SLS-DSU
SCOTTISH LONGITUDINAL STUDY DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT UNIT

Stability and change in ethnic groups in Scotland

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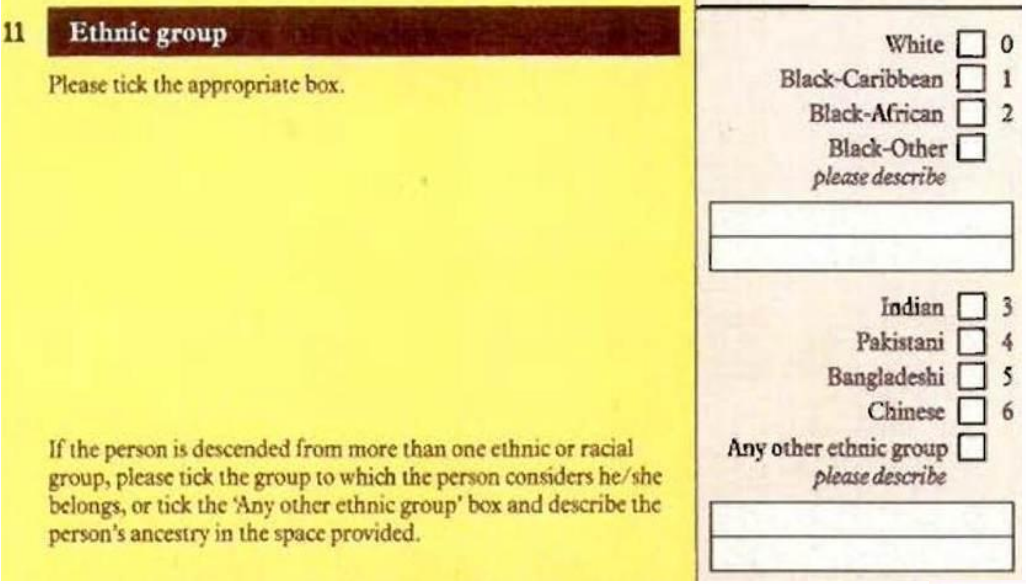
National Records of Scotland
E·S·R·C ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

Research questions

- To what extent has the self-reported ethnicity in the censuses remained stable over time?
- Which ethnic groups are more stable and comparisons can be made for these groups over time?

Ethnicity: concept

- Ethnicity: The social group people can identify with or are identified with by others, as a result of a mix of cultural and other factors including language, religion, ancestry, and physical features.



11 **Ethnic group**

Please tick the appropriate box.

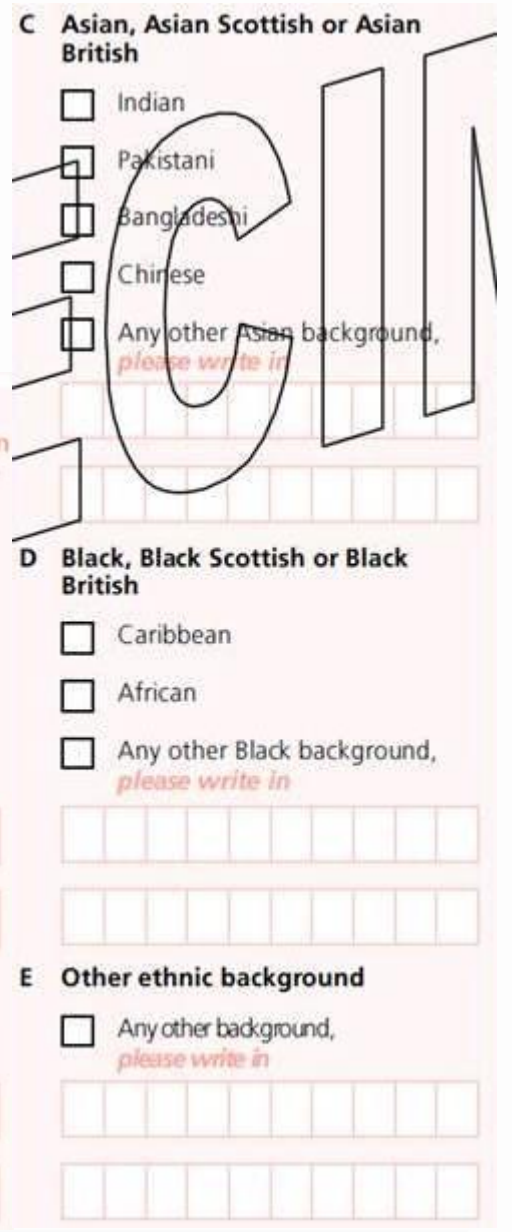
If the person is descended from more than one ethnic or racial group, please tick the group to which the person considers he/she belongs, or tick the 'Any other ethnic group' box and describe the person's ancestry in the space provided.

White ☐ 0
Black-Caribbean ☐ 1
Black-African ☐ 2
Black-Other ☐
please describe

Indian ☐ 3
Pakistani ☐ 4
Bangladeshi ☐ 5
Chinese ☐ 6
Any other ethnic group ☐
please describe

1991 census

2001 census



15 What is your ethnic group?

Choose ONE section from A to E, then ✓ the appropriate box to indicate your cultural background.

A White

☐ Scottish
☐ Other British
☐ Irish
☐ Any other White background, *please write in*

B Mixed

☐ Any Mixed background, *please write in*

C Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British

☐ Indian
☐ Pakistani
☐ Bangladeshi
☐ Chinese
☐ Any other Asian background, *please write in*

D Black, Black Scottish or Black British

☐ Caribbean
☐ African
☐ Any other Black background, *please write in*

E Other ethnic background

☐ Any other background, *please write in*

2011 census

15 What is your ethnic group?

♦ Choose **ONE** section from A to F, then tick **ONE** box which **best describes** your ethnic group or background.

A White

- ☐ Scottish
- ☐ Other British
- ☐ Irish
- ☐ Gypsy / Traveller
- ☐ Polish
- ☐ Other white ethnic group, please write in

B Mixed or multiple ethnic groups

- ☐ Any mixed or multiple ethnic groups, please write in

C Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British

- ☐ Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British
- ☐ Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British
- ☐ Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British
- ☐ Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British
- ☐ Other, please write in

D African

- ☐ African, African Scottish or African British
- ☐ Other, please write in

E Caribbean or Black

- ☐ Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British
- ☐ Black, Black Scottish or Black British
- ☐ Other, please write in

F Other ethnic group

- ☐ Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British
- ☐ Other, please write in

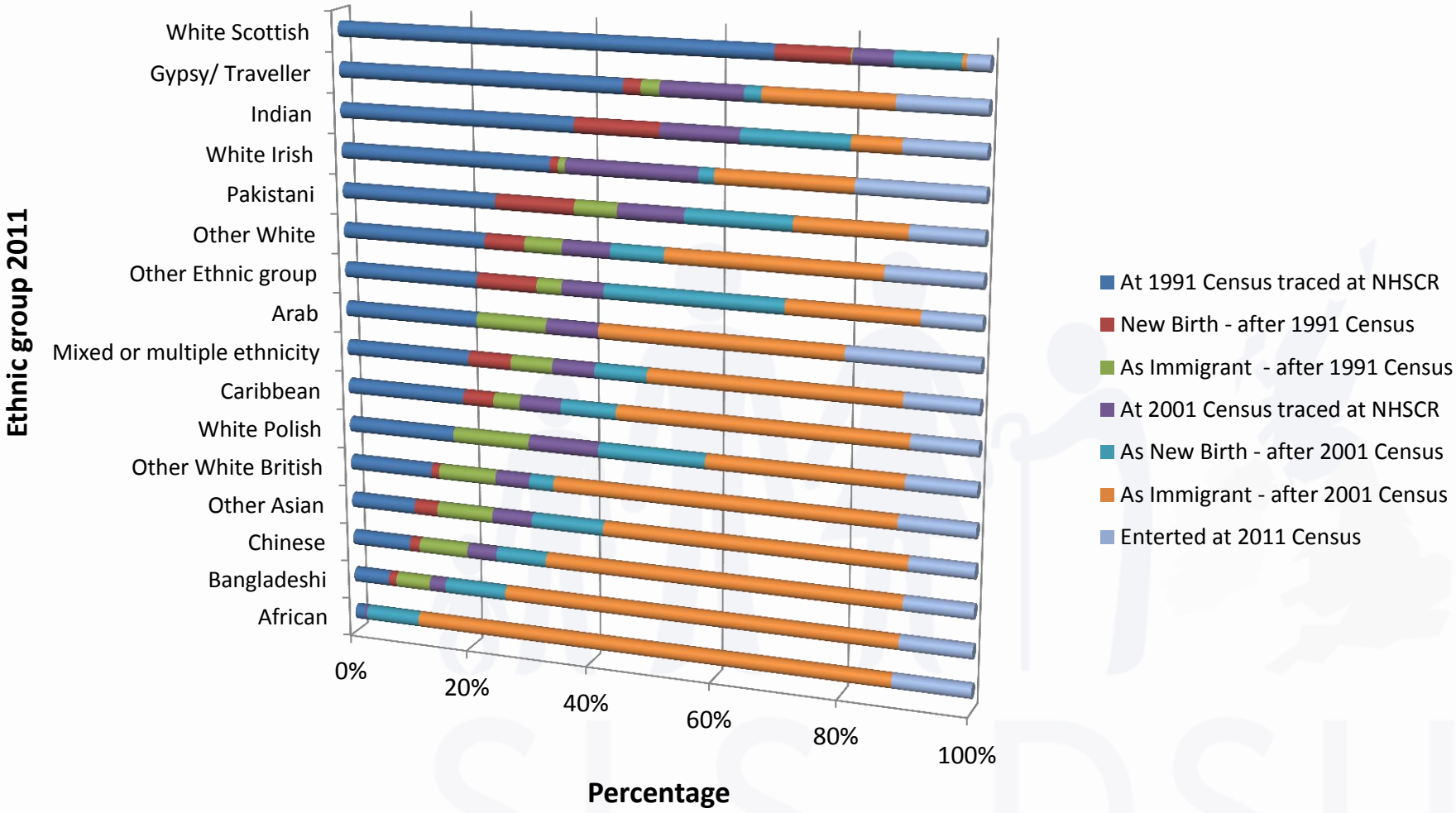
SPECIMEN

Comparison between 100% census data and SLS data in 2011

Source: SLS and 2001 census table

100% census			SLS			
Ethnic group	N	%	Ethnic group	N	%	% valid
White Scottish	4445678	83.95	White Scottish	223,650	83.01	84.68
Other White British	417109	7.88	Other White British	21,022	7.80	7.96
White Irish	54090	1.02	White Irish	2,632	0.98	1.00
Gypsy/ Traveller	4212	0.08	Gypsy/ Traveller	189	0.07	0.07
White Polish	61201	1.16	White Polish	2,767	1.03	1.05
Other White	102117	1.93	Other White	4,541	1.69	1.72
Mixed ethnic group	19815	0.37	Mixed ethnic group	923	0.34	0.35
Pakistani	49381	0.93	Pakistani	2,368	0.88	0.90
Indian	32706	0.62	Indian	1,524	0.57	0.58
Bangladeshi	3788	0.07	Bangladeshi	185	0.07	0.07
Chinese	33706	0.64	Chinese	1,375	0.51	0.52
Other Asian	21097	0.40	Other Asian	898	0.33	0.34
African	29638	0.56	African	1,120	0.42	0.42
Caribbean	3430	0.06	Caribbean	134	0.05	0.05
Black Other	3110	0.06	Black Other	114	0.04	0.04
Arab	9366	0.18	Arab	410	0.15	0.16
Other Ethnic Group	4959	0.09	Other Ethnic Group	249	0.09	0.09
			No code or imputed	5334	1.98	
Total	5295403	100	Total	269435	100	100

Ethnicity and status of linkage



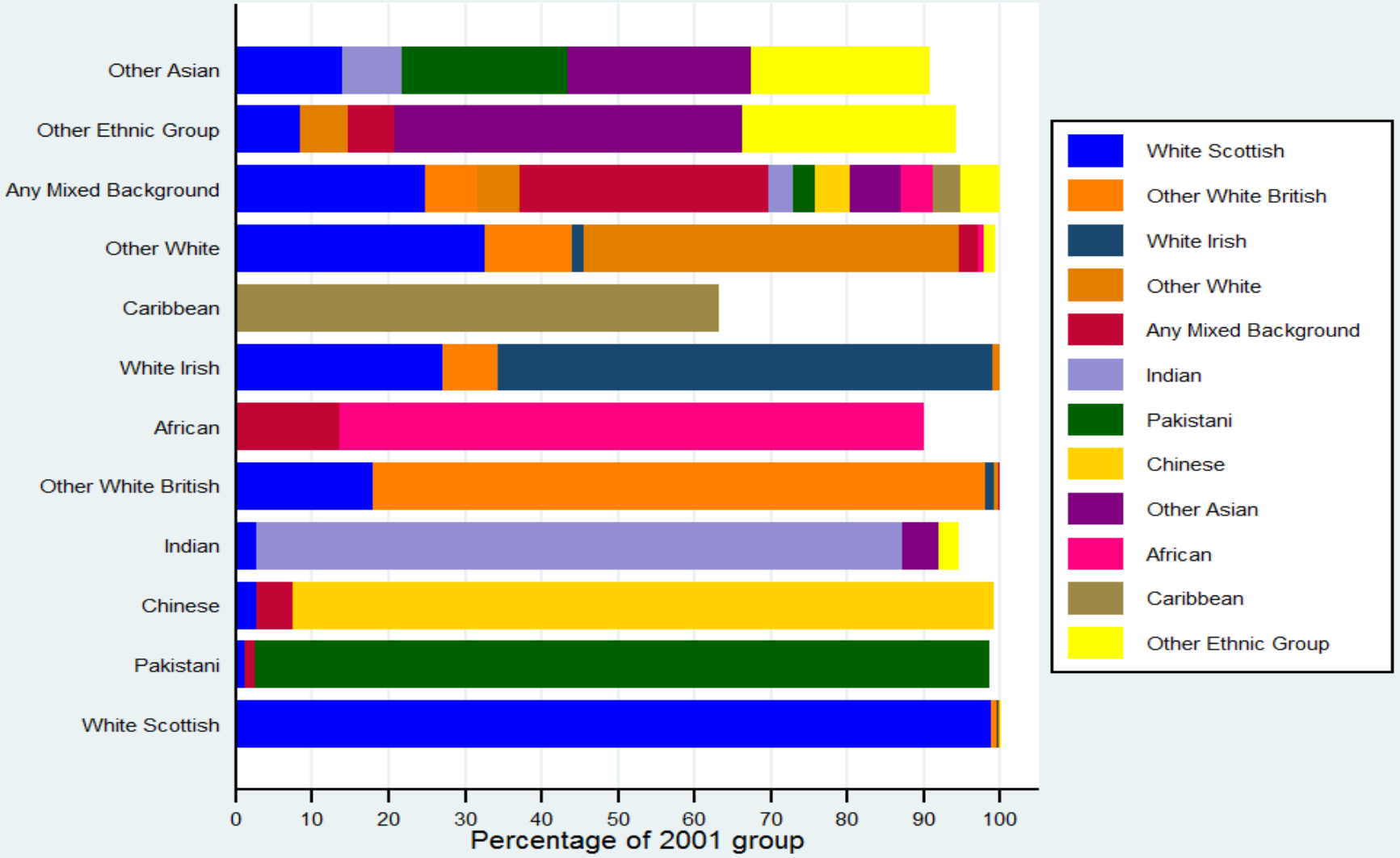
Source: SLS

Ethnic group 2001 and ethnic group 2011

	White Scottish	Other White British	White Irish	Other White	Any Mixed Background	Pakistani	Indian	Bangladeshi	Chinese	Other Asian	African	Caribbean	Other Ethnic Group
White Scottish	166,737	1,294	409	268	66	36	15	14			18		33
Other White British	2,101	9,396	141	66	13								
White Irish	385	103	926	13									
Other White	595	208	25	897	46						12		28
Any Mixed Background	84	23		19	110	10	11		15	23	14	12	18
Pakistani	12				12	936							
Indian	12						379			22			12
Bangladeshi								44					
Chinese	12				21				410				
Other Asian	18					28	10			31			30
African					15						85		
Caribbean												24	
Other Ethnic Group	16			12	12					87			54

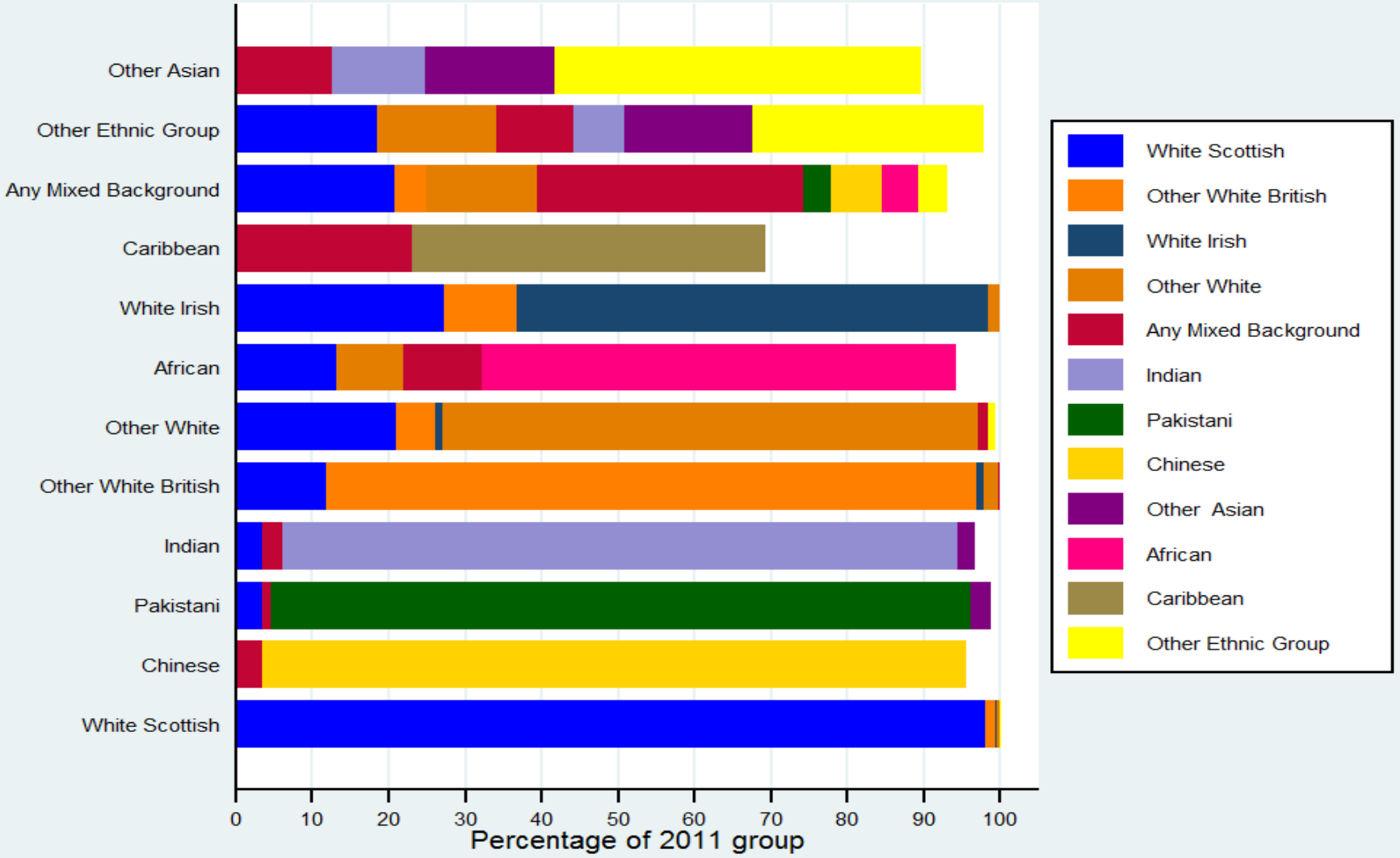
Source: SLS

Transition of ethnic groups between 2001 and 2011: Percentage of 2001 group



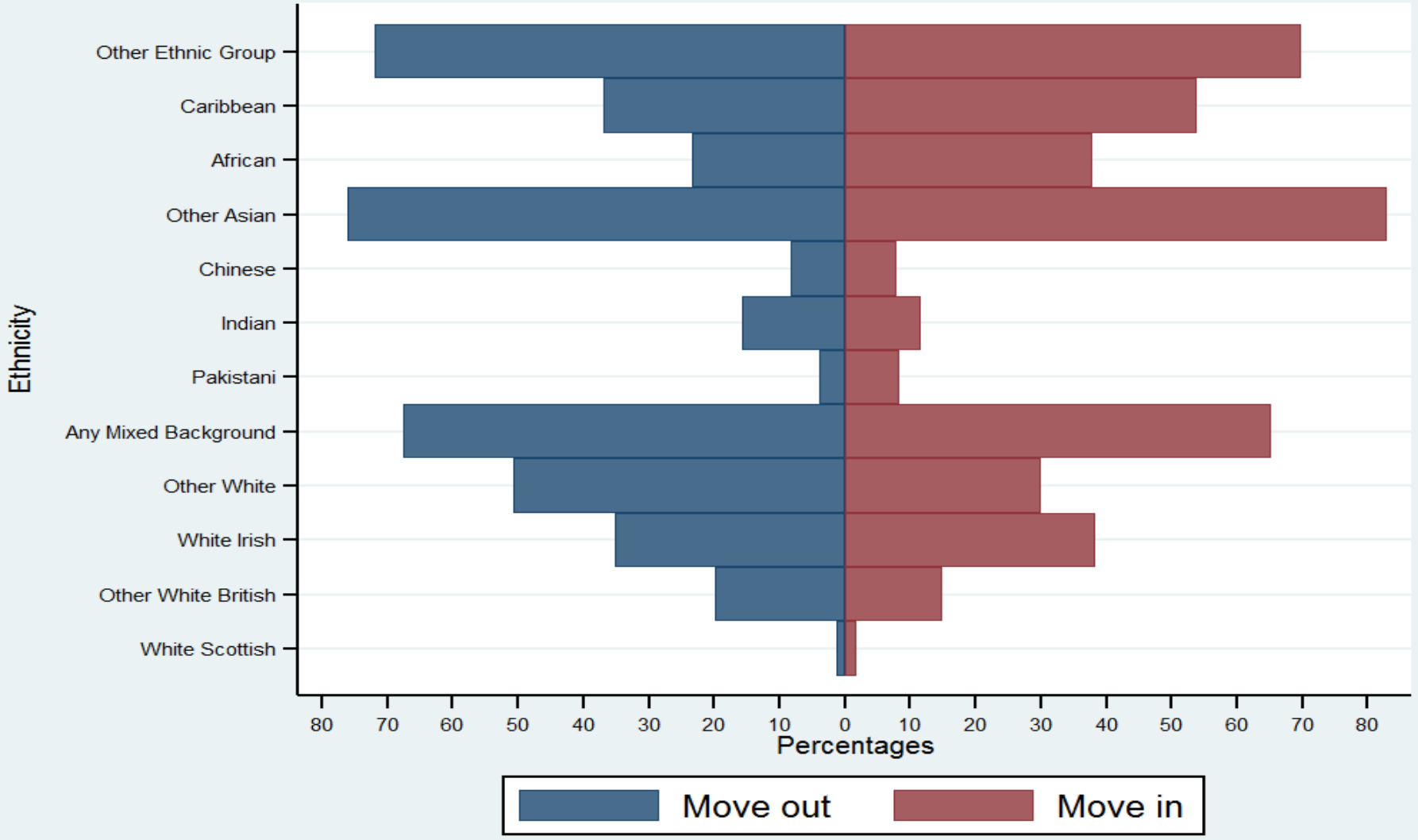
Source: SLS

Transition of ethnic groups between 2001 and 2011: Percentage of 2011 group



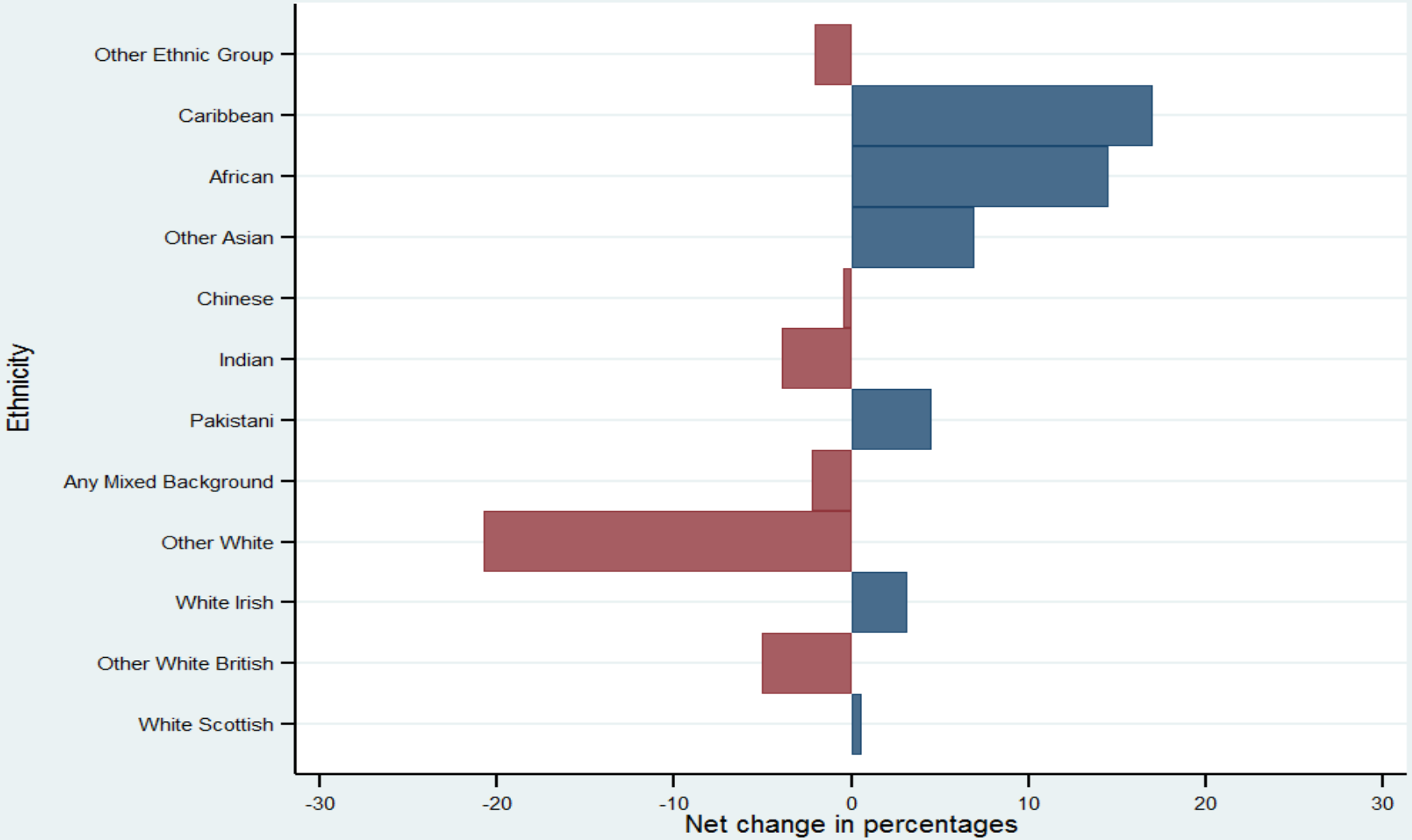
Source: SLS

Transition of ethnic groups between 2001 and 2011: moving in and moving out



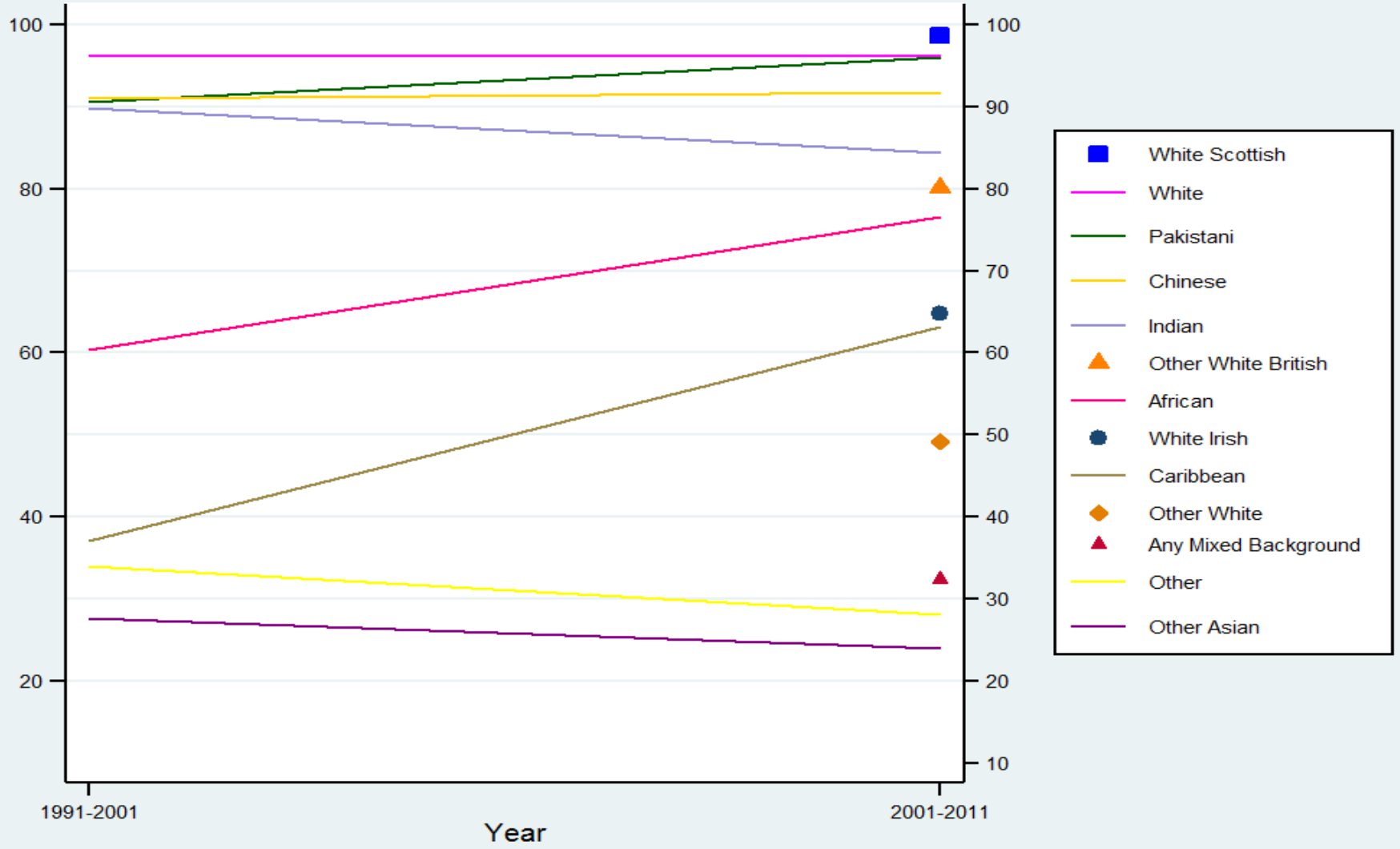
Source: SLS

Transition of ethnic groups between 2001 and 2011: net change



Source: SLS

Stability of ethnic group 1991-2001 and 2001- 2011



Source: SLS

Stable groups

- 2001-2011
  - White Scottish
  - White Irish
  - Other white British
  - Indian
  - Pakistani
  - Chinese
  - African
- 1991-2011
  - White
  - Indian
  - Pakistani
  - Chinese
  - African

Conclusions

- Ethnicity is a complicated concept and self-reported ethnic groups change over time
- Many reasons an individual chooses different ethnic identity:
  - More than one category is suitable
  - The census question changes
  - Conscious change
  - Change in respondent
  - Error
  - Data processing and imputation

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Conclusions

- Some ethnic groups, White Scottish, White British, White Irish, Indian, Pakistani, Chinese are highly stable
- Residual categories such as other Asian, Other Ethnic are very diverse, mixed ethnic group is also unstable

Acknowledgements

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