

# A Portrait of Modern Britain

Policy  
Exchange 

## Ethnicity and Religion

Dr Rakib Ehsan and Iain Mansfield

Foreword by Sir Trevor Phillips, OBE





---

# A Portrait of Modern Britain

## Ethnicity and Religion

Dr Rakib Ehsan and Iain Mansfield

Foreword by Sir Trevor Phillips, OBE



---

Policy Exchange is the UK's leading think tank. We are an independent, non-partisan educational charity whose mission is to develop and promote new policy ideas that will deliver better public services, a stronger society and a more dynamic economy.

Policy Exchange is committed to an evidence-based approach to policy development and retains copyright and full editorial control over all its written research. We work in partnership with academics and other experts and commission major studies involving thorough empirical research of alternative policy outcomes. We believe that the policy experience of other countries offers important lessons for government in the UK. We also believe that government has much to learn from business and the voluntary sector.

Registered charity no: 1096300.

#### Trustees

Karan Bilimoria, Alexander Downer, Andrew Feldman, David Harding, Patricia Hodgson, Greta Jones, Andrew Law, Charlotte Metcalf, David Ord, Daniel Posen, Andrew Roberts, William Salomon, Simon Wolfson, Nigel Wright.

## About the Authors

**Dr Rakib Ehsan** is an academic and author who specialises in matters of social cohesion, immigration, and public security. His PhD, awarded by Royal Holloway, University of London, investigated the impact of social integration on ethnic minorities living in the UK. He has authored op-eds on the matters of integration, cohesion, and demographic change for publications such as The Daily Mail and The Telegraph, as well as speaking on such issues for mainstream flagship programmes such as BBC Sunday Morning Live and ITV's Good Morning Britain (GMB). He provided evidence in the UK Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (CRED).

**Iain Mansfield** is Director of Research and Head of Education and Science at Policy Exchange. He is a former Special Adviser to three Education Secretaries. Prior to that he held a variety of senior positions in the private and public sector, including as a Senior Civil Servant at the Department for Education, as Director of UK Trade and Investment, The Philippines in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and as Head of Public Sector at the Association of Chartered and Certified Accountants. He has served as a University Governor and as a Director of a British Chamber of Commerce.

© Policy Exchange 2024

Published by  
Policy Exchange, 1 Old Queen Street, Westminster, London SW1H 9JA

[www.policyexchange.org.uk](http://www.policyexchange.org.uk)

ISBN: 978-1-917201-22-3

## Endorsements

As a former Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, I have seen at first-hand the amazing contribution that people of every ethnic group make to British society. Policy Exchange's excellent report rightly showcases the diversity of modern Britain, while also, rightly, highlighting the enduring impact of poverty, with citizens from every ethnic group believing that class is more important than race in determining one's life chances in Britain today.

Policy Exchange's findings also remind us, in the wake of this summer's riots, that integration cannot be taken for granted. Our new Labour Government must place integration at the heart of its future plans for communities, bringing together people of all faiths, ethnicities and backgrounds in a shared vision of a Britain that can be both optimistic about its future and proud of its heritage – I hope that the Government will study Policy Exchange's thoughtful recommendations carefully.

**Rt Hon Ruth Kelly**, Former Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Senior Fellow at Policy Exchange

One of the United Kingdom's assets is the diversity of its population – diversity of race, diversity of faith and diversity of culture – united by a shared pride in Britain, its history and its values. This Policy Exchange report clearly sets out an increasingly complex portrait of modern Britain, drawing hugely insightful conclusions. As the UK's first Hindu MP and the Conservative party's first non-white Minister in the House of Commons, as well as the party's first non-white person to speak from the Despatch Box, I believe that now in the UK, there are many more opportunities for people to rise as far as their talent and ability will take them. Indeed, the political integration of ethnic and religious minorities has reached the point where the holding of high public office by non-white, non-Christians has been normalised – showing what a truly great and magnificent country we all live in. I fully commend the report's recommendations and urge everyone to take note of this powerful piece of research.

**Rt Hon Shailesh Vara**, former Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

*As the first ever Zoroastrian Parsi to sit in the House of Lords, it is increasingly clear to me that we live in a Britain that is not only more ethnically and religiously diverse than ever before, but content and secure in that fact. Furthermore, as the first Indian-born Chancellor of a Russell Group University in Great Britain, I have long been alive to the importance of integration and educational opportunities in promoting equality of opportunity. Indeed, it is our commitment to meritocracy, to shared interests and common principles, which is why Britain is one of the only countries in Europe where second generation immigrants outperform non-immigrants in our education system. I welcome this insightful Policy Exchange paper and the important and positive story that it tells.*

**Lord Bilimoria CBE**, DL, founder of Cobra Beer, Chairman of the Cobra Beer Partnership Limited, and Chancellor of the University of Birmingham

# Contents

About the Authors	2
Endorsements	4
About A Portrait of Modern Britain	8
Foreword	9
Preface	12
Executive Summary	15
Summary of Recommendations	27
1. Introduction	30
1.1 What has changed since 2014?	35
2. The Changing Portrait of Modern Britain	38
2.1. Ethnic Change	38
2.2: Accelerated Secularisation and Religious Diversification	42
2.3. The age profile of racial and ethnic minorities	44
2.4. Regional spread of ethnic minorities	46
2.5. Diversification of towns – the rise of ‘MINTs’	49
2.6. Urban-rural spread of racial and ethnic minorities	53
3. Family and Children	55
3.1. Family Structure and Dynamics in Modern Britain	55
3.3 Trans, Sex and Gender	61
4. Education	66
4.1. Level of School Attainment and Suspensions/Exclusions	67
4.2: 16-19 Attainment	72
4.3: University attendance and undergraduate results	73
5. Economy and Housing	75
5.1: General economic status	75
5.2: Type of Employment and Average Hourly Pay	77
5.3 Housing Tenure and Attitudes to ‘Nimbyism’	80
6. Health	83
6.1: Life expectancy	83
6.2: Self-reported health status in the 2021 Census	85
6.3: Self-reported happiness, psychological well-being, and general life satisfaction	87
7. Crime, Protest, and Immigration	88
7.1 Crime	88
7.2 Direct Action Protest	90
7.3 Immigration	91
8. Politics and Society	94
8.1: The 2010 EMBES	94
8.2: Perception of Equality and Opportunity In Modern Britain	96



8.3: Perceptions of 21st Century British Life	97
9. Race, Class, and Discrimination	99
9.1. Perceived barriers to progress in modern Britain	100
9.3: Social Relations and Experiences of Discrimination	104
10. Social Integration and British National Belonging	110
10.1. Integration – Friends, Work, Neighbours, and Worshippers	111
10.2: National Belonging and Attitudes towards British History	113
10.3: Pride in British Historic Achievements	116
11. A New Framework for Social Integration and National Belonging	119
11.1: The Relationship between Social Integration and National Belonging	119
11.2: The Economic and Educational Index (EEI)	122
12. Conclusion	126
13: Policy Recommendations	131

## About A Portrait of Modern Britain

A Portrait of Modern Britain is a major project being undertaken by Policy Exchange that aims to accurately describe the current demographic profile of modern Britain, significant regional and local variations in age and demography – and how these are changing – while charting the wide range of views held by the populous on matters from healthcare to history, immigration to economics.

The first Portrait of Modern Britain was carried out for Policy Exchange in 2014 by two young researchers named Rishi Sunak and Saratha Rajeswaran, the first of whom would go on to become the UK's first ethnic minority Prime Minister of modern times. Focusing on the lives and contributions of ethnic minority citizens, it was welcomed by politicians and political leaders across the political spectrum.

Using census and other data, alongside new bespoke polling carried out exclusively for Policy Exchange, the new project aims to identify how Governments can successfully focus on what unites us – and how to deliver for the country – building on the latent strengths of British identity and culture that bind us together, while fulfilling the legitimate material and economic aspirations of the younger generation.

A Portrait of Modern Britain: Ethnicity and Religion is the first report in this project and – like its predecessor of a decade ago – focuses on the lives, contributions and beliefs of ethnic minorities in the UK. Future reports in the series will place a spotlight on young Britons, and on national attitudes towards the economy and public services.

A Portrait of Modern Britain is being led by a team including Iain Mansfield, Rakib Ehsan and Lara Brown.

# Foreword

Sir Trevor Phillips, OBE

Britain is a country used to change. In particular, when it comes to the changes brought by newcomers, our island's history is largely one of successful integration.

However, we are also familiar with the difficulties of finding a happy accommodation between the old and the new, in that uncertain period during which migrants turn into natives. We are better than most at managing such stresses, but the process is never painless.

Experience tells us that the greater the pace and volume of change, the more important it is to be prepared as a society. Right now, we are ill equipped to cope with our current challenges, much less the harsher realities of the coming decades.

In recent years, like most other developed nations, the UK's economic prosperity has come to depend on the arrival of thousands of migrants, currently more than a million each year. They bring talents and energy lacking in our ageing workforce. Even the proponents of so-called "net-zero" migration acknowledge that for the foreseeable future, it is probable that virtually all population increase will arise from immigration.

The economic upsides are growth and innovation. But the potential downsides - the impact on wages for low-paid workers, and the pressure on public services and amenities also need to be taken into account, measured and mitigated. This has become even more important given the unprecedented scale, speed and diversity of inward migration. We can no longer assume that Britain can simply repeat the lessons of our successful past.

Seventy years ago, the Windrush generation, most of whom came from a single region, the Caribbean, numbered just thousands each year. They spoke English and mostly worshipped a Christian God. Now, according to the 2021 census, there are 29 communities of over 100,000 people born in a country other than the UK. They hail from a hugely divergent range of countries, with different languages, faiths, and cultural traditions: Iran, Brazil, Italy, the United States, the Philippines and Sri Lanka for example.

Each of these communities is large enough to be – to some extent – self-sufficient, with its own businesses, social networks, shops and even financial institutions. It is a fair bet that by the middle of this century half of the British population will be able to trace recent origins to a country outside the British Isles. These days, integration won't happen naturally. The scale and pace of change are simply too great for achievement of the

right balance to be left to chance.

And there are entirely new cultural and social frictions. Easy travel and digital communications tie these modern diasporas to the old country in ways that were not previously possible. Recent years have seen conflicts generated far away from our shores break out on our streets. The politics of the Indian sub-continent and the Middle East for example are no longer “quarrels in a faraway country between people of whom we know nothing”.

All of this means that the mix of our people is more consequential than it ever has been to our economic, social and cultural future. Yet there are few important aspects of modern Britain about which we are less well-informed; for example though we are a society with dozens of minority communities of significant size, our census data, though valuable, is too broad brush: Nigerian and Ghanaian heritage Britons, Chinese and Koreans, Hindu and Muslim Indians should no more be crammed into the same category than should Swedes and Spanish-heritage Brits.

In addition the traditional orthodoxy that life chances are determined by a simple black and white binary has been overturned by the study of detailed data, vividly set out in policy exchange’s report. Many of our minority communities are more unlike each other – in education, in employment, in health, in family formation – than they are each unlike the white majority. Racism matters, but it is not all there is to the life of minority Britons.

Finally, the most interesting trend is perhaps the least well-understood: that white Britain no longer determines what is “normal” for our society. In several of our largest cities, the white British are a minority in our schools; in a sense, we are moving to a world in which whoever you are you belong to a larger or smaller ethnic group with its own contribution and its own needs.

We can also see fascinating and unexpected trends in political behaviours. Recent surveys have shown that whilst Britain’s majority graduate classes are moving leftwards, the highly educated in some minority groups – Indian Hindus for example - are moving the other way, abandoning traditional labour loyalties. By contrast, as some poor white communities leave Labour for populist parties, working class Caribbean voters are entrenching their support for left-wing parties. Given that in the next few decades minority voters will account for almost half the electorate, their preferences will be critical to the outcome of electoral contests, whether national, regional or local, and to the future of our Government.

That means we cannot be complacent about our shared values and behaviours. The evidence is that the cleavages between groups is no longer a marginal issue for public policy – it is the single most important challenge to decision makers. Yet, bizarrely, neither this government nor the previous administration has created any institutional machinery – whether ministerial, civil service or arm’s length – dedicated to encouraging social and cultural integration. Indeed the default position of our political and media classes is to dismiss the questions raised by the changes in our

nation as marginal. This is a catastrophic error of judgement for which we will pay dearly unless we act now.

Policy Exchange's portrait of our nation teaches us one thing above all : our future rests on managing our diversity, and complacency is the surest pathway to the growth of extremism and conflict.

**Sir Trevor Phillips, OBE**, is a Senior Fellow at Policy Exchange. He was the Founding Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission and former President of the John Lewis Partnership.

# Preface

**Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi**

I arrived in England at aged 11, a boy from Baghdad fleeing Saddam Hussein's murderous regime. I still remember the pain of being bullied when I first came here, my family fleeing Saddam Hussein's death squads. In school, I sat at the back of the classroom unable to speak English. My teachers thought I had learning difficulties and my classmates called me a 'Paki'.

But this country, the best country on earth, took me into its heart. It gave me a home, an education, a life. It took in a young Kurdish boy without a word of English and made him a Cabinet Minister.

Policy Exchange's brilliant new report, a Portrait of Modern Britain, shows that this journey of transformation is now no longer an unusual tale. Whether measured by economic success, educational attainment or health outcomes, many ethnic minority groups are now doing as well as whites – indeed, often outperforming them, sometimes significantly. The lazy stereotype, so beloved by some activists, that 'white = privileged, ethnic minority = disadvantaged' is now simply not an accurate representation of modern Britain. Policy Exchange's polling, furthermore, shows that people recognise this, with a significant net positive agreement from every ethnic group surveyed believing that class is more important than race in terms of determining who succeeds in Britain today.

Yet as we have seen over recent years, economic progress is a necessary but not sufficient condition for racial integration and societal harmony. Whether it is the ugly anti-immigrant rioting that contorted our cities this summer, marches on the streets of London that have prevented Jews from going outside, or intercommunal disorder that has flared in places as divergent as Leeds and Peckham, our unwillingness to stand up with confidence for our nation and its values has led to chaos.

In societies with a heterogeneous citizenry, the academic literature is clear that we must do all we can to downplay the differences and find common ground. Too many in politics, media, academic and public life have sought to focus on what divides us. Whether that is promoting Black Lives Matter or shutting down debate on women's rights; revisionist notions of 'decolonising' history in our museums and universities, or promoting anti-immigrant conspiracy theories on social media – they seek to create division from what should be common ground. These divisions can then be exploited by those who are fundamentally opposed to our

way of life, such as Putin's Russia, the Communist Party of China, the Muslim Brotherhood or Iran and its proxies.

To counter this, the Government and other public institutions must do more to support integration and foster a sense of belonging. As Policy Exchange's report demonstrates, the monarchy, pride in Britain's past and great sporting events remain unifying features that can draw the people of this nation together, regardless of the colour of their skin. And although it has become fashionable amongst some to deride our heritage and mock our patriotism, Policy Exchange has found that in every ethnic group polled, there was a strong net agreement with the statements that, 'Throughout history, Britain has been a force for good in the world' and that 'Children who are raised in Britain should be taught to be proud of Britain and its history.'

Britain remains the most tolerant country on Earth, with the deep conservatism of a people who have inherited institutions, traditions and customs that are the envy of the world. Where there are tensions, we should be fearless in working through them. Policy Exchange's excellent report demonstrates how we can build an inclusive, patriotic modern Britain that builds upon both our treasured heritage and our shared hopes for the future.

**Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi** is the *Former Chancellor of the Exchequer*

### Jonathan Rutherford

The Labour government needs to tell a story about who we are as a people and how we might live together in a multi-ethnic, secular democracy. To persuade people to set aside their self-interest for the common good and to accept ‘tough decisions’ requires more than the Prime Ministers promise of ‘delivery’.

Labour has to speak convincingly about the ordinary, everyday life of work, family and neighbourhood that binds society together and provides people of all colours and races with a sense of security and belonging.

The debate on the left about Britain has too often been polarised by a stark choice between either the racism of Englishness and Britishness or the idea of a ‘multicultural post-nation’. This is not a debate in which the great majority of the British people can take part for they want neither racism nor a post-nation.

Policy Exchange’s report provides valuable evidence for resetting the left’s debate about the future of multi-ethnic, secular democracy. It shows how far the country has developed, but also the challenges it still faces.

Class, something the left has stopped thinking about in recent years, is a unifying theme. Every minority ethnic group polled believes overwhelmingly that class is the biggest barrier to opportunity. And Britain’s history is a binding source of national identity. A majority in each minority ethnic group believes that children brought up in Britain should be proud of its history.

Alongside class and nation, a stable and secure family provides the best start in life. Ethnic groups with a tradition of stable family life do better than those with high levels of family separation. Many now outperform whites on economic, health and education measures.

As working class whites, particularly in the most deprived parts of the country, are overtaken in social advancement by minority ethnic groups, feelings of class and racial grievance increases along with a sense of being abandoned. The language of diversity is associated with a sense of threat to their precarious way of life.

National identity is a membership not simply a liberal transaction. Labour needs to develop a form of multicultural nationalism in which the nation and its history are the organising principle of a shared common life, and class is recognised as the principal driver of inequalities.

Labour has the opportunity to set the country on a new course with a national story of common belonging in which each can recognise their contribution and their place in its history. Policy Exchange’s report provides a valuable resource in this effort.

**Jonathan Rutherford** is co-Leader The Future of the Left project at Policy Exchange



# Executive Summary

A Portrait of Modern Britain: Ethnicity and Religion explores the ever-changing and increasingly complicated portrait of modern Britain – looking at ethnic and religious demographic change and forms of educational and socio-economic integration. Following on from the 2014 Policy Exchange report, A Portrait of Modern Britain, co-authored by the UK’s future prime minister Rishi Sunak and Saratha Rajeswaran, this 2024 edition explores how the multi-ethnic fabric of UK society has altered over that period – and charts a vibrant, inclusive, and patriotic roadmap for Britain’s uniquely diverse society.

The report draws on detailed analysis of the 2021 Census data and other statistical resources, combining this with state-of-the-art polling conducted by Redfield and Wilton for Policy Exchange, which surveyed a nationally representative sample of 2,000 people of all ethnicities, alongside ‘booster’ samples of 1400 ethnic minority respondents, 200 each from the Black African, Black Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese and Mixed-Race ethnic groups. This data was supplemented by a series of in-depth interviews with ethnic minority citizens from a diverse range of backgrounds, ethnicities, faiths, and political leanings.

Our report has found that the new Labour government led by prime minister Sir Keir Starmer has inherited a Britain that is not only more ethnically and religiously diverse than ever before, but one that – despite attempts to import US-style racial conflicts and foreign territorial grievances – is increasingly at ease with that fact. The recent nationwide violent disorder has tested that conclusion but, ultimately, not contradicted it, particularly given the widespread condemnation and disapproval of the rioters from every part of British society and every ethnic and religious group.

The political integration of ethnic and religious minorities has reached the point where the holding of high public office by non-white, non-Christians has been normalised. In Sunak, Britain, of course, had the first ethnic minority leader of any major European nation. Three of the four “great offices of state” in Sunak’s first Cabinet were held by ethnic minorities. Both Scotland and Wales have also had ethnic minority leaders. Perhaps even more significant, however, was just how unremarked-on all this was. Again, perhaps imported from America, political discourse in Britain talks more about race than about class. But we found that a strong majority of people from every ethnic minority group polled believe, surely correctly, that in the UK class is more important than race in determining whether a person succeeds. Clear pluralities of ethnic

minority respondents also believe that Britain has been a force for good in the world, and that children who are raised here should be taught to be proud of this country and its history. They emphatically reject the view of some white progressives that it is wrong, or racist, to believe this or to teach this. It is vital that any form of government action – including the planned introduction of new race-related legislation as announced in the recent King’s Speech – does not undermine social cohesion, business growth, and civic belonging.

In daily life, many ethnic minority groups are now systematically outperforming their white British peers educationally, economically and in health outcomes – though some groups have yet to close the gaps, notably the Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller ethnic groups.

This is not to say racism towards ethnic and racial minorities has vanished – but in-person, overt racial discrimination and abuse has diminished significantly, with ethnonationalist sentiments banished to the very fringes of society, and most white people supporting civic conceptions of English identity as opposed to those rooted in race and ancestry. However, new challenges have emerged, including the mass amplification by social media of racial abuse towards ethnic-minority figures – from footballers to politicians – in public life, to emerging intra-community tensions that have become visible in Leicester, London and elsewhere, and the growth of openly communal electoral politics with the “Hindu manifesto,” the “Sikh manifesto” and the success of pro-Palestinian independents.

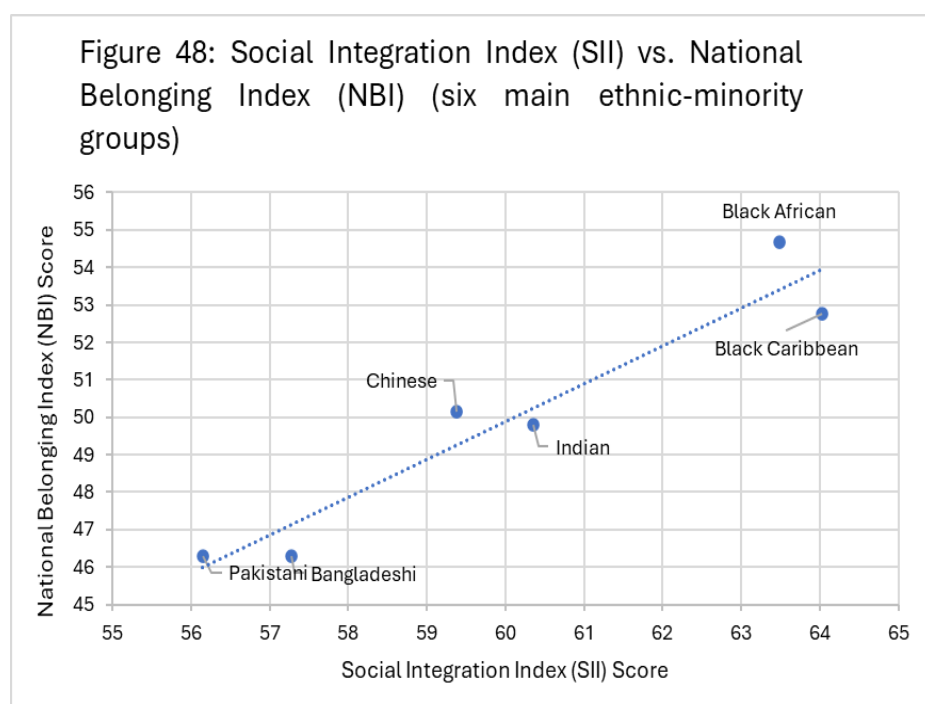
The recent nationwide disorder showed us that social cohesion is more fragile than we thought, and that powerful tensions are growing beneath the surface. Why, even as white racism has plummeted, did the tragedy in Southport trigger such widespread violence – when similar incidents, often in more openly racist times, have not previously done so? Part of the answer, of course, is the fast spread of misinformation – but that cannot be the whole answer. Nor does this diagnosis address what happens if the information is genuine – the next time there is a real attack by an asylum seeker or an Islamist terrorist. Riots in such a circumstance would still be an unjustified tragedy.

The racial antagonism we saw this summer was inchoate, little organised, and little supported – but it is partly the consequence of policy failures. Unless those failures are honestly addressed, it could grow. Though the rioters must be condemned and punished, condemnation and punishment are not enough. The riots revealed the fundamental lack of emphasis on social integration in mainstream British politics; the reluctance of the authorities to speak frankly and swiftly about incidents involving race, and to show that they are dealing with all races fairly and consistently – creating a vacuum which misinformation fills; the de-facto decriminalisation of certain offences due to the disappearance of effective neighbourhood policing; and repeated governmental failures to respect the will of the public to reduce immigration and introduce a functioning asylum system. The very concept of a democratic nation-state based on

a stable national membership has been neglected for too long by the political classes.

It is essential, too, that the government avoids responses that play into the grievance-mongers' hands or validate their claims about "two-tier" policy – such as adopting the controversial definition of "Islamophobia" that could be seen to privilege one group, or shield it from criticism, more than others.

Using a combination of polling and census data we developed three indices – for National Belonging, for Social Integration, and for Economic and Educational Success - to chart how different ethnic minorities are finding their place in modern Britain. Using these, we identify a growing and influential group of ethnic minorities – Minorities in Towns, or MINTs – who are moving out of cities into suburban towns and villages. In terms of educational attainment, economic success, and values, they are increasingly like, and integrated with, their white counterparts, and wish similar things from their governments, whether that it is on jobs, healthcare, or education.<sup>1</sup>



### What has changed since 2014?

In the last decade the ethnic minority population has grown by more than 25%, and has further diversified in terms of ethnicity, faith and geographic location within the UK. Black African and Arab populations are amongst the groups where the growth has, proportionally, been largest, alongside the 'white other' population.

The economic and educational progress of many ethnic minorities identified in the 2014 report has strengthened and deepened. Many

1. The figures in the Executive Summary are taken from the main body of the report. The Figure Number refers to the figure's place in the main body of the report.

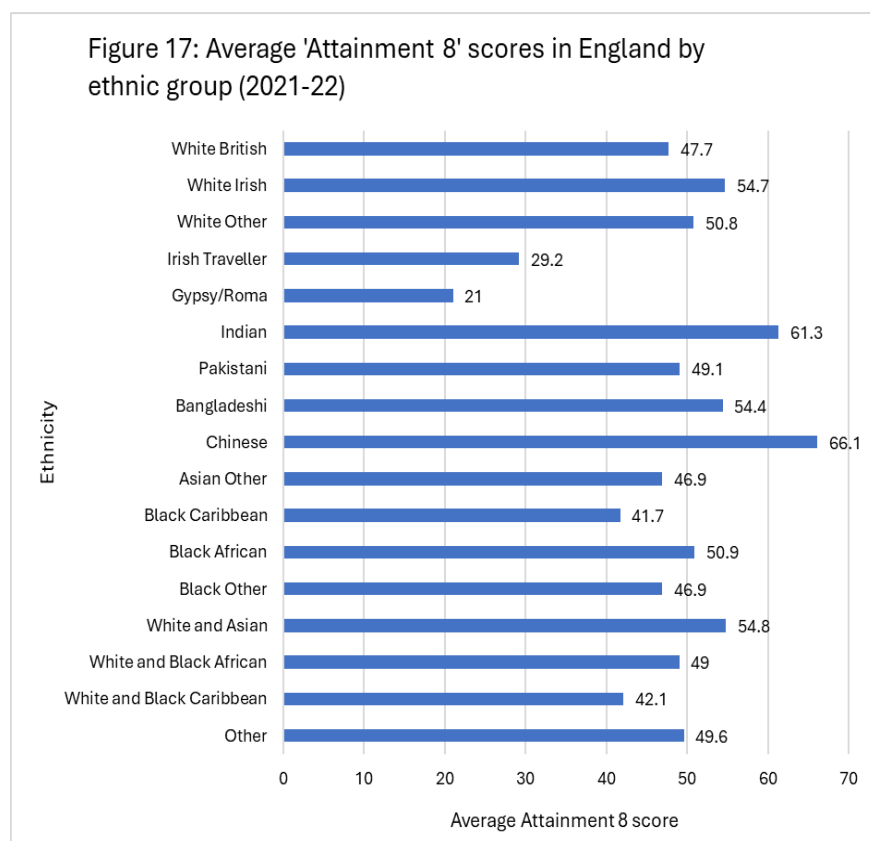
ethnic groups now outperform the White British group on a wide range of measures, whether educational, economic and health related – though Black Caribbean and the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller groups continue to lag on most indicators.

Compared to the era of our first report, ethnic minorities have taken a significantly greater role in public and political life. As we write our report in 2024, the UK has had an ethnic minority Prime Minister, multiple Chancellors, and multiple Home Secretaries, with ethnic minority individuals also having served as First Ministers of Scotland and Wales and as Mayor of London. Ethnic minority individuals are still significantly more likely to vote Labour than Conservative, as in 2014; however, though over recent elections some ethnic groups, particularly Indian and Chinese voters are beginning to lean more towards the Conservatives, while at the most recent election, some ethnic minority voters, including Muslims, voted not for Labour or the Conservatives, but for other parties such as the Greens, Liberal Democrats or Independents.

### **‘Ethnic Minority’ as a category is becoming increasingly meaningless**

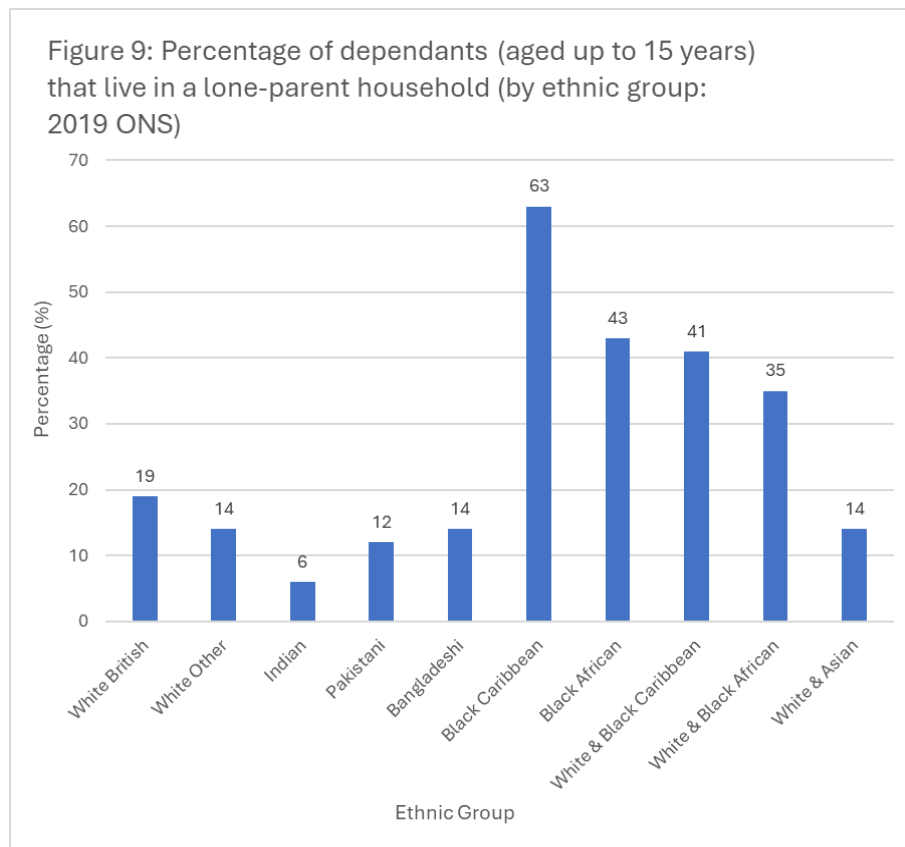
The diversity contained within the term ‘ethnic minority’ is now so broad – both within each minority and between minorities – that considering ethnic minorities as a monolithic group for public policy purposes is now increasingly meaningless. We have rightly seen backlash against the term ‘BAME’ – but it applies equally to policies or schemes that target ‘ethnic minorities’ as a bloc, on the assumption that all ethnic minorities are similarly disadvantaged or face similar challenges. This criticism of ‘BAME’ applies to the term ‘global majority’ which has been used by British institutions ranging from the National Trust to Camden People’s Theatre – a phrase that came into existence to describe populations of the so-called Global South and was then repurposed to refer to racial minorities in the United States’s race debate.

The ethnic group with the highest concentration of professional workers was Indian – with British Indians also having the highest rate of home ownership – with 71% living in a property which is either owned outright or owned with a mortgage/loan or shared ownership. Life expectancy data published by the ONS in 2021 shows that the white ethnic group had one of the lowest life expectancies – dropping to 79.7 years for men and 83.1 years for women. Meanwhile, white-British pupils lag considerably behind multiple non-white ethnic-minority groups – to the point that Chinese-heritage pupils on free school meals (FSM) perform better than their white-British peers who are not on free school meals in terms of average ‘Attainment 8’ scores. The flaws in considering ‘ethnic minority’ as a single bloc is further demonstrated by the fact that Black African children significantly outperform their white peers – while Black Caribbean children underperform them.



What also shines through the fresh polling presented in this report, and helps explain their success, is the family-orientated nature of ethnic minorities – for many in these groups, their close family members form an integral part of communal life. This appears to especially apply for Britain’s academically and economically high-performing Chinese ethnic group. In each of the ethnic-minority groups under analysis, overwhelming majorities considered the relationship with family members as an important factor in helping them succeed in life – with this feeling being particularly high among Chinese-heritage and Black African-origin respondents.

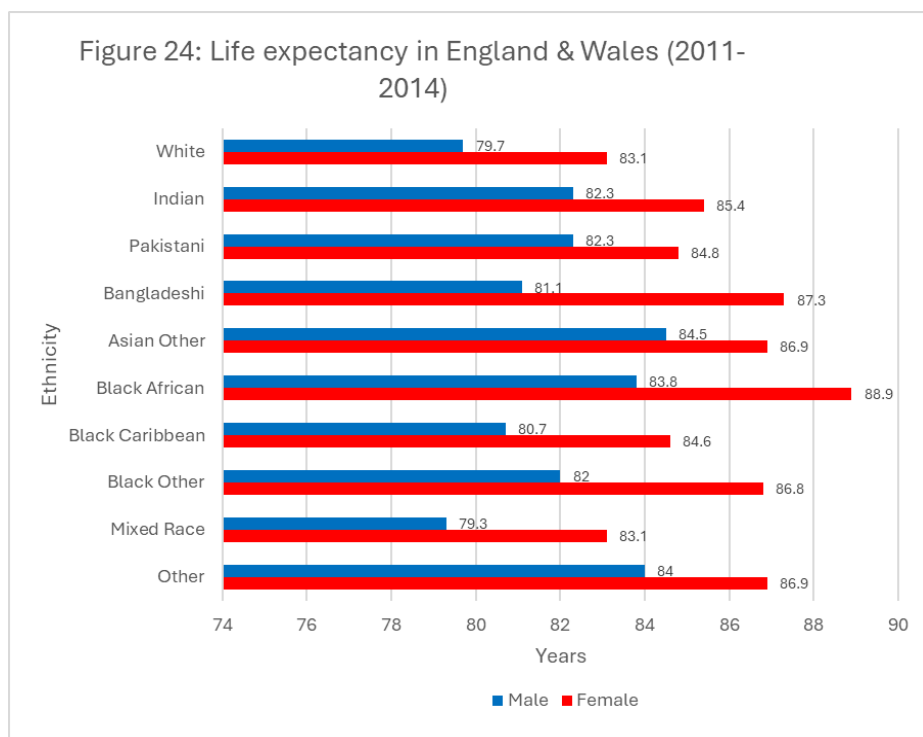
On the other side of the coin, family breakdown has a dramatically disparate impact across ethnic groups, with a stunning 63% of dependants with Black Caribbean ethnicity living in a lone-parent household, compared to just 6% of those with Indian ethnicity. This is not to stigmatise single parents (the overwhelming majority being mothers who try their best under challenging circumstances), but to highlight that certain family structures and dynamics are relatively successful when it comes to youth development in various spheres of life.



In an era of family fragility and intergenerational disconnection in the social mainstream, modern Britain can no longer afford ‘the family’ to largely be a non-topic in our politics. This echoes the sentiments of the March 2021 Sewell report published by the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities – a stable family unit remains the finest safety net and strongest agent of social order known to humankind.

### Non-white groups fare better in terms of life expectancy

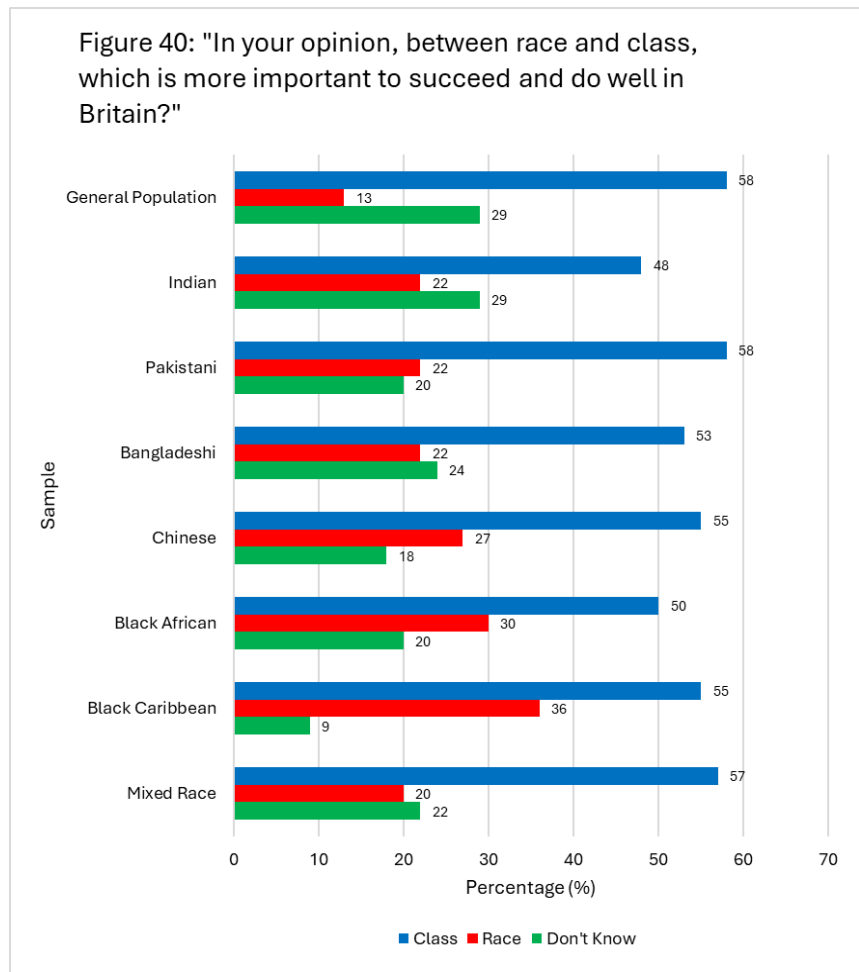
In modern Britain, the portrait when it comes to health is anything but straightforward. While from a low base, the rate of maternal mortality is notably higher for black mothers than their white peers. When it comes to mental health, white people are more likely to report suicidal ideation and acts of self-harm than their Asian and black counterparts. Members of black ethnic groups are far more likely to be sectioned under the Mental Health Act. When it comes to life expectancy, as shown below, non-white minorities living in England and Wales tend to live longer than the white population. It is especially high among black African women, who have a life expectancy of 89 years – dropping to 80 years for white men. The relatively-deprived Bangladeshi and Pakistani ethnic groups also have higher levels of life expectancy than the white mainstream. The concept of ‘migrant optimism’ within tight-knit, ethnic-minority communities of faith is one that should feature more prominently in our conversations on longevity and wellbeing in modern Britain.



### Class is more important than race

In his first speech in Downing Street as prime minister, Sir Keir Starmer congratulated his Conservative predecessor Rishi Sunak on being the UK's first British Asian PM and referred to the "extra effort that will have required." While this was clearly well-intentioned, it ignored the reality that Sunak belongs to one of the most successful ethno-religious groups in modern Britain – more successful, on average, than whites - and was educated at one of the country's top public schools (Winchester College, where he became head boy), and was one of the richest men ever to become Prime Minister. This was a clear example of the disproportionate attention on race among mainstream progressive politicians – with social class often left by the wayside.

We found that the ethnic minority individuals polled overwhelmingly thought that class was more important than race in determining whether a person would succeed in modern day Britain (54% thought class was more important, vs 26% who thought race was). The proportion thinking class was more important was similar to that in the national sample (58%) and the majority in favour of class held true across every ethnic group polled.



In every group polled – except mixed-race – over half of respondents believed that Britain was a country where someone of their race would be treated fairly, with fewer than 20% in each ethnic group disagreeing with this proposition. Although respondents did not think race was less important, our polling showed that people did think that someone’s ability to speak English, their education and their networks and connections were highly important – emphasising the importance of integration and educational opportunities in promoting equality of opportunity.

The fact that race was not a direct barrier to success in life does not mean that racism or discrimination has been eliminated. A significant minority of ethnic minority respondents indicated they had been racially discriminated against in the last 12 months – with rates ranging from 28% (Pakistani) to 49% (black African). The venues in which this discrimination took place were highly varied but included workplaces and on the street.

### A Patriotic and Inclusive Britain

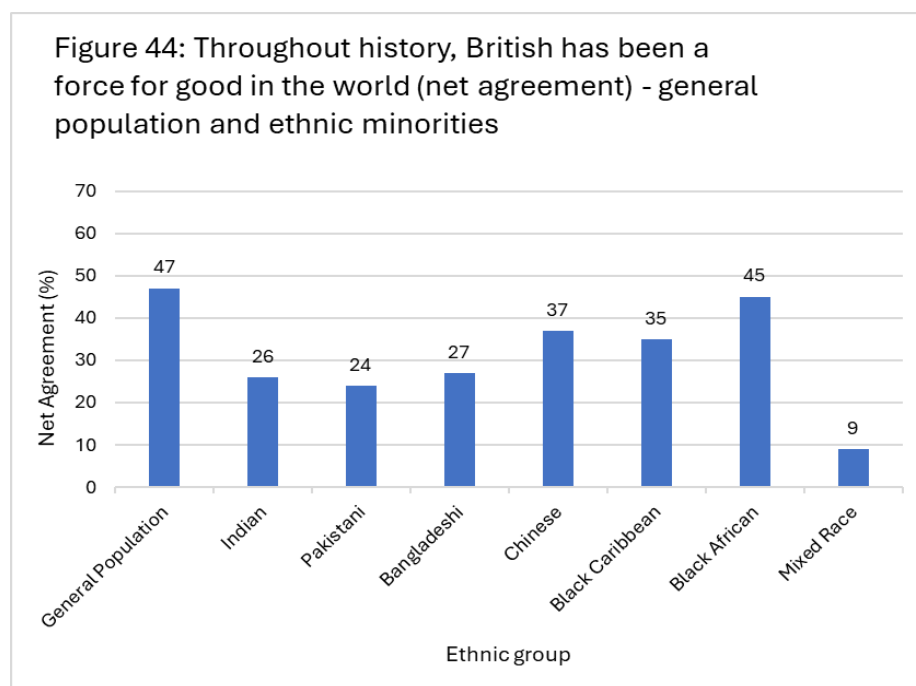
The June 2020 research published by IPSOS showed that Britons overwhelmingly reject race-based conceptions of British identity, with 93% rejecting the premise that ‘to be truly British, you have to be white’. This was followed by a report jointly published by British Future and



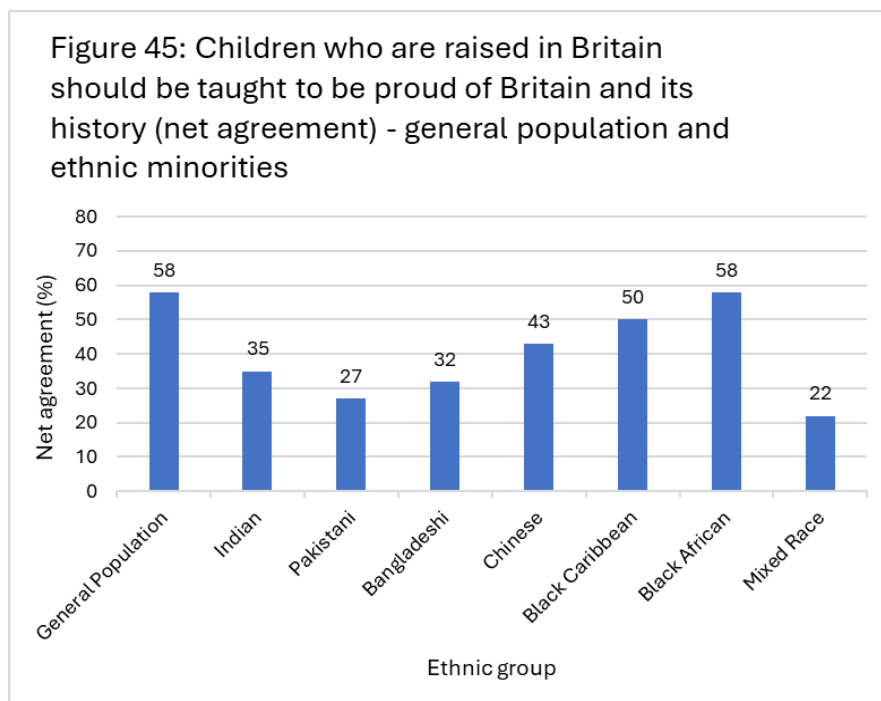
the Centre for English Identity and Politics, which found three quarters (77%) of white people in England believe that ‘Being English is open to people of different ethnic backgrounds who identify as English.’ Most of the population reject the notion that ‘Britishness’ and ‘Englishness’ should be exclusive on the grounds of race and ancestry.

Our report shows this is reciprocated by most ethnic minority residents, who similarly buy in to a concept of an ethnically diverse and patriotic Britain which should be confident in its national history and contributions to the world. When asked ‘how important is a sense of Britishness to your identity’ on a scale of 0 to 10, the average score for each ethnic group polled was between 5 and 6, only marginally lower than that of the population as a whole (6.25) – a highly positive result given this sample included a significant number of ethnic-minority individuals who had been born overseas and may be recently-arrived migrants.

In every ethnic-minority group polled, there was net agreement with the statement that, “On balance, throughout history, Britain has been a force for good in the world.”



And a majority of respondents in every ethnic group thought that children who are raised in Britain should be taught to be proud of Britain and its history.



In contrast to those who advocate ‘decolonising the curriculum’, our polling showed that a wide diversity of events throughout British history – including Britain’s role in the World Wars, Magna Carta, the Industrial Revolution and the Abolition of the Slave Trade – resonated across different ethnic groups, demonstrating that people of every race and ethnicity can find pride in these historical achievements. Similarly, when it came to recent history, major unifying moments including the 2012 Olympic Opening Ceremony in London, a variety of sporting events, the vaccine roll-out and the late Queen Elizabeth II’s Platinum Jubilee, increased pride in Britain across ethnic groups.

Our polling demonstrates that despite attempts by some to introduce divisive US-style racial politics, most Britons, regardless of ethnicity, are keen to celebrate the UK’s history and culture. Politicians, educators, and cultural institutions should not feel abashed in building upon this appetite for inclusive patriotism, whether that is doing more to celebrate the contribution of Commonwealth citizens to the World Wars, or by celebrating achievements of universal resonance, such as Britain’s industrial and scientific achievements or our proud history of Parliamentary democracy.

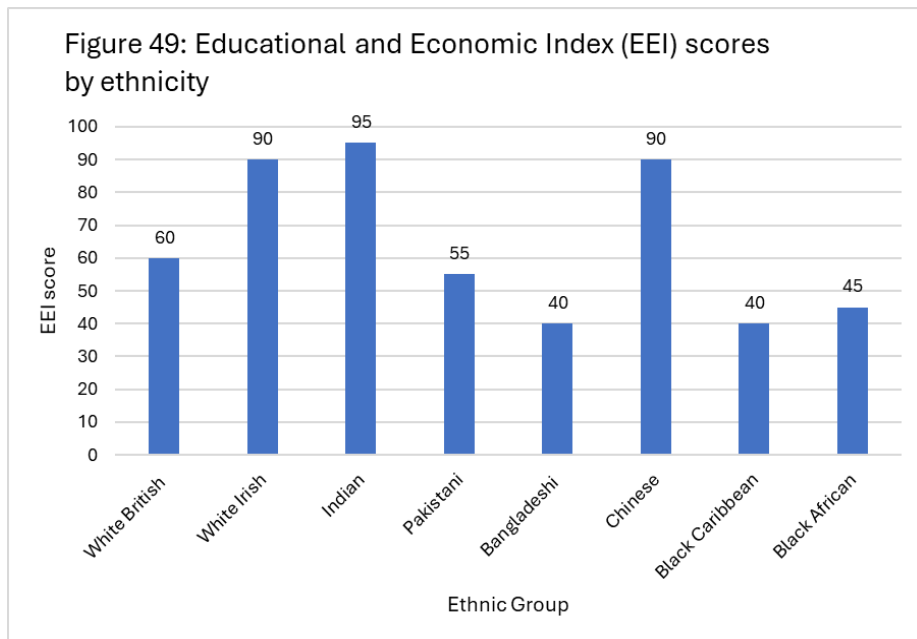
### ‘Managed Diversity’ and integration

There is no longer a debate over whether the UK should be a demographically diverse society – it is one. Britain has historically represented one of the most successful examples of a multi-ethnic democracy in the modern world – but the recent nationwide riots driven by far-right violent disorder showed that there are significant improvements to be made when it comes to integrating diverse communities into a culturally cohesive whole which

is based on mutual regard and respect for the rule of law.

The impact of geopolitical conflicts and foreign territorial disputes on British politics was thrust into the spotlight during the build-up to the recent UK General Election, especially with the emergence of The Muslim Vote (TMV) – which strived to mobilise British Muslims by focusing on Israel-Palestine and endorsing ‘pro-Gaza’ independent candidates (along with those running on behalf of the Workers Party of Britain [WPB] led by left-wing maverick George Galloway). There was also the production of the ‘Hindu manifesto’ published by Hindus for Democracy, which called for the proscription of individuals and organisations that are engaged in “attacking the sovereignty and integrity of India”. Meanwhile, a rival ‘Sikh manifesto’ published by The Sikh Network, demanded that the UK Government should challenge India at the United Nations (UN) to withdraw its ‘reservation’ that self-determination does not apply its people – including the “oppressed” Sikh minority. This religiously-motivated focus on foreign-policy grievances is infused with claims of anti-Muslim, anti-Hindu, and anti-Sikh hatred (both in the UK and abroad).

The frequent conflation between multiculturalism as a (questionable) social-cohesion approach and the reality of multi-ethnic successes in Britain has weakened the quality of this national conversation. As previously stated by Policy Exchange, integration is a ‘policy orphan’ in British politics – with intellectual deficiencies existing across the political spectrum over it. Both polling and census data demonstrates that integration is essential for educational and economic success – whether that is in terms of spoken English, or in the networks and cultural capital that open doors and unlock opportunities. While it can be argued that socio-economic integration outcomes for British ethnic minorities are superior to those in other major European countries such as France, improvements need to be made – especially in terms of on-the-ground career advice in urban communities, having the tools to build mainstream professional contacts, and navigating the competitiveness of the labour market. This also applies for ‘left-behind’, post-industrial, working-class areas with predominantly white-British populations.



While welcome, socio-economic success – whether it is performing well at school, holding a well-paid job, or getting on the property ladder – is not an automatic springboard to greater British national belonging. Actively integrating diverse communities into a confident cultural account of Britain’s history and many positive contributions to the world, is fundamental to achieving a more successful and socially harmonious society. Social, ethnic, and religious diversity in 21st century Britain is a fact – but while that has the potential to be highly beneficial, it is not inevitably the case that it will be. There are many societies across the world where ethnic or religious divisions have led to lasting social divisions – and recent communal tensions in places such as the east Leicester have demonstrated that there is no reason to believe that the UK is immune to these pressures.

It takes conscious management to transform diversity into strength; and while diversity can, and should, be celebrated, differences must also be acknowledged. A successful model of integration takes work: from central government, from local government, in schools, town halls, and community groups. A successful society cannot only celebrate differences, but must also create a shared identity that brings people together, of common values, shared culture, and treasured heritage. The emphasis must be on fostering shared experiences and bonds of social trust – not only across racial and religious groups, but also between the generations to combat social isolation among the young and old – to cultivate a vibrant, inclusive, and patriotic society in modern Britain which is governed in the spirit of fairness and impartiality.

# Summary of Recommendations

## **1. A new national integration strategy for modern Britain**

The new Labour government should introduce a new national integration strategy. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) – which incorporates organisations such as local councils, schools, NHS trusts, and police forces – should have integration at the heart of it.

## **2. Mandatory publication of integration figures by local authorities**

Local authorities should be made to publish integration figures every five years on both residential and school mix (in terms of both ethnicity and religion) to provide greater information on areas where different ethnicities are or are not physically integrating.

## **3. A responsible model of ‘managed diversity’**

There must be greater selectivity in terms of community engagement – with the British state prioritising associations and individuals with a proven track record of supporting equality of opportunity.

## **4. Proposed Race Equality Act must not undermine social cohesion**

The proposed Race Equality Act must not risk thwarting business growth and disincentivise firms/companies from becoming more inclusive in terms of race, age, and geography.

## **5. Building social and cultural capital among schoolchildren**

The Government should encourage schools to do more to provide young people with greater opportunities to participate in physical activities which can help to build social and cultural capital, with a particular focus on those of lower socio-economic classes – regardless of ethnicity.

## **6. Creation of a Statues of National Celebration Commission (SNCC)**

The UK Government should set up a time-limited Statues of National Celebration Commission (SNCC) which would identify historical figures deserving of a statue due to their immense contributions to British life, reporting after one year.

## **7. A knowledge-rich inclusive history curriculum for modern Britain**

Every ethnic group believed children raised in Britain should be taught to be proud of Britain and its history. The children of Britain should be taught to be proud of their national heritage in an inclusive manner that reflects Britain’s history and traditions.

**8. Re-oriented focus on class in the context of social mobility**

The UK Government and public bodies such as the Social Mobility Commission (SMC) must ensure that educational success and young people's development are primarily analysed through a class and poverty lens, not a racial one.

**9. Enhance, extend and increase the funding of the Community Ownership Fund – and give it a new focus on supporting integration**

The Community Ownership Fund is an invaluable scheme that can support communities gain control of assets that might otherwise close, preserving them for the community. Extending it would ensure more communities could be supported – and a new focus on supporting integration would ensure particular priority would be given to assets that bring people together from across social and ethnic groups.

**10. Renewed focus among public bodies on opportunities for disabled people**

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) should launch a review on the degree to which existing DEI policies – across the public, private, and third sectors – factor in disability.

**11. Reducing the UK's immigration dependency**

The new Labour government should adopt a sensible approach to reduce the UK's over-reliance on immigration by enhancing the domestic talent pool. Properly funding training schemes, apprenticeships, and bursaries for sectors such as health and social care, would ensure these are accessible to people of all income levels and classes.

**12. A new asylum settlement for modern Britain**

A cap on the number of refugees resettled in the UK – one where Parliament considers the social, economic, and cultural infrastructure of local authorities, which are treated as vital stakeholders and must approve an agreed limit annually – should be introduced.

**13. Introduction of pro-family policies**

The UK should catch up with much of Europe by better promoting the institution of marriage in the tax system via a fully transferable tax allowance for married couples and introducing greater levels of parental leave.

**14. Ten-Year Plan for Health to explicitly address health disparities**

The Ten-Year Plan for Health, currently being developed by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), should have a dedicated workstream which considers the national-level interventions – which are cost-effective and underpinned by a robust evidence base – which can reduce avoidable healthcare disparities, according to geography, socio-economic class and ethnicity.

**15. Restoration of neighbourhood policing**

Local police forces must have the resources to put in place effective neighbourhood policing teams which are able to gather vital on-the-ground knowledge of local criminal activity and anti-social behaviour. This model should also be the basis for popular consent for stop-and-search measures. This will require additional resource in order not to take away from the necessity of continuing to resource sexual and domestic violence investigation teams.

**16. Revisiting riot-related training for better-resourced police forces**

The Home Office should instruct all police forces which cover urban metropolitan city-centres to revisit public order strategies and require an increase in the number of enhanced (Level 2) Public Order trained officers.

**17. Strengthening anti-disinformation capabilities of police forces**

It is vital that police forces have trained specialists who can combat the online spread of conspiracy theories - especially in the aftermath of high-impact events which may be weaponised to incite violence and hatred against specific groups. This is likely to require a change in approach relating to information the police and CPS are willing and able to release prior to any criminal trials. The Government should consider whether legislation is required in this area.

**18. Greater understanding of diverse ethnic groups**

Government agencies should commit to disaggregating larger groups which are both ethnically and religiously diverse, as well as being far from homogeneous in terms of migratory background – especially the Indian and Black African ethnic categories.

**19. Ending the merged Pakistani/Bangladeshi categorisation**

There remain UK Government data sources which use a combined 'Pakistani/Bangladeshi' category. While both are Sunni-majority South Asian groups and such merging could be driven by sample-size considerations, there should be a concerted effort to move away from this.

**20. Improvement of ethnic-minority samples in the British polling industry**

Members of the British Polling Council (BPC) should improve the robustness of their ethnic-minority sampling – especially for admittedly harder-to-reach elements of British Muslim communities.

**21. Re-run of the 2010 British Ethnic Minority Election Study (2010 EMBES)**

To truly deepen our understanding of modern Britain, interested parties across the public, private, and third sectors should pool resources to fund a re-run of the 2010 EMBES – which remains the fullest-scale survey into British ethnic-minority behaviour and attitudes.

# 1. Introduction

“The face of Britain has changed”. This was the opening sentence of the 2014 Policy Exchange report, *A Portrait of Modern Britain*, co-authored by the UK’s future prime minister Rishi Sunak and Saratha Rajeswaran.<sup>2</sup> Since its publication, the ever-evolving portrait of modern Britain has undergone significant forms of social and cultural change – with Sunak himself recently presiding over one of the most ethnically-diverse and religiously-heterogeneous societies in the industrialised world. This diversity is reflected in various spheres of British life such as politics, business, media, sport, and entertainment. Indeed, the UK’s great offices of state being occupied by ethnic-minority politicians has been normalised – to the point that when James Cleverly was recently appointed as home secretary under the last Conservative government, few mentioned the fact he was the first person with black parentage to hold the position. The brief tenure of Grant Shapps aside, the current home secretary, Yvette Cooper, is the first white person to hold the office in more than six years (and the last time a white man was home secretary was in 2010). Another recent event which truly captured the diverse essence of modern Britain was the Coronation of King Charles III – with a variety of faiths represented among those who are given notable roles for the occasion. This included Lord (Syed) Kamall – the British academic of Indo-Guyanese Muslim heritage – presenting the Armills.<sup>3</sup>

While it is common knowledge that the UK is an established multi-ethnic, multi-racial and multi-faith democracy, there is more to learn and understand about how this diversity plays out in terms of socio-cultural attitudes, socio-economic status, and socio-political integration. Even though ‘BAME’ acronym (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) has proven itself to be a crudely homogenising concept, there remains a lingering tendency – from politics to media - to treat Britain’s ethnic and religious minorities as a singular political entity where similar views are held. Indeed, the argument can be made that broader racial labels such as ‘Asian’ and ‘Black’ are no longer fit for purpose, as they risk overlooking serious differences based on ethnicity and religion. Categories such as “South Asian” do not only serve to mask over noteworthy economic and social disparities between Britain’s Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis – but also mean that very real forms of diversity within these sizeable groupings at times go unrecognised.

To take a step further, the ‘Black African’ ethnic category incorporates both established UK-born Christians of Nigerian heritage and foreign-born Muslim refugees who have fled civil conflict in countries such as Somalia.

2. Sunak, R. and Rajeswaran, S. (2014), ‘A Portrait of Modern Britain’, *Policy Exchange*, 6 May. Available at: <https://policyexchange.org.uk/publication/a-portrait-of-modern-britain/>, last accessed: 28 April 2024.
3. The Royal Family (2023), ‘Roles to be performed at the Coronation Service at Westminster Abbey’, 27 April. Available at: <https://www.royal.uk/news-and-activity/2023-04-27/roles-to-be-performed-at-the-coronation-service-at-westminster-abbey>, last accessed: 28 April 2024.



Ethnic identities in themselves have become even more complex due to the rapid growth of the UK's mixed race-population and generational cultural change. While it may not be commonplace as such, there will be occasions that British citizens will identify with an ethnic group that does not necessarily reflect their specific ancestral origins. This includes highly-integrated, second-generation European migrants who identify as 'white British' but belong to Irish-born parents. There may be mixed-ethnic people who identify more strongly with a particular ancestral background, depending on their personal life experiences – especially differences in the quality of relationships with their parents, extended families, and wider community.

This makes the changing and ever-diversifying portrait of modern Britain even more complicated. As this report will demonstrate time and again, harnessing our commitment to exploring differences both between and within our ethnic and religious minorities, as well as investigating how identities are shaped and constructed, enriches our understanding of modern Britain.

The evolving portrait of modern Britain – in terms of ethnic and religious composition – is influenced by a variety of somewhat inter-related factors such as migratory patterns, fertility rates, age profiles of groups, and the degree to which faith is central to one's everyday life. As will be explained over the course of the report, the country has become more secular and irreligious, but also more religiously diverse – with the ethnically-diverse Muslim population being the fastest-growing sizeable religious group.<sup>4</sup> While some ethnic groups have reduced as a proportion of the wider population (such as the white-British mainstream and the hyper-integrated Black Caribbean ethnic group), others have grown at a notable pace (such as the 'white other' category incorporating EU migrants from countries such as Poland and Romania, as well as Black Africans which will include recently-arrived migrants from Commonwealth countries such as Nigeria and South Africa).

The UK has recently experienced record-breaking levels of legal immigration, with the provisional ONS estimate of total long-term immigration for year ending June 2023 being 1.234 million – much of this being driven by inflows from Commonwealth member countries such as India, Nigeria, and Pakistan, along with China and conflict-affected Ukraine.<sup>5</sup> In addition to this, 38,761 people were granted refugee status or other protection following an asylum application in the year ending September 2023 (the highest number granted in a year since 2002).<sup>6</sup> Prominent countries of origin for those granted asylum include Muslim-majority nations such as Afghanistan, Syria, and Iran. The UK has also provided refuge to large numbers of Hongkongers escaping from Chinese-state tyranny and Ukrainians fleeing from Kremlin-led militarism. While there are factors to consider such as the rate of long-term settlement, there is no doubt that large inflows of people in recent history will influence how the portrait of modern Britain changes over the course of the next few decades.

4. Office for National Statistics (2022), 'Religion, England and Wales: Census 2021', 29 November. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/bulletins/religionenglandandwales/census2021>, last accessed: 28 April 2024.
5. Office for National Statistics (2023), 'Long-term international migration, provisional: year ending June 2023', 23 November. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/longterminternationalmigrationprovisional/yearendingjune2023>, last accessed: 28 April 2024.
6. UK Government (Home Office) (2023), 'How many people do we grant protection to?', 7 December. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-year-ending-september-2023/how-many-people-do-we-grant-protection-to>, last accessed: 28 April 2024.

As British society becomes more diverse – racially, ethnically, and religiously – ‘diversity management’ across the public, private, and third sectors will face greater challenges. The UK may well be one of the world’s most successful multi-ethnic democracies, but there is more work to be done – whether it is fostering higher levels of broad-based social trust, boosting public confidence in institutions ranging from the NHS to the police, delivering the classically British promise of equality of opportunity, and fostering a civic national pride that bonds people of different ancestral backgrounds together. And whether it is the August-September 2022 Leicester riots primarily between Muslim and Hindu youths, the flaring-up of Eritrean political sectarianism in Camberwell, or the recent Afghan-Romanian disorder in Bournemouth, diversity is not an unalloyed good and simplistic notions of it will do more harm than good – the portrait of modern Britain has its tensions and it is best to guard against over-celebration. The need for a more mature understanding of modern Britain’s demographic diversity was further underscored by the recent Harehills riots in Leeds which took place after social services removed children from a Romani family.

As well as analysing Census data and referring to relevant existing polling, this Policy Exchange report commissioned Redfield & Wilton Strategies to carry out general-population and ethnic-minority surveys to deepen our collective understanding of Britain’s ever-changing and increasingly complicated portrait. The scope of these surveys is comprehensive and wide-ranging – indeed, this is the fullest, large-scale, survey investigation into the political attitudes, social views, and cultural practices of Britain’s ethnic minorities since the landmark Ethnic Minority British Election Study in 2010. The British ethnic-minority survey provides a richness of data on a wide range of matters which relate to the spheres of social, economic, cultural, and political life in modern Britain. Along with the polling of the wider public (which is both nationally and politically representative of the general population), ‘booster’ samples of the Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Black Caribbean, and Black African ethnic groups were commissioned to further explore points of convergence and divergence within the broader ethnic-minority population.

Augmenting the state-of-the-art polling specifically commissioned for this report, Policy Exchange held semi-structured interviews with individuals – with their insightful contributions helping us make more sense of not only the progress made by modern Britain, but also the deep-rooted challenges it faces in a growingly volatile and unpredictable age. Interviewees encompassed those who hail from different backgrounds and had unique life experiences to tell - but all are committed to fostering a fairer, more cohesive Britain which provides a sense of security and belonging to all; one that addresses the root causes of material disadvantage and cultural disconnection in modern Britain. Those who made personal contributions to this report included British broadcaster Sir Trevor Phillips, leading educator Lord (Tony) Sewell, and independent Bolton-born journalist Jordan Tyldesley.

The central conclusion of the report is that modern Britain, while flawed, continues to be one of the most successful examples of a multi-ethnic democracy in the world. While there are unquestionable differences between Britain's ethnic minorities when it comes to areas such as family dynamics, socio-economic status, and health outcomes, there is a collective appreciation of British democracy – especially the freedoms and protections provided to minorities, which are not as robust and comprehensive in many other white-majority, ethnically-diverse societies. While there is a creeping insecurity in more 'elite' circles over Britain's traditional heritage and contributions to the world, such insecurities are not shared by many ethnic-minority Britons who tend to originate from parts of the globe with strong historic and cultural ties with the UK. This is important when one considers national forms of political and media 'representation' - which may not always reflect the more positive pro-Britain sentiments in local communities.

The report also echoes the sentiments of the seminal March 2021 Sewell report published by the UK Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities – that variance in socio-economic outcomes between ethnic groups can be attributed to a myriad of social, cultural, economic, and geographical factors as well as migratory background – they are not simply direct products of so-called institutional racism and systemic racial discrimination in the UK.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, this view is strongly reflected in the ethnic-minority polling commissioned for this report – results which collectively provide an uplifting story of national pride but also one which emphasises the value of family values and the enduring impact of social class (with both being somewhat sidelined in 'progressive' Americanised social-policy debates which have tended to be geared towards protected characteristics such as race).

This Policy Exchange report also takes to task reductive narratives surrounding ethnic-minority life and socio-economic disadvantage in Britain. Lazy assumptions that ethnic minorities are doing worse than the white-British mainstream or woefully under-represented in all influential spheres of life are simply no longer true. When it comes to level of school attainment, higher-education participation, labour market integration, home ownership, life expectancy, and self-reported health status, multiple ethnic minorities are now doing better – sometimes much better – than white Britons. In the corridors of political power – especially frontline politics – ethnic-minority leadership is the 'new normal', with Punjabi Hindu-origin Rishi Sunak recently being the UK's prime minister until the result of the last general election, the SNP's Pakistani Muslim-heritage Humza Yousaf holding the position of first minister of Scotland until his very recent resignation, Labour's Pakistani Muslim-heritage Sadiq Khan as mayor of London for the last eight years and the party's Zambia-born Vaughan Gething recently becoming the first black first minister of Wales (and the first black head of any European country) before also resigning from the position. In this sense, post-Brexit Britain is far ahead of major European counterparts such as France, Germany, and the Netherlands

7. UK Government (Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities) (2021), 'Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities: The Report', 31 March. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-report-of-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities>, last accessed: 28 April 2024.

when it comes to ethnic diversity in the higher political echelons.

The report is structured as follows. After this introductory section, Chapter 2 the report will flesh out the key ethnic and religious forms of demographic change in the UK, as well as exploring the geographical distribution of minorities in terms of region and urban-rural classification. Chapter 2 also highlights the rise of ‘minorities in towns’ – MINTs – challenging the view that rising forms of demographic diversity in provincial towns is not being driven by so-called ‘white flight’, but aspirational ethnic-minority families moving to quieter ‘child-friendly’ areas with relatively favourable house prices. This is followed by a section on family and children, with Chapter 3 considering the rates of single parenthood by ethnic group as well as Britain’s consistently-declining fertility rates. The report then moves into its sections on socio-economic resources – looking at racial and ethnic disparities when it comes to outcomes such as level of academic attainment, labour market integration, and housing tenure. These three sections – Chapters 4, 5, and 6 - on socio-economic resources are followed by a section which engages with health-related outcomes such as life expectancy, as well as self-reported measures of psychological well-being.

The report then moves on to exploring public attitudes of ethnic minorities and the wider general population at large. Chapter 7 of the report explores ethnic-minority attitudes towards two of the leading sociocultural issues in British politics – immigration and crime. This part of the report also examines attitudes towards protests – which is especially relevant, with the UK recently witnessing the Black Lives Matter (BLM), pro-Palestine, and British-nationalist demonstrations. This weaves into the next section of the report on politics and identity, with Chapter 8 covering survey data on institutional trust and national self-identification in terms of ‘Britishness’ and ‘Englishness’ (with the overwhelmingly majority of British ethnic-minority based in England’s major cities).

Driven by the fresh polling conducted by Redfield and Wilton which was commissioned for this report, Chapter 9 explores themes of racial identity, social class, and reported discrimination. This includes examining the views of both specific ethnic minorities and the wider British population on what shapes life chances in modern Britain and to what extent factors such as race and class are important in this context, as well as protected characteristics such as sex and sexual orientation. There are also interesting findings to report on the degree to which members of the British public attach importance to shared racial identity when it comes to placing trust in others. Chapter 10 focuses on levels of social integration and feelings of national belonging among ethnic minorities. There are four areas of interest when it comes to social integration – friends, work, neighbours, and place of worship. As well as understanding the degree to which people ‘feel’ British, fresh polling data on attitudes towards British history and Britain’s role in the world is considered.

This new ethnic-minority polling data is then utilised to create two indices which are at the heart of Chapter 11 – the Social Integration Index

(SII) and the National Belonging Index (NBI), which the different ethnic-minority samples are ranked on, with mean scores calculated. The report then flows into a discussion of results and the conclusion in Chapter 12, finishing with its policy recommendations on how to foster a fairer and more cohesive modern Britain in Chapter 13.

## 1.1 What has changed since 2014?

How much has changed since 2014, when Policy Exchange published the first Portrait of Modern Britain, authored by Rishi Sunak and Saratha Rajeswaran? Just as this report aims to do, this comprehensive report painted a picture of the diverse and growing contribution that people of ethnic minorities make to life in the UK, using a range of survey, census, academic and polling data, complemented by interviews.

In 2014, Sunak and Rajeswaran wrote that “Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people now make up a significant and fast-growing part of the population”, that “understanding of these communities has not kept up with their rising importance” and that “there is a tendency in the media to assume that all BME communities can be treated as a single political entity – as if all ethnic minorities held similar views and lived similar lives.” All of these remain as true as ever today in a society where – despite race being an ever-increasing part of public discourse – this is often viewed through a distorted, simplistic lens, overly influenced by perspectives and assumptions taken from the United States which cannot be straightforwardly translated or applied to modern Britain.

But if some things have stayed the same, what has changed? Most obviously, the ethnic minority population of Britain has grown. Our previous report reported that the 2011 Census found that 8 million people, or 14.0% of the population of England and Wales, belonged to an ethnic minority; in contrast, the 2021 Census found that this had increased to 10.9 million, or 18.3% of England and Wales. These numbers will have been further added to by arrivals since 2021, including those given refuge from Hongkong, and high levels of net migration in 2022 and 2023, primarily from non-EU countries such as India, Nigeria, and Pakistan.

The Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese ethnic groups have all grown. A small but fast-growing ethnic group is the Arab ethnic group, which increased by 50% from 0.4% to 0.6% of the population. There was a substantial increase in the ‘White, Other’ population, which has increased from 4.4% to 6.2% of the overall population (from 2.5 million to 3.7 million people). And while the 2014 report identified an increasing number of mixed-race marriages, ten years on this is reflected in a substantial rise in the proportion of the population identifying as Mixed Race, up from 2.2% to 2.9% (1.2 million to 1.7 million people).

One particularly notable change is the relative growth of the Black African and Black Caribbean groups. In 2001, half (50%) of black people in England and Wales were of Black Caribbean ethnicity, with just over 40% Black African and the remainder Other Black. By 2011, Black Africans were 53% of the black population, with the Black Caribbean population only 32%. This trend has continued over the last decade, with the

Black Caribbean now just a quarter (26%) of the total black population of England and Wales. Interestingly, this has occurred alongside the increasing cultural recognition of the arrival of the Empire Windrush as the ‘foundation story’ of modern mass migration to the UK. Whilst this demographic shift does not invalidate that story – any more than the US celebration of Thanksgiving is invalidated by the fact that the majority of modern US citizens are not descended from New England puritans – it is an important reminder that the true portrait of modern Britain contains a wide diversity of ethnicities, ancestries and experiences.

In addition to growing, the ethnic minority population has shown significant changes both in terms of age and geography. Longstanding populations, such as the White British, Black Caribbean, or Chinese ethnic groups have aged by three, four and five years respectively, while both younger arrivals and new births in ethnic groups such as Black African and Mixed Race groups have kept down the overall median age amongst ethnic minorities. Geographically, though concentrations of specific ethnicities remain in certain regions – such as Black Caribbean people in London or Pakistanis in the West Midlands – there has been a significant diversification, with older and more established ethnic minority individuals moving out of the cities into suburbia, towns and villages. Our report identifies the rise of ‘MINTs’ – Minorities in Towns – as a growing cohort of aspirational, family-oriented, home-ownership-focused, ethnic-minority citizens who are increasingly similar in terms of desires and values as the White British population.

Since the last report, the UK has undergone rapid secularisation – with the proportion of the population identifying as Christian dropping from 59% to 46% - alongside religious diversification, with a growth in the percentage of people identifying as Sikh, Hindu and, particularly, Muslim, up from 4.9% to 6.5%. The diversity of family structures, and attitudes to family, is a constant across the two reports, with the proportion of Black Caribbean children who live in a single-parent household (63%) being over ten times as many as the proportion of Indian children (6%) (for comparison, the proportion of White British children in a single-parent household was 19%).

The economic and educational progress of many ethnic minorities identified in the 2014 report has strengthened and deepened. Many ethnic groups now outperform the White British group on a wide range of measures – though Black Caribbean and the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller groups continue to lag on most indicators. Overall, however, the oft-made assumption that ethnic minority groups will have lower educational, economic or health outcomes no longer holds true.

The White British group now has one of the lowest levels of educational attainment at GCSE, as well as one of the lowest progressions to Higher Education, particularly for boys. Similarly, whereas in our previous report the unemployment rate for the Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean and Black African groups stood at over two and a half times the rate of the White group, this gap has closed to within one percentage point for

Pakistanis and three percentage points for Bangladeshis. In 2014, the White group was nearly £1 above the Asian racial group in terms of average hourly pay (£10.81 and £9.82 respectively), and remained above as recently as 2018. Yet in 2021 the highest average hourly pay in 2021 (all workers aged 16 and above in the UK) was Asian (£14.29), followed by people with a Mixed Race background (£13.57), White (£13.51), and Black (£12.55).

Compared to the era of our first report, ethnic minorities have taken a significantly greater role in public and political life. On May 6 2014, when Policy Exchange published its last report, there were fewer than 30 ethnic minority MPs in Parliament, and Cabinet contained just one member from an ethnic minority, Rt Hon Sajid Javid, Secretary of State for Culture, Media, and Sport. As we write our report in 2024, the UK has had an ethnic minority Prime Minister, multiple Chancellors, and multiple Home Secretaries – sometimes in succession – with ethnic minority individuals also having served as First Ministers of Scotland and Wales and as Mayor of London. Multiple ethnic minority individuals serve on the front bench of all three major parties. Ethnic minority individuals are still significantly more likely to vote Labour than Conservative, as in 2014; however, though over recent elections some ethnic groups, particularly Indian and Chinese voters are beginning to lean more towards the Conservatives, while at the most recent election, some ethnic minority voters, including Muslims, voted not for Labour or the Conservatives, but for other parties such as the Greens, Liberal Democrats or Independents<sup>8</sup>.

One important change since our former report is that then, when asked ‘How important is a sense of “Britishness” to your identity?’ all ethnic minority groups reported a slightly higher proportion indicating that this was very important to them (8-10 on a ten-point scale); whereas in our latest report, when asked similar questions, ethnic minority groups typically reported slightly lower figures than White respondents. This may be driven in part by both relatively high levels of recent immigration and a waning sense of Britishness amongst the younger generation (with most ethnic minority groups significantly younger than the White British population). Nevertheless, questions such as ‘children brought up in Britain should be taught to be proud of British history’ and ‘Throughout history, Britain has historically been a force for good in the world’ received a net positive result from every ethnic group.

Overall, compared to the last report, we have found a strengthening, growing and deepening of the role and success of ethnic minority groups within the UK. While there remain significant variations in all areas between different ethnic groups, these are increasingly non-linear and unpredictable, with a wide diversity of outcomes and attitudes across almost every area of life.

---

8. Minorities Report (2024), UK in a Changing Europe, [Link](#)

## 2. The Changing Portrait of Modern Britain

The portrait of modern Britain has undergone waves of social and cultural transformation in the post-WWII era. Flows of inward migration from former members of the British Empire (many now proudly having a place in the voluntary association The Commonwealth of Nations) as well as European Union member-states (including those which were under Communist control in the Cold War period) have contributed towards the rising racial, ethnic, and religious diversification of British society. It is not an exaggeration to suggest that certain parts of the country have experienced considerable demographic and cultural change in recent decades – to the point that the white-British population is now a minority in a growing number of local authorities.

Along with immigration-related change, there have also been internal cultural developments such as the decline in Christian identification in a rapidly-secularised mainstream with an overriding emphasis on individual liberty. This data presented in this section of the report underscores the complex reality that current-day Britain is a curious mix of being more secular and a place of greater religious heterogeneity; a more culturally liberal society in some ways but also comprising parts of the country where socially conservative values rooted in faith and family are the norm.

### 2.1. Ethnic Change

The recent 2021 Census for England and Wales provided a picture of significant racial and ethnic change.<sup>9</sup> The data which has emerged from it tells us that British society has become a more racially and ethnically diverse one – with the white-British ethnic group now representing under half of the population in cities such as London (36.8%), Birmingham (42.9%), and Leicester (33.2%), along with towns such as Luton in Bedfordshire (31.8%) and Slough in Berkshire (24.0%). By local authority, this drops as low as 14.8% for Newham in east London and 15.2% for Brent in north-west London.

In the 2011 Census, 80.5% of residents across England and Wales identified with an ethnic group which made them part of the white-British mainstream. In 2021, this had dropped to fewer than three in four people – 74.4%.<sup>10</sup> The fastest-growing ethnic group are those who fall in the “White Other” ethnic category – which, from 2011 to 2021,

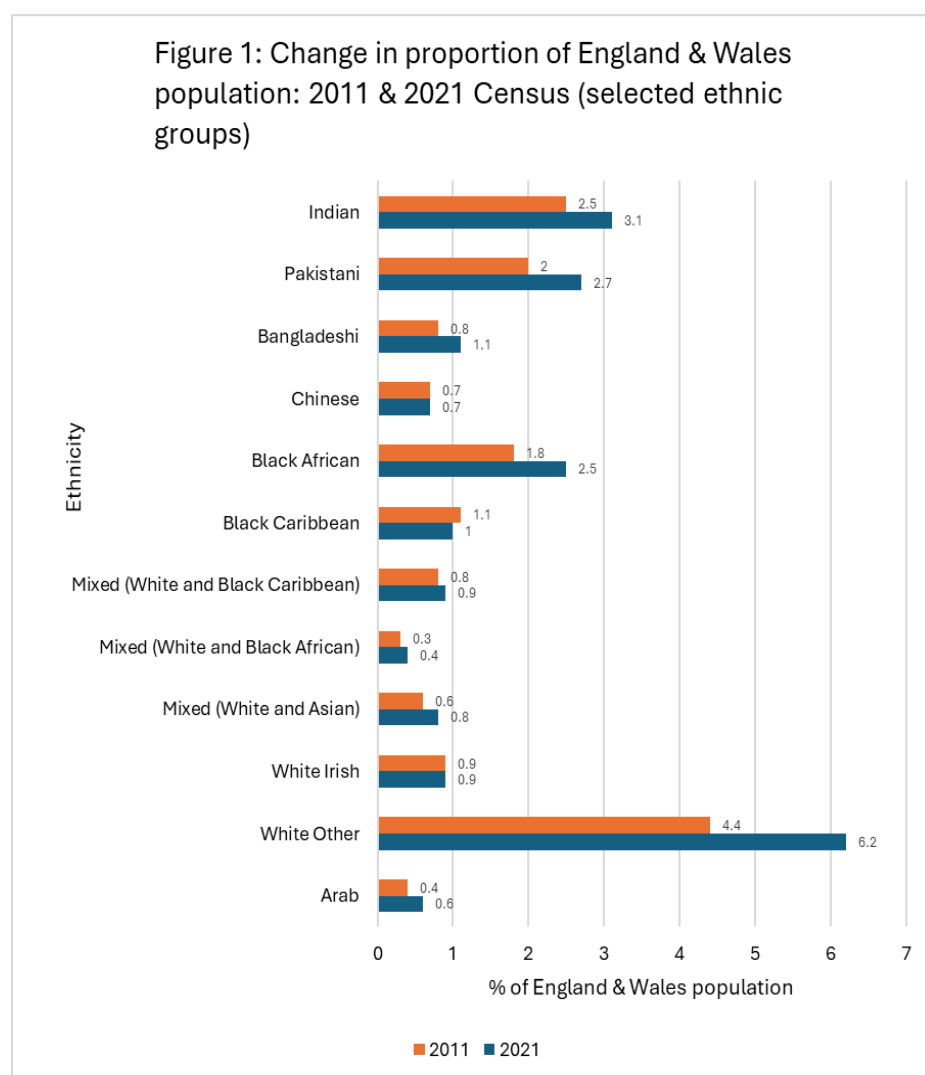
---

9. Office for National Statistics (2022), 'Ethnic group, England and Wales: Census 2021', 29 November. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/bulletins/ethnicgroupenglandandwales/census2021>, last accessed: 28 April 2024.

10. Ibid.



has increased from 4.4% to 6.2% of the overall population (from 2.5 million to 3.7 million people). This growth has largely been driven by pre-Brexit inward migration from European Union member-states such as Poland and Romania. According to the 2021 Census, one in six Londoners belong to the “White Other” ethnic group (17.0%), meaning that it a white-majority city. The highest concentration of people belonging to the “White Other” ethnic category by local authority is in Kensington and Chelsea – 28.3%. Outside of London, the two highest concentrations of this ethnic grouping can be found in Cambridge, Cambridgeshire (19.6%) and Boston, Lincolnshire (19.4%).



From the 2011 to 2021 Census, the percentage of residents across England and Wales who fall into the ‘higher-level’ Asian category has risen from 7.5% to 9.3% (4.3 million to 5.5 million people).<sup>11</sup> The largest Asian-heritage ethnic group are people of Indian origin, which has grown from 2.5% to 3.1% of the overall population during this time (1.4 million to 1.9 million people). The highest concentration of Indian-origin people by local authority is in Leicester in the East Midlands, where more than

11. Ibid.

one in three residents identify with this ethnic group – 34.3% (with one in six residents in Leicester being born in India). The percentage of people of Pakistani origin has increased from 2.0% to 2.7% of the overall population (1.1 million to 1.6 million people). In the neighbouring local authorities of Pendle in eastern Lancashire and Bradford in West Yorkshire, more than one in four residents identified with the Pakistani ethnic group in the 2021 Census – 25.6% and 25.5% respectively (the two highest concentrations by local authority).

The third-largest Asian ethnic group, people of Bangladeshi origin, has increased from 0.8% to 1.1% of the overall population (447,000 to 645,000 people).<sup>12</sup> The highest concentration of Bangladeshi-heritage people by local authority is Tower Hamlets, with more than one in three people identifying with this ethnic group – 34.6%. From 2011 to 2021, the percentage of the overall population being of Chinese origin has remained the same at 0.7% (increasing from 393,000 to 446,000 people). Being far more geographically distributed across the country, the highest concentration of Chinese-origin people by local authority is in the City of London at 6.3%, followed by Cambridge at 4.4%.

The percentage of the overall population which belongs to the ‘higher-level’ Black category has also increased across England and Wales.<sup>13</sup> From 2011 to 2021, it has grown from 3.3% to 4.0% of the general population (1.9 million to 2.4 million people). The largest ethnic group within this racial category are Black Africans (which is itself an incredibly diverse ‘group’, incorporating co-racial people originating from countries such as Nigeria in west Africa, Zimbabwe in southern Africa, and Somalia in the Horn of Africa). The Black African ethnic group is one of the fastest-growing sections of society. From 2011 to 2021, their percentage of the overall population has increased from 1.8% to 2.5% (990,000 to nearly 1.5 million people). The four local authorities with the highest concentration of people of Black African origin are all in London (Barking and Dagenham – 16.0%; Southwark – 15.7%; Greenwich – 15.3%; Lewisham – 12.6%). Outside of London, the highest concentration of Black African-origin people by local authority is Thurrock in Essex – 9.2%.

The size of the Black Caribbean ethnic group is relatively small when compared with other sizeable ethnic-minority groups. While the number of people who belong to the Black Caribbean ethnic category has increased (from 595,000 to 623,000), its percentage of the overall population decreased from the 2011 to 2021 England & Wales Census (from 1.1% to 1.0%).<sup>14</sup> Indeed, the number of Bangladeshi-heritage people registered in the 2021 edition was higher than the Black Caribbean-origin population (644,881 and 623,119 respectively). In a sense, Black Caribbeans (which incorporate a diversity of islands of origin such as Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, St Kitts and Nevis, and St Lucia) are ‘a minority within a minority’ – representing just 26% of the wider Black population registered in the 2021 England and Wales census. While the post-WWII arrival of Windrush migrants and cultural festivals such as Notting Hill Carnival have been adopted as significant touch-points of the so-called

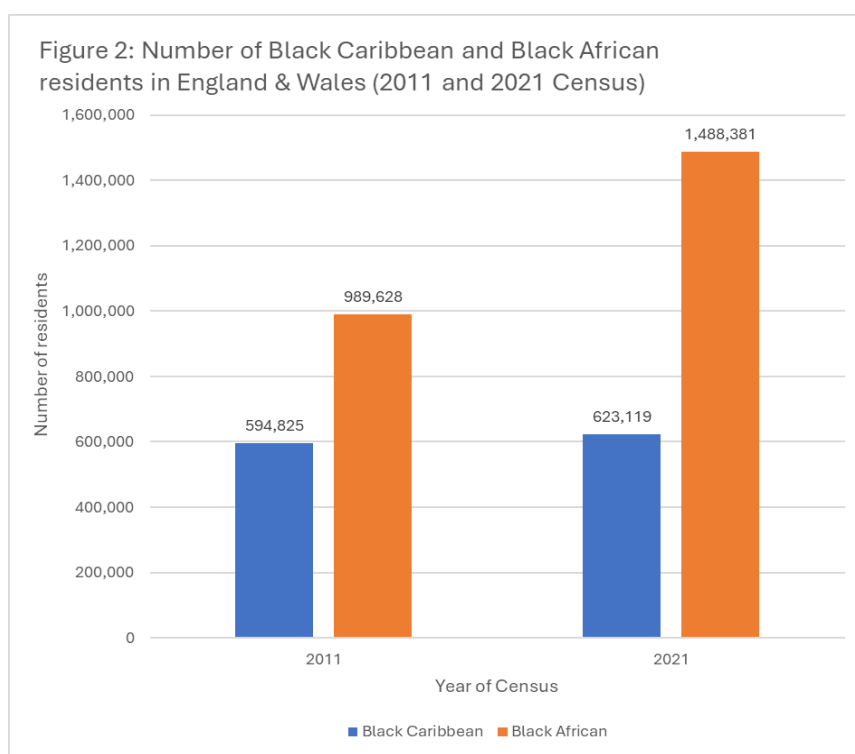
---

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

'black community' in Britain, it is worth noting that the archetypal 'Black Briton' is no longer of Caribbean heritage. The three highest concentrations of people belonging to the Black Caribbean group by local authority are all in London – Lewisham (10.6%), Croydon (9.2%) and Lambeth (9.1%). Outside of London, the three highest concentrations of Black Caribbean-heritage people are in the West Midlands region – Birmingham (3.9%), Sandwell (3.8%) and Wolverhampton (also 3.8%).



An ethnic category which is on a consistently upward trajectory in terms of share of the overall population is the wider mixed- and multiple-ethnic grouping. From 2011 to 2021, it has increased from 2.2% to 2.9% of the overall population in England and Wales (1.2 million to 1.7 million people).<sup>15</sup> The largest-sized sub-category within the wider mixed-ethnic grouping are those of White and Black Caribbean origin (who represent 0.9% of the overall population – 513,000 people). This is followed by those with a mixed White and Asian background, who make up 0.8% of the population (488,000 people across England and Wales). The number of people in the 2021 Census who described themselves as having a mixed White and Black African background is comparatively low (under a quarter of the million – 249,596 people to be exact). This represents 0.4% of the overall population in England and Wales. Outside of the three main mixed-ethnic groups (White & Caribbean, White & Asian, and White & Black African), there are 467,000 people who fall into the “Other Mixed” sub-category (0.8% of the overall population). The highest concentrations of mixed-ethnic people by local authority are in London – with Lewisham being the highest-ranked on this front (8.1% of residents).

15. Ibid.

A relatively small but fast-growing, non-white, ethnic-minority grouping in the UK are Arabs. Primarily originating from the Middle East & North Africa region (MENA), the number of Arabs from the 2011 to 2021 Census has increased from 231,000 to 332,000 (0.4% to 0.6% of the overall population).<sup>16</sup> In the 2021 Census, the majority of people who fell into this ethnic category directly ticked the “Arab” option (but more than one in three were categorised as “Arab” after making written responses such as “Arab African”, “Moroccan” and “North African”). While some Arab families have been present in the UK for generations, large-scale conflicts and civil unrest in the MENA region mean there are emergent asylum-connected communities consisting of more recent arrivals. The three highest concentrations of Arab people by local authority are all in London – Westminster (7.6%), Brent (5.3%), and Ealing (4.4%). Outside of London, the five highest concentrations of Arabs (based on the 2021 Census) can be found in Manchester (2.7%) and Cardiff (1.8%), Birmingham (1.7%), Liverpool (1.7%), and Sheffield (1.6%).

## 2.2: Accelerated Secularisation and Religious Diversification

The two general trends in British society in regard to faith are that we have become both a more secular and religiously heterogeneous one (along with growing racial and ethnic diversification).<sup>17</sup>

Britain has undergone a rapid process of secularisation which has a precipitous fall in Christian self-identification at the heart of it. Shortly after the arrival of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the 2001 Census revealed that more than seven in ten residents in England and Wales – 71.7% to be exact – identified with the Christian faith. This figure dropped to under six in ten in 2011 – 59.3%. In 2021, for the first time in the history of the England and Wales Census, under half of residents identified as Christian – 46.2%. Britain may well be a European society with an established Church, but the figures point towards an accelerated growth in irreligion. While this section of society may include those who consider themselves to be ‘spiritual’, the percentage of people who stated that they are of “no religion” has increased markedly from 25.2% in 2011 to 37.2% in 2021 – a rise of 12 percentage points. This is a somewhat youth-driven development. Of the 22.2 million people who reported being of no religion, only 8.8% were aged 65 years or over (with this age category representing 18.6% of the overall population).

However, this process of rapid secularisation in the white-British mainstream (the rise of what Guyana-born British broadcaster Sir Trevor Phillips calls the ‘godless liberals’) has been accompanied by greater religious heterogeneity – with a pronounced growth in numbers. From the 2011 to the 2021 edition of the England and Wales Census, the number of people who identify with the Christian faith has decreased by 5.8 million, the number who describe themselves as Muslim has risen by 1.2 million over the same period (from 2.7 million to 3.9 million).<sup>18</sup> Muslims now

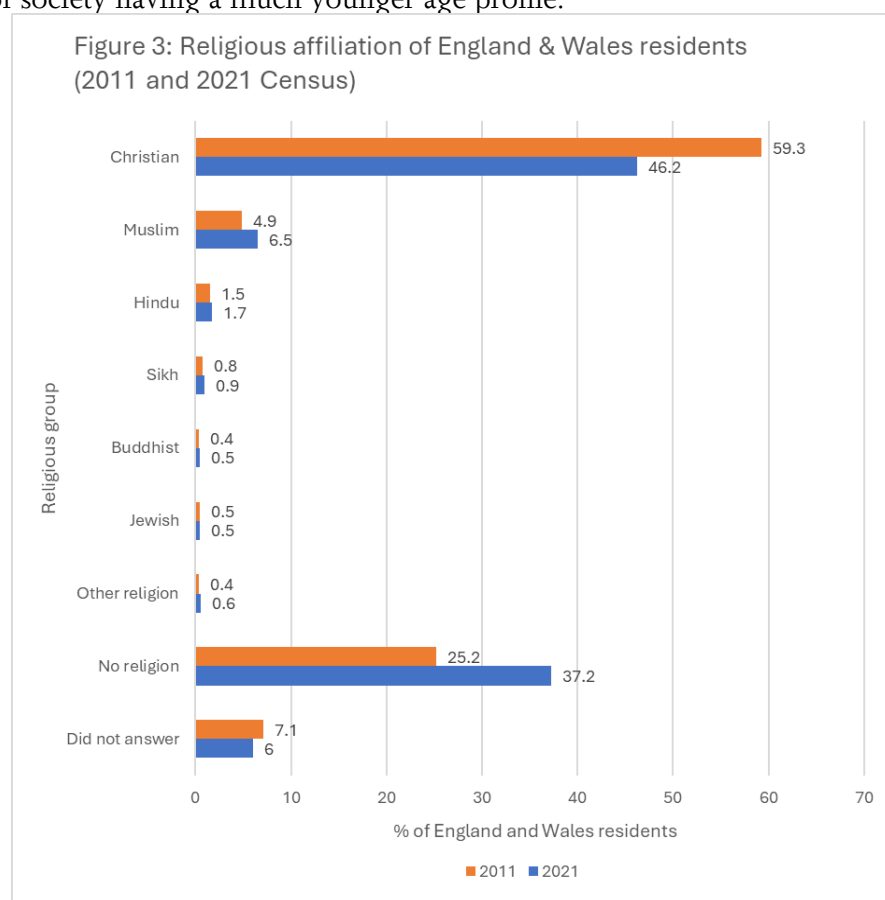
---

16. Ibid.

17. Office for National Statistics (2022), ‘Religion, England and Wales: Census 2021’, 29 November. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/bulletins/religionenglandandwales/census2021>, last accessed: 28 April 2024.

18. Ibid.

represent 6.5% of the population of England and Wales – with this section of society having a much younger age profile.



While 62% of the wider general population was aged under the age of 50 years in the 2021 Census, this increased to 84.5% for Muslims. The local authority with the highest concentration of Muslims is Tower Hamlets in east London (39.9%), followed by Blackburn with Darwen in Lancashire (35.0%). While the former predominantly comprises Muslims of Bangladeshi origin, the latter largely consists of their co-religionists of Pakistani heritage. One of the other higher-ranking local authorities in terms of concentrations of Muslims is Luton in Bedfordshire (32.9%) – with this population being relatively diverse in terms of ethnic background when compared to the Muslim populations of Tower Hamlets and Blackburn with Darwen.

For the first time in the history of the England and Wales Census, the number of people identifying as Hindu reached one million – growing from 1.5% to 1.7% of the overall population.<sup>19</sup> While not as youthful as the Muslim population, Hindus in England and Wales also have a younger profile than the wider general population. Harrow in west London had the highest concentration of Hindus by local authority (25.8%). There has also been a modest growth in the number of people identifying as Sikh (423,000 to 524,000), Buddhist (249,000 to 273,000) and Jewish (265,000 to 271,000) from the 2011 to 2021 England and Wales

19. Ibid.

Census. The combined population of the three religious groups amounts to less than 2% of the overall population. The local authority with the highest concentration of Sikhs was Wolverhampton in the West Midlands (12%). For Jews, it was Hertsmere in Hertfordshire, which includes towns such as Borehamwood, Bushey, and Potters Bar (17.0%). The highest concentration of Buddhists by local authority was in Rushmoor in Hampshire (4.7%), which incorporates the town of Aldershot – the home of Buddhist Community Centre UK (BCCUK) and a notable contingent of Nepalese-heritage families associated with the Brigade of Gurkhas of the British Army.

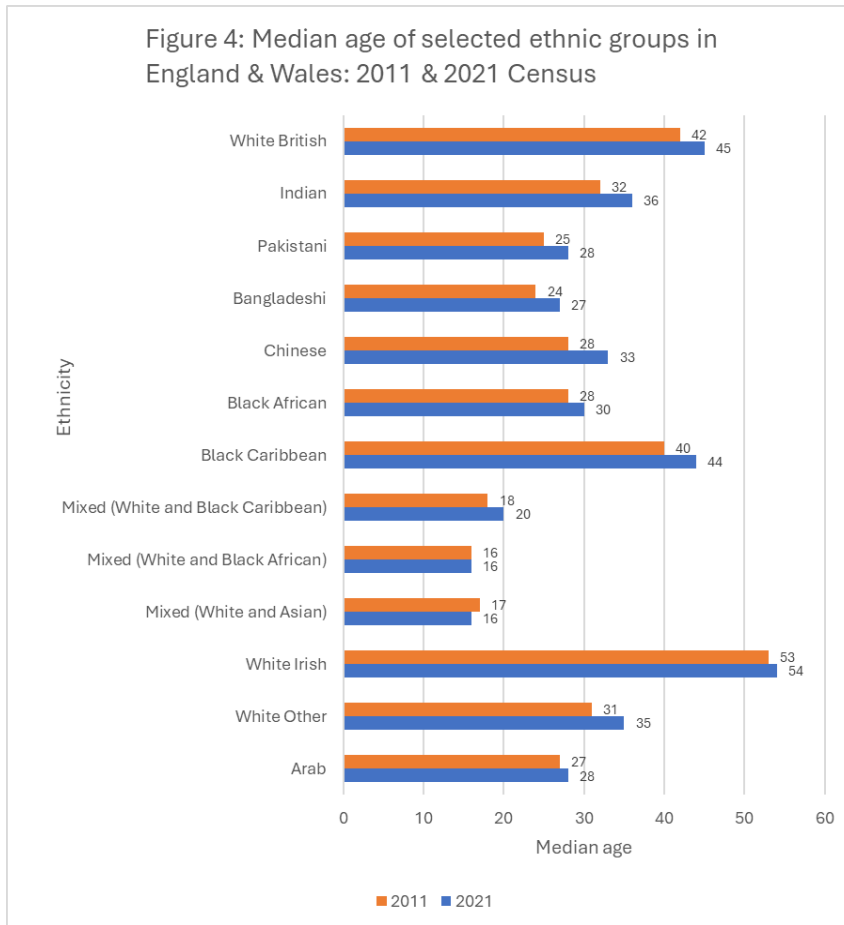
### 2.3. The age profile of racial and ethnic minorities

A demographic characteristic that will have an influential impact on the ever-changing portrait of modern Britain is age – with there being considerable differences between and within racial groups when it comes to their age-related profiles. The youthfulness (and elderliness) of communities will have a defining role in future population change in terms of race, ethnicity, and religion (with the latter depending on the degree of intergenerational transfer of religious values and practices).

While the median age of the England & Wales population has only slightly increased in the 2011 to 2021 edition (39 to 40 years), there have been notable changes in the median age within specific groups – as well as there being major differences between ethnic groups which will shape the future ethnic, racial, and religious composition of the adult population in the future.<sup>20</sup> The ethnic group which has experienced the largest median-age increase from the 2011 England and Wales census to the 2021 edition is Chinese – 28 to 33 years. The general trend is the median age of ethnic groups increasing. The ethnic category with the largest drop in median age over this period is the ‘Black Other’ group – from 23 to 19 years.

---

20. UK Government (2023), ‘Age groups’, 31 March. Available at: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/demographics/age-groups/latest/>, last accessed: 28 April 2024.



In the 2021 Census, white-British residents in England and Wales were one of the oldest ethnic groups based on median age – reporting a figure of 45 years. Only one ethnic group registered a higher median age – the white-Irish ethnic group at 54 years. Gypsies and Travellers are a major anomaly in terms of median age patterns in the white racial group – having a median age of just 28 years. The age structure of the white ethnic groups shows that there are significant differences. Nearly one in five white British people in the 2021 England and Wales Census were under the age of eighteen – 19%. This dropped to just 6% for the white-Irish group but rose to over one in three people – 34% – for the Gypsy and Traveller communities. On the other end of the age structure, around one in six white-Irish residents and one in ten white British people were over the age of 75 (16.6% and 10.6% respectively). This drops to just 2.7% for Gypsies and Travellers.

Looking at the broader racial categories, white people in England and Wales are significantly older on average than their Black, Asian, and mixed-race counterparts – with median ages of 43, 32, 32, and 19 years respectively. Among the mixed-race ethnic groups, the median-age figure drops all the way down to 16 years (for those of mixed White-Asian parentage and mixed-race people with a White and Black African background).

Between the main South Asian ethnic groups, there are median-age

differences of note – with people of Indian origin being somewhat older than the Sunni-majority Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic groups (median ages of 36, 28, and 27 years respectively). Reflecting migratory stages and patterns, the age structure of the South Asian ethnic groups are different. Around one in six Indian-heritage residents were under the age of eighteen in the 2021 England and Wales Census (16.7%) – rising to more than one in five for Pakistani-heritage people (22%) and more than one in four for the Bangladeshi-origin population across the two home nations (26.7%). Within each of the Indian and Bangladeshi ethnic groups, 2.8% of people are over the age of 75 – rising to 4% for the Pakistani ethnic group. While other factors such as future immigration flows will have an effect, the current-day relative youthfulness and Islamic religiosity of Britain’s Pakistani-heritage and Bangladeshi-origin communities mean that the wider South Asian population is likely to become less ‘Indian’ and more ‘Muslim’ as time progresses.

There is a median-age difference of 14 years between the Black Caribbean ethnic group and their co-racial peers of African origin – 44 years and 30 years respectively. Reflecting their generally recently-arrived nature, Black African people living in England and Wales have one of the lowest median ages. Further underlining fundamental differences in terms of age structure, 16% of Black Caribbeans in the 2021 England and Wales Census were under the age of 18 – rising to 30% for the co-racial African group. While 1% of Black African-heritage residents were over the age of 75 years, the corresponding figure for people of Black Caribbean origin was 8%. Along with other factors such as romantic choice and future patterns of intercontinental migration, the respective age profiles suggest that it is highly likely that the British Black population (which is already majority-African) will, over time, become increasingly African in terms of ancestral heritage – with the possibility that the absolute number of British Black Caribbeans is now very much on a downward trajectory.

### 2.4. Regional spread of ethnic minorities

As this report progresses, it will become all the clearer that Britain’s ethnic minorities are anything but a monolithic homogeneous bloc. This is apparent when considering the differences in regional spread between ethnic-minority groups across England and Wales.<sup>21</sup>

The most regionally concentrated group among Britain’s sizeable ethnic minorities are people of Black Caribbean origin. According to the 2021 Census, more than half of Black Caribbean-heritage people living in England and Wales are based in the London city-region – 55.4%.<sup>22</sup> There is no other sizeable ethnic group which has more than half of its England and Wales population concentrated within a single region. A further 14.5% of the Black Caribbean ethnic group lives in the West Midlands – with a significant proportion being based in Birmingham. Only 0.6% live in Wales – the lowest proportion out of all sizeable ethnic-minority groups. While a plurality of their co-racial counterparts of African origin do live in London – 46.8% - the majority live outside of the capital, with

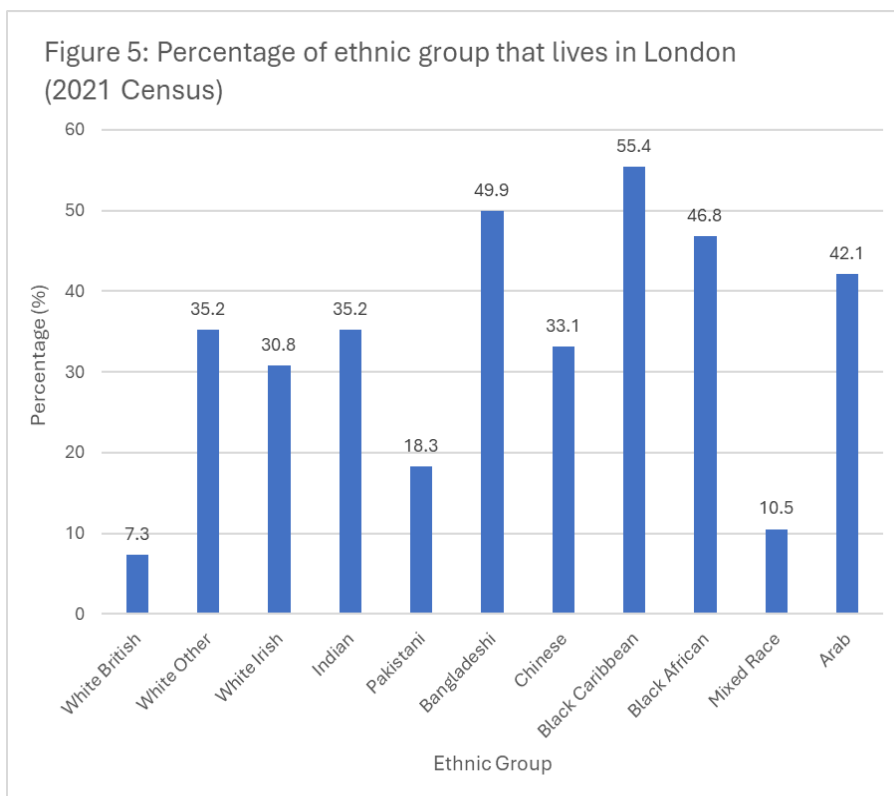
21. UK Government (2022), ‘Regional ethnic diversity’, 22 December. Available at: [https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/national-and-regional-populations/regional-ethnic-diversity/latest/#:-:text=of%20all%20regions%2C%20the,2.9%25\)%20had%20the%20lowest](https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/national-and-regional-populations/regional-ethnic-diversity/latest/#:-:text=of%20all%20regions%2C%20the,2.9%25)%20had%20the%20lowest), last accessed: 28 April 2024.

22. Ibid.



notable proportions based in the South East and West Midlands regions (10.1% and 9.8% respectively).

The three main South Asian ethnic groups – Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis – also differ in terms of regional spread across England and Wales. Bangladeshis - the smallest in number out of the three ethnic groups - are the most concentrated within a particular region, with very nearly half of the population living in London (49.9% to be exact, according to the 2021 Census).<sup>23</sup> This is further concentrated in the eastern London boroughs of Tower Hamlets and Newham. In fact, one in three Bangladeshi-heritage people living in England and Wales (33.7%) are concentrated in four eastern boroughs of London – Tower Hamlets (107,333), Newham (55,677), Redbridge (31,895) and Barking & Dagenham (22,393 people). Brick Lane in the East End – affectionately known as ‘Banglatown’ – is an established cultural attraction in modern Britain. There are also notable proportions of Bangladeshi-heritage people living in the West Midlands (12.0%), North West England (9.4%) and the East of England (7.9%). With 2.4% of Bangladeshi-heritage people living in Wales, this is the highest proportion among the three main South Asian groups (with 1.1% within both the Indian-origin and Pakistani-heritage groups living in Wales).



According to the 2021 Census data, over one in three Indian-heritage people living in England and Wales are based in London (35.2%) – having an especially notable presence in the western boroughs such as Harrow (home to 75,000 people of Indian origin), along with the north-western borough of Brent (which has 66,000 residents belonging to this ethnic

23. Ibid.

group).<sup>24</sup> When compared to other sizeable ethnic groups (such as Black Caribbeans, Black Africans, and Bangladeshis), Indians are more evenly spread in terms of regional distribution. While 14.8% of Indian-origin people live in the West Midlands, a further 13.0% and 12.3% live in the south-east of England and the East Midlands respectively. Within the East Midlands, over 126,000 people of Indian ethnic origin are based in the Leicester local authority (126,421 is the exact 2021 Census figure). To put this in perspective, this exceeds the total number of Indian-origin people across the Yorkshire & the Humber and North East England regions and the entirety of Wales (combined population of 124,413 for the three government office regions).

The sizeable ethnic-minority group which is most evenly spread across England and Wales in terms of regional distribution are people of Pakistani origin. Around one in five people of Pakistani origin are based in the West Midlands (20.1%) – this is also the case for North West England (19.1%), Yorkshire and the Humber (18.7%), and London (18.3%).<sup>25</sup> Out of the five sizeable ethnic minorities, Pakistanis are the most ‘non-London-based’ in terms of England and Wales residence – with more than four in five people within this ethnic group living outside of the capital (81.7%). While more than half of the Black Caribbean, Black African, Indian, Bangladeshi, and Chinese ethnic groups are based in southern England (inclusive of London) – 65.2%, 59.8%, 51.4%, 58.0%, and 53.4% respectively - this is not the case for Pakistanis. Around one in three people in the Pakistani ethnic group live in either London or one of the two southern English regions – 34.6%. As well as being a notable presence in a string of Northern English post-industrial towns such as Oldham in Lancashire and Dewsbury in Yorkshire, there are sizeable Pakistani-origin populations in cities such as Birmingham and Bradford (195,102 and 139,553 people respectively, based on Census 2021 data). To put this in perspective, the same data source shows that 145,311 Pakistani-origin people were living in the whole of the South East England region.

The smallest out of the six main ethnic categories under analysis for this report – people of Chinese -origin – are relatively spread out across the regions when compared with the Black Caribbean, Black African, and Bangladeshi ethnic groups.<sup>26</sup> According to the 2021 England and Wales Census, one in three Chinese-origin residents were based in London – 33.1% (147,520 people). Notable proportions of the Chinese-heritage population live in the south-east and north-west regions of England – 14.4% and 12.1% (64,329 and 54,051 people respectively). The largest Chinese-origin Census 2021 populations, by London borough, were in Tower Hamlets (10,279), Barnet (9,434) and Southwark (8,405 people). Outside of London, there are similarly-sized populations of Chinese-origin people in Manchester and Birmingham – 12,644 and 12,487 people respectively. A further 8,841 Chinese-heritage people were based in Liverpool. Outside of the larger metropolitan centres, there were notable Chinese-origin populations in the university cities of Cambridge and Oxford – 6,362 and 4,479 people respectively.

24. Ibid.

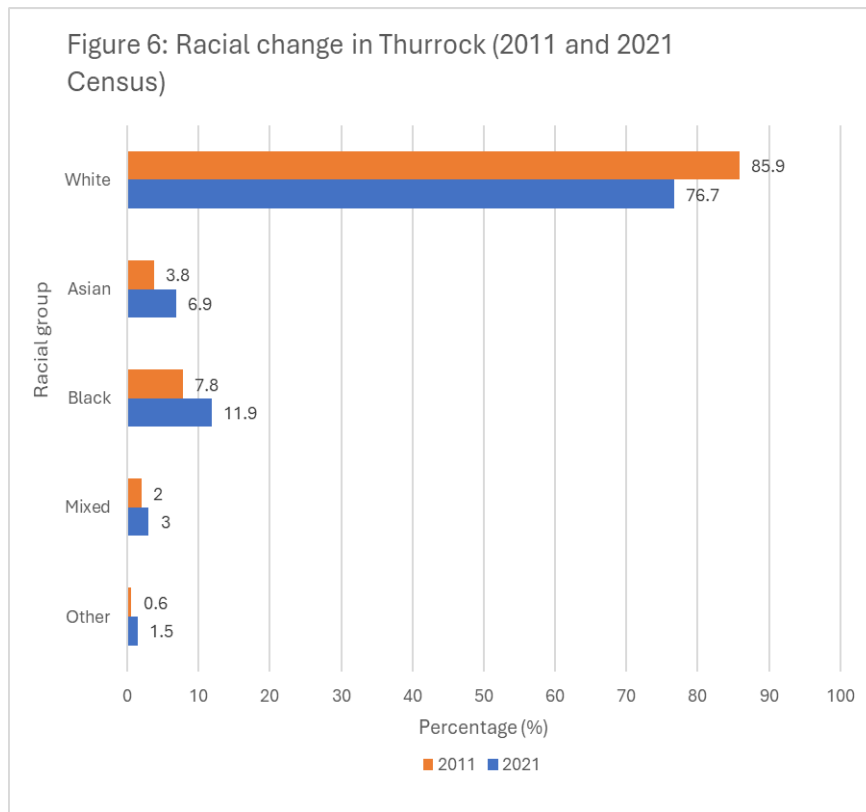
25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

### 2.5. Diversification of towns – the rise of ‘MINTs’

A notable pattern which has emerged over the course of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century but accelerated in recent times is the growing diversification of towns which are near larger metropolitan centres. While much of the commentary on this has focused on so-called ‘white flight’ from urban to suburban and sub-rural areas as well as the countryside, a plausible explanation for such forms of demographic change is aspirational younger families migrating from hyper-diverse cities and moving into relatively homogeneous towns with more favourable housing markets and social conditions which are perceived to be more ‘family-friendly’. This emergent, upwardly-mobile, traditionalist demographic could be broadly referred to as ‘Minorities in Towns’ – MINTs. This could also involve established older family members (including grandparents) augmenting such patterns of internal migration.

There is also the argument that certain ethnic- and religious-minority communities with a younger age profile are more likely to prioritise marriage as an institution of social value and child-raising as an integral part of adulthood – which would naturally feed into fertility-connected demographic shifts at both the national and local level in modern Britain. While much of the discourse on such forms of localised demographic change is focused on the negative concept of ‘white flight’ (essentially white Britons ‘fleeing’ areas due to cultural and demographic anxieties), the growth of the ‘MINTs’ – aspirational, family-oriented, home-ownership-focused, ethnic-minority citizens who may have strong social and economic connections to major cities but desire a degree of distance from the metropolitan hustle-and-bustle by moving into towns with distinct local identities – is something deserving of greater attention. Indeed, it will shift the electoral landscape in a string of constituencies which have a recent history of changing hands – with MINTs likely to establish themselves as a critical voter constituency in modern British politics.



The local authority of Thurrock in Essex, East of England, which includes the town of Grays, two miles east of the M25 motorway, has experienced notable forms of ethnic and religious demographic change in recent times.<sup>27</sup> Lying on the north bank of the River Thames immediately to the east of London, it incorporates the Port of Tilbury – the principal port for the capital. Falling in the London commuter belt, Thurrock is an area of regeneration within the Thames Gateway redevelopment zone and includes the northern ends of the Dartford Crossing. In the recent English local elections, the Labour Party gained Thurrock council (which was previously under no overall control) – gaining eight councillors, with the Conservatives losing twelve.<sup>28</sup> In the recent UK general election, Labour gained the constituency of Thurrock from the Conservatives (who were knocked down to third place by Reform UK) – with Labour now holding a majority of 6,474 votes.<sup>29</sup>

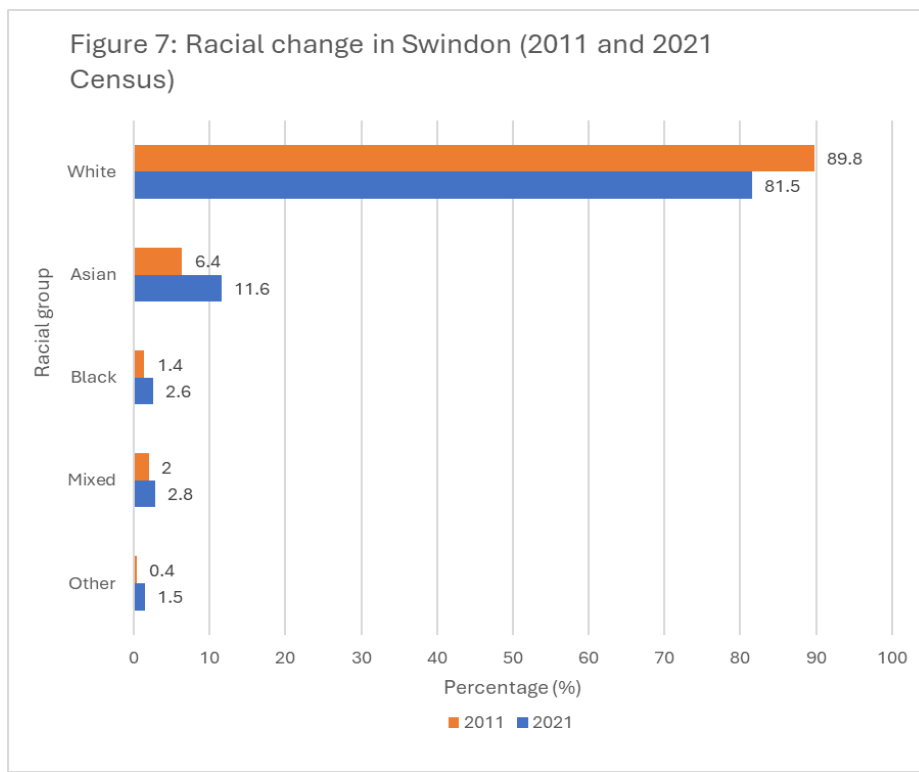
Between the last two England and Wales censuses, the population of Thurrock increased by 11.6% - from just over 157,700 in 2011 to around 176,000 in 2021. The proportion of residents in the local authority who identified as Black increased from 7.8% in 2011 to 11.9% in 2021, while the percentage of residents who were White dropped from 85.9% to 76.7% over the same period. In 2021, 6.9% of residents in Thurrock identified with an Asian ethnic category - up from 3.8% in 2011. During this time, Thurrock has witnessed a rise in the proportion of its residents who identify as Muslim (2.0% to 4.9%), Hindu (0.7% to 1.4%), and Sikh (0.8% to 1.2%). From the 2011 to 2021 Census, the percentage of residents in Thurrock who reported their religious affiliation as Christian

27. Office for National Statistics (2023), 'How life has changed in Stockton-on-Tees: Census 2021', 19 January. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E06000004/>, last accessed: 28 April 2024.

28. BBC News (2024), 'Thurrock election result'. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2024/england/councils/E06000034>, last accessed: 7 May 2024.

29. BBC News (2024), 'Thurrock results'. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2024/uk/constituencies/E14001546>, last accessed: 29 July 2024.

dropped from 63.3% to 51.7%, while the proportion of people who say they are of 'no religion' increased from 26.0% to 34.7%.

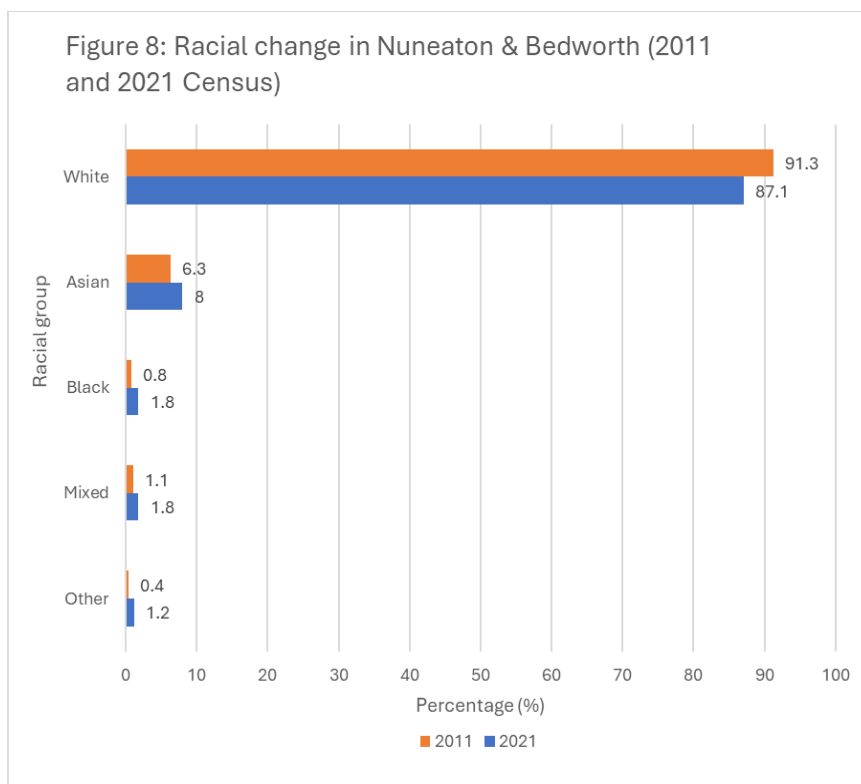


One town which has experienced notable forms of demographic change in recent times is Swindon.<sup>30</sup> The largest settlement in the county of Wiltshire (which falls into the South West England region), it lies on the M4 corridor – 71 miles to the west of London and 36 miles east to Bristol. It is closely situated to the Cotswolds to its north and the North Wessex Downs to its south. In the recent English local elections, Labour strengthened its existing control of Swindon council, gaining nine councillors – all at the expense of the Conservatives.<sup>31</sup> In the recent UK general election, Labour gained both Swindon seats (South and North) from the Conservatives – now holding majorities of 9,606 and 4,103 votes respectively.<sup>32 33</sup>

From the 2011 to 2021 England and Wales Census, the population of Swindon local authority increased from 209,200 to 233,400 – a growth of 11.6%. In 2021, the proportion of the population that identified with an Asian-origin ethnic group was 11.6% - up from 6.4% in 2011. Over this same period, the percentage of Swindon's residents who identified as Black rose from 1.4% to 2.6%. Between the 2011 and 2021 Census, the percentage of people in Swindon who identified with a White ethnic group dropped from 89.8% to 81.5%. In this time, Swindon has witnessed a rise in the proportion of its residents who are Muslim (1.7% to 2.7%), Hindu (1.2% to 2.5%), and Buddhist (0.6% to 0.7%). The percentage of residents who identify as Christian has dropped from 57.5% to 46.6%

30. Office for National Statistics (2023), 'How life has changed in Swindon: Census 2021', 19 January. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E06000030/>, last accessed: 28 April 2024.
31. BBC News (2024), 'Swindon election result'. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2024/england/councils/E06000030>, last accessed: 7 May 2024.
32. BBC News (2024), 'Swindon South results'. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2024/uk/constituencies/E14001537>, last accessed: 29 July 2024.
33. BBC News (2024), 'Swindon North results'. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2024/uk/constituencies/E14001536>, last accessed: 29 July 2024.

during this time, with the proportion of people saying they are of ‘no religion’ increasing from 31.0% to 40.5%. It is, however, home to an established sizeable population of Goan Roman Catholics.



In the heart of Middle England, the local authority of Nuneaton & Bedworth in Warwickshire has shown signs of racial, ethnic, and religious diversification.<sup>34</sup> Named after the two traditional market towns incorporated, the local authority in the West Midlands region is reasonably close to the cities of Birmingham, Leicester, and Coventry (with Nuneaton having direct train connectivity with London King’s Cross railway station). In the recent English local elections, Labour wrestled control of Nuneaton & Bedworth council from the Conservatives – the former gained fifteen councillors, with the latter losing fourteen.<sup>35</sup> In the July 2024 general election, Labour gained the seat of Nuneaton from the Conservatives – winning with a majority of 3,479 votes.

From 2011 to 2021, the population of Nuneaton & Bedworth local authority increased by 7.1% - from 125,300 to 134,200 people. Its population increased by a greater percentage than the overall population of the West Midlands region (6.2%), as well as the overall population of England (up 6.6% since the 2011 Census). In 2021, 8.0% of Nuneaton and Bedworth residents identified with an Asian ethnic category - up from 6.3% in 2011. The 1.7 percentage-point rise was the largest increase among main racial groups in the local authority. The proportion of residents in the local authority who identified as Black increased from 0.8% in 2011 to 1.8% in 2021, while the percentage of residents who were White dropped

34. Office for National Statistics (2023), 'How life has changed in Nuneaton and Bedworth: Census 2021', 19 January. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E07000219/>, last accessed: 28 April 2024.

35. BBC News (2024), 'Nuneaton & Bedworth council results'. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2024/england/councils/E07000219>, last accessed: 29 July 2024.

from 91.3% to 87.1% over the same period. In this time, Nuneaton & Bedworth has experienced a rise in the proportion of its residents who are Muslim (2.3% to 3.0%), Sikh (2.2% to 2.6%), Hindu (1.1% to 1.6%), and Buddhist (0.3% to 0.5%). From the 2011 to 2021 Census, the percentage of residents in the local authority who identify with the Christian faith dropped from 63.6% to 48.5%, while the proportion of people who say they are of 'no religion' increased from 24.0% to 37.8%.

## 2.6. Urban-rural spread of racial and ethnic minorities

The urban vs. rural distribution of ethnic minorities living in England has changed in recent times – with there being noteworthy differences between racial groups. It is worth noting that at the time of writing, there is a lack of data available on how different ethnic groups are distributed along urban-rural lines. Existing data is broken down into broader racial categories (such as White, Asian, Black, and Mixed). Based on data at the Lower Layer Super Output (LSOA) level, 9.7 million people were estimated to live in England's rural areas in 2020, compared with 46.9 million people in urban areas (based on LSOA-level data).<sup>36</sup> Over the decade leading up to the measurement of the figures, these populations have increased by 6.0% and 6.6% respectively. As of 2020, the higher-level 'white ethnic' group accounted for 96.8% of England's rural population – this figure drops down to 81.7% for parts of the country classified as urban areas.

Against a backdrop of somewhat unsubstantiated claims that the English countryside is a uniquely hostile environment against racial and ethnic minorities, there is data which suggests that England's rural areas are becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. From 2016 to 2020, the percentage of England's rural population belonging to an ethnic-minority group increased from 2.4% to 3.2%.<sup>37</sup> Over the same period, the percentage of the urban population in England belonging to an ethnic-minority group only rose marginally from 18.2% to 18.3%. Based on 2020 England population data on urban vs. rural distributions, 310,400 people with an ethnic-minority background lived in rural England – with the corresponding figure for England's urban areas being in the region of 8.6 million.

There are notable differences in the racial and ethnic composition of minority populations in urban and rural areas. In 2020, the percentage of the ethnic-minority population in rural England which was mixed-race stood at 32.9% - this figure drops to 13.8% for the ethnic-minority population in urban England.<sup>38</sup> In 2020, under one in three ethnic-minority people in rural England belong to an Asian ethnic group (32.0%) – this rises to nearly half when it comes to the wider ethnic-minority population in urban areas across England (46.9%). Under one in six ethnic-minority people living in England's rural parts in 2020 belonged to a Black ethnic group (Caribbean, African etc) – 16.1%. This figure rises to over a quarter – 24.7% - for the ethnic-minority population in urban England. While 14.6% of England's urban ethnic-minority population in 2020 belonged to the Chinese, Arab, and 'Other' ethnic groups (such as white European

36. UK Government (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs) (2024), 'Statistical Digest of Rural England: 1 – Population', 16 April. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/661d3b95ac3dae9a53bd3dd3/16\\_04\\_2024\\_-\\_1\\_-\\_Population.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/661d3b95ac3dae9a53bd3dd3/16_04_2024_-_1_-_Population.pdf), last accessed: 28 April 2024.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

minorities originally from Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria) this rose to 19.1% for England's rural ethnic-minority population.



## 3. Family and Children

Along with differences between racial and ethnic minorities in terms of migratory background and geographical distribution, there are considerable forms of variation in terms of educational and socio-economic outcomes. Much of this is influenced by a variety of factors – migratory history, family structure, community norms, cultural values towards education and enterprise, as well as other determinants ranging from the quality of public services and the general health of civic assets in local areas. The portrait of modern Britain is one where there are significant racial and ethnic disparities – whether it is family structure, level of school attainment, university attendance, labour market integration, or rates of home ownership. This does not only expose the exceptionally reductive implications of the ‘BAME’ acronym, but also highlights the degree to which broader racial categories such as ‘Black’, ‘Asian’ and ‘White’ serve to mask ethnic differences which are often overlooked.

### 3.1. Family Structure and Dynamics in Modern Britain

Family life in Britain has been fundamentally transformed in much of Britain – especially after the socially-liberal ‘revolution’ of the 1960s, the industrial decline that came with fast-paced economic globalisation, and the cultural ascent of secular individualism.

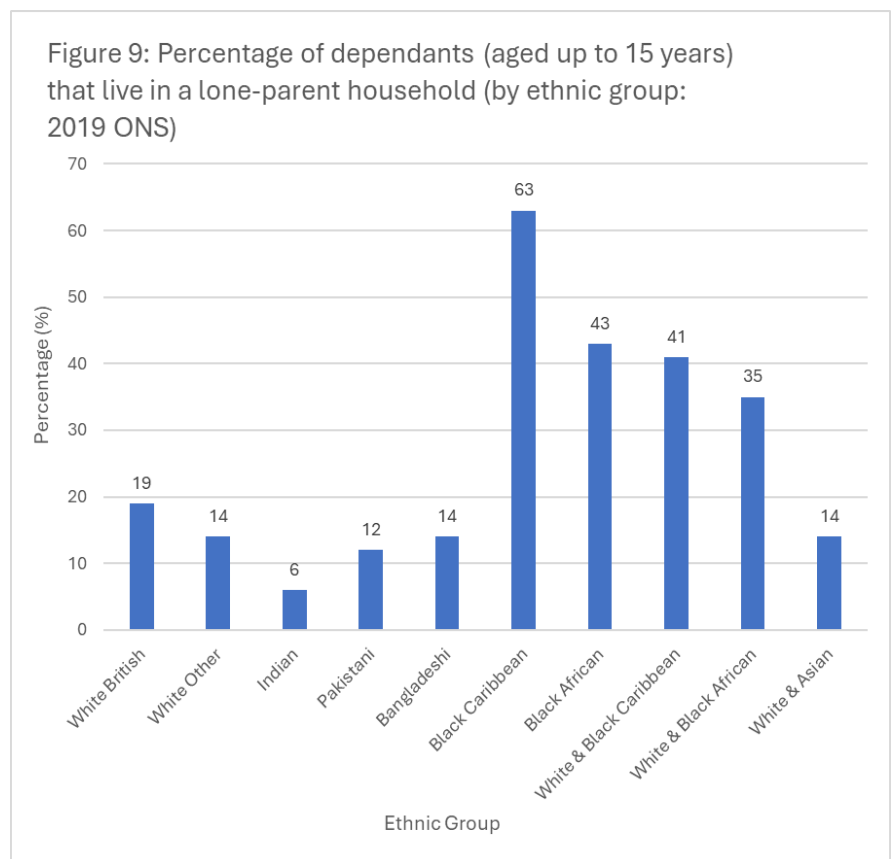
Along with the United States, the UK has reached the undesirable status of being a world leader – an international hotspot – when it comes to family fragility and parent-child disconnection. In 1971, the UK had 570,000 single-parent families; by 2021, this figure had reached an eye-watering 3 million.<sup>39</sup> In the 1970s, the marriage rate for men – the number of men marrying per 1,000 unmarried people of either sex aged 16 years and over – peaked at 78.4 in 1974. By 2019, this had plummeted to just 18.6. For women, the 1970s peak was 60.5 (in 1972). This had dropped to 17.2 by 2019. The ONS have shown that, in England and Wales, there were a total of 111,934 opposite-sex divorces in 2021 – an increase of 9.3% from the 2020 figure.<sup>40</sup> Divorce enquiries to British legal firms soared during the Covid-19 pandemic, with lockdowns and social distancing ending what were previously ‘separate’ routines and external leisure activities that served to mask underlying marital problems.

These developments have an impact in various spheres of life – from young people’s mental health to pressures on housing stock due to ‘unformed’ families and the splitting of fragile ones. Robust academic research produced by the Centre of Social Justice’s Sophia Worringer has shown that family structure has a greater impact on the presence of

39. Office for National Statistics (2023), ‘Families and households in the UK: 2022’, 18 May. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/bulletins/familiesandhouseholds/2022#:~:text=There%20were%202.9%20million%20alone,to%2017%25%20of%20all%20families.>, last accessed: 29 April 2024.

40. Office for National Statistics (2022), ‘Divorces in England and Wales: 2021’, 2 November. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/divorce/bulletins/divorcesinenglandandwales/2021>, last accessed: 30 April 2024.

externalising behaviours – linked to cognitive development, physical and mental health, school attainment, criminal-justice involvement, and social and emotional development – than education or poverty.<sup>41</sup> This supports research produced by Rob Henderson which was published by the US-based Institute for Family Studies, which suggests that family instability during childhood is more strongly associated with psychopathic behaviours in adulthood than early-life socio-economic status.<sup>42</sup> Marriage, compared to cohabitation, is more likely to neutralise the threat of relationship breakdown, and thus is strongly linked with a form of two-parent stability that is more strongly associated with positive youth outcomes – such as level of school attainment, labour market integration, and general life satisfaction. The Sewell report concluded that “the support, nurture, and care that family networks provide are something that no government intervention can match in practical or emotional power...but the need for support is inevitably greater amongst lone-parent families”.<sup>43</sup>



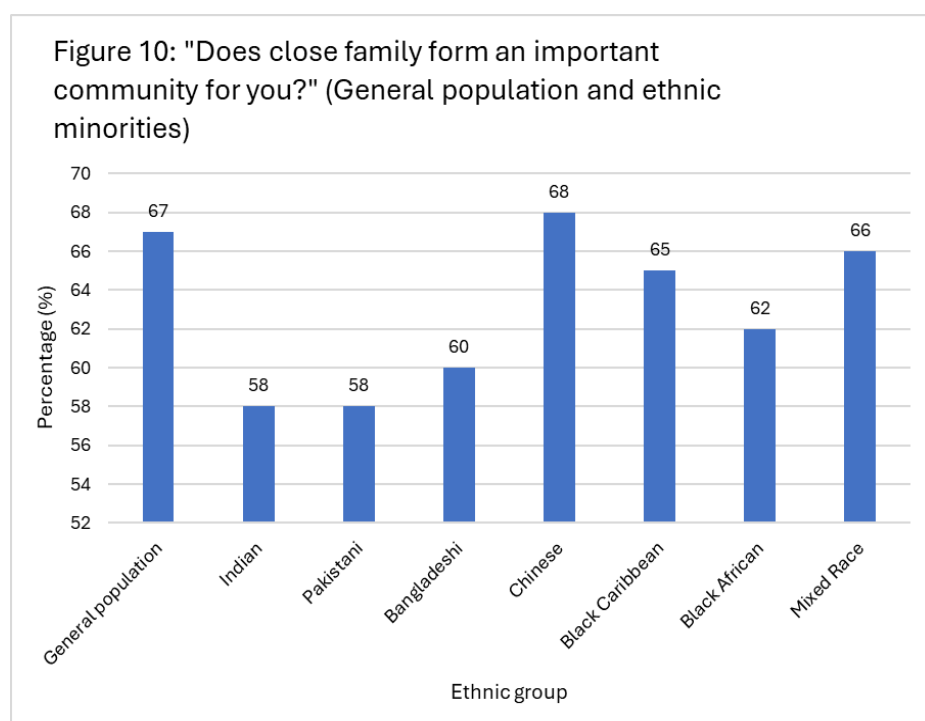
41. Worringer, S. (2020), 'Sophia Worringer: Marriage still matters – and most for the poorest', *ConservativeHome*, 16 August. Available at: <https://conservativehome.com/2020/08/16/sophia-worringer-marriage-still-matters-and-most-for-the-poorest/>, last accessed: 30 April 2024.

42. Henderson, R. (2021), 'Does Poverty Create Psychopathic Behavior? No, But Family Instability Appears To', *Institute for Family Studies*, 13 July. Available at: <https://ifstudies.org/blog/does-poverty-create-psychopathic-behavior-no-but-family-instability-appears-to>, last accessed: 30 April 2024.

43. UK Government (Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities) (2021), 'Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities: The Report', 31 March. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-report-of-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities>, last accessed: 28 April 2024.

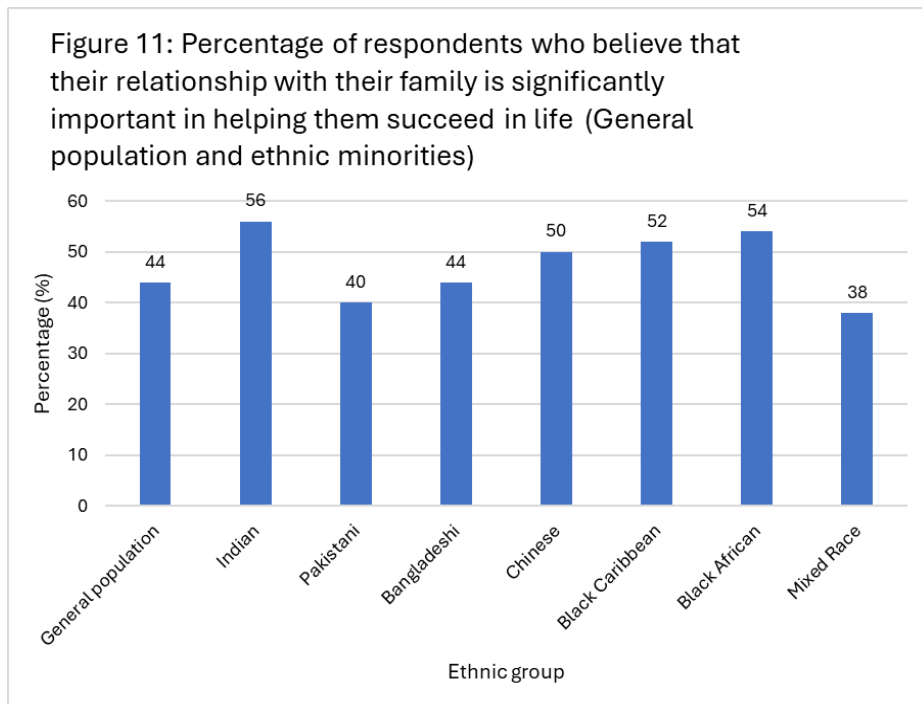
This is not to stigmatise single parents (the overwhelming majority being mothers who try their best under challenging circumstances), but to highlight that certain family structures and dynamics are relatively successful when it comes to youth development in various spheres of life. And it is here where there are especially stark ethnic and racial differences. Labour Force Survey 2019 data published by the ONS on the percentage of dependants (up to 15 years) living in lone-parent households underscored

the reductive nature of the crudely homogenising ‘BAME’ acronym as well as exposing how the white-British mainstream is some way behind multiple ethnic-minority groups on this measure.<sup>44</sup> Around one in five white-British dependants live in a lone-parent household – 19%, according to this data source. This is a higher rate than that for the three main South Asian ethnic groups – Indian (6%), Bangladeshi (12%) and Pakistani (14%). The rates are significantly higher for the two main black ethnic categories, with 43% of Black African-heritage children living in a single-parent household – which rises all the way to 63% for their co-racial peers of Caribbean origin. There is the possibility that the relatively high percentage of lone-parent households in the Black African ethnic group is somewhat a consequence of ‘one-parent migration’ (especially among refugees who have fled conflicted-affected territories).



The Redfield & Wilton surveys asked respondents whether their close family members formed an ‘important community’ for them. Figure 10 shows that two-thirds of the general population reported that their relationship with close family members represented an important form of community. A majority of respondents with each of the seven ethnic-minority samples followed suit – peaking at 68% for Chinese-origin respondents (an upwardly-mobile section of the British population defined by high levels of academic attainment and labour market integration).

44. Office for National Statistics (2021), ‘Proportion of children in lone parent families by ethnic group, England and Wales, 2019’, 28 June. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/adhocs/12947proportionofchildreninloneparentfamiliesbyethnicgroupenglandandwales2019>, last accessed: 29 April 2024.



Presenting data from the Redfield & Wilton surveys, Figure 11 shows that the majority of respondents within a number of ethnic-minority samples believe that the relationship with their family was significantly important in helping them succeed in life – underscoring the value of strong and healthy family-related bonds in one’s personal development (especially in terms of education and work).

For one of the highest-performing ethnic groups in terms of education and employment – British Indians – 56% of respondents believed that their relationship with family members was key to helping them towards achieving their successes in life. It is also relatively high among British respondents of Black African origin (54%) – an increasingly upwardly-mobile group in British society. These figures are notably higher than the one for the general population – 44%.

**Albie Amankona, (Broadcaster and Financial Analyst)**

Over the past ten years, we have witnessed the proliferation of anti-West narratives across the universities, with ideologically skewed interpretations of British history and heritage taking hold. While the belief that Britain has historically been a force for good in the world may be held by most of the public, this is unlikely to be the case among lecturers and students in the higher education system. While we should never whitewash the brutally exploitative nature of the Empire, the degree to which British colonialism and market capitalism are viewed as the roots of all current-day social, economic, and cultural ills in modern Britain is concerning.

First-generation migrants like my grandfather, who arrived in the UK from the Gold Coast (now Ghana) in the 1950s, believe that Britain is a force for good in the world overall. He experienced more than his fair share of racism after landing on these shores – but he also saw how the UK sought to facilitate the social and economic integration of racial minorities through the passage of anti-discrimination legislation. Over the decades, my grandfather has seen the heartening progress made by Britain when it comes to racial equality. I am proud to be part of this national advancement – his mixed-race grandson; one is establishing a career for himself in the spheres of finance and media. Along with my Ghanaian grandfather, these professional strides I have made are also a rich source of pride for my white grandmother – a working-class woman from north-west England whose childhood was lived under severe deprivation.

I have a very special bond with my grandparents. Moving forwards, modern Britain needs to strike a new social and economic settlement which better allows for families across the generations to live within proximity. The UK can design the most practical and effective welfare state – but there is no greater social safety net than a tight-knit, multi-generational family network in a close geographical space. This should be the central guiding consideration of British public policy – one that should be able to command cross-party consensus.

### 3.2. Fertility and Birth Rates

Disparities in fertility/birth rates – which can be influenced by religious and cultural values on the importance of marriage and building a new family – have shaped and are likely to continue to shape demographic change in Britain.

According to several studies, British communities of Bangladeshi heritage and Pakistani origin – containing many families that can trace their origins back to rural, deprived parts of Sylhet and Azad Kashmir with high levels of Islamic religious observance - have historically ranked in the top two when measuring average fertility rates by ethnicity in the UK.<sup>45</sup> Meanwhile, the fertility rate for the British Indian population has previously fallen below the UK national average.

The overall Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in England and Wales has been decreasing since 2010 – dropping to 1.49 children per woman in 2022.<sup>46</sup> There was a total of 605,479 live births in England and Wales in 2022 - a 3.1% decrease from 624,828 in 2021 and the lowest number since 2002. In 2021, for England and Wales, the number of births outside of marriage or civil partnership was higher than births within marriage or civil partnership in England and Wales (311,306 live births (51.4%) were registered to women outside of a marriage or civil partnership). With the UK faced with a demographic ‘time-bomb’ – low fertility rates combined with an ageing population - debate has sparked on the sustainability of the welfare state and whether the state should intervene through the introduction of pro-natalist policies.

45. Coleman, D. and Dubuc, S. (2009), ‘The fertility of ethnic minorities in the UK, 1960s–2006’, *Population Studies*, 64: 19–41. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00324720903391201>, last accessed: 30 April 2024.

46. Office for National Statistics (2022), ‘Births by parents’ country of birth, England and Wales: 2021’, 9 August. Available at: [https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/livebirths/bulletins/parentscountryof-birthenglandandwales/2021#:~:text=In%202021%2C%20the%20estimated%20total,per%20woman%20\(Figure%201\).](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/livebirths/bulletins/parentscountryof-birthenglandandwales/2021#:~:text=In%202021%2C%20the%20estimated%20total,per%20woman%20(Figure%201).), last accessed: 30 April 2024.

Local fertility rates, which can be shaped by the percentage of residents being child-bearing women and the presence of relatively socially-conservative minorities, tend to be higher in urban younger areas with relatively high Muslim populations. According to the 2021 England and Wales census data, the four local authorities with the highest TFRs were Barking & Dagenham (1.98), Luton (1.96), Oldham (1.94), and Slough (1.92).<sup>47</sup> Comparatively, Brighton and Hove – which is known for its radically liberal culture and relatively non-diverse local population – has a TFR of just 1.00 (which is well below the nationwide TFR). It is worth noting that a recent study by the Institute for the Impact of Faith in Life found that 68% of British Muslims believed that people have a duty to get married and raise children to be citizens who make positive contributions to British society. This dropped by 25 percentage points to 43% for the general population.<sup>48</sup>

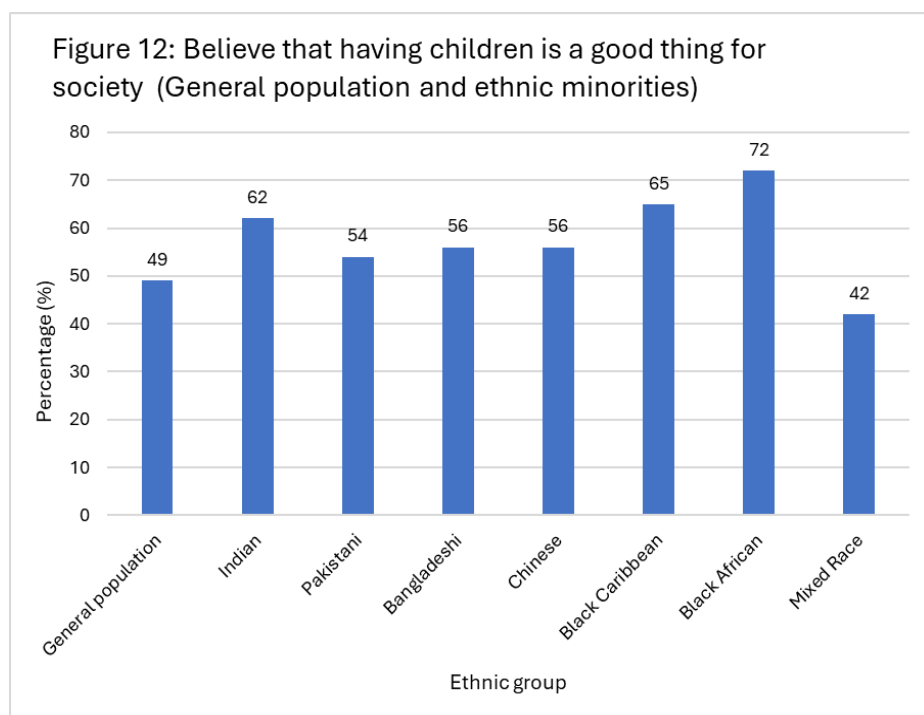


Figure 12 shows survey data which shows the proportion of respondents polled by Redfield & Wilton who said that having children is a good thing for society. Nearly half of the general population agreed with this, while the majority did so across all the ethnic-minority samples (bar mixed-race respondents). This peaked among respondents of Black African origin, with nearly three in four saying that having children is a good thing for society – 72%.

47. Office for National Statistics (2022), 'Births in England and Wales: 2021', 9 August. Available at: [https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/livebirths/bulletins/birthsummarytablesenglandandwales/2021#:~:text=Live%20births%20and%20fertility%20rates,-For%20the%20first&text=The%20total%20fertility%20rate%20\(TFR\)%20for%20England%20and%20Wales%20in,than%20in%202019%20\(1.65\),](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/livebirths/bulletins/birthsummarytablesenglandandwales/2021#:~:text=Live%20births%20and%20fertility%20rates,-For%20the%20first&text=The%20total%20fertility%20rate%20(TFR)%20for%20England%20and%20Wales%20in,than%20in%202019%20(1.65),) last accessed: 30 April 2024.

48. Ehsan, R. and Scott, J. (2024), 'The social contributions of British Muslims', *Institute for the Impact of Faith in Life*, 5 March. Available at: <https://iifl.org.uk/reports/the-social-contribution-of-british-muslims/>, last accessed: 30 April 2024.

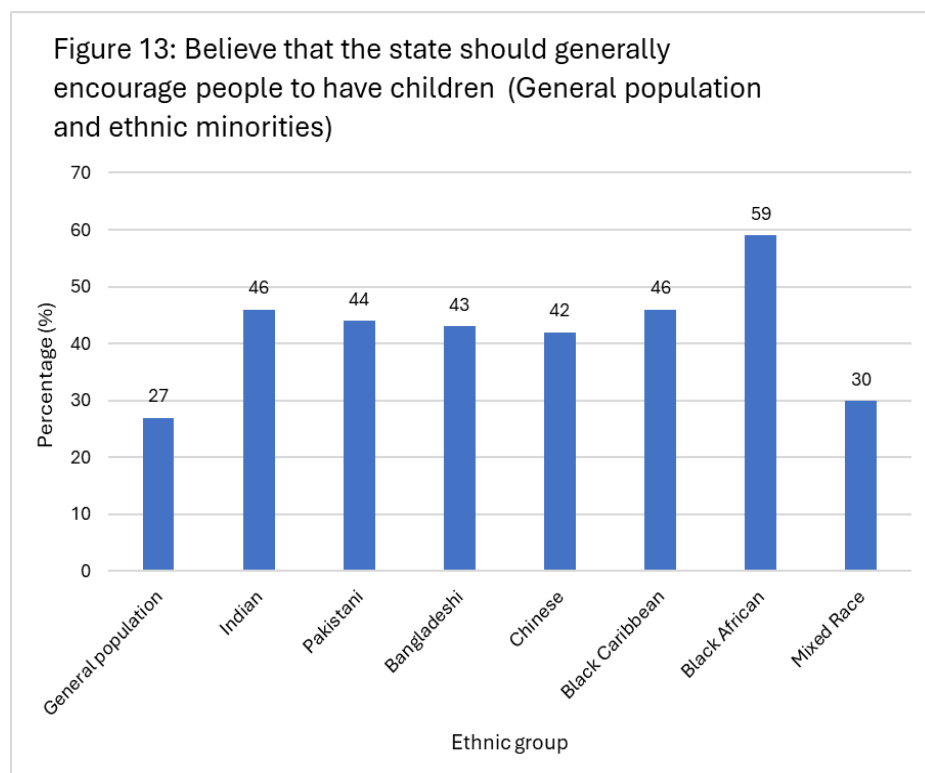


Figure 13 shows the percentage of respondents who said the state should “generally encourage” people to have children. Only 27% of the general population believe that the state should do so – which is much lower than most of the ethnic-minority samples. This peaks at nearly three in five respondents for the Black African-origin sample – with 59% believing that the British state should generally encourage people to have children. The data suggests that support for the state to generally encourage people to have children (possibly through pro-natalist policies designed to lift fertility rates) does not command comprehensive support among the general public but may do so in more religiously conservative elements of the ethnic-minority population.

### 3.3 Trans, Sex and Gender

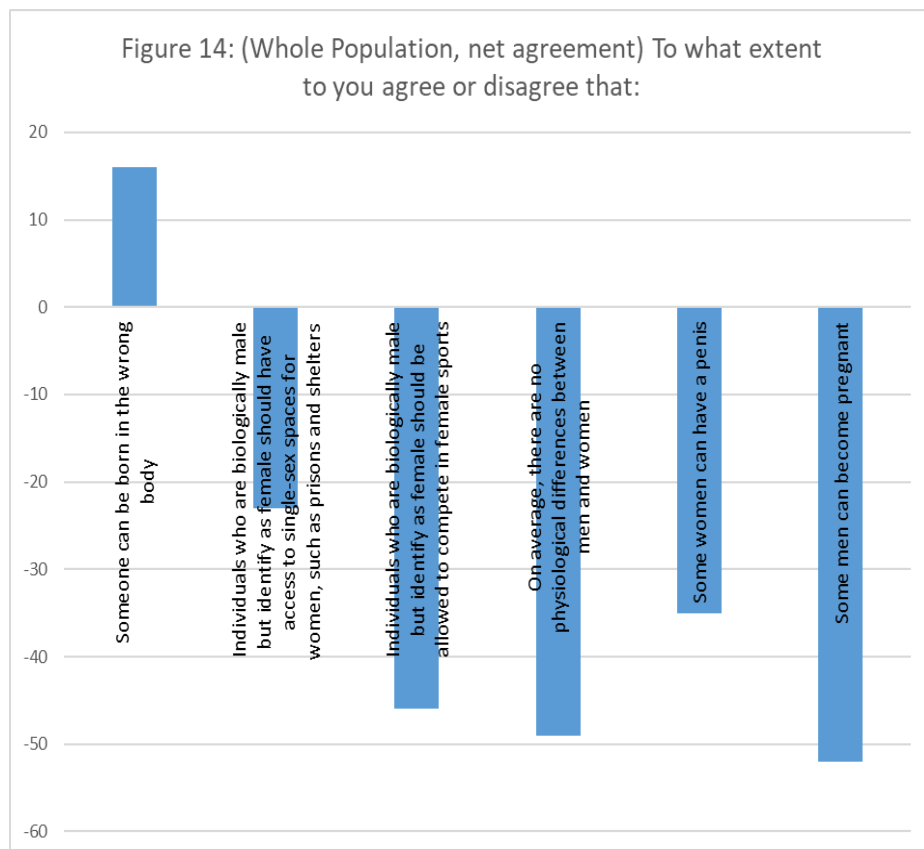
Controversies around the definitions of sex and gender – including the rights of transgender people in areas such as sport and access to women’s spaces, how children who question their gender should be treated, and what should be taught to children in schools – have come to the fore over the last decade in the UK, as well as in other Western nations.

Unlike most other social areas (such as support for same-sex marriage, for sex outside marriage, or for non-traditional family forms) where public opinion has significantly liberalised, in this area public opinion has gone the other way, with the proportion thinking that someone who is transgender should be able to change their sex on their birth certificate falling from 53% in 2019 to 30% in 2023.<sup>49</sup> This is likely to be as a result of greater awareness of the potential conflicts between the rights of women and transgender people (such as in sport), the potential abuse of

49. National Centre for Social Research, 2023, [Link](#)

self-ID laws by biological males, the revelations of scandals in children’s healthcare, including at the Tavistock Clinic, and as a result of the Cass Review.<sup>50</sup>

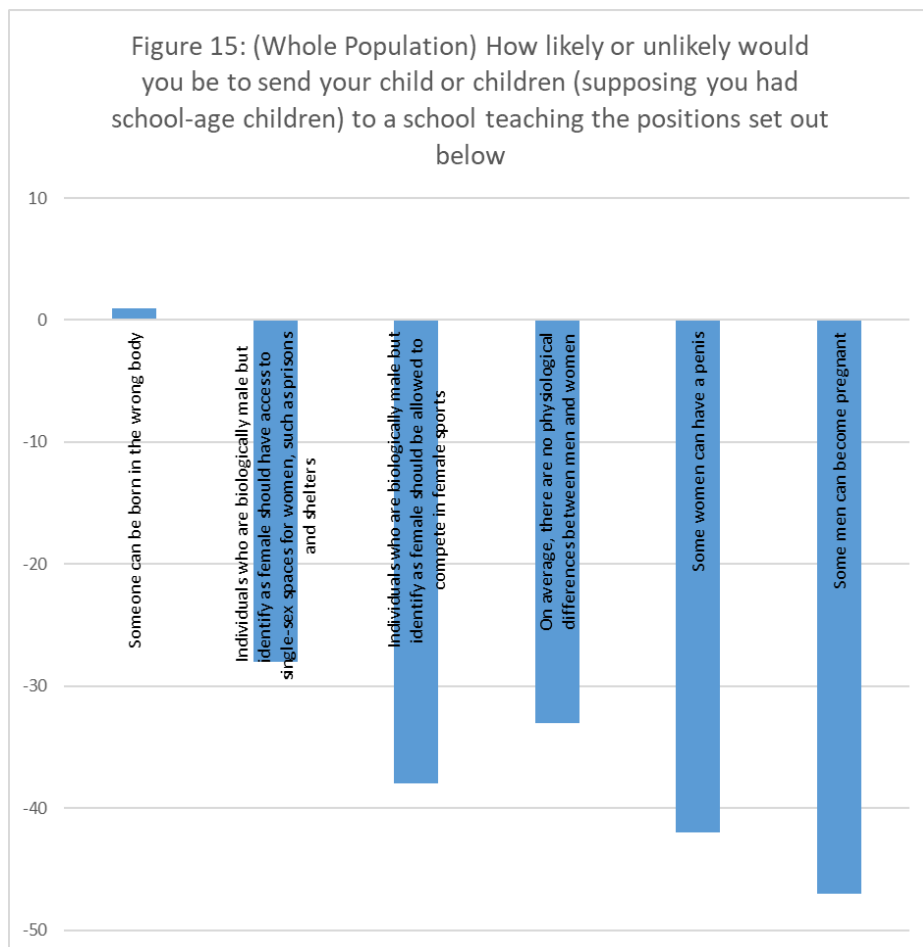
Presenting data from the Redfield and Wilton polling, we found that the population as a whole, while accepting that transgender people exist (‘someone can be born in the wrong body’), strongly reject statements such as ‘women can have a penis’, and believe strongly that single-sex spaces for women should be protected in prisons, refuge shelters and sport.



These findings were replicated when it came to what they wished their children to be taught, with respondents saying they would be unlikely to send their children to schools teaching these positions:

50. Independent Review of Gender Identity Services for Children and Young People, Dr Hilary Cass, 2024. [Link](#)





The public also believe, by an overwhelming margin, that if a child is questioning their gender, then a ‘Watchful Waiting’ approach – where the child is given support and counselling, with other interventions being deferred – is more appropriate, in line with the recommendations of the Cass Review. 71% believed that, “The child should be offered counselling and support to help them understand why they feel this way, with other interventions being deferred for a period, until it can be seen whether the child persists in this belief or moves on from it.” In contrast, only 15% supported the affirmative treatment approach espoused by many LGBT+ charities, that, “The child should be affirmed in their belief and encouraged to change their name and pronouns, to dress as the gender they wish to be, and to take puberty blockers to prevent or delay puberty.”

Interestingly, and disturbingly, despite these being the positions held by the majority of the population, a net positive proportion of people believed they could get in trouble for expressing views such as ‘men cannot get pregnant’ or ‘Individuals who are biologically male but identify as female should not have access to single-sex spaces for women, such as prisons and shelters’. The experience of numerous individuals, including Jo Phoenix, Maya Forstater and Rachel Meade, suggests they are correct. This is not only troubling – but demonstrates that the proportion of the population who oppose the imposition of radical gender ideology

is significantly larger than those who are willing to speak up against it, as has been previously documented in Policy Exchange’s *Biology Matters* programme.<sup>51</sup> The Redfield and Wilton polling showed that:

**Table 1: Do you believe you could get into trouble for expressing any of the following opinions, in person or on social media?**

	Yes	No	Don't know
Someone cannot be born in the wrong body.	48%	29%	24%
Individuals who are biologically male but identify as female should not have access to single-sex spaces for women, such as prisons and shelters.	49%	28%	24%
Individuals who are biologically male but identify as female should not be allowed to compete in female sports.	49%	30%	21%
On average, there are physiological differences between men and women.	50%	30%	20%
A woman cannot have a penis.	47%	30%	23%
Men cannot become pregnant.	48%	32%	20%

To what extent do these views translate across different ethnic minority groups? Our ethnic minority polling found (net support):

**Table 2: Do you believe you could get into trouble for expressing any of the following opinions, in person or on social media (by ethnic group)?**

	Black Caribbean	Black African	Bangladeshi	Chinese	Indian	Pakistani	Mixed Race	Whole Population
Someone can be born in the wrong body	-14%	-16%	-10%	13%	11%	-29%	-2%	16%
Individuals who are biologically male but identify as female should have access to single-sex spaces for women, such as prisons and shelters	-22%	-13%	-16%	-4%	7%	-12%	-23%	-23%
Individuals who are biologically male but identify as female should be allowed to compete in female sports	-36%	-28%	-20%	-31%	-5%	-26%	-43%	-46%
On average, there are no physiological differences between men and women	-31%	-30%	-28%	-39%	-25%	-37%	-53%	-49%
Some women can have a penis	-28%	-21%	-38%	-22%	-23%	-45%	-36%	-25%
Some men can become pregnant	-47%	-41%	-41%	-28%	-32%	-50%	-50%	-52%

Overall, this shows a very similar pattern to the whole population – that ethnic minority respondents do not believe that women can have a penis or that men can become pregnant, and that they support maintaining single-sex spaces for biological women and protecting female-only sport. These responses were broadly replicated with regards to the questions as to what they would wish their children to be taught in schools.

As with the population as a whole, there was also strong support for

51. Policy Exchange, *Biology Matters* [Link](#)

the ‘Watchful Waiting’ approach over the ‘Affirmative’ approach with regards to gender-questioning children – though slightly lower than that for the population as a whole, something that was also reflected in the ethnic minority splits for the nationally representative poll.

**Table 3: Net support for ‘Watchful Waiting’ approach vs ‘Affirmative’ approach for gender-questioning children**

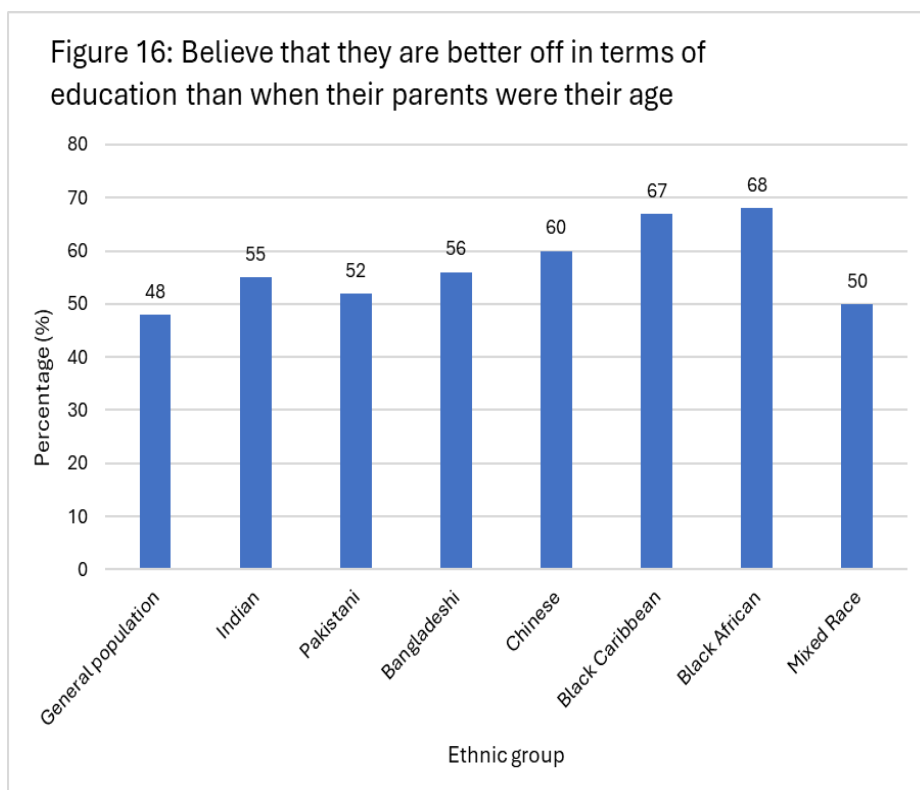
	<i>Black Caribbean</i>	<i>Black African</i>	<i>Bangladeshi</i>	<i>Chinese</i>	<i>Indian</i>	<i>Pakistani</i>	<i>Mixed Race</i>	<i>Whole Population</i>
Net support for ‘Watchful Waiting’ approach vs ‘Affirmative’ approach for gender-questioning children	38%	39%	33%	22%	34%	28%	45%	56%

Due to the small sample sizes it would be a mistake to over-interpret the differences between the ethnic minority groups, but there is some suggestion that Chinese and Indian respondents are more positive towards the claims of gender ideology, and for the inclusion of biological males who identify as trans in women’s spaces and sports, than both other ethnic minority groups and the population as a whole – which may result from the fact that these ethnic minority groups are, overall, more highly educated and more economically successful, both factors which correlate with progressive social views.

The fact that ethnic minority respondents share the views of the general population on this matter poses a potential challenge for the current electoral coalitions on the left. Historically, ethnic minority voters have tended to vote for left-wing or ‘progressive’ parties; however, such parties also currently draw a high level of support from wealthier graduates, who typically favour more progressive policies on identity and equality issues, including on trans rights, than the population as a whole. As the UK becomes more ethnically diverse, these tensions will only increase. For parties on the left, balancing these competing pressures in a way that demonstrates understanding of the complexities of the issues concerned, and the nature of the concerns of all parties involved, will become increasingly important.

## 4. Education

Focusing on academic outcomes in Britain (especially England), there are serious ethnic differences within broader racial groups and between ethnic minorities more generally when it comes to level of educational attainment. The English school system is a sphere of British life where multiple non-white ethnic-minority groups strongly outperform the white-British mainstream – with Chinese-origin and Indian-heritage pupils setting a high bar when it comes to level of school- and college-level attainment.



The Redfield & Wilton ethnic-minority survey revealed positive attitudes among ethnic minorities in terms of how they rated their own educational opportunities when compared with their own parents – with a significant proportion born to parents who were raised in relatively underdeveloped countries with comparatively limited access to state-funded schools of a reasonable standard. The majority of ethnic-minority respondents believed that they are better off than their parents in terms of education (when their parents were their current age) – peaking at 68% among those of

Black African origin. This is a full 20 percentage points higher than the corresponding figure for the wider public – under half, at 48%. This potentially speaks to the power of migrant parents instilling a strong sense of academic prioritisation in their offspring – especially parents who value the British education system and had limited educational opportunities of their own in their country of origin.

What is especially startling in modern Britain is the relatively low level of academic attainment among the white-British working-classes (even when compared to similarly socio-economically disadvantaged peers in ethnic-minority groups). This is reflected in the patterns of academic attainment which are presented in the rest of this chapter. Much of this is driven by multi-generational disadvantage and a family-based cultural scepticism towards the financial value of education, as well as place-based factors such as regional inequality and a lack of social capital (especially the absence of local civic assets which can provide a sense of purpose and belonging).<sup>52</sup>

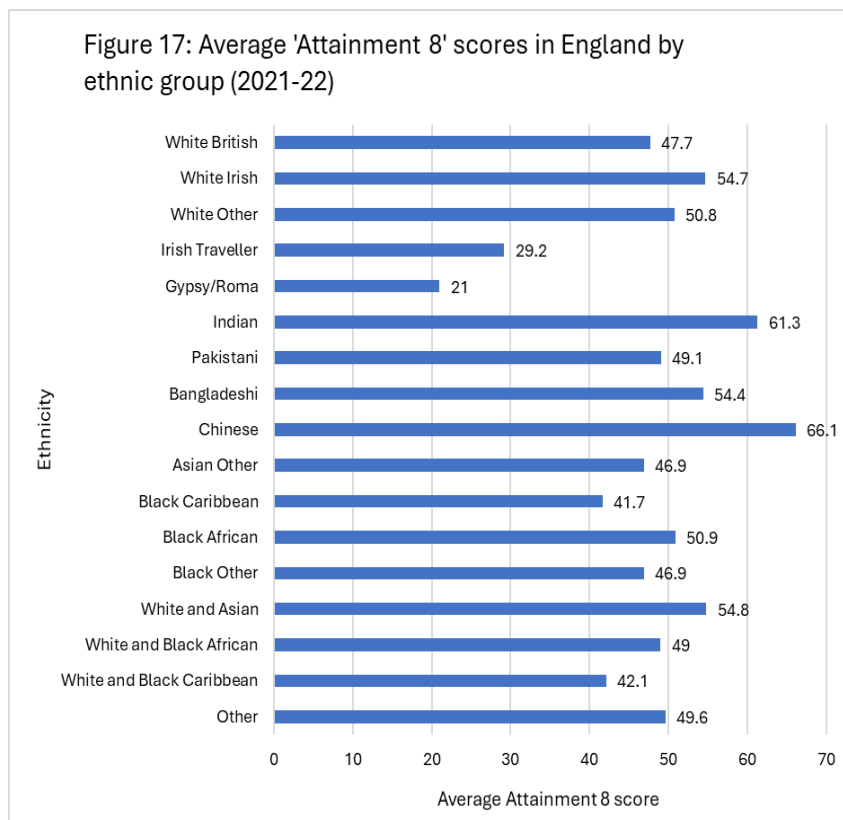
The Redfield & Wilton polling showed that while ethnic-minority Britons can see the value in having various post-18 educational options for young people after they leave school/college, there is a prevailing belief – especially among people of Chinese heritage – that attending a top-rated university is the best option. This is not necessarily the case with the general population, which gravitates in higher numbers towards other options such as the apprenticeship route. Compared with the general population, Britain’s ethnic minorities are notably more likely to think that going straight into the world of work after finishing school/college is an undesirable low-return option – with the preference for having a solid university education before entering the labour market being relatively common.

#### 4.1. Level of School Attainment and Suspensions/ Exclusions

The average score for ‘Attainment 8’ (which measures the performance of pupils in eight GCSE-level qualifications) is marked out of a total of 90. Attainment 8 is a method of measuring how well pupils in England do in Key Stage 4 (which they usually complete when they are 16 years old [Year 11]).<sup>53</sup> For the academic year 2021-22, the average score for the whole of England was 48.8 out of 90. The highest performing ethnic group were English-schooled pupils of Chinese origin (66.1), followed by their peers of Indian heritage (61.3). On average, White (47.8), Black (48.6), and mixed-race pupils (49.4) registered a lower average Attainment 8 score than Asian pupils (54.6). This means that White and Black pupils scored lower than the average score for England – with white Gypsy and Roma pupils registering the lowest average Attainment 8 score out of all ethnic groups (21.0).

52. UK Parliament (2021), ‘Forgotten’ White working-class pupils let down by decades of neglect, MPs say, 22 June. Available at: <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/203/education-committee/news/156024/forgotten-white-working-class-pupils-let-down-by-decades-of-neglect-mps-say/#:~:text=In%202019%2C%20less%20than%2018,working%2Dclass%20children%20missing%20out.>, last accessed: 1 May 2024.

53. UK Government (2023), ‘GCSE results (Attainment 8)’, 17 October. Available at: [https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/11-to-16-years-old/gcse-results-attainment-8-for-children-aged-14-to-16-key-stage-4/latest/#:~:text=Attainment%208%20is%20a%20way,they%20are%2016%20years%20old.&text=Each%20grade%20a%20pupil%20gets,to%201%20\(the%20lowest\).](https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/11-to-16-years-old/gcse-results-attainment-8-for-children-aged-14-to-16-key-stage-4/latest/#:~:text=Attainment%208%20is%20a%20way,they%20are%2016%20years%20old.&text=Each%20grade%20a%20pupil%20gets,to%201%20(the%20lowest).), last accessed: 1 May 2024.



However, there is considerable ethnic variation within the wider racial groups on this measurement of school attainment. While all sizeable Asian ethnic-minority groups register scores higher than the average for the whole of England, pupils of Pakistani origin trail their Indian-heritage peers by more than 12 points (49.1 and 61.3 respectively). Educational outcomes for schoolchildren of Bangladeshi heritage have improved in recent times – partly as the result of improved teaching standards in the capital’s eastern boroughs, with schemes such as the London Challenge and the Teach First program creating a pool of aspirational schoolteachers who strive to lift the quality of schools in relatively deprived inner-city areas (which nevertheless are conveniently situated to attractive cultural assets for younger professionals). The average Attainment 8 score for Bangladeshi-heritage pupils falls near the mid-point of the scores for their co-racial Indian- and Pakistani-origin counterparts (54.4).

One of the most oft-overlooked group-level differences in the sphere of English education is between Black Caribbean-heritage pupils and their co-racial peers of African origin. English-schooled pupils of Black Caribbean origin are one of the lowest-performing ethnic groups when it comes to level of school achievement – registering an average Attainment 8 score of 41.7. This is exactly six points lower than the corresponding figure for the white-British mainstream (47.7) and more than 24 points lower than the average score for their Chinese-origin ‘BAME’ counterparts. Conversely, the average Attainment 8 score is 50.9 out of 90, which is more than nine points higher than that of their co-racial Caribbean-heritage peers (as well

as being higher than the figure for the white-British mainstream by more than three points). This does not only demonstrate the ethnic variation among Black pupils in England, but also highlights crucial differences in terms of how they compare to the white-British mainstream in terms of level of school attainment.

Younger mixed-race people are one of the fastest-growing demographics in modern Britain – at times an under-researched element of its evolving portrait. There are key differences to report among England’s pupils with mixed-race backgrounds. The only specific sub-group above the overall mixed-race average Attainment 8 score of 49.4 out of 90 are pupils of mixed White-Asian parentage (54.8). Pupils of mixed White-Black African parentage registered an average score of 49.0, with this figure dropping further to 42.1 for their peers of mixed white-Black Caribbean parentage. The “Mixed other” group, which would include mixed-race pupils with Asian-Black parentage, returned an average score of 51.2 out of 90.

It is also worth noting that white pupils in England who identify as ethnically Irish have a notably higher average score than the co-racial peers in the British mainstream (54.7 and 47.7 out of 90 respectively) - a difference of 7 points. It is worth noting that in this context that many white-Irish pupils in England are the children of middle-class, education-oriented Roman Catholic parents who migrated to the UK from cities in the Republic of Ireland such as Dublin, Cork, and Limerick.

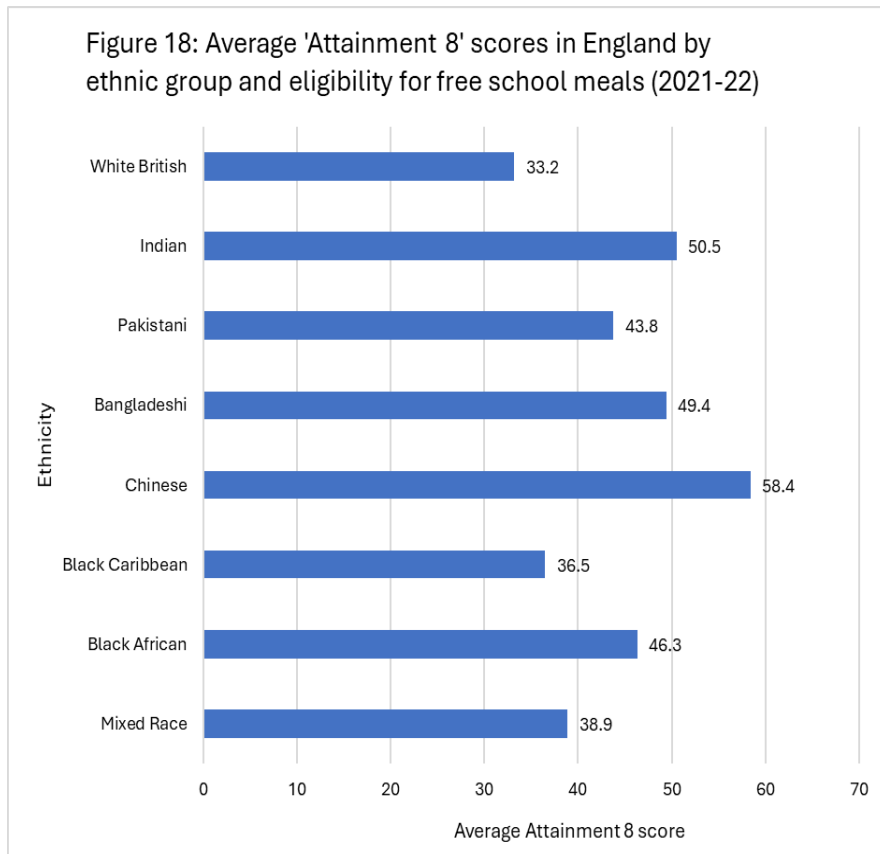


Figure 18 shows the average ‘Attainment 8’ scores for pupils who are eligible for free school meals (FSM), with a selected number of ethnic groups (including white-British) included in the analysis.<sup>54</sup> The data shows that the average Attainment 8 score for white-British pupils who are eligible for free school meals is 33.2 – which is lower than the average score for peers also on free school meals within the following ethnic groups: Chinese (58.4), Indian (50.5), Bangladeshi (49.4), Black African (46.3), Pakistani (43.8), Mixed Race (38.9), and Black Caribbean (36.5). The average ‘Attainment 8’ score of 58.4 for Chinese-heritage pupils who are eligible for free school meals is comfortably higher than that for white-British pupils who are not eligible for free school meals (51.1).

**Table 4: Rate of suspensions and permanent exclusions in England by ethnicity (2021-22)**

Ethnicity	% Suspensions	% Permanent Exclusions
White British	7.90	0.09
White Irish	6.99	0.11
White Other	4.01	0.04
Irish Traveller	19.34	0.31
Gypsy/Roma	25.63	0.31
Indian	1.06	0.01
Pakistani	4.20	0.05
Bangladeshi	2.25	0.02
Chinese	0.73	0.01
Asian Other	2.29	0.03
Black Caribbean	11.74	0.16
Black African	4.96	0.05
Black Other	7.34	0.09
White & Asian	5.07	0.06
White & Black African	8.08	0.10
White & Black Caribbean	13.62	0.23

Table 4 shows that there are notable differences between co-racial groups and ethnic minorities more generally when it comes to the rates of suspensions and permanent exclusions at English schools for the 2021-22 academic year.<sup>55</sup>

Overall, Chinese-origin pupils have the lowest rates of suspensions and permanent exclusions (0.73% and 0.01%). The group with the highest rates is pupils with a Gypsy or Roma background (25.63% and 0.31%). This means over one in four pupils with a Gypsy/Roma background were suspended in England in the 2021-22 school year. In the white-British mainstream, 7.90% of pupils were suspended in this school year (with

54. Ibid.

55. UK Government (2022), ‘Suspensions and permanent exclusions in England’, 24 November. Available at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/suspensions-and-permanent-exclusions-in-england/2021-22-annual-term>, last accessed: 1 May 2024.



0.09% being handed permanent exclusions). This means that all the Asian ethnic groups, as well as pupils of Black African origin and mixed White and Asian parentage, had lower suspension and permanent-exclusion rates than their white-British peers.

While Black African-origin pupils had a lower suspension and permanent-exclusion rates when compared to the white-British mainstream, their co-racial peers of Black Caribbean heritage had higher rates (11.74% and 0.16% respectively), underscoring the importance of assessing ethnic differences within wider racial groups as well as facing up to the reality that family dynamics (both in terms of traditional vs. non-traditional structures and household cultural values towards academic self-discipline) are anything but uniform across the British black population.

**Table 5: Average Progress 8 score in England by ethnicity (2021-22)**

Ethnicity	Average Progress 8 score
White British	-0.18
White Irish	0.09
White Other	0.49
Irish Traveller	-1.03
Gypsy/Roma	-1.00
Indian	0.83
Pakistani	0.28
Bangladeshi	0.55
Chinese	0.99
Asian Other	0.70
Black Caribbean	-0.33
Black African	0.35
Black Other	0.11
White & Asian	0.21
White & Black African	0.01
White & Black Caribbean	-0.46
Other	0.54

Table 5 shows the average Progress 8 scores by ethnicity for the academic year 2021-22 in England. 'Progress 8' is a method of measuring the progress that England-based pupils make from the end of Key Stage 2 (the last year of primary school) to the end of Key Stage 4 (when they take GCSEs).<sup>56</sup> The higher a pupil's 'Progress 8' score, the more progress they have made in comparison with pupils who started at a similar level. A score above 0 means pupils in an ethnic group are doing better than average, with a score below 0 meaning they are doing less well than average.

The data shows that the following ethnic groups are doing less well than average when it comes to the progress made from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 (11 to 16 years of age): the white-British mainstream, the Irish

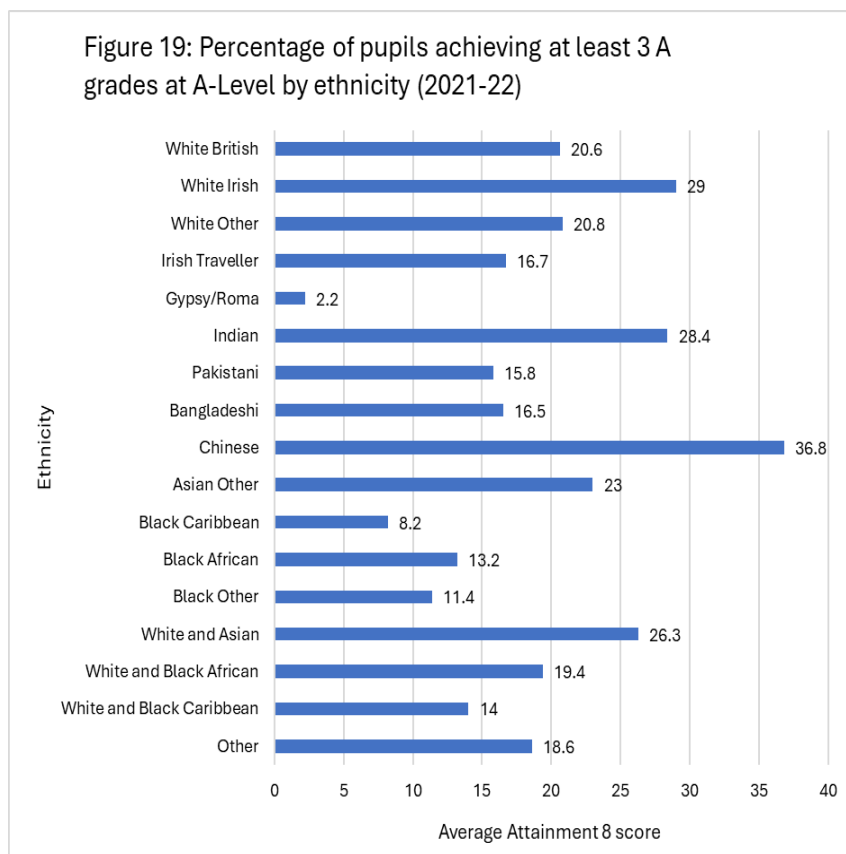
56. UK Government (2023), 'Pupil progress between 11 and 16 years old ('Progress 8')', 17 October. Available at: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/11-to-16-years-old/pupil-progress-progress-8-between-ages-11-and-16-key-stage-2-to-key-stage-4/latest/>, last accessed: 1 May 2024.

Traveller communities, pupils of Gypsy or Roma background, pupils of Black Caribbean heritage, and those of mixed White and Black Caribbean parentage. In the white population, the ethnic group showing the most impressive level of progress is the ‘white other’ group which will include pupils of Polish and Romanian heritage.

All the Asian ethnic groups are doing better than the average when it comes to making progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 – with this being particularly strong among Chinese-heritage and Indian-origin schoolchildren (0.99 and 0.83 respectively). While pupils of Black Caribbean heritage are doing less well than the average on this educational metric (-0.33), their co-racial counterparts of Black African origin are doing better than the average (0.35).

### 4.2: 16-19 Attainment

Similar patterns emerged when it comes to A-Level outcomes. For the 2021-22 academic year, 23.1% of students got 3 A grades or better at A level (including students whose ethnicity was not known) in England.<sup>57</sup> Over one in three Chinese-heritage students – 36.8% - got 3 A grades or better (the highest percentage out of all ethnic groups). They were followed by their peers of Irish origin (29.0%) and Indian heritage (28.4%). While Bangladeshi-origin and Pakistani-heritage pupils are ahead of their white-British peers in terms of average ‘Attainment 8’ score, this is not the case when it comes to the proportion that achieve 3 A grades or better at A-Level (Bangladeshi: 16.5%; Pakistani: 15.8%; white-British: 20.6%).



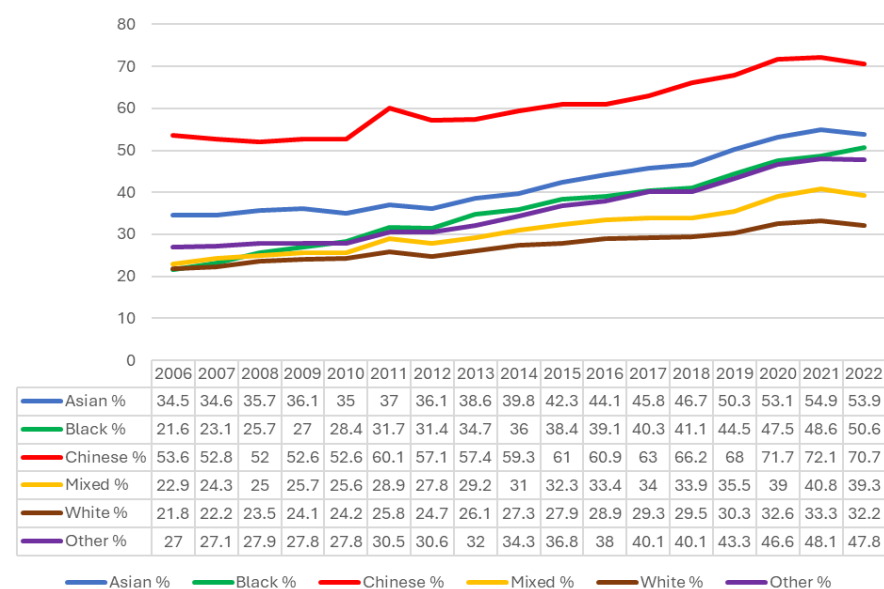
57. UK Government (2023), ‘Students getting 3 A grades or better at A level’, 23 November. Available at: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/a-levels-apprenticeships-further-education/students-aged-16-to-18-achieving-3-a-grades-or-better-at-a-level/latest/>, last accessed: 1 May 2024.

There are again notable differences between co-racial Black students of Caribbean origin and African heritage. While 8.2% of students in the former group achieved 3 A grades or better at A-Level, this rises to 13.2% for the latter. More than one in four mixed-race students with White and Asian parentage got 3 A grades or better at A-Level (26.3%). The corresponding figures for mixed-race counterparts of White-and-Black African and White-and-Black Caribbean parentage are 19.4% and 14.0% respectively. The lowest figure for all ethnic groups is for white Gypsy and Roma students, which is 2.2% (but it is worth noting is based on an exceptionally low sample of 46 students for the whole of England).

### 4.3: University attendance and undergraduate results

Much of the publicly-accessible data on entry rates for university-level education is broken down by broader racial groups, as opposed to being disaggregated by ethnic origin. This has been justified on the grounds that such forms of disaggregation would create group size so small, that reliable generalisations could no longer be made. However, there are notable racial and ethnic differences to report from existing data sources.

Figure 20: Percentage of state school pupils aged 18 years who were accepted to higher education in the UK (by ethnicity: 2006-2022)



Over the course of much of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, rates of acceptance into higher education in the UK have been on a consistently upward trajectory for all racial categories. Throughout the 2006-2022 period, the rate of acceptance in higher education for state-educated 18-year-olds of Chinese heritage has been over 50% - with this consistently being above 70% this decade (peaking at 72.1% in 2021).<sup>58</sup> In this data analysis, the group with second-highest acceptance rate for higher education from 2006-2022 is the Asian (non-Chinese) grouping (which will include state-school pupils

58. UK Government (2023), 'Entry rates into higher education', 21 November. Available at: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/higher-education/entry-rates-into-higher-education/latest/#:~:text=The%20data%20shows%20that%2C%20in,education%20%E2%80%93%20the%20lowest%20entry%20rate>, last accessed: 1 May 2024.

of Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi heritage). In 2006, around one in three 18-year-olds in this ethnic category entered the university system – throughout the 2020s, the rate has been comfortably above 50% (peaking at 54.9% in 2021).

In 2006, the acceptance rates into higher education for state-schooled White and Black 18-year-olds in the UK were near-identical – 21.8% and 21.6% respectively. By 2022, more than half of Black state-schooled 18-year-olds entered the university system (50.6%), with the corresponding figure for their White peers in state schools being 32.2% (under one in three). In 2006, less than a quarter of mixed-race 18-year-olds in the state school system were accepted into higher education – 22.9%. In the 2020s, this has risen to two in five state school pupils aged 18 years – peaking at 40.8% in 2021. The highest increase in the rate of acceptance into higher education (comparing 2006 with 2022) can be found in the Black category – 21.6% to 50.6% (exactly 29 percentage points).

While the acceptance rate into higher education is relatively low for white pupils in the state school system, the performance of white students completing undergraduate degrees (which will incorporate those who were privately educated) is higher than the wider Asian (including Chinese), Black, Mixed, and ‘Other’ ethno-racial categories. According to UK Government data for the 2021-22 academic season, more than one in three white graduates – 36.1% - earned a first-class degree.<sup>59</sup> The corresponding figures for the mixed-race, Asian, Other, categories were the following: 31.3%, 27.5%, and 25.1%. For this academic year, in the region of one in six Black graduates earned a first-class degree – 17.2%. The corresponding figure for graduates earning an upper-second class degree by ethnicity are the following: White (46.9%), Asian (47.3%), Black (45.4%), Mixed Race (48.7%), and Other (47.6%).

Over one in three Black graduates in the 2021-22 academic season were graded either a lower second, third, or pass for their undergraduate degree – 37.1%. This is the highest percentage out of all the racial categories. Over one in four graduates in the ‘Other category’ were graded at these levels – 27.1%. This drops to 25.2% and 20.0% for Asian and mixed-race graduates respectively. Around one in six white graduates had their undergraduate degree graded at a lower second, third, or pass (17.0%). The relative success of white-British students at both college- and university-level education is somewhat explained by the reality that the figures are being drawn from a smaller, more educationally motivated, and elite pool of young people. A considerable number of lower-middle-class and working-class white Britons drop out before these stages (which is not necessarily the case with most ethnic minorities).

---

59. UK Government (2023), ‘Undergraduate degree results’, 6 December. Available at: [https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/higher-education/undergraduate-degree-results/latest/#:~:text=The%20data%20shows%20that%3A,first%20class%20degree%20\(17.3%25\)](https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/higher-education/undergraduate-degree-results/latest/#:~:text=The%20data%20shows%20that%3A,first%20class%20degree%20(17.3%25),), last accessed: 1 May 2024.

## 5. Economy and Housing

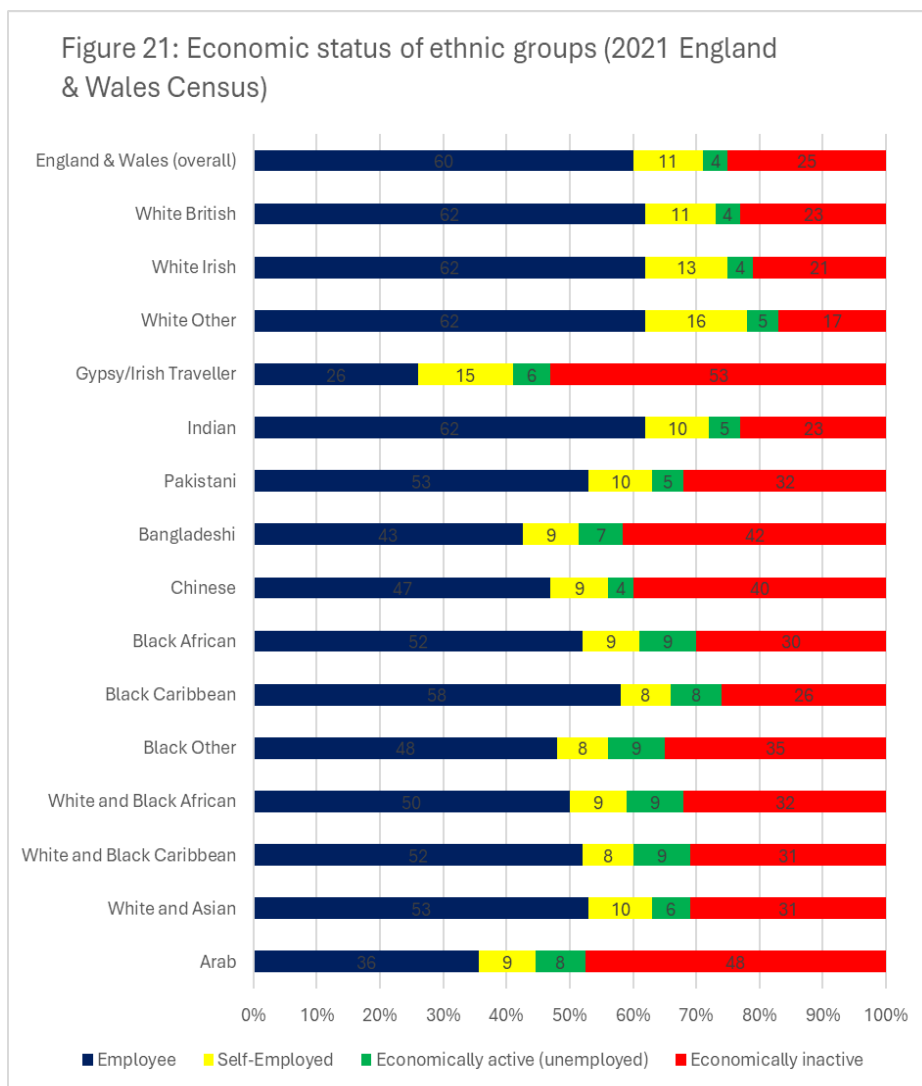
While high levels of educational integration have not necessarily translated into strong labour market outcomes for some ethnic-minority groups, there are several socio-economic metrics where non-white groups perform better than the white-British mainstream – such as percentage of workers in professional occupations, level of average hourly pay, and degree of home-ownership. British citizens of Indian heritage rank highly across all three of these socio-economic indicators. There are significant socio-economic disparities among Britain’s ethnic minorities - which are shaped by factors such as migratory background, age profile of group, family dynamics, cultural norms, and place of UK residence. A particular cultural factor of note includes conservative gender roles influencing female labour market participation. A strong geographical effect on housing tenure sees ethnic groups concentrated in high-cost London being disproportionately situated in social rented housing. Such factors once again underscore the importance of looking beyond race-related explanations when considering such disparities.

### 5.1: General economic status

According to 2021 Census data (encompassing England and Wales) there are clear racial and ethnic disparities when it comes to employment rates (which should be taken in the context of differences between ethnic groups based on overall age profile and current full-time participation in the education system). Choosing to remain in full-time education – either in college or at university – is a form of economic inactivity under this measure. This is also the case for stay-at-home parents (usually mothers) and full-time ‘informal carers’ within family units who take care of elderly and disabled spouses and relatives.

Across the two home nations, the rate of employment (calculated by combining those who are either employed in some capacity or self-employed and fall between 16-64 years of age) for the white-British mainstream is just under three in four people – 73%.<sup>60</sup> This rises to over four in five people for the ‘white Other’ ethnic category (78%) – many of whom arriving in the UK as economic migrants from EU member-states such as Poland, Romania, and Lithuania. This group also has one of the highest rates of self-employment – 16%. The non-white ethnic-minority group with the highest level of employment (employed or self-employed) were those of Indian heritage – 72%.

60. Office for National Statistics (2023), ‘Diversity in the labour market, England and Wales: Census 2021’, 25 September. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/diversityinthelabourmarketenglandandwales/census2021#diversity-in-the-labour-market-england-and-wales-data>, last accessed: 2 May 2024.



One of the lowest rates of employment in this data analysis is found in the relatively youthful and socially conservative Bangladeshi category – an employment level of 52%. This high level of economic inactivity – which stood at 42% - is largely due to the youthful age structure of the Bangladeshi ethnic group (meaning a notable proportion is ‘economically inactive’ by virtue of being in full-time education) and relatively conservative gender norms (contributing towards a high level of female homemakers who do not participate in the labour market). According to the 2021 Census data for England and Wales, 45% of Arab people aged 16-64 were either employed or self-employed – with 48% being economically inactive.

In terms of unemployment – incorporating those people who are not working, actively looking for work, and available to start employment – there are notable differences within racial groups and between ethnic minorities. The overall unemployment figure based on England and Wales 2021 census data was 4% - with the white-British mainstream along with the white-Irish and Chinese ethnic groups being in line with this. The highest figure for the level of unemployment in a particular ethnic group, based on this data source, is 9% - this is the figure for the following ethnic

groups: Black African, Black Other, mixed White and Black African, and mixed White and Black Caribbean. While there are evident differences between the Black Caribbean ethnic group and co-racial peers of African heritage in terms of educational outcomes, they are broadly similar in terms of breakdown for economic activity.

## 5.2: Type of Employment and Average Hourly Pay

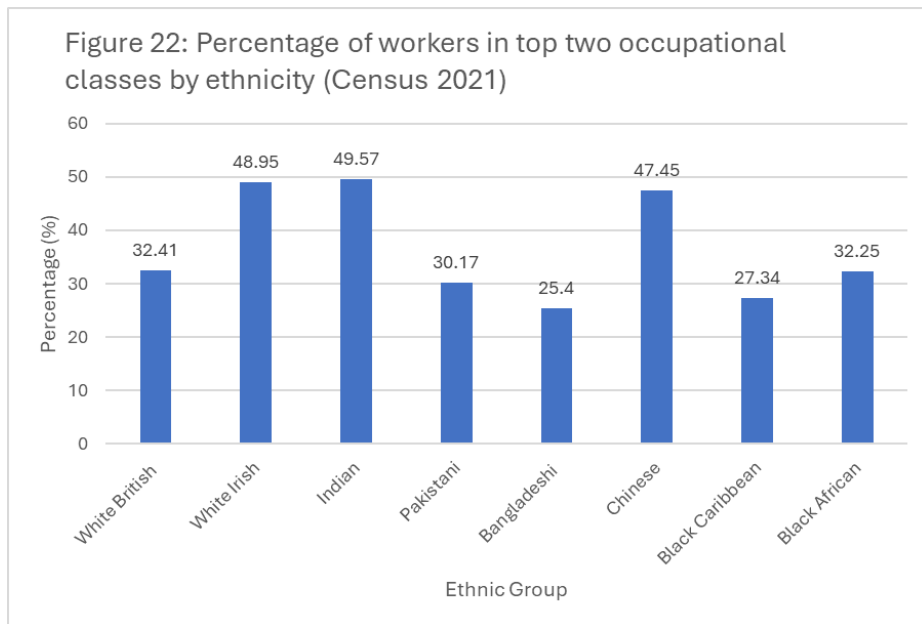
According to Annual Population Survey data from 2021, the percentage of active workers in the UK who were classified as being in ‘professional’ roles was 25.7% - making this form of occupation the most common one in the UK labour market.<sup>61</sup>

The ethnic group with the highest concentration of professional workers was Indian – with two in five Indian-heritage people working in this form of occupation (39.8% to be exact). For this data source, the lowest corresponding figure was found in a merged Pakistani-Bangladeshi category (21.9%) – further highlighting differences in the degree of socio-economic integration within the UK’s wider South Asian population. Again, there are notable differences to report between the white-British mainstream and the white-Irish minority group. While 24.7% of workers in the former ethnic category were involved in professional occupations, this rose to 35.0% for the latter ethnic group. The figure for the white-British group is identical to the one for the wider Black racial category (with this data source not breaking down this category by ethnicity, such as ‘Black African’ and ‘Black Caribbean’).

More than one in three workers in the merged Pakistani-Bangladeshi grouping – 33.9% - were in ‘elementary’, ‘sales and consumer services’ or ‘process plants and machine operatives’ roles – the three occupation types with the lowest associated socio-economic circumstances. The corresponding figure for the Indian ethnic group is half of that – 17.0%. While more than one in five white-British workers – 21.3% - were in ‘elementary’, ‘sales and consumer services’ or ‘process plants and machine operatives’ roles, this drops to one in seven for their co-racial counterparts of Irish origin (14.3%). The corresponding figure for the Black racial group was nearly one in four workers – 24.3%.

For this data source, the top three ethnic groups in terms of the percentage of workers being in the top-tier occupation category (managers, directors, and senior officials) are the following: white Irish (13.5%), white-British (10.7%) and Indian (10.6%). The corresponding figure for the Pakistani-Bangladeshi merged category was 8.1%. Less than one in twenty black workers were in the highest occupational grade of managers, directors, and senior officials – 4.6%.

61. UK Government (2022), ‘Employment by occupation’, 27 July. Available at: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/work-pay-and-benefits/employment/employment-by-occupation/latest/>, last accessed: 2 May 2024.



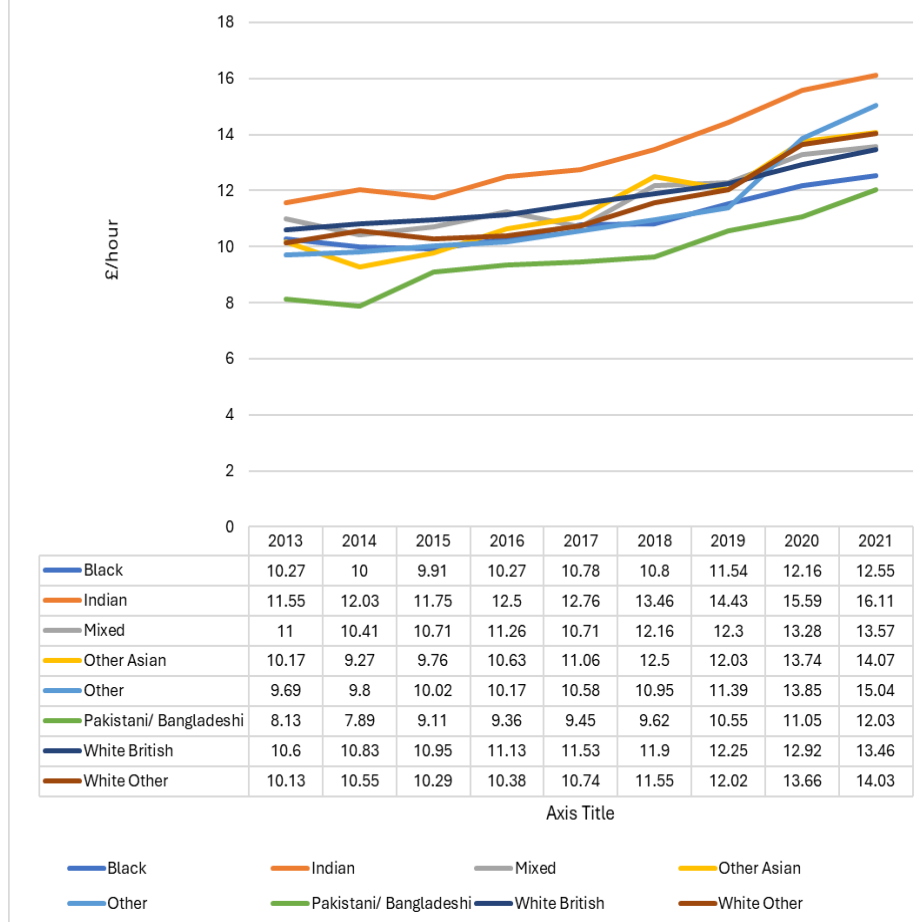
Similar patterns regarding socio-economic status emerge from the Census 2021 England and Wales data. Nearly half of workers in the Indian, white-Irish, and Chinese ethnic groups are either in directorships/senior managerial positions or in professional roles. Fewer than one in three white-British workers are in the top two occupational classes, dropping to around just a quarter for the Bangladeshi ethnic groups.

With there being significant racial and ethnic disparities in terms of occupational structure within groups, there are notable differences between them when it comes to average hourly pay.<sup>62</sup> In 2021, the median hourly pay for all workers aged 16 and over in the UK was £13.57 – it was £13.00 in 2020, and £10.54 in 2013. Looking at the three main racial groups – White, Asian, Black, and Mixed Race – the racial group with the highest average hourly pay in 2021 (all workers aged 16 and above in the UK) was Asian (£14.29), followed by people with a mixed-race background (£13.57), White (£13.51), and Black (£12.55). As recently as 2018, the white racial group had a higher level of median hourly pay than the Asian racial group (£11.87 and £11.80 respectively). In 2014, the white racial group was nearly £1 above the Asian racial group in terms of average hourly pay (£10.81 and £9.82 respectively).

62. UK Government (2022), 'Average hourly pay', 27 July. Available at: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/work-pay-and-benefits/pay-and-income/average-hourly-pay/latest/#by-ethnicity-over-time>, last accessed: 2 May 2024.



Figure 23: Average (median) hourly pay by ethnic group: Annual Population Survey (2013-2021)



However, when disaggregated by ethnic group, the highest-earning group (by median hourly pay) in 2021 is the white-Irish minority (£18.14), followed by workers of Indian heritage (£16.11).<sup>63</sup> Both are notably higher than the level of median hourly pay for workers in the white-British mainstream in 2021 (£13.46). For this data source, the lowest level of median hourly pay is found in the merged Pakistani-Bangladeshi category - £12.03. Since 2013, the only occasion where an ethnic category's median hourly pay fell below £8 was for the Pakistani-Bangladeshi merged grouping (£7.89 in 2014).

In more recent 2022 Annual Population data for England and Wales, the ethnic group with the highest median gross hourly pay was the white-Irish ethnic-minority (£20.20) – which represents a pay gap of negative 40.1% relative to White British employees (who had a median gross hourly pay rate of £14.42).<sup>64</sup> This is driven by the relatively high proportion of Irish-origin workers who are in directorships, managerial/senior roles, and professional occupations. For 2022, other ethnic-minority groups with a higher level of median gross hourly pay than the white-British mainstream include the following: Chinese (£17.73), Indian (£17.29), mixed White-Asian background (£16.93), and Arab (£15.04). Among

63. White-Irish group not included in Figure 15 as data for this ethnic group based on this source was only available for 2020 and 2021.

64. Office for National Statistics (2023). 'Ethnicity pay gaps, UK: 2012 to 2022', 29 November. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/articles/ethnicitypaygapsingreatbritain/2012to2022>, last accessed: 7 May 2024.

the sizeable ethnic groups, workers of Bangladeshi heritage (concentrated in lower-paid menial roles in the transportation and hospitality sectors) have the lowest median gross hourly pay (£11.90). For the 18-category ethnicity classification, the very lowest median gross hourly pay rate is for workers of mixed White and Black Caribbean parentage (£11.75).

### **Baron (Tony) Sewell of Sanderstead (Educational consultant and chair of the UK Government's Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities)**

Modern Britain is a land of racial and ethnic disparities, but this does not mean that it is performing poorly when it comes to equality of opportunity. It is one of the most successful models of a white-majority, multi-ethnic democracy in the world.

Education has proven to be the key sphere of life where there has been considerable ethnic-minority advancement – especially pupils that can trace their origins back to China, India, and Nigeria. However, some groups have been left behind, such as working-class white Britons and those of Black Caribbean heritage. Several factors come into play, but parental evaluations on the economic value of education and academic excellence being marker of social status in the local community are key.

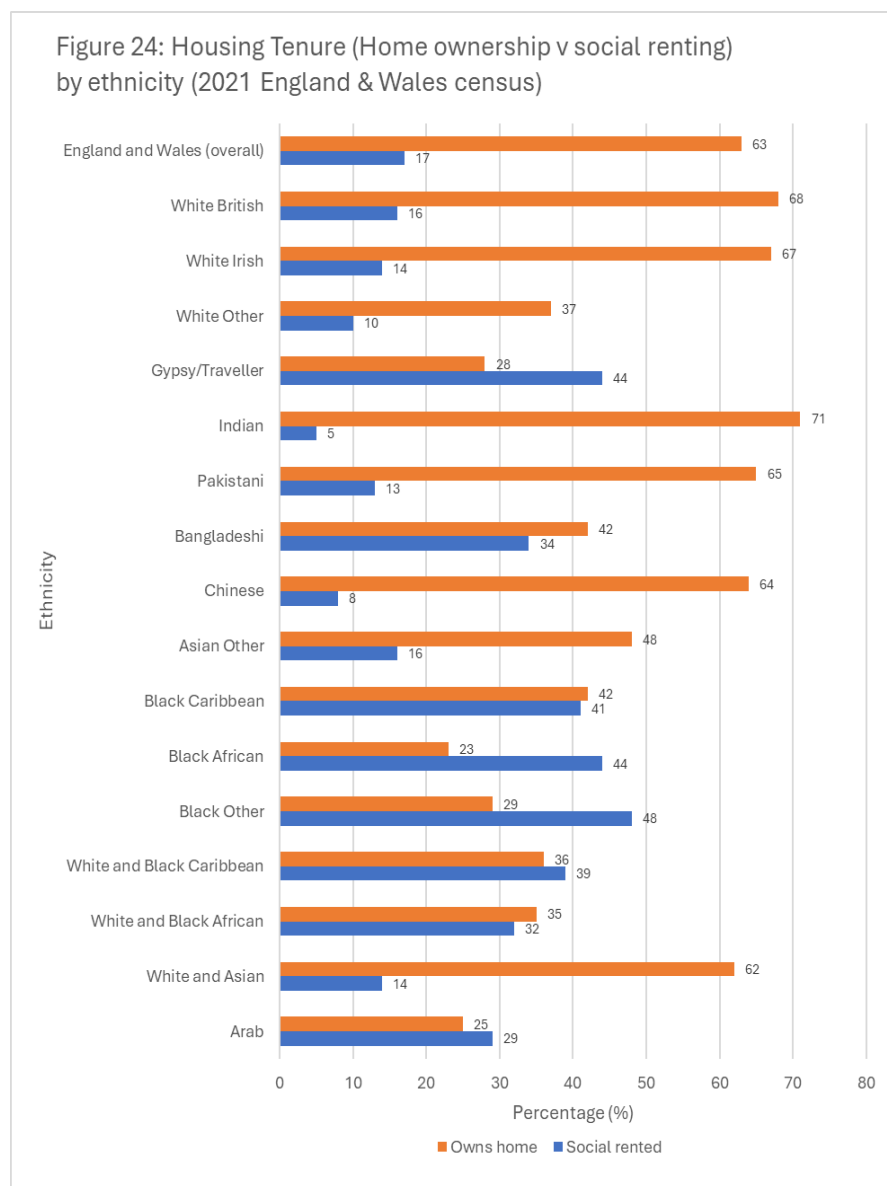
However, the progress ethnic minorities have made in education have not necessarily translated into robust labour market integration outcomes.

While there are studies which show that CVs with ‘culturally distant’ names fare worse in recruitment processes, the picture is more complicated than this. Whether is it family-related circumstances or a lack of insightful career advice in local communities, some may choose a ‘weaker’ university closer to home or be under pressure to work during their period in higher education. A lack of knowledge over the specific qualifications required to make progress in a particular field is also an issue. All of this can have a potentially negative impact on employment prospects.

In the world of work, while it can differ from sector to sector, developing a high-trust network of professional contacts is essential. There is a great deal of emphasis on ‘improving systems’ through HR and DEI policies – departments which, ironically, tend to be relative cul-de-sacs when it comes to genuine career progression. The key to stronger labour market integration is understanding the dynamics of one’s industry, being assertive when it comes to developing ties with key players, and confidently participating in core business activities.

### **5.3 Housing Tenure and Attitudes to ‘Nimbyism’**

With home ownership being an integral part of the UK’s ‘property-owning’ democratic traditions and a significant measure of socio-economic integration, there are fundamental differences between ethnic groups.

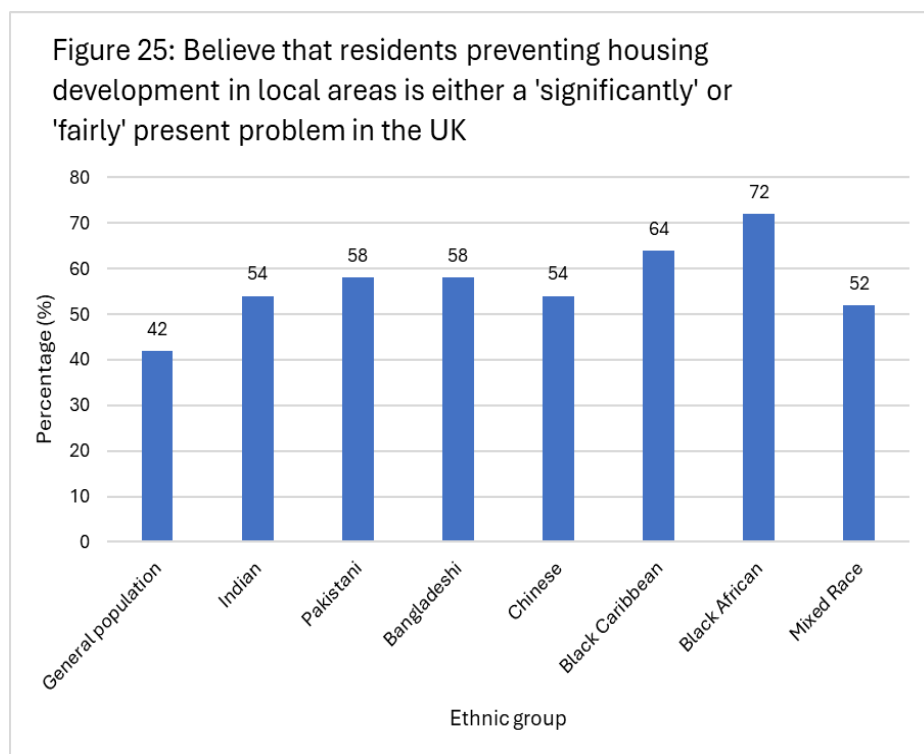


According to the 2021 Census for England and Wales, the ethnic group with the highest rate of home ownership is Indian – with 71% living in a property which is either owned outright or owned with a mortgage/loan or shared ownership.<sup>65</sup> This is eight percentage points higher than the overall England and Wales figure of 63% and three percentage points higher than the figure for the white-British mainstream (68%). The other three ethnic-minority communities which have a rate of home ownership higher than the overall England and Wales figure are the Irish, Pakistani, and Chinese ethnic groups (67%, 65%, and 64% respectively). One of the lowest rates of home ownership can be found among people of Black African origin (which is a relatively newly-arrived ethnic group which includes refugees who have fled civil unrest in countries such as Somalia) – 23%. The lowest rate of home ownership is reported by the white Roma ethnic group – 16%.

Ethnic groups which are relatively concentrated in high-cost London

65. Office for National Statistics (2023), 'Ethnic group differences in health, employment, education and housing shown in England and Wales' Census 2021', 15 March. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/articles/ethnicgroupdifferencesinhealthemploymenteducationandhousingshowninenglandandwalescensus2021/2023-03-15>, last accessed: 2 May 2024.

tend to have lower rates of home ownership and are notably more likely to live in social rented housing. Across England and Wales, the percentage of people in the Black Caribbean, Black African, and Black Other ethnic groups living in social rented housing are the following: 41%, 44%, and 48%. Nearly one in three people in the Bangladeshi ethnic group also do so – 34%. The ethnic group with the lowest percentage of people living in social rented housing is Indian – 5% (one in twenty people). The percentage of Chinese-origin and Pakistani-heritage people living in social rented accommodation is 8% and 13% respectively, with this figure being 14% for those who fall into the white-Irish ethnic group. This means that several ethnic-minority groups have a lower rate of living in social rented housing than the white-British mainstream – where one in six people (16%) fall into this mode of housing tenure.



The new Redfield and Wilton polling shows that 42% of the general population think that residents preventing housing developments in local areas is either a ‘significantly’ or ‘fairly’ present problem in the UK – a figure which is lower than that for all seven ethnic-minority samples in the analysis. Indeed, the majority of ethnic-minority Britons believe this to be the case – peaking at 72% for respondents of Black African origin, followed by their co-racial counterparts of Caribbean heritage (64%). Respondents of Bangladeshi origin also rank highly at 58%. This suggests that British ethnic minorities which disproportionately reside in London-based social housing are especially sensitive to existing forms of ‘NIMBYism’ – local opposition to proposed developments which collectively pose an obstacle to expanding the national supply of affordable homes.

## 6. Health

Looking at the health of modern Britain through the lens of ethnicity and race reveals a complex picture. It can be unhelpful to generalise that more positive health-related outcomes are associated with the white-British mainstream, compared with non-white ethnic-minority groups.

Since the last Portrait of Modern Britain report, a wide range of policy initiatives have been developed to explore, better understand and to address ethnic disparities in healthcare provision. The NHS Race and Health Observatory, established in 2021 as a “fully independent body... to deliver a concerted focus on racial and ethnic health inequalities”, is the most salient example.

It has long been an objective for Britain’s healthcare services to strengthen the link between underserved communities to reduce cultural barriers and to address forms of institutional distrust. One of the justifications for developing integrated care systems (ICSs), which were placed on a statutory footing under the previous Government, was to create new organisations with a scale and responsibility to tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access across a significant geographic scale (each of roughly 1 million people). Some of the communities which are underserved are ethnic-minority populations, but in an era where overall public satisfaction in the NHS is at an all-time low, there is little doubt that a lack of confidence in healthcare (and indeed, some of the poorest health-connected outcomes) can be found in the white-British mainstream and parts of the country with minimal ethnic-minority populations also. By way of example, the two places in the England with the fewest GPs per patient on average are Thurrock (where 76% of the population are “White”<sup>66</sup>) and Leicester (where in 2021, 43.4% of residents identified their ethnic group within the “Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh”).<sup>67, 68</sup> Healthcare disparities can, therefore, be found across a range of axes: geographic; socio-economic as well as according to ethnicity.

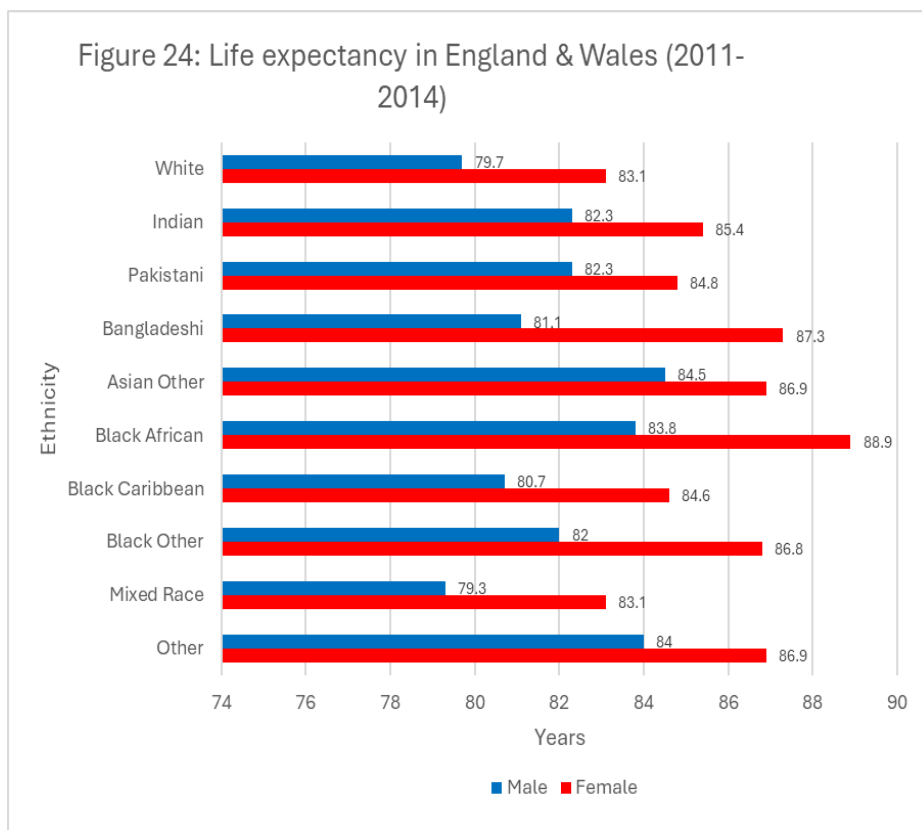
### 6.1: Life expectancy

Life expectancy data from the past decade or so in the UK reveals that when it comes to life expectancy and cause of mortality, the portrait of modern Britain is far from straightforward – and in fact, some outcomes are notably more favourable for multiple non-white ethnic groups when compared with the white population.

66. ONS, Census 2021, [Link](#)

67. BBC News Online, 2024, [Link](#)

68. Thurrock Council, [Link](#)



Based on life expectancy data from 2011-2014 (which was published by the ONS in 2021), the high-level white ethnic group had one of the lowest life expectancies – dropping to 79.7 years for men and 83.1 years for women.<sup>69</sup> To put this in perspective, this life expectancy rate for men was lower than that for their Black African, Black Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi counterparts – peaking at 83.8 years for men of Black African origin, with rates for all the stated ethnic groups exceeding 80 years. Based on sex and ethnicity, the highest life expectancy rate can be found among women of Black African origin – 88.9 years. The life expectancy level for Bangladeshi-heritage and Indian-origin women also breaches the 85-year mark (87.3 and 85.4 years, respectively) with the rate of their Pakistani female peers slightly lower, at 84.8 years. Based on the 2011-2014 data, the life expectancy rate for Black Caribbean females is also higher when compared with white women (84.6 years).

There are several factors which can explain these ethnic and racial disparities in life expectancy in modern Britain. One explanation for the relatively high levels of life expectancy among those of Black African heritage is that the very healthiest and most resilient migrants and refugees can endure the trials and tribulations of escaping from conflict-affected territories and areas of civil unrest, as well as dealing with the challenges of starting afresh in a vastly different setting. While war and conflict can inflict both psychological trauma and physical injuries, there is also the possibility that it can be the catalyst for developing a certain mental endurance which equips individuals with the toughness to overcome

69. Office for National Statistics (2021), 'Ethnic differences in life expectancy and mortality from selected causes in England and Wales: 2011 to 2014', 26 July. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/lifeexpectancies/articles/ethnicdifferencesinlifeexpectancyandmortality-fromselectedcausesinenglandandwales/2011to2014>, last accessed: 2 May 2024.

various challenges in life which may be relatively testing for those who have lived comparatively charmed lives.<sup>70</sup> This could well apply for first-generation Bangladeshi migrants who have direct experience of the 1971 Liberation War for national independence.

There are other possible factors at play which are more behavioural and social in nature. Previous studies published by Public Health England (PHE), Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) have found that ethnic-minority groups are generally less likely to engage in harmful health-related behaviours such as smoking<sup>71</sup> and excessive alcohol consumption (with the latter especially frowned upon in Muslim communities).<sup>72</sup> The potentially devastating impact of loneliness and social isolation should also be considered in the context of life expectancy. While loneliness among the elderly is a major issue in modern Britain, it may in certain cases be less of a problem in some more socially-conservative migrant communities with stronger family-oriented networks and thriving places of worship which can be organic sources of belonging, mutual support, and social trust.

## 6.2: Self-reported health status in the 2021 Census

In the 2021 England and Wales census, everyone was asked to rate their health from “very good”, “good”, “fair”, “bad”, or “very bad”. Over the whole population, nearly half (48%) of people said they had “very good” health – with just over 1% saying they had “very bad” health (1.2% to be exact). However, there were ethnic and racial differences to report.<sup>73</sup>

There is a notable relationship between youthfulness and likeliness to report being in good health (which is likely to feed into self-reported health status by ethnicity). What is evident is that there are significant ethnic differences based on self-reported health status (from the 2021 England and Wales census). This partly explains the differences in self-reported health outcomes for the older white Irish ethnic group, which are relatively unfavourable (with this ethnic group having a median age of 54 years).

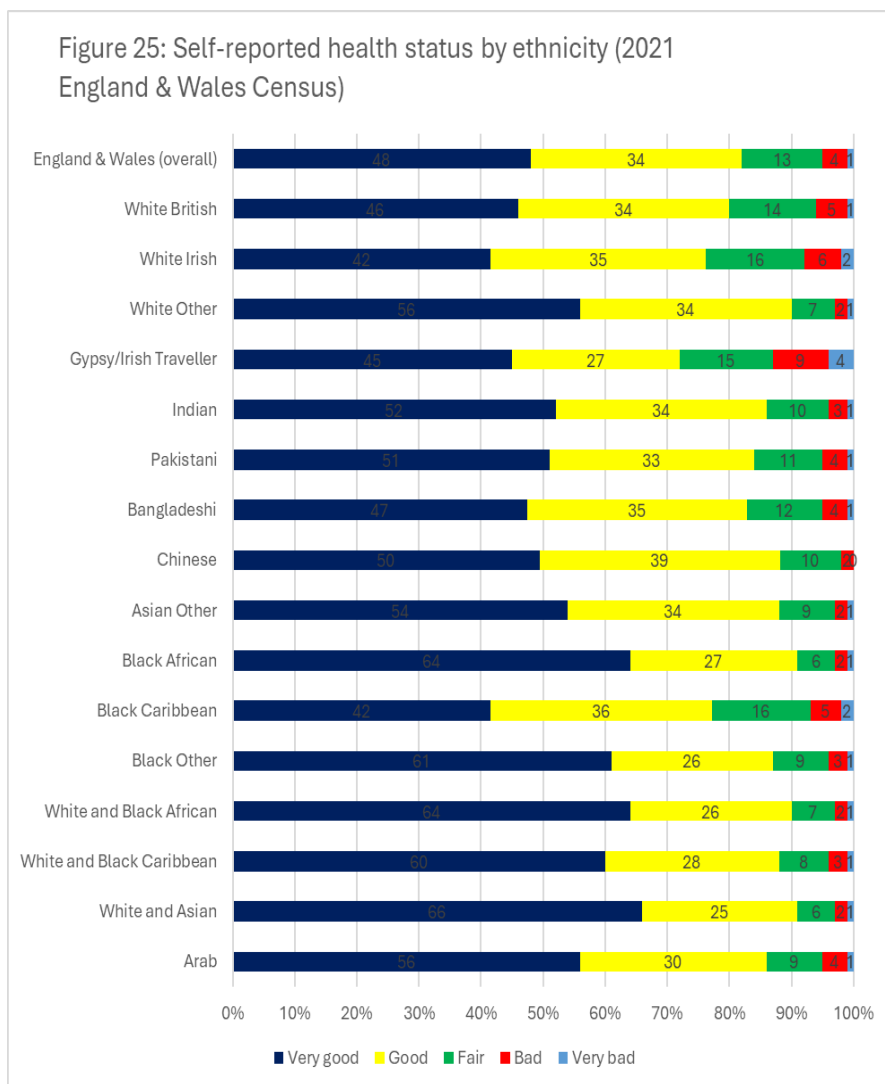
However, considering its relatively youthful profile (having a median age of 27 years), one may expect more positive levels of self-reported health status among Bangladeshi-origin people living across England and Wales. This point also applies to the Gypsy and Irish Traveller communities, which have an average age of 28 years (but disproportionately live in confined households which are affected by a lack of basic amenities, including running water, adequate sanitation, and waste-management facilities). Four percent of people in the Gypsy and Irish Traveller communities report having very bad health – the highest level of all ethnic groups in this analysis.

70. The association of increasing resilience with positive health outcomes among older adults, Musich et al, 2022, [Link](#)

71. Cigarette Smoking Amongst Adults, Gov.uk, 2024, [Link](#)

72. Office for National Statistics (2021), ‘Ethnic differences in life expectancy and mortality from selected causes in England and Wales: 2011 to 2014’, 26 July. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/lifeexpectancies/articles/ethnicdifferencesinlifeexpectancyandmortality-fromselectedcausesinenglandandwales/2011to2014>, last accessed: 2 May 2024.

73. Office for National Statistics (2023), ‘Ethnic group differences in health, employment, education and housing shown in England and Wales’ Census 2021’, 15 March. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/articles/ethnicgroupdifferencesinhealthemploymenteducationandhousingshowninenglandandwalescensus2021/2023-03-15>, last accessed: 2 May 2024.



The ethnic category with the most positive level of self-reported health status is people of mixed White and Asian parentage (which has a school-level median age of just 16 years) – with two in three saying that their health is “very good” and a further quarter reporting that it is “good”. People of Black African origin – who have a median age of 30 - also rank highly on this measure, with 64% reporting that their health is “very good”. This is significantly better than the corresponding figure for the co-racial (and much older) Caribbean-heritage group which has a median age of 44 – dropping by 22 percentage points to 42%. With the white-British ethnic group being the second-eldest based on median age, its figure of 80% for self-reporting either “very good” or “good” health is lower than all non-white categories included in the analysis (except for Black Caribbeans).



### 6.3: Self-reported happiness, psychological well-being, and general life satisfaction

A recent nationally-representative survey carried out by British Polling Council (BPC) member TechneUK on behalf of the Institute for the Impact of Faith in Life (IIFL) explored levels of self-reported mental and psychological well-being in the general population.<sup>74</sup> Respondents were asked to evaluate their level of happiness, their state of psychological well-being over the three months leading up to the survey, and their general life satisfaction at the time of taking the survey.

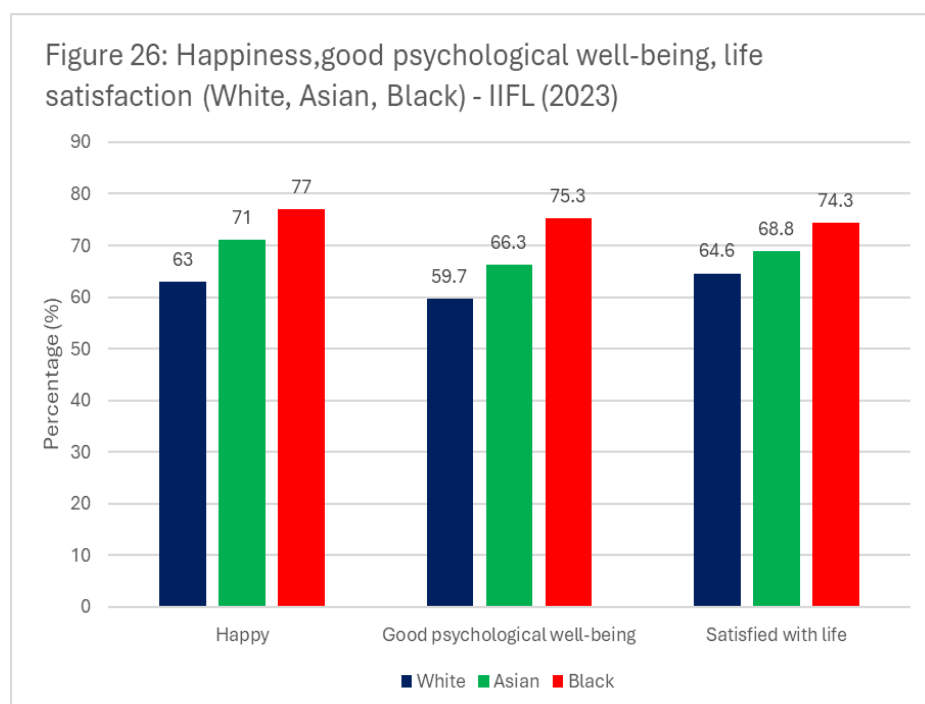


Figure 26 presents the survey results from the IIFL-TechneUK polling which explored levels of self-reported mental and psychological well-being in the UK general population (broken down by wider racial groups – White, Asian, Black – to allow for the largest race-related samples possible).

Across all three self-reported measures of mental and psychological well-being which were asked of a nationally-representative general-population sample, white respondents fared the worst – being the least likely to report that they were happy, had a good level of psychological well-being, and were satisfied with their life. While it is important to approach the findings with a degree of caution due to the sample size of Black respondents, it was they who fared the best out of the three broader racial groups across the three self-reported measures of mental and psychological well-being. The Asian sample fell in between the White and Black samples across the self-reported indicators exploring happiness, psychological well-being, and general life satisfaction.

74. Ehsan, R. (2023), 'Keep the Faith: Mental Health in the UK', Institute for the Impact of Faith in Life (IIFL), 17 November. Available at: <https://iifl.org.uk/reports/keep-the-faith-mental-health-in-the-uk/>, last accessed: 2 May 2024.

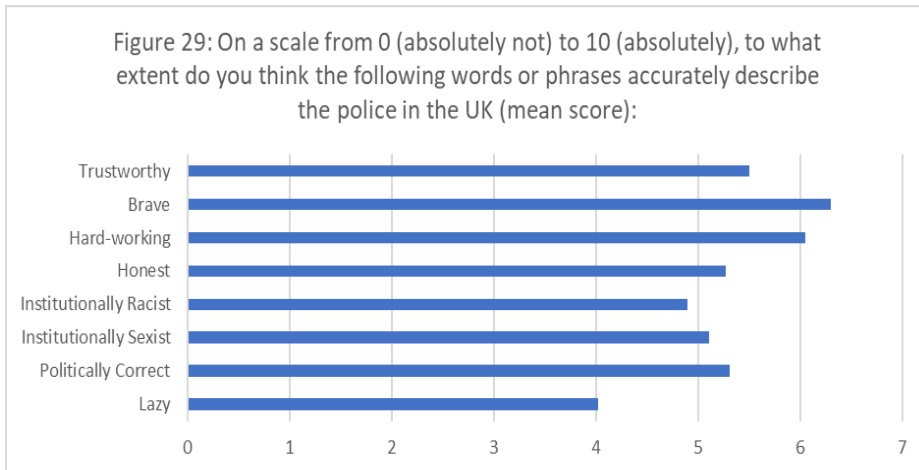
## 7. Crime, Protest, and Immigration

### 7.1 Crime

The views of the public on crime and policing are remarkably consistent across ethnicities, with all groups having a low degree of confidence in the police, a belief that the police are not as tough on crime as they should be and a similar perspective on what should be the police's top priorities. However, whilst broadly in alignment with the wider population, there was a detectable difference in the experience and attitudes of Black, particularly Black Caribbean, respondents, who were more likely to have been a victim of crime, were marginally more likely to consider the police to be institutionally racist and placed a higher priority on the police investigating racially motivated and hate crimes than did other ethnic groups.

Overall, people have low confidence in the police, with a net score of 29% of people disagreeing with the statement, 'How confident are you in the ability of the police to protect you from crime?' This contrasts poorly with other public services: for example, a total of 41% of people agreed with the statement 'If I needed healthcare, I am confident I would receive good treatment from the NHS' – a startlingly large difference, particularly given the challenges of the NHS in recent years have been well publicised. Interestingly, ethnic minority respondents were slightly less likely to disagree that they were confident in the police to protect them from crime (net disagreement of 20% of Black respondents and 21% of Asian respondents, compared to 33% of White respondents) – though ethnic minority respondents were also more confident they would receive good treatment from the NHS, potentially reflecting a more generally positive attitude to public services.

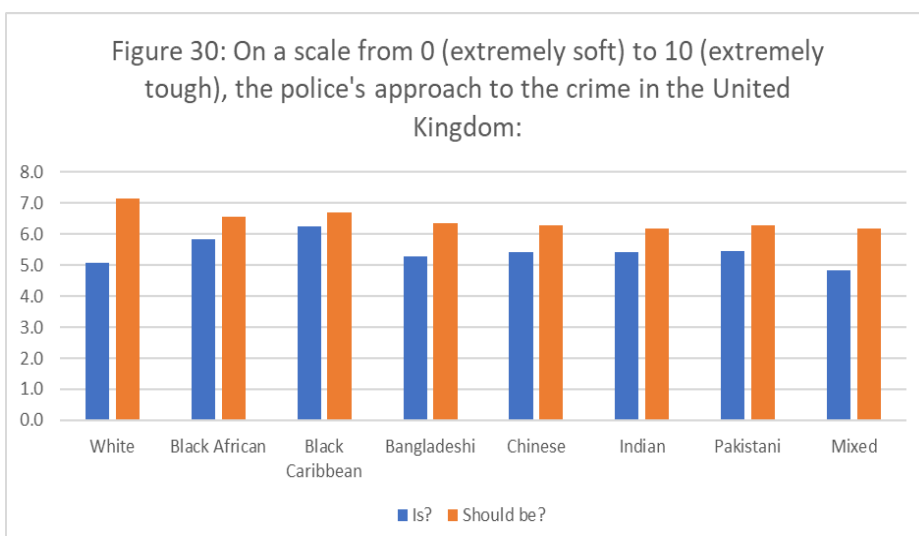
Approximately 1 in 7 (14%) of people said they had been a victim of crime within the last two years, a figure that rose to 1 in 5 (20%) of both Black Africans and Black Caribbeans. Most people reported the crime to the police (between 7 in 10 and 8 in 10 across ethnic groups). In keeping with the low confidence in the police, only 33% of people were satisfied with how the police responded to their report, with 50% of people unsatisfied. Interestingly, there is some suggestion that both Black African and Black Caribbean respondents were more satisfied, though the sample population is very low.



The public tend to think the police are hard-working and brave, and not lazy. They are moderately thought to be trustworthy and honest, which slightly more considering them to be politically correct than either institutionally sexist<sup>75</sup> or racist.

In general, there was little difference between ethnic minority groups, with most Asian ethnic minority groups giving answers similar to white and whole population averages on these questions. Black respondents, and particularly Black Caribbean respondents, typically gave slightly lower answers for the 'positive' qualities and slightly higher answers for the 'negative' qualities. The greatest difference was seen on 'institutionally racist': on the nationally representative survey, 'White' was 4.86 and the average of all Asian groups 4.82, but the average of both Black groups notably higher at 5.55 – and the ethnic minority survey showed that for Black Caribbean respondents this was higher still, at 5.72. Collectively, these results show a lower level of confidence in the police from Black, particularly Black Caribbean individuals – though this should not be conflated with lower confidence from all ethnic minority groups.

Every ethnic group considers that the police should be tougher on crime than they are:



75. Interestingly, there was minimal difference between women (5.15) and men (5.06) on this question.

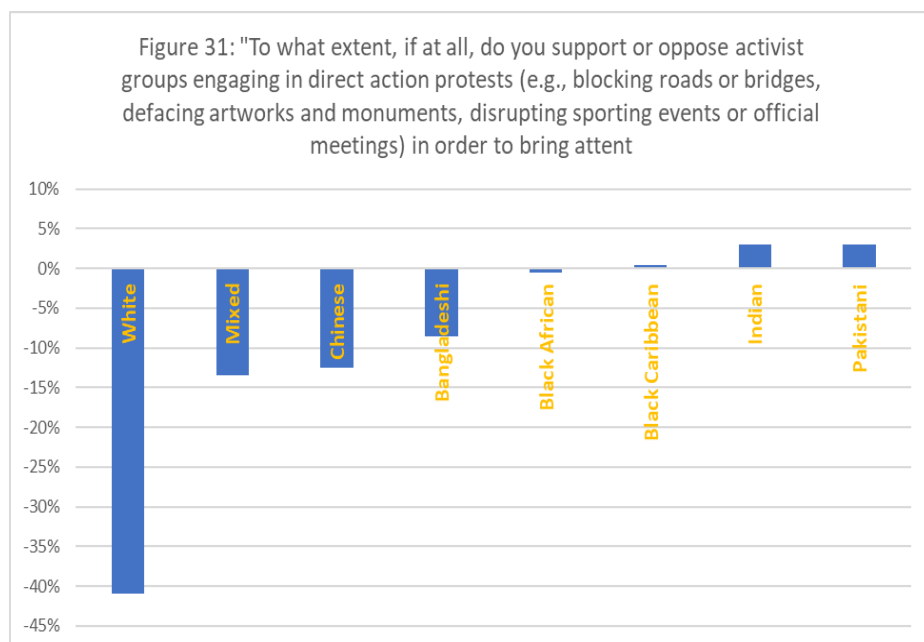
The discrepancy is most stark for White respondents, where the difference between how tough on crime they would like the police to be and how tough they believe they actually are is a full two points on a ten point scale. But the fact that every ethnic group would like the police to be tougher on crime clearly demonstrates a desire for stronger action on crime that crosses the boundaries of race and ethnicity.

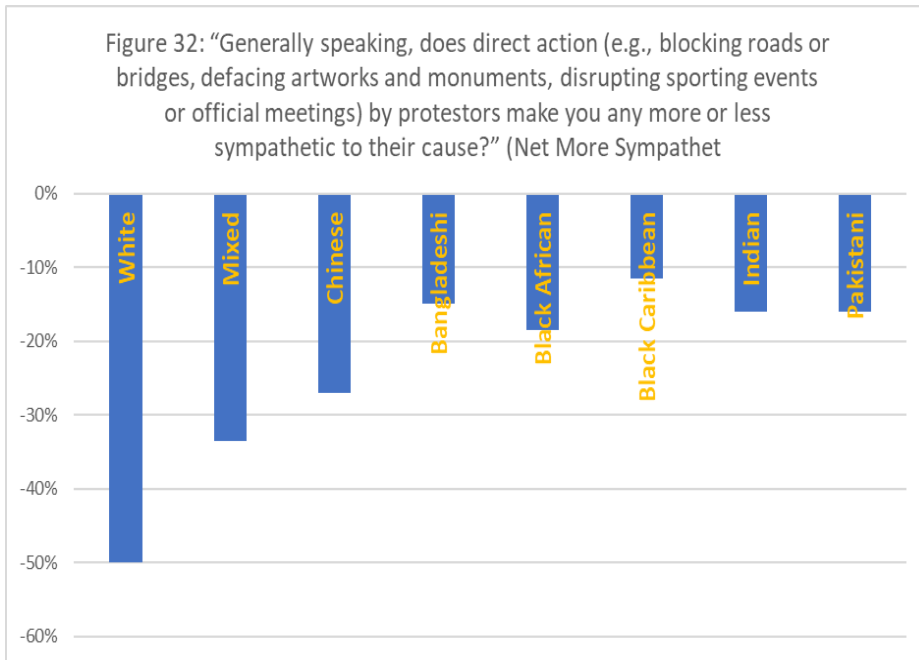
## 7.2 Direct Action Protest

We asked respondents two questions regarding direct action protests, such as blocking roads, defacing monuments or disrupting events:

- “To what extent, if at all, do you support or oppose activist groups engaging in direct action protests (e.g., blocking roads or bridges, defacing artworks and monuments, disrupting sporting events or official meetings) in order to bring attention to their cause?”
- “Generally speaking, does direct action (e.g., blocking roads or bridges, defacing artworks and monuments, disrupting sporting events or official meetings) by protestors make you any more or less sympathetic to their cause?”

On both questions we saw a stark difference between white respondents and all other ethnic groups, with white respondents significantly more opposed, and more likely to think that direct action made them less sympathetic to the cause in question.





This impact can be seen clearly in both the high level ethnic aggregations in the nationally representative polling and the more granular categories of the ethnic minority polling. Whereas white respondents were overwhelmingly opposed to direct action, ethnic minority respondents were more split – with there even being a small net support from Black Caribbean, Indian and Pakistani respondents. Similarly, while all ethnic groups felt that direct action was more likely to make them less sympathetic, this effect was much more pronounced amongst white respondents than those of other ethnicities.

### 7.3 Immigration

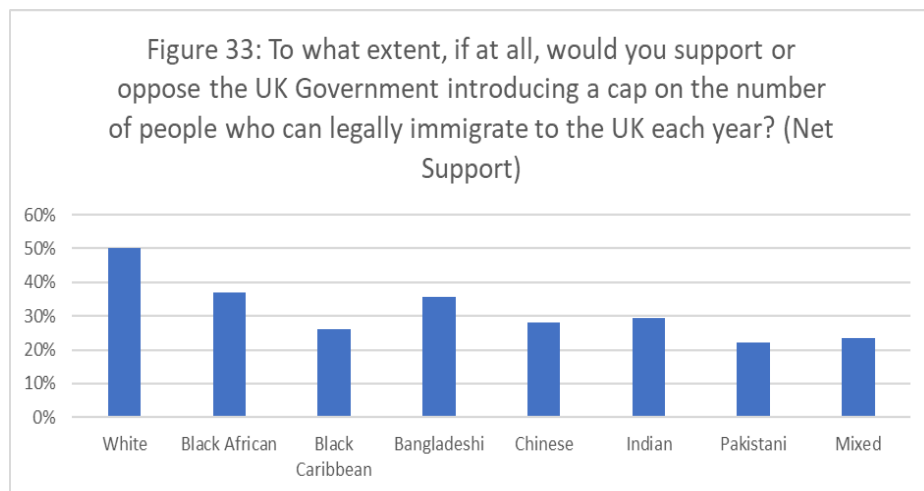
Ethnic minority respondents from all groups are significantly more positive about legal immigration than White respondents. On the fundamental question, “How would you describe the current level of legal immigration in the United Kingdom?”, the largest response from every ethnic minority group was that ‘There is an appropriate level of legal migration’, outweighing those who thought there was too much or too little legal migration (though for every group, more thought there was too much than too little).

Differences between the groups were largely within the margin of error. Averaging across all ethnic minority groups, 34% thought there was too much legal migration, compared to 40% about the right amount and 13% too little. By contrast, more White respondents thought there was too much legal migration (50%) compared to about the right amount (30%) and too little (10%).

In keeping with this, most ethnic minority groups thought that, on balance, legal immigration had had a positive or very positive impact in most areas, including the economy, public services, the NHS and Government finances. Their position was more finely balanced on social

cohesion, and most groups believed that legal immigration had had a negative impact on house prices and rents from all groups – though more Black African and Black Caribbean respondents felt the impact had been positive rather than negative in this area, too.

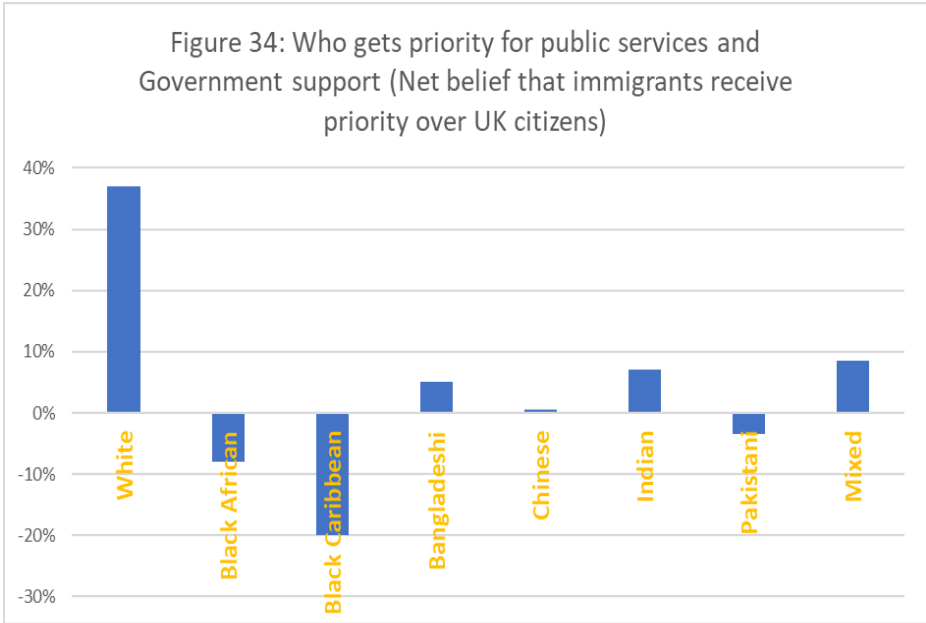
Support for immigration does not, however, translate to a ‘blank cheque’ for migration policies. Every ethnic group showed strong net support for introducing a cap on the number of people who can legally immigrate to the UK each year.



Similarly, on illegal immigration, at least 58% of every ethnic group polled thought that ‘Migrants crossing the Channel in small boats’ was either ‘fairly present’ or ‘significantly present’ as a problem in the UK today, with this rising to 70% or above for Black African, Black Caribbean and White respondents.

All ethnic groups took into account a range of factors as to what the Government should prioritise when determining whether a person should be allowed to migrate to this country. White respondents prioritised their ability to speak English (63%) and the extent to which they can demonstrate they share British values (64%), and least weight on whether they had family living here (45%) or the amount they were able to earn (47%). By contrast, based on information from the nationally representative polling, both Black and Asian respondents weighted all factors more similarly, at between 50% and 60%.

Ethnic groups are split as to whether UK citizens or immigrants get greater priority from the Government in terms of public services and support. Black African, Black Caribbean and Pakistani respondents are more likely to believe that UK citizens get more support, whereas Indian, Bangladeshi and (strongly) White respondents are more likely to believe that immigrants get greater priority (Chinese respondents are equally split.



Although sample sizes are small, this finding is borne out by the aggregated figures in the nationally representative polling, which again shows that White (50 : 17), Asian (34 : 42) and Mixed (42 : 10) respondents believe immigrants get greater priority, while Black respondents believe immigrants get less priority (29 : 43).

## 8. Politics and Society

Considering the complex demographic landscape of modern Britain and the overall growth of its ethnic and religious minorities, in-depth ethnic-minority research remains somewhat underdeveloped in the UK. The largest full-scale investigation into the public attitudes, political views, and identity-framing of Britain's ethnic minorities was the ground-breaking 2010 Ethnic Minority British Election Study (EMBES) survey – which was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), with the total cost being to the tune of £4 million.<sup>76</sup> There has not been a repeat exercise since, despite the fundamental social, cultural, and economic transformations which have taken place in modern Britain over the past fourteen years.

Considering the targeted nature of such survey research (which includes adopting elaborate methods to connect with traditionally harder-to-reach elements of ethnic-minority communities), the costs of ethnic-minority polling can be prohibitively expensive. However, compared to other European counterparts such as France (where there is a certain mainstream reluctance to carry out such minority-specific surveys under its rigid model of so-called 'colour-blind' universalism), the UK does have a body of data which has helped us to somewhat understand behavioural and attitudinal differences between and within Britain's ethnic minorities.

Much like the educational and economic disparities which have been fleshed out in previous sections, the survey history of ethnic-minority public attitudes does not only expose the reductive nature of catch-all labels such as 'BAME' and 'non-white' – but also the ethnic gaps concealed by wider racial categorisations such as 'Black' and 'Asian'.

### 8.1: The 2010 EMBES

The 2010 EMBES remains the largest-scale deep-dive into the social attitudes and political preferences of Britain's ethnic minorities. The survey covered political knowledge and interest, political values and policy preferences, perceptions of and preferences for political parties, voter registration, electoral behaviour (turnout and vote choice), forms of non-voting political participation (such as signing petitions and demonstrations), trust in political institutions, and satisfaction with the democratic system. When one considers that the polling took place in 2010 (with the book centred on the survey findings published in August 2013), the endurance and stickability of the 'BAME' label suggests either a long-term mainstream ignorance of such ethnic differences (due to a lack of research and engagement with relevant work) or a concerted

---

76. Heath, A. et al. (2013), *The Political Integration of Ethnic Minorities in Britain*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.



ideological effort to hide variations in political integration between non-white groups which have at times been caricatured as a disaffected and alienated collective.

**Table 6: Level of Democratic Satisfaction and Political Trust (2010 BES and EMBES)**

Ethnicity	Satisfied with British Democracy (%)	High Level of Trust in UK Parliament (%)	High Level of Trust in Politicians (%)
Indian	74.1	35.9	26.9
Pakistani	76.4	37.0	28.3
Bangladeshi	78.6	42.8	29.3
Black African	73.2	33.8	26.3
Black Caribbean	48.1	12.5	8.5
White British	61.5	19.5	10.9

Table 6 presents survey results from the 2010 British Election Study (where the white-British data is derived from) and the 2010 Ethnic Minority British Election Study.<sup>77</sup> The data shows that while respondents of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Black African origin consistently report higher levels of satisfaction with British democracy and trust in the UK Parliament (and politicians generally) than the white-British mainstream, those of Black Caribbean heritage – the longest-settled and socially-integrated ethnic minority - reported significantly lower levels, being the most democratically dissatisfied and politically disaffected group. Indeed, the Black Caribbean group was the only one where under half of respondents were satisfied with how democracy works in Britain, with only one in eight reporting a high level of trust in the UK Parliament.

An interesting pattern which emerged from this analysis is that Black Africans were closer to the three main South Asian ethnic groups (Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis) than their co-racial Caribbean counterparts when it came to levels of democratic satisfaction and political trust. The two ethnic groups which reported relatively high levels of satisfaction with British democracy and political trust were the relatively segregated Sunni-dominant Bangladeshi-heritage and Pakistani-origin groups – despite post-9/11 securitisation and the so-called ‘War on Terror’ (which included the UK’s involvement in the military invasion of Iraq).

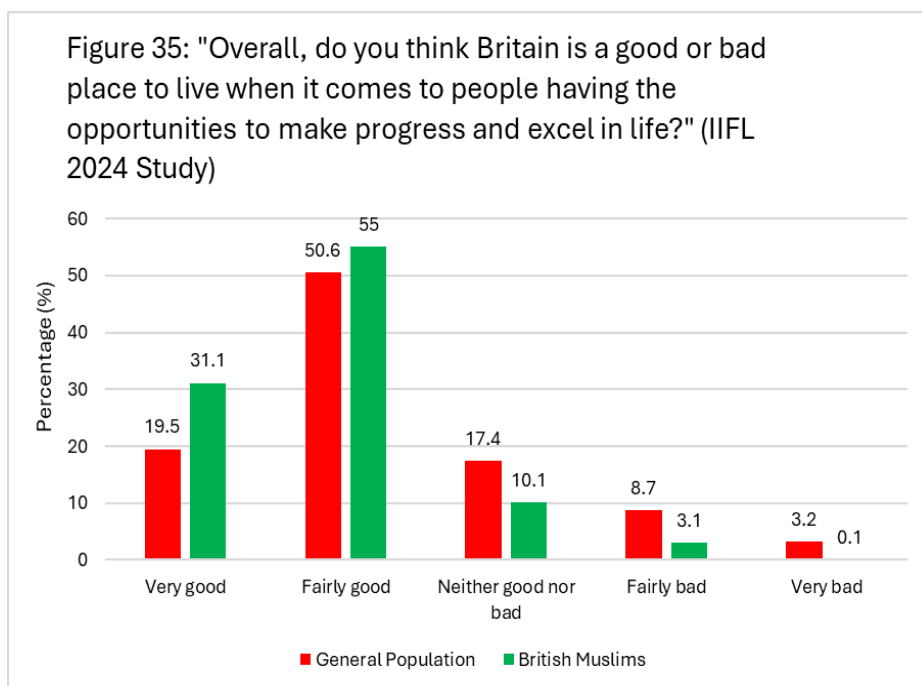
The results suggest that a variety of factors may shape political trust in the broader British ethnic-minority context, such as the degree of ‘social mixing’ (which may increase perceptions of discrimination) and direct experiences of unfavourable social, political, and economic environments in other parts of the world (which in turn feed into naturally positive orientations towards the British democratic system). The latter factor could have a heightened effect if such experiences abroad are connected to war and conflict (such as the 1971 Bangladeshi liberation struggle and

77. Ehsan, R. (2019), ‘Discrimination, Social Relations and Trust: Civic Inclusion of British Ethnic Minorities: Phd Thesis’, Royal Holloway, University of London, 1 April. Available at: <https://pure.royalholloway.ac.uk/en/publications/discrimination-social-relations-and-trust-civic-inclusion-of-brit>, last accessed: 5 May 2024.

the Somali Civil War).

## 8.2: Perception of Equality and Opportunity In Modern Britain

The existing body of data suggests that Britain’s ethnic minorities – by and large – consider the UK to be a relatively tolerant and accommodating society which has made significant strides when it comes to racial equality. To commemorate the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the first Caribbean migrants of the Windrush generation, British Future published a report which found that over two in three ethnic-minority people - 68% - agreed that the UK has made significant progress on racial equality over the past 25 years.<sup>78</sup> In addition to this, four in five ethnic-minority Britons believed that the UK is a better place to live, as a member of an ethnic minority, than other western countries like the USA, Germany or France. However, it is worth noting that 80% of ethnic-minority Britons in the study also felt that the UK needs to make “much more” progress on racial equality over the forthcoming 25 years.<sup>79</sup>



An even more recent 2024 study by the Institute for the Impact of Faith in Life (IIFL) found that British Muslims (which are overwhelmingly non-white and a South Asian-majority population with only 5% being ethnically white-British) were more likely than the general public to believe that Britain is a good place to live when it comes to people having the opportunities to progress and excel in life (86% and 70% respectively).<sup>80</sup> While just 3% of British Muslims believed Britain was a bad place to live on this front, this rose four-fold to 12% for the general population. More than four in five British Muslim respondents (83%) also agreed with the view that, when compared to other European countries

78. British Future (2023), 'Why the Windrush Matters Today', 7 June. Available at: <https://www.britishfuture.org/report-examines-attitudes-to-race-to-day-as-britain-marks-75th-windrush-anniversary/>, last accessed: 5 May 2024.

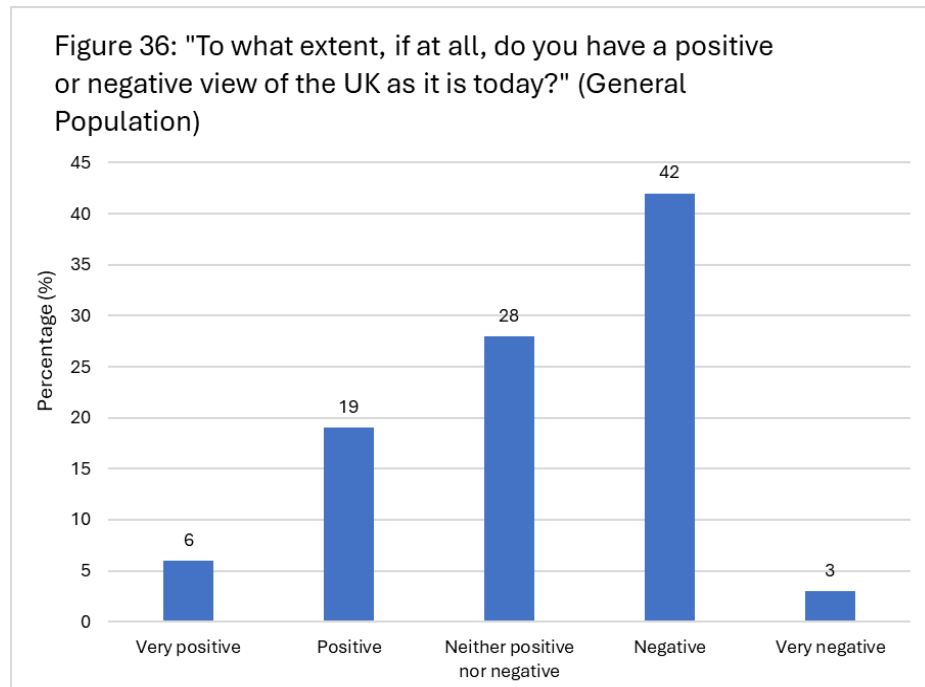
79. Ibid.

80. Ehsan, R. and Scott, J. (2024), 'The social contributions of British Muslims', Institute for the Impact of Faith in Life, 5 March. Available at: <https://iifl.org.uk/reports/the-social-contribution-of-british-muslims/>, last accessed: 30 April 2024.

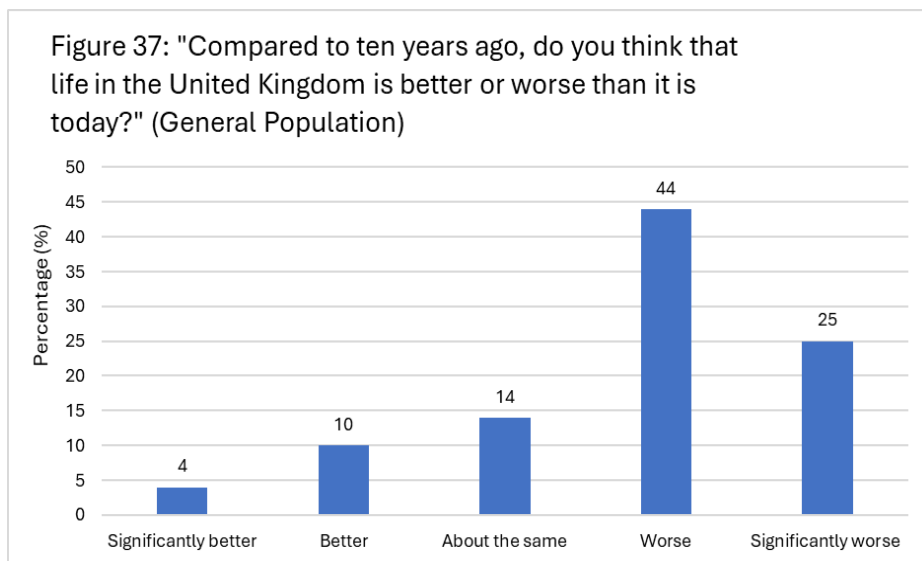
such as France, Germany, and the Netherlands, the UK is a better place for Muslims to be able to be respectful of their faith whilst being involved in wider public life – echoing the findings which emerged in British Future’s Windrush report based on ethnic-minority polling. This figure of 83% rose to 87% for British Muslim respondents based in London.<sup>81</sup> This finding is perhaps reflective of the reality that the UK historically outperforms major western European counterparts when it comes to the provision of anti-discrimination protections and religious freedoms for its ethnic minorities.

### 8.3: Perceptions of 21st Century British Life

Reflecting existing data on attitudes towards British democratic society, the fresh polling conducted by Redfield and Wilton discovered further ethnic differences when people were asked about the current state of modern Britain and how it has changed over the past decade. The findings suggest that a significant proportion of the British public both have a generally negative view of the current state of modern Britain and believe that the country is worse off than ten years ago. However, there are differences of note between the general population and multiple ethnic minorities once again underscoring the reality that the social and cultural landscape is somewhat complicated when exploring evaluations of life in current-day Britain.



81. Ibid.



Only a quarter of respondents in the general population survey reported either a “very positive” or “positive” view of current-day UK (6% and 19% respectively). This is dwarfed by the percentage of people that reported having either a ‘negative’ or ‘very negative’ view – a total of 45%.

Only 14% of respondents in the general population survey said that they felt life in the UK was either “significantly better” or “better” than it was a decade ago (4% and 10% respectively). A further 14% responded “about the same”. Nearly seven in ten respondents – 69% - said that they felt life in the UK was either “worse” or “significantly worse” than it was ten years ago (44% and 25% respectively). The remaining 4% responded “don’t know” to his survey item.

The Redfield and Wilton polling data suggests that ethnic minorities are generally less likely to believe that life in the UK has become worse than they were ten years ago, when compared with the wider general population. Under half of the respondents in the Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean samples believe this to be the case – 48%, and 44% respectively. For the Black African sample, 36% believe that life is worse now in the UK than it was ten years ago – 33 percentage points lower than the general population figure of 69%.

## 9. Race, Class, and Discrimination

The debate on what are the key barriers to equality of opportunity and more cohesive community relations continues to be a fiercely-contested one in modern Britain. While there is a traditional consensus among Britain's ethnic minorities that significant strides have been made in terms of racial equality, the Summer 2020 emergence of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in the UK after the police killing of George Floyd across the pond meant that racism and discrimination was thrust to the heart of national sociopolitical discourse. There has been a particular emphasis on 'institutional racism' – incorporating state institutions such as the NHS, private corporations in financial services, and sporting establishments such as the England & Wales cricket board.

The rise of BLM in the UK, however, has not necessarily been welcome. A November 2020 Opinium poll found that 55% of the British public – including a plurality of ethnic-minority Britons – believed that BLM has increased racial tensions in the UK.<sup>82</sup> This was followed by a May 2021 YouGov survey which showed that only 8% of Britons believed that UK race relations had improved since the emergence of BLM demonstrations the previous summer – with 36% saying it had deteriorated.<sup>83</sup> Concerns have grown that multi-factored forms of disadvantage in modern Britain are increasingly viewed through the reductive prism of race – with a prime example being the Labour Party's proposed introduction of a new Race Equality Act which seeks to tackle pay, health, and policing disparities (which are shaped by a variety of social, cultural, and economic factors). It is not unreasonable to argue that with the shift towards race-centred explanations for disparities, other factors – especially social class – are being pushed to the sidelines.

Along with concerns that British social policy is overly focused on protected characteristics, such as race, when considering the existence of socio-economic disadvantage and barriers to life progression, there is the risk of modern Britain being 're-racialised', especially if the allocation of opportunities and rewards – jobs, internships, training schemes, or scholarships – are increasingly perceived to be based on racial preferences. This has unfortunately seen traditional British institutions such as the Royal Air Force (RAF) engage in unlawful procedures designed to boost ethnic-minority recruitment.<sup>84</sup> There has also been identitarian-activist calls for 'neo-segregationist' practices such as 'black-only' theatre showings and the boycotting of non-black businesses over the Christmas festive

82. Opinium (2020), 'Black History Month – Black Lives Matter Report: Key Findings', 30 November. Available at: <https://www.opinium.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Perceptions-of-the-Black-Lives-Matter-movement-Report.pdf>, last accessed: 10 May 2024.

83. YouGov (2021), Survey results on public attitudes towards BLM and UK race relations (May 20-21). Available at: [https://d3nk13psvxxpe9.cloudfront.net/documents/YouGov\\_-\\_1\\_year\\_of\\_BLM\\_nat\\_rep\\_sample.pdf](https://d3nk13psvxxpe9.cloudfront.net/documents/YouGov_-_1_year_of_BLM_nat_rep_sample.pdf), last accessed: 10 May 2024.

84. Haynes, D. (2023), 'Royal Air Force unlawfully discriminated against white male recruits in bid to boost diversity, inquiry finds', Sky News, 30 June. Available at: <https://news.sky.com/story/royal-air-force-unlawfully-discriminated-against-white-male-recruits-in-bid-to-boost-diversity-inquiry-finds-12911888>, last accessed: 10 May 2024.

period. There is the possibility that the increased ‘racialisation’ of social and economic relations can undermine community cohesion in modern Britain.

### 9.1. Perceived barriers to progress in modern Britain

In the Redfield and Wilton polling for this report, respondents were asked questions on what they felt were the important barriers to (and enablers of) making headway in life and being successful in modern Britain. As well as gauging the perceived importance of educational qualifications and English language proficiency, this included asking them the degree to which they believe racial identity and socio-economic status has an impact on social mobility in modern Britain.

**Table 7: “How important, if at all, do you believe the following are in determining a person’s ability to succeed and do well in Britain today”**

	Extremely Important	Fairly Important	Somewhat important	Not at all important
English speaking skills	53%	36%	10%	2%
Education	43%	43%	11%	2%
Networks & connections	26%	31%	26%	16%
Sense of humour	19%	40%	29%	13%
Social class	17%	30%	27%	25%
Race	11%	19%	22%	48%
Biological Sex	11%	19%	19%	51%
Sexual orientation	10%	15%	18%	57%

Table 7 shows the survey results after general-population respondents were asked how important the following were in determining a person’s ability to succeed and do well in modern Britain: English speaking skills; education; network and connections; sense of humour; social class; race; biological sex; sexual orientation. It should be acknowledged that there is a degree of interconnectedness between these listed determinants. For example, belonging to a family in a higher social class can increase the chances of being organically well-connected to relatively powerful and influential individuals/organisations.

The survey data suggests that there is considerable public recognition in the UK of the value of English language skills, as well as having a sound educational background, when it comes to making headway in modern Britain. This is especially relevant in terms of building social capital and obtaining formal qualifications which can enable stronger labour market integration. English language proficiency and educational background are far more likely to be identified as important determinants of one’s ability to succeed in modern Britain – especially when compared to racial

identity. Indeed, social class – which has increasingly been de-emphasised in debates on social mobility – is more likely to be viewed as an important factor in this context than race, along with other protected characteristics such as sex and sexual orientation.

More than half of the general-population respondents believed that English speaking skills are extremely important in determining one’s ability to succeed in modern Britain (53%), with a further 36% saying it is “fairly important” (providing a total figure of 89%, which is the highest for all the determinants listed). This is followed by education / academic record, with the “extremely important” and “fairly important” responses being selected by 43% of respondents each (providing a total of 86%).

When compared to racial identity, the British public is notably more likely to believe that social class is important in determining a person’s ability to succeed and do well in Britain. While 30% of respondents believed that race is either “extremely” or “fairly” important in this context, this figure rises to 47% for social class. A quarter of respondents – 25% - were of the view that social class is not at all important in determining one’s ability to succeed in modern Britain. On the other hand, nearly half of all respondents – 48% - believe that race is not at all important in determining one’s ability to do well in Britain.

Looking at two other protected characteristics, the majority of respondents in the general-population sample believe that biological sex is not at all important in determining one’s ability to succeed in modern Britain (51%). This rises to 57% when it comes to sexual orientation – the highest figure in the analysis.

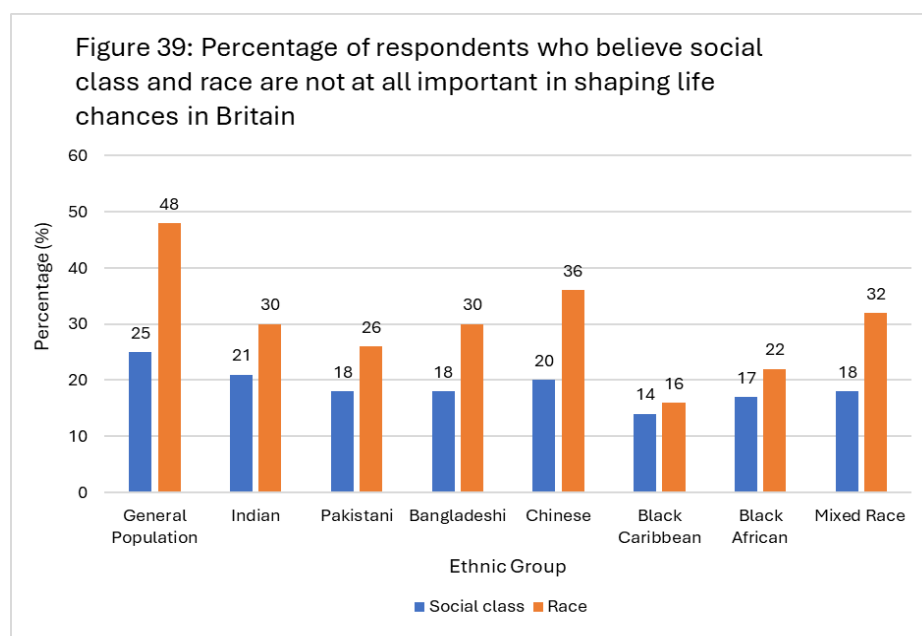
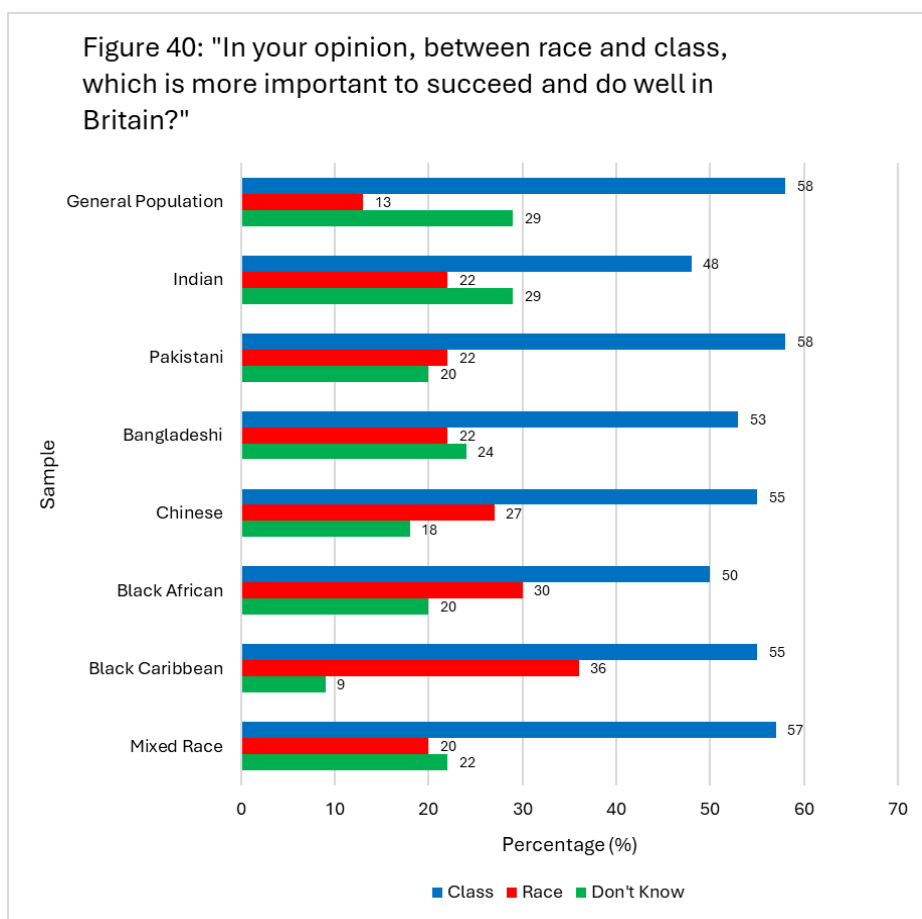


Figure 39 shows the percentage of general-population and ethnic-minority respondents who believe that the following are not at all important in determining one’s ability to succeed and do well in modern

Britain: social class and race.

Compared to each of the ethnic-minority group samples (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Black Caribbean, Black African, and Mixed Race), respondents in the wider general-population sample were more likely to say both social class and race are not at all important in determining one’s ability to succeed and do well in modern Britain.

However, within each the seven ethnic-minority samples, respondents were more likely to say that race is not at all important in this context. The gap is the widest among Chinese-heritage respondents, with 36% believing that race is not at all important in determining one’s ability to succeed in modern Britain (dropping to 20% for social class). The ethnic-minority group least likely to say race and social class are not important at all in determining one’s ability to succeed and do well in modern Britain were the respondents of Black Caribbean heritage (16% and 14% respectively).



The findings reported in Figure 39 are reinforced by those included in Figure 40. Within both the wider general population and six of the seven ethnic-minority group samples (Indian-origin respondents being the exception), the majority of respondents selected race over class when deciding which is more important in determining a person’s ability to succeed and do well in Britain. This peaks at 58% for the Pakistani-



heritage sample, which is on par with the corresponding figure for the wider general population. Less than a quarter of respondents in the Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi samples selected class over race (22% each), with this dropping further down to 20% for mixed-race respondents – further underscoring the trend of ethnic-minority Britons believing that social class has a greater impact than racial identity in the shaping of life chances in modern Britain.

**Jordan Tyldesley (Bolton-based independent journalist and media commentator)**

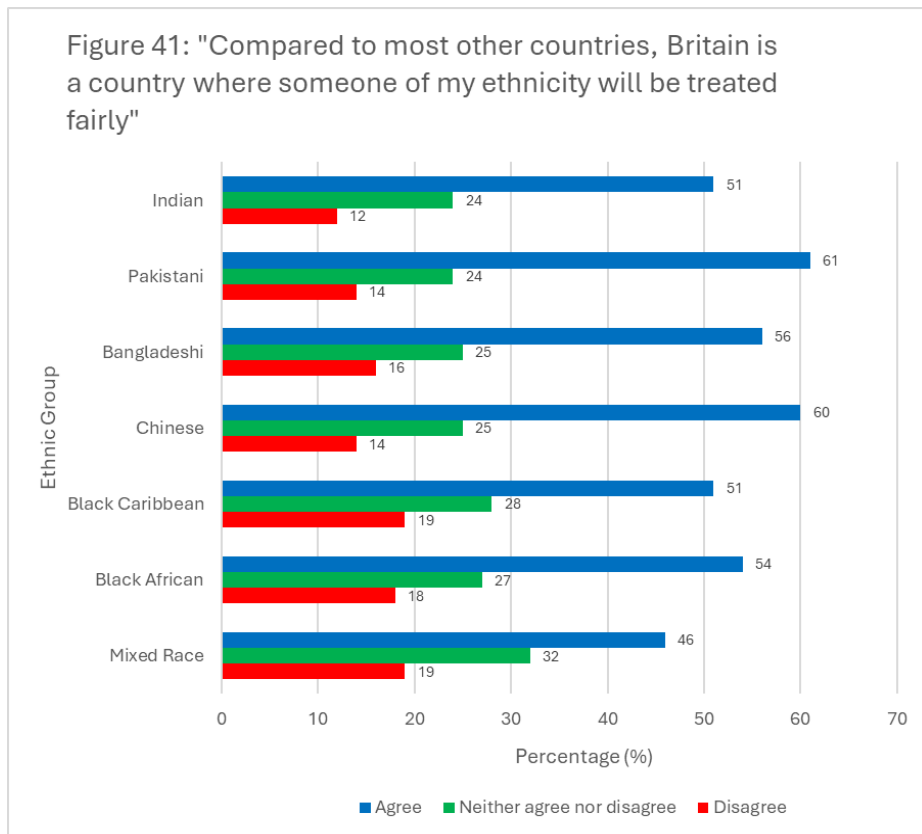
Having lived in Bolton for all my life, I have seen various forms of social, economic, and cultural change which are somewhat under-reported – especially in the mainstream media.

While social mobility among the white-British working classes has stalled, the same cannot be said for aspirational South Asian communities in the town. A notable number of families in these communities have managed to accrue enough financial resources to now send their children to Bolton School – an independent school on the Greater Manchester-Lancashire border. More and more ethnic-minority enterprises are popping up in Bolton, meaning that there has been an ethnic and religious diversification of business ownership in this neck of the woods.

Where Bolton has experienced the most serious form of decline in recent times is in the town centre – which has essentially collapsed. It looks tired and run-down, with the high street being well and truly hollowed out. The town centre has been unable to compete with a nearby retail park with more favourable parking rates. There are more people with visible mental-health problems in the town centre, with its disintegration bringing greater criminal activity with it.

For me, the two greatest inequalities in modern Britain are based on social class and region. Working-class people in north-west England – especially Bolton – are ‘left-out’ in England’s London-centric model of political economy. For all the political talk on ‘levelling up’ the country, Bolton is not even ‘levelled up’ within Greater Manchester – it is not even integrated into the Manchester Metrolink tram system. Inequality within regions is an overlooked problem, especially when it comes to Greater Manchester.

The social-policy debate in modern Britain could do with focusing more on class-based barriers and forms of geographic inequality. This development would be most welcome in places like my hometown of Bolton.



Bar the mixed-race sample, the majority of respondents within the other six ethnic-minority samples – Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Black African, and Black Caribbean – agree with the view that someone of their ethnicity will be treated fairly in Britain (when compared with most other countries). The level of agreement is highest among Indian-origin respondents, with more than three people in this sample doing so (62%).

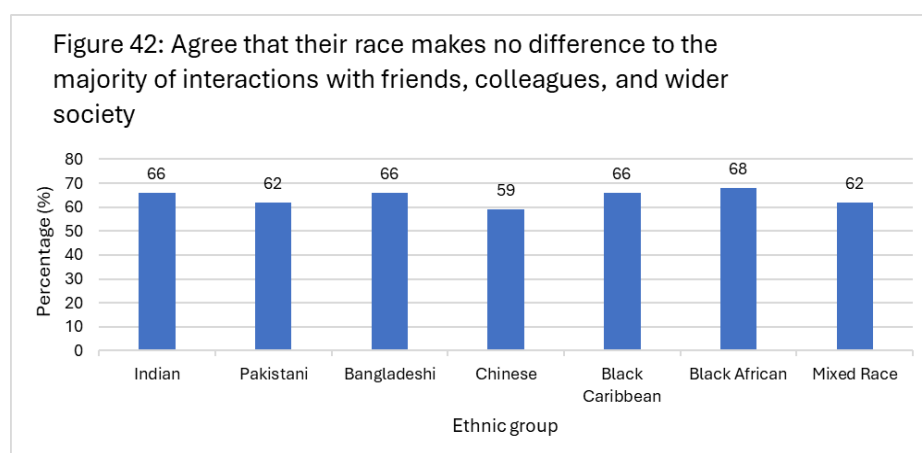
In terms of expressing some form of disagreement, nearly one in five respondents within the Black Caribbean and mixed-race samples disagreed with the view that someone with their ethnic background will be treated fairly in Britain when compared with most countries – 19% each (with 5% strongly disagreeing within both samples). The lowest level of disagreement can be found in the Indian-origin sample – 12%. This supports previous studies which show that the majority of ethnic-minority Britons believe that modern Britain is a better place to live as a member of a racial minority, especially when compared to major European countries such as France, Germany, and the Netherlands – which historically rank lower than the UK when it comes to the provision of anti-discrimination protections on the grounds of race, ethnicity, and religion.

### 9.3: Social Relations and Experiences of Discrimination

The findings of the new Redfield and Wilton polling encouragingly suggest that most ethnic-minority Britons believe that their race makes no differences to many of their interactions with friends, colleagues, and wider society. While there are notable differences between groups, most of the ethnic-minority respondents also report that they have not

experienced a single racially-discriminatory incident during the past twelve months. This is testament to the significant progress the UK has made when it comes to the quality of race relations – especially when compared to the earlier stages of the post-WWII era where there were significant racial barriers in critical spheres of life such as employment and housing, as well as the 1958 Notting Hill race riots and the founding of the National Front in the late 1960s (which was responsible for various acts of far-right violence, intimidation, and violence).

However, the figures also tell us to guard against complacency – while there may have been significant improvements in terms of ‘racial tolerance’ and positive interactions across different races – which includes the normalisation of interracial marriages and mixed-race people being one of the fastest-growing ethnic groups in modern British society – there is the argument that interracial social trust is ‘thin’ in parts and requires us to take stock of the ‘true’ quality of race relations at a deeper level. There remains a notable section of the British population which reports that their willingness to place trust in others is somewhat conditional on race – especially when it comes to sensitive matters of family and security (such as looking after their children and keeping their house keys safe). While race may not impact on the general quality of day-to-day interactions, for some it stills plays a role in how trusting they are of others in particular situations.



Within each of the seven ethnic-minority samples, the majority of respondents believed that their race makes no difference in the majority of interactions they have with friends, colleagues, and wider society. The highest level of agreement by ethnic group is among Black African-origin respondents, with more than two in three believing that their race makes no difference in most of such interactions (68%). The lowest level of agreement can be found among respondents of Chinese-heritage – but this still represents three in five respondents in this sample (59%).

**Table 8: Reported experiences of discrimination in the twelve months leading up to survey**

	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Chinese	Black Caribbean	Black African	Mixed Race
Race	36%	28%	36%	30%	40%	49%	41%
Religion	18%	36%	36%	16%	20%	22%	15%
Nationality	20%	14%	14%	18%	20%	20%	16%
Accent	18%	12%	10%	16%	20%	20%	19%
Age	14%	14%	12%	14%	18%	18%	14%
Gender	12%	12%	12%	12%	16%	16%	22%
Political Opinions	6%	5%	5%	3%	8%	8%	6%
Social Class	8%	7%	10%	6%	12%	12%	12%
Sexual Orientation	4%	2%	4%	4%	6%	6%	8%
Disability	3%	0%	2%	3%	4%	4%	8%
No reported discrimination	44%	38%	36%	46%	36%	36%	39%

Table 8 presents the survey results after the ethnic-minority respondents were asked if they had personally experienced an incident (or incidents) of discrimination in Britain over the last twelve months on any of the following bases: race, religion, nationality, accent, age, gender, political opinions, social class, sexual orientation, and disability.

Race was the most commonly-reported form of discrimination for all seven ethnic-minority samples under analysis, peaking at 49% for respondents of Black African origin. This was followed by mixed-race respondents (41%) and the Black Caribbean-heritage sample (40%). The Muslim-majority Pakistani-origin and Bangladeshi-heritage samples were relatively more likely to report discriminatory experiences on the grounds of religion – 36% each. More than a quarter of Black African-origin respondents (the most recently-arrived group in terms of migratory history) reported they had personally experienced at least one discriminatory incident on the grounds of their accent – 28% (the highest figure by ethnic group for this reported form of discrimination).

Encouragingly, there is a notable proportion of ethnic-minority reporting that they have not experienced discrimination on any of the ten grounds over the twelve months leading up to being surveyed. This is especially high among Chinese-heritage and Indian-origin respondents – 46% and 44% respectively. The lowest figure by ethnic group when it comes to the proportion of respondents reported no experiences of discrimination over the past twelve months is found among Black African-origin respondents – 26%.

**Table 9: Percentage of respondents who report that it is either very or fairly important that a childminder trusted with their child/children shared the same racial identity/religious affiliation**

	Same racial background	Same religious affiliation
General Population	37%	28%
Indian	44%	45%
Pakistani	62%	62%
Bangladeshi	59%	60%
Chinese	45%	43%
Black African	64%	64%
Black Caribbean	63%	56%

Table 9 shows the survey results after respondents were asked how important it was that a childminder responsible for looking after their child/children shared a) their race and b) their religion.

Respondents in the general population survey were less likely to say that it was important that a childminder/babysitter looking after their offspring, shared their own racial identity and religious background. However, it is more than one-third for the former and above a quarter for the latter – which are not negligible sections of the wider public by any stretch of the imagination.

The data suggests that ethnic minorities have stronger ‘ingroup’ tendencies than the general population on this front. Most respondents within the Black African-, Black Caribbean-, Pakistani-, and Bangladeshi-heritage samples reported that that it was either very or fairly important that a childminder/babysitter looking after their child/children shared their race and religion. While not quite as ‘open’ as the general population, less than half of the respondents of Indian origin and Chinese heritage felt shared identities were important in this context.

**Table 10: Percentage of respondents who report that it is either very or fairly important that a neighbour they leave their house keys with shares their racial background/religious affiliation**

	Same racial background	Same religious affiliation
General Population	29%	21%
Indian	40%	36%
Pakistani	48%	54%
Bangladeshi	49%	51%
Chinese	42%	36%
Black African	47%	48%
Black Caribbean	52%	43%

Table 10 shows the survey results after respondents were asked how important it was that a neighbour trusted with their house keys shared a)

their racial identity and b) their religious affiliation.

Similar to the previous table, respondents in the wider general population survey were the least likely to place importance on having a shared race and religion when trusting a neighbour with their house keys. But it can be argued that three in ten doing so for the former and one in five doing so for the latter, are very much noteworthy proportions of the national population which should not be overlooked when considering the broader health of intergroup trust in modern Britain.

However, much higher proportions of ethnic-minority respondents attach importance to a neighbour sharing their racial and religious background when trusting them with their house keys. When it comes to sharing their racial background, the highest figure is found in the Black Caribbean-origin sample (52%) with the lowest being among Indian-heritage respondents (40%); for religious background, the highest figure is found in the Pakistani-origin sample (54%), with the lowest figure being 36% (within both the Indian-heritage and Chinese-heritage samples).

Like in the case of the Pakistani-origin respondents, the majority of the Bangladeshi-heritage sample said it was either very or fairly important that a neighbour shared their religious background when trusting them with their house keys. This suggests that ethno-religious minorities, which have higher levels of residential segregation, are more likely to have stronger 'ingroup' preferences when placing trust in their neighbours.

**Sir Trevor Phillips (Writer, broadcaster, businessman and former politician)**

There is no doubt that for a person of colour, Britain is a warmer home than it was for my parents, part of the post-war Windrush generation.

Seven decades ago, our father walked the streets of London searching for a landlord who would not shut the door in his face. In later years, my older brothers skirted the threat of violence when they could, and confronted it when they had to. My sisters discovered that the families of the girls they thought were their best friends had erected a racial exclusion zone around their homes.

For most people, most of the time, this kind of overt prejudice is now history. But racial friction has not been entirely smoothed over. The fact that people may not express racial animosity to your face does not mean it no longer exists.

Today, the young men who might have slipped on a knuckleduster before chasing you into an alley, instead open their laptop to tap out a crass message. It might be a vulgar insult below a photo of my wife or children, copied a million times within hours. Maybe less directly wounding, but emotionally corrosive, and destructive.

And whilst in person everyone minds their ethnic p's and q's these days, the odd unguarded remark can remind us that the old attitudes are not quite dead, even amongst those who imagine themselves beyond

bias.

The jolly red-faced chap next to me at a board meeting pipes up to support my proposal with “I really don’t think of Trevor as black”. He means it as a compliment; but praise for overcoming your obvious deficiency is hardly reassurance that post-racial Britain has arrived.

## 10. Social Integration and British National Belonging

The findings in the last chapter both emphasise the progress modern Britain has made in terms of race relations and point to room for improvement.

British ethnic minorities are generally better-integrated – both in a socio-economic and socio-political sense – than their counterparts in the French secular republic. This is especially true (of or when compared to) the African-heritage Muslim communities which originate from countries such as Senegal and Algeria and which continue to languish in a pool of disaffection and deprivation in the banlieues of cities such as Paris, Lyon, and Marseille. It should be of no surprise that more than four in five British Muslims believe that the UK – with a more flexible approach to integration – is a better place for their co-religionists to be respectful of their faith whilst being involved in wider public life, when compared to countries such as France. There remain concerns over levels of segregation in the UK in cities such as Leicester and towns such as Blackburn. The flaring up of communal tensions means that ‘diversity management’ needs to be revisited in certain parts of the country. (Nonetheless, the UK’s ethnic groups are more evenly mixed than in the United States. The likes of London, Manchester, and Birmingham are less ethnically segregated than American cities such as Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago).

Contrary to much of the mainstream ‘progressive’ rhetoric which permeates across the spheres of politics and media, Britain’s ethnic minorities traditionally report high levels of British identification and relatively strong attachments to Britain as a society. Much of this can be attributed to the relatively tolerant and inclusive nature of wider British society. The June 2020 research published by IPSOS showed that Britons overwhelmingly reject race-based conceptions of British identity, with 93% rejecting the premise that ‘to be truly British, you have to be white’.<sup>85</sup> This was followed by a report jointly published by British Future and the Centre for English Identity and Politics, which found three quarters (77%) of white people in England believe that ‘Being English is open to people of different ethnic backgrounds who identify as English’.<sup>86</sup> National identity is increasing framed by the general public in civic, as opposed to ancestral, terms.

This chapter, based on the new Redfield and Wilton polling, explores the current situation when it comes to the social integration of British ethnic minorities – focusing on spheres of life such as friends and work, as well as one’s local neighbourhood and place of worship. Building on

---

85. Ipsos MORI (2020), ‘Race and ethnicity in Britain: 5-10 June 2020’, June. Available at: <https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2020-06/race-inequality-june-2020-charts.pdf>, last accessed: 11 June 2024.

86. British Future (2021), ‘English identity open to all, regardless of race, finds poll – and Three Lions is the symbol that unites us’, 9 June. Available at: <https://www.british-future.org/english-identity-open-football-unites/>, last accessed: 11 June 2024.



existing studies which have looked at British national identity, this chapter fleshes out public attitudes towards British history and whether young people should be encouraged to take pride in it. This incorporates an exploration of which historical events make people proud of their British identity – ranging from the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade to the defeat of Nazism in the Second World War. This can help to paint a picture of what a meaningful and wholesome British civic-national identity – one which is confident in Britain’s history, heritage, and traditions – can look like in the modern age.

### 10.1. Integration – Friends, Work, Neighbours, and Worshippers

With Policy Exchange keen to explore the degree of social integration among British ethnic minorities in various spheres of life, Redfield and Wilton asked ethnic-minority respondents the extent to which their friends, work colleagues, residents in their neighbourhood, and fellow worshippers (if they attend a place of worship) share their ethnic background. This survey question was inspired by the 2010 EMBES, which investigated social-integration outcomes along very similar lines.

The figures shown are for those who reported that either all or most of the people in the stated sphere of interaction shared their own ethnic background. For the work-related item, only respondents who were either employed or self-employed were included in the analysis. The data for place of worship only includes ethnic-minority respondents who reported that they attend religious services at least a few times a year.

#### **Christabel Cooper, Director of Research at Labour Together**

Modern Britain is a country beset with problems – anaemic growth and sluggish productivity have fed through to a lack of funding for public services. Child poverty remains stubbornly high and we have the unfortunate status of having the highest percentage of homeless people among western countries. Britain currently struggles to find a place for itself in an increasingly volatile and unpredictable world.

Meanwhile, our country is also one of the most regionally unequal countries in the developed world. Economic stagnation in many parts of the country has resulted in the erosion of place-based pride. When talking with people, we often hear that thriving civic assets which were once hubs of social interaction have now disappeared.

I was born and bred in London, and still live not far from where I was born. I formerly served as a councillor for my local borough. I know how uplifting and wholesome a strong local sense of belonging can be. So, it is sad to hear London portrayed by some, as a lawless, balkanised hellscape. It is far more racially integrated than major American cities. Many ethnic-minority families have thrived here, helped by the generally high quality of schools in London. This contrasts sharply with the low-

opportunity banlieues of France’s major cities — where poorly-integrated minorities have been disadvantaged by a so-called ‘colour-blind’ political system which ignores the underlying causes of those disadvantages.

Restoring the pride in local areas across Britain must be a priority. But this is not achieved by denigrating a capital city which is one of the more successful global examples of integration. Instead, we should focus on spreading opportunity across the regions. Rather than forcing local authorities to bid against each other for “levelling-up” funds, there is a need for proper investment in both human and physical capital in the places that lack them, and the devolution of power to local leaders and communities.

**Table 11: Percentage of ethnic-minority respondents who are part of an exclusively or predominantly co-ethnic networks (friendship group, workplace, neighbourhood, and place of worship)**

	Friends	Work	Neighbourhood	Place of worship
Indian	36%	17%	21%	60%
Pakistani	60%	31%	30%	65%
Bangladeshi	59%	34%	32%	62%
Chinese	43%	30%	15%	46%
Black African	61%	33%	30%	55%
Black Caribbean	60%	30%	22%	55%

The data suggests that the highest levels of ethnic segregation can be found in friendship groups (where people have the most freedom of self-selection and ability to shape their own network in terms of discarding individuals). Around three in ten respondents within the Black African-, Black Caribbean-, Pakistani-, and Bangladeshi-heritage samples reported that either most or all their friends belong to their own ethnic group. For employment-related network, the most socially-integrated ethnic-minority sample was the Indian-origin respondents (only 17% reporting that theirs was either exclusively or predominantly co-ethnic). When it comes to co-ethnicity of neighbourhood, nearly one in three Bangladeshi-heritage respondents report that either most or all the people in their local area share their ethnicity (32%) – with the lowest figure emerging from the Chinese-origin sample (15%).

Except for the Chinese-origin respondents, the majority of respondents (who reported that they attend religious services at least a few times a year) within each of the five remaining ethnic-minority samples said their place of worship was either exclusively or predominantly co-ethnic in terms of fellowship (peaking at 65% for respondents of Pakistani heritage). It is, however, worth noting that the figure is on the lower side for Black Africans at 55% - the group that has the highest rate of attendance at a place of worship under this measurement.

## 10.2: National Belonging and Attitudes towards British History

In keeping with previous studies, the Redfield and Wilton polling results suggest that Britain's ethnic minorities are broadly proud of their British identity – at a level not dissimilar to the general population. This pattern also emerges when ethnic-minority respondents were asked if Britain has generally been a force for good in the world and whether young Britons should be taught to be proud of their national history. The findings challenge identitarian narratives that tend to suggest that patriotic expressions such as waving the Union Flag and celebrating British history have the potential to alienate much of the UK's ethnic-minority population – to the contrary, many have a positive view of Britain's contributions to the world and believe that young people should be encouraged to treat them as a source of pride.

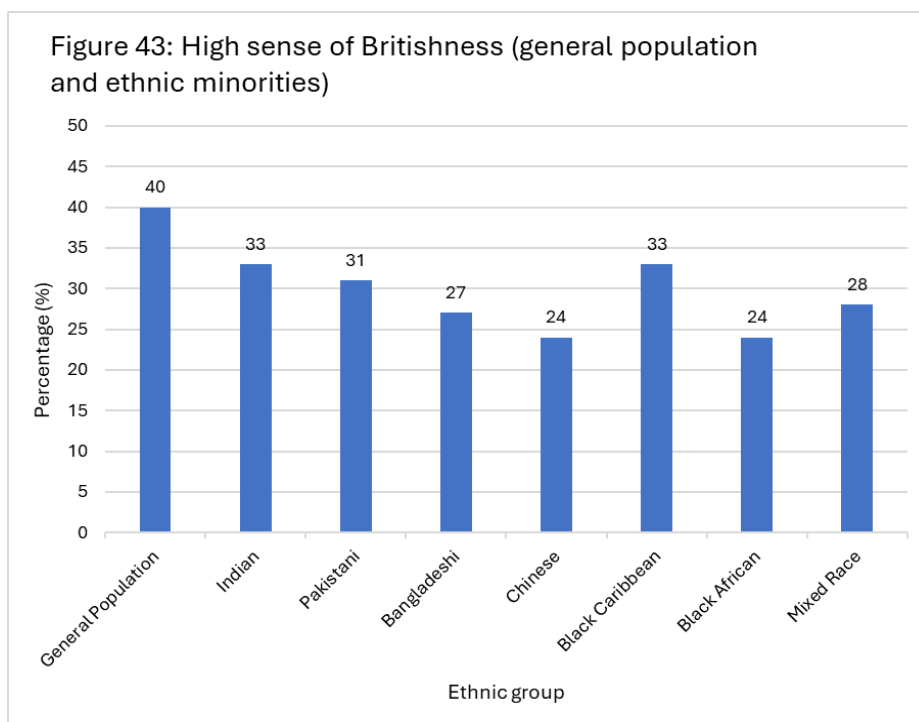
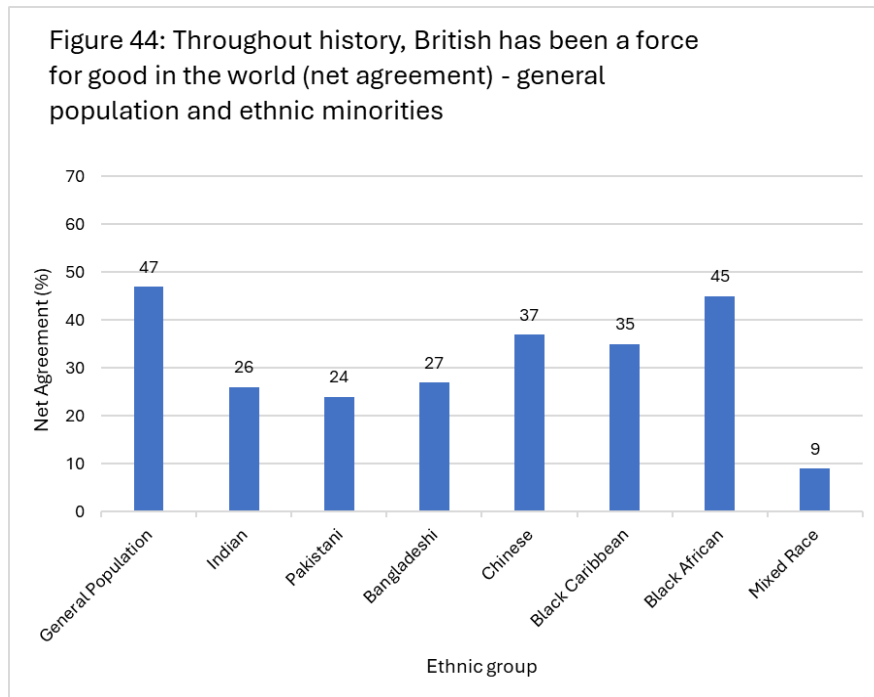


Figure 35 shows the survey results from the general-population polling and the seven ethnic-minority samples after respondents were asked to rate their sense of Britishness on a 0-10 scale. The results shown are for reporting a 'high' sense of Britishness (a rating of either 8, 9, or 10 / 8-10). According to this analysis, two in five general-population respondents reported having a strong sense of Britishness – 40%. This is a higher percentage than the corresponding figures for all seven ethnic-minority samples. Indian-origin and Black Caribbean-heritage respondents were the most likely to report a high sense of Britishness – 33% each. The ethnic-minority samples which were the least likely to report a high sense of Britishness were respondents of Chinese origin and Black African heritage – 24% each.



Three in five respondents in the general-population sample agreed that on balance, Britain has historically been a force for good in the world (60%), with 13% disagreeing with this view – providing the highest net figure of +47 (the highest in the analysis). Three in five respondents of Black African origin also agreed that on balance, Britain has historically been a force for good in the world (60%), with 15% expressing disagreement – with this net figure of +45 (the highest out of the seven ethnic-minority samples). The majority of Chinese-origin and Black Caribbean-heritage respondents agreed with this statement (53% within each sample).

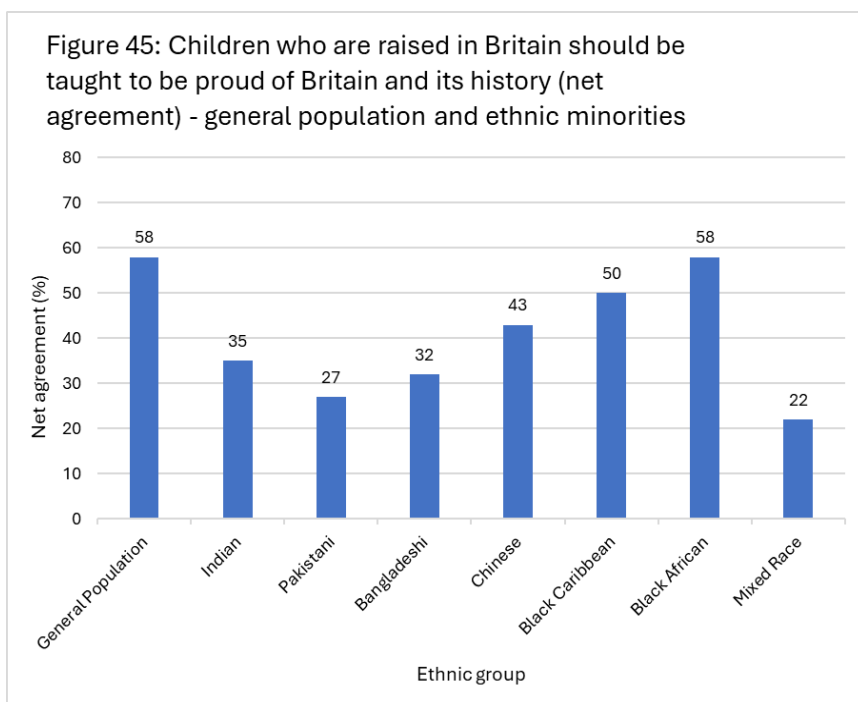


Figure 45 presents the survey results after the general-population and ethnic-minority respondents were asked if children who are raised in Britain should be taught to be proud of Britain and its history. Nearly three in four general-population respondents believed that children raised in Britain should be taught to be proud of Britain and its history – 72%, with 14% saying they should not be – providing a net figure of +58. These figures are exactly replicated among respondents of Black African heritage – with the net figure of +58 being the highest out of all seven ethnic-minority samples included in the analysis.

Apart from the mixed-race sample, the majority of respondents in the remaining ethnic-minority samples agree that children raised in modern Britain should be taught to be proud of Britain and its history: Black Caribbean (67%), Chinese (63%), Indian (57%), Bangladeshi (56%) and Pakistani (53%).

### **Dr Alka Sehgal-Cuthbert (Educator and chair of Don't Divide Us)**

In my decades-long experience as an educator, I have observed several trends in the English school system which are far from desirable.

Schools should serve two main functions – developing the knowledge of the young and socialising them into a wider set of norms and practices than those of their family and friends alone, so they are prepared for adulthood in modern Britain. This would be much easier if there was a broad-based consensus over morality and preferred social norms. Super-fragmentation in diverse communities can pose serious challenges for schools. This can give rise to conflicts regarding responsibilities and rights – as demonstrated by the recent court case involving Michaela School which related to matters of secular universalism and religious accommodation.

In education, modern Britain has seen a fundamental lack of vision from successive governments when it comes to cultivating a transcendent civic national identity and how schools can foster mutual respect in their local communities. In British politics, the spread of anti-British and anti-Western ideas, often in a misguided, and mistaken attempt to be inclusive of pupils from minority backgrounds, has made it difficult to uphold a positive, shared understanding, and attachment to, the nation. Instead, we have witnessed the identitarian instrumentalization of education – especially the proliferation of Critical Race Theory (CRT) and support for gender self-identification both of which encourage narrow, group identification that stifles a sense of individual character and a sense of belonging to the widest group constitutive of a democracy – the nation-based citizenry.

Schools should not be reduced to being ‘service providers’ which cater to a variety of tribal interests. They should be disciplined forums of critical thinking and the robust - but civil - exchanging of ideas. Emotional safetyism, especially in the form of so-called ‘safe spaces’, will achieve very little in building bonds of social trust among the young of modern

Britain.

Schools are best able to maintain a position of impartiality when they make the effort to protect freedom of expression not necessarily in classrooms where pupils are under the age of the majority, but certainly in staffrooms among adults. This holds the key to the mature intellectual development we need as a supposedly advanced industrialised democracy.

### 10.3: Pride in British Historic Achievements

With many ethnic-minority Britons believing that Britain has generally been a force for good in the world and that young people should be taught to be proud of their national history, those polled were asked which historic achievements made them especially proud of being British. Respondents were given an extensive list of historical events and were asked to select up to three which made them the proudest of their British identity.

In the general population, the five leading historical events which make people proud of their British identity were Britain's role in the Second World War and the Great War (48% and 32% respectively), the abolition of the slave trade (22%), the Industrial Revolution (19%), and the signing of the Magna Carta (15%). In terms of historical events which made the general-population respondents ashamed of their British identity, the top three were Britain's participation in the transatlantic slave trade (39%), British colonial activities in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean (22%), and the Irish potato famine (19%).

Britain's role in WWII was the also the leading historical event in terms of being a source of British pride for the following ethnic groups: Mixed Race (30%), Chinese (28%), Indian (22%) and Bangladeshi (22%). The abolition of the slave trade was the leading historical event among Black African-origin respondents (26%) and their co-racial counterparts of Caribbean heritage (19%). It is worth noting that despite being given a considerable number of historical events to choose from, one in five of the general-population respondents said none of them made them proud of being British, rising to 34% for respondents of Pakistani origin. In terms of historical events which made ethnic-minority respondents ashamed to be British, the transatlantic slave trade was the highest ranked (peaking at 44% for mixed-race respondents), followed by Britain's colonial activities in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean (with this rising up to 29% for respondents of Indian origin).

**Table 12: Recent historical events which increased national pride and sense of belonging in Britain (general population and ethnic minorities)**

	General Population	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Chinese	Black African	Black Caribbean	Mixed race
Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee	50%	44%	42%	45%	46%	40%	48%	32%
Queen Elizabeth's death and funeral	45%	32%	33%	31%	38%	30%	40%	29%
2012 London Olympics Opening Ceremony	45%	42%	36%	39%	44%	48%	50%	44%
England women's football team winning Euro 2022	44%	47%	40%	44%	44%	53%	58%	36%
England men's football team reaching final of Euro 2020	39%	44%	46%	46%	42%	46%	56%	36%
England men's football team reaching semi-finals of the 2018 World Cup	40%	46%	42%	48%	44%	47%	52%	38%
England men's cricket team winning the 2019 World Cup	32%	42%	43%	51%	36%	42%	48%	32%
Britain's Covid-19 vaccine rollout	44%	43%	32%	40%	34%	42%	46%	28%
Britain's support for Ukraine	44%	48%	25%	34%	36%	42%	48%	36%
June 2016 UK referendum on EU membership	25%	22%	15%	22%	22%	24%	24%	14%

With respondents being asked which recent historical events increased their sense of national pride and belonging in Britain, there are points of convergence and divergence among the general population and ethnic-minority respondents polled.

Among the ten recent historical events included in the analysis, the general population was most likely to say that the late Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee increased their sense of national pride and belonging in Britain, with more than half saying so (51%). Bar the mixed-race sample,

more than two in five respondents in the remaining ethnic-minority samples said the same – peaking at 48% for people of Black Caribbean origin.

The results also show that sports-related ceremonies and achievements can be a powerful catalyst for bolstering national pride and sense of belonging. Forty-five per cent of the general population said this for the 2012 London Olympics opening ceremony (which received international credit for its inclusive and dynamic nature), peaking at 50% for respondents of Black African origin. Demonstrating the sheer headway made by women’s football in recent times, 44% of the general population said the England women football team’s victorious Euro 2022 campaign on home soil increased their sense of national pride and belonging – with more than half of the Black African-origin and Black Caribbean-heritage respondents also saying this (58% and 53% respectively).

While under a third of the general population said that the England men’s cricket team’s victorious 2019 World Cup campaign (also on home soil) increased their national sense of pride of belonging (32%), the figure was appreciably higher in the Asian and Black ethnic samples (reaching 51% and 48% for Bangladeshi-origin and Black Caribbean-heritage respondents respectively). This suggests that the England men’s cricket team, which has been incredibly diverse in recent times (including Pakistani Muslim-heritage players such as Adil Rashid and Moeen Ali and the Barbadian-origin duo Jofra Archer and Chris Jordan), has a unique ability to bolster a national sense of pride and belonging in Britain’s Commonwealth-origin minorities.

With the vaccine roll-out being the stand-out positive in the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, 44% of the general population stated that it increased their sense of national pride and belonging – peaking at 46% for respondents of Black African origin. This could be an endorsement of not only the government response, but also the role of civil society and grassroots community action. The responses to the UK’s support for Ukraine following its invasion by Russia are more inconsistent. While 44% of the general population say it has increased their national sense of pride and belonging (peaking at 48% for Indian-origin respondents), it plummets to 25% for respondents of Pakistani heritage. Only a quarter of the general population say that the June 2016 UK referendum on EU membership – which both exposed and entrenched various social and political divides – increased their national pride and sense of belonging in Britain (with the figure being lower in all seven ethnic-minority samples).



# 11. A New Framework for Social Integration and National Belonging

Utilising the ethnic-minority polling data provided by Redfield and Wilton Strategies, Policy Exchange constructed two indices – the Social Integration Index (SII) and National Belonging Index (NBI).

The SII was constructed by deriving data on the co-ethnicity of friendship groups, work-related networks, local neighbourhoods, and places of worship. A higher score was awarded in cases where a respondent was part of networks that had a lower proportion of people who shared their ethnic background. It is worth noting that points were still awarded in cases where respondents were part of highly co-ethnic networks in terms of employment and place of worship (as this still constitutes a form of social participation that was not registered by those who are not actively in work and do not have a place of worship as a hub of community-based interaction). The SII also includes main language spoken at home, with the highest number of points awarded to respondents who live in a home where English is the main language. It also incorporates the degree to which respondents have racial preferences when it comes to trusting a neighbour with their house keys.

The NBI factored in the strength of a respondent's sense of Britishness, as well as their views on whether Britain has historically been a force for good in the world and whether children raised in Britain should be taught to be proud of it and its history. The maximum score that could be registered for either index was 100.

## 11.1: The Relationship between Social Integration and National Belonging

The results by ethnicity for the Social Integration Index (SII) and the National Belonging Index (NBI) suggest that there is a positive relationship between the level to which one is socially integrated across their friendship group and professional network, along with their local neighbourhood and place of worship (if they have one), and their sense of 'Britishness' (which includes viewing Britain positively in terms of its contributions to the world and believing that young Britons should be encouraged to be proud of their national history)

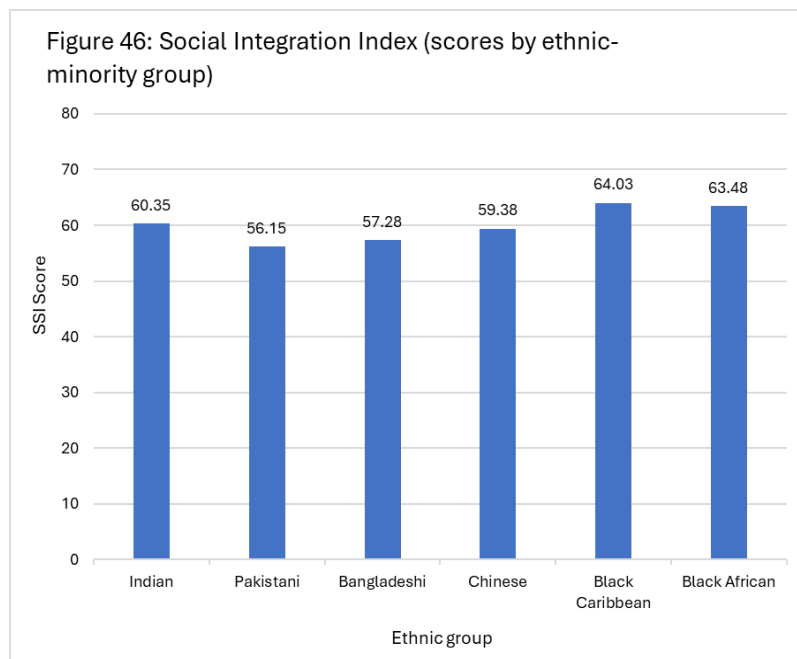


Figure 46 presents the mean scores by ethnic group for the Social Integration Index (SII) out of 100, with six ethnic-minority samples under analysis: Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Black Caribbean, and Black African.

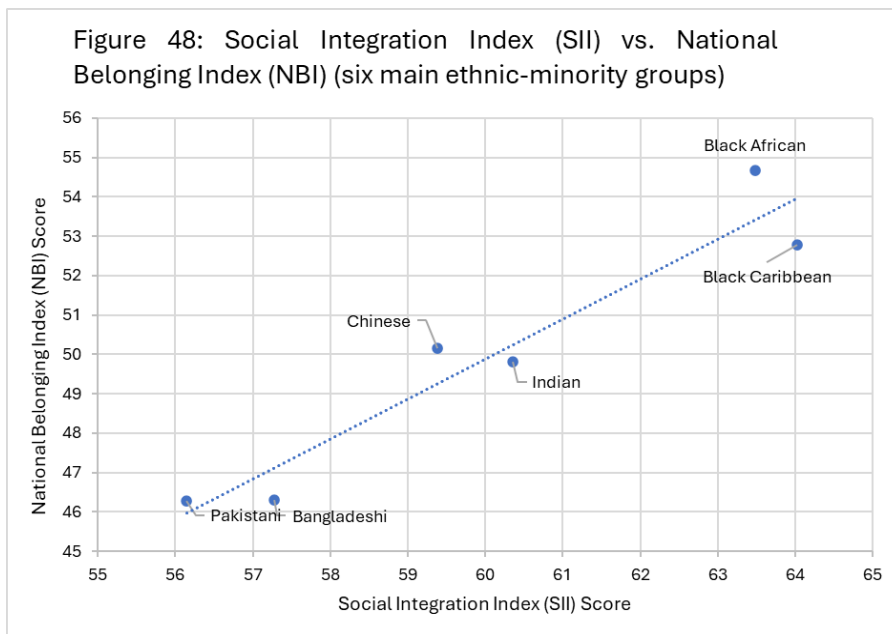
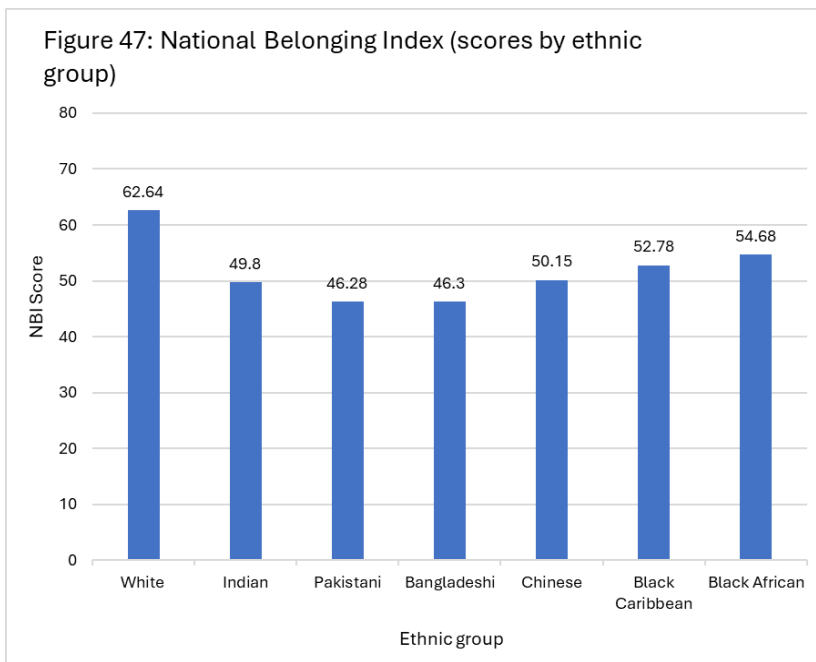
The ethnic-minority sample which ranks last in the analysis based on the Social Integration Index is the one of Pakistani heritage – 56.15. The highest-ranking ethnic-minority group on the SII are respondents of Black Caribbean origin – 64.03. These findings are generally in keeping with previous research on levels of social integration among British ethnic minorities, including the comprehensive 2010 EMBES.

The relatively high SII score for respondents of Black African origin – 63.48 - is somewhat driven by higher rates of social activity through work and places of worship, which presents additional opportunities to interact with those outside of their ethnic grouping.

Figure 47 presents the mean scores by ethnic group for the National Belonging Index (NBI).

Following on from the SII, the ethnic-minority sample which ranks last in the analysis based on the National Belonging Index is the one of Pakistani heritage – 46.28. Like in the case of the SII, the two lowest-ranking ethnic groups on the NBI are Pakistani-heritage and Bangladeshi-origin respondents.

The ethnic-minority group with the highest NBI score is Black African – 54.68. The higher NBI mean score for respondents of Black African origin is largely driven by relatively high levels of support for the view that Britain has historically been a force for good in the world, and that children in Britain should be taught to be proud of it and its history. The highest NBI score registered in the analysis is for white respondents – 62.64.



The scatter graph and trendline – which shows the relationship between SII and NBI scores by ethnic group – suggest that there is a positive relationship between the level of social belonging and strength of national belonging.

**Mercy Muroki, political advisor and columnist**

It does not surprise me that this Policy Exchange report finds relatively high levels of social integration and British national belonging among Black Africans living in the UK.

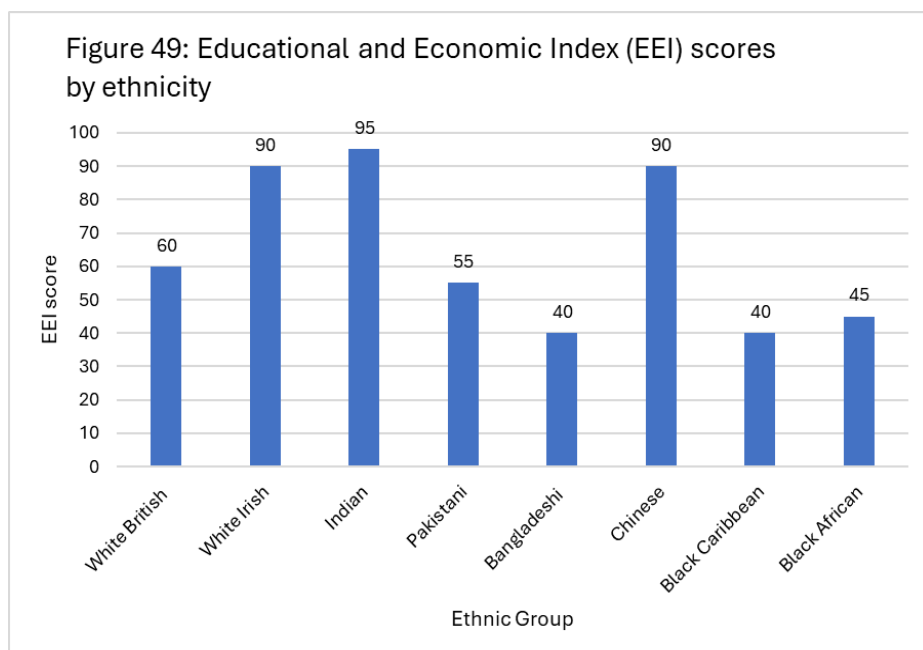
Contrary to some of narratives often platformed by the mainstream media, many Africans living in the UK are patriotic, have a positive approach to integration and value the opportunities presented by our market economy. As opposed to being insular and alienated, many of the UK's Black Africans have embraced 'open engagement' in terms of political participation, economic activity, and intercultural exchange. Some of the older and middle-aged sections of the British Black Africans which originate from Commonwealth member countries value their historic connections with the UK and take pride in being part of its constitutional parliamentary monarchy.

One of the reasons I have found many Black Africans – especially those born and raised on the African continent to be particularly appreciative of the UK's democratic system is because they are sadly aware of what 'poor governance' truly looks like. Their direct exposure to gross financial mismanagement, political corruption, and major social unrest, contributes towards naturally positive orientations towards British democracy and rule of law in the UK. It is that migrant optimism which spurs on Black African success on these islands, as well as a steadfast belief that a solid education is the finest agent of social mobility in the UK.

Despite the Black African population in the UK being well over one million people, there is a tendency for the 'Caribbean experience' to be the reference point when understanding life in 'Black Britain'. This is understandable given Black Caribbeans have had a longer-standing presence in Britain. However, this neglects the huge diversity of the black population in the UK. More needs to be done to understand the Black African-heritage population's experience and contribution to the UK's social, political, and economic life.

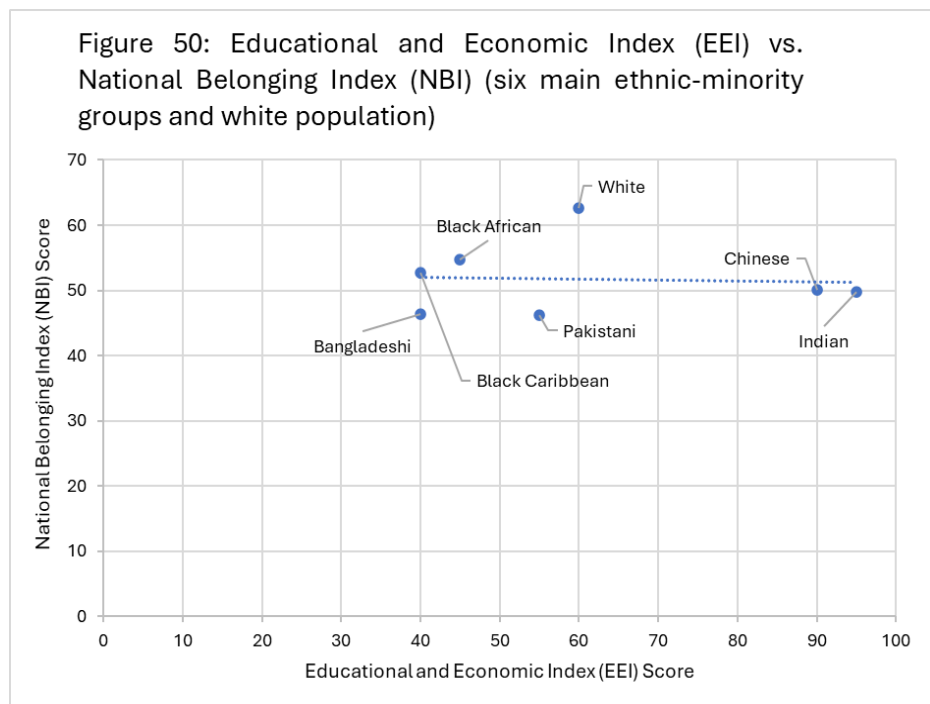
**11.2: The Economic and Educational Index (EEI)**

As well as constructing the Social Integration and National Belonging indices – the SII and the NBI – by using the fresh Redfield and Wilton polling data, Policy Exchange has also developed the 'Educational and Economic Index' (EEI). This was built by using a combination of ONS England and Wales 2021 Census and UK Government data, focusing on four main indicators: level of school attainment ('Attainment 8'); the proportion of workers in directorships, senior managerial positions, and other professional roles; average hourly pay; rate of home ownership.



Out of the eight ethnic groups under analysis, the three highest-ranked on the Educational and Economic Index (EEI) are Indian, Chinese, and white-Irish – with the white-British mainstream trailing some way behind them. Indeed, in terms of EEI score, the white-British mainstream is closer to the two lowest-ranked ethnic groups – Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean – than the three frontrunners. The Indian group, scoring 95 out of 100 on the EEI, leads the pack and edges ahead of the Chinese and white-Irish ethnic groups by virtue of having a home-ownership rate which exceeds 70% (according to the 2021 Census for England and Wales).

This suggests that there is no clear relationship – at ethnic-group level – between socio-economic status in the UK and British national sense of belonging. British Black Africans, for example, are not necessarily well-established in a socio-economic sense (largely due to being a recently-arrived ethnic group with a significant proportion resettling with limited resources), but have a relatively strong sense of British national belonging. On the other hand, there is a pattern of relatively low social integration, national sense of belonging, and socio-economic status for British Bangladeshis. However, being a relatively recently-arrived group which primarily originates from rural, deprived, and under-educated parts of Sylhet, there are now encouraging signs of progress (especially in terms of level of school attainment).



An ethnic group that boasts exceptionally strong levels of socio-economic integration along with reasonably high levels of social integration and national belonging are British Indians – who are likely to become an increasingly critical voter constituency as they move from urban metropolitan centres to traditional provincial towns which have been historical electoral ‘battlegrounds’ between the Labour Party and the Conservatives. The rise of ‘minorities in towns’ – MINTs - in places like Thurrock, Swindon, and Nuneaton is being driven by aspirational, asset-owning, and business-minded British Indian families. But it will also incorporate relatively socially-conservative groups which are deeply family-oriented and wish to escape from London’s dysfunctional housing market – such as British Black Africans, who score impressively on both the Social Integration and National Belonging indices (with many likely to aspire to build their socio-economic resources over time). These internal migratory trends will gradually but surely re-mould the demographic and political landscape in parts of traditional-market England and big-city commuter towns – meaning that British political system will have to invest time into re-tuning their economic and cultural offerings in such areas.

**Cindy Yu, Assistant (Broadcast) Editor at The Spectator**

The relationship between family culture and the accumulation of socio-economic resources is critical to understanding social mobility in British ethnic-minority communities – especially the academically and economically high-performing Chinese ethnic group.

Much of the British-Chinese success story is rooted in multi-generational solidarity and parental ambitions for the young. In terms of

culture, a strong educational ethos is engrained in Confucianism and there exists a prevailing steadfast belief in the potential to advance if you work hard enough. As well as being smaller in number than multiple ethnic minorities, the British-Chinese population is relatively geographically dispersed. Therefore, for British-Chinese families to thrive, there has been no choice but to integrate and build social capital outside of their own ethnic communities.

As many British families of Chinese origin have accumulated their wealth, they have sought to either send their children to private schools or relocate to catchment areas which incorporate higher-performing state comprehensives. Traditionally, such schools tend to have more stable environments based on a discipline-focused culture, as well as considerable extra-curricular capacities. This allows for young people to concentrate on their studies and aids their broader personal development. The view that having a strong academic background is the most effective pathway towards future financial security endures – but there is also the more status-driven element of ‘seeking knowledge’ and educational achievement being a source of pride.

For all its flaws, Britain is a relatively meritocratic society. This is certainly the case when it is compared to mainland China. While the regime is nominally communist, it presides over a society which is intensely stratified – with nepotism being alive and well across a range of sectors. It is no surprise that many British-Chinese families are appreciative of the opportunities provided by modern Britain – while it is imperfect, it compares favourably to both their country of origin and many other parts of the world.

## 12. Conclusion

Modern Britain, for all its flaws, is a place that has witnessed meaningful progress when it comes to providing opportunity and security for its ethnic and religious minorities. In keeping with its liberal traditions rooted in fairness, Britain is a land of comprehensive anti-discrimination protections and considerable religious freedoms. The political integration of ethnic and religious minorities has reached the point where the non-white, non-Christian holding of high positions of public office has been normalised – something which cannot be said for western European countries with diverse democracies of their own. Indeed, while other former European imperial powers have struggled to rebuild ties with their ex-colonies in the post-independence area, Britain has transitioned with ease from the days of Empire to the voluntary association of the Commonwealth – primarily down to the diplomatic contributions made by the late Queen Elizabeth II during her magnificent seven-decade reign. Such is the UK's positive reputation in the post-colonial international system, the Commonwealth is now home to independent nation-states which were colonised by non-British powers – such as Togo, Gabon, Rwanda, and Mozambique.

While there are improvements to be made in strengthening the classically British promise of equality of opportunity, there is little doubt that modern Britain has made significant strides in terms of racial equality. This is not to say racism towards ethnic and racial minorities are not problems in modern Britain – but rather, it has evolved in terms of the shape it takes and where it occurs. Real-life violence, intimidation, and harassment towards racial minorities - whether it was the Teddy Boys wreaking havoc ahead of the 1958 Notting Hill riots or the National Front's activity through the 1970s, which resulted in clashes such as the 1977 Battle of Lewisham – has dropped significantly. Ethnonationalist sentiments are on the very fringes of society – to the point that most white people in England support civic conceptions of English identity as opposed to those rooted in race and ancestry.

However, the voice of ethnonationalists and neo-fascists is amplified on social media platforms such as X – often 'faceless anons' posting abhorrent forms of racist abuse towards high-profile, British ethnic-minority figures. So-called 'keyboard warriors' holding such toxic views have been empowered by social-media platforms which either lack the capacity or willingness to address such behaviours. Far-right disinformation in the online space has the potential to inflame social tensions – even to the point that it undermines public security, as demonstrated during the recent nationwide rioting.



However, we must not overlook the level of racism between and within racial and ethnic minorities on social media – especially with the popularisation of slurs such as ‘coconut’, ‘Uncle Tom’, ‘turncoat’ and ‘house negro’. This rears its ugly head even among those elected to the House of Commons. This has included Rupa Huq referring to Kwasi Kwarteng as ‘superficially black’ due to his academic background and speaking style, as well as Dawn Butler clashing with co-racial politicians such as Kemi Badenoch over the phrase ‘racial gatekeeper’. Other instances of problematic interventions based on identity include former Tory (and now Reform) MP Lee Anderson’s suggestion that London’s now-three-time-elected Muslim mayor Sadiq Khan was in the pockets of Islamists. Elected representatives must be more responsible when navigating the choppy waters of race and religion in modern Britain – the global reputation of British democracy is partly shaped on how it manages its own diversity.

While most of the findings which emerged from the Redfield and Wilton Strategies polling commissioned for this report are generally encouraging, there are some that require pause for thought – further underscoring the complicated nature of the portrait of modern Britain. A resounding majority of the British public believe that life in Britain is worse than it was a decade ago, with only a quarter of the public having a positive view of it in its current form. Considering the prolonged cost-of-living crisis, anaemic economic growth, rock-bottom political trust, industrial-scale NHS and court-system backlogs, unprecedented levels of immigration and the ongoing small-boats emergency on the English south coast, these findings are not necessarily a surprise. These problems, collectively, have the potential to undermine the standard of living in modern Britain.

However, there are positive findings to report when it comes to national sense of belonging and the integration of ethnic minorities. Believing that Britain has historically been a force for good in the world and that children raised here should be taught to be proud of British history, appear to be the mainstream view among ethnic-minority people – a corrective to the cultural offensive to ‘decolonise’ the curriculum. Among ethnic minorities, it is the norm - as opposed to being the exception – to think that people who share their ethnicity are treated more fairly in Britain when compared to most other countries. A comfortable majority are also of the view that their race makes no difference in many of the interactions they have with friends, work colleagues, and wider society. This underlines the reality that, for all its flaws, British democracy has made truly meaningful progress when it comes to race relations and the integration of its ethnic minorities. What is especially reassuring is that these findings have emerged despite the recent growth in BLM-inspired ‘racialisation’ of social and economic issues which impact on people from different walks of life (including those belonging to the white-British mainstream). However, there is still work to be done in terms of racial integration – with the polling revealing that far-from-insignificant proportions of the British population place

---

importance on someone belonging to their own race if they needed to trust them to take care of their children or look after their house keys.

This report also finds that while racial identity tends to be placed at the front and centre of social-policy discourse - especially in the so-called 'progressive' spheres of politics, research, and media – much of the British public (including ethnic minorities) believe that there are other factors which are a stronger determinant of life chances in modern Britain than race. While a notable portion of ethnic-minority people continue to believe that race is important in determining one's ability to succeed in modern Britain (with this belief being somewhat higher among black Britons), the view that the inter-related factors of socio-economic status and networks/connections are important is stronger. While social class has been pushed to the margins of mainstream debates on inequality in modern Britain (which has tended to focus more on 'protected characteristics'), the mainstream view – both in the wider general population and among Britain's non-white minorities – is that class is more important than race in determining a person's ability to succeed and do well in modern Britain. While race may be more 'comfortable' ground for the disproportionately privileged and economically-secure establishment parliamentary parties to build their equality policies on (as demonstrated by Labour's proposal to introduce a new Race Equality Act, as announced in the recent King's Speech), this is not necessarily respectful of mainstream public opinion and traditional ethnic-minority communities, who are more likely to think that social class is more of a barrier to socio-economic progress than racial background.

What shines through the fresh polling presented in this report is the family-oriented nature of ethnic minorities – for many in these groups, their close family members form an integral part of communal life. This appears to especially apply to Britain's academically and economically high-performing Chinese ethnic group. In each of the ethnic-minority groups under analysis, overwhelming majorities considered the relationship with family members as an important factor in helping them succeed in life – with this feeling being particularly high among Chinese-heritage and Black African-origin respondents. In an era of family fragility and intergenerational disconnection in the social mainstream, modern Britain can no longer afford 'the family' to largely be a non-topic in our politics. This report echoes the sentiments of the March 2021 Sewell report published by the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities – a stable family unit remains the finest safety net and strongest agent of social order known to humankind.

The greatest challenge for modern Britain, however, is striking a much more family-friendly settlement – one that encourages more people to marry and build families of their own. With the country's depressed birth rates and ageing population, it is facing a demographic time-bomb that will have severe consequences for the sustainability of the welfare state once it truly explodes. Relying on unprecedented levels of immigration to address this demographic imbalance is not a sensible nor sustainable

approach – bringing its own challenges in terms of community cohesion and social integration, as demonstrated by the role of ‘new and emergent communities’ in the August-September 2022 Leicester disorders. However, it is idealistic to suggest that reversing lower fertility rates in the domestic mainstream can be solely achieved through ‘family-friendly’ policies implemented by the government. In a period of fast-paced secularisation and the rise of material individualism, it would require fundamental cultural change – perhaps driven by influential socially-conservative actors maximising the power of technology and social media – to turbo-charge a renewed respect for the institution of marriage and instilling a widespread belief that raising children in a good and proper way is a patriotic act of civic duty in modern Britain. A more family-centred government policy agenda would need to be complemented by a cultural sea-change encouraged by traditional-minded elements of civil society.

**Kunle Olulode (Director of support charity Voice4Change England)**

“Britain is not a ‘racism free zone’ and we certainly have not achieved the perfect meritocracy – we have not. A wealth of CV field experiments discovers that résumés with ‘culturally distant’ names fare worse than those with traditional ‘English-sounding’ ones in recruitment processes – even after controlling for academic record, work experience, and skill sets. The recent Casey review on cultural practices within the Met exposed that it is very much a failing organisation in terms of managing its workforce diversity.

However, Britain has break away from being shackled to the reductive ‘disparities = discrimination’ paradigm. The role of family dynamics, social capital, and economic aspiration needs to inform thinking in the sphere of public policy, which appears to be increasingly influenced by American-inspired racial identity politics. Anti-racist activism in the UK is losing credibility due to its slavish fascination with American history and contemporary affairs, as well as its refusal to recognise the significant strides modern Britain has made over racial equality.

There needs to be a renewed national emphasis on practical collaborative action which enables left-behind communities to lift themselves from poverty and deprivation. The reality is that certain ethnic-minority groups place greater cultural value on family unity and collective civic endeavour – which can help to overturn socio-economic disadvantages over time. The British-Chinese population is a fine case study – that’s not to say there is poverty in the Chinese community, but the drive towards self-improvement is not taken for granted. Unfortunately, there has been an erosion of the notion of ‘the respectable working-class’ – especially in white-British and Black Caribbean communities. While some groups in British society resist the forces of secular material individualism, others are increasingly defined by it.

There needs to be a grand project of national cultural renewal – one

that emphasises the value of an enterprising work ethic, collective-led discipline, and self-help, in which families and independent community-based institutions can play an important role. Neither the state nor the market holds all the answers here – the empowerment of traditional civic society to deliver this much-required cultural transformation does.”

---

# 13: Policy Recommendations

This report comprehensively evaluated existing forms of government and non-government data relating to demographic change in modern Britain, educational and socio-economic integration, health-related outcomes. As well as commissioning general-population and ethnic-minority surveys specifically for this report, Policy Exchange carried out interviews with British figures who hail from different walks of life but are all collectively interested in seeing a fairer and more cohesive Britain, where opportunity and belonging are more evenly spread throughout society.

Taking all of this into account, the report makes the following eighteen recommendations:

## **1. A new national integration strategy for modern Britain**

The new Labour government should introduce a new national integration strategy. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) – which incorporates organisations such as local councils, schools, NHS trusts, and police forces – should have integration at the heart of it. The current expectation of “fostering good relations” is vague – this provision should be directly interpreted as promoting and enabling social, cultural, and socio-economic integration in local communities.

## **2. Mandatory publication of integration figures by local authorities**

With the ‘catchment area’ model of allocating state-school pupils, residential and educational segregation are intrinsically linked. Local authorities should be made to publish integration figures every five years on both residential and school mix (in terms of both ethnicity and religion). They should also be encouraged to carry out local studies which investigate how residential and school mix potentially ties in with ‘inward’ and ‘outward’ forms of social trust among residents and schoolchildren.

## **3. A responsible model of ‘managed diversity’**

The British state must move away from the ‘multi-cultural’ model of diversity which is overly reliant on unrepresentative identitarian organisations and unaccountable so-called ‘community leaders’ who desire group-based special dispensation and preferential treatment. There must be greater selectivity in terms of community engagement – with the British state prioritising associations and individuals with a proven track record of supporting equality of opportunity. There must be a dedicated effort to neutralise the threat of communal politics and sectarian activity to community cohesion in modern Britain.

#### **4. Proposed Race Equality Act must not undermine social cohesion**

The King's Speech announced the Labour government's plans to introduce new racial equality legislation. It is important that the drafting of this legislation is driven by first-rate contemporary evidence. This legislation must also guard against 'unintended consequences' – especially when it comes to mandatory ethnic pay gap reporting (with a previously exclusively white-British company which becomes more racially inclusive by recruiting junior ethnic-minority employees potentially falling foul of such provisions). This could both thwart business growth and disincentivise firms/companies from becoming more inclusive in terms of race, age, and geography.

#### **5. Building social and cultural capital among schoolchildren**

The Government should encourage schools to do more to provide young people with greater opportunities to participate in physical activities which can help to build social and cultural capital. In local authorities characterised by residential segregation along ethnic and religious lines, this could include inter-school activities (especially sporting competitions which can help to build bonds of trust and friendship). There should be a particular focus on those of lower socio-economic classes – regardless of ethnicity.

#### **6. Creation of a Statues of National Celebration Commission (SNCC)**

The UK Government should set up a time-limited Statues of National Celebration Commission (SNCC) which would identify historical figures deserving of a statue due to their immense contributions to British life, reporting after one year. This could include the likes of Subedar Khudadad Khan (the first Indian-heritage recipient of the Victoria Cross) and Baron (Learie) Constantine (an anti-discrimination stalwart who worked tirelessly to build racial cohesion within the British trade union movement). The erecting of such statues should be spread across the UK (not confined to London).

#### **7. A knowledge-rich inclusive history curriculum for modern Britain**

Every ethnic group believed children raised in Britain should be taught to be proud of Britain and its history. The children of Britain should be taught to be proud of their national heritage in an inclusive manner that reflects Britain's heritage, rather than an over-reliance on imported, often American, notions of race and racial conflict. This should include educating pupils both about the contribution of those of diverse backgrounds to the UK's modern history as well as learning about and celebrating those elements of British history that belong to all humanity, such as Magna Carta, the Glorious Revolution and the development of Parliamentary democracy. As well as educating pupils on the multi-racial nature of the Allied effort to defeat continental fascism and the national project of bringing post-war Britain back on its feet, school-pupils should learn about their country's working-class, anti-racist traditions. This could

include the 1862 Manchester mill workers revolt and the 1942 Battle of Bamber Bridge.

### **8. Re-oriented focus on class in the context of social mobility**

The UK Government and public bodies such as the Social Mobility Commission (SMC) must ensure that educational success and young people's development are primarily analysed through a class and poverty, not a racial, lens. It is vital that factors such as family culture and local community norms (especially in relation to formal education), along with socio-economic status and geography, are all considered when seeking to understand the shaping of life chances in modern Britain.

### **9. Renewed focus among public bodies on opportunities for disabled people**

Much of the mainstream socio-political discourse on fairness and equality is viewed through the prism of protected characteristics such as race, sex, sexual orientation, and gender reassignment. In modern Britain, disability is somewhat of a forgotten protected characteristic. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) should launch a review on the degree to which existing DEI policies – across the public, private, and third sectors – factor in disability (such as creating a more disability-friendly workplace in terms of the provision of relevant equipment and tackling ableism within organisations)

### **10. Enhance, extend and increase the funding of the Community Ownership Fund – and give it a new focus on supporting integration**

The Community Ownership Fund is an invaluable scheme that can support communities gain control of assets that might otherwise close, preserving them for the community. Extending it would ensure more communities could be supported – and a new focus on supporting integration would ensure particular priority would be given to assets that bring people together from across social and ethnic groups.

### **11. Reducing the UK's immigration dependency**

The UK continues to be shackled to a high-immigration, low-growth, sluggish-productivity model. The new Labour government should adopt a sensible approach to reduce the UK's over-reliance on immigration by enhancing the domestic talent pool. Properly funding training schemes, apprenticeships, and bursaries for sectors such as health and social care would ensure these are accessible to people of all races and classes. It should also explore the possibility of improving pay and working conditions.

### **12. A new asylum settlement for modern Britain**

The UK has a rich tradition of rehoming the world's most persecuted peoples, but the current asylum system remains dysfunctional and fails to prioritise integration. A cap on the number of refugees resettled in the UK – one where Parliament considers the social, economic, and cultural

infrastructure of local authorities, which are treated as vital stakeholders and must approve an agreed limit annually – should be introduced. Under this cap, women and girls at major risk of sex-based violence in conflict-affected zones should be prioritised.

### **13. Introduction of pro-family policies**

The fostering of a more family-friendly agenda spans areas of public policy such as tax, workers rights, and welfare. The UK should catch up with much of Europe by better promoting the institution of marriage in the tax system via a fully transferable tax allowance for married couples and introducing greater levels of parental leave. The Labour government should also remove the two-child benefit cap in the future.

### **14. Ten-Year Plan for Health to explicitly address health disparities**

The Ten-Year Plan for Health, currently being developed by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), should have a dedicated workstream which considers the national-level interventions – which are cost-effective and underpinned by a robust evidence base – which can reduce avoidable healthcare disparities, according to geography, socio-economic class and ethnicity.

### **15. Restoration of neighbourhood policing**

Local police forces must have the resources to put in place effective neighbourhood policing teams which are able to gather vital on-the-ground knowledge of local criminal activity and anti-social behaviour. This model should also be the basis for popular consent for stop-and-search measures. This will require additional resource in order not to take away from the necessity of continuing to resource sexual and domestic violence investigation teams.

### **16. Revisiting riot-related training for better-resourced police forces**

The August-September 2022 Leicester and Summer 2024 riots exposed the reality of certain police forces being ill-equipped in terms of managing and controlling large-scale public disorder and the national police capability to respond quickly enough to sudden widespread disorder. The Home Office should instruct all police forces and the National Police Chiefs Council to revisit public order strategies and require an increase in the number of enhanced (Level 2) Public Order trained officers.

The Home Office should instruct all police forces which cover urban metropolitan city-centres to revisit public order strategies and require an increase in the number of enhanced (Level 2) Public Order trained officers.

### **17. Strengthening anti-disinformation capabilities of police forces**

Following the Southport stabbing attack, unfounded anti-Muslim conspiracy theories proliferated across social media platforms – largely unchallenged by the relevant public authorities. Under the ownership of Elon Musk, self-regulation on X is broken. It is vital that police forces



have trained specialists who can combat the online spread of conspiracy theories - especially in the aftermath of high-impact events which may be weaponised to incite violence and hatred against specific groups. This is likely to require a change in approach relating to information the police and CPS are willing and able to release prior to any criminal trials. The Government should consider whether legislation is required in this area.

### **18. Greater understanding of diverse ethnic groups**

While this may be costly and run into sampling issues, government agencies should commit to disaggregating larger groups which are both ethnically and religiously diverse, as well as being far from homogeneous in terms of migratory background – especially the Indian and Black African ethnic categories. This would deepen our collective understanding of modern Britain – especially in terms of social and economic integration.

### **19. Ending the merged Pakistani/Bangladeshi categorisation**

There remain UK Government data sources which use a combined ‘Pakistani/Bangladeshi’ category. While both are Sunni-majority South Asian groups and such merging could be driven by sample-size considerations, there should be a concerted effort to move away from this – especially with the potential impact of spousal migration and cousin marriages (which are at relatively high levels among the Pakistani-heritage population in cities such as Bradford) on child health and development.

### **20. Improvement of ethnic-minority samples in the British polling industry**

There was a considerable gap between the voting intention polling shortly before the recent UK general election and the actual result in terms of vote share. This was largely due to the much-reduced traditional support for Labour among British Muslims (with five ‘pro-Gaza’ independents elected). Members of the British Polling Council (BPC) should improve the robustness of their ethnic-minority sampling – especially for admittedly harder-to-reach elements of British Muslim communities.

### **21. A re-run of the 2010 Ethnic Minority British Election Study (2010 EMBES)**

The 2010 EMBES remains the fullest-scale and most rigorous investigation into the social behaviour, political attitudes, and cultural values of British ethnic minorities – even though fieldwork for it took place in the aftermath of the 2010 UK general election. To truly deepen our understanding of modern Britain, it is recommended that interested actors across the public, private, and third sectors pool resources to fund a re-run of the 2010 EMBES (retaining the key questionnaire items on integration and identity to make direct comparisons between 2010 and mid-2020s Britain).



£10.00  
ISBN: 978-1-917201-22-3

Policy Exchange  
1 Old Queen Street  
Westminster  
London SW1H 9JA

[www.policyexchange.org.uk](http://www.policyexchange.org.uk)