



## Fife results from Scotland's Census 2022

### Health, Disability and Unpaid Care

Contact: [research.enquiries@fife.gov.uk](mailto:research.enquiries@fife.gov.uk)

Version: 1

Date: 07/10/2024

Scotland's Census is the official count of every person and household in the country. There has been a census in Scotland every 10 years since 1801, except 1941. The 2021 census in Scotland was moved to 2022 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The answers people give to census questions help build up a picture of the population. Government and other service providers rely on census data to make important decisions. Scotland's census collection phase took place between 28 February and 1 June 2022.

**This briefing is the eighth in a series of topic summaries, and provides census data on health, disability and unpaid care. These statistics show Scotland's people, where they live, and how they are changing.**

#### General Health

One of the questions in Scotland's Census asked, "How is your health in general?". In 2022 in Fife, 289,322 (77.8%) said that their health was good or very good. This is a decrease from 2011 of 9,569 people.

For those people that said that their health was bad or very bad, 26,147 (7%) of Fife's population fell into these categories. This was an increase of 6,717 people from 2011. This is mostly driven by an ageing population and the increase in older people since 2011. There is a strong link between age and general health. In a population with more older people, you would expect worse health.

Figure 1 shows how the percentage of people reporting bad or very bad health increases as age increases. In 2022 in Fife, there 23,606 more people aged 50 or over than in 2011. This means that there would be more people reporting bad or very bad health even if rates were unchanged.

Figure 1 also shows that there were small increases in the percentage of people reporting bad or very bad health in all age groups, similar to the picture for Scotland as a whole. This means the overall increase in the percentage of people reporting bad or very bad health is not entirely due to the higher number of older people compared to 2011. It is also worth bearing in mind that there is a strong link between age and health when making comparisons between populations, and two areas with the same size population may have very different health outcomes depending on their age profiles.

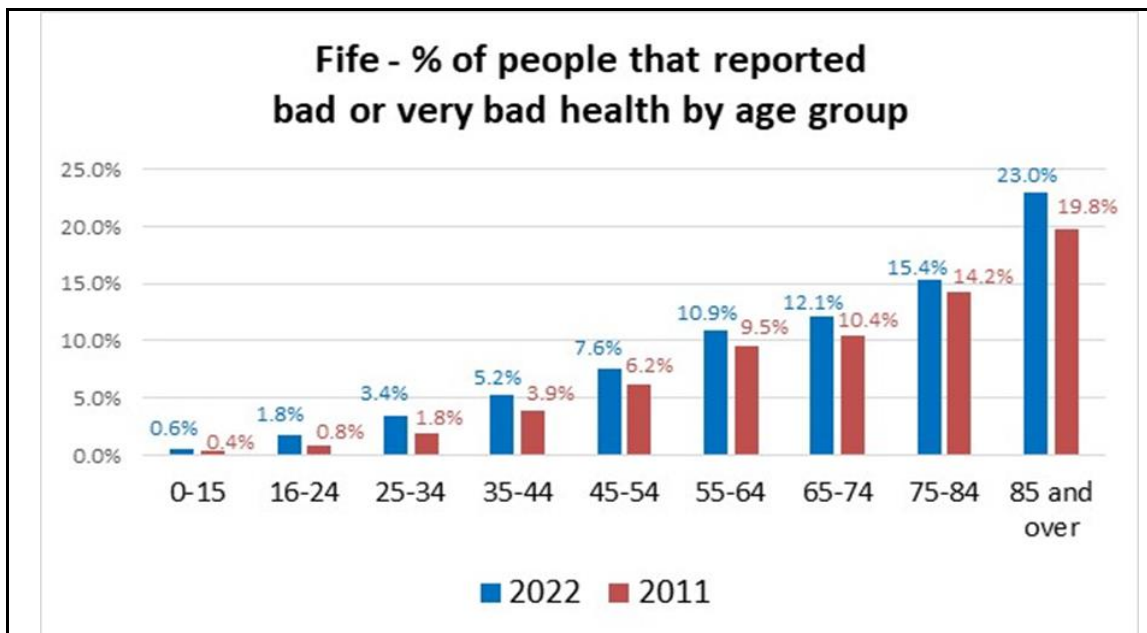


Figure 1. Percentage of people in Fife that reported bad or very bad health by age group (Census 2022, 2011)

### People with a health problem or disability that limited their activities

In 2022, 95,552 Fife people said that they had a health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activities either a little or a lot. This was an increase of 21,306 over the decade and shows an increase from one in every five people suffering from a health problem or disability in 2011, to one in four people in 2022.

Figure 2 shows that the number of people with a health problem that limited their day-to-day activities increased across all age groups from 2011 to 2022. There is a strong relationship between this measure of health and age, with older people more likely to have a health problem or disability that limits their activities than younger people.

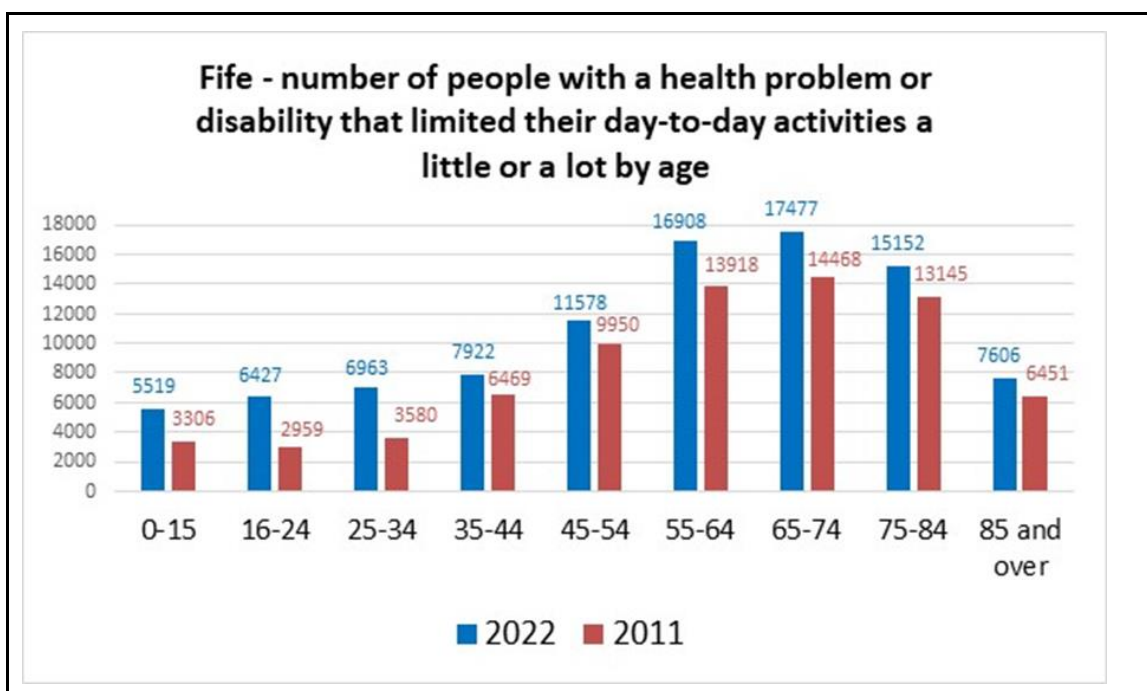


Figure 2. Number of people in Fife with a health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activities a little or a lot by age (Census 2022, 2011)

The increase in the number of older people in Fife with an activity-limiting health problem or disability was driven by an ageing population, although the percentage of people aged 75 or older who have a health problem/disability actually decreased over the decade from 67.8% in 2011, to 62.5% in 2022, similar to the Scottish level picture. However, the overall increase in older people meant there was an increase in the number of older people with an activity-limiting health problem or disability.

Fife’s younger age groups also saw increases in the number of people with a health problem or disability that limited their day-to-day activities. In particular, the number of people in the 16-24 age group with a health problem/disability more than doubled during the decade, increasing from 2,959 in 2011 to 6,427 in 2022.

## Health conditions

The census asked if people had a health condition which had lasted or was expected to last more than twelve months. A list of conditions was presented along with descriptions. People were asked to tick all that apply. The question included tick boxes for learning disabilities, learning difficulties and developmental disorders. However, data for these categories is not included in this Census briefing, as there were changes to how these three conditions were presented on the census form in 2022. National Records of Scotland are undertaking further quality assurance of this data and will provide an update later in the year.

In Fife in 2022, the most common type of health condition reported in the census was a ‘long-term illness, disease or condition’. This is described in the census as a condition that you may have for life, that may be managed with treatment or medication and is not in one of the other health condition categories. It is a broad category that includes a range of conditions such as Arthritis, Cancer, Diabetes and Epilepsy. Nearly one in four people in Fife (23.4%) reported having this condition, and it is higher than the Scottish average of 21.4%. The number of people with this condition has also increased in Fife from 20.3% in 2011.

Figure 3 shows the percentage of people in Fife that reported that they had a specific health condition.

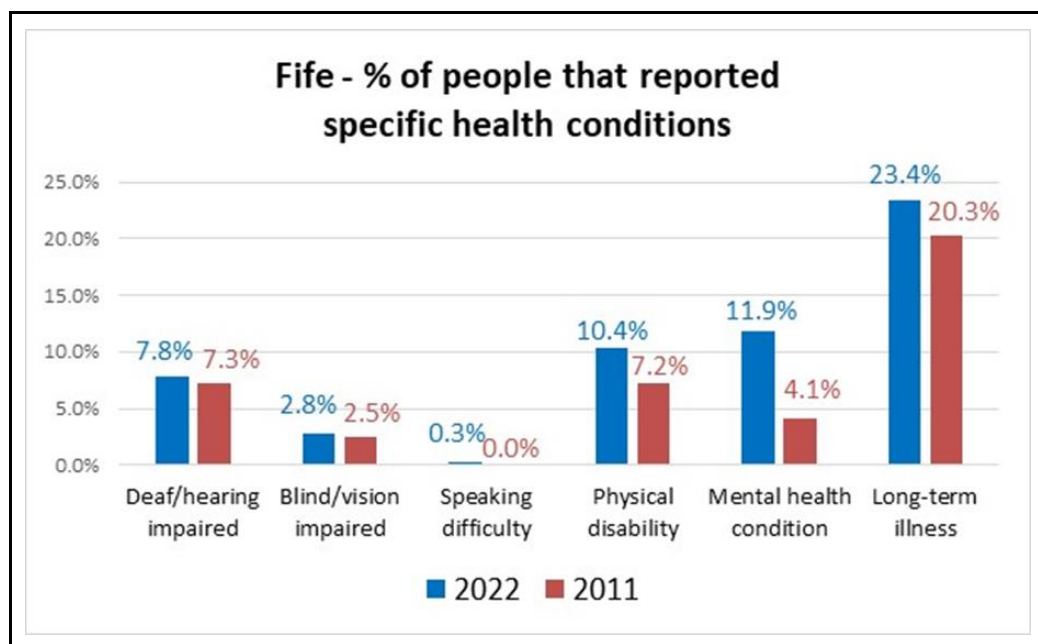
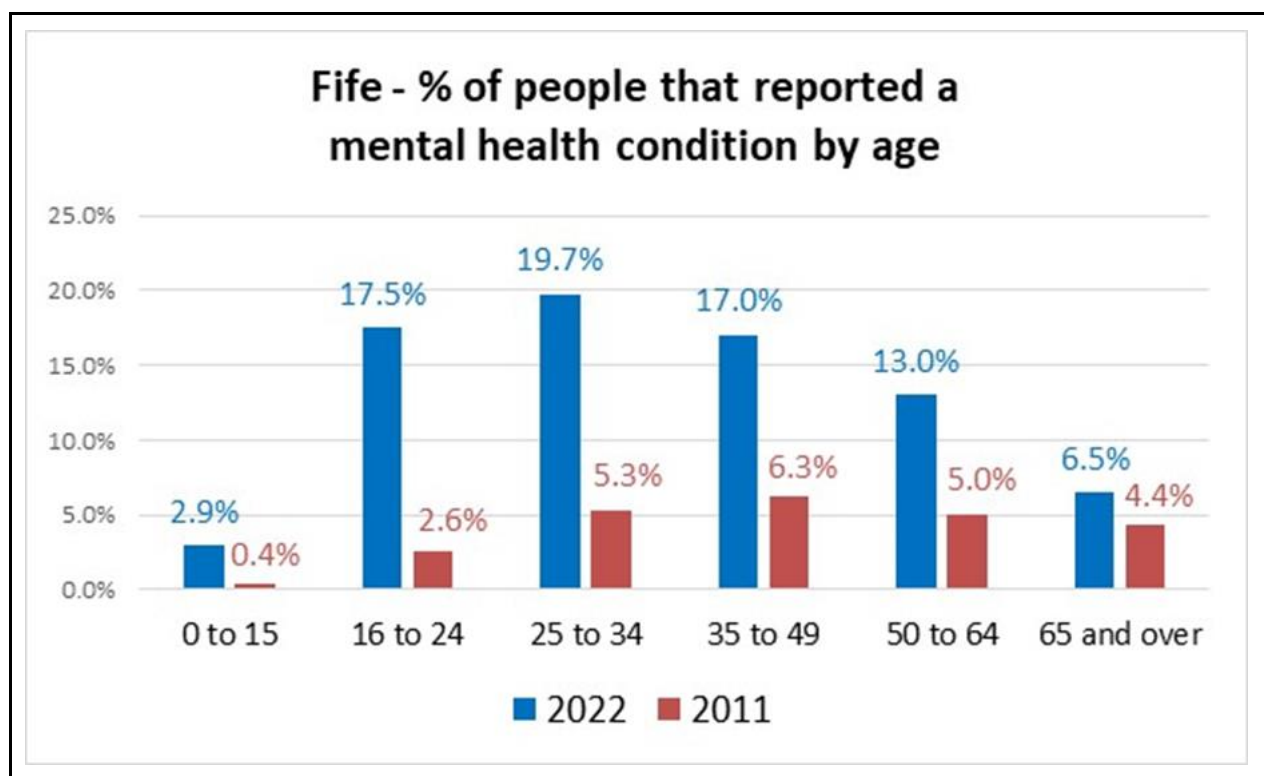


Figure 3. Percentage of people in Fife that reported specific health conditions (Census 2022, 2011)

The second most common condition reported in the census was a mental health condition. The percentage of people in Fife with this condition was 11.9% in 2022, compared with 4.1% in 2011. This shows a near three-fold increase over the decade and is in line with the picture for Scotland as a whole.

The increase in the number of people reporting a mental health condition was driven by a large increase amongst younger people. In 2022, younger people were more likely to report a mental health condition than older people, a reversal from the picture in 2011. The largest increases were in the 16 to 24 age group. In 2011 in Fife, 2.6% of those aged 16 to 24 reported a mental health condition. By 2022, this had increased to 17.5%. This is higher than the Scottish level of 15.4%. Figure 4 shows the percentage of people that reported a mental health condition by age in Fife.

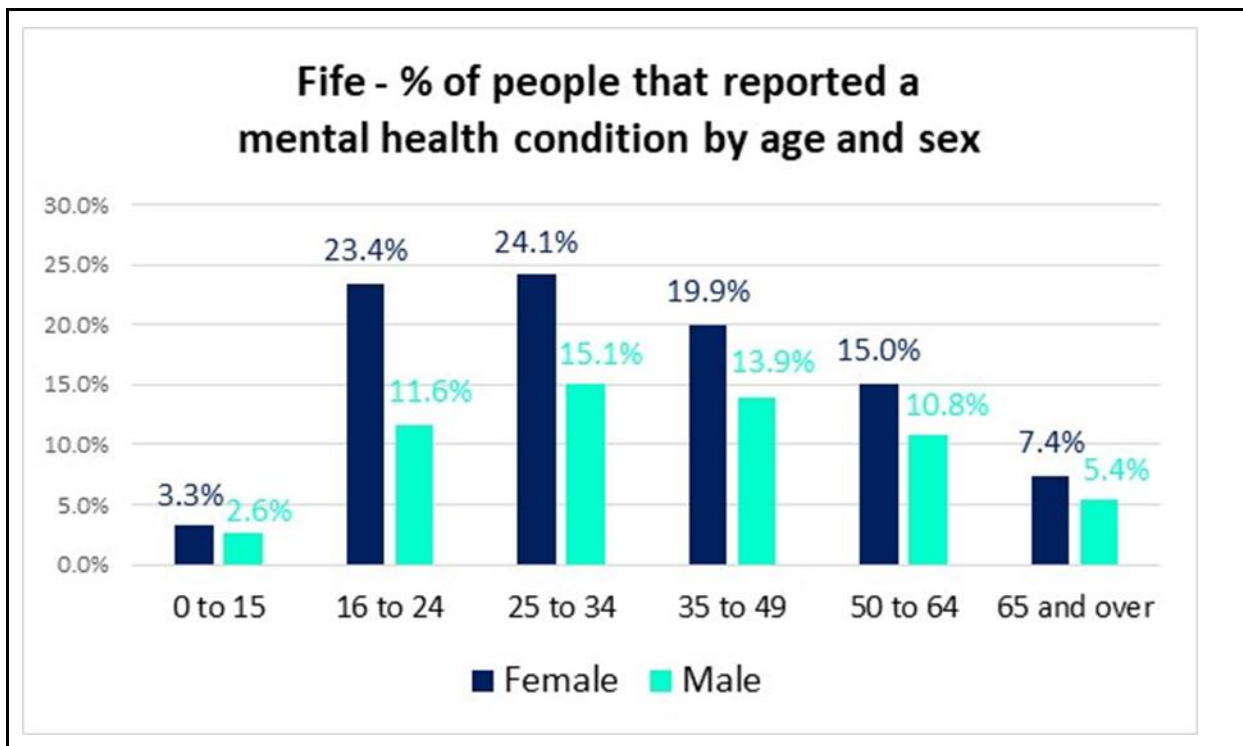


**Figure 4. Percentage of Fife people that reported a mental health condition by age (Census 2022, 2011)**

It is important to note that census data on health conditions is self-reported. Changes over time may reflect people’s understanding of their circumstances and their willingness to report their health condition, as well as changes in prevalence. Increases in demand for services may be partially driven by decreased stigma and more awareness about mental health and wellbeing.

The census also found that a higher percentage of females reported a mental health condition across all age groups in 2022, similar to the pattern in 2011. The largest difference in 2022 was among the 16 to 24 age group, where the percentage of females (23.4%) in Fife reporting a mental health condition was more than double the number for males (11.6%). These percentages are also higher than the Scottish average of 20.4% for females and 10.5% for males.

Figure 5 shows the percentage of people in Fife that reported a mental health condition by age and sex.



**Figure 5. % of people that reported a mental health condition by age and sex in Fife (Census 2022)**

## Unpaid Carers

The census asked people if they look after, or give any help or support to family members, friends, neighbours or others. The question said this was support required because of long-term physical/mental ill-health/disability, or problems related to old age. This briefing refers to these people as unpaid carers.

In 2022, there were 44,222 unpaid carers in Fife. This was an increase of 9,394 people (27.0%) from 2011, and in line with the Scottish national figure of 27.5%

Figure 6 shows the number of unpaid carers in Fife by age.

The number of unpaid carers has increased across all age groups over the last decade in Fife and Scotland. The largest increase has been in the 50 to 64 age group which has increased by 4,125 people since 2011 in Fife. This age group is most likely to have parents in the oldest age groups which have the highest levels of health problems or disability that limits their day-to-day activities.

Figure 7 shows the percentage of people in Fife that provide unpaid care by age and sex.

In 2022, 12.2% of people aged 3 and over in Fife were providing unpaid care. Females (14.0%) provided higher levels of care than males (10.3%) across all age groups. The 50 to 64 age group showed the largest gap between females (24.5%) and males (17.1%) providing unpaid care.

In 2022, more than half (54.8%) of all unpaid carers spent between 1 to 19 hours per week providing care support. A further one-quarter of unpaid carers spent more than 50 hours per week providing care. This is a similar picture for Scotland overall.

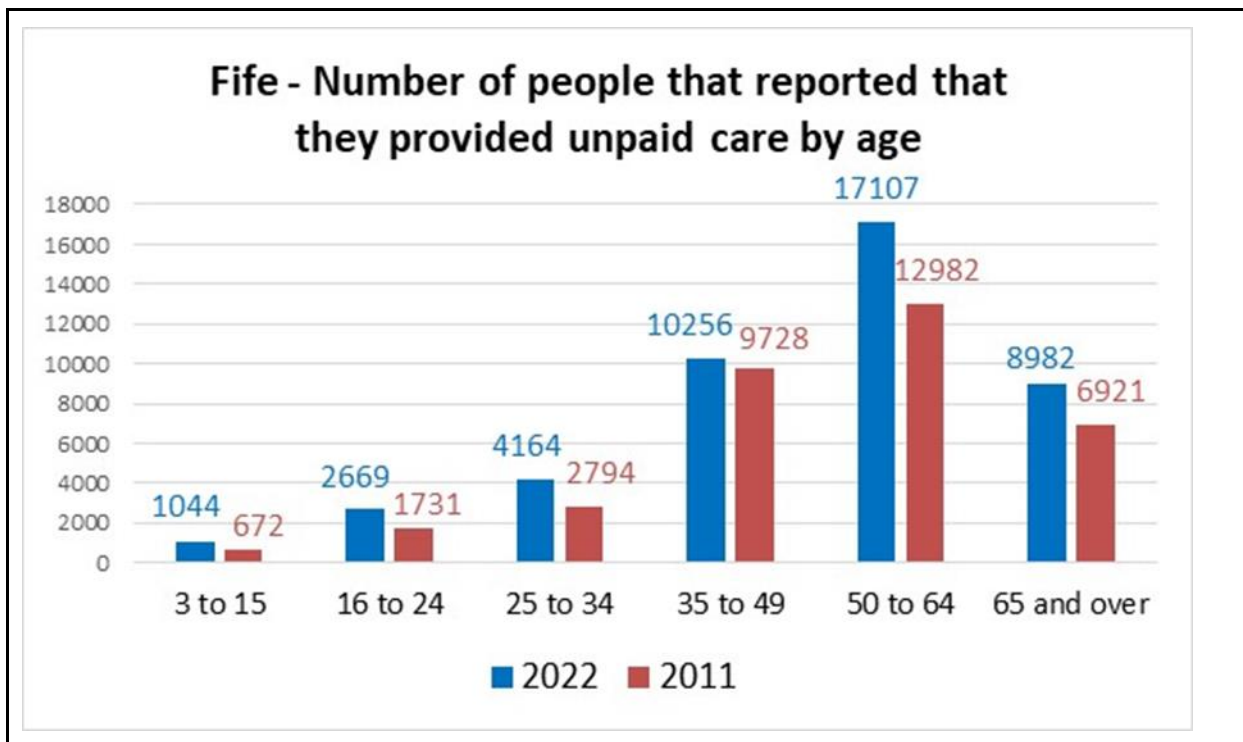


Figure 6. Number of people in Fife that reported that they provided unpaid care by age (Census 2022, 2011)

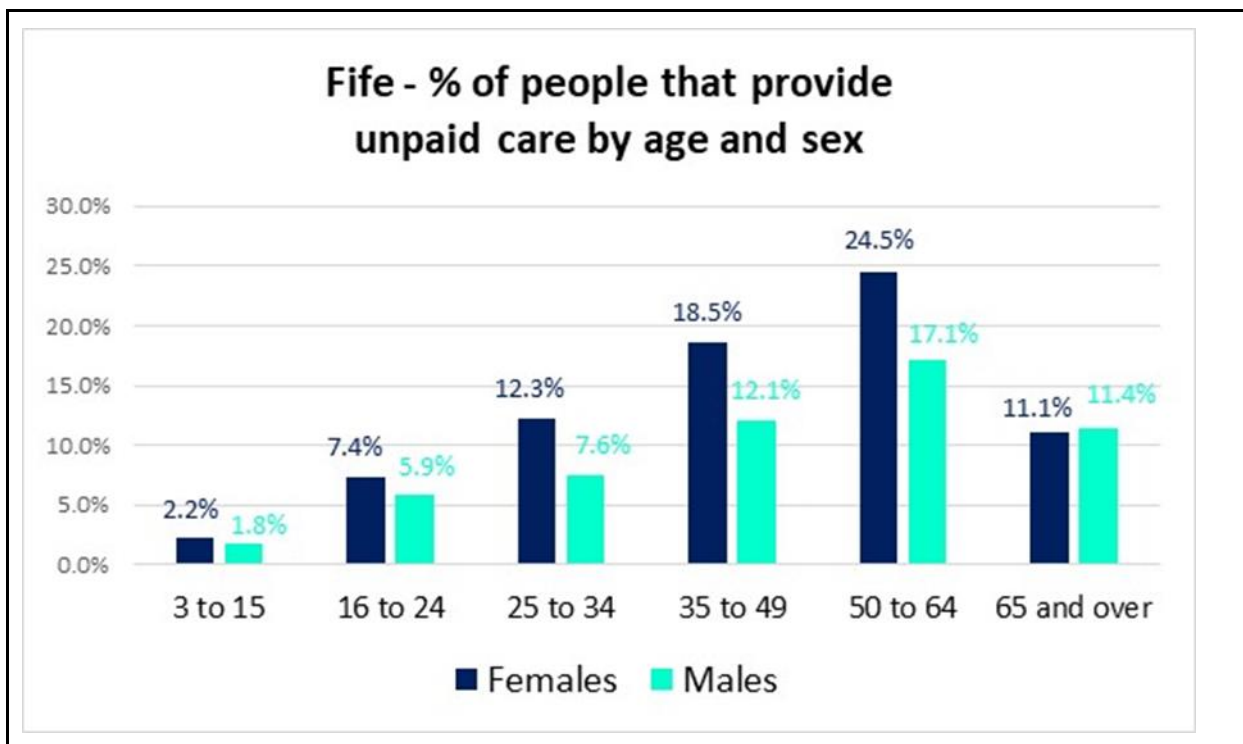


Figure 7. Percentage of people that provide unpaid care by age and sex (Census 2022)

## Census Results

Fife briefings on Scotland's Census 2022 are available from [Census | KnowFife](#)

To access Census results, please go to [Scotland's Census \(scotlandscensus.gov.uk\)](https://scotlandscensus.gov.uk)