West Midlands Combined Authority

Factsheet – Key statistics primarily based on the 7 LA geography

The Economic Intelligence Unit

Aug 2026

3m + Population	40.6% under 30	1.33m Jobs	£76.9bn GVA	104,870 businesses	£6.1bn business R&D
A large, young and diverse population	A young city region	Major employment base	Large city-region economy	A substantial and diverse business base	A major UK centre for research & innovation

Our People

A young and diverse population

- Just **over 3 million residents** in 2025, annual change -0.1% vs Eng.+0.4%. **Young population at 20.7% aged under 16** vs Eng. 17.9%; **40.6% aged under 30 years old.**
- **Diverse population** with **38.6% classed as ethnic minorities**, England at 19.0%.
- **Female life expectancy (LE): 82 yea**rs (Eng. 83.3), **male LE: 77.6 years** (Eng. 79.5) in 2022-24.

Skills are improving, but significant gaps remain

- **44.3 attainment 8 score** compared to 46.0 for England in the 2024/25 academic year.
- **42.8%** working age population with **RQF4+**, compared to 48.0% for England in 2025. Annual change +2.5% vs Eng. +3.4%. **Shortfall to national: +95,011.**
- **9.5%** working age population with **no qualifications**, compared to 6.1% for England in 2025. Annual change -10.8% vs Eng. -6.7%. **Shortfall to national: -61,184.**
- **17,350 apprenticeship starts** in 2024/25 academic year. Annual change +0.9% vs Eng. +4.1%.

Labour-market participation remains a key challenge

- **Nearly 1.33 million jobs** in 2024, annual change -0.4% vs Eng. +0.7%.
- **69.1% employment rate,** compared to 75.8% for England for the year ending March 2026. Annual change -0.9pp vs Eng. +0.1pp.
- **Claimant rates at approx. 7%** compared to 4.0% nationally. **Youth claimants** (18-24 years) **are at nearly 10%** compared to nearly 6% nationally.
- **25.1% economically inactive,** compared to 20.5% for England in the year ending March 2026. Annual change -0.2pp vs Eng. -0.7pp. Main reasons for inactivity: **31.7% student** (Eng. 26.6%**), 27.4% long-term sick** (Eng 28.0%) and **22.1% looking after family / home** (Eng. 18.6%).
- **5.5% classed as NEET** (inc. not known) compared to 5.8% for England at the end of 2025 / start of 2026. Annual change -1.1pp vs +0.2pp nationally.

Earnings are growing, although a pay gap remains

- **Full-time, median, gross weekly pay was £714.0** compared to £769.5 for England in 2025. Annual change +6.2% vs Eng. +5.1%. However, a **shortfall of £55.5 remains.** While **gross annual pay was £36,126** compared to £39,243 for England in 2025. Annual change +5.7% vs Eng. +4.3%.

Our Businesses

A large economy, but a persistent productivity gap

- **Total GVA (CVM) of £76.9bn** in 2023, annual change +1.0% vs Eng. +0.5%. **GVA per head was £25,794,** annual change -0.1%, Eng. -0.5%. **Shortfall to national (£33,719): -£7,925.**
- **GVA per hour of £35.72** (£41.87 for the UK) in 2023. Annual change +1.5% vs UK +2.2%. **Shortfall to national: £6.15.**

Strong signs of business dynamism

- **104,870 enterprises** in 2024, annual change -1.3% vs Eng. -0.4%
- **430 high-growth enterprises** in 2024, annual change +11.7% vs Eng. +4.0%
- **14,395 enterprise births** in 2024, annual change +2.2% vs Eng. +0.3%. While there were **12,140 enterprise deaths** in 2024, annual change -17.8% vs Eng. -9.5%.
- Of the 14,080 enterprise births in 2023, **92.0% of enterprises were active 1 year later** (Eng. 93.4%). Of the 16,550 enterprise births in 2021, **46.3% were active 3 years later** (Eng. 53.5%). Of the 15,310 enterprise births in 2018, **33.0% were active 5 years later** (Eng. 38.3%).

Significant innovation, investment and export strengths

- **The priority clusters account for nearly half of enterprises and GVA.**
- **60 single site FDI projects created 2,174 new jobs** in 2025/26 (+2 and -584 since 2024/25).
- **32.5% innovation active businesses** in 2022-24, an increase from 31.7% in 2020-22. Whereas the UK was at 34.0%, a decrease from 36.3%.
- **WMCA exported nearly £28.6bn in goods and services** in 2023, annual change +10.4%. More recent data shows that the **West Midlands region exported £31.6bn of goods** in the year ending Q1 2026, annual change -9.9%, UK:-1.2%.
- In 2024, **West Midlands businesses** spent nearly **£6.1bn on R&D** (7.7% of UK total).

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Our Places

Significant deprivation alongside relative housing affordability

- **44.7% of LSOAs in the WMCA area are in the top 20% most deprived areas** - this equates to nearly 1.4m residents. **Of these 27.1% of LSOAs are in the top 10% most deprived areas** (832,463 residents).
- **Over 1.22m homes,** annual change +0.6% vs Eng. +0.8%. **WMCA target of 12,200 homes per year.**
- **2,461 additional affordable housing completions** in 2024/25. Annual change +0.1%.
- **Median house price of £235,000** compared to £300,000 nationally in year ending September 2025. Annual change +4.4% vs Eng. +1.7%.
- **4,347 households approached local authorities for homelessness support** and **7,148 households were in temporary accommodation** in Oct to Dec 2025. There are an estimated **158 people sleeping rough** on a single night in autumn 2025.
- The **average home was 6.22 times the median annual average earnings** (Eng. 7.63).
- **12.8% (151,099) of households were fuel poor** compared to 9.9% nationally in 2024, annual change -26.4% vs Eng. -11.8%.

Improving physical and digital connectivity

- **88.9%** (1,069,278) **of premises** in the WMCA area **had full fibre connectivity** – above the UK average of 81.8% as of January 2026.
- The **number of jobs accessible within a forty-five-minute public transport journey** in the WMCA and its surrounding areas has **increased from 153,348 in 2024 to 168,606 in 2025.**

Progress towards a greener region

- In 2024, the **WMCA produced a total of 9,307 kt of carbon dioxide emissions.** This was an annual change of -1.7% compared to -1.6% across England.

Our Story

Civic participation and influence are increasing

- In 2025/26, **42%** of residents surveyed **engaged in civic participation, activism or consultation at least once** in the last 12 months (Eng. 46%). An annual increase from 37% (Eng. increase from 41%).
- In 2025/26, **28%** of residents **"definitely" or "tended" to agree that they can personally influence decisions affecting their local area** (Eng. 26%). An annual increase from 25% (Eng. increase from 24%).
- In 2025/26, **53%** of residents **volunteered at least once in the last 12 months** (Eng. 56%). An annual increase from 50% (Eng. increase from 54%).

Pride and belonging remain important challenges

- In 2025/26, **50%** of people aged 16 years and over **agreed that they were proud to live in their local area** (Eng. 62%). An annual increase from 48% (Eng. increase from 60%).
- In 2025/26, **59%** of people aged 16 years and over **felt they belonged "very strongly" or "fairly strongly" to their immediate neighbourhood** (Eng. 61%). An annual decrease from 60% (Eng. decrease from 62%).
- 74% of people aged 16 years and over **agree that people from other backgrounds get along** (Eng. 79%). An annual decrease from 77% (Eng. decrease from 81%).

Area remains attractive for investors

- In 2024, **the WMCA area had the highest level of FDI stocks (89.1bn) of any combined authority area outside London.**

Tourism remains below pre-pandemic levels

- Visitor levels averaged 243,000 per year (2015-2019). In 2024, **the WMCA area welcomed 183,000 visitors.**

Notes: *sources are indicated in each bullet by the underlined word.*
Latest data available as of mid- August 2026.
Clusters, accessible jobs and visitor numbers bullets have been taken directly from the annual State of the Region report. Clusters is based on calculations from the ONS – GVA and UK business Counts.
Questions within the Community pathway of the Community and Engagement Survey were asked to respondents from October 2025 to March 2026