

Travel to Work

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 8th December 2022, ONS released a topic summary providing detail on Travel to Work.**

This briefing focuses on analysis of Travel to Work in Birmingham. Other themes are analysed in subsequent briefing notes, and an interactive census dashboard is available on the **Birmingham City Observatory**.



KEY HEADLINES:

Census 2021 took place during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, a period of unparalleled and rapid change; the national lockdown, associated guidance and furlough measures will have affected the travel to work briefing. Take care when using the data for planning and policy purposes.

- It is estimated that 114,058 (25.8%) of Birmingham's residents worked mainly at or from home in the week before Census Day, 21 March 2021.
- The most selected mode of travel to work was driving a car or a van, with 202,963 (45.9%) of all Birmingham residents using this method.
- The second most selected mode of travel to work was using a bus, minibus or coach, with 43,123 (9.7%) of all Birmingham residents using this method.
- Of those travelling to a workplace, 194,866 people (44.0% of residents) travelled short distances to work (less than 10 kilometres).
- Among the remaining 70,352 people (15.9% of residents) travelled longer distances to work (10 kilometres and over).

KEY FINDINGS:

Working at or mainly from home

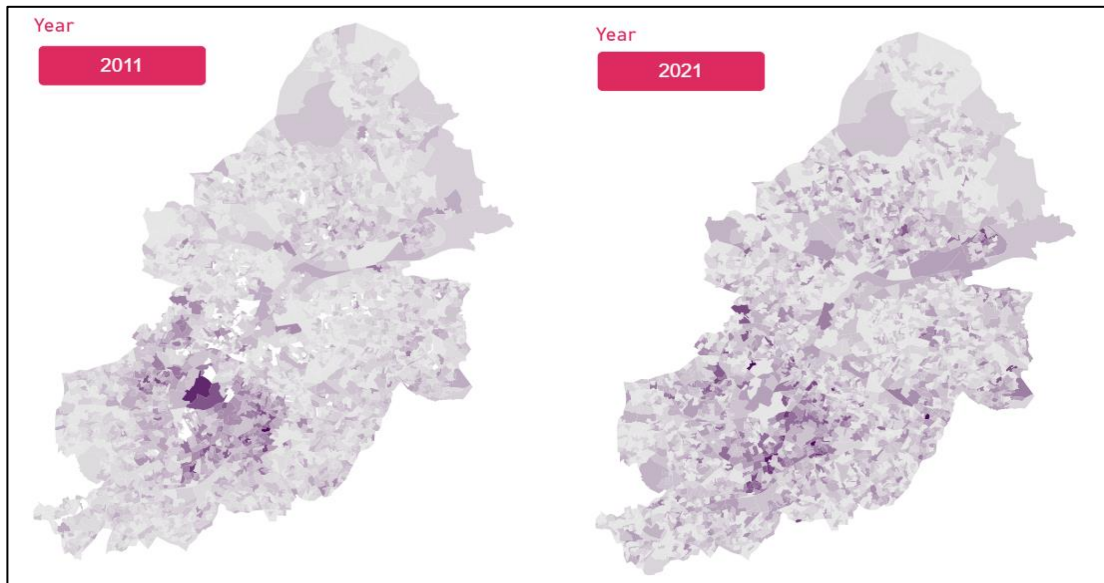
- In 2021, 114,058 (25.8%) of Birmingham's residents worked mainly at or from home, compared to 14,402 (3.4%) in 2011ⁱ.

Method of travel to work

- 74.2% of Birmingham's residents (328,360) did not work mainly at or from home. They instead specified the main mode of transport they used to reach their place of employment, as detailed below:
 - 202,963 (45.9%) of people travelled to work by driving a car or van in 2021, compared to 235,505 (55.6%) in 2011.
 - 43,123 (9.7%) travelled via Bus, minibus or coach in 2021, compared to 73,117 (17.3%) in 2011.
 - 31,483 (7.1%) travelled on Foot in 2021, compared to 42,709 (10.1%) in 2011.
 - 21,557 (4.9%) travelled as Passengers in a car or van in 2021, compared to 22,726 (5.4%) in 2011.
 - 9,220 (2.1%) travelled via Train in 2021, compared to 19,750 (4.7%) in 2011.
 - 6,673 (1.5%) travelled via Taxi in 2021, compared to 2,976 (0.7%) in 2011.
 - 5,741 (1.3%) travelled on a Bicycle in 2021, compared to 6,629 (1.6%) in 2011.
 - 5,505 (1.2%) used an Other method of travel to work in 2021, compared to 2,540 (0.6%) in 2011.
 - 1,118 (0.3%) used a Motorcycle, scooter or moped in 2021, compared to 1,970 (0.5%) in 2011.
 - 977 (0.2%) used an Underground, metro, light rail, tram in 2021, compared to 1,367 (0.3%) in 2011ⁱⁱ.
- Although the number of residents travelling by bicycle has remained similar in terms of percentage point, it is visually notable to see that bicycle usage is more dispersed across Birmingham in 2021 compared to 2011 where usage was more concentrated in the southwest of the city, see below:

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Bicycle usage across Birmingham in 2011, compared to 2021



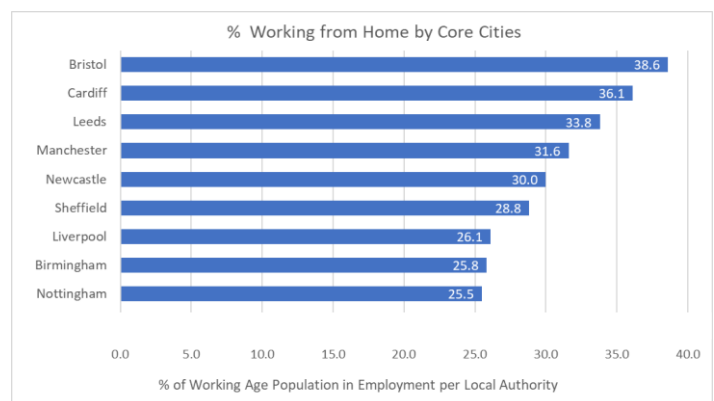
Distance travelled to work

- Of those travelling to a workplace 194,866 people (44.0%) of residents travelled short distances to work (less than 10 kilometres). Looking in more detail within this group:
 - 44,638 (10.1%) of people travelled less than 2 kilometres.
 - 72,746 (16.4%) of people travelled at least 2 kilometres to less than 5 kilometres.
 - 77,482 (17.5%) of people travelled at least 5 kilometres to less than 10 kilometres.
- Among the remaining 70,352 people (15.9%) who travelled longer distances to work (10 kilometres and over):
 - 43,586 (9.9%) of people travelled at least 10 kilometres to less than 20 kilometres.
 - 11,183 (2.5%) of people travelled at least 20 kilometres to less than 30 kilometres.
 - 4,907 (1.1%) of people travelled at least 30 kilometres to less than 40 kilometres.
 - 3,655 (0.8%) of people travelled at least 40 kilometres to less than 60 kilometres.
 - 7,021 (1.6%) of people travelled 60 kilometres and over.

COMPARISON WITH CORE CITIES AND WEST MIDLANDS COMBINED AUTHORITIES:

It is difficult to compare the ‘working from home’ variable with the 2011 Census because Census 2021 took place during a national lockdown. The government advice at the time was for people to work from home (if they can) and avoid public transport. Working from home was the second highest category nationally.

- In comparison to the Core Cities (see table to the right), Birmingham ranked second to last in the category of ‘percentage of its population working mainly from home’ (25.8%, 114,058).
- The Core City with the highest population working from home was Bristol with 38.6% (92,026).
- In the West Midlands, Solihull ranked 1st with 36.1% of its population ‘working mainly from home’ (35,366). This was followed by Birmingham (114,058) and Coventry (38,674) (both 25.8%).



ⁱ This calculation excludes the category ‘not in employment’.

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