

A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace

Employee Information Gathering Exercise

MARCH 2020



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Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND



INTRODUCTION

Background

Headline Findings

Who Completed the Employee Information Gathering Exercise?

Background

- The Commission's **Statement on Key Inequalities in Employment in Northern Ireland** highlighted that:
'Prejudicial attitudes both within and outside the workplace are experienced by people with disabilities, women, Trans people, lesbian, gay and bisexual people, people from minority ethnic groups, migrant workers and those of different religious beliefs'.
- The Commission identified the need to enhance the evidence base. This evidence will support the development of further advice and guidance for employers to improve practices.
- Between 29 November 2018 and 1 March 2019, **two information gathering exercises** asked employers and employees to complete online surveys. The information gathering exercises allowed respondents to self-select and refer the surveys onwards to other respondents. Therefore, the findings are not representative for either all employers or all employees in Northern Ireland.
- This report on the survey for the **Employee information gathering exercise** provides findings for frequency analyses, and cross-tabulations by employer characteristics such as workplace size, business sector, and union representation from closed questions within the Employee survey.

Background

- The report also provides findings for frequency analyses, and cross-tabulations, where possible, by **employee characteristics** such as sex, age, community background/religion, disability, caring responsibilities, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, dependent status, from closed questions within the Employee survey.
- The report also provides information from qualitative analyses of open questions within the Employee survey for all employees.
- This report will be followed by further findings on the equality issues and situations raised by respondents.

Headline Findings:

Workplace Culture and Values

- The majority (69%) of employees felt their workplace culture was welcoming and inclusive with typically more than half of employees agreeing with positively framed statements about their workplaces. However:
 - Just under half of employees agreed with the statements, ‘*My workplace seeks to accommodate employees from different cultures*’ (49%) and ‘*My workplace supports employees with mental ill health*’ (48%);
 - Over 1 in 4 employees disagreed on some statements within the survey – for example, ‘*Staff are treated in consistent way in line with workplace policies*’ (29%) and ‘*Staff [are] able to challenge unwanted behaviour*’ (29%).
- Over one in five employees (21%) personally experienced unwanted behaviour during the past 12 months, while one in four (25%) employees stated that they had witnessed unwanted behaviours towards others during the past 12 months.
 - Unwanted behaviours were experienced on the grounds of sex (27% of responses), religion (24%), political opinion (20%), caring (20%) and age (20%);
 - Just over half (52%) of these employees did ‘not raise the issue at all’.
 - The most frequently given reasons for ‘not raising the issue at all’ related to management practices, the fear of victimisation and prejudice, stigma and bias.
 - Of those employees that experienced unwanted behaviour, only 15% stated that the issue was now resolved.

Headline Findings:

Experience of Workplace culture by equality ground

- **People with disabilities, Carers, people with Other / No religion and LGBQ+ people** were less likely to feel that their workplace culture was welcoming and inclusive **across most statements**. For example:
 - **People with disabilities**, when compared to all respondents, were less likely to agree with statements, such as “*My workplace seeks to support employees with disabilities*” (51% v 60%) while **Carers** were less likely to agree with statements, such as “*My workplace is ‘family friendly’*” (56% v 76%).
- **People with disabilities (34%), Carers (32%), LGBQ+ people (29%) and people of other / no religion (26%) were more likely to have experienced unwanted behaviour during the past 12 months,** when compared to all the employees who responded to this survey (21%).
- **People with disabilities (37%), Carers (36%), people of Other / No Religion (35%) and LGBQ+ people (32%) were more likely to say they had witnessed unwanted behaviours during the past 12 months**, when compared all employees (25%) who responded to this survey.

Headline Findings:

Employee Viewpoints on Shaping a Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace

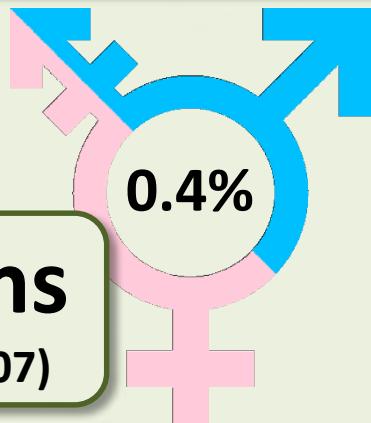
- Employees identified '**positive experiences** where an employer, a manager or work colleague did something that helped make the workplace a better place for you?'
 - Key examples included workplace **support**, access to **flexible working**, workplace **flexibility**; workplace **initiatives**, employer / manager **empathy** and access to **reasonable adjustments**.
- Employees identified examples of '**changes** that could be made to your workplace to prevent unwanted behaviours'.
 - Key examples identified included: **taking action** when issues arose' **improving workplace policy, improved training and education**' **effective management**, better **communication**' and the **promotion of** **equality, diversity and inclusion** within the workplace.
 - A number of employees felt that their workplace was doing their best and there was **nothing more to do** on this issue.
- Employees identified examples of '**something government or other organisations...could do** to help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces'
 - Key examples identified were offering greater **support** for employees; providing **training**; focusing on issues in **recruitment and promotion**, **developing and/or improving policy** and **increasing awareness of diversity-related issues**

Who Completed the Information Gathering Exercise?

3,583 Employees



Men and Women
(n=3207)



Trans
(n=3207)

**Persons
with a
disability**
(n=3206)



LGBTQ+
(n=3169)

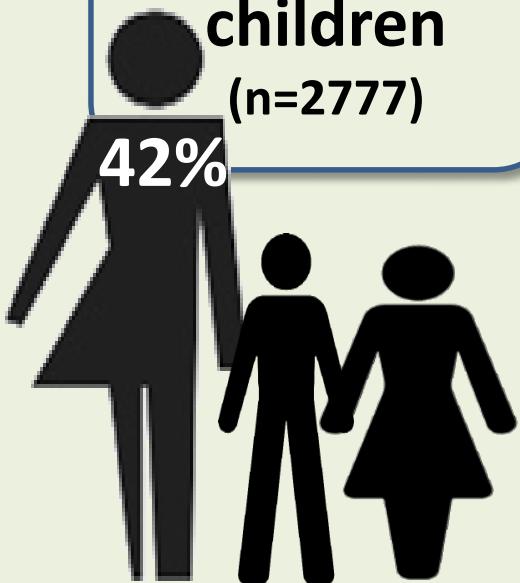
Percentages may not round to 100% due to other / prefer not to say categories

Disability Icon courtesy of the Accessible Icon project

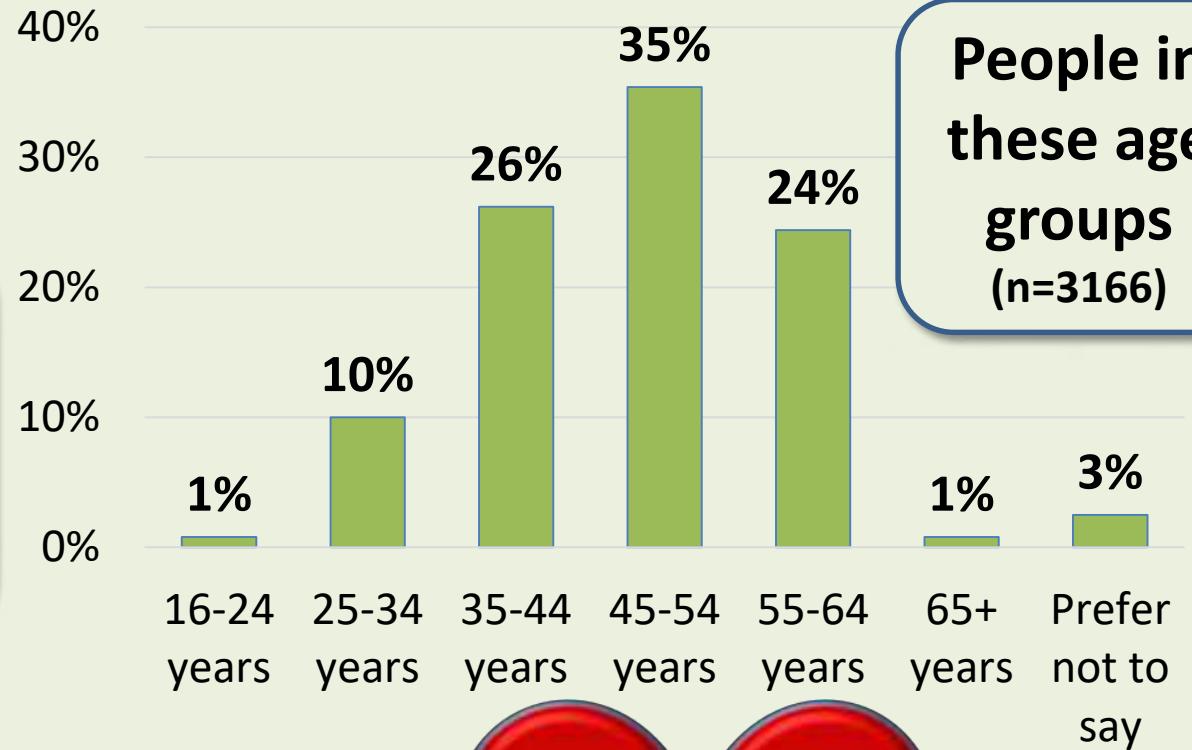
Trans Icon courtesy of <https://2.bp.blogspot.com/>

Including..

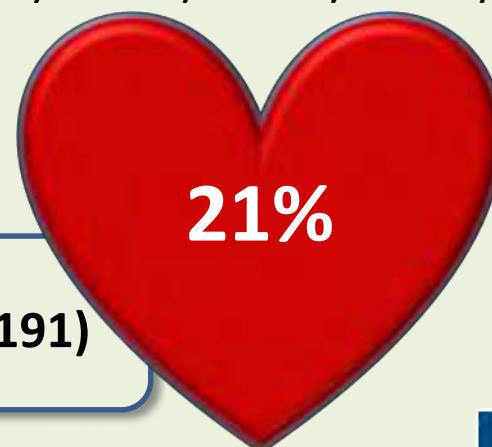
Parents with dependent children
(n=2777)



42%



Carers (n=3191)



21%

Percentages may not round to 100% due to other / prefer not to say categories

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Including..

People born
in.. (n=3204)



People from
these ethnic
groups..
(n=3211)

White
96%

Other
1%

Protestant
38%

And from this
community
background..
(n=3194)

Catholic
42%

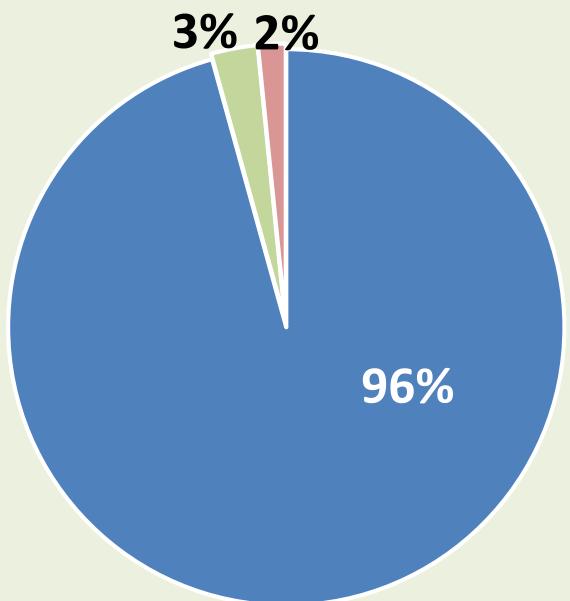
No
Religion
11%

Other
Religion
1%

Percentages may not round to 100% due to other / prefer not to say categories

Employees came from these:

Business Sectors (n=3194)

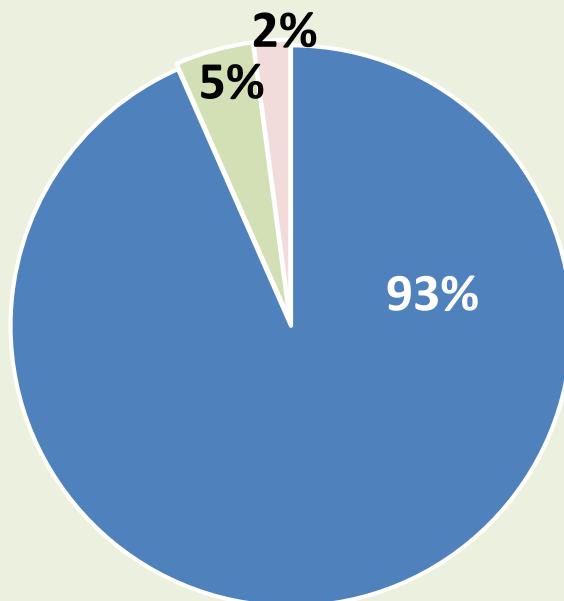


■ Public sector

■ Private sector

■ *Third sector

Employees with and without access to a union (n=3198)



■ Yes

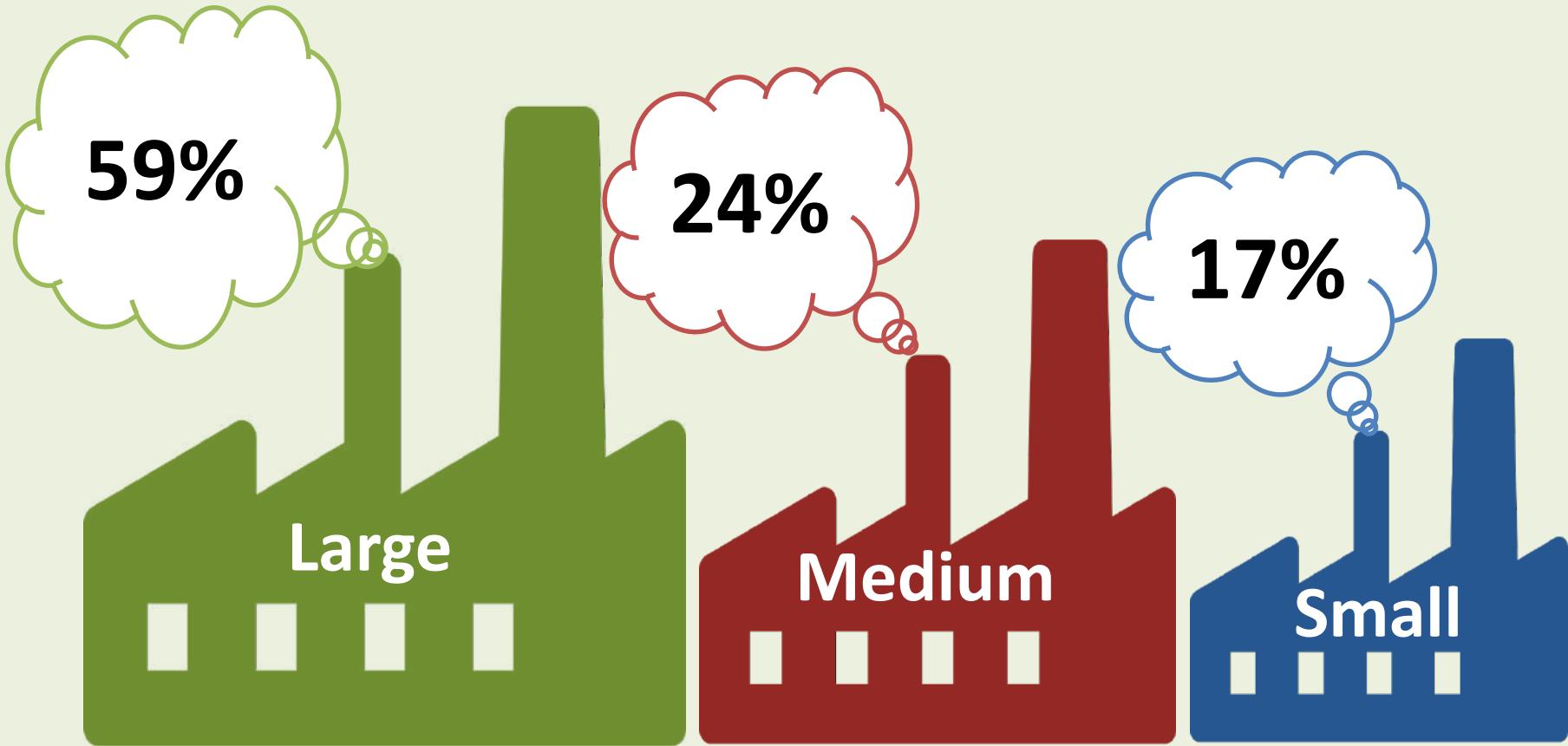
■ No

■ Don't know

*A charity or voluntary sector organisation or social enterprise

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Employees from this size of organisation (n=3199)



Large employers have 250+ employees: Medium employers have 50-250 employees:
Small employers have less than 50 employees

Icon courtesy of: <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/2/2a/Industry5.svg/1024px-Industry5.svg.png>

FINDINGS

A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

Creating a Positive Workplace Experience

A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

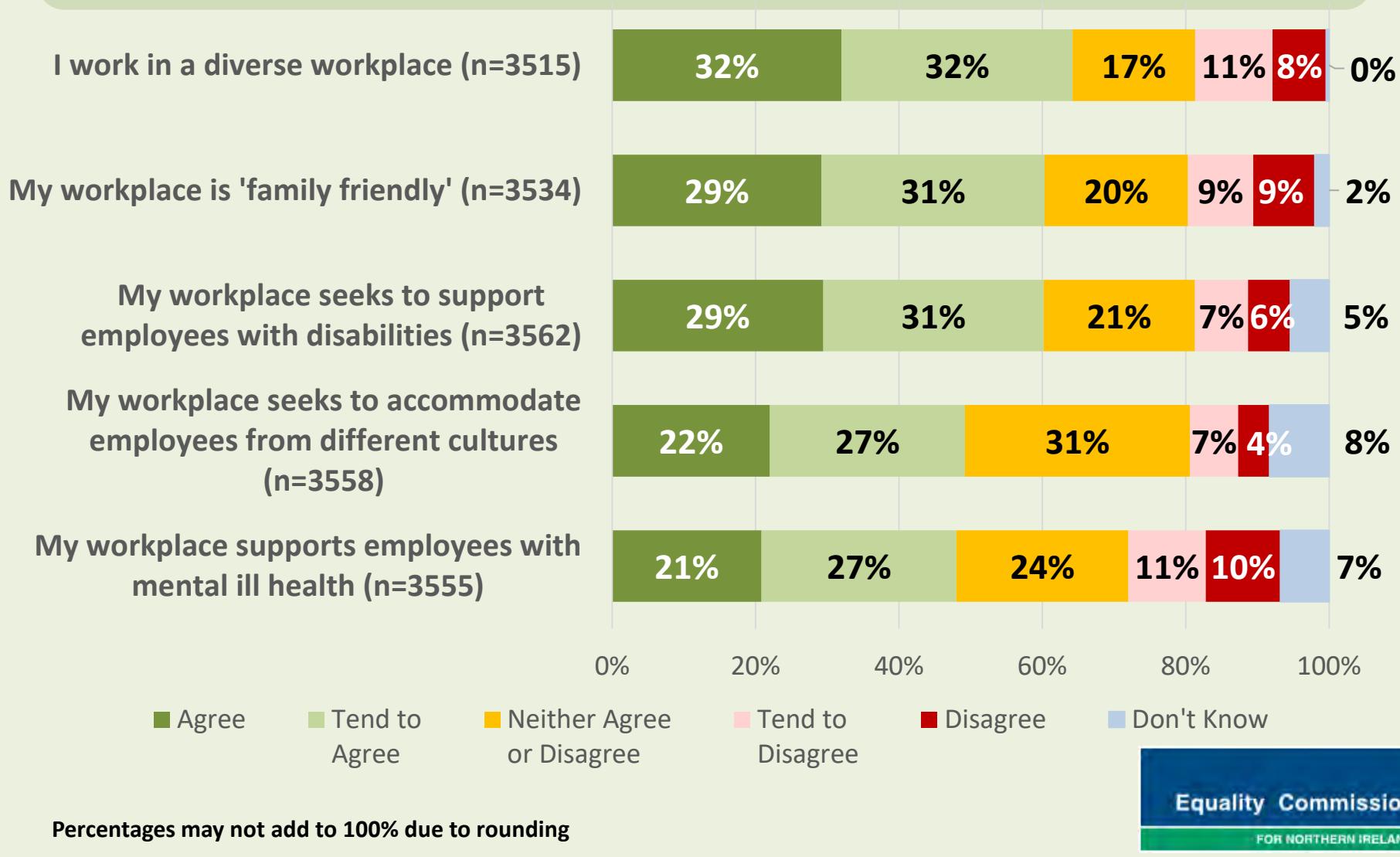
Which values diversity?

Which is respectful and supportive?

Which is consistent in its treatment and actions

A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

Which values diversity?



A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

Which values diversity?

Employee responses to these questions were further analysed by:



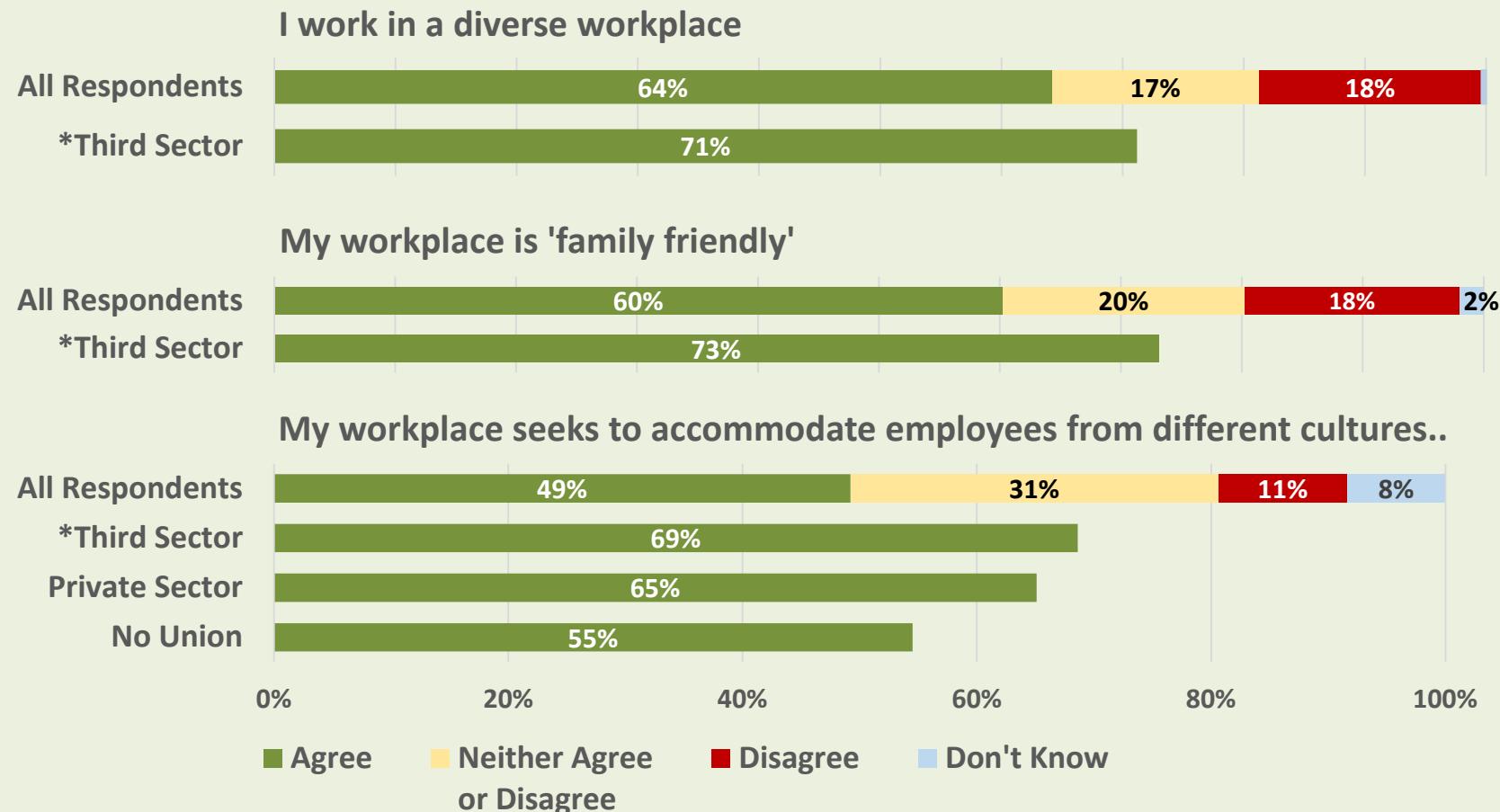
Employer Characteristics*

* Only notable differences are reported

A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

Which values diversity?

Employer Characteristics



*A charity or voluntary sector organisation or social enterprise

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

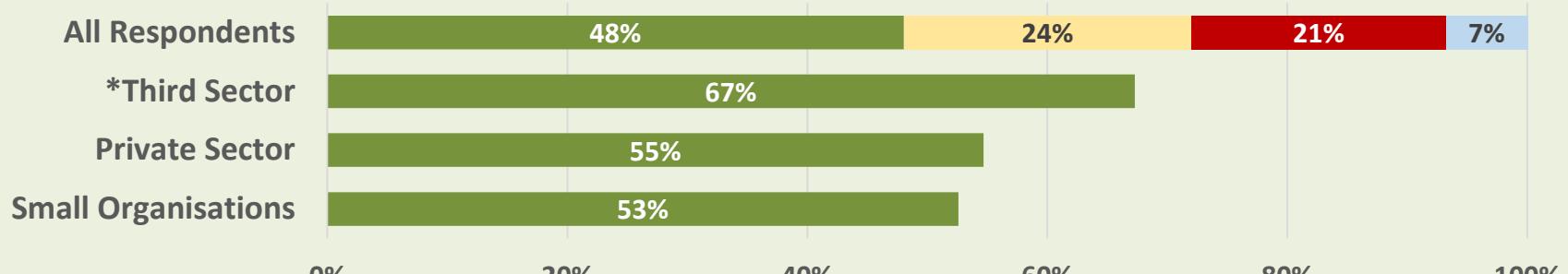
Which values diversity?

Employer Characteristics

My workplace actively seeks to support employees with disabilities



My workplace supports employees with mental ill health



0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

■ Agree ■ Neither Agree
or Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Don't Know

*A charity or voluntary sector organisation or social enterprise

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

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A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

Which values diversity?

Employee responses to these questions were further analysed by:



Men and Women

Employee Characteristics*



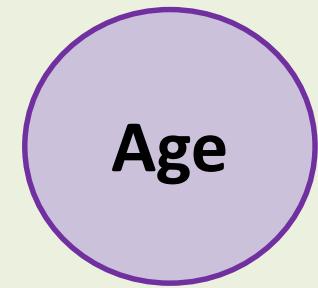
Disability



Dependents



Community
background



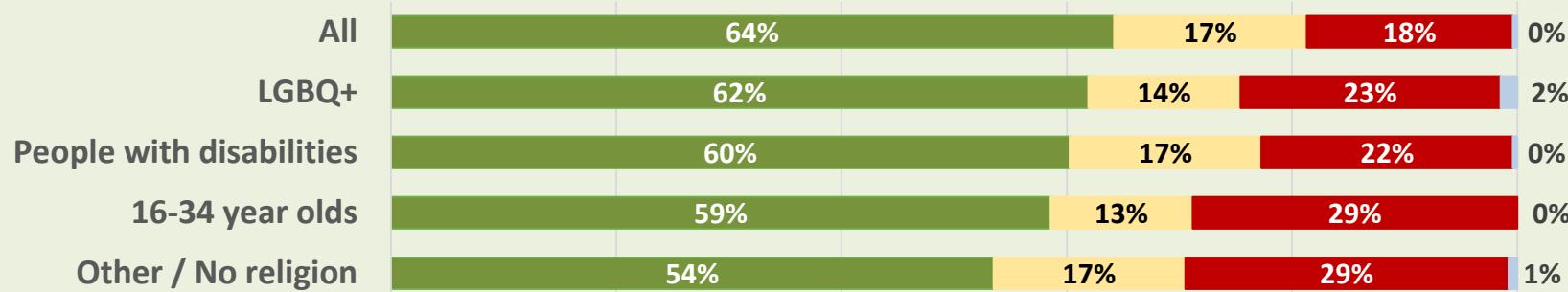
Age

A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

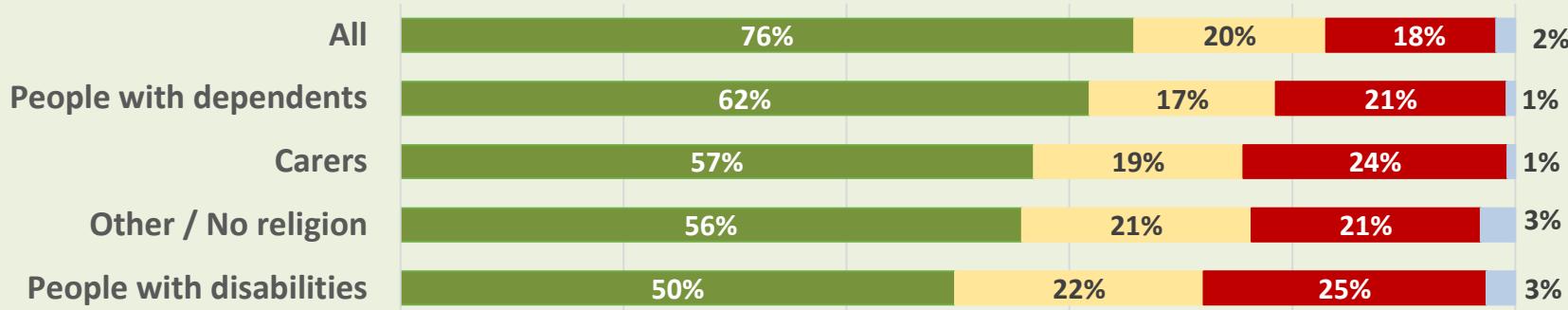
Which values diversity?

Employee Characteristics

I work in a diverse workplace



My workplace is 'family friendly'



0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

■ Agree ■ Neither Agree
or Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Don't Know

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Equality Commission

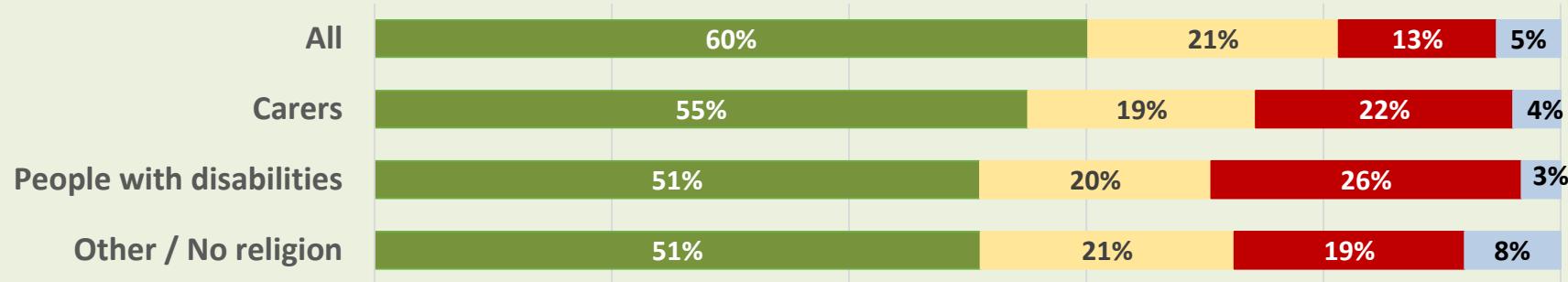
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A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

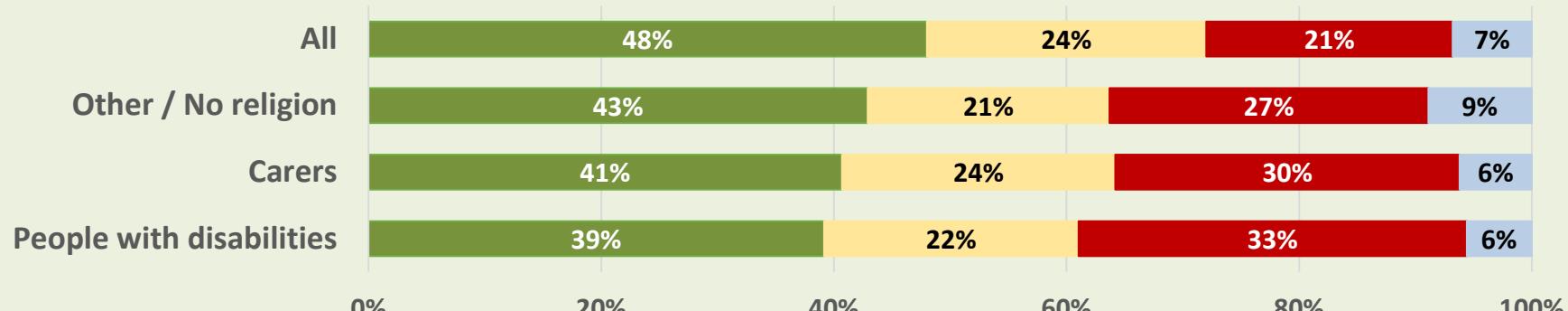
Which values diversity?

Employee Characteristics

My workplace seeks to support employees with disabilities



My workplace supports employees with mental ill health



0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

■ Agree ■ Neither Agree... ■ Disagree ■ Don't Know

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Equality Commission

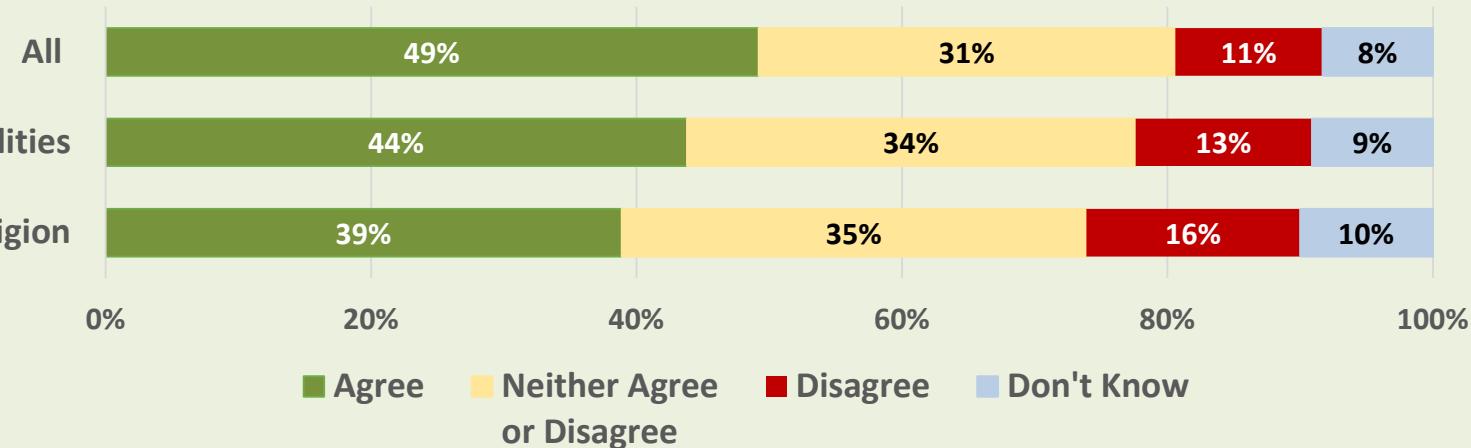
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A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

Which values diversity?

Employee Characteristics

My workplace seeks to accommodate employees from different cultures



Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

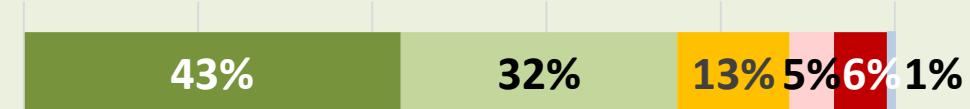
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A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

Which is respectful and supportive

I feel welcomed and supported by my line manager regardless of my individual identity (n=3555)



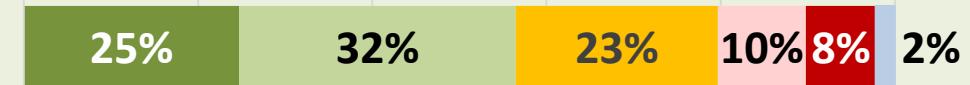
I feel welcomed and supported by my work colleagues regardless of my individual identity (n=3541)



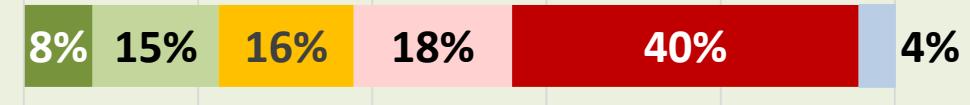
My workplace is welcoming and inclusive (n=3552)



I think that my workplace respects individual identity (n=3543)



The atmosphere in my workplace sometimes makes me feel uncomfortable due to my identity or that of another work colleague or friend (n=3556)



Agree

Tend to Agree

Neither Agree or Disagree

Tend to Disagree
or Disagree

Disagree

Don't Know

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

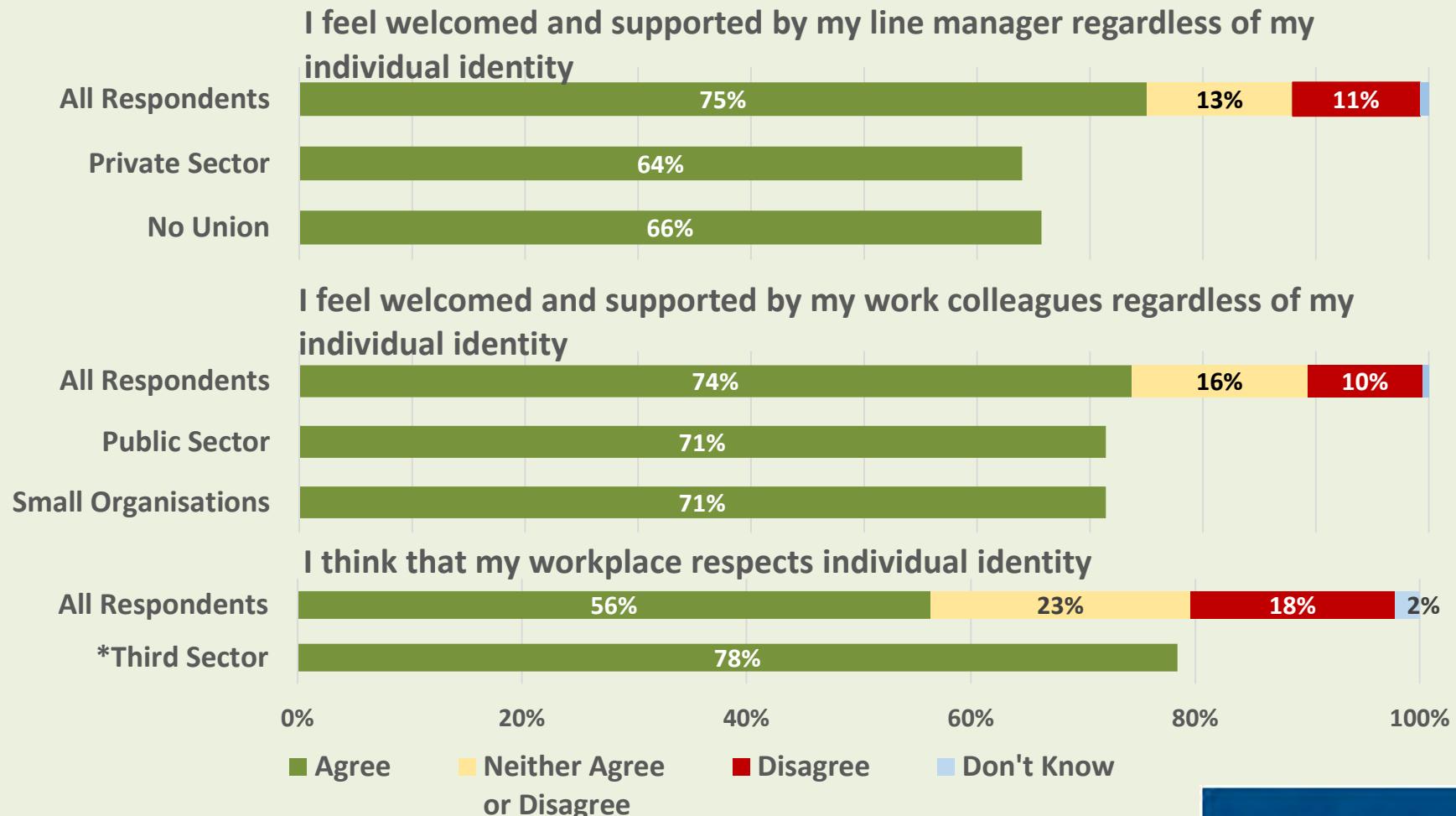
Equality Commission

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A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

Which is respectful and supportive?

Employer characteristics



*A charity or voluntary sector organisation or social enterprise

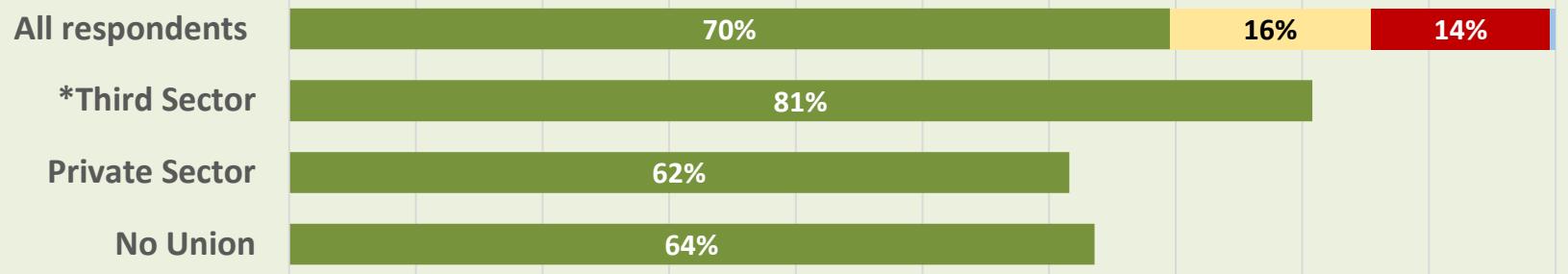
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A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

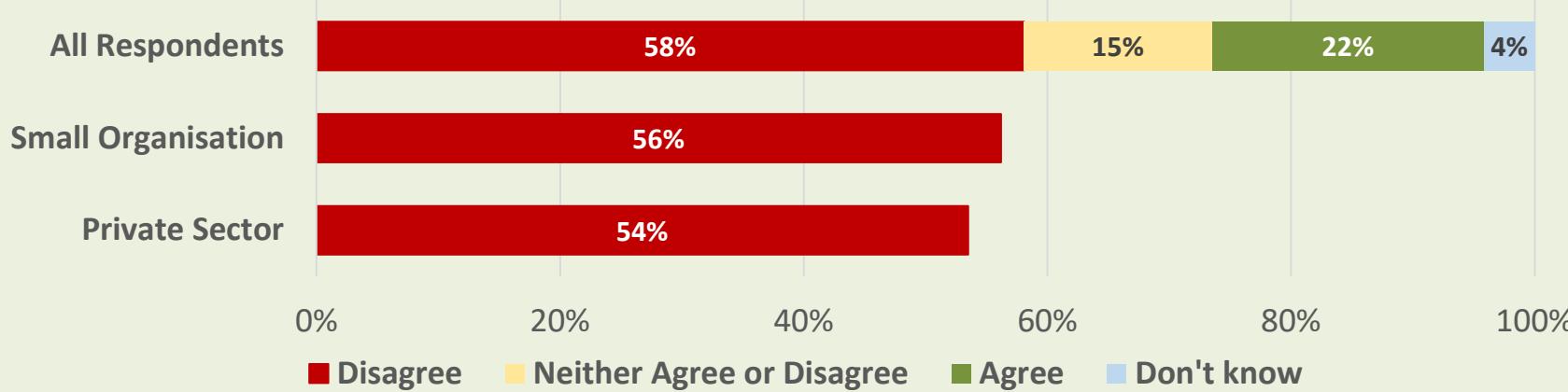
Which is respectful and supportive?

Employer Characteristics

My Workplace is Welcoming and Inclusive



The atmosphere in my workplace sometimes makes me feel uncomfortable due to my identity or that of another work colleague or friend



*A charity or voluntary sector organisation or social enterprise

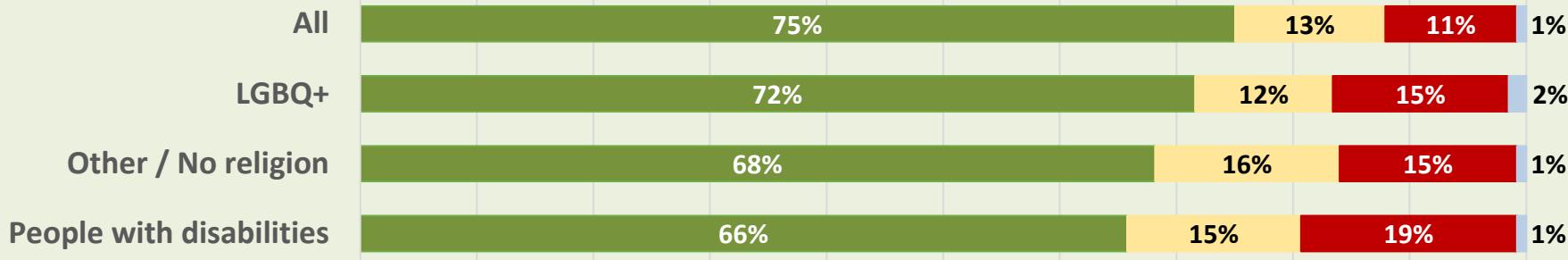
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A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

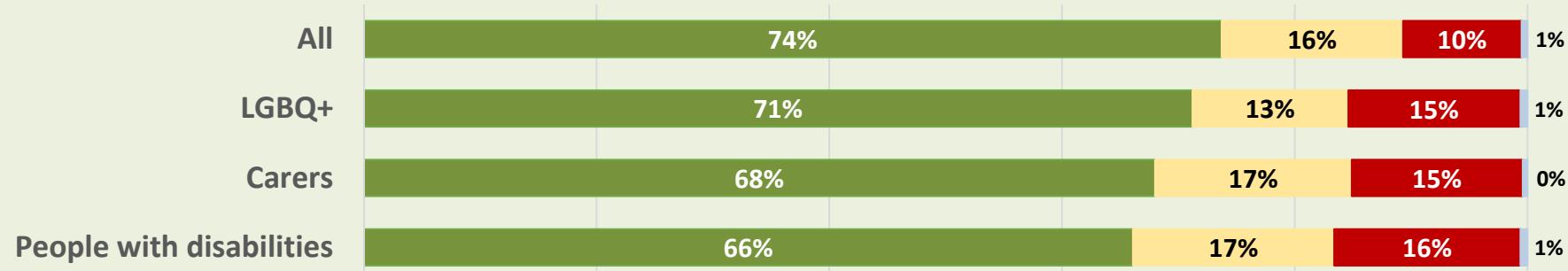
Which is respectful and supportive?

Employee Characteristics

I feel welcomed and supported by my line manager regardless of my individual identity



I feel welcomed and supported by my work colleagues regardless of my individual identity



0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

Agree

Neither Agree
or Disagree

Disagree

Don't Know

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Equality Commission

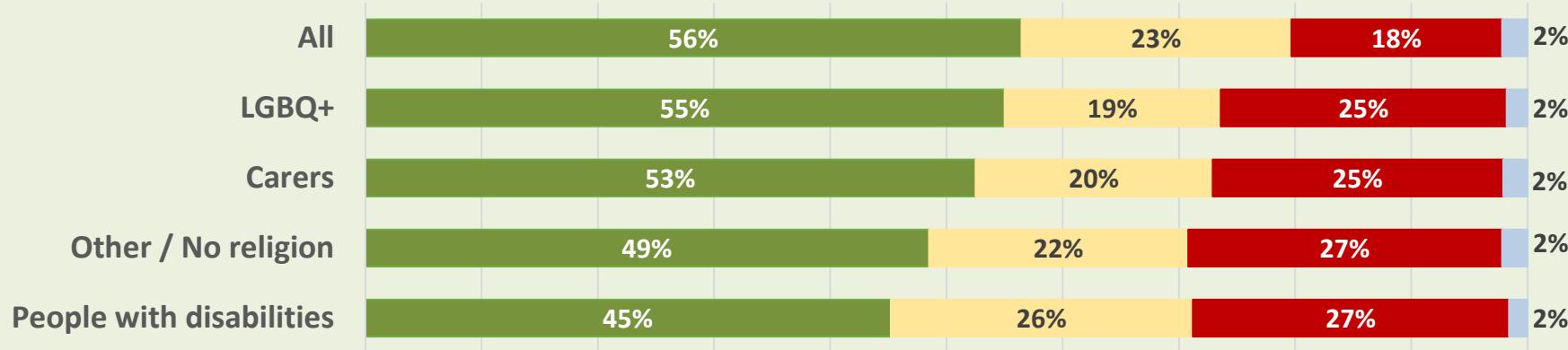
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A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

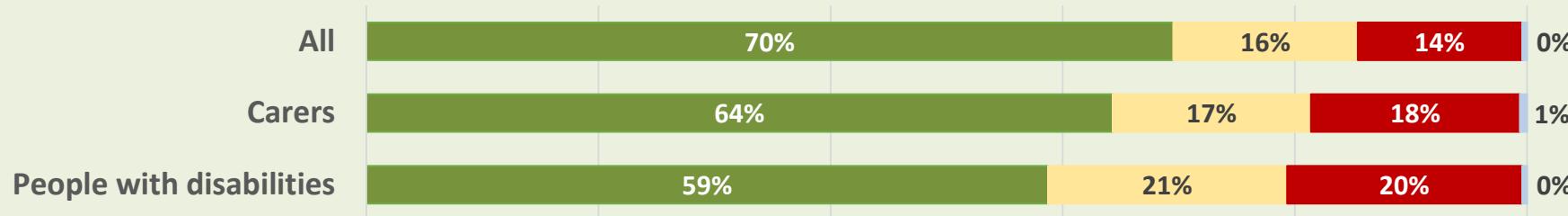
Which is respectful and supportive?

Employee Characteristics

I think that my workplace respects individual identity



My workplace is welcoming and inclusive



0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

■ Agree ■ Neither Agree ■ Disagree ■ Don't Know
or Disagree

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Equality Commission

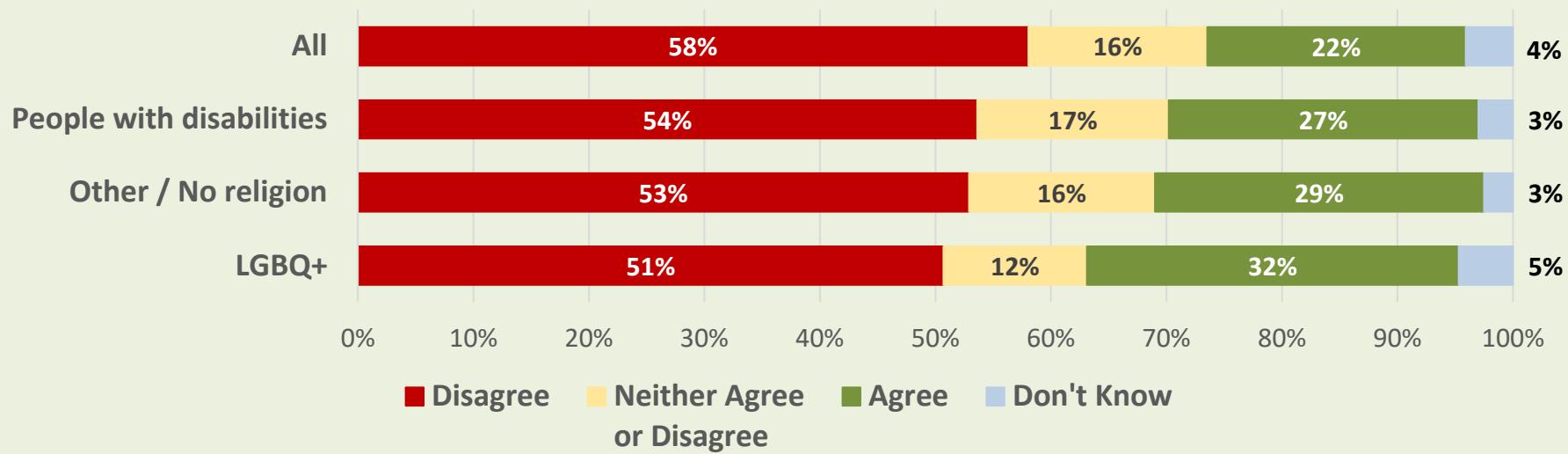
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A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

Which is respectful and supportive?

Employee Characteristics

The atmosphere in my workplace sometimes makes me feel uncomfortable due to my identity or that of another work colleague or friend

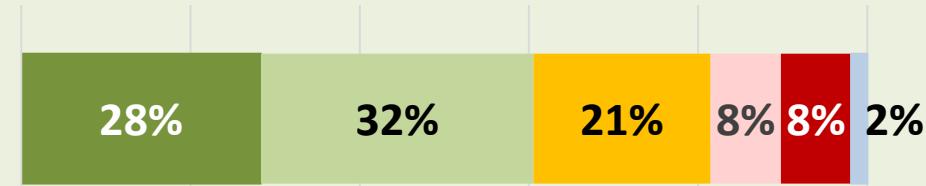


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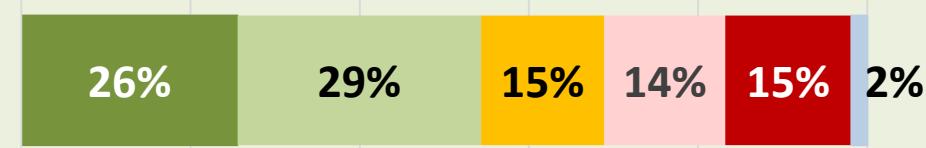
A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

Which is consistent in its treatment and actions?

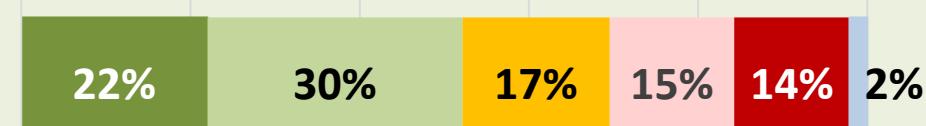
I believe the actions of my organisation are consistent with an inclusive workplace
(n=3551)



Staff in my workplace are treated in a consistent way in line with workplace policies (n=3553)



I feel able to challenge unwanted behaviour in the workplace (n=3550)



■ Agree ■ Tend to Agree ■ Neither Agree or Disagree ■ Tend to Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Don't Know

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

Which is consistent in its treatment and actions?

Employer Characteristics



A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

Which is consistent in its treatment and actions?

Employee Characteristics



Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Equality Commission

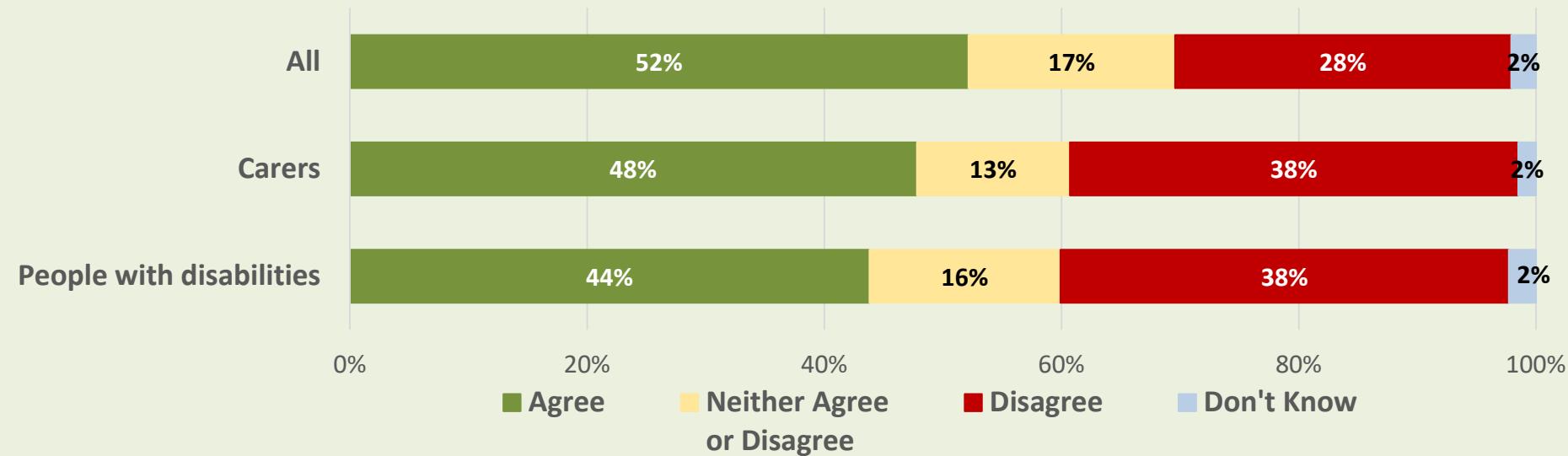
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

Which is consistent in its treatment and actions?

Employee Characteristics

I feel able to challenge unwanted behaviour in the workplace



Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

The majority of employees felt their workplace, overall, was welcoming and inclusive, however...

1 in 4

- I feel able to challenge unwanted behaviour.
- Staff in my workplace are treated in a consistent way in line with workplace policies.

Disagree

1 in 5

- My workplace is “family friendly”.
- My workplace supports people with mental ill health
- The atmosphere in my workplace is comfortable
- My workplace is diverse
- My workplace respects individual identity

A Welcoming and Inclusive Workplace?

The majority of employees felt their workplace, overall, was welcoming and inclusive, however...



Carers, People with disabilities, LGBTQ+ people and people of Other / No Religion were less likely to agree / more likely to disagree that their workplace, overall, was welcoming and inclusive



Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

Who personally experienced unwanted behaviours?

The grounds employees experienced unwanted behaviours

Dealing with and resolving unwanted behaviours

Why employees who had experienced unwanted behaviours did not raise the issue at all?

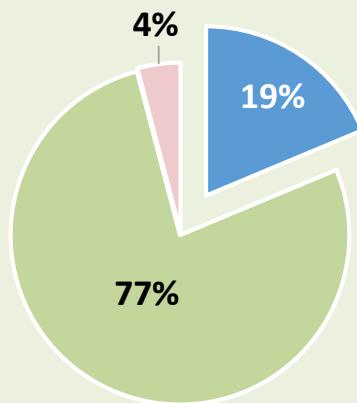
Who witnessed unwanted behaviours towards others in the workplace?

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

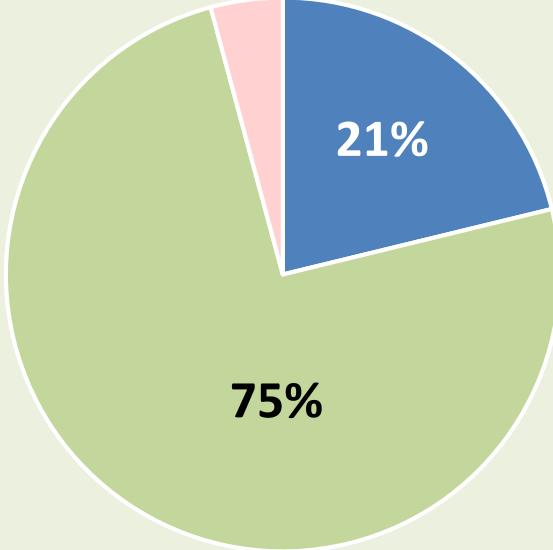
Who personally experienced unwanted behaviours?

Over 1 in 5 employees personally experienced unwanted behaviours, during the past 12 months[^]

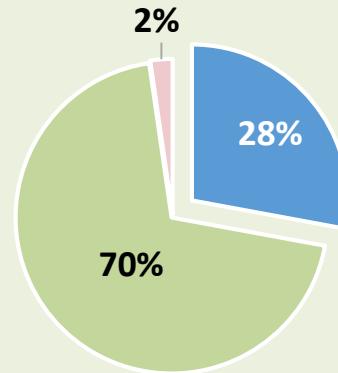
Medium-size Organisations (n=781)



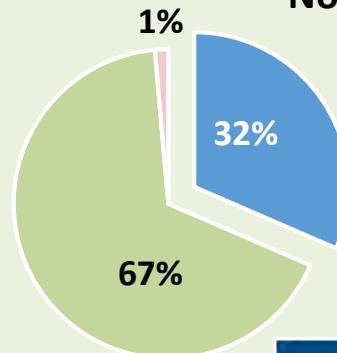
All Respondents (n=3546)



Private Sector (n=86)



No Union (n=143)



[^]because of your sex, age, race, religious belief, political opinion, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status or status as a parent or carer

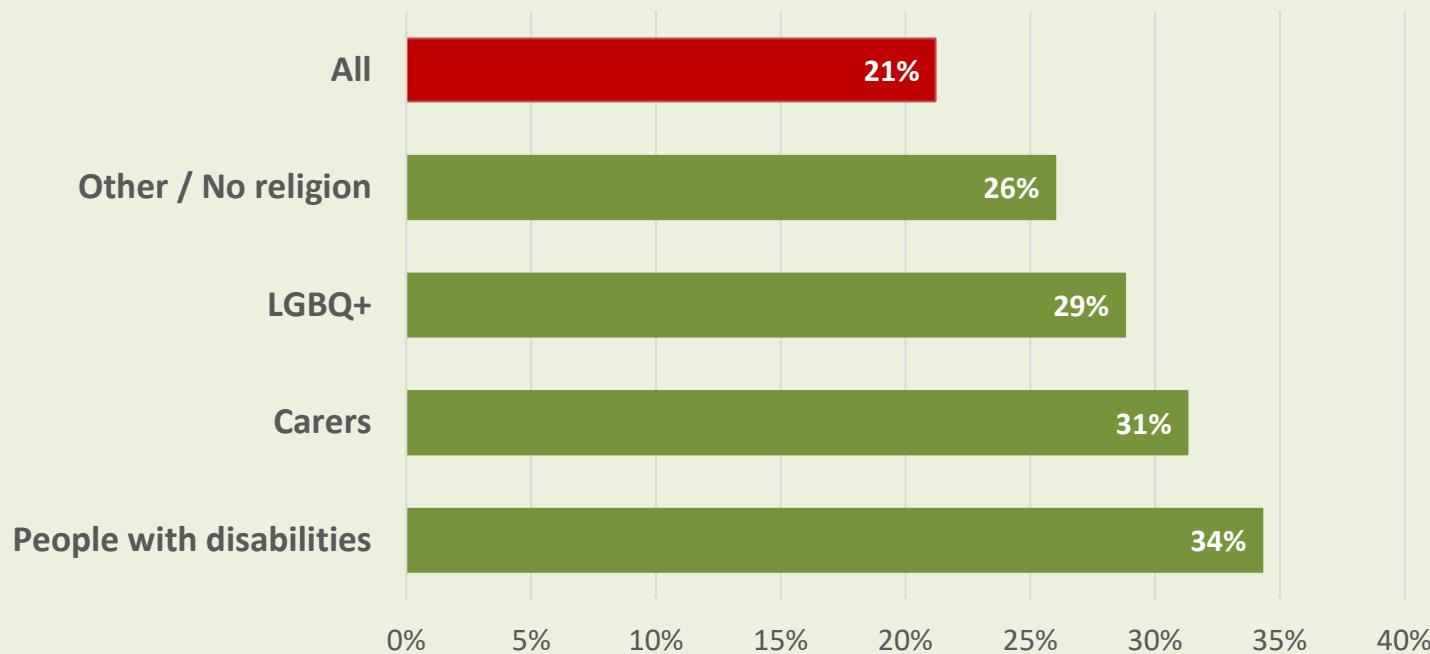
Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

Who personally experienced unwanted behaviours?

Employee Characteristics: Over 1 in 3 people with disabilities personally experienced unwanted behaviours, during the past twelve months[^]

All Respondents (n=3546)

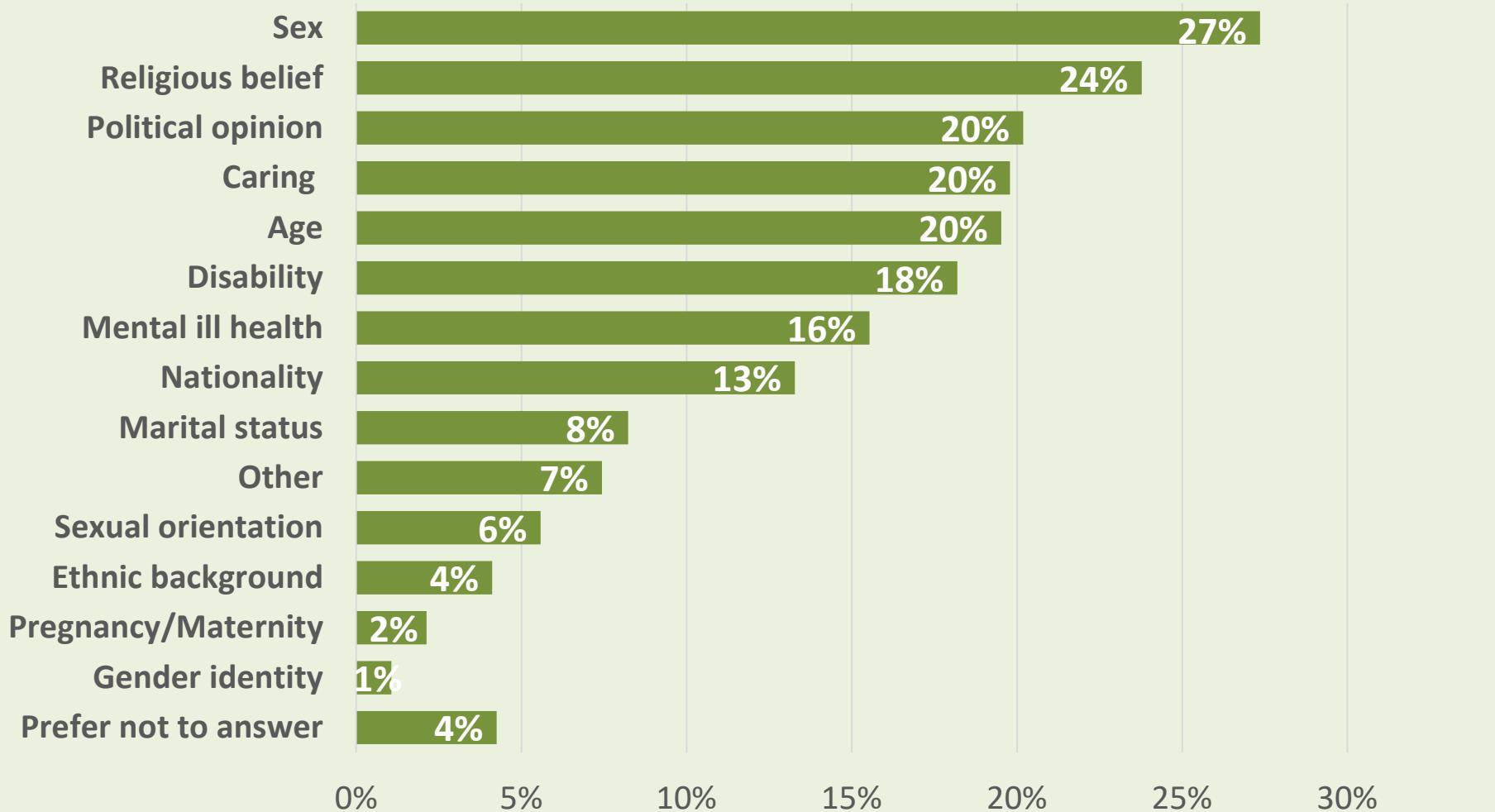


[^]because of your sex, age, race, religious belief, political opinion, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status or status as a parent or carer

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

The grounds employees experienced unwanted behaviours (n=753)

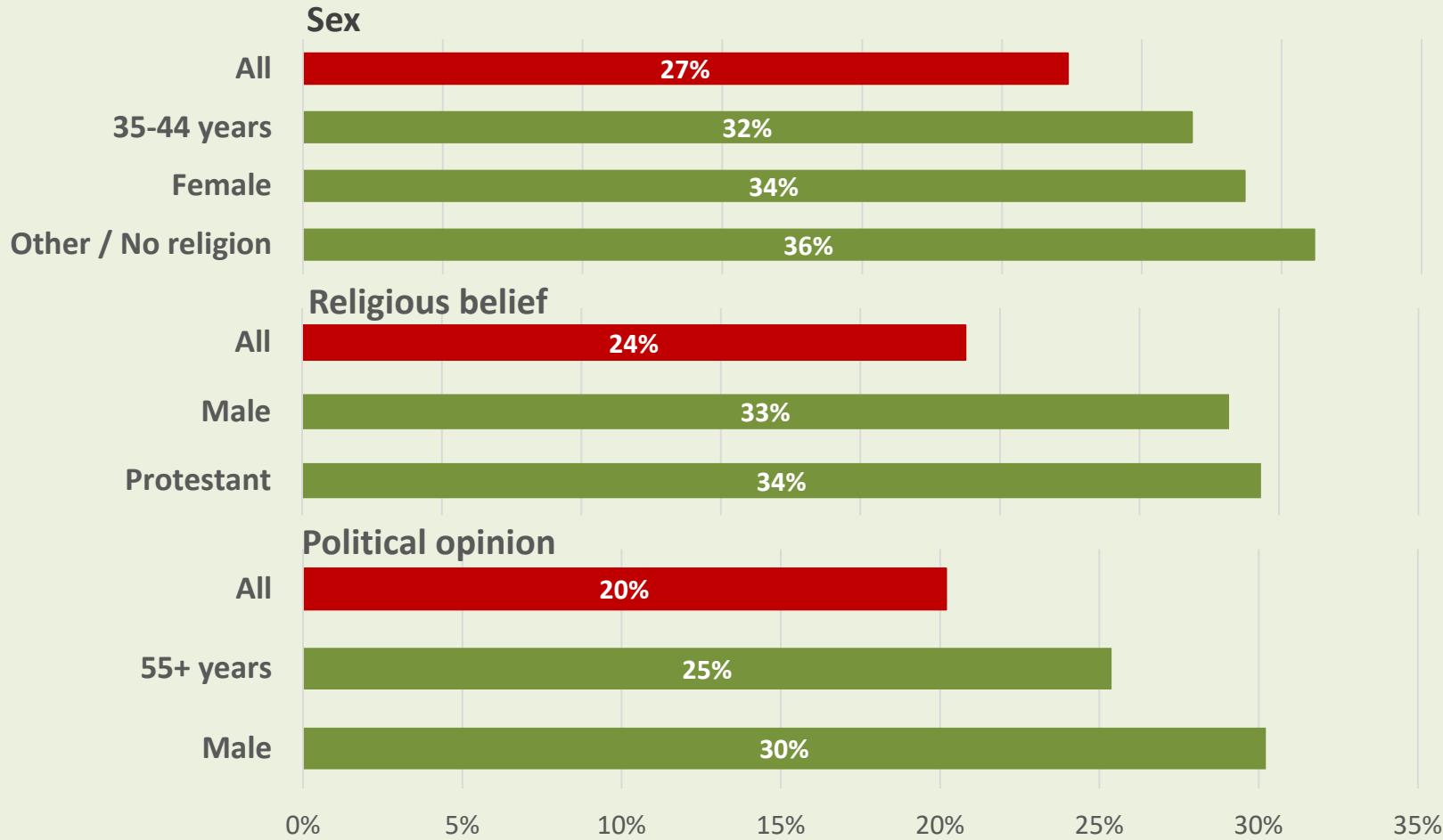


Multiple response question: Percentages do not add to 100%

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

The grounds employees experienced unwanted behaviours (n=753)

Employee Characteristics: The grounds employees experienced unwanted behaviour on by the characteristic of the employee.



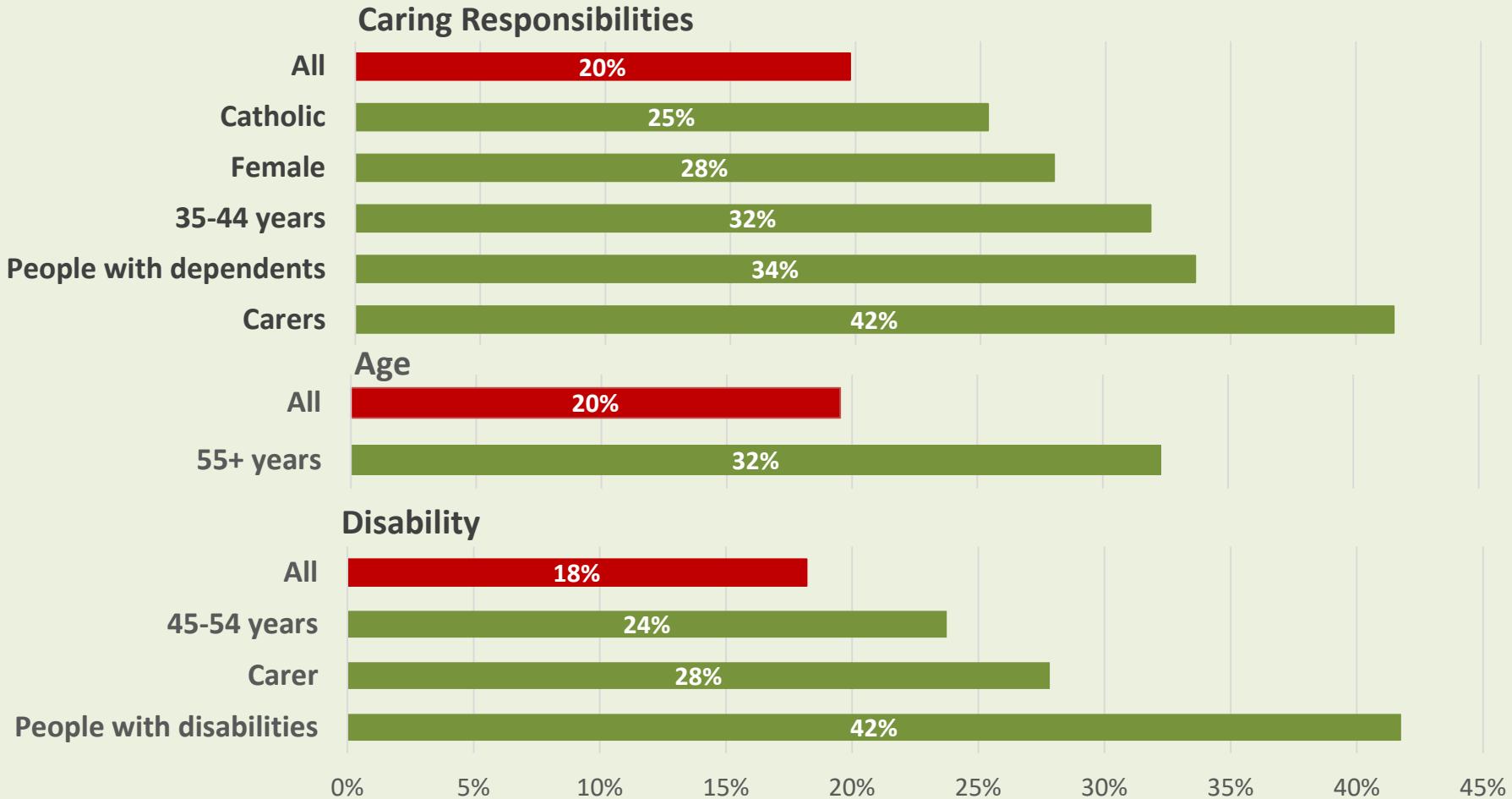
Multiple response question: Percentages do not add to 100%

Some grounds could not be further analysed due to low sample size

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

The grounds employees experienced unwanted behaviours (n=753)

Employee Characteristics: The grounds employees experienced unwanted behaviour on by the characteristic of the employee.



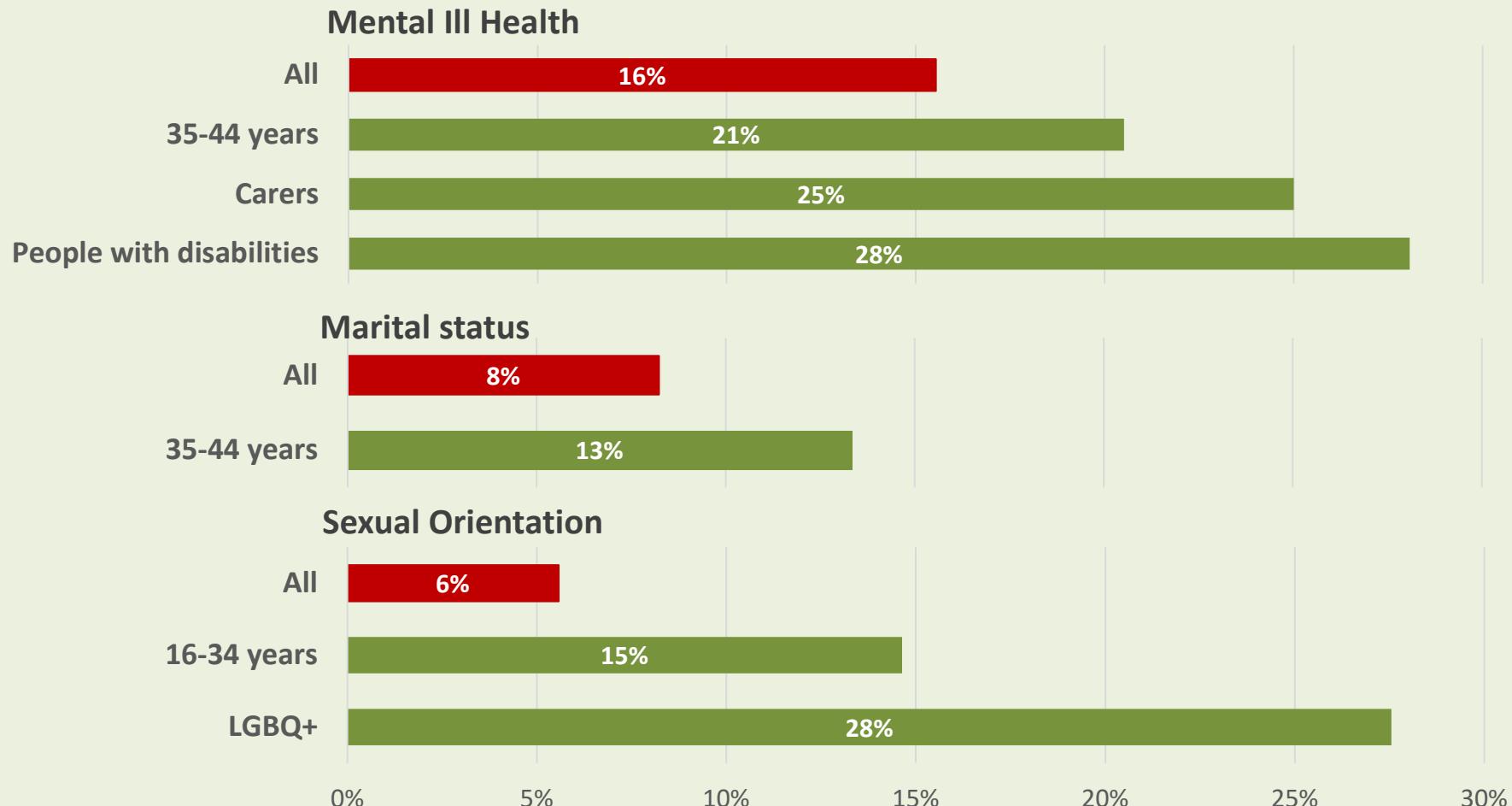
Multiple response question: Percentages do not add to 100%

Some grounds could not be further analysed due to low sample size

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

The grounds employees experienced unwanted behaviours (n=753)

Employee Characteristics: The grounds employees experienced unwanted behaviour on by the characteristic of the employee.

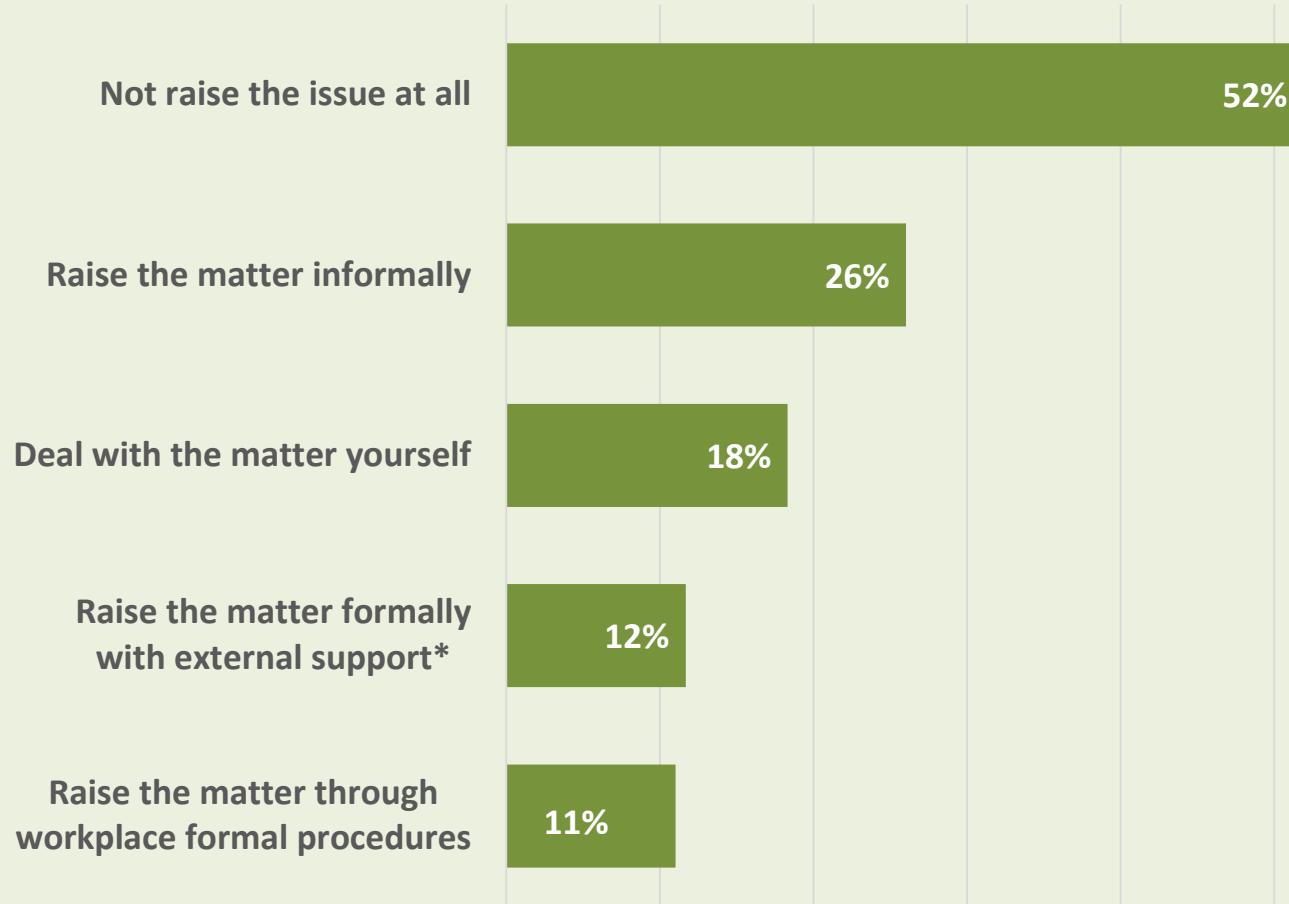


Multiple response question: Percentages do not add to 100%
Some grounds could not be further analysed due to low sample size

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

Dealing with and resolving unwanted behaviours

What did these employees do about it?... (n=753)



Multiple response question: Percentages do not add to 100%

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

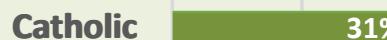
Dealing with and resolving unwanted behaviours

Employee Characteristics: What did these employees do about it?... (n=753)

Not raise the issue at all



Raise the issue informally



People with disabilities



Carers



Deal with the matter yourself



Raise the matter formally with external support*



Raise the matter through workplace formal procedures



People with disabilities



0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70%

Multiple response question: Percentages do not add to 100%

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

Examples of reasons why employees who had experienced unwanted behaviours did 'not raise the issue at all'.



(*n=391 respondents; n=208 responses)

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

Why employees who had experienced unwanted behaviours did ‘not raise the issue at all’?

Employees who had personal experienced unwanted behaviours, but who did ‘not raise the issue at all’, were asked to explain why they did not raise the issue.

Most frequently given examples of reasons for not raising the issue related to the following:

- **Management:** Management practices discouraged employees (n=162) from raising the issue
- **Fear:** Fear of victimisation discouraged employees (n=62) from raising the issue
- **Prejudice, Stigma and Bias:** Employees (n=44) felt that prejudice, stigma and bias was a reason for not raising the issue

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

Why employees who had experienced unwanted behaviours did 'not raise the issue at all'?

Management: Examples from employees (n=162 responses) of management practices which discouraged them from raising the issue

EFFECTIVENESS

"No confidence in my management or in my organisation either accepting or understanding the issues, or dealing with them"

Male, Public sector

"Management have ignored issues raised previously."

Male, Private sector

LEADERSHIP

"Nothing would be done since its endorsed by senior management"

Female, Public sector



POWER & HIERARCHY

"Was at a high level so felt unable to raise this. Most likely result would have been losing my job."

Female, Private sector

"There was no point as management close ranks to protect each other."

Female, Public sector

SUPPORT

"no expectation of support"

Male, Public sector

"I did not feel I would be supported by line management"

Female, Public sector

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

Why employees who had experienced unwanted behaviours did 'not raise the issue at all'?

Fear: Examples from employees (n=62) of fear of victimisation which discouraged them from raising the issue

SITUATION WOULD GET WORSE

"Afraid it would exacerbate the situation leading to (me) being ostracized in the organisation"
Male, Public Sector

LOSS OF JOB

"Fear of being sacked"
Female, Private Sector



BEING LABELLED

"would only make things worse, would get stigmatised."
Male, Public Sector

RETRIBUTION

*"Fear of being targeted.
Fear of being side lined."*
Male, Public Sector

EXCLUSION

"Issue wouldn't have been dealt with properly and I would have been excluded by colleagues for raising the issue"
Female, Public Sector

CONSEQUENCES

"Taking up the issue could result in negative consequences for me."
Female, Public Sector

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

Why employees who had experienced unwanted behaviours did 'not raise the issue at all'?

Prejudice, Stigma and Bias: Examples from employees (n=44) who felt that prejudice, stigma or bias was a reason for not raising the issue

SUBTLE BIAS

"The political and religious bias is of a subtle and silent nature. Impossible to state to line manager that someone "doesn't speak to you"; but, the inference is obvious as to why."

Male, Public Sector

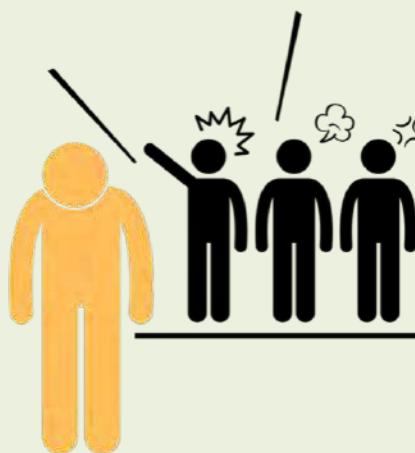
BIAS WORKS BOTH WAYS

"Sexist jokes towards males aren't counted"

Male, Public Sector

"As a person from the Protestant background complaints will not be taken seriously and more than likely result in me being accused of bigotry."

Male, Public Sector



SOCIETAL PREJUDICE

"Much of the population in Northern Ireland is prejudiced against LGBT people, and it is my experience that even employers who wish to create an LGBT friendly environment where their staff is broadly representative of the NI population cannot resist the flow of sentiment coming from so many prejudiced people in the population"

Male, Public Sector

WORKPLACE BIAS

"Discrimination against those with caring responsibilities is an inherent issue with [my organisation]."

Female, Public Sector

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

Why employees who had experienced unwanted behaviours did 'not raise the issue at all'?

Other Themes: Examples of other reasons given by employees for not raising the issue of unwanted behaviour

DEALING WITH IT

(n=21 responses)

"Whilst the conduct was unwanted, it was not causing me enough trouble to warrant raising the matter and escalating the issue. However, now when certain political issues are raised I simply say that I'm not willing to discuss the matter in the workplace and this has somewhat helped reduce the tension that was building."

Male, charity / voluntary sector

UNCOMFORTABLE

(n=12 responses)

"I feel like I am in the minority with my religious beliefs so don't feel comfortable approaching the matter."

Female, Private sector

NO POINT

(n=20 responses)

"Thought there was no point, could lead to further difficulties."

Female, Public sector

DIDN'T WANT TO CAUSE TROUBLE

(n=16 responses)

"Didn't want to aggravate the issue."

Male, Public sector

TOO MUCH TROUBLE

(n=10 responses)

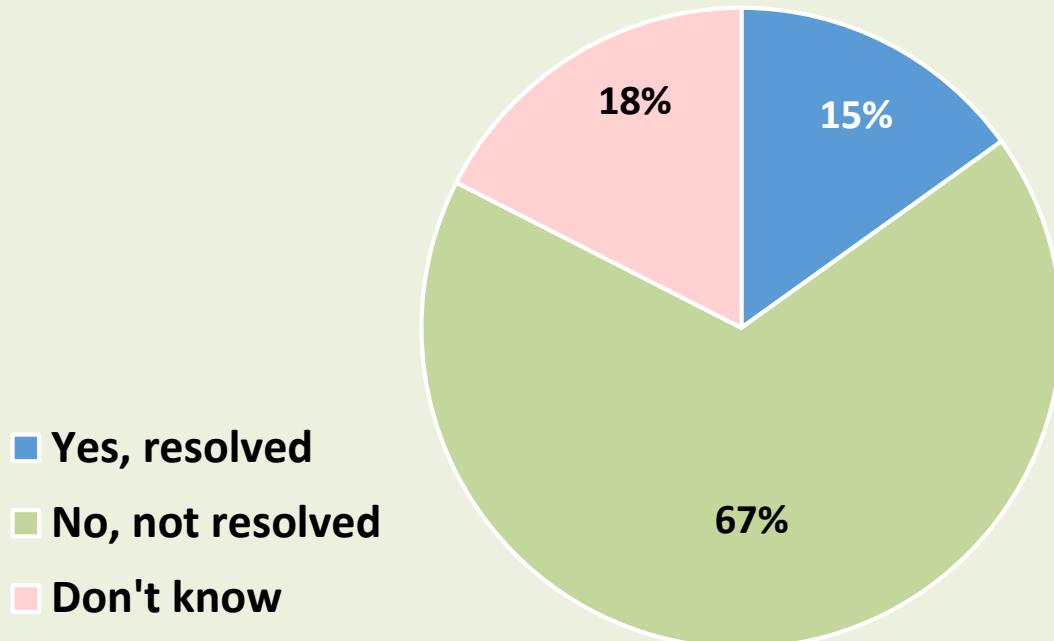
"Don't want the hassle, just want to get on with my job."

Female, Public sector

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

Dealing with and resolving unwanted behaviours

Is the issue resolved for these employees?... (n=730)



Multiple response question: Percentages do not add to 100%

Equality Commission

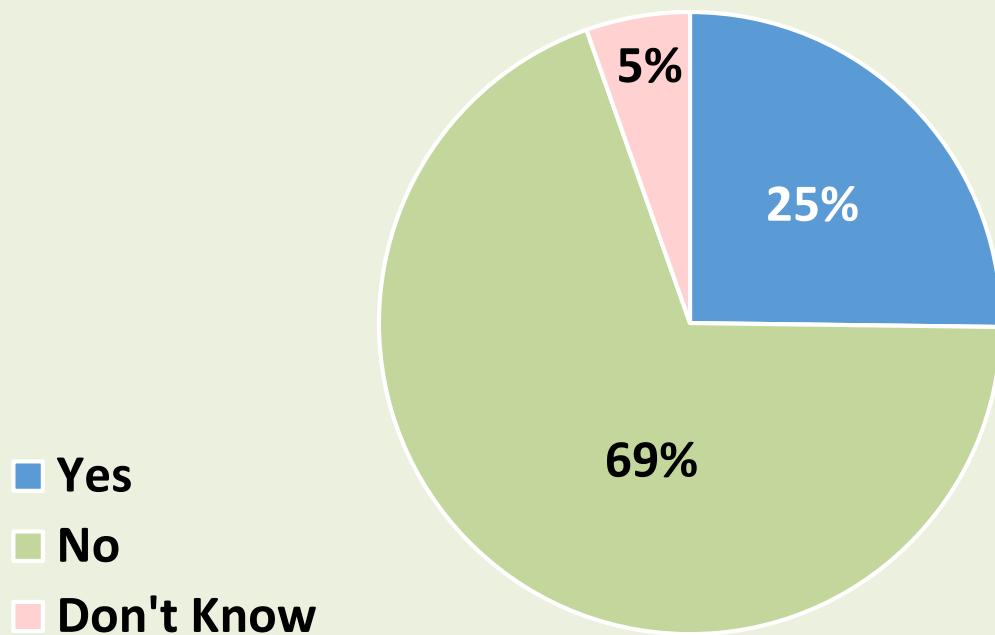
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

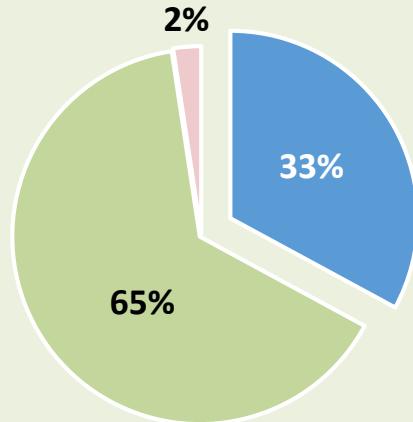
Who witnessed unwanted behaviours towards others in the workplace?

1 in 4 employees have witnessed unwanted behaviours, during the past 12 months[^]

All Respondents (n=3505)



Private Sector (n=85)

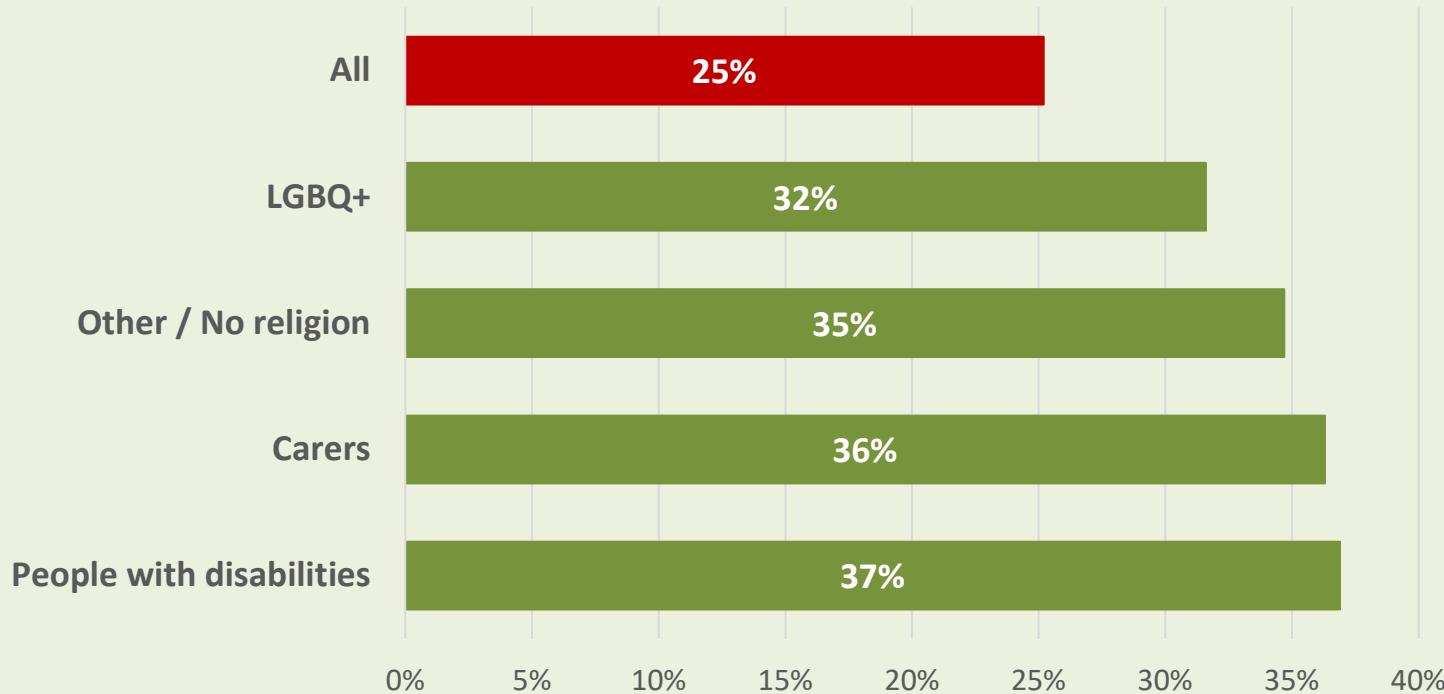


[^]because of sex, age, race, religious belief, political opinion, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status or status as a parent or carer

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Experience of Unwanted Behaviours in the Workplace

Employee Characteristics: Who witnessed unwanted behaviours towards others in the workplace?



^{^because of sex, age, race, religious belief, political opinion, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status or status as a parent or carer}

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Positive Experiences in the Workplace: Examples of where an employee's employer, manager or work colleague did something that helped make their workplace a better place for them

Preventing Unwanted Behaviour: Examples, provided by employees, of changes that could be made to employees' workplaces to prevent unwanted behaviour

Promoting Welcoming and Inclusive Workplaces: Examples, provided by employees, of something government or other organisation could do to help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Positive Experiences in the Workplace

Examples of where an employee's employer, manager or work colleague did something that helped make their workplace a better place for them*



*All respondents = 3098; responses = 1591; 712 participants answered 'no' when asked if they had had any particularly positive experiences in the workplace in the last three years.

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Positive Experiences in the Workplace

Employees were asked 'In the last three years have you experienced any particularly positive experiences where an employer, a manager or work colleague did something that helped make the workplace a better place for you?'

Most frequently given examples related to the following:

- **Support:** Employees said that *supportive managers and/or colleagues* contributed to a positive experience in the workplace (n=364 responses)
- **Flexible Working:** Employees said that access to *flexible working arrangements* contributed to a positive experience in the workplace (n=137 responses)
- **Flexibility:** Employees said that a *flexible approach* contributed to a positive experience in the workplace (n=74 responses)
- **Workplace Initiatives:** Employees said that *workplace initiatives* contributed to a positive experience in the workplace (n=71 responses)
- **Empathy:** Employees said that *manager / employer empathy* contributed to a positive experience in the workplace (n=71 responses).
- **Reasonable Adjustments:** Employees said that *implementing reasonable adjustments* contributed to a positive experience in the workplace (n=68 responses)

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Positive Experiences in the Workplace

Support: Examples from employees (n=364 responses) who said that supportive managers and/or colleagues contributed to a positive experience in the workplace.

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

"I have 2 children under 3. My manager has been very flexible in relation to my work life balance which has allowed me to be a better father, but still achieve the targets required by the organisation."

Male, Public Sector

PRACTICAL SUPPORT

"Two computer screens to ease the complexity of work and emails."

Female, Public Sector

DISABILITY SUPPORT

"Took time to understand and ask me about my disability, which made it easier for me explain what I needed rather than hide it to try and fit in with people without a disability"

Female, Public Sector



GENERALLY SUPPORTIVE

"My manager is really supportive with a human approach which I am grateful for."

Male, Charity / Voluntary Sector

CRISIS SUPPORT

"Supportive when family members ill or during a bereavement"

Female, Public Sector

SUPPORT FOR CARING

"Agreed for me to work flexibly around attending hospital appointments with a family member who is undergoing cancer treatment. This was and still is of invaluable help to me."

Female, Private Sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Positive Experiences in the Workplace

Flexible Working: Examples from employees (n=137 responses) who said that access to flexible working arrangements contributed to a positive experience in the workplace.

"Compress my hours to spend more time with my daughter"
Male, Public Sector

"My line manager is very accommodating of the fact that it is easier for me to work from home sometimes so improve work life balance with disabled daughter"
Female, Public Sector

..due to my circumstances I have been granted termtime over the last few years without this I dont believe I could afford to work due to child care costs."
Female, Public Sector

"Approval of E-working to provide better work/home life balance"
Female, Public Sector

"My Manager gave me a shorter working week."
Female, Private Sector



(They).. "Offer Flexible Working (Part time hours and increased lunch break to 1 hour so we can attend the local gym as a group)"
Female, Private Sector

..change of location to suit my work needs and a change of working duties to aid care of my family."
Male, Public Sector

"My workplace is very accommodating with regards to my part-time caring responsibilities to my young child."
Male, Public Sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

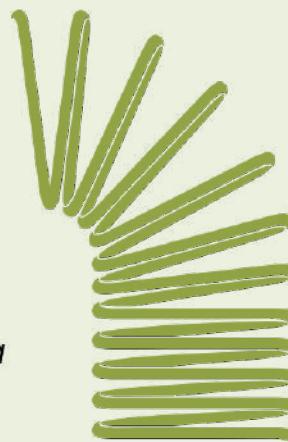
Positive Experiences in the Workplace

Flexibility: Examples from employees (n=74 responses) who said that a flexible approach contributed to a positive experience in the workplace.

"Being flexible not only when my child hasn't been well but also understanding my emotional need to attend the little things like sports days and school plays. very supportive workplace in this area."
Female, Charity/Voluntary Sector

"Agreed for me to work flexibly around attending hospital appointments with a family member who is undergoing cancer treatment. This was and still is of invaluable help to me."
Female, Private Sector

"Showing discretionary flexibility with work attendance following bereavement"
Male, Public Sector



"In a previous post my line manager helped me by being even more flexible with working hour patterns - contracted hours were always completed but a little extra flexibility used at her discretion."
Male, Public Sector

"My line manager allows flexibility which supports me in my role as a carer."
Female, Public Sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Positive Experiences in the Workplace

Workplace Initiatives: Examples from employees (n=71 responses) who said that workplace initiatives contributed to a positive experience in the workplace.

WELLBEING

"My employer has a Health & Wellbeing areaand have invested in training staff ..to become workplace mental health first aiders. There is also an Employee Assistance Program for all concerns relating to finance, legal, health etc. and there is a health and wellbeing champion within each office to promote healthier lifestyles."

Female, Private sector

EVENTS

"NICS LGBT Network was set up and NICS marched at Pride"
Female, Public sector



SOCIAL

"encouraging people to leave their desks and providing somewhere for them to have a cup of tea or lunch is a crucial part of positive working relationships."
Female, Public sector

CHAMPIONS

"The organisation has put in place a Diversity Champion infrastructure starting at the most senior level and has created champions for Gender, Sexual orientation, Ethnic background and Disability themes to actively promote diversity within the workplace."

Male, Public sector

INCLUSION

"deaf awareness seminars were held with deaf and/or hard of hearing staff involved in the planning and execution of the seminars."

Male, Public sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Positive Experiences in the Workplace

Empathy: Examples from employees (n=71 responses) who said that manager / employer empathy contributed to a positive experience in the workplace.

UNDERSTANDING

"My line manager at the moment also understands personal circumstances/situations which have occurred recently and has had quick chats about it with me which made me feel like he is supporting and helping me in work."

Male, Public Sector

"[My manager has] been understanding of personal issues."

Female, Public Sector

SYMPATHETIC

"Showed a caring and sympathetic side when I was going through a difficult period in my life."

Female, Public Sector



CARING/CONSIDERATE

"constant good advice and caring support from line managers."

Female, Public Sector

"My manager is open, concerned and supportive of me and the limitations of my disability."

Male, Public Sector

EMPATHIC

"Empathy and Understanding shown by my line manager when I was going through a difficult marital breakdown".

Male, Public Sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Positive Experiences in the Workplace

Reasonable Adjustments: Examples from employees (n=68 responses) who said that implementing reasonable adjustments contributed to a positive experience in the workplace.

SUPPORTIVE AND PROACTIVE

"Employer and line manager very supportive in terms of providing adequate facilities at main work base (for disability). Also facilitating work from home when required."

Female, Public sector

EQUIPMENT

"[My employer] helped me purchase best quality hearing aids available plus additional Bluetooth technology for smartphone and Laptop/TV"

Male, Public sector



ACCOMMODATING

"My manager is very good at accommodating my mental health issues and making reasonable adjustments."

Male, Public sector

OFFICE ENVIRONMENT

"I was allowed to change desks so that I could face the door and see people coming and going as I have hearing loss."

Female, Charity/voluntary sector

FLEXIBLE WORKING

"I have Schizophrenia and my employer and managers have been very supportive by talking in a non-judgemental way. They have also allowed me to take short notice days off when I have needed to because of my condition".

Female, Public sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Positive Experiences in the Workplace

Other Themes: Examples of other factors that contribute to a positive experience in the workplace.

HELPFUL

(n=53 responses)

"Support from colleagues, by sharing work.
[They]helped me settle back to work after
a period of illness."
Female, Public sector

PROMOTES WELL-BEING

(n=38 responses)

"I have been in my place of employment for many years and positive experiences have been staff communication through lunches together along with support to Charity Orgs [organisations] and a general interest in Staff's wellbeing. As work loads increase this is very important."

Female, Public sector

TRANSFER

(n=34 responses)

"[I was granted]A transfer to a post closer to home when an office closure would have made it very difficult to achieve a work/life balance."

Male, Public sector

TRUST AND RESPECT

(n=34 responses)

"My line manager treated me with respect and offered support during a period of illness."

Male, Public sector

BEING FRIENDLY

(n=36 responses)

"Colleagues all very friendly and stick together."

Female, Private sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Preventing Unwanted Behaviours

Examples, provided by employees, of changes that could be made to employees' workplaces to prevent unwanted behaviour*

COMMUNICATION

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

recruitment &
promotion

fair treatment

GREATER LEADERSHIP

TAKE ACTION

CHALLENGE UNWANTED BEHAVIOUR

balance equality

NOTHING
MORE TO
DO

IMPROVE POLICY

greater empathy

workplace initiatives

human resources

knowledge &
awareness

nothing will
change

greater monitoring

outdated
attitudes
other

ADDRESS WORKPLACE CONCERNs

Human qualities

openness

improve office
environment

TRAINING & EDUCATION

PROMOTE EQUALITY

TACKLE BIAS

*All respondents = 3,098; responses = 1482; "Don't know" responses = 49

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Preventing Unwanted Behaviours

Employees were asked ‘To give an example of changes that could be made to your workplace to prevent unwanted behaviours’

Most frequently given examples related to the following six actions:

- **Take Action:** Employees said that *employers taking action* could prevent unwanted behaviours in the workplace
- **Improve Policy:** Employees said that *improving workplace policy* could prevent unwanted behaviours in the workplace
- **Training and Education:** Employees said that *improved training and education* could prevent unwanted behaviours in the workplace
- **Effective Management:** Employees said that effective management could prevent unwanted behaviours in the workplace
- **Communication:** Employees said that better communication could prevent unwanted behaviours in the workplace
- **Promote Equality, Diversity & Inclusion:** Employees said that promoting equality, diversity and inclusion could prevent unwanted behaviours in the workplace

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Preventing Unwanted Behaviours

Take Action: Examples from employees (n=251 responses) who said that employers taking action could prevent unwanted behaviours in the workplace

SPEAK OUT

"people empowered to call it out / like whistleblowing"

Male, Public sector

PREVENTION

An explicitly stated commitment by management in support of equality and dignity in the workplace and proactively creating a welcoming environment; taking complaints seriously; ensuring fair and equal career progression"

Female, Public sector

MOVING PROBLEMS ON

"Problems' are often solved by simply moving people, avoiding the need to take action in accordance with policies."

Male, Public sector



DON'T BURY COMPLAINTS

"For my employer/organisation to address complaints fairly, transparently and appropriately instead of trying to shut down complaints.."

Female, Public sector

DISCIPLINE

"more meaningful action taken against people who demonstrate unwanted behaviours"

Female, Public sector

TACKLE BULLYING

"Clamp down on bullying instead of hiding head in the sand"

Male, Public sector

DEAL WITH IT!

"To confront the unwanted behaviour straight away and not let it lie."

Female, Private sector

ZERO TOLERANCE

"Zero tolerance policy"

Male, Public sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Preventing Unwanted Behaviours

Improve Policy: Examples from employees (n=198 responses) who said that improving workplace policy could prevent unwanted behaviours in the workplace.

DEVELOPMENT/REVIEW

"A clear policy whereby staff felt comfortable in reporting unacceptable behaviors and a clear policy whereby staff knew that poor attitudes by them would not be tolerated."

Male, Public Sector

FLEXIBLE WORKING

"Jobs being offered on a full time basis only. Senior jobs and flexible working regarded as incompatible."

Female, Private Sector

IMPLEMENTATION

"Better communication of policies"

Female, Private Sector



ADHERENCE

"[Management should]..follow proper policy and not make it up as you go along."

Male, Public Sector

FLEXIBILITY

"policies are applied too rigidly and/or inconsistently - employers are so afraid of getting things wrong that they get it wrong by acting without empathy or humanity."

Female, Public Sector

CONSISTENCY

"..treating everyone with fairness and equity and apply work place policies consistently"

Female, Public Sector

COMPLAINTS

"better investigations of complaints / every complaint is seen as a challenge rather than an opportunity to improve working environment"

Male, Public Sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Preventing Unwanted Behaviours

Training and Education: Examples from employees (n=167 responses) who said that improved training and education could prevent unwanted behaviours in the workplace

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

"Equality Training for all staff"
Female, Private Sector

DIGNITY & HARASSMENT

"More training in respecting people no matter what grade they may be in the organisation"
Female, Public Sector

DISABILITY

"Further training for managers and staff around disabilities. This area is the main one that I have seen where managers struggle to know what can be done in terms of reasonable adjustments."
Male, Public Sector

LEGISLATION

"More training and better understanding of the law"
Female, Private Sector



EDUCATION

"Educate staff more on a regular basis through online courses and face to face"
Male, Public Sector

GENERAL

"Clear policy and procedures and training for all staff, volunteers and managers."
Female, Charity/Voluntary Sector

MANAGEMENT

"Better trained management"
Male, Private Sector

AWARENESS

"Encourage line managers to lead by example and promote awareness training sessions to all staff"
Female, Public Sector

LEADERSHIP

"HR department / leadership training"
Male, Private Sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Preventing Unwanted Behaviours

Effective Management: Examples from employees (n=162 responses) who said that effective management could prevent unwanted behaviours in the workplace

TACKLE FAVOURITISM

"No favouritism, everyone should be treated equally."
Male, Public sector

CAPABILITY

"There are individual managers that have very poor people management skills and breed an environment where staff feel undervalued and not appreciated."

Female, Public sector

MANAGER BEHAVIOUR

"more support from senior management regarding unwanted behaviours, including their own."

Male, Public sector

HUMAN RESOURCES

"Better support and quicker responses from HR"
Female, Private sector



APPROACHABLE

"To have approachable management"
Female, Public sector

SUPPORTIVE

"Positive leadership / support from senior management...."
Male, Private Sector

CONSISTENCY

"Consistency with managing staff is also missing as some staff are treated very differently to others."
Female, Public sector

REMOTE MANAGEMENT

"Training for remote management. US management believe they don't need to comply to UK law."
Male, Private sector

STRONG

"I think managers need to be stronger and more confident when address(ing) inappropriate behaviour"
Male, Public sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Preventing Unwanted Behaviours

Communication: Examples from employees (n=139 responses) who said that better communication could prevent unwanted behaviours in the workplace.

CLARITY

"Clear statements about what constitutes unwanted behaviours."

Female, Public Sector

ADVERTISING

"Advisory emails, Signage in prominent areas"

Male, Public Sector

MORE GUIDANCE

"Formal policy and training for all staff on dignity, respect and discretion in all communications with staff including appropriate behaviours, particularly in relation to verbal opinions and communication in the workplace and for a work etiquette to be the norm."

Female, Public Sector

MEETINGS

"[To] have regular team meetings"

Female, Private Sector



REMINDERS

"I think if the message was reinforced regularly it would help"

Female, Public Sector

EXAMPLES

"Email reminders or training that incorporates actual 'real life examples'."

Male, Public Sector

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

"more recognition and more communication to explain why change within the workplace is necessary basically more engagement"

Male, Public Sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Preventing Unwanted Behaviours

Promote Equality, Diversity & Inclusion: Examples from employees (n=132 responses) who said that promoting equality, diversity and inclusion could prevent unwanted behaviours in the workplace.

PROMOTE INCLUSION

"Just a sense where everyone, even those not particularly in the in-crowd, is included and accepted for who they are; zero tolerance policy to exclusion/isolating of colleagues who are a little different."

Female, Public Sector

CHILL FACTORS:

SPORT

"Reduce or ban discussions about sport which reflect only one community standpoint."

Male, Public Sector

PROMOTE EQUALITY

"Transparency and greater appreciation of diversity and equality."

Female, Public Sector



PROMOTE DIVERSITY

"Highlighting other cultures religious festivals"

Male, Private Sector

"More women and other people from minority communities in management roles would be good."

Female, Private Sector

CHILL FACTORS:

POLITICS/RELIGION

"Reiterate politics & religion are not appropriate topics for discussion in work."

Female, Public Sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Preventing Unwanted Behaviours

Other Themes: Examples of other changes that could prevent unwanted behaviours in the workplace

NOTHING MORE TO DO

(n=103 responses)

"There are no unwanted behaviours in my workplace."

Female, Private sector

"I feel that all is being done that can be done to avoid unwanted behaviours"

Male, Charity / voluntary sector

GREATER LEADERSHIP

(n=84 responses)

"We know we have the support of our teams and head office to help eradicate any unwanted behaviours should they arise"

Female, Private sector

"Leadership by example and challenging behaviours."

Male, Public sector

CHALLENGE UNWANTED BEHAVIOURS

(n=101 responses)

"A culture of challenging 'banter' that can frequently be sexist and on occasion homophobic."

Female, Public Sector

TACKLE DISCRIMINATION & BIAS

(n=93 responses)

"Tackling a culture of 'casual racism'. I often hear comment regarding people from traveller or eastern European cultures and this often goes unchallenged (perhaps this is because these are not visible minorities it is not considered racist)."

Male, Public sector

"Religion seen as a barrier for me. Possibly hired as a token minority. They need to stop this."

Female, Private sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Promoting Welcoming and Inclusive Workplaces

Examples, provided by employees, of something government or other organisations, including the Equality Commission, could do to help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces*



*All respondents = 3,098; responses = 1351; “Don’t know” responses = 197;
“No” / “Not Applicable” responses = 54

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Promoting Welcoming and Inclusive Workplaces

Employees were asked ‘To give an example of something government or other organisations, including the Equality Commission, could do to help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces’

The most frequently given examples related to the following five actions:

- **Support:** Employees said that support from government/other organisations could help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces
- **Training:** Employees said that training from government/other organisations could help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces
- **Policy:** Employees said that developing and/or improving policy and procedures could do to help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces
- **Recruitment & Promotion:** Employees said that action on recruitment and promotion from government/other organisations could help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces
- **Increase awareness:** Employees said that increasing awareness by government/other organisations could help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Promoting Welcoming and Inclusive Workplaces

Support: Examples from employees (n=222 responses) who said that support from government/other organisations could do to help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces.

ENGAGE WITH EMPLOYEES

"Listen to the staff on the ground and react to other surveys findings."

Male, Public sector

DISABILITY

"Better understanding of reasonable adjustments and how people with disabilities really need that bit extra support from work. My organisation's policy directly discriminates against me and my reasonable adjustment on file is being ignored. I must go through my working life with warning after warning because I have a lifelong disease."

Female, Public Sector

DEDICATED OFFICER

""Equality champions."

Male, Public Sector

CARERS

"More support for parents and carers"

Female, Public Sector



VICTIM SUPPORT

""Better support for individual who is being subjected to discrimination/harrassment."

Female, Public Sector

MENTAL HEALTH

"Better support for employees suffering from mental health issues."

Male, Public Sector

ASSIST STAFF TO REPORT

"Taking fear out of reporting issues. People are scared of losing jobs and believing they are incapable of finding another job."

Female, Private Sector

MANAGEMENT

"Take action against those managers who are clearly in the wrong."

Male, Public Sector

INFRASTRUCTURE

"Make sure that the right things are in place such as auto door opening for physically disabled people."

Female, Public Sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Promoting Welcoming and Inclusive Workplaces

Training: Examples from employees (n=215 responses) who said that training from government /other organisations could do to help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

"Personally, I would love to see training offered to companies like mine in regards to equality training for inclusive [work]places"

Female, Private Sector

UNWANTED BEHAVIOUR

"More mandatory staff training on what constitutes inappropriate behaviour"

Male, Public Sector

EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

"Ensure all managers and staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities surrounding the issues."

Male, Public Sector

DISABILITY

"Mandatory training around disability discrimination in particular."

Male, Public Sector



AWARENESS

"More courses promoting awareness of issues."

Male, Public Sector

WORKSHOPS & SEMINARS

"seminars, workshops, media."

Female, Private Sector

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

"Invest more in training senior managers how to deal with staff with dignity and respect."

Female, Public Sector

"People skills should be taught to all managers."

Female, Private sector

GENERAL TRAINING

"Offer more direct training or resources to employers."

Female, Public Sector

GOOD PRACTICE

"Best practice stories, training, raise awareness, support managers"

Female, Public Sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Promoting Welcoming and Inclusive Workplaces

Policy: Examples from employees (n=118 responses) who said that developing and/or improving policy and procedures could do to help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces.

IMPLEMENTATION

"EC [Equality Commission] should examine practices within the workplace to see if they are carried out in a fair manner. Many Depts [in my organisation] operate differently however all have same policy"

Male, Public sector

[Provide] examples and templates to help make the process easy for employers to implement"

Female, Charity/voluntary sector



ENFORCEMENT

"insist that policies re behaviour in the workplace are adhered to and adopt a zero tolerance when they are not"

Male, Public sector

FLEXIBLE WORKING

"Promote as positive and desirable the role flexible working can play in achieving work/life balance and business objectives, rather than there being a tacit assumption that flexible working patterns are a problem to be accommodated."

Male, Public sector

"Be more open/flexible to parent/carers taking time off work or having the facility to work from home ."

Female, Charity/voluntary sector

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

"increased paternity leave/pay to a par with maternity leave".

Female, Public sector

"A proper policy on disabled people"

Male, Public Sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Promoting Welcoming and Inclusive Workplaces

Recruitment & Promotion: Examples from employees (n=106 responses) who said that action on recruitment and promotion from government/other organisations could do to help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces.

DIVERSITY

"Promote employment of people from BME [black and minority ethnic] communities"

Female, Charity/voluntary sector

"Employing more [people] with disabilities and learning difficulties and be seen to be doing so"

Male, Public sector

RECRUITMENT

"A more equal recruitment strategy particularly at management level."

Male, Public sector

INDUCTION

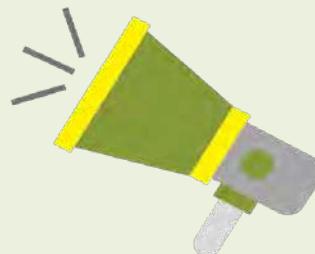
"Induction packs, social inclusion (buddy system)."

Male, Public sector

PART-TIME OPPORTUNITIES

"Stop inequality against part workers by ensuring promotion opportunities for them also not just full time staff"

Female, Public sector



AGENCY STAFF

"offering agency staff permanent positions following a successful probation period"

Female, Public sector

PROMOTION

"More laws surrounding promoting people into senior positions without advertisements."

Female, Private sector

CENTRALISATION

"Stop putting all the jobs in the city, people with disabilities, with caring responsibilities and with family duties are fantastic members or staff however are automatically excluded from promotion."

Female, Public sector

POSITIVE ACTION

"Provide more paid employment to more people with a disability / learning disability"

Female, Charity/voluntary sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Promoting Welcoming and Inclusive Workplaces

Increase awareness: Examples from employees (n=102 responses)

who said that increasing awareness by government/other organisations could help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces.

"More awareness of less known disabilities such as ADHD and ASD. I have seen multiple times individuals with symptoms of ASD being called weird, excluded and their condition not being considered. I myself have diagnosed ADHD and have found a limited understanding of how this affects me in the work place."
Female, Public sector

"Maintain information and education to highlight that welcoming and inclusive workplaces should be the norm"
Male, Public sector

"Start in schools by giving the tools to make people more respectful."
Male, Public sector



"Make people aware, get into the workplace and give people advice etc."
Male, Public sector

"Raise awareness of actions, both verbal and physical, that may cause offence or hurt to others of a different background"
Female, Public sector

"Better promote and celebrate good practice examples. Be proactive."
Male, Public sector

"Maybe more understanding/information about the cultures in NI"
Female, Public sector

"Help promote good relations, provide easy pathways to solve any grievances"
Female, Public sector

Creating A Positive Workplace Experience

Promoting Welcoming and Inclusive Workplaces

Other Themes: Examples of other actions that government/other organisations could do to help promote welcoming and inclusive workplaces

MONITORING & COMPLIANCE

(n=80 responses)

"Promote and apply standards (such as BS76005) for Diversity and Inclusion and promote and publish good practice across the full spectrum."

Male, Private sector

"Enforce equality legislation. Demand that all employers make recruitment, buildings, work conditions accessible, particularly for those with disabilities"

Female, Charity / voluntary sector

ADVERTISING

(n=44 responses)

"Provide more online resources so that employees could access them."

Female, Private sector

INVESTIGATIONS & SANCTIONS

(n=36 responses)

"More proactive powers of investigation and sanction."

Male, Public sector

PROMOTE EQUALITY

(n=76 responses)

"Promote the value of citizen diversity, different cultures and personal differences and acceptance."

Female, Public sector

"Emphasise the rights of ALL minorities and ALL majorities. Rights are not a zero sum game."

Male, Public sector

BALANCE EQUALITY

(n=36 responses)

"Balance is required now. Equality - not over zealous discrimination in favour of minorities."

Female, Charity / voluntary sector

INFORMATION GATHERING

**Methodology
Reporting**

Methodology & Reporting

Methodology

- The Commission undertook **two information gathering exercises**, asking employers and employees to complete either an employer-focused or an employee-focused online survey.
- The information gathering exercises used snowball or referral sampling methodologies, whereby respondents self-selected whether to respond to the exercise.
- The information gathering exercises took place between 29 November 2018 and 1 March 2019.
- **The findings are not representative for either all employers or employees, or any disaggregation of employers and employees, in Northern Ireland and no inferences can be made from the findings**

Reporting

- All findings presented within this report are based on simple noteworthy differences from the responses made by all respondents; no statistical methodologies or significance testing was used for this report.
- Where practical, counts are presented. These will vary due to non-response by respondents to certain questions.
- Some cross-tabulations may not be presented due to small sample size.
- The findings are based on a self-selecting group of respondents who offered their experiences of the workplace to help the Commission gather evidence to support the development of further advice and guidance for employers to improve practices across a range of equality grounds



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