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GOFAL A LLESIANT **GOGLEDD CYMRU**
NORTH WALES SOCIAL CARE AND WELL-BEING
SERVICES IMPROVEMENT COLLABORATIVE

2021 Census

Topic summary: religion

December 2022



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Betsi Cadwaladr
University Health Board



Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
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Wales



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YNYS MÔN
ISLE OF ANGLESEY
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CONWY
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COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL



Cyngor
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County Council



CYNGOR
Sir y Fflint
Flintshire
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wrexham
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Introduction

This bulletin looks at the topic summary data from the 2021 Census for England and Wales about the religion of usual residents and household religious composition. The data was published on 29 November 2022 by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). It provides unrounded population and household estimates at North Wales and unitary authority level.

The census introduced a voluntary question on religion in 2001. In the census data, religion refers to a person's religious affiliation. This is the religion with which they connect or identify, rather than their beliefs or active religious practice.

In this bulletin percentages are calculated out of the overall population as opposed to out of the population who answered the religion question. This aids comparison across time and between areas, as the percentage of the population who answer the question varies.

The ONS has also published [Religion, England and Wales: Census 2021 in England and Wales \(Office for National Statistics\)](#) which includes some data down to output area.

More data will be released in phases until the end of 2023 and will include detailed data at small area level about people, households and living arrangements, work and housing/amenities.

Changes between 2011 and 2021 may reflect how the Covid 19 pandemic affected people's choice of usual residence on Census Day (21 March 2021). Census results for Gwynedd in particular are likely to have been affected by where students were counted. These changes might have been temporary for some and more long-lasting for others. It is also not clear how exiting the European Union has affected population change in Wales and across the UK.

Main points

- In North Wales there was a significant increase between 2011 and 2021 in the number and proportion of people who said they had no religion. This was balanced by a significant decrease in those who identified as Christian.
- In 2021, 286,722 usual residents reported that they had no religion. This was 41.7% of the population and was a significant increase from 26.9% in 2011. The proportion was highest in Gwynedd at 44.2% and lowest in Flintshire and Anglesey at 40.7%.
- Across Wales as a whole more people reported they had no religion (46.5%) than any single religious affiliation. For England and Wales the percentage was 37.2%.
- The proportion of people who identified as Christian was 49.8% or 341,972 people. This was a significant decrease since 2011 (63.9%). The proportion was highest in Flintshire and Anglesey at 51.5% and lowest in Gwynedd at 46.2%. Denbighshire and Wrexham also had less than half of the population identifying as Christian. (Wales in 2021 = 43.6% and England and Wales = 46.2%).
- The population of North Wales is less religiously diverse than national averages. A total of 12,353 people or 1.8% of the population identified with a religion other than Christian. This compares to 3.6% for Wales and 10.6% for England and Wales as a whole.
- In 2021 this included 0.8% of the population who identified as Muslim (5,326 usual residents) which was the second largest religion. The proportion was highest in Wrexham at 1.1% and lowest in Flintshire and Anglesey at 0.5%. (Wales in 2021 = 2.2% and England and Wales = 6.5%).
- There was little change from 2011 in the proportions of the population identifying with religious groups other than Christian for North Wales as a whole or for individual unitary authority areas.

The key results for North Wales

- 641,229 respondents in North Wales (93.3%) chose to answer the voluntary religion question in 2021. More people answered than in 2011 when 92.2% answered.
- 286,722 usual residents reported that they had no religion. This was 41.7% of the population and was a significant increase from 26.9% or 184,762 people in 2011.
- Across Wales as a whole more people reported they had no religion (46.5%) than any single religious affiliation. For England and Wales the percentage was 37.2%.
- The proportion of people who identified as Christian was 49.8% or 341,972 people. This was a significant decrease since 2011 when the figure was 63.9% of usual residents or 439,412 people. (Wales in 2021 = 43.6% and England and Wales = 46.2%).
- The proportion of the population identifying as Christian decreased in all North Wales local authorities between 2011 and 2021.
- There was little change from 2011 in the proportions of the population identifying with other religious groups. A total of 12,353 people or 1.8% of the population identified with a religion other than Christian. This was 1.5% in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 3.6% and England and Wales = 10.6%).
- This included 0.8% of the population who identified as Muslim (5,326 usual residents) which was the second largest religion. This is an increase from 0.6% in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 2.2% and England and Wales = 6.5%).

The key results for the Isle of Anglesey

- 64,433 respondents on the Isle of Anglesey (93.5%) chose to answer the voluntary religion question in 2021. More people answered than in 2011 when 91.8% answered.
- 28,066 usual residents reported that they had no religion. This was 40.7% of the population and was a significant increase from 25.5% or 17,797 people in 2011. The 2021 rate was higher than the rate for England and Wales as a whole (37.2%). The rate for Wales in 2021 was 46.5%.
- The proportion of people who identified as Christian was 51.5% or 35,485 people. This was a significant decrease since 2011 when the figure was 65.1% of usual residents or 45,400 people. (Wales in 2021 = 43.6% and England and Wales = 46.2%).
- There was little change from 2011 in the proportions of the population identifying with other religious groups. A total of 882 people or 1.3% of the population identified with a religion other than Christian. This was 1.1% in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 3.6% and England and Wales = 10.6%).
- This included 0.5% of the population who identified as Muslim (328 usual residents) which was the second largest religion. This is an increase from 0.4% in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 2.2% and England and Wales = 6.5%).

The key results for Gwynedd

- 108,883 respondents in Gwynedd (92.7%) chose to answer the voluntary religion question in 2021. More people answered than in 2011 when 91.4% answered.
- 51,941 usual residents reported that they had no religion. This was 44.2% of the population and was a significant increase from 29.7% or 36,163 people in 2011. The 2021 rate was higher than the rate for England and Wales as a whole (37.2%). The rate for Wales in 2021 was 46.5%.
- The proportion of people who identified as Christian was 46.2% or 54,249 people. This was a significant decrease since 2011 when the figure was 59.5% of usual residents or 72,503 people. (Wales in 2021 = 43.6% and England and Wales = 46.2%).
- There was little change from 2011 in the proportions of the population identifying with other religious groups. A total of 2,693 people or 2.3% of the population identified with a religion other than Christian. This was also 2.3% in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 3.6% and England and Wales = 10.6%).
- This included 1.0% of the population who identified as Muslim (1,137 usual residents) which was the second largest religion. This is a decrease from 1.1% in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 2.2% and England and Wales = 6.5%).

The key results for Conwy County Borough

- 107,417 respondents in Conwy County Borough (93.6%) chose to answer the voluntary religion question in 2021. More people answered than in 2011 when 92.2% answered.
- 46,946 usual residents reported that they had no religion. This was 40.9% of the population and was a significant increase from 26.1% or 30,017 people in 2011. The 2021 rate was higher than the rate for England and Wales as a whole (37.2%). The rate for Wales in 2021 was 46.5%.
- The proportion of people who identified as Christian was 50.8% or 58,283 people. This was a significant decrease since 2011 when the figure was 64.7% of usual residents or 74,506 people. (Wales in 2021 = 43.6% and England and Wales = 46.2%).
- There was little change from 2011 in the proportions of the population identifying with other religious groups. A total of 2,188 people or 1.9% of the population identified with a religion other than Christian. This was 1.5% in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 3.6% and England and Wales = 10.6%).
- This included 0.7% of the population who identified as Muslim (842 usual residents) which was the second largest religion. This is an increase from 0.5% in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 2.2% and England and Wales = 6.5%).

The key results for Denbighshire

- 89,361 respondents in Denbighshire (93.3%) chose to answer the voluntary religion question in 2021. More people answered than in 2011 when 92.3% answered.
- 40,297 usual residents reported that they had no religion. This was 42.1% of the population and was a significant increase from 26.8% or 25,132 people in 2011. The 2021 rate was higher than the rate for England and Wales as a whole (37.2%). The rate for Wales in 2021 was 46.5%.
- The proportion of people who identified as Christian was 49.3% or 47,226 people. This was a significant decrease since 2011 when the figure was 64.1% of usual residents or 60,129 people. (Wales in 2021 = 43.6% and England and Wales = 46.2%).
- There was little change from 2011 in the proportions of the population identifying with other religious groups. A total of 1,838 people or 1.9% of the population identified with a religion other than Christian. This was 1.4% in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 3.6% and England and Wales = 10.6%).
- This included 0.8% of the population who identified as Muslim (740 usual residents) which was the second largest religion. This is an increase from 0.5% in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 2.2% and England and Wales = 6.5%).

The key results for Flintshire

- 144,859 respondents in Flintshire (93.5%) chose to answer the voluntary religion question in 2021. More people answered than in 2011 when 92.8% answered.
- 62,995 usual residents reported that they had no religion. This was 40.7% of the population and was a significant increase from 25.4% or 38,726 people in 2011. The 2021 rate was higher than the rate for England and Wales as a whole (37.2%). The rate for Wales in 2021 was 46.5%.
- The proportion of people who identified as Christian was 51.5% or 79,849 people. This was a significant decrease since 2011 when the figure was 66.4% of usual residents or 101,298 people. (Wales in 2021 = 43.6% and England and Wales = 46.2%).
- There was little change from 2011 in the proportions of the population identifying with other religious groups. A total of 2,015 people or 1.3% of the population identified with a religion other than Christian. This was 0.9% in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 3.6% and England and Wales = 10.6%).
- This included 0.5% of the population who identified as Muslim (739 usual residents) which was the second largest religion. This is an increase from 0.3% in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 2.2% and England and Wales = 6.5%).

The key results for Wrexham

- 126,276 respondents in Wrexham (93.5%) chose to answer the voluntary religion question in 2021. More people answered than in 2011 when 92.5% answered.
- 56,477 usual residents reported that they had no religion. This was 41.8% of the population and was a significant increase from 27.4% or 36,927 people in 2011. The 2021 rate was higher than the rate for England and Wales as a whole (37.2%). The rate for Wales in 2021 was 46.5%.
- The proportion of people who identified as Christian was 49.5% or 66,880 people. This was a significant decrease since 2011 when the figure was 63.5% of usual residents or 85,576 people. (Wales in 2021 = 43.6% and England and Wales = 46.2%).
- There was little change from 2011 in the proportions of the population identifying with other religious groups. A total of 2,919 people or 2.2% of the population identified with a religion other than Christian. This was 1.6% in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 3.6% and England and Wales = 10.6%).
- This included 1.1% of the population who identified as Muslim (1,540 usual residents) which was the second largest religion. This is an increase from 0.6% in 2011. (Wales in 2021 = 2.2% and England and Wales = 6.5%).

About the Census

The census happens every 10 years and gives us a picture of all the people and households in England and Wales.

Your answers to census questions help organisations make decisions on planning and funding public services in your area, including transport, education and healthcare.

Census Day was on Sunday 21 March 2021.

[As data from the 2021 Census becomes available, the Regional Innovation Coordination Hub website will be publishing key results and providing analysis for North Wales and our unitary authority areas.](https://www.northwalescollaborative.wales/census/)

(<https://www.northwalescollaborative.wales/census/>)

[A statistical bulletin summarising the key results for Wales is available.](https://gov.wales/ethnic-group-national-identity-language-and-religion-wales-census-2021-html)

(<https://gov.wales/ethnic-group-national-identity-language-and-religion-wales-census-2021-html>)

[The main census website](https://census.gov.uk/) is:

<https://census.gov.uk/>

[Welsh Government's main Census website](https://gov.wales/census-population) is:

<https://gov.wales/census-population>

The full [release schedule for the 2021 Census](https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/censustransformationprogramme/census2021output/s/releaseplans) is available.

(<https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/censustransformationprogramme/census2021output/s/releaseplans>)