



DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION REPORT 2022

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FOREWORD

As hiring managers, job seekers, and recruiters, how many times have we talked about the importance of ‘culture’ in an organisation? How many times have we determined whether one is a ‘cultural fit’ for the business?

It’s not a mystery why such emphasis is placed on ‘culture’. Culture is formed immediately when you bring a group of people together and, when it’s in an institution where we are spending a third of our lives, one can only hope that we are working alongside people who share our values. A team with shared values is a team that, on paper, should gel.

Selfishly, we all want to be a part of a team like this. We know that a great team will bring out the best in our own performance, a great team can be relied on and, together, a great team can achieve more than you could on your own.

The prevailing problem with the quest to build a culture, however, is that the lines between shared values and perceived shared values are blurred. Unconscious biases creep in. Expectations differ. Assumptions are made. Too many times in the quest to find a cultural fit, one will perceive the shared values of another in the image or shared experience of oneself. This results in homogenous teams and jeopardises the fundamental desire we all have, which is to be included.

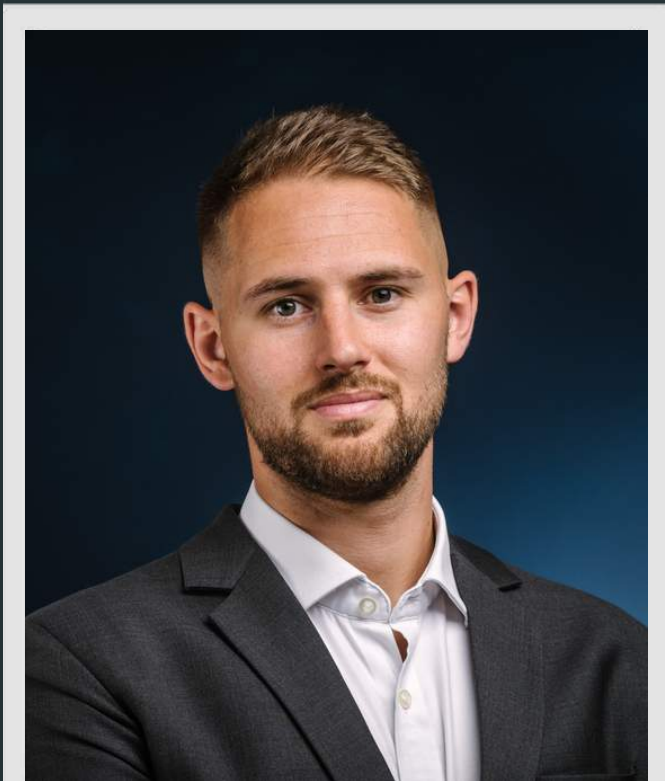
In recent years, the spotlight on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion has been shining brighter and brighter. As businesses face the complexities of creating a diverse and inclusive environment, they find themselves undergoing a culture transformation and, in doing so, a strong DE&I strategy has now become an imperative component in an organisation’s endeavour to attract and retain staff.

Such transformations can certainly be challenging, but it is rewarding. It’s an opportunity to create an environment where our colleagues are treated just how we wish to be treated ourselves. However, with there now being four generations in the workplace, creating a solid strategy around DE&I can often be met with the conflicting “we’ve always done it this way” attitude versus the many voices saying “we have to do more”.

Beyond the moral prerequisites of ensuring you have a diverse and inclusive business, it has been proven that the cash flow of diverse companies is 2.9 times higher than those who are not. Research suggests even just the presence of physical diversity results in better performance. With a greater spotlight on DE&I issues, companies lacking in diversity are facing more scrutiny from the public and, subsequently, run the risk of losing business and falling behind when it comes to recruiting - no matter how big or small the company is.

Yes, change is complex but if the past decade has taught us anything, it’s that adaptability is fundamental. Companies must now think what type of business they want to be and what type of impact they wish to have on their global or local communities.

The **Accountancy**, **Tax & Treasury**, and **Legal** professions have historically fallen short in demonstrating DE&I in practice. Having had numerous conversations in the past year with colleagues, candidates, and clients about inclusive recruitment practices, we decided it was time to shine a spotlight on DE&I in our markets.



ALEX MANN
Director & Head of Tax

KEY INSIGHTS

LACK OF DIVERSITY

51.2% of those surveyed believe that there is lack of diversity at senior management level.

BUILDING A CULTURE OF DE&I

Almost a **third** of all respondents **don't** believe their organisations are doing enough to foster DE&I.

INCLUSION DEFICIENCY

93% of those surveyed do not consider themselves as having a disability.

IMPACT OF DE&I

63% of those surveyed believe that career progression is affected by DE&I attributes.

SOCIAL MOBILITY

33% of respondents consider themselves to be from a working class background.



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CHANGES THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE

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Traditionally the **Accountancy, Tax & Treasury, & Legal** professions are viewed as largely white and male dominated with cultures resistant to change. However, in recent years the growing importance of DE&I in the workplace has resulted in firms tackling biases, resulting in increased representation of different groups within these sectors.



Since **2019**, accountancy giant, KPMG, has increased female representation at Partner level by **4.5%** in the UK. Other diversity areas have progressed far slower, with just a **0.3%** increase in the number of LGBTQ+ Partners since **2019** and a **1.1%** increase in Partners with disability.

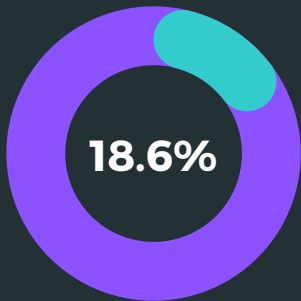
Within the legal space, the SRA noted an increase in women joining the profession since **2019** and while the gender gap at senior level remains significant, there are encouraging signs of this narrowing. There has also been a **5%** increase of disabled lawyers and a **0.4%** increase in the amount of LGBTQ+ lawyers since **2019**.

While the percentages are small, the changes across these UK markets are gaining recognition within the profession. This was clearly evident in our survey, with one **Manager** at a **Professional Services** firm noting that,

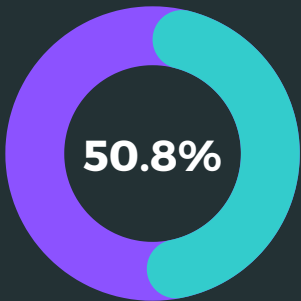
“The UK has made huge strides over the last decade and should be applauded for what it has achieved in the workplace. Despite all the noise, we have moved forward.”

In many ways, this was reflected in our data with almost half of these professions feeling that businesses were doing enough to increase diversity in the teams. Indeed, there is much to applaud in the transformations that are being seen in the industry but we must not forget that an alarming **30%** of respondents believed more needs to be done. It’s conflicting data such as this which really captures the complexities of the DE&I landscape.

Although most companies now have Diversity & Inclusion policies in place, do you believe your sector is doing enough to increase diversity in their teams?



Yes



No



Don't Know

There is no denying that progress is being made across the Accountancy, Tax & Treasury & Legal sectors, but more needs to be done. A stand out initiative that has taken place are ‘networks’ for under-represented groups. When we asked our respondents whether employers have network groups in place for diversity groups, it was encouraging to see that the majority (**54.9%**) did.



WORK TO BE DONE

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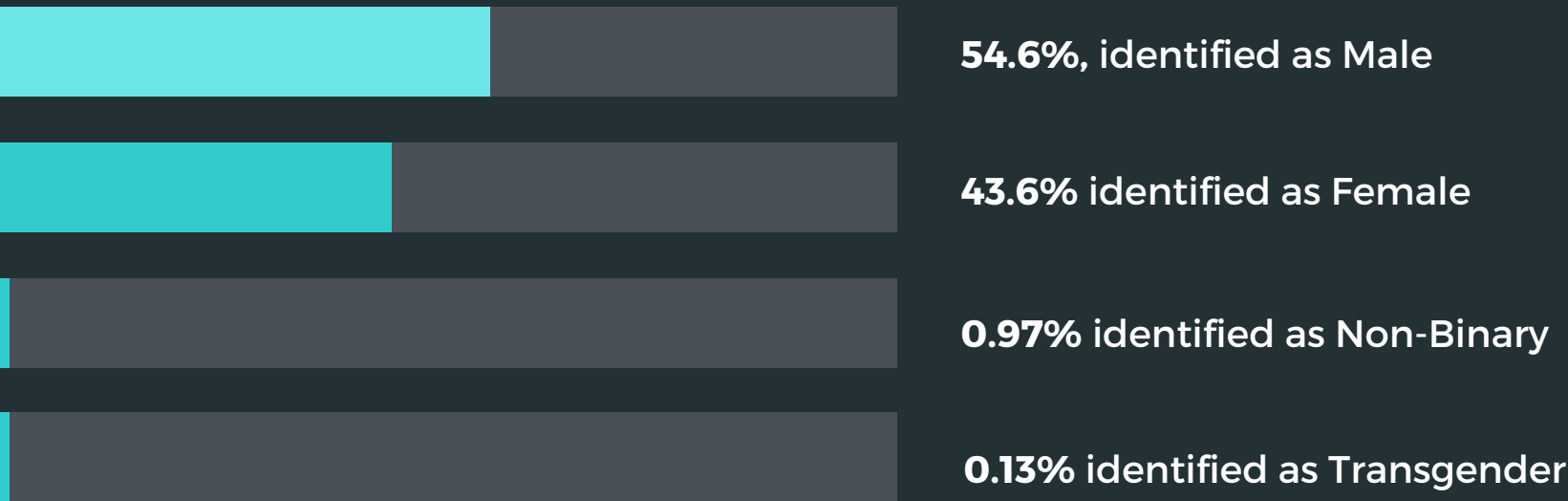
Diversity, equity, and inclusion is an umbrella term that covers a wide scope of groups within our society. Companies need to be asking themselves if they are doing enough to address the following areas:

- Gender, race, and sexuality equity across all levels of the business
- Accommodating physical, hidden and mental disabilities (including neurodiversity)
- Respect for other cultures and religious beliefs
- Where possible, hiring experience over qualifications

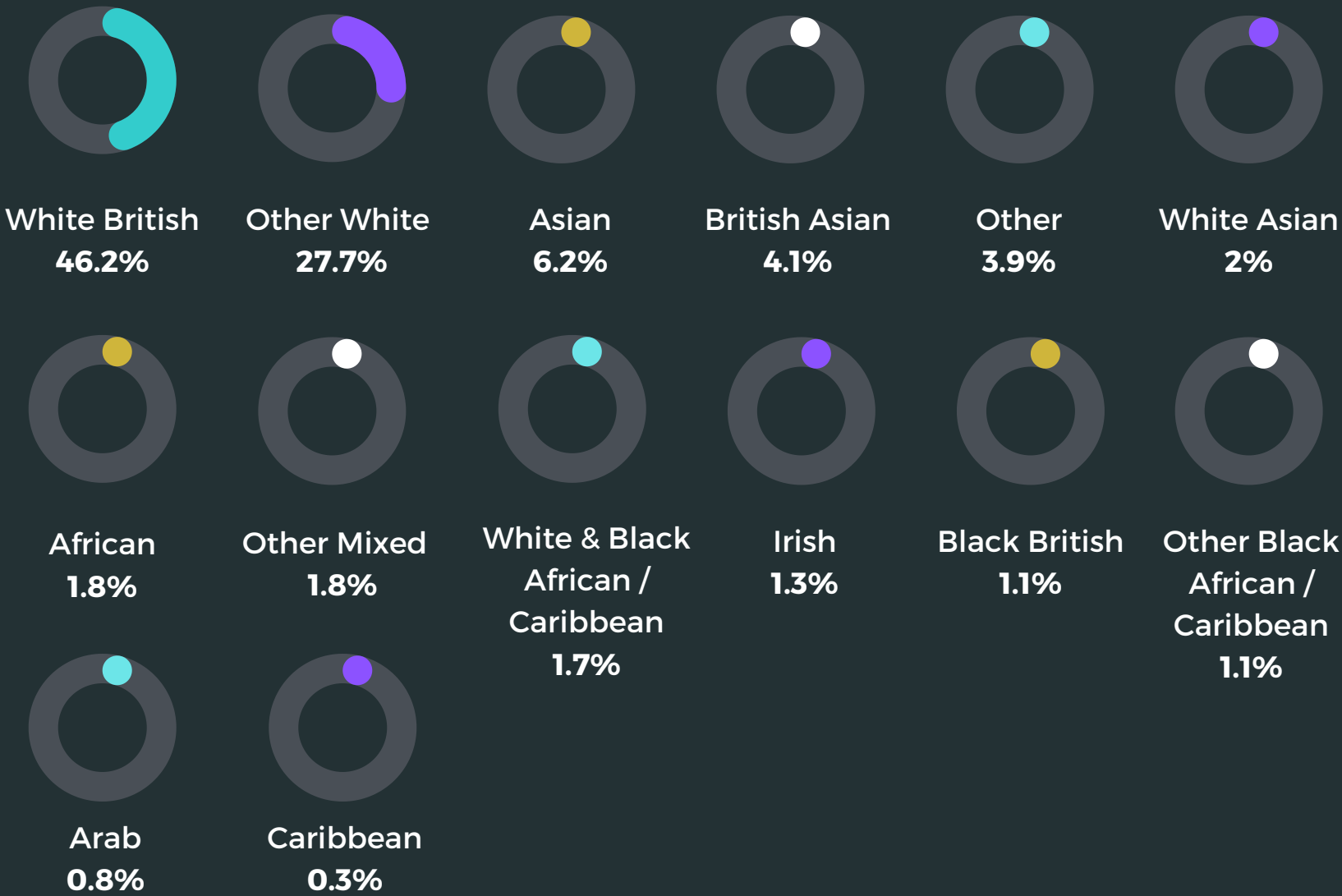
Although positive steps have been taken in recent years, our results suggest there is still **work to be done**

Here's a **snapshot** of our respondent profiles on the basis of gender and ethnicity.

Gender Snapshot



Ethnicity Snapshot



39% of our respondents have personally experienced issues around diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

According to our results, a glass ceiling remains intact across the professions. Although these statistics appear bleak, there is a glimmer of hope now that organisations are tackling DE&I heads on. An **Audit Associate** at a **Top 10** Accountancy firm noted,

“Our organisation is very D&I aware but for other companies it's all about awareness and getting the word out there to employees. Have national and local sessions to raise this awareness. Online courses are also a good start.”

Recent **McKinsey** research into the business benefits of improving diversity found that companies in the top **25%** for ethnic diversity were **33%** more likely to achieve above average profit, while more ethnically diverse boards were **43%** more likely to outperform on profits*.

Those employers who are not making the steps to create a more inclusive workplace risk not only the financial implications, but lagging behind their competitors in recruitment. Across the market we have seen a talent shortages, which was noted as the key challenge for recruiters globally in **Bullhorn's Recruitment Industry Trends Report 2022**.

Ultimately, candidates hold all the cards in today's market. It is their prerogative to be selective over where they work, how they work, and what job offers they can take. As a result, candidates are able to look beyond the usual requirements, such as salary or location, and are able to make an assessment of prospective employers based on the make-up of their teams, company culture, and the representation of groups amongst leadership.

It is no surprise that those companies who foster an inclusive and supportive culture are the ones that we are seeing come out on top.

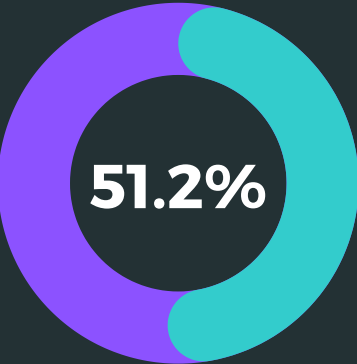
Firms across the **Accountancy, Tax & Treasury & Legal** sectors have a grand platform to build successful, diverse teams on a large scale. An added bonus of this is that it will increase retention rates, as teams become comfortable and able to progress their careers in positive and equitable environments. In turn, this will result in greater visibility of diverse groups at the top seats. As one **Treasury** turned **Head of D&I** said,

“D&I is not just a recruitment and numbers issue. How they bring people into the business is probably the easiest part to address. Whereas inclusion and a sense of belonging, as well as opportunities for career development, for existing employees is key to providing an enjoyable working environment for everyone, and ultimately retaining employees.”

DE&I AT BOARD LEVEL

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Diversity at board level has become a key consideration and there is much to say that those firms who are able to boast diverse leadership have also seen increased revenue. However, from glancing at the responses to our survey, it seems the **Accountancy, Tax & Treasury**, and **Legal** markets are still struggling with this.



of our respondents felt there is a lack of diversity from senior management level and beyond at their organisation.

A **Senior Associate** within the **Accountancy** sector believes,

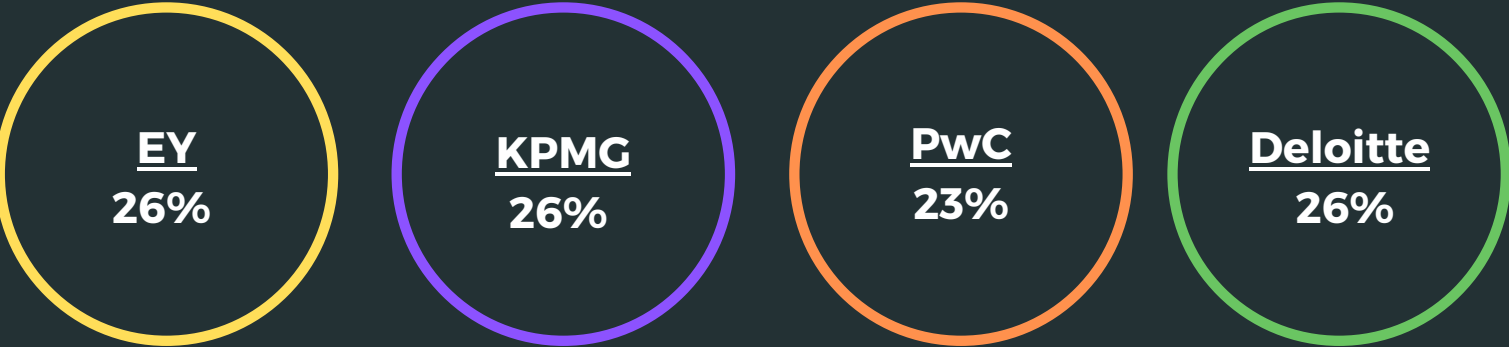
“The senior management is where companies should focus. It is highly male dominated, even though it has improved in recent years.”

An **Associate** at a **Law** firm echoed similar sentiments,

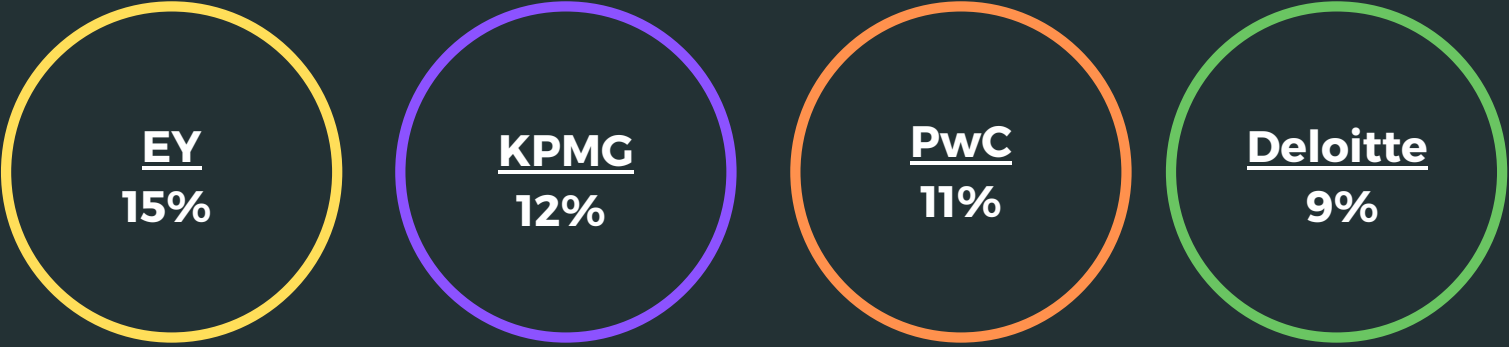
“Stop preaching to the choir - organisations spend so much time telling those at the bottom about diversity, but we are ones who know! Change has to start at the top, with the 60-something year old men in charge and their proteges.”

With these comments in mind, we delved into the current makeup of partners across the Big 4 in the UK to gain a greater insight:

Breakdown of Female Partners *



Breakdown of Partners from an Ethnic Minority Background*



Within the legal space **SRA** figures denote that,

61% of all solicitors are female.

35% of legal partners are female.

16% of legal partners are from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background.



Although these numbers paint a sorry picture, these firms are committed to increasing representation and have started to see results from their initiatives. **KPMG** now has **54%** female graduate and apprentice joiners. **EY** has set a goal of having **40%** female Partners and **20%** of Partners from ethnic minority backgrounds by 2025. And they are making headway. This year women made up **36%** of partner promotions, and **23%** of those promoted are from an ethnic minority background. Both increased by **2%** since last year.

So progress is being made, but slowly.

A study by **Egon Zehnder** found that to fully benefit from diversity, company boards should have at least three directors who are women, ethnic minorities, or identify as LGBTQ+. Clearly, this can be a challenge for sectors who are traditionally not diverse, as those groups would not usually have the board level of experience necessary.

- 1 Not on 'Board'**
Consider looking beyond board experience, instead select board members based on skillset.
- 2 Keep things fresh**
Ensure the board is always up to date with DE&I. Lengthy tenures could be a barrier to your company's growth and evolution, consider making changes to the board more regularly.
- 3 Increase the seats**
If the board has a low turnover, but it remains beneficial for the firm to maintain those with extensive experience, why not add more seats to the table? This can make room to accommodate innovative diverse leadership.

HOW DE&I IS REPRESENTED IN ACCOUNTANCY & FINANCE

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Diversity is an ongoing process across the Accountancy & Finance sector. There is still work to be done, conversations to be had and difficult questions to address. However, compared to just 5 years ago, we've observed a sea of change in the approach to DE&I across finance departments. While Harvey John always aim to deliver a diverse pool of candidates, our clients are now actively requesting a higher level of diversity in our shortlists.

Who is accountable for making an organisation truly diverse?

Finding the right person or people should not be a matter of "team fit." In our experience, what most hiring managers mean by fit is that they want someone with whom they'd like to have a beer or play a round of golf with. But people with a variety of personalities can be great at the job. This misguided hiring strategy contributes to a company's lack of diversity, because hiring managers so often hire people who have similar backgrounds to them. We've heard too many hiring managers talk about the need to have a bit of 'banter' with their colleagues but as one female respondent stated in our survey "certain sectors I've worked in, engineering for example, is mainly white, middle-aged males - where racist and sexist comments were laughed off as banter often."

Finding the 'right fit'

Conducting the survey led us to question who should be held accountable for making an organisation truly diverse? The short answer is everyone. In reality it is often left to HR, but what responsibility should hiring managers take? Harvey John always provides talent based on job criteria, but we're losing count of the number of times that we've heard that a candidate is not the right 'team fit'. Yes, there absolutely needs to be a rapport between a hiring manager and team member, but sometimes looking beyond that 'fit' can pay dividends.

Even when you're in, barriers remain

Lack of progression and opportunity isn't just being felt by those entering into the industry. 60% of our respondents stated that their career progression had been affected by issues relating to gender, race, ethnicity, age or social class. Having worked within the finance sector for over two decades, we can attest to the fact that blind recruitment works. Studies show that blind hiring has a positive impact for change – where as many as 50% more women have gone through to the final selection stages when using a blind screen.

Another hurdle is having a voice at the table. In 2019, women's UK representation on executive committees in major financial services firms was only 20%, which although above the global average is still nowhere near parity. As one Accountancy Associate stated

“I believe at first [DE&I] starts at the Senior Manager level. My organisation is practically a 'man-club' which is very biased based on gender and ethnicity. If the board doesn't undertake and implement D&I changes, local diversification will have no global effects.”

Although the UK is above the global average, there remains a mountain to climb.



DAVID WADDEL
Managing Director, Accountancy

HOW DE&I IS REPRESENTED IN TAX

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The importance of network

Nearly half of respondents (45.3%) reported that their company does not have any network groups to support and promote various diversity groups within their firms. Not only is this a fantastic internal platform to understand more about your colleagues and foster a more collaborative culture, it is also hugely valuable for tax as a discipline. With tax becoming ever more international, having a deeper understanding of religions and different ethnicities is extremely valuable in developing the ability to become a true 'global' professional. Furthermore, many in-house tax teams are part of a global tax function, so internal networking initiatives - even if they are held in your local office - can be a fantastic way to harmonise global remote teams.

If we turn to the professional services space, **Mo Salim** (Tax Technology Associate Director at Evelyn Partners) has cited both the personal and business implications of their internal networking 'coffee meetings'. Not only has this provided a platform for discussions around current affairs and cultural nuances but, as Mo has highlighted, it has provided a safe space to,

Break down walls and allow people
“to raise issues or opinions that may
not usually have the opportunity to
do so.”

As such, it's become an "unstructured medium - or outlet - for staff to become closer and more understanding." Interestingly, the subsequent impact of the coffee meetings at Evelyn Partners has resulted in not just a more aware and empathetic culture, but there have been noticeably more cross-department referrals that have enabled different departments to gain in-roads to clients that already exist within the firm.

Diversity at a senior level

Whilst the Big 4 can largely be credited with initiating the aforementioned network groups, we are starting to see such opportunities trickle down across top and mid tier firms. Like Evelyn Partners, other top 20 firms have advocated networks such as those listed below.

- **Women's Empowerment**
- **LGBTQ+**
- **REACH** (Religion, Ethnicity, and Cultural Heritage)

Not only have these groups provided a platform to network but they have, as one **VAT Director** at a Top 15 firm remarks, highlighted historical flaws in their recruitment processes and created a platform where the firm can work towards improving their diversity amidst the leadership grades.

While gender diversity at a senior level amongst the tax community is far better than other disciplines, such as law, there is a noticeable lack of ethnic representation across European tax partners. In fact, 53.2% of tax professionals have said there is a lack of diversity at the senior management level and beyond.

The Big 4 is very much leading the way in bringing greater representation into leadership roles but, as we move through the ranks of the accountancy firms, this becomes far less apparent.



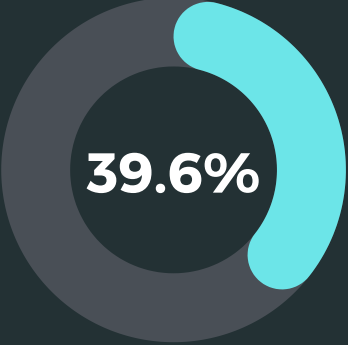
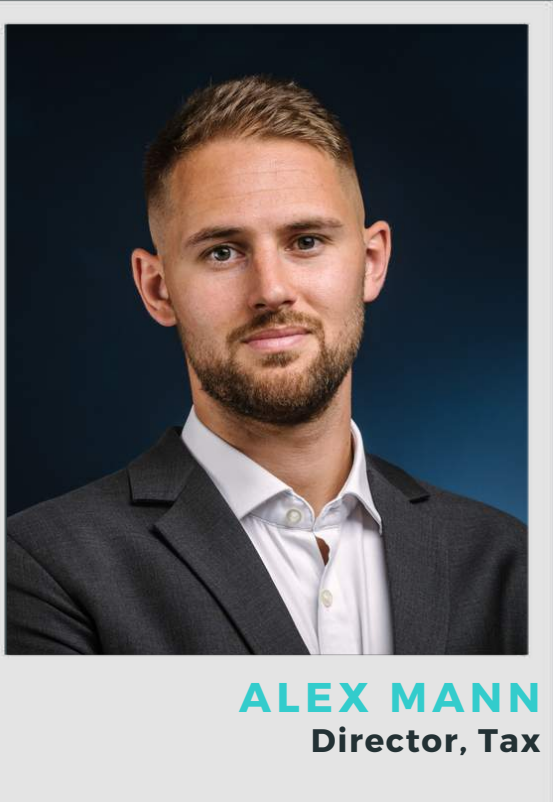
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It is worth noting that some tax disciplines remain more diverse than others. Take indirect tax and transfer pricing, for instance, which are by nature far more international in their remit and only more recently seen the introduction of their own mass graduate schemes, compared to other more 'mature' tax. As a result, representation throughout the ranks appears to be far more evenly distributed compared to what we see in more 'domestic' or 'mature' taxes, such as personal tax or corporate tax.

Challenges in getting diverse representation in tax

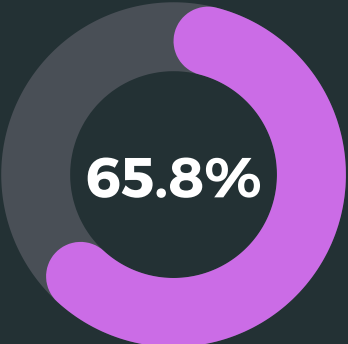
Whilst there are many initiatives now in place to pipeline greater representation in the tax arena, eg. Crowe, BDO, RSM & other familiar names are participating in the **10,000** black interns programme, much of this will only come to fruition in the long term. It raises the question as to what needs to be done in the mid to short term to increase representation in tax?

On a global level, one of the challenges for multinational organisations is the country specific issues when it comes to DE&I. For instance, one D&I champion that we spoke to from a Big 4 firm mentioned that the firm's Russian leaders are very reluctant to commit to LGBTQ+ policies due to the laws and prevailing attitudes in the country. As such, this Big 4 firm is unable to provide company wide measures, which calls into question how serious of an ally they really are to such issues. Just as we may commend the Big 4 in the UK and Europe for leading the front on DE&I issues, this is arguably undermined by their alternative stance in other parts of the world.



of tax professionals feel they've been personally affected by diversity issues in the workplace. This is a concerning statistic and indicates that far tougher stances need to be taken to eliminate this figure.

And even more alarming,

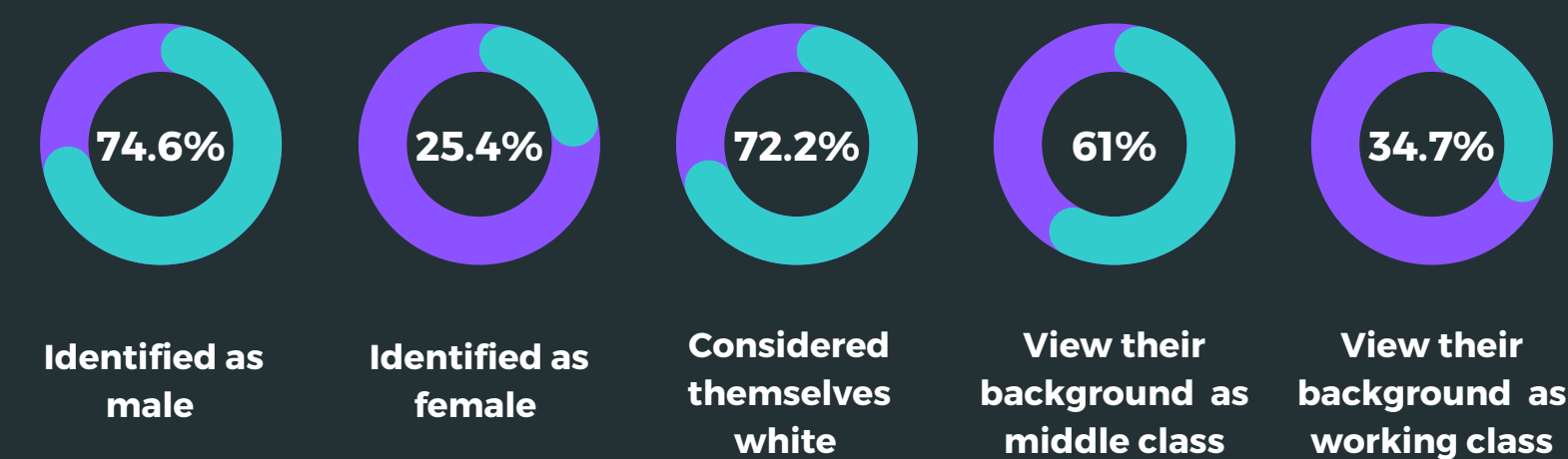


of tax professionals still feel their progression is impacted by gender, race, disability, sexuality, ethnicity, age or social class.

HOW DE&I IS REPRESENTED IN TREASURY

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Diversity within the Treasury sector still has a way to go, our survey shows the treasury landscape remains overwhelmingly white, male and middle class.



There has unquestionably been an increase in the number of females and individuals of other ethnicities working in treasury roles in recent years, of which we can testify to and the sector is continuing to progress in both attracting and retaining diverse candidates.

Diversity is not just a HR issue. It needs to be shared with hiring managers. There is recognition from all within the business that there is a potential financial risk of “not doing enough” and research has consistently shown that a solid DE&I policy can have a positive impact on attracting future talent. We recently interviewed a **Head of D&I** from a **FTSE 100** company who spoke of the fact that inclusion and creating a sense of belonging is key in promoting career development opportunities for existing employees.

Where’s the diversity at board level?

It is refreshing that given the profile of our treasury respondents (**63%** were from a senior level), a majority (**54.2%**) did recognise that there was a lack of diversity within the sector at partner and board level. Perhaps unsurprisingly considering the profiles of the majority of respondents, **58.3%** felt they hadn't been personally affected by diversity issues in the workplace. However, **61.1%** of respondents did feel that career progression could be impacted by diversity issues, and this is backed up by the fact that **47%** believe that the sector isn’t doing enough to address the challenges of DE&I.

What to expect in the next few years

The recent pandemic has delivered a noticeable change in working practices. Given the nature of treasury, systems and security are a priority for the sector, however advancements in tech have enabled people to work remotely. My hope is that this more flexible approach to work will remove some of the barriers to senior level positions for treasury professionals requiring greater flexibility as they attempt to progress their careers, and ultimately improve diversity in the workplace.

From conversations that we’ve had with hiring managers and HR professionals across the treasury market, we can honestly say that change is happening. Perhaps too slow for some, but change nonetheless.



GUY MIDDLETON
Associate Director, Treasury

HOW DE&I IS REPRESENTED IN LEGAL

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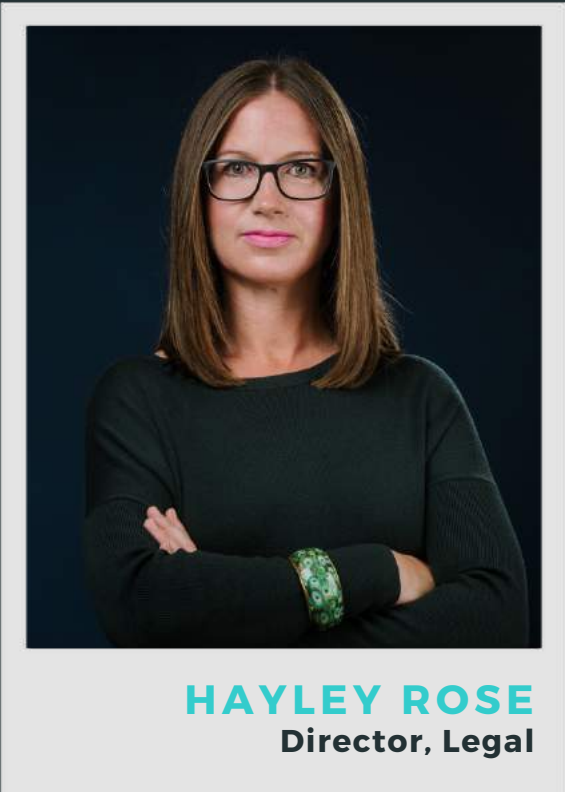
Over recent years, the need to take DE&I seriously across all businesses has been brought to the forefront. The challenge for the legal sector continues to be putting policies in place that really make a difference and empower minorities. This is reflected by the fact that only **37.2%** of our respondents believed that the legal sector is doing enough to increase diversity in their workplace.

Where are the female leaders?

In a profession that has more women (**52%**) than men, it is shocking that those at partner level do not reflect this diverse figure. Our research shows that this has not gone unnoticed.

57.7% reported a lack of representation at senior management level.

At Harvey John, we love to see women heading up departments, breaking down barriers placed by a sector which previously was a man's world. But, it would be great to see more women in the top seat of Managing Partner.



HAYLEY ROSE
Director, Legal

65% of our respondents were female, while women make up almost half (**49%**) of lawyers in law firms and three quarters of the workforce for 'other legal staff', the underrepresentation of women becomes more apparent at senior levels.

Having spoken with many clients and candidates, the pandemic has helped firms take a cosmic shift forward in their approach to flexibility. The acknowledgement that people don't need to be office bound to do exceptional work is new for the legal sector, but it has been embraced by many firms which is heartening to see. We hope it will help the retention of women within the legal space and give them greater progression opportunities whilst balancing family alongside their career.

Accessibility

The lack of diversity in ethnicity and social class both need to be addressed, as we should not accept current figures as the norm. According to the SRA, **79%** of lawyers identify as white, whilst just **17%** are from an ethnic minority group. Our survey mimics this almost entirely with **79%** identifying as white. The lack of diversity in social class also needs to be addressed with only **28%** of our respondents identifying as 'working class'.

It will be interesting to see if the SQE, replacing the LPC, will help some diversity issues in the sector and make the legal profession more accessible to those from a less economically privileged background. There is an argument that as the costs are lower and it removes the LPC gamble (will I, won't I get a training contract?) young people from different backgrounds will be able to confidently study law.

We were surprised by the minimal number of those with disabilities in the legal profession, leading us to ask what the sector can do to address this and make law more accessible to all?

Only **5%** of legal professionals consider themselves to have a disability. This compares to a UK wide figure of **14%**. Firstly, we need to ensure that there is a visible acceptance amongst the sector, which in turn will enable people to feel comfortable declaring their disability without concerns of reprisal.

Progression

A staggering **77%** felt that their career progression has been impacted by issues relating to DE&I. This is by far the biggest response from all of our professional sectors. However, **56%** of those same respondents felt their sector was doing enough to address these issues, so perhaps changes are on the horizon.

OUR PLEDGE

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We recognise that it is difficult to totally escape the biases that exist across the market but Harvey John is committed to actively reducing them and using our position to influence change.

Conducting this research has allowed us to understand the key DE&I issues that our sectors are facing. Not only has this been an exercise to better understand our markets, it has also been a process of education that has resulted in Harvey John evolving our own practices.

It is time that we become comfortable with the uncomfortable and use our positions as recruiters to help bring positive change to the Accountancy, Tax & Treasury, and Legal sectors.

Harvey John will now be operating under a renewed methodology for both internal and external recruitment.

GOING FORWARD...

- When taking job orders, Harvey John will always request and discuss your company's diversity & inclusion policies to understand your commitments and suggest best practice where we can. This will enable us to educate each other on DE&I issues, whilst ensuring your recruitment process is fit for purpose.
- When introducing our shortlists, Harvey John will always explain the steps we've taken to ensure a diverse and inclusive shortlist as part of your hiring process.
- Where tools allow us to do so, our recruiters will trial blind CV searches. Tools such as LinkedIn Recruiter enable us to conduct research whilst omitting personal details that may influence unconscious bias (for example, names, age, and profile picture).
- On an annual basis, Harvey John will undergo DE&I training to ensure our team is in touch with the evolving landscape of DE&I. This will start in October 2022.
- Harvey John is committed to reviewing our Equal Opportunities & DE&I policy annually.
- Harvey John will establish our very own team of Diversity Champions to continuously educate and aid our team with all matters relating to DE&I.

This is just the start. These commitments will be reviewed regularly to ensure that we as a business are doing all we can to combat biases across the recruitment process.

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REPORT METHODOLOGY

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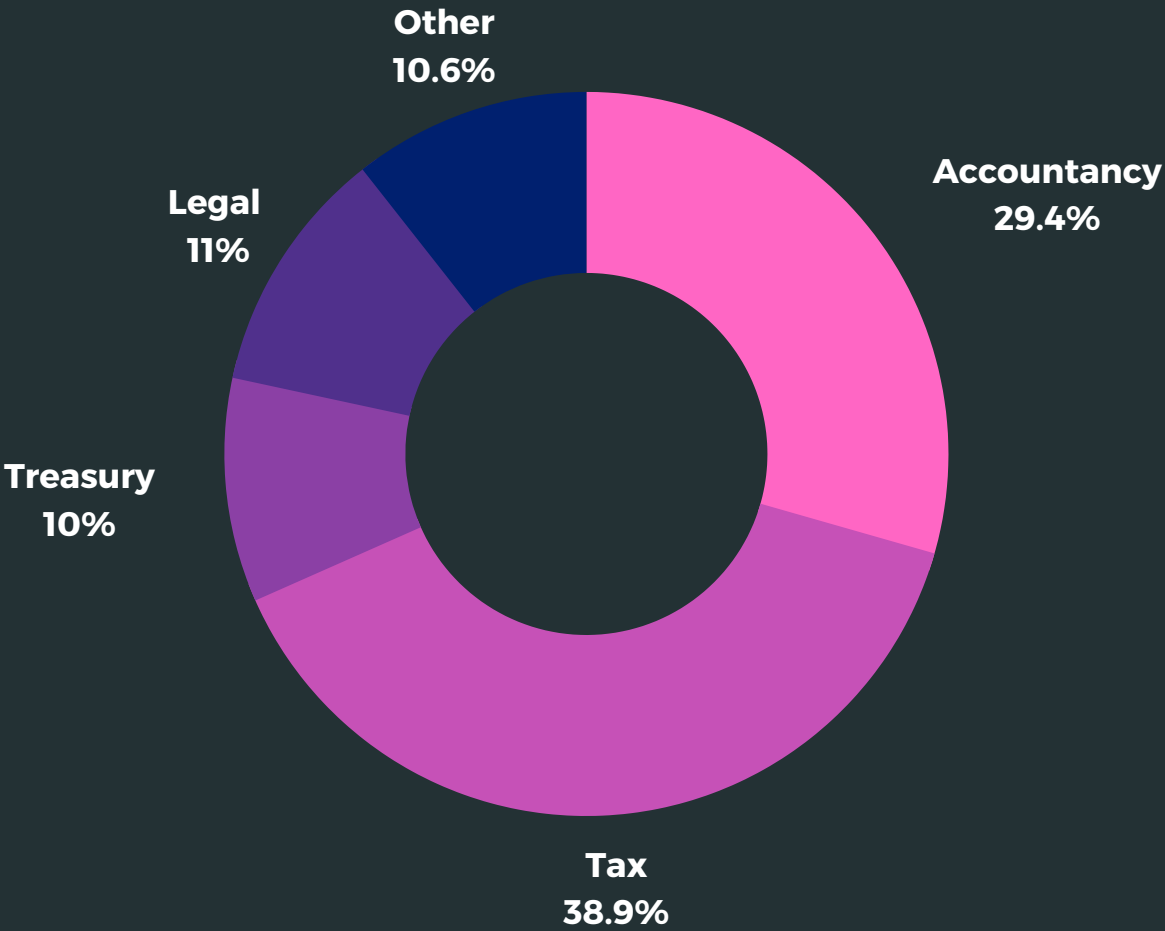
Harvey John conducted this research between December 2021 and March 2022, and we had a total of **715** respondents. The purpose of this research was to examine the issue of DE&I across the **Accountancy, Tax & Treasury**, and **Legal** sectors.

This quantitative research was conducted through emails to our candidates and to the wider market on social media. In order to get better insight into how specific businesses are implementing DE&I strategy and actions, the Harvey John team conducted the quantitative research in May 2022. These interviews were conducted by our sector specialist Directors and lasted between 10-20 minutes.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

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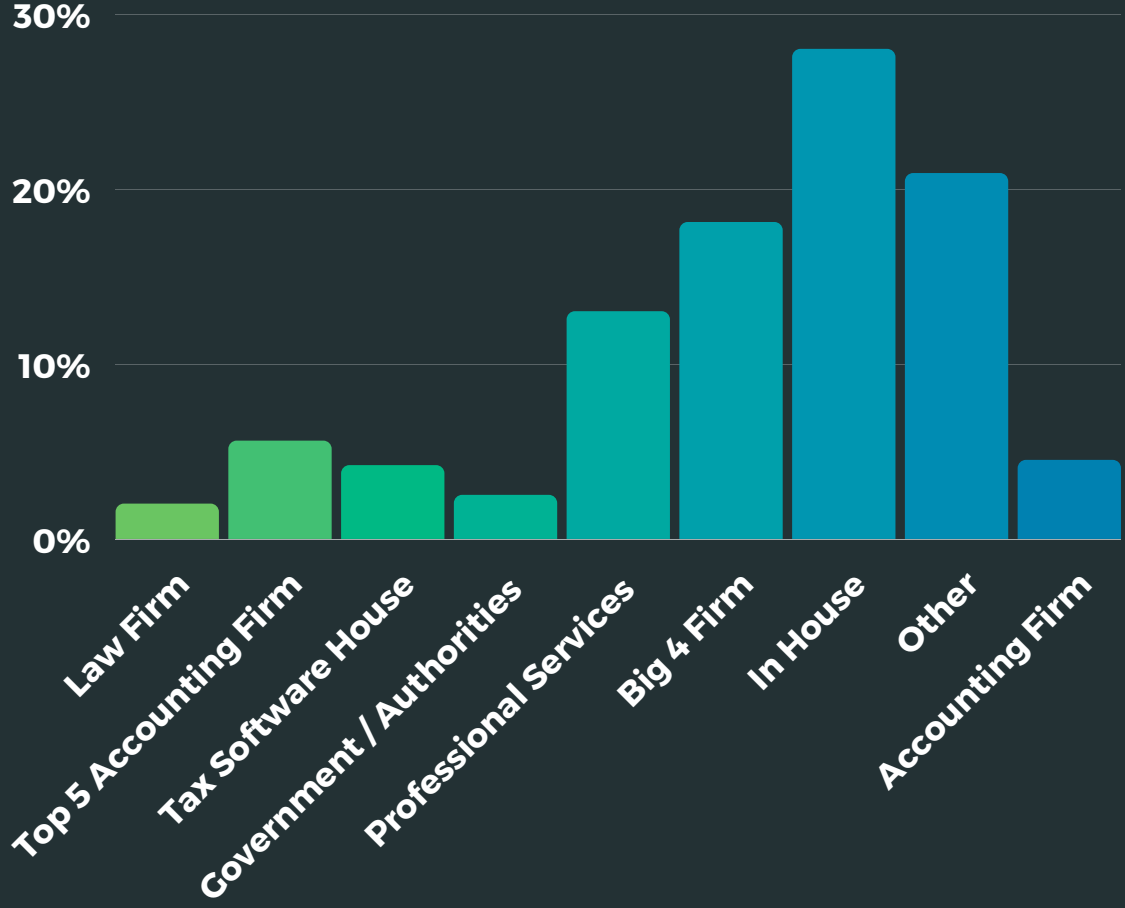
What kind of organisation are you currently working at?



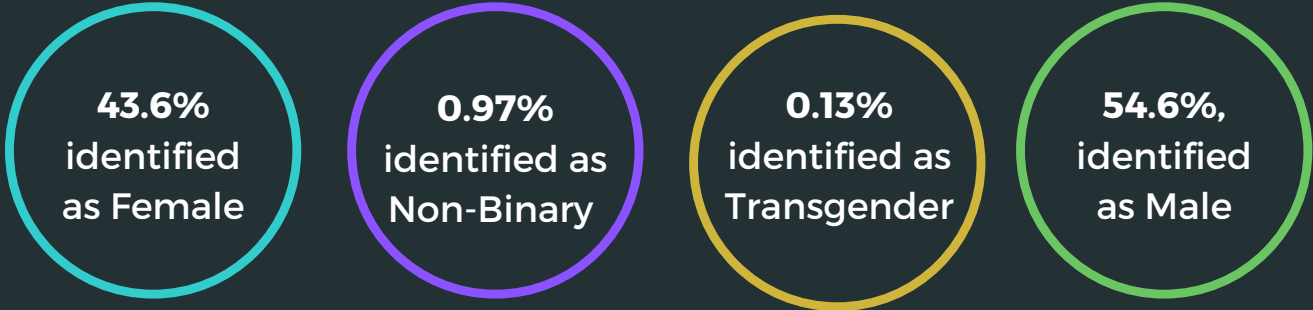
What's your current job grade?

Partner	6.8%
Director	14.7%
Head	7.3%
Senior Manager	18.1%
Manager	22%
Assistant Manager	6.8%
Senior Associate	15.5%
Associate	8.8%

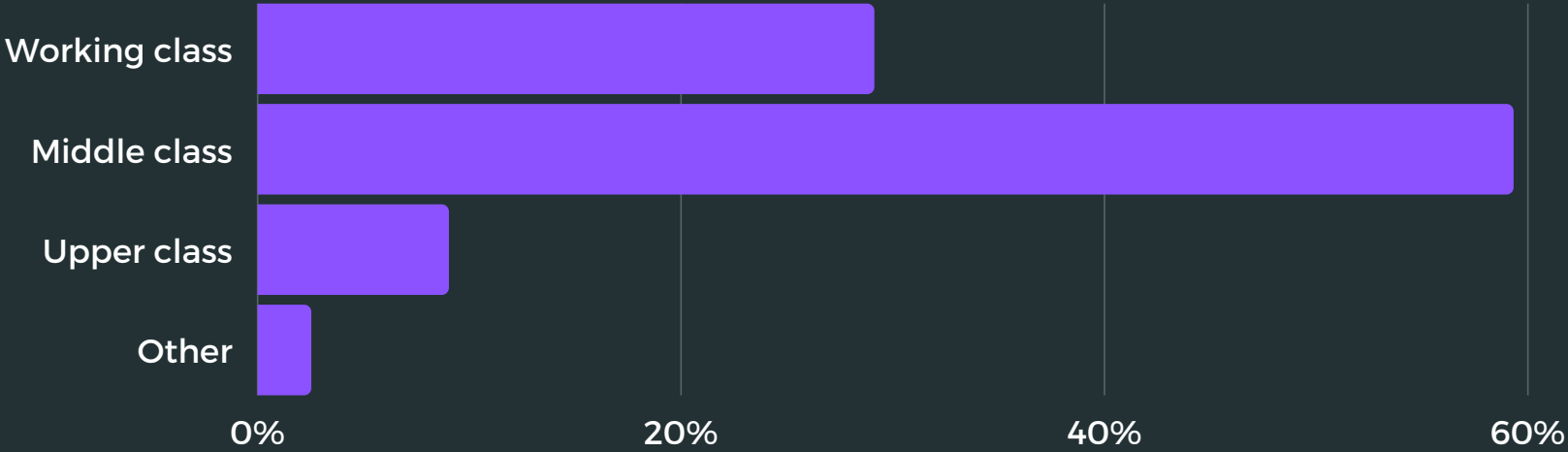
Which sector do you specialise in?



What's your gender identity?



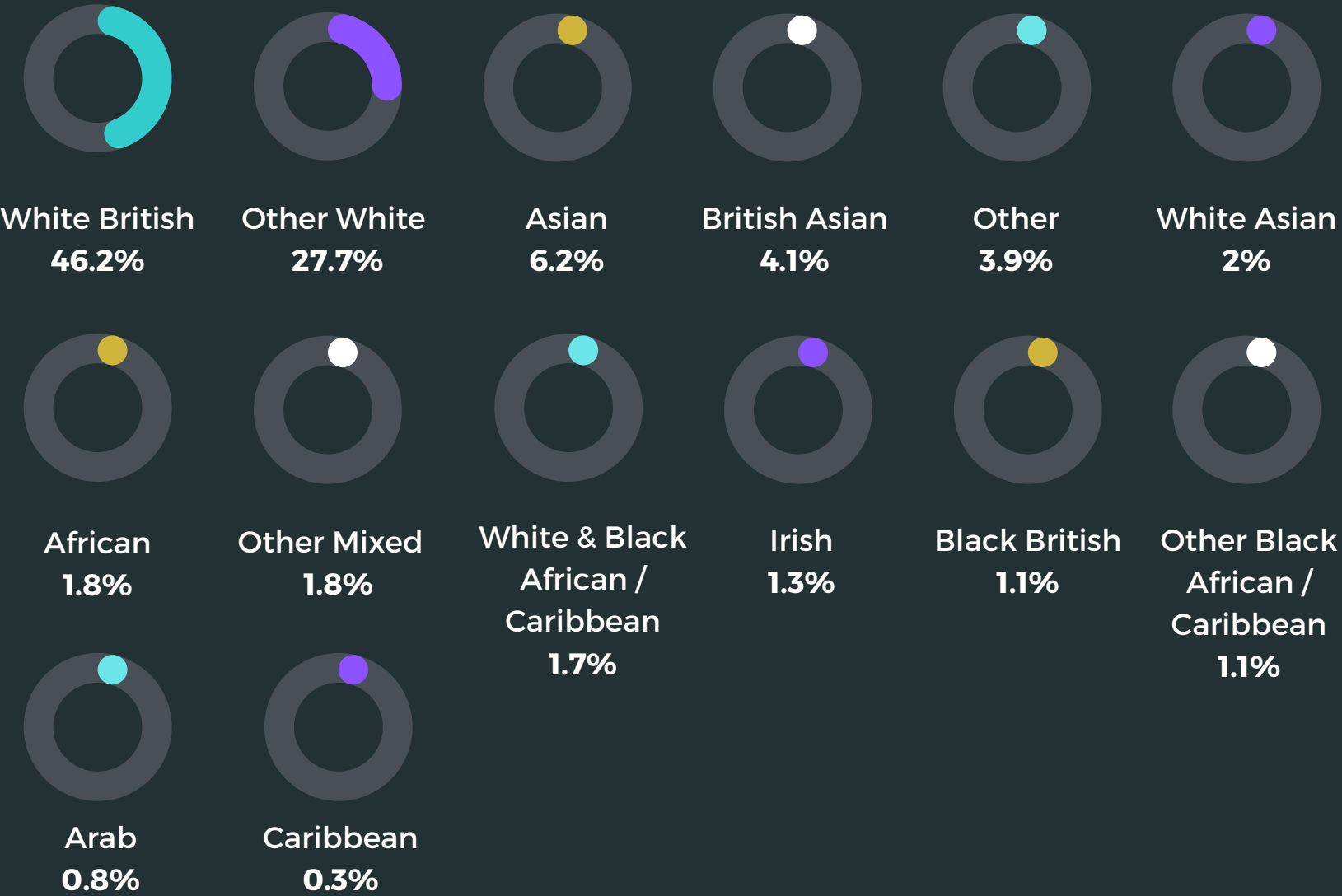
How would you describe your class background?



Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



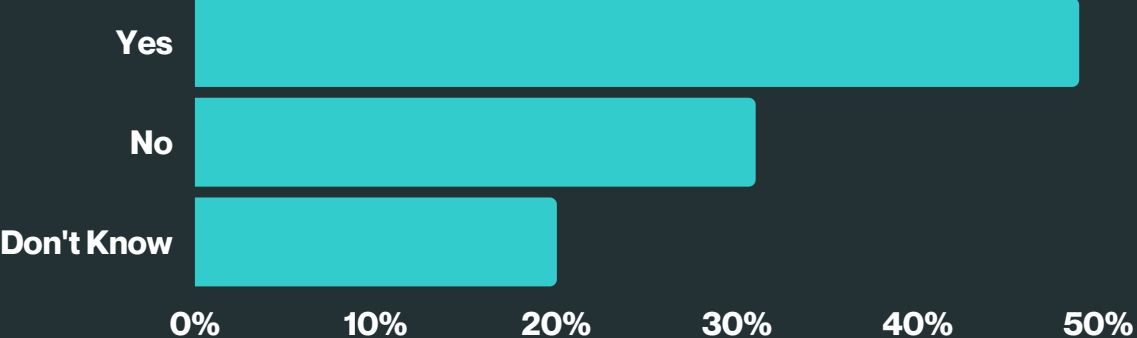
Which of the following best describes you?



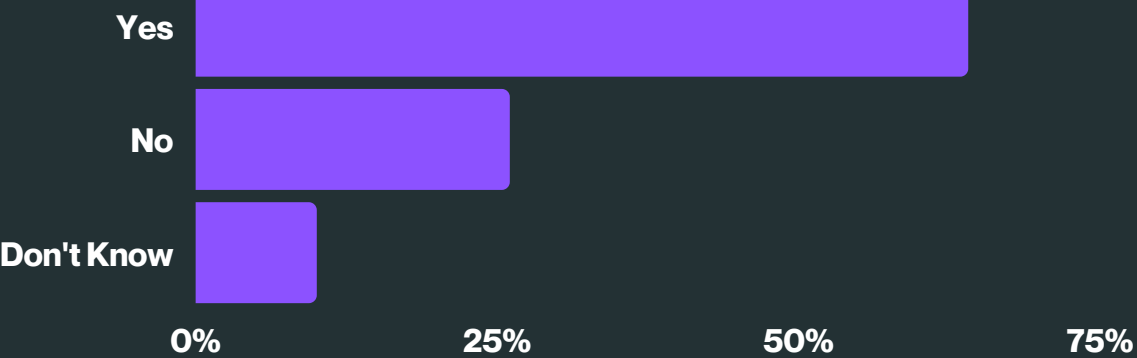
APPENDIX

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Although most companies now have Diversity & Inclusion policies in place, do you believe your sector is doing enough to increase diversity in their teams?

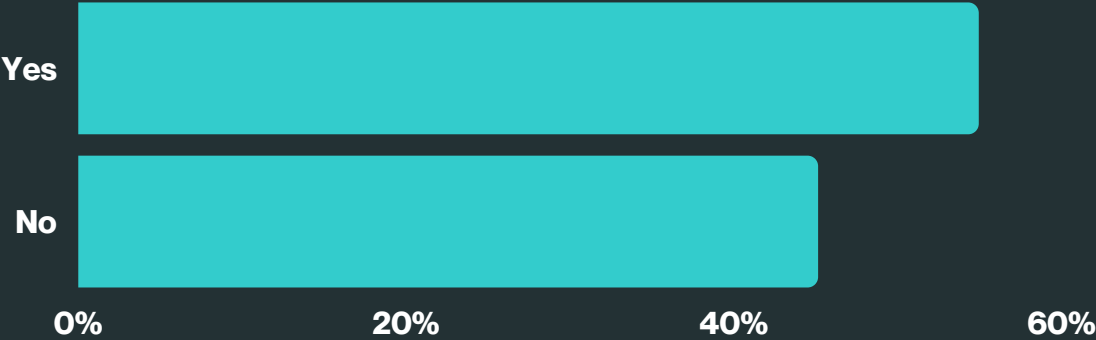


Do you believe that progression within your sector can be impacted by gender, race, disability, sexuality, ethnicity, age or social class?

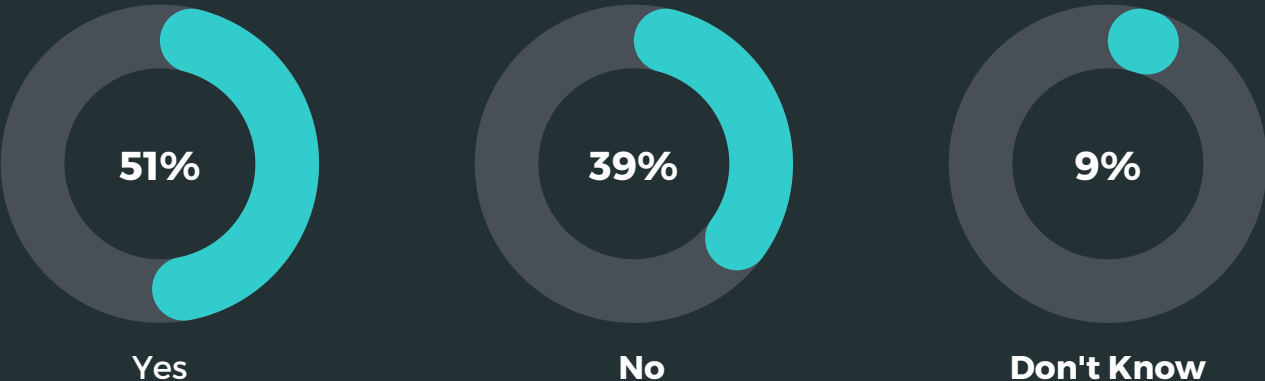


To your knowledge does the company you work for have any networks or groups for:

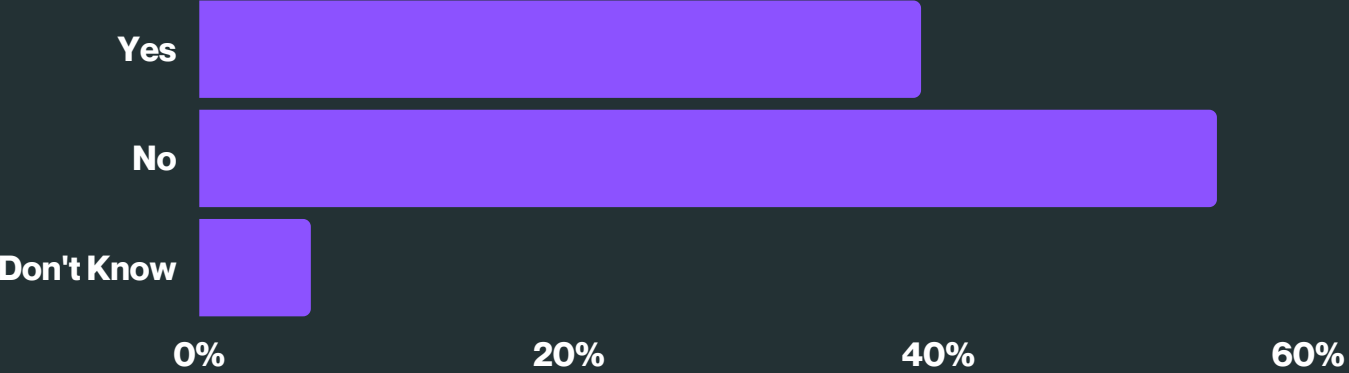
- Sexual orientation
- Gender identity
- Religion / beliefs
- Disability
- Ethnicity



Is there lack of diversity at senior management level and beyond at your organisation?



Do you feel you've personally been affected by diversity issues in the workplace?



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