**Directorate of**

**Public Health**

**2021 Census Bolton**

Summary briefing: National Identity, Ethnic group, Religion and Language

Prepared by: Bolton Council Intelligence Hub in collaboration with BRAIN

Date: 30/11/2022

**Summary briefing: National Identity, Ethnic group, Religion and Language Overview**

# Purpose

This report details the Ethnic group Census 2021 information summary for Bolton (data release 29/11/2022).

# Scope

The third release of data from the Census 2021, was released on the 29th November 2022 and covered ethnic group, national identity language and religion. This briefing paper will cover an overview of the data release. Separate briefings on each of these separate data sets are also available in the [New and notable](https://www.boltonjsna.org.uk/newandnotable) section of the Bolton JSNA.

# Key findings

* The 4 data sets released all show a changing population both Nationally and in Bolton.
* Whilst the decrease in the percentage of people who would describe themselves as being from a “White” ethnic background has dropped ten percentage points between 2011 and 2021 to 71.9%, 90.5% of Bolton’s population identify with at least 1 UK national Identity, and 96.1% either speak English as their main language or are proficient in speaking English.
* In England and Wales, the biggest changes have been seen in people reporting their national identity and main language as Romanian. In 2011 Romanian was the 16th most selected non-UK national identity and the 19th main language. In 2021 it has increased to 2nd in both the most selected non-UK Identity and main language (excluding English). Polish remains the most selected in both categories.
* In Bolton the biggest change can be seen in its Asian community. In 2011 14% described their ethnic background as Asian, with 7.8% being from an Indian background and 4.3% from a Pakistani background. In 2021 20.1% describe their ethnic background as Asian, with Pakistani now being the largest group at 9.4% and Indian 8.9%.
* This change is also evident in the number of people in Bolton reporting their main language as Urdu, which has overtaken Gujarati as the second most reported main language after English.
* The percentage of people reporting their religion as Muslim has also increased from 11.7% to 19.9%, further reflecting these changes.
* In line with the national picture the number of people describing themselves as Christian has for the first time fallen below 50% - in Bolton the figure is 47% (similar to the national figure of 46.2%). This still by far represents the largest religion in Bolton and across England and Wales. There has been significant increase, both nationally and locally, in the number of people reporting no religion. In Bolton this has risen 8.6% since 2011 to 25.8%.
* The North West as a region does not follow this trend and has a majority of people identifying as Christian, 52.5%, with the highest local authority, Knowsley, reporting 66.6%.

# Useful links

[Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion - Census 2021](https://census.gov.uk/census-2021-results/phase-one-topic-summaries/ethnic-group-national-identity-language-and-religion)

[New and notable – Bolton JSNA](https://www.boltonjsna.org.uk/newandnotable) – this and all future census briefings will be available here with local interpretation. A working group of multi-agency partners is developing more bespoke analysis and intelligence to inform Bolton priorities