

Scotland's Census 2022 – Education, labour market and travel to work in Aberdeenshire

On 11 September 2024, data from the 2022 Census on [education, labour market, and travel to work](#) was published. The statistics cover employment rates, education levels, industries, occupations, and commuting methods across Scotland. This report highlights some of the main results for Aberdeenshire. All data is available to download from [Scotland's Census website](#).

Education

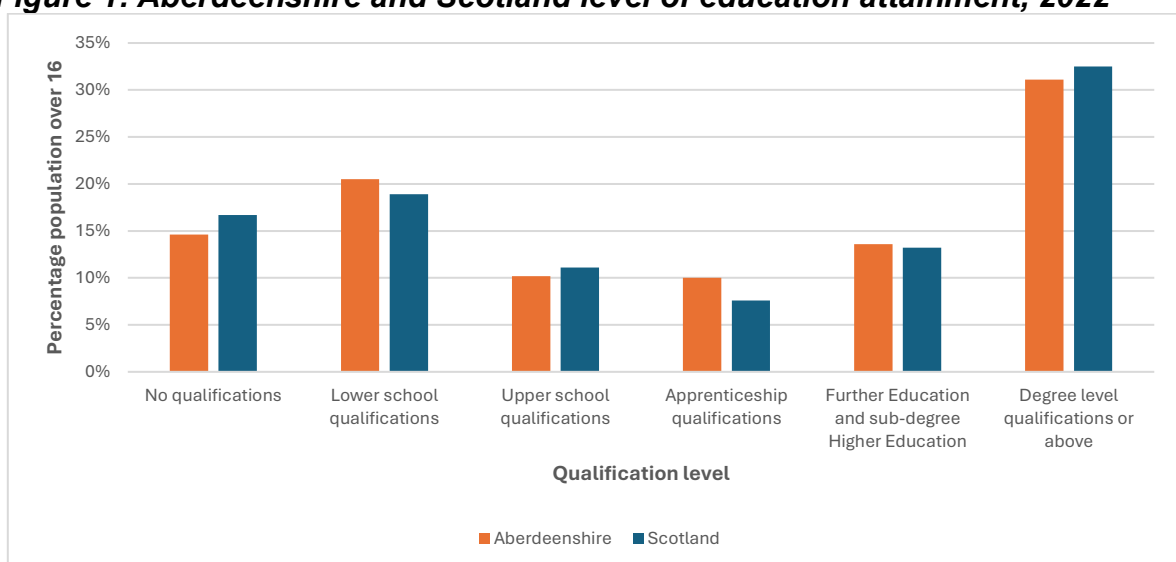
Level of education

In 2022, 85.4% of Aberdeenshire residents aged 16+ had formal education qualifications, surpassing the Scottish average of 83.3%. Figure 1 illustrates the education levels¹ in Aberdeenshire and Scotland, showing some minor variations between the two.

Aberdeenshire slightly surpassed national rates in lower school education qualifications, apprenticeships, and further education, but it was slightly below Scotland in upper school qualifications, degree-level qualifications. 14.6% of Aberdeenshire residents had no qualifications which was below the Scottish average of 16.7%.

In both Aberdeenshire and Scotland, nearly one third of people had degree-level education or above (31.1% in Aberdeenshire and 32.5% in Scotland). Apprenticeships were the least common qualification, with 10.0% in Aberdeenshire and 7.6% in Scotland.

Figure 1: Aberdeenshire and Scotland level of education attainment, 2022



¹ Definitions of qualifications – Available from [Scotland Census – Highest level of qualification](#) [Accessed 21 October 2024]

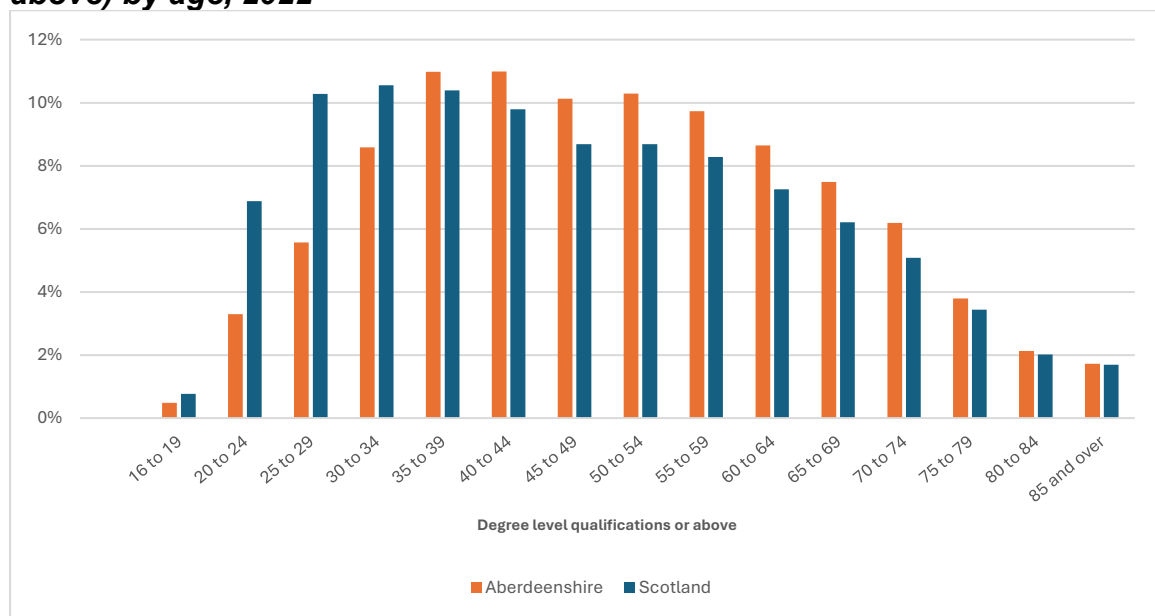
In Aberdeenshire, 56.6% of females had degree-level qualifications or higher, compared to 43.4% of males. This trend is close to the Scottish average, where 56.2% of females and 43.8% of males had degree-level qualifications or above.

For apprenticeship qualifications, in Aberdeenshire males accounted for most with 83.7%, compared to 16.3% for females. This too correlates with the with the Scottish rates of 84.0% for males and 16.0% for females.

Figure 2 illustrates that in Aberdeenshire, people aged 40-44 were most likely to have degree-level qualifications or above, with the 35-39 age group close behind. However, in Scotland, the 30-34 age group was the most likely to have degree-level qualifications or above.

Across Scotland a large proportion of people in their 20s have degree-level qualifications or above compared to Aberdeenshire. In contrast, Aberdeenshire has more people aged 35 and over with degree-level qualifications or above than the Scottish average.

Figure 2: Aberdeenshire and Scotland rate of degree level qualifications (or above) by age, 2022



Industry and Occupation

On Census Day (20 March 2022), Aberdeenshire had an employment rate of 80.5% for people aged 16-64 (excluding full-time students) and an unemployment rate of 2.7%. The employment rate for Aberdeenshire is above the Scottish rate of 72.4%, and the unemployment rate is below the Scottish rate of 3.3%².

² Definition of employment rate and unemployment rate – Available from [Office for National Statistics](https://www.ons.gov.uk/) [Accessed 8 October 2024]

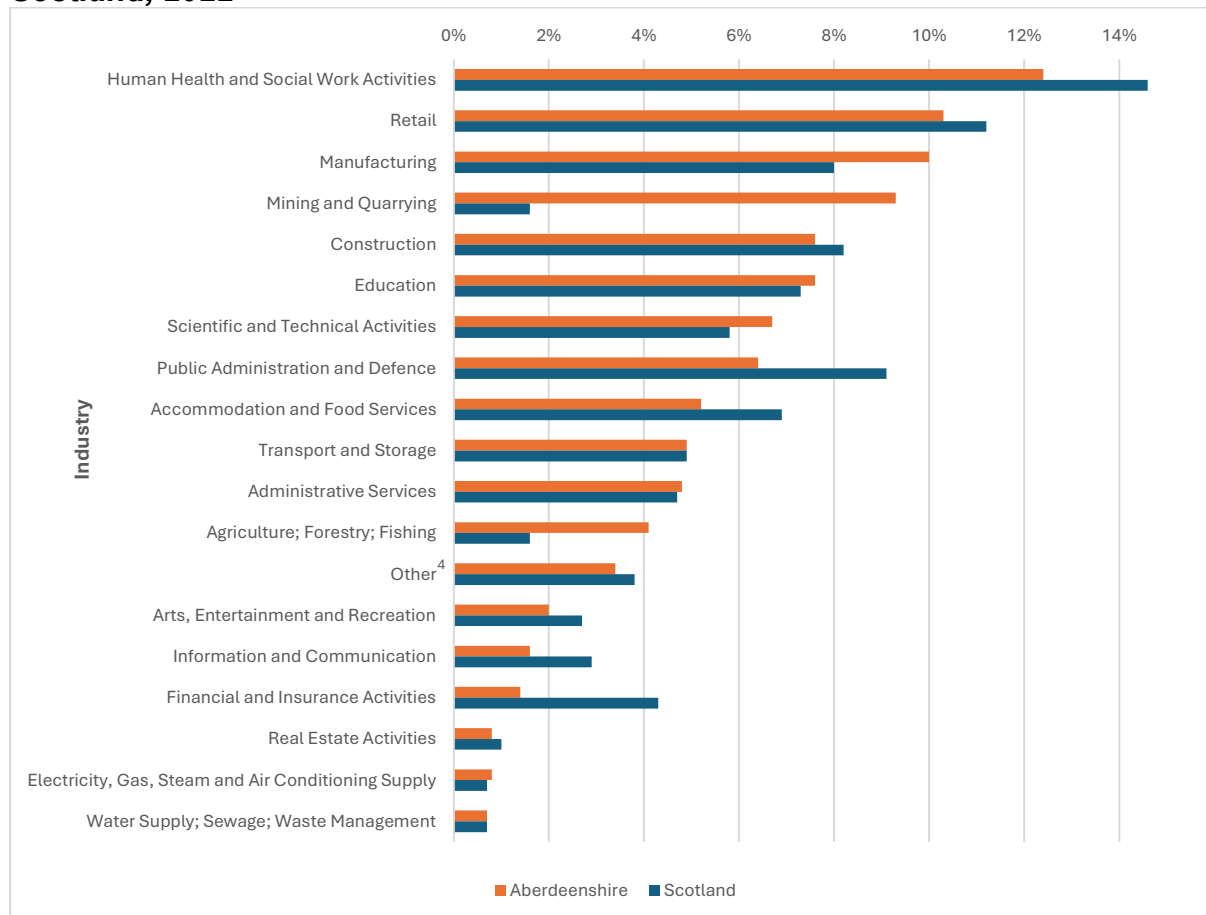
Industry

Figure 3 shows that in Aberdeenshire, the most common industry was human health and social work, making up 12.4% (16,586 jobs). This was followed by retail at 10.3%, manufacturing at 10.0%, and mining and quarrying at 9.3%.

In Scotland, the human health and social work industry was also the most common, but with a higher rate of 14.6% compared to Aberdeenshire. Retail was the second most common industry in both regions. However, in Scotland, public administration and defence was the third most common industry, unlike in Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeenshire had more jobs in agriculture, forestry, and fishing, as well as in manufacturing, when compared to Scotland as a whole. The biggest difference was in the mining and quarrying sector, with Aberdeenshire at 9.3% and Scotland at only 1.6%. This is because oil and gas jobs are included within the mining and quarrying category³.

Figure 3: Percentage of working population by industry Aberdeenshire and Scotland, 2022



³ Mining and quarrying - UK standard industrial classification of economic activities – Available from [Office National Statistics](#) [Accessed 7 October 2024]

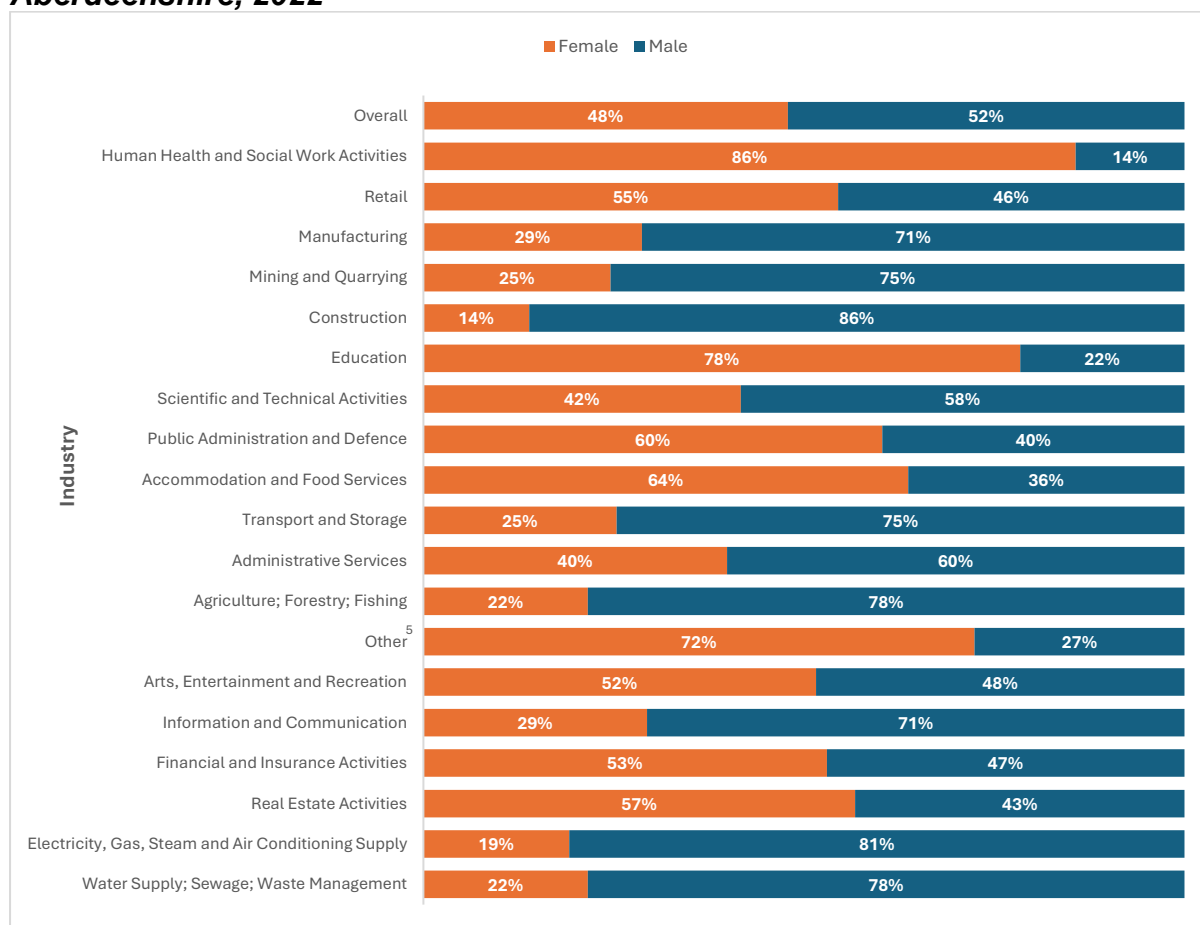
⁴ Other - Other Service Activities; Activities of Household as Employers; Undifferentiated Goods - and Services - Producing Activities of Households for Own Use; and Activities of Extra-Territorial Organisations and Bodies

Industry by sex

Proportionally, in Aberdeenshire, 52.1% of the workforce was male compared to 47.9% being female.

Figure 4 below shows that in Aberdeenshire in 2022, most jobs in the human health and social work (85.7%) and education (78.4%) sectors were held by females. On the other hand, the construction industry had the highest proportion of male employees at 86.1%, followed by utilities (80.5%), agriculture, forestry, and fishing (78.4%), and infrastructure (78.4%).

Figure 4: Proportion of working population by sex and by industry Aberdeenshire, 2022



Hours worked

In 2022, just over half of the people in Aberdeenshire (53.5%) worked full-time (31 to 48 hours per week), while the rate in Scotland was higher at 61.5%. Since 2011, the number of people working full-time in Aberdeenshire decreased by 2.7%, whereas in Scotland it increased by 7.4%.

⁵ Other - Other Service Activities; Activities of Household as Employers; Undifferentiated Goods - and Services - Producing Activities of Households for Own Use; and Activities of Extra-Territorial Organisations and Bodies

Since 2011, in Aberdeenshire there has been an increase of 5.1% in the number of people working part-time (16-30 hours per week), this again contrasts with Scotland which saw a decrease in the number of people working part-time (16-30 hours per week) by 2.3%.

In Aberdeenshire, 84.3% of males worked full-time (31 hours per week or more) in 2022, which is a decrease of 7.9% since 2011. For females, 51.9% worked full-time, which is much lower than males, but this rate has increased by 6.0% since 2011.

Occupation

Figure 5 shows that out of the 9 occupation categories, professional roles⁶ were the most common in Aberdeenshire, making up 19.4% of all jobs. Skilled trades⁷ followed at 14.6%, while sales and customer service roles were the least common, accounting for just 5.9% of jobs.

In Scotland, professional jobs were the most common, accounting for 20.6%, which is higher than Aberdeenshire’s 19.4%. Associate professional and technical occupations were the second most common at 13.9%, a similar rate to Aberdeenshire’s 14.0%. Process, plant, and machinery operations were the least common at 7.6%, below Aberdeenshire’s 8.1%.

Figure 5: Percentage of working population by occupation Aberdeenshire and Scotland, 2022

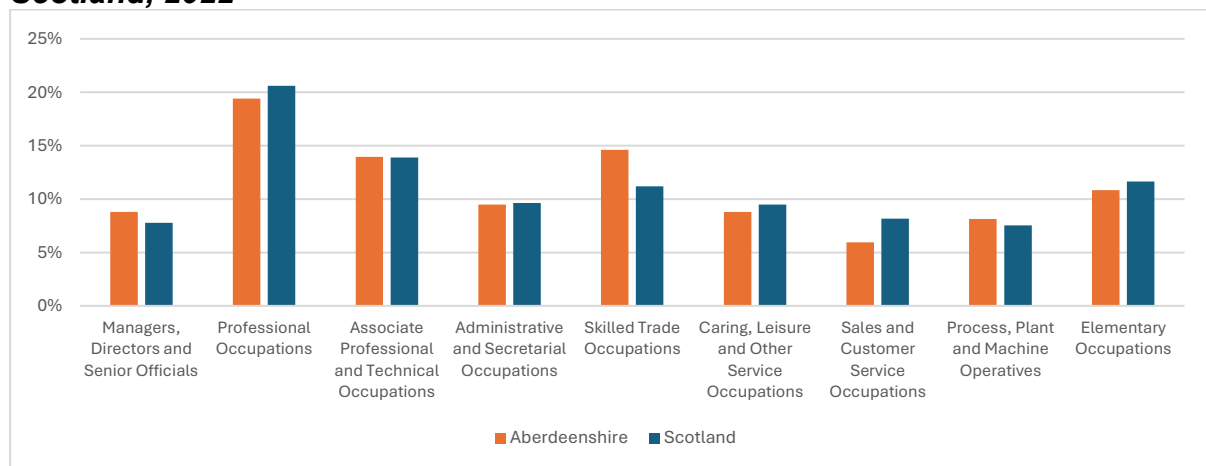
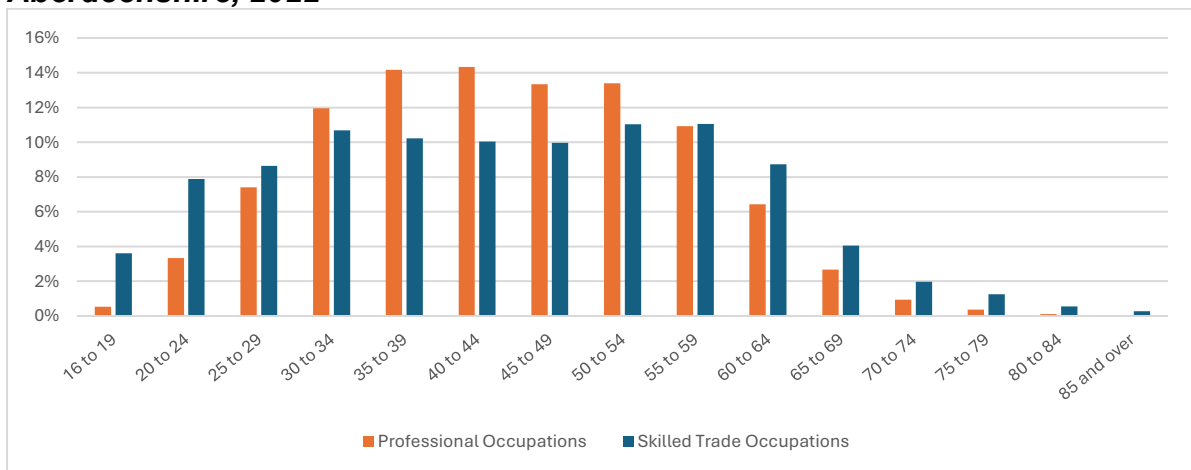


Figure 6 indicates that people aged 29 and under, as well as those 55 and above, were more likely to work in skilled trades. Meanwhile, individuals aged 30-54 were more likely to have professional jobs.

⁶ Professional occupations - occupations and high-level managerial positions in corporate enterprises, or national or local government. Occupations at this level normally require a degree or equivalent period of relevant work experience - Available from [Office National Statistics](#). [Accessed 7 October 2024].

⁷ Skilled trades – occupations that require a substantial period of training, often provided by means of a work based training programme (e.g. metal, electrical and construction trades) – Available from [Office National Statistics](#). [Accessed 7 October 2024].

Figure 6: Comparison of professional and skilled trade occupations by age Aberdeenshire, 2022



Working from home and travel to work

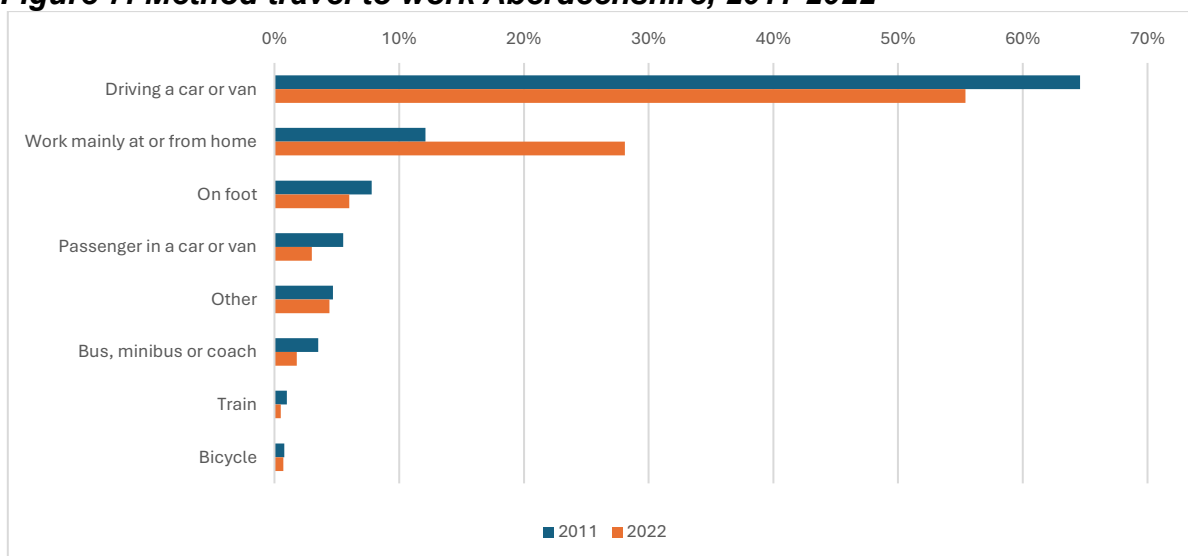
Working from home

Aberdeenshire, like Scotland, has seen a significant increase in people working from home. In 2011, there were 15,701 home workers (12.1%), which more than doubled to 36,671 (28.1%) by 2022, a 134% increase. Yet, this is still lower than the Scottish proportion of 31.6%, which was an increase of 208% from 2011.

Method of travel

Figure 7 shows in 2022, driving a car or van was still the main way workers (aged 16-74) in Aberdeenshire travelled, with 55.4% (71,054 workers) using this method. However, this is a significant drop of 15.5% from 2011, when 64.6% (84,100 workers) drove to work. The decrease in driving is likely due to the significant increase in people working from home. Walking was the next most common travel method, used by 6.0% (7,765 workers) in 2022.

Figure 7: Method travel to work Aberdeenshire, 2011-2022

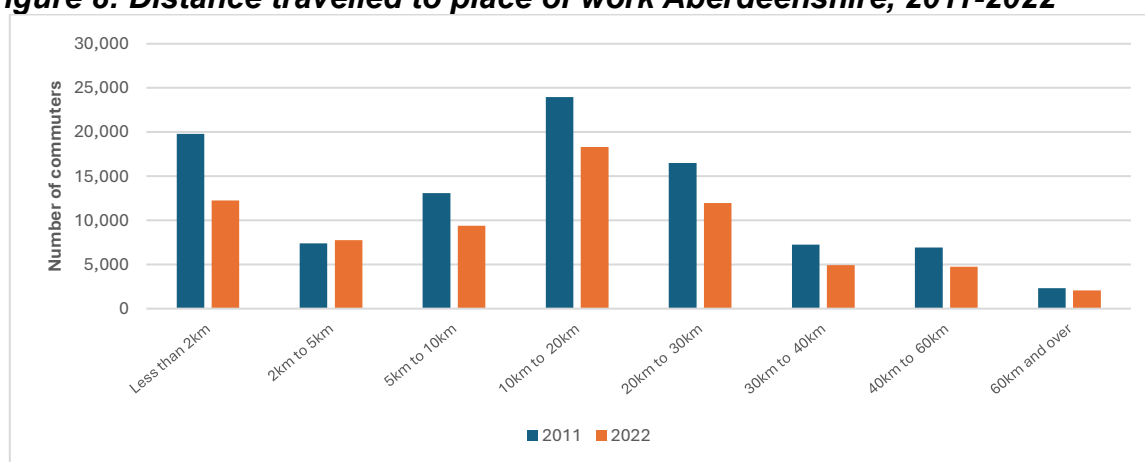


For Scotland, driving a car or van was also the primary method of travel for workers at 45.9%. Walking was the next most common travel method, used by 7.3% of workers.

Distance travelled to place of work

In 2022, most commuters in Aberdeenshire (18,306) travelled between 10km and 20km to work, down from 23,946 in 2011. Figure 8 shows that since 2011, commuting numbers have decreased in all distance categories except for the 2km to 5km range. This again is likely due to more people working from home. The largest declines were in the less than 2km category (7,541 fewer people), the 10km to 20km category (5,640 fewer people), and the 20km to 30km category (4,540 fewer people).

Figure 8: Distance travelled to place of work Aberdeenshire, 2011-2022



Distance travelled to place of study

On Census Day 2022, Aberdeenshire had 46,952 people⁸ aged 4 and over who were studying, marking a 6.7% increase since 2011. This growth rate surpasses the national increase of 4.1%.

In 2022, most students in Aberdeenshire (44.2%) lived within 2km of their place of study, a decrease of 3.2% since 2011. There have been significant increases in the number of people studying from home up by 42.1% and those traveling between 2km and 5km up by 51.9% to their place of study since 2011.

For students in higher education (aged 16+), most (22.7%) studied from home. This is a significant increase of 108% from 2011, when only 9.7% studied from home. For those who commuted, the most common distance was between 10km and 20km, accounting for 15.8% of students (aged 16+).

Report produced by the Planning Information & Delivery Team, Aberdeenshire Council.

For more information, please contact statistics@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or visit [Scotland's Census 2022](#) website.

⁸ This includes primary and secondary school children.