



NHS Lothian

2022 Scottish Census Data:

**Ethnic group, national
identity and religion**

Public Health and Health Policy

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On 21st of May 2024, Scotland's Census released [Scotland's Census 2022 - Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion | Scotland's Census](#). This report presented data from the 2022 census, mainly at a national level, and compared it to data from the 2001 and 2011 censuses. NHS Lothian's Public Health Intelligence Team (PHIT) have used [census data released at a smaller geography level](#) to compare the findings for Scotland with Lothian and its four local authorities. PHIT have created a series of graphs illustrating the census data summarised below for Lothian and its local authority areas. These are available upon request by contacting the team at loth.phintelligence@nhs.scot

Religion

The report found that for the first time, the majority of people said that they had no religion. In Scotland, 54% of adults (aged 16 and over) said that they had no religion, which increased from 39% in 2011. 60% of Lothian's adult population said they had no religion, an increase from 47% in 2011. All four local authorities had higher proportions of the population responding that they had no religion compared with Scotland. Midlothian had the highest percentage of non-religious people (64%), and East Lothian had the greatest increase of non-religious people (17% increase).

There was evidence across all areas that the proportion of people who said they had no religion increased in all age groups. This trend indicates that the increase in non-religious people has not been driven solely by young people, who are less religious in general, moving into higher age brackets.

Most religions experienced a decrease in their proportions of the total population between 2011 and 2022, but the Church of Scotland saw the largest decrease followed by Roman Catholicism. Some religions such as Islam and Hinduism experienced a small increase in their proportion of the population.

Ethnic group

The report found that the percentage of people in Scotland with a minority ethnic background increased from 8.2% in 2011 to 12.9% in 2022. This increase was larger than the increase between 2001 and 2011 (4.5% to 8.2%). The percentage of people in Lothian with a minority ethnic background increased from 12.6% in 2011 to 20.6% in 2022, and Lothian also showed a larger increase than between 2001 and 2011 (6.8% to 12.6%). All four local authorities also show the same trend as Scotland and Lothian. East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian all have a lower percentage of people with minority ethnic backgrounds than Scotland while Edinburgh had a higher percentage.

In Scotland, Lothian and all local areas, most minority ethnic groups have increased in population percentage between the 2011 and 2022 censuses. The "other white" category has seen particularly large growth in all local areas, and the "Polish" category saw high growth in Midlothian and West Lothian. Conversely, the "Gypsy/Traveller" category has seen a reduction in population percentage between 2011 and 2022 in all areas except for East Lothian. It is possible that this reduction

could be due to the introduction of the “Roma” and “Showperson” categories in the 2022 census.

Country of birth

In the report, it was highlighted that while Scotland as a whole does have an aging population, the relative differences in the population between older and younger age groups would be starker without the effect of migration. Nationally, amongst only those born in Scotland, the population aged 65 and over is 85.5% higher than the 20-29 population and 82.8% higher than the 30-39 population. However, when all people are included, the 65 and over population is 60.7% higher than the 20-29 population and 55.1% higher than the 30-39 population.

In Lothian, amongst those born in Scotland, the population aged 65 and over is 65.6% higher than the 20-29 population and 69.5% higher than the 30-39 population. When including all people, the 65 and over population is 14.8% higher than the 20-29 population and 16.9% higher than the 30-39 population. The same pattern can be observed in the four local authorities.

National identity

The report showed that in Scotland, the percentage of people who responded that Scottish was their only national identity increased from 62.4% to 65.5% between 2011 and 2022. Lothian also showed the same pattern, with the percentage of people who reported that Scottish was their only national identity increasing from 55.8% to 56.4%. All local authorities except for City of Edinburgh showed the same pattern. It is possible that this trend is due to Edinburgh having higher rates of international migration than other local areas. The percentage of people who responded that British was their only national identity also increased for Scotland and all local areas while the percentage of people who responded that they felt Scottish and British decreased in Scotland and all local areas.