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# Ethnic diversity in politics and public life



## Summary

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- 4 Other elected bodies in the UK
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Annex 1: Standard ethnic classifications used in the UK

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## Summary

This briefing looks at the proportion of people from minority ethnic backgrounds in a range of public positions across the UK.

The term “minority ethnic” here refers to all people who do not identify with the “White” ethnic group in Great Britain, and all those apart from the “White” and “Irish Traveller” categories in Northern Ireland.

In 2021/22 about **13 % of the UK population aged 16 and over** was from a minority ethnic background, ranging from 3% in Northern Ireland to 15% in England, as set out in the table below.

Population aged 16+ by ethnic group, 2021/22						
Ethnic group	UK	Nations				
		England	Wales & Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	
White	<b>87%</b>	85%	96%	86%	96%	97%
All other ethnic groups	<b>13%</b>	15%	4%	14%	4%	3%
Of which:						
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	<b>1%</b>	..	..	..	..	..
Asian / Asian British	<b>7%</b>	..	..	..	..	..
Black / Black British	<b>3%</b>	..	..	..	..	..
Other ethnic groups	<b>2%</b>	..	..	..	..	..

Source: Office for National Statistics (2022). Annual Population Survey, April 2021 - March 2022 [data collection]. UK Data Service [Accessed 13 September 2022]

### Notes:

The Annual Population Survey is based on a weighted sample of UK households and these figures should be treated as approximate estimates only.

Breakdowns for individual ethnic groups are only provided at UK level, because the sample size isn't large enough to generate reliable estimates for all countries.

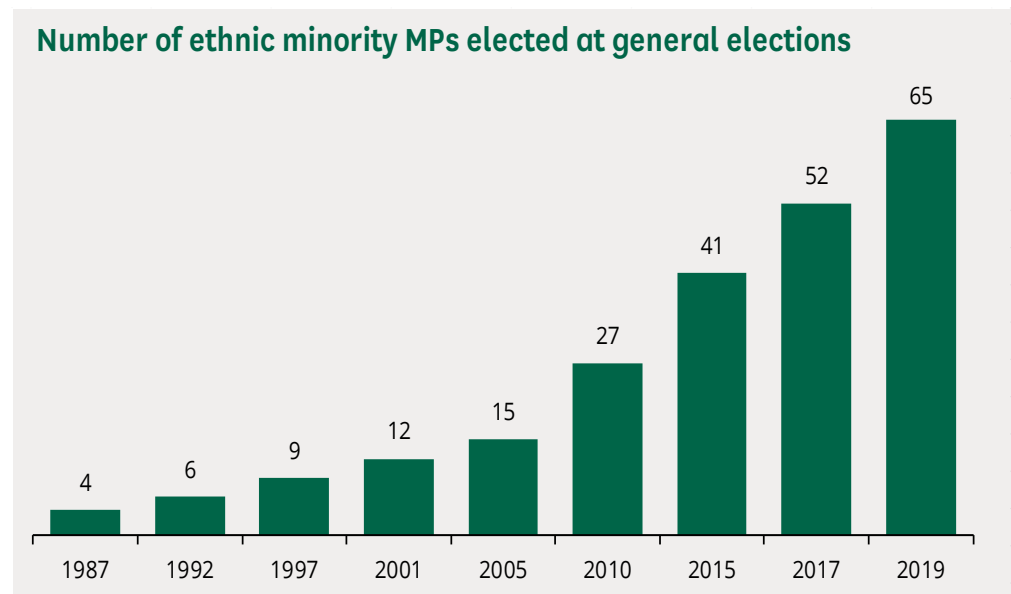
"Black/Black British" includes people from Black, African, and Caribbean backgrounds.

"White" includes people identifying as Irish Travellers except in Northern Ireland, where this group is counted under "Other ethnic groups".

The proportion of people from a minority ethnic background has risen in recent years, and so has the representation of minority ethnic groups in political and public positions. However, in most cases the proportion of people from minority ethnic backgrounds in such positions is lower than in the population as a whole – and often markedly so. The exceptions are the NHS and the social work sector.

## UK Parliament and Government

Following the 2019 General Election, 65 or 10% of Members of the House of Commons were from minority ethnic backgrounds. Four MPs from minority ethnic groups were elected in 1987, the first since 1929: Diane Abbott, Paul Boateng, Bernie Grant and Keith Vaz. The number has increased at each general election since then – most notably from 2010 onwards – as the chart below shows. But if the ethnic make-up of the House of Commons reflected that of the UK population, there would be about 85 MPs from minority ethnic backgrounds



Source: [British Future](#) (2019), House of Commons Library Briefing, [UK Election Statistics: 1918-2019](#)

Of the 65 MPs from minority ethnic backgrounds, 41 (63%) are Labour and 22 are Conservatives (34%). There are two Liberal Democrat MPs from a minority ethnic background. More than half (37) of the 65 are women.

In September 2022, 55 or **7.3% of Members of the House of Lords** were from minority ethnic groups.

**Seven Cabinet Ministers** are from a minority ethnic background: Kemi Badenoch (International Trade); Suella Braverman (Home Secretary); James Cleverly (Foreign Secretary); Ranil Jayawardena (Environment, Food and

Rural Affairs); Kwasi Kwarteng (Chancellor of the Exchequer); Alok Sharma (COP26 President); and Nadim Zahawi (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster). This is the highest number ever and the first time none of the Great Offices of State is held by a White man (Prime Minister, Home Secretary, Foreign Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer).

## Other elected bodies in the UK

As of September 2022, **six (4.5%)** of the **Scottish Parliament's** 129 members and **three (5%)** of the 60 Members of the **Senedd Cymru/Welsh Parliament** are from minority ethnic backgrounds, including the first woman of colour elected since the start of the devolution. **None** of the 90 Members of the **Northern Ireland Assembly** are recorded as being from a minority ethnic group.

As well as the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, **eight (32%) of the 25 Members of the London Assembly** were from minority ethnic backgrounds in September 2022, compared with about 41% of London's population.

Minority ethnic representation in local government is lower than the corresponding population in all countries of the United Kingdom. A [2019 audit \(PDF\)](#) by Operation Black Vote found that while councils in some local authorities, especially in London, closely reflected the local ethnic make-up, many others had no councillors from minority ethnic groups at all.

## Public sector staff

Ethnic diversity among public sector staff varies noticeably across services and countries of the UK, although figures are often hard to compare. Two sectors stand out as having high levels of minority ethnic staff, especially in England: the **NHS** and the **social work** sector.

In **NHS England**, **25.2%** of staff reported as being from a minority ethnic background in 2022, compared with 15.7% of the economically active population. **49.5% of doctors and 41.9% of hospital consultants in NHS England** were from minority ethnic backgrounds. Representation of **Asian** staff was particularly high, at 34.5% of doctors and 32.2% of consultants.

In September 2021, **23.4% of social workers in England** were from minority ethnic backgrounds. Representation of **Black** social workers was particularly high at 12.3%, compared with 3.7% of the economically active population that year.

The ethnic profile of the UK Civil Service and the UK Army was similar to that of the wider economically active population. In most other public services, minority ethnic representation was significantly lower, although many have

reported gradual improvements. Fire and Rescue services typically reported the lowest figures – as low as 0.2% in Northern Ireland, compared with 2.0% of the economically active population (the latest available data for the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue service is for 2019).

Finally, in the majority of cases where data is available, minority ethnic representation is often lower in the higher pay grades.

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# 1 Ethnicity in the United Kingdom

## 1.1 Categorising ethnicity

The concept of “ethnicity” is highly personal, normally self-reported and organisations classify ethnicity in different ways.

This briefing uses ethnic groups used by the data sources, providing a breakdown by group where available. Where data is not disaggregated, this briefing uses the term “minority ethnic” to refer to people and groups other than those in the “White” ethnicity categories of the 2011 census, unless otherwise stated.<sup>1</sup>

This reflects the way that many of the figures reported here have been collected across the UK and over time.<sup>2</sup>

It’s important to note:

- The “White” categories used vary in the countries of the UK. The use of “White” in this briefing reflects Office for National Statistics (ONS) guidance for UK-wide reporting<sup>3</sup>.
- The ONS and Cabinet Office use the term “ethnic minorities” to encompass all groups other than “White British”. On this definition, groups such as “White – Irish”, “White – Gypsy or Irish Traveller” and “White – Other” are classified as ethnic minorities. Where the White British group is not available – which is the case for most sources in this briefing – “ethnic minorities” refer to all groups other than “White”.<sup>4</sup>
- Where data is not broken down by different ethnic groups, groupings may mask differences between and within groups.
- Good practice in data collection about ethnicity is to ask people how they self-identify, as well as to accept that people may not wish to answer the question. Figures are rarely precise or complete.
- Some organisations report ethnicity statistics as a proportion of those who declared, whereas others include individuals whose ethnicity is not stated or known.
- Information about ethnicity is not always officially collected, as is the case for Members of Parliament. This briefing relies on other and multiple sources in these cases, notably relying on individuals’ wider public discussion about their own identity.

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<sup>1</sup> Or the White and Irish Traveller categories in Northern Ireland.

<sup>2</sup> See Annex 1 and n.3 for standard ethnic classifications in the UK.

<sup>3</sup> ONS Guide: [Ethnic Group, Nationality and Religion](#)

<sup>4</sup> ONS [Language and Spelling – 9. Race and ethnicity](#). Cabinet Office [Ethnicity Facts and Figures Style Guide – Writing about ethnicity](#)



- In some cases – notably in smaller bodies in Northern Ireland – the low number of individuals involved means that reporting could clash with confidentiality and so ethnicity figures are not disclosed.

These issues mean that the figures presented in this briefing are rarely precise and are often not comparable. They do however give indications of levels and trends.

Annex 1 sets out the ethnic categories used in different parts of the UK, as well as which groups are covered by “White” and “minority ethnic” in this briefing.

## 1.2 The population of the United Kingdom

As set out in the following table, the ONS has estimated that people from minority ethnic backgrounds made up **13% of the UK population aged 16 and over** in 2021/22. This varied from 3% in Northern Ireland to 15% in England.<sup>5</sup>

Population aged 16+ by ethnic group, 2021/22						
Ethnic group	UK	Nations				
		England	Wales	England & Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
White	<b>87%</b>	85%	96%	86%	96%	97%
All other ethnic groups	<b>13%</b>	15%	4%	14%	4%	3%
Of which:						
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	<b>1%</b>	..	..	..	..	..
Asian / Asian British	<b>7%</b>	..	..	..	..	..
Black / Black British	<b>3%</b>	..	..	..	..	..
Other ethnic groups	<b>2%</b>	..	..	..	..	..

Source: Office for National Statistics (2022). Annual Population Survey, April 2021 - March 2022 [data collection]. UK Data Service [Accessed 13 September 2022]

### Notes:

The Annual Population Survey is based on a weighted sample of UK households and these figures should be treated as approximate estimates only.

Breakdowns for individual ethnic groups are only provided at UK level, because the sample size isn't large enough to generate reliable estimates for all countries.

"Black/Black British" includes people from Black, African, and Caribbean backgrounds.

"White" includes people identifying as Irish Travellers except in Northern Ireland, where this group is counted under "Other ethnic groups".

<sup>5</sup> Office for National Statistics (2019) [Annual Population Survey](#)

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## 2 Ethnic diversity in Parliament

### 2.1 The House of Commons

It is difficult to establish the number and proportion of MPs from minority ethnic groups, as MPs are not required to officially state their ethnicity. We therefore rely on external sources that collect this information, often based on MPs' public assertions.

In modern times, the number of MPs from minority ethnic backgrounds has risen from four in 1987 to 65 in 2019. However, if the House of Commons reflected the UK population (13% people from minority ethnic backgrounds in 2021/22) there would be around 85.

#### Into the 20<sup>th</sup> century

Differing understandings of and attitudes towards ethnicity mean it is difficult to be certain about when the first MP from a minority ethnic background entered Parliament and how many have since. Our analysis of historical MPs is based on family origin. The individuals we include below may not have thought of themselves as having a 'minority ethnic' background as this is a relatively new term.

Some MPs from minority ethnic backgrounds were the sons and grandsons of wealthy men known as "slave holders" and enslaved or formerly enslaved women.<sup>6</sup> While we record them among Britain's first minority ethnic MPs, we recognise the profits their families gained from enslaving others may have helped them to stand for Parliament, given that in the early 1800s candidates were required to own land of a certain value, and MPs were not paid a salary until 1911.

Opening the House of Commons to non-Protestant religious groups was a central focus in the 19th century, and this facilitated the entry of MPs from minority ethnic groups. The first Roman Catholics entered the House of Commons in 1832.<sup>7</sup> Lionel Rothschild, the first practising Jewish MP, finally took his seat in 1858, when Parliament accepted changes to the oath of allegiance, 11 years after his initial election.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The use of the term "slave holder" follows [guidance from the US National Park Service Underground Railroad project](#)

<sup>7</sup> The Victorian Commons, [Catholics in the Commons: part 1, 5 November 2014](#)

<sup>8</sup> Jewish Virtual Library, [Lionel Nathan de Rothschild](#)

It is possible the first MP from what might today be classified as a minority ethnic background was James Townshend, elected to Parliament in 1767 as Whig MP for West Looe. His British grandfather worked for the Royal Africa Company, a mercantile trading company that also traded enslaved people; his grandmother, of African and Dutch descent, was a prominent businesswoman who also owned enslaved people.<sup>9</sup> Their daughter, Bridget, moved to England and had ten children, one of whom was James Townshend. He is possibly followed by Richard Beckford, elected MP for Bridport in 1780, the son of a plantation owner and an enslaved Jamaican woman.<sup>10</sup>

Henry Redhead Yorke was elected Liberal MP for York in 1841. His father was the son of a British plantation owner and a formerly enslaved woman from Bermuda, and his mother was English.<sup>11</sup>

Scotland's first MP from a minority ethnic background is likely to be Peter McLagan, the son of a Scottish slave holder and a Black woman of whom we know very little. He served as Liberal MP for Linlithgowshire from 1865 to 1893.<sup>12</sup>

The table below shows a timeline of MPs from what we might consider 'minority ethnic' backgrounds today. This is based on their family origins as described by various sources.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> London Historians' Blog, [From Gold Coast to Gold Coach: James Townshend, a Black Lord Mayor of London in the Eighteenth Century](#)

<sup>10</sup> The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1754-1790, [Beckford, Richard](#); Amanda Goodrich, [Henry Redhead Yorke, Colonial Radical](#), 2019, p58

<sup>11</sup> Victorian Commons, [Ethnic Minorities in Parliament: a new addition to the Victorian Commons](#)

<sup>12</sup> The Scotman, [Memorial Calls for Scotland's 'forgotten' first non-White MP](#)

<sup>13</sup> Victorian Commons, [Ethnic Minorities in Parliament: a new addition to the Victorian Commons](#); Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; The Scotman, [Memorial Calls for Scotland's 'forgotten' first non-White MP](#); Open University, [Making modern Britain...](#) J Clement Vaz, Profiles of Eminent Goans, 1997, p262

## Historical MPs from minority ethnic backgrounds

Name	Year elected	Party	Constituency	Family origin
James Townshend	1767	Whig	West Looe	Father: English. Mother: English, African and Dutch.
Richard Beckford	1780	Whig	Bridport	Father: English. Mother: Jamaican.
John Stewart	1832	Tory	Lymington	Believed to be from a mixed ethnic background
Alexander Raphael	1835	Liberal	County Carlow	Armenian
David Ochterlony Dyce Sombre	1841	Radical Liberal	Sudbury	Mixed European and Indian
Henry Redhead Yorke	1841	Liberal	York	Father: British and Bermudan. Mother: English
Peter McLagan	1865	Liberal	Linlithgowshire	Father: Scottish. Mother: Black.
Dadabhai Naoroji	1892	Liberal	Finsbury Central	Parsi
Mancherjee Bhownagree	1895	Conservative	Bethnal Green	Parsi
Ernest Soares	1900	Liberal	Barnstaple	Father: Indian origin. Mother: English
Henry Finnis Blossie Lynch	1906	Liberal	Ripon	Father: Irish. Mother: Mixed British and Armenian
Shapurji Saklatvala	1922	Labour	Battersea North	Parsi

### Notes

Richard Beckford was later MP for Arundel in 1784 and Leominster in 1791.

Alexander Raphael was later elected Whig MP for St Albans in 1847.

Shapurji Saklatvala was later Communist MP for Battersea North in 1924.

## Since the 1980s

After Shapurji Saklatvala lost his seat in 1929, the year 1987 is often identified as when the first MPs from minority ethnic groups entered Parliament: Diane Abbott (Hackney North & Stoke Newington), Paul Boateng (Brent South), Bernie Grant (Tottenham) and Keith Vaz (Leicester East), all representing Labour. Diane Abbott is therefore the first female MP from a minority ethnic background.

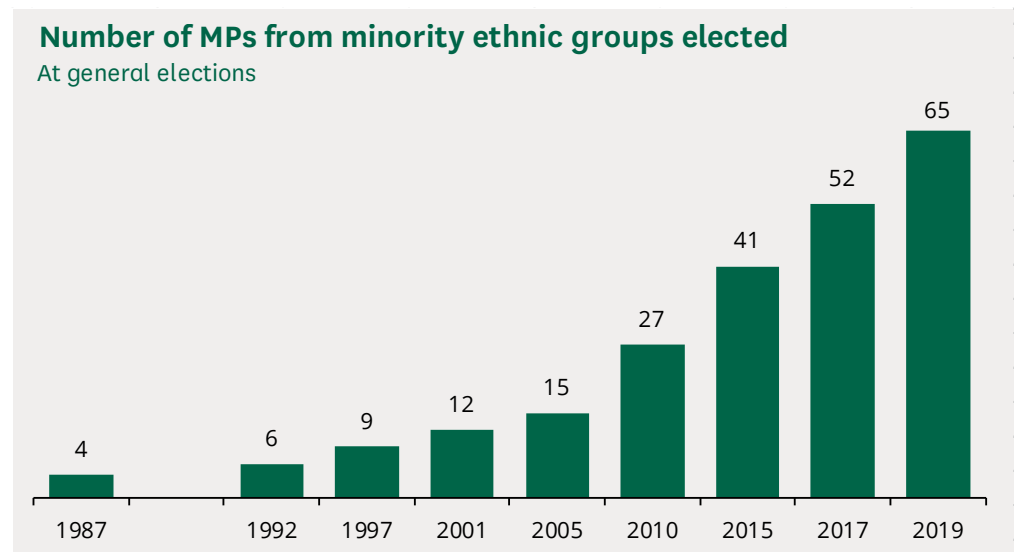
However, two Conservative MPs, Jonathan Sayeed, whose father was Indian, and Richard Hickmet, whose father was Turkish, were elected in 1983, though they are said not to have identified with a minority ethnic group themselves.<sup>14</sup>

Since 1987, the number of MPs from minority ethnic backgrounds has increased at every general election, reaching 65 in 2019, as shown in the chart below. In 2010, the number almost doubled to 27, and in 2015, there were 14 more MPs from minority ethnic backgrounds elected.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Butler, D and Kavanagh, D 'The British General Election of 2001,' Dennis Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, p206. The Clarion Mag, [The rich history of BME MPs, 21 June 2020](#)

<sup>15</sup> House of Commons Library Briefing Paper [CBP7529, UK Election Statistics: 1918-2019: 100 years of elections](#); Parliament UK, Find [MPs](#) (accessed 1 May 2019)

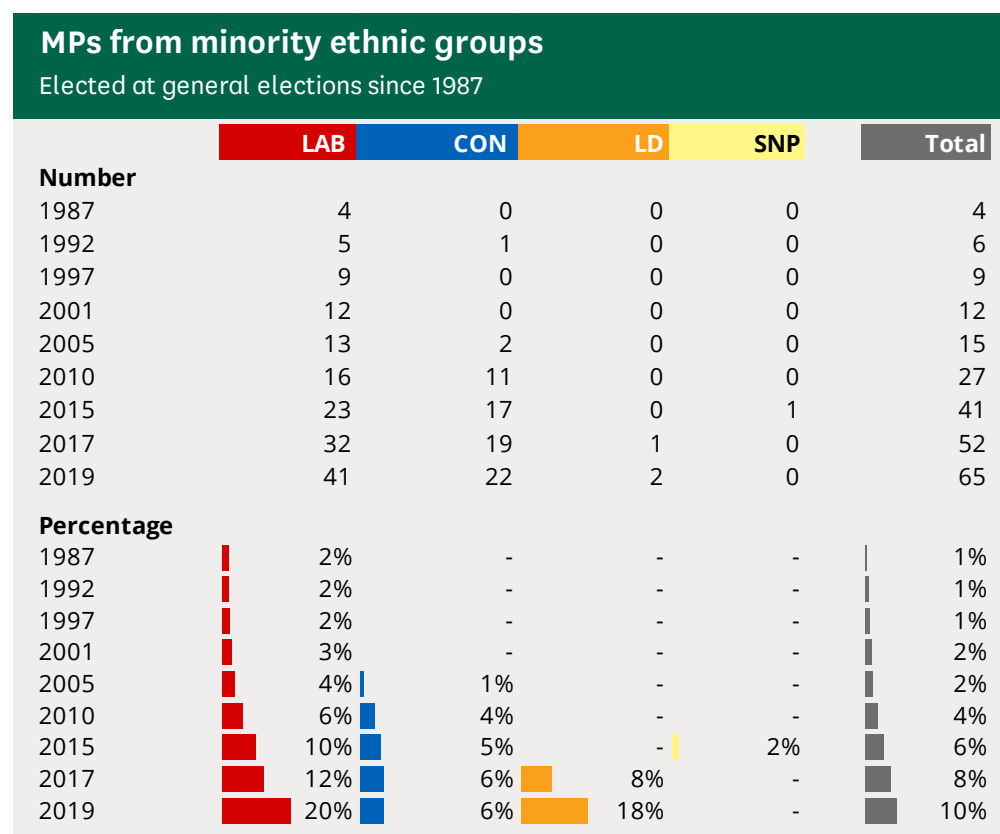
Following the 2019 General Election, **10% of MPs** were from a minority ethnic background. If the House of Commons reflected the ethnic make-up of the population (13% ethnic minorities in 2021/22) there would be about 85.



Source: [British Future](#) (2019), House of Commons Library briefing, [UK Election Statistics: 1918-2019](#)

## MPs from minority ethnic backgrounds by party

The table on the next page shows the number and percentage of MPs from minority ethnic backgrounds elected by party between 1987 and 2019.



Source: [British Future](#) (2019), House of Commons Library Briefing Paper [CBP7529, UK Election Statistics: 1918-2019](#)

The number of Labour MPs from a minority ethnic group has grown at every election since 1987, reaching a record high of 41 in 2019.

The first minority ethnic Conservative MP elected since 1987 is Nirj Deva, who was born in Sri Lanka. He was elected in 1992 but lost his seat in 1997. Conservatives Adam Afriye and Shailesh Vara were elected in 2005, since then the number has increased at each general election to 22 in 2019.

Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh was elected for the SNP in 2015 but lost her seat in 2017, while Parmjit Singh Gill became the first Liberal Democrat MP from a minority ethnic background winning the 2004 Leicester South by-election.

Following the 2019 General Election, of the 65 minority ethnic MPs, 41 are Labour (63%), 22 are Conservative (34%) and two are Liberal Democrats (3%). Of all Labour MPs, 20% are from minority ethnic backgrounds; of all Conservative MPs, there are 6%. Layla Moran and Munira Wilson, the Liberal Democrats' two MPs from minority ethnic backgrounds, constitute 18% of all Liberal Democrat MPs.

The 65 MPs following the 2019 General Election are listed in the next table. This list is a combination of data compiled by [Operation Black Vote](#) and [British Future](#). Ethnic identities have not been ascribed to individuals to avoid misidentification.

## MPs from ethnic minority groups by party

Name	Constituency	Party
Abena Opong-Asare	Erith and Thamesmead	Labour
Adam Afriyie	Windsor	Conservative
Afzal Khan	Manchester, Gorton	Labour
Alan Mak	Havant	Conservative
Alok Sharma	Reading West	Conservative
Apsana Begum	Poplar and Limehouse	Labour
Bambos Charalambous	Enfield, Southgate	Labour
Bell Ribeiro-Addy	Streatham	Labour
Bim Afolami	Hitchin and Harpenden	Conservative
Chi Onwurah	Newcastle upon Tyne Central	Labour
Claire Coutinho	East Surrey	Conservative
Claudia Webbe	Leicester East	Labour
Clive Lewis	Norwich South	Labour
Darren Henry	Broxtowe	Conservative
David Lammy	Tottenham	Labour
Dawn Butler	Brent South	Labour
Diane Abbott	Hackney North and Stoke Newington	Labour
Feryal Clark	Enfield North	Labour
Florence Eshalomi	Vauxhall	Labour
Gagan Mohindra	South West Hertfordshire	Conservative
Helen Grant	Maidstone & The Weald	Conservative
Imran Ahmad-Khan	Wakefield	Conservative
Imran Hussain	Bradford East	Labour
James Cleverly	Braintree	Conservative
Janet Daby	Lewisham East	Labour
Kate Osamor	Edmonton	Labour
Kemi Badenoch	Saffron Walden	Conservative
Khalid Mahmood	Birmingham, Perry Barr	Labour
Kim Johnson	Liverpool Riverside	Labour
Kwasi Kwarteng	Spelthorne	Conservative
Layla Moran	Oxford West and Abingdon	Liberal Democrat
Lisa Nandy	Wigan	Labour
Mark Hendrick	Preston	Labour
Marsha de Cordova	Battersea	Labour
Mohammad Yasin	Bedford	Labour
Munira Wilson	Twickenham	Liberal Democrat
Nadhim Zahawi	Stratford-on-Avon	Conservative
Nadia Whittome	Nottingham East	Labour
Navendu Mishra	Stockport	Labour
Naz Shah	Bradford West	Labour
Nusrat Ghani	Wealden	Conservative
Preet Gill	Birmingham Edgbaston	Labour
Priti Patel	Witham	Conservative

## MPs from ethnic minority groups by party

Continued

Ranil Jayawardena	North East Hampshire	Conservative
Rehman Chishti	Gillingham and Rainham	Conservative
Rishi Sunak	Richmond (Yorks)	Conservative
Rosena Allin-Khan	Tooting	Labour
Rupa Huq	Ealing Central and Acton	Labour
Rushanara Ali	Bethnal Green and Bow	Labour
Sajid Javid	Bromsgrove	Conservative
Saqib Bhatti	Meriden	Conservative
Sarah Owen	Luton North	Labour
Seema Malhotra	Feltham and Heston	Labour
Shabana Mahmood	Birmingham, Ladywood	Labour
Shailesh Vara	North West Cambridgeshire	Conservative
Suella Braverman	Fareham	Conservative
Tahir Ali	Birmingham, Hall Green	Labour
Taiwo Owatemi	Coventry North West	Labour
Tanmanjeet Singh Dhese	Slough	Labour
Thangam Debbonaire	Bristol West	Labour
Tulip Siddiq	Hampstead and Kilburn	Labour
Valerie Vaz	Walsall South	Labour
Virendra Sharma	Ealing, Southall	Labour
Yasmin Qureshi	Bolton South East	Labour
Zarah Sultana	Coventry South	Labour

Source: [Operation Black Vote](#), British Future (personal correspondence)

## Female MPs from minority ethnic groups in the House of Commons

Source: [Operation Black Vote](#), British Future (personal correspondence)

The chart on the left shows the number of MPs from minority ethnic groups by gender and party elected at the last general election.

Before 2010, Diane Abbott, Dawn Butler and Oona King had been the only female MPs from any minority ethnic background. The first women of Asian origin were elected in 2010, there were six in total. Rushanara Ali, Labour MP for Bethnal Green and Bow; Shabana Mahmood, Labour MP for Birmingham Ladywood; Lisa Nandy, Labour MP for Wigan; Priti Patel, Conservative MP for Witham; Yasmin Qureshi, Labour MP for Bolton South East and Valerie Vaz, Labour MP for Walsall South.<sup>16</sup>

Following the 2019 General Election, there were **37 women from minority ethnic groups in the House of Commons**: 5.7% of all MPs, 16.8% of the 220 female MPs, and more than half (56.9%) of all minority ethnic MPs. 29 were Labour, six were Conservative and two were Liberal Democrat.

<sup>16</sup> Bdnews24, [UK gets its first Bengali MP](#), The Times of India, [Priti Patel is UK's first Gujarati woman MP](#)





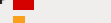


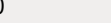









## 2.2

## The House of Lords

It is difficult to collate information about ethnic diversity in the House of Lords, as Peers are not required to provide such information.<sup>17</sup>

The first peer from a non-European background is widely believed to be Sir Satyendra Sinha, created Baron Sinha of Raipur, a hereditary peerage, in 1919.<sup>18</sup> The first peer of African descent is widely reported to have been the Trinidadian cricketer and lawyer Learie Constantine, created Baron Constantine of Maraval and Nelson in 1969.<sup>19</sup>

Research suggests that in September 2022 there were 55 Members of the House of Lords from minority ethnic groups. This is **7.3% of all 755 Peers**, up from 52 (6.6%) in October 2021.<sup>20</sup> The following table sets out the number of Peers from minority ethnic groups by their political party or group and gender.

House of Lords members from minority ethnic groups Sep 2022					
Party/group	Peers from minority ethnic group			group	All Peers Total
	Male	Female	Total		
Bishops	0	0	0	0%	24
Conservative	11 	5 	16 	6.5%	248
Crossbench	12 	4 	16 	8.7%	183
Labour	4 	7 	11 	7.2%	166
Liberal Democrat	3 	3 	6 	8.4%	83
Non-affiliated	4 	2 	6 	15.8%	38
Other	0	0	0	0%	12
Lord Speaker	0	0	0	0%	1
Total	34	21	55	7.3%	755

Source: [Operation Black Vote. Peers](#); UK Parliament, [Lords membership](#) (accessed 27 September 2022); House of Commons Library research

The next page shows the list of all current Members of the House of Lords from a minority ethnic group.

<sup>17</sup> House of Lords Library Note [LLN 2014/017: Membership of the House of Lords: Ethnicity, Religion and Disability](#)

<sup>18</sup> Columbia Encyclopaedia, 6th edition, Columbia University Press, 2008

<sup>19</sup> 100 Great Black Britons, [Lord Leary Constantine](#)

<sup>20</sup> [Operation Black Vote. Peers](#); UK Parliament, [Lords membership](#) (accessed 27 September 2022, 12 Oct 2021); House of Commons Library research

## Peers from minority ethnic groups by affiliation

Name	Affiliation
Ajay Kakkar	Crossbench
Amirali Bhatia	Non-affiliated
Ara Warkes Darzi	Non-affiliated
Bernard Francisco Ribeiro	Conservative
Bhikhu Chhotalal Parekh	Labour
Diljit Singh Rana	Conservative
Dolar Popat	Conservative
Doreen Lawrence	Labour
Floella Benjamin	Liberal Democrat
Haleh Afshar	Crossbench
Indarjit Singh	Crossbench
Jitesh Gadhia	Conservative
John Sentamu	Crossbench
John Taylor	Non-affiliated
Kamlesh Kumar Patel	Crossbench
Karan Faridoon Bilimoria	Crossbench
Khalid Hameed	Crossbench
Kishwer Falkner	Liberal Democrat
Lola Young	Crossbench
Manzila Pola Uddin	Non-affiliated
Martha Otito Osamor	Labour
Meghnad Desai	Labour
Meral Hussein-Ece	Liberal Democrat
Michael John Hastings	Crossbench
Mohamed Sheikh	Conservative
Narendra Babubhai Patel	Crossbench
Nathanael Wei	Conservative
Navnit Dholakia	Liberal Democrat
Nazir Ahmed	Non-affiliated
Nosheena Shaheen Mobarik	Conservative
Oona King	Labour
Patricia Janet Scotland	Labour
Paul Boateng	Labour
Qurban Hussain	Liberal Democrat
Rajinder Paul Loomba	Crossbench
Rami Ranger	Conservative
Ranbir Singh Suri	Conservative
Ruby McGregor-Smith	Conservative
Rumi Verjee	Liberal Democrat
Sandip Verma	Conservative

## Peers from minority ethnic groups by affiliation

Continued

Sayeeda Hussain Warsi	Conservative
Shaista Gohir	Crossbench
Shreela Flather	Crossbench
Shriti Vadera	Labour
Simon Andrew Woolley	Crossbench
Swraj Paul	Non-affiliated
Syed Kamall	Conservative
Tariq Ahmad	Conservative
Usha Kumari Prashar	Crossbench
Valerie Amos	Labour
Victor Adebowale	Crossbench
Waheed Alli	Labour
Wajid Khan	Labour
Zahida Parveen Manzoor	Conservative
Zameer Choudrey	Conservative

Source: [Operation Black Vote](#), with additional analysis by House of Commons Library

## 2.3

## International Comparisons

There are different classification systems and approaches to monitoring ethnic diversity worldwide.

### The United States

The 117<sup>th</sup> US Congress (2021-2023) is the most ethnically diverse in US history, with around 23% of voting Members of the House of Representatives and Senate from minority ethnic backgrounds.<sup>21</sup>

As of August 2022, there are 61 African American Members (11.3% of all members), 52 Hispanic/Latino members (9.6%), 21 Asian/Pacific Islander American Members (3.9%), and five American Indian Members (0.9%). Additionally, 29 Members were born outside the US (6.3%).<sup>22</sup> Members belonging to more than one of these categories have been included in each relevant category.<sup>23</sup>

Comparing US political institutions to US national statistics is complex because Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin is not an option in the US Census's question on race. This is due to the racial diversity of people of Hispanic,

<sup>21</sup> Pew Research Centre, '[Racial, ethnic diversity increases yet again with the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress](#)', 28 January 2021

<sup>22</sup> Congressional Research Service, '[Membership of the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress: a profile](#)', last updated 31 August 2022

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

Latino and Spanish origin. Instead, a question on Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin is first asked, followed by a question on race; respondents of Hispanic, Latino and Spanish origin select their race from the tick-boxes provided (White, Black or African American etc.).

Additionally, the classifications reported by the Congressional Research Service differ slightly from the Census categories. In the latest estimates from July 2021, 13.6% of the US population were Black or African American, 6.1% were Asian, 0.3% were Hawaiian or of other Pacific Islander origin, and 1.3% were American Indian or Alaska Native; and 18.9% were Hispanic or Latino.<sup>24</sup>

## Germany

Following the 2021 elections, at least 83 out of 735 (11.3%) Members of the German Federal Parliament had a so-called “migration background”. This is defined as either not being born as a German citizen themselves or having a parent who was not. This compared with 26% of the total population at the time and was three percentage points higher than after the previous election (2017).<sup>25</sup>

The figures for the US and Germany are cited as record high levels.

## France

Public authorities in France are forbidden in law from collecting data on ethnicity or race. Nevertheless, unofficial analysis by the broadcaster France 24 reported that of the 550 deputies elected to the National Assembly in Metropolitan France in 2022, 32 (5.8%) had at least one parent whose background was from a French overseas dominion or territory or from a non-European country.<sup>26</sup> This compares with 35 deputies (6.4%) in 2017 and 1.5% of deputies in 2012.

Around 11% of the French population were estimated to have at least one parent with an immigration background in 2015.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> The United States Census Bureau: [Quick Facts](#)

<sup>25</sup> Mediendienst Integration, [At least 83 MPs with migration history](#), 29 September 2021

<sup>26</sup> “Metropolitan France” includes those parts of France in Europe. It excludes French overseas departments and territories (“DOM-TOM”).

<sup>27</sup> France 24, [“Diversity gains ground in France’s new-look National Assembly after vote”](#), June 2017; [“National Assembly gradually reflects ‘diversity of the French street’”](#), June 2022

## 3

## The UK Government and the Cabinet

The first minister from a minority ethnic background is widely understood to be Baron Sinha (see section 2.2), who was made Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for India in the House of Lords in 1919.

The first **government minister** in the House of Commons was Paul Boateng (Labour), who was made Parliamentary Under-Secretary in the Department of Health in 1997.<sup>28</sup> There have since been 20 government ministers with minority ethnic backgrounds in the House of Commons.

### Government ministers from minority ethnic groups House of Commons, by year first appointed

Name	Party	Year	Gender
Ernest Soares	Liberal	1910	Male
Paul Boateng	Labour	1997	Male
Keith Vaz	Labour	1999	Male
David Lammy	Labour	2002	Male
Parmjit Dhanda	Labour	2005	Male
Sadiq Khan	Labour	2007	Male
Shahid Malik	Labour	2007	Male
Dawn Butler	Labour	2008	Female
Shailesh Vara	Conservative	2010	Male
Helen Grant	Conservative	2012	Female
Sajid Javid	Conservative	2012	Male
Sam Gyimah	Conservative	2013	Male
Priti Patel	Conservative	2014	Female
Alok Sharma	Conservative	2016	Male
Kwasi Karteng	Conservative	2018	Male
Suella Braverman	Conservative	2018	Female
Nusrat Ghani	Conservative	2018	Female
Rishi Sunak	Conservative	2018	Male
Nadhim Zahawi	Conservative	2018	Male
James Cleverly	Conservative	2019	Male
Seema Kennedy	Conservative	2019	Female
Kemi Badenoch	Conservative	2019	Female
Ranil Jayawardena	Conservative	2020	Male
Alan Mak	Conservative	2021	Male
Rehman Chishti	Conservative	2022	Male
Claire Coutinho	Conservative	2022	Female

Source: Members Names Information Service, House of Commons Library research

<sup>28</sup> All information in this section is from the Members' Name Information Service, a House of Commons database.

The first **Cabinet minister** from a minority ethnic background was Paul Boateng, who was appointed Chief Secretary to the Treasury in 2002. The first minority ethnic female Cabinet minister was Baroness Amos (Labour); she was appointed Secretary of State for International Development in 2003.

### Ministers from minority ethnic backgrounds attending the Cabinet

By year first attended Cabinet

Name	Year	Party	First position appointed
Paul Boateng	2002	Labour	Chief Secretary to the Treasury
Baroness Amos	2003	Labour	Secretary of State for International Development
Baroness Scotland	2007	Labour	Attorney General
Baroness Warsi	2010	Conservative	Minister without Portfolio
Sajid Javid	2014	Conservative	Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport
Priti Patel	2016	Conservative	Secretary of State for International Development
Alok Sharma	2019	Conservative	Secretary of State for International Development
James Cleverly	2019	Conservative	Minster without Portfolio
Rishi Sunak	2020	Conservative	Chancellor of the Exchequer
Suella Braverman	2020	Conservative	Attorney General
Kwasi Kwarteng	2021	Conservative	Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Nadhim Zahawi	2021	Conservative	Secretary of State for Education
Shailesh Vara	2022	Conservative	Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
Kemi Badenoch	2022	Conservative	Secretary of State for International Trade
Ranil Jayawardena	2022	Conservative	Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Source: Members Names Information Service, House of Commons Library research

After Liz Truss became Prime Minister on 6 September 2022, she appointed a government with seven Cabinet ministers from minority ethnic backgrounds:

- Kemi Badenoch (International Trade)
- Suella Braverman (Home Secretary)
- James Cleverly (Foreign Secretary)
- Ranil Jayawardena (Environment, Food and Rural Affairs)
- Kwasi Kwarteng (Chancellor of the Exchequer)
- Alok Sharma (COP26 President)
- Nadim Zahawi (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster)

This is the first time that all the four Great Offices of State (Prime Minister, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Home Secretary and Foreign Secretary) are held by either a woman or someone from a minority ethnic background.

There have been twelve **Peers** from minority ethnic backgrounds who have held ministerial positions, as shown in the table below.

## Government ministers from minority ethnic groups

House of Lords, by year first appointed

Name	Party	Year	Gender
Satyendra Sinha	Liberal	1919	Male
Valerie Amos	Labour	2001	Female
Patricia Scotland	Labour	2001	Female
Ara Darzi	Labour	2007	Male
Kamlesh Patel	Labour	2008	Male
Sandip Verma	Conservative	2010	Female
Sayeeda Warsi	Conservative	2010	Female
Tariq Ahmad	Conservative	2012	Male
Dolar Popat	Conservative	2013	Male
Nosheena Mobarik	Conservative	2016	Female
Zahida Manzoor	Conservative	2018	Female
Syed Kamall	Conservative	2022	Male

Source: Members Names Information Service, House of Commons Library research

## 4 Other elected bodies in the UK

### 4.1 Devolved legislatures

#### Scotland

Following the most recent election to the **Scottish Parliament** in May 2021, six (4.5%) of the 129 members were from a minority ethnic background. Two, Humza Yousaf (SNP), Anas Sarwar (Labour), were incumbents, while Foysol Choudhury (Labour), Pam Gosal (Conservatives), Sandesh Gulhane (Conservatives), and Kaukab Stewart (SNP) are all newly elected.<sup>29</sup> This is four more than there were in the 2016 Parliament. About 4% of the Scottish population are from minority ethnic backgrounds.<sup>30</sup>

#### Wales

Three (5%) of the 60 Members of the National Assembly for Wales were from an minority ethnic background in November 2021.<sup>31</sup> This compares with 5.9% of the Welsh population. The longest serving is Vaughan Gething, who has been a Labour MS since 2011 and is currently Minister for Health and Social Services.<sup>32</sup> Altaf Hussain has served since 2021, as well as between 2015 and 2016.

The first member of the Senedd from a minority ethnic background was Mohammad (Oscar) Asghar, elected as a Plaid Cymru MS in 2007 and then as a Conservative in 2011 and 2016. He died in June 2020.<sup>33</sup> His daughter Natasha Asghar was elected in his seat in 2021 making her the first female minority ethnic member of the Senedd.<sup>34</sup>

#### Northern Ireland

None of the current 90 Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly are from an minority ethnic background.<sup>35</sup> Anna Lo represented the Alliance Party in the Assembly between 2007 and 2016 and in doing so became the first

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<sup>29</sup> [Centre for Constitutional Change](#) (accessed 10 Nov 2021)

<sup>30</sup> Office for National Statistics (2022). Annual Population Survey, April 2021 - March 2022 [data collection]. UK Data Service [Accessed 13 September 2022]

<sup>31</sup> Senedd Research, [How diverse is the Sixth Senedd, 11 May 2021](#)

<sup>32</sup> National Assembly for Wales, [Find a Member of the Senedd](#) (accessed 27 Sep 2022)

<sup>33</sup> BBC, [Conservative Senedd Member Mohammad Asghar has died](#)

<sup>34</sup> Senedd Cymru, [Natasha Asghar MS](#)

<sup>35</sup> Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, [NI Assembly Election 2022 Results, 9 May 2022](#)



Chinese-born member of a legislature in Europe.<sup>36</sup> About 3% of the Northern Irish population are from minority ethnic backgrounds.<sup>37</sup>

## 4.2

# Local Government and the Greater London Authority

The local government figures reported below are based on surveys of local councillors. These surveys had response rates of around 30% and the figures may therefore not be representative of all councillors.

## England

The 2022 Local Government Association census found that 8.3% of all local authority councillors were from minority ethnic backgrounds, the highest figure yet.<sup>38</sup> This compares with a minority ethnic population of 15.7%.<sup>39</sup> Of English local councillors, 4.0% were from Asian or Asian British backgrounds, 1.5% were Black or Black British, 1.9% were mixed and 0.8% selected the “Other” category.<sup>40</sup>

A 2019 audit of local authorities in England by Operation Black Vote reported that 14% of councillors in unitary, metropolitan and London borough councils were from minority ethnic backgrounds.<sup>41</sup> It found that the proportion varied markedly between local authorities. In Brent, for instance, 66.7% of the councillors and 64.9% of the population were from minority ethnic backgrounds, but in Brighton and Hove, there were no minority ethnic councillors despite 10.9% making up the population.<sup>42</sup> The latest available data from Operation Black Vote is from 2019 due to backlog issues caused by the pandemic.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> BBC, [Alliance party selects Anna Lo, 19 November 2010](#)

<sup>37</sup> Office for National Statistics (2022). Annual Population Survey, April 2021 - March 2022 [data collection]. UK Data Service [Accessed 13 September 2022]

<sup>38</sup> Local Government Association, [National Census of local authority councillors, 21 June 2022](#), (PDF) p.22, Figures given as a proportion of respondents; response rate was 30%

<sup>39</sup> Office for National Statistics (2022). Annual Population Survey, April 2021 - March 2022 [data collection]. UK Data Service [Accessed 13 September 2022]

<sup>40</sup> Local Government Association, [National Census of local authority councillors, 21 June 2022](#) (PDF), p.22, Figures given as a proportion of respondents; response rate was 30%

<sup>41</sup> Operation Black Vote, [BAME local political representation audit 2019](#) (PDF), p. 9, Local population figures are based on the 2001 Census.

<sup>42</sup> Operation Black Vote, [BAME local political representation audit 2019](#) (PDF), pp.6-8, Local population figures are based on the 2001 Census.

<sup>43</sup> Operation Black Vote personal correspondence

## Wales

The most recent survey of councillors and candidates in Wales (2017) reported that **1.8%** of county and borough councillors who provided their ethnicity data were from minority ethnic groups, up from 0.6% in 2012.<sup>44</sup> The corresponding minority ethnic population of Wales at that time was 4.4%.<sup>45</sup>

## Scotland

The most recent survey of Scotland's councillors (after the 2017 elections) found that **0.4%** of all respondents were from minority ethnic groups compared with 4% of Scotland's population at that time.<sup>46</sup> Of this 0.4%, half were Asian and half selected "Other ethnic group". 2.7% of councillors selected the "Other" White ethnic group.<sup>47</sup>

## Northern Ireland

In April 2019, there was **one councillor** of recorded minority ethnic origin in Northern Ireland, out of a total of 462.<sup>48</sup>

## Greater London Authority

As well as the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, **eight (32%)** of the 25 Members of the London Assembly are from minority ethnic groups since the last elections in May 2021, the same as the 2016 London Assembly.<sup>49</sup> This compares with about 41% of London's population at the time of the elections.

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<sup>44</sup> Welsh Government, [Local Government Candidates Survey](#), p. 15, The response rate was 26%.

<sup>45</sup> Office for National Statistics (2022). Annual Population Survey, April 2021 - March 2022 [data collection]. UK Data Service [Accessed 13 September 2022]

<sup>46</sup> Improvement Service, [Scotland's Councillors 2017-2022](#) (PDF). 408 out of 1,227 (33%) of councillors responded. Of the 408 who responded, 1.5% did not provide their ethnicity data

<sup>47</sup> No respondents selected "White Gypsy/Traveller" or "White Polish".

<sup>48</sup> Northern Ireland Assembly, personal correspondence

<sup>49</sup> Operation Black Vote, personal correspondence

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## 5

# Public sector organisations

This section reports figures about the ethnic diversity of staff and appointments in a range of public services across the UK. It is important to note that coverage, response rates, dates and ethnic classifications vary, so figures are not necessarily directly comparable.

The table below sets out the ethnic breakdown of the economically active populations across the UK. In brief, this refers to the number of people aged 16 and over who are in employment or available for work. These figures may offer better comparisons for considering diversity in the staffing levels presented in this section.

For various reasons – most notably differing age profiles and lower participation of women in the workforce – the minority ethnic population usually has a slightly lower representation in the economically active population.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> GOV.UK ethnicity facts and figures service, [employment](#) [accessed 30 September 2022]

Ethnic group	Economically active population by ethnic group, 2021/22					
	UK	Nations				
		England	Wales	England & Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
White	<b>86%</b>	84%	95%	85%	95%	97%
All other ethnic groups	<b>14%</b>	16%	5%	15%	5%	3%
Of which:						
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	<b>2%</b>	..	..	..	..	..
Asian / Asian British	<b>7%</b>	..	..	..	..	..
Black / Black British	<b>3%</b>	..	..	..	..	..
Other ethnic groups	<b>2%</b>	..	..	..	..	..

Source: Office for National Statistics (2022). Annual Population Survey, April 2021-March 2022 [data collection]. UK Data Service [Accessed 13 September 2022]

Notes: The Annual Population Survey is based on a weighted sample of UK households and these figures should be treated as approximate estimates only. Breakdowns for individual ethnic groups are only provided at UK level, because the sample size isn't large enough to generate reliable estimates for all countries; "Black/Black British" includes people from Black, African, and Caribbean backgrounds; "White" includes people identifying as Irish Travellers except in Northern Ireland, where this group is counted under "Other ethnic groups".

## 5.1 Ethnic diversity in the armed forces

At the beginning of April 2022, 8.8% of the UK Regular Forces were from an minority ethnic background.<sup>51</sup> This has steadily increased from 6.9% in April 2012.

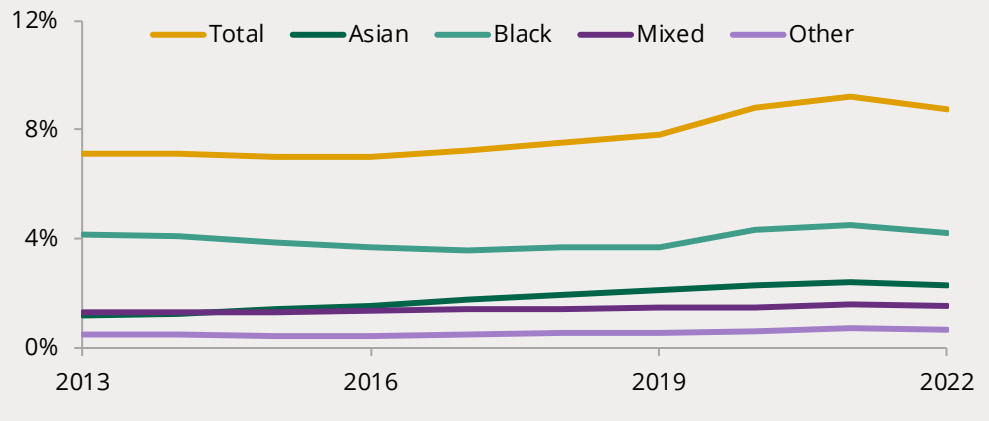
The increase has been driven partly by a rise in personnel from Asian backgrounds, from 1.1% in 2012 to 2.4% in 2021. In 2022, 4.2% of all personnel were Black, 1.6% were Mixed, and 0.7% were from other minority ethnic groups. Ethnicity was recorded for 99.3% of all personnel in 2022.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>51</sup> GOV.UK, [UK Armed Forces Biannual Diversity Statistics 2022, 30 June 2022](#)

<sup>52</sup> As above

### Minority ethnic representation has increased in the UK regular forces

% of personnel at 1 April



Source: GOV.UK, [UK Armed Forces Biannual Diversity Statistics 2022, 30 June 2022](#)

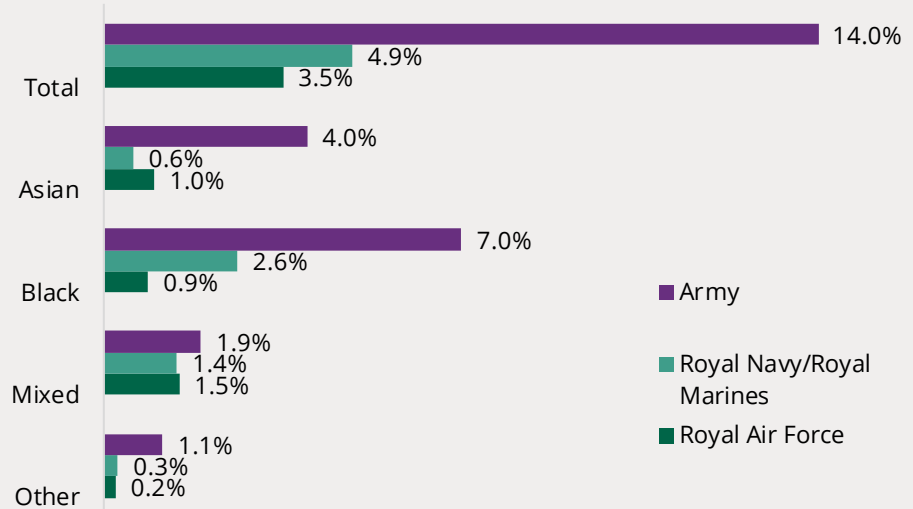
Note: "Total" refers to all minority ethnic groups

Representation in the armed forces varies by service. Minority ethnic group representation is highest in the **Army**, rising from 9.9% in April 2012 to 14.0% in April 2022. This is in line with the UK's economically active population. Over time, the biggest change has been an increase in Asian representation, from 1.5% in 2012 to 4.0% in 2022.

Minority ethnic group representation is lower in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines and Royal Air Force. In the **Royal Navy and Royal Marines**, representation increased from 3.5% in April 2012 to 4.9% in April 2022, and in the **Royal Air Force** it increased from 1.6% to 3.5% in the same period.

### The Army has higher minority ethnic representation than other services

% of personnel at 1 April 2022



"Total" refers to all ethnic minority groups

Source: GOV.UK, [UK Armed Forces Biannual Diversity Statistics 2022, 30 June 2022](#)

Representation also differs by rank. Across all services, there is lower minority ethnic representation among officers than among other ranks, though this is less pronounced in the Royal Air Force, where representation is low across the board.

The difference is most pronounced in the Army, where 3% of officers were from minority ethnic backgrounds in April 2022, compared with 16% of personnel in other ranks. This gap has widened in recent years as diversity has increased among the Army's other ranks.

Among **Future Reserves** (the combined reserve forces of each service), minority ethnic group representation is growing but is lower than the regular forces. 6.0% of the Future Reserves were from minority ethnic backgrounds across all services (up from 4.7% in October 2012). Across all services (Maritime Reserves, Army Reserves and Royal Air Force Reserves), representation is lower among officers than other ranks.

## 5.2

### Civil Service

At the end of March 2022, 15.0% of UK civil servants were from a minority ethnic background, an increase of 0.7 percentage points from 2021.<sup>53</sup> This is slightly above the figure for the economically active population in the UK (14.0%).<sup>54</sup>

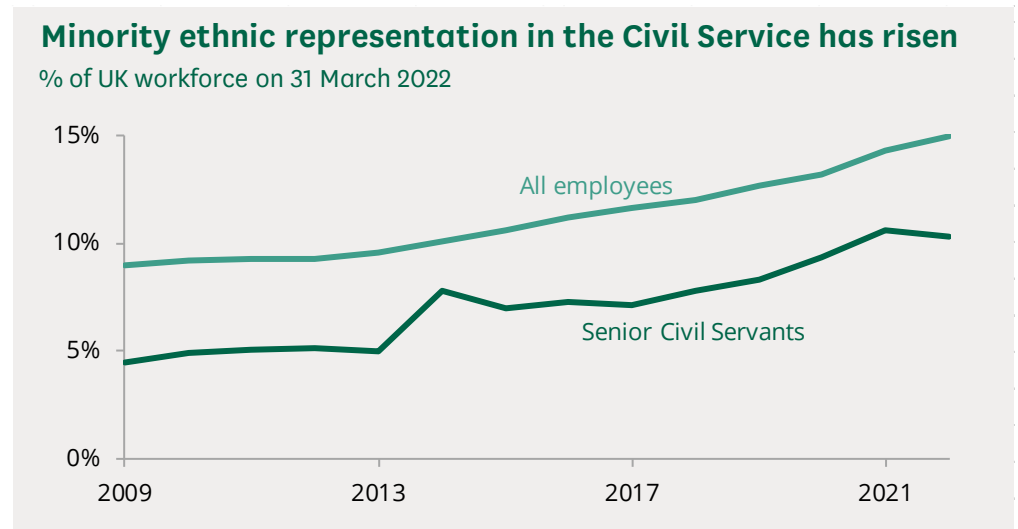
Representation in the UK Civil Service has grown steadily from 8.5% in 2008 when data was first published. This is also true for senior civil servants, the highest pay band, with people from minority ethnic backgrounds making up 4.4% in 2008 and 10.3% in 2022. This remains below the proportion of the wider workforce and the economically active population who are from minority ethnic backgrounds.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> GOV.UK, [Civil Service Statistics, 27 July 2022](#)

<sup>54</sup> Office for National Statistics (2022). Annual Population Survey, April 2021-March 2022 [data collection]. UK Data Service [Accessed 13 September 2022]

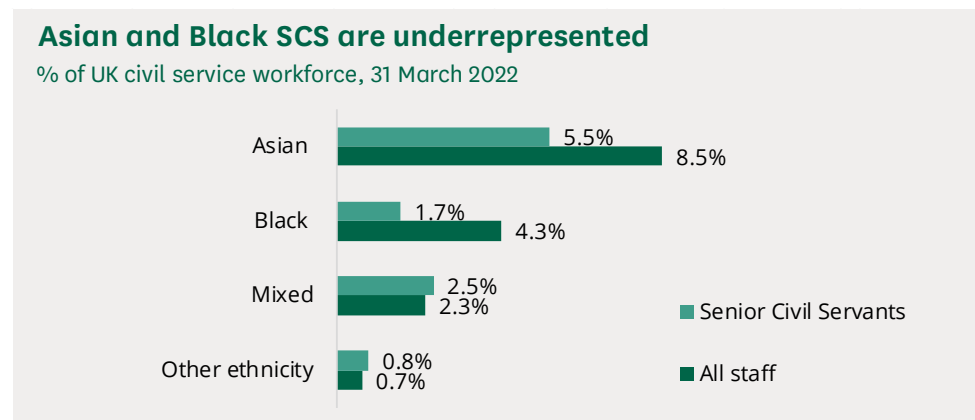
<sup>55</sup> Nomis, [Annual Civil Service Employment Survey](#); GOV.UK, [Civil Service Statistics](#)



Source: GOV.UK, [Civil Service Statistics, 27 July 2022](#)

The breakdown of the UK Civil Service workforce by ethnic group broadly reflects that of the economically active UK population. The figures for 2022 also closely reflect the 2021 statistics, which are given in brackets for comparison. In 2022, 8.5% (7.3% in 2021) of the workforce were categorised as Asian, 4.3% (3.9%) Black, 2.3% (2.1%) Mixed and 0.7% (0.7%) other ethnic group.<sup>56</sup>

Among the highest pay bands, Asian and Black employees are most underrepresented, making up 5.5% and 1.7% of UK senior civil servants.



Source: GOV.UK, [Civil Service Statistics, 27 July 2022](#)

<sup>56</sup> UK Civil Service reports separate figures for the “Chinese” group. If these are combined with figures for the “Asian” group, in order to compare with Annual Population Survey estimates, Asian representation of the Civil Service is 7.3%.

## Wales

In Wales, people from minority ethnic groups make up **4.3% of all civil service employees** and **3.1% of senior civil servants**.<sup>57</sup> This compares with 4.8% of the economically active population in Wales.<sup>58</sup>

## Scotland

In Scotland, **3.8% of all civil service employees** are from minority ethnic backgrounds and **3.5% of senior civil servants**, compared with 4.9% of the economically active population. A figure for senior civil servants from minority ethnic groups was first reported in 2018, at 3.2% representation.<sup>59</sup>

## Northern Ireland

Among home civil servants based in Northern Ireland, **1.5%** are from minority ethnic backgrounds compared to 3.2% of the economically active population (excluding Irish Travellers).<sup>60</sup> There are no senior civil servants based in Northern Ireland reported to be from a minority ethnic group.

## 5.3

## National Health Service

Healthcare is a devolved matter, so there are four health services operating in the UK. Statistics on workforce diversity are only published for NHS England and NHS Scotland.

In March 2022, 25.2% of NHS staff in England, whose background was known, were from minority ethnic backgrounds. This is compared with 15.7% of the economically active population (ethnicity was known for 96% of staff).<sup>61</sup> There were large variations by staff group. Doctors had the highest minority ethnic representation, at 49.5%, and ambulance staff had the lowest, at 4.1%.

There are variations in representation by ethnic group and staff group. In the table below, figures representing Chinese staff have been combined with the Asian ethnic group to allow comparison with the economically active population.

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<sup>57</sup> GOV.UK. [Civil Service Statistics, 27 July 2022](#)

<sup>58</sup> Office for National Statistics (2022). Annual Population Survey, April 2021 - March 2022 [data collection]. UK Data Service [Accessed 13 September 2022]

<sup>59</sup> GOV.UK. [Civil Service Statistics, 27 July 2022](#)

<sup>60</sup> Excludes the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

<sup>61</sup> NHS Digital, [NHS workforce statistics](#)



## Representation in NHS England varies by staff and ethnic group

% of NHS England workforce on 31 March 2022

	Doctors	Consultants	Nurses and health visitors	Midwives	Ambulance staff
Asian	34.5%	32.2%	14.3%	2.7%	1.6%
Black	5.8%	3.1%	10.5%	7.7%	0.7%
Mixed	3.9%	2.7%	1.6%	2.1%	1.5%
Other	5.3%	3.9%	5.4%	0.7%	0.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>49.5%</b>	<b>41.9%</b>	<b>31.8%</b>	<b>13.2%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>

Source: [NHS Workforce statistics, 30 June 2022](#)

Asian staff (including Chinese employees) make up 35% of doctors and consultants but fewer than 3% of midwives and ambulance staff. Black staff make up 10.5% of nurses and health visitors but only 0.7% of ambulance staff.

Minority ethnic representation in NHS England has grown over time, from 18.7% in 2017 to 25.2% in 2022. The table below shows the breakdown by ethnic group over time. The Asian ethnic group (excluding Chinese staff) grew the most, from 9.2% to 12.2% of all staff.

## Minority ethnic representation in NHS England has increased, 2017-2022

% of staff on 31 March

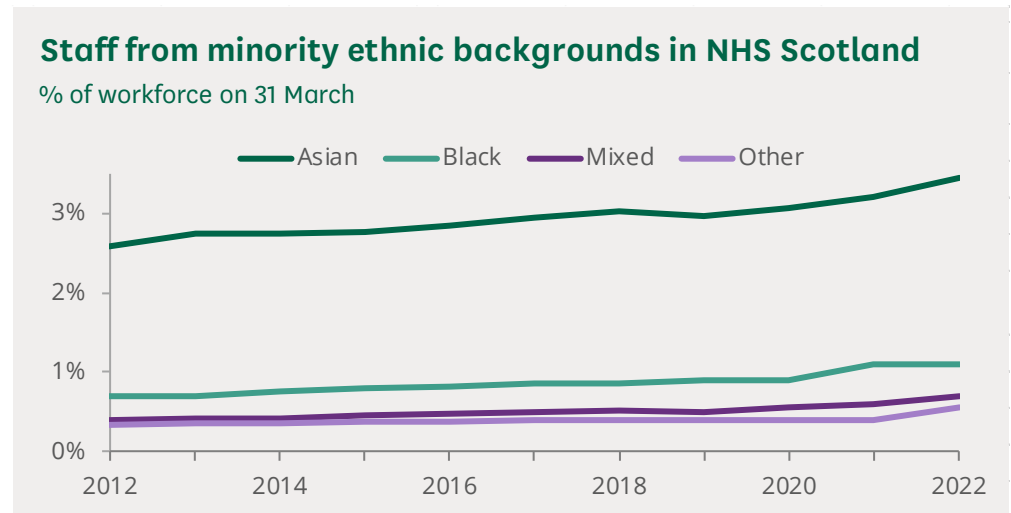
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	<b>19.8%</b>	<b>20.7%</b>	<b>22.1%</b>	<b>23.3%</b>	<b>25.2%</b>
Asian	9.2%	9.6%	10.0%	10.7%	11.2%	12.2%
Black	5.6%	5.9%	6.1%	6.4%	6.8%	7.3%
Chinese	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%
Mixed	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%	1.9%	2.0%	2.1%
Other	2.0%	2.1%	2.3%	2.5%	2.7%	3.0%

Source: [NHS Workforce statistics, 30 June 2022](#)

## Scotland

Minority ethnic representation in NHS Scotland has grown over time, rising from 4.1% in 2010 to 5.8% in 2022. This is slightly more than the figure of 4.9% for Scotland as a whole. Figures are calculated as a proportion of those who provided their ethnicity data, which rose from 64% in 2010 to 73% in 2021.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Turas Data Intelligence, [NHS Scotland Workforce](#) (Equality and Diversity spreadsheet), ISD Scotland, [NHS Scotland Workforce Information](#) (Overall trend spreadsheet)



Source: [NHS Scotland Workforce](#)

## 5.4

### Ethnic diversity in the police force

Prior to 2021, the Home Office used the following minority ethnic group categories for the police workforce in England and Wales: Asian or Asian British, Black or Black British, Chinese or Other Ethnic Group, and Mixed. Due to a change in the data collection framework in 2021, staff who identify as Chinese are now counted under the Asian ethnic group, in line with the 2011 ONS Census classifications.<sup>63</sup>

Since 2015, the representation of officers from minority ethnic groups has grown from 6.7% to 7.9% as of 31 March 2022. This compares with 14% of the economically active population in England and Wales. The biggest increase was among Mixed ethnicity staff, which grew from 1.5% in 2015 to 2.4% in 2022. Representation of Black staff remained at 1.7% until 2021 where it fell by 0.4 percentage points and, in 2022, remains at 1.3%.<sup>64</sup>

Among the forces with the highest proportion of officers from minority ethnic backgrounds (as a proportion of officers where ethnicity is known) are:

- the **Metropolitan Police**, with 16.7% minority ethnic officers compared with 40.2% of the local population (at the time of the 2011 Census)
- the **West Midlands Police** with 12.4% compared with 29.9% of the local population (in 2011)
- **Bedfordshire Police** with 10.1% compared with 22.5% of the local population (in 2011)

Officers from minority ethnic groups remained less well-represented in the highest ranks. In March 2022, 6.2% of chief officers (an increase of 2.0% from

<sup>63</sup> GOV.UK, [Police workforce England and Wales Statistics](#), 31 March 2022, data tables, notes tab

<sup>64</sup> GOV.UK, [Police workforce England and Wales Statistics](#). Data before 2015 are not provided due to changes to adjustments made to the Metropolitan Police Service's data in 2015.

2021) and 4.4% of chief inspectors were from minority ethnic backgrounds, compared with 8.5% of constables.

Police Scotland does not regularly publish statistics on the ethnicity of its officers. The most recent information on police diversity in Scotland comes from the [Police Scotland Equality and Diversity Mainstreaming & Outcomes Progress Report 2021](#) although this uses information for the end of March 2020.

According to the report, 1.5% of police officers considered themselves to be from a minority ethnic group. This figure has remained around 1% since 2010. Of the overall Scottish population, 4% identified as being from a minority ethnic group.<sup>65</sup>

The Police Service of Northern Ireland reports that in September 2022, 0.62% of its 6,897 police officers were from a minority ethnic background.<sup>66</sup> It is not indicated whether this figure includes or excludes officers whose ethnicity is not known.

## 5.5 Ethnic diversity in the justice system

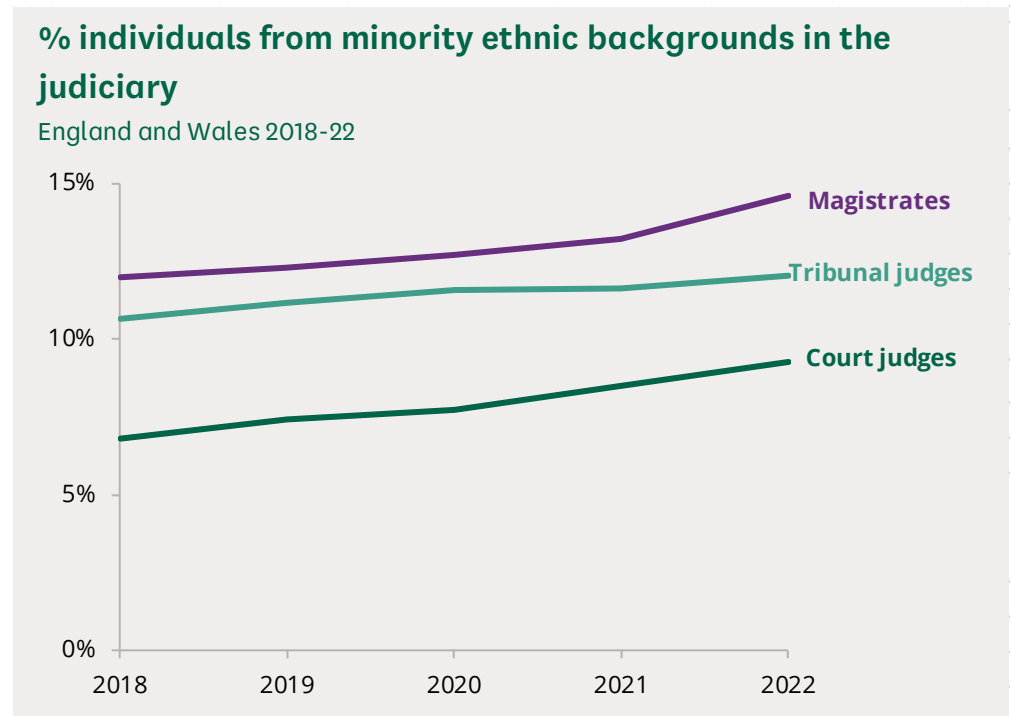
On 1 April 2022, 9.3% of court judges and 12.0% of tribunal judges in post in England and Wales were from minority ethnic backgrounds (of whose ethnicity was known). In both cases, this is an increase of roughly a percentage point from 2020. The proportion of magistrates from minority ethnic backgrounds was 13.7%, a slight increase from 13.2% in 2021.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Estimate only; Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey, April 2021 - March 2022 [data collection]. [UK Data Service](#) [Accessed 13 September 2022]

<sup>66</sup> Police Service of Northern Ireland, [Workforce Composition Statistics](#), accessed 23 September 2022.

<sup>67</sup> GOV.UK, [Judicial diversity statistics](#), Courts and Tribunals Judiciary, [Judicial Diversity](#)

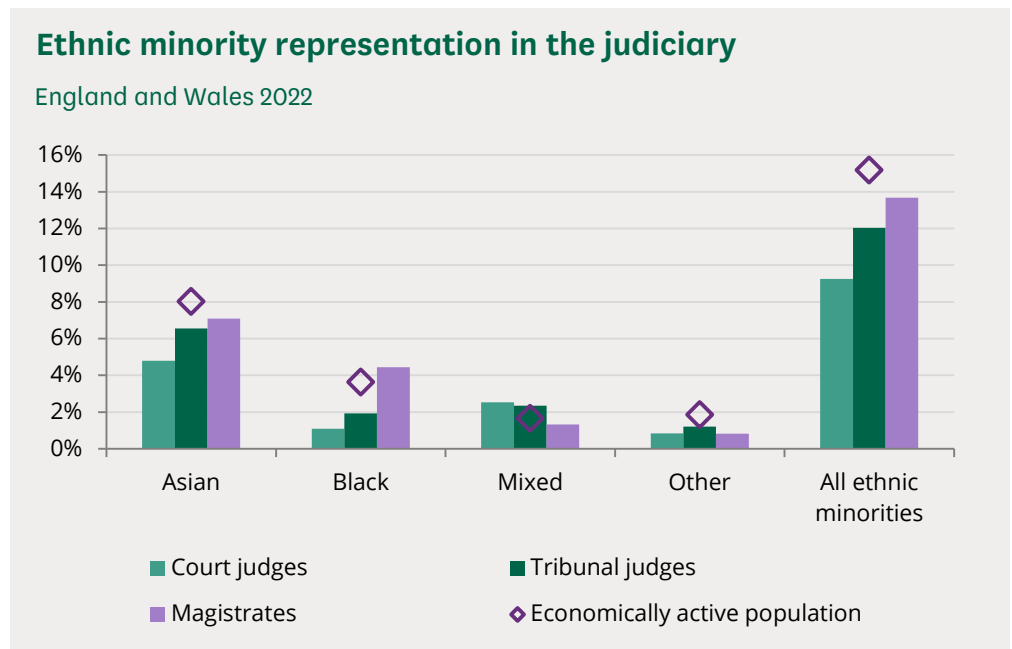


Source: Ministry of Justice, [Judicial diversity statistics 2022](#), 2021 and 2020, tables 3.1 and 3.5; Courts and Tribunals Judiciary, [Judicial Diversity Statistics 2018 and 2019](#)

Compared with the economically active population of England and Wales (15.2%), people from minority ethnic groups are generally underrepresented as of 1 April 2022. People from Asian backgrounds make up 4.8% of court judges, 6.6% of tribunal judges and 7.1% of magistrates, but 8.0% of the economically active population. Some 4.4% of magistrates are Black compared with 3.6% of the economically active population, but these figures are lower in the judiciary, where 1.1% of court judges and 1.9% of tribunal judges are Black.<sup>68</sup>

Among court judges, district judges in the Magistrates' court had the highest proportion of people from a minority ethnic background (12.5%), while the lowest proportion were among Court of Appeal judges (2.8%).

<sup>68</sup> GOV.UK, [Judicial diversity statistics](#), Courts and Tribunals Judiciary, [Judicial Diversity](#)



Source: GOV.UK, [Judicial diversity statistics](#), Courts and Tribunals Judiciary, [Judicial Diversity](#)

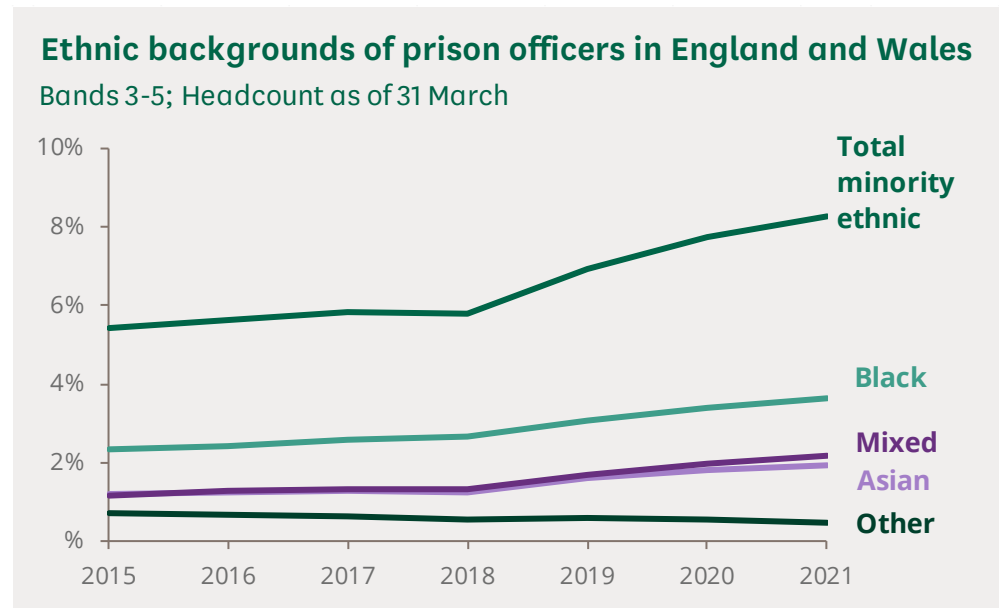
No overall information is available for **Scotland**, although a small number of employment tribunals are included in the figures for tribunals above.

On 1 April 2021, 1.8% of lay magistrates and 1.0% of tribunal members in **Northern Ireland** were from minority ethnic backgrounds. There were no court-based judges from minority ethnic backgrounds in post. For comparison, 3.2% of the economically active population was from a minority ethnic background.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, [The Judiciary in Northern Ireland, Equality Monitoring Report 2021](#)

## 5.6

## Prison officers



Source: GOV.UK, [HMPPS annual staff equalities report, various years](#)

In England and Wales, minority ethnic representation among prison officers has increased in recent years, from 5.4% in 2015 to 8.3% in 2021 (latest data).<sup>70</sup> However, this falls short of the economically active population in England and Wales, which is currently 15.2%.

Representation has increased in all minority ethnic groups except the combined “Other” category, which remained similar. Comparing to the economically active population of England and Wales, representation of Black and Mixed prison officers is around the same level, whereas prison officers from Asian and other minority ethnic groups were underrepresented.

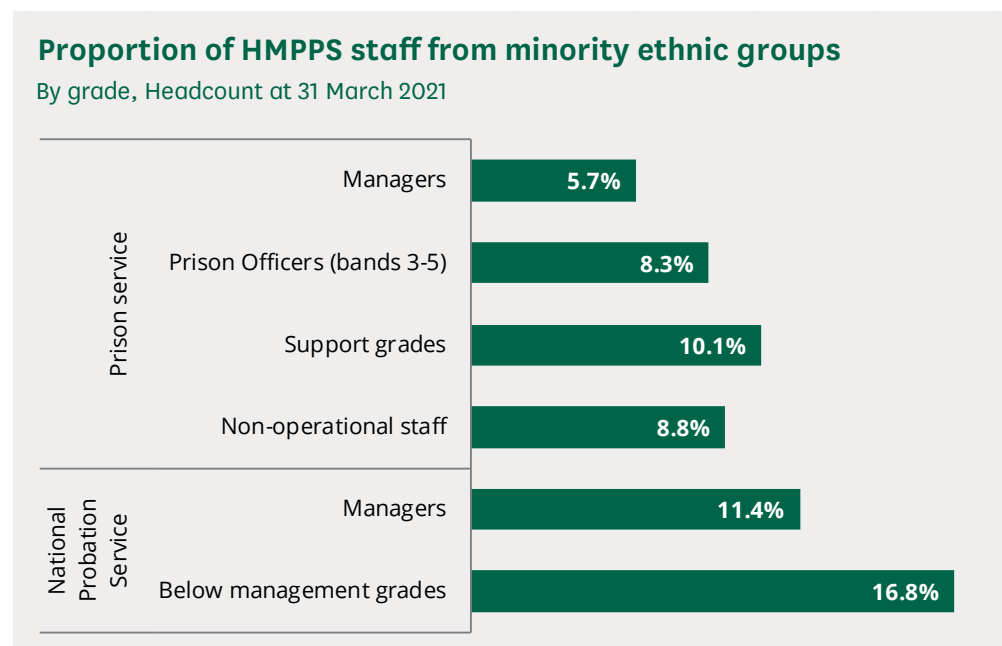
Prison officers are part of His Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service, which altogether employed around 54,000 people as of March 2022.<sup>71</sup> As shown in the chart below, people from minority ethnic groups were slightly more represented among support grades and non-operational staff in the Prison Service (where 8.8%-10.1% were from a minority ethnic group) but less represented among prison management staff (5.7%).

Minority ethnic group representation was higher in the **National Probation Service** as a whole and was highest among staff at the **non-managerial level**. Making up 16.8% of staff in these roles, individuals from an minority ethnic background were over-represented in comparison with the

<sup>70</sup> Officers in bands 3-5. Source: Ministry of Justice, [HMPPS annual staff equalities report](#). Data is presented as a proportion of those who provided their ethnicity data.

<sup>71</sup> On a headcount basis. HMPPS, Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service Staff Equalities Report: 2020 to 2021

economically active population as a whole. However, staff from minority ethnic groups were still under-represented at the managerial level within the Probation Service.



Source: Source: GOV.UK, [HMPPS annual staff equalities report 2020/21](#).

In the latest diversity figures for employees in the Scottish Prison Service (31 March 2019), no data is provided for ethnic groups other than those in the White group due to low numbers. Nearly half of 4,451 employees did not provide any ethnicity data; of those who did, fewer than 70 employees were from an minority ethnic background.<sup>72</sup>

## 5.7

### Ethnic diversity in teaching

Due to changes in reporting in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, the data provided below for each country is not comparable. However, it can be used as a rough guide.

#### Teachers in England

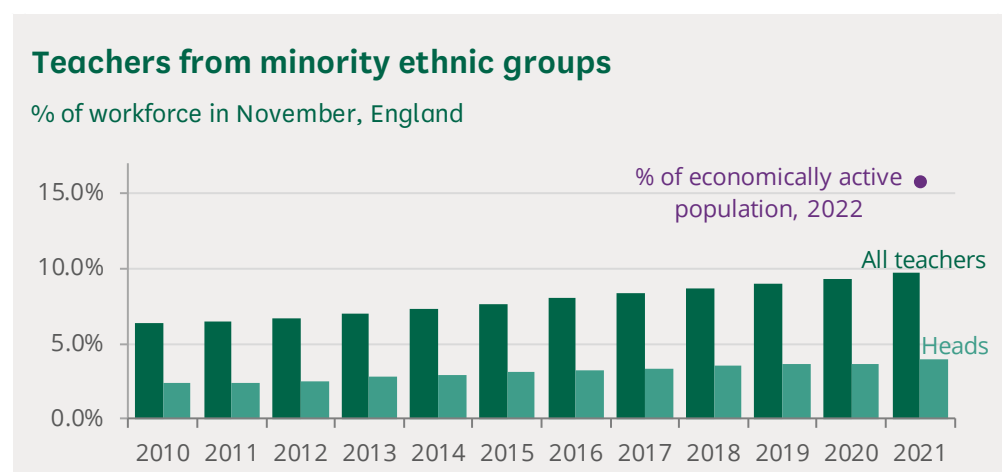
In November 2021, 9.7% of all teachers in state-funded schools in England whose ethnicity was known were from minority ethnic groups (excluding White

<sup>72</sup> Scottish Prison Service (2020) [Mainstreaming, Gender Pay Gap and Equality Outcomes Progress Report](#) (PDF), p. 52

minorities), compared with 6.4% in 2010.<sup>73</sup> This compares with an estimated 16% of the economically active population.<sup>74</sup>

More detailed ethnic group breakdowns are also published. In November 2021, 85.1% of teachers were from White British backgrounds, 5.2% were from Irish and other White backgrounds, 5.1% were from Asian backgrounds, 2.4% were from Black backgrounds, and 1.6% were from Mixed backgrounds.<sup>75</sup>

The proportion of headteachers from minority ethnic backgrounds is lower than among all teachers. The proportion rose from 2.4% in 2010 to 4.0% in 2021. In 2021, 1.8% of headteachers were Asian, 1.1% were Black, 0.9% were Mixed and 0.2% were from another minority ethnic group.<sup>76</sup>



Notes: Headcount basis, minority ethnic backgrounds includes all non-White ethnic groups

Source: Department for Education, [School workforce in England: November 2021](#), 9 June 2022

## Teachers in Wales

In November 2021, 1.2% of teachers in Wales whose ethnicity was known identified as belonging to a minority ethnic group (excludes White minorities), compared with an estimated 5% of the economically active population in 2021/22.<sup>77</sup> 98.9% of teachers in Wales identified as White (includes White minorities).

In November 2021, of headteachers in Wales whose ethnicity was known, only five identified as belonging to a minority ethnic group (0.4% of headteachers whose ethnicity was known).

<sup>73</sup> All figures for England exclude teachers whose ethnicity is not known. Department for Education, [School workforce in England: November 2021](#), 9 June 2022

<sup>74</sup> Estimate only; Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey, April 2021 - March 2022 [data collection]. UK Data Service [Accessed 13 September 2022]

<sup>75</sup> Department for Education, [School workforce in England: November 2021](#), 9 June 2022

<sup>76</sup> Department for Education, [School workforce in England: November 2021](#), 9 June 2022

<sup>77</sup> Excludes teachers whose ethnicity is not known. Stats Wales, School Workforce Census: 2021/22, updated June 2022; Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey, April 2021 - March 2022 [data collection]. UK Data Service [Accessed 13 September 2022]



## Teachers in Scotland

In 2021, 2% of teachers in Scotland were known to belong to a minority ethnic group (excluding White minorities).<sup>78</sup> This compares to an estimated 5% of the economically active population in Scotland belonging to a minority ethnic group in 2021/22. 89% of teachers in Scotland identified as White British and 92% identified as White.

## Teachers in Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland [Teacher Workforce Census](#) does not include information about the ethnicity of teachers.

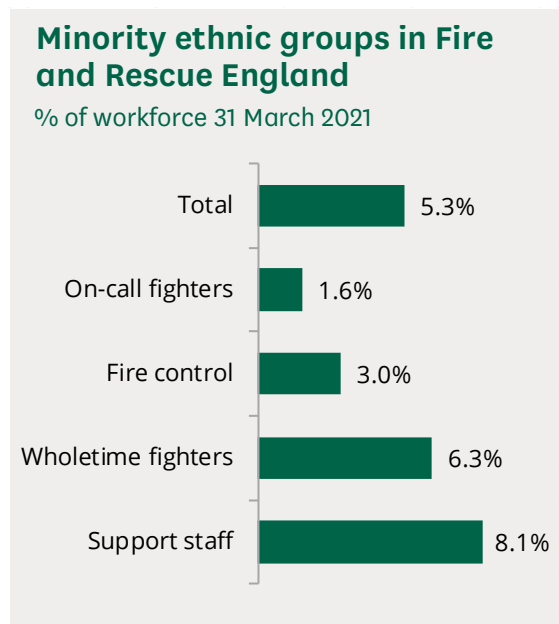
However, the General Teaching Council of Northern Ireland published figures for the ethnic breakdown of 72% of all teachers as of April 2019. At this time, 0.3% of teachers whose ethnic background was recorded were from minority ethnic groups.<sup>79</sup>

## 5.8

## Fire and Rescue Service

In 2021 in England, 5.3% of all staff in the Fire and Rescue Service whose ethnicity was known were from minority ethnic backgrounds, compared with 15.7% of the economically active population (In March 2021, ethnicity was known for 90% of all staff). 1.1% were Asian, 1.6% were Black, 2% were Mixed and 0.6% were from Chinese or other minority ethnic groups.<sup>80</sup>

Representation varied by staff role. Among wholetime firefighters – the majority of staff – 6.8% were from minority ethnic backgrounds, compared with 1.6% of on-call fighters. In Fire Control, 3% of staff, and 8.1% of



Source: GOV.UK, [Fire and rescue workforce and pensions statistics, 5 November 2021](#)

<sup>78</sup> Includes teachers whose ethnicity is not known, this means these figures are not comparable to those presented above for England or for Wales.

<sup>79</sup> General Teaching Council of Northern Ireland, by correspondence. Details were held for 71.9% of teachers.

<sup>80</sup> GOV.UK, [Fire and rescue workforce and pensions statistics](#)

support staff, were from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Minority ethnic group representation has increased gradually over time, from 4.0% of all staff in 2011 to 5.3% in 2021. Among the total number of firefighters (wholetime and on call), representation increased from 3.5% in 2011 to 4.7% in 2021.

In **Scotland**, 2.2% of all staff whose ethnicity was known were from minority ethnic backgrounds on 31 March 2022, however data was only held for 60% of staff.<sup>81</sup> This compares with 4.0% of the population and has grown from 0.8% in 2012. Representation was higher among support staff, at 3.6% of staff.

Fire services in **Wales** are a local authority service. Minority ethnic representation on 31 March 2021 of staff whose ethnicity was known was as follows:

- North Wales: 1.4%<sup>82</sup>
- Mid and West Wales: 1.0%<sup>83</sup>
- South Wales Fire and Rescue Service: 1.0%<sup>84</sup>

In April 2019, the **Northern Ireland** Fire and Rescue Service reported that of the 52.9% of staff whose origin was recorded, 0.2% were from minority ethnic groups.<sup>85</sup>

## 5.9

### Social workers

On 30 September 2021, the proportion of children's social workers from minority ethnic backgrounds in England was 23.4% (of the 81% whose ethnicity was known). This compared with 15.7% of the economically active population.

In 2017, (the first year in which collecting ethnicity data in the social work workforce was mandatory) 20.0% of social workers were from minority ethnic backgrounds. The biggest increase was among representation of Black social workers, rising from 10.6% in 2017 to 12.8% in 2021.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, [Statistics](#) (Fire Safety and Organisational Statistics – tables and charts)

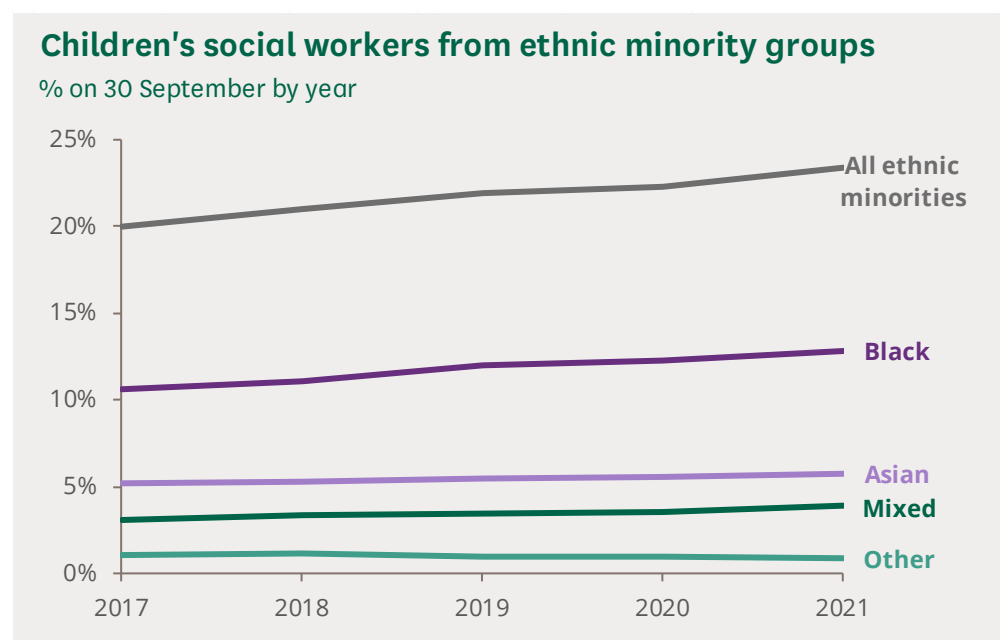
<sup>82</sup> North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, [Employment Monitoring Data 2020-2021](#) (PDF)

<sup>83</sup> Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, [Annual Equality Report 01 April 2020 – 31 March 2021](#) (PDF)

<sup>84</sup> South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, [Annual Equality Report 01 April 2020 – 31 March 2021](#) (PDF)

<sup>85</sup> Personal correspondence with the Commons Library

<sup>86</sup> GOV.UK. [Statistics: Children's Social Work Workforce](#)



Source: GOV.UK. [Statistics: Children's Social Work Workforce](#)

The local authorities with the highest proportion of minority ethnic social workers were:

- Brent (74.8%)
- Tower Hamlets (68.6%)
- Haringey (66.5%)
- Waltham Forest (66.4%)
- Newham (65.9%)

There was a higher proportion of Black social workers in England (12.8%) compared to social workers from Asian (5.7%) and Mixed ethnic groups (3.9%).

According to **Social Care Wales**, 89% of social workers on the register in Wales were from White backgrounds on 1 April 2021. It is not stated whether this includes social workers whose ethnicity is not known.<sup>87</sup>

In **Scotland**, of those whose ethnicity was known, 5.1% of the workforce in the social service sector was from a minority ethnic group in December 2021.<sup>88</sup> Since the Scottish Social Services Council presents the percentages as whole numbers, the figure may not be exact. This figure has grown from 3.5% in 2013, however, the proportion of employees whose ethnicity was known fell from 86% in 2013 to 78% in 2021, so it is not clear whether this represents an actual rise in minority ethnic representation.

In **Northern Ireland**, 4.4% of social care workers whose ethnicity was known were from minority ethnic groups in October 2020 (the most recent data),

<sup>87</sup> Social Care Wales, [Social care workforce report](#) (PDF)

<sup>88</sup> Scottish Social Services Council Statistics, [Workforce data reports](#)

compared with 2.0% of the economically active population (however, ethnicity was known for only 60% of workers).<sup>89</sup> 2.1% were Asian and 1.5% were Black. Minority ethnic group representation was lower among social workers (1.3%) and students (1.5%), who have a smaller headcount than social care workers.

## 5.10 Public appointments

In **England and Wales**, 11.2% of new public appointments were made to people from a minority ethnic background in 2020/21 (the most recent period for which data is available). This compares with 14.0% in 2019/20.<sup>90</sup>

Of people reappointed in 2020/21, 7.9% were from minority ethnic groups, making a total of 9.6% for all appointments (down from 15.3% the year before but up from 7.0% in 2009/10).<sup>91</sup>

In **Scotland**, 3.6% of public board members whose ethnicity was known were from a minority ethnic background in 2020/21 (latest release). This figure has risen since 2004/05, when it was 2.8%. Among applicants, 8.5% were from minority ethnic backgrounds, compared with 3.6% of appointments.<sup>92</sup>

The latest available figures for **Northern Ireland** show that in 2018/19, 2% of appointment applications were from people from minority ethnic groups.

Ethnicity was known for only 42% of applications. More complete data is available for 2017/18, when 3% of applications were from people from minority ethnic groups. For this year, the ethnicity was recorded for 81% of applicants. This proportion of applicants belonging to minority ethnicities has remained stable year-on-year. In 2017/18, 183 appointments were made, and as the number of minority ethnic appointees was fewer than five, figures were not reported in order to protect individual confidentiality.<sup>93</sup> Ethnic background was known for 53% of the 929 public appointments that were made in 2017/18; of these, 1.2% were from minority ethnic backgrounds.

<sup>89</sup> Northern Ireland Social Care Council, personal correspondence

<sup>90</sup> The Commissioner for Public Appointments [Annual Report 2020/21](#) and [2019/20](#) (PDF)

<sup>91</sup> The Commissioner for Public Appointments [Annual Report 2020/21](#) (PDF)

<sup>92</sup> Ethical Standards Commissioners, [Public Appointments Annual Report 2020/21](#) (PDF)

<sup>93</sup> The Executive Office, [Public appointments reports](#)

## Annex 1: Standard ethnic classifications used in the UK

This briefing paper uses the terms “White” and “minority ethnic” in line with guidance from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) for reporting across the UK.<sup>94</sup>

Classifications and terminology have varied between country and over time. Those used here are based on the 2011 Census and the ONS’s recommendations for monitoring surveys.

In summary, this briefing separates the “White” categories used in England, Wales and Scotland from all other groups. In Northern Ireland, figures for the “Irish Traveller” group are recorded separately from the “White” group, but they are added to “White” figures for UK-level reporting

Source for table below: ONS: [Ethnic Group, national identity and religion](#).

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<sup>94</sup> ONS, [Language and Spelling – Race and Ethnicity](#)

## Recommended standard ethnic categories

England and Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
<b>White<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>White<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>White<sup>a</sup></b>
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British <sup>a</sup>	Scottish <sup>a</sup>	
Irish <sup>a</sup>	Other British <sup>a</sup>	
Gypsy or Irish Traveller <sup>a</sup>	Irish <sup>a</sup>	
Any other White background <sup>a</sup>	Gypsy/Traveller <sup>a</sup>	
	Polish <sup>a</sup>	
	Any other White ethnic group <sup>a</sup>	<b>Irish Traveller<sup>a</sup></b>
<b>Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups</b>	<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups</b>	<b>Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups</b>
White and Black Caribbean	Any Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	White and Black Caribbean
White and Black African		White and Black African
White and Asian		White and Asian
Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background		Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background
<b>Asian/Asian British</b>	<b>Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British</b>	<b>Asian/Asian British</b>
Indian	Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	Indian
Pakistani	Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	Pakistani
Bangladeshi	Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	Bangladeshi
Chinese	Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	Chinese
Any other Asian background	Any other Asian	Any other Asian background
<b>Black/ African/Caribbean/ Black British</b>	<b>African</b>	<b>Black/African/ Caribbean/Black British</b>
African	African, African Scottish or African British	African
Caribbean	Any other African	Caribbean
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	<b>Caribbean or Black</b>	Any other Black/African/Caribbean background
	Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	
	Black, Black Scottish or Black British	
	Any other Caribbean or Black	
<b>Other ethnic group</b>	<b>Other ethnic group</b>	<b>Other ethnic group</b>
Arab	Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	Arab
Any other ethnic group	Any other ethnic group	Any other ethnic group

Note: a) Included in "White" in this briefing paper.

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