

2001 Census Topic Report: Cultural Background Executive Summary

This report outlines the 2001 Census results about ethnic groups, religion and country of birth. This summary draws together major findings about each of the main ethnic groups in the Census. A fuller statistical profile of each group is available separately.

The Census confirms Birmingham as a diverse city, with residents from a range of national, ethnic and religious backgrounds. Not surprisingly, the Census identifies differences between ethnic groups, but it also shows up differences between Birmingham and the overall national averages. Most groups in the City have lower rates of participation in the labour force, smaller percentages of people with qualifications and higher levels of limiting long-term illness.

About 641,300 (66%) of Birmingham residents consider themselves to be White British, compared with the national average in England of 87%. The other large groups are Pakistani (104,000), Indian (56,000), Black Caribbean (48,000), White Irish (31,000) and Bangladeshi (21,000). The Census recorded 28,000 residents with Mixed backgrounds. Smaller groups in Birmingham include Chinese and Black African.

The City's overall population fell slightly between 1991 and 2001. Numbers in the White group reduced, but other groups, notably the Pakistani group, have grown.

Nearly 60% of the City residents identify themselves as Christian, 14% Muslim, 3% Sikh and 2% Hindu. 12% of residents do not have a religion and 8% of residents did not answer the new, voluntary, religion question. Apart from the Indian group, the majority in an ethnic group identifies with one religious category. The majority religion among White and Black groups is Christian. Most members of the Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups are Muslim.

Almost 84% of Birmingham's residents were born in the UK. A majority of members of most of the larger ethnic groups were born in the UK.

The **White British** group has relatively fewer younger people and more people of older ages than most groups. The rate of participation in the labour market (economic activity) is higher than other groups, but below the national average.

The **Pakistani** group has a youthful age profile. Economic activity rates are lower than average, particularly for females. Unemployment rates and self-employment rates are relatively high. The percentage without formal qualifications is high. The average household, 4.25 persons, is relatively large. Over 70% of households are owner-occupiers, but 50% do not have central heating. The incidence of limiting long-term illness is low, partly because of the youthful age profile, but rates are above the City average in the older age groups.

The age profile of the **Indian** group is more youthful than the White British group but less so than the Pakistani group. The group has a high unemployment rate, together with a high percentage of self-employed workers. The percentages working as managers, senior officials or professionals are above the City averages, as is the percentage with a higher-level qualification. Over 80% of households are owner-occupiers. The percentage without central heating is below the city average, while the percentage with more than one car is above. The incidence of limiting long-term illness is above average in the older age groups.

The **Black Caribbean** group has large numbers aged between 30 and 44, with more females than males in this age group. The female economic activity rate is above the City average. The percentage self-employed is low, while the unemployment rate is high. The percentage without a formal academic or professional qualification is below the city average. Nearly 42% of households comprise one person; a further 25% are lone parents. 50% of households do not have a car, and 44% are in Council or Social Housing.

Nearly three quarters of the **White Irish** group are aged over 39. Less than one third were born in the UK. Economically active rates are low; over a quarter of those aged 16-74 are retired. About 55% of 16-74 year olds have no qualifications. Nearly 41% of households comprise one person, and a further 10% comprise pensioners. Nearly 31% of households lack central heating, and 50% do not have a car. About 20% are in not-good health and the percentage with limiting long-term illness is high. This reflects both an elderly age structure and above average rates of illness among those aged between 16 and 64 years of age.

The majority of people in the **Mixed groups** share Black Caribbean and White backgrounds. The age structure is very youthful; 36% of the population is younger than 15. The unemployment rate is high. Over 30% of households are lone parents. 48% of households are in Council or Social Rented housing, and 53% did not have a car. The percentage with a limiting illness is low because of the youthful age structure, but age-specific rates are above the city averages.

The **Bangladeshi** group has a youthful age profile. The economically active rates, particularly female, are low. The group has high percentages of people in part-time work or unemployed. Nearly a quarter of working residents are in skilled trades, with a similar proportion in 'elementary' occupations. 55% of those aged 16-74 report no qualifications. A high percentage (55%) of households are married couples. Under half of households are owner-occupiers, and a third are in Council or Social Housing. The average household is large, with 4.5 persons. Nearly 48% of households do not have a car, and 40% are without central heating. The incidence of limiting long-term illness is low, partly because of the age profile, but rates are above average in the older age groups.

Three quarters of the **Chinese** group were born outside the UK. A high proportion of the economically active are self-employed. Many Chinese residents are students, and a high percentage of the group had higher qualifications. A third of those in work are professionals, managers or senior officials; 12% are in sales and customer services. 10% of residents live in communal establishments. Limiting long-term illness is below average except among those aged over 64.

Of **Black African** residents, 71% were born outside the UK. About a third are students, and 39% had Higher Level Qualifications. Unemployment rates are above average, but about 40% of working residents are in professional, associate professional or technical occupations. Nearly 60% of households are in rented accommodation. Nearly 58% of households do not have a car. The incidence of limiting long-term illness is below average among those younger than 65.