

Policy Implication 5.1

Families have long been a central component of the drivers and implications of population ageing.

Children are born into families and family decisions regulate the number of children born; dependant individuals both young and old are typically supported and cared within families; transfers of finance, support and care are moved between the generations within families.



Family trends occur in parallel to and because of ageing.

Changing family structures and decisions are important drivers of ageing in the population, manifested most obviously through below replacement fertility rates. In turn, ageing will change family structures and relations, including leading to a 'verticalisation' of families and affecting intergenerational caring responsibilities.



Policy Implication 5.2

In parallel to ageing, the UK population is experiencing a growth in the plurality of family structures.

There is limited evidence on the impact heterogeneous family types may have on important issues relating to ageing, especially later life caring responsibilities. Understanding this is a priority for understanding the resilience of UK care policies.



The trend towards plurality of family forms has influenced the relations within families: between ageing partners, older parents and their adult children, and grandparents and grandchildren.



More divorce:

The proportion of those aged 65 and over who were divorced increased from 5.2 per cent in 2001 to 8.7 per cent in 2011

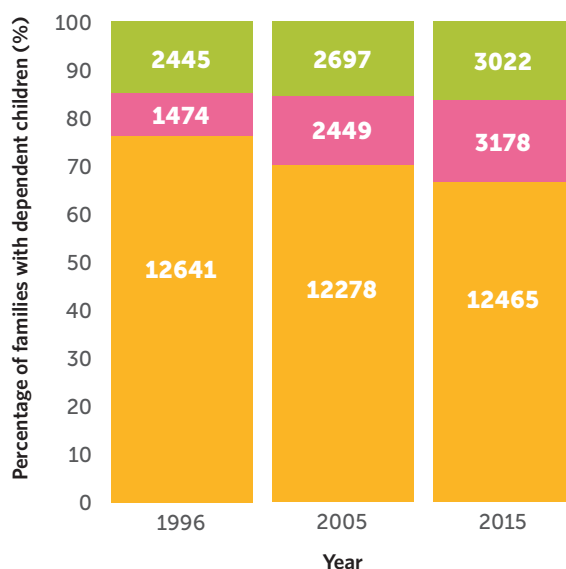
Source: Foresight Evidence Review, Andreas Hoff March 2015 | ONS 2011 Census



While the marriage is still the dominant form of family, families are becoming increasingly heterogeneous and complex in size and character.



UK family structures, in numbers (thousands) and as a percentage of families with dependent children, 1996-2015



Family type: ● Married couple family ● Cohabiting couple family ● Lone parent family

Source: ONS (2015) Families and Households: 2015



Levels of childlessness are projected to increase over the coming decades, with a disproportionate impact on 65-74 year old men.



Estimates and projections of percentage of people aged 65+ who are childless, by gender and age group, England 2007-2032

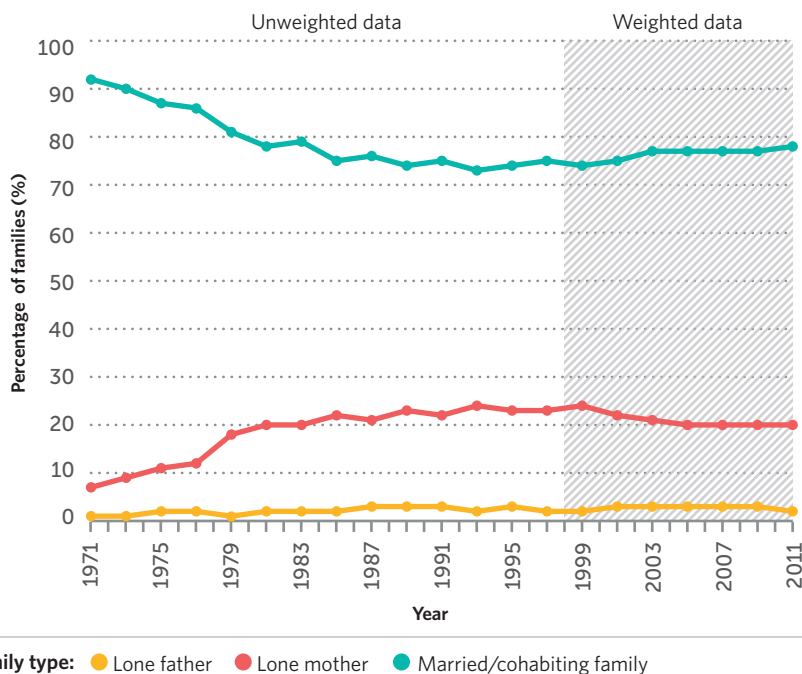
		Percentage of childless people by year (%)					
Age (years) and gender		2007	2012	2017	2022	2027	2032
65-74	Men	14.0	14.5	16.8	19.8	21.7	22.8
	Women	11.3	10.0	10.5	11.1	12.1	13.2
75+	Men	15.1	14.2	13.3	14.6	17.0	19.5
	Women	15.4	13.6	11.9	11.8	12.5	14.0

Source: Pickard, L. et al. (2012) Mapping the Future of Family Care: Receipt of Informal Care by Older People with Disabilities in England to 2032 Social Policy and Society 11(04) 533-545



Dependent children still tend to be looked after by married or cohabiting parents, but there has been an increase in lone parenthood.

 *Families with dependent children by family type, 1971-2011, Great Britain*



Source: ONS (2013) Chapter 3 - Households, families and people (General Lifestyle Survey Overview - report on the 2011 General Lifestyle Survey)





Policy Implication 5.3

The ageing of the population is likely to increase the demands for informal care, and other things being equal this will disproportionately impact women.

Informal caring responsibilities currently predominantly fall on women. This can have important negative consequences for women's health, wealth and wellbeing, with the full implications realised throughout the life course.



The impact of caring responsibilities varies between genders.



15% of older women



11% of older men

cared for someone in the last month



The greatest propensity of care-giving is found amongst 55-59 years old women. Increasing numbers of men are involved in family care but it is still predominantly a female role.

Women particularly can be trapped in low-paid part-time jobs which leads them to combine paid work with care-giving tasks.

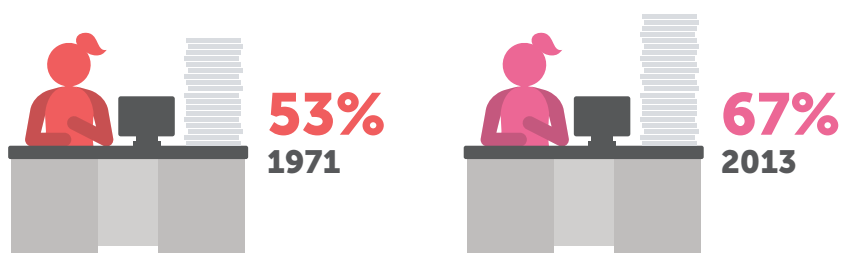
Source: Jivraj, S. and Nazroo, J. (2012) 'Social domain tables'. In Banks, J., Nazroo, J. and Steptoe, A. (eds) The Dynamics of Ageing: Evidence from the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing 2002-2010 (Wave 5) Institute for Fiscal Studies Report 293 <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/pdf/elsa5final.pdf>



Changing roles will affect traditional assumptions about who provides care.

Since the days of predominantly single earner families, rising female employment has changed the availability of family care. This is driven by rising housing costs, increasing female tertiary education and employment oriented family policies.

Female employment has risen, and is likely to continue rising



The proportion of British women aged 30–34 years who completed tertiary education has increased from **33% in 2004** to **49.3% in 2014**

Source: Hoff, A., (2015) Foresight evidence review



The impact of caring responsibilities varies between ethnicities.

There are differences in the strength and structure of family care support networks across different ethnic groups. Family carers from ethnic minorities are less likely to access health or social services. Compared to the White majority women are more likely to provide family care in Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani minorities, even when controlling for age, sex or socio-economic background.



Source: Foresight Evidence Review, Andreas Hoff, March 2015



The 'verticalisation' of family structures associated with an ageing population brings a number of opportunities and challenges

Relating to house provision, grandparent care and the capacity of smaller family units to care and provide support across generations.



Grandparents play a significant role in childcare, enabling their children to work.

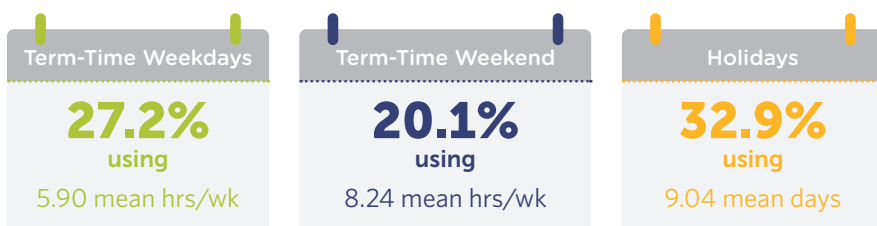
The Millenium Cohort Study found that at 9 months old:



of grandparents provided at least some care for 42% of families...

...rising to 71% of families where the mother was in employment or studying.

Amount of time in childcare arrangements (children aged 7)



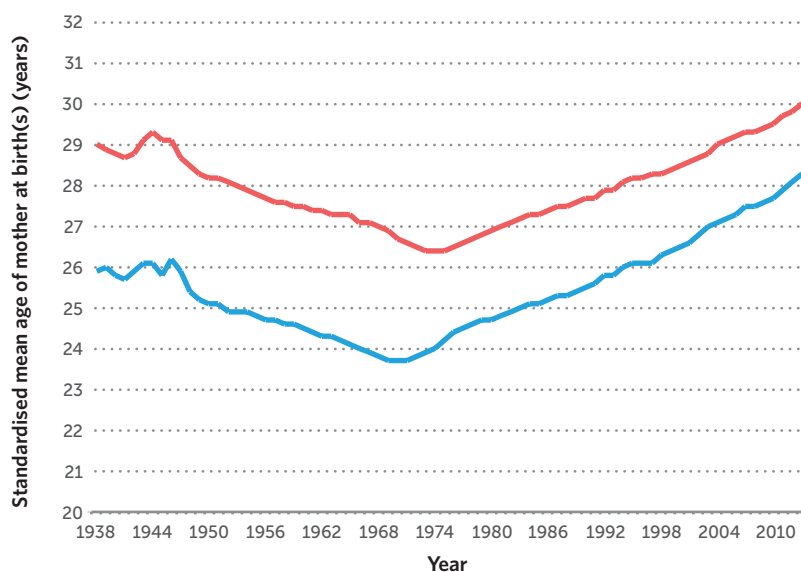
Source: Childhood Wellbeing Research Centre (2011) Grandparents providing child care



The rising mean age of first birth means there will be longer gaps between the generations.



Standardised mean age of mother for England and Wales, for all births (including first, second, third births etc.) and for first births only, 1938-2013



Birth type: ● First Births ● All births



Source: ONS (2015) Births by Parents' Characteristics



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5.4b

Children and spouses are already most likely to provide informal care to people with disabilities aged over 65 and over 75, with the numbers projected to increase.



Past and projected numbers (thousands) and percentage change of people with disabilities aged 65+ and 75+ by receipt of informal care in private households in England, 2007 and 2032

Age (years)	Care receipt	2007	2032	Percentage growth (%)
65+	No informal care	740	1265	71
	Informal care from spouse	500	960	92
	Informal care from child	530	810	52
	Informal care from child & spouse	145	275	90
	Informal care from others	200	340	68
	All with informal care	1380	2385	73
75+	No informal care	480	860	80
	Informal care from spouse	250	580	133
	Informal care from child	425	680	60
	Informal care from child & spouse	70	155	133
	Informal care from others	155	260	68
	All with informal care	890	1670	87

Source: Pickard, L. et al. (2012) Mapping the Future of Family Care: Receipt of Informal Care by Older People with Disabilities in England to 2032 Social Policy and Society 11(04) 533-545



Successful policy responses in an ageing population are likely to be those which take a whole life course approach and identify the dependencies between generations.

It will be particularly important to recognise that policy which impacts on younger adult life - for example when adults are caring for young children - will impact on later life experiences and support requirements.





Caring for an elderly family member in mid-life can impact upon an individual's earning capacity. Career interruptions or part-time work due to child or elder care currently reduce pension entitlements with consequences for income in later life.



Source: Future of an Ageing Population (2016) Foresight report



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