

Mayors Dialogue on Growth and Solidarity

City profile: Bristol, United Kingdom



Population: 463,400 (2019)
GDP per capita: \$45,891 (2018)
Major industries: services, manufacturing, tech, creative media
Percentage of migrants: 16% (2019)
Mayor's name: Marvin Rees | **Next election date:** 2021

Socioeconomic profile

Bristol is home to 463,400 individuals over 110 km², and has grown approximately 1% annually over the past ten years (Bristol City Council, 2020a). The city is young, with 18% of residents younger than 15 and 49% between the ages of 16 and 44, a number that is growing faster than the national average (ONS, 2019). Until the 1930s, Bristol was a densely populated urban area, with an overall structure that had not changed much since the medieval period. Following severe damage in the Second World War, the city's reconstruction plan included the building of multiple ring roads, concentrating commercial areas in the city centre and residences on the outskirts (City Design Group, 2013). Bristol exhibits high levels of spatial and socioeconomic inequality, with 'hot spots' of income-deprived neighborhoods adjacent to some of the wealthiest areas in the country (Bristol City Council, 2019a).

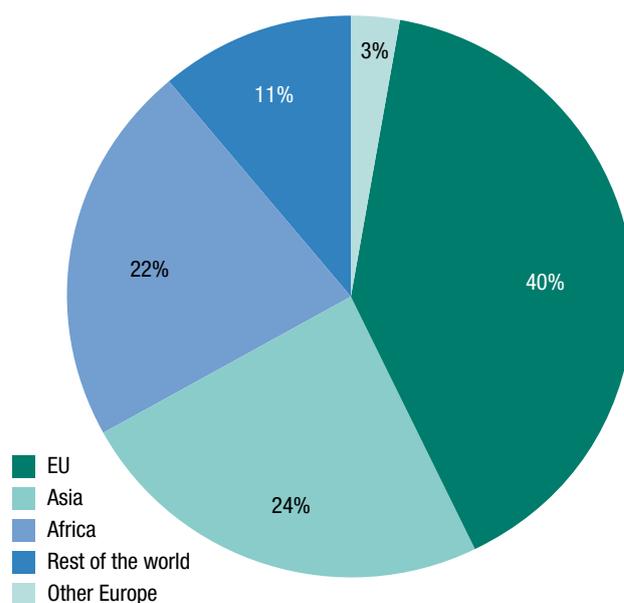
Bristol's current GDP per capita is \$45,891.¹ Located between two rivers, Bristol historically relied on its port and related industries to power the economy. The city has now pivoted to service work: the greatest contributor to Bristol's Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2011 was banking and insurance, and other major sectors include healthcare, education and retail (Bristol Government, 2011). Bristol is also home to several high-value sectors, including advanced manufacturing, tech and the creative industries (IPPR, 2019). Bristol's GVA per worker is significantly higher than the national average, driven by the skilled workforce and high rates of knowledge-intensive occupations, which make up 32% of jobs in the city (Bristol City Council, 2011). Bristol's 3.8% unemployment rate is comparable with the national average (Eurostat, 2020). However, the city encompasses 42 areas that rank in the 10% most deprived areas in England (Bristol City Council, 2018a). In 2019, 14% of residents were classified as 'income deprived' (Bristol City Council, 2019a). A significant challenge is the high

demand for housing and rapidly increasing house prices since 2005 (Bristol City Council, 2018b).

Migration profile

In 2019, 16% of Bristol residents were born outside the UK, higher than the UK average of 14% (IPPR, 2019). Many foreign-born Bristolians arrived after 2000, with a spike between 2004 and 2009, during which the city welcomed 24,000 migrants (Bristol City Council, 2020a). As illustrated in the graphic, most of Bristol's immigrants are from the EU, followed by Asia (broadly defined) and Africa. In 2011, approximately 11% of Bristol's international immigrants were from Poland, 9% from Somalia and 6% from India (Bristol

Migrant profile of Bristol



Source: IPPR (2019); analysis of ONS data

¹ Figure is provided in nominal US\$ and is not comparable with other cities profiled. See ONS (2019). GDP figure is converted to nominal US\$ using OECD's local currency to US\$ conversion rate (<https://data.oecd.org/conversion/exchange-rates.htm>).

City Council, 2013). A national 2018 survey found that although half of EU immigrants moved to the southwest of England for employment reasons, an equal share of non-EU migrants cited ‘family reasons’ as the purpose of their move (IPPR, 2019). The backgrounds of immigrants to the city will probably shift significantly when the UK’s Brexit transition period comes to an end in January 2021 and new immigration rules apply.

Immigrants make up an essential element of Bristol’s workforce. In 2011, foreign-born employees constituted 33% of the hotel and restaurant sector workforce, as well as 20% of administrative and support services and 19% of transport and communication workforces (ibid.). Within the city, Lawrence Hill, one of the most economically deprived areas, has the highest foreign-born population (39%), followed by the Central Ward (33%), which houses most of the city’s international students (Bristol City Council, 2018a). Bristol became a City of Sanctuary in 2010, with local organisations, schools and businesses publicly committing to welcome and include asylum seekers and refugees (Bristol City of Sanctuary, n.d.). In a 2019 Quality of Life survey, 71% of respondents agreed that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their neighbourhood (Bristol City Council, 2020b).

Governance structure

The municipal council of Bristol consists of 70 elected councillors representing 34 electoral wards (Bristol City Council, n.d.a). The Labour Party controls the city council (50%), with remaining seats belonging to the Conservatives (18.6%), Greens (14.7%) and Liberal Democrats (12%) (Bristol City Council, n.d.b). The Mayor and city council are elected every four years via public vote. The separate position of Lord Mayor, who chairs council meetings and performs ceremonial functions, is elected by city councillors for a one-year period. In the context of the central government reducing support grants, the overall funding available to Bristol City Council has remained flat since 2013/2014, with an increasing reliance on revenue raised through business rates and council tax (Bristol City Council, 2018b). The council’s corporate strategy prioritises reducing homelessness, building affordable homes, boosting educational outcomes, improving geographic connectivity, and increasing physical and mental well-being (Bristol City Council, 2018a). In terms of migration-related initiatives, Bristol’s Global City Plan aims to create a more culturally vibrant, cohesive and welcoming city (Bristol City Council, n.d.c), and Bristol’s Refugee, Asylum Seeker and Inclusion Strategy aims to strategically and systematically support refugees and asylum seekers across service platforms and community activities (Bristol City Council, 2019b).

References

- Bristol City Council (n.d.a) ‘About the council’ (www.bristol.gov.uk/council-and-mayor).
- Bristol City Council (n.d.b) ‘About the council’ (www.bristol.gov.uk/council-and-mayor/political-makeup-of-the-council).
- Bristol City Council (n.d.c) ‘Bristol: global city’ (www.bristol.gov.uk/policies-plans-strategies/bristol-global-city).
- Bristol City Council (2011) ‘Bristol local economic assessment’ (https://web.archive.org/web/20121117004736/http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/Bristol%20local%20economic%20assessment%20March%202011_0.pdf).
- Bristol City Council (2013) ‘2011 census topic report: community cohesion statistics’ (www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/34008/Community%20Cohesion%20Statistics_July%202013_0.pdf/5894c958-fe23-43df-8c6a-4db83a0a98f6).
- Bristol City Council (2018a) ‘Corporate strategy 2018–2023’ (www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/33620/Bristol+City+Council+Corporate+Strategy+2018+to+2023.pdf/3e7d7377-ed1f-5d67-c6ab-af49b7159a5e).
- Bristol City Council (2018b) ‘Medium term financial plan 2017/18–2021/22’ (www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/138089/Medium+Term+Financial+Plan.pdf/8c63db70-473c-bfd6-ed07-49a323a71547).
- Bristol City Council (2019a) ‘Deprivation in Bristol. Summary findings of the 2019 English indices of deprivation within Bristol Local Authority Area’ (www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/32951/Deprivation+in+Bristol+2019.pdf/).
- Bristol City Council (2019b) ‘Bristol City Council refugee and asylum seeker inclusion strategy 2019’ (www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/3188217/Refugee+Asylum+Seeker+Strategy+2019.pdf/3778a8c5-a08c-8763-c2e2-b72262c0b32c).
- Bristol City Council (2020a) ‘The population of Bristol’ (www.bristol.gov.uk/statistics-census-information/the-population-of-bristol).
- Bristol City Council (2020b) ‘Quality of life survey’ (www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/33896/QoL+2019-20+Report+%28v2%29.pdf/e58942c4-a6f4-ebec-459f-d81ff99cce46).
- Bristol City of Sanctuary (n.d.) ‘Bristol City of Sanctuary’ (<https://bristol.cityofsanctuary.org/>).
- Bristol Government (2011) ‘Bristol: local economic assessment’ (https://web.archive.org/web/20121117004736/http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/Bristol%20local%20economic%20assessment%20March%202011_0.pdf).
- City Design Group (2013) ‘Bristol central area, context study informing change.’ City Design Group, Neighbourhoods and City Development, Bristol City Council (www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/33167/City%20Centre%20Context%20Study%20-%20Sections%201-3.pdf/ddd2707e-b678-4d45-92e9-8da537b86b72).
- Eurostat (2020) ‘Unemployment rate by NUTS 2 regions’ (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/tgs00010>).
- IPPR – Institute for Public Policy Research (2019) ‘Go west: Bristol and the post-Brexit immigration system’ (www.ippr.org/files/2019-10/go-west-bristol-oct19.pdf).
- ONS – Office of National Statistics (2019) ‘Mid-2018 population estimates for 2016 wards by broad age band’ (www.bristol.gov.uk/documents/20182/3840028/Mid+2018+population+estimates+by+broad+age+band+by+ward+.pdf/be88a8b2-88a9-4cbd-fb57-9918cbb7f097).

