

How Fair is North East Scotland?

Integration & Community Cohesion in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray

Executive Summary

It has been widely acknowledged that one consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic has been the reversal of recent equality gains,* especially for marginalised groups like ethnic minority communities (including European ethnic minorities). The full extent is still to be measured, and other contextual factors – like Brexit – must also be considered. The evidence gathered in this report gives an overview of the situation in North East Scotland – Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray (the Grampian region). We also highlight where more research is necessary to better assess and take action to prevent a further deepening of inequalities as the recovery develops.

Employment

Ethnic minorities have suffered worse job losses than the rest of the population in 2020-21, with Grampian's non-UK-born ethnic minorities hardest-hit. Existing challenges have been exacerbated by the pandemic, especially for those in 'lower skill' occupations. Compared with the national average, Grampian has shown higher employment levels for ethnic minorities over the past decade, but this remains lower than for Scottish/British people. The figure for Africans is particularly low, despite a high level of education and skills in this group. 'Non-white' ethnic minorities start businesses at higher rates than the rest of the population, but remain under-represented in business leadership.

Housing

Problems in this area are most prevalent in deprived areas, but overall, ethnic minorities in Grampian live with less secure tenure than the Scottish/British population, and levels of over-crowding are noteworthy. There are consistent gaps in data on homelessness and ethnicity at a local level, and more research is required to get a clearer picture.

Education

With recent changes in the recording of pupils' ethnicity data, current statistics have become less meaningful in highlighting disparities and areas for improvement. However, ethnic minority pupils in Grampian have routinely achieved higher attainment than those from a Scottish/British background. Schools are one of the most important points of contact for newcomers' integration, as well as a key site for educational work around equality. The consequences of pandemic-related disruption remain to be seen, but many ethnic minority families face the interconnected challenges of low-wage or insecure employment, overcrowding, insecure tenancy, poverty, and digital exclusion.

Health

There is limited quantitative evidence to understand health outcomes of ethnic minorities, as ethnicity is not consistently recorded by health services. The evidence that does exist suggests that Grampian's poorest areas – in terms of health outcomes – are home to higher than average proportions of ethnic minorities. Research also suggests that ethnic minorities have a lower level of satisfaction with health services, arising from

* For example, EHRC, 2020. *How Coronavirus has affected Equality and Human Rights*. [Link](#).

language barriers and differences between how healthcare works in Scotland and other countries. Mental health is a key concern among ethnic minority communities, and digital exclusion has become a key issue during Covid-19.

Bridges, Bonds and Links

It is difficult to find existing data to build a clear picture of the social bridges, bonds and links that support integration across diverse communities. More research is required in this area, especially in light of Brexit and Covid-19. What is available shows a consistently high proportion of ethnic minorities who feel that North East Scotland is a welcoming place, and who feel they are part of their local communities. A decrease in this sentiment has taken place over the last few years, which is likely to be associated with the implementation of Brexit.

Language and Cultural Knowledge

Evidence highlights the importance of English language learning for successful integration. Qualitative research, mainly focussed on regeneration areas in Aberdeen City and Shire, and among Syrian New Scots, highlights challenges in accessing English classes, as well as barriers that arise when English learning has stalled. A key issue is the necessity to adapt certain aspects of language classes to facilitate access and improve the learning process.

Safety and stability

Evidence in this area reflects the ongoing pervasiveness of racism and xenophobia. In 2020, the number of reported prejudice and hate crime incidents in Grampian reached its highest level in the last six years, with the majority of these incidents related to race/ethnicity. The figures are likely to be much higher due to under-reporting. Covid-19 led to a rise in prejudice against Chinese and East Asian communities, along with an increase in gender-based abuse.

Rights and Citizenship

The majority of applications to the EU Settlement Scheme in Grampian were accepted. However, financial costs of future citizenship applications are a significant worry for many EU nationals. While more research in this area is necessary, available evidence shows that ethnic minorities have lower rates of participation in elections and other civic activities. Additionally, if passed, the new Nationality and Borders Bill is likely to more deeply entrench inequalities for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.

Much of the work in the coming years will be shaped by challenges from Brexit, Covid-19 and other global issues like climate change and conflict-driven migration, especially in terms of providing support for the most vulnerable people in our communities. While Covid-19 highlighted (and often intensified) inequalities around ethnicity, gender, disability and social class, these inequalities are not new. As we move into recovery, there is an opportunity to rethink and reshape how things are done, to create a fairer society for everyone.

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Introduction | 1 |
| 2. Demographics | 4 |
| 3. Markers & Means: Employment..... | 9 |
| 4. Markers & Means: Housing | 18 |
| 5. Markers & Means: Education | 24 |
| 6. Markers & Means: Health..... | 28 |
| 7. Social Connections: Bridges, Bonds & Links | 33 |
| 8. Facilitators: Language & Cultural Knowledge | 38 |
| 9. Facilitators: Safety and Stability | 41 |
| 10. Foundations: Rights and Citizenship..... | 46 |
| 11. A Vision for Grampian..... | 50 |

Charts & Tables

| | |
|--|----|
| Grampian Population Ethnicity Data, 2011 | 4 |
| Grampian Population Ethnicity Data, 2021 (age 40+ only)..... | 5 |
| Percent of Population Born Outside the UK, 2000-2020 | 6 |
| Ethnic Minority Percent of Population, 2004-2020 | 6 |
| Top Ten non-UK Countries of Birth, Census 2011..... | 6 |
| New National Insurance Number Registrations for Overseas Nationals, 2002-2020..... | 7 |
| School Leavers Entering Employment (%) | 9 |
| Employment Rates by Ethnicity: 2011 | 10 |
| Employment Rates by Ethnicity & Nationality: 2019 & 2020 (estimate)..... | 10 |
| Employment Rates by Ethnicity, 2011-2020..... | 10 |
| Proportion of Modern Apprenticeships held by Ethnic Minorities | 13 |
| Ethnicity of Homelessness Applicants by Local Authority, 2018-19 | 18 |
| Tenancy by Ethnicity, 2011 | 19 |
| Ethnicity by SIMD Datazones, 2012 Most Deprived Areas | 20 |
| Ethnicity by SIMD Datazones, 2012 Least Deprived (Most Affluent) Areas | 20 |
| School Leavers' Qualifications, 2013-14 to 2015-16..... | 25 |
| Grampian Age Distribution, 2011 | 28 |
| General Health, 2011 | 29 |
| Prejudice Incidents & Hate Crimes in Grampian, 2020..... | 41 |
| Motivation for Incident..... | 42 |
| Type of Incident | 42 |
| Victim Ethnicity | 42 |
| Location Type..... | 43 |
| People Attending British Citizenship Ceremonies by Local Authority | 46 |

1. Introduction

1.1 Local Context

In 2016, a variety of partners in North East Scotland recognised the need for a joined-up approach to understanding, monitoring and tackling inequalities between different ethnic groups in Grampian.¹ These discussions took place across a range of contexts: refugee resettlement, asylum seeker dispersal, community cohesion, Brexit, economic barriers, housing, health, education, and others.

Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migration

Historically, Glasgow has been the only ‘dispersal’ area in Scotland for asylum seekers, so experience of refugee resettlement was sparse beyond the central belt. While Glasgow remains the main local authority where asylum seekers are sent, in 2016-17 the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme brought refugees from Syria to all areas in Scotland, including Grampian. In 2021, refugees have begun to arrive from Afghanistan in a similar programme, and lessons learned over the past five years should have a positive impact on improving their experience.

Generally speaking, the process of resettlement has raised many questions about the support given to anyone, particularly vulnerable people, arriving in Grampian from abroad. Where formal resettlement schemes have been supported financially by the Home Office, most new arrivals – and those who seek to help them – receive minimal support, at best. There are also on-going discussions about the extension of asylum dispersal across all local authority areas – something that would likely have little or no additional funding attached. There has rightly been a focus on the legacy of the refugee resettlement work in terms of getting ready for asylum seeker dispersal, and more broadly ensuring that people arriving in Grampian are treated with dignity and are able to thrive.

Particular challenges are faced by Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Young People. Those who settle in the North East from English local authorities like Kent come via the National Transfer Scheme, with resettlement and Looked After Children supports in place. Despite this, they still face isolation, disconnection from other young people, and limited contact with people who have similar lived experiences and cultural backgrounds. Those arriving in Grampian through other routes are even more isolated and vulnerable, with very little formal support.

Nationality and Borders Bill

As of December 2021, the Bill is in its second reading in the House of Lords. An extension of ‘Hostile Environment’ policies, it would dramatically restrict access to asylum in the UK, criminalise asylum seekers, remove safeguards for children and victims of human trafficking, introduce the option of sending refugees to other countries. It would also extend the ability to revoke UK citizenship from those born elsewhere. Serious concerns have been raised by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the UK Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), the Scottish Refugee Council (SRC), and others.²

¹ Grampian refers to three local authority areas: Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray. The Grampian region is used as a boundary by the NHS and Grampian Regional Equality Council; it is also sometimes used to deliver partnership working across local authority areas, e.g. Integrate Grampian and the Grampian Gypsy/Traveller Interagency Group.

² UNHCR, 2021 ([link](#)). EHRC ([link](#)). SRC ([link](#)).

Brexit

Leaving the EU has been recognised as a game-changer, particularly in terms of business and cultural connections, and the security of European nationals (mainly Eastern and Central Europeans) living in Grampian. Anecdotally, there are increased incidents of verbal abuse, though these go largely unreported. There is also a concern around future rights, including residency, shared by many EU nationals who do not have UK citizenship.

Previously, questions have been raised around social cohesion and the extent to which there are positive relationships amongst Grampian's diverse communities. These questions have come into sharper focus in the context of refugee resettlement and Brexit.

Research

A range of academic and third-sector research has explored equality and ethnicity in North East Scotland. At a conference in November 2016, there was a sense that this research was informative, but not necessarily put to practical use. The conference highlighted the need to raise issues affecting marginalised communities with policymakers and others in a position to implement change.

Challenges

All of the above point to a challenge for public bodies, the third sector and the wider population of Grampian. Are we effectively set up to engage, empower and support people from ethnic minority communities?³ Do we have effective mechanisms to monitor discrimination, inequality and community cohesion? This document, developed in partnership through Integrate Grampian, is aimed at laying the basis for making progress in these crucial areas.

1.2 Integrate Grampian

Integrate Grampian is a multi-agency forum which arose from the significant overlap between two existing forums: Aberdeen Prejudice Incident Partnership and Integrate Aberdeenshire. As well as monitoring prejudice incidents and hate crime statistics in the Grampian area, the forum has worked together to develop a resource called Living and Working in North East Scotland (available online: [link](#)). It is a downloadable resource translated into 7 languages which explains the basics of local and national services and how to access them. The group also developed and widely distributed a postcard in multiple languages with information about the resource.

In considering the issues laid out above, the forum agreed that it would be well placed to be a network where equality between ethnic groups and community cohesion/integration can be monitored (via this document); relevant local research can be shared and linked to the appropriate decision/policy makers; and priorities and areas of joint working can be agreed.

It was agreed that Grampian Regional Equality Council (GREC) would take a lead on developing this document, with support from the SSAMIS project and other Integrate Grampian partners where appropriate.

³ 'Ethnic minority communities' is used throughout to mean inclusive of European minorities, unless quoting the work of others who take a different approach.

1.3 'Is Scotland Fairer?' and Integration Framework

How Fair is North East Scotland? Integration & Community Cohesion draws on two frameworks as its foundation. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) are required by the Equality Act (2010) to publish a triennial review of equality and human rights in the UK and Scotland. In 2010 the EHRC (UK) published *How Fair is Britain? Equality, Human Rights and Good Relations*, followed by a focused report on human rights in 2012, and a report on progress in 2015 called *Is Britain Fairer?*

In 2016, EHRC Scotland published a separate, supplementary document: *Is Scotland Fairer?* The current document uses the relevant indicators used in *Is Scotland Fairer?* ([link](#)) as a starting point for gathering relevant local and regional data.

The document also draws on the 'Indicators of Integration' Framework developed by Ager and Strang in 2004.⁴ The framework, which continues to be used by the Scottish Refugee Council uses the following indicators/areas:

| | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|---------|----------------------|--------------|
| Markers and Means | Employment | Housing | Education | Health |
| Social Connection | Social Bridges | | Social Bonds | Social Links |
| Facilitators | Language and Cultural Knowledge | | Safety and Stability | |
| Foundation | Rights and Citizenship | | | |

This document uses this framework as a basis to explore the variety of relevant areas, whilst lifting the pertinent indicators from the *Is Scotland Fairer?* document and fitting them into the 'Indicators of Integration' Framework.

1.4 Layout of this document

After summarising relevant demographic data, the document is divided into sections which correspond with the 'Indicators of Integration' framework above. Under each section, there is:

- Relevant local and/or Grampian-wide statistical data
- A note of any key data that is not presently available
- A summary of relevant local research
- An overview with recommended priorities

This is a 'working document' – the statistics and particularly the mapping of services will become out of date; however the aim is to provide an overview of the recent and current situation, with a view to identifying priority areas, best practice, and opportunities for joint working.

⁴ Home Office, 2004, Indicators of Integration – Final Report. [Link](#).

2. Demographics

2.1 Population

While the decade between 2009-2019 was a period of overall population increase in North East Scotland, recent years have seen a reversal of this trend, most likely due to the loss of jobs in the oil and gas sector, and the effects of both Brexit and Covid-19 on inward migration.

Between mid-2018 and mid-2019, both Aberdeen City and Moray experienced an increase (by 0.5% and 0.3%, respectively) while Aberdeenshire experienced a net decrease in population (by 0.1%).⁵ An increase in migration away from the North East to the rest of Scotland and the rest of the UK peaked in 2015-16, and overseas migration into the North East has been declining during the same period.⁶

However, nearly a third of Aberdeen City's inward migration still comes from overseas, a figure comparable to Glasgow and Edinburgh.⁷ Across the UK, people from ethnic minorities are more likely to live in cities and large towns than in rural areas⁸ and this pattern is replicated across Grampian.

2.2 Ethnicity

Census Data

The most reliable source here is the Census. Ethnicity data is not collected in Scotland's Mid-Year Population Estimates, though it does present data on country of origin.

In 2011, the most diverse wards in Aberdeen City were Tillydrone/ Seaton/ Old Aberdeen and Torry/ Ferryhill, where 33% and 23% of the population were ethnic minorities. Overall, Aberdeen City was more ethnically diverse than Scotland as a whole, with 2-3 times more people with Polish, 'other white,' Asian, and mixed backgrounds; and nearly 4 times more Africans than Scotland as a whole.

The most diverse wards in Aberdeenshire and Moray were Fraserburgh and District (10.5% ethnic minorities), Peterhead North and Rattray (9.9%), and Elgin City South (6.7%) and North (6.3%). Most of the ethnic minorities in these wards were of Eastern European origin.⁹

Grampian Population Ethnicity Data, 2011

| Ethnic Group | Number | % |
|--|---------|------|
| All people | 569,061 | 100% |
| White: Scottish | 448,133 | 79% |
| White: Other British | 64,891 | 11% |
| White: Irish | 3,805 | 1% |
| White: Gypsy/Traveller | 533 | 0.1% |
| White: Polish | 11,036 | 2% |
| White: Other White | 17,692 | 3% |
| Mixed or multiple ethnic groups | 2,491 | 0.4% |
| Asian, Asian Scottish/British | 12,155 | 2% |
| African, African Scottish/British | 5,620 | 1% |
| Caribbean, Black, or Caribbean/Black Scottish/British | 914 | 0.2% |
| Other ethnic groups | 1,791 | 0.3% |

⁵ National Records for Scotland (NRS), Mid-Year Population Estimates, Scotland, mid-2019. [Link](#).

⁶ 2019 Population Estimates Briefing Note, Aberdeen City Council. [Link](#).

⁷ National Records for Scotland, Mid-Year Population Estimates, Mid-2018-19, published April 2020. [Link](#).

⁸ SPICe Briefing: Ethnicity and Employment, Suzi Macpherson, 09 June 2015.

⁹ Scotland's Census 2011, Table KS201SC.

Other Data

More recent data is available from NHS Scotland, where (colour coded) ethnicity is recorded with a person's CHI Number, by health board. In statistics on Covid-19 vaccine uptake, the population for each ethnicity was listed, but only for age 40+. It may be possible to get broader data, though as shown in the table below, a significant number of people are 'ethnic group unknown.'

In recent years, pupil ethnicity has become 'colour coded' in Scotland. In 2017, young people who were Polish, Irish, Gypsy/Traveller and 'White Other' were included as ethnic minorities (taking the approach set out by the Scottish Government) – but as of 2020, they are not. As a result, the school census now renders invisible a large number of ethnic minority pupils, making analysis of their experience much more difficult. To give a sense of the problem, between 2017 and 2020, the percentage of pupils classed as ethnic minorities dropped from 33% to 17% in Aberdeen, from 16% to 4% in Aberdeenshire, from 24% to 3% in Moray, and from 17% to 3% across Scotland as a whole. While there might have been some population shift during this three-year period, the overwhelming majority of 'missing' ethnic minority pupils have simply not been counted.

Grampian Population Ethnicity Data, 2021
(age 40+ only¹⁰)

| Ethnic Group | Number | % |
|--|---------|-------|
| Total: All people (AGE 40+) | 318,693 | 100% |
| White: Scottish | 145,428 | 46% |
| White: Other British | 49,925 | 16% |
| White: Irish | 866 | 0.3% |
| White: Gypsy/Traveller | 361 | 0.1% |
| White: Polish | 2,224 | 0.7% |
| White: Other White | 6,630 | 2% |
| White: Subgroup Unknown | 13,671 | 4% |
| Asian, Asian Scottish/British | 3,299 | 1% |
| African, African Scottish/British | 1,267 | 0.4% |
| Caribbean, Black, or Caribbean/Black Scottish/British | 320 | 0.1% |
| Mixed or multiple ethnic groups | 575 | 0.2% |
| Arab, Arab Scottish/British | 184 | <0.1% |
| Other ethnic groups | 1,496 | 0.5% |
| Unknown | 92,447 | 29% |

2.3 Country of Birth

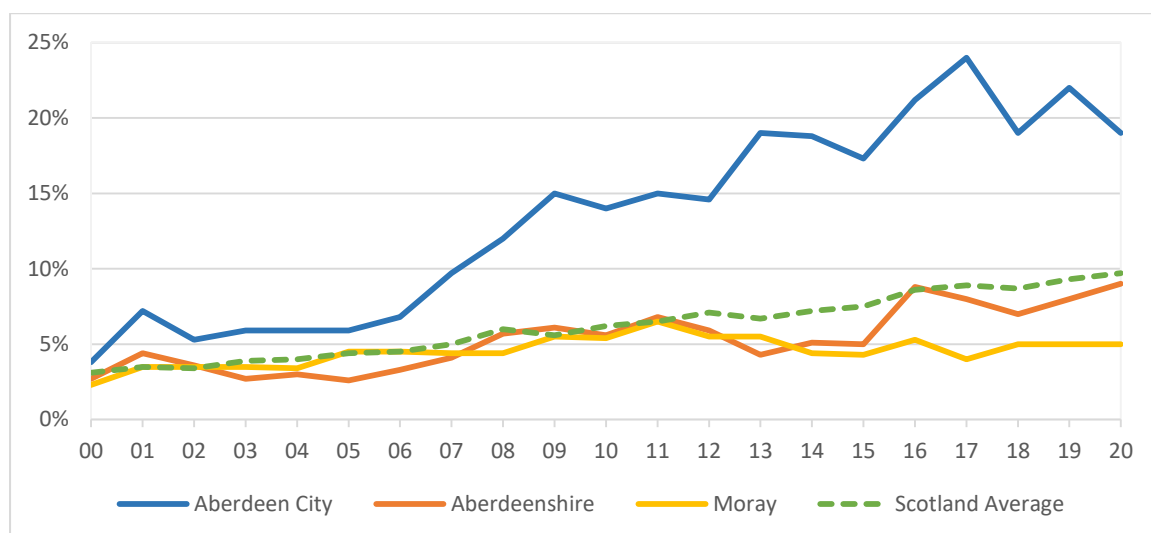
In 2020, Aberdeen City had the highest proportion in Scotland of non-UK born residents: 24%, or 56,000 people, with slightly more than half born in the EU and half outside the EU.¹¹ For Aberdeenshire and Moray, the figures were 9% (24,000 people) and 5% (5,000 people), with a similar split between EU and non-EU. The Scottish average for 2020 was 9.6%.

Both the proportion of residents born outside of the UK, and the proportion of ethnic minorities has been rising steadily in recent decades, and this has been more pronounced in Aberdeen City, as shown below. While population estimates can be skewed by sample size, the overall trend is clear to see and figures will be confirmed in the 2022 Census. The countries of birth with the highest numbers in Grampian/Scotland in 2011 are also shown below.

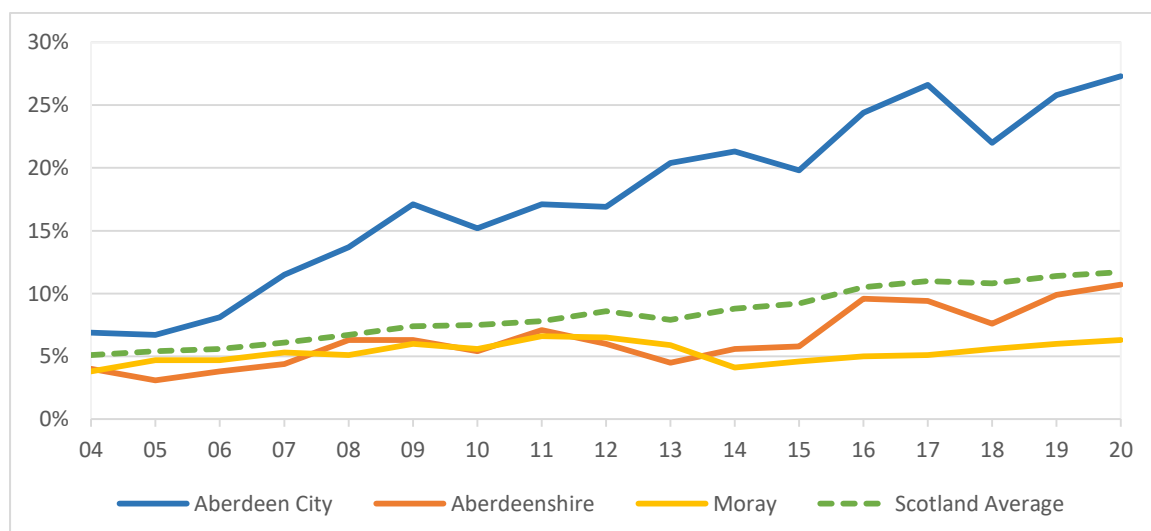
¹⁰ Vaccination Uptake: Individuals in receipt of dose 1 of COVID-19 vaccine up to and including 25 May 2021.

¹¹ NRS, Population by Country of Birth and Nationality in Scotland, by Council Area, 2020. [Link](#).

Percent of Population Born Outside the UK, 2000-2020



Ethnic Minority Percent of Population, 2004-2020¹²



Top Ten non-UK Countries of Birth, Census 2011¹³

| Grampian | | | Scotland | | |
|----------------------|--------|------|----------------------|--------|------|
| Poland | 10,025 | 1.8% | Poland | 55,231 | 1% |
| Nigeria | 3,603 | 0.6% | India | 23,489 | 0.4% |
| Germany | 3,354 | 0.6% | Ireland | 22,952 | 0.4% |
| India | 3,322 | 0.6% | Germany | 22,274 | 0.4% |
| USA | 2,350 | 0.4% | Pakistan | 20,039 | 0.4% |
| Ireland | 2,167 | 0.4% | USA | 15,919 | 0.3% |
| Lithuania | 1,856 | 0.3% | China | 15,338 | 0.3% |
| Other EU 2001 | 1,816 | 0.3% | South Africa | 10,607 | 0.2% |
| Other Non-EU | 1,581 | 0.3% | Other EU 2001 | 9,782 | 0.2% |
| Latvia | 1,576 | 0.3% | Nigeria | 9,458 | 0.2% |

¹² ONS, Estimated Population by Council Area, Country of Birth and Ethnicity, 2004 to 2020. [Link](#). This chart includes 'white' people born outside the UK and 'colour coded' ethnic minorities.

¹³ Scotland's Census 2011, Table QS203SC; Country of Birth. [Link](#).

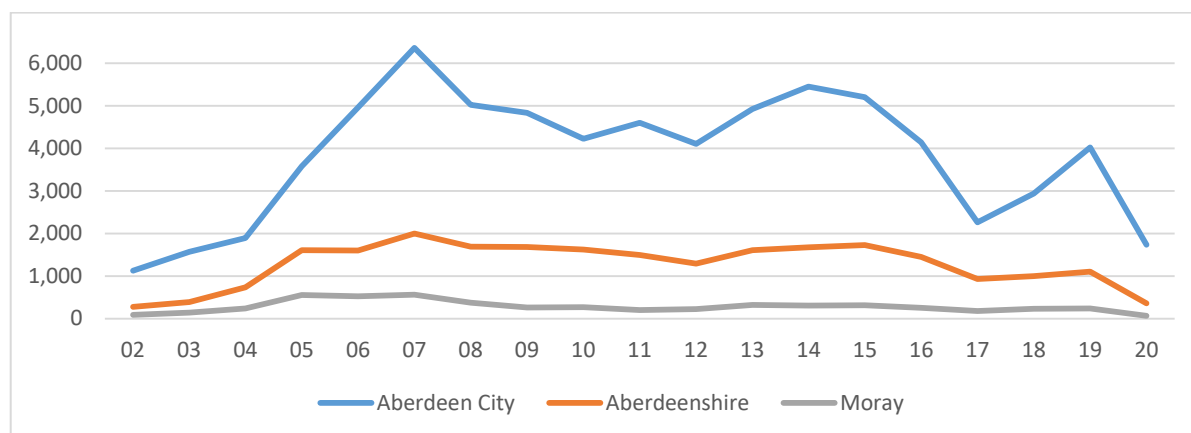
2.4 Mothers' Country of Birth

Between 2007 and 2019, the proportion of births to non-UK born mothers in Aberdeen increased from just under a quarter to just over a third (23% to 36%). During that period, the average in Scotland as a whole increased from 11% to 18%, with figures in Aberdeenshire and Moray slightly lower. Between 2007 and 2012, the number of births increased in Grampian, from 6,108 to 6,470, but this declined in 2017 to 5,917, and again in 2019 to 5,476. There was a similar trend across Scotland, but births to non-UK born mothers continued to increase.¹⁴

2.5 National Insurance Number Registrations for Overseas Nationals¹⁵

During the 18-year period from 2002-2020, over 100,000 overseas nationals applied for new National Insurance Numbers (NINO) in Grampian. Annual registration rates varied between a low of 1,496 in 2002 and a high of 8,926 in 2007. As shown in the chart below, figures dropped dramatically in 2016-17, began to rise again in 2018-19, then dropped steeply in 2020. All three council areas in Grampian followed the same trend, with Aberdeen City consistently receiving the largest number of applications, ranging from 1,129 in 2002 to 6,364 in 2014. These figures follow a similar pattern to that seen across the UK, and correlate strongly with international trends, including the entry of 10 countries to the EU in May 2004, the economic downturn of 2008, free movement for Bulgarian and Romanian citizens in January 2014, the Brexit vote of June 2016, and the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

New National Insurance Number Registrations for Overseas Nationals, 2002-2020



2.6 Religion¹⁶

In the 2011 Census, more people in Grampian said they had 'no religion' (44.6%) than any specific religious group, and 7.5% did not state a religion. The three Christian categories totalled 45.8% (Church of Scotland 31.6%, Roman Catholic 6.7%, Other Christian 7.5%). The average across Scotland for 'no religion' was 36.7%, religion not stated 7%, Church of Scotland 32.4%, Roman Catholic 15.9% and Other Christian 5.5%. While most Church of Scotland members were born in Scotland (93%), nearly half of Grampian's Roman Catholics were born outside the UK (45.4%), compared with the Scottish average of 12.2%.

¹⁴ National Records for Scotland, Vital Events Reference Tables 2019, 2017, 2012, 2007, Section 3: Birth. [Link](#).

¹⁵ Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) statistics, 2017-2020 [Link](#).

¹⁶ Scotland's Census 2011, Table LC2207SC.

In Grampian, people born outside the UK were more likely to identify with a religion: two-thirds versus around half, and the group with the highest proportion identifying with a religion (78.3%) were born in Africa. The figures were similar for Scotland as a whole. Grampian had slightly lower proportions of people who belonged to minority religions (Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Other Religions) than Scotland as a whole (2.1% vs. 2.6%).

Markers & Means

These domains are ‘markers’ because success [...] is an indication of positive integration outcomes, and ‘means’ because success [...] is likely to assist the wider integration process.¹⁷

3. Markers & Means: Employment

Oil & Gas Context

Any discussion of employment in North East Scotland would be incomplete without considering the dominant role of the oil and gas industry. Oil price fluctuations have far-reaching consequences in all sectors, as seen in 2015-16 and 2020-21.

Skills Development Scotland recently carried out an analysis of school leaver destinations, giving a snapshot of how job losses in oil and gas (and knock-on effects in other industries) reduced opportunities for young people to enter employment on completing school. While 2019-20 saw young people entering employment at lower rates across Scotland, the reduction was greater in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. The influence of the oil and gas downturn of 2015-16 was even more stark in Aberdeen City, which has yet to return to its pre-2015 levels.

School Leavers Entering Employment (%)

| | 2014-15 | 2015-16 | Change 2014-16 | 2016-17 | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | Change 2018-20 |
|----------------------|---------|---------|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------|
| Aberdeen City | 21.6 | 14.5 | -7.1% | 15.4 | 18.5 | 17.7 | 8.7 | -9% |
| Aberdeenshire | 23.3 | 22.1 | -1.2% | 21 | 21 | 21.7 | 14.4 | -7.3% |
| Scotland | 21.4 | 22.3 | +0.9% | 22 | 22.7 | 22.9 | 16.2 | -6.7% |

3.1 Indicators and Data Points

Employment Rates

The most reliable source for employment rates by ethnicity is the Census. In 2011, employment in the Grampian region was higher than in Scotland as a whole, for both Scottish/British people and ethnic minorities. This follows the general pattern of the past decade (shown below).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimates annual employment rates across the UK, using a sample of 100,000 people. While this is broadly representative,¹⁸ it is impossible to get a perfectly accurate picture, especially when considering small groups (such as ethnic minorities) in less densely populated areas (like Aberdeenshire and Moray). However, ONS data is the most accurate information available, and it gives a general picture between censuses.

Another shortcoming of ONS data is its ‘colour coding’ of ethnicity. Ethnic groups are listed as ‘white’ or ‘ethnic minority’, obscuring figures for ethnic minorities from Europe, Gypsy/Travellers, etc. Country of birth data resolves this problem to a certain extent, so below we examine figures for ‘white’ and ethnic minority people born in the UK, and those born outside the UK.

¹⁷ Ager & Strang, 2004, Indicators of Integration – Final Report (Home Office). [Link](#).

¹⁸ ONS 2015, Labour Force Survey QMI. [Link](#).

Employment Rates by Ethnicity: 2011¹⁹ Including people who were employed or self-employed.

| | Aberdeen City | Aberdeenshire | Moray | Grampian | Scotland |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------|---------------|---------------|
| Scottish/British | 78.8 % | 83.4 % | 80.4 % | 81.2 % | 75.3 % |
| Ethnic Minority* | 66.5 % | 79.1 % | 72.9% | 70.4 % | 62.3 % |

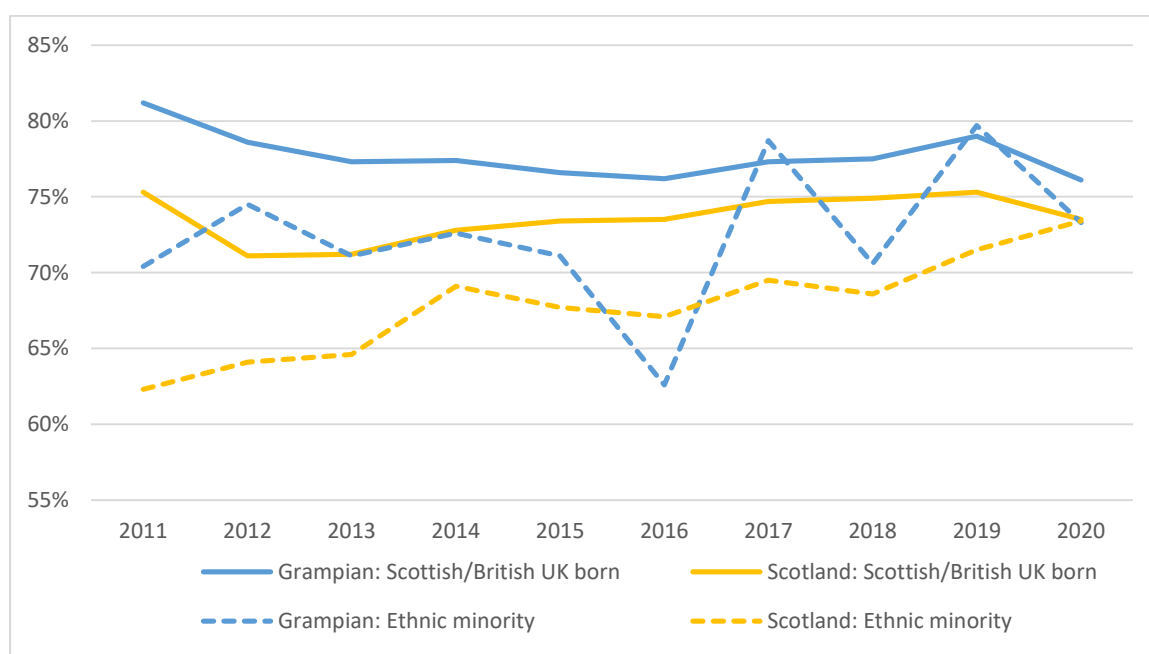
* Includes 'colour coded' ethnic minorities, Gypsy/Travellers, and 'white' categories except White Scottish/British.

Employment Rates by Ethnicity & Nationality: 2019 & 2020 (estimate)²⁰ Including people who were employed, self-employed, or furloughed.

| | Aberdeen City | | Aberdeenshire | | Moray | | Grampian | | Scotland | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 2019 | 2020 | 2019 | 2020 | 2019 | 2020 | 2019 | 2020 | 2019 | 2020 |
| 'White' UK Born | 79.8% | 70.7% | 79.9% | 80.1% | 75.0% | 76.2% | 78.1% | 77.5% | 75.3% | 73.5% |
| 'White' non-UK Born | 79.0% | 82.6% | 92.8% | 82.0% | 72.0% | 59.4% | 82.6% | 80.7% | 80.2% | 78.7% |
| Ethnic Minority UK Born | <u>81.7%</u> | <u>60.9%</u> | <u>88.5%</u> | <u>77.8%</u> | <u>76.2%</u> | * | 82.5% | 66.2% | 64.3% | 71.4% |
| Ethnic Minority non-UK Born | 77.5% | 55.5% | 62.4% | 49.4% | 86.3% | 74.7% | 76.7% | 54.8% | 57.9% | 61.9% |

* Data unavailable/unreliable due to small sample size. Figures are underlined where data was not available for country of birth, but was available for nationality – UK born and UK national are not exactly the same group (e.g. people can gain UK citizenship) but there is considerable overlap.

Employment Rates by Ethnicity, 2011-2020²¹



Note: the erratic shifts in Grampian's ethnic minority employment rate are likely an effect of small sample size.

¹⁹ Scotland's Census 2011, Table DC6220Scca. Note: the 2018 edition of *How Fair is North East Scotland* quoted figures that included retirees as 'economically inactive.' Here, they are excluded for a more accurate picture of employment rates. This also improves consistency with ONS figures, which calculate employment rates among people aged 16-64.

²⁰ ONS, 2020. Annual Population Survey, Calendar Years 2019 and 2020, Employment Rate, Age 16-64. NomisWeb.

²¹ Data for 2011: Scotland's Census 2011, Table DC6220Scca. Data for 2012-2020: ONS, 2021. Annual Population Survey, Employment Rate, Age 16-64.

Two key patterns emerge from the data:²²

- The employment rate for ethnic minority people – in Grampian and Scotland as a whole – tends to be lower than for Scottish/British people, despite ethnic minorities tending to have higher levels of education (see Education section below).
- Covid-19 led to widespread job losses in 2020; this affected different groups of people in different ways across Grampian and Scotland as a whole. Some of the hardest-hit groups was Grampian's non-UK born ethnic minorities, whose employment rate dropped between 12 and 22 percentage points between 2019 and 2020. During the same period, the average employment rate across Scotland for this group actually increased slightly, though it was still the lowest in Scotland by 10 percentage points.

Other Points of Note (from 2011 Census)²³

Unemployment: Aberdeen City unemployment rates for most groups were slightly lower than Scotland as a whole: on average 4.1% vs. 5.1%. The highest unemployment rate was among people born in Africa (10.7%), slightly higher than the Scottish average for African-born people (10.6%). Other regions of birth had unemployment rates between 3.4% (Oceania) and 6.1% (Europe, non-EU). The UK-born unemployment rate was 3.8%, and people born outside the UK generally had higher unemployment rates than those born in the UK. In Aberdeenshire and Moray, unemployment rates were considerably lower than the Scottish average, ranging between 2-5%, with UK-born unemployment rates of 2.6% in Aberdeenshire and 3.9% in Moray. As in Aberdeen City, unemployment was higher among people born outside the UK, with the exception of Oceania.

Full & Part-Time Work: Across Grampian, a higher proportion of all people were in both full-time and part-time work than Scotland as a whole, on average 40.4% and 15.5%, vs. 36.4% and 14.3%. In all areas, the figure was slightly lower than average for people born in the UK, and slightly higher for people born in other European countries. In some cases the gap was considerable: for example, in Aberdeenshire, 60% of EU-born people were in full-time employment, vs. 39.9% of UK-born people. However, for a more complete picture, it is important to consider these figures alongside the types of jobs and industries people are working in (see below).

Economic Activity & Inactivity: The category 'Economically Active' includes people who are working, looking for work, or on short-term sick leave or maternity leave. 'Economically Inactive' includes students, retirees, unpaid carers, people who have given up looking for work, and those who are unable to work due to long-term illness or disability.

Grampian had higher levels of economic activity than the Scottish average: 66.9% vs. 62.8%. The most economically active group was people born in EU Accession (2001-2011) countries, e.g. Eastern Europe: 86.5% in Grampian and 84.2% in Scotland as a whole. The least economically active group was people born in Ireland: 60.2% in Grampian and 53.9% in Scotland as a whole. The figures for UK-born people were 66.2% and 62.5%, and with the exception of Ireland, all other groups had higher rates of economic activity. Across Grampian, more than 70% of adults born in Europe, Africa and Oceania were economically active, which makes sense given the age distribution of these groups (see section 6 on Health below).

²² See also: Skills Development Scotland, Regional Skills Assessments, Aberdeen City and Shire, 2021 ([link](#)) and Skills Matrix ([link](#)). Aberdeenshire Employability Partnership ([link](#)), ABZ Works ([link](#)) and Moray Employability ([link](#)).

²³ Scotland's Census 2011, Table DC6210SC.

Employment Classifications²⁴

Note that these are based on 'colour coded' data, so do not take into account European minorities.

In Aberdeen City, 11.4% of people in **higher managerial, administrative and professional** jobs were ethnic minorities. This was the highest figure of any area in Scotland, and well above the Scottish average of 4.8%. The figures for Aberdeenshire and Moray were 2.2% and 1.5%, respectively. 17.5% of ethnic minority adults in Aberdeen City and 16.6% in Aberdeenshire were classed as higher managerial, administrative and professional workers.

The largest categories for ethnic minorities were **full-time students in Aberdeen City (29.9%)**, Lower Managerial, Administrative and Professional in Aberdeenshire (17.8%), and Semi-Routine in Moray (18.7%). In Aberdeen City, 79.6% of ethnic minorities aged 16-24 were full-time students, compared with 56.3% of 'white' adults in the same age range. Figures for Scotland as a whole are slightly lower.

The proportion of ethnic minority adults who were **long-term unemployed or had never worked** was lower in Aberdeen City than the Scottish average: 5.4% vs. 11%, and in both cases, the majority of people in this category were women. The figures for 'white' adults were 2.9% and 4.8%, respectively. Among 'white' adults in Scotland as a whole, figures for men and women who had never worked or were long-term unemployed were similar: 4.9% and 4.6%.

In Grampian, 14.8% of ethnic minority women were **looking after home or family**, compared with 6.2% of 'white' women, 0.6% of ethnic minority men and 0.4% of 'white' men. The figures for Scotland as a whole were 14.3%, 5.3%, 1.2% and 0.7%, respectively. Asian women consistently had higher rates of looking after home and family, for example 19.8% of Asian women in Aberdeenshire were in this category.

Occupation Types²⁵

Note that these are based on 'colour coded' data, so do not take into account European minorities.

In some occupations, ethnic minority workers made up a higher proportion than their representation in the population as a whole, most notably in **professional occupations** in Aberdeen City (12% vs. 7.2%), but also in Aberdeenshire (2.2% vs. 1.4%), Moray (1.6% vs. 0.9%) and Scotland as a whole (4.9% vs. 3.3%). They were also over-represented across Grampian in **caring, leisure and service occupations, sales and customer service occupations, and elementary occupations**. The latter include low-skilled jobs in cleaning, delivery, manufacturing, agriculture, construction, etc.

Across Grampian, ethnic minorities were under-represented among the following occupations: **managers, directors and senior officials; associate professional and technical; administrative and secretarial; skilled trades**. Consistently, the lowest proportion of ethnic minorities was among **process, plant and machine operatives**: 3.2% in Aberdeen City, 0.8% in Aberdeenshire, and 1.5% in Moray. This category includes many industrial jobs in oil and gas.

Meanwhile, the largest proportion of ethnic minority workers were in professional occupations: 33.1% in Aberdeen City, 26.2% in Aberdeenshire, 19.4% in Moray, and 25.1% in Scotland as a whole. The figure for 'white' workers was 19%, 16.1%, 11.3% and 16.5%, respectively.

²⁴ Scotland's Census 2011, Tables DC6206, DC6201SC.

²⁵ Scotland's Census 2011, Table DC6213SC.

Industries²⁶

In Aberdeen City, ethnic minorities made up 11% of the workforce in both **human health and social work** and **accommodation and food service**. 20% of the city's ethnic minority workers were in the former; 12% in the latter. Unusually compared with Scottish averages, 9% of workers in **professional, scientific and technical activities** in Aberdeen were ethnic minorities: 13% of the total ethnic minority workforce. The figures were 3.6% and 5.7% in Scotland as a whole. 13% also worked in **wholesale and retail trade / repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles**.

20% of ethnic minority workers in Aberdeenshire and Moray also worked in **human health and social work**, and 24% of ethnic minority workers in Moray were based in **accommodation and food service** (15% in Aberdeenshire, and 16.7% in Scotland as a whole). As with Aberdeen City, another key industry was **wholesale and retail trade / repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles**, with 15% of the ethnic minority workforce in Aberdeenshire and Moray. Due to small population sizes, ethnic minorities made up small proportions of the overall workforce in all other industries.

Modern Apprenticeships²⁷

Beyond employment, an indicator of economic integration is participation in Modern Apprenticeship (MA) schemes. As with other statistics above, data collected by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) is 'colour coded' so ethnic minority figures do not include, for example, EU immigrants or their children. Still, it remains a useful indicator. And while ethnic minorities remain under-represented in MAs, Grampian's figures were closer to reflecting the population than Scotland as a whole (see below). All three local authorities in Grampian increased the proportion of ethnic minorities in MAs since 2017, and Aberdeen City had the highest proportion in Scotland: 7.7%, compared with the Scottish average of 2.7%.

Proportion of Modern Apprenticeships held by Ethnic Minorities vs. Proportion in Population, Financial Year 2020-21 (*not including European minorities*)

| | Aberdeen City | Aberdeenshire | Moray | Scotland |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|-------|----------|
| % of MAs | 7.7 % | 1.5 % | 1.8 % | 1.6 % |
| % in Population (16+) | 8.4 % | 3.1 % | 1.3 % | 4.0 % |

Small Businesses & Entrepreneurial Activity

While ethnicity data is not available for the North East, Scotland-wide research has found that people from 'non-white' ethnic backgrounds start businesses at a much higher rate than those from 'white' backgrounds. In 2019, the figures were 17% and 7%, respectively. However, in 2020, the former figure dropped to 13%, while the latter remained steady at 7%, indicating "greater precarity" in circumstances for ethnic minority communities.²⁸

Ultimately, a higher proportion of a small population is still a small number in absolute terms. Between 2015 and 2019, only 1-3% of Scotland's small businesses were majority led by people from 'non-white' backgrounds, despite comprising 4.3% of the population.²⁹

²⁶ Scotland's Census 2011, Table DC6216SC.

²⁷ ONS, 2021. Annual Population Survey, % ethnic minority, aged 16+, April 2020 to March 2021; Skills Development Scotland, 2017. Equalities Summaries: Aberdeen City ([link](#)); Aberdeenshire ([link](#)); Moray ([link](#)).

²⁸ Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2013 ([link](#)) and 2020 ([link](#)).

²⁹ UK Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2019 ([link](#)); Census Table LC2101SC.

Meanwhile, setting aside ethnicity, the proportion of people engaged in ‘early entrepreneurial activity’ across Scotland remained steady between 2019 and 2020. However, the North East saw a decline from 8.7% to 6.5%. Reasons for the difference in the North East included a perception of fewer good opportunities for start-ups, less confidence in success, and greater fear of failure, all of which have been diverging from the Scottish average for a few years. Researchers connected these individual attitudes to wider structural issues, like an economy made fragile due to its reliance on the oil and gas industry.³⁰

Research from 2016 identified similar concerns, along with other factors working against ethnic minority entrepreneurs in Aberdeen. These included limited access to finance, labour and support.³¹

Key Missing Data

Data on earnings, under-employment and job satisfaction are not available by region and ethnicity – where available, there is Scotland-wide data for specific ethnic groups, or regional data that is not broken down by ethnicity. The same is true for data on the leadership of small businesses.

3.2 Evidence from Relevant Local Research

Community Planning Aberdeen, Population Needs Assessment (2021)³²

This report highlights how the Covid-19 pandemic has pushed many people into poverty due to reduced income resulting from reduced hours, reduced levels of pay from the furlough scheme and loss of employment. Ethnic minority communities, together with women and young people, are likely to be particularly affected by these circumstances as they tend to work in less secure occupations with lower wages, pushing more people into poverty. According to the Equality and Human Rights Commission, ethnic minority people reported that they were less likely to have been furloughed during the pandemic, and more likely to have lost their jobs.

Shared Futures & No Recourse North East: the Human Cost of Brexit (2021)³³

In an online roundtable discussion, members of community groups and third & public sector organisations reflected on Brexit’s impact on EU citizens in North East Scotland. Six speakers presented diverse perspectives and more than 65 people attended the discussion that followed, raising the concerns of local communities.

Speakers highlighted the ‘hostile environment’ that EU nationals now face, with discrimination around employers, landlords and banks not knowing the rules – or taking advantage of the uncertain situation – and people experience issues accessing benefits, jobs and places to live. For example, employers and landlords are required to take *nine* steps to check someone’s status online. This is likely to lead to a preference for applicants with a British passport or physical residence permit.

³⁰ Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2020. [Link](#).

³¹ Rahman, Z, *et al*, 2016. ‘What influences ethnic entrepreneurs’ decision to start-up: Some evidence from Aberdeen, Scotland.’ *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, November 2016. [Link](#).

³² Community Planning Aberdeen, report available online. [Link](#).

³³ GREC, briefing available online. [Link](#).

Participants touched on similar issues, mentioning there was not enough information and guidance about the changes arising from Brexit, reinforcing that employers and landlords do not have enough knowledge of the new rules, which is likely to lead to discrimination.

GREC: Aberdeen Equality Outcomes Survey & Focus Groups (2020)

During August and September 2020, GREC conducted a survey to gather feedback from people with protected characteristics to feed into Aberdeen City Council (ACC)'s Equality Outcomes. The survey was complemented by a series of focus groups held in October and November, which also supported the development of Aberdeen's Health & Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) Equality Outcomes.

Among working-age survey participants (143), the employment rate was 68% for ethnic minorities – slightly lower than the average of 71% for all participants. One of the main findings was that more than half of participants from ethnic minority communities felt that their access to employment was restricted by at least one protected characteristic – and a significant number had two or more overlapping protected characteristics.

Feedback from the focus groups indicated that ethnic minority communities, especially African communities, felt there was ongoing discrimination relating to employment. There were different opinions on whether the origin of this discrimination was personal, institutional or systemic – but all participants agreed that it had a negative impact on people's lives.

EU nationals felt they were disproportionately affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, given that most had come to Aberdeen for work, and many struggled in terms of employment and finances. Participants also mentioned that those without good English proficiency were experiencing further problems to access support during the pandemic, as all advice was provided through the phone.

Aberdeenshire Council Equality Outcomes, Interim Engagement Analysis (2021)³⁴

While data was not collected on participant ethnicity in the Community Survey or Citizens' Panel Survey, there were respondents in both who felt that ethnicity could present barriers to employment (48% and 30%).

New Scots (Syrian Refugees) in Aberdeenshire³⁵

In 2018, there were 86 working-age adults in the Syrian New Scots' community in Aberdeenshire. Most were engaged in volunteer work but only three were in employment. Covid-19 halted almost all volunteering opportunities, but employment levels have significantly increased. By 2021, two-thirds of working-age New Scots' were in part-time or full-time employment, thanks in part to a dedicated Employability Keyworker for the group, who has assisted clients to overcome previous issues including rural isolation, language barriers and digital exclusion.

³⁴ Report available online. [Link](#).

³⁵ Syrian New Scots website, partnership notes.

Challenges for Ethnic Minority Small Business Owners (2016)³⁶

Researchers conducted interviews with 25 ethnic minority business owners in Aberdeen, all of whom faced difficulties in accessing labour, due to frequent changes to immigration rules. Challenges in attracting ethnic majority staff lead to a heavy reliance on student workers, but pathways for students to remain in the UK are narrowing. Meanwhile, Aberdeen's economy is tied to oil price fluctuations, creating rapid changes in access to finance, demand for goods and services, prices for energy and raw materials, etc. The authors argue that ethnic minority entrepreneurs have less robust support systems to deal with these issues, leaving them much more vulnerable to failure.

Research from 2018 and Earlier

For a more in-depth summary of this research, including sample sizes and other details, please see How Fair Is North East Scotland 2018, available on grec.co.uk/research.

SSAMIS 2017: Migrant Employment in Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire³⁷

Researchers spoke with Central and Eastern European (CEE) immigrants working mainly in the fish industry, agriculture, or low-skilled sectors like care or hospitality. Participants found work through agencies, existing social networks, and occasionally through local resources. Problems associated with low-paid and unskilled work included insecurity, health and safety issues, discrimination and exploitation. Many participants were overqualified for the low-skilled roles they felt stuck in, and most formed social connections among co-workers who spoke the same languages, further reducing opportunities to improve their English skills.

GREC 2017: Tackling Economic Barriers Survey

Several key findings arose from this pilot study. For newcomers to North East Scotland, getting a job seems to become easier with length of residence, though the chance of experiencing discrimination at work also appears to rise over time. While most participants were happy with their jobs, nearly half felt their work was not a good match for their skills and qualifications, and many felt they lacked opportunities for career progression.

GREC 2016: Economic Experiences of Different Ethnic Groups in North East Scotland³⁸

A large proportion of research participants faced barriers, difficulties or obstacles in looking for work, or did not seek employment due to family commitments. Many underestimated how long it would take to get a job, and a significant proportion of female participants had trouble finding work due to lack of childcare. Many also experienced discrimination, including being disadvantaged by lack of experience in Scotland, qualifications not being recognised, and issues with language.

³⁶ Rahman, Z, et al, 2016. 'What influences ethnic entrepreneurs' decision to start-up: Some evidence from Aberdeen, Scotland.' *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*. [Link](#). Note: this research was not included in HFINES 2018.

³⁷ Summary write-up based on SSAMIS project fieldwork, 2014-15. [Link](#).

³⁸ Report available online. [Link](#).

3.3 Summary

The quantitative data and local research present a mixed picture of economic experience among ethnic minorities in Grampian in the last decade. Some have had success working in the oil and gas industry, healthcare and higher education, while many have become 'stuck' in lower status and more precarious jobs in fish processing, agriculture and hospitality. On a number of employment indicators, mainly from the 2011 Census, ethnic minorities fare better than the majority population, and several data points suggest that ethnic minorities in Grampian have better employment outcomes than those in Scotland as a whole.

However, the broad patterns in Grampian tend to align with national trends, and the employment rate for ethnic minority people remains lower than for Scottish/British people, despite higher levels of education. In one particularly stark example, Africans in Grampian have the highest proportion of degree-level qualifications, but also face the highest unemployment rate (more than 10%). While no ethnicity data is available for the North East region, it is clear that 'non-white' ethnic minorities across Scotland start businesses at higher rates than the rest of the population, but face significant challenges and remain under-represented in business leadership.

In addition to existing patterns of employment inequality, ethnic minorities have suffered worse job losses during Covid-19. Grampian's non-UK-born ethnic minorities have been hardest hit, potentially due to insecure employment and barriers to accessing information and support. Qualitative data shows that ethnicity continues to be perceived as a barrier for employment. Many of the challenges that ethnic minorities face in this area – such as language barriers, absence of opportunities to match skills and development, and lack of childcare – have been exacerbated by Covid-19 and Brexit.

Special attention should be given to how all these factors impact on women looking after home or family, as in 2011 the rates were higher – both for ethnic minorities and Scottish/British women – than the national average.

Priorities

- Ensuring that ethnic minorities have opportunities to improve their English language skills where required; to develop other employability skills; to transfer qualifications from their countries of origin; and to gain awareness of workplace rights.
- Ensuring increased engagement with (and opportunities for) Africans and other communities with the highest rates of unemployment in Grampian.
- Developing a better understanding of the unequal impacts of Covid-19 and Brexit on the employment of ethnic minorities and others with protected characteristics, including the intersectional ways that issues manifest.

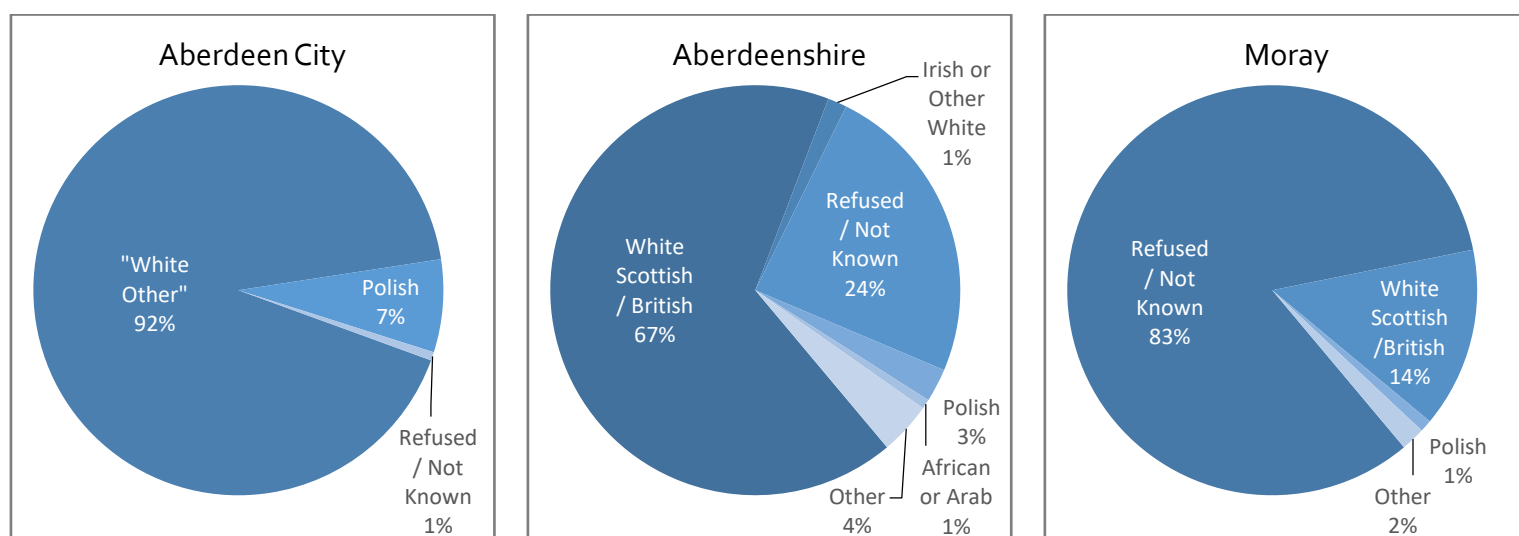
4. Markers & Means: Housing

4.1 Indicators and Data Points

Homelessness³⁹

2018-19 is the most recent data available for homelessness applications by local authority and ethnicity, and even during this period, recording of ethnicity data seems patchy (see charts below).

Ethnicity of Homelessness Applicants by Local Authority, 2018-19



Tenancy⁴⁰

Similar to the pattern across Scotland, ethnic minorities in Grampian lived with less secure tenure than Scottish/British people. On average, four times more ethnic minority people rent from private landlords than Scottish/British people, and even in Aberdeenshire, where home ownership is highest, less than half of ethnic minority people own their homes, compared with more than three-quarters of Scottish/British people.

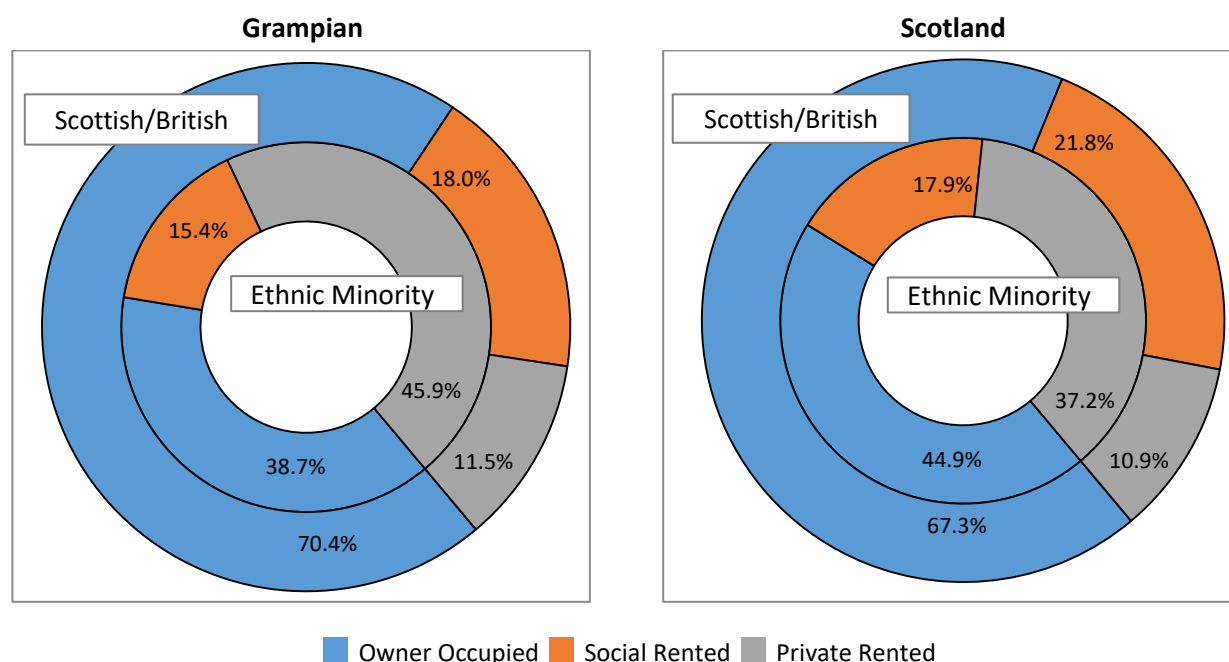
Tenancy, 2011 Census

| | | Aberdeen City | Aberdeenshire | Moray | Grampian Average | Scotland Average |
|----------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|-------|------------------|------------------|
| Owner-Occupied | Scottish/British | 65.5% | 77.3% | 68.5% | 70.4% | 67.3% |
| | Ethnic Minority | 29.8% | 45.9% | 40.4% | 38.7% | 44.9% |
| Social Rented | Scottish/British | 22.8% | 13.3% | 17.9% | 18.0% | 21.8% |
| | Ethnic Minority | 20.0% | 14.1% | 12.0% | 15.4% | 17.9% |
| Private Rented | Scottish/British | 11.7% | 9.3% | 13.6% | 11.5% | 10.9% |
| | Ethnic Minority | 50.2% | 40.0% | 47.6% | 45.9% | 37.2% |

³⁹ Scottish Government, Homelessness Statistics: additional analysis by local authority, July 2019 [Link](#).

⁴⁰ Scotland's Census 2011, Table DC4214SCca. 'Ethnic minority' includes all non-'white' ethnic groups, plus White Irish, White Gypsy/Traveller, White Polish and White Other.

Tenancy by Ethnicity, 2011



Areas of Multiple Deprivation⁴¹

Generally speaking, Grampian is an affluent part of Scotland. In the 2020 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), the Midstocket area of Aberdeen ranked the second least deprived in Scotland, and 116 areas in Grampian fell into the least deprived 10%. Meanwhile, eight areas in Grampian ranked among the 10% most deprived, and 20 in the 15% most deprived. This has shifted somewhat since 2016, with several more areas slipping down the league table of the most deprived in Scotland, and a reduction of those ranked most affluent.

Even with high levels of affluence overall, there is a significant demographic gap between the richest and poorest parts of Grampian. For example, combining SIMD and Census data, it is clear that a ethnic minorities are over-represented in deprived areas. On average, around a quarter (23.3%) of people in Grampian's ten most deprived areas were ethnic minorities, up to nearly a third (32.3%) in Woodside (Aberdeen City). The figure was less than 15% in Grampian's ten most affluent areas. However, ethnic minorities were over-represented in several affluent areas, especially around Aberdeen's hospitals, emphasising the importance of ethnic minority workers in the health service.

The table below shows the ten most and least deprived areas in Grampian, with the proportions of different ethnicities among residents. While the figures are for 2012, most of these areas have remained in the same categories in 2016 and 2020.⁴² In more densely populated areas, one area may include several SIMD datazones, and often neighbouring datazones have similar SIMD scores. A lower score means a higher level of deprivation, based on measures of income, employment, health, education/skills, housing, crime, and geographic access to services.

⁴¹ Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2020 ([link](#)). Scotland's Census 2011, Table LC2801SC.

⁴² One exception has been Heldon West & Fogwatt in Buckie, which moved into the most deprived decile.

| Ethnicity by SIMD Datazones, 2012 Most Deprived Areas | | | | | | | | Irish, Polish, Gypsy/Traveller, Other 'White' | Mixed / Multiple, Other | Asian | African | Caribbean / Black |
|--|-----------|------------------------------|------------|--------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|---|----------------------------|-------|---------|-------------------|
| Datazone | SIMD Rank | Area | All people | Scottish / British | | Total Ethnic Minorities | | | | | | |
| S01006634 | 500 | Torry East | 634 | 497 | 78.4% | 137 | 21.6% | 116 | 2 | 12 | 3 | 4 |
| S01007126 | 536 | Fraserburgh Harbour/Broadsea | 927 | 626 | 67.5% | 301 | 32.5% | 287 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 0 |
| S01006684 | 545 | Woodside | 684 | 477 | 69.7% | 207 | 30.3% | 135 | 15 | 30 | 25 | 2 |
| S01006636 | 675 | Torry East | 870 | 700 | 80.5% | 170 | 19.5% | 133 | 12 | 8 | 15 | 2 |
| S01006667 | 725 | Seaton | 741 | 537 | 72.5% | 204 | 27.5% | 132 | 9 | 35 | 24 | 4 |
| S01007086 | 754 | Peterhead Harbour | 1132 | 808 | 71.4% | 324 | 28.6% | 280 | 7 | 33 | 4 | 0 |
| S01006724 | 785 | Northfield | 1005 | 882 | 87.8% | 123 | 12.2% | 73 | 2 | 11 | 27 | 10 |
| S01006729 | 878 | Heathryfold/Middlefield | 831 | 704 | 84.7% | 127 | 15.3% | 70 | 5 | 30 | 20 | 2 |
| S01007088 | 884 | Peterhead Harbour | 539 | 452 | 83.9% | 87 | 16.1% | 83 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| S01006727 | 893 | Heathryfold/Middlefield | 1015 | 754 | 74.3% | 261 | 25.7% | 232 | 4 | 10 | 11 | 4 |
| | | Total | 8378 | 6437 | 76.8% | 1941 | 23.2% | 1541 | 62 | 176 | 134 | 28 |

| Ethnicity by SIMD Datazones, 2012 Least Deprived (Most Affluent) Areas | | | | | | | | Irish, Polish, Gypsy/Traveller, Other 'White' | Mixed / Multiple, Other | Asian | African | Caribbean / Black |
|---|-----------|----------------------|------------|--------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|---|----------------------------|-------|---------|-------------------|
| Datazone | SIMD Rank | Area | All people | Scottish / British | | Total Ethnic Minorities | | | | | | |
| S01006561 | 6975 | Midstocket | 766 | 664 | 86.7% | 102 | 13.3% | 40 | 21 | 30 | 4 | 7 |
| S01006689 | 6969 | Hilton | 629 | 497 | 79.0% | 132 | 21.0% | 49 | 14 | 47 | 22 | 0 |
| S01006935 | 6964 | Westhill Central | 699 | 659 | 94.3% | 40 | 5.7% | 17 | 4 | 19 | 0 | 0 |
| S01006559 | 6958 | Midstocket | 607 | 487 | 80.2% | 120 | 19.8% | 85 | 3 | 30 | 2 | 0 |
| S01006833 | 6957 | Stonehaven North | 455 | 423 | 93.0% | 32 | 7.0% | 23 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| S01006575 | 6956 | West End South | 951 | 786 | 82.6% | 165 | 17.4% | 99 | 18 | 38 | 9 | 1 |
| S01006581 | 6955 | West End South | 889 | 787 | 88.5% | 102 | 11.5% | 74 | 6 | 17 | 4 | 1 |
| S01006573 | 6949 | West End North | 724 | 607 | 83.8% | 117 | 16.2% | 83 | 10 | 13 | 9 | 2 |
| S01006570 | 6946 | Rosemount | 791 | 608 | 76.9% | 183 | 23.1% | 73 | 12 | 68 | 29 | 1 |
| S01006933 | 6945 | Westhill North/South | 580 | 554 | 95.5% | 26 | 4.5% | 10 | 4 | 8 | 4 | 0 |
| | | Total | 7091 | 6072 | 85.6% | 1019 | 14.4% | 553 | 95 | 274 | 84 | 13 |

Overcrowding⁴³

Under-occupation and overcrowding are calculated using number of occupants and their relationships to determine the number of rooms a household requires. When the number of available rooms is smaller than what is required, the home is considered overcrowded.

Grampian's level of overcrowding is lower than the Scottish average (9% vs. 11%), but ethnic minorities disproportionately bear the brunt of this. Across Grampian, 25% of ethnic minorities live in overcrowded homes. This figure is similar to the national average for ethnic minorities (24%) and much higher than the figure for Grampian's Scottish/British population (7%). In Aberdeen City, 33% of Africans lived in overcrowded conditions, similar to the Scottish average of 32%. In Moray, 25% of Asians lived in overcrowded homes, and in Aberdeenshire, the figure was 26% for people in the 'white other' ethnic group (including Europeans and Gypsy/Travellers).

⁴³ Scotland's Census 2011, Table LC4420SC.

Key Missing Data

Apart from some material in the Local Housing Needs Assessment for Aberdeen City,⁴⁴ there appears to be no available data linking housing, ethnicity and reasons for homelessness across Grampian.

4.2 Evidence from Relevant Local Research

Shared Futures & No Recourse North East: the Human Cost of Brexit (2021)⁴⁵

Speakers and participants in this online roundtable discussion highlighted key issues regarding access to housing due to Brexit. EU nationals now face the same 'hostile environment' as non-EU migrants, with exhaustive procedures to live and work in the UK. When landlords and employers are required to take *nine* steps to check someone's status online, it is likely to lead to a preference for applicants with a British passport or physical residence permit. Participants felt there was not enough information and guidance about the changes arising from Brexit, reinforcing that landlords and employers do not have enough knowledge of the new rules, which can lead to discrimination.

More broadly, people subjected to immigration controls have always been excluded from housing and homelessness provision, but prior to Brexit, this did not apply to EU citizens. Therefore, the Scottish Anti-Destitution strategy is undermined by Brexit and the impact of more people included in the No Recourse for Public Funds (NRPF) category. The absolute deadlines imposed by Brexit have made prevention of destitution much more complex.

GREC: Aberdeen Equality Outcomes Survey & focus groups (2020)⁴⁶

While most research participants did not feel their homes were overcrowded, nearly a third of ethnic minority participants felt their homes were sometimes too damp or too cold, and the same proportion found that housing related issues had resulted in a household member suffering a health problem. The figure for Scottish/British participants was 18% and 8%, respectively. Many also highlighted a lack of affordable housing in Aberdeen City.

Syrian New Scots in Aberdeenshire⁴⁷

Aberdeenshire Council faced significant logistical challenges in organising suitable housing for the Syrian New Scots community. When families began to arrive in 2015, they were initially given private accommodation rented by the council for a two year period, in a Private Sector Leasing (PSL) scheme. The expectation was that they would transition into more typical Private Residential Tenancies (PRTs) afterwards. This scheme worked well until 2019, when issues began to arise, including the changing needs of tenants (mobility, children, etc), and landlords wishing to sell or move back into their properties. Some landlords also wanted to end their legal agreement with Aberdeenshire Council, in order to charge higher rent.

⁴⁴ Available online. [Link](#).

⁴⁵ GREC, briefing available online. [Link](#). There were six speakers and 65 participants in total.

⁴⁶ More than 200 people took part in this research.

⁴⁷ Aberdeenshire New Scots Housing Strategy Review Discussion Paper (Internal), April 2021.

A temporary Housing Officer was appointed in 2019, to provide dedicated support to New Scots clients, and the post was made permanent in 2021. They have supported clients with housing and homelessness applications, communication with landlords, organising repairs, and other matters. They have also identified issues around overcrowding, affordability (even for those working), damp conditions, domestic abuse, and neighbours' anti-social behaviour. Meanwhile, the housing market had shifted since 2015, with fewer available properties, higher rental costs, and significant impacts on families with three or more children due to the Benefit Cap. Broadly speaking, they found that the needs of New Scots were similar to those of social housing clients, requiring ongoing support. Anecdotal evidence also showed that the only New Scots tenants who could afford to move into employment were those in two-bed private housing, due to Local Housing Allowance rates.

During 2020, Covid-19 led to many PSL tenancies being extended for a year, but transitions into PRTs resumed in 2021. However, one year post-transition, only 10% of New Scots tenants remained in their original private sector home, and most landlords have expressed plans to sell their properties when their PSL agreement ends. Therefore, the housing strategy for future groups of New Scots will focus on social housing rather than private rented accommodation, to minimise disruption, allow for better support, and ensure more secure tenancies.

Research from 2018 and Earlier

For a more in-depth summary of this research, including sample sizes and other details, please see *How Fair Is North East Scotland 2018*, available on grec.co.uk/research.

Minority Ethnic Housing Project (MEHP), 2016: Annual Report SSAMIS 2017: Migrant Housing in Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire⁴⁸

Until 2017, when funding ceased, the MEHP provided advice and support to ethnic minorities facing homelessness and other housing issues. Similar issues were identified in the SSAMIS research, and in both cases, problems often compounded each other. Key issues included:

- Issues with benefits – late payments, shrinking payments, sanctions, loss of Jobseeker's Allowance for EU nationals with a permanent Right to Reside, bedroom tax, etc.
- Other money/debt problems – rent arrears, employability, fuel costs, etc.
- Immigration issues – No Recourse to Public Funds, loss of Right to Reside, complex/confusing paperwork and other requirements (often needing IT skills/access to complete).
- Poor housing – overcrowding, unaffordable rent, insecure tenancy, health/safety concerns, etc.
- Irresponsible landlords – ignoring tenants' rights, threatening eviction, refusing to make repairs.
- Being 'stuck' in overpriced, poor quality accommodation provided by employers.
- Language barriers, lack of knowledge about rights/entitlements/where to get help, limited ESOL provision in rural areas, limited informal support networks, etc.
- Domestic abuse, eviction, homelessness, long waiting lists for social housing.

⁴⁸ Summary write-up based on SSAMIS project fieldwork, 2014-15. [Link](#).

4.2 Summary

The evidence above highlights some specific housing challenges faced by ethnic minorities in Grampian. Housing problems tend to be most prevalent in more deprived areas, but overall, ethnic minorities in Grampian live with less secure tenure than the Scottish/British population, with worse figures compared to the Scottish average. In addition, levels of over-crowding are noteworthy, despite not differing greatly from the national picture. Examining demographics alongside data on multiple deprivation, it is clear that ethnic minorities are over-represented in both poorer and richer areas, which aligns with findings in the Employment section above.

There are consistent gaps in data on homelessness and ethnicity at a local level, and more work is required to get a clearer understanding of which communities are being affected by homelessness and why. Issues linked to UK- and Scotland-wide policies, such as immigration rules, benefits system changes and the 'hostile environment' all affect access to housing as highlighted by recent qualitative data, which suggests that related issues are only becoming more significant as the consequences of Brexit and Covid-19 develop.

Priorities

- Gaining a better understanding of the communities most affected by homelessness and why.
- Ensuring appropriate support is in place for those falling through the gaps of immigration and benefit rules.
- Raising awareness among those living in over-crowded and poor-quality housing of where to seek information, advice and support.
- Focused work in areas of deprivation with high proportions of ethnic minorities.

5. Markers & Means: Education

5.1 Indicators and Data Points

As discussed in the Demographics section above (page 5), ethnicity categories for pupils have become less meaningful since 2018. Therefore, this chapter will retain the 2018 quantitative data.

The consequences of pandemic-related disruption remain to be seen, but it is important to remember that many ethnic minority families face the interconnected challenges of low-wage or insecure employment, overcrowding, insecure tenancy, poverty, and digital exclusion.

Attendance, Absence & Exclusion from School⁴⁹

In Aberdeen City in 2016/17, 33% of pupils were from an ethnic minority background. In Aberdeenshire the figure was 16.2%, in Moray it was 23.5%, and the Scottish average was 17.1%.

Attendance figures was broadly similar for ethnic minority and Scottish pupils, between 94-95%, in all areas of Grampian, and these were similar to the Scottish averages of 93.3% attendance for Scottish pupils and 94% for ethnic minority pupils. There were no groups in Grampian whose attendance was below 91%.

In terms of exclusions from school, ethnic minority pupils in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire were under-represented: 22.8% of exclusions in Aberdeen City were of ethnic minority pupils, 13.7% in Aberdeenshire, and 12% across Scotland. In Moray, they were slightly over-represented, comprising 25.6% of exclusions.

Considering the pupil population in Scotland as a whole, a lower proportion of ethnic minority pupils were excluded, compared with Scottish pupils: 1.1%, compared with 1.7%. In Grampian, 2% of Scottish pupils and 1.5% of ethnic minority pupils were excluded.

School Leavers – Positive Destinations & Qualifications⁵⁰

The vast majority of school leavers in Grampian went on to positive destinations, including further education, higher education, training, employment and voluntary work. Ethnic minority school leavers in Grampian had slightly higher rates of positive destinations than their Scottish counterparts. The largest gap was in 2015-16, when 95.4% of ethnic minority school leavers went on to positive destinations, compared with 90.4% of Scottish school leavers.

Between 2013-14 and 2015-16, nearly all school leavers across Grampian achieved at least one qualification at SCQF Level 4 or better. At all levels, ethnic minority pupils achieved qualifications in higher proportions than their Scottish counterparts.⁵¹ For qualifications in level 6 or greater, Moray consistently had the lowest levels of attainment for all ethnic groups.

⁴⁹ Pupil Census 2016/17, Tables 4.5, 7.2, 7.3, 10, 11.1. [Link](#).

⁵⁰ Scottish Government, Attainment and Leavers' Destination Data, 2016/17. [Link](#).

⁵¹ Ethnicity data was recorded as 'white Scottish,' 'White non-Scottish' and the other categories of non-'white' ethnicities.

School Leavers' Qualifications, 2013-14 to 2015-16

| | | 2013-14: At least one qualification in SCQF Level: | | | 2014-15: At least one qualification in SCQF Level: | | | 2015-16: At least one qualification in SCQF Level: | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|--|------|------|--|------|------|--|------|------|
| | | 4+ | 5+ | 6+ | 4+ | 5+ | 6+ | 4+ | 5+ | 6+ |
| Aberdeen City | Scottish | 95.8 | 78.9 | 47.7 | 95.7 | 80.6 | 53.6 | 95.0 | 84.0 | 56.7 |
| | Ethnic Minority | 99.8 | 91.5 | 76.0 | 97.3 | 91.2 | 78.9 | 99.3 | 95.5 | 78.8 |
| Aberdeenshire | Scottish | 96.8 | 82.3 | 53.2 | 97.7 | 87.3 | 57.2 | 97.4 | 87.8 | 61.8 |
| | Ethnic Minority | 99.1 | 96.1 | 62.7 | 99.3 | 81.6 | 64.0 | 99.6 | 97.2 | 72.5 |
| Moray | Scottish | 98.3 | 88.4 | 55.0 | 96.3 | 85.5 | 55.5 | 97.1 | 86.1 | 57.5 |
| | Ethnic Minority | 99.4 | 95.6 | 63.2 | 98.4 | 89.9 | 65.5 | 98.6 | 92.7 | 60.7 |

Generally speaking, 'White non-Scottish' was both the largest ethnic minority group and the lowest-performing group among ethnic minorities, but this group typically performed better than their 'white Scottish' counterparts. In some other ethnic minority groups, 100% of pupils left school with at least 4, 5, or 6 qualifications. However, these tended to be small numbers of pupils (less than 20).

Highest Level of Qualification⁵²

In the 2011 Census, ethnic minorities across Grampian consistently had higher levels of qualifications than their Scottish/British counterparts: 55.1% were educated to degree level or above, and only 10.6% had no qualifications. The figures for Scottish/British people were 26% and 24%, respectively. 80.1% of Africans (compare this to the relatively high unemployment rate) and 61.6% of Asians in Grampian were educated to degree level or above. In Scotland as a whole, 48% of ethnic minority people and 24.2% of Scottish/British people were educated to degree level or above, and 5.6% of ethnic minorities and 27.8% of Scottish/British people had no qualifications.

5.2 Evidence from Relevant Local Research

Shared Futures & No Recourse North East: the Human Cost of Brexit (2021)⁵³

In terms of education, speakers and participants in this online roundtable discussion mainly focused on Brexit's impacts on higher education. Changes to University/College fees and funding will reduce the number of students able to afford the programmes they wish to pursue. Participants also discussed uncertainty in relation to future professional expectations, both for UK and EU students, and the latter group discussed not feeling welcome in the UK anymore.

GREC: Aberdeen Equality Outcomes Survey & Focus Groups (2020)⁵⁴

More education to prevent prejudice and discrimination was widely acknowledged as a necessity by research participants. In the survey, some participants explained that more training is needed to tackle day to day racism, which is sometimes not even acknowledged as such, while others highlighted that systemic discrimination must be addressed as well.

⁵² Scotland's Census 2011, Table LC5202SC.

⁵³ GREC, briefing available online. [Link](#). There were six speakers and 65 participants in total.

⁵⁴ More than 200 people took part in this research.

In the focus groups, a key theme was the desire to see more work around education and equality, particularly in schools. Ethnic minority participants said that schools should help promote inclusion and respect for diversity, for example celebrating festivals from different religions. Other participants also pointed to specific issues, such as halal meat not being provided by schools, which impacts children's diets. This issue had been raised previously but with no suitable resolution.

Research from 2018 and Earlier

For a more in-depth summary of this research, including sample sizes and other details, please see How Fair Is North East Scotland 2018, available on grec.co.uk/research.

SSAMIS 2017: Migrant Education and Skills in Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire⁵⁵

Migrant parents often expressed worries about uprooting children who had begun their schooling, and Scotland was seen to offer better long-term prospects for them. While adults had mixed views of Scottish schooling, they appreciated the extra help their children received when they arrived, and it was clear that schools were a key forum for integration. Younger children tended to pick up English very quickly, and were inclined to assimilate well. Migrants who arrived as teenagers could have more difficulty fitting in, but there were few stories of nationality/race related bullying. Part-time college courses were popular among adults, as a way of improving English, occupational mobility, social networks and integration.

Moray Council 2015: Bullying Survey⁵⁶

In a survey completed by nearly 2000 P4-P6 pupils (22% of the cohort), 3.9% said they had experienced bullying related to race or ethnicity.

5.3 Summary

Recent changes to the ethnicity categories for pupils make current quantitative data less meaningful to understand potential disparities and areas for improvement, making relevant comparisons through time and with other indicators much more difficult (see page 5). The consequences of pandemic-related disruption remain to be seen.

The quantitative evidence from 2018 highlights that in terms of educational attainment, ethnic minorities in Grampian are routinely achieving higher than those from a Scottish/British background, while there are no relevant disparities in terms of school exclusions and attendance. This information is usefully compared to the economic/employment experiences of ethnic minorities, most notably Africans who have proportionally the highest level of attainment in terms of university degrees, but also the highest rate of unemployment.

The review of local evidence suggests that schools are one of the most important points of contact for newcomers' integration. Parents' engagement with the school community can be affected by language barriers and the pressures of working long hours and shifts, highlighting the importance of ESOL classes as a tool for improving integration through language learning.

⁵⁵ Summary write-up based on SSAMIS project fieldwork, 2014-15. ([link](#))

⁵⁶ Moray Council, 2016, Moray Approach to Bullying in Schools. ([link](#))

The evidence also suggests that the older a pupil is when they arrive in Scotland, the more difficult it is for them to integrate into a new school, and those with high levels of English and qualifications gained in Scotland are more likely to be successful in the employment market. In line with the influence schools have in boosting integration, recent evidence shows that ethnic minority communities would like to see schools increasing the work they do around equality issues.

Priorities

- Making the most of the link between ESOL learning and integration opportunities.
- Ensuring that opportunities to learn English genuinely meet local needs.
- Getting a better understanding of the experience of ethnic minority young people starting school at a senior stage, and exploring what more could be done to support them.
- Getting a better understanding of how pandemic-related disruption has affected ethnic minority young people, especially those already disadvantaged due to poverty, digital exclusion or language barriers.
- Sharing best practice for communication between schools and families, especially identifying strategies to support families in meeting home-learning requirements, understanding the Scottish education system, etc.
- Making 'white' ethnic minority pupils visible in the statistics, as they were before 2020.

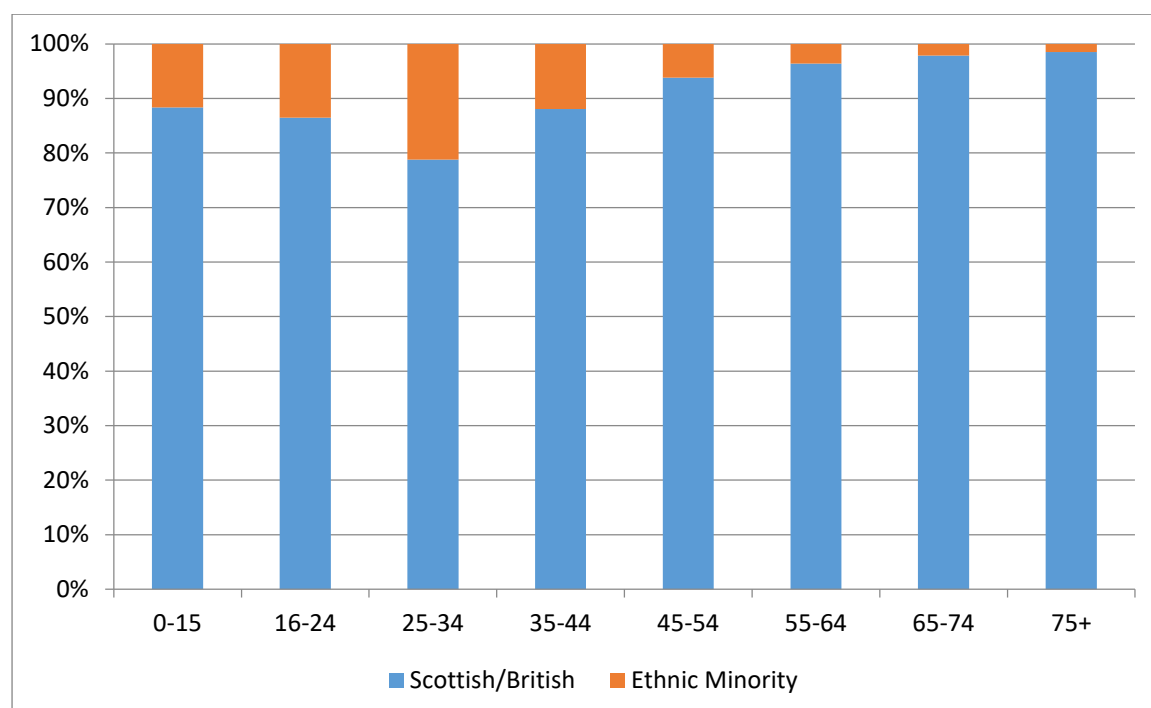
6. Markers & Means: Health

6.1 Indicators and Data Points

Age Distribution⁵⁷

For the Grampian region in the 2011 Census, the largest age group for both 'non-white' and European ethnic minorities was 25-34, and there were very few ethnic minority people of retirement age or older. This is significant for health, as younger people tend to be healthier.

Grampian Age Distribution, 2011



Disability, Long-Term Health Conditions and General Health⁵⁸

One-fifth (20%) of people in Scotland have a disability or a long-term health condition affecting their day-to-day activities. For 'non-white' ethnic minorities, the figure is 9% – the data is not available by country of birth or other characteristics, so European ethnic minorities are not accounted for.

In Grampian, 16% of the population has a disability or long-term health condition, including only 4% of people from 'non-white' ethnic backgrounds.

As shown below, the general health of 'non-white' ethnic minorities tends to be better than for 'white' people in Grampian and across Scotland as a whole. This likely relates to different age profiles, as shown above.

⁵⁷ Scotland's Census 2011, Table DC2101SC.

⁵⁸ Scotland's Census 2011, Table LC3205SC.

General Health, 2011⁵⁹

| Health | Ethnicity | Aberdeen City | Aberdeenshire | Moray | Grampian Average | Scotland Average |
|-------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|-------|------------------|------------------|
| Good or Very Good | 'White' | 85% | 87% | 85% | 86% | 82% |
| | 'Non-White' | 96% | 94% | 89% | 95% | 90% |
| Fair | Scottish/British | 11% | 10% | 11% | 11% | 12% |
| | Ethnic Minority | 4% | 5% | 8% | 4% | 7% |
| Bad or Very Bad | Scottish/British | 4% | 3% | 4% | 4% | 6% |
| | Ethnic Minority | 1% | 1% | 3% | 1% | 3% |

SIMD, Health Indicator⁶⁰

In the SIMD Health indicator, only five of Scotland's most deprived 10% of areas are in Grampian – 4 in Aberdeen City, 1 in Moray and none in Aberdeenshire. The proportion of Scottish/British in both the most and least deprived areas (in health terms) is similar – around 75%. However, the latter include a large proportion of people in the 'other white' category. Based on country of birth data for these data zones, most of these are from wealthier countries, including the USA, Canada, and EU pre-2001 countries (France, Germany, Italy, etc). On the other hand, 'white' ethnic minorities in more deprived areas tend to be from poorer countries in Eastern Europe.

Key Missing Data

The following data by ethnicity was not available for Local Authority areas or Health Board Areas: morbidity/mortality rates; immunisation/antenatal care; cervical and breast screening. More evidence is also needed on the impact of Covid-19 on ethnic minority communities in Grampian.

6.2 Evidence from Relevant Local Research

GREC: Grampian Health & Diversity Network Project (2021)⁶¹

In a health community outreach project during the Covid-19 pandemic, a survey and series of discussions were held between March and July 2021, with 87 ethnic minority community members and health champions from 17 different nationalities/ethnicities. The main questions addressed access to health services, participation in engagement activities, and vaccine hesitancy.

Survey results showed that 17% of participants felt that accessing health and social care services was 'Difficult' or 'Very difficult'. To improve access, participants suggested enhancing flexibility in service provision, including more flexibility in the hours the services are provided (including weekends), how appointments are scheduled and carried out (in-person, by phone, online or by video), and flexibility in the services offered in rural localities to avoid travelling long distances.

⁵⁹ Scotland's Census 2011, Table LC3206SC.

⁶⁰ SIMD 2016 and 2020; Scotland's Census 2011, Tables LC2205SC and QS203SC.

⁶¹ GREC, Report available online. [Link](#).

Overall, 9% of participants were dissatisfied with the health and social care services they received, and 17% did not feel well informed about these services. 21% felt their community does not get the support and information it needs to be a safe and healthy place, and 21% felt they cannot make a valuable contribution towards decisions in their local area regarding health and social care services. Around 80% of participants were either unaware or unsure of the opportunities available to participate in improving health and social care services, and they proposed providing more information and flexible ways to engage, which would increase participation.

Community Planning Aberdeen, Population Needs Assessment (2021)⁶²

As a result of social isolation caused by lockdown, the health impacts of Covid-19, and the broader impact on the economy and society, mental health is an area of particular concern. Longitudinal analysis showed a rising number of people experiencing mental health problems, with some of the most significant impacts on groups who are already marginalised. These include ethnic minorities; young people; isolated older people; women; single parents; transgender people; and those with pre-existing or long-term mental or physical health conditions. People who are unemployed or in insecure employment were also more likely to suffer mental health problems.

The Population Needs Assessment cited ONS research from April and September 2021,⁶³ where participants were asked about the impact of Covid-19 on multiple aspects of their lives, including mental health and wellbeing. Though there is no disaggregated data for ethnic minorities and the sample sizes were small, North East Scotland (including Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire) showed high levels of loneliness and anxiety, as well as low levels of happiness.

Shared Futures & No Recourse North East: the Human Cost of Brexit (2021)⁶⁴

Participants in this online roundtable discussion referred to Brexit and Covid-19 as a 'time bomb' that would increase mental health problems among EU citizens.

Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) and GREC, Survey & Focus groups (2020)

To help develop the new ACHSCP Equality Outcomes, at the end of 2020 research was conducted with 192 people to better understand the health inequalities and challenges impacting people with protected characteristics in Aberdeen. For this, a survey was conducted, as well as discussion groups with community members with all (and sometimes overlapping) protected characteristics.

One of the key findings was that ethnic minority participants had lower rates of satisfaction with health and social care services than the average across participants from all demographics – 36%, compared with 48% on average. 25% were dissatisfied, compared with an average of 14%.

Ethnic minority participants also had slightly lower levels of positive responses to a series of health-related questions. For example, 57% felt they had a good experience with health and social care

⁶² Report available online: ([report link](#)) (['dashboard' link](#))

⁶³ Summary available on ONS website [Link](#).

⁶⁴ GREC, briefing available online. [Link](#). There were six speakers and 65 participants in total.

services, compared with 62% on average, and 27% reported a general good experience with some issues, compared with 18% on average. Only a third of ethnic minority participants felt they could “access the right health and social care services/support that best suited [their] needs,” compared with 40% on average, and a quarter disagreed with the statement, compared with 18% on average. Only one in five felt “informed, supported and involved as I need to be about my care,” compared with an average of double that, and a third disagreed, compared with 17% on average.

In the focus groups and other engagement activities, ethnic minority participants suggested that access to language support is required to improve access and delivery of health services, highlighting that language is one of the key barriers to feeling listened to when accessing these services. They also emphasised that in mental health services, one size does not fit all. Practitioners must be aware of cultural nuances and differences that can affect how mental health conditions are understood, evaluated and treated. This was a particular concern for African communities, especially in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, as it was acknowledged that more people would struggle with isolation but would feel uncomfortable speaking about it or seeking help.

The report also cited research conducted by ACVO in 2020, showing that current service provision in Aberdeen to address domestic abuse does not cater for the intersectional needs of people with disabilities, those from ethnic minority communities, LGBTQ+ communities, men and perpetrators.

Research from 2018 and Earlier

For a more in-depth summary of this research, including sample sizes and other details, please see How Fair Is North East Scotland 2018, available on grec.co.uk/research.

Syrian New Scots in Aberdeenshire⁶⁵

In March 2018, a significant proportion of Syrian New Scots (82%) reported that their health had improved, though mental health was still a key concern – including social isolation, separation from family members, the aftermath of trauma, anxiety about long-term immigration status, and the lack of Arabic-language mental health services. The language barrier also made it difficult to access health services, and some participants had experienced a refusal to provide language support.

GREC/NHS Grampian Focus Group Reports, 2015-17; SSAMIS Research on Migrant Health in Aberdeen/Shire, 2017; Supporting Pathways to Healthier Lives, GREC 2017⁶⁶

Focus groups and interviews in Aberdeen City and Fraserburgh, conducted in a range of languages, suggested generally high levels of patient satisfaction with NHS services, though issues often arose from differences in healthcare systems between Scotland and countries in Central and Eastern Europe. For example, frustrations around the need to go through a GP for referral to specialist services, lack of emphasis on wellness checks and preventative care, and a general ‘wait and see’ approach. Many participants opted to use medical and dental services in their countries of origin for long-term health issues, and even some acute issues.

Language issues were also discussed, especially in North Aberdeenshire, and some participants with limited English felt very vulnerable in the health care system, despite having been treated well.

⁶⁵ Syrian New Scots website, partnership notes.

⁶⁶ Research reports available on grec.co.uk/research.

However, in hospital and other acute situations, participants generally received appropriate language support. Generally speaking, participants had very positive experiences of interpreting and of maternity care in Aberdeen/shire, and there was a real appreciation for free prescriptions and medical devices, and shorter waiting times for services like optometry and urgent GP appointments (despite complaints about waiting several weeks for non-urgent GP appointments).

Loneliness was a significant issue affecting participants' wellbeing, often due to limited local support networks, language issues and working long hours. In Aberdeenshire, there were specific problems arising from working conditions in fishing and food production.

SSAMIS 2017: Migrant Experiences in Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire⁶⁷

Informal interpreters and Language Line were used at medical appointments, though the latter was not always available at short notice. Participants who had been hospitalised (e.g. for injury or on maternity wards) were generally happy with having been provided with suitable NHS interpreters. However, it is important to note that language was a complex issue, and even advanced proficiency did not mean that migrants would not encounter difficulties being or feeling understood: cultural knowledge and differences were also part of this.

6.3 Summary

There is limited quantitative evidence to understand health outcomes of ethnic minorities, as ethnicity is not consistently recorded by health services. Existing evidence suggests that Grampian's poorest areas – in terms of health outcomes – are home to a higher proportion of ethnic minorities.

In terms of satisfaction with health and social care services, local research presents a mixed picture, showing high levels of satisfaction with NHS provision over the years, while also suggesting there is a gap when compared to the Scottish/British population. Lower levels of positive responses are also shown in a series of indicators compared to the Scottish/British population in relation to access to the appropriate health services and information. This reflects issues associated with language barriers and differences between how healthcare works in Scotland compared with other countries.

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic more people are experiencing mental health problems, and ethnic minorities are among the hardest hit groups. Evidence gathered both before and during the pandemic indicates that a 'one size fits all' approach in the provision of mental health services is problematic for ethnic minorities as cultural nuances might be underestimated.

Priorities

- Gain a better understanding of the particular health issues and outcomes of different ethnic groups in Grampian, including health inequalities arising from Covid-19.
- Address the disparate experiences of those accessing health services in across Grampian, targeting areas with high levels of social deprivation and ethnic minority communities.
- Increase understanding of the health system in Grampian, highlighting key differences with how things are done outside of the UK.

⁶⁷ Summary write-up based on SSAMIS project fieldwork, 2014-15. [Link](#).

7. Social Connections: Bridges, Bonds & Links

1. *Social bonds* (connections within a community defined by, for example, ethnic, national or religious identity); 2. *Social bridges* (with members of other communities); and 3. *Social links* (with institutions, including local and central government services).⁶⁸

7.1 Indicators and Data Points

Social Attitudes Survey⁶⁹

The National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) carries out annual social attitude surveys across Scotland, with a sample of around 1500 people per question. While it is not possible to divide responses by region, there are some interesting points to note, covering Scotland as a whole. The most recent survey relevant to Social Connections was in 2015:

A2.1 “People from outside Britain who come to live in Scotland make the country a better place.” Since 2006, there has been a slight increase in the number of respondents who agree with this statement, and slight decrease in the number who disagree.

A2.3 “Scotland would begin to lose its identity if more people from Eastern Europe came to live in Scotland.” 38% of respondents agreed; 41% disagreed.

A2.4 “Scotland would begin to lose its identity if more black and Asian people came to live in Scotland.” 34% agreed; 33% disagreed.

A3.1 Feelings if a close relative married or formed a long term-relationship with someone who was: Muslim: 49% happy; 20% unhappy. Black/Asian: 62% happy; 5% unhappy. Gypsy/Traveller 37% happy; 32% unhappy.

“Have equal opportunities for Black and Asian people gone too far or not far enough?” 16% of respondents believed it had gone too far; 32% believed that it had not gone far enough. Younger people and people with higher qualifications tended to answer the latter, while older people and those with lower qualifications were more inclined to answer the former.

Key Missing Data

Much of the data that would help assess social bridges, bonds and links is simply not available. Data on the ethnicity of members does not appear to be collected by trade unions, political parties, voluntary organisations, etc. Local authorities do not consistently collect ethnicity data on councillors, council employees or service users. According to a Scotland-wide survey, the average

⁶⁸ Ager & Strang, 2004, Indicators of Integration – Final Report (Home Office). [Link](#).

⁶⁹ Available from the NatCen website. [Link](#).

councillor is a 'white' Scottish man, married, aged 50-59, "who is a well-educated homeowner from a managerial or professional occupation."⁷⁰ These results were similar to previous studies.⁷¹

7.2 Evidence from Relevant Local Research⁷²

Shared Futures & No Recourse North East: the Human Cost of Brexit (2021)⁷³

Community members who attended the online roundtable event discussed how a sense of belonging was taken away during and after the Brexit campaign. They described how people in their communities stopped using their home languages outside, to prevent being targeted as 'those migrants,' which had a negative effect on their sense of belonging and feeling welcome.

GREC: Aberdeen Equality Outcomes Survey & Focus Groups (2020)

In a survey conducted during August and September 2020, more than two-thirds of ethnic minority participants felt that Aberdeen was welcoming, and more than half felt included in their local communities. Figures were similar for Scottish/British participants.⁷⁴

Around a quarter of all participants felt they had been excluded from cultural activities because of protected characteristics, and they were generally part of ethnic minority groups, including half of participants from African, Caribbean or Black backgrounds. The negative experiences they described in comments mentioned racism and being concerned due to previous attacks. A few participants were also targeted by racist comments at sports facilities, but around half of ethnic minority participants enjoyed exercising at a gym, sports centre or swimming pool.

Feedback from the focus groups highlighted that places of worship are key places to socialise for the African community, so their closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic disproportionately impacted this community's sense of connectedness. Members of the Muslim community also discussed the impacts of the mosques being closed, but they spoke positively about the supportive nature of their local communities during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In broader terms, African participants identified a problem in the lack of representatives from their community in senior positions, both in the public and private sector, and during the development of new strategies and plans. European minority ethnic communities had mixed responses about feeling safe and welcomed in Aberdeen, with participants discussing positive experiences, but also challenges to access some services. To overcome these issues, participants suggested an increased focus on bringing people of different communities and cultures together, and an increased understanding of diversity to promote positive community relations.

⁷⁰ Improvement Service, 2018. *Scotland's Councillors, 2017-2022*. [Link](#).

⁷¹ Scottish Government Social Research, 2008. *National Survey of Local Government Candidates, 2007*. [Link](#).

⁷² The most recent Aberdeen City Voice survey does not include any information about ethnicity or nationality. [Link](#).

⁷³ GREC, briefing available online. [Link](#). There were six speakers and 65 participants in total.

⁷⁴ There were 167 survey participants, including 73 from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Elphinstone Institute: *Home-Hame-Дом-Дом* Project (2019-2020)⁷⁵

Home-Hame-Дом-Дом was a creative learning project, bringing people from different backgrounds together to build a sense of community and belonging in the North East. The project aimed to facilitate deeper engagement of Eastern European migrant communities and encourage meaningful integration with the indigenous populations, as social isolation and loneliness were identified as a considerable issue for parents and older migrants.

The evaluation report describes how activities and events, such as photography, sewing, and dance, helped participants from diverse cultural backgrounds increase their sense of connectedness and integration. In a follow-up survey both migrant and Scottish participants reported positive outcomes, including meeting new people, making new friends and professional contacts, learning new skills or developing existing ones, learning something new about other cultures, and improving language skills and confidence.

Building personal connections was very important to participants, especially as isolation increased during lockdowns, and connections tended to ‘ripple out’ into generating more connections. The project helped to improve integration and gave participants an opportunity to express their feelings, and also created moments of serendipity, when unexpected opportunities arose.

There were several relevant lessons learned through the implementation of this project:

- Translating the project documentation into the main community languages attracted a wider range of participants.
- Polish and Doric classes challenged English as the only important language for integration.
- Language skills developed informal methods – there are other options to learn a language besides a formal class, with images and videos key to making learning accessible.
- Learning through practical activities worked well to bring people together and integrate without focusing explicitly on language and integration. The creative nature of the activities helped to engage participants, shifting focus away from what might be perceived as threatening or embarrassing, and technology (e.g., translation apps) helped people to learn together.
- Spaces played a relevant role, as community centres did not attract migrants to participate. Acknowledging the need for flexibility, venues were identified that had meaning for participants, so they felt welcomed and safe.
- Fostering cultural democracy was important, along with making all activities as non-hierarchical as possible. All forms and expressions of culture were valued equally – including vernacular culture. Co-creation and process took priority over the ‘end product’ of the arts activities.⁷⁶

Research from 2018 and Earlier

For a more in-depth summary of this research, including sample sizes and other details, please see How Fair Is North East Scotland 2018, available on grec.co.uk/research.

⁷⁵ Evaluation Report available online. [Link](#).

⁷⁶ It should be noted that this is a summary of lessons learned – the full report includes more detail and examples.

GREC 'Migrants' Pathways and Journeys in Aberdeen' report (2017)

For newcomers, a key source of information was word of mouth within their own ethnic or language communities, including friends, family, and even local restaurants. However, if local networks were not aware of services or resources, a newcomer could miss out on the help they needed, and some people struggled to find others who spoke the same language. Points of contact with institutions included GPs and dentists, the local council, religious and community groups, community centres, local charities, and schools, colleges and universities.

GREC 'Life in Aberdeen' and 'Life in Aberdeenshire' Surveys, 2018; Tackling Economic Barriers pilot study, 2017; GREC 'Creating a Fairer and More Equal Aberdeen,' 2016-17⁷⁷

More than 80% of ethnic minority participants felt that Aberdeen/shire or their local neighbourhoods were welcoming places, and more than 70% felt part of their communities. The figures for Scottish/British participants were two-thirds and just over half. Just over half of both Scottish/British and ethnic minority participants said they were active in their local communities, and around 90% felt able to participate in public life.

More than three-quarters of ethnic minority participants felt that equality and diversity are welcomed and celebrated in Aberdeen, compared with two-thirds of Scottish/British participants, and three-quarters of both groups agreed that people from different nationalities get along well in their local area. At the same time, only around half of both groups felt there were good relations between communities. Around three-quarters of Scottish/British participants felt that ethnic minorities are treated with respect in the region, while a third of those from ethnic minority backgrounds disagreed with this statement.

There were similar levels of involvement in local groups between ethnic minority and Scottish/British participants – over two-thirds were involved in at least one group. A higher proportion of ethnic minority participants were involved with religious, cultural, community and parents' groups, while Scottish/British participants were more involved with trade unions, charities, sports clubs, hobby groups, and political, campaigning or civic groups.

More than 80% of both ethnic minority and Scottish/British participants had friends who were different nationalities, and a slightly smaller proportion had friends who spoke a different first language. Unsurprisingly, participants who felt part of their communities were more likely to have diverse friendships.

7.3 Summary

It is difficult to find existing data to build a clear picture of the social bridges, bonds and links that support integration across diverse communities. Most of the evidence that we have comes from four community surveys, the most recent undertaken in 2020. On the whole, the results of the surveys are positive as they consistently show a high proportion of ethnic minorities that felt that Aberdeen or North East Scotland is a welcoming place, and who feel they are part of their local communities. However, for these two indicators there was a decrease in the positive responses between 2017 and

⁷⁷ Summary report available online. [Link](#).

2020 – not noted in the Scottish/British population – which may relate to the implementation of Brexit, as suggested by qualitative evidence.

Findings from 2016-18 surveys suggest that a high proportion of both ethnic minorities and Scottish/British participants are involved in community groups and have friendships across ethnic and language groups. The detrimental effect of Covid-19 in these and other indicators of social connectedness were highlighted by members of ethnic minorities, especially by those involved with faith communities. Considering this alongside the findings in other sections, more research is necessary to look into the experiences and feelings of people (from both ethnic minority and Scottish/British communities), in order to better understand the consequences of the pandemic and Brexit, especially in regeneration areas.

Priorities

- Gaining a greater understanding of social bonds, bridges and links within regeneration areas in Grampian.

8. Facilitators: Language & Cultural Knowledge

8.1 Indicators and Data Points

Language⁷⁸

In the 2011 Census, 1.7% of the population in Grampian did not speak English well, and 0.3% did not speak English at all. For people born outside the UK (aged 3+), the figures were 9.4% and 2%, though English proficiency was higher among people who came to the UK at an earlier age. For example, nearly 80% of people who arrived before age 16 speak English 'very well,' while this was the case for only half of people who arrived after age 50. Figures for the whole of Scotland were broadly similar.

In 2020, there were 8,344 pupils across Grampian whose main home language was not English – this is a considerable increase from the 2017 figure of 7,157. For some, English was a secondary language at home, and among the 7,910 who had English as an Additional Language (EAL), 13% were new to English, a fifth were in the 'early acquisition' phase, nearly a third were 'developing competence,' a quarter were 'competent,' and 14% were fluent.

In Aberdeen City schools, pupils spoke 92 different home languages, in Aberdeenshire they spoke 59, and in Moray, 43. 165 languages are spoken by pupils in schools across Scotland. The main three home languages after English in Aberdeen City were Polish, Arabic and Russian; in Aberdeenshire they were Polish, Scots and Lithuanian; in Moray they were Scots, Polish and Portuguese. This has not changed since 2017.

8.2 Summary of Relevant Local Research

Aberdeenshire Council Equality Outcomes, Interim Engagement Analysis (2021)⁷⁹

While data was not collected on participant ethnicity in the Community Survey or Citizens' Panel Survey, both had participants who felt that a lack of translation and interpretation services make it difficult for people who do not have English as their first language to access services (33% and 50%).

Research from 2018 and Earlier

For a more in-depth summary of this research, including sample sizes and other details, please see How Fair Is North East Scotland 2018, available on grec.co.uk/research.

Syrian New Scots in Aberdeenshire⁸⁰

The top concern for Syrian New Scots was language learning. Many felt that provision was inadequate, citing classes at limited times and locations, lack of opportunity for progression, or conversely, classes that began with sentences and vocabulary, rather than starting with the basics of letters and sounds. There was also frustration with a lack of Arabic speakers at ESOL classes who could help explain grammar, and lack of childcare provision or gender-segregated classes.

⁷⁸ Scotland's Census 2011, Tables DC2105SC and DC2803SC. Pupil Census 2017 and 2020, Tables 5.8 and 5.9.

⁷⁹ Report available online ([link](#)). Citizens' Panel report ([link](#)).

⁸⁰ Syrian New Scots website, partnership notes.

GREC 'Life in Aberdeen' and 'Life in Aberdeenshire' Surveys, 2018

Less than a quarter of ethnic minority participants felt they could not understand the local accent/dialect, and nearly all rated their spoken English skills as 'good,' 'very good' or 'native speaker'. A handful of Scottish/British participants (6.6%), including a few who were born in Aberdeen/shire – also struggled with the Doric accent/dialect.

SSAMIS 2017: Migrant Language Learning in Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire⁸¹

Language was a key issue for participants, cutting across every sphere of life, with a significant impact on their experiences of moving to Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. **Language affected what kind of jobs they were able to access and their ability to connect with the local community**, and language difficulties caused problems on an everyday basis for those with low levels of English. Knowledge of English also played a big role in how confident migrants felt in Aberdeen/shire, and thus to their **wider emotional wellbeing**. Low levels of English could compound **social isolation**.

ESOL **provision did not always meet participants' needs**, in terms of class timing, location and lack of childcare provision. Some participants were able to access classes and informal English lessons through the Workers' Education Authority (WEA), church groups, and through work colleagues. Many participants turned to private interpreters for language support during medical appointments or help to fill in welfare or mortgage paperwork. There was also a crossover with interpreters providing services for Police Scotland and the local courts, and **migrant volunteers and local community workers** provided free ad hoc help in Citizens Advice Bureaux and community cafés.

GREC, The Economic Experiences of Different Ethnic Groups in North East Scotland, 2016.

Both SSAMIS research and EHRC/GREC research indicates that access to classes can be problematic in terms of **timing and childcare requirements**, and there were specific concerns about decisions to remove the provision of beginner classes in Fraserburgh. The elements that participants found most effective for improving their English included conversations at work or study; English language classes; conversations at home; watching/listening to programmes or reading media; and opportunities to volunteer in charity shops to practice English in a workplace setting.

8.3 Summary

Qualitative research, mainly focussed on regeneration areas in Aberdeen City and Shire, and among Syrian New Scots, highlights challenges in accessing English classes, as well as barriers that arise when English learning has stalled. A key issue is the necessity to adapt certain aspects of language classes to facilitate access and improve the learning process.

The evidence above highlights the importance of English language learning for successful integration. As in previous sections the broader, region-wide data does not highlight disparities between Grampian and the rest of Scotland, though recent figures show a considerable increase in pupils across Grampian whose main home language was not English.

⁸¹ Summary write-up based on SSAMIS project fieldwork, 2014-15. [Link](#).

The qualitative research, mainly focussed in regeneration areas in Aberdeen City and Shire, and among Syrian New Scots, highlights challenges of accessing English classes, as well as barriers that arise when English learning has stalled. A key issue is the necessity to adapt certain aspects of language classes to facilitate access and improve the learning process, and though the project Home-Home-Дом-Дом (see summary on page 34) was not focused in improving language proficiency, some of the adaptations implemented (e.g. practical activities and informal methods such as images and videos) were positively evaluated, reinforcing this argument.

Priorities

- Gain an understanding of how English language provision is working, particularly in areas with high levels of ethnic minorities working in low-skilled jobs (where English proficiency is often not crucial), and consider whether changes in approach are required.
- Learn from best practice in other parts of Scotland in terms of English learning and integration initiatives.

9. Facilitators: Safety and Stability

9.1 Indicators and Data Points

Crime Rates⁸²

In the 2020 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), Grampian had 62 neighbourhoods in Scotland's highest decile for crime: 42 in Aberdeen City, 13 in Aberdeenshire, and 7 in Moray. At the same time, 118 were in the lowest decile for crime: 30 in Aberdeen City, 67 in Aberdeenshire and 21 in Moray. Using the (very similar) 2012 data in conjunction with Census data, the highest-crime neighbourhoods were home to 42,000 people, of whom three-quarters were Scottish/British, and a quarter were ethnic minorities. The lowest-crime neighbourhoods were home to 36,000 people, of whom 93% were Scottish/British and 7% were ethnic minorities.

Domestic Abuse⁸³

The Covid-19 pandemic sparked a significant rise in gender-based violence and domestic abuse across Scotland (and the rest of the world), due to restrictions on movement and an increase in social isolation. As research from RGU put it, "Covid-19 gave perpetrators more tools for control." In response, increased funding was made available for domestic abuse charities – though many still struggle to meet demand and cope with negative impacts on staff and volunteer wellbeing. There has also been an increase in public awareness campaigns about domestic abuse and coercive control, with posters and information about local support at pharmacies, supermarkets, and even some vaccination centres. However, it is likely that many ethnic minority women are excluded from accessing support due to language issues, cultural differences and other barriers. Aberdeen Violence Against Women Partnership has produced postcards with contact information for domestic abuse support services, including helplines in other languages.

Research conducted by ACVO in 2020 stated that service provision in Aberdeen addressing domestic abuse did not cater for the intersectional needs of people with disabilities, those from ethnic minority communities, LGBTQ+ communities, men and perpetrators.

Prejudice Incidents & Hate Crimes in Grampian, 2020⁸⁴

There were 540 prejudice incidents and hate crimes reported in Grampian in 2020, which is the highest level in the past six years, by a considerable margin. Statistics and details of incidents were received from Police Scotland and GREC. As in other years, most of the incidents (522) were reported directly to Police Scotland.

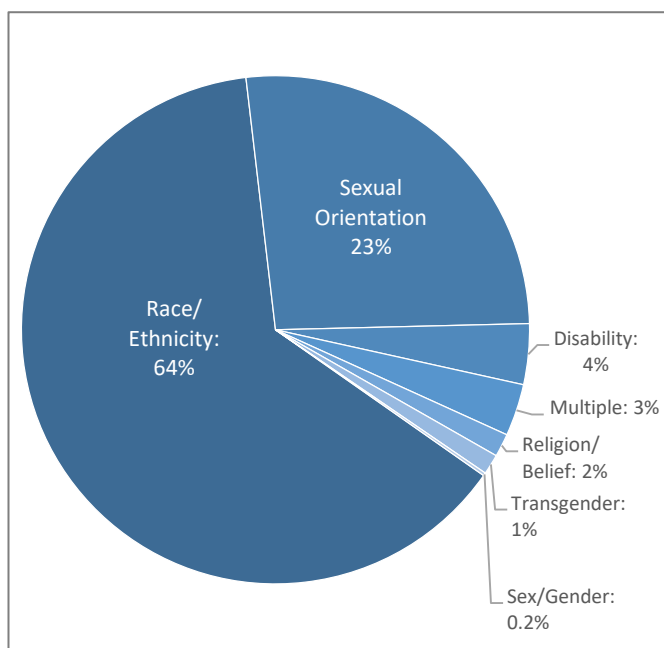
| Year | Grampian Total | Aberdeen City | Aberdeen shire | Moray |
|------|----------------|---------------|----------------|-------|
| 2020 | 540 | 346 | 123 | 67 |
| 2019 | 485 | 302 | 100 | 65 |
| 2018 | 420 | 248 | 88 | 84 |
| 2017 | 457 | 306 | 87 | 63 |
| 2016 | 396 | 255 | 82 | 57 |
| 2015 | 425 | 312 | 68 | 45 |

⁸² SIMD; Scotland's Census, Tables LC2205SC and QS203SC.

⁸³ Report available online ([link](#)). Domestic abuse support services postcard ([link](#)).

⁸⁴ Detailed overview of hate crime and prejudice incidents in Grampian, 2020. [Link](#).

Motivation for Incident

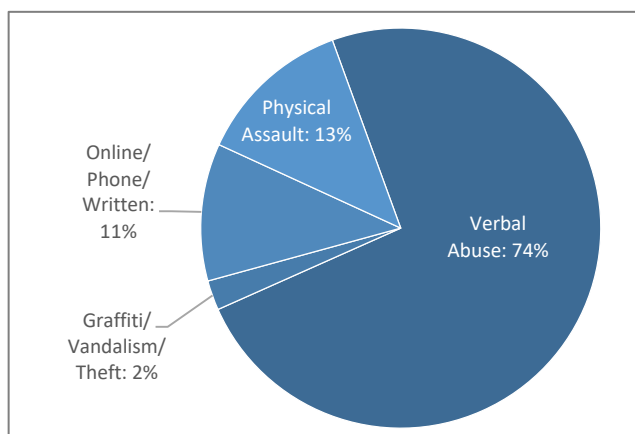


As shown in the chart, racism was the predominant motivator for hate crimes and prejudice, relating to 345 incidents (an 8% increase from 2019). The second-most prevalent motivator was sexual orientation, which related to 112 incidents (a 29% increase from 2019). Additionally, 21 incidents related to disability, 8 to religion or belief, 7 to transgender identity, 1 to gender, and 18 to multiple characteristics, all including race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or both.

Since 2015, homophobic incidents have been increasing steadily each year, and racist incidents have fluctuated from around 250 to 350 per year. Prejudice against other characteristics has remained fairly constant during this period.

Type of Incident

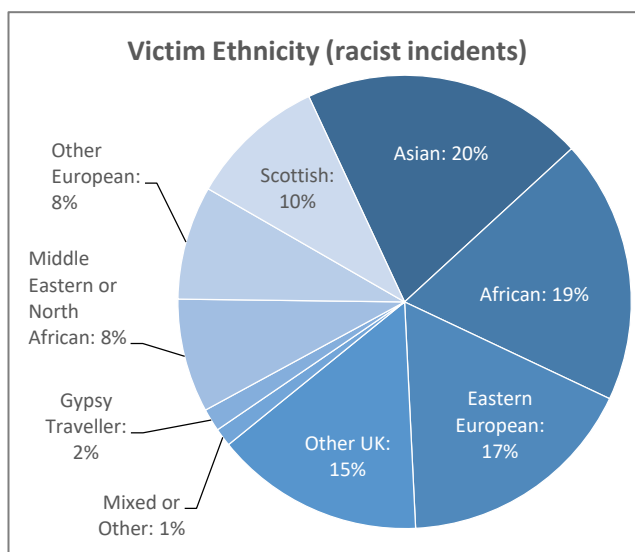
Verbal abuse was the most frequently reported incident, with 399 recorded in 2020. There were 68 physical assaults, including 54 assaults with an element of verbal abuse, theft or vandalism. Unsurprisingly for 2020, 'non-contact' forms of abuse like online messages and threatening phone calls increased by two-thirds compared with 2019, from 38 incidents to 60. Due to under-reporting, the actual number is likely to be much higher.



Victim Ethnicity

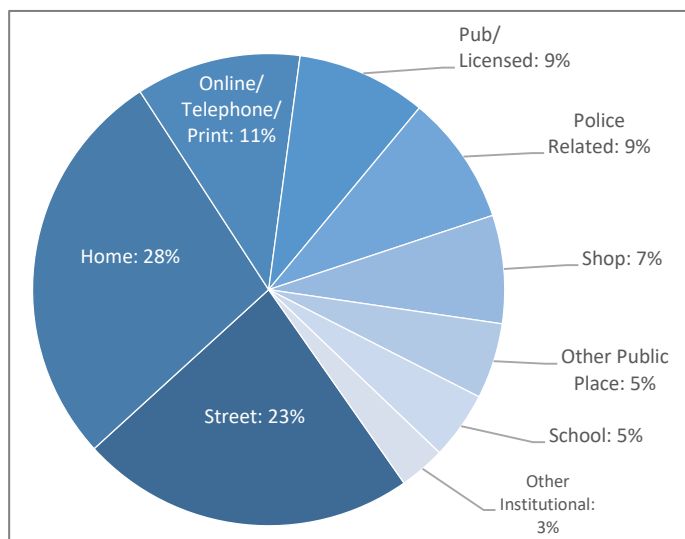
Where known/recorded, victims' ethnicities for racist incidents are shown here ('Asian' includes British/Scottish Asian, and 'African' includes British/Scottish African). For UK ethnicities, it was not always noted whether victims were European or other ethnicities.

There is a slight decrease in reported incidents that target Asian people: 9%, or six cases, compared with 2019. However, a number of surveys and other reports indicate increased Covid-related prejudice towards Chinese and East Asians in particular. The



discrepancy may reflect hesitance to report incidents, rather than an actual decrease. During the same period, there was a 26% increase in incidents targeting Africans, from 46 in 2019 to 58 in 2020, and incidents targeting people from the Middle East and North Africa nearly doubled, from 13 to 25.

Location Type



Where known/recorded, incidents took place in the types of locations indicated here. Incidents most frequently took place in homes, on the street, or in other public places like bars, shops or public transport. Of the 61 incidents of 'remote' abuse, nearly 80% of messages or phone calls were received in people's homes. Taking this into account, it is worth noting that the proportion of incidents at home increased from 23% of total incidents in 2019 to 59% in 2020. With under-reporting, the true extent of online abuse is likely to be much higher.

9.2 Evidence from Relevant Local Research

GREC/SAREC: Experiences of Chinese, East and South-East Asian Communities during COVID-19 in Scotland (2021)⁸⁵

At the end of 2020, the Scottish Alliance of Regional Equality Councils (SAREC) carried out a research project to better understand the experiences of Chinese, East and South-East Asian communities in Scotland during the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown.

In a Scotland-wide survey, 70 community members from Aberdeen took part. In both Aberdeen and across Scotland, around one third of participants had experienced prejudice or hate crime during the pandemic, or were unsure whether they had. Some who were unsure later expanded on situations such as being stared at when wearing a mask, having objects thrown at them, and being uncertain about comments from others because they did not speak English fluently. More than a quarter of Aberdeen participants knew other community members who had experienced prejudice or hate crime during the pandemic, which was lower compared to national figures. Most incidents were not reported to any organisation – in Aberdeen, only one was reported to a relevant institution.

More than half of participants saw or heard racist remarks toward East Asians during the pandemic, whether online or offline, and a quarter saw or heard these on a monthly basis or more often. Overall, 40% of participants felt less safe than before the pandemic, which was slightly lower than the 46% recorded at a national level.

⁸⁵ Report available online. [Link](#).

Shared Futures & No Recourse North East: the Human Cost of Brexit (2021)⁸⁶

Though participants did not directly describe experiences of hate crime and prejudice, they did highlight that their sense of hostility at an interpersonal level increased due to Brexit, as well as feeling unwelcomed and not belonging. Some community members had stopped using languages other than English outside their homes to prevent being targeted. The event included 6 speakers and 65 participants.

Aberdeenshire Council Equality Outcomes, Interim Engagement Analysis (2021)⁸⁷

While data was not collected on participant ethnicity in the Community Survey or Citizens' Panel Survey, both found that participants knew people in Aberdeenshire who had experienced prejudice, discrimination or harassment (66% and 39%). A smaller proportion (38% and 22%) had experienced prejudice, discrimination or harassment themselves.

In 'Community Conversations,' participants were generally positive about safety in Aberdeenshire, despite being aware of a few negative incidents. One New Scot had been subject to name calling but this was resolved by talking with the person who had targeted them. More broadly, participants identified a number of groups who may not feel safe because of a protected characteristic – women, the elderly, and those who live rurally. Notably, this did not include ethnic minorities.

GREC: Aberdeen Equality Outcomes Survey & Focus Groups (2020)⁸⁸

Between 2017-2020, half of ethnic minority participants in the survey experienced racist prejudice or hate crime, including incidents of online abuse, in-person verbal abuse, inappropriate 'jokes,' threats, vandalism, being refused a service, being spat at, and being physically assaulted. Several participants also highlighted the significance of 'microaggressions,' where frequent, low-level comments and behaviours have a serious cumulative effect.

Most incidents were not reported, largely because participants felt they were not worth reporting, because they felt they would not be taken seriously, or because they did not want to "make a fuss". 20% of participants did not know how to report an incident, and 17% felt that reporting was too complicated or difficult. Other reasons for not reporting were fear of retribution (25%), including from work colleagues or managers, discomfort speaking with the police (9%), language issues (5%). A significant number also commented that reporting multiple incidents would be impractical or demoralising – even if they were taken seriously. For example, "When small things happen so frequently you just accept it. Plus, racial gaslighting where white people tell you you're too sensitive, it's not racism, if you don't like it leave, etc."

⁸⁶ GREC, briefing available online. [Link](#).

⁸⁷ Report available online ([link](#)). Citizens' Panel report ([link](#)).

⁸⁸ There were 167 survey participants, including 73 from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Research from 2018 and Earlier

For a more in-depth summary of this research, including sample sizes and other details, please see How Fair Is North East Scotland 2018, available on grec.co.uk/research.

GREC 'Life in Aberdeen' and 'Life in Aberdeenshire' Surveys, 2018; GREC 'Creating a Fairer and More Equal Aberdeen,' 2016-17⁸⁹

More than three-quarters of both ethnic minority and Scottish/British participants felt Aberdeen and/or their neighbourhoods were safe places to live.

9.2 Summary

The evidence above reflects the ongoing pervasiveness of racism and xenophobia, compared with other hate crime categories. In 2020 the number of reported prejudice and hate crime incidents in Grampian reached its highest level in the last six years. The majority of these incidents related to race/ethnicity, with a rise in incidents targeting people from Africa and the Middle East. The figures are likely to be much higher due to under-reporting, shaped by a series of complex factors. These include lack of knowledge of how to do it or finding it too difficult; fear of retribution; discomfort speaking with the Police; and language issues.

As an indicator of how widespread under-reporting could be, even though official figures showed a slight decrease in incidents targeting Asian people in 2020, evidence suggests that Covid-19 led to a higher proportion of people in Chinese and East Asian communities experiencing prejudice and hate crime, causing them to feel less safe than they did before the pandemic.

Additionally, a rise in gender-based abuse was noted during the pandemic.

Priorities

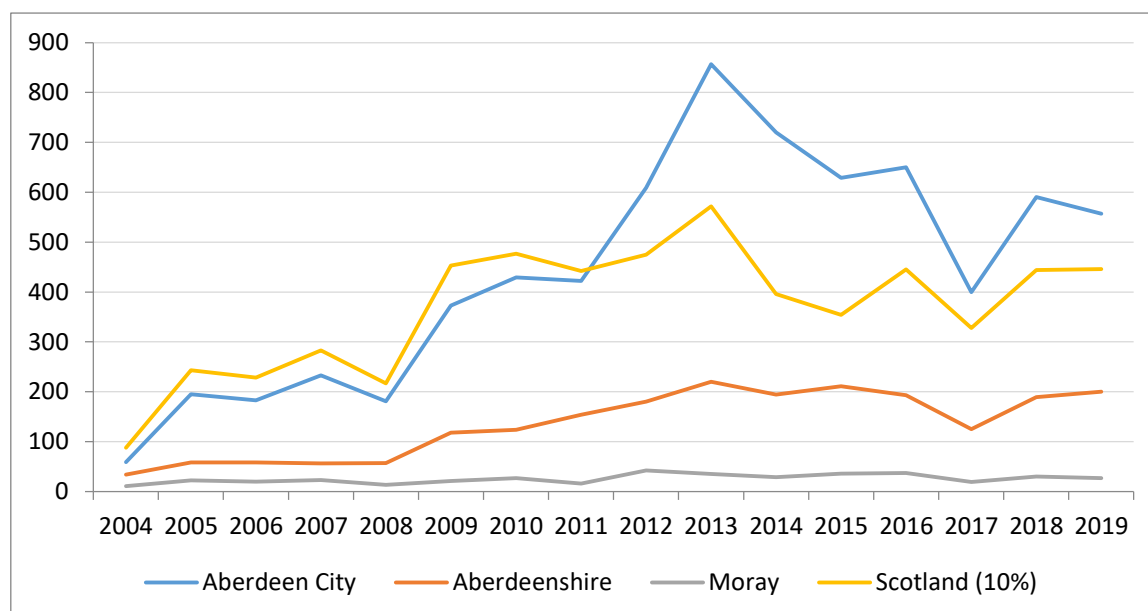
- Promote how to report hate crime and where to get support.
- Engage with young people in schools and other settings, especially around issues of equality, human rights and gender-based violence.

⁸⁹ Summary report available online. [Link](#).

10. Foundations: Rights and Citizenship

10.1 Indicators and Data Points

People Attending British Citizenship Ceremonies by Local Authority



EU Settlement Scheme⁹⁰

By the end of June 2021, 44,230 people had applied to the EU Settlement Scheme across Grampian. As of September 2021, decisions had been made on 92% of applications in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, and 90% of applications in Moray. The outcomes of these decisions are shown below. There was no explanation of what 'Outcome: Other' means, but presumably this describes applications that have been rejected.

| | Total Applications | Outcome: Settled Status | | Outcome: Pre-Settled Status | | Outcome: Other | | Still in Process | |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|-----|----------------|----|------------------|-----|
| Aberdeen City | 28,640 | 15,240 | 53% | 10,330 | 36% | 900 | 3% | 2,170 | 8% |
| Aberdeenshire | 12,220 | 7,870 | 64% | 3,030 | 24% | 370 | 3% | 950 | 8% |
| Moray | 3,370 | 2,110 | 63% | 840 | 25% | 100 | 3% | 330 | 10% |

Political Representation & Participation⁹¹

For the first time, the Scottish Parliament now broadly reflects the ethnic makeup of Scotland as a whole, with 4.5% 'colour coded' ethnic minority MSPs, plus two 'white' immigrant MSPs.⁹² However, at the local government level, less than 1% of Councillors are from ethnic minority backgrounds.

⁹⁰ UK Government Statistics, EU Settlement Scheme Local Authority Tables. [Link](#).

⁹¹ The Journey to a More Diverse Scottish Parliament, race.ed.uk ([link](#)). Equality and Human Rights Commission, Research report 125: Barriers to participation in standing for election to local government in Scotland ([link](#)).

⁹² BAME MSPs: Foysol Choudhury, Pam Gosal, Sandesh Gulhane, Anas Sarwar, Kaukab Stewart, Humza Yousaf. Other immigrant MSPs: Maggie Chapman, Lorna Slater.

There is very little (if any) data on participation in political parties and other civic organisations, both locally and nationally. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) highlights this issue in their report on barriers to participation in standing for local election in Scotland.⁹³

“data were not often systematically collected, whether by government or by political parties. This meant it was not possible to understand whether other protected characteristic groups were under-represented compared with the general population. [...] Political parties do not seem to collect and publish data on levels of representation from membership, through to approved lists of candidates, candidates for selection, and candidates for election. Diversity data by stage would be very useful in helping political parties to understand and tackle barriers to diversity.”

Nationality and Borders Bill

As of December 2021, the Bill is in its second reading in the House of Lords. An extension of ‘Hostile Environment’ policies, it would dramatically restrict access to asylum in the UK, criminalise asylum seekers, remove safeguards for children and victims of human trafficking, and introduce the option of sending refugees to other countries. Serious concerns have been raised by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the UK Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), the Scottish Refugee Council (SRC), and others.⁹⁴

While many media outlets have focused on new powers to revoke UK citizenship from those born elsewhere, the EHRC outlines some key intersectional issues:⁹⁵

“Those with certain protected characteristics may be disproportionately impacted by these proposals, including as a result of barriers to early engagement with the authorities. For example, women arriving in the UK through irregular routes, including by being smuggled or trafficked across borders, may be fleeing gender-based violence and may need more time to seek appropriate support before they are able to engage with authorities. LGBT+ people may face challenges in sharing their identity and therefore take more time to prepare and disclose information to officials. Similarly those with mental health conditions related to experiences of torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment may not present themselves immediately due to the impact of trauma. Minor children separated from parents may be disproportionately affected by restrictions on family reunion rights.

“Particular attention will be required around asylum-seekers who may not originate from a region of conflict, but may be subject to persecution on the basis of their protected characteristics – such as LGBT+ people, or women who have experienced gender-based violence – and have reached the UK by unofficial routes. Such groups may be smaller in number than others in the migrant population, but will in many cases be most disadvantaged while having the least support available to them under the new proposals. Due regard must be given to those impacts, and proportionate mitigations put in place.

⁹³ Equality and Human Rights Commission, Research report 125: Barriers to participation in standing for election to local government in Scotland. [Link](#).

⁹⁴ UNHCR, 2021 ([link](#)). EHRC ([link](#)). SRC ([link](#)).

⁹⁵ EHRC ([link](#)).

“All those recognised as refugees in the UK, whether granted temporary or secure status, have a well-founded fear of persecution in their home country. The ability of those afforded temporary protection status to integrate into society and make a positive contribution to their communities may be affected by the limited and insecure nature of their leave.”

10.2 Evidence from Relevant Local Research

Shared Futures & No Recourse North East: the Human Cost of Brexit (2021)⁹⁶

Speakers and participants in this online discussion forum pointed to the financial costs associated with citizenship applications, which will impact both EU nationals entering the UK from January 2021 onwards, and those who were living in the UK before. One speaker noted that citizenship applications cost more than £1,000 in 2021, plus the fees associated with English language tests and the Life in the UK test. There were six speakers and 65 participants in total.

GREC: Aberdeen Equality Outcomes Survey & Focus Groups (2020)⁹⁷

One section of the survey focused on civic life, asking participants about voting and other civic activities, including responding to consultations, signing petitions, writing to elected representatives or getting involved with community councils, political parties, trade unions or campaigning groups. 60% of ethnic minority participants reported voting in an election, and 53% had engaged in other civic activities. These were significantly lower percentages than for Scottish/British participants, of whom 90% reported voting in an election and 74% had engaged in other civic activities.

Nearly a quarter of ethnic minority participants felt excluded from civic engagement because of their ethnicity or nationality. For some, this was due to language issues, lack of familiarity with the political system, or not knowing how to get involved. For others, not being allowed to vote discouraged them other forms of civic activity. In comments, participants described being ignored or dismissed because of their ethnicity, and some were concerned about political involvement putting their immigration status at risk.

Key Missing Data

There appears to be very little relevant data in this area. Other potential indicators to support future analysis may come from Home Office records, local surveys, or qualitative interviews, including:

- Access to – and utilisation of – legal and welfare benefits advice by ethnic minorities compared with the general population.
- Ethnic minority communities’ reported sense of equity in accessing services and entitlements.
- Rates of application for citizenship by ethnic minorities and refugees.

⁹⁶ GREC, briefing available online. [Link](#).

⁹⁷ There were 167 survey participants, including 73 from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Other indicators:

- Acceptance rate of family reunion applications by refugees.
- Proportion of ethnic minorities involved in political party or trade union in past 12 months (compared with general population).

10.2 Summary

The data above shows that the majority of applications to the EU Settlement Scheme in Grampian were accepted. However, financial costs of future citizenship applications are a significant worry for many EU nationals.

Though there is limited evidence available and more research in this area is necessary, a local survey shows a gap in participation, with significantly lower percentages of ethnic minorities voting in elections compared with the Scottish/British population, and the same trend with regards to engagement in civic activities. This is attributed to lack of knowledge about the political system or how to get involved, language barriers, and not being allowed to vote. However, it is relevant to note that the research was carried out prior to the extension of voting rights implemented in 2021.

11. A Vision for Grampian

Much of the work in the coming years will be shaped by challenges from Brexit, Covid-19 and other global issues like climate change and conflict-driven migration, especially in terms of providing support for the most vulnerable people in our communities. While Covid-19 highlighted (and often intensified) inequalities around ethnicity, gender, disability and social class, these inequalities are not new. As we move into recovery, there is an opportunity to rethink and reshape how things are done, to create a fairer society for everyone.

To that end, the Integrate Grampian partnership has a vision for the region as an area that is welcoming to those who choose to live, work, study, bring up a family or start a business here. In practice, this means a region where:

- **Physical and mental health services are inclusive for all**, health inequalities are minimised, and the long-term consequences of Covid-19 are addressed equitably.
- **Barriers to accessing public services are addressed**, especially in terms of language and cultural barriers, digital literacy and disabled access. Those who cannot access digital resources are not excluded. Genuine public engagement includes marginalised communities, especially those who are most affected by the issues being discussed.
- **Quality housing options are available to meet the needs of all**, including refugees and asylum seekers.
- **Everyone feels safe, welcome and respected in their communities. There are opportunities to build meaningful connections** between people from different countries, backgrounds, cultures, etc.
- **There is equal access to education**, both for school-age children and adults, supporting learning as well as integration for both learners and their families. Opportunities to learn English genuinely meet the needs of those who have English as an additional language.
- **Employment opportunities are accessible to all**, including opportunities for people to transfer their qualifications and access employment that matches their skills and experience.
- **There is vigilance against hate crime, prejudice, modern slavery, exploitation and trafficking.**
- **Good practice in promoting integration and community cohesion is shared**, both within Grampian and with external partners and networks.
- **Equality is not a 'tick-box' exercise but a value that is genuinely embedded in our society.**

This document is a starting point for meeting this vision. By identifying what data is currently available, we have a clearer idea of the issues and a baseline for measuring progress. Next steps include agreeing priority areas to progress, considering how this can be delivered, by which partners, and to establish mechanisms, such as action plans, that will allow monitoring and reporting of progress.

Partnership working, evaluation, learning and pro-activity will be key to making a difference to our region, and as partners we are committed to taking forward our vision with these core values.