

## 2021 Census ethnic group, national identity, language and religion headline results for Herefordshire

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) published an ethnic group, national identity, language and religion topic summary on 29 November 2022.

Information about migration, including country of birth and length of residency within the UK as well as numbers of non-UK short-term residents are included in [Demography and Migration Census 2021 In Herefordshire](#).

### Ethnic group & national identity



Migration from Eastern Europe – particularly Poland - has played an important role in Herefordshire's population growth since the expansion of the European Union (EU) in 2004. This resulted in a dramatic change in ethnic makeup.

The number of people in Herefordshire who identified themselves as being of an ethnicity other than 'white: British' increased by 44% over the 10 year period between censuses to 5,100 (8.9%) in 2021, compared with 6.4% in 2011 - this is still very low compared to nationally (26%).

People of 'white: other' origin (i.e. not British; Irish; Gypsy or Irish Traveller) made up the largest single minority group in the county - 5.1% of the population, compared to 6.2% nationally.

There were around 600 Roma and Gypsy or Irish Travellers (0.2% of residents). Despite often being reported together, "White: Roma" was added as a separate ethnic group in the Census 2021, as they are a distinct group with different needs to Gypsy or Irish Travellers and were thought to have been under-counted due to the lack of a

specific tick-box in previous censuses. Historically, Herefordshire had one of the highest proportions of 'white: Gypsy or Irish Traveller' populations amongst local authorities nationwide; However, this is not the case when considering the combined "white: Roma" and 'white: Gypsy or Irish Traveller' group (now lying just outside the highest third of all local authorities in the country).

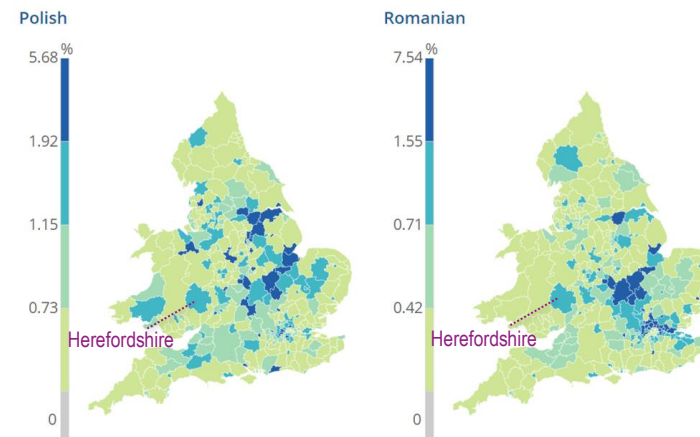
3K  
whose main  
language is  
Polish

### Languages

Around 7,300 residents in 2021 (3.9%) were born in countries that joined following the expansion of the EU in 2004 – just under half (3,400) in Poland and a quarter (1,800) in Romania.

Unsurprisingly then, Polish was the most common main language in the county other than English, followed by Romanian.

1.5K  
whose main  
language is  
Romanian



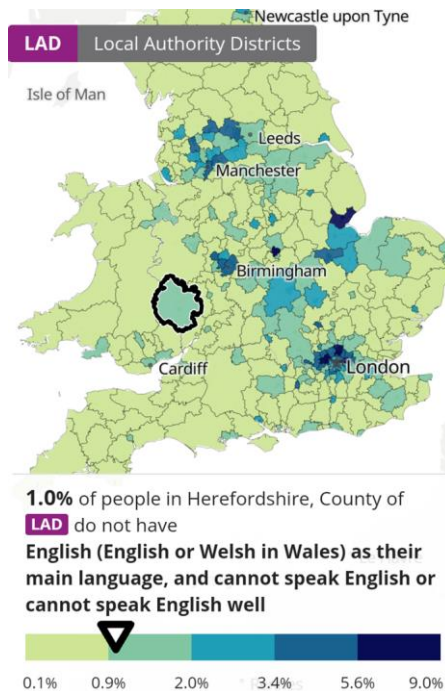
Source: Office for National Statistics - Census

Other main languages included south and east Asian languages (almost 1,000 residents); Lithuanian (570), Bulgarian (470), Hungarian & Portuguese (each around 300) and other European languages (800); and Russian (200).

**1.8K**  
could not  
speak English  
well

Almost 2,400 households (2.9%) did not have any occupants who spoke English as their main language, and another 630 only had a child (or children) who did – although this does not mean that people in them were unable to speak English, just that it was not their preferred language. The key point is that in total, around 1,800 residents (1.0% of people) could not speak English well – 280 of them not at all.

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census



## Religion

It was not obligatory to complete the Census question about religion - 93% of Herefordshire's residents answered the question.

As with nationally, Christianity remained the largest religion in Herefordshire – although numbers have fallen since 2011 - from 68% of the population to 55% (compared with 46% nationally).

The number of people who described themselves as “Muslim” continues to rise, overtaking “Buddhists” and becoming the second largest group - more than doubling to 790 residents (0.4%); “Buddhists” are the third largest group with 650 residents (0.3%).

The proportion reporting they have no religion increased from 23% to 37% - the same proportion as nationally.