

Midlands Engine: Annual Population Survey: Year Ending March 2021¹

Key Points:

- In the year ending March 2021, the employment rate in the Midlands Engine area was 73.8%, compared to 74.7% for the UK overall. When compared to the previous year ending March 2020, the Midlands Engine area has decreased by 0.8 percentage points (pp). The UK employment rate decreased by 1.2pp over the same time period.
- The unemployment rate for the Midlands Engine was 5.5% compared to 4.9% for the UK. For the Midlands Engine, this is an increase of 1.2pp, with the UK increasing by 1.0pp since the previous year.
- The economic activity rate for the Midlands Engine area was 78.3%, compared to 78.5% for the UK. For the Midlands Engine area, the economic activity rate has increased by 0.1pp while the UK has decreased by 0.5pp.
- For economic inactivity, the Midlands Engine rate was 21.7% in the year ending March 2021, compared to 21.5% in the UK overall. For the Midlands Engine area, this has decreased by 0.1pp while the UK increased by 0.5pp.

In Detail:

Employment

- In the year ending March 2021, the employment rate in the Midlands Engine area was 73.8%, compared to 74.7% for the UK overall. When compared to year ending March 2020, the Midlands Engine area has decreased by 0.8 percentage points (pp). The UK employment rate decreased by 1.2pp over the same time period.
- Within the Midlands Engine, 29 local authority areas have employment rates that are at or above the UK average (74.7%). Staffordshire Moorlands recorded the highest rate at 83.6% (47,300 people), down to Birmingham with the lowest at 65.7% (484,500 people).

Unemployment

- The unemployment rate for the Midlands Engine was 5.5% compared to 4.9% for the UK in year ending March 2021. For the Midlands Engine, this is an increase of 1.2pp compared to March 2020, the UK increased by 1.0pp.
- Malvern Hills recorded the highest unemployment rate at 14.8% (7,300 people), down to Bromsgrove at 2.1% (1,100 people)².

Economic Activity

- The economic activity rate for the Midlands Engine area was 78.3% in March 2021, compared to 78.5% for the UK. For the Midlands Engine area, the economic activity rate has increased by 0.1pp since March 2020, while the UK has decreased by 0.5pp in the same period.
- Economic activity varies from 86.5% (54,800 people) in Cannock Chase to 71.2% (34,900 people) in Bolsover.

Economic Inactivity²

- For economic inactivity, the Midlands Engine rate was 21.7% for March 2021, compared to 21.5% in the UK overall. For the Midlands Engine area, this has decreased by 0.1pp while the UK increased by 0.5pp in the same period.
- The Midlands Engine had a lower percentage of people that are inactive due those classed as student (25.8% vs 27.3%), temporary sick (0.7% vs 1.8%), long term sick (23.8% vs 24.0%) and other (11.0% vs 12.9%).

¹ Office for National Statistics (ONS): Annual Population Survey, released September 2021

² Please note, some estimates within the Midlands Engine are not available since the group sample size is zero or disclosive (0-2).

Midlands Engine and UK Economic Inactivity by reason, March 2021:

	Midlands Engine Economically Inactive Num. March 2021	% of Midlands Engine Total Economically Inactive March 2021	UK Economically Inactive % March 2021
Economically inactive student	353,100	25.8%	27.3%
Economically inactive looking after family/home	271,400	19.8%	19.7%
Economically inactive sick	335,700	24.6%	25.8%
Economically inactive retired	190,200	13.9%	13.5%
Economically inactive other	150,300	11.0%	12.9%

Employment by Occupation

- The following table shows employment by occupation across the Midlands Engine and the UK for the year ending March 2021. The Midlands Engine have a higher than the UK average percentage of people employed in 4 of the 9 occupations, these include: skilled trades occupations (9.8% vs 9.0%), caring, leisure and other service occupations (9.7% vs 9.0%), process, plant and machine operatives (7.6% vs 5.7%) and elementary occupations (10.7% vs 9.1%). The Midlands Engine and the UK have the same proportion (7.2%) for sales and customer service occupation.

Midlands Engine and UK Occupations, year ending March 2021

	Midlands Engine March 2021	Midlands Engine % March 2021	UK % March 2021
1: managers, directors and senior officials	520,600	10.8%	11.1%
2: professional occupations	990,500	20.5%	23.1%
3: associate prof & tech occupations	655,000	13.5%	15.4%
4: administrative and secretarial occupations	467,700	9.7%	10.2%
5: skilled trades occupations	474,600	9.8%	9.0%
6: caring, leisure and other service occupations	470,500	9.7%	9.0%
7: sales and customer service occupations	347,900	7.2%	7.2%
8: process, plant and machine operatives	369,700	7.6%	5.7%
9: elementary occupations	517,400	10.7%	9.1%