



Bradford District population update

At a glance:

- Bradford's population decreased by 2,000 (0.4%) people in the last year to 557,800
- Bradford is the fifth largest metropolitan district council after Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield and Manchester
- Bradford has the ninth largest percentage (21.9%) of people aged from 0 to 15 in England and is the second youngest city (after the City of Peterborough)

Introduction

The 2025 mid-year population estimates were published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on 29 July 2026. These population estimates update the 2024 mid-year estimates. The estimates for Bradford District include the people usually resident here and long-term international migrants (people who intend to stay for 12 months or more), but not short-term migrants (who stay or leave for less than 12 months).

Summary

The 2025 mid-year estimate for Bradford's population is 557,800 people, a decrease of 2,000 (0.4%) people since the June 2024 population total. The population is 51% female and 49% male.

Bradford is the fifth largest metropolitan district council in England in terms of population after Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield and Manchester.

Bradford has the highest population density (1,522 people per square kilometre) and the second lowest median age (37.6 years) after Leeds (36.6) in West Yorkshire. Bradford also has the highest percentage of young people under the age of 16 in West Yorkshire.

West Yorkshire local authorities	Population density	Median age	Total population	Age 0 – 15	Age 16 – 64	Age 65 – 84	Age 85+
Bradford	1,522	37.6	557,800	21.9%	62.0%	13.9%	2.1%
Calderdale	579	42.6	210,700	18.5%	61.5%	17.7%	2.3%
Kirklees	1,091	40.3	445,800	19.4%	62.1%	16.2%	2.3%
Leeds	1,524	36.6	840,600	18.2%	65.9%	13.7%	2.2%
Wakefield	1,091	41.2	369,500	18.4%	62.2%	17.1%	2.3%

Population by metropolitan district and unitary authorities

Comparing the mid-2025 Bradford population total with other metropolitan district councils shows that Bradford is the fifth largest after Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester and Sheffield.

Population by metropolitan district	
Local Authority	Total population
Birmingham	1,177,000
Leeds	840,600
Manchester	588,300
Sheffield	579,500
Bradford	557,800

When the mid-2025 population total is compared with other metropolitan districts and unitary authorities shows that Bradford is the ninth largest after Birmingham, Leeds, North Yorkshire, Manchester, Somerset, Cornwall, Sheffield and Buckinghamshire.

Population by metropolitan district and unitary authority	
Local Authority	Total population
Birmingham	1,177,000
Leeds	840,600
North Yorkshire	639,100
Somerset	591,000
Manchester	588,300
Cornwall	584,800
Buckinghamshire	584,300
Sheffield	579,500
Bradford	557,800

Population change from 2024 to 2025

The District's population has decreased by 2,000 people (0.4%) since 2024. The ONS data shows that there have been around 2,000 more people coming to live in Bradford from overseas than emigrating. 6,400 people left Bradford for other parts of the UK than came to live here. There were more than 2,400 more births than deaths.

Young people

Bradford has the ninth highest percentage of young people aged from 0 to 15 in England (21.9%) and is the second youngest city (after the City of Peterborough).

Percentage of people under the age of 16 by local authority			
Local Authority	Authority type	Total population	% age 0-15
Barking & Dagenham	London Borough	238,295	24.3%
Slough	Unitary Authority	167,450	23.9%
Dartford	Non-metropolitan District	126,297	22.5%
Luton	Unitary Authority	236,380	22.5%
Blackburn with Darwen	Unitary Authority	163,801	22.3%
Oldham	Metropolitan District	251,915	22.2%
Peterborough	Unitary Authority	224,757	22.2%
Thurrock	Unitary Authority	181,664	22.0%
Bradford	Metropolitan District	557,758	21.9%

When looking at numbers of young people aged 0 to 18, Bradford has the seventh highest percentage in England (26.3%) and is the second youngest city (after the City of Peterborough).

Percentage of people under the age of 19 by local authority			
Local Authority	Authority type	Total population	% age 0-18
Barking & Dagenham	London Borough	238,295	28.9%
Slough	Unitary Authority	167,450	28.3%
Blackburn with Darwen	Unitary Authority	163,801	26.8%
Luton	Unitary Authority	236,380	26.6%
Oldham	Metropolitan District	251,915	26.5%
Peterborough	Unitary Authority	224,757	26.3%
Bradford	Metropolitan District	557,758	26.3%

Median age

The median age is the mid-point where half the population is older and the other half is younger. Bradford's median age is 37.6 – the second lowest in West Yorkshire after Leeds (36.6). Calderdale, by contrast has the highest median age in West Yorkshire (42.6) and this is higher than both the national figure (40.6) and the regional figure (40.2).

Population density

As the population increases the density (usually measured as the number of people per square kilometre) increases. Leeds now has the highest population density in West Yorkshire. Calderdale has the lowest population density in West Yorkshire (38% of the Bradford figure) and the national and regional rates are lower still.

Number of people per square kilometre						
	2004	2011	2013	2016	2021	2025
Bradford	1,324	1,428	1,435	1,453	1,493	1,522
Calderdale	536	561	566	574	568	579
Kirklees	972	1,035	1,047	1,065	1,061	1,091
Leeds	1,310	1,361	1,379	1,416	1,466	1,524
Wakefield	938	964	974	995	1,045	1,091
Yorkshire & Humber	329	343	346	352	356	368
England	385	408	413	424	434	451

Data sources and further information

A briefing note about the population of Bradford at ward level will be published in November 2026

Source: ONS Population estimates

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/estimatesofthepopulationforenglandandwales>

Link: www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity
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