

# Ethnic groups and sector employment profiles for understanding COVID-19 and inequalities in the West Midlands Region

## Introduction:

This piece provides ethnic occupational data (*ONS Annual Population Survey, 2019*) to understand occupational inequalities likely to present as a result of an increased exposure to infection and, through exposure to loss of income in the West Midlands. The analysis looks at a) whether certain occupations are disproportionately covered by minority groups and b) the gender split employment rate within ethnic groups which can help to understand economic household compositions and the impact shut down sectors may have on existing inequalities.

Alongside the data, it is important to acknowledge the complex intersectionality of health inequalities and the impact of COVID-19. This piece aims to complement work being carried out to understand the relationship between health and wealth and population risk in the West Midlands to assist our partners and stakeholders.

## Summary:

- Healthcare workers have the highest increased risk due to exposure to infection and in the West Midlands, Black ethnic group has the largest proportion of their population working in this sector.
- Transport and storage workers are at increased risk due to exposure to public and in the West Midlands, Pakistani ethnic group has the largest proportion of their population working in this sector.
- Workers in *shutdown* sectors have an increased risk of exposure to loss of income and in the West Midlands, Pakistani ethnic group has the largest proportion of their population working in wholesale and retail trade whilst 'other Asian ethnic group'<sup>1</sup> has the largest proportion of their population working in accommodation and food services.
- Impact of shutdown sectors can also be understood in the context of the employment gender gap and in the West Midlands, Pakistani ethnic group has the greatest employment rate gap between male and female followed by 'other ethnic group'<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Other Asian ethnic group': any other Asian background which is NOT Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi or Chinese (*ONS ethnic group classifications* <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/ethnic-groups>)

<sup>2</sup> 'Other ethnic group' within employment rate gender gap: Includes Arab ethnicity and any other ethnic group which is NOT White, Mixed, Asian or Black (*ONS ethnic group classifications* <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/ethnic-groups>)

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## Sectors with increased exposure to infection:

### **Health and social work sector**

Health and social work workers have an increased exposure to infection and health risks, including mortality due to contact with infected persons. The black ethnic group in the West Midlands has the largest proportion within its population working within this sector (33.6%) followed by 'other Asian background' (18.9%). This is similar picture to national figures with the black ethnic group also having the largest proportion within its population working within this sector (26.9%) followed by 'other Asian background' (20.8%).

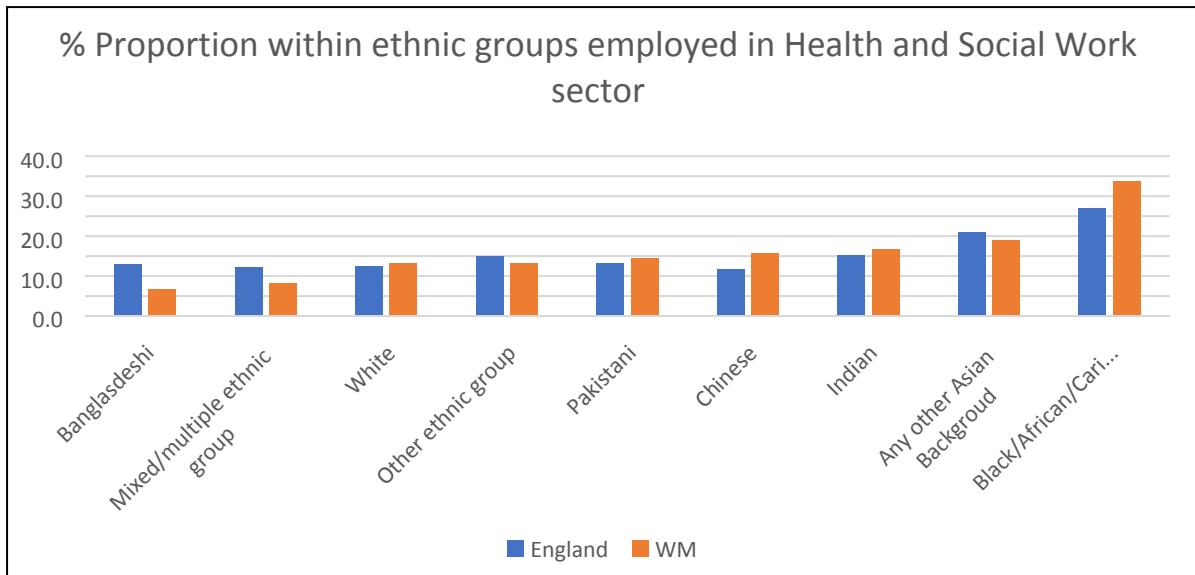


Figure 1

**Transport & storage sector**

Transport workers have an increased exposure to infection and health risks, including mortality due to contact with members of general public. The Pakistani ethnic group in the West Midlands has the largest proportion within its population working within this sector (17.2%) followed by Bangladeshi ethnic group (15.5%). This is similar picture to national figures with Pakistani ethnic group also having the largest proportion within its population working within this sector (15.1%) followed by Bangladeshi ethnic group (10.6%).

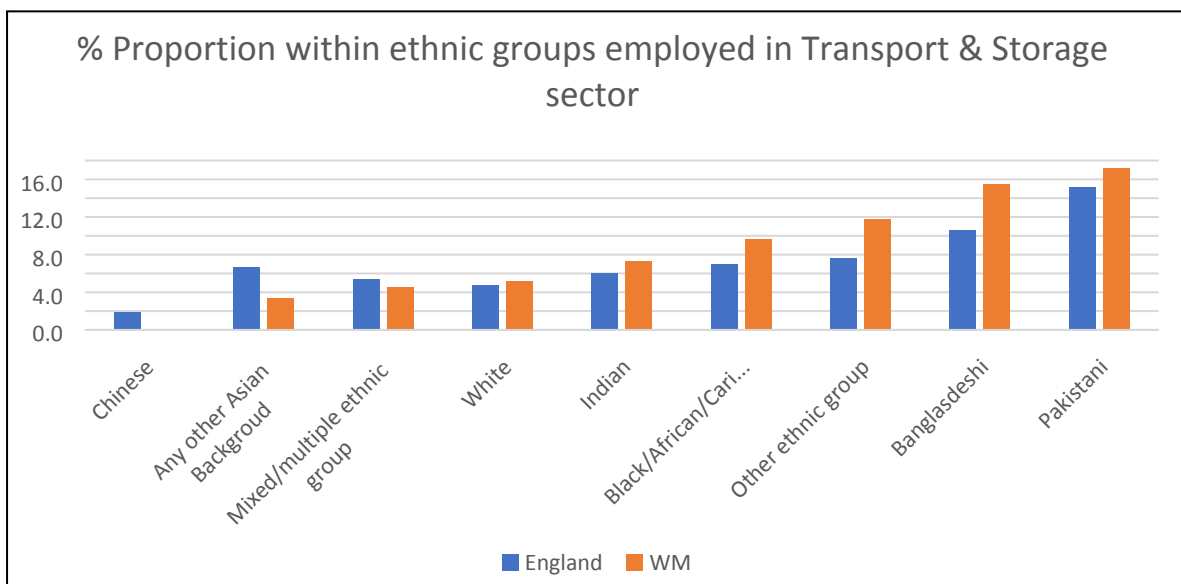


Figure 2

## Sectors with increased exposure to loss of income:

### Wholesale and retail trade sector

Workers in wholesale and retail have an increased exposure to loss of income working in a shutdown sector. The Pakistani ethnic group in the West Midlands has the largest proportion within its population working within this sector (17.6%) followed by Bangladeshi ethnic group (17.5%). This is similar picture to national figures with Pakistani ethnic group also having the largest proportion within its population working within this sector (20.4%) followed by Bangladeshi ethnic group (16.7%).

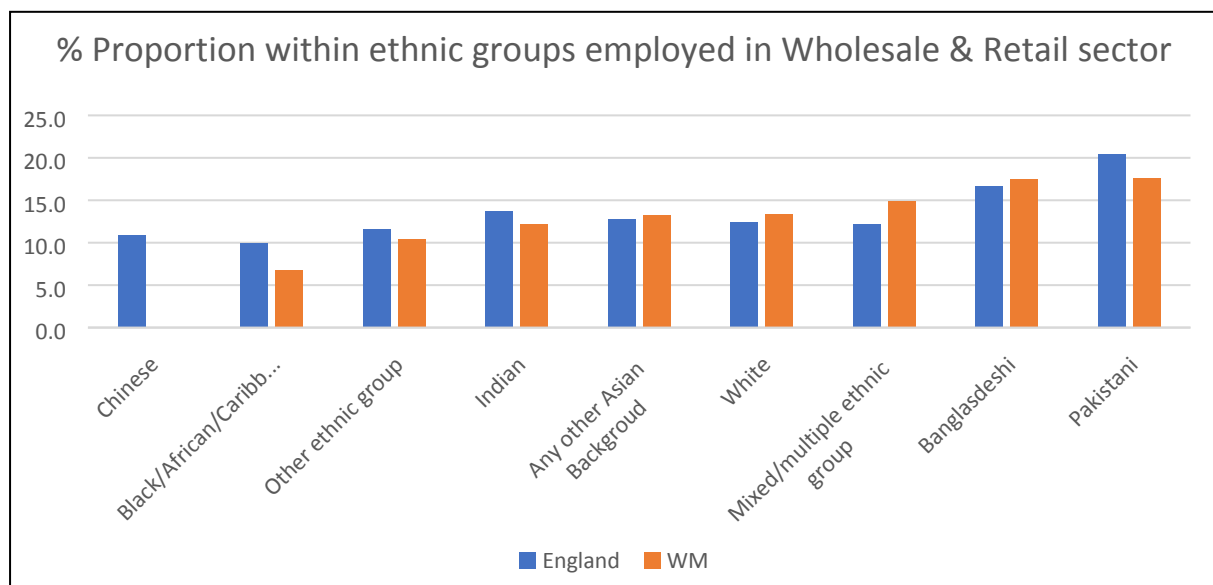


Figure 3

### Accommodation and food sector

Workers in accommodation and food sector have an increased exposure to loss of income of working in a shutdown sector. The 'any other Asian background' ethnic group in the West Midlands has the largest proportion within its population working within this sector (26.9%) followed by Chinese ethnic group (25.3%). This is different to the national picture with Bangladeshi having the largest proportion within its population working within this sector (18.2%) followed by Chinese ethnic group (13.6%).

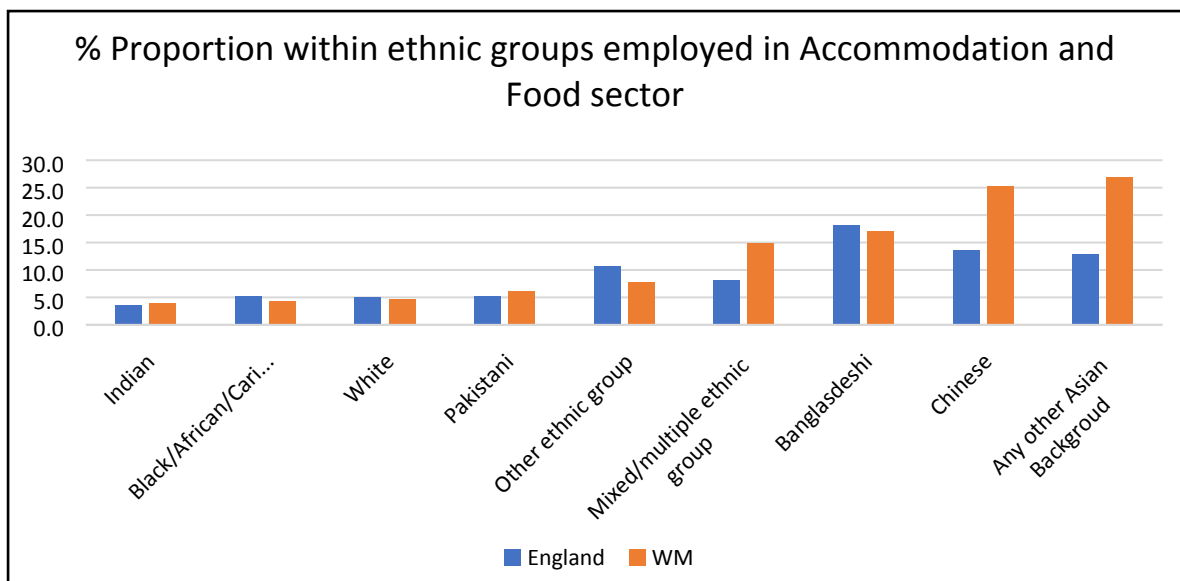


Figure 4

### **Black/African/Caribbean/Black British ethnic group % of workforce:**

The black ethnic group accounts for 3.9% of the West Midlands total workforce and accounts for 9.4% of the West Midlands ‘human health & social work’ workforce and 6.3% of the West Midlands ‘transport & storage’ workforce. Comparatively, in England this group accounts for 3.5% of total workforce and 7.3% of ‘human health & social work’ workforce and 4.8% of ‘transport and storage’ workforce.

### **Sector employment:**

In the West Midlands, 33.6% of black ethnic group are employed in ‘human health & social work’ sector, followed by ‘transport & storage’ (9.6%) and then ‘public administration and defence’ (8.8%). Comparatively, in England 26.9% of black ethnic group are employed in ‘human health & social work’ sector, followed by ‘wholesale & retail’ (10%) and then ‘education’ (8.1%).

### **Employment rate:**

Working age population employment rate is 62.7% in the West Midlands and 61.1% in WMCA, both lower than national average of 67.9%. Male employment is 67.1% in the West Midlands and 64.3% in WMCA, both lower than national average of 72.4%. Female employment rate lower than male and is 59.1% in the West Midlands and 58.6% in WMCA, both lower than national average of 63.8%.

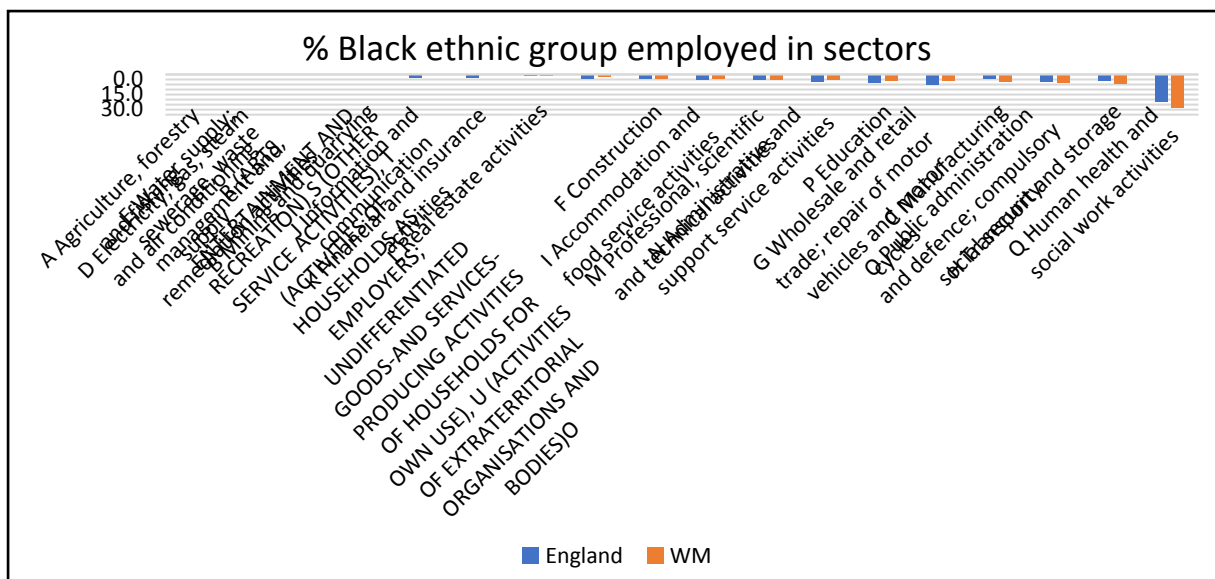


Figure 5

**Mixed/multiple ethnic group  
% of workforce:**

The mixed ethnic group workforce accounts for 1.1% of the West Midlands total workforce and accounts for 0.6% 'human health & social work' workforce. Comparatively, in England this group accounts for 1.3% of total workforce and 1.2% of 'human health & social work' workforce.

**Sector employment:**

In the West Midlands, 14.9% of mixed ethnic group are employed in 'accommodation and food services' whilst 14.9% are also employed in 'wholesale & retail trade', followed by 'education' 11.4%. Comparatively, in England 12.2% of mixed ethnic group are employed in 'human health & social work' sector and 12.2% are also employed in 'wholesale & retail trade' followed by 'education' (11.2%).

**Employment rate:**

Working age population employment rate is 60.4% in the West Midlands and 58.2% in WMCA, both lower than national average of 69.4%. Male employment rate is 64.4% in the West Midlands and 58.7% in WMCA, lower than national average of 74.6%. Female employment rate is lower than male and is 51.7% in the West Midlands and 57.7% in WMCA. Both lower than national average of 65.4%.

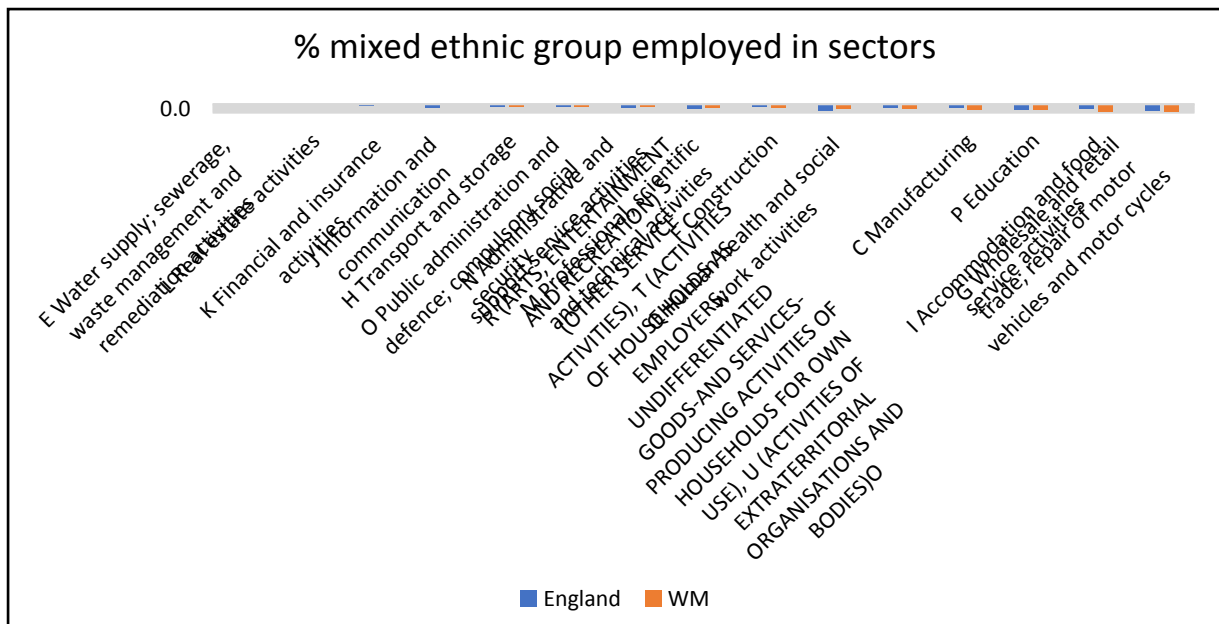


Figure 6

**Indian ethnic group  
% of workforce:**

The Indian ethnic group account for 5.1% of the West Midlands total workforce and 6% of ‘human health & social work’ workforce and 6.2% of ‘transport & storage’ workforce. Comparatively, in England this group accounts for 3.2% of total workforce and 3.7% of ‘human health & social work’ workforce and 3.8% of ‘transport & storage’ workforce.

**Sector employment:**

In the West Midlands, 16.6% of Indian ethnic group are employed in ‘human health & social work’ sector, followed by ‘manufacturing’ (12.6%) and ‘wholesale & retail’ (12.2%). Comparatively, in England 15.2% of Indian group are employed in ‘human health & social work’ sector and 13.7% are employed in ‘wholesale & retail trade’ followed by ‘information & communication’ (10.6%).

**Employment rate:**

Working age population employment rate is 72.7% in the West Midlands and 72.3% in WMCA, both lower than national average of 75.1%. Male employment rate is 77.9% in the West Midlands and 77.1% in WMCA, both lower than national average of 81.2%. Female employment is lower than male, and 67.4% in the West Midlands and 67.3% in WMCA. Both lower than national average of 68.6%.



Figure 7

**Pakistani ethnic group  
% of workforce:**

The Pakistani ethnic group accounts for 3.4% of the West Midlands total workforce and 3.5% of ‘human health & social work’ workforce and 9.7% of ‘transport & storage’ workforce. Comparatively, in England this group accounts for 1.7% of total workforce and 1.7% of ‘human health & social work’ workforce and 5.2% of ‘transport & storage’ workforce.

**Sector employment:**

In the West Midlands, 17.6% of Pakistani ethnic group are employed in ‘wholesale & retail’, followed by ‘transport & storage’ (17.2%) and then ‘human health & social work’ (14.5%). Comparatively, in England 20.4% of Pakistani ethnic group are employed in ‘wholesale & retail’, followed by ‘transport & storage’ (15.1%) and then ‘human health & social work’ (13.1%).

**Employment rate (Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic group):**

Working age population employment rate is 54.3% in the West Midlands and 53.5% in WMCA, both lower than national average of 56.3%. Male employment rate is 75.1% in the West Midlands and 74% in WMCA, similar to the national average of 74%. Female employment rate is lower than male and is 33.3% in the West and 32.4% in WMCA. Both lower than national average of 38.1%.





Figure 8

### Bangladeshi ethnic group

#### % of workforce:

The Bangladeshi ethnic group accounts for 0.9% of the West Midlands total workforce and 0.4% of ‘human health & social work’ workforce and 2.3% of ‘transport & storage’ workforce. Comparatively, in England this group accounts for 0.7% of total workforce and 0.7% of ‘human health & social work’ workforce and 1.5% of ‘transport & storage’ workforce.

#### Sector employment:

In the West Midlands, 17.5% of Bangladeshi ethnic group are employed in ‘wholesale & retail’, followed by ‘accommodation & food services’ (17.1%) and then ‘transport & storage’ (15.5%). Comparatively, in England 18.2% of Bangladeshi ethnic group are employed in ‘accommodation & food services’, followed by ‘wholesale & retail’ (16.7%) and then ‘human health & social work’ (12.9%).

#### Employment rate:

Please see Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic group above.



Figure 9

**Chinese ethnic group  
% of workforce:**

The Chinese ethnic group account for 0.3% of the West Midlands total workforce and 0.3% of ‘human health & social work’ workforce. Comparatively, in England this group accounts for 0.5% of the total workforce and 0.4% of ‘human health & social work’ workforce.

**Sector employment:**

In the West Midlands, 25.3% of Chinese ethnic group are employed in ‘accommodation & food services’, followed by “human health & social work’ (25.7%) and then ‘education’ (14.5%). Comparatively, in England 17.3% of Chinese ethnic group are employed in ‘professional, scientific and technical’ sector, followed by ‘accommodation & food services’ (13.6%) and then ‘human health & social work’ (11.7%).

**Employment rate (‘Other’ ethnic group: Chinese, any other Asian background and Arab):**

Working age population employment rate is 58.1% in the West Midlands and 55.3% in WMCA, both lower than national average of 64.4%. Male employment rate is 72.8% in the West Midlands and 70.7% in WMCA, both similar to the national average of 72.8%. Female employment rate is lower than male and is 42% in the West Midlands and 37.1% in WMCA. Both lower than national average of 56.9%.

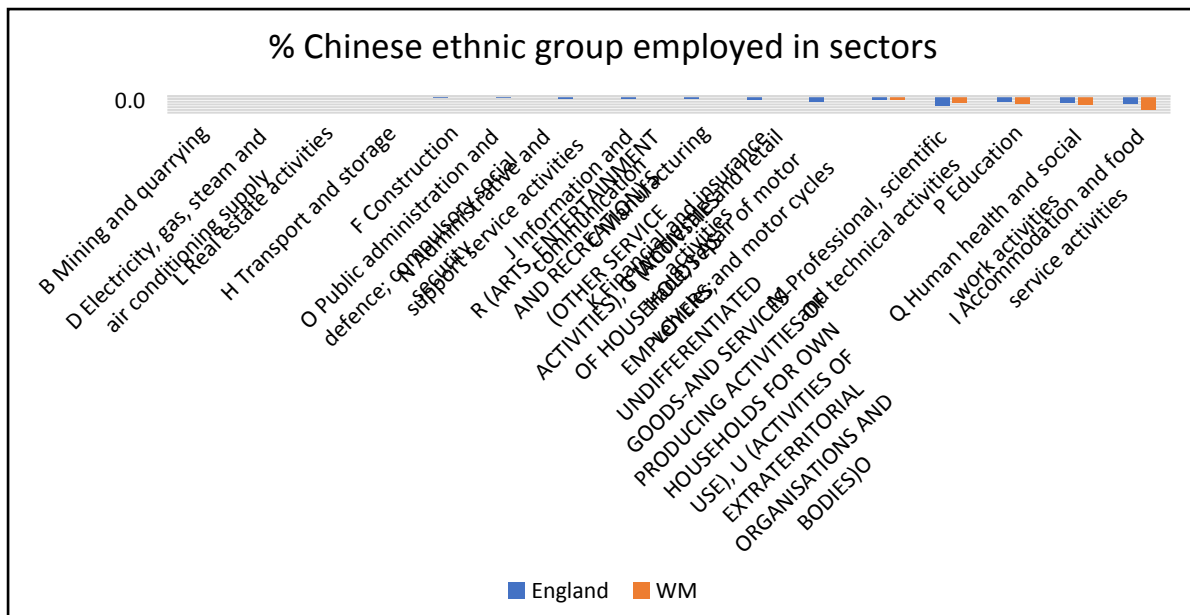


Figure 10

**Any other Asian background ethnic group  
% of workforce:**

The Any other Asian background ethnic group account for 0.8% the West Midlands workforce and 1% of the ‘human health & social work’ workforce. Comparatively, in England this group accounts for 1.3% of the total workforce and 2.1% of ‘human health & social work’ workforce and 1.7% of the ‘transport & storage’ workforce.

**Sector employment:**

In the West Midlands, 26.9% of other Asian background ethnic group are employed in ‘accommodation & food services’, followed by ‘human health & social work’ (18.9%) and then ‘wholesale & retail’ (13.2%). Comparatively, in England 20.8% of other Asian background ethnic group are employed in ‘human health & social work’ sector, followed by ‘accommodation & food services’ (12.9%) and then ‘human health & social work’ (12.8%).

**Employment rate:**

Please see ‘Other’ ethnic group: Chinese, any other Asian background and Arab above.



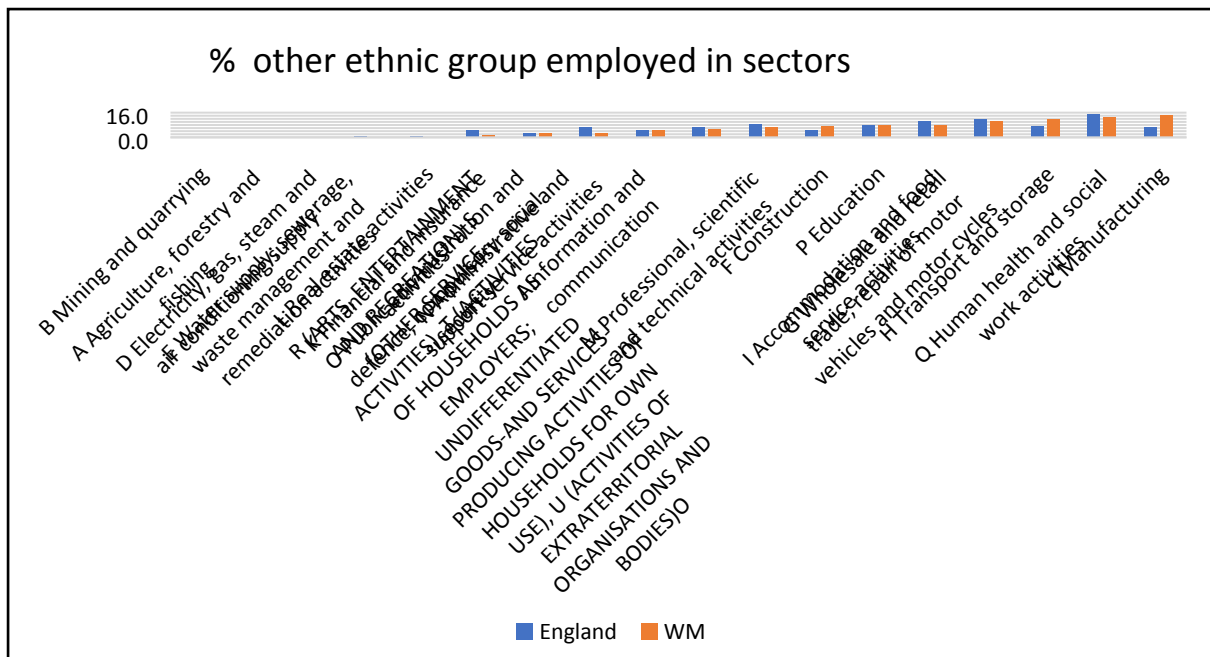


Figure 12

**White ethnic group for comparison:**

**% employees within sectors from White ethnic group:**

The white ethnic group account for 83% of workers the West Midlands workforce and 77.4% of ‘human health & social work’ workforce. Comparatively, in England this group account for slightly more of the workforce at 85.9% and 80.8% of ‘human health & social work’ workforce.

**Sector employment:**

In the West Midlands, 13.3% of White ethnic group are employed in ‘wholesale & retail trade’, followed by ‘human health & social work’ (13.2%) and then ‘manufacturing’ (12.7%). Comparatively, in England 12.4% of White ethnic group are employed in ‘wholesale & retail trade’, followed by ‘human health & social work’ (12.3%) and then ‘education (11%)’.

**Employment rate:**

Working age population employment rate is 76.6% in the West Midlands and 72.9% in WMCA, both lower than national average of 77.7%. Male employment rate is 79.8% in the West Midlands and 75.9% in WMCA, both lower than the national average of 81.3%. Female employment rate is lower than male and is 73.4% in the West and 70% in WMCA. Both lower than national average of 74.1%.

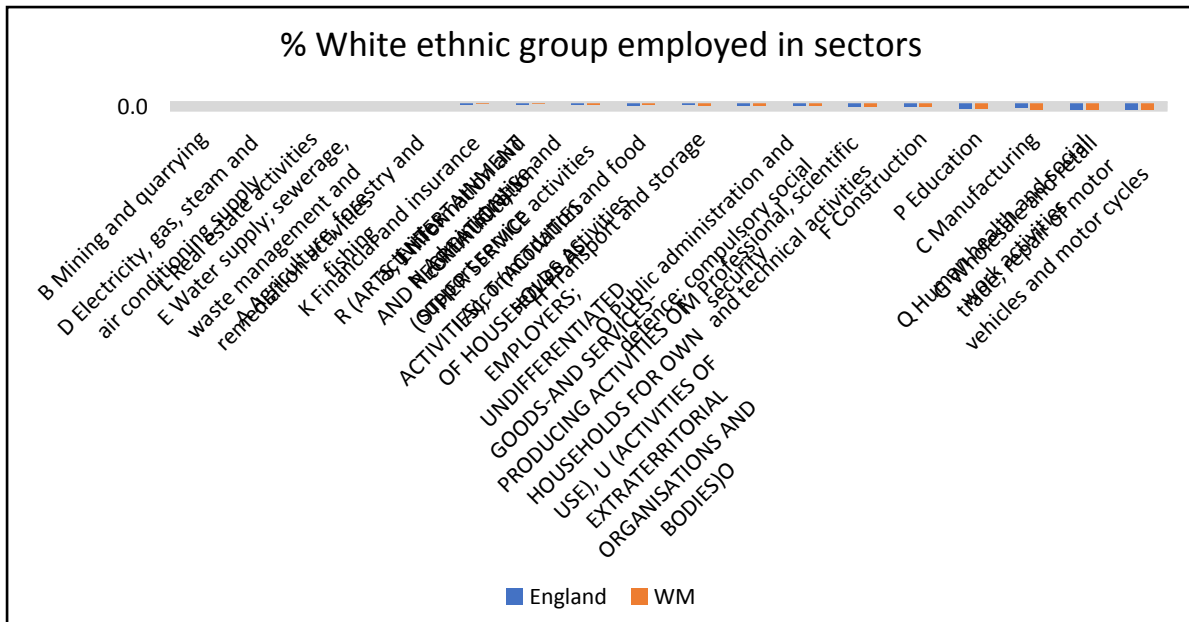


Figure 13

**Employment rate gender gap summary:**

The employment rate gender gap for the West Midlands is 9.6% and for WMCA area this is 11.2%, both greater than national average of 8.9%. In the West Midlands Pakistani ethnic group has largest employment rate gap (41.8%) and this is the same for WMCA (41.8%) and national average (35.9%). This is followed by 'other ethnic group' which has a gap of 30.8% in the West Midlands and 33.6% in WMCA, this is much greater than national average of 15.9%.

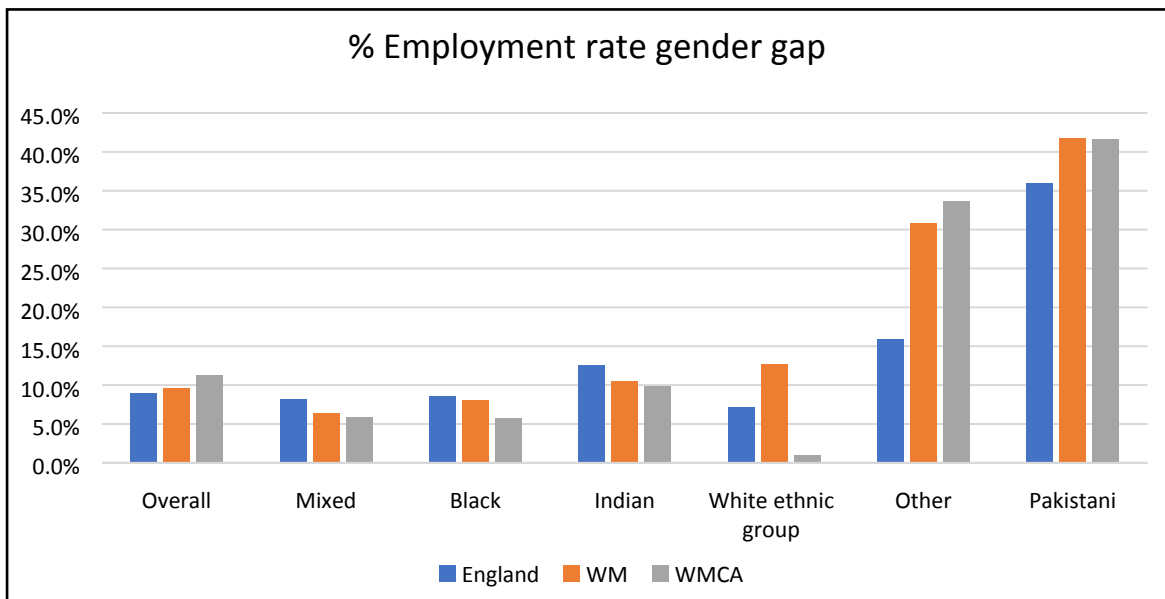


Figure 14

**Data source:**

The ONS Annual Population Survey 2019 is a household sample based survey and provides figures for April 2018 to March 2019

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/articles/1167.aspx>