



Housing Research Summary

A Profile of the Housing and Socio-Economic Circumstances of Black and Minority Ethnic People in Wales in 2001

This research project was commissioned in order to help inform the National Assembly for Wales' *Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy*. The aim is to provide up-to-date information on the characteristics of the black and minority ethnic (BME) population, trends in the BME population and likely patterns of change in the future. The main source for the study was the 2001 Census of Population, which provides the most up-to-date picture of the population and households for ethnic groups and for Welsh local authorities.

The key findings are:

- The BME population of Wales is relatively small, but highly diverse.
- It is still mainly concentrated into the major cities of south Wales, but there are BME communities in all parts of Wales.
- Some sections of the BME population are extremely deprived, but there are also prosperous ethnic groups.
- The asylum seeker and refugee population is quite small and mainly located in the major cities. It has different needs from the BME population as a whole.
- The number of people aged over 50 in the BME population is small but significant. The Caribbean population contains the largest elderly population amongst BME groups.
- If historic trends continue, the BME population will increase to form 3.2% of the population of Wales in 2011.

1. The ethnic composition of Wales

The BME population of Wales was small relative to other parts of the UK (2.1% compared with a UK average of 7.9%) in 2001. It is diverse and the long history of inter-ethnic unions has resulted in a unusually large share of the population being of mixed parentage or classified as of "other" ethnicity by the Census (Table 1). The largest religious minority consists of Muslim people, of which there were 21.7 thousand in 2001, representing half of the 43.8 thousand people with a non-Christian religion and a third of the BME population. This group is highly diverse in terms of ethnic and national origins, with substantial Black-African, Arab and south-east Asian components.

Table 1: The ethnic composition of Wales in 2001

	Wales			UK	
	Persons	Percent of Wales population	Wales share of UK population	Persons	Percent of UK population
White	2,841,507	97.9	5.2	54,153,898	92.1
<i>Mixed parentage</i>	<i>17,661</i>	<i>0.6</i>	<i>2.6</i>	<i>677,117</i>	<i>1.2</i>
White/Black-Caribbean	5,996	0.2	-	-	-
White/Black-African	2,414	0.1	-	-	-
White/Asian	4,999	0.2	-	-	-
White/Other	4,251	0.1	-	-	-
<i>Asian or Asian British</i>	<i>25,448</i>	<i>0.9</i>	<i>1.1</i>	<i>2,331,423</i>	<i>4.0</i>
Indian	8,259	0.3	0.8	1,053,411	1.8
Pakistani	8,287	0.3	1.1	747,285	1.3
Bangladeshi	5,434	0.2	1.9	283,063	0.5
Other Asian	3,464	0.1	1.4	247,664	0.4
<i>Black or Black British</i>	<i>7,069</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>0.6</i>	<i>1,148,738</i>	<i>2.0</i>
Black Caribbean	2,597	0.1	0.5	565,876	1.0
Black African	3,727	0.1	0.8	485,277	0.8
Black Other	746	0.0	0.8	97,585	0.2
<i>Chinese or Other ethnic group</i>	<i>11,402</i>	<i>0.4</i>	<i>2.4</i>	<i>478,018</i>	<i>0.8</i>
Chinese	6,266	0.2	2.5	247,403	0.4
Other	5,135	0.2	2.2	230,615	0.4
<i>Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)</i>	<i>61,576</i>	<i>2.1</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>4,635,296</i>	<i>7.9</i>
All ethnic groups	2,903,083	100.0	4.9	5,878,919	100.0

Source: 2001 Census of Population (Key Statistics Table 6)

The BME population was much younger than the white population of Wales in 2001. The mean age of white people was 39.8 years, compared with 28.1 years for BME people. Among BME people, Black people were oldest on average at 34.6 years, while those of mixed parentage were youngest, aged 23 on average. More than a fifth of white people, but only 6.5% of BME people were of pensionable age. In

contrast, 10.1% of BME people were aged 0 to 4 and 21.7% aged 5 to 15, compared with 5.7% and 14.3% respectively for white people. The more youthful nature of the BME population means that up to the age of 45, each age group forms a larger share of the BME than the white population; above that age, the pattern is reversed. (Table 2)

**Table 2: Age structure of each ethnic and religious group
(percentages of each ethnic and religious group)**

	Population	Aged 0-4	Aged 5-15	Aged 16-24	Aged 25-44	Aged 45-59/64	Aged 60-65/74	Aged 75+
Total population	2,903,083	5.8	14.4	10.9	26.6	22.2	11.8	8.3
White	2,841,505	5.7	14.3	10.8	26.5	22.4	11.9	8.4
White: British	2,786,605	5.7	14.4	10.7	26.5	22.4	11.9	8.4
White: Irish	17,689	1.6	4.4	9.2	23.1	29.5	20.4	11.8
White Other: White	37,211	4.4	9.7	14.8	31.5	20.5	11.4	7.7
BME	61,578	10.1	21.7	17.1	31.0	13.6	4.6	1.9
<i>Mixed parentage</i>	<i>17,660</i>	<i>15.0</i>	<i>31.5</i>	<i>16.4</i>	<i>22.5</i>	<i>9.2</i>	<i>3.3</i>	<i>2.0</i>
White & Black Caribbean	5,996	14.9	34.6	15.8	21.7	7.3	3.5	2.3
White & Black African	2,414	15.9	26.9	15.1	25.6	11.4	3.7	1.3
White & Asian	4,999	16.2	32.7	17.2	22.1	7.7	2.7	1.6
Other Mixed	4,251	13.4	28.5	17.3	22.3	12.4	3.6	2.4
<i>Asian or Asian British</i>	<i>25,447</i>	<i>9.6</i>	<i>19.5</i>	<i>17.7</i>	<i>32.0</i>	<i>15.1</i>	<i>4.6</i>	<i>1.5</i>
Indian	8,261	6.4	14.5	18.7	35.3	18.8	5.0	1.2
Pakistani	8,287	11.0	21.6	17.6	29.3	13.1	5.5	1.8
Bangladeshi	5,436	13.5	25.8	19.0	29.6	8.9	2.4	0.9

	Population	Aged 0-4	Aged 5-15	Aged 16-24	Aged 25-44	Aged 45-59/64	Aged 60-65/74	Aged 75+
Other Asian	3,463	7.7	16.4	13.5	34.5	21.0	5.0	1.9
<i>Black or Black British</i>	<i>7,070</i>	<i>6.5</i>	<i>14.8</i>	<i>14.4</i>	<i>35.5</i>	<i>15.9</i>	<i>8.8</i>	<i>4.3</i>
Black Caribbean	2,597	2.7	8.9	9.1	40.6	20.7	13.4	4.5
Black African	3,727	8.9	18.1	17.6	32.2	12.8	6.5	3.9
Other Black	746	7.5	18.4	16.8	34.2	14.3	3.9	5.0
<i>Chinese or Other Ethnic Group</i>	<i>11,401</i>	<i>5.8</i>	<i>15.6</i>	<i>18.4</i>	<i>39.3</i>	<i>15.8</i>	<i>3.8</i>	<i>1.3</i>
Chinese	6,266	5.7	15.4	21.4	34.2	17.1	4.8	1.5
Other Ethnic Group	5,135	5.9	15.9	14.7	45.5	14.2	2.6	1.2
Religion								
Christian	2,087,242	4.3	13.4	9.4	24.4	24.5	14.1	10.0
Buddhist	5,407	2.2	7.1	11.9	38.9	31.1	6.2	2.6
Hindu	5,433	6.2	13.0	17.6	36.0	21.3	4.7	1.2
Jewish	2,256	3.5	8.1	8.8	21.7	28.3	15.2	14.4
Muslim	21,739	11.6	23.0	17.4	31.2	12.2	3.6	1.0
Sikh	2,014	7.1	21.8	18.9	30.7	15.5	3.7	2.3
Any other religion	6,909	2.0	5.8	12.5	38.2	28.8	9.0	3.7
No religion	537,935	9.1	16.7	16.5	36.3	15.6	3.9	2.0

Source: 2001 Census of Population (Standard Tables 101 and 149)

The BME population mainly lived within south-east Wales, with Cardiff having both the largest BME population and the greatest ethnic diversity (Table 3). Cardiff alone contained two-fifths of the BME population of Wales. Three-fifths of BME people lived in the three major cities, in all of which the BME share of the population was well above the national average. While BME people live in most Welsh towns in small numbers, the BME

population share in much of north Wales was well below the Welsh average. The Chinese community was the most geographically widespread (followed by the Bangladeshi ethnic group), while the Pakistani and Black ethnic groups are the most geographically concentrated into south-east Wales. BME people are less likely to live in rural areas or traditional industrial areas than white people.

Table 3: Geographical distribution of the BME population of Wales

Unitary authority (ranked in descending order of share of national BME population)	Share of population from all ethnic groups	Share of BME population	Percent of resident population from BME groups
WALES	100.0	100.0	2.1
Cardiff	10.5	41.8	8.4
Newport	4.7	10.8	4.8
Swansea	7.7	7.8	2.1
Rhondda Cynon Taff	8.0	4.4	1.2
The Vale of Glamorgan	4.1	4.2	2.2
Bridgend	4.4	2.9	1.4
Carmarthenshire	6.0	2.6	0.9
Caerphilly	5.8	2.5	0.9
Neath Port Talbot	4.6	2.3	1.1
Wrexham	4.4	2.3	1.1
Gwynedd	4.0	2.2	1.2
Conwy	3.8	1.9	1.1
Flintshire	5.1	1.9	0.8
Pembrokeshire	3.9	1.8	1.0
Powys	4.4	1.7	0.8
Ceredigion	2.6	1.7	1.4
Denbighshire	3.2	1.7	1.1
Monmouthshire	2.9	1.6	1.2
Torfaen	3.1	1.4	1.0
Blaenau Gwent	2.4	0.9	0.8
Merthyr Tydfil	1.9	0.9	0.9
Isle of Anglesey	2.3	0.8	0.7

Source: 2001 Census of Population (Standard Table 101)

Students formed a large component of the BME population, especially for the Chinese and Other ethnic groups. Nearly half of all BME students lived in Cardiff, where they formed 1 in 8 of the BME population. Overall 2.4% of BME households were student households. Students (outside communal establishments) were more likely than average to live in private rented accommodation with shared facilities. In Ceredigion (in which Aberystwyth and Lampeter University Colleges are located), students formed 23% of the BME population.

2. Social and economic disadvantage

The picture presented by the 2001 Census data is not a simple one of white advantage and BME disadvantage. BME men were less likely than white men to be economically active, though Indian and Bangladeshi men display higher economic activity rates than white men (Table 4). Black-African and Muslim men display the lowest economic activity rates.

Unemployment rates were highest for Black and Black British men, and for men of mixed parentage. Unemployment rates for Indian, Chinese and "Other" men were lower than those for white men.

Table 4: Economic activity by ethnic group, gender and religion in Wales, 2001

	Male		Female	
	Percent economically active	Unemployment rate	Percent economically active	Unemployment rate
Males	67.7	7.4	54.5	4.9
<i>White</i>	67.8	7.3	54.7	4.8
British	67.9	7.3	54.7	4.8
Irish	56.4	8.9	48.3	5.8
Other White	62.3	8.9	52.1	7.1
<i>Black and Minority Ethnic</i>	65.5	11.1	46.9	10.4
<i>Mixed</i>	63.5	16.3	54.7	11.2
White and Black Caribbean	63.3	19.6	56.4	12.5
White and Black African	66.6	13.6	55.5	12.9
White and Asian	65.3	13.3	53.3	9.3
Other Mixed	60.0	17.4	53.5	10.5
<i>Asian or Asian British</i>	69.1	8.5	39.1	12.0
Indian	70.7	5.7	53.7	8.5
Pakistani	65.7	12.5	29.9	15.3
Bangladeshi	70.5	7.8	23.0	24.0
Other Asian	70.4	8.8	43.0	9.7

	Male		Female	
	Percent economically active	Unemployment rate	Percent economically active	Unemployment rate
<i>Black or Black British</i>	58.2	18.1	49.5	12.4
Black Caribbean	63.4	16.2	59.0	8.2
Black African	53.1	20.1	40.0	17.6
Other Black	60.5	18.7	58.2	11.8
<i>Chinese and Other Ethnic groups</i>	64.5	7.3	51.7	6.5
Chinese	63.4	6.3	55.7	5.6
Other Ethnic Group	66.1	8.7	47.5	7.5
Religion				
Christian	64.3	6.0	51.6	3.8
Buddhist	63.2	9.6	50.0	7.8
Hindu	70.2	3.4	51.0	6.6
Muslim	60.8	10.9	25.6	15.9
Sikh	64.8	6.8	44.6	7.9
Jewish	61.1	6.6	48.4	5.8
Other	61.3	16.4	46.7	9.4
No Religion	71.2	9.4	55.8	7.3

Source: 2001 Census of Population (Standard Tables 108 and 153)

The main contrast between white and BME women was the much lower percentage of Bangladeshi and Pakistani (and Muslim) women who were economically active. The unemployment rate for BME women was about twice that for white women, being highest for Bangladeshi, Black-African and Pakistani women.

The BME unemployment rate in 2001 was 1.7 times higher than that for white people. BME people living in Newport and Cardiff experienced an unemployment rate double that for white people.

BME people were less likely than white people to work in manufacturing industry,

but much more likely to work in hotels and restaurants and in the health and social services. Public sector services employed 30.7% of BME people and 35.7% of Black people. For Asian people, wholesaling and retailing and restaurants and hotels were the major sources of employment. More than a third of Chinese and Other people worked in hotels and restaurants.

An above average percentage of people from the Asian and Asian British and Chinese and Other ethnic groups worked as *managers and senior officials*. The overall percentage of BME people in *professional occupations* was nearly double that for white people, with over a quarter

of Asian and Asian British people in work having this type of job. Doctors accounted for a large percentage of these workers, with 17.9% of Asian and 9% of Muslim people employed as “health professionals”. Black, mixed parentage and Chinese and Other people were more likely than average to be in *associate professional and technical* jobs, such as “health and welfare associate professionals” (which includes nurses). Only Chinese and Other people (working in “textiles, printing and other skilled trades”) were more likely than white people to work in *skilled trades*. Black and Black British people and people of mixed parentage were more likely than people from other ethnic groups to work in personal service occupations, while sales occupations are most important for Asian and Asian British ethnic groups and Muslim people. White people are more likely than people from BME groups to be *process, plant and machinery operatives*, but a higher percentage of people of mixed parentage, Black and Black British and Muslim people work in *elementary occupations*.

Overall, 30.9% of BME people aged 16 to 74 had higher level educational qualifications, while 33.5% had no qualifications (compared with 17.1% and 40.4% respectively for white people). Around half of Indian, Other Asian and Other people were highly qualified, but Pakistani and Bangladeshi people were more likely than average to have no qualifications.

Another indication of economic need is the number of children living in poverty. A much larger percentage of BME (21.9%) than white children (13.6%) lived in households in which the head had either never worked, was long term unemployed

or had an occupation which cannot be classified. More than a quarter of Caribbean children and a third of African children lived in such households.

About two-fifths of all dependent children had household heads from the lowest occupational groups (semi-routine and routine occupations) or who were out of the workforce. These households contained more than half of dependent children from African, Caribbean and Pakistani ethnic groups and three-fifths of dependent Bangladeshi and Black-Other children. In contrast, only a quarter of dependent Indian and Chinese children lived in households headed by a person from the lowest status occupational groups.

Indian children were most likely, and Bangladeshi children least likely, to live in households headed by a managerial or professional person. South Asian and Chinese children were most likely to live in households headed by a person who was a small employer or in business on their own account. Bangladeshi and white children were most likely to live in households headed by a person working in a lower supervisory or technical occupation. Half of Hindu children lived in managerial or professional households, but more than half of Muslim children lived in households where the head had a semi-routine or routine occupation or was out of the labour market.

3. Households and family types

In 2001, 43.5% of BME households (compared with 31.4% of all households in Wales) were families with children. However, there were considerable differences between BME groups. Two-fifths of Asian and Asian British households and over a third of Chinese and other

households were couples with children, but only 21.7% of Black and Black British and 21% of mixed parentage households were of this type. Lone parent families were less common than average among Asian and Asian British households but much more common for Black-Caribbean or mixed parentage.

Lone pensioners and pensioner couples were about a third as common in the BME population as in the white population. Among BME groups, the percentage of childless couples was higher than average for Indian people, while this percentage was very low for Pakistani, African and (especially) Bangladeshi people. The percentage of households containing adults living alone was particularly high for people

from Black and Black British ethnic groups, people of mixed parentage and the “other” ethnic group. Student households were much more common among BME groups than for white people, especially common in the Chinese and Other ethnic groups, and for the Black-African and Indian ethnic groups.

On average, BME households were larger than white households (3.6 persons compared to 2.8 persons). Family sizes were largest in families with a family head of mixed parentage, while Black and Black British families were smaller than white families. Lone parents of mixed parentage headed large families, with an average family size of 5.4 persons.

4. Housing Tenure and Type

**Table 5: Tenure type of households from each ethnic group and religion
(percentage of households from each ethnic group)**

	All households	Owned	Rented from council	Other social rented	Private rented or living rent free
Total	1,209,047	71.3	13.7	4.2	10.8
<i>White</i>	<i>1,190,399</i>	<i>71.5</i>	<i>13.8</i>	<i>4.1</i>	<i>10.6</i>
British	1,164,985	71.7	13.8	4.1	10.4
Irish	9,436	65.2	14.4	5.5	14.9
Other White	15,978	64.7	10.6	3.9	20.8
Minority ethnic groups	18,648	58.2	11.6	7.3	23.0
<i>Mixed</i>	<i>4,432</i>	<i>50.7</i>	<i>19.1</i>	<i>10.2</i>	<i>20.0</i>
White and Black Caribbean	1,493	46.5	23.1	13.6	16.8
White and Black African	709	47.5	23.7	9.9	18.8
White and Asian	1,042	58.1	13.7	7.2	21.0
Other Mixed	1,188	51.3	16.0	8.9	23.7
<i>Asian or Asian British</i>	<i>7,472</i>	<i>67.0</i>	<i>6.4</i>	<i>4.8</i>	<i>21.8</i>

	All households	Owned	Rented from council	Other social rented	Private rented or living rent free
Indian	2,762	66.3	3.8	3.0	26.9
Pakistani	2,178	72.5	6.8	5.0	15.7
Bangladeshi	1,231	62.8	10.0	8.5	18.7
Other Asian	1,301	63.1	7.8	4.9	24.2
<i>Black or Black British</i>	<i>3,073</i>	<i>48.6</i>	<i>19.6</i>	<i>12.6</i>	<i>19.2</i>
Black Caribbean	1,464	58.7	18.9	10.5	11.9
Black African	1,300	38.2	19.5	14.5	27.9
Other Black	309	44.3	23.9	15.2	17.2
<i>Chinese and Other</i>	<i>3,671</i>	<i>57.3</i>	<i>6.2</i>	<i>4.2</i>	<i>32.3</i>
Chinese	1,999	71.3	4.6	1.9	22.3
Other Ethnic Group	1,672	40.6	8.1	7.1	44.1
Religion					
Christian	892,157	74.1	13.1	3.7	9.1
Buddhist	2,666	60.4	9.0	4.8	25.8
Hindu	1,861	66.1	2.8	2.7	28.4
Jewish	1,139	75.0	5.8	4.8	14.4
Muslim	5,985	58.8	10.1	8.5	22.6
Sikh	615	71.9	7.6	3.7	17.1
Other	3,620	56.7	13.5	6.5	23.3
None	86,551	66.2	16.6	4.8	12.3

Source: 2001 Census of Population (Standard Tables 111 and 156)

On average, BME households were less likely than white households to own their own homes (58.2%, compared with 71.5% of white households), but were also less likely to live in local authority rented accommodation (11.6% compared with 13.8%; Table 5). BME households were more than twice as likely as white households to live in private sector rented accommodation and were also more likely to live in accommodation provided by housing associations and other social landlords.

There were substantial differences between BME groups:

- Two-thirds of Asian and Asian British households owned their dwellings, while only half of those with heads from Black or Black British or mixed parentage ethnic groups owned their homes.
- Black or Black British or mixed parentage ethnic groups were more likely than other broad ethnic groupings to live in rented accommodation, especially local authority and other social landlord rented housing.
- Households from Asian or Asian British ethnic groups were less likely than those from other ethnic groups to live in social rented housing, but more likely to live in private sector rented accommodation.
- Pakistani and Chinese households were more likely than other BME households to be owner-occupiers (a similar percentage to white households).
- Households headed by people from the "Other", Black-African and Other-Asian ethnic groups are most likely to live in private sector rented accommodation.

Among BME households, 38.9% of those living in social rented accommodation were lone parent families. In the private rented sector, BME people (37.3%) are over twice as likely as white people to be living in married couple families with dependent children.

There were large variations in the housing tenure of BME households between unitary authorities in Wales:

- In Monmouthshire, Flintshire, Caerphilly, Conwy and the Vale of Glamorgan, over two-thirds were owner-occupiers.
- The percentage renting from local authorities was highest in Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen.
- The percentage renting from other social landlords was highest in the three south Wales cities (9.5% in Cardiff) and Wrexham.
- BME households were most dependent upon private sector landlords for housing in Ceredigion, where 51.1% lived in private sector rented accommodation, and rural areas such as Denbighshire and Powys, followed by Wrexham.

Households from BME groups were more likely than white households to live in terraced dwellings (33.8% compared with 29.2%) and flats (12.6% compared with 7.8%) and less likely than white households to live in detached (21% compared with 27.1%) and semi-detached (23.5% compared with 32.5%) dwellings. Black and Black British and mixed parentage households were the most likely to live in flats, and Black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi households were the more

likely to live in terraced housing. On the other hand, Indian, Other-Asian, “Other” and Chinese households were more likely than white households to live in detached dwellings.

5. Housing conditions

- BME households were much more likely to experience housing deprivation than white households (20.3% compared with 11.3%).
- Rates of housing deprivation were highest for Bangladeshi (31.7 per cent) and Black-African (27.6 per cent) households.
- Overall, 4.4% of all households lived in dwellings where there were fewer rooms than the household required. Overcrowding was much more severe for BME groups than for white households, with 15.5% of BME households living in dwellings in which there were too few rooms.
- Chinese and Other ethnic groups experienced the greatest degree of overcrowding, with nearly a fifth of households living in dwellings with too few rooms.
- Mixed parentage or Caribbean households were least likely to be overcrowded. Overcrowding was more severe for Black-African and Asian ethnic groups.
- Nearly a third of Bangladeshi and a quarter of Black-African people lived in dwellings without sufficient rooms, while a fifth of Pakistani and Other-Asian people lived in overcrowded conditions.

- Muslim and Sikh households were most likely than those from other religious groups to live in dwellings with too few rooms for the household.
- Overcrowding was most common in the private rented sector, where a quarter of BME households live in dwellings where there are fewer rooms than required; a fifth of BME households in social rented accommodation are overcrowded.
- BME households (5.6%) were less likely than white households (7.5%) to live in dwellings without central heating. Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black-African and Black-Caribbean households were more likely than other BME households not to have central heating in their homes.

The percentage of white households experiencing housing deprivation was highest in Gwynedd (24.6%) and lowest in Caerphilly (6.6%). The percentage of BME households deprived was highest in Ceredigion (31.1%). Rates of BME housing deprivation tend to be high in unitary authorities with Universities (e.g. Aberystwyth and Lampeter in Ceredigion and Bangor in Gwynedd), where students form a high percentage of the BME population.

6. The refugee and asylum seeker population of Wales

In 1997, the asylum seeker and refugee population of Wales was estimated to be 1016 households containing 3565 people, 67% of whom lived in Cardiff, with a further 16% in Newport and 12% in Swansea. 70% of all refugees were Somali.

Asylum seekers have been dispersed to Wales by National Asylum Support Service (NASS) since May 2001. Nearly all are dispersed on a “subsistence only” basis, being provided with subsistence and accommodation by NASS and being given no choice over where to live. Key findings about this population are:

- The number supported by NASS increased from 1.8 thousand at the end of 2002 to 2.6 thousand at the start of 2004. There were 20% more men than women in this total.
- At the start of 2004, there were 1153 in Cardiff (44.1% of the Wales total), 930 in Swansea (35.6%), 420 in Newport (16.1%) and 61 in Wrexham (2.3%). In March 2004, there were only 133 asylum seekers who had moved to Wales voluntarily, 64% located in the four ‘cluster areas’.
- In December 2003, Somalis formed 13.3% of the asylum seeker population, followed by Pakistanis (10.2%), Iraqis (9.6%), and Iranians (7.9 %).
- In March 2004, 21.3% of asylum seekers were alone, 35.9% arrived in groups of 3 to 4 people and 33% arrived in larger groups. Only 51% of NASS-supported asylum seekers in Wales were single adults.
- Arabic (14.3%), Slovak (11.6%), Urdu (8.5%), English (8.1%), Farsi (7.1%) and French (6.4%) were the most commonly spoken languages by asylum seekers in March 2004.

7. BME Elders

Overall, there were 9.1 thousand BME people aged over 50 and 3.3 thousand aged over 65 in 2001, representing 0.9% of all people aged over 50 and 0.7% of all people aged over 65. People aged over 50 comprised 14.7% of the BME population, but nearly a quarter (23.2 per cent) of Black and Black British people. Pensioners living alone represented 10.5% of Black-Caribbean and 10.9% of Black-African households.

Levels of health tend to deteriorate with age. Nearly a third of people aged 50 to 64 and three-fifths of people aged 65 and over suffered from a long-term health problem in 2001. BME women and older BME men had poorer levels of health than white people from the same age group. Chinese people experienced much lower illness rates and better levels of general health than people from other ethnic groups.

The percentage of the population active in the labour market declines rapidly with age for people aged over 50. Men from BME ethnic groups aged over 50 displayed higher activity rates than white men in 2001, while BME women displayed lower activity rates than white women.

Men from the Indian, Other-Asian, Other and Chinese ethnic groups displayed the highest economic activity rates, while men of mixed parentage, and men from the Black-African, Bangladeshi and Black-Caribbean ethnic groups experienced the lowest economic activity rates. Economic activity rates were highest for white, Black-Caribbean and Indian women, but very low for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women.

8. Population change and future trends

Wales has one of the longest established BME populations in the UK. The BME population was probably around 8 thousand before the Second World War, increasing to 61.6 thousand in 2001. The BME population has remained largely concentrated in Cardiff and the industrial areas of south Wales.

Between 1981 and 1991, the white population of Wales increased by 2.4%, but the BME population increased by 31.1% or 10.2 thousand persons (fastest for Bangladeshi and Pakistani people). Published Census data for 1991 and 2001 reveals that the white population grew by 1.7% and the BME population grew by 48.2% between 1991 and 2001. The Black and Black British population grew by 63.1%, the Chinese and Other population grew by 49.4%, and the Asian and Asian British population grew by 38.1%.

Cardiff and Newport received more than half of the total increase of the BME population of Wales between 1991 and 2001. In the other cities and towns of south Wales, the growth in the BME population compensated for a decline in the white population.

If BME populations grow at the same rate between 2001 and 2011:

- the BME population will increase from 61,576 in 2001 to 91,269 in 2011 (comprising 3.2% of the population of Wales);
- the largest component will be growth in the number of people of mixed parentage, and from “other” ethnic groups;

- the number of BME people aged 60 will increase by 1.9 thousand (38.2%);
- the share of BME people in the population aged 60 and over will increase from 0.75% to 1%.

9. Conclusions and recommendations

The Welsh BME population is relatively small but highly diverse. Though BME communities remain largely concentrated into south-east Wales (where their share of the resident population is largest and ethnic diversity is greatest), there are now BME communities in all parts of Wales, including small rural towns and coastal resorts. People of Black and Asian ethnic origin form a larger share of the population in the major cities, but people of mixed parentage and from “Other” ethnic groups are more prominent in smaller towns. In University towns, students represent a substantial part of the BME population.

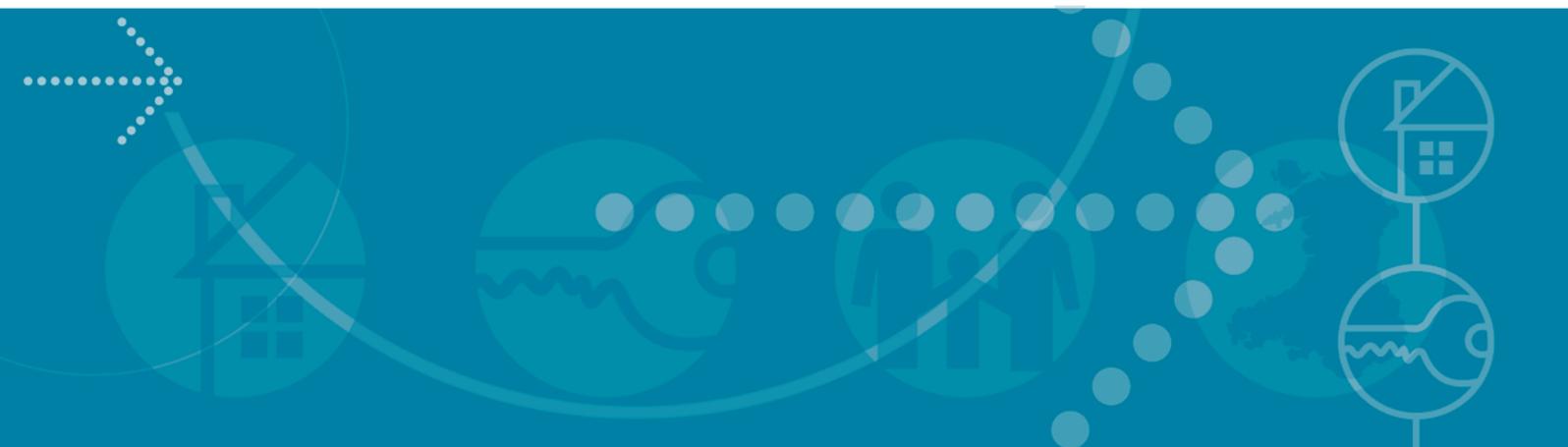
The BME population is much younger than the white population, and household and family sizes are larger on average. The BME population will continue to grow rapidly, becoming more diverse over time. The number of BME elderly will increase rapidly.

- Therefore, housing providers in all parts of Wales must take the needs of BME communities into account, and recognise the diversity of local BME communities.
- The assessment of BME housing needs should distinguish the needs of the student population from those of permanent BME residents (unfortunately, this is not possible with Census data).

- Housing providers should be aware that the BME population will continue to grow and will become more diverse over time.

BME people as a whole are disadvantaged relative to the white majority population, but there is considerable diversity between ethnic groups. Among BME people, the least disadvantaged are the Indian and Chinese ethnic groups and the most disadvantaged are Black-Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi people. BME households experience a higher rate of housing deprivation than white households, but there are differences between BME groups in the degree of disadvantage.

- Therefore, housing providers should recognise the diversity of housing and other need among BME groups.
- There will be increasing needs for housing and social care providers to take the needs of older BME people into account, even though they will continue to form a very small percentage of the older population.



Further copies of this summary can be obtained from:

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