

JSNA Health and Wellbeing Profile 2024/25

Births

Nationally, the story of births is one of decreases and record lows, with the total number of births continuing the fall. Fertility rates have been decreasing in all age groups, except for women aged 40 years and over.

The number of births in Bristol gradually increased from the year 2000 onwards, reaching a peak of 6,800 births per annum in 2012 (calendar year). Since then births in Bristol have fallen gradually. In 2023 (calendar year) the number of births fell to 4,771, a fall of 30% since the peak in 2012 and the lowest number since 2002. This fall in births remains in line with the recent trend of decreasing live births observed before the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

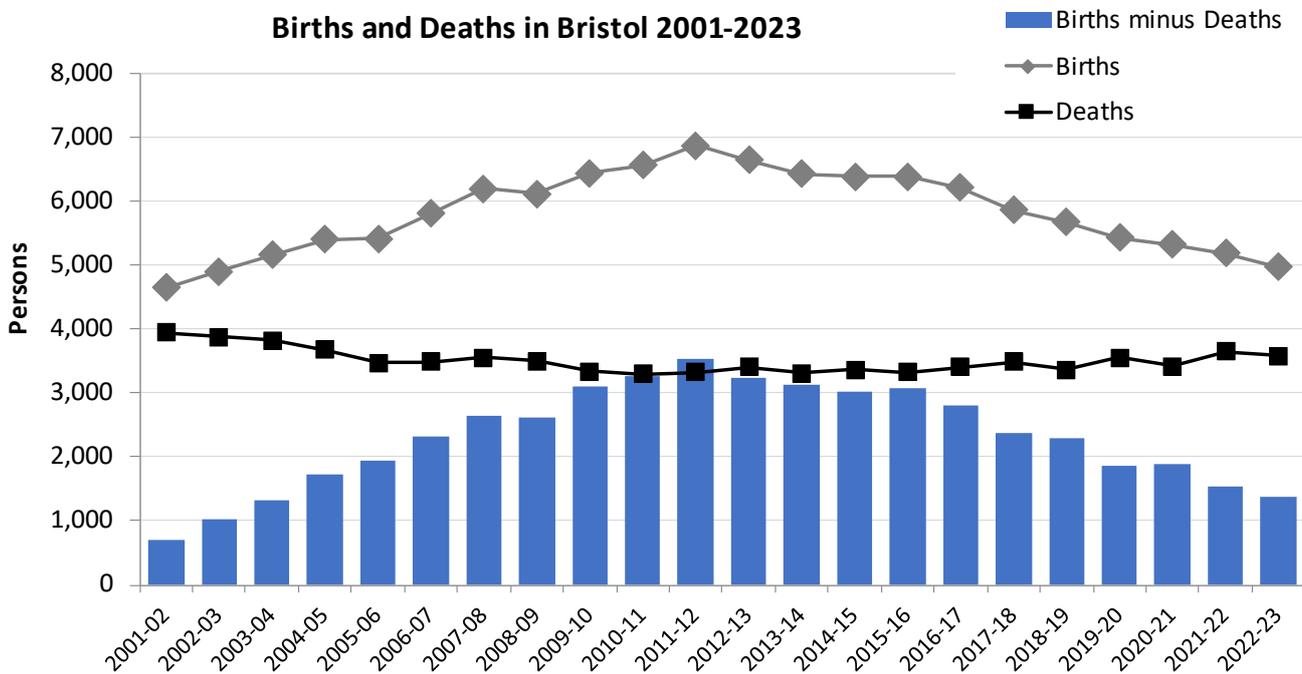


Figure 1: Births and Deaths in Bristol mid-2001 to mid-2023
Source: ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates licensed under the Open Government Licence.

The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) for England and Wales in 2023 was 1.44 children per woman, the lowest since records began in 1938. The Total Fertility Rate in Bristol in 2023 was lower than nationally at 1.14 children per woman, down from 1.22 in 2022. The average age of mothers at childbirth in England and Wales in 2023 was 30.9 years. The average age of mothers in Bristol is older than nationally at 33.0 years.

Changes in total fertility rate are driven mainly by women born in the UK as they make up the majority of the population of childbearing age (Figure 2). However, non-UK born women make up an increasing share of the population, which also acts to push fertility rates upwards. The percentage of births in Bristol to non-UK born mothers has increased from 13% in 2001 to 31.7% in 2022. In 2021, the Total Fertility Rate for non-UK born women in England and Wales was estimated to be 2.03 children per woman, compared to 1.54 for women born in the UK.

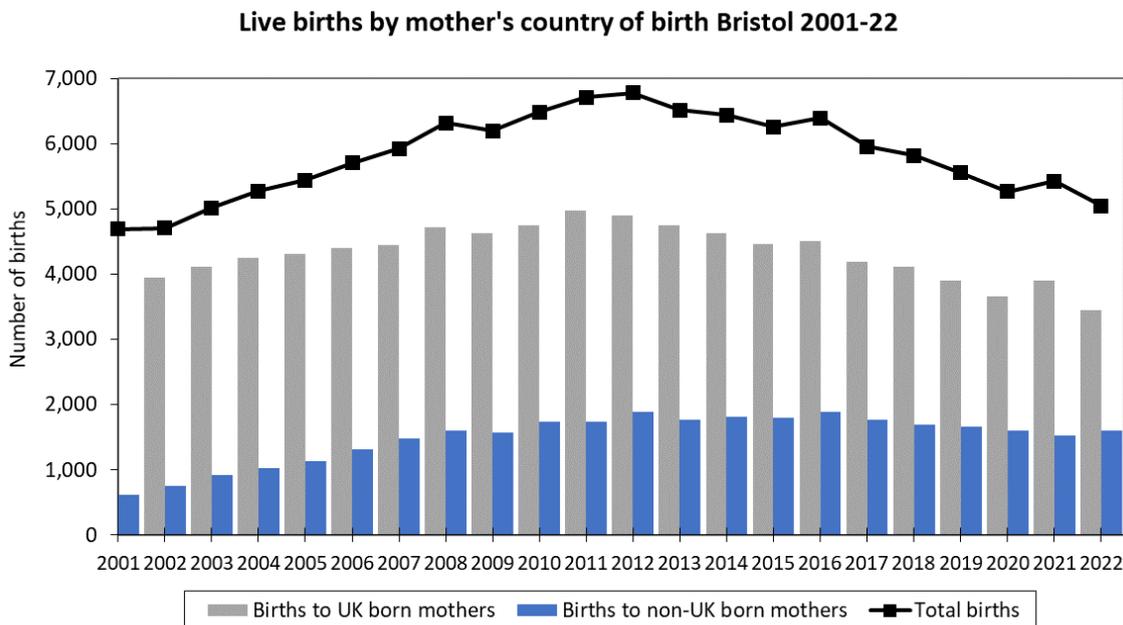


Figure 2: Live births by mother's country of birth Bristol 2001-22
 Source: ONS Annual District Birth data by calendar year

The recent fall in births is seen across the city (Figure 3).

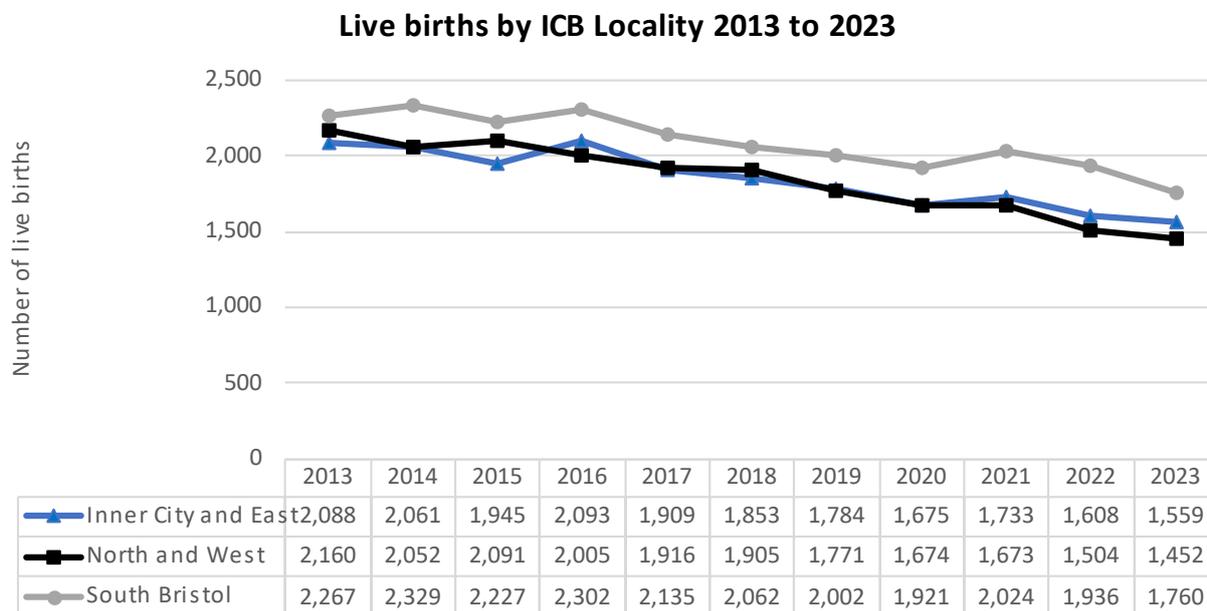


Figure 3: Live births by ICB Locality 2013 to 2023
 Source: ONS Vital Statistics by calendar year

Components of population change

In Bristol, there are more live births than deaths each year resulting in an increase in the population due to natural change (Figure 1). Over the last decade (2013-2023), there were a total of 57,800 births and 34,450 deaths, resulting in a population increase of 23,350 due to natural change alone. Natural change accounted for just over half (53%) of the total population change in Bristol over the decade.

In the 12 months to mid-2023 however, natural change accounted for just a third (32%) of the population change in Bristol. The majority of the population change was due to net international migration into the Bristol local authority area from outside of the UK (+6,800), together with a net loss of people moving from Bristol to other parts of the UK (-3,800).

Further data / links / consultations:

- Bristol City Council population <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/population>
- NOMIS Life Events <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

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