

HE TĀNGATA  
THE PEOPLE

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AOTEAROA DEI INDUSTRY CENSUS 2025

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Commercial  
Communications  
Council



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# Executive Summary

The Aotearoa DEI Census 2025 offers a data-informed snapshot of diversity, equity and inclusion across New Zealand's advertising, marketing, media and creative sectors. Based on the experiences of nearly 900 professionals, the findings explore how aspects of lived identity shape both experiences of, and perceptions around, belonging, inclusion, and workplace behaviour.

This report brings forward a spectrum of individual and group-level realities, offering insight into the barriers, support systems, and opportunities for progress that respondents identified within their professional environments.

While some indicators highlight ongoing challenges, the insights also reflect growing awareness and confidence in speaking to these issues—potentially signalling increasing literacy around diversity, equity and inclusion within the sector.

Rather than serving as a definitive benchmark, this report is designed to support continuous improvement—helping organisations reflect on their progress, identify areas for change, and address the deeper, systemic factors that shape workplace inclusion over time.

# Methodology

## Introduction

The Aotearoa DEI Census 2025 was conducted between February and March 2025, via an online survey distributed through industry networks, associations and employer partners. The survey was anonymous and voluntary, with 889 valid responses collected.

## Scope

Respondents were drawn from across New Zealand's creative and communications sectors, including advertising, media, marketing, PR, production, design, and digital technology. Participants represented all career stages, from interns to C-suite, and a broad mix of organisation sizes, ownership structures, and working arrangements.

## Survey Design

The census questionnaire was developed by Kantar, ensuring consistency with similar global studies.

The survey was conducted by Kantar New Zealand.

## Data Integrity & Limitations

To preserve statistical significance and participant anonymity, identity cohorts with fewer than 30 respondents were excluded from detailed analysis.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Woman, Māori, Disabled
- Woman, Pacific Peoples, Disabled
- Woman, Māori, Caregiver
- Woman, Pacific Peoples, Caregiver
- Man, Pacific Peoples, Caregiver
- Man, Māori, Caregiver
- Non-Binary Respondents
- Man, 18-24, Non-Dominant Sexuality, Disabled

Where appropriate, trends are compared to the 2023 and 2021 census data and international benchmarks.

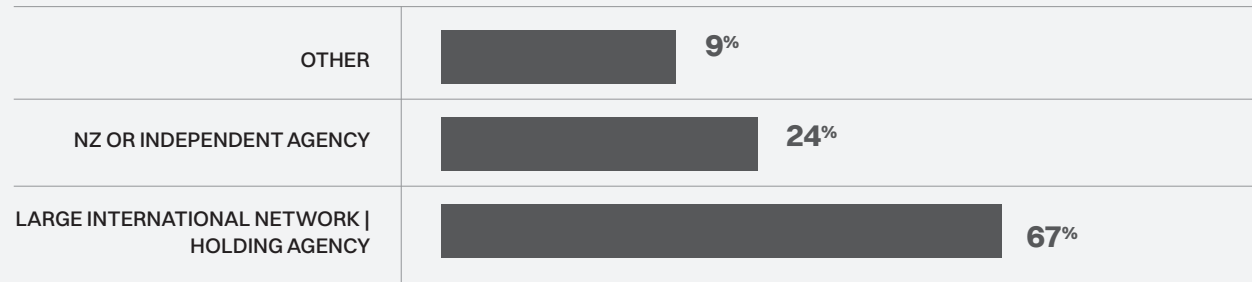
Percentages may be rounded. Percentages may not total 100% due to multi-response options.

# Glossary

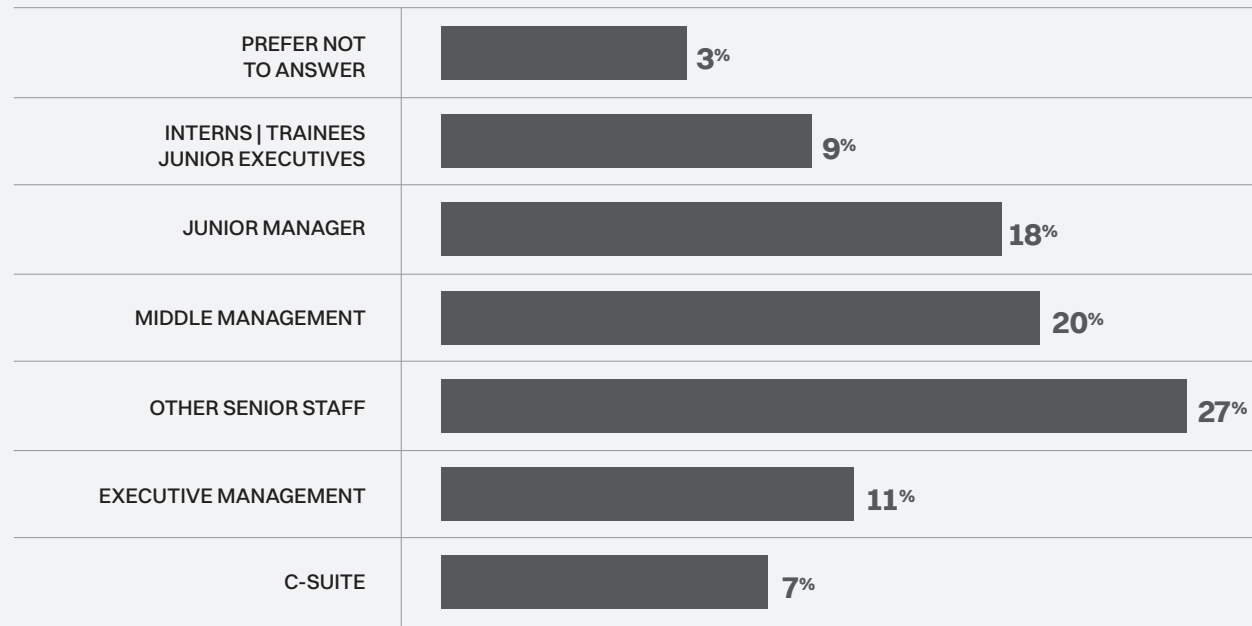
<b>DEI</b>	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.	<b>Disability</b>	Disability includes a wide range of experiences – including physical, sensory, and learning disabilities as well as mental distress, invisible disabilities and chronic health conditions. Defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as “long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.” Not everyone will use the word disability or disabled to describe their experience.
<b>Diversity</b>	The representation of a wide range of identities and experiences within a community or organisation, including but not limited to ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexuality and disability.	<b>Serious Illness</b>	Long-term or life-changing health conditions such as cancer or autoimmune diseases that may or may not impact daily functioning.
<b>Equity</b>	Removing systemic barriers to create fair access to opportunities and resources, recognising that treating everyone the same does not always result in fairness.	<b>Accessibility</b>	Environments, services, and communications that everyone can access and participate in equitably.
<b>Inclusion</b>	Creating environments where people of all identities feel welcomed, respected, and able to participate.	<b>Neurodiversity / Neurodivergence</b>	A strengths based term that sees neurological differences as natural variations within the human population, rather than deficits or disorders.” Includes experiences like dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, ADHD, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), Tourette syndrome, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD.)
<b>Belonging</b>	When people feel genuinely accepted, supported, and empowered to bring their full self to a space.	<b>Dominant Sexuality</b>	Heterosexuality.
<b>Inclusion Index</b>	The Inclusion Index is a score calculated using a statistical method (factor analysis) to group related survey questions covering inclusion, belonging and discrimination.	<b>Non-Heterosexual</b>	People who identify as part of the LGTBTTQIA+ community.
<b>Intersectionality / Multiple Discrimination</b>	Overlapping aspects of a person’s identity (e.g., ethnicity, gender, disability, socio-economic status) that when combined, create unique experiences of discrimination or disadvantage.	<b>Rainbow Community</b>	A commonly used umbrella term in Aotearoa for people who identify as LGTBTTQIA+.
<b>Microaggressions</b>	Subtle, often unintentional, actions or comments that express bias or reinforce stereotypes about marginalised groups.	<b>LGBTQIA+</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, Plus.
<b>Asian Peoples</b>	Includes Southern Asian (e.g. Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan), Maritime South-East Asian (e.g. Malaysian, Singaporean, Indonesian, Filipino), Chinese Asian (e.g. Chinese, Taiwanese), Mainland South-East Asian (e.g. Thai, Cambodian, Vietnamese), and Other North-East Asian (e.g. Japanese, Korean, Mongolian).	<b>Takatāpui</b>	A reclaimed Māori term for Māori who identify as LGBTQIA+ or have diverse gender or sexual identities. It acknowledges both cultural identity and rainbow inclusion.
<b>Pacific Peoples</b>	Includes Niuean, Fijian, Samoan, Tongan, Cook Islands and other Pacific Peoples.		
<b>European</b>	For the purposes of this survey, individuals who identify as only European have been grouped together. This includes New Zealand European / Pākehā, English, Scottish, Irish, Italian, and Other European identities. This grouping allows for comparison to the majority population and excludes those who also identify with another ethnic group.		

# Respondents by Company & Role

## RESPONDENTS BY COMPANY TYPE



## RESPONDENTS BY ROLE TYPE



# Key Findings & Summary

## Over & Under Representation

**Māori and Pacific Peoples** remain under-represented, with the majority identifying as European. **Women, Rainbow & Takatāpui communities, and disabled people** are over-represented compared to national workforce data – but still remain minority groups who experience disproportionately high rates of negative behaviour and discrimination.

## Inclusion Index

The industry-wide Inclusion Index is **60**, down from **71** in 2023. The most significant drop was in absence of discrimination, which fell from **98 to 83**, reflecting a rise in people experiencing or witnessing identity-based discrimination.

## Group-Level Variation

Inclusion scores vary significantly across demographic groups. Disabled and neurodiverse respondents reported the lowest inclusion scores (**49 and 42 respectively**) and also reported higher-than-average rates of negative experiences. Lower scores were also observed where multiple marginalised identities intersect, including **ethnicity, gender, disability, sexuality and age**.

## Ageism

Our industry skews young, with 25–44 year-olds making up **64%** of the workforce, compared to just **37%** nationally. Despite having the highest inclusion scores, those aged **45+** experience age-related discrimination more frequently than others.

## Reporting Behaviour

Most instances of negative behaviour and identity-based discrimination go **unreported** – often due to fear of career repercussions or a lack of confidence that reporting will lead to meaningful change.

## Turnover and Inclusion

**14%** of respondents reported having left a job due to discrimination or lack of inclusion. This figure increases to:

- **30%** among Pacific Peoples
- **25%** among Rainbow and Takatāpui

## Workplace Roles

Inclusion scores vary by seniority with middle managers reporting lower inclusion than their senior leaders (**54 vs 77**).



REPRESENTATION

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Our industry has higher representation of women, younger workers, and Rainbow & Takatāpui communities than national data.

**16%**

Rainbow & Takatāpui

**41%**

Long-term learning, physical or mental health conditions affecting day-to-day activities

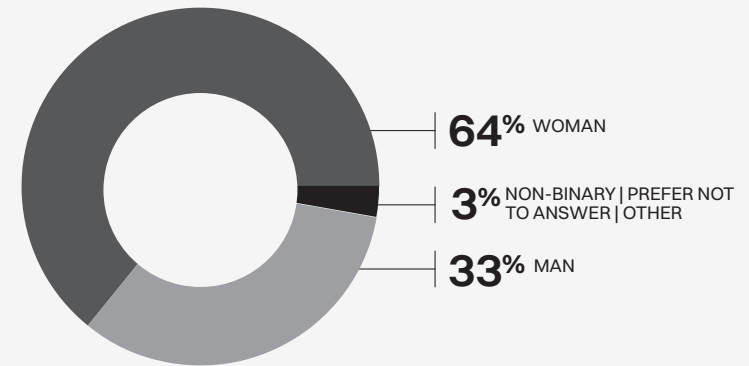
**7%**

Provide care for someone else

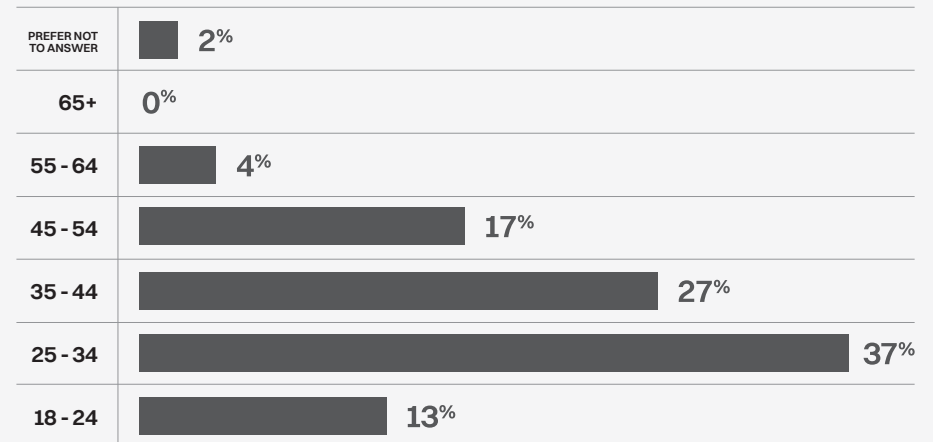
**34%**

Are parents to children under 16

### GENDER



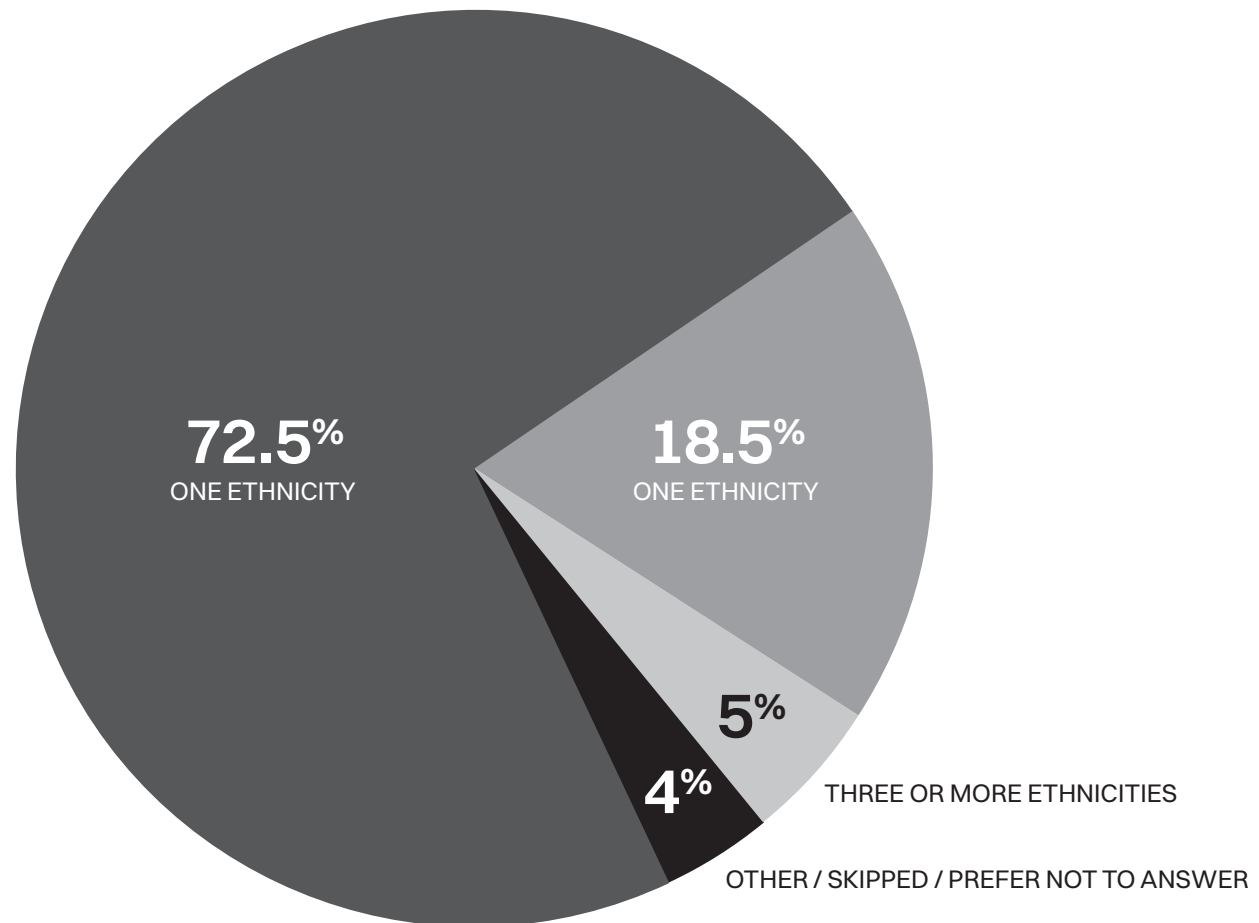
### AGE



Stats NZ 2023 4.9% of adults identify as Rainbow or Takatāpui  
Stats NZ 2024 51.2% of the workforce aged 18-64 are women  
Stats NZ 2024 18% of the workforce are aged 25-34; 17% are aged 35-44

DEMOGRAPHICS

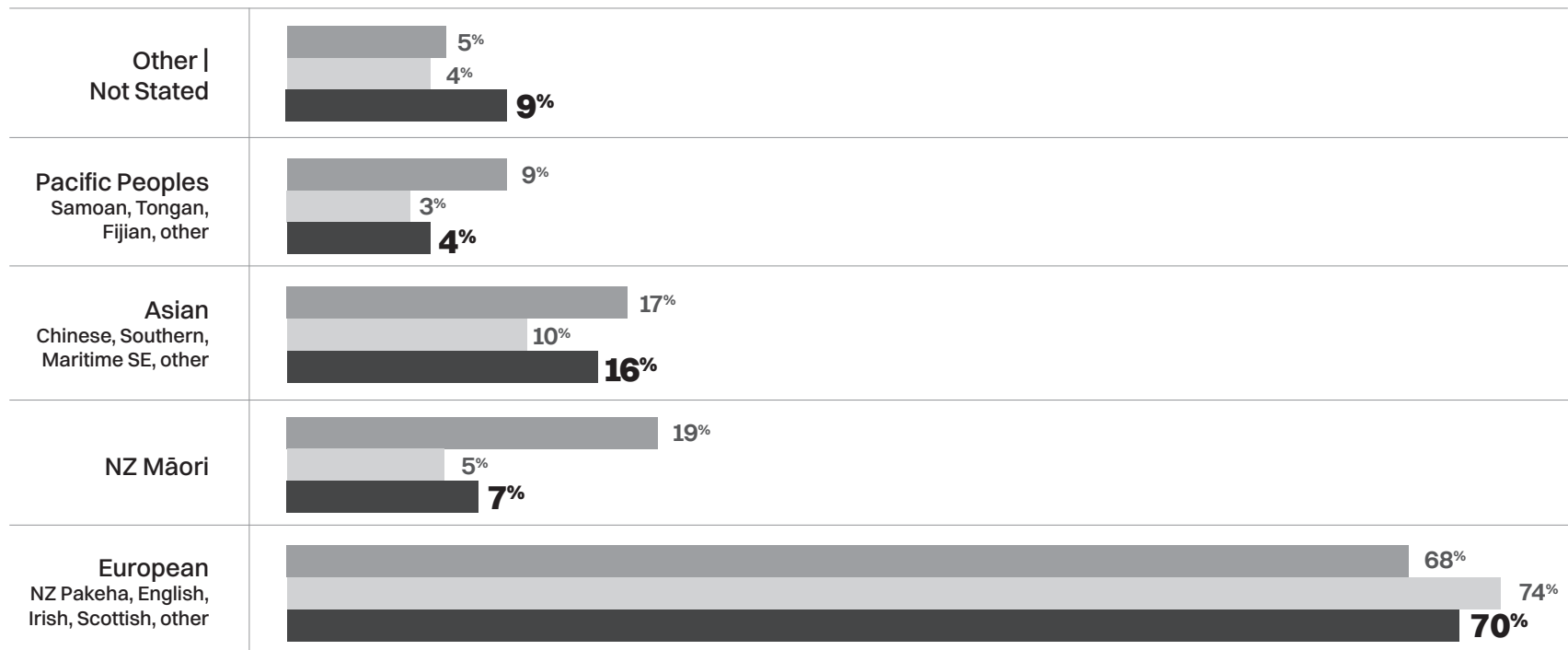
24% of respondents identify with 2 or more ethnic identities.



DEMOGRAPHICS

# The majority are European, with Māori & Pacific Peoples remaining under-represented.

Percentages exceed 100% due to respondents identifying with more than one ethnicity.



This comparison is made against national population figures, not industry-specific or workforce benchmarks. This report does not provide further insights into the inclusion or discrimination experiences of individuals who identified with multiple ethnicities versus those who identified with a single ethnicity.

INCLUSION

The Inclusion Index Score is calculated by the following formula:


$$\left( \begin{array}{l} \text{COMPANY} \\ \text{SENSE OF} \\ \text{BELONGING} \end{array} + \begin{array}{l} \text{ABSENCE} \\ \text{OF} \\ \text{DISCRIMINATION} \end{array} \right) - \begin{array}{l} \text{PRESENCE OF} \\ \text{NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR} \end{array} = \text{INCLUSION INDEX SCORE}$$

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While there are many diversity dimensions to consider, the Inclusion Index is based on these five:

Ethnicity | Disability | Gender | Sexuality | Religion

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# The Inclusion Index has dropped 11 points since 2023.

**60**

The industry-wide Inclusion Index has dropped from 71 in 2023.

**44**

Pacific Peoples report the lowest inclusion score of all reported ethnicities.

**49**

Respondents with a disability or serious illness report a lower inclusion than those without (68).

**84**

Māori or Pacific owned agencies report a higher inclusion score than all other recorded agency types (60).

**57**

Respondents aged 35 - 44 report the lowest inclusion score of all age groups.

**54**

Respondents of Non-Dominant Sexuality report a lower inclusion score than those of Dominant Sexuality (63).

# The Inclusion Index varies across demographic groups.

METRIC	INCLUSION SCORE
All Respondents	<b>60</b>
European	<b>▲ 62</b>
Asian	<b>59 ▼</b>
Māori	<b>49 ▼</b>
Pacific Peoples	<b>44 ▼</b>
Man	<b>▲ 66</b>
Woman	<b>58 ▼</b>

METRIC	INCLUSION SCORE
18-24	<b>▲ 64</b>
25-34	<b>59 ▼</b>
35-44	<b>57 ▼</b>
45+	<b>▲ 66</b>
Heterosexual	<b>▲ 63</b>
Non-Dominant Sexuality	<b>54 ▼</b>
Has Disability or Serious Illness	<b>49 ▼</b>
No Disability or Serious Illness	<b>▲ 68</b>

# ...and across workplace factors.

CATEGORY	SCORE
<b>• By Agency Type</b>	
Large International Agency	<b>61</b>
NZ/Independent Agency	<b>61</b>
Māori or Pacific Owned Agency	<b>84</b>
<b>• By Work Situation</b>	
In-Office	<b>61</b>
Hybrid	<b>59</b>
Fully Remote	<b>46</b>
<b>• By Position Level</b>	
Interns & Junior Staff	<b>68</b>
Junior Managers	<b>62</b>
Middle Managers	<b>54</b>
Other Senior Staff	<b>59</b>
Executive Management	<b>63</b>
C-Suite	<b>71</b>

CATEGORY	SCORE
<b>• By Role</b>	
Operations	<b>78</b>
Finance, Operations, Support Services	<b>76</b>
Other	<b>71</b>
Data, CRM & Technology	<b>65</b>
Media	<b>64</b>
Client/Account Management	<b>63</b>
Marketing	<b>57</b>
PR, Events, Social	<b>56</b>
Creative & Design	<b>54</b>
Strategy Planning	<b>54</b>
Production	<b>44</b>

# Sense of belonging remains consistent, but the rapid drop in emotional support is evident.

	2025 CENSUS	2023 CENSUS	GLOBAL 2023
Company Sense of Belonging	75	75	69
I am valued and essential part of my direct team <b>% AGREE</b>	91%	86%	82%
I am valued and essential part of my company <b>% AGREE</b>	78%	75%	71%
I am emotionally and socially supported at work <b>% AGREE</b>	61%	75%	64%
My unique attributes, characteristics, skills, experience valued <b>% AGREE</b>	79%	76%	70%
Senior management do not discriminate in hiring/career advancements <b>% AGREE</b>	64%	64%	55%
I am provided with sufficient support to develop my skills and progress my career <b>% AGREE</b>	64%	65%	57%

# The biggest change is a marked decline in absence of discrimination.

	OVERALL INCLUSION INDEX	SENSE OF BELONGING	ABSENCE OF DISCRIMINATION	PRESENCE OF NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR
DEI Census <b>2025</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>19</b>
DEI Census <b>2023</b>	71	75	98	16
DEI Census <b>2021</b>	61	69	97	22
Global Average <b>2023</b>	63	69	96	19

The Absence of Discrimination score reflects the percentage of respondents who did not report experiencing or witnessing discrimination or negative behaviour related to their identity. The decline in this score — from 98 in 2023 and 97 in 2021 — indicates that more respondents are reporting such experiences or observations than before.

# Discrimination has increased across all measured identity factors.

	2025 CENSUS	2023 CENSUS	GLOBAL 2023
Absence of Discrimination	83	98	96
My Age - personally discriminated at company % <b>NO</b>	71%	94%	92%
My Gender - personally discriminated at company % <b>NO</b>	76%	97%	94%
My Family Status - personally discriminated at company % <b>NO</b>	76%	97%	95%
My Race - personally discriminated at company % <b>NO</b>	82%	97%	96%
My Religion - personally discriminated at company % <b>NO</b>	89%	99%	99%
Disability Status - Personally discriminated at Company % <b>NO</b>	90%	100%	99%
Relationship Status - Personally discriminated at Company % <b>NO</b>	91%	100%	99%
Appearance - Personally Discriminated at Company % <b>NO</b>	83%	97%	96%
Social Class - Personally Discriminated at Company % <b>NO</b>	88%	98%	97%

# Despite feeling more comfortable at work, negative behaviour has risen across all other areas.

	2025 CENSUS	2023 CENSUS	GLOBAL 2023
Presence of Negative Behaviour	19	16	19
Unfairly spoken over and not listened to in meetings % <b>YES</b>	38.5%	23%	27%
Learning Opportunities or progress restricted by senior colleagues % <b>YES</b>	18.7%	16%	17%
Undervalued compared to colleagues of equal competence % <b>YES</b>	26.8%	24%	28%
People taking sole credit for shared efforts % <b>YES</b>	24.2%	23%	32%
Bullied or undermined in some way % <b>YES</b>	18%	13%	13%
Physical harassment or violence % <b>YES</b>	1.1%	1%	1%
Exclusion from events/activities % <b>YES</b>	16%	12%	13%
Made to feel uncomfortable in the workplace % <b>YES</b>	9.2%	12%	13%



DETAILED  
ANALYSIS BY  
COHORT



ETHNICITY

## ETHNICITY

# Minority ethnicities have lower inclusion scores than those of European decent.

<b>ETHNICITY</b>	<b>INCLUSION INDEX</b> AVERAGE INCLUSION INDEX IS 60	<b>% WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR OR DISCRIMINATION BASED ON THEIR ETHNICITY</b>
Pacific Peoples	44	3%
Māori	49	11%
Asian	59	6.5%
European Only (NZ Pākehā, English, Irish, Scottish, Other)	61	1%

## ETHNICITY

# Ethnicity impacts the exposure and impact of negative experiences.

<b>NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR</b>	<b>ALL EUROPEAN</b>	<b>ASIAN</b>	<b>MĀORI</b>	<b>PACIFIC PEOPLES</b>
I believe my learning opportunities or progress has been restricted by managers.	<b>17%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>25%</b>
I felt undervalued compared to colleagues of equal competence.	<b>25%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>38%</b>
I have been bullied or undermined in some way.	<b>17%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>25%</b>
I have been interrupted or not listened to in meetings.	<b>41%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>46%</b>
I have been made to feel uncomfortable in the workplace due to who I am (e.g. my gender, race, ethnicity, LGBTQI+ status, social background, health, religion, parental duties etc).	<b>8%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>13%</b>
I have been physically harassed or subject to violence.	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>
I have been subject to sexual harassment (e.g. sexual comments or jokes, physical behaviour, displaying pictures, photos, or drawings of a sexual nature, sending emails with sexual content).	<b>5%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4%</b>
I have been verbally harassed, insulted or received other hurtful comments.	<b>9%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>13%</b>
I have felt excluded from events or activities.	<b>15%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>8%</b>
I have had my name consistently mispronounced.	<b>8%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>21%</b>
I have heard complaints about “being too politically correct” or “too sensitive” in response to calling out offensive statements or behaviour towards minority groups.	<b>14%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>21%</b>
I have observed “casual discrimination” - e.g. where the speaker/writer stereotypes or disparages a type of person (e.g. ethnicity, religion or gender) without seeming to be conscious it was inappropriate.	<b>33%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>50%</b>
I have repeatedly observed people taking sole credit for shared efforts.	<b>24%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>33%</b>
I have sometimes felt excluded or treated unfairly because of my age.	<b>20%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>29%</b>

# Māori are under-represented and have the highest rates of ethnicity-based discrimination.

Māori make up **19.6%** of the national population  
but just 7% of the industry.

**11%** have experienced discrimination based on ethnicity  
Highest reported rate of ethnicity-based discrimination.  
Compares to 1% for NZ European / Pākehā.

**38.5%** feel undervalued compared  
to equally competent colleagues  
10 points higher than the industry average of 28%.

# Pacific Peoples are 2x more likely to leave the industry due to discrimination or lack of inclusion.

Inclusion Score of **44**

The lowest inclusion score of any ethnic group.

**30%** have left their job due to discrimination or lack of inclusion

More than double the industry average of 14%  
and the highest exit rate of any ethnic group.

**27%** report being bullied or undermined in some way.

9 points above the industry average of 18%.

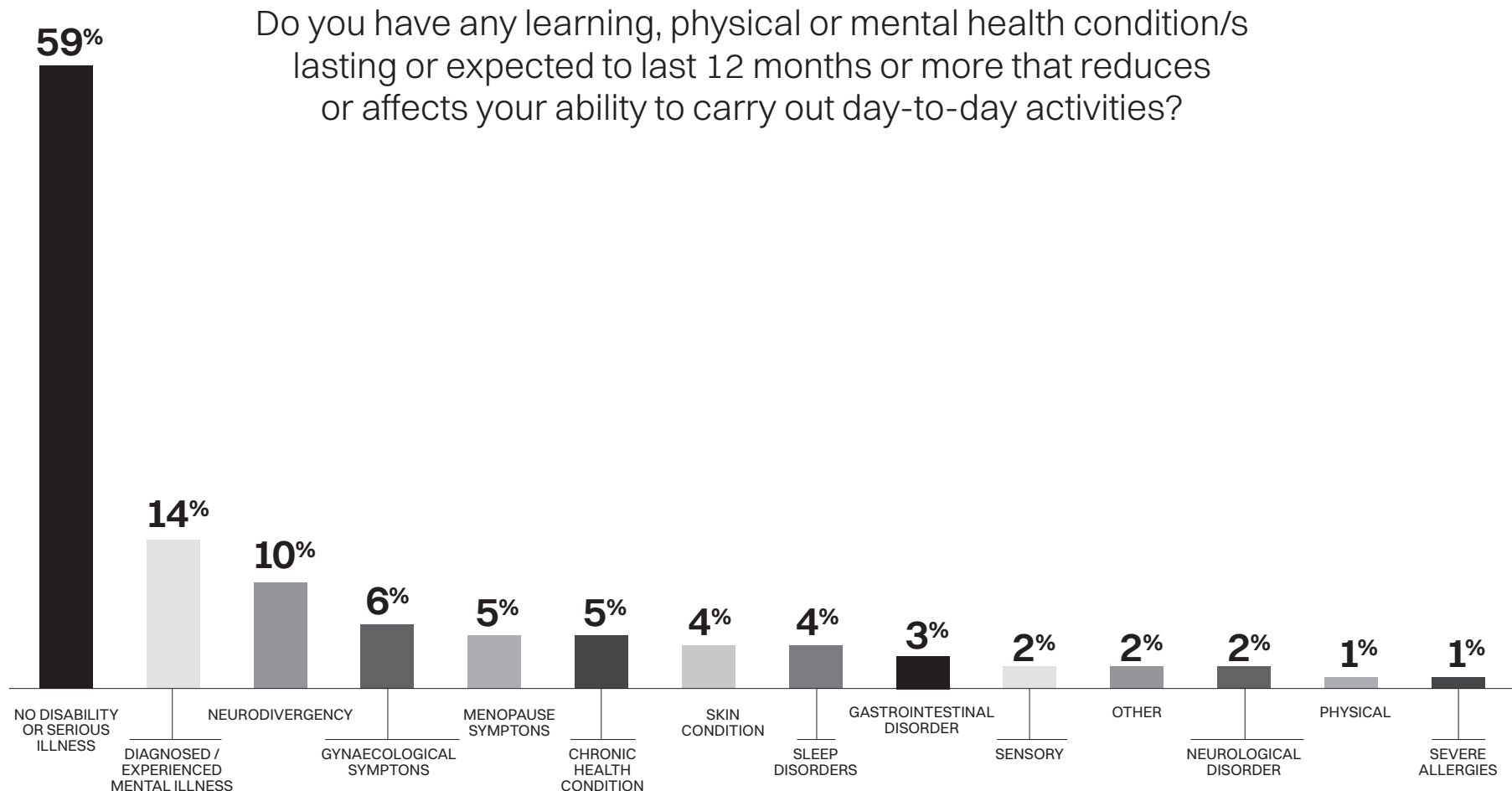
“ It’s often very subtle things, which are very hard to pinpoint and raise. ”

Anonymous survey response to Identity based discrimination

DISABILITY,  
SERIOUS ILLNESS,  
MENTAL HEALTH &  
STRESS (ON-GOING)

## DISABILITY

# 41% have one or more disabilities and/or serious illnesses that affect day to day work.

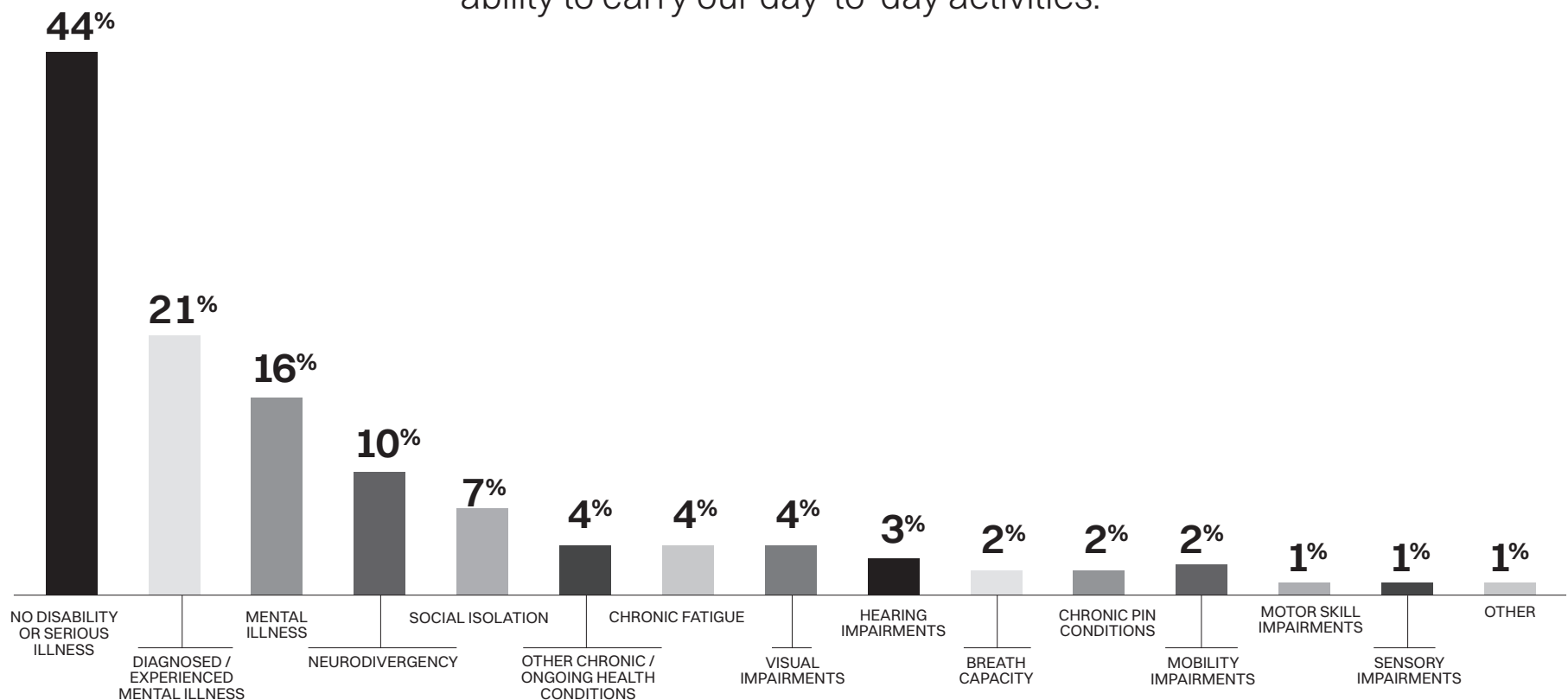


Note: Disability includes a wide range of experiences - including physical, sensory, and learning disabilities as well as mental distress, invisible disabilities and chronic health conditions. The breadth of experiences within disability is important to understand when looking at these results.

## DISABILITY

# Many more live with invisible disabilities & health conditions that don't affect work but still impact life.

Of the list, please identify which of these conditions you are affected by, even if it does not reduce or affect your ability to carry our day-to-day activities.

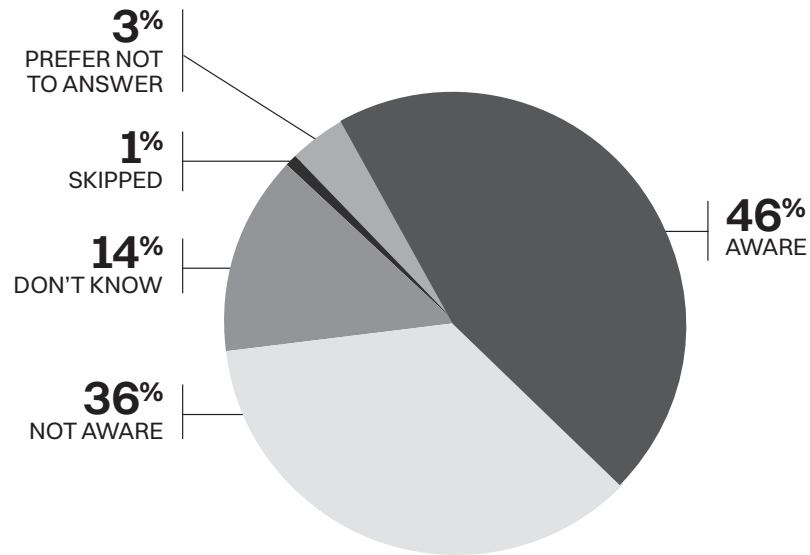


Note: Disability includes a wide range of experiences - including physical, sensory, and learning disabilities as well as mental distress, invisible disabilities and chronic health conditions. The breadth of experiences within disability is important to understand when looking at these results.

# When the company is aware, support is felt.

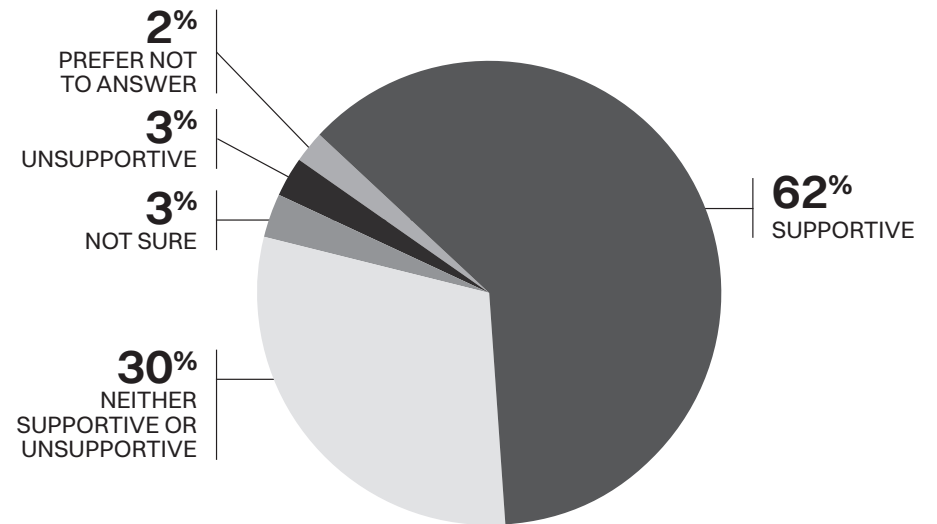
## AWARE

Is your company aware of your health concerns/disability?  
(of those that have a disability/condition)



## SUPPORT

How supportive is your company regarding your health issues or the conditions you are affected by?  
(of those whose company are aware only)



## DISABILITY

# There is a significant drop in inclusion for those with a disability and/or serious illness.

	<b>INCLUSION INDEX</b> AVERAGE INCLUSION INDEX IS 60	<b>% WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR OR DISCRIMINATION BASED ON THEIR DISABILITY STATUS</b>
Has Disability and/or Serious Illness	49	2.5%
No Disability and/or Serious Illness	68	0.2%

→ **NOTE** In this Census, “disability” has been used as a broad umbrella term that encompasses a wide range of lived experiences—including physical impairments, sensory impairments, mental health conditions, cognitive differences, and invisible impairments. It also includes some health-related conditions that may not traditionally fall under disability definitions, such as allergies, gynaecological symptoms, and chronic illnesses. This broader grouping reflects how participants self-identified and should be considered when interpreting results.

## DISABILITY

# And higher rates of negative behaviour across all experiences.

	NO DISABILITY/ SERIOUS ILLNESS	HAS DISABILITY/ SERIOUS ILLNESS
<b>NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR</b>		
I believe my learning opportunities or progress has been restricted by managers.	<b>13%</b>	<b>26%</b>
I felt undervalued compared to colleagues of equal competence.	<b>22%</b>	<b>35%</b>
I have been bullied or undermined in some way.	<b>12%</b>	<b>27%</b>
I have been interrupted or not listened to in meetings.	<b>29%</b>	<b>51%</b>
I have been made to feel uncomfortable in the workplace due to who I am. (e.g. my gender, race, ethnicity, LGBTQI+ status, social background, health, religion, parental duties etc).	<b>7%</b>	<b>13%</b>
I have been physically harassed or subject to violence.	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>
I have been subject to sexual harassment (e.g., sexual comments or jokes, physical behaviour, displaying pictures, photos, or drawings of a sexual nature, sending emails with sexual content).	<b>4%</b>	<b>5%</b>
I have been verbally harassed, insulted or received other hurtful comments.	<b>6%</b>	<b>16%</b>
I have felt excluded from events or activities.	<b>14%</b>	<b>18%</b>
I have had my name consistently mispronounced	<b>11%</b>	<b>12%</b>
I have heard complaints about “being too politically correct” or “too sensitive” in response to calling out offensive statements or behaviour towards minority groups	<b>11%</b>	<b>20%</b>
I have observed “casual discrimination” - e.g. where the speaker/writer stereotypes or disparages a type of person (e.g. ethnicity, religion or gender) without seeming to be conscious it was inappropriate	<b>28%</b>	<b>43%</b>
I have repeatedly observed people taking sole credit for shared efforts.	<b>20%</b>	<b>31%</b>
I have sometimes felt excluded or treated unfairly because of my age.	<b>14%</b>	<b>23%</b>



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**10% of respondents identify  
as neurodivergent.**

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**Inclusion Score of 42**

Lower than the average for other disability or mental distress groups at 47,  
and well below the overall average at 60.

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**13%** report experiencing negative behaviour  
based on their neurodivergent status.

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**42%** say their company is aware of their neurodivergence.  
Only 38% of those whose company is aware feel adequately supported at work.

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Over **40%** of neurodiverse respondents experience  
other affected conditions such as Mental Distress,  
Social Isolation, Chronic Pain and more.

“ We need better understanding of neurodiversity. It affects how we communicate, process and function in the workplace. ”

# Mental Distress is higher amongst minority communities.

**14%** of respondents report diagnosed mental distress.

But is higher amongst minority communities:

**25%**

Rainbow & Takatāpui

**20%**

Māori

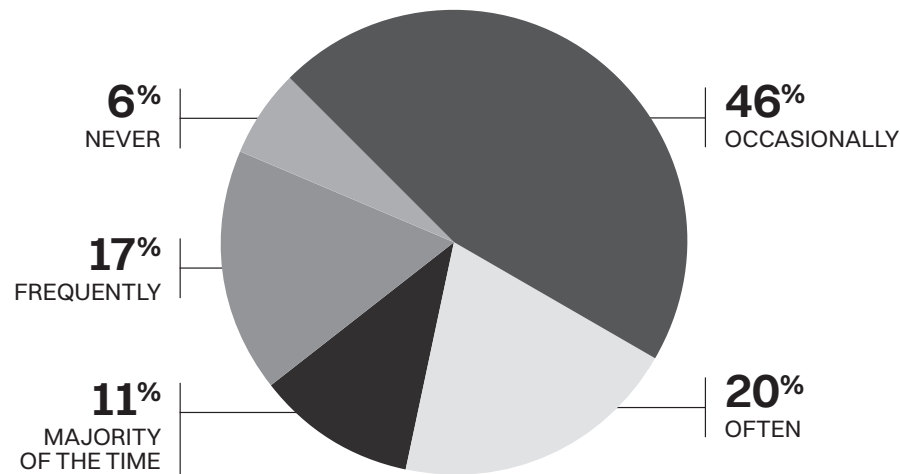
**18%**

Pacific Peoples

# One third of respondents experience stress affecting day-to-day activities.

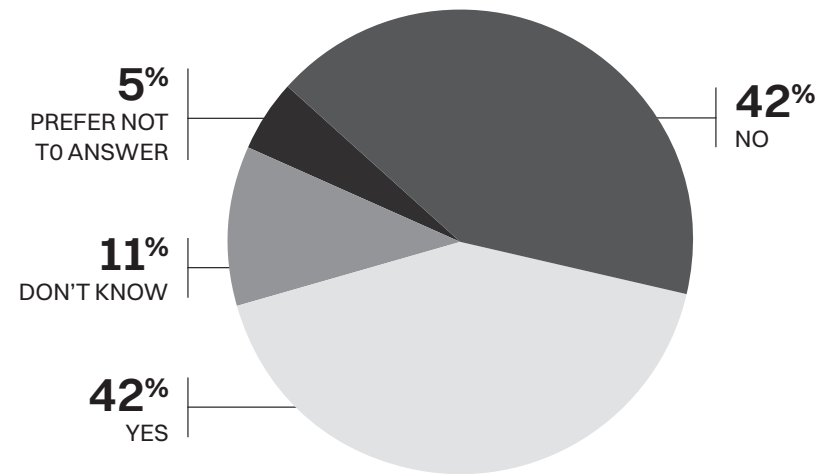
## STRESS LEAVE

How often do you experience stress that affects your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?



## STRESS LEAVE FOLLOW-UP

Is your Mental Illness Condition / Stress (ongoing) primarily due to your work?



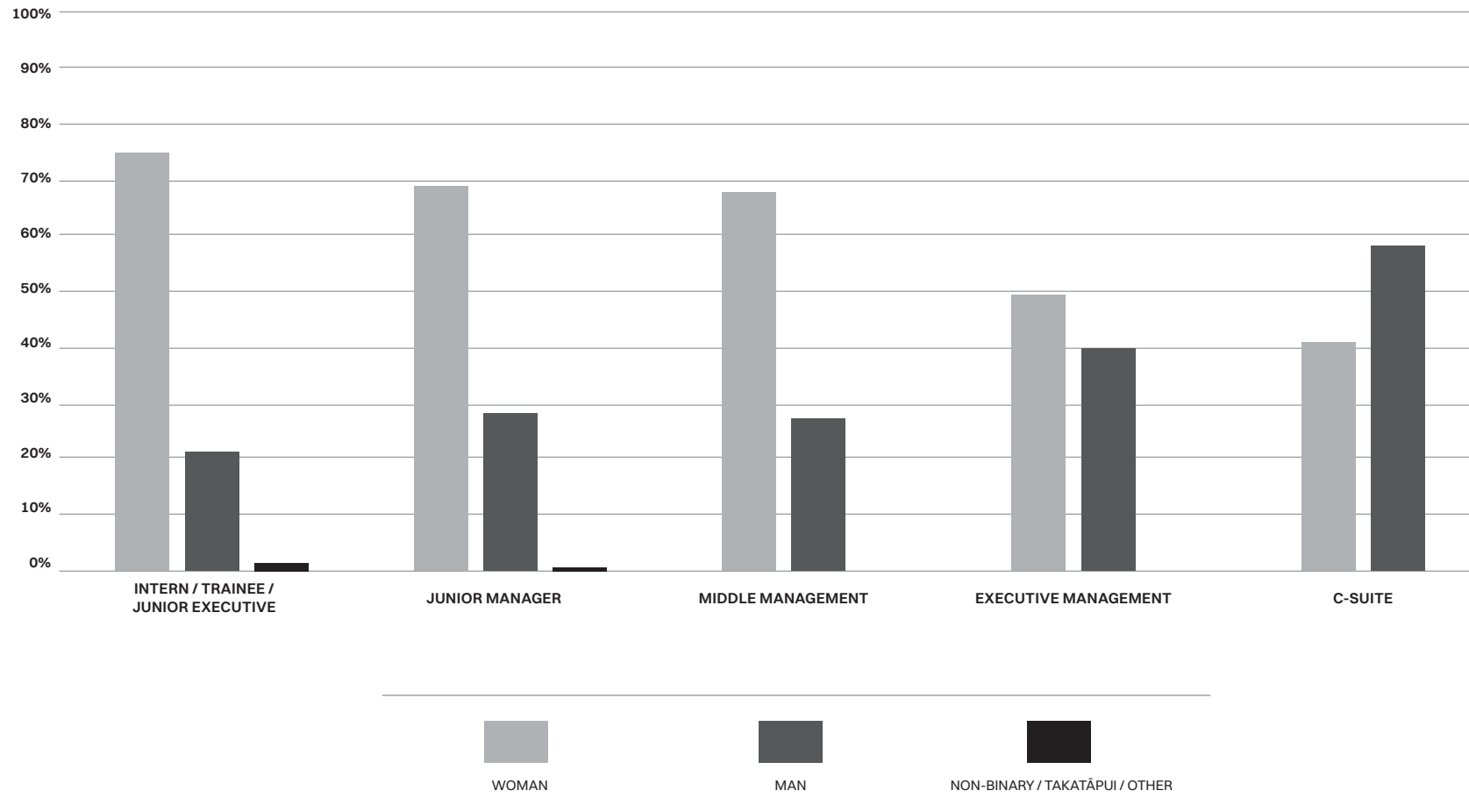


GENDER

## GENDER

# Historic male dominance prevails at C-Suite.

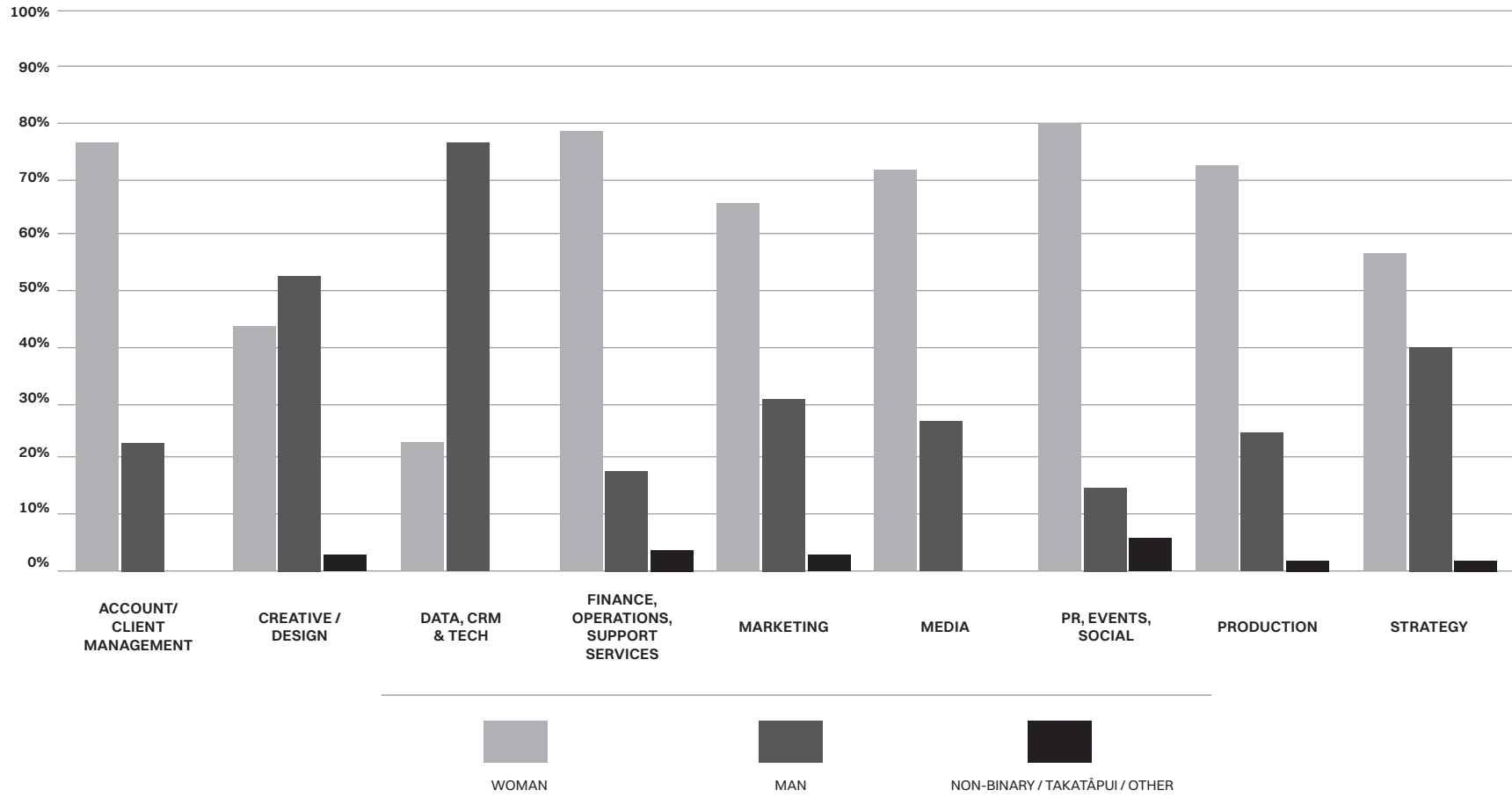
### GENDER DISTRIBUTION BY ROLE / POSITION



## GENDER

# Gender representation varies widely between departments.

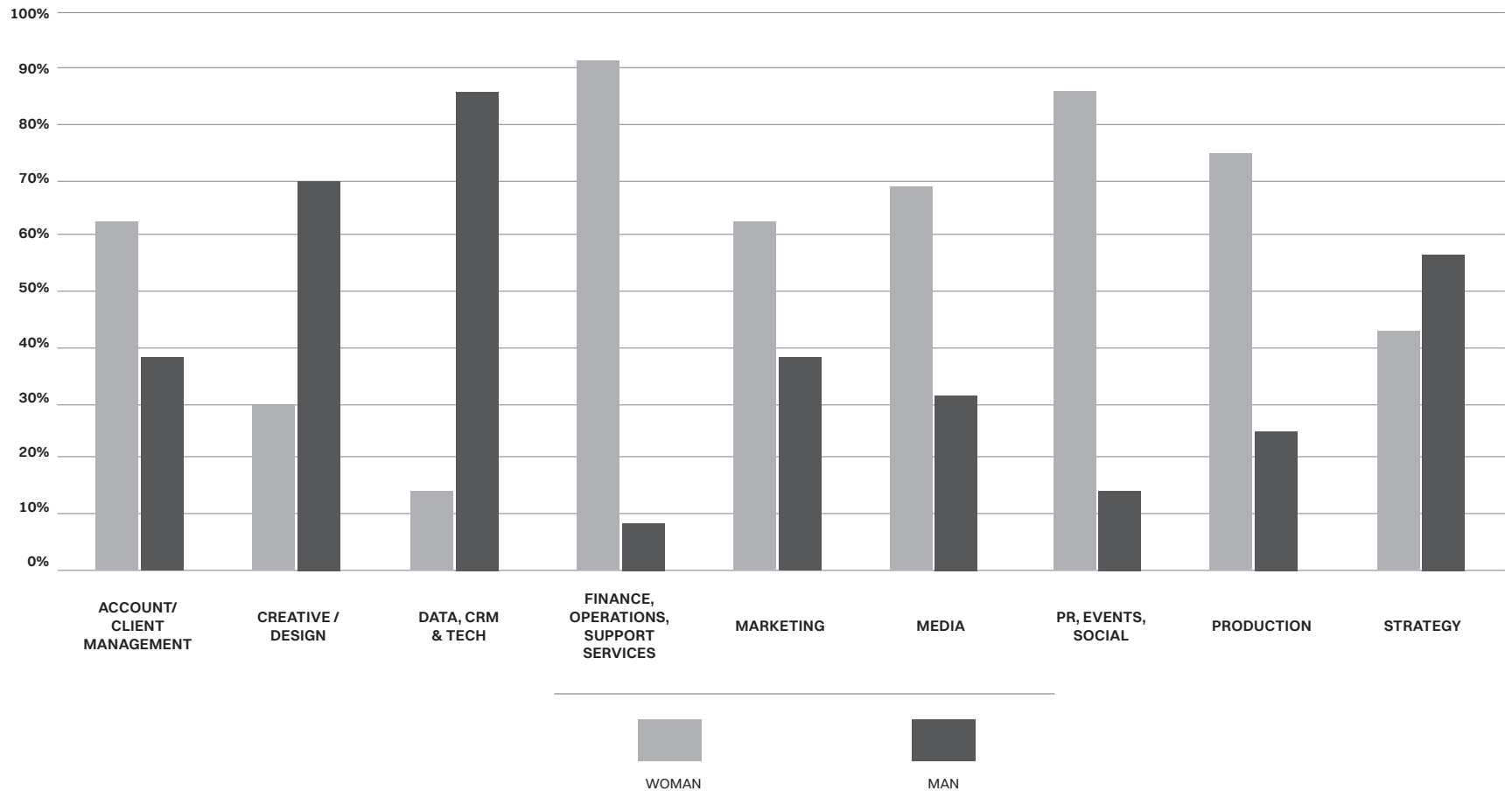
### GENDER DISTRIBUTION BY DEPARTMENT



## GENDER

Leadership shows even greater imbalances, for both men and women.

### GENDER DISTRIBUTION BY SENIORITY WITHIN DEPARTMENTS



DISABILITY

# Women face significantly more discrimination.

GENDER	INCLUSION INDEX AVERAGE INCLUSION INDEX IS 60	% WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR OR DISCRIMINATION BASED ON THEIR GENDER
Man	66	2%
Woman	58	8.8%

**8.8% vs 4%**

Reports of women experiencing negative treatment based on their gender has doubled since 2023 when they reported 4%.

## GENDER

# ...and higher rates of negative behaviour.

<b>NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR</b>	<b>MAN</b>	<b>WOMAN</b>
I believe my learning opportunities or progress has been restricted by managers.	<b>15%</b>	<b>20%</b>
I felt undervalued compared to colleagues of equal competence.	<b>22%</b>	<b>28%</b>
I have been bullied or undermined in some way.	<b>14%</b>	<b>19%</b>
I have been interrupted or not listened to in meetings.	<b>34%</b>	<b>41%</b>
I have been made to feel uncomfortable in the workplace due to who I am (e.g. my gender, race, ethnicity, LGBTQI+ status, social background, health, religion, parental duties etc).	<b>6%</b>	<b>10%</b>
I have been physically harassed or subject to violence.	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>
I have been subject to sexual harassment (e.g. sexual comments or jokes, physical behaviour, displaying pictures, photos, or drawings of a sexual nature, sending emails with sexual content).	<b>2%</b>	<b>6%</b>
I have been verbally harassed, insulted or received other hurtful comments.	<b>9%</b>	<b>10%</b>
I have felt excluded from events or activities.	<b>10%</b>	<b>19%</b>
I have had my name consistently mispronounced.	<b>12%</b>	<b>12%</b>
I have heard complaints about "being too politically correct" or "too sensitive" in response to calling out offensive statements or behaviour towards minority groups.	<b>11%</b>	<b>15%</b>
I have observed "casual discrimination" - e.g. where the speaker/writer stereotypes or disparages a type of person (e.g. ethnicity, religion or gender) without seeming to be conscious it was inappropriate.	<b>28%</b>	<b>36%</b>
I have repeatedly observed people taking sole credit for shared efforts.	<b>19%</b>	<b>27%</b>
I have sometimes felt excluded or treated unfairly because of my age.	<b>16%</b>	<b>19%</b>

**“ As a woman in tech I’m often assumed to be less capable/competent than my male counterparts and I’m used to it. Sometimes I will address it in the room depending on the audience.”**

Anonymous survey response to Identity based discrimination

**12% of women  
report gender-based  
discrimination.  
This is 6x higher  
than men (2%).**

However, not all gender-based discrimination is felt by non-males.

“As a male, I didn't think it (gender-based discrimination) would be taken seriously.”

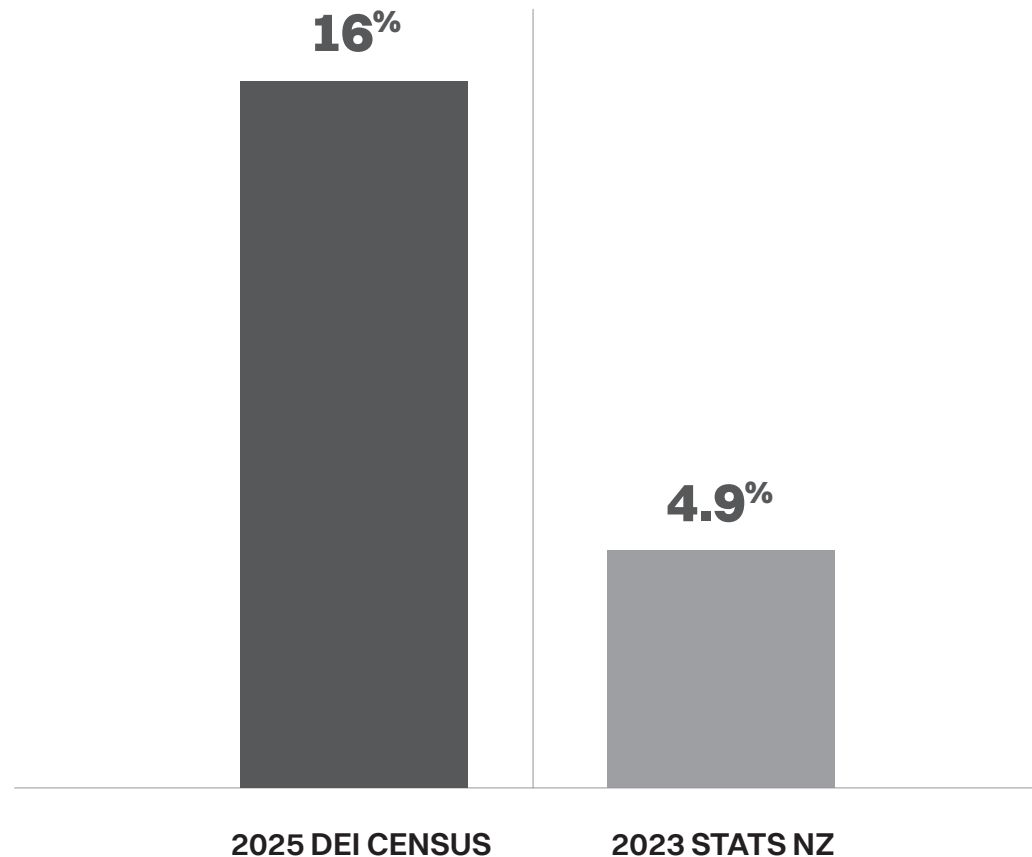
Anonymous survey response to Identity based discrimination



SEXUALITY

# Rainbow & Takatāpui representation in our industry is nearly 3x the national average.

NATIONAL VS. INDUSTRY RAINBOW & TAKATĀPUI REPRESENTATION



## SEXUALITY

However, the community remains a minority group and faces higher rates of negative behaviour and discrimination.

<b>SEXUALITY</b>	<b>INCLUSION INDEX</b> AVERAGE INCLUSION INDEX IS 60	<b>% WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR OR DISCRIMINATION BASED ON THEIR SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>
Non-Dominant	54	6%
Dominant	63	0.4%

## SEXUALITY

# Rainbow & Takatāpui respondents are twice as likely to feel uncomfortable at work because of who they are.

NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR	DOMINANT SEXUALITY	NON-DOMINANT SEXUALITY
I believe my learning opportunities or progress has been restricted by managers.	19%	19%
I felt undervalued compared to colleagues of equal competence.	26%	29%
I have been bullied or undermined in some way.	18%	19%
I have been interrupted or not listened to in meetings.	38%	40%
I have been made to feel uncomfortable in the workplace due to who I am (e.g. my gender, race, ethnicity, LGBTQI+ status, social background, health, religion, parental duties etc).	8%	16%
I have been physically harassed or subject to violence.	1%	4%
I have been subject to sexual harassment (e.g. sexual comments or jokes, physical behaviour, displaying pictures, photos, or drawings of a sexual nature, sending emails with sexual content).	4%	6%
I have been verbally harassed, insulted or received other hurtful comments.	10%	11%
I have felt excluded from events or activities.	16%	17%
I have had my name consistently mispronounced.	12%	12%
I have heard complaints about “being too politically correct” or “too sensitive” in response to calling out offensive statements or behaviour towards minority groups.	12%	23%
I have observed “casual discrimination” - e.g. where the speaker/writer stereotypes or disparages a type of person (e.g. ethnicity, religion or gender) without seeming to be conscious it was inappropriate.	32%	43%
I have repeatedly observed people taking sole credit for shared efforts.	24%	24%
I have sometimes felt excluded or treated unfairly because of my age.	18%	18%

“ Identifying problems (especially microaggressions) seem to identify me as a ‘trouble-maker’.”

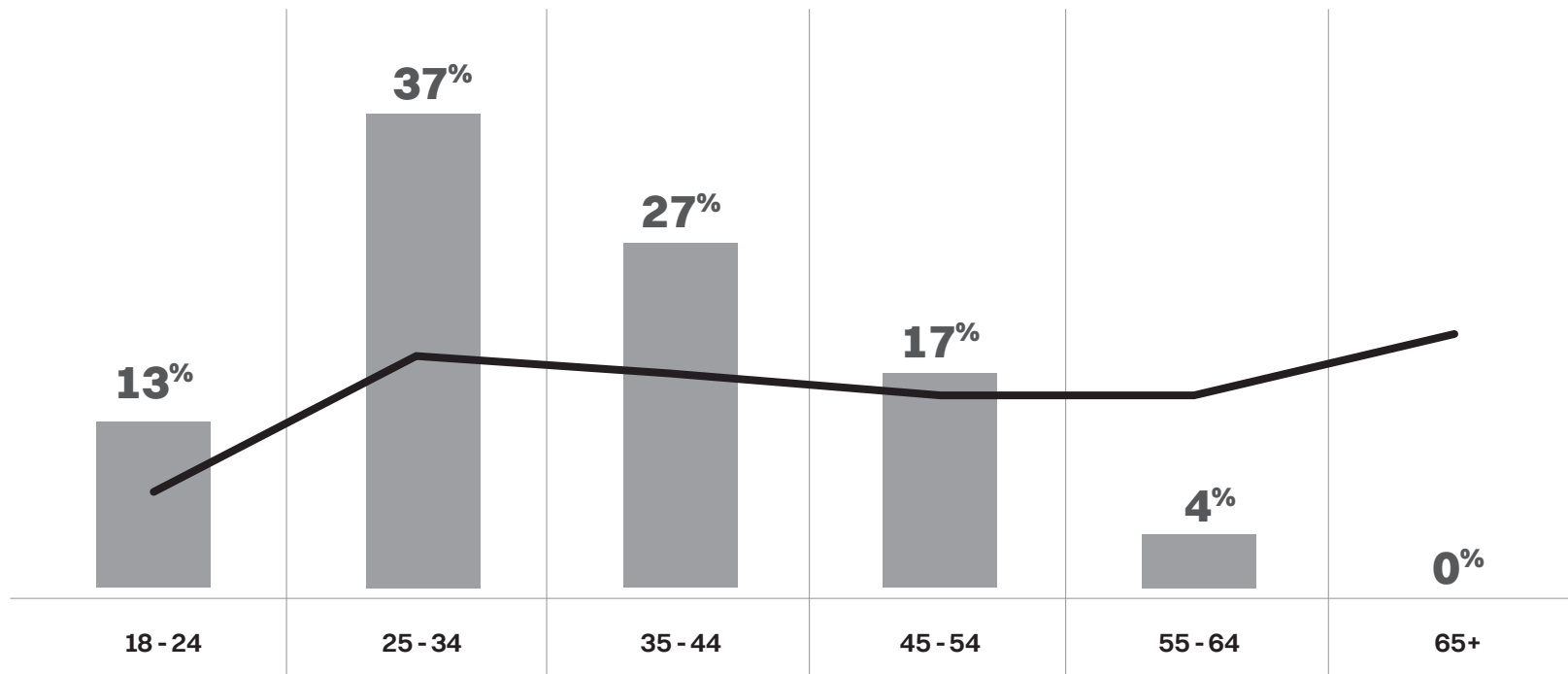
The image features a dark gray background with a central light gray lens-shaped area. The word "AGE" is written in white, uppercase letters within this central area. The lens shape is formed by two overlapping circles, creating a central intersection. The overall design is minimalist and modern.

AGE

AGE

**Our industry is young,  
with those aged 25-44 making up 64%.**

NATIONAL VS. INDUSTRY WORKING AGE



# Older workers experience higher rates of age-based discrimination.

AGE GROUP	INCLUSION INDEX AVERAGE INCLUSION INDEX IS 60	% WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR OR DISCRIMINATION BASED ON THEIR AGE
18-24	64	14%
25-34	59	9%
35-44	57	3%
45+	66	18%

# 18%

Despite having the highest inclusion score, those aged 45+ report the highest rate of age-related negative experiences.

**39%** of respondents  
aged 55-64  
have experienced  
discrimination due  
to their age.

“ The industry is inherently ageist, both at limiting younger people and excluding older people.

Raising singular issues feels feeble. ”



PARENTAL &  
CAREGIVING  
STATUS

## PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

# Parents feel backed by their company, yet still face bias.

	<b>INCLUSION INDEX</b> AVERAGE INCLUSION INDEX IS 60	<b>% WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR OR DISCRIMINATION BASED ON THEIR FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
No Parental Responsibilities	60	1%
Parental Responsibilities	61	15%

# 34%

of respondents are parents or have legal guardianship for a child under 16 years.

# 65%

of parents have taken parental leave at their current company.

# 80%

say their company was supportive leading up to this leave period and 72% were supportive upon return.

# Caregivers face added stress and less support.

Caregiver refers to those providing care to an adult or child beyond the typical responsibilities of parenthood — often helping with daily living, medical and emotional needs.

	INCLUSION INDEX AVERAGE INCLUSION INDEX IS 60	% WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR OR DISCRIMINATION BASED ON THEIR FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES
None	62	5%
Care for an adult or child	53	11%

**7%**

of respondents provide care and support to an adult or child beyond usual responsibilities of parenthood and/or family.

**Less than half**

say their company is aware of their caregiving status.

**Caregivers express the need for:**

- Flexibility in hours and location
- More supportive and understanding managers
- Leave allowances
- A culture of no judgement



# DEI & WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE

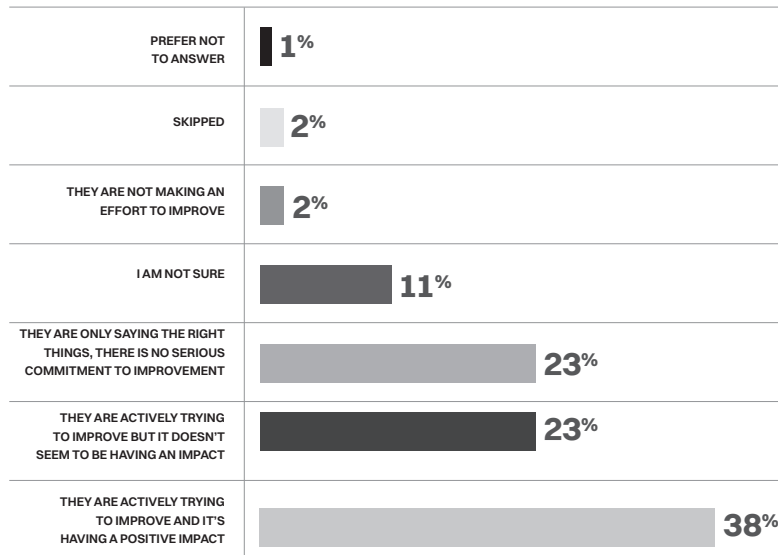
# DEI efforts appear to have slowed down.

Respondents agreeing that their company is actively taking steps to be more diverse & inclusive.

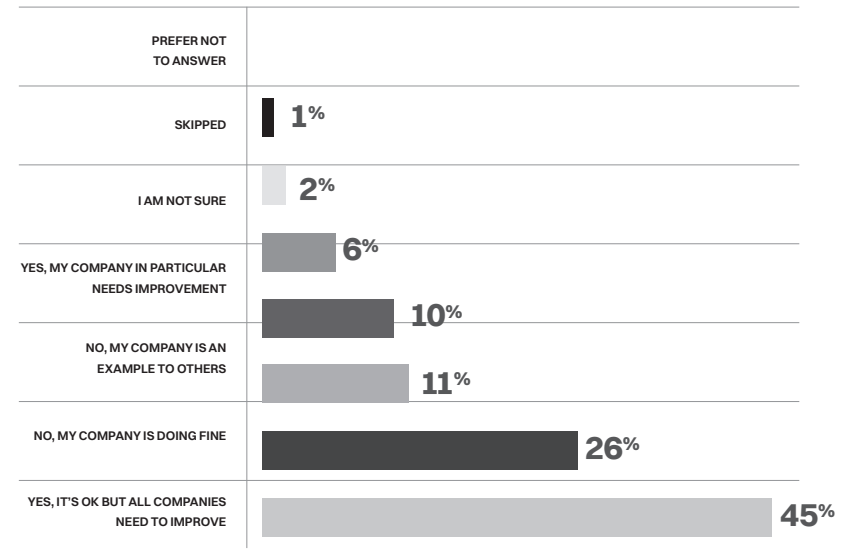


# Only 38% believe their companies DEI efforts make an impact.

## WHICH OF THE BELOW BEST DESCRIBES YOUR COMPANY'S CURRENT APPROACH TO DEI?



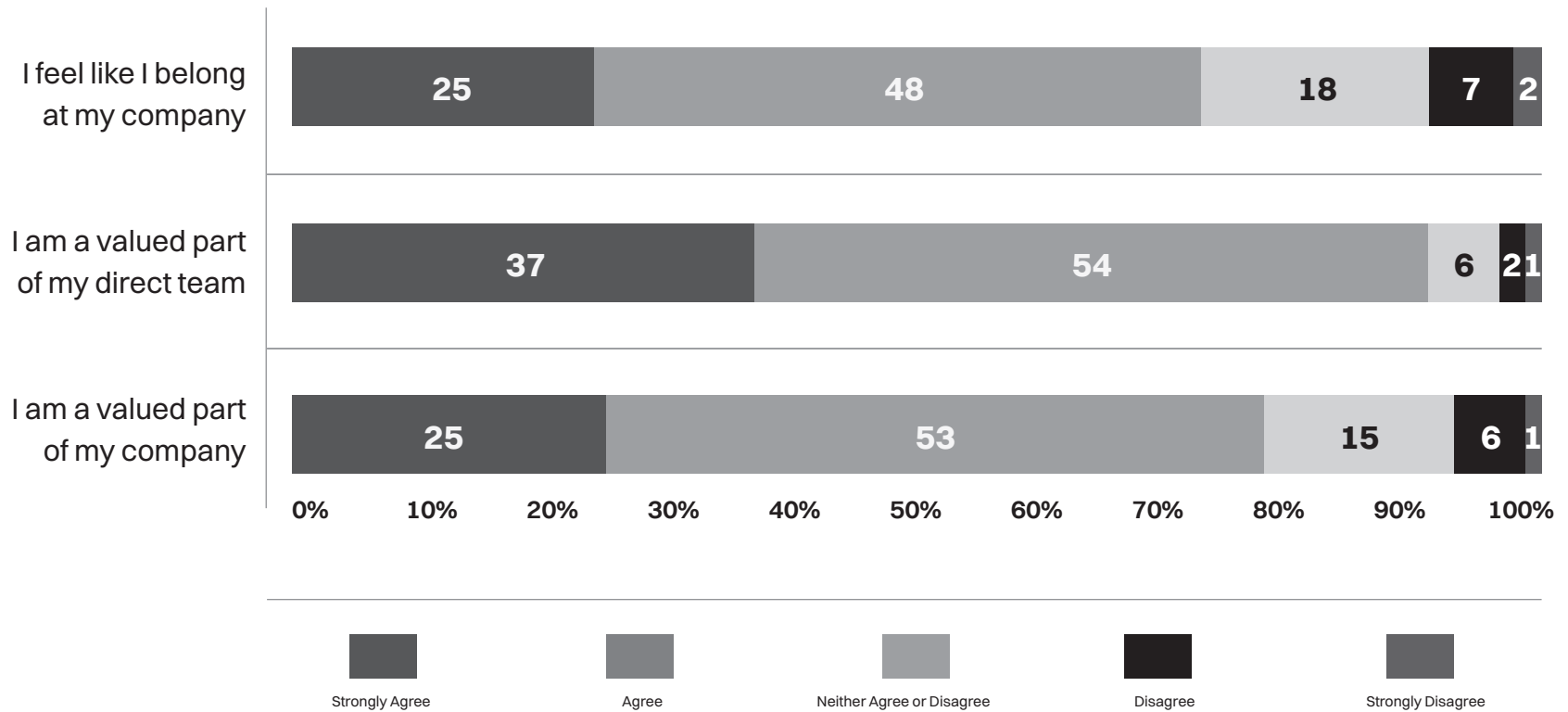
## IN YOUR VIEW, DO YOU BELIEVE YOUR COMPANY NEEDS TO IMPROVE DEI?



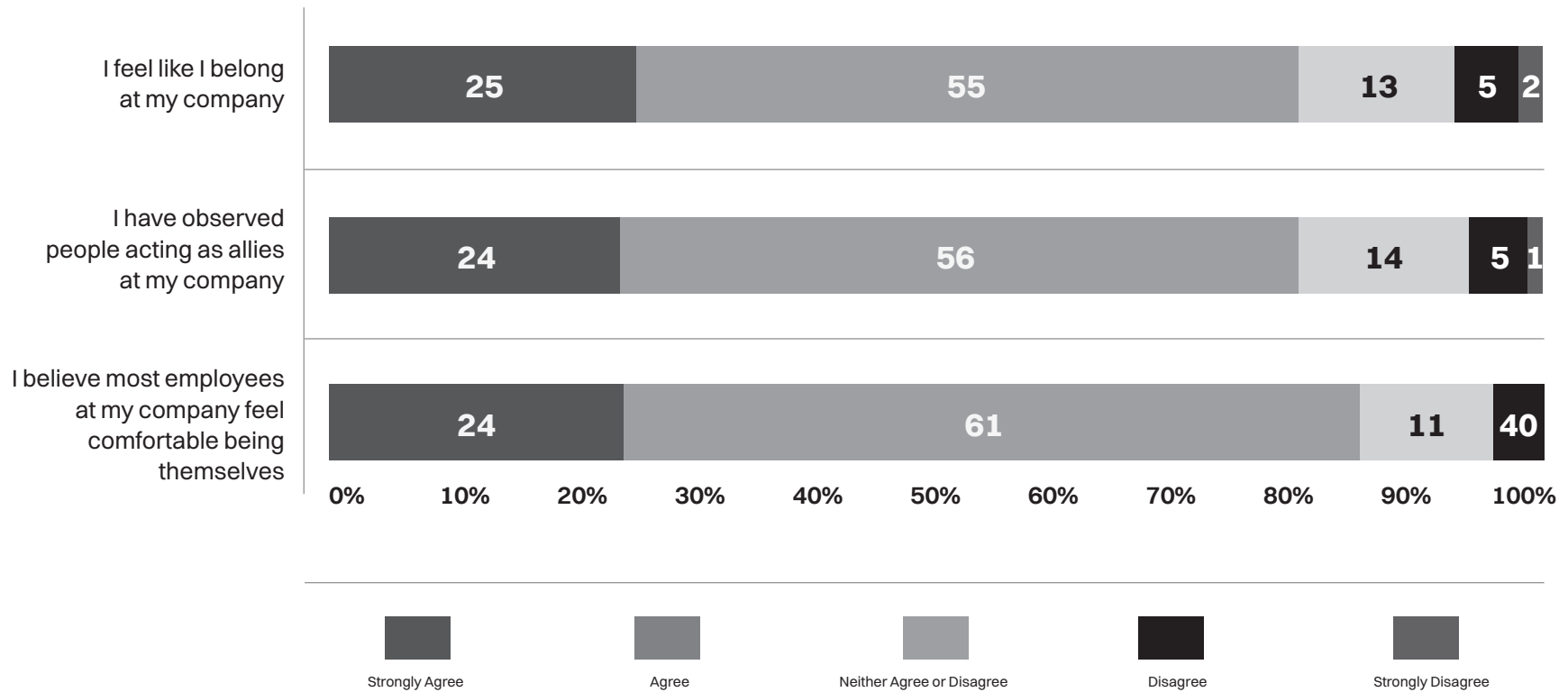
“ It doesn't  
often filter down  
past senior  
leadership. ”

Anonymous survey response to Identity based discrimination

# Value within teams is strong.



# There is a strong sense of belonging in the workplace.



# But there's still work to do.

I believe my company attracts a diverse workforce that reflects the community it operates within



I believe my managers are fair when it comes to hiring or career advancements



I am aware of my company's DEI strategy and/or policy procedures



0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%



Strongly Agree



Agree



Neither Agree or Disagree



Disagree



Strongly Disagree



Prefer not to answer

# NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR

# Identity impacts how behaviours are experienced.

These are the **four** most commonly reported negative behaviours in the workplace. Below each, cohort-level data shows which groups experience these behaviours at rates higher than the industry average.

**38%** have been interrupted or not listened to in meetings.

- Neurodiverse **55%**
- Disability or Serious Illness **52%**
- Caregiver (child & adult) **51%**

**27%** feel undervalued compared to peers of equal competence.

- Māori **38%**
- Pacific Peoples **33%**
- Disability or Serious Illness **33%**

**18%** have been bullied or undermined in some way.

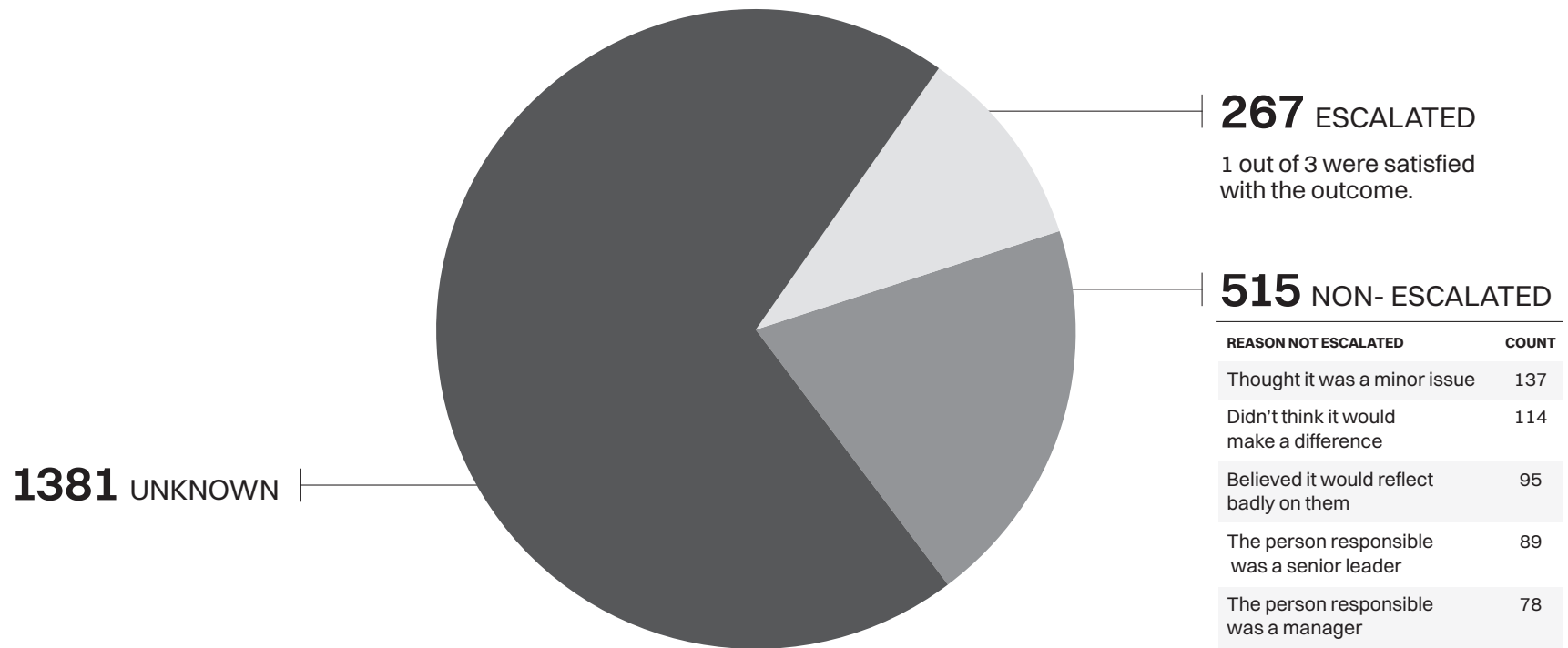
- Pacific Peoples **27%**
- Māori **26%**
- Disability or Serious Illness **26%**

**24%** saw others taking sole credit for shared work.

- Māori **32%**
- Disability or Serious Illness **31%**

# Negative behaviours go unreported because they're seen as 'minor issues'.

2,163 incidents of Negative Behaviour were reported.



**1381** UNKNOWN

**267** ESCALATED

1 out of 3 were satisfied with the outcome.

**515** NON- ESCALATED

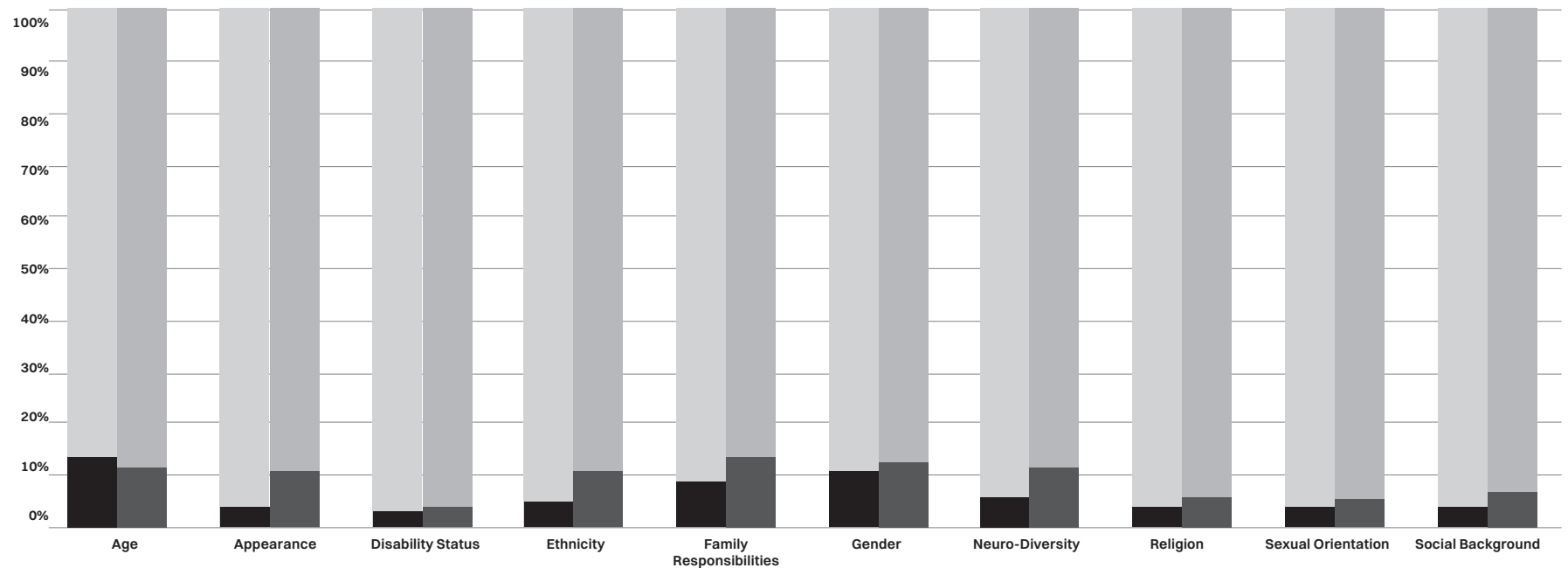
REASON NOT ESCALATED	COUNT
Thought it was a minor issue	137
Didn't think it would make a difference	114
Believed it would reflect badly on them	95
The person responsible was a senior leader	89
The person responsible was a manager	78

Note: Follow-up questions were not mandatory.

The background is a dark charcoal grey. It features several geometric shapes: a large dark grey semi-circle on the left side, a dark grey square in the top-left corner, and a dark grey square in the bottom-right corner. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

# IDENTITY-BASED DISCRIMINATION

# Age & gender are the most experienced form of identity-based discrimination.



Experienced



Not experienced



#Witnessed



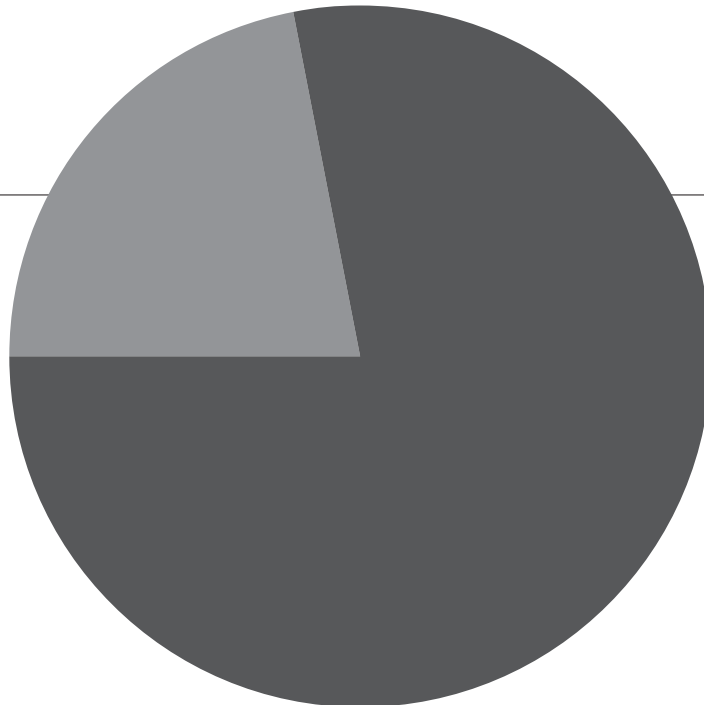
Notwitnessed

# 70% of people experiencing identity-based discrimination do not report it.

1,011 incidents of Identity-based Discrimination were reported.

361 Experienced / 650 Witnessed

**72** ESCALATED  
43% were satisfied with the outcome.



**258** NON- ESCALATED  
LESS THAN 30% WERE REPORTED.

REASON NOT ESCALATED	PEOPLE
Thought it wouldn't be addressed properly	77
Concerned about career impact	55
Didn't trust the escalation process	52
Believed it was a minor issue	49
Thought others would think it was minor issue	42

Note: Multiple instances could be selected. Follow-up questions were not mandatory. Totals may not represent all who experienced or witnessed discrimination.

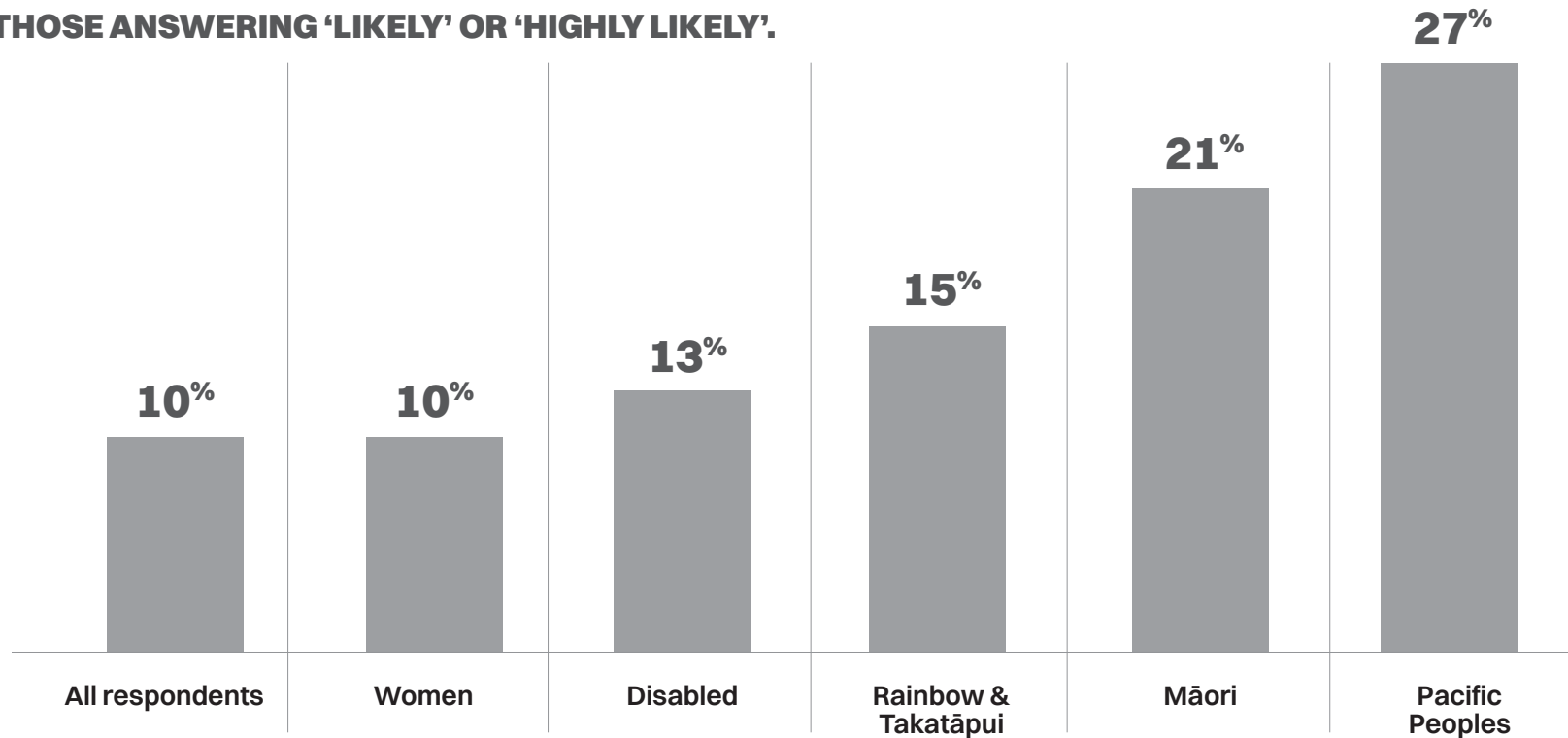


# TURNOVER & RETENTION

The impact of discrimination is clear, with minority communities more likely to leave the industry due to mistreatment.

**HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO LEAVE YOUR COMPANY BASED ON ANY LACK OF INCLUSION AND/OR DISCRIMINATION YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED?**

**THOSE ANSWERING 'LIKELY' OR 'HIGHLY LIKELY'.**



TURNOVER & RETENTION

# Identity shapes workplace priorities.

NZ European	Māori	Pacific Peoples	Man	Woman	18-24	25-34	35-44	45+	Hetero sexual	Non-dominant Sexuality	Disability or Serious Illness	No Disability or Serious Illness
Fairer Approach to Pay & Promotion	Flexible Working	A Leader Who Champions Diversity & Inclusion in the Workplace	Fairer Approach to Pay & Promotion	Fairer Approach to Pay & Promotion	Better Trained Managers	Fairer Approach to Pay & Promotion	Fairer Approach to Pay & Promotion	Flexible Working	Fairer Approach to Pay & Promotion	Fairer Approach to Pay & Promotion	Fairer Approach to Pay & Promotion	Fairer Approach to Pay & Promotion
More recognition of the Impact of Business Pressures	More Diverse Leadership	Flexible Working	Flexible Working	Flexible Working	Fairer Approach to Pay & Promotion	Flexible Working	Flexible Working	More recognition of the Impact of Business Pressures	Flexible Working	More recognition of the Impact of Business Pressures	Flexible Working	Flexible Working
Flexible Working	More recognition of the Impact of Business Pressures	A commitment to Addressing the Gender Pay Gap	Better Trained Managers	More recognition of the Impact of Business Pressures	More recognition of the Impact of Business Pressures	More recognition of the Impact of Business Pressures	Client-side Marketing Roles	A commitment to Addressing the Gender Pay Gap	More recognition of the Impact of Business Pressures	Flexible Working	More recognition of the Impact of Business Pressures	More recognition of the Impact of Business Pressures



# PRIORITIES & NEXT STEPS

“Saying the right things is easy.

Doing it is harder.”

# What you do next matters.

The 2025 Aotearoa DEI Census paints a complex picture, one of progress and promise, alongside persistent inequities and missed opportunities. While inclusion is improving in pockets, it remains uneven, especially effecting those with intersecting or marginalised identities.

Every data point shared here represents real experiences. And behind each number is a person navigating their workplace in a way many of us may never see.

## HERE'S WHERE WE GO FROM HERE:

- 1. LISTEN FIRST - Real change begins with listening to those most affected.**  
Acknowledge the gaps. Respect lived experience. Create space for honest conversations.
- 2. USE THE DATA - This isn't just a report, it's a roadmap.**  
Dig into your results, find the patterns, and ask what's missing. Let the data guide your next step.
- 3. CONNECT WITH OTHERS - Join a cohort - or start your own.**  
The Comms Council has created a dedicated space on its website - He Tāngata The People - for people to express interest in working groups; either joining those already focused on specific challenges, or creating new groups.



Commercial  
Communications  
Council

HE TĀNGATA  
THE PEOPLE