

FOCUS ON Religion



Focus on Religion paints a picture of the different faith groups in the UK today. It looks separately at Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Information comparing and contrasting the characteristics of the main faith groups, their lifestyles and experiences is presented. It draws on information from the 2001 Census – the first time Great Britain included a question on religion – and other sources.

The 2001 Census identified 8.6 million people in Great Britain who said they had no religion. Christianity is the main religion, with 41 million people. Muslims were the largest non-Christian religious group – 1.6 million – and their profile shows a young, tightly clustered, but often disadvantaged, community.

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Religious Populations

Christianity is main religion in Britain

Christianity is the main religion in Great Britain. There were 41 million Christians in 2001, making up almost three quarters of the population (72 per cent). This group included the Church of England, Church of Scotland, Church in Wales, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations.

People with no religion formed the second largest group, comprising 15 per cent of the population.

About one in 20 (5 per cent) of the population belonged to a non-Christian religious denomination.

Muslims were the largest religious group after Christians. There were 1.6 million Muslims living in Britain in 2001. This group comprised 3 per cent of the total population and over half (52 per cent) of the non-Christian religious population.

Hindus were the second largest non-Christian religious group. There were over half a million Hindus (558,000), comprising 1 per cent of the total population and 18 per cent of the non-Christian religious population.

There were just over a third of a million Sikhs (336,000), making up 0.6 per cent of the total population and 11 per cent of the non-Christian religious population.

There were just over a quarter of a million Jewish people (267,000), constituting 0.5 per cent of the total population and 9 per cent of the non-Christian religious group.

Buddhists numbered 149,000 people in 2001, comprising 0.3 per cent of the population of Great Britain.

The religion question was the only voluntary question in the 2001 Census and 8 per cent of people chose not to state their religion.

Other religions in England and Wales

Rather than select one of the specified religions offered on the 2001 Census form, many people chose to write in their own religion. Some of these religions were reassigned to one of the main religions offered, predominantly within the Christian group.

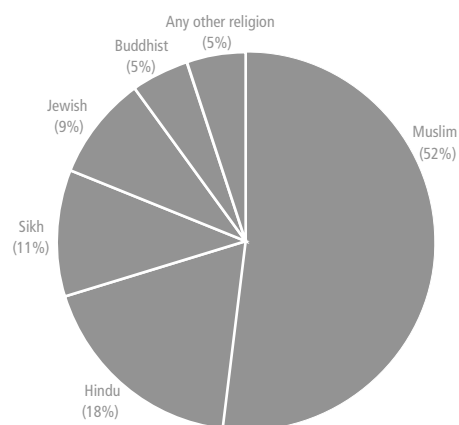
In England and Wales, 151,000 people belonged to religious groups which did not fall into any of the main religions. The largest of these were Spiritualists (32,000) and Pagans (31,000), followed by Jain (15,000), Wicca (7,000), Rastafarian (5,000), Bahá'í (5,000) and Zoroastrian (4,000).

Population of Great Britain: by religion, April 2001

	Great Britain		
	Total population	Non-Christian religious population	
	(Numbers)	(Percent-ages)	(Percent-ages)
Christian	41,014,811	71.82	n/a
Muslim	1,588,890	2.78	51.94
Hindu	558,342	0.98	18.25
Sikh	336,179	0.59	10.99
Jewish	267,373	0.47	8.74
Buddhist	149,157	0.26	4.88
Any other religion	159,167	0.28	5.20
No religion	8,596,488	15.05	n/a
Religion not stated	4,433,520	7.76	n/a
All non-Christian religious population ¹	3,059,108	5.36	100
All population	57,103,927		100

The distribution of non-Christian religions, April 2001

Great Britain
Percentages



Sources:

Census, April 2001, Office for National Statistics
Census, April 2001, General Register Office for Scotland

Notes:

The chart of non-Christian religions excludes Christians, people who had no religion and those who did not state their religion.
No religion includes people who ticked 'None' at the religion question plus those who wrote in Jedi Knight, Agnostic, Atheist and Heathen and those who ticked 'Other' but did not write in any religion.



Age & Sex Distribution

Muslim population is youngest

Muslims have the youngest age profile of all the religious groups in Great Britain. About a third of Muslims (34 per cent) were under 16 years of age in 2001, as were a quarter (25 per cent) of Sikhs and a fifth (21 per cent) of Hindus. There are very few older people in these groups – less than one in ten were aged 65 years or over. The Jewish and Christian groups have the oldest age profiles with one in five aged 65 years or over (22 per cent and 19 per cent respectively).

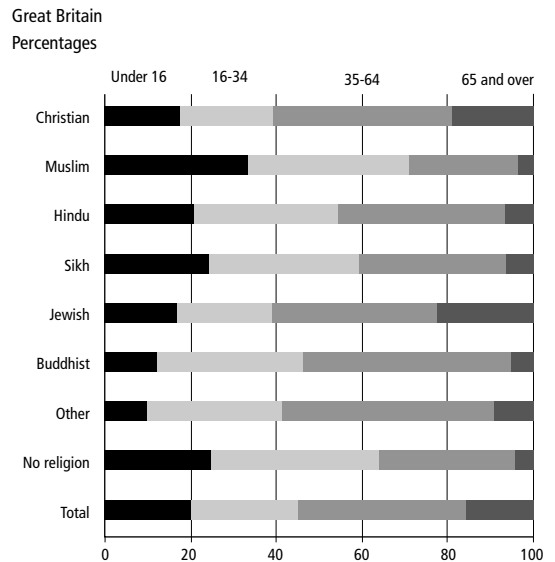
These differing age profiles reflect the ethnic make-up of the different religious groups. Christian and Jewish communities contain predominantly White people who have lived in the UK all their lives or who migrated here before the Second World War, and have an older age structure. Muslim, Hindu and Sikh communities are predominantly of South Asian ethnic origin and have a younger age profile, reflecting later immigration and larger family sizes with more children.

Muslims are the only religious group in which men outnumber women – 52 per cent compared with 48 per cent. This reflects the gender structure of Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups, in which men slightly outnumber women due to their immigration history. In all other religious groups there are either the same proportions of men and women or slightly more women than men, reflecting the fact that women live longer than men in the general population. However, men formed the majority of the ‘no religion’ group, 56 per cent.

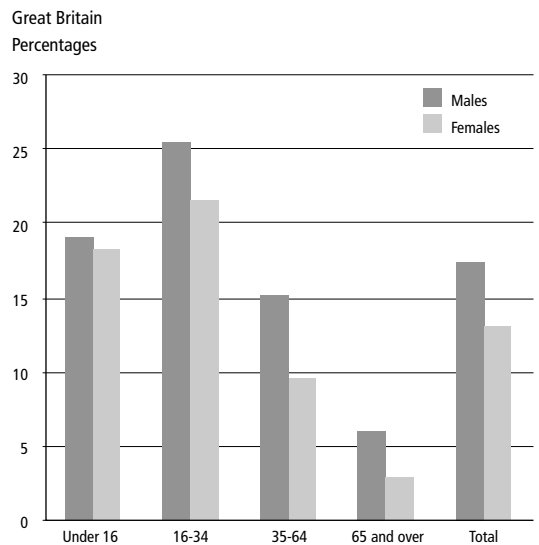
There is greater gender variation among the other smaller religious groups in England and Wales. In 2001, women made up more than two thirds of people who gave their religion as Spiritualism (68 per cent) or Wicca (67 per cent). Women also formed just over half of the Pagan and Bahá’í groups – 54 per cent and 53 per cent respectively. Conversely, among Rastafarians and Zoroastrians, men were in the majority (70 per cent and 54 per cent respectively).

Younger people are more likely than older people not to belong to any religion, reflecting the trend towards secularisation. Among 16 to 34 year olds in Great Britain, almost a quarter (23 per cent) said that they had no religion compared with less than 5 per cent of people aged 65 or over.

Religion: by age, April 2001



People with no religion: by age and sex, April 2001



Sources:

Census, April 2001, Office for National Statistics
 Census, April 2001, General Register Office for Scotland



Geographic Distribution

Minority religions concentrated in London

People from non-Christian religions are more likely to live in England than in Scotland or Wales. In 2001 they made up 6 per cent of the population in England, compared with only 2 per cent in Wales and 1 per cent in Scotland.

People from Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim and Sikh backgrounds were concentrated in London and other large urban areas. Christians and those with no religion were more evenly dispersed across the country.

The Jewish population was the most heavily concentrated in London, with 56 per cent of the Jewish population of Great Britain living there. A further 11 per cent lived in the East of England. Almost one in five Jews (17 per cent) lived in the London Borough of Barnet, where they constituted 15 per cent of the population.

Just over half (52 per cent) of Britain's Hindu population lived in London. A further 12 per cent lived in the East Midlands and 10 per cent in the West Midlands, with large populations living in particular pockets within these broad areas. In London, Hindus were concentrated in Brent and Harrow where they made up a fifth of each of these populations (17 per cent and 20 per cent respectively). Seven per cent of Hindus lived in Leicester in the East Midlands, where they comprised 15 per cent of the population.

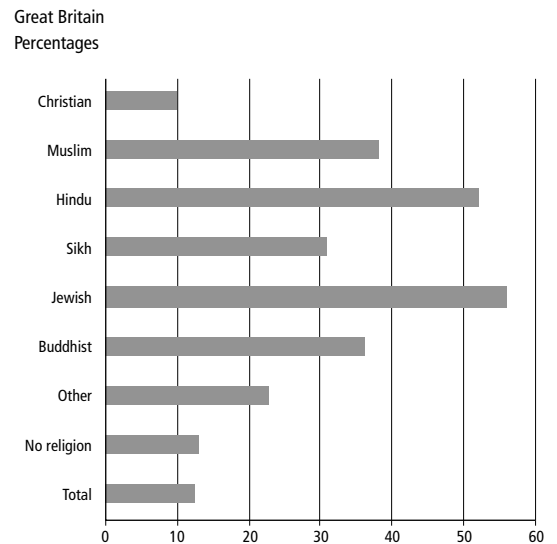
Around two fifths of Muslims (38 per cent) lived in London. After London, the regions with the next biggest share of the Muslim population were the West Midlands (14 per cent), the North West (13 per cent), and Yorkshire and the Humber (12 per cent). Even within these regions, Muslims were highly concentrated spatially. Muslims made up 8 per cent of London's population overall but 36 per cent of the Tower Hamlets and 24 per cent of the Newham populations.

Almost a third (31 per cent) of the Sikh population lived in the West Midlands. They were particularly concentrated in the Wolverhampton and Sandwell areas: 8 per cent and 7 per cent respectively of the populations of these local authorities were Sikh. A further 31 per cent of the Sikh population lived in London. They were especially concentrated in West London boroughs, making up almost 10 per cent of the populations of Ealing and Hounslow. They also comprised almost 10 per cent of the population of Slough in the South East.

Of the 149,000 Buddhists living in Britain in 2001, 36 per cent lived in London with the rest dispersed across the other regions. The highest concentrations of Buddhists were in the London boroughs of Westminster and Camden where they made up 1 per cent of the local population.

Christians were spread across Britain. London had the lowest proportion of Christians – only 58 per cent of the London population described themselves in this way. People in the North East and the North West were the most likely to describe themselves as Christian with four fifths of people in each of these regions doing so (80 per cent and 78 per cent respectively). People in these regions were the least likely to say they had no religion.

Percentage of each religion living in London, April 2001



Sources:

Census 2001, Office for National Statistics
 Census 2001, General Register Office for Scotland



Ethnicity

Nine in ten Sikhs are from the Indian group

Nine out of ten Sikhs (91 per cent) living in Great Britain in 2001 were from an Indian ethnic background. Hindus were also predominantly Indian (84 per cent). A further 12 per cent of Hindus gave their ethnic group as 'Other Asian', the majority being from Sri Lanka.

The vast majority of Christians were White (97 per cent) and this group accounted for almost 40 million people. Although Black people made up only 2 per cent of the total Christian population, 71 per cent of Black people were Christian (815,000), as were half (52 per cent or 353,000) of the Mixed ethnic group.

Three quarters of Muslims (74 per cent) were from an Asian ethnic background, predominantly Pakistani (43 per cent), Bangladeshi (16 per cent), Indian (8 per cent) and Other Asian (6 per cent). There were almost 1.2 million Asian Muslims living in Great Britain in 2001. One in ten Muslims (11 per cent) were from a White ethnic group, 4 per cent were of White British origin and 7 per cent from another White background including Turkish, Cypriot, Arab and Eastern European. A further 6 per cent of Muslims were of Black African origin, mainly from North and West Africa, particularly Somalia.

The vast majority of Jewish people were White (97 per cent), as were 95 per cent of people who had no religion.

Buddhism was the most ethnically diverse of all the main religions. It was made up of people from White (38 per cent), Chinese (25 per cent), Asian (10 per cent), Mixed (3 per cent), Black (1 per cent) and Other (24 per cent) ethnic groups.

Chinese people are the least religious. In 2001, more than half (53 per cent) said that they had no religion. People from a Mixed ethnic background were the next least religious (23 per cent).

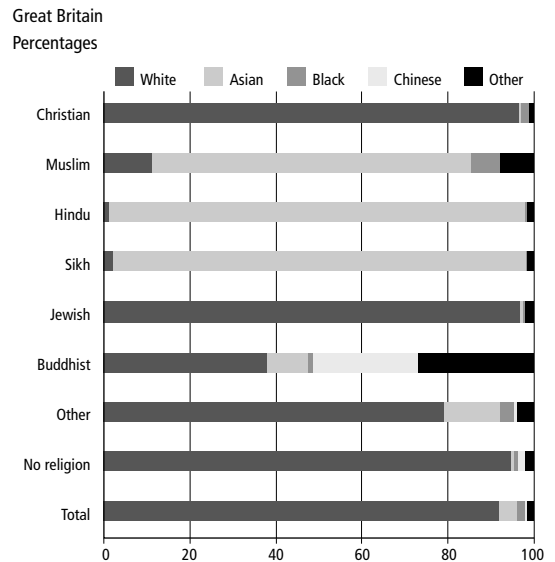
South Asians and Black Africans were the most religious. Only 2 per cent of Indians, 2 per cent of Black Africans and less than 1 per cent each of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis said that they had no religion.

People from a White British, Other White, Black Caribbean and Other Black background were somewhere in between with between 11 and 16 per cent stating that they had no religion.

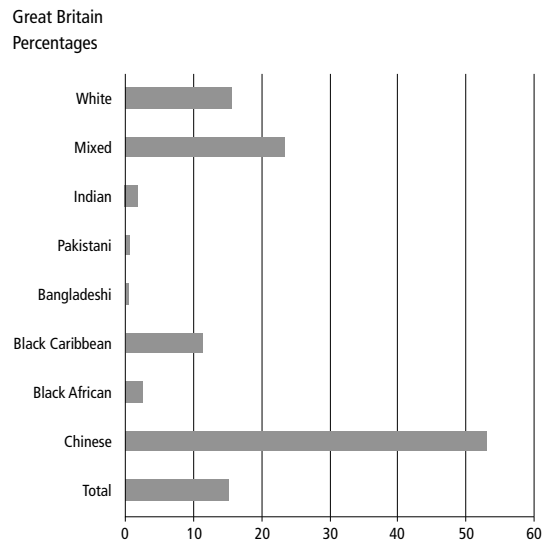
Younger people were less religious than older people, and this was true for all ethnic groups. The proportions having no religion were so small among South Asians that the variation with age was much less marked for these groups.

Among most minority ethnic groups, being religious was also related to country of birth. Those born in the UK were less likely to be religious than their immigrant parents born abroad.

Religion: by ethnic group, April 2001



Percentage with no religion: by ethnic group, April 2001



Sources:

Census, April 2001, Office for National Statistics
 Census, April 2001, General Register Office for Scotland



Country of Birth & National Identity

Hindus least likely to be born in UK

Country of birth

Hindus are the least likely of all the religious groups to have been born in the UK, followed by Muslims and Buddhists. The majority within each of these groups had been born outside the UK.

Less than four in ten Hindus (37 per cent) who were living in Great Britain in 2001 had been born in the UK. A similar proportion had been born in Asia (39 per cent), predominantly India (30 per cent), and 6 per cent had been born in Sri Lanka. A further 21 per cent of Hindus had been born in Africa, reflecting the 1970s migration to the UK of East African Asians, in particular from Kenya (10 per cent) and Uganda (4 per cent).

Just under half (46 per cent) of Muslims living in Great Britain in 2001 had been born in the UK while 39 per cent had been born in Asia – mainly Pakistan (18 per cent), Bangladesh (9 per cent) and India (3 per cent). A further one in ten Muslims (9 per cent) had been born in Africa, including Somalia (2 per cent) and Kenya (1 per cent). Four per cent of Muslims were from parts of Europe outside the UK, including Turkey (3 per cent) and the Former Yugoslavian countries (1 per cent).

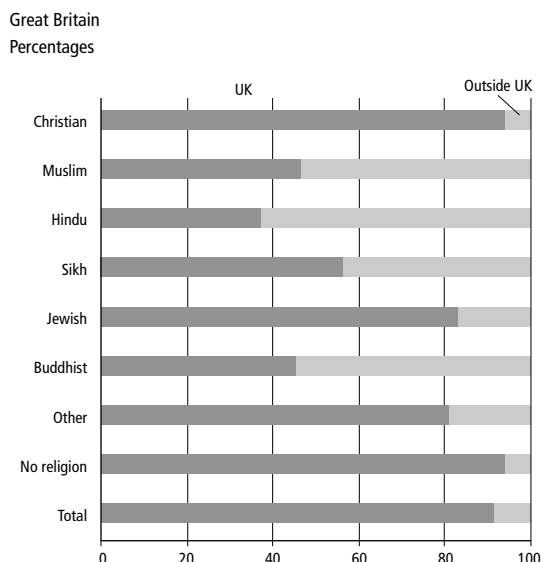
Just under half of Buddhists (45 per cent) living in Great Britain in 2001 had been born in the UK. A slightly higher proportion (49 per cent) had been born in Asia: Thailand (8 per cent), Japan (8 per cent), Vietnam (7 per cent), Hong Kong (6 per cent), Malaysia (6 per cent) and China (3 per cent).

Sikhs are the most likely of all the Asian religions to have been born in the UK. Over half (56 per cent) of the Sikh community in 2001 had been born in the UK. Thirty seven per cent had been born in Asia, predominantly India (35 per cent), and 6 per cent had been born in Africa, mainly Kenya (4 per cent).

The majority of Jewish people (83 per cent) had been born in the UK but 6 per cent had been born in another European country, reflecting migration from Germany and Eastern Europe in the period before the Second World War. A further 3 per cent had been born in Israel, 2 per cent had been born in South Africa and 2 per cent in the USA.

Almost all of the Christian group (94 per cent) were born in the UK. Three per cent were born in another European country, including Ireland (1 per cent), and 1 per cent were born in each of Africa, Asia and North America. The countries of birth for people with no religion were very similar to those for the Christian group.

Religion: by country of birth, April 2001



Sources:

Country of birth: Census April 2001 Office for National Statistics and General Register Office for Scotland

Notes:

Former Yugoslavian countries mentioned here include Kosovo, Bosnia Herzegovina, Serbia or Yugoslavia.



Country of Birth & National Identity (continued)

Identity

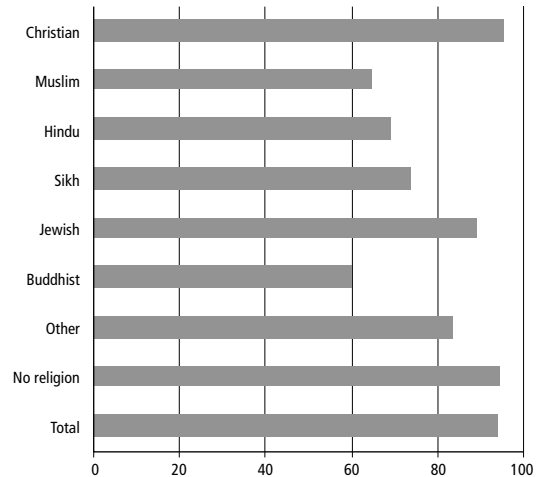
In every religious group the majority of adults aged 16 and over in Great Britain described their national identity as either British, English, Scottish or Welsh. Around 95 per cent of Christians and those with no religion described themselves in this way. Seventy four per cent of Sikhs, 69 per cent of Hindus, and 65 per cent of Muslims gave one of these British identities.

National identity is strongly related to country of birth. Adults from all religious groups who were born in the UK were more likely than their foreign-born counterparts to give a British identity. Almost all (99 per cent) UK-born Jews, Christians and people with no religion had a British national identity. Nine out of ten UK-born Buddhists (94 per cent), Muslims (93 per cent), Sikhs (90 per cent) and Hindus (91 per cent) gave a British national identity.

More than half of Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Hindu adults living in England and Wales in 2001 said that their religion was important to their self-identity. Among Christians, only a fifth mentioned religion as important, although this was much higher among Black Christians. After religion and ethnicity, being aged over 50 and being born outside the UK were also associated with rating religion as important to self-identity.

Proportion of people aged 16 and over who consider their identity to be British, English, Scottish or Welsh: by religion, 2003-2004

Great Britain
Percentages



Sources:

National identity: Labour Force Survey, June 2003 to May 2004 (Wave 1 and Wave 5 respondents)

Religious identity: Home Office Citizenship Survey 2001, Home Office

Notes:

The 2003-2004 LFS dataset is the first 12-month period during which religion data were collected from all adults, including proxies. The dataset was specifically created for this report and is not available for other purposes. Data have been weighted to post-2001 Census population estimates released in February 2003.

The importance of religion to self-identity was measured by the question: 'Suppose you were describing yourself, which of the things on this card would say something important about you?' Figures represent the percentage of people who included religion in their answer.



Health & Disability

Muslims report worst health

Muslim males and females in Great Britain had the highest rates of reported ill health in 2001.

Age-standardised rates of 'not good' health were 13 per cent for Muslim males and 16 per cent for Muslim females. Rates were also high for Sikhs: 10 per cent of males and 14 per cent of females rated their health as 'not good'. These rates, which take account of the difference in age structures between the religious groups, were higher than those of Jews and Christians, who were the least likely to rate their health as 'not good'.

Females were more likely than males to rate their health as 'not good' among most groups. The gender difference was most notable for Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus. Among females, 16 per cent of Muslims, 14 per cent of Sikhs and 11 per cent of Hindus rated their health as 'not good'. These rates were 3 to 4 percentage points higher than their respective male counterparts.

There was little gender difference in the rates for Christians and Jews, and no gender difference for those with no religion. Buddhists were the only group where males were more likely than females to say their health was 'not good'.

If the different age structures of the religious groups are not taken into account, Christian and Jewish groups have the highest proportions of people saying their health was 'not good'. This is a direct result of the older age profiles within each group.

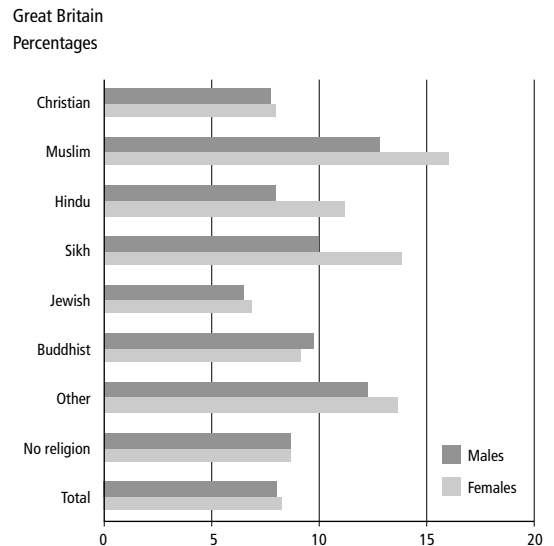
There are marked variations in rates of disability or long-term illness which restrict daily activities between people from different religious backgrounds in Great Britain.

In 2001 the highest overall rates of disability were found among Christians and Jews. However, once age was taken into account, Jewish people had the lowest rates of disability (13 per cent for both males and females). Christians had the second lowest age-standardised rates, at 16 per cent for males and 15 per cent for females respectively.

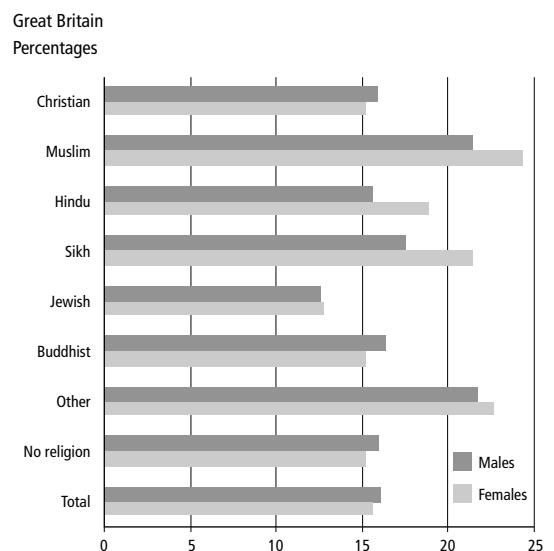
After taking account of the different age structures of the groups, Muslims had the highest rates of disability. Almost a quarter of Muslim females (24 per cent) had a disability, as did one in five (21 per cent) Muslim males.

In some groups the gender difference in rates of disability was much greater than in others. In Muslim, Hindu and Sikh groups disability rates for females were about 3 percentage points higher than for males. For Buddhists, Christians and those with no religion, disability rates were slightly higher for males than for females.

Age standardised 'not good' health rates: by religion and sex, April 2001



Age standardised limiting long-term illness or disability rates: by religion and sex, April 2001



Sources:

Census, April 2001, Office for National Statistics
 Census, April 2001, General Register Office for Scotland

Notes:

The general health question in the 2001 Census was 'Over the last twelve months would you say your health has on the whole been Good, Fairly Good, Not Good'.

Age-standardised rates allow comparisons between populations with different age structures. The method used here is direct standardisation using the European Standard Population.

The term disability is used to refer to limiting long-term illness or disability which restricts daily activities. It is calculated from a 'Yes' response to the question in the 2001 Census: 'Do you have any long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits your activities or the work you can do?'



Marriage Patterns

16% of young people with no religion cohabit

Living arrangements

Among 16 to 24 year olds, those with no religion and Muslims were the most likely to be living with a partner in Great Britain in 2001, either as a married or cohabiting couple (19 per cent for each group).

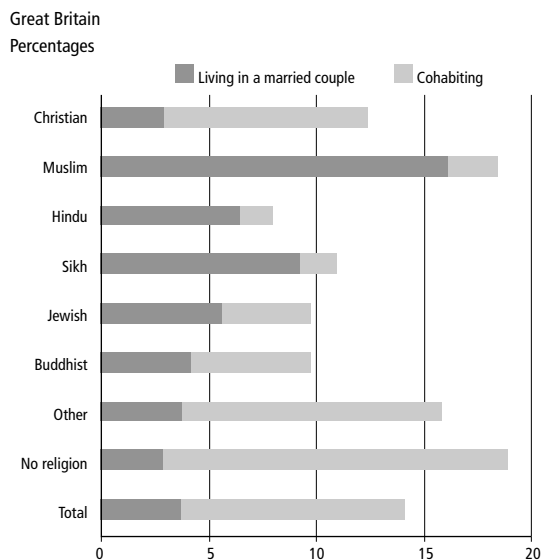
People with no religion were the most likely to be cohabiting (16 per cent of 16 to 24 year olds). Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims were the least likely to do so. This pattern is reflected across all age groups but is most marked among young adults aged 16 to 24. Young Muslims were the most likely to be living as part of a married couple whereas people with no religion were the least likely to do so.

Marital Status

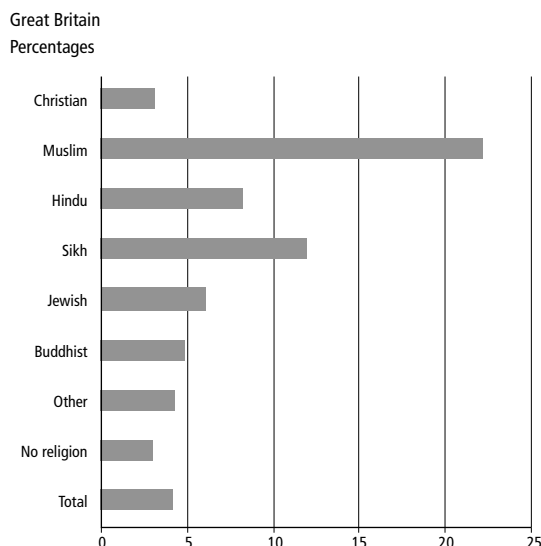
Young Muslim adults were more likely to be married (22 per cent) than were young people from any other religious background. As with people from other religions, not all of these were living with their spouse. Christians and those with no religion were the least likely to be married – 3 per cent of 16 to 24 year olds in each group.

Overall, Hindus and Sikhs are the least likely to be divorced, separated or re-married. This pattern was the same across most age groups in Great Britain in 2001. For example, among 45 to 54 year olds, one in ten Sikhs (10 per cent) and Hindus (11 per cent) who had ever been married described their current marital status as divorced, separated or re-married. This compares with 17 per cent of Muslims, 34 per cent of Christians and 43 per cent of those with no religion in the same age group.

Living arrangements of 16 to 24 year olds: by religion, April 2001



Percentage of 16 to 24 year olds who were married: by religion, April 2001



Sources:

Census, April 2001, Office for National Statistics
 Census, April 2001, General Register Office for Scotland



Households

Muslims have largest households

Muslim, Sikh and Hindu households in Great Britain are larger than households headed by someone of another religion. In 2001, households headed by a Muslim were largest, with an average size of 3.8 people, followed by households headed by Sikhs (3.6 people) and Hindus (3.2 people). A third of Muslim households (34 per cent) contained more than five people, as did 28 per cent of Sikh and 19 per cent of Hindu households.

Jewish, Christian and Buddhist households were smaller – each with an average size of 2.3 people. These groups have an older age structure than the other religious groups, and contain a higher proportion of one-person households. Over 30 per cent of these households contained only one person, compared with between 13 and 15 per cent of Sikh, Hindu or Muslim households.

Households headed by a Muslim are more likely than other households to contain children. Around two thirds (63 per cent) contained at least one dependent child in 2001, compared with around a quarter of Jewish (25 per cent) and Christian (27 per cent) households.

Muslim households also contained the highest number of children. A quarter (25 per cent) of Muslim households contained three or more dependent children, compared with 14 per cent of Sikh, 7 per cent of Hindu, and 5 per cent of Christian households.

The differences in the presence of children reflect partly the younger age structure of the Muslim population, and the intentions of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. The average intended number of children among Pakistani and Bangladeshi women was 3.4 and 3.6 respectively, compared with 2.4 among Indian women and 2.1 among White women.

Lone parent households are less common within Muslim, Hindu, Sikh or Jewish communities. Hindu headed households with dependent children were the least likely to be lone parent households in 2001, at 8 per cent. The proportions of Buddhist and Christian households with dependent children that were lone parent households were higher, 25 and 21 per cent respectively. Among households with dependent children headed by someone with no religious affiliation this figure was 26 per cent.

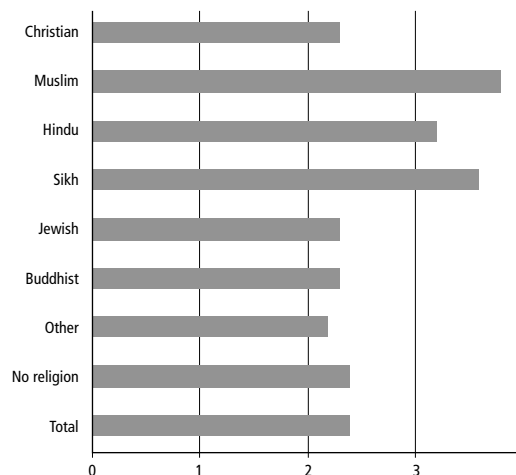
Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims are those most likely to live as married couples. Around 50 per cent of households headed by someone from one of these religions were married couple family households in 2001. This compared with between 27 and 38 per cent of households headed by people of other religions.

Jewish or Christian headed households are much more likely than those of other religions to consist only of pensioners. Again this reflects their older age structure. In 2001, around 30 per cent contained only pensioners, compared with less than 8 per cent among other groups. Nineteen per cent of Jewish and 17 per cent of Christian households were single-pensioner households. Among the other groups, no more than 5 per cent of households were single-pensioner households.

Sikh, Muslim, and Hindu households were more likely than other households to contain more than one family. Multiple-family households made up 7 per cent of all households in Great Britain overall in 2001. Among the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities they comprised between 19 and 21 per cent of households. These multiple-family households are likely to be single extended family households, particularly in the case of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh multiple-family households.

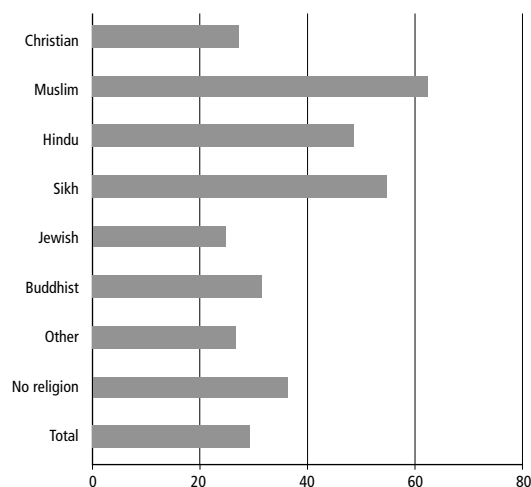
Average household size: by religion of household reference person, April 2001

Great Britain
People per household



Households with dependent children: by religion of household reference person, April 2001

Great Britain
Percentages



Sources:

Census, April 2001, Office for National Statistics
 Census, April 2001, General Register Office for Scotland
 Intended family size: Population Trends 112, Family building intentions in England and Wales: trends, outcomes and interpretations.

Notes:

Household Reference Person was introduced in the 2001 Census and replaces Head of Household. The Household Reference Person is used to assign the religion of the household. It does not follow that everyone in the household will be of the same religion as the Household Reference Person.

A dependent child is a person aged 0 to 15 in a household or aged 16 to 18 in full-time education and living with his or her parents.

Married couple and lone parent households contain at least one person below pensionable age.

Pensioners are people of pensionable age. Pensionable age is 65 and over for males and 60 and over for females.



Housing

Sikhs most likely to own their own homes

Sikh, Jewish and Hindu households are the most likely to own their own homes. Around three-quarters or more of each group did so in Great Britain in 2001 (82 per cent, 77 per cent and 74 per cent respectively). Muslim and Buddhist households were the least likely to be homeowners (52 per cent and 54 per cent respectively).

Jewish and Christian households were the most likely to own their homes outright rather than be buying with a mortgage, at 40 per cent and 32 per cent respectively. Their older age profiles account for this to some extent, as they will have had more years to finish paying off their mortgages.

Muslim households are the most likely to be living in social rented accommodation, that is accommodation rented from the council or housing association. In 2001, 28 per cent of Muslim households were living in social rented accommodation. Hindu, Sikh and Jewish households were the groups least likely to be social renters – ranging between 8 and 9 per cent.

Buddhist households were the most likely to be living in private rented accommodation (24 per cent). A very small percentage of all households live rent-free (2 per cent), but Muslim households were twice as likely as other households to do so (4 per cent).

Muslim households are the most likely to experience overcrowding. One third of Muslim households (32 per cent) lived in overcrowded accommodation in 2001, as did 22 per cent of Hindu and 19 per cent of Sikh households. Just 6 per cent of Christian households experienced overcrowding. The high proportions for Muslim, Sikh and Hindu households are, to some extent, a reflection of their large size. Their average sizes were 3.8, 3.6 and 3.2 people respectively, compared with 2.3 people among Christian and Jewish households.

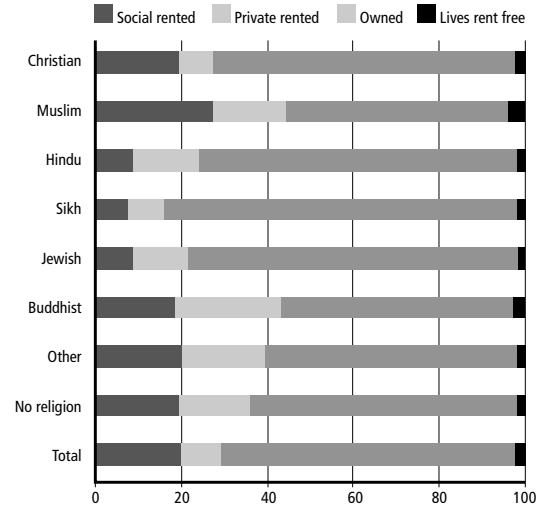
Muslim households were the most likely to lack central heating (12 per cent). Hindu and Sikh households were among the least likely to lack this facility (4 per cent and 5 per cent respectively). Eight per cent of Christian households did not have central heating. These differences could be seen across all household types, including households with children and pensioner only households.

Buddhists and Muslim households were the most likely to lack sole access to a bathroom (2 and 1 per cent respectively) and to not have self-contained accommodation (1 per cent for each). Again, this was true for all household types.

This pattern of housing deprivation among the different religious groups was evident across all regions and all socio-economic groups. It was particularly marked among households that had never worked and those experiencing long-term unemployment.

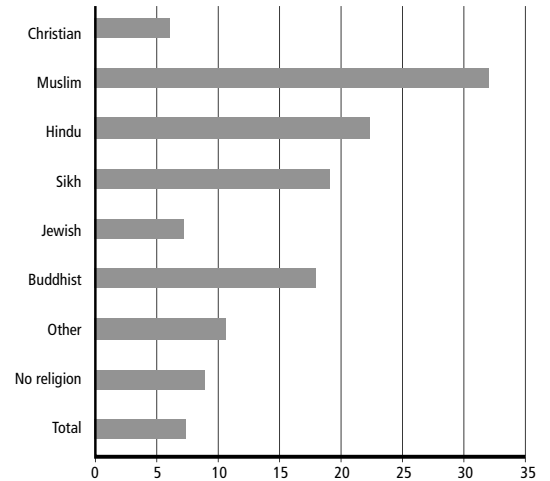
Religion of household reference person: by tenure, April 2001

Great Britain
Percentages



Households experiencing overcrowding: by religion of household reference person, April 2001

Great Britain
Percentages



Sources:

Census, April 2001, Office for National Statistics
Census, April 2001, General Register Office for Scotland

Notes:

Social rented includes accommodation that is rented from a council (Local Authority, Scottish Homes, Northern Ireland Housing Executive) or a Housing association, Housing Co-operative, Charitable Trust, Non-profit housing company or registered social landlord. Private rented includes accommodation that is rented from a private landlord or letting agency, employer of a household member, relative or friend of a household member, or other non social rented. Overcrowding is measured by 'occupancy rating'. This relates the actual number of rooms to the number of rooms 'required' by the members of the household (based on a relationship between them and their ages). A household with a rating of -1 or less can be considered to be overcrowded.



Education

One in three Muslims have no qualifications

In 2003-2004, almost a third (31 per cent) of Muslims of working age in Great Britain had no qualifications – the highest proportion for any religious group. They are also the least likely to have degrees (or equivalent qualifications).

After Muslims, Sikhs are the next most likely to have no qualifications, followed by Christians. Around a quarter (23 per cent) of Sikhs and 15 per cent of Christians had no qualifications. Overall, Sikhs are as likely as Christians to hold degrees (16 per cent in each group in 2003-2004), and young Sikhs are more likely than Christians of the same age to do so. The pattern is reversed among older age groups.

Jews and Buddhists, followed by Hindus, are the least likely to have no qualifications and the most likely to have degrees. A third of Jews and Buddhists (37 and 33 per cent respectively), and a quarter (26 per cent) of Hindus, had a degree.

Across all religions, the pattern for men and women of working age is similar but women are generally more likely than men to have no qualifications.

Muslims and Sikhs who were born in the UK are more likely than those born elsewhere to have a degree or equivalent qualification, irrespective of age. Among those under the age of 30, UK-born Sikhs and Muslims were twice as likely to have degrees in 2003-2004 as those born elsewhere. In contrast, there was no difference in the likelihood of having a degree between Hindus born in the UK and those born elsewhere.

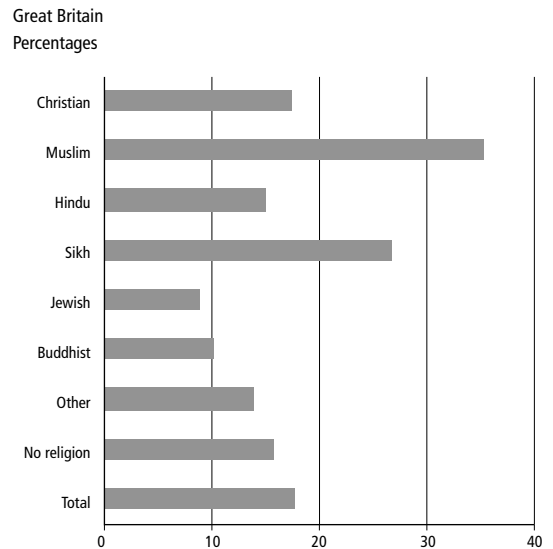
In January 2003 there were almost 7,000 state-maintained faith schools in England, making up 35 per cent of primary and 17 per cent of secondary schools. The overwhelming majority of these faith schools (99 per cent) were Christian. Christian schools had places for 1.7 million children and, in 2001, 5.1 million children aged 5 to 16 in England were described as Christian.

There were 371,000 school-aged (5 to 16 year old) Muslim children in England in 2001 and four Muslim state-maintained schools in 2003, catering for around 1,000 children. There were 64,000 school-aged Sikh children and two Sikh state-maintained schools, catering for 600 children.

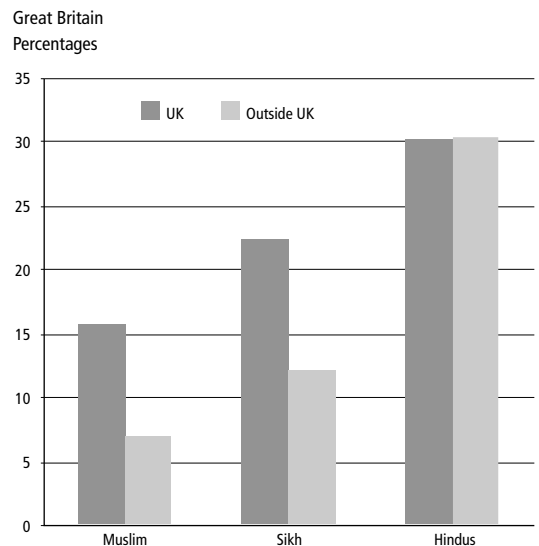
There were 33,000 Jewish school-aged children in England compared with 13,000 places in state-maintained Jewish schools.

There was also one Seventh Day Adventist secondary school and one Greek Orthodox primary school, catering for 300 and 200 pupils respectively.

People of working age with no qualifications: by religion, 2003-2004



Percentage of 16 to 30 year olds with a degree: by religion and country of birth, 2003-2004



Sources:

Qualifications: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics
 Schools: Annual Schools Census, January 2003, Department for Education and Skills
 Number of children: Census, April 2001, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

The 2003-2004 LFS data uses combined quarters for Summer 2003 to Spring 2004. This is the first 12-month period during which religion data were collected from all adults, including proxies. The dataset was specifically created for this report and is not available for other purposes. Only wave 1 and wave 5 respondents from each quarter are included, ensuring that each respondent was counted only once. Data have been weighted to post-2001 census population estimates released in February 2003.
 The working age population comprises males aged 16 to 64 and females aged 16 to 59.



Labour Market

Muslim unemployment rate highest

Unemployment rates for Muslims are higher than those for people from any other religion, for both men and women.

In 2003-2004, Muslims had the highest male unemployment rate in Great Britain. At 14 per cent, this was over three times the rate for Christian men (4 per cent). Unemployment rates for men in the other religious groups were between 5 and 11 per cent.

Among women, Muslims again had the highest unemployment rate, at 15 per cent. This was almost four times the rate for Christian women (4 per cent). Hindus (11 per cent) and Buddhists (10 per cent) had the next highest rates. Unemployment rates for women in the other religious groups were between 5 and 8 per cent.

Unemployment rates were highest among those aged under 25 for all the religious groups. Muslims aged 16 to 24 years had the highest unemployment rates of all. They were twice as likely as Christians of the same age to be unemployed – 22 per cent compared with 11 per cent.

Although unemployment rates for older Muslims were lower, there was a greater difference between their unemployment rates and those for people from other religious backgrounds. For example, Muslims aged 25 to 34 years were more than three times as likely as Christians of the same age to be unemployed – 14 per cent and 4 per cent respectively.

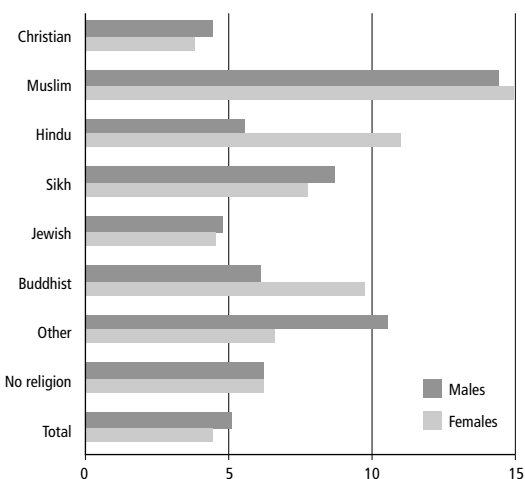
Men and women of working age from the Muslim faith are also more likely than other groups in Great Britain to be economically inactive, that is, not available for work and/or not actively seeking work. Reasons include being a student, being disabled, or looking after the family and home.

Among working age men, Muslims had the highest overall levels of economic inactivity in 2003-2004 – 30 per cent compared with 16 per cent of Christians. This is partly explained by the young age profile of Muslims and the correspondingly high proportion of students. However, among older men of working age, Muslims also had the highest levels of economic inactivity, largely due to ill health.

Within each religious group women were more likely than men to be economically inactive. The main reason was that they were looking after the family and home. Muslim women were considerably more likely than other women to be economically inactive. More than two thirds (68 per cent) of Muslim women of working age were economically inactive compared with no more than a third of women of working age in each of the other groups. Christian women were least likely to be economically inactive (25 per cent).

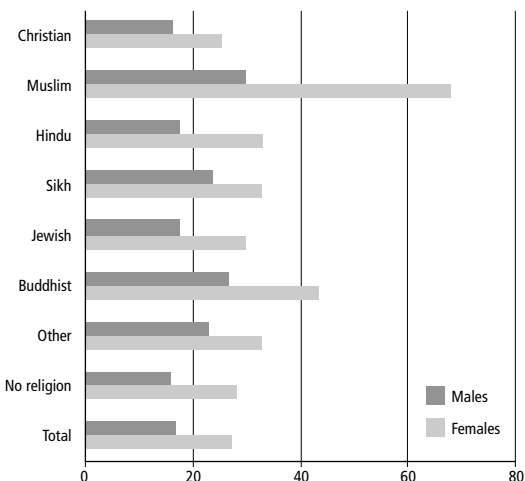
Unemployment rates: by religion and sex, 2003-2004

Great Britain
Percentages



Economic inactivity rates of working age people: by religion and sex, 2003-2004

Great Britain
Percentages



Source:

Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

The 2003-2004 LFS data uses combined quarters for Summer 2003 to Spring 2004. This is the first 12-month period during which religion data were collected from all adults, including proxies. The dataset was specifically created for this report and is not available for other purposes. Only wave 1 and wave 5 respondents from each quarter are included, ensuring that each respondent was counted only once. Data have been weighted to post-2001 Census population estimates released in February 2003.

Unemployment rate: based on the ILO definition as a percentage of all economically active. Economic inactivity rates are expressed as a proportion of the working age population (men aged 16 to 64, women aged 16 to 59).



Employment Patterns

Jews most likely to be self-employed

Jewish people were most likely to be self-employed in Great Britain in 2003-2004, followed by Muslims. Both groups were more likely than Christians, Sikhs and those with no religion to be self-employed. Around one in three Jewish people and around one in five Muslims were self-employed. This compared with around one in ten Christians, Sikhs and those with no religion.

Certain religious groups are concentrated in particular industries. In 2003-2004, 40 per cent of Muslim men in employment were working in the distribution, hotel and restaurant industry compared with 17 per cent of Christian men and no more than 29 per cent of men in any other group.

Muslims, together with Sikhs, were more likely than other men to be working in the transport and communication industry. More than one in seven from these religions worked in this sector compared with less than one in ten from any other religious group.

Jewish men were more likely than men from any other religion to work in the banking, finance and insurance industry. Around a third of Jewish men worked in this sector.

Among women in employment, Sikhs are more likely than other women to work in manufacturing, and the transport and communication industry. One in six Sikh women worked in manufacturing compared with less than one in ten women from any other religion.

Hindu and Muslim women are concentrated in the distribution, hotel and restaurant industry. Over a quarter of each group worked in this industry compared with around a fifth of Christian women.

Among employed men, Jews, Hindus and Buddhists are the most likely to work in managerial or professional occupations – over two fifths in each group in 2003-2004. One in 20 Hindu men were doctors compared with one in 200 Christian or Sikh men. However, a substantial proportion of Hindu men were also working in low skilled jobs.

Muslim and Sikh men are the least likely to be working in managerial or professional occupations (less than a third of these groups), and the most likely to be working in low skilled jobs. Muslim men are six times more likely than Christians or those with no religion to be taxi drivers.

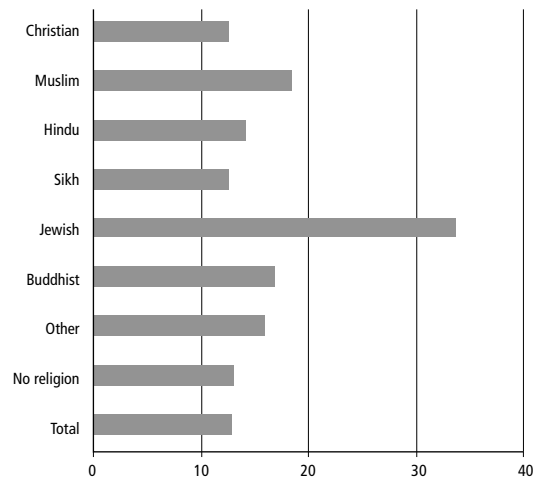
The proportion of Christian men working in managerial or professional occupations is similar to that for Muslims and Sikhs, at around 30 per cent. However, Christian men are more likely than Muslims and Sikhs to be working in skilled trade jobs and less likely to be in low skilled jobs.

Patterns are similar for women, although not as pronounced. Sikh women are the least likely to be managers or professionals (15 per cent) and the most likely to be working in low skilled jobs. Around 10 per cent were working as process, plant and machine operatives compared with around 3 per cent in most other groups.

Muslim and Hindu women are concentrated in sales and customer service jobs – 18 per cent in each religion compared with 12 per cent among Christians and those with no religion.

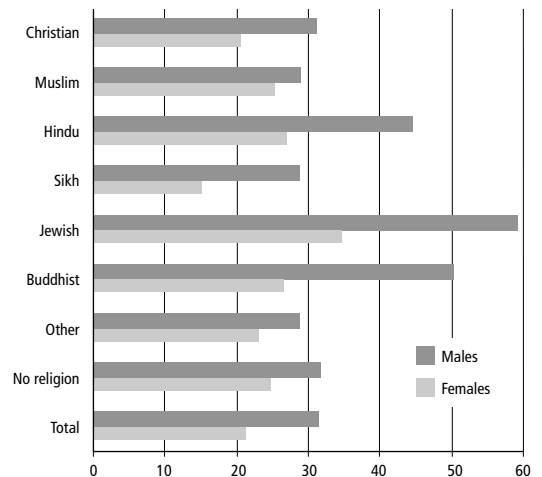
Self employed as a percentage of all in employment: by religion, 2003-2004

Great Britain
Percentages



People in employment working in managerial and professional occupations: by religion, 2003-2004

Great Britain
Percentages



Source:

Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

The 2003-2004 LFS data uses combined quarters for Summer 2003 to Spring 2004. This is the first 12-month period during which religion data were collected from all adults, including proxies. The dataset was specifically created for this report and is not available for other purposes. Only wave 1 and wave 5 respondents from each quarter are included, ensuring that each respondent was counted only once. Data have been weighted to post-2001 Census population estimates released in February 2003.

Self-employed industry and occupation data are expressed as a percentage of all in employment.

Low skilled occupations include: Process, Plant and Machine Operatives and Elementary occupations.



Communities in Northern Ireland

Protestants largest community

People from a Protestant community background make up the largest group in Northern Ireland. In 2001, 53 per cent of the population was from a Protestant community background. People from a Catholic community background made up the second largest group (44 per cent).

There were similar proportions of men and women in each of the communities. Forty-nine per cent of people from a Protestant background were men and 51 per cent were women. Among Catholics, 48 per cent were men and 52 per cent were women. In contrast, those with no religious community background were more likely to be men (55 per cent).

Northern Ireland data on religion are different to those for Great Britain because a very different Census question was asked in Northern Ireland. The religious categories were all divisions of the Christian category together with an 'other religion' option. The distinction between Catholics and Protestants was not available for the rest of Great Britain.

People from a Protestant community background have an older age structure than those from a Catholic community background. In 2001, 17 per cent of Protestants were aged 65 years or over compared with 10 per cent of Catholics. Conversely, over a quarter (27 per cent) of people from a Catholic community background were under 16 years of age, compared with a fifth (20 per cent) of those from a Protestant background.

Northern Ireland is divided into five European Union geographic areas (NUTS), but only one of these areas, Belfast, was inhabited by roughly equal proportions of people from Catholic and Protestant community backgrounds in 2001 (47 per cent and 49 per cent respectively).

Outer Belfast and East of Northern Ireland were the areas with the highest proportions of people from a Protestant background (74 per cent and 62 per cent respectively). The highest proportions of people from a Catholic background were found in the West and South of Northern Ireland (65 per cent) and in the North of Northern Ireland (57 per cent).

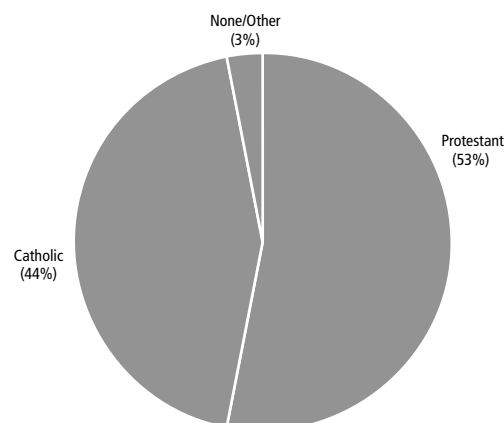
The spatial concentration of the different religions can be seen at a smaller geographical level. People from Catholic and Protestant community backgrounds were represented in roughly equal numbers in only two of the 26 local government districts in Northern Ireland in 2001 – Armagh and Belfast.

Protestants formed the majority population in 13 local government districts and in six of these districts they made up more than three quarters of the population. The highest concentrations of Protestants were found in Carrickfergus (85 per cent), Ards (83 per cent) and North Down (80 per cent).

Catholics formed the majority population in 11 local government districts. However, they accounted for more than three quarters of the local population in only two: Newry and Mourne (where 81 per cent were from the Catholic community) and Derry (where 75 per cent were Catholics).

Community background (religion or religion bought up in), April 2001

Northern Ireland
Percentages



Source:

Census, April 2001, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

Notes:

The term community background refers to a person's current religion or if no current religion is stated, the religion that that person was brought up in. Protestant includes 'Other Christian' and 'Christian related', and those brought up as Protestants. Catholic includes those respondents who gave their religion as Catholic or Roman Catholic, and those brought up as Catholics.

NUTS stands for European Union Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics. NUTS is a hierarchical classification of areas that provide a breakdown of the European Union's economic territory so that regional statistics that are comparable across the Union can be produced.



Northern Ireland Labour Market

Unemployment rate higher for Catholics than Protestants

In Northern Ireland, unemployment rates among Catholics were higher than those among Protestants for both men and women in 2002/03.

The unemployment rate for Catholic men was 9 per cent compared with 5 per cent for Protestant men. Among women, the unemployment rates were 6 per cent for Catholics compared with 3 per cent for Protestants.

This difference is evident for both men and women, and among all age groups, except for men aged under 25. Within this group, unemployment rates for the two communities were very similar.

A higher proportion of Catholic than Protestant working age men and women were economically inactive, that is not available for work and/or not actively seeking work. Reasons for economic inactivity include being a student, being disabled or looking after the family and home.

Overall in 2002/03, 24 per cent of Catholic men were economically inactive compared with 18 per cent of Protestant men. This pattern was the same across most age groups.

Economic inactivity rates were higher for women than men, and there was a greater difference between the two religions among women than among men: 42 per cent of Catholic women were inactive compared with 31 per cent of Protestant women. This pattern occurred across all age groups.

Among men a higher proportion of Catholics than Protestants worked in the construction industry, 25 per cent compared with 15 per cent.

There was little variation between Catholic and Protestant women in the industries in which they worked.

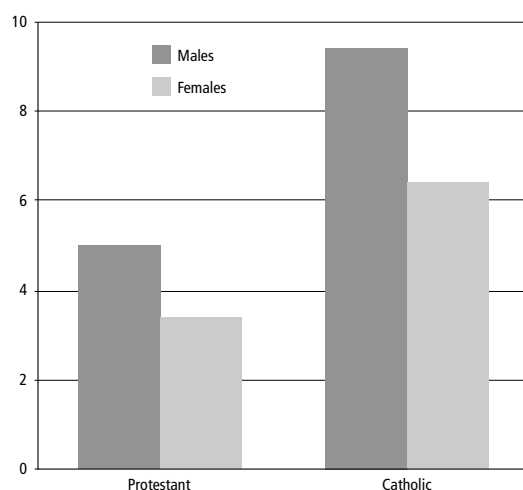
For most age groups there was little difference between Catholics and Protestants in educational achievement in 2002/03. However, Catholics aged 50 and over were more likely than Protestants of the same age to have no qualifications (49 per cent compared with 40 per cent).

In 2002/03, around one in ten of both Protestants and Catholics held a degree. Among both groups a quarter had GCE 'A' levels as their highest qualification while a quarter had no qualifications.

Unemployment rates: by religion and sex, 2002/03

Northern Ireland

Percentages



Source:

Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

The period 2002/03 refers to the year beginning 1st March 2002 and ending 28th February 2003.

Respondents to the Labour Force Survey were asked: 'What is your religious denomination?'

Unemployment rates are expressed as a percentage of the economically active population.

Analysis excludes those with No Religion and those belonging to Other religions.

Qualification questions are asked to people in employment aged 16 and over, and to all other people of working age (males 16-64 and females 16-59).

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Contact details:

Content: Amanda White
020 7533 5731

General series: Hayley Butcher
020 7533 5882

Office for National Statistics
1 Drummond Gate
London SW1V 2QQ

Telephone: 0845 601 3034

www.statistics.gov.uk

