

# 2011 Census: Muslims and Sikhs most likely to feel British

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Muslims and Sikhs are the religious groups most likely to feel British, according to new analysis of the 2011 Census by University of Manchester researchers.

Sixty two per cent of Sikhs, 57 per cent of [Muslims](#) and 54 per cent of Hindus describe their national identity as British only they say. The figure is only 15 per cent for Christians.

However, 65 per cent of [Christians](#) and 54 per cent of [Jews](#) are the most likely to feel English, find the team based at the University's Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity (CoDE).

In England, three-fifths of the population do not identify with a British national identity, and only see themselves as English, whereas [ethnic minority](#) groups are much more likely to describe themselves as British.

And Bangladeshis are more likely than any other ethnic group to say they are British only, they add.

The research, argues Dr Stephen Jivraj, is at odds with the [Coalition government](#)'s plans to promote mainstream British values across England.

Dr Jivraj said: "Though the 2011 Census allowed people to report multiple identities from English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British and Other, nine in ten people reported a single national identity.

"Indeed, the distinction between British and English identities continues to confuse not only tourists, but policy makers – but it's something we all need to understand more fully.

"If you believe what you read in the newspapers, Muslims are less likely to feel British than anyone else. In fact, the opposite is true.

"For many non white residents, including Muslims, this feeling of Britishness is probably partly a result of the citizenship process: they are surely less likely to take their Britishness for granted.

"Our findings are at odds with the present and previous Government's emphasis on encouraging ethnic minorities and new migrants to accept 'British' life and 'British' values."

Also according to the team, age is related to national identity in England: – People aged 60 and above are more likely to report only English national identity than those aged 30-59 (70 per cent compared to 56 per cent).

People in their 30s, 40s and 50s are more likely to report British identity than those older and those who report Foreign national identity only are disproportionately young adults (aged 20-34), the typical age of recent international [migrants](#).

Other findings include:

- Bangladeshi (72%), Pakistani (63%) and Indian (58%) ethnic groups are the most likely to report only a British national identity.
- White British (72%) and Mixed (47%) [ethnic groups](#) are more likely to see themselves as English rather than British.
- Muslims are less likely to report Foreign national identity only

than Buddhist or Hindus (24% compared to 42 and 32%).

The paper is titled "Who feels British? The relationship between ethnicity, religion and national identity in England."

**More information:** [www.ethnicity.ac.uk/census](http://www.ethnicity.ac.uk/census)

Provided by University of Manchester

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