

Population Profile

Summary points

- Bristol is the largest city in the South West and the 8th largest of the 12 UK 'Core Cities'. The mid-2025 population of Bristol is estimated to be 495,300. The population is currently projected to increase to 526,600 people by 2032 – a 10% increase between 2022-32 (England 6.4%) and the 2nd highest % increase of the Core Cities in England.
- In the 12 months to mid-2025, Bristol's population grew by only 0.2% (England & Wales 0.4%). However, Bristol is one of only two Core Cities in England and Wales with an increase in population (though both of less than 1%).
- Looking back over the last decade (2015-2025) Bristol's population grew by an estimated 43,500 people, a 9.6% increase (England and Wales grew by 7.1%). This is the 3rd largest percentage population increase of the nine Core Cities in England and Wales.
- Bristol has a relatively young age profile with an average age of 33.6 years compared to 40.7 years in England & Wales as a whole. Over the last decade, people aged 19-28 years accounted for more than half (53%) of the total population increase in Bristol, whilst the number of children aged under 10 fell by 16%.
- Bristol is home to a wealth of cultures and creative ideas, and the city continues to build on its strengths as a safe and welcoming place to all, including as a City of Sanctuary that values its diversity.

Population trend

The population of Bristol continued to grow up to mid-2025¹, reaching an estimated 495,300 people. The population increased by just 1,000 people (0.2%, England & Wales 0.4%) over the 12 months to mid-2025. This was the lowest rate of increase since mid-2021 and was primarily due to fall in international net migration. Bristol is the 8th largest of the 12 UK 'Core Cities'.

Between 2021 and 2024, Bristol saw a large increase in population, at levels similar to the years before the EU Referendum. In the year to mid-2025 however, population growth has slowed significantly (Figures 1 and 2).

Over the last decade (2015-2025) Bristol's population grew by an estimated 43,470 people – a 9.6% increase. England and Wales grew by 7.1%. Over the decade Bristol had the third highest percentage population increase of the Core Cities in England and Wales.

¹ ONS Mid-2025 (provisional) Population Estimates, published 29 July 2026. A usual resident is anyone who was in the UK and had stayed or intended to stay in the UK for a period of 12 months or more, or had a permanent UK address and was outside the UK and intended to be outside the UK for less than 12 months. Students are counted at their term time address.

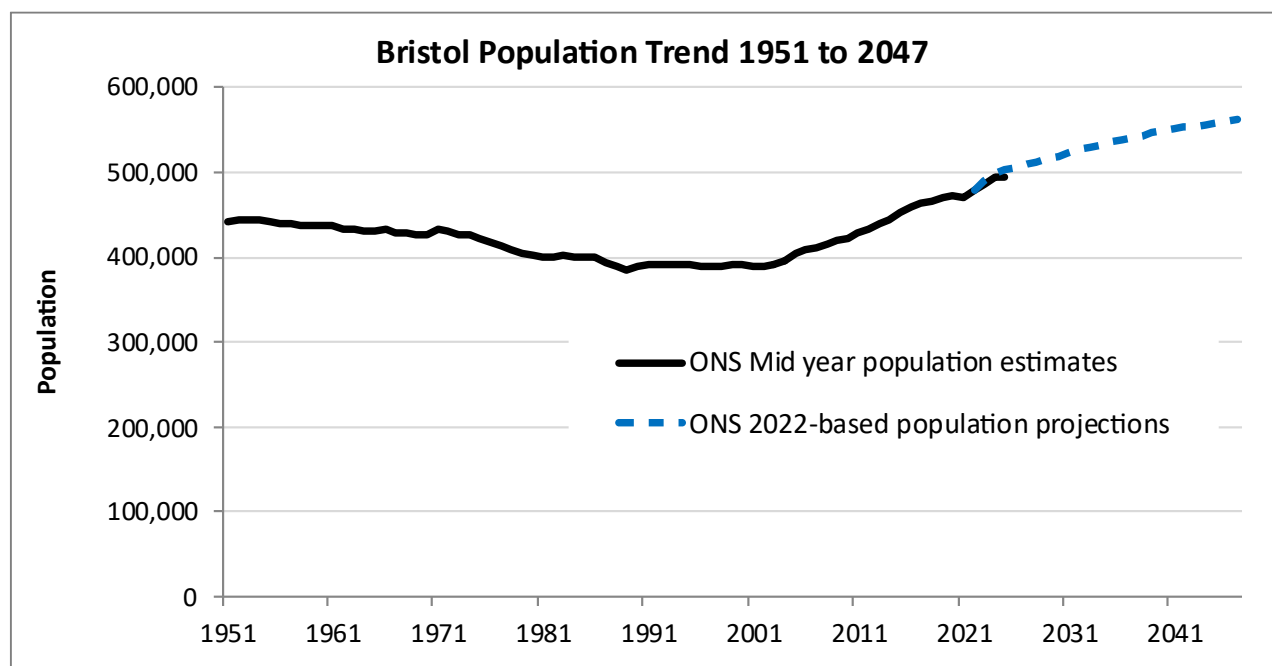


Figure 1 Bristol Population Trend 1951 to 2047

Source: ONS Population Estimates and 2022-based Population Projections. ONS licensed under the Open Government Licence.

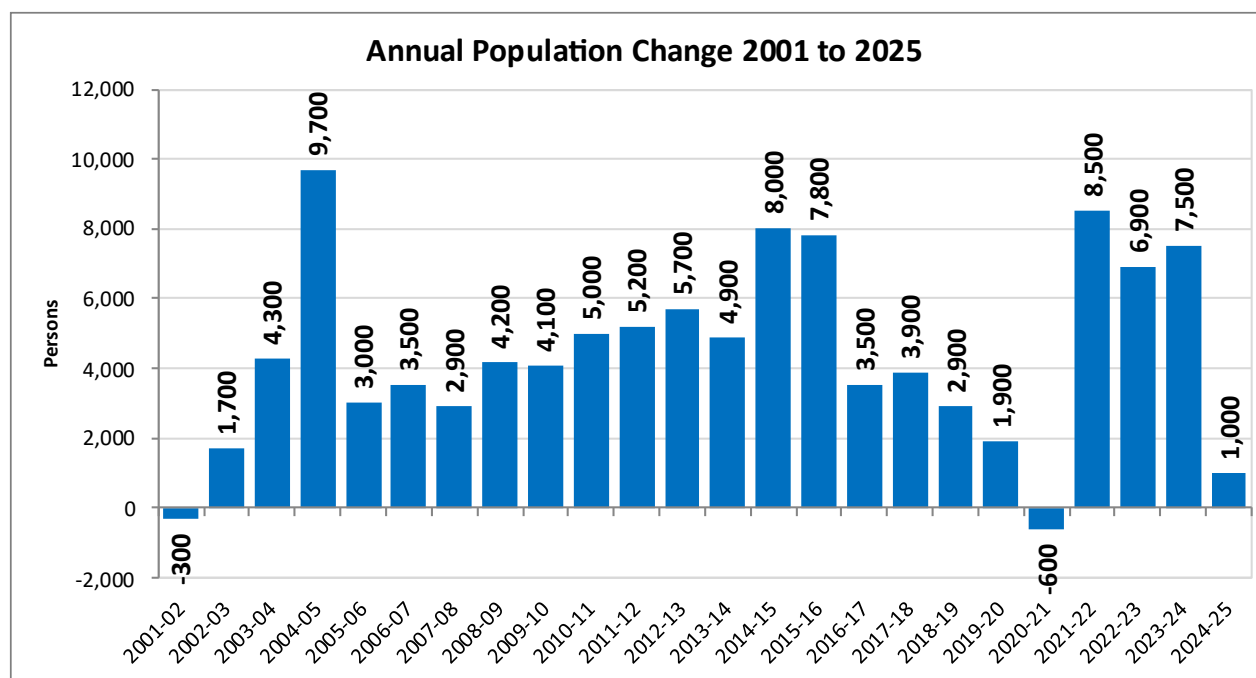


Figure 2 Bristol Population Estimates 2001 to 2025

Source: ONS Population Estimates. ONS licensed under the Open Government Licence.

Population age profile

Bristol has a relatively young age profile. The median age of people living in Bristol in 2025 was 33.6 years old, this compares to the England and Wales median of 40.7 years. Figure 3 and Figure 4 show the age profile of the population.

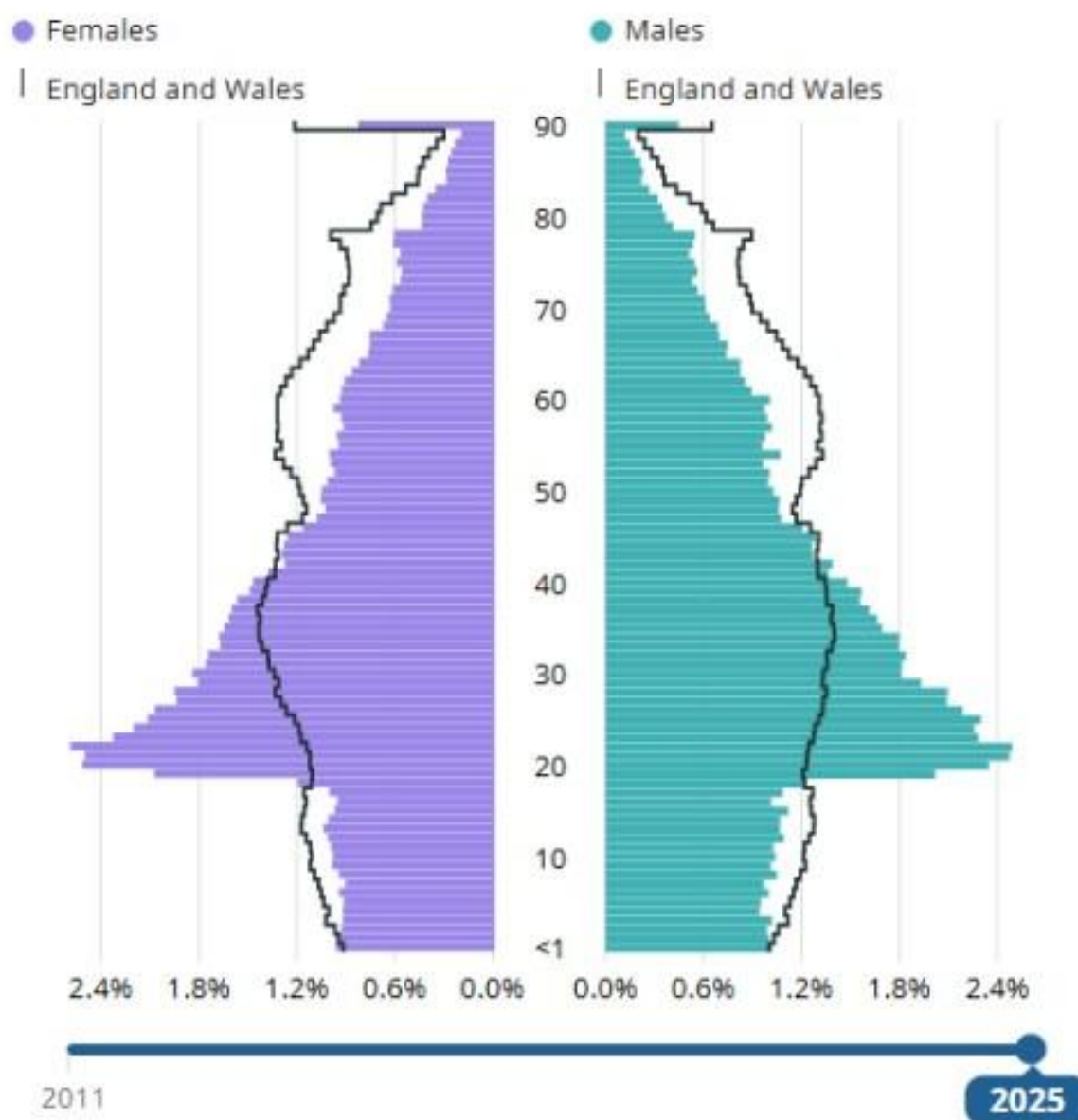


Figure 3 Mid-2025 Population Pyramid by age and sex - Bristol and England and Wales

Source: ONS Population Estimates. ONS licensed under the Open Government Licence.

	Males	%	Females	%	Persons	%	E&W%
0-15	40,369	16.4	38,592	15.5	78,961	15.9	17.9
16-24	42,404	17.2	43,378	17.4	85,782	17.3	10.7
25-49	99,261	40.2	97,015	39.0	196,276	39.6	33.1
50-64	35,491	14.4	35,694	14.4	71,185	14.4	19.1
65 and over	29,134	11.8	33,922	13.6	63,056	12.7	19.3
All ages	246,659	100.0	248,601	100.0	495,260	100.0	100.0

Figure 4 Mid-2025 Population Estimates by Age and Sex for Bristol

Source: ONS Population Estimates. ONS licensed under the Open Government Licence.

Children

Bristol's 79,000 children make up 15.9% of the total population, however this proportion continues to fall due to falling numbers of births. Over the decade (2015-25), the overall number of children living in Bristol fell by 4,381 (-5.3%), whilst England and Wales saw an increase of 1.7%. Within this, the number of children aged under 5 years old fell by 21% (-6,532) and the number of children aged 5-9 years fell by 10% (-2,676). Over the same period, the number of 10-15 years increased by 18.5% (+4,827).

Working age

Bristol has a higher proportion of working age (16-64 years) people than nationally – 71.3% of the total population in Bristol is of working age compared to 62.9% in England and Wales. The highest proportions are amongst the 20-34 year olds which make up almost a third (31%) of Bristol's total population compared to just 19% nationally. Many of the people in this age group are students living in Bristol during term time.

The working age population in Bristol has increased by 44,000 people (+14.2%) since 2015 compared to an increase of just 6.2% in England and Wales as a whole. The greatest increase was in the number of 19-28 year olds, with this age group growing by 23,000 (+26%) over the decade; nationally this age group grew by less than 1%. The population increase in this age band alone accounted for more than half (53%) of the total population increase in Bristol between 2015 and 2025.

Older people

Bristol's 63,100 older people aged 65 years and over make up 12.7% of the total population. The proportion of older people is much lower than in England and Wales where almost a fifth (19.3%) of the population are aged 65 and over. There are 8,600 people living in Bristol aged 85 years and older.

Although the number of older people has increased year-on-year, Bristol does not have an ageing population according to the official definition^{1F} as the median age of the population and older people as a proportion of the total population in Bristol has been falling.

Over the decade 2015-25 the number of older people aged 65 and over in Bristol increased by 6.5%, a much lower increase than in England and Wales where there was a 16.1% increase. Within this large age group, the number of older people aged 70-79 years in Bristol grew by 4,138 (+17.3%), whilst the number aged 80 years and over remained unchanged. Nationally, the number of people aged 70-79 increased by 24.3% and those aged 80 and over by 20.2%.

Population within Bristol

The total usually resident population based on Mid-2024 estimates in each ICS locality and sub-locality is shown in figure 5. Bristol North and West has the largest resident population with a total population of 190,813 (39% of Bristol total), South Bristol has a population of 158,899

(32% of Bristol total) and Inner City and East has a total population of 144,687 (29% of Bristol total).

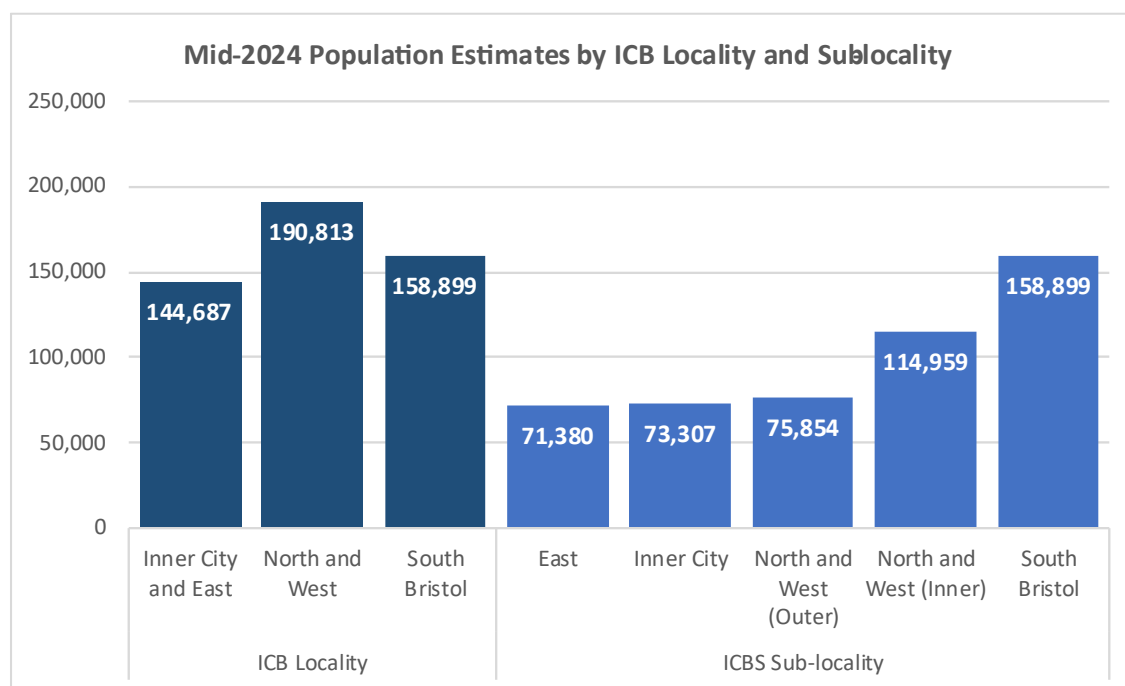


Figure 5 Mid-2024 Total Population by ICB Locality and Sub-locality

Source: ONS Mid-Year Estimates from NOMIS

The number of people by broad age band in each ICS locality is shown in figure 6.

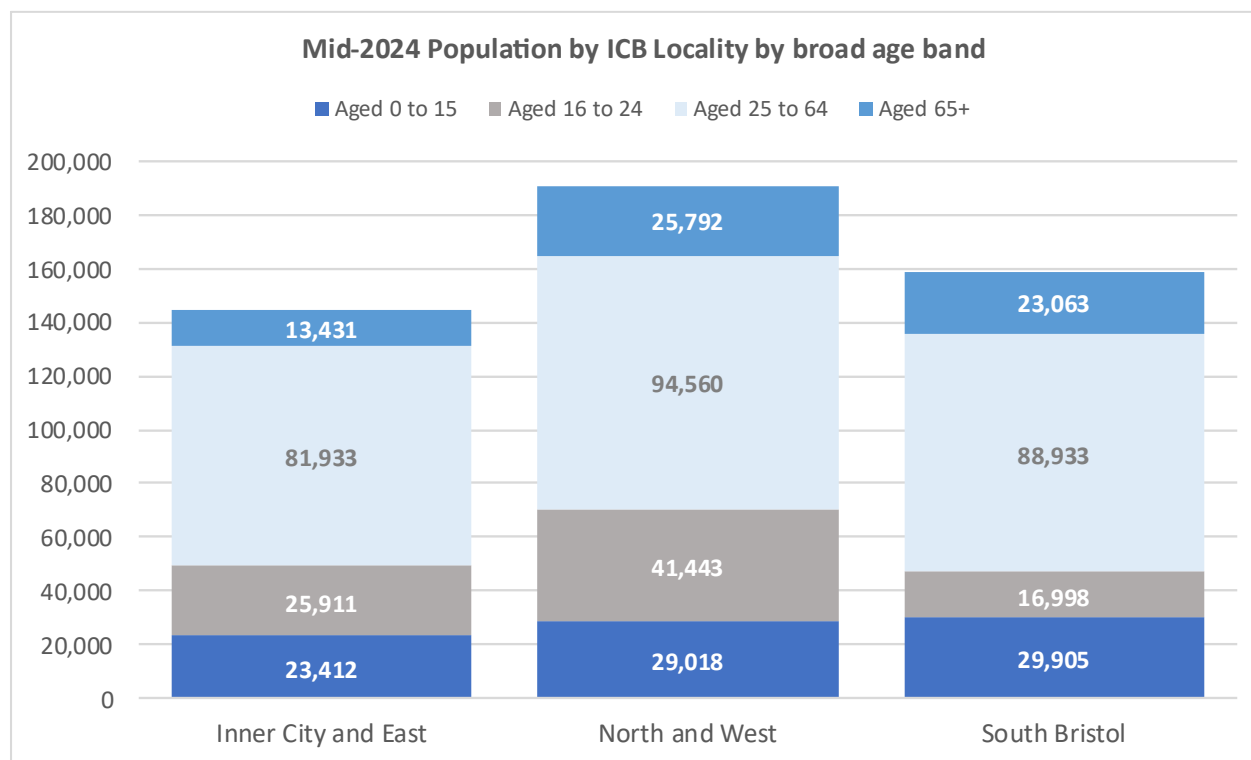


Figure 6 Mid-2024 Population Age Profiles by ICB Locality

Source: ONS Mid-Year Estimates from NOMIS

Population change within Bristol

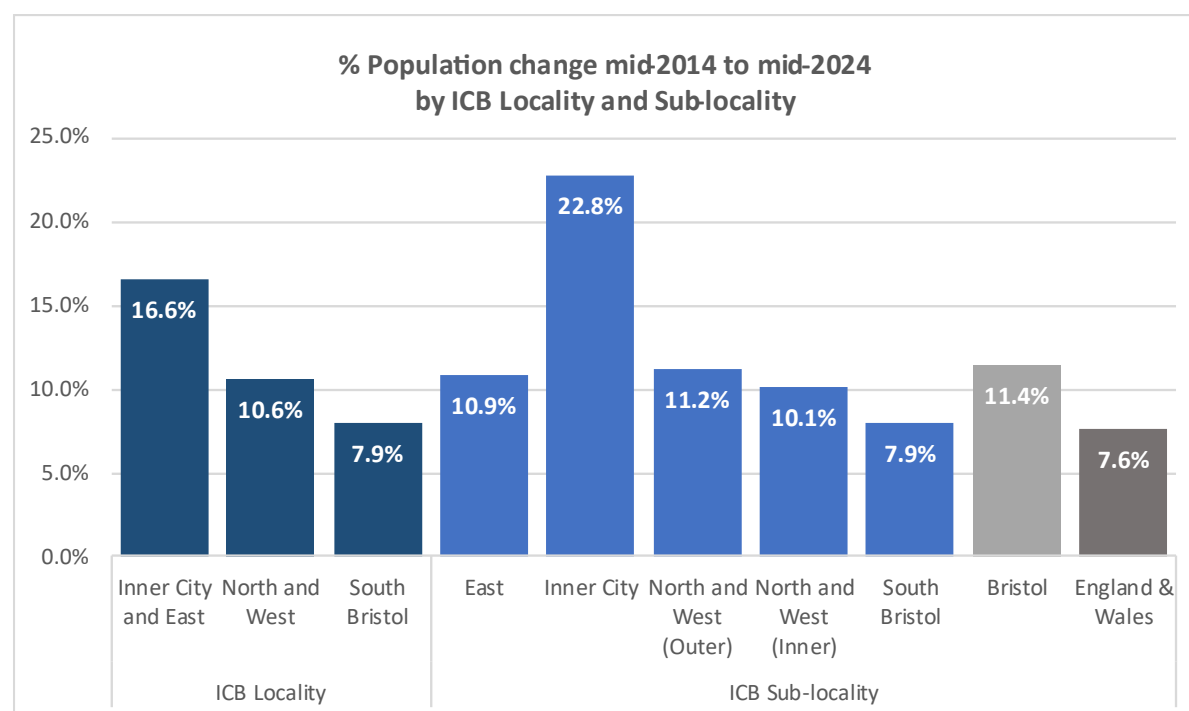


Figure 7 Population Change mid-2014 to mid-2024 by ICB Locality and Sub-locality

Source: ONS Mid-Year Estimates from NOMIS

Looking at population change between mid-2014 and mid-2024 by ICB locality and sub-locality (figure 7), the highest levels of growth were in Inner City sub-locality which increased by 22.8%. Lowest levels of growth were in South Bristol at 7.9%.

Within localities rates of change vary considerably with implications for how services can manage demand and where services should most appropriately be located.

The components of population change vary from area to area across Bristol. Whilst there have been significant levels of births in some areas, the growth in the population of central areas of Bristol, appears to be due to large increases in net-migration, including students.

Population diversity

Ethnic group (Census 2021)

Bristol has seen a significant rise in net international migration since the Census in 2021, in particular from India, China, Ukraine, Nigeria, Pakistan and Hong Kong. See JSNA Migration Profile for more details.

The population of Bristol is increasingly diverse - figure 8 shows the increase in the population belonging to an ethnic minority group (i.e. all groups except White British) since 2001.

Figure 9 shows the population in 2021 by 18 ethnic groups (White British not shown). Across the 19 ethnic groups in Bristol, the largest percentage point increase over the last decade was seen in the number of people identifying as 'Other White' – 8.3% in 2021 (E&W 6.2%), up from 5.1% (E&W 4.4%) in 2011.

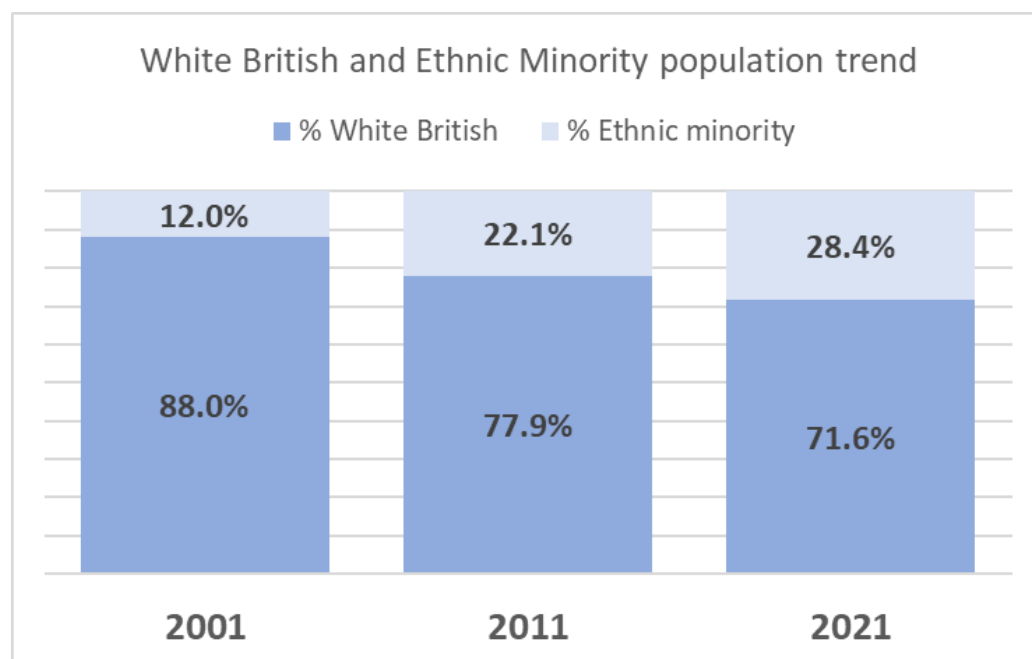


Figure 8 White British and Ethnic Minority Population Trend
Source: ONS Census 2001, 2011 and 2021 from NOMIS

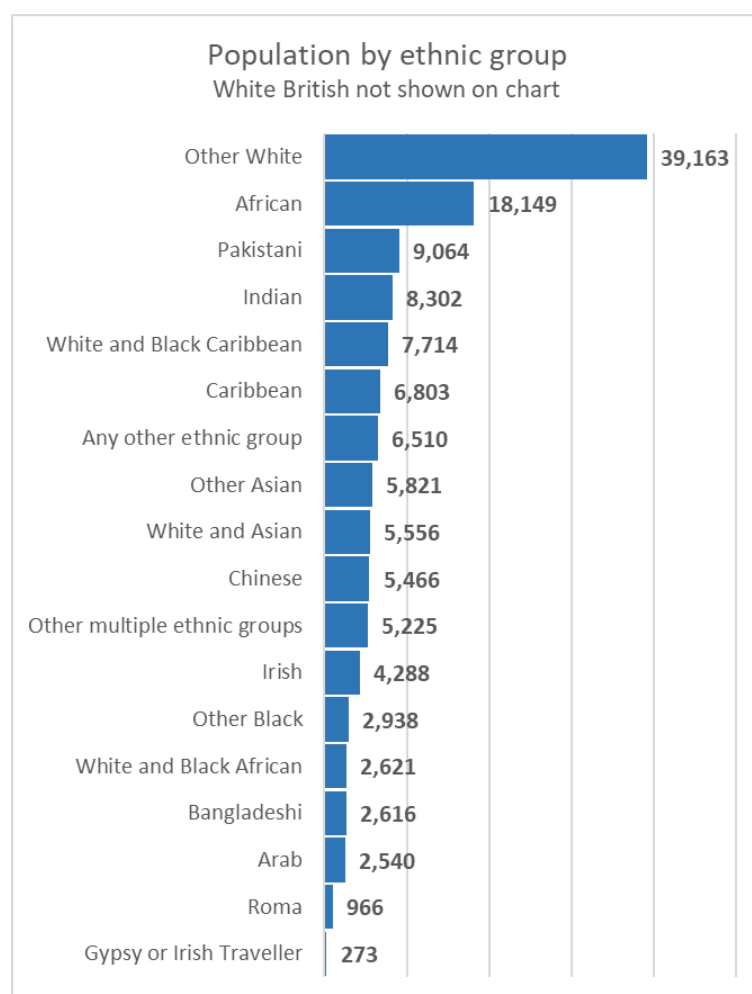


Figure 9 Population by ethnic group (White British not shown)
Source: ONS Census 2021 from NOMIS

The write-in functionality has enabled ONS to produce a detailed ethnic group classification providing insight into 287 individual ethnic groups. In Bristol the largest ethnic minority groups in 2021 were Somali 9,167 (1.9%), Pakistani 9,103 (1.9%) and Indian 8,371 (1.8%).

Country of birth (Census 2021)

Bristol has seen a significant rise in net international migration since the Census in 2021, in particular from India, China, Ukraine, Nigeria, Pakistan and Hong Kong. See JSNA Migration Profile for more details.

The non-UK born population in Bristol has more than doubled over the last two decades, increasing from 8.2% in 2001 to 18.8% in 2021, a higher proportion than the England and Wales average of 16.8% (figure 10). This affects changing health needs of the local community and communicating best routes to access appropriate health services.

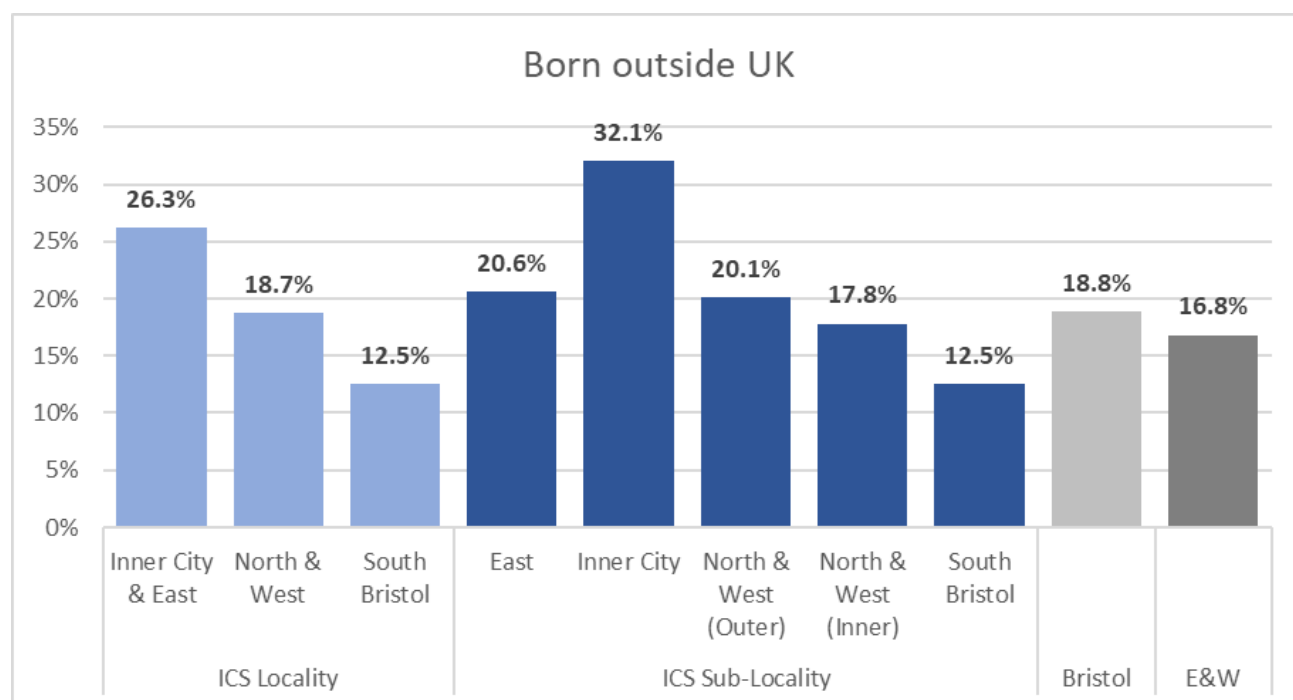


Figure 10 Population Born Outside the UK by ICS Locality and Sub-locality

Source: ONS Census 2021 from NOMIS

Diversity across the city (Census 2021)

Inner City and East has the largest ethnic minority population of the three ICS localities with 43.5% of the total resident population belonging to an ethnic minority group, this is higher than the Bristol average 28.4%. In Inner City sub-locality more than half (52.6%) of the usual residents belong to an ethnic minority group. Lower ethnic minority populations are in North and West 26.1% and South Bristol 17.8%.

The distribution of the ethnic minority population across Bristol is shown in figure 12 and summary data by ICS Localities and Sub-localities is shown in figure 11.

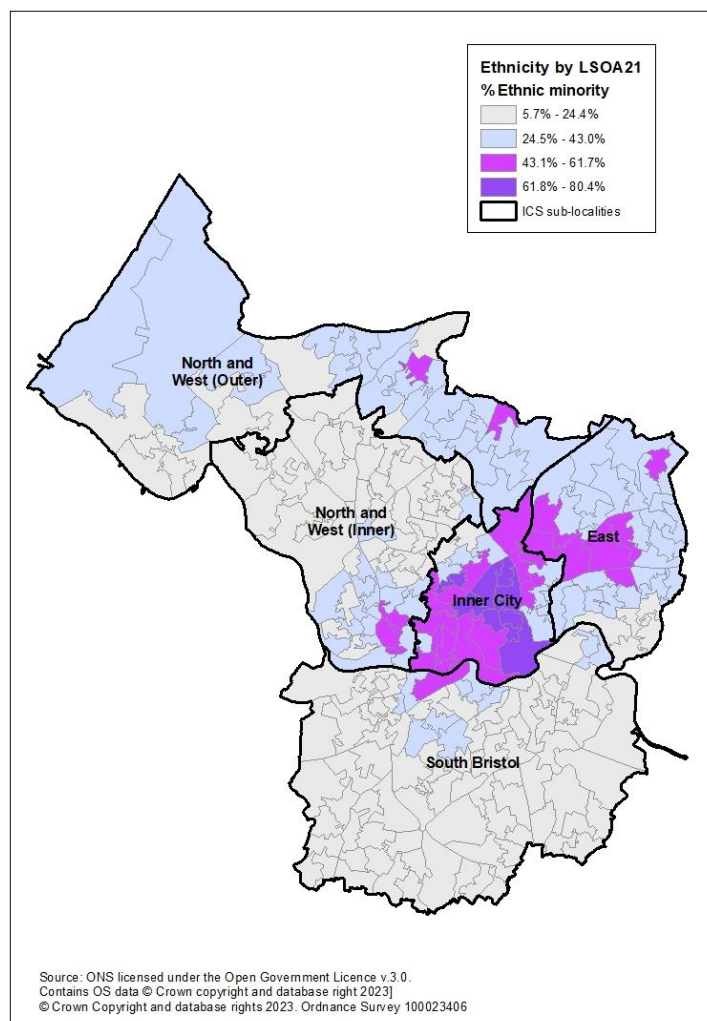


Figure 11 Ethnic Minority Population by Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA21) and ICS Sub-locality
 Source: ONS Census 2021 from NOMIS

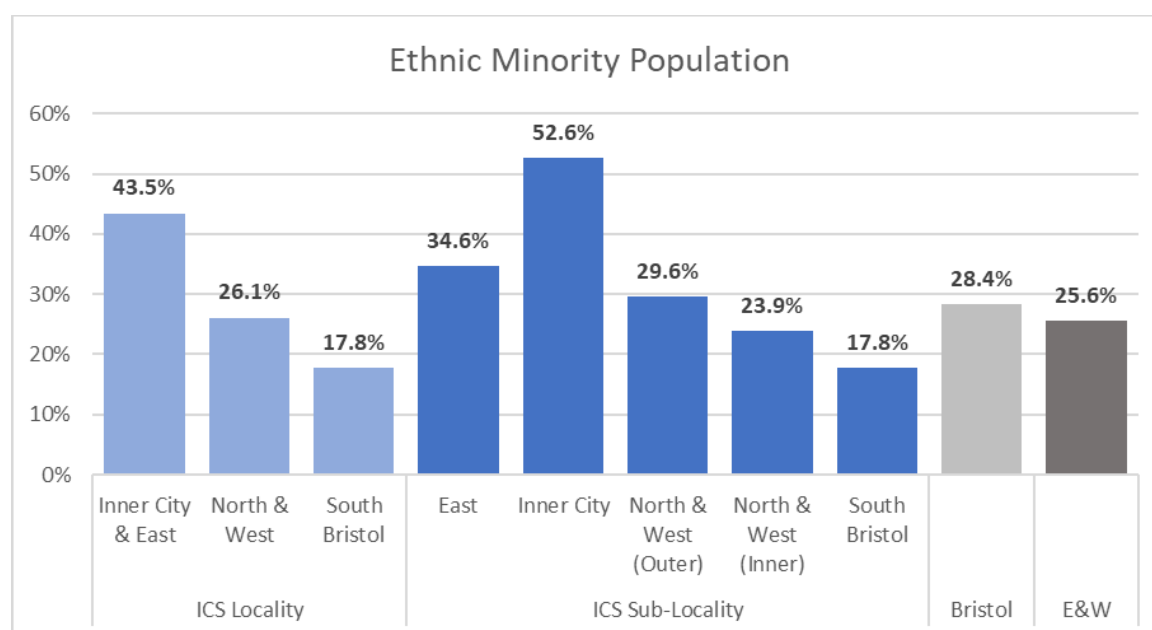


Figure 12 Ethnic Minority Population by ICS Locality and Sub-locality
 Source: ONS Census 2021 from NOMIS

Further data / links:

The Population of Bristol report <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/population>

Population-related JSNA Profiles include:

1. JSNA - Population Projections
2. JSNA - Births
3. JSNA - Migration

Population profiles for equalities groups are also available on the [BCC population web page](#) including ethnic group, religion, Disabled, sexual orientation, Trans, older people and Somali population.

Bristol Census 2021 results are presented via two dashboards:

- Headline Census 2021 results for Bristol overall are presented in the [Census 2021 Dashboard](#).
- Detailed data for areas within Bristol are in the [Bristol Census Data Profiles dashboard](#). The new Census Data Profiles dashboard include: Area Profiles (all census indicators for a selected geographic area) and Topic Profiles (an individual indicator mapped across the city)

Links to ONS tools are available from the [Bristol City Council Census web page](#)

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Contact details: research@bristol.gov.uk