



Annual Population Survey: Employment Activity: January – December 2018

In summary:

- In 2018, the employment rate was 68.7% for the Black Country compared to 75.4% nationally.
- This is an increase of 0.4pp from 2017 compared to a 0.3pp increase nationally.
- The unemployment rate for the Black Country was 6.1% in 2018 compared to 4.2% nationally.
- This is a 0.8pp decrease compared to 0.3pp nationally.
- Economic activity was 73.2% for the Black Country compared to 78.7% nationally.
- This represents a 0.2pp decrease compared to the 0.1 increase nationally.
- Economic inactivity was 26.8% for the Black Country compared to 21.3% nationally.
- This represents a 0.2pp increase compared to the 0.1 decrease nationally.

In Detail:

Employment

- The Black Country's employment rate in 2018 was **68.7%** (500,600 people) - an increase of 0.4 percentage points (pp) since 2017, while the national employment rate was 75.4% with an increase of 0.3pp.
- Within the Black Country, employment rate varies from 65.9% in Wolverhampton to 69.1% in Dudley. Notably, Sandwell employment rate has increased by 4.7pp from 2017 to reach 69%, in contrast Dudley has decreased by 2.6pp in 2018.

Unemployment

- The unemployment rate has decreased for the Black Country by 0.8pp down to **6.1%** (32,800 people) in 2018, the national average has also decreased but at slower rate of 0.3pp to 4.2%.
- Performance varies across the local authorities from 5.3% unemployment rate in Dudley (7,500 people) to 7.7% in Wolverhampton (9,000 people).

Economic Activity

- Economic activity was **73.2%** (533,400 people) in 2018, a decrease of 0.2pp from the previous year. England's economic activity was 78.7% which is a 0.1pp increase from 2017.
- Economic activity varies from 71.4% (116,300 people) in Wolverhampton to 74.5% (127,400 people) in Walsall.
- Notably, Sandwell is the only local authority that increased from the previous year and by 3.3pp to reach 73.6% in 2018.

Economic Inactivity

- **26.8%** (195,600 people) are classed as economically inactive in the Black Country, compared to 21.3% for England. The following table shows the reason and change over the last year:

Table 1: Economic inactivity by reason for the Black Country and England

Reason	Black Country 2017		Black Country 2018		England 2018	
	Numerator	%	Numerator	%	Numerator	%
% of economically inactive student	48,800	25.3%	49,400	25.2%	2,003,700	27.1%
% of economically inactive looking after family/home	58,400	30.3%	58,500	29.9%	1,806,900	24.4%
% of economically inactive temporary sick	6,400	3.3%	4,700	2.4%	139,900	1.9%
% of economically inactive long-term sick	44,100	22.9%	42,100	21.5%	1,620,500	21.9%
% of economically inactive discouraged	#	#	1,700	0.9%	28,600	0.4%
% of economically inactive retired	15,900	8.3%	20,100	10.3%	953,200	12.9%
% of economically inactive other	18,800	9.7%	19,200	9.8%	847,500	11.5%
Denominator	192,900		195,700		7,400,300	

Estimate not available due to the sample group size is either zero or disclosive

Employment by Occupation

- In the Black Country, **36.0%** (183,700 people) of people work as either managers, directors and senior officials, professional occupations, or associate prof & tech occupations – an increase from 35.2% (176,900 people) in 2017. In comparison the national average is 46.1% of people who are employed in these sectors – a decrease from 46.8% in 2017

Table 2: Employment by occupation for the Black Country and England

	Black Country 2017		Black Country 2018		England 2018	
	Numerator	%	Numerator	%	Numerator	%
% all in employment who are - 1: managers, directors and senior officials	45,500	9.0%	44,000	8.6%	3,021,600	11.1%
% all in employment who are - 2: professional occupations	70,300	13.9%	78,900	15.4%	5,670,800	20.8%
% all in employment who are - 3: associate prof & tech occupations	61,100	12.1%	60,800	11.9%	4,060,900	14.9%
% all in employment who are - 4: administrative and secretarial occupations	55,700	11.0%	57,100	11.1%	2,752,900	10.1%
% all in employment who are - 5: skilled trades occupations	64,500	12.8%	66,300	12.9%	2,682,500	9.9%
% all in employment who are - 6: caring, leisure and other service occupations	48,900	9.7%	50,100	9.8%	2,424,800	8.9%
% all in employment who are - 7: sales and customer service occupations	42,800	8.5%	37,600	7.3%	2,008,400	7.4%
% all in employment who are - 8: process, plant and machine operatives	47,000	9.3%	52,900	10.3%	1,702,300	6.3%
% all in employment who are - 9: elementary occupation	66,100	13.1%	61,900	12.1%	2,812,900	10.3%
Total	501,900		509,600		32,053,200	

Source: ONS (Nomis): Annual Population Survey, 16th April 2019