



# Estimating the number of vulnerable children (29 groups)

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Technical Paper 3 in Children's Commissioner project on vulnerable children

**Alma Economics**

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Robust information on the number of vulnerable children is essential for effective, efficient and targeted service provision. With information on prevalence, practitioners and policymakers can identify gaps in provision, as well as understand current and future trends. Evidence-based decision-making can lead to improved practice and consequently improved outcomes for marginalised and vulnerable children in England.

This report examines existing statistics and data to inform the Children's Commissioner's report on vulnerable children. The primary aims are to:

- > Provide preliminary estimates of the number of children facing different types of vulnerability in England;
- > Identify any issues, gaps and limitations in the relevant data collections and statistics, and;
- > Deliver recommendations on how to improve the quality of data and reporting.

## Methodology

Firstly, a review of all available datasets and statistics was conducted, including publications from government departments (e.g. Department for Education, the Ministry of Justice) and non-governmental organisations and charities, such as the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC).

To complement our findings from the data and statistics review, we assessed peer-reviewed academic journals, policy papers and sector studies that provided information on datasets and statistics or directly estimated the numbers of vulnerable children.

For each dataset, statistic or estimate, we assessed the coverage, sample sizes, and overall quality to identify potential gaps. Through this review, we developed a set of recommendations on how to improve data collection for vulnerable children in the future. Finally, we synthesised the data sets and statistics to provide a preliminary estimate of the number of vulnerable children in each of the groups.

# Groups of Vulnerable Children

Children are considered vulnerable if they experience risks that are systematically different from those experienced by the average population and affect substantially their wellbeing and life chances. Groups of vulnerable children can be identified by certain characteristics, socio-economic circumstances and experiences. Since the scope of potential vulnerabilities is broad, a short-list of the key groups was developed to target our review. The table below summarises the headline figures for each group.

## 1. Headline numbers for vulnerable groups (England)

	Group	Category	Numbers	Quality <sup>1</sup>	Data source
1	Children Looked After (CLA)	Children looked after at 31 March 2016	70,440	1a	Children looked after in England including adoption
2	Children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP)	Children who were the subject of a CPP at 31 March 2016	50,310	1a	Characteristics of children in need
3	Children in detention	Children in the secure estate (February 2017)	824	1b	Youth custody data
		Children in Secure Children's Homes (SCHs) (31 March 2016)	192	1a	Secure children's homes statistics
4	Children in Need (CIN)	Children in need at 31 March 2016	394,400	1a	Characteristics of children in need
5	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)	UASC looked after at 31 March 2016	4,210	1a	Children looked after in England including adoption
6	Care Leavers	Children who ceased to be looked after during 2015-2016	31,710	1a	Children looked after in England including adoption

<sup>1</sup> 1a - National statistics, 1b - Official statistics; 2a - Non-official statistics based on direct measurement, including surveys; 2b - Non-official statistics based on indirect measurement, including modelling. Use of experimental statistics is denoted with "e".

		Care leavers aged 17 years old at 31 March 2016	910	1a*	Children looked after in England including adoption
7	Children who are subject to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO)	Children involved in Special Guardianship Orders during Q1- Q4 2016 in England and Wales	7,323	1a	Family court statistics
8	Adopted children	All CLA who were adopted during the year ending 31 March 2016	4,690	1a	Children looked after in England including adoption
9	Children in workless families	Children living in long-term workless households (2014)	1,148,000	1a	Children living in long-term workless households: UK
		Children living in workless households (December 2016)	1,057,142	1a	Working and workless households in the UK
10	Children in low-income families	Children eligible for Free School Meals	1,141,598	1a	Schools, pupils and their characteristics
		Children in relative poverty	2,100,000	1a	Households below average income
		Children in material deprivation and low income	1,368,000	1a	Households below average income
		Children in material deprivation and severe low income	456,000	1a	Households below average income
		Children in absolute poverty	2,000,000	1a	Households below average income
		Children in persistent low income	1,357,278	2b*	Income dynamics

11	Children who are homeless or who are in insecure/ unstable housing	Children living in households in temporary accommodation on 31 December 2016	118,960	1a	Statutory homelessness and prevention and relief
12	Children not meeting the threshold for social worker intervention (Pre-section 17)	Referrals resulted in an assessment and the child was assessed not to be in need in the year ending 31 March 2016	158,060	1a	Characteristics of children in need
13	Teenage parents	Teenage fathers - Births by age of the father - (2015)	885	1a	Births by parents' characteristics in England and Wales
		Teenage mothers - Births by age of the mother - (2015)	5,788	1a	Births by mothers' usual area of residence in UK
14	Children in non-intact families	Dependent children under 19 in lone parent families (UK, 2016)	3,043,000	1a	Families and households in the UK
15	Undocumented children and children without legal identity/ regular immigration status	Undocumented children in the United Kingdom in 2012	120,000	2b	No Way Out, No Way in (Sigona and Hughes, 2012)
16	Young carers	Young unpaid carers 5 to 17 years old (2015)	171,024	2b - based on 1a	2011 Census updated using Alma estimates
17	Children in troubled families	Children in funded families on the programme as at 31 December 2016	407,924	2b – based on 1b	National Evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme 2015 – 2020



18	Children whose parents use substances problematically	Children under 18 years old living with adults in contact with drug treatment (2011/12)	103,742	1b	Statistics for drug treatment activity in England – parents and children who live with their children under-18 in 2011/12
		Children under-16 years old affected by parental alcohol problems (2004) – estimates for 2015	945,919	2b	Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (PMSU) (2004) - Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England, Cabinet Office
19	Children whose parents may have limited parenting capacity	No headline figure			
20	Young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)	NEET aged 16-18 years old at the end of 2016	121,000	1a	NEET Quarterly Brief
21	Excluded children	Pupil enrolments with one or more fixed period exclusions (academic year 2014/2015)	154,060	1a	Permanent and fixed period exclusions in England
		Permanent exclusions (academic year 2014/2015)	5,800	1a	Permanent and fixed period exclusions in England
22	Children involved with the criminal justice system/young offenders	Young people cautioned or sentenced during the year ending 31 March 2016	31,193	1a	Youth justice statistics
23	Children in gangs	Children aged 10-18 who are members of a street gang	46,053	2b - based on 1b	Proportion of children aged 10-15 who were involved in gangs, 2013/14 (ONS)

24	Children who have childhood experienced trauma/abuse	Children in need at 31 March 2016 due to neglect or abuse	199,720	1a	Characteristics of children in need
25	Children who have been victims of modern slavery	Number of minor potential victims in 2016	1,204	1b	National Referral Mechanism (NRM) Statistics – End of Year Summary 2016
26	Missing children	All children missing during the financial year 2015-2016	56,331	1b	Missing Persons Data Report
27	Absent children	All absent children during the financial year 2015/2016	11,494	1b	Missing Persons Data Report
28	Children with BME background	Children with BME background (2011)	2,894,630	1a	2011 Census
29	Sexual and gender minority children	Sexual minority (LGB) children aged 16-17—estimates for 2015	42,000 (3.3%)	2b*	Sexual identity, UK

Note: Where we can we have reported total numbers of children in England in each group, but for some groups only new cases are known (e.g. group 7), or data are not available for England only (e.g. group 15). Where this is the case it is specified in the “category” column.

## Key knowledge gaps

While there are good quality statistics on the number of many groups of vulnerable children, there are still pronounced knowledge gaps which need to be addressed. ‘Invisible’ children, with limited quality data reporting on their circumstances, characteristics or experiences, are particularly vulnerable. Without an understanding of prevalence, it is challenging to identify and support children in high risk situations.

In our review, the following groups lacked official or national statistics:

- > Children in mental health detention (part of group 3 – children in detention)
- > Children who are homeless or who are in insecure/unstable housing
- > Pre-section 17
- > Undocumented children and children without legal identity/ regular immigration status
- > Children whose parents use substances problematically
- > Children whose parents have limited parenting capacity
- > Young people involved in gangs
- > Sexual and gender minority children

Another common problem is the limited availability of information on the stock of children in a particular group. For example, the official statistics provided by the Department for Education report the number of children who have been adopted, left care or are subject to a Special Guardianship Order during the year but there is no information on the stock of all those children. The same issue holds for teenage parents, as information provided by the ONS is concentrated on teenagers becoming parents each year.

The quality of non-official statistics varies greatly. Some sources provide ongoing updates with robust methodology while others may be one-off studies using limited sample sizes. While official or national statistics still have limitations, the standardisation of practice plays an important role in ensuring quality.

The reasons behind these knowledge gaps vary greatly. Some groups are inherently difficult to track administratively due to the covert or illegal nature of their circumstances, such as undocumented children and children without legal identity/ regular immigration status or children in gangs. In other situations, socio-political factors may influence knowledge gaps. For example, collecting information on the sexual and gender identity of children can be a controversial undertaking. Certain groups are comprised of a very small number of children (e.g. children who have been victims of modern slavery), which may lead to a lack of awareness for their existence and prevalence and affect related funding and policymaking. It is important to bridge these gaps and ensure that experiences and issues affecting “invisible” children in England are captured.

## Key recommendations

It is worth noting that even groups with robust data collection procedures face certain limitations. To improve data collection, quality and analysis for vulnerable children in England, we recommend the following:

### Publish more information related to invisible children

Some of the main knowledge gaps can be covered either by using already existing, but not publicly available, administrative data or by using survey data to provide annual official estimates of the number of children in certain groups. For example, for children in mental health detention there should be administrative data collected by the NHS, which is not published. The same issue holds for Pre-Section 17 children, i.e. those children who have been assessed by a social worker twice in a 12-month period but they are not considered 'in-need' and thus do not receive any services from LAs. As LAs record information on assessments, referrals and children going through them (this information is presented in the "Characteristics of children in need" statistics of the Department for Education), it should be feasible to also report the number of children going through two assessments in 12 months.

As already discussed, some groups cannot be easily identified using administrative data due to their illegal or hidden nature. However, an annual official estimate using survey data would be extremely useful to provide information on the prevalence of those groups, even if the information will include some margin of error. For example, the Labour Force Survey (LFS) could be used to provide estimates on the number of undocumented children, as it has already been done in a one-off academic study (Sigona and Hughes, 2012). Surveys including more information on the relationship between family members, for example the Understanding Society survey, can be used to identify the prevalence of children whose parents may have limited parenting capacity. The Crime Survey for England and Wales collects some information on young people involved in gangs, and consequently, it could be used to provide an annual estimate of the prevalence of those children. Finally, numerous surveys (e.g. the General Household Survey, the National Crime Survey for England and Wales and the National Psychiatric Morbidity Study) can be combined to provide estimates for the number of children whose parents use substances problematically (Manning et al., 2009).

### Further disaggregation to understand overlaps, intersections and scope

As children experiencing multiple vulnerabilities are at a heightened risk, it is important for data to be disaggregated at a meaningful level to assist policymakers understand different patterns across genders, age groups, race or socio-economic circumstances and target policy accordingly. Moreover, further geographical disaggregation could inform policymakers on the prevalence of vulnerable children in a particular country or region. For example, the Family Court Statistics and the "Divorces in England and Wales" publication report only aggregated figures for England and Wales, while "Families and Households in the UK" statistics report only UK-aggregated numbers. Consequently, accurate official figures for children in divorced or lone-parent families in England are not immediately available.

## Publishing timely data to facilitate real-time response

A key aim of collecting monitoring data is to assist practitioners and service providers to deliver effective and tailored services. Without timely data releases, it is challenging for providers to understand and respond to changing trends. For example, the most recent release of “Children living in long-term workless households: UK” publication includes data from 2014. Worklessness is vastly affected by the current economic and social circumstances and thus the existence of up-to-date data is crucial for policy and decision-making. Similar issues exist in the data sources providing information on children in non-intact families and young carers. Consequently, a great improvement would be a more frequent publication of some data sources, to decrease the time lag between the reporting period and the release date and increase their usefulness.

## Clear identification of easily observed overlaps

The main difficulty in estimating a headline number for all vulnerable children in England is the fact that children usually face more than one vulnerability, which implies huge overlaps between the different groups of vulnerable children. While these overlaps can be estimated using econometric techniques, more robust information at the data collection point would provide greater accuracy. For example, while Children in Need (CIN) are defined nationally as any case open to children's social care services including children subjects of child protection plans and children looked after, in the national data, it is not easy to identify exactly how many children are only receiving services as CIN (without being the subject of a child protection plan or looked after by the LA).

# Introduction

## Aim

This report will examine existing statistics and data to inform the Children's Commissioner's State of the Nation report on vulnerable children. The primary aims are to:

1. Provide preliminary estimates of the number of children facing different types of vulnerability in England;
2. Identify any issues, gaps and limitations in the relevant data collections and statistics, and;
3. Deliver recommendations on how to improve the quality of data and reporting.

Robust information on the number of vulnerable children is essential for effective, efficient and targeted service provision. With information on prevalence, practitioners and policymakers can identify gaps in provision, understand current and future trends and improve the cost efficiency. Evidence-based decision-making can lead to improved practice and consequently improved outcomes for marginalised and vulnerable children in England.

The findings of this report can also provide a foundation for future work to monitor the number of vulnerable children over time and estimate the overlaps and intersections between vulnerable groups.

## Vulnerable children

Children are considered vulnerable if they experience risks that are systematically different from those experienced by the average population and affect substantially their wellbeing and life chances. Groups of vulnerable children can be identified by certain characteristics, socio-economic circumstances and experiences. As the scope of potential vulnerabilities is broad, a short list of the key groups was identified in collaboration with the Working Group to target our review. Table 2 identifies the 29 groups of vulnerable children which will be reviewed in this report.

## 2. Groups of vulnerable children

Safeguarding concerns or in Local Authority (LA) care	
1	Children Looked After (CLA)
2	Children who are subject to Child Protection Plans (CPP)
3	Children in detention
4	Children in Need (CIN)
5	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)
6	Care leavers
7	Children who are subject to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO)
8	Adopted children
Economic circumstances	
9	Children in workless families
10	Children in low-income families
11	Children who are homeless or who are in insecure/unstable housing
Family circumstances/characteristics	
12	Pre-Section 17
13	Teenage parents
14	Children in non-intact families
15	Undocumented children and children without legal identity/ regular immigration status
16	Young carers
17	Children in 'troubled families'
18	Children whose parents use substances problematically
19	Children whose parents may have limited parenting capacity
Child's educational engagement	
20	Young people Not in Education, Employment or Training
21	Excluded pupils
Child's involvement in offending or anti-social behaviour	
22	Children involved with the criminal justice system/young offenders
23	Young people who are involved in gangs

Childhood experience of abuse/exploitation	
24	Children who have experienced trauma/abuse
25	Children who have been victims of modern slavery
Missing and absent children	
26	Missing children
27	Absent children
Minority populations	
28	Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) children
29	Sexual and gender minority children



# Methodology

The findings in this report were obtained through a two-stage methodology:

## Stage 1: Data collection and literature review

- > Review of datasets and statistics
- > Review of literature to fill any gaps in statistics and data collections available

## Stage 2: Synthesis and assessment of data and statistics

## Stage 1. Data collection and literature review

### Our search strategy

Our search was conducted by using online databases and the appropriate search terms. Firstly, we used all the key groups (see Table 2) as search terms. For example, some of the search terms were: “children in need”, “children looked after”, “children abused”, “parental neglect”, “homeless children”, etc.

Further search terms were used to limit the amount of results and increase the relevance. For example, terms like “England”, “data”, “numbers” were used in conjunction with the terms above.

We used a variety of databases and online libraries, including:

- > Google Scholar
- > IDEAS / EconPapers (repec.org)
- > JSTOR
- > Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
- > Science Direct
- > www.gov.uk
- > SSRN eLibrary

### Data collection

Firstly, a review of all available datasets and statistics was conducted. Our review included official statistical releases from governmental departments, such as the Department for Education, the Ministry of Justice, the Department for Work and Pensions, as well as Office of National Statistics (ONS) publications and data collected by non-governmental organisations and charities, such as the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC). Priority was always given to national and official statistics and their underlying data, as the quality is considered more reliable.

## Literature review

To complement our findings from the data and statistics review, we assessed peer-reviewed academic journals, policy papers and sector studies which either provided information on datasets and statistics or directly estimated the numbers of vulnerable children.

We primarily focused on recent literature, relevant to vulnerable children in England. However, where it was considered useful, our scope was extended to identify any groups of children that are not well-defined or included in the English literature. Our review also covered any related 'grey' literature (e.g. unpublished materials, conference proceedings).

## Stage 2. Synthesis and assessment of data and statistics

For each dataset, statistics or estimate, we assessed the coverage, sample sizes, quality and variable inconsistencies to identify potential gaps. Through this review, we developed a set of recommendations on how to improve data collection for vulnerable children in the future. Finally, we synthesised the data sets and statistics to provide a preliminary estimate of the number of vulnerable children in each of the groups in the scope of this report (see Table 1).

## Results

This section of the report estimates the number of children in each vulnerability group listed in Table 2.

For each group, we assess a range of factors to provide a comprehensive overview, including:

- **Group definition:** the most widely accepted definition for each group.
- **Data sources available:** summary of the most reliable data sources (priority is given to official and national statistics).
- **Frequency of publication:** how often the data source is updated and published.
- **Quality of the data or statistics:** the data collection strategies, including whether datasets are survey-based or administrative.
- **Categories for reporting:** different ways of measuring the number of children in a vulnerability group. For example, for Children Looked After (CLA), there are data on the number of children looked after at the end of the financial year, the number of children looked after at any time during a year, the number of children who started to be looked after during the year and the number of children who ceased to be looked after during the year.
- **Vulnerability sub-groups:** different characteristics that may reveal different levels of vulnerability within a larger group. For example, for children subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP), when the data is disaggregated by plan duration, a sub-group may be identified.
- **Limitations in data collection, estimates and statistics:** issues that may compromise the accuracy or scope of the estimates or numbers provided.
- **Recommendations:** suggestions to improve data and statistics in the future.

This multifaceted analysis will provide a contextual understanding of the data currently available and its limitations.

## Group 1: Children Looked After (CLA)

### Definition

A child is looked after by a Local Authority (LA) if a court has granted a care order to place a child in care, or a children's services department has cared for the child for more than 24 hours (Children Act 1989).

### Data source

The primary data source for this group is the "Children looked after in England including adoption: 2015-2016" statistical release. The CLA statistics are designated as National Statistics (for additional detail see Box 1.1). The CLA release is clearly explained, readily accessible, and produced by using robust methods. The statistics are provided by the Department for Education, which collects data from all English Local Authorities (LAs) through the SSDA903 return. The return aims to capture information for every single child under the age of 18 looked after in England.

The main release is published annually towards the end of September/beginning of October. A second release including additional tables is published in December. The most recent release was published on 29 September 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016. The next statistical release is expected to be published in September 2017 and it will provide information for the year ending 31 March 2017.

### Categories

There are various ways to report the number of vulnerable children in this group. "Children looked after during the year ending 31 March 2016" refers to all children who have been in care at some point during the year, including those who have left care by the end of the year and those who have remained in care. "Children looked after at 31 March 2016" refers to children who are in care at the last day of the financial year, in other words it is a snapshot of the number of children looked after on 31 March. Finally, "children who started to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2016" and "children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2016" reports information on the number of children entering and leaving care during the year.

### Sub-groups

Certain sub-groups of CLA can be associated to heightened risk and vulnerability. Research shows that stability can be associated to improved well-being and outcomes for children in care.

Three primary sub-groups have been identified for their relevance to vulnerability and policymaking. The number of children in each placement type is useful to examine for the allocation of financial resources and policy development. In addition, the number of placements of a child during the year is an indicator of his or her level of vulnerability. Due to the instability and insecurity associated with constantly changing placements, children with 3 or more placements during one year are expected to be more vulnerable than children with just one placement. The duration of time in care can also

be relevant to the level of vulnerability. Children who have been in care for at least 12 months can be considered at higher risk of vulnerability.

### Data limitations and recommendations

The data is comprehensive and accurate, as they are reported by LAs directly. However, as CLA tend to leave and return to care relatively often, and usually more than once in a year, it would be useful to release the data quarterly instead of annually, to provide a snapshot at different points in the year.

Moreover, only the number of placements during the year and the number of children in each placement at the end of the year are reported. This information is very useful but additional detail on the number of children passing through each type of placement each year would help LAs with resource planning and management.

### 3. Children Looked After (CLA)

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Children looked after during the year ending 31 March 2016	100,810	<b>Data source:</b> Children looked after in England including adoption: 2015 to 2016. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> The main release is published annually towards the end of September/beginning of October. A second release including additional tables is published every December. The most recent release was published on 29 September 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016. Additional tables were published on 8 December 2016. The next statistical release is expected to be published in September 2017 and it will provide information for the year ending March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	Children looked after at 31 March 2016	70,440	
	Children who started to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2016	32,050	
	Children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2016	31,710	
Sub-group <sup>2</sup> :	Foster placements	51,850	
	Placed for adoption	2,940	
	Placement with parents	3,810	
	Other placement in the community (living independently, or residential employment)	3,040	
	CLA at 31 March 2016 per placement	7,600	
	Other residential settings (residential care homes, NHS Trust providing medical/nursing care, family centres, young offenders institutions or prisons)	960	
Sub-group:	Residential schools	140	
	Other placement	100	
	1 placement	48,200	
	2 placements	15,000	
	3 or more placements	7,250	
CLA at 31 March 2016 per number of placements	CLA during the year ending 31 March 2016, for at least 12 months	48,480	

<sup>2</sup> All sub-groups refer to the number of children who are looked after at 31 March 2016.

### Box 1.1: National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority (UKSA) has the authority to designate the official 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.

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.

## Group 2: Children who are subject to Child Protection Plans (CPP)

### Definition

A Child Protection Plan (CPP) is a plan detailing the ways in which a child is to be kept safe, including how his or her health and development is to be promoted, and ways in which professionals can support the child's family, if this is in the child's best interest, in promoting his or her welfare.

If a child is taken into police protection, is the subject of an emergency protection order or there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm (physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect), a Section 47 enquiry is initiated. If the child is judged to be at continued risk of significant harm, a Section 47 enquiry results in a protection conference at which a CPP is developed.

### Data source

The main data source for this group is the statistical release "Characteristics of children in need: 2015 to 2016". The statistics in this release are designated as National Statistics. They are provided by the Department for Education, which collects data from all English LAs aiming to capture information for every single child in need and every child who is the subject of a CPP, under the age of 18, in England. It is an annual statistical release, published every November. The most recent statistical release was published on 3 November 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016. The next statistical release will be published in November 2017 and it will report information for the year ending 31 March 2017.

## Categories

Table 4 outlines three different categories of children subject to a CPP. “Children who were the subject of a CPP at 31 March 2016” refers to children subject to a plan at that particular day. “Children who became the subject of a CPP during the year ending 31 March 2016” includes children who became the subject of a plan at any time during the year including both those who ceased to be the subject of a plan before the end of the financial year and those who were still the subject of a plan at the end of the year. Finally, “Children who ceased to be the subject of a CPP during the year ending 31 March 2016” includes children who at any time of the year ceased to be the subject of a plan. A child will cease to be the subject of a plan if it is judged that the he or she is no longer at continuing risk of significant harm, as well as if the child has reached 18 years of age.

## Sub-group

Table 4 also reports the number of children at each category of abuse, as it can indicate different levels of vulnerability. Children who have suffered multiple types of abuse may be at higher risk of vulnerability than other children. The duration of a CPP and whether a child has been the subject of multiple plans can also suggest heightened risk.



#### 4. Children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP)

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Children who were the subject of a CPP at 31 March 2016	50,310	<b>Data source:</b> Characteristics of children in need: 2015 to 2016. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> It is an annual statistical release, published every November. The most recent statistical release was published on 3 November 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016. The next statistical release will be published in November 2017 and it will report information for the year ending 31 March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	Children who became the subject of a CPP during the year ending 31 March 2016	63,310	
	Children who ceased to be the subject of a CPP during the year ending 31 March 2016	62,750	
<b>Sub-group:</b> Children subject to a CPP at 31 March 2016 by latest category of abuse	Neglect	22,610	
	Physical abuse	3,570	
	Sexual abuse	2,270	
	Emotional abuse	19,260	
	Multiple	2,600	
<b>Sub-group:</b> Children subject to a CPP at 31 March 2016 per duration	Less than 3 months	15,590	
	3 to 6 months	12,540	
	6 months to 1 year	13,430	
	1 to 2 years	7,700	
	2 years and over	1,030	
	Children who became the subject of a CPP for a second or subsequent during the year ending 31 March 2016	11,350	
Related groups	Children who were subject to Section 47 enquiries which started during the year ending 31 March 2016	172,290	
	Children who were the subject of an initial stage child protection conference, which took place in the year ending 31 March 2016	73,050	

## Related groups

While broader in scope, “children subject to Section 47 enquiries” and “children who were the subject of an initial child protection conference” can also indicate a level of vulnerability. Although some of these cases did not proceed to a CPP, children in these groups were at some stage considered at risk of significant harm.

## Data limitations and recommendations on the way forward

The data is collected directly from all LAs in England and consequently it can be considered accurate and comprehensive. However, it is important to note that if a child is the subject of more than one plans during the year, each plan is reported separately. The same limitation holds for children subject to Section 47 enquiries. Consequently, the numbers reported will inevitably include some double counting. The only measure which does not suffer from this limitation is “children who were the subject of a CPP at 31 March 2016”. Consequently, it would be extremely useful if LAs provided data for the CPP and Section 47 enquiries per child during a particular year, and allowed the statistical release to report the number of children instead of the number of plans.

Finally, if the statistics were published quarterly instead of annually, the lag between the reporting period and release date would be smaller facilitating more accurate figures.

## Group 3: Children in detention

### Definition

Children may be detained in different situations. The main categories of children in detention are listed below.

- > Children in the secure estate: children under sentencing or remand for committing a serious criminal offence, detained in Young Offender Institutions (YOIs), Secure Training Centres (STCs) and Secure Children's Homes (SCHs).
- > Children in secure accommodation: children placed in SCHs for their own protection.
- > Children in mental health detention: children detained under the Mental Health Act, placed in a Child and Adolescent In-Patient Unit.
- > Children in immigration detention: children detained in immigration removal centres, mostly with their families.

### Data sources and categories

Different data sources report data for each of the categories stated above. Some of the data sources refer to the number of children at 31 March 2016, while others report the number of all children detained during 2016. Consequently, one single number for the whole group cannot be estimated. However, numbers for the different categories stated above (children in the secure estate, children in secure accommodation, children in mental health detention and children in immigration) for are reported in Table 5.

#### A. Children in the secure estate and children in secure accommodation

The Ministry of Justice and the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales publish both annual and monthly statistics on the population of children and young people (under 18) in custody, as part of the "Youth justice statistics". Both monthly and annual datasets provide information only for children in the secure estate who have committed a serious criminal offence.

The "Youth custody" data reports the most up-to-date figures, as it is updated monthly. The latest update was released on 14 April 2017 and provided figures for February 2017. The "Youth justice statistics" provide annual figures of all children detained in YOIs, STCs and SCHs, due to committing a serious criminal offence and who were placed by the Youth Justice Board, at 31 March each year. The most recent statistics present data for the year ending 31 March 2016.

Another informative data source is the annual "Secure children's homes statistics", provided by the Department for Education. This particular release reports the number of children (under 18) detained in all SCHs, including both those under sentencing or remand and those detained for their own protection. Table 5 presents all the relevant information. It should be noted that some of the children in the secure estate are detained in SCHs and consequently they are included in both "Children in the secure estate" and "Children in SCH's" categories.

#### B. Children in mental health detention

No official statistics were found for the number of children in mental health detention. However, the most recent report of the NHS annual statistics “Inpatients formally detained in hospitals under the Mental Health Act 1983, and patients subject to supervised community treatment” states that data for children detained in hospitals started to be collected in January 2016.<sup>3</sup>

### C. Children in immigration detention

Regarding children in immigration detention the main data source is the “Immigration Statistics” published quarterly by the Home Office. The most recent statistics, published on 23 February 2017, provided data for the last quarter of 2016, including the number of children who entered and left immigration detention during 2016 (Table 5).

### Data limitations and recommendations

The statistics on children in the secure estate, in secure accommodation and in immigration detention are accurate and comprehensive as the information is collected directly by the Youth Justice Board’s Placements Services, all children’s homes in England and Wales and the Home Office. The main gap in the data for this group is the number of children in mental health detention.

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<sup>3</sup> The most recent figures were published on 30 November, 2016 providing data for the year ending 31 March 2016. Next publication is expected in Autumn 2017.

## 5. Children in detention

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
Secure estate and secure accommodation	Children in the secure estate (England, February 2017)	824	<b>Data source:</b> Youth Custody data. <b>Provider:</b> Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. <b>Frequency:</b> The dataset is updated on a monthly basis. It was most recently updated on 10 March 2017, providing data for January 2017. <b>Designation:</b> Official Statistics.
	Children in the secure estate (England, 31 March 2016)	827	<b>Data source:</b> Youth Justice statistics. <b>Provider:</b> Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. <b>Frequency:</b> The statistics are published annually in January. The most recent statistics were released on 27 January 2017, reporting data for the year ending 31 March 2016. The next statistics will be released on 25 January 2018, reporting data for the year ending 31 March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National statistics.
	Children in SCHs (England, 31 March 2016)	192	<b>Data source:</b> Secure children's homes statistics (Children accommodated in secure children's homes). <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> The statistics are published annually in June. The most recent statistics were released on 9 June 2017, reporting data for the year ending 31 March 2016. The next statistics will be released on 8 June 2018, reporting data for the year ending 31 March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National statistics.
	Children detained in SCHs placed by the Youth Justice Board	83	
	Children detained in SCHs by LA in a criminal justice context	16	
	Children detained in SCH by LA on welfare context	93	
Immigration detention	Children in immigration detention as at 31 December 2016 (both England and UK)	0	<b>Data source:</b> Immigration Statistics. <b>Provider:</b> Home Office. <b>Frequency:</b> The statistics are published quarterly every

	Children who entered immigration detention in England during 2016	69	<p>February, May, August and November providing data for two months before the release. The most recent release was published on 23 February 2017, including data for the three months between October and December 2016. The next statistics are expected to be published towards the end of May 2017 and they will provide information for three months between January to March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.</p>
	Children who left immigration detention in the UK <sup>4</sup> during 2016	74	

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<sup>4</sup> There is no information for the number of children who left immigration detention in England specifically. The number for England is expected to be very close to that for the UK as a whole, as children who entered immigration detention in the UK but outside England were just 2 in 2016.

## Group 4: Children in need (CIN)

### Definition

A child is defined as being in need if: i) the child is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of services by a LA; ii) the child's health or development is likely to be significantly impaired or further impaired, without the provision of such services; or iii) the child is disabled (Children Act 1989).

### Data source

The main data source for this group is "Characteristics of children in need: 2015 to 2016", which provides data for the year ending 31 March 2016. The information is collected by the Department for Education directly from all LAs in England. In this particular dataset, a child in need is a child (under 18) who has been referred to a LA and judged to be in need of social care services through an assessment. It is an annual statistical release, published every November. The most recent release was published on 3 November 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016. The next release will be published in November 2017 and it will report information for the year ending 31 March 2017.

### Categories

Table 6 reports a number of different categories of children in need. "Children in need throughout the year ending 31 March 2016" captures all children who have received social care services during the year, including both those who are and those who are not in need by the end of the year. "Children in need at 31 March 2016" includes children who are in need at the end of the financial year. "Children starting an episode of need during the year ending" refers to children for whom a referral has been made at any time during the year, while "children ending an episode of need during the year ending 31 March 2016" includes children in need whose case was closed at any time during the year.

### Sub-groups

The primary need at assessment for children in need provides an overview of the types of vulnerabilities experienced. This information can be used to identify which needs are most prominent and where policy interventions and social care services are most needed. From 2016 data, we can easily observe that abuse or neglect is the most common reason for a child being in need of social care services. The number of children suffering from family dysfunction and disabilities is also significant.

### Data limitations and recommendation

This statistical release is very comprehensive in terms of the children who have been referred, assessed and judged to be in need of social care services. However, due to the nature of the group, the number of children will always be slightly underestimated, as there might be children who need

social care services but they are not referred or assessed for a variety of reasons (e.g. because their parents/family/environment cannot detect their needs).

Another group of children worth considering is children who are referred to social care services but do not pass the assessment threshold. These children may still be vulnerable. It would be very useful to know the number of children referred and assessed by social care services but judged not to be in need. In the data, such information is provided but only in terms of referrals rather than the number of children (Table 6). Improvements to reporting in this respect would increase the accuracy of vulnerable children estimates.

Finally, if the statistics were reported quarterly instead of annually, the lag between reporting period and release date would be smaller allowing for up-to date figures and information on the number of children in need at different points in the year.



## 6. Children in need

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Children in need throughout the year ending 31 March 2016	778,980	<b>Data source:</b> Characteristics of children in need: 2015 to 2016. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> It is an annual statistical release, published every November. The most recent release was published on 3 November 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016. The next release will be published in November 2017 and it will report information for the year ending 31 March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	Children in need at 31 March 2016	394,400	
	Children starting an episode of need during the year ending 31 March 2016	401,600	
	Children ending an episode of need during the year ending 31 March 2016	384,580	
<b>Sub-group:</b> Children in need at 31 March 2016 per primary need of assessment	Abuse or neglect	199,720	
	Child's disability or illness	37,760	
	Parents' disability	11,450	
	Family in acute stress	34,370	
	Family dysfunction	68,440	
	Socially unacceptable behaviour	7,590	
	Low income	1,910	
	Absent parenting	11,650	
	Cases other than children in need	3,410	
Related group	Not stated	16,950	
	Referrals which resulted in no further action in the year ending 31 March 2016	61,800	
	Referrals which resulted in an assessment and the child was assessed not to be in need in the year ending 31 March 2016	158,060	

## Group 5: Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

### Definition

An unaccompanied asylum seeking child is a person under 18 years of age, applying for asylum in his or her own right, who is separated from both parents and is not being cared for by an adult, who by law has responsibility to do so (Home Office).

### Data sources and categories reported

The main data source for UASC is the “Children looked after in England including adoption: 2015 to 2016” statistics provided by the Department for Education. The statistics include data for the number of UASC looked after by LAs in England at 31 March each year. The most recent figure available is for the year ending 31 March 2016 and it is reported in Table 7. The main release is published annually towards the end of September/beginning of October. A second release including additional tables is published every December. The CLA statistics only provides information for the number of UASC on the last day of the financial year.

The Association of Directors of Children’s Services (2016) reports the number of UASC who started and ceased to be looked after during the year. The ADCS collected the relevant information by sending a request for qualitative and quantitative data to all 152 LAs in England in July 2016. The findings are presented in Table 7. The report states the responses of 106 LAs. Table 7 also reports an estimate for all LAs in England. These results should be treated with caution as the report does not state which LAs responded to which questions and the extrapolations did not account for the significant LA and regional variations demonstrated in the Department for Education data.

The immigration Statistics provided by the Home Office is another relevant data source. These statistics provide the number of asylum applications from unaccompanied children per year in the UK.

### Data limitations and recommendations

The statistics provided by the Department for Education (“children looked after in England including adoption”) are as comprehensive as possible in terms of the number of UASC looked after. However, an LA might decide, having taken account of a child’s wishes, that the child is competent enough to look after him/herself. In such cases, they may legitimately use Section 17 for support instead of Section 20. Consequently, there might be UASC who are not in care, but they still use social care services and LA support. These children are currently missing from the data. In fact, CIN statistics do report the number of referrals to children’s social care with an assessment factor of “unaccompanied asylum seeker” (2,800 during the year ending 31 March 2016). However, this is just the number of relevant episodes during the year and not the stock of UASC who are also CIN. For example, many of those children may have left the country by the last day of the reporting period. Moreover, it is not clear in the data if those children are also included in CLA statistics, as CLA are considered a sub-group of CIN. If CIN statistics include specific and clear data for UASC who receive support from social care services, then the two statistical releases would provide a comprehensive picture of UASC in England.

Immigration statistics are very useful as they provide information for the number of asylum applications by UASC. However, we cannot know how many UASC currently reside in England from this information.

## 7. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	UASC looked after at 31 March 2016	4,210	<b>Data source:</b> Children looked after in England including adoption: 2015 to 2016. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> The main release is published annually towards the end of September/beginning of October. A second release including additional tables is published every December. The most recent release was published on 29 September 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016. Additional tables were published on 8 December 2016. The next statistical release is expected to be published in September 2017 and it will provide information for the year ending March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	UASC started to be looked after during 2015 – 2016:		<b>Data source:</b> Safeguarding Pressures Phase 5 – Special thematic report on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking and Refugee Children. <b>Provider:</b> The Association of Directors of Children’s Services. <b>Frequency:</b> N/A. The report was published in November 2016. <b>Next release:</b> N/A. <b>Designation:</b> Non-official survey data.
	ADCS’ survey (responding rate: 106/152 LAs)	3,200	
	Estimated figure (estimated by Alma)	4,589	
	UASC looked after at any time during 2015 – 2016:		
	ADCS’ survey (responding rate: 106/152 LAs)	5,673	
Estimated figure (estimated by Alma)	8,135		

	Applications by UASC	3,175 (number of applications in the UK)	<p><b>Data source:</b> Immigration Statistics.</p> <p><b>Provider:</b> Home Office. <b>Frequency:</b> The statistics are published on a quarterly basis, every February, May, August and November providing data for two months before the release. The most recent release was published on 23 February 2017, including data for the three months between October and December 2016. The next statistics are expected to be published towards the end of May 2017 and they will provide information for the three months between January and March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.</p>
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## Group 6: Care leavers

### Definition

According to the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, a care leaver is someone who has been looked after by a LA for a period of 13 weeks or more spanning their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### Data source

The only data source that reports information on care leavers is “Children looked after in England including adoption” statistics, provided by the Department for Education. The official statistics only report the number of children who ceased to be in care each year. However, in the most recent statistical release the Department for Education included experimental data on the number of care leavers, who left care during the year ending 31 March 2016.

### Categories

Table 8 reports the number of care leavers, who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2016, aged 17 and 18 years old. The children captured in this group are children whose 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> birthday falls between 1 April and 31 March 2016, who were previously looked after for at least 13 weeks from when they were aged 14 to 16.

In contrast, the number of children who have left care during the year provides a broader view of this group.

### Sub-groups

The experimental data on care leavers provide also some further information on their characteristics. Table 8 shows the number of care leavers in groups that indicate different levels of vulnerability. For example, care leavers who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or are currently living in unsuitable accommodation can be considered more vulnerable than others.

### Data limitations and recommendations

The data currently available refers to the number of care leavers each year. Many children return to care, which means that the data cannot provide information on the stock of all care leavers currently in England. The figures are experimental statistics published for the first time and due to that, as the Department for Education analysis noted, some LAs have not provided data for approximately 11% of all 18 year olds (around 1,000), and a very small number of 17 year olds. Consequently, the figures should be treated with caution and mainly as estimates rather than actual numbers.

Consequently, there are two main areas for improvement. Firstly, the quality and methodology of experimental statistics requires further work, as the information included is extremely useful. Finally, data for all care leavers and all children who ceased to be looked after should account for children who have returned to care. Such information will facilitate the calculation of an estimate of individuals who have left care no matter their age. This is important as all children who have been in care can be considered vulnerable, not only those captured in the strict definition used in the experimental data.

## 8. Care leavers

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	All children who ceased to be looked after during the year	31,710	<b>Data source:</b> Children looked after in England including adoption: 2015 to 2016. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> The main release is published annually in the end of September/beginning of October. A second release including additional tables is published every December. Most recent publication: 29 September 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016. Additional tables were published on 8 December 2016. The next statistical release is expected to be published in September 2017 and it will provide information for the year ending March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics (Care leavers data are designated as Experimental Statistics).
	Care leavers aged 17 years old at 31 March 2016	910	
	Care leavers aged 18 years old at 31 March 2016	8,370	
<b>Sub-group:</b> Care leavers (aged 17 and 18 years old) per activity	Higher education	260	
	Education (other than higher)	3,670	
	Training or employment	1,720	
	NEET	3,060	
	Not known	570	
<b>Sub-group:</b> Care leavers (aged 17 and 18 years old) per suitability of accommodation	Suitable accommodation	8,100	
	Unsuitable accommodation	570	
	No information	560	

## Group 7: Children who are subject to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO)

### Definitions

A special guardianship is an order made by the Family Court that places a child or a young person to live with someone other than their parents on a long-term basis (Adoption and Children Act 2002).

A Special Guardianship Order (SGO) secures the relationship between the special guardian and the child or young person and gives them parental responsibility, whilst maintaining links with the child's or young person's parents.

### Data sources and categories

The Department for Education's "Children looked after including adoption" statistics provide the number of children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2016 due to being subject to a SGO.

There can be cases in which children who are not in care become subject to a SGO. These children are not included in the statistics stated above, but they are included in the Family Court statistics provided by the Ministry of Justice. The data covers children involved in all SGOs made both in public and private law cases.

### Data limitations and recommendations

The statistics provided by the Department for Education are comprehensive and accurate for children who have been in care during the last year, as the data is reported by all LAs in England. However, they are only available annually and, as with care leavers, we only know the number of children subject to a SGO each year but we do not have any information on the stock of children subject to a SGO.

The Family Court statistics are inclusive and accurate, as a SGO can only be made by the Family Court. Moreover, they are released quarterly and thus the lag between the reporting period and the release date is very small. However, the figures in the publicly available statistics are only available as aggregated numbers for all children in England and Wales. The statistics would be even more useful and comprehensive if separate figures were reported for the two countries.

## 9. Children who are subject to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO)

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Children who ceased to be looked after during the year ending 31 March 2016 subject to special guardianship order (England)	3,830	<p><b>Data source:</b> Children looked after in England including adoption: 2015 to 2016, <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education.</p> <p><b>Frequency:</b> The main release is published annually in the end of September/beginning of October. A second release including additional tables is published every December. Most recent publication: 29 September 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016. Additional tables were published on 8 December 2016. The next statistical release is expected to be published in September 2017 and it will provide information for the year ending March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.</p>
	Children involved in special guardianship orders (during Q1- Q4 2016 in England and Wales)	7,323	<p><b>Data source:</b> Family Court Statistics. <b>Provider:</b> Ministry of Justice. <b>Frequency:</b> The statistics are released on a quarterly basis, every March/April, June, September and December, providing data for three months before the release. The most recent publication was released on 30 March 2017, including data for the three months between October to December 2016. The next statistical release will be published on 29 June 2017 and it will provide information for the period between January and March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.</p>



## Group 8: Adopted children

### Definition

Adoption places a child or young person in a permanent home. Once an adoption order has been granted, the birth parents lose parental responsibility.

### Data source and categories

An adopted child in England is a child who used to be looked after by a LA. Consequently, the CLA data provided by the Department for Education is the most relevant and accurate source of information. The most recent statistics report the number of children who were adopted at any time during the year ending 31 March 2016. Table 10 presents the relevant figure.

### Sub-groups

Table 10 also presents information on the age at time of adoption and time spent waiting. These sub-groups provide important information on the number of children with different levels of vulnerability, as children who are adopted older and those who have waited longer are expected to be the most vulnerable and face more difficulties.

### Data limitations

The figures report the number of children adopted each year but there is no information on the stock of all individuals adopted who are still children and potentially vulnerable. Using the data from other years to estimate this number is challenging as adoptions can fail. For example, last year 4,850 adoption placements ceased and on average they lasted for less than a year. Consequently, as data comes directly from LAs, more information on the stock of all adopted children could be collected. Finally, quarterly release of data would be extremely useful for this category to provide up-to-date and more accurate information.

## 10. Adopted children

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	All CLA who were adopted during the year ending 31 March 2016	4,690	<b>Data source:</b> Children looked after in England including adoption: 2015 to 2016. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> The main release is published annually towards the end of September / beginning of October. A second release including additional tables is published every December. The most recent release was published on 29 September 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016. Additional tables were published on 8 December 2016. The next statistical release is expected to be published in September 2017 and it will provide information for the year ending March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
<b>Sub-group:</b> All CLA who were adopted during the year ending 31 March 2016 per age at adoption	Under 1	230	
	1 to 4	3,370	
	5 to 9	1,020	
	10 to 15	70	
	16 and over	x <sup>5</sup>	
<b>Sub-group:</b> All CLA who were adopted during the year ending 31 March 2016 per time spent waiting	Under 6 months	900	
	From 6 months to under 1 year	650	
	From 1 year to under 2 years	360	
	From 2 years to under 3 years	200	
	3 years and over	310	

<sup>5</sup> Figure not shown in the datasets to protect confidentiality

## Group 9: Children in workless families

### Definitions

“Children living in workless households” are children living in households in which all persons over 16 are unemployed or inactive.

“Children living in long-term workless households” are children living in households in which all persons have been workless for more than 1 year or have never worked.

### Data sources and categories

The data source providing the most recent data for children in workless households is the “Working and workless households in the UK: October to December 2016” statistical release published by the ONS. These statistics are based on data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

The only figures available for children living in long-term workless households is “Children living in long-term workless households: UK” statistical release published by the Office for National Statistics. The statistical release estimates were calculated using the Annual Population Survey (APS). The most recent release provides data for 2014.

### Data limitations and recommendations

Both ONS publications on workless households use survey data. As all surveys, LFS and APS introduce some bias in the estimates due to sampling and non-sampling errors (e.g. the surveys do not cover all individuals in a country, but mainly individuals in private households and some income streams may be under-reported)<sup>6</sup>. Finally, “Children living in long-term workless households: UK” statistics are released 18 months after the reporting period, failing to provide up-to date data. As long-term worklessness is an important measure, the time lag should be reduced.

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<sup>6</sup> For more details on errors arising from survey data, refer to box 1.2

## 11. Children in workless families

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Children living in long-term workless households (under 16 years old, England, end of 2014)	1,148,000	<b>Data Source:</b> Children living in long-term workless households: UK. <b>Provider:</b> Office of National Statistics (ONS). <b>Frequency:</b> The statistical release and underlying data tables are published on a quarterly basis. The most recent release was published on 4 July 2016, covering the period January to December 2014. <b>Next statistical release:</b> TBA. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	Children living in workless households (under 16 years old, England, October to December 2016)	1,057,142	<b>Data Source:</b> Working and workless households in the UK. <b>Provider:</b> Office of National Statistics (ONS). <b>Frequency:</b> The statistical release and underlying data tables are published on a quarterly basis. The most recent release was published on 1 March 2017, covering the period October to December 2016. The next statistical release is expected to be published on 31 May 2017 and it will provide information on the period January to March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.

### Box 1.2: Errors arising from survey errors

Results from sample surveys are always estimates, not precise figures. This means that they are subject to a margin of error. Biases in survey estimates can arise from:

- > Sampling error: Sampling error arises from the unrepresentativeness of the sample taken. In surveys, the sample is not the whole population and this introduces some uncertainty. In general terms, the smaller the sample size, the larger the uncertainty
- > Non-sampling error: Non-sampling errors include coverage errors, i.e. a failure to represent all population units in the sample, response errors due to misunderstandings or misreporting, mistakes in recording the data or coding and other errors of collection, nonresponse or processing.

For example, household surveys, such as the Labour Force Survey (LFS), the Family Resources Survey (FRS) and Understanding Society, are completed by household members and consequently, they do not account for the population in residential institutional settings (e.g. healthcare settings, offenders' institutions).

Non-sampling error can be minimised through effective and accurate sample and questionnaire design and extensive quality assurance of the data. However, it is not possible to eliminate it completely, or quantify it.

## Group 10: Children in low-income families

### Definitions

As with the previous group, there is not one way to define low-income families. This report focuses on the following indicators of low-income:

- **Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility:** Free School Meals (FSM) is a statutory benefit available to school-aged children from families who receive other qualifying benefits (e.g. Income support, jobseekers allowance).
- **Relative poverty:** refers to households with income below 60 per cent of the median.
- **Absolute poverty:** it also refers to households with income below 60 per cent of the median, but using the year 2010/11 as a reference year (to compare over time).
- **Persistent poverty:** it refers to households that have been in relative poverty for three years during the last four.
- **Material deprivation and severe low income:** it refers to households with income below 70% of the median and unable to afford particular goods and activities.

### Data sources and categories

The main data source for children eligible for FSM is the “Schools, pupils and their characteristics” statistics, provided by the Department for Education. The most recent release reports the number of all pupils eligible for FSM in England in January 2016. The data comes from the January 2016 school census and was published in June 2016.

The “Households Below Average Income” statistics is published by the Department for Work and Pensions annually. It provides estimates for relative poverty, absolute poverty and material deprivation and severe low income, calculated by using data from the Family Resources Survey (FRS). The most recent release was published on 16 March 2017 and it included average estimates for the three financial years between 2013/14 and 2015/16, instead of an annual figure.

Estimates on persistent poverty are included in the ‘Income Dynamics’ statistics, produced by the Department for Work and Pensions, and are based on the Understanding Society data. This dataset was firstly published on 16 March 2017 providing an estimate of the percentage of children in persistent low income during the period 2011 – 2015. Table 12 reports an estimate of the number of those children calculated by using the percentage reported in the statistics (11%) and the ONS mid-population estimate for children up to the age of 18.

Finally, it should be noted that children in both datasets are defined as individuals aged under 16 or older (16 to 18 for Income Dynamics, and 16 to 19 for HBAI) in full-time non-advanced education.

### Data limitations and recommendations

Estimates of the number of children eligible for FSM is comprehensive and very informative as they are based on school census data. However, the total number includes all full-time and part-time pupils with sole or dual main registrations. Consequently, the numbers in “Schools, pupils and their characteristics” might be slightly inflated.

Both “Households Below Average Income” and “Income Dynamics” are based on survey data<sup>7</sup>, which means that they do not report accurate numbers but estimates with some margin of error. Moreover, the HBAI statistics provide an average estimate for the period 2013/15 to 2015/16, instead of an annual figure, limiting further their accuracy. The same issue holds for Income Dynamics statistics, as they report only an estimate of the percentage of children in persistent low income during the whole period of 2011 to 2015. Moreover, ‘Income Dynamics’ statistics are still experimental. Consequently, the figure presented in Table 12 for children in persistent low income should be treated with caution.

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<sup>7</sup> Refer to Box 1.2

## 12. Children in low-income families

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Children eligible for Free School Meals (students <sup>8</sup> aged 0 to 17, England, January 2016)	1,141,598	<b>Data source:</b> Schools, pupils and their characteristics. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> The release is published annually every June. Most recent publication: 28 June 2016, providing data collected in the January 2016 Census. The next statistical release is expected to be published in June 2017 and it will provide data collected in the January 2017 Census. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	Children in relative poverty <sup>9</sup> (England, 3 years' average 2013/14 – 2015/16)	2,100,000	<b>Data source:</b> Households Below Average Income. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Work and Pensions. <b>Frequency:</b> The statistics are published annually in February/March (before 2017 they were published every June). The most recent release was published on 16 March 2017, including data for the financial year 2015/2016. The next statistical release is expected to be published in February/March 2018 and it will provide data for the financial year 2016/2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	Children in material deprivation and low income (England, 3 years' average 2013/14 – 2015/16)	1,368,000	
	Children in material deprivation and severe low income (England, 3 years' average 2013/14 – 2015/16)	456,000	
	Children in absolute poverty (England, 3 years' average 2013/14 – 2015/16)	2,000,000	

<sup>8</sup> The figure captures all students in state-funded nursery schools, state-funded primary schools, state-funded secondary schools, state-funded special schools, pupil referral units and LA alternative provision, including academies and free schools.

<sup>9</sup> Before housing costs.



	Children in persistent low income (England, 2015)	1,357,278 <sup>10</sup> (Alma's estimate)	<p><b>Data source:</b> Income Dynamics. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Work and Pensions.</p> <p><b>Frequency:</b> N/A (this is the first year that the dataset was published). The most recent release was published on 16 March 2017, providing data for the period 2010 - 2015. The next statistical release is expected to be published in February/March 2018 and will provide data for 2016. <b>Designation:</b> Experimental official statistics.</p>
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<sup>10</sup> This number was estimated by using the ONS mid-2015 population estimates for all children up to age of 18 in England.

## Group 11: Children who are homeless or who are in insecure/unstable housing

### Definitions

According to the Housing Act 1996, individuals can be considered 'homeless' if

- they have no accommodation;
- they have a right to continue to occupy their accommodation but cannot secure entry to it;
- their home is a moveable structure such as a houseboat or caravan and they have nowhere to park it and reside in it;
- there is nowhere in which the whole household can live together;
- they have accommodation but it is not reasonable for them to continue to occupy it, for example because of its poor condition;
- they, or a family member, will be at risk of domestic or other violence if they remain in their accommodation.

In the data available, the following two terms are used as types of homelessness:

- **Statutory homelessness:** when a household is accepted by a LA as homeless, or is found to be unintentionally homeless and in priority need, the authority has a duty to ensure that suitable accommodation is available. The most common immediate outcome for new acceptances is to be placed in temporary accommodation. The main types of temporary accommodation are temporary accommodation with shared facilities (e.g. bed and breakfast accommodation, hostels, women's refuges) and self-contained temporary accommodation (e.g. nightly paid, LA stock, leased from the private sector by an LA).
- **Rough sleeping:** it is defined by the Government as 'people sleeping, or bedded down, in the open air (such as on the streets, or in doorways, parks or bus shelters); people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations etc.)'.

### Data sources and categories

The official data source providing data on homeless people and people in unstable housing is Homelessness Statistics, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The majority of information refers to adults and households. However, the "Statutory homelessness and prevention and relief" dataset, which is part of the Homelessness Statistics, provides information on the households with dependent children applied and accepted as homeless by LAs, in temporary accommodation and in B&B over 6 weeks. The most recent dataset was released on 23 March 2017 and provided data for the last quarter of 2016.

The statistics report the number of households with dependent children accepted by the LAs and the number of those in temporary accommodation. However, the number of children is only reported for households in temporary accommodation (60,240 families with 118,960 children). To provide an estimate of all children accepted by LAs as homeless we used the average number of children in each household in temporary accommodation (2.0) and applied it to the number of all statutory homeless households with dependent children. Finally, another interesting category is the number of young

people aged 16-24 applying and accepted, as non-dependents, for statutory homelessness. The relevant information is reported in Table 13.

Another useful dataset, also part of Homeless Statistics, is the “Rough sleeping in England”, which provides an estimate of the number of people sleeping rough in LAs’ areas at any night during the reporting period. The most recent dataset was released on 25 January 2017 and provided night snapshots of the number of people sleeping rough in LAs’ areas during Autumn 2016. The estimate reported was 4,134 people sleeping rough every night in England, from which 288 were young people under 25 years old. More detailed information for children younger than 18 years old is not available in the data.

### Hidden Homelessness

The term ‘hidden homelessness’ refers to people who may be in a similar housing situation to those who apply to LAs as homeless, that is, lacking their own secure, separate accommodation, without formally applying or registering with a LA or other homelessness agencies.

The Homelessness Monitor (2017), an annual state-of-the-nation report looking at the impact of economic and policy developments on homelessness, identifies three different types of hidden homelessness; ‘concealed’ households, ‘sharing’ households and ‘overcrowded’ households. ‘Concealed’ households are family units or single adults living within other households, who may wish to form separate households given appropriate opportunity. ‘Sharing’ households are households who live together in the same dwelling but who do not share either a living room or regular meals together. ‘Overcrowded’ households are households that do not comply with the rule of the ‘bedroom standard’. This rule allocates one bedroom to each couple or lone parent, one to each pair of children under 10, one to each pair of children of the same sex over 10, and additional bedrooms for children over 10 of different sex and for additional adult household members.

The latest report was published in March 2017 and it included estimates of the prevalence of hidden homelessness in England in 2016. The estimates were calculated by using the LFS, the Understanding Society (US) and the English Housing Survey (EHS). The report states that 21.1% of all households in England contained additional family units, 1.45% of households were ‘sharing’ households, including 1.6% of all lone parent households, and 3% were ‘overcrowded’. However, no information on the number of children in these households was provided.

### 13. Children who are homeless in insecure/unstable housing

Group	Category	No. of households	No. of children	Information
General group	Households accepted as homeless by LA with dependent children in 2016 (England)	43,020	86,040 (Alma's estimate <sup>11</sup> )	<b>Data source:</b> Statutory homelessness and prevention and relief. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). <b>Frequency:</b> The statistics are published on a quarterly basis. The most recent release was published on 23 March 2017, including data for the last quarter of 2016. The next dataset is expected to be published in June 2017 and it will provide data for the first quarter of 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	Households in temporary accommodation on 31 December 2016 (England)	60,240	118,960	
<b>Sub-group:</b> Households in temporary accommodation	In self-contained temporary accommodation	53,380	106,760 (Alma's estimate)	
	In bed and breakfast	2,780	5,560 (Alma's estimate)	
Related groups	Households accepted as homeless of which main applicant is 16-24 years old in 2016 (England)	13,280	13,280	<b>Data source:</b> Rough sleeping in England. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). <b>Frequency:</b> The statistics are published quarterly. The most recent release was published on 23 January 2017, including data for Autumn 2016. The next dataset is expected to be published in January 2018 and it will provide estimates for Autumn 2018. <b>Designation:</b> Official Statistics
	Rough Sleepers under 25 years old (snapshot, England, Autumn 2016)	N/A	288	

<sup>11</sup> This is not the actual number of children. It is an estimate calculated by using the number of homeless families and the average number of children in households in temporary accommodation.

## Limitations

Homelessness is by its nature a hidden category, as there are people never identified by LAs. For being accepted of statutory homelessness, you usually need to have a priority need (e.g. dependent children or being of old age) or to be considered as unintentionally homeless. Consequently, there might be people that are discouraged to apply and thus they are not in the data.

Homelessness statistics are comprehensive in the number of households applied and accepted by LAs as homeless. On the other hand, specific information on households with dependent children is only available for accepted households, while the number of dependent children is only available for households in temporary accommodation. Consequently, the main improvement to be made in the official statistics is better and more comprehensive reporting of the number of children in accepted and not accepted households.

Regarding the number of non-dependent young people applying for statutory homelessness, data on the age group 16-17 would be extremely useful, as young people at this age group can be considered much more vulnerable than adults aged 18-24. The same applies to young people sleeping rough.

Finally, although hidden homelessness cannot be accurately reported, it would be extremely useful if the estimates provided in the annual Homelessness Monitor were also available for children instead of households and adults only.

## Group 12: Pre-section 17

### Definition

Under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989, LAs have a general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are “in need”<sup>12</sup> and to promote the upbringing of such children by their families, by providing a range of services appropriate to those children’s needs. For a child to receive these services a referral and an assessment should take place. If the result of the assessment is that the child should not be considered “in need”, then no services are provided to him/her.

The main issue with the above regulation is that children who are assessed and do not go on to become “in need”, especially those close to the relevant threshold, might still be vulnerable and face difficulties. A smaller subset of those children goes through the same process twice within a short period of time. This shows a greater degree of vulnerability and need of support, even though these children are not considered “in-need”.

Pre-section 17 children can be defined, though not a formal definition, as those children who have been assessed by a social worker twice in a 12-month period and they are not considered ‘in-need’.

### Data source and main category

The main official data source for children in need, referrals and assessments completed by children’s social care services is the “Characteristics of children in need” statistics, published annually by the Department for Education (DfE). The most recent release provides information for the year ending 31 March 2016. The statistics report that, during that year, 571 640 assessments were completed and 158,000 children were assessed not to be in need.

### Related groups

According to this statistical release, during the year ending 31 March 2016, 621,470 referrals were completed by the social care services. 61,800 of those referrals resulted in no further action, while 138,700 referrals were completed within 12 months of a previous referral. These figures show different levels of vulnerability, as children referred to social care services twice can be considered more vulnerable than those referred just once and no assessment was needed.

### Data limitations and recommendations

The DfE’s statistics are comprehensive and inclusive in terms of the population covered, as they are collected directly by the LAs’ records of social care services assessments and referrals. However, the figures reported in these statistics do not include the exact number of children in this group. More particularly, the figure reported is the number of children whose needs were considered serious enough to warrant a social work assessment, but they were not assessed as ‘in need’. The number of

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<sup>12</sup> For more information on the definition of Children In Need (CIN) refer to group 4, page 16.

children assessed twice in the year is not known. The figure 158,060 reported in Table 14 is the maximum possible number, as this would be the correct figure if all of them were assessed twice.

Consequently, the main improvement to be made is the inclusion of the number of assessments of each 'not-successful' child in the CIN statistics, as it is already done for referrals. Finally, according to the DfE's documentation the number of all referrals (621,470) and all assessments (571,640) completed during the year might be inflated as if a child has been through more than one referrals or assessments during the year, each instance will be recorded. Separate figures for the number of children referred and the number of children assessed would be extremely useful.

#### 14. Pre-section 17

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Referrals resulted in an assessment and the child was assessed not to be in need in the year ending 31 March 2016	158,060	<b>Data source:</b> Characteristics of children in need: 2015 to 2016. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> It is an annual statistical release, published every November. The most recent release was published on 3 November 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016. The next release will be published in November 2017 and it will report information for the year ending 31 March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
Related groups	All referrals completed during the year ending 31 March 2016	621,470	
	Referrals which were completed within 12 months of a previous referral	138,700	
	Referrals which resulted in no further action in the year ending 31 March 2016	61,800	
	All assessments completed during the year ending 31 March 2016	571,640	

## Group 13: Teenage Parents

### Definition

The term “teenage parents” captures parents who have not reached legal adulthood, including teenage girls, usually within the ages of 13 to 18, becoming pregnant.

### Data sources

There are three main data sources providing information for the number of parents per age. All data sources are published annually by the ONS and they are designated as National Statistics. The first one is the “Conceptions in England and Wales” statistical bulletin, which includes all pregnancies of women usually resident in England and Wales, excluding conceptions resulting in miscarriages or illegal abortions. The most recent statistical bulletin was released on 22 March 2017, providing the number of mothers under 18 at conception in England in 2015, as well as the percentage of conceptions that led to abortion. The second data source is the “Births by mothers’ usual area of residence in UK” dataset. The most recent dataset was released on 22 September 2016 and provides data for the number of births by teenager mothers in England in 2015. Finally, another useful data source is the “Births by parents’ characteristics in England and Wales” statistical bulletin. The latest release was published on 29 November 2016 and provided data for 2015. This is the only source which refers to teenage fathers. However, only aggregated figures for England and Wales are available. All the figures collected from these data sources are presented in Table 15.

### Data limitations and recommendations

There is not an official estimate of all teenage parents in England. The only available information is the number of teenage girls who have been pregnant or have gave birth during the reporting period. These numbers do not give the accurate number of teenage mothers as some of them might give their child for adoption, for example. However, teenage girls who have been pregnant, gone through abortion or gave a birth can be considered as having a higher risk of vulnerability and thus information on their prevalence is important. Another gap in the data is the number of teenage fathers in England specifically. Official estimates using survey data (e.g. the Labour Force Survey) can be produced to fill the gaps stated above and to provide an estimate of all teenage parents in England, not only the ones who became parents during the reporting period.



## 15. Teenage parents

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
Teenage fathers	Births by age of the father – All fathers aged under 18	885	<b>Data source:</b> Births by parents’ characteristics in England and Wales. <b>Provider:</b> Office for National Statistics. <b>Frequency:</b> The dataset is published annually in October/November. The most recent release was published on 29 November 2016, including data for 2015. The next release will be published in October/ November 2017 and it will report information 2016. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	13 to 15	67	
	16 to 17	818	
Teenage mothers	Births by women under 18 years old during 2015 in England	5,788	<b>Data source:</b> Births by mothers’ usual area of residence in UK. <b>Provider:</b> Office for National Statistics. <b>Frequency:</b> The dataset is published annually in September/October. The most recent release was published on 22 October 2016, including data for 2015. The next release will be published in September/October 2017 and it will report information 2016. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
Conceptions by teenagers	Conceptions to women under 18 years old during 2015 in England	19,080	<b>Data source:</b> Conceptions in England and Wales. <b>Provider:</b> Office for National Statistics. <b>Frequency:</b> The dataset is published annually in February/March. The most recent release was published on 22 March 2017, including data for 2015. The next release will be published in February/ March 2018 and it will report information 2016. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	Conceptions leading to abortion	9,983 <sup>13</sup> (estimate)	
	Conceptions not leading to abortion	9,097 (estimate)	
	Conceptions per mothers age:		
	13 to 15	3,261	
	16 to 17	15,819	

<sup>13</sup> "Conceptions leading to abortion" and "conceptions not leading to abortion" were estimated by using the percentage of conceptions that led to abortion provided in the data, they should not be treated as the exact numbers.

## Group 14: Children in non-intact families

### Definition

Non-intact families refer to families in which not both biological parents are present in the home. Non-intact families mainly include divorced and lone-parent families. A child in a non-intact family is not necessarily vulnerable, but the absence of one biological parent might increase the risk for vulnerability.

### Data sources and categories

The main official data source for information on families is “Families and households in the UK”, published annually by the ONS and providing information on the number of dependent and non-dependent children per family type in the UK. The estimates are produced by using data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The most recent publication was released on 4 November 2016 and it provided an estimate of the number of children in lone-parent families in the UK. However, the dataset includes only UK aggregated figures. Table 16 presents this figure, together with an estimate of the number of those children in England, calculated by using data directly from the LFS for the last quarter of 2016.

Regarding divorces, the “Divorces in England and Wales: Children of Divorced Couples” dataset, which is also published by the ONS, reports the number of children of divorced couples per year of divorce. The most recent release was published on 5 December of 2016 and it provided information for 2013. These statistics are derived by Her Majesty’s Courts and Tribunal Service during the divorce process.

The two categories are not mutually exclusive and they refer to different time periods. Consequently, the figures in Table 16 cannot be added to provide one general estimate of all children in non-intact families.

### Data limitations and recommendations

Official information on lone-parent families is only available for the UK, lower geographies would be extremely useful to identify the number of children in the different countries. Moreover, divorce datasets are published 3 years after the reporting period and they also do not provide specific information for England. Finally, the number of all divorced children currently in England is not known, as only the number of couples taking divorce each year is reported.

## 16. Non-intact families

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Dependent children under 19 in lone parent families (2016)	<u>3,043,000</u> (UK – officially published ONS figure) - <u>2,483,000</u> (England – Alma estimate using LFS for only one quarter and approximate sampling weights)	<b>Data source:</b> Families and households in the UK. <b>Provider:</b> Office for National Statistics. <b>Frequency:</b> The statistics are published annually. The most recent release was published on 4 November 2016, including data for 2016. The next release will be published in Autumn 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
Sub-groups	Dependent children under 16 whose parents were divorced during 2013 (England and Wales)	99,864	<b>Data source:</b> Divorces in England and Wales: Children in divorced couples. <b>Provider:</b> Office for National Statistics. <b>Frequency:</b> The statistics are published annually. The most recent release was published on 5 December 2016, including data for 2013. <b>Next release:</b> TBA. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.

## Group 15: Undocumented children & children without legal identity/ regular immigration status

### Definition

There is not a universally accepted definition of undocumented children and children without regular immigration status but it usually includes:

- unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- dependents of adults pursuing asylum
- children who enter the country clandestinely, and
- children who have obtained refugee status/indefinite or discretionary leave to remain

### Data sources and categories

There are no official statistics or estimates for the number of undocumented children and children without legal identity mainly due to the nature of the population, that is hidden and mostly wants to remain as such. However, there are independent one-off studies that use survey data to provide an estimate of this population. One of the most recent and most well-known ones is a research report published in 2012 by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Centre on Migration, Policy and Society at the University of Oxford. The study, which was conducted by Sigona and Hughes (2012), estimated that there are 120,000 irregular migrant children in the UK, with over half of them born in Britain. The study used an older figure estimated by Gordon et al. (2009) for the Greater London Authority and updated it with data on deportations, permissions to stay and leaves granted. Moreover, the authors used the Labour Force Survey 2008 to estimate the proportion of minors in the irregular migrant population, i.e. the number of children born in the UK to irregular migrants.

For some of the categories included in the general group of undocumented children there is information mainly provided by the Home Office and included in the “Immigration statistics”. These statistics, as also discussed in Group 5, provide information on the number of unaccompanied and accompanied children who applied for asylum during the year. The most recent release includes data for all the applications received during 2016, as reported in Table 17.

## 17. Undocumented children

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Undocumented children (UK, 2012)	120,000	No Way Out, No Way in (Sigona and Hughes, 2012)
Sub-groups	Applications by UASC (UK, during 2016) <sup>14</sup>	3,175	<b>Data source:</b> Immigration Statistics. <b>Provider:</b> Home Office. <b>Frequency:</b> The statistics are published on a quarterly basis, every February, May, August and November providing data for two months before the release. The most recent release was published on 23 February 2017, including data for the three months between October and December 2016. The next statistics are expected to be published towards the end of May 2017 and they will provide information for three months between January to March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistic.
	Applications by dependents (UK, during 2016)	7,914	

### Data limitations and recommendations

The estimate of the number of all children is the result of one-off research report, which was published 5 years ago. The estimate is outdated and no more recent figures are available. A simple extrapolation by using population estimates cannot be used in this particular case, as the number of irregular immigrants does not necessarily follow the population growth of the country. It is usually strongly affected by other socio-economic circumstances. This is also shown by the 65% increase in the population of UASC from 2014 to 2015<sup>15</sup>. An annual report on the estimated number of those children would be extremely useful to inform the public on the changes in the numbers of undocumented children during the years and how they are affected by the current political and economic situation.

Regarding immigration statistics, the numbers provided should be considered accurate but more information on characteristics and decisions taken for dependent children, as there are for UASC, would be extremely useful. The main issue with this category is that dependents are rarely separated in the data with their parents. In other words, the decision of the asylum application of a parent is recorded but not a separate record is made for dependent children.

<sup>14</sup> For more information and sub-group of UASC, see group 5.

<sup>15</sup> The UASC population was 1,265 in 2013, 1,945 in 2015 and it was increased to 3,253 in 2015 (Immigration statistics, 2016).

## Group 16: Young Carers

### Definition

According to the Children and Families Act 2014, a young carer is a person under 18 years of age who provides or intends to provide care to another person.

### Data source and category

The main dataset providing data for this group is 2011 Census, which asked children and young people aged 5 to 17 years old, whether they have provided unpaid care to family members, friends, neighbours or others because of long-term physical or mental ill health or disability, or problems related to old age, and for how many hours per week. Table 18 reports this information, together with an estimate of the number of young carers in 2015. The estimate was calculated by extrapolating the 2011 figure to the mid-2015 ONS population estimates.

### Sub-groups

Table 18 also presents information on the level of unpaid care provided by young carers, indicating different levels of vulnerability, as children providing 50 hours of care per week can be considered much more vulnerable than those providing less than 19 hours per week. 2011 Census data provided only the percentage of children per level of vulnerability. Table 18 reports the estimated number of children per sub-group. Those estimates were calculated by using the percentages reported in Census data and the mid-2015 ONS population estimates for children aged 5 to 17 in England.

### Data limitations and recommendations

The data comes from the 2011 Census, which means that, in terms of the population covered, the estimates are as inclusive as possible. However, there are still some limitations relating to the young carers identified in the population.

Census data are collected through self-completed questionnaires. Consequently, the numbers reported are based on self-identification by young carers and their families, many of whom may not recognise their care responsibilities. Moreover, the definition of a young carer can be different across individuals and across surveys. Furthermore, the figure reported does not capture children who care for adults with drug and alcohol problems. Finally, the figure captures only individuals aged 5 to 17 years old, while in a Children's Commissioner Survey (2016), 31 out of 102 LAs reported that they had received young carers referrals for children under 5.

Overall, the figure is expected to underestimate the actual number of young carers in England. A BBC survey<sup>16</sup> conducted in 2010 suggested a total of 700,000 young carers across the UK. The estimate

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<sup>16</sup> Number of child carers “four times previous estimate, 2010. BBC News. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-11757907> (accessed 4.4.2017)

was based on a survey of 4,000 children and thus it cannot be considered more accurate than the census figures. However, it indicates that the number reported is most probably an underestimate and that there are young carers missing from the data.

## 18. Young Carers

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Young unpaid carers 5 to 17 years old (England, 2011)	166,363	<b>Data source:</b> 2011 Census. <b>Provider:</b> Office for National Statistics. <b>Frequency:</b> Census data is released every 10 year. The most recent publication is the 2011 Census providing information for the population of England and Wales on Census Day, 27 March 2011. The next Census in England and Wales will be in 2021. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	Young unpaid carers 5 to 17 years old (England, 2015)	171,024 (Alma estimate by using ONS population estimates)	
<b>Sub-groups:</b> Young unpaid carers per level of unpaid care (hours per week) – England, 2015	1 to 19 hours	140,134 (Alma estimate - 1.7% of the relevant population)	
	20 to 49 hours	16,486 (Alma estimate - 0.2% of the relevant population)	
	50+ hours	16,486 (Alma estimate - 0.2% of the relevant population)	

## Group 17: Children in ‘troubled families’

### Definition

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) defined ‘troubled families’ as families characterised by worklessness, children not being in school and family members being involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.

### The Troubled Families programme

The term was introduced with the Troubled Families programme, which began in April 2012 and it is led by the DCLG. The programme is delivered by LAs and targets to help families with multiple problems.

The initial number of targeted families in England was 120,000. The number of families was estimated by using survey data from the Families and Children Study (FACS). In 2015, when the second phase of the programme was launched, a new target of 400,000 families was introduced. The significant increase in the number of troubled families identified is due to wider inclusion criteria than in the first phase.

To be eligible for the second phase of the programme, each family must have at least two of the following six problems:

1. Parents or children involved in crime or anti-social behaviour.
2. Children who have not been attending school regularly.
3. Children of all ages, who need help, are identified as in need or are subject to a Child Protection Plan.
4. Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusion or young people at risk of worklessness.
5. Families affected by domestic violence and abuse.
6. Parents or children with a range of health problems.

### Data source and prevalence

The DCLG publishes an annual evaluation report, in which the results of the second phase of the programme are presented. The first report was published on 4 April 2017 and it included information on families currently on the programme. At 31 December 2016, there were 185,420 identified families funded by the programme. The report used the National Impact Study and the Family Progress Data to identify the personal characteristics of people in those families. The results showed that 11.5% of participants are children younger than 4 years old, 16,7% are children aged 5 to 9, 16,7% are children aged 10 to 14 and 11.2% of the population are young people aged 15 to 17. Finally, the average number of dependent children in families participating in the programme is 2.2. Table 19 presents an estimate of the number of children in funded families and an estimate of the number of children aged 0 to 17 in all families that going to participate in the programme until 2020, the final year of the second phase.



## Data limitations

Only 63,671 out of the 185,420 families on the programme were identified in the data in which the results of the report are based on. Consequently, the figures in Table 19 do not represent the exact numbers of children on the programme, but an estimate based on the average number of children in families identified in the data.

### 19. Children in 'troubled families'

Group	Category	No. of families	No. of children	Information
General group	Maximum funded families up to 2020 (England)	399,960	879,912 (Alma estimate)	<b>Data source:</b> National Evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme 2015 – 2020. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Communities and Local Government. <b>Frequency:</b> The report is published annually. The most recent report was released on 4 April 2017. <b>Designation:</b> Official Statistics.
	Funded families on the programme as at 31 December 2016 (England)	185,420	407,924 (Alma estimate)	

## Group 18: Children whose parents use substances problematically

### Definition

Substance misuse refers to the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs (World Health Organisation).

Drug or alcohol dependence of parents can have hazardous effects on children's lives, as children of parents with problematic drug or alcohol use are at greater risk of physical, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect, inadequate supervision, inappropriate parenting capacities, poverty, inadequate accommodation, exposure to toxic substances and social isolation.

### Data sources and categories

There are many data sources for the number of people using substances problematically, however, they usually do not provide data on whether these individuals are parents and the number of their children. The National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS) provides annual official statistics for adults in contact with drug treatment and special services, but the statistics do not include any information on children. In 2012, the National Treatment Agency published an one-off statistical bulletin, which presented key results from the NDTMS on adults in contact with drug treatment between 2009-10 and 2011-12 who stated that they were a parent and/ or lived with children under the age of 18. In 2011/12, there were 197,110 adults in drug treatment with an estimated number of 103,742 children under 18 years old. Table 20 presents an estimate of the population of those children in 2015, using the ONS mid-2015 population estimates of people under 18 years old.

Another extremely useful one-off study is that of Manning et al. (2009), in which the authors combined data from the General Household Survey (2004), the Household Survey for England (2004), the National Psychiatric Morbidity Study (2000), the British Crime survey (2004/5) and the Scottish Crime Survey (2000) to estimate the number of children with substance misusing parents in the UK. Their main results were that around 22.1% of children under-16 years olds in the UK were living with a hazardous drinker<sup>17</sup>, 2.5% with a harmful drinker<sup>18</sup> and 3.7% in households where the only adult was 'at least' a hazardous drinker. Regarding drugs, Manning et al. (2009) estimated that around 8% of children under-16 years old in the UK were living with an adult who had used illicit drugs within the last year, 2.8% with a drug dependent user, 0.9% with an adult who had an overdosed and 5.7% with a lone parent who had used drugs in the past year. These categories indicate different levels of vulnerability. For example, children with a lone parent who is a harmful or hazardous drinker are more vulnerable than others, as having an adult who is not a hazardous drinker can mitigate the harm caused by the problem drinking parent. Table 20 presents the estimate of the children whose parents use substances problematically, based on the percentages estimated by Manning et al. (2009) and the mid-2015 ONS population estimates of children under 16 years old in England. The figures should be treated with caution as Manning et al. (2009) used UK data from the period 2000 and 2009 and consequently, our estimates are based on the assumption

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<sup>17</sup> Hazardous drinking is a pattern of alcohol consumption that increases the risk of harmful consequences for the user or others.

<sup>18</sup> The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) defines harmful drinking as a pattern of alcohol consumption that causes health problems, including psychological problems such as depression, alcohol-related accidents or physical illness such as acute pancreatitis.

that the proportion of parents using substances problematically is constant over time and across the UK (at least for the period 2000 to 2015).

Moreover, the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (PSMU) estimated in 2004 that between 780,000 and 1.3 million children in the UK are affected by parental alcohol problems, with the maximum being 1 in 11 children. The Advisory Council for the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) reported that, in 2003, 2-3% of children under the age of 16 in England and Wales had one or both parents with serious drug problem, i.e. around 200,000 and 300,000 children. Applying these figures to mid-2015 population of children under-16 years old in England, gives us a maximum of 945,919 children affected by parental alcohol problems and a range of 208,102 to 312,153 children with one or both parents with serious drug problem. Those estimates should be treated with caution for the same reasons as all other estimates in this section.

Finally, other relevant datasets and surveys do exist, as the NPMS, but the publicly available data and statistics are usually focused on number of adults by type of family or household without providing an estimate of the number of children.

## Limitations

The figures provided by the National Treatment Agency are comprehensive and inclusive in terms of people in drug treatment, however, they do not capture all drug dependent users who were not in treatment during the reporting period. Moreover, the estimate of the number of children of people in contact with drug treatment in 2015 is just a simple extrapolation assuming that the proportion of drug users remains constant over time and thus it should be treated with caution. Moreover, both the figure for 2012 and that for 2015 may overestimate the real number, as a single child may be counted more than once, if both his/her parents were in treatment. Finally, the "Statistics for drug treatment activity in England – parents and people who live with their children under 18 in 2011/12" was just a one-off release and the more recent statistics of the NDTMS do not provide information for the number of children. An annual statistical release including such information would be extremely useful.

Generally, there is a gap in the data for this category as the vast majority of estimates are outdated and more importantly they are the results of one-off studies. Consequently, an official annual publication, based on survey data to capture the whole population and not only those in treatment, is crucial.

## 20. Children whose parents use substances problematically

Group	Category	No. of children (estimates)	Information
Drug treatment	Children under 18 years old living with adults in contact with drug treatment during 2011/12 (England)	103,742	<b>Data source:</b> Statistics for drug treatment activity in England – parents and children who live with their children under-18 in 2011/12. <b>Provider:</b> National Treatment Agency (NTA). <b>Frequency:</b> One-off statistical bulletin published in 2012. <b>Designation:</b> Official Statistics.
	Children under 18 years old living with adults in contact with drug treatment (England, 2015)	106,861 (Alma estimate using mid-2015 ONS population estimates)	
Drug dependence	Children under-16 years old who had one or both parent with serious drug problems.	208,102 – 312,153 (Alma estimate using mid-2015 ONS population estimates)	<b>Data source:</b> Advisory Council for the Misuse of Drugs (2003) Hidden Harm – Responding to the Needs of Problem Drug Users.  <b>Data source:</b> Manning, V., Best, D.W., Faulkner, N., Titherington, E., 2009. New estimates of the number of children living with substance misusing parents: results from UK national household surveys. BMC Public Health 9. Sources used in Manning et al. (2009): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The General Households Survey (GHS), 2004</li> <li>- The Household Survey for England (HSfE), 2004</li> <li>- The National Psychiatric Morbidity Study (NPMS)</li> <li>- The British Crime Survey (BCS), 2004/5</li> </ul>
	Children, under-16 years old, lived with a drug dependent user (England, 2015)	291,343 (Alma estimate using mid-2015 ONS population estimates)	
	Children, under-16 years old, lived with an adult who had overdosed (England, 2015)	93,646 (Alma estimate using mid-2015 ONS population estimates)	
	Children, under-16 years old, lived with an adult who used drugs during the past year	239,318 <sup>19</sup> (Alma estimate using mid-2015 ONS population estimates)	

<sup>19</sup> This estimate was based on NPMS data. Manning et al. (2009) also report that another estimate based on BCS, which is much larger (more than twice). However, as the majority of other estimates presented in Table 20 were based on NPMS (as it has the largest sample who answered drug questions), we reported this figure for consistency.

	and it was a lone parent (England, 2015)		- Scottish Crime Survey (SCS), 2000.
Alcohol dependence	Children, under-16 years old, lived with a hazardous drinker (England, 2015)	2,299,530  (Alma estimate using mid-2015 ONS population estimates)	
	Children, under-16 years old, lived with a harmful drinker (England, 2015)	260,128  (Alma estimate using mid-2015 ONS population estimates)	
	Children, under-16 years old, lived with only one adult, who was 'at least' a hazardous drinker (England, 2015)	384,989  (Alma estimate using mid-2015 ONS population estimates)	
	Children under-16 years old affected by parental alcohol problems (England, 2015)	945,919  (Alma estimate using mid-2015 ONS population estimates)	<b>Data source:</b> Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (PMSU) (2004) - Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England, Cabinet Office

## Group 19: Children whose parents may have limited parenting capacity

### Definition

Parenting capacity is defined as the ability of parents or caregivers to meet a child's physical, emotional and intellectual developmental needs. Parenting capacity may be affected by various factors, including mental illness, substance misuse, disabilities and domestic abuse. There is no official definition of limited parenting capacity and some factors mentioned may not necessarily impact parenting capacity to a significant extent.

### Datasets and categories

This group is extremely broad so it is challenging to identify a definitive number of children whose parents may have limited parenting capacity. While we explore some of the sources available that report on factors that may limit capacity (e.g. mental illness, domestic abuse and disabilities), we will not provide an overall number as the data is not readily available. In terms of parental substance misuse, the information sources have been covered in detail in the section discussing children whose parents use substances problematically.

Radford et al. (2011) explores various forms of abuse and neglect in the UK including exposure to domestic violence and caregivers with longstanding illness and disabilities. The study was one-off and the findings were based on survey data. Of the 6,196 parents, care givers, children and young adults interviewed approximately 7.7 per cent of under 11s, 10 per cent of 11–17s and 8.9 per cent of 18–24s reported having a disability or longstanding illness. Moreover, in terms of exposure to domestic violence between adults during childhood, approximately 12 per cent of under 11s, 17.5 per cent of 11–17s and 23.7 per cent 18–24s. Approximately 3.2 per cent of the under 11s and 2.5 per cent of the 11–17s had been exposed to domestic violence in the past year.

Cleaver et al. (2011) provides a literature review of the studies that estimate the prevalence of factors that may influence parental capacity. The review looks at parental mental illness, parental learning disability, parents with problem drinking or drug misuse and domestic violence. However, it simply cites the prevalence of these issues in the adult population and does not translate these statistics to the number of vulnerable children.

### Data limitations and recommendations

The Radford et al. study has certain limitations. As noted in Box 1.2, results from sample surveys can suffer from certain biases which can affect the accuracy of estimates. In addition, to collect data on children under 11, the authors interviewed parents or caregivers, which may affect the reliability of the responses. Parents may be less likely to report on factors that related to their parenting capacity.

The key to obtaining robust information on this group, lies in the definition of the parameters. Limited parenting capacity covers a range of experiences and groups. More valuable information may be obtained by disaggregating these factors.

## Group 20: Young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

### Definition

A young person NEET is anybody aged 16 – 24 years old, who is not in any form of education or training and who is not in employment. As a result, a person identified as NEET will always be unemployed or economically inactive. This report focuses on young people aged 16-18 years old.

### Datasets and categories

There are two main statistics providing information on young people NEET. The two data sources are both provided by the Department for Education, but they are not directly comparable, as they are not based on the same data.

The first data source is the “Participation in Education, Training and Employment”. This Statistical First Release (SFR) provides the official annual estimates of participation and NEET in England. The estimates combine data from a number of sources, including administrative data from schools (School Census), further education, work-based learning and higher education (HESA and ILR), as well as the LFS, to estimate some gaps in the administrative data (e.g. on the job training or other education or training). Table 21 reports the estimates presented in this data source. The first category provides the final figures for 2014, while the second the provisional estimates for 2015.

The second data source is the “NEET Statistics Quarterly Brief”. The national estimates in this release are produced by using data from the LFS. The use of LFS allows the estimates to be released quarterly instead of annually. Table 21 reports the NEET estimates for 2015 and 2016.

### Data limitations and recommendations

The provisional annual figures provided in the “Participation in Education, Training and Employment” SFR are published every June, 6 months after the period to which they relate, while the final figures are presented in the next release. Consequently, there is a lag of 18 months between the period the data refers to and when the final figures are published. The SFR fails to provide up-to date information.

On the other hand, the “NEET Quarterly Brief” provides data for the period up to 2 months before the release is published. Consequently, the data is up-to date and very informative. The limitation of this data source is that it is mainly based on LFS, which, as all surveys, introduces some bias in the estimates. However, as they are designated as National Statistics, they can be considered reliable.

## 21. Young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	NEET aged 16-18 years old (end of 2014)	148,300 (final figure)	<b>Data source:</b> Participation in Education, Training and Employment: 2015. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> The release is published annually every June. The most recent publication was released on 30 June 2016, including provisional estimates for the end of 2015. The next statistical release is expected to be published on 29 June 2017 and it will provide final figures for the end of 2015 and provisional estimates for 2016. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	NEET aged 16-18 years old (end of 2015)	125,400 (provisional)	
	NEET aged 16-18 years old (end of 2015)	121,000	<b>Data source:</b> NEET Quarterly Brief. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> The statistics are released quarterly, every March/April, June, September and December, providing data for two months before the release. The most recent publication was released on 27 February 2017, including data for the three months between October to December 2016. The next statistical release will be published on 25 May 2017 and it will provide information for the period January to March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	NEET aged 16-18 years old (end of 2016)	121,000	



## Group 21: Excluded children

### Definitions

There are two main types of exclusions: the permanent exclusions and the fixed-period exclusions. Permanent exclusion refers to a child who is excluded and cannot attend the same school again (unless the exclusion is overturned). His or her name is removed from the school register and he/she would then be educated at another school or via some other form of provision.

A fixed-period exclusion refers to a pupil who is excluded from a school for a set period of time. A pupil may be excluded for one or more fixed periods up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year. Pupils in fixed-period exclusions remain on the register of that school, as they are expected to return when the exclusion period is completed.

### Main data source

The main data source for this group is the “Permanent and fixed period exclusions in England” provided annually by the Department for Education. The data provides the number of pupil enrolments with one or more fixed period exclusions and the number of permanent exclusions. The more recent publication was released on 21 July 2016 and it provides information for the academic year 2014/15. The relevant figures are presented in Table 22.

### Related groups

A group related to the group of excluded children is pupils attending Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and Alternative Provision (AP). Such schools provide alternative education to students who have either been permanently or fixed-period excluded or they cannot attend the school in which they are registered because of health or other problems. Data for those types of schools is provided in “Schools, Pupils and their characteristics” statistical release, which is also published annually by the Department for Education. The most recent publication was released on 28 June 2016 and it provided data from the January 2016 school census.

### Data Limitations and recommendations

Both data sources use data from the school census, which provides information for every child attending state-funded schools. Independent and private schools can also provide data for their pupils but it is not compulsory. Consequently, apart from a small number of students in private schools that are not included, the data can be considered comprehensive and inclusive in terms of the population covered.

An important limitation is that exclusion statistics provide the number of pupil enrolments with one or more fixed period exclusions and the number of permanent exclusions instead of the number of excluded children. Children who have been excluded by two or more schools will be included in the figures more than once. In the school census data, every student is identified by a unique pupil number (UPN). Consequently, the number of excluded students can be easily calculated by the Department for Education, which has access to the most sensitive individual-level data.

Finally, the information for PRUs and APs is very limited, as only the number of students attending these schools is available. A more comprehensive statistical release could include the number of children per reason of attendance, e.g. exclusion, health problems.

## 22. Excluded children

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Pupil enrolments with one or more fixed period exclusions (academic year 2014/2015)	154,060	<b>Data source:</b> Permanent and fixed period exclusions in England: 2014 to 2015. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> The release is published annually every July. The most recent publication was released on 21 July 2016, providing data for the academic year 2014/2015. The next statistical release is expected to be published on 20 July 2017 and it will provide data for the academic year 2015/2016. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	Permanent exclusions (academic year 2014/2015)	5,800	
Related Groups	Pupils in Pupil Referral Units (January 2016)	15,015	<b>Data source:</b> Schools, pupils and their characteristics. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> The release is published annually every June. <b>Most recent publication:</b> 28 June 2016, providing data collected in the January 2016 Census. The next statistical release is expected to be published in June 2017 and it will provide data collected in the January 2016 Census. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	Pupils in LA Alternative Provision (January 2016)	22,032	

## Group 22: Young people involved with the criminal justice system/young offenders

### Definition

The Ministry of Justice defines “young offenders” as those under the age of 18 (10 -17 years old) who have committed a crime, including both those who have been cautioned and those who have been sentenced due to a criminal activity.

### Data source and categories

The main data source providing official data for young offenders and crimes committed by those under the age of 18 is the Youth Justice Statistics published by the Ministry of Justice and the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. The statistics are released annually towards the end of January and the most recent ones were released on 26 January 2017, providing data for the year ending 31 March 2016. The statistics report the number of all young people (10 -17 years old) who have been cautioned or sentenced in England during the reporting period, as well as their gender and age. The figures are presented in Table 23.

The number of young people per type of sentence is an indicator of different levels of vulnerability. This information is not available for England but the aggregated numbers for England and Wales are presented in Table 23. Finally, the statistics also report the number of proven offences by type of offence, showing that the most common offences among young people during the year ending 31 March 2016 were violence against other individuals (19,862 out of 75,142 offences by young people), theft and handling of stolen goods (10,832 offences). The number of children per proven offence is not available.

### Data limitations and recommendations

The information for this group of vulnerable children is accurate and inclusive as it is provided directly by the Ministry of Justice and the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. The main improvement to be made is the provision of separate data on the number of young offenders cautioned and those sentenced, as well as the number of offenders by type of sentence for England. Such information is currently available only in aggregated figures for England and Wales. Moreover, the number of young people per type of offence (e.g. robbery, violence, theft, public order), instead of just the number of offences, would also provide valuable information.

## 23. Young offenders

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Young people cautioned or sentenced in England during the year ending 31 March 2016	31,193	<b>Data source:</b> Youth Justice Statistics. <b>Provider:</b> Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board for England and Wales. <b>Frequency:</b> The statistics are published annually in January. The most recent publication was released on 26 January 2017 and it provided data for the year ending 31 March 2016. The next statistical release is expected to be published in January 2018 and it will provide data for the academic year 2015/2016. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
Sub – groups	Young offender by age (England, year ending 31 March 2016)	31,193	
	10 to 14	7,418	
	15	5,999	
	16	7,774	
	17+	10,002	
	Young offender by gender (England, 31 March 2016)	31,193	
	Male	25,650	
	Female	5,520	
	Not known	23	
	Young offenders sentenced by type of sentence (England and Wales, 31 March 2016)	27,881	
	Immediate custody	1,687	
	Community sentences	19,048	
	Other sentences (absolute or conditional discharge, fine, suspended sentence)	7,146	

## Group 23: Young people involved in gangs

### Definition

A gang is a relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who:

1. see themselves as a discernible group
2. engage in a range of criminal activities
3. identify or lay claim over territory
4. have some form of identifying structural feature, and
5. are in conflict with other, similar gangs.

(Centre for Social Justice, 2009)

### Data sources

There is not a comprehensive national figure of the number of gangs, or the number of young people involved or associated with gangs.<sup>20</sup> A potential data source is the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), which does collect some information on the proportion of young people who are a member of a street gang, but these figures are not published in the statistical releases, data tables and ONS reports presenting the results of the survey. Moreover, the data for children aged 10 to 15 years old are considered sensitive and access can be granted only through a secure access application<sup>21</sup>.

The only recent publicly available official figures are the percentage of children and young people who either know a member of a street gang or are themselves members in period 2013/2014. The figures have been calculated by the ONS, as a response to a Freedom for Information<sup>22</sup> request, by using the CSEW survey data. The results show that 9.5% of all children aged 10 to 15 in England and Wales know a member of a street gang, while a 0.9% are members of a street gang. Regarding young people aged 16 to 24 years old, 5.4% of them are estimated to know a member of a gang and 0.7% to be members of a gang. The above figures have been extrapolated to the most recent population estimates for England<sup>23</sup> and the results are presented in table 24.

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<sup>20</sup> Kids as young as seven being lured into gangs, 2015. The Independent. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/children-as-young-as-seven-are-being-lured-into-street-gangs-mps-warn-10073629.html> (accessed 11.4.17).

<sup>21</sup> A secure access application was impossible to be sent, accepted and data to be provided in the time frame of this project.

<sup>22</sup> A Freedom for Information request can be sent to provide more recent data. However, due to the limited timeframe for this particular project, the 2013/2014 figures were used.

<sup>23</sup> The mid-2015 ONS population estimates have been used. The population estimate for children aged 10-15 is 3,613,971 and for young people aged 16 to 18 is 1,933,773.

## 24. Children in gangs

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Children aged 10-18 who are members of a street gang	46,053 (Alma estimate)	<b>Data source:</b> Proportion of children aged 10-15 who were involved in gangs, 2013/14. Proportion of adults aged 16 – 24 who were involved with gangs, 2013/14. Provider: Office for National Statistics (ONS). <b>Frequency:</b> One-off release, published on 4 September 2014, providing information for the year ending 31 March 2014. <b>Designation:</b> Official estimates.
<b>Sub-groups:</b> Members of gangs by age group	10 to 15	32,517 (Alma estimate)	
	16-18	13,536 (Alma estimate)	

### Data limitations and recommendations

The information for people involved in gangs or have been victims of gangs is very limited and our research revealed an important gap in the data. The main difficulty with collecting information on gangs and their members is that they want to remain hidden, as they usually engage in criminal activities. The police-recorded crime data includes offences which are related to gangs but they are not separately identifiable. On the other hand, the CSEW survey does not collect information on crimes relating to street gangs and the victims of such crimes. Consequently, two very important improvements would be the separate identification of police-recorded gang data as well as a better coverage of victims of gang-related crimes by the CSEW. Moreover, an annual statistical release, which will be publicly available, would be extremely useful for providing immediate information on the number of people who are either members or victims of gangs.

The figures reported in Table 24 are just estimates and they should be treated with caution. Firstly, the percentages used in the estimation were calculated by the ONS using CSEW data. Survey data, as discussed in Box 1.2, always introduce sampling and non-sampling errors. CSEW, in particular, covers only the household population in England and Wales, which means that people living in health and care residential establishments as well as people detained are not included in these estimates. Children included in the missing population may face an increased risk to be involved in gangs and thus the estimates may underreport their real numbers. Moreover, the figures provided by the ONS were aggregated for England and Wales and for the age groups 10-15 and 16-24. Consequently, our estimates (Table 24) assume that the same percentage is also true for England specifically and that the percentage of young people involved in gangs is consistent within the two age groups.

## Group 24: Children who have experienced trauma/abuse

### Definitions

According to the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child- that causes significant harm to a child or fails to prevent harm. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but it can also be neglect, as a lack of love, care and attention can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet).

### Data sources and categories

#### 1. Children referred to social care services

The “Characteristics of children in need” statistics published annually by the Department for Education, provide the number of all children in need due to neglect or abuse at the end of each financial year. Moreover, the same statistics also report the number of all children who became the subject of a Child Protection Plan (CPP) during the reporting period and the number of those who were the subject of a CPP at the last day of the financial year per initial category of abuse. A child is the subject of a CPP if he or she is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm (physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect). Consequently, all those children have experienced or are likely to experience trauma or abuse. The most recent release was published on 3 November 2016 and provides data on the year ending 31 March 2016. All the relevant information is presented in Table 25.

The above data sources are comprehensive and accurate for children referred to social care services. However, there is always a number of children who have experienced or are currently experiencing abuse but they have never been referred to social care services. There are many reasons for children not to be referred to social care services. For example, children might be afraid to ask for help or they might consider abusive behaviour normal.

#### 2. Crime statistics (police-recorded and data from the CSEW)

Other data sources providing information on abusive behaviour to children are extremely useful to understand the trends and the magnitude of the problem but they do not estimate the exact number of children who have experienced trauma or abuse. The NSPCC’s annual publication “How safe are our children?” reports the number of police-recorded offences against children. The most recent publication was released in June 2016 and it stated that during the financial year 2014/15 the police recorded 39,388 sexual offences against children under 18 years old and 8,506 offences of cruelty and neglect against children under 16 years old in England. However, no information on the number of children who were the victims of these offences is available either in the report or in the publicly available police-recorded crime open tables.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) collects information on victims of child abuse offences but they are not publicly available. The only available information refers to children who have been victims of violence, robbery, personal theft and criminal damage. Those children are not necessarily vulnerable. For example, a child whose mobile phone has been stolen cannot be

considered vulnerable but on the other hand, a child who has suffered violence, even just for once, can be traumatised. The data is only available for children younger than 16 years old in England and Wales. The information for the year ending September 2016 is reported in Table 25.

### 3. Other estimates

Radford et al. (2011) surveyed a sample of parents, young people and young adults in the UK in 2009 about their experiences of child abuse and neglect. From the 2,275 young people aged 11-17 years old interviewed, one in six have experienced some type of severe maltreatment and over half have been exposed to some form of community violence.

The 2015 to 2016 CSEW ran for the first time a module of questions asking adults aged 16 to 59 whether they had any experience of abusive behaviour as children. In the year ending March 2016, the CSEW achieved a nationally representative sample of 35,248 adults with a response rate of 72%. The results were presented in the report “Abuse during childhood: Findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, year ending March 2016”, which was published on 4 August 2016 by the ONS. According to the report, 8.9% of all adults aged 16 to 59 have suffered psychological abuse before the age of 16, while 6.8% have suffered physical abuse, 6.6% sexual assault and 7.9% have witnessed domestic violence or abuse.

The NSPCC, as it is stated in their statistics on child abuse<sup>24</sup>, estimated in 2013 that for every child identified as needing protection from abuse, another 8 are suffering from abuse and neglect but they are not getting the support they need. NSPCC collects information from government statistics and academic research and this calculation is based on the proportion of children who experienced maltreatment in the previous years identified through research compared with the number of children who are on a CPP. If this estimate is accurate, then, given the number of children who were the subject of a CPP, at 31 March 2016 there were around 453,000 children suffering abuse.

Finally, bullying is an extremely prevalent type of abuse across children and adolescents. There is no official information for the number of children who have experienced bullying. However, Chamberlain et al. (2010) conducted a survey of 253,755 children and reported that 46% of children and young people in years 6, 8 and 10 (ages 10-11, 12-13, 14-15 respectively) said they had been bullied at some point whilst at school. Moreover, the Annual Bullying Survey 2016 published by the charity Ditch the Label estimates that 1.5 million young people aged 12-20 have been bullied within the last year in the UK.

All the above estimates are either of small sample, outdated or not targeted in the population of interest (e.g. the ONS report surveyed adults about their experience of abuse as children, this cannot provide an unbiased estimate for children today as for example, trends might have changed massively from 30 years ago). Consequently, the estimates are not reported in Table 25 due to uncertainty about their quality and methodology. However, they can provide an indicator of the magnitude of the problem of abuse.

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/research-and-resources/statistics/>



## Data limitations and recommendations

Overall, we don't know exactly how many children in England are victims of child abuse. Child abuse is usually hidden from view and children may be too young, too scared or too ashamed to report what is happening. Data available underestimate the number of incidents or victims of child abuse, as they include only those reported either to social care services or the police.

An annual publication presenting estimates on children who have been victims of child abuse would be extremely useful. Such data do exist in the CSEW but they are not publicly available for confidentiality. However, some summary statistics or just an estimate of the number of those children would be very informative. Moreover, estimates such as those provided by Radford et al. (2011), the ONS in the "Abuse during childhood: Findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, year ending March 2016" and the NSPCC are very helpful. Consequently, an annual study providing such estimates, instead of one-off estimates, would be a great improvement.

### 25. Children who have experienced trauma/abuse

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Children in need at 31 March 2016 due to neglect or abuse (under 18 years old, England)	199,720	<b>Data source:</b> Characteristics of children in need: 2015 to 2016. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> It is an annual statistical release, published every November. The most recent release was published on 3 November 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016. The next release will be published in November 2017 and it will report information for the year ending 31 March 2017. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	Children who were the subject of a child protection plan at 31 March 2016 (under 18 years old, England)	50,310	
	Children who became the subject of a CPP in the year ending 31 March 2016 (under 18 years old, England)	63,310	
<b>Sub-group:</b> Children who were the subject of a child protection plan at 31 March 2016 per type of initial category of abuse (under 18 years old, England)	Neglect	23,150	
	Physical abuse	4,200	
	Sexual abuse	2,370	
	Emotional abuse	17,770	
	Multiple	2,810	
	Neglect	28,360	

<b>Sub-group:</b> Children who became the subject of a CPP in the year ending 31 March 2016 per type of initial category of abuse (under 18 years old, England)	Physical abuse	6,200	
	Sexual abuse	2,970	
	Emotional abuse	22,420	
	Multiple	3,350	
<b>Related group:</b> Victims of crime experienced by children aged 10 to 15 (England and Wales, year ending September 2016)	All	446,000	<b>Data source:</b> Crime in England and Wales: year ending September 2016. <b>Provider:</b> Office for National Statistics. <b>Frequency:</b> It is released quarterly. The most recent release was published on 19 January 2017, including data for the year ending September 2016. The next release will be published on 27 April 2017 and it will report information for the year ending December 2016. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	Violence with injury	163,000	
	Violence without injury	56,000	
	Robbery	27,000	
	Personal theft	201,000	
	Criminal damage to personal property (property stolen or damaged solely belonged to the child)	47,000	

## Group 25: Children who have been victims of modern slavery

### Definition

Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking. Traffickers and slave drivers coerce, deceive and force individuals against their will into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. Victims may be sexually exploited, forced to work for little or no pay or forced to commit criminal activities against their will. (HM Government, 2014)

### Data source

The main data source providing information on victims of modern slavery is the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) statistics. The NRM is a framework for identifying victims of modern slavery (including victims of human trafficking) and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. The statistics are provided by the National Crime Agency (NCA) on a quarterly basis and they present information on all reported victims of modern slavery in the UK and each country separately. Table 26 reports the number of children (under the age of 18) referred to the NRM in England during 2016. Some of those children they have received a negative decision, which means that they have been found not to be victims of modern slavery. However, the exact number of those children in England is not known and thus it is not reported in Table 26. On the other hand, a child referred to NRM can be considered vulnerable, even if a negative response has been received, as it means that the child has been under a certain risk of being a victim of modern slavery.

Another data source which provides information for children who have been victims of modern slavery is the “Characteristics of children in need” statistics published by the Department for Education. More particularly, these statistics report the number of referrals to children’s social care services that have gone onto assessment with trafficking as a factor identified at the end of the assessment. During the year 31 March 2016, there were 1,300 episodes of trafficking reported to social care services. However, as this is the number of referrals, there might be children included more than once in this figure. Moreover, we cannot know which of those children are also included in the NRM statistics. Consequently, the number is not reported in Table 26 but it can be a good indicator of the magnitude of the problem.

### Sub-groups

The NRM statistics provide data for the exploitation type claimed at referral and the nationality of children referred. Table 26 presents some of those figures that can provide useful information. Some numbers are also presented separately for males and females, as there are different trends for each gender. For example, the vast majority of boys is referred for labour exploitation, while the vast majority of girls for sexual exploitation. Moreover, unknown exploitation, which involves criminal exploitation, is one of the most common exploitation types among boys. Regarding children’s nationality, the data is not available for males and females separately. Table 26 presents the most prevalent nationalities among the children referred to NRM.

## Data limitations and recommendations

The NRM Statistics do not provide any analysis of the picture of modern slavery in England. They just provide figures relating to the number of potential victims that have been referred into the NRM process during each reporting period.<sup>25</sup> Trafficking is a hidden crime and recorded statistics are almost certainly an underestimate (NSPCC, 2017<sup>26</sup>), as victims are often unaware of how to report their abuse or they are unable or scared to do so due to the fear of reprisals against themselves or their families.

The NRM statistics contain very limited decision data for 2016, as over 55% of cases are pending a final outcome. The statistics report only UK aggregated figures for decisions. In 2016, there were 3805 children referred to NRM in the UK. From those children, 635 have received a positive conclusive decision and were judged to have been victims of modern slavery at the time of the data cut-off date of 06/01/2017, while 962 have received a negative Reasonable Grounds (RG)<sup>27</sup> or negative Conclusive Decision (CD), i.e. they have been found not to be victims of human slavery. The remaining referral cases are pending decision. If those figures were available by country and by the type of negative response (RG, or, CD), then the data source would be more informative in terms of the magnitude of the problem of modern slavery in each country separately and the different levels of severity of each case.

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<sup>25</sup> National Crime Agency (2017)

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-trafficking/child-trafficking-facts-statistics/>

<sup>27</sup> Reasonable Grounds and Conclusive Decision are the first and second decision stage, at which the Competent Authorities (the Modern Slavery Human Trafficking unit and the Home Office Visas and Immigration) decide whether a person is a victim of modern slavery, respectively. The threshold at Reasonable Grounds stage is: "from the information available so far I believe but cannot prove" that the individual is a potential victim of trafficking or modern slavery. If an individual receives a positive response at this stage, then he/she passes to the next one, the Conclusive Decision stage. The threshold for a Conclusive Decision is: "it is more likely than not" that the individual is a victim of human trafficking or modern slavery.

## 26. Children who have been victims of modern slavery

Group	Category	No. of children			Information
		Female	Male	Total	
General group	Number of minor potential victims (England, 2016)	501	703	1204	<b>Data source:</b> National Referral Mechanism (NRM) Statistics – End of Year Summary 2016. <b>Provider:</b> National Crime Agency (NCA). <b>Frequency:</b> The statistics are released quarterly but not always on the same dates. During the first quarter, a summary report for last year is also published. The most recent release was published on 29 March 2017, providing the summary statistics for 2016. The next statistical release is expected to be published during the months May to July 2017 and it will provide information first quarter of 2017 (January to March 2017). <b>Designation:</b> Official Statistics.
Sub-group:  Number of minor potential victims by claimed exploitation type (England, 2016)	Domestic servitude	59	35	94	
	Labour exploitation	60	375	435	
	Sexual exploitation (non-UK national)	111	28	139	
	Sexual exploitation (UK national)	196	12	208	
	Unknown exploitation	75	253	328	
Sub-group:  Number of minor potential victims by nationality (England,2016)	Albania	676			
	Vietnam	451			
	United Kingdom	315			
	Nigeria	225			
	China	198			
	Romania	186			
	Poland	159			

## Group 26: Missing children

### Definition

A missing child is any child whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another. (National Police Guidance, 2014)

### Data source and categories

The main data source for this group is the “Missing Persons Data”, provided by the UK Missing Persons Bureau of the National Crime Agency. The information is collected by all police forces in England and Wales. A report presenting this information is published annually. The most recent report provides figures for the number of all missing children in England for the financial year 2015/2016. A missing person in the data is defined as a single person who has been reported missing and recorded on a missing person system.

### Sub-group

Within the general group, there are children who have been in the care of a LA. Data for those children is available in CLA statistics published by the Department for Education. However, the particular data for missing children were collected for the first time in 2015 and they are designated as experimental data. The first sub-group reported in Table 27 refers to children who are missing from placement or whereabouts (e.g. school), while the second (children who were away from placement without authorisation) refers to children whose whereabouts is known but who is not at their placement or the place they are expected to be and the carers have concerns or the incident has been notified to the LA or the police. Finally, Table 27 also reports the stock of CLA missing at 31 March 2016 and the number of CLA who went missing more than once in the year ending 31 March 2016.

### Data limitations and recommendations

One of the main limitations of the “Missing Persons Data” is the variation in reporting practices. More particularly, some police commands did not provide data, while three police forces provided a yearly figure which simply summed the data from all four quarters and failed to remove duplicates. Moreover, it should be noted that the majority of children in these statistics are found within a few days (with most found within a few hours) of being reported missing. The number of children who have been missing for more than a few days is expected to be low. For example, during 2014/15, just 5% of all cases involved people missing for more than 7 days<sup>28</sup>. Consequently, the figure below represents children with cases of different levels of severity and it should be treated with caution.

Generally, due to the nature of the group, there will always be some children not included in the data. It is generally believed that there are people who go missing without being reported to the

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<sup>28</sup> This statistic refers to all cases, including adults and children.

police but it is difficult to estimate how many. One such group is young people who run away from home or care; Rees and Lee (2005) stated that over two-thirds (68%) of young people who run away had not been reported as missing to the police.

## 27. Missing children

Groups	Categories	No. of children	Information
General group	All children missing in England during the financial year 2015/2016	56,331	<p><b>Data source:</b> Missing Persons Data Report. <b>Provider:</b> UK Missing Persons Bureau of the National Crime Agency. <b>Frequency:</b> Annually. The most recent report was published on 28 February 2017, including data for the financial year 2015/2016. The next report is expected to be published in 2018 and it will provide data for the financial year 2016/2017.</p> <p><b>Designation:</b> Official Statistics.</p>
Sub-groups	CLA who had a missing incident during the year ending 31 March 2016	8,670	<p><b>Data source:</b> Children looked after in England including adoption: 2015 to 2016. <b>Provider:</b> Department for Education. <b>Frequency:</b> The main release is published annually towards the end of September/beginning of October. A second release including additional tables is published every December. The most recent release was published on 29 September 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016. Additional tables were published on 8 December 2016. The next statistical release is expected to be published in September 2017 and it will provide information for the year ending March 2017.</p> <p><b>Designation:</b> Experimental Statistics (only the data for missing children).</p>
	CLA who were away from placement without authorisation during the year	4,430	
	CLA missing at 31 March 2016	260	
	CLA who went missing more than once during the year	5,200	

## Group 27: Absent children

### Definition

Absent children are children who are not at a place where they are expected or required to be, perceived not to be at any apparent risk. When absent children are reported to the police, then the situation is simply monitored and reviewed.

### Data source and categories

The main data source for this group is the “Missing Persons Data”, provided by the UK Missing Persons Bureau. The information is collected by all police forces in England and Wales. A report presenting this information is published annually. The most recent report provides figures for the number of all absent children in England for the financial year 2015/2016.

### Data limitations and recommendations

One of the main limitations of the “Missing Persons Data” is the variation in reporting practices. More particularly, some police commands did not provide data, while three police forces provided a yearly figure which simply summed the data from all four quarters and failed to remove duplicates. Moreover, more consistency in the period in the year during which the report is published would be really useful for monitoring purposes.

## 28. Absent Children

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	All absent children in England during the financial year 2015/2016	11,494	<b>Data source:</b> Missing Persons Data Report. <b>Provider:</b> UK Missing Persons Bureau of the National Crime Agency. <b>Frequency:</b> The report is published annually but not in a particular time in the year. The most recent report was published on 28 February 2017, including data for the financial year 2015/2016. The next report is expected to be published in 2018 and it will provide data for the financial year 2016/2017. <b>Designation:</b> Official statistics (not designated as National Statistics).



## Group 28: Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) children

### Definition

Children and young people of the following ethnicities: Asian, Black, Mixed, Other, Gypsy, Roma, Traveller, White Irish, or White other.

### Data source and limitations

The main data source is the 2011 Census, which covers the whole population in England. Consequently, the data is accurate and inclusive. The main limitation of Census data is the time lag, as they are published every ten years. Table 29 reports the official figure, together with an estimate of the population in 2015. The estimate was calculated by extrapolating the number reported in 2011 Census to mid-2015 population estimates published by the ONS, for children aged 0-17 in England.

### Sub-group

BME children is a very broad group that covers a diversity of experiences. It may be more useful to examine the vulnerabilities associated to particularly marginalised ethnic sub-groups.

#### 29. Children with BME background

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General group	Children aged 0-17 with BME background (England, 2011)	2,894,630	<b>Data source:</b> 2011 Census. <b>Provider:</b> Office for National Statistics. <b>Frequency:</b> Census data is released every 10 year. <b>Most recent publication:</b> 2011 Census providing information for the population of England and Wales on Census Day, 27 March 2011. The next Census in England and Wales will be in 2021. <b>Designation:</b> National Statistics.
	Children aged 0-17 with BME background (England, 2015)	2,981,670 (Alma estimate)	
Sub-groups: Children aged 0-17 with BME background, per ethnicity (England, 2011)	Irish	33,889	
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	19,615	
	Other White	407,479	
	Mixed/multiple ethnic group	590,017	
	Asian/Asian British	1,136,293	
	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	562,333	
	Other ethnic group	145,004	

## Group 29: Sexual and gender minority children

### Definition

This group includes children who are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual (LGB) and gender minority children, i.e. transsexual, intersex, or non-binary children under 18 years old.

### Data sources and categories

There is not one official data source that provides data on the number of all sexual and gender minority children. However, there is some information available for certain groups of this general category. More particularly, sexual minority children and young people, i.e. individuals who are gay, lesbian or bisexual, are better covered in the data than gender minority people.

#### A. Sexual minority children

The main data source for the number and characteristics of sexual minority children is the annual statistical bulletin “Sexual identity, UK” published by the Office for National Statistics. The estimates presented in this publication are based on data from the Annual Population Survey (APS), which collects information on self-perceived sexual identity from the household population aged 16 and over in the UK.

According to the ONS estimates, in 2015 there were 109,000 young people aged 16 to 24 years old, who identified themselves as gay or lesbian, while 133,000 individuals in the same age group, identified themselves as bisexual. This is 1.5% and 1.8% of the relevant UK population, respectively. As there is no specific information for sexual minority individuals under 18 years old in England, we can provide an estimate for children aged 16 and 17 years old by extrapolating the above percentages to the specific population<sup>29</sup>. This extrapolation produces an estimate of 19,000 gay or lesbian young people aged 16 and 17 years old and 23,000 bisexual individuals, of the same age group, in England. The underlying assumption is that the percentage of sexual minority young people is the same across the UK and across the different age groups between 16 to 24, as no further information is available for the variation between different UK’s countries or different age groups. Consequently, the estimates are not accurate and they should be considered as indicators. To conclude, the headline estimate is that a 3.3% of the UK population aged 16 to 24 years old is lesbian, gay or bisexual. The estimates explained above are presented in Table 30.

Another data source providing information on children who are LGB is the British National Surveys of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (Natsal). Natsal<sup>30</sup> aims to interview individuals aged 16 to 74 living in private households in Great Britain. The sample population of Natsal is half of that of the APS and consequently, it cannot be considered as more representative. However, the main finding of Natsal-3, which was conducted in 2010–2012, is that 1.5% of the 16–24 population in Great Britain is gay or lesbian, while 1.5% of the same population is bisexual. The findings are similar with those of the ONS statistics. The relatively consistent findings of the two data sources can support the validity of the

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<sup>29</sup> For the extrapolation, we used the ONS mid-year population estimates for 2015, which were published on 23 June 2016.

<sup>30</sup> Natsal is conducted by researchers from the University College London (UCL), the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and NatCen Social Research (NatCen),

estimates presented in Table 30 and it is an indicator of consistency between Great Britain and United Kingdom in this particular group.

## **B. Gender minority children**

No official data exists for gender minority children in England. The only information publicly available is the number of people presenting for treatment of gender dysphoria. More particularly, data provided to Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIRES) by HM Revenues and Customs for 2010 reports that only 100 or so children and adolescents are referred annually to the UK's sole specialised gender identity service, compared to 1,500 referred to adult clinics. The number stated above is almost certainly an underestimate of children with gender dysphoria, or, transsexual children. Few younger people present for treatment despite the fact that most gender dysphoric adults report experiencing gender variance from a very early age. Social pressure, in the family and at school, inhibits the early revelation of their gender variance.<sup>31</sup>

Finally, regarding intersex children, ONS data is based on birth registration data. For births where the sex of a child is indeterminate or where there are intersex traits, the advice given by the General Register Office (GRO) is that the registration should be deferred until medical investigations have been completed. If this goes over the 42 days usually required to register a birth, the matter is reported to GRO in writing for monitoring of the case and to ensure that a registration is eventually secured. Therefore, it is very rare that the sex of a child is recorded as indeterminate or intersex within birth registrations so no figures are published on this due by the ONS to the small numbers. On the other hand, there is no publicly available NHS dataset including such information.

## **Data limitations and recommendations**

There is a range of limitations in the data collected on children with sexual and gender minorities. The "Sexual identity, UK" statistics only provides aggregated estimates for young people aged 16-24. It would be useful if the data was further disaggregated, particularly for the 16-18 age group. The statistics are also based on survey results, which means some measurement and sample errors will affect the accuracy of the estimate (e.g. this particular survey covers only private households).

There is very little information on gender minority children in England. The NHS does not currently publish relevant data. While it is expected that the group is fairly small in England, it is necessary to understand the prevalence to target policy and interventions.

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<sup>31</sup> GIRES, (2011)

### 30. Sexual minority children

Group	Category	No. of children	Information
General Category	Sexual minority (LGB) young people aged 16-24 – estimates for UK 2015	242,000 (3.3%)	<p><b>Data source:</b> Sexual identity, UK. <b>Provider:</b> Office for National Statistics.</p> <p><b>Frequency:</b> Sexual identity estimates for the UK are usually published annually in October. The most recent release was published on 5 October 2016 and it provided estimates for 2015. The next estimates are expected to be published in October 2017, providing information for 2016.</p> <p><b>Designation:</b> Experimental Official Statistics.</p>
	Sexual minority (LGB) children aged 16-17 – estimates for England 2015	42,000 (3.3%) - Alma estimate	
Sub-groups	Young people aged 16-24 who are gay or lesbian – estimates for UK 2015	109,000 (1.5%)	
	Children aged 16-17 who are gay or lesbian – estimates for England 2015	19,000 (1.5%) - Alma estimate	
	Young people aged 16-24 who are bisexual – estimates for UK 2015	133,000 (1.8%)	
	Children aged 16-17 who are bisexual – estimates for England 2015	23,000 (1.8%) - Alma estimate	

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## Annex 1: data source summary

The table below lists the data sources which are expected to be updated in the future.

Data Source	Provider	Designation	Frequency	Most recent release	Next scheduled release	Relevant groups
2011 Census	Office for National Statistics	National Statistics	Every 10 years	2011 Census providing information for the population of England and Wales on Census Day, 27 March 2011	2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young carers</li> <li>• Children with Black and Minority Ethnicity (BME) background</li> </ul>
Births by mothers' usual area of residence in UK	Office for National Statistics	National Statistics	Annually	Published on 22 October 2016, including data for 2015	October / November 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teenage parents</li> </ul>
Births by parents' characteristics in England and Wales	Office for National Statistics	National Statistics	Annually	Published on 29 November 2016, including data for 2015	September / October 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teenage parents</li> </ul>
Characteristics of children in need	Department for Education	National Statistics	Annually	Published 3 November 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016	November 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP)</li> <li>• Children in need</li> <li>• Children who have experienced trauma / abuse</li> <li>• Pre-section 17</li> </ul>

Data Source	Provider	Designation	Frequency	Most recent release	Next scheduled release	Relevant groups
Children in Secure Children's Homes	Department for education	National Statistics	Annually	Published on 9 June 2016, reporting data for the year ending 31 March 2016	June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children in detention</li> </ul>
Children living in long-term workless households: UK	Office of National Statistics (ONS)	National Statistics	Quarterly	Published 4 July 2016, covering the period January to December 2014	TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children in workless families</li> </ul>
Children looked after in England including adoption	Department for Education	National Statistics	Annually	29 September 2016, including data for the year ending 31 March 2016. Additional tables were published on 8 December 2016	September 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children looked after</li> <li>Unaccompanied asylum seeking children</li> <li>Adopted children</li> <li>Missing children</li> <li>Care leavers</li> <li>Children who are subject to a SGO</li> </ul>
Conceptions in England and Wales	Office for National Statistics	National Statistics	Annually	Published on 22 March 2017, including data for 2015	February / March 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teenage parents</li> </ul>
Crime Survey for England and Wales	Office for National Statistics	National Statistics	Quarterly	Published on 19 January 2017, including data for the year ending September 2016	27 April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children who have experienced trauma / abuse</li> </ul>
Divorces in England and Wales: Children in divorced couples	Office for National Statistics	National Statistics	Annually	Published on 5 December 2016, including data for 2013	TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children in non-intact families</li> </ul>



Data Source	Provider	Designation	Frequency	Most recent release	Next scheduled release	Relevant groups
Families and households in the UK	Office for National Statistics	National Statistics	Annually	Published on 4 November 2016, including data for 2016	Autumn 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children in non-intact families</li> </ul>
Family court statistics	Ministry of Justice	National Statistics	Quarterly – March / April, June, September and December	Published 30 March 2017, including data for the three months between October to December 2016	29 June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children involved in Special Guardianship Orders</li> </ul>
Households below average income	Department for Work and Pensions	National Statistics	Annually	Published 16 March 2017, including data for the financial year 2015 / 2016	February/March 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children in low-income families</li> </ul>
Immigration statistics	Home Office	National Statistics	Quarterly - February, May, August and November	Published 23 February 2017, including data for the three months between October and December 2016	End of May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children in detention</li> <li>Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children</li> <li>Undocumented children and children without legal identity / regular immigration status</li> </ul>
Income dynamics	Department for Work and Pensions	Experimental Official Statistics	Annually	Published 16 March 2017, providing data for all financial years between 2010/2011 and 2015/2016	February/March 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children in low-income families</li> </ul>

Data Source	Provider	Designation	Frequency	Most recent release	Next scheduled release	Relevant groups
Missing Persons Data Report	UK Missing Persons Bureau of the National Crime Agency	Official Statistics	Annually	Published on 28 February 2017, including data for the financial year 2015 / 2016	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Missing children</li> <li>Absent children</li> </ul>
National Evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme 2015 – 2020	Department for Communities and Local Government	Official Statistics	Annually	Published on 4 April 2017	TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children in ‘troubled families’</li> </ul>
National Referral Mechanism (NRM) Statistics	National Crime Agency (NCA)	Official Statistics	Quarterly	Published 29 March 2017, providing the summary statistics for 2016.	May / July 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children who have been victims of modern slavery</li> </ul>
NEET Quarterly Brief	Department for Education	National Statistics	Quarterly – March / April, June, September and December	Published 23 February 2017, including data for the three months between October to December 2016	25 May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)</li> </ul>
Participation in education, training and employment	Department for Education	National Statistics	Annually	Published 30 June 2016, including provisional estimates for the end of 2015	29 June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)</li> </ul>
Permanent and fixed period exclusions in England	Department for Education	National Statistics	Annually	Published 21 July 2016, providing data for the academic year 2014 / 2015	June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excluded children</li> </ul>

Data Source	Provider	Designation	Frequency	Most recent release	Next scheduled release	Relevant groups
Proportion of children aged 10-15 who were involved in gangs, 2013/14, and, proportion of adults aged 16 – 24 who were involved with gangs, 2013 / 14	Office for National Statistics	Official Statistics	One-off published ad hoc data	Published on 4 September 2014, providing data for 2013 / 14	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children involved in gangs</li> </ul>
Rough sleeping in England	Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)	Official Statistics	Quarterly	Published on 23 January 2017, including data for Autumn 2016	January 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children who are homeless in insecure/unstable housing</li> </ul>
Schools, pupils and their characteristics	Department for Education	National Statistics	Annually	Published 28 June 2016, providing data collected in the January 2016 School Census	June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children in low-income families</li> <li>Excluded children</li> </ul>
Sexual identity, UK	Office for National Statistics	Experimental Official Statistics	Annually	Published 5 October 2016 providing estimates for 2015	October 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sexual and gender minority children</li> </ul>
Statistics for drug treatment activity in England – parents and children who live with their children under-18 in 2011 / 12	National Treatment Agency (NTA)	Official Statistics	One-off statistical bulletin	Published in 2012	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children whose parents use substances problematically</li> </ul>

Data Source	Provider	Designation	Frequency	Most recent release	Next scheduled release	Relevant groups
Statutory homelessness and prevention and relief	Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)	National Statistics	Quarterly	Published on 23 March 2017, including data for the last quarter of 2016.	June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children who are homeless in insecure/unstable housing</li> </ul>
Working and workless households in the UK	Office of National Statistics (ONS)	National Statistics	Quarterly	Published 1 March 2017, covering the period October to December 2016	31 May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children in workless families</li> </ul>
Youth custody data	Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board for England and Wales	Official Statistics	Monthly	Published 10 March 2017, providing data for January 2017	April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children in detention</li> </ul>
Youth Justice statistics	Ministry of Justice and Youth Justice Board for England and Wales	National Statistics	Annually	Published on 26 January 2017, reporting data for the year ending 31 March 2016	25 January 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children in detention</li> <li>Young offenders</li> </ul>

## Annex 2: summary of overlaps

### Key

E	Groups that are mutually exclusive (i.e. there are no overlaps)
O	Groups with overlaps (e.g. some children are included in both groups, but there are also children included only in one group)
S	One group is a subset of the other group

	CLA	CPP	Detained	CIN	UASC	Care leavers	SGO	Adopted	Workless families	Low-income	Homeless	Pre-section 17	Teenage parents	Non-intact families	Young carers	Undocumented	In troubled families	Parents use substances	Limited parenting capacity	NEET	Excluded	Young offenders	Involved in gangs	Abused	Trafficked	Missing	Absent	BME	Gender or sexual minority
CLA		F	O	S	O	F	O	F	O	O	F	F	O	F	O	O	F	F	F	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
CPP	F		O	S	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	F	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Detained	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	F	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	F	F	O	O
CIN	S	S	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	F	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
UASC	O	O	O	O		O	F	O	O	O	O	O	O	F	F	S	F	F	F	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Care leavers	F	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	F	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
SGO	O	O	O	O	F	O		F	O	O	O	O	O	F	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

Adopted	E	O	O	O	E	O	E		O	O	O	O	O	E	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Workless	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Low-income	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Homeless	E	O	E	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Pre-section 17	E	E	O	E	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Teenage parents	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Non-intact families	E	O	O	O	E	E	E	E	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Young carers	O	O	O	O	E	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Undocumented	O	O	O	O	S	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
In troubled families	E	O	O	O	E	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Parents use substances	E	O	O	O	E	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

Limited parenting capacity	E	O	O	O	E	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
NEET	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O			O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Excluded	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O			O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Young offenders	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O			O	O	O	O	O	O
Involved in gangs	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O			O	O	O	O	O
Abused	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O			O	O	O	O
Trafficked	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O			O	O	O
Missing	O	O	E	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O			O	O
Absent	O	O	E	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O			O
BME	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O		O
Gender or sexual minority	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	



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