



## CASE-BROOKINGS CENSUS BRIEFS

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# Minority Ethnic Groups in Britain

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November 2004

## SUMMARY

- The increase in the numbers of people from different ethnic backgrounds and countries was one of the most significant changes in Britain during the 1990s. This paper uses data from the 1991 and 2001 Censuses to describe the distribution of Britain's main minority ethnic groups, and how it has changed, both across the country as a whole and in the four largest conurbations.
- Britain is still a predominantly white society, with 92% of its population from the white majority in 2001. However, this picture is changing, with a rapidly increasing diversity of ethnic groups and cultures. According to Census data, Britain's population grew by 4% in the 1990s. 73% of this growth was due to minority ethnic groups, which grew by about 1.6 million people compared with 600,000 in the white population. The fastest growing group was 'Black African', more than doubling during the decade. Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Chinese groups also saw rapid growth.
- Minority ethnic populations grew in virtually every local authority area, including those with very few minorities at the start of the decade as well as those where minority ethnic communities were already established. This is consistent with the pattern of dispersal that was evident in the 1980s.
- As a percentage of their starting point, these increases were greatest in areas with small minority ethnic populations in 1991. However, the greatest numerical increases were in areas where there were already sizeable minority ethnic populations, which were mainly inner urban areas. This is consistent with a pattern of natural population growth and continuing immigration to join established family members.
- This population growth took place in the context of continuing counter-urbanisation and regional economic decline. While minority ethnic populations in inner urban areas continued to grow, white populations in many of these areas continued to decline. As a result, minority ethnic groups made up a greater share of the population of some urban neighbourhoods in 2001 than they had in 1991.
- These twin patterns of dispersal and concentration present both opportunities and challenges for the development of our increasingly multi-cultural society.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper is the second in a series of Census Briefs produced by CASE and inspired by the work of the Brookings Institution in the United States whose Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy has played a creative role in informing and in part helping shape the recovery of US cities. The series aims to help advance the debate on the future of cities and towns in Britain by presenting evidence of key urban and neighbourhood trends during the 1990s, using evidence from the 1991 and 2001 Censuses. The first paper in the series covered population growth and decline in Britain's cities and regions. This one looks more closely at changes in the size and distribution of minority ethnic groups, nationally and within the major conurbations where they are concentrated.



The increase in the numbers of people from different ethnic backgrounds and countries is one of the most significant changes in Britain since the 1991 Census. The 2001 Census gives us the chance to quantify these changes and explain their significance in the areas affected. In this paper, we use Census data from 2001 and 1991 firstly to describe the distribution of Britain's main minority ethnic groups; secondly to describe changes in their distribution over the 1990s; and thirdly to show what has happened in four large conurbations including London, for which we use electoral ward data to indicate change at the neighbourhood level.

The story we tell is one of major continuing growth in the minority ethnic populations of the country and of these cities in particular, far greater than the growth in population as a whole. In numerical terms, the growth in minority populations has been greatest in areas where they were already well established. Often accompanied by decreasing white populations, this has resulted in greater concentrations of minority groups within certain inner urban areas than was the case in 1991. Equally striking, however, is the continued trend, already visible in the 1991 Census (Peach, 1996) towards growth of the more established minority groups in other areas as well. The number and proportion of people from minority ethnic groups has grown in virtually every local authority area, even though the numbers remain small in many cases. Thus, the white population is becoming less isolated from minority ethnic groups, as these groups spread and grow in a larger number of areas, but at the same time, in certain inner urban neighbourhoods, minority ethnic groups are becoming more isolated as their numbers grow and white populations dwindle.

Knowing more about this changing composition of the population and the pattern of settlement is interesting in itself. But it is also important for policy makers and practitioners in various fields to understand what is happening so that responses can also adapt. Here we aim to present as objectively as possible what is actually happening, where it is happening and on what scale, to provide a basis for this understanding. In our conclusions, we discuss what implications can and cannot be drawn from the data, and their significance for policy.

In producing this series, we owe a debt of thanks to Bruce Katz and other colleagues in Brookings for inspiring us to undertake the work jointly with them; to Professor William Julius Wilson of Harvard for his constant interest in our work on poor neighbourhoods and his willingness to join the wider urban debate in this country as well as in the US; to Professors Tony Champion, Duncan McLennan and Ivan Turok for their challenging advice and willingness to share expertise; to David Lunts, head of the Urban Unit at ODPM and the many other colleagues in government who have encouraged us to do this work; also to Richard Best at the Joseph Rowntree Foundation for supporting our original work on the slow death of great cities and to Richard Rogers for sharing his expertise and experience in our follow up to the Urban Task Force, *Cities for a Small Country* (Rogers and Power 2000). Throughout, we draw on our work in CASE for the area study funded by the ESRC where we track 12

of the poorest urban areas in the country over 7 years, written up by Ruth Lupton (2003) and Katharine Mumford and Anne Power (2003), and on the work of our colleagues at the Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy at Brookings, whose work on the US Census can be found at <http://www.brookings.edu/es/urban/issues/demographics/demographics.htm>.

In producing this second brief, we are particularly grateful to Ludi Simpson from the Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research at the University of Manchester for sharing his expertise, data and insights, to Sarah Fielder at ODPM and to Becky Tunstall and Vesla Weaver who read and commented on the drafts. Census data has been made available by the Office for National Statistics under Crown Copyright and is reproduced here with the permission of the Controller of HMSO and the Queen's Printer for Scotland.

## ANALYSING ETHNIC CHANGE USING THE CENSUS

The Census of Population, conducted in England and Wales by The Office for National Statistics (ONS) and in Scotland by the General Register Office for Scotland (GRO), is the only source of data on the ethnic composition of the population at small area level in Great Britain. A question on ethnicity was introduced for the first time in 1991, meaning that the 2001 Census offers the first chance to compare the geographical distribution of ethnic groups, over time, all previous attempts having been based on estimation from questions about country of birth. This is an important opportunity, not to be missed.

There are, nevertheless, some difficulties in making comparisons over time. One is the problem of the use of different ethnic categories in 1991 and 2001, principally the introduction of 'mixed race' options in 2001. While in the 1991 Census, respondents could identify with one of the major ethnic groups or declare themselves 'other', in 2001 they could identify in mixed categories, such as 'mixed white and black British'. 674,000 people (more than 1% of the population) identified as 'mixed race' in 2001, with mixed black/white accounting for a little more than half this number, and mixed white/Asian about one third. This will have had an impact on numbers in all the other categories. For example the number in the 'Black other' category dropped from 178,000 to 97,000 over the decade and the number of people identifying as 'other' dropped from 290,000 in 1991 to 229,000 in 2001. It seems likely that at least some of this change was due to people re-classifying as mixed race in 2001. We cannot, however, tell how much.

Other problems arise from the general difficulty of comparing the 1991 and 2001 Censuses because of under-enumeration and changes in the counting of students. 1991 Census counts were not adjusted to take into account estimated under-enumeration and thus were thought to be lower than the actual population. 2001 Census counts were adjusted for under-enumeration prior to publication and are thought to be more accurate.

Local Authority	Number of people in all minority groups 1991	Number of people in all minority groups 2001	Change in numbers of minorities	% change in numbers of minorities	Minorities as % of LA population 1991	Minorities as % of LA population 2001	Percentage point increase in minorities
Wansbeck	326	639	313	96%	0.5%	1.0%	0.5%
North Devon	451	834	383	85%	0.5%	1.0%	0.4%
West Dorset	451	1225	774	172%	0.5%	1.3%	0.8%
East Lindsey	611	1342	731	120%	0.5%	1.0%	0.5%
Angus	568	854	286	50%	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%
Isle of Anglesey	359	481	122	34%	0.5%	0.7%	0.2%
South Ayrshire	579	763	184	32%	0.5%	0.7%	0.2%
Midlothian	405	740	335	83%	0.5%	0.9%	0.4%
South Somerset	727	1696	969	133%	0.5%	1.1%	0.6%
Wychavon	522	1337	815	156%	0.5%	1.2%	0.7%
South Norfolk	523	1214	691	132%	0.5%	1.1%	0.6%
Inverclyde	455	750	295	65%	0.5%	0.9%	0.4%
Flintshire	713	1194	481	67%	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%
Bolsover	350	631	281	80%	0.5%	0.9%	0.4%
Sedgemoor	482	1161	679	141%	0.5%	1.1%	0.6%
South Shropshire	187	361	174	93%	0.5%	0.9%	0.4%
Restormel	421	1022	601	143%	0.5%	1.1%	0.6%
North Ayrshire	666	936	270	41%	0.5%	0.7%	0.2%
West Somerset	154	285	131	85%	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%
North Dorset	253	850	597	236%	0.5%	1.4%	0.9%
Mendip	464	1219	755	163%	0.5%	1.2%	0.7%
Purbeck	205	521	316	154%	0.5%	1.2%	0.7%
Wear Valley	300	494	194	65%	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%
Wyre	481	1212	731	152%	0.5%	1.1%	0.7%
North Cornwall	348	711	363	104%	0.5%	0.9%	0.4%
East Ayrshire	575	810	235	41%	0.5%	0.7%	0.2%
Aberdeenshire	1006	1628	622	62%	0.5%	0.7%	0.3%
North Shropshire	246	640	394	160%	0.5%	1.1%	0.7%
Caradon	356	573	217	61%	0.5%	0.7%	0.3%
Mid Devon	295	554	259	88%	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%
North Norfolk	409	772	363	89%	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%
South Hams	348	747	399	115%	0.4%	0.9%	0.5%
Moray	363	765	402	111%	0.4%	0.9%	0.4%
East Lothian	365	655	290	79%	0.4%	0.7%	0.3%
West Devon	199	435	236	119%	0.4%	0.9%	0.5%
Hambleton	334	632	298	89%	0.4%	0.8%	0.3%
Derbyshire Dales	283	638	355	125%	0.4%	0.9%	0.5%
Sedgefield	374	569	195	52%	0.4%	0.7%	0.2%
South Lakeland	397	820	423	107%	0.4%	0.8%	0.4%
Eilean Siar	119	172	53	45%	0.4%	0.6%	0.2%
Torridge	207	574	367	177%	0.4%	1.0%	0.6%
Staffordshire Moorlands	371	726	355	96%	0.4%	0.8%	0.4%
Forest of Dean	292	739	447	153%	0.4%	0.9%	0.5%
Copeland	276	485	209	76%	0.4%	0.7%	0.3%
East Devon	444	926	482	109%	0.4%	0.7%	0.4%
Teesdale	91	205	114	125%	0.4%	0.8%	0.5%
Derwentside	320	537	217	68%	0.4%	0.6%	0.3%
Dumfries & Galloway	528	969	441	84%	0.4%	0.7%	0.3%
Tynedale	196	399	203	104%	0.3%	0.7%	0.3%
Orkney Islands	67	86	19	28%	0.3%	0.4%	0.1%
Allerdale	320	572	252	79%	0.3%	0.6%	0.3%
Selby	205	516	311	152%	0.3%	0.7%	0.4%
Scottish Borders	301	589	288	96%	0.3%	0.6%	0.3%
Ryedale	132	320	188	142%	0.3%	0.6%	0.4%
Berwick-upon-Tweed	71	103	32	45%	0.3%	0.4%	0.1%
Eden	113	212	99	88%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%
Alnwick	57	123	66	116%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%
Isles of Scilly	1	6	5	500%	0.0%	0.3%	0.2%



Local Authority	Number of people in all minority groups 1991	Number of people in all minority groups 2001	Change in numbers of minorities	% change in numbers of minorities	Minorities as % of LA population 1991	Minorities as % of LA population 2001	Percentage point increase in minorities
Fylde	548	1051	503	92%	0.8%	1.4%	0.7%
Babergh	614	1072	458	75%	0.8%	1.3%	0.5%
West Lancashire	828	1605	777	94%	0.8%	1.5%	0.7%
North Warwickshire	465	839	374	80%	0.8%	1.4%	0.6%
Newark and Sherwood	783	1551	768	98%	0.8%	1.5%	0.7%
Wrexham	938	1403	465	50%	0.8%	1.1%	0.3%
Halton UA	933	1425	492	53%	0.8%	1.2%	0.5%
Fenland	561	1173	612	109%	0.8%	1.4%	0.7%
Merthyr Tydfil	442	564	122	28%	0.7%	1.0%	0.3%
Neath Port Talbot	1025	1448	423	41%	0.7%	1.1%	0.3%
Boston	394	858	464	118%	0.7%	1.5%	0.8%
Fife	2519	4426	1907	76%	0.7%	1.3%	0.5%
Isle of Wight UA	910	1749	839	92%	0.7%	1.3%	0.6%
North Kesteven	582	1030	448	77%	0.7%	1.1%	0.4%
Taunton Deane	681	1597	916	135%	0.7%	1.6%	0.8%
Clackmannanshire	344	403	59	17%	0.7%	0.8%	0.1%
Conwy	764	1157	393	51%	0.7%	1.1%	0.3%
Congleton	605	1048	443	73%	0.7%	1.2%	0.4%
Torbay UA	856	1601	745	87%	0.7%	1.2%	0.5%
Vale Royal	815	1501	686	84%	0.7%	1.2%	0.5%
Hartlepool UA	644	1042	398	62%	0.7%	1.2%	0.5%
Tewkesbury	498	1068	570	114%	0.7%	1.4%	0.7%
Torfaen	627	852	225	36%	0.7%	0.9%	0.2%
South Lanarkshire	2046	3404	1358	66%	0.7%	1.1%	0.4%
Penwith	406	675	269	66%	0.7%	1.1%	0.4%
Caerphilly	1159	1548	389	34%	0.7%	0.9%	0.2%
Tendring	859	1853	994	116%	0.7%	1.3%	0.7%
Waveney	726	1400	674	93%	0.7%	1.2%	0.6%
Redcar and Cleveland UA	978	1473	495	51%	0.7%	1.1%	0.4%
Ashfield	730	1185	455	62%	0.7%	1.1%	0.4%
Monmouthshire	537	964	427	80%	0.7%	1.1%	0.5%
St Helens	1200	2056	856	71%	0.7%	1.2%	0.5%
Stratford-on-Avon	708	1462	754	106%	0.7%	1.3%	0.6%
High Peak	567	1124	557	98%	0.7%	1.3%	0.6%
New Forest	1064	1935	871	82%	0.7%	1.1%	0.5%
Chester-le-Street	345	531	186	54%	0.7%	1.0%	0.3%
Falkirk	910	1491	581	64%	0.6%	1.0%	0.4%
Renfrewshire	1117	2139	1022	91%	0.6%	1.2%	0.6%
Denbighshire	558	1073	515	92%	0.6%	1.2%	0.5%
Ellesmere Port and Neston	510	1004	494	97%	0.6%	1.2%	0.6%
Christchurch	257	489	232	90%	0.6%	1.1%	0.5%
Easington	606	719	113	19%	0.6%	0.8%	0.1%
Bridgnorth	311	468	157	50%	0.6%	0.9%	0.3%
West Lindsey	469	774	305	65%	0.6%	1.0%	0.4%
Amber Valley	685	1087	402	59%	0.6%	0.9%	0.3%
Carrick	504	1150	646	128%	0.6%	1.3%	0.7%
Carlisle	605	893	288	48%	0.6%	0.9%	0.3%
Stroud	610	1435	825	135%	0.6%	1.3%	0.7%
Pembrokeshire	658	1026	368	56%	0.6%	0.9%	0.3%
Barnsley	1296	1994	698	54%	0.6%	0.9%	0.3%
Perth & Kinross	744	1308	564	76%	0.6%	1.0%	0.4%
Mid Suffolk	455	860	405	89%	0.6%	1.0%	0.4%
Blyth Valley	461	779	318	69%	0.6%	1.0%	0.4%
Herefordshire, County of UA	925	1576	651	70%	0.6%	0.9%	0.3%
Powys	685	1086	401	59%	0.6%	0.9%	0.3%
Scarborough	609	1029	420	69%	0.6%	1.0%	0.4%
Oswestry	192	420	228	119%	0.6%	1.1%	0.6%
Kerrier	500	828	328	66%	0.6%	0.9%	0.3%
Shetland Islands	128	232	104	81%	0.6%	1.1%	0.5%
Malvern Hills	388	1032	644	166%	0.6%	1.4%	0.9%
West Dunbartonshire	543	666	123	23%	0.6%	0.7%	0.1%
East Dorset	440	847	407	93%	0.6%	1.0%	0.5%
East Riding of Yorkshire UA	1620	3820	2200	136%	0.6%	1.2%	0.7%
North East Derbyshire	539	1074	535	99%	0.6%	1.1%	0.6%
Blaenau Gwent	399	581	182	46%	0.6%	0.8%	0.3%
Barrow-in-Furness	400	567	167	42%	0.5%	0.8%	0.2%
Teignbridge	592	1216	624	105%	0.5%	1.0%	0.5%
Carmarthenshire	919	1623	704	77%	0.5%	0.9%	0.4%
South Holland	367	881	514	140%	0.5%	1.2%	0.6%
Highland	1107	1671	564	51%	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%

This means that comparisons of 1991 and 2001 Census data probably show greater increases in population than actually occurred, especially in urban areas where undercounting was worst. They also show artificially high increases in urban areas because the 2001 Census counted students at their term addresses, while the 1991 Census counted them at their vacation addresses. Students are disproportionately located in large towns and cities during term time, rather than in smaller rural settlements.<sup>1</sup>

When overall population change is being considered, these problems may be overcome to a certain extent by the use of mid-year estimates (MYEs), which are adjusted for under-enumeration and to incorporate students at term addresses. We used MYEs when we reported on population change in the first paper in this series. Unfortunately, for individual Census questions, such as ethnicity, MYEs are not available. In this paper, therefore, we use two approaches. In the first part of the paper, when we are discussing change at the national and local authority levels, we use published Census data from both 1991 and 2001. When considering these findings, we need to bear in mind that overall population increases for large urban areas are probably over-stated (and decreases under-stated), to the order of about four to six percentage points. For example, Liverpool's population declined by 3% according to the Census figures, and 7% according to the MYEs. Increases in minority ethnic populations are probably particularly over-stated, because these groups were particularly likely to have been under-counted in the 1991 Census.

In the latter part of the paper, when we turn to analysing change at the electoral ward level, we adopt a more complicated approach because our closer geographical focus in this section makes our analysis more vulnerable to errors in Census counts. In this section we base our calculations not on Census data for 1991 but on ward population estimates calculated by the ESRC Estimating with Confidence project in the late 1990s.<sup>2</sup> These take into account estimates of undercounting of ethnic minorities in the 1991 Census, and thus offer a more accurate picture of local change than do raw Census counts, although they do not overcome the problem of students being counted at their vacation addresses. Similar estimates have not been prepared for 2001 and as far as we are aware there are no plans to do this, because of the greater accuracy of the 2001 data. We therefore compare SOCPop estimates for 1991 with Census data for 2001.

With these caveats in mind, we present data on Britain's ethnic minorities in 2001, and on changes during the 1990s, at the national, local authority and neighbourhood level.

## BRITAIN'S ETHNIC MINORITIES

Britain has traditionally been, and remains, a predominantly white nation, with 92% of its population in 2001 declaring themselves white British, white Irish, or 'white other', a category that includes white people from old Commonwealth countries (such as Australians, New

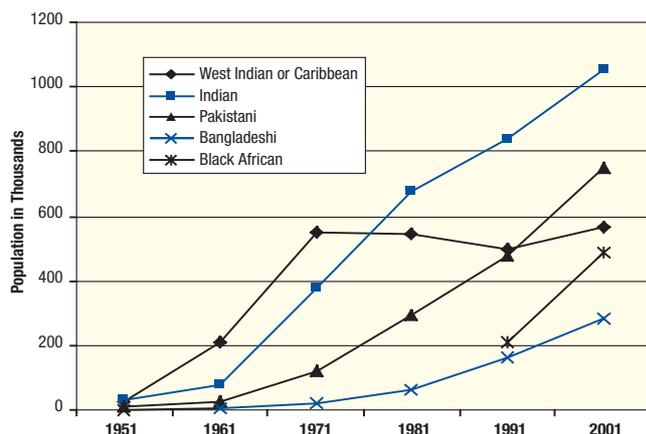
Zealanders, Canadians and white South Africans) and white Europeans.

The minority ethnic population has grown rapidly since the early 1950s, when it numbered less than 100,000 people and was largely confined to dockland areas in cities such as London, Liverpool, Cardiff and Bristol. Since then, there has been rapid expansion, initially fuelled by the need for labour in manufacturing and service industries. Black people of Caribbean origin were the earliest arrivals in the post war period of expanded immigration, settling in London and other major cities. The high point of Caribbean immigration was the mid 1950s to mid 1960s, and there has been little change in the overall size of the black Caribbean population since 1971. Other groups arrived later and continued to grow. Pakistanis and Indians began to arrive in large numbers in the mid 1960s and Bangladeshi arrivals peaked in the early 1980s (Peach 1996). These South Asian groups also settled in large cities and, in the case of Pakistani and Bangladeshi immigrants, in smaller textile towns in Lancashire and Yorkshire where there was demand for 24-hour labour. All of these groups have grown consistently and rapidly (Figure 1). The black African population was relatively small until the 1990s, so much so that it was not considered a 'major group' for Peach's analysis of the 1991 Census on which Figure 1 is based, but doubled between 1991 and 2001, with settlement predominantly in London. As at 2001, the major minority ethnic groups were Indians (1,052,000), Pakistanis (747,000), black Caribbeans (566,000), and black Africans (485,000) with smaller Bangladeshi (283,000) and Chinese populations (243,000), in addition to those identifying as mixed race (674,000) (Table 1). 'Other Asian', 'Other Black' and 'Other' groups make up the remainder of the minority ethnic total.

<sup>1</sup> Fuller explanations of the comparability of 1991 and 2001 data can be found on the National Statistics website ([www.statistics.gov.uk](http://www.statistics.gov.uk)).

<sup>2</sup> These estimates are known as the SOCPop estimates and can be found at the Census Dissemination Unit website ([http://census.ac.uk/cdu/Datasets/1991\\_Census\\_datasets/Area\\_Stats/Adjusted\\_data/Undercount\\_adjusted\\_data/SOCPop](http://census.ac.uk/cdu/Datasets/1991_Census_datasets/Area_Stats/Adjusted_data/Undercount_adjusted_data/SOCPop)).

**FIGURE 1: Growth of Minority Ethnic Populations in Britain 1951-2001**



Source: 1951-1991 data reproduced from Peach (1996). 2001 data from 2001 Census Key Statistics Table 6.

**TABLE 1: Size of Ethnic Groups in Britain 2001 (with 1991 for comparison)**

	1991 population (000s)	2001 population (000s)	% of total population 2001	% of minority ethnic population 2001
White	51873	52481	92	
<b>All minority ethnic groups</b>	<b>3014</b>	<b>4623</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100</b>
Black Caribbean	500	566	1	12
Black African	212	485	1	10
Black Other	178	97	0	2
Indian	840	1052	2	23
Pakistani	477	747	1	16
Bangladeshi	163	283	0	6
Other Asian	197	247	0	5
Chinese	157	243	0	5
Other	290	229	0	5
Mixed race	0	674	1	15

Note: Columns do not sum to 100% due to rounding. Source: 2001 Census: Key Statistics Table 6.

## THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS

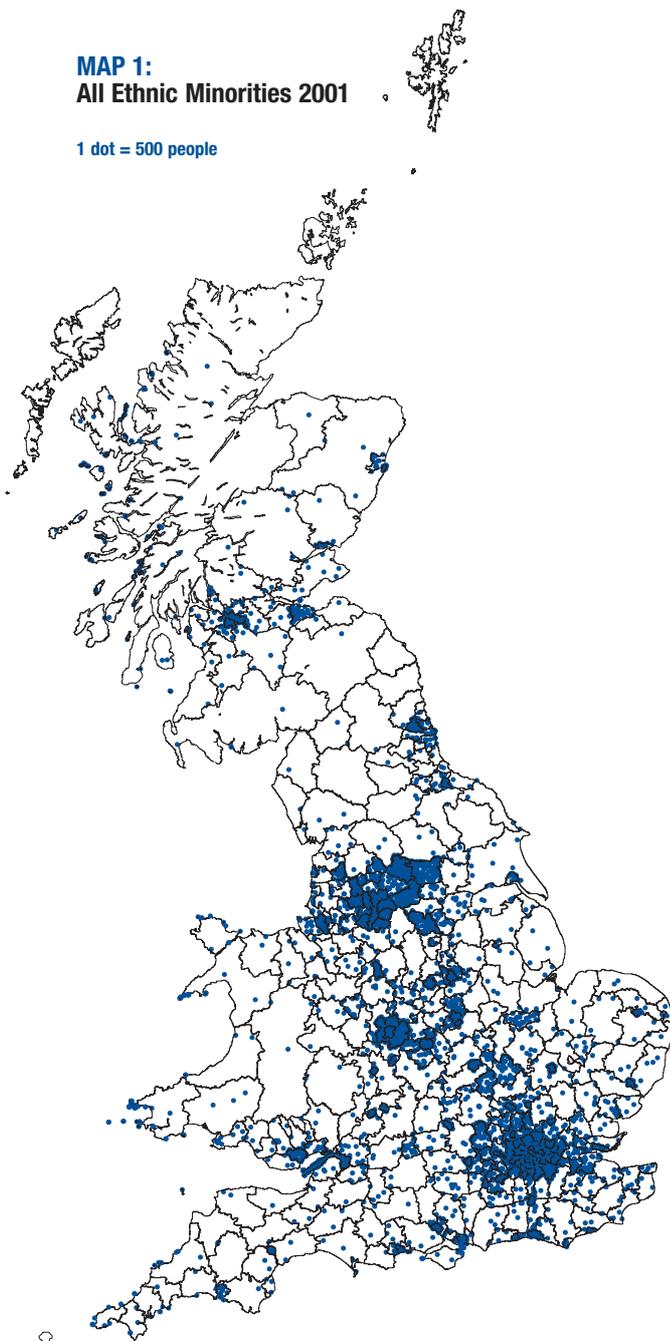
The original settlement patterns of immigrant groups in towns and cities where their labour was in demand and where older private housing was available have resulted in a very uneven distribution of minority ethnic groups, skewed heavily towards the inner areas of London and certain other cities and towns.

Map 1 shows the distribution of people from minority ethnic groups in 2001. It shows a strongly urban pattern, with high concentrations in London and the surrounding area, in Birmingham and the cities of the Midlands such as Coventry, Leicester, Nottingham and Derby, in Lancashire and West and South Yorkshire and in other cities such as Glasgow, Liverpool, Bristol and Cardiff.

Maps 2-7 show the distribution of the different groups in 2001. They show the same urban pattern. In the broadest terms, minority ethnic groups tended to be settled in the large cities and industrial towns where there were other minority ethnic groups. However the patterns were not exactly the same for the different groups:

**MAP 1: All Ethnic Minorities 2001**

1 dot = 500 people



- The Indian population was concentrated in London, and in the cities of the Midlands, and in Lancashire and West Yorkshire.
- The Pakistani population was strongly represented in Manchester, Lancashire and West Yorkshire and also in Birmingham and the Midlands cities, with a smaller proportion of the population in London than was the case for Indians.
- The Bangladeshi population was concentrated in London and to a lesser extent Birmingham.
- The Black Caribbean population had a similar pattern to the Bangladeshi population but with London even more dominant.
- Black Africans were very heavily concentrated in London.
- Chinese were more widely dispersed than other groups.