

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

The national Census happens every 10 years and gives us a picture of all the people and households in England and Wales. The last Census Day was on 21 March 2021. **On 6th January 2023, ONS released a topic summary providing detail on sexual orientation and gender identity.**

This briefing focuses on analysis of sexual orientation and gender identity in Birmingham. Other themes are analysed in subsequent briefing notes, and an interactive census dashboard is available on the **Birmingham City Observatory**.



KEY HEADLINES:

- For the Birmingham population aged 16 or over:
 - 779,054 (87.6%) of the population identified as straight or heterosexual.
 - 11,968 (1.3%) described themselves as gay or lesbian.
 - 11,258 (1.3%) described themselves as bisexual.
 - 3,578 (0.4%) wrote in another sexual orientation, including pansexual, asexual, and other orientations.
- For the Birmingham population aged 16 or over:
 - 807,422 (90.8%) indicated that their gender identity was the same as their sex registered at birth.
 - 7,826 people (0.9%) indicated that their gender identity was different to their sex registered at birth.
- Among Core Cities, Birmingham had the second highest proportion of those who did not answer either question on gender identity (8.4%, 74,377) or sexual orientation (9.4%, 83,766).
- Birmingham had the lowest proportion of those whose gender identity was the same as their sex registered at birth (90.8%, 807,422), and for straight or heterosexual orientation (87.6%, 779,054), compared to other local authorities in the West Midlands.

KEY FINDINGS:

Sexual Orientation

- For the first time in the Census, people were also asked “Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?”. The question was voluntary and was only asked of people aged 16 years and over. For the Birmingham population aged 16 or over:
 - 779,054 (87.6%) of the population identified as straight or heterosexual
 - 11,968 (1.3%), described themselves as gay or lesbian
 - 11,258 (1.3%) described themselves as bisexual
 - 2,527 (0.3%) described themselves as pansexual
 - 468 (0.1%) described themselves as asexual
 - 322 (0.04%) described themselves as queer
 - Another 261 (0.03%) wrote in a further different sexual orientation
- The overall number of people in Birmingham who identified with an LGB+ orientation was therefore 26,804 (3.0% of the population aged 16 years and over).
- The remaining 83,766 people in Birmingham aged 16 years and over (9.4%) did not answer the question on sexual orientation.

Gender Identity

- For the first time in the Census, people were asked “Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?” People had the option of selecting either “Yes” or “No” and writing in their gender identity. The question was voluntary and was only asked of people aged 16 years and over.
- A total of 807,422 (90.8%) answered that their gender identity was the same as their sex registered at birth.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

- A total of 7,826 people (0.9%) that their gender identity was different from their sex registered at birth. This included:
 - 4,168 (0.5%) answered “No” but did not provide a specific gender identity
 - 1,405 (0.2%) identified as a trans man
 - 1,327 (0.1%) identified as a trans woman
 - 603 (0.1%) identified as non-binary
 - 323 (0.04%) wrote in a different gender identity
- The remaining 74,377 (8.4%) did not answer the question on gender identity.

COMPARISON WITH CORE CITIES:

Sexual Orientation

- Manchester had the lowest proportion of those who describe themselves as straight or heterosexual (84.6%, 370,576) and Leeds had the highest proportion (88.4%, 582,244).
- Manchester had the highest proportion of those who describe themselves as gay or lesbian (3.3%, 14,608) and Bristol had the highest proportion of those who describe themselves as bisexual (3.1%, 12,020).
- Nottingham and Birmingham had the highest proportions of those who did not answer the question (9.8% and 9.4% respectively).

Gender Identity

- At 93.2%, both Liverpool (375,804) and Leeds (613,810) had the highest proportions whose gender identity was the same as their sex registered at birth. In contrast, Nottingham and Birmingham had the lowest proportions whose gender identity was the same as their sex registered at birth (90.6% (239,353) and 90.8% (807,422) respectively). Nottingham and Birmingham also had the highest proportions of those who did not answer the question (8.6% (22,677) and 8.4% (74,377) respectively).

COMPARISON WITH WEST MIDLANDS COMBINED AUTHORITIES:

Sexual Orientation

- Solihull had the highest proportion who describe themselves as straight or heterosexual (91.9%, 160,446) and Birmingham had the lowest proportion (87.6%, 779,054).
- Birmingham had the highest proportion of those who describe themselves as gay or lesbian (1.3%, 11,968), followed by Coventry (1.2%, 3,339). Coventry had the highest proportion of those who describe themselves as bisexual (1.5%, 4,133), followed by Birmingham (1.3%, 11,258).
- Birmingham also had the highest proportion who did not answer the question (9.4%, 83,766) and Solihull had the lowest (6.2%, 10,765).

Gender Identity

- Solihull had the highest proportion of those whose gender identity was the same as their sex registered at birth (94.9%, 165,566).
- Birmingham had the lowest proportion of those whose gender identity was the same as their sex registered at birth (90.8%, 807,422). However, it was only slightly lower and very similar to Coventry (91.6%, 253,522), Sandwell (91.9%, 244,452) and Wolverhampton (91.9%, 191,659).
- Birmingham had the highest proportion who did not answer the question (8.4%, 74,377), and Solihull had the lowest (4.8%, 8,397).