

CIS2015-04

## Differences in Employment by Gender in London

Census Information Scheme

August 2015



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## Key Findings

In London:

- There was a significant difference between the rate of men and women who were economically active (74 per cent of men were economically active compared to 61% of women).
- Women were more likely to work part-time than men with 35 per cent of women working part-time compared to 18 per cent of men.
- Women were less likely to be self-employed than men. 13 per cent of women were self-employed compared to 23 per cent of men.
- Women were much more likely to work in Education, Human health and Social Work than men. On the other hand, men were much more likely to work in Construction, Transport and Storage than women.
- Long-term trends not only show a higher rate of women in employment but also that women are having children at a later age.
- Women with dependent children in the family were less likely to work than those without dependent children. Interestingly, men with dependent children were more likely to work.
- The gender gap (i.e. the difference between the economic activity rate of men and women) was largest amongst those born in the Middle East and Asia.
- Muslim women were the least likely to be economically active (41 per cent active) and had the largest gender gap, with women reporting an economic activity rate 28 per cent lower than men.
- Women with no religion were the most likely to be economically active (73 per cent active) and had the smallest gender gap, with women reporting an economic activity rate 8 per cent lower than men.

## Introduction

This report uses Census data as well as other sources to give an overview of the differences in employment and economic activity between males and females in London, looking in particular detail at:

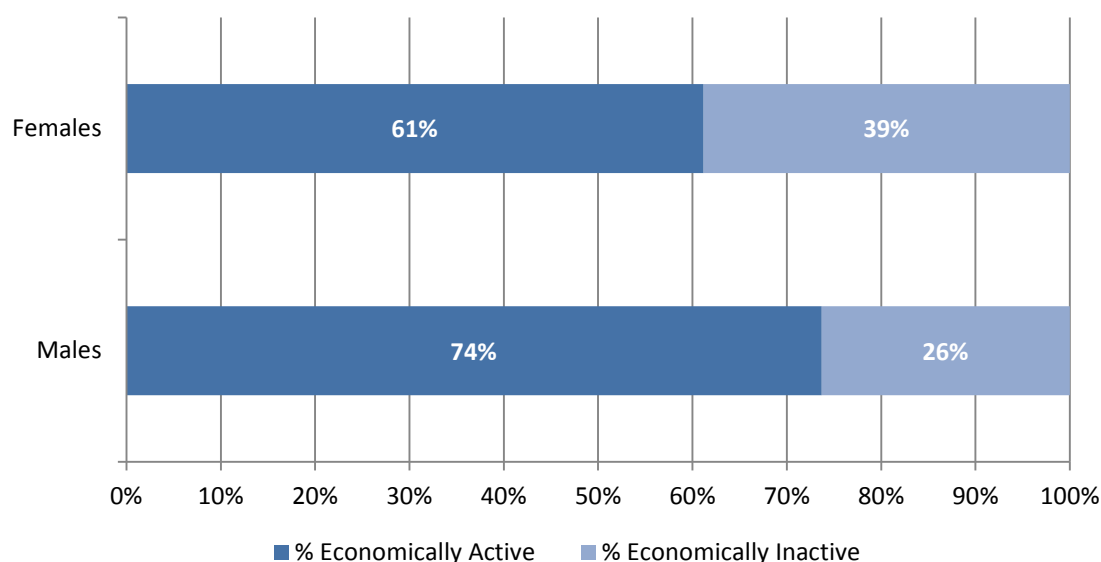
- What kinds of jobs men and women tend to have
- Age variation
- The effect of having children
- Cultural variations

Unless otherwise stated all figures are for London residents aged 16 and over.

This report is accompanied with an Excel workbook that you can download from the [London Datastore](#). The workbook allows you to view all the charts and figures in this report for a specific borough (a key advantage of using Census data over Labour Force Survey/Annual Population Survey data).

There was a significant difference between the rate of men and women who were economically active<sup>1</sup> (74 per cent of men were economically active compared to 61 per cent of women) in 2011. The main reason for working-age women being economically inactive was to look after the home or family, with ten per cent doing so (compared to just one per cent of men).

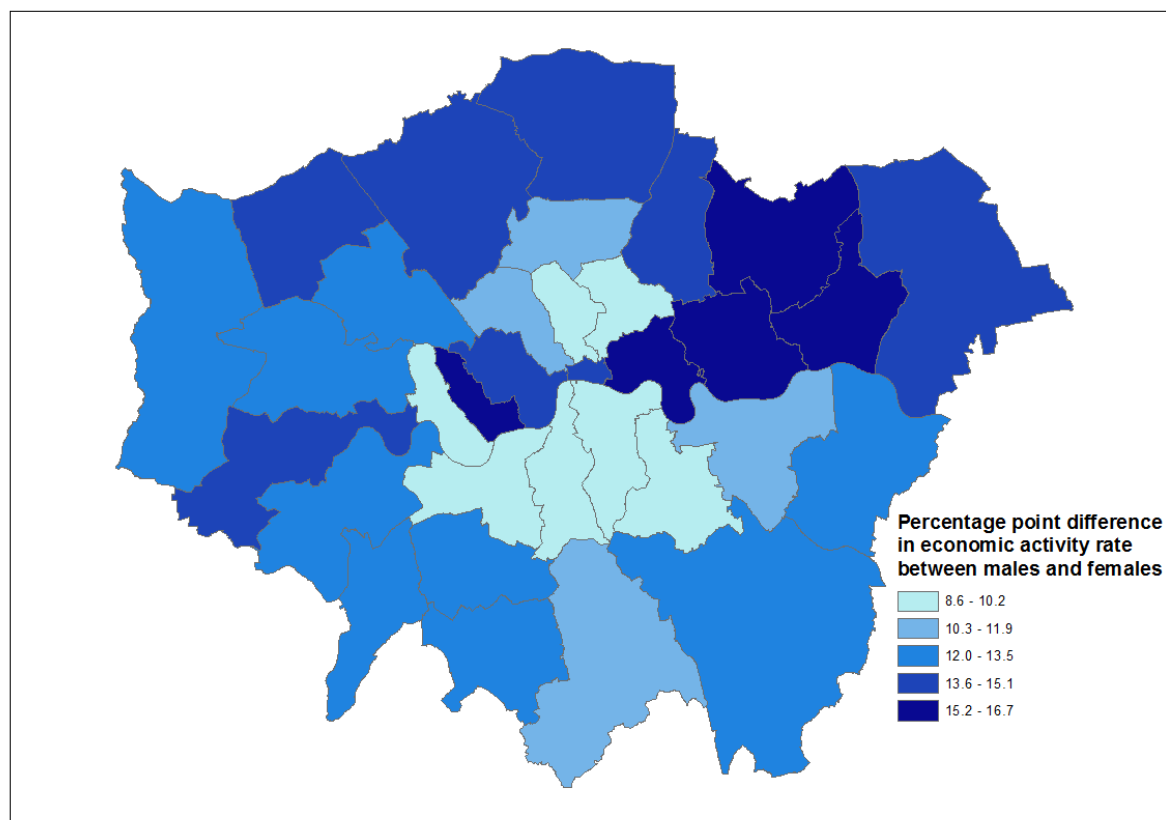
**Figure 1: Percent aged 16 and over economically active by sex, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census Table DC6107EW

<sup>1</sup> Economically active – persons aged 16 and over in employment or looking for employment (i.e. unemployed)

**Figure 2: Percentage point difference in economic activity rate between males and females aged 16 and over by borough, 2011**

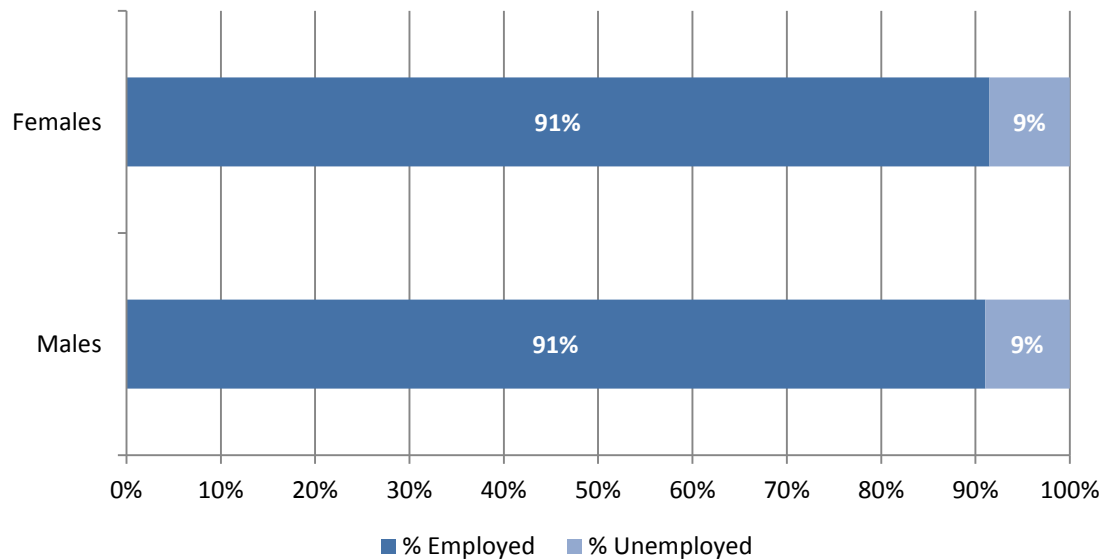


Source: 2011 Census Table DC6107EW

The boroughs with the largest difference in economic activity rate between men and women were Newham, Tower Hamlets and Kensington & Chelsea. The boroughs with the smallest difference were Lambeth, Hammersmith & Fulham and Hackney.

Despite the contrast in economic activity rate, when looking at the rate of those economically active who were employed there was no difference between genders with 91 per cent in employment for both men and women.

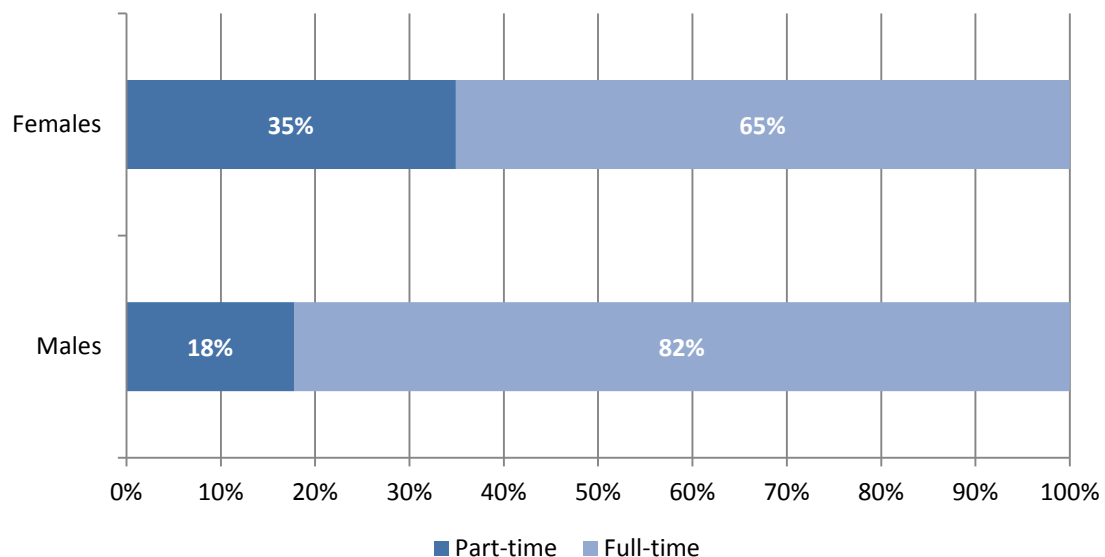
**Figure 3: Percent economically active employed age 16 and over by sex, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census Table DC6107EW

Women were more likely to work part-time than men with 35 per cent of women working part-time compared to 18 per cent of men.

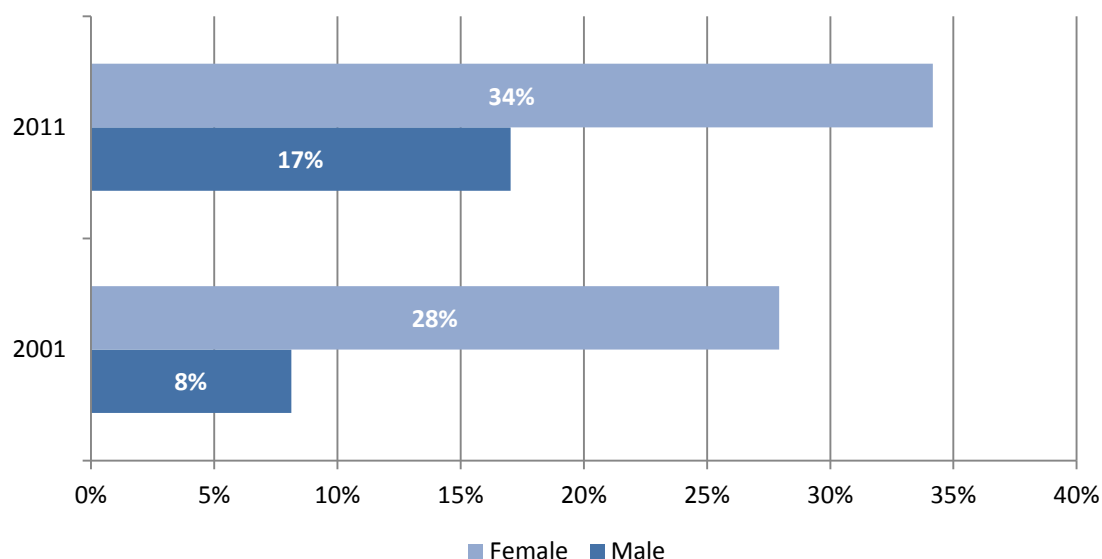
**Figure 4: Percent aged 16 and over working full-time/part-time by sex, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census Table DC6107EW

Compared to 2001, women were six percentage points more likely to work part-time while men were nine percentage points more likely, meaning that the difference between genders has fallen slightly<sup>2</sup>. This increase in the part-time working was driven by the economic downturn where many people stayed in employment in return for fewer hours.

**Figure 5: Percent aged 16 to 64 working part-time by sex, 2001 and 2011**



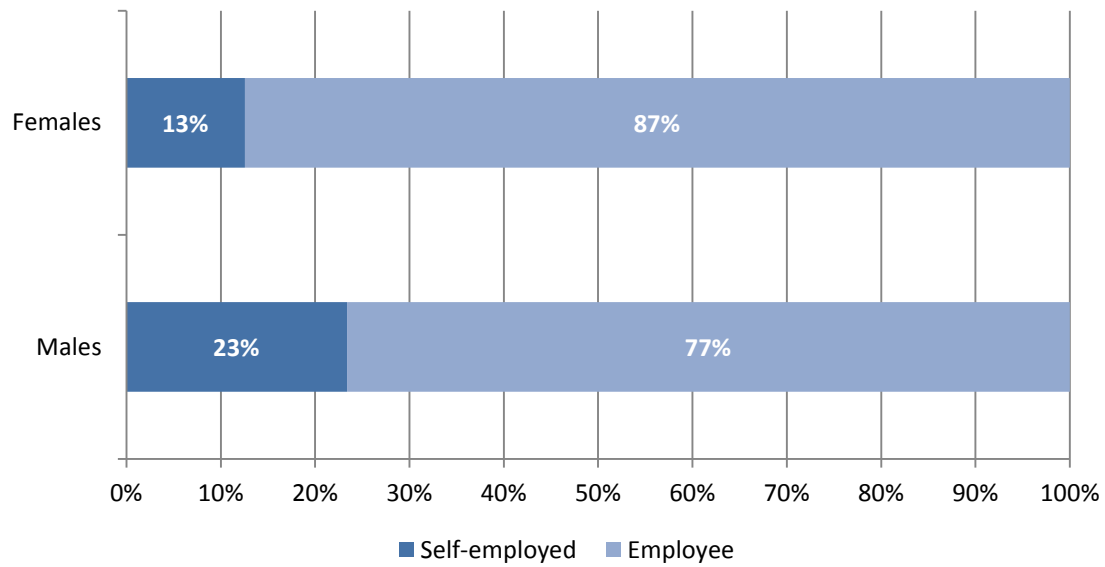
*Source: 2001 & 2011 Census*

Women were less likely to be self-employed than men. 13 per cent of women were self-employed compared to 23 per cent of men.

<sup>2</sup> For the 2001/2011 comparison only those aged between 16 and 64 were looked at due to limitations in 2001 data. This explains why Figure 4 and 5 show slightly different values.



**Figure 6: Percent aged 16 and self-employed/employee by sex, 2011**



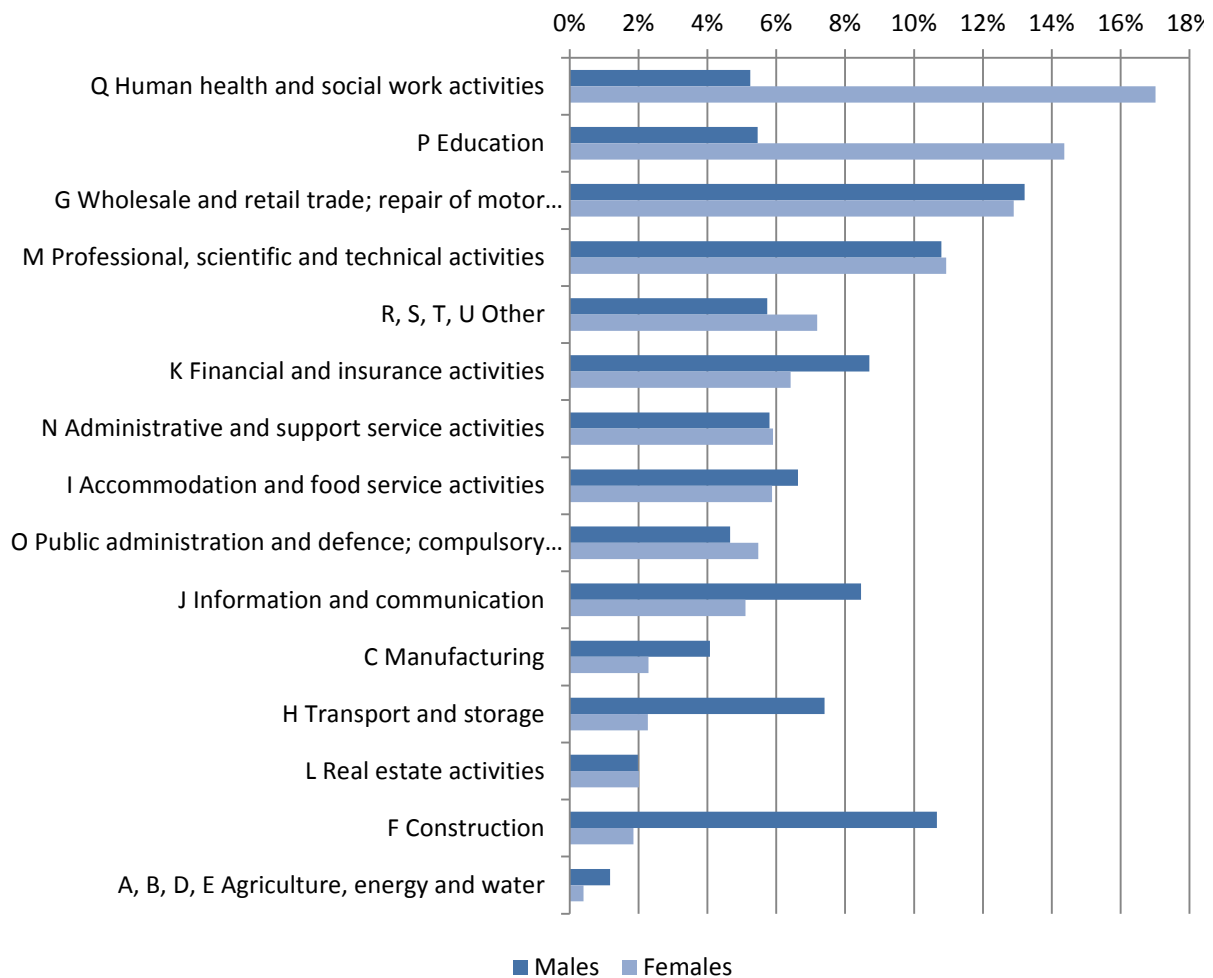
*Source: 2011 Census Table DC6107EW*

The same trends were followed for England and Wales as a whole for all of the above, although the national figure for women working part-time was higher at 44 per cent (compared to 35 per cent for London – shown in Figure 4).

## Industry and Occupation Type

There were differences in the types of jobs women and men did. The top three industries that women worked in were human health & social work, education and wholesale & retail. By way of comparison, the top three industries that men worked in were wholesale & retail, professional & technical and construction.

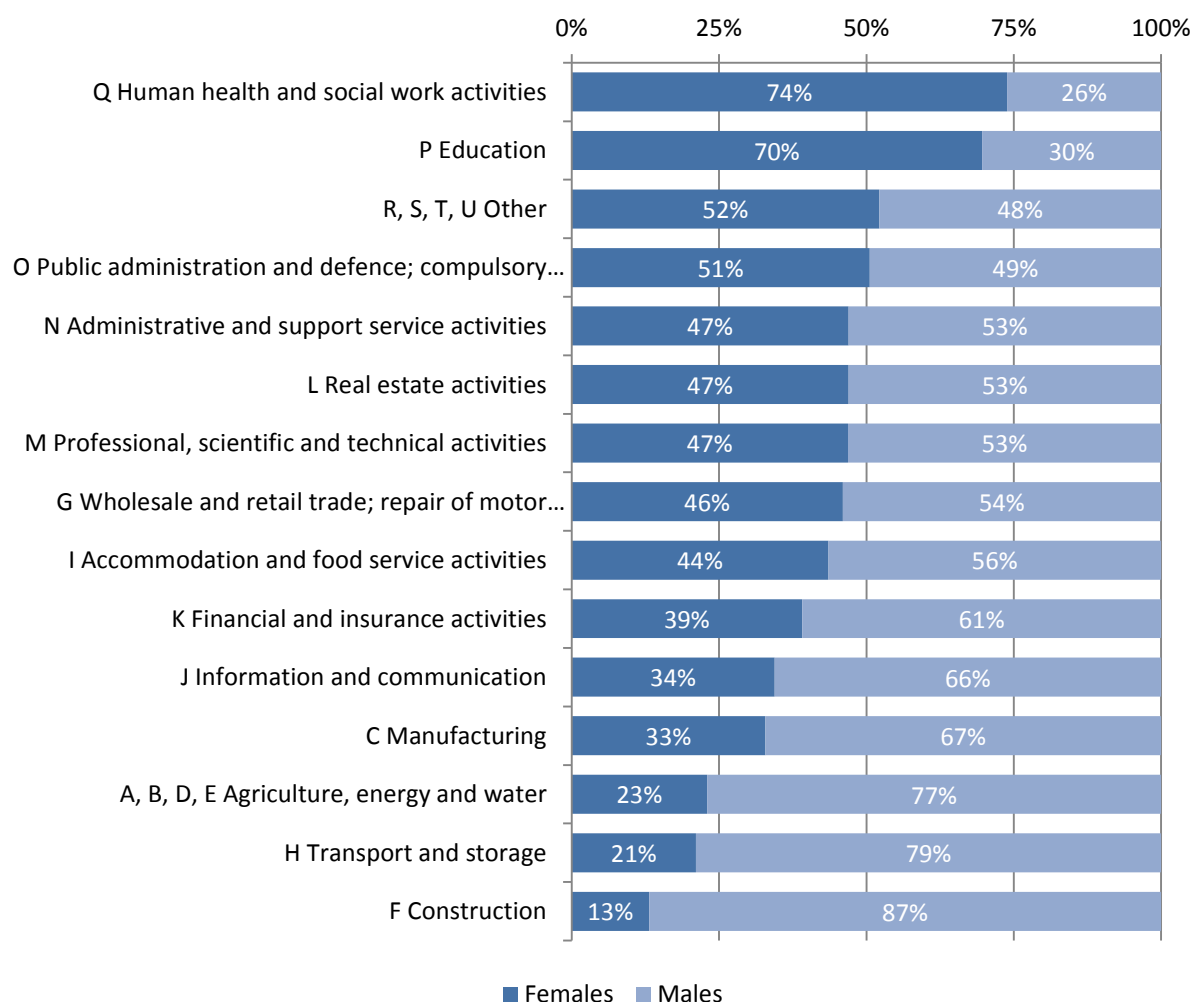
**Figure 7: Percent of males and females in industry, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census Table DC6110EW

The most female-dominated industries were education, human health and social work activities with 72 per cent of those working in these industries being female. On the other hand, the most male-dominated industries were construction, transport and storage with just 17 per cent working in these industries being female.

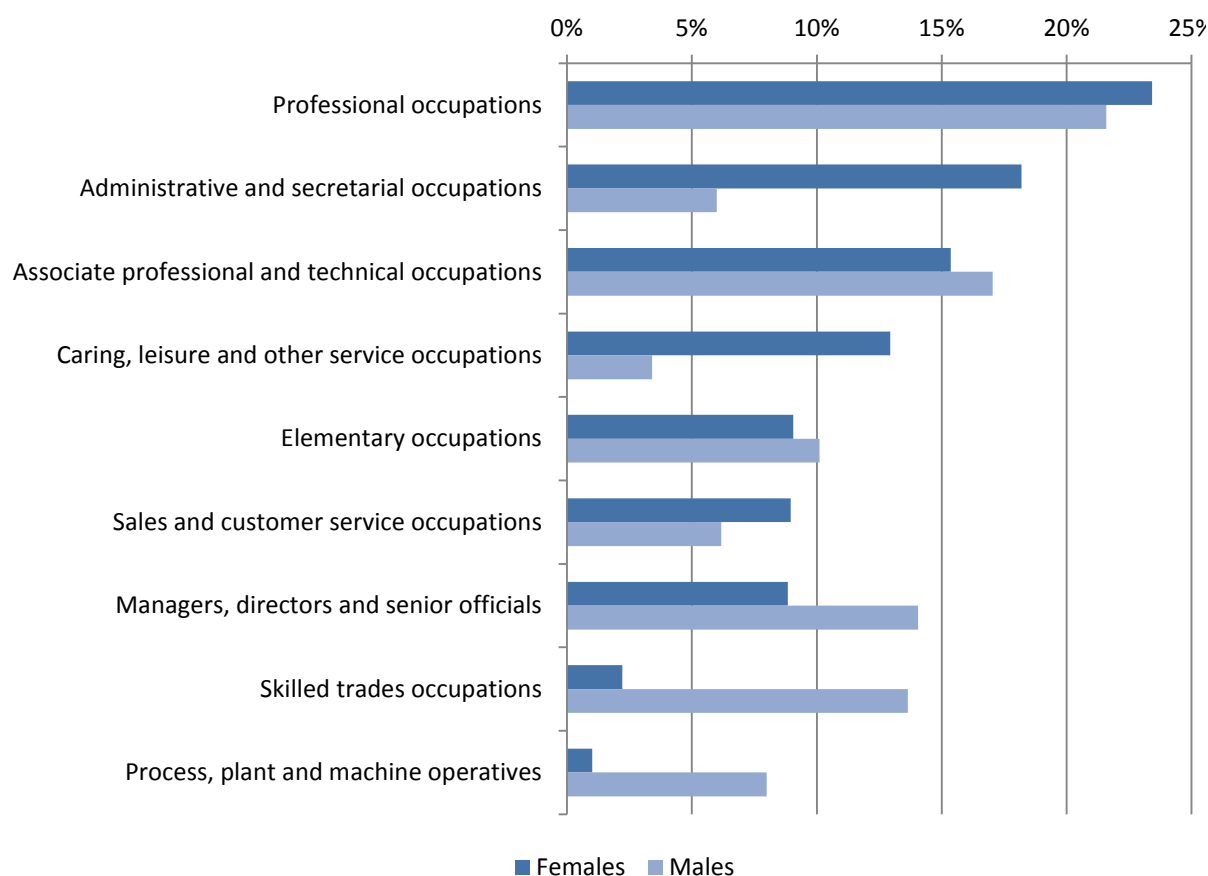
**Figure 8: Percent employed in industry by sex, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census Table DC6110EW

Following on from this, the top types of occupations that women worked in were professional, administrative and secretarial occupations. By way of comparison, the top types of occupations that men worked in were professional, technical and senior or managerial occupations.

**Figure 9: Percent of males and females in occupation, 2011**

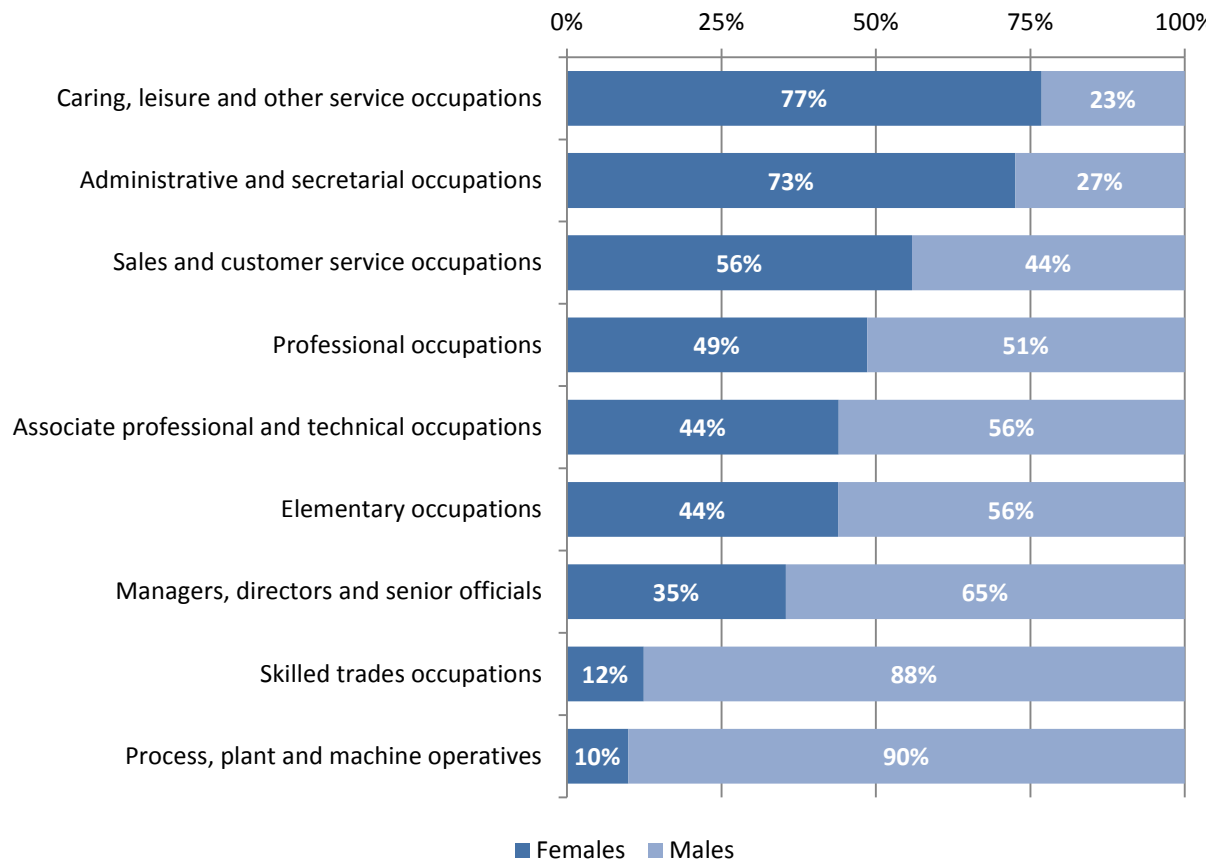


Source: 2011 Census Table DC6112EW

The most female-dominated types of occupation were administrative and secretarial occupations or caring, leisure and other service occupations. 74 per cent of Londoners working in these occupations were female.

Meanwhile the most male-dominated types of occupation were process, plant and machine operatives or work in skilled trade occupations. Just 12 per cent of Londoners working in these occupations were female.

**Figure 10: Percent employed in occupation by sex, 2011**

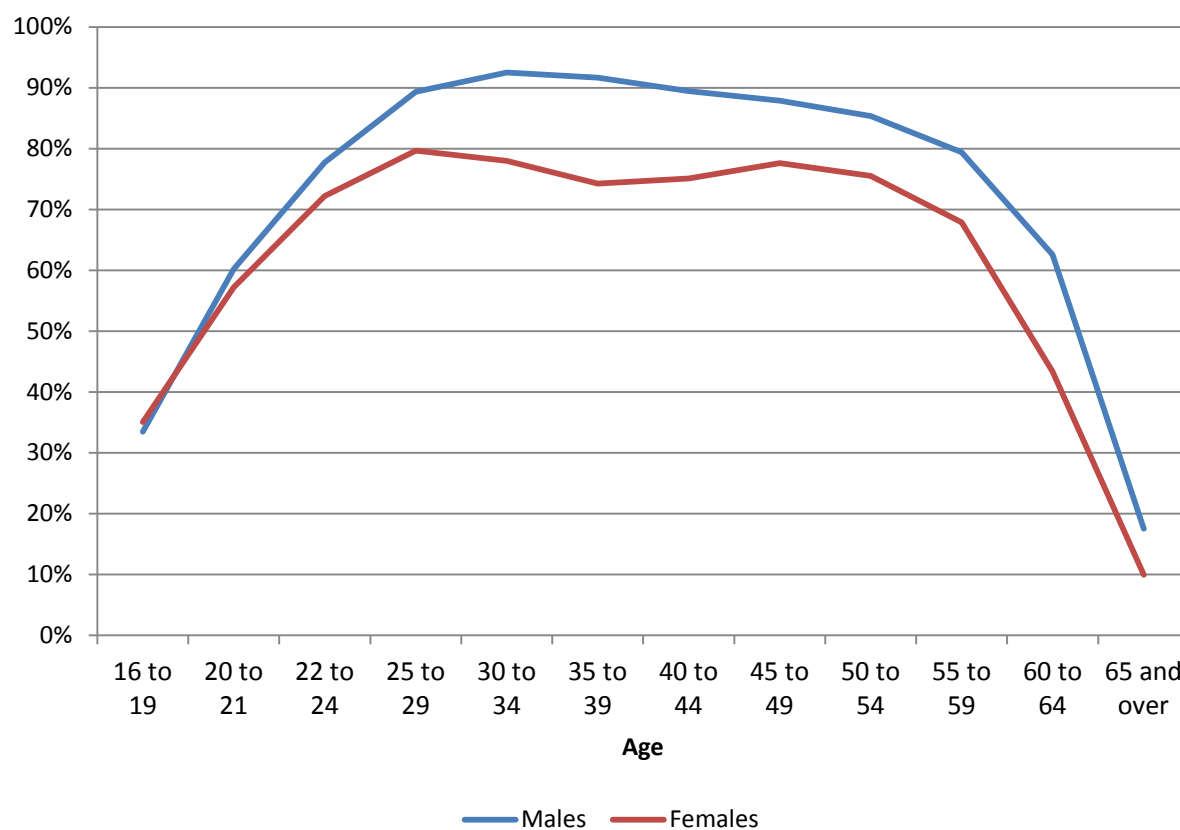


Source: 2011 Census Table DC6112EW

## Age Breakdown

Figure 11 shows that women in London were less likely to be economically active than men across all age groups barring ages 16 to 19.

**Figure 11: Percent economically active by age and sex, 2011**

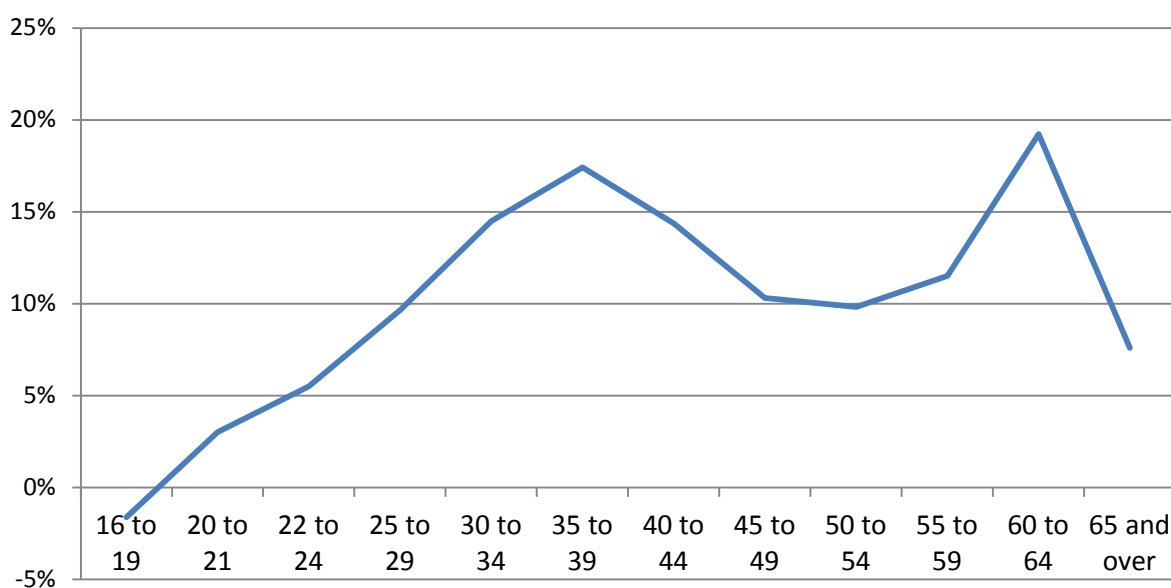


Source: 2011 Census Table DC6107EW

Things get more interesting when looking at how the gap between men and women varies by age. Looking at Figure 12, there are two peaks where the gap between men and women was at its largest. The first of these occurs amongst those in their 30s and is likely driven by women having children.

The gap also rises for 60 to 64 year olds and is most likely due to the national retirement age being 60 for women and 65 for men. This peak will likely be less significant by the time of the 2021 Census as the state pension age will be the same for both men and women by this time.

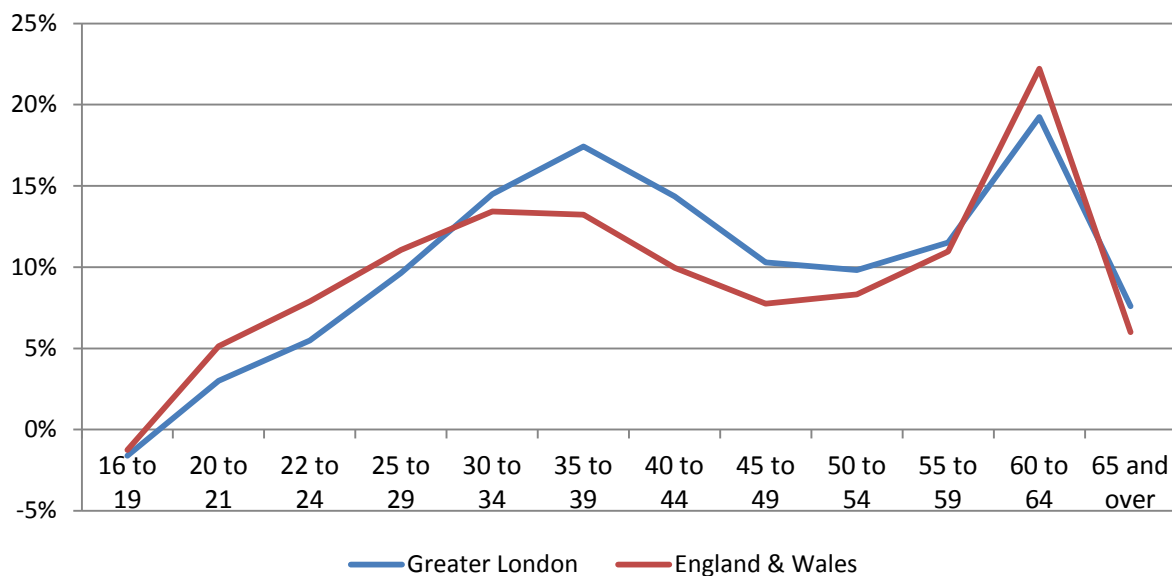
**Figure 12: Percentage point gap in economic activity rate between men and women by age, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census Table DC6107EW

Figure 13 shows how this trend varies between London and the national average. It shows that the first (possibly child-driven) peak was higher in London while the second peak, amongst those aged 60 to 64, was lower in London.

**Figure 13: Percentage point gap in economic activity rate between men and women by age, 2011**

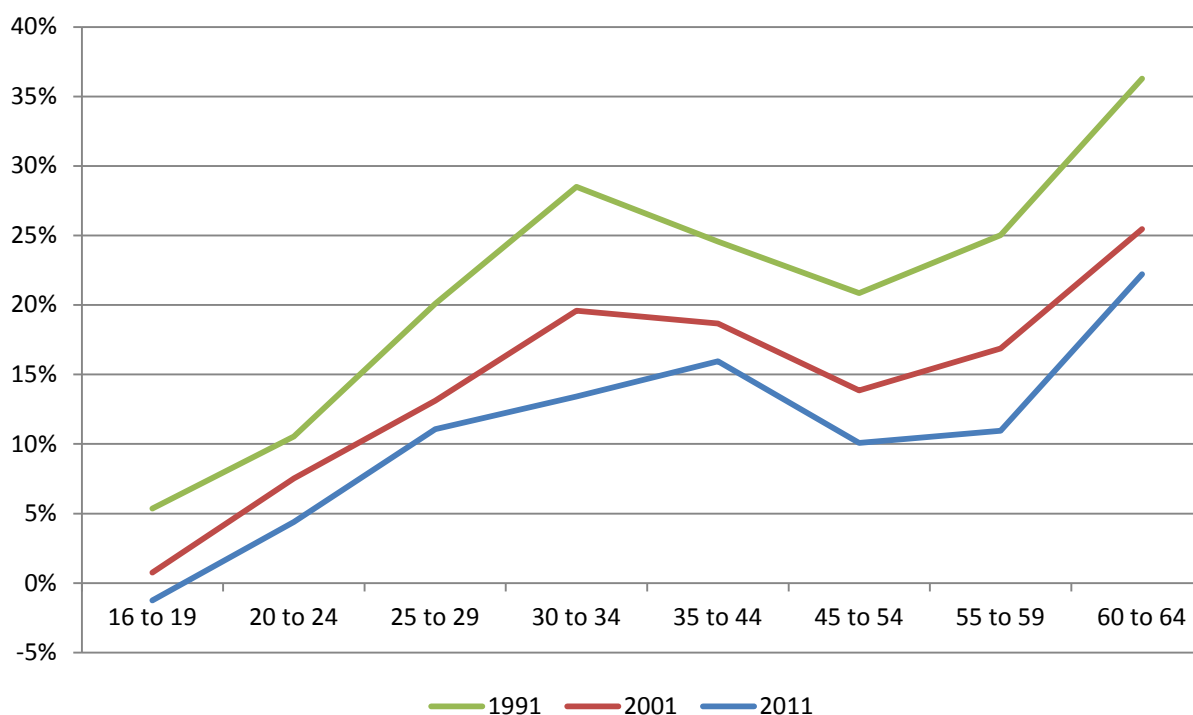


Source: 2011 Census Table DC6107EW



Figure 14 shows that while this trend has been present over the past 20 years, the gap between men and women has gradually decreased. It also shows that the first peak has moved into a later age group which may link in with Figure 15 (on the next page) which highlights that women are having their first children at increasingly older ages.

**Figure 14: Percentage point gap in economic activity rate between men and women by age, 1991 to 2011**



*Different age ranges used from Figures 12 & 13 due to data limitations in previous years.*

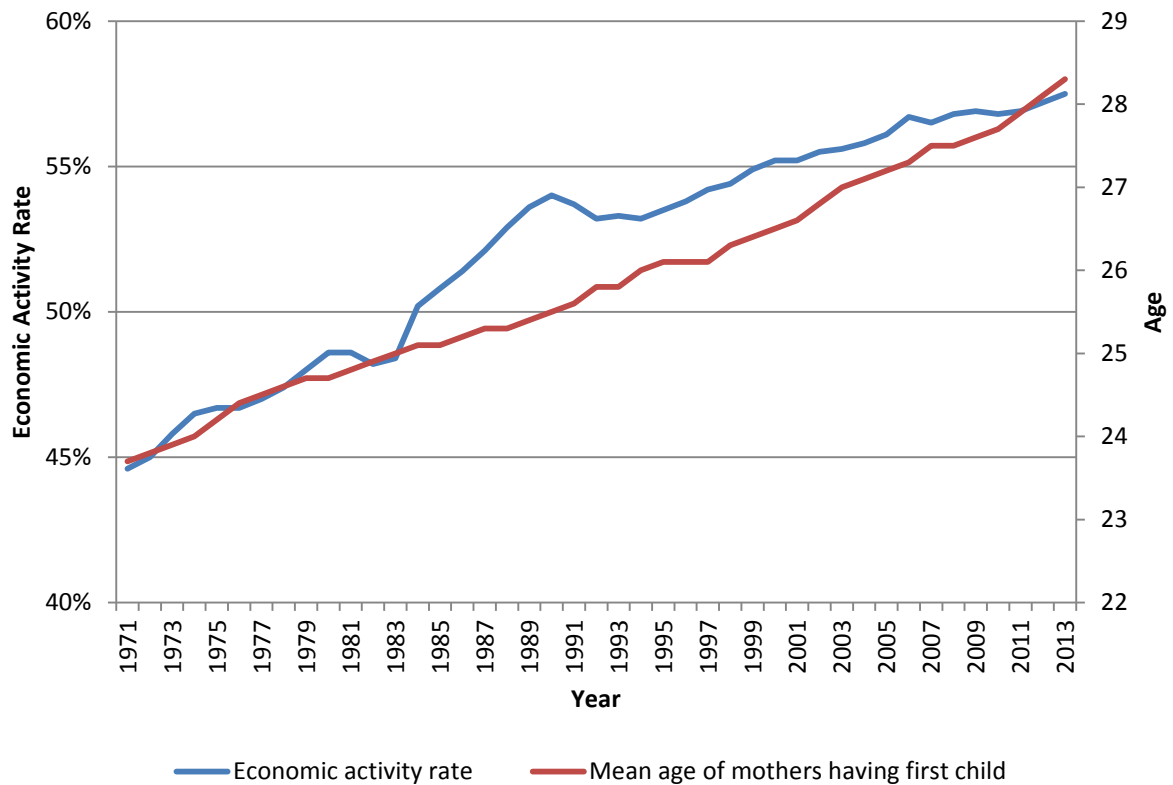
Source: 1991, 2001 and 2011 Census

This trend was also present when looking at England & Wales as a whole.

## Children

Long-term trends not only show a higher rate of women in employment but also that women are having children at a later age.

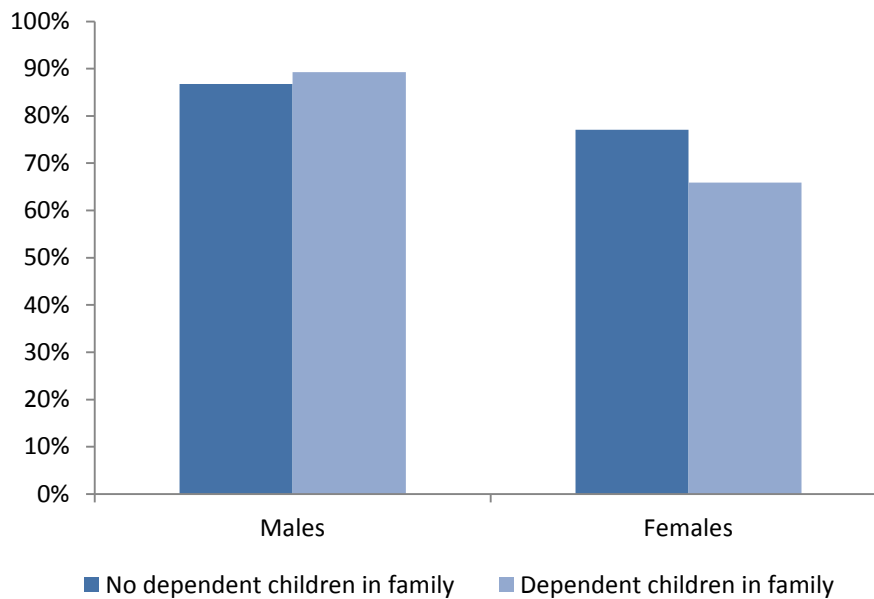
**Figure 15: Economic activity rate of women aged 16 and over and mean age of mothers having first child by year, United Kingdom**



Source: ONS Labour Force Survey & Characteristics of Mothers

Looking at Figure 16 it is evident that there is some association between having children and economic activity. Women with dependent children in the family were less likely to work than those without dependent children. Conversely men with dependent children were more likely to work.

**Figure 16: Economic activity rate age 19 - 64 with and without dependent children (aged 18 and under) in family by sex, 2011**



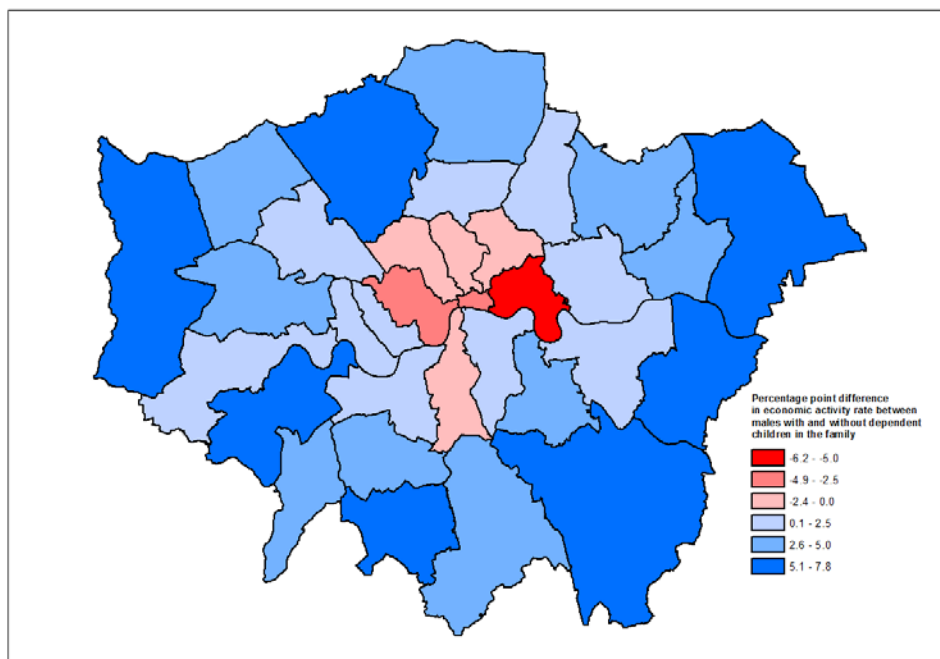
Source: 2011 Census Microdata

This trend wasn't present across all London Boroughs however, with men in certain inner London boroughs (Tower Hamlets, City and Westminster<sup>3</sup>, Hackney, Islington, and Lambeth) reporting a lower economic activity rate with dependent children than without – see Figure 17.

On the other hand Figure 18 shows that the female economic activity rate was lower for women with dependent children across all London Boroughs. Nonetheless the differences did vary considerably from borough to borough with Tower Hamlets reporting the largest difference (26 percentage points lower) while Bexley had the smallest difference (one percentage point lower).

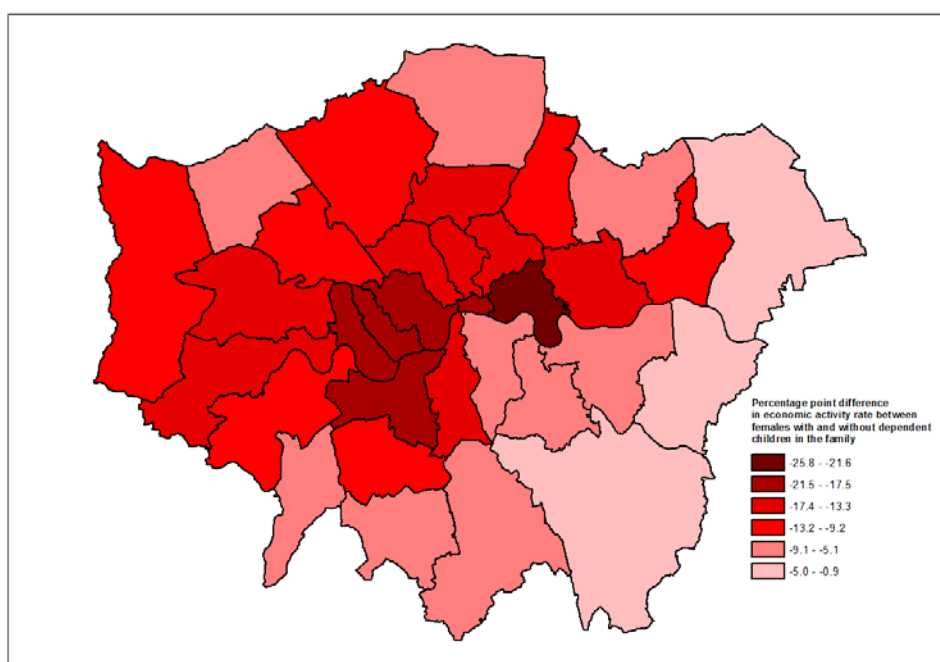
<sup>3</sup> The Census Microdata merged City of London and Westminster together due to small sample sizes from City.

**Figure 17: Difference in economic activity rate between men with and without dependent children by borough, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census Microdata

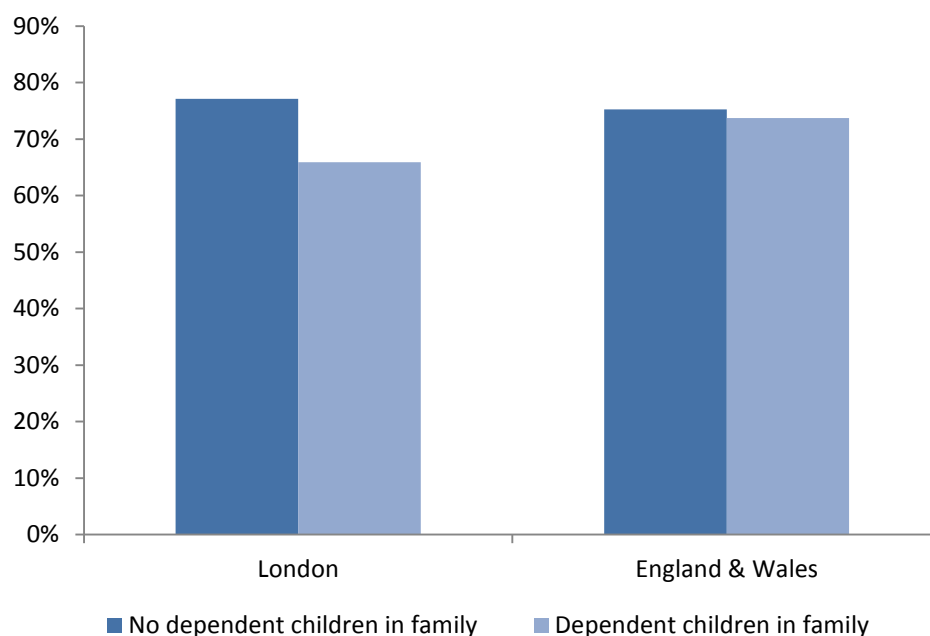
**Figure 18: Difference in economic activity rate between women with and without dependent children by borough, 2011**



2011: Census Microdata

The gap between women with and without dependent children was greater in London than the national average (11 percentage points vs 2 percentage points).

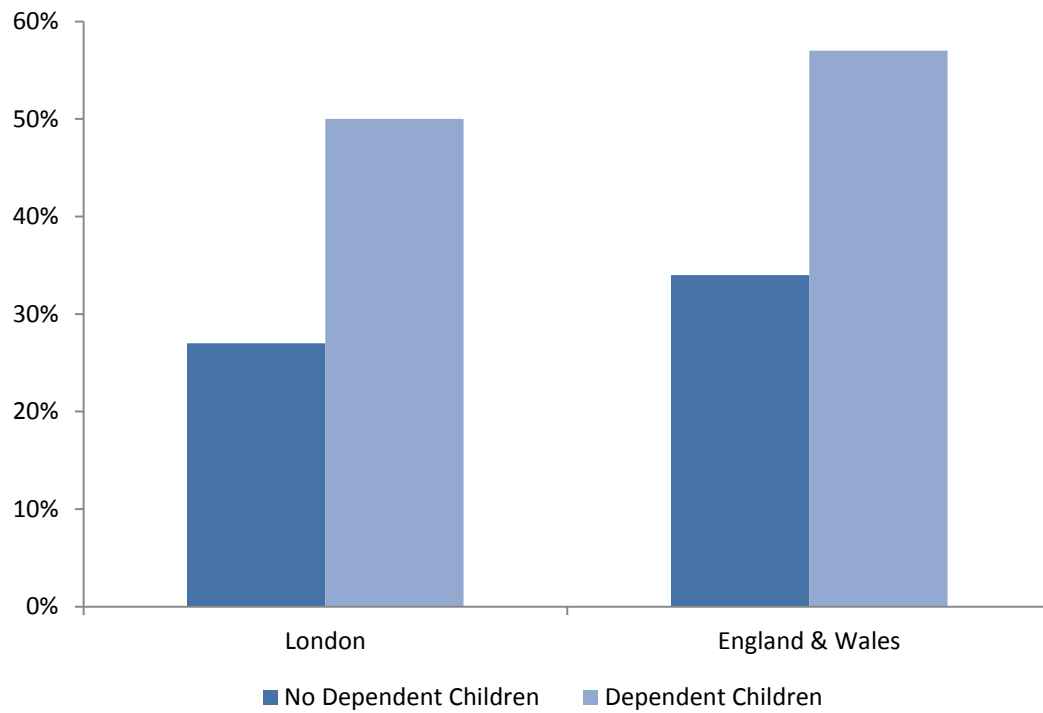
**Figure 19: Economic activity rate of women of age 19 – 64 with and without dependent children (aged 18 and under) in family by region, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census Microdata

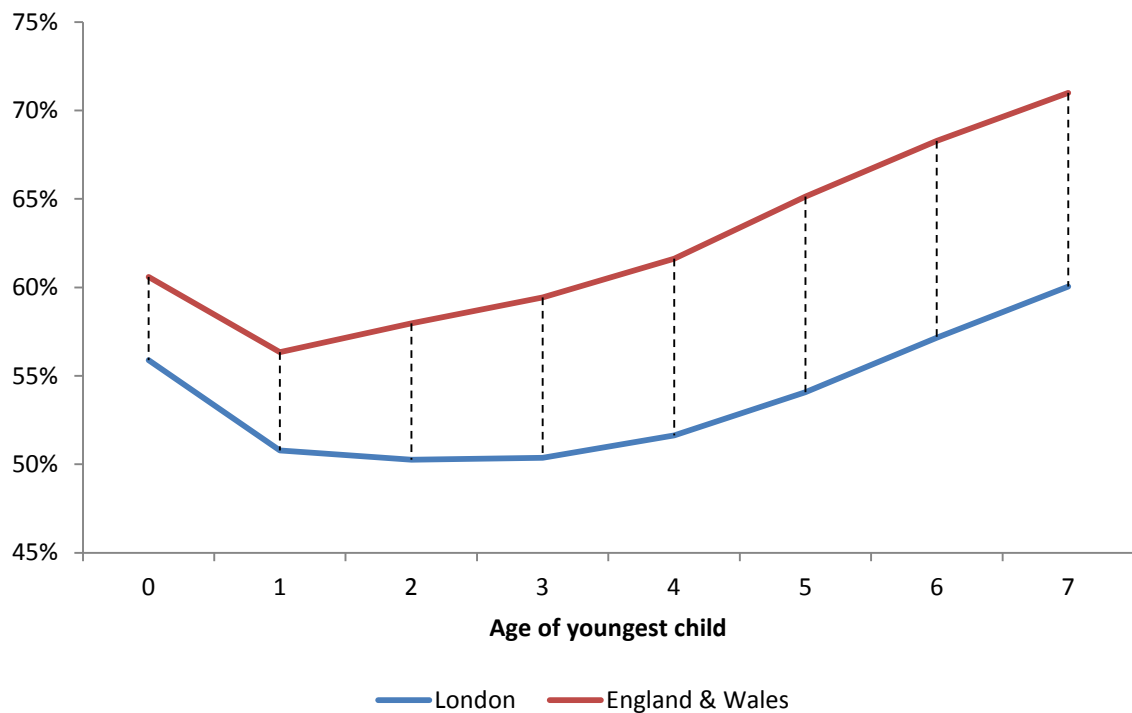
Half of women in employment and with dependent children were working part-time. By way of comparison, 27 per cent of women without dependent children in the family were working part-time – a difference of 23 percentage points (the same as the national average).

**Figure 20: Percent of women in employment age 19 – 64 working part-time with and without dependent children (aged 18 and under) in family by region, 2011**



*Source: 2011 Census Microdata*

**Figure 21: Employment rate of mother by age of youngest child, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census Table CT0249

Figure 21 looks at the employment rate of mothers whose youngest child was aged seven or younger. In London, the employment rate starts to rise for mothers whose child is aged four and over. This is later than the national average where the employment rate starts to rise when the youngest child is aged two and over.

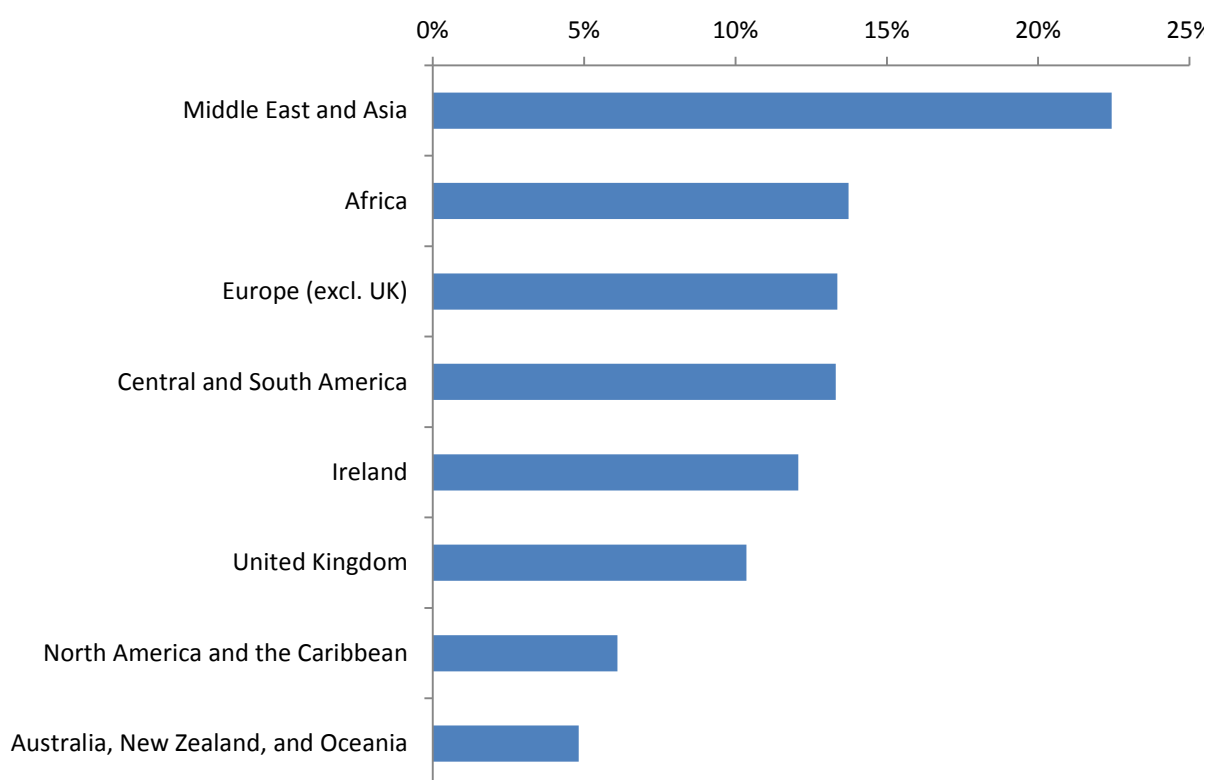
The gap between London and the national average increases as the age of youngest child increases.

## Cultural Impacts on Women in Employment

### Country of Birth

While women of all countries of birth were less likely to be economically active than men, the difference was especially large between males and females born in the Middle East and Asia<sup>4</sup>. There was a 22 percentage point gap between the economic activity rate of men and women born there (the gap for London as a whole was 13 percentage points).

**Figure 22: Percentage point difference in economic activity rate between men and women by country of birth, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census Table DC6203EW

Looking at those born in the Middle East and Asia in more detail, the biggest gender gap was between men and women from Southern Asia (29 percentage points) whilst women from the Middle East also had a gap of over 20 percentage points.

Those from East, South-East and Central Asia didn't match this trend with a small gap between men and women.

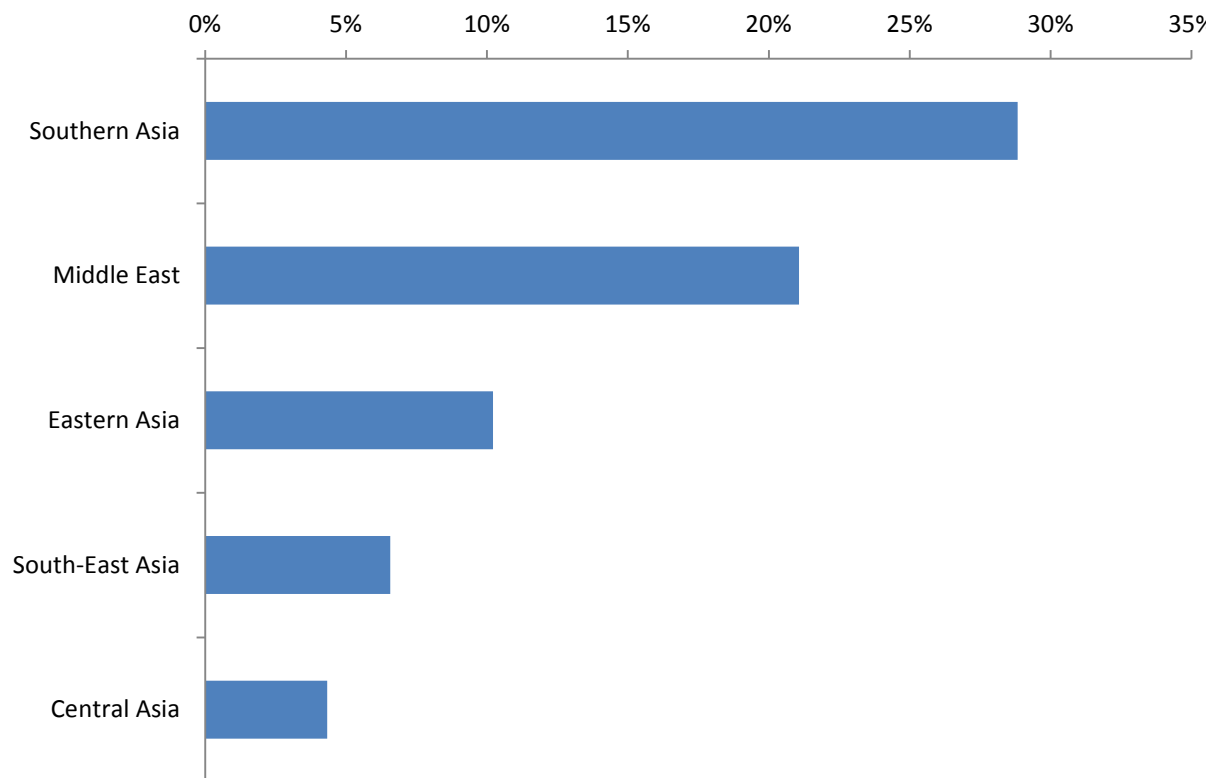
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<sup>4</sup> Download an index of which countries are included in each area here:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/2011/census-data/2011-census-user-guide/information-by-variable/write-in-response-groupings.xls>



**Figure 23: Percentage point difference in economic activity rate between men and women by country of birth – Middle East and Asia, 2011**



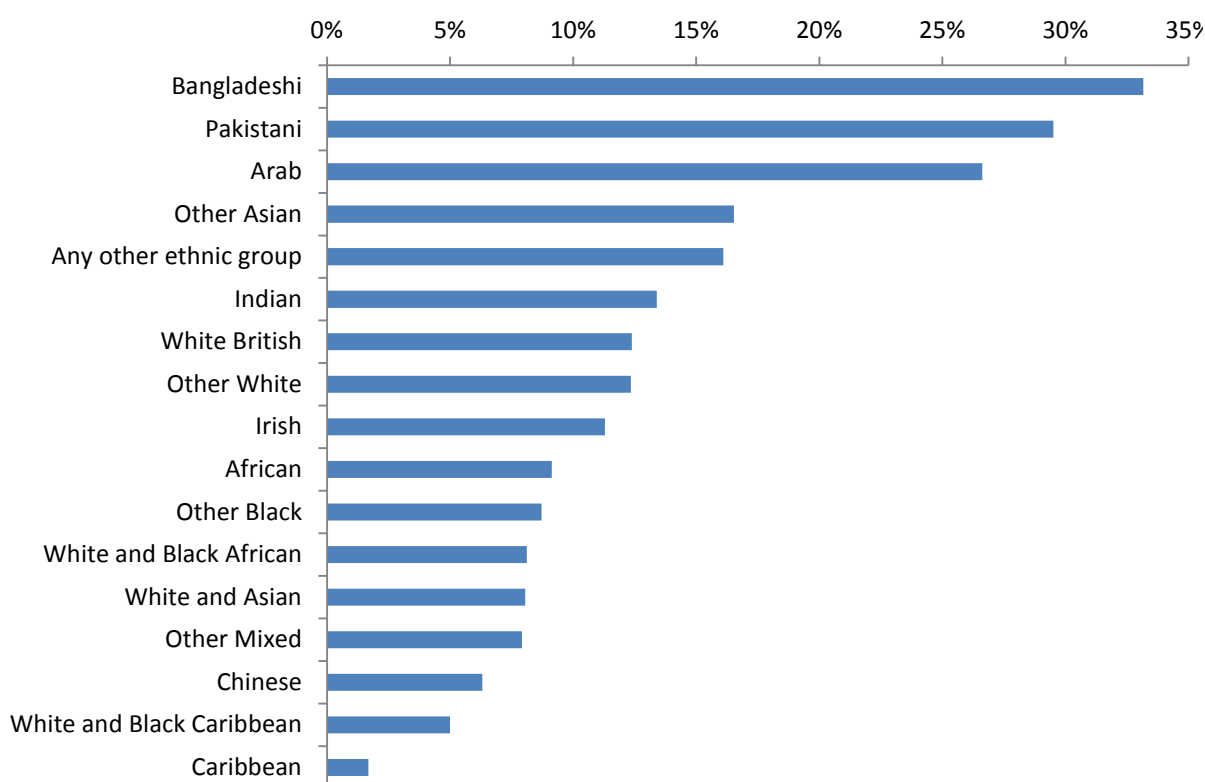
Source: 2011 Census Table DC6203EW

## Ethnicity

The trends shown when looking at country of birth are reflected in ethnic breakdowns with the gap between men and women being largest in the Asian ethnic groups. This is no surprise as country of birth and ethnicity are two strongly linked characteristics.

The Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Arab ethnic groups all had gender gaps of over 25 percentage points. On the other end of the scale Caribbean and Chinese ethnic groups both have comparatively low gender gaps.

**Figure 24: Percentage point difference in economic activity rate between men and women by ethnicity, 2011**



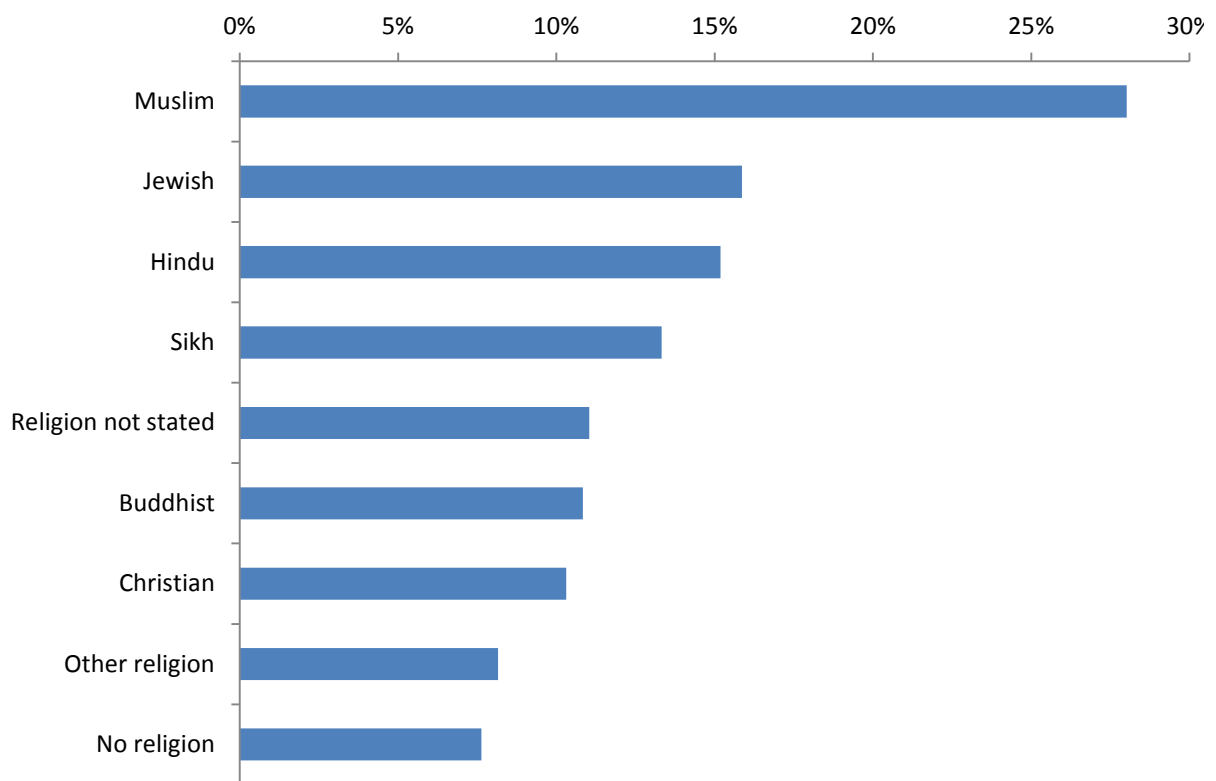
Source: 2011 Census Table DC6201EW

## Religion

Muslim women were the least likely to be economically active (41 per cent active) and had the largest gender gap, with women reporting an economic activity rate 28 percentage points lower than men.

Women with no religion were the most likely to be economically active (73 per cent active) and had the smallest gender gap, with women reporting an economic activity rate 8 percentage points lower than men.

**Figure 25: Percentage point difference in economic activity rate between men and women by religion, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census Table DC6205EW

## Conclusion

Looking at the evidence provided by the Census there were certainly differences in economic activity between males and females, however these differences varied considerably when broken down by the other factors looked at in this report such as age, ethnicity and religion.

While some of the differences that were highlighted had clear causes (for example, retirement age being the main driver of the economic activity gap between men and women aged 60 to 64) others were less obvious and were likely caused by a more complex mixture of factors.

Of course, many of these trends do vary at a geographical level. You can explore these geographical variations by using the accompanying [Excel workbook](#).

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