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**RIGHT TIME, WRONG PLACE AS ‘SINGLE’ HOTSPOTS REVEALED**

***– New report reveals a nationwide ‘singles gap’ in single men to women ratio –***

* Report reveals areas with the highest ratio of single women to single men
* Single hotspots revealed as ‘City of London’ (single men) and ‘Knowsley’ Merseyside (single women), with rural singles gap set to widen over next decade
* New analysis factors out non-cohabiting couples included as ‘single’ in previously-published Office for National Statistics (ONS) data[[1]](#endnote-1)

The odds of finding a single man or woman are stacked against daters living in certain areas, according to the findings of a new report.

The second part of eHarmony.co.uk’s [*‘Future of Dating’* report](http://www.eharmony.co.uk/relationship-advice/dating/2014/05/future-of-dating/?cid=78356) – *‘The State of Singles’* – compiled by the Future Foundation, identifies the growing ‘singles gap’ in the number of single women to single men (aged 18-64) and vice versa around the country.

Its findings reveal that the ratio of single women to single men is generally higher in cities than in rural areas[[2]](#endnote-2) and pinpoints the local area districts (LADs) in England and Wales that have the highest number of singles of each gender.

The top hotspots for single females, i.e. the LADs with the highest number of single females compared to men, are Knowsley (120 single men per 100 single women), Enfield (116), Wandsworth (114), Barking and Dagenham (113) and Chichester (113). *See table 1.*

While the two biggest hotspots for single men are in urban areas – City of London (155 single men per 100 single women) and Newham (126) – across the country as a whole, a higher ratio of single to women can be found in rural areas, with sparsely-populated areas such as the Isles of Scilly (119) and Forest Heath (117) appearing in the top-ten hotspots for single men. *See table 2.*

Unlike the ONS definition of ‘single’ (which is all people who are not married and not cohabiting, regardless of whether they are in a relationship or not), this study excludes people who are in a relationship but not living together from the ‘single’ population, to give a more accurate picture of the location of truly single Britons in England and Wales.

The report reveals that overall young single women (aged 18-34) are in shorter supply than young single men, primarily because women enter relationships younger than men on average. This means much of the pool of young women (aged 18-34) are living with men in the older age group (aged 35-64) and therefore not ‘single’.

Young men have the best chance of finding young single women in the city (where there are 88 young single women for every 100 young men) than in rural areas (where there are 81 young single women for every 100 young men).

Interestingly the figures reveal a ‘doughnut effect’ around London specifically, with a higher ratio of single women living in the outer boroughs (especially Enfield, Bromley, Barking and Dagenham, and Croydon, all of which are in the top-ten hotspots for single women nationwide), but with a higher ratio of men in the middle (e.g. City of London, Tower Hamlets and Newham).

Over the next decade, the report forecasts that the singles gap in rural areas could widen, as increasing numbers of country-based women pursue urban careers and higher earnings. This in turn will put further emphasis on matchmaking services to connect couples, with more than half of couples[[3]](#endnote-3) set to meet online by 2031.

Romain Bertrand, Managing Director of eHarmony.co.uk, said: “Meeting that special someone can be tough. With busier lives than ever it can be hard to find the time to get out there and meet people, and sometimes it’s a case of simply not being in the right place at the right time. That’s where online dating can really make a difference. People want great, quality dates with people they’re truly compatible with. At eHarmony we use science to make this happen, using our unique compatibility matching system to get to know our members in order to set up better like-minded matches.”

**– Ends –**

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**Table 1. The top 10 single WOMEN hotspots (Local areas districts with the highest single female to single male ratios, in England and Wales, ages 18-64)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Rank**  | **Area** | **Single women per 100 single men** |
| 1 | Knowsley | 120 |
| 2 | Enfield | 116 |
| 3 | Wandsworth | 114 |
| 4 | Barking and Dagenham | 113 |
| 5 | Chichester | 113 |
| 6 | Bromley | 113 |
| 7 | South Hams | 112 |
| 8 | Hertsmere | 111 |
| 9 | Croydon | 111 |
| 10 | Hammersmith and Fulham  | 111 |

**Table 2. The top 10 single MEN hotspots (Local areas districts with the highest single male to single female ratios, in England and Wales, ages 18-64)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Rank**  | **Area** | **Single men per 100 single women** |
| 1 | City of London  | 155 |
| 2 | Newham | 126 |
| 3 | Isles of Scilly | 119 |
| 4 | Cambridge  | 117 |
| 5 | Forest Heath  | 117 |
| 6 | Stafford  | 116 |
| 7 | Southampton  | 116 |
| 8 | Copeland  | 115 |
| 9 | Tower Hamlets  | 115 |
| 10 | Eden  | 114 |

**Table 3. Ratio of single men and women, split by age, and by urban/rural**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Women** | **Men** |
| Single women (aged 18-64) per 100 single men (18-64) | Single women (aged 18-34) per 100 single men (aged 18-34) | Single women (aged 35-64) per 100 single men (aged 35-64)  | Single men (aged 18-64) per 100 single women (aged 18-64)  | Single men (aged 18-34) per 100 single women (aged 18-34)  | Single men (aged 35-64) per 100 single women (aged 35-64) |
| Urban | 99 | 87 | 114 | 101 | 114 | 88 |
| Rural  | 97 | 80 | 111 | 103 | 125 | 90 |

**Methodology**

The Future Foundation constructed estimates for numbers of single men and women for each local area district by combining two sources: 1) Local area profiles by five year age bands, gender and living arrangement, derived from Census 2011 data. 2) Nationally representative survey research which asked respondents if they were in a 'steady' relationship with someone they did not live with. The age/gender/living arrangement profile of each area thus gave rise to a) the numbers of non-married and non-cohabiting adults (from Census data) and in addition b) estimates for the number of single adults not currently in a relationship with a non-resident partner.

**About eHarmony.co.uk**

eHarmony launched in the United Kingdom in 2008, following a period of extensive research into love and relationships in the UK. Working in partnership with the Oxford Internet Institute at the University of Oxford, a multi-disciplinary research team gathered and analysed data to identify the patterns that predict compatibility for couples throughout the United Kingdom. After conducting the research, eHarmony developed models of compatibility specific to the United Kingdom resident population and now offers a UK relationship service based on a series of scientific models known as the Compatibility Matching System®. eHarmony.co.uk has amassed 3.5m registered users since launching in 2008.

1. Source: ONS figures on singles define ‘single’ as those who are not married and are not cohabiting with their partner – so actually includes people in steady relationships with a partner who they don’t live with as ‘single. This study also includes people who are not in a steady non-residential relationship as ‘single’ in order to give a more accurate representation of the number of people who are single and available for a relationship. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Source: the Future Foundation. For the purpose of this study 'urban' is the top-50 most densely populated local area districts in England & Wales, 'rural is the top-50 least densely populated local area districts in England & Wales. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Source: The Future Foundation ‘Future of Dating’ report (Part 1), published in January 2014. Further information available upon request. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)