

EXECUTIVE
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network hr

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

IN THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY

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WELCOME

Network HR, alongside our research and insights team conducted a survey among more than 750 Human Resources professionals in Financial Services, via an online survey to gather their opinions on diversity and inclusion within the Insurance sector.

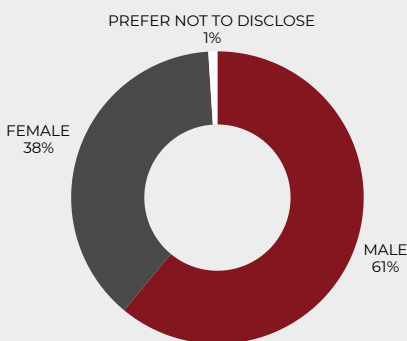
This report presents the findings of a study conducted among HR professionals in the insurance sector to assess the state of diversity and inclusion (D&I) within the industry. The study aimed to understand the experiences and perceptions of HR professionals regarding the sector's diversity, equal opportunities, and inclusion practices. By analysing their responses, we aim to highlight the importance of a robust ED&I strategy, and identify steps that can be taken to promote diversity and inclusion within the insurance sector.



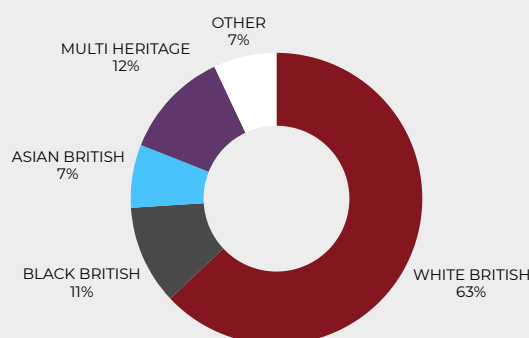
On behalf of Network, we hope you enjoy our insight.

RESPONDENT DATA

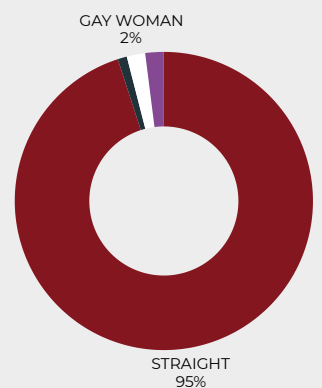
GENDER



ETHNICITY



SEXUALITY



To gain a better understanding of our respondents, and to dissect the data further we asked how they identify within three categories; gender, ethnicity, and sexuality. For gender, a non-binary option was provided but garnered no results. The majority of our respondents identified as White British, options such as; White Other, Black Other, and Asian Other, were represented but to a lesser extent. The majority of participants within our study identified as straight (95%), with 1% identifying as a gay man, 2% as a gay woman, and 2% as bisexual.

ADDRESSING DISPARITIES AND ADVANCING DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

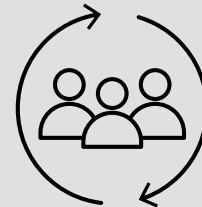
A notable contrast emerges when comparing the perspectives of different demographic groups within the sector.

While the majority of white male respondents perceived the industry as inclusive, there is a stark disparity in the experiences of underrepresented groups.

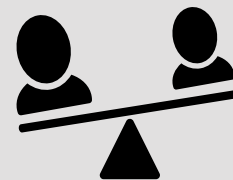
The study highlights that a significant percentage (80%) of Black British respondents feel unable to bring their true, authentic selves to work in the insurance sector. This is a concerning revelation, indicating that the industry still has significant work to do in creating an environment where individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds feel fully accepted and valued.

Additionally, the findings reveal that over three-quarters of women in the insurance sector have encountered discrimination based on their gender. This underscores the existence of gender bias and the need for concerted efforts to address systemic inequalities and foster equal opportunities for career progression.

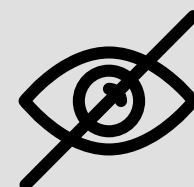
It is crucial to recognize that the perception of inclusivity among white male respondents may stem from their relative privilege and position within the industry. Their experiences might not necessarily reflect the experiences of individuals from other demographic backgrounds. Therefore, the overall perception of inclusivity within the insurance sector should not be solely determined by the perspectives of the majority group.



Only **21%** of respondents described the insurance sector as "diverse and inclusive."



58% believed they did not receive fair and equal opportunities for career progression.



62% did not feel they could bring their true, authentic selves to work.



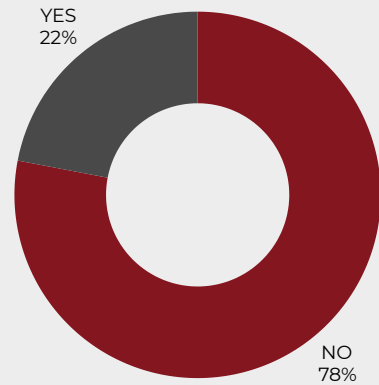
57% reported experiencing discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

INDUSTRY PERCEPTION

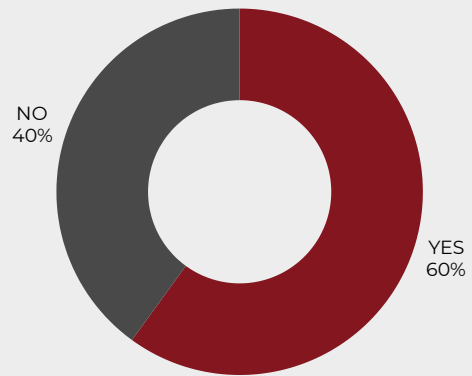
A notable portion of respondents reported they would not consider a career in insurance, worryingly 66% of these people stated their response was influenced by their gender, sexual orientation, or ethnicity.

When we asked their perception of the insurance industry responses varied, with some perceiving the prevailing attitude as dated, lacking diversity inclusion, very traditional and male-dominated with a description of a “boys club” culture across the sector.

"Would you consider a career in insurance?"



"Is your response influenced by your gender, sexual orientation, or ethnicity?"



PERCEPTION OF LEADERSHIP REPRESENTATION:

Over half of the respondents were not aware of any specific steps being taken to enhance the representation and visibility of diverse individuals in leadership positions within the insurance industry.

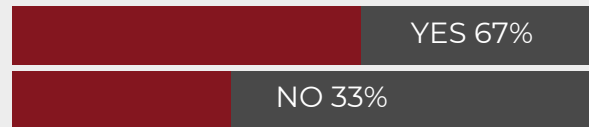
Some respondents mentioned gender-specific programs, transparency requirements by regulatory bodies, and leadership as ambassadors for diversity. One participant stated there is a requirement for more visible reputation of diverse individuals as instructed by FCA, in terms of gender and race, but this is a target rather than an ongoing expectation.

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING TALENT FROM UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS

Two-thirds of respondents currently working in the sector would recommend a career in insurance to family and friends.

We also asked if their current employer had a clear and impactful approach to ED&I, this question had a near-even response with 53% stating a clear ED&I initiative is in place.

"Would you recommend a career in the insurance industry to family & friends?"



We asked what could help and attract talent from underrepresented groups.

Respondents suggested various steps, including reverse mentoring, using different platforms for attracting talent, co-creation of policies, reducing nepotism in entry-level roles, conducting independent reviews of EDI approaches, offering flexible working arrangements, and creating a compelling employee value proposition (EVP).

Another suggestion was to actively promote insurance at grassroots level as a career that is both accessible and rewarding. By collaborating with schools, community organizations, and career guidance programs, the insurance industry can engage with underprivileged communities, provide mentorship opportunities, and highlight the potential for upward mobility within the sector, thereby opening doors to diverse talent and promoting greater social and economic inclusion.

To build a business fit for the future, it is vital that any business' employee base reflects the diversity of its clients, customers and the many communities in which it operates around the world.

There's a very solid business case behind the desire to increase diversity and the drive to create more equitable and inclusive workplaces. By having greater diversity of thought and personality within a business, you can build resilient and enquiring teams, better able to navigate a broad range of challenges, and who can make the most of the opportunities available.

Fiona Claybrook
Group HR Director
The Ardonagh Group



INDUSTRY COMMENTARY

“Caring counts is much more than our philosophy at Sedgwick, it's hard-wired into everything we do. As a global organisation with over 30,000 colleagues, ensuring we embody the diversity that exists in the world and have a fair and inclusive work environment is our priority and moral responsibility.

Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is decades-long, and we've integrated it into everything we do - in our hiring practices, professional development, performance management processes, engagement efforts and diverse benefits. Ultimately, our aim is to create an inclusive environment where all colleagues can thrive. This drives better experiences for our customers and colleagues, as well as promoting company growth.”

Vicki Cowell
Head of UK Colleague Resources
Sedgwick



“HR professionals hold a real position of power when it comes to influencing the culture of an organisation. Having a seat at the table when it comes to hiring decisions, promotional decisions, identifying successors, addressing performance and responding to grievances provides a huge opportunity to challenge managers and leaders to check their bias. It's also vital for HR to help leaders and managers understand the impact of their influence on the teams and peers around them. The significance of seemingly small actions should not be underestimated. For example, not greeting certain colleagues or showing distraction during meetings and one-on-one interactions may have a profound impact on an individual's sense of value and inclusion within the organisation, which can significantly influence their commitment and willingness to continue contributing to the company's growth and success.”

Louisa Erwin
Group Head of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
BMS Group



IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study highlight the urgent need for a robust ED&I strategy within the insurance sector. Failing to address the current gaps in diversity and inclusion can have detrimental effects on talent attraction, retention, and overall organisational success. To promote diversity and inclusion, the following steps are recommended:

Implement targeted initiatives: Develop programs specifically designed to attract and support underrepresented groups, such as reverse mentoring, and pipeline internship and graduate schemes.

Foster an inclusive culture: Create an open and inclusive culture that encourages employees to bring their authentic selves to work, raising awareness and promoting acceptance.

Conduct regular assessments: Regularly review and assess EDI approaches throughout the employee lifecycle to identify areas for improvement and ensure fairness and equal opportunities.

Establish clear leadership behaviours and standards: Define and communicate a clear set of leadership behaviours.

Ensure diverse representation in decision-making processes: Actively seek diverse perspectives in decision-making bodies, including boards, committees, and task forces.

Promote allyship and employee resource groups: Encourage the formation of allyship networks and employee resource groups (ERGs) that focus on supporting underrepresented groups.



It's clear that the Insurance industry faces systemic challenges which have hindered representation within the sector. Based on our research it is accepted that the industry is in a period of reform which requires a collective endeavour to transform cultural perceptions and common practices which contribute to the challenge of equality, diversity and inclusivity within the industry.

Concrete actions should be taken to address gender and ethnic biases, implement inclusive recruitment and promotion practices, and provide training and education to foster awareness and cultural sensitivity within the industry. Diversifying leadership positions and amplifying the voices and experiences of underrepresented groups will be critical in driving meaningful change and ensuring that the insurance sector becomes more inclusive and reflective of society as a whole.

By committing to these actions, the industry can embrace diversity and inclusion as core values, promoting fairness, equality, and innovation. This transformation will not only enhance employee satisfaction, engagement, and productivity but also enable the industry to better serve its diverse customer base and drive long-term success in an evolving business landscape.



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