

'Is Britain Fairer?': Key facts and findings on religion or belief

'Is Britain Fairer?' (2015) is the Equality and Human Rights Commission's five-yearly review of equality and human rights in Britain. This factsheet captures some of our key findings for religion or belief.

Religion or belief is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. The Act prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; protects individuals from unfair treatment; and promotes a fair and more equal society. It protects people from being discriminated against because of their religion or belief in a variety of fields, including employment, education, the exercise of public functions and the provision of services. Figures from the Office of National Statistics and National Records of Scotland indicate that there were **36.9 million** Christians; **266,000** Buddhists; **850,000** Hindus; **275,000** Jewish people; **2.9 million** Muslims; **444,000** Sikhs; **260,000** of 'Other' religion; **16.5 million** people with no religion; and **4.5 million** people who did not state their religion living in Britain in 2011.

People with no religion are less worried about crime but more likely to report being the victim of a violent crime



People with no religion were less worried about crime. In England, Muslims (67.8%), Buddhists (67.1%), Hindus (66.4%), Sikhs (61.6%) and Christians (38.6%) were more likely to report feeling worried about physical attack and acquisitive crime than those with no religion (32.3%) in 2012/13. In Scotland, worry about crime was higher for people from religious minorities (57.6%) and Christians compared with those reporting no religion (45.6%) in 2012/13. Wales did not have sufficient data to make a comparable analysis for religious minorities.

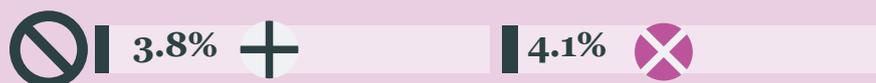
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Compared with Christians, a higher proportion of people with no religion reported being a victim of violent crime in 2012/13.



In England, the proportion of religious minorities that reported being a victim of violent crime was higher (9.1%) than those of no religion.

Wales did not have sufficient data to make a comparable analysis for religious minorities.

Islamophobia has been identified as an emerging challenge



The Coalition Government's 2014 report on delivering the 'Challenge It, Report It, Stop It' hate crime action plan identified anti-Muslim hatred as an emerging challenge alongside extremism and hate crime, online hate crime and disability hate crime.

It also outlined the the Government's projects to tackle anti-Muslim sentiment, including the launch of Tell MAMA, a third-party reporting service to record incidents and support victims of anti-Muslim hatred. Tell MAMA, in their 2013/14 report, identified that online incidents made up the majority of cases reported to them, while around half of 'offline' victims were female and often were wearing items of clothing associated with Islam. Under-reporting remains a challenge in analysing crime data, particularly hate crime.

Christians and Muslims are less likely to have a degree-level qualification than Buddhists, Sikhs, Jewish people, Hindus, or people with no religion



In Britain, 31.2% of people with no religion had a degree-level qualification in 2013. A lower percentage of Christians (25.2%) and Muslims (28.0%) had a degree-level qualification. However, Buddhist (39.8%), Hindu (53.2%), Jewish (54.0%) and Sikh (32.4%) people were more likely to have a degree-level qualification, compared with those with no religion in 2013.

A higher percentage of young people with no religion were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) (10.5%) compared with young Christians (7.1%) and young people from religious minorities (6.8%) in 2013.

In Britain, 25-64-year-old Christians (9.8%), Buddhists (14.0%), Muslims (22.2%) and Sikhs (14.9%) were more likely to have no qualifications than those with no religion (9.8%) in 2013. Jewish (6.2%) and Hindu (7.9%) people, by contrast, were less likely to have no qualifications, compared with those with no religion.

People with a religion are generally paid less than those with no religion

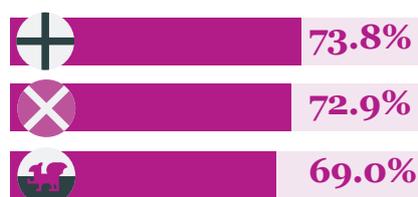
The average earnings for people of particular religions/beliefs in 2013 were: £10.70 for people with no religion; **£10.50** for Christians; and **£9.80** for religious minorities. **Hindus (£11.70)** and **Jewish people (£16.20)** were the two religious groups that had higher earnings than those with no religion in 2013.



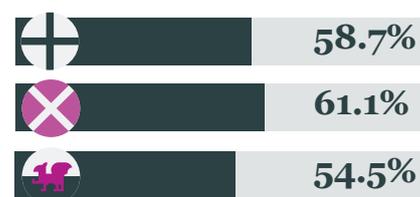
The percentage of Christians in employment across Britain, in 2013, was:



The percentage of people with no religion in employment, in 2013, was:

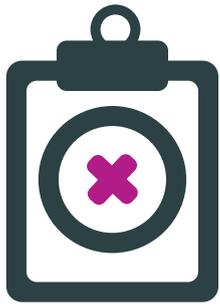


The percentage of people from a religious minority in employment, in 2013, was:



In Britain in 2013, Christians had a lower unemployment rate (5.9%), compared with those with no religion (7.9%). People from religious minorities had a higher unemployment rate (11.6%). However, this varied widely depending on the religious minority. Whereas Jewish people had the lowest unemployment rate (3.2%), Muslims had the highest (17.2%).

People with no religion are less likely to report bad physical or mental health but are more likely to smoke or drink excessively



In England, fewer people with no religion reported very bad health (**4.6%**), compared with Christians (**6.7%**) and religious minorities (**8.5%**) in 2012. **In Scotland** during the same period, fewer people with no religion reported very bad health (**6.6%**), compared with Christians (**9.8%**). There were no data available for Wales.

In England, fewer people with no religion reported poor mental health (**14.2%**), compared with Christians (**14.7%**) and religious minorities (**20.0%**) in 2012. There were no data available for Wales.



In England, people with no religion were more likely to smoke (**22.1%**) compared with Christians (**16.7%**) or people from a religious minority (**15.7%**) in 2012. In Scotland, people with no religion were more likely to smoke (**29.7%**) compared with Christians (**21.3%**). There were no data available for Wales.

In England, people with no religion were more likely to consume more than the recommended daily intake for alcohol (**41.1%**), compared with Christians (**32.5%**) and religious minorities (**9.2%**) in 2012. The same trend was observed **in Scotland** where people with no religion (**42.9%**) were more likely to drink more than the recommended daily intake of alcohol, compared with Christians (**32.5%**) and religious minorities (**9.2%**). There were no data available for Wales.



In England, there was a higher percentage of Christians who were recorded as overweight or obese (**66.6%**), compared with people with no religion (**55%**). The percentage of religious minorities recorded as overweight or obese was **56.4%** in 2012. **In Scotland**, during the same period, more Christians were recorded as overweight or obese (**68.2%**), compared with people with no religion (**60.0%**). The percentage of religious minorities recorded as overweight or obese was **46.7%**. There were no data available for Wales.



Christians are more likely to vote but people with no religion are more likely to be involved in political activity



Christians (95.2%) were more likely than those who had no religion (91.2%) to say they had voted in the 2015 General Election. Compared with people with no religion, a lower percentage of those from a religious minority said they had voted (**88.4%**).

In England a greater percentage of those with no religion (34.0%) than those who were Christians (29.6%) or from a religious minority (23.5%) took part in political activities, such as lobbying and/or protesting, in 2013/14.

