



2011 Census Digest: Economic Activity and Inactivity

Introduction

The 2011 Census results show that:

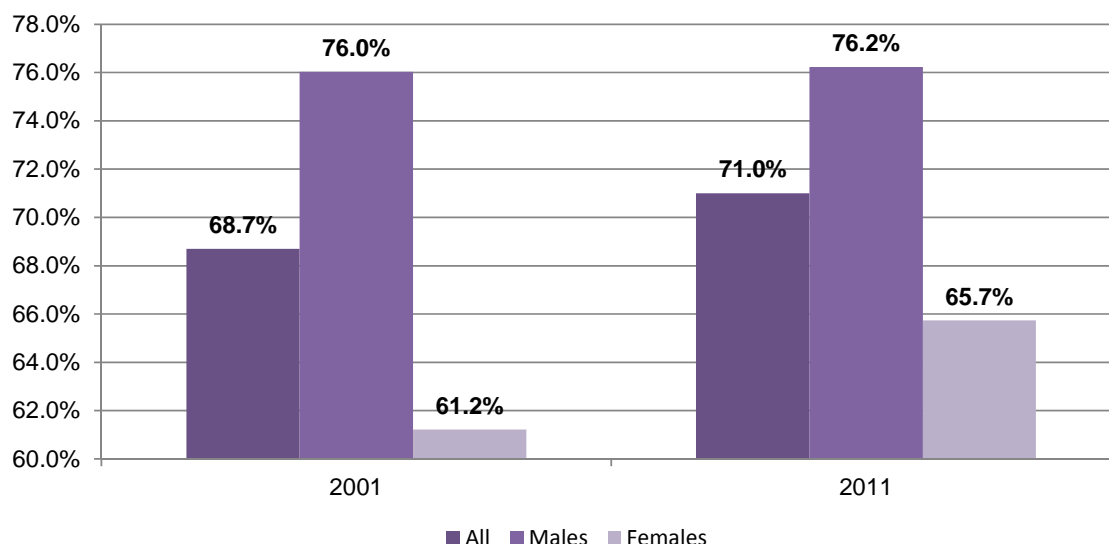
- The rate of economic activity in Shropshire is slightly higher than the England and Wales average.
- The economic activity rate has risen slightly over the last decade; this is almost entirely attributable to a significant increase in the number of women who are economically active.
- There has been a sharp rise in the number of part-time employees and the number who are unemployed. Levels of self-employment have also increased strongly. While the number of full-time employees has also increased, growth has been much lower than overall population growth amongst 16-74 year olds.
- The number of students has risen significantly – both those who are economically active and those who are economically inactive.
- The number of 16-74 year olds who are retired and hence economically inactive has risen strongly; this classification accounts for the majority of the economically inactive population.
- There has been a stark reduction in the number looking after a home or family. The number who are long-term sick has also fallen.

For definitions on economic activity, please refer to the note at the end of this digest.

Economic activity

The number of economically active people in Shropshire rose by 12.9% between 2001 and 2011 to 158,983 people; this is the equivalent of 71% of the 16-74 year old population. 46% of all those who are economically active are female, which is the equivalent of 65.7% of the 16-74 year old female population. The proportion of women in this age band who are economically active has risen discernibly over the last ten years (from 61.2% in 2001), resulting in an additional 10,893 economically active females. While a higher proportion of the 16-74 year old male population is economically active (76.2%), the male rate of economic activity remains virtually unchanged since the time of the 2001 Census. The sharp rise in the female activity rate is largely attributable to lower numbers of women staying at home to look after the house or family and the higher number of women who are working part-time.

Percentage of the Shropshire population which is economically active, 2001 & 2011



Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census, © Crown Copyright 2012

How Shropshire compares to other locations

The proportion of the Shropshire population which is economically active is slightly higher than the national average (69.7% in England and Wales). However, the number who are economically active has grown at a slightly slower rate over the 10 year period since the last Census, at 12.9% compared with 14.5%. The economic activity rate in Shropshire is similar to its statistical neighbour¹ and Marches Local Enterprise Partnership² area averages.

Economic activity levels; geographic comparisons, 2001 & 2011

	2001			2011			% change 2001-2011
	All persons	Number of economically active persons	% of persons who are economically active	All persons	Number of economically active persons	% of persons who are economically active	
Shropshire	205,069	140,831	68.7%	223,892	158,983	71.0%	12.9%
Marches LEP	444,118	304,242	68.5%	479,613	339,044	70.7%	11.4%
West Midlands	3,780,784	2,491,813	65.9%	4,067,119	2,778,859	68.3%	11.5%
Shropshire and Statistical Neighbours	4,088,587	2,770,624	67.8%	4,438,356	3,114,829	70.2%	12.4%
England	35,532,091	23,756,707	66.9%	38,881,374	27,183,134	69.9%	14.4%
England and Wales	37,607,438	25,022,204	66.5%	41,126,540	28,659,869	69.7%	14.5%

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census, © Crown Copyright 2012

The sharp rise in the number of economically active women witnessed in Shropshire replicates the national trend, with the 17.5% rise recorded in Shropshire being matched by a 17.8% rise in England and Wales. The rise in Shropshire has been higher than in the wider Marches LEP area or than in the West Midlands region. It also slightly surpasses the average rise for Shropshire's statistical neighbour local authorities. The rate of growth within the male economically active population has been slower than the national average (9.2% compared with 11.9% for England and Wales), but this does marginally exceed the level of growth registered in the wider Marches LEP area as well as the West Midlands region. Growth in the number of economically active men in Shropshire matches overall population growth for this age and gender band.

Changes in the number economically active by gender: geographic comparisons, 2001-2011

	% change 2001-2011 males	% change 2001-2011 females
Shropshire	9.2%	17.5%
Marches LEP	8.3%	15.3%
West Midlands	8.8%	14.9%
Shropshire and Statistical Neighbours	8.9%	16.7%
England	11.8%	17.6%
England and Wales	11.9%	17.8%

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census, © Crown Copyright 2012

Composition of Shropshire's economically active population

While most economically active people are full-time employees, there has been a sharp rise in the number employed part-time since the 2001 Census. The number of part-time employees rose by 27.7% between 2001 and 2011 to account for 21.9% of the economically active population and for 15.5% of the total 16-74 aged population. Shropshire ranks 44th out of 348 borough, district and unitary authorities for the percentage of people who are part-time employees.

¹ Includes Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire as well as Shropshire

² Includes Telford and Wrekin and Herefordshire as well as Shropshire

While the number of full-time employees has risen, growth has been much more muted (3.2%) and notably lower than overall population growth. Consequently, the proportion of the economically active population attributable to full-time employees has fallen from 57.2% in 2001 to 52.3%.

The Census shows that 28,535 people were self-employed in 2011. This is the equivalent of 17.9% of all economically active people and for 12.7% of the 16-74 year old population. There has been an above average rise in self-employment, with the number advancing by 18.3% between 2001 and 2011. Shropshire ranks 62nd out of 348 borough, district and unitary authorities for the percentage of people who are self-employed.

Not surprisingly given the economic climate at the time of the 2011 Census, levels of unemployment have increased significantly. In 2001 there were 5,031 unemployed people; by 2011 this had risen by 46.1% to 7,350. This equates with 4.6% of the economically active population and for 3.2% of all 16-74 year olds. Despite this rise, Shropshire still ranks only 223rd out of the 348 authorities.

The number of full-time students who are economically active has also risen between Census dates. There are now a third more students who are economically active, and these account for 3.3% of all economically active people. However, Shropshire still supports fewer economically active full-time-students than most places, with the county ranking 290th out of 348.

Breakdown of the economically active population in Shropshire, 2001 & 2011

	2001			2011			% change 2001-2011
	Number	% of economically active	% of all Age16-74	Number	% of economically active	% of all Age16-74	
Employee: Part-time	27,217	19.3%	13.3%	34,760	21.9%	15.5%	27.7%
Employee: Full-time	80,553	57.2%	39.3%	83,106	52.3%	37.1%	3.2%
Self-employed	24,124	17.1%	11.8%	28,535	17.9%	12.7%	18.3%
Unemployed	5,031	3.6%	2.5%	7,350	4.6%	3.2%	46.1%
Full-time student	3,906	2.8%	1.9%	5,232	3.3%	2.3%	33.9%
All economically active	140,831	100.0%	68.7%	158,983	100.0%	71.0%	12.9%

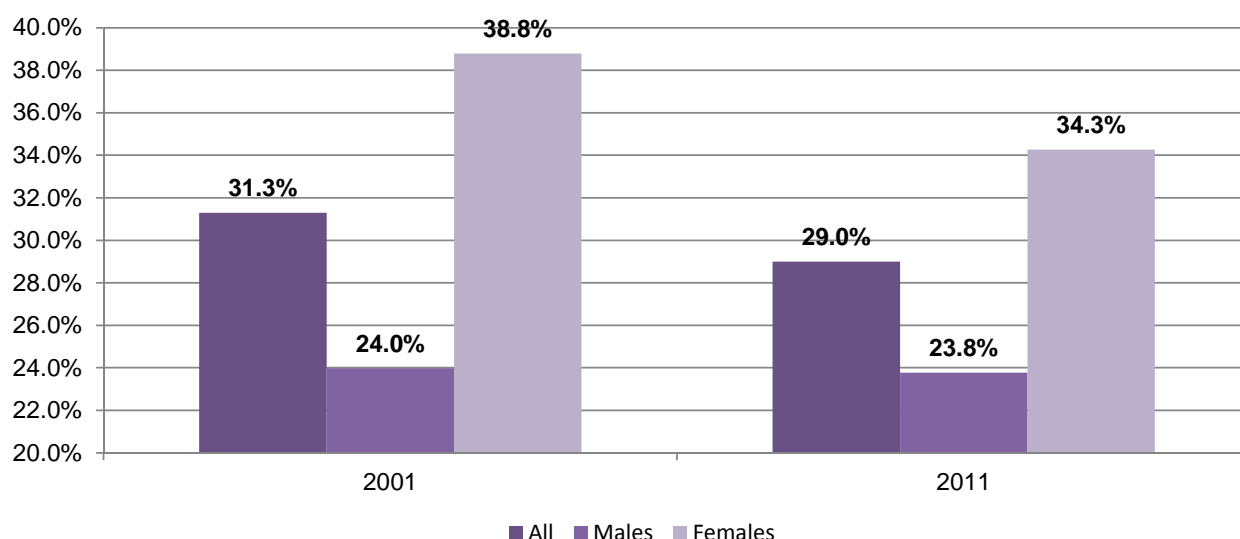
Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census, © Crown Copyright 2012

Economic inactivity

The number of people in Shropshire who are economically inactive rose by 1%, or by 671 people, to 64,909 people between 2001 and 2011. Despite this increase, the proportion of the working age population (aged 16-74) which is inactive has fallen to 29% from 31.3%. 59% of all those who are economically inactive are female, equating with 34.4% of the 16-74 year old female population.

As a consequence of the significant increase in economically active women, the proportion who are inactive has fallen from 38.8% in 2001. The proportion of 16-74 year old men who are economically inactive has remained broadly stable.

Percentage of the Shropshire population which is economically inactive, 2001 & 2011



Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census, © Crown Copyright 2012

How Shropshire compares to other locations

The proportion of the working age population which is economically inactive is lower in Shropshire than it is nationally. However, numbers have increased over the last 10 years (albeit by just 1% which is much lower than the 9.2% growth in the 16-74 year old population). In contrast, in 2011 there were 118,563 fewer economically inactive people in England and Wales than there were in 2001. Overall, 30.3% of all 16-74 year olds in England and Wales were economically inactive in 2011.

Economic inactivity levels; geographic comparisons, 2001 & 2011

	2001			2011			% change 2001-2011
	All persons	Number of economically inactive persons	% of persons who are economically inactive	All persons	Number of economically inactive persons	% of persons who are economically inactive	
Shropshire	205,069	64,238	31.3%	223,892	64,909	29.0%	1.0%
Marches LEP	444,118	139,876	31.5%	479,613	140,569	29.3%	0.5%
West Midlands	3,780,784	1,288,971	34.1%	4,067,119	1,288,260	31.7%	-0.1%
Shropshire and Statistical Neighbours	4,088,587	1,317,963	32.2%	4,438,356	1,323,527	29.8%	0.4%
England	35,532,091	11,775,384	33.1%	38,881,374	11,698,240	30.1%	-0.7%
England and Wales	37,607,438	12,585,234	33.5%	41,126,540	12,466,671	30.3%	-0.9%

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census, © Crown Copyright 2012

The number of economically inactive females has declined nationwide, but less so in Shropshire, at -3.3% compared with the 5% reduction that occurred in England and Wales. Meanwhile, the number of inactive males rose more rapidly in Shropshire (by 8%) than was the case in England and Wales (5.5%).

Changes in the number economically inactive by gender: geographic comparisons, 2001-2011

	% change 2001-2011 males	% change 2001-2011 females
Shropshire	8.0%	-3.3%
Marches LEP	8.2%	-4.3%
West Midlands	6.8%	-4.3%
Shropshire and Statistical Neighbours	7.1%	-3.7%
England	5.8%	-4.7%
England and Wales	5.5%	-5.0%

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census, © Crown Copyright 2012

Composition of Shropshire's economically inactive population

The highest proportion of Shropshire's economically inactive population is retired. The number of retired people below the age of 75 has risen by more than a fifth since 2001, the equivalent of an additional 6,414 people. This category accounted for 58.3% of all economically inactive people in 2011 compared with 48.9% in 2001. By 2011, 16.9% of all 16-74 year olds in Shropshire were retired, up from 15.3% in 2001. Shropshire ranks 93rd out of 348 borough, district and unitary authorities for the percentage of people who are retired.

The number of students (economically inactive) in Shropshire has risen even more rapidly than the number retired – by 35.5% over the ten year period to account for 13.5% of the economically inactive population compared with 10.1% in 2001.

In contrast, the number looking after the home or family has fallen drastically – in 2001 there were 12,204 people who were economically inactive for this reason. By 2011, this had fallen to 7,529 (a 38.3% drop). As a consequence, the percentage share held by this group has fallen back to just 11.6%. Shropshire ranks 299th out of 348 borough, district and unitary authorities for the percentage of people who are economically inactive because they are looking after a family or home.

The number either long-term sick or disabled has also fallen significantly – by 21.6% to 7,237 people, or 11.1% of all economically inactive people.

Breakdown of the economically inactive population in Shropshire, 2001 & 2011

	2001			2011			% change 2001-2011
	Number	% of economically inactive	% of all Age16-74	Number	% of economically inactive	% of all Age16-74	
Retired	31,419	48.9%	15.3%	37,833	58.3%	16.9%	20.4%
Student (including full-time students)	6,466	10.1%	3.1%	8,764	13.5%	3.9%	35.5%
Looking after home or family	12,204	19.0%	6.0%	7,529	11.6%	3.4%	-38.3%
Long-term sick or disabled	9,229	14.4%	4.5%	7,237	11.1%	3.2%	-21.6%
Other	4,920	7.7%	2.4%	3,546	5.5%	1.6%	-27.9%
All economically inactive	64,238	100.0%	31.3%	64909	100.0%	29.0%	1.0%

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census, © Crown Copyright 2012

Definitions

Economically active

A person aged 16 to 74 is described as economically active if, in the week before the census, they were:

- in employment, as an employee or self-employed
- not in employment, but were seeking work and ready to start work within two weeks, or
- not in employment, but waiting to start a job already obtained and available.

Full-time students who fulfil any of these criteria are classified as economically active and are counted separately in the 'Full-time student' category of economically active - they are not included in any of the other categories such as employees or unemployed.

Economically inactive

A person aged 16 to 74 is described as economically inactive if, in the week before the census, they were not in employment but did not meet the criteria to be classified as 'Unemployed' This includes a person looking for work but not available to start work within two weeks, as well as anyone not looking for work, or unable to work - for example retired, looking after home/family, permanently sick or disabled.

Students who fulfil any of these criteria are also classified as economically inactive. This does not necessarily mean in full-time education and excludes students who were working or in some other way were economically active.

Employed (In employment)

A person aged 16 to 74 is defined as employed (or in employment) if in the week before the census they carried out at least one hour's paid work, either as an employee or self-employed.

This includes casual or temporary work, on a government-sponsored training scheme, doing paid or unpaid work for their own or family business, being away from work ill, on maternity leave, or on holiday or temporarily laid off.

Footnote

The information in this digest relates to ONS Census 2011 key statistics tables KS601EW, KS602EW and KS603EW and ONS Census 2001 key statistics tables KS09a, KS09b and KS09c.

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