

Does Britain have plural cities?

Summary

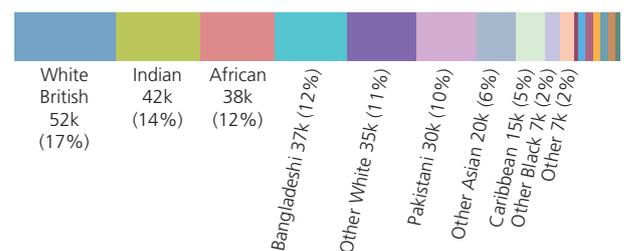
The changing ethnic composition of an area is a guide to changing needs inasmuch as it may indicate a variety of preferences for housing size, for types of school meals, for care of older people, for cultural and entertainment facilities, for funeral services or for other aspects of local services.

- Britain's cities are more ethnically diverse than ever before. Slough, Luton and Leicester are the first local authorities outside London which are already plural where no ethnic group is in the majority.
- The census itself has changed how Britain's diversity is measured by dividing White into White British, Irish, Gypsy and Irish Traveller, and Other White.
- The number of England and Wales residents who have a British national identity is six million more than the number who tick White British as an ethnicity.
- Britain's cities are not becoming less British. 81% of Luton's residents have a British national identity while 45% are of White British ethnicity.
- Cities labelled by politicians as 'segregated' are in fact the most diverse. For example Bradford and Leicester both have more than a thousand residents from each of fifteen ethnic categories measured in the census, and over thirty thousand residents from diverse groups that the census labels as 'Mixed' or 'Other White', 'Other Asian', 'Other Black' or simply 'Other'.
- Increased diversity over a decade is small but steady: every local authority except Forest Heath has increased its diversity since 2001.

Census data on cities

The information we have compiled about each local authority District is [available here](#). It includes composition according to ethnic group and religion, UK born, year of and age at arrival, numbers with a British passport, and with a British national identity, households with multiple ethnicity, and the diversity index (see below). In this Briefing we have included some of the most diverse Districts. On their charts we have labelled each ethnic group which has 2% or more of the District's residents.

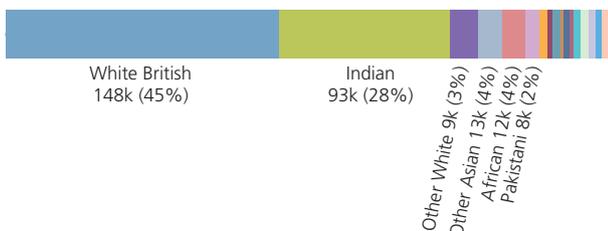
The data are currently available for each local authority in England and Wales. The boundary of a local authority sometimes fits closely or even sits within an urban area. Such a close boundary emphasises ethnic diversity, as in Leicester. In contrast the boundary of Bradford includes surrounding areas with less ethnic diversity and does not reflect the diversity of the city alone.



[Click here for District profiler in Excel](#)

Newham

Newham is Britain's most ethnically diverse local authority; eight ethnic groups are represented by 5% or more of its residents. Of Newham's 308 thousand residents, 143 thousand were born in the UK. 52 thousand have ethnic group White British, while 203 thousand have a British identity. 34% of households have more than one ethnicity, and 5% residents are of mixed ethnicity themselves. Of the 165,414 born abroad, 47% arrived since 2004. 17 of the 18 ethnic groups counted in the 2011 Census have one thousand or more residents.



[Click here for District profiler in Excel](#)

Leicester

Leicester's Indian population is itself diverse, with Hindu, Muslim and Christian populations born in the UK, India, and East Africa. Of Leicester's 330 thousand residents, 219 thousand were born in the UK. 149 thousand have ethnic group White British, while 273 thousand have a British identity. 18% of households have more than one ethnicity, and 4% residents are of mixed ethnicity themselves. Of the 110,843 born abroad, 36% arrived since 2004. 17 of the 18 ethnic groups counted in the 2011 Census have one thousand or more residents.

Measuring diversity

Ecologists have a very useful notion of diversity which we have applied to calculate how closely each local authority is to having an equal number of each ethnic group measured in the census. We have combined White Gypsy/Irish Traveller with Other White, and Arab with Other, for better comparability with 2001. Called the 'Reciprocal Diversity Index', the ecologists sum the sixteen ethnic group proportions, first squaring them, and divide into 1. The Index is greatest when there are equal numbers in each group, when it is equal to 16, and lowest when there is only one group in an area, when it is equal to 1. We have standardised the index by stretching it to be always within the range 0 to 100.¹ The average across England and Wales as a whole has increased from 2.1 in 2001 to 3.6 in 2011.

Plural cities of the future

Plural cities is a concept used in discussions about how local government policies might change when the population is so ethnically mixed that no one group is the majority. In this briefing we examine what the census says about the emergence of plural local authorities, and show how diverse our cities already are².

Local government deals with diverse areas on an everyday basis: not only ethnic and cultural diversity but claims made by young adults and older people, those in rural and urban neighbourhoods, those with powerful organisations to represent them and those without.

Twenty three of London's thirty three Boroughs are already 'plural'. Leicester's total White population is more than half its residents and this is not expected to reduce to half until 2019.³ But restricting attention to White British shows that it is already plural now, as the Irish, Eastern European and Other White populations are substantial. Thus the diversity in the census classification itself affects how we think of every city's composition. Slough and Luton are also already plural with White British less than half their population. It is possible that Birmingham will join them during this decade. However, in none of these local authorities will the White British population be small. It is now the biggest in every local authority except two (Tower Hamlets and Brent, where it is the second biggest).

All ethnic groups feel British

A British identity is adopted by all ethnic groups. National identity was asked for the first time in the 2011 Census. In England and Wales 51.6 million named a British identity. This is six million more than the 45.1 million who ticked the census boxes for a White British ethnic group identity. The census outputs showing the overlaps between 'ethnicity' and 'national identity' will be released in summer 2013. But

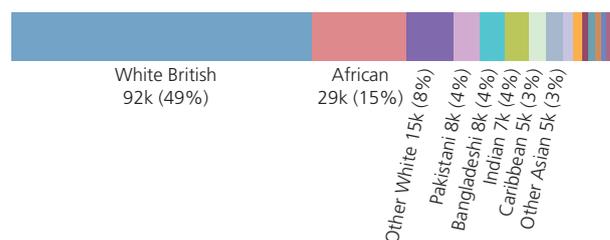
we already know from other sources that British identity is felt at least as strongly by those of minority ethnicity as those of White British ethnicity. This is the case for people of similar age and background born in the UK: younger, more highly educated people, and those born overseas all express less strong British identity⁴.

Ethnic diversity on the increase

How diverse is each Local Authority: how close is it to having an equal number of each ethnic group? The 2011 Census tells us that no local authority is very diverse in this sense. On a scale of 0 to 100 (see information box), Newham is the most diverse local authority in England and Wales at 55, but the average across the 348 local authorities in England and Wales is just under 4.

Diversity, averaged over the local authorities, has increased from 1.4 in 1991, to 2.1 in 2001 and to 3.6 in 2011. These seem small changes, but they are increases of one half in each decade. Every local authority except Forest Heath has increased its diversity since 2001. Forest Heath hosts US air force bases, affecting its composition from year to year.

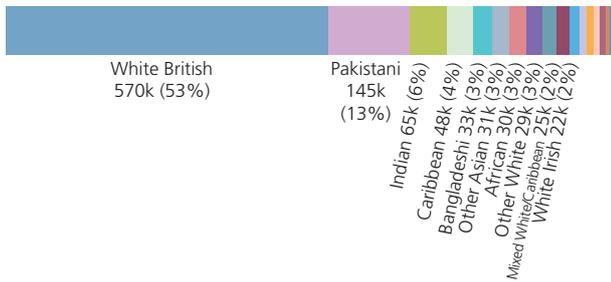
There is a very strong relationship between diversity and the total population of ethnic minorities in a local authority (the correlation coefficient is 0.94). The ten local authorities with greatest diversity are Newham, Brent, Ealing, Redbridge, Waltham Forest, Hackney, Harrow, Slough, Haringey and Westminster, with Luton the next most diverse area outside London. In other words, areas with the fewest White British, are also the most diverse. Those with little diversity are the areas where the population is almost entirely White British, though in the main, this is no longer a feature of modern Britain.



Barking and Dagenham

[Click here for District profiler in Excel](#)

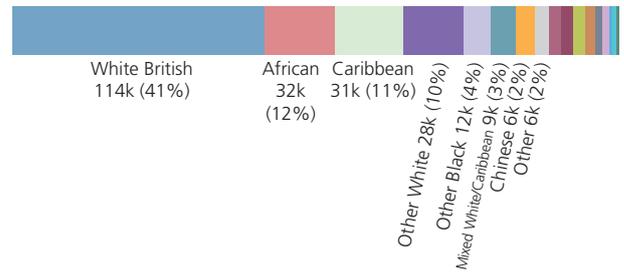
Barking and Dagenham is home to many people who have moved away from Inner London in the past decade, like many other Outer London Boroughs. Of Barking and Dagenham's 186 thousand residents, 128 thousand were born in the UK. 92 thousand have ethnic group White British, while 150 thousand have a British identity. 23% of households have more than one ethnicity, and 4% residents are of mixed ethnicity themselves. Of the 57,447 born abroad, 40% arrived since 2004. 16 of the 18 ethnic groups counted in the 2011 Census have one thousand or more residents.



Birmingham

[Click here for District profiler in Excel](#)

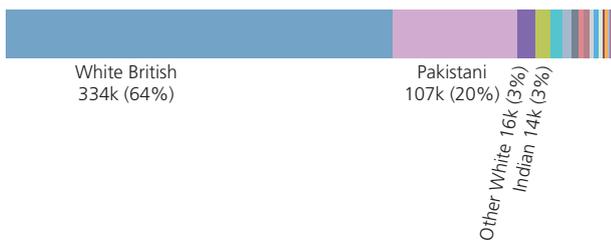
Birmingham's large population means that its ethnic diversity includes ten ethnic groups each with twenty thousand people. Of Birmingham's 1.1 million residents, 835 thousand were born in the UK. 570 thousand have ethnic group White British, while 952 thousand have a British identity. 21% of households have more than one ethnicity, and 4% residents are of mixed ethnicity themselves. Of the 238,313 born abroad, 33% arrived since 2004. 17 of the 18 ethnic groups counted in the 2011 Census have one thousand or more residents.



Lewisham

[Click here for District profiler in Excel](#)

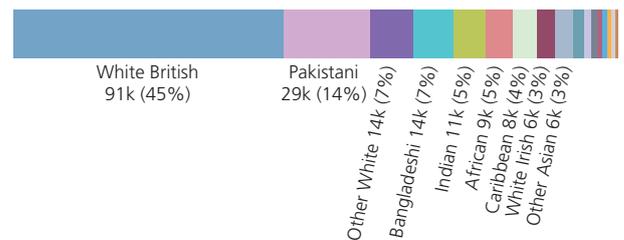
Lewisham has the highest percentage of Caribbean population among Britain's local authorities, though larger districts including Birmingham have more Caribbean residents. Of Lewisham's 276 thousand residents, 183 thousand were born in the UK. 114 thousand have ethnic group White British, while 218 thousand have a British identity. 39% of households have more than one ethnicity, and 7% residents are of mixed ethnicity themselves. Of the 93,086 born abroad, 35% arrived since 2004. 17 of the 18 ethnic groups counted in the 2011 Census have one thousand or more residents.



Bradford

[Click here for District profiler in Excel](#)

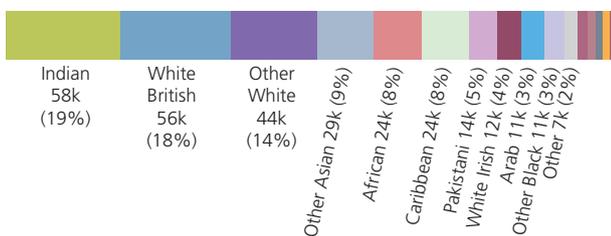
Bradford's Pakistani population is eight times the next largest ethnic minority group. A third of the local authority population lives outside the urban area of Bradford. Of Bradford's 522 thousand residents, 433 thousand were born in the UK. 334 thousand have ethnic group White British, while 481 thousand have a British identity. 12% of households have more than one ethnicity, and 2% residents are of mixed ethnicity themselves. Of the 89,609 born abroad, 36% arrived since 2004. 15 of the 18 ethnic groups counted in the 2011 Census have one thousand or more residents.



Luton

[Click here for District profiler in Excel](#)

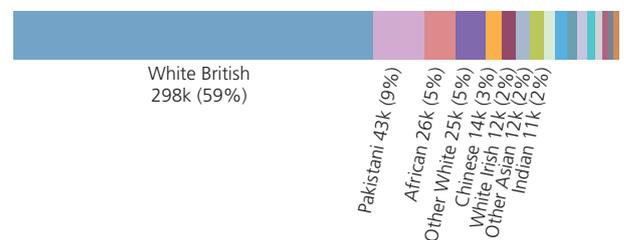
Luton is one of the three districts outside London where the number of White British is less than half of all residents, though still three times the next largest group, Pakistanis. Of Luton's 203 thousand residents, 140 thousand were born in the UK. 91 thousand have ethnic group White British, while 165 thousand have a British identity. 24% of households have more than one ethnicity, and 4% residents are of mixed ethnicity themselves. Of the 62,872 born abroad, 40% arrived since 2004. 16 of the 18 ethnic groups counted in the 2011 Census have one thousand or more residents.



Brent

[Click here for District profiler in Excel](#)

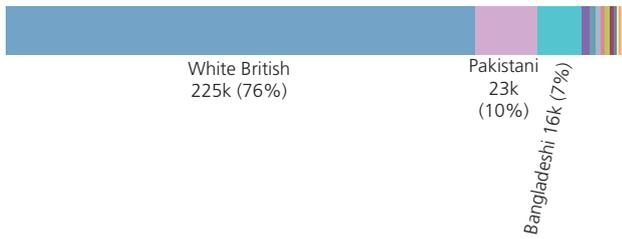
Brent is one of Britain and London's most ethnically diverse areas. Of Brent's 311 thousand residents, 140 thousand were born in the UK. 56 thousand have ethnic group White British, while 210 thousand have a British identity. 34% of households have more than one ethnicity, and 5% residents are of mixed ethnicity. Of the 171,427 born abroad, 37% arrived since 2004. 17 of the 18 ethnic groups counted in the 2011 Census have one thousand or more residents.



Manchester

[Click here for District profiler in Excel](#)

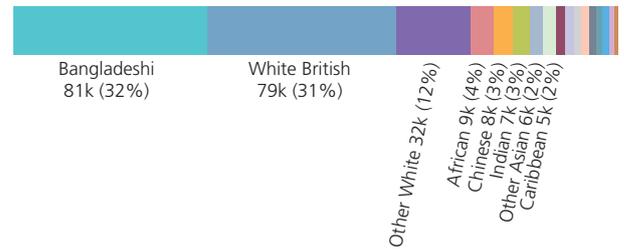
Manchester's African population has more than trebled in the past decade. Of Manchester's 503 thousand residents, 376 thousand were born in the UK. 298 thousand have ethnic group White British, while 418 thousand have a British identity. 25% of households have more than one ethnicity, and 5% residents are of mixed ethnicity themselves. Of the 127,061 born abroad, 51% arrived since 2004. 17 of the 18 ethnic groups counted in the 2011 Census have one thousand or more residents.



Oldham

[Click here for District profiler in Excel](#)

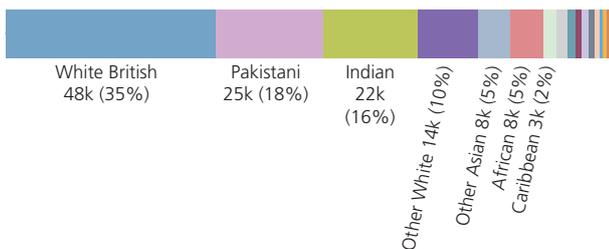
Oldham includes rural and industrial areas outside its main urban centre. Of Oldham's 225 thousand residents, 198 thousand were born in the UK. 170 thousand have ethnic group White British, while 214 thousand have a British identity. 9% of households have more than one ethnicity, and 2% residents are of mixed ethnicity themselves. Of the 26,501 born abroad, 30% arrived since 2004. 10 of the 18 ethnic groups counted in the 2011 Census have one thousand or more residents.



Tower Hamlets

[Click here for District profiler in Excel](#)

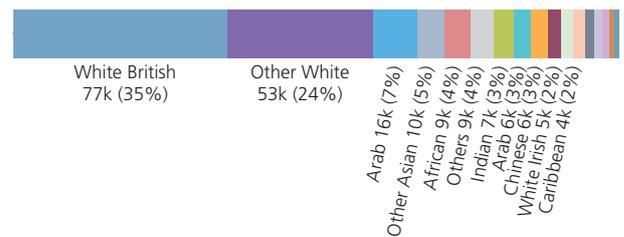
Tower Hamlets has Britain's largest Bangladeshi population. Of Tower Hamlets' 254 thousand residents, 145 thousand were born in the UK. 79 thousand have ethnic group White British, while 190 thousand have a British identity. 33% of households have more than one ethnicity, and 4% residents are of mixed ethnicity themselves. Of the 109,434 born abroad, 44% arrived since 2004. 17 of the 18 ethnic groups counted in the 2011 Census have one thousand or more residents.



Slough

[Click here for District profiler in Excel](#)

Outside London, Slough is the most ethnically diverse local authority in Britain. Of Slough's 140 thousand residents, 86 thousand were born in the UK. 48 thousand have ethnic group White British, while 108 thousand have a British identity. 21% of households have more than one ethnicity, and 3% residents are of mixed ethnicity themselves. Of the 54,652 born abroad, 41% arrived since 2004. 13 of the 18 ethnic groups counted in the 2011 Census have one thousand or more residents.



Westminster

[Click here for District profiler in Excel](#)

Westminster is a gateway for many new residents of Britain from Europe and the Middle East. Of Westminster's 219 thousand residents, 102 thousand were born in the UK. 77 thousand have ethnic group White British, while 139 thousand have a British identity. 42% of households have more than one ethnicity, and 5% residents are of mixed ethnicity themselves. Of the 116,989 born abroad, 46% arrived since 2004. 17 of the 18 ethnic groups counted in the 2011 Census have one thousand or more residents.

¹ Simpson, L. (2007). Ghettos of the mind: the empirical behaviour of indices of segregation and diversity. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society: Series A (Statistics in Society)*, 170(2), 405-424.

² Finney, N., & Simpson, L. (2009). 'Sleepwalking to segregation'? *Challenging myths about race and migration*. Bristol: Policy Press, especially Chapter 7: Challenging the myth of minority white cities, pp 141-160.

³ Projections from Manchester University suggest 2019, while those from Leeds University suggest 2023 or 2032, depending on future migration.

⁴ Nandi, A., & Platt, L. (2012). How diverse is the UK. In S. L. McFall (Ed.), *Understanding Society: Findings 2012*. Colchester: ISER, University of Essex.

Sources: the 2011 Census (Crown Copyright).

This briefing is one in a series, *The Dynamics of Diversity: evidence from the 2011 Census*.

Author: Ludi Simpson

Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity (CoDE)

The University of Manchester

Oxford Road, Manchester

M13 9PL, UK

email: censusbriefings@ethnicity.ac.uk

www.ethnicity.ac.uk

