



Security Institute Diversity & Inclusion Survey Analysis

Published November 2022



THE SECURITY
INSTITUTE



Security Institute

Diversity & Inclusion Survey analysis

Contents

1. Executive summary.....	2
2. Methodology.....	3
3. Overall findings	4
4. Commentary on the findings.....	6
5. Recommendations.....	8
Annex 1: Analysis – Question by question.....	9
Annex 2: Recommendations for a follow-on survey	23
Annex 3: Survey Monkey Output	(Separate document)
Annex 4: Spreadsheet with raw data	(Separate document)
Annex 5: GISF Questionnaire summary	(Separate document)

1. Executive summary

In 2021, the first year of the Security Institute (SI) Inclusive Security Special Interest Group (ISSIG), a Diversity & Inclusion survey for the sector was carried out. The survey received 760 responses, of which 549 were from within the Security Institute and the remainder from the wider community. Even taking into consideration the fact that people tend to join professional bodies such as SI later in their career, the responses show the security sector has challenges to address in order to reflect the diversity of UK Society, the community the security sector serves.

In summary, the survey respondents were 78% Male, 63% aged 45 or over and 83% were white. The corresponding figures for UK Society were 49%, 49% and 85%. 88% identified as heterosexual and 12% identified with a disability; this shows a disparity with broader society where figures are 94% and 19% respectively.

The survey showed that women in particular face barriers getting into the sector and then, once within it, progressing. There are fewer respondents with disabilities than might be expected, and of those that did identify with disabilities, many stated they had not received the support they need, particularly those identifying with dyslexia.

The report examines some of the underlying factors that have led to the current context, including its significant recruitment relationship with the military, and its need to focus on profitability. It also notes growing views within the sector that to develop and thrive, the sector needs to recognise that profitability and diversity are not only compatible; but that a diverse workforce will make the sector more profitable.

The report explores possible causes and makes recommendations for the sector; in particular to:

1. Improve the image of the security sector for diversity and inclusion
 - Continue to build an identity for the security sector as a whole, as the Security Institute is doing
 - Engage all existing members of the sector with the initiative, articulating the value – morally and economically – of a diverse workforce.
2. Develop recruitment opportunities
 - Develop routes into the sector for all
 - Widen entry-level opportunities to the sector
 - More consideration for recruiting people with disabilities to the sector
 - More consideration of flexible working opportunities
 - Revisit recruitment processes within the sector and provide opportunities for hiring managers to gain access to techniques to increase diversity.
3. Improve progression opportunities and retention for those in the sector
 - Develop tools to address the most significant inequalities – which are in gender and disability
 - Support assistive technology for dyslexia related issues.
4. Run a follow-on survey in 2023
 - Recommendations for a follow-on survey are in [Annex 2](#).

2. Methodology

A baseline survey and Focus Group Discussions were carried out in July 2021 by the Security Institute. Over 500 responses were received. The survey was then advertised more widely online¹ and additional responses were received.

Questions covered:

1. Ethnic group
2. Ethnic group
3. Age
4. Educational level
5. Security Institute membership
6. Position in the sector
7. Disability
8. Disability (free text option)
9. Religion
10. Gender
11. Gender identity
12. Sexual orientation
13. Area of the sector worked in
14. Discipline of the sector worked in
15. Factors that have caused advantage in career to date
16. Factors that have caused advantage (free text option)
17. Factors that have caused disadvantage in career to date
18. Factors that have caused disadvantage (free text option)
19. Suggestions for improving levels of diversity & inclusion in the security industry

This report was collated by a security sector consultant, [David Clamp](#), in consultation with industry representatives, and based on the baseline survey output, attached as Annex 3. The survey did not include any identifiers, so it was not possible to track an individual's responses through more than one question. However, comparisons and inferences can be made based on the demographics identified.

All the available quantitative data from the surveys is recorded in Annex 3 and 4 and the answers to each individual question are analysed in detail in [Annex 1](#). Illustrative charts were generated where appropriate. Where possible, the data was compared to national UK Census or Office of National Statistics data; it was also compared to an Equality & Diversity Monitoring exercise which sampled 40 Global Interagency Security Forum (GISF) members in January 2021².

Five questions – 5, 8, 16, 18 and 19 – were free text questions. Key themes were identified from responses and each text response was allocated to a theme. Quotes from these questions have been used to illustrate points made throughout [Annex 1](#)³.

The sector is committed to becoming more inclusive in terms of all diversity indicators, as referenced in the recent Security Institute newsletter Validation Report⁴. It will be essential to compare the results of this survey to future surveys, such as the one proposed for 2023. Therefore, recommendations for how to develop future surveys are included in this in [Annex 2](#).

¹ One example is <https://www.ifsecglobal.com/security/security-institute-invites-sector-to-respond-to-inclusivity-and-diversity-survey/>

² GISF Equality & Diversity Monitoring – survey responses as of 14/01/2021 – attached as Annex 5

³ No spelling corrections have been made to the quotes but in some cases incomplete sentences have been enhanced with a clarification in [square brackets].

⁴ Validation Board Report Page 12 <https://security-institute.org/g2-2022/mobile/index.html>

3. Overall findings

This survey paints an important picture of a complex sector that is building a new identity as a diverse employer. It was clear from the high attendance and senior commitment to speak at a panel discussion on Inclusion and Diversity at the International Security Expo 2022⁵ that this is an area of interest to the sector. However, the sector is not a cash-rich one and leaders who look at other sectors who have been able to invest in EDI initiatives are looking creatively at how to recognize the value of bringing a focus on EDI to the sector.

The survey of 760 respondents from the security sector indicates a low level of representation of women in the sector (22% of the respondents compared to a national figure of 51%), with a majority of respondents (83%) identifying as white and 63% of the respondents as aged 45 or over; this compares to national figures of 85% and 29%. It tells us that the most significant inequity in the sector is gender: 78% of the respondents identify as male (the 2021 census records 51% of England and Wales's population as female⁶), and gender was identified as the most significant barrier in careers in the security industry by more respondents than any other factor. The figures show that there is still significant work to do to ensure that the sector is open and supportive for everyone.

Why is the gender balance so inequitable? Respondents said that women in the industry are not being taken seriously and are being held back due to their gender. Some noted that during their careers, assumptions were made that women have less relevant experience. This may be because a significant recruitment pathway into the private security sector has been from the UK military, which is itself 89% male and is working to balance its own diversity⁷. The survey provides evidence that there are real barriers for people who identify as female in this sector. It may be that the older, more senior sections of the sector are those which are most dominated by men; the data in this survey does not give us insight into that, but future surveys will need to. There is evidence that the sector may be changing (see next page about the GISF survey) but not fast enough to achieve equity.

Why is the sector older? The respondents are mostly older and have more senior roles – 65% were over 45, and 48% identified as senior or executive management. The older demographic may be a result of the significant proportion of those who enter the sector after another career, possibly in the uniformed services, or may result from the nature of Security Institute membership, which may be more attractive to members who are more established in their careers. While this older generation is still in work, recruitment initiatives will have limited impact on improving the gender balance.

Recruitment initiatives such as the 2018 Security Institute 'Next Generation in Security' initiative⁸ are welcome but need to be updated, made more visible and need to reach a wider audience using contemporary social media platforms. There has been some success in recent years with high profile recruitment for young people in the Cyber Security sector that could be used as a model.

Why is the sector predominately white? The ethnic identity of the sector is broadly representative of the nation as a whole: what this survey does not tell us is whether the diversity ratio changes amongst the more senior respondents; further surveys should be conducted to analyse whether senior levels of the sector are less ethnically diverse. It is clear that the sector must be open to all.

⁵ 27-28th September, Olympia, London

⁶ This survey defines gender as how the respondent would describe it; national statistics have so far been based on physical birth gender, though the 2021 Census data on gender identity will be released in November 2022.

⁷ 11.8% of the 2020 UK Regular Forces and Future Reserves were female. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-biannual-diversity-statistics-2021/uk-armed-forces-biannual-diversity-statistics-1-april-2021>

⁸ Introducing the 'Next Generation in Security' initiative <https://youtu.be/Fxx4wy7aFBC>

What are the other disparities? The significance of the gender and age inequalities should not distract from improving the diversity of the sector in other areas identified in the report where the disparity is less stark. In particular, 12% of respondents considered themselves to have a disability in the sector compared to 19% in the UK population as a whole. It is likely there are three main reasons for this:

1. people with a disability do not consider this to be a sector they want to or could be successful in joining;
2. recruitment processes in the sector prevent people with disabilities from being successful; and
3. respondents may have chosen not to record their disability.

Further analysis is required on this at the recruitment stage; one respondent to the survey noted they did not disclose a disability because of a concern they would be discriminated against. It is important to ascertain in future surveys if this concern is shared across the sector, as if employers are not aware of a disability will not be able to provide appropriate support. In addition, respondents, including some who have not declared a disability to their employer, have often had to provide their own support to enable them to work effectively – the most common area where respondents lacked support is with issues related to neurodivergence, especially dyslexia.

Although the diversity of the religious identities of the sector broadly matches the UK population, the survey responses showed lower Islamic representation than would be expected.

It is encouraging that in terms of sexual orientation the sector has a more diverse makeup than the UK population as a whole, but this is a rapidly changing area that we have to continue to monitor carefully.

Where are the barriers? 36% of all respondents identified some form of barrier or disadvantage during their career. By far the most significant was gender. The survey was completed by people who had successfully entered the sector – it does not record those who were not recruited; perhaps some have been unsuccessful at the application stage due to their identity. The other most significant barriers noted were Level of Experience, Race, Age and Educational Attainment. These observations imply that promotion within the sector favours older, better educated and less diverse candidates.

A smaller number of respondents felt that their military experience had been a barrier to progression. The inference is that diversity initiatives have encouraged some recruiters to look to non-traditional sources of staff. Anecdotally the proportion of non-military recruits in the humanitarian sector has risen in recent years. It is encouraging to see that some of the most visible supporters of EDI initiatives (for instance the panel at the above-mentioned Security Expo) come from the majority group and articulate convincingly on the benefits of a more diverse workforce for the efficiency and profitability of the sector as a whole.

4. Commentary on the findings

4.1 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the Security Sector

Can the sector afford EDI? The security sector is not, compared to other better funded sectors, one where funding is available to build expensive EDI units within organisations. Indeed, some managers see EDI as an expensive ‘nice to have’. But a motivated, inclusive workforce is a profitable one, and all managers should look to build a positive inclusive team as part of developing their own profitability. This put the onus on all managers to advocate for EDI.

Is the sector already changing? Although it is not possible to draw from the data whether the gender balance is better for younger or less senior staff⁹ it is intuitively the case that the sector is more diverse and younger at less senior levels. Indeed, there is evidence for this. A similar but smaller survey carried out by [GISF](#) in 2021 of security professionals in the humanitarian sector showed that they were on average younger, and the gender balance, while still not achieving parity, was less stark (62.5% identifying as male). There is a danger of stereotyping, but when the sector is older, there can be a tendency of less enthusiasm for concepts of inclusion, which are can be associated with a younger demographic.

Is the sector united behind change? A small, vocal minority rejected Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives. Some felt discriminated against for being in the majority (mostly white, male and heterosexual, sometimes also those who identified that they had a military background). However, the survey does identify that the number of people who raised this is significantly less than those who raise lack of diversity as a significant obstacle for the sector to overcome.

4.2 Recruitment

There are three issues to address – making the sector attractive, making recruitment inclusive, and once staff are recruited, keeping them in the sector to build a rewarding career.

Recruiting more broadly requires tools which include targeted recruitment, anonymized recruitment, and advocacy for a more diverse sector. Respondents pointed to the need to ensure that recruitment practices within the sector are fair and open; there is a significant opportunity for implementing more inclusive recruitment processes. Recruitment in the sector is not just the province of HR departments; all hiring managers need to recognize the need to increase diversity in the sector.

Perceptions and buy-in are critical. The security industry does not always require the highest skilled entrants to the sector: it is more economically efficient for staff to learn on the job, and progress through experience rather than attracting well qualified, expensive, new recruits. And many employers are putting in measures to improve the diversity of the sector, but in some cases, these are being confused with (or interpreted as) positive discrimination, particularly by the small vocal minority mentioned above. There is evidence of support for increased diversity and inclusion in the sector, but also resentment and suspicion of it. There is an opportunity for communicating clearly about the difference between opening recruitment opportunities to more diverse groups (legal and to be encouraged), and positive discrimination (mostly illegal under the Equalities Act 2010).

⁹ A recommendation for a follow on survey is for analysis of age / seniority against gender or ethnicity to enable tracking of change.

4.3 Retention

Retention can be strengthened not only by revisiting internal recruitment processes, but also by reinforcing pathway-generating projects such as that carried out by the Inclusive Security Special Interest Group within The Security Institute (IS SIG), the [Women's Security Society](#), and the Rainbow Group within the SIG.

That said, setting up groups will only impact the likely members of such groups and their supporters, but this initiative needs to impact across the sector. The voice of the white, well-educated, older, security professional diversity advocate is critical and more work needs to articulate why the sector needs a diverse workforce to thrive in the 21st Century. The data shows us there are more advocates for diversity and inclusion than opponents, and they should be given a voice to promote retention in the sector. But also, we need to look at the value of promoting the skilled, eloquent, diverse advocates for EDI to avoid them leaving the sector before they achieve their potential.

5. Recommendations

These brief recommendations summarise the key themes of the report:

- 5.1 Improve the image of the security sector for diversity and inclusion
 - Continue to build an identity for the security sector as a whole, as the Security Institute is doing
 - Engage all existing members of the sector with the initiative, articulating the value – morally and economically – of a diverse workforce.

- 5.2 Recruitment opportunities
 - Develop routes into the sector for all
 - Widen entry-level opportunities to the sector
 - More consideration for recruiting people with disabilities to the sector
 - More consideration of flexible working opportunities
 - Revisit recruitment processes within the sector and provide opportunities for hiring managers to gain access to techniques to increase diversity.

- 5.3 Improve progression opportunities and retention for those in the sector
 - Develop tools to address the most significant inequalities – which are in gender and disability
 - Support assistive technology for dyslexia-related issues.

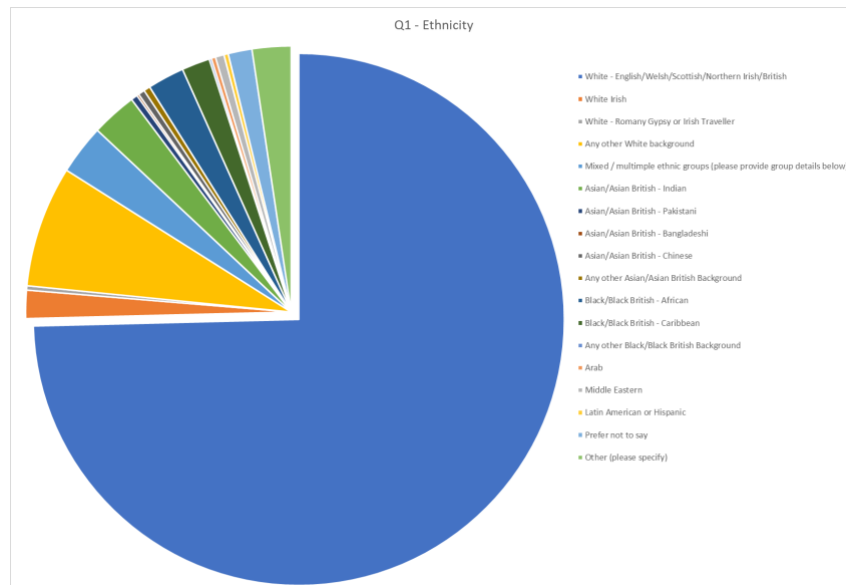
- 5.4 Run a follow on survey in 2023
 - Recommendations for a follow-on survey are in [Annex 2](#).

Annex 1: Analysis – Question by question

The survey consisted of 19 questions. The responses to the survey are collated in a Survey Monkey output document attached as Annex 3. This section analyses the results for each question in turn.

Q 1 & 2 Ethnicity¹⁰

83% of the 760 people sampled identified as white¹¹. This correlates to the 2021 UK census data which records that the UK population has 85% identifying as white¹² and to the 2021 GISF member survey which was 84%. Other ethnicities broadly matched census percentages (e.g. 2.8% of those sampled identified as Indian,



compared with 2.8% in the census). The Ethnic Identity Category groups broadly, but not completely, match the UK census groupings (i.e., the census does not record Latin American / Hispanic as a grouping, but the survey did). It is worth comparing the sector to the UK armed forces, where only 8% identify as BAME (i.e. 92% identify as white.)¹³ The GISF data on non-white groupings varied from the Security Institute data, possibly as a result of the small data set: only one of the 40 respondents identified as non-white.

There are perceptions identified in the free text questions that ethnic identity could be seen as either a barrier (30 people felt they had been people discriminated against because of their ethnic identity), or an advantage (5 people felt they had been given opportunities on the basis of their ethnic identity). But it is important to note that only one respondent identified non-white ethnicity as an advantage (the first quote below); the rest felt that their white ethnicity had been to their advantage. Stereotypes of the sector are unbalanced; and recruitment cannot be seen to unfairly benefit any group.

Quotes from free text questions

- *Being a woman of colour has been a huge advantage*
- *I think perceptions of my race/skin colour has /is defined/challenged my ability and capability, primarily in a negative context.*

¹⁰ Q1: What is your ethnic group? Please choose one option that best describes your ethnic group or background. Q2: If you answered 'Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups' above, please specify

¹¹ Including White Irish, Romany Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Any other White background

¹² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/articles/populationestimatesbyethnicgroupandreligionenglandandwales/2019>

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-biannual-diversity-statistics-2021/uk-armed-forces-biannual-diversity-statistics-1-april-2021>

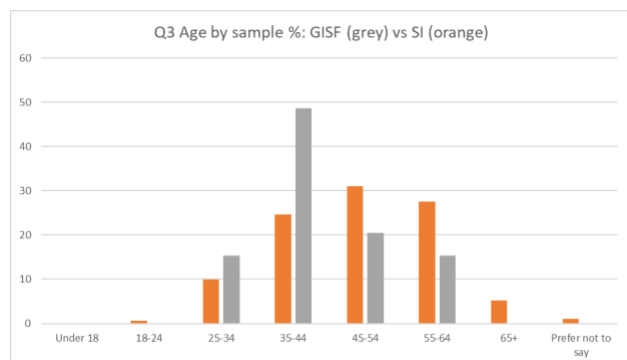
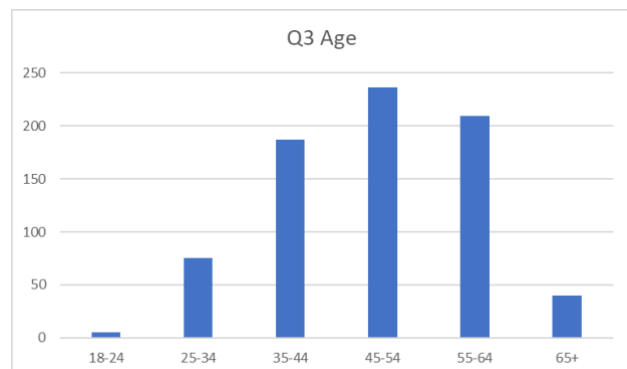
- *Being white British makes me easier to vet and able to hold posts reserved for British nationals*
- *I have no doubt that being male & white has made it easier for me to progress*
- *Sometimes race plays a role in appointing employees to certain positions*
- *I am very experience (sic) Senior manager, however previous informed for global company where racism was very open, I was always under paid than rest of my colleagues however my region was always higher achiever.*
- *Being an Asian and from a country that is not very well perceived to be progressive [is seen as a barrier]*

Q 1 & 2 Summary:

- There is a significant opportunity to increase diversity of the sector.
- Recruitment initiatives could include advertising placed to attract more diverse groups, potentially with role models from ethnic minorities

Q3 Age¹⁴

The most populous age range for the sector was 45-54, with 55-64 second – 63% of the respondent were over 45, compared to 49% of the England and Wales working age average¹⁵. With an older sector, there may be a tendency for less enthusiasm for concepts of inclusion, which are more associated with a younger demographic. The older demographic may be a result of the significant proportion of entrants who join the sector after a military career. It also shows that the Security Institute attracts members who are more established in their careers. The GISF sample by comparison is notably younger – only 35% were over 45 - which may reflect the humanitarian sector as a whole.



¹⁴ Q3: What is your age group?

¹⁵ Derived from

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/populationandhouseholdestimatesenglandandwales/census2021> – see Q3 worksheet in Annex 4

Quotes from free text questions

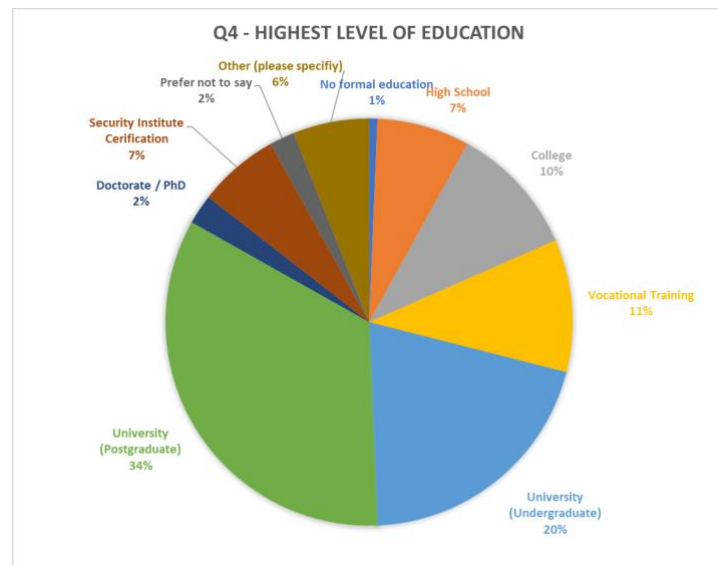
- *As you get older it is harder to get work because HR and recruiters do not understand the value of experience*
- *In an increasingly digital environment there is a general assumption that it's not for someone my age*

Q 3 Summary:

- Younger people in the sector might not see the value in joining the Security Institute
- There should be better career paths that enable progression within the sector rather than rely on those joining the sector in a second career for the more senior positions
- The messaging in this recruitment campaign needs to ensure that it does not alienate existing older members of the sector
- Increase visibility of the difference between positive discrimination (generally prohibited under the Equality Act 2010, unless an occupational requirement applies) and increasing access to a sector for minority groups (legal and to be encouraged)

Q 4 Level of Education¹⁶

The respondents had generally received a high level of education - 73% of the respondents had received some form of further education and the largest single group had achieved a postgraduate qualification. Although overqualification was noted as a barrier by one respondent (see quote below) this appears to be a well-qualified sector, or at least the respondents to this survey, as noted elsewhere were in more senior management roles. The inevitable recommendation is therefore to broaden opportunities within the sector at entry level, with promotion of initiatives like the 2018 Security Institute recruitment video¹⁷ as well as ensuring that career progression is open to all.



Quotes from free text questions

- *An engineering degree (in a different field) helps with my problem solving skills.*
- *My degree helped me secure my first role*
- *Masters degree in Criminology has opened doors*

¹⁶ Q4: What is your highest level of education?

¹⁷ Introducing the 'Next Generation in Security' initiative <https://youtu.be/Fxx4wy7aFBc>

- *An undergrad degree in Criminology and Law showed my personal interest in security which my MD has encouraged through joining the Institute and allowing me time to attend conferences etc.*
- *Early career – entry barred due to postgraduate level qualifications! (I was actually told this)*

Q 4 Summary

- Widen entry level opportunities with initiatives like the 2018 Next Generation in Security' video

Q 5 – Security Institute Certification¹⁸

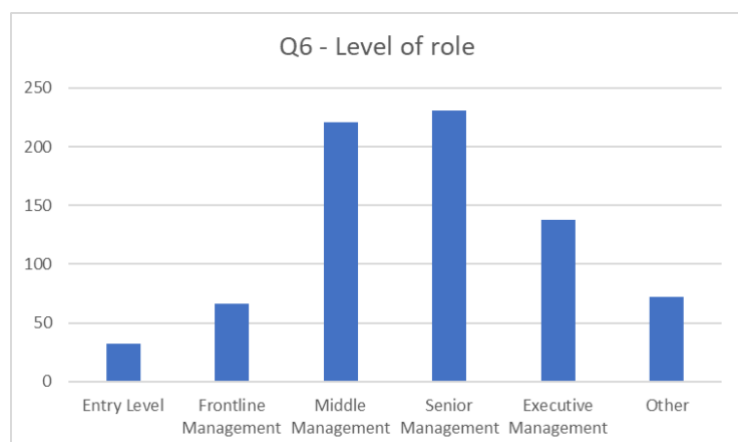
This question allowed a free text answer and was interpreted differently by different respondents – some thought the question was asking about their level of Security institute qualifications and some about their level of membership. 27 respondents noted their level of Security Institute qualification – 4 at Level 3 (certificate Level), 19 at Level 5 (Diploma level); and 4 at Level 7 (Advanced Level). 13 noted their level of Security Institute membership (3 AsyL, 8 MsyL, 2 FsyL). 6 recorded that they were CsyP. The inference that can be drawn here is that in order to attain these levels of qualification, these respondents were generally better qualified, though the sample of respondents was not great enough to draw conclusions - only 10% of those surveyed answered this question.

Q 5 Summary

- In future surveys only allow choices for this question (eg Level 3, Level 5 or Level 7)

Q 6 – Position within the sector¹⁹

The results from this question broadly follow the line of the previous two questions, suggesting either that the respondents to the survey were biased towards the more senior levels of the sector. 48% were at senior or executive management level with a very small percentage (4%) of entry level responses, suggesting a lack of responses from that important part of the sector.



¹⁸ If you answered 'Security Institute Certification' in Q4, please specify.

¹⁹ Q6: What is your position within the sector?

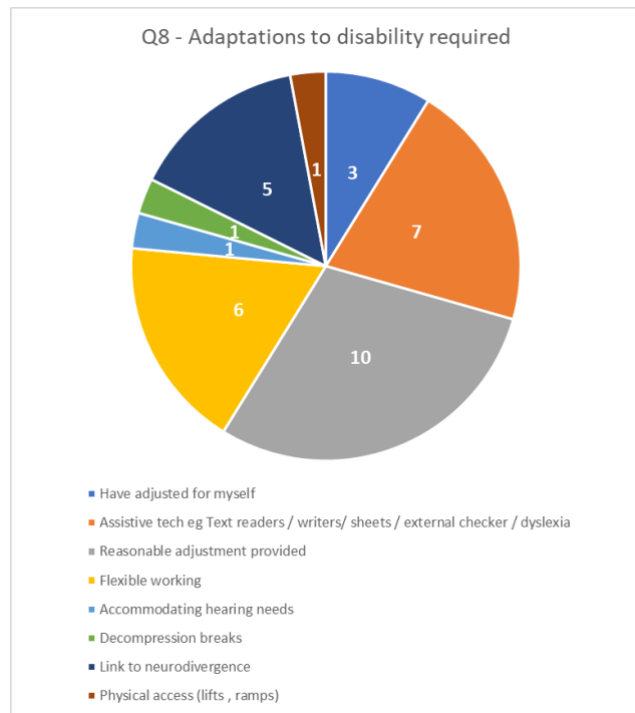
Q 6 Summary

- In a follow-on survey ensure that there is broader response from all ranges of seniority across the sector.

Q 7 & 8 Disability²⁰

12% of the respondents considered themselves to have a disability, compared to 19% of the working-age UK population²¹. The GISF result is comparable to the SI survey (12.5% of the GISF sample considered themselves to have a disability). This implies that there is some form of barrier to entry and progression for people with disabilities. This could be either because:

- people with a disability do not consider this to be a sector they want to or could be successful applying to;
- recruitment processes in the sector prevent people with disabilities being successful in joining the sector;
- Career progression, with so many coming into the military who have legitimate limitations on disability²²



Whichever is the case, there is clearly work to do to increase recruitment and career progression amongst people with disabilities.

In Q8, a free text question, 34 respondents noted that they required some form of adaptation. Analysis of the responses showed the themes of the response they identified – a third of these were not specific but noted that their employer had made some form of appropriate adaptation (see chart). The most common adaptation required by respondents was some form of assistive technology (whether text readers or writers, use of external checkers). Most of these seemed to relate to dyslexia in some form, as did the 5 responses related to neurodivergence. So together 11 of respondents identified a need for support needs with dyslexia related issues. As these were free text answers, there may have been other responses who were less explicit but who were grouped in the ‘reasonable adjustment provided’ group, flagging that this is an area the sector needs to provide

²⁰ Q7: Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Q8: If you answered 'yes' to Q7, are there any reasonable adjustments you believe could/should be made to assist in your day-to-day activities?

²¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2019-to-2020/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2019-to-2020#disability-1>

²² One respondent noted: “I do not have a full disability as defined above but I do receive a war disability pension. As a self employed person I do not disclose this disability to employees as I am not required to and I manage it myself. I would not feel comfortable disclosing it for fear of discrimination”.

support. It is also worth noting that 6 respondents identified flexible working as an adjustment that could / should be made – which suggests that there is more that needs to be done there too.

Quotes on reasonable adjustments from Q8:

- *I have always adjusted my own setting to suite me (sic) as mass produced attempts offer little value.*
- *I have a reasonable adjustment passport and assistive technology provided by work*
- *[We require] Implementation of some additional software for staff with learning disorders, hearing and visual difficulties. The way in which we distribute our company messages to allow it to be more accessibility compliant*
- *[My organisation provides] flexible timing and place of work*
- *[We need] Decompression breaks where applicable and allowable*
- *I manage these myself mainly. However, I do find social interactions fatiguing*

Q 7 & 8 Summary:

- More consideration for recruiting people with disabilities to the sector
- More support for assistive technology for dyslexia related issues
- More consideration of flexible working opportunities

Q 9 - Religion²³

Of the group sampled, 45% identified as Christian, much lower than the most recent set of Government data available²⁴ which records 56% identifying as Christian. The likely explanation is that Government data collects a more limited set of characteristics and does not distinguish between atheist, agnostic and those who prefer not to say, some of whom might have identified as Christian as a ‘default response’ in the UK without more nuanced options.

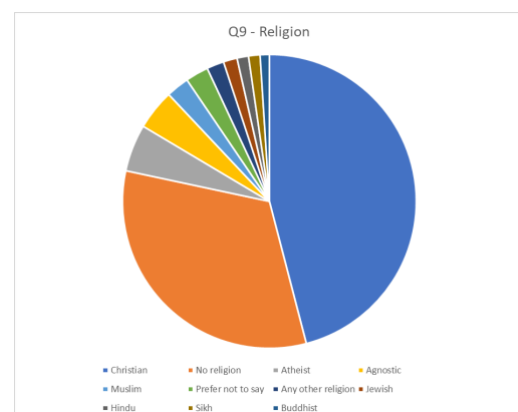
The 2.5% of respondents who identified as Muslim is lower than the 5.5% of the national population.; those identifying as Jewish, Sikh and Buddhist are better represented in the sector than their numbers on the census might suggest. It is not the place of this survey to suggest why the security services attract less Muslim candidates, but this is an area the sector ought to focus recruitment.

Quotes from free text questions

- No quotes specifically mentioned religion as a factor

Q 9 Summary:

- Look to recruit from the Muslim sector to address current underrepresentation.

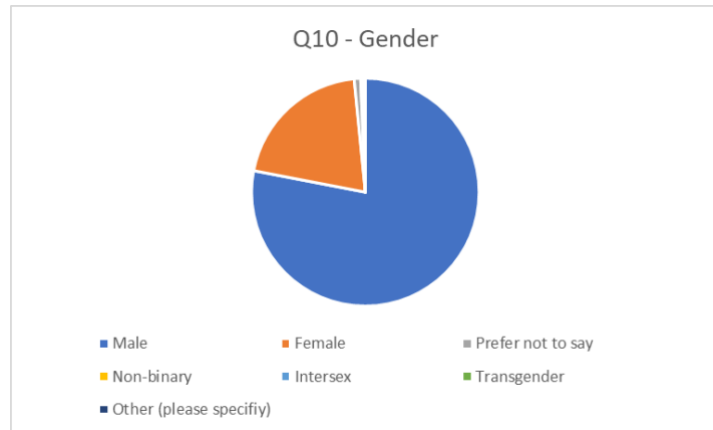


²³ Q9: Do you identify with any of the following religions?

²⁴ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationcharacteristicsresearchtables>

Q 10 & 11 Gender²⁵

This issue demonstrated the most significant disparity and generated more comment than any other in the free text answers. The respondents were heavily biased to those who identified as male – 78% of respondents identified as male; 20% as female, 0.6% with other gender identities; 0.9% preferred not to say. So clearly the sector



needs to recruit and progress female or non-male candidates. The GISF survey of humanitarian security focal points recorded a lower figure of 62.5% male, still unacceptably biased towards respondents who identified as male, but possibly lower because it sampled a younger group (see Q 3), where traditional gender stereotypes are less of a barrier. It should be noted that a significant recruitment pathway is from the UK military, which is also working on diversity, but where only 11.8% of the UK Regular Forces and Future Reserves were recorded as female in 2020²⁶.

When reviewing the free text questions for Q18 ('What factors have caused you disadvantage in your career?'), the most common theme of responses was clearly related to gender disadvantages for women. 16% of the 318 responses to that question identified gender as a factor that had caused disadvantage; higher than level of experience, race, age or educational attainment.

Some male respondents felt discriminated on the basis of their gender as well - gender disadvantages for men was identified as a barrier by only 3% of the responses to Q18. The respondents identifying as male may have felt that there has been a level of positive discrimination in favour of female candidates, though it is not known if this is genuine or a perception based on a particular world view. It is therefore clear that the priority is to challenge the barriers, real or perceived, that are preventing people who identify as female from joining and thriving in the sector.

As noted in the Ethnicity question section, one response to the ethnicity question, "*Being a woman of colour has been a huge advantage*" indicates that some strategies to allow women to be recruited and to facilitate their progression have been successful. But this is a rare view; the majority view is that being a woman in the sector is a barrier.

In summary, of the respondents to the free text questions:

- 6% identified being female as an advantage
- 7% identified being male as an advantage
- 20% identified being female as being a disadvantage
- 10% Identified being male as being a disadvantage

The 2021 UK Census results covering gender identity will be released in November 2022²⁷ so cannot be compared at this time, the recent Canada census has identified 0.2% of their working age

²⁵ Q10: How would you describe your gender? Q11: Is your gender identity the same as the sex you were assigned at birth?

²⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-biannual-diversity-statistics-2021/uk-armed-forces-biannual-diversity-statistics-1-april-2021>

²⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-census-2021-in-england-and-wales>

population as trans or non-binary; if this is replicated in the UK census, then the survey results (0.6%) show a higher-than-average representation of trans or non-binary individuals.

Quotes from free text questions

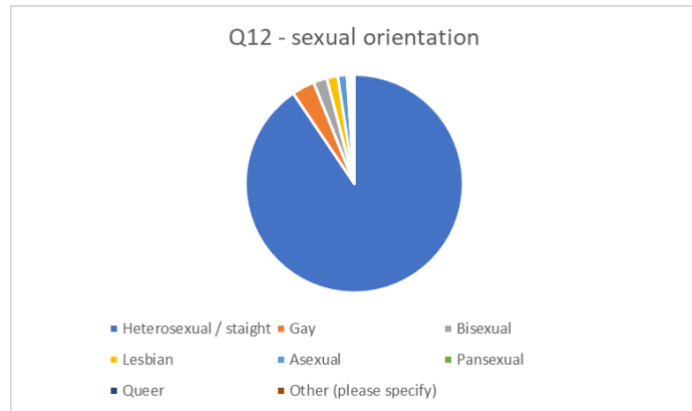
- *Security is still dominated by men and this makes it very difficult to be taken seriously as a woman*
- *Being female has held me back*
- *Not many female security advisers when I started working in that field*
- *Male dominated industry*
- *If anything being a female I was held back by male dominance*
- *There are some jobs I have applied for where I believe I would have been appointed had I been male*
- *Being female and working globally with bosses who have not paid me equally to males. Also I think a white male leadership org has been a disadvantage.*
- *Still a "boys club" and stigmatized if you do not have a law enforcement or military background.*
- *Men usually speak to my male colleagues assuming they are senior to me in the organisation*
- *Females are given significant advantages over men.*
- *Being a woman of colour has been a huge advantage*
- *Being female in the industry is beneficial*

Q 10 & 11 Summary:

- There is clear evidence of real and perceived barriers for people who identified as female in this sector. These must be addressed by recruitment tools which may include targeted recruitment, anonymized recruitment, and advocacy for more women in the sector. This needs to be backed up by pathway generating projects such as that carried out by the Inclusive Security Special Interest Group within The Security Institute (IS SIG) and role modelling initiatives like the Women in Security Awards. Advocacy for gender diversity for and by men in the sector is essential.

Q 12 – Sexual orientation²⁸

The survey collates sexual orientation in more detail than the national data statistics. The most significant finding however is that while 88% of those surveyed identified themselves as heterosexual, the national average in the most recent ONS data set available²⁹ is 93.6%. The ‘prefer not to say’ grouping was roughly the same for both surveys so that implies that LGBTQ+ membership is higher (9.2%) in the security sector than in the national average (3.7%) There is evidence to show that the proportions of society who identify as LGBTQ+ is rising, so it could be inferred that the security sector is ahead of the curve. The GISF survey broadly reflected the SI survey.



That said, as identified in the quotes, some saw positive discrimination in favour of protected characteristics as a barrier against their own advancement. It is concerning to see that 17 of the 270 respondents to Q18 (free text discussing barriers placed in respondents’ careers) mentioned sexuality as a potential barrier, though it should be stressed that both heterosexual and LGBTQ+ respondents responded here: see the first four quotes below.

The honesty of one respondent should be flagged **“I was recruited into my previous role solely because my line manager wanted a sexual relationship with me!”**. While not surprising in such a male-dominated sector, this is still shocking and must be recognised as truth.

Quotes from free text questions

- *I am actively being discriminated against for being a white, male, straight veteran*
- *Being a white, straight male of a certain age you are discriminated at daily by other young / non-straight:’ /ethnic less qualified in terms of experience and qualifications...*
- *Not being LGBTQ [has disadvantaged me]*
- *White, heterosexual male. Age. [has disadvantaged me]*
- *I have faced discrimination based on gender and sexuality, also marital status, and mental health*
- *Female and Gay [has disadvantaged me]*
- *I was recruited into my previous role solely because my line manager wanted a sexual relationship with me*

Q 12 Summary:

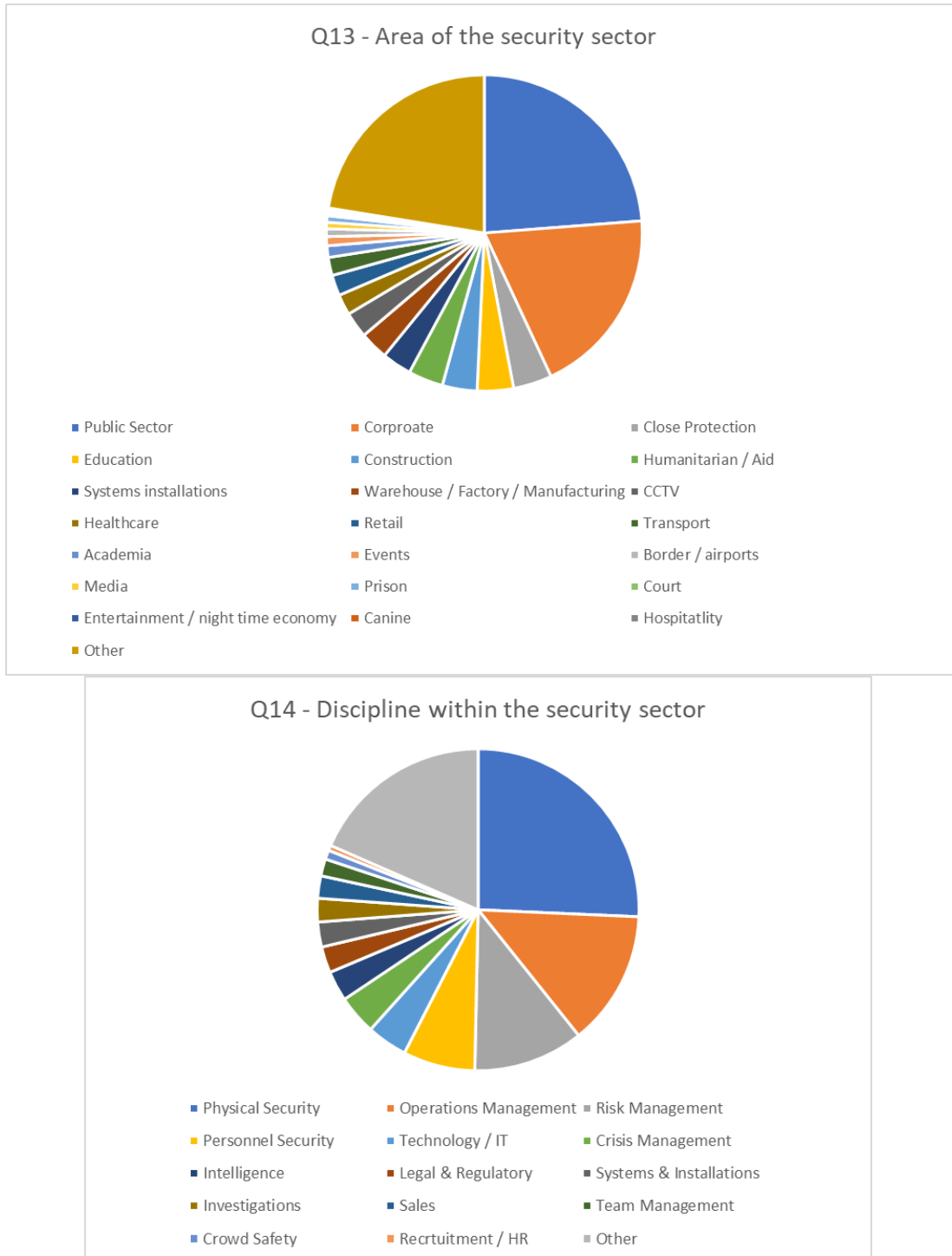
- Continue to promote all aspects of diversity in the sector
- Increase visibility of the difference between positive discrimination (generally prohibited under the Equality Act 2010, unless an occupational requirement applies) and increasing access to a sector for minority groups (legal and to be encouraged)

²⁸ Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

²⁹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/datasets/sexualidentityuk>

Q 13 & 14 Area of the security sector³⁰

The value of this and the next question are of limited value to the exploration of inclusivity in the sector but instead serve mostly to highlight the diversity of opportunities within the security sector, demonstrated most vividly by the fact that the second biggest selected response in both questions was 'Other'.



³⁰ Q13: In which area of the security sector do you work? Q14: In which discipline of the security sector do you work?

Q 15 & 16 Have factors caused advantages in your career to date?³¹

31% of those surveyed felt that there had been factors that had given them advantages. Analysis of the 184 free text answers in Q16 from the respondents who chose to give more detail identified three areas as giving advantages:

- Experience in the Uniformed Services (34%),
- Educational attainment (27%), and
- Prior industry experience (23%).

This would appear to support merit-based recruitment rather than positive discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics. Being female, as discussed previously, only showed 6% as having received an advantage on the basis of their gender.



Quotes from Q16 are included under the relevant headings elsewhere in this report

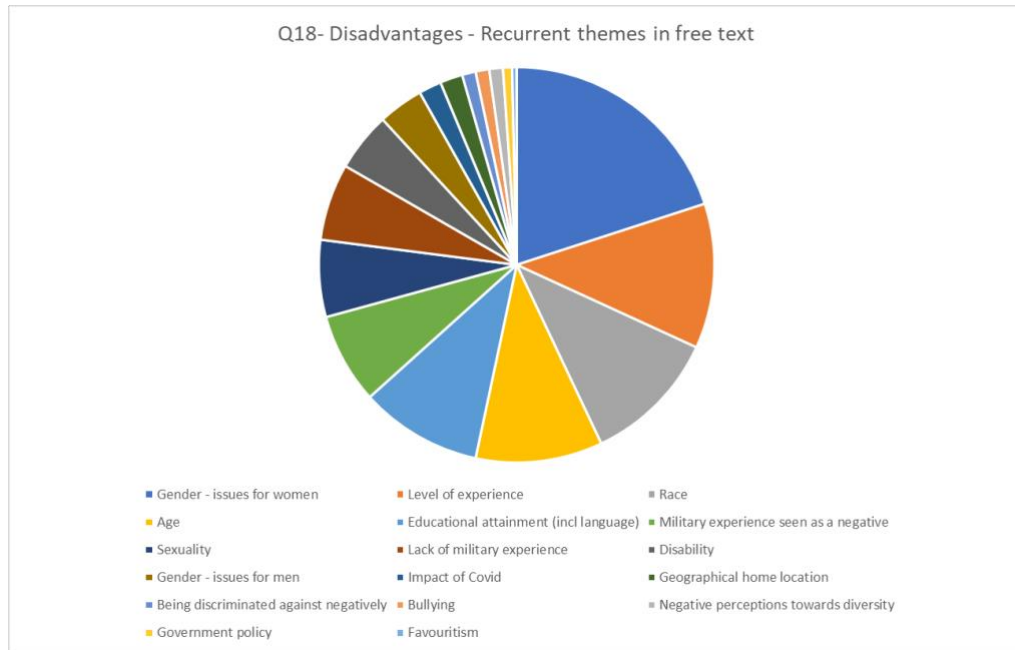
Q 15 & 16 Summary:

- Reword Q 16 to allow responses from only those who felt that there had been factors that caused advantages.

³¹ Q15: Do you think any factors have caused you any advantages in your security career to date? Q16: If you answered 'yes' or 'no' and would like to provide more details, please explain why.

Q 17 &18 Have factors caused disadvantages in your career to date?³²

34% of the respondents felt that there had been factors that had caused them disadvantages in their career. Q18, the free text opportunity to discuss this issue, attracted 270 comments (86 more than Q16). The most significant barrier was gender, placing barriers in the path of women in the sector (54 responses or 20%). The other most significant barriers noted were Level of Experience (12%), Race (11%), Age (10%) and Educational Attainment (10%).



Discussion of each of these has been included in the relevant section, earlier in this report. The next largest grouping has not emerged elsewhere - 20 respondents (7%) identified military experience as a negative – i.e. a barrier to progression. The inference is that diversity initiatives have encouraged some recruiters to look to non-traditional sources of staff. Anecdotally the proportion of non-military recruits in the sector has fallen in recent years³³.

Quotes from Q18 are included under the relevant heading elsewhere in this report

Q 17 & 18 Summary:

- Ensure that conclusions identified in other questions are addressed

³² Q17: Do you think any factors have caused you any disadvantages in your security career to date? Q18: If you answered ‘yes’ or ‘no’ and would like to provide more details, please explain why.

³³ The author of this piece is a professional in the security sector without a military background who believes that it is healthy to have a mix of backgrounds in the sector.

Q 19 – Suggestions for improving levels of diversity & inclusion in the security industry³⁴

As seen elsewhere in the survey, the three most common themes that respondents identified were in the areas of sector image (which will encourage entrants to the sector), recruitment processes (how staff are recruited) and progression and retention (once they are in the sector). In order, respondents identified the following suggestions:

- Increase diversity (62 responses),
- Revisit processes and provide support training for hiring managers (33),
- Create graduate or apprentice schemes (31),
- Build the identity of security as a viable career (29),
- Improve role advertising (25).

Reflecting on the wide range of the answers to Q13 and Q14, it is clear that the identity of the sector lacks cohesion and identity; initiatives like the new entrants' video references under Q4 (educational attainment) are to be encouraged.

Of the 331 who contributed thoughts here, 17 explicitly stated that diversity and inclusion should not be a priority for the sector. Considering the entire sample size of 760, that is only 2% - a small minority. Similarly, the 21 who said that the level of support for inclusion in the sector is already sufficient are significantly outvoted by those suggesting otherwise.

Q 19 Summary:

- Revisit recruitment processes within the sector and provide opportunities for hiring managers to gain access to techniques to increase diversity.
- Continue to build an identity for the security sector as a whole, as the Security Institute is doing.

³⁴ Q19: Do you have any suggestions for improving levels of diversity & inclusion across the security industry generally?

Survey Question Summaries:

Q1 & 2 Ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a significant opportunity to increase diversity of the sector. • Recruitment initiatives could include advertising placed to attract more diverse groups, potentially with role models from ethnic minorities.
Q3 Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the sampling of respondents is reflective of the sector as a whole, then it needs to recruit younger entrants and strategies to do so need to be put in place (for instance more widespread use of advertising on social media). The messaging in this recruitment campaign needs to ensure that it does not alienate existing older members of the sector. • Increase visibility of the difference between positive discrimination (generally prohibited under the Equality Act 2010, unless an occupational requirement applies) and increasing access to a sector for minority groups (legal and to be encouraged).
Q 4 Level of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widen entry-level opportunities with initiatives like the 2018 Next Generation in Security' video. • In future surveys only allow choices for this question (eg Level 3, Level 5 or Level 7).
Q 5 – Security Institute Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In future surveys only allow choices for this question (eg Level 3, Level 5 or Level 7).
Q6 – Position in the sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a follow-on survey ensure that there is broader response from all ranges of seniority across the sector.
Q 7 & 8 Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More consideration for recruiting people with disabilities to the sector. • More support for assistive technology for dyslexia-related issues. • More consideration of flexible working opportunities.
Q 9 - Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look to recruit from the Muslim sector to address current underrepresentation.
Q 10 & 11 Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is clear evidence of real and perceived barriers for people who identified as female in this sector. These must be addressed by recruitment tools which may include targeted recruitment, anonymized recruitment, and advocacy for more women in the sector. This needs to be backed up by pathway generating projects such as that carried out by the Inclusive Security Special Interest Group within The Security Institute (IS SIG) and role modelling initiatives like the Women in Security Awards. Advocacy for gender diversity for and by men in the sector is essential.
Q 12 – Sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote all aspects of diversity in the sector. • Increase visibility of the difference between positive discrimination (generally prohibited under the Equality Act 2010, unless an occupational requirement applies) and increasing access to a sector for minority groups (legal and to be encouraged).
Q 15 & 16 Have factors caused advantages in your career to date?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reword Q 16 to allow responses from only those who felt that there had been factors that caused advantages.
Q 17 & 18 Have factors caused disadvantages in your career to date?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that conclusions identified in other questions are addressed.
Q 19 – Suggestions for improving levels of diversity & inclusion in the security industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit recruitment processes within the sector and provide opportunities for hiring managers to gain access to techniques to increase diversity. • Continue to build an identity for the security sector as a whole, as the Security Institute is doing.

Annex 2: Recommendations for a follow-on survey

- A follow-on survey is recommended for summer 2023, two years after the baseline data was collected in July 2021. (This is according to the date stamps on the free text responses in the Survey Monkey output).
- Ensure that categories provided for questions reflect UK census categories or equivalent e.g. for ethnicity.
- Ensure that the survey is completed by respondents at all levels of the sector – the respondents to this survey appear to have been dominated by older, more senior staff.
- Ensure that data can be analyzed across respondents' answers to enable for instance an analysis of key diversity indicators (e.g. gender and ethnicity) of more junior or younger staff compared to older, or more senior staff; or to gauge the number of respondents who espouse consistent viewpoints.
- Q5 - In future surveys only allow choices for this question (e.g. Level 3, Level 5 or Level 7).
- Q6 – reword the groupings to accommodate more non-management roles and to negate the high level of 'other' responses.
- Q16 & 18 – reword to allow responses from only those who felt that there had been factors that caused advantages (Q16) or disadvantages (Q18).
- Potential additional questions:
 - Are recruitment processes in the sector fair and open to all?
 - If fair, please give examples
 - If unfair please give examples
 - Is your performance evaluated fairly?
 - If fair, please give examples
 - If unfair please give examples
- Ensure that the source data set is available rather than the Survey Monkey output.
- Allow analysis of Focus Group results.

Annex 3: Survey Monkey Output (Separate document)

Annex 4: Spreadsheet with raw data (Separate document)

Annex 5: GISF Questionnaire summary (Separate document)