

Sikhs in England and Wales, Census of Population 2021, England and Wales

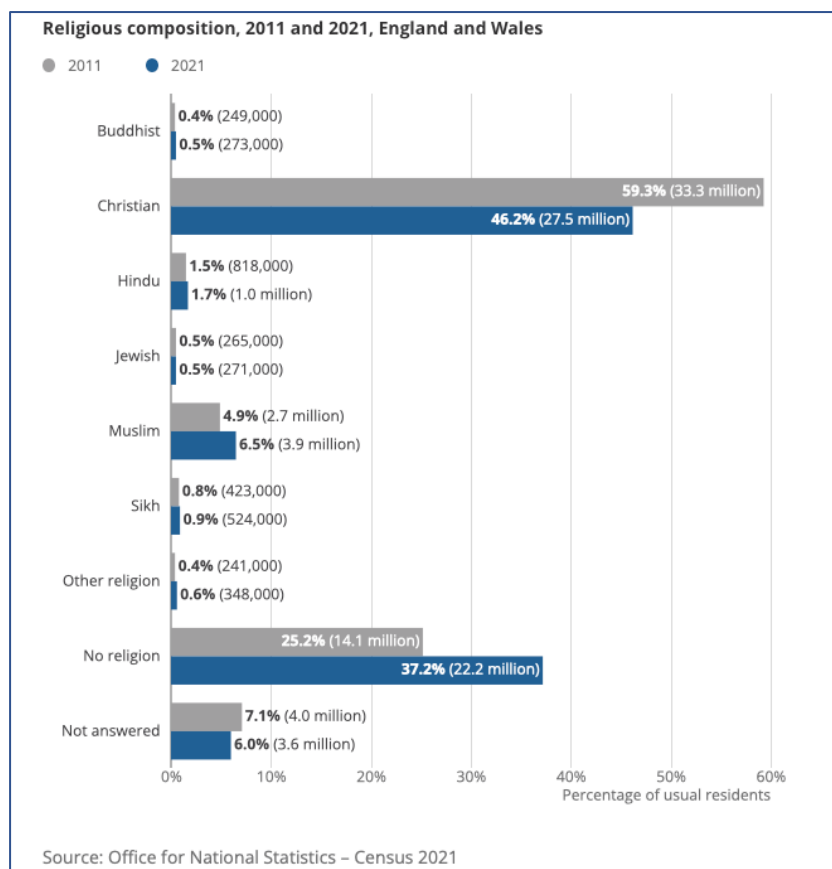
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Census figures published today show that 524,000 Sikhs lived in England and Wales in 2021, up 24% since 2011, and now comprise 0.9% of the population.

The Office for National Statistics has today published statistics by Ethnicity, Religion, National Identity and Language from the Census of Population 2021. This note summarises the information on Sikhs in England and Wales, and compares the changes from the 2011 Census. This is based on analysis of the Religion question in the Census. 77,000 people also ticked “Other” under Ethnicity and then wrote in “Sikh” as their ethnicity. Most of these people are likely to have ticked “Sikh” under Religion too, but some may not have.

The chart below shows breakdown of the population of England and Wales by religion, for 2011 and 2021. 46% of the population described themselves as Christian, the first time that this has fallen below 50% of the total, while there was a large increase in those saying “No religion”. Other faith groups all saw increases of varying sizes (Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and “Other religion”).



Number of Sikhs in England and Wales

The total number of Sikhs in England and Wales in 2021 is 524,140. This compares with a total of 423,158 in the 2011 Census, an increase of 24 per cent. There were 520,092 Sikhs in England in 2021 compared with 420,196 in 2011, and 4,048 Sikhs in Wales in 2021, compared with 2,962 in 2011. Sikhs comprise 0.88% of the population of England and Wales in 2021, compared with 0.75% in 2011.

Wales and English Regional breakdown

The following table shows the numbers of Sikhs in each region of England and Wales, and percentage increase since 2011. All regions show increases, but the largest increases of about one third are in South East, North West and East of England, and in Wales. Yorkshire and The Humber saw the smallest increase of about 8 per cent.

Number of Sikhs in England and Wales by English Region & Wales Census 2011 and Census 2021			
Region	2011	2021	% increase
East	18,213	24,284	33.3%
East Midlands	44,335	53,950	21.7%
London	126,134	144,543	14.6%
North East	5,964	7,206	20.8%
North West	8,857	11,862	33.9%
South East	54,941	74,348	35.3%
South West	5,892	7,465	26.7%
West Midlands	133,681	172,398	29.0%
Yorkshire and The Humber	22,179	24,034	8.4%
Total England	420,196	520,092	23.8%
Wales	2,962	4,048	36.7%
Total England and Wales	423,158	524,140	23.9%

Source: Office for National Statistic

Local Authority areas with the largest Sikh populations in England and Wales

Annex 1 shows all Local Authority areas with Sikh populations over 1,000 in 2021, also comparing with the populations in the same areas in 2011.

Sandwell has overtaken Birmingham as the local authority with the largest Sikh population in England and Wales, with an increase of 46% since 2011, whereas Birmingham's Sikh population only increased by 2%. Walsall, Dudley, Solihull and Wolverhampton in West Midlands all saw increases of over 40%.

Areas that have seen more than a doubling of their Sikh populations are Havering, Harborough, Runnymede, Bracknell Forest and Surrey Heath, whereas Sikh populations in Newham, Bradford, Nottingham, Greenwich, North Hertfordshire and Brent declined. This possibly reflects some movement from urban centres to more rural or outer city areas.

Areas with the highest concentrations of Sikhs (Sikhs as a percentage of the total population of the area) are: Wolverhampton (12.0%), Sandwell (11.5%), Slough (11.3%), Hillingdon (8.6%), Hounslow (8.6%) and Gravesham (8.0%).

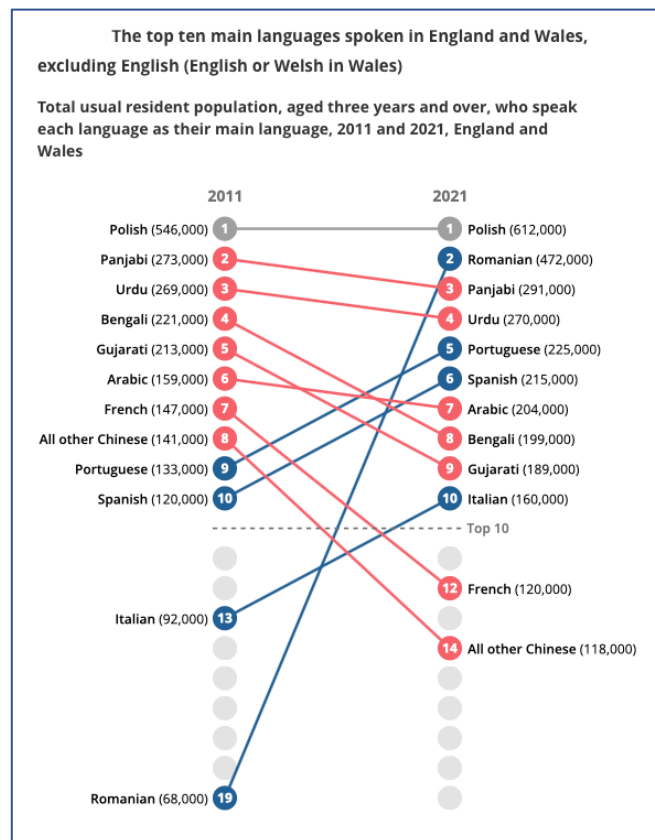
Language spoken – Panjabi

Panjabi is the language most commonly spoken by Sikhs living in Britain, alongside English. Panjabi is also spoken by people of other religions from the parts of Panjab that are in both India and Pakistan.

The Census asked about people’s main language. 291,000 people reported Panjabi as their main language in 2021, an increase of 7% from 273,000 in 2011. In 2011, Panjabi had been the 3rd most common main language in England and Wales, behind English and Polish. However, a large increase in the number of Romanian speakers means that Panjabi is now placed 4th, after English, Polish and Romanian.

The chart below shows the different outcomes for the languages of the Indian subcontinent. Although the number of Panjabi speakers increased by 18,000, Gujarati decreased by 24,000, Bengali decreased by 22,000, and Urdu increased by just 1,000. The number of Romanian speakers increased by over 400,000, reflecting the large increase in population numbers from Romania. There were also increases in the number of Portuguese and Spanish speakers, while speakers of French, Arabic and “All other Chinese” declined.

It should be noted that for those who speak more than one language, the Census will only record their main language, and therefore it will not provide a complete picture of how many people speak each language. For example, many second, third and fourth generation persons of migrants from the sub-continent may now regard English as their main language, although they may also speak Panjabi, Hindi, Urdu or other languages.



Annex 1

Sikhs in England and Wales, Census of Population					
	Area	Census 2011	Census 2021	% change from 2011 to 2021	Sikhs as % of total population
1	Sandwell	26,934	39,252	46%	11.5%
2	Birmingham	32,376	33,126	2%	2.9%
3	Wolverhampton	22,689	31,769	40%	12.0%
4	Ealing	26,778	28,491	6%	7.8%
5	Hillingdon	18,230	26,339	44%	8.6%
6	Hounslow	22,749	24,677	8%	8.6%
7	Slough	14,889	17,985	21%	11.3%
8	Redbridge	17,377	17,622	1%	5.7%
9	Coventry	15,912	17,297	9%	5.0%
10	Walsall	11,606	17,148	48%	6.0%
11	Leicester	14,457	16,451	14%	4.5%
12	Leeds	8,914	10,047	13%	1.2%
13	Derby	8,891	9,762	10%	3.7%
14	Buckinghamshire	*	8,811	*	1.6%
15	Gravesham	7,743	8,560	11%	8.0%
16	Warwick	5,373	6,299	17%	4.2%
17	Newham	6,421	5,638	-12%	1.6%
18	Dudley	3,694	5,316	44%	1.6%
19	Bexley	4,156	5,272	27%	2.1%
20	Solihull	3,504	5,029	44%	2.3%
21	Bradford	5,125	4,834	-6%	0.9%
22	Windsor and Maidenhead	2,941	4,517	54%	2.9%
23	Havering	1,928	4,498	133%	1.7%
24	Medway	3,846	4,363	13%	1.6%
25	Oadby and Wigston	3,664	4,342	19%	7.5%
26	Barking and Dagenham	2,952	4,284	45%	2.0%
27	Southampton	3,476	4,192	21%	1.7%
28	Bedford	3,336	4,114	23%	2.2%
29	Nottingham	4,312	4,110	-5%	1.3%
30	Nuneaton and Bedworth	2,739	3,529	29%	2.6%
31	Kirklees	3,330	3,476	4%	0.8%
32	Greenwich	3,490	3,229	-7%	1.1%
33	Luton	2,347	3,032	29%	1.3%
34	Wokingham	2,043	2,992	46%	1.7%
35	Blaby	1,849	2,927	58%	2.8%
36	Telford and Wrekin	2,118	2,851	35%	1.5%
37	Harrow	2,752	2,743	0%	1.1%
38	Manchester	2,292	2,718	19%	0.5%
39	Spelthorne	1,325	2,612	97%	2.5%
40	North Hertfordshire	2,447	2,280	-7%	1.7%

* New Unitary Authorities created since 2020

Sikhs in England and Wales, Census of Population (continued)					
	Area	Census 2011	Census 2021	% change from 2011 to 2021	Sikhs as % of total population
41	South Derbyshire	1,400	2,263	62%	2.1%
42	Bristol, City of	2,133	2,247	5%	0.5%
43	Charnwood	1,241	2,042	65%	1.1%
44	Thurrock	1,224	2,030	66%	1.2%
45	Dartford	1,543	2,014	31%	1.7%
46	Richmond upon Thames	1,581	1,987	26%	1.0%
47	Trafford	1,652	1,984	20%	0.8%
48	Milton Keynes	1,372	1,959	43%	0.7%
49	Hackney	1,872	1,867	0%	0.7%
50	Epping Forest	1,253	1,847	47%	1.4%
51	West Northamptonshire	*	1,791	*	0.4%
52	North Northamptonshire	*	1,787	*	0.5%
53	South Staffordshire	1,027	1,716	67%	1.6%
54	Croydon	1,450	1,654	14%	0.4%
55	Rugby	840	1,552	85%	1.4%
56	Brent	1,709	1,530	-10%	0.5%
57	Barnet	1,269	1,524	20%	0.4%
58	Cardiff	1,317	1,517	15%	0.4%
59	Harborough	630	1,467	133%	1.5%
60	Newcastle upon Tyne	1,223	1,449	18%	0.5%
61	Swindon	1,228	1,448	18%	0.6%
62	Kingston upon Thames	1,236	1,428	16%	0.8%
63	Central Bedfordshire	746	1,399	88%	0.5%
64	Doncaster	1,140	1,391	22%	0.5%
65	Peterborough	1,184	1,348	14%	0.6%
66	Waltham Forest	1,209	1,285	6%	0.5%
67	Runnymede	551	1,269	130%	1.4%
68	Enfield	1,078	1,199	11%	0.4%
69	Reading	947	1,194	26%	0.7%
70	Rushcliffe	902	1,167	29%	1.0%
71	Bromsgrove	609	1,152	89%	1.2%
75	Preston	930	1,091	17%	0.7%
73	Bromley	736	1,068	45%	0.3%
74	Bracknell Forest	455	1,055	132%	0.8%
75	Surrey Heath	483	1,054	118%	1.2%
76	Broxtowe	921	1,037	13%	0.9%
77	Eastleigh	854	1,023	20%	0.7%
78	South Gloucestershire	623	1,006	61%	0.3%

* *New Unitary Authorities created since 2020*

Source: Office for National Statistics