

# Rural population and migration

- In 2013 the population of England was 53.9 million, of which 9.2 million (17.1 per cent) lived in rural areas and 44.7 million (82.9 per cent) lived in urban areas. These mid-year population estimates are based on lower super output areas (LSOAs). This gives a lower population estimate than Census output area population. The 2011 Census rural population was 9.3 million (17.6 per cent). The equivalent mid-year population estimate for 2011 estimated the rural population to be 9.1 million (17.2 per cent). This does not therefore constitute a reduction in population.<sup>1</sup>
- Within the rural areas, 0.5 million people lived in sparse settings.
- There are proportionately more older people living in rural areas – over 50 per cent of the population in rural areas were aged 45 and above, compared with around 40 per cent in urban areas.

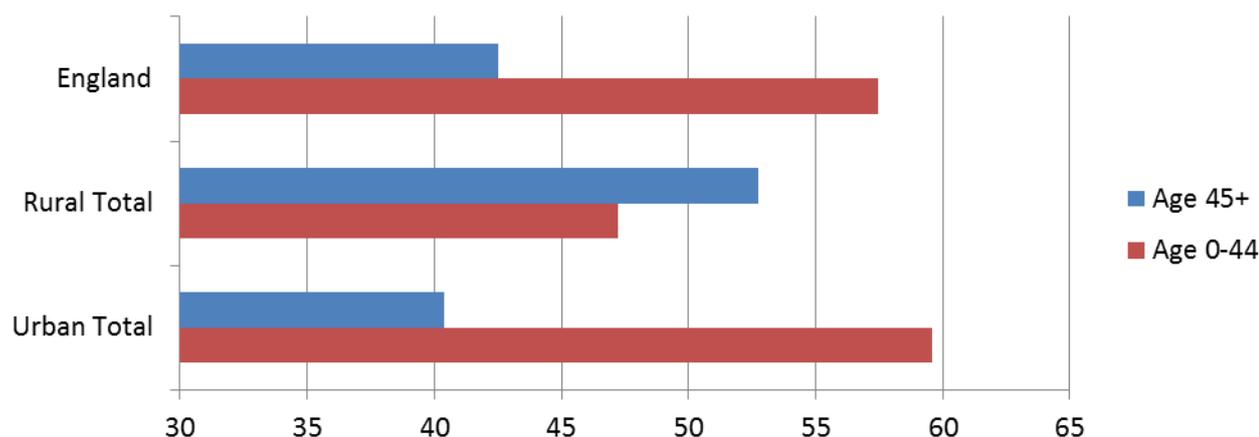
## 2013 Mid-year population estimates

	Population	Proportion (%)
<b>Rural</b>	<b>9,206,500</b>	<b>17.1</b>
Rural town and fringe	4,970,200	9.2
- those in a sparse setting	191,700	0.4
Rural village and hamlet	4,236,200	7.9
- those in a sparse setting	297,400	0.6
<b>Urban</b>	<b>44,659,400</b>	<b>82.9</b>
Urban major conurbation	19,224,000	35.7
Urban minor conurbation	1,935,400	3.6
Urban city and town	23,499,900	43.6
- those in a sparse setting	90,600	0.2
		0.0
<b>England</b>	<b>53,865,800</b>	<b>100.0</b>

- 9.2 million people, or 17.1 per cent of the population, live in rural areas.
- Around 580,000 people, or 1.1 per cent of the population live in settlements in a sparse setting.

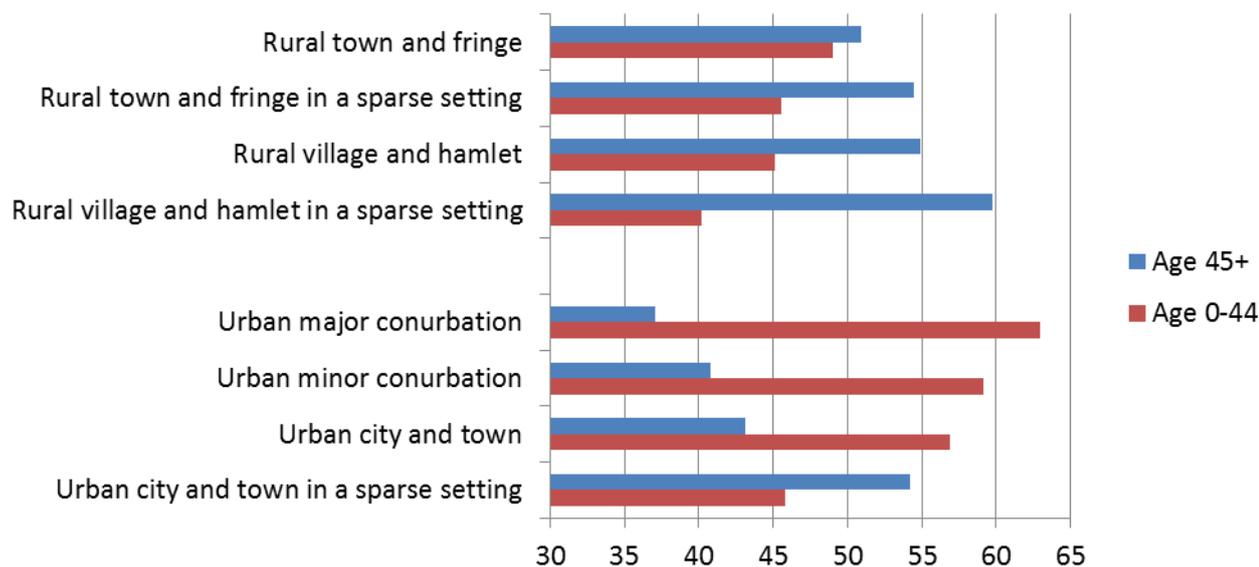
## Population by age

2013 Mid-year population by area and percentage, rural and urban totals



- Less than 50 per cent of those living in rural areas are aged below 45 years, compared with almost 60 per cent in urban areas, and overall there are proportionately fewer younger people living in settlements in a sparse area.

2013 Mid-year population by area and percentage, rural and urban classification



- The proportion of the population aged under 45 years tends to decline the more rural the settlement type.

### Age groups as a percentage of total 2013 mid-year population

	0 - 14 years old	15 - 29 years old	30 - 44 years old	45 - 64 years old	65 + years old
<b>Rural</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>22.9</b>
Rural town and fringe	16.5	15.2	17.4	28.4	22.6
- those in a sparse setting	14.7	15.1	15.8	27.9	26.6
Rural village and hamlet	15.3	14.1	15.6	31.6	23.3
- those in a sparse setting	13.4	12.8	13.9	32.6	27.2
<b>Urban</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>16.1</b>
Urban major conurbation	18.9	21.6	22.5	23.1	13.9
Urban minor conurbation	17.3	22.5	19.3	24.4	16.4
Urban city and town	17.6	19.6	19.6	25.2	17.9
- those in a sparse setting	14.7	15.8	15.3	27.5	26.7
<b>England</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>19.6</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>17.3</b>

#### Notes:

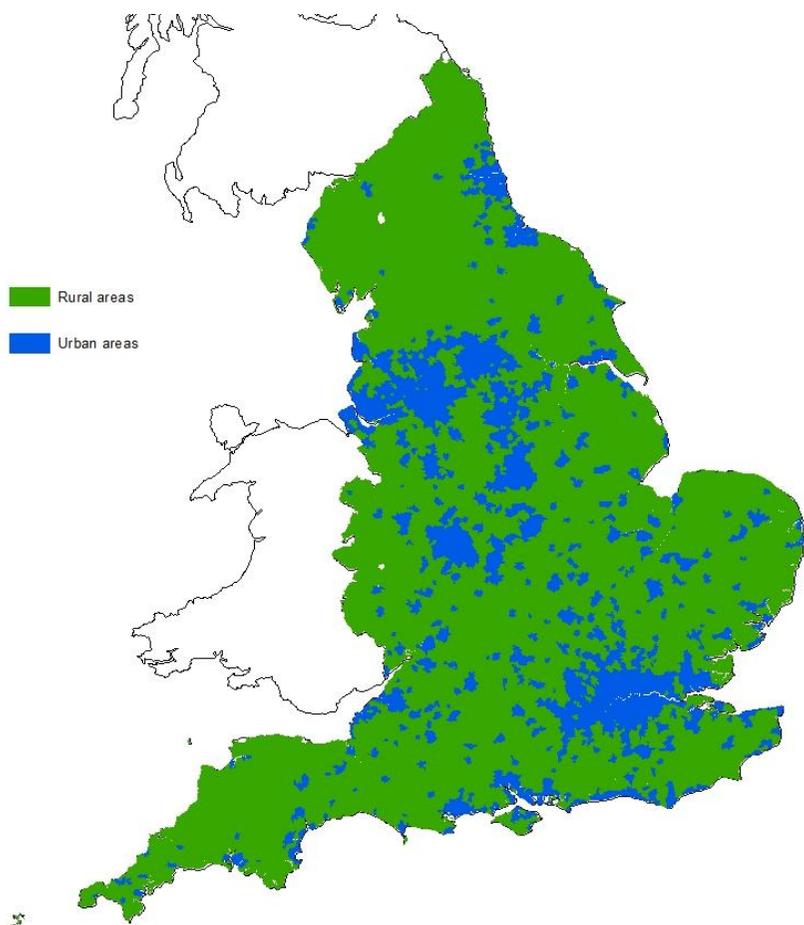
<sup>1</sup>This analysis uses mid-year population estimates, produced by the ONS. While these indicators are broadly in line with census level population data, there are minor differences relating to the area classifications: Census population data are based on output areas (OAs, approx. 300 people), and mid-year population estimates are based on lower super output areas (LSOAs, approx. 3000 people). The larger the area the more likely it is to contain an urban settlement and be classified as urban. Analysis using LSOAs may slightly under-estimate the rural population.

The estimated resident population of an area includes all those people who usually live there, regardless of nationality. Arriving international migrants are included in the usually resident population if they remain in the UK for at least a year. Emigrants are excluded if they remain outside the UK for at least a year. This is consistent with the United Nations definition of a long-term migrant. Armed forces stationed outside of the UK are excluded. Students are taken to be usually resident at their term time address.

Source: Small Area Population Estimates 2013, Office for National Statistics. © Crown Copyright 2015.  
These data use RUC2011.

- The following maps show the close geographic relationship between the rural and urban populations at lower super output area level (LSOA) and areas where the percentage of population of under 45 year olds are most concentrated.

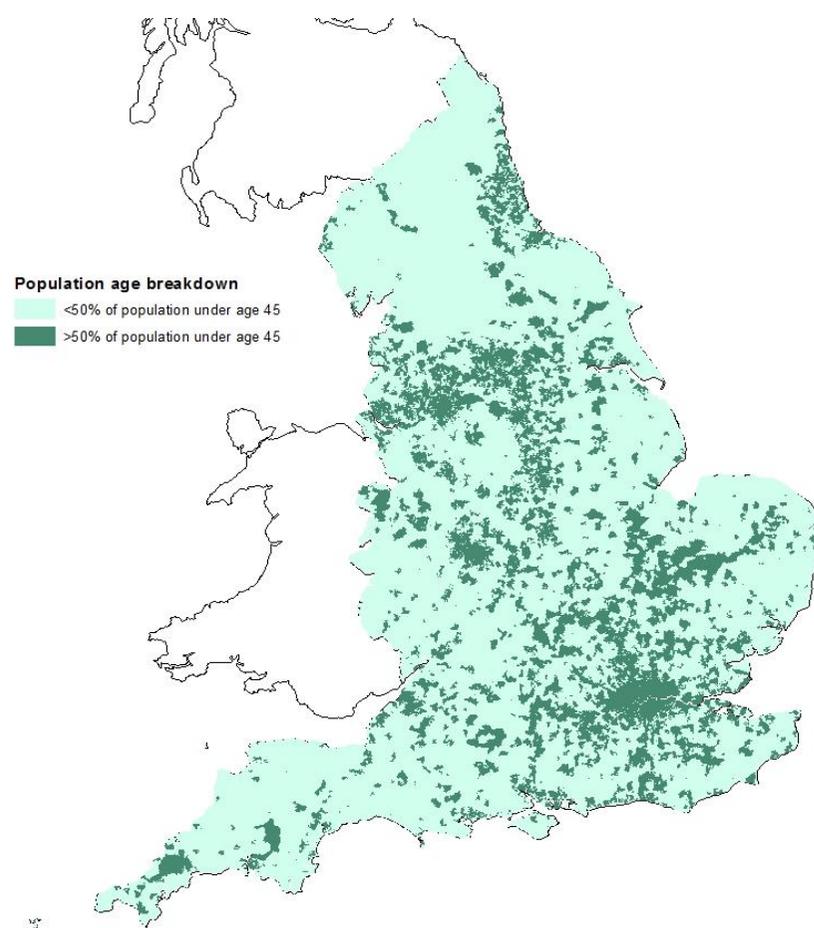
## Lower super output area classification of England (2011)



Source: ONS, Defra RUC2011

© Crown Copyright and database rights 2015  
Defra No. 100022861

## Percentage of population under the age of 45 years (2013)

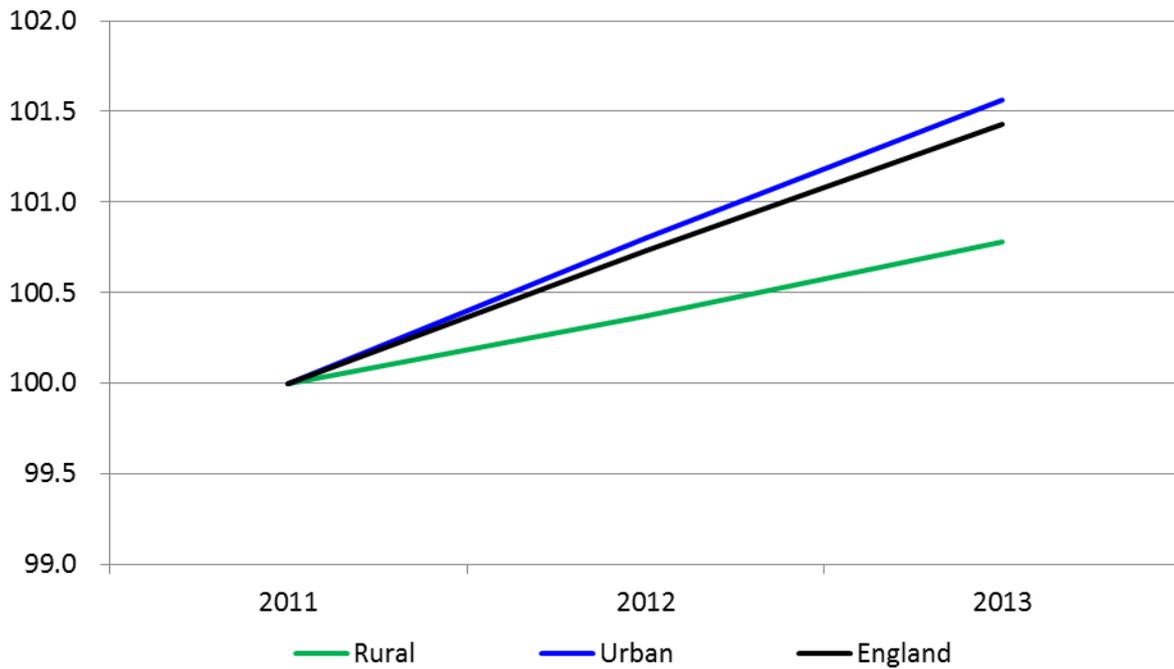


Source: ONS, Defra Mid-year population estimates for 2013 at LSOA level

# Population change

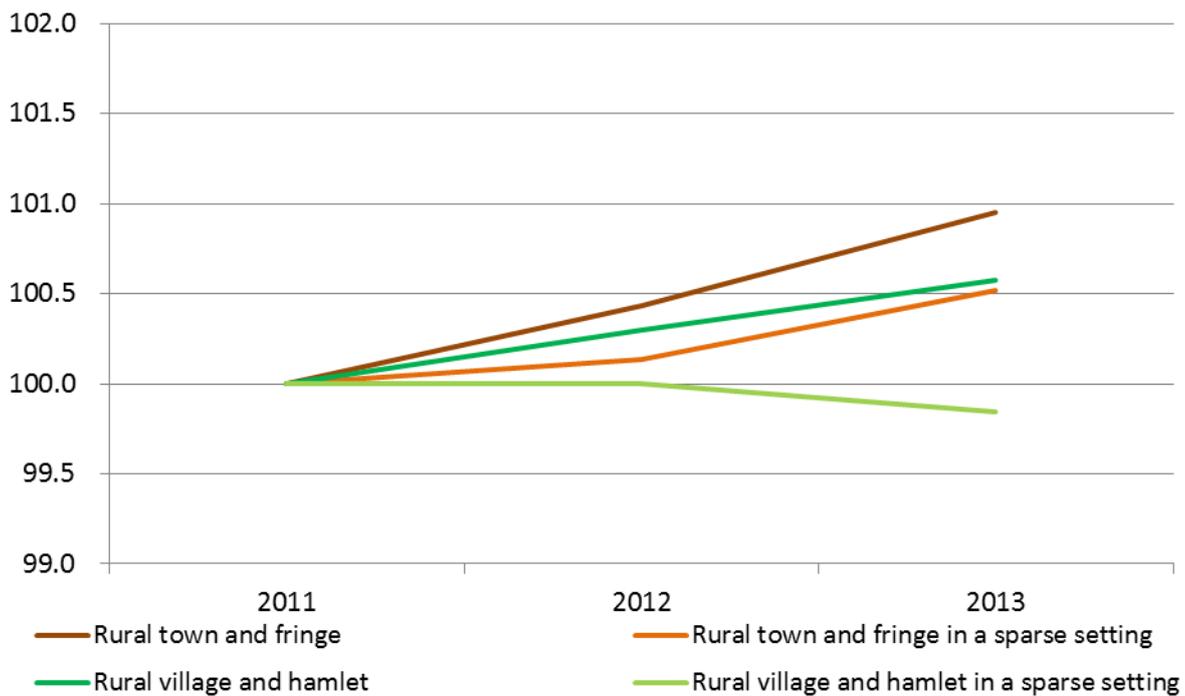
Index of population change, 2011 to 2013

2011 = 100



Index of population in rural areas, 2011 to 2013

2011 = 100



- Both rural and urban areas have seen an increase in overall population. Rural has increased by 0.8 per cent and urban by 1.6 per cent.
- Within rural areas between 2011 and 2013, the greatest rate of population increase was in *rural town and fringe areas* (1.0 per cent).
- *Villages and hamlets in sparse settings* were the only rural area to show a decline in population, although the rate of decline was only slight, by 0.2 per cent.

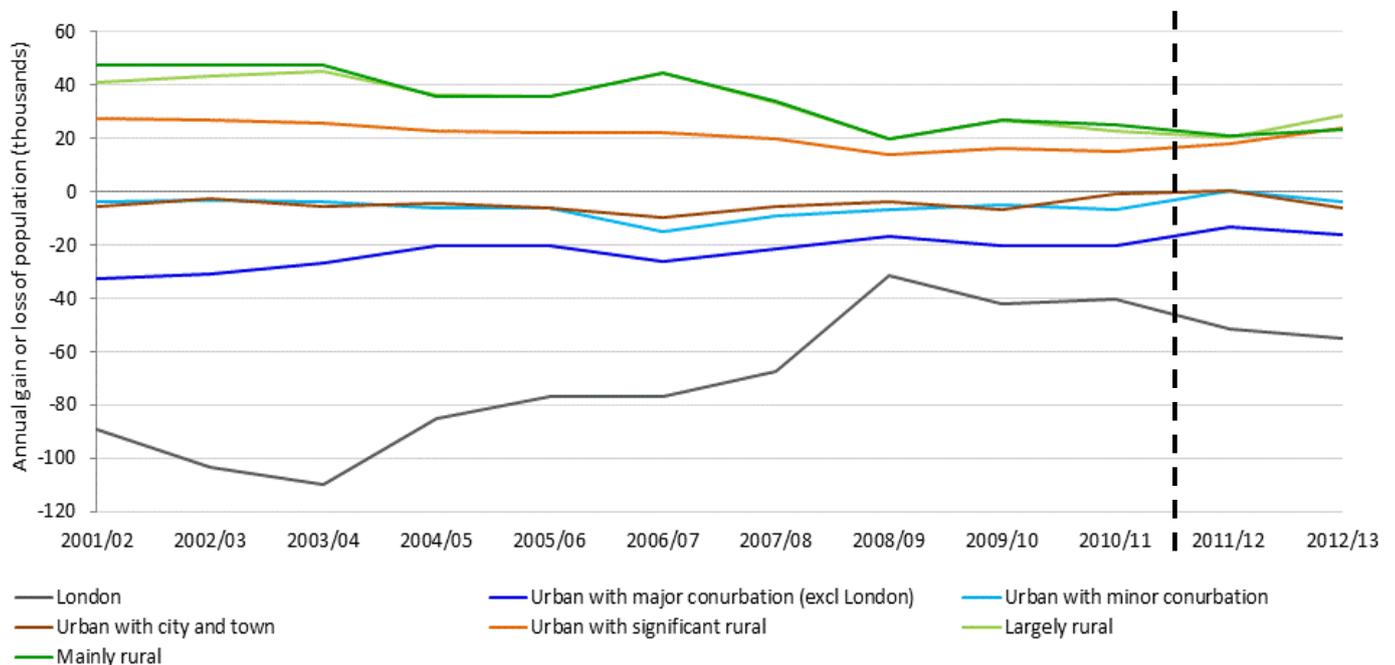
*Index of population change, 2011 to 2013*

2011 = 100

	2011		2012		2013	
	Population	Index	Population	Index	Population	Index
Rural town and fringe	4,923,340	100.0	4,944,544	100.4	4,970,243	101.0
Rural town and fringe in a sparse setting	190,696	100.0	190,956	100.1	191,691	100.5
Rural village and hamlet	4,212,141	100.0	4,224,601	100.3	4,236,224	100.6
Rural village and hamlet in a sparse setting	297,819	100.0	297,813	100.0	297,363	99.8
Urban city and town	23,170,621	100.0	23,338,595	100.7	23,499,913	101.4
Urban city and town in a sparse setting	90,620	100.0	90,535	99.9	90,578	100.0
Urban major conurbation	18,890,596	100.0	19,061,090	100.9	19,224,004	101.8
Urban minor conurbation	1,910,471	100.0	1,924,899	100.8	1,935,433	101.3
Rural	9,135,481	100.0	9,169,145	100.4	9,206,467	100.8
Urban	43,971,688	100.0	44,324,584	100.8	44,659,350	101.6
<b>England</b>	53,107,169	<b>100.0</b>	53,493,729	<b>100.7</b>	53,865,817	<b>101.4</b>

# Internal migration

## Internal migration, 2001/02 to 2012/13



**Note: The RUC01 for Local Authorities has been applied to all data up to and including 2010/11. From 2011/12 onwards the RUC11 for Local Authorities has been applied.**

- Between 2000/01 and 2003/04 the general trend for migration between places in England was of net migration to predominantly rural settlements from predominantly urban ones.
- This overall trend continued from 2003/04 to 2008/09 although the extent of net migration to predominantly rural settlements was decreasing.
- Since 2008/09 there has been an increase in the rate of net migration to predominantly rural settlements.
- *Largely rural* settlements saw net inward migration of 28,500 people and *Mainly rural* settlements saw net internal migration of 23,300 in 2012/13.
- In contrast, *Urban with major conurbation (including London)* settlements lost more residents to internal migration, with a net decrease of 71,400 in 2012/13, with *London* alone showing a net decrease of 55,000. This will partly reflect the fact that *London* is the most common region of first residence for international migrants to the UK, many of whom may later move on to other regions.
- Population change has many drivers and whilst the evidence presented here does not point directly to these causes, changes in the extent of internal migration over recent years suggests a causal link with the economic downturn of the same period. It is likely that economic recession and subsequent suppressed housing market have both acted to reduce the extent of movements between rural and urban areas.

Internal migration, 2001/02 to 2012/13, thousands

	01/02	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Mainly rural	47.7	47.3	47.4	35.6	35.9	44.3	33.6	19.9	26.9	25.1	21.0	23.3
Largely rural	40.8	43.4	45.0	36.1	35.8	44.6	33.2	20.0	26.9	22.9	20.3	28.5
Urban with significant rural	27.1	26.8	25.4	22.4	22.0	22.2	19.8	13.6	15.9	15.0	17.8	23.6
Urban with city and town	-5.5	-2.8	-5.9	-4.2	-6.4	-9.7	-5.7	-3.7	-6.9	-0.8	0.0	-6.5
Urban with minor conurbation	-3.6	-3.4	-3.9	-6.5	-6.4	-15.2	-9.4	-6.7	-5.1	-6.6	0.5	-3.6
London	-89.2	-103.2	-110.1	-85.0	-76.8	-77.2	-67.7	-31.7	-42.4	-40.6	-51.5	-55.0
Urban with major conurbation (excl London)	-33.0	-30.9	-26.9	-20.1	-20.6	-26.4	-21.3	-16.6	-20.4	-20.2	-13.2	-16.4
Predominantly rural	88.5	90.7	92.4	71.7	71.7	88.9	66.8	39.9	53.8	48.0	41.3	51.8
Predominantly urban	-131.3	-140.3	-146.8	-115.8	-110.2	-128.5	-104.1	-58.7	-74.8	-68.2	-64.2	-81.5

**Note: The RUC01 for Local Authorities has been applied to all data up to and including 2010/11. From 2011/12 onwards the RUC11 for Local Authorities has been applied.**

Notes:

Internal migration is defined as residential moves between local authorities. Moves within a single local authority are excluded, as are international moves into or out of the UK. These statistics are based on a combination of administrative data and represent the best available source of information on internal migration. Further information on the data sources and methods, and their limitations, is available via the ONS internal migration methodology webpage

(<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/population-and-migration/internal-migration-methodology/index.html>).

Source: ONS, 2013. Internal Migration within the United Kingdom during the year to June 2013.

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/migration1/internal-migration-by-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/year-ending-june-2013/index.html>