



Ethnic Minority Women in the UK

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- **There are around 2.3 million ethnic minority women and 2.3 million ethnic minority men in the England.** Ethnic minorities are on average younger than the White population, the difference in average age being particularly large for those people of mixed ethnic origin.
- According to the latest Census data, 92 per cent of both men and women in the UK are white. **Asian and Asian British women and men form the largest ethnic minority group.**

Ethnic Minority Women in the Labour Market

- **Employment rates for ethnic minorities are generally lower than those for Whites. However, on recent trends, the ethnic minority employment rate gap is narrowing. Across all ethnic groups, women are less likely to be employed than men are.** The employment rate for the population overall is 74.9% compared to the ethnic minority employment rate of 61.6%¹. For female ethnic minorities the employment rate is 52.8%.
- **Women are much more likely than men to work part-time and this holds for all ethnic groups.** The proportion of ethnic minority women working part-time is lower than that of White women (35.5% compared to 41.5%), this is true for all ethnic groups except Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. This indicates that although their employment rates are lower than those of White women overall, once in employment ethnic minority women are more likely to work full-time.
- **Unemployment rates for women and men from ethnic minorities are generally higher than those for Whites.** The highest rates are found for Pakistani and Bangladeshi people and African people. The unemployment rate for all groups was 5.7%. For ethnic minorities it was 10.7%². In addition, nearly two-thirds of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women are economically inactive.
- **Women are generally more likely than men to work in the public sector.** Ethnic minority women are more likely to work in the public sector (33.6%) compared to 16.7% for ethnic minority men.
- **Self-employment is less common among ethnic minority women than average.** Self-employment for the overall GB population is 12.4%, for women it is 7.2% and for ethnic minority women it is 6.5%³.
- Where numbers allow a comparison, findings show that ethnic minority women and men in employment, with the exception of Black/Black British women and men from mixed ethnic groups, **are no less likely than white women to work in higher managerial/professional occupations.**

1 3rd Quarter LFS 2007

2 Ibid

3 2nd Quarter LFS 2007

- **Once in employment minority ethnic women are as successful as white women in reaching a higher occupational level** and that, taken together with the lower employment rates for ethnic minorities, this would indicate that their labour market disadvantage applies mainly to finding work.

Ethnic Minority Women in Public Life

- There are over 882 national bodies across the UK, which have over 21,000 board appointments to them⁴.
- As at 31 March 2006, 35.5% of public appointments are held by women. 6.5% (489) are held by ethnic minority women⁵.
- The Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA) has recruited a central list of 22 independent assessors, 13 of them are women, two of whom are ethnic minority women⁶.
- As of 30 June 2007 24% of Chairs of national health related bodies were held by women and within these bodies 40.8% of non-executives were women, 3.3% of whom were from minority ethnic communities⁷.
- As of 30 June 2007 35.5% of chairs of local NHS boards were women, 3.8% of whom were from ethnic minority communities. 39.2% of non-executives on these boards were women, 5% of whom were from ethnic minority communities⁸.
- In business, only four Directorships in FTSE100 companies are held by women from an ethnic minority background⁹.

Ethnic Minority Women in Political Life

- There are now 126 women MPs, representing 19.5% of all MPs. There are 15 ethnic minority MPs, two of whom are women¹⁰.
- In 2006, 29.3% of local councillors in England were women, compared to 52.0% of the adult population. This figure represents the highest proportion of women councillors ever recorded, but progress has been slow¹¹.
- There are currently around 168 ethnic minority women councillors. This represents 0.9% of councillors in England, even though ethnic minority women make up 4.6% of the adult population¹².
- Asian women are particularly under-represented in the council chamber – only 14.6% of Asian councillors are women¹³.

4 Cabinet Office Public Appointments 2006

5 Ibid

6 Office of the commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA)

7 Data from the Appointments Commission which is the independent public appointments agency, sponsored by the Department of Health

8 Ibid

9 Equal Opportunities Commission (2006), Sex and Power who runs Britain? 2006

10 UK Parliament website 2006, www.parliament.uk

11 National Census of Local Authority Councillors in England 2006

12 National Census of Local Authority Councillors in England 2006 and ONS 2004 Population Estimates by Ethnic Group

13 National Census of Local Authority Councillors in England 2006

Ethnic Minority Women in the Judiciary¹⁴

- 58 ethnic minority women are holders of judicial offices. This includes:
 - 8 Circuit Judges
 - 17 Recorders
 - 7 District Judges
 - 19 Deputy District Judges
 - 1 District Judge (Magistrates)
 - 5 Deputy District Judges (Magistrates)
- There is only one minority ethnic women high court judge. This compares to 78 white males in the same position.

Qualifications

- Ethnic minority women are more likely to have a degree or equivalent than the overall British women (22.5% vs 20.0%). However, ethnic minority women are more likely to have no qualifications than the overall British women (17.1% vs 12.7%)¹⁵.
- Among women, Pakistani/Bangladeshi group is the least likely to have a degree or equivalent, 12.1% compared to 19.3% for British women¹⁶.

Government Equalities Office

www.equalities.gov.uk

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¹⁴ Figures accurate as of 9 October 2007 and are under constant change

¹⁵ 3rd Quarter LFS 2007

¹⁶ 2nd Quarter LFS 2007

