

# West Midlands

## Weekly Economic Impact Monitor



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This monitor aims to pull together information across regional partners to understand the impacts of Covid-19 on the economy. Where possible it will utilise all forms of quantitative and qualitative intelligence. However, we urge caution in the use of the contents as this is an emerging situation.

This week the [IMF](#) has dropped its expected growth forecast for many of the leading economies globally. This reflects disruptions to supply chains and a softening of consumption in the third quarter. As government spending is slowing down on Covid-19 relief programmes, many consumers are reining in their spending, especially as inflation is hitting prices generally and energy prices are climbing in time for the winter. The [IMF](#) now predicts global growth of 5.9%, 0.1% lower than the previous month. As demand continues to increase in developed nations, developing nations are still being impacted by the Delta variant. The health of the West Midlands private sector continued to strengthen in September, with ongoing improvements in demand underpinning growth of sales, output and employment, but global risks still threaten recovery

- In England the percentage of people testing positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) increased in the week ending 2 October 2021 to an estimated 786,300 people, equating to around 1 in 70 people.
- The [International Energy Agency Global outlook report for 2021](#) has warned that continued under investment in green energy could lead to increased periods of turbulence in the energy market. Energy prices throughout UK, Europe and Asia have hit record highs in recent weeks and inflation is hitting prices in many countries.
- The [paper also recommends](#) that Europe could reduce its reliance on Russia by increasing its use of renewables. Currently, Europe receives 60% of its energy from Russia and is highly dependent on Gazprom.
- Since the start of 2021, the gas system average price has been steadily increasing. The price has more than doubled since the start of the year, with an increase of 213% since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021, and an increase of 71% since 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021. In the latest week, from 26<sup>th</sup> September to 3<sup>rd</sup> October, the system average price (SAP) in the preceding seven-day average increased by 2% to 5.785 pence per kilowatt hour.
- [136 countries](#) have signed up to a historic deal to enforce a corporate tax rate of at least 15%, as a fairer system to ensure large companies pay their fair share of tax.
- UK job vacancies have hit a 20 year record high, with [vacancies hitting 1.1 million](#) between July and September of this year, the highest levels since records began in 2001.
- The Bank of England has announced that it expects inflation to rise to at least [4%](#) by the end of the year. This will offset any wage rises for those lucky enough to receive them. Many people however will see the living standards fall as their wages remain the same and inflation continues to increase.
- [Consumer spending is slowing](#). This is likely due to the expected inflation rises, as well as rapidly increasing energy prices in the build up to winter when consumers will need to heat their homes.
- [GDP of 0.4% in August 2021](#). This was largely as a result of strong growth in accommodation which grew [22.9%](#). Arts, entertainment and recreation was the second largest growth in services at [8.5% in August 2021](#).
- A [BBC report](#) looking into gender pay gaps has found that there has been no improvement in the pay gap in 2020-21 comparative to the year before.
- A record-breaking 12,000 social enterprises were created last year, according to the [No Going Back: State of Social Enterprise Report 2021](#) produced by Social Enterprise UK.
- The WMCA set out a package of measures to help the region's unemployed gain skills needed to get back into work following the removal of the Coronavirus Job retention Scheme this month, and the region's slow recovery from the shock of Covid, the [WMCA is stepping in with £25 million worth of training to support the unemployed in returning to employment](#).
- A 'one stop' shop was launched last week to give people the [skills needed to land thousands of jobs at next summer's 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham](#).
- According to a [government report](#) that came out ahead of the [Birmingham Tech Week](#), the West Midlands has been named as having the fastest growing tech sector and is expected to create an extra 52,000 tech roles by 2025. Between, 2014 and 2019 the Tech sector has grown by 7.6% a year, the fastest region in the UK. Going forward it is expected to generate at least £2.7 billion by 2025.
- The growth figures published as part of the [Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport \(DCMS\) Assessing the UK's regional digital ecosystems report](#), highlights the size and speed of the sector's growth in the region has far outpaced any other region, including London.

- Researchers at CityREDI/WMREDI have built a “typical” student spending profile and then calculated regional multipliers from spending a “typical” £1 in each region. As such, for each £1, the average region adds £0.72 in its GVA. This masks significant variation with the best performer (Eastern Scotland) generating £0.8 and the worst (East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire) generating £0.68.
- 143,000 students in West Midlands generate more jobs for the region than the 180,000 students do for Inner London. Looking at the shares of the local economy, we see that student expenditure is responsible for more than 4% of GVA and jobs in the West Midlands.
- Over a quarter of businesses (27.7%) that contacted the Growth Hub over the last year were referred to one of the nine regional university partners. They were mainly referred to specific university business support programmes (81.6%) that provide specialised support such as the adoption of new technologies and processes, skills development, and business leadership.
- In March 2021 there were 148,630 enterprises in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, a decrease of 2.0% (-3,005 enterprises) compared to the March 2020 snapshot, while the number in the UK increased by 0.6%.
- WMCA (3 LEP) area had a higher proportion of enterprises with turnover over £5m at 2.6% (3,825) compared to UK at 2.4%. The WMCA (3 LEP) area was also above the UK proportions with turnover between £1m - £4.99m at 7.4% (11,005) of enterprises, while the UK average was 7.0% and enterprises with turnover between £250,000 - £999,999 with 21.6% (32,030) of the WMCA (3 LEP) total, while the UK stood at 20.2%.
- In the WMCA (3 LEP) area, the sector with the highest proportion of enterprises was the business professional and financial services which accounted for 39.1% of the business base; matching the UK proportion. Retail accounted for 17.1% (25,400) of the WMCA (3 LEP) business base, which was above the UK average of 15.0%. This is followed by construction at 13.5% (20,045), below the UK average of 14.7%.
- In the year to Q2 2021, the West Midlands region’s export value was worth nearly £26.2bn, a decrease of £1.3bn (-4.9%) since the year ending Q2 2020. The UK decreased by 3.5% to £302bn worth of exports in year ending Q2 2021.
- In the year ending Q2 2021, the West Midlands imported nearly £32.9bn worth of goods. This has increased by nearly £1.4bn (+4.4%). While the value of all UK imports increased by 1.3% to £441.3bn. The West Midlands had a trade deficit of £6.7bn in the year ending Q2 2021.
- In the year ending Q2 2021, the largest value export for a SITC section in the West Midlands was machinery and transport at £17.8bn. This SITC section accounted for 68% of the total exports value; of which 61.2% (£10.9bn) were non-EU exports. Compared to year ending Q2 2020, the value of these exports has decreased by £1.1bn (-5.8%), but quarter-on-quarter decline is much more modest.
- The West Midlands Business Activity Index increased from 55.2 in August 2021 to 56.3 in September 2021. Firms indicated that a further recovery in demand and expanded capacities supported the rise in output. The overall UK Business Activity Index increased from 54.8 in August 2021 to 54.9 in September 2021. Out of the twelve UK regions, the West Midlands region was second highest for the Business Activity Index in September 2021, only behind Wales.
- The West Midlands Future Activity Index decreased slightly from 77.2 in August 2021 to 76.8 in September 2021, with firms continuing to forecast output growth for the next 12 months. Business confidence stemmed on hopes that the pandemic will be contained and further easing on travel restrictions. Optimism was also reported from firms due to new business enquires and product diversification.
- The West Midlands Input Prices Index decreased from 78.3 in August 2021 to 78.0 in September 2021. The overall rate of input price inflation was steep and one of the strongest seen in the series history (January 1997). Firms reported that fuel, transportation, staff and material costs all increased.
- The number of payroll employees in the UK showed another monthly increase, up 207,000 to a record 29.2 million in September 2021, returning to pre-COVID-19 (February 2020) levels.
- The number of UK job vacancies in July to September 2021 was a record high of 1,102,000, an increase of 318,000 from its pre-pandemic (January to March 2020) level; this was the second consecutive month that the three-month average has risen over one million. The experimental single-month vacancy estimates recorded almost 1.2 million in September 2021, which is a record high.
- The latest Labour Force estimates for June to August 2021 show the UK employment rate increased by 0.5 percentage points on the quarter, to 75.3%. and the unemployment rate decreased by 0.4 percentage points, to 4.5%. The economic inactivity rate is down 0.2 percentage points on the previous quarter, to 21.1%.
- In June to August 2021, reports of redundancies in the three months prior to interview decreased by 0.2 per thousand on the quarter to 3.6 per thousand employees for the UK, similar to pre-COVID-19 levels.
- There were **180,625 claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area in September 2021**. Since August 2021, there has been a decrease of 1.5% (-2,685) claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, less than the UK decrease of 3.0%.
- There were **33,405 youth claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area in September 2021**. Since August 2021, there has been a decrease of 2.9% (-980) youth claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, below the UK decrease of 3.8%.
- In total, the WMCA (3 LEP) area had 91,100 employments furloughed on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021. This reflects a 5.3% take-up rate of eligible employments for the scheme, compared to UK-wide rate of 4.6%. When compared to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021, the number of employments furloughed in the WMCA (3 LEP) area decreased by 15,200 (-14.3%, UK -16.6%).

- For the UK, the number of employments on furlough peaked at 8.9 million on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020. This fell to 2.4 million at 31<sup>st</sup> October, rose again to 4.9 million employments on furlough at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021. However, the number of employments on furlough has fallen since January and the latest provisional figures show that as the scheme is coming to an end, the number of employments on furlough was 1.3 million on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021. Since the start of the scheme a total of 11.7 million jobs have been put on furlough for at least part of the duration of the scheme.
- There has been a total of 539,300 claims made from 151,400 individuals in the WMCA (3 LEP) across all SEISS grants; the total claims reached a value of nearly £1.38bn. At a West Midlands regional level, there were approximately 258,000 of the population eligible for the fifth grant of the SEISS, which is a take up rate of 32% based on the total number of claims of 83,000. This can be split further by gender and there was a total potentially eligible male population of 184,000 for the fifth grant of the SEISS, which equates to a take-up rate of 33%, which is based on the total number of claims of 62,000. There were 74,000 eligible female population for the West Midlands region with a take-up rate of 28% based on the total number of claims of 21,000.
- According to Springboard, in the week to the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021, the volume of overall retail footfall in the UK decreased by 3% from the previous week (week to 25<sup>th</sup> September 2021). This decrease in overall footfall in the UK was because of an 8% week-on-week fall in high street footfall. Meanwhile, retail parks and shopping centre footfall increased slightly from the previous week by 1% and 2%, respectively.
- 27.2% of trading businesses in the West Midlands reported profits had decreased by at least 20%. However, 44.9% of trading businesses in the West Midlands reported that profits had stayed the same and approximately 11% reported their profits had increased by at least 20%.
- Businesses were asked in the last two weeks, had their businesses exporting or importing of goods or services been affected when compared to normal expectations for the time of year. 57.1% of West Midlands businesses who were exporting reported that they had not been affected and 61.0% reported that importing had not been affected.
- 31.1% of responding West Midlands businesses reported that prices increased more than normal, 37.9% reported that prices did not change any more than normal.
- 1.0% of West Midlands businesses reported that vacancies were easier to fill. 22.4% of West Midlands businesses reported there was no difference in the ability to fill vacancies and 46.2% reported vacancies were more difficult to fill.
- 21% of responding West Midlands adults reported in the past seven days they had worked at home because of COVID-19 (29% overall working population), while 19% of West Midlands adults they had not be able to work from home (22% overall working population).

# Global, National and Regional Outlook

Alice Pugh, WMREDI

## Global

The [International Energy Agency Global outlook report for 2021](#) has warned that continued under investment in green energy could lead to increase periods of turbulence in the energy market. Energy prices throughout the UK, Europe and Asia have hit record highs in recent weeks and inflation is hitting prices in many countries. The IEA warns that clean energy and infrastructure need a £4 trillion a year investment globally. An outlay such as this would mean the world could limit the rise in global temperature to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels, as agreed in Paris six years ago.

The release of the report was timed to coincide with the [COP 26](#) and emphasises that governments need to increase their emissions reductions at a [much faster rate than they have already](#) agreed if they are to meet the targets set in Paris. It suggests incentives could be introduced through tax systems, easier to access finance and changes in regulation.

The report highlights that whilst there has been a significant move towards greener energy technologies, such as solar and wind, the progression has been hindered by the pandemic. Natural gas shortages over the last year have even led to many countries either having to increase their use of coal and oil or have slowed down the speed at which they were reducing their use of them. This means that the world is on course for the [second biggest increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions ever](#).

The [paper also recommends](#) that Europe could reduce its reliance on Russia by increasing its use of renewables. Currently, Europe receives 60% of its energy from Russia and is highly dependent on Gazprom, the government backed energy company. Over the last two months it has been perceived by most European nations that Russia has taken advantage of the energy crisis to force through the Nord Stream 2 energy pipeline. Whilst [Russia has denied this](#), it did [reduce the of energy they supply to Europe](#) once they had met their contractual obligation. However, if European nations were less reliant on coal, oil and natural gas, then Russia would have less influence over the energy market and their ability to use it as an economic weapon.

[136 countries](#) have signed up to a historic deal to enforce a corporate tax rate of at least 15%, as a fairer system to ensure large companies pay their fair share of tax. For a long time, large corporations have been able to move around depending on where there are more favourable tax regulations, enabling them to re-route profits through low tax jurisdictions. The floor on corporation tax is set to come in from 2023. Under the agreement countries will also have more scope to tax multinational companies operating within their borders, even if they don't have a physical presence.

This will affect firms with global sales above 20 billion euros and profit margins above 10%. A quarter of any profits they make above the 10% threshold will be reallocated to the countries where they earned and taxed there. However, there have been [criticisms](#) as industrial countries' corporation tax rates average 23.5%, well above the 15% floor, which will still allow large corporations to take advantage of low tax rates.

The [IMF](#) has dropped its expected growth forecast for many of the leading economies globally. This reflects disruptions to supply chains and a softening of consumption in the third quarter. As government spending is slowing down on Covid-19 relief programmes, many consumers are reining in their spending, especially as inflation is hitting prices and energy prices are climbing in time for the winter. The [IMF](#) now predicts global growth of 5.9%, 0.1% lower than the previous month.

In its [World Economic Outlook in October](#), the [OECD](#) has stated that supply chain issues will continue to cause supply and price inflation issues. As demand continues to increase in developed nations, developing nations are still being impacted by the Delta variant. This is causing the continued disruption of labour and is leading to bottlenecks and price inflation in sectors where there is an under-supply of materials. As winter is coming, there is also increasing concerns about new variants, which could cause issues in the high demand period surrounding Christmas.

## National

UK job vacancies have hit a 20 year record high, with [vacancies hitting 1.1 million](#) between July and September of this year, the highest levels since records began in 2001. Given subdued activity over the last year, it was unsurprising that as everything opens back up the largest job vacancies are in motor vehicle repair and the retail sector. However, this rise in vacancies is due to labour supply shortages. In order to attract labour supply, many businesses have increased wages and wages are [7.2% higher](#) than this time last year. However, these figures are distorted due to depressed wages last year when many were on furlough. If that effect is stripped out, according to the [BBC](#) the wage rises are closer to 4%.

However, the Bank of England has announced that it expects inflation to rise to at least [4%](#) by the end of the year. This will offset any wage rises for those lucky enough to receive them. Many people, though, will see living standards fall though as their wages remain the same and inflation continues to increase. There do not seem to be people with the right skills to take all positions. Such a high number of vacancies suggests that there is a high skills mismatch between the jobs people want and have the skills for, and the jobs that are currently available.

This is also not good news for the economy as [consumer spending is slowing](#). This is likely due to the expected inflation rises, as well as rapidly increasing energy prices in the build up to winter when consumers will need to heat their homes. Plus, with many more people working from home – at least for some of the time, we have a much greater dependency on energy than we did previously.

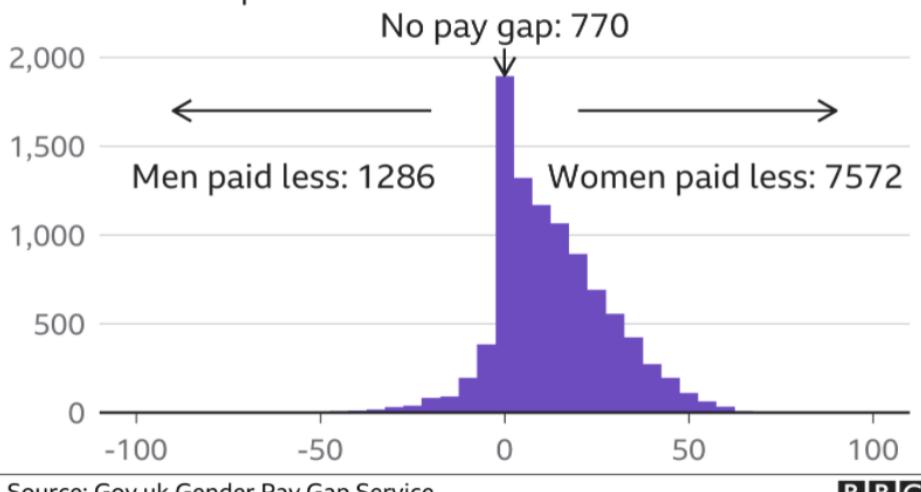
However, over the summer many people took the opportunity for a chance at freedom and went for staycations. This has led to a growth in [GDP of 0.4% in August 2021](#). This was largely as a result of strong growth in accommodation which grew [22.9%](#). Arts, entertainment and recreation was the second largest growth in services at [8.5% in August 2021](#). However, growth has still not returned to its pre-pandemic levels.

A [BBC report](#) looking into gender pay gaps has found that there has been no improvement in the pay gap in 2020-21 comparative to the year before. The [BBC](#) looked at a company's median pay gap - that is, the difference in pay between the middle-ranking woman and the middle-ranking man. 9,628 companies reported in time for the deadline, up from a total number of 6,945 firms that reported in 2019. Of these companies:

- 7,572 report a pay gap which favours men
- 1,286 have a pay gap favouring women
- 770 report no pay gap.

### Spread of pay gaps across reporting companies

Number of companies where

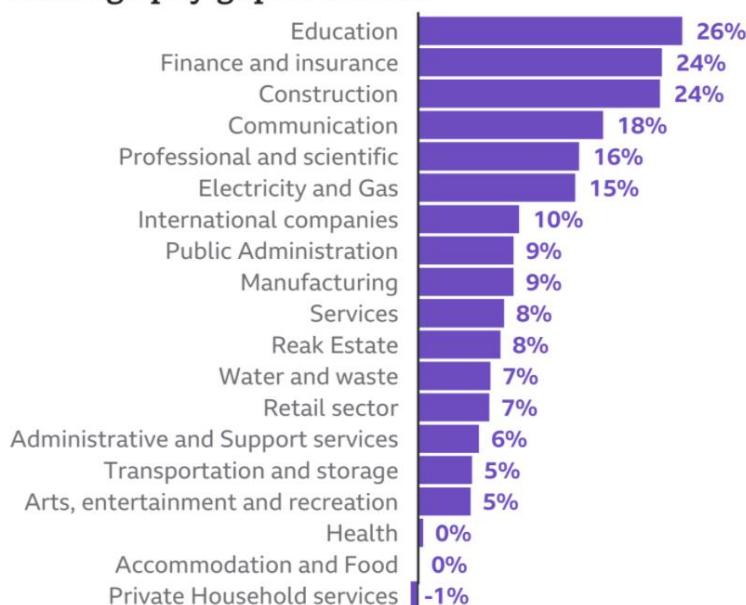


Source: Gov.uk Gender Pay Gap Service

BBC

The median pay gap is not the same as paying women less than men to do the same work, which is illegal in the UK. However, using the median pay measure is helpful in understanding the number of women in companies who hold senior roles. The [BBC's](#) analysis found that by sector, the worst gender pay gaps on average are in education (26%), finance and insurance (24%) and construction (23.8%).

### Average pay gap in sectors



Source: Gov.uk Gender Pay Gap Service

BBC

A record-breaking 12,000 social enterprises were created last year, according to the [No Going Back: State of Social Enterprise Report 2021](#) produced by Social Enterprise UK. The report found there are more than 100,000 social enterprises in the UK contribute £60bn a year to the UK economy and employ two million people.

The report, based on research conducted among almost 900 social enterprises, found social enterprises were [more resilient than mainstream businesses during the pandemic](#), with 44% reporting an increase in turnover last year compared with 18% of businesses. Just over a third of social enterprises reported a decrease in turnover compared with 56% of businesses. The report also found that 47% of social enterprises were led by a woman, rising to 66% among new enterprises that have been operating for up to a year.

### Regional

The WMCA set out a package of measures to help the region's unemployed gain skills needed to get back into work. This is especially important following the removal of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme this month, and the region's slow recovery from the shock of Covid. The [WMCA is stepping in with £25 million worth of training to support the unemployed in returning to employment](#).

Working with the region's educational providers, the WMCA's support will be targeted at up-skilling people for roles in sectors where the WMCA has seen growth- including digital, logistics, health and social care, rail and construction. The training will also be focused towards jobs with long-term prospects, such as teaching assistants, housing officers and software developers. Alongside education providers, the WMCA will also work alongside local employers to give people the skills needed to [fill record job vacancy levels](#).

A 'one stop' shop was launched last week to give people the [skills needed to land thousands of jobs at next summer's 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham](#). The bespoke online portal has been set up by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), offering valuable information on training courses that are matched to Birmingham 2022 jobs.

The [Jobs and Skills Academy portal](#) is part of the WMCA's commitment to train more than 6,000 local people for jobs that are currently available, as well as during and after the sporting spectacle. It offers access to a wide range of courses in sectors which are expected to see large numbers of jobs created by the Games such as security,

stewarding, logistics catering and cleaning. Courses are free to West Midlands residents whose annual income is less than £18,135.

According, to a [government report](#) that came out ahead of the [Birmingham Tech Week](#), the West Midlands has been named as having the fastest growing tech sector and is expected to create an extra 52,000 tech roles by 2025. Between, 2014 and 2019 the Tech sector has grown by 7.6% a year, such that the region has the fastest growth in the UK. Going forward, it is expected to generate at least £2.7 billion by 2025.

New figures from [Azunda and Dealroom for the UK's Digital Economy Council](#) and [Tech Nation](#) show tech companies in the West Midlands are on track to raise more venture capital investment in 2021 than they did a year earlier, and tech job vacancies advertised in the region have almost doubled since December 2020. West Midlands based tech companies have raised £454 million in venture capital funding already this year, comparative to £358 million last year. Job vacancies have increased by 82% from 5,099 in December 2020 to 9,287 in October 2021.

The growth figures, published as part of the [Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport \(DCMS\) Assessing the UK's regional digital ecosystems report](#), highlights the size and speed of the sectors growth in the region has far outpaced any other region, including London. The DCMS report looks at regional growth in the digital economy and will be used to support the government's work on levelling up so it can work with the sector to capitalise on untapped areas of potential and create more wealth and jobs.

[Commonwealth Games Contractors](#) are also part of the initiative so local people can be connected directly to those helping to stage the games. Currently the WMCA Is working with adult education providers such as colleges, local authorities and independent training companies to ensure that the training delivered aligns to the future needs of the contractors as well.

[Cadbury](#) is set to release a new vegan chocolate bar at the beginning of November the same time as the UN COP26. Developed over the last two years at Mondelēz International's Global Centre of Excellence for Chocolate Research and Development in Bournville, the bar is said to retain its creamy taste you would usually expect from Cadbury by swapping dairy milk with almond paste. Additionally, as part of the company's commitment to innovate and trial new forms of packaging, the Cadbury Plant Bar range will be wrapped in 100% plant-based packaging made from ISCC certified bio-sourced plastics from renewable resources. Similar recycled soft plastic packaging will also be rolled-out across the Cadbury Dairy Milk tablet bars as well in the UK and Ireland.

These decisions have been taken as part of Cadbury sustainability initiatives [Snacking Made Right](#) – the strategy from which the company delivers its sustainability and well-being agendas. It follows after there have been changing their diets, with more people demanding more environmentally friendly products and aim to cut down their carbon footprint by reducing their consumption of animal-based products. As, a result of consumers' demands, there is a wider product range from favourite brands, so increasing choice.

# Future Business District

Anne Green, Rebecca Riley, Hannes Read and Ben Brittain, WMREDI

This week saw the launch of research carried out by CityREDI for the Colmore Row Bid on the Future Business District. [The Colmore Business District](#) (Colmore BID) established the Future Business District Study to inform long-term recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and offer policy directions on best practice for central business districts across the UK. It commissioned a team from City-REDI, University of Birmingham and the West Midlands Combined Authority to deliver a research programme, supported by an independent Advisory Panel and a range of partners.

The project focused on prospects for Birmingham's city centre business district in the medium- and longer-term, addressing two questions:

- What is the likely long-term impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on city centre business districts?
- How can we ensure they remain successful as places to attract businesses and people and contribute to vibrant city centres?

An initial research phase involved an evidence and data review; workshops on 'megatrends'; and a call for evidence. A subsequent engagement phase involved in-depth interviews with 21 businesses and stakeholders; Advisory Panel meetings to help develop future scenarios; facilitated discussions on future infrastructure, place and urban experience; supplementary individual meetings; and engagement with a broader community panel on working patterns and broader use of cities and city centres.

## The research phase included:

- Evidence review
- Data analysis
- Workshops on 'megatrends'
- Call for evidence

## Engagement phase

- In-depth interviews with businesses & stakeholders – and an expert Advisory Panel
- Engagement with a broader community panel – focus on working patterns & broader use of city centres
- Facilitated discussions on future infrastructure, place & urban experience
- Supplementary individual meetings

## Historical perspectives

- Pandemics in history have had social, economic and political impacts and have spurred developments in medicine - Black Death, plagues, Spanish Flu, SARS, Swine Flu, Covid-19
- Cities have survived and re-emerged in a relatively strong position – BUT now wider availability of alternatives to face-to-face interaction

## Evolution of cities

- *Macro geographies* - agglomeration advantages of cities are likely to remain because of the importance of proximity in collaborative knowledge creation – role of cities as meeting places retained
- *Micro geographies* - local level also increasingly important

**Megatrends** were reviewed for their effect on the city. Major movements, patterns or trends that have a transformative impact on business, economy, society, cultures and personal lives, key ones include:

- Hybrid working
- Work re-imagined
- The urban experience economy
- Cities for people not cars

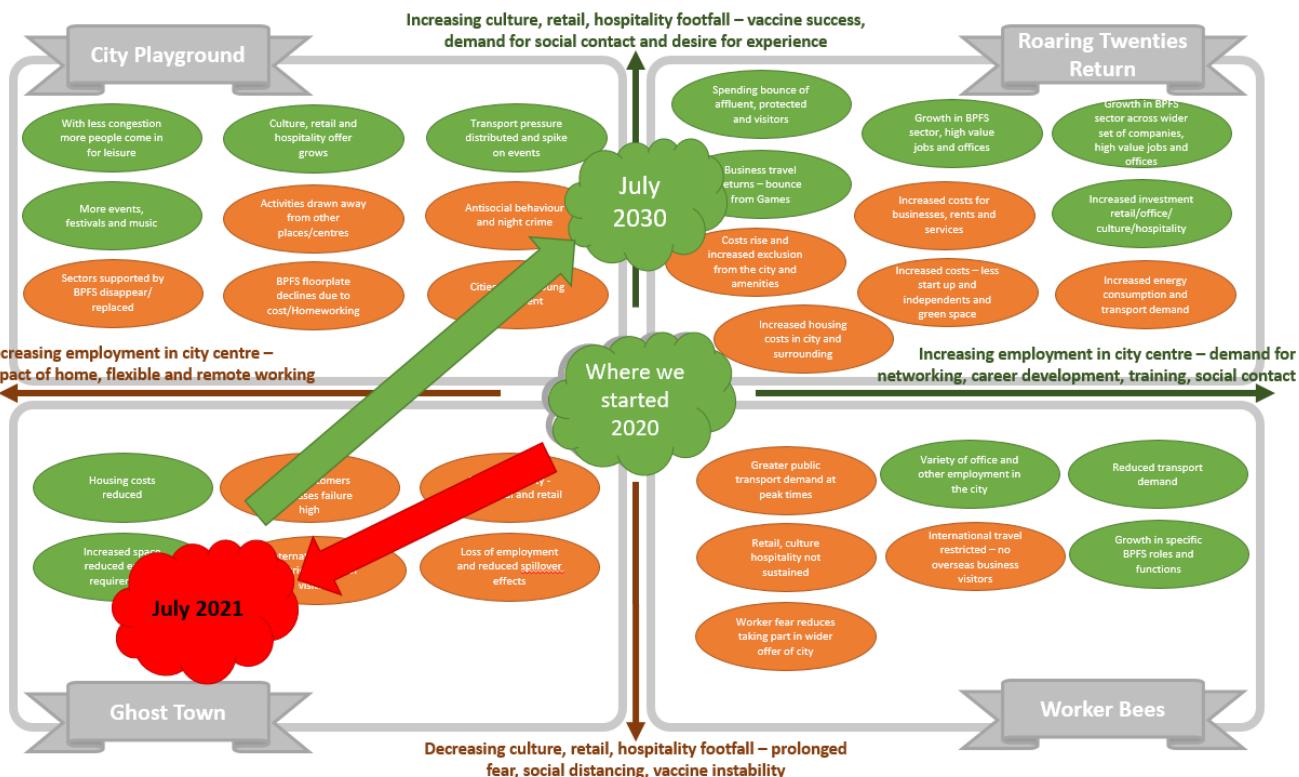
The diagram below highlights the main trend themes that came through the research.



The interviews with local businesses raised a lot of key issues which are illustrated through the quotes below:

- “We were already ‘agile’ & ‘flexible’, like a lot of firms in the city centre - but Covid has brought a step change in this.”
- “The office will become a ‘social space’. It will be a place to think and challenge; not to do what you can do at home.”
- “Greater attraction for evening economy, hospitality & leisure will help the city centre become a destination, in addition to high quality work space.”
- “Safety & security, they are really important, especially for inward investors ... we have come a long way on this, but there is more to do.”
- “Green spaces & corporate social responsibility have a strong relationship and firms should be encouraged to develop, invest in opening green & public spaces to all.”

The final stage looked at developing scenarios for the future business district and wider city, and developed 4 future scenarios, deliberately extreme and divergent to flag the risks and opportunities places face under the alternate futures:



We gauged the impact of the different economic scenarios using two different models. One is City-REDI's in-house Socio-Economic Impact Model (SEIM-UK).<sup>1</sup> This input-output model takes account of the interdependencies between different sectors of the economy at the West Midlands metropolitan area scale. The other is an economic model from Oxford Economics<sup>2</sup> run at the Birmingham local authority scale. This latter model enables the specific scenarios to be compared with a baseline scenario. The model scenario was run for a ten-year period: 2021-2030.<sup>3</sup>

For each model we examined the four scenarios across the two axes of: (1) economic output in services and industry; and (2) output in accommodation, trade, food services, arts, entertainment and recreation. We adopted the following assumptions for illustrative purposes to capture trends associated with different broad directions of travel implied by each scenario:

- **Ghost Town:** assumes a 20% reduction in output (Gross Value Added) for manufacturing, construction, transport, utilities, real estate, and professional services, and a 50% drop in wholesale and retail trade, accommodation, food services, arts, and entertainment. This leads to:
  - GVA per worker would increase by 10.3%, compared to a baseline scenario of 11.3%.
  - Total GVA would contract by -1.9% compared to the baseline growth of 19.6%.
  - The change in economic output would be accompanied by a net out-migration of 77,700.
- **Roaring Twenties Return:** assumes the reverse of 'Ghost Town': increasing by 20% in the former sectors and doubling in the latter. This will lead to:
  - A population increase of 15.8% (and of 16.6% aged 16-64) between 2021 and 2030, compared to a baseline growth of 4.2% and 2.1% respectively.
  - GVA per worker would increase by 7.8%, compared to a baseline scenario of 11.3%.
  - Total GVA would grow by 61.5% compared to the baseline of 19.6%.
  - The change in economic output would be accompanied by an increase in net migration into Birmingham of 112,800.

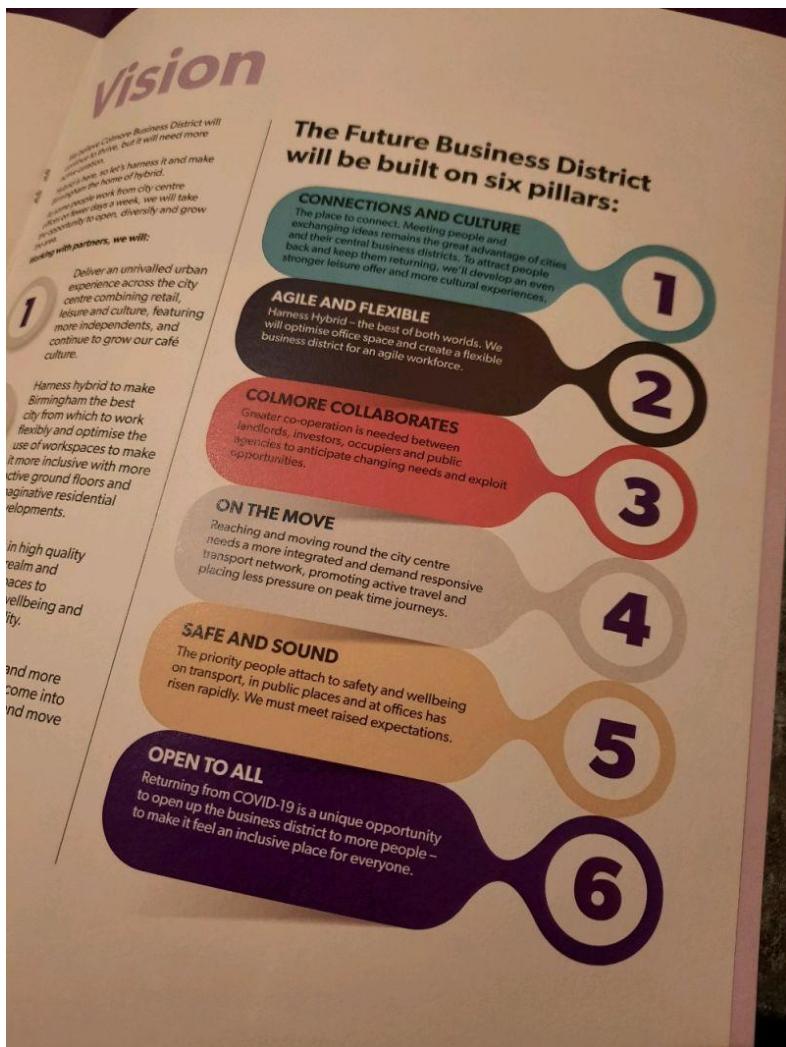
<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/business/research/research-projects/city-redi/socio-economic-impact-model-for-the-uk.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> The Oxford Economics model (2021) is funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority, the Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect.

<sup>3</sup> Tables and Figures are output automatically for the period to 2040.

- *City Playground*: assumes the 20% drop in manufacturing, construction, transport, and professional services, but a contrasting doubled output in wholesale and retail trade, accommodation, food services, arts, and entertainment. Key trends include:
  - A population increase of 12.9% (and of 13.1% aged 16-64) between 2021 and 2030, compared to a baseline growth of 4.2% and 2.1% respectively.
  - GVA per worker would increase by 3.1%, compared to a baseline scenario of 11.3%.
  - Total GVA would grow by 42.5% compared to the baseline of 19.6%.
  - The change in economic output would be accompanied by an increase in net migration of 104,900.
- *Worker Bees*: assumes the reverse of ‘City Playground’, this scenario envisages a 50% drop in trade, accommodation, food services, arts, and entertainment. However manufacturing and professional services output grows by 20%. Key trends include:
  - A population increase of 3.3% (and of -1.0% aged 16-64) between 2021 and 2030, compared to a baseline growth of 4.2% and 2.1% respectively.
  - GVA per worker would increase by 14.6%, compared to a baseline scenario of 11.3%.
  - Total GVA would grow by 13.3% compared to the baseline of 19.6%.
  - The change in economic output would be accompanied by a net out-migration of 11,300.

**Full research report and Colmore Bid’s Strategy for the Future Business District “The Space Between” Can be found [here](#)**



# The Regional Economic Contribution of Student Expenditure: Implications for Managing the COVID-19 Pandemic

## Tasos Kitsos, WMREDI

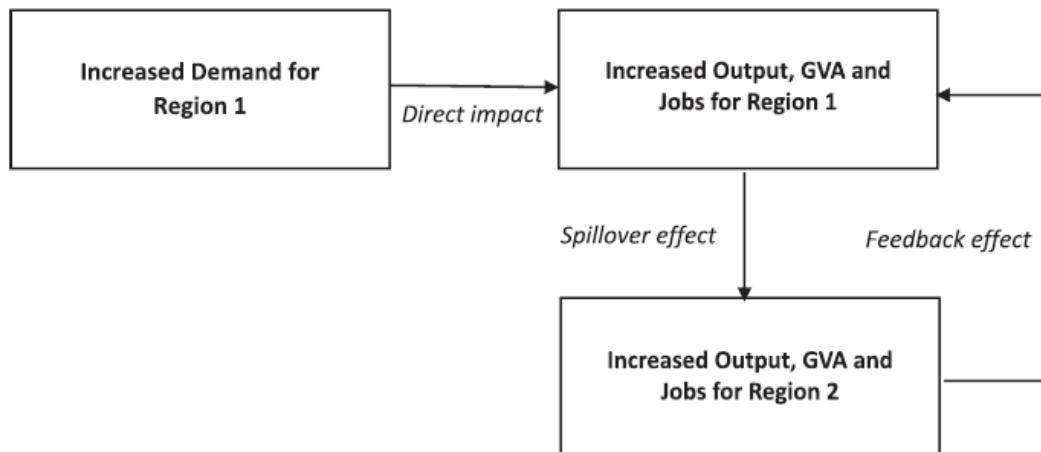
In this piece, [Tasos Kitsos](#) discusses his recent publication “Universities, students and regional economies: a symbiotic relationship?” with [André Carrascal-Incera](#) and [Diana Gutiérrez-Posada](#).

This research is part of the City-REDI project on [The Impact of Universities on Regional Economies](#).

Key questions are: What is the economic contribution of students in the regions where they study? What is the impact of the regional economic structure in making the most of student expenditure? What is the effect of students not coming to a region to study for a year?

We started exploring the [first two questions before the COVID-19 pandemic](#), with the third becoming relevant when universities had to switch from face to face to online teaching.

Bringing together a range of datasets, we built a multi-regional input-output model for all UK NUTS2 regions, to shed light on answers to our questions. The model allows us to measure the direct as well as the spillover and feedback effects of student expenditure as shown below.



First, we build a “typical” student spending profile and then we calculate regional multipliers from spending a “typical” £1 in each region. This shows us how the different regional industrial structures can benefit to different degrees from the same spending. As such, for each £1, the average region adds £0.72 in its GVA. This masks significant variation with the best performer (Eastern Scotland) generating £0.8 and the worst (East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire) generating £0.68. Similar are the variations in terms of jobs generated.

Secondly, we consider different student characteristics (domicile, mode of study) to estimate the total student spending in a region and its impact. This allows us to estimate the total contribution of students (separately between direct and spillover effects) for each region and the share of this contribution to the region’s employment and GVA. Hence, we find that the 143,000 students in West Midlands, generate more jobs for the region than the 180,000 students do for Inner London. Looking at the shares of the local economy, we see that student expenditure is responsible for more than 4% of GVA and jobs in the West Midlands, twice as much as the respective figures for the UK.

Translating these effects to consider the risk of universities operating online rather than in person, for a region such as the West Midlands, a job is at risk for every 2-3 students not coming to the region. And these are only the impacts of lost student expenditure.

Overall, our study shows that different regions can benefit to different degrees from student expenditure and this is dependent on both the regional industrial structure as well as the student population. Calculating regional

multipliers allows us to approximate the total contribution of student spending by region and consider the cost of disruption from the ineffective management of the pandemic.

Our paper “Universities, students and regional economies: a symbiotic relationship?” is part of a forthcoming **Regional Studies** Special Issue on the economic contribution of students to regional economies and is freely available [here](#). Its abstract is included below:

***“This paper examines the heterogeneous effect of student spending in UK NUTS-2 regions. Impact analyses of the more than £45 billion students spend each year have so far been agnostic of the regional absorptive capacity to benefit from this expenditure. Building a multi-regional input–output model for the UK and combining it with data on student expenditure, domicile and level of study, the paper finds significant regional heterogeneity in gross value added and employment multipliers as well as in interregional spillovers. The analysis shows how important student expenditure is for regional economies and the symbiotic relationship between student spending and regional industrial structures that produce varying impact outcomes.”***

# E-Cargo Bikes – The Future of ‘Last-Mile’ Logistics?

Robert Lynam, WMREDI

What are your perceptions of an e-cargo bike? Peculiar-looking? A novelty that will eventually wear off? What about capable? As well as being favourable for the environment, they can also bring social and economic benefits both for businesses as well as individuals.

E-cargo bikes are simply electrically assisted bikes designed to carry a big load. And compared with diesel vans, these freight vehicles emit up to 90% fewer carbon emissions when delivering goods in city centres as the final part of the supply chain, or the ‘last-mile’. Recent studies have also found that they are beneficial for businesses in dense, urban environments. Not only are they cheaper to use, but they can also deliver parcels 60% faster than their fossil-fuel-powered counterparts. Moreover, they have the added benefit of reducing congestion – potentially attracting further economic investment to the area – by being able to weave through traffic and park more flexibly. In fact, these bikes have so much potential that they could halve the number of motorised trips (both commercial and individual) in urban environments that involve the transportation of goods.

## Benefits for the West Midlands

The problems that these pedal-powered vehicles can ameliorate are directly applicable to the West Midlands. As well as the region’s air pollution affecting 2.8 million people, Birmingham has a predicted population growth equivalent to adding the population of Oxford to the city by 2031. Combine this with the rise in online shopping that has arisen during the pandemic – habits that potentially look here to stay – and you have a recipe for gridlock on the roads. Congestion already costs the regional economy £2 billion a year in 2008 and is predicted to have worsened by over 80% by 2035. As road freight specifically accounts for 30% of this economic impact, one could estimate that halving the number of goods-related trips by using e-cargo bikes could potentially save the region up to £150 million a year, not to mention countless premature deaths related to air pollution.

The local authorities have already spotted the potential of these thrifty three-wheelers. Birmingham City Council secured £58,000 of government funding for an e-cargo bike pilot scheme which was tested during the Christmas of 2020. Transport for West Midlands has also foreseen their benefit for the broader region, considering them as part of its Local Transport Plan. However, time isn’t on our side: the climate emergency is already upon us. So, what can be done to speed up this transition?

## Some policy suggestions to encourage the uptake of e-cargo bikes in the West Midlands

### Directives

- Build on the existing cycling infrastructure in the region to normalise the use of bicycle-related transport, both making it easier and less stigmatising. This will reduce the friction of the transition for individuals and businesses considering making the switch from four to two wheels.
- Create strategically placed local delivery hubs – or urban micro warehouses – where businesses who don’t have existing resources to do so can transfer their goods to e-cargo bikes to complete the last stage of delivery.

### Incentives

- Provide direct funding, subsidies or loans for businesses to reduce the financial risk of investing in their use. Whilst public services are already setting a good example in the region, such financial incentives are also necessary if the private sector is to seriously consider and adopt the trend.
- Hold demonstration sessions and trial periods for individuals and businesses so they can try before they buy and see the benefits for themselves. Direct experience is often the best way to persuade.

## Only one part of the puzzle

The benefits of e-cargo bikes are plain to see. But they won’t single-handedly solve the problems the West Midlands and other city-regions face. They are only one of many measures that need to be implemented in order to create a healthier, more prosperous place to live for all. The region’s vision for an integrated transport system is a positive development, as is the national government’s goal for net-zero transport by 2050. All policies have their part to play, from the cycle hire scheme to the clean air zone.

Whilst it is misplaced to think that the use of e-cargo bikes for ‘last-mile’ logistics is the single solution to these problems, we should not underestimate the scale of impact that these vehicles could have on the city-region. And [better is good](#). That is, whilst not a comprehensive solution, undertaking micro-changes is both beneficial and necessary. Sales of commercially purposed e-cargo bikes are [predicted to rise by 60%](#) this coming year. Like in so many other areas, the West Midlands could also lead this permanent transition by directing, facilitating and encouraging the future of ‘last-mile’ logistics for the benefit of its people, businesses and planet.

# Business Support: Referrals to Regional Universities by the GBSLEP Growth Hub

**Freya Williams, Alice Pugh and Dr Juliane Schwarz, WMREDI**

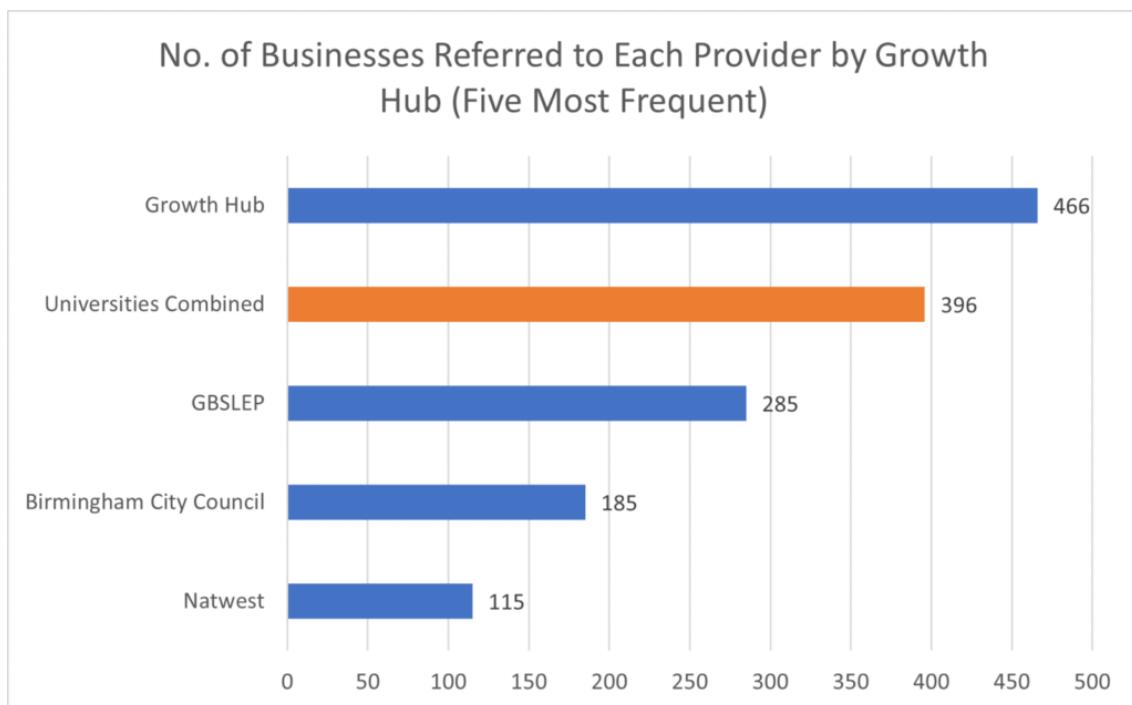
This piece examines the referral of businesses by the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) Growth Hub to universities in the West Midlands, including what sectors they come from, the size of businesses and what kind of support they receive.

## GBSLEP Growth Hub

The [Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership \(GBSLEP\) Growth Hub](#) offers assistance to businesses located in the GBSLEP area (Birmingham, Bromsgrove, Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Redditch, Solihull, Tamworth and Wyre Forest). Support to the business is free, though they may be required to make a matched contribution depending on the funding source where a grant is being provided. The Growth Hub is funded by national organisations such as the [Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy](#) and continues to receive funding from the [European Union Regional Development Fund](#) until 2023. Support is provided either within the Growth Hub, [GBSLEP](#) or external partners such as regional universities.

## Businesses Support by University Providers

Upon contacting the Growth Hub, an individual business' support needs are assessed before being connected to the most appropriate service and provider. Between October 2019 and July 2021, 1428 businesses contacted the Growth Hub, almost three quarters (1046 out of 1428) were referred to either internal or external providers for further support. The Growth Hub itself dealt with the majority of enquiries internally through the [Peer Networks](#), [Access to Finance Portal](#), and [Brexit Advisors](#). Businesses are also referred to other parts of the GBSLEP, such as the [Skills Hub](#), [Digital Welcome Scheme](#), and the [Pivot and Prosper Grant Fund](#) or external partners such as local councils, banks and universities.



*Number of Businesses Referred to Each Provider by Growth Hub (Five Most Frequent)*

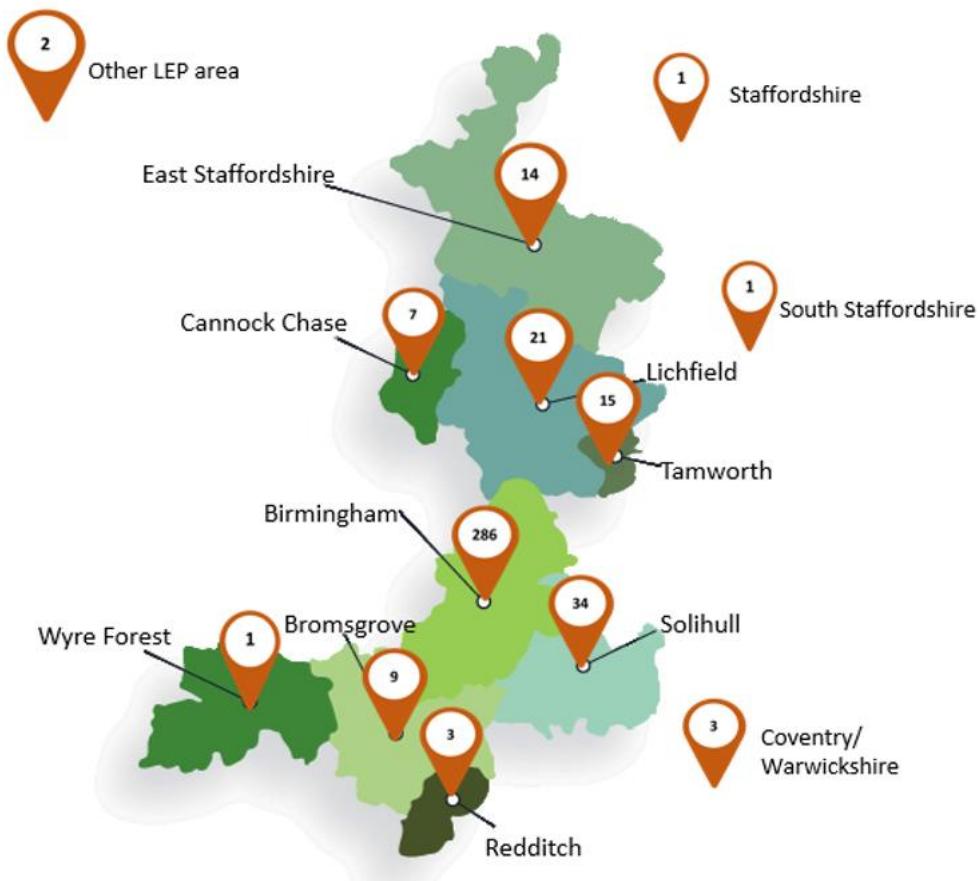
Over a quarter of businesses (27.7%) that contacted the Growth Hub in the time period were referred to one of the nine regional university partners. The university partners are:

- Aston University,
- Birmingham City University,
- Coventry University,
- Keele University,

- Staffordshire University,
- University of Birmingham,
- University College Birmingham,
- University of Warwick,
- University of Wolverhampton.

Businesses that accessed university support through the Growth Hub were mainly referred to specific university business support programmes (81.6%) that provide specialised support such as the adoption of new technologies and processes, skills development, and business leadership.

No. of Businesses Referred to University Partners by Growth Hub by Location

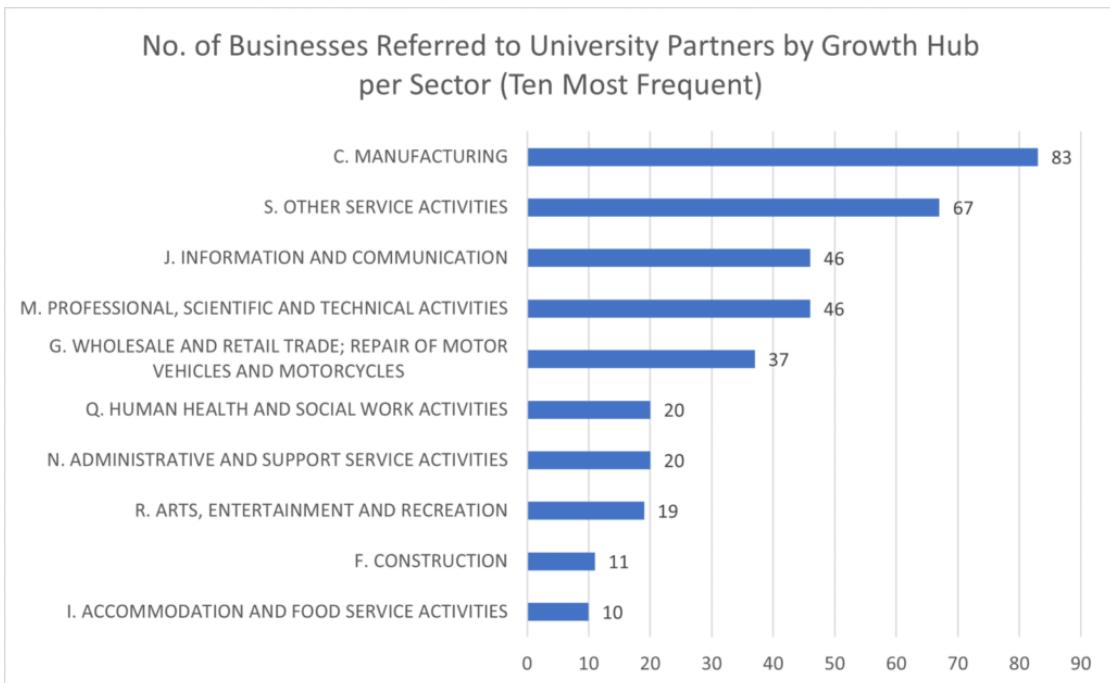


Number of Businesses Referred to University Partners by Growth Hub by Location

## Sectors

Businesses receiving support from universities via Growth Hub referrals operate in 18 different company sectors. The most common sectors are:

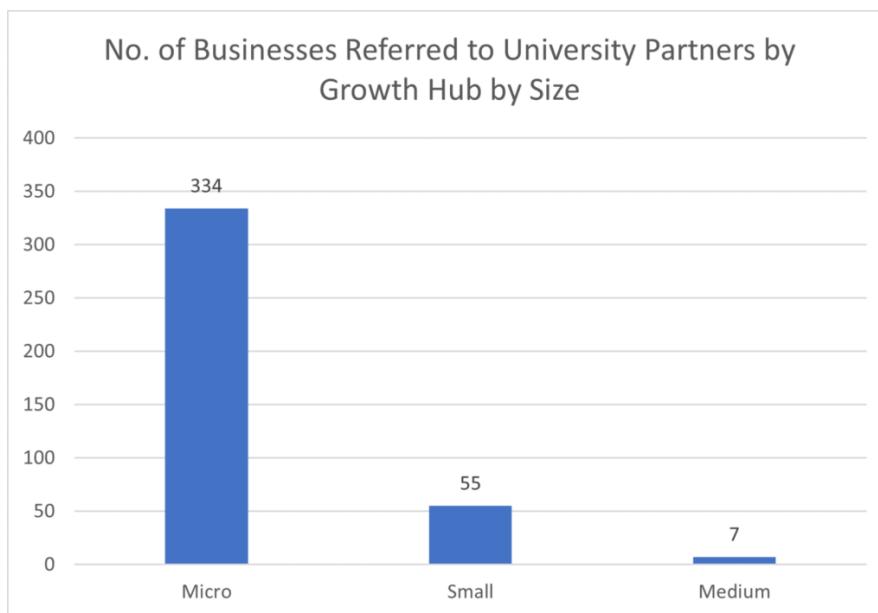
1. Manufacturing (83 businesses).
2. Other service activities (67 businesses).
3. Professional, scientific and technical activities (46 businesses).
4. Information and communication (46 businesses).
5. Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (37 businesses).



*Number of Businesses Referred to University Partners by Growth Hub per Sector (Ten Most Frequent)*

### Size of Businesses

Over four-fifths (84.3%) of businesses receiving support from a university via the Growth Hub referral route are micro-businesses (less than 10 employees). Only 13.9% are described as small businesses (less than 50 employees) and 1.77% as medium-sized (less than 250 employees).



*Number of Businesses Referred to University Partners by Growth Hub by Size*

### Kinds of Support

The support services offered by universities can be broadly categorised into four distinct but often overlapping areas:

1. support in growing or running a business;
2. use of facilities and equipment;
3. courses for employees;
4. recruitment of university students.

The support for growing and running a business can be either financial, technical or non-technical. Aston University allows businesses to access matched financial support through the [Innovation Vouchers](#) scheme and grants worth

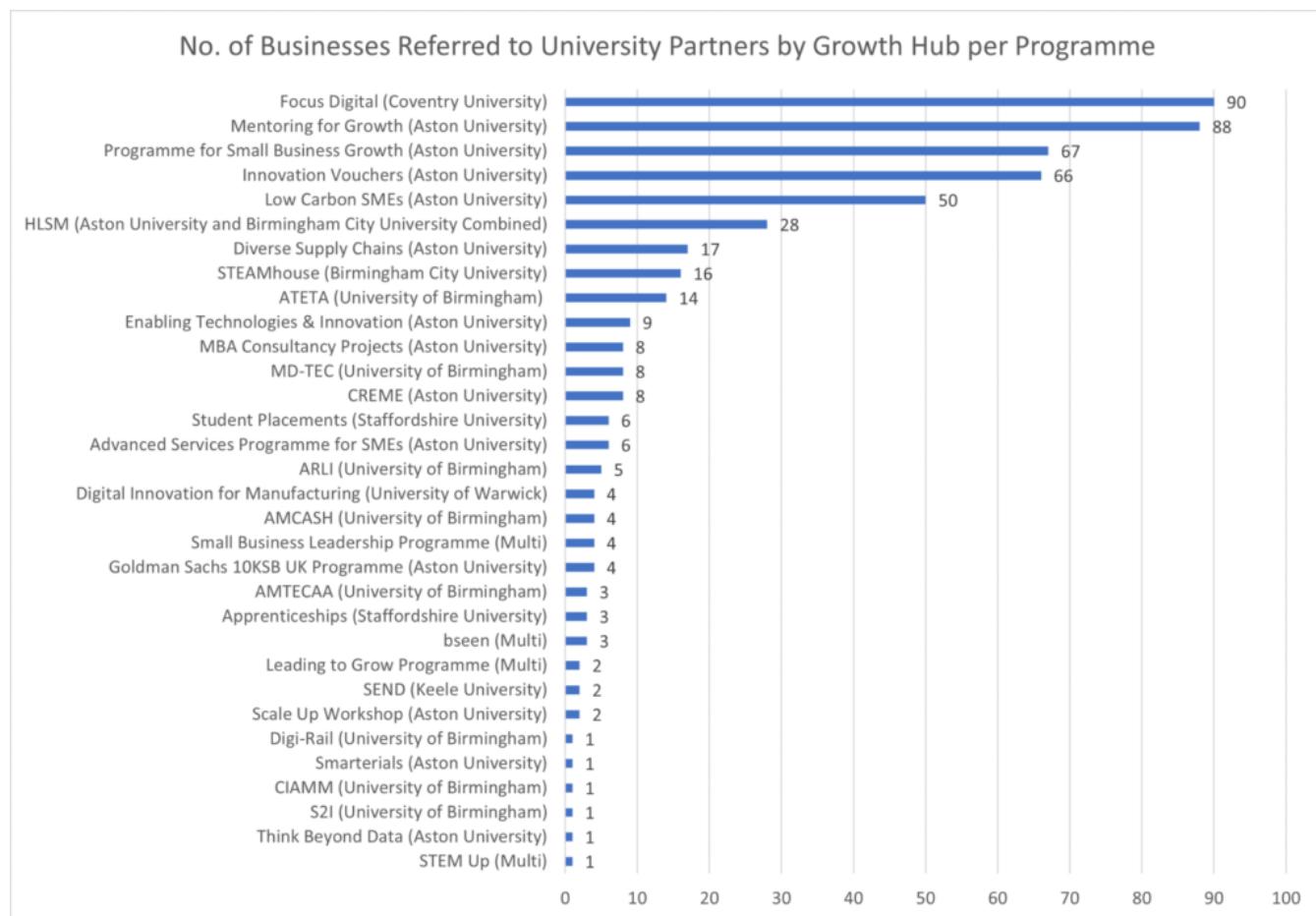
£2500 for ethnic or other minority-led SMEs to enter the supply chains of firms, with the [Diverse Supply Chains](#) programme.

Aston University also offer a variety of routes for businesses to receive non-technical support, including a [Mentoring Programme](#) in partnership with the GBSLEP; [Consultancy Projects with their MBA students](#); and the [Aston Programme for Small Business Growth](#). Coventry University provide non-technical support in conjunction with technical support with the [Focus Digital Programme](#). They offer a package of workshops, one-to-one graphic design and assistance in developing new products or processes.

Thirteen of the 32 university schemes that received referrals from the Growth Hub are offering technical support. This encompasses largely STEM related research and development, short to long-term projects, with a goal of helping businesses to develop innovative and improved products and processes. This type of support often includes access to skills, technical equipment and technicians for prototyping and testing new products, an example of this is Aston University's [Enabling Technologies & Innovation Competences Challenge Project](#).

Many universities offer the use of specialist facilities and equipment to local businesses. For example, the University of Birmingham's [Medical Devices Testing and Evaluation Centre \(MD-TEC\)](#) allows participating SMEs to access their usability suite, when undertaking a medical devices project with the Centre. On the other hand, Birmingham City University's [STEAMhouse](#) initiative offers office and incubator space to businesses.

Universities in the region have been adept at both achieving objectives around increasing employability and graduate employment and retention in the region and meeting specific skills gaps by supporting businesses in recruiting their current and past students. An example of this is the [Higher Level Skills Match \(HLSM\)](#) programme, that runs in partnership with Birmingham City, Aston and Newman Universities. It matches businesses with high-calibre graduates, further facilitating knowledge exchange between universities and businesses. The provision of apprenticeships or professional development courses for new or existing staff is another service frequently offered to businesses, e.g. [Staffordshire University's apprenticeship programme](#).



Some universities have developed specialised business support programmes in response to local needs and national priorities. Aston University's [Low Carbon SMEs](#) programme and the University of Birmingham's [Accelerating Thermal Energy Technology Adoption \(ATETA\)](#) scheme supported a combined 61 businesses to adopt low zero carbon energy technologies through Growth Hub referrals. The [Centre for Research in Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship \(CREME\)](#) delivers expertise on business support for ethnic minority entrepreneurs.

# UK Business: Activity, Size and Location - October 2021<sup>4</sup>

## Black Country Consortium Economic Intelligence Unit

The UK Business: activity, size and location dataset released in October 2021 provides a snapshot of the Business Demography dataset from 12<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and provides a breakdown by sector, turnover and employment size band. The fuller Business Demography is released in November each year which provides the total number of active enterprises in each location.

The following briefing is based on enterprises as opposed to local units<sup>5</sup>.

### Key points:

- The snapshot from March 2021 shows there were 148,630 enterprises in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, a decrease of 2.0% (-3,005 enterprises) compared to the March 2020 snapshot, while the UK increased by 0.6%.
- In March 2021 snapshot, the WMCA (3 LEP) area had a higher proportion of enterprises with turnover over £5m at 2.6% (3,825) compared to UK at 2.4%. The WMCA (3 LEP) area was also above the UK proportions with turnover between £1m - £4.99m at 7.4% (11,005) of enterprises, while the UK average was 7.0% and enterprises with turnover between £250,000 - £999,999 with 21.6% (32,030) of the WMCA (3 LEP) total, while the UK stood at 20.2%.
- In the WMCA (3 LEP) area, the sector with the highest proportion of enterprises was the business professional and financial services which accounted for 39.1% of the business base; matching the UK proportion. Retail accounted for 17.1% (25,400) of the WMCA (3 LEP) business base, which was above the UK average of 15.0%. This is followed by construction at 13.5% (20,045), below the UK average of 14.7%.

### In Detail:

- The snapshot from March 2021 shows there were 148,630 enterprises in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, a decrease of 2.0% (-3,005 enterprises) compared to the March 2020 snapshot, while the UK increased by 0.6%.
- In the West Midlands 7 Met. area there were 91,075 enterprises in March 2021. This is a decrease of 0.1% (-75 enterprises) from the 2020 snapshot.
- Within the WMCA (3 LEP) area, there were 35,720 enterprises in the Black Country LEP in the 2021 snapshot, an increase of 4.0% (+1,360) from the 2020 snapshot. While Coventry and Warwickshire LEP had 37,905 enterprises but decreased by 1.2% (-450) since the previous snapshot. In Birmingham and Solihull LEP, there were 75,005 enterprises in the March 2021, a decrease of 5.0% (-3,915 enterprises) since the 2020 snapshot.
- At local authority area in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, the largest decrease in the number of enterprises in the latest snapshot showed Bromsgrove decreasing by 1,930 (to 7,250 enterprises) and Birmingham decreasing by 1,445 (to 36,925 enterprises). In contrast, Sandwell increased by 480 (to 9,585 enterprise) and Walsall increased by 325 (to 8,190 enterprises).

The following table shows the 2020 and 2021 snapshot for the number of enterprises and also the change by local authority within the WMCA (3 LEP) area and UK-Wide:

	2020 Snapshot	2021 Snapshot	Percentage Change	Number Change
Birmingham	38,370	36,925	-3.8%	-1,445

<sup>4</sup> Office for National Statistics (ONS)/Nomis: UK Business; activity, size and location: 2021/ UK Business Counts - released October 2021

<sup>5</sup> ONS state that an enterprise can be thought as the overall business, made up of all the individual sites or workplaces. It is defined as the smallest combination of legal units that has a certain degree of autonomy within an enterprise group. A local unit is an individual site (for example a factory or shop) associated with an enterprise. It can also be referred to as *workplace*.

Bromsgrove	9,180	7,250	-21.0%	-1,930
Cannock Chase	3,430	3,405	-0.7%	-25
Coventry	10,120	10,210	0.9%	90
Dudley	9,940	10,220	2.8%	280
East Staffordshire	4,845	4,855	0.2%	10
Lichfield	4,750	4,780	0.6%	30
North Warwickshire	2,820	2,815	-0.2%	-5
Nuneaton and Bedworth	3,830	3,735	-2.5%	-95
Redditch	3,235	2,995	-7.4%	-240
Rugby	5,170	5,215	0.9%	45
Sandwell	9,105	9,585	5.3%	480
Solihull	8,305	8,215	-1.1%	-90
Stratford-on-Avon	8,475	8,290	-2.2%	-185
Tamworth	2,350	2,320	-1.3%	-30
Walsall	7,865	8,190	4.1%	325
Warwick	7,940	7,640	-3.8%	-300
Wolverhampton	7,450	7,725	3.7%	275
Wyre Forest	4,450	4,260	-4.3%	-190
<b>WM 7 Met.</b>	<b>91,150</b>	<b>91,075</b>	<b>-0.1%</b>	<b>-75</b>
Black Country LEP	34,360	35,720	4.0%	1,360
Coventry and Warwickshire LEP	38,355	37,905	-1.2%	-450
Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP	78,920	75,005	-5.0%	-3,915
<b>WMCA (3 LEP)</b>	<b>151,635</b>	<b>148,630</b>	<b>-2.0%</b>	<b>-3,005</b>
United Kingdom	2,749,700	2,765,150	0.6%	15,450

### Employment by Size Band

- In the WMCA (3 LEP) area, 89.4% (132,855) of enterprises employed between 0-9 employees, below the UK average of 89.7%. Compared to the 2020 snapshot, the WMCA (3 LEP area) proportion has remained the same but the number of enterprises has decreased by 2,680, the UK proportion increased by 0.1pp.
- For the WMCA (3 LEP) area, the percentage of enterprises that employed 10-49 people was above the UK (8.6% vs 8.4%). The WMCA (3 LEP) area remained the same proportion when compared to the March 2020 snapshot but the number of enterprises decreased by 275, the UK decreased by 0.1pp.
- For the WMCA (3 LEP) area, 1.6% of enterprises employed 50 to 249 people and 1.5% for the UK. This has remained the same proportions for the WMCA (3 LEP) and the UK since the 2020 snapshot. The number of enterprises that employed 50-249 people has decreased by 65 in the WMCA (3 LEP) area since 2020.
- The proportion that employed over 250 people in the WMCA (3 LEP) area was 0.5% in 2020, above the UK-wide proportion of 0.4%. The UK proportion has remained the same since the 2020 snapshot while the WMCA (3 LEP) area increased by 0.1pp (+10 enterprises).

The following table shows the March 2021 snapshot of employment by size band for selected geography in the West Midlands and the UK:

	WM 7 Met.	BCLEP	CWLEP	GBSLEP	WMCA (3 LEP)	UK
Total	91,075	35,720	37,905	75,005	148,630	2,765,150
Micro (0 to 9)	81,090	31,465	34,070	67,320	132,855	2,480,140
% Micro	<b>89.0%</b>	<b>88.1%</b>	<b>89.9%</b>	<b>89.8%</b>	<b>89.4%</b>	<b>89.7%</b>
Small (10 to 49)	8,045	3,450	3,090	6,220	12,760	232,815
% Small	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>9.7%</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>
Medium-sized (50 to 249)	1,500	640	560	1,125	2,325	41,655
% Medium-sized	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>

Large (250+)	440	160	180	345	685	10,540
% Large	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%

### Turnover Band

- For the WMCA (3 LEP) area, 37.4% of enterprises had turnover between £0-£99,999, this was below the UK average of 38%. These were the highest percentages for the WMCA (3 LEP) area and the UK out of the five turnover bands.
- The WMCA (3 LEP) area had a higher proportion of enterprises with turnover over £5m at 2.6% (3,825) compared to UK at 2.4%. The WMCA (3 LEP) area was also above the UK proportions with turnover between £1m - £4.99m at 7.4% (11,005) of enterprises, while the UK average was 7.0% and enterprises with turnover between £250,000 - £999,999 with 21.6% (32,030) of the WMCA (3 LEP) total, while the UK stood at 20.2%.

The following table shows the WM 7 Met., WMCA (3 LEP) and UK turnover band from the March 2021 snapshot:

	WM 7 Met.	WM 7 Met. %	WMCA (3 LEP)	WMCA (3 LEP) %	UK	UK %
£0 - £99,999	33,630	36.9%	55,550	37.4%	1,049,710	38.0%
£100,000 - £249,999	29,150	32.0%	46,225	31.1%	895,385	32.4%
£250,000 - £999,999	19,110	21.0%	32,030	21.6%	557,890	20.2%
£1m - £4.99m	6,790	7.5%	11,005	7.4%	194,845	7.0%
£5m+	2,395	2.6%	3,825	2.6%	67,320	2.4%
Total	91,075	100%	148,630	100%	2,765,150	100%

### Enterprises by Sector

- In the WMCA (3 LEP) area, the sector with the highest proportion of enterprises was business professional and financial services which accounted for 31.9% of the business base; matching the UK proportion. Compared to the 2020 snapshot, business professional and financial services have decreased by 8.6% (-4,475), the UK decreased by 2.1%.
- Retail accounted for 17.1% (25,400) of the WMCA (3 LEP) business base, which was above the UK average of 15.0%. This is followed by construction at 13.5% (20,045), below the UK average of 14.7%.
- Since the March 2020 snapshot, the WMCA (3 LEP) area saw a decrease in four sectors. The sectors were; advanced manufacturing & engineering by 50 enterprises (-0.6% to 8,775), business, professional & financial services by 4,475 enterprises (-8.6%), digital & creative by 390 enterprises (-3.8% to 9,955) and low carbon and environmental technologies by 185 (-5.0% to 3,540). In contrast, retail increased by 735 enterprises (+3%) and construction increased by 625 (+3.2% to 20,045).

The following table shows the number and change of enterprises by sector for the WMCA (3 LEP) and UK:

Sector	WMCA (3 LEP) Num. 2020	WMCA (3 LEP) Num. 2021	WMCA (3 LEP) % Change 2020-2021	WMCA (3 LEP) Num. Change 2020-21	WMC A 2021 % of Total	UK 2021	UK % Change 2020-21	UK 2021 % of Total
Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering	8,825	8,775	-0.6%	-50	5.9%	117,100	1.8%	4.2%
Business, Professional and Financial Services	51,880	47,405	-8.6%	-4475	31.9%	883,375	-2.1%	31.9%
Construction	19,420	20,045	3.2%	625	13.5%	407,485	2.6%	14.7%

Digital & Creative	10,345	9,955	-3.8%	-390	6.7%	235,270	-5.0%	8.5%
Cultural Economy (inc. Sports)	10,630	11,045	3.9%	415	7.4%	235,265	2.2%	8.5%
Life Sciences & Healthcare	6,880	6,990	1.6%	110	4.7%	114,920	1.2%	4.2%
Logistics & Transport Technologies	12,030	12,130	0.8%	100	8.2%	138,410	12.5%	5.0%
Low Carbon & Environmental Technologies	3,725	3,540	-5.0%	-185	2.4%	155,140	-4.6%	5.6%
Public Sector (inc. Education)	3,235	3,360	3.9%	125	2.3%	63,100	1.6%	2.3%
Retail	24,665	25,400	3.0%	735	17.1%	415,090	4.9%	15.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>151,635</b>	<b>148,630</b>	<b>-2.0%</b>	<b>-3,005</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,765,155</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>100%</b>

# UK Regional Trade in Goods Statistics: Year Ending Q2 2021<sup>6</sup>

## Black Country Consortium Economic Intelligence Unit

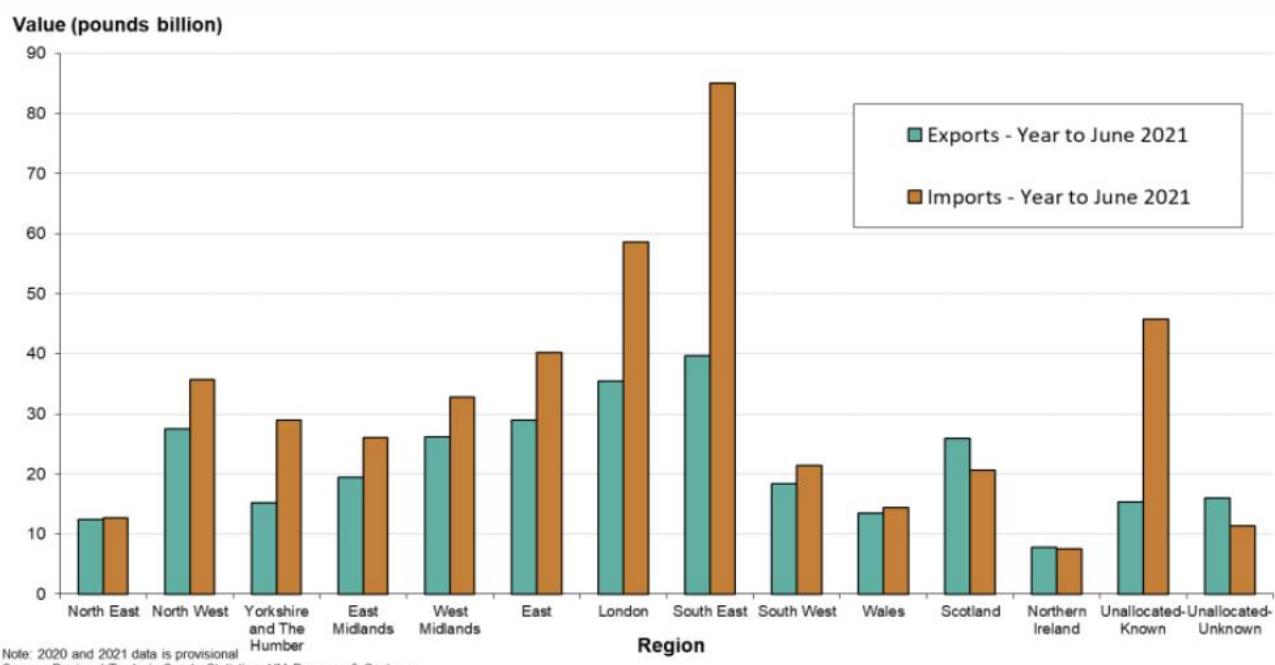
### Key Points:

- In the year to Q2 2021, the West Midlands region's export value was worth nearly £26.2bn, a decrease of £1.3bn (-4.9%) since the year ending Q2 2020. The UK decreased by 3.5% to £302bn worth of exports in year ending Q2 2021.
- In the year ending Q2 2021, the West Midlands imported nearly £32.9bn worth of goods. This has increased by nearly £1.4bn (+4.4%). While the value of all UK imports increased by 1.3% to £441.3bn.
- The West Midlands had a trade deficit of £6.7bn in the year ending Q2 2021.
- In the year ending Q2 2021, the largest value export for a SITC section in the West Midlands was machinery and transport at £17.8bn. This SITC section accounted for 68% of the total exports value; of which 61.2% (£10.9bn) were non-EU exports. Compared to year ending Q2 2020, the value of these exports has decreased by £1.1bn (-5.8%), but quarter-on-quarter decline is much more modest.
- By Country group, the highest value of exports was to the European Union at nearly £11.9bn, accounting for 45.5% of the total. Exports to the EU from the West Midlands decreased by £465m (-3.8%) since the year ending Q2 2020, but increased compared to Q1 2021; whereas non-EU exports fell.

### In Detail:

- For the year ending Q2 2021, the West Midlands region exported nearly £26.2bn and imported nearly £32.9bn, leading to a trade deficit of nearly £6.7bn. This reflects a larger deficit when compared to the year ending Q2 2020 when the trade deficit was £3.9bn.

The following chart shows the value of imports and exports by region in the year ending Q2 2021:

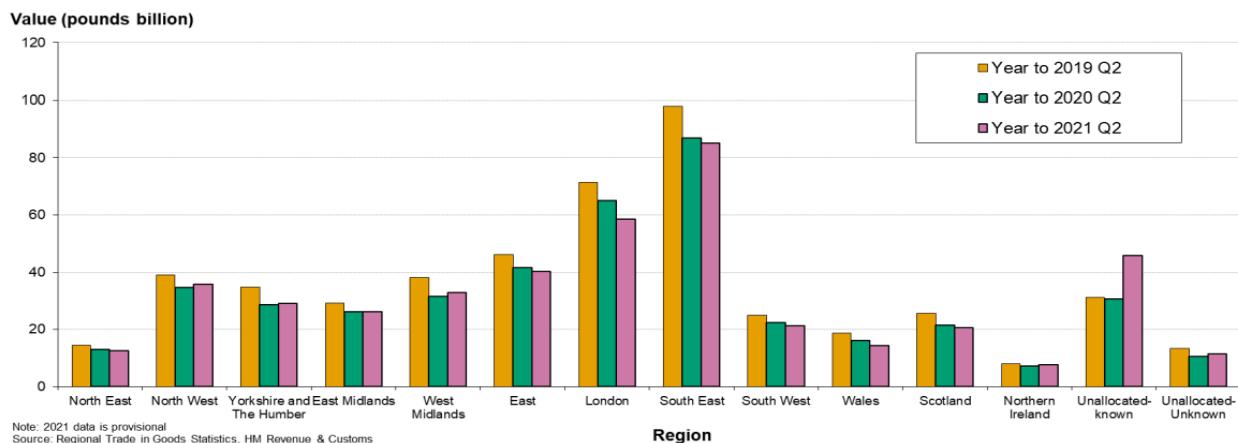


### Exports

<sup>6</sup> Source: HM Revenue & Customs, UK Regional Trade in Goods Statistics Quarter 2 2021 – Released October 2021. Please note, year ending Q2 refers to the year ending June.

- In the year to Q2 2021, the overall value of UK trade in goods exports decreased by 3.5% (to £302bn) compared with the same period from the previous year. Excluding the North East, North West and the East, all other UK countries and regions saw a decrease in annual export value.
- The West Midlands value in exports decreased by £1.3bn (-4.9%) to £26.2bn when compared to the year ending Q2 2020 (£27.5bn). Since the year ending Q2 2020, the value of exports from the West Midlands to the EU decreased by £465m (-1.3%, UK -1.5%) to £11.9bn in year ending Q2 2021. Over the same period, the value of exports from the West Midlands to Non-EU locations decreased by £873m (-5.8%, UK-5.4%) to £14.3bn in year ending Q2 2021.
- The West Midlands region accounted for 8.7% of UK total exports in the year ending Q2 2021.

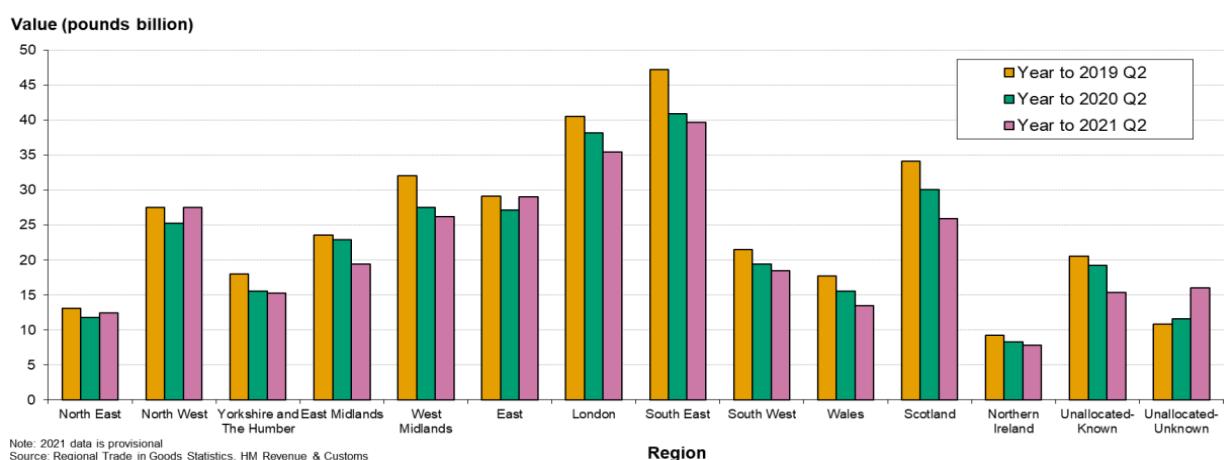
**The following chart shows UK exports by region, years to Q2 2019, Q2 2020 and Q2 2021:**



## Imports

- The value of the West Midlands region's imports increased by nearly £1.4bn (+4.4%) to nearly £32.9bn in the year ending Q2 2021 compared with the year ending Q2 2020. The North West, Yorkshire and the Humber and Northern Ireland also saw an increase in the value of imports; UK-wide increased by 1.3% to £441.3bn over the same period.

**The following charts shows UK imports by region, years to Q2 2019, Q2 2020 and Q2 2021:**



## Standard International Trade Classification (SITC)

- The total value of exports in four of the ten SITC sections increased in the West Midlands when compared to Q2 2020, these were; food and live animals, crude materials, animal and vegetable oils and chemicals.
- In the year ending Q2 2021, the largest value export for a SITC section in the West Midlands was machinery and transport at £17.8bn. This SITC section accounted for 68% of the total exports value; of which 61.2% (£10.9bn)

were non-EU exports. Compared to year ending Q2 2020, the value of these exports has decreased by £1.1bn (-5.8%), with quarter-on-quarter exports falling by 13.2% (from £4.7bn in Q1 to £4.2bn in Q2).

- West Midlands imports from six of ten SITC sections increased from year ending Q2 2020 to Q2 2021. The SITC sections which decreased were; food and live animals, mineral fuels, chemicals and miscellaneous manufactures.
- The SITC section with the largest value of imports in year ending Q2 2021 was machinery and transport at £14.9bn, reflecting 45.3% of total imports; of which 62.7% (£9.3bn) came from the EU. This SITC section overall has increased since year ending Q2 2020 by £961m (+6.9%), but has fallen quarter-on-quarter (from £3.9bn in Q1 to £3.6bn in Q2).

**The following table shows a breakdown of exports and imports by SITC section and the percentage change between year ending Q2 2020 and Q2 2021:**

Total Exports by SITC Section	West Midlands Region			United Kingdom		
	Year to Q2 2020	Year to Q2 2021	% Change	Year to Q2 2020	Year to Q2 2021	% Change
	£ millions			£ millions		
0 Food and Live Animals	£633	£691	9.2%	£15,185	£13,993	-7.8%
1 Beverages and Tobacco	£81	£68	-16.0%	£6,951	£6,889	-0.9%
2 Crude Materials	£689	£888	28.9%	£6,069	£8,173	34.7%
3 Mineral Fuels	£166	£126	-24.1%	£25,956	£20,127	-22.5%
4 Animal and Vegetable Oils	£25	£33	32.0%	£536	£530	-1.1%
5 Chemicals	£1,352	£1,388	2.7%	£52,763	£52,688	-0.1%
6 Manufactured Goods	£2,881	£2,721	-5.6%	£31,077	£35,690	14.8%
7 Machinery and Transport	£18,913	£17,814	-5.8%	£119,418	£110,869	-7.2%
8 Miscellaneous Manufactures	£2,731	£2,423	-11.3%	£46,294	£39,484	-14.7%
9 Other commodities nes	£55	£37	-32.7%	£8,812	£13,539	53.6%
Total Exports	£27,527	£26,189	-4.9%	£313,063	£301,982	-3.5%
<hr/>						
Total Imports by SITC Section						
0 Food and Live Animals	£2,594	£2,540	-2.1%	£40,271	£38,922	-3.3%
1 Beverages and Tobacco	£244	£249	2.0%	£6,180	£6,698	8.4%
2 Crude Materials	£528	£682	29.2%	£10,754	£13,601	26.5%
3 Mineral Fuels	£518	£396	-23.6%	£35,117	£29,185	-16.9%
4 Animal and Vegetable Oils	£108	£112	3.7%	£1,394	£1,507	8.1%
5 Chemicals	£2,190	£2,173	-0.8%	£52,919	£56,228	6.3%
6 Manufactured Goods	£6,223	£6,799	9.3%	£51,381	£59,343	15.5%
7 Machinery and Transport	£13,931	£14,892	6.9%	£161,373	£155,858	-3.4%
8 Miscellaneous Manufactures	£5,117	£4,997	-2.3%	£69,878	£73,622	5.4%
9 Other commodities nes	£8	£15	87.5%	£6,427	£6,296	-2.0%
Total Imports	£31,461	£32,853	4.4%	£435,692	£441,262	1.3%

### Country Group

- Since the year ending Q2 2020, West Midlands exports increased to Asia & Oceania, Eastern Europe excluding EU and Sub-Saharan Africa.
- The highest value of exports was to the European Union at nearly £11.9bn, accounting for 45.5% of the total. Exports to the EU from the West Midlands decreased by £465m (-3.8%) since the year ending Q2 2020, though the quarter-on-quarter change shows 9.6% growth in EU exports – from £2.8bn in Q1 2021 to £3.0bn in Q2. The West Midlands rate of growth was however among the lowest of all UK regions and below the average rate of 18.1%.
- The second highest value of exports was to North America at £6bn, accounting for 22.9% of total exports. Exports to North America from the West Midlands decreased by £1bn (-14.8%) since the year ending Q2 2020.
- Since the year ending Q2 2020, West Midlands imports increased in five of the eight country groups. There were decreases in imports from Eastern Europe excluding EU, Middle East and North Africa excluding EU and North

America. Overall, non-EU exports in the West Midlands fell by 5.8% between Q2 2020 and Q1 2021, while quarter-on-quarter growth fell by 15.3%, the largest decrease of any UK region (with many increasing).

- The highest value of imports was from the European Union at £19.1bn, accounting for 58.2% of total West Midlands imports. This reflects a £161m increase in value (+0.8%) from year ending Q2 2020. The second highest value of imports was from Asia & Oceania at £9bn, accounting for 27.3% of total imports. Imports from Asia & Oceania to the West Midlands increased by £1.3bn (-17.2%) since the year ending Q2 2020.

**The following table shows a breakdown of exports and imports by country group and the percentage change between year ending Q2 2020 and Q2 2021:**

Exports by Country Group	West Midlands Region			United Kingdom		
	Year to Q2 2020	Year to Q2 2021	% Change	Year to Q2 2020	Year to Q2 2021	% Change
	£ millions			£ millions		
Asia & Oceania	£4,591	£4,884	6.4%	£53,672	£51,943	-3.2%
Eastern Europe (excl EU)	£578	£682	18.0%	£4,954	£5,381	8.6%
European Union	£12,370	£11,905	-3.8%	£149,686	£147,449	-1.5%
Latin America and Caribbean	£326	£324	-0.6%	£4,613	£4,182	-9.3%
Middle East and North Africa (excl EU)	£1,318	£1,142	-13.4%	£16,665	£13,869	-16.8%
North America	£7,042	£5,999	-14.8%	£56,412	£49,730	-11.8%
Sub-Saharan Africa	£324	£328	1.2%	£5,276	£4,768	-9.6%
Western Europe (excl. EU)	£976	£923	-5.4%	£14,350	£14,801	3.1%
Undefined Country Group	£2	£2	0.0%	£7,434	£9,859	32.6%
<b>Total Exports</b>	<b>£27,527</b>	<b>£26,189</b>	<b>-4.9%</b>	<b>£313,063</b>	<b>£301,982</b>	<b>-3.5%</b>
Imports by Country Group						
Asia & Oceania	£7,666	£8,982	17.2%	£94,430	£111,134	17.7%
Eastern Europe (excl EU)	£366	£293	-19.9%	£8,065	£8,332	3.3%
European Union	£18,947	£19,108	0.8%	£233,489	£225,112	-3.6%
Latin America and Caribbean	£420	£487	16.0%	£5,660	£5,271	-6.9%
Middle East and North Africa (excl EU)	£681	£670	-1.6%	£11,509	£9,093	-21.0%
North America	£2,125	£1,833	-13.7%	£44,502	£38,438	-13.6%
Sub-Saharan Africa	£267	£282	5.6%	£6,495	£7,478	15.1%
Western Europe (excl. EU)	£989	£1,199	21.2%	£26,152	£31,324	19.8%
Undefined Country Group				£5,392	£5,081	
<b>Total Imports</b>	<b>£31,461</b>	<b>£32,853</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>£435,692</b>	<b>£441,262</b>	<b>1.3%</b>

# NatWest Purchasing Manager Index (PMI) Survey: West Midlands Region

Released October 2021<sup>7</sup>

## Black Country Consortium Economic Intelligence Unit

The following seasonally adjusted indices vary between 0 and 100, with a reading above 50 indicating an overall increase compared to the previous month, and below 50 an overall decrease.

### In Summary:

- The West Midlands Business Activity Index increased from 55.2 in August 2021 to 56.3 in September 2021. Firms indicated that a further recovery in demand and expanded capacities supported the rise in output.
- The overall UK Business Activity Index increased from 54.8 in August 2021 to 54.9 in September 2021.
- Out of the twelve UK regions, the West Midlands region was second highest for the Business Activity Index in September 2021, only behind Wales.
- The West Midlands Future Activity Index decreased slightly from 77.2 in August 2021 to 76.8 in September 2021, with firms continuing to forecast output growth for the next 12 months. Business confidence stemmed on hopes that the pandemic will be contained and further easing on travel restrictions. Optimism was also reported from firms due to new business enquires and product diversification.

### In Detail:

#### Business Activity Index

The West Midlands Business Activity Index increased from 55.2 in August 2021 to 56.3 in September 2021. Firms indicated that a further recovery in demand and expanded capacities supported the rise in output.

**The following graph show the West Midlands Business Activity Index trends up to September 2021:**

**West Midlands Business Activity Index**

sa, >50 = growth since previous month



Source: IHS Market/NatWest, October 2021

Out of the twelve UK regions, the West Midlands region was second highest for the Business Activity Index in September 2021, with Wales the highest at 57.1 down to the North East the lowest at 51.0.

**The following chart shows the Business Activity Index across all UK regions in September 2021:**

<sup>7</sup> Source: IHS Markit/NatWest West Midlands PMI, October 2021

**Business Activity Index**  
sa, >50 = growth since previous month, Sep '21



Source: IHS Market/NatWest, October 2021

## Demand

The West Midlands New Business Index decreased from 59.8 in August 2021 to 57.3 in September 2021. The overall rate of growth was the slowest in the seven-month sequence of expansion. Although firms reported a further rise in new work intakes and improved demand conditions.

## Exports<sup>8</sup>

The West Midlands Export Climate Index decreased from 55.4 in August 2021 to 54.9 in September 2021. The slowdown in growth was linked to weaker rises in output among some of the region's top export markets. Softer increases were noted in France (55.3), Germany (55.5), Ireland (61.5) and the USA (55.0), but in all cases the rates of expansion remained strong.

**The following table shows the top export markets for the West Midlands in September 2021:**

**Top export markets, West Midlands**

Rank	Market	Weight	Output Index, Sep'21
1	USA	21.2%	55.0
2	Germany	11.1%	55.5
3	China	8.7%	51.4
4	Ireland	6.2%	61.5
5	France	6.1%	55.3

Source: IHS Market/NatWest, October 2021

## Business Capacity

The Employment Index decreased from 58.2 in August 2021 to 56.3 in September 2021 as West Midlands firms had a slowdown in hiring during September. Job creation was associated with improved demand, the replacement of

<sup>8</sup> The West Midlands Export Climate Index is calculated by weighting together national PMI output data according to their importance to the manufacturing exports of the West Midlands. This produces an indicator for the economic health of the region's export markets.

leavers and capacity expansions. Growth was reportedly dampened by shortages of candidates, retirements and resignations.

The West Midlands Outstanding Business Index decreased from 58.1 in August 2021 to 55.6 in September 2021, although West Midlands firms reported additional strain on capacity as business volumes increased for the seventh consecutive month. The increase was linked to supply chain bottlenecks, staff shortages and a lack of raw material availability.

## Prices

The West Midlands Input Prices Index decreased from 78.3 in August 2021 to 78.0 in September 2021. The overall rate of input price inflation was steep and one of the strongest seen in the series history (January 1997). Firms reported that fuel, transportation, staff and material costs all increased.

The West Midlands Prices Charged Index increased from 62.2 in August 2021 to 64.7 in September 2021. The latest rise in output charges was sharp, and the fastest in the history of the series (November 1999) as West Midlands firms tried to protect margins.

## Outlook

The West Midlands Future Activity Index decreased from 77.2 in August 2021 to 76.8 in September 2021. West Midlands firms continued to forecast output growth for the next 12 months. Business confidence stemmed on hopes that the pandemic will be contained and further easing on travel restrictions. Optimism was also reported from firms due to new business enquires and product diversification.

Out of the twelve UK regions, the West Midlands was fifth for the Future Business Activity Index in September 2021, with the South East the highest at 80.4 and Northern Ireland the lowest at 59.0.

**The following chart shows the Future Activity Index across all UK regions in September 2021:**



Source: IHS Market/NatWest, October 2021

# WMCA Claimant Count and Labour Market Statistics: Released October 2021

## Black Country Consortium Economic Intelligence Unit

### UK Labour Market Summary<sup>9</sup>

- The number of payroll employees in the UK showed another monthly increase, up 207,000 to a record 29.2 million in September 2021, returning to pre-COVID-19 (February 2020) levels.
- The number of UK job vacancies in July to September 2021 was a record high of 1,102,000, an increase of 318,000 from its pre-pandemic (January to March 2020) level; this was the second consecutive month that the three-month average has risen over one million. The experimental single-month vacancy estimates recorded almost 1.2 million in September 2021, which is a record high.
- The latest Labour Force estimates for June to August 2021 show the UK employment rate increased by 0.5 percentage points on the quarter, to 75.3% and the unemployment rate decreased by 0.4 percentage points, to 4.5%. The economic inactivity rate is down 0.2 percentage points on the previous quarter, to 21.1%.
- In June to August 2021, reports of redundancies in the three months prior to interview<sup>10</sup> decreased by 0.2 per thousand on the quarter to 3.6 per thousand employees for the UK, similar to pre-COVID-19 levels.

### Regional Labour Market Summary<sup>11</sup>

- For the three months ending in August 2021, the West Midlands Region employment rate (aged 16 – 64 years) was 74.6%. Since the three months ending May 2021, the employment rate saw an increase of 0.6 percentage points (pp); while there is an increase of 0.5pp when compared to the same period in the previous year. The UK employment rate was 75.3%, an increase by 0.5pp when compared to the previous quarter, but a decrease of 0.1pp when compared to the previous year.
- For the three months ending in August 2021, the West Midlands Region unemployment rate (aged 16 years and over) was 4.9%, which has decreased by 0.8pp since the previous quarter; but an increase of 0.2pp from the previous year. The UK unemployment rate was 4.5%, a decrease of 0.4pp from the previous quarter, and a 0.1pp decrease when compared to the previous year.
- For the three months ending in August 2021, the West Midlands Region economic inactivity rate (aged 16 – 64 years) was 21.5% - an increase of 0.1pp from previous quarter but a decrease of 0.6pp when compared to the previous year. The UK economic inactivity rate was 21.1%, a decrease of 0.2pp from the previous quarter but a 0.2pp increase from the previous year.

### WMCA Annual Population Survey Summary

- Overall, for the WMCA (3 LEP) area, the economic activity rate increased in the year ending June 2021 compared to year ending June 2020, by 0.2pp to reach 77.5%; this growth rate is considerably above the UK average which decreased by 0.7pp (to 78.2%).
- The WMCA (3 LEP) area employment rate decreased since the year ending June 2020, by 0.5pp to 72.6% for year ending June 2021; the UK decreased by 1.5pp (to 74.3%).
- The WMCA (3 LEP) area unemployment rate increased by 0.9pp (from year ending June 2020) to reach 6.4% in year ending June 2021 - the increase was below the UK average of 1.1pp but unemployment remains above the UK average of 5.1%.
- The WMCA (3 LEP) economic inactivity rate decreased since year ending June 2020 by 0.2pp to 22.5% in the year ending June 2021. Over the same period the UK increased by 0.7pp (to 21.8%).

<sup>9</sup> Source: ONS, Labour Market Overview; UK: October 2021

<sup>10</sup> The redundancy estimates measure the number of people who were made redundant or who took voluntary redundancy in the three months before the Labour Force Survey interviews; it does not take into consideration planned redundancies.

<sup>11</sup> Source: ONS, Labour Market in the Regions of the UK: October 2021

## WMCA (3 LEP) Claimant Summary

- There were **180,625 claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area in September 2021**. Since August 2021, there has been a decrease of 1.5% (-2,685) claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, less than the UK decrease of 3.0%. When compared to September 2020, the number of claimants has decreased by 14.5% (-30,650) in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, with the UK decreasing by 21.7% over the same period. When compared to March 2020 (pre-pandemic figures), the number of claimants has increased by 53.6% (+63,035) in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, with the UK increasing by 63.9% over the same period.
- There were **33,405 youth claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area in September 2021**. Since August 2021, there has been a decrease of 2.9% (-980) youth claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, below the UK decrease of 3.8%. When compared to September 2020, the number of youth claimants has decreased by 22.7% (-9,785) in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, with the UK decreasing by 30.2% over the same period. When compared to March 2020 (pre pandemic figures), the number of youth claimants has increased by 46.3% (+10,570) in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, with the UK increasing by 51.3% over the same period.

### In Depth:

#### Regional Labour Market<sup>12</sup>

Please note data is only available at a regional level – please see the quarterly Annual Population Survey section for lower-level analysis.

- For the three months ending in August 2021, the West Midlands Region employment rate (aged 16 – 64 years) was 74.6%. Since the three months ending May 2021, the employment rate saw an increase of 0.6 percentage points (pp); while there is an increase of 0.5pp when compared to the same period in the previous year. The UK employment rate increased by 0.5pp when compared to the previous quarter, but a decrease of 0.1pp when compared to the previous year. The overall UK employment rate was 75.3% with the highest employment rate within the UK for the three months ending August 2021 in the East (79.1%) and the lowest in Northern Ireland (71.1%).
- For the three months ending in August 2021, the West Midlands Region unemployment rate (aged 16 years and over) was 4.9%, which has decreased by 0.8pp since the previous quarter; but an increase of 0.2pp is reported from the previous year. The UK unemployment rate was 4.5%, a decrease of 0.4pp from the previous quarter, and a 0.1pp decrease when compared to the previous year. The highest unemployment rate in the UK for the three months ending August 2021 was in London with 5.8%, with the lowest unemployment rate in the South West at 3.4%.
- For the three months ending in August 2021, the West Midlands Region economic inactivity rate (aged 16 – 64 years) was 21.5% - an increase of 0.1pp from previous quarter but a decrease of 0.6pp when compared to the previous year. The UK economic inactivity rate was 21.1%, a decrease of 0.2pp from the previous quarter but a 0.2pp increase from the previous year. The highest economic inactivity rate in the UK for the three months ending August 2021 was in Northern Ireland (25.8%), with the lowest in the East (18.4%).

The table below provides a summary of the latest headline estimates for Regions of the UK, seasonally adjusted, June to August 2021:

	Employment rate – Jun to Aug 2021(aged 16- 64 years)	Change onMar to May 2021	Unemployment rate- Jun to Aug 2021 (16 years +)	Change onMar to May 2021	Inactivity rate – Jun to Aug2021 (aged 16-64 years)	Change onMar to May 2021
UK	75.3%	0.5pp	4.5%	-0.4pp	21.1%	-0.2pp
Great Britain	75.4%	0.5pp	4.5%	-0.4pp	21.0%	-0.2pp
England	75.6%	0.5pp	4.5%	-0.5pp	20.8%	-0.1pp

<sup>12</sup> Source: ONS, Labour Market in the Regions of the UK: October 2021

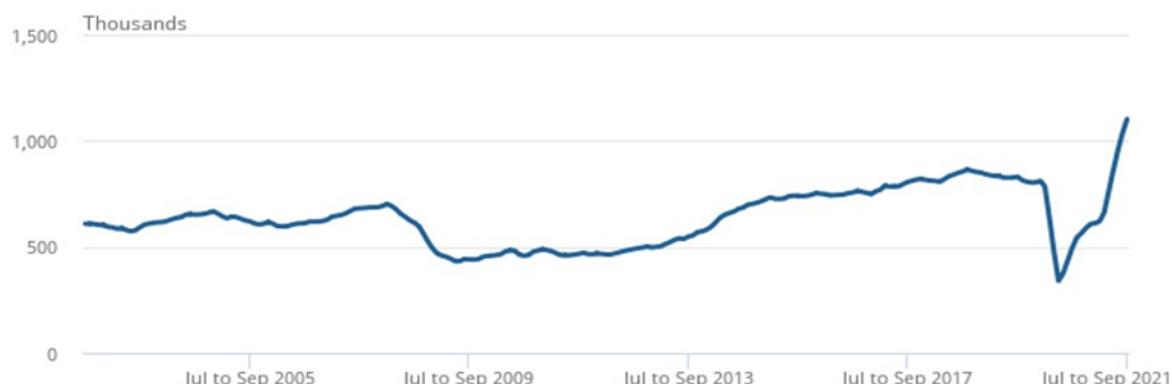
North East	71.5%	-0.6pp	5.2%	-0.6pp	24.5%	0.8pp
North West	73.6%	0.6pp	4.1%	-0.8pp	23.2%	0.0pp
Yorkshire and The Humber	72.7%	-0.2pp	4.8%	-0.2pp	23.6%	0.3pp
East Midlands	75.4%	0.5pp	4.3%	-0.6pp	21.2%	-0.1pp
<b>West Midlands</b>	<b>74.6%</b>	<b>0.6pp</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>-0.8pp</b>	<b>21.5%</b>	<b>0.1pp</b>
East	79.1%	1.5pp	3.6%	-0.4pp	17.9%	-1.1pp
London	74.9%	0.3pp	5.8%	-0.8pp	20.5%	0.3pp
South East	78.2%	0.5pp	4.2%	0.0pp	18.4%	-0.5pp
South West	77.7%	0.7pp	3.4%	-0.2pp	19.5%	-0.6pp
Wales	74.2%	0.6pp	4.0%	0.2pp	22.6%	-0.8pp
Scotland	74.3%	0.3pp	4.4%	0.0pp	22.2%	-0.4pp
Northern Ireland	71.1%	0.8pp	4.1%	0.5pp	25.8%	-1.3pp

Source: ONS – Labour Force Survey

### UK Labour Market Statistics - Vacancies<sup>13</sup>

- In July to September 2021, the estimated number of vacancies recorded was at its highest level since records began, with the majority of industries growing on the quarter. In the same period there were 3.7 vacancies for every 100 employee jobs, also a record high.

The following chart shows the number of vacancies in the UK, seasonally adjusted, July to September 2002 to July to September 2021:

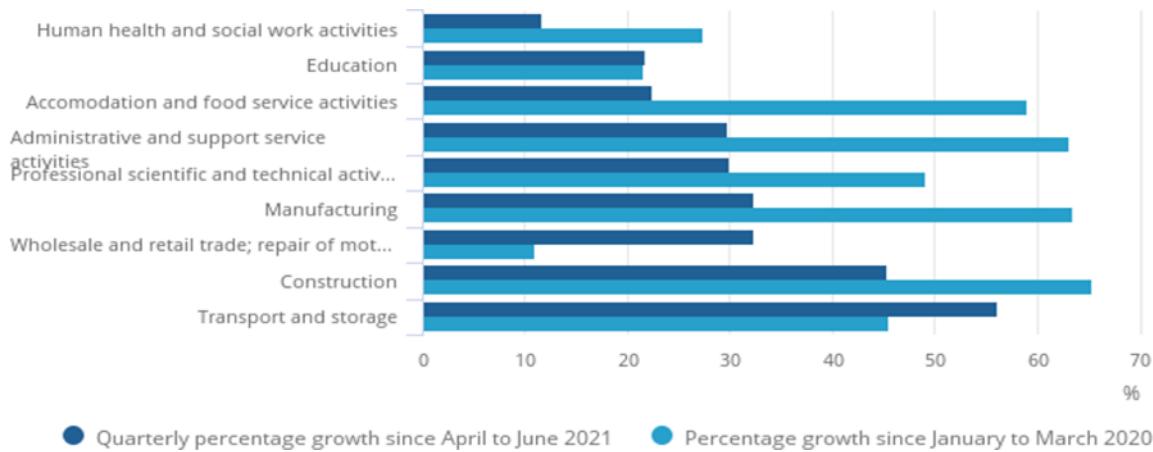


Source: ONS – Vacancy Survey

- The majority of industries saw quarterly growth. The fastest rate of growth was seen in transport and storage, which grew by 56.1% (18,500). While the rate of vacancy growth has slowed recently, the number of vacancies is still escalating across most industries. The largest increase in vacancy numbers was in wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, which grew by 35,100 (32.4%).
- Other industries also saw large increases in vacancy numbers, namely accommodation and food service activities (24,600), professional, scientific and technical activities (24,400) and manufacturing (20,300). The latter two industries, alongside 10 others, posted a record number of vacancies in July to September 2021.

The following chart shows July to September 2021 three-month average vacancies in the UK, quarterly percentage growth from April 2021 to June 2021 and percentage growth from pre- pandemic January to March 2020:

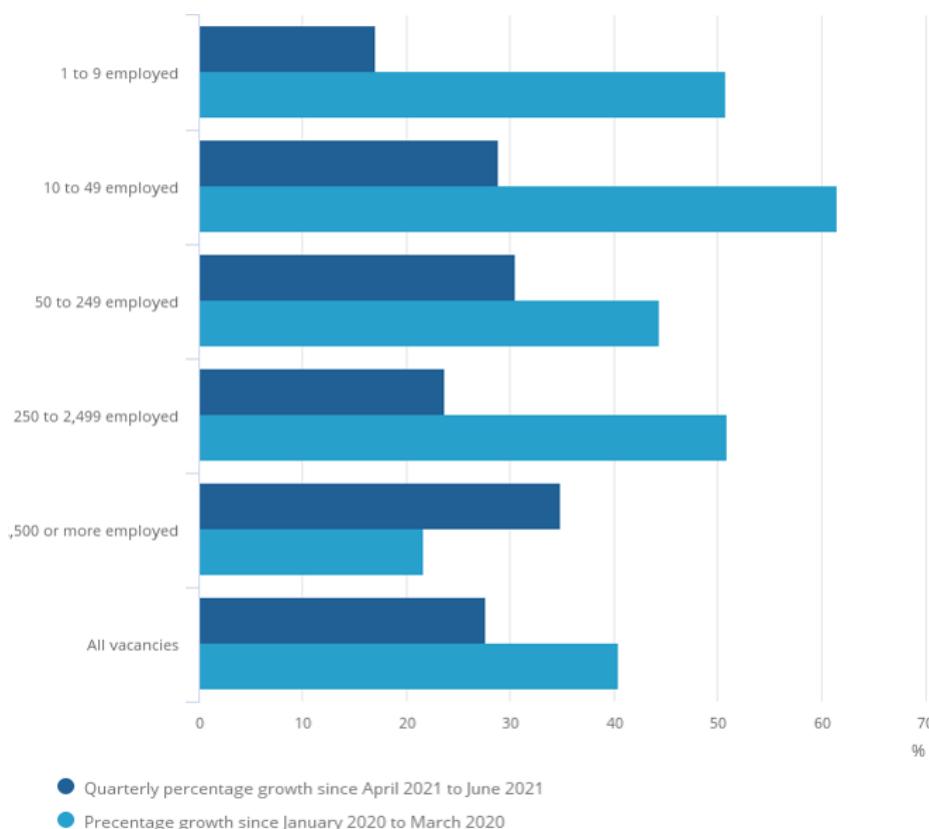
<sup>13</sup> Source: UK labour market: October 2021



Source: ONS – Vacancy Survey

- The signs of recovery are strong across all of the industry size bands with each one displaying record highs in July to September 2021.

**The following chart shows July to September 2021 three-month average vacancies in the UK, quarterly growth from April to June 2021 and growth from a pre-pandemic January to March 2020:**



## WMCA Annual Population Survey: Employment Activity: Year Ending June 2021

The table below provides a summary of the latest headline estimates for the working age population in the WMCA and the UK, year ending June 2021:

	Economic activity rate		Employment rate		Unemployment rate		Economically inactive	
	Jul 20- Jun 21	PP change Jul 19- Jun 20	Jul 20- Jun 21	PP change Jul 19- Jun 20	Jul 20- Jun 21	PP change Jul 19- Jun 20	Jul 20- Jun 21	PP change Jul 19- Jun 20
Birmingham	72.0%	-0.9pp	64.8%	-1.4pp	10.1%	0.8pp	28.0%	0.9pp
Bromsgrove	86.7%	4.9pp	85.1%	5.4pp	1.8%	-0.8pp	13.3%	-4.9pp

Cannock Chase	84.9%	-1.0pp	79.0%	-5.5pp	6.9%	-	15.1%	1.0pp
Coventry	74.0%	-3.0pp	70.0%	-2.2pp	5.4%	-0.9pp	26.0%	3.0pp
Dudley	81.2%	4.5pp	77.1%	4.1pp	5.1%	0.2pp	18.8%	-4.5pp
East Staffordshire	80.0%	-1.7pp	76.6%	-4.0pp	4.2%	-	20.0%	1.7pp
Lichfield	77.5%	-3.4pp	72.5%	-4.7pp	6.4%	1.8pp	22.5%	3.4pp
North Warwickshire	84.2%	4.4pp	83.1%	4.6pp	-	-	15.8%	-4.4pp
Nuneaton and Bedworth	82.3%	3.1pp	79.2%	0.5pp	3.7%	-	17.7%	-3.1pp
Redditch	82.6%	2.2pp	77.6%	-1.1pp	6.1%	-	17.4%	-2.2pp
Rugby	83.9%	-0.2pp	80.0%	-2.0pp	4.6%	2.1pp	16.1%	0.2pp
Sandwell	78.3%	4.5pp	74.0%	3.9pp	5.5%	0.5pp	21.7%	-4.5pp
Solihull	82.6%	2.1pp	79.3%	2.4pp	3.9%	-0.5pp	17.4%	-2.1pp
Stratford-on-Avon	79.2%	-6.2pp	75.2%	-8.7pp	5.0%	3.2pp	20.8%	6.2pp
Tamworth	81.0%	-6.3pp	81.0%	-2.5pp	-	-	19.0%	6.3pp
Walsall	75.5%	-3.2pp	69.5%	-4.0pp	7.9%	1.2pp	24.5%	3.2pp
Warwick	85.5%	3.3pp	80.8%	-0.8pp	5.5%	-	14.5%	-3.3pp
Wolverhampton	76.0%	1.3pp	71.7%	1.3pp	5.7%	0.0pp	24.0%	-1.3pp
Wyre Forest	86.0%	3.0pp	82.9%	3.4pp	3.6%	-0.6pp	14.0%	-3.0pp
<b>WM 7 Met.</b>	<b>75.4%</b>	<b>0.2pp</b>	<b>69.8%</b>	<b>-0.1pp</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>0.3pp</b>	<b>24.6%</b>	<b>-0.2pp</b>
Black Country	77.9%	2.0pp	73.3%	1.6pp	6.0%	0.5pp	22.1%	-2.0pp
Coventry and Warwickshire	79.2%	-0.9pp	75.4%	-2.0pp	4.8%	1.4pp	20.8%	0.9pp
Greater Birmingham and Solihull	76.5%	-0.4pp	70.8%	-1.0pp	7.4%	0.8pp	23.5%	0.4pp
<b>WMCA (3 LEP)</b>	<b>77.5%</b>	<b>0.2pp</b>	<b>72.6%</b>	<b>-0.5pp</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>0.9pp</b>	<b>22.5%</b>	<b>-0.2pp</b>
UK	78.2%	-0.7pp	74.3%	-1.5pp	5.1%	1.1pp	21.8%	0.7pp

## Employment Rate

- In the year ending June 2021, the employment rate in the WMCA (3 LEP) area was 72.6%, compared to 74.3% for UK-wide. This was a 0.5pp decrease in the employment for the WMCA (3 LEP) area when compared to year ending June 2020. The UK employment rate decreased by 1.5pp over the same time period.
- The employment rate for the WM 7 Met. area decreased from 69.9% in the year ending June 2020 to 69.8% in year ending June 2021.
- Within the WMCA (3 LEP) area, the Black Country LEP employment rate increased by 1.6pp since June 2020 to reach 73.3% in the year ending June 2021. Coventry and Warwickshire LEP's employment rate remains higher than the UK average at 75.4%, but decreased by 2.0pp since year ending June 2020. Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP experienced a decrease of 1.0pp to an employment rate of 70.8%.
- At local authority level in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, Stratford-on-Avon had the largest percentage point decrease since June 2020; by 8.7pp; the employment rate was still 75.2%. In contrast, Bromsgrove had the highest increase in employment rate; by 5.4pp and reached 85.1% in year ending June 2021.

## Unemployment Rate<sup>14</sup>

- The unemployment rate for the WMCA (3 LEP) was 6.4% in year ending June 2021 compared to 5.1% UK-wide. For the WMCA (3 LEP), this was a 0.9pp increase compared to an increase of 1.1pp for the UK since year ending June 2020.
- The unemployment rate for the WM 7 Met. area increased from 7.0% in year ending June 2020 to 7.3% in year ending June 2021.

<sup>14</sup> Due to data gaps local authority data was excluded from analysis

- Within the WMCA (3 LEP), Since the year ending June 2020, the Black Country LEP's unemployment rate increased by 0.5pp to 6.0% in year ending June 2021. Coventry & Warwickshire LEP has increased by 1.4pp to 4.8% in year ending June 2021. Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP increased by 0.8pp to 7.4% in year ending June 2021.

### Economic Activity Rate

- The economic activity rate for the WMCA (3 LEP) area was 77.5% compared to 78.2% for the UK in the year ending June 2021. For the WMCA (3 LEP) area, there has been a 0.2pp increase in the economic activity rate compared to a 0.7pp decrease for the UK since year ending June 2020.
- The economic activity rate in the WM 7 Met. area for year ending June 2021 was 75.4%, an increase of 0.2pp from year ending June 2020.
- The Black Country LEP area experienced a 2.0pp increase from year ending June 2020 to reach 77.9% in year ending June 2021. While Coventry and Warwickshire LEP decreased by 0.9pp to 79.2% and Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP decreased by 0.4pp to 76.5% over the same period.
- Economic activity rate varies across the WMCA (3 LEP) local authorities from 72.0% in Birmingham to 86.7% in Bromsgrove in the year ending June 2021. Although, 9 local authorities experienced a decrease when compared to year ending June 2020, with the highest decrease in Tamworth by 6.3pp (to 81.0%).

### Economic Inactivity Rate

- For economic inactivity rate, the WMCA's (3 LEP) rate was 22.5% compared to 21.8% UK-wide for year ending June 2021. For the WMCA (3 LEP) area, this has decreased by 0.2pp compared to a 0.7pp increase for the UK when compared to year ending June 2020.
- The economic inactivity rate in the WM 7 Met. area for year ending June 2021 was 24.6%, a decrease of 0.2pp from year ending June 2020.
- For the year ending June 2021, the WMCA (3 LEP) had a lower percentage of people that were inactive when compared to the UK, these categories were; long-term sick (22.6% vs 24.1%), retired (11.4% vs 13.5%) and those classed as other (10.0% vs 11.9%). The WMCA (3 LEP) has the same proportion of those discouraged when compared to the UK (0.8%).

**The following table shows the proportions of economic inactivity rate by reason for the year ending June 2021 for the WMCA and UK:**

	WM 7 Met.	WMCA (3 LEP)	UK
Student	33.4%	30.6%	28.5%
Looking after family/home	22.7%	22.0%	19.3%
Temporary sick	2.9%	2.6%	2.0%
Long-term sick	22.4%	22.6%	24.1%
Discouraged	1.0%	0.8%	0.8%
Retired	8.4%	11.4%	13.5%
Other	9.3%	10.0%	11.9%

### Employment by Occupation

- The WMCA (3 LEP) area had a higher percentage of people employed in four of the nine occupations when compared to the UK, these include; elementary occupations (10.9% vs 9.1%), process, plant and machine operatives (7.2% vs 5.6%), caring, leisure and other service occupations (9.8% vs 9.0%) and administrative and secretarial occupations (10.4% vs 10.2%).

**The following table shows the proportions of employment by occupation for the year ending June 2021 for the WMCA and UK:**

	WM 7 Met.	WMCA (3 LEP)	UK
1: managers, directors and senior officials	8.4%	10.1%	10.8%
2: professional occupations	20.3%	21.5%	23.3%
3: associate prof & tech occupations	14.0%	14.1%	15.5%
4: administrative and secretarial occupations	11.2%	10.4%	10.2%
5: skilled trades occupations	8.9%	8.7%	9.0%
6: caring, leisure and other service occupations	10.9%	9.8%	9.0%
7: sales and customer service occupations	7.3%	7.0%	7.2%
8: process, plant and machine operatives	7.4%	7.2%	5.6%
9: elementary occupations	11.3%	10.9%	9.1%

## Claimant Count

### Claimant count for people aged 16 years and over<sup>15</sup>:

- There were 180,625 claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area in September 2021. Since August 2021, there has been a decrease of 1.5% (-2,685) claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, less than the UK decrease of 3.0%. When compared to September 2020, the number of claimants has decreased by 14.5% (-30,650) in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, with the UK decreasing by 21.7% over the same period. When compared to March 2020 (pre-pandemic figures), the number of claimants has increased by 53.6% (+63,035) in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, with the UK increasing by 63.9% over the same period.
- The Black Country LEP area had 55,700 claimants aged 16 years and over in September 2021, a decrease of 1,040 (-1.8%) claimants from the previous month. Compared to the same month in 2020, Black Country LEP claimants decreased by 10,245 (-15.5%). When compared to March 2020 (38,275) the number of claimants has increased by 17,425 (+45.5%).
- In Coventry and Warwickshire LEP, there were 27,250 claimants aged 16 years and over in September 2021, a decrease of 620 (-2.2%) claimants since August 2021. Compared to the same month in 2020, Coventry and Warwickshire LEP claimants decreased by 6,715 (-19.8%). When compared to March 2020 (15,825) the number of claimants has increased by 11,452 (+72.2%).
- In Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP, there were 97,675 claimants aged 16 years and over in September 2021, a decrease of 1,025 (-1.0%) claimants since August 2021. Compared to the same month in 2020, Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP claimants decreased by 13,690 (-12.3%). When compared to March 2020 (63,490) the number of claimants has increased by 34,185 (+53.8%).

The following table shows a breakdown of number of claimants aged 16+ and change by selected months across the WMCA and for the UK:

	Mar. 2020	Sep. 2020	Aug. 2021	Sep. 2021	Sep. 2021 (Claimants as proportion aged 16-64) Rates <sup>4</sup>	% Change Since Mar. 2020	% Change Since Sep. 2020	% Change Since Aug. 2021
Birmingham	49,370	80,865	74,980	74,425	10.1%	50.7%	-8.0%	-0.7%
Bromsgrove	1,165	2,700	2,110	2,100	3.6%	80.3%	-22.2%	-0.5%
Cannock Chase	1,655	3,640	2,720	2,660	4.2%	60.7%	-26.9%	-2.2%
Coventry	8,000	16,520	14,580	14,250	5.6%	78.1%	-13.7%	-2.3%
Dudley	8,515	14,600	12,040	11,785	6.1%	38.4%	-19.3%	-2.1%
East Staffordshire	1,720	3,835	3,200	3,120	4.2%	81.4%	-18.6%	-2.5%
Lichfield	1,320	2,980	2,110	2,100	3.4%	59.1%	-29.5%	-0.5%

<sup>15</sup> ONS/DWP, Claimant count, October 2021. Please note, figures for previous months have been revised.

North Warwickshire	845	2,070	1,480	1,440	3.6%	70.4%	-30.4%	-2.7%
Nuneaton and Bedworth	2,830	5,355	4,160	4,130	5.2%	45.9%	-22.9%	-0.7%
Redditch	1,535	3,260	2,565	2,495	4.8%	62.5%	-23.5%	-2.7%
Rugby	1,535	3,200	2,550	2,480	3.7%	61.6%	-22.5%	-2.7%
Sandwell	10,780	19,160	16,790	16,490	8.0%	53.0%	-13.9%	-1.8%
Solihull	3,650	7,580	6,060	5,945	4.6%	62.9%	-21.6%	-1.9%
Stratford-on-Avon	1,050	3,075	2,300	2,245	2.9%	113.8%	-27.0%	-2.4%
Tamworth	1,490	2,890	2,325	2,245	4.8%	50.7%	-22.3%	-3.4%
Walsall	8,605	15,160	12,850	12,640	7.3%	46.9%	- 16.6%	-1.6%
Warwick	1,570	3,750	2,805	2,705	2.9%	72.3%	-27.9%	-3.6%
Wolverhampton	10,380	17,020	15,060	14,785	9.0%	42.4%	-13.1%	-1.8%
Wyre Forest	1,580	3,620	2,635	2,580	4.4%	63.3%	-28.7%	-2.1%
<b>WM 7 Met.</b>	<b>99,300</b>	<b>170,910</b>	<b>152,360</b>	<b>150,325</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>51.4%</b>	<b>-12.0%</b>	<b>-1.3%</b>
Black Country LEP	38,275	65,945	56,740	55,700	7.6%	45.5%	-15.5%	-1.8%
Coventry and Warwickshire LEP	15,825	33,965	27,870	27,250	4.5%	72.2%	-19.8%	-2.2%
Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP	63,490	111,365	98,700	97,675	7.6%	53.8%	-12.3%	-1.0%
<b>WMCA (3 LEP)</b>	<b>117,590</b>	<b>211,275</b>	<b>183,310</b>	<b>180,625</b>	<b>6.9%</b>	<b>53.6%</b>	<b>-14.5%</b>	<b>-1.5%</b>
United Kingdom	1,268,620	2,656,115	2,144,330	2,079,275	5.0%	63.9%	-21.7%	-3.0%

- Overall, for the WMCA (3 LEP) the number of claimants as a proportion of residents aged 16 - 64 years old was 6.9% compared to 5.0% for the UK in September 2021<sup>16</sup>.

### Youth Claimants (Aged 16-24)

- There were 33,405 youth claimants (16-24 years old) in the WMCA (3 LEP) area in September 2021. Since August 2021, there was a decrease of 2.9% (-980) youth claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, below the UK decrease of 3.8%. When compared to September 2020, the number of youth claimants has decreased by 22.7% (-9,785) in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, with the UK decreasing by 30.2% over the same period. When compared to March 2020 (pre pandemic figures), the number of youth claimants has increased by 46.3% (+10,570) in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, with the UK increasing by 51.3% over the same period.
- The Black Country LEP area had 10,660 youth claimants in September 2021, a decrease of 325 (- 3.0%) claimants from the previous month. Compared to the same month in 2020, Black Country LEP youth claimants decreased by 3,190 (-23.0%). When compared to March 2020 (7,750) the number of youth claimants has increased by 2,910 (+37.5%).
- In Coventry and Warwickshire LEP, there were 4,725 youth claimants in September 2021, a decrease of 210 (- 4.3%) claimants since August 2021. Compared to the same month in 2020, Coventry and Warwickshire LEP youth claimants decreased by 2,020 (-29.9%). When compared to March 2020 (2,920) the number of claimants has increased by 1,805 (+61.8%).
- In Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP, there were 18,020 youth claimants in September 2021, this is a decrease of 445 (-2.4%) claimants since August 2021. Compared to the same month in 2020, Greater Birmingham and

<sup>16</sup> WMCA SED Board Dashboard reports the number of claimants as a proportion of population aged 16 years and over – WMCA 3 LEP was 5.4% and the UK was 3.8% in September 2021.

Solihull LEP youth claimants decreased by 4,575 (-20.2%). In the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP area, when compared to March 2020 (12,165) the number of claimants has increased by 5,855 (+48.1%).

**The following table shows a breakdown of number of youth claimants and change by selected months across the WMCA and for the UK:**

	Mar. 2020	Sep. 2020	Aug. 2021	Sep. 2021	Sep. 2021 (Claimants as proportion aged 16-24) Rates	% Change Since Mar. 2020	% Change Since Sep. 2020	% Change Since Aug. 2021
Birmingham	9,220	16,210	13,945	13,650	8.1%	48.0%	-15.8%	-2.1%
Bromsgrove	220	550	400	375	4.6%	70.5%	-31.8%	-6.3%
Cannock Chase	370	785	540	520	5.6%	40.5%	-33.8%	-3.7%
Coventry	1,550	3,380	2,590	2,455	4.0%	58.4%	-27.4%	-5.2%
Dudley	1,755	3,195	2,355	2,325	7.5%	32.5%	-27.2%	-1.3%
East Staffordshire	320	745	545	530	4.7%	65.6%	-28.9%	-2.8%
Lichfield	275	575	355	355	3.8%	29.1%	-38.3%	0.0%
North Warwickshire	165	430	290	285	4.9%	72.7%	-33.7%	-1.7%
Nuneaton and Bedworth	570	1,085	800	800	6.6%	40.4%	-26.3%	0.0%
Redditch	310	635	470	445	5.7%	43.5%	-29.9%	-5.3%
Rugby	245	580	430	415	4.2%	69.4%	-28.4%	-3.5%
Sandwell	2,130	3,930	3,205	3,100	9.0%	45.5%	-21.1%	-3.3%
Solihull	830	1,730	1,250	1,205	5.9%	45.2%	-30.3%	-3.6%
Stratford-on-Avon	160	545	335	315	2.9%	96.9%	-42.2%	-6.0%
Tamworth	305	640	495	475	6.4%	55.7%	-25.8%	-4.0%
Walsall	1,940	3,375	2,655	2,555	8.5%	31.7%	-24.3%	-3.8%
Warwick	230	725	495	455	2.3%	97.8%	-37.2%	-8.1%
Wolverhampton	1,925	3,355	2,770	2,680	10.0%	39.2%	-20.1%	-3.2%
Wyre Forest	315	725	460	460	5.3%	46.0%	-36.6%	0.0%
<b>WM 7 Met.</b>	<b>19,345</b>	<b>35,170</b>	<b>28,770</b>	<b>27,970</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>44.6%</b>	<b>-20.5%</b>	<b>-2.8%</b>
Black Country LEP	7,750	13,850	10,985	10,660	8.7%	37.5%	-23.0%	-3.0%
Coventry and Warwickshire LEP	2,920	6,745	4,935	4,725	3.9%	61.8%	-29.9%	-4.3%
Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP	12,165	22,595	18,465	18,020	7.2%	48.1%	-20.2%	-2.4%
<b>WMCA (3 LEP)</b>	<b>22,835</b>	<b>43,190</b>	<b>34,385</b>	<b>33,405</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>46.3%</b>	<b>-22.7%</b>	<b>-2.9%</b>
United Kingdom	241,760	523,990	380,170	365,735	5.2%	51.3%	-30.2%	-3.8%

- Overall, for the WMCA (3 LEP) the number of youth claimants as a percentage of residents aged 16- 24 years old was 6.8% compared to 5.2% for the UK in September 2021.

#### **Claimant Count by Age and Gender (WMCA 3 LEP)<sup>17</sup>**

- Overall, for the WMCA (3 LEP) area between August 2021 and September 2021, excluding the age bracket of 65 years and over (increased by 15 to 460), there were decreases across all other age brackets.

<sup>17</sup> Please note, figure may not sum due to rounding

- For those aged 16-24 in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, when comparing September 2021 to the previous month, there was an overall decrease of 980. This can be split by a decrease of 710 males and a decrease of 265 females. However, within the 16-24 age bracket, females aged 16-17 increased by 5 claimants.
- For those aged 25-49 in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, when comparing September 2021 to the previous month, there was an overall decrease of 895. This can be split by a decrease of 1,005 males and an increase of 100 females. Notably within the 25-49 age bracket, all female age brackets have increased since August 2021.
- For those aged 50 years and over in the WMCA (3 LEP) area, when comparing September 2021 to the previous month, there was an overall decrease of 805 claimants. This can be split by a decrease of 560 males and a decrease of 235 females. Within this age range (50 years and over) there was an increase for females aged 65 years and over by 15 claimants.

The following table shows a breakdown by age brackets and gender for the WMCA (3 LEP) area over selected time periods:

		Mar. 2020	Sep. 2020	Aug. 2021	Sep. 2021	No. Change Since Mar. 20	No. Change Since Sep. 20	No. Change Since Aug. 21
Total	Age 16+	117,590	211,275	183,310	180,625	63,035	-30,650	-2,685
	Aged 16-24	22,835	43,190	34,385	33,405	10,570	-9,785	-980
	Aged 16-17	250	370	325	310	60	-60	-15
	Aged 18-24	22,580	42,820	34,065	33,085	10,505	-9,735	-980
	Aged 25-49	67,130	120,710	106,180	105,285	38,155	-15,425	-895
	Aged 25-29	15,945	29,065	24,445	24,215	8,270	-4,850	-230
	Aged 30-34	15,635	28,290	25,150	24,950	9,315	-3,340	-200
	Aged 35-39	13,715	24,360	22,335	22,170	8,455	-2,190	-165
	Aged 40-44	11,230	20,130	18,355	18,325	7,095	-1,805	-30
	Aged 45-49	10,605	18,870	15,900	15,625	5,020	-3,245	-275
	Aged 50+	27,635	47,370	42,735	41,930	14,295	-5,440	-805
	Aged 50-54	9,960	17,840	15,415	15,070	5,110	-2,770	-345
	Aged 55-59	8,985	15,320	13,460	13,215	4,230	-2,105	-245
	Aged 60-64	7,675	12,205	11,405	11,180	3,505	-1,025	-225
	Aged 65+	1,020	2,010	2,455	2,470	1,450	460	15
Male	Age 16+	69,420	127,100	108,475	106,185	36,765	-20,915	-2,290
	Aged 16-24	14,100	26,345	21,060	20,350	6,250	-5,995	-710
	Aged 16-17	115	170	135	120	5	-50	-15
	Aged 18-24	13,980	26,170	20,930	20,220	6,240	-5,950	-710
	Aged 25-49	38,965	72,850	62,390	61,385	22,420	-11,465	-1,005
	Aged 25-29	9,610	18,135	15,010	14,745	5,135	-3,390	-265
	Aged 30-34	9,095	17,230	14,815	14,605	5,510	-2,625	-210
	Aged 35-39	7,730	14,540	12,910	12,700	4,970	-1,840	-210
	Aged 40-44	6,440	11,895	10,535	10,420	3,980	-1,475	-115
	Aged 45-49	6,080	11,050	9,115	8,920	2,840	-2,130	-195
	Aged 50+	16,355	27,900	25,010	24,450	8,095	-3,450	-560
	Aged 50-54	5,820	10,470	8,980	8,740	2,920	-1,730	-240
	Aged 55-59	5,295	9,005	7,920	7,755	2,460	-1,250	-165
	Aged 60-64	4,575	7,210	6,620	6,470	1,895	-740	-150
	Aged 65+	655	1,220	1,485	1,485	830	265	0
Female	Age 16+	48,175	84,175	74,840	74,435	26,260	-9,740	-405
	Aged 16-24	8,730	16,850	13,320	13,055	4,325	-3,795	-265
	Aged 16-17	135	200	190	195	60	-5	5
	Aged 18-24	8,595	16,650	13,130	12,860	4,265	-3,790	-270
	Aged 25-49	28,165	47,860	43,790	43,900	15,735	-3,960	110
	Aged 25-29	6,340	10,930	9,435	9,470	3,130	-1,460	35

Aged 30-34	6,530	11,060	10,335	10,345	3,815	-715	10
Aged 35-39	5,985	9,820	9,430	9,470	3,485	-350	40
Aged 40-44	4,790	8,230	7,815	7,910	3,120	-320	95
Aged 45-49	4,525	7,820	6,785	6,705	2,180	-1,115	-80
Aged 50+	11,280	19,475	17,725	17,490	6,210	-1,985	-235
Aged 50-54	4,135	7,365	6,435	6,330	2,195	-1,035	-105
Aged 55-59	3,690	6,315	5,545	5,465	1,775	-850	-80
Aged 60-64	3,100	4,995	4,785	4,710	1,610	-285	-75
Aged 65+	360	795	965	980	620	185	15

#### Alternative Claimant Count<sup>18</sup>

An experimental quarterly alternative claimant count was released that covers the yearly month of August 2016 to August 2021. These statistics measure the number of people claiming unemployment related benefits by modelling what the count would have been if Universal Credit had been fully rolled out since 2013 (when Universal Credit began).

Trends over time for local areas can be considered using the Claimant Count prior to 2013, and the Alternative Claimant Count from 2013. However, the figures cannot be directly compared as they are defined differently.

#### All Ages

- The alternative claimant count data estimated 181,881 claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area in August 2021, a decrease of 16.4% (-35,755) when compared to August 2020. Over the same period the UK decreased by 22.7%. However, the figures are significantly higher in August 2021 when compared to the monthly figures of August 2016-2019. Compared to August 2019, claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area had increased by 54.3% (+64,015), the UK increased by 65.9%.

#### All Ages Alternative Claimant Count, August 2016 – August 2021:

	Aug-16	Aug-17	Aug-18	Aug-19	Aug-20	Aug-21	% Change Since Aug. 19	% Change since Aug.20
<b>WM 7 Met.</b>	<b>97,485</b>	<b>95,968</b>	<b>96,816</b>	<b>100,656</b>	<b>176,570</b>	<b>151,888</b>	<b>50.9%</b>	<b>-14.0%</b>
Black Country LEP	39,324	38,365	38,101	38,750	68,294	56,230	45.1%	-17.7%
Coventry & Warwickshire LEP	14,690	14,284	14,747	15,401	34,467	27,572	79.0%	-20.0%
Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP	59,266	59,187	60,777	63,715	114,875	98,079	53.9%	-14.6%
<b>WMCA (3 LEP)</b>	<b>113,280</b>	<b>111,836</b>	<b>113,625</b>	<b>117,866</b>	<b>217,636</b>	<b>181,881</b>	<b>54.3%</b>	<b>-16.4%</b>
UK	1,303,667	1,269,184	1,254,570	1,280,856	2,749,220	2,125,131	65.9%	-22.7%

#### Alternative Claimant Count – 16-24 years old

- The alternative claimant count data estimated 32,985 youth claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area in August 2021, a decrease of 21.5% (-9,049) when compared to August 2020. Over the same period the UK decreased by 30.0%. However, the youth claimant figures are significantly higher in August 2021 when compared to the monthly figures of August 2016-2019. Compared to August 2019, youth claimants in the WMCA (3 LEP) area had increased by 64.8% (+12,973), the UK increased by 72.3%.

#### 16- 24 years old Alternative Claimant Count, August 2016 – August 2021:

<sup>18</sup> Source: Department for Work and Pensions, Alternative claimant statistics, October 2021

	Aug-16	Aug-17	Aug-18	Aug-19	Aug-20	Aug-21	% Change Since Aug. 19	% Change since Aug.20
WM 7 Met.	16,196	14,985	15,142	17,188	34,196	27,722	61.3%	-18.9%
Black Country LEP	6,775	6,301	6,067	6,787	13,356	10,447	53.9%	-21.8%
Coventry & Warwickshire LEP	2,042	1,922	2,030	2,406	6,437	4,668	94.0%	-27.5%
Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP	9,793	9,037	9,492	10,819	22,241	17,870	65.2%	-19.7%
<b>WMCA (3 LEP)</b>	<b>18,610</b>	<b>17,260</b>	<b>17,589</b>	<b>20,012</b>	<b>42,034</b>	<b>32,985</b>	<b>64.8%</b>	<b>-21.5%</b>
UK	211,837	192,929	186,673	209,188	515,038	360,365	72.3%	-30.0%

### EMSI Job Postings WMCA (3 LEP) Geography September 2021<sup>19</sup>

*Note: The data below identifies job postings, derived from the EMSI Analyst Tool, and not comparable to the official vacancy data.*

- Following a slight dip in the number of unique job postings in August, the number of postings rebounded strongly in September reflecting national trends. In total, there were 182,242 unique job postings across the WMCA 3 LEP geography, which equates to 11,878 (7.0%) more than in August suggesting heightened demand.
- All 19 LA areas across the WMCA 3 LEP geography logged a positive change in job postings.
- The largest change was recorded in Cannock Chase, up 11%; whilst Redditch, Stratford-on-Avon, Tamworth and Walsall all logged double-digit change of 10%. Sandwell registered the smallest increase at 2%.
- Posting intensity, i.e., the effort towards hiring for particular positions remains high. Posting intensity increased in Birmingham, Lichfield, Redditch and Tamworth

The following tables shows across the WMCA (3 LEP) local authorities the number of unique job postings in September 2021 and the percentage change from the previous month:

	Sep 2021 Unique Postings	% Change (Aug 2021 - Sep 2021)
Birmingham	71,079	7%
Bromsgrove	2,366	8%
Cannock Chase	3,394	11%
Coventry	15,832	6%
Dudley	8,577	8%
East Staffordshire	5,337	7%
Lichfield	3,915	9%
North Warwickshire	2,716	8%
Nuneaton and Bedworth	3,778	7%
Redditch	3,579	10%
Rugby	4,893	6%
Sandwell	9,835	2%
Solihull	8,810	8%
Stratford-on-Avon	5,793	10%
Tamworth	3,719	10%
Walsall	6,944	10%
Warwick	10,126	6%
Wolverhampton	8,741	7%
Wyre Forest	2,808	7%

<sup>19</sup> Source: EMSI, October 2021

# WMCA Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) Statistics: Released October 2021<sup>20</sup>

## Black Country Consortium Economic Intelligence Unit

### Summary

- In total, the WMCA (3 LEP) area had 91,100 employments furloughed on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021. This reflects a 5.3% take-up rate of eligible employments for the scheme, compared to UK-wide rate of 4.6%. When compared to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021, the number of employments furloughed in the WMCA (3 LEP) area decreased by 15,200 (-14.3%, UK -16.6%).
- As of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021, there was a higher percentage of males furloughed at 6.1% (52,400), compared to females at 4.6% (38,900). The UK also had a higher take up rate for males compared to females (4.9% vs 4.3%).
- When compared to the UK proportions, the WMCA (3 LEP) area has a higher proportion of female workers on furlough in four age groups on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021; under 25 (10% vs 9.5%), aged 25 to 29 (9.1% vs 9.0%), aged 35-39 (12% vs 11.9%) and aged 50 to 54 (12% vs 11.9%).
- When compared to the UK proportions, the WMCA (3 LEP) area has a higher proportion of male workers on furlough in three age groups on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021; aged 25 to 29 (9.4% vs 9.2%), aged 30-34 (11.8% vs 11.1%) and aged 50 to 54 (12.1% vs 11.6%).
- For the WMCA (3 LEP) area, on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021, the sector with the highest number of employments furloughed was manufacturing at 18,430.
- Latest UK figures show that there were 440,500 employers with 1.3 million staff on furlough on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021. This is a decrease of 260,000 employments from 31<sup>st</sup> July where there were 1.6 million employments on furlough. Since the start of the scheme a total of 11.7 million jobs have been put on furlough for at least part of the duration of the scheme.
- For all age bands the number of employments on furlough and the take-up rates decreased across February to August 2021. The largest reductions in the number of employments on furlough in June and August were for younger employees in the under 18, 18 to 24 and 25 to 34 age bands.
- The largest reduction is for employers with 250 or more employees where the number of employments on furlough decreased by 78,900 from 264,700 employments at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021 to a provisional estimate of 185,800 (1% take-up) at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021.
- Provisional figures show for the UK that all sectors saw a reduction in levels of furlough between 31<sup>st</sup> July and 31<sup>st</sup> August. The arts, entertainment and recreation sector, and accommodation and food services sector had the highest take-up rate of all the sectors, with 12% of employments eligible for furlough on furlough at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021.

### Full Briefing

#### United Kingdom

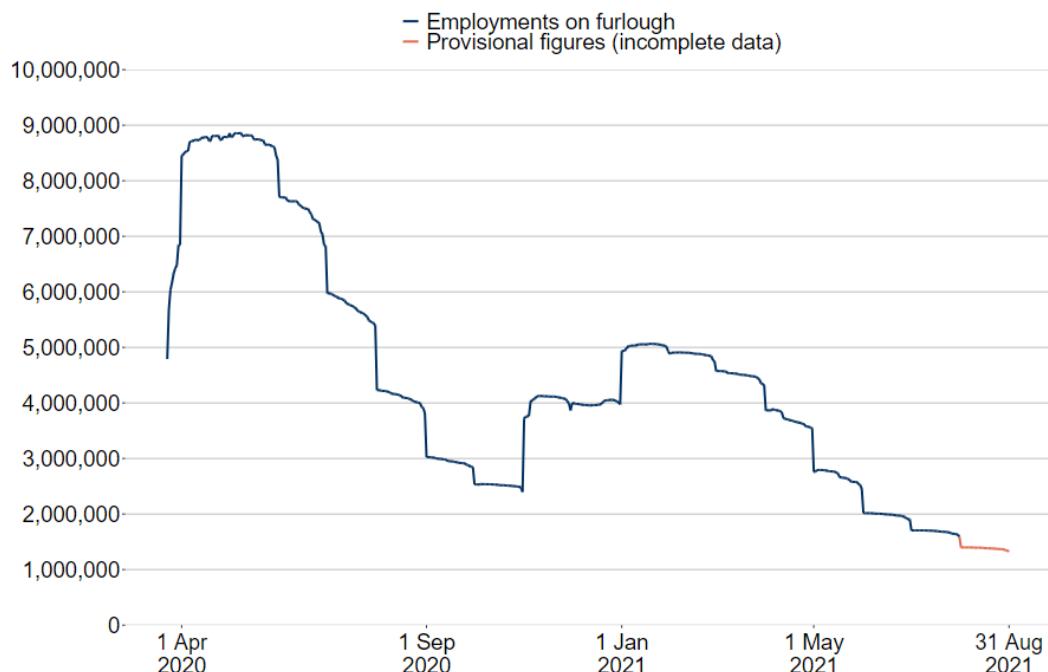
#### Furloughed Employments Over Time

- For the UK, the number of employments on furlough peaked at 8.9 million on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020. This fell to 2.4 million at 31<sup>st</sup> October, rose again to 4.9 million employments on furlough at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021. However, the number of employments on furlough has fallen since January and the latest provisional figures show that as the scheme is coming to an end, the number of employments on furlough was 1.3 million on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021.

<sup>20</sup> Source: HMRC, Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme statistics: October 2021. Please note, the figures for August 2021 are based on claims received to the deadline of 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021. In some circumstances, late claims can be made with a reasonable excuse and in agreement with HMRC. Claims for August could also be amended until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Therefore, the data for August 2021 is incomplete and should be considered provisional.

Since the start of the scheme a total of 11.7 million jobs have been put on furlough for at least part of the duration of the scheme.

**The following chart shows the total number of employments furloughed in the UK over time to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021:**

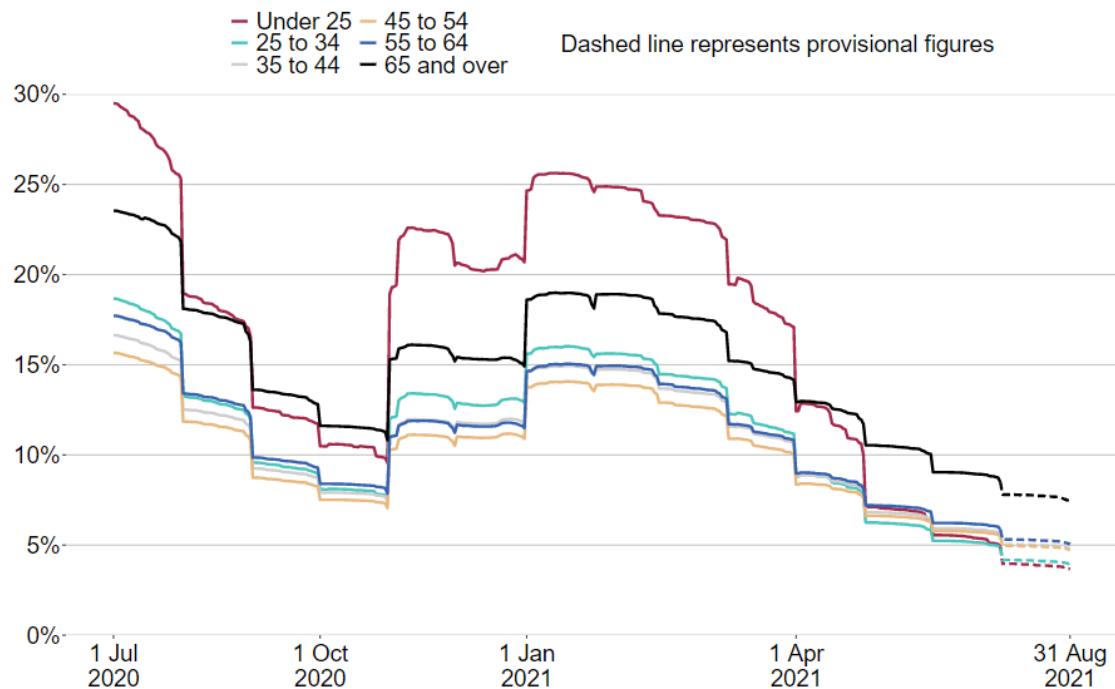


Source: HMRC CJRS data

### Employments Furloughed Over Time by Age

- For all age bands the number of employments on furlough and the take-up rates decreased across February to August 2021. The largest reductions in the number of employments on furlough in June and August were for younger employees in the under 18, 18 to 24 and 25 to 34 age bands.
- Take-up rates for the youngest age bands - under 18 and 18 to 24 - decreased dramatically in July and August 2021 and are now lower than other age bands. This reduction is in line with the easing of restrictions across the UK, particularly in hospitality.
- Take-up rate for the 65 and over age band reduced more slowly than for the youngest age groups through July and August. Thus, at the end of August this age band had the highest take-up of all age groups. The 65 and over age band had take-up rates of 7% and 8% for female and male employments at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021, in comparison with the 4% and 5% respectively for the total female and male populations.

**The following chart shows the proportion of employments furloughed for the UK by the age of the employee between July 2020 to August 2021:**



Source: HMRC CJRS and PAYE Real Time Information data

### Furlough by Gender

- For the UK, more employments were put on furlough with male job holders than where the employee was female through May to August 2021. This reflects decreases in the number of jobs on furlough in sectors such as accommodation and food which typically have higher numbers of female employees.
- For employments where the employee was female, there were 739,500 employments on furlough at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021. Provisional figures show that this decreased throughout August to 617,200 at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021. For employments where the employee was male, there were 822,800 employments on furlough at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021. Provisional figures show the number of employments on furlough decreased to 697,300 at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021.

### Furlough by Employer Size

- For the UK, for all employer sizes, the number of employments on furlough decreased across February to August 2021. The largest reduction is for employers with 250 or more employees where the number of employments on furlough decreased by 78,900 from 264,700 employments at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021 to a provisional estimate of 185,800 at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021.
- Employers with one employment had 126,300 employments on furlough at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021. Provisional figures show that this decreased only slightly in August to 116,000 employments on furlough at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021.
- Employers with 2 to 4 employees had the highest proportion of eligible employments on furlough at 18%. Medium and large sized businesses have the lowest proportion of eligible employments on furlough. Provisional figures for 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021 show that employers with 250 or more employees had 1% of eligible employees on furlough.
- Between January and the end of August 2021, the number of employments on furlough decreased by a larger proportion amongst large employers. Employers with 250 or more employees have seen an 89% reduction in employments on furlough since the peak in January, in comparison with a 44% reduction amongst employers with one employee. This may reflect the varying impact of the pandemic on businesses of differing sizes.

### Furlough by Sectors

- Provisional figures show for the UK that all sectors saw a reduction in levels of furlough between 31<sup>st</sup> July and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021. The arts, entertainment and recreation sector had the highest take-up rate of all the sectors, with 12% of employments eligible for furlough on furlough at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021.
- The accommodation and food services sector saw the largest reduction in the number of employments on furlough between 31<sup>st</sup> July and 31<sup>st</sup> August. There were 193,800 employments on furlough (11% of those eligible) in this sector at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021, a reduction of 69,900. The construction, transportation and storage has relatively high take-up rates (8%) and have been slower than other sectors in reducing the number of employments on furlough in August 2021.
- Diving further into the broad sectors to an industry level; the ten more detailed industry groups with the highest rates of jobs being put on furlough at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021 were passenger air transport (44%), travel agency and tour operators (40%), photographic activities (34%), manufacture of wearing apparel (25%), creative; arts and entertainments activities (24%), printing and service activities relating to printing (23%), organisation of conventions and trade shows (23%), other reservation service and related activities (22%), retail sale via stalls and markets (21%), and reproduction of recorded media (20%).

## WMCA (3 LEP)

### Employments Furloughed by Gender

- In total, the WMCA (3 LEP) area had 91,100 employments furloughed on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021. This reflects a 5.3% take-up rate of eligible employments for the scheme, compared to UK-wide rate of 4.6%. When compared to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021, the number of employments furloughed in the WMCA (3 LEP) area decreased by 15,200 (-14.3%, UK -16.6%).
- As of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021, there was a higher percentage of males furloughed at 6.1% (52,400), compared to females at 4.6% (38,900). The UK also had a higher take up rate for males compared to females (4.9% vs 4.3%).
- As of the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021, the local authority with the highest percentage of employments furloughed was Birmingham at 6.5% (26,700 furloughed of the 413,000 eligible). The local authority with the highest percentage of males furloughed was Birmingham at 7.9% (16,700 furloughed of the 211,500 eligible). The local authority with the highest percentage of female employments furloughed was Solihull at 5.6% (2,600 furloughed of 46,200 eligible).

*The following table shows employments furloughed, eligible employments and the take-up rate for the WMCA (3 LEP) area by gender as of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021<sup>21</sup>:*

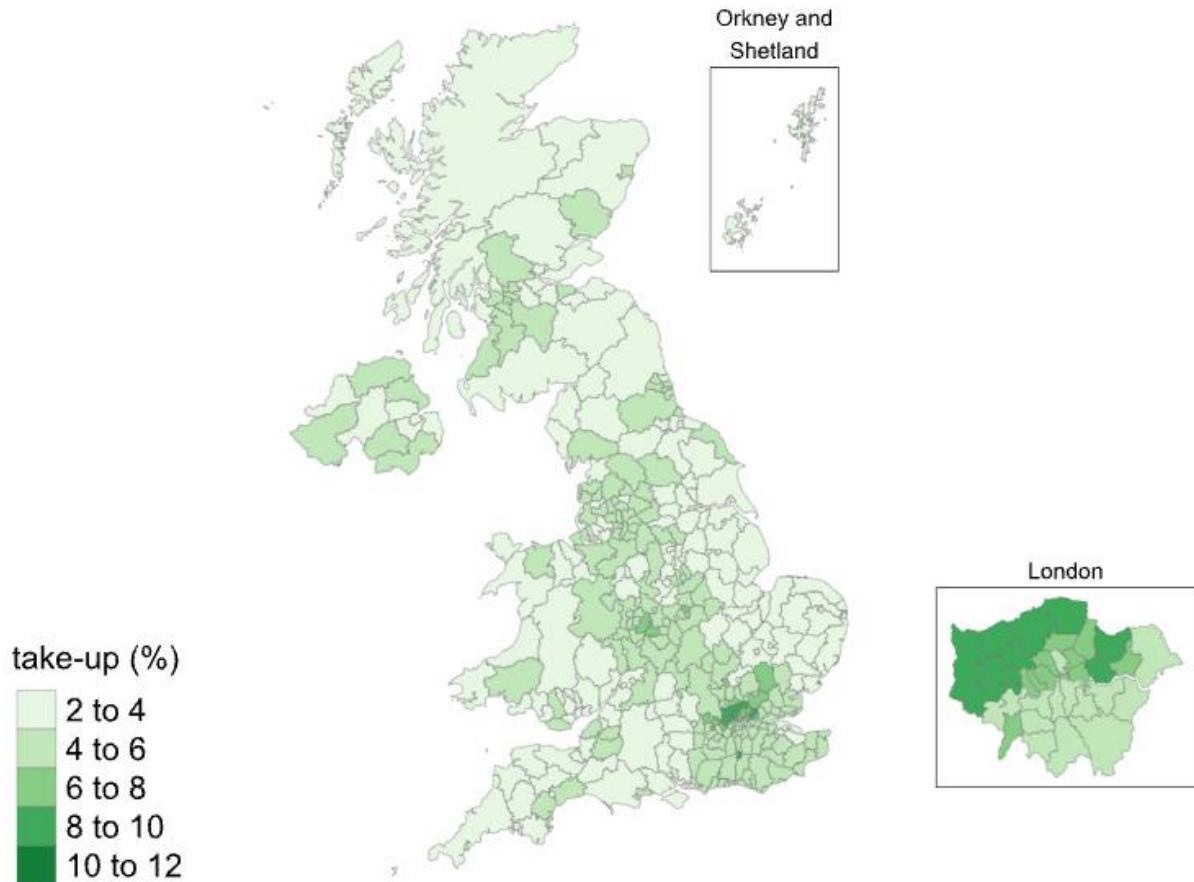
	Female			Male			Total		
	Female eligible employments	Female employments furloughed	Female take up-rate	Male eligible employments	Male employments furloughed	Male take up-rate	Total eligible employments	Total employments furloughed	Total take up-rate
Birmingham	201,500	10,100	5.0%	211,500	16,700	7.9%	413,000	26,700	6.5%
Bromsgrove	22,100	1,000	4.5%	20,700	1,100	5.3%	42,800	2,100	4.9%
Cannock Chase	22,300	1,000	4.5%	22,100	1,100	5.0%	44,400	2,100	4.7%
Coventry	71,000	2,800	3.9%	73,900	4,400	6.0%	144,800	7,200	5.0%
Dudley	66,200	2,600	3.9%	65,600	3,500	5.3%	131,800	6,100	4.6%
East Staffordshire	26,900	1,200	4.5%	28,400	1,200	4.2%	55,300	2,300	4.2%
Lichfield	22,800	1,100	4.8%	22,500	1,200	5.3%	45,300	2,300	5.1%

<sup>21</sup> Please note 'unknown' has been excluded from the table, the total UK figure will not sum.

North Warwickshire	14,700	700	4.8%	14,400	800	5.6%	29,200	1,500	5.1%
Nuneaton and Bedworth	30,000	1,200	4.0%	30,000	1,700	5.7%	60,000	2,900	4.8%
Redditch	20,100	900	4.5%	19,700	1,100	5.6%	39,800	2,000	5.0%
Rugby	26,100	1,100	4.2%	27,700	1,100	4.0%	53,800	2,200	4.1%
Sandwell	65,900	3,000	4.6%	67,000	4,300	6.4%	132,900	7,300	5.5%
Solihull	46,200	2,600	5.6%	45,600	3,000	6.6%	91,800	5,600	6.1%
Stratford-on-Avon	29,300	1,600	5.5%	28,800	1,300	4.5%	58,100	2,900	5.0%
Tamworth	17,800	700	3.9%	18,200	900	4.9%	36,100	1,600	4.4%
Walsall	54,800	2,600	4.7%	55,800	3,500	6.3%	110,600	6,100	5.5%
Warwick	32,300	1,500	4.6%	33,700	1,500	4.5%	66,000	3,000	4.5%
Wolverhampton	53,800	2,300	4.3%	53,300	3,100	5.8%	107,000	5,400	5.0%
Wyre Forest	21,000	900	4.3%	20,100	900	4.5%	41,100	1,800	4.4%
<b>WM 7 Met.</b>	<b>559,300</b>	<b>25,900</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>572,700</b>	<b>38,500</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>1,132,000</b>	<b>64,400</b>	<b>5.7%</b>
Black Country LEP	240,700	10,500	4.4%	241,700	14,400	6.0%	482,300	24,900	5.2%
Coventry & Warwickshire LEP	203,400	8,900	4.4%	208,500	10,800	5.2%	411,900	19,700	4.8%
Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP	400,700	19,500	4.9%	408,800	27,200	6.7%	809,600	46,500	5.7%
<b>WMCA (3 LEP)</b>	<b>844,800</b>	<b>38,900</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>859,000</b>	<b>52,400</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>1,703,800</b>	<b>91,100</b>	<b>5.3%</b>
West Midlands Region	1,208,800	52,400	4.3%	1,215,600	66,700	5.5%	2,424,300	119,000	4.9%
United Kingdom	14,452,600	617,200	4.3%	14,239,600	697,300	4.9%	28,692,200	1,324,600	4.6%

- The parliamentary constituency in the WMCA (3 LEP) area with the highest take-up rate on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021 was Birmingham, Hodge Hill at 8.4% (3,300 furloughed of the 39,500 eligible). Birmingham, Hodge Hill was also the parliamentary constituency with the highest male take-up rate with 10.5% (2,300 furloughed of 21,900 eligible). The parliamentary constituency with the highest female take-up rate with 6.5% (1,200 furloughed of the 18,400 eligible) was Birmingham, Hall Green.

***The following map shows employments on furlough as a proportion of eligible employments at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021 (provisional), by Parliamentary Constituency:***



### Employments Furloughed by Age and Gender<sup>22</sup>

- When compared to the UK proportions, the WMCA (3 LEP) area has a higher proportion of female workers on furlough in four age groups on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021; under 25 (10% vs 9.5%), aged 25 to 29 (9.1% vs 9.0%), aged 35-39 (12% vs 11.9%) and aged 50 to 54 (12% vs 11.9%).
- When compared to the UK proportions, the WMCA (3 LEP) area has a higher proportion of male workers on furlough in three age groups on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021; aged 25 to 29 (9.4% vs 9.2%), aged 30-34 (11.8% vs 11.1%) and aged 50 to 54 (12.1% vs 11.6%).

**The following table shows a breakdown by age and gender the number of workers on furlough at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021:**

		BC LEP	CW LEP	GBS LEP	WM 7 Met.	WMC A	WMCA %	United Kingdom	UK %
Female	Under 25	1,150	770	1,970	2,780	<b>3,890</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	58,600	9.5%
	25 to 29	960	730	1,860	2,540	<b>3,550</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	55,600	9.0%
	30 to 34	1,120	1,030	2,170	3,050	<b>4,320</b>	<b>11.1%</b>	68,400	11.1 %
	35 to 39	1,260	1,070	2,340		<b>4,670</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	73,700	11.9 %
	40 to 44	1,120	1,030	2,240		<b>4,390</b>	<b>11.3%</b>	71,300	11.6 %
	45 to 49	1,130	1,000	2,140		<b>4,270</b>	<b>11.0%</b>	69,200	11.2 %
	50 to 54	1,200	1,130	2,330	2,870	<b>4,660</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	73,300	11.9 %

<sup>22</sup> UK analysis excludes unknown or missing, figure may not sum.

	<b>55 to 59</b>	1,120	930	1,940	2,530	<b>3,990</b>	<b>10.3%</b>	64,900	10.5 %
	<b>60 to 64</b>	780	770	1,370	1,830	<b>2,920</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	47,100	7.6%
	<b>65 and over</b>	590	520	1,040	1,240	<b>2,150</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	35,000	5.7%
	<b>All</b>	10,500	8,900	19,500	26,000	<b>38,900</b>	<b>100%</b>	617,200	100%
<b>Male</b>	<b>Under 25</b>	1,250	890	2,320	3,250	<b>4,460</b>	<b>8.5%</b>	61,000	8.7%
	<b>25 to 29</b>	1,270	1,030	2,620	3,750	<b>4,920</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	63,800	9.2%
	<b>30 to 34</b>	1,610	1,250	3,320	4,720	<b>6,180</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	77,500	11.1 %
	<b>35 to 39</b>	1,700	1,170	3,270	4,740	<b>6,140</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	82,000	11.8 %
	<b>40 to 44</b>	1,670	1,220	3,120	4,590	<b>6,010</b>	<b>11.4%</b>	81,700	11.7 %
	<b>45 to 49</b>	1,640	1,160	3,090	4,390	<b>5,890</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	78,100	11.2 %
	<b>50 to 54</b>	1,810	1,340	3,230	4,610	<b>6,380</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	81,000	11.6 %
	<b>55 to 59</b>	1,530	1,160	2,810	3,810	<b>5,500</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	73,000	10.5 %
	<b>60 to 64</b>	1,190	950	2,030	2,890	<b>4,170</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	56,000	8.0%
	<b>65 and over</b>	800	650	1,420	1,760	<b>2,870</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	43,100	6.2%
	<b>All</b>	14,400	10,800	27,200	38,500	<b>52,400</b>	<b>100%</b>	697,300	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>Under 25</b>	2,410	1,680	4,290	6,030	<b>8,380</b>	<b>9.2%</b>	119,700	9.1%
	<b>25 to 29</b>	2,230	1,750	4,490	6,290	<b>8,470</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	119,400	9.1%
	<b>30 to 34</b>	2,730	2,270	5,500	7,770	<b>10,500</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	145,900	11.1 %
	<b>35 to 39</b>	2,960	2,250	5,630	8,040	<b>10,840</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	155,700	11.8 %
	<b>40 to 44</b>	2,770	2,240	5,350	7,570	<b>10,360</b>	<b>11.3%</b>	153,000	11.6 %
	<b>45 to 49</b>	2,770	2,160	5,230	7,220	<b>10,160</b>	<b>11.1%</b>	147,300	11.2 %
	<b>50 to 54</b>	3,000	2,470	5,570	7,480	<b>11,040</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	154,300	11.7 %
	<b>55 to 59</b>	2,650	2,090	4,730	6,340	<b>9,470</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	137,900	10.5 %
	<b>60 to 64</b>	1,980	1,710	3,430	4,720	<b>7,120</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	103,100	7.8%
	<b>65 and over</b>	1,400	1,160	2,460	3,010	<b>5,020</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	78,100	5.9%
	<b>All</b>	24,900	19,700	46,500	64,400	<b>91,100</b>	<b>100%</b>	1,324,600	100%

Figures in the table may not sum due to rounding

### Employments Furloughed by Broad Sector – WMCA (3 LEP) Overall

- For the WMCA (3 LEP) area, on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021, the sector with the highest number of employments furloughed was manufacturing at 18,430. This was followed by wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles at 13,550, and then accommodation and food services at 11,330 employments furloughed.
- Alongside drops in accommodation and food services (-4,120) and wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles (-1,690), there was also notable drops in manufacturing (-1,530) and administrative and support services (-1,520) since 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021.

**The following table shows the total employments furloughed by broad sector for the WMCA (3 LEP) as of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021:**

Sector	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2021	31 <sup>st</sup> August 2021	Number Change
Accommodation and food services	15,450	11,330	-4,120
Administrative and support services	10,530	9,010	-1,520
Arts, entertainment and recreation	3,650	2,910	-740
Construction	6,060	5,280	-780
Health and social work	4,620	3,880	-740
Information and communication, Financial and insurance & Real estate	5,550	5,000	-550
Manufacturing	19,960	18,430	-1,530
Other	4,560	3,990	-570
Other service activities	4,440	3,870	-570
Professional, scientific and technical	7,920	7,200	-720
Transportation and storage	8,260	6,870	-1,390
Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles	15,240	13,550	-1,690
Total	106,300	91,100	-15,200

Figures may not sum due to rounding

# WMCA: Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) – Released October 2021<sup>23</sup>

## Black Country Consortium Economic Intelligence Unit

### Introduction

There has been a total of 539,300 claims made from 151,400 individuals in the WMCA (3 LEP) across all SEISS grants; the total claims reached a value of nearly £1.38bn.

The following main figures are based on claims submitted for the fifth SEISS to 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021 only. There are two levels to the fifth SEISS grant. Individuals who have seen a decline in turnover of 30% or more can claim a higher grant of up to 80% of 3 months' average trading profits. Otherwise, individuals can claim a grant worth 30% of 3 months' average trading profits.

### Summary

- Across the WMCA (3 LEP) area, 170,000 people were eligible for the fifth grant of SEISS. There were 59,600 claims made to 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021 (approximately split by 41,600 claims made for the higher grant and 18,000 claims for the lower grant) with a total value of £123.3m (split approximately by £104.5m for the higher grant and £18.9m for the lower grant) with an average overall claim value of £2,200. The overall take-up rate was 35%, above the UK average of 33%.
- At a West Midlands regional level, there were approximately 258,000 of the population eligible for the fifth grant of the SEISS, which is a take up rate of 32% based on the total number of claims of 83,000. This can be split further by gender and there was a total potentially eligible male population of 184,000 for the fifth grant of the SEISS, which equates to a take-up rate of 33%, which is based on the total number of claims of 62,000. There were 74,000 eligible female population for the West Midlands region with a take-up rate of 28% based on the total number of claims of 21,000.
- The sectors with the highest take-up rates in the West Midlands region were transport and storage at 50% (24,100 eligible, 12,200 claims) and other service activities at 42% (18,100 eligible, 7,600 claims).

### In Depth

#### WMCA (3 LEP)

Across the WMCA (3 LEP) area, 170,000 people were eligible for the fifth grant of SEISS. There were 59,600 claims made to 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021 (approximately split by 41,600 claims made for the higher grant and 18,000 claims for the lower grant) with a total value of £123.3m (split approximately by £104.5m for the higher grant and £18.9m for the lower grant) with an average overall claim value of £2,200. The overall take-up rate was 35%, above the UK average of 33%.

Across local authority areas within the WMCA (3 LEP) area, the overall take-up rate varies from 24% in Stratford-on-Avon to 41% in Birmingham.

For the fifth grant of SEISS up to 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021, the WMCA (3 LEP) area, there were 124,300 of the male population eligible. There were 45,800 claims with a total value of £98.6m with an average claim at £2,300. The male take-up rate was 37% (UK take-up rate of 35%). For the female population in the WMCA (3 LEP) area there were 45,700 eligible population. There were 13,700 claims, the total value of £24.9m with an average claim at £1,800. The female take-up rate was 30% (UK take-up rate of 29%).

Across local authority areas within the WMCA (3 LEP) area, the male take-up rate varies from 23% in Stratford-on-Avon to 41% in Birmingham. The male take-up rate varies from 25% in Stratford-on-Avon to 35% in Cannock Chase.

<sup>23</sup> Source: HM Revenue & Customs, Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) Statistics: October 2021

**The following table shows the overall breakdown of the fifth grant for SEISS by local authority for eligible population, claims, values and take-up rate for the SEISS up to 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021:**

	Total potentially eligible population	Total no. of all claims made to 15/09/21	Total value of all claims made to 15/09/21	Average value of all claims made to 15/09/21	Total number of claims made for higher grant	Total value of claims made for higher grant	Total number of claims made for lower grant	Total value of claims made for lower grant	Total Take-Up Rate
Cannock Chase	5,100	1,700	£3,800,000	£2,200	1,100	£3,000,000	600	£800,000	34%
East Staffordshire	5,200	1,600	£3,200,000	£2,000	1,100	£2,700,000	500	£500,000	30%
Lichfield	4,800	1,500	£3,600,000	£2,500	1,000	£3,000,000	400	£600,000	30%
Tamworth	3,000	1,000	£2,200,000	£2,200	700	£1,900,000	300	£300,000	33%
North Warwickshire	3,100	900	£2,200,000	£2,300	700	£1,800,000	300	£300,000	30%
Nuneaton and Bedworth	4,900	1,600	£3,400,000	£2,200	1,100	£2,900,000	500	£500,000	32%
Rugby	4,400	1,200	£2,700,000	£2,300	900	£2,400,000	300	£400,000	27%
Stratford-on-Avon	7,600	1,800	£4,600,000	£2,500	1,300	£4,000,000	500	£500,000	24%
Warwick	5,500	1,500	£3,500,000	£2,400	1,100	£3,100,000	400	£400,000	27%
Birmingham	44,400	18,000	£34,100,000	£1,900	12,800	£29,100,000	5,200	£5,000,000	41%
Coventry	12,300	4,600	£9,400,000	£2,000	3,200	£8,000,000	1,400	£1,400,000	37%
Dudley	14,200	4,900	£10,000,000	£2,100	3,300	£8,300,000	1,600	£1,800,000	34%
Sandwell	12,900	5,100	£9,800,000	£1,900	3,400	£8,100,000	1,700	£1,800,000	39%
Solihull	7,800	2,500	£6,200,000	£2,500	1,800	£5,400,000	700	£800,000	32%
Walsall	11,700	4,300	£8,900,000	£2,100	2,900	£7,400,000	1,400	£1,500,000	37%
Wolverhampton	9,700	3,400	£6,600,000	£2,000	2,300	£5,500,000	1,100	£1,100,000	35%
Bromsgrove	4,600	1,200	£3,000,000	£2,400	900	£2,600,000	300	£400,000	27%
Redditch	3,800	1,300	£2,900,000	£2,200	900	£2,500,000	400	£400,000	35%
Wyre Forest	5,000	1,500	£3,200,000	£2,200	1,100	£2,800,000	400	£400,000	29%
<b>WM 7 Met.</b>	<b>113,000</b>	<b>42,700</b>	<b>£85,100,000</b>	<b>£2,000</b>	<b>29,600</b>	<b>£71,700,000</b>	<b>13,100</b>	<b>£13,400,000</b>	<b>38%</b>
Black Country LEP	48,500	17,700	£35,300,000	£2,000	11,900	£29,300,000	5,800	£6,200,000	36%
Coventry & Warwickshire LEP	37,800	11,600	£25,800,000	£2,300	8,300	£22,200,000	3,400	£3,500,000	31%
Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP	83,700	30,300	£62,200,000	£2,200	21,400	£53,000,000	8,800	£9,200,000	36%
<b>WMCA (3 LEP)</b>	<b>170,000</b>	<b>59,600</b>	<b>£123,300,000</b>	<b>£2,200</b>	<b>41,600</b>	<b>£104,500,000</b>	<b>18,000</b>	<b>£18,900,000</b>	<b>35%</b>
West Midlands Region	258,000	83,000	£174,000,000	£2,100	58,000	£148,000,000	25,000	£26,000,000	32%
United Kingdom	3,345,000	1,092,000	£2,477,000,000	£2,300	778,00	£2,127,000,00	315,00	£349,000,00	33%

Across the WMCA (3 LEP) parliamentary constituencies, the overall take up rate for the fifth grant of SEISS varies from 22% in Kenilworth and Southam to 49% in Birmingham, Hodge Hill. The male take-up rate varies from 22% in Kenilworth and Southam to 51% in Birmingham, Hodge Hill. The female take-up rate varies from 23% in Kenilworth and Southam to 37% in Warley.

**The following table shows an overall breakdown of the fifth grant for SEISS by parliamentary constituencies for eligible population, claims, values and take-up rate up to 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021:**

	Total potentially eligible population	Total no. of all claims made to 15/09/21	Total value of all claims made to 15/09/21	Average value of all claims made to 15/09/21	Total number of claims made for higher grant	Total value of claims made for higher grant	Total number of claims made for lower grant	Total value of claims made for lower grant	Total Take-Up Rate
Aldridge-Brownhills	3,500	1,100	£2,500,000	£2,300	700	£2,000,000	400	£500,000	31%
Birmingham, Edgbaston	3,300	1,200	£2,500,000	£2,100	800	£2,100,000	400	£400,000	37%
Birmingham, Erdington	4,000	1,700	£3,400,000	£2,000	1,200	£2,800,000	500	£500,000	42%
Birmingham, Hall Green	5,500	2,300	£4,000,000	£1,800	1,700	£3,500,000	600	£500,000	42%
Birmingham, Hodge Hill	5,900	2,900	£4,500,000	£1,600	2,100	£3,900,000	800	£600,000	49%
Birmingham, Ladywood	4,700	2,100	£3,500,000	£1,600	1,500	£3,000,000	600	£400,000	45%
Birmingham, Northfield	3,700	1,400	£3,100,000	£2,300	1,000	£2,600,000	400	£500,000	37%
Birmingham, Perry Barr	4,700	1,900	£3,300,000	£1,800	1,300	£2,800,000	600	£500,000	40%
Birmingham, Selly Oak	3,900	1,300	£2,900,000	£2,200	900	£2,400,000	400	£500,000	35%
Birmingham, Yardley	5,000	2,200	£4,300,000	£1,900	1,600	£3,600,000	600	£600,000	44%
Bromsgrove	4,600	1,200	£3,000,000	£2,400	900	£2,600,000	300	£400,000	27%
Burton	4,700	1,400	£2,800,000	£2,000	1,000	£2,400,000	400	£400,000	31%
Cannock Chase	5,100	1,700	£3,800,000	£2,200	1,100	£3,000,000	600	£800,000	34%
Coventry North East	4,700	2,000	£3,800,000	£2,000	1,300	£3,200,000	600	£700,000	42%

	Total potentially eligible population	Total no. of all claims made to 15/09/21	Total value of all claims made to 15/09/21	Average value of all claims made to 15/09/21	Total number of claims made for higher grant	Total value of claims made for higher grant	Total number of claims made for lower grant	Total value of claims made for lower grant	Total Take-Up Rate
Coventry North West	4,200	1,400	£3,100,000	£2,100	1,000	£2,700,000	400	£400,000	34%
Coventry South	3,400	1,200	£2,500,000	£2,100	900	£2,200,000	400	£400,000	36%
Dudley North	3,800	1,400	£2,800,000	£2,000	900	£2,300,000	500	£500,000	37%
Dudley South	3,400	1,100	£2,300,000	£2,100	700	£1,900,000	400	£400,000	33%
Halesowen and Rowley Regis	3,800	1,400	£2,900,000	£2,100	1,000	£2,400,000	400	£500,000	35%
Kenilworth and Southam	4,300	1,000	£2,400,000	£2,500	700	£2,100,000	300	£300,000	22%
Lichfield	4,500	1,300	£3,300,000	£2,500	900	£2,800,000	400	£500,000	30%
Meriden	4,100	1,300	£3,300,000	£2,400	1,000	£2,800,000	400	£400,000	33%
North Warwickshire	4,100	1,300	£2,900,000	£2,300	900	£2,500,000	400	£500,000	31%
Nuneaton	3,700	1,100	£2,400,000	£2,200	800	£2,100,000	300	£400,000	31%
Redditch	4,300	1,400	£3,200,000	£2,200	1,000	£2,700,000	400	£500,000	34%
Rugby	4,000	1,100	£2,600,000	£2,300	800	£2,200,000	300	£300,000	27%
Solihull	3,700	1,200	£2,900,000	£2,500	900	£2,600,000	300	£400,000	31%
Stourbridge	4,300	1,400	£2,900,000	£2,100	1,000	£2,400,000	400	£500,000	33%
Stratford-on-Avon	5,600	1,400	£3,500,000	£2,500	1,000	£3,100,000	300	£400,000	24%
Sutton Coldfield	3,700	1,100	£2,600,000	£2,400	800	£2,200,000	300	£400,000	29%
Tamworth	3,900	1,300	£2,900,000	£2,300	900	£2,500,000	400	£400,000	32%
Walsall North	4,000	1,600	£3,400,000	£2,100	1,000	£2,800,000	600	£600,000	40%
Walsall South	4,100	1,600	£3,000,000	£1,900	1,100	£2,600,000	500	£400,000	39%
Warley	3,900	1,600	£3,000,000	£1,900	1,100	£2,500,000	500	£500,000	41%
Warwick and Leamington	3,800	1,100	£2,500,000	£2,300	800	£2,200,000	300	£300,000	28%
West Bromwich East	3,600	1,400	£2,700,000	£2,000	900	£2,200,000	500	£500,000	38%
West Bromwich West	3,700	1,400	£2,800,000	£1,900	900	£2,200,000	500	£500,000	39%
Wolverhampton North East	3,200	1,100	£2,300,000	£2,100	700	£1,900,000	400	£400,000	34%
Wolverhampton South East	3,500	1,300	£2,500,000	£2,000	900	£2,100,000	400	£500,000	36%
Wolverhampton South West	3,500	1,200	£2,300,000	£1,900	800	£1,900,000	400	£300,000	34%
Wyre Forest	5,000	1,500	£3,200,000	£2,200	1,100	£2,800,000	400	£400,000	29%
<b>WMCA (3 LEP)</b>	<b>170,000</b>	<b>59,600</b>	<b>£123,300,000</b>	<b>£2,200</b>	<b>41,600</b>	<b>£104,500,000</b>	<b>18,000</b>	<b>£18,900,000</b>	<b>35%</b>
United Kingdom	3,345,000	1,092,000	£2,477,000,000	£2,300	778,000	£2,127,000,000	315,000	£349,000,000	33%

## Regional Analysis

### West Midlands Region: Claims by Age and Gender

At a West Midlands regional level, there were approximately 258,000 of the population eligible for the fifth grant of the SEISS, which is a take up rate of 32% based on the total number of claims of 83,000. This can be split further by gender and there was a total potentially eligible male population of 184,000 for the fifth grant of the SEISS, which equates to a take-up rate of 33%, which is based on the total number of claims of 62,000. There were 74,000 eligible female population for the West Midlands region with a take-up rate of 28% based on the total number of claims of 21,000.

Overall, for the West Midlands region the highest take-up rate was for those aged 35-44 years old at 37% (59,300 eligible, 21,700 claims). The highest take-up rate in the West Midlands region for females were those aged 25-34 years old at 32% (12,200 eligible and 3,900 claims). For males in the West Midlands region, the highest take-up rate was those aged 35-44 years old at 39% (41,900 eligible, 16,400 claims).

**The following table shows a breakdown by age and gender across the West Midlands Region for the fifth grant of SEISS, up to 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021:**

Gender	Age bands	Total potentially eligible population	Total no. of claims made to 15/09/21	Total value of claims made to 15/09/21	Average value of claims made to 15/09/21	Proportion of total number of claims made for higher grant	Proportion of total value of claims made for higher grant	Take-Up Rate
Male	16-24	6,900	2,200	£3,500,000	£1,600	57%	76%	32%
	25-34	33,700	12,700	£28,100,000	£2,200	63%	80%	38%

	35-44	41,900	16,400	£35,500,000	£2,200	66%	82%	39%
	45-54	46,400	15,700	£34,500,000	£2,200	68%	83%	34%
	55-64	40,200	11,200	£25,900,000	£2,300	71%	86%	28%
	65+	13,200	2,700	£7,300,000	£2,700	76%	89%	20%
	Missing	1,700	500	£1,000,000	£1,900	67%	84%	32%
	All	184,000	62,000	£136,000,000	£2,200	67%	83%	33%
Female	16-24	1,900	500	£800,000	£1,500	81%	93%	27%
	25-34	12,200	3,900	£7,000,000	£1,800	82%	93%	32%
	35-44	17,300	5,300	£9,100,000	£1,700	80%	91%	31%
	45-54	19,800	5,900	£10,900,000	£1,900	80%	92%	30%
	55-64	16,600	4,300	£8,500,000	£2,000	80%	91%	26%
	65+	5,400	900	£2,100,000	£2,300	81%	91%	17%
	Missing	600	200	£400,000	£2,000	81%	92%	28%
	All	74,000	21,000	£39,000,000	£1,800	80%	92%	28%
All	16-24	8,800	2,700	£4,200,000	£1,600	61%	79%	31%
	25-34	45,900	16,700	£35,100,000	£2,100	68%	83%	36%
	35-44	59,300	21,700	£44,600,000	£2,100	69%	84%	37%
	45-54	66,200	21,600	£45,400,000	£2,100	71%	85%	33%
	55-64	56,900	15,600	£34,400,000	£2,200	74%	87%	27%
	65+	18,600	3,600	£9,400,000	£2,600	77%	90%	19%
	Missing	2,300	700	£1,400,000	£1,900	71%	86%	31%
	All	258,000	83,000	£174,000,000	£2,100	70%	85%	32%

### West Midlands Region: Claims by Broad Sector

- The sectors with the highest take-up rates in the West Midlands region were transport and storage at 50% (24,100 eligible, 12,200 claims) and other service activities at 42% (18,100 eligible, 7,600 claims).

The following table shows a breakdown by broad industry for the West Midlands Region for the fifth grant of SEISS, up to 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021:

Sector description	Total potentially eligible population	Total no. of claims made to 15/09/21	Total value of claims made to 15/09/21	Average value of claims made to 15/09/21	Proportion of total number of claims made for higher grant	Proportion of total value of claims made for higher grant	Take-Up Rate
Accommodation and food service activities	6,100	1,800	£4,200,000	£2,400	82%	93%	29%
Administrative and support service activities	18,600	4,400	£7,000,000	£1,600	72%	87%	24%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	8,500	400	£800,000	£1,800	52%	72%	5%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	5,200	1,900	£4,300,000	£2,300	86%	95%	36%
Construction	78,800	26,900	£66,200,000	£2,500	58%	78%	34%
Education	8,900	3,300	£6,800,000	£2,100	84%	94%	37%
Financial and insurance activities	1,500	300	£900,000	£2,800	63%	82%	22%
Human health and social work activities	11,500	2,300	£5,000,000	£2,100	71%	86%	20%
Information and communication	2,300	600	£1,600,000	£2,500	71%	88%	27%
Manufacturing	6,700	2,100	£4,600,000	£2,200	69%	84%	31%
Other service activities	18,100	7,600	£15,000,000	£2,000	88%	96%	42%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	11,600	3,100	£8,300,000	£2,700	75%	89%	27%

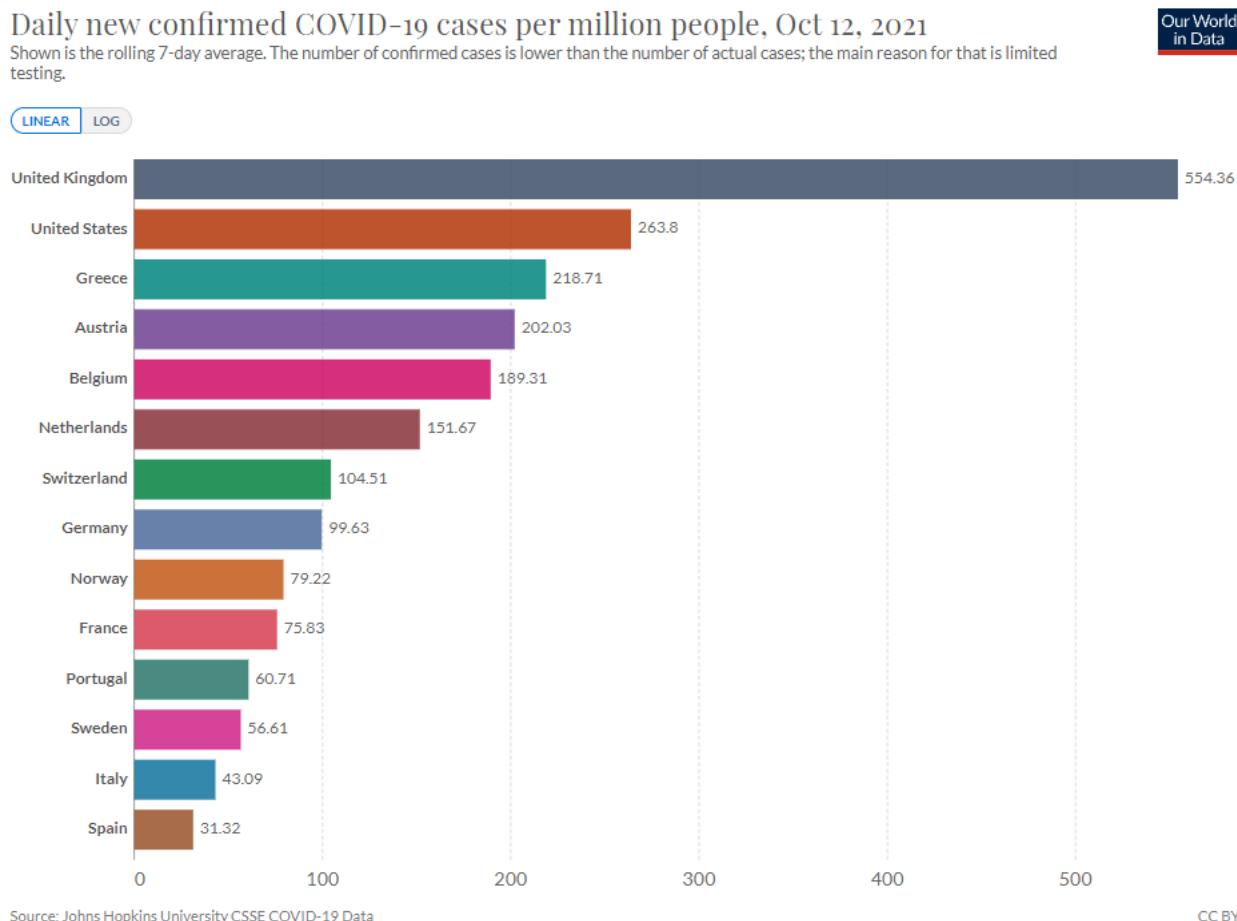
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	500	100	£300,000	£2,200	65%	87%	26%
Real estate activities	1,100	200	£400,000	£2,200	67%	83%	18%
Transportation and storage	24,100	12,100	£19,100,000	£1,600	76%	89%	50%
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	16,900	4,100	£8,000,000	£1,900	68%	85%	24%
Unknown and other	37,300	11,400	£22,100,000	£1,900	73%	87%	31%
All	258,000	83,000	£174,000,000	£2,100	70%	85%	32%

# Infection Rates and Vaccine Update

Alice Pugh WMREDI/WMCA

The UK has seen a [resurgence in infection rates](#), and the daily new cases confirmed in the UK is now the highest out of the selected European countries in the graph below. This comes as more and more people return to work and the majority of lockdown restriction have been removed, including the re-opening of entertainment venues, such as bars and pubs.

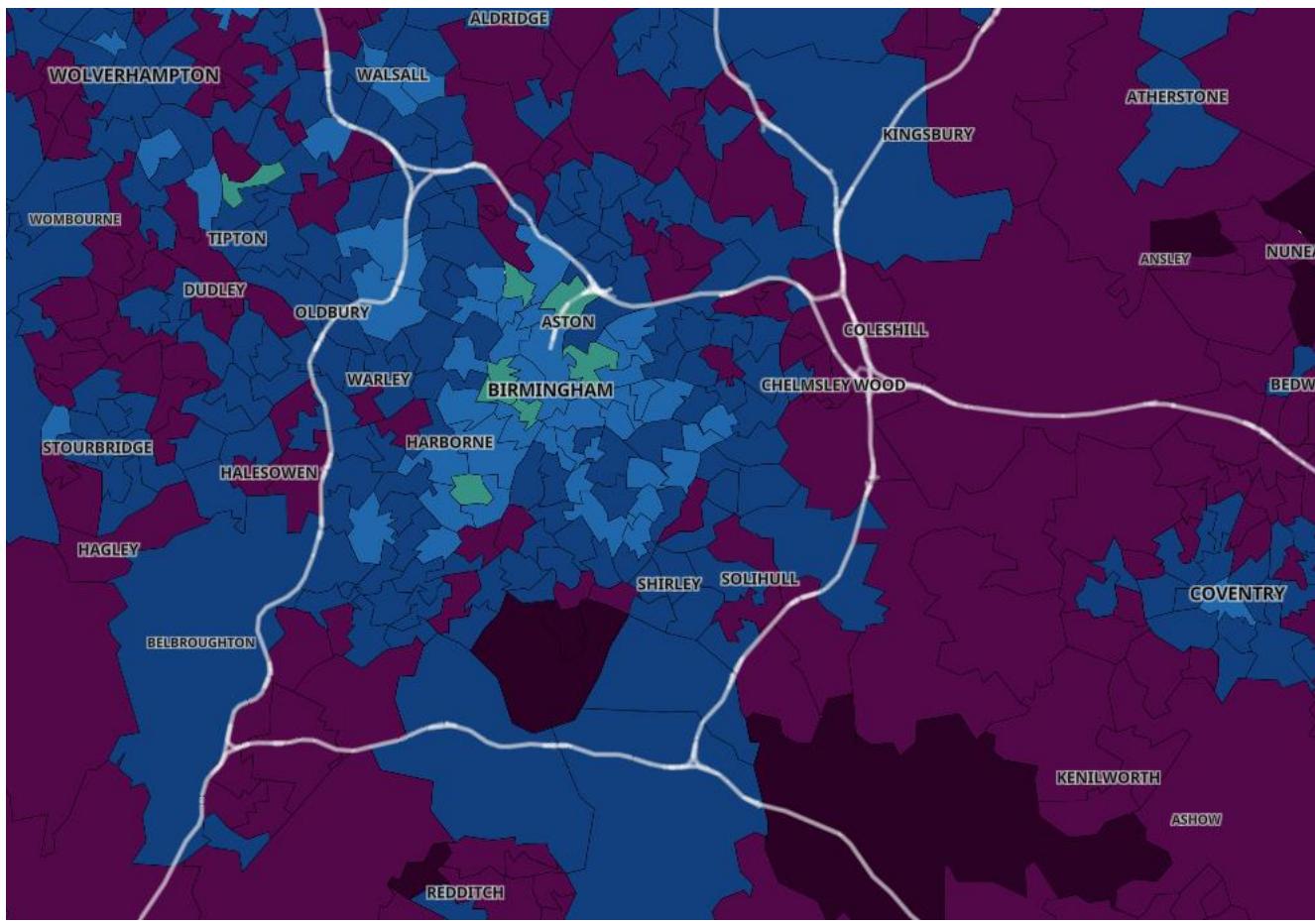
[Since 31 December 2019](#) and as of week 2021-39, **235 611 921** cases of COVID-19 (in accordance with the applied case definitions and testing strategies in the affected countries) have been reported, including **4 809 532 deaths**.



Latest [ONS infection survey](#) data (8<sup>th</sup> October 2021 next release 15<sup>th</sup> October 2021) states:

- In England, the percentage of people testing positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) increased in the week ending 2 October 2021 to an estimated 786,300 people (95% credible interval: 737,600 to 835,300), equating to around 1 in 70 people.
- In Wales, the trend in the percentage of people testing positive was uncertain in the week ending 2 October 2021; we estimate that 56,900 people in Wales had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 45,700 to 69,300), equating to around 1 in 55 people.
- In Northern Ireland, the percentage of people testing positive decreased in the week ending 2 October 2021; we estimate that 14,500 people in Northern Ireland had COVID-19 (95% credible interval: 9,300 to 20,900), equating to around 1 in 130 people.
- In Scotland, the percentage of people testing positive decreased in the week ending 2 October 2021; we estimate that 84,900 people in Scotland had COVID-19, (95% credible interval: 70,200 to 101,100) equating to around 1 in 60 people.

The map below displays weekly data, which are updated every day [here](#). Seven-day rolling rate of new cases by specimen date ending on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021.

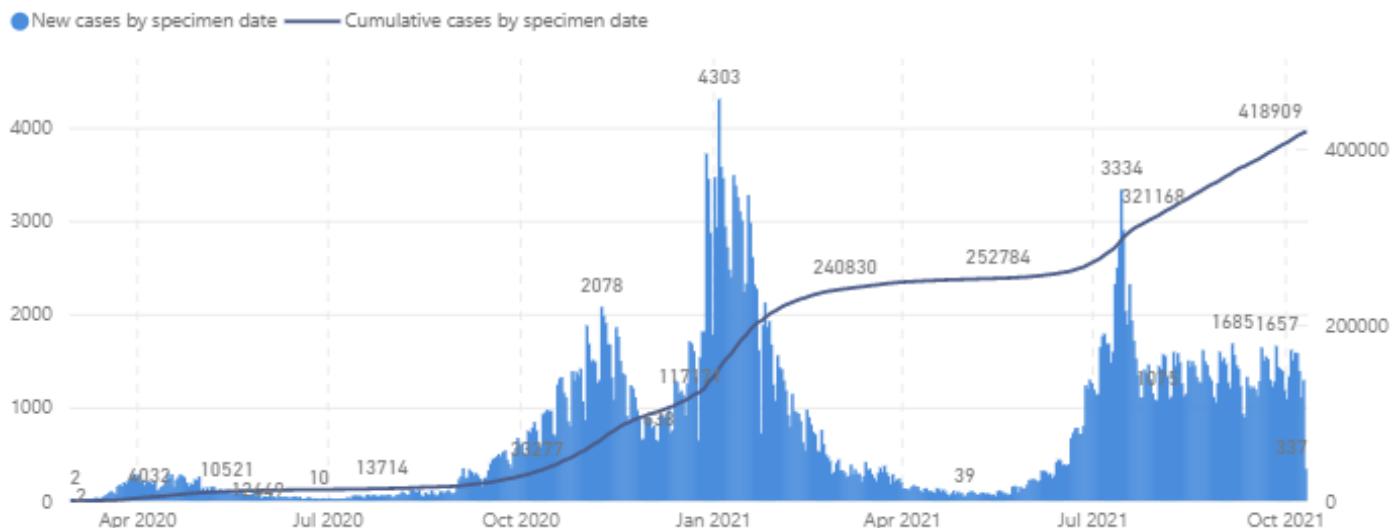


### Regional Data

[The Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Epidemiology and Intelligence Cell](#) have created a dashboard which looks at covid data on a regional level. Data below:

Date	New cases by specimen date	New cases by publish date	Cumulative cases by specimen date	Cases in the last 7 days	Rate per 100,000 in the last 7 days
09 October 2021	1103	1587	417282	2	0.07
08 October 2021	1390	1625	416179	10098	344.81
07 October 2021	1579	1320	414789	9891	337.74
06 October 2021	1587	1505	413210	9701	331.25
05 October 2021	1504	1165	411623	9525	325.24
04 October 2021	1616	1505	410119	9452	322.75
03 October 2021	1332	1312	408503	9493	324.15
02 October 2021	1090	1339	407171	9437	322.24
01 October 2021	1183	1772	406081	9568	326.71
30 September 2021	1389	1327	404898	9681	330.57
29 September 2021	1411	1253	403509	9809	334.94
28 September 2021	1421	1271	402200	9944	330.55

## All ages



As can be seen from the charts below in the first lockdown infections were higher in the older age groups, whereas now younger people are being infected (nb there will be some effect from higher testing but symptomatic cases presenting for testing are also more prevalent now).

## Covid 19 Hospital Activity

A number of [data collections](#) have been implemented to support incident management. The collections were activated at short notice and the content of the collections has evolved as the incident has developed. The data collected is classified as management information. It has been collected on a daily basis with a tight turn round time. No revisions have been made to the dataset. Any analysis of the data should be undertaken with this in mind.

## Total reported admissions to hospital and diagnoses in hospital

The table below shows the latest daily rates

Name	27-Sep-21	28-Sep-21	29-Sep-21	30-Sep-21	01-Oct-21	02-Oct-21	03-Oct-21	04-Oct-21	05-Oct-21	06-Oct-21	07-Oct-21	08-Oct-21	09-Oct-21	10-Oct-21
ENGLAND	617	596	625	552	520	549	577	627	658	632	634	619	613	606
East of England	58	34	54	39	37	37	36	49	58	49	45	65	64	72
London	86	73	81	66	70	82	57	87	74	76	84	78	67	58
Midlands	127	113	129	116	121	99	130	127	128	119	135	128	132	116
North East and Yorkshire	126	150	143	125	97	130	141	129	166	141	133	144	146	130
North West	90	94	101	99	87	99	97	93	88	93	87	77	83	85
South East	55	70	55	43	44	47	57	63	52	77	56	44	50	74
South West	75	62	62	64	64	55	59	79	92	77	94	83	71	71

## Mechanical Ventilation beds - occupied by confirmed COVID-19 patients

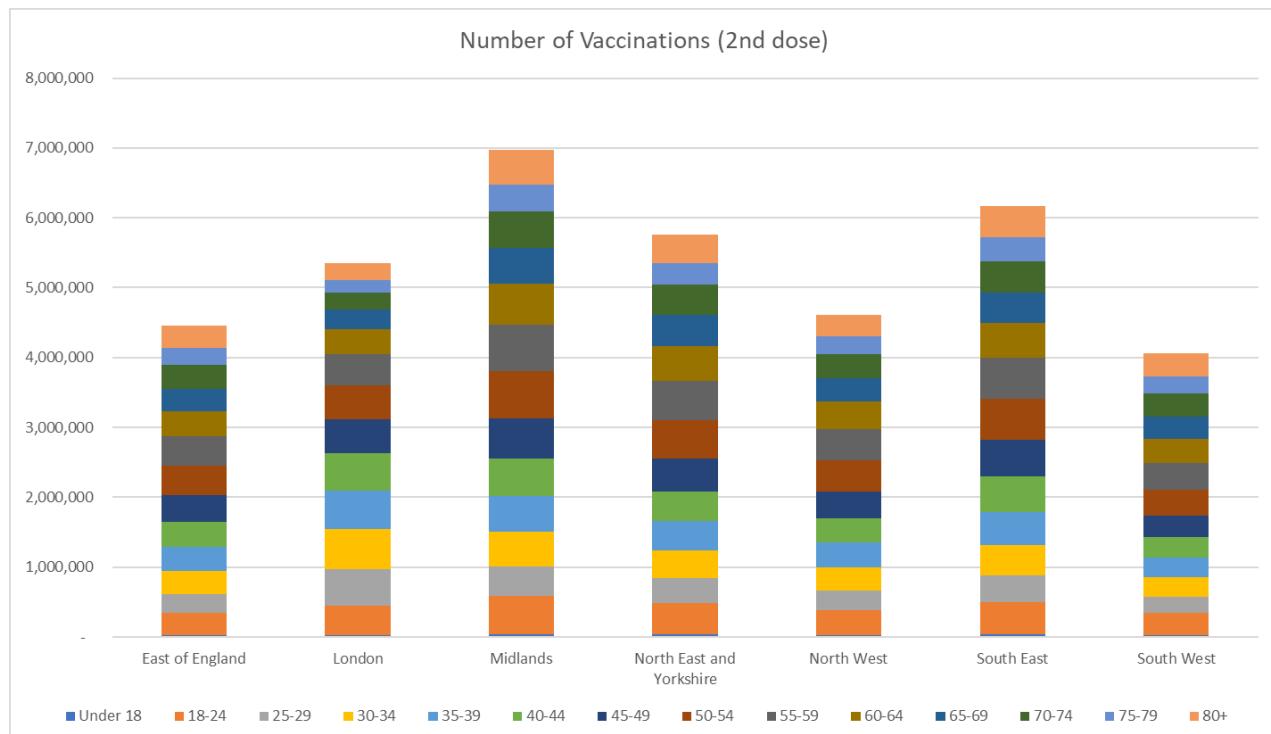
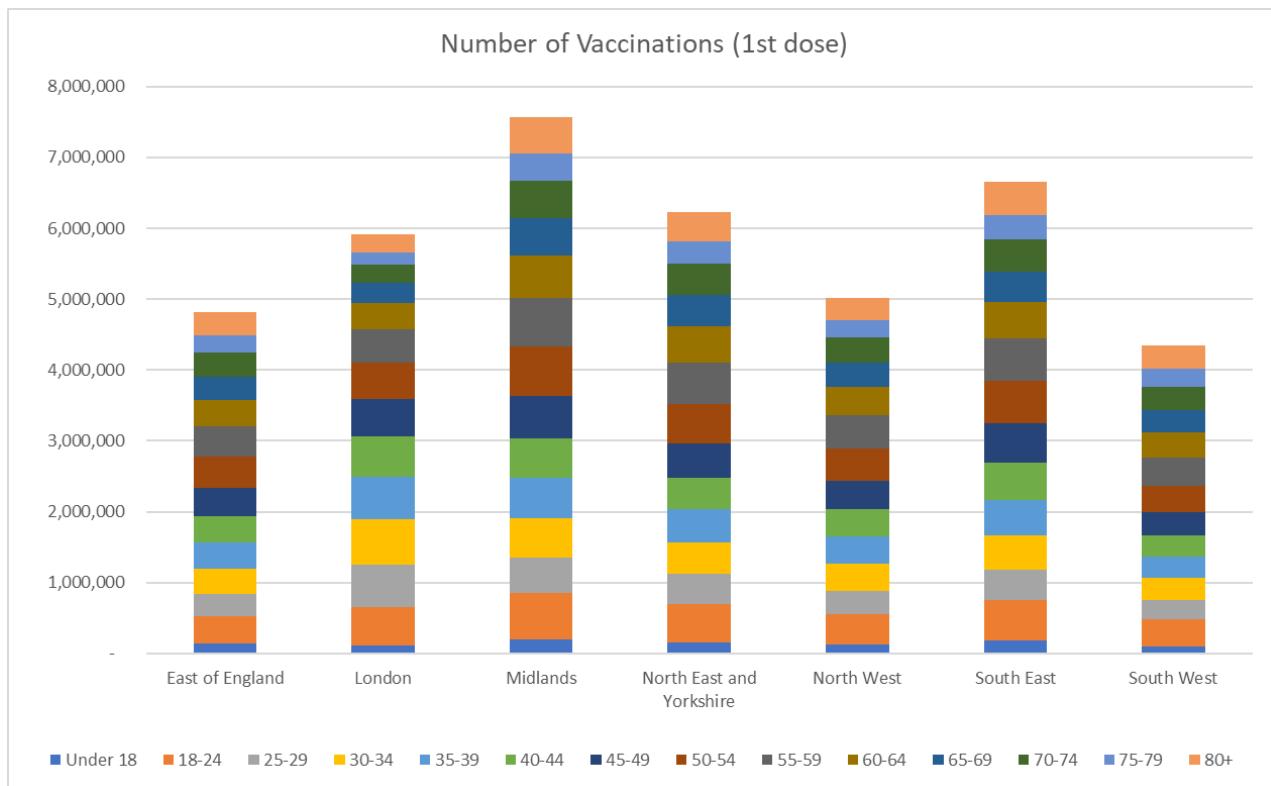
Name	29-Sep-21	30-Sep-21	01-Oct-21	02-Oct-21	03-Oct-21	04-Oct-21	05-Oct-21	06-Oct-21	07-Oct-21	08-Oct-21	09-Oct-21	10-Oct-21	11-Oct-21	12-Oct-21
ENGLAND	671	672	671	630	639	632	661	663	665	647	639	622	621	657
East of England	43	49	55	49	47	50	49	52	54	53	58	53	53	58
London	175	181	179	176	173	175	171	161	144	143	146	139	146	146
Midlands	139	134	130	122	130	131	137	133	132	132	120	118	127	129
North East and Yorkshire	133	127	125	123	129	125	126	125	131	133	131	117	121	123
North West	85	90	88	82	78	72	88	92	95	88	89	93	93	95
South East	52	47	44	41	43	41	45	48	44	46	46	48	39	53
South West	44	44	50	37	36	40	41	42	48	51	52	47	49	53

## Total beds - occupied by confirmed COVID-19 patients (as at 08:00)

Name	29-Sep-21	30-Sep-21	01-Oct-21	02-Oct-21	03-Oct-21	04-Oct-21	05-Oct-21	06-Oct-21	07-Oct-21	08-Oct-21	09-Oct-21	10-Oct-21	11-Oct-21	12-Oct-21
ENGLAND	5,017	4,916	4,799	4,652	4,778	4,909	5,006	5,009	4,962	4,975	4,921	5,077	5,206	5,213
East of England	366	373	384	350	345	379	367	359	346	358	356	368	408	440
London	983	948	927	894	906	934	925	904	884	885	867	878	894	853
Midlands	1,003	965	930	883	971	973	1,029	1,042	1,027	1,008	991	1,040	1,073	1,086
North East and Yorkshire	1,055	1,055	1,023	1,013	1,055	1,059	1,093	1,112	1,140	1,115	1,101	1,148	1,169	1,166
North West	834	793	786	788	744	773	814	803	779	772	788	808	757	
South East	435	437	415	402	426	444	440	431	427	430	421	430	414	462
South West	341	345	334	322	331	347	338	358	359	400	413	425	440	449

## Vaccine Update

Between the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and the [7<sup>th</sup> October 2021](#), the Midlands has successfully vaccinated **7,380,915** people with the first dose and **6,491,598** of these individuals have received the second dose as well. Meaning the Midlands has successfully provided the most jabs out of any region including London.



	% who have had both doses (using ONS denominators)												
	18-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80+
Total	61.6%	66.2%	74.5%	79.3%	85.9%	86.6%	91.6%	93.7%	95.4%	94.5%	95.2%	97.2%	90.0%
East of England	67.4%	70.8%	76.7%	80.8%	87.4%	88.1%	92.6%	94.8%	96.0%	94.7%	95.5%	98.8%	90.6%
London	57.8%	69.3%	69.3%	70.6%	78.1%	82.1%	85.2%	87.2%	88.5%	87.3%	88.1%	88.4%	80.2%
Midlands	57.8%	59.3%	71.5%	78.6%	85.7%	86.2%	92.2%	93.4%	96.3%	94.7%	95.9%	97.6%	91.4%
North East and Yorkshire	58.8%	61.4%	72.7%	79.8%	86.4%	86.3%	92.4%	94.5%	95.9%	95.8%	96.6%	97.2%	90.5%
North West	57.3%	59.8%	69.8%	77.9%	85.2%	85.3%	91.2%	93.7%	96.1%	95.2%	95.6%	96.6%	90.0%
South East	65.9%	71.6%	82.6%	85.2%	89.5%	88.7%	92.8%	94.7%	96.3%	95.6%	95.0%	98.4%	90.6%
South West	68.9%	73.1%	81.7%	85.7%	90.7%	89.2%	93.4%	95.8%	96.7%	95.3%	96.1%	99.4%	92.9%

# **Weekly Deaths Registered: 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021**

## **Black Country Consortium Economic Intelligence Unit**

The following analysis compares the latest available time period (the week of the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021) to the previous week period (the week of the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021) for the number of deaths registered and the number of deaths registered related to the Coronavirus<sup>24</sup>.

Across England and Wales, the overall registered death figures decreased from 10,684 in the week of the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021 to 10,510 in the week of 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021. The number of deaths registered that state Coronavirus on the death certificate decreased from 888 people to 783 people over the same period.

Regional level analysis shows that the West Midlands' overall registered death figure slightly decreased from 1,098 people in the week of 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021 to 1,094 in the week of 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021. The number of registered deaths related to Coronavirus decreased from 104 people to 72 people over the same period.

There was a total of 753 deaths registered across the WMCA (3 LEP) area in the week of the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021. There were 57 deaths registered that were related to Coronavirus over the same period. In comparison to the week of the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021, the overall registered death figures in the WMCA (3 LEP) area decreased by 8, with the number of registered deaths related to Coronavirus decreased by 17 people.

At local authority level in the week of the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021, there were twelve local authorities in the WMCA (3 LEP) area that registered deaths related to the Coronavirus (as seen in the following table). Of the 57 registered Coronavirus deaths; Birmingham accounted for 21 deaths, Sandwell accounted for 9 deaths and East Staffordshire accounted for 6 of the registered deaths.

Of the 57 registered Coronavirus deaths in the WMCA (3 LEP) involving Coronavirus in the week of the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021, 50 were registered in a hospital, 4 deaths were registered at home and 3 deaths were registered at a care home.

### **Place and number of deaths registered that are related to Coronavirus in the week of 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021:**

	Care home	Elsewhere	Home	Hospice	Hospital	Other communal establishment	Total
Cannock Chase	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
East Staffordshire	0	0	0	0	6	0	6
Lichfield	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tamworth	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
North Warwickshire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nuneaton and Bedworth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rugby	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Stratford-on-Avon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Warwick	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bromsgrove	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Redditch	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Wyre Forest	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Birmingham	0	0	1	0	20	0	21
Coventry	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
Dudley	2	0	1	0	2	0	5
Sandwell	0	0	1	0	8	0	9
Solihull	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Walsall	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
Wolverhampton	1	0	0	0	3	0	4
<b>WM 7 Met.</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>46</b>
Black Country LEP	3	0	2	0	16	0	21
Coventry & Warwickshire LEP	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP	0	0	2	0	30	0	32
<b>WMCA (3 LEP)</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>57</b>

<sup>24</sup> Please note that up-to-date counts of the total numbers of deaths involving COVID-19 are published by Public Health England (PHE) -ONS figures differ from the PHE counts as the latter include deaths which have not yet been registered.

Source: ONS, Death registrations and occurrences by local authority and health board, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021

# ONS Weekly Release Indicators

## Black Country Consortium Economic Intelligence Unit

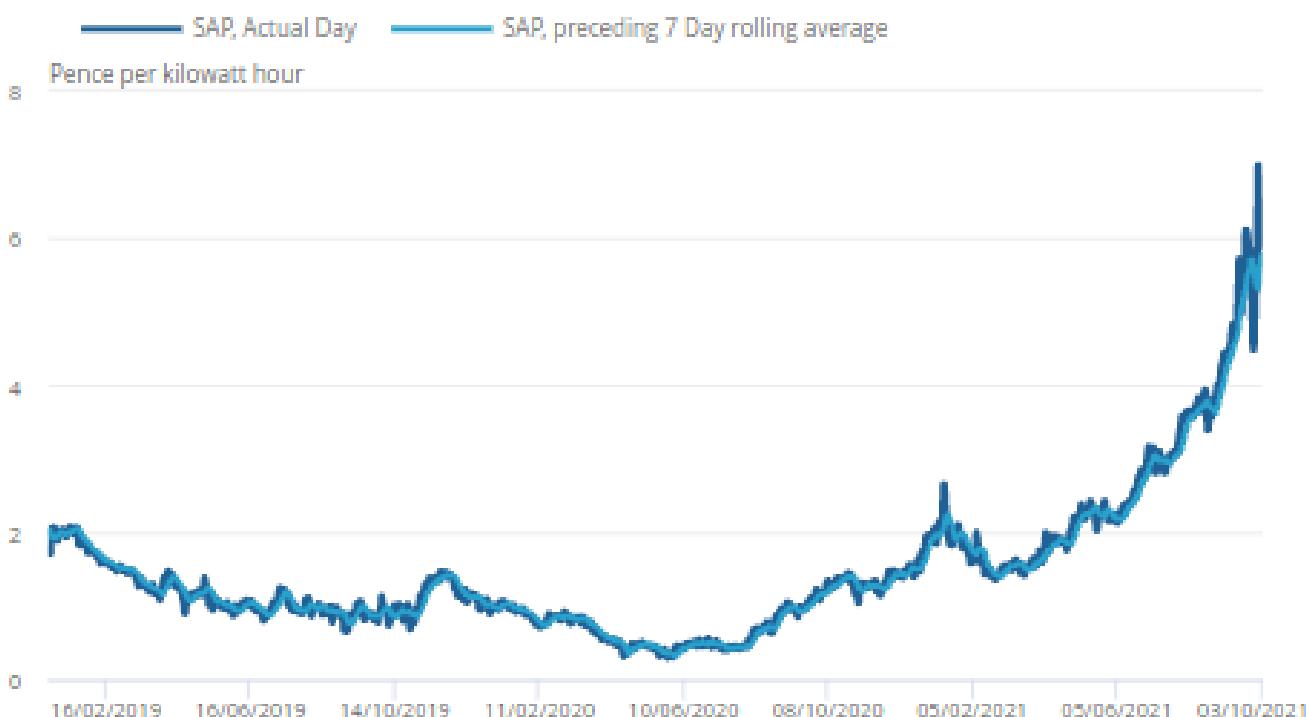
On the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021, Office for National Statistics (ONS) released 'economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators. These statistics are experimental and have been devised to provide timely information. The following information covers: system average price of gas, footfall data, online job adverts, final results from Wave 40 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS), national company incorporations and voluntary dissolutions and results from Wave 75 of the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

### System Average Price (SAP) of Gas

ONS have now introduced the system average price (SAP) of gas. This is the average price of all gas traded through the balancing market. Market participants post bids or offers for volumes of gas as day-ahead and within-day trades. The SAP aggregates the trades conducted on the On-the-Day Commodity Market (OCM). This is the market that National Grid use in their role as residual balancer. Other markets exist for wholesale gas trading in GB. The data can be used to understand the general trend of gas prices within the UK, however, should be treated with caution as these can be subject to extreme within-day trading prices and may skew actual traded prices. It must also be noted that while these prices reflect spot prices on the day, traders can opt for futures contracts where the buyer and the seller agree the market-determined price for gas for a future date. The daily SAP is used to determine the futures price and is therefore a useful indicator of supply constraints and demand pressures.

Since the start of 2021, the SAP has been steadily increasing. The price has more than doubled since the start of the year, with an increase of 213% since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021, and an increase of 71% since 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021. In the latest week, from 26<sup>th</sup> September to 3<sup>rd</sup> October, the SAP preceding seven-day average increased by 2% to 5.785 pence per kilowatt hour.

**The following chart shows System average price, pence per kilowatt hour, 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 to 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2021, UK (non-seasonally adjusted):**



Source: National Grid

## Online Job Adverts

Figures are taken from jobs adverts provided by Adzuna. The Adzuna categories do not correspond to SIC categories and therefore not comparable with the ONS Vacancy Survey. Please note, Index of job adverts on Adzuna by category, 100 = average job adverts in February 2020.

Nationally, between the 24<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 total online job adverts increased by 4 percentage points. On the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021, total online job adverts were at 139.2% of their average level in February 2020. Out of the 28 categories (excluding unknown) 26 increased from the previous week. Of the 28 categories, there were two that were below their February 2020 levels; ‘energy, oil and gas’ (94.7%) and ‘charity/voluntary’ (95.4%), these two categories were also the ones that had decreased from the previous week.

Between the 24<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021, the West Midlands region online job adverts increased by 6.3 percentage points. On the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021, total online job adverts for the West Midlands was at 160% of their average level in February 2020.

## Footfall

According to Springboard, in the week to the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021, the volume of overall retail footfall in the UK decreased by 3% from the previous week (week to 25<sup>th</sup> September 2021). This decrease in overall footfall in the UK was because of an 8% week-on-week fall in high street footfall. Meanwhile, retail park and shopping centre footfall increased slightly from the previous week by 1% and 2%, respectively.

In the latest week to 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021, overall retail footfall was at 81% of the level seen in the equivalent week of 2019. Comparing retail locations, footfall at retail parks remained the strongest relative to pre-COVID-19 levels, at 94% of its equivalent 2019 level. Meanwhile, the corresponding figures for high streets and shopping centres were 78% and 76%, respectively.

In the week to 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021, retail footfall saw a week-on-week fall in 9 out of the 10 UK countries and English regions, the largest occurring in the South West, Wales and the West Midlands, where footfall fell by 5%. Northern Ireland was the only area that did not see a weekly decrease, remaining unchanged from the previous week.

## National Company Incorporations and Voluntary Dissolution

Companies House data shows for the UK, there were 15,024 company incorporations in the week to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021. This is up from 13,978 recorded in the previous week, lower when compared to the same week in 2020 (17,940) but higher than the same week in 2019 (13,791).

Also, for the week to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021, there were 6,202 voluntary dissolution applications, an increase from 5,842 recorded in the previous week. The number of voluntary dissolution applications was higher than levels seen in the same week of 2020 (6,198) and the same week in 2019 (4,900).

## Business Insights and Conditions Survey

The final results from Wave 40 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS) based off the 5,069 businesses surveyed across the West Midlands that businesses have a presence in with a response rate of 23.1% (1,173) and to 2,996 businesses that are head quartered in the West Midlands, with a response rate of 21.7% (649). Please note, businesses were asked for their experiences for the reference period 6<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> September 2021. However, for questions regarding the last two weeks, businesses may respond from the point of completion of the questionnaire (20<sup>th</sup> September to 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2021). Also, the data used is unweighted for regions and response levels can be low so the following results should be treated with caution when evaluating the impact of COVID-19. Due to weighted data being available for the UK a comparison has not been included.

## Trading and Financial Performance

98.2% of responding West Midlands businesses were trading over the reference period. 1.1% of businesses has temporarily closed or temporarily paused trading and less than 1% of businesses had permanently ceased trading.

Businesses were asked how their turnover for the last two weeks compared to normal expectations for the time of year. Excluding 'not sure' responses, 27.0% of trading businesses in the West Midlands reported their turnover had decreased by at least 20%. However, 46.3% of trading businesses in the West Midlands reported that their turnover was unaffected and approximately 14.7% reported their turnover had increased by at least 20%.

Excluding 'other' and 'not sure' responses, 45.5% of responding West Midlands businesses reported the main reason for the change in the business turnover in the last two weeks was due to COVID-19, 1.7% reported the main reason as the end of the EU transition period and 16.9% reported that it was due to COVID-19 and the end of the EU transition period.

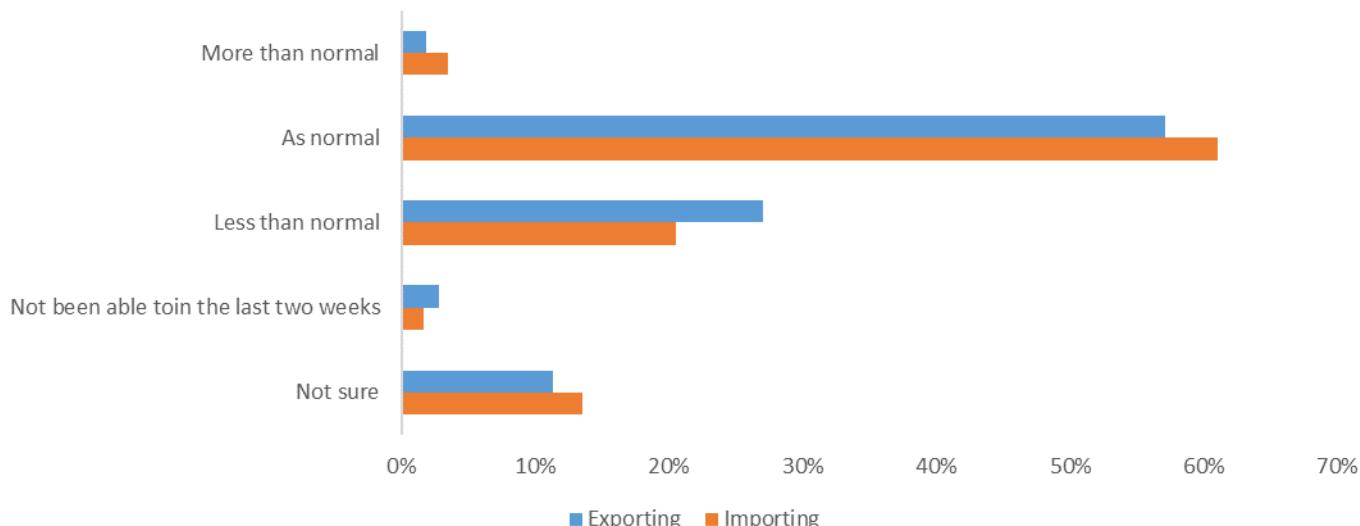
## Profits

Businesses were asked in the last two weeks how profits compared with normal expectations for the time of year. Excluding 'not sure' and 'not applicable' responses, 27.2% of trading businesses in the West Midlands reported profits had decreased by at least 20%. However, 44.9% of trading businesses in the West Midlands reported that profits had stayed the same and approximately 11% reported their profits had increased by at least 20%.

## International Trading

Businesses were asked in the last two weeks, had their businesses exporting or importing of goods or services been affected when compared to normal expectations for the time of year. 57.1% of West Midlands businesses who were exporting reported that they had not been affected and 61.0% reported that importing had not been affected.

**The following chart shows for the West Midlands region how exporting or importing of goods or services compared to normal expectations for the time of year in the last two weeks:**



Businesses were asked if they currently use rules of origin to access or zero tariffs on exports, excluding 'not sure' responses, 29.5% of responding West Midlands businesses reported they were not. 7.4% of responding West Midlands businesses reported they were to EU countries, less than 1% were for non-EU countries and 13.1% reported they were to both EU and non-EU countries.

## UKCA Marking

Excluding 'not sure' or 'no' responses, 4.1% of responding West Midlands businesses manufacture products that need a CE or UKCA marking. 5.8% of West Midlands businesses import products with a CE or UKCA marking and 5.4% distribute products with CE or UKCA markings.

7.1% of responding West Midlands businesses reported they were not aware that most CE marked products need to be UKCA marked from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 and 7.1% were not sure of the rules.

21.4% of responding West Midlands businesses are already using UKCA marking. 5% of West Midlands businesses are not aware of or do not know how to meet the requirements for the UKCA. 52.1% of West Midlands businesses are not

using the UKCA marking but plan to by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022. 2.9% of West Midlands businesses will not use UKCA marking as it is not relevant to the business or products.

## Prices

Businesses were asked how the prices of materials, goods or services brought by their businesses change in the last two weeks in comparison with normal price fluctuations. Excluding ‘not sure’ or ‘not applicable’ responses, 31.1% of responding West Midlands businesses reported that prices increased more than normal, 37.9% reported that prices did not change any more than normal. 7.1% of West Midlands businesses reported some prices increased and some prices decreased and less than 1% reported prices decreased more than normal.

Businesses were also asked how the prices of materials, goods or services sold by their businesses change in the last two weeks in comparison with normal price fluctuations. Excluding ‘not sure’ or ‘not applicable’ responses, 11.2% of responding West Midlands businesses reported that prices increased more than normal, 58.6% reported that prices did not change any more than normal. 5.0% of West Midlands businesses reported some prices increased and some prices decreased and less than 1% reported prices decreased more than normal.

## Increases in Demand

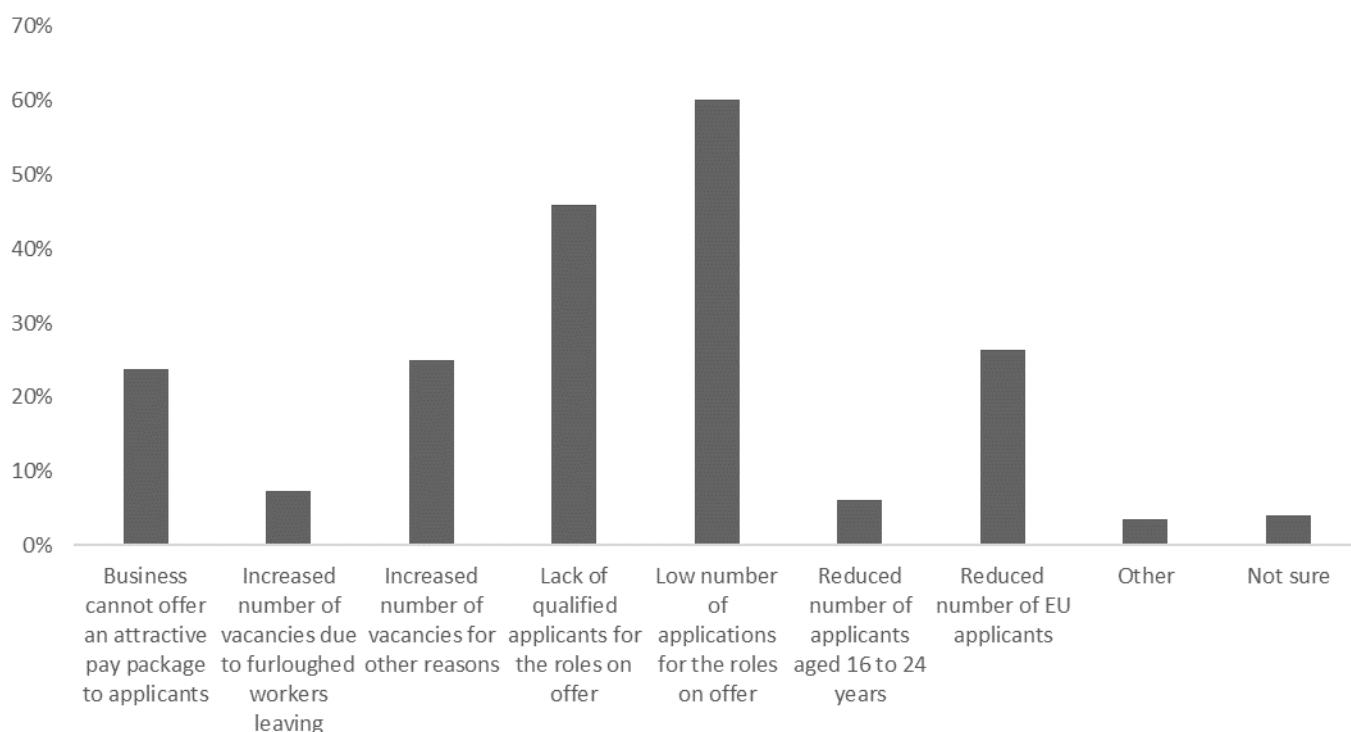
13.5% of responding West Midlands businesses reported an increase in demand for goods or services sold in the last two weeks, with 61.6% reporting no increase.

## Vacancies

Businesses were asked how the ability to fill vacancies in the last month compare with normal expectations for the time of year. Excluding ‘not sure’ responses, 1.0% of West Midlands businesses reported that vacancies were easier to fill. 22.4% of West Midlands businesses reported there was no difference in the ability to fill vacancies and 46.2% reported vacancies were more difficult to fill. 12.2% of West Midlands businesses did not have any vacancies to fill.

Where West Midlands businesses reported that vacancies were more difficult over the last month when compared with normal expectations for the time of the year, the highest response with 60.1% was ‘low number of applicants for the roles on offer’.

**The following graph shows for the West Midlands region why filling vacancies more difficult over the last month when compared with normal expectations for the time of the year:**



## Expected Redundancies

5.5% of responding West Midlands businesses expect to make redundancies in the next three months. Although, 69.8% of West Midlands businesses reported they did not expect redundancies over the next three months.

### **EU Workers and Non-EU Workers**

Businesses were asked how the number of workers within the EU had changed when compared with normal expectations for the time of year. Where relevant, less than 1% of West Midlands businesses reported the number of workers within the EU had increased. 18.9% reported the number had stayed the same and 16.3% of responding West Midlands businesses reported the number had decreased.

Businesses were asked how the number of workers outside the EU had changed when compared with normal expectations for the time of year. Where relevant, 4.1% of West Midlands businesses reported the number of workers outside the EU had increased. 1.4% reported the number had stayed the same and 15.8% of responding West Midlands businesses reported the number had decreased.

## **Social Impacts of the Coronavirus**

The following refers to the period of 22<sup>nd</sup> September to 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2021. Please note, only a selection of indicators at a regional level are included in the below.

### **Working at Home**

Among those who said they were working from home, 21% of responding West Midlands adults reported in the past seven days they had worked at home because of COVID-19 (29% overall working population). While 19% of West Midlands adults they had not been able to work from home (22% overall working population).

Where applicable, 33% of West Midlands adults are more likely to work from home if they have just a cold (32% overall working population).

### **Well-Being, Loneliness and Perceptions of the Future**

Mean personal well-being scores for life satisfaction was 7.2 in the West Midlands (7.1 GB), worthwhile was 7.5 in the West Midlands (7.4 GB), happiness was 7.3 for West Midlands adults (7.1 GB) and anxious was recorded at 3.5 for West Midlands adults (4.0 GB).

6% of adults in the West Midlands reported low levels of life satisfaction (7% GB). 6% of West Midlands adults reported low level of feeling worthwhile (7% GB). 12% of responding West Midlands adults reported low level of happiness (11% GB) and 25% reported high levels of anxiety (32% GB).

18% of adults in the West Midlands reported to often/always or some of the time to feeling lonely (23% GB). While 59% reported hardly ever or never feeling lonely in the West Midlands (50% GB).

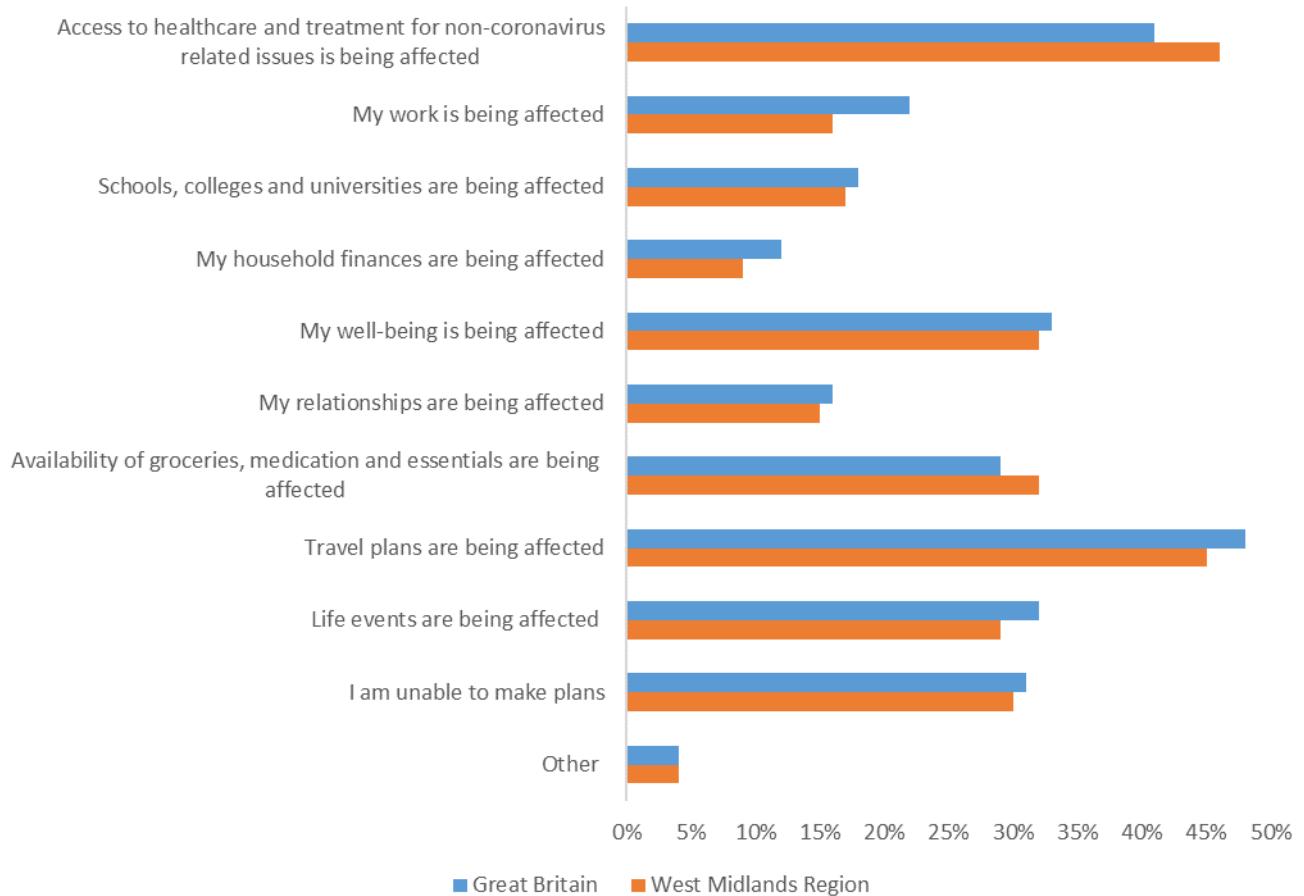
10% of West Midlands adults believe it will take 6 months or less before life returns to normal (matching GB). While 14% of West Midlands adults believed it will take 7 to 12 months (matching GB). 32% of West Midlands adults think it could more than a year to return back to normal (33% GB) and 15% for the West Midlands adults thought it would never go back to normal (13% GB).

### **Impact on People's Life Overall**

In the West Midlands, 46% of adults reported they were very or somewhat worried about the effect COVID-19 was having on their life (47% GB). 21% of responding West Midlands adults reported that they were somewhat unworried or not at all worried (22% GB).

46% of responding West Midlands adults reported access to healthcare and treatment for non-coronavirus related issues is being affected (41% GB).

**The following chart shows for the West Midlands region and Great Britain-wide how COVID-19 was affecting adults lives between 22<sup>nd</sup> September and 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2021:**



# LEP Level Intelligence

## WMCA

**WMCA Growth Hub Intel for WM Weekly Economic Monitor – 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

### HEADLINES

SECTOR	KEY INSIGHTS
Cross Sector	<p><b>Outlook</b></p> <p>The <b>health of the West Midlands private sector continued to strengthen in September</b>, with ongoing improvements in demand underpinning growth of sales, output and employment. Moreover, the headline <a href="#"><u>NatWest West Midlands PMI Business Activity Index</u></a>, a seasonally adjusted index that measures the month-on-month change in the combined output of the region's manufacturing and service sectors, <b>rose from 55.2 in August to 56.3 in September to signal a marked and quicker rate of increase</b>.</p> <p>There however remain major risk factors that could derail prospects for recovery – notably <b>continuing distribution and supply difficulties and growing input price pressures</b> affecting many economic sectors.</p> <p>A <b>period of sustained uncertainty</b>, with external issues surrounding the legacy of Covid and EU Exit causing businesses many problems. In recent weeks we have continued to see this play out more clearly, particularly related to <b>shortages and price rises of fuel, gas and food</b>. This cocktail of major issues is troublesome for many cash strapped businesses, in <b>particular those that use a lot of energy and fuel, and are reliant on international trade and supply chains</b>. Businesses also reported difficulties obtaining credit insurance due to the lack of cashflow.</p> <p>As economic growth levels out and firms face key challenges and shortages, business leaders are stressing how <b>vital it is the Government sets out a clear strategy on how they intend to minimise the prospect of future lockdowns and give businesses the confidence</b> they need to plan effectively and rebuild over the next few months, mitigating the current issues in the run up to Christmas.</p> <p>Furthermore, there are requests of <b>Government to provide urgent clarity on continuation of existing funding and support, securing longer-term funding schemes</b> and the mechanisms to facilitate greater certainty to boost business and investor confidence.</p> <p><b>Labour Market</b></p> <p>A key ongoing factor of threats is the UK's current multi-faceted labour crisis. As widely reported, the <b>shortage of HGV drivers</b> is at the heart of this issue. This is an ongoing problem, with the impact being related to <b>supply chain interruptions and empty shelves</b>.</p> <p>While a lack of HGV drivers has dominated the headlines, the challenge extends well beyond this to <b>include other skilled professions</b>, and along with resulting disruption to supply chains, has led to increasing calls for action in the run-up to Christmas.</p> <p>The <b>end of furlough</b> has been somewhat less notable than expected. However, further conversations with businesses are occurring as they anticipate the fallout; <b>it may be a further month or two before the effects are felt</b>. Some employers are hoping that the end of the scheme <b>may make more candidates available</b> and help with a shortage of qualified staff.</p> <p>In addition to the above and similar issues reported in recent weeks, Growth Hubs in the region have heard problems from businesses related to:</p>

SECTOR	KEY INSIGHTS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Apprentice Quality</b> – some businesses reporting a struggle to get local apprentices to complete training courses, citing a lack of work ethic as the cause, although this is a minority of their apprenticeship base and have seen some great success with apprentices, generally.</li> <li>• <b>Wages Pressure</b> – Employers across the region are facing continued issues as staff are able to earn more money for easier jobs, some of which come with more sociable hours. Other employers reluctantly rising wages above the correct market rate to retain staff and mitigate the problem.</li> </ul> <p><b>Product Shortages and Price Rises</b></p> <p>Linked to a lack of HGV drivers, a <b>wide range of product and raw material supply problems</b> are sustained across multiple sectors, ranging from <b>food shortages, fertiliser, construction materials, wood, steel and aluminium, through to semiconductors</b>. At best this is resulting in supply delays, at worst significant price increases or even lack of supply resulting in halted production. New supply chain related intelligence in the last couple of weeks includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some businesses, in particular electrical and gas maintenance businesses, have been <b>forced to stop working on certain contracts as they cannot source replacement parts, potentially putting lives at risk</b>. Other issues in businesses related to “Net Zero” such as a manufacturer of electric bikes unable to source sufficient components. Issues raised include <b>increased minimum order values, larger competitors are able to bulk order, along with increased delivery lead times and reduced credit lines having a serious impact on their ability to compete</b>. This also affecting the launch of new product lines.</li> <li>• There have been recent reports that some <b>businesses furloughed middle management decision makers</b>, exacerbating issues with supply chains.</li> <li>• There remains a clear <b>appetite to continue to source supplies and maximise production within UK borders</b> although China is still a much cheaper option, providing delays with shipping can be accommodated.</li> <li>• Businesses relying on imported supplies in preparation of the Christmas period growing <b>increasingly concerned that they may not receive consignments until the New Year</b>, putting many at risk of failure as they will be relying on trade during the festive period to compensate for drops in revenues due to COVID.</li> <li>• Knock on effect of supply price increases which are being passed on to end users. One client stating a <b>25% ticket price increase on some product lines is still not enough to make the same profit</b> on these products that they were buying three months ago.</li> </ul> <p><b>Enquiries</b></p> <p>Particularly <b>frequent enquiries of late for the region’s Growth Hubs</b> include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>International Inward Investment</b> – A number of new inward investment opportunities from businesses outside of the UK have presented themselves this week.</li> <li>• <b>Grants</b> – A distinct increase in pace in relation to businesses seeking grant funding for a range of projects. Capital investment remains the most popular although concerns that current ERDF funds will be exhausted prior to the launch of any UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Green, Proof of Concept and Innovation projects also feature this week as businesses continue with Net Zero strategies and development of new products.</li> <li>• <b>COVID Recovery</b> – Examples of larger strategic SMEs developing new product lines to complement existing products.</li> <li>• <b>Mental Health</b> – Issues around Mental Health have been raised by a number of companies where both management and employees are suffering burn out, money worries, anxiety and isolation. Whilst many are able to seek self-help, others are struggling to process this problem.</li> </ul>

SECTOR	KEY INSIGHTS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Property Searches</b> –Growth Hub advisors continue to deal with a regular flow of businesses seeking property. A combination of inward investment and growth strategies the main drivers for these searches, further highlighting the benefits of relocating or expanding within the West Midlands.</li> <li>• <b>Skills</b> – Continued demand or support with skills and staff development strategies. Staff retention and enhanced employment packages a key driver to this.</li> <li>• <b>Planning</b> – Complaints around how bureaucratic, slow, expensive, and potentially outdated, planning processes are, posing a risk to projects that see businesses looking to build new premises.</li> <li>• <b>Networking</b> – Attendance at several regional networking events significantly impacted by positive COVID cases. Some events seeing up to 50% of registered attendees not able to take part as COVID cases continue to rise.</li> <li>• <b>Borrowing</b> – Businesses that have taken CBILS and/or Bounceback loans that need further financial support, unable to borrow more as their banks are not willing to take on further risk.</li> </ul> <p><b>Access to Funding and Support</b></p> <p><b>Finance</b></p> <p>Almost half of West Midlands businesses were using external finance in 2021 but <b>regional disparities are a risk to the area's economic potential</b>, according to new research from the British Business Bank. The <a href="#">British Business Bank's first annual Regions and Nations Tracker</a> said that London, the Southeast, the Northwest and the East of England accounted for 86 per cent of equity investment and 69 per cent of private debt investment despite hosting just 55 per cent of UK businesses. <b>The West Midlands has accounted for three per cent of equity investments since 2011 and 6% of private debt activity in 2018 and 2019 while hosting eight per cent of the business population.</b></p> <p>The UK's uneven distribution of growth finance is not driven by high growth potential businesses in the area, but by the <b>presence of local investors</b>. It shows that investors are far more likely to invest in businesses close to their office, with 67% of equity investment stakes in the West Midlands involving companies and investors within two hours of each other and 39% within one hour of each other.</p> <p>Compared to the rest of the West Midlands <b>investors remain concentrated in Birmingham</b>, with funders in the city leading on 30% of all transactions in the region – nearly double those of Coventry (16%).</p> <p><b>Tech investment projects</b> continue to top the table of funding requests from local businesses in the GBSLEP area. Reflecting regional trends Tech accounts for more than double the next highest area of sector funding requests (Carbon).</p> <p><b>Patents</b></p> <p>The lack of take-up of the UK's 'patent box' by small and medium sized companies (SMEs) suggests that the <b>beneficial tax regime is not effectively incentivising innovation by that group of businesses</b>, a <a href="#">tax expert</a> has said.</p> <p>Only <b>5% of tax relief claims under the UK's Patent Box were made by small and medium sized companies (SMEs)</b> according to the latest estimates published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS). Statistics for 2018-2019 reveal that 92% of relief claimed under the Patent Box regime was by companies classified as "large", whilst only 1% was by "small" companies and a further 4% by "medium" sized companies. Although the figure for claims by large companies is projected to remain unchanged for 2019-2020, a further drop of 1% is anticipated for the value of relief claimed by SMEs.</p>

SECTOR	KEY INSIGHTS
Tech	<p><b>West Midlands tech sector to grow by £2.7bn - report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The West Midlands could be set to create 52,000 tech jobs and see the sector grow by <b>£2.7 billion</b>, according to new government figures. A report published to coincide with the start of Birmingham Tech Week suggests the region could see a bumper uplift by 2025 as it becomes the <b>UK's fastest growing region for tech</b>. The Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has published the findings which said the projected increase in jobs would represent an increase of 55 per cent since 2019.</li> </ul>
Manufacturing	<p>The manufacturing sector continues to report that <b>Brexit guidance is confusing</b> in terms of paperwork, taking a lot of time to follow and leading to increased admin costs. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Freight delays</b> due to capacity needing addressing and support given to the sector. Multiple complaints of extended transit times.</li> <li>Calls for support to <b>trade with developing markets</b> and for government to push forward faster with negotiating trade deals with these areas.</li> <li><b>Little guidance on quotas</b> - which are being reported always out of date – request for improved guidance on quotas. Knock on effect from COVID-19 has been increased demand and short supply. This has caused difficulties meeting the demands of our customer base.</li> </ul> <p>More widely, a <b>kitemark for manufacturing companies that show leadership in employing apprentices has been launched</b>. Manufacturing trade body <a href="#">Make UK</a> has partnered with support platform Next Gen Makers to develop the <b>Engineering Apprenticeships Employer Kitemark</b>, which will recognise companies who achieve a best practice benchmark.</p>
Hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local pubs and restaurants have suggested they are now <b>having to increase pay to attract staff</b> as shortages of skilled workers continue to hamper the industry</li> </ul>
Health & Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local care home recruitment agencies have highlighted <b>continued difficulties in the recruitment of care workers due to legislation requiring care workers to be fully vaccinated</b></li> </ul>
Business, Professional and Financial Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>Professional Services Research Innovation Fund with the University of Birmingham and GBSLEP</b> continues to attract interest from businesses that are looking to modernise in new ways or develop new patterns of work. This directly links local businesses with a university that is at the forefront of sustainability and innovation within BPFS.</li> <li>SuperTech West Midlands have successfully launched the <b>Connector Series</b>, focussed on <b>linking big commercial entities with smaller businesses</b>, offering 1-2-1 access to senior members of some of the largest Professional Services entities in the Midlands. The cohort for October has been fully booked and well received, with bookings now open for the November opportunities.</li> </ul>

## NEW ECONOMIC SHOCKS

COMPANY	LOCATION	SECTOR	SOURCE/DETAIL
<a href="#">Uniper</a>	Birmingham	Energy	Some 1,100 jobs could be lost after energy supply firm 'Uniper' revealed plans to close large part of its engineering services function. It has around 1,100 employees, with staff based in Germany as well as the UK – in Birmingham Hams Hall and Ratcliffe on Soar.
<a href="#">Poundland</a>	Stourbridge	Retail	Poundland has closed its town centre store in Stourbridge after its lease came to an end, bosses have confirmed. The discount store, in The Ryemarket Shopping Centre on the town's High Street, shut its doors for good on Wednesday 6th October.
<a href="#">Jaguar Land Rover</a>	Multiple Sites in Region	Automotive	Luxury car maker Jaguar Land Rover worldwide sales fell by 18.4 per cent from July to September. It sold 92,710 cars – 20,859 fewer than in the same three-month period last year.

COMPANY	LOCATION	SECTOR	SOURCE/DETAIL
			Jaguar sales were down 29.6 per cent to 19,248 and Land Rover fell 14.8 per cent to 73,462. In the UK overall sales were down 47.6 per cent. JLR, which has its engine manufacturing centre at the i54 north of Wolverhampton, said sales continued to be constrained by the impact of the global semiconductor shortage on production.

## NEW INVESTMENT, DEALS AND OPPORTUNITIES

COMPANY	LOCATION	SECTOR	DETAIL & SOURCE
<a href="#">Deloitte</a>	Midlands	Financial Services	Financial services firm Deloitte saw its Midlands operation deliver double-digit growth across all its service lines over the last 12 months. The practice said it has maintained its focus on recruiting and retaining talent to enable it to provide specialist, multi-disciplinary teams across multiple sectors, increasing headcount to more than 1,000 people across West and East Midlands.
<a href="#">Amazon</a>	Nationwide with regional centres	Retail	Amazon is hiring 20,000 seasonal positions across the UK, which includes 750 jobs in Rugby. There will be a variety of full-time, part-time, temporary, or seasonal roles in Amazon's centres.
<a href="#">Gymshark</a>	Solihull	Retail	The founder of Gymshark, Ben Francis, along with his private equity backers, are drawing up plans to float the company, reports suggest. Just a year after the Solihull firm was valued at £1bn, Gymshark has been in initial discussions with investors and banks about an IPO according to reports.
<a href="#">University of Birmingham / Bruntwood Sci-Tech</a>	Birmingham	Health	Construction work has started on the first phase of a major new life sciences campus in Birmingham. The building, known as No.1 Birmingham Health Innovation Campus, is being constructed on land next to Battery Retail Park in Selly Oak by a partnership between University of Birmingham and property group Bruntwood SciTech.
<a href="#">RLF</a>	Birmingham	Consultancy	Property and construction consultancy RLF, which has a strong presence in Birmingham with clients including University of Birmingham and Bruntwood SciTech, has been snapped up by a US firm. MGAC, a North American-based project and cost management consultancy, has completed the acquisition of RLF for an undisclosed, all-cash purchase.
<a href="#">Company Shop</a>	Birmingham	Retail	A retailer which specialises in redistributing surplus food and household products is launching its second store in the West Midlands. Company Shop has agreed a deal to open the new store in Birmingham, following on from the launch of its outlet in Dudley in March.
<a href="#">The Ground Screw Centre</a>	Ryton, Warwickshire	Retail and Wholesale	Warwickshire company which supplies ground screws as an alternative to concrete foundations is on target to hit £1 million in annual revenue after moving into a new HQ in Ryton. Over the past year, The Ground Screw Centre has been supported by the University of Warwick Science Park's Business Ready Programme and turnover has jumped from £185,000 to £875,000.

COMPANY	LOCATION	SECTOR	DETAIL & SOURCE
<a href="#">Eatron Technologies</a>	Warwick	Engineering	Warwick software company has more than quadrupled its workforce in the last eight months as demand skyrockets
<a href="#">Britvic</a>	Rugby	Engineering and Manufacturing	Britvic is to create 20 jobs as part of a £26.9m investment at its factory in Rugby. The investment involves the installation of a fourth canning line, growing the site's total capacity by a further 18 per cent.
<a href="#">RMD Kwikform</a>	Aldridge	Construction	Interserve Group has sold Aldridge-based RMD Kwikform (RMDK), the equipment services business, to global player Altrad Group. The sale of RMDK is part of the planned restructuring of the group.
<a href="#">Hawne Trading Estate</a>	Halesowen	Industrial	A Halesowen industrial estate has been snapped up in a multimillion-pound deal. Tony Gibb, head of commercial property at Thursfields Solicitors, and senior associate Emma Hughes, acted for a Worcestershire family in the sale of Hawne Trading Estate to an undisclosed buyer.
<a href="#">West Midlands Pension Fund</a>	Wolverhampton	Business Services	West Midlands Pension Fund has signed up to become a tenant at Wolverhampton's i9 office development. The organisation will occupy almost 20,000 sq ft on the second and third floors of the development, with it being the base for 180 employees.
<a href="#">City of Wolverhampton College</a>	Wolverhampton	Rail	A new rail training centre has been launched for people to gain the skills needed to build the region's expanding tram and train networks. The centre, at City of Wolverhampton College's Wellington Road campus in Bilston, has more than 40 metres of railway track for students to learn the skills needed to build and maintain rail lines. The facility is also the first in the UK to offer training on slab track technology which is used in the construction of high-speed rail lines like HS2.

Disclaimer: The contents of this document are based on the latest data available and the contribution of regional partners in a fast paced environment, therefore we urge caution in its use and application  
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