

Key findings from Economy, Culture & Skills Committee call for evidence – online form

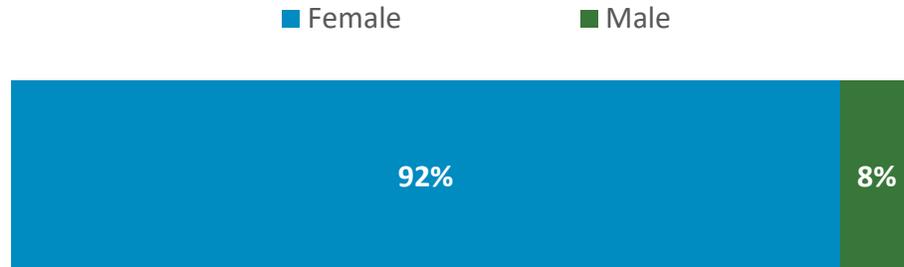
December 2025

Methodology and data limitations

- This online form was launched between September 2025 and November 2025 alongside an official call for evidence. All responses were gathered via an online survey platform. The online form was designed by Research Unit staff and the Economy, Culture and Skills Committee project team.
- The online form was promoted by the Committee and project team sharing it with stakeholders, and online via social media.
- The primary purpose of the call for evidence was to gather experiences of Londoners and people who have moved out of London in order to raise children.
- The total number of London-based respondents to the online form was 85.
- The respondents to the online form were self-selected. The respondents cannot be considered to be the representative of the London population. The results should therefore be treated with caution. The findings can provide the Committee with an overall impression of Londoners' experiences, but should not be considered to be a precise reflection of these.
- Demographic data was collected to understand which groups of Londoners the online form reached. The next slide provides an overview of the age, gender, ethnicity and borough of residence of respondents.

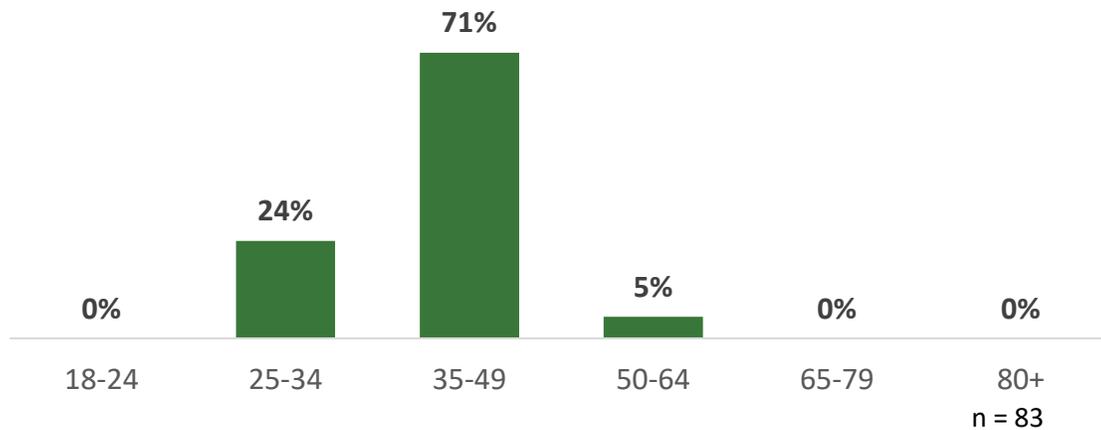
Characteristics of respondents

Gender of respondents



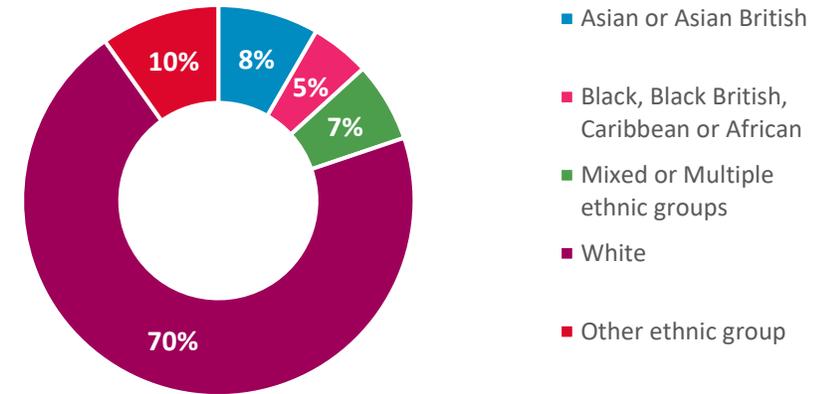
n = 83

Age group of respondents



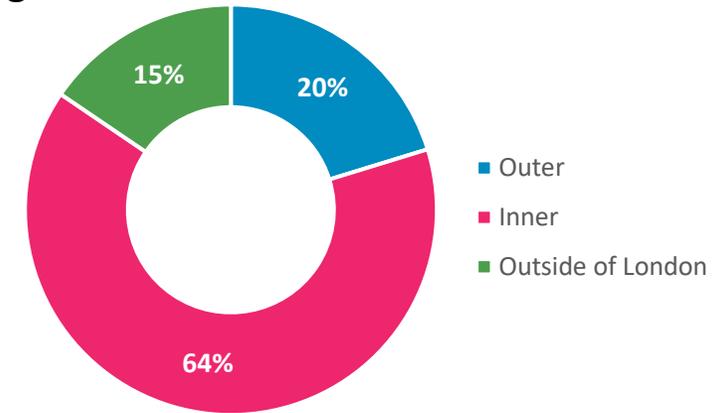
n = 83

Ethnicity of respondents



n = 82

London borough

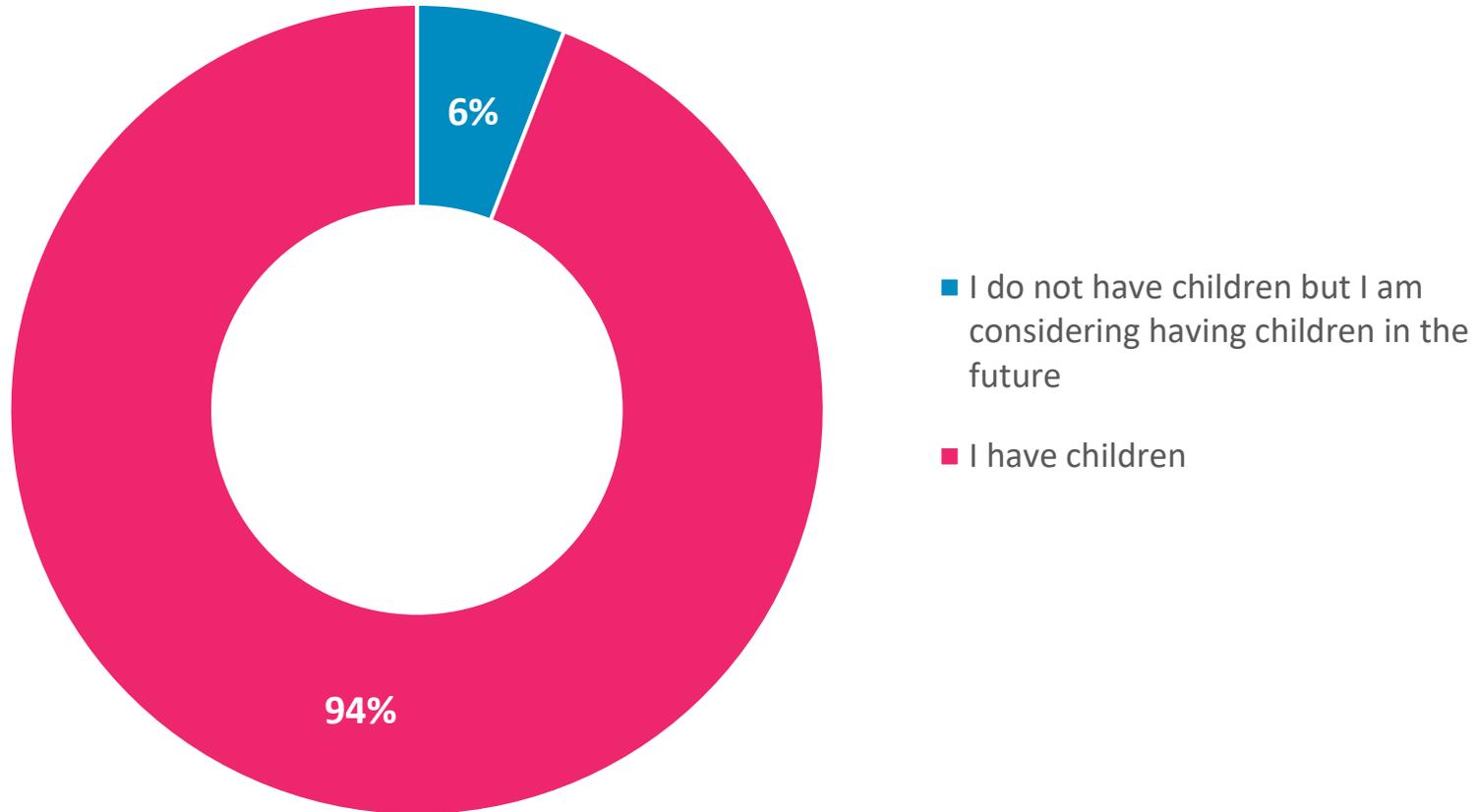


n = 84

Where questions were skipped or respondents answered 'prefer not to say', these are not included in percentage calculations.

Parental responsibilities

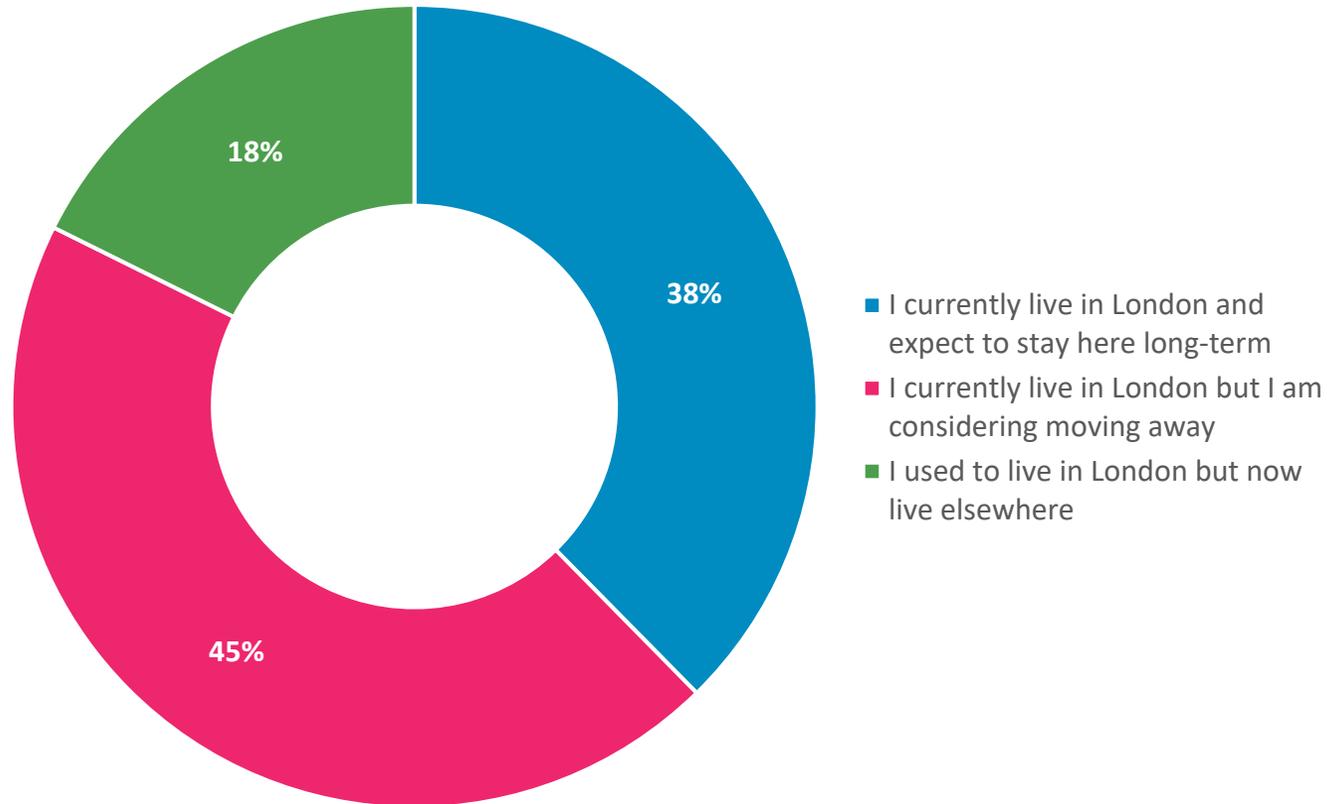
Do you have children or are you considering having children in the future?



The majority of respondents (94%) already have children while 6% did not have children but are considering having children in the future.

Current living situation

Which of the following best describes your current living situation?



38% of respondents currently live in London and expect to stay in the long term while 45% currently live in London but are considering moving away. The remaining 18% used to live in London but have now moved elsewhere.

Reasons for planning to stay in London

When asked about their main reasons for planning to stay in London, respondents most commonly cited work-related factors. Some simply stated “work” as their primary reason, while others highlighted the wider range of job opportunities available in London and the ability to commute with relative ease.

Another common theme was London being a multicultural and diverse city. Respondents described how this contributes to their quality of life, providing access to cultural events, arts and a broad range of experiences and activities.

“ [I plan to stay in London] so my partner does not have a long commute and can be an active part of [our children’s] lives. I also want to continue with my job in London and be close to my child so I can collect her from nursery and enjoy time with her. ”

“ I grew up in East London, but my partner is from Yorkshire. I believe where we live in E20 is an amazing part of the world to live. Amazingly multicultural, lots to do as children grow older. Lots to do for adults! Lots to do for families. I would like if it was so gentrified and much more affordable, but that would only be to have more opportunities to take advantage of the amazing city we live in. ”

“ Access to incredible cultural events and green spaces plays a significant role. As a multicultural family, the diversity of London is crucial for us. ”

“ Closeness to work, galleries, great transport links, parks, cinema, restaurants and all on offer. If it had a beach as well it would be perfect ”

Reasons for planning to stay in London

Many respondents also emphasised the importance of being close to friends and family. Living near existing support networks and extended family members was described as a key factor in their decision to remain in the city.

Other reasons mentioned included having children settled in stable schools, access to reliable transport links, and the availability of green spaces.

“ We have a close support network nearby including parents, siblings and friends. Also, the schools are very good. ”

“ Great transport links and public transport, great lifestyle, proximity to family and culture. ”

“ We don't want to move our child to another school. We don't have the budget for the move. [We are] worried about the job market or job commute if we kept same jobs. ”

“ It's where my extended family live and also job opportunities. ”

“ I expect to stay in London mid-term not long term. Reason being job opportunities and ease of public transportation. I would consider moving overseas if things remain unchanged. ”

“ My children like living here and like their home and do not want to move. ”

The above quotes are from respondents' answers to the question, "Please can you explain the main reasons why you are planning to stay in London? Your reasons do not necessarily need to be related to raising a family, although the Committee would be particularly interested to hear your views on this topic." The question allowed free text entry.

Reasons for considering leaving London

When asked about the main reasons they might consider leaving London, respondents most commonly referred to housing pressures. This included the high cost of buying or renting, limited space for growing families and a lack of access to gardens or green spaces.

Some respondents said they were conflicted about leaving, noting that access to good local schools was a key factor for keeping them in London. Childcare also emerged as a concern. Respondents highlighted both limited availability and the high cost of childcare as reasons they might consider relocating. Rising levels of crime were another frequently cited issue, with several respondents expressing concerns about safety for themselves and their families.

A number of respondents also mentioned noise and air pollution as important reasons for wanting to leave. Others simply stated that London is “expensive,” explaining that the broader cost of living in the city makes it difficult to stay. Additional factors included wanting to be closer to family and friends, as well as dissatisfaction with tax levels and possible changes to immigration policies.

“ The cost of housing means my home is not big enough for my small family and our quality of life is relatively poor as a result, especially considering we are a two-parent family with reasonably good incomes. ”

“ I am concerned about the rising levels of crime such as assault by a stranger, phone and bike thefts, knife crime, open selling and use of drugs, shoplifting, all of which appear to go unchecked. My family and friends have all been affected by the crimes I have listed. I am also concerned about the levels of noise and air pollution in the area of East London where I live, and how these affect my child. ”

The above quotes are from respondents' answers to the question, “Please can you explain the main reasons why you might consider leaving London? Your reasons do not necessarily need to be related to raising a family, although the Committee would be particularly interested to hear your views on this topic.” The questions allowed free text entry.

Reasons for considering leaving London

“ Living expenses are too high and the space is very limited in a house. We believe that our children will have more freedom to grow in an environment with more space and as parents, to cut down the living cost. ”

“ I have family and friends in the north and also my partner has a business in the north. It's cheaper. London is expensive, polluted, high-crime. We'd like our own garden. But we have friends here, London has lots to offer in terms of things to do. My kid has got into a good school. Work pays better. It doesn't feel like an easy decision. ”

“ Lack of space, we need a house and garden. All of which are unaffordable in London. Only flats seem to be built. Anti-social behaviour- drugs and people doing balloon's are now a common sight[...] ”

“ I want cleaner air, more green space, better schools and safe environment for [my children] once they are starting to go out alone. ”

“ The main reason we would consider leaving London is because of the cost of living, specifically the cost of housing. Another factor is the quality of state secondary schools in certain areas of London. We recently moved from an inner London borough (Newham) to an outer London borough (Harrow) to get more for our money in terms of housing and to have better state secondary schools nearby. We would consider moving out of London at some point because schools see over-subscribed in London, especially special schools. ”

“ In future we might move from London due to immigration policies. If the new law applied to current visa holders. ”

The above quotes are from respondents' answers to the question, "Please can you explain the main reasons why you might consider leaving London? Your reasons do not necessarily need to be related to raising a family, although the Committee would be particularly interested to hear your views on this topic." which allowed free text entry.

Reasons for leaving London

The most common reason respondents who have left London gave for moving elsewhere was housing. Many felt that London's high housing costs made it difficult to buy or rent suitable accommodation and that moving elsewhere offered more affordable options. Respondents also emphasised that homes outside London tend to be larger, with better access to gardens and outdoor space.

Safety was another recurring theme. Several respondents described concerns about rising crime levels and said they did not feel London was the right environment to raise children.

For some, access to good schools was an important factor when deciding to relocate. Other reasons mentioned included wanting to be closer to family, benefiting from better transport links and the availability of higher salaries or better job opportunities outside of London.

“ Sadly, we moved away to be able to afford to buy a property before having children. We couldn't find anything in London that allowed commutes to central London where our jobs are based, so had to move outside the M25 and now [get the] train in. We loved living in London and do still try to come back in regularly, but the cost of housing is just prohibitive. ”

“ To be able to afford a property with outside space. To be in a location where we could walk places with a pushchair (not needing to take the tube/ bus). To be part of a community with young families. ”

“ I moved to London as a young professional but grew up myself outside of London and prefer access to green spaces and few numbers of people. I wanted the same lifestyle for my children. ”

“ You get more for your money in terms of buying a property. There are more green spaces. I didn't feel safe raising children in a large city. It has better transport links to the motorway. I can get around easier by car. ”

“ We chose to move out of London for better quality of life for a family. We made the choice as soon as I became pregnant with the first child. ”

The above quotes are from respondents' answers to the question, "Please can you explain the main reasons for your choice to leave London? Your reasons do not necessarily need to be related to raising a family, although the Committee would be particularly interested to hear your views on this topic. The question allowed free text entry in responses.

Challenges of raising children in London

We asked people if there was anything else they would like to share with the Committee about the challenges of raising Children in London:

“ I want to cycle around with my children and I want them to be free from the dangers of air pollution. Kensington and Chelsea are particularly bad at providing cycle lanes which cuts us off from London. London's air pollution, driven mainly by traffic, is among the worst in the UK and can stunt children's lung growth, worsen asthma, and increase long-term health risks. We have an air pollution and obesity crisis which is being ignored by London's planners. ”

“ London house prices and rents are too high for anyone I know to contemplate having children. Several long-term couples I know are still flat sharing with strangers because they can't afford a property of their own, despite both working and earning decent salaries. ”

“ Concerns about under-funding within secondary schools and behaviour of children whose families do not have the same believe and values around education and courtesy to school staff. I imagine the wealthy families in the area who are more aligned in my value of education will send their children to private education and that will put more burden on the secondary phase as supportive families will not fill the places. ”

“ As a first-time mum of twins we found it almost impossible to live and thrive in London. London was my home for over 20 years and I really didn't want to leave but the ever increase in house prices and low-quality homes and the fact we get no financial support for our twins left us no option but leave the city we love so much. ”

“ In this country, schools play a crucial role, especially for immigrant parents, who typically look there for a strong sense of community because extended families aren't always available. If the place does not offer it, we will be raising kids lost on their sense of identity, and you will see probably teenagers looking in the wrong places a feeling of belonging. ”

The above quotes are from respondents' answers to the question, "If there is anything else you would like to share with the Committee about the challenges of raising children in London, please do so here:" The question allowed free text entry.