

# Ethnic profile: White Other population in Tower Hamlets



2011 Census factsheet (July 2015)

## Summary

This briefing provides a profile of the 'White Other' ethnic group population in Tower Hamlets. All figures are from the 2011 Census.

- 12 per cent of the Tower Hamlets population – 31,550 residents - belong to the White Other ethnic group, similar to the London average (13 per cent), but higher than proportion nationally (5 per cent, England).
- The White Other group is the third largest ethnic group in the borough, after the White British and Bangladeshi groups, who account for 31 and 32 per cent of the population respectively.
- The White Other population is one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in the borough: the population more than doubled between 2001 and 2011 from 12,825 to 31,550 - a rise of 18,725 in population numbers and a percentage rise of 146 per cent. The proportion of the borough's population from the White Other group grew from 7 to 12 per cent between 2001 and 2011, mirroring trends regionally and nationally.
- The White Other population is very diverse: the majority (92 per cent) were born outside the UK and the population includes residents from a wide range of backgrounds (eg Western and Eastern Europeans, Australians, Americans).
- The White Other population has a distinct age profile characterised by a large concentration of young adults: 75 per cent were aged 20-39, far higher than the borough average of 49 per cent.
- White Other residents are more likely to be in good health compared to the population generally, consistent with their younger age profile: 93 per cent described their health as good or very good, 10 points higher than the borough average (83 per cent).
- White Other households are the most likely, of all ethnic groups, to live in the private rented sector: almost two thirds (65 per cent) of all White Other households were living in privately rented accommodation compared to just over one third of all borough households (34 per cent).
- White Other households are less likely than average to contain dependent children, but more likely to be in the 'other' household type group which includes sharer households (ie groups of individuals, often unrelated, sharing a home).
- White Other residents have the highest employment rate across all ethnic groups: 80 per cent of White Other adults (excluding those who were retired) were in employment compared with 64 per cent for all adults.
- White Other residents are less likely to be unemployed compared with other groups: the unemployment rate for White Other adults was 6 per cent compared with an average of 12 per cent for the population.
- White Other residents were relatively well qualified compared with other groups: 58 per cent had higher level qualifications compared with a borough average of 41 per cent.

## Ethnic group profile: The White Other population in Tower Hamlets

### About the Census

The Census aims to provide a count of all people and households in the UK and is carried out every ten years by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The Census took place in March 2011 and the questionnaire covered a range of topics including: demography, diversity, labour market circumstances, housing and health.

One of the main strengths of the Census is that, unlike sample surveys, it can provide reliable estimates for small groups within the population and for small areas within local authorities. This makes it particularly valuable for analysis of topics like diversity. Furthermore, as it takes place at the same time, in the same way, across the entire country, it enables comprehensive benchmarking of key data.

### Ethnicity data

Ethnic classifications are the subject of considerable debate and different classifications exist. Most tend to reflect a mix of quite different aspects of cultural identity including: skin colour, geography, ancestry and national identity. The Census classification took years to develop, and has been subject to various consultations and extensive testing, and consequently is one of most widely used for statistical and monitoring purposes.

Figure 1 shows the final ethnicity question and classification used in the 2011 Census. This comprised 18 categories which were presented under 5 summary categories.

Under the White category, there were four different White groups. The first three captured the White British, White Irish and Gypsy/Irish Traveller populations.

The last category was '**Any other White background**'. Respondents who ticked this box were invited to write in further details of their ethnic background.

This briefing explores the characteristics of this group, which is referred to here as '**White Other**'.

Figure 1 – 2011 Census: ethnicity question

**16** What is your ethnic group?  
Choose **one** section from A to E, then tick **one** box to best describe your ethnic group or background

**A White**

English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British

Irish

Gypsy or Irish Traveller

Any other White background, write in

**B Mixed/multiple ethnic groups**

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any other Mixed/multiple ethnic background, write in

**C Asian/Asian British**

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Chinese

Any other Asian background, write in

**D Black/African/Caribbean/Black British**

African

Caribbean

Any other Black/African/Caribbean background, write in

**E Other ethnic group**

Arab

Any other ethnic group, write in

### Acknowledgements

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## Ethnic group profile: The White Other population in Tower Hamlets

### Population size

The 2011 Census counted 31,550 residents from the White Other ethnic group in Tower Hamlets. The White Other population comprises around one out of every eight borough residents (12 per cent of residents), similar to the London average (13 per cent), but higher than proportion nationally (5 per cent, England).

The White Other group is the third largest ethnic group in the borough (out of 18), after the White British and Bangladeshi groups, who accounted for 31 and 32 per cent of the population respectively. Considered together, these three groups comprise three quarters of the population (figure 2).

### Change: 2001-2011

The Tower Hamlets population has increased by 30 per cent between the 2001 and 2011 Censuses – the largest increase in England.

The White Other population has shown particularly strong growth and has more than doubled in size between 2001 and 2011 from 12,825 to 31,550 - a rise of 18,725 in population numbers and a percentage rise of 146 per cent.

The proportion of the borough's population from the White Other group has grown from 7 to 12 per cent between 2001 and 2011. Trends were similar across London where the proportion from White Other groups increased from 8 to 13 per cent between 2001-2011 (figure 3).

### Country of birth

A relatively high proportion (92 per cent) of White Other residents were born outside the UK. Of these, the vast majority arrived in the UK as young adults: 84 per cent arrived between the ages of 16 and 34.

The White Other population has the highest percentage of migrant residents of all 18 ethnic group populations.

Figure 2. Population by ethnicity, Tower Hamlets, 2011

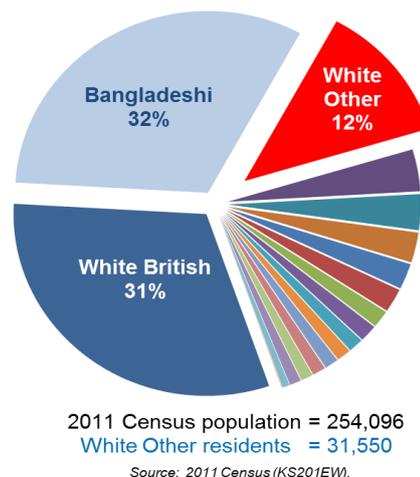


Figure 3. Percentage of the population that are from the White Other group, 2001-2011

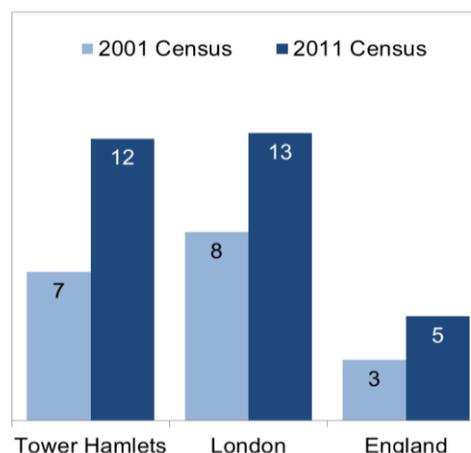
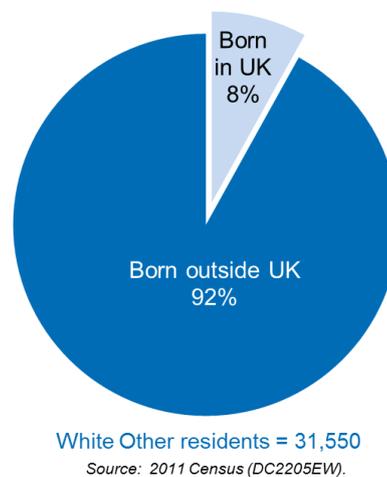


Figure 4. White Other Population by country of birth, Tower Hamlets, 2011



## Ethnic group profile: The White Other population in Tower Hamlets

### Detailed ethnicity

Table 1 provides an analysis of the 'write in' responses provided by White Other residents, in response to the ethnicity question. These figures illustrate just how diverse the White Other group is (Table 1).

The largest groups were residents who identified as: Western or Eastern European; Australian or New Zealander, Turkish, Greek, American. Smaller groups include White Africans, Iranians, Serbians, Latin Americans, Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

While these data provides insight into the backgrounds of White Other residents, it is important to note that these figures do not provide complete counts of residents from these ethnic groups. Not every White Other resident provided further detail (some are included under the *Any other ethnic group* category), while others may be captured under different Census ethnic categories (eg Black Other, Asian Other).

### Age

The White Other population has a very distinct age profile characterised by a large concentration of young adults: 75 per cent of the White Other population are aged 20-39, considerably higher than the borough average of 49 per cent, and one of the highest proportions across all ethnic groups.

Conversely, the White Other population has fewer children and older people than average: 3 per cent are aged 60 and over, compared with 8 per cent for the borough population; and 6 per cent are children (aged under 16) compared with 20 per cent across the whole population.

### Gender

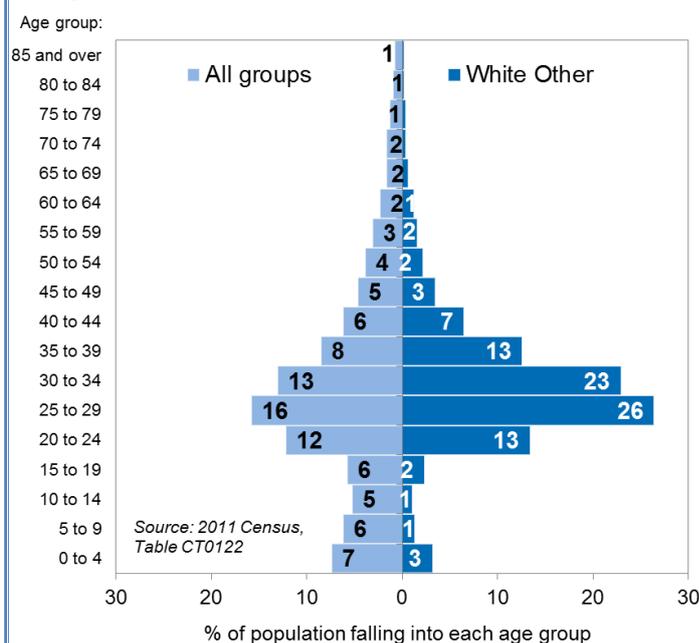
The White Other population has a fairly even gender split and comprises 51 per cent men and 49 per cent women, similar to the borough average.

**Table 1 Detailed ethnicity breakdown of White Other group, Tower Hamlets, 2011**

(Analysis of Write in response under 'White Other' category)	Number	% total
<b>All White Other residents</b>	<b>31,550</b>	<b>100</b>
Other Western European	7,677	24
European Mixed	3,739	12
Italian	2,569	8
Polish	2,263	7
Australian/New Zealander	2,190	7
Other Eastern European	1,895	6
North American	1,261	4
Com. Russian Ind. States	1,216	4
Baltic States	1,113	4
Greek	898	3
Turkish	807	3
Latin/South/Central American	468	1
Brazilian	385	1
Cypriot (part not stated)	136	0
Greek Cypriot	124	0
North African	111	0
Albanian	95	0
Serbian	87	0
Turkish Cypriot	77	0
Kosovan	72	0
Colombian	63	0
Iranian	58	0
Croatian	55	0
White African	52	0
Other groups (< 50 residents)	402	1
Any other ethnic group	3,737	12

Source: 2011 Census, Table QS211EW

**Figure 5 Age profiles compared, White Other vs. All groups, Tower Hamlets, 2011**



### Health and caring responsibilities

White Other residents are more likely to be in good health compared to the population generally, consistent with their younger age profile (Figure 6).

The majority of White Other residents described their health as 'good' or 'very good' (93 per cent), the highest rate across all ethnic groups, and 10 points higher than the borough average (83 per cent).

White Other residents were also least likely to have caring responsibilities: 3 per cent provided unpaid care compared with 8 per cent for all groups.

### Housing tenure

White Other households are the most likely, of all ethnic groups, to live in the private rented sector (figure 7). Almost two thirds of White Other households were living in privately rented accommodation compared to just over one third of all borough households (65 vs. 34 per cent).

White Other households are far less likely than average to be in the social rented sector (13 per cent vs. 40 per cent of all borough households), and just over one fifth (23 per cent) were owner occupiers, lower than the borough average (27 per cent).

### Occupancy and overcrowding

One in eight White Other households (12 per cent) were classified as overcrowded on the Census bedroom measure<sup>1</sup>, lower than the borough average of 16 per cent.

Just over half (54 per cent) had the required number of bedrooms, a bit higher than average (50 per cent), and one third were classed as under-occupied, similar to the borough average. (Table 2).

<sup>1</sup> The occupancy rating provides a measure of whether a household's is overcrowded or under occupied. An occupancy rating of -1 implies that a household has one fewer bedroom than required, whereas +1 implies that they have one more bedroom than the standard requirement.

Figure 6. General health, White Other population compared with all groups, Tower Hamlets, 2011

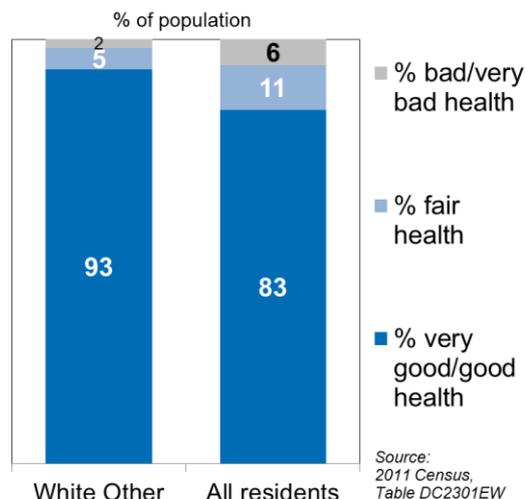


Figure 7 Tenure profile of White Other and all households, Tower Hamlets, 2011

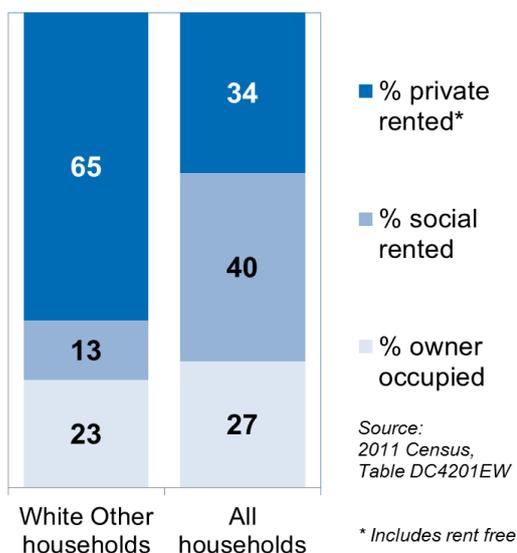


Table 2 Occupancy ratings: White Other and all households, Tower Hamlets, 2011

	Households (% totals)	
	White Other	All
All households	100	100
<i>Occupancy rating bedroom standard:</i>		
+1 or more (under occupied)	33	33
0 (required number)	54	50
-1 or less (overcrowded)	12	16

Source: 2011 Census, Table DC4206EW.

## Ethnic group profile: The White Other population in Tower Hamlets

### Household composition

The Census counted 14,724 White Other households<sup>2</sup> in Tower Hamlets - 15 per cent of all the borough's households. Of these, around one third (34 per cent) of comprised people living alone, and most of this group were working age (Table 3).

A further 36 per cent comprised of 'one family households' which includes families with children (couples and lone parents) and couples living alone (ie with no children).

White Other households are more likely than average to comprise couple only households (22 vs. 15 per cent), but are far less likely to be families with children. Across all household types, 13 per cent of White Other households contained dependent children compared with 27 per cent of all borough households.

White Other households with children tend to have smaller families: the average number of children per family household was 1.46 for White Other households compared with a borough average of 2.08.

Just under one third (30 per cent) of households are categorised as 'Other household types'. These comprise households that contain more than one family unit (eg extended families or groups of individuals sharing).

White Other households were particularly over-represented in the *Other household type*: *Other* sub-category that includes sharer households (26 vs. 15 per cent of households).

<sup>2</sup> Households include those living alone or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room or dining area.

Household level data by ethnicity refers to the ethnicity of the Household Reference Person (HRP). Factors such as economic activity, student status and age are used to determine who is assigned to be the HRP.

**Table 3 Household composition: White Other households compared with all households, Tower Hamlets, 2011**

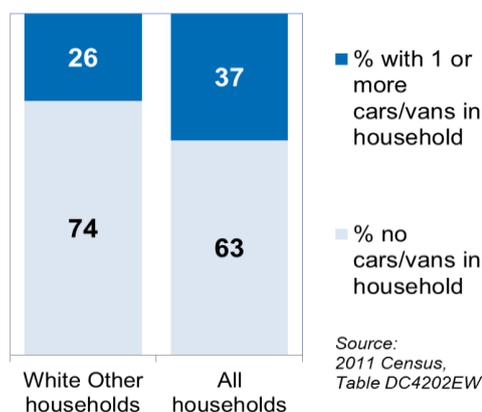
	White Other h'holds	% totals	
		White Other	All Other groups
<b>ALL HOUSEHOLDS</b>	<b>14,724</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>One person household:</b>	<b>5,019</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>
One person: aged 65 and over	229	2	6
One person: aged under 65	4,790	33	29
<b>One family households:</b>	<b>5,294</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>44</b>
Pensioner family: all aged 65+	51	0	1
Couple family	4,606	31	32
- No children	3,252	22	15
- With dependent children	1,243	8	15
- All children non-dependent	111	1	2
Lone parent family	637	4	11
- With dependent children	491	3	7
- All children non-dependent	146	1	3
<b>Other household types:</b>	<b>4,411</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>22</b>
With dependent children	251	2	5
All full-time students	323	2	2
All aged 65 and over	8	0	0
Other (includes sharers)	3,829	26	15
<i>All h'hlds with dependent children</i>	<i>1,985</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Average no. of dep. children in families:</i>		<i>1.46</i>	<i>2.08</i>

Source: 2011 Census (Table DC1201EW)

### Car ownership

Across all ethnic groups, White Other households are the group least likely to have access to a car or van (26 per cent vs 37 per cent for all households).

**Figure 8 Car Ownership, White Other and all households, Tower Hamlets, 2011**



## Ethnic group profile: The White Other population in Tower Hamlets

### Labour market participation

The White Other population is characterised by high levels of labour market participation.

White Other residents have the highest employment rate<sup>3</sup> of all ethnic groups: 80 per cent of White Other adults (excluding those who were retired) were in employment compared with 64 per cent for all adults (figure 9).

White Other residents have relatively low levels of unemployment compared with other groups (figure 10): the unemployment rate<sup>4</sup> for White Other adults was 6 per cent compared with an average of 12 per cent for the population generally (at the time of the 2011 Census).

### Occupation

Figure 11 illustrates the different occupational sectors residents work in (figures relate to residents who work, regardless of where they work across London).

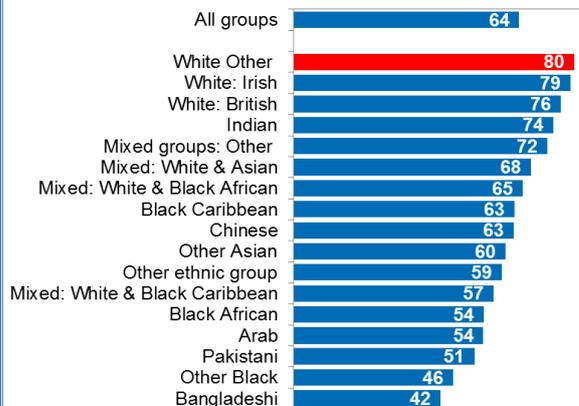
Within the White Other population, of those employed, 63 per cent work in professional and managerial occupational groups (groups 1-3), 6 points higher than the percentage for all groups (57 per cent). Just over one in five White Other workers are employed in occupational sectors 6-9, a bit lower than average (22 vs. 27 per cent).

Across all occupational groups, 15 per cent of White Other workers were self-employed close to the borough average of 14 per cent.

<sup>3</sup> The employment rate shown here expresses the number employed as a % of those aged 16+ (excluding retired). Retired people are excluded to give a better comparison between different ethnic groups, given their different age profiles.

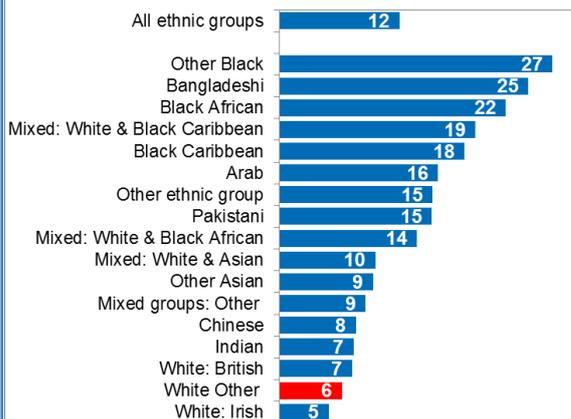
<sup>4</sup> Unemployed people are defined as those who were not in employment who said they were seeking work, available to start in 2 weeks, or waiting to start a job already obtained (ILO definition) The % rate expresses the number unemployed as a proportion of the economically active population.

**Figure 9 Employment rates (%) by ethnicity, persons aged 16 and over (excluding retired), Tower Hamlets, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census, DC6201EW

**Figure 10 Unemployment rates (%) by ethnicity, persons aged 16 and over, Tower Hamlets, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census, DC6201EW

**Figure 11 Employment by occupation, White Other and all groups, Tower Hamlets, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census, Table DC6213EW

**Socio-economic profile**

The National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SeC) provides an additional perspective, by classifying all adults in the population, including those who are retired, by either: their current or previous occupation; whether they ever worked or are long term unemployed; or whether they are full time students.

Figure 12 compares the NS-SeC profile of the White Other population to adults generally. Almost half of all White Other adults (49 per cent) are in the managerial and professional NS-SeC groups, significantly higher than the borough average (35 per cent). This reflects both the high employment rates within the White Other group as well as occupational patterns.

Conversely, only 4 per cent of White Other adults were in the ‘never worked’ or ‘long term unemployed’ categories, much lower than the borough average (14 per cent).

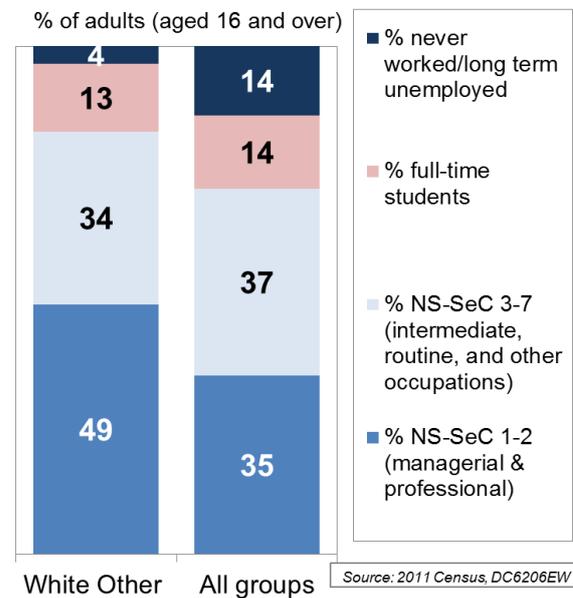
**Qualifications**

White Other residents were relatively well qualified compared with other groups: 58 per cent of White Other adults had higher level qualifications compared with a borough average of 41 per cent. While only 5 per cent had no qualifications compared with 20 per cent for all groups (Figure 13).

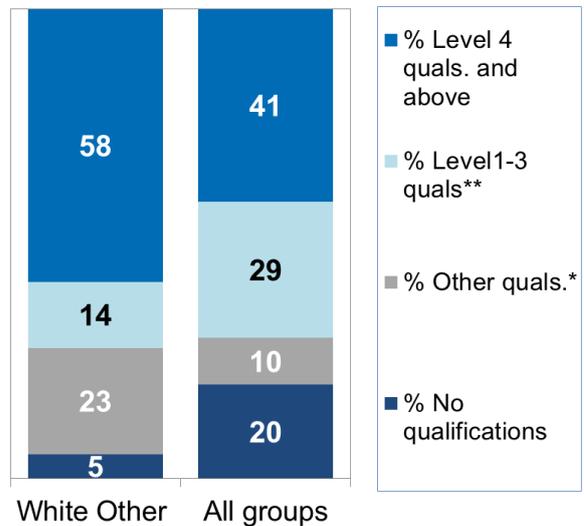
Qualifications patterns may – in part – reflect the high proportion of young adults in the White Other population, as younger people are more likely to hold formal qualifications than older people.

A significant proportion (23 per cent) of White Other residents have ‘other qualifications’. This category includes foreign qualifications, where it has not been possible to classify the qualification under the equivalent level. This means the proportion of White Other residents who have qualifications equivalent to levels 1-4 and above may be understated.

**Figure 12 NS-SeC profile (adults): White Other vs. all groups, Tower Hamlets, 2011**



**Figure 13 Highest qualification level (persons aged 16+), White Other and all groups, Tower Hamlets, 2011**



Source: 2011 Census, Table DC5209WEI.  
 \* Other includes foreign qualifications not included elsewhere.  
 \*\* Apprenticeships have been included in the category 'level 1-3'

**More information**

This briefing was produced by the Council’s Corporate Research Unit. For more information about the Census results, please see the Council’s website [http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgsi/901-950/916\\_borough\\_statistics.aspx](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgsi/901-950/916_borough_statistics.aspx)