



BRIEFING PAPER

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Ethnic diversity in politics and public life

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Summary

This report focuses on the proportion of people from ethnic minority backgrounds in a range of public positions across the UK.

By “ethnic minority” we mean all people except those in the “White” ethnic group in Great Britain, and all those apart from the “White” and “Irish Traveller” categories in Northern Ireland. In 2019 about **14.4% of the UK population** was from an ethnic minority background, ranging from 2.2% in Northern Ireland to 16.1% in England, as set out in the table below.

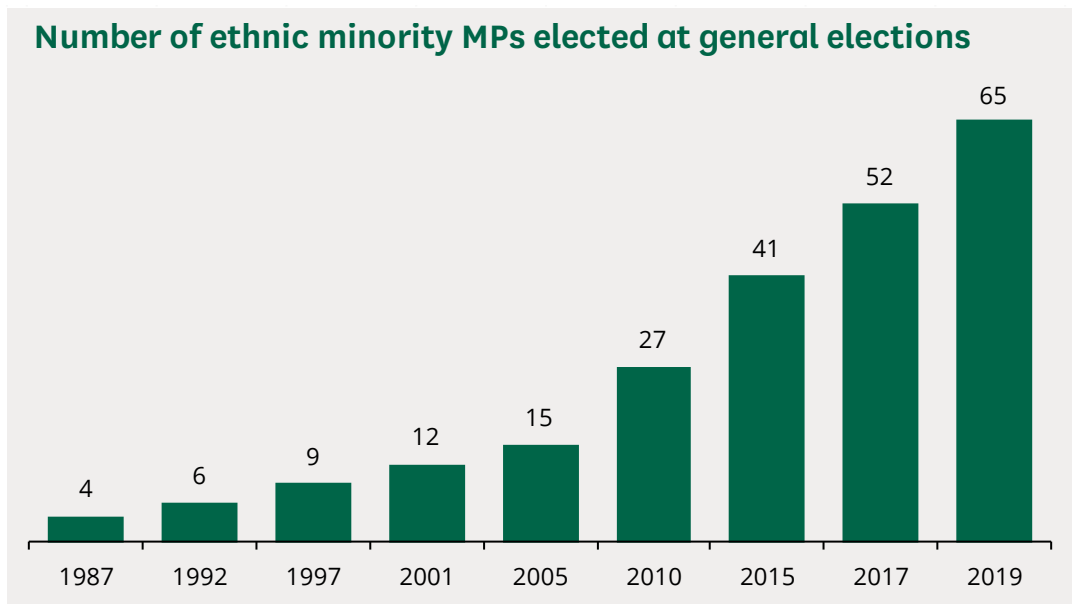
Population by ethnic group, UK 2019						
	Total population					
	England	Wales	England & Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	UK
White	83.9%	94.1%	84.4%	94.6%	97.8%	85.6%
All ethnic minority groups	16.1%	5.9%	15.6%	5.4%	2.2%	14.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<i>Ethnic minority breakdown:</i>						
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	1.9%	1.0%	1.9%	0.7%	..	1.7%
Asian / Asian British	8.4%	2.8%	8.1%	2.6%	..	7.5%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	3.8%	1.2%	3.7%	1.1%	..	3.4%
Any other ethnic group	2.0%	1.0%	1.9%	1.0%	..	1.8%
<i>Total</i>	<i>16.1%</i>	<i>5.9%</i>	<i>15.6%</i>	<i>5.4%</i>	<i>0.0%</i>	<i>14.4%</i>

Source: Annual Population Survey, Jan 2019 - Dec 2019 dataset

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

UK Parliament and Government

Following the 2019 General Election, 65 or **10% of Members of the House of Commons** were from ethnic minority backgrounds. Four ethnic minority MPs were elected in 1987, the first since 1929: Diane Abbott, Paul Boateng, Bernie Grant and Keith Vaz. Their 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 93 Members from ethnic minority backgrounds.



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

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

In March 2020, 50 or **6.3% of Members of the House of Lords** were from ethnic minority groups.

Three Cabinet Ministers are from an ethnic minority background: Rishi Sunak (Chancellor), Priti Patel (Home Secretary) and Alok Sharma (Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy). In addition, Suella Braverman, Attorney General, attends the Cabinet and is from an ethnic minority background.

Other elected bodies in the UK

Two (1.6%) of the **Scottish Parliament's** 129 members and **two (3.3%)** of the 60 Members of the **Welsh Parliament** were from ethnic minority backgrounds. **None** of the 90 Members of the **Northern Ireland Assembly** were recorded as being from an ethnic minority group.

As well as the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, **eight (32%) of the 25 Members of the London Assembly** were from ethnic minority backgrounds in October 2020, compared with about 40.6% of London's population.

Ethnic minority representation in local government is lower than the corresponding population in all countries of the United Kingdom. An audit 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 ethnic minority councillors 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 ethnic minority staff, especially in England: the **NHS** and the **social work** sector.

In **NHS England**, **22.1%** of staff reported as being from an ethnic minority background in 2020, compared with 14.5% of the economically active population. **46.0% of doctors and 40.1% of hospital consultants in NHS England** were from ethnic minority

backgrounds. Representation of **Asian** staff was particularly high, at 32.8% of doctors and 31.2% of consultants, compared with 7.7% of the economically active population.

In 2019, **21.9% of social workers in England** were from ethnic minority backgrounds. Representation of **Black** social workers was particularly high at 12.0%, compared with 3.7% of the economically active population.

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, ethnic minority 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.

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

1. Ethnicity in the United Kingdom

1.1 Categorising ethnicity

The concept of “ethnicity” is open to a wide range of understandings. It is highly personal and is normally self-reported, and organisations classify ethnicity in different ways. This briefing presents the groupings used by the data sources, providing a breakdown by ethnic group where available. Where data is not disaggregated, this briefing uses the term “ethnic minority” to refer to people and groups other than those in the “White” ethnicity categories of the 2011 census, unless otherwise stated.¹

This reflects the way that many of the figures reported here have been collected across the UK and over time, as well as the historic focus of considering questions of ethnic diversity or race relations.²

It’s important to note the following:

- 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.
- 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”.³
- 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 collected, as for instance in the case of 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.
- 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 is not disclosed.
- It is also good practice to be explicit about the coverage of specific terms in wider discussion. Doing so helps to avoid misunderstandings and disputes about accuracy.⁴

To BAME or not to BAME?

Terminology around race and ethnicity is subjective and highly personal. This briefing follows the ONS and Cabinet Office’s style guides, using “ethnic minority” and “ethnic minorities” rather than “BAME” (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic), “BME” (Black and Minority Ethnic) or “non-White”.

¹ Or the White and Irish Traveller categories in Northern Ireland.

² See Annex 1 and n.3 for standard ethnic classifications in the UK.

³ ONS [Language and Spelling – 9. Race and ethnicity](#). Cabinet Office [Ethnicity Facts and Figures Style Guide – Writing about ethnicity](#)

⁴ GOV.UK, [Ethnicity in the UK](#)

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 are covered by “White” and “ethnic minority” in this briefing paper.

1.2 The population of the United Kingdom

As set out in the following table, the ONS has estimated that people from ethnic minority backgrounds made up **14.4% of the UK population** in 2019. This varied from 2.2% in Northern Ireland to 16.1% in England.⁵

Population by ethnic group, UK 2019						
	Total population					
	England	Wales	England & Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	UK
White	83.9%	94.1%	84.4%	94.6%	97.8%	85.6%
All ethnic minority groups	16.1%	5.9%	15.6%	5.4%	2.2%	14.4%
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<i>Ethnic minority breakdown:</i>						
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	1.9%	1.0%	1.9%	0.7%	..	1.7%
Asian / Asian British	8.4%	2.8%	8.1%	2.6%	..	7.5%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	3.8%	1.2%	3.7%	1.1%	..	3.4%
Any other ethnic group	2.0%	1.0%	1.9%	1.0%	..	1.8%
<i>Total</i>	<i>16.1%</i>	<i>5.9%</i>	<i>15.6%</i>	<i>5.4%</i>	<i>0.0%</i>	<i>14.4%</i>

Source: Annual Population Survey, Jan 2019 - Dec 2019 dataset

⁵ Office for National Statistics (2019) [Annual Population Survey](#)

2. Parliament

2.1 The House of Commons

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

In modern times, the number of MPs from ethnic minority backgrounds has risen from four in 1987 to 65 in 2019. However, if the House of Commons reflected the UK population (14.4% ethnic minorities in 2019) there would be around 93.

Into the 20th century

Differing understandings of and attitudes towards ethnicity mean that it is difficult to be certain about when the first Member from an ethnic minority background entered Parliament and how many there have been since. Some are the sons and grandsons of wealthy men known as "slave holders" and enslaved or formerly enslaved women.⁶ While we record them among Britain's first ethnic minority MPs here, we also recognise that their families' profits 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. Our analysis of historical MPs is based on family origin and our use of the term 'ethnic minority' in reference to these individuals is necessarily anachronistic.

Opening the House to non-Protestant religious groups was a more central focus in the 19th century, although this struggle eventually facilitated the entry of ethnic minority Members. The first Roman Catholics entered the House of Commons in 1832.⁷ Lionel Rothschild, the first practising Jewish Member, finally took his seat in 1858, when Parliament accepted changes to the oath of allegiance, 11 years after his initial election.⁸

It is possible that the first MP from what we would describe today as an ethnic minority 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.⁹ Their daughter Bridget moved to England and had ten children, one of whom was James Townshend. He is possibly followed

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

⁷ The Victorian Commons, [Catholics in the Commons: part 1](#)

⁸ Jewish Virtual Library, [Lionel Nathan de Rothschild](#)

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

9 Ethnic diversity in politics and public life

by Richard Beckford, elected MP for Bridport in 1780, the son of a plantation owner and an enslaved Jamaican woman.¹⁰

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.¹¹

Scotland's first MP from an ethnic minority 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 1893.¹²

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

Historical ethnic minority MPs				
Name	Year elected	Party	Constituency	Family origin
James Townshend	1767	Whig	West Looe	Father: English. Mother: English, African and Dutch.
Richard Beckford	1780		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 Bhownaggee	1895	Conservative	Bethnal Green North-East	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 Catholic Tory 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, 1987 is often identified as the year when the first ethnic minority MPs 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 an ethnic minority background.

However, two Conservative MPs, Jonathan Sayeed, whose father was Indian, and Richard Hickmet, whose father was Turkish, were elected in

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

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

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

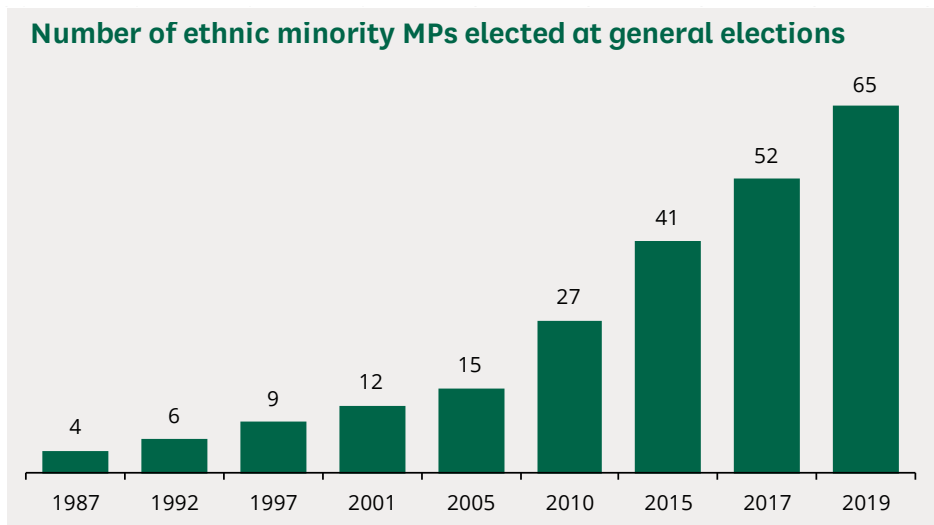
¹³ Victorian Commons, [Ethnic Minorities in Parliament: a new addition to the Victorian Commons](#); Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; The Scotman, [Memorial Calls for Scotland's 'forgotten' first non-White MP](#); Open University, [Making modern Britain](#),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

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1983, though they are said not to have identified as ethnic minorities themselves.¹⁴

Since 1987, the number of ethnic minority MPs has risen at every general election, reaching 65 in 2019, as shown in the chart below. Increases were particularly marked in 2010, when the number almost doubled to 27, and in 2015, when 14 more ethnic minority MPs were elected.¹⁵

Following the 2019 General Election, **10% of Members of the House of Commons** are from an ethnic minority background. If the House reflected the ethnic make-up of the population (14.4% ethnic minorities in 2019) there would be about 93.

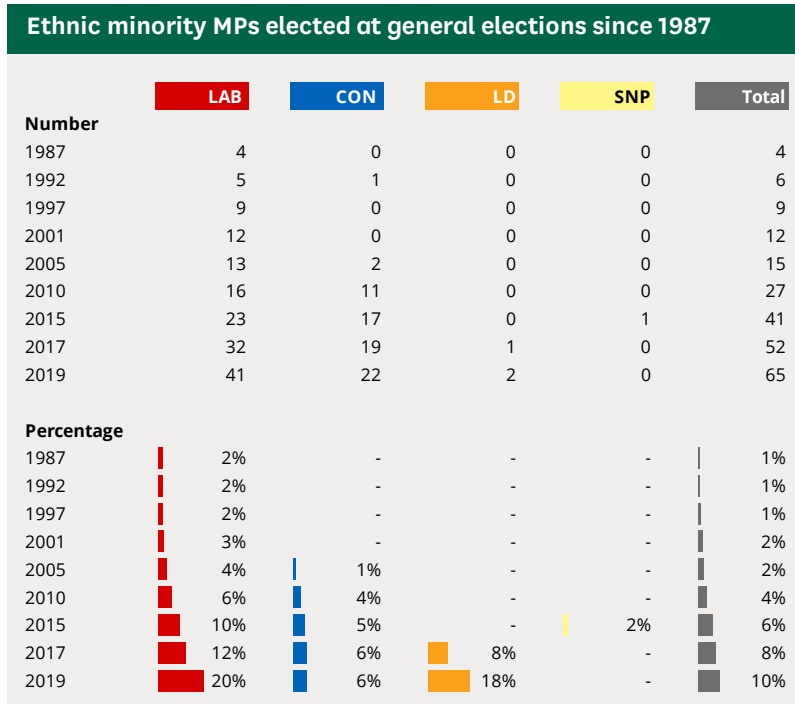


Source: [British Future](#) (2019), House of Commons Library Briefing Paper [CBP7529, UK Election Statistics: 1918-2019](#)

The table below shows the number and percentage of ethnic minority MPs elected by party between 1987 and 2019.

¹⁴ The Clarion Mag, [The rich history of BME MPs](#)

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



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

The number of ethnic minority Labour MPs has grown at every election since 1987, reaching a record high of 41 in 2019. The first ethnic minority 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. The next ethnic minority Conservatives – Adam Afriyie and Shailesh Vara – were elected in 2005, since when 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 Layla Moran became the first Liberal Democrat MP from an ethnic minority background in 2017.

Following the 2019 General Election, of the 65 ethnic minority MPs returned, 41 are Labour (63%), 22 are Conservative (34%) and 2 are Liberal Democrats (3%). Of all Labour MPs, 20% are from ethnic minority backgrounds; of all Conservative MPs, 6% are from ethnic minority backgrounds. Layla Moran and Munira Wilson, the Liberal Democrats’ two ethnic minority MPs, constitute 18% of all Liberal Democrat MPs.

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

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Ethnic minority Members of Parliament by party

Name	Constituency	Party
Abena Oppong-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
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 Dhesi	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

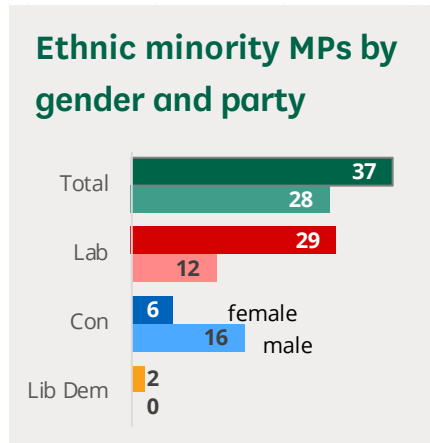
Source: [Operation Black Vote](#), British Future (personal correspondence)

Ethnic minority women in the House of Commons

The chart on the right shows the number of ethnic minority MPs by gender and Party elected at the last General Election.

Before 2010, Diane Abbott and Dawn Butler had been the only female MPs from any ethnic minority background. The first women of Asian origin were elected in 2010: they are Rushanara Ali, Labour MP for Bethnal Green and Bow, Priti Patel, Conservative MP for Witham, and Valerie Vaz, Labour MP for Walsall South.¹⁶

Following the 2019 General Election, there were **37 ethnic minority women 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 ethnic minority MPs. 29 were Labour and 6 were Conservative.



¹⁶ 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.¹⁷

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 1919.¹⁸ 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 1969.¹⁹

Research suggests that in October 2020 there were 50 ethnic minority Members of the House of Lords, **6.3% of all 798 Peers**.²⁰ The following table sets out the numbers of ethnic minority Peers by group and gender.

Ethnic minority members in the House of Lords					
Oct 2020					
Party/group	Ethnic minority Peers			% of group	All Peers
	Male	Female	Total		
Bishops	0	0	0	0%	26
Conservative	9	5	14	5.5%	256
Crossbench	10	4	14	7.7%	181
Labour	4	6	10	6.8%	177
Liberal Democrat	2	4	6	7.9%	89
Non-affiliated	5	1	6	11.5%	52
Other	0	0	0	0%	16
Lord Speaker	0	0	0	0%	1
Total	30	20	50	6.3%	798

Sources: [Operation Black Vote, Peers](#); UK Parliament, [Lords membership](#) (accessed 12 Oct 2020)

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

¹⁸ Columbia Encyclopaedia, 6th edition, Columbia University Press, 2008

¹⁹ 100 Great Black Britons, [Lord Leary Constantine](#)

²⁰ [Operation Black Vote, Peers](#); UK Parliament, [Lords membership](#) (accessed 12 Oct 2020)

Ethnic minority Peers 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 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
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 MacGregor-Smith	Conservative
Rumi Verjee	Liberal Democrat
Sandip Verma	Conservative
Sayeeda Hussain Warsi	Conservative
Shreela Flather	Crossbench
Meghnad Desai	Labour
Shriti Vadera	Labour
Simon Andrew Woolley	Crossbench
Swraj Paul	Non-affiliated
Usha Kumari Prashar	Crossbench
Valerie Amos	Labour
Victor Adebawale	Crossbench
Waheed Alli	Labour
Zahida Parveen Manzoor	Conservative
Zameer Choudrey	Conservative

2.3 International comparisons

International comparison in this area is complicated by differing classification systems and approaches to ethnic monitoring.

In the 116th US Congress (2019-2021), out of a total 436 members in the House of Representatives, there were 53 Black or African American members (12.2%), 46 Hispanic or Latino members (10.6%), 17 members of Asian or Pacific Islander ancestry (3.9%), and four American Indian members (0.9%). In the Senate, out of 100 members, there were three Black or African American members (3.0%), five Hispanic or Latino members (5.0%), three of Asian or Pacific Islander ancestry (3.0%), and no American Indian members.²¹

Comparison to national statistics is complex because Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin is not an option in the US Census's question on race, due to the racial diversity of people of Hispanic, 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 2019, 13.4% of the US population was Black or African American, 5.9% was Asian, 0.2% were Hawaiian or of other Pacific Islander origin, and 1.3% was American Indian or Alaska Native; and 18.5% was Hispanic or Latino.²²

Following the 2017 elections, 58 out of 709 (8.2%) Members of the German Federal Parliament had a so-called "migration background", which is defined as either not being born as a German citizen themselves or having a parent who was not. This compared with 22.5% of the total population at the time.²³

Public authorities in France are forbidden in law from collecting data on ethnicity or race. Nevertheless an "imperfect" analysis by the broadcaster France 24 reported that of the 551 deputies elected to the National Assembly in 2017 in Metropolitan France, 35 (or 6.4%) of the total had at least one parent whose background was from a French overseas dominion or territory or from a non-European country.²⁴ This was up from 1.5% in 2012.²⁵

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

²¹ Congressional Research Service, [Membership of the 116th Congress: a profile](#) (last updated 2 October 2020)

²² The United States Census Bureau: [Quick Facts](#)

²³ Mediendienst Integration, [58 MPs have a Migration Background](#), October 2017.

²⁴ "Metropolitan France" includes those parts of France in Europe. It excludes French overseas departments and territories ("DOM-TOM").

²⁵ France 24, ["Diversity gains ground in France's new-look National Assembly after vote"](#), June 2017

3. The Government and Cabinet

The first ethnic minority minister 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 ethnic minority **government minister** in the House of Commons was Paul Boateng (Labour), who was made Parliamentary Under-Secretary in the Department of Health in 1997.²⁶ There have since been 20 ethnic minority government ministers in the House of Commons.

Ethnic minority government ministers

By year first appointed

Name	Party	Year	Gender
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
James Cleverly	Conservative	2019	Male
Seema Kennedy	Conservative	2019	Female
Kemi Badenoch	Conservative	2019	Female
Ranil Jayawardena	Conservative	2020	Male

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

²⁶ All information in this section is from the Members' Name Information Service.

Ethnic minority ministers attending the Cabinet

By year first attended Cabinet

Name	Year	Party	Position
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
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
Rishi Sunak	2020	Conservative	Chancellor of the Exchequer
Suella Braverman	2020	Conservative	Attorney General

Currently there are three Cabinet ministers from ethnic minority backgrounds: Priti Patel (Home Secretary), Alok Sharma (Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) and Rishi Sunak (Chancellor of the Exchequer). Suella Braverman, who was made Attorney General in February 2020, also attends the Cabinet. The only other politician from an ethnic minority background to have held this position is Baroness Scotland, who also became the first female Attorney General when she was appointed in 2007.²⁷

In addition to Baroness Amos and Baroness Scotland, eight other **Peers** from ethnic minority backgrounds have held ministerial positions.

Ethnic minority ministers in the Lords

By year first appointed

Name	Party	Year	Gender
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
Dolar Popat	Conservative	2013	Male
Nosheena Mobarik	Conservative	2016	Female
Zahida Manzoor	Conservative	2018	Female
Tariq Ahmad	Conservative	2020	Male

²⁷ University of London, [Patricia Scotland](#)

4. Other elected bodies in the UK

4.1 Devolved legislatures

In October 2020, **two (1.6%)** of the **Scottish Parliament's** 129 members were from an ethnic minority background: Humza Yousaf (SNP) and Anas Sarwar (Labour).²⁸ This is the same number as in the 2011 Parliament. As noted above, about 5.4% of the Scottish population are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Three (5%) of the 60 Members of the **National Assembly for Wales** were from an ethnic minority background in October 2020.²⁹ The longest serving is Vaughan Gething, who has been a Labour AM since 2011 and is currently Minister for Health and Social Services.³⁰ About 5.9% of the Welsh population is from ethnic minority backgrounds. The first ethnic minority member of the Senedd was Mohammad (Oscar) Asghar, elected as a Plaid Cymru AM in 2007 and then as a Conservative in 2011 and 2016. He died in June 2020.³¹

None of the current 90 Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly were recorded as being from an ethnic minority background in October 2020. Anna Lo represented the Alliance Party in the Assembly between 2007 and 2016 and in doing so became the first Chinese-born Member of a legislature in Europe.³² About 2% of the Northern Irish population is from ethnic minority backgrounds.

4.2 Local government and the Greater London Authority

England

The most recent (2018) Local Government Association census found that **4.2% of councillors were from ethnic minority backgrounds**, a figure that has changed little from 3.5% in 2004.³³ This compared with an ethnic minority population of about 15.6% at the time. 2.1% of councillors were from Asian or Asian British backgrounds, 0.9% were Black or Black British, 0.9% were mixed and 0.3% selected the "Other" category.

In April 2019, an audit of local authorities in England by Operation Black Vote reported that while 14% of councillors were from ethnic minority backgrounds, this proportion varied markedly: in Brent, for instance, 66.7% of the councillors and 64.9% of the population were from ethnic minority backgrounds, but in Brighton and Hove, there were no

²⁸ [Operation Black Vote](#) (accessed 14 October 2020)

²⁹ Institute of Welsh Affairs, [How can Wales elect a more diverse Senedd?](#)

³⁰ National Assembly for Wales, [Your Assembly Members](#) (accessed 14 October 2020)

³¹ BBC, [Conservative Senedd Member Mohammad Asghar has died](#)

³² BBC, [Alliance party selects Anna Lo](#)

³³ Local Government Association, [National Census of local authority councillors \(2018\)](#). Figures given as a proportion of respondents.

ethnic minority councillors despite a 10.9% ethnic minority population.³⁴

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 ethnic minority groups, up from 0.6% in 2012.³⁵ The corresponding ethnic minority population of Wales was 4.4%.

Scotland

A survey of Scotland's councillors after the 2017 elections found that **0.4%** of all respondents were from ethnic minority groups compared with 4% of Scotland's population as a whole at that time. However, only 408 out of 1,227 councillors responded, so the sample may not be representative.³⁶ Of this 0.4%, half were Asian and half selected "Other ethnic group". 2.7% of councillors selected the "Other White ethnic group category".³⁷

Northern Ireland

In April 2019, there was **one councillor** of recorded ethnic minority origin in Northern Ireland, out of a total of 462.³⁸

Greater London Authority

As well as the **Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, eight (32%)** of the 25 Members of the **London Assembly** were from ethnic minority backgrounds in October 2020.³⁹ This compares with about 40.6% of London's population.

³⁴ Operation Black Vote, [BAME local political representation audit 2019](#). Local population figures are based on the 2001 Census.

³⁵ Welsh Government, [Local Government Candidates Survey](#). The response rate was 26%.

³⁶ Improvement Service, [Scotland's Councillors 2017-2022](#). Of the 408 who responded, 1.5% did not provide their ethnicity data

³⁷ No respondents selected "White Gypsy/Traveller" or "White Polish".

³⁸ Northern Ireland Assembly, personal correspondence

³⁹ London Assembly, personal correspondence

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.

For ease of reference, the ethnic breakdown of the UK and each country appears again below. This table also sets out the ethnic breakdown of the economically active populations across the UK. In brief, this refers to the number of people aged 16 to 64 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 participation of women in the workforce – the ethnic minority population usually has a slightly lower representation in the economically active population.

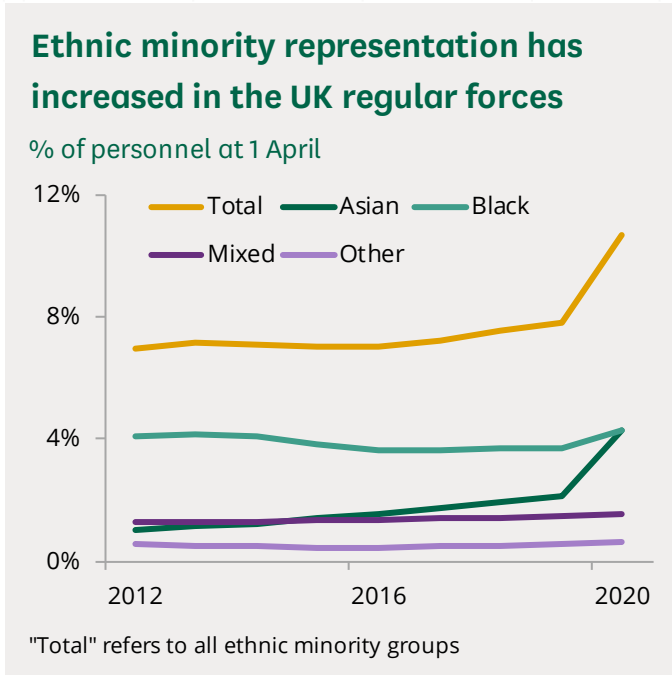
Economically active population, UK 2019						
	Economically active population					
	England	Wales	England & Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	UK
White	85.5%	94.8%	85.9%	95.5%	98.0%	87.0%
All ethnic minority groups	14.5%	5.2%	14.1%	4.5%	2.0%	13.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<i>Ethnic minority breakdown:</i>						
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	1.3%	0.8%	1.3%	0.5%	..	1.2%
Asian / Asian British	7.7%	2.7%	7.4%	2.3%	..	6.8%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	3.7%	0.9%	3.6%	0.9%	..	3.3%
Any other ethnic group	1.8%	0.7%	1.8%	0.9%	..	1.7%
<i>Total</i>	<i>14.5%</i>	<i>5.2%</i>	<i>14.1%</i>	<i>4.5%</i>	<i>2.0%</i>	<i>13.0%</i>

Source: Annual Population Survey, Jan 2019 - Dec 2019 dataset

5.1 Armed forces

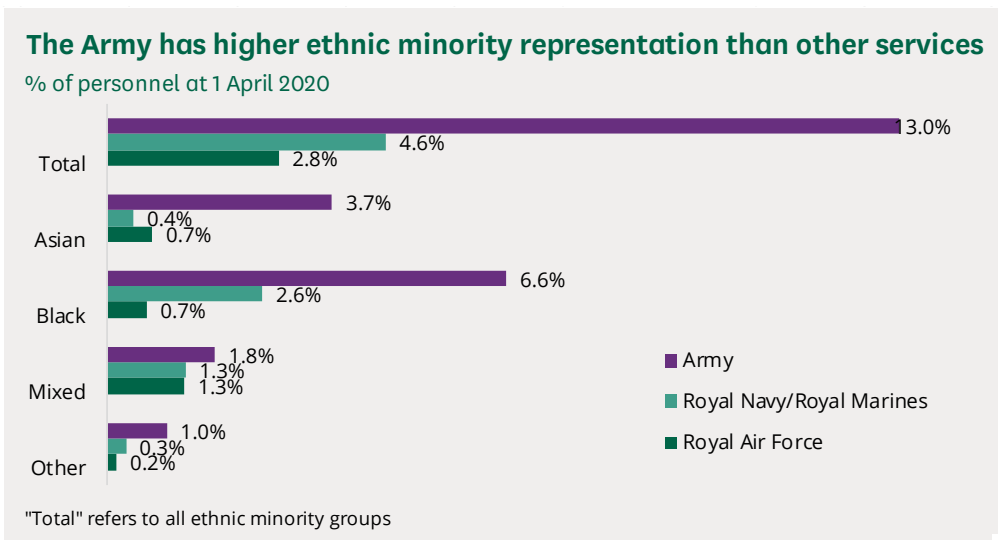
At the beginning of April 2020, **10.7% of the UK Regular Forces was from ethnic minority backgrounds** across all services.⁴⁰ This has steadily increased from 6.9% in April 2012. The data suggest that this increase has been driven by a rise in representation of Asian personnel, from 1.1% in 2012 to 4.2% in 2020. In 2020, 4.2% of all personnel were Black, 1.5% were Mixed, and 0.6% were from other ethnic minority groups. Ethnicity was recorded for 99.2% of all personnel.

⁴⁰ GOV.UK, [UK Armed Forces Biannual Diversity Statistics 2020](#)



Representation in the armed forces varies by service. Ethnic minority representation is highest in the **Army**, rising from 9.9% in April 2012 to **13.0% in April 2020**, in line with the UK economically active population. Over time, the biggest change has been an increase in Asian representation, from 1.5% in 2012 to 3.7% in 2020.

Ethnic minority representation is lower in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines and Royal Air Force. In the **Royal Navy and Royal Marines**, ethnic minority representation increased from 3.5% in April 2012 to **4.6%** in April 2020, and in the **Royal Air Force** it increased from 1.6% to **2.8%** in the same period. With the exception of the proportion of Asian personnel in the Army, the proportion of each ethnic minority group changed by no more than half a percentage point in any service between 2012 and 2020.



Representation also differs by rank. **Across all services, there is lower ethnic minority representation among officers than 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 2.9% of officers were from ethnic minority backgrounds in April 2020, compared with 15% of personnel in other ranks; furthermore, 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), ethnic minority representation is growing but is lower than the UK Regulars, at **5.7%** from ethnic minority backgrounds across all services (up from 4.7% in October 2012). Across all services (Maritime Reserves, Army Reserves and Royal Air Force Reserves), ethnic minority representation is lower among officers than other ranks.

5.2 Civil Service

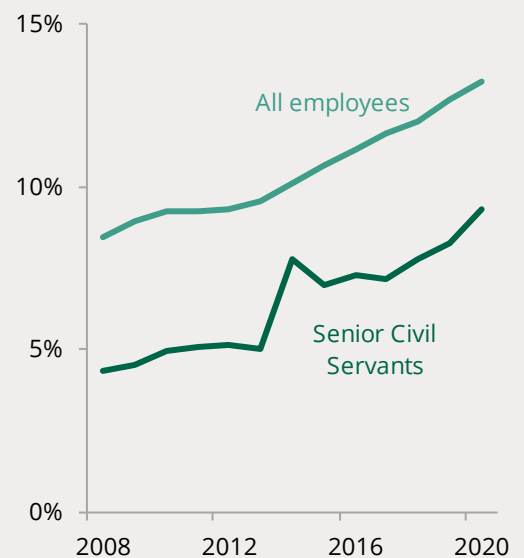
At the end of March 2020, **13.2%** of **UK** civil servants were from an ethnic minority background, an increase of half a percentage point from 2019. This is very close to the economically active population in the UK (13.0%).

Ethnic minority representation in the UK Civil Service has grown steadily from 8.5% in 2008 when data was first published. The representation of **Senior Civil Servants** (SCS), the highest pay band, has also steadily increased, from 4.4% in 2008 to **9.3%** in 2020, however it remains below that of the wider workforce and the economically active population.⁴¹

The breakdown of the UK Civil Service workforce by ethnic group broadly reflects that of the economically active UK population, at 7.0% Asian,⁴² 3.5% Black, 1.8% Mixed and 0.6% other ethnic group in 2020. Among the highest pay bands, Asian and Black employees are most underrepresented, making up 5.0% and 1.1% of UK Senior Civil Servants.

Ethnic minority representation in the Civil Service has risen

% of UK workforce on 31 March



⁴¹ Nomis, [Annual Civil Service Employment Survey](#); GOV.UK, [Civil Service Statistics](#)

⁴² 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%.

In Wales, ethnic minority groups make up **3.3% of all employees** and **2.0% of Senior Civil Servants**. This compares with 5.2% of the economically active population in Wales.

Scotland

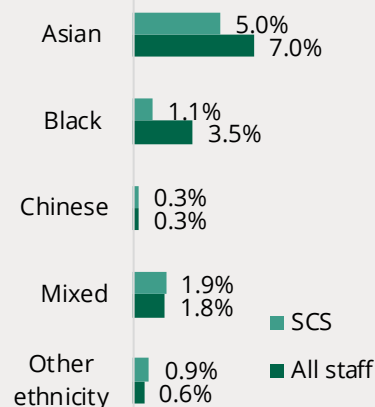
In Scotland, **3.1% of all employees** are from ethnic minority backgrounds and **4.1% of Senior Civil Servants**, compared with 5.4% of the economically active population. A figure for ethnic minority Senior Civil Servants was first reported in 2018, at 3.2% representation.

Northern Ireland

Among home civil servants based in Northern Ireland, **1.0%** are from ethnic minority backgrounds compared to 2.0% of the economically active population (excluding Irish Travellers).⁴³ The reported figure for **Senior Civil Servants** from ethnic minority backgrounds is zero.

Asian and Black SCS are underrepresented

% of UK workforce, 31 March 2020



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 2020, **22.1% of NHS staff in England** whose background was known were from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared with 14.5% of the economically active population (ethnicity was known for >90% of staff).⁴⁴ There were large variations by staff group. Doctors had the highest ethnic minority representation, at 46.0%, and Ambulance staff had the lowest, at 3.5%.

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" group to allow comparison with the economically active population.

Representation in NHS England varies by staff and ethnic group

% of NHS England workforce on 31 March 2020

	Doctors	Consultants	Nurses and health visitors	Midwives	Ambulance staff	Economically active population
Asian	32.8%	31.2%	11.4%	2.3%	1.3%	7.7%
Black	5.2%	2.9%	8.8%	7.0%	0.5%	3.7%
Mixed	3.5%	2.4%	1.5%	1.8%	1.4%	1.3%
Other	4.6%	3.5%	4.5%	0.6%	0.3%	1.8%
Total	46.0%	40.1%	26.1%	11.6%	3.5%	14.5%

Asian staff (including Chinese employees) make up over 30% of doctors and consultants but fewer than 3% of midwives and ambulance staff,

⁴³ Excludes the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

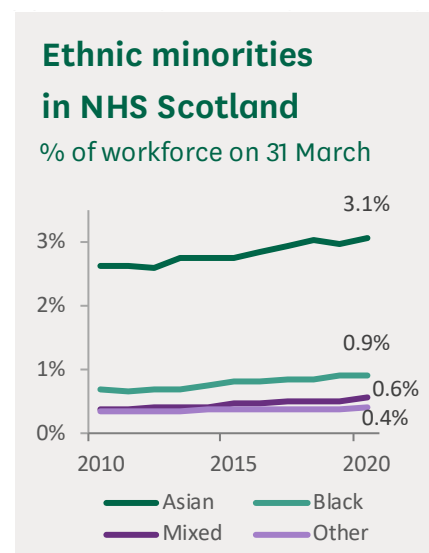
⁴⁴ NHS Digital, [NHS Workforce Statistics](#)

compared with 7.7% of the economically active population in England. Black staff make up 8.8% of nurses and health visitors but only 0.5% of ambulance staff, compared with 3.7% of the economically active population.

Ethnic minority representation in NHS England has grown over time, from 18.7% in 2017 to 22.1% in 2020. The table below shows the breakdown by ethnic group over time. The “Asian” group (excluding Chinese staff) grew the most, from 9.2% to 10.7% of all staff.

Ethnic minority representation in NHS England has increased, 2017-2020					
% of staff on 31 March					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Total	18.9%	19.8%	20.7%	22.1%	
Asian	9.2%	9.6%	10.0%	10.7%	
Black	5.6%	5.9%	6.1%	6.4%	
Chinese	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	
Mixed	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%	1.9%	
Other	2.0%	2.1%	2.3%	2.5%	

Ethnic minority representation in **NHS Scotland** has grown steadily over time, rising from 4.1% in 2010 to 5.0% in 2020. Figures are calculated as a proportion of those who provided their ethnicity data, which rose from 64% in 2010 to 73% in 2020. The current make-up of NHS Scotland is broadly similar to that of the economically active population.⁴⁵



⁴⁵ Turas Data Intelligence, [NHSScotland Workforce](#) (Equality and Diversity spreadsheet), ISD Scotland, [NHS Scotland Workforce Information](#) (Overall trend spreadsheet)

5.4 Police

The Home Office uses the following ethnic minority categories for the police workforce in **England and Wales**: Asian or Asian British, Black or Black British, Chinese or Other Ethnic Group, and Mixed. Since 2015, ethnic minority staff representation, as a proportion of staff whose ethnicity was known, grew from 6.7% to **7.7%** on 31 March 2020 (response rates >95%).⁴⁶ This compared with 14.1% of the economically active population in England and Wales.

The biggest increase was among Asian staff, which grew from 2.9% in 2015 to 3.5% in 2020. Representation of Black staff remained at 1.7% over the same period.

Among the forces with the highest representation are:

- the Metropolitan Police, with 19.5% ethnic minority officers (up from 13.4% in 2018, but compared with 40.6% of the local population);
- the West Midlands Police with 13.4%;
- Leicestershire Police with 10.4%.

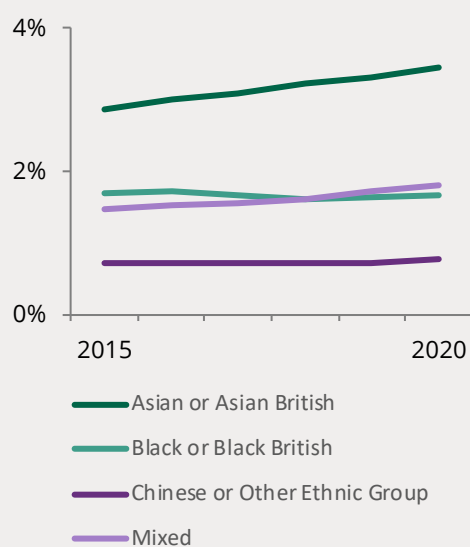
Ethnic minority officers remained less well-represented in the highest ranks: in March 2020, **1.9% of chief officers** (a fall from 2.6% in 2019) and **4.3% of chief inspectors** were from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared with **7.9% of constables**. Representation of Black chief officers fell from 1.0% in 2018 to 0.0% in 2020, and the figure for the “Chinese or other” group has been 0.0% since 2015.

Police **Scotland** do not publish statistics on the ethnicity of their officers, but reported in response to a Freedom of Information request that in January 2019, 255 (**1.6%**) of police officers whose ethnicity was known (98%) were from ethnic minority backgrounds.⁴⁷ If police officers from White minority backgrounds are included in the calculation, this figure rises to 3.6%.

The Police Service of **Northern Ireland** reports that in May 2020, **0.57%** of its 6,988 police officers were from an ethnic minority background.⁴⁸ It is not indicated whether this figure includes or excludes officers whose ethnicity is not known.

Police workforce in England and Wales

% ethnic minorities on 31 March



⁴⁶ 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.

⁴⁷ WhatDoTheyKnow, [Ethnic backgrounds of employees](#) (accessed 18 October 2020)

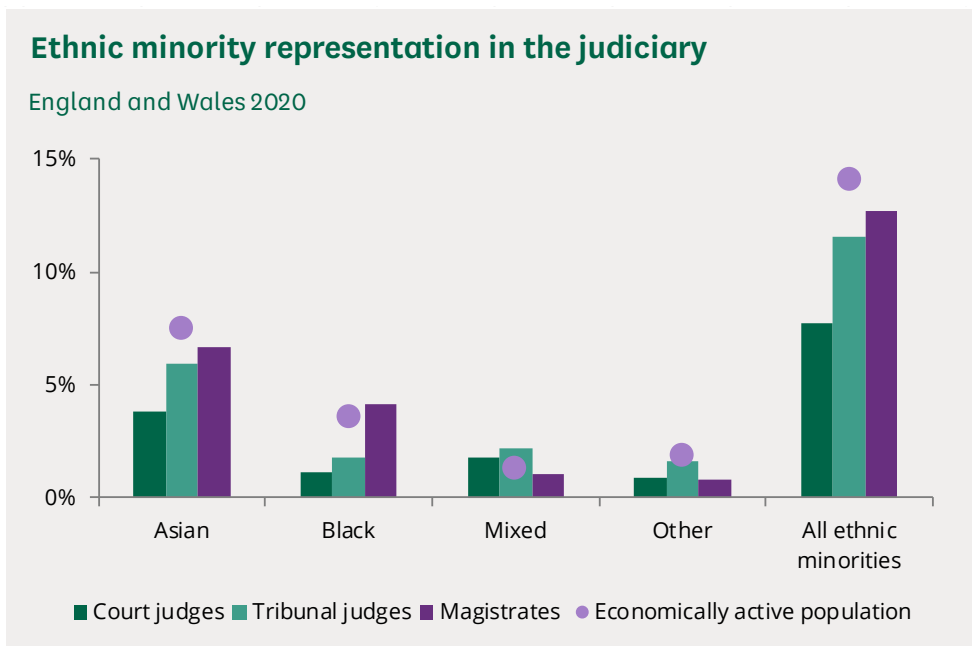
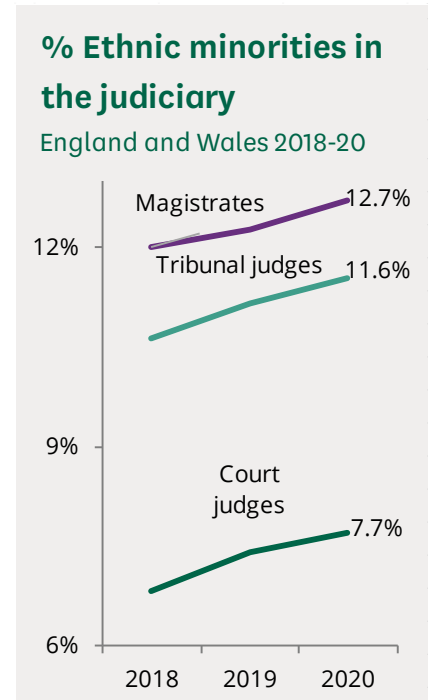
⁴⁸ Police Service of Northern Ireland, [Workforce Composition Statistics](#)

5.4 Justice

On 31 March 2020, **7.7% of court judges and 11.6% of tribunal judges in post** in **England and Wales** were from ethnic minority backgrounds (of whose ethnicity was known). In both cases, this is an increase of roughly a percentage point from 2018. The proportion of **magistrates** from ethnic minority backgrounds was **12.7%**, a slight increase from 12.0% in 2018.⁴⁹

Compared with the economically active population of England and Wales (14.1%), ethnic minorities are generally underrepresented. People from Asian backgrounds make up 3.9% of court judges, 6.0% of tribunal judges and 6.7% of magistrates, but 7.4% of the economically active population. Some 4.1% of magistrates are Black compared with 3.6% of the economically active population, but representation of Black judges is lower at 1.2% of court judges and 1.8% of tribunal judges.

Among heads of division (the highest level), no data is provided, due to low numbers. This compares with 10% of deputy high court judges and 10% of district judges being from ethnic minority backgrounds.



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 2019, **1.6% of lay magistrates and 2.6% of tribunal members** in **Northern Ireland** were from ethnic minority backgrounds, both rising by 0.1 percentage point from 2018. No court-based judges from ethnic minority backgrounds were recorded. For

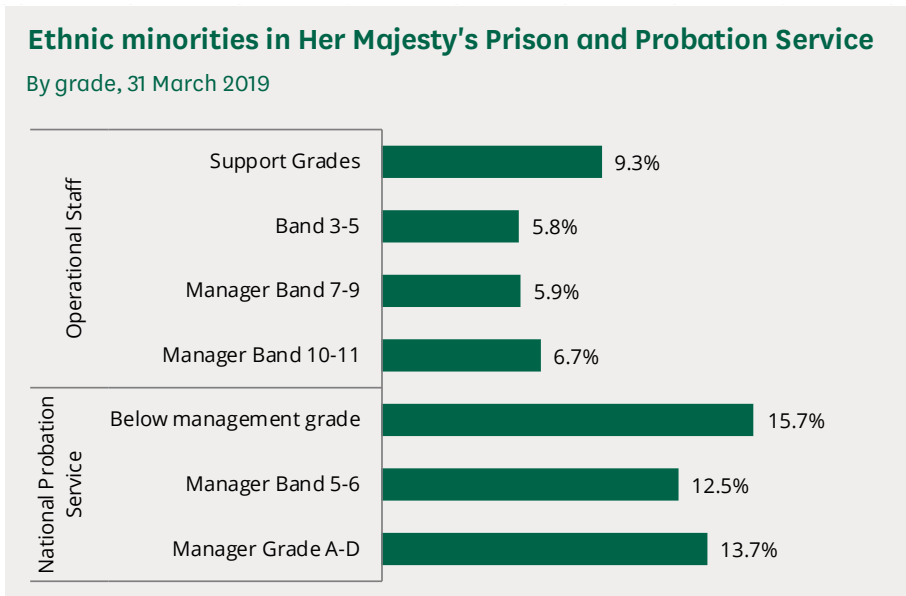
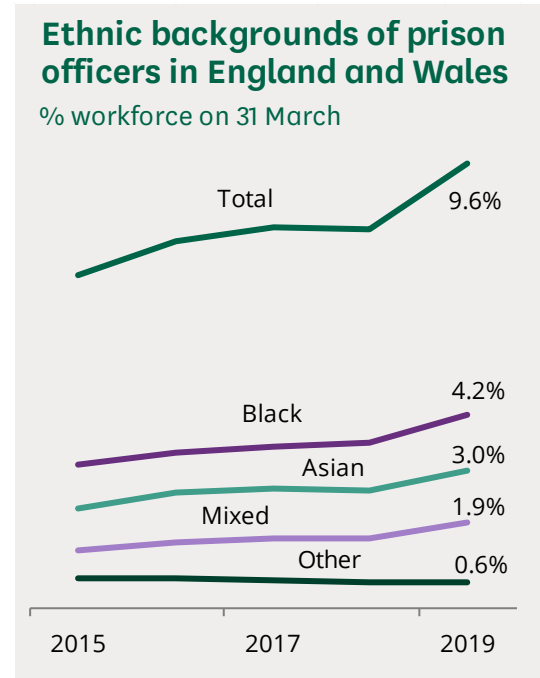
⁴⁹ GOV.UK, [Judicial diversity statistics](#), Courts and Tribunals Judiciary, [Judicial Diversity](#)

comparison, 1.9% of the economically active population was from an ethnic minority background.⁵⁰

5.5 Prison officers

In **England and Wales**, ethnic minority representation among prison officers has increased in recent years, from 7.2% in 2015 to **9.6%** in 2019 (latest data).⁵¹ However, this falls short of the economically active population in England and Wales, which is currently 14.1%. Representation has increased in all ethnic minority 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 slightly higher, whereas prison officers from Asian and other ethnic minority groups were underrepresented.

Ethnic minority representation was **higher in the National Probation Service than among operational staff**. In both groups, ethnic minority representation was **lower at the highest grades than the lowest grades**: 6.7% and 13.7% compared with 9.3% and 15.7% respectively. However, among both operational staff and the National Probation Service, ethnic minority representation was in fact lowest at the level **below** the most senior managers.



In the latest diversity figures for employees in the **Scottish Prison Service** (31 March 2019), no data is provided for groups other than those in the “White” groups due to low numbers. Nearly half of 4,451

⁵⁰ Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, [The Judiciary in Northern Ireland 2019 Equality Monitoring Report](#)

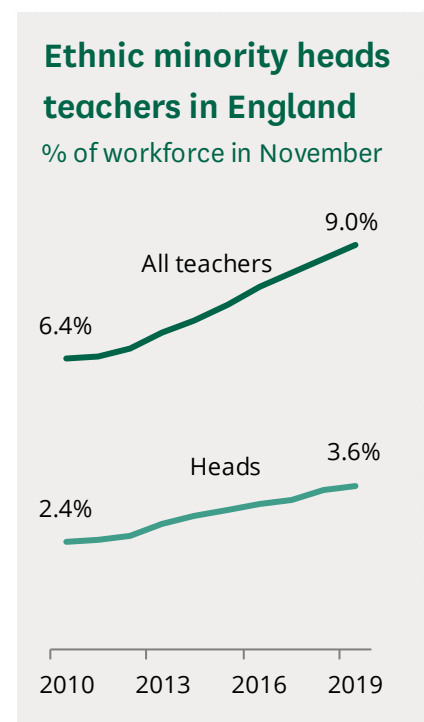
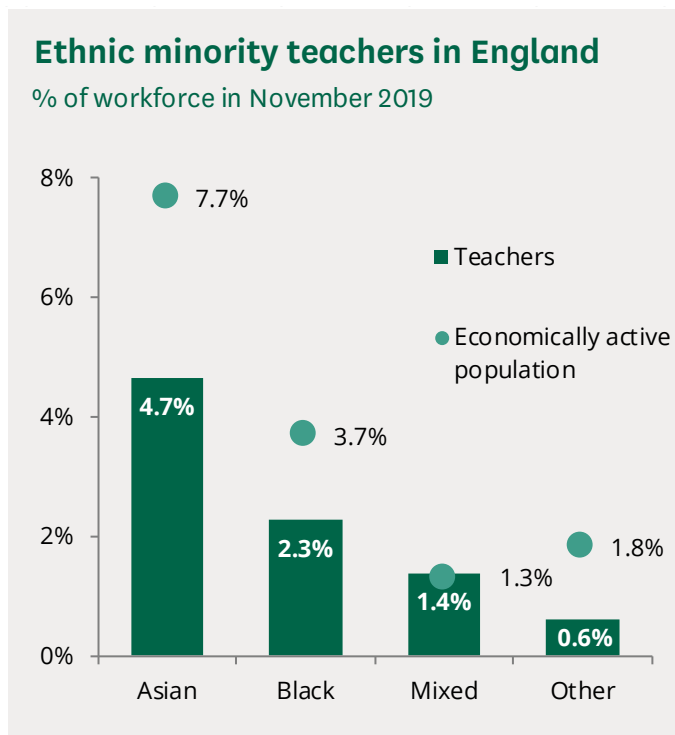
⁵¹ GOV.UK., [HMPPS annual staff equalities report](#). Data is presented as a proportion of those who provided their ethnicity data.

employees did not provide any ethnicity data; of those who did, fewer than 70 were from an ethnic minority background.⁵²

5.6 Teachers

In November 2019, **9.0%** of all teachers in state funded schools in **England** whose ethnicity was known were from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared with 6.2% in 2010 (response rates >90%). This compares with 14.5% of the economically active population. Only the proportion of teachers from Mixed ethnic backgrounds was in line with the economically active population in England: teachers from Asian, Black and other ethnic minority backgrounds were underrepresented. The Department for Education provides data broken down by individual ethnic group, but due to low proportions they are combined in this briefing. 85.7% of teachers were from White British backgrounds and 5.3% were from Irish and other White backgrounds.

The proportion of headteachers from ethnic minority backgrounds lags behind that of all teachers. The proportion rose from 2.4% in 2010 to 3.6% in 2019. In 2019, 1.6% of headteachers were Asian, 1.0% were Black, 0.8% were Mixed and 0.2% were from another ethnic minority group.⁵³



In March 2020, **1.3%** of teachers registered with the Education Workforce Council in **Wales** identified as Black, Asian or from a minority ethnic background, compared with 5.2% of the economically

⁵² Scottish Prison Service, [Mainstreaming, Gender Pay Gap and Equality Outcomes Progress Report](#)

⁵³ All data from GOV.UK, [School Workforce in England](#)

active population. This figure includes teachers whose ethnicity is not known (6.2%). 91.2% of registered teachers identified as White.⁵⁴

In **Scotland**, the proportion of ethnic minority teachers whose ethnicity was known has remained similar over time in both primary and secondary schools (response rates >94%).⁵⁵ In primary schools, **1.1%** of teachers were from ethnic minority backgrounds in September 2019 (compared with a low of 0.9% in 2008 and a high of 1.4% in 2011). In secondary schools, **1.8%** of teachers were from ethnic minority backgrounds (compared with a low of 1.6% in 2012 and a high of 2.1% in 2011). These compare with a figure of 4.5% for the economically active population in Scotland. Due to low numbers, a figure for ethnic minority headteachers was not available.

In **Northern Ireland**, **0.3%** of teachers whose ethnic background was recorded were from ethnic minority groups in April 2019.⁵⁶

5.7 Fire and Rescue Service

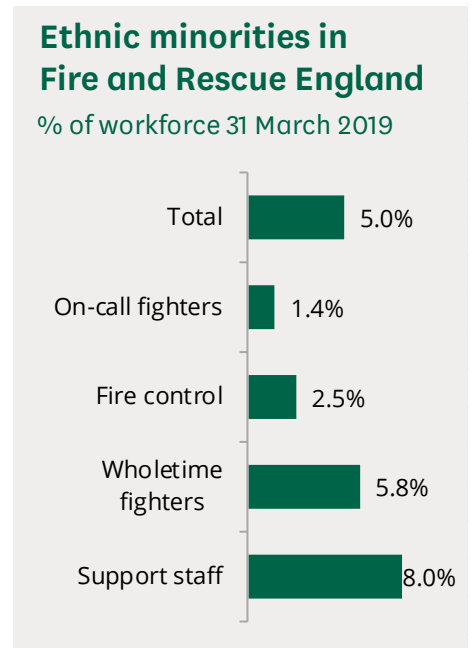
In **England**, **5.0%** of all staff in the Fire and Rescue Service whose ethnicity was known were from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared with **14.5%** of the economically active population (March 2019; ethnicity was known for 90% of all staff). 1.1% were Asian, 1.6% were Black, 1.7% were Mixed and 0.5% were from Chinese or other ethnic minority groups.⁵⁷

Representation varied by staff role. Among wholtime firefighters – the majority of staff – 5.8% were from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared with 1.4% of on-call fighters. In Fire Control, 2.5% of staff, and 8.0% of support staff, were from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Ethnic minority representation has increased gradually over time, from 4.0% of all staff in 2011 to 5.0% in 2019. Among the total number of firefighters (wholtime and on call), representation increased from 3.5% in 2011 to 4.3% in 2019.

In **Scotland**, **1.9%** of staff whose ethnicity was known were from ethnic minority backgrounds on 31 March 2020, however data was only held for 62% of staff.⁵⁸ This compared with 4.5% in the economically active population and has grown from 0.8% in 2012. Representation was slightly higher among support staff, at 2.3% of staff.

Fire services in **Wales** are a local authority service. Ethnic minority representation on 31 March 2020 of staff whose ethnicity was known was as follows:



⁵⁴ Education Workforce Council, [EWC Annual Education Workforce Statistics for Wales 2020](#)

⁵⁵ Gov.scot, [Teacher census supplementary statistics](#)

⁵⁶ General Teaching Council of Northern Ireland, by correspondence. Details were held for 71.9% of teachers.

⁵⁷ GOV.UK, [Fire and rescue workforce and pensions statistics](#)

⁵⁸ Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, [Statistics](#) (Fire Safety and Organisational Statistics – tables and charts)

- North Wales: **1.5%**⁵⁹
- Mid and West Wales: **1.0%**⁶⁰

Ethnicity data is not reported by the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service. The economically active population of Wales is 5.2% from ethnic minorities.

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 ethnic minority groups.⁶¹

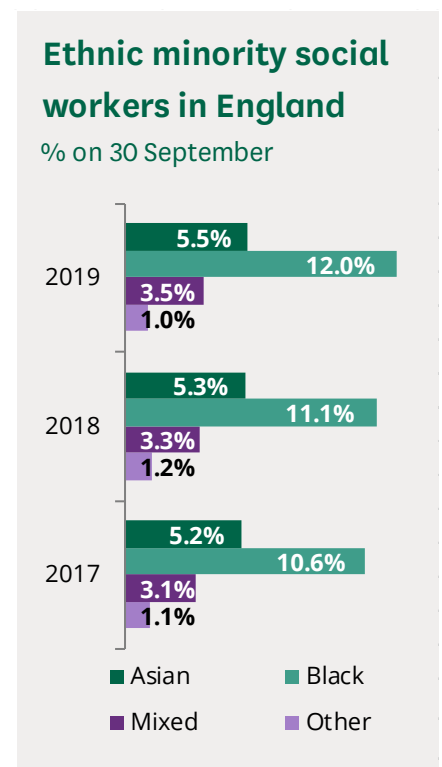
5.8 Social workers

On 30 September 2019, the proportion of children and family social workers from ethnic minority backgrounds in **England** was **21.9%** (of the 82% whose ethnicity was known). This compared with 14.1% of the economically active population. This figure of 21.9% rose from 20.0% in 2017, the first year in which collecting ethnicity data in the social work workforce was mandatory. The biggest increase was among representation of Black social workers, rising from 10.6% in 2017 to 12.0% in 2019.⁶²

The local authorities with the highest ethnic minority representation were:

- Brent (73.6%)
- Waltham Forest (69.9%)
- Newham (67.4%)
- Tower Hamlets (64.2%).

Four local authorities reported a 100% White workforce whose ethnicity was known: Darlington, Redcar and Cleveland, City of Kingston upon Hull, and the Isles of Scilly.



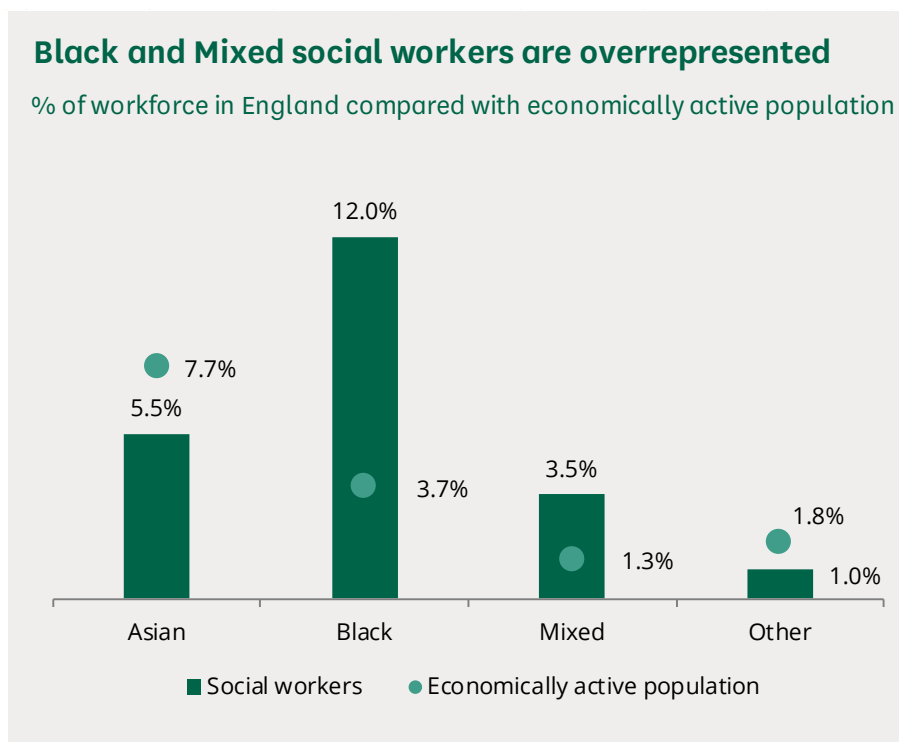
⁵⁹ North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority, [Employment Monitoring Data 2019-2020](#)

⁶⁰ Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service, [Annual Equality Report 01 April 2019 – 31 March 2020](#)

⁶¹ Personal correspondence

⁶² GOV.UK. [Statistics: Children's Social Work Workforce](#)

Compared with the economically active population, there was a significantly higher proportion of Black social workers in England, at 12.0% (compared with 3.7%). In Brent, 53.4% of social workers were from Black backgrounds. Social workers from Mixed ethnic groups were also overrepresented, at 3.5% of social workers compared with 1.3% of the economically active population. Social workers from Asian and other ethnic minority groups were underrepresented compared with the economically active population.



According to Social Care Wales, 88% of social workers on the register in **Wales** were from White backgrounds on 1 April 2020. It is not stated whether this includes social workers whose ethnicity is not known.⁶³

In **Scotland**, of those whose ethnicity was known, **5.1%** of the workforce in the social service sector was from an ethnic minority background in December 2019.⁶⁴ Since the Scottish Social Services Council presents the percentages as whole numbers, the figure may not be exact. This figure of 5.1% has grown from 3.5% in 2013, however, the proportion of employees whose ethnicity was known fell from 86% in 2013 to 78% in 2019, so it is not clear whether this represents an actual rise in ethnic minority representation.

In **Northern Ireland**, **4.4%** of social care workers whose ethnicity was known were from ethnic minority backgrounds in October 2020, compared with 2.0% of the economically active population (however, ethnicity was known for only 60% of workers).⁶⁵ 2.1% were Asian and 1.5% were Black. Ethnic minority representation was lower among

⁶³ Social Care Wales, [Registration data reports](#)

⁶⁴ Scottish Social Services Council Statistics, [Workforce data Reports](#)

⁶⁵ Northern Ireland Social Care Council, personal correspondence

social workers (1.3%) and students (1.5%), who have a smaller headcount than social care workers.

Ethnic minority social workers in Northern Ireland					
Oct-20					
	Social Worker	Social Care Worker	Student	Total	Economically active population
Response rate	80%	60%	85%	63%	
<i>Of which:</i>					
White	98.7%	95.6%	98.5%	96.1%	98.0%
Total ethnic minority	1.3%	4.4%	1.5%	3.9%	2.0%
Asian	0.3%	2.1%	0.2%	1.8%	-
Black	0.2%	1.5%	0.5%	1.3%	-
Mixed	0.2%	0.5%	0.7%	0.4%	-
Other	0.6%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	-
Note:	"White" includes Irish Traveller and Roma Traveller				

5.9 Ministerial and public appointments

In **England and Wales**, **13%** of **new appointments** were made to people from an ethnic minority background in 2018/19 (latest release), compared with 10% in 2017/18. This was 10.3% for reappointments, giving a total of **11.9%** for **all appointments** (up from 8.4% the year before and from 7% in 2009/10).⁶⁶

In **Scotland**, **2.9%** of public board members whose ethnicity was known were from an ethnic minority background in 2018/19 (latest release). This figure has remained stable since 2004/05, when it was 2.8%. Among applicants, 6.3% were from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared with 3.6% of appointments.⁶⁷

The latest available figures for **Northern Ireland** show that in 2017/18, 3.2% of applications whose ethnicity was known (80%) were from people from ethnic minority groups. This remained the same year-on-year. Overall 183 appointments were made, and as the number of ethnic minority appointees was fewer than five, figures were not reported in order to protect individual confidentiality.⁶⁸ Ethnic background was known for 53% of the 929 public appointments that were held; of these, **1.2%** were from ethnic minority backgrounds.

⁶⁶ The Commissioner for Public Appointments [Annual Report 2018/19](#)

⁶⁷ Ethical Standards Commissioners, [Public Appointments Annual Report 2018-19](#)

⁶⁸ The Executive Office, [Public appointments reports](#)

Annex 1: Standard ethnic classifications used in the UK

This briefing paper uses the terms “White” and “ethnic minority” in line with guidance from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) for reporting across the UK.⁶⁹

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

⁶⁹ ONS, [Language and Spelling – Race and Ethnicity](#)

RECOMMENDED STANDARD ETHNIC CATEGORIES

England and Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
White^a	White^a	White^a
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British ^a	Scottish ^a	
Irish ^a	Other British ^a	
Gypsy or Irish Traveller ^a	Irish ^a	
Any other White background ^a	Gypsy/Traveller ^a	
	Polish ^a	
	Any other White ethnic group ^a	
		Irish Traveller^a
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups
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
Asian/Asian British	Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	Asian/Asian British
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
Black/ African/Caribbean/ Black British	African	Black/African/ Caribbean/Black British
African	African, African Scottish or African British	African
Caribbean	Any other African	Caribbean
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	Caribbean or Black	Any other Black/African/Caribbean background
	Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	
	Black, Black Scottish or Black British	
	Any other Caribbean or Black	
Other ethnic group	Other ethnic group	Other ethnic group
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.

Source: ONS

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