



European
Commission



*SURVEY ON DIVERSITY,
INCLUSION AND RESPECT
AT THE WORKPLACE*
REPORT OF THE RESULTS

COMMISSIONERS' FOREWORD

Our vision for a diverse and inclusive workplace is one where everyone feels a sense of belonging and is supported in reaching their full potential.

Following the announcement in the 2020-2025 anti-racism action plan, and for the first time, the European Commission and the European External Action Service have collected data on **diversity, inclusion and respect at the workplace** through a dedicated survey.

The survey covered **all categories of staff and all grounds of discrimination** that the EU actively fights: sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. While participation in the survey was voluntary, we are delighted that 10,199 staff responded (22% of those contacted). We hope that in future surveys we will have even higher participation, so that the results reflect the views of even more of our staff.

We thank all participants. Your replies will help us make the Commission and the European External Action Service, better and more inclusive workplaces. The results presented in this report give us a solid evidence base for developing future policies.

Various messages emerge from the survey. Many aspects of diversity and

inclusion are **generally positively assessed**, such as gender balance in management and inclusion of LGBTIQ colleagues.

At the same time, the survey shows that there are areas where we should improve. We are determined to **act on the findings of this survey** by implementing policies and actions, notably in the context of the Commission's new human resources strategy. Specifically, we will look into improving our attractiveness as an employer for people from an ethnic minority background and we will foster support and services to our colleagues with a disability or those caring for a family member with a disability. We will work actively with all colleagues and in particular with managers, who play a critical role in fostering an inclusive work culture in teams. There will also be a new anti-harassment framework for the Commission with emphasis on prevention that will further promote respect and inclusiveness in the workplace.

We are committed to evaluating the impact of our actions through future surveys in order to measure progress towards our goals and further promote a fair, diverse and inspiring work culture for all.

Josep Borrell Fontelles

High Representative of the Union
for Foreign Affairs and Security
Policy/Vice-President of the
European Commission

Johannes Hahn

Commissioner for Budget and
Administration

Helena Dalli

Commissioner for Equality

SUMMARY FINDINGS

This survey is part of our efforts to build a Union of Equality, starting with our own institutions. Accordingly, in all its equality strategies¹, the Commission has committed itself as an employer to lead by example and to support diversity and inclusion at work.

This survey aims to measure the existing diversity among the workforce, to evaluate the respondents' perceptions of inclusion and respect at workplace and to collect data to steer evidence-based policies. This report focuses on the findings of the diversity and inclusion sections of the survey and mentions main results of the respect at the workplace section, which are detailed in a dedicated report in annex.

The survey was sent to staff of the Commission, executive agencies and European External Action Service on 10 March 2021 and was open until 31 March 2021. There was a 22% response rate (more than 10,000 respondents). Staff members working in delegations are counted as EEAS respondents in this report. Locally employed staff were however not consulted for this survey.

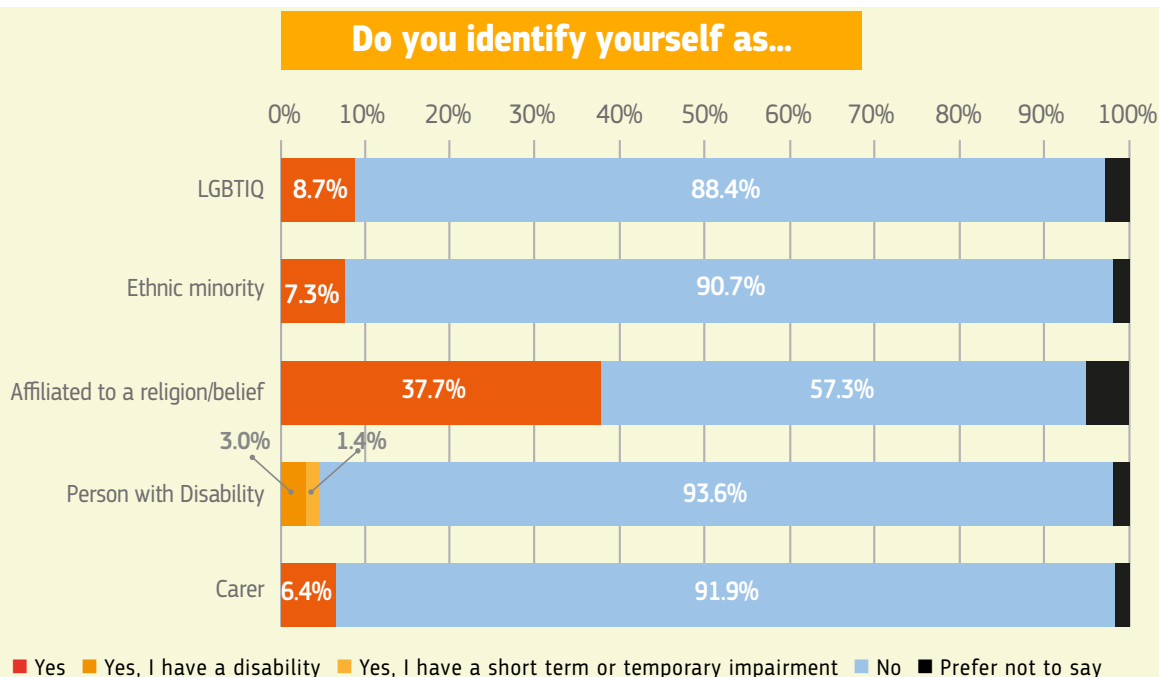
Based on comparison with existing staff data (for example on age, gender, employment status or seniority) the demographic characteristics of the respondents are broadly in line with those of all staff.

However, it is important to note from the outset that although significant, a 22% response rate does not allow for conclusions to be drawn for all staff. It does nonetheless allow a clear picture of the 10,000 people who responded and this will help guide future policies.

For the first time, we have a **documented vision of the self-declared diversity among our staff**:

- **37.7%** of respondents declared a religious affiliation;
- **8.7%** of respondents declared themselves to be LGBTIQ;
- **7.3%** declared themselves to be from an ethnic minority background;
- **6.4%** said they cared for a dependent with a disability; and
- **4.4%** said they had a disability.

We cannot extrapolate to say that these percentages hold for all staff. Nor can we compare directly with figures on the diversity of the EU population as there are no complete and fully comparable equality data at EU level. This report will therefore not present benchmarking figures to compare the diversity of the respondents with society as a whole.



¹ [Gender equality strategy 2020-2025](#), [EU anti-racism action plan 2020-2025](#), [EU strategic framework for Roma equality, inclusion and participation 2020-2030](#), [EU LGBTIQ equality strategy 2020-2025](#), [EU strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities 2021-2030](#) and [EU strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life \(2021-2030\)](#)

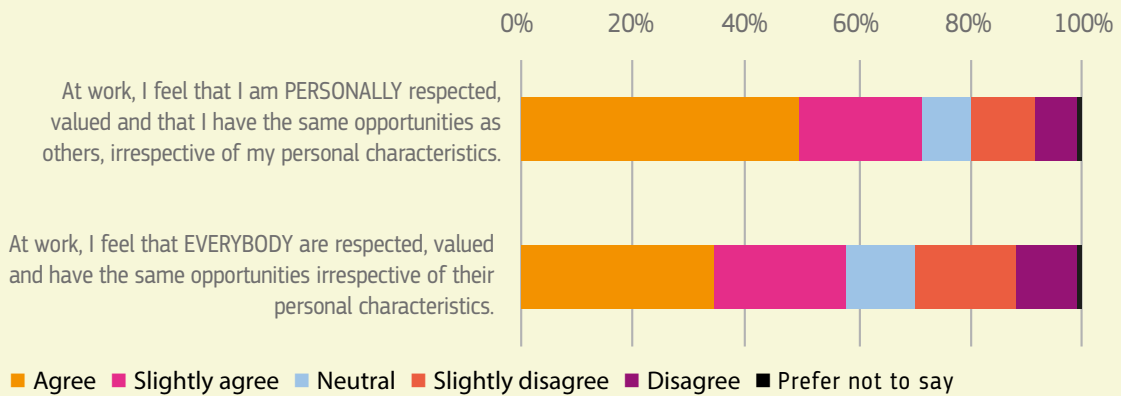
² 5,784 respondents from the Commission replied to questions on respect at workplace – 14% response rate.

A POSITIVE GENERAL PERCEPTION...

The **feeling of inclusion is high overall**, with 72% of respondents saying that they feel 'personally respected, valued and have the same opportunities as others, irrespective of personal characteristics' at work. This

positive result is **however tempered by the respondents from some groups**, in particular those from an ethnic minority background or with a disability (respectively 60% and 56%).

Feeling of inclusion at work

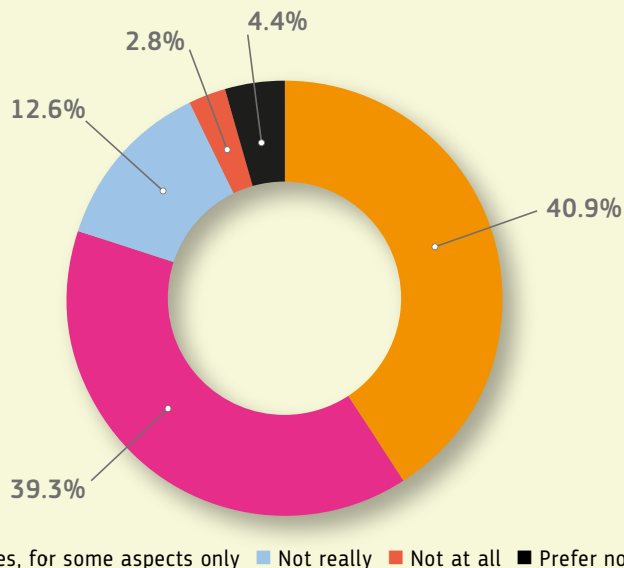


Interestingly, even if respondents feel positively valued and recognised themselves, their **perception of the fair treatment of others is less positive**: a smaller majority (58%) feels that 'everybody is respected, valued and have the same opportunities as others, irrespective of personal characteristics.' This drops further, **falling below the average for respondents from an ethnic minority background and those with a disability** (47% and 44%).

The overall perception of diversity and inclusion in the Commission, EEAS and executive agencies is positive: **80% of respondents would recommend their organisation** (either totally or partially) as an employer of choice regarding diversity.

Moreover, most respondents consider their management 'committed to an inclusive and equal treatment of all staff members' (60% positive perception).

Would you recommend your organisation as an employer of choice regarding diversity and inclusion?

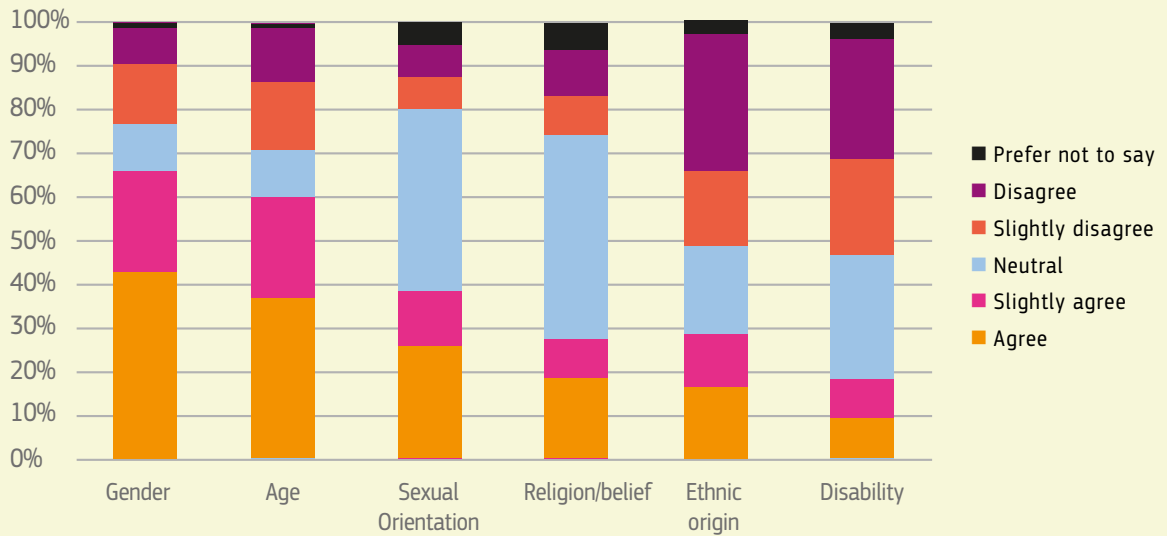


... THAT SHOULD NOT HIDE DIVERGENCES

However, this should not mask a **varied perception of different aspects of diversity**. Less than half of all respondents think that

their organisation is diverse in terms of disability or ethnic origin.

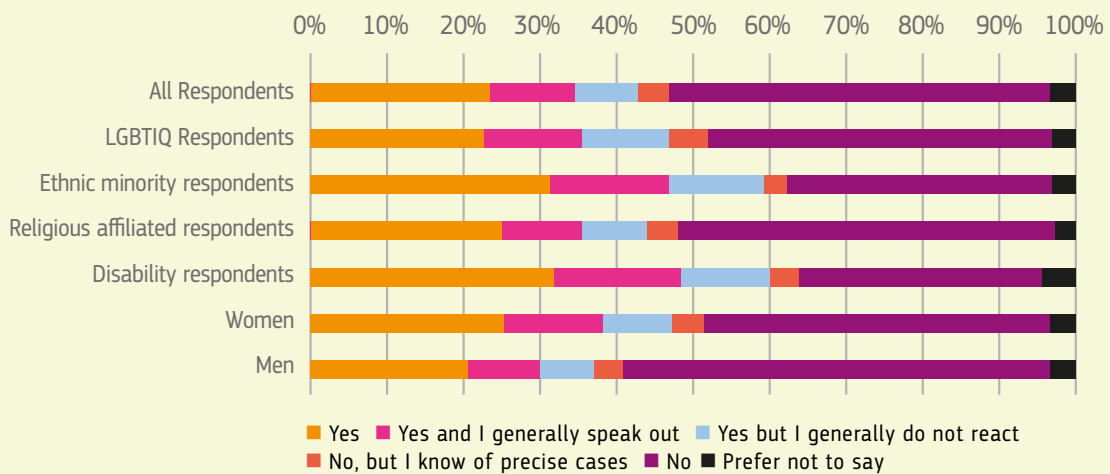
I consider that my organisation is diverse in terms of...



Regarding the atmosphere at work, 'behaviours, remarks or decisions which made someone (including yourself) feel discriminated or unequally treated' are reported by many

respondents: **43% have directly observed or experienced such attitudes** in the last 5 years.

In the last 5 years, have you observed behaviours, remarks or decisions which made someone (including yourself) feel discriminated or unequally treated at work?



This is more prominent among some groups of respondents: +1.2 percentage points for respondents with a religious affiliation, +4.1 pp for women, +6.0 pp for LGBTIQ respondents, +16.3 pp for respondents from ethnic minorities and +17.1 pp for respondents with a disability.

Perceptions based on personal characteristics may also impact colleagues' careers: 16% of respondents have refrained from 'applying to a job vacancy, a new project or some training because of one or more personal characteristics'. This number rises to 25% of respondents from an ethnic minority background and 40% of respondents with a disability.

Respondents are **aware of the diversity and inclusion actions put in place by their**

organisation, but are not very familiar with the details. While 16% know and are familiar with the diversity and inclusion action plans and strategies, more than half (55%) have merely 'heard of' them and 29% have not heard of them at all.

This survey covered the grounds of discrimination listed in the treaties and which the EU actively combats: sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation². In addition to these six grounds, respondents spontaneously declared **other grounds that, in their perception, may trigger unequal treatment**. The main ones stated were, in descending order: grade/employment status, nationality, family status, socio-economic and cultural background, political opinion and appearance.

ON RESPECT AT THE WORKPLACE

The survey included a dedicated section on respect at the workplace that was undertaken as part of the Commission's work to review its harassment prevention policy dating back to 2006. While the response rate of 14% for this section does not make it possible to draw conclusions for all Commission staff, the survey responses give a good overview of the experiences that respondents report having had in the workplace.

In terms of overall perception, over 53% of respondents working in the Commission consider that the organisation tackles sexual harassment effectively, compared with 18% who do not. Responses were more divided on psychological harassment, with 40% of respondents agreeing that the Commission addresses psychological harassment effectively, against 40% who do not.

These overall perceptions are similar **for the EEAS**, where 57% of respondents consider that the organisation tackles **sexual** harassment effectively, compared with 19% who do not. For **psychological** harassment, 40% of

respondents agree that the **EEAS** addresses this effectively, against 43% who do not.

Most respondents had not experienced the behaviours, which could potentially qualify as either psychological or sexual harassment. 26% of those who did had sought assistance while 59.4% were reluctant to ask for support.

Looking ahead to future actions, the top five actions seen by respondents as being 'very effective' in tackling harassment were: 1) managers taking swift action; 2) effective disciplinary procedures; 3) raising awareness of what harassment is, and where to find information; 4) making clear the types of behaviour that are not acceptable; 5) encouraging early, informal ways of solving conflicts.

² Article 10 TFEU: "In defining and implementing its policies and activities, the Union shall aim to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation".

NEXT STEPS

The results of this survey have for the first time given strong pointers to the aspects of diversity and inclusion that staff in our organisations perceive to be important.

The [new HR strategy](#), adopted on 5 April 2022 commits **the Commission** to drawing on the results of this survey to update its diversity and inclusion action plan. This process to update the action plan will be led by the Diversity and Inclusion Office in DG HR but will involve staff and their representatives in a participatory process.

Moreover, the results concerning respect at the workplace give a solid basis for guiding the review of the Commission policy on the

prevention of and fight against harassment, planned to be delivered in 2022.

For **the EEAS** and thus the delegations, the results of this survey will feed into existing initiatives, such as in the areas of disability and support for LGBTIQ colleagues, and a new diversity and inclusion action plan. In addition, the findings have informed the second anti-harassment awareness-raising campaign which is currently under way.

The Commission and the European External Action Service will conduct a follow up diversity and inclusion survey towards the end of this College mandate to measure progress.

FURTHER INFORMATION

You can find more information and detailed results of this survey by following these links:

- [Section I of the diversity and inclusion report: main findings](#)
- [Section II of the diversity and inclusion report: results by ground of discrimination](#)
- [Section III of the diversity and inclusion report: results by workplace](#)
- [Annexes of the diversity and inclusion report](#)
- [Factsheet of the diversity, inclusion and respect at workplace report \(EN\)](#)
- [Respect at the workplace report](#)

For any question, comments or suggestions on this report, please contact:

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