

Babies' First Names

2020

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This statistical report looks at the most common babies' names for Scotland and council areas in 2020, from birth certificates.

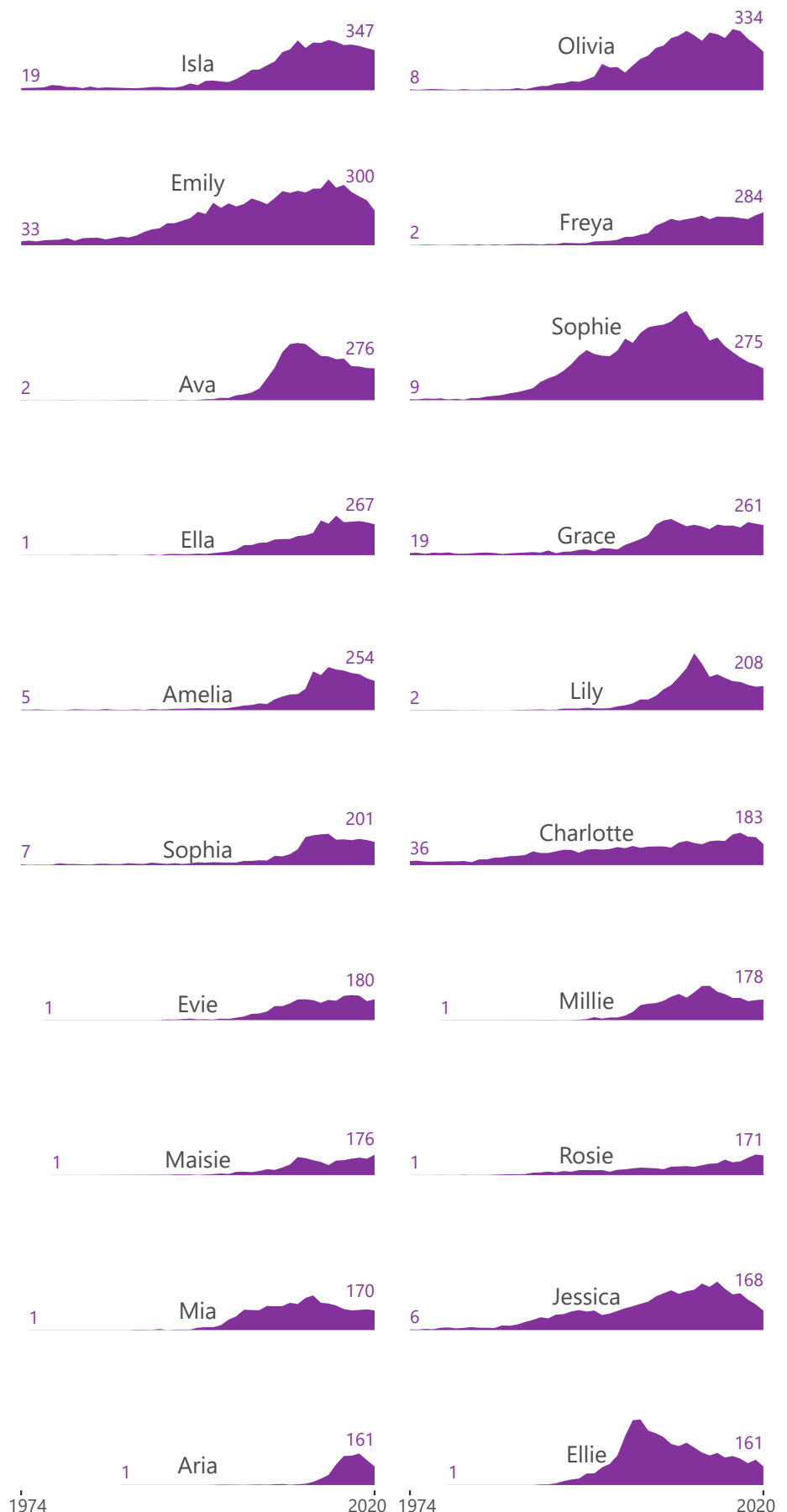
For the first time, Isla was the top baby girl's name in 2020

Isla was the top baby girl's name in 2020 despite fewer baby girls being named Isla than in previous years. This is part of a larger trend of falling births and increasing variety in baby names for both boys and girls.

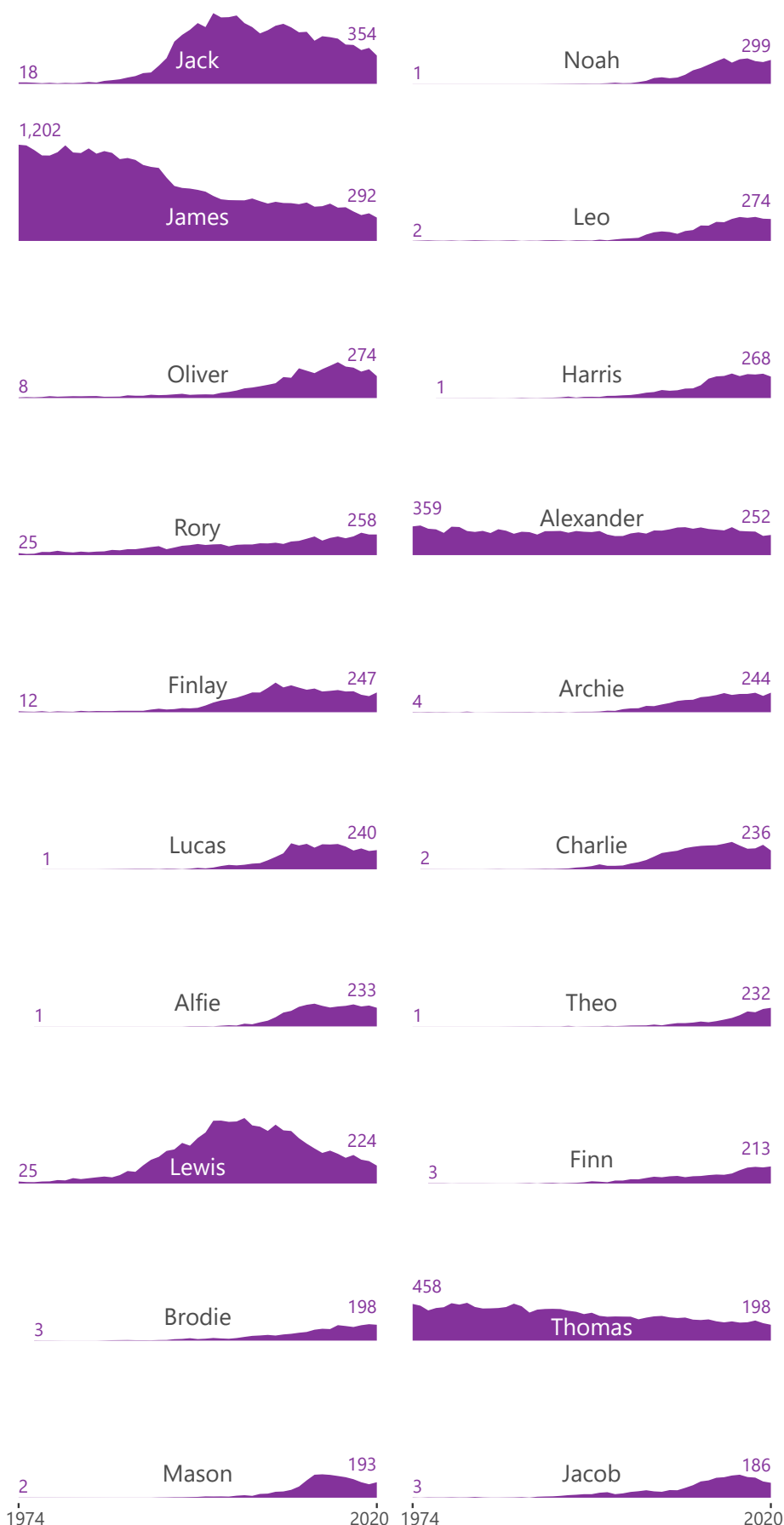
Isla was ranked top with mothers aged 35+. But only ranked 7th with mothers aged under 25.

Many more girls are now being given 'unique' names (i.e. the only girl born in 2020 given a certain name). In 1974 only about 1 in 30 baby girls were given a unique name. In 2020 about 1 in 8 baby girls were given a unique name.

Top 20 baby girl's names in 2020



Top 20 baby boy's names in 2020



Jack is the top name for the 13th year in a row

Jack was the top baby boy's name in 2020 despite fewer baby boys being named Jack over the last couple of decades. This is part of a larger trend of falling births and increasing variety in baby names for both boys and girls.

Jack was ranked second with mothers 35+ years old but only ranked 17th with mothers under 25.

Many more boys are now being given 'unique' names (i.e. the only boy born in 2020 given a certain name). In 1974 only about 1 in 50 baby boys were given a unique name. In 2020 there were more than 1 in 12 baby boys given a unique name.

The top baby names vary a lot across the country

East Dunbartonshire and Aberdeenshire were the only areas that followed the national trend with **Isla** and **Jack** being the top (or joint top) names.

All other council areas have different combinations of most popular names.

Council Area	Top girls name(s) either 1st or joint 1st	Top boys name(s) either 1st or joint 1st
Aberdeen City	Isla	Daniel
Aberdeenshire	Isla	Harris, Jack
Angus	Isla	Harris
Argyll and Bute	Olivia, Rosie	Alfie, Arran, Harry, Noah, William
City of Edinburgh	Isla	Alexander, Oliver
Clackmannanshire	Olivia	Luke
Dumfries and Galloway	Isla	Alfie, Harris
Dundee City	Ava	Alexander
East Ayrshire	Ella	Alfie
East Dunbartonshire	Isla	Jack
East Lothian	Olivia	James
East Renfrewshire	Emily	Jack
Falkirk	Emily	Brodie, Lucas
Fife	Olivia	Jack
Glasgow City	Freya	Muhammad
Highland	Emily	Archie
Inverclyde	Sophia	Jack
Midlothian	Ella	Harris
Moray	Ella	Archie
Na h-Eileanan Siar	Freya	Alexander, Lachlan
North Ayrshire	Freya	Alexander, Rory
North Lanarkshire	Olivia	Jack
Orkney Islands	Ava, Freya	Jack
Perth and Kinross	Charlotte	Oliver
Renfrewshire	Emily	Charlie, Leo, Oliver
Scottish Borders	Isla	Archie
Shetland Islands	Krissi	Brodie, Theo, Tommy
South Ayrshire	Ella, Emily	James
South Lanarkshire	Sophie	Jack
Stirling	Isla	Archie, Harris, James
West Dunbartonshire	Olivia	Noah
West Lothian	Grace, Olivia	Oliver

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Key findings

- Isla and Jack were the most common names for girls and boys in Scotland in 2020.
- Isla moved up 2 places in the overall rankings from last year, and became the most common name for girls for the first time. There were fewer girls named Isla in 2020 than in 2019, but Olivia (previously the most common, now second) and Emily (previously the second most common, now third) fell by greater amounts.
- Jack remained the most common boys name for the 13th consecutive year. Noah rose by 6 places to be the second most common name for baby boys, followed by James which remained third.
- Maeve (up by 130 places to 86th) and Ayda (up by 63 places to 91st) were the girls names that rose by the highest number of places within the top 100. For boys, Roman (up 68 places to 33rd) and Finley (up 48 places to 88th) rose by the largest number of places in the top hundred.

How has the popularity of your name changed?

Visit our [interactive charts](#) and search for any name to see how many babies were given this name between 1974 and 2020 in Scotland.

- Younger and older mothers chose different names for their babies. There were only 2 boys' names and 4 girls' names which featured in the top 10 for both mothers aged under 25 and those aged 35 or over.
- Olivia and Noah were the most common names for girls and boys with mothers aged under 25. For mothers aged 35 and over, the most common names were Isla and James.
- The variety of names has increased over time and the number of different names given to babies rose to the highest ever level in 2020. For baby girls, there were an average of 190 different names for every thousand babies, for boys it was 141 names per thousand. This means that children going to school over the next few years are much less likely to share their name with a classmate than their parents' or grandparents' generations were.
- There is also variation in baby names within Scotland, with only two out of thirty-two council areas picking both Isla and Jack as the top (or joint top) names.

Data for this publication:

[All names given to babies in 2020](#)

[All names given to babies between 1974-2020](#)

[Charts and tables from this publication](#)

Most common names

The most common babies names for girls and boys in Scotland in 2020 were Isla and Jack. This is the first time Isla has been the top name for girls, while Jack has been the top boys' name since 2008.

The boys' top ten names had three new entrants in 2020, with Alexander, Finlay and Archie replacing Charlie, Alfie and Lewis. This is the first time that Lewis has not been in the top ten since 1996. Archie and Finlay have entered the top ten for the first time.

The girls' top ten had one new entrant, with Lily replacing Charlotte. Lily was the second most common girls name back in 2011, and has returned to the top ten for the first time since 2015. An alternative spelling, Lilly, also rose by 15 places to 69th.

Table 1: Top 20 babies names in Scotland, 2020

Boys				Girls			
Rank ¹	Name	Number	Change in Ranking 2019-2020	Rank ¹	Name	Number	Change in Ranking 2019-2020
1	Jack	354	no change	1	Isla	347	+2
2	Noah	299	+6	2	Olivia	334	-1
3	James	292	no change	3	Emily	300	-1
4=	Leo	274	+3	4	Freya	284	+5
4=	Oliver	274	-2	5	Ava	276	+1
6	Harris	268	-1	6	Sophie	275	-2
7	Rory	258	+3	7	Ella	267	-2
8	Alexander	252	+3	8	Grace	261	no change
9	Finlay	247	+12	9	Amelia	254	-2
10	Archie	244	+9	10	Lily	208	+6
11	Lucas	240	+3	11	Sophia	201	+3
12	Charlie	236	-8	12	Charlotte	183	-2
13	Alfie	233	-4	13	Evie	180	+8
14	Theo	232	+2	14	Millie	178	+6
15	Lewis	224	-9	15	Maisie	176	+11
16	Finn	213	+5	16	Rosie	171	+3
17=	Brodie	198	+1	17	Mia	170	+1
17=	Thomas	198	-1	18	Jessica	168	-7
19	Mason	193	+9	19=	Aria	161	-4
20	Jacob	186	no change	19=	Ellie	161	-6

[click here to view the full list](#)

The fastest rising names in the top hundred for girls were Maeve (up by 130 places to 86th) and Ayda (up by 63 places to 91st).

There is a lot of year-on-year change in the top hundred girls names, with 14 out of the 15 new entrants to the top hundred rising by 20 places or more. As well as Maeve and Ayda, the names Autumn, Quinn, Indie, Rosa, Piper, Mollie and Nina rose by 40 or more places.

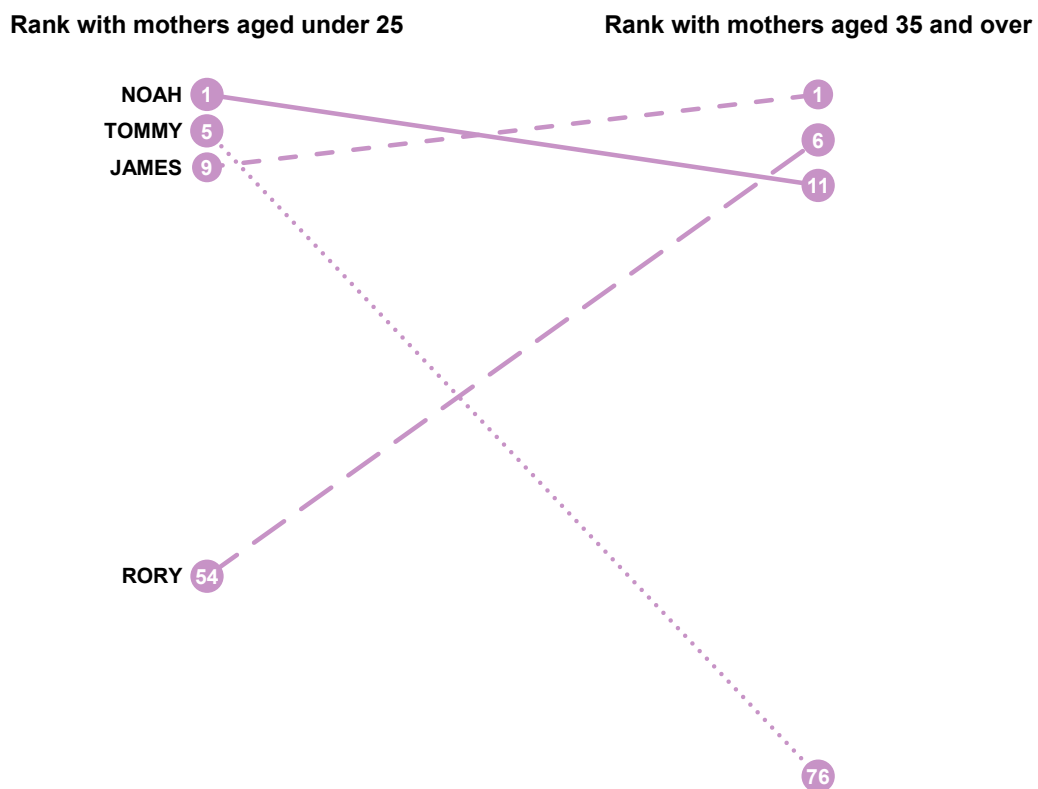
For boys, the fastest rising names in the top hundred were Roman (up by 68 places to 33rd) and Finley (up by 48 places to 88th). These names joined the top hundred along with Joey, Teddy, Robbie, Myles, Frankie and Brody.

Names by age of mother

Jack, the most popular name for boys in 2020, was the 2nd most popular name with mothers aged 35 and above, and only 17th with mothers aged under 25. James was the most popular name for boys with older mothers while Noah was ranked 1st for younger mothers.

Only 2 of the 10 leading boys names (Leo and James) chosen by mothers aged under 25 feature in the top 10 for mothers aged 35 and older. Shortened names, such as Tommy, are more popular with younger mothers with 3 included in the top 10, with older mothers preferring unabbreviated names, such as Alexander.

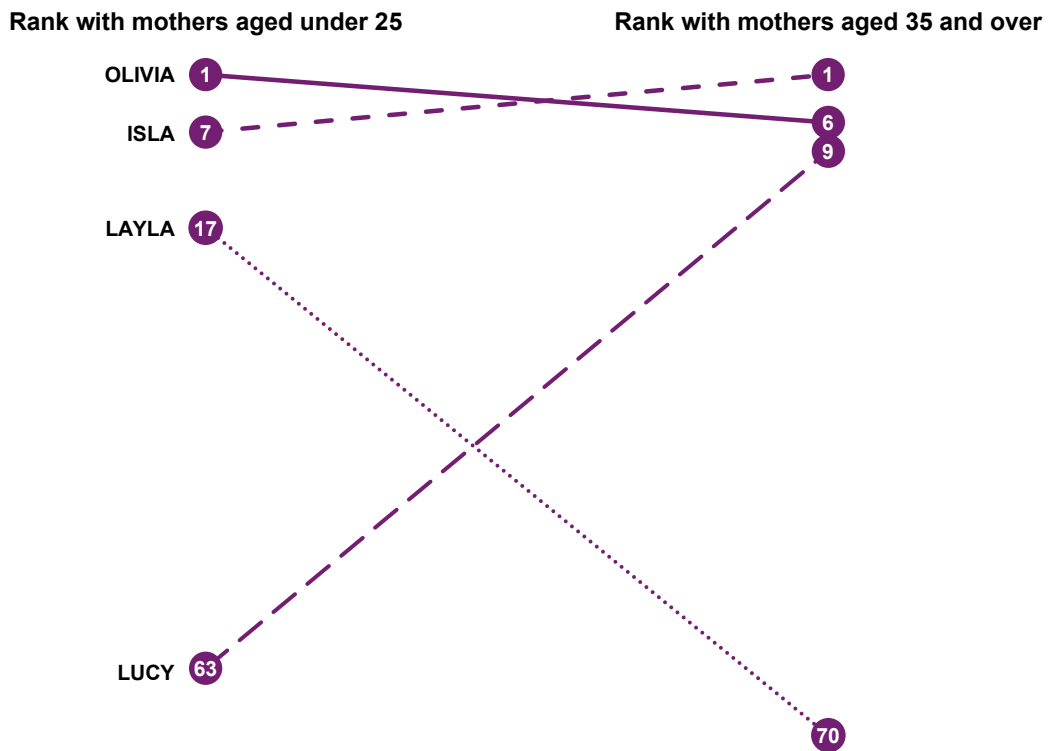
Figure 1a: Ranked boys names by mothers' age group (selected names)



Isla, the most popular name for girls in 2020, was also the most popular name with mothers aged 35 and over but only ranked 7th with mothers aged under 25. Olivia, the most popular girls name of 2019, however was ranked 1st by younger mothers and 6th by older mothers.

Of the quickly rising names mentioned in the last section, some of these increases come from mostly younger mothers and some from mostly older mothers. Maeve didn't make the top 100 for mothers over 35, but was more popular for mothers aged under 25 and aged 25-29. Autumn followed a similar trend. Quinn and Rosa all appear to be rising due to their popularity among older mothers.

Figure 1b: Ranked girls names by mothers' age group (selected names)



Variety of names chosen

In Scotland in 2020, there were 4,347 different first names given to girls and 3,375 different first names given to boys. These statistics are based on the birth registrations of 22,387 girls and 23,968 boys.

There is a much wider variety of names given to babies in 2020 compared to previous years.

Figure 2: Number of different names per 1,000 babies

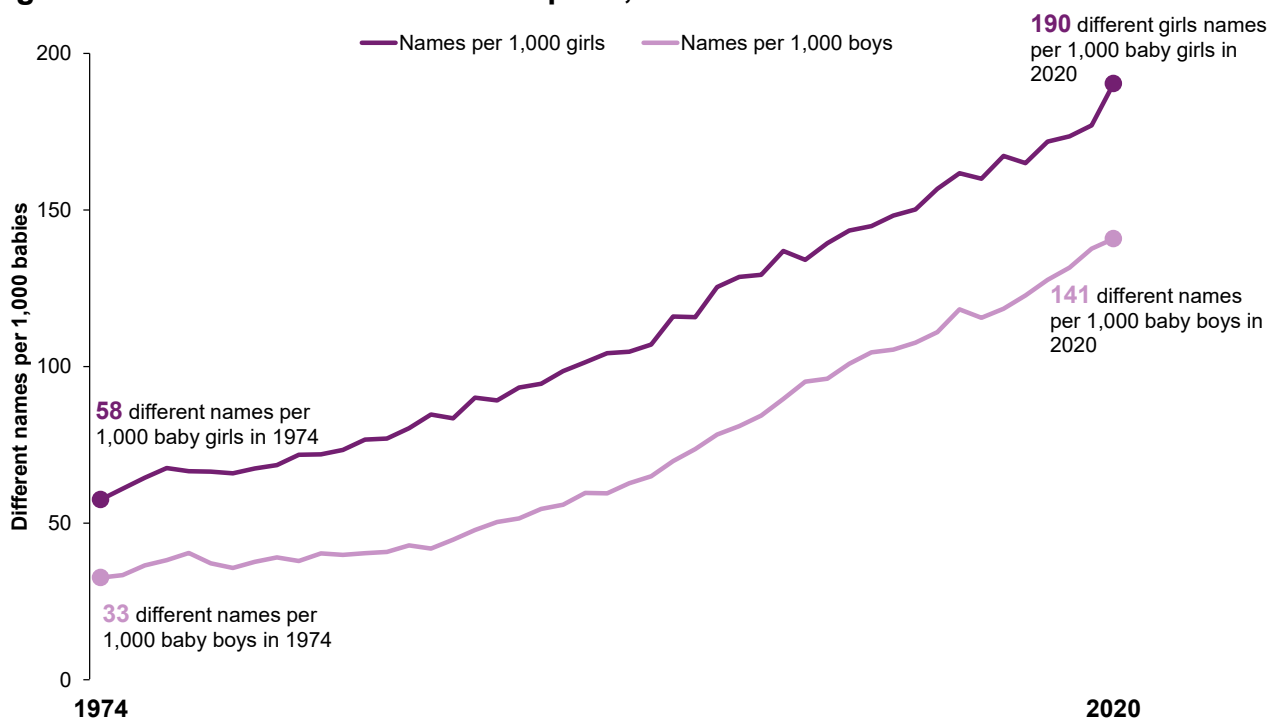
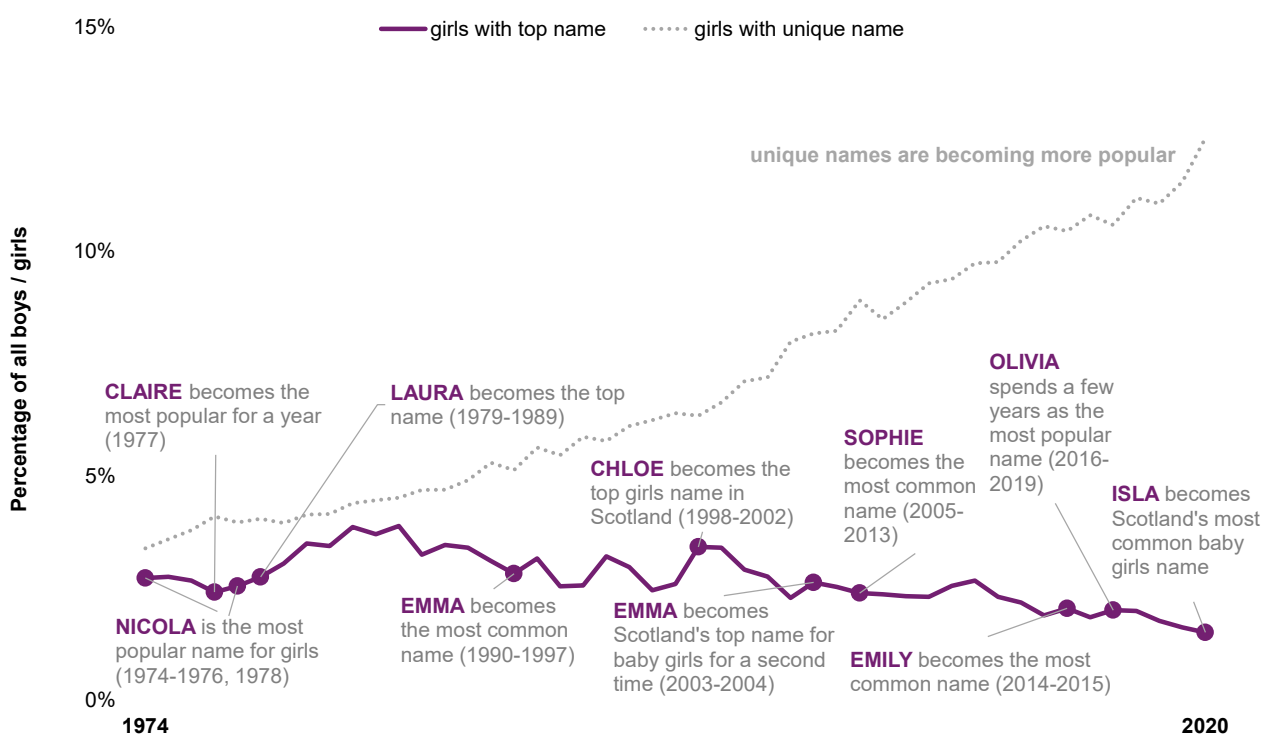


Figure 2 shows how the variety of names given to babies has risen over the years, with the range of names given to girls being consistently larger than for boys. Babies born in 2020 will be much less likely to share their name with a classmate than their parents or grandparents were, when they go to school.

A random selection of 1,000 baby girls born in 2020 would have around 190 different names between them, meaning that any one baby would be likely to share their name with 4 others. For baby girls born in 1974, there would have been around 58 different names per 1,000 babies; meaning that any one baby would share their name with an average of 16 others.

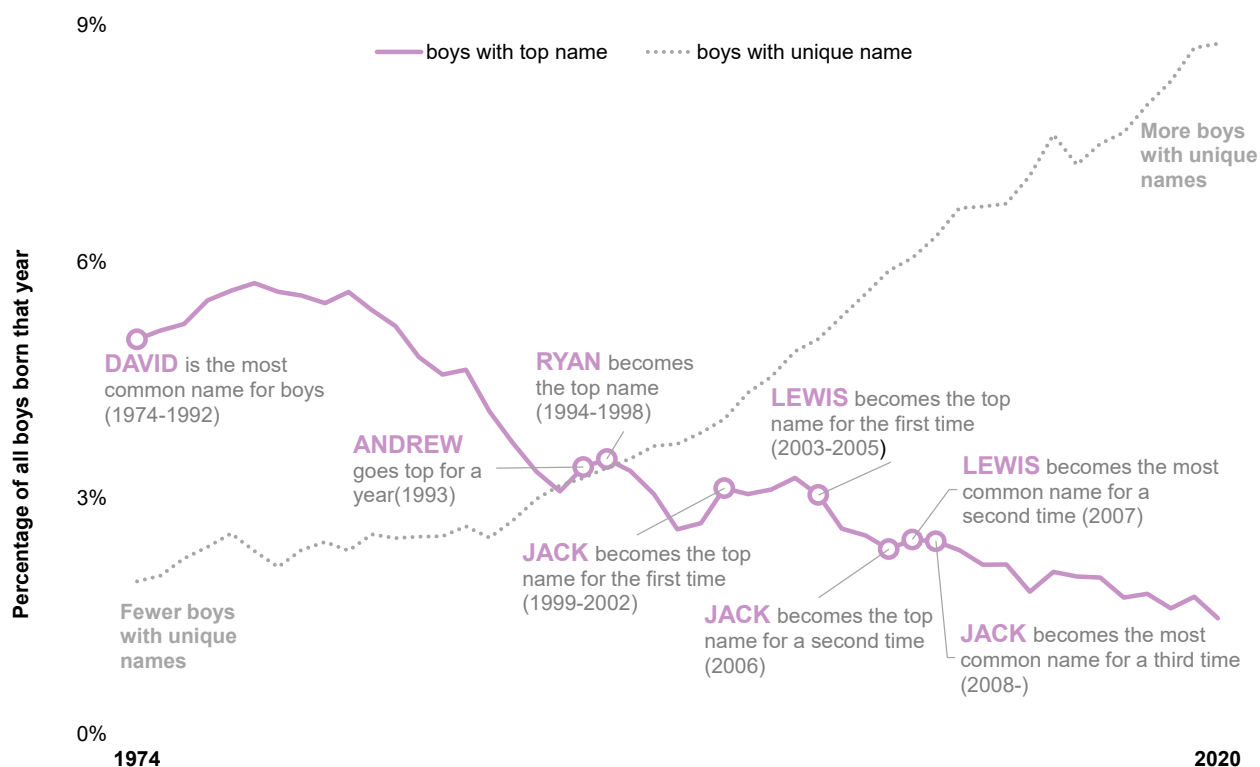
Figure 3a and Figure 3b show how the popularity of the most common baby names and unique baby names have changed over time.

Figure 3a: Most popular names and unique names (girls), 1974-2020



In 2020, 1.5% of baby girls born in Scotland had the most common name (Isla), and 12.5% had a name that no other baby girl was given. The popularity of the most common name has generally decreased over time, with the name Laura being given to nearly one in every twenty-five girls born in 1983 (3.9%), more than twice as common as Isla is now.

Figure 2b: Most popular names and unique names (boys), 1974-2020



The name Jack was given to 1.5% of boys born in 2020, while 8.8% of boys born shared their name with no other baby boy last year. Up until 1994, more boys were given the most common name for the year than were given unique names. In 1979, nearly 1 in 18 babies born was given the name David (5.7%), while around 1 in every 43 babies was given a unique name (2.3%).

Names and popular culture

Many names become popular due to appearing on TV or film, or due to a celebrity having this name.

The name Billie rose in popularity by 79% in the past two years with 34 baby girls being given this name in 2020. In the same time, Google searches in the UK for [“Billie” and “Billie Eilish”](#) spiked, with the singer having her first number one single in the UK in early 2020.

Tommy has become a more common boys names in recent years, more than doubling in popularity in the past two years with 148 boys being given this name in 2020. It has been rising ever since 2015, when only 26 boys were given this name. The popularity of this name could be linked to two different sources. Tommy Shelby (Peaky Blinders) first appeared on TV screens in 2013, with the show rising in popularity in the following years. Tommy Fury appeared on Love Island in June 2019. Both names were [frequently searched on google in the past few years](#).

Names by area within Scotland

The top girls' name, Isla, was the most common girls' name in a quarter of Scotland's council areas (eight out of thirty-two). The top boys' name, Jack, was also the top name in eight areas, with the only two areas to have both Isla and Jack as top or joint top being East Dunbartonshire and Aberdeenshire.

Isla was the top girls' name in eight council areas, Olivia was the most common, or joint most common, in seven. Emily was the most common, or joint most common, five areas; Freya and Ella were the most common or joint most common in four areas.

Jack was the top or joint top name in eight areas, with Harris top or joint top in five areas. Archie, Alexander and Oliver were top or joint top in four areas.

Notes on statistical publications

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