**Ethnicity in Leicester (Census 2021)**

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**Introduction**

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) launched the Census 2021 survey on March 21, 2021. Census 2021 had a high response rate of 97%, making it a reliable resource that provides a detailed understanding of the population of England and Wales. This information provides valuable insight into the characteristics of local authorities and information that can be used for governments and municipalities to develop policies, plan public services and more.

The Census 2021 results about ethnicity include data about ethnic group, national identity, religion, and language. Overall, the data shows an increase in diversity, both in Leicester and in the wider population. This is important as ethnic minorities can be disproportionality affected in different areas of life and robust data needs to be collected in order to reduce these disparities.

This report shows trends and analysis of the Census 2021 data regarding ethnicity, national identity, religion, main language, and English proficiency. It places the data in the context of previous results, making comparisons with the 2001 and 2011 censuses where possible, as well as comparisons with data from England and Wales, other urban cities within the UK, and other local authorities in Leicestershire.

**Highlights**

* Leicester has become one of the first cities to have “minority majorities”, with 43.4% of residents identifying with Asian ethnicity, 34.3% of which have Indian heritage.
* For the first time, the percentage of White respondents has dropped below 50%, with White British accounting for just 33%.
* Other ethnic minorities are on the rise, now accounting for 15.7% of the resident population – up from 12.3% in 2011.
* Leicester had the joint second-largest percentage-point rise in the proportion of people who did not identify with any UK nationality, from 17.2% in 2011 to 24.1% in 2021.
* The percentage of residents in Leicester with a Christian affiliation is on the decline at only 25%, down from 45% in 2001.
* The percentage of residents with an affiliation to Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism have all increased since the last Census.
* Since 2011, there has been a 4 percentage-point reduction in the proportion of Leicester residents who have a UK language as their main household language.
* 2% of residents in Leicester cannot speak English at all.

**What Data Related to Ethnicity does the Census Collect?**

1. **Ethnic Group** – *“What is your ethnic group? Options: White, Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups, Asian/Asian British, Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, Other Ethnic Group”*
2. **National Identity** – *“How would you describe your national identity? Multiple responses allowed.”*
3. **Religion** – *“What is your religion? Options: No religion, Christian, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Other”*
4. **Main Language** – *“What is your main language? Options: English, Other”*
5. **English Proficiency** – *“How well can you speak English? Options: Very Well, Well, Not Well, Not at all”*
6. **Ethnic Group**

Ethnic group is divided into two stages: firstly, a person identifies as one of five ‘high-level’ ethnic groups: "Asian, Asian British, Asian Welsh", "Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African", "Mixed or Multiple", "White", or "Other ethnic group". Secondly, an individual identifies as one of 19 available response options, including ‘write-in’ responses. While an individual’s nationality may change, their ethnicity will remain the same. This means that ethnic group gives a more accurate estimate of long-term changes in ethnic diversity.

**England & Wales Ethnic Group Overview**

Source: [ons.gov.uk](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/internationalmigrationenglandandwales/census2021)

* In 2021, 81.7% (48.7 million) of usual residents in England and Wales identified their ethnic group within the high-level "White" category, a decrease from 86.0% (48.2 million) in the 2011 Census.
* Timeline

  Description automatically generatedAs part of the "White" ethnic group, 74.4% (44.4 million) of the total population in England and Wales identified their ethnic group as "English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British", this is a continued decrease from 80.5% (45.1 million) in 2011, and from 87.5% (45.5 million) who identified this way in 2001.

***Figure 1*** *(Source:* [*ons.gov.uk*](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/internationalmigrationenglandandwales/census2021)*)*

* The next most common high-level ethnic group was "Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh" accounting for 9.3% (5.5 million) of the overall population, this ethnic group also saw the largest percentage point increase from 2011, up from 7.5% (4.2 million people).
* Across the 19 ethnic groups, the largest percentage point increase was seen in the number of people identifying through the "White: Other White" category (6.2%, 3.7 million in 2021, up from 4.4%, 2.5 million in 2011), this response option allows people to specify their ethnic group through writing it in; the increase may be partly explained by the new search-as-you-type functionality introduced for Census 2021, making it easier for people to self-define when completing the census online.
* Large changes were also seen in the numbers of people identifying their ethnic group as "Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group" (1.6%, 924,000 in 2021, up from 0.6%, 333,000 in 2011), and "Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: African" (2.5%, 1.5 million in 2021, up from 1.8%, 990,000); both ethnic groups had the option to write in their response.
* In England and Wales, 10.1% (2.5 million) of households consisted of members identifying with two or more different ethnic groups, an increase from 8.7% (2.0 million) in 2011.

Chart, pie chart

Description automatically generated**Ethnic Group in Leicester**

***Figure 2.*** *Ethnic breakdown in Leicester city on the 2021 day of Census*

Leicester has now been identified as one of the first cities in the UK to no longer have a white-majority population. The most predominant ethnicity reported by residents in Leicester is Indian, at 34.3% of the population which has increased from 93,335 people in 2011 to 126,421 people in 2021. This is closely followed by White British at 33.2% of the population which has decreased from 148,629 people in 2011 to 122,385 people in 2021.

Chart, pie chart

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***Figure 3.*** *Three-decade trend of ethnicity in Leicester*

The figure above shows changes in ethnicity over three decades, from the 2001, 2011 and 2021 Census results. Over the past three decades, the percentage of Leicester residents reporting as White has constantly reduced, from 63.9% in 2001, to 50.6% in 2011, and 40.9% in 2021. The percentage of Leicester residents reporting as Asian has constantly increased, from 29.9% in 2001, to 37.1% in 2011, to 43.4% in 2021. Meanwhile, the minority ethnic groups have also all experienced a small increase in Leicester over the last 30 years.

Chart, bar chart

Description automatically generated**Regional and National Comparison of Ethnic Group**

***Figure 4.*** *A comparison of ethnicity reported by Leicester residents with other major and neighbouring urban cities.*

Overall, these findings show:

* In 2021, 43.4% of individuals living in Leicester were of Asian ethnicity and were Leicester’s largest ethnic minority, compared to 31.0% in Birmingham, 14.7% in Inner London, 14.9% in Nottingham, and 15.6% in Derby.
* In comparison, 40.9% of individuals living in Leicester were of a white ethnicity, 48.6% in Birmingham, 55.7% in Inner London, 65.9% in Nottingham, and 73.8% in Derby.
* The percentage of residents reporting as Black, Mixed or Other ethnicities were all highest in Inner London with 16.4%, 5.2% and 6.4% respectively. Derby had the lowest percentage of residents reporting as Black, Mixed or Other, with 4.0%, 2.7% and 2.9% respectively. Leicester had 7.8% of residents of a black ethnicity, 2.8% from mixed or multiple ethnic groups and 4.1% from other ethnic groups.
* Across England and Wales, 81.7% of individuals were of white ethnicity, compared to 9.3% of individuals with Asian ethnicity, 4% of individuals with Black ethnicity, 2.9% with multiple or mixed ethnic groups and 2.9% from other ethnic groups.

**Local Authority Breakdown – Ethnic Groups in Leicestershire**

Chart, pie chart

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**Figure 5.** 43.4% of residents in Leicester have Asian ethnicity, with 40.9% of people being White, 7.8% Black, 4.1% Other and 3.8% Mixed ethnicity.

Chart, pie chart

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**Figure 6.** In Blaby, the majority of people (86.2%) are White, with only 8.3% of people having Asian ethnicity, 2.7% Mixed ethnicity, 1.5% Black, and 1.3% Other.

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**Figure 7.** In Charnwood, the majority of people (82.3%) are White, with 12.4% of people having Asian ethnicity, 2.5% with Mixed ethnicity, 1.5% with Black ethnicity and 1.2% Other.

Chart, pie chart

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**Figure 8.** In Harborough, the vast majority (91.0%) of people are White, with 5.4% of people having Asian ethnicity.

Chart, pie chart

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**Figure 9.** In Hinckley and Bosworth, the vast majority (94.3%) of people are White, with 2.8% of people having Asian ethnicity.

**Chart, pie chart

Description automatically generatedFigure 10.** In Melton, the vast majority (96.9%) of people are White, with 1.2% of people having Asian ethnicity.

**Chart, pie chart

Description automatically generatedFigure 11.** In North West Leicestershire, the vast majority of people (95.9%) of people are White, with 1.5% of people having Asian ethnicity and 1.5% of people having multiple ethnic groups.

**Chart, pie chart

Description automatically generatedFigure 12.** In Oadby and Wigston, 63.4% of people are White, with 27.9% of people having Asian ethnicity, 3.3% having Other ethnicity, 3.2% with Mixed ethnicity, and 2.2% with Black ethnicity.

Chart

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***Figure 13.*** *Comparison of ethnic groups across Leicestershire*

Overall, the figures above show that Leicester is the most diverse local authority in Leicestershire, with a 59.1% majority belonging to ethnic groups other than White. Oadby and Wigston is the second most diverse local authority, at 43.2% of residents who don’t identify as White. Melton is the least diverse local authority, with only 3.1% of people having an ethnicity other than White.

*Map

Description automatically generatedMap

Description automatically generated***A Two Decade Comparison of Ethnic Dispersion Across Leicestershire**

***Figure 14.*** *White ethnicity across Leicestershire in 2011 and 2021*

Map

Description automatically generatedThe above heatmaps show an overall decrease in the percentage of White residents in Leicestershire between 2011 and 2021. In Leicester (LE), the percentage dropped by 10%, from 50.5% in 2011 to 40.9% in 2021. In Blaby (BL), the percentage dropped from 91.0% to 86.2%, Charnwood (CH) dropped from 87.4% to 82.3%, and Oadby and Wigston (OW) decreased by 10%, from 73.0% to 63.4%. The other local authorities (North West Leicestershire (NW), Melton (ME), Harborough (HA), and Hinckley and Bosworth (HB)) experienced declines of no more than 5%.

**Map

Description automatically generated*Figure 15.*** *Asian ethnicity across Leicestershire in 2011 and 2021*

The above heatmaps show an overall increase in the percentage of Asian residents in Leicestershire between 2011 and 2021. In Leicester (LE), the percentage increased from 37.1% in 2011 to 43.4% in 2021. Oadby and Wigston (OW) experienced an increase from 22.3% to 27.9%. The other local authorities experienced increases of less than 5%.

**Map

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Description automatically generated*Figure 16.*** *Black ethnicity across Leicestershire in 2011 and 2021*

Map

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Description automatically generatedThe above heatmaps show a small overall increase in the percentage of Black residents in Leicestershire between 2011 and 2021 (please note the very small percentage increments depicted in the legend). In Leicester (LE), the percentage increased from 6.2% in 2011 to 7.8% in 2021. Oadby and Wigston (OW) experienced a 1% increase. The other local authorities experienced increases of less than 1%.

***Figure 17.*** *Mixed ethnicity across Leicestershire in 2011 and 2021*

The above heatmaps show a small overall increase in the percentage of residents with mixed or multiple ethnicities in Leicestershire between 2011 and 2021 (please note the very small percentage increments depicted in the legend). In Blaby (BL), Charnwood (CH), Harborough (HA) and Oadby and Wigston (OW), the percentages increased by 1%. The other local authorities experienced increases of less than 1%.

**Map

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Description automatically generated*Figure 18.*** *Other ethnicities across Leicestershire in 2011 and 2021*

The above heatmaps show a small overall increase in the percentage of residents with ‘Other’ ethnicities in Leicestershire between 2011 and 2021 (please note the very small percentage increments depicted in the legend). In Leicester (LE), the percentage increased from 2.6% to 4.1%, in Blaby (BL) the percentage increased by 1%, and in Oadby and Wigston (OW), the percentage increased from 1.4% to 3.3%. The other local authorities experienced increases of less than 1%.

1. **National Identity**

The census question on national identity was introduced in 2011 because of increased interest in "national" consciousness and a demand for people to be able to acknowledge their national identity. The question allows respondents to select all identities that apply. Caution should be taken when comparing “British only” and “English only” identities as “British” replaced “English” as the top response option on the form and therefore may have impacted individual response. Leicester had the joint second-largest percentage-point rise across England in the proportion of people who did not identify with any UK nationality, from 17.2% in 2011 to 24.1% in 2021.

**England and Wales National Identity Overview**

Source: [ons.gov.uk](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/internationalmigrationenglandandwales/census2021)

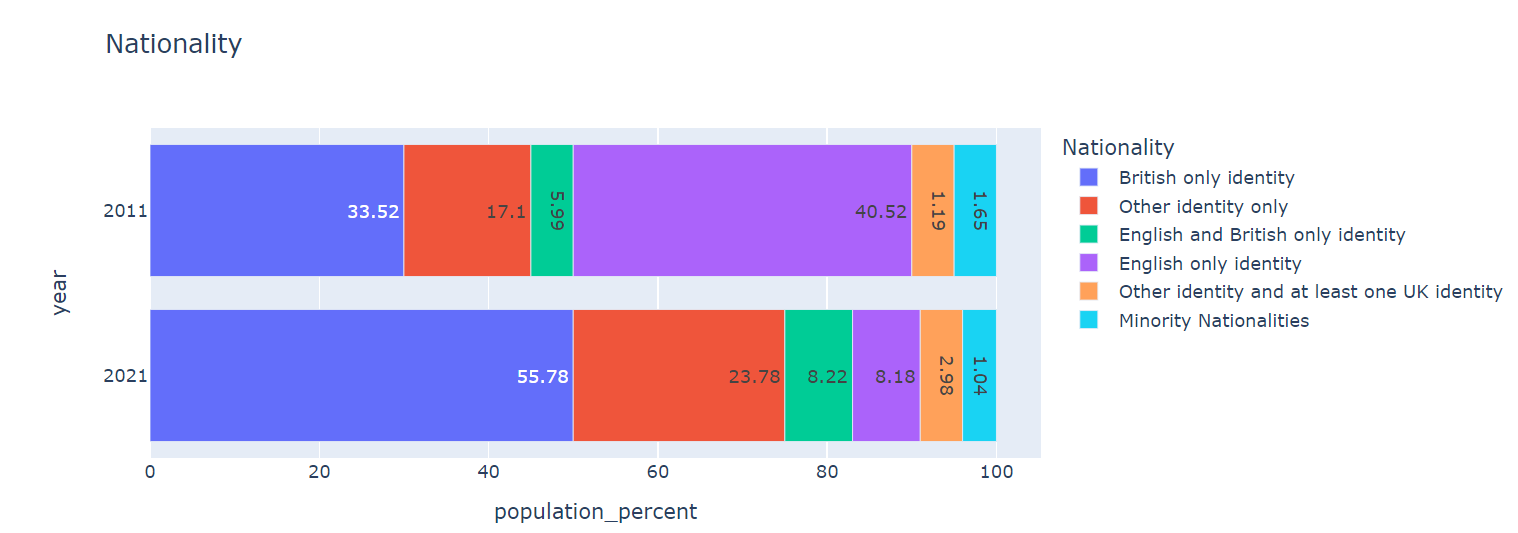
* In 2021, 90.3% (53.8 million) of usual residents identified with at least one UK national identity (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British, and Cornish); this is a slight decrease from 92.0% (51.6 million) in 2011.
* People who identified with at least one UK and one non-UK identity accounted for 2.0% of the overall population (1.2 million people) in 2021; this is an increase from 0.9% (492,000) in 2011.
* Those selecting a non-UK identity only accounted for 9.7% of the overall population (5.8 million people), which is an increase from 8.0% of the population (4.5 million people) in 2011.

Chart

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***Figure 19.*** *Source: ons.gov.uk*

* Among those who described a non-UK national identity, the most common response was those describing “Polish” only as their identity (1.0%, 593,000); “Polish” only was also the most common response in 2011 (1.1%, 593,000).
* “Romanian” only was the second most commonly reported non-UK national identity, increasing to 0.8% (477,000) in 2021 from 0.1% (73,000) in 2011, which is the largest increase for any non-UK national identity.
* Other common non-UK identities include “Indian” only (0.6%, 380,000), “Irish” only (0.5%, 300,000), and “Italian” only (0.5%, 287,000).

**National Identity in Leicester**

***Figure 20.*** *A two-decade comparison of national identity in Leicester.*

In Leicester, the ‘British only’ identity has increased from 34% in 2011 to 56% in 2021 while the ‘English only’ nationals, have seen a significant decrease, from 41% to 8%. While this may partly represent true differences in self-identity, it is likely due to changes in the question options as this year “British” replaced “English” as the first option response listed on the questionnaire in England. The figure also shows an increase in ‘English and British only’ nationals, from 6% to 8%. Non-UK, i.e., ‘Other’ identity has increased from 17% in 2011 to 24% in 2021, however other ‘minority’ nationalities have reduced from 2% to 1%.

***Figure 21.*** *A two-decade comparison of UK and non-UK national identity in Leicester*

There has been a decrease in the number of residents reporting a UK-only identity, from 81.6% to 72.9%, and an increase in the number reporting a non-UK only identity, from 17.2% to 24.1%. There has also been a small increase in the number of residents identifying with both a UK and non-UK identity, from 1.2% to 3%.

***Figure 22.*** *Percentages of the most common non-UK national identities in Leicester*

The most common non-UK identity in Leicester at the time of Census was Indian at 6.4%, followed by Portuguese at 4%. Other European identities included Polish at 2.1%, Italian and Romanian at 1.2%, and 2.43% identified with ‘Other EU member countries’.

**Regional and National Comparison**

Chart, bar chart

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***Figure 23.*** *National identity of residents in 5 urban areas of the UK in 2021 by percentage*

Chart, bar chart

Description automatically generated***Figure 24.*** *National identity of residents in five urban areas of the UK in 2021 by number*

Figures 23 and 24 show that Derby had the highest percentage of residents with UK-only identities at 86.12% (225,091). Inner London had the greatest percentage of residents with both a UK and non-UK identity at 5.31% (163,082), as well as the highest percentage of residents with only non-UK national identities at 24.44% (750,185), closely followed by Leicester with 24.08% (88,737).

Chart, bar chart

Description automatically generated**Local Authority Breakdown - Leicestershire**

***Figure 25.*** *Comparison of national identities in Leicestershire local authorities in 2021*

The vast majority of residents in Leicestershire in 2021 identify as UK nationals only, at over 90% of individuals in all local authorities except Leicester city. 1% of people in North West Leicestershire and in Melton identified as Polish, and 1% of residents in Oadby and Wigston identified as Indian.

1. **Religious Affiliation**

The census introduced a **voluntary** question on religion in 2001. In the census data, religion refers to a person’s religious affiliation. This is the religion with which they connect or identify, rather than their beliefs or active religious practice.

Percentages are calculated out of the overall population as opposed to out of the population who answered the religion question. This aids comparison across time and between areas, as the percentage of the population who answer the question varies. In total, 94.0% of the overall population in England and Wales (56.0 million people) chose to answer the religion question in 2021. This is a higher percentage than in 2011, when 92.9% (52.1 million) answered the religion question and 7.1% (4.0 million) chose not to answer. There are multiple factors which can cause changes to the religious profile of an area, for example changing age structure, residents relocating, or individuals self-identifying in different ways between censuses.

**England and Wales Religion Overview**

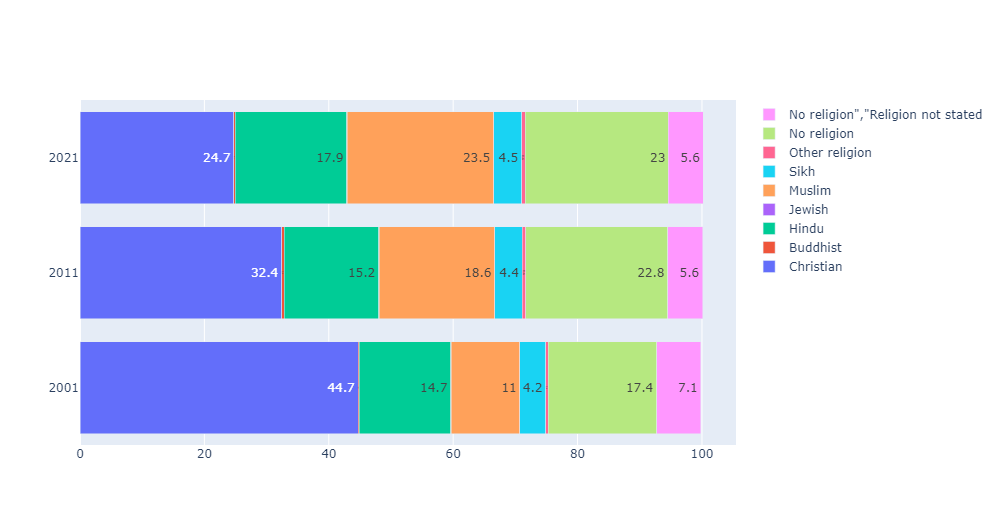
Source: [ons.gov.uk](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/internationalmigrationenglandandwales/census2021)

* The religion question is voluntary; 94.0% (56.0 million) of usual residents answered the question in 2021, an increase from 92.9% (52.1 million) in 2011. For the first time in a census of England and Wales, less than half of the population (46.2%, 27.5 million people) described themselves as “Christian”, a 13.1 percentage point decrease from 59.3% (33.3 million) in 2011; despite this decrease, “Christian” remained the most common response to the religion question.
* Timeline

  Description automatically generated“No religion” was the second most common response, increasing by 12.0 percentage points to 37.2% (22.2 million) from 25.2% (14.1 million) in 2011.

***Figure 26.*** *Source:* [*ons.gov.uk*](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/internationalmigrationenglandandwales/census2021)

* There were increases in the number of people who described themselves as “Muslim” (3.9 million, 6.5% in 2021, up from 2.7 million, 4.9% in 2011) and “Hindu” (1.0 million, 1.7% in 2021, up from 818,000, 1.5% in 2011).
* Wales had a greater decrease in people reporting their religion as “Christian” (14.0 percentage point decrease, from 57.6% in 2011 to 43.6% in 2021) and increase in “No religion” (14.5 percentage point increase, from 32.1% in 2011 to 46.5% in 2021) compared with England and Wales overall.
* London remains the most religiously diverse region of England in 2021, with over a quarter (25.3%) of all usual residents reporting a religion other than “Christian”; the North East and South West are the least religiously diverse regions, with 4.2% and 3.2%, respectively, selecting a religion other than “Christian”.

**Religious affiliations in Leicester**

***Figure 27.*** *A three-decade trend of religious affiliations in Leicester*

The majority of the population in Leicester are affiliated with Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism, whereas the minority religions comprise of Buddhism, Judaism, Sikhism and ‘Other’. There are a large number of respondents which are not affiliated with any religion; we can see an increasing trend in this category, which means currently after 2021, 23% of the population doesn’t belong to any religion.

**Regional and National Comparison**

***Figure 28.*** *A comparison of religious affiliations in 5 urban areas of the UK in 2021*

Nottingham had the highest percentage of respondents with no religious affiliations (41.2%), closely followed by Loughborough (40.7%). In comparison, Leicester had the lowest percentage of respondents with no religious affiliation (23%). Loughborough had the largest percentage of respondents with Christian affiliation (41.5%) whereas Leicester had the lowest proportion of Christian respondents (24.7%). Conversely, Leicester had the largest proportion of Hindu respondents (17.9%) and Sikh respondents (4.5%) whilst Derby had the lowest percentage of Hindu respondents (1.2%), and Inner London had the lowest percentage of Sikh respondents (0.4%). Inner London did have the highest percentage of Buddhist (1%), Jewish (1.5%), and ‘Other’ (0.8%) respondents. Birmingham had the highest proportion of Muslim respondents (29.9%), in comparison with Loughborough which had the lowest proportion at just 3.1%.

**Local Authority Breakdown - Leicestershire**

***Figure 29.*** *A comparison of religious affiliations in local authorities across Leicestershire in 2021*

Leicester had the greatest proportion of religious believers in 2021 at 71.5%, closely followed by Oadby and Wigston at 64.4%. These two local authorities also had the lowest proportion of Christian believers at 24.7% and 34.6% respectively, with the next most-dominant religion being Islam (23.5% and 11.2%) and Hinduism (17.9% and 10.0%). Only half of the residents in North West Leicestershire identified as religious, with 49% of people identifying as Christian and only 1.8% identifying with any other religion.

1. **Main Language**

Main language was assessed during the 2021 census, offering respondents the choice of “English” or “Other”, in which case an answer box was provided. This investigated questions such as how many people spoke English, or English and Welsh in Wales, as a main language, and what were the most common main languages in England and Wales, excluding English and Welsh.

**England and Wales National Identity Overview**

Chart, line chart

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***Figure 30****. Source:* [*ons.gov.uk*](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/internationalmigrationenglandandwales/census2021)

Source: [ons.gov.uk](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/internationalmigrationenglandandwales/census2021)

* In 2021, 91.1% (52.6 million) of usual residents, aged three years and over, had English (English or Welsh in Wales) as a main language (down from 92.3%, or 49.8 million, in 2011).
* In 2021, a further 7.1% (4.1 million) of the overall population were proficient in English (English or Welsh in Wales) but did not speak it as their main language.
* The most common main languages, other than English (English or Welsh in Wales), were: Polish (1.1%, 612,000), Romanian (0.8%, 472,000), Panjabi (0.5%, 291,000), and Urdu (0.5%, 270,000).
* The largest increase was for people who specified Romanian as a main language, who accounted for over 0.8% of usual residents in 2021 (472,000 people), up from 0.1% (68,000) in 2011.
* In 2021, 63.8% (15.8 million) of households consisted of members who all had the same main language; 6.0% (1.5 million) had different main languages within the household.

**Main Language in Leicester**

***Figure 31.*** *Most common languages spoken in Leicester in 2021*

67.5% of residents in Leicester spoke English as a first language in 2021, while 12.2% spoke Gujarati, 2.5% spoke Panjabi, 2.2% spoke Polish, 1.2% spoke Romanian, and 10.9% spoke other languages (groups of less than 1% were collated).

Chart, bar chart

Description automatically generated**Regional and National Comparison**

***Figure 32.*** *A comparison of the percentage of residents who speak English as a first language across 5 UK cities in 2021.*

*Chart, bar chart

Description automatically generated*Leicester had the lowest percentage of people who spoke English as a first language at 70%, in comparison with Inner London at 73%, Birmingham at 84.4%, Nottingham at 85.7%, and Derby at 87.1%. For England and Wales, the figure was 91.1%.

***Figure 33.*** *Combination of language spoken in 5 UK cities in 2021.*

In Leicester, 17.6% of the population speak a combination of languages in addition to English, compared to 6% of the general population of England and Wales (2021).

**Local Authority Breakdown - Leicestershire**

***Figure 34.*** *Percentage of the population in Leicestershire who speak English as their first language*

Leicester had the lowest percentage of people who spoke English as a first language (67.5%), followed by Oadby and Wigston (87.5%), Charnwood (91.0%), and Blaby (92.0%). Harborough, Hinckley and Bosworth, Melton and North West Leicestershire had the highest proportion of residents who spoke English as a first language (95%).

1. **English Proficiency**

**England and Wales National Identity Overview**

Source: [ons.gov.uk](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/internationalmigrationenglandandwales/census2021)

People who did not report English (English or Welsh in Wales) as a main language were asked to report how well they could speak English (8.9%, 5.1 million). Of those 5.1 million people, 43.9% (2.3 million) could speak English very well, 35.8% (1.8 million) could speak English well, 17.1% (880,000) could not speak English well, and 3.1% (161,000) could not speak English at all.

Chart, bar chart

Description automatically generated***Figure 35.*** *Source:* [*ons.gov.uk*](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/internationalmigrationenglandandwales/census2021)

**English Proficiency in Leicester**

***Figure 36.*** *A two-decade trend of English language proficiency in people over 3 years old in Leicester*

In 2021, 70% of the residents of Leicester above 3 years of age spoke English as their first language, compared with 72.5% in 2011. A greater proportion of the population can speak English very well (10.2%), and well (10.8%), however there was also an increase in the percentage of people who cannot speak English well (6.9%), and those who cannot speak English (2.1%). This could be due to an increasing migrant population in Leicester.

Chart, bar chart, waterfall chart, box and whisker chart

Description automatically generated**Regional and National Comparison**

***Figure 37.*** *English language proficiency in 5 UK cities in 2021, by percentage*

In Leicester, 34% of individuals who don’t speak English as their main language reported they could speak English proficiently, compared to 53% in Inner London, and 41% in Nottingham. Leicester had the largest proportion of people who could not speak English at all (7%), followed by Birmingham and Derby (5%). Inner London had the lowest proportion of individuals who do not speak English at all (3%) and who could not speak English well (14%).

**Local Authority Breakdown - Leicestershire**

***Figure 38.*** *English proficiency across local authorities in Leicestershire in 2021*

Of the individuals in Leicestershire who did not speak English as a main language, Leicester had the highest proportion of individuals who could speak English very well (9.8%), followed by Oadby and Wigston (5.1%). Leicester also had the largest proportion of people who could not speak English (2%) and who could not speak English well (6.7%). These differences are largely because Leicester had the largest proportion of residents who did not speak English as a first language; as this secondary question is based on those respondents, the answers appear to be roughly scaled accordingly.

**Limitations & Further information**

It is recognised that ethnic and race groups included in the Census do not represent how all people identify. The Census offers an option for people to write in their ethnic group, race or background using their own words if they do not identify with any groups in the list. One limitation is that data for an aggregated group (the black group) can hide differences between the detailed ethnic groups (the black Caribbean and black African groups). Additionally, people in ethnic minority groups tend to be younger than white British people and are more likely to live in large urban areas. This could have an impact on our comparisons as the data has not been adjusted for age. The order of the Census National Identity options has been changed this year from English first to British first, which is likely to have impacted National Identity results. This question was also only introduced in 2011 for the first time so it is difficult to make long-term comparisons. Long-term data for language was also only available corresponding to age categories. Effort has been made to make meaningful comparisons between 2011 and 2021 but it is accepted that there may be some discrepancies due to data availability.

Useful links:

1. The ONS website contains information regarding the census, including:
   1. [Visualisation of changes in Leicester - 2021](https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E06000016/)
   2. [Quality and methodology for Census 2021](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/methodologies/qualityandmethodologyinformationqmiforcensus2021)
   3. [England and Wales migration data 2021](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/internationalmigrationenglandandwales/census2021#country-of-birth)
   4. [Terms, definitions, and answers to frequently asked questions](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/methodologies/longterminternationalmigrationfrequentlyaskedquestionsandbackgroundnotes#migration-terms-and-definitions)
   5. [Changes to migration questions and question development](https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/planningforcensus2021/questiondevelopment/secondaddressmigrationandcitizenshipquestiondevelopmentforcensus2021#research-and-development-timeline) (since previous census)
   6. [Overview of detailed migration data](https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/aboutcensus/censusproducts/detailedmigrationdata) (including plans for release)
   7. [Future publication plans for 2023](https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/aboutcensus/censusproducts/analysis/internationalmigrationanalysisplans)
2. For 2011 census data:
   1. [2011 census data](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census_2011)
   2. https://infuse.ukdataservice.ac.uk/