

Students Summary Bulletin for Shropshire

April 2023

Key Points

- In 2021, 16.2% of the 5+ population in Shropshire were full-time students. 72.8% of these were school-aged children, the remainder were 16+ adults pursuing further or higher education or other full-time training. Proportionally there are fewer students in Shropshire than there are in the West Midlands or England, in part due to lower numbers of children and young people, but also influenced by a limited range of Higher Education opportunities.
- There has been a slight decline in the number of 16+ students in Shropshire since the 2011 Census.
- The split between students who are economically active and those that are not, has changed significantly between 2011 and 2021, with the latter now accounting for 71.3% of all students compared with 62.7% in 2011.
- The significant decline in full-time students who were classed as economically active between 2011 and 2021 (and corresponding increase in student population which is inactive) is likely to have arisen as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, when casual workers and those with zero hour contracts were less likely to be beneficiaries of Government schemes such as the CJRS (Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme), and as such may represent a temporary decline.

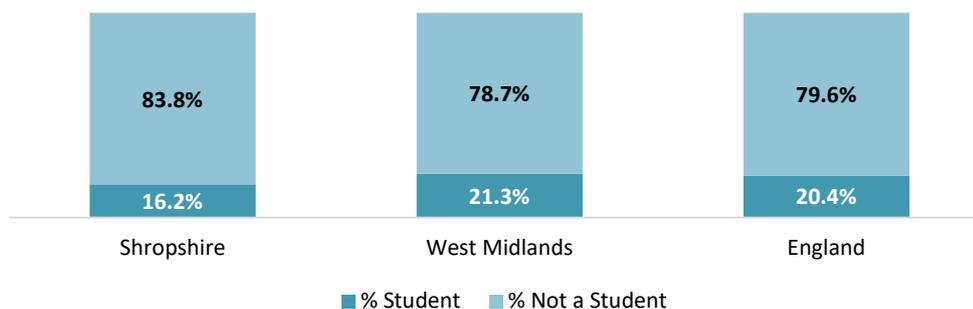
Prepared by the Business Improvement: Data, Analysis and Intelligence – Resources Directorate



Student Numbers

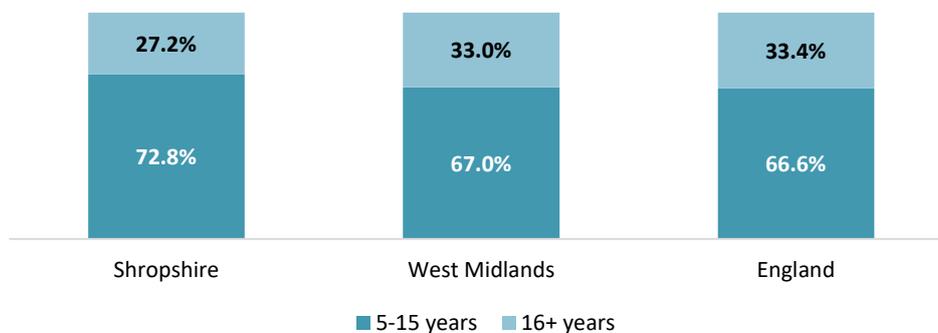
In 2021, the population aged 5 years and above in Shropshire was 309,184 people. The number of school children and full-time students at their term-time address as at Census day 2021 was 49,975, which is the equivalent of 16.2% of the 5+ population. The proportion of this population cohort which was studying full-time is lower in Shropshire than in either the West Midlands or England. This is influenced by the older population in Shropshire and relative small number of children and young adults.

Breakdown of 5+ Population by Student and Non-Student, 2021



Nationally and regionally, around a third of all full-time students are aged 16 years and above, the majority of whom will be undertaking further and higher education. This proportion is lower in Shropshire, at 27.2%, meaning that a greater proportion are school age students.

Breakdown of -Student Population by Age, 2021



Students Aged 16+

The number of full-time students aged 16 years and over in Shropshire fell by 3.2% between 2011 and 2021 (447 people). Over the same period, the 16+ population grew by 7.6%. Overall adult population growth also exceeded student population growth in the West Midlands and England, although the number of students did rise in both geographies (+4.6% in the West Midlands and +1.4% in England). A lower proportion of the 16+ population is a full-time student than is the case nationally or regionally, at 5% in 2021 (8.2% in the West Midlands and 7.9% in England).



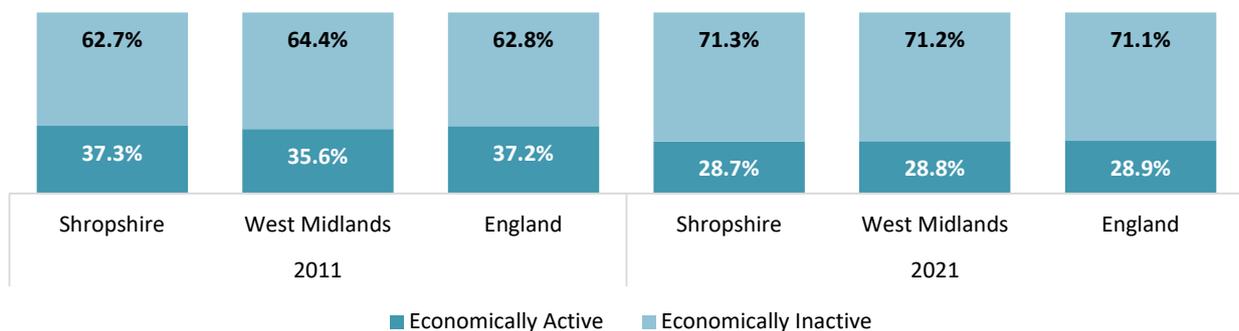
Number of Students, 2011 & 2021

	2011	2021	% change
Shropshire Students	14,033	13,586	-3.2%
<i>Shropshire 16+ Population</i>	<i>252,979</i>	<i>272,245</i>	<i>+7.6%</i>
Shropshire Students as % 16+ Population	5.5%	5.0%	-
West Midlands Students	376,668	393,810	+4.6%
<i>West Midlands 16+ Population</i>	<i>4,507,405</i>	<i>4,801,331</i>	<i>+6.5%</i>
West Midlands Students as % 16+ Population	8.4%	8.2%	-
England Students	3,600,808	3,651,703	+1.4
<i>England 16+ Population</i>	<i>42,989,620</i>	<i>46,006,957</i>	<i>+7.0%</i>
England Students as % 16+ Population	8.4%	7.9%	-

Note: 16+ full-time students only

The majority of full-time students are economically inactive, and rates are broadly similar in Shropshire as they are in the West Midlands and England. Across all geographies, the proportion who are not economically active has risen since 2011 – from 62.7% in Shropshire to 71.3% in 2021. The number of economically inactive students has risen by a tenth (10.1%) between 2011 and 2021, which is 886 more people. Over the same period, the number of economically active students has fallen by a quarter (25.5%), or by 1,333 people. Lower levels of economic activity amongst the student population will have been caused at least partially by the Covid-19 pandemic, when the type of employment typically undertaken by full-time students will have been in short supply.

Breakdown of Students by Economic Activity, 2011 & 2021



The decline in the number of economically active students has been a major contributor in an overall reduction in the number of economically active people in Shropshire in the decade to 2021. The overall number fell by 2,539 people (-1.6%) of which around half can be attributed to a loss of student labour force.

Number of Economically Active Students

	16+ Population			Economically Active Population		
	2011	2021	% change	2011	2021	% change
Shropshire	252,979	272,245	+7.6%	161,449	158,910	-1.6%
of which students	14,033	13,586	-3.2%	5,232	3,899	-25.5%
West Midlands	4,507,405	4,801,331	+6.5%	2,828,200	2,823,816	-0.2%
of which students	376,668	393,810	+4.6%	134,021	113,221	-15.5%
England	42,989,620	46,006,957	+7.0%	27,650,097	28,001,502	+1.3%
of which students	3,600,808	3,651,703	+1.4	1,337,827	1,056,250	-21.0%

Note: Full-time students only

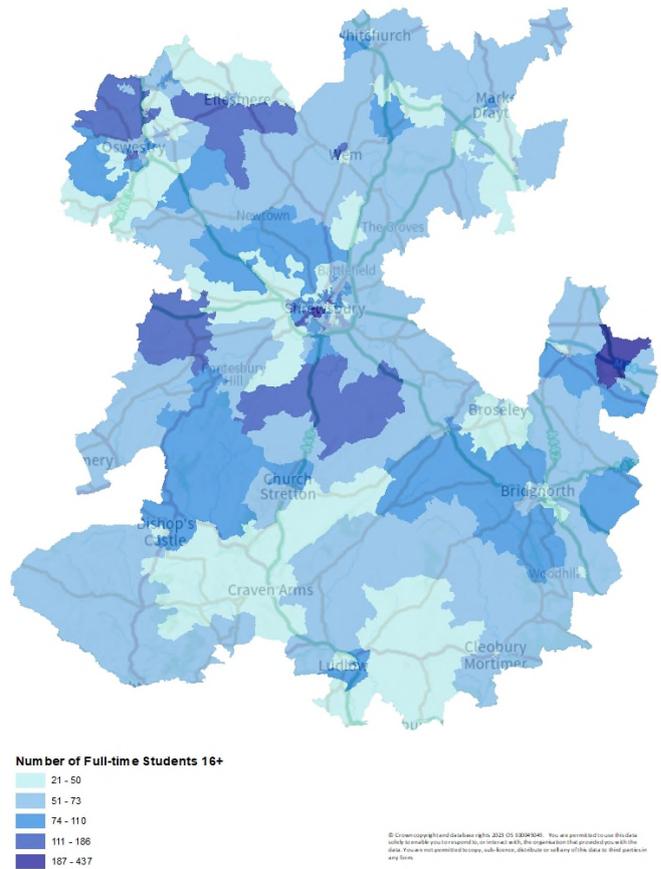


Number of Students by LSOA

Most students are located in the main urban parts of Shropshire, especially Shrewsbury, where the further and higher education offer is strongest.

There are clearly clusters of students in more rural locations adjacent to education providers such as Concord College (near Church Stretton), Derwen College (Gobowen) and Thomas Adams Sixth Form (Wem).

Numbers are also comparatively high in the east of the county, where access to facilities across the border is easier.



Composition of the Economically Active Student Population

Most economically active students are in employment, at just over four-fifths in 2021. This is higher than in either the West Midlands or England, meaning that there are proportionately fewer unemployed students in Shropshire than there are either regionally or nationally. 745 students were unemployed in Shropshire in 2021 compared with 885 in 2011.

Breakdown of Economically Active Students, 2021



Definitions

There are three main types of economic activity status:

- economically active: in employment (an employee or self-employed)
- economically active: unemployed (those who were looking for work and could start within two weeks, or waiting to start a job that had been offered and accepted)
- economically inactive (those who did not have a job between 15 March and 21 March 2021 and had not looked for work between 22 February and 21 March 2021 or could not start work within two weeks)

Full-time students who either work, or are looking for work, are classified as economically active.

The economically active population includes people who were put on furlough at the time of Census 2021, who were considered to be temporarily away from work.

The data in this bulletin have been extracted from 2021 Census table TS066 and from 2011 Census DC620 EW.

For more information please contact: BusinessIntelligence@shropshire.gov.uk

Or refer to ONS website:

[Labour market and travel to work: Census 2021 in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics](#)

