

## 2 The Composition and Characteristics of Households in Scotland

### Main Findings

Religious belonging in Scotland is declining over time – just over a half of adults reported that they don't belong to a religion

Three out of ten adults in Scotland reported a long-term health condition. This is increasing over time.

A quarter of all adults in Scotland are permanently retired from work

Over a third of people in Scotland live alone

Only five per cent of households in Scotland are two adult families with three or more children, or three or more adult families with one or more children.

Six out of ten households in Scotland are owner-occupier

Almost six out of 10 households in Scotland earn less than £25,000 a year

## 2.1 Introduction and Context

This chapter describes the types of homes in Scotland and who lives in them.

Collecting information on age, disability, ethnicity, religion, gender, and sexual orientation provides an important contribution to the overall equality evidence base. This is used by policy makers to target services and tackle discrimination and disadvantage. The Scottish Household Survey (SHS) collects information about all household members, including children.

The age and number of people in the household are combined to give a 'household type'. The SHS uses eight household types defined as follows:

- A **single adult** household – contains one adult of 16-64 year olds and no children.
- A **single parent** 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 60 for women and 65 for men.
- A **small family** household – contains two adults of any age and one or two children.
- An **older smaller** household – contains one adult of 16-64 year olds 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 of 16-64 year olds 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.

### Technical survey information

A technical description of why we have information on adults and households and where the Highest Income Householder (HIH) fits in is required.

The highest income householder gives the characteristics of all household members, including children and answers questions on characteristics of the household. Then, one of the adults in the household completes another part of the interview ('random adult'), which is mostly around behaviour and attitudes.

The characteristics of adults, households and the Highest Income Householder (HIH) are described below. Due to the method of collecting this data, the household member characteristics of gender and age will be accurately reported. However, whether a member of the household has a long standing illness or disability is thought to be under reported as the household reference person may not know of individuals' conditions.

## 2.2 All Household Members

Information on all household members shows:

- a quarter of people are over 60 years old.
- there are slightly more women than men in Scotland.
- there is an increasing number of people with a long-term health condition

The gender and age of all household members as well as whether a household member has a long-term illness or disability<sup>18</sup> are presented in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1: Characteristics of all household members**

Column percentages, 2016 data

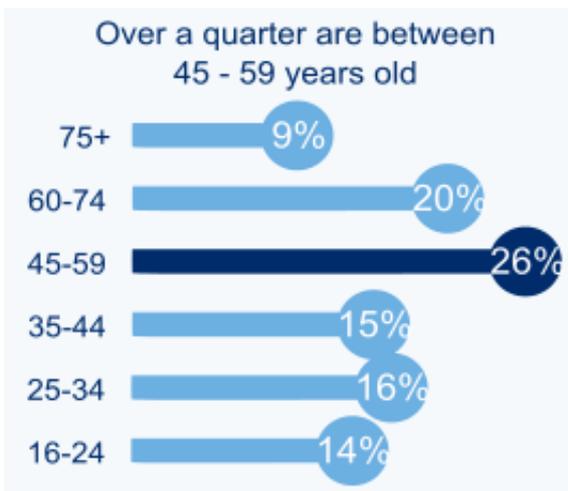
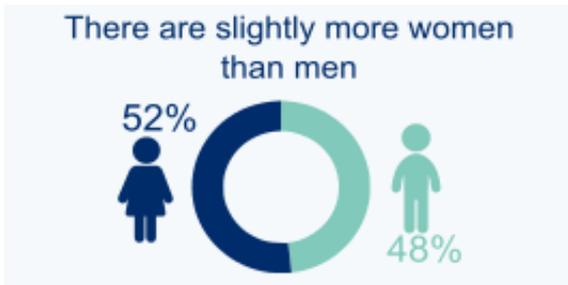
All household members

Age		Gender	
0-15	17	Male	49
16-24	11	Female	51
25-34	13	Total	100
35-44	12	<i>Base</i>	<i>22,760</i>
45-59	21	Long-term physical or mental health condition	
60-74	17	Yes	22
75+	8	No	78
Total	100	Total	100
<i>Base</i>	<i>22,760</i>	<i>Base</i>	<i>22,670</i>

<sup>18</sup>The question on long-term physical or mental health condition asks: "Do you have a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?" Long-term conditions were defined as a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting, or expected to last, 12 months or more. The wording of this question changed in 2012 and is now aligned with the harmonised questions for all large Scottish Government surveys. A long-term condition was defined as limiting if the respondent reported that it limited their activities in any way. The Scottish Health Survey (2015) reports that around a third (32 per cent) of adults had at least one long-term condition in 2012-2015.

## 2.3 Adults in Private Households

- Questions asked of individuals show that the population in Scotland is largely white, ageing and three out of ten adults have a long-term limiting physical or mental health condition.



A second part of the interview selects one adult at random. In one person households, this is the same person. More detailed questions are asked of this 'random adult'.

Table 2.2 to 2.8 present equality characteristics of adults, based on those selected to take part in the 'random adult' interview. These tables provide estimates for age, gender, marital status, ethnicity, current economic situation of all adults and 16-64 year olds adults, whether they have a long term illness or disability, sexual orientation and religion of adults in Scotland.

The results show that the population in Scotland is largely white, ageing and three out of ten adults have a long-term limiting physical or mental health condition. Changes over time show health is worsening.

**Table 2.2: Characteristics of adults – age, gender, and long-term health condition**

Column percentages, 2016 data

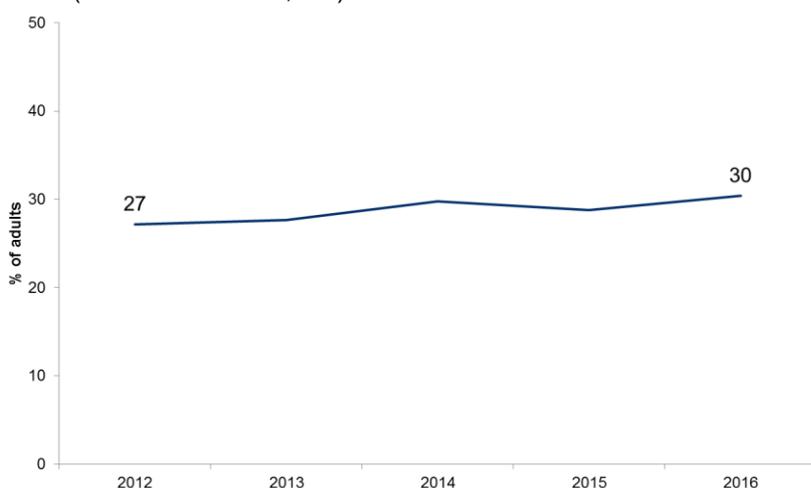
Adults

Age		Gender	
16-24	14	Male	48
25-34	16	Female	52
35-44	15	Total	100
45-59	26	<i>Base</i>	<i>9,640</i>
60-74	20	Long-term physical or mental health condition	
75+	9	Yes	30
Total	100	No	70
<i>Base</i>	<i>9,640</i>	Total	100
		<i>Base</i>	<i>9,610</i>

Examination of the time series data shows an increase in the percentage of adults reporting a long-term health condition (Figure 2.1). In 2016, three out of ten adults (30 per cent) reported a long-term physical or mental health condition, an increase from 27 per cent in 2012.

**Figure 2.1: Long-term physical or mental health condition of adults by year**

Adults (minimum base: 3,200)



**Table 2.3: Characteristics of adults – ethnicity**

Column percentages, 2016 data

Adults

Ethnicity	
<b>White</b>	<b>96.0</b>
Scottish	78.9
Other British	11.9
Irish	1.0
Gypsy / Traveller	0.0
Polish	1.8
Other white ethnic group	2.4
<b>Any mixed or multiple ethnic groups</b>	<b>0.3</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>2.3</b>
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	0.7
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	0.5
Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	0.1
Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	0.5
Other Asian ethnic group	0.5
<b>African</b>	<b>0.5</b>
African, African Scottish or African British	0.3
Other African ethnic group	0.2
<b>Caribbean or Black</b>	<b>0.1</b>
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	0.1
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	0.0
Other Caribbean or Black ethnic group	0.0
<b>Other Ethnic Group</b>	<b>0.7</b>
Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	0.2
Any other ethnic group	0.6
Don't know	0.0
Refused	0.1
Total	100
<i>Base</i>	<i>9,640</i>

Examining the economic status of all adults and then a subset of 16-64 year olds adults shows some interesting results (Table 2.4). A quarter of all adults are permanently retired from work and five per cent of 16-64 year olds adults are also retired. Only four per cent of 16-64 year olds adults are unemployed and seeking work.

**Table 2.4: Characteristics of adults – economic status**

Column percentages, 2016 data

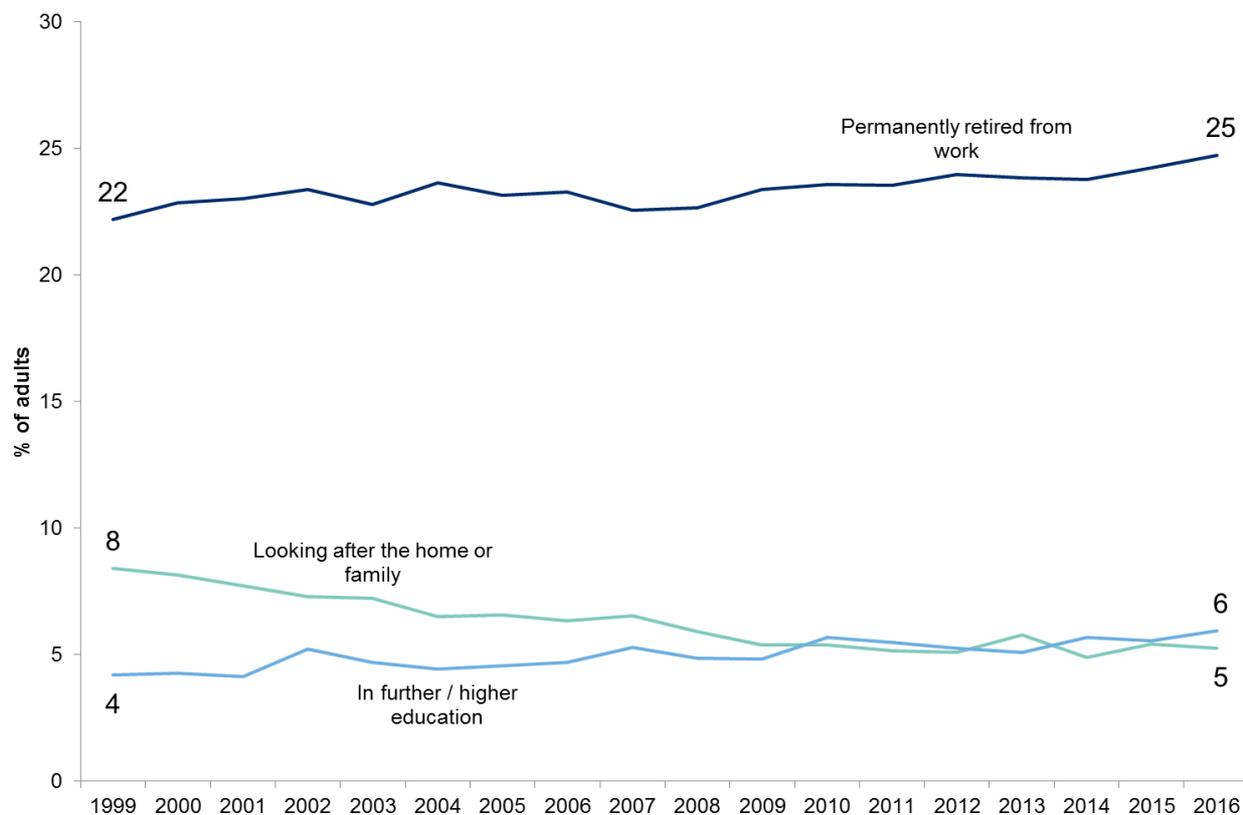
Adults

Economic status	All adults	Working-age adults
Self employed	6	8
Employed full time	37	48
Employed part time	10	12
Looking after the home or family	5	7
Permanently retired from work	25	5
Unemployed and seeking work	3	4
At school	2	3
In further / higher education	6	8
Govt work or training scheme	0	0
Permanently sick or disabled	4	5
Unable to work because of short-term illness or injury	1	1
Other	0	0
Total	100	100
<i>Base</i>	<i>9,640</i>	<i>6,680</i>

Looking at the economic status of selected groups of adults and how this has changed over time also presents some interesting results (Figure 2.2). The proportion of those who are permanently retired from work increased from 22 per cent in 1999 to 25 per cent in 2016. Similarly, the proportion of adults in further or higher education increased from four per cent in 1999 to six per cent in 2016, while the proportion of those looking after the home or family has been decreasing, from eight per cent in 1999 to five per cent in 2016.

**Figure 2.2: Economic status of adults by year – selected groups**

Adults (minimum base: 9,410)



## Sexual orientation

- Ninety-eight per cent of adults identified themselves as heterosexual.

**Table 2.5: Characteristics of adults – sexual orientation**

Column percentages, 2016 data

Sexual orientation	Male	Female	All
Heterosexual/Straight	97.7	98.1	97.9
Gay/Lesbian	1.4	0.9	1.1
Bisexual	0.4	0.3	0.4
Other	0.1	0.2	0.1
Refused	0.4	0.5	0.4
Total	100	100	100
Base	4,400	5,240	9,640

The question on sexual orientation was introduced to the SHS in 2011 as one of the Scottish Government’s “core” questions<sup>19</sup>. Developed by the Office for National Statistics, the question was designed to provide accurate statistics to underpin the equality monitoring responsibilities of public sector organisations and to assess the disadvantage or relative discrimination experienced by the lesbian, gay and bisexual population. It should be noted that estimates on self-identified sexual orientation from the SHS are likely to under-represent the lesbian, gay and bisexual population. Potential reasons for this are discussed in Annex 2: Glossary.

## Religion

- Religious belonging in Scotland is declining over time.
- Around a half of adults reported that they don’t belong to a religion.

Since the harmonised question on religious belonging was introduced to the SHS in 2009, there has been an upward trend in the proportion of adults reporting not belonging to a religion, from 40 per cent in 2009 to just over a half of adults (51 per cent)<sup>20</sup> in 2016 (Figure 2.3). There has also been a corresponding decrease in the proportion reporting belonging to ‘Church of Scotland’, from 34 per cent to 24 per cent.

**Table 2.6: Characteristics of adults – religious belonging**

Column percentages, 2016 data

Adults

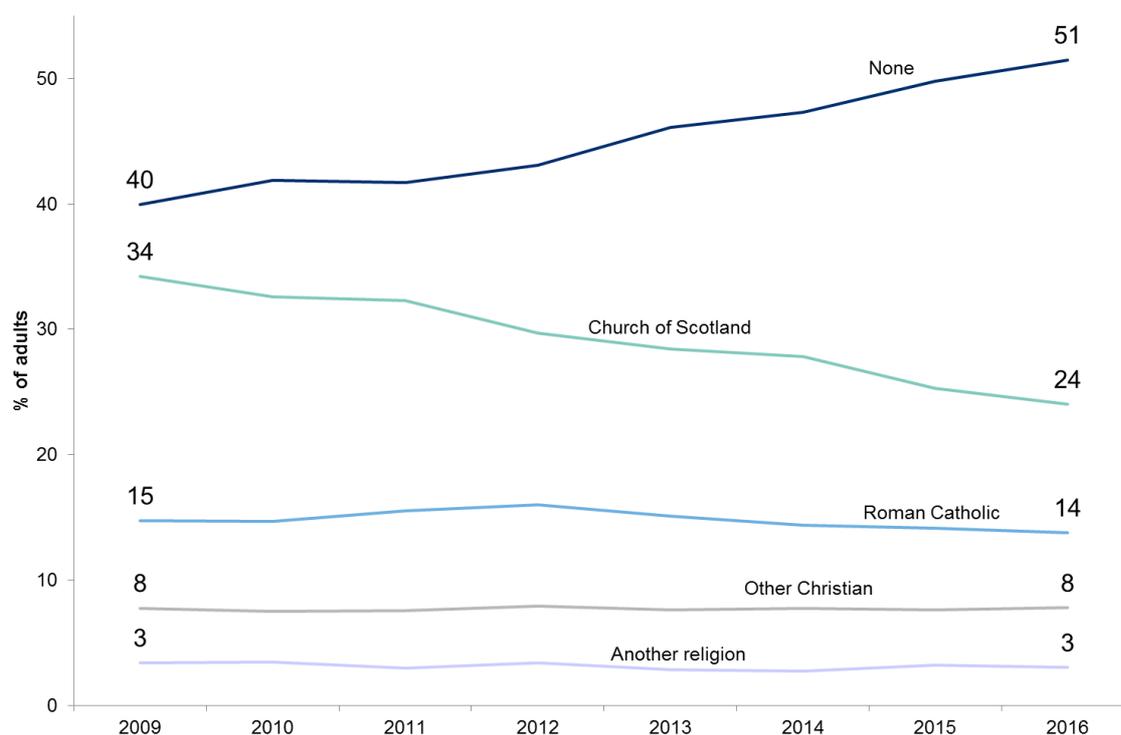
Religion	
None	51.5
Church of Scotland	24.0
Roman Catholic	13.8
Other Christian	7.8
Muslim	1.4
Buddhist	0.3
Sikh	0.1
Jewish	0.1
Hindu	0.3
Pagan	0.2
Another religion	0.6
Total	100
<i>Base</i>	<i>9,640</i>

<sup>19</sup> From January 2012, the same core questions are asked in all Scottish Government cross-sectional surveys. Data from all surveys for these questions will be pooled, to provide better estimates at national and local level. The Scottish Surveys Core Questions (SSCQ) is an annual Official Statistics publication. SSCQ enables the production of reliable and detailed information on the composition, characteristics and attitudes of Scottish households and adults across a number of topic areas including equality characteristics, housing, employment and perceptions of health and crime.

<sup>20</sup> The actual percentage is 51.484 hence rounded to 51.5 in the table but only to 51 when rounded to the whole number in the text.

**Figure 2.3: Religious belonging of adults by year**

2016 data, Adults (minimum base: 9,410)



## Marital status

Exploring the marital status of different age groups reveals the following:

- Young adults are mostly single.
- After age 35 adults are more likely to be married.
- Divorce rate rises after age 45.

**Table 2.7: Characteristics of adults – marital status**

Column percentages, 2016 data

Adults

Marital status	
Never married and never registered a same-sex civil partnership	36
Married	47
In a registered same-sex civil partnership	0
Separated, but still legally married	2
Separated, but still legally in a same-sex civil partnership.	0
Divorced	8
Formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved.	0
Widowed.	7
Surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership	0
Refused	0
Total	100
Base	9,640

Figure 2.4 shows the relationships between current marital status and adults of different ages. Of those adults aged 16 to 24 in 2016, the vast majority (97 per cent) have never been married or been in a same sex civil partnership. For those in the age bands between 35 to 74, marriage is the predominant status and accounts for 60 per cent of adults across these categories. The proportion married or in a civil partnership then drops off slightly for those aged 75 or over (48 per cent) with fewer adults (40 per cent) in this age group reporting being widowed or a bereaved civil partner.

**Figure 2.4: Current marital status of adults by age**

2016 data, Adults (minimum base: 730)

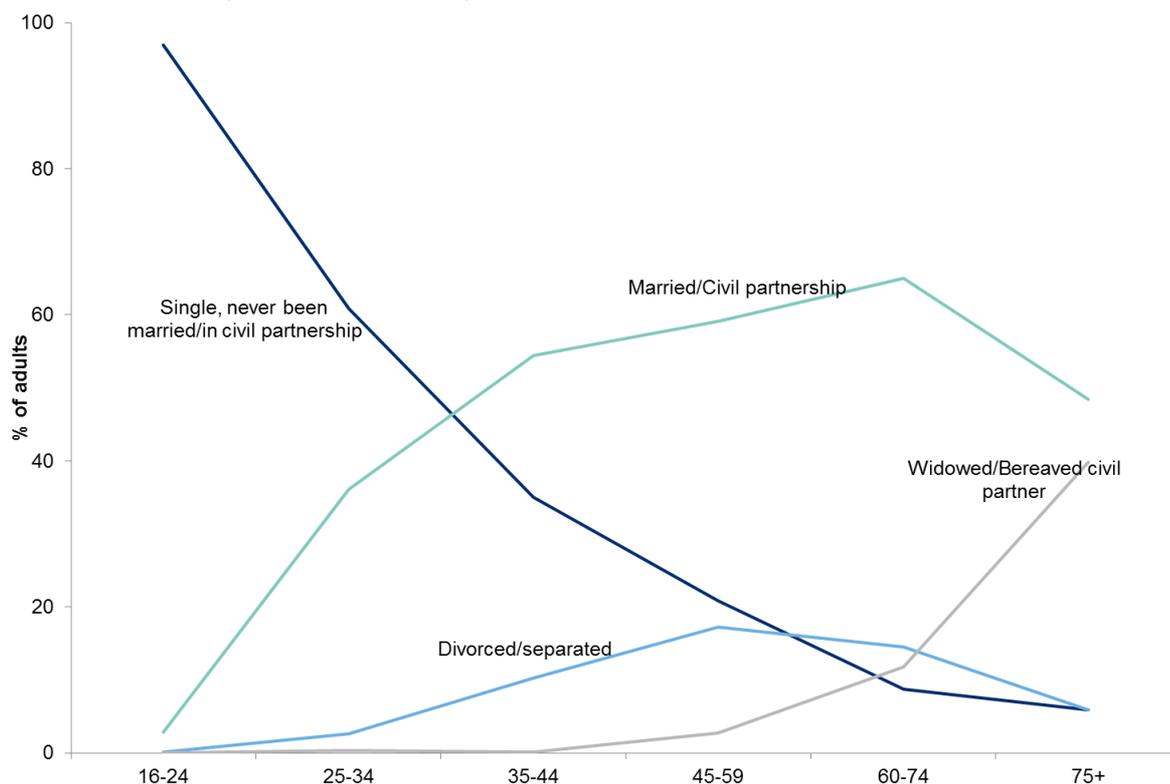


Table 2.8 shows the percentage of each marital status category who are aged 16 to 24, 25 to 34 and so on<sup>21</sup>.

**Table 2.8: Marital status and age of population**

Row percentages, 2016 data

Marital status	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-59	60-74	75+	Total	Base
Single, never been married/in civil partnership	37	27	14	15	5	2	100	3,130
Married/Civil partnership	1	12	17	32	28	10	100	3,990
Divorced/separated	0	4	15	45	30	6	100	1,330
Widowed/Bereaved civil partner	-	1	0	10	35	54	100	1,180
All	14	16	15	26	20	9	100	9,640

<sup>21</sup> Shown as row percentages.

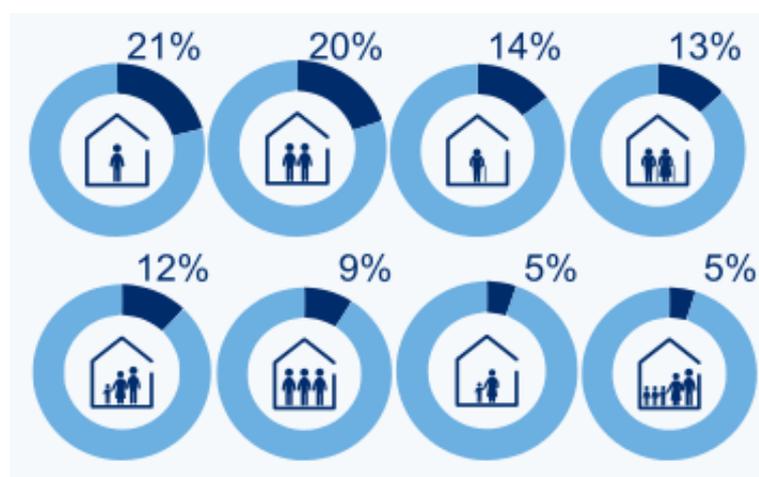
## 2.4 Household Characteristics

The Scottish Household Survey provides estimates of geographical characteristics (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and urban/rural classifications), property type, household type, tenure and net household income for households in Scotland.

Household type is derived from the details collected from the household respondent about all household members, using a combination of age and number of people in the household. Full definitions of each household type are included in section 2.1. Combining the data in this way provides an indicator of the life stage and family circumstance of households.

### Family circumstance of households

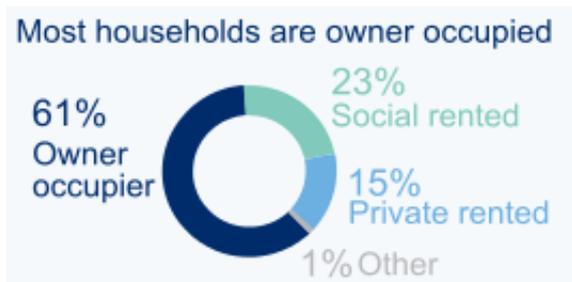
- Less than one in four households in Scotland contain children.
- There are very few families in Scotland with three or more children.
- Over a third of people in Scotland live alone.



Over a third of people in Scotland live alone (35 per cent). Only five per cent of households in Scotland are two adult families with three or more children, or three or more adult families with one or more children. Less than one in five of households in Scotland contain children (Table 2.9).

### House type and tenure

- Most people in Scotland live in a house or bungalow.
- Owner-occupier is the most common type of tenure.



Nearly two-thirds of people in Scotland live in a house or a bungalow with the remaining third living in a flat. Owner-occupier is the most common type of tenure with six out of ten adults living in a home they own outright or are buying, followed by nearly a quarter in the social rented sector. The private rented sector is growing in Scotland. More information on this is contained in Chapter 3 on housing.

### Area type

- Over four in five people in Scotland live in urban areas (including small towns) (83 per cent), with only 17 per cent in rural areas.



### Income

- Almost six out of ten households in Scotland earn less than £25,000 a year and only 20 per cent of Scottish households earn more than £40,000 a year.

Please note that the Scottish Household Survey is not the preferred source of income data. Income data in the SHS is mainly collected to be used to explain other results. The official source of income statistics for Scotland is the Family Resource Survey (FRS). Modelled local level household income estimates provide the best source of income data at a sub-Scotland level. Results from both are available from the Scottish Government website<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> FRS based poverty and income inequality results:  
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Social-Welfare/IncomePoverty>

Small area income estimates: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/supply-demand/chma/statistics>

**Table 2.9: The characteristics of households in Scotland**

Column percentages, 2016 data

Household Type	
Single adult	21
Small adult	20
Single parent	5
Small family	12
Large family	5
Large adult	9
Older smaller	13
Single older	14
Total	100
<i>Base</i>	<i>10,470</i>

Property Type	
A house or bungalow	64.3
A flat, maisonette or apartment (including four-in-a-block or conversion)	35.3
A room or rooms	0.1
A caravan, mobile home or a	0.1
Some other kind of	0.2
Total	100
<i>Base</i>	<i>10,470</i>

Tenure	
Owner occupied	61
Social rented	23
Private rented	15
Other	1
Total	100
<i>Base</i>	<i>10,470</i>

SIMD quintiles	
1 - Most Deprived	22
2	21
3	20
4	19
5 - Least Deprived	19
Total	100
<i>Base</i>	<i>10,470</i>

Urban/Rural classification	
Large urban areas	36
Other urban areas	35
Accessible small towns	9
Remote small towns	4
Accessible rural	11
Remote rural	6
Total	100
<i>Base</i>	<i>10,470</i>

Total household income	
£0 - £6,000	3
£6,001 - £10,000	9
£10,001 - £15,000	17
£15,001 - £20,000	15
£20,001 - £25,000	13
£25,001 - £30,000	10
£30,001 - £40,000	14
£40,001+	20
Total	100
<i>Base</i>	<i>10,080</i>

## Conclusion

Many interesting features of households in Scotland and the homes they occupy have been examined in this chapter. The next chapter explores housing.