National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) as defined by own occupation

Purpose:

To provide 2001 Census based information about the National Statistics Socio-Economic (NS-SEC) Group of the population within each area as defined by own occupation.

Definition of indicator and its variants:

Economically active and non-active residents of households and those aged 16-64 who are economically active by National Statistics Socio-Economic classification as defined by own occupation.

<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>MF</td>
<td>16-74 econ. active, 16-64 by SEC</td>
<td>E&amp;W, E, GOR, ONS area, SHA, LA, PCO, CTY</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>01R_018VS_01_V2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Numerator:

**Numerator data** - Numbers of people aged 16-64 by National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) and number aged 16-74 who were economically active in the following NS-SECs:

- Higher Managerial and Professional Occupations;
- Higher Professional Occupations;
- Lower Managerial and Professional Occupations;
- Intermediate Occupations;
- Small Employers and Own Account Workers;
- Lower 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 Tables 23 and 26 (S23 and S26). 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).

National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) was derived from information provided on occupation and employment status. Persons aged 16 and over were asked to provide details of their main job in the previous week (if they had a paid job in that week) or of their most recent job. Anyone with no previous paid job was instructed to give...
no further occupational information (including many housewives, elderly retired, permanently sick and young or long-term unemployed).

**Denominator:**

*Denominator data* - The total number of male and female residents aged 16-64, and household residents aged 16-74.

*Source of denominator data* - ONS: Standard Tables 23 and 26 (S23 & S26). Data processed by DH.

*Comments on denominator data* - For those absent households for which no completed Census form was received by ONS, certain data were imputed.

**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:


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:


The percentages of men and women resident in households who were economically active or retired were obtained by dividing the number of such residents in the sample by the total number of men and women, respectively, in the sample who were resident in households.

The percentage distribution by NS-SEC was obtained by dividing the number of men and women resident in each area in each group by the total number of men and women resident in each area.

**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