



London's population of young children – current and future

Veronica Tuffrey, City Intelligence Unit

23 July 2024

Population Statistics User Group

Outline

- 1 Background and method
- 2 Components of change
- 3 Total population change
- 4 Influencing factors
- 5 The future



1 Background and method



Primary schools

This article is more than 6 months old

Primary schools in England close, merge and shrink as pupil numbers fall

London boroughs among hardest hit due to falling birth rate and family struggles with Covid and rising costs

Richard Adams *Education editor*

Sat 16 Dec 2023 06.00 GMT

 Share

Primary schools are being closed, merged and shrunk as councils across England respond to falling numbers of pupils due to the falling birth rate as well as family upheaval triggered by rising costs, Brexit and Covid.

London boroughs are among the hardest hit, with thousands of school places being lost but the closures and cuts extend to other cities and areas as they

Leaving London: Pressure on outer boroughs as families move in

2 January



Havering is struggling to manage its finances under decreased funding and a swelling population

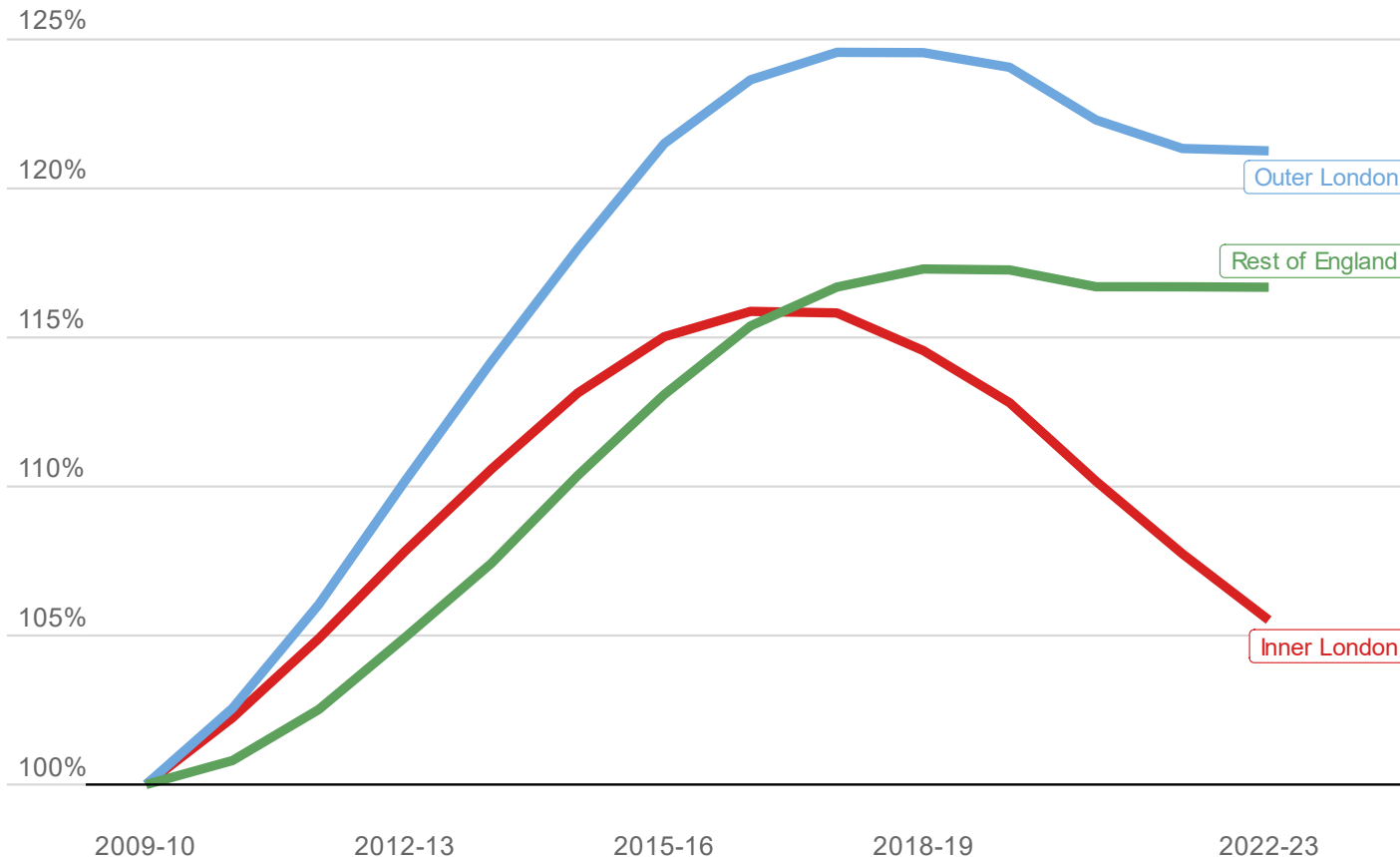
By Adriana Elgueta

BBC News, Romford

London's suburbs are being placed under a huge amount of strain as an increasing number of families move out of the capital. Nurseries are bursting to the point where babies who have not even been born are being registered with them while schools and care homes are struggling to cope with demand. Council budgets are under pressure.

CITY INTELLIGENCE

Background = Falling demand for primary school places, especially in Inner London



- Total number of children in London's primary schools has been falling since around 2016
- For Inner London, the trend is still downwards
- For Outer London and the rest of England the numbers have stabilised

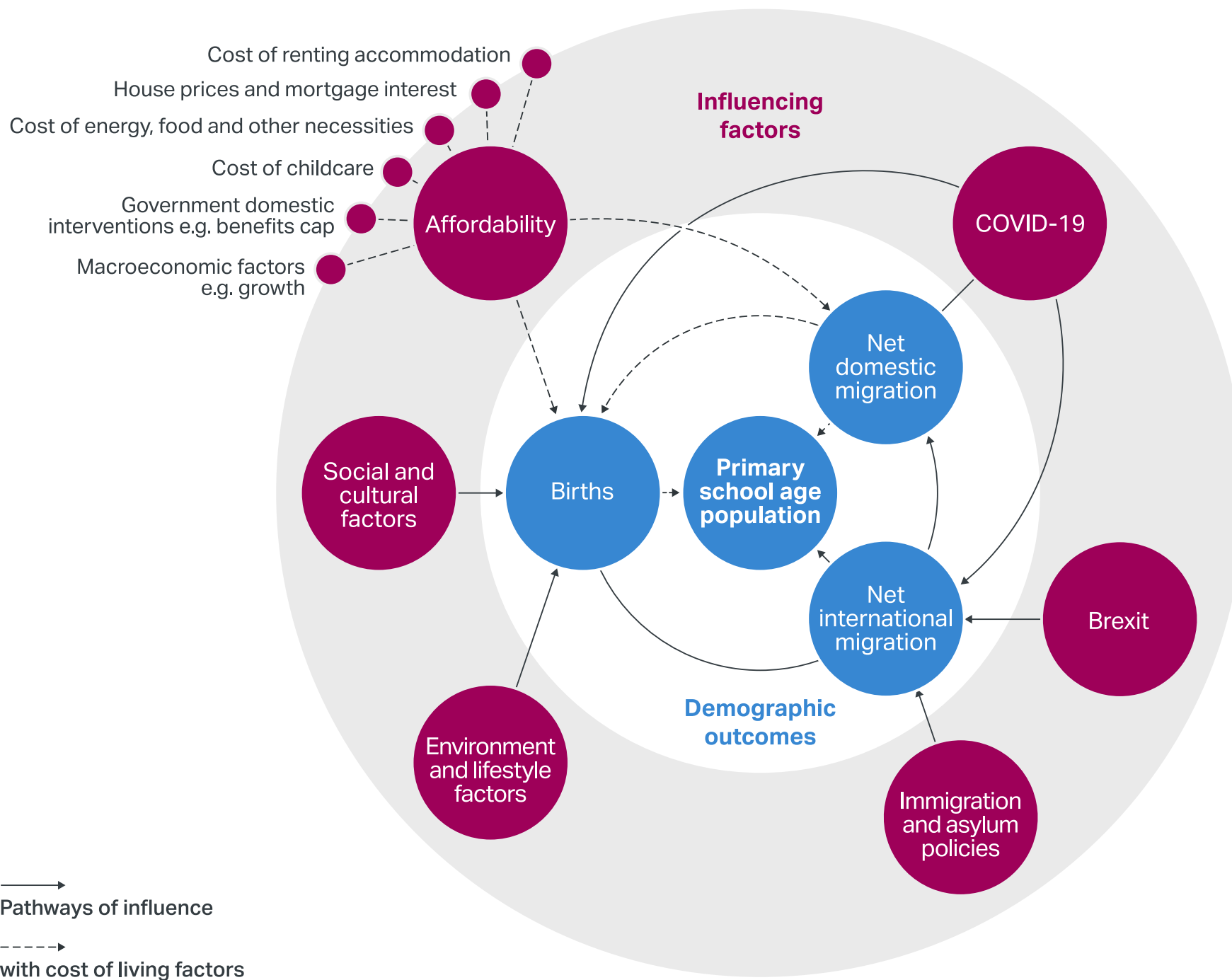
Left: Indexed headcount of state-funded full-time primary-school pupils by location, between academic years 2009-10 and 2022-23



Method

Aim: Outline prospects for trends and broad distribution of primary-school-age children in London

- Focus on population of children aged 0-10
- Used national, regional and borough-level data to
 - examine patterns in components of population change – births and migration (domestic and international)
 - examine population characteristics including housing tenure
- Only used official sources of data, including commissioned



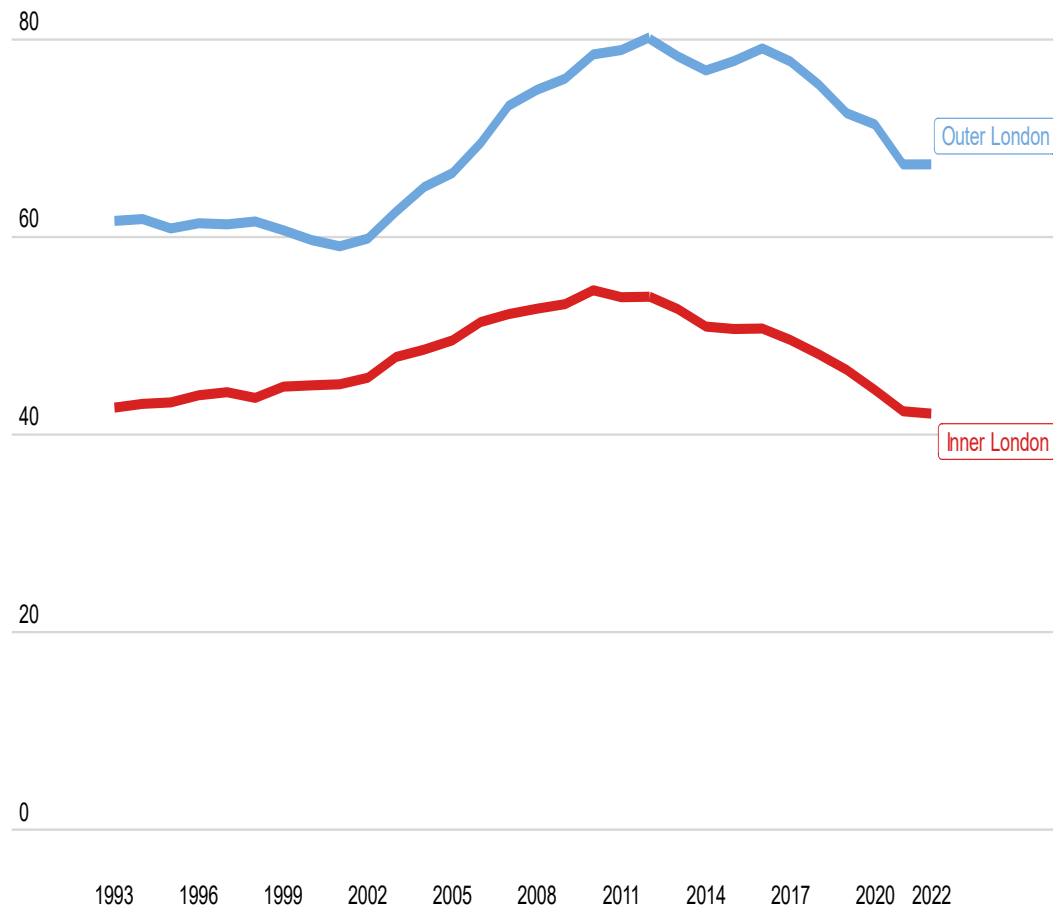
Causal model

- Clarifies interactions between the three components of population change being considered, and the factors influencing them
- Based on rapid review of academic and other online literature

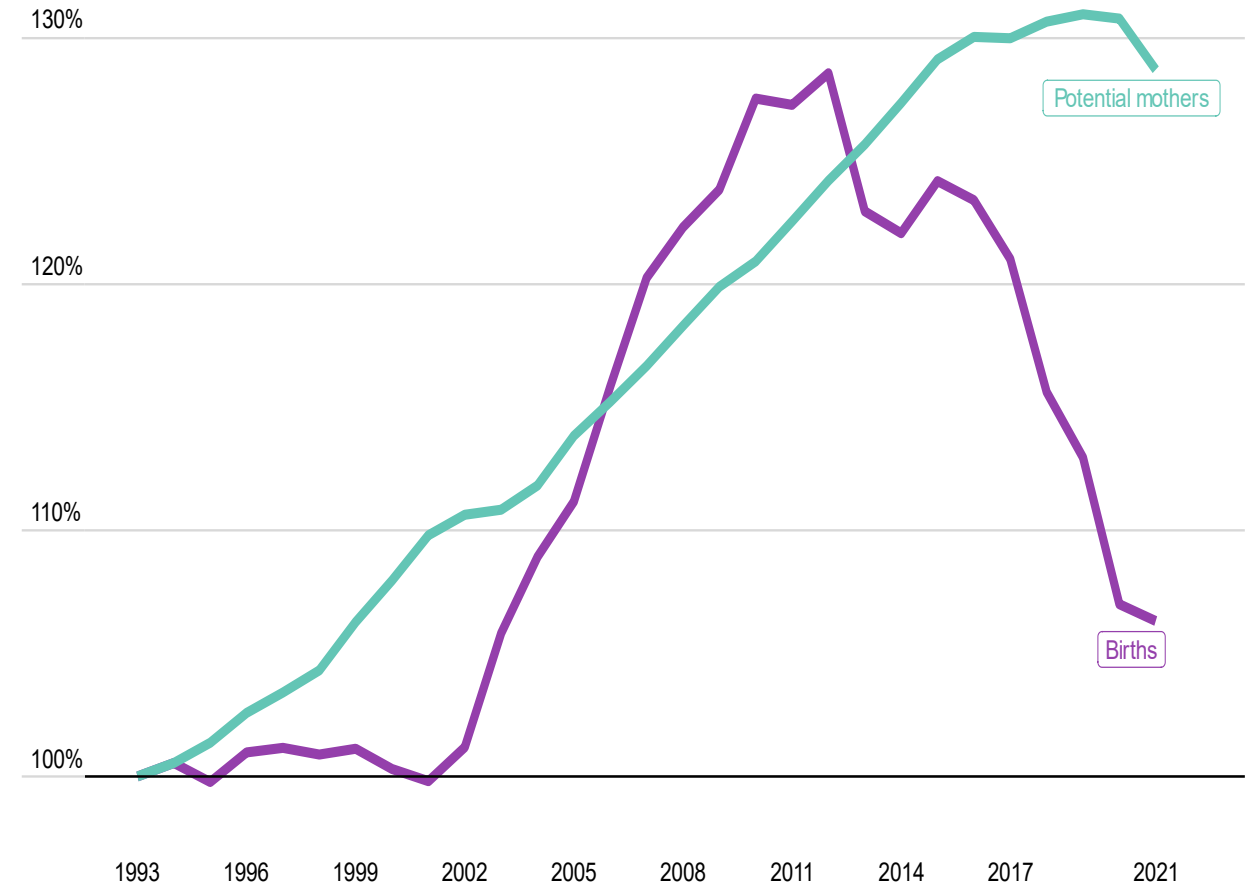


2 Components of change

- Births



Thousands of births/year by zone



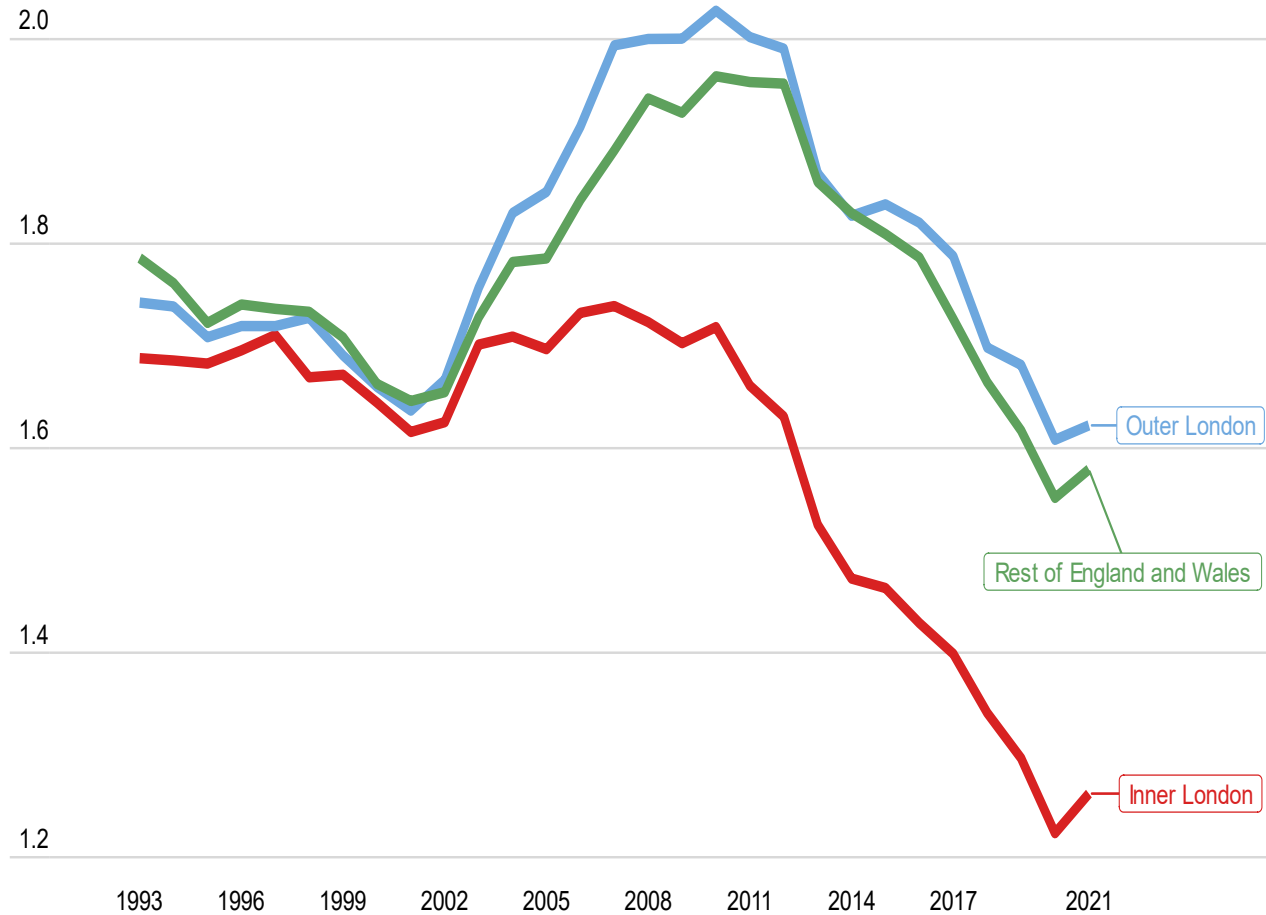
Numbers of births and potential mothers, London, indexed to 1993

The left chart shows fall in births is due to fall in average number of births/women

TFR

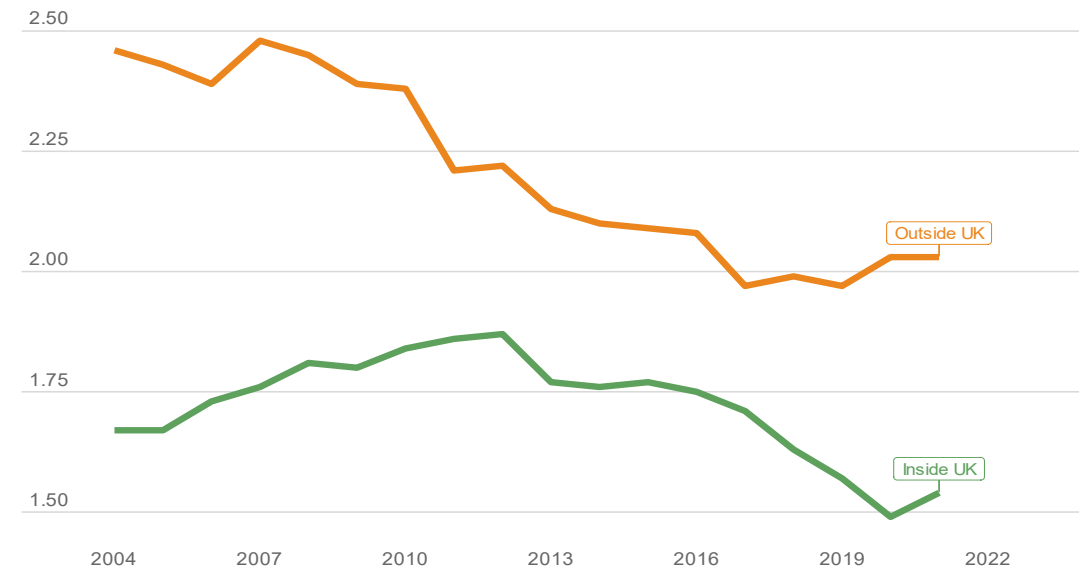
Total Fertility Rate = average number of children per woman

- Over last decade, women across England and Wales had progressively fewer children on average
- Changes were earliest and greatest in Inner London (see left)
- Big change in TFR among mothers born outside the UK (see below)



Above:
TFR, London and rest of England & Wales 1993 – 2021

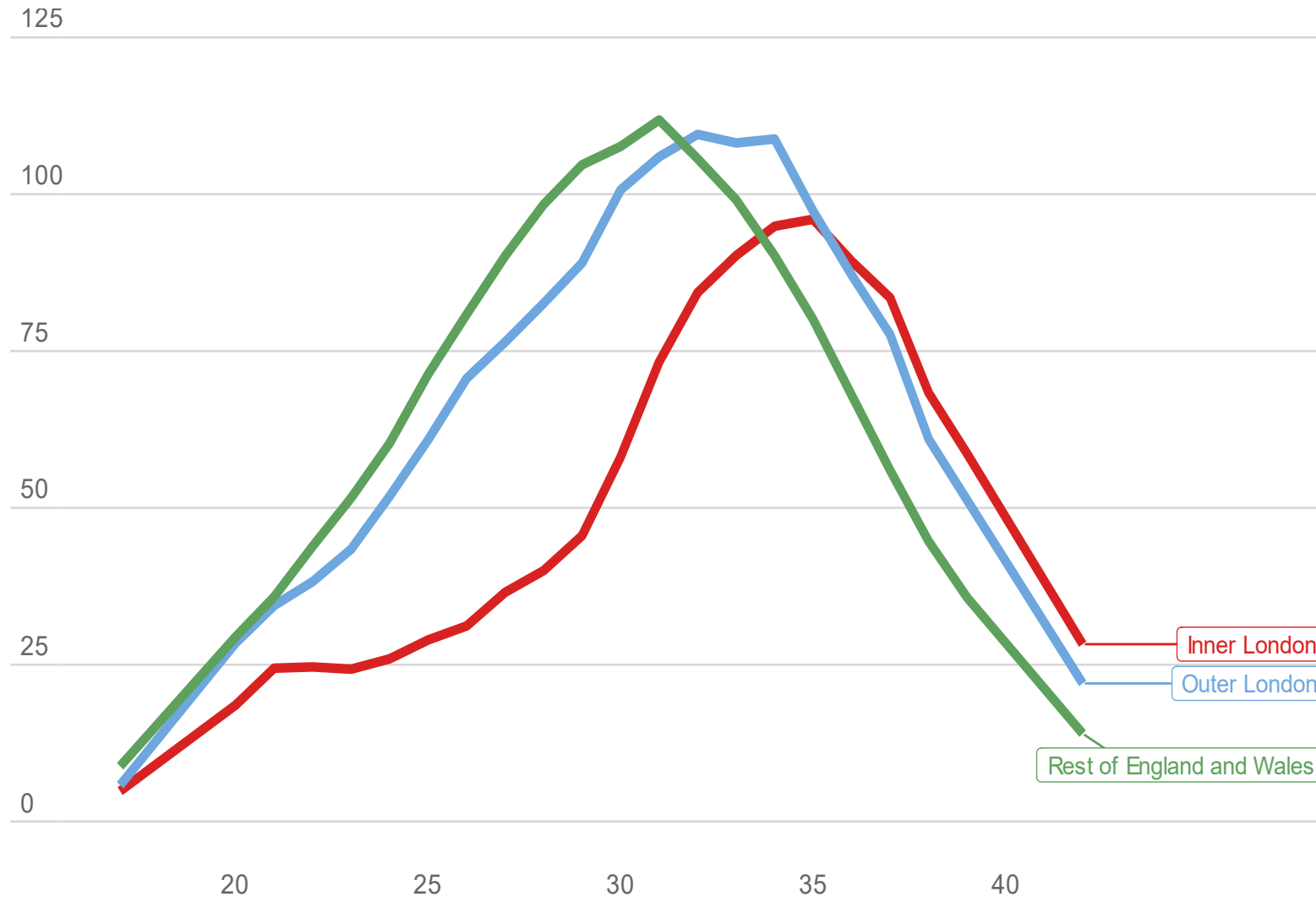
Right:
TFR by location of mother's birth (UK data) 2004 - 2021



ASFR

Age specific fertility rate = annual number of births to women of a specified age, per 1,000 women of that age

- Women in London have lower fertility rates before their mid-30s, and higher fertility rates during their late 30s and 40s, compared to elsewhere
- Separate analysis by age group shows that in London since c.2012
 - ASFR for older women has stabilised
 - ASFR for younger women fell, with no sign of trend levelling out or reversing



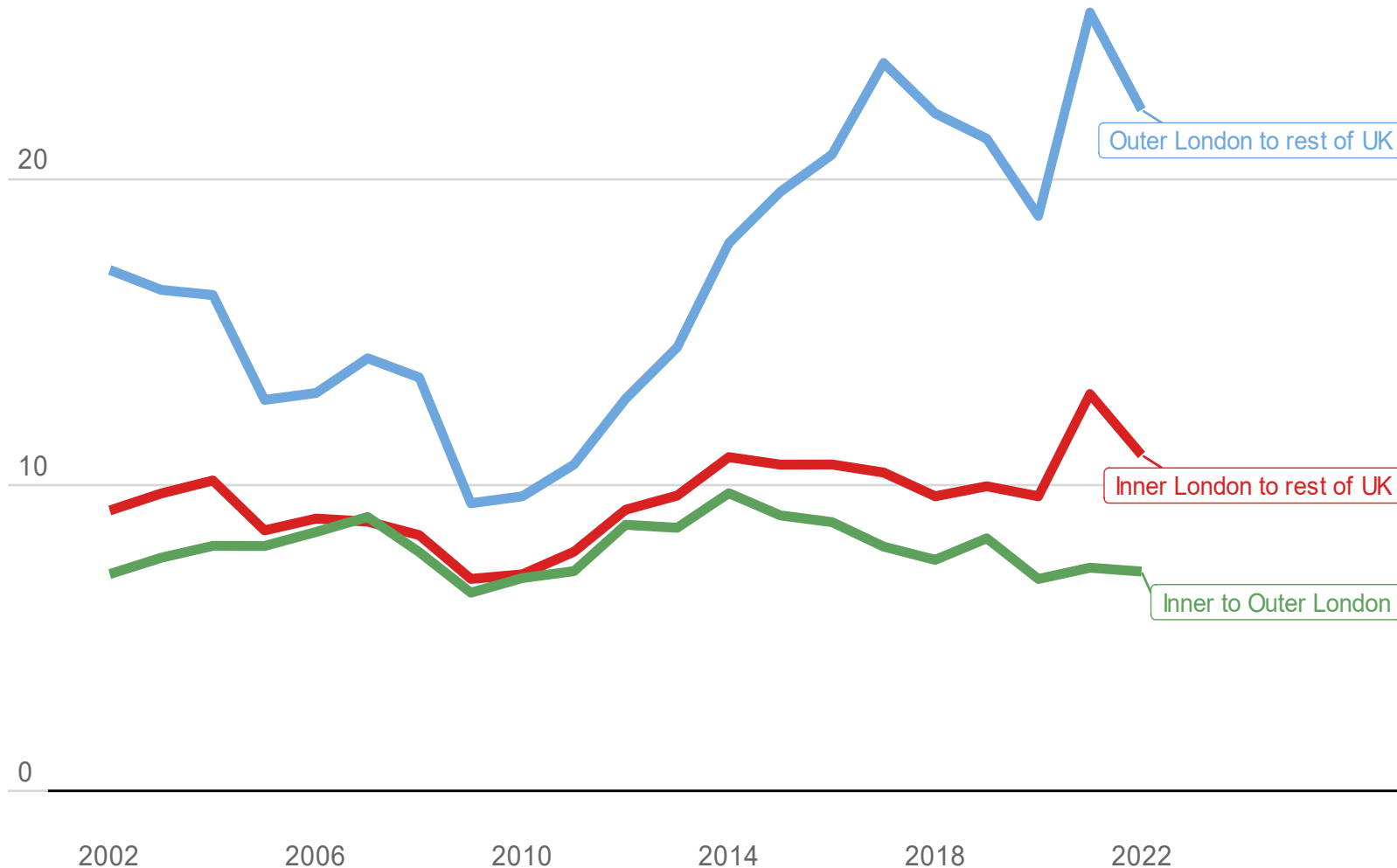
ASFR in Inner and Outer London, and the rest of England and Wales, 2021 (Age on x axis)



2 Components of change

- Domestic migration

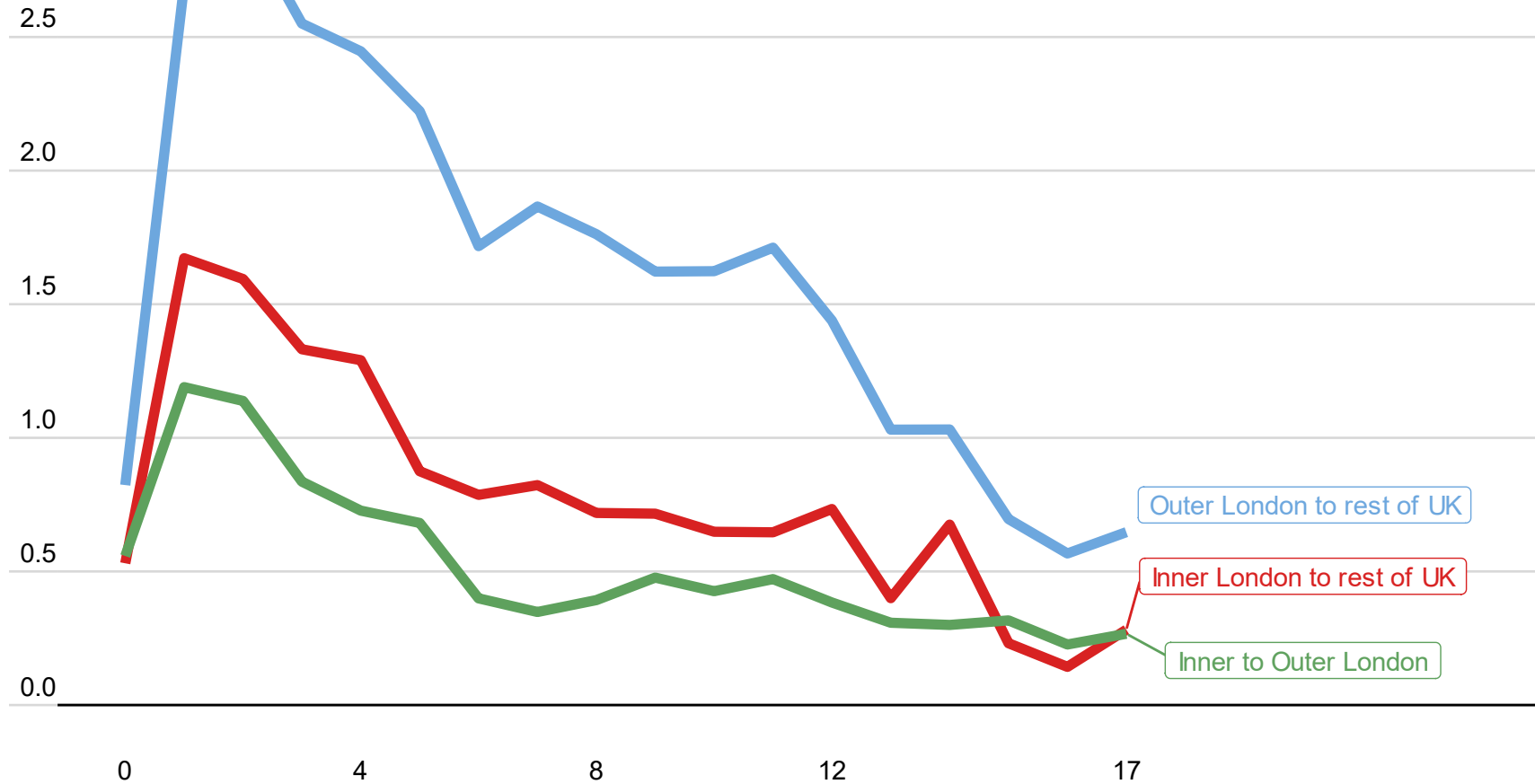
Domestic migration of young children by flow path



London's net domestic migration flows by flow path, among children aged 0-10, from year ending June 2002 to year ending June 2022 (Annual flow in thousands)

- Over last two decades
 - Net flow from Inner to Outer London quite stable
 - Net flow from Inner London to rest of UK has slightly increased
 - Net flow from Outer London to rest of the UK greatly increased; destinations mainly other large cities, or commuter belt
- Separate analysis by age group shows net outflow from London for 25-44 y.o.(those most likely to be parents of young children) has consistently increased since financial crisis, with peak in 2021

Domestic migration of children by age



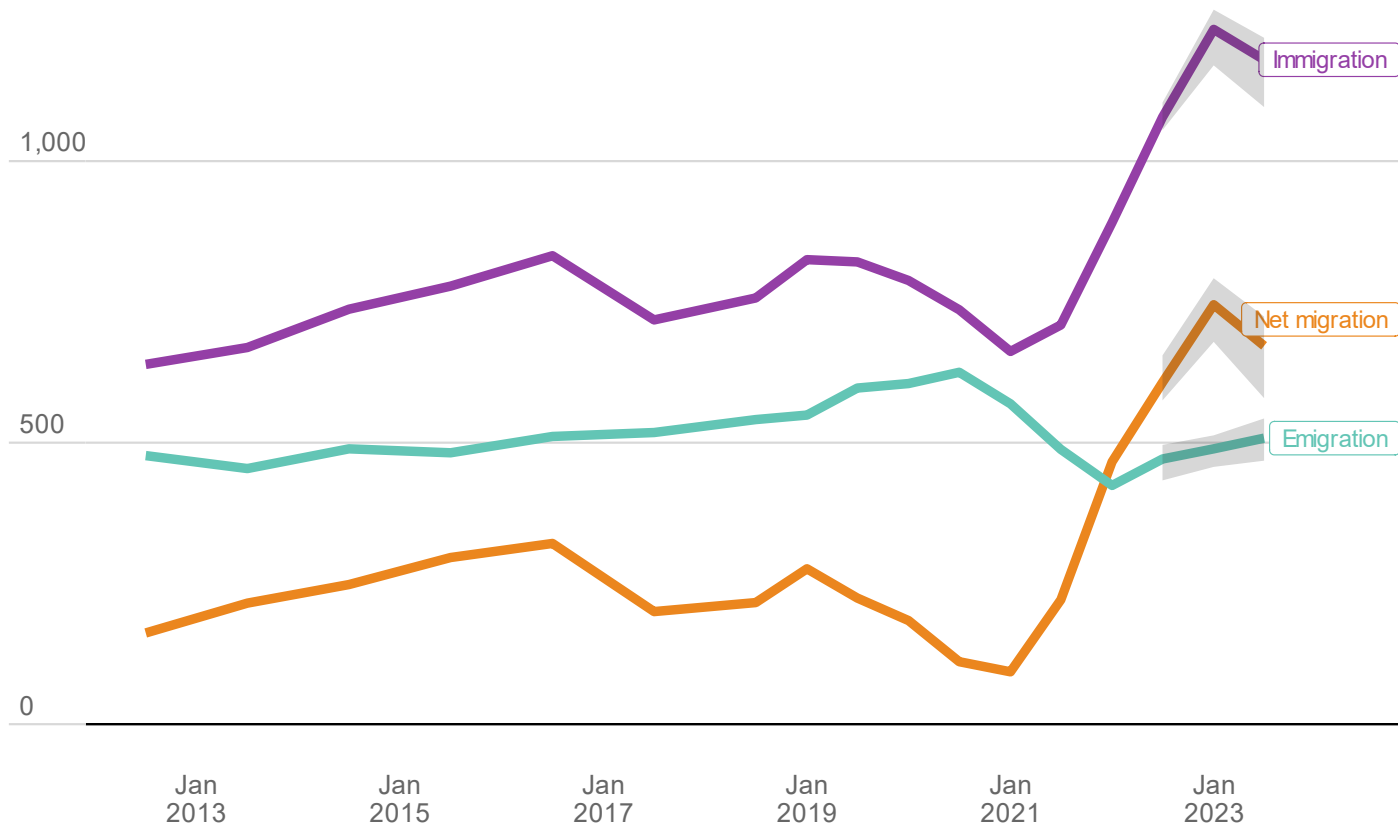
- Peak ages for outflow are 0-5.
- Drop in flows from age five reflects a reduced tendency for families to relocate once children start attending primary school
- A further drop in flows from age 12 aligns with children starting at a secondary school

London's net domestic migration flows by age of children, in the year ending June 2022 *Annual flow in thousands*



2 Components of change

- International migration

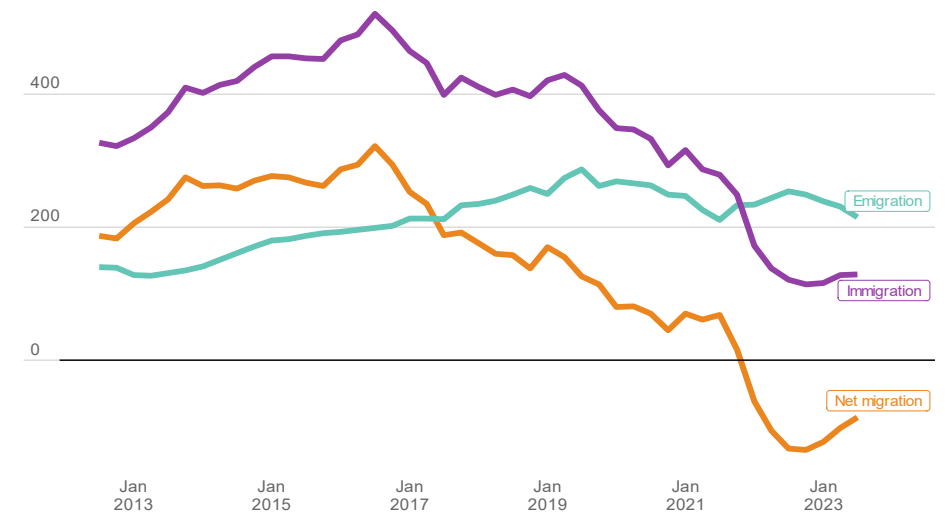


International migration flows, UK, estimates of annual flow (thousands) for mid-2012 to mid-2023 (provisional)

Above: Total flows; Right: Flows only of EU nationals

International migration to and from UK

- Patterns have changed since 2016, and especially since 2021, mainly related to UK's exit from EU
- Major increase in net migration to London in year ending mid-2022 (left)
- Major decrease in net migration of EU nationals since 2016 (below)



Inner Outer

United Kingdom

Rest of Europe

Middle East and Asia

The Americas, the Caribbean, and Other

Africa

-25 0 25 50 75

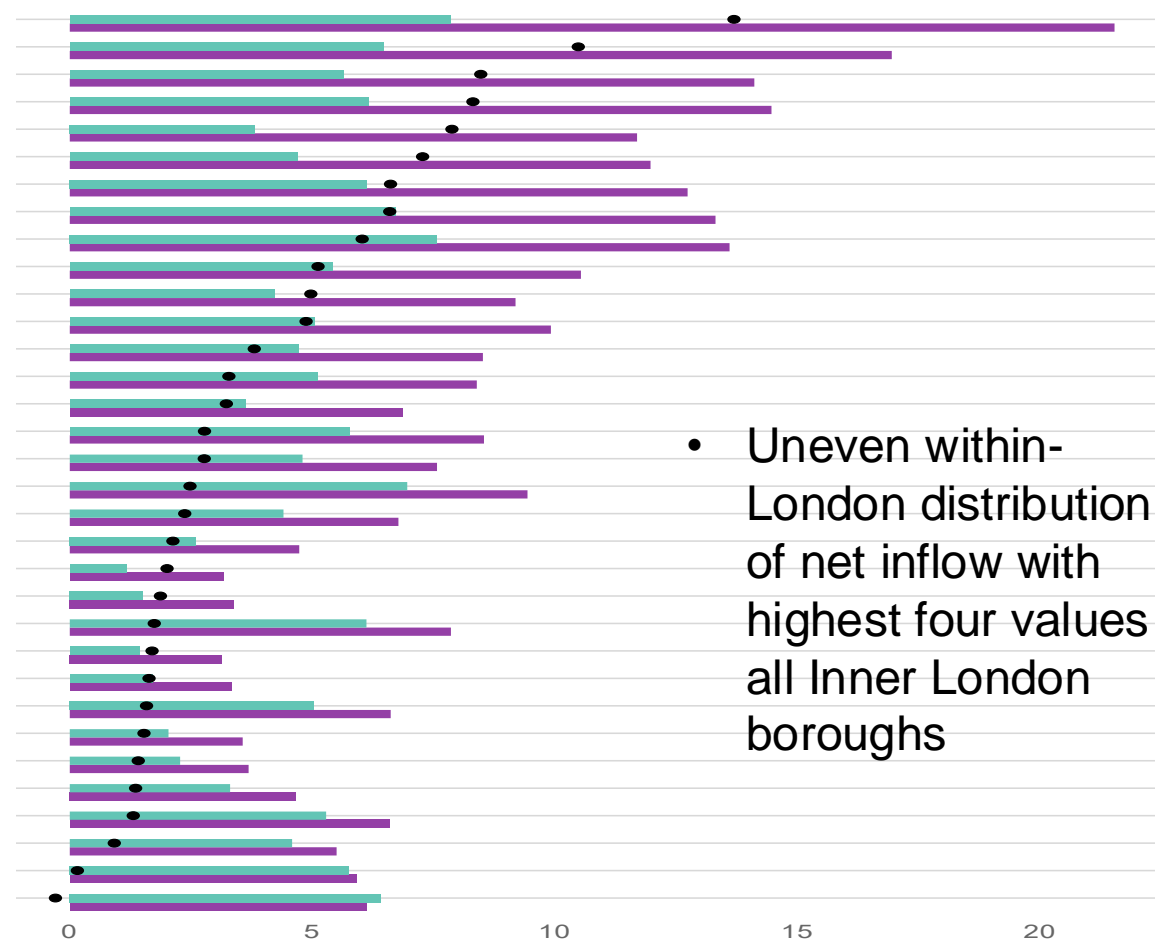
Above: Country of birth of all usual London residents aged 0-15, change from Census 2011 to Census 2021 (Thousands)

Right: Annual international migration flows by London borough, estimates for year ending June 2022 (Thousands)

International migration to and from London

- Biggest inter-censal decrease in children with country-of-birth Africa (left)

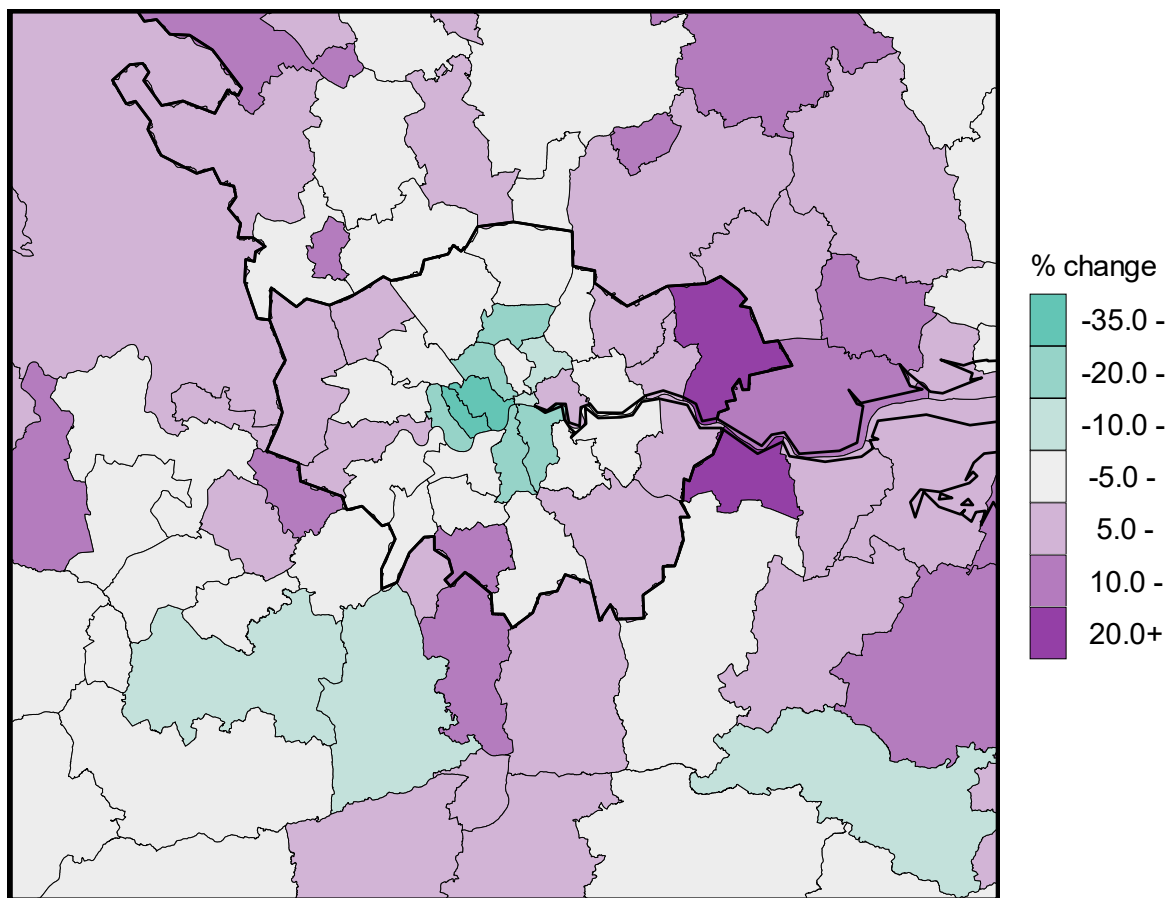
Immigration Emigration Net International Migration



- Uneven within-London distribution of net inflow with highest four values all Inner London boroughs



3 Total population change



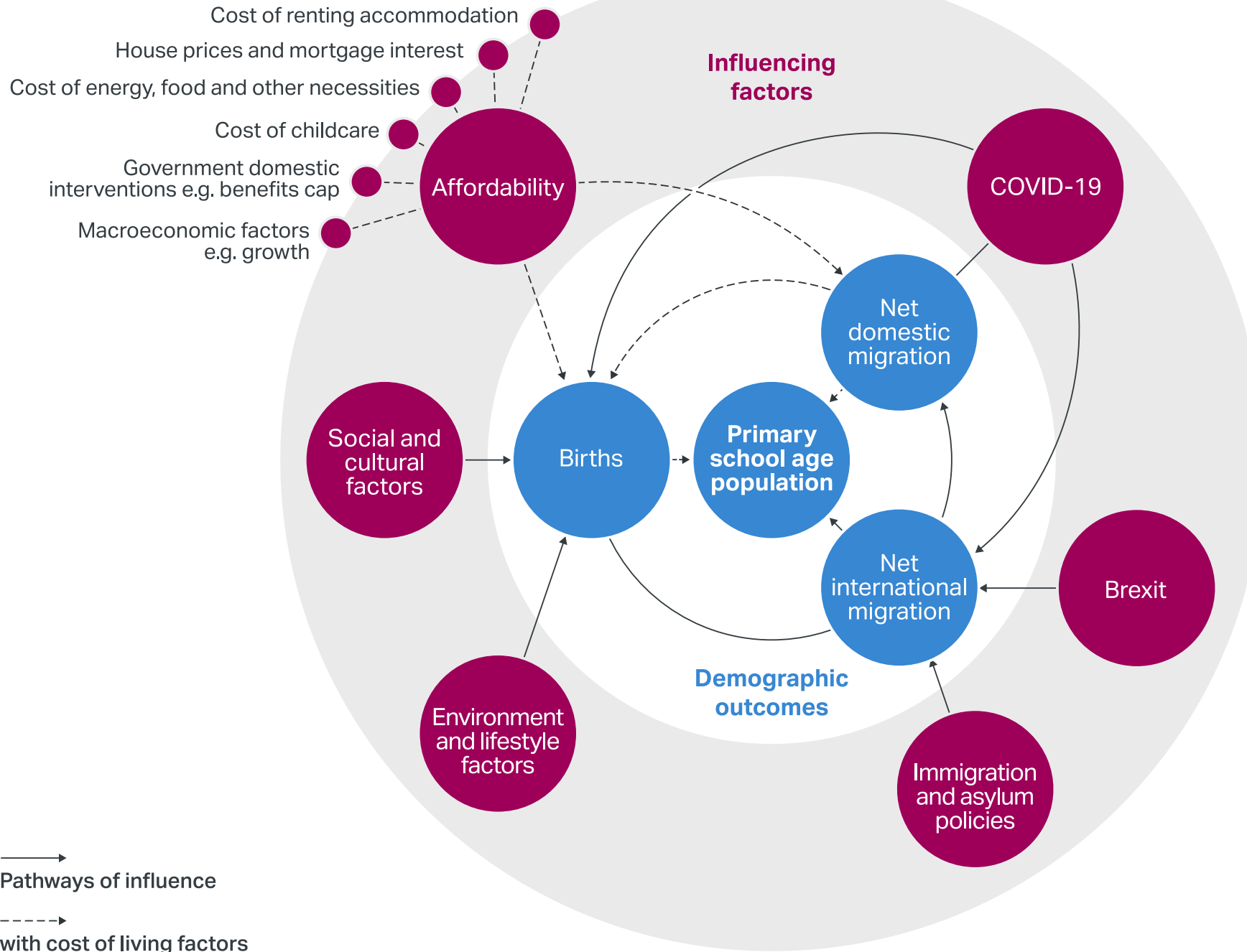
Intercensal changes in characteristics of households with dependent children

- Housing tenure – decrease in households owning their houses; and an increase in households in private rented accommodation
- Ethnicity – Large increases in number of households with a household reference person (HRP) of Asian, Mixed and Other ethnicities; and decrease in number of households with an HRP of Black ethnicity in Inner London
- Socio-economic status – Increases in highest/richest groups and falls in others

Change in population aged 0-10 between 2011 and 2021 censuses



4 Influencing factors






5 The future



Future patterns

- 1 Births – Influenced most by economic conditions including cost of housing, also affected by migration
- 2 Domestic migration – Also highly influenced by economic conditions
- 3 International migration – Highly influenced by policy so difficult to predict
- 4 Total population change - Poorer and younger families may need to move out of expensive parts of Inner London, or not settle there if moving from elsewhere in UK or abroad
- 5 In summary – current trends likely to continue, with big variation between boroughs

- 
- Link to blog, which has link to report's datastore page - [London's population of young children – current and future – London Datastore](#)
 - Next step – Interactive dashboard with borough level data
 - Comments, suggestions and questions are welcome

Thank you

Veronica.Tuffrey@london.gov.uk