



## A Spotlight On...

Coaching in the UK, 2017: A Spotlight on Ethnicity

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## Contents

Contents .....	3
Summary .....	4
Key findings.....	4
Introduction .....	8
Methodology .....	9
The Coaching Workforce .....	11
Active Coaches, by ethnicity .....	11
Regional data, by ethnicity.....	12
Profile of Active coaches, by ethnicity.....	12
Age started coaching, by ethnicity .....	13
Coaching roles, by ethnicity.....	14
Coaching environment, by ethnicity .....	15
Coaching hours, by ethnicity.....	16
Volunteer v's paid coaching, by ethnicity .....	16
Coach qualifications, by ethnicity.....	17
Understanding participants, by ethnicity .....	17
Experiences of coaching, by ethnicity.....	18
The challenges coaches face, by ethnicity.....	19
Future coaching activity, by ethnicity .....	20
Reasons for stopping coaching, by ethnicity .....	20
Back to coaching, by ethnicity .....	21
Coached-participation .....	24
Regional Data, by ethnicity.....	25
Profile of coached participants, by ethnicity .....	25
Experience of receiving coaching, by ethnicity.....	26
The benefits of coaching, by ethnicity.....	27
Participants view of their coach, by ethnicity.....	28
Choosing a coach, by ethnicity .....	29
Great Coaching, by ethnicity.....	30
Participants no longer in the receipt of coaching, by ethnicity.....	30
Participants who never received coaching, by ethnicity.....	31
Discussion .....	32

## Summary

UK Coaching commissioned YouGov to survey 20,000 adults and 1,000 children in 2017. The primary aim of the survey was to explore the participant experience of receiving coaching and the experience of being a coach. The survey also asked members of the public their views of coaches and coaching in general.

The survey incorporated a broader definition of coaching, to include anyone involved in or receiving coaching across the whole sport and physical activity sector.

This report presents the key findings from coaches and coached-participants and has a specific focus on ethnicity.

For further information about the Coaching in the UK study, please see the UK Coaching website: <https://www.ukcoaching.org/resources/research/coaching-in-the-uk>

## Key findings

### (1) The Coaching Workforce

- Nearly 12 million white people and over 2 million people from BAME groups coached at some point in their lifetime, representing almost a quarter of the adult white population (27%) and almost a third of the adult BAME population (31%).
- 2.7 million active white coaches and over 700,000 active BAME coaches coached sport or physical activity in the twelve months prior to the survey. This represents 6% and 10% of the UK population respectively.
- There is a greater proportion of the adult BAME population involved in coaching, than the adult white population.
- Within the regions of England, the proportion of active BAME coaches varies from 6% in the South West of England to 12% in London.
- Overall, using a broad definition of coaching, the workforce is relatively diverse in terms of ethnicity: 78% were white and 22% were BAME, compared to the national average of 86% and 14% respectively.
- BAME coaches tend to be younger than white coaches: 51% of BAME coaches were aged 18-34, compared to 39% of white coaches.

- White coaches were significantly more likely than BAME coaches to have a physical or mental health condition lasting or expected to last twelve months or more (28% and 19% respectively).
- BAME coaches were significantly more likely to be from higher social grades than white coaches (73% and 63% from higher social grades respectively).
- A greater proportion of BAME coaches started coaching between the ages of 17-25, compared to white coaches. The mean age of starting coaching was 25.6 for BAME coaches and 28.2 for white coaches.
- Exploring the reasons why coaches first became involved in coaching, the most common reason cited by BAME coaches was to stay involved in sport or physical activity (28%), whereas the most common reason cited by white coaches was to support their local team (24%).
- BAME coaches were significantly more likely than white coaches to describe their role as an activator/facilitator (18%), fitness or exercise instructor (16%), personal trainer (10%) and advanced/senior coach (8%).
- Both white and BAME coaches were most likely to report that they worked in sports clubs (26% and 27% respectively). BAME coaches were significantly more likely than white coaches to say they worked in community groups, youth groups or similar, private leisure centres, gyms or health clubs, local authority leisure centres and further or higher education sessions.
- On average, BAME coaches coach slightly more hours in a voluntary capacity than white coaches: mean of 12.2 hours per week for BAME coaches and 11 hours for white coaches.
- Over half of active white and BAME coaches (57% and 59% respectively) reported that they do not have any formal coaching qualifications. BAME coaches are significantly more likely than white coaches to have a qualification at levels 3 and 4.
- BAME coaches reported that they understood adults and young people the most, and pre-school children and younger children the least. White coaches reported a significantly higher understanding of younger children than BAME coaches.
- Most coaches reported a positive experience of coaching and the majority of white and BAME coaches reported that their coaching made a difference to their participants (78% and 80% respectively).
- The most common challenge cited by white and BAME coaches was balancing work/home life (38% and 36% respectively). The second most common challenge faced by BAME coaches was the voluntary nature of coaching/lack of pay.
- A greater proportion of BAME coaches (47%) said they would like to spend more time coaching in the future, compared to white coaches (41%).

## (2) Coached-participation

- In the 12 months prior to the survey, 1.6 million people from BAME backgrounds received coaching, representing 22% of the BAME population in the UK. A significantly lower proportion of the white population received coaching during the same period (17%).
- London has the highest proportion of BAME adults in receipt of coaching (25%) and Yorkshire and the Humber has the lowest (17%).
- Of all those who received coaching in the previous twelve months, the majority were white (82%) compared to BAME (18%). This is higher than the national average, at 14% BAME.
- Those in receipt of coaching from a BAME background were significantly more likely to be younger than those who are white (24% and 17% respectively were aged 18-24) and were significantly less likely to be aged 55+ (13% BAME compared to 33% white).
- BAME participants in receipt of coaching were significantly more likely than white participants to be of higher social grade (72% compared to 67%), but significantly less likely to have physical or mental health conditions (26% compared to 32%).
- Those in receipt of coaching were overwhelmingly positive about their experience, with significantly more people from BAME backgrounds rating their experience as good, compared to white people (75% and 69% respectively).
- Overall, those who receive coaching report a very positive experience. The majority of white and BAME participants (84% and 81% respectively) said that their coach motivates them to do better. However, with the exception of one statement about experience of coaching, BAME participants were less likely to agree with all statements than white participants.
- Whilst white and BAME participants agree there are benefits of coaching, BAME participants were less likely than white participants to agree that coaching improves skills/performance, improves fitness, physical health, and mental health and wellbeing.
- Those in receipt of coaching had “stickier” sport and physical activity habits than those not in receipt of coaching: they were more likely to do more sport and physical activity; have increased their activity levels since the previous year; and would like to do more sport or physical activity in the future. This was the case for both white participants and BAME participants.

- A large proportion of BAME and white participants reported that they had confidence and trust in their coach, would recommend their coach to others, and have a good relationship with their coach. However, a significantly larger proportion of white participants agreed with these three statements compared to BAME participants.
- Both BAME and white participants were most likely to choose a coach based on experience, and personal and people skills.
- Both BAME and white participants thought it was more important that a coach understands them than it was to have the same characteristics as them such as personality, gender, age, life experience and background. However, significantly more people from BAME backgrounds thought it was important their coach was the same gender as them, than white people.
- Participants who received coaching were asked what they thought made a great sport and physical activity coach. BAME and white participants most commonly responded with “gives constructive feedback and corrections”.
- Around nine in ten (90%) of BAME participants no longer in the receipt of coaching said they might be encouraged to receive coaching again in the future.

## Introduction

In 2017, UK Coaching commissioned YouGov to undertake the largest ever survey into coaches and coaching. A nationally representative sample of 20,000 adults and 1,000 children were surveyed about their experience of receiving coaching and their experience of being a coach. The survey also asked the public about their perceptions of coaches and coaching in general.

This was the first major piece of research to encompass a broader definition of coaching, which included anyone involved in or receiving coaching across the whole sport and physical activity sector. It recognised that participants receive coaching in a range of different settings and that coaches play a number of different roles, from coaches in sports clubs, to community activators and helpers, PE teachers, and exercise and fitness instructors. All contribute towards an active nation.

This report presents the key findings from coaches and coached-participants and has a specific focus on ethnicity.

Separate reports are available for:

- The coaching workforce
- Adult participants who have received coaching
- Children and young people who have received coaching
- The general public
- A spotlight on gender

For further information about the Coaching in the UK study, please see the UK Coaching website: <https://www.ukcoaching.org/resources/research/coaching-in-the-uk>

## Methodology

YouGov conducted a survey of 20,688 UK adults aged 18+ in August 2017. The results are weighted to be representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

The survey was administered online, using a questionnaire distributed to members of the YouGov panel of 800,000+ individuals. An email was sent to panellists selected at random from the base sample according to the sample definition, inviting them to take part in the survey.

Sample sizes:

- All participants: 20,688
- Coached participants: 3,788
- Coaches: 1,350
- Children and young people (aged 7-17): 1,047

In order to explore all forms of coaching, 'coaching' has been defined for the purposes of this research as: "Coaching, instruction, training or tuition in ANY sport or physical activity. This can include any environment, such as formal sports club settings as well as informal community settings. It can include any sport or physical activity, including recreational or competitive sport, exercise, fitness, gym, dance, etc."

Below are the definitions for various terms used throughout the reports:

- Active coaches: people who have coached in the past twelve months.
- Inactive coaches: people who have coached in the past five years, but not in the past twelve months.
- Coached-participants: people who have received coaching in the past twelve months.
- BAME: Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic groups (used to refer to members of non-white communities in the UK).
- Social grade: defined by the Market Research Society as a series of demographic classifications based on the occupation of the head of the household. The categories are classified as follows: AB: upper middle and middle class; C1: lower middle class; C2 skilled working class; DE: working class and non-working class. For the analysis, they have been grouped into higher grades (ABC1) and lower grades (C2DE).
- \* denotes a statistically significant finding (i.e. the difference between two or more results is a real difference and does not appear by chance.)

## **Coaching in the UK: A Spotlight on Ethnicity**

### **The Coaching Workforce**

## The Coaching Workforce

The first section of this report focuses on people who coached sport and physical activity in the twelve months prior to the survey, or at any point in their past.

The survey revealed that nearly 12 million white people and over 2 million people from BAME groups coached at some point in their lifetime. This represents almost a quarter of the adult white population (27%) and almost a third of the adult BAME population (31%). A significantly higher proportion of the BAME population coached sport or physical activity than the white population.

The table below presents the total number of White and BAME adults in the UK who coached, instructed, trained, taught or led any sport or physical activity, in any environment, to children or adults.

**Table 1.1: Incidence of Coaching in the UK, by ethnicity**

Last time coached	White		BAME	
	N	% of population	N	% of population
In the past 12 months	2,671,205	6	724,746	10*
In the past 2 years	883,034	2	215,624	3*
In the past 3 years	875,645	2	213,820	3*
In the past 5 years	863,114	2	212,109	3*
Longer than 5 years	6,429,226	15*	843,042	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,722,224</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>2,209,341</b>	<b>31*</b>

*Base: all those who have coached at any point in their lifetime. Population figures are based on ONS mid-year population estimates (18+) in the UK.*

### Active Coaches, by ethnicity

Examining only active coaches (those who coached within the previous 12 months), the survey revealed 2.7 million active white coaches and over 700,000 active BAME coaches in the UK. This represents 6% and 10% of the UK population respectively. Thus, there is a greater proportion of the adult BAME population involved in coaching, than the adult white population.

There are some home county variations, as shown in the table below. Northern Ireland has the highest proportion of BAME coaches (15%) compared to England, Wales and Scotland. Wales has the lowest proportion of BAME coaches (8%). As a proportion of the population, England has a significantly higher proportion of BAME coaches than white coaches.

**Table 1.2: Active coaches by home country, by ethnicity**

Home Country	White % of population	BAME % of population
England	7	10*
Wales	7	8
Scotland	6	11
Northern Ireland	6	15

*Base: all those who have coached in the last 12 months. The total for all home countries does not equate to the total in table 1.1 above, due to rounding. Population figures are based on ONS mid-year population estimates (18+) in the UK. Absolute numbers for each home country cannot be provided, due to data not available*

### Regional data, by ethnicity

Within the regions of England, the proportion of active BAME coaches varies from 6% in the South West of England to 12% in London.

It is interesting to note that within all regions, except the South West, the proportion of coaches from a BAME background is higher than the proportion of coaches who are white.

**Table 1.3: Active coaches by region, by ethnicity**

Region	White % of population	BAME % of population
North East	5	10
North West	5	10*
Yorkshire and the Humber	5	7
East Midlands	5	9
West Midlands	5	10*
East	6	10*
South East	6	9*
London	6	12*
South West	7	6

*Base: all those who have coached in the last 12 months. The total for all regions does not equate to the total in table 1.1 above, due to rounding. Population figures are based on ONS mid-year population estimates (18+) in the UK. Absolute numbers for each region cannot be provided, due to data not available*

### Profile of Active coaches, by ethnicity

Examining the demographic profile of active coaches, the survey found that 78% were white and 22% were BAME, compared to the national average of 86% and 14% respectively.

BAME coaches tend to be younger than white coaches: 51% of BAME coaches were aged 18-34, compared to 39% of white coaches. Similar proportions of BAME and white coaches were female (47% and 46% respectively).

White coaches were significantly more likely than BAME coaches to have a physical or mental health condition lasting or expected to last twelve months or more (28% and 19% respectively, compared to the national average of 20%). Whereas BAME coaches were significantly more likely to be from higher social grades than white coaches (73% and 63% from higher social grades respectively, compared to the national average of 57%).

**Table1.4: Profile of UK active coaches, by ethnicity**

Active Coaches	White %	BAME %
Ethnicity	78	22
18-24	19	22
25-34	20	29*
35-44	21	27*
45-54	16*	11
55-64	12	8
65+	12*	3
Male	54	53
Female	46	47
Physical or mental health condition	28*	19
No physical or mental health condition	64	69
Higher social grades	63	73*
Lower social grades	37*	27

Base: all those who have coached in the last 12 months.

### Age started coaching, by ethnicity

The age at which people started coaching is presented in the table below. A greater proportion of BAME coaches started coaching between the ages of 17-25, compared to white coaches (41% and 38% respectively), with a quarter (25%) of BAME coaches starting to coach aged 17-21. BAME coaches were significantly less likely to begin coaching over the age of 40 (8%) than white coaches (16%).

The mean age of starting coaching was 25.6 for BAME coaches and 28.2 for white coaches.

**Table 1.5 Age started coaching, by ethnicity**

Age	White %	BAME %
16 and under	15	17
17-21	23	25
22-25	15	16
26-30	12	14
31-40	18	19
Over 40	16*	8

Base: all those who have coached in the last 12 months

Exploring the reasons why coaches first became involved in coaching, the most common reason cited by BAME coaches was to stay involved in sport or physical activity (28%), whereas the most common reason cited by white coaches was to support their local team (24%).

BAME coaches were significantly more likely than white coaches to report they became involved in coaching to stay involved in the sport/activity, they progressed from volunteering, and they were inspired by their own coach.

**Table 1.6 Reasons first became involved in coaching, by ethnicity**

Reason	White %	BAME %
To stay involved in sport or physical activity	21	28*
To contribute to my local community	19	23
Progressed from volunteering	17	23*
Began coaching other participants whilst still playing	23	22
I was inspired by my own coach	12	19*
To support my local club/ team	24*	18
As a result of child's involvement in sport	17	17
Career Development	16	17

*Base: all those who have coached in the last 12 months*

*Respondents could select more than one option; therefore, percentages do not add up to 100%*

### Coaching roles, by ethnicity

Coaches were asked to select a job title that best described their coaching role. A wide variety of job titles were selected, from helpers, school teachers and fitness instructors. BAME coaches were significantly more likely than white coaches to describe their role as an activator/facilitator (18%), fitness or exercise instructor (16%), personal trainer (10%) and advanced/senior coach (8%).

**Table 1.7 Coaching job titles**

<b>Job Titles</b>	<b>White %</b>	<b>BAME %</b>
Helper	21	25
Activators/Facilitators	12	18*
Coach	21	18
Assistant Coach	14	17
Fitness or Exercise Instructor	8	16*
Other	15	12
PE Teacher	8	10
Personal Trainer	6	10*
Sports Leader	9	10
Teacher	8	10
Advanced/Senior Coaches	4	8*
Trainee Coach	5	7
Head Coach	4	5
Specialist Coach	6	5
Performance Coach	4	4

*Base: all those who have coached in the last 12 months.*

*Respondents could select more than one option; therefore, percentages do not add up to 100%*

### **Coaching environment, by ethnicity**

Coaches were next asked about where their coaching activity took place. Both white and BAME coaches were most likely to report that they worked in sports clubs (26% and 27% respectively).

BAME coaches were significantly more likely than white coaches to say they worked in community groups, youth groups or similar (18% and 13% respectively), private leisure centres, gyms or health clubs (14% and 7% respectively), local authority leisure centres (11% and 7% respectively) and further or higher education sessions (9% and 3% respectively).

**Table 1.8: Where coaching takes place, by ethnicity**

Place	White %	BAME %
Sports Clubs	27	26
Community group, youth group or similar	13	18*
Private leisure centre, gym or health club	7	14*
Other	15	13
School sessions (as part of PE)	14	12
School sessions (e.g. outside PE, Active Schools)	11	12
Local Authority Leisure Centre	7	11*
In an outdoor/ urban space	9	11
Further or higher education sessions	3	9*
Private sessions with my own clients	8	9
In an outdoor/ country setting	11*	5
Sports institute or similar	2	3
In a talent/ performance environment	2	3

Base: all those who have coached in the last 12 months.

### Coaching hours, by ethnicity

In a typical week, white coaches were significantly more likely to say they coached 1-2 hours, than BAME coaches (37% compared to 30%); whereas, BAME coaches were significantly more likely than white coaches to say they coached 6-9 hours (8% and 4% respectively).

**Table 1.9: Coaching hours in a typical week, by ethnicity**

Hours	White %	BAME %
No regular hours	19	21
1-2 Hours	37*	30
3-5 Hours	14	15
6-9 Hours	4	8*
Over 10 Hours	27	27

Base: all those who have coached in the last 12 months

### Volunteer v's paid coaching, by ethnicity

On average, BAME coaches coach the same number of hours in a paid capacity than white coaches: the mean number of hours coaching per week in a paid capacity is 6.9 hours for both BAME and white coaches.

On average, BAME coaches coach slightly more hours in a voluntary capacity than white coaches: the mean number of hours coaching per week in a voluntary capacity is 12.2 hours for BAME coaches and 11 hours for white coaches.

## Coach qualifications, by ethnicity

The table below presents the level of coach qualification, by ethnicity. Over half of active white and BAME coaches (57% and 59% respectively) reported that they do not have any formal coaching qualifications.

It is interesting to note that whilst a greater proportion of white coaches have a level 1 or level 2 qualification than BAME coaches; BAME coaches are significantly more likely than white coaches to have a qualification at levels 3 and 4.

**Table 1.10: Type of qualification, by ethnicity**

Qualification	White %	BAME %
No Qualification	57	59
Activator/ Leader qualification	6	6
Level 1 (Or equivalent)	11*	7
Level 2 (Or equivalent)	9	7
Level 3 (Or equivalent)	5	8*
Level 4 (Or equivalent)	2	4*
HE/FE Degree or Diploma	5	5

*Base: all those who have coached in the last 12 months*

## Understanding participants, by ethnicity

Active coaches were asked to what extent they felt they understood the specific needs of different age groups. BAME coaches reported that they understood adults and young people the most (77% and 70% respectively), and pre-school children and younger children the least (40% and 53% respectively). Interestingly white coaches reported a significantly higher understanding of younger children (60%) than BAME coaches (53%).

**Table 1.11: Coach understanding of different age groups, by ethnicity**

Participant age groups	White		BAME	
	% some/good understanding	% little/no understanding	% some/good understanding	% little/no understanding
Adults (18-50)	73	27	77	23
Young People (14-17)	67	33	70	30
Older children (10-13)	67	33	63	37
Older adults (50+)	58	42	61	39
Younger Children (5-9)	60*	40	53	47
Pre- School Children (0-4)	43	57	40	60

*Base: all those who have coached in the last 12 months*

Likewise, active coaches were asked the extent to which they felt they understood the specific needs of different groups of people.

Overall, BAME coaches were more likely to report that they had some or good understanding of people from black and minority ethnic groups (74%), people new to sport / physical activity (70%) and women or girls only groups (68%). BAME coaches were significantly more likely to understand black and minority ethnic groups, and talented players/high performance athletes, than white coaches,

In contrast, BAME coaches felt that they understood people with a long-term illness or health condition the least with 56% of BAME coaches reporting little or no understanding of this group.

**Table 1.12: Coaches Understanding of different groups, by ethnicity**

Participant groups	White		BAME	
	% some/good understanding	% little/no understanding	% some/good understanding	% little/no understanding
People from black and minority ethnic groups	64	36	74*	26
People new to sport / physical activity	67	33	70	30
Women or girl groups only	67	33	68	32
People who are inactive / infrequently inactive	59	41	65	35
People from low income groups	61	39	65	35
Talented players / High performance Athletes	44	56	53*	47
People with a Physical Disability	43	57	49	51
People with a learning disability	45	55	46	54
People with a long-term illness or health condition	43	57	44	56

*Base: all those who have coached in the last 12 months*

### Experiences of coaching, by ethnicity

Active coaches were asked a series of questions regarding their experience of being a coach. The most common response given by both white and BAME coaches was that their coaching made a difference to their participants (78% and 80% respectively).

It is interesting to note that BAME coaches were more likely to agree with all of these statements (with the exception of resources/equipment and sufficient opportunities) than white coaches. They were significantly more likely to agree that coaching keeps them active, they feel proud to tell others they are a coach, get recognition for coaching, find it hard to balance coaching with other commitments, feel part of a community/network, and sometimes feel alone or isolated.

**Table 1.13: Experience of being a coach, by ethnicity**

Experience	White		BAME	
	% Agree	% Disagree	% Agree	% Disagree
I feel my coaching makes a difference to my participants	78	4	80	3
Coaching keeps me physically active	65	10	72*	8
I look forward to coaching	68	7	69	7
I would recommend coaching to a friend or colleague	63	6	67	3
I am able to deliver the style of coaching I aspire to	61	9	65	8
I have the right resources/ equipment to coach effectively	63	13	62	10
I have a choice in deciding when and where I coach	58	22	60	16
I feel proud when I tell other I am a coach	50	9	59*	6
I am recognised for the contribution I make to helping others through coaching	50	17	57*	14
I have sufficient opportunities to coach in my chosen sport/ activity	56	13	56	12
It's hard to balance coaching alongside my other commitments	35	36	51*	23
I feel part of a network or community of coaches	37	29	50*	21
I would like some help from others when I coach	43	22	49	17
Working as a coach I sometimes feel alone or isolated	21	50	32*	36

Base: all those who have coached in the last 12 months. This table excludes neutral responses

### The challenges coaches face, by ethnicity

Active coaches were asked what they thought were the main barriers or challenges facing coaches in the UK. The most commonly cited challenge cited by white and BAME coaches was balancing work/home life (38% and 36% respectively). The second most common challenge faced by BAME coaches was the voluntary nature of coaching/lack of pay;

whereas the second most common challenge faced by white coaches was the cost of training /qualifications.

White coaches were significantly more likely than BAME coaches to cite challenges with dealing with parents and behavioural issues.

**Table 1.14: The challenges coaches face, by ethnicity**

Challenges	White %	BAME %
Balancing work / home life	38	36
The voluntary nature of coaching/ lack of pay	31	34
The cost of training /qualifications	38	33
Lack of investment in facilities and equipment	34	31
The length of time it takes to undertake qualifications / training/ CPD	23	27
Lack of support from employers, clubs or national government bodies	21	23
Dealing with parents (behaviour or interference)	30*	21
Behavioural issues of players / participants	24*	18
Declining participation rates	18	17
Lack of opportunity to take additional training/ CPD	17	17
Lack of experienced or qualified coaches	16	16

*Base: all those who have coached in the last 12 months.*

### Future coaching activity, by ethnicity

Active coaches were asked if they would like to spend more time coaching in the future: 47% of BAME coaches said they would and 41% of white coaches said they would.

### Reasons for stopping coaching, by ethnicity

The following section focuses on inactive coaches (i.e. those who coached within the previous five years, but not in the last twelve months).

Inactive coaches were asked why they had not coached within the previous twelve months. The most common reason cited by both white and BAME coaches was “I no longer had enough time (32% and 34% respectively).

**Table 1.15: Reasons why they had not coached in previous 12 months, by ethnicity**

Reason	White %	BAME %
I no longer had enough time	34	32
I move away	18	18
I felt I was getting to old	12	13
I fell out of love with coaching	8	13*
Qualifications and training were too expensive to keep up to date	8	11
Problems with parent or participants	4	11*
There were not enough participants to keep the session going	5	11*
I got injured	10	10
There was too much responsibility being a coach	7	9
I didn't get enough support from my club/ organisation	5	9*
My child stopped playing the sport	6	7
Problems with other coaches/ the club/ employers	3	5

*Base: all those who coached within the past 5 years, but not the past 12 months. Respondents could select more than one option; therefore, percentages do not add up to 100.*

### Back to coaching, by ethnicity

Finally, inactive coaches were asked whether they would like to return to coaching again in the future: 26% of white coaches and 28% of BAME coaches said they would. However, two in five (41%) of inactive BAME coaches said they would not be interested in coaching again in the future compared to 45% of white coaches.

When asked, what might encourage them to start coaching again, the most common responses cited by BAME coaches were payment of expenses (18%) and access to new learning opportunities (14%); whereas the most common responses by white coaches were payment for delivering sessions and training to update or refresh skills (14% respectively).

**Table 1.16: What might encourage inactive coaches to start coaching again, by ethnicity**

<i>Encouragement to start coaching again</i>	<b>White %</b>	<b>BAME %</b>
No, I don't want to get back into coaching	33*	24
Payment of expenses	11	18*
Access to new learning opportunities	8	14*
Payment for delivering sessions	14	13
Time off or support from my main employer	10	13
Training to update or refresh my skills	14	12
Opportunities to try a different sport/ activity	8	12*
Support from another coach	7	12*
Getting "Back into coaching" sessions	6	12*
Support from a coach developer or mentor	6	11*
Help or support from others (i.e. parents or volunteers)	8	10

*Base: all those who coached within the past five years, but not the past 12 months. Respondents could select more than one option therefore, percentages do not add up to 100%.*

## **Coaching in the UK: A Spotlight on Ethnicity**

### **Coached-participation**

## Coached-participation

This section of the report focuses on people who received coaching in sport and physical activity in the twelve months prior to the survey, or at any point in their past.

Over 30 million adults have received coaching in sport or physical activity at some point in their lifetime (representing around 60% of the adult population in the UK). In the 12 months prior to the survey, 1.6 million people from BAME backgrounds received coaching, representing 22% of the BAME population in the UK.

In contrast, a significantly lower proportion of the white population received coaching during the same period (17%).

**Table 2.1: Participants in the receipt of coaching, by ethnicity**

Last time received coaching	White		BAME	
	N	% of population	N	% of population
In the past 12 months	7,568,415	17	1,594,440	22*
In the past 2 years	2,207,584	5	503,124	7*
In the past 3 years	1,751,290	4	356,357	5*
In the past 5 years	2,157,785	5	351,267	5
Longer than 5 years ago	12,858,453	30*	1,604,815	23
Total	26,543,526	61	4,410,013	63*

*Base: all those who have received coaching at any point in their lifetime*

Examining only recent recipients of coaching (those who received coaching within the previous twelve months), there are home country variations as seen below. Wales has the lowest proportion of BAME adults in the receipt of coaching (8%) and Northern Ireland has the highest (42%). Similarly, Wales also has the lowest proportion of white adults in the receipt of coaching (16%).

**Table 2.2: Coached- participation by home country, by ethnicity**

Home country	White % of population	BAME % of population
England	19	22*
Wales	16	8
Scotland	18	23
Northern Ireland	18	42*

*Base: all those who have coached in the last 12 months. The total for all home countries does not equate to the total in table 1.1 above, due to rounding. Population figures are based on ONS mid-year population estimates (18+) in the UK. Absolute numbers for each home country cannot be provided, due to data not available*

## Regional Data, by ethnicity

London has the highest proportion of BAME adults in receipt of coaching (25%) and Yorkshire and the Humber has the lowest (17%). In contrast the East of England and London has the highest proportion of white adults in receipt of coaching (20%) and the East Midlands and North West has the lowest (15% respectively).

It is interesting to note that within all regions, except the East of England, the proportion of people receiving coaching from a BAME background is higher than the proportion of coaches who are white.

**Table 2.3: Coached participation by region, by ethnicity**

Region	White	BAME
	% of population	% of population
North East	18	21
North West	15	22*
Yorkshire and Humber	16	17
East Midlands	15	22*
West Midlands	16	18
East of England	20	20
South East	17	24*
London	20	25*
South West	18	22

*Base: all those who have coached in the previous twelve months. The regional total might not add up to the total in table 1.1 above, due to rounding. Population figures are based on ONS mid-year population estimates (18+) in the UK. Absolute numbers for each home country cannot be provided, due to data not available*

## Profile of coached participants, by ethnicity

Examining the demographic profile of those who received coaching in the previous twelve months, the majority were white (82%) compared to BAME (18%). This is higher than the national average, at 14% BAME.

Those in receipt of coaching from a BAME background were significantly more likely to be younger than those who are white (24% and 17% respectively were aged 18-24) and were significantly less likely to be aged 55+ (13% BAME compared to 33% white),

BAME participants in receipt of coaching were significantly more likely than white participants to be of higher social grade (72% compared to 67%), but significantly less likely to have physical or mental health conditions (26% compared to 32%).

**Table 2.4: Table of coached participants, by ethnicity**

Active Participants	White %	BAME %
BAME	82	18
18-24	17	24*
25-34	20	28*
35-44	18	22*
45-54	14	14
55-64	14*	7
65+	19*	6
Male	38	36
Female	62	64
Physical or mental health condition	32*	26
No physical or mental health condition	60	64
Higher social grades	67	72*
Lower social grades	33*	28

Base: all those who have received coaching in the last 12 months

### Experience of receiving coaching, by ethnicity

Those in receipt of coaching were overwhelmingly positive about their experience, with significantly more people from BAME backgrounds rating their experience as good, compared to white people (75% and 69% respectively).

**Table 2.5: Participants rating of coaching received, by ethnicity**

Ratings	White %	BAME %
Good	69	75*
Neutral	30*	24
Poor	1	1

Base: all those who have received coaching in the previous twelve months

Exploring their experience of coaching in further detail, participants reported overwhelmingly positive responses across all factors.

The majority of white and BAME participants (84% and 81% respectively) said that their coach motivates them to do better. It is interesting to note that with the exception of one statement, BAME participants were less likely to agree with all of these statements than white participants.

**Table 2.6: Experience of receiving coaching, by ethnicity**

Experience	White		BAME	
	% Agree	% Disagree	% Agree	% Disagree
My coach motivates me to do better	84	2	81	4
My coach encourages me to come back	79*	2	75	4
I enjoy being coached	78*	4	74	6
Coaching meets individual sport and physical activity needs	77	3	78	3
My coach pushes me to do more	77	4	76	4
My coach listens to me	73*	4	69	5
My coach supports me to achieve my individual goals	72	4	70	6

Base: all those who have received coaching in the previous twelve months. Excludes neutral responses

### The benefits of coaching, by ethnicity

Coached participants were asked to consider the benefits of coaching. Both white and BAME participants were most likely to agree that the coaching they receive helps to improve their skills/performance. Again, it is interesting to note that BAME participants were less likely to agree with all of these statements than white participants.

**Table 2.7: The benefits of receiving coaching**

Benefits	White		BAME	
	% Agree	% Disagree	% Agree	% Disagree
The coaching I receive helps to improve my skills/performance	87*	2	84	2
The coaching I receive helps to improve my fitness	84	3	82	3
The coaching I receive helps to improve my physical health	83	2	80	3
The coaching I receive helps to improve my mental health and well-being	72	5	69	6

Base: all those who have received coaching in the previous twelve months. Excludes neutral responses.

Next, participants were asked to rate their own physical and mental health. The findings were compared between those in receipt of coaching in the past twelve months; those who participated in sport and physical activity in the previous 12 months; and those who had never received coaching.

Across all factors, those in receipt of coaching scored more positively than those who participated in sport and physical activity and those who never received coaching. This was the case for both white participants and BAME participants.

**Table 2.8: Benefits of coaching by participant group, by ethnicity**

Benefits	White			BAME		
	Coached last 12 mths %	Participated last 12 mths %	Never received Coaching %	Coached last 12 mths %	Participated last 12 mths %	Never received coaching %
Rated own physical health as excellent or good	37	33	22	37	33	24
Rated own mental health and well-being as excellent or good	49	48	46	47	46	46
Done more sport and physical activity in the last 12 months	47	36	34	51	42*	34
Would like to do more sport and physical activity	75	73	66	84	81*	79
Time spent in sport and physical activity (minutes per week)	229	194	163	179	151	117

*Base: all those who have received coaching in the previous twelve months.*

### Participants view of their coach, by ethnicity

Participants' positivity about the coaching they received continued when asked to consider their coach. A large proportion of BAME and white participants reported that they had confidence and trust in their coach (80% and 86% respectively); would recommend their coach to others (78% and 83% respectively); and have a good relationship with their coach (71% and 75% respectively). It is worth noting that a significantly larger proportion of white participants agreed with these three statements compared to BAME participants.

**Table 2.9: Participants views of their coach, by ethnicity**

Participants views	White		BAME	
	% Agree	% Disagree	% Agree	% Disagree
I have confidence and trust in my coach	86*	2	80	3
I would recommend my coach to others	83*	2	78	4
I have a good relationship with my coach	75*	4	71	4
Through coaching, I feel part of a team or community	58	11	57	13
Through coaching, I have access to a range of social opportunities	41	21	43	17

Base: all those who have received coaching in the previous twelve months. Excludes neutral responses.

### Choosing a coach, by ethnicity

The survey asked participants the most important things they looked for when choosing a coach. Both BAME and white participants were most likely to choose a coach based on experience, and personal and people skills.

**Table 2.10: Considerations when choosing a coach, by ethnicity**

Choosing a coach	White %	BAME %
Experience	73*	67
Personal and people skills	70	67
Qualifications and training	66*	61
Someone who can understand me	57	56
Good reputation	43	39

Base: all those who have received coaching in the previous twelve months. Respondents could select more than one option; therefore, percentages do not add up to 100%.

Both BAME and white participants thought it was more important that a coach understands them (56% and 57% respectively, table 2.10 above) than it was to have the same characteristics as them such as personality, gender, age, life experience and background (table 2.11 below). However, significantly more people from BAME backgrounds thought it was important their coach was the same gender as them, than white people (11% and 6% respectively).

**Table 2.11: Further considerations when choosing a coach, by ethnicity**

Choosing a coach	White %	BAME %
Has a similar personality to me	12	11
Is the same gender as me	6	11*
Is a similar age to me	6	5
Has a similar life experience to me	4	6
Is from a similar background to me	3	5

Base: all those who have received coaching in the previous twelve months. Respondents could select more than one option; therefore, percentages do not add up to 100%

### Great Coaching, by ethnicity

Participants who received coaching were asked what they thought made a great sport and physical activity coach. The findings include a combination of technical coaching skills and social skills. BAME and white participants most commonly responded with “gives constructive feedback and corrections” (51% and 53% respectively).

**Table 2.12: Participant views of great coaches, by ethnicity**

Great coaches	White%	BAME %
Give constructive feedback and corrections	53	51
Friendly and approachable	50	46
Improve skills and ability	44	40
Qualified/trained	39	38
Create a warm and welcoming environment	39	36
Treat all participants as individuals	39*	33
Build good relationships	37	33
Have previous experience of coaching	20	19
Get good results (i.e. win matches/games)	12	15*
Know the rules of the game	12	13

Base: all those who have received coaching in the previous twelve months. Respondents could select more than one option; therefore, percentages do not add up to 100%.

### Participants no longer in the receipt of coaching, by ethnicity

Over 7 million people (6.1 million white and 1.2 million BAME people) reported they have received coaching in the past 5 years, but not in the last 12 months.

Around nine in ten (90%) of BAME participants no longer in the receipt of coaching said they might be encouraged to receive coaching again in the future. However, 10% said they would not be interested in receiving coaching again in the future. In comparison, almost a quarter (23%) of white participants who were no longer in receipt of coaching had no interest in receiving coaching again, a significantly higher proportion than the BAME population.

Reducing the cost of the session was the most common factor cited by white and BAME adults that might encourage them to take part in sessions in the future (50% and 53% respectively) followed by providing sessions at a more convenient time (28% and 33% respectively) and introducing more fun (19% and 22% respectively).

Improving the quality of coaching was cited by 16% of BAME adults, a significantly higher proportion than that of white adults (10%).

**Table 2.13: What would attract people back into coached sessions, by ethnicity**

Factors	White %	BAME %
Reduce the cost of sessions	50	53
Provide sessions at more convenient times for me	28	33*
Introduce more fun	19	22
Improve the facilities	13	20*
Introduce more social activities	12	18*
Provide more sessions	12	16*
Improve the quality of coaching	10	16*
Introduce more competitions or events	4	11*
Not interested in receiving coaching again	23*	10
Reduce the number of competitions or events	4	9*

*Base: all those who have received coaching in the past five years, but not the previous twelve months.*

*Respondents could select more than one option; therefore, percentages do not add up to 100%.*

### Participants who never received coaching, by ethnicity

Of those who had never received coaching in the past, that vast majority of white and BAME adults (75% and 65% respectively) said they would not be interested in doing so in the future. Asked why they would not be interested in receiving coaching, most said they preferred to exercise / play sport on their own. The second most common response from BAME participants was that it costs too much, whereas the second most common response from white participants was that “they think it is not for people like them”.

**Table 2.14 Reasons why they are not interested in receiving coaching, by ethnicity**

Reasons	White %	BAME %
They prefer to exercise/do sport on their own	35	39*
It costs too much	23	30*
They think it is not for people like them	29	26
They don't need a coach for their sport/activity	21	25
They don't have time	13	21*

*Base: all those who had never received coaching. Respondents could select more than one option; therefore, percentages do not add up to 100%.*

## Discussion

This statistical report provides a high-level summary of data from the Coaching in the UK study, with a specific focus on ethnicity. Coaching in the UK was the largest nationally representative survey conducted of coaches and coaching in the UK. It was the first research to include a broader definition of coaching, recognising changing government policy and the wider work of UK Coaching, supporting coaches across the whole sport and physical activity sector. The survey set a new baseline of data, which will enable UK Coaching and the wider sector to monitor and measure progress. It is hoped that the survey will be repeated on a regular basis.

This Spotlight on Ethnicity report complements the original reports on the coaching workforce and coached-participation: see <https://www.ukcoaching.org/resources/research/coaching-in-the-uk> for further information.

Using a broader definition of coaching, this report reveals a coaching workforce which is much more diverse in relation to ethnicity, than previous research has suggested. There is a greater proportion of the adult BAME population involved in coaching, than the adult white population: 2.7 million active white coaches and over 700,000 active BAME coaches coached sport or physical activity in the twelve months prior to the survey. This represents 6% and 10% of the adult UK population respectively. Previous research focused on coaching within traditional sports club settings and used a narrow role definition of a “sports coach”. These studies underrepresented the number of coaches operating in different environments and contexts, under a range of different role titles, across the whole sport and physical activity sector.

Overall, the coaching workforce is much more ethnically diverse than previously understood, and relatively diverse in sports club settings, and at more advanced/senior and specialist coaching roles. However, there are some localities that are not as diverse in relation to ethnicity, for example, in the South West of England and in the Yorkshire and Humber region. It is interesting to note that whilst the coaching workforce overall is diverse in relation to ethnicity, the BAME population of coaches is less representative in terms of socio-economic status and physical or mental health condition (and less representative than the white population of coaches). More research is required to explore this in further detail and to understand the challenges and barriers of BAME coaches, particularly with those from lower social grades and those with physical or mental health conditions.

The study also challenges previous research in relation to coaching roles and coaching qualifications. Whilst BAME coaches were significantly more likely than white coaches to describe their role as an activator/facilitator, they were also significantly more likely to describe their role as an advanced or senior coach. Furthermore, BAME coaches were significantly more likely than white coaches to have qualifications at levels 3 and 4, although it is not known whether they are coaching at the equivalent level of their qualification.

There were some interesting findings to note in relation to coach experience. Overall, whilst the experience of coaching for both BAME and white coaches was positive, BAME coaches reported a more positive experience across most factors than their white colleagues. It would be interesting to explore this in greater detail through further qualitative research. A greater proportion of BAME coaches were also more likely to want to spend more time coaching in the future, compared to white coaches.

In relation to coached-participation, a significantly higher proportion of the BAME population were in receipt of coaching in the twelve months prior to the survey than the white population: 22% of the BAME population compared to 17% of the white population in the UK. As with the coaching workforce, there are regional variations with a greater proportion of BAME adults in receipt of coaching in London.

Mirroring the coach workforce, BAME participants in receipt of coaching are less representative in terms of socio-economic status and physical or mental health condition: BAME participants were significantly more likely than white participants to be of higher social grade and were significantly less likely to have physical or mental health conditions. This provides further evidence to support the link between participation and coaching, and further qualitative research is required to explore the direction of this relationship in more detail.

It is also very interesting to note that whilst those who receive coaching report a very positive experience overall, BAME participants were less positive about their experience across a range of factors than white participants. This is opposite to the coach experience, as detailed above, and would therefore be interesting to explore in further detail.

Both BAME and white participants thought it was more important that a coach understands them, than it was to have the same characteristics as them such as personality, gender, age etc, challenging the “people like me” principle. However, significantly more people from BAME backgrounds thought it was important that their coach was the same gender as them,

suggesting that the “people like me” principle is more important for some groups and communities than others.

Overall, the findings suggest that coaching is an overwhelming positive experience for both the coach and the participant. It also suggests that providing more opportunities for people to take part in coached-activity, particularly amongst lower socio-economic groups, may help to increase BAME participation in sport and physical activity more generally. It could also increase the diversity of the coaching workforce by widening the “talent” pool.