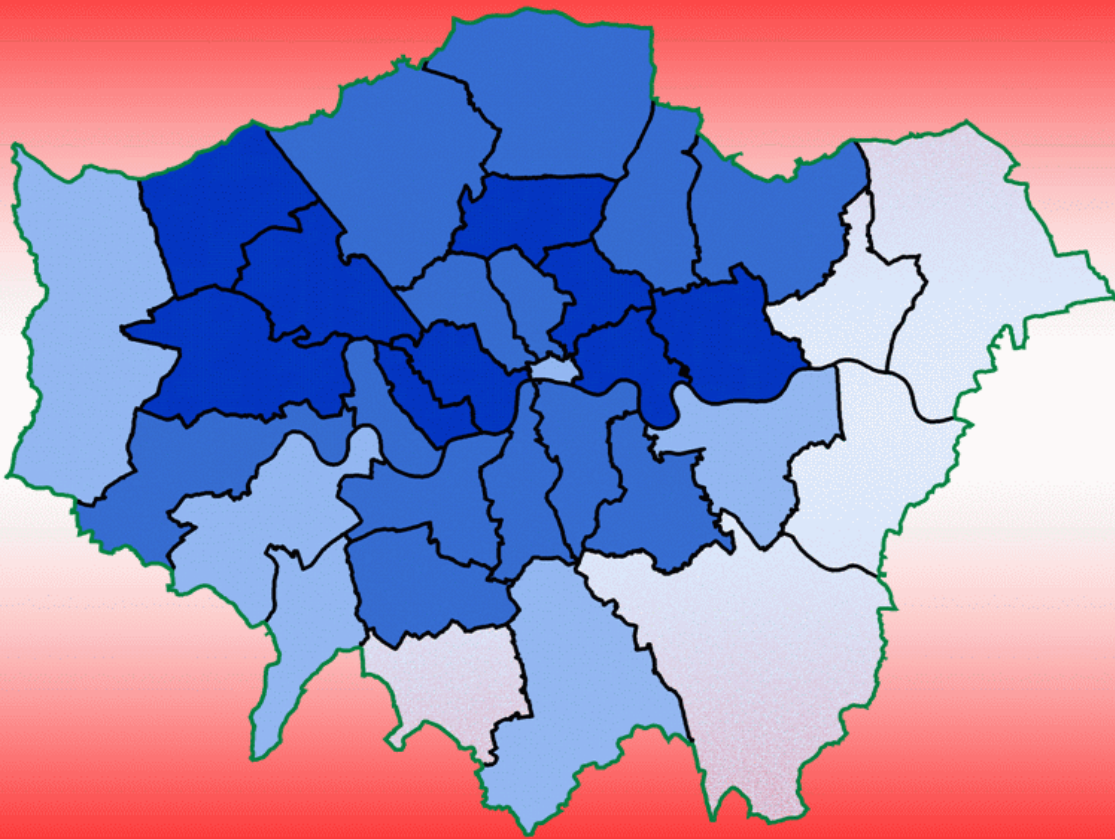


Data Management and Analysis Group

The Census Language Needs Indicator

A comparison with Labour Force Survey data



DMAG Briefing 2006-31

November 2006

The Census Language Needs Indicator A comparison with Labour Force Survey data

For more information please contact:

Gareth Piggott
Data Management and Analysis Group
Greater London Authority
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London SE1 2AA

Tel: 020 7983 4327
e-mail: gareth.piggott@london.gov.uk

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Data can be made available in other formats on request

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■	40 to 58
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This is the legend for the front cover map showing
The percentage of population in the Language Needs Indicator

The Census Language Needs Indicator: a comparison with LFS data

Introduction

Although the 2001 Census did not ask a question about the English language, there is some data available from the Census that can be used as a proxy for possible language needs. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) call it a 'Language Needs Indicator' (LNI).

Fundamentally speaking, this is based on the principle of whether a person (or their Household Reference Person) was born in a country where English is not the first language.

As the name suggests, this data is only an indicator, and the numbers will be an over-count of the actual number of people who do not use English as their first language. It highlights people who *might* speak another language other than English.

Background

DMAG Briefing 2006-26, 'Profile of Londoners by language: An analysis of Labour Force Survey data on first language', looks in detail at Labour Force Survey (LFS) data about people whose first language is not English. Where the LNI from the Census is an over-estimate, the LFS 'English as a second language' (ESL) total is likely to be an under-estimate due to the difficulties in covering non-English speakers. However, the LFS shows that people whose first language is not English have relatively low employment rates at 52 per cent compared with 74 per cent for those whose first language is English. Furthermore, 19 per cent of ESL Londoners of working age say they have experienced problems in finding or keeping a job due to language difficulties. Finally, a quarter of ESL Londoners have no qualifications, twice as high as those with English as a first language.

Definition of Language Needs Indicator (LNI):

A person is counted in the LNI figures if they are "Either born outside the UK and whose Household Reference Person (HRP) was born outside the Irish Republic; the USA or the 'Old Commonwealth' **or** who were born inside the UK and whose Household Reference Person was born outside the UK; the Irish Republic; the USA or the 'Old Commonwealth*'".

*The Old Commonwealth is Australia, New Zealand, Canada.

This ONS definition only counts UK, Ireland, USA, Australia, New Zealand and Canada as English-speaking countries. This Briefing will refer to this group as 'English-speaking countries', even though it is recognised that there are other countries in the world where English is the main language spoken. For continuity purposes, the ONS definition of English-speaking countries will be kept throughout this Briefing.

LNI Data limitations

The 2001 Census records 2,404,937 people as having possible language needs in London. This represents around a third (34 per cent) of all Londoners. For people aged 16 and over the proportion is slightly lower at 32 per cent. In contrast the LFS shows that 18 per cent of people aged and 16 and over have a first language that is not English. Even though the LFS is likely to be a slight under-count, there is a substantial difference between this and the Census figures.

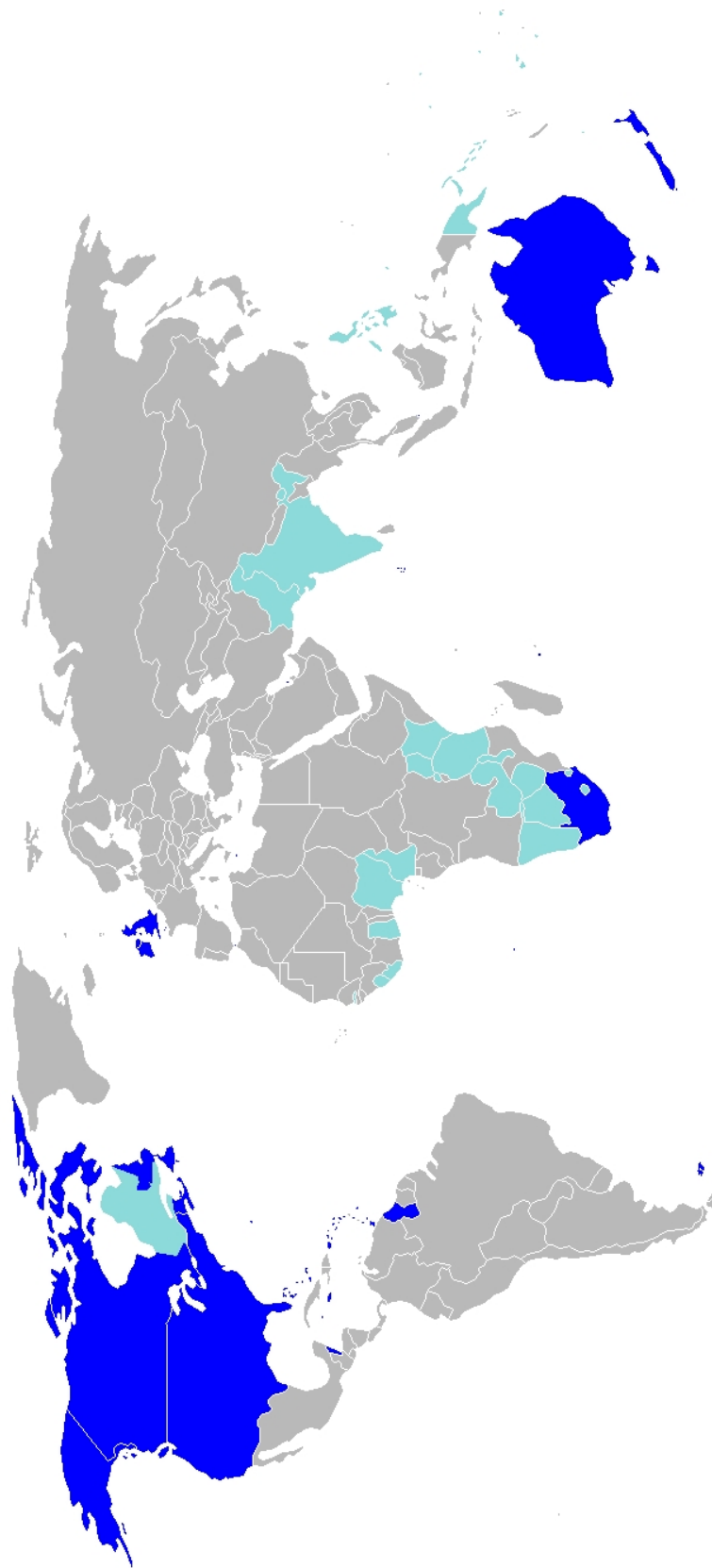
The LFS shows that only two per cent of people born in the UK have a first language that is not English, compared with 50 per cent of all people born outside the UK. Many Londoners who were born outside the UK were nevertheless born in English-speaking countries such as Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA or Canada, which is one reason why the figure is only 50 per cent. Furthermore, other countries, such as many of the Caribbean and African countries, either have English as an official language or have high proportions of English speakers in their population. So country of birth of the individual seems to be the biggest factor in whether someone has English as a first language or not, far bigger than say whether or not someone has parents who were born in a non-English-speaking country. For instance, the LFS shows that 81 per cent of working age Londoners born on the Indian sub-continent do not have English as a first language, compared with just two per cent of people born in Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, USA or Canada. It is likely that the figure for the Indian sub-continent is not even higher either because of the high numbers of people who were born there but migrated to the UK at a very young age, or who have lived in the UK for so long that they consider their first language now to be English.

Map 1 shows the countries beyond the ONS definition which may contain an English-speaking population. The countries shaded in dark blue are those where English is the main language spoken, and the countries in light blue are those where English is an official language of the country but not the most popular language spoken there.

The Census LNI figure is likely to be highly inflated by the numbers of people who were born in English-speaking countries but have an HRP who was not. The LFS shows that the vast majority of these people will have English as a first language, even though among some ethnic groups the proportions will be lower. Indeed as many as one in five UK-born people from BME groups do not have English as a first language.

Thus if only one in five UK born people from BME groups has ESL and four in five people born in non-English-speaking countries have ESL then these two factors roughly balance each other out. Therefore a more accurate estimate of people likely not to speak English as first language would be purely to count the numbers of people who were born in countries where English is not the first language. However, this is not straightforward since many countries in the world speak a mixture of languages, one of which may be English. So a proxy measure would still have to be used, although it could be one which is far less of an over-count than the current ONS Language Needs Indicator.

Map 1 All countries, states, and provinces where English is officially spoken



Darker shading - English is the de facto (in practice) official language

Lighter shading - English is an official, but not a primary language.

Source: Wikipedia 2006

In London the Census counted 1,650,445 people who were born outside English-speaking countries, which was 23 per cent of the whole population. The percentage of the working age population was 27 per cent, which is comparable with the LFS figure of 20 per cent given that it is widely believed that the LFS is a slight under-count. This figure is 754,492 lower than the total LNI figure for London, which represents the number of people who were born in the UK, Ireland, USA or the Old Commonwealth but has an HRP who was born outside those countries.

Census data for LNI was originally only released for dependent children. The count in London was 631,863. However, this figure is significantly affected the by the numbers of children whose HRP was born outside the English-speaking countries and not by the numbers of children who were born in those countries. Around three-quarters of the children included in the LNI are included due to where their HRP was born (see Table 1 and Appendix Table 1). As shown by the LFS, only a small proportion of these children will actually have a first language that is not English. In contrast, people of working age are far more likely to be in the LNI because of their own country of birth and not that of their HRP, notwithstanding the fact that they are more likely to be the HRP themselves. Around four in five working age Londoners who are counted in the LNI figures are there because they were born outside UK, Ireland, USA or the Old Commonwealth countries. Therefore, the LNI seems to be a far better measure for the adult population than for dependent children. However, this takes no account of any children who grow up in households where English is not the first language, yet when they grow into adults English becomes their first language, for which there is no data available.

Table 1 Percentage of people counted in the LNI who are counted because of their own country of birth by age, London

	0 to 15	16 to 64	65+	Total
Language Needs Indicator	547,848	1,673,534	183,555	2,404,937
Born outside UK, Ireland, USA or Old Commonwealth	131,155	1,351,584	173,994	1,656,733
% in LNI due to own Country of Birth	24	81	95	69

Source: 2001 Census, Commissioned Tables C0116 and C0488

By only including the percentage of people born outside English-speaking countries (and not those whose HRP was), then nine per cent of children aged 0 to 15 would fall under that definition, considerably less than 28 per cent for 16 to 64 years olds and 20 per cent of over 65 year olds. Even so that means, using this definition, almost one in ten children in London are likely to have at least some English language needs.

The LNI is known to be an over-statement of those who do not have English as a first language. Despite these limitations the LNI is a good source of data as an indicator of need rather than a true reflection of the number of people who do not speak English. The Census allows us to break the data down by age and borough where other data sources would not. The data should be used to compare across different areas where English language problems might be more or less likely to occur within the resident population.

Language Needs Indicator data

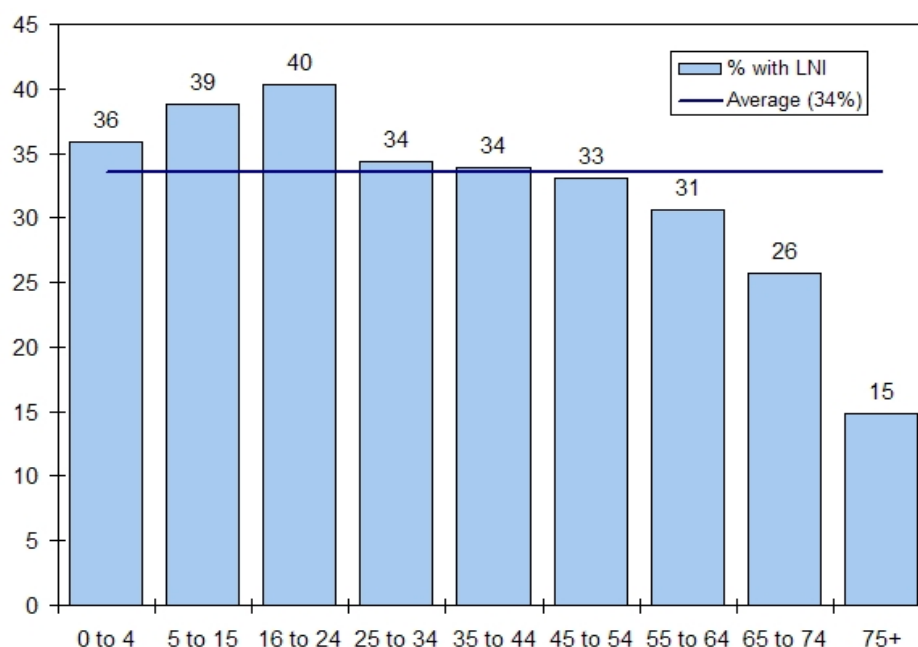
In London, 34 per cent of people are included in the Language Needs Indicator, far more than West Midlands, the second highest region with 10 per cent. These are followed by South East (nine per cent), East and East Midlands (eight per cent). The national average, including London, is 11 per cent. The ranking of the regions is broadly similar to the LFS, though the ESL data has Wales being second highest after London, most of whom cite Welsh as their first language.

Inner London (40 per cent) has a far higher LNI percentage than outer London (29 per cent), though this is still way above the national average.

Brent, in Outer London, has the highest percentage of LNI in the country (57 per cent), though Newham (56 per cent) and Tower Hamlets (50 per cent) also have over half of their population in the LNI. All of the top ten and 18 of the top 20 districts are in London, with only Slough and Leicester being outside London (see Table 2 and Map 2). In London, Havering has the lowest percentage (seven per cent), followed by Bexley (11 per cent) and Bromley (12 per cent).

In London, 16 to 24 is the age band with the highest likelihood of finding a person in the LNI (40 per cent). The proportion steadily drops away in older age groups and in the over 75 group, 15 per cent are in the LNI (see Figure 1). For people aged over 16, this pattern is similar to the LFS ESL data, though of course the percentages are lower in the LFS.

Figure 1 Percentage of people included in the Language Needs Indicator by age, London 2001



Source: 2001 Census, Commissioned Table C0488

At borough level the highest percentage of LNI in any group is 5 to 15 year olds in Tower Hamlets (70 per cent), closely followed by 0 to 4 year olds in the same borough (69 per cent). The figure for children aged 0 to 15 in Newham is second highest in London (64 per cent).

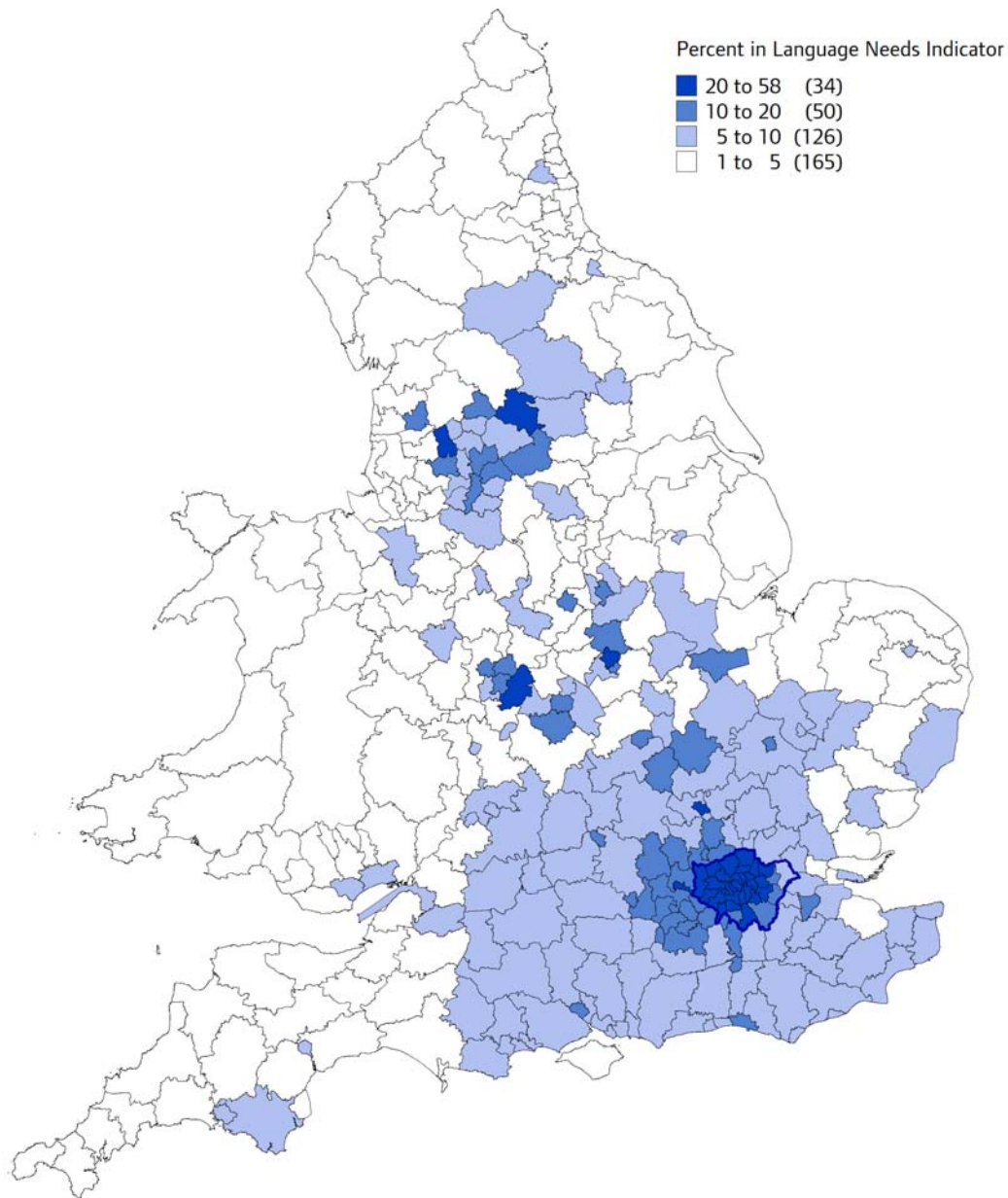
cent). Newham has the highest percentage of 16 to 44 year olds in the LNI (60 per cent), while Brent has the highest in the 45 and over age group ranging from 62 per cent for 45 to 54 year olds down to 34 per cent for people 75 and over. LNI age data for all London Boroughs can be found in Appendix Table A2.

Table 2 Top 40 districts in England and Wales for percentage of population in the Language Needs Indicator, 2001

Rank	Local Authority	Region	All people	LNI	% LNI
1	Brent	LONDON	263,464	150,894	57
2	Newham	LONDON	243,884	137,144	56
3	Tower Hamlets	LONDON	196,099	98,189	50
4	Ealing	LONDON	300,950	141,382	47
5	Hackney	LONDON	202,826	93,139	46
6	Haringey	LONDON	216,505	97,650	45
7	Harrow	LONDON	206,811	90,333	44
8	Westminster	LONDON	181,290	78,336	43
9	Kensington and Chelsea	LONDON	158,929	68,328	43
10	Hounslow	LONDON	212,344	82,996	39
11	Lambeth	LONDON	266,167	103,134	39
12	Barnet	LONDON	314,566	118,443	38
13	Southwark	LONDON	244,868	91,510	37
14	Camden	LONDON	198,015	73,227	37
15	Slough	SOUTH EAST	119,061	43,215	36
16	Redbridge	LONDON	238,638	85,927	36
17	Waltham Forest	LONDON	218,346	76,111	35
18	Enfield	LONDON	273,567	94,024	34
19	Hammersmith and Fulham	LONDON	165,248	56,491	34
20	Leicester	EAST MIDLANDS	279,919	94,158	34
21	Merton	LONDON	187,918	60,157	32
22	Islington	LONDON	175,804	56,233	32
23	Lewisham	LONDON	248,918	77,546	31
24	Wandsworth	LONDON	260,382	78,523	30
25	Croydon	LONDON	330,581	95,143	29
26	Luton	EAST	184,375	49,841	27
27	City of London	LONDON	7,175	1,788	25
28	Birmingham	WEST MIDLANDS	977,083	233,154	24
29	Greenwich	LONDON	214,408	49,965	23
30	Kingston upon Thames	LONDON	147,274	33,397	23
31	Hillingdon	LONDON	243,000	54,800	23
32	Blackburn with Darwen	NORTH WEST	137,473	28,000	20
33	Bradford	YORKSHIRE & THE HUMBER	467,674	95,089	20
34	Richmond upon Thames	LONDON	172,341	35,038	20
35	Oxford	SOUTH EAST	134,244	24,305	18
36	Watford	EAST	79,728	13,913	17
37	Woking	SOUTH EAST	89,832	15,428	17
38	Cambridge	EAST	108,860	18,644	17
39	Wolverhampton	WEST MIDLANDS	236,584	40,174	17
40	Bedford	EAST	147,910	24,994	17

Source: 2001 Census, Commissioned Table C0488

Map 2 Percentage of population in the Language Needs Indicator for districts in England and Wales



Source: 2001 Census, Commissioned Table C0488

Appendix Table A1 Breakdown of country of birth for children aged under 16 in households and their HRP's, London 2001

Country of Birth of Household Representative:	Total	Born inside UK	Born outside UK
Total	1,446,149	1,303,178	142,971
UK (inc Channel Islands and Isle of Man)	872,499	855,535	16,964
Republic of Ireland	23,265	21,168	2,097
Australia	4,239	3,197	1,042
New Zealand	2,879	2,372	507
Canada	2,539	2,036	503
USA	9,757	6,193	3,564
EU Countries	33,713	24,103	9,610
Rest of World	497,258	388,574	108,684

Source: 2001 Census, Commissioned Table C0001

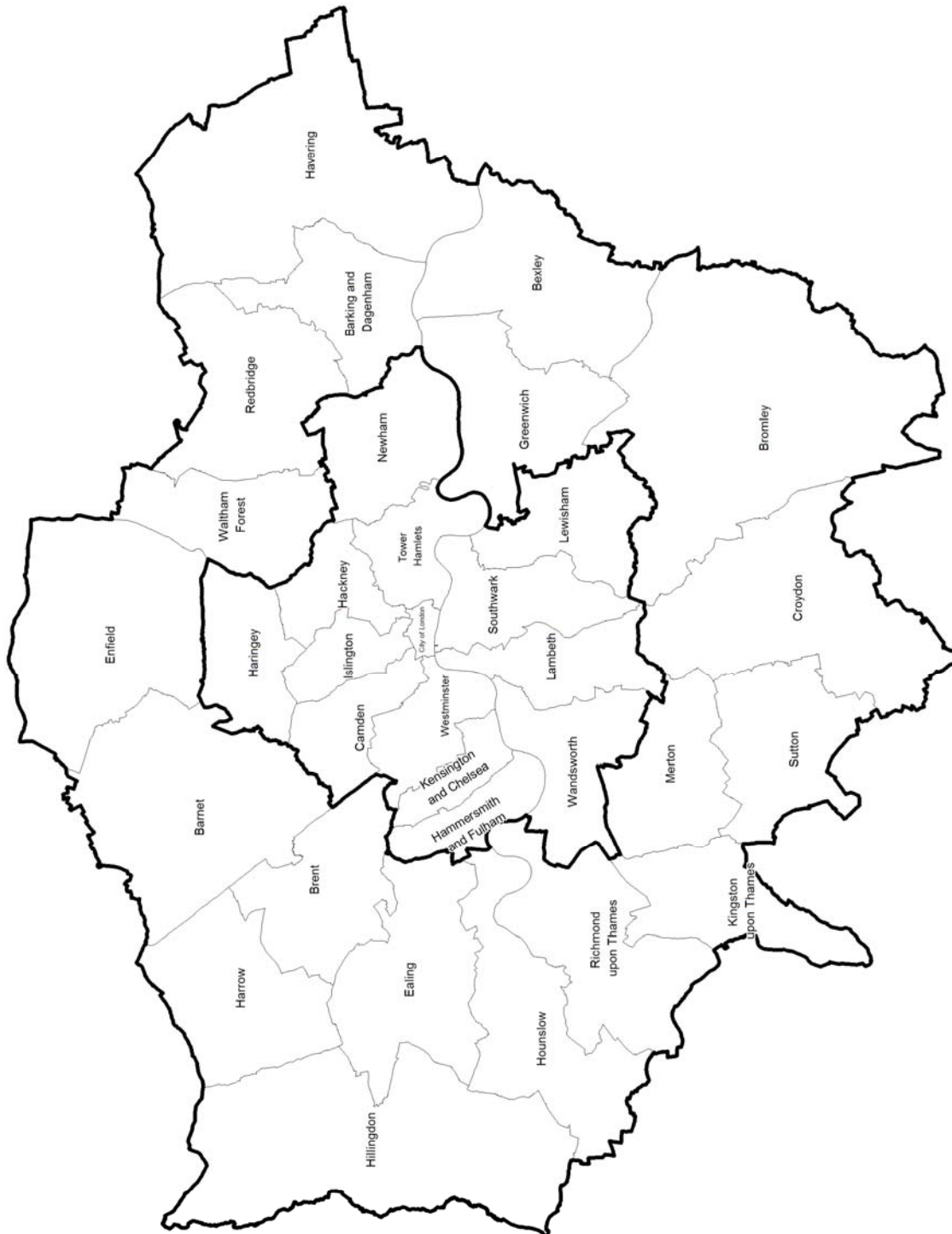
Appendix Table A2 Percentage of people in Language Needs Indicator by age, London Boroughs, 2001

	Total	0 to 4	5 to 15	16 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 to 74	75+
Barking and Dagenham	15	19	16	19	19	17	13	11	6	4
Barnet	38	37	40	44	38	40	40	37	32	20
Bexley	11	10	11	14	12	12	12	10	8	6
Brent	57	56	63	63	53	57	62	58	54	34
Bromley	12	12	12	15	14	14	13	11	9	7
Camden	37	47	49	39	37	35	34	31	30	24
Croydon	29	28	31	33	29	31	30	28	24	14
Ealing	47	45	54	56	44	47	49	46	40	27
Enfield	34	34	38	42	34	35	38	36	28	12
Greenwich	23	27	27	28	28	26	20	17	12	7
Hackney	46	45	55	54	41	43	46	48	45	24
Hammersmith & Fulham	34	36	42	38	33	34	33	32	30	20
Haringey	45	46	52	51	39	42	47	50	49	29
Harrow	44	45	50	52	46	48	47	37	31	19
Havering	7	7	7	8	7	8	7	7	5	4
Hillingdon	23	24	25	27	26	24	23	19	15	8
Hounslow	39	38	43	46	40	40	40	37	31	17
Islington	32	36	39	36	31	29	30	32	30	20
Kensington and Chelsea	43	47	53	50	47	42	40	37	33	25
Kingston upon Thames	23	22	26	26	24	25	24	21	16	10
Lambeth	39	41	46	43	33	38	42	44	41	24
Lewisham	31	33	34	37	32	31	31	31	26	12
Merton	32	31	35	39	34	32	34	31	25	14
Newham	56	63	64	64	59	57	53	45	36	17
Redbridge	36	40	44	47	37	39	37	30	22	11
Richmond upon Thames	20	19	22	23	24	21	20	17	15	11
Southwark	37	45	46	39	37	40	35	35	26	13
Sutton	15	14	15	16	16	16	16	14	11	8
Tower Hamlets	50	69	70	58	47	42	39	40	33	15
Waltham Forest	35	38	41	48	35	34	34	31	24	9
Wandsworth	30	29	35	33	28	30	33	34	31	18
Westminster	43	52	56	49	45	40	41	38	35	26
Inner London	40	45	50	46	38	39	39	38	34	20
Outer London	29	30	33	36	31	31	30	27	22	13
London	34	36	39	40	34	34	33	31	26	15
England	11	13	13	15	14	12	10	9	8	6

NB there is no data available for the City of London

Source: 2001 Census, Commissioned Table C0488

London boroughs with the Inner London boundary marked



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Contact details for the Data Management and Analysis Group are as follows:

Rob Lewis (020 7983 4652) is **Head of the Data Management and Analysis Group**.
rob.lewis@london.gov.uk

Bill Armstrong (020 7983 4653) works in the **Census Team** with particular responsibilities for **commissioned tables, workplace data** and **mapping**. bill.armstrong@london.gov.uk

Baljit Bains (020 7983 4613) works in the **Demography Team** and is responsible for **ethnic demography**, including **ethnic group projections**. baljit.bains@london.gov.uk

Gareth Baker (020 7983 4965) is the **GIS Manager**. gareth.baker@london.gov.uk

Shen Cheng (020 7983 4889) works in the **Education Team** and is responsible for **school roll projections**.
shen.cheng@london.gov.uk

David Ewens (020 7983 4656) works in the **Education Team** and is responsible for **research and data analysis**. david.ewens@london.gov.uk

Giorgio Finella (020 7983 4328) works in the **Census Team**. giorgio.finella@london.gov.uk

John Hollis (020 7983 4604) is responsible for the work of the **Demography, Education** and **Social Exclusion Teams**, and particularly for **demographic modelling**. john.hollis@london.gov.uk

Eileen Howes (020 7983 4657) is responsible for the work of the **Census, SASPAC** and **General Statistics Teams** and particularly for **census analysis**. eileen.howes@london.gov.uk

Ed Klodawski (020 7983 4694) works in the **Demography Team**. His post is joint with the **London Health Observatory** and specialises in **ethnic** and **health** issues. edmund.klodawski@london.gov.uk

Rachel Leeser (020 7983 4696) works in the **Social Exclusion Team** with particular responsibilities for **surveys, income data** and the **Social Exclusion Data Users Group**. rachel.leeser@london.gov.uk

Alan Lewis (020 7983 4348) works on the **SASPAC** project. alan.lewis@london.gov.uk

Gareth Piggott (020 7983 4327) works in the **Census Team**. gareth.piggott@london.gov.uk

Kelly Rump (020 7983 4655) is DMAG's **Senior Coordinator**. kelly.rump@london.gov.uk

Lorna Spence (020 7983 4658) is a member of the **Social Exclusion Team**, with particular responsibilities for **labour market data**. lorna.spence@london.gov.uk

Lovedeep Vaid (020 7983 4699) works in the **Social Exclusion Team** with particular responsibilities for **benefits, indicators, income data** and the **Social Exclusion Extranet**. lovedeep.vaid@london.gov.uk

Please use the above descriptions in deciding whom to contact to assist you with your information needs.