

NEWS RELEASE

EMBARGO: 00:01am, - Monday, 19 May 2013

INTERVIEW: Interviews are available.

REPORT: To see the full report, click [here](#)

BRIEFING: A media briefing can be found [here](#)

New report into changing shape of households in Scotland over ten years should be driver to shape future policies and services

A new report into changing shape of Scottish households over the last ten years will be put under the spotlight this week at a high-profile conference, attended by the Minister for Children and Young People.

The report, commissioned by Parenting across Scotland, an umbrella body for a number of high-profile charities (1) highlights a multitude of changes to Scotland's households and families over the 10-year period, but notes some aspects of family life remaining similar. It was produced by an Evidence Request Bank being developed by the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships (2).

Parenting across Scotland has urged governments, policy makers, decision makers and anyone designing and delivering services in Scotland, to ensure they use the report to best meet families' needs, particularly where local specific information is available.

Minister for Children and Young People Aileen Campbell will attend the report's launch on Tuesday, at Parenting across Scotland's conference, the 'Changing Shape of Families in Scotland'.

Speakers on the day will include Paul Bradshaw of ScotCen Social Research, Marion Davis from One Parent Families Scotland, Stella Gibson from The Spark, and Bill Alexander from Highland Council.

Clare Simpson, Project Manager, Parenting across Scotland, said: "This report is of major importance to anyone designing and delivering services in Scotland. The microscope is put on family formation, parents' working patterns, from who cares for children, to whether they work part time, or full time, marriage rates, fertility rates, numbers of lone children, single parents. No stone is left unturned – but it also shows gaps that need to be filled.

She added: "This study should be a driver for how services are shaped to ensure they meet the changing shape and needs of families."

Headline figures from the in-depth 56-page-report, include:

- There were 2.4 million households in Scotland in 2011, an increase of 0.2 million since 2001, with an increase in the number of people living alone meaning it became the most common type of household in 2011.
- Marriage or civil partnered households decreased from 38% in 2001 to 32% in 2011, while there was a growth in the number of co-habiting couples from 7% to 9%.
- Divorce rates were lower by 7% over the ten year period 2001 – 2011.

- There was a notable increase in the number of births registered to unmarried parents. 51% in 2011 compared to 43% in 2001.
- There has been an increase of 49% in the number of looked after children over 2001 - 2011, while the number of children in kinship care in 2011 was nearly four times that in 2001.
- The proportion of people providing unpaid care to family members or friends remained stable – but the number of hours increased. In 2011, 44% of unpaid carers provided 20 or more hours of care a week (an increase from 37% in 2001), while 27% provided 50 or more hours of care a week (an increase from 24% in 2001).
- In 2011, 74% of working age men and 64% of working age women were economically active, compared to 72% and 59% in 2001, with women remaining more likely to be in part time employment than men.
- Numbers of men and women not working due to looking after home or family increased for both sexes. The proportion of men who were not in paid work undertaking this role increase from 1% (2001) to 3% (2011). However, women were far more likely to be looking after the home or family than men. In 2011, women were six times more likely to fulfil this role.

Clare Simpson, Project Manager, Parenting across Scotland, added: “The report throws up as many questions as it answers. It paints a picture of both stability and change. However, what’s really clear is families are juggling multiple responsibilities and providing large amounts of care while continuing to be active in the economy. Women are almost six times as likely as men to be looking after the home and family, and are also much more likely to be working part time. To ensure families are able to flourish in these hard pressed times, it is imperative we ensure the right supports are in place to allow parents to work. High quality, flexible childcare which parents can afford and family friendly working practices are crucial to the health of Scotland’s families.”

Minister for Children and Young People Aileen Campbell said: “This report brings together a range of research to give a clearer picture of the challenges families face today and will be useful to many people in making the right support available. It reinforces some of what we already know, including the fact that better access to quality childcare gives families greater options on how to manage their daily life and to continue their career should they wish. That’s why we’re investing £280 million over the next two years to expand annual, funded early learning and childcare provision for 3- and 4-year olds from 475 to 600 hours from August and extending this entitlement to the most vulnerable 27% of 2-year-olds over two years.”

Paul Bradshaw, Senior Research Director at ScotCen Social Research, where he manages the Growing Up in Scotland study (GUS), a large scale, longitudinal birth and child cohort study involving over 10,000 Scottish families, said: “By highlighting important areas of family life which require continuing and improved support – for example maintaining secure parental relationships and ensuring access to employment, policy makers now have better information on which they can re-align existing policies to reflect the changing needs of families in Scotland. This report is incredibly useful in helping us understand the broad changes to family structures that took place as we entered the 21st century and on where to make improvements moving forward.”

Marion Davis, Policy Advisor at One Parent Families Scotland, said: “Policy-makers need information which will inform their decision-making which is accessible and contributes to finding practical solutions to problems. The report on families in Scotland will make a valuable contribution to ensuring parents & children receive the support & services they need.”

Stella Gibson, Chief Executive of The Spark, said: “This report highlights that although we have a degree of stability in terms of the levels of divorce, that there are still many families in Scotland experiencing relationship difficulties and ultimately relationship breakdown. We learn about relationships from those around us, particularly our parents and carers. Our aspiration for Scotland must be that all children are growing up learning about positive relationships, as these are the parents of the future.”

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Notes to editors:

1. Parenting across Scotland partners are: Aberlour Childcare Trust; Capability Scotland; Children 1st; Children in Scotland; Families Outside; One Parent Families Scotland; Relationships Scotland; Scottish Adoption; The Spark (formerly Scottish Marriage Care). Together the partners work with thousands of parents throughout Scotland.
2. The [Evidence Request Bank Development Project](#) is a new initiative, led by the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, to help third and public sector organisations and services in Scotland access and use social research evidence. It is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, with additional funding from the Scottish Government and Parenting Across Scotland, and supported by West Lothian Council and Children in Scotland.
3. For a full copy of the report click [here](#)
4. For a media briefing on the report and conference, click [here](#)