

Class, Race and Inequality in Northern Towns

Policy Brief

Key Findings:

- Racial and ethnic diversity is growing in the North of England. While numbers are lower than the national average (below 9% compared with 14% in England and Wales), some Northern cities have among the largest minority populations in the UK. Diversity has also increased due to newly arrived migrant populations (+69% in the North West, +68% in Yorkshire and Humber, +74% in the North East; see also Migration Observatory 2013).
- As national framing of diversity tends to focus on higher minority concentration areas in the country, much of the post-industrial North of England is being left out of major debates. Austerity has hit hard many of these predominantly Labour-held districts in the North.
- While new strategies to moderate racial inequalities are emerging under the agenda of “inclusive growth” in the North, demographic change is taking place in areas with a long experience of no or slow economic growth compared with the national average and the South.
- Analyses of issues around Brexit in the North have focused almost exclusively on the political expression of White British working class residents.

Policy Recommendations:

- Towns and cities in the North of England reveal deep racial and ethnic inequalities that should be addressed by local authorities and government under statutory duties enshrined by the Equality Act of 2010.
- Tackling racial and ethnic inequalities should be emphasised and resourced as part of wider policies on economic development and inclusion in the North.
- Initiatives to audit and tackle racial inequalities in the North should be coordinated by a specifically Northern-based working group, able to share knowledge and best practices.
- All regeneration and revitalisation schemes in the region should consider the historical and present day contribution of a racially and ethnically diverse local community, as well as reflecting this diversity in their decision making processes.
- Local authorities should reach out to and engage smaller ethnic groupings as well as newly arrived migrants as well as established black and minority ethnic groups (BME).

- Notions of the working class need to be deracialised (i.e. the working class is not “white”), thereby acknowledging that BME and newly arrived migrants are more likely to be working class than not in the North of England.
- In the face of hostile national narratives on limiting immigration and rejecting multiculturalism, it is vital to develop a new, inclusive narrative of a multi-ethnic working class, and on tackling inequalities that affect all working-class people regardless of ethnicity, in the North as elsewhere. See also Runnymede (2019).

Class, Race and Inequality in Northern Towns

Once the cradle of the Industrial Revolution, the North of England has gone through substantial social and economic decline. As with many parts of the UK, new migrations – including significant numbers from Central and Eastern Europe, asylum seekers, and other global migrants – have settled in Northern cities and towns. This has overlain an already significant racial and ethnic diversity, amidst social change and increasing disparities brought about through the change to a pre-dominantly post-industrial economy. Where White British and British Black and Asian working classes alike found work in the past, the new service and mixed manufacturing economy has struggled to respond to and mediate widening racial inequalities across the North. These inequalities are all the more significant given the well known inequality between the North and the South of the country.



An icon of the North: Middlesbrough Transporter Bridge in the semi-abandoned Middlehaven area

Brexit has been a significant focal point for discussion about the North, but this has been mostly focused on a somewhat mythical “white working class”. The political disunity and governance issues posed cannot be reduced to simple socio-

spatial formulae, given the economic and social diversity of the Northern region. Whereas the major cities such as Manchester, Leeds and Newcastle may be understood in terms comparable to London, the picture across mid-sized, historically affluent industrial towns* is very mixed, according to racial and ethnic diversity, political dynamics – ranging from strong UKIP inflected influences to strongly Labour administrations – and variable degrees of tension between old and new populations.

* We refer to these mostly mid-sized urban locations as “towns”, although some have the formal designation of “city”.

1. The new racial and ethnic diversity in the North

Table 1. Ethnic Groups by Region

	Asian	Black	Mixed	White British	White Other	Other
North East	2.9	0.5	0.9	93.6	1.7	0.4
North West	6.2	1.4	1.6	87.1	3.1	0.6
Yorkshire and The Humber	7.3	1.5	1.6	85.8	3	0.8
England and Wales	7.5	3.3	2.2	86	4.4	1.0

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011

Changing Population

The broad overview of data shows the North to be distinctive to other parts of the country in its racial and ethnic diversity. The North East is still a less diverse part of the country, which may contribute to some political tensions. White Other here is the fastest growing category. Our knowledge is limited by the use of ONS national survey data from 2011, when there has been much change in the last decade. Some localities have very diverse populations, as Table 2 shows.

Table 2. Data Scan of Northern Towns

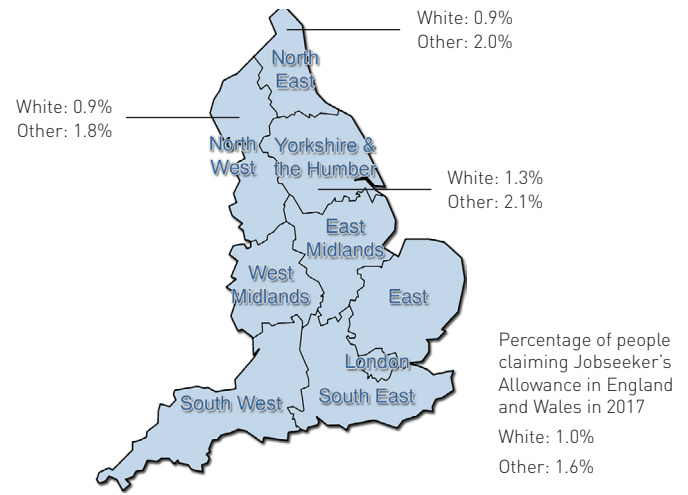
	Pop. 2011	Age (mean)	Occup. I-III %	Level 4+ %	Unemp. Rate %	White Brit %	Brit Asian %	CEE %	UKIP 2015 %	Leave %
Grimsby	88243	38.5	25.4	14.5	7.9	94.7	0.6	1.6	25.0	69.9
Doncaster	109805	39.1	31.1	19.0	6.2	84.9	3.5	4.4	23.4	69.0
Barnsley	91297	40.2	31.1	17.2	5.4	94.7	0.5	1.5	22.6	68.3
Rotherham	109691	39.6	30.5	16.9	5.8	85.6	7.1	2.0	30.2	67.9
Hull	284321	38.2	28.0	16.4	7.6	90.3	1.0	2.9	19.5	67.6
Blackpool	147663	41.5	30.7	15.8	6.0	93.8	0.8	1.5	15.9	67.5
Wakefield	99251	39.7	34.8	21.6	5.3	85.5	5.3	3.4	18.3	66.4
Middlesbrough	174700	38.4	28.9	17.3	7.7	88.4	5.1	0.9	16.6	65.5
Wigan	103608	40.0	32.3	19.3	5.0	95.3	0.6	1.0	19.5	63.9
Sunderland	174286	40.4	29.5	18.1	6.3	93.4	2.2	0.5	20.1	61.3
Rochdale	107926	36.4	33.8	20.0	6.2	65.2	24.7	1.4	18.8	60.1
Salford	103886	35.6	36.2	23.8	5.4	77.2	2.8	3.8	18.0	56.8
Halifax	88134	37.6	32.7	18.7	6.4	76.6	15.9	2.4	12.8	55.7
Dewsbury	62945	34.8	28.4	15.4	5.9	59.4	34.6	1.4	12.4	54.7
Bradford	349561	34.3	30.5	17.9	5.7	54.1	32.3	2.9	13.7	54.2
Preston	97886	34.7	30.4	20.8	5.1	71.5	16.1	3.2	15.4	53.3
Cambridge	145818	35.9	57.3	46.9	2.7	67.5	4.7	4.2	5.2	26.2
UK	61470800	39.4	45.7	38.6	4.4	81.9	4.9	2.4	12.6	51.9

Source: Nomis – Built Up Areas Local Reports – Census 2011. Variables: *Pop 2011*: Total number usual residents; *Age (mean)*: Average age of usual residents; *Occup I-III*: Managers, directors and senior officials; Professional occupations; and Associate professional and technical occupations as % of usual residents aged 16–74; *Level 4+*: National Qualification Framework Level 4 and above as % of usual residents aged 16 and over; *Unemp rate*: Unemployed as % of usual residents aged 16–74; *White British*: White English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British as % of usual residents; *British Asian*: British Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi as % of usual residents; *CEE*: Born in EU accession countries 2001–11 (A8 countries) as % of usual residents; *UKIP 2015*: UKIP vote as % of total vote for parliamentary constituencies corresponding approximately to built-up area; *Leave*: Leave vote as % of total vote in counting areas for the EU Referendum in which the built up area is located.

2. Racial Inequalities in the North

Labour market

In 2017, the rate of employment for people from a White background (White British and White ethnic minorities) was higher than for people from all other ethnic groups across regions in the UK. Lowest rates of employment for each ethnic group were generally observed in the North, particularly in the North East: 71% for White British, 74% for White Other, 64% for Indian and 59% for Black (DWP, 2018a).



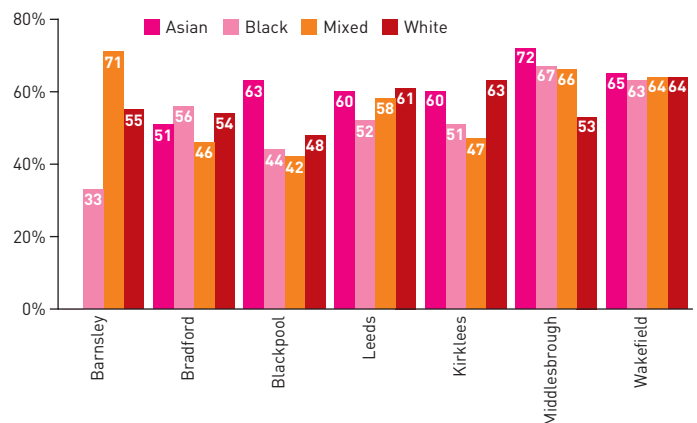
Source: DWP, 2018b; Ethnicity Facts and Figures (EFF)

In terms of use of welfare benefits, BME groups were more likely to receive Jobseeker’s Allowance across the region. For example, in Yorkshire and Humber they have a take up rate of 2.1% compared with 1.3% for White groups - both of which are above the national average. The percentages for White claimants and claimants from all other ethnic groups are underestimates, as the ethnicity of some Jobseeker’s Allowance claimants was not known during the period studied.

Education

Persisting racial inequalities are observed across educational levels. For example, in England, children from Black groups are 4% less likely to attain English and Maths GCSE compared to children from White groups (in 2016).

Percentage of children aged 14 to 16 attaining A* to C in English and Maths GCSE in northern towns



Source: Department for Education, 2017.

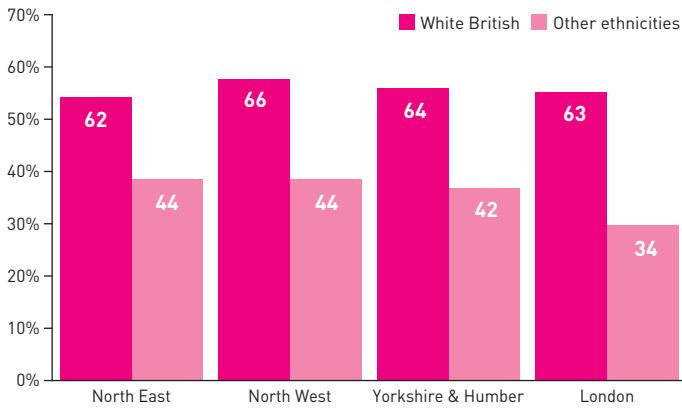
Note that very small numbers and confidentiality mean that DfE withholds figure for Asians in Barnsley.

These differences are emphasised in certain locations in the North. Kirklees and Bradford show significant differences between Black and White pupils, whereas Leeds and Wakefield have better and more even results. Asian pupils do relatively well across the region. Black pupils in Barnsley have the lowest attainment levels at GCSE.

Home Ownership

In England and Wales, there is a gap of 27% in home ownership rates between White British and other groups. In the North of England, the gap is somewhat narrower. Better access to homes for Black and ethnic minority communities in the North is directly linked with the lower housing cost in the area. Home ownership is significant because it means that minority groups are more likely to turn to the now scarce social housing or the expensive private market solutions, and because it tends to reproduce inequalities for the next generation.

Home ownership in the North of England and London (%)



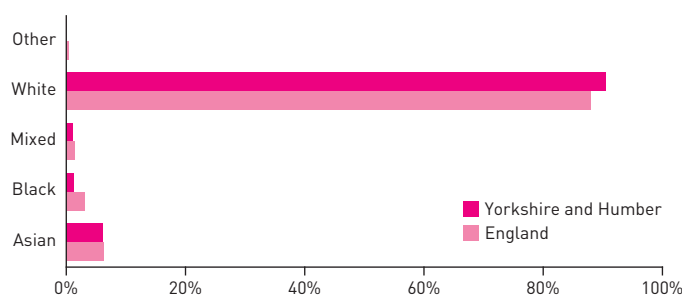
Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, English Housing Survey, 2015/16 and 2016/17 combined, EFF.

Employment in the public sector

The White population is overrepresented in the civil service in both England and the North of England. There is a +2% overrepresentation of the White population across England, and this widens to +5% overrepresentation in Yorkshire and Humber. Across England, Asian staff had the lowest median salary (£26,700). White staff were most commonly the highest paid and Asian staff were most commonly the lowest paid (Cabinet Office, 2018a).

Black and minority ethnic groups represent 14% of the total population in England and Wales, but only represent 6.6%

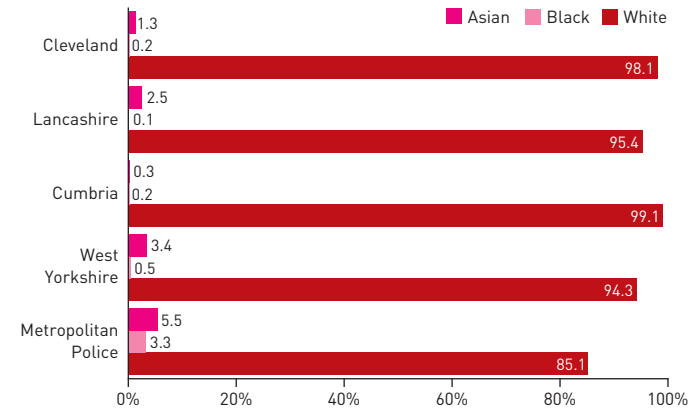
Civil Service staff by ethnicity and region



Source: Cabinet Office, 2016; EFF

of the total police workforce. In contrast, 93.4% of police officers are White, 7% more than in the population. In the North of England, racial inequalities in the police workforce are starker. In 2018, North Yorkshire Police had a workforce that was 98.8% white, South Yorkshire Police 96.4%, and West Yorkshire 94.3%.

Police ethnicity in the North



Source: Home Office, 2018; EFF

3. Rising hate crimes in Northern Towns

In 2017-2018, there has been the highest recorded number of hate crime in England and Wales: 94,098, which stands for an increase of 17% from the previous year when 80,383 incidences of hate crime were registered. This trend is also reproduced at the regional level in Northern towns. The EU referendum and the Brexit vote as well as terrorist attacks have had a clear impact on the number of hate crimes reported (Home Office, 2019). In addition, the police has adopted an improved procedure on recording hate crime.

As Table 3 shows, Greater Manchester leads the figures with the highest numbers of hate crimes reported, with a stark increase from 5,496 hate crimes reported in 2016-2017 to

Table 3. Police recorded Hate Crime in the North

	2016-2017	2017-2018
Cheshire	1,131	1,466
Cleveland	754	878
Cumbria	315	426
Durham	509	711
Greater Manchester	5,496	7,861
Humberside	852	1,060
Lancashire	1,076	2,105
Lincolnshire	376	416
Merseyside	2,871	2,656
North Yorkshire	317	384
Northumbria	2,187	2,559
South Yorkshire	1,591	2,219
West Yorkshire	5,155	6,106
Total North	22,630	28,847
British Transport Police	2,730	3,263
Metropolitan Police	19,743	19,424
Total in England and Wales	80,393	94,098

Source: Home Office, 2019

7,861 in 2017-2018. West Yorkshire is second, registering an increase from 5,155 hate crimes reported in 2016-2017 to 6,106 reported in 2017-2018. At the opposite pole, areas with the lowest number of reported hate crime are found across the three regions, namely in North Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Cumbria.

While hate crime is monitored across five categories of faith, race, sexual identity, disability and transgender identity, two thirds of reported hate crimes are committed on religious grounds against Muslim communities (Home Office, 2019).

Commission on Diversity in the North

To better understand how the North is responding to these changes, a Commission on Diversity in the North was founded at the University of Leeds in Autumn 2017. The honorary chair of the Commission is Lord Bhikhu Parekh and the project is led by Prof. Adrian Favell and Dr Roxana Barbulescu. The Commission is hosted by the Centre for Ethnicity and Racism Studies, which has a long standing expertise on the comparative study of race and racism globally. Its mission is to facilitate dialogue and knowledge transfers between academia, local government and civil society in the North of England.

<https://cers.leeds.ac.uk/projects/commission-on-diversity-in-the-north/>

During 2017-18, the Commission held a series of events involving the participation of key stakeholders across the region and nationally. These included: the Runnymede Trust

and New Europeans; local council representatives from Wakefield and Keighley; West Yorkshire Regional Combined Authority; the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner West Yorkshire, and other community engagement officers of the West Yorkshire Police; JUST Yorkshire, the Leeds Jewish Representative Council; Stop Hate UK; and researchers at Leeds Beckett University and the University of Leeds.

The Commission held three events in 2017-18 at the University of Leeds to reflect upon the difficulties of understanding and interpreting this evidence and the issues it indexes. We have published online lectures by Omar Khan on 'Racial Inequalities in Britain'; and Adrian Favell on 'Brexit and the Future of Community Relations'.

The members of the Commission and academics at the University of Leeds have worked with Stop Hate UK to raise awareness about the prevention and reporting of hate crimes in the North of England. Their joint work included upgrading the app Stop Hate West Yorkshire to report hate crime available to residents in the region. The app is now available in various languages and can record and process video, audio and visual material.

The Commission is also part of the ESRC funded project 'Northern Exposure: Race, Nation and Disaffection in "Ordinary" Towns and Cities after Brexit'. This is a major social science project examining the implications of Brexit on race relations, new migrations and Northerners' sense of place and belonging.

<https://northernexposure.leeds.ac.uk>

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