

CULTURAL GUIDANCE AND UNDERSTANDING



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Practical guidance on cultural diversity

This guide aims to arm you with some topline information, so you can better understand women from diverse cultural backgrounds in your community from a cultural and faith perspective. This includes information on where large communities of Black and Asian Muslim women reside in England, the mother-tongue languages some of them speak, and how culture and faith play into the foods many of our Black and Asian Muslim women eat and don't eat, into their dress and attire.

This guide has been developed by MMC, a recognised pioneer in multicultural communications, in partnership with This Girl Can. It is designed to be used in conjunction with the Let's Get Out There guide. Its overarching aim is to help organisations more effectively support and inspire our Asian Muslim and Black women to take part in outdoor activities on offer up and down the country.

England's multicultural women have complex identities and different women will practise their faith and cultural beliefs to differing degrees and in different ways. So this information is meant as an introduction, rather than a 'one size fits all' guide.

You can find more data and insights from the latest Census in section 1.2, which covers the multicultural landscape.

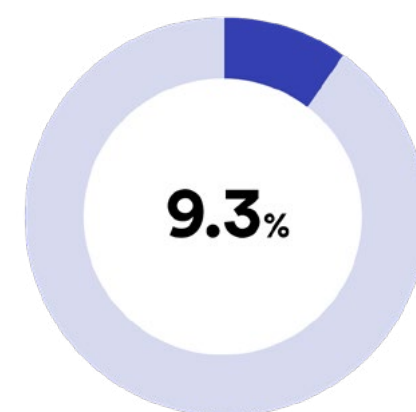




1.1 Snapshot of key communities

Looking at the Asian population

Asian people make up 9.3% of the population in England and Wales. The three most sizeable Asian communities in England and Wales are Indians (13% are Muslim), Pakistanis (over 90% are Muslim) and Bangladeshis (over 90% are Muslim). Since most Muslim people in England have roots in South Asian countries, we'll generally use the term 'South Asian' when referring to our Asian Muslim women.



Asian people make up 9.3% of the population in England and Wales.



One of the barriers which is often cited by South Asian Muslim women for not participating in outdoor activities is not being able to wear modest clothing whilst taking part.

One of the barriers which is often cited by South Asian Muslim women for not participating in outdoor activities is not being able to wear modest clothing whilst taking part, or a lack of modest clothing suitable for the activity being available to buy. Certainly, the traditional dress code for the Muslim community has modesty at its heart. This can include clothing which covers the arms and legs, a Hijaab (headscarf), Niqab (face cover) or Burka (full body cover) – all faith-based signs that a woman is Muslim.

Most of the South Asian Muslim women living in England speak English as a first language. However, it's worth noting that around 7% of our Indian women, 10% of our Pakistani women and 15% of our Bangladeshi women do not speak English well or cannot speak English at all. As such, another barrier to taking part in outdoor activities could include a lack of provision in mother-tongue languages.

What majority mother-tongue languages are spoken by South Asian Muslim women in England?



Pakistani

For our Pakistani women, it's mainly:

Urdu

written and spoken

Panjabi

spoken

Mirpuri

spoken



Indian

For our Indian women, it's mainly:

Hindi

written and spoken

Gujarati

written and spoken

Panjabi

written and spoken



Bangladeshi

For our Bangladeshi women, it's mainly:

Sylheti

spoken

Bengali

mainly written



Many people from diverse cultural backgrounds live in urban areas, and in certain parts of England – including London, Birmingham, Manchester, Bradford and Luton – there are proportionally higher numbers of South Asian Muslim women. This information could prove helpful for mapping out regional activations.

Finally, when you're trying to engage with South Asian Muslim women, it can be useful to be aware of possible dietary requirements. For example, some Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims do not eat pork, do not drink alcohol and ask that food is halal. However, once again it's important to remember that people practise their religions to differing degrees so there are differences in to what extent people will adhere to these dietary requirements.

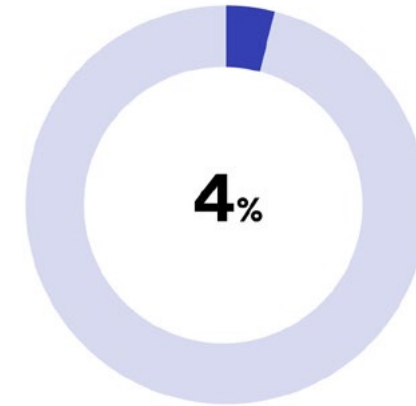


Looking at the Black population

Black people make up 4% of the population in England and Wales. Africans are the largest Black community in England and Wales, followed by Caribbeans.

Black African people are one of the fastest-growing communities in England. This community comes from different countries across the African continent, but the largest numbers are from Nigeria and Ghana. Other countries from which people come to England include Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, South Africa and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Black Caribbean people come from the Islands in the British West Indies including Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, St Kitts and Nevis and St Lucia, Guyana and Grenada. One of the largest waves of migration from the British West Indies took place in the mid-1960s, and this wave of migrants are often known as the 'Windrush' generation.



Black people make up 4% of the population in England and Wales.



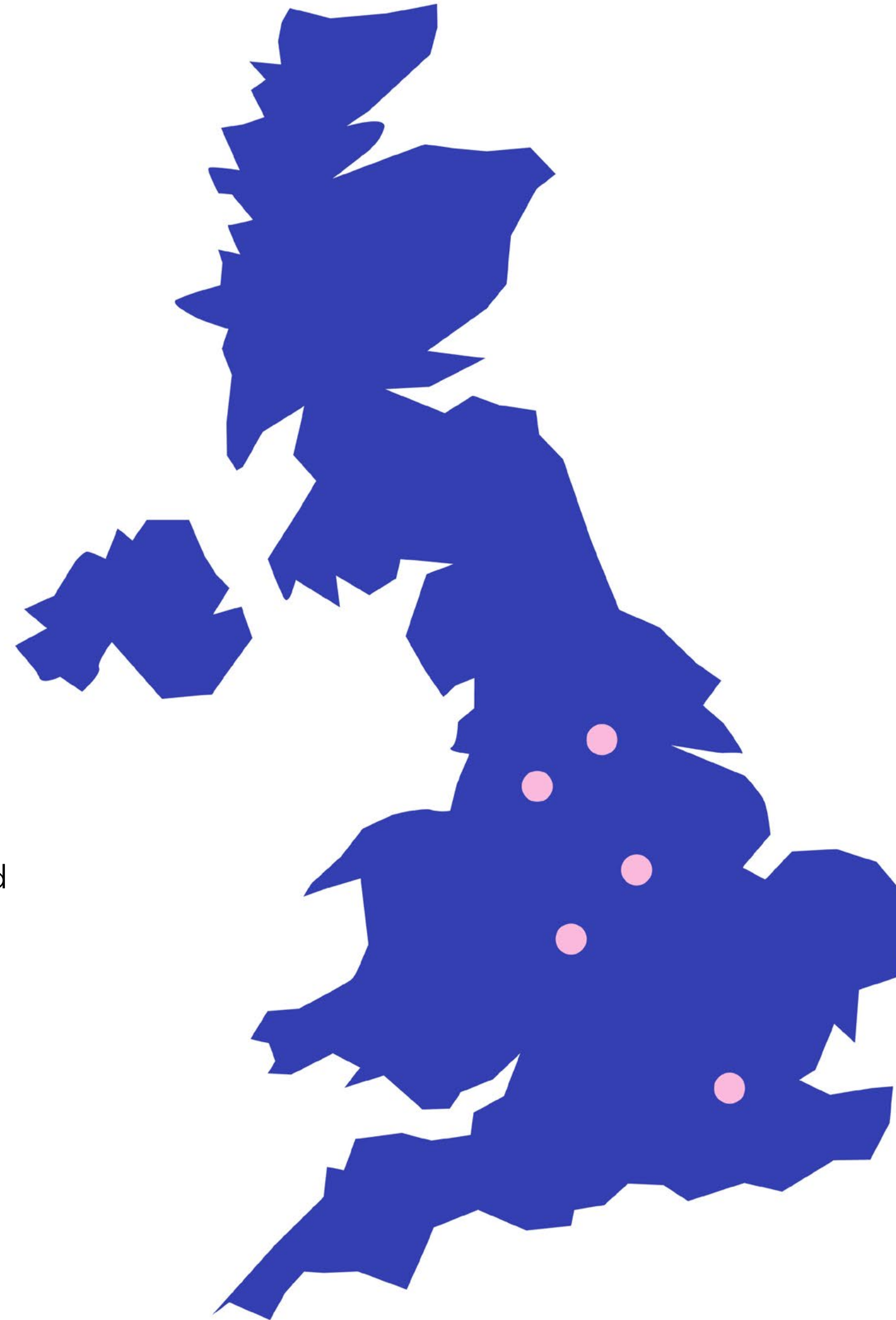
Wave of migration known as the 'Windrush' generation.



For over 90% of our Black African and Black Caribbean women, English is widely spoken and is either their main language or spoken well. There are a vast number of African languages and dialects across the continent. However, if we look at the largest Black African communities in England, most of our Nigerian women are likely to be Yoruba or Igbo and therefore speak these languages as well as pidgin English, whilst Ghanaians in England are likely to speak Twi, Fante, Ga as well as pidgin. It's worth noting that since Somali only became a written language in 1972, there can be a lower English proficiency to be mindful of. Translations, audio and visual methods may prove effective in reaching Somali women.

The majority of Black Africans and Caribbeans in England are Christian, and a quarter of Black African people are Muslim.

A common barrier to participation for all of England's multicultural women is a lack of representation (see section 2). As there are higher numbers of Black women living in urban areas such as London, Birmingham, Manchester, Nottingham and Leeds, developing outdoor initiatives in these areas that increase participation amongst Black women would be a great way to boost comfort levels and tackle this particular barrier.



1.2 Multicultural landscape

The multicultural landscape

This section is intended to provide further information on the multicultural landscape in England, with a particular focus on South Asian (Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi) and Black (African and Caribbean) women.

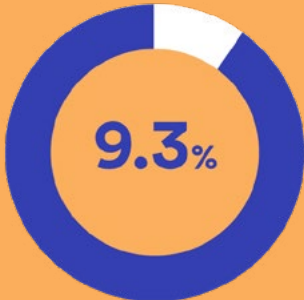
The information in this appendix delves into the most current, comprehensive and detailed data about ethnic groups in England and Wales from the most recent Office for National Statistics (ONS) Census. We have reported the data as England and Wales as this is the reporting style of ONS for this particular data.

Population size

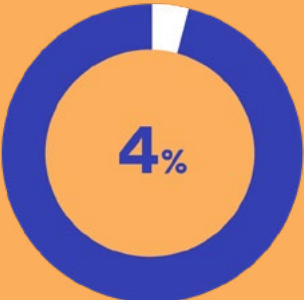
This section provides an overview of the overall size of the whole Black and South Asian population in England and Wales.



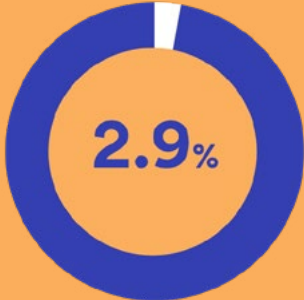
The total population of England and Wales is **59 million** of which **10.8 million people (18%)** are from four major communities:



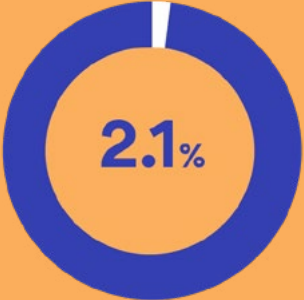
Asian
5.5 million



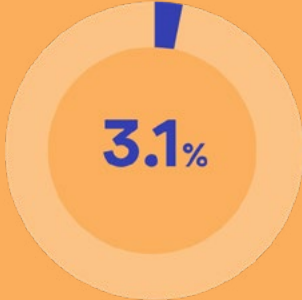
Black
2.4 million



Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
1.7 million



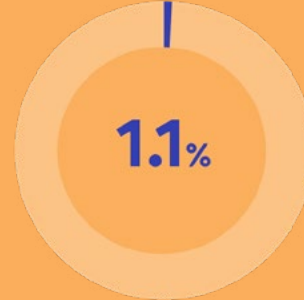
Other ethnic
1.2 million



Indian
1,864,318



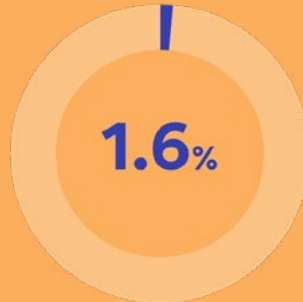
Pakistani
1,587,819



Bangladeshi
644,811



Chinese
445,619



Other Asian
972,783

Community profiles

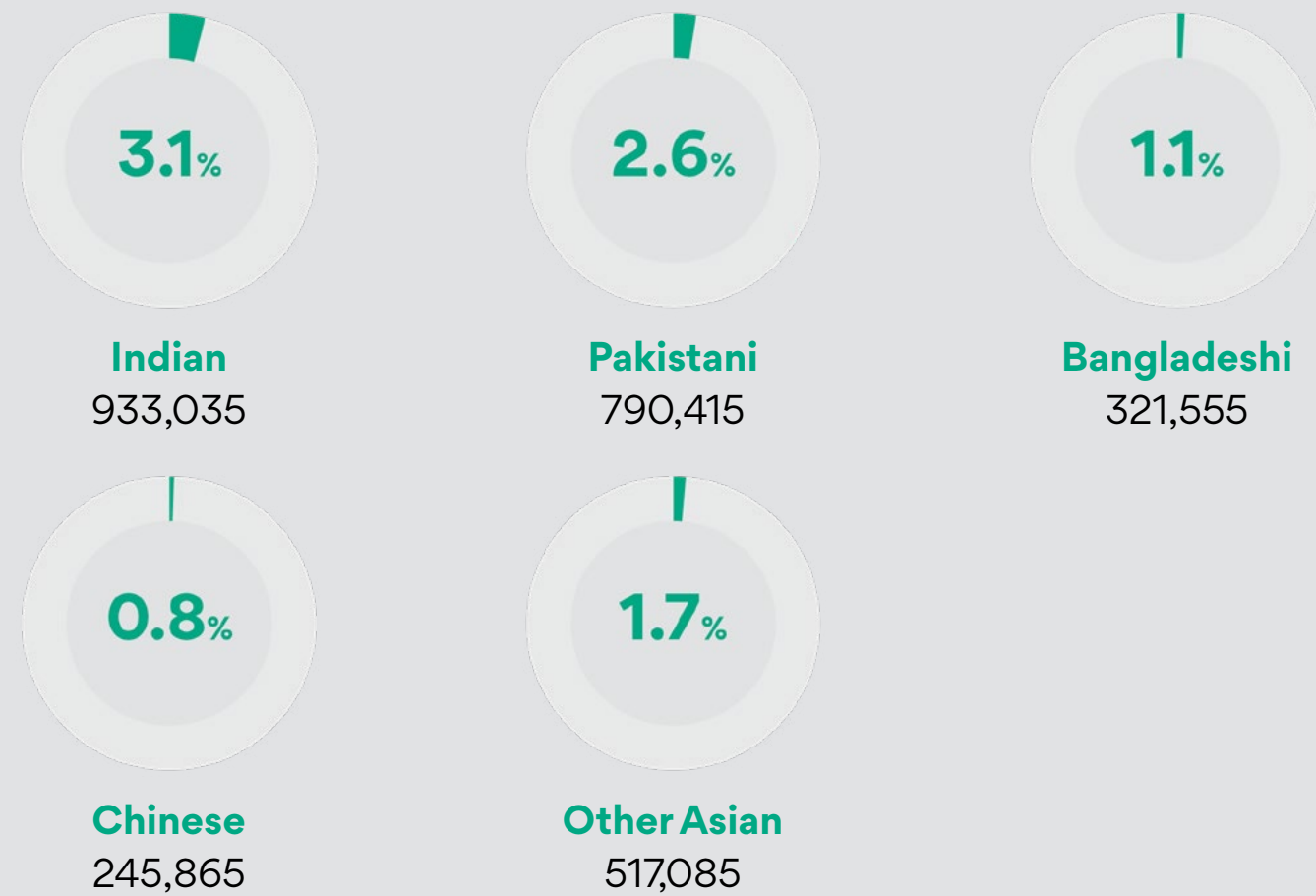
In this section, we take a closer look at the Asian and Black communities in England and Wales, focusing on the make-up, geographic locations, and age profiles.

Breakdown of Asian communities in England and Wales

There is a total of 5.5 million Asian people in England and Wales. Most of the Asian population is composed of communities from four different countries, with the Indian and Pakistani communities being the largest.

The number of our women in each community

In England and Wales, the Asian female population totals 2.8 million.



Large populations of South Asians reside in:

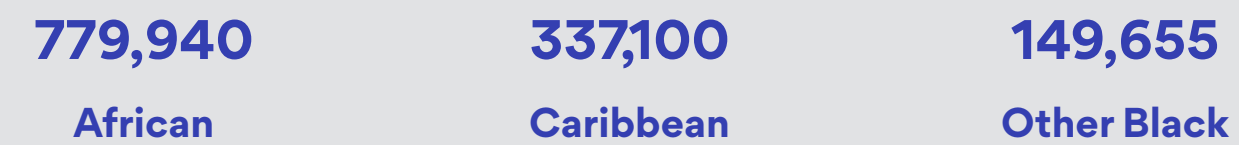
- London: All South Asian groups
- Birmingham: Mainly Indians and Pakistanis
- Leicester: Mainly Indians
- Bradford: Mainly Pakistanis
- Manchester: Mainly Pakistanis
- Slough: Mainly Indians and Pakistanis
- Luton: Mainly Pakistanis and Bangladeshis
- Oldham: Mainly Pakistanis and Bangladeshis
- Wolverhampton: Mainly Indians
- Coventry: Mainly Indians
- Kirklees: Mainly Pakistanis and Indians

Breakdown of Black communities in England and Wales

There is a total of 2.4 million Black people in England and Wales, comprising those from African and Caribbean communities.



The number of our women in each community

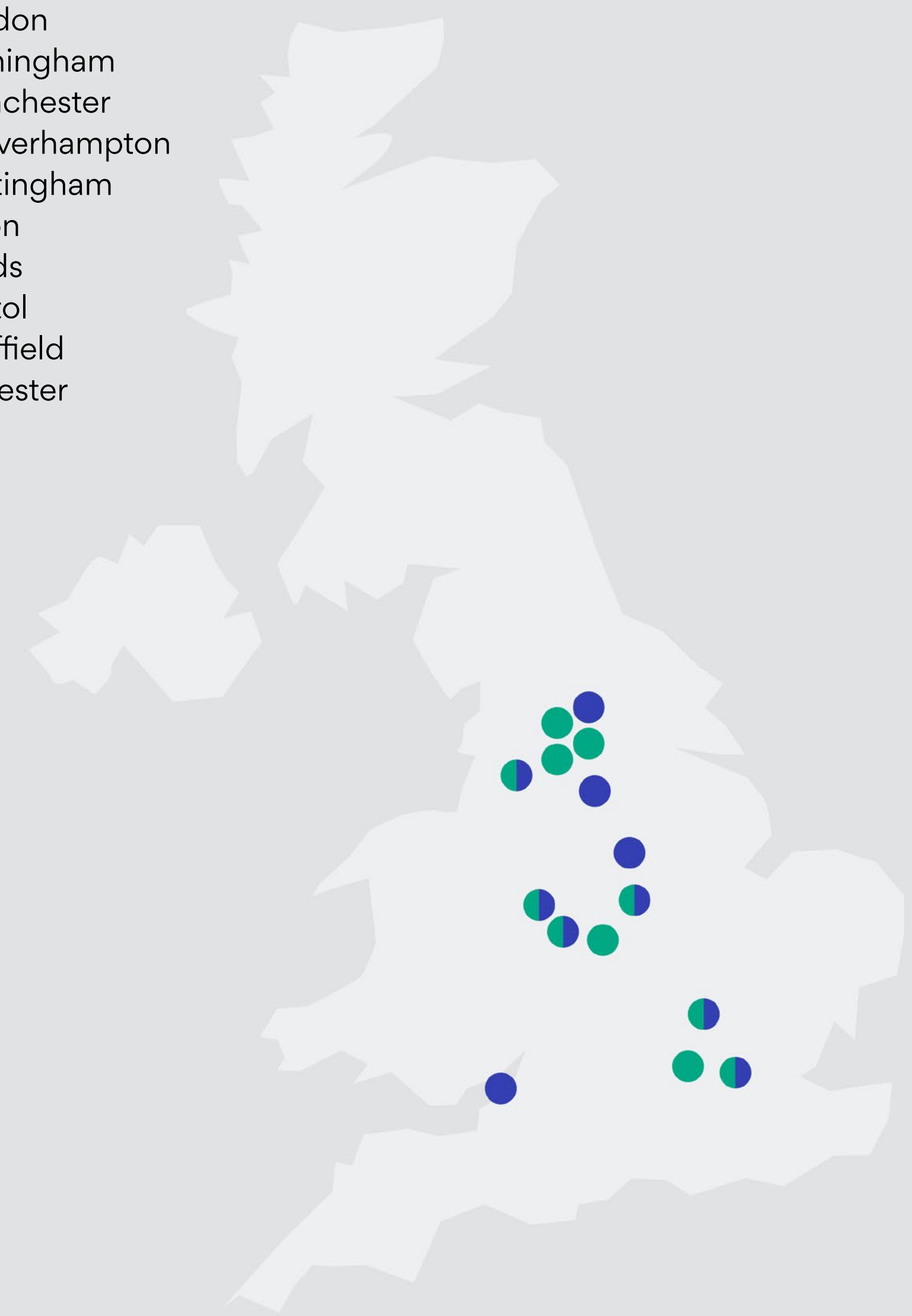


Large populations of Black Africans reside in:

- London
- Birmingham
- Manchester
- Leeds
- Coventry

Large populations of Black Caribbeans reside in:

- London
- Birmingham
- Manchester
- Wolverhampton
- Nottingham
- Luton
- Leeds
- Bristol
- Sheffield
- Leicester



Culturally intelligent guidance

This section provides guidance in terms of the language, faith, dietary requirements, clothing and key calendar dates for our multicultural women.

Important naote: People practise their religious beliefs to varying levels and therefore not everyone will follow the dietary and clothing requirements outlined below, and people will speak mother-tongue languages to differing degrees. However, this section provides some general guidance.

Mother-tongue languages

There are a vast number of languages and dialects spoken in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and across the African continent. These pages aim to provide some information about the majority languages spoken in England.

Indian

In England, the majority languages for communication are:



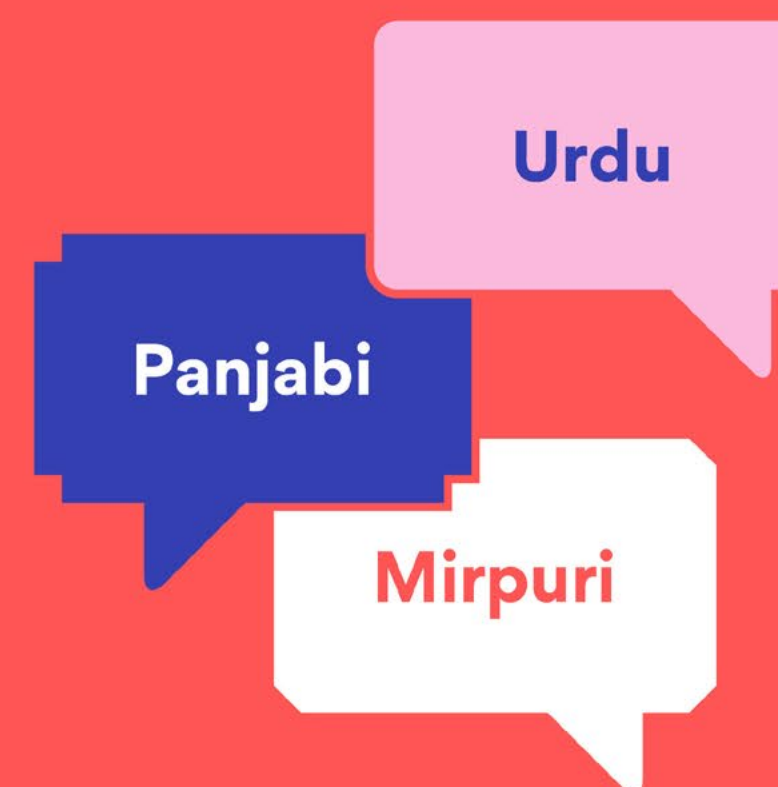
Hindi
Written and spoken
and language of 'Bollywood'

Gujarati
written and spoken

Panjabi
written and spoken

Pakistani

In England, the majority languages for communication are:



Urdu
written and spoken

Panjabi
spoken

Those from **Mirpur** speak **Mirpuri** and there is a significant population in the West Midlands

Bangladeshi

In England, the majority languages for communication are:



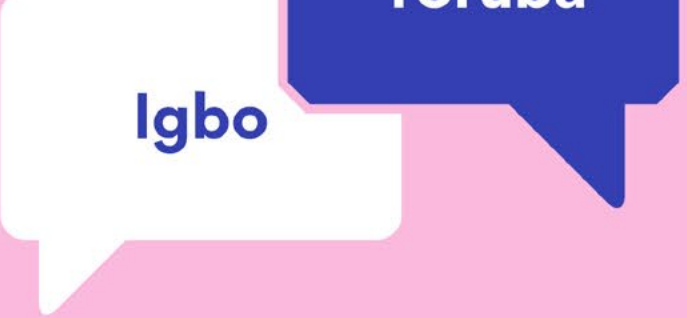
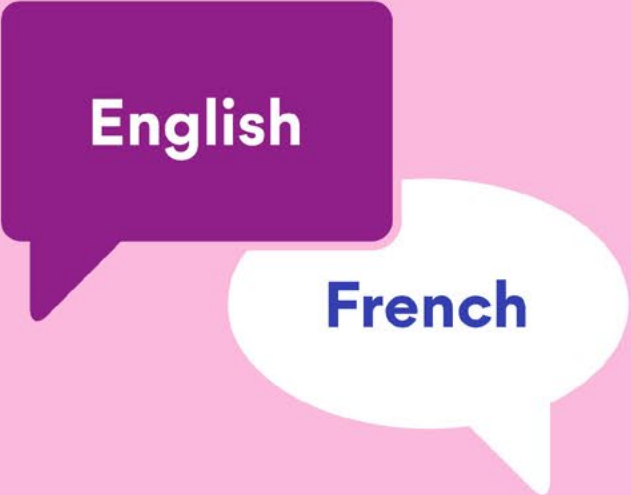
Sylheti
spoken only

Bengali
written
(limited spoken
by those more literate)



African

In England, the majority languages for communication are:



Most **Nigerians** in the UK are likely to be **Yoruba** or **Igbo** and therefore speak these languages, as well as **pidgin English**.

Ghanaians in the UK are likely to speak **Twi**, **Fante**, **Ga** as well as **pidgin English**.



It is worth noting that since **Somali** only became a written language in 1972, there can be a lower English proficiency to be mindful of. Translations, audio and visual methods may prove effective in reaching Somali women.

Caribbean

In England, the majority languages for communication are:



Most speak **English**.



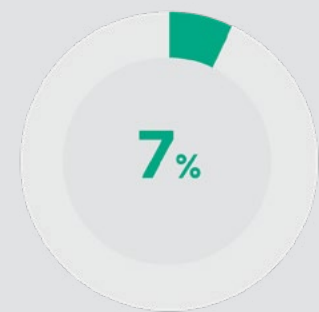
However, some people also speak **Patois** or **Creole languages** among themselves.

English proficiency

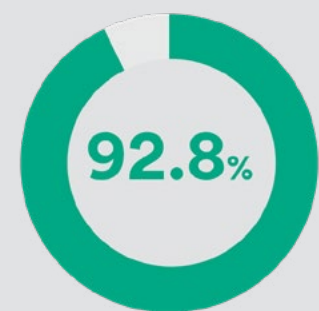
Indian



For 89.6% of Indian women, English is either the main language or they speak English well.



7% of Indian women do not speak English well or cannot speak English.

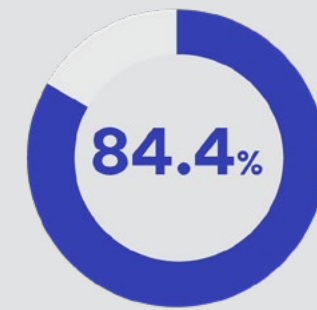


For 92.8% of Indian men, English is either the main language or they speak English well.



3.7% of Indian men do not speak English well or cannot speak English.

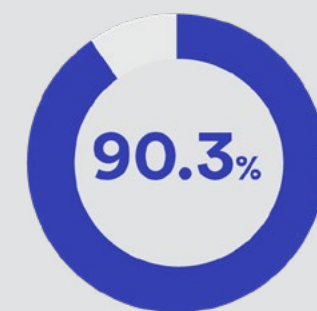
Pakistani



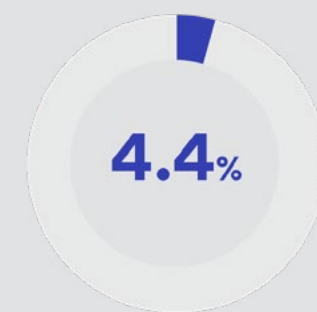
For 84.4% of Pakistani women, English is either the main language or they speak English well.



10.3% of Pakistani women do not speak English well or cannot speak English.

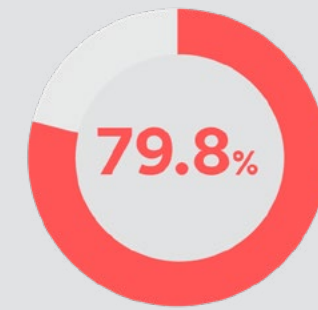


For 90.3% of Pakistani men, English is either the main language or they speak English well.

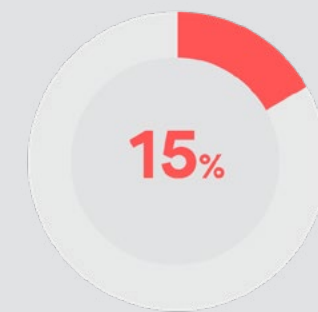


4.4% of Pakistani men do not speak English well or cannot speak English.

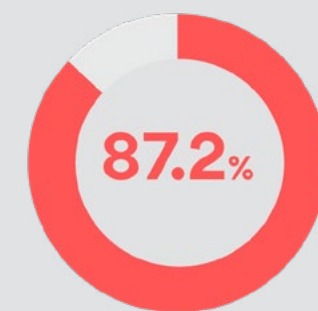
Bangladeshi



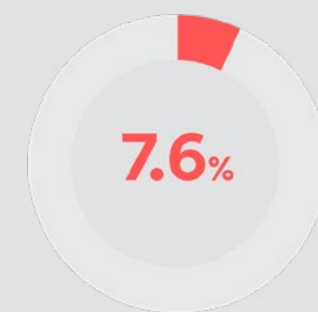
For 79.8% of Bangladeshi women, English is either the main language or they speak English well.



15% of Bangladeshi women do not speak English well or cannot speak English.

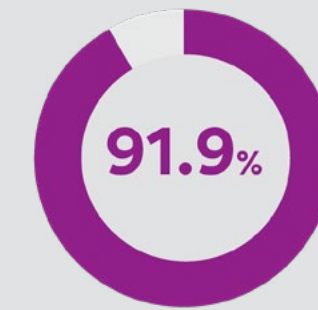


For 87.2% of Bangladeshi men, English is either the main language or they speak English well.

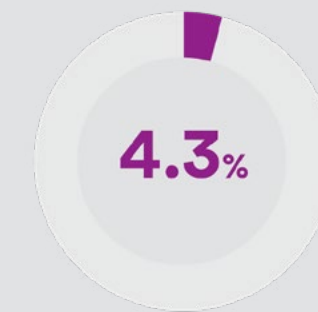


7.6% of Bangladeshi men do not speak English well or cannot speak English.

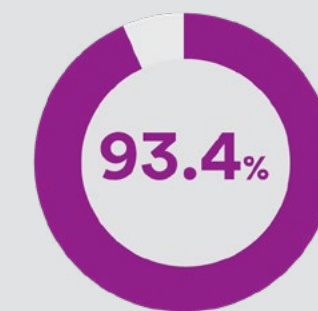
African



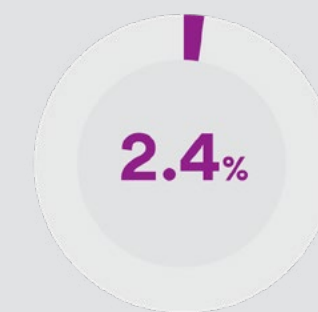
For 91.9% of African women, English is either the main language or they speak English well.



4.3% of African women do not speak English well or cannot speak English.

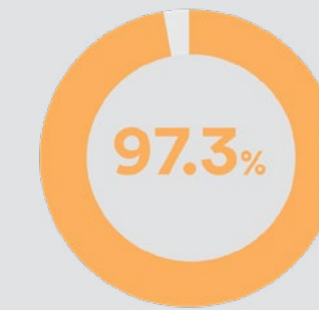


For 93.4% of African men, English is either the main language or they speak English well.



2.4% of African men do not speak English well or cannot speak English.

Caribbean



For 97.3% of Caribbeans, English is either the main language or they speak English well.

The main faith groups of women in England

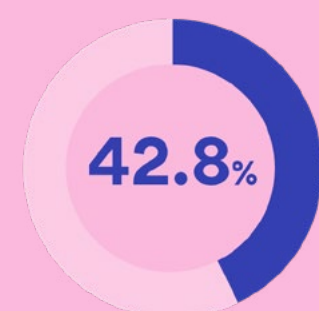
Indian



Muslim

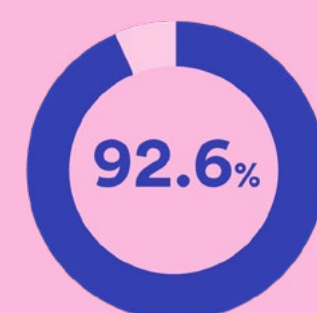


Sikh



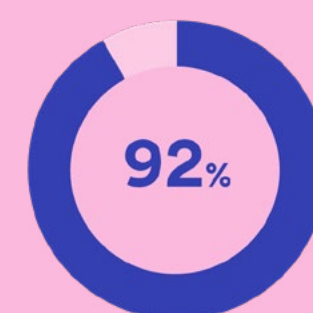
Hindu

Pakistani



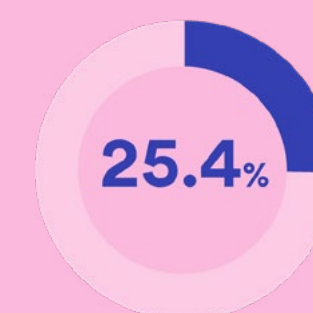
Muslim

Bangladeshi

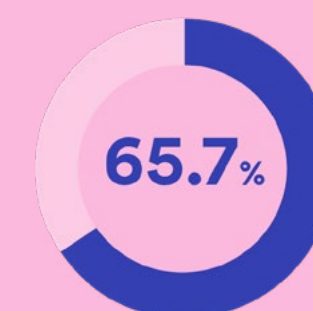


Muslim

African



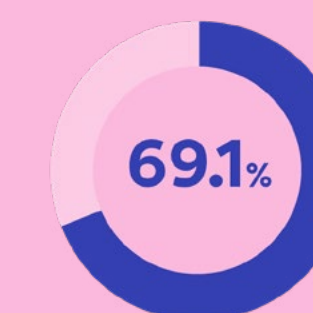
Muslim



Christian

Although the predominant faith is Christianity, there are a variety of beliefs present depending on the denomination people adhere to.

Caribbean



Christian

Although the predominant faith is Christianity, there are a variety of beliefs present depending on the denomination people adhere to.

Diet and clothing

Muslim

Diet

According to religious beliefs, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims traditionally do not eat pork, do not drink alcohol, and food must be halal.

In accordance with religious beliefs, Caribbean Muslims traditionally do not eat pork.

Clothing

Many women wear modest clothing (cover arms and legs).

They may choose to wear:

Hijaab – headscarf

Niqab – face cover

Burka – full body cover

As per traditional dress, some Indian women wear saris or salwar kameez.

Rastafarian

Diet

Traditionally, according to religious and cultural beliefs many do not eat pork, and do not drink alcohol.

Some are vegetarians or vegans – referred to as ‘Ital’.

Clothing

As a symbol of their culture and faith, Rastafarian women often wear long loose dresses or skirts, have dreadlocks and may wrap their hair.



Key calendar dates

There are several key cultural, religious or festival dates which are helpful to note when planning activities or promotion around activities. While there are other key calendar moments, the festivals and events outlined here are the bigger or more noteworthy calendar moments pertaining to our Black and Asian Muslim women.

Note

Approximate dates have been provided because the exact dates of some cultural and religious events differ every year.

Festival/Events	Approximate annual timing	Significance/meaning	Audience
Ethiopian Christmas	07 Jan	Ethiopian Christmas celebration is marked by a large feast.	Rastafari
St.Valentine's Day	14 Feb		All
Shrove Tuesday	Varies by year	Pancake Day – traditionally a way to use up eggs, flour and sugar before 40 days of fasting.	Christian
Ghana Independence Day	24 Mar	Independence Day marks the declaration of independence from the United Kingdom.	Ghanaian
Lent	February – April	A period of 40 days which comes before Easter in the Christian calendar, traditionally a time of fasting and reflection.	Christian
Easter	March/April	Easter is the most important festival in the Christian calendar. It celebrates Jesus rising from the dead, three days after he was crucified.	Christian
Ramadan	Varies by year	The holiest month in Islam: 30 days of fasting, reflection and penance.	Muslim
Chaand Raat	Varies by year	The night before Eid, akin to Christmas Eve, where families come together to celebrate the sighting of the new moon, signifying the end of Ramadan and the start of festive celebrations.	Muslim
Eid al-Fitr	Varies by year	Celebrates the end of Ramadan with communal prayers, feasting, and acts of charity.	Muslim
Eid al-Adha	Varies by year	The Festival of Sacrifice. It's like Thanksgiving, marked by communal feasting and acts of charity, emphasising gratitude, and sharing with others.	Muslim
Carnival season	May – August	Celebratory street events held around the country with Notting Hill, London being the largest of its kind.	Black, predominantly Caribbean
Mela	May – September	Defined as a public gathering, Melas take place around the country in the summer months. Like festivals, there is food, music and dancing.	South Asian
Pakistan Independence Day	14 Aug	Marks the creation of Pakistan and independence from the British Raj.	Pakistani
Indian Independence Day	15 Aug	Marks independence of India from the British Raj.	Indian
Ethiopian New Year's Day	11 Sep	The start of the New Year in Ethiopia is recognised because Rastafarians believe Ethiopia to be their spiritual homeland.	Rastafari
Black History Month	October	Period to recognise the outstanding contributions people of African and Caribbean descent have made to history.	All Black communities
Nigerian Independence Day	01 Oct	Independence Day marks the declaration of independence from the United Kingdom.	Nigerian
Christmas	25 Dec	The birth of Jesus.	Christian



THANK YOU

Contact information
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