

Census 2021: Ethnic Group, National Identity, Language, and Religion Topic Summary

The source of all the data presented is the 2021 Census.

Key points

- 74.5% of people in Sheffield identified themselves as “White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British”, compared with 80.8% in 2011.
- 88.9% of people in Sheffield have one or more UK identity only (i.e. identify as being English, Scottish, Welsh, Northern Irish, Cornish or British).
- 9.1% have a non-UK identity only, and 1.9% of people have a UK identity and a non-UK identity.
- In 2021, 91.2% of people in Sheffield spoke English as their main language, compared with 92.6% in 2011.
- The percentage of people in Sheffield who identified as having no religion increased from 31.2% in 2011 to 43.4% in 2021.
- There was a fall in the number of people who identified as Christian from 52.5% to 38.5%, while the number of people who identified as Muslim increased from 7.7% to 10.3%.

Ethnic Group

Ethnicity data collected from the 2021 Census has been released by ONS at two levels, the first being high-level ethnic group with five categories (Asian, Asian British, Asian Welsh; Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African; Mixed or Multiple; White; Other ethnic group) further broken into 19 sub-categories, with the largest two in Sheffield being “White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British” followed by “Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Pakistani”. See Table 1 in the Appendices for a breakdown of the Sheffield population by broad ethnic group.

The second, detailed ethnic group classification allowed respondents to define their own ethnicity. From this data, ONS built a dataset consisting of 287 different ethnic groups (285 of which are represented in Sheffield). Note that this does not include *all* ethnicities respondents provided, and there is still a degree of grouping in this category.

In 2021, 74.5% of people in Sheffield identified themselves as “White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British”, compared with 80.8% in 2011.

In absolute terms, the largest increases between 2011 and 2021 were in the “White: Other White”, “Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: African” and “Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Pakistani” ethnic groups.

Census 2021 was the first census to collect “White: Roma” as a specific ethnic group, with 0.4% of people in Sheffield identifying themselves as White Roma. In the 2011 Census, it is likely that most of the individuals identifying as belonging to this ethnic group would have been grouped into the “White: Other White” category.

The largest of the detailed ethnic groups are shown in the table below.

Detailed Ethnic Group

Detailed Ethnic Group	Number	Percentage
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	414676	74.5%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Pakistani or British Pakistani	27671	5.0%
Other ethnic group: Arab	8956	1.6%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	7524	1.4%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh of African background: African unspecified	7468	1.3%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Chinese	7393	1.3%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Indian or British Indian	6798	1.2%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian (unspecified)	5214	0.9%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh or Caribbean background: Caribbean	4643	0.8%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Bangladeshi, British Bangladeshi	4258	0.8%
White: European Mixed	4090	0.7%
White: Polish	3121	0.6%
White: Irish	2750	0.5%
White: Roma	2456	0.4%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	2431	0.4%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh of African background: Somali	2411	0.4%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh of African background: Nigerian	2143	0.4%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh of African background: Somalilander	1648	0.3%
Other ethnic group: Kurdish	1525	0.3%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh or Caribbean background: Black British	1519	0.3%
White: Romanian	1517	0.3%
White: Other White, White unspecified	1156	0.2%
White: Other Eastern European	1011	0.2%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed	964	0.2%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Iranian	911	0.2%

National Identity

88.9% of people in Sheffield had a UK only identity. This is lower than in Yorkshire and the Humber (93.2%) and England as a whole (89.9%).

Language

The Census captures the main language of all people aged 3 and over. In 2021, 91.2% of people in Sheffield spoke English as their main language, compared with 92.6% in 2011.

A total of 1.8% of people spoke a South Asian language as their main language, with the most common being Urdu. There has been a slight fall in the percentage of people speaking the three most commonly spoken South Asian languages – Urdu, Panjabi, and Bengali – as their main language.

The most commonly spoken European languages were Slovak, Polish, and Romanian, with Slovak and Romanian having the largest increases of all of the most commonly spoken languages (shown in the table below).

Main Language

Main language	2021 Total	2021 Percentage	2011 Total	2011 Percentage	Change (as percentage of population)
English	491478	91.22%	490407	92.15%	-0.94%
Arabic	6055	1.12%	5043	0.95%	0.18%
South Asian language: Urdu	3747	0.70%	4222	0.79%	-0.10%
East Asian language: All other Chinese	3731	0.69%	4439	0.83%	-0.14%
Other European language (EU): Slovak	3140	0.58%	1244	0.23%	0.35%
Other European language (EU): Polish	3045	0.57%	2611	0.49%	0.07%
Other European language (EU): Romanian	2082	0.39%	284	0.05%	0.33%
South Asian language: Panjabi	1732	0.32%	2743	0.52%	-0.19%
West or Central Asian language: Kurdish	1444	0.27%	960	0.18%	0.09%
African language: Somali	1384	0.26%	2074	0.39%	-0.13%
South Asian language: Bengali (with Sylheti and Chatgaya)	1327	0.25%	1515	0.28%	-0.04%
West or Central Asian language: Persian or Farsi	1296	0.24%	1017	0.19%	0.05%
Spanish	1211	0.22%	808	0.15%	0.07%
Portuguese	995	0.18%	499	0.09%	0.09%
Other European language (EU): Italian	920	0.17%	358	0.07%	0.10%

Religion

The religion question in the 2021 Census was a voluntary question for people aged 16 and over. 94.0% of people chose to answer the question.

The most common response to the religion question was 'no religion'; increasing from 31.2% of people in 2011 to 43.4% in 2021.

The proportion of people who were Christian fell from 52.5% in 2011 to 38.5% in 2021, while the proportion of people who were Muslim increased from 7.7% to 10.3%. See Table 2 in the Appendices for further information about religion

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Appendices. Table 1: Broad Ethnic Group



	Ethnic Group	2021		2011		2011-2021 Change	2011-2021 Change (as percentage of population)	2011-2021 Change (in size of group)
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage			
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	Bangladeshi	4,258	0.8%	3,326	0.6%	932	0.2%	28.0%
	Chinese	7,393	1.3%	7,398	1.3%	-5	0.0%	-0.1%
	Indian	6,798	1.2%	5,868	1.1%	930	0.2%	15.8%
	Pakistani	27,671	5.0%	21,990	4.0%	5,681	1.0%	25.8%
	Other Asian	7,440	1.3%	5,803	1.0%	1,637	0.3%	28.2%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	African	18,237	3.3%	11,543	2.1%	6,694	1.2%	58.0%
	Caribbean	4,647	0.8%	5,506	1.0%	-859	-0.2%	-15.6%
	Other Black	2,628	0.5%	3,033	0.5%	-405	-0.1%	-13.4%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	White and Asian	5,214	0.9%	3,490	0.6%	1,724	0.3%	49.4%
	White and Black African	2,431	0.4%	1,296	0.2%	1,135	0.2%	87.6%
	White and Black Caribbean	7,524	1.4%	5,450	1.0%	2,074	0.4%	38.1%
	Other Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	4,535	0.8%	3,053	0.6%	1,482	0.3%	48.5%
White	English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	414,698	74.5%	446,837	80.8%	-32,139	-6.3%	-7.2%
	Irish	2,750	0.5%	2,891	0.5%	-141	0.0%	-4.9%
	Gypsy or Irish Traveller	341	0.1%	358	0.1%	-17	0.0%	-4.7%
	Roma	2,456	0.4%	NOT CATEGORISED				
	Other White	19,971	3.6%	12,458	2.3%	7,513	1.3%	60.3%
Other ethnic group	Arab	8,956	1.6%	8,432	1.5%	524	0.0%	6.2%
	Any other ethnic group	8,575	1.5%	3,966	0.7%	4,609	0.9%	116.2%

Table 2: Religion

Religion	2021		2011		2011-2021 Change (as percentage of population)	2011-2021 Change (in size of group)
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage		
No religion	241,556	43.4%	172,516	31.2%	12.2%	28.6%
Christian	214,136	38.5%	290,299	52.5%	-14.0%	-35.6%
Muslim	57,044	10.3%	42,801	7.7%	2.5%	25.0%
Not answered	33,600	6.0%	37,584	6.8%	-0.8%	-11.9%
Hindu	3,759	0.7%	3,566	0.6%	0.0%	5.1%
Other religion	2,635	0.5%	1,961	0.4%	0.1%	25.6%
Buddhist	2,215	0.4%	2,282	0.4%	0.0%	-3.0%
Sikh	927	0.2%	942	0.2%	0.0%	-1.6%
Jewish	649	0.1%	747	0.1%	0.0%	-15.1%