

Census Theme Briefing: Employment and Economic Activity



This briefing looks in detail at the theme of employment and economic activity in Somerset using the 2011 Census data to give a snapshot. Each table is broken down into urban and rural figures, based upon the ONS classification of output areas. NB. Economic activity includes those people who are unemployed but actively seeking work.

Economic activity and employment (2011)

Green = higher than Somerset overall, Red = lower than Somerset overall

Area	% population aged 16-74		% of people in employment		
	Economic activity rate	Employment rate	Part-time	Full-time	Self-employed
Urban city and town	71.7%	65.4%	25.3%	61.4%	13.3%
Rural town and fringe	69.6%	64.3%	25.4%	55.9%	18.8%
Rural village	69.4%	64.8%	22.9%	51.9%	25.2%
Rural hamlets and isolated dwellings	70.7%	66.6%	21.2%	45.8%	33.1%
Total Rural	69.8%	65.0%	23.4%	51.9%	24.7%
Total Somerset	70.8%	65.2%	24.4%	56.8%	18.8%
Total England	69.9%	62.1%	22.1%	62.2%	15.7%

The economic activity rate in Somerset is highest in the urban areas (71.7%) and lowest in rural villages (69.4%). However, employment rates are highest in areas characterised by rural hamlets and isolated dwellings (65.2%).

In terms of working patterns, most people in urban areas work full-time (61.4%). Levels of self-employment in rural areas are substantially higher than in urban areas, with 33.1% of people in rural hamlets working for themselves - more than double the national average.

Employment rate by disability (2011)

Green = higher than Somerset overall, Red = lower than Somerset overall

Area	In employment		
	All residents aged 16+	Activities limited a lot	Activities limited a little
Urban city and town	59.8%	10.5%	28.7%
Rural town and fringe	57.5%	9.5%	27.1%
Rural village	59.1%	11.9%	30.5%
Rural hamlets and isolated dwellings	61.7%	14.3%	34.5%
Total Rural	59.1%	11.2%	29.9%
Total Somerset	59.4%	10.8%	29.3%
Total England	58.9%	10.5%	29.4%

As would be expected, the employment rate for those whose daily activities are limited by a disability is lower than for the working population as a whole. Only 10.8% of Somerset residents whose activities are limited a lot are employed. Rates are higher in rural areas, with 14.3% in rural/isolated areas in employment. The same pattern can be seen amongst those people whose activities are limited a little; the highest employment rates are in the rural areas and the lowest are in the urban areas.

Employment by ethnicity (2011)

Green = higher than Somerset overall, Red = lower than Somerset overall

Area	All residents aged 16+	White: Total	White: English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British	White: Irish	White: Other White	Mixed/ multiple ethnic group	Asian/ Asian British	Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British	Other ethnic group
Urban city and town	59.8%	59.6%	58.9%	47.4%	78.3%	64.6%	68.4%	67.3%	65.0%
Rural town and fringe	57.5%	57.3%	57.2%	46.8%	67.4%	66.8%	73.5%	72.4%	70.4%
Rural village	59.1%	59.1%	59.0%	50.6%	67.6%	58.0%	61.7%	68.8%	56.1%
Rural hamlets and isolated dwellings	61.7%	61.7%	61.6%	57.8%	68.4%	74.7%	61.9%	66.7%	66.7%
Total Rural	59.1%	59.0%	58.9%	51.1%	67.7%	65.6%	68.0%	69.8%	64.5%
Total Somerset	59.4%	59.3%	58.9%	49.1%	75.1%	65.0%	68.3%	68.1%	64.8%
Total England	58.9%	59.3%	58.7%	52.8%	71.5%	57.5%	55.9%	56.8%	50.5%

Employment rates vary between different ethnic groups. The 'white Irish' group has the lowest employment rate in Somerset (49.1%), whereas the 'other white' group has the highest (75.1%). This is likely to reflect the influx of EU migrants in recent years, many of whom moved here in order to find employment. The 'other white' employment rate is higher still when looking at urban areas alone (78.3%).

The rural town and fringe areas of Somerset show consistently higher than average employment rates for 'non-white' ethnic groups.