

## Debate Pack

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# Muslim community in Wales

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# 1

## Background

This debate pack has been compiled ahead of the Westminster Hall debate scheduled for 23 February 2022 at 2:30pm. Ruth Jones MP will lead the debate on the 'Muslim community in Wales'.

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) website claims that it is the UK's 'largest and most diverse national Muslim umbrella organisation' with more than 500 members including mosques, schools, charitable associations and professional networks. Its website states:

Our mission is empowering Muslim communities to achieve a just, cohesive, and successful British society. Founded in 1997, we lead community projects and initiatives around the country. The MCB publishes reports, guidelines and resources to inform the mainstream discourse on British Muslims and to empower our member organisations across, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland - [Who we are – Muslim Council of Britain \(MCB\)](#)

### The Muslim population in Wales

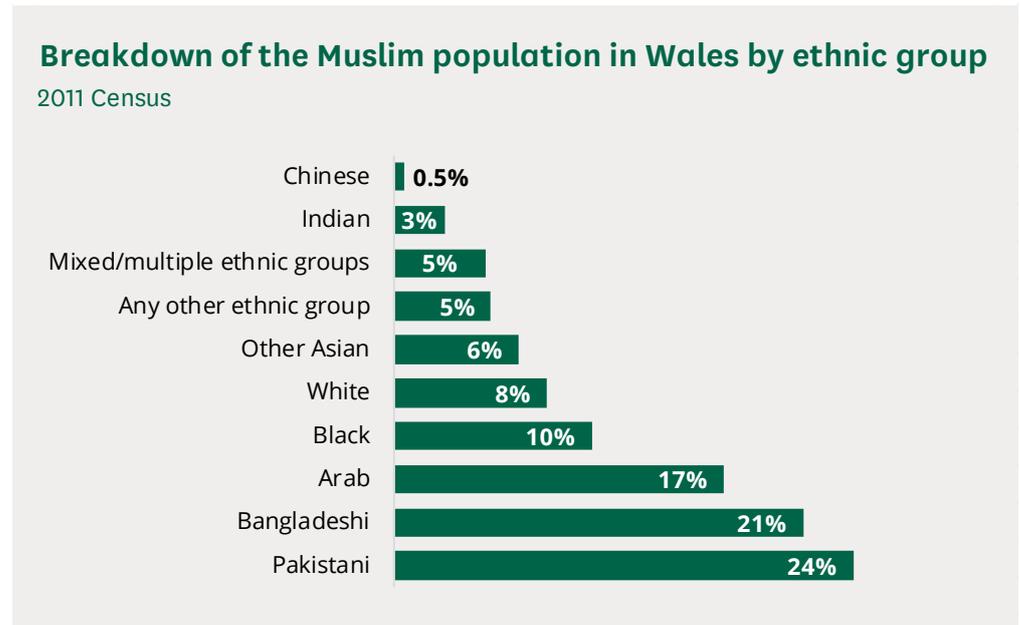
In December 2021, the ONS published [experimental statistics](#) for population estimates by religion for England and Wales for 2019.<sup>1</sup>

In 2019, the Muslim population in Wales was estimated to number 55,400. This compares with the 2011 census estimate for Wales of 45,950. Muslims accounted for roughly 1.8% of the population of Wales in 2019 compared with the 2011 census estimate of 1.5%. This compares with figures for England which showed the estimated Muslim population in 2019 to be 5.9% and the 2011 census figure of 5%.

In terms of ethnicity, the 2011 Census showed that the majority of Muslims in Wales were Pakistani (24%), followed by Bangladeshi (21%) and then Arab (17%). These three groups made up 62% of the Muslim population in Wales.

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<sup>1</sup> Population estimates were calculated by combining population data from the Annual Population Survey (APS) 2017 to 2019 datasets which is weighted to be representative of the household population as a whole. The APS excludes most people living in communal establishments. A person's religion is self-defined and is based on which religion they identify themselves as, as opposed to their beliefs or whether or not they actively practise their faith.



Source: Nomis, Ethnic Group by Religion, [DC2201EW](#)

Muslims also had the second highest proportion of any faith in Wales to be born outside of the UK. The 2011 census showed that 58% of Muslims in Wales were born outside of the UK and that around 66% of Muslims were born outside of Wales.<sup>2</sup>

Muslims were the faith least likely to identify as ‘Welsh only’. The majority of Muslims identify as ‘British only’ (46%). Among Muslims, the second highest proportion had an identity originating outside of the UK defined as ‘Non-UK’ (32%) which was the highest of any faith in Wales.<sup>3</sup>

Muslims in Wales also showed a younger age profile than any other faith. The percentage of the Muslim population aged 44 and under was 85%.<sup>4</sup>

The 2011 census also showed that almost half (47%) of the Muslim population in Wales resided in Cardiff. The second highest was found in Newport (15%) followed by Swansea (12%). 74% of Muslims resided in these three local authorities.<sup>5</sup>

## Number of Mosques

There are believed to be around [40 mosques](#) in Wales.

<sup>2</sup> Welsh Government, [A statistical focus on religion in Wales 2011 Census](#), p26

<sup>3</sup> [Ibid](#), p24

<sup>4</sup> [Ibid](#), p29

<sup>5</sup> Stat Wales, [Welsh residents by religion and local authority](#), 2011 Census

## Health

In the 2011 Census, respondents were asked to state whether their general health was very good, good, fair, bad, or very bad.

In Wales, 86% of Muslim respondents said that their health was good or very good, compared with 78% of all people. However, this is not a complete picture, because a larger proportion of Muslim respondents were of younger ages, and general health is correlated with age.

In fact, when we focus on older age groups, Muslims in Wales reported worse general health than other groups. 29% of Muslims aged 65 or above said that their health was good or very good, compared with 44% of all people. 56% of Muslims aged 50-64 said that their health was good or very good, compared with 68% of all people.

Data from the 2021 Census is expected to be available later in 2022.

Source: NOMIS, [Census 2011 Table LC3203EW](#)

In 2020 the Office for National Statistics published some analysis of religion and health for England and Wales as a whole (i.e. not just Wales), which you can read [here](#). Based on a longitudinal study, it found in 2016-2018 that those who identified as Muslim had a lower level of physical functioning than those who identified as Jewish, Christian or no religion. These figures adjust for age.

## Educational attainment

Analysis of the 2011 census showed that the proportion of the Muslim population aged 16 and over with no qualifications was 23%. This was less than the figure for Wales as a whole, which was approximately 26%. The proportion of Muslims with level 4 and above qualifications (undergraduate degree, higher degrees and NVQ Level 4-5 or equivalent) was 27% which was higher than the national figure of 25%.<sup>6</sup>

## Hate Crimes

Figures on hate crime by religion in Wales are not given separately from the figures provided for England & Wales by the Home Office or broken down by police force. In 2020/21, 45% (2,703) of religious hate crimes recorded by the police targeted Muslims in England and Wales.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Welsh Government, [A statistical focus on religion in Wales 2011 Census](#), pp57-59

<sup>7</sup> Home Office, [Hate crime, England and Wales, 2020 to 2021](#)

Of the 6,377 offences in 2020/21 across all police forces in England and Wales involving the religion hate crime strand, 150 were recorded by Welsh police forces. Of the 150, 70 were recorded by the South Wales police force.<sup>8</sup>

[Freedom of information requests](#) were submitted to all police forces in England and Wales asking for the number of Islamophobic hate crimes reported from the beginning of January 2015 to 30 November 2017. Of the Welsh police forces, only Gwent and North Wales provided figures. Gwent police force reported [20](#) such crimes since 2016. While North Wales provided the following [response](#) recording 21 incidents which involved the words 'Islam', 'Muslim' or 'Mosque' for the period in question.

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<sup>8</sup> [Home Office, Hate Crime Open Data](#)

## 2 Parliamentary Material

### 2.1 Press articles

#### ['I know I'm not really Welsh': Living with Islamophobia in Wales](#)

ITV | 19 November 2021

Samia Egeh has always called Wales home, yet she doesn't feel Welsh, or British.

Despite living in Cardiff, home to one of the UK's oldest BAME communities, she is forced to live with a daily reality: islamophobia.

"Islamophobia certainly does exist," Samia told ITV Wales.

"It really is real and it's not Muslims thinking it does exist, or that we have some sort of chip on our shoulder.

"It happens and it happens every day."

According to the latest data from the UK Home Office, nearly half of all hate crime victims in England and Wales in the year ending March 2021 were Muslims.

Up to 45% of the 6,377 religious hate crimes recorded during the period were committed against Muslims, compared to 22% against Jewish people, the second most targeted religious group.

#### [The 'forgotten' members of North Wales' Muslim community 'left behind' by Welsh Government pilot](#)

North Wales Live | 4 July 2021

Members of North Wales' Muslim community fear they are being forgotten about as Covid rules saw public prayer limited to south Wales.

Many worshippers in North Wales left with no option but to stay at home for the second time since the pandemic began.

Due to social distancing measures, women and children were not allowed to attend mosques in North Wales to pray for Eid-Al-Fitr, the festival which marked the end of the holy month of Ramadan in May.

## [Abused and discriminated against yet thriving and proud: the life of Muslims in Wales](#)

Wales Online | 19 April 2019

What does it mean to be Welsh and Muslim?

How does it feel to grow up in a rapidly expanding community that is full of pride and love and yet which is not well understood by or fully integrated with the world around it?

How do you come to terms with the rising tide of abuse so many report?

Over several months, we have interviewed people throughout the 45,000-strong Muslim communities in Cardiff and Newport.

## 2.2

## Parliamentary questions

### [Ahmadiyya: Religious Freedom](#)

15 Feb 2022 | 120910

**Asked by: Ruth Jones**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps the Government is taking to promote freedom of religion or belief for Ahmadiyya Muslims in (a) Newport West constituency, (b) Wales and (c) the UK.

**Answering Member: Kemi Badenoch | Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities**

The United Kingdom has a proud tradition of religious tolerance, within the law. The Government is committed to creating a strong and integrated society in which hatred and prejudice are not tolerated and in which all people, including the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, are free to express their religious identity and live without fear of harassment and crime because of it.

We recognise the huge contribution of people of all faiths, beliefs and none, bring to public life, locally and nationally, and are committed to celebrating and promoting this.

### Islam: Religious Hatred

**Asked by: Ruth Jones**

**07 Dec 2021 | 83477**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when he last discussed tackling Islamophobia with the leaders of the devolved Administrations.

**Answering member: Kemi Badenoch | Department: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities**

The Government remains committed to tackling Islamophobia and recognises the discrimination and intolerance faced by Muslim communities. Criminal Justice is a fully devolved issue in Scotland and Northern Ireland. In Wales, we maintain a dialogue and the Welsh Government has been consulted on our forthcoming Hate Crime Strategy.

### Islam: Wales

**Asked by: Ruth Jones**

**03 Dec 2021 | 82089**

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what discussions he has had with the Welsh Government on his plans to tackle Islamophobia; and if he will make a statement.

**Answering member: Kemi Badenoch | Department: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities**

The Government remains committed to tackling islamophobia and recognises the discrimination and intolerance faced by Muslim communities. Our counterparts in the Welsh Government have been consulted on our upcoming Hate Crime Strategy and this will be published in due course.

### Muslim Council of Wales

**Asked by: Jones, Ruth**

**26 Nov 2021 | 80463**

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, when he last met representatives of the Muslim Council of Wales.

**Answering member: Simon Hart | Department: Wales Office**

I have regular discussions with representatives from various religious groups.

The Government wholeheartedly supports the invaluable work being done by the Muslim community, and indeed all of our faith communities, who are inspired by their faith or belief.

The Government believes that people need to be able to feel strong in their religious identities and we are making sure that the voices of people of faith are heard in Government.

Increasing understanding and respect between faith communities is central to the Government's integration agenda.

We continue to work with all of our faiths, and even more so during the pandemic. A Places of Worship Taskforce and faith-specific roundtables, including a Muslim roundtable, chaired by the Faith Minister were established so we can best support our faith communities, and listen and act on their concerns.

### Community Development

**Asked by: Baroness Uddin**

**20 May 2020 | HL4064**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that (1) BAME, and (2) Muslim, women's organisations are allocated enough funding to meet service demands.

**Answering member: Lord Greenhalgh | Department: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government**

Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government continues to play a facilitative role in ensuring Government understands the needs of BAME communities, including Muslim women, and the challenges they may be currently facing in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is some evidence to suggest that BAME communities may be disproportionately affected by coronavirus.

There is a substantial package of targeted support for charities on the frontline of responding to COVID-19. The £750m DCMS-led funding package that the Government has announced will support organisations working with vulnerable groups impacted by COVID-19, including some in BAME communities.

Of this funding, £370m will support smaller, local charities working with vulnerable people. In England, this support will be provided through the National Lottery Community Fund. More details of the funding criteria and application process will be released in the coming days via the National Community Lottery Fund. £60m of the funding will be allocated through the Barnett formula so the devolved administrations are funded to provide similar support in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. DCMS always strives to

engage with and represent all British people in its work, including those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

A further £360m will be distributed between Government departments to provide targeted support to the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. This funding will not be allocated via an open bid but will be awarded in line with agreed departmental priorities, with the first £76m going towards supporting survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence, vulnerable children and their families and victims of modern slavery announced on 02 May.

As part of this, MHCLG launched a £10m ‘Domestic abuse safe accommodation: COVID-19 emergency support fund’ for charities providing safe accommodation for domestic abuse victims to bid directly into (attached) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-covid-19-emergency-support-fund>). This includes charities that provide specialist services such as those dedicated to supporting BAME victims. The deadline for charities to put forward an application is Thursday 21 May.

Departments, including MHCLG, continue to work at pace to ensure this funding reaches the areas of greatest need as quickly as possible, with the aim for our key partners to receive money in the coming weeks.

In addition, for 2020/2021, MHCLG has launched a new competitive grant scheme, with a budget of up to £2m for established community organisations and charities to carry out projects that promote shared values and integration, whilst tackling the harmful behaviours which lead to religiously and racially motivated hate crime. We welcome proposals from projects supporting the BAME community and Muslim women.

The Home Offices’ Building a Stronger Britain Together programme is also continuing to support BAME communities and Muslim women’s organisations within its network. These civil society organisations work within communities to tackle all forms of extremism; support victims of extremism and hate crime, as well as challenging the divisive, extremist narratives targeting minority communities. Preparations for 2020/21 delivery of the BSBT programme are currently underway. The programme uses robust grant standards to ensure our funding delivers the greatest impact for these organisations in tackling extremism issues.

### [Places of Worship Security Funding Scheme](#)

**Asked by: Zarah Sultana**

**06 Apr 2020 | 26192**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many of each category of place of worship have applied for funding through the Places of Worship Security Funding scheme in (a) England and (b) Wales.

**Answering member: Kit Malthouse | Department: Home Office**

Over the first three years, the Places of Worship scheme has received 431 applications in total. Of the applications received, 134 were successful and 297 were unsuccessful.

In England, there have been 253 applications from Christian communities, 108 applications from Muslim communities, 19 applications from Hindu communities, 34 applications from Sikh communities and 1 application from Jain communities.

Of those applications, there have been 193 unsuccessful applications from Christian communities, 60 unsuccessful applications from Muslim communities, 14 unsuccessful applications from Hindu communities, 17 unsuccessful applications from Sikh communities, and 1 unsuccessful application from Jain communities.

In Wales, there have been 14 applications from Christian communities, 1 application from Muslim communities, 1 application from Hindu communities and 0 applications from Sikh and Jain communities.

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