

JSNA Health and Wellbeing Profile 2023/24

Population

Summary points

- Over the decade 2012-2022 Bristol was the second fastest growing of all the Core Cities in England and Wales after Manchester. Bristol's population grew by an estimated 45,800 people – a 10.6% increase. England and Wales grew by 6.5%.
- In the 12 months to mid-2022, the population of Bristol grew by 7,740 (1.6%) up from 471,300 (mid-2021) – this is the largest annual increase in population by far since before the EU Referendum in 2016.
- Net international migration was the largest component of population growth in Bristol in the 12 months to mid-2022 and was the highest net international migration in almost two decades.
- As seen nationally, there has been a marked change in immigration since 2021, with the majority of immigration now non-EU nationals. Increases in non-EU migration include both international students and workers. Bristol has seen a very significant rise in the number of in-migrants from India in the last 2 years, plus other countries including China, Ukraine, Nigeria, Pakistan and Hong Kong.
- Bristol has a relatively young age profile with a median age of 33.9 years compared to 40.6 years nationally.
- The city is increasingly diverse. At the time of the 2021 Census 28.4% of the population were from an ethnic minority group, ranging from 17.8% in South Bristol to 52.6% in the Inner City sub-locality.

Population trend

The usually resident population of Bristol local authority is estimated to be 479,000¹, the 8th largest city in England and Wales outside of London.

Following a period of population decline in the post war years, the population of Bristol stabilised in the 1990s (figure 1). This was followed by a period of unprecedented population growth until the EU Referendum in 2016. From 2016 until the Covid-19 pandemic, the population of Bristol increased annually but at a slower rate than the previous decade. Following the pandemic, 2021/22 saw a large increase in the population, at a level similar to the years before the EU Referendum.

¹ ONS Mid-2022 Population Estimates, published November 2023. 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.

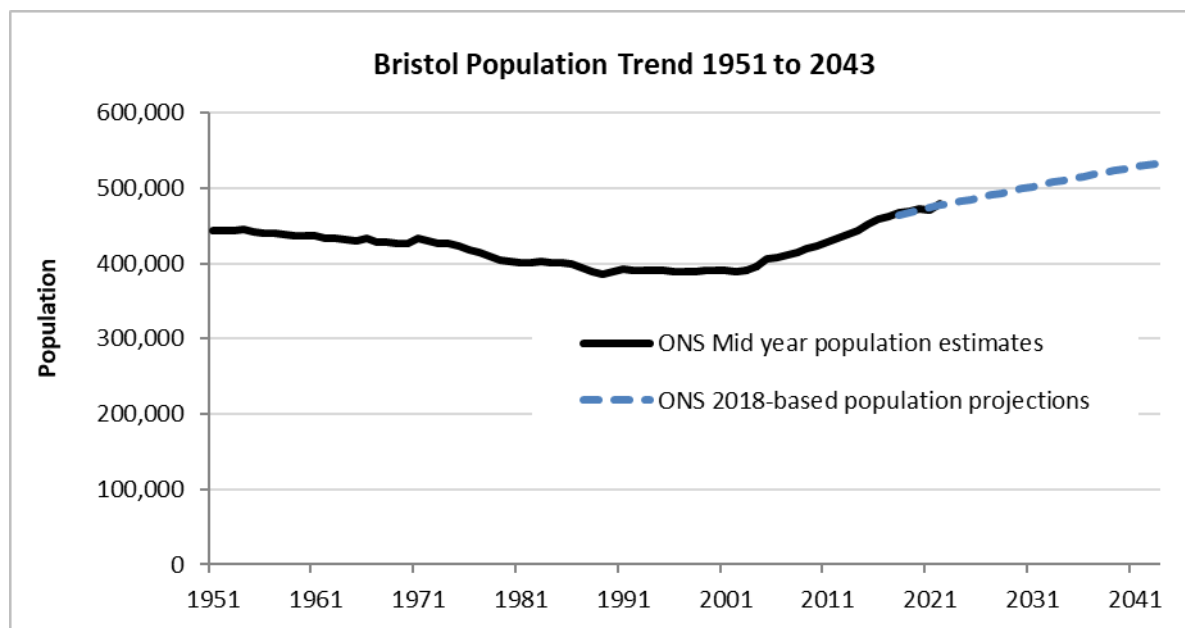


Figure 1 Bristol Population Trend 1951 to 2043

Source: ONS Population Estimates and 2018-based Population Projections. ONS licensed under the Open Government Licence.

In the 12 months to mid-2022, the population of Bristol grew by 7,740 (1.6%) up from 471,300 (mid-2021) – this is the largest annual increase in population by far since before the EU Referendum in 2016 (figure 2). The main factor behind this growth was a large increase in international migration including students and people coming from abroad to work (see Components of population change).

Figure 2 shows annual population change in Bristol since 2001.

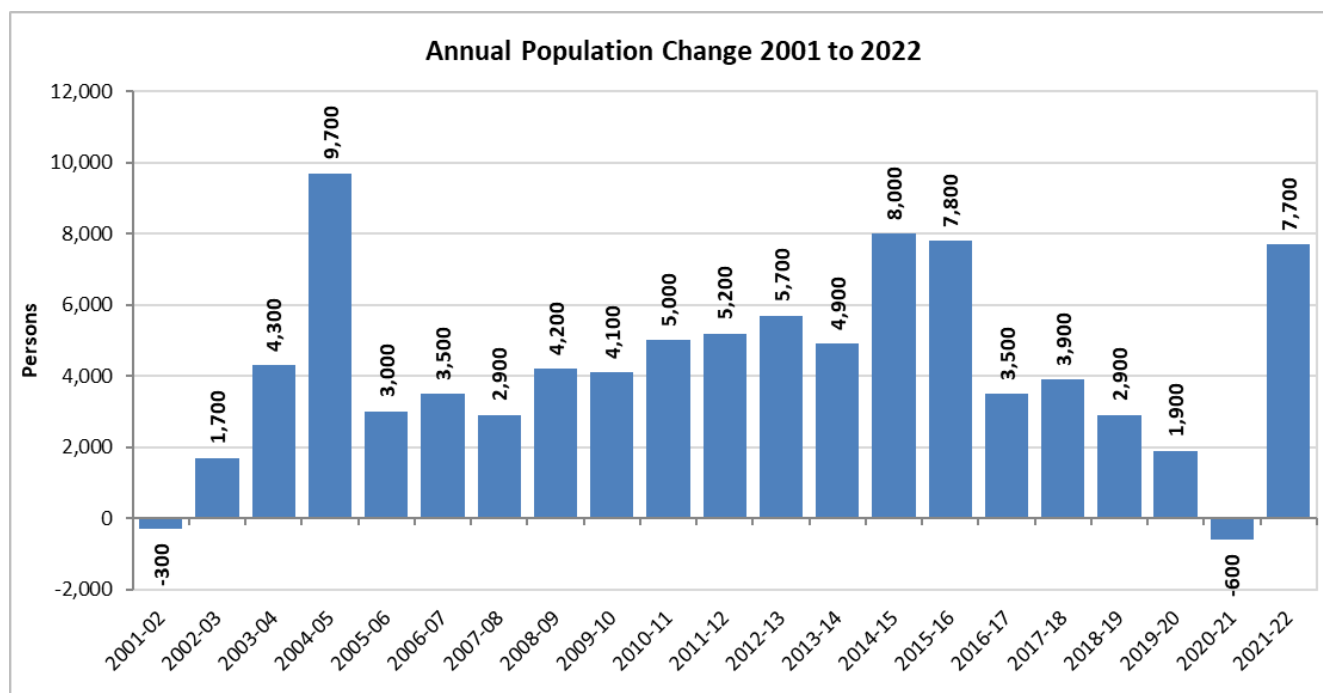


Figure 2 Bristol Population Estimates 2001 to 2022

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

Components of population change

Annual population change is driven by births, deaths and migration. Collectively, these are referred to as the 'components of change'. The difference between the number of live births and the number of deaths is known as 'natural change'.

Over the last decade (2012-2022), there were a total of 59,500 births and 34,300 deaths, resulting in a population increase of 25,200 due to natural change alone. Natural change accounts for just over half (55%) of the total population change in Bristol over the decade.

In the 12 months to mid-2022 however, natural change accounted for just 20% (+1,500) 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 (+7,200), together with a small net loss of people from Bristol to other parts of the UK (-1,000). For the first time since the expansion of the EU in 2004/5, net international migration to Bristol was almost 5 times higher than natural change (births minus deaths) and was the highest net international migration in almost two decades.

As seen nationally, there has been a marked change in immigration since 2021. Until 2019 EU nationals were the larger component of total immigration, whereas since 2021 the majority of immigration is now non-EU nationals. This coincides with free movement ending for EU nationals, the introduction of the graduate visa route, the easing of travel restrictions following the COVID-19 pandemic and external developments such as the war in Ukraine.

Increases in non-EU migration include both international students and workers. Bristol has seen a very significant rise in the number of in-migrants from India in the last 2 years, plus other countries including China, Ukraine, Nigeria, Pakistan and Hong Kong.

Population age profile

Bristol has a relatively young age profile. The median age of people living in Bristol in 2022 was 33.9 years old, this compares to the England and Wales median of 40.6 years. Figure 3 and Figure 4 show the age profile of the population.

Children

There are more children living in Bristol than people aged 65 and over. Bristol's 82,200 children make up 17.2% of the total population. However, over the decade (2012-22), the overall number of children living in Bristol increased by just 1,726 (2.1%), lower than the England and Wales increase of 4.3%. Within this, the number of children aged under 5 years old in Bristol fell by 18% (-5,500), whilst the number of children aged 5-15 years increased by 14% (+7,200). The trends reflect the fall in the number of births in Bristol in more recent years.

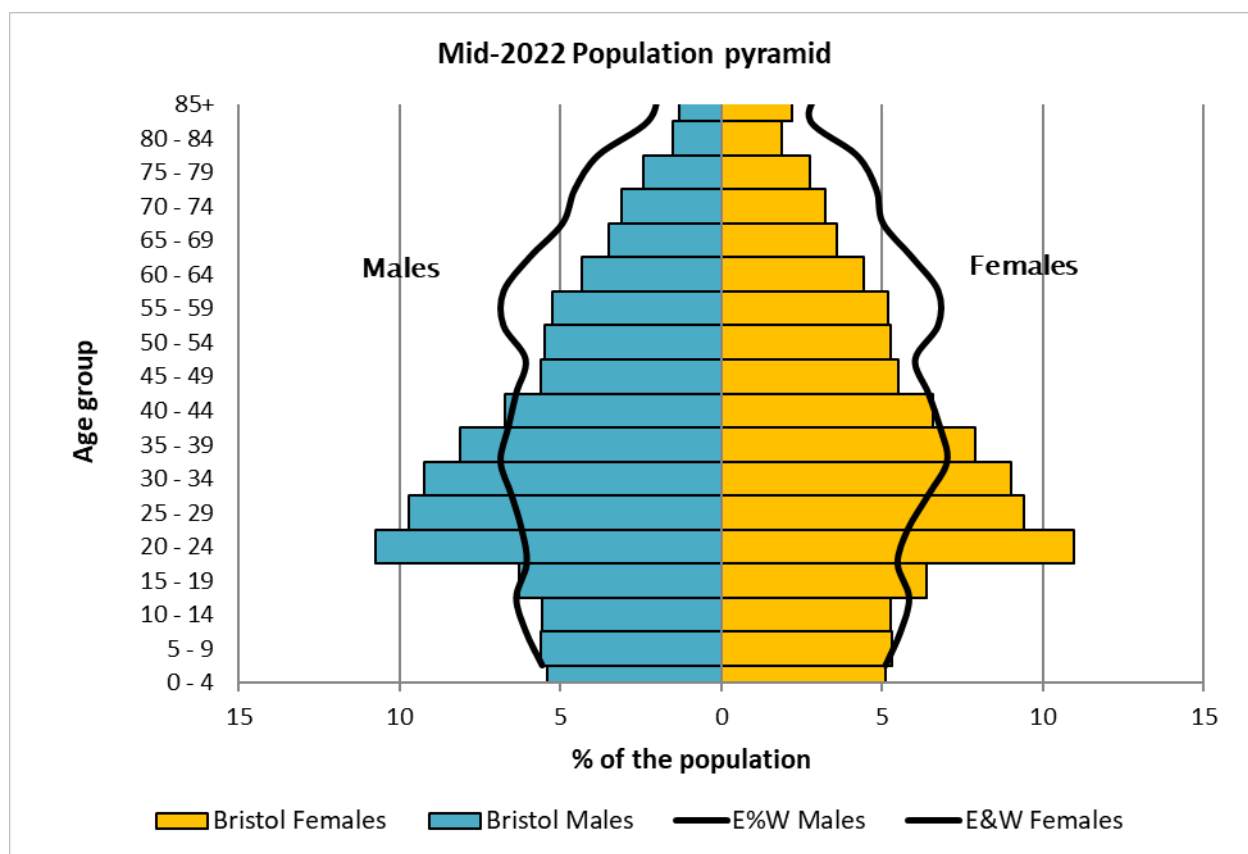


Figure 3 Mid-2022 Population by Five Year Age Band in Bristol and England and Wales
 Source: ONS 2022 Mid-Year Population Estimates. ONS licensed under the Open Government Licence.

Age band	Males	%	Females	%	Persons	%
0-15	42,000	17.7	40,200	16.7	82,200	17.2
16-24	38,100	16.0	39,300	16.3	77,400	16.2
25-49	93,800	39.4	92,500	38.4	186,300	38.9
50-64	35,900	15.1	35,900	14.9	71,800	15.0
65 and over	28,300	11.9	33,000	13.7	61,300	12.8
All ages	238,200	100.0	240,900	100.0	479,000	100.0

Figure 4 Mid-2022 Population Estimates by Age and Sex for Bristol
 Source: ONS Population Estimates. ONS licensed under the Open Government Licence.

Working age

Bristol has a higher proportion of working age (16-64 years) people than nationally – 70% of the total population in Bristol is of working age compared to 63% in England and Wales. The highest proportions in Bristol are amongst the 19-39 year olds which make up 44% of the total population compared to just 27% nationally. Many people in this age group are students living in Bristol during term time.

The working age population in Bristol has increased by almost 40,000 people (+14%) since 2012 compared to an increase of 4.2% in England and Wales as a whole. The greatest increase was in the 19-39 year olds which increased by 18%, compared to just 4% nationally. This age group alone accounted for the majority (63%) of the total increase in population in Bristol over the decade.

Older people

Bristol’s 61,300 older people aged 65 years and over make up 12.8% of the total population. The proportion of older people is much lower than in England and Wales as a whole where 18.8% of the population are aged 65 and over. There are 8,456 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 ‘aging population’ according to the official definition² as the median age of the population and the proportion of older people in Bristol has been falling.

Over the decade 2012-22 the number of older people aged 65 and over in Bristol increased by just 7.1%, a much lower increase than in England and Wales as a whole where there was a 17.4% increase in the number of older people. Over the decade the number of older people aged 65-79 years in Bristol grew by 5,100 (+13%, England and Wales +19%), whilst the number aged 80 years and over fell by just over 1,000 (-6%, England and Wales +14%).

Population within Bristol

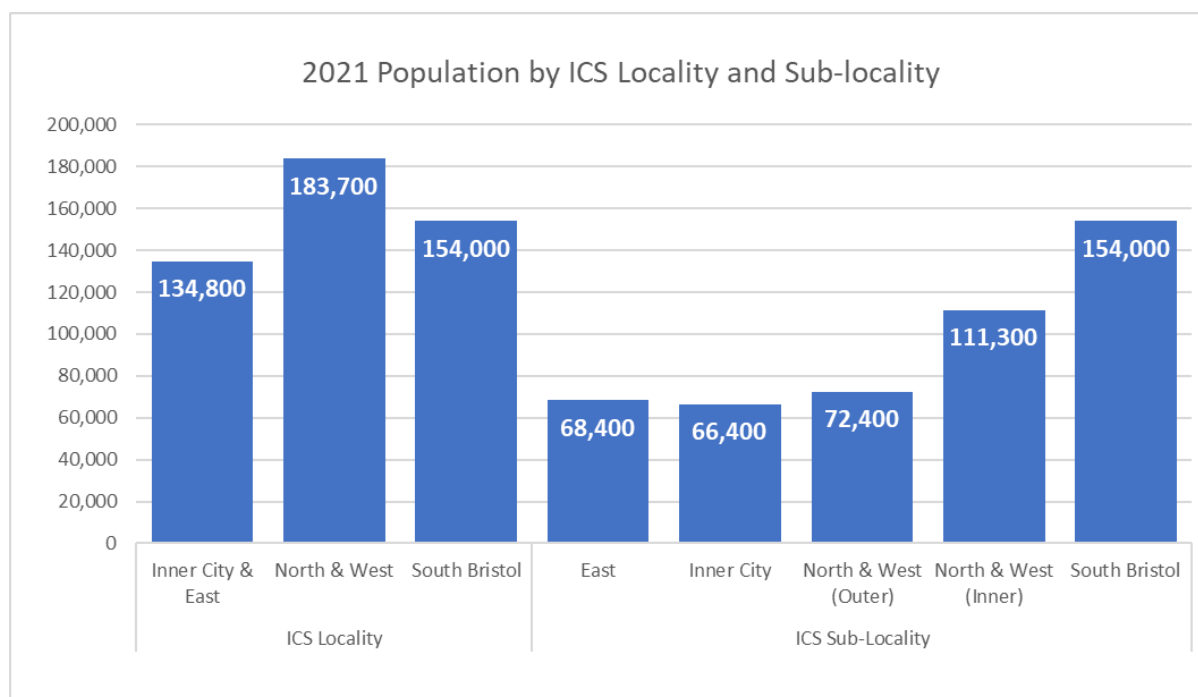


Figure 5 Census 2021 Total Population by ICS Locality and Sub-locality
Source: ONS Census 2021 from NOMIS

² Ageing of the population refers to both the increase in the average (median) age of the population and the increase in the number and proportion of older people in the population.

The total usually resident population based on Census 2021 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 183,700 (39% of Bristol total), South Bristol has a population of 154,000 (33% of Bristol total) and Inner City and East has a total population of 134,800 (29% of Bristol total).

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

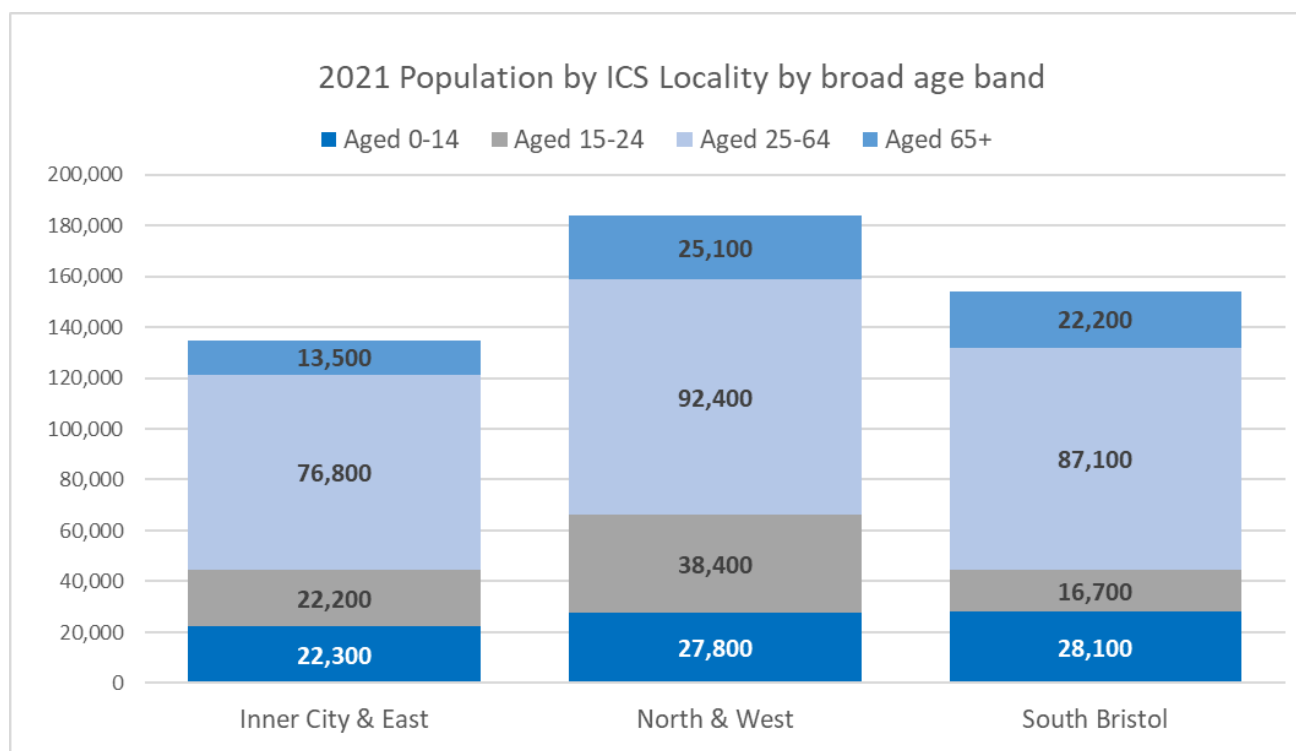


Figure 6 Census 2021 Population Age Profiles by ICS Locality

Source: ONS Census 2021 from NOMIS

Population change within Bristol

Looking at population change 2011 to 2021 by ICS locality and sub-locality (figure 7), the highest levels of growth were in Inner City sub-locality which increased by 17.2%. Lowest levels of growth were in North and West (Inner) at 7.8%.

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.

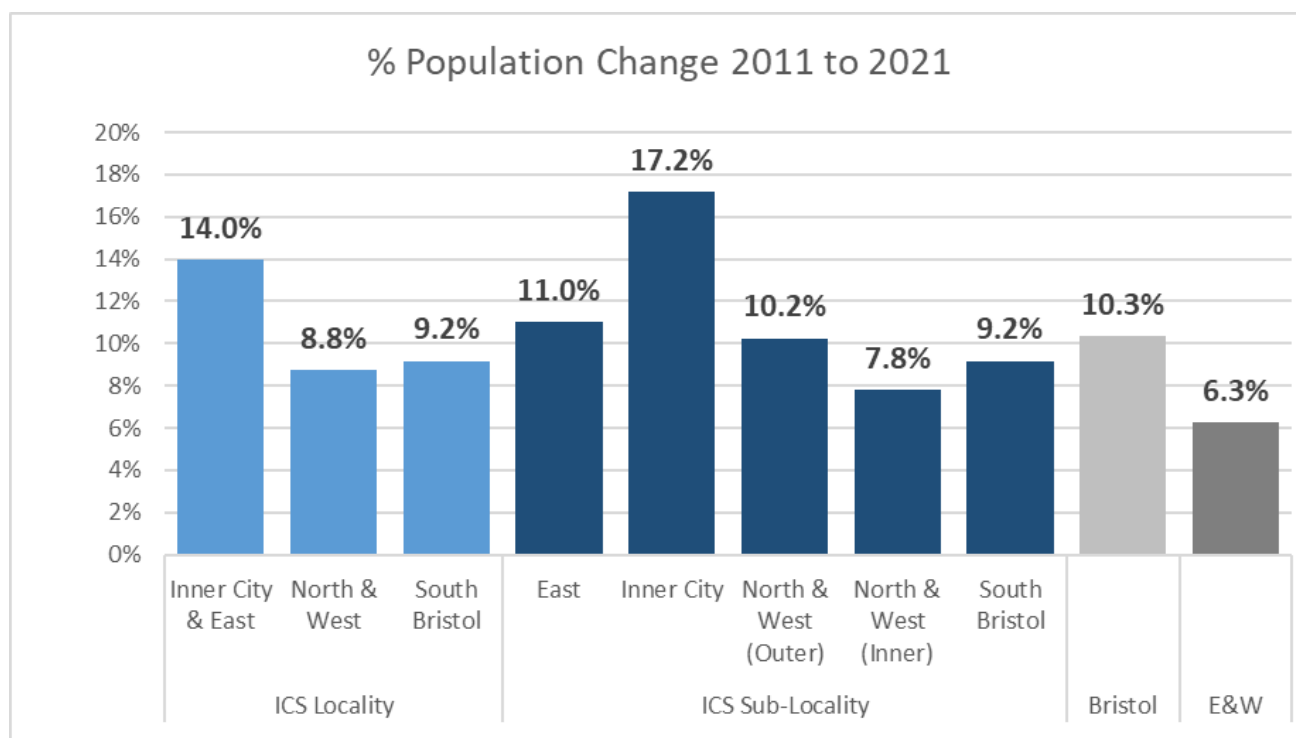


Figure 7 Population Change 2011 to 2021 by ICS Locality and Sub-locality
 Source: ONS Census 2011 and Census 2021 from NOMIS

Population diversity

Ethnic group (Census 2021)

Note: Bristol has seen a significant rise in the number of in-migrants from India since the Census in 2021, plus other countries including China, Ukraine, Nigeria, Pakistan and Hong Kong.

The population of Bristol is increasingly diverse - figure 8 shows the increase in the population belonging to an ethnic minority group (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.

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%).

There are many factors that may be contributing to the changing ethnic composition of England and Wales, such as differing patterns of ageing, fertility, mortality, and migration. Changes may also be caused by differences in the way individuals chose to self-identify between censuses.

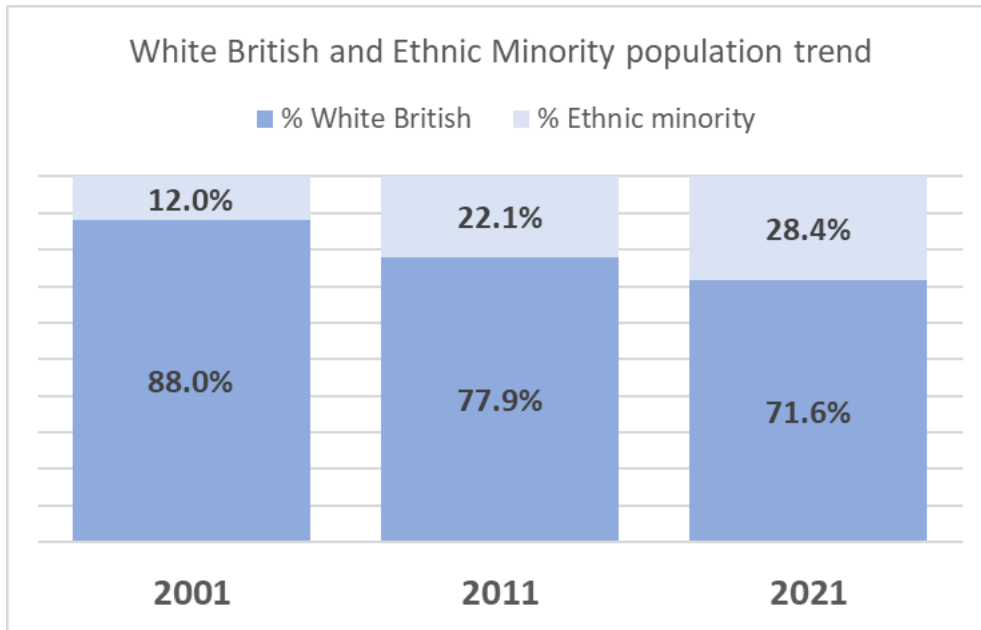


Figure 8 White British and Ethnic Minority Population Trend
 Source: ONS Census 2001, 2011 and 2021 from NOMIS

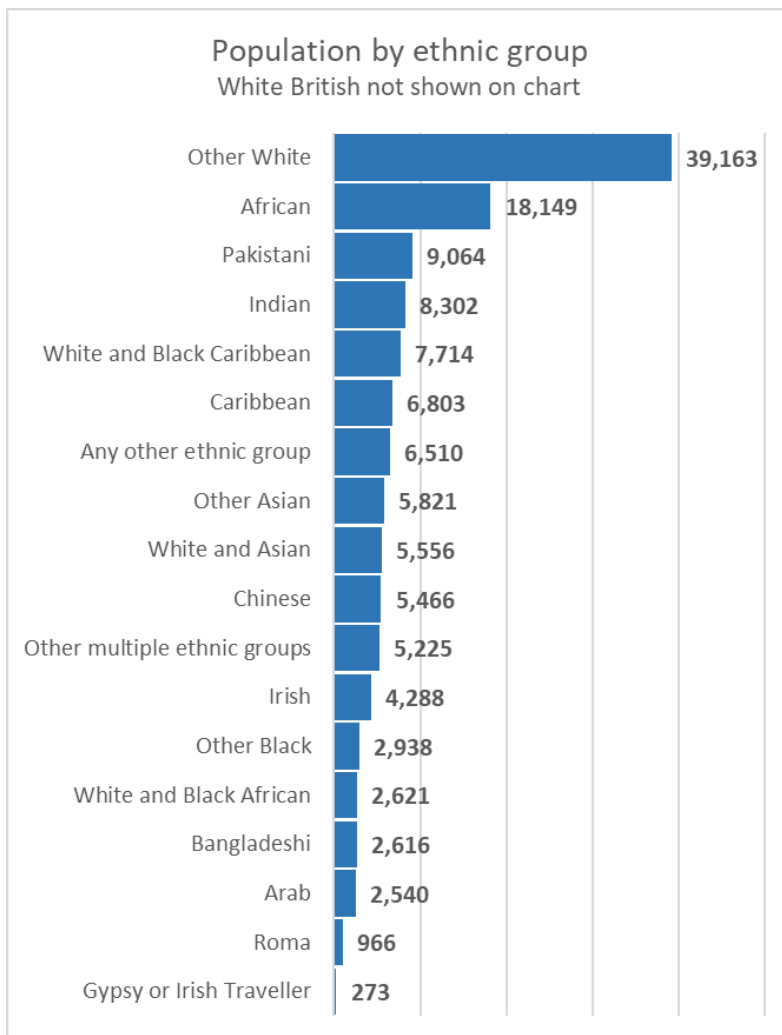


Figure 9 Population by ethnic group (White British not shown)
 Source: ONS Census 2001, 2011 and 2021 from NOMIS

Country of birth (Census 2021)

Note: Bristol has seen a significant rise in the number of in-migrants from India since the Census in 2021, plus other countries including China, Ukraine, Nigeria, Pakistan and Hong Kong.

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 where 16.8% of the population were born outside the UK (figure 10). This affects changing health needs of the local community and communicating best routes to access appropriate health services.

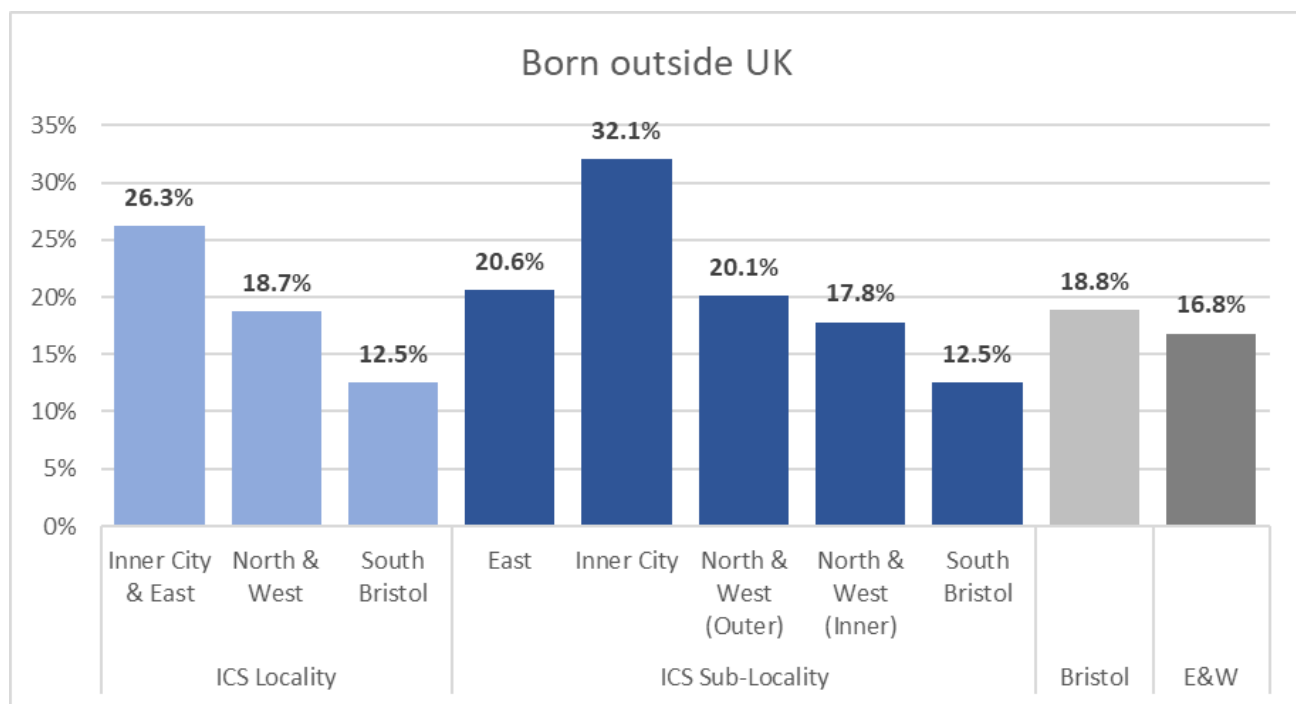


Figure 10 Population Born Outside the UK by ICS Locality and Sub-locality
Source: ONS Census 2021 from NOMIS

In 2021, people born in the European Union (EU) made up 42% (37,251) of the non-UK born Bristol population, the remaining 58% (51,717) were born outside the EU. This continues a longer-term trend of an increasing proportion of non-UK born residents being from within the EU.

Of people born in Europe, the majority 18,316 were born in the original EU14 member states (Western Europe), followed by 13,152 born in EU8 Accession countries (Eastern Europe), 5,055 born in EU2 countries (Romania and Bulgaria), 728 born in other EU countries and 3,294 people born in European countries that are outside of the EU.

Of people born in Africa, by far the largest number were born in Somalia (4,654). This number includes only a proportion of the total Somali population living in Bristol, as many Somalis were born in the UK or other European countries.

Of people born in Asia, the highest numbers were born in India (4,381), Pakistan (3,586) and China (2,638). For the Americas and Caribbean region, the largest populations were born in Jamaica (2,594), South America (2,468) and the United States (2,422).

In Bristol, the 3 most common non-UK countries of birth in 2021 were the same as in 2011:

- Poland, which increased from 6,415 in 2011 to 8,770 in 2021
- Somalia, which fell from 4,947 in 2011 to 4,654 in 2021
- India, which increased from 3,809 in 2011 to 4,381 in 2021

Spain, Italy, Romania and China all entered the top 10 non-UK countries of birth in Bristol. Those who listed Romania as their country of birth increased from 587 in 2011 to 3,782 in 2021, an increase over the decade of 3,195 (544%). This increase is driven by working restrictions for Romanian citizens being lifted in 2014.

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.

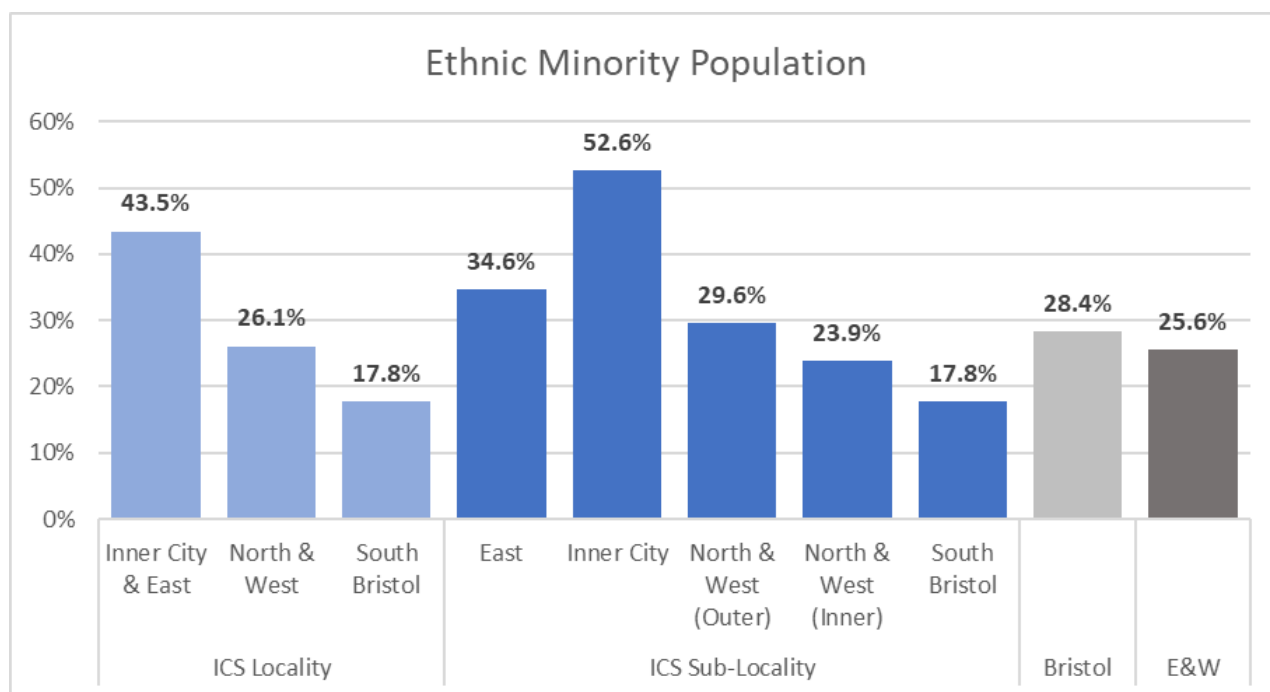


Figure 11 Ethnic Minority Population by ICS Locality and Sub-locality
Source: ONS Census 2021 from NOMIS

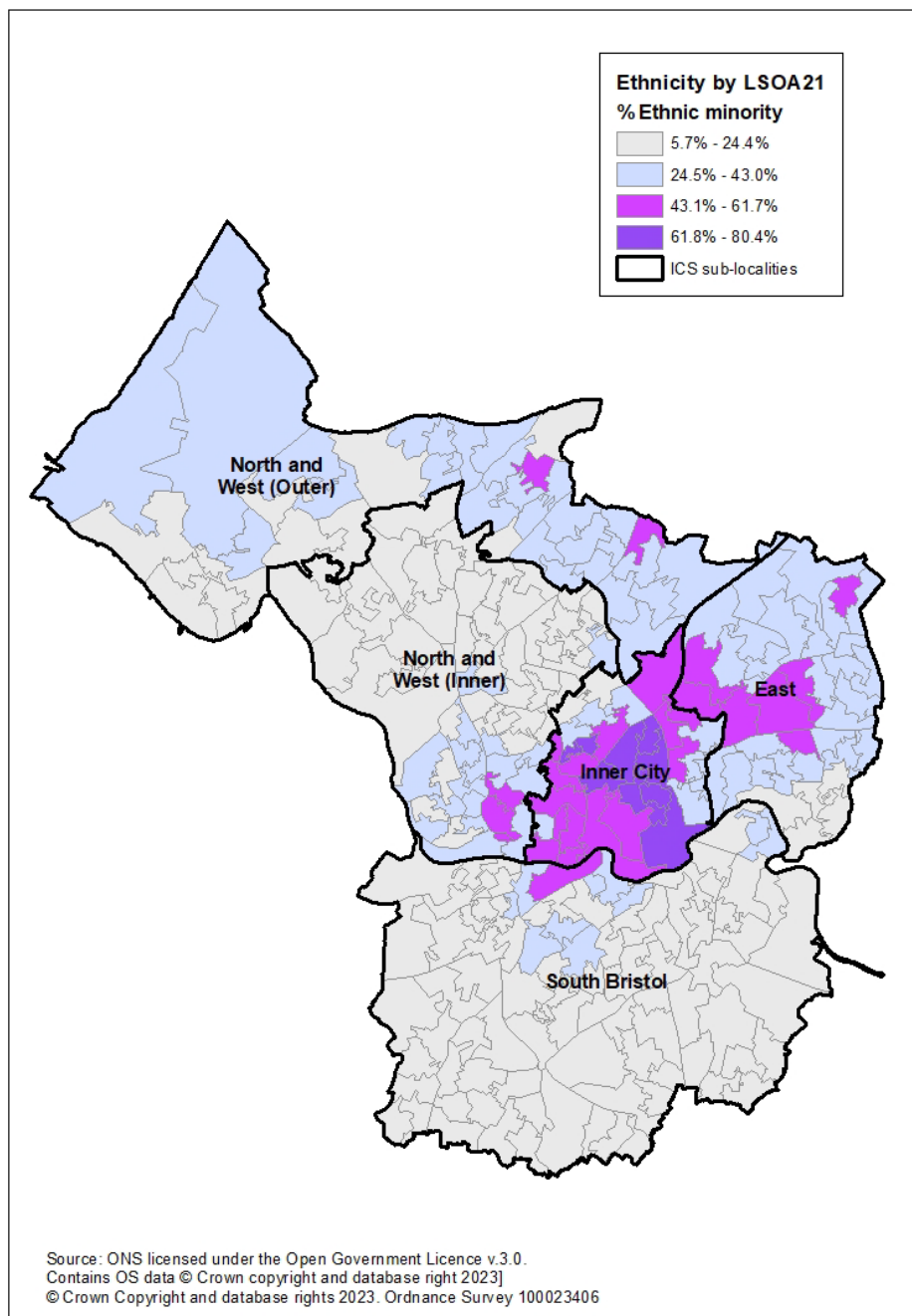


Figure 12 Ethnic Minority Population by Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA21) and ICS Sub-locality
 Source: ONS Census 2021 from NOMIS

Uncertain population trends

Future population projections are uncertain. Recent events – including the Covid-19 pandemic, leaving the EU, the new Hong Kong British National Overseas visa and the global climate emergency – and their potential impacts on our economy and society, are not reflected in the current 2018-based population projections. ONS will publish 2022-based population projections in early 2025.

A combination of factors is likely to influence future population change. These include economic performance, health and well-being, household dynamics and finances, the potential

impact of conflict, cultural change, social developments, and political and policy responses to these factors, or interventions that affect them.

Further data / links:

Bristol Census 2021 results are presented via two new 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)

Bristol City Council population report <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/population>

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

Date updated: January 2024

Date of next update: July 2024