 30 per cent in 2019.

In 2019, four per cent of men report working part-time hours; an increase from two per cent in 1999. The proportion of women working part time has maintained over the last 20 years, accounting for 17 per cent of women in 2019.

Men reporting to look after the home or family had increased by less than one percentage point between 1999 and 2019. The proportion of women who reported that they look after the home or family decreased from 15 per cent in 1999 to seven per cent in 2019.

Men reporting to be permanently retired from work had increased from 19 per cent in 1999 to 22 per cent in 2019. This had remained stable for women over time, with around a quarter (26 per cent) reporting that they are permanently retired from work in 2019.

In 2019, four per cent of men reported to be unemployed and seeking work, this had decreased from seven per cent in 1999. In 2019, two per cent of women reported being unemployed and seeking work, this had decreased from three per cent in 1999.

Over the last 20 years there was an increase in women working. In 1999, 5 per cent of women were in employment; in 2019 this has increased to 53 per cent. For men this has remained relatively stable over the last 20 years, with 60% of men in work in 2019.

Women aged 16 to 64 with no children in their household are more likely to work full-time than women aged 16 to 64 with children in their household. This has been a consistent finding over the last 20 years.

In 2019, seven per cent of women aged 16 to 64 with children in their households reported to be self-employed; this has increased from three per cent in 1999.

In 1999, 28 per cent of women aged 16 to 64 with children in their household reported that they were looking after the home or family. By 2019 this had decreased to 17 per cent.

Economic activity by urban / rural classification

Over the last 20 years, in urban areas there were increases in the proportion of adults who reported to be self-employed, working full-time and entering into further or higher education. There were decreases in the proportion of adults reporting that they look after the family or home and that they are unemployed and seeking work.

In rural areas of Scotland, there were upward trends in the proportion of adults reporting to be self-employed or retired over the 20 years, with downward trends in adults reporting unemployment, looking after the home or family and working full-time.

In 1999, 21 per cent of adults who lived in rural areas were permanently retired from work; in 2019 this increased to 31 per cent.

Economic activity by 20 per cent highest and lowest income households

There are distinctions when separating the economic activity of the 20 per cent lowest income households and the 20 per cent highest income households.

For households in the 20 per cent lowest income group there were increases in adults reporting to be employed on a part-time basis and permanently sick or disabled over the past 20 years. There were decreases in adults reporting looking after the home or family and being unemployed and seeking work.

Households in the 20 per cent highest income group showed an upward trend in adults reporting to be self-employed.

Adults in the 20 per cent lowest income groups that reported they are employed on a part-time basis increased from nine per cent 1999 to 12 per cent in 2019.

In 1999, 11 per cent of adults in the 20 per cent lowest income households looked after the home or family compared to four per cent in the 20 per cent highest income households. In 2019 these decreased to seven per cent and two per cent respectively.

The proportion of adults in the 20 per cent lowest income households reporting to be unemployed and seeking work decreased from 21 per cent in 1999 to 14 per cent in 2019. The proportion remained steady for the highest income group over the last 20 years, at one per cent in 2019.

In 1999, 13 per cent of adults in the 20 per cent lowest income households were permanently sick or disabled. In 2019 this had increased to 17 per cent. For households in the 20 per cent highest income group this proportion had declined from one per cent in 1999 to less than one per cent in 2019.

Economic activity for single parent households

In 2019, eight per cent of single parent households reported to be self-employed, this increased from two per cent in 1999.

Single parent households that reported to be employed full-time increased from 15 per cent in 1999 to 25 per cent in 2019.

Single parent households that are employed on a part-time basis increased from 20 per cent in 1999 up to 28 per cent in 2019.

There was a 22 percentage point decrease of single parent households that look after the home or the family between 1999 (42 per cent) and 2019 (20 per cent).

Economic activity for young adults, aged 16 to 24

In 1999, 37 per cent of young adults (aged 16 to 24) were employed full-time. In 2019 this decreased to 32 per cent.

Over the last 20 years there has been a decrease in young adults that look after the home or family, from five per cent in 1999 to three per cent in 2019.

In 1999, ten per cent of young adults were unemployed and seeking work. In 2019 this had decreased to seven per cent.

In 2019, there were more young adults aged 16 to 24 in higher or further education than in 1999. This increased from 24 per cent in 1999 to 34 per cent in 2019.

5 Finance

Overall, the proportion of households that reported that they are managing well financially increased from 42 per cent in 1999 to 56 per cent in 2019. This dipped between 2007 and 2012, which could be explained by the economic downturn, but has increased steadily since 2012. This increase is mirrored by decreases in households reporting that they get by alright financially (from 44 per cent to 36 per cent) and households reporting that they don't manage very well and have some financial difficulties (13 per cent to eight per cent) over the 20 years.

Managing well financially for 20 per cent highest and lowest income households

The 20 per cent lowest income households are more likely to report that they get by alright financially, or that they don't manage very well and are having financial difficulties, when compared to the 20 per cent highest income households. This has been a consistent finding over the 20 years.

In 1999, 28 per cent of households in the 20 per cent lowest income group reported that they manage very well and quite well financially, in 2019 this increased to 40 per cent. In comparison, for households in the 20 per cent highest income group, 66 per cent reported that they manage very or quite well financially in 1999, increasing to 75 per cent in 2019.

Managing well financially for single parent households

In 1999, 34 per cent of single parent households reported that they don't manage very well and have some financial difficulties. In 2019, this decreased to 19 per cent.

Managing well financially for young households (HIH aged 16 to 24)

The proportion of young households reporting that they manage very well or quite well financially over the past 20 years has doubled, from 24 per cent in 1999 to 48 per cent in 2019.

In 1999, 28 per cent of young households reported they don't manage very well and have some financial difficulties. In 2019, this had decreased to 11 per cent.

Managing well financially for older households (HIH aged 60 or over)

In 1999, 45 per cent of older households where the highest earner was aged 60 or over reported that they managed well financially. By 2019 this had increased to 63 per cent.

In 1999, eight per cent of older households reported they don't manage very well and have some financial difficulties. In 2019 this has decreased to four per cent.

6 A National Statistics Publication for Scotland

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The designation of the Scottish Household Survey as National Statistics was confirmed on 26 May 2010 following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority³.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

Changes to these statistics

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have:

- improved the accessibility of the statistics by creating a digital interactive dashboard to allow for easier comparisons across two topic areas⁴

³ https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/images_letter-from-richard-alldritt-to-rob-wishart-assessment-of-scottish-household-survey-outputs-26052010_tcm97-32343.pdf

⁴ <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-scottish-household-survey>

- based on positive user feedback, this dashboard was expanded to cover all topics with national and local authority data and renamed the SHS Data Explorer⁵. This was first released with data from the 2018 SHS in May 2020 and, having taken further user feedback on board, was further improved and released with data from the 2019 SHS in September 2020
- added more value by creating an infographic key findings report⁶ and data comic to accompany the annual report
- introduced face-to-face briefings of our interviewers to improve the quality of the data collection
- introduced additional quality assurance processes of the raw data
- completed a user consultation to collect information about our users and how they use the data⁷
- completed a 2018-2021 Questionnaire Review to ensure that the SHS continues to deliver high quality evidence on key policy priorities⁸
- shortening delivery timescales so users had access to the local authority data and micro-data⁹ quicker. In 2020, local authority data from the 2019 SHS was released on the same day as the national results through the SHS Data Explorer. The SHS Data Explorer replaces the local authority tables that were provided as a Excel spreadsheet and offers users improved functionality

How to Access Background or Source Data

The data collected for this statistical bulletin:

☒ are available in more detail through statistics.gov.scot.

☒ will be made available via the UK Data Archive.

⁵ <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-scottish-household-survey-data-explorer>

⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-2019-key-findings/>

⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-user-engagement-scotstat/pages/2017-consultation/>

⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-questionnaires>

⁹ <https://beta.ukdataservice.ac.uk/datacatalogue/series/series?id=2000048>

☒ may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact SHS@gov.scot for further information.

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Complaints and Suggestions

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Details of forthcoming publications can be found at www.gov.scot/statistics