



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

STATISTICS

# Ethnic group differences in health, housing, education and economic status in Wales (Census 2021)

Population and household estimates for ethnic groups in Wales by age, sex, religion, general health, disability status, unpaid caregiving, housing tenure, occupancy rating, education level, employment, and socio-economic status.

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# Contents

**Introduction**

**Main points**

**Age and sex**

**General health**

**Disability**

**Unpaid care provision**

**Housing tenure**

**Occupancy rating (bedrooms)**

**Education level**

**Economic activity status**

**Socio-economic status**

**Quality and methodology information**

**Contact details**

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# Introduction

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) published Census 2021 data on ethnic groups of individuals and households in Wales on Tuesday 29 November 2022. On the same day, we published our topic summary [Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion in Wales \(Census 2021\)](#).

This statistical bulletin contains summary data on ethnic groups by various socio-economic outcomes for individuals and households who were usual residents of Wales at the time of the census, on 21 March 2021. It tells us how such outcomes varied for different ethnic groups across Wales. The bulletin also contains ethnic group analysis by age and sex for context. All data in this bulletin can be accessed via the [Census 2021 flexible table builder \(ONS\)](#).

Many of these outcomes will be influenced by the age of individuals within each ethnic group. They will also overlap, for example, people in poor health or those who care for other may be less able to work or gain education. Income and where people live will also have a large effect on how people live, as well as any cultural differences.

Since 1991, the census for England and Wales has included a question about ethnic identity. The ethnic group categories, including 'other' categories for write-in responses, were arranged within five high-level ethnic group categories. A full list of the 19 ethnic group categories analysed in this bulletin is provided in the [quality and methodology section](#).

In June 2022 the Welsh Government published its [Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan](#) which includes guidance on Anti-Racist language. This bulletin uses the ethnic group categories collected as part of the census. These categories do not necessarily align with this guidance.

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## Main points

- The age profile of people in Wales varied widely across ethnic groups, with higher proportions of older people found within the “White” high-level ethnic group and higher proportions of younger people found within the “Mixed or multiple ethnicities” group.
- People in the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” high-level ethnic group were the most likely to report that they were in “good health” or “very good health” (88.7%) and those in the “White” group were the least likely (78.1%).
- People in the “White” high-level ethnic group were the most likely to report that they were disabled (22.2%), whilst people within the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” group were the least likely (9.7%).
- People in the “White” high-level ethnic group were the most likely to report that they provided unpaid care (10.8%), whilst people within the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” group were the least likely (6.1%).
- People in the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” high-level ethnic group were the least likely to own their own home and the most likely to live in social rented housing (40.5%).
- Usual residents in households within the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” high-level ethnic group were the most likely (21.51%) to have a negative occupancy rating, meaning that they had fewer bedrooms than required.
- People in the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” high-level ethnic group were the most likely to hold qualifications at Level 4 or above (for example Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma, Bachelor’s degree and post-graduate qualifications) (43.9%), whilst people in the “White” group were the least likely (9.3%).
- Employment, including self-employment, was highest among people aged 16 to 64 in the “White” high-level ethnic group (69.5%), self-employment was highest in the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” group (10.2%),

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unemployment was highest in the “Black, Black Welsh Black British, Caribbean or African” group (9.9%) and Economic Inactivity was highest in the high-level “Other ethnic group” (46.4%).

- People aged 16 to 64 in the “White” high-level ethnic group were the most likely to report that they held “Managerial” socio-economic status (29.9% of people from this group).

## Age and sex

The population in Wales recorded on Census Day, 21 March 2021, was 3,107,494. Of this population, 2.9 million (93.8%) identified within the “White” high-level ethnic group.

Of the “White” population in Wales, 2.8 million (90.6% of the whole Welsh population) identified as “Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British”.

Of the other high-level ethnic groups in the Welsh population, 89,000 identified as “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British”; 49,000 as “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups”; 28,000 as “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African”; and 26,000 as “Other ethnic group”.

For detailed breakdowns of the population in Wales by ethnic group, please refer to our topic summary [Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion in Wales \(Census 2021\)](#).

## Ethnic groups by age and sex

There was a relatively even distribution of sexes across the five high-level ethnic groups. Females were the majority within the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” (50.8%), “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups” (50.5%), and “White” (51.1%)

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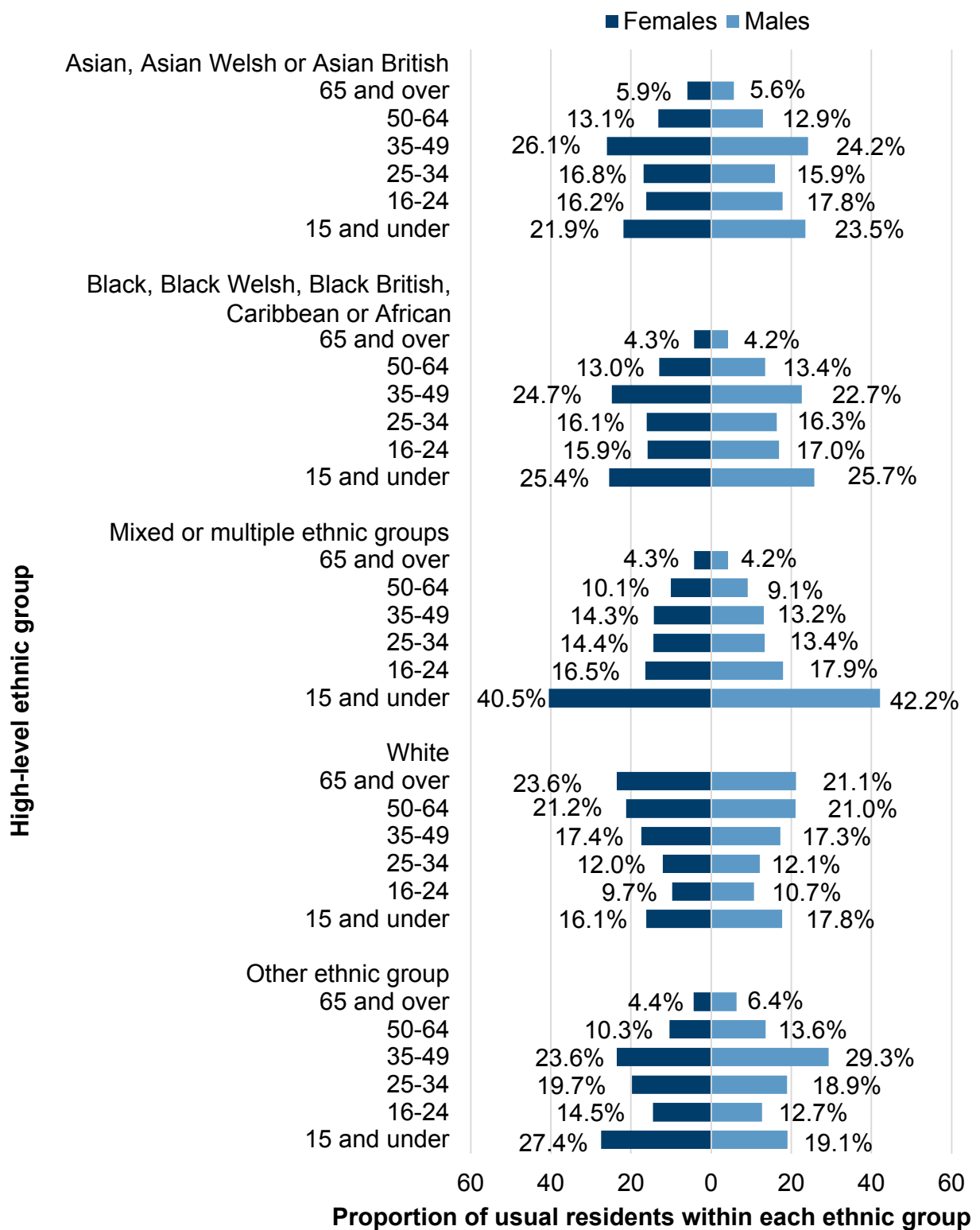
high-level ethnic groups, but were the minority within the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” (49%) and “Other ethnic group” high-level ethnic groups (45.8%).

The age distributions for the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British”, “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” and “Other ethnic group” high-level ethnic groups were similar, with larger populations found within younger age groups, although with a population spike at ages 35 to 49.

Within the high-level “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups” category, 40.5% of females and 42.2% of males were aged 15 and under, although these proportions fell sharply to 16.5% and 17.9% respectively, in the 16 to 24 age group. In this ethnic category, only 4.3% of females and 4.2% of males were aged 65 and over.

The proportion of people in the “White” high-level ethnic group in Wales increases with age from the 16 to 24 age group upwards. This age group (16- to 24-year-olds) includes 9.7% of females and 10.7% of males, compared to 23.6% of females and 21.1% of males in the 65 and over age group.

## Figure 1: Proportions of high-level ethnic groups by age group and sex, Wales, 2021



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Description of Figure 1: This bar chart shows the proportion of usual residents in each high-level ethnic group within each of the six age groups. The proportion of both males and females declined for older ages within the “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups” high-level ethnicity group but increased for older ages within the “White” high-level ethnicity group.

Source: Census 2021

## Median ages of ethnic groups

Median ages varied widely across ethnic groups. Within the high-level “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups”, median ages for females ranged from 16 for those who identified as “White and Black African” to 24 for “Other Mixed”, whilst median ages for males ranged from 15 for those who identified as “White and Black African” to 22 for “Other Mixed”.

The median age for people who identified as “Arab” was 25 for females and 26 for males.

Within the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” high-level group, the median age for people who identified as “Caribbean” was 47 for both females and males but only 22 for people who identified as “Other Black”.

Median ages were relatively evenly distributed within the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” high-level ethnic group, ranging from 27 for females and 26 for males who identified as “Bangladeshi” to 36 for females and 31 for males who identified as “Other Asian”.

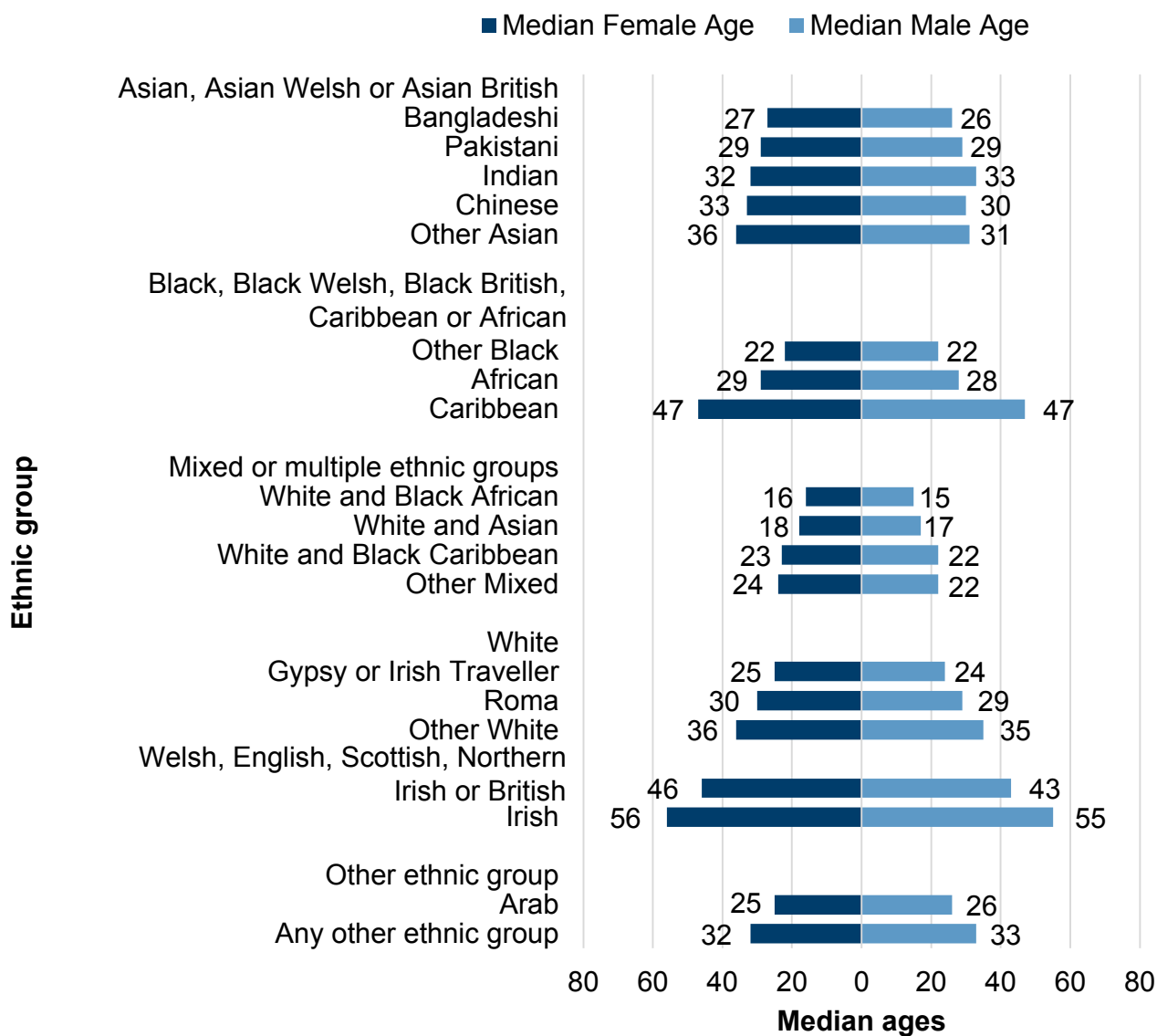
Median ages varied the most amongst “White” ethnic groups, ranging from 25 for females and 24 for males who identified as “Gypsy or Irish Traveller” to 56 for females and 55 for males who identified as “Irish”.

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**Figure 2: Median ages of ethnic groups by sex, Wales, 2021**



Description of Figure 2: This bar chart shows the median ages of usual residents across ethnic groups in Wales. There was considerable variation in median ages between different groups. The highest median ages were found amongst females (56) and males (55) who identified as “White: Irish”. The lowest were

found amongst people who identified as “Mixed and multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African” (16 for females and 15 for males) and “Mixed and multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian” (18 for females and 17 for males).

Source: Census 2021

## General health

Usual residents were asked to rate their own health status from a list of five options: “Very good health”, “Good health”, “Fair health”, “Bad health” and “Very bad health”.

People within the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” high-level ethnic group were the most likely to report that they were in “good” or “very good” health (88.7%), and those in the “White” high-level group were the least likely (78.3%).

People within the “White” high-level ethnic group were also the most likely to report that they were in “bad” or “very bad” health (7.2%) and those from the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” group were the least likely (3.2%).

Out of all individual ethnic groups, those who identified as “African” and “Mixed and multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian” were the most likely to report that they were in a state of “very good health” (65.1% of people in both groups).

People who identified as “White: Irish” were the least likely to report that they were in a “very good” state of health (40.3%). Those who identified as “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” reported the poorest levels of health, with 10.3% stating that they had “bad health” and 4.6% “very bad health”.

Within the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” high-level ethnic group, 7.6% of people who identified as “Caribbean” reported either “bad

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health” or “very bad health”, compared to just 2.3% of people who identified as “African”.

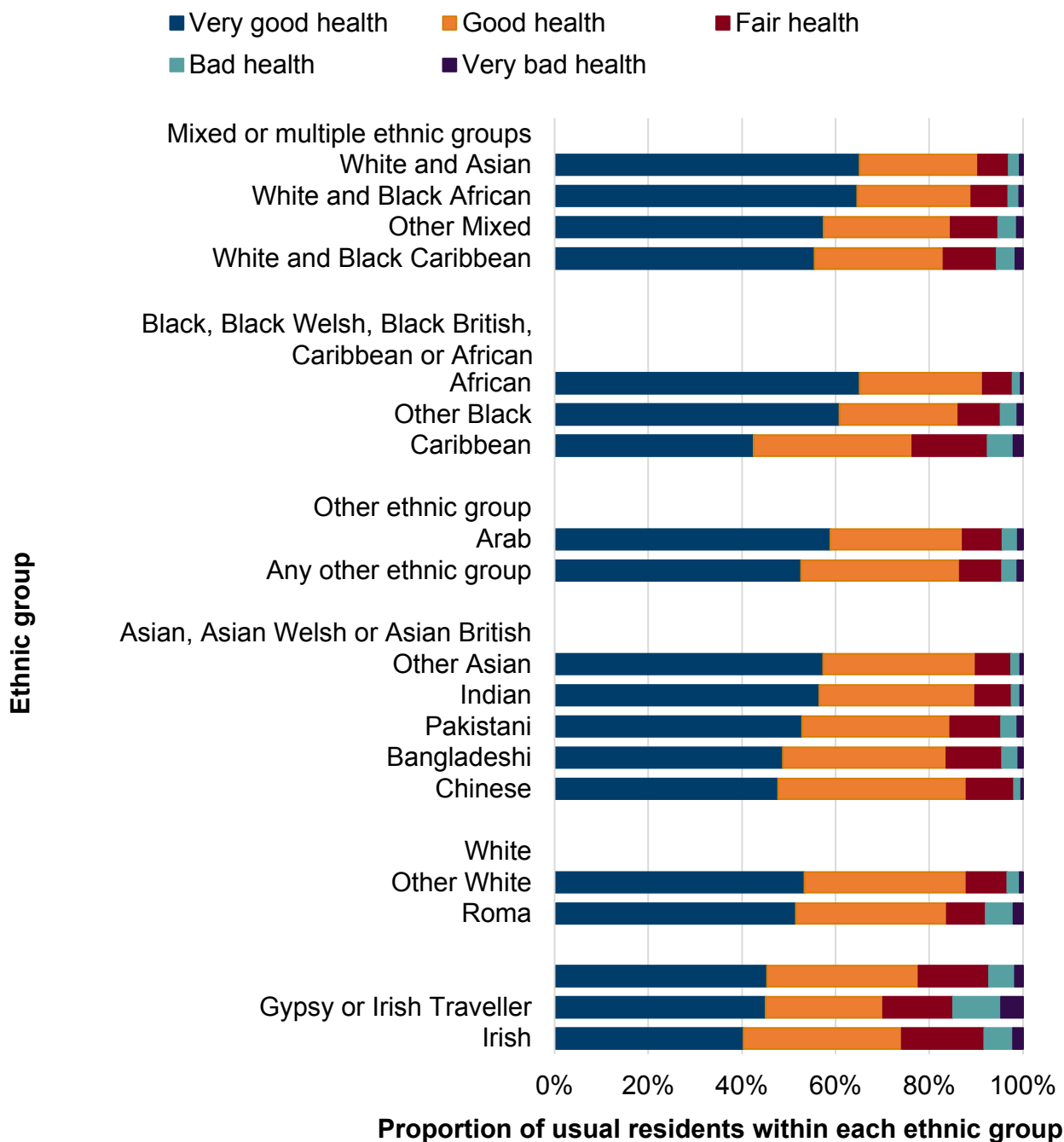
The different age profiles of the ethnic groups are likely to impact the patterns seen in general health. The analysis of health and disability in this bulletin did not use age-standardised rates, that is, we present the percentage of people within an ethnic group of a particular health or disability status, without adjusting for the age structure of that group.

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### Figure 3: Ethnic groups by health status, Wales, 2021



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Description of Figure 3: This bar chart displays the proportion of usual residents within each ethnic group who fall into each of the five categories which represent their self-reported health level. People who identified as “Mixed and multiple ethnicities: White and Asian”, “Mixed and multiple ethnicities: White and Black African” and “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean: African” were the most likely to report that they were in “Very good health” (although it should be noted that these groups are among the youngest age profiles). People who identified as “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” were the most likely to report that they were in “Very bad health”.

Source: Census 2021

## Disability

Usual residents were asked to report if they had a long-term physical or mental health condition or illness (lasting or expecting to last 12 months or more), and the extent to which this limited their day-to-day activities. Respondents who reported a long-term physical or mental health condition and whose day-to-day activities were limited ‘a little’ or ‘a lot’ have been defined as disabled.

The approach used in the Census aims to collect data that closely aligns with the definition of disability in the [Equality Act \(2010\) \(Gov.UK\)](#). This is informed by the medical model of disability which defines people as disabled by their impairment. In 2002 the Welsh Government adopted the [social model of disability \(Disability Wales\)](#). This model sets out a different way to view disability – rather than defining people as disabled by their impairment (as in the medical model of disability), people with impairments are disabled by physical, attitudinal and organisational barriers created by society.

The data included in this section uses the Equality Act (2010) definition of disability, and therefore reflects the medical model of disability. However, where

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possible, we have used language throughout this bulletin that aligns with the social model of disability.

21.6% of usual residents in Wales reported that they were disabled. People within the “White” high-level ethnic group had the highest proportion of disabled people (22.2%), comprised of 10.6% whose day-to-day activities were affected ‘a lot’ and 11.6% whose day-to-day activities were affected ‘a little’.

The “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” high-level ethnic group had the lowest proportion of disabled people (9.7%), comprised of 4.1% whose day-to-day activities were affected ‘a lot’ and 5.6% whose day-to-day activities were affected ‘a little’.

There was substantial variation in proportions of disabled people between individual ethnic groups. Within the “White” high-level ethnic group, the group who identified as “Gypsy or Irish Traveller” had the highest percentage of disabled people (29.7%) and those who identified as “Other White” had the lowest (11.1%).

Within the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” high-level ethnic group, the group who identified as “Caribbean” had the highest percentage of disabled people (22.0%) and those who identified as “African” had the lowest (7.9%).

Within the “Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups” high-level ethnic group, the group who identified as “White and Black Caribbean” (20.2%) had the highest percentage of disabled people and those who identified as “White and Asian” had the lowest (12.6%).

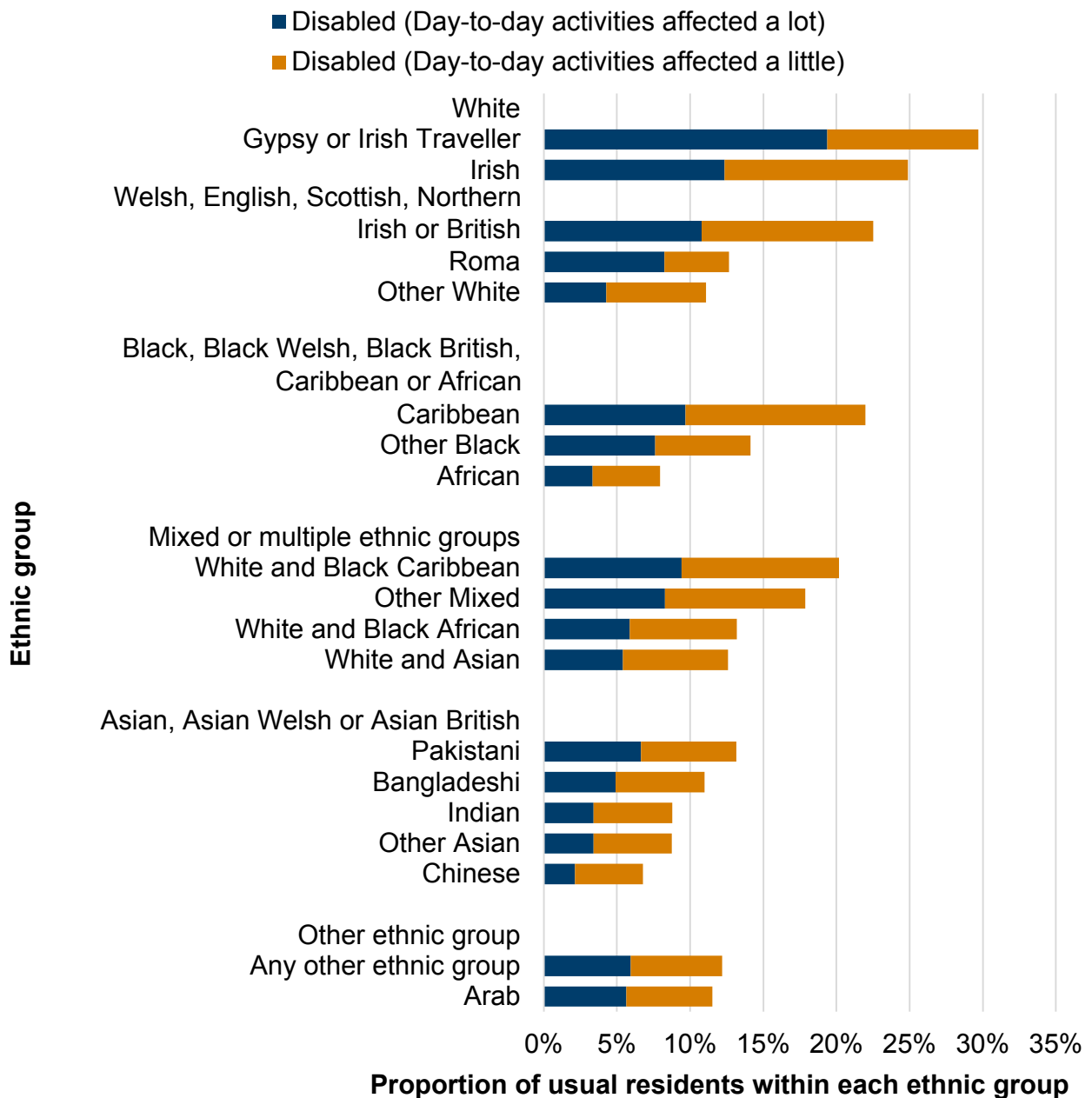
Within the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” high-level ethnic group, the group who identified as “Pakistani” (13.1%) had the highest percentage of disabled people and those who identified as “Chinese” had the lowest (6.8%).

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**Figure 4: Disabled people by ethnic group, Wales, 2021**



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Description of Figure 4: This bar chart shows the proportion of usual residents within each ethnic group who reported that they were disabled. The proportions of disabled people were highest amongst people who identified as “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” and lowest amongst people who identified as “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Chinese”.

Source: Census 2021

## Unpaid care provision

The census asked usual residents in Wales aged 5 years and over “Do you look after, or give any help or support to, anyone because they have long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, or problems related to old age?”. They were asked to exclude anything they did as part of their paid employment. Figures for unpaid care can be affected by perception of the question. Not everyone who provides unpaid care may consider themselves an unpaid carer. The data may also be impacted by different age profiles within ethnic groups.

People within the “White” high-level ethnic group provided the highest rate of unpaid care (10.8% providing some hours of unpaid care). From this group, 4.8% of people provided care for 19 or less hours, 2.2% provided care for 20 to 49 hours and 3.7% provided care for 50 or more hours per week.

People within the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” high-level ethnic group were least likely to be providing unpaid care (6.1%).

There was considerable variation in unpaid care provision between the different “White” ethnicities. People who identified as “Gypsy or Irish Traveller” spent the most time providing unpaid care, with 5.1% spending 50 or more hours per week and 4.6% spending 20 to 49 hours per week caring. This compares to 1.8% and

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1.4% of people who identified as “Other White”, respectively.

Within the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” high-level ethnic group, 2.5% of people who identified as “Caribbean” provided unpaid care for 50 or more hours per week, compared to 1.4% of people who identified as “African”.

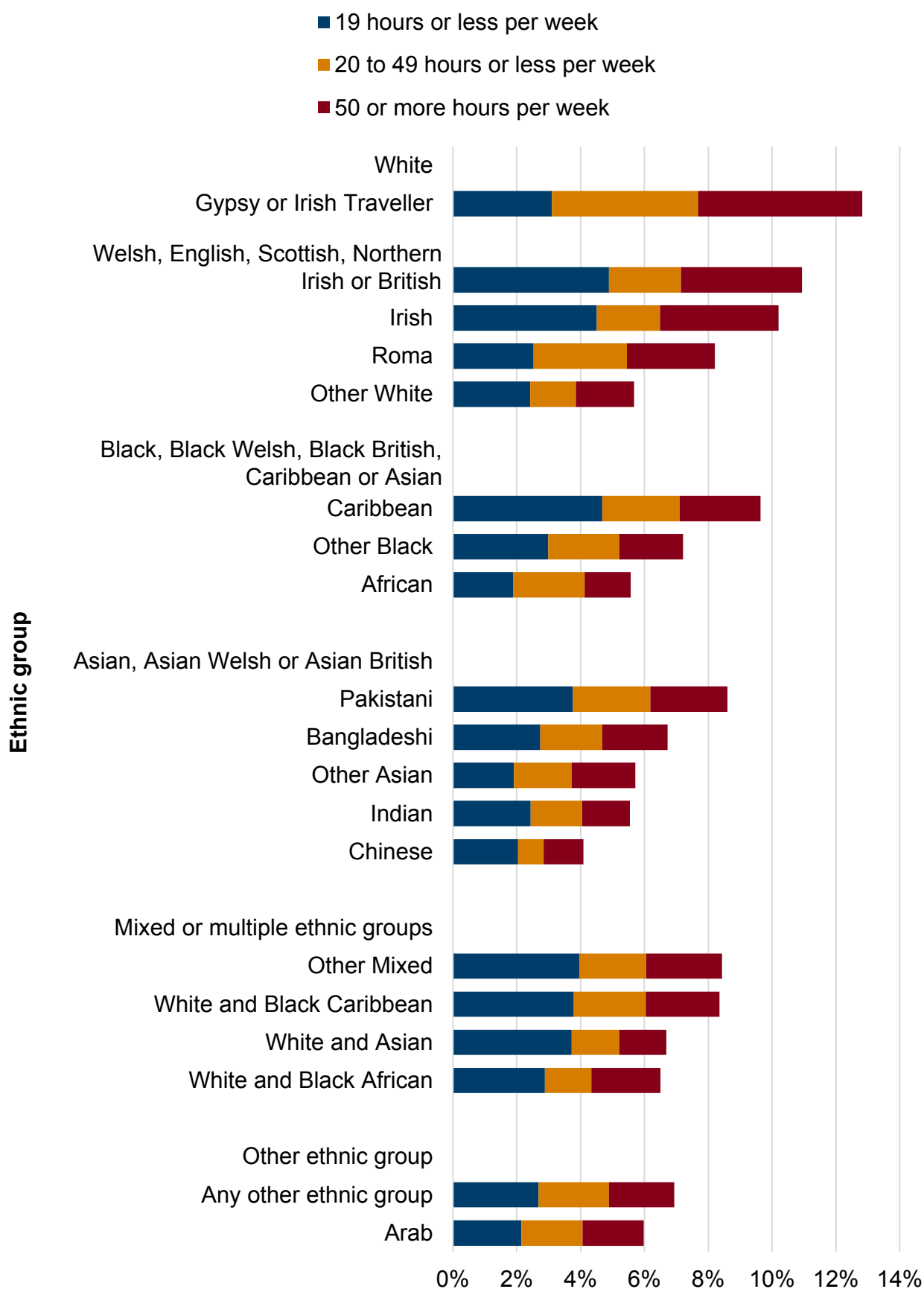
Within the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” high-level ethnic group, 2.4% of people who identified as “Pakistani” provided unpaid care for 50 or more hours per week, compared to 1.2% of people who identified as “Chinese”.

## Figure 5: Ethnic groups by unpaid care provision, Wales, 2021

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Description of Figure 5: This bar chart shows the proportion of usual residents within each ethnic group who provided unpaid care, split by three different categories which represent how many hours of unpaid care they provided per week. People who identified as “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” were the most likely to provide unpaid care and those who identified as “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Chinese” were the least likely.

Source: Census 2021

## Housing tenure

Usual residents in households were asked to report if they owned their home (outright or with a mortgage) or if they lived in a rented home. If rented they were asked what type of landlord they had (private landlord, council, registered social landlord or other).

People in the “White” high-level ethnic group were the most likely to own their home outright (33.2%), whilst people in the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” high-level ethnic group were the least likely (7.6%). People from the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” group were the most likely to own a home with a mortgage (41.0%).

People in the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” high-level ethnic group were the most likely to live in social rented housing, rented either from the Local Authority or a registered social landlord (40.5%). People within the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” high-level group were the least likely (9.8%).

People in the high-level “Other ethnic group” were the most likely to rent privately, whether from a private landlord, letting agency or other (44.9%), whilst those in the “White” group were the least likely (16.1%).

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Private renting was also the most common form of housing tenure for people within the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” high-level ethnic group (42.3%).

There was wide variation in housing tenure between different ethnic groups within the high-level “White” group. People who identified as “Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British” (68.9%) and “Irish” (68.8%) were the most likely to own their homes, either outright or with a mortgage, loan or shared ownership. On the other hand, the “Gypsy or Irish Traveller” (23.1%) and “Roma” (18.7%) ethnic groups were amongst the least likely to own their homes.

There was less variation seen in the remaining high-level categories. Within the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” high-level group, people who identified as “Pakistani” were the most likely to own their own homes (67.2%) whilst people who identified as “Other Asian” were the least likely (50.8%).

Within the “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups” high-level ethnic group, people who identified as “White and Asian” were the most likely to own their homes (61.4%) and people who identified as “White and Black African” were the least likely (37.7%).

Within the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” high-level ethnic group, people who identified as “Caribbean” were the most likely to own their homes (50.1%) and people who identified as “African” were the least likely (17.3%).

The percentages of people living in social rented homes were highest amongst people who identified as “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” (56.1%) and “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean: African” (54.5%) and lowest amongst people who identified as “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Indian” (3.3%), “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Chinese” (8.8%), and “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Pakistani” (9.5%).

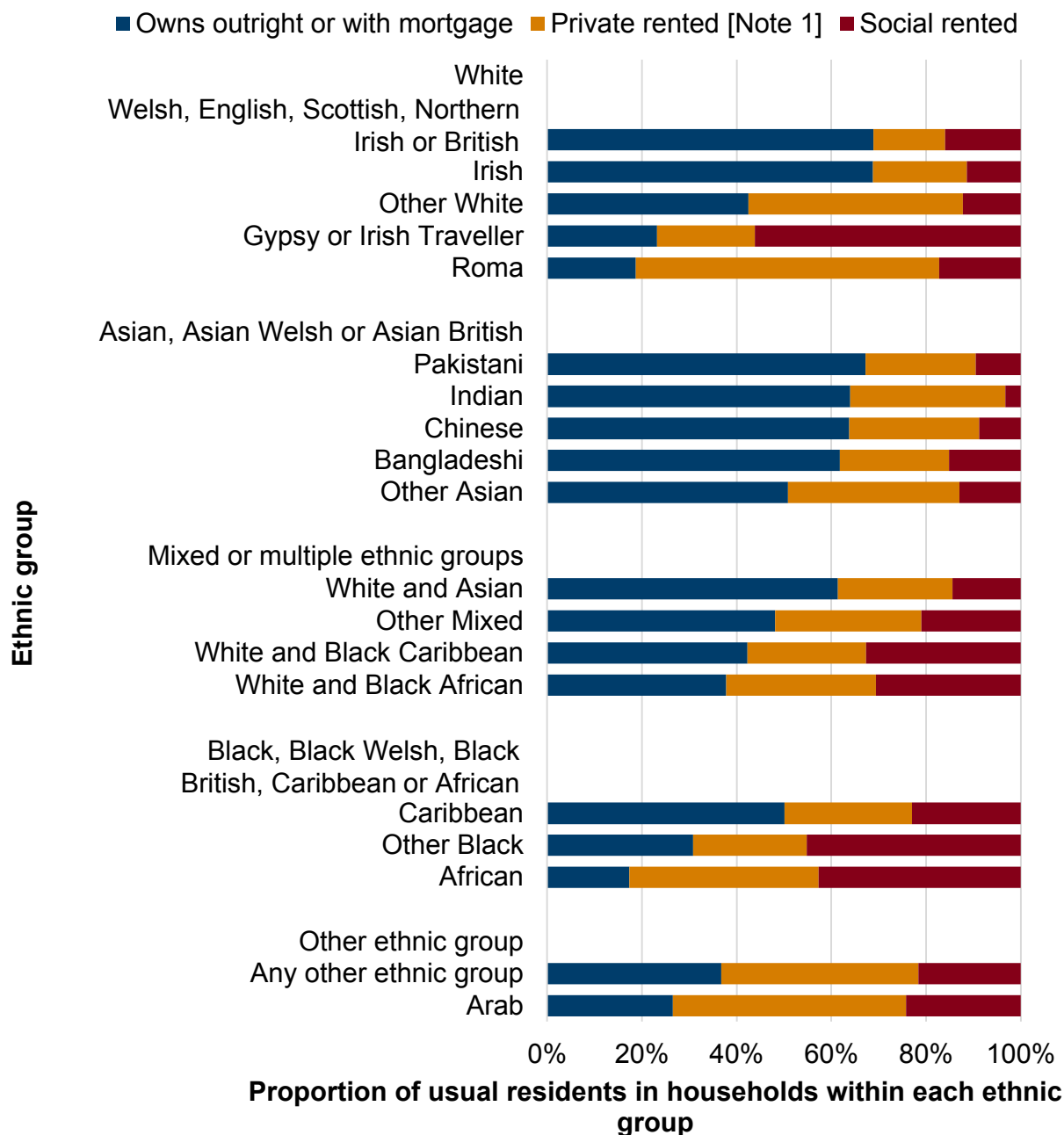
Private renting (or living rent free) was most common amongst people who identified as “White: Roma” (64.1%), “Arab” (49.2%) and “Other White” (45.2%) and least common among those who identified as “White: Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British” (15.2%), “White: Irish” (19.9%) and “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” (20.7%).

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## Figure 6: Ethnic groups by housing tenure, Wales, 2021



Description of Figure 6: This bar chart shows the proportion of usual residents in households within each ethnic group

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households within each ethnic group who owned their home, lived in social rented accommodation, or lived in private rented accommodation. Home ownership was highest for people who identified as “White: Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British”, “White: Irish” and “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Pakistani” and lowest for people who identified as “White: Roma” and “Other Black”.

Source: Census 2021

[Note 1] The “Private Rented” category includes a small number of people who are living rent free.

## Occupancy rating (bedrooms)

Occupancy rating provides a measure of whether a household’s accommodation is overcrowded or under-occupied. An occupancy rating of negative 1 or less implies that a household has fewer bedrooms than the standard requirement (i.e. it is overcrowded), positive 1 or more implies that they have more bedrooms than required (under-occupied), and 0 implies that they met the standard required. For further information on the definition for bedroom occupancy, see the [ONS housing bulletin glossary](#).

People within the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean” high-level ethnic group were the most likely to experience overcrowding with an occupancy rating of -1 or less (21.1%), followed by “Other ethnic groups” (17.4%), “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” (15.0%), “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups” (8.3%) and “White” (4.0%).

The high-level ethnic group with the greatest percentage of people living in homes with more bedrooms than required (occupancy rating of +1 or more) was “White” (71.5%), followed by “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups” (54.9%), “Asian,

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Asian Welsh or Asian British” (50.4%), “Other ethnic groups” (40.7%) and “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean” (36.1%).

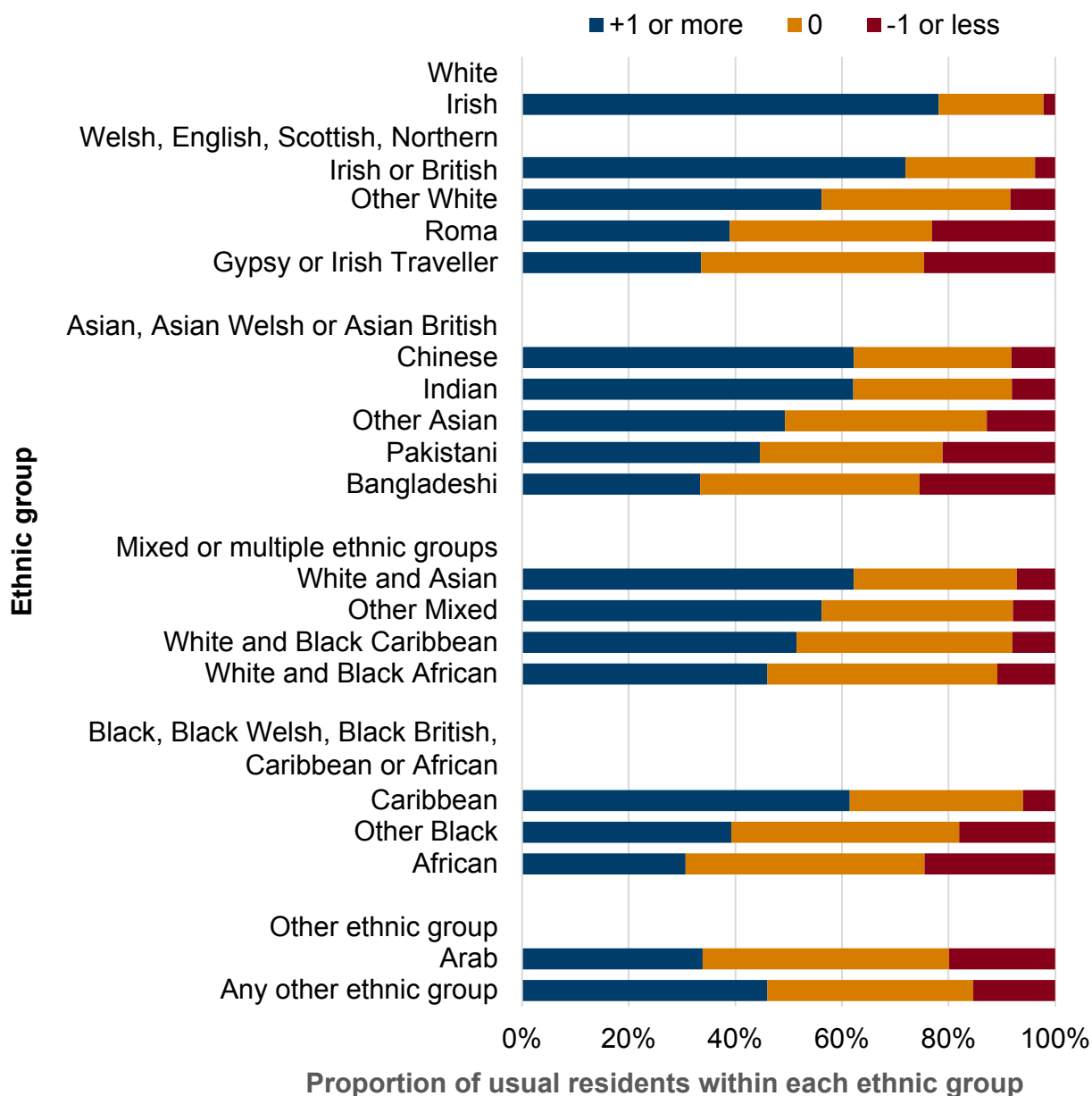
There was wide variation in occupancy rating between different “White” ethnic groups. Usual residents in households who identified as “Irish” (78.2%) and “Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British” (72.0%) were the most likely to have a positive occupancy rating, whilst people from the “Gypsy and Irish Traveller” (24.6%) and “Roma” ethnic groups (23.1%) were the most likely to live in overcrowded accommodation.

Within the high-level “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” ethnic group, people who identified as “Bangladeshi” (25.5%) or Pakistani (21.2%) were the most likely to experience overcrowding, whilst people who identified as “Chinese” (8.2%) and “Indian” (8.1%) were the least likely.

Within the “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups” high-level ethnic group, people who identified as “White and Black African” were the most likely to experience overcrowding (10.9%) whilst those who identified as “White and Asian” were the least likely (7.2%).

Within the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” high-level ethnic group, people who identified as “African” were the most likely to experience overcrowding (24.5%), whilst people who identified as “Caribbean” were the least likely (6.1%).

**Figure 7: Ethnic groups by occupancy rating (bedrooms), Wales, 2021**



Description of Figure 7: This bar chart shows the proportion of usual residents within each ethnic group who fitted into one of 3 categories which described their occupancy rating; over-crowded, adequate number of bedrooms, and under-occupied. The ethnic groups most likely to report a positive occupancy rating (more bedrooms than required) were “White: Irish”, “White: Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British”, “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Chinese”, “Mixed or multiple ethnicities: White and Asian”, “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Indian”, and “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean: Caribbean”. The ethnic groups most likely to experience overcrowding were “Asian, Asian British, or Asian Welsh: Bangladeshi”, “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller”, “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean: African”, “White: Roma” and “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Pakistani”.

Source: Census 2021

## Education level

Usual residents in Wales aged 16 and over were asked to record any qualifications they had ever achieved in Wales or elsewhere, even if they were not using them now. This can be used to calculate the highest level of qualification using the following categories.

- No qualifications: No formal qualifications
- Level 1: 1 to 4 GCSE passes (i.e. grade A\* to C or grade 4 and above) and any other GCSEs at other grades, Foundation Welsh Baccalaureate, or equivalent qualifications.
- Level 2: 5+ GCSE passes (i.e. grade A\* to C or grade 4 and above), Intermediate Welsh Baccalaureate, or equivalent qualifications.
- Apprenticeships
- Level 3: 2+ A Levels, Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate, or equivalent

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qualifications.

- Level 4 or above: Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma, Bachelor's degree, or post-graduate qualifications.
- Other qualifications, of unknown level

Out of a total of 2.6 million usual residents aged 16 and over in Wales, 31.5% reported that their highest qualification was at level 4 or above. 19.9% had no qualifications. 17.2% reported that their highest qualification was at level 3. 14.4% had a highest qualification at level 2 and 8.7% had a highest qualification at level 1. Apprenticeships were the highest qualification for 5.6% of usual residents aged 16 and over. Other qualifications accounted for the remaining 2.7%.

People within the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” high-level ethnic group were the most likely report a qualification at Level 4 or above (43.9%) whilst those in the high-level “White” ethnic group were the least likely (31.0%).

People within the high-level “Other ethnic group” were the most likely to hold no qualifications (24.7%) with those in the high-level “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean” (14.5%) and “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups” (15.2%) the least likely.

People who identified as “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” were the most likely to hold no qualifications out of all ethnic groups (58.8%), followed by “White: Roma” (31.8%) and “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Bangladeshi” (30.9%). Those who identified as “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Indian” were the least likely to hold no qualifications (9.3%), followed by “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian” (11.0%) and “Other Mixed or multiple ethnic groups” (14.9%).

People who identified as “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Indian” were the most likely to hold qualifications at Level 4 or above (61.9%) by a substantial margin. Other ethnic groups with high levels of Level 4 or higher qualifications

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included “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean: African” (46.4%), “Arab” (46.3%), “White: Irish” (44.7%), “Other Asian” (44.3%) and “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Chinese” (42.9%).

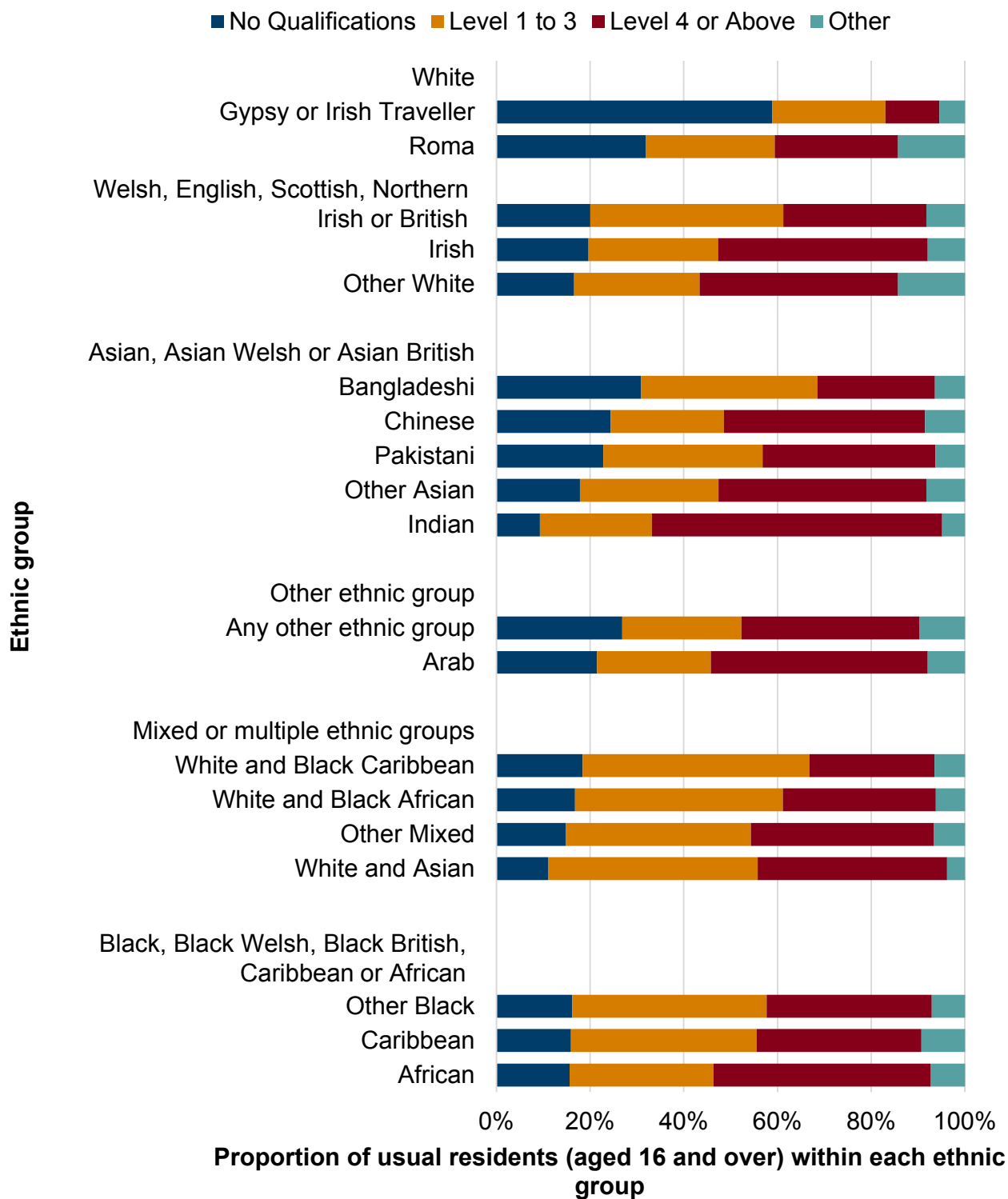
The ethnic groups least likely to hold qualifications at Level 4 or above were “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” (11.5%), “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Bangladeshi” (25.0%), “White: Roma” (26.3%) and “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean” (26.7%).

## Figure 8: Ethnic groups by highest qualification level, for those aged 16 and over, Wales, 2021 [Note 1]

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Description of Figure 8: This bar chart shows the proportion of usual residents in Wales aged 16 and over within each ethnic group who fell into each of the four categories which represented their highest qualification level. People who identified as “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” were the most likely to hold no qualifications and the least likely to hold qualifications at Level 4 or above. People who identified as “Indian”, “Arab” or “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean: African” were the most likely to hold qualifications at Level 4 or above.

Source: Census 2021

[Note 1] For the purpose of making the chart easier to read, Levels 1, 2 and 3 have been combined into a single category called “Level 1 to 3”, and “Apprenticeships” have been included within the “Other” category.

## Economic activity status

Usual residents aged 16 and over were asked questions on their economic activity status. The questions asked whether a person was working or looking for work in the week before Census 2021.

For this analysis, we looked at Census data for whether people aged between 16 and 64 years were an employee, self-employed, unemployed, or economically inactive. Reasons for economic activity include: student, retired, long-term sick, and looking after the home or family.

Long-term illness, caring for others, where someone lives, and age can affect the number of people employed within an ethnic group.

Census 2021 took place during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. As a result of the pandemic, the UK government had introduced furlough measures to

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ensure those who could not work were able to remain in employment. When completing the Census 2021 form, people on furlough were advised to say that they were temporarily away from work, as were those who were quarantining or self-isolating because of the pandemic. The number of people who were economically inactive might be higher than anticipated as it is possible that some people on furlough may have identified as economically inactive, instead of temporarily away from work. There are some differences between Census 2021 data on employment and data based on the Labour Force Survey. These differences are explained in the article [Comparing Census 2021 and Labour Force Survey estimates of the labour market, England and Wales](#), produced by the Office for National Statistics.

In the Census, the “White” high-level ethnic group had the highest proportion of usual residents aged 16 to 64 who were employees (59.8%), followed by “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups” (49.6%), “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean” (48.3%), “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” (48.2%) and “Other ethnic groups” (37.3%).

Self-employed status is highest amongst people within the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” high-level ethnic group (10.2%) and lowest amongst people within the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean” ethnic group (7.5%).

People within the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean” high-level ethnic group were the most likely to be unemployed (9.9%), whilst people within the “White” high-level ethnic group were the least likely (3.9%).

People within the high-level “Other ethnic group” were the most likely to be economically inactive (46.5%) and people within the high-level “White” group were the least likely (26.6%).

There was wide variation in employee status between individual ethnic groups. The ethnic groups with the highest percentage of employees were “Other White”

(64.7%), “White: Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British” (59.6%), “White: Irish” (59.5%), “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Indian” (56.5%) and “Other Asian” (53.4%). The ethnic groups with the lowest percentage of employees were “White: Gypsy and Irish Traveller” (22.4%) and “Arab” (28.5%).

There was less variation in self-employed status between ethnic groups. The groups with the highest percentage of self-employed individuals were “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Pakistani” (13.2%), “White: Gypsy and Irish Traveller” (11.5%) and “Any other ethnic group” (11.4%). The groups with the lowest percentage of those self-employed were “Arab” (6.0%), “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean: African” (7.1%) and “Mixed or multiple ethnicities: White and Black African” (7.2%).

People who identified as “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean: African” were the most likely to be unemployed (11.0%). The ethnic groups least likely to be unemployed were “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Chinese” (3.4%), “White: Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British” (3.9%), “White: Irish” (4.1%) and “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” (4.4%).

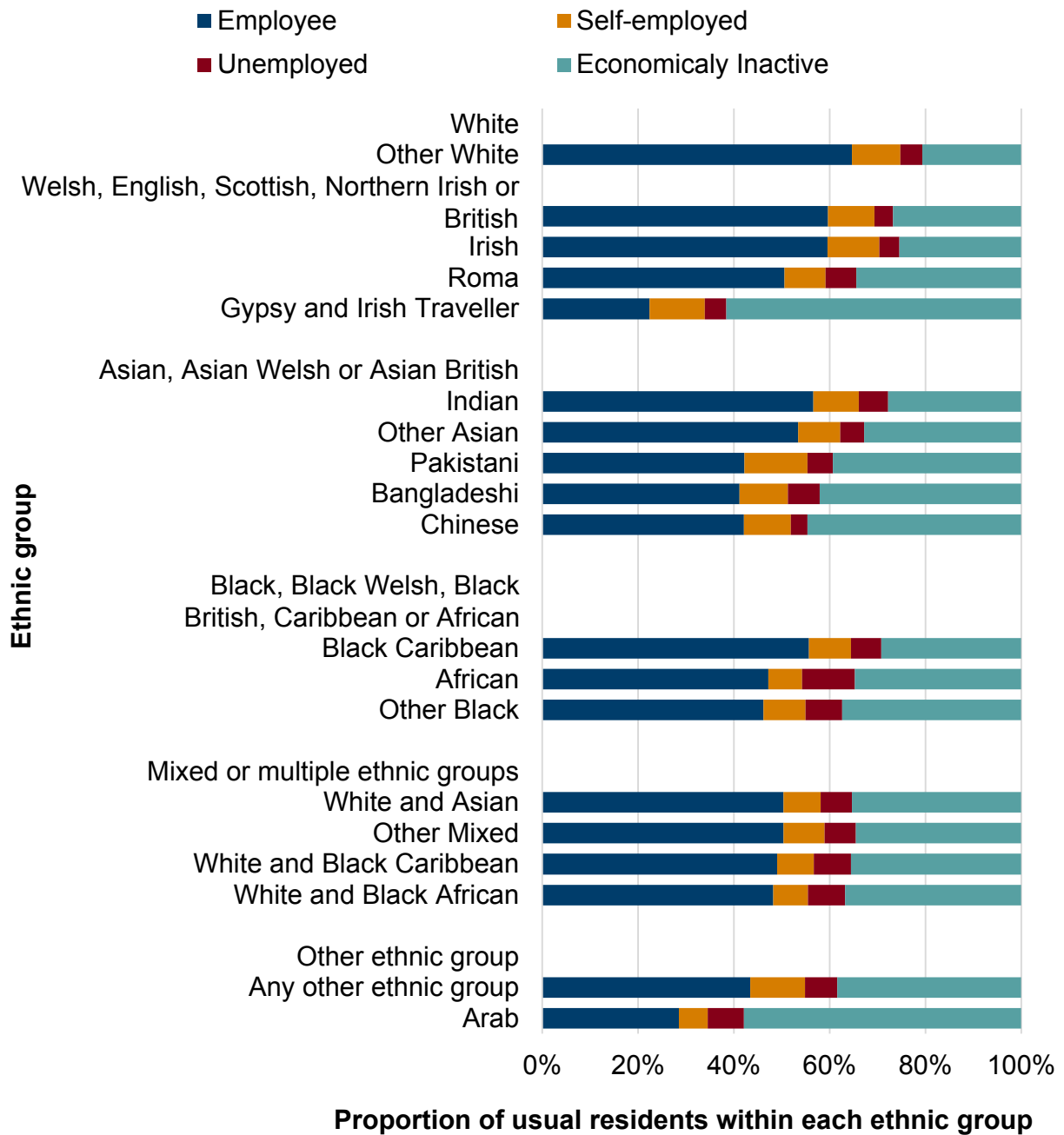
The ethnic groups most likely to be economically inactive were “White: Gypsy and Irish Traveller” (61.7%) and “Arab” (57.9%). The least likely were “Other White” (20.7%), “White: Irish” (25.5%), “White: Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British” (26.8%), “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Indian” (27.8%) and “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean: Caribbean” (29.2%).

## Figure 9: Ethnic groups by economic status, for those aged 16 to 64, Wales, 2021

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Description of Figure 9: This bar chart shows the proportions of usual residents (aged 16 to 64) who fell into each of the four economic status categories. People

who identified as “Other White” were the most likely to be an employee. People who identified as “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean: African” were the most likely to be unemployed. People who identified as “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” or “Arab” were the most likely to be economically inactive.

Source: Census 2021

## Reasons for economic inactivity

A third (32.5%) of usual residents aged 16 to 64 who identified as “Arab” reported that they were economically inactive because they were a student, the highest of all ethnic groups. This was followed by “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Chinese” (29.7%) and “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian” (21.3%). The ethnic groups with the smallest relative populations of economically inactive students were “White: Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British” (6.8%), “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” (7.4%), “White: Irish” (7.4%) and “White: Roma” (7.7%).

17.7% of people who identified as “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” reported being economically inactive because they were looking after the home or their family. This was followed by “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Bangladeshi” (17.3%), “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Pakistani” (14.2%), “Arab” (13.5%) and “White: Roma” (12.1%). People of “White: Irish” ethnicity were the least likely to be inactive for this reason (3.9%).

18.1% of people who identified as “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” reported being economically inactive because they were “Long term sick or disabled”, twice as high as the next highest ethnic group, “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean” (9.1%). The ethnic groups least likely to report this reason was “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Chinese” (1.1%), followed by “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Indian” (1.6%).

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Retirement (before the age of 65) was given as the reason for economic inactivity by 8.9% of people who identified as “Other White”, followed by “White: Roma” (7.7%), “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” (7.4%), “White: Irish” (5.0%) and “White: Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British” (4.2%). The ethnic groups least likely to give this as a reason were “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean: African” (0.3%), “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Bangladeshi” (0.7%) and “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African” (0.8%).

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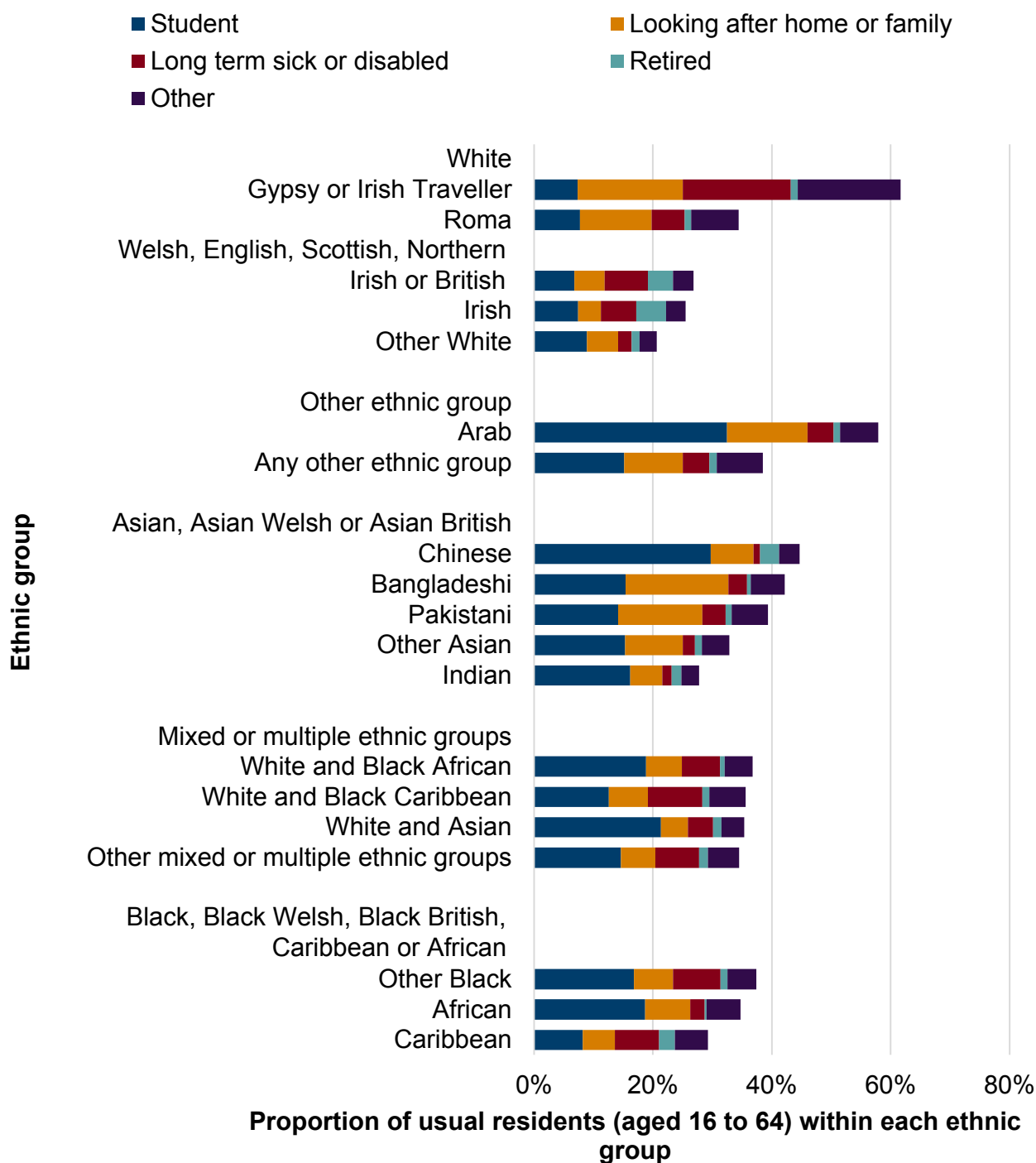
**Figure 10: Ethnic groups by reason for economic inactivity, for those aged 16 to 64, Wales, 2021**

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Description of Figure 10: This bar chart shows the proportions of usual residents, aged 16 to 64, by ethnic group who fell into five categories which

denoted their reasons for economic inactivity. Being a student was the most common reason given by people who identified as “Arab” or “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Chinese”. “Looking after the home or family” was most commonly given by people who identified as “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Bangladeshi”, “Arab” and “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller”. “Long-term sick or disabled” was most commonly given by people who identified as “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller”. “Retired” was most commonly given by people who were “Other White”, “White: Roma” and “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller”.

Source: Census 2021

## Socio-economic status

The National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) provides an indication of socio-economic position, based on responses to economic activity status, occupation and employment history questions in Census 2021. It is an ONS standard classification.

There are 9 different NS-SEC categories, which have been condensed into 5 “high-level” categories for the purpose of this bulletin. The way in which these categories have been condensed is shown in Table 1 in the [quality and methodology section](#).

Usual residents (aged 16 to 64) within the “White” high-level ethnic group were the most likely to hold “Managerial” socio-economic status (29.9%), followed by “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” (26.6%), “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups” (25.8%), “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean” (23.1%) and “Other ethnic groups” (20.7%).

People in the “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean” high-level ethnic group were the most likely of all groups to be students (24.8%), followed

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by “Other ethnic groups” (23.7%), “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” (21.2%), “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups” (20.2%) and “White” (6.8%).

There was considerable variation in socio-economic statuses across individual ethnic groups. Within the “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” high-level ethnic group, 42.1% of usual residents who identified as “Indian” reported that they held “Managerial” socio-economic status, compared to just 13.7% of those with “Bangladeshi” ethnicity.

Within the “White” high-level group, 40.5% of people who identified as “Irish” held “Managerial” status, more than “Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British” (30.0%), “Other White” (26.8%), “Roma” (13.9%) and “Gypsy or Irish Traveller” (8.3%).

The greatest proportions of people who reported that they were involved in routine or semi-routine work were within the “White: Roma” (35.9%), “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean” (33.4%) and “Other White” (32.7%) ethnic groups. The smallest proportions were found within the “Arab” (10.8%) and “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Indian” (12.0%) ethnic groups.

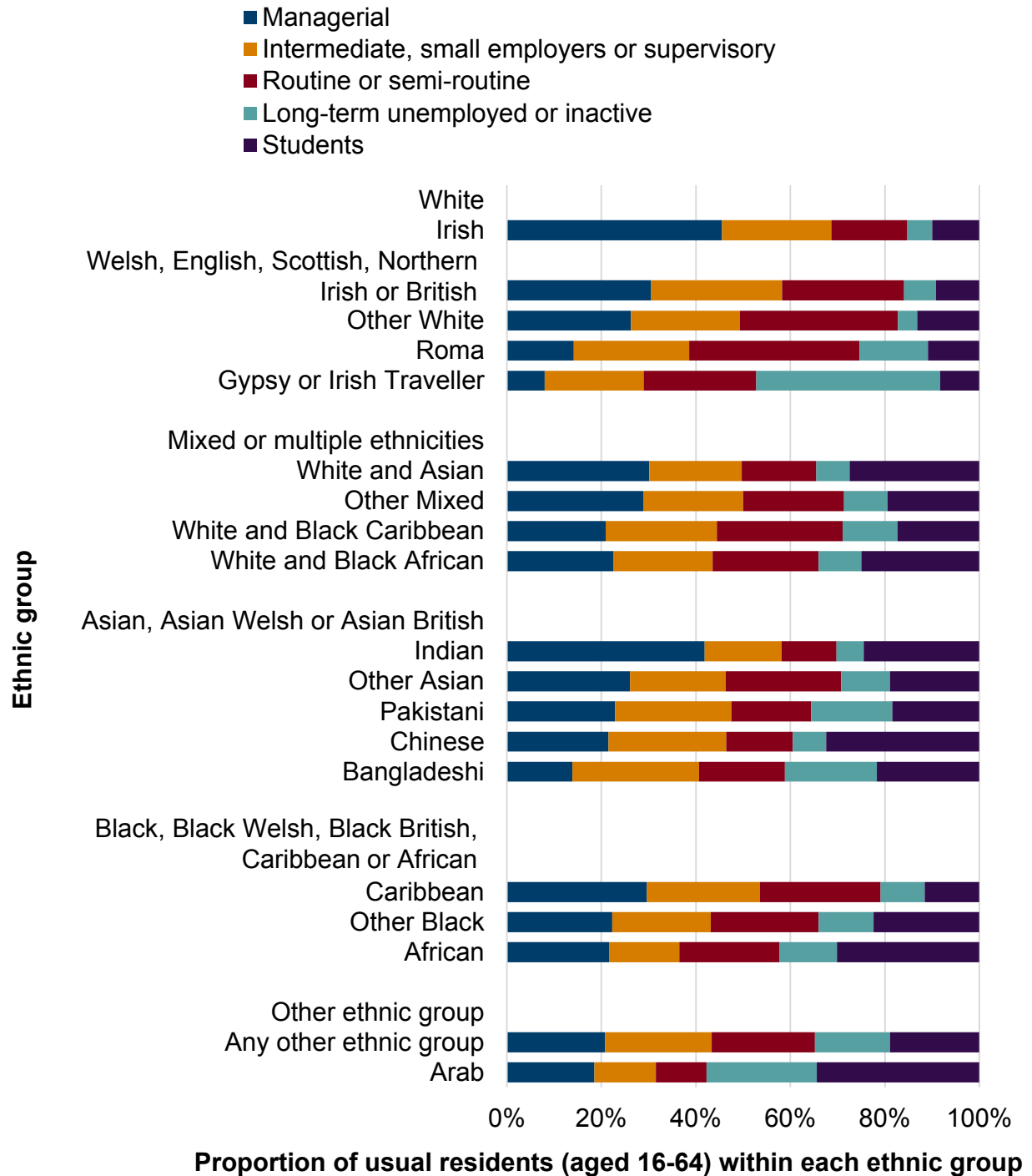
The ethnic groups with the highest proportions of students were “Arab” (32.5%), “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Chinese” (29.5%) and “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean: African” (29.0%). The ethnic groups with the lowest proportions of students were “White: Irish” (6.5%), “White: Welsh, English Scottish, Northern Irish or British” (6.7%), “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” (7.5%) and “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean” (9.6%).

## Figure 11: Ethnic groups by socio-economic status, for those aged 16 to 64, Wales, 2021

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Description of Figure 11: This bar chart shows the proportions of usual residents (aged 16 to 64) within each ethnic group who fell into each of the five socio-economic categories. People who identified as “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Indian” or “White: Irish” were the most likely of any group to report “Managerial” socio-economic status. People who identified as “White: Roma”, “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean” and “Other White” were the most likely to hold routine or semi-routine socio-economic status.

People who identified as “Arab”, “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Chinese” or “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, African or Caribbean: African” were the most likely to report that they were students.

Source: Census 2021

## Quality and methodology information

For full quality and methodology information, including a glossary of terms, please visit the [ONS’ quality and methodology information report](#). Read more about the specific quality considerations for [Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion \(ONS\)](#).

## Usual residents

A “usual resident” is anyone who on Census Day, 21 March 2021, was in the UK and had stayed or intended to stay in the UK for a period of 12 months or more, or had a permanent UK address and was outside the UK and intended to be outside the UK for less than 12 months.

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## Usual residents in households

“Usual residents in households” are usual residents who live in a UK household, in which a household is defined as either one person living alone, or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room or sitting room, or dining area. A household must contain at least one person whose usual place of residence is at the address. A group of short-term residents living together is not classified as a household, and neither is a group of people at an address where only visitors are staying.

## Ethnic group categories

The 19 ethnic group categories analysed in this bulletin are listed below:

### 1. “White”

Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish or British

Irish

Gypsy or Irish Traveller

Roma

Any other White background

### 2. “Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups”

White and Black Caribbean

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White and Black African

White and Asian

Any other Mixed or Multiple background

### **3. “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British”**

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Chinese

Any other Asian background

### **4. “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African”**

Caribbean

African background

Any other Black, Black British or Caribbean background

### **5. “Other ethnic group”**

Arab

Any other ethnic group

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## Socio-economic categories

The five socio-economic categories analysed in this bulletin have been condensed from the nine original National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC) categories, as shown in Table 1. Further information on the NS-SEC categories can be found in [ONS' The National Statistics Socio-economic Classification \(NS-SEC\)](#).

**Table 1: National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification categories condensed into five high-level categories**

High-level categories	NS-SEC categories
<b>Managerial</b>	L1, L2 and L3: Higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations L4, L5 and L6: Lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations
<b>Intermediate, small employers or supervisory</b>	L7: Intermediate occupations L8 and L9: Small employers and own account workers L10 and L11: Lower supervisory and technical occupations

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**High-level categories****NS-SEC categories**

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**Routine or semi-routine**

L12: Semi-routine occupations  
L13: Routine occupations

**Long-term unemployed or inactive**

L14.1 and L14.2: Never worked and long-term unemployed

**Students**

L15: Full-time students

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Further information on our quality assurance processes is provided in the [Maximising the quality of Census 2021 population estimates methodology \(Office for National Statistics\)](#).

Population change in certain areas may reflect how the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic affected people's choice of usual residence on Census Day. These changes might have been temporary for some and more long-lasting for others.

Where the COVID-19 pandemic may have affected the way that people responded to certain questions advice has been included in each section above.

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## National Statistics status

The **United Kingdom Statistics Authority** has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the **Code of Practice for Statistics**.

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

The designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed to the ONS in June 2022 following a **full assessment against the Code of Practice by the Office for Statistics Regulation**.

## Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. The Act puts in place seven wellbeing goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous,

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resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the wellbeing goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before Senedd Cymru. Under section 10(8) of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, where the Welsh Ministers revise the national indicators, they must as soon as reasonably practicable (a) publish the indicators as revised and (b) lay a copy of them before the Senedd. These national indicators were laid before the Senedd in 2021. The indicators laid on 14 December 2021 replace the set laid on 16 March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the wellbeing goals and associated technical information is available in the [Wellbeing of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local wellbeing assessments and local wellbeing plans.

## Contact details

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Media: 0300 025 8099

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