

Population estimates...in brief

July 2021

The population of East Sussex was estimated to be 558,900 in mid-2020, 7% more people than in 2010. Internal migration from within the UK is the main driver for the rising population in the county – negative natural change in 2020 was at its highest level since at least 1991. East Sussex has a much older population profile than the country as a whole, with more than a quarter of the population over the age of 65.

Note that 80% of the county's deaths from Covid-19 have occurred in the period since July 2020, so the impact of deaths due to the pandemic on the population estimate for the mid-year 2020 will be small, although there may have been other impacts such as migration changes.

Population of East Sussex in 2020

558,852

Up 0.3% since 2019

(England up 0.5%, South East up 0.4%)

Up 6.7% since 2010

(England up 7.4%, SE up 7.5%)



26% aged 65+

(England 18%)

4.0% aged 85+

(England 2.5%)

Joint second highest aged 85+ of all counties/UAs

Population in 2019 557,229

+ Natural change -2,366

births +4,620

deaths - 6,986

+ Net migration from UK +3,171

in migration +20,107

out migration -16,936

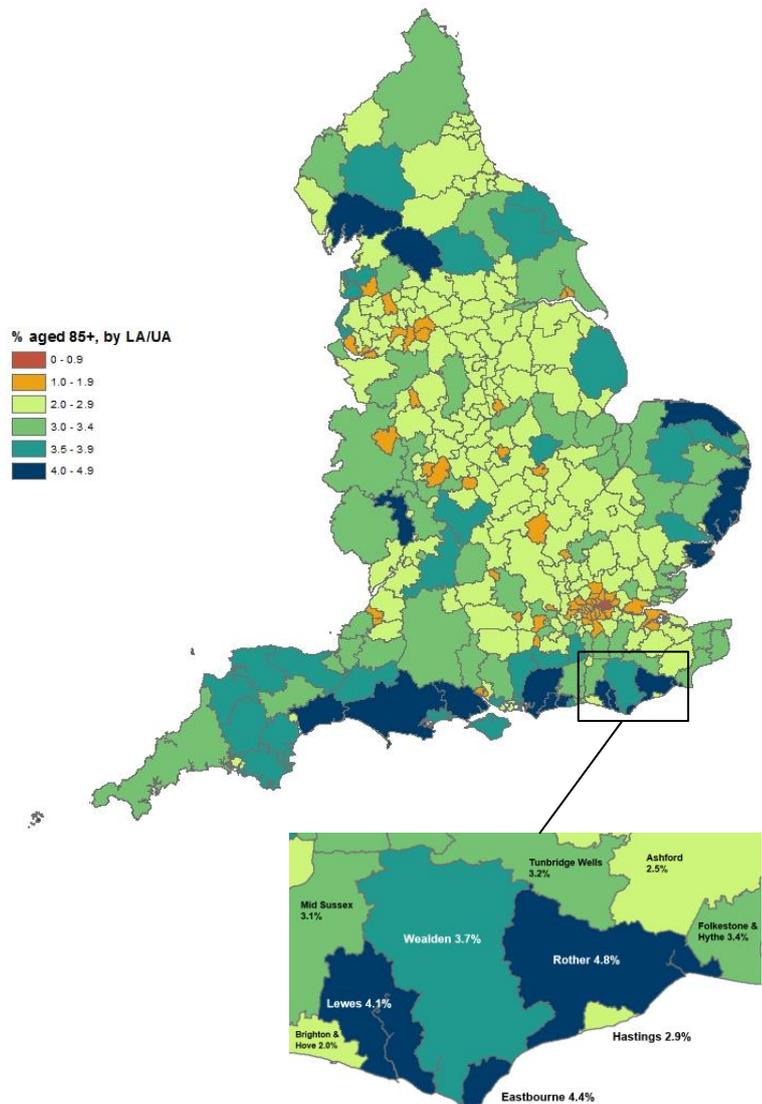
+ Net international migration +785

in migration +2,367

out migration -1,582

= Population in 2020 558,852

Percentage of people aged 85 and over in local authority districts and unitary authorities in England in 2020



At 4.85%, Rother now has the second highest proportion of over 85s of all districts/UAs in the country – but the proportion is only marginally lower than North Norfolk (4.87%). However it still has the highest proportion of the very old (90 and over) at 2.0%.

Population change 2019-2020

	Mid-2020 population	Mid-2019 population	Absolute change 2019-2020	Percentage change 2019-2020
Eastbourne	103,324	103,745	-421	-0.4%
Hastings	92,554	92,661	-107	-0.1%
Lewes	103,525	103,268	257	0.2%
Rother	96,716	96,080	636	0.7%
Wealden	162,733	161,475	1,258	0.8%
East Sussex	558,852	557,229	1,623	0.3%
South East	9,217,265	9,180,135	37,130	0.4%
England	56,550,138	56,286,961	263,177	0.5%

Population change 2010-2020

	Mid-2020 population	Mid-2010 population	Absolute change 2010-2020	Percentage change 2010-2020
Eastbourne	103,324	98,510	4,814	4.9%
Hastings	92,554	89,623	2,931	3.3%
Lewes	103,525	97,079	6,446	6.6%
Rother	96,716	90,578	6,138	6.8%
Wealden	162,733	147,861	14,872	10.1%
East Sussex	558,852	523,651	35,201	6.7%
South East	9,217,265	8,577,771	639,494	7.5%
England	56,550,138	52,642,452	3,907,686	7.4%

Population change in East Sussex since 2010

- The population of East Sussex increased by 6.3% in the 10 years to 2020, but rose by only 0.3% between 2019 and 2020. If there was no inward migration, the population of the county would be falling (see chart overleaf), as there have been more deaths than births (negative natural change) in every year since our data begins in 1991.
- In the year to June 2020, there were 4,620 births and 6,986 deaths, giving 2,366 more deaths than births, the largest population decrease due to natural change for at least 30 years. Even Hastings had a negative natural change figure in 2019-20, contrasting with overall natural increases in the previous 14 years, although natural change there is at a much lower level than the other districts
- The decline in natural change has been counteracted by levels of internal migration

and, to a lesser extent, international migration (see chart below). In 2020, 20,107 people moved into the county from the rest of the UK, and 16,936 moved out to other parts of the UK, giving net internal migration of 3,171. International migration into the county was somewhat lower at 2,367, with 1,582 people moving abroad, giving net international migration of just 785 – lower than the figure in 2019 (1,023). Net international migration was lower in all districts than in 2019, except in Lewes.

- Between 2019 and 2020, the population grew fastest in Wealden (up 0.8%), and actually declined slightly in Eastbourne (down 0.4%) and Hastings (down 0.1%). Wealden has seen the fastest growth in the county over the past 10 years, with an increase of 10.1%, while numbers in Hastings have seen the slowest growth at 3.3%.

Total deaths in East Sussex
in year to June 2020

6,986

Annual average mid-year deaths
2011-2020

6,467

Total deaths from Covid-19
in year to June 2020

353

Deaths data from ONS measures people who died with Covid-19 mentioned on death certificate as a cause of death.

In total **1,753** deaths with Covid-19 have been recorded in the county up to 25/6/2021.

Total net migration to June 2020

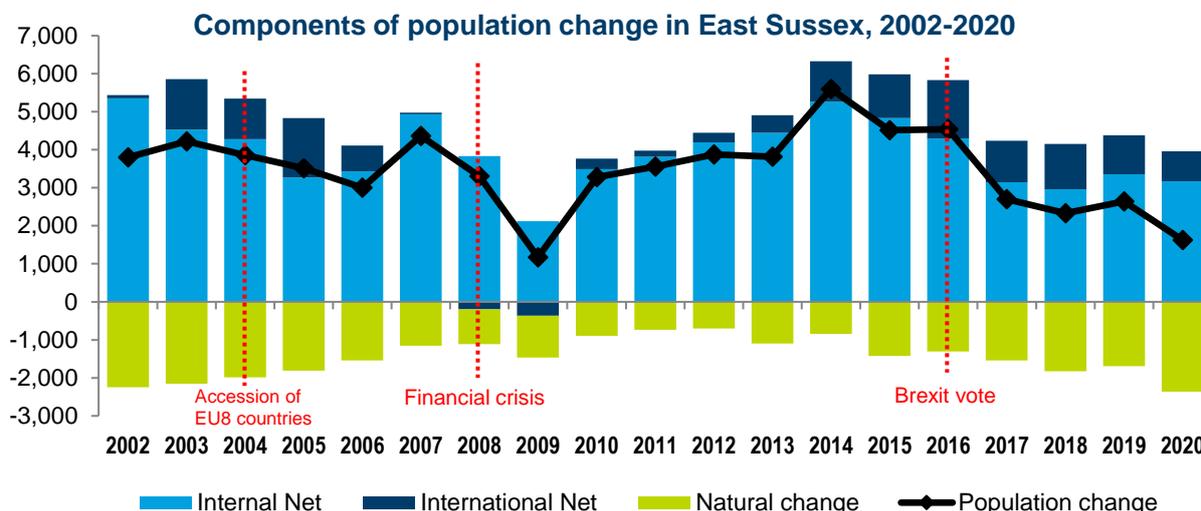
3,956

at its lowest level since 2010

Largest ever loss through
natural change in 2020

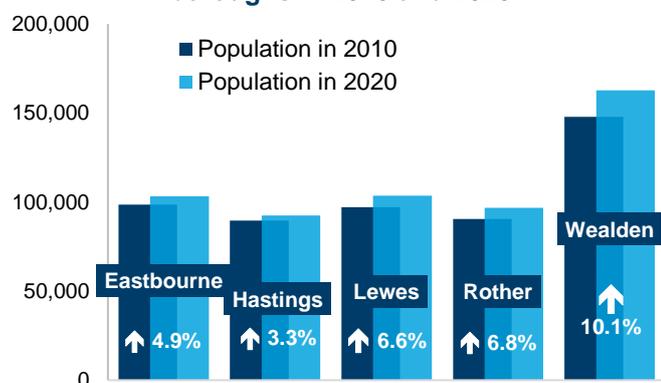
-2,366

(compared to records since 1991)



District level changes

East Sussex population by districts and boroughs in 2010 and 2020



Eastbourne

The population of Eastbourne has increased by 4.9% since 2010 (up 4,814), but this increase has been dominated by older people aged 65 and over (up 18.0% over 10 years), with falls among younger adult age groups – there were 1,908 fewer people aged 16-29 (down 11.2%) and 785 fewer people aged 30-44 (down 4.3%). However, there was an increase in children aged 0-15 (up 1,099 or 6.6%) in the 10 years to 2020. In the year from 2019, there were falls among all age groups aged under 45, contributing to an overall decline in the borough of 0.4% over the year.

Hastings

Hastings has seen the population rise by 3.3% since 2010, the lowest increase in the county. Again, the increase has been dominated by older people with an increase of 3,852 (25.2%) among people aged 65 and over, and 7.7% among those aged 45-64, compared to a fall of 13.1% among those aged 16-29 and a 6.2% decline in people aged 30-44. There was a small rise in the number of children aged 0-15 of 2.5% (416 more children). In the year to 2020, there was a fall of 3.1% in the number of young people aged 16-29, contributing

to an overall decline of population in the borough of 0.1% (107 fewer people overall), although there was a rise of 1.5% (276 people) among over 65s.

Lewes

Overall population numbers in Lewes have risen by 6.6% since 2010, with the biggest rise among seniors aged 65+ (up 22.1% or 4,863 more people), more modest rises among those aged 45-64 (up 4.8%) and children aged 0-15 (up 4.3%), and a decline of 3.1% among people age 30-44 (523 fewer people). There was a rise of 0.2% (257 more people) in the year to 2020, but while the 65+ group increased by 0.7%, there was a fall of 0.6% among children aged 0-15.

Rother

The population of Rother has risen by 6.8% since 2010, with a 22.1% rise among those 65 and over (5,646 more people in this age group). There were increases in all other age groups except those aged 30-44, which saw a decline of 6.8% (913 fewer people) over the 10 years. Younger adults aged 16-29 rose by 5.5% in Rother (contrasting with steep falls among this age group in Eastbourne and Hastings). Rother saw an increase of 0.7% in the year to 2020, and only the 45-64 age group saw a slight fall in numbers (down 0.1%) last year.

Wealden

Wealden has seen the biggest rise in population in the county since 2010, of 10.1% (14,872 more people), reflecting increased housing provision in the district. The rise was dominated by older people with 26.7% more people aged 65+, and 9.0% more people aged 45-64. But there were also rises among the 16-29 age group (up 7.7%) and children aged 0-15 (up 5.1%), However, even here there was a decline of 3.4% among people aged 30-44. Since 2019 there has been a rise of 0.8% (1,258 more people), with increases among all age groups.

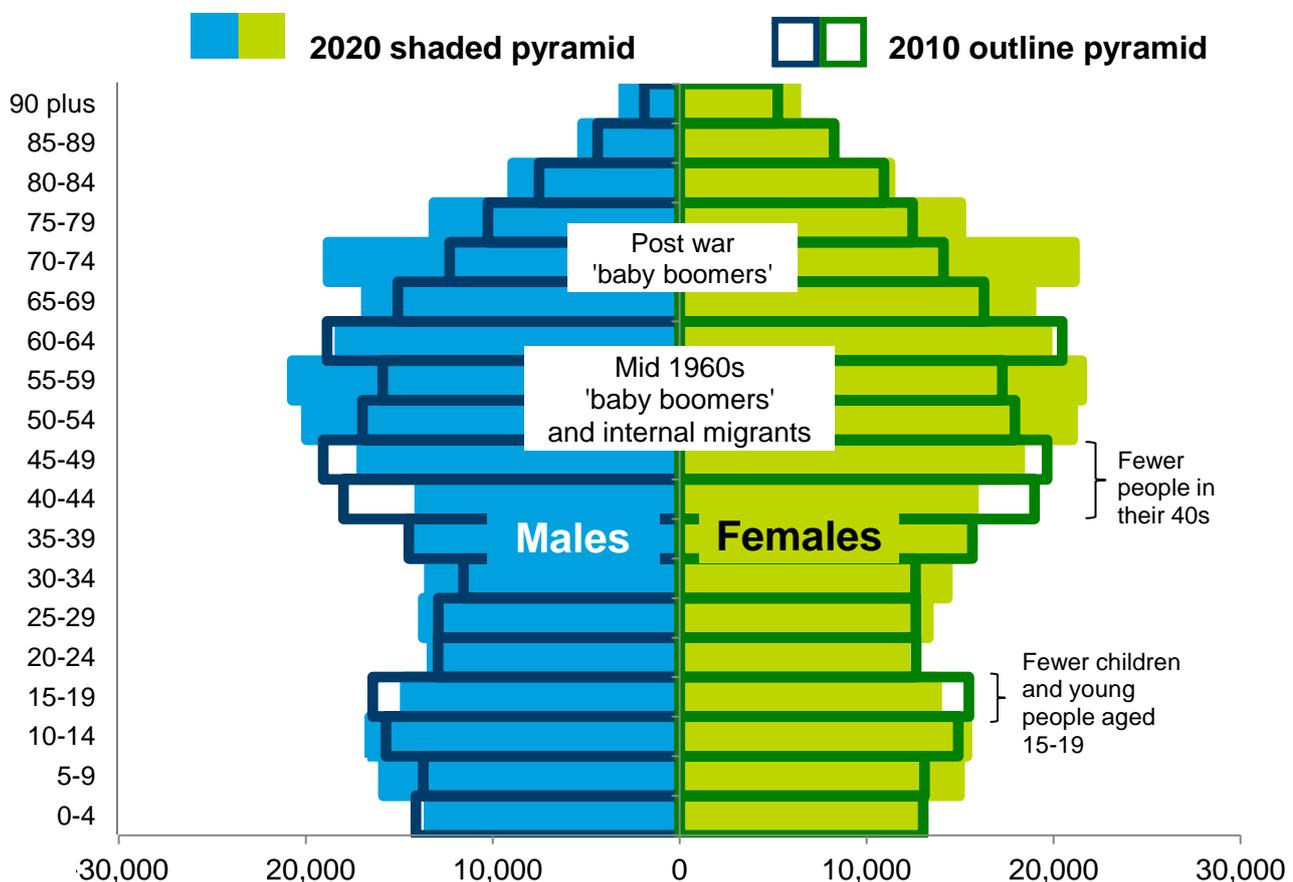
Age structure

- East Sussex has a much older age profile compared to England and the South East. A quarter (26%) of the county's population is aged 65 or over (sixth highest of all counties/UAs in the country), compared to 19% in England and 20% regionally. And the median age in the county is 48.4, compared to the national average of 40.2. On the other hand only 17% of the county is under 16, compared to 19% nationally and in the South East.
- At 4.85%, Rother now has the second highest proportion of over 85s of all districts/UAs in the country – but the proportion is only marginally lower than North Norfolk (4.87%). However it still has the highest proportion of the very old (90 and over) at 2.0%. It has the second highest proportion of people aged 65 and over (32.3% - behind North Norfolk 33.5%). The median age there is 53.4 years, also second highest of any district (North Norfolk: 54.7 years).
- Overall the East Sussex population has grown by 7% since 2010. While the population aged 65 and over has increased

by 23%, older people aged 45-64 have risen by 6.9%, and children aged 0-15 have risen by 4.1%, there have been declines among the 30-44 age group (down 4.6%) and younger adults age 16-29 (down 2.4%).

- There have been two 'baby booms', one just after World War II and another in the mid-1960s, which can be seen as 'bulges' in the population pyramid below. However population growth in those age groups has been augmented by migration, mainly by people moving to East Sussex from within the UK.
- Although the overall number of children under 18 has increased marginally since 2010 (by 2.5%), there are considerably fewer young people aged 16-19 in 2020 than there were in 2010 (down 12.1%), with young people aged 16-17 down 9.2% and those aged 18-19 down by 15.1%. Other groups seeing significant falls in numbers include those in their early 40s (aged 40-44, down 19.9% since 2010), partly as a consequence of the population 'bulge' in those age groups ageing on ten years and the next age group being far less numerous.

East Sussex population by sex and age groups in 2010 and 2020

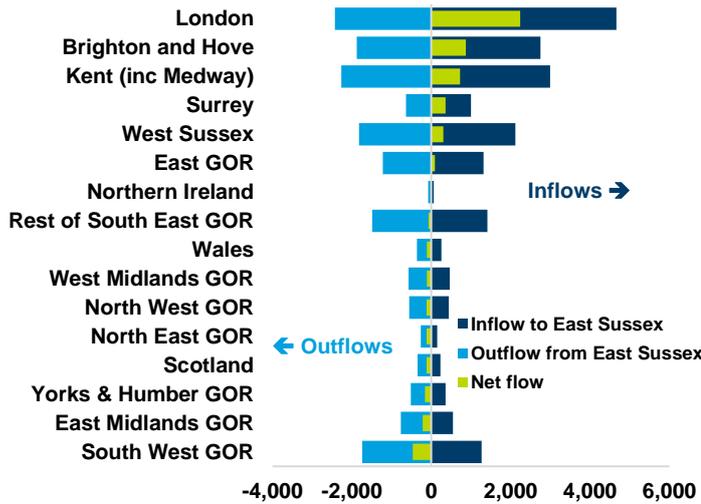


Population change due to migration

Internal migration

The area seeing the largest flows into the county in 2020 was London: 4,666 people moved from the capital and 2,424 moved there, giving 2,242 net migrants, but there were also significant net inflows from Brighton and Hove (872 net in-migrants), Kent including Medway (729) and Surrey (364). The region with the largest net outflow was the South West, with 467 more people moving to the region from East Sussex than moved from there.

Internal migration in 2020 by area



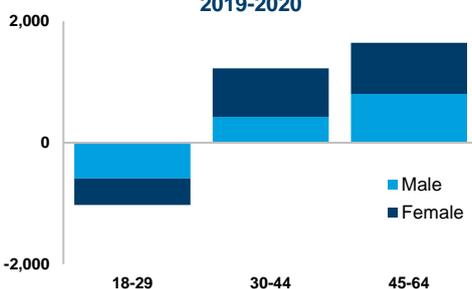
UK migrant flow

Number of migrants

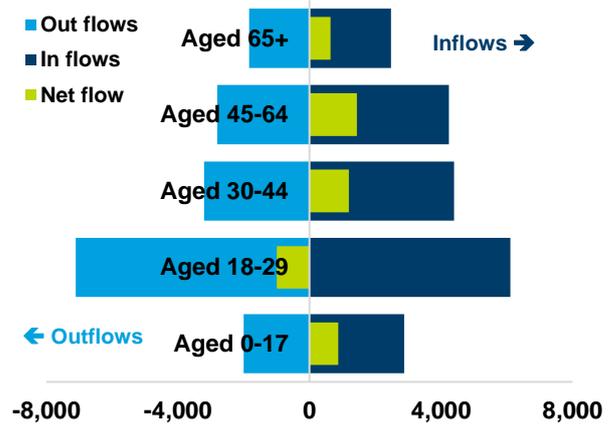
Inflow	+29,506
Outflow	-26,335
Total internal moves (between districts in East Sussex)	9,399
Net flow	+3,171

In 2020, internal migration was dominated by those over age 30, especially the middle-aged (45-64). While there was a net outflow of people aged 15-19, with 1,187 more young adults leaving than moving to the county from within the UK, there were net inflows of 207 people aged 20-29, 1,196 people aged 30-44 and 1,442 people aged 45-64.

Net internal migration by age group and sex, 2019-2020



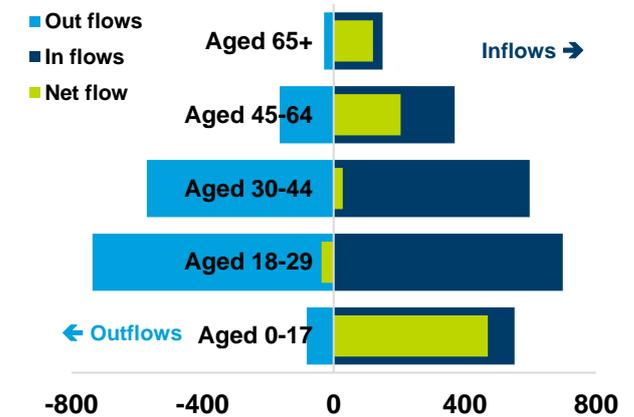
UK migration flows by age, 2020



International Migration

International migration was more dominated by children and young people, with 60% of the total number of net international migrants (470 people) in the 0 to 17 age group. This may reflect the number of independent and language schools with international pupils in the county. There were also net inflows for all ages over 40 (374 more people) but a net outflow of 122 of people aged 20-39.

Overseas migration flows by age 2020



There was some variation in the districts, although all districts saw overall net inflows from overseas. Hastings, Lewes and Wealden saw net international outflows among the 25-44 age group, but net inflows for other age groups.

Overseas migrant flow

Number of migrants

Inflow	+2,367
Outflow	-1,582
Net flow	+785

Children and young people (aged 0 to 17)



2010
104,000

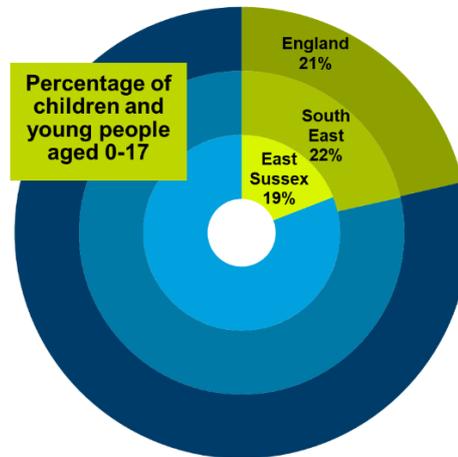
2010-2020
+2,600 (+2.5%)

2020
106,600

19.9%
of total population
2010

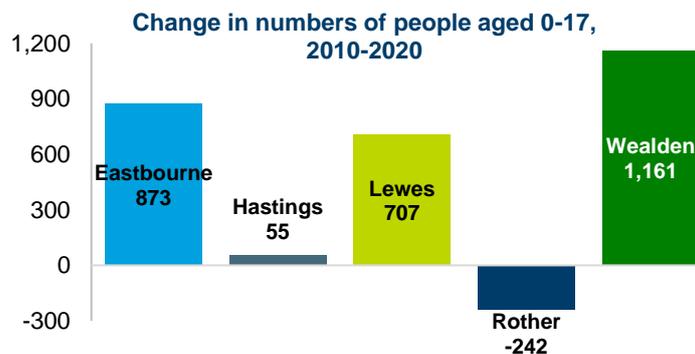
Regional /national comparison

In 2020, children and young people (aged 0 to 17 years) formed 19% of the total population in East Sussex, which is lower than the regional (22%) and national (21%) averages



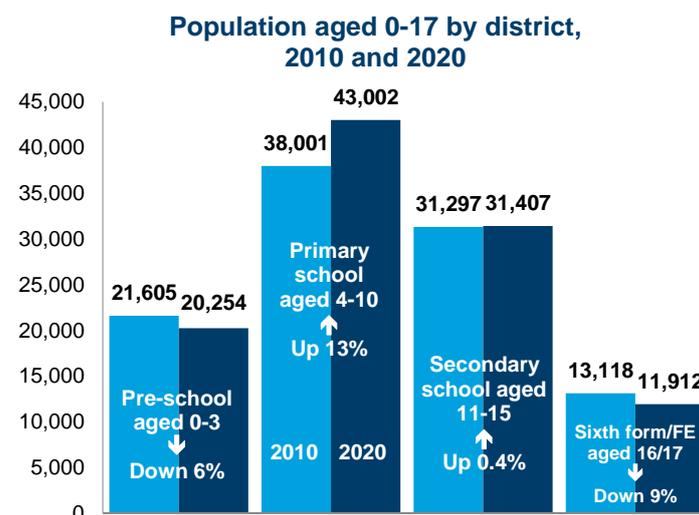
19.1%
of total population
2020

Whilst the total number of children aged 0-17 grew by just 2.5% in East Sussex between 2010-2020, in England and the South East rates of growth were 7.2% and 7.4% respectively.



Lewes, Eastbourne and Wealden all saw significant increases in the number of children and young people between 2010 and 2020, with the largest rises in Wealden (up 1,161) and Eastbourne (873). There was little change in Hastings, and in Rother numbers fell by 242.

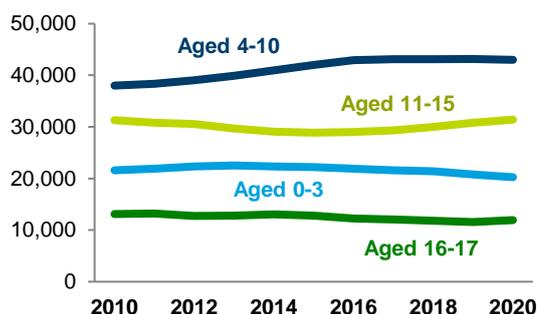
Overall numbers of school-age children (aged 4-15) have risen in the last decade (up 7.4%). But while the number of primary aged children (4-10) rose by 13.2%, the number of secondary age (11-15) increased by just 0.4%.



The 0-3 age group fell by 6.3% between 2010 and 2020, and saw a 2.6% fall in the year to 2020.

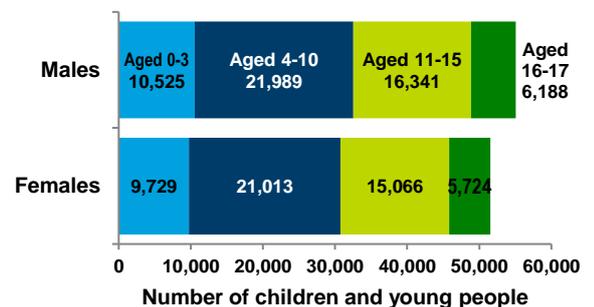
The number of sixth formers (aged 16-17) fell by 9.2% between 2010 and 2020 but rose by 3.0% in the year to 2020.

In the last year this trend reversed - the 4-10 age group fell slightly (down 0.3%) between 2019 and 2020, with a 1.9% rise among those aged 11-15.



More males than females

Aged 0 to 17 years
Male 52:48 Female
Total population
Male 48:52 Female



Working age population (aged 18 to 64)



2010
300,900

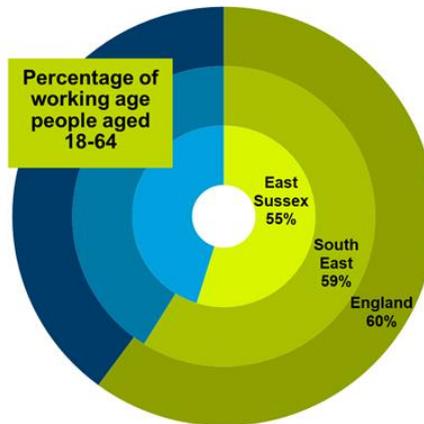
2010-2020
+5,300 (+1.8%)

2020
306,200

Regional /national comparison

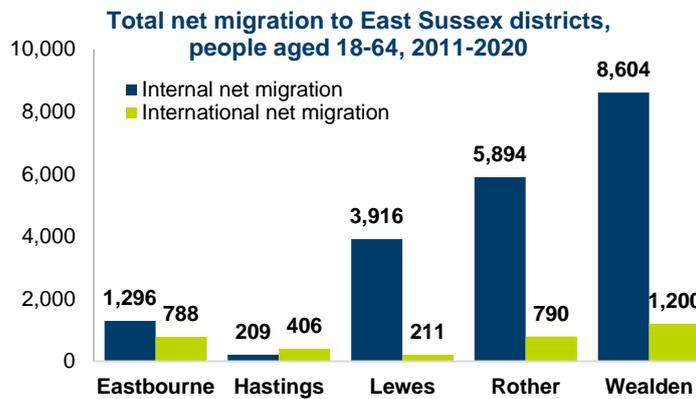
57.5%
of total population
2010

In 2020, working age people made up 55% of the total population in East Sussex, which is lower than the regional (59%) and national (60%) averages



54.8%
of total population
2020

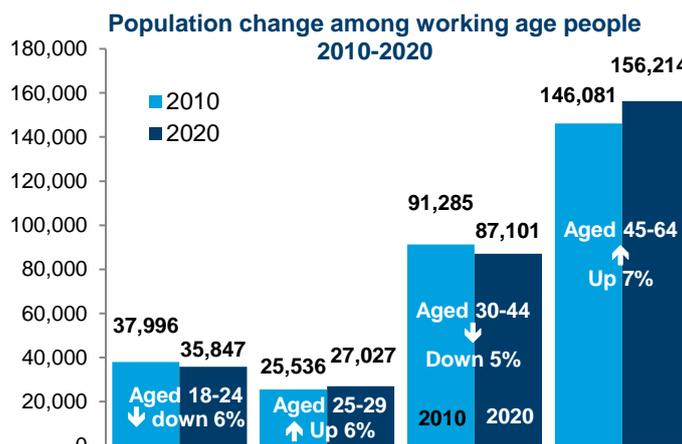
Internal migration (from within the UK) is the main driver of population change among the 18-64 age group, with a net inflow of 19,900 working age people moving into the county from the UK in the decade to 2020, 55% of whom were female.



Between 2010 and 2020, only 14% of net migration of working age people in the county was from overseas, but in Hastings the proportion was 66%, compared to just 5% in Lewes.

In 2020, while there was a net inflow from overseas of working age females of 310, there was a net outflow of males of 115.

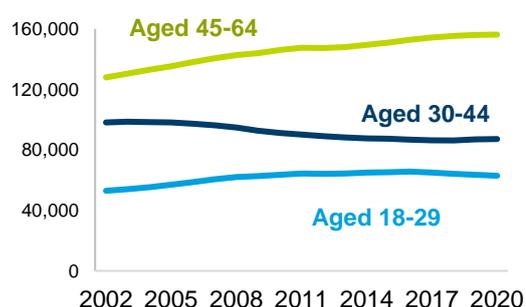
Overall numbers of young working age adults (aged 18-29) fell by 658 (1.0%) in the last decade, and there were net outflows to migration of 11,600 among this age group.



In 2019-2020, there was a net outflow of young people (aged 18-29) to the rest of the UK, but significant net internal inflows from older age groups (30-64).

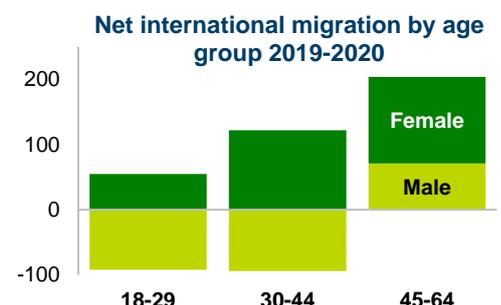
International migration was also dominated by older people, but while there were net outflows of young males aged under 40, there were inflows of females of all ages.

The oldest age group 45-64 have risen most, by 10,133 (up 6.9%). However, numbers of those aged 30-44 have fallen by 4,184 since 2010 (down 4.6%).



More males than females

Aged 18 to 64 years
Male 49:51 Female
Total population
Male 48:52 Female



Older population (aged 65 and over)



2010
118,700

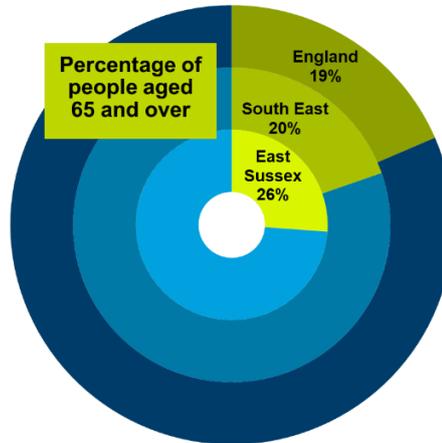
2010-2020
+27,400 (+23.0%)

2020
146,100

Regional /national comparison

22.7%
of total population
2010

Over a quarter (26%) of all people were aged 65+ in 2020, compared to 19% in England and 20% in the South East. 20% of the county's population is aged 70+, compared to 15% regionally and 14% nationally



26.1%
of total population
2020

At 23.0%, the rise in older people since 2010 is higher than the national rise (22.2%) but lower than the regional (24.0%) increase.

4.0% of all people are aged 85+; joint second highest (with Scilly Isles) of all counties and unitaries in England, just behind Dorset (4.2%).

Numbers of pensioners aged 70-74 rose fastest, by 51%, mainly due to the post-war baby boomers reaching their early 70s (see pyramid on page 4).

At 13%, the increase in the more elderly (aged 85+) was lower than the national and regional (both 23%) rises.

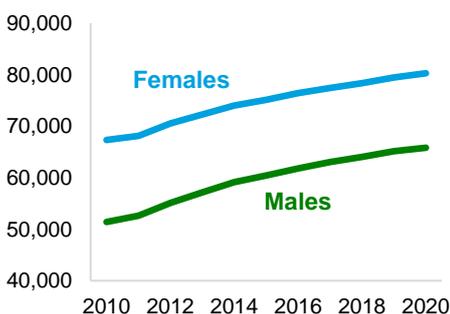
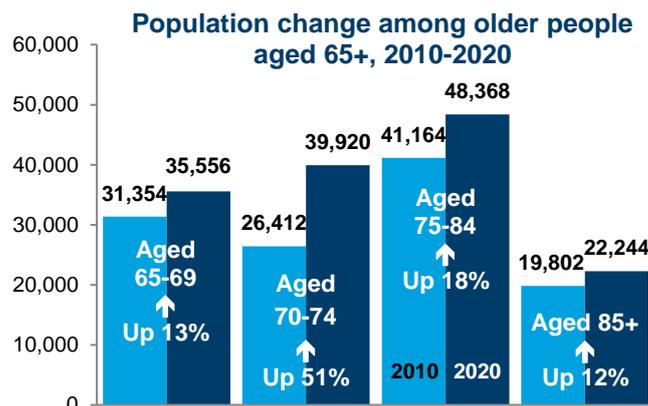


Almost 1/3 of Rother's population (32.3%) are aged 65+, ranking second highest in of all districts/UAs, behind North Norfolk. Rother also has the second highest proportion of over 85s in the country at 4.8%, and Eastbourne has the fifth highest (4.4%).

Only 20.7% of Hastings population is aged 65+.

The county's very elderly population (aged 90+) increased by 29%, slower than national rise (35%).

There was net migration of 762 older people into the county in 2019-20, four fifths of whom (82%) were aged 65-74, and just 16% of in-migrants came from overseas.



More males than females

Aged 65+ years

Male 45:55 Female

Total population

Male 48:52 Female

The number of males aged 65+ has increased faster than females – there was a 28% increase in the number of males, compared to a 19% increase in females in this age group over the ten years. Among the 85-89 age group, the number of females actually declined by 5%, which compared to a rise of 19% among males in this age group. The ratio of 90+ females to males is still 68:32.

Population and components of change, 2019-2020

	East Sussex**	South East	England
Population mid-2019	557,229	9,180,135	56,286,961
Births	4,620	92,936	600,708
Deaths	6,986	89,669	553,546
Natural change	-2,366	3,267	47,162
Internal in-migration	20,107	257,708	90,650
Internal out-migration	16,936	240,025	110,943
Internal migration - net	3,171	17,683	-20,293
International in-migration	2,367	76,086	553,116
International out-migration	1,582	61,701	322,002
International migration - net	785	14,385	231,114
Other*	3,213	72,465	521,160
Population mid-2020	558,852	9,217,265	56,550,138

*Other changes presented in this table comprise changes to the size of armed forces stationed in the UK and other special population adjustments such the prison population

** County level internal in- and out-flows exclude flows between districts in East Sussex

	Eastbourne	Hastings	Lewes	Rother	Wealden
Population mid-2019	103,745	92,661	103,268	96,080	161,475
Births	925	985	809	685	1,216
Deaths	1,345	1,031	1,307	1,393	1,910
Natural change	-420	-46	-498	-708	-694
Internal in-migration	5,351	4,186	5,699	5,572	8,698
Internal out-migration	5,688	4,286	4,983	4,488	6,890
Internal migration - net	-337	-100	716	1,084	1,808
International in-migration	690	423	290	436	528
International out-migration	378	398	228	192	386
International migration - net	312	25	62	244	142
Other*	-866	-228	537	1,256	2,514
Population mid-2020	103,324	92,554	103,525	96,716	162,733

Further information

The mid-year population estimates are produced annually by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) for every local authority and health area in England & Wales. The latest mid-2020 population estimates were released by ONS on 25 June 2021, alongside the detailed components of change. This data is available by gender and age groups at district level and a useful [Analysis Tool](#) is also available from the ONS. Small area population estimates for ward and lower layer super output area are currently only available for 2019, and revised small area data is due for release in Autumn 2021.

Note that the full impact of the Coronavirus pandemic may not be entirely reflected in these population estimates, as estimates of international migration were affected by the suspension of the International Passenger Survey. A more accurate estimate of the population will be available next year with data from the 2021 Census.

- For more information about mid-year population estimates see the [ONS website](#). Data is also available to download from the [Nomis](#) website.
- View East Sussex in Figures for more data on [population estimates](#) by sex and age group, from 2001 to 2020 at district level and [dependency ratios](#) time series. Data is also available for [internal migration](#) by age group, [international migration](#), and [births, deaths and natural change](#).
- You can also find the [weekly deaths figures](#) from all causes and from Covid-19, which are published regularly on East Sussex in Figures
- For further information about population estimates for East Sussex, contact Lenna Santamaria on 01273 481619 or email mariahelena.santamaria@eastsussex.gov.uk

Contact details

The Research and Intelligence Team, Governance Services, provides demographic and socio-economic data, intelligence and insight to support East Sussex County Council and other East Sussex Partners. The Team also manages East Sussex in Figures (ESiF), the Local Information System for East Sussex.

ESiF is a web-based information system that contains detailed, up-to-date and reliable information on a very wide range of topics. It is free and very easy to use and puts individual users in control. ESiF lets you specify exactly what data you want to see (for the places and time periods you are interested in) and how you want to view it (as a table, chart or map).

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