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Arrests

Published 3 July 2024

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1. Main facts and figures

- in the year ending 31 March 2023, there were 668,979 arrests in England and Wales – up by over 14,000 compared with the previous year
- black people were 2.2 times as likely to be arrested as white people – there were 20.4 arrests for every 1,000 black people, and 9.4 for every 1,000 white people
- overall, men were almost 6 times as likely to be arrested as women – there were 19.4 arrests for every 1,000 men, and 3.3 for every 1,000 women
- black men were 2.4 times as likely to be arrested as white men – there were 38.2 arrests for every 1,000 black men, and 16.0 for every 1,000 white men

Further research:

A 2016 [report by the Ministry of Justice](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-disproportionality-in-the-criminal-justice-system-in-england-and-wales) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-disproportionality-in-the-criminal-justice-system-in-england-and-wales>) analysed ethnic disparities in the criminal justice system in England and Wales. It found that, compared with white people, other ethnic groups were over-represented at the arrests stage. They were also over-represented in being tried at Crown Court rather than a magistrates' court, custodial remand and plea at Crown Court, custodial sentencing, and adjudications of prison discipline.

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2. Things you need to know

What the data measures

This data measures the number of arrests for 'notifiable offences' – offences for which the police must complete a crime report.

Arrest rates are rounded to 1 decimal place. Unrounded data was used to work out arrest rates and differences between ethnic groups.

Not included in the data

The City of London police force area is not included in the data. This is because of the small number of people living in the area compared with people visiting.

How arrest rates are calculated

For each ethnic group, the arrest rate is the number of people arrested for every 1,000 people from that group.

The ethnic groups used in the data

Data for the 3 years from April 2020 to March 2023 uses the [19 ethnic groups from the 2021 Census](https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/style-guide/ethnic-groups#2021-census) (<https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/style-guide/ethnic-groups#2021-census>).

Someone who is arrested is usually asked for their ethnicity. The circumstances of an arrest may affect the accuracy of this information.

If ethnicity is not given, it is shown as 'unknown' in the tables. Ethnicity was not given for 12.7% of arrests between April 2022 and March 2023.

In the 16 years to March 2023, the percentage of people arrested whose ethnicity was not known has varied. It was lowest (2%) between the years ending March 2009 and March 2014, and highest (15%) between the years ending March 2020 and March 2022.

Methodology

Read the [detailed methodology document](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-powers-and-procedures-in-england-and-wales-201112-user-guide) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/police-powers-and-procedures-in-england-and-wales-201112-user-guide>) for the data on this page.

Data over time is shown from April 2020 to March 2023, using [population figures from the 2021 Census](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/bulletins/ethnicgroupenglandandwales/census2021) (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/bulletins/ethnicgroupenglandandwales/census2021>) to calculate arrest rates. This data is not comparable with previous years' data, which is calculated using population rates from previous censuses.

A person arrested in a particular area may not necessarily live in that area. Population estimates for police force areas are based on permanent residents of that area as reported in the 2021 Census. Read more about [problems using Census data](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/understanding-our-data/how-we-use-census-data#problems-using-census-data) ([/understanding-our-data/how-we-use-census-data#problems-using-census-data](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/understanding-our-data/how-we-use-census-data#problems-using-census-data)) to work out rates.

We use 'relative likelihoods' in the data to make comparisons, for example 'black people were over 2 times as likely to be arrested as white people'. You can read more about [using relative likelihoods](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/using-relative-likelihoods-to-compare-ethnic-disparities) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/using-relative-likelihoods-to-compare-ethnic-disparities>) to compare ethnic disparities.

A person arrested for a notifiable offence is counted each time they are arrested. This is as long as the offence is not related to one that happened earlier in the same financial year (April to March). If it is connected, or if a person has been arrested for more than one notifiable offence on the same occasion, the offence with the highest maximum penalty is recorded.

The Lancashire police force area was unable to submit arrests data in previous years (affecting the 2015 to 2020 data file). For comparability with these years, there is an 'All - excluding Lancashire' area.

In the data file

[Download the data](#) for:

- the number of arrests by area and ethnicity
- data from 2006 to 2019, which uses Census 2011 population figures to calculate rates

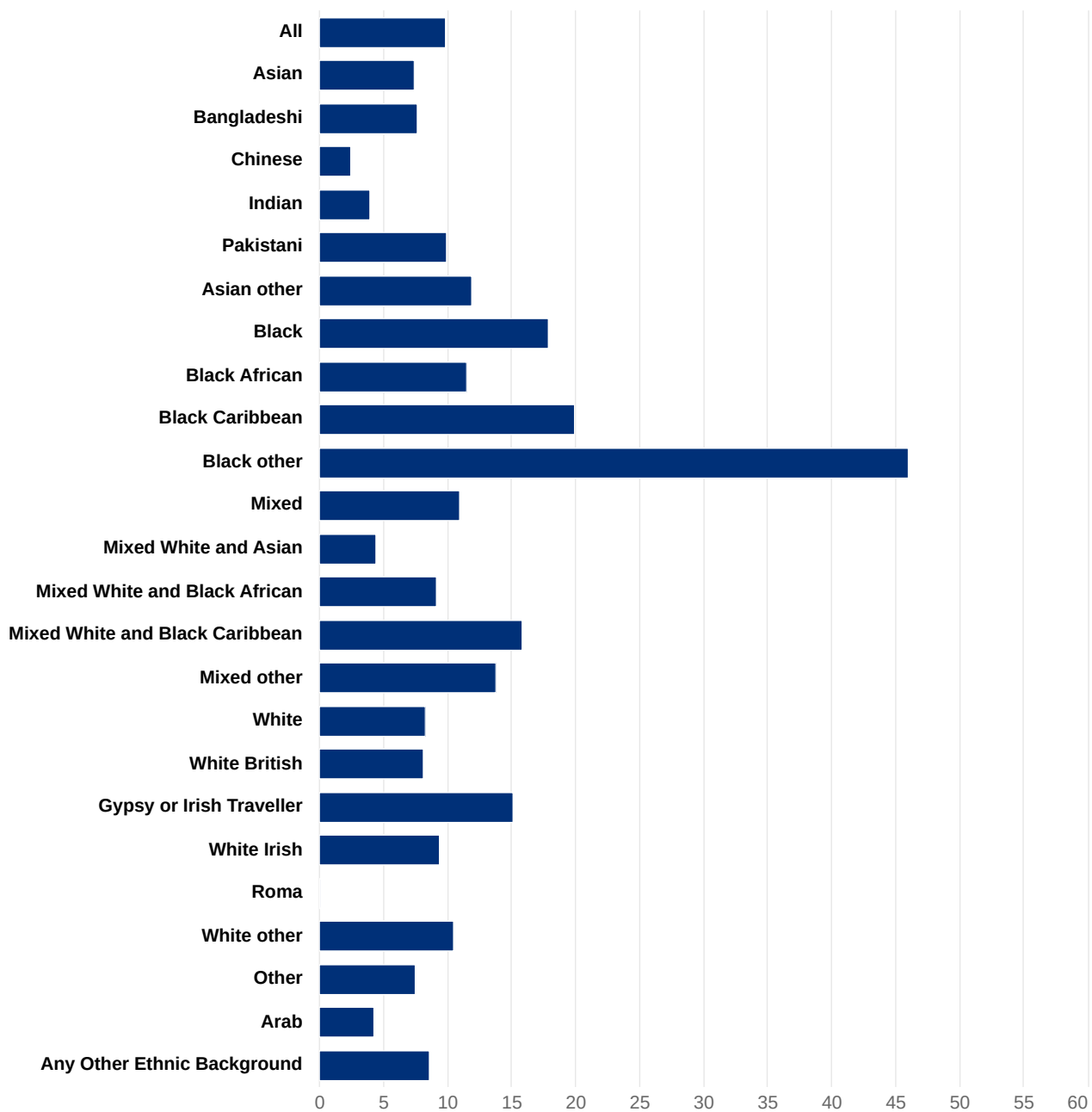
3. By ethnicity

Location: England and Wales

Time period: April 2022 to March 2023

Source: [Police powers and procedures: England and Wales, year ending 31 March 2023 \(second edition\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/stop-and-search-and-arrests-year-ending-march-2023)
[\(<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/stop-and-search-and-arrests-year-ending-march-2023>\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/stop-and-search-and-arrests-year-ending-march-2023)

Arrest rate for every 1,000 people, by ethnicity



[Download chart \(PNG\)](#)

Arrest rate for every 1,000 people, and total number of arrests, by ethnicity

[Ethnicity](#) ↓

[Rate per 1,000](#) ↓

[Number of arrests](#) ↓

All	11.2	668,979
Asian	8.4	46,396
Bangladeshi	8.7	5,581
Chinese	2.8	1,240
Indian	4.5	8,435
Pakistani	11.3	17,984
Asian other	13.5	13,156
Black	20.4	49,243
Black African	13.1	19,465
Black Caribbean	22.7	14,164
Black other	52.4	15,614
Mixed	12.5	21,555
Mixed White and Asian	5.0	2,421
Mixed White and Black African	10.4	2,597
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	18.0	9,213
Mixed other	15.7	7,324
White	9.4	456,393
White British	9.2	405,964
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	17.2	1,165
White Irish	10.7	5,441
Roma	0.1	8
White other	11.9	43,815
Other	8.5	10,656
Arab	4.8	1,605
Any Other Ethnic Background	9.8	9,051
Unknown	N/A*	84,736

[Show 6 more rows](#)

* Not applicable

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Summary

The data shows that, in the year to March 2023:

- there were 668,979 arrests in England and Wales – a rate of 11.2 arrests for every 1,000 people
- the arrest rate for black people was 2.2 times higher than for white people – there were 20.4 arrests for every 1,000 black people, and 9.4 for every 1,000 white people
- the arrest rate for people with mixed ethnicity (12.5 arrests for every 1,000 people) was 1.3 times higher than for white people
- people from Asian (8.4 arrests for every 1,000 people) and 'other' (8.5 arrests) ethnic backgrounds had lower arrest rates than white people

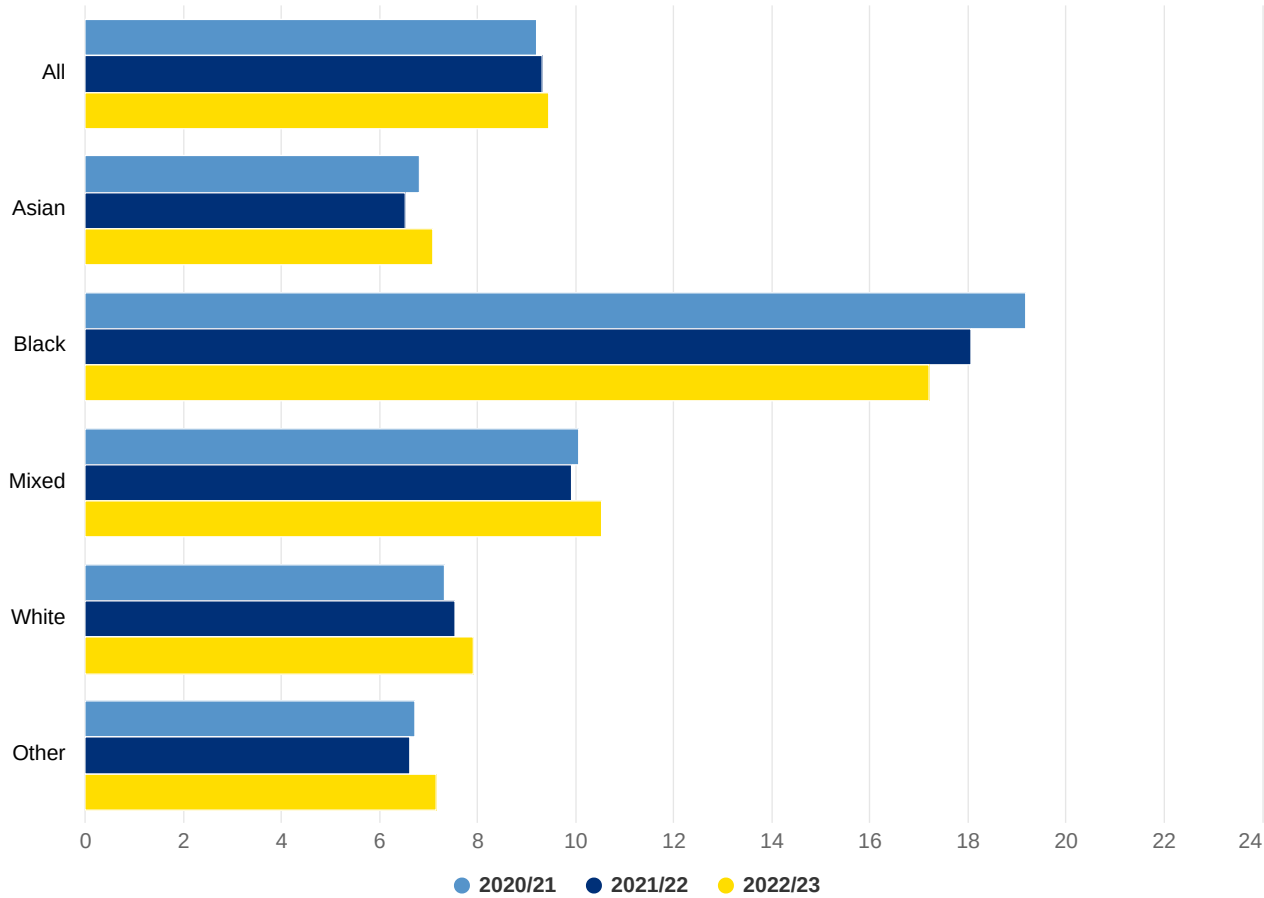
4. By ethnicity over time

Location: England and Wales

Time period: April 2020 to March 2023

Source: [Police powers and procedures: England and Wales, year ending 31 March 2023 \(second edition\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/stop-and-search-and-arrests-year-ending-march-2023)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/stop-and-search-and-arrests-year-ending-march-2023>)

Arrest rate for every 1,000 people, by ethnicity over time



[Download chart \(PNG\)](#)

Arrest rate for every 1,000 people, by ethnicity over time

Ethnicity ↓	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
	Rate per 1,000 ↓	Number of arrests ↓	Rate per 1,000 ↓	Number of arrests ↓	Rate per 1,000 ↓	Number of arrests ↓
All	10.8	643,832	11.0	654,597	11.2	668,979
Asian	8.0	44,213	7.7	42,404	8.4	46,396
Black	22.5	54,097	21.3	51,326	20.4	49,243
Mixed	11.8	20,354	11.7	20,105	12.5	21,555
White	8.6	420,051	8.9	433,535	9.4	456,393
Other	7.9	9,927	7.8	9,796	8.5	10,656
Unknown	N/A*	95,190	N/A*	97,431	N/A*	84,736

* Not applicable

[Download table data \(CSV\) \(/crime-justice-and-the-law/policing/number-of-arrests/latest/downloads/by-ethnicity-over-time-table.csv\)](#) [Source data \(CSV\) \(/crime-justice-and-the-law/policing/number-of-arrests/latest/downloads/by-ethnicity-over-time.csv\)](#)

Summary

This data only includes the 3 years between April 2020 and March 2023. It cannot be compared to previous years because it uses different ethnic group categories and population data.

The data shows that, in the 3 years to March 2023:

- the overall arrest rate in England and Wales stayed the same at around 11 arrests for every 1,000 people
- the number of arrests went up by around 25,000
- the arrest rate for black people went down from 22.5 to 20.4 arrests for every 1,000 people
- the arrest rate for every 1,000 people went up in the white (8.6 to 9.4), Asian (8.0 to 8.4) and 'other' (7.9 to 8.5) ethnic groups

5. By ethnicity and area

Location: England and Wales

Time period: April 2022 to March 2023

Source: [Police powers and procedures: England and Wales, year ending 31 March 2023 \(second edition\)](#)
(<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/stop-and-search-and-arrests-year-ending-march-2023>)

Arrest rate for every 1,000 people, and number of arrests, by ethnicity and police force area

Geography	All		Asian		Black		Mixed		White		
	Rate per 1,000	Number of arrests	Rate per 1,000	Number of arrests	Rate per 1,000	Number of arrests	Rate per 1,000	Number of arrests	Rate per 1,000	Number of arrests	Rate per 1,000
All	11.2	668,979	8.4	46,396	20.4	49,243	12.5	21,555	9.4	456,393	8.5
All - excluding Lancashire	11.3	657,217	8.5	45,711	20.5	49,086	12.6	21,376	9.4	447,057	8.5
Avon and Somerset	9.3	16,141	6.7	407	27.8	1,052	14.7	652	7.8	12,364	20.5
Bedfordshire	8.9	6,292	8.7	1,012	18.3	723	13.1	354	7.4	3,771	10.5
Cambridgeshire	8.8	7,873	6.7	473	22.7	419	8.8	237	7.4	5,665	6.9
Cheshire	14.1	15,488	8.6	217	39.6	262	12.0	210	13.9	14,407	25.9
Cleveland	20.5	11,679	12.8	344	32.6	219	35.7	271	19.8	10,326	30.9
Cumbria	14.7	7,362	24.9	122	69.5	83	10.7	43	14.3	6,964	29.8
Derbyshire	10.8	11,381	28.7	1,507	29.2	426	13.3	271	9.0	8,612	13.2
Devon and Cornwall	8.2	14,619	7.0	169	29.7	201	5.0	123	6.7	11,586	6.6
Dorset	6.7	5,217	6.9	123	45.5	242	12.0	187	5.6	4,116	5.0
Durham	14.3	8,982	11.3	122	34.0	83	11.2	72	14.1	8,532	19.3

	All		Asian		Black		Mixed		White		
Dyfed-Powys	11.2	5,781	12.2	71	45.7	59	12.0	59	10.9	5,467	4.7
Essex	9.4	17,405	7.3	568	19.1	1,209	14.0	664	8.3	13,785	9.8
Gloucestershire	9.3	6,004	7.0	129	47.2	367	17.7	250	7.9	4,765	12.3
Greater Manchester	15.3	43,745	10.5	4,075	21.1	2,835	12.9	1,113	12.6	27,697	7.3
Gwent	8.8	5,153	8.0	135	24.8	114	10.6	94	8.5	4,697	13.6
Hampshire	9.9	19,785	8.1	766	31.9	936	14.3	596	8.8	15,994	10.6
Hertfordshire	7.9	9,433	5.1	533	18.8	845	9.6	433	6.8	6,663	6.9
Humberside	16.0	14,980	11.7	225	40.4	308	24.5	273	14.9	13,287	23.0

[Show 25 more rows](#)

* Not applicable

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Summary

The data shows that:

- black people had the highest arrest rate in 38 out of 42 police forces
- in Dorset, black people were 8.1 times as likely to be arrested as white people – the biggest difference in arrest rate out of all police force areas
- in 9 police force areas, Asian people had a higher arrest rate than white people
- in 36 police force areas, the mixed ethnic group had a higher arrest rate than the white ethnic group
- in the Metropolitan Police area, people in the Asian, black, mixed and ‘other’ ethnic groups made up 56% of arrests – the highest percentage out of all police force areas
- differences in arrest rates between areas may reflect population differences in those areas – for example, more people from the Asian, black, mixed and ‘other’ ethnic groups live in London than in North Wales
- in the Metropolitan Police area, there were 10.2 arrests for every 1,000 people from ethnic minority groups, compared with 7.0 arrests for every 1,000 white people
- Cleveland had the highest overall arrest rate, at 20.5 arrests for every 1,000 people
- Dorset (6.7 arrests for every 1,000 people) and Warwickshire (7.1 arrests) had the lowest overall arrest rates

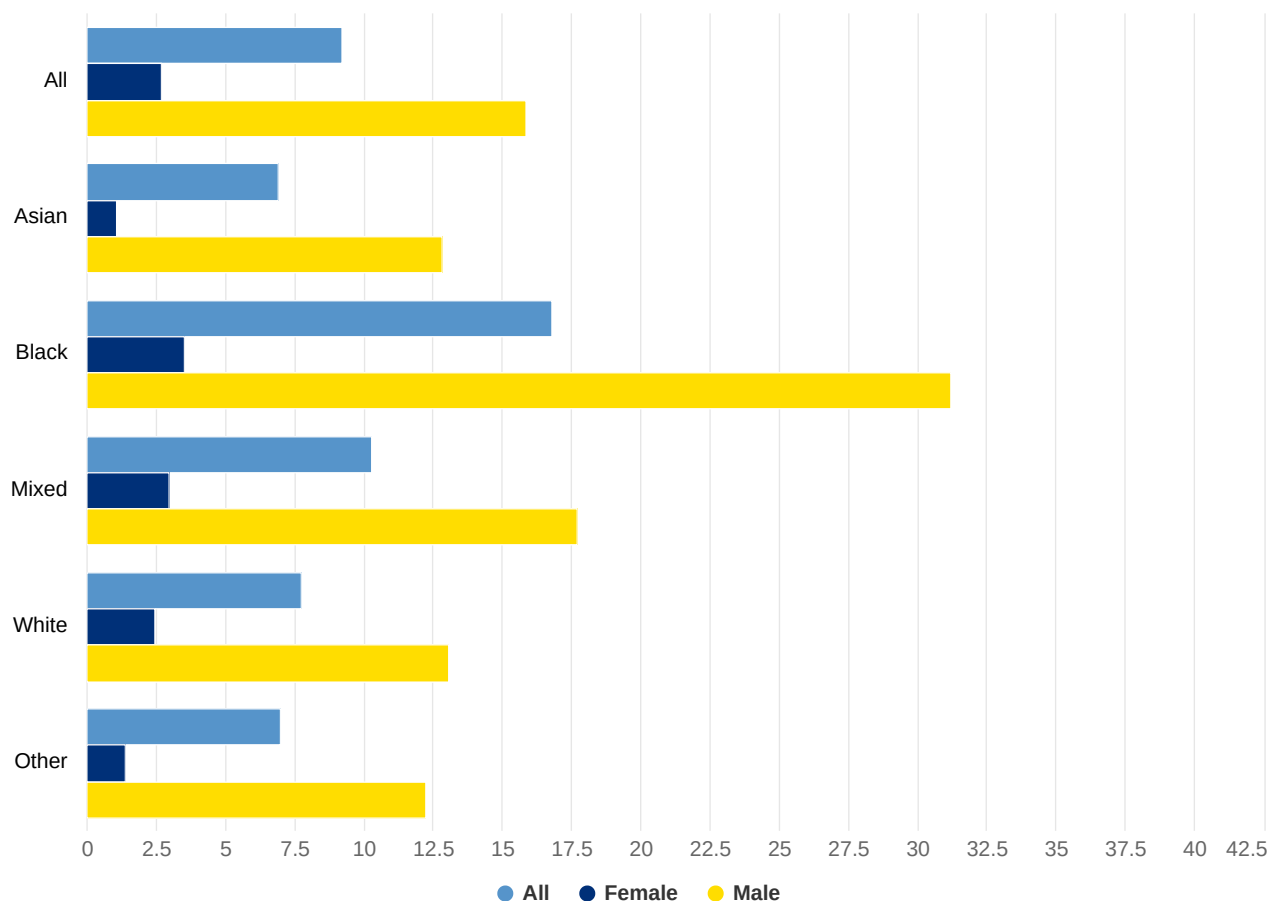
6. By ethnicity and sex

Location: England and Wales

Time period: April 2022 to March 2023

Source:

Arrest rate for every 1,000 people, by ethnicity and sex



[Download chart \(PNG\)](#)

Arrest rate for every 1,000 people, and number of arrests, by ethnicity and sex

Ethnicity	All		Female		Male	
	Rate per 1,000	Number of arrests	Rate per 1,000	Number of arrests	Rate per 1,000	Number of arrests
All	11.2	668,979	3.3	100,709	19.4	566,179
Asian	8.4	46,396	1.3	3,660	15.7	42,573
Bangladeshi	8.7	5,581	1.3	410	15.9	5,147
Chinese	2.8	1,240	1.2	283	4.8	951
Indian	4.5	8,435	0.7	699	8.3	7,695
Pakistani	11.3	17,984	1.6	1,226	20.9	16,695
Asian other	13.5	13,156	2.0	1,042	26.5	12,085
Black	20.4	49,243	4.3	5,413	38.2	43,677
Black African	13.1	19,465	2.6	2,030	24.5	17,362
Black Caribbean	22.7	14,164	4.9	1,660	43.6	12,468
Black other	52.4	15,614	11.5	1,723	93.5	13,847
Mixed	12.5	21,555	3.6	3,196	21.7	18,295

	All		Female		Male	
Mixed White and Asian	5.0	2,421	1.3	325	8.6	2,088
Mixed White and Black African	10.4	2,597	2.9	369	18.1	2,216
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	18.0	9,213	5.3	1,379	31.1	7,816
Mixed other	15.7	7,324	4.6	1,123	27.5	6,175
White	9.4	456,393	3.0	74,595	16.0	381,010
White British	9.2	405,964	3.0	67,403	15.5	337,957
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	17.2	1,165	6.4	218	27.9	944
White Irish	10.7	5,441	3.4	896	18.6	4,531
Roma	0.1	8	0.2	8	0.0	0
White other	11.9	43,815	3.1	6,070	21.9	37,578
Other	8.5	10,656	1.7	1,050	15.0	9,553
Arab	4.8	1,605	0.5	77	8.6	1,520
Any Other Ethnic Background	9.8	9,051	2.1	973	17.4	8,033
Unknown	N/A*	84,736	N/A*	12,795	N/A*	71,071

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* Not applicable

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Summary

The data shows that:

- there were 19.4 arrests for every 1,000 men, and 3.3 for every 1,000 women
- black men were 2.4 times as likely to be arrested as white men – there were 38.2 arrests for every 1,000 black men, and 16.0 for every 1,000 white men
- black women were 1.4 times as likely to be arrested as white women – there were 4.3 arrests for every 1,000 black women, and 3.0 for every 1,000 white women
- Asian men were 12 times as likely to be arrested as Asian women – there were 15.7 arrests for every 1,000 men, and 1.3 for every 1,000 women

7. Data sources

Source

[Police powers and procedures: England and Wales, year ending 31 March 2023 \(second edition\) \(https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/stop-and-search-and-arrests-year-ending-march-2023\)](#)

Type of data

Administrative data

Type of statistic

National Statistics

Publication frequency
Yearly

Purpose of data source

Figures on arrests and stop and search reported to the Home Office are used to create greater transparency in the use of police powers in England and Wales. They make the police more accountable by enabling the public to monitor them locally and nationally.

The data is used to form a national picture of the trends in arrests and stop and search. It informs discussions about crime, policing and criminal justice in government and academia, and ensures the public are accurately informed.

8. Download the data

[Arrests data 2006 to 2010 - Spreadsheet \(csv\) 17 MB \(/crime-justice-and-the-law/policing/number-of-arrests/latest/downloads/arrests-data-2006-to-2010.csv\)](#)

This file contains the following: measure, ethnicity, year, gender, age group, geography, numbers of arrests, rates of arrests, population estimates

[Arrests data 2010 to 2015 - Spreadsheet \(csv\) 21 MB \(/crime-justice-and-the-law/policing/number-of-arrests/latest/downloads/arrests-data-2010-to-2015.csv\)](#)

This file contains the following: measure, ethnicity, year, gender, age group, geography, numbers of arrests, rates of arrests, population estimates

[Arrests data 2015 to 2020 - Spreadsheet \(csv\) 22 MB \(/crime-justice-and-the-law/policing/number-of-arrests/latest/downloads/arrests-data-2015-to-2020.csv\)](#)

This file contains the following: measure, ethnicity, year, gender, age group, geography, numbers of arrests, rates of arrests, population estimates

[Arrests data 2020 to 2023 - Spreadsheet \(csv\) 30 MB \(/crime-justice-and-the-law/policing/number-of-arrests/latest/downloads/arrests-data-2020-to-2023.csv\)](#)

This file contains the following: measure, ethnicity, year, gender, age group, geography, numbers of arrests, rates of arrests, population estimates

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