

UK

PUBLISHING WORKFORCE

Diversity, inclusion and belonging

2021

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

This is the fifth consecutive year that we have co-ordinated a survey of the publishing industry's workforce, the largest survey of its kind which in 2021 reached more than 14,000 employees.

Once again, the picture that emerges is varied and its interpretation requires nuance.

There are definitely some things to welcome and, crucially, some potential signs that the work that publishers have been doing to improve diversity, inclusion and belonging for staff is beginning to help move the dial.

It is encouraging that we can see some movement on representation of people from ethnic minority groups, indicating that the target for 15% of employees being from these groups by 2022 has been met – although this is undoubtedly an area where significant progress still needs to be made.

It is also positive that we can see that LGBT+ representation continues to grow, as does the representation of people with a disability.

Representation of females in executive leadership and senior management positions continues to be over 50%, something that really sets us apart as an industry and is incredibly positive.

However, there is absolutely no room for complacency. In many areas, the pace of change is not enough. Socio-economic background continues to represent a major barrier to inclusion in our industry, as it does in many others. A lack of regional diversity remains stark.

We expect that when data from the latest population census is revealed later this year, many of the national averages we use to benchmark where we are as an industry will significantly shift. The progress that has been made will need to be reassessed against this latest information and I expect that all industries that are serious about their workforces reflecting the population will need to reassess their plans and grow their ambitions.

As this survey is the last in the time period initially set in our Inclusivity Action Plan, we are working with our members and industry partners to adjust our strategy to reflect evolving conversations,



Stephen Lotinga
Chief Executive of the
Publishers Association

publisher activity and best practice in this area. Much has happened in the time since the last plan was developed.

As part of this, we will consider the workforce survey and how it is best delivered in the future, how we can best support our members around this area of work and whether new targets should be set. Later in 2022, we will publish our revised plans.

My thanks to all those people who have contributed to this survey. I know it can make for difficult reading and frustration at the pace of change is valid.

Data is only one step, but it is vital. If you care about something, you measure it and this work has always been focused on trying to build sound data that can then be used to help target effective action. We are under no illusion that it is enough on its own. Change needs to happen faster and we will do whatever we can as your association to support the industry's ambitions in this area.

Methodology

Since 2017, the Publishers Association has conducted annual socio-demographic surveys of the UK publishing workforce. The insights from these surveys feed into our ongoing work to understand representation within the industry and monitor changes over time.

The data collection for this year's survey was conducted by the Publishers Association and EA Inclusion and took place between October and December 2021 using the same methodology as previous editions of the study. The study took place slightly later in the year in 2021 than in previous years. This was due to a number of members conducting their own in house surveys later in the year, or for the first time.

This study comprises two strands of research:

The **survey of publishing employees** was modelled on the Office for National Statistics Census for England and Wales, and has been developed to align with current inclusive best practice for the collection of socio-demographic data. Participating businesses either sent this online survey to their staff or provided their pre-existing data, which EA Inclusion then aggregated to create a combined data set. As not every respondent answered every question in the survey, and some of the aggregate data provided by businesses was partial, the base can vary. This has been noted where relevant.

The **survey of participating organisations** collected data on publishing operations, including size, sector, and office locations, as well as gender at executive leadership and senior management levels.

Where possible, comparisons have been made to the UK population to provide context. It should be noted that the results for the England and Wales 2021 Census have not yet been published at the time this report was produced, and the latest Census of Scotland has yet to take place in 2022. Comparisons have also been made to the Publishers Association's previous annual Workforce Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging surveys where appropriate.

Participation

A total of 14,089 employees from 60 businesses took part in EA Inclusion's survey of publishing employees in 2021. The total number of respondents was in line with the previous year, while there was a slight decrease in the number of participating organisations. This decrease in the number of organisations participating in this year's survey was due to a number of factors including; organisations conducting their own surveys and not having the results available in time to participate; and organisations being in transitional periods, either through mergers, changes of personnel, or undertaking reviews of their structure or operations.

Almost all of the 60 businesses that took part in the employee survey also took part in the business survey, with the exception of one, with a further seven businesses taking part in the business survey that did not take part in the workforce survey, making a total of 66 businesses.

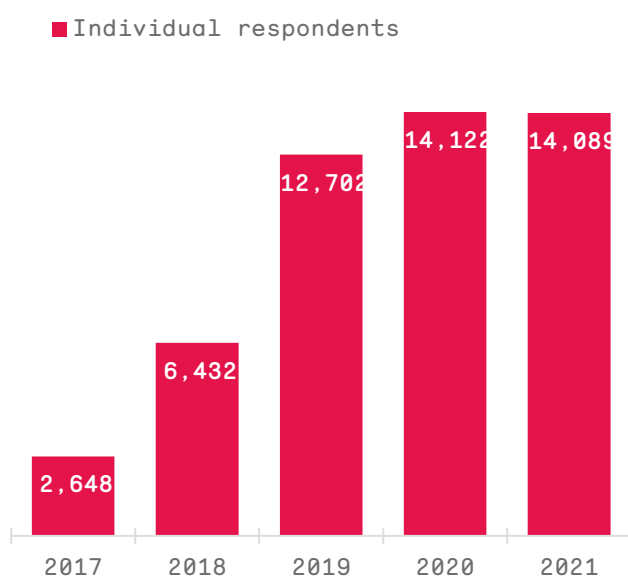


Figure 1: Number of individual respondents.

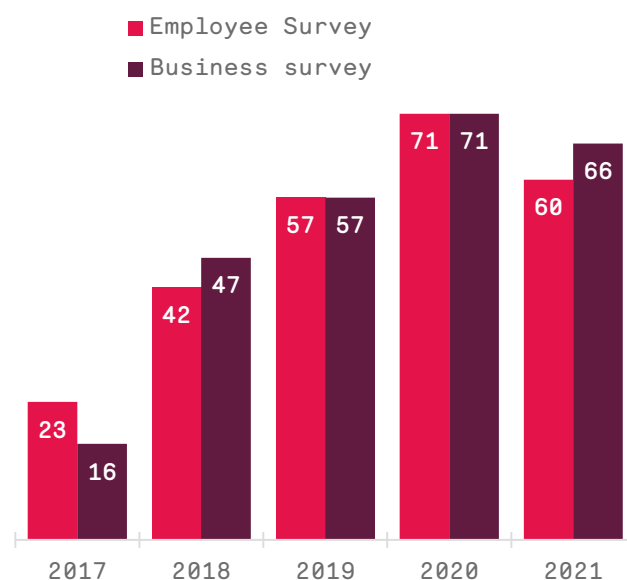
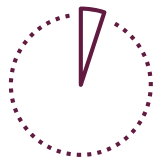


Figure 2: Number of participating businesses.

Key findings



Females continue to dominate the workforce, accounting for almost two thirds of respondents (63%), with over half of executive leadership and senior management positions held by females (52% and 56% respectively).



Representation of people from ethnic minority groups (excluding white minorities) has increased to 15%, achieving the Publishers Association's target set for 2022.



LGBT+ representation continues to increase further with 13% of respondents either identifying as lesbian, gay, or bi, or preferring to self-describe their sexual orientation, a figure which has grown each year since 2017 (5%) – and 1% of respondents identify as trans.



The representation of people with a disability has increased over the years from 2% in 2017 to 8% in 2020, to 13% in 2021.



Almost half of respondents have experienced mental health problems (43%). Compared to 2020, this declined from 46%. At the time of the survey, one in four (25%) were currently experiencing mental health problems.



Socio-economic background continues to represent major barriers to inclusion, with around two thirds (67%) of respondents being from professional backgrounds.



Those who were privately educated (19%), and those educated to a degree level (83%) continue to be overrepresented in the workforce in relation to the population.

About our respondents

Childhood home and where they live now

Over three quarters (79% due to rounding) of respondents live in either London (49%, up from 37% in 2020) or the South East of England (31%, down from 38% in 2020). This combined figure was higher than in 2020 (74%), and was significantly higher than the proportion of respondents that grew up in those areas (17% and 23% respectively). Outside of London, 7% live in the East of England and 5% live in the South West of England. All other regions and nations were home to 2% or fewer of respondents. Although it is not possible to be certain about the location of respondents' place of work, it is evident that the workforce is concentrated in the south of England, although the diversity of where the workforce grew up is much greater.

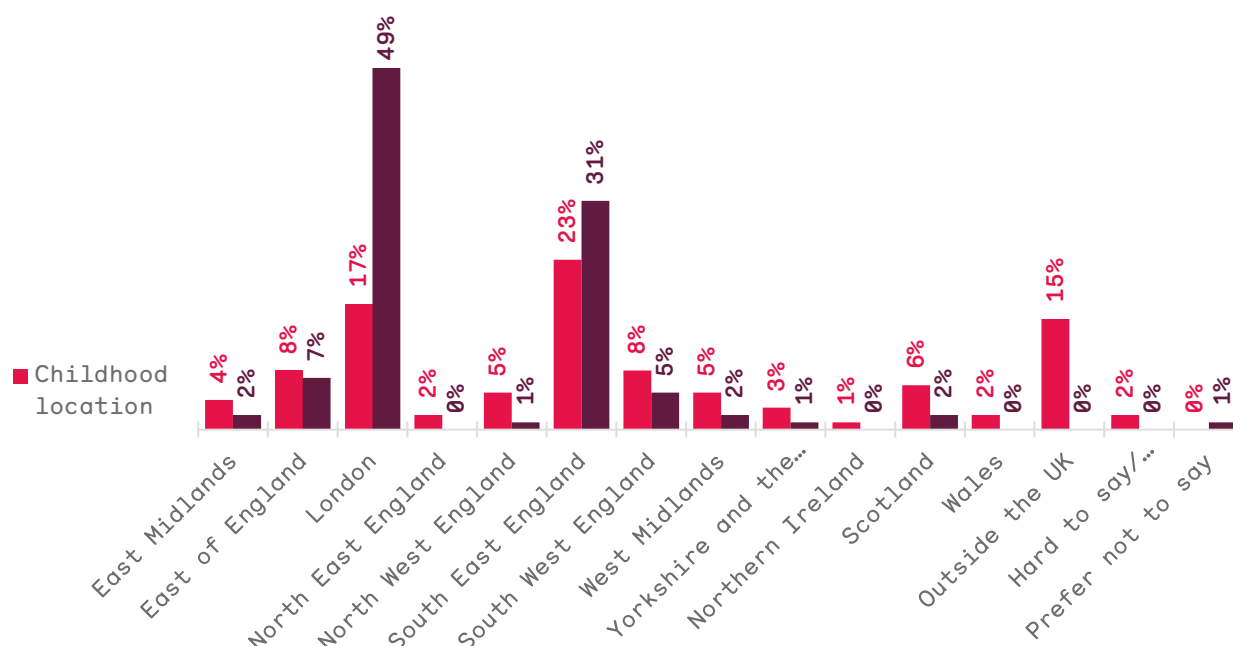


Figure 3: Where did you spend the majority of your childhood?
Where is your primary home located?

Base: 'Where did you spend the majority of your childhood?' - 5,314 respondents,
'Where is your primary home located?' - 3,839 respondents.

Age

The age profile of publishing continues to remain concentrated in the 25 to 44 age bracket (63%), although this is down from 67% in 2020. The largest individual group within this is those aged 25 to 34 (33%, down from 37% in 2020). This is higher than we would expect compared to the UK workforce as a whole, where 57% were aged between 25 and 49 ([ONS](#)). Within publishing, just 5% of respondents were aged between 18 and 24, which was in line with 2020 results but much lower than the UK average (12% aged 16 to 24). A total of 13% of respondents were aged 55 or over, which was a significant increase from 8% each year from 2018 to 2020 but is still lower than the 32% of those aged 50 and over in the UK workforce.

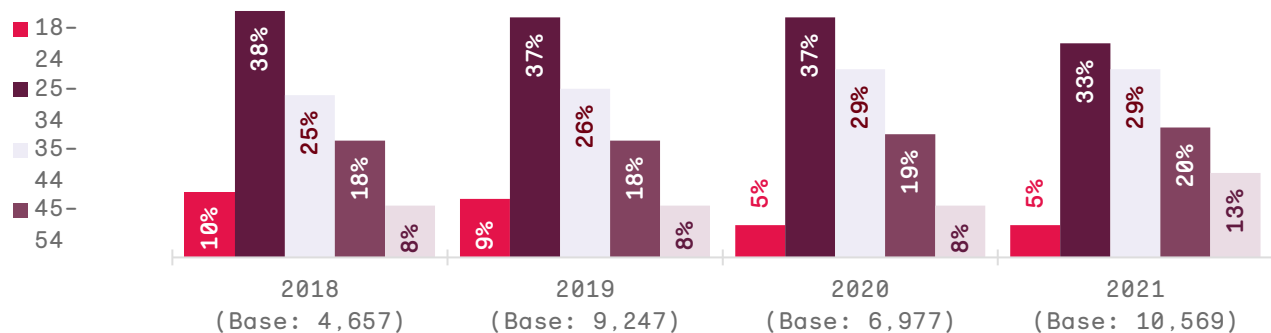


Figure 4: What is your age range?

Base: Provided in chart.

Religion or belief

According to [2019 ONS population estimates](#), 38% of the population of England, Scotland and Wales were non-religious and 51% were Christian. The publishing workforce does not reflect this, with most respondents indicating that they were non-religious (60%) and a lower proportion (25%) identifying as Christian, which was in line with 2020 results. 2% of respondents identified as Muslim, while 1% identified as either Jewish or Hindu. Buddhist and Sikh respondents each accounted for less than 1% of respondents, and 4% of respondents identified with another religion or belief.

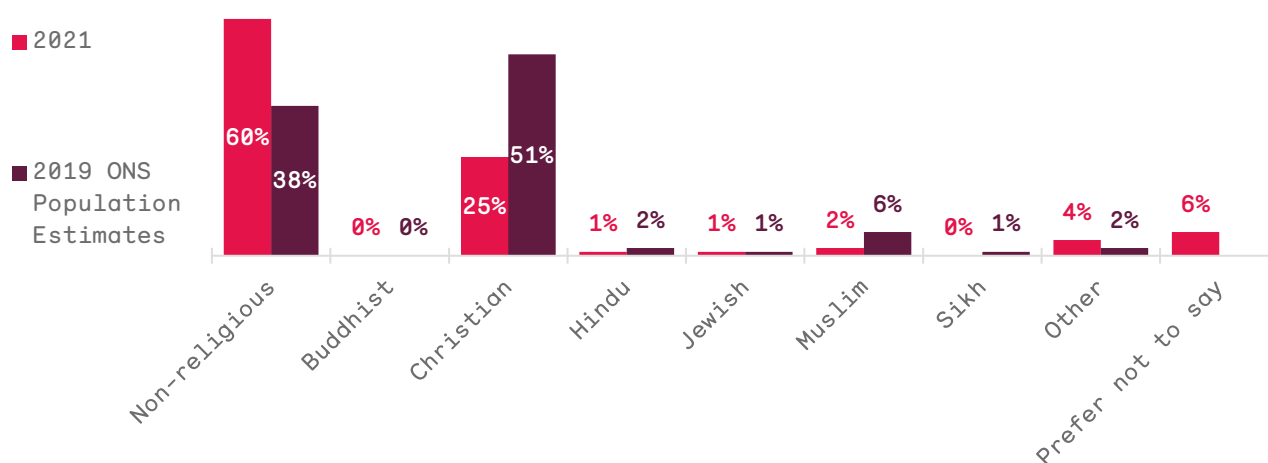


Figure 5: What is your religion or belief?

Base: 5,430 respondents.

National identity

93% of respondents identified their national identity as at least one of the following: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, or British, which was an increase from 2020 (87%), and was slightly higher than the UK population (91% according to the ONS 2021 Annual Population Survey). One in six (16%) respondents identified their national identity as being other than British or one of the home nations, a higher figure than that recorded in the ONS 2021 Annual Population Survey (9%).

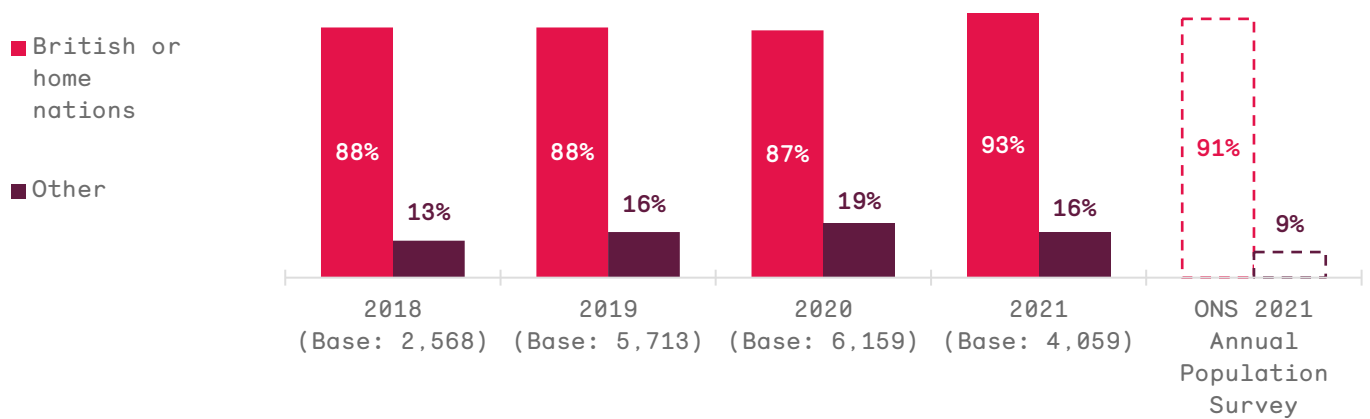


Figure 6: How would you describe your national identity?

Base: Provided in chart.

Note: Totals are over 100% as individuals were able to select 'all that apply'.

Caring responsibilities

More than a quarter (26%, down from 29% in 2020) of respondents had caring responsibilities for children, with the majority (97%, in line with 2020 results) of respondents' line managers (or equivalent) being aware of this. In comparison, Working Families reported that there were 13 million working parents in the UK, representing more than 1 in 3 people in the workforce (around 37%).

One in 25 (4%, down from 7% in 2020) respondents had caring responsibilities for adults, with almost three quarters (71%, up from 63% in 2020) of respondents' line managers (or equivalent) being aware of this. In comparison, Carers UK reported that 1 in 9 (around 11%) workers in the UK has caring responsibilities for adults.

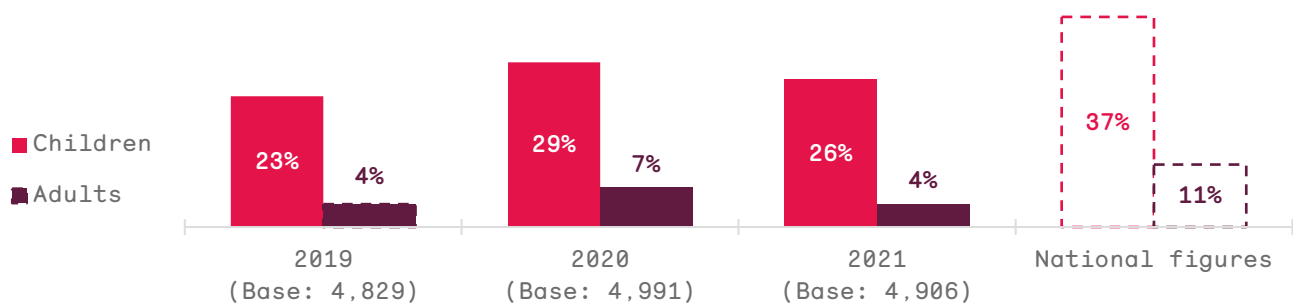


Figure 7: Do you have regular caring responsibilities?

Base: Provided in chart.

Flexible working

Flexible working arrangements have changed significantly since the UK lockdown in March 2020 due to Covid-19. In the 2020 survey, it was reported that 89% of respondents had the ability to work from home following the first lockdown, a huge increase from the 40% who had the ability to work from home before the first UK lockdown.

In 2021, respondents were asked how often they work from home over a typical recent month. It should be noted that on 19 July 2021, the government moved England to Step 4 and lifted most coronavirus-related legislation, including guidance on working from home. This advice was updated on Monday 13 December, and people were again asked to work from home where possible. Although for the majority of the time the survey was undertaken, between October and December 2021, working from home guidance was not in place in England (although it was in other home nations), we do know from various publishers and published articles that publishers continued to offer the workforce the option of working from home at least some of the week.

When asked within the survey, 93% of respondents said they work from home two or more days per week, with almost two-fifths of respondents (38%) working from home around 5 days per week, which was the most common response. A small proportion (3%) of respondents worked from home once a week or less, with 3% of respondents not working from home at all.

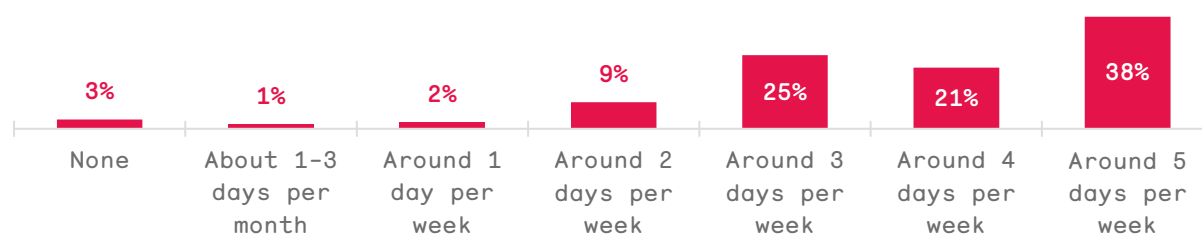


Figure 8: Over a typical recent month, how often do you work from home?

Base: 2,284 respondents.

Family or friends in publishing

The majority of respondents did not have family or friends working in the industry before they started their career in publishing compared to 15% who did. This was in line with 2020 results (16%).

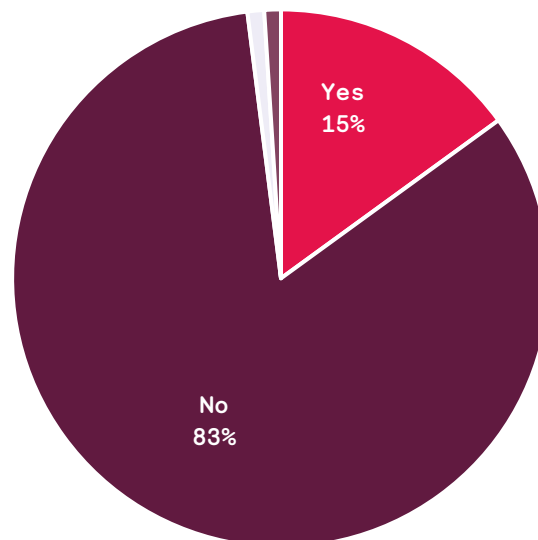


Figure 9: Before you started your career in publishing, did you have family or friends that worked within the industry?

Base: 3,934 respondents.

Note: 1% of respondents either preferred not to say or were unsure.

Gender

63% of the publishing workforce identifies as female.

According to the World Bank, 47% of the UK workforce was female, compared to 63% in publishing, a level which has remained relatively consistent since the survey began. 36% of respondents identified as male and less than 1% preferred to self-describe their gender.

Respondents were asked separately whether their gender identity was the same as the sex that they were assigned at birth, which has been reported in the LGBT+ section of this report.

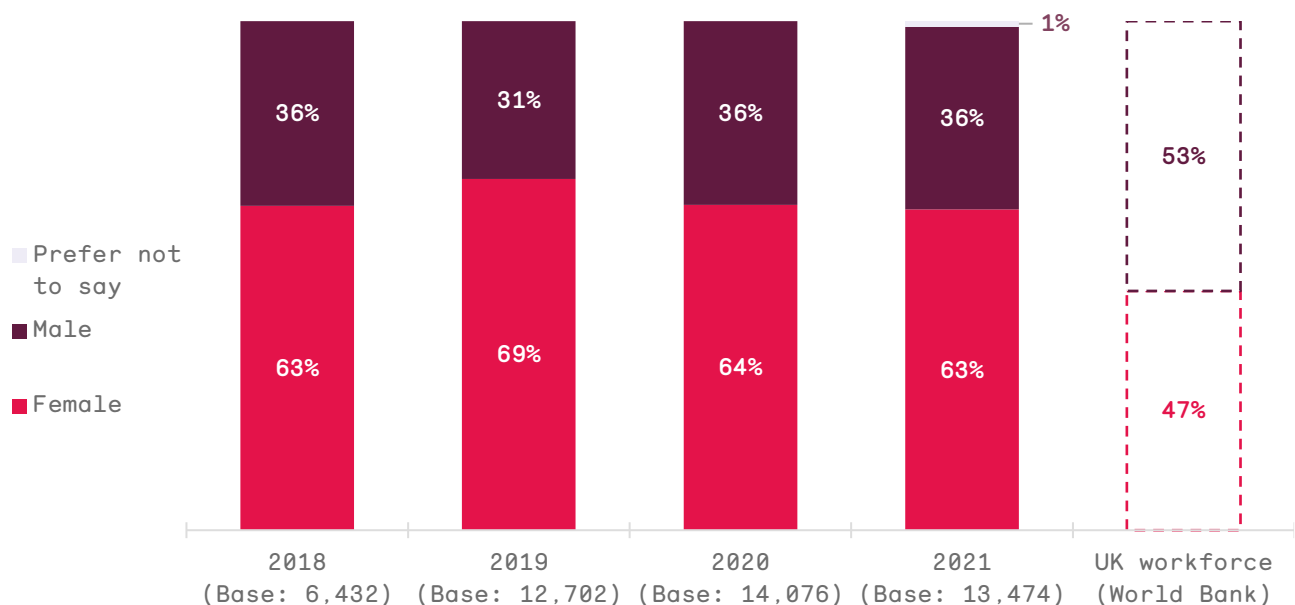


Figure 10: What best describes your gender?

Base: Provided in chart.

Note: Less than 1% of survey respondents preferred to self-describe their gender each year.

Females continue to make up more than half of the executive leadership and senior management roles in publishing.

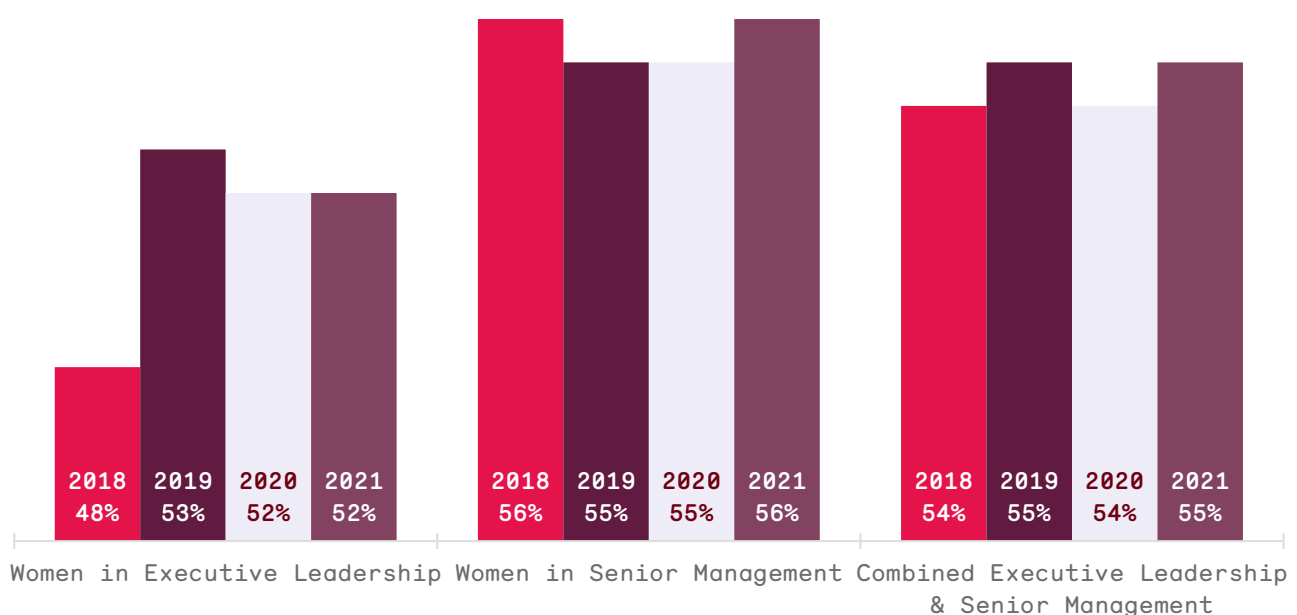


Figure 11: Females in executive leadership and senior management.

Base: 66 organisations provided this data in 2021.

The representation of females in executive leadership (52%) and senior management (56%) across the industry as a whole, both separately and combined (55%), was on par with both 2019 and 2020, and continues to meet the Publishers Association's target of at least 50%.

Ethnicity

Representation of employees from ethnic minority groups (excluding White minorities) has increased in 2021 to 15%.

People from ethnic minority groups (excluding White minorities) make up 15% of respondents, which was in line with the population of England and Wales (15%) according to the [ONS' 2019 population estimates](#) (up from 14% in the [2011 ONS Census](#)). This figure has increased gradually over time for publishing, from 12% in 2018, and 13% in both 2019 and 2020. A further breakdown of ethnicity is provided in the paragraphs that follow.

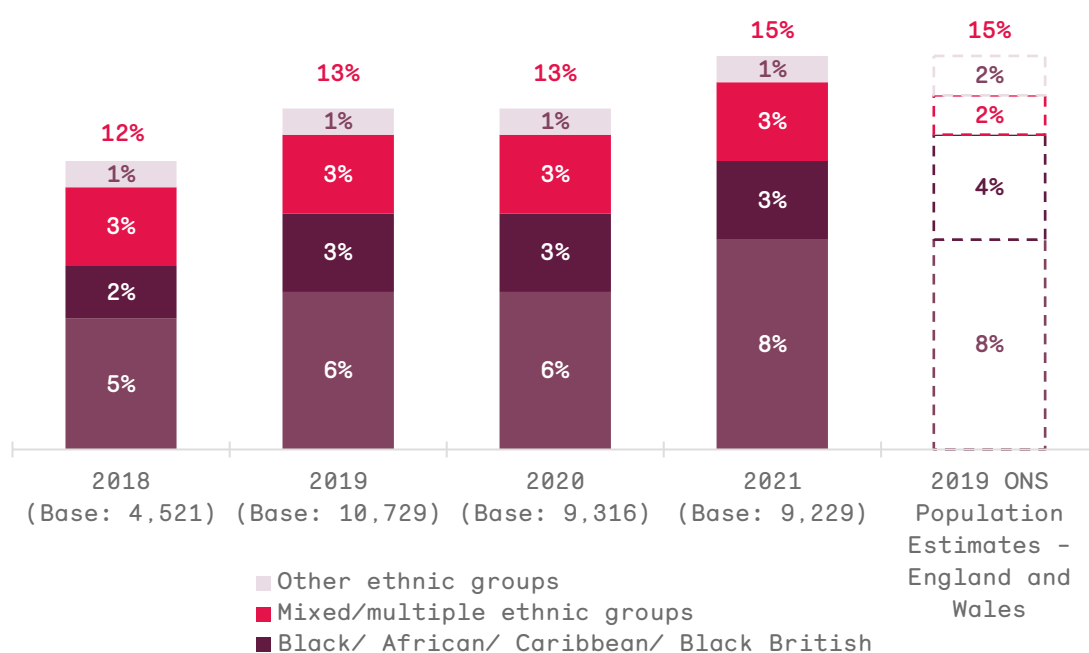


Figure 12: What is your ethnic group?

Base: Provided in chart.

Note: Individual categories do not add up to the 'Combined' figures as they have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

The proportion of respondents identifying as Asian/Asian British has increased from 5% in 2018 to 6% in 2019 and 2020, to 8% in 2021, which was in line with the estimated population of England and Wales (8% according to the [ONS' 2019 population estimates](#)). The proportion of respondents identifying as Black/African/ Caribbean/Black British remains unchanged from 2019 and 2020 at 3%, which was lower than the estimated population of England and Wales (4%). A further 3% of respondents identified as having mixed or multiple ethnicities, which was one percentage point higher than the ONS estimates (2%), and has remained consistent each year since 2018. Finally, 1% of respondents identified as being from Other ethnic groups, which was in line with the estimated population of England and Wales (2%) and this has remained consistent each year since 2018.

The representation of respondents from White ethnic groups (83%) appeared to be similar to the population of England and Wales (85% according to the [ONS' 2019 population estimates](#)). However, in looking deeper, those identifying as White British specifically was significantly lower than the estimated population of England and Wales (69% compared to 78%).

Further regional analysis around ethnicity was undertaken for London, the largest area where respondents live. It should be noted that not all existing data that was received from organisations included respondents' primary home location, so this analysis was based on the smaller subset of data that was available.

London ethnicity comparison

While the representation of respondents from ethnic minority groups (excluding White minorities) living in London has increased since 2020 (from 16% to 18%), this was still well below the London population (40% according to the [ONS 2011 Census](#) - while dated, this remains the most accurate data to benchmark against). Respondents from Asian/Asian British ethnic groups (8%, up from 7% in 2020) were significantly underrepresented in comparison to the London population (19%), a difference of 11 percentage points. People from Black/African/Caribbean/Black British ethnic groups make up 13% of the London population, but only 3% (up from 2% in 2020) of respondents living in London identified as Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British, a difference of 10 percentage points. The representation of respondents living in London who were from mixed or multiple ethnic groups (5%) was in line with the London population, and there was lower representation of London respondents (1%) from Other ethnic groups in comparison to the population (3%).

2021 Base: 1,831 respondents/ 2020 Base: 1,471 respondents.

LGBT+

LGB+ representation is high and growing.

The publishing workforce has a substantially higher proportion of respondents identifying as lesbian, gay, bi, or other term preferred (LGB+) (13%) than the estimated 3% of the UK population ([ONS](#)). The proportion of respondents identifying as LGB+ has increased significantly from 8% in 2018, with the largest increase amongst those identifying as bi (from 4% to 7% since 2018).

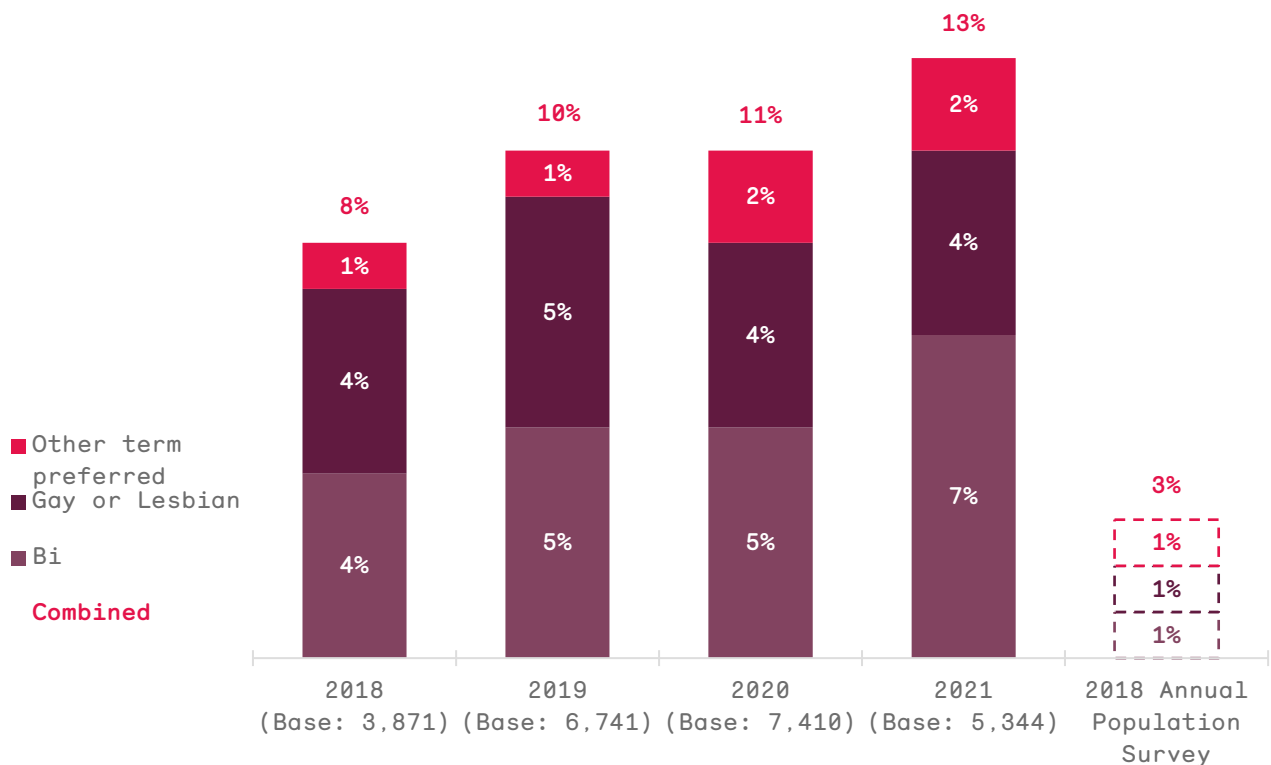


Figure 13: Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

Base: Number of respondents included in chart.

Note: Individual categories do not always add up to the 'Combined' figures as they have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Trans people made up 1% of respondents.

Respondents were asked if their gender identity was the same as the sex that they were assigned at birth. 1% of respondents (in line with 2020 results) said their gender identity differed from the sex that they were assigned at birth, with 98% saying that it remained the same. This corresponds with estimates by the Government Equalities Office that there were approximately 200,000 to 500,000 trans people in the UK, around 1% of the population.

Socio-economic background & education

Socio-economic background and education continue to represent major barriers to inclusion.

Socio-economic background has been measured using the [Social Mobility Commission's](#) recommended question around the occupation of the main household earner during respondents' childhood. Socio-economic background has been reported in three groups:

- **Professional backgrounds** – Modern professional & traditional occupations; senior or junior managers or administrators.
- **Intermediate backgrounds** – Clerical and intermediate occupations; small business owners.
- **Lower socio-economic backgrounds** – Technical and craft occupations; routine, semi-routine manual, and service occupations; long-term unemployed.

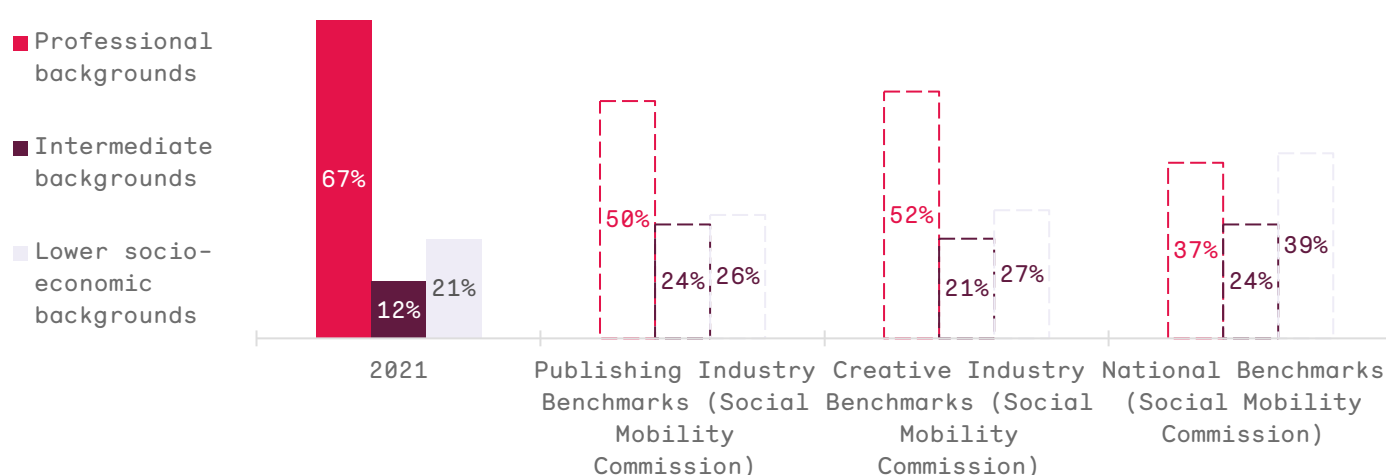


Figure 15: What was the occupation of your main household earner when you were about aged 14?

2021 Base: 4,756 respondents.

Note: As per Social Mobility Commission guidance, respondents who answered 'Other' or preferred not to say were removed from the analysis.

Around two thirds (67%) of respondents were from professional backgrounds, which was significantly higher than the Social Mobility Commission's publishing industry benchmark (50%), creative industry benchmark (52%), and the national benchmark (37%). Around one in eight (12%) respondents were from intermediate backgrounds, which was lower than the publishing industry (24%), the creative industry (21%), and national (24%) benchmarks. Around one in five (21%) respondents were from lower socio-economic backgrounds, which was lower than the publishing industry (26%), the creative industry (27%), and national (39%) benchmarks.

Those who were privately educated continue to be overrepresented in the workforce.

In total, 19% of respondents attended an independent or fee paying school, which was in line with previous years, and this was higher than the 7% of the current UK school population who are privately educated. Of those respondents who attended an independent or fee paying school, a small proportion (3%) had a bursary, while the majority (16%) did not.

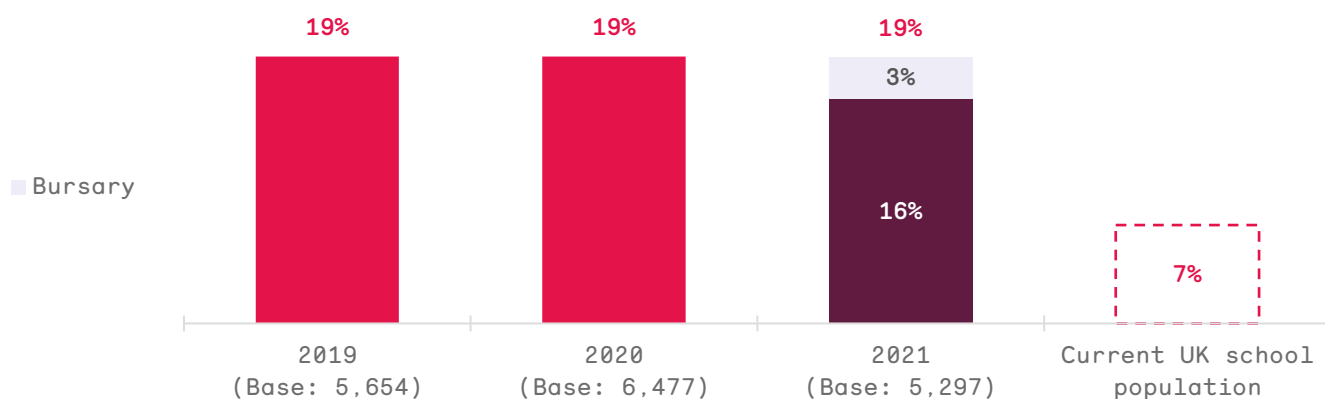


Figure 16: What type of school did you mainly attend between the ages of 11 and 16?

- Attended an independent or fee-paying school.

Base: Number of respondents included in chart.

Note: This question was amended in 2021 to capture those who had a bursary to attend an independent or fee paying school.

Of those respondents who finished school after 1980, 13% received free school meals, which was in line with 2020 results (12%). In comparison, in January 2019, 15% of pupils from all school types were eligible for and claiming free school meals ([Department for Education](#)).

A significant portion of the publishing workforce were educated to a degree level.

A total of 83% of respondents have an undergraduate degree or higher qualification, which has been relatively consistent since 2019, and this was significantly higher than the 19% of the UK population who were educated to this level ([Sutton Trust and Social Mobility Commission](#)).

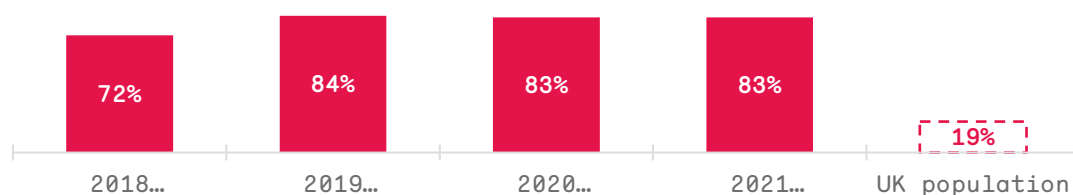


Figure 17: What is the highest level of education you have achieved?

- Educated to degree level (either undergraduate or post graduate).

Base: Number of respondents included in chart.

Amongst those who attended university, 42% were the first in their family to have done so, which was in line with 2020 results (41%). This was much lower than national figures where more than two thirds of students (68%) were classed as the first in their family to go to university in ([Higher Education Policy Institute 2017-2018](#)).

Almost half (49%) of respondents who went to university attended a Russell Group university (up from 43% in 2020), compared to 6% of the working age population ([Sutton Trust and Social Mobility Commission](#)). 8% attended either the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge, a figure

which has remained stable since 2019, and was much higher compared to less than 1% of current 18-year-olds ([Sutton Trust and Social Mobility Commission](#)).

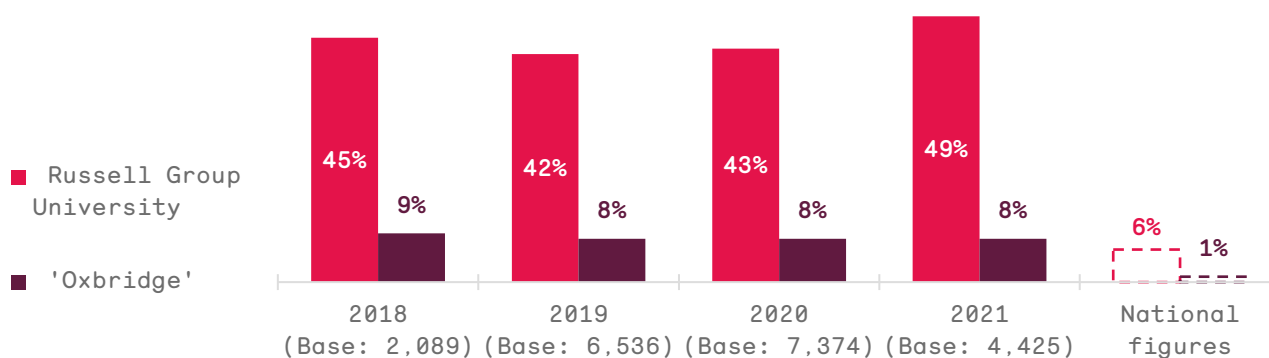


Figure 18: If you attended university, which university/ies did you attend?

Base: Number of respondents included in chart.

Disability and long-term health conditions

Disability or long-term health condition representation amongst survey respondents continues to increase each year. 13% of respondents identified as having a disability or long-term health condition in 2021, which was up significantly from 8% in 2020, 7% in 2019, and 5% in 2018.

In comparison, one in five (20%) of the UK working age population have a disability, and one in three (33%) have a long-term health condition ([ONS 2021 Annual Population Survey](#)). Whilst these survey results were some way behind national figures, when taking into account the disability employment gap (the gap between the employment rates of disabled and non-disabled people, which was recently reported in the [ONS 2021 Annual Population Survey](#) as 28%) and considering disability representation and targets set by Disability Confident Leaders like [Barclays](#) (14% representation) and the [BBC](#) (12% target), this was a positive finding.

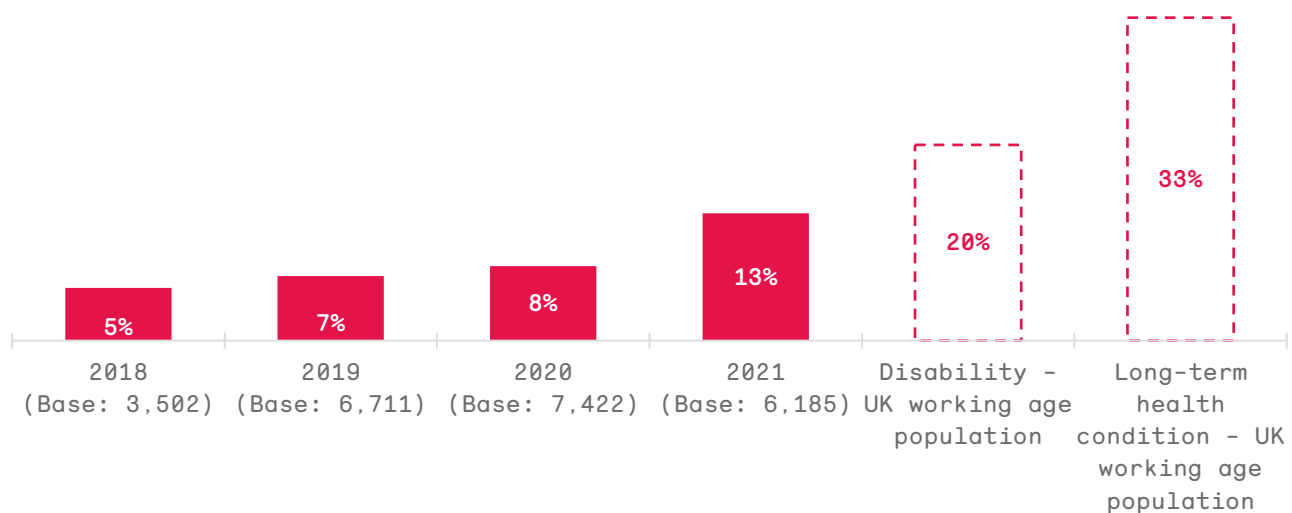


Figure 19: Do you consider yourself to have a disability or long-term health condition (mental health and/ or physical health)?

Base: Number of respondents included in chart.

The most common disability or long-term health condition was mental health conditions, with almost half (49%) of respondents with a disability or long-term health condition reporting this. Around a third (32%) of respondents with a disability or long-term health condition reported that they had a long-term illness, disease, or condition.

Respondents were also asked whether they were open about their disability or long-term health condition at work, with 76% saying they were either open or ‘partially’ open about this, which was in line with 2020 results (78%). A lower proportion of respondents (30%) were open about their disability or long-term health condition at work in comparison to 2020 results (40%), while a higher proportion (46%) of respondents were ‘partially’ open about this in comparison to 2020 (38%).

Over half (55%) of respondents’ line managers were aware of their disability or long-term health condition, which was higher than 2020 results (52%). 43% of respondents said that their colleagues were aware, which was also higher than 2020 results (39%).

Almost a quarter (23%) of respondents with a disability or long-term health condition said they were not open about it at work, and one in five (20%) said that no one at work was aware of this. Both findings were higher than 2020 results (14% and 11% respectively).

Mental health

One in four (25%) respondents were currently experiencing mental health problems, which was an increase from 21% in 2020. In comparison, one in six people report experiencing a common mental health problem (like anxiety and depression) in any given week in England, and this rises to one in four people experiencing a mental health problem of some kind each year (Mind). A further one in five (19%) have experience of mental health problems in the past, down from 25% in 2020, with almost half (43%) of respondents having experience of mental health problems.

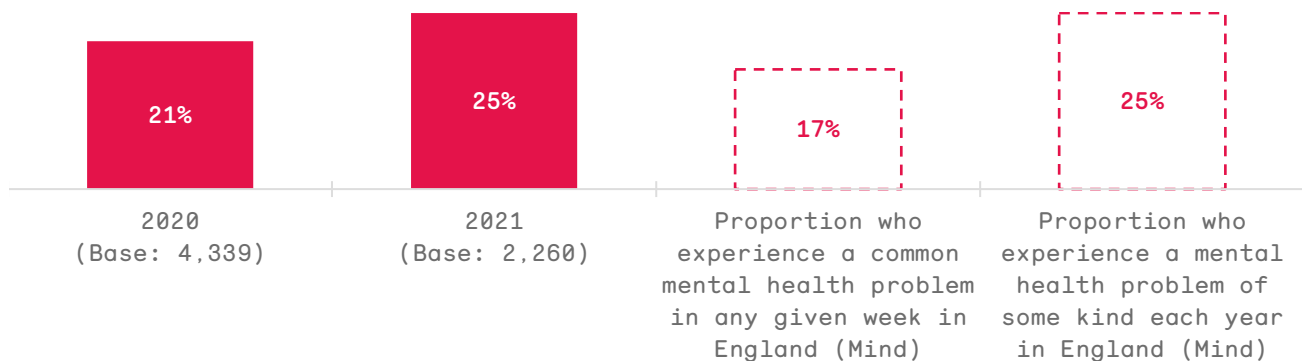


Figure 20: Do you have personal experience of mental health problems?
- Respondents who are currently experiencing mental health problems.

Base: Number of respondents included in chart.

Respondents were also asked whether they were open about their mental health problems at work, with 64% of those currently experiencing mental health problems saying they were either open or ‘partially’ open about this, which was in line with 2020 results. A lower proportion of respondents (14%) were open about their mental health problems at work in comparison to 2020 results (20%), while a higher proportion (50%) of respondents were ‘partially’ open about this in comparison to 2020 (44%).

Of those currently experiencing mental health problems, almost half (46%) of respondents' line managers were aware of this, which was in line with 2020 results. Around a third (34%) of respondents said that colleagues were aware, which was slightly lower than 2020 results (38%).

More than a third (35%) of respondents currently experiencing mental health problems said they were not open about it at work, and almost 1 in 3 (32%) said that no one at work was aware of this. Both findings were in line with 2020 results.

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