

Booksellers Association

Workforce Diversity Survey 2023/24 Report



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Introduction

As part of the BA's ongoing commitment to diversifying bookselling and better representing booksellers from all walks of life, all demographics and communities, we are very pleased to once again present the results of our Workforce Diversity Survey.

The fundamental aim of this project is to gather more data about our workforces to enable us to tackle issues around barriers of access and issues of representation. While data is not the answer to diversity, it is critical to understand where we are in our journey to ensuring that careers in bookselling are open to people from the widest possible range of backgrounds and that those already in the industry can thrive. In turn, this will allow us to create a useful report from the data and identify the best next steps.

In continuing on our journey in conducting our second industry-wide diversity and inclusion survey, we have once again partnered with EA Inclusion, who have managed a similar project on behalf of both the [Publishers Association](#) and the [Association of Authors Agents](#), as well as working with a number of individual publishers over several years.

Methodology

EA Inclusion compiled an anonymous online survey for the Booksellers Association to capture data on the diversity of its members' workforce, and their perceptions of inclusion. The survey was designed in line with the Office for National Statistics Census and was developed to align with current diversity and inclusion best practice.

The Booksellers Association asked all members to share this survey with their staff and encourage participation by booksellers across the sector.

The data collection for this survey took place over several weeks, between October 2023 and early January 2024, with analysis being undertaken in January 2024.

Relevant comparisons have been made to a 2022 survey and national figures to provide some benchmarks for comparison.

Participation

- A total of 275 individuals responded to this survey
 - An increase of 49% from 2022
- These individuals represented 158 different booksellers
 - An increase of 36% from 2022



275 Respondents
+49% from 2022



158 Booksellers
+36% from 2022

Summary of Key Findings



68% of respondents identified as female (down from 71% in 2022), in comparison to 51% of the population in England and Wales ([2021 Census](#)).



8% of respondents' gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth (7% in 2022), in comparison to 1% of the population in England and Wales ([2021 Census](#)).



8% of respondents identified as being from ethnic minority groups (excluding White minorities) (7% in 2022), in comparison to 18% of the population of England and Wales ([2021 Census](#)).



Almost three in ten (29%) respondents identified as LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bi, or preferred to self-describe their sexual orientation) (up from 23% in 2022), in comparison 3% of the population in England and Wales ([2021 Census](#)).



More than a quarter (28%) of respondents identified as having a disability or long-term health condition (29% in 2022), in comparison to 18% of the population of England and Wales ([2021 Census](#)).



One in four (24%) respondents have a neurodiverse condition (23% in 2022), in comparison to more than 15% of the UK population ([ACAS](#)).

- It should be noted that more than a third (39%) of those who said that they had a neurodiverse condition did not identify as having a disability or long-term health condition.



Almost a third (32%) of respondents are currently experiencing mental health problems (down from 35% in 2022), in comparison to one in six people reporting experiencing a common mental health problem (like anxiety and depression) in any given week in England, while one in four report experiencing mental health problems each year ([Mind](#)).



Almost two thirds (64%) of respondents had professional backgrounds (up from 59% in 2022) based on the occupation of their main household earner when they were about aged 14, in comparison to 37% of the population ([Social Mobility Commission](#)).



13% of respondents attended an independent or fee-paying school (down from 17% in 2022), in comparison to 7% of the population ([Sutton Trust](#) and [Social Mobility Commission](#)).



Around a third (34%) of respondents have caring responsibilities for children (19%) or adults (15%) (35% in 2022 – 28%/9%) in comparison to almost 40% of the workforce being working parents ([Working Families](#)) and between 9% and 18% of the population being carers ([Carers UK](#)).



Almost half (47%) of respondents said that they have read a book which has changed their perspective on D&I (up from 40% in 2022).



The majority of respondents agreed/ strongly agreed that they **feel included (85%), respected (80%), like they belong (83%) and that they can be their authentic self (81%)** at work, although these all declined from 2022 (between 7 and 10 percentage points).



Around three quarters of respondents agreed/ strongly agreed that their organisation **values and is committed to diversity and inclusion (80%)** and is **making progress addressing diversity and inclusion (72%)** although these both declined from 2022 (between 9 and 10 percentage points).



More than half (58%) of respondents agreed/ strongly agreed that the culture in the bookselling industry is inclusive (up from 52% in 2022).



Respondents rated the accessibility of their bookshop an average of 3.6 out of 5 (3.7 in 2022 – although responses were limited to bookshop owners).

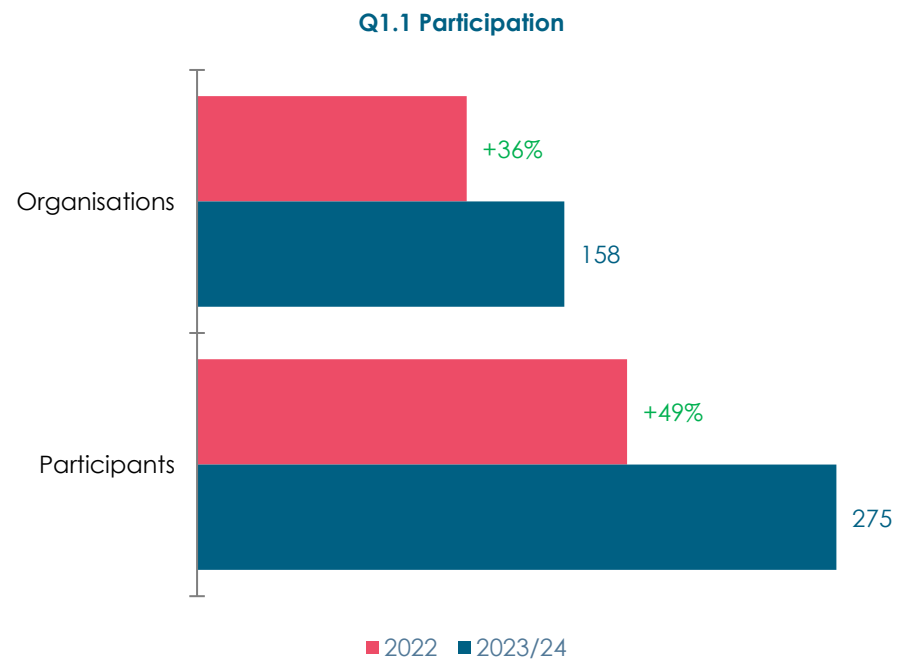
Findings

1. Your Organisation

Q1.1 Your Organisation

- 275 Respondents Answered

A total of 275 individuals responded to this survey, which was an increase of 49% from 2022. These individuals represented 158 different booksellers, which was an increase of 36% from 2022.



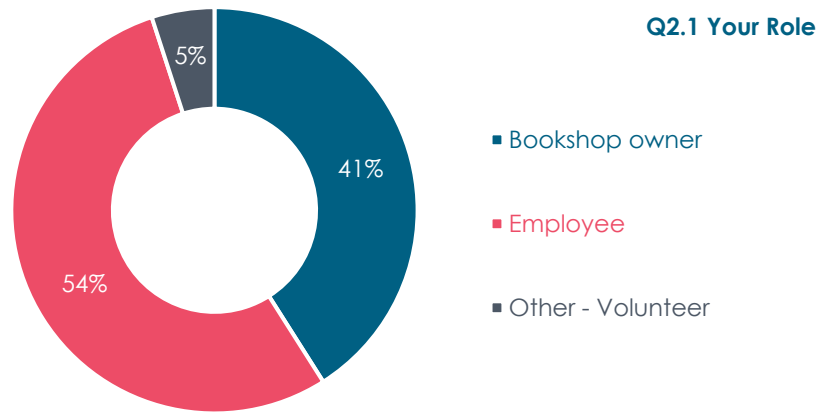
2. Your Role

Q2.1 Your Role

- 275 Respondents Answered

Less than half (41%) of respondents were bookshop owners, while more than half 54% were employees in bookshops. In total, 5% of respondents identified their role as being 'other' than a bookshop owner or employee, and these respondents said that they were volunteers.

In comparison to the 2022 survey, there has been a decline in the proportion of bookshop owners amongst respondents (from 45% in 2022 to 41% in 2023/24).



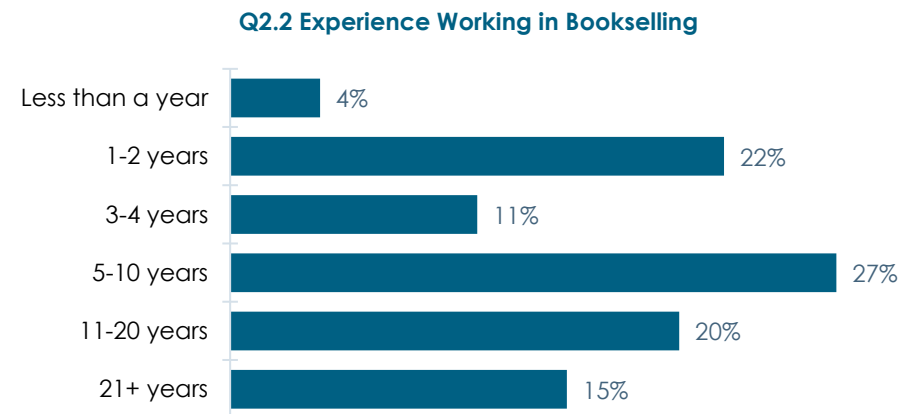
Q2.2 How many years have you worked in bookselling?

- 275 Respondents Answered

Respondents' length of experience in bookselling varied considerably, with the average (mean) number of years respondents have worked in bookselling being around 10 years.

Over a third of respondents (37%) have worked in bookselling for less than five years, including just 4% of respondents who have worked in bookselling for less than a year. More than a quarter (27%) have worked in bookselling for 5-10 years, and one in four (20%) have 11-20 years experience. Almost one in six (15%) respondents have 21+ years of experience in bookselling.

There were negligible differences in the length of service of respondents in comparison to the 2022 survey.



Q2.3 Prior to working in bookselling, have you worked in any of the following sectors?

Note: Totals may be over 100% as respondents were asked to select 'all that apply'.

- 275 Respondents Answered

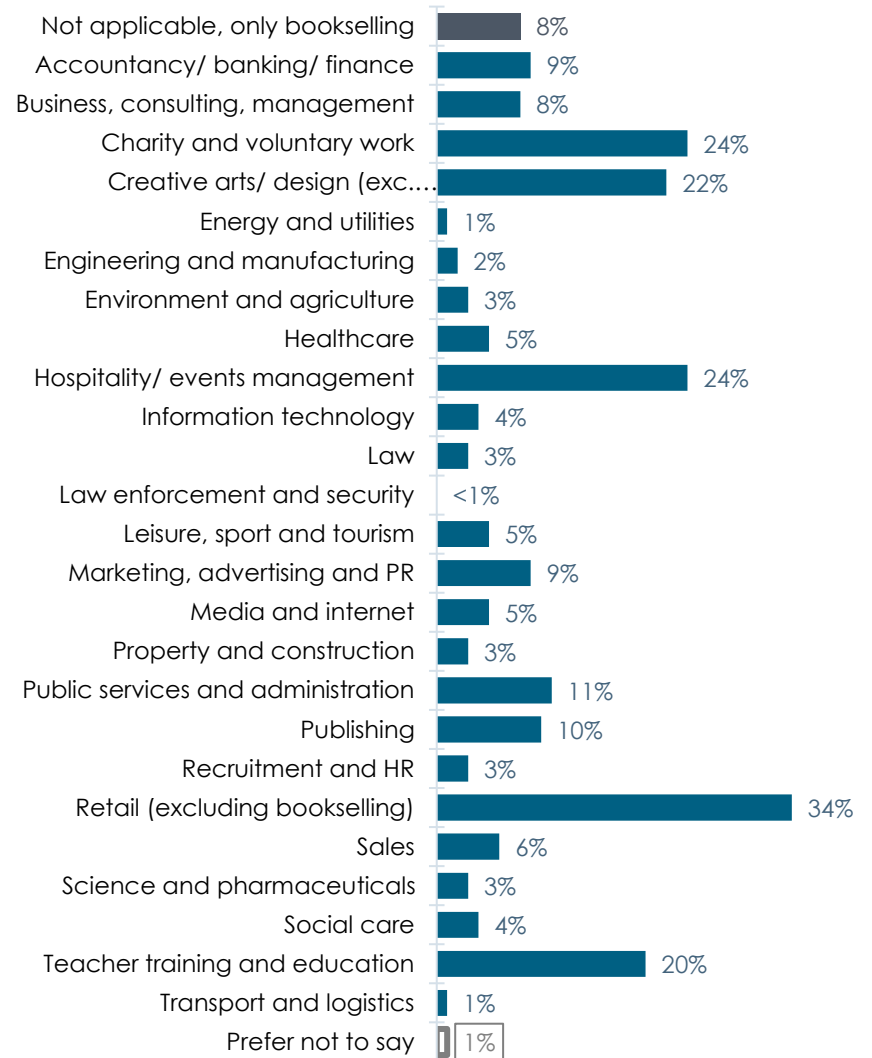
Prior to working in bookselling, respondents had worked in a wide range of sectors. The most common sector for respondents to have worked in prior to bookselling was Retail (excluding bookselling), with more than a third (34%) of respondents having worked in this sector. Around one in four/ five respondents had worked in Charity and voluntary work (24%), Hospitality and event management (24%), Creative arts and design (excluding publishing) (22%), or Teacher training and education (20%).

8% of respondents have not worked outside of bookselling.

- 1% of respondents preferred not to say

Since 2022 the most common previous work sectors have remained relatively consistent. There has been a significant increase in the proportion of respondents who previously worked in Hospitality and event management (15% in 2022, to 24% in 2023/24).

Q2.3 Previous Sector Experience Outside of Bookselling



Q2.4 Prior to working in bookselling, what is the highest level of management seniority that you have held?

- 275 Respondents Answered

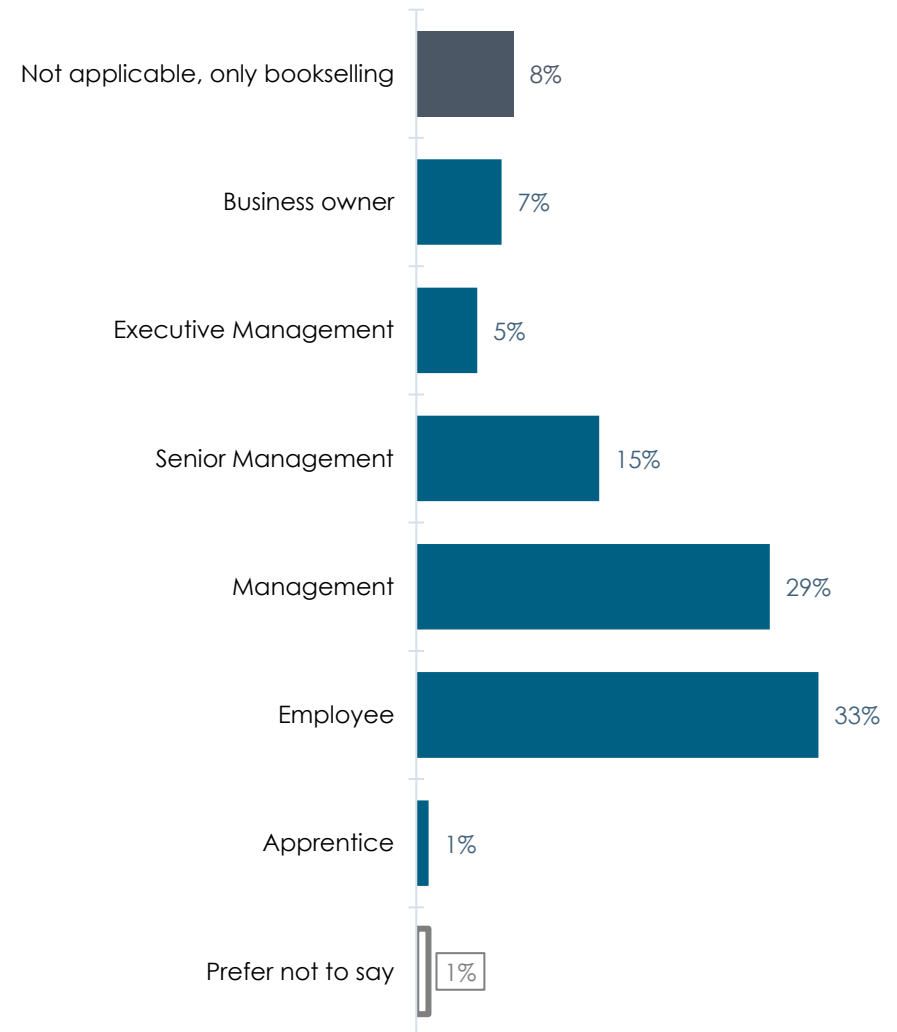
Looking at the highest level of management seniority that respondents have held prior to working in bookselling, 7% had been a business owner, while a small proportion (5%) had worked at Executive Management level. One in seven (15%) respondents had worked at Senior Management level, and almost a third (29%) had worked at Management level prior to working in bookselling. One in three (33%) respondents have worked at employee level (with no line/ project management responsibility).

One in 13 (8%) respondents have not worked outside of bookselling.

- 1% of respondents preferred not to say

In comparison to the 2022 survey, there has been a decrease in the proportion of respondents with Management level experience (from 36% in 2022, to 29% in 2023/24). The proportion of respondents who have only worked within bookselling is in line with 2022 results.

Q2.4 Highest Level of Management Seniority Held Prior to Working in Bookselling



3. Career Break or Sabbatical

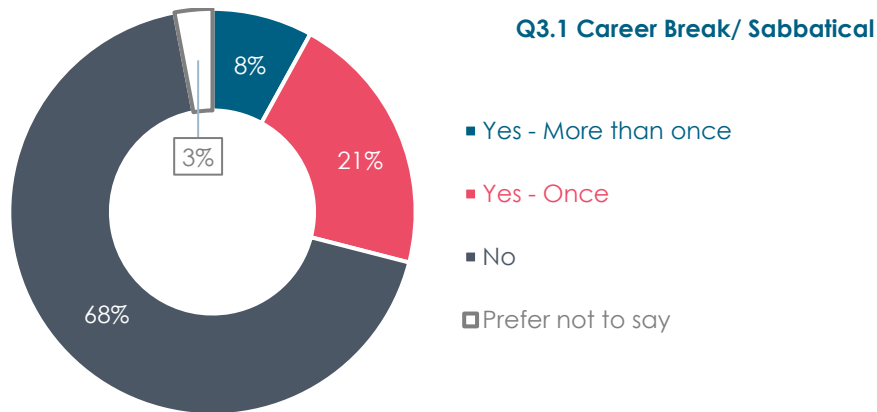
Q3.1 Have you ever taken a career break or sabbatical for more than one year for any reason?

- 275 Respondents Answered

In total, almost one in three (29%) respondents have taken a career break or sabbatical for more than one year, with 8% having done this more than once, and 21% having done this once. More than two-thirds of respondents (68%) have never taken a career break or sabbatical for more than one year.

- 3% of respondents preferred not to say

These results are in line with the 2022 survey.



Q3.2 What was the reason for your career break/s or sabbatical/s?

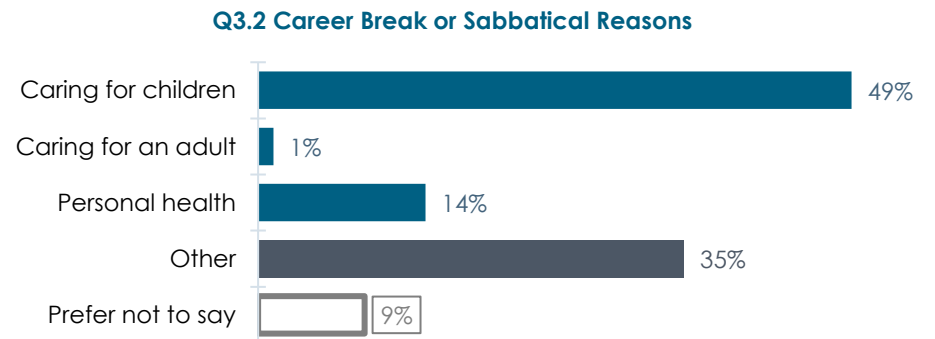
- 80 Respondents Answered

Just under half (49%) of respondents who took a career break/s or sabbatical/s did so in order to care for children, with just 1% to caring for adults. 14% of respondents who took a career break/s or sabbatical/s did so due to personal health.

One in three (33%) respondents took a career break/s or sabbatical/s for other reasons, which included travel, education/ training, redundancy/ unemployment, evaluating career change options, volunteering, pursuing leisure activities, political activism, and as a result of Covid.

- 8% of respondents preferred not to say

A higher proportion of respondents in the 2022 survey has taken a career break/s or sabbatical/s to care for an adult (7% in 2022 vs 1% in 2023/24)



4. Location

Q4.1 Where is your primary home located?

Note: This is a survey of the UK and Ireland bookselling industry and therefore is only open to respondents in these areas.

- 275 Respondents Answered

Around two-thirds (68%) of respondents live in England, a decrease from 75% in 2022. The highest proportion of respondents live in the South East of England (12%), down from 17% in 2022. London and the East of England are both home to 11% of respondents, which are up from 7% and 9% in 2022.

Outside of England, a further 15% of respondents live in Scotland, while 7% live in Wales, and 1% live in Northern Ireland. Finally, 9% of respondents live in the Republic of Ireland. Representation of respondents living outside of England was up from 25% in 2022 to 32% in 2023/24.

- 1% of respondents preferred not to say

Q4.2 Where did you spend the majority of your childhood?

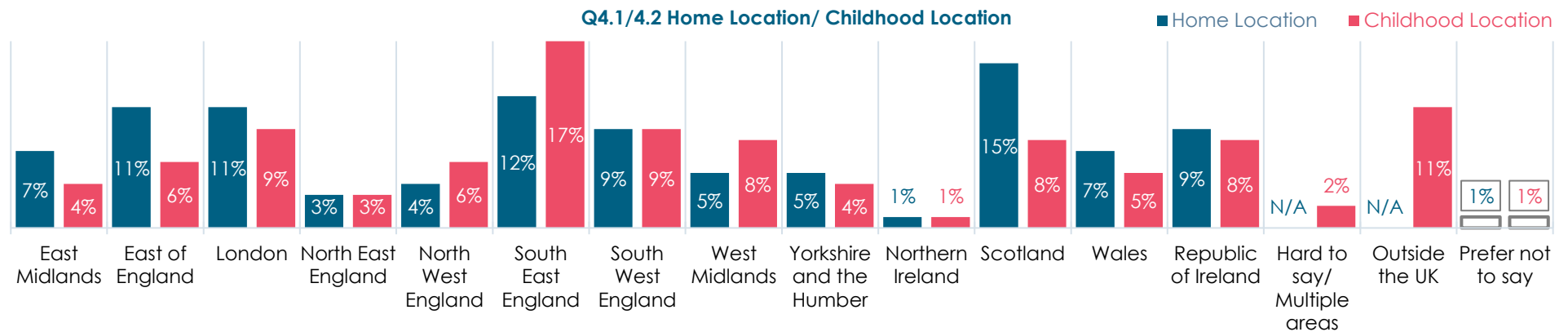
- 275 Respondents Answered

Around two-thirds of respondents grew up in England (64%), which is down from 69% in 2022. The highest proportion of respondents grew up in the South East of England (17%), which was in line with 2022.

Outside of England, a further 8% grew up in Scotland, while 5% grew up in Wales, and 1% grew up in Northern Ireland. Finally, 8% of respondents grew up in the Republic of Ireland.

Around one in nine (11%) respondents grew up outside of the UK/ Ireland, which was an increase from 9% in 2022.

- 1% of respondents preferred not to say



5. Age

Q5.1 What is your age range?

- 275 Respondents Answered

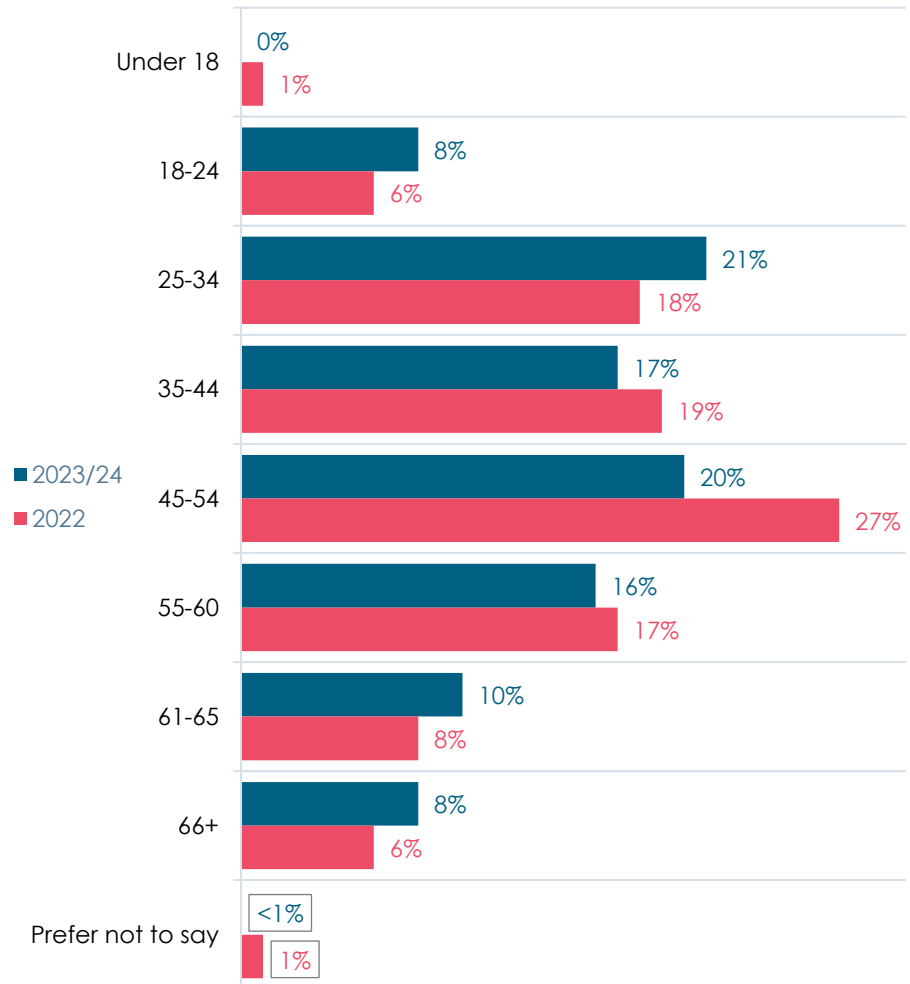
None of the 2023/24 respondents were aged under 18, while a relatively small proportion were aged 18-24 (8%). Around one in five respondents were aged 25-34 (21%) and 17% were aged between 35-44. A fifth (20%) of respondents were aged 45-54. One in six (16%) respondents were aged 55-60, while one in ten (10%) were aged 61-65, and 8% were aged 66+.

- One respondent preferred not to say

There has been a change in the age profile of respondents since 2022, with a bigger proportion at either end of the age spectrum (with the exception of under 18s). There has been an increase in the proportion of respondents aged 18-24 and 25-34, along with those aged 61-65 and 66+. Reflecting this, there was a decline in the proportion of respondents in age groups between 35 and 60.

National Comparison: The age profile of respondents aligns with the results from the [2021 Census in England and Wales](#), where 21% of the population over the age of 15 are aged between 25-34, 20% are aged 35-44, and 21% are aged 45-54.

Q5.1 Age



6. Gender and Gender Identity

Q6.1 What best describes your gender?

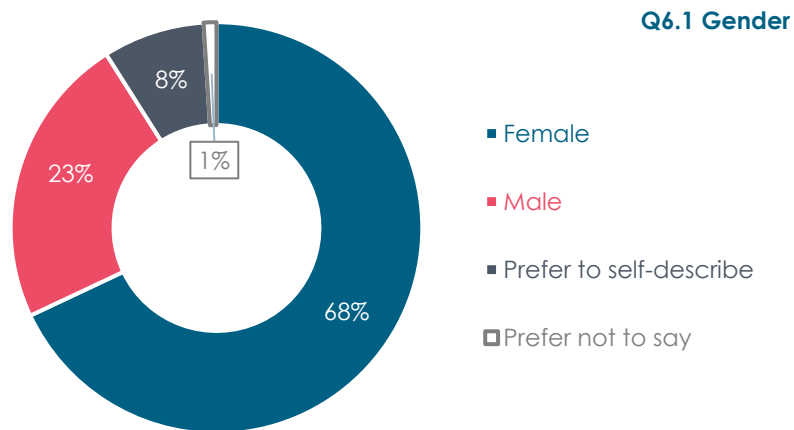
- 275 Respondents Answered

Around two-thirds (68%) of respondents identified as female, with less than a quarter (23%) identifying as male. Additionally, 8% of respondents preferred to self-describe their gender, with the majority of those (6% overall) who did so identifying as non-binary.

- 1% of respondents preferred not to say

Gender representation was similar in 2023/24 to 2022.

National Comparison: According to the [2021 Census in England and Wales](#), 51% of the population are female.



Q6.2 Is your gender identity the same as the sex you were assigned at birth?

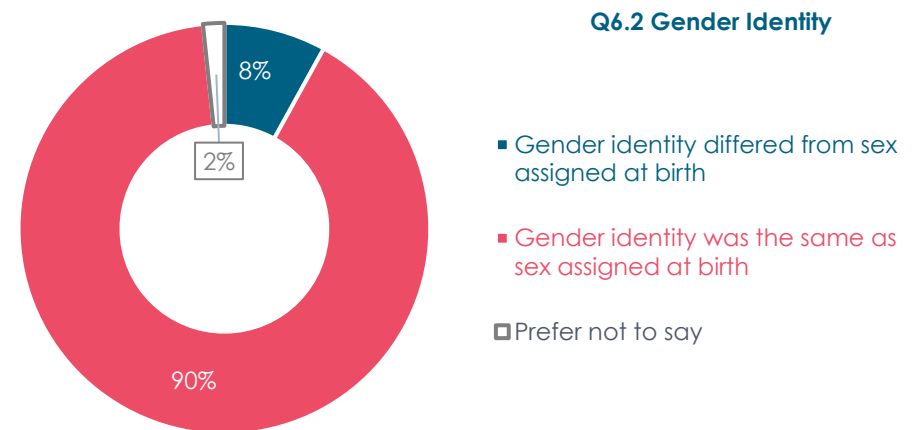
- 275 Respondents Answered

Respondents were asked if their gender identity was the same as the sex that they were assigned at birth, with 8% of respondents saying that it differed and 90% saying that it remained the same. This is similar to the results of the 2022 survey.

- 2% of respondents preferred not to say

This was similar in 2023/24 to 2022.

National Comparison: According to the 2021 Census in England and Wales, 1% of the population said that that their gender identity differed from the sex that they were assigned at birth.



7. National Identity

Q7.1 How would you describe your national identity?

Note: Totals may be over 100% as respondents were asked to select 'all that apply'.

- 275 Respondents Answered

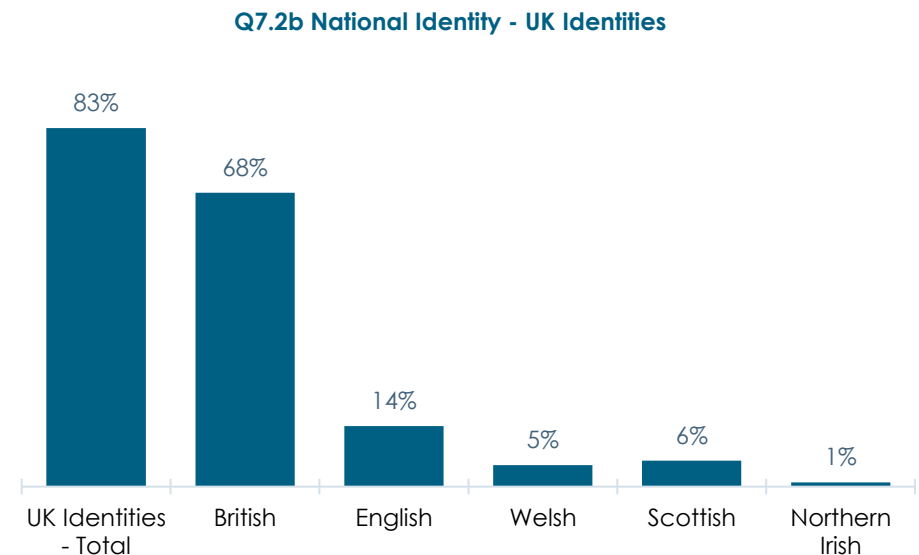
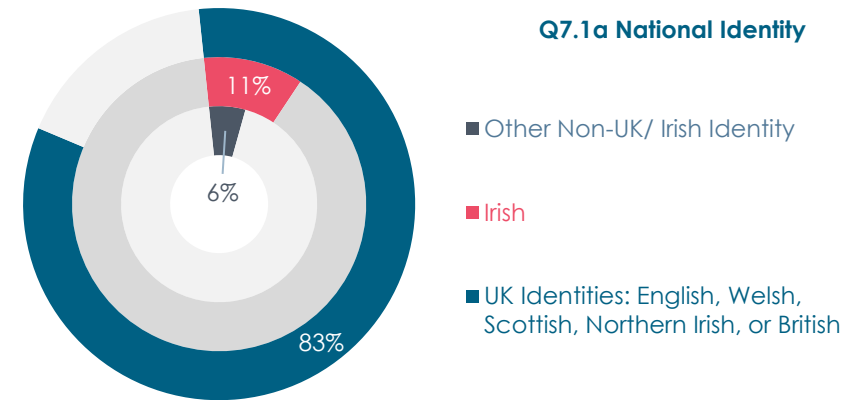
More than one in five (83%) respondents identified their national identity as British (68%), or one or more of the following UK nations: English (14%), Welsh (5%), Scottish (6%), or Northern Irish (1%). A total of 11% of respondents identified as Irish, and 6% of respondents identified with a non-UK/ non-Irish national identity.

- 2% of respondents preferred not to say

There has been a decline in respondents identifying with British/home nations national identities from 2022 (86%) to 2023/24 (83%), and non-UK/ Irish identities (9% down to 6%), while the proportion of respondents identifying with Irish identities has increased from 7% to 11%.

National Comparison: According to the [2021 Census in England and Wales](#), 90% of the population identify their national identity as British or at least one UK national identity. Overall, 12% of the population identified with a non-UK national identity (either by itself or with at least one UK identity).

There is no comparable benchmark for the UK and Ireland combined.



8. Ethnicity

Q8.1 What is your ethnic group?

Note: Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

- 275 Respondents Answered

A total of 8% of respondents identified as being from ethnic minority groups (excluding White minorities):

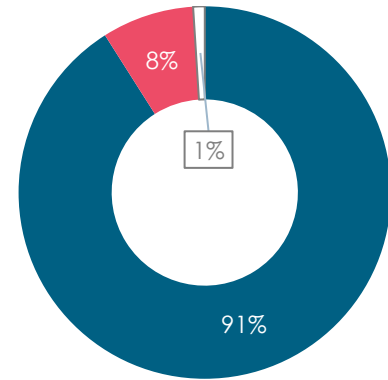
- 3% Asian, Asian British, Asian Irish
- 1% Black/ Black British, Black Irish, Caribbean, or African
- 4% Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups

A combined 91% of respondents identified as being from White ethnic groups, with the majority (71%) identifying as White British. A further 11% identified as White Irish, and 9% identified as being from other White backgrounds.

- 1% of respondents preferred not to say

Ethnicity representation was in line with 2022 results, with the exception of White British representation declining from 77% in 2022 to 71% in 2023/24 and White Irish representation increasing from 7% in 2022 to 11% in 2023/24.

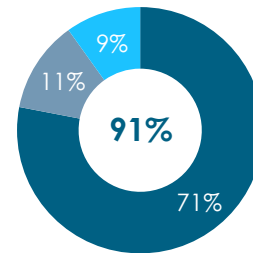
National Comparison: According to the [2021 Census in England and Wales](#), a combined 18% of the population were from ethnic minority groups (excluding White minorities), while 82% were from White groups, with 74% identifying as White British. Ethnic minority groups (excluding White minorities) include: 9% from Asian/ Asian British groups; 4% from Black, Black British, Caribbean, or African groups; 3% from Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups; and 2% from Other ethnic groups.



Q8.1a Ethnicity

- White (Total)
- Ethnic Minority Groups (Excluding White Minorities) (Total)
- Prefer not to say

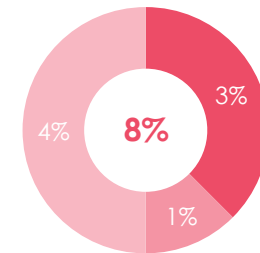
Q8.1b White Ethnic Groups



- White - English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
- White - Irish
- Any Other White Background

Note: Less than 1% of respondents identified as White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller

Q8.1c Ethnic Minority Groups (Excluding White Minority Groups)



- Asian/ Asian British/ Asian Irish (Total)
- Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British/ Black Irish (Total)
- Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups (Total)

Note: Less than 1% of respondents identified as being from Other ethnic groups

9. Religion or Belief

Q9.1 What is your religion or belief?

- 275 Respondents Answered

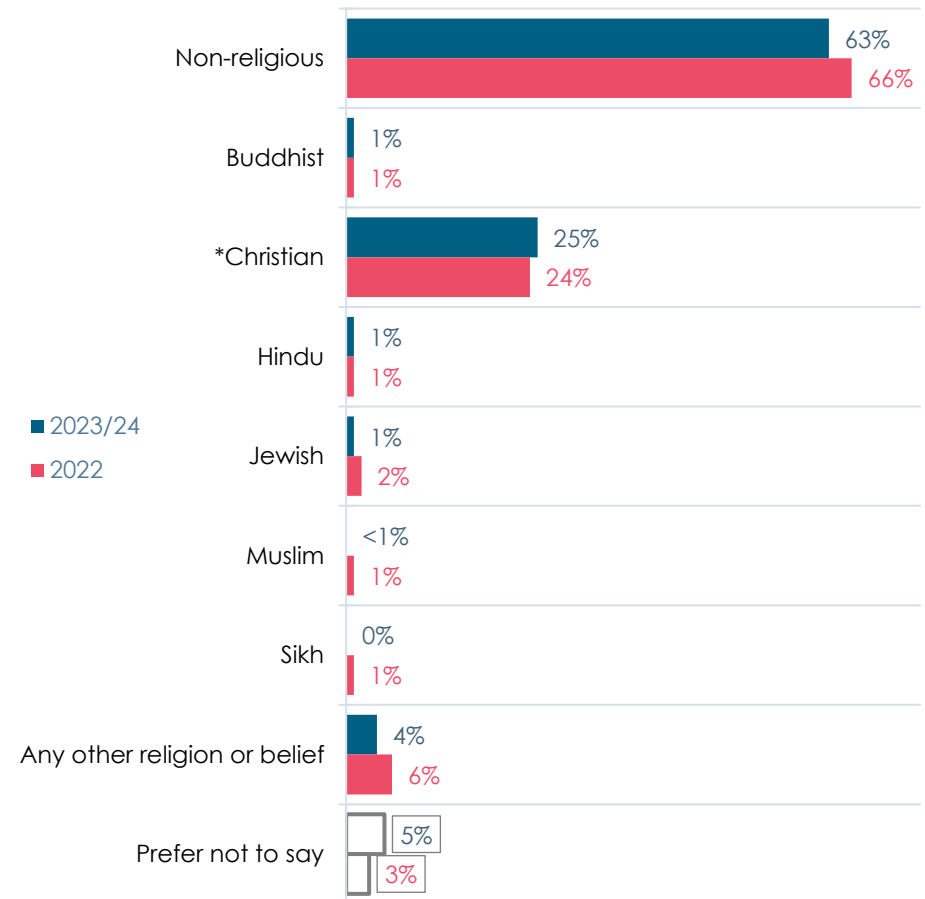
Around two-thirds (63%) of respondents identified as non-religious, with one in four (25%) identifying as Christian*. A small proportion of respondents identified as either Buddhist (1%), Hindu (1%), or Jewish (1%). Less than 1% of respondents identified as Muslim and there were no Sikh respondents, while 4% of respondents identified with another religion or belief.

- 5% of respondents preferred not to say

Respondents' religion or belief is in line with 2022, with the most noticeable difference being the decrease in the proportion of non-religious respondents (from 66% in 2022 to 63% in 2023/24).

National Comparison: According to the [2021 Census in England and Wales](#), 37% of the population are non-religious and 46% are Christian, which was the most common religious group. The next most common religious group was Muslim (7%), followed by Hindu (2%). Buddhist, Jewish, and Sikh religious groups each accounted for 1% of the population. Other religions or beliefs accounted for 1%, while 6% of census respondents preferred not to say.

Q9.1 Religion or Belief



*Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Church or Ireland [inc. Protestant] and all other Christian denominations)

10. Sexual Orientation

Q10.1 Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

- 275 Respondents Answered

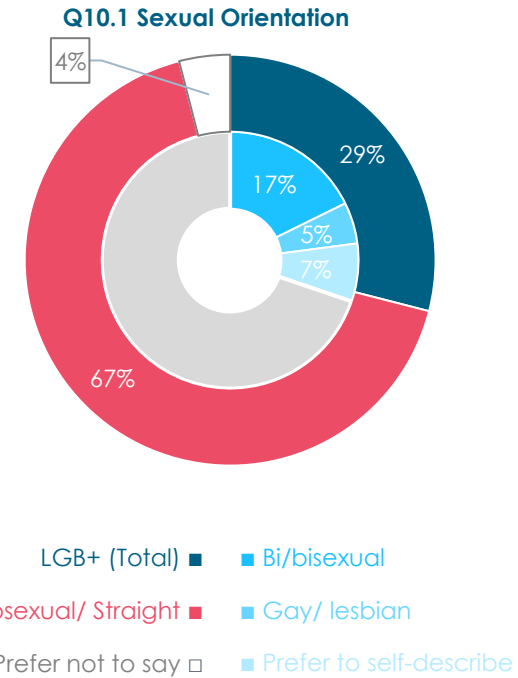
Almost three in ten (29%) respondents identified as LGB+ (lesbian, gay, bi/ bisexual, or preferred to self-describe their sexual orientation), with 17% identifying as bi/ bisexual, and 5% identifying as gay/ lesbian. A further 7% preferred to self-describe their sexual orientation, with around a third of those identifying as either queer, asexual, or pansexual.

Two-thirds (67%) of respondents identified as straight/ heterosexual.

- 4% of respondents preferred not to say

In comparison to 2022, there has been a significant increase (from 23% to 29%) in the proportion of respondents identifying as LGB+. This is mostly attributed to the increase in bi/ bisexual respondents (from 10% in 2022, to 17% in 2023/24). The overall LGB+ representation increase is mirrored by a decline in the proportion of respondents that identified as straight/heterosexual (from 72% in 2022 to 67% in 2023/24).

National Comparison: According to the [2021 Census in England and Wales](#), 3% of the population identify as LGB+, while 8% did not respond.



Q10.2 Are you open about your sexual orientation at home?

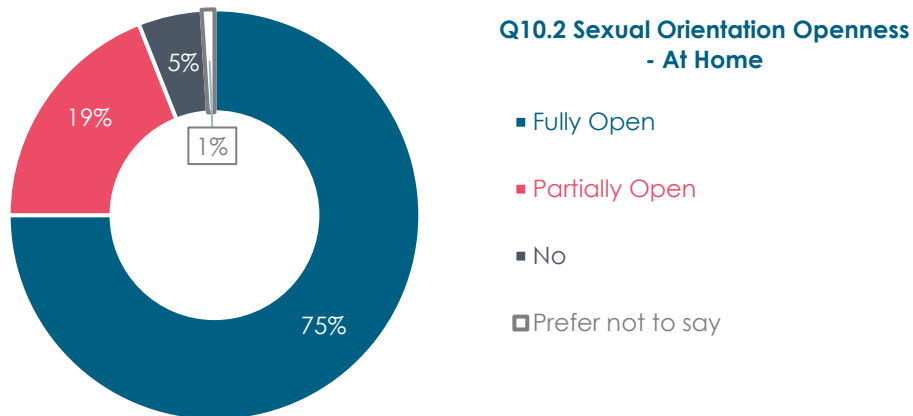
- 81 Respondents Answered

Respondents who identified as LGB+ were asked about their sexual orientation openness at home.

Three-quarters (75%) of LGB+ respondents were fully open about their sexual orientation at home, while a further 19% said that they were partially open at home. 5% were not open about their sexual orientation at home.

- 1% of respondents preferred not to say

There is an increase in the proportion of respondents who are not open about their sexual orientation at home since 2022 (from 2% to 5%), and a higher proportion said that they were fully open (from 71% to 75%).



Q10.3 Are you open about your sexual orientation at work?

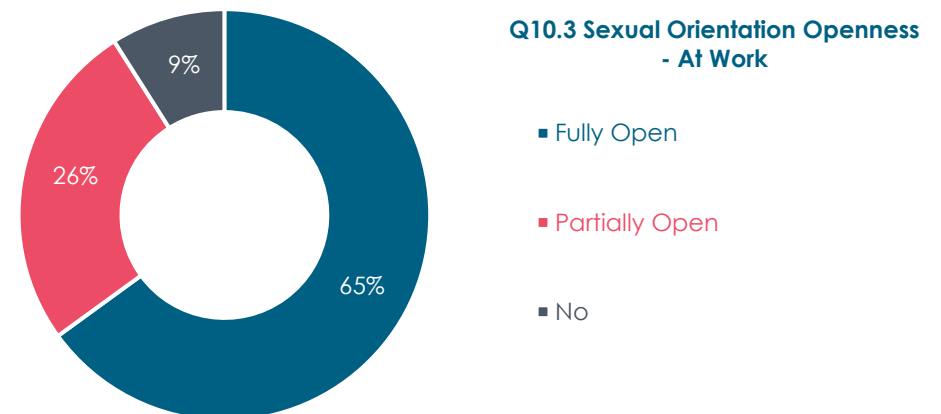
- 81 Respondents Answered

Respondents who identified as LGB+ were asked about their sexual orientation openness at work, which is a key measure of inclusion.

Around two-thirds (65%) of respondents were fully open about their sexual orientation at work, with a further one in four (26%) being partially open at work. 9% of respondents were not open about their sexual orientation at work.

- 0% of respondents preferred not to say

A higher proportion of respondents are open about their sexual orientation at work (either fully or partially) now compared to in 2022. This is reflected in a decline in the proportion of respondents who are not open about their sexual orientation at work (from 12% to 9%).



11. Disabilities, Long-Term Health Conditions, and Neurodiversity

Q11.1 Do you consider yourself to have a disability or long-term health condition (mental health and/ or physical health)?

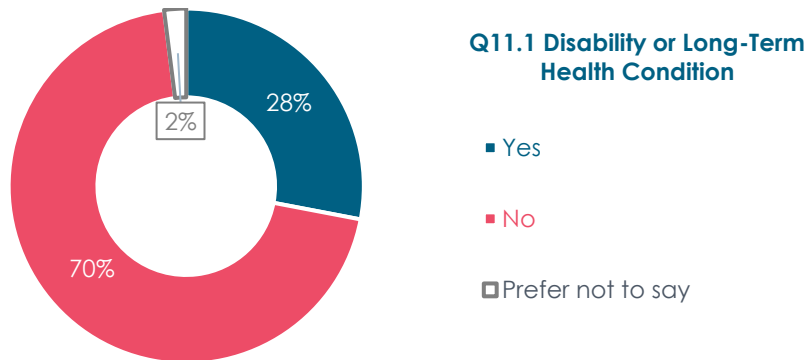
- 275 Respondents Answered

Almost three in ten (28%) respondents shared that they identify as having a disability or long-term health condition.

- 2% of respondents preferred not to say

This was in line with 2022 results (29%).

National Comparison: Almost one in five (18%) of the population of England and Wales have a disability or a long-term health condition ([2021 Census](#)).



Q11.2 Do you have a neurodiverse condition? Neurodiversity refers to the different ways the brain can work and interpret information. Most forms of neurodivergence are experienced along a spectrum. Examples of neurodiverse conditions include ADHD, ASD, ADD, dyslexia, Tourette's, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, borderline personality disorder, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, or others.

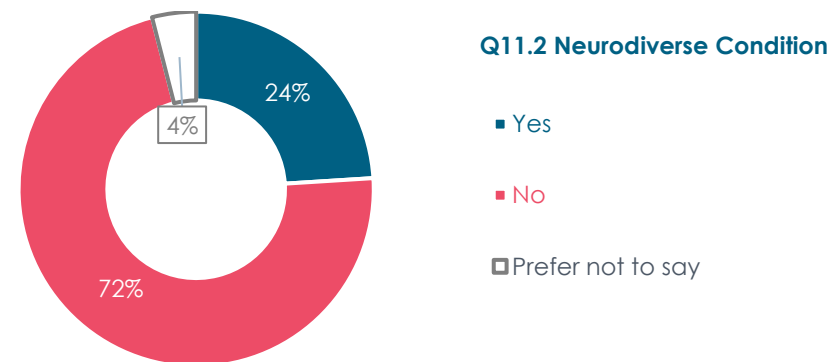
- 275 Respondents Answered

Almost one in four (24%) respondents shared that they have a neurodiverse condition.

- 4% of respondents preferred not to say

This was in line with 2022 results (23%).

National Comparison: It is estimated that around one in seven people (more than 15%) in the UK are neurodivergent ([ACAS](#)).



Q11.3 Do you have any of the following, which have lasted, or are expected to last, at least 12 months?

Note: Totals may be over 100% as respondents were asked to select 'all that apply'.

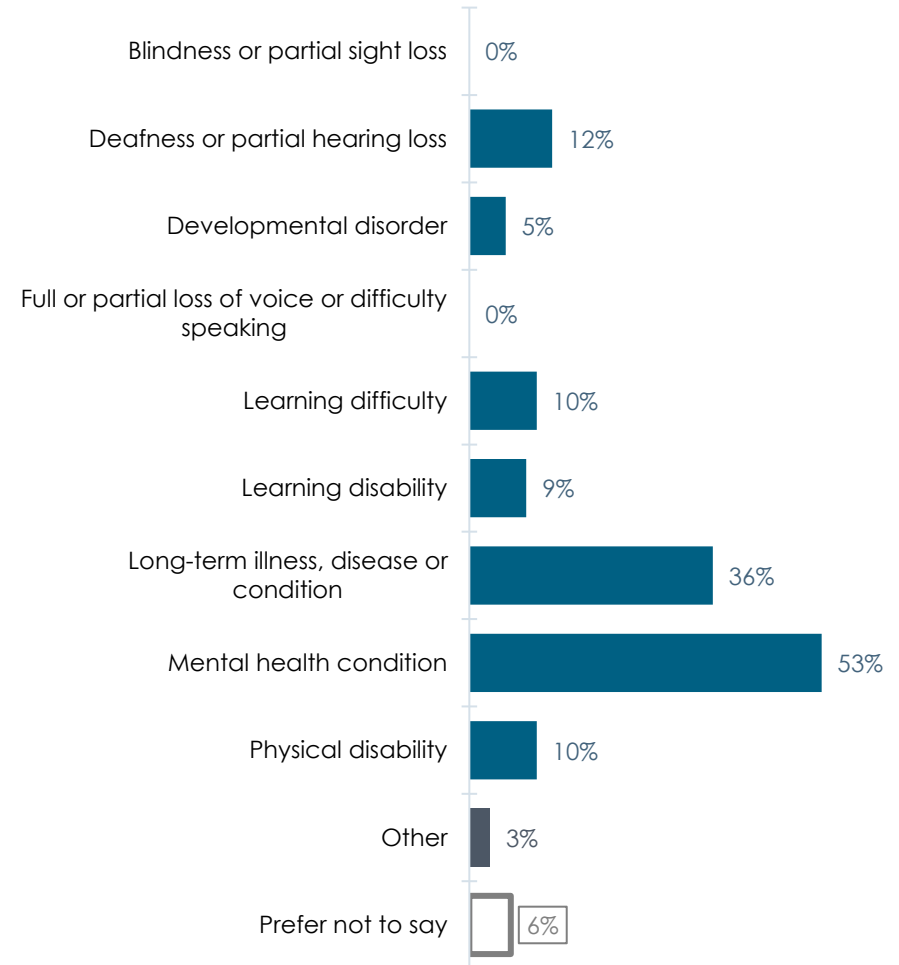
- 129 Respondents Answered

Of those who responded, more than half (53%) had a mental health condition, while over a third (36%) had a long-term illness, disease or condition. Around one in eight (12%) respondents had deafness or partial hearing loss, and one in ten (10%) respondents shared that they had a physical disability. Around one in ten respondents had a learning difficulty (10%) or learning disability (9%).

- 6% of respondents preferred not to say

While the representation of most of the disabilities or long-term health conditions were similar in both 2022 and 2023/24, there is a substantial decline in the proportion of respondents sharing that they had a physical disability (from 23% to 10%).

Q11.3 Disabilities/ Long-Term Health Conditions



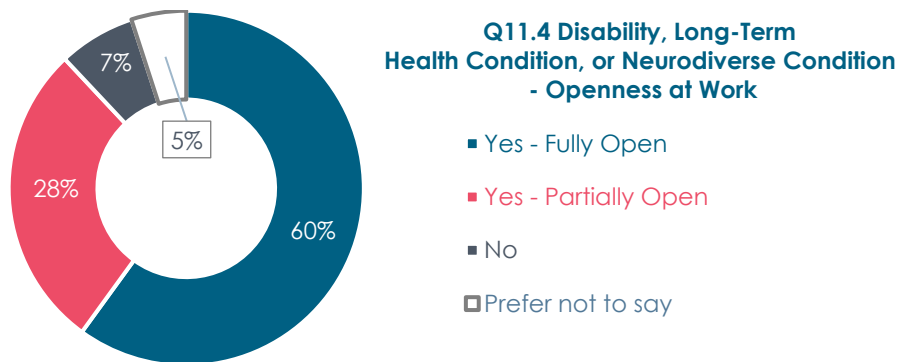
Q11.4 Are you open about your disability, long-term health condition, or neurodivergence at work?

- 133 Respondents Answered

Of those who responded, 88% were open (either fully or partially) about their disability, long-term health condition, or neurodivergence at work - 60% were fully open, while 28% were partially open about this. A small proportion (7%) were not open about their disability, long-term health condition, or neurodivergence at work.

- 5% of respondents preferred not to say

There has been an increase (from 81% in 2022 to 88% in 2023/24) in the proportion of respondents who are open (fully or partially) about their disability, long-term health condition, or neurodivergence at work.



Q11.5 Who at your current workplace knows about your disability, long-term-health condition, or neurodivergence?

Note: Totals may be over 100% as respondents were asked to select 'all that apply'.

- 128 Respondents Answered

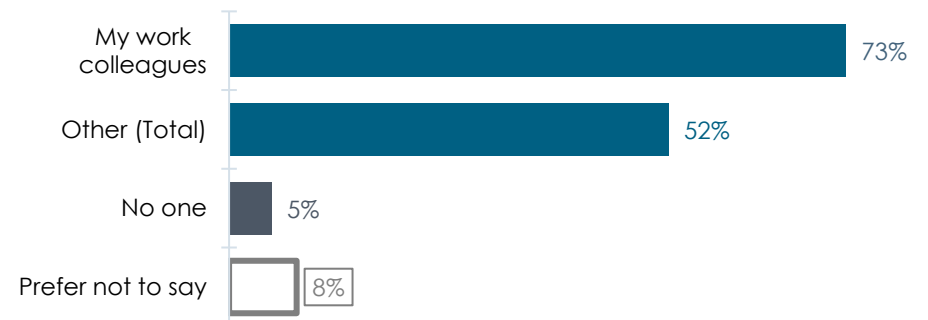
Almost three-quarters (73%) of respondents said that their work colleagues were aware of their disability, long-term-health, or neurodivergence, which was in line with the 2022 survey.

More than half (52%) of respondents said that someone at work other than colleagues were aware of their disability, long-term-health, or neurodivergence (which is a decline from 57% in 2022).

One in twenty (5%) respondents said that no one at work was aware of their disability, long-term-health condition, or neurodivergence, which was lower than in 2022 (9%).

- 4% of respondents preferred not to say

Q11.5 Who at your current workplace knows about your disability, long-term health condition, or neurodiverse condition?



12. Mental Health

Q12.1 Have you ever experienced problems with your own personal mental health?

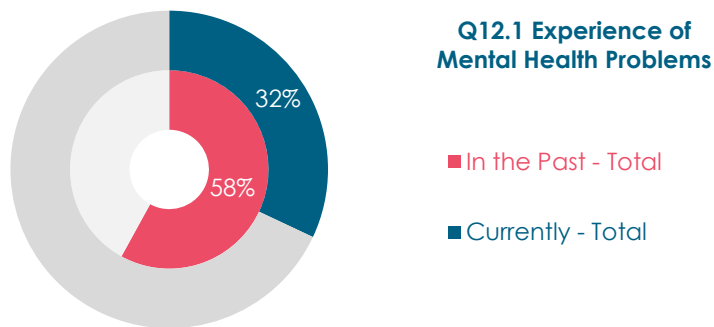
- 275 Respondents Answered

Almost a third (32%) of respondents said that they are currently experiencing mental health problems. More than a half (58%) of respondents said that they have experienced mental health problems in the past (including those who are currently experiencing mental health problems).

- 4% of respondents preferred not to say

In comparison to 2022, the proportion of respondents who are currently experiencing mental health problems has decreased from 35% to 32%.

National Comparison: One in six people (17%) report experiencing a common mental health problem (like anxiety and depression) in any given week in England, while one in four (25%) report experiencing mental health problems each year ([Mind](#)).



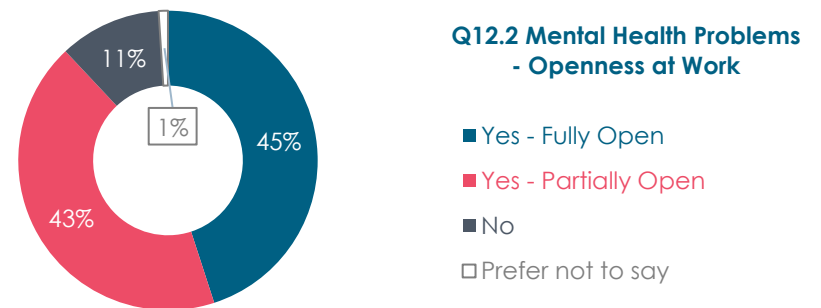
Q12.2 Have you been open about your mental health problems at work?

- 84 Respondents who are currently experiencing mental health problems answered

Of those respondents who are currently experiencing mental health problems, more than three quarters (88%) were open (either fully open or partially open) about their mental health problems at work - 45% were fully open, while 43% were partially open about this at work. 11% of respondents who are currently experiencing mental health problems, said that they are not open about this at work.

- 1% of respondents preferred not to say

There has been a significant decrease in the proportion of respondents who are open about their mental health at work (from 82% in 2022 to 75% in 2023/24), particularly those who are fully open, where there has been a decrease of 11%.



Q12.3 Who at your current workplace knows that you are experiencing mental health problems?

Note: Totals may be over 100% as respondents were asked to select 'all that apply'.

- 81 Respondents who are currently experiencing mental health problems answered

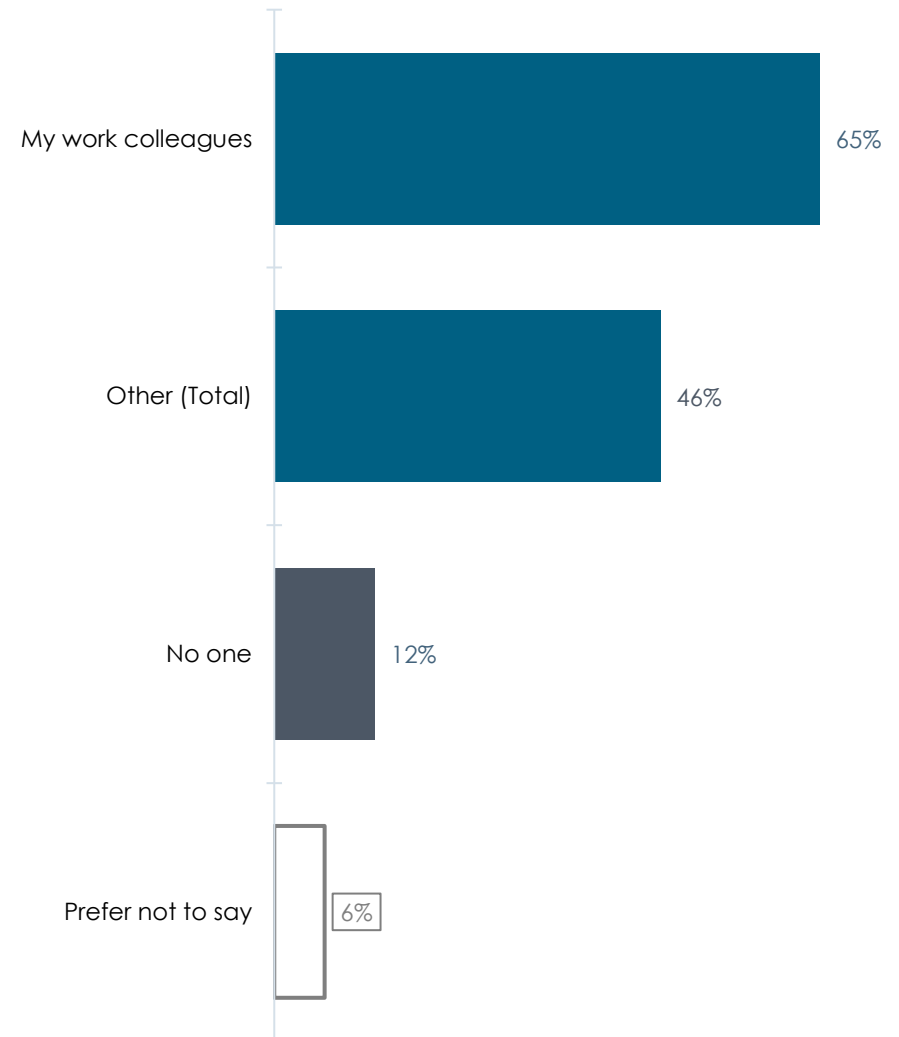
Of those respondents who are currently experiencing mental health problems, almost two thirds (65%) said that their colleagues were aware of this, which has declined from the 2022 survey (69%).

Almost half (46%) of respondents said that someone at work other than colleagues were aware of their mental health problem at work.

One in eight (12%) respondents who are currently experiencing mental health problems said that no one at work is aware of this, which has declined from the 2022 survey (16%).

- 6% of respondents preferred not to say

12.3 Who at your current workplace knows that you are experiencing mental health problems?



Observation

- 28% of respondents identified as having a disability or long-term health condition
- 24% of respondents identified as having a neurodiverse condition
- 32% of respondents said that they are currently experiencing mental health problems

In total, almost half (47%) respondents had either a disability or long-term health condition, a neurodiverse condition, or were currently experiencing mental health problems.

It should be noted that:

- More than a third (39%) of those who said that they had a neurodiverse condition did not identify as having a disability or long-term health condition.
- Almost half (42%) of those who said that they are currently experiencing mental health problems did not identify as having a disability or long-term health condition.

13. Socio-economic Background and Education

Q13.1 What was the occupation of your main household earner when you were about aged 14?

- 275 Respondents Answered in Total (17 responses removed as below)

Note: 17 responses which included 'Long-term unemployed'; 'Other' such as retired, this question does not apply to me, I don't know'; and 'Prefer not to say'; were removed from the analysis as per Social Mobility Commission Guidance.

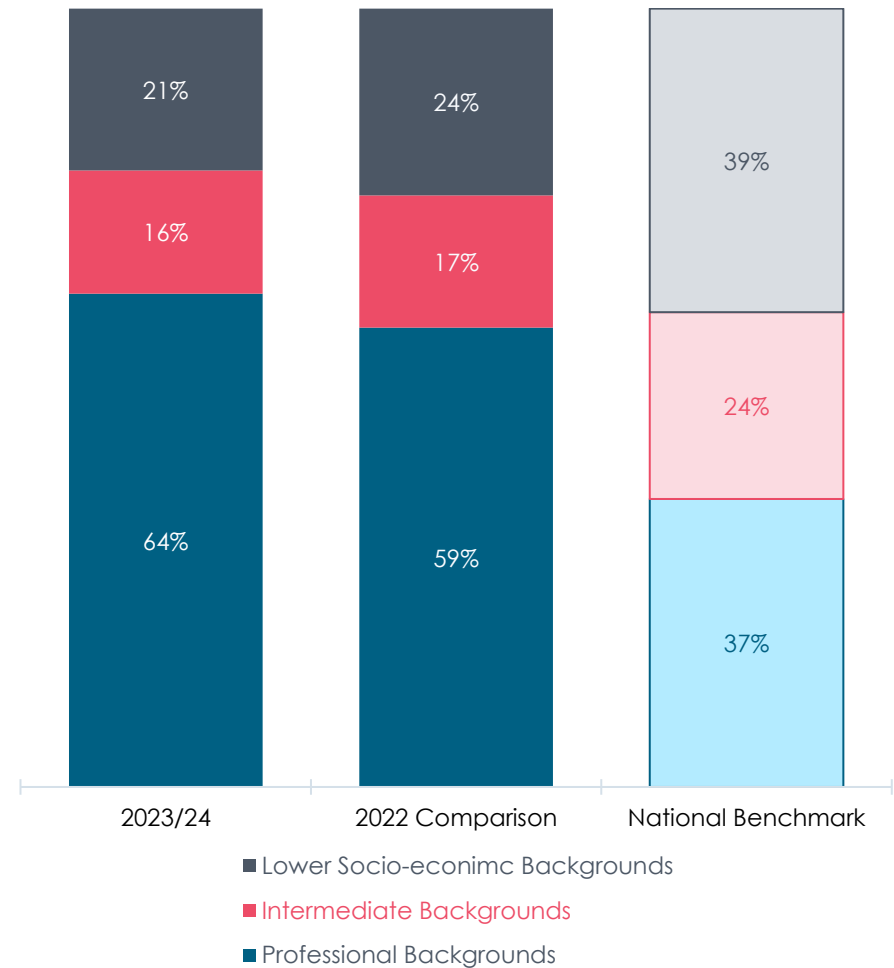
Almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents had professional backgrounds based on the occupation of the main household earner when they were about aged 14 (up from 59% in 2022). One in six (16%) had intermediate backgrounds (in line with 2022 results), and just over a fifth (21%) had lower socio-economic backgrounds (down from 24% in 2022).

Looking at all responses, a small proportion of respondents said that their main household earner was long-term unemployed (2%) or provided another response (3%) (e.g. retired, this question did not apply to them, or they didn't know).

- 2% of all respondents preferred not to say

National Comparison: The national benchmarks from the [Social Mobility Commission](#) report that over a third (37%) of the population had professional backgrounds, around a quarter (24%) had intermediate backgrounds, and almost four in ten (39%) had lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Q13.1 Socio-economic Background Based on Parental Occupation at Age 14



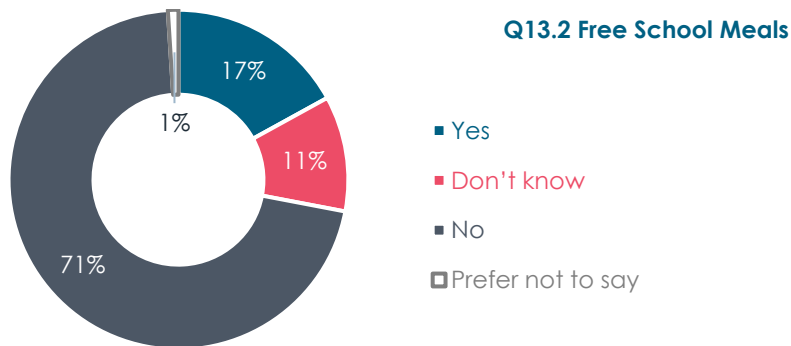
Q13.2 If you finished school after 1980, were you eligible for Free School Meals at any point during your school years? Free School Meals are a statutory benefit available to school-aged children from families who receive other qualifying benefits and who have been through the relevant registration process. It does not include those who receive meals at school through other means (e.g. boarding school)

- 204 Respondents Answered (71 Respondents finished school before 1980 and therefore this question is not applicable to them)

Of those respondents who finished school after 1980, 17% were eligible for Free School Meals during their school years (down from 20% in 2022). A further 11% said that they didn't know.

- 1% of respondents preferred not to say

National Comparison: In January 2019, 15% of pupils from all school types were eligible for and claiming free school meals ([Department for Education](#)).



Q13.3 What type of school did you mainly attend between the ages of 11 and 16?

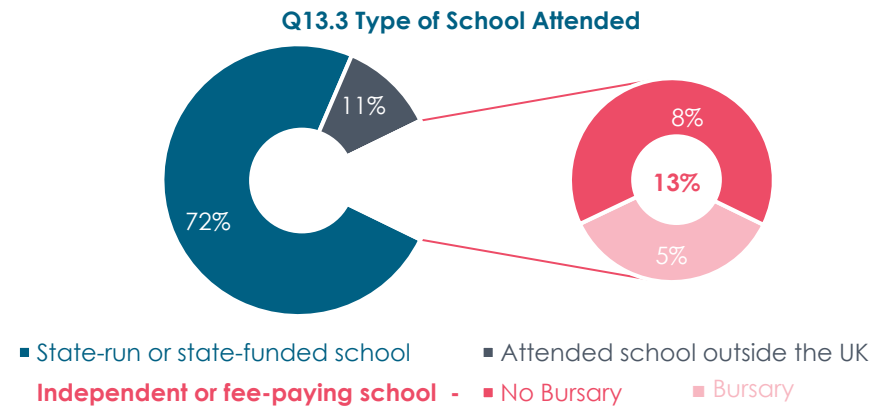
- 275 Respondents Answered

The majority (72%) of respondents attended state-run/funded schools in the UK, while 13% of respondents attended an independent or fee-paying school in the UK (8% without a bursary and 5% with a bursary). 11% of respondents attended school outside of the UK.

- 1% of respondents preferred not to say

There has been a decline in the proportion of respondents that attended fee-paying schools (17% in 2022 to 13% in 2023/24).

National Comparison: Of the current UK school population, 7% attend independent or fee-paying schools ([Sutton Trust and Social Mobility Commission](#)).



Q13.4 What is the highest level of education you have achieved?

- 275 Respondents Answered

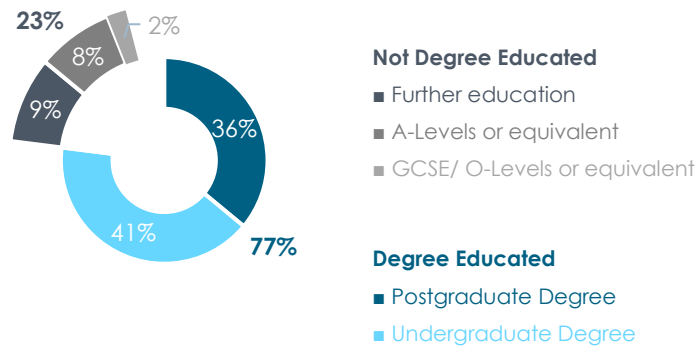
More than three-quarters (77%) of respondents are degree educated, with 36% having achieved a postgraduate degree and 41% having achieved an undergraduate degree. Almost a quarter (23%) were not degree educated.

- 1% of respondents preferred not to say

The proportion of respondents that are degree educated is consistent with 2022 (78%), however the proportion of those with a postgraduate degree has declined (42% in 2022 and 36% in 2023/24), while the proportion with an undergraduate degree (36% in 2022 and 41% in 2023/24) has increased.

National Comparison: Of the working age population, 34% have level 4 or above qualifications (Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma, Bachelor's degree, or post-graduate qualifications) ([England and Wales Census 2021](#)).

Q13.4 Highest Level of Education Achieved



Q13.5 If you attended university, are you the first generation in your family to do so?

- 232 Respondents Answered

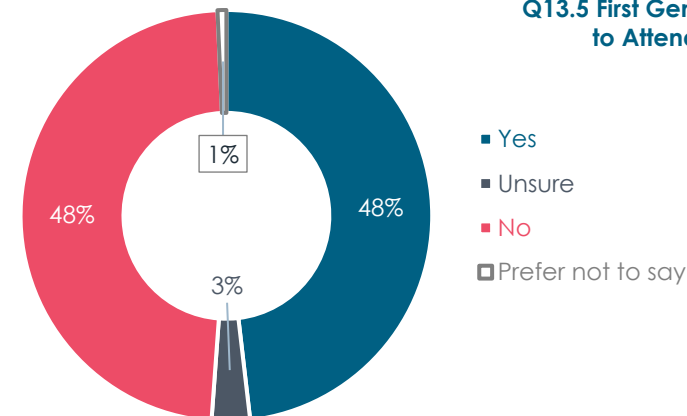
Amongst those respondents who attended university, almost half (48%) were the first generation in their family to have done so, while 3% were unsure.

- 1% of respondents preferred not to say

In comparison to the 2022 survey, the proportion of respondents who were the first generation in their family to have attended university declined (from 51% in 2022).

National Comparison: The [Social Mobility Commission](#) estimates the current proportion of first in family (FiF) graduates to be 67%.

Q13.5 First Generation in Family to Attend University



14. Caring Responsibilities

Q14.1 Do you have regular caring responsibilities?

- 275 Respondents Answered

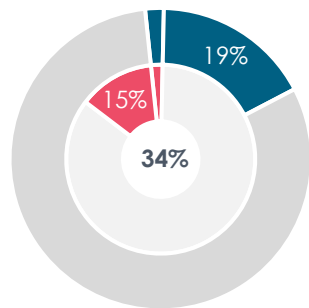
Around a third (34%) of respondents have regular caring responsibilities, for either children (19%) or adults (15%). A small proportion of respondents (2%) have regular caring responsibilities for both children and adults.

- 1% of respondents preferred not to say

The overall proportion of respondents with regular caring responsibilities for children or adults is in line with the 2022 survey (35%), although caring responsibilities have declined for children (28% in 2022), and increased for adults (9% in 2022).

National Comparison: [Working Families](#) report that there are 13 million working parents in the UK, which equates to more than one in three of the workforce (almost 40%).

Carers UK estimates that the number of unpaid carers across the UK is 10.6 million, which is around 18% of the population, although ONS figures estimate this to be around 9% ([Carers UK](#)).



Q14.1 Caring Responsibilities

- For Adults
- For Children

Q14.2 If you have caring responsibilities, is your line manager (or equivalent) aware of your caring responsibilities?

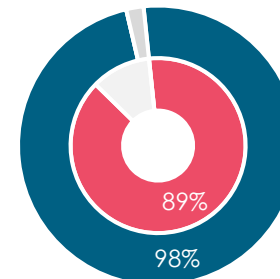
- 42 Respondents Answered (Children)
- 28 Respondents Answered (Adults)

The majority (98%) of the respondents with caring responsibilities for children said that their line manager (or equivalent) was aware of this, which was in line with 2022 (100%).

- 2% of respondents with caring responsibilities for children preferred not to say

Almost nine in ten (89%) respondents with caring responsibilities for adults said that their line manager (or equivalent) was aware of this, which was an increase from 2022 (75%).

- 0% of respondents with caring responsibilities for adults preferred not to say



Q14.2 Caring Responsibilities - Line Manager Awareness

- For Adults
- For Children

15. Perceptions of Diversity and Inclusion

Q15.1 Please answer according to how much you agree/ disagree with the following statements:

Note: 'Not applicable' / 'Prefer not to say' responses have been removed from the analysis.

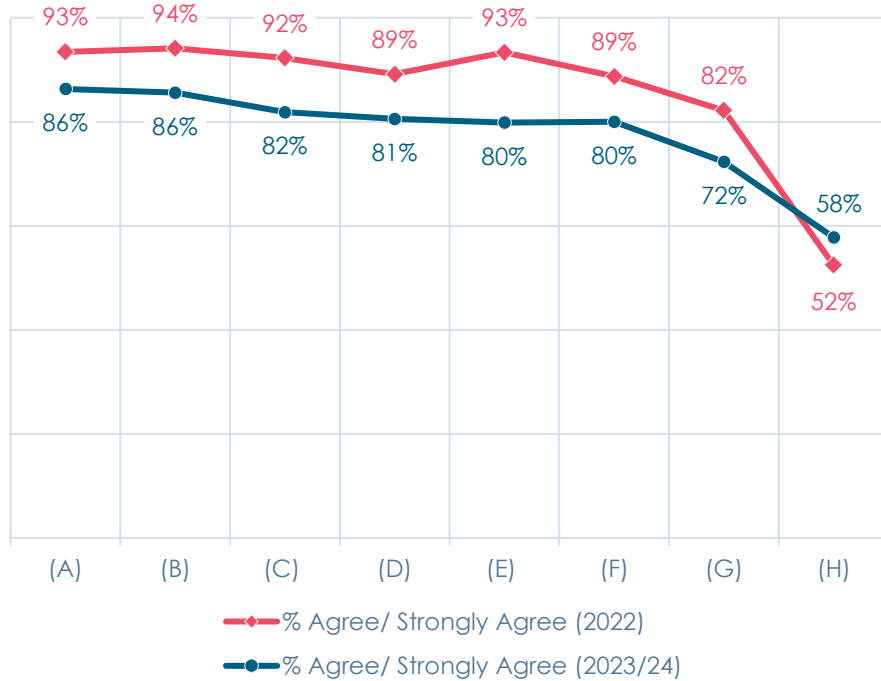
- 275 Respondents Answered (Between 248-258 when removing 'Not applicable' / 'Prefer not to say' responses)

Perceptions around diversity and inclusion have generally declined in comparison to the 2022 survey. A lower proportion of respondents agreed that they feel included, like they belong, respected, or like they can be their authentic self at work. A lower proportion of respondents also agreed that perspectives like theirs are included in the decision making at their organisation, that their organisation values and is committed to D&I, or that their organisation is making progress to address D&I. In contrast to this, a higher proportion of respondents agreed that the culture in the bookselling industry is inclusive.

- A. 86% (down from 93% in 2022) of respondents agreed/ strongly agreed with the statement **(A) 'I feel included at my organisation'**
 - o Average score of 4.3 out of 5 (down from 4.7 in 2022)
- B. 86% (down from 94% in 2022) of respondents agreed/ strongly agreed with the statement **(B) 'I feel like I belong at my organisation'**
 - o Average score of 4.3 out of 5 (down from 4.7 in 2022)

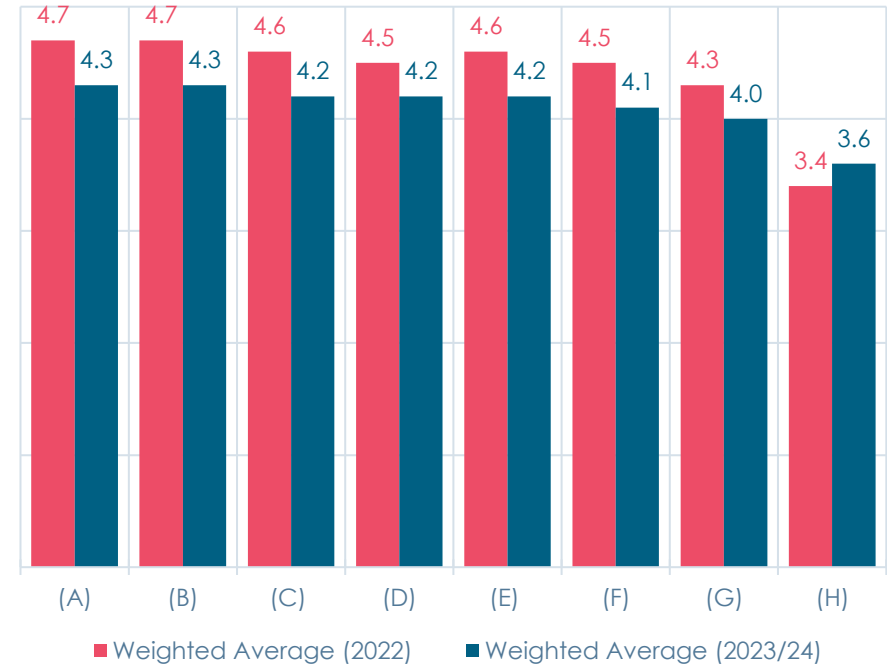
- C. 82% (down from 92% in 2022) of respondents agreed/ strongly agreed with the statement **(C) 'I feel respected at my organisation'**,
 - o Average score of 4.2 out of 5 (down from 4.6 in 2022)
- D. 81% (down from 89% in 2022) of respondents agreed/ strongly agreed with the statement **(D) 'I can be my authentic self at work'**,
 - o Average score of 4.2 out of 5 (down from 4.5 in 2022)
- E. 80% (down from 93% in 2022) of respondents agreed/ strongly agreed with the statement **(E) 'Perspectives like mine are included in the decision making at my organisation'**
 - o Average score of 4.2 out of 5 (down from 4.6 in 2022)
- F. 80% (down from 89% in 2022) of respondents agreed/ strongly agreed with the statement **(F) 'My organisation values and is committed to diversity and inclusion'**
 - o Average score of 4.1 out of 5 (down from 4.5 in 2022)
- G. 72% (down from 82% in 2022) of respondents agreed/ strongly agreed with the statement **(G) 'My organisation is making progress addressing diversity and inclusion'**
 - o Average score of 4.0 out of 5 (down from 4.3 in 2022)
- H. 58% (up from 52% in 2022) of respondents agreed/ strongly agreed with the statement **(H) 'The culture in the bookselling industry is inclusive'**
 - o Average score of 3.6 out of 5 (up from 3.4 in 2022)

Q15.1a Please answer according to how much you agree/disagree with the following statements:



- 1. Strongly Disagree
- 2. Disagree
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Agree
- 5. Strongly agree

Q15.1b Please answer according to how much you agree/disagree with the following statements:



- A. 'I feel included at my organisation'
- B. 'I feel like I belong at my organisation'
- C. 'I feel respected at my organisation'
- D. 'I can be my authentic self at work'
- E. 'Perspectives like mine are included in the decision making at my organisation'
- F. 'My organisation values and is committed to diversity and inclusion'
- G. 'My organisation is making progress in addressing diversity and inclusion'
- H. 'The culture in the bookselling industry is inclusive'

16. Bookshop Accessibility

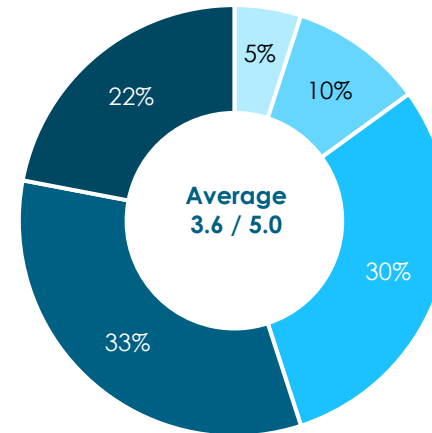
Q16.1 On a scale of 1-5 (with 1 not being very accessible and 5 being very accessible), how accessible is your bookshop for customers with disabilities?

- 275 Respondents Answered

Respondents were asked how accessible their bookshops were on a scale of 1 (not very accessible) to 5 (very accessible). Respondents rated scored the accessibility of their bookshop an average of 3.6 out of 5, which was in line with 2022 results (3.7).

- 22% of respondents rated the accessibility of their bookshop as 'very accessible' – a 5 out of 5
- A third (33%) of respondents rated the accessibility of their bookshop as a 4 out of 5
- Three in ten (30%) respondents rated the accessibility of their bookshop in the middle – a 3 out of 5
- 10% of respondents rated the accessibility of their bookshop as a 2 out of 5
- 5% of respondents rated the accessibility of their bookshop as (not very accessible) - a 1 out of 5

Q16.1 Bookshop Accessibility on a Scale of 1 (Not Very Accessible) to 5 (Very Accessible)



1. Not very accessible	2	3	4	5. Very accessible

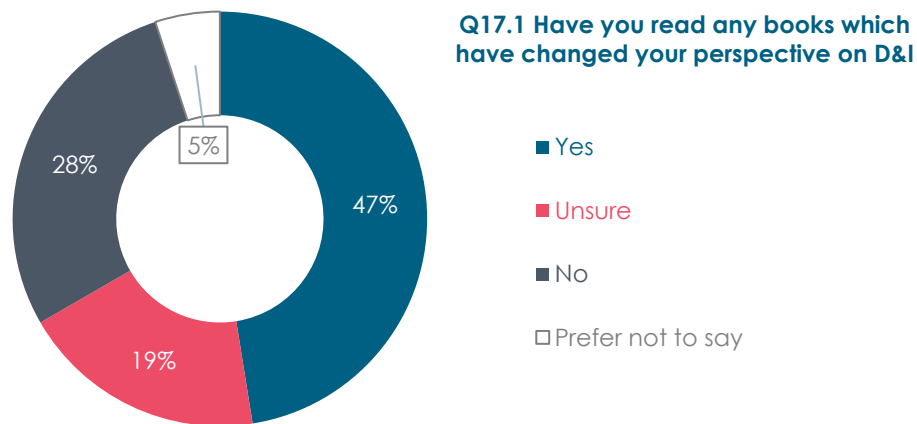
17. Books Which Have Changed Perspectives Around D&I

Q17.1 Have you read any books which have changed your perspective on diversity and inclusion?

- 273 Respondents Answered

Almost half (47%) of respondents have read a book which has changed their perspective on diversity and inclusion, which is an increase from 2022 (40%). One in five (19%) respondents were unsure if they had and 28% said they had not.

- 5% of respondents preferred not to say



18. Future Research

Q18.1 Would you be willing to take part in future research around salary and careers in bookselling?

- 275 Respondents Answered

More than half (58%) of respondents would be willing to take part in future research around salaries and careers in bookselling, while around one in five (19%) were unsure. A fifth (20%) of respondents said that they would not be willing to take part in future research around salaries and careers in bookselling.

- 3% of respondents preferred not to say

A reduced proportion of respondents would be willing to take part in future research around salaries and careers in bookselling (from 64% in 2022).

