

Being Blue: An examination of the lived experience of minority ethnic police officers

This research project, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), examines the lived experience of belonging and inclusion of minority ethnic police officers.

Key details

Lead institution	University of Leicester
Principal researcher(s)	Dr Claire Davis claire.davis@leicester.ac.uk
Police region	East Midlands
Level of research	Professional/work based
Project start date	January 2025
Date due for completion	November 2026

Research context

Recent high-profile events have reignited public concern about police culture. Despite a range of initiatives, police officers from minority ethnic backgrounds are still less likely to be promoted, more likely to resign and more likely to be subject to public complaints and misconduct proceedings. Yet the lived experience of minority ethnic officers has been absent from research and policymaking for over a decade, and without these insights, interventions will not bring about sustainable reform in the inclusion and belonging of those from minority ethnic backgrounds.

This study is a platform for change in the belonging, inclusion and retention of minority ethnic police officers. Through the innovative, participant-led research design and solution-focused impact activities, the Being Blue project centralises the lived experience of ethnic minority officers. The research will support police organisations in generating lasting and meaningful change in the

experience of belonging, and inclusion for ethnic minority officers. To achieve this, the study will:

- develop an evidence-base that centralizes lived experience of ethnic minority police officers of belonging and inclusion
- use this lived experience evidence-base to identify good practice in inclusion, belonging and retention of ethnic minority police officers and support constabularies to ensure more inclusive organisational policies and practices, and meaningful and sustainable change

Research methodology

The study includes:

- semi-structured interviews with ethnic minority police officers across different roles and ranks, examining wellbeing, inclusion, belonging and support
- reflective diaries representing the lived experience of ethnic minority officers of identity, inclusion and belonging in an authentic and accessible way

Additional resources

[Project website](#)