

Census 2021 Bulletin

National Identity and Language Spoken in Shropshire

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National Identity and Language in Shropshire

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has released Census 2021 figures on national identity and religion. This bulletin will provide a summary at Shropshire level. The report will compare Shropshire with England and the West Midlands and look at any change since 2011. Please note the question on language and data collected is for all usual residents aged 3 years and over.

Key facts

- The majority of Shropshire residents (97.4%) selected English as their main language lower than England (90.8%) and West Midlands (91.0%).
- Compared to 2011, the number of people selecting English as their main language has slightly fallen from 97.9%.
- In Shropshire Polish was the second most popular language spoken in 2021 (1,385, 0.4%). Polish was also the second most popular language spoken in Shropshire in 2011 (1,575, 0.5%).
- Bulgarian (1,270, 0.4%) was the next most popular language spoken in Shropshire followed by Romanian (966, 0.3%), Arabic and Punjabi. This was similar to national and regional trends.
- The largest increase was for people who specified Romanian as a main language, who accounted for over 0.3% of usual residents in 2021 (966 people), up from 0.04% (100) in 2011. This was also the case nationally.
- German, Cantonese Chinese, French and Slovak languages moved out of the top 10 languages (other than English) spoken in Shropshire. Romanian, Spanish, Panjabi and Lithuanian moved into the top 10 languages in 2021.
- In terms of household language, the majority of responses consisted of households where all residents aged 16 and over, had English as their first language (97.1%) greater than in England (89.3%) and the West Midlands (89.4%). This number was slightly less than in 2011 (97.7%).
- In terms of English proficiency, the largest group was made up by those whose main language is English (307,064, 97.4%), followed by people whose main language is not English (2.6%). This is less than England (90.8%) and (9.2%) respectively. The proportion of all groups has remained relatively unchanged since 2011.
- In terms of multi-language households, the largest group was all household members having the same language (68.7%), this is greater than in England (63.7%) and the West Midlands (64.0%). It is not possible to compare this to 2011.
- In terms of national identity 96.3% in Shropshire identified with at least one UK identity (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or Cornish). This was similar to 2011 (97%). When comparing with England and the West Midlands Shropshire had a higher rate than England (89.9%) and the West Midlands (91.2%) in 2021.



- In Shropshire, people who identified with at least one UK and one non-UK identity accounted for 0.9% of the overall population 2,779 people in 2021; this is an increase from 0.4% (1,091) in 2011. This figure was 1.9% in England and 1.4% in the West Midlands.
- In Shropshire 3.7% (12,000) people selected a non-UK identity an increase from (8,250) 2.7% in 2011. This is considerably lower than England (8.2%) and the West Midlands (6.2%).
- In 2021 more than half of respondents in Shropshire (55.8%, 180,654) chose a “British” only national identity, a rise of 40 percentage points from 15.7%, (48,086) in 2011. There has been a corresponding decline in “English” only identity, this fell by 51 percentage points from 66.6% (203,761) in 2011 to 15.3% (59,995) in 2021. This has also been the case nationally. (This change is likely to be as a result of a change to the question structure in the Census 2021, please see note at the end of the bulletin).
- Among those who described a non-UK national identity, the most common response in Shropshire was those describing “Polish” only as their identity (0.4%, 1,397); “Polish” only was also the most common response in 2011 (0.6%, 1,724). This was followed by Romanian (0.3% or 941) increased from 0.1% in 2011, the largest increase in all non-UK national groups. This mirrors the national situation.

Chart 1: English spoken as a main language (English or Welsh in Wales) as a percentage of the population

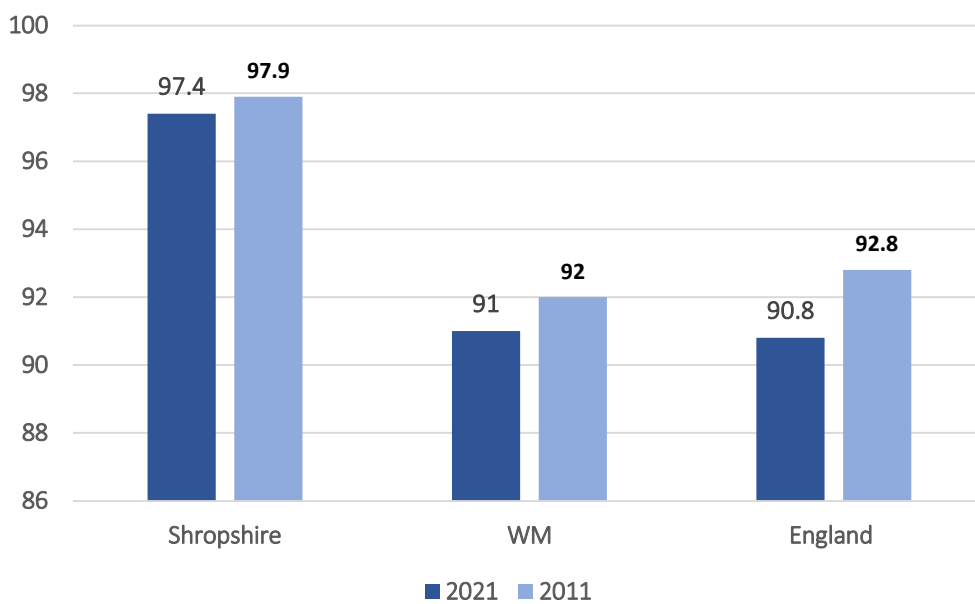


Table 1: Top 10 Languages spoken in Shropshire (other than English) 2021

Language	Number	Percentage
Other European language (EU): Polish	1385	0.4
Other European language (EU): Bulgarian	1270	0.4
Other European language (EU): Romanian	966	0.3
Arabic	355	0.1
South Asian language: Panjabi	292	0.1
Welsh or Cymraeg (in England only)	291	0.1
Spanish	255	0.1
East Asian language: All other Chinese	232	0.1
East Asian language: Tagalog or Filipino	203	0.1
Other European language (EU): Lithuanian	201	0.1

Table 2: Main Languages spoken in Shropshire (other than English) 2021 Compared with 2011.

2011 top 10 Languages	Rank in 2011	Position in 2021	2021 Top 10 Languages	Rank in 2021	Position in 2011
Other European Language (EU): Polish	1	1	Other European language (EU): Polish	1	1
Welsh/Cymraeg (in England only)	2	6	Other European language (EU): Bulgarian	2	3
Other European Language (EU): Bulgarian	3	2	Other European language (EU): Romanian	3	17
East Asian Language: All other Chinese	4	8	Arabic	4	10
East Asian Language: Tagalog/Filipino	5	9	South Asian language: Panjabi	5	22
Other European Language (EU): German	6	21	Welsh or Cymraeg (in England only)	6	3
East Asian Language: Cantonese Chinese	7	14	Spanish	7	13
French	8	16	East Asian language: All other Chinese	8	4
Other European Language (EU): Slovak	9	19	East Asian language: Tagalog or Filipino	9	5
Arabic	10	4	Other European language (EU): Lithuanian	10	20

Moving out of the 2021 Top 10

Moving into the 2021 Top 10



Table 3: Household Language in Shropshire 2021 as a Percentage of the Population

Household Language	Shropshire (%)	West (%) Midlands	England (%)
All adults in household have English as a main language	97.1	89.4	89.3
At least one but not all adults in household have English as a main language	1.3	4.4	4.3
No adults in household, but at least one person aged 3 to 15 years, has English as a main language	0.3	1.4	1.4
No people in household have English as a main language	1.4	4.8	5

Table 4: Proficiency in English in Shropshire as a Percentage of the Population

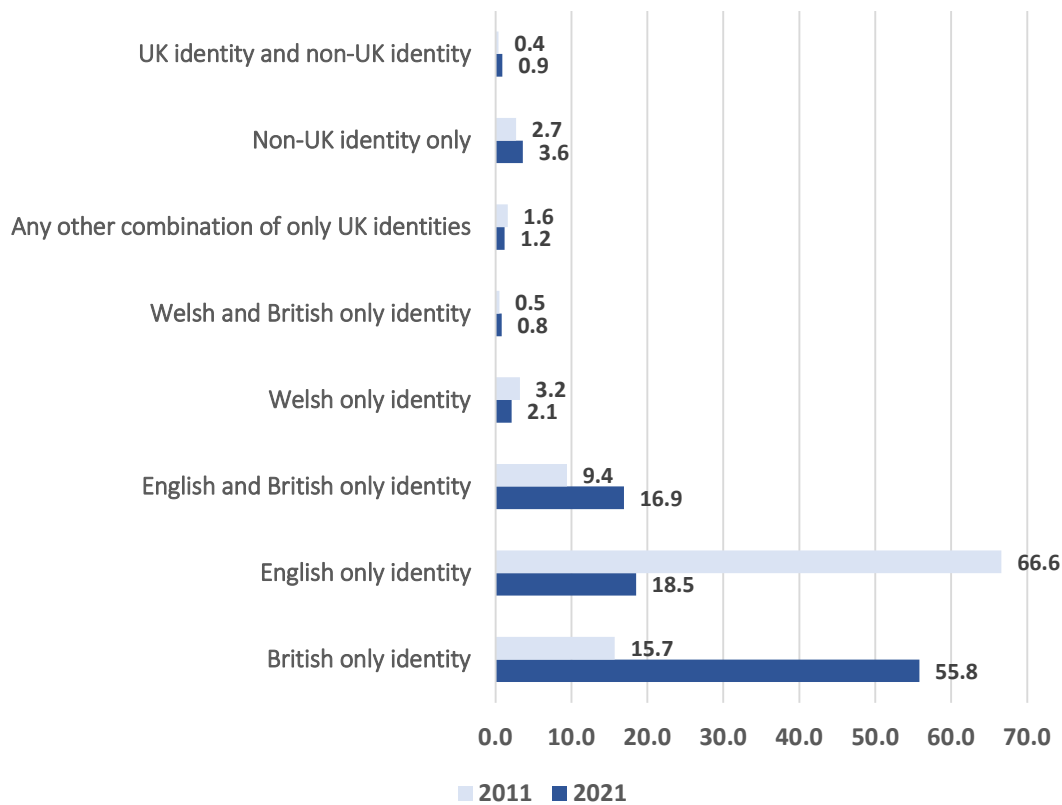
Proficiency in English	Shropshire (%)	West (%) Midlands	England (%)
Main language is English (English or Welsh in Wales)	97.4	91.0	90.8
Main language is not English (English or Welsh in Wales)	2.6	9.0	9.2
Main language is not English (English or Welsh in Wales): Can speak English very well	1.1	3.4	4.0
Main language is not English (English or Welsh in Wales): Can speak English well	0.9	3.4	3.3
Main language is not English (English or Welsh in Wales): Cannot speak English well	0.5	1.9	1.6
Main language is not English (English or Welsh in Wales): Cannot speak English	0.1	0.4	0.3



Table 5: Multiple Language Households in Shropshire, West Midlands and England

Multi Language Households	Shropshire (%)	West (%) Midlands	England (%)
One-person household	29.7	29.9	30.1
All household members have the same main language	68.7	64.0	63.7
Main language differs between generations, but not within partnerships	0.3	2.1	2
Main language differs within partnerships	0.8	2.1	2.2
Any other combination of multiple main languages	0.5	1.9	2

Chart 2: National Identities Shropshire 2011 and 2021



Notes

While the increase in number of usual residents describing their national identity as "British" and the fall in the number describing their national identity as "English" may partly reflect true change, it is most likely to be a result of the changes to the question structure where "British" became the top response option in 2021 for England only

Sources

[Religion, England and Wales, Census 2021, Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#)

[National Identity, England and Wales: Census 2021](#)

Census 2021 Topic Summaries and Nomis: Table TS024, TS025 and TS026, TS029, TS027

Census 2011: Tables KS206EW, QS214EW and QS204EW, QS205EW.

Further Information

Census 2021 Topic Summaries - [Ethnic group, national identity, language, and religion: Census 2021 in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#).

[Census Maps - Census 2021 data interactive, ONS](#)

[Shropshire Facts and Figures](#)

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