

COMPAS Breakfast Briefing Summary



Photo: Slawek Kozdras, COMPAS Photo Competition 2012

What does the 2011 Census tell us about integration and diversity in the UK?

Debates on integration in the UK swing between relaxed claims of increased mixing, and urgent calls to attend to White flight or immigrant segregation. The Centre on Diversity of Ethnicity (CoDE) at the University of Manchester has been issuing Briefings on the 2011 Census results. This COMPAS Breakfast Briefing will summarise the CoDE briefings graphically and open a discussion on implications for social policy.

Britain's increased diversity

The decennial census is the only occasion when the ethnic and religious composition of Britain's towns and cities is known reliably and in detail, and can be compared to past years. In the six months since December 2012, these results have begun to be released by the Office for National Statistics for England and Wales and for each local authority district.

The 2011 Census results are unequivocal in confirming for the 2000s what had been found for earlier decades: ghettos of immigrants do not exist in Britain; Britain has more neighbourhoods that are more ethnically diverse than in the past; that this increase in diversity has occurred in cities, in suburbs and in rural areas.

The increase in diversity is in fact greatest where there were fewest ethnic minority residents before. This makes us sure that minority ethnic groups' movement within Britain is, in net terms, away from their clusters. It is this movement of minorities away from their areas of initial

settlement that has led to less residential segregation, not more. This gradual dispersal was also the case for previous eras of immigration, including of Jews and from Ireland.

No data directly about migration within Britain have yet been released from the 2011 Census. It is likely, because it would repeat our knowledge from the 2000s, that White and minority movement away from 'minority areas' is at similar rates, and is best characterised as suburbanisation of the aspiring classes who have been successful in the labour and housing markets, which is common to all ethnic groups. It is unlikely to be 'White flight' or 'White working class flight'.

The population of England and Wales is becoming more mixed residentially: whether you live in East London or Cumbria, you were more likely to live next door to someone who is of a different ethnic group in 2011 than in 2001. It is also more mixed within the household. And there is an increased number of people identifying themselves as of 'Mixed' ethnic group.

Religion, language and plurality in Britain

Looking at religion rather than ethnic group, the geographical separation from others of Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists is in each case less than ten years ago. In each case it is less than that of England and Wales' Jewish population.

Much has rightly been made of the Census' new question on language, and the acquisition of good English skills as a key means of integrating into all aspects of life in Britain. The Briefing will highlight how Britain is becoming a nation with far more bilingual people than in the past, and the number of the population that cannot speak English well.

The growing diversity of the UK is guaranteed whatever the future levels of immigration. More than half of the Caribbean, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Mixed groups are UK-born. For these groups, natural growth – those born in the UK out-numbering those who die – has been a larger source of population growth than further immigration in the 2000s.

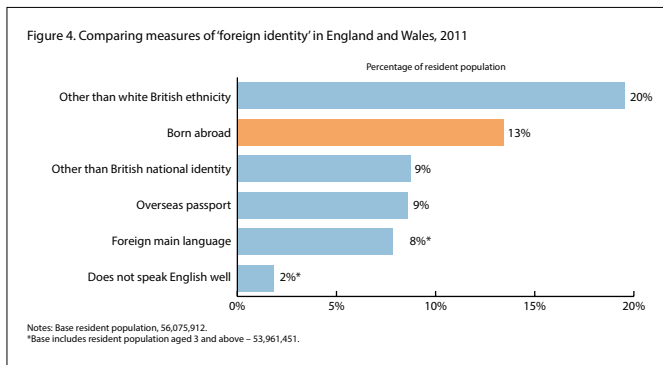
Are the headlines of White and minority isolation entirely unfounded? They are based on two observations that are a result of the growing diversity described by the 2011 Census.

- First, in many cities, the number of White British residents is decreasing at the same time as the number of other residents is increasing. This is a consequence of minority ethnic groups growing 'naturally' (births more than deaths), combined with the continued suburbanisation of all groups.
- Second, as diversity grows, there are more people who live in areas where the number of White British is less than half the total. At the moment, between a third and a half of residents with an ethnic group other than White British, live in electoral wards where the number of White British is a minority. These are diverse areas, not ones where any ethnic group is 'dominant' or a majority.

Finally, results are beginning to emerge from the Census output about continuing social differences between ethnic groups regarding employment, health, housing and education.

The briefing will open debate on the policy implications of these results. One of the problems with disregarding the evidence about reduced segregation is that headline debates based on misleading analysis distract from more important issues. The myths of greater isolation stigmatise immigrants and minorities and the places they live in and they shift the political focus away from persistent ethnic inequalities.

At the same time, the UK's ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity is growing just about everywhere in Britain and can be expected to continue to develop. How can the democratic fabric of the UK be imbued with this diversity in the most positive ways?



Source: *How can we count immigration and integration?* (2013) Briefing at www.ethnicity.ac.uk/census.

This growing diversity has already created large areas where no one ethnic group constitutes as much as half the population. These are Britain's 'plural' towns and cities and include Slough, Luton, Leicester and twenty three of London's thirty three Boroughs.

What is happening to "Britishness"?

Is 'Britishness' in decline as a result of ethnic diversity? We will report on this issue with data on national identity released for the first time in a census, with surprising results.

About the speakers:

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COMPAS Breakfast Briefings present topical, cutting edge research on migration and migration related issues. This research is made accessible every month to an audience of policy makers and other research users.

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