



Population Projections for Bristol (2022-based)

In mid-2025 Bristol local authority exceeds half a million people for the first time

Bristol in 2032:

Projected population

526,594

people

up from 478,636 people in 2022.

Population change since 2022

+10.0%

compared to +6.4% across England.

Net international migration

+49,757

people

projected to be the largest factor in the population increase between 2022 and 2032.

Projected median age

33 years

no change from 33 years in 2022.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) published new 2022-based Sub-National Population Projections on 24 June 2025. These replace the previously published 2018-based Sub-National Population Projections.

Persons included are all those people who usually live in an area, regardless of nationality. Arriving international migrants are included in the usually resident population if they remain in the UK for at least a year and emigrants are excluded if they remain outside the UK for at least a year. Students and school boarders are included at their term time address.

Due to high levels of uncertainty, the projections presented here only include projections up to the year 2032. Projections are however available for a longer 25-year time period.

For further information about how the population is projected to change in Bristol and other areas see the new [ONS Population Projection Explorer](#)

1.0 Population change in Bristol to 2032

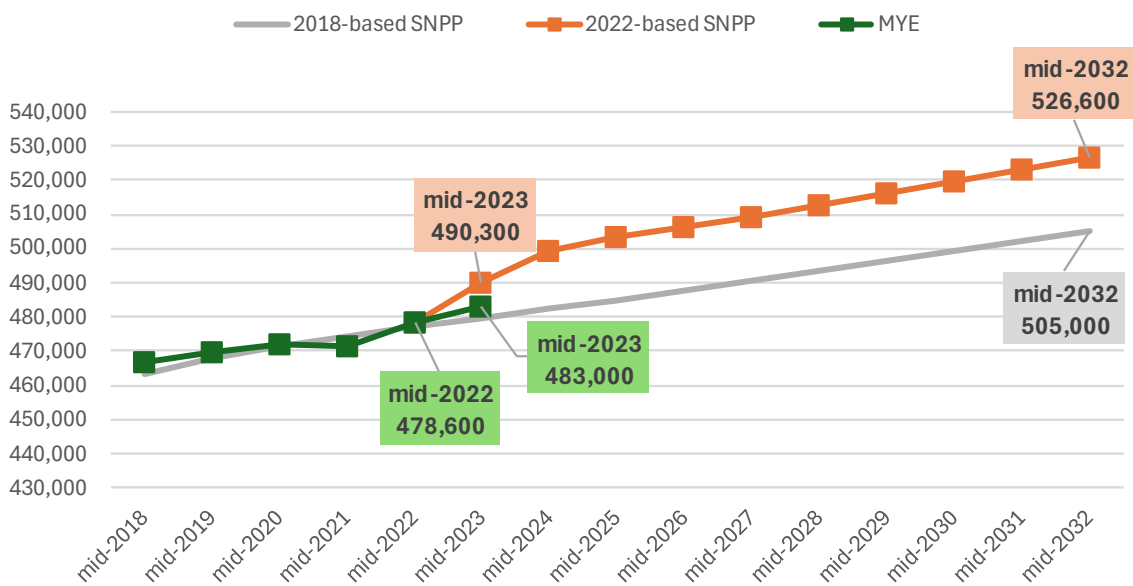
The population in Bristol is projected to increase from 478,600 people in 2022 to 526,600 people in 2032. This is a 10% increase, which is higher than the England average of 6.4% and the second highest percentage increase of the England Core Cities - only Manchester has a greater projected increase at 11%.

The biggest factor in this population change is net international migration, which will increase the population by an estimated 49,800 people. This is different to the majority of areas in England, where net internal migration (ie to/from other parts of the UK) is projected to be the biggest factor in population change.

Figure 1 shows how the population of Bristol is projected to change over the next decade 2022-32, together with the mid-year population estimates for 2018 to 2023¹ and the superseded 2018-based projection.

Figure 1 2022-based population projections compared to 2018-based population projections

Source: ONS Sub-National Population Projections



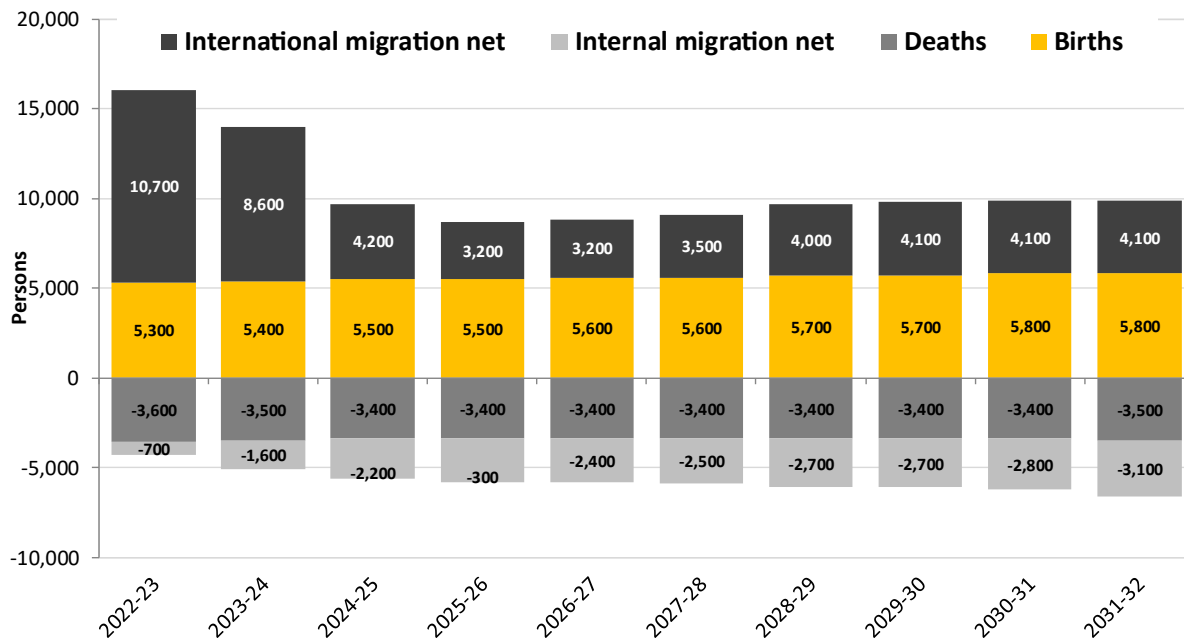
2.0 Components of population change

Population change is projected by looking at births and deaths (natural change) and people moving in and out of areas. Figure 2 shows the components of population change in Bristol between 2022 and 2032.

¹ Mid-2023 estimate is provisional. New mid-2024 estimates will be published on 30 July 2025 together with revised mid-2022 and revised mid-2023 estimates

Figure 2 Components of population change in Bristol between 2022 and 2032

Source: ONS Sub-National Population Projections



In Bristol, our projections show that between 2022 and 2032:

- More births than deaths mean that the population is projected to increase by 21,465, with 55,887 births and 34,423 deaths in Bristol between 2022 and 2032. This means natural change would increase the population in Bristol by 4.5%, compared with an increase of 0.2% in England.
- Net internal migration (people moving to and from other local authorities in the UK) is projected to reduce the population by 23,258, with 433,157 people moving to the area and 456,415 people moving from the area between 2022 and 2032. This would decrease the population in Bristol by 4.8%.
- Net international migration is projected to increase the population by 49,757, with 98,766 people moving to the area and 49,009 people moving from the area between 2022 and 2032. This would increase the population in Bristol by 10.4%, compared with an increase of 6.5% in England.

The number of births in Bristol is much lower than what was previously projected in the 2018-based projections, reflecting the continued fall in births and birth rates nationally.

3.0 Age profile in Bristol in 2032

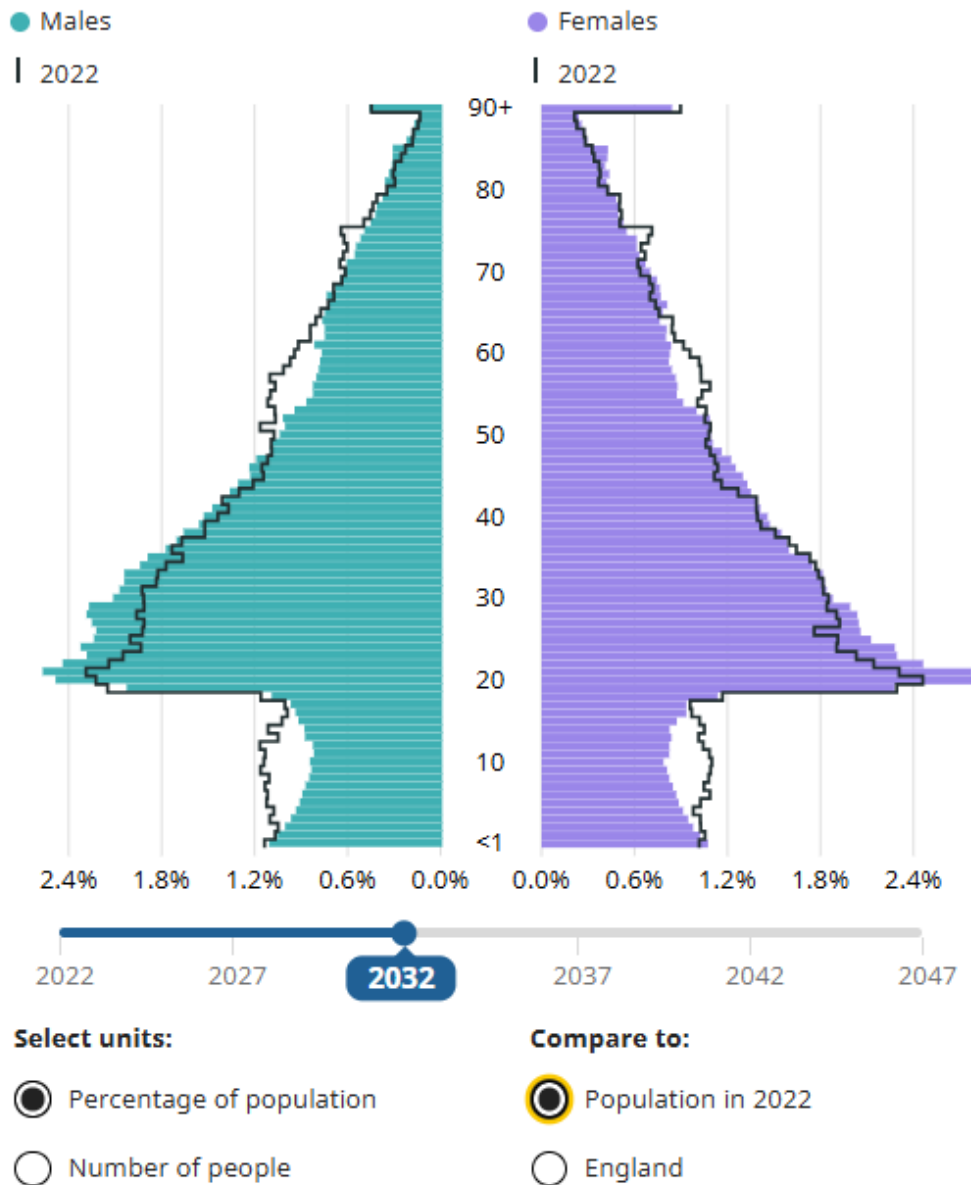
The median age in Bristol is projected to remain the same at 33 years between 2022 and 2032. In England, the median age is projected to be 41 years in 2032.

Figure 3 shows the population profile of Bristol in 2032 and compares it to 2022.

Figure 3 Population age profile of Bristol in 2032 compared to 2022

Source: ONS Sub-National Population Projections

Projected population age structure by single year of age and sex for Bristol, 2022 to 2047



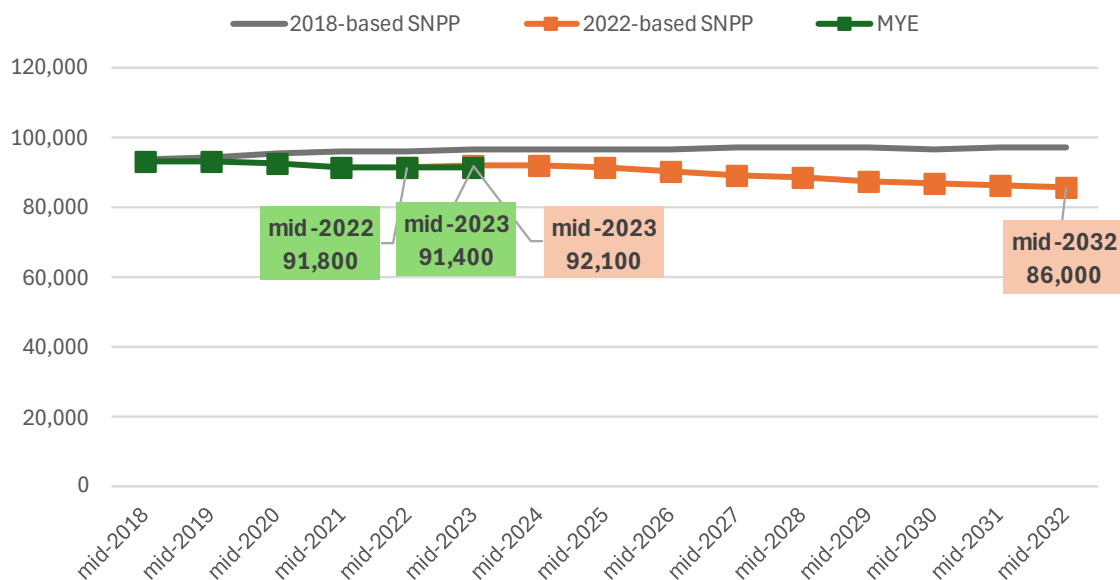
Source: Subnational population projections for England from Office for National Statistics – Migration category variant

In 2032 in Bristol, there will be 6,400 fewer children (aged 0-15), 46,900 more people of working age and 7,400 more older people (aged 65 and over). The 20 to 29 age group are set to see the largest change in Bristol between 2022 and 2032.

Figure 4 shows how the number of children (aged 0-17) living in Bristol is projected to change over the next decade 2022-32, together with the mid-year population estimates for 2018 to 2023² and the superseded 2018-based projection.

Figure 4 Projection of children (aged 0-17) in Bristol in 2032 compared to 2018-based projections

Source: ONS Sub-National Population Projections



4.0 Uncertainty in population projections data

Subnational population projections are not forecasts and do not attempt to predict potential changes in international migration. There is uncertainty over future directions and levels of international migration.

Because of more up-to-date migration data, ONS have used the **migration category variant** in place of the usual principal projections as this is a better reflection of short-term population change.

Projected population change is the result of assumptions about future births, deaths and migration, sometimes known as components of population change. For each local authority in England, ONS collect data on components of change to project these trends forward. The 2022-based subnational projections use data from 2018 to 2022. ONS project these data forward for 25 years and use the national population projections for England to constrain the projections.

Demographic behaviour used to develop assumptions for projections is inherently uncertain and so projections become increasingly uncertain the further they are carried forward. This is particularly so for smaller geographical areas, such as Local Authorities, and detailed age and sex breakdowns.

² Mid-2023 estimate is provisional. New mid-2024 estimates will be published on 30 July 2025 together with revised mid-2022 and revised mid-2023 estimates

The data used for the subnational projections may not necessarily capture the entire local context in which population change occurs. At the local level, population change is influenced by many factors not considered in the projections, such as economic development and housing policies.

Figure 5 Variant population projections showing a range of future demographic scenarios, mid-2022 to mid-2032

Source: ONS Sub-National Population Projections

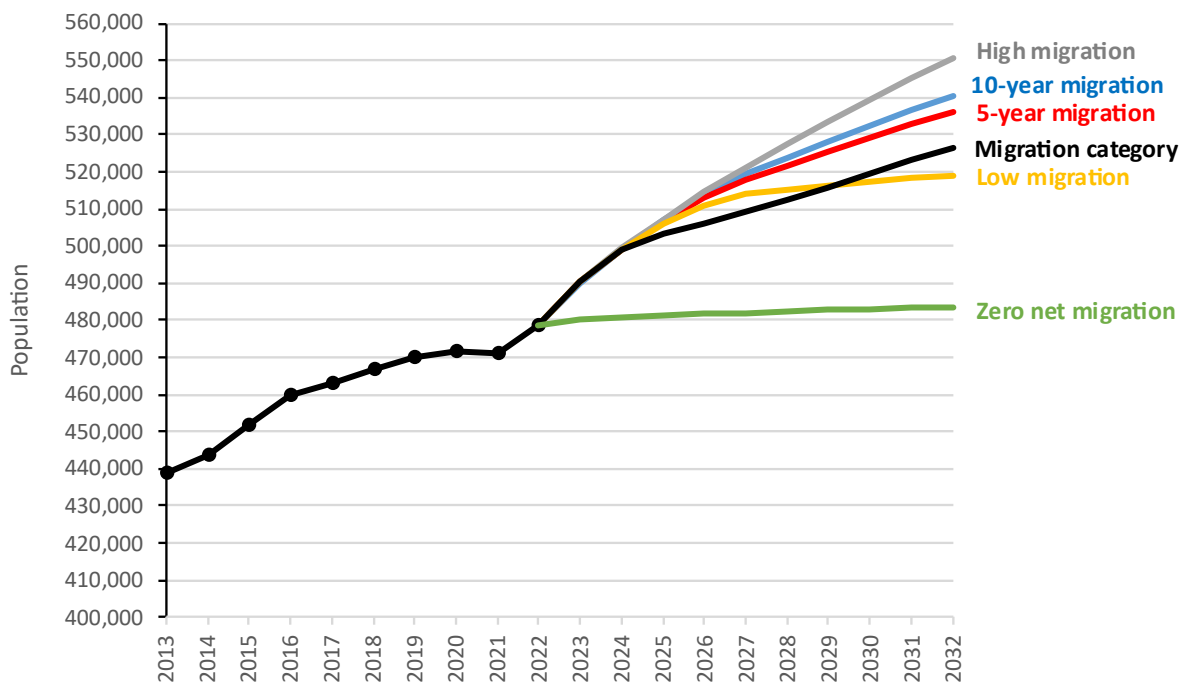


Figure 5 shows the different population projections possible for Bristol in 2032 based on different variant scenarios. The variants range from 483,200 (Zero net migration) to 550,900 (High migration).

“Migration category” variant is used by ONS, which takes into account the most recent long-term migration estimates available when the projections were published in June 2025.

5.0 Further information

More information about the population of Bristol can be found on the Bristol City Council [Population web page](#) and on the new [ONS Population Projection Explorer](#)

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