

Persistent race inequalities in the UK's labour market and how to address them in your workplace



Accommodating Diversity in the Workplace

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Agenda

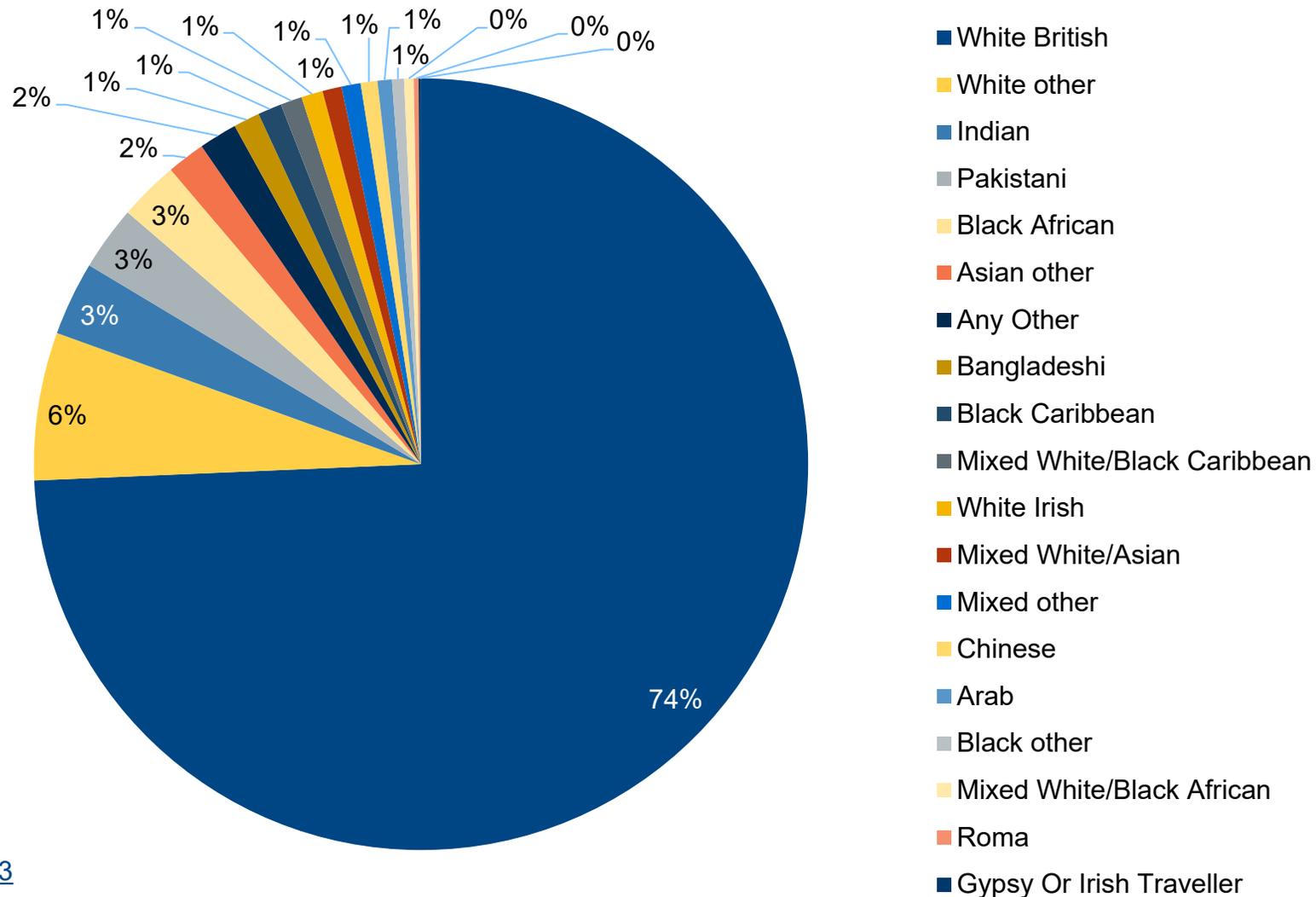
- **Race and ethnicity trends in the UK labour market**
- **How workforce inequalities manifest**
- **Why inequalities persist and what promotes employer action**
- **What you can do – lessons from organisational good practices**
- **Q&A**



Race and ethnicity trends in the UK labour market



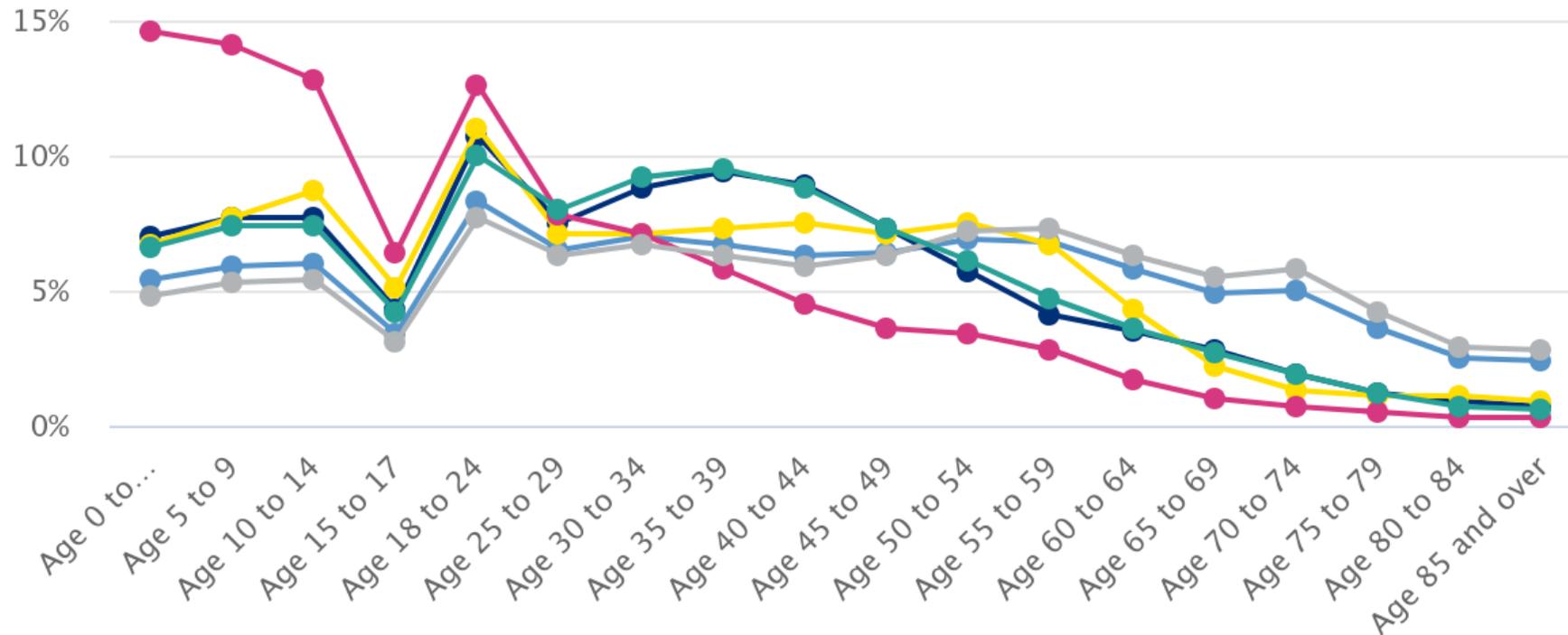
Ethnic profile of the UK population



Source: ONS data, 2023

Ethnicity by age

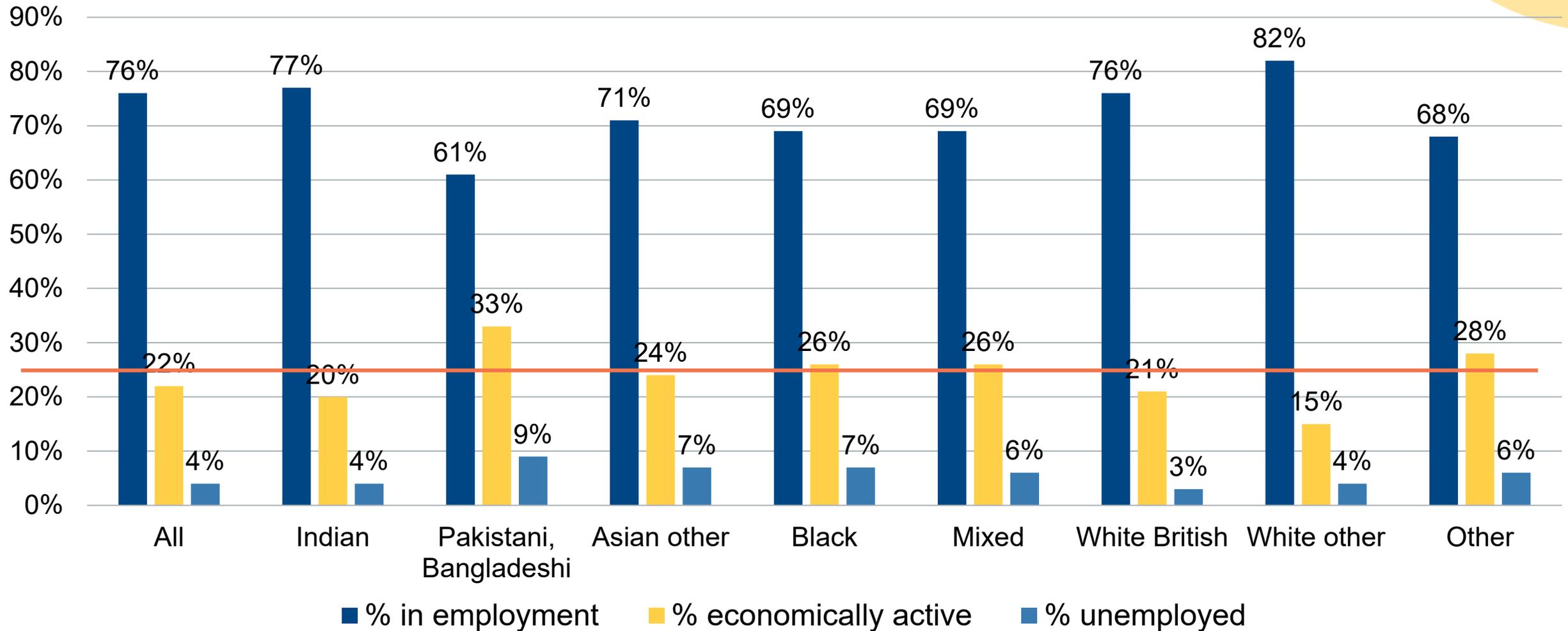
20% Title: Percentage of people in each age group, by ethnicity (5 ethnic groups). Location: England and Wales. Time period: 2021. Source: Ethnic group by age and sex, England and Wales: Census 2021| Ethnicity Facts and Figures GOV.UK



● All ● Asian ● Black ● Mixed ● White ● Other

Source: ONS data, 2023

Ethnic composition of the UK labour force



Intersecting factors affecting ethnic groups' labour market outcomes

- Gender
- Education levels
- Health status
- Marital status, parenthood, care responsibilities
- Geography, including housing
- Migration status

Ethnicity and sector

	All	Asian	Indian	Pakistani, Bangladeshi	Other Asian	Black	Mixed	White	White British	White Irish	White Other	Other
Industry	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.8	0.1	!	0.2	!	0.1	0.7	0.9	1	1.3	0.5	!
Energy and water	1.8	1	0.9	1	1.2	1.5	0.8	1.9	1.9	2.2	1.4	0.8
Manufacturing	8.5	6.5	8.3	5.3	4.7	4.9	5.8	8.9	8.8	7.2	10.2	6.4
Construction	6.5	2.7	2.8	3.1	2.1	3.5	5.6	6.9	7	6.9	6.4	4
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	16.4	18.6	12.6	25.9	20.3	12.3	17.8	16.3	16.3	10.5	17.5	17.7
Transport and communication	9.7	15.3	18.9	14.4	10.2	10.3	9.9	9.1	8.7	11.5	13.8	13.9
Banking and finance	18.3	20.3	21.2	16.3	23.4	16.2	21.6	18.1	17.9	18.4	20.6	18.4
Public admin, education and health	32.2	31.9	32.3	31.3	31.9	47.2	32.8	31.7	32.3	38.2	24.4	32.7
Other services	5.8	3.6	2.9	2.4	6	4	4.9	6	6.1	3.8	5.2	6.1

Experience of UK labour market for ethnic minorities

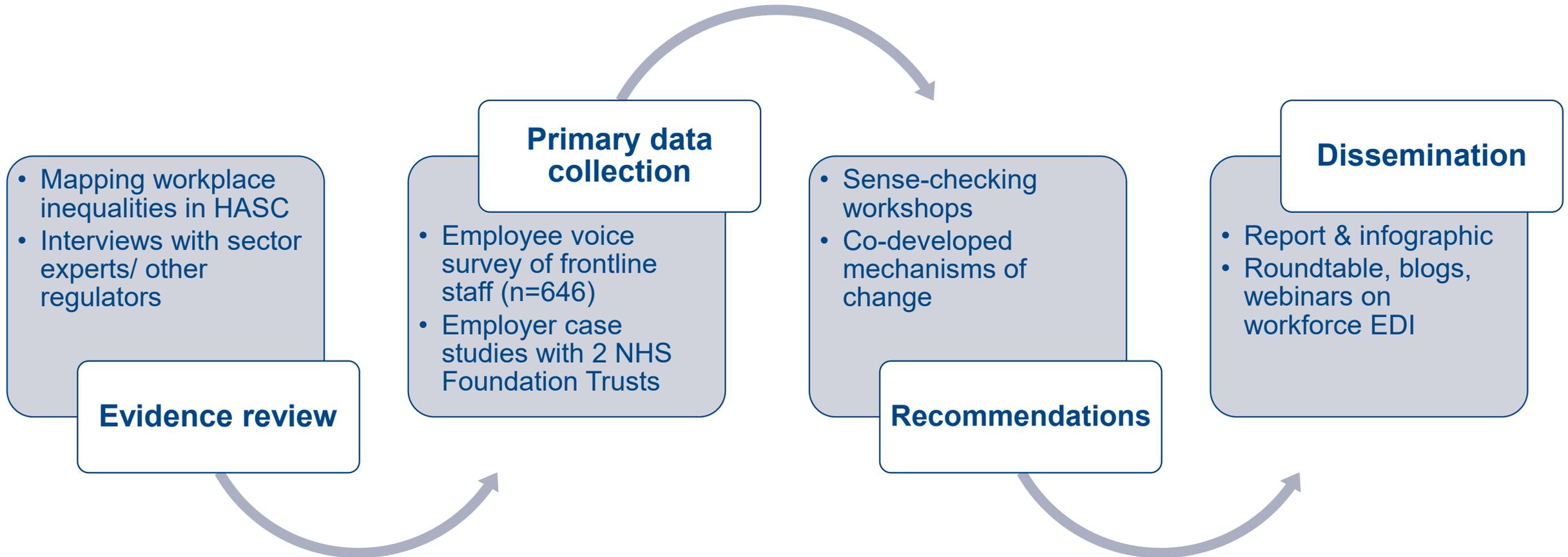
- Remain underrepresented in employment compared to white counterparts – lower pay; slower progression, barriers to recruitment; acute youth employment crisis (1 in 8 young people are not in education, employment or training)
- Struggles include:
 - Access to jobs - recruitment channels and advertisements do not effectively target them
 - Poor selection methods - unconscious bias in selection; focus on past experience rules out disadvantaged youth (Youth Futures, 2022).
 - 48% report experiencing prejudice and discrimination in the workplace (Youth Futures, 2024).
- Race and ethnicity was the second most common area for employer action (CIPD, 2022).



How inequalities manifest – IES findings from the health and adult social care sector research



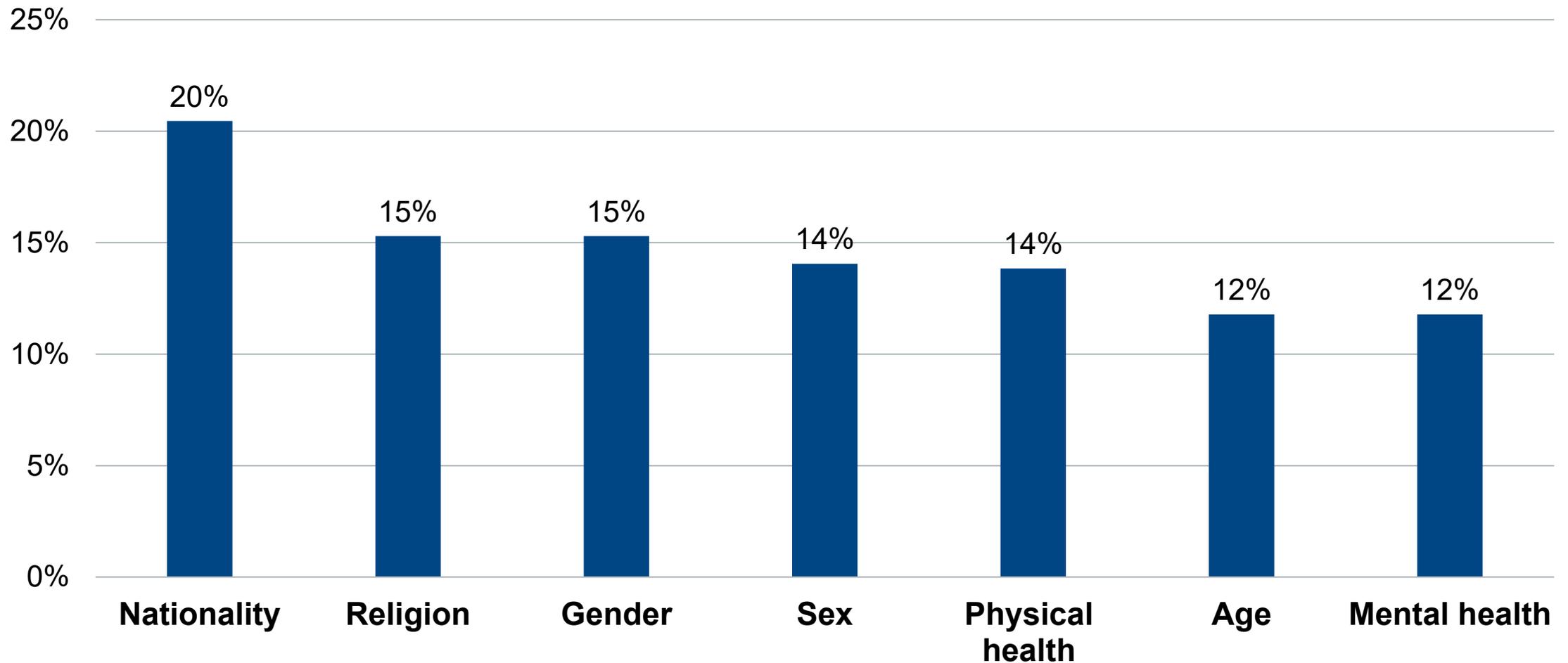
Mixed methods study design



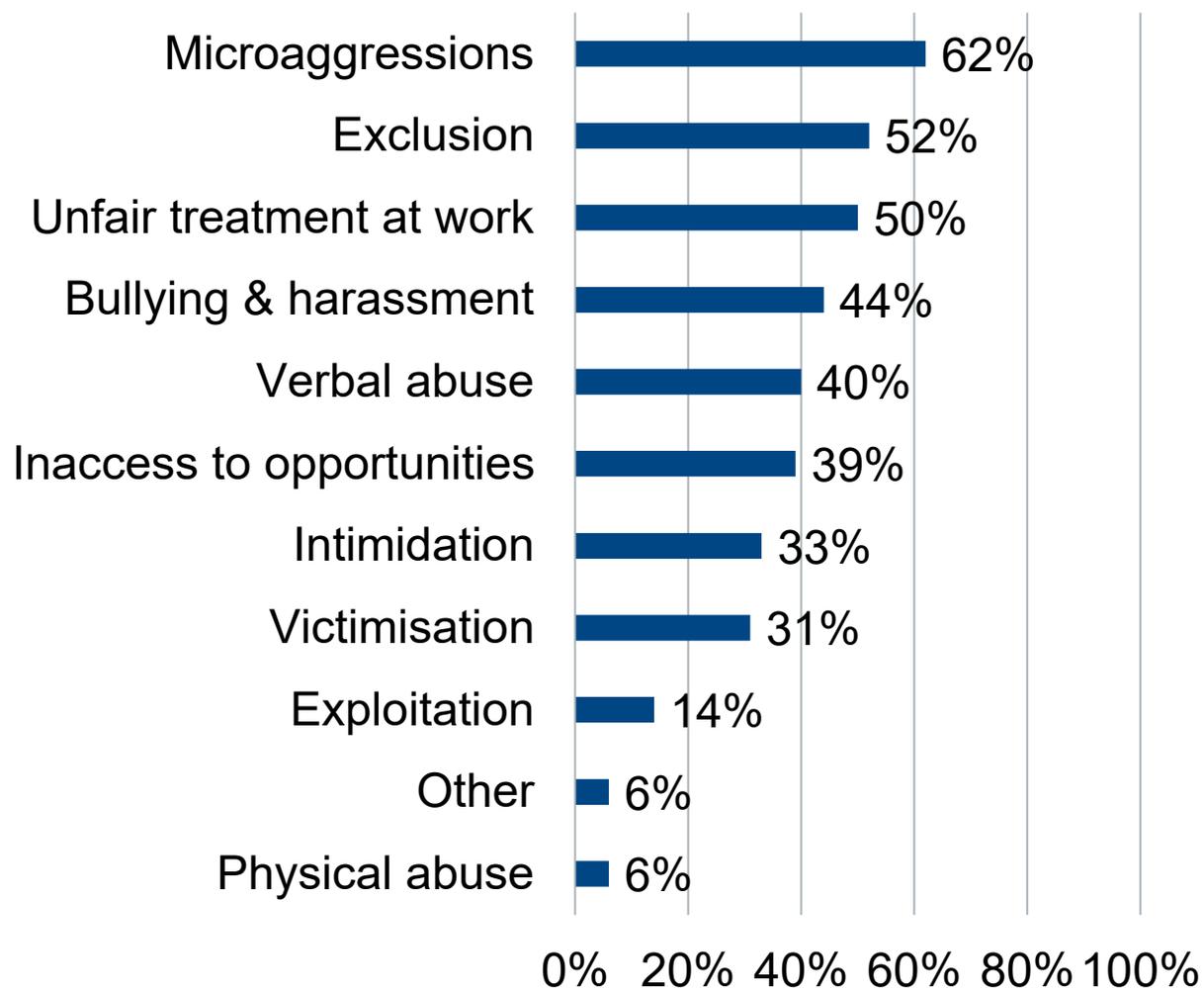
Survey findings on race/ethnicity inequalities

- 41% of survey respondents (N=646) had observed and/or experienced race/ethnicity-related inequalities
- Race/ethnicity inequalities were observed and/or experienced more frequently by Black, Asian and other ethnic minority respondents compared to white respondents
- Race/ethnicity inequalities are most prevalent across all HASc sub-sectors – much higher for acute care, community and social care services than other sectors
- Majority (68%) experienced two or more types of inequality

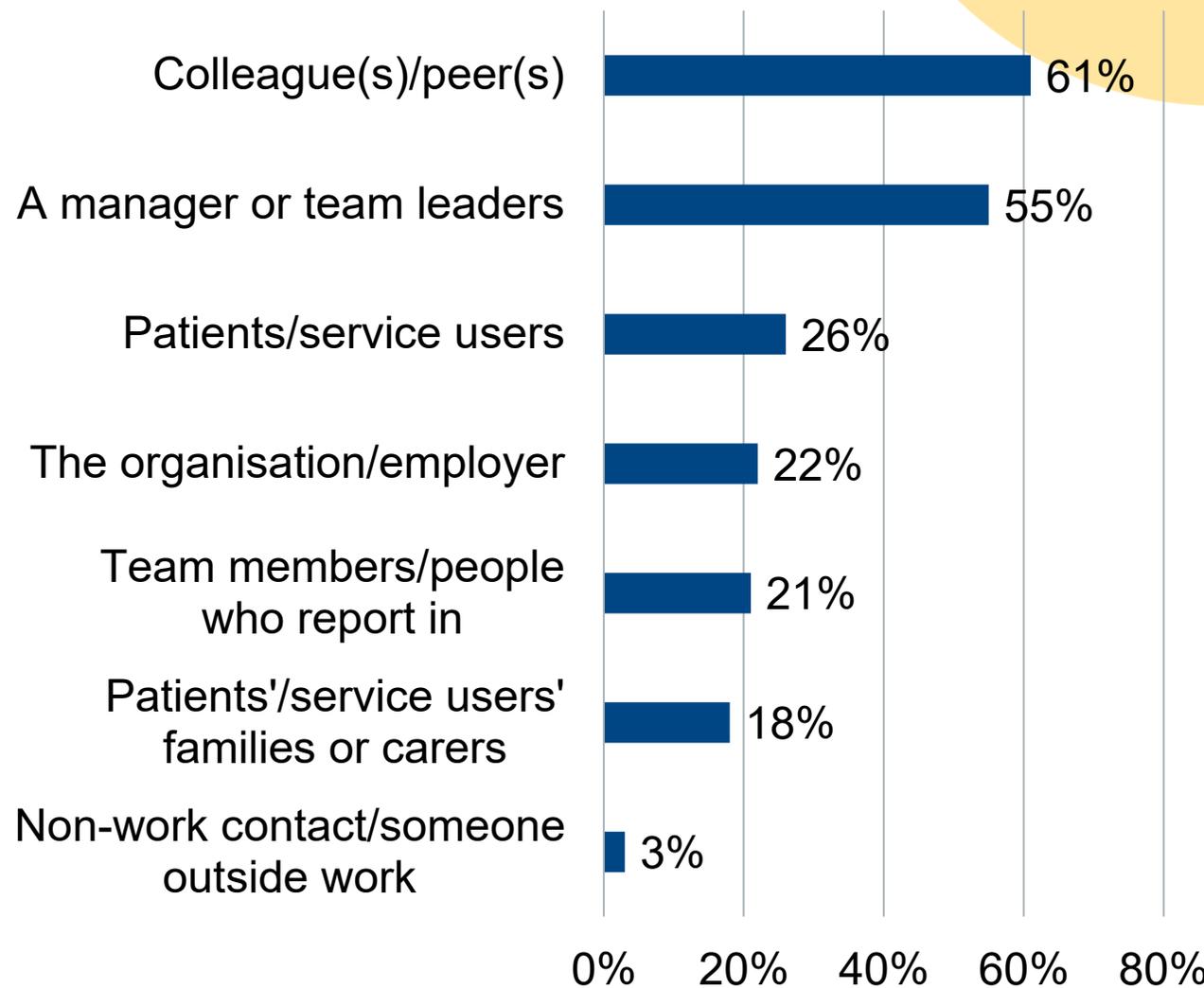
Combined discrimination - inequalities intersecting with race/ethnicity



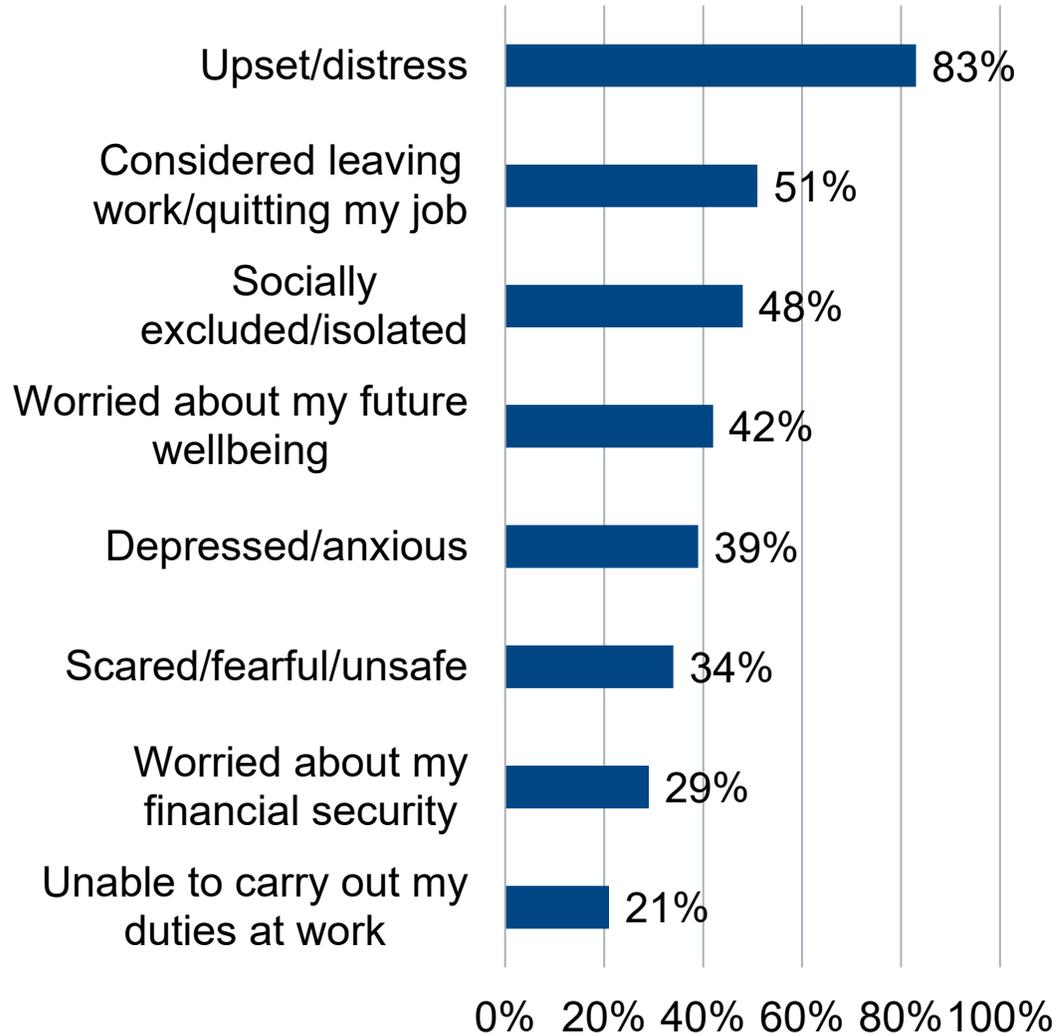
Manifestation of workforce inequalities



Sources of unequal treatment



Impact workforce inequalities on self



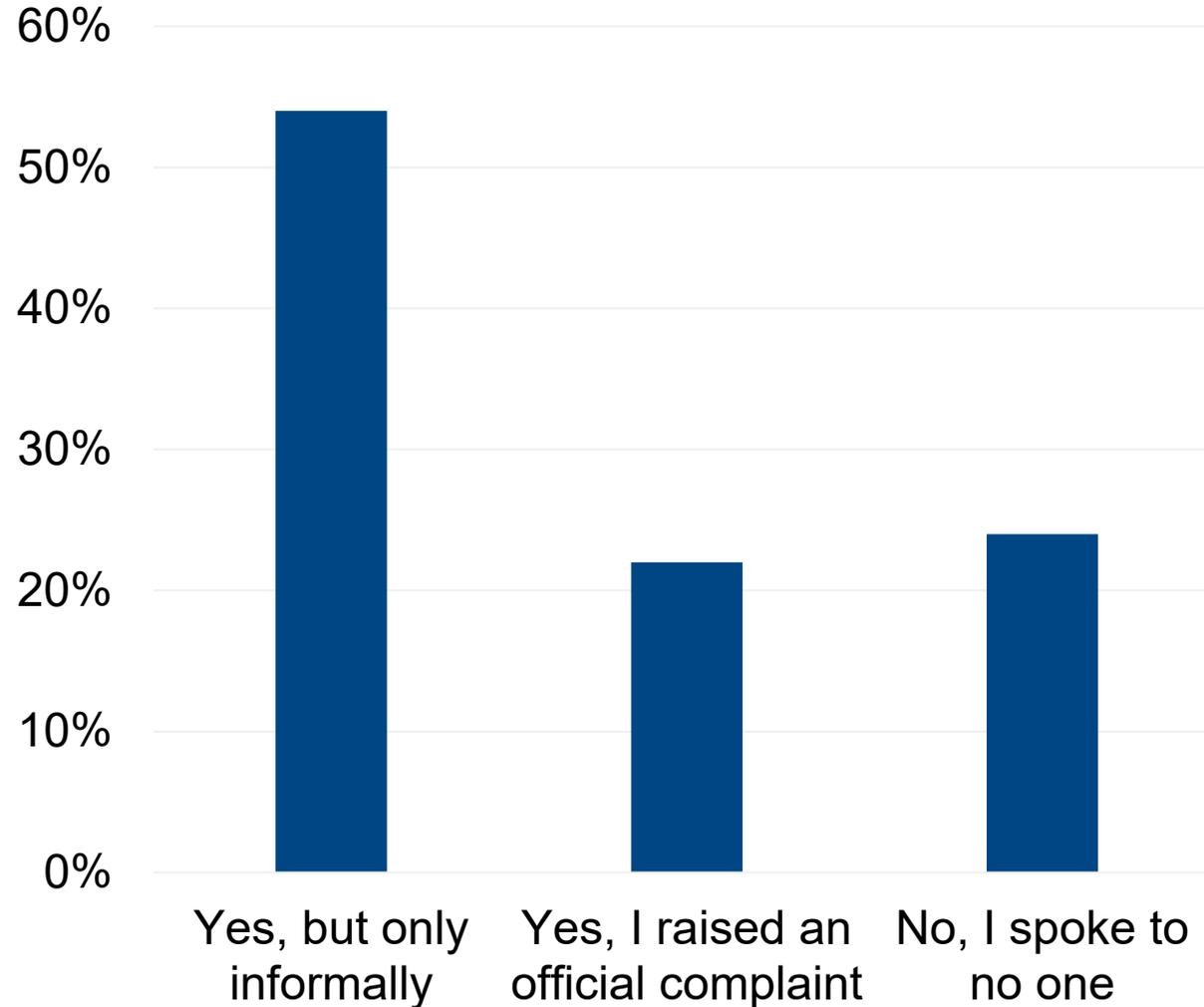
Impact workforce inequalities on career



Conditions driving inequality

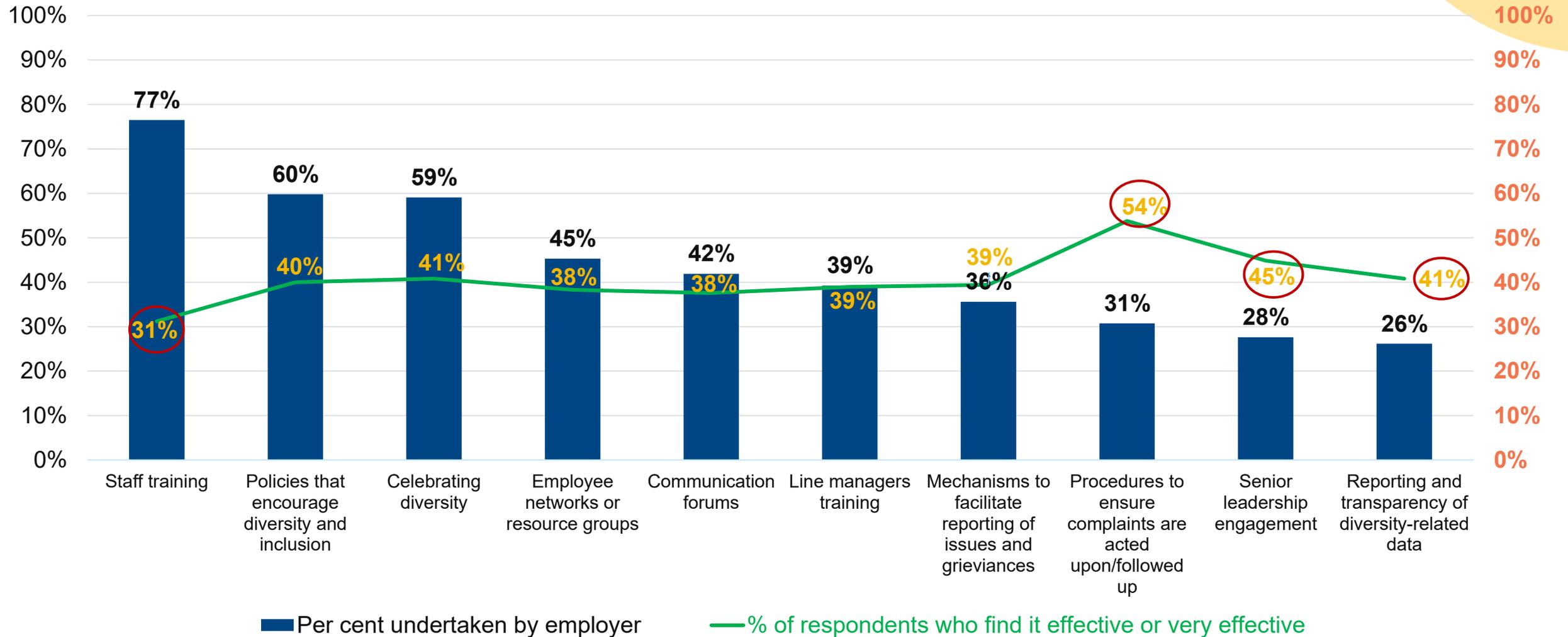


Reporting of race inequality



- The most common place to report was to a manager.
- The most common result was that no action was taken on their complaint.
- Around a quarter to a third did not report inequalities at all, feeling that:
 - no action would be taken,
 - fear of being seen as a troublemaker
 - not believing anything would change as a result.

What works to address inequalities



Reflective question for attendees

To what extent do these findings on race inequalities resonate with your experience within your own organisation?

Infographic available

Tackling workforce inequalities in health and adult social care

Survey findings from 646 respondents

Inequality types experienced and/or observed

Race/ethnicity-related inequalities most commonly reported **41%**

Followed by **gender or sex** inequalities **32%**

Microaggressions are the most common behaviour experienced in **race/ethnicity and gender or sex-related** inequalities (**60%**).

Physical disability/condition inequalities **22%**

Mental health condition/illness inequalities **18%**

Nationality inequalities **18%**

Systemic and institutional racism are deeply ingrained and operate in hidden ways.

Combined discrimination

68% survey respondents reported experiencing/observing **2-4 inequalities** at the same time.

Race/ethnicity and nationality inequalities most commonly intersected (**20%**).

An **intersectional** approach to EDI is **crucial** for effective behaviour change.

Impact of workforce inequalities

Over **80%** of respondents reported **feeling upset or distressed**.

More than **50%** reported having **considered leaving the job**.

Over **60%** reported a negative impact of inequalities on **career progression and promotion opportunities**.

Over **75%** reported a negative impact on their **work environment/relationships**.

Over **50%** experiencing/observing **physical disability-related inequality** reported

Over **40%** reported that **race/ethnicity inequalities** negatively impact **quality of services, quality of care, and interaction with**

Recommendations

Anticipatory impact mechanisms

Establish clearly defined targets for EDI that are linked to measurable progress.

Encourage collection and use of **EDI data** on workforce demographics, complaints, etc. by all providers.

Take a **proportionate approach** to workforce equity, tailored to the size and scale of providers.

Directive impact mechanisms

Inspectors to be **fully upskilled** on how to assess and identify **signs of workforce inequality**.

Inspectors to be aware of **relevant provider workforce data** in preparation for inspection.

Providers to be accountable with enforcement-focused measures necessary to ensure **ensure compliance to legislative and regulatory standards**.

Organisational impact mechanisms

Support providers to set clear accountability structures that ensure **senior leadership take responsibility** for EDI.

Encourage providers to be **proactive on workforce equality**, with appropriate strategies to support individuals at risk.

Relational impact mechanisms

Facilitate **open, honest, collaborative approaches** with providers

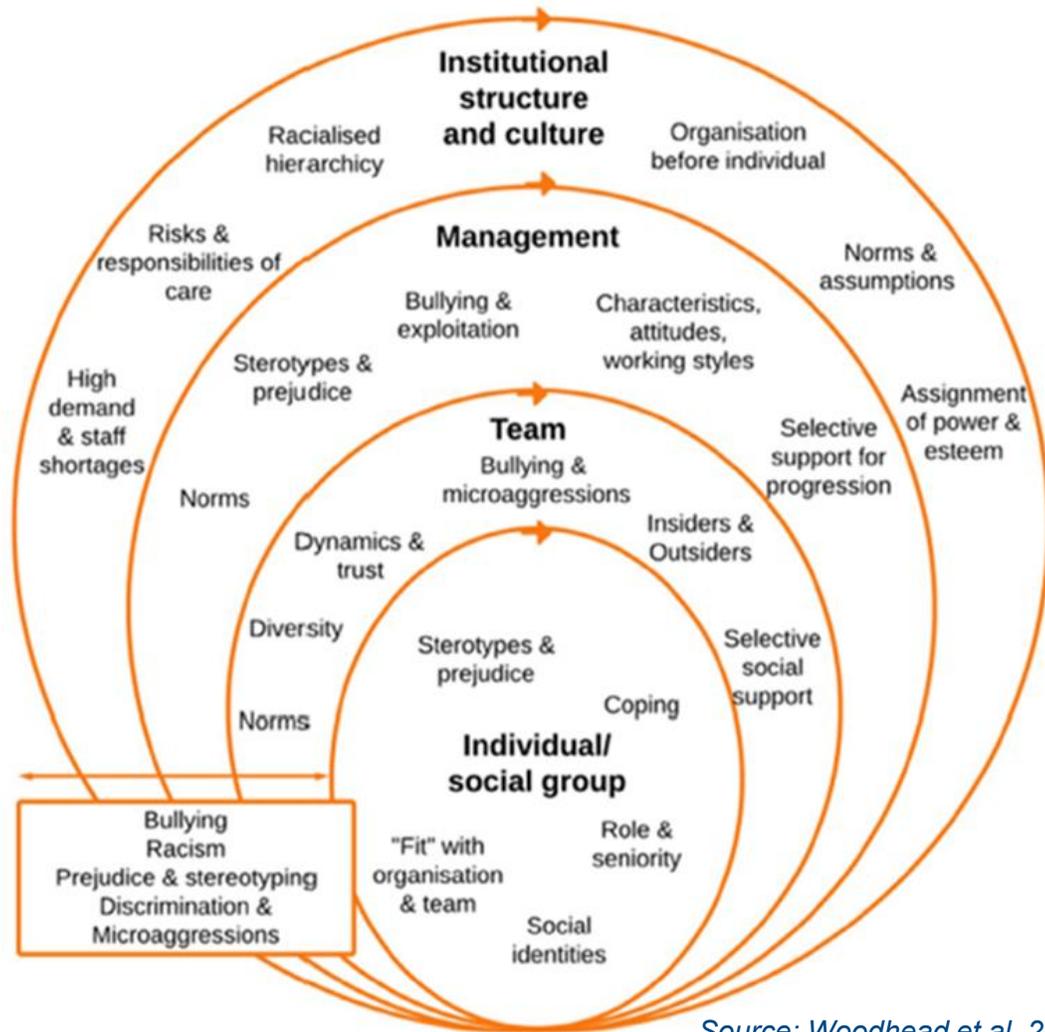
Establish **supportive peer networks** for inspectors to encourage sharing of best practices.

Informational impact mechanisms

Strengthen evidence **linking how workforce inequalities**

Facilitate the identification and

Drivers of persistent inequalities



Source: Woodhead et al, 2022

- Whole systems thinking is missing from efforts to tackle inequalities.
- Systemic and institutional factors are deeply entrenched.
- An intersectional approach to EDI is crucial for effective and lasting behaviour change.
- Senior leaders must create a safe environment and role model everyday inclusion .
- Cross-sectoral collaborations and accountability measures through EDI frameworks and clearly defined targets help.



What works to promote employer action and how you can address race inequalities in your workplace



IES findings on why employers take action on EDI

External drivers

- Regulatory compliance
- Market competitiveness
- Reputation or brand image
- Stakeholder or Client pressure
- Public or social expectations

Internal drivers

- Workforce skills and needs
- Organisational values and culture
- Innovation and creativity
- Organisational growth and productivity

Organisational good practices to tackle race inequalities

Presence of staff networks

Senior leadership diversity and engagement

Access to high quality workforce data

Dedicated organisational (infra)structure and processes

Skills, expertise, and resources

Organisational culture

Line manager buy-in

Workplace adjustments

Lived experience and collaboration

Ideas for action in your workplace

Individual level	Team level
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Place emphasis on lived experience• Institute a strong complaints/grievance procedures with effective resolution• Encourage constructive dialogue and sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish supportive peer networks to encourage sharing of best practices• Promote 'Inclusion for all' as a key approach• Upskill on how to assess and identify signs of workforce inequality
Management level	Institutional level
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reinforce the business case for EDI• Demonstrate senior leadership commitment and accountability• Invest in high-quality data and evaluating effectiveness of EDI investments• Set clear accountability structures for senior leaders to take responsibility for EDI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt an intersectional approach• Establish clearly defined, measurable EDI targets• Encourage the collection and use of EDI data• Facilitate sharing best practices• Encourage initiatives like complaints/grievance procedures and senior leadership engagement

Reflective question for attendees

Which practices have you adopted to tackle race inequalities in your organisation and to what effect?



Thank you

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