

Geography – Background Information – 2011 Census Higher Geography Classifications

Census Areas

Results from the 2011 Census are available for a wide range of census areas, from the smallest area, Output Area (OA), to the largest area, Scotland.

The main census areas for which results will be made available have been decided in consultation with users.

The main building bricks for census areas are output areas and all higher geographies are built from output areas.

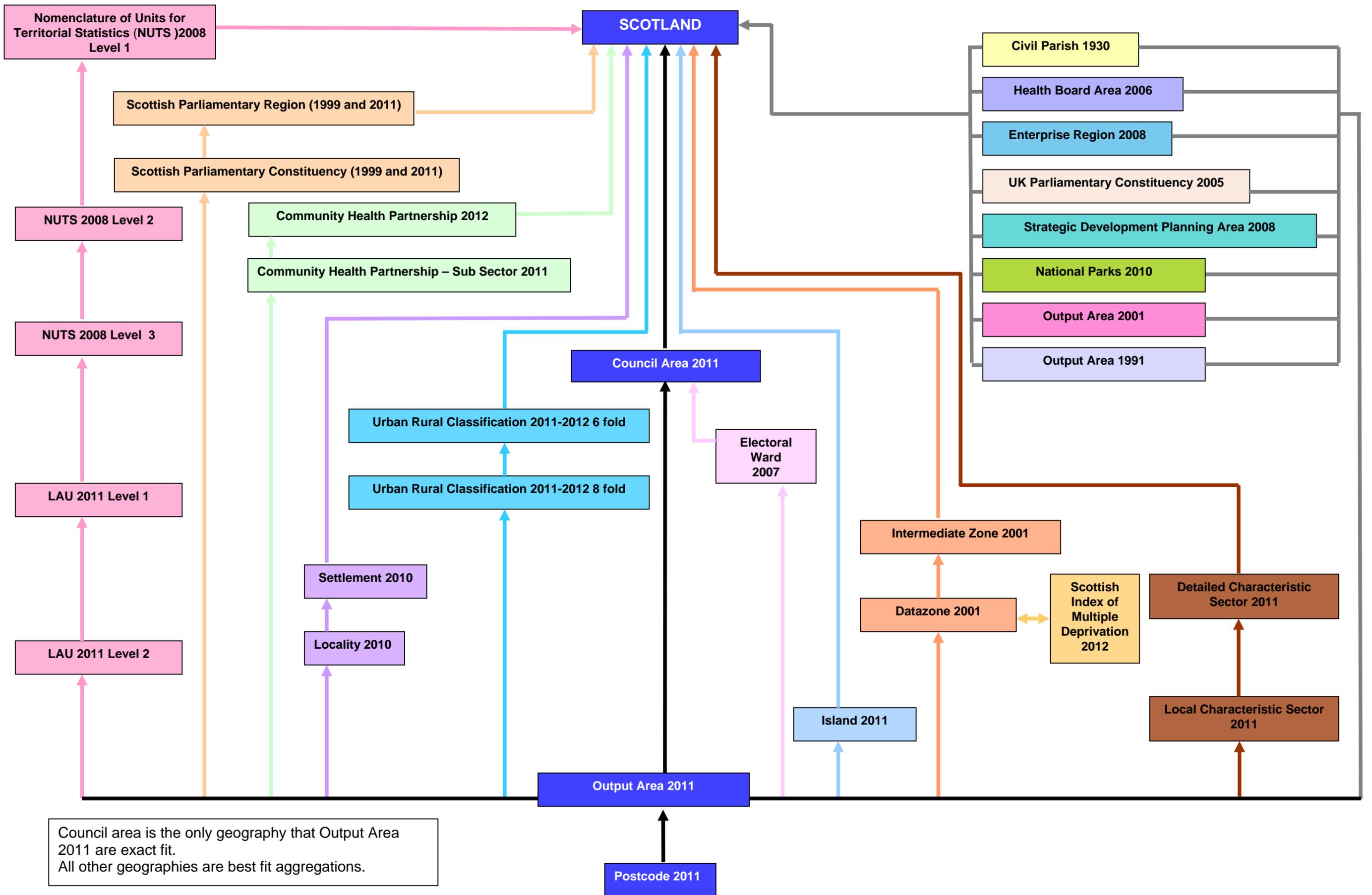
The diagram below depicts how the different areas nest into higher areas, all derived from output areas.

Any area for which census output is produced is the aggregation of output areas that approximate best to the area.

OAs will aggregate exactly to a council area. All other higher geography aggregations are best-fit.

Further information on best-fit aggregations can be found in the geography [Policy](#) section of the National Records of Scotland (NRS) website.

Geography – Background Information – 2011 Census
Higher Geography Classifications



Geography – Background Information – 2011 Census Higher Geography Classifications

The geographies contained in the 2011 Index are a snapshot of the position in 2011.

Background information on our frozen geography policy and the 2011 Census geographies: Output Areas, master postcode, Local Characteristic Sector and Detailed Characteristic sector can be found in the [2011 Census Supporting Information](#) section of the National Records of Scotland (NRS) website.

Council Area 2011

This is the only geography that is produced as exact-fit.

32 council areas were established across the whole of Scotland in 1996. Their councils form the single tier of local government in Scotland.

The Local Government Boundary Commission is responsible for making recommendations to the Scottish Government where amendments to council boundaries are required. The Scottish Government is ultimately responsible for any changes to the council boundaries.

Electoral Wards 2007

Electoral wards are found across Scotland, Northern Ireland and most of England, whereas the equivalents in Wales, the Isle of Wight and six of the unitary authorities created in 2009 are known as electoral divisions. In Scotland, each Council area contains a number of electoral wards. The voters in each of these electoral wards elect councillors to the local council. Prior to 2007 each electoral ward elected a single councillor (a single-member ward) to the local council. In 2007, with the introduction of proportional representation, the number of wards was reduced and each electoral ward now elects either 3 or 4 councillors (multi-member wards).

The Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) is responsible for reviewing the electoral wards and consequently making recommendations to the Scottish Government where amendments are required. The Scottish Government is ultimately responsible for any changes to the electoral ward boundaries.

Scottish Parliamentary Regions and Constituencies (1999 and 2011), and UK Parliamentary Constituencies 2005

The 73 Scottish parliamentary constituencies are used to elect members to the Scottish Parliament. The Boundary Commission for Scotland periodically reviews the boundaries and makes recommendations to the Westminster Parliament. The Westminster Parliament is the ultimate authority for the constituency boundaries.

UK Parliamentary constituencies are used to elect members to the UK Parliament in Westminster, London. There are currently 650 such constituencies covering the entire UK, and in Scotland there are 59. These constituencies may straddle council area boundaries.

Geography – Background Information – 2011 Census Higher Geography Classifications

The Boundary Commission for Scotland provides Geography Branch with the boundary datasets for Scottish UK parliamentary constituencies, but only after they have been sanctioned by the Westminster parliament.

Health Board Areas 2006

The 14 Health Board Areas (HBAs) are responsible for local health care in Scotland.

They report to the Scottish Government and are based on groups of the local government districts that existed before the introduction of council areas in 1996. This means that although most HBs cover one or more complete council areas, there are cases where council areas are split.

There were originally 15 HBs but in April 2006 the Argyll & Clyde HB was abolished and the area absorbed by two existing HBs (Greater Glasgow & Clyde HB and Highland HB). The Scottish Government is responsible for defining the boundaries of the Health Boards.

Please note: Also defined as NHS Board Areas in some of the NRS publications..

Settlements and Localities 2010

Settlements are a group of high density postcodes containing a minimum of 500 residents, which are enclosed by low density postcodes or water.

Localities are a group of high density postcodes within a settlement. These are used to sub-divide large settlements into more manageable areas

More information on Settlements and Localities can be found in the [Settlements and Localities Dataset](#) section of the NRS website.

Civil Parish 1930

From 1845 to 1930, civil parishes formed part of Scotland's local government system. The parishes, which had their origins in the ecclesiastical parishes of the Church of Scotland, often overlapped county boundaries, largely because they reflected earlier territorial divisions. Parishes have had no direct administrative function since 1930. In 1930, all parishes were grouped into elected district councils. These districts were abolished in 1975, and the new local authorities established in that year often cut across parish boundaries. In 1996, there was a further reorganisation of Scottish local government, and a number of civil parishes lie in two or more council areas.

It is important to note that the boundaries of the civil parishes and the ecclesiastical parishes are not the same.

Although Civil Parishes lost their former administrative function in 1929, they have changed very little since the 20th Century and Census data has been produced for these areas for all Censuses from 1891.

More information on Civil Parishes can be found in the [Other National Records of Scotland \(NRS\) Geographies Dataset](#) section of the NRS website.

Geography – Background Information – 2011 Census Higher Geography Classifications

Islands 2011

At the time of the census, there were 110 islands known to receive mail of which 93 were recorded as having at least one resident during enumeration.

The process of creating Output Areas resulted in the smaller islands (in terms of population) becoming merged with neighbouring islands.

Census output is to be produced for 56 islands or groups of islands that meet the confidentiality thresholds for census statistics.

Further information on Islands can be found in the [Other National Records of Scotland \(NRS\) Geographies Dataset](#) section of the NRS website.

National Parks 2010

National parks are designed to conserve the natural beauty and cultural heritage of areas of outstanding landscape value, and to promote public understanding and enjoyment of these areas. National parks exist in England, Scotland and Wales. Their boundaries are not constrained by any other geography, i.e. a National Park can cross council boundaries.

There are two national parks in Scotland: The Cairngorms national park and Loch Lomond & The Trossachs national park.

The Scottish Government is responsible for the legislation delimiting the boundaries of the national parks to National Records of Scotland geography branch.

Community Health Partnerships (CHPs) 2012

Community Health Partnerships (CHPs) were introduced in 2006 as a second tier of health administration in Scotland. CHPs play a key role in improving health and reducing inequalities, working with local communities and other statutory and voluntary sector providers. They report to the Scottish Health Boards.

Community Health Partnership Sub Areas 2011

Community Health Partnership Sub Areas are sub-divisions of Community Health Partnerships.

Enterprise Regions (ERs) 2008

Enterprise Regions are government-funded bodies which aim to foster local economic growth and development in Scotland. There are six ERs and these cover the whole of Scotland. Enterprise Regions replaced Local Enterprise Companies (LECs) in September 2007.

Strategic Development Planning Areas 2008

Strategic Development Planning Areas were established under the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 to prepare and keep under review a strategic development plan for its area.

Geography – Background Information – 2011 Census Higher Geography Classifications

They cover Scotland's four largest city-regions, around Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow, covering approximately 32% of the land area of Scotland

Intermediate Zones 2001

Intermediate zones are a statistical geography that sit between data zones and local authorities, created for use with the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (SNS) programme. Intermediate zones are used for the dissemination of statistics that are not suitable for release at the data zone level because of the sensitive nature of the statistics, or for reasons of reliability.

They nest within local authorities (as they were in 2001), and are built up from data zones (as they were in 2001). Each intermediate zone contains at least 2,500 residents.

Datazones 2001

Datazones are the core geography for dissemination of results from Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics (SNS). The data zone geography covers the whole of Scotland and nests within local authority boundaries (as they were in 2001).

Datazones are groups of 2001 Census output areas which have populations of between 500 and 1,000 household residents.

Scotland is divided into 6,505 data zones which are the main geography used for small area statistics. They were created in 2004 by combining 2001 Census output areas, as a way to monitor and develop policy at small area level. Each data zone has approximately the same population (750) but because population based, can vary greatly in size. The largest data zone in Scotland is 1,159 square kilometres and the smallest is 12,367 square metres.

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2012

The Scottish Government Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the Scottish Government's official tool for identifying small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across all of Scotland and is relevant to policies aimed at tackling the causes and effects of multiple deprivation. The SIMD provides a relative ranking 6,505 small areas (data zones) across Scotland from the most deprived (ranked one) to the least deprived in Scotland (ranked 6.505).

For analysis purposes, the SIMD rankings are often split into groups. For example, to allow information on the 15% most deprived areas to be compared to similar information on the other areas.

Local Administrative Unit (LAU) 2011 Level 2

LAU 1 and LAU 2 are European Union Statistical units which replaced the former Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics (NUTS) level 4 and Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics (NUTS) level 5 respectively on 11 July 2003.

Currently in Scotland, the lowest level (LAU2 areas) is based on the single-member wards which were in operation until the introduction of the multi-member wards in 2007.

Geography – Background Information – 2011 Census Higher Geography Classifications

There are 5 levels of statistical units - LAU2 (the lowest), LAU1, NUTS3, NUTS2 & NUTS1 (the highest). The highest 4 unit levels are made up of groupings of the level immediately below.

Urban Rural Classification (6 and 8 fold) 2011-2012

The Scottish Government (SG) Urban/Rural Classification provides a consistent way of defining urban and rural areas across Scotland. The classification is based upon two main criteria: (i) population as defined by the National Records of Scotland (NRS), and (ii) accessibility based on drive time analysis to differentiate between accessible and remote areas in Scotland.

The classification is available in two forms, a 6-fold classification which distinguishes between urban, rural, and remote areas through six categories, and an 8-fold classification which further distinguishes between remote and very remote regions.

Postcode Sector

Postcode Sectors are the next hierarchical level above the individual postcode. For example, if the individual postcode is EH12 3DG, then that postcode falls within Sector EH12 3. Postcode Sector boundaries and council area boundaries are not coterminous

No census data is provided at true postcode sector level.

More information on postcodes can be found in the Postcode Background Information note in the [NRS Postcode Extract](#) section of the NRS website.

Output Area 1991

NRS first created Output Areas (OAs) for the 1991 Census to allow comparability with small area statistics output from 1971 and 1981. NRS used postcodes to plan 1981 Census enumeration districts and 1991 postcode based OA generally fell within 1981 ED.

More information on 1991 Output Areas can be found in the [1991 Census Datasets](#) section of the NRS website.

Output Area 2001

NRS created Output Areas (OAs) for the 2001 Census to allow comparability with OAs for the 1991 Census. The OAs were created as groups of postcodes nesting as well as possible into the following areas: Council Area (CA), 2001 locality, 1991 OA, postcode sector and 2001 electoral ward.

More information on 2001 Output Areas can be found in the [2001 Census Datasets](#) section of the NRS website.