Social class as defined by occupation of household reference person

**Purpose:**

To provide 2001 Census based information about the social class of resident populations as defined by occupation of household head.

**Definition of indicator and its variants:**

Residents in households with an economically active household head, by the social class of the head of household.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Organisation (see glossary)</th>
<th>Current data</th>
<th>Trend data</th>
<th>File-worksheet name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number and percent of residents in households</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>16 to 74 residents, 16-64 economically active</td>
<td>E&amp;W, E, GOR, ONS area, SHA, LA, PCO, CTY</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td></td>
<td>01Q_017VS_01_V2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Data for PCOs have been produced from “best fit” of Output Areas.

**Numerator:**

**Numerator data** - Numbers of residents in households with household reference persons aged 16-74 in the following National Statistics Socio-Economic Classifications (NS-SECs):

- Large employers and higher managerial occupations;
- Higher Professional Occupations;
- Lower Managerial and Professional Occupations;
- Intermediate Occupations;
- Small Employers and Own Account Workers;
- Large Supervisory and Technical Occupations;
- Semi-Routine Occupations;
- Routine Occupations;
- Never Worked;
- Long-term Unemployed;
- Full-time Students;
- Not classifiable for other reasons.

**Source of numerator data** – Office for National Statistics (ONS): Standard Table S45 (S45). Data processed by the Department of Health (DH).

**Comments on numerator data** - The ONS Area Classification values for Census indicators are computed from Local Authority (LA) data. Strategic Health Authority (SHA) values are computed from Primary Care Organisation (PCO) data rather than LA.

The definition of "economically active" was largely determined from answers to more than one question, including:

- "Last week, were you doing any work: as an employee, or on a Government sponsored training scheme or as self-employed/freelance, or in your own/family business?";
- "Last week, were you any of the following: retired, student, looking after home/family, permanently sick/disabled or none of the above?";
- "Were you actively looking for any kind of paid work during the last 4 weeks?".

The economically inactive were those allocated to the following categories: students, permanently sick, retired, and other inactive (including looking after home or family).
to give no further occupational information (including many housewives, elderly retired, permanently sick and young or long-term unemployed).

The household reference person (HRP) was the first person entered on the form aged 16 and over and usually resident at the address of enumeration. No reference person was identified in households consisting entirely of visitors.

"Not classifiable for other reasons" included people whose occupation had not been coded and those who could not be allocated to an NS-SEC category.

In the NS-SEC classification all full-time students were recorded in the full-time student category regardless of whether they were economically active or not.

For long-term unemployed the year last worked is 1999 or earlier.

Denominator:

- **Denominator data** - The total number of household residents in the sample.

- **Source of denominator data** - ONS: Standard Table S45 (S45). Data processed by DH.

- **Comments on denominator data** - None

Statistical methods:

Census data for PCOs were produced by ONS on the basis of best fit using two different methods. The 2001 Census Key Statistics tables were produced on the basis of best fit of Output Areas to PCOs, and Standard tables (which are generally the more detailed tables, showing cross-tabulations between different variables) for health areas were produced on the basis of best fit of wards. The “two-method approach” used by ONS is a problem, in that the same variables for health areas appear as different totals in the Key Statistics and Standard tables. Some of these differences are also “significant”. For a more detailed explanation see: [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/cn_96.asp](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/cn_96.asp)

Disclosure protection measures applied by the ONS to 2001 Census output for England and Wales are in place in order to prevent the inadvertent release of information about identifiable individuals. As a result, totals may sometimes not add up. For more details about disclosure control methods see: [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/op5.asp](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/op5.asp)

Interpretation of indicators:

- **Quality of indicator** - Annex 12 describes the criteria that should be used to judge the quality of this indicator. The application of the criteria is dependent on the context (e.g. describing a single organisation, comparing several organisations) and the level (e.g. national / regional with large numbers of events, local with small numbers of events) at which the data are to be used.

Further reading:


Updated: December 2009