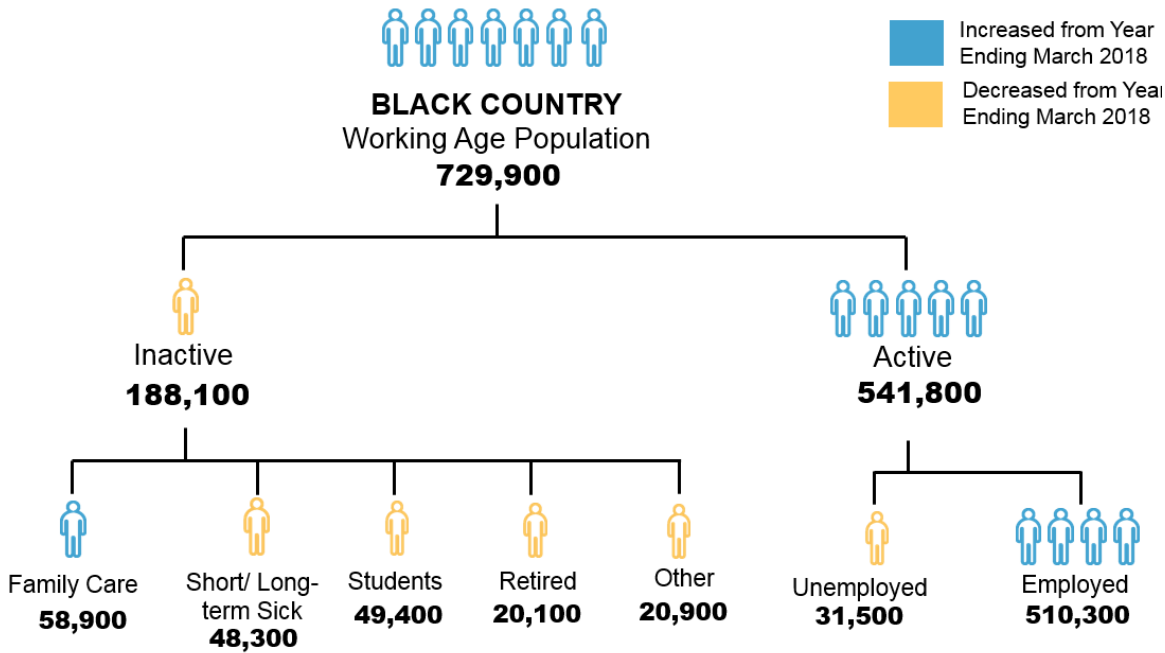


Annual Population Survey: Employment Activity: April 2018 – March 2019

Summary

- In the year ending March 2019, the employment rate in the Black Country was 69.9% (510,300 people) compared to 75.6% for England overall.
- This is a net increase of 20,900 people (+4.3%) in employment compared to the previous year, resulting in a 2.4pp increase in the employment rate from 67.5%.
- The Black Country employment increase is more than five times that of the England average (+0.8%), resulting in a narrowing of the employment rate gap between the Black Country and the national average.
- The unemployment rate for the Black Country was 5.8% (31,500 people) in the year ending March 2019, compared to 4.2% for England.¹
- This represents a net decrease of 5,700 people unemployed (-15.3%) from the previous year, resulting in a reduction of the unemployment rate from 7.1% to 5.8%.
- For England overall, the unemployment rate fell from 4.4% to 4.2% between the two periods, representing a 3.2% net reduction (-38,300) in the number of people unemployed.
- The economic activity rate for the Black Country area was 74.2% (541,800 people) in the year ending March 2019), compared to 78.9% for England.
- This represents a net increase of 15,200 economically active people in the region (+2.9%) from the previous period, resulting in a 1.6pp increase in the economic activity rate from 72.6%.
- The Black Country's economic activity increase is more than four times that of the England average (+0.6%), resulting in a narrowing of the economic activity rate gap between the Black Country and the national average.
- For economic inactivity, the Black Country rate was 25.8% for the year ending March 2019 (188,100 people), compared to 21.1% in England overall.
- This represents a net decrease of 10,200 people (-5.1%) from the previous period, resulting in a 1.6pp decrease in the economic inactivity rate from 27.4%.
- The Black Country's economic inactivity decrease is more than four times that of the England average (-1.1%), resulting in a narrowing of the economic inactivity rate gap between the Black Country and the national average.

¹ The unemployment denominator is in relation to the labour force and not the population.

Black Country Working age population break down for year ending March 2019

Source: ONS, Annual Population, July 2019

Full Briefing**Employment**

- The Black Country working age population (16-64 years) employment rate has increased at a faster rate than the England average from the year ending March 2018 to the year ending March 2019.
- In the year ending March 2019, the employment rate in the Black Country was 69.9% (510,300 people) compared to 75.6% for England overall. This is a net increase of 20,900 people (+4.3%) in employment compared to the previous year, resulting in a 2.4pp increase in the employment rate from 67.5%.
- The Black Country has been the fastest growing WMCA LEP in the last year, increasing its employment rate from 67.5% to 69.9% (510,300 people) - a net increase of 20,900 people (+4.3%, more than 5 times faster the national average increase of 0.8%).
- Within the Black Country, Sandwell had the highest employment rate for the year ending March 2019 at 71.0% and the highest increase from the previous period at +11.4% (+14,800 people).

Figure 1: Black Country Employment rate for the years ending March 2018 and 2019



	Employment Year End March 18	Employment Rate (%) Year End March 18	Employment Year End March 19	Employment Rate (%) Year End March 19	Change	% Change
Dudley	135,300	70.3	135,700	70.6	400	0.3%
Sandwell	129,600	64.2	144,400	71.0	14,800	11.4%
Walsall	119,400	70.6	121,200	70.8	1,800	1.5%
Wolverhampton	105,100	65.1	108,900	66.8	3,800	3.6%
Black Country	489,400	67.5	510,300	69.9	20,900	4.3%
England	30,810,100	74.8	31,052,200	75.2	242,100	0.8%

Unemployment

- The unemployment rate for the Black Country was 5.8% (31,500 people) in the year ending March 2019, compared to 4.2% for England. This represents a net decrease of 5,700 people unemployed (-15.3%) from the previous year, resulting in a reduction of the unemployment rate from 7.1% to 5.8%.
- Within the Black Country, Walsall had the lowest unemployment rate in the year ending March 2019 at 5.2%, followed closely by Dudley at 5.3%.
- Sandwell's employment rate was 5.8% in the year ending March 2019, a net decrease of 3,300 people (-27.0%) which is the highest decrease within the Black Country.

Figure 2: Black Country Unemployment rate for the years ending March 2018 and 2019

	Unemployment Year End March 18	Unemployment Rate (%) Year End March 18	Unemployment Year End March 19	Unemployment Rate (%) Year End March 19	Change	% Change
Dudley	8,000	5.6	7,600	5.3	-400	-5.0%
Sandwell	12,200	8.6	8,900	5.8	-3,300	-27.0%
Walsall	8,100	6.3	6,600	5.2	-1,500	-18.5%
Wolverhampton	8,900	7.8	8,400	7.2	-500	-5.6%
Black Country	37,200	7.1	31,500	5.8	-5,700	-15.3%
England	1,188,300	4.4	1,150,000	4.2	-38,300	-3.2%

Economic Activity

- The economic activity rate for the Black Country area was 74.2% (541,800 people) in the year ending March 2019), compared to 78.9% for England. This represents a net increase of 15,200 economically active people in the region (+2.9%) from the previous period, resulting in a 1.6pp increase in the economic activity rate from 72.6%.
- Sandwell has the highest economic activity rate within the Black Country for the year ending March 2019 and also experienced the highest change from the previous period with a net increase of 11,500 people (+8.1%). Dudley remained the same as the previous period at 74.5%.

Figure 3: Black Country economic activity for the years ending March 2018 and 2019

	Economic Activity Year End March 18	Economic Activity (%) Year End March 18	Economic Activity Year End March 19	Economic Activity (%) Year End March 19	Change	% Change
Dudley	143,300	74.4	143,300	74.5	0	0.0%
Sandwell	141,800	70.3	153,300	75.4	11,500	8.1%
Walsall	127,500	75.4	127,800	74.7	300	0.2%
Wolverhampton	114,000	70.6	117,400	72.0	3,400	3.0%
Black Country	526,600	72.6	541,800	74.2	15,200	2.9%
England	27,244,600	78.6	27,414,100	78.9	169,500	0.6%

Economic Inactivity

- For economic inactivity, the Black Country rate was 25.8% for the year ending March 2019 (188,100 people), compared to 21.1% in England overall. This represents a net decrease of 10,200 people (-5.1%) from the previous period, resulting in a 1.6pp decrease in the economic inactivity rate from 27.4%.
- Within the Black Country, looking after the family/home accounts for the highest percentage of economically inactive, in contrast those closed as other is the smallest percentage at 4.8%.

Figure 4: Black Country and England Economic Inactivity by reason²

	Black Country Economically Inactive No. Year End March 19	Black Country % of Total Economically Inactive Year End March 2019	England Economically Inactive No. Year End March 19	England % of Total Economically Inactive Year End March 2019
% of economically inactive student	45,100	24.0	1,982,600	27.0
% of economically inactive looking after family/home	58,900	31.3	1,788,900	24.4
% of economically inactive sick	48,300	12.8	1,758,200	12.0
% of economically inactive retired	17,600	9.4	938,100	12.8
% of economically inactive other	18,100	4.8	868,000	5.9
Total Economic Activity	188,100	25.8	7,335,900	21.1

Employment by Occupation

- The following table shows employment by occupation across the Black Country and England for the year ending March 2019.
- The Black Country have a higher than average percentage of people employed in 5 of the 9 areas, these include: elementary occupations (12.1% vs 10.2% England), skilled trade (12.4% and 9.9%) and caring, leisure and other service occupations (10% and 8.9%).

² Please note, long-term and temporary sick has been classified into sick and economically inactive other also includes discouraged.

Figure 5: Black Country and England employment by occupation

	<i>Black Country Numerator Year Ending March 2019</i>	<i>Black Country Percentage Year Ending March 2019</i>	<i>England Numerator Year Ending March 2019</i>	<i>England Percentage Year Ending March 2019</i>
% all in employment who are - 1: managers, directors and senior officials	44,500	8.5	3,060,700	11.2
% all in employment who are - 2: professional occupations	82,100	15.7	5,746,300	21.0
% all in employment who are - 3: associate prof & tech occupations	63,900	12.3	4,102,800	15.0
% all in employment who are - 4: administrative and secretarial occupations	59,600	11.4	2,719,400	10.0
% all in employment who are - 5: skilled trades occupations	64,800	12.4	2,709,400	9.9
% all in employment who are - 6: caring, leisure and other service occupations	51,900	10.0	2,437,400	8.9
% all in employment who are - 7: sales and customer service occupations	36,300	7.0	1,982,200	7.3
% all in employment who are - 8: process, plant and machine operatives	52,400	10.0	1,701,200	6.2
% all in employment who are - 9: elementary occupations	63,300	12.1	2,779,600	10.2

Source: ONS (Nomis): Annual Population Survey, July 2019