

Ethnicity in the Criminal Justice System 2024

Executive Summary

This publication compiles statistics from data sources across the Criminal Justice System (CJS), to provide a combined perspective on the typical experiences of different ethnic groups.

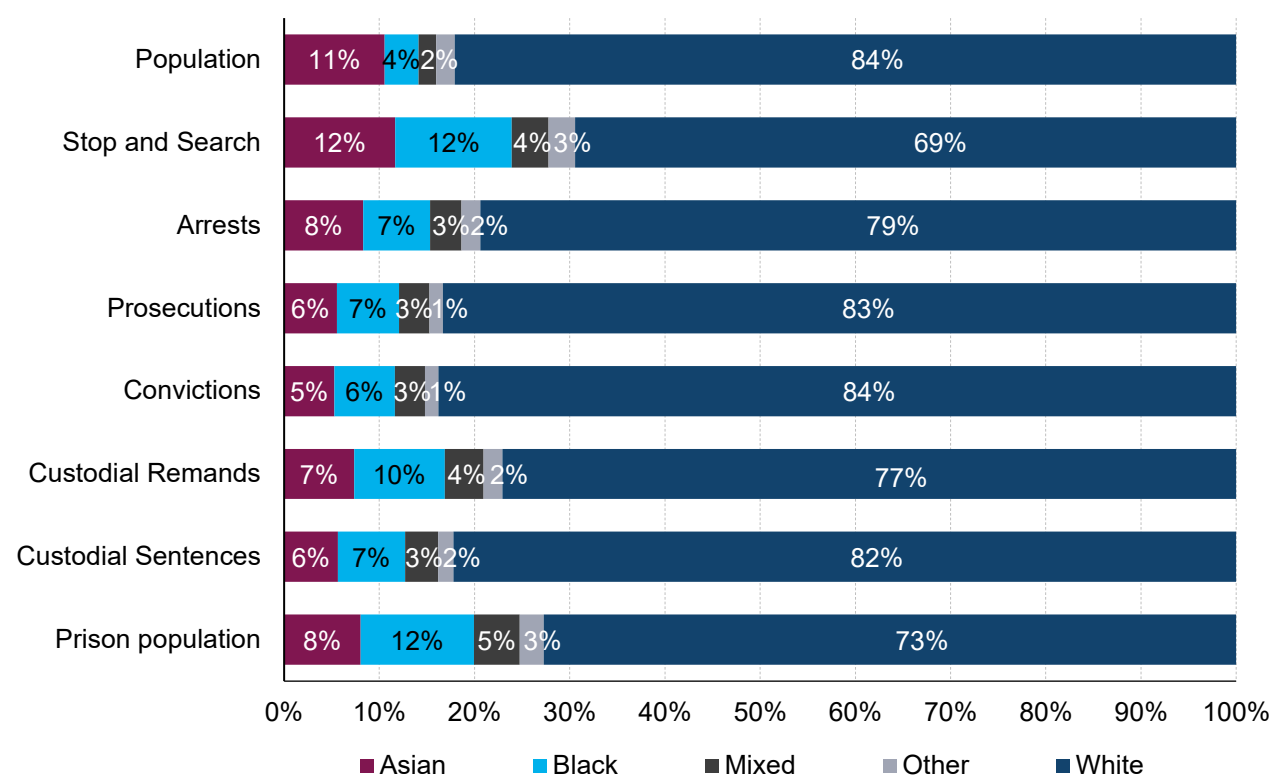
No causative links can be drawn from these summary statistics. For the majority of the report, no controls have been applied for other characteristics of ethnic groups (such as average income, geography, offence mix or offender history), so it is not possible to determine what proportion of differences identified in this report are directly attributable to ethnicity. Differences observed may indicate areas worth further investigation but should not be taken as evidence of bias or as direct effects of ethnicity.

As in previous publications we have made comparisons to the population using Census data. In the 2021 Census, the proportion in each ethnic group was as follows: 9% Asian, 4% black, 2% Mixed, 84% White and 2% Other.

In general, minority ethnic groups appear to be over-represented at many stages throughout the CJS compared with the White ethnic group. This is especially apparent when comparing to the ethnic breakdown of the population of England and Wales¹. The greatest disparity appears at the point of stop and search, custodial remands and prison population. Among minority ethnic groups, Black individuals were often the most over-represented. Outcomes for minority ethnic children are often more pronounced than White children at various points of the CJS. Differences in outcomes between ethnic groups over time present a mixed picture, with disparity decreasing in some areas and widening in others.

¹ Population data from 2021 Census.

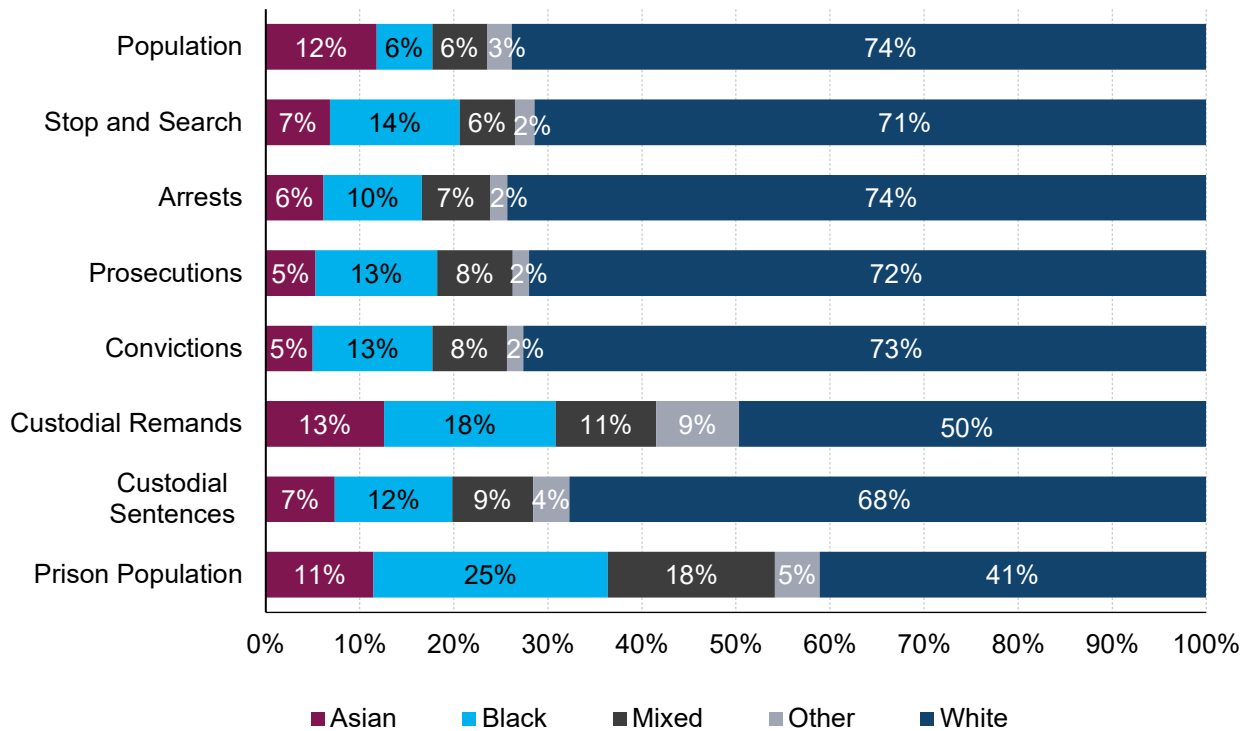
Figure 1.01: Ethnicity proportions for adults throughout the criminal justice system, 2024²



(Source: See sources via relevant chapters throughout the report)

² Prosecutions, convictions, sentence outcomes and remand decisions for indictable offences in 2024. Arrests and stop & search data from 2024/25. Prison population at 30th June 2025.

Figure 1.02: Ethnicity proportions for children throughout the criminal justice system, 2024³



(Source: See sources via relevant chapters throughout the report)

³ Population data from 2021 Census. Prosecutions, convictions, sentence outcomes and remand decisions for indictable offences in 2024. Prison population at 30th June 2025.