

# UK Games Industry Census

Understanding diversity in the  
UK games industry workforce

Dr. Mark Taylor



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.



Arts and  
Humanities  
Research Council



**Report author:**

Dr. Mark Taylor - Senior Lecturer, Sheffield Methods Institute

**In collaboration with:**

Luke Hebblethwaite - Insight & Innovation Manager, Ukie

For questions about this report,  
please contact Ukie at:

[hello@ukie.org.uk](mailto:hello@ukie.org.uk)

+44 207 534 5800

[@uk\\_ie](https://twitter.com/uk_ie)

**ukie**



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.



Arts and  
Humanities  
Research Council



# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	5	<b>2.6 Caring responsibilities</b>	29	<b>5.2 Education and job role</b>	46
<b>Executive summary</b>	8	<b>2.7 Long-term conditions</b>	30	<b>6. Mental health</b>	48
<b>1. Who did the census?</b>	10	<b>2.8 Neurodiversity</b>	31	<b>6.1 Mental health conditions</b>	48
1.1 Job role	10	<b>2.9 Social background</b>	32	<b>6.2 Anxiety and depression by job role</b>	49
1.2 Employment contract type	12	<b>2.10 School type</b>	34	<b>6.3 Anxiety and depression by seniority</b>	50
1.3 Supervision and seniority	13	<b>3. Job roles</b>	36	<b>6.4 Anxiety and depression by gender and LGBTQ+ status</b>	51
1.4 Time in the sector	14	<b>3.1 Job roles by gender</b>	36	<b>7. Next steps</b>	53
1.5 Organisation size	15	<b>3.2 Job roles by ethnic group</b>	38	<b>8. Methodological appendix</b>	55
1.6 Location	16	<b>3.3 Job roles by social background</b>	39	<b>8.1 Questionnaire design</b>	55
1.7 Hours worked	17	<b>3.4 Seniority by social background</b>	40	<b>8.2 Recruitment</b>	57
<b>2. Who works in games?</b>	18	<b>4. Nationality</b>	41	<b>8.3 Weighting</b>	58
2.1 Age	19	<b>4.1 Nationality and job role</b>	42	<b>8.4 Job classification</b>	58
2.2 Ethnic group	20	<b>4.2 Nationality, gender and ethnic group</b>	43	<b>Acknowledgements</b>	59
2.3 Nationality	22	<b>5. Education</b>	44		
2.4 Gender	23	<b>5.1 Qualifications</b>	44		
2.5 Sexuality	27				

**"By conducting this census, we now have a benchmark that can lay the foundations for the creation of a truly diverse and inclusive sector for the future."**

**DR JO TWIST - CEO UKIE**

# Introduction

## Dr. Jo Twist OBE – CEO, Ukie

We know that games businesses across the country have recognised that placing equality, inclusivity and diversity at the heart of their work is critical to their success as creative, innovative world leaders. But we also know that it has been hard to do so without robust, reliable data to help guide them.

This report, compiled and produced independently by the University of Sheffield, decisively changes that. This census gathered anonymised and aggregated data from more than 3,200 people working in the sector, delivering what we believe to be the most extensive and authoritative analysis of the diversity of a national games industry's workforce ever conducted.

It reveals insights such as our youth, which forms the backbone of our thriving sector, with two thirds of our workforce 35 or under. 28% of our workforce are non-UK

nationals, making us a truly international industry. We're a welcoming industry, as over a fifth of our sector are LGBTQ+. Black, Asian and minority ethnic representation is also higher than the overall creative industries and sectors such as music, publishing and film/TV, as well as slightly above the average across the national working population.

But being transparent about who we are also means facing up to some challenges. Female representation in the games is lower than in the overall cultural and creative industries and considerably less than the national working average.

Reported levels of anxiety and depression are significantly above the national average – especially in junior and mid-tier roles. BAME representation also drops amongst those in more senior positions.

It's important to keep in mind why we've taken such a frank look at our industry. By conducting this census, we now have a benchmark that can lay the foundations for the creation of a truly diverse and inclusive sector for the future. The newly launched #RaiseTheGame pledge is an excellent example of how businesses can be more representative and inclusive, which enriches the diversity of what we create. It brings together the sector to share the goal of building a diverse workforce, providing long term support to one another and giving us the best chance of making that ambition a reality.

We know we have to work hard to create diverse, supportive and inclusive workplaces and the sector has already taken great steps. This world-leading research is an invaluable tool to help businesses of all shapes and sizes see how those measures can make a real difference.



**"We hope that this report has helped to make sense of the industry as it stands, and we're optimistic about what's going to come next."**

**DR. MARK TAYLOR - SENIOR LECTURER, SHEFFIELD METHODS INSTITUTE**





## **Dr. Mark Taylor – Senior Lecturer, Sheffield Methods Institute**

The UK Games Industry Census is the result of a collaboration between the University of Sheffield, the University of Leeds, and Ukie, supported by the Arts & Humanities Research Council.

Official statistics on the labour force aren't well-suited to games. We know a lot about the diversity of people working in other sectors, such as the other screen industries, because of large, nationally-representative datasets run by the Office for National Statistics.

This isn't true for games, partly reflecting the fact that it's a comparatively young industry. It's also fast-moving, which means that our understanding needs to be kept up-to-date. If the games workforce looked a particular way a few years ago, we can't be confident that this is still the case. This report represents our approach to addressing this imbalance.

We've aimed to understand diversity in a broad sense. For this reason, as well as interrogating key elements such as gender and ethnicity, we've also asked questions around long-term health conditions, sexuality, and people's social backgrounds. In this report, we've written dedicated sections on nationality, education, and mental health, to see how these crucial aspects vary by people's jobs and their characteristics.

The work that's included here wouldn't have been possible without the support of the AHRC, or the support of our colleagues at Leeds and Sheffield – most importantly Helen Thornham and Jędrzej Niklas – but it also wouldn't have been possible without a significant buy-in from people working in the games industry. The support that we've had from people in across the sector has been absolutely essential to getting this report to where it is. This report aims to answer a wide range

of questions about the UK games industry workforce, but it also represents a starting point for how we can understand who works in games. In addition to further analysis of the data that we describe in this report, we're also hoping to undertake further survey work in future to help monitor how these figures are changing over time, as well as more research to aim to better understand the reasons why the games workforce looks as it does, and how this might change in the future.

But, in the meantime, the biggest thanks should go to the 3,208 people whose data we've analysed for this report. Analysing surveys is only possible when people are kind enough to spend time answering them, and we've been blown away by the response from people working throughout the games industry. We hope that this report has helped to make sense of the industry as it stands, and we're optimistic about what's going to come next.

# Executive summary

The UK Games Industry Census is a first-of-its-kind report, delivering the most comprehensive and detailed assessment of diversity within the UK games industry workforce ever conducted.

Written by Dr. Mark Taylor of the University of Sheffield and funded via the Arts & Humanities Research Council, this independent analysis focuses on three main areas: the kinds of work that games industry workers do, their personal characteristics, and their backgrounds. By asking questions that could be compared against those from other sectors, national datasets or by digging into how multiple characteristics fit together, we were able to gain a very clear view of both areas where games can celebrate and where clear challenges lie.

This census was completed by over 3,200 games workers, or around 20% of the overall workforce, between September and October 2019. By using both open and targeted recruitment methods, we were able to ensure a truly representative sample of people working across the sector.

The UK games industry workforce is highly international – 19% of workers are from the EU/EEA, and a further 9% from the rest of the world – with respondents listing 88 different countries as where they spent most of their time in childhood. International workers make up a third of core games production art and programming roles and are more likely to work in senior, mid-level and junior roles in the industry, but feature less in managerial and directorial positions.

The games sector is a young industry, with two thirds of people working in the sector aged 35 or under. But 54% of people in the industry have worked in the sector for five years or more.

10% of people working in games are Black, Asian or minority ethnic (BAME). This is a slightly higher percentage than in the national working population, and higher than both the overall creative industries and specific sectors such as music, publishing and film / TV. However, it is lower than the equivalent figure for IT and



software, as well as below the average in the working-age population. While BAME workers can be found broadly equally in all job roles, with a small skew towards more non-sector specific roles, they are noticeably less represented in senior positions.

70% of people working in the games industry are male, compared to 28% female and 2% non-binary workers. Female representation in the workforce is significantly under the national average of those in work, as well as less than in cultural and creative roles more generally, but is similar to the proportion of women working in Film / TV, and above that of the general IT / software sector.

Migration is a key factor of both ethnic and gender diversity; while 28% of the overall games workforce in general holds non-UK nationalities, this rises to 40% for



BAME workers and 35% of female workers. 62% of the video games workforce come from households where the main earner worked in a managerial / professional role. This proportion is higher than every other creative sector aside from publishing and only lower than those found in roles such as doctors, lawyers and journalists. This ratio is still comparable to that of national broadcasters such as the BBC and Channel 4.

81% of the industry is educated to at least undergraduate level, rising to 88% for core games production roles in art or programming. This is considerably above the 57% average for the cultural and creative industries. 27% of workers hold a game-specific qualification, rising to over half of workers in games design and art roles. More commonly, workers have qualifications in STEM subjects at 31%, increasing to 60% for workers in programming roles.

12% of the industry workforce attended an independent or fee-paying school, which is nearly double the national average of 7%. This figure rises to 20% of the workforce amongst directors and CEOs.

21% of people working in games are LGBTQ+, while 79% are heterosexual. This is a significantly high proportion of LGBTQ+ workers, with other data sources indicating that heterosexual people make up between 93-97% of the national population.

At 2%, non-binary representation in the UK games industry workforce is higher than the national average, which is estimated at 0.4%. Trans people make up 3% of the games industry workforce, which again is above the estimated 1% within the national population.

21% of people working in the games industry live with a chronic physical health condition. This is higher than the overall working-age population, where 13% report long term physical issues.

31% of respondents to the census reported that they live with anxiety, depression or both, considerably above the national average of 17%. Individuals working in junior or mid-level roles were more likely to report that they

had anxiety and / or depression, with higher levels of depression also reported among Directors/CEOs of smaller companies.

3.5% of respondents reported that they worked 51 hours per week or more. Three quarters of all respondents reported working a standard full-time working week of between 33-40 hours.

These findings, as well as the further detail found throughout this report, reveals the complex and unique make-up of the UK games workforce. While there are many positive stories within the data, it is clear there are some key challenges that the industry must also understand and address.

Going forward, the sector will need to build both short and long-term strategies that continue to help support and retain existing talent, as well as encourage engagement and recruitment among those who are less well represented.

# 1

## Who did the census?

A total of 3,208 people working in different roles in the UK games industry filled out the census. This can be compared with a recent estimate<sup>1</sup> that UK games companies directly employ 16,140 FTE roles, meaning survey responses here consist of around 20% of the overall UK games workforce.

In designing the survey questionnaire, we aimed to ask questions that would mean that the results could be compared with other national data sources, while making the process of answering the questions as straightforward and non-invasive as possible.

Throughout this report, we'll draw comparisons with figures from the working-age population and from other relevant groups, such as people working in different occupations.

People who filled out the survey were recruited in two ways. First, the survey was launched on 4th September 2019 at Ukie's annual Members' Day, with accompanying

press coverage, publicity through social media, and so on, and ran for 6 weeks allowing anyone who worked in games to participate. However, we know that only recruiting through open channels is likely to lead to biased estimates. Because of this, we also recruited through a representative sample of games organisations. We explain the methodology in much more detail in the "Methodological appendix" section of this report.

The questionnaire consisted of three main sections: about the kinds of work that people do, about their personal characteristics, and about their background. In this section, we explain a little about people's responses to questions in the first section, about the work that they do.

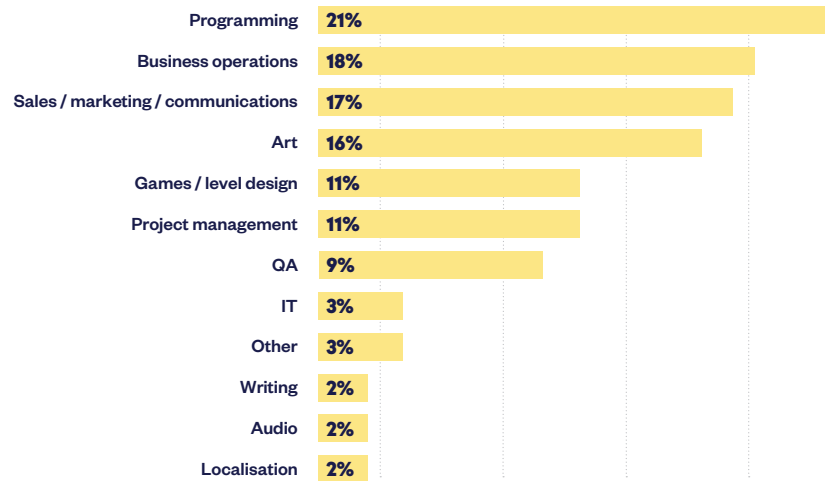


### 1.1 Job role

The first question people were asked was about their job role. They were presented with a wide range of categories and asked which of them they carry out in their job. Respondents could tick as many boxes as they wanted. The first figure, on the right-hand side, shows how many people worked in these different roles.

**The most common role among respondents was programming / development, at 21% of the sample.** However, the census received responses from people working in a very wide range of roles, with seven different roles receiving responses from more than 5% of the sample. Some roles had small numbers, with noticeably few responses from people working in composition / music, and in distribution.

## Grouped job roles

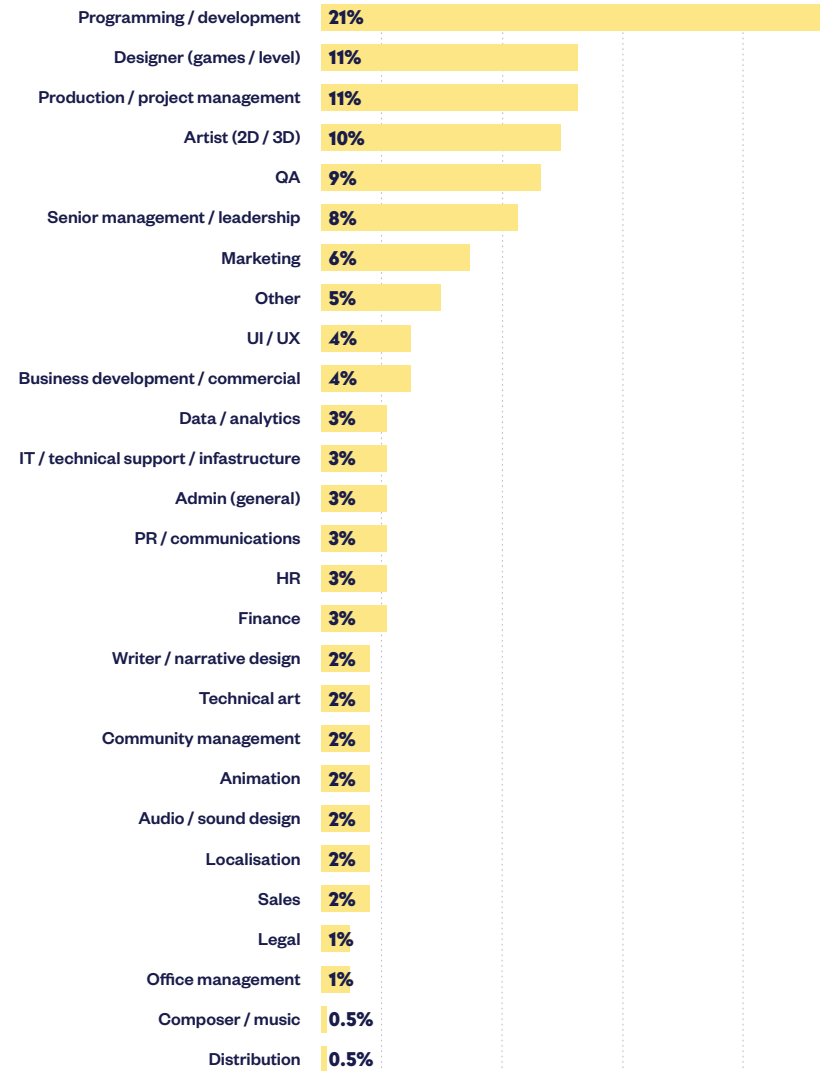


These figures don't sum to 100% because several people were undertaking more than one role – for example, someone might work both on project management and in senior management.

To simplify some of the comparisons, and so that we're not potentially disclosing information about any respondents, we've grouped some different job roles together. For example, "Animation", "Artist", "Technical art", and "UI / UX", have been grouped together under "Art". This can be seen in the above figure. These are the categories we'll be using throughout the rest of the report.

For full details of how we've grouped these jobs together, please see the appendix.

## All job roles





## 1.2 Employment contract type

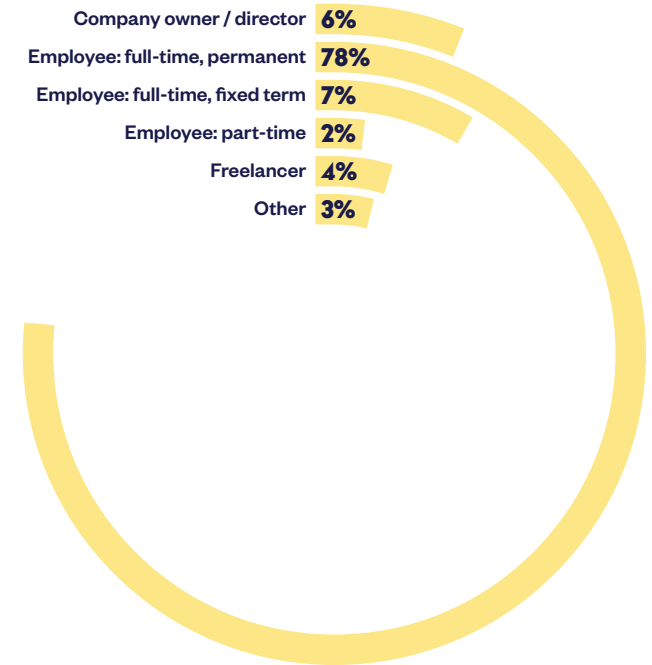
We asked people what their relationship was with their place of work – whether they were full-time, freelance, on a fixed-term contract, and so on. This figure shows the overall percentage of people with different kinds of relationships.

**By far the largest group of respondents were people employed as full-time, permanent members of staff;** there were far smaller numbers of people working on fixed-term contracts, who were part-time, who were freelancers, and who were company owners or director. We've grouped fixed-term and permanent part-time workers together, and we've also grouped a few categories together under the "Other" category.

The 7% of people on fixed-term contracts is slightly higher than the national average of 5%, while 2% of people working part-time is significantly lower than the average of all workers, which is 26%<sup>2</sup>.

The fraction of people working in freelance roles, at 4%, is below the 6% figure<sup>3</sup> for all sectors; however, some people in the "Other" category might have been classified as freelance through other methodological approaches. It's also likely that our recruitment method, which targeted organisations, is likely to have left freelancers underrepresented relative to employees.

### Employment contract type



2: Jenkins, K., 2017. Exploring the UK freelance workforce in 2016. The Association of Independent Professionals and the Self Employed (IPSE).

3: Office for National Statistics, 2019. Labour Force Survey table EMP01 SA: Full-time, part-time and temporary workers (seasonally adjusted).

### 1.3 Supervision & seniority

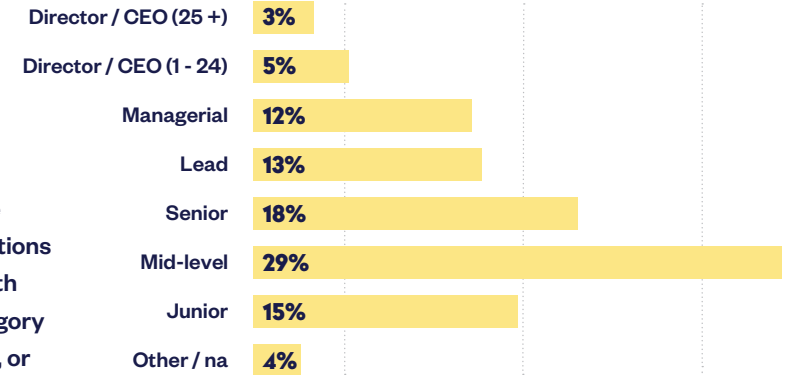
We asked respondents whether they supervised anyone in their work. We found that around **40% of people had some level of responsibility for supervision**, such as line management, which is marginally higher than in the working population more generally<sup>4</sup> and may suggest that our data has more people in more senior roles than the overall population of people working in games.

One thing that might explain this is people's seniority. We asked people which of the following categories best described their position in their place of work. While there is no set definition for each of these categories, as someone might be "senior" in one organisation and "lead" in another, we think it effectively captures some of the differences in people's seniority.

Among people who selected "Director / CEO", we've distinguished between people who work in organisations with between 1 and 24 people, and organisations with 25 or more people. Meanwhile, the "Other / na" category largely consists of people working in freelance roles, or who work in very small organisations.

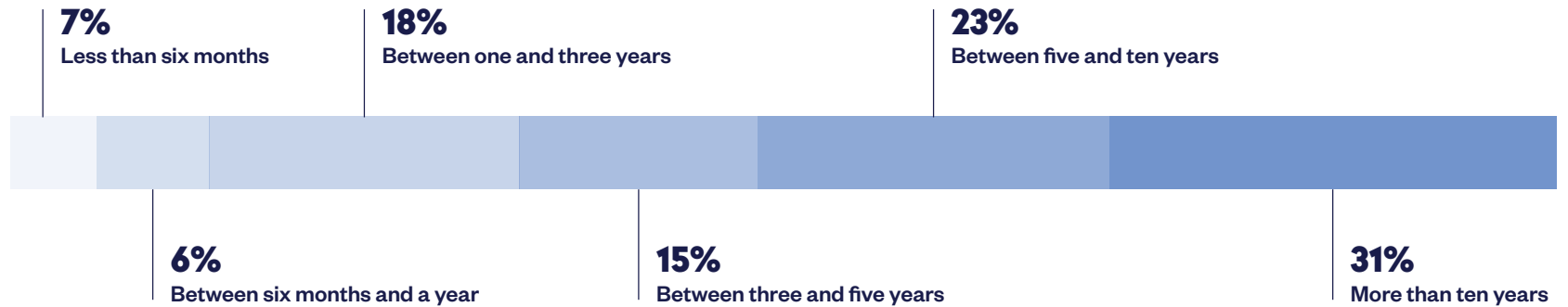
The category with the largest number of people in is "mid-level", at around 30%, while around 15% have classified themselves as junior. Around half the sample is senior or above. This is consistent with the previous point around the fraction of respondents who are responsible for supervision.

#### Seniority of role



4: Office for National Statistics, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. (2019). Quarterly Labour Force Survey, July - September, 2019. [data collection]. UK Data Service. SN: 8588, <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-8588-1>

## Time worked in the sector



### 1.4 Time in the sector

We asked people how long they've worked in the games sector. The responses to this are summarised in the above figure.

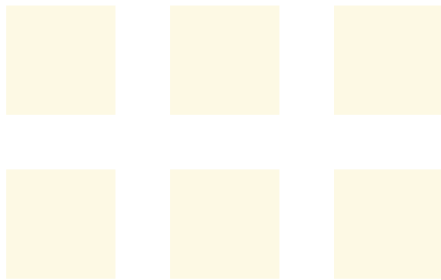
**Nearly a third of respondents have worked in games for ten years or more**, while around 13% of people have worked in games for up to a year. This is also consistent with the fact that a large fraction of the sample is

relatively senior, though it's also worth noting that, in other sectors, 31% of people having been working in the same sector for a decade or more wouldn't be unusually high.

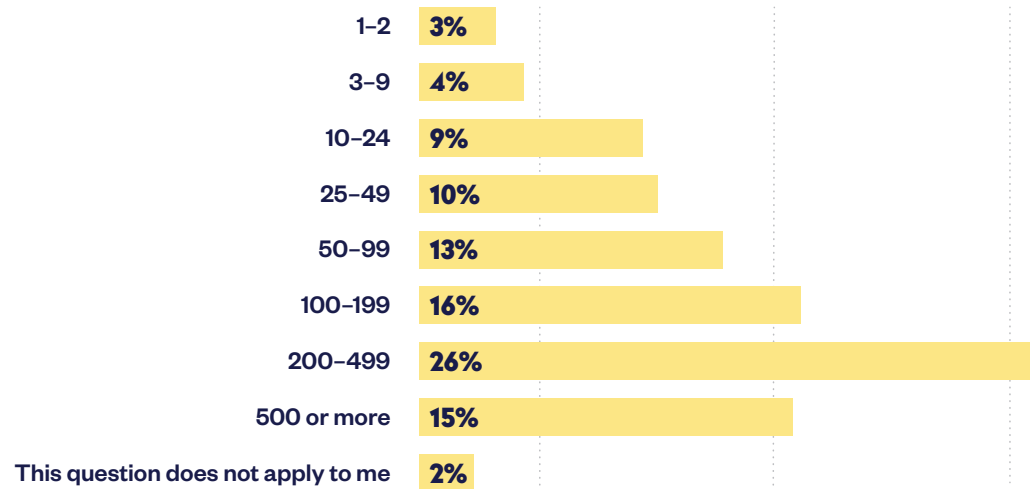
In this context, it's something that's noteworthy because games is a relatively young industry.

💡 **Nearly a third of respondents have worked in games for ten years or more** 💡





## Organisation size by employees



### 1.5 Organisation size

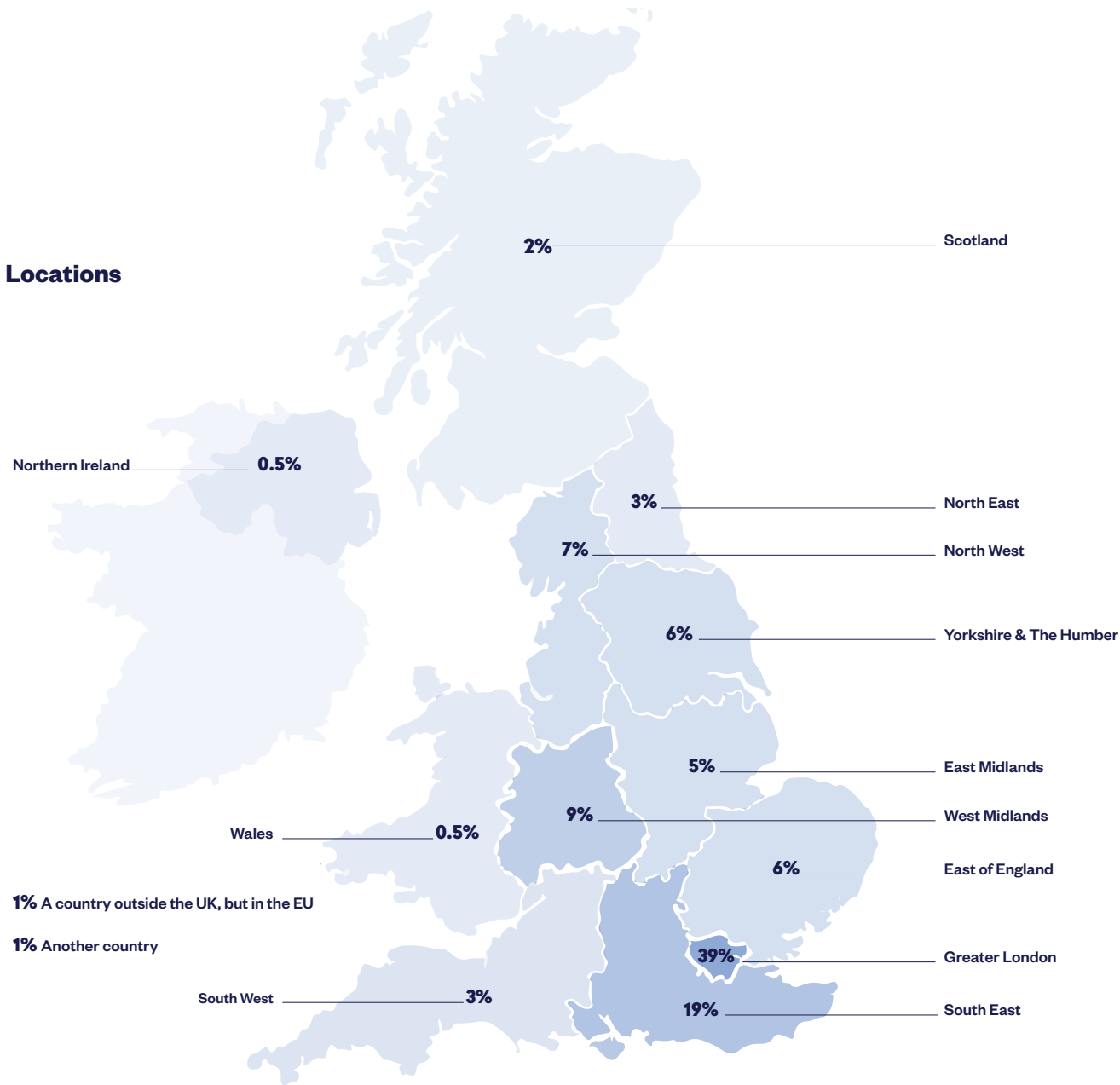
We asked respondents how many people were based at their organisations, which we were able to use to compare with nationally representative data sources to identify whether organisations of any given size seemed to be under or over-represented.

While for some people the size of the organisation they work for isn't always clear – for example, someone working in a small office that's a part of a larger organisation – this is helpful to get an overview of the range of organisations represented among our respondents.

Compared with other Ukie data<sup>5</sup>, people working in smaller organisations, up to around 10 people, are under-represented, while people working in larger organisations, particularly those employing between 200 and 499 people, are over-represented.

However, **analysis of the dataset using weighting to adjust for these differences does not lead to any major differences**, and so the results presented throughout are unweighted. Please see the methodological appendix for full details.

## Locations



## 1.6 Location

We asked about the UK region where the organisation at which people worked could be found. As with the question about organisation size, for some people this won't have been totally clear, such as those people who work in a small office in one region while the larger organisation is based in another region.

Compared with other Ukie data<sup>6</sup>, some areas such as London are overrepresented, while other areas such as Wales and Scotland are underrepresented.

As described in the previous section on organisation size, analysis of other estimates with and without weighting adjustments based on these two variables **did not lead to major differences**, so results presented throughout are based on unweighted data.

For respondents based outside of the UK, we assume that they consider themselves part of the UK games industry and therefore we include their responses in the data. It should be noted that the number of these respondents is so low that including them or not does not alter the results in any meaningful way.

## 1.7 Hours worked

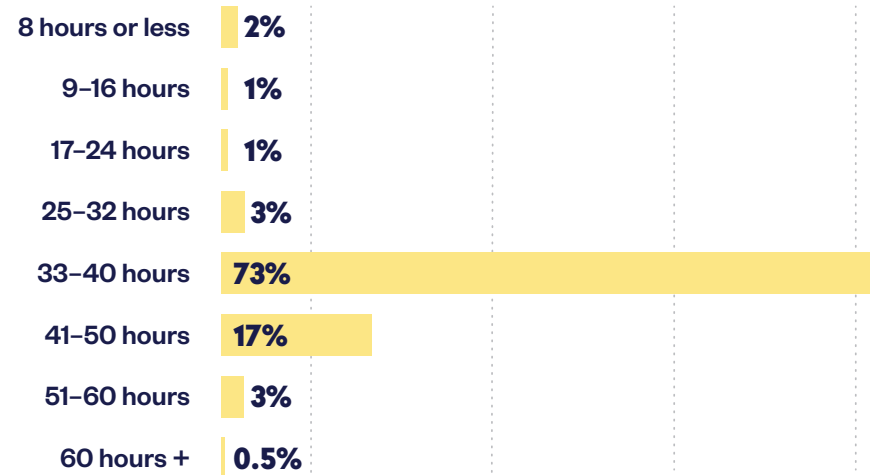
Respondents were asked “How many hours per week do you usually work? Please exclude meal breaks.” The figure to the right shows the numbers of hours people reported working.

This figure suggests that **73% of the people working in games work between 33 and 40 hours per week**, and that fewer than 4% of people work for more than 50 hours a week.

This is at odds with previous international games sector research on long working hours (sometimes known in the industry as “crunch”, usually referring to periods of intense working leading up to project deadlines) that suggests that the percentage of people working long hours is likely to be larger than this<sup>7</sup>.

While the survey asked people to answer about the number of hours people usually worked, some respondents may have instead interpreted the question as being about their contracted hours.

### Usual hours worked



7: See for example Harvey, A., & Shepherd, T., 2017. When passion isn't enough: gender, affect and credibility in digital games design. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 20(5),492-508.



# 2

## Who works in games?

This section summarises who works in games based on some of their personal characteristics. We'll follow this in the next few sections by describing the different backgrounds of people working in games, some more about the jobs they work in, and how the breakdown of who works in games differs across different kinds of job roles, different kinds of organisations, and so on.

As far as possible, we'll also draw comparisons with equivalent figures for the working-age population, to give a sense of whether the numbers for games are high or low.

In addition, where possible, we'll draw comparisons with other parts of the cultural and creative industries. We know from other research that jobs in the cultural and creative industries have very different profiles from the overall working-age population, and games are classified as part of this sector.



We also know that jobs in sectors with more of a technical focus can also look very different from the working-age population.

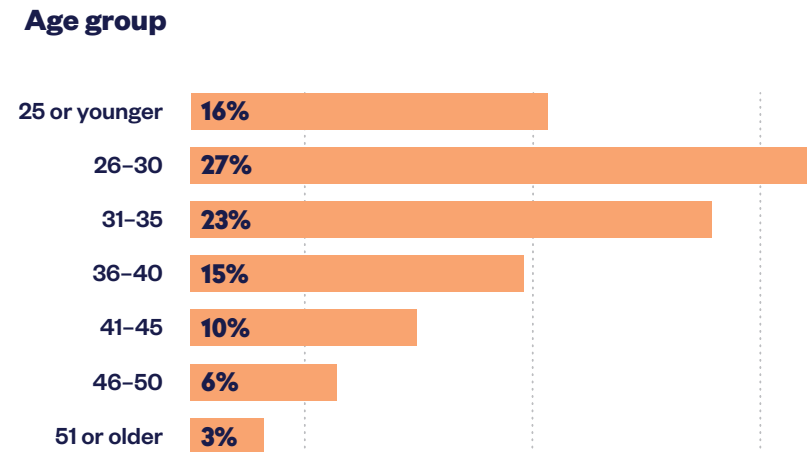
For this reason, we're also drawing some comparisons with other occupational groups, and, in some cases, with some other organisations. It's not possible to draw comparisons for every single dimension discussed in the previous section because the data often aren't available.

📍📍 **Two-thirds of the UK games industry workforce is 35 or under** 📍📍

## 2.1 Age

We asked respondents how old they were at their last birthday, in five-year categories (such as “26–30”). In this figure, we’ve grouped the age groups of people 25 and younger together, and the age groups of people 51 and older, as some of these groups had relatively fewer respondents.

**When compared with people working in all jobs, people working in games are much younger. This is most striking with the categories 26–30 and 31–35, with 27% and 23% of the games workforce respectively, compared with 11% in each of these categories in the overall population<sup>8</sup>.**



By comparison, just 3% of people working in games are 51 or older, compared with 29% of all people in work.

This is likely partly explained by the fact that games is a relatively young industry, particularly at its current scale, and so we would not expect large numbers of people in their fifties and sixties with long careers in games, since the numbers of people working in games in recent decades were much smaller.

8: Office for National Statistics. Economic Activity by sex by age (2011 Census, England and Wales): <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/dc6107ew>

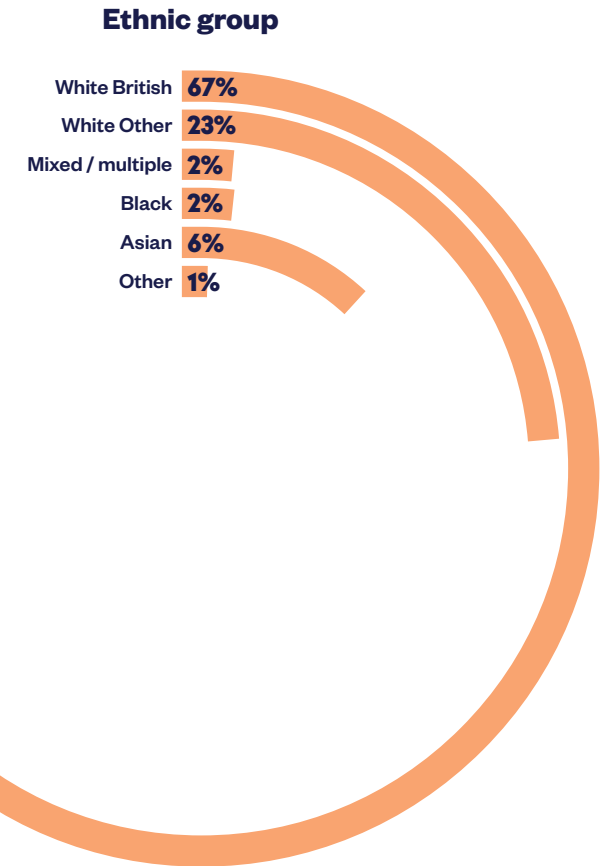
## 2.2 Ethnic group

We asked people the question “What is your ethnic group?” and presented them with the same category as the options presented in the Census that’s distributed to people in England. 67% of people working in games are White British, and 23% are White Other. This leaves around **10% of people who are members of other ethnic groups**, the largest of which is Asian people at around 6%.

Together, this means that the fraction of people working in games from non-White ethnic groups is in fact lower than that of the working-age population<sup>9</sup>. This is driven by the White Other category, which is 23% among the

games workforce, but closer to 6% among the working-age population. The fraction of Black people working in games, at 2%, is lower than the fraction of Black people in the working-age population at 3.4%; the discrepancy for Asian people is less pronounced, at 6% compared with 8.1%.

The age category with the largest fraction of BAME people is the 36–40 group, at 13%; most other categories have similar fractions of BAME people, at around 10%, except for the 51 and older category, where 5% of people are BAME.



👉 Black, Asian and minority ethnic people make up 10% of the UK games industry workforce 👉

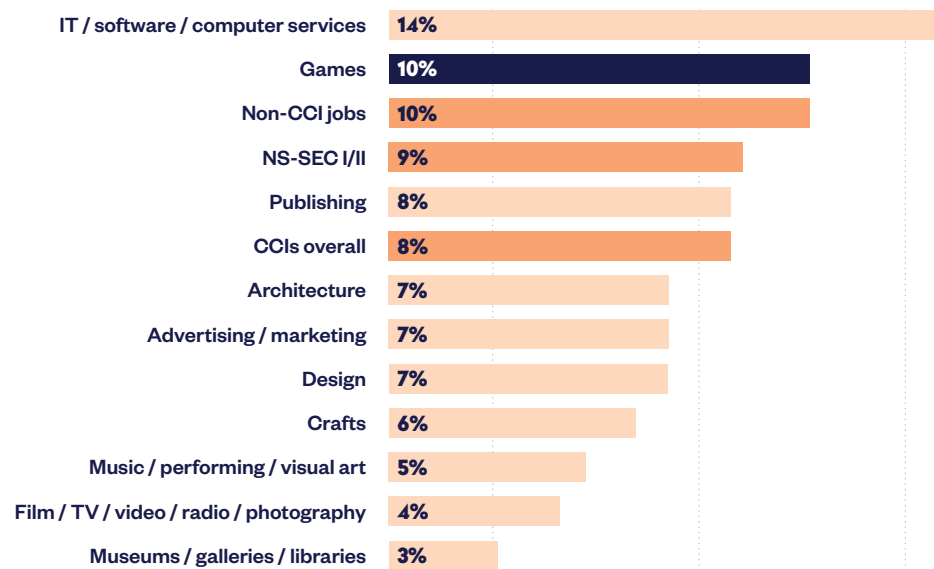
📌 Games is more ethnically diverse than the general UK workforce, cultural and creative industries, and managerial / professional jobs in general 📌

**2.2.1 Ethnic group: comparing with other industries**

Here, we’re comparing the fraction of people working who are BAME with the equivalent figures from each of the other main sectors of the cultural and creative industries<sup>10</sup>. The comparison figures are derived from the Labour Force Survey<sup>11</sup>. We’re also comparing all jobs outside of cultural and creative industries (which we’ve classified as “Non-CCI jobs”), and managerial and professional jobs as a whole (which we’ve classified as “NS-SEC I/II”).

While the overall fraction of BAME workers in games is below the equivalent figure in the working-age population, **games are in fact slightly more ethnically diverse than the workforce in general, of cultural and creative industries in general, and of managerial jobs in general.** However, the games sector has a smaller fraction of BAME workers than does the broader IT / software / computer services sector, into which most games jobs are classified: 10% compared with 14%.

**Ethnic group: % BAME workforce across a range of sectors**

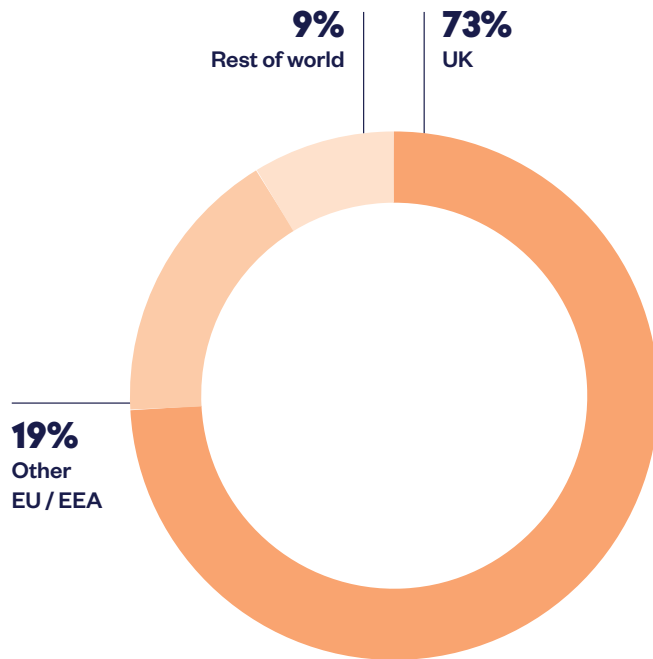


10: DCMS, 2013. Classifying and measuring the creative industries.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/203296/Classifying\\_and\\_Measuring\\_the\\_Creative\\_Industries\\_Consultation\\_Paper\\_April\\_2013-final.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/203296/Classifying_and_Measuring_the_Creative_Industries_Consultation_Paper_April_2013-final.pdf)

11: Oakley, K., Laurison, D., O'Brien, D. and Friedman, S., 2017. Cultural capital: Arts graduates, spatial inequality, and London's impact on cultural labor markets. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 61(12), pp.1510-1531.

## Nationality



📍 28% of the games industry workforce is international, with 19% from the EU / EEA 📍

### 2.3 Nationality

We asked people “What is your nationality?”, with the options:

- UK / British national
- National of another European Union / European Economic Area member state (not the UK)
- National of a country outside of the European Union / European Economic Area

The categories were not mutually exclusive, so respondents with multiple nationalities could tick two, or all three categories.

73% of respondents had British nationality, while 19% had nationality of another country in the EU or EEA, and 9% had nationality of somewhere else.

**The UK games industry has a significantly more international workforce than the working-age population<sup>12</sup>, where the equivalent figures are closer to 7% from other countries in the EU / EEA, and 10% from countries outside the EU / EEA. The UK games industry also has a significantly more international workforce than the rest of the screen industries, which consist of around 88% UK nationals, and 6% each EU / EEA and rest of world nationals<sup>13</sup>.**

In addition to this, we also asked respondents “In which country did you spend the most time in your childhood?”, from which 88 different countries were represented.

12: Office for National Statistics, 2019. Population of the UK by country of birth and nationality.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/datasets/populationoftheunitedkingdombycountryofbirthandnationality>

13: ScreenSkills, 2019. Annual ScreenSkills Assessment. <https://www.screenskills.com/media/2853/2019-08-16-annual-screenskills-assessment.pdf>



## 2.4 Gender

We asked respondents “What is your gender?”, with four options:

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Other (please specify)

70% of respondents said they were male, 28% female, and 2% non-binary or other.

By comparison with the working-age population, the games workforce is disproportionately male at 70%: the working-age population is close to 50:50, while the population in work is closer to 53% male<sup>14</sup>.

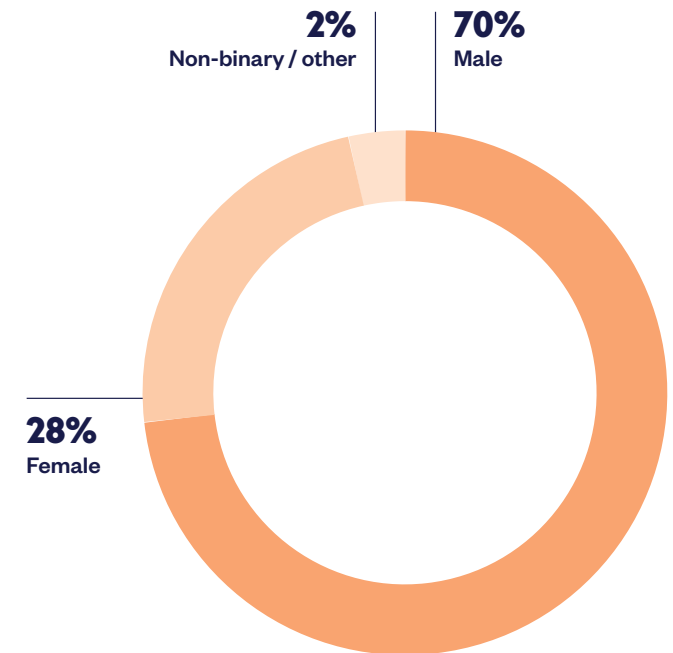
The proportion of people working in games who are non-binary, or other genders, is significantly larger than the estimated fraction in the adult population, at around 0.4%, although robust estimates are not available<sup>15</sup>.

### Gender at birth

Following the question about people's genders, we asked “Is this the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?”. We've interpreted responses to this question as whether people are trans or not.

Trans respondents are a mix of men, women, and non-binary people. On this basis, we've identified that **3% of respondents are trans**. This can be compared with estimates from Stonewall<sup>16</sup> that the overall fraction of trans adults in the UK is around 1%. Most of the trans respondents to the survey are 30 or younger.

### Gender



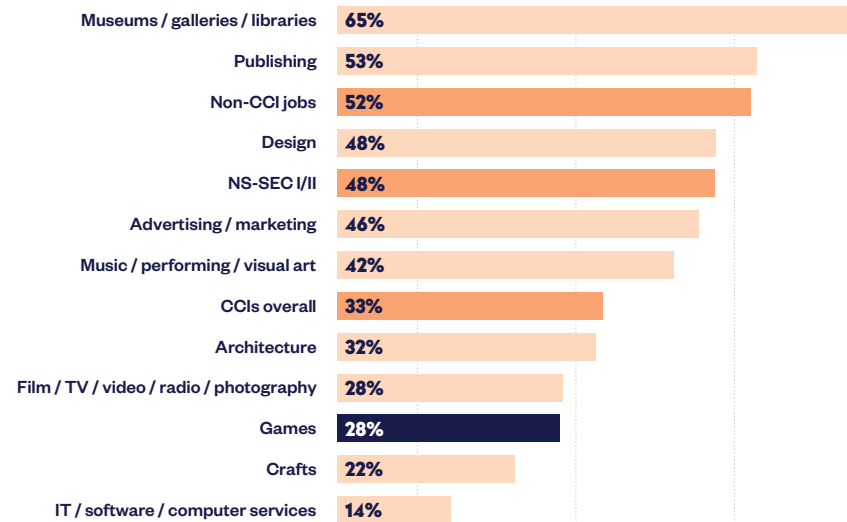
14: Office for National Statistics. Economic Activity by sex by age (2011 Census, England & Wales): <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/dc6107ew>

15: All About Trans, 2014. Non-binary factsheet. <https://www.allabouttrans.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/non-binary-gender-factsheet.pdf>

16: Stonewall. The Truth About Trans. <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/truth-about-trans#trans-people-britain>

At 28%, the fraction of women working in games is significantly below the overall UK workforce, the creative and cultural industries, and managerial / professional jobs more generally

**Gender: % female workforce across a range of sectors**



### 2.4.1 Gender: comparing with other sectors

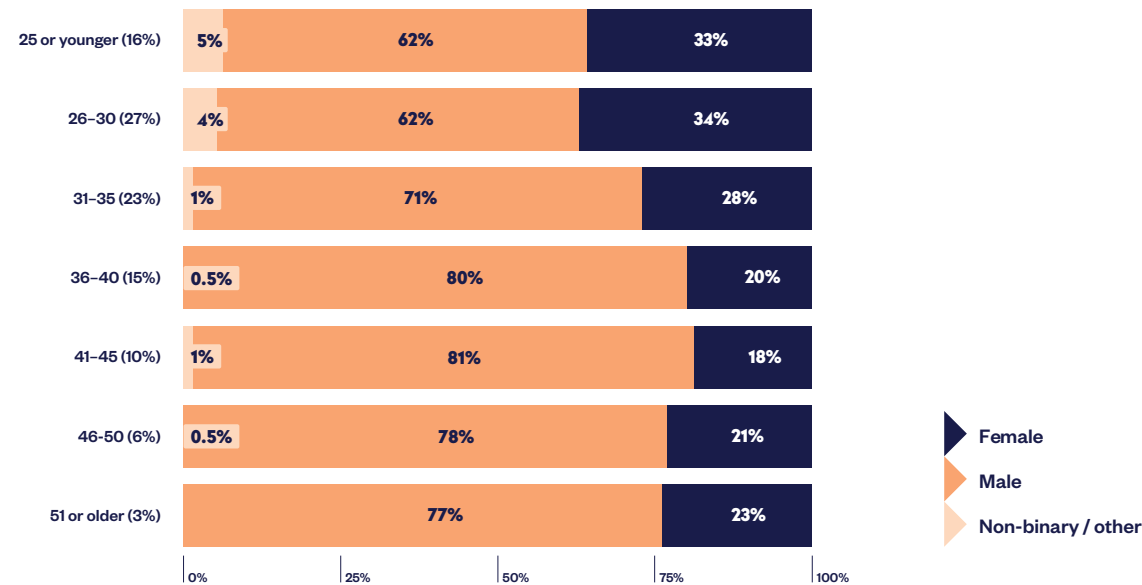
Here, we're using the same categories as in section 2.2.1, focusing on the proportions of women in each occupational group; we don't have enough information about non-binary people to draw comparisons.

To reiterate, "CCIs overall" refers to jobs across the cultural and creative industries, and "NS-SEC I/II" refers to managerial and professional jobs more generally. Once again, this comparison data is drawn from the Labour Force Survey.

The fraction of women working in games is significantly below that of managerial and professional jobs, and jobs in general. However, it is only slightly smaller than the fraction of women working in cultural and creative industries in general, at 28% compared with 33%.

This can be partly explained by the very small fraction of women working in IT / software / computer services, at 14%: this occupational group forms the largest single group within the CCI category more generally.

## Gender and age



### 2.4.2 Gender and age

Similarly, it is important to address the relationship between age and gender. The below figure shows the gender balance in the games industry at different age groups.

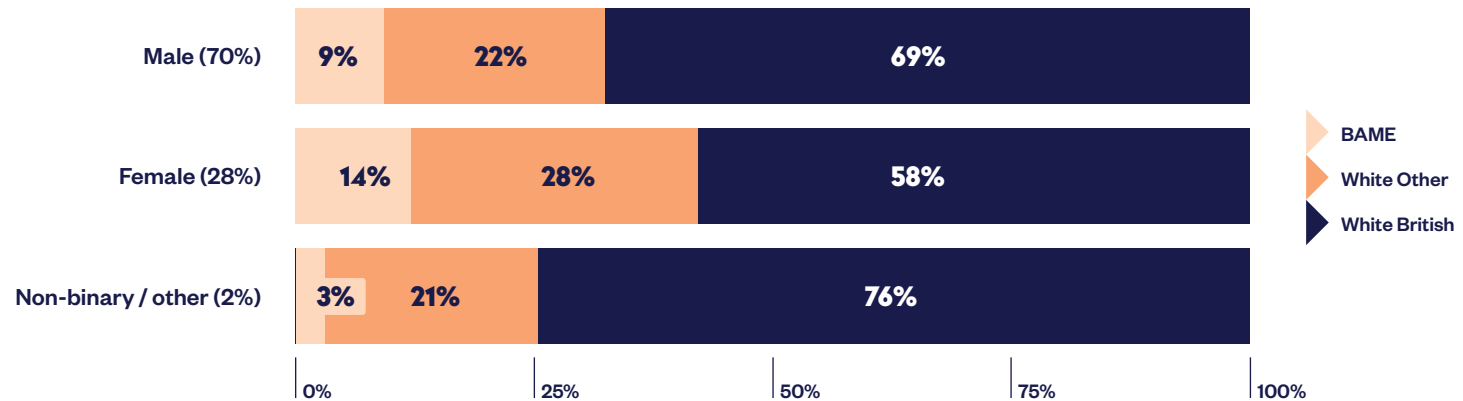
Younger age groups have more women and non-binary people: 62% of people 30 and under working in games are men, compared with 70% overall. By contrast, close to 80% of those people working in games in the age groups from 36 and above are men.

This does not guarantee that, in time, the games industry will become more evenly balanced between genders as younger women and non-binary people already working in games progress through the industry.

In the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) sector, the phenomenon whereby the fraction of women decreases at increasingly senior career stages is known as the “leaky pipeline”<sup>17</sup>, though this issue is not limited to STEM.

17. Pell, A.N., 1996. Fixing the leaky pipeline: Women scientists in academia. *Journal of animal science*, 74(11), pp.2843-2848.

### Gender and ethnic group



### 2.4.3 Gender and ethnic group

It’s also important to consider the relationships between these axes of diversity, recognising the salience of intersectionality. The below figure shows the fractions of people from different genders who are members of different ethnic groups. In this case, we’ve grouped people from different BAME categories together, as the numbers in some cases are potentially so small as to be disclosive.

A larger fraction of women working in games (14%) are BAME, compared with men (9%) and non-binary people (3%). This is in contrast with the national trend, where a larger proportion of the overall female workforce is White<sup>18</sup>. We will revisit this issue in a section 4, which focuses on the different nationalities of people working in games.

18: Office for National Statistics, 2019. Ethnicity facts and figures: Employment.

<https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/work-pay-and-benefits/employment/employment/latest#by-ethnicity-and-gender>

👉 21% of the games industry workforce is LGBTQ+, a significantly higher proportion than in national population estimates, which range between 3-7% 👉

## 2.5 Sexuality

We asked respondents “Which of the following best describes how you think about yourself?”, presenting them with the following categories:

- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Heterosexual / straight
- Lesbian / gay
- Queer
- Other (please specify)

Other than the “Other” category, these were presented in a random order.

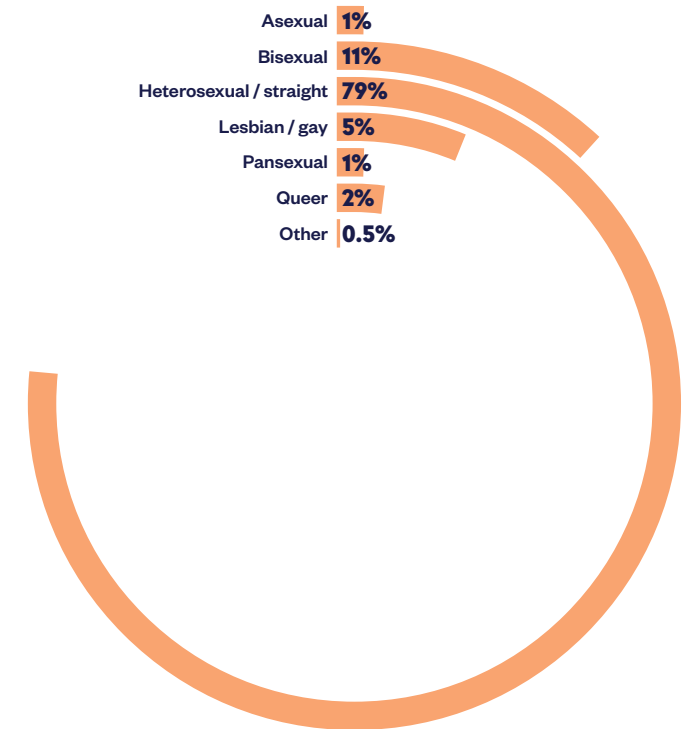
Of those respondents who answered this question, 79% of respondents responded that they were straight, compared with 5% who were lesbian / gay, 11% who were bisexual, and 5% who selected another option.

A comparatively large fraction of respondents stated that they were pansexual having selected “Other”, which is why we include that category here.

The games industry therefore has a significantly larger proportion of people whose sexuality is anything other than heterosexual / straight than in the adult population, estimated at between 93% and 97% depending on the approach used<sup>19</sup>.

The largest differences are with respect to bisexual people, which is 11% in games compared with 0.7% in the adult population, and people who are neither heterosexual / straight, lesbian / gay, nor bisexual: this group is 5% of people working in games, compared with 0.6% in the adult population. Less reliable data exists around how many queer, pansexual, and asexual people there are in the UK population, which is why we don’t draw the comparison here.

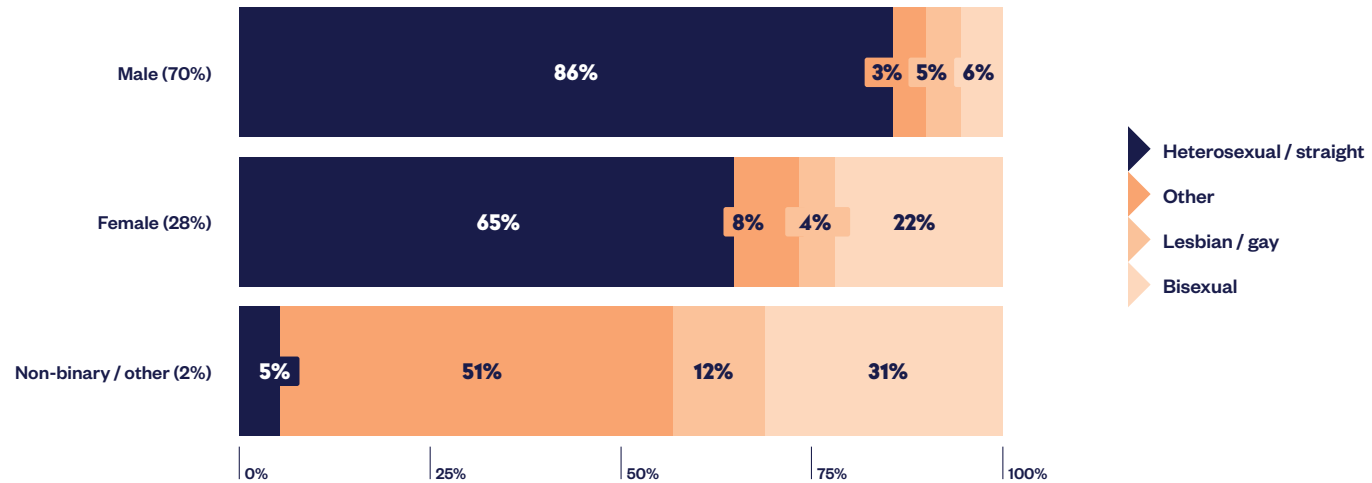
### Sexuality



19: Office for National Statistics, 2017. Sexual orientation, UK: 2017. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/bulletins/sexualidentityuk/2017>



## Sexuality and gender



### 2.5.1 Sexuality and gender

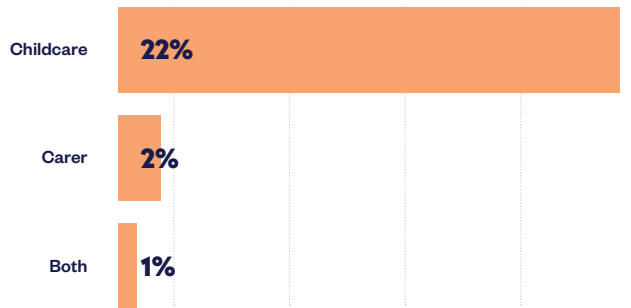
Here, we investigate whether there are differences in the sexualities of different genders. In this case, we have grouped together some sexualities due to small numbers and the potential of disclosure.

Men are the most likely group to be heterosexual/straight at 86%, compared with 65% of women and 5% of non-binary people.

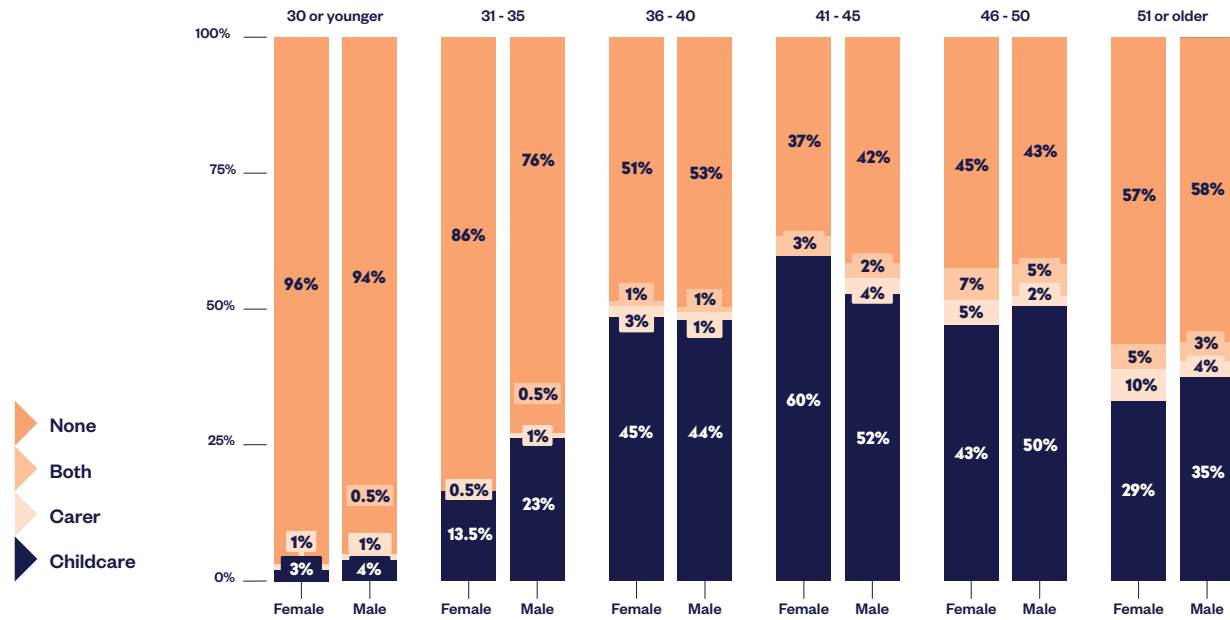
Similar fractions of men and women are lesbian/gay, at around 5% each, but women are particularly likely to be bisexual, at 22% compared with 6% of men.

Women are also particularly likely to be neither heterosexual/straight, lesbian/gay, nor bisexual, at 8%. That said, the fraction of men who are not heterosexual/straight is still significantly greater than the national average.

## Caring responsibilities



## Caring responsibilities, age and gender



## 2.6 Caring responsibilities

We asked respondents “Do you have any caring responsibilities outside work?”. The possible answers were:

- Yes – I have childcare responsibilities
- Yes – I have carer responsibilities
- Yes – I have both childcare and carer responsibilities
- No

Overall, 23% of respondents have childcare responsibilities and 3% of respondents have carer responsibilities, with 1% of respondents having both.

This compares with around 38% of people in work who live with dependent children<sup>20</sup>. This is a major difference, which might be at least partly explained through the age distribution of people working in games, as it skews younger than the overall population of people in work.

In order to unpack this, we’ve explored people’s caring responsibilities by both age group and gender. Because some of these categories are very small, we’ve omitted non-binary people, and we’ve grouped people under 30

together. This shows that the small fractions of people with caring responsibilities, particularly childcare responsibilities, can be partly explained by the age distribution of people working in games. Around half of the people working in games who are aged between 36 and 50 have childcare responsibilities, while a very small fraction of people aged 30 or younger have any caring responsibilities (around 5%).

There are also relatively small differences between men and women in terms of caring responsibilities, except that men aged 31–35 are nearly twice as likely to have childcare responsibilities as are women.

20: Office for National Statistics, 2019. Families and the labour market, England: main dataset using the Labour Force Survey and Annual Population Survey.

🔥 31% of games industry workers reported anxiety or depression, or both 🔥

## 2.7 Long-term conditions

Following extensive discussion with a range of people in games, the questions about long-term conditions were very detailed.

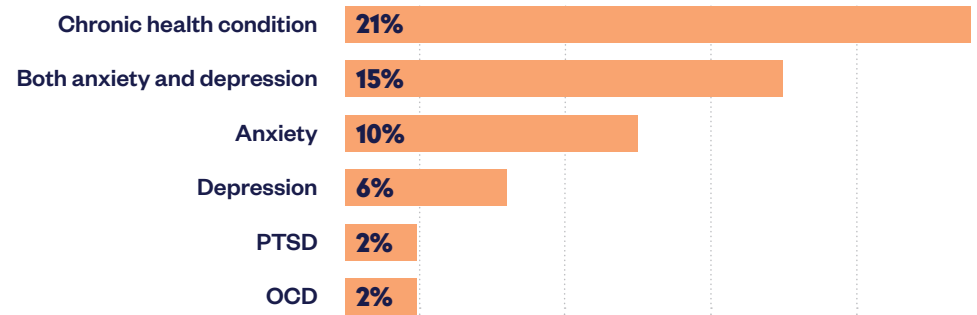
There were three batches of questions, all starting with “Do you have any of the following conditions which have lasted, or are expected to last, at least 12 months?”. The first batch focused on neurodiversity, the second on mental health, and the third on chronic physical health conditions. Here, we’ve grouped chronic physical health conditions together, as some categories had so few responses that they were potentially disclosive.

We’ve also distinguished between people who reported both anxiety and depression, and people who reported just one. In this first figure, we’ll show the rates of people reporting different long-term health conditions; we’ll then show the figures for different neurodivergent conditions.

**21% of respondents disclosed that they live with a chronic physical health condition**, compared with around 13% in the working-age population<sup>21</sup>.

**31% of respondents reported anxiety or depression (or both)**, compared to a national average of 17%.

### Long-term conditions



15% of respondents disclosed both anxiety and depression, compared with 8% nationally<sup>22</sup>; 10% disclosed that they had anxiety (but not depression), compared with 6% nationally, and 6% disclosed that they had depression (but not anxiety), compared with 3% nationally. We’ll explore these figures in more detail in a subsequent section.

Rates of reported PTSD are slightly lower than in the general population (2%, compared with 4% in the general population), while rates of reported OCD are similar to those in the general population.

21: Office for Disability Issues, 2011. Life Opportunities Survey wave one results.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/180891/los\\_wave\\_one\\_200911.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/180891/los_wave_one_200911.pdf)

22: Mind, 2017. Mental health facts and statistics.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/statistics-and-facts-about-mental-health/how-common-are-mental-health-problems/>

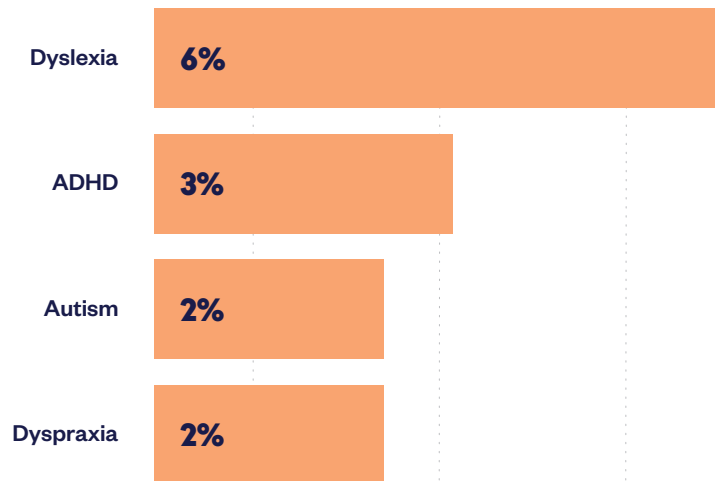
👉 11% of respondents reported a neurodivergent condition 👉

## 2.8 Neurodiversity

These categories are not mutually exclusive, with some respondents having two, three, or all four conditions; overall, **11% of respondents are neurodivergent**. These percentages are broadly consistent with or lower than those estimated in the general population, with ACAS estimating<sup>23</sup> that 4% of the adult population has ADHD, with the numbers for dyslexia 10%, dyspraxia 5%, and autism 1-2%.

However, it is particularly worth drawing attention to the fact that it is estimated<sup>24</sup> that just 16% of autistic adults are in full-time work, while around 56% of people in the overall adult population are<sup>25</sup>. **This suggests that the rates of autistic adults working in games is in fact between three and four times the rate in other employment sectors.**

### Neurodiversity



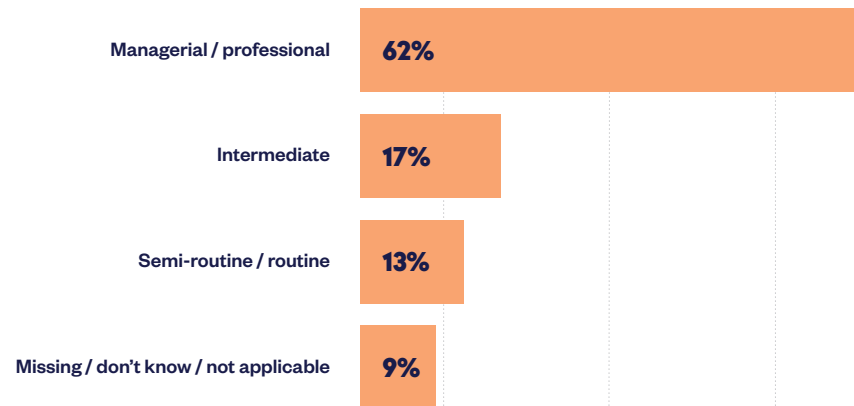
23: ACAS, 2016. Neurodiversity in the workplace. <https://www.acas.org.uk/neurodiversity>

24: National Autistic Society, 2016. Government must tackle the autism employment gap: National Autistic Society <https://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/media-centre/news/2016-10-27-employment-gap.aspx>

25: Office for National Statistics, 2019. Employment in the UK.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/employmentintheuk/december2019>

## Social background



### 2.9 Social background

The key measure we've used for people's social backgrounds is a question about what the main income earner in people's households when they were about 14.

This methodology is recommended by the Cabinet Office<sup>26</sup> and has been rolled out across several different occupational sectors, including a wide range of employers. We've grouped responses into four main categories: "Managerial / professional", "Intermediate", and "Semi-routine / routine", as well as "Missing/don't know / not applicable".

**62% of respondents reported that they lived in households where the main income earner worked in a managerial or professional job.** This can be contrasted with around 33% of all people in work, and around 44% of people working in managerial and professional jobs<sup>27</sup>.

Almost all jobs in games are currently classified as managerial or professional. These figures should be put into the context that, as we saw above, people working in games are younger than people working in all jobs, and this can form part of the explanation for the differences.

### 2.9.1 Social background: comparing with other industries

In the above figure, we're using the same occupational comparisons and data from the Labour Force Survey as we used in the comparisons for gender and ethnic group.

One crucial difference here is that the comparison data from the Labour Force Survey asks people to specify the job that the main income earner did when they were about 14, rather than select one category from a list of options. The percentages correspond to the fractions of people who grew up in a household where the main income earner worked in either a managerial or a professional job.

<sup>26</sup>: Civil Service Diversity & Inclusion, 2018. Measuring Socio-economic Background in your Workforce: recommended measures for use by employers.

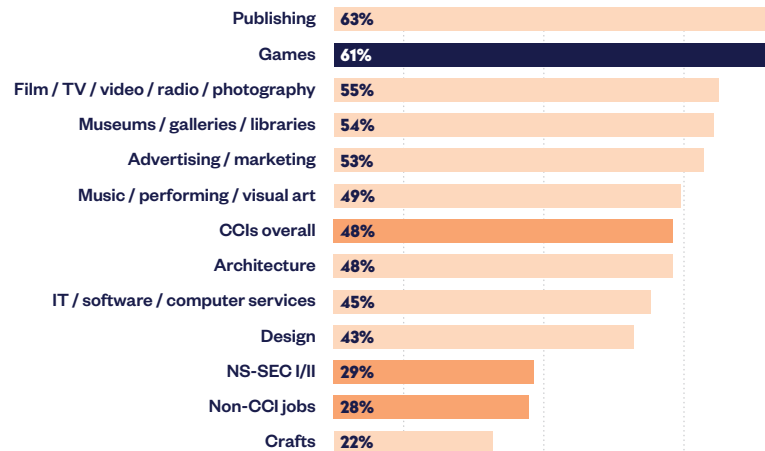
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/768371/Measuring\\_Socio-economic\\_Background\\_in\\_your\\_Workforce\\_recommended\\_measures\\_for\\_use\\_by\\_employers.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/768371/Measuring_Socio-economic_Background_in_your_Workforce_recommended_measures_for_use_by_employers.pdf)

<sup>27</sup>: Friedman, S., Laurison, D., & Macmillan, L., 2017. Social Mobility, the Class Pay Gap and Intergenerational Worklessness: New Insights from The Labour Force Survey.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/596945/The\\_class\\_pay\\_gap\\_and\\_intergenerational\\_worklessness.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596945/The_class_pay_gap_and_intergenerational_worklessness.pdf)



**Social background: % from managerial / professional backgrounds compared with other cultural and creative industries**



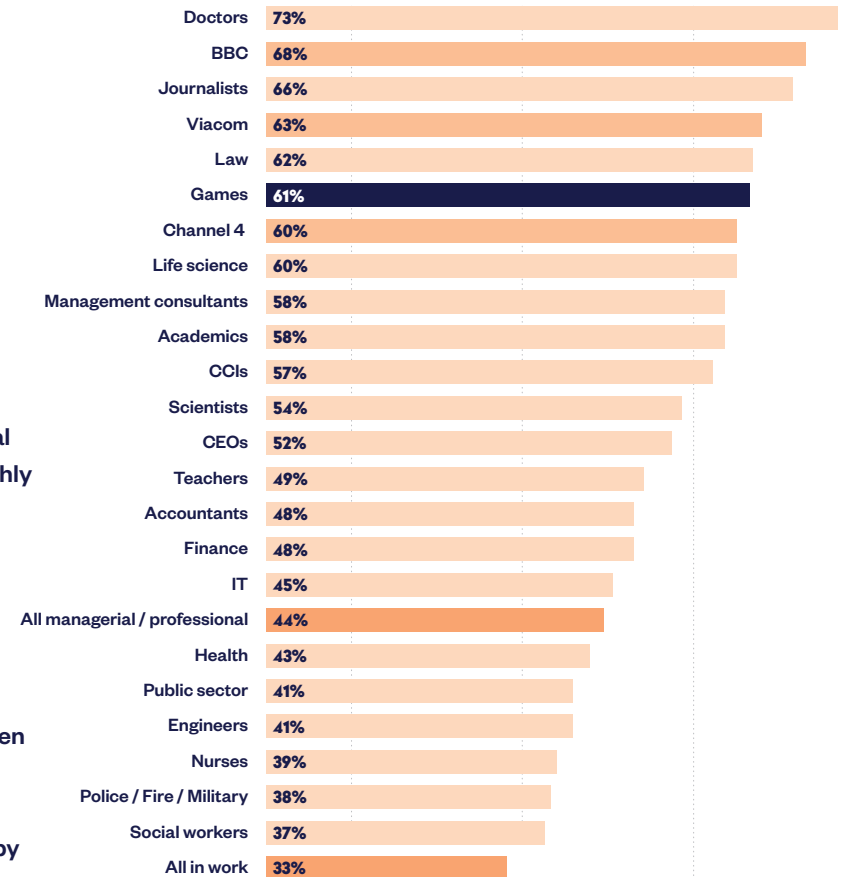
This indicates that **games has a much larger fraction of people who grew up in managerial or professional households than people in managerial and professional occupations in general, and indeed a larger fraction than any other sector in the cultural and creative industries other than publishing.**

However, this comparison might be misleading as a consequence of the methodological issue around how the question is asked. For this reason, we also draw out comparator figures a range of specific occupations<sup>28</sup>, and for a range of specific broadcasters<sup>29</sup>, which can be seen in the figure above. This shows that while games still has a

very high fraction of workers from managerial and professional backgrounds, they are roughly comparable with people working in the key broadcasters of the BBC, Channel 4, and Viacom.

It should be pointed out that there are relatively few comparisons to be drawn because of how recently the measure has been introduced, but its use is being adopted by Ofcom and is being extended through other sectors. This includes organisations funded by Arts Council England<sup>30</sup>.

**Social background: % from managerial / professional backgrounds compared with other industries and organisations**

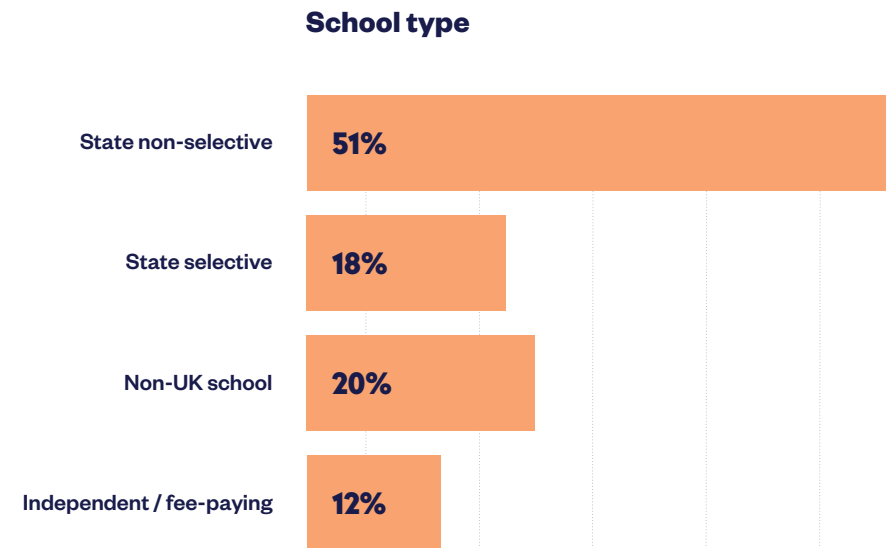


28: Friedman, S., Laurison, D., & Macmillan, L., 2017. Social Mobility, the Class Pay Gap and Intergenerational Worklessness: New Insights from The Labour Force Survey. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/596945/The\\_class\\_pay\\_gap\\_and\\_intergenerational\\_worklessness.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596945/The_class_pay_gap_and_intergenerational_worklessness.pdf)

29: Ofcom, 2019. Diversity and equal opportunities in television: monitoring report on the UK-based broadcasting industry. <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/information-for-industry/guidance/diversity/diversity-equal-opportunities-television>

30: Arts Council England, 2019. Diversity. <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/our-impact/diversity>

📍 Rates of selective or independent fee-paying schooling are significantly higher in the games sector workforce than the national population 📍



### 2.10 School type

The other key measure we used for people's social backgrounds is the type of school they attended. The 20% of people who attended school outside the UK is a bit lower than we'd expect given the numbers of people who hold non-UK nationalities.

A slight majority of respondents (51%) attended non-selective state schools, such as comprehensives. 18% attended selected state schools, such as grammar schools, and 12% attended independent or fee-paying schools.

The 18% of people who attended selective state schools is much larger than the 5% of students currently in education who do so, although changes over time mean that this figure is not representative of the working-age population.

The 12% of people who attended independent or fee-paying schools is around double the national average of 7%<sup>31</sup>.



# 3

## Job roles

In this section, we'll look at how different characteristics vary across different kinds of jobs – the kinds of work people are doing, and whether they're more junior or more senior. Minority groups' representation in games is unlikely to be consistent across different jobs, and it's important to understand how different groups are represented in different roles in the games sector.

Here, we'll focus on the particular roles that people do and people's seniority, and look at how this varies by gender, ethnic group, and social background. It's worth noting that, in the process of composing this report, we also looked at how these things varied by organisation size, finding only small differences.

### 3.1 Job roles by gender

First, we'll revisit our earlier classification of different job roles, looking at how they differ by gender. Remember that the overall figures in the census are around 70% male, 28% female, and 2% non-binary; the percentages of people working in different roles are included in the labels.

**At about 87% male, programming is the job role with the largest fraction of men, followed by IT (83%) and design (82%). All job roles have a majority of men working in them; the most evenly-balanced are localisation, writing, project management, and business operations.**

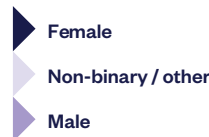
Our next focus is on how seniority varies by gender. We want to understand whether the fraction of men is similar at all levels of games, or whether men are more or less predominant at more junior or more senior levels.

Men tend to represent between 77% and 80% of the workforce in most senior positions and an even higher proportion in core game production roles

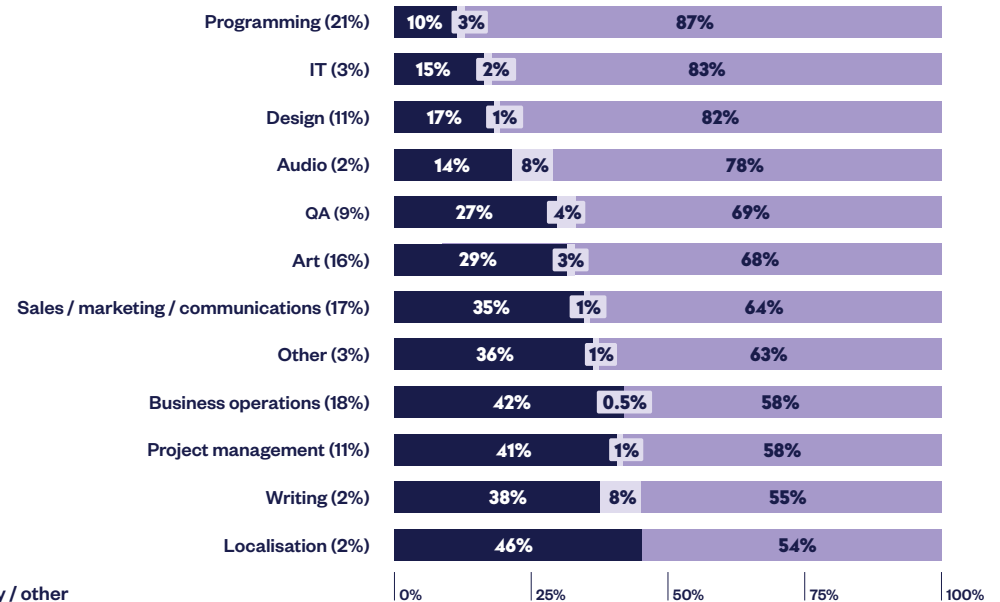
There's a larger fraction of men among more senior than more junior roles. Around 41% of people working in junior roles, or who are otherwise unclassified, are either women or non-binary; the equivalent figures for people in lead or senior roles, or directors / CEOs, are only half of this.

However, it's noteworthy that 70% of people in managerial roles are male, which is substantially lower than for other senior roles.

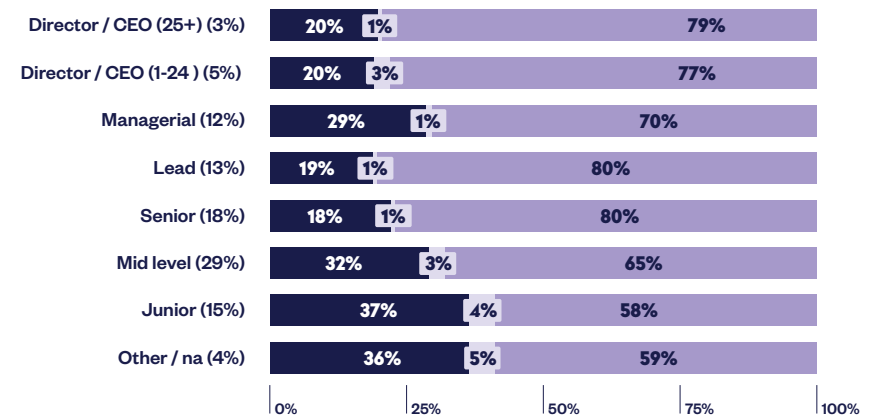
This is partly explained by the fact that people in business operations roles were more likely to describe themselves as "managerial", while people in programming were more likely to describe themselves as "lead".



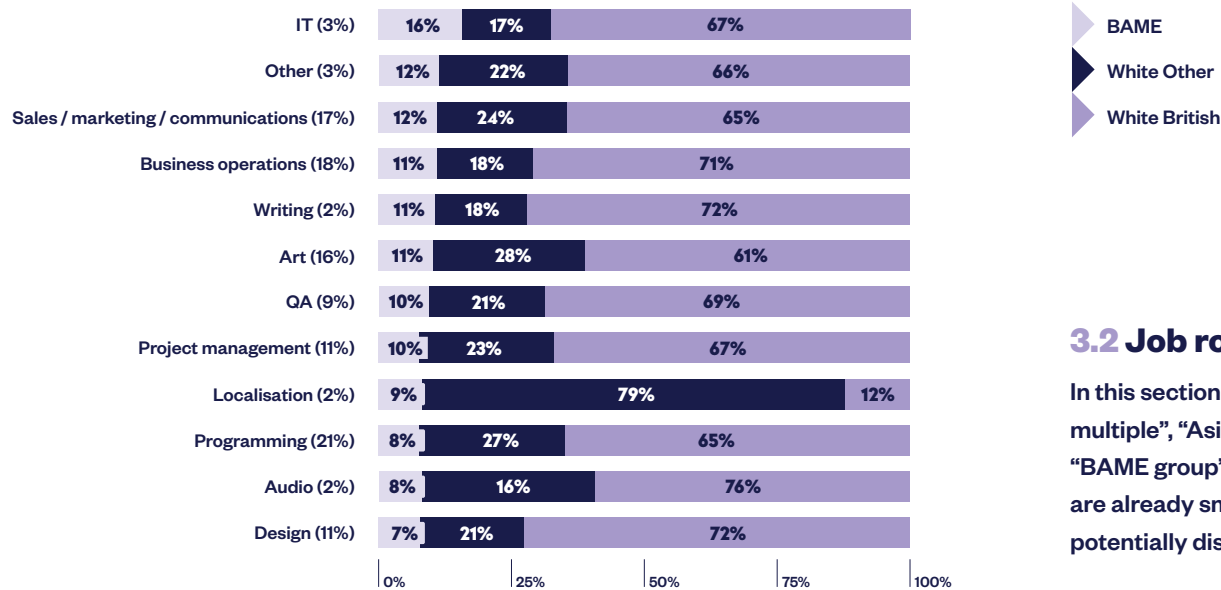
### Gender by job role



### Gender by seniority



### Ethnic group by job role



### 3.2 Job roles by ethnic group

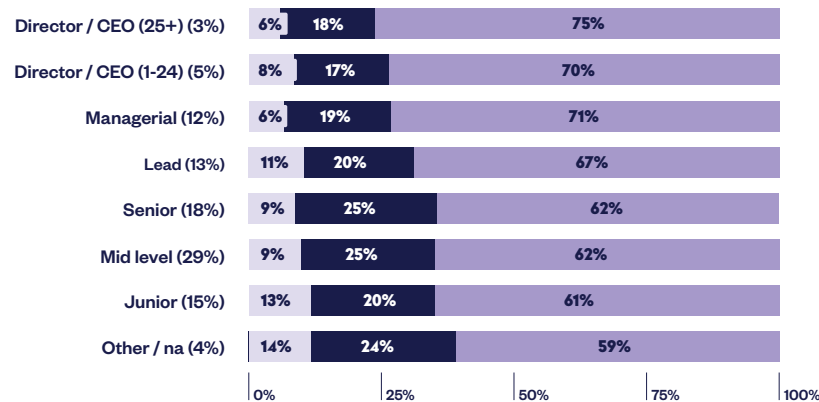
In this section, we're grouping people in the "Mixed / multiple", "Asian", "Black", and "Other" groups into a "BAME group", for reasons of disclosure; these groups are already small, so breaking them apart by job role is potentially disclosive.

The job role with the largest fractions of BAME people working in them is IT, with 16%; **most roles have between 10% and 12% of BAME people working in them.**

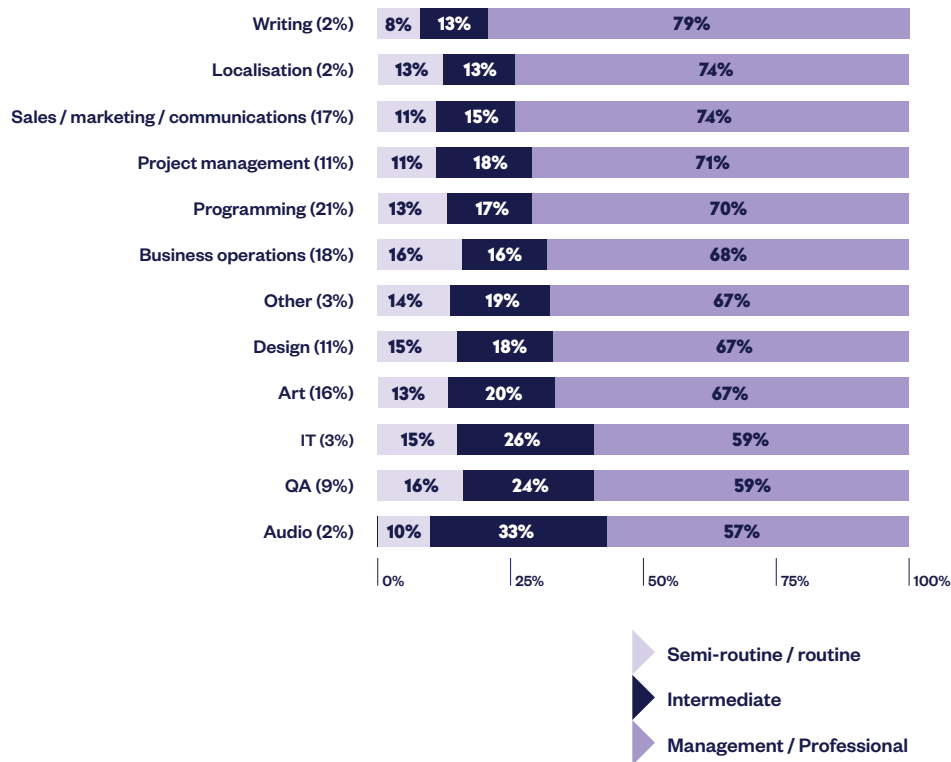
The fractions of people in the "White Other" group are quite varied, with relatively few in business operations, writing, and audio, and (unsurprisingly) a large majority of people working in localisation.

**There are consistently larger fractions of White British people in more senior roles, highest among Directors / CEOs of larger organisations at 75%.** The fractions of people who are from other White groups are more consistent, varying from 25% to 17%, **while the fractions of BAME people in junior roles (13%) is double the fraction of BAME people either in managerial roles, or who are Directors / CEOs of larger organisations (6%).**

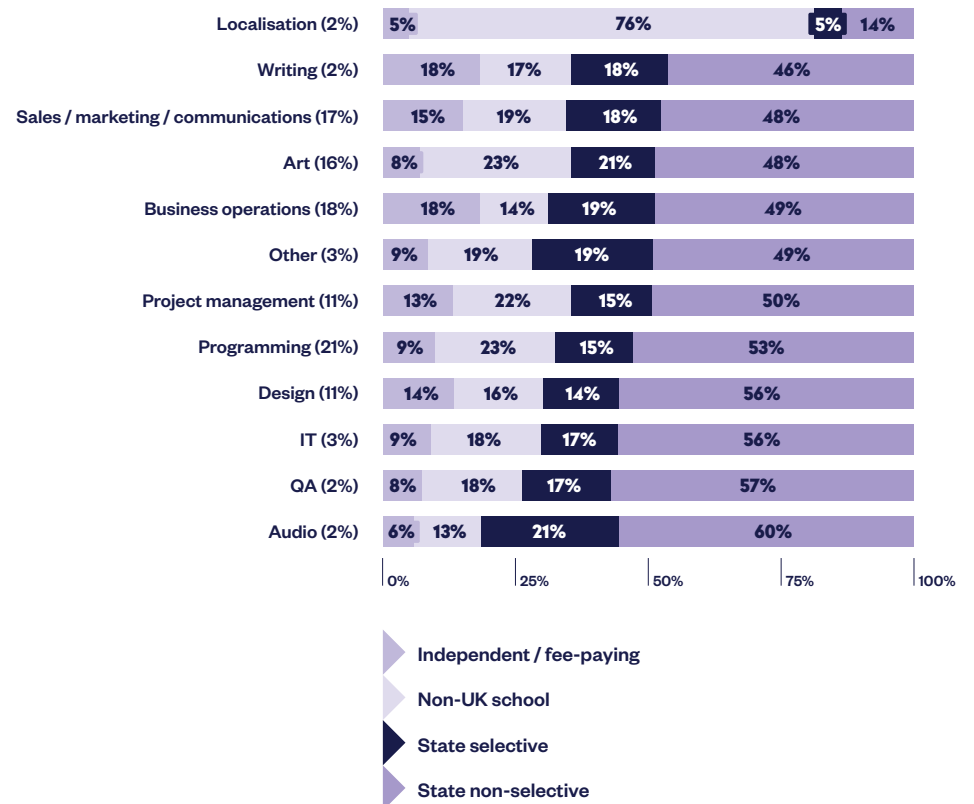
### Ethnic group by seniority



### Job role by social background



### Job role by school type



### 3.3 Job roles by social background

In this section, we'll unpack how job role and seniority varies according to people's social background – again, returning to the question of the kind of work that the main income earner in the household did when respondents were around 14. In these figures, we've omitted people who said they didn't know, ticked "not applicable", and so on, so we're just focusing on people whose parents worked in managerial or professional jobs, in intermediate

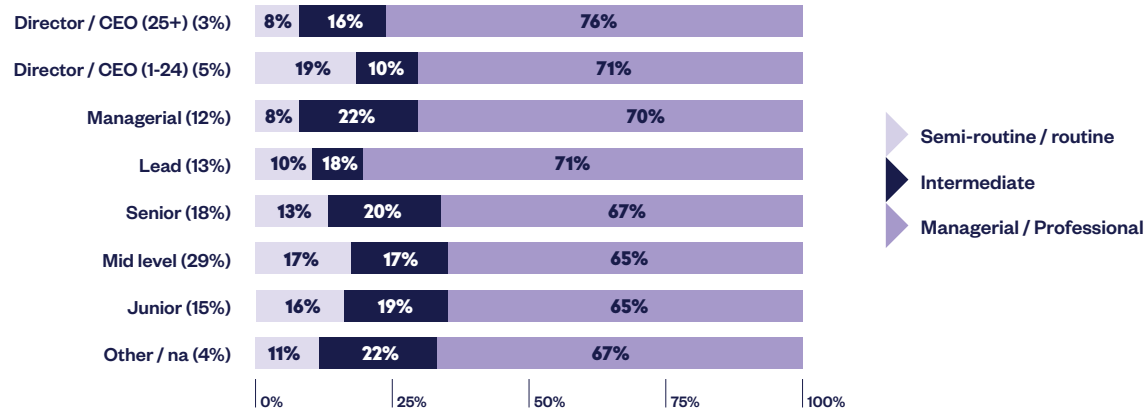
jobs, and in semi-routine and routine jobs. The roles with the most people from managerial and professional backgrounds are writing, localisation, and sales / marketing / communications, while IT, QA, and audio have the fewest. These differences are largely driven by the fractions of people from intermediate backgrounds; the fractions of people from semi-routine or routine backgrounds are largely similar to each other.

These figures are consistent with the fractions of people who were educated in different types of schools, with the key difference that the vast majority of people working in localisation were educated outside of the UK.

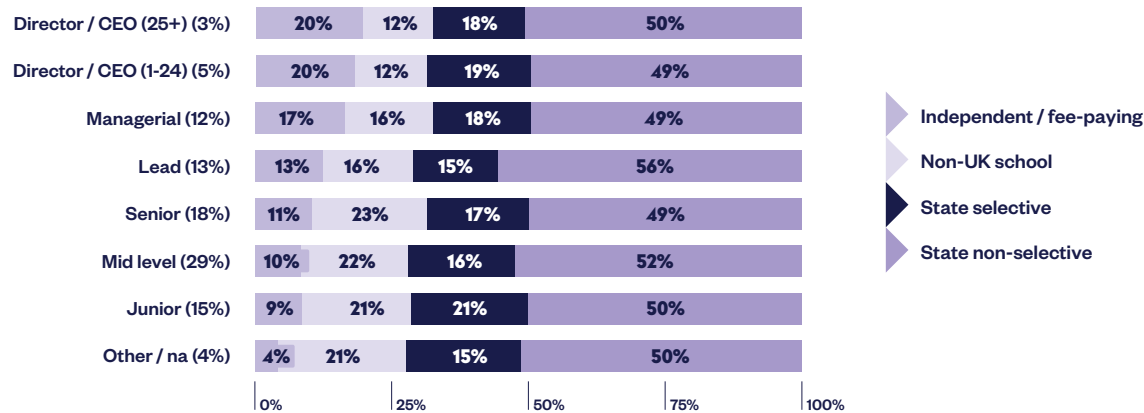
46% of people working in writing were educated at non-selective UK state schools, compared with 60% of people working in audio.



### Seniority by social background



### Seniority by school type



People in more senior positions are more likely to have come from a managerial / professional background and are significantly more likely to have been independently educated

### 3.4 Seniority by social background


People in more junior roles are slightly more likely to be from managerial / professional backgrounds, although these differences are small; 65% of people in junior and mid-level roles can be compared with 70-71% of people in managerial and lead roles, and directors / CEOs of smaller organisations. Directors / CEOs of larger organisations are the most likely group to be from managerial / professional backgrounds, at 76%.

By contrast, the differences in the fractions of people who were independently educated are somewhat larger, although this is partly explained by the smaller fractions of senior people who were educated outside the UK: almost all groups have close to 50% of people who were educated in non-selective UK state schools. **20% of directors and CEOs were educated in independent schools, compared with around 10% of people between junior and senior roles.**

# 4

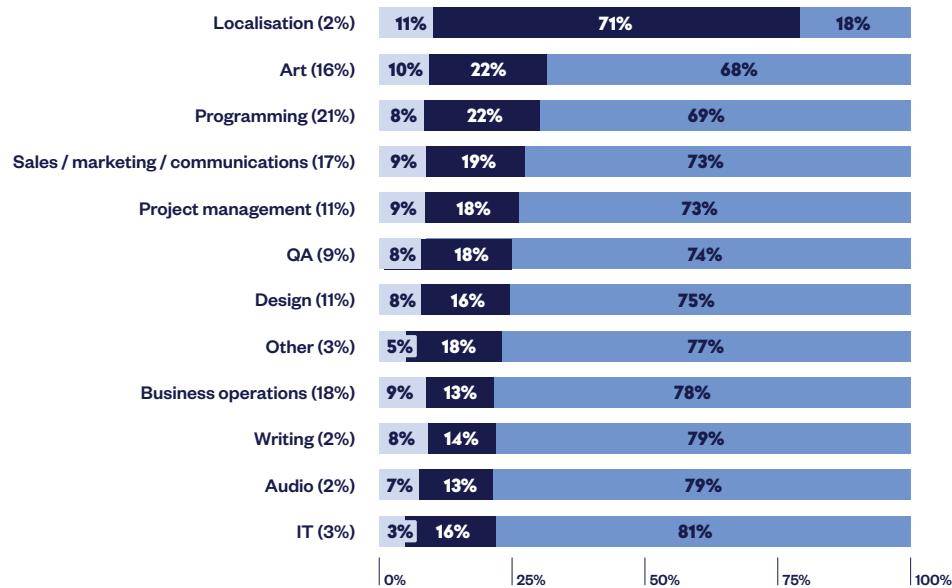
## Nationality

As we saw earlier, the UK games workforce is highly international. **28%** of the workforce holds a non-UK nationality, and people from **88** different countries responded to the survey.

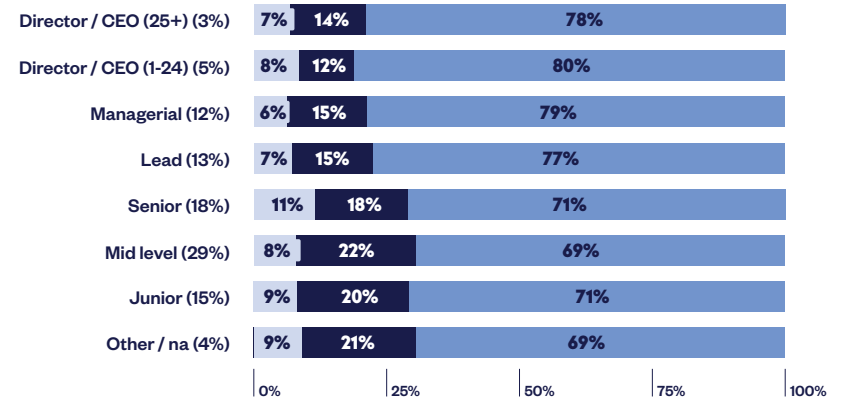


Here, we want to understand non-UK nationals in the UK games workforce in two ways. Are they undertaking different sorts of jobs from the workforce with UK nationality? And how far is the diversity in the games workforce driven by international workers?

### Job role by nationality



### Seniority by nationality



👉 The core games production roles of art and programming roles have a particularly international workforce, at 32% and 31% respectively 👉

### 4.1 Nationality and job role

In this section, we're grouping people in the "Mixed / multiple", "Asian", "Black", and "Other" groups into a "BAME group", for reasons of disclosure; these groups are already small, so breaking them apart by job role is potentially disclosive.

The job role with the largest fraction of people from outside the UK is localisation, by some distance; just 18% of people working in localisation hold UK nationality.

The next two are art and programming, at 68% and 69% UK respectively, and both with 22% of people from

other countries in the EU. At the other end of the scale, IT is the job role with the largest fraction of people with UK nationality. People working in lead, managerial, and directorial / CEO roles are more likely to have UK nationality than are people working in other roles.

The fractions of people from outside the EU are fairly consistent across all different levels of seniority, while the fractions of people from elsewhere in the EU vary more, from 22% of people working in mid-level jobs and 14% of directors / CEOs of larger organisations, and just 10% of directors / CEOs of smaller organisations.

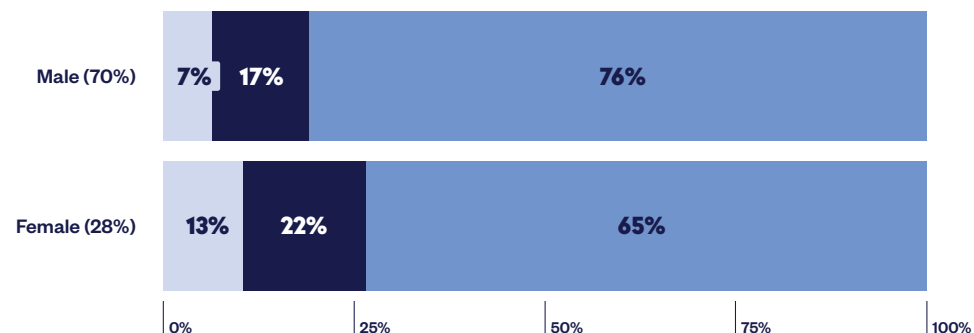
Non-UK nationals are a major factor in both the gender and ethnic diversity of the games industry workforce

## 4.2 Nationality, gender and ethnic group

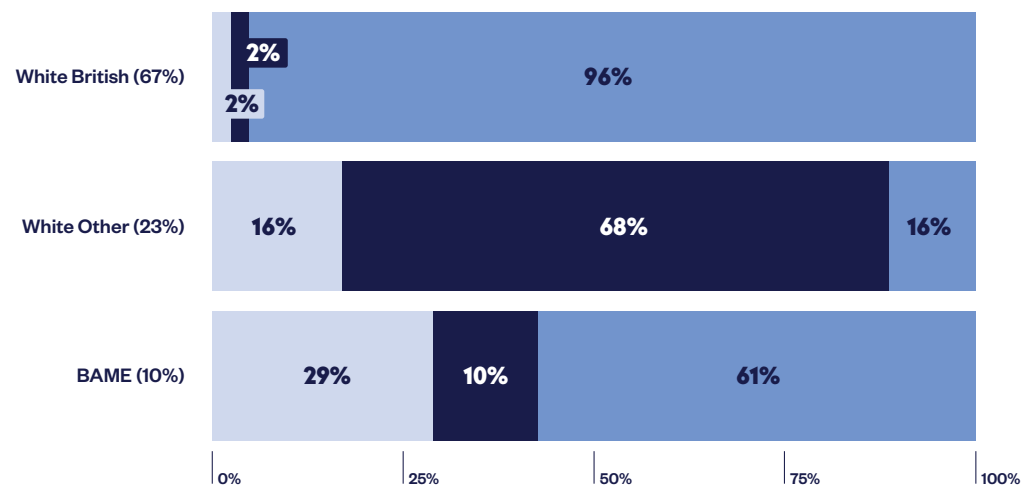
The representation of women in the UK games industry is partly driven by people of different nationalities. 24% of men working in games hold nationalities of countries other than the UK, while 35% of women working in games do. This difference is more pronounced for people outside of the EU; the fraction of women who come from outside the EU (13%) is nearly double the equivalent figure for men (7%). We've omitted non-binary people here for the possibility of disclosure.

It is unsurprising that the overwhelming majority of White British people (96%) are also those with British nationality. One implication of this is that the White Other and BAME categories both have above-average fractions of people holding other nationalities; just 16% of the White Other group has UK nationality, while just 61% of the BAME group does. To make this more explicit: a large part of what ethnic diversity there is in the UK games industry is down to people with nationalities of other countries.

Gender by nationality



Ethnic group by nationality



# 5

## Education

We asked three main questions about education: the type of school that respondents had spent the most time attending, their highest achieved level of education, and the subject of that study.

In this section, we'll focus on the second and third of these questions, having mainly considered the type of school that people spent the most time attending in the context of social background. We'll therefore focus on what kinds of qualifications people working in games hold, both in terms of level and subject.

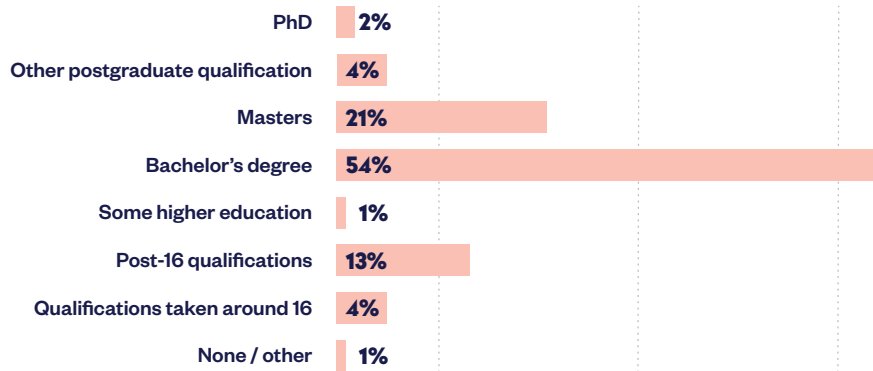


### 5.1 Qualifications

We first asked people “What is your highest achieved level of education?”, presenting them with the following options:

- PhD / DPhil / other doctoral qualification
- Postgraduate Master’s degree (e.g. MSc, MA)
- Other postgraduate qualification (e.g. PGCE, GDL)
- Undergraduate degree (e.g. BA, BSc, BFA)
- Post-16 qualifications (e.g. A-levels, Scottish Highers, High School Diploma, Baccalaureate)
- Apprenticeship
- Qualifications taken around age 16 (e.g. GCSEs, CSEs, O-levels, Mittlere Reife)
- None
- Other (please specify)

## People's highest level of education



We've adapted the categories so that people who specified that they held undergraduate Master's degrees (such as MChem) are included in the Master's category. We've included apprenticeships in the "Other" category, as numbers were very small; we've also introduced a "Some higher education" category, reflecting the number of people who reported that they'd attended higher education but hadn't graduated with a degree.

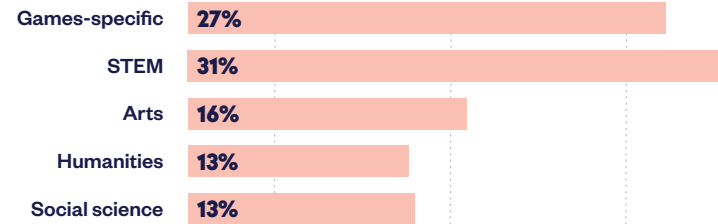
**81% of games workers are educated to at least degree-level**, significantly above that of the overall UK workforce at 23% and the cultural and creative industries generally at 56%<sup>32</sup>. The nearest comparable industries in the cultural and creative industries with this rate of degree-level education are museums, galleries and

libraries at 79% and architecture at 84%. A slight majority of people working in games hold an undergraduate degree as their highest achieved level of education, while 27% of people hold a postgraduate qualification.

While the most common subject area is STEM subjects, 69% of people working in games hold their highest qualification in another subject. **27% of people hold games-specific qualifications**, while 42% of people studied arts, humanities, or social science.

In the remainder of this section, we'll be breaking people into three groups: those with postgraduate degrees, those with Bachelor's degrees, and people without degrees.

## The main subject of people's highest qualification



📌 **Games is a highly-educated industry, with 81% of the workforce educated to degree level or above** 📌

32: O'Brien, D., Laurison, D., Miles, A. and Friedman, S., 2016. Are the creative industries meritocratic? An analysis of the 2014 British Labour Force Survey. *Cultural Trends*, 25(2), pp.116-131

📌📌 The core games production roles of art and programming are the most highly educated, with 88% with degrees or above 📌📌

## 5.2 Education and job role

Does whether people hold particular qualifications vary by their job role?

The job role with the largest fraction of people without degrees is IT, at 41%; this is followed by QA and business operations. On the other end, 12% of people working in art and in programming do not hold degrees. The job role with the largest fraction of people holding postgraduate qualifications is localisation, at 47%.

There are major differences in the kinds of qualifications that people studied by their job role. A (slight) majority of people working in design hold games-specific

qualifications – 54% – while large fractions of people working in art, QA, and programming also do.

By contrast, very small fractions of people working in audio, business operations, sales / marketing / communications, localisation, and IT, do so.

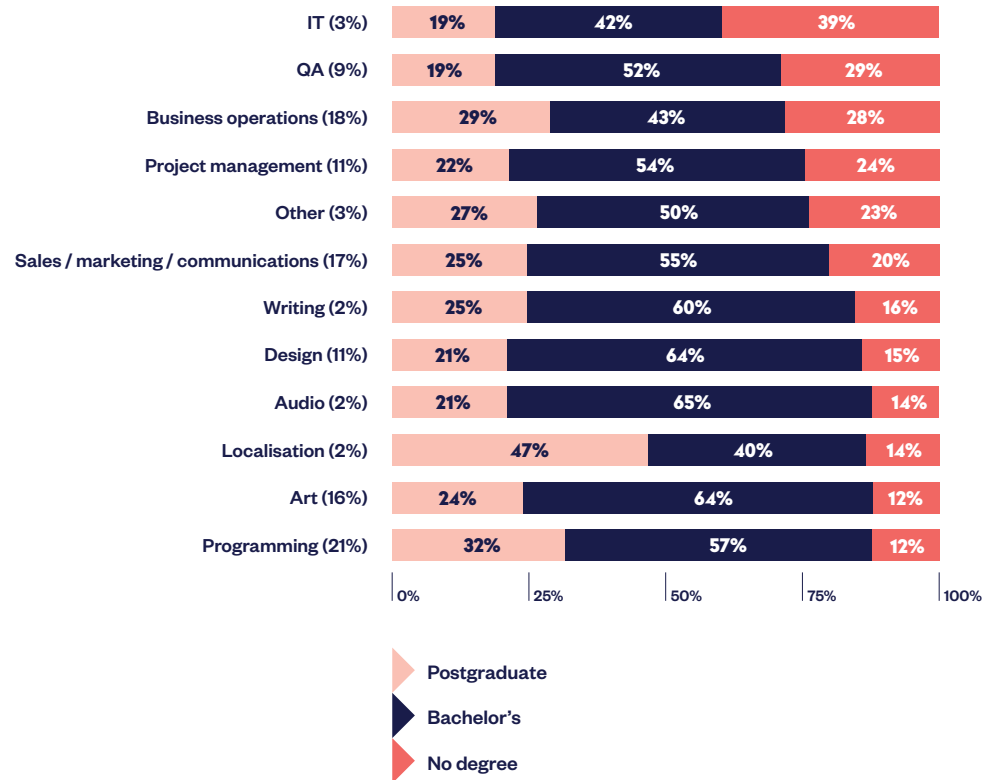
All job roles have people from a wide range of different educational backgrounds; while most people working in programming hold games-specific qualifications or qualifications in STEM, 6% hold qualifications in other disciplines; other areas, such as project management, are a more even mix across these five different subject areas.

📌📌 Games-specific qualifications are most prevalent in core games production roles, such as design, art, QA and programming 📌📌

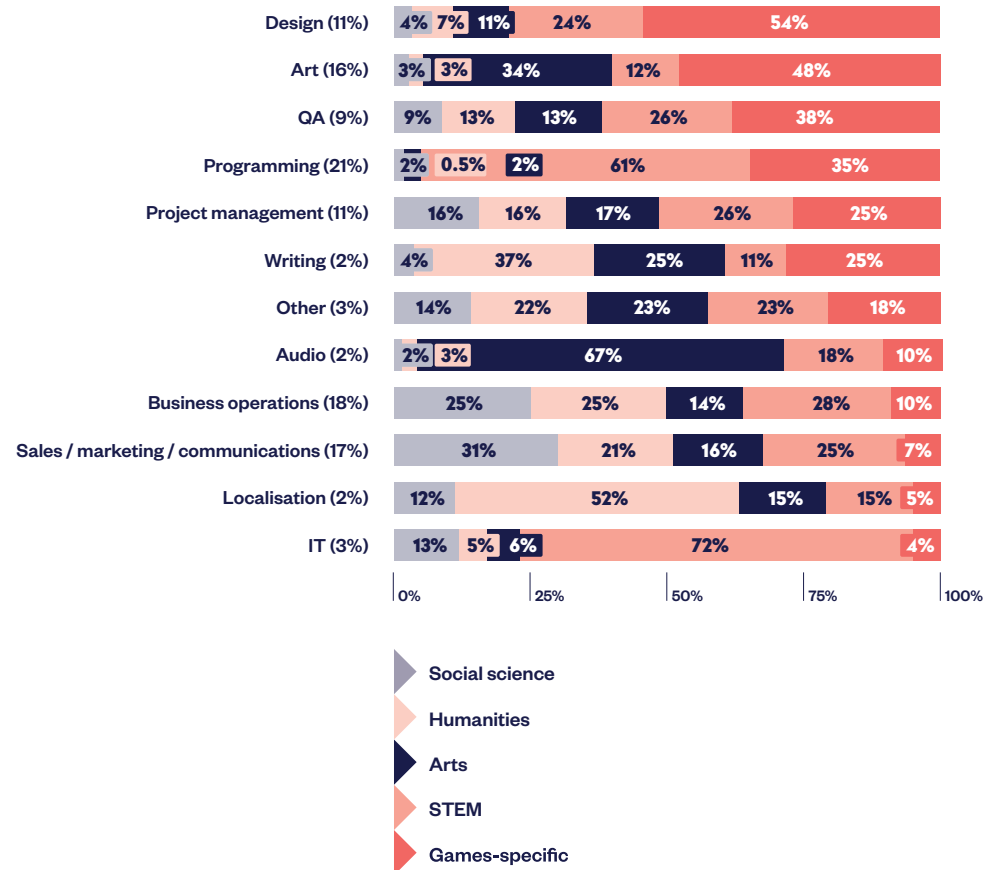


📍 54% of games / level design workers have games-specific qualifications 📍

Job role by qualifications



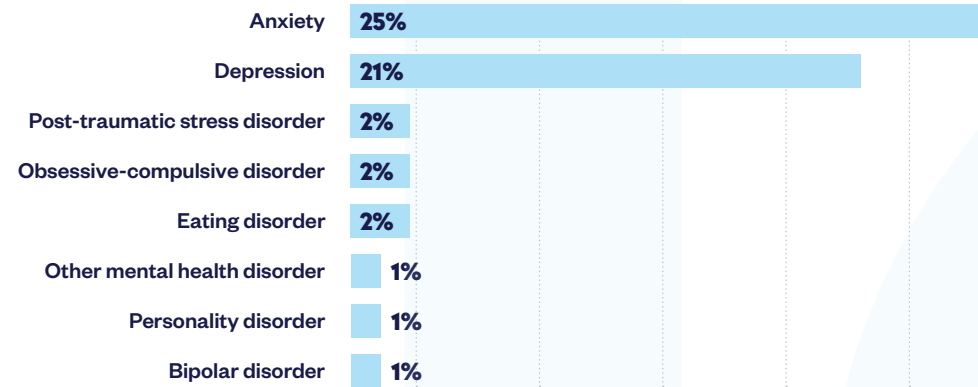
Job role by subject



# 6

## Mental health

### Long-term mental health conditions



### 6.1 Mental health conditions

Recent international work<sup>33</sup> has highlighted the salience of mental health in the games industry.

We saw in an earlier section what the overall rates of people disclosing certain long-term mental health conditions, but the overall proportions of people disclosing different long-term mental health conditions can be seen in the figure on this page.

It's difficult to get good estimates of overall rates of some of these conditions but the rates of anxiety and

depression in games are higher than in the general population, while the rates of PTSD, bipolar, and obsessive-compulsive disorder are similar in games to the equivalent figures in the general population<sup>34</sup>.

Throughout the remainder of this section, we're going to focus on how mental health conditions vary across different parts of the games industry. We're going to particularly focus on anxiety and depression, as focusing on other long-term mental health conditions might draw attention to cases where there are small numbers.

33: Take This, 2019. State of the Industry 2019: Mental Health in the Game Industry. [https://www.takethis.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/TakeThis\\_StateOfTheIndustry\\_2019.pdf](https://www.takethis.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/TakeThis_StateOfTheIndustry_2019.pdf)

34: Mind, 2017. Mental health facts and statistics.

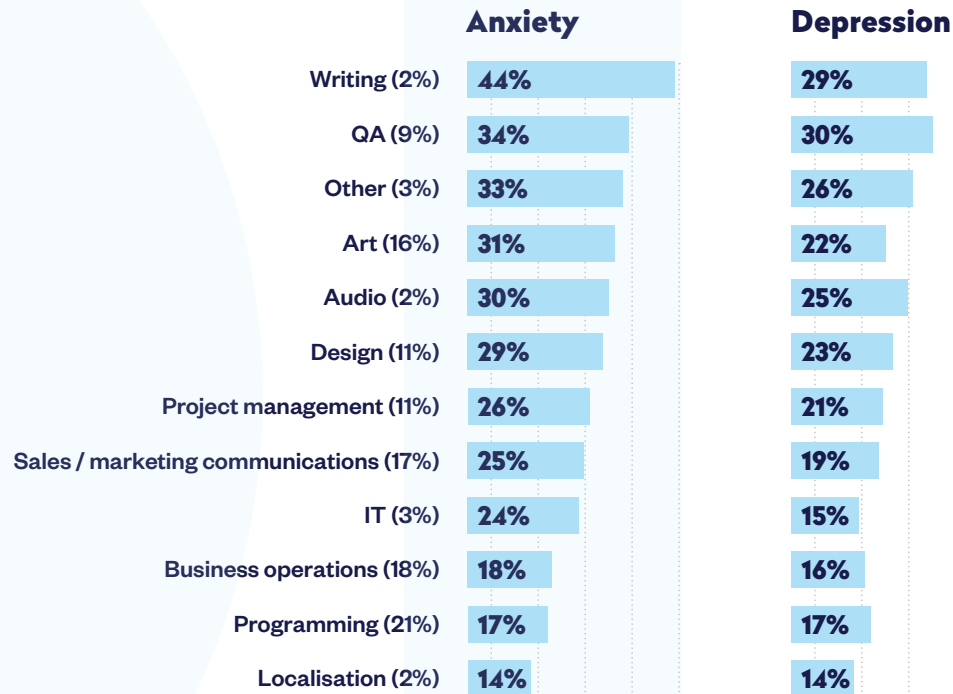
<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/statistics-and-facts-about-mental-health/how-common-are-mental-health-problems/>

## Anxiety and depression by job role

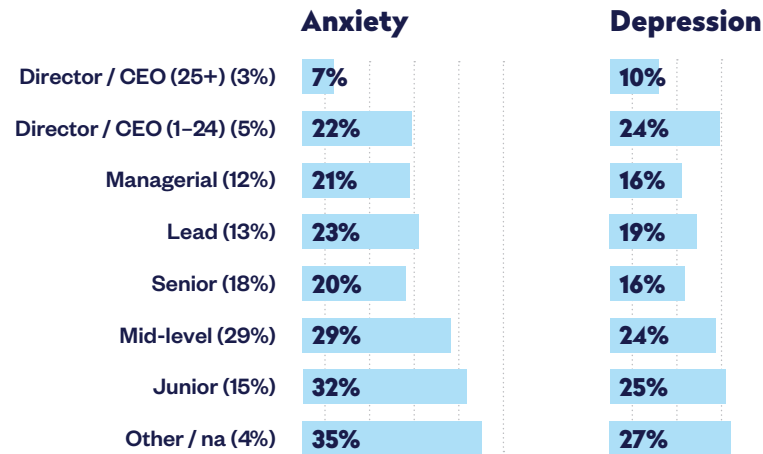
### 6.2 Anxiety and depression by job role

This figure shows how reported rates of anxiety and depression vary across different job roles. To help with comparison, we've included the percentages of respondents in each job role alongside each occupational group.

Rates of anxiety are highest among people working in writing, while rates of depression are highest among people working in QA. Rates of both conditions are lowest among people working in localisation.



## Anxiety and depression by seniority



More junior people are more likely to declare higher rates of both anxiety and depression

### 6.3 Anxiety and depression by seniority

The below figure shows declaration of anxiety and depression by seniority within organisations.

This figure shows that more junior people are broadly also more likely to declare rates of both anxiety and depression, with people in director / CEO roles in larger organisations being the least likely to declare either. One exception to this is the directors / CEOs of smaller organisations, who are more likely to declare depression.

In the general population, older people tend to be more likely to experience mental ill health<sup>35</sup>, so these differences cannot simply be explained by the fact that more junior people are also more likely to be younger.

However, in this case our estimates of anxiety and depression are based on self-reporting, and it is possible that younger people are more willing to disclose long-term mental health conditions.

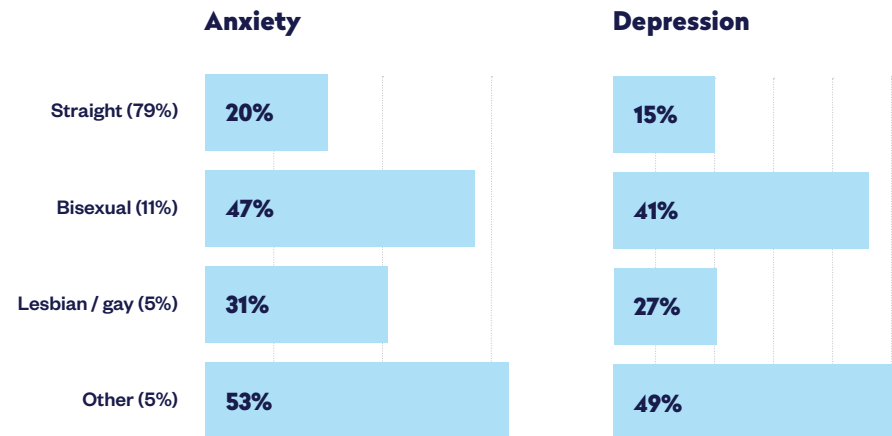
35: Depending on the methodological approach taken, mental ill health is either at its worst in people's mid-40s, or gradually worsens through the life course. Blanchflower, D.G. and Oswald, A.J., 2008. Is well-being U-shaped over the life cycle?. *Social science & medicine*, 66(8), pp.1733-1749; Bell, A., 2014. Life-course and cohort trajectories of mental health in the UK, 1991-2008-A multilevel age-period-cohort analysis. *Social Science & Medicine*, 120, pp.21-30.

## 6.4 Anxiety and depression by gender and LGBTQ+ status

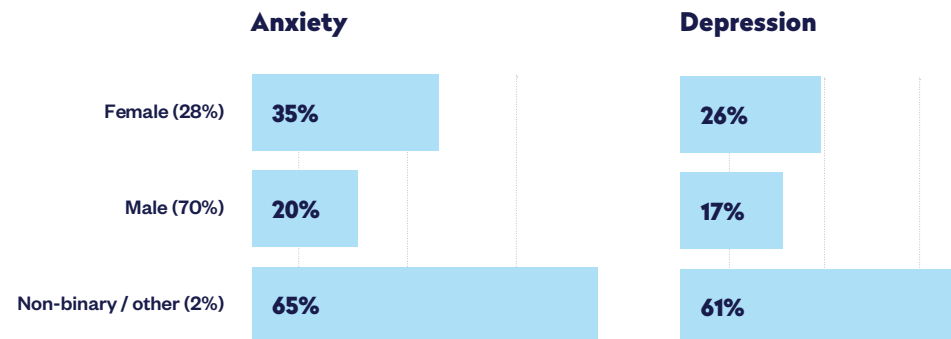
We were also interested to know whether anxiety and depression rates varied by gender and LGBTQ+ status. Existing research suggests that rates of mental ill health are higher among LGBTQ+ people, so these results should be put into that context.

This shows that the rates of anxiety and depression among women are greater than those for men, at 35% and 26% compared with 20% and 17% respectively. These figures are even larger for non-binary people. These results are all largely consistent with the differences between rates of long-term mental health conditions between women, men, and non-binary people<sup>36</sup>, with no indication that these differences are any greater in games

### Anxiety and depression by sexuality



### Anxiety and depression by gender

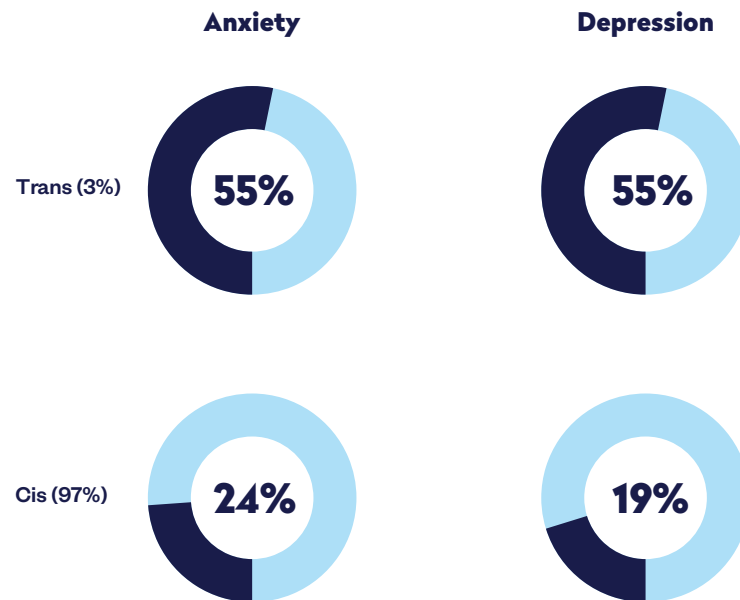


36. Mind, 2018. Stonewall's LGBT in Britain - <https://www.mind.org.uk/news-campaigns/legal-news/legal-newsletter-december-2018/stonewall-s-lgbt-in-britain-health-report/>

; Remes, O., Brayne, C., Van Der Linde, R. and Lafortune, L., 2016. A systematic review of reviews on the prevalence of anxiety disorders in adult populations.

Brain and behavior, 6(7). <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/brb3.497>

### Anxiety and depression by trans status



As in broader society, women and LGBTQ+ people all report higher rates of anxiety and depression

than in the general population, adjusted for the fact that rates of these conditions are higher among people working in games than in the general population.

These results are also consistent with existing research that suggests that rates of long-term mental health conditions are higher among the LGBTQ+ population than in the straight population.

They are also consistent with the cited research indicating that rates of long-term mental health conditions are higher among trans people than they are among cis people.

# 7

## Next steps

Throughout this report we have revealed the complex and unique story of the diversity of the UK games industry. These findings uncover, perhaps for the first time, not only many positive aspects of the make-up of the sector, but also some key challenges that the industry needs to understand and address.

In confronting these issues, the sector will need to build both short- and long-term strategies that help support and develop existing talent, as well as encourage engagement, recruitment, retention, and promotion of

those groups who are less well represented. In order to fully address some of the questions raised by this report, the industry will need to implement a wide range of initiatives, and a set of suggestions to confront them all would be as long as this entire report.

Such initiatives are likely to require a financial commitment, as well as joined-up work from across a wide range of organisations, otherwise we risk duplication of effort across parallel programmes or continually reinventing the wheel.

However, in helping to guide the industry's next steps, we recommend a sector-wide commitment to the following six key principles, which can be found overleaf. →



## Six principles for improving diversity in the games workforce

1

### **Champion and support industry diversity initiatives**

The UK games industry should commit to sectoral and wider equality, diversity, and inclusion initiatives, such as the #RaiseTheGame scheme, empower and support representative diversity groups, and champion both local activities and global campaigns.

2

### **Commit to further research, including regular measurement of the sector**

The games sector should commit to regularly measuring the make-up of its workforce, tracking and informing progress, and build upon existing work to conduct both broader and deeper analyses. It should continue to collaborate with independent researchers to provide further rigorous and objective insight about working in games.

3

### **Create both short and long-term strategies to target areas for improvement**

Through supporting forums such as Ukie's EDI Working Group, the industry should develop strategies to produce tangible solutions to identified challenges, develop a set of priorities, and inform a proactive approach to supporting the ongoing wellbeing of the games workforce.

4

### **Emphasise focus on underrepresented demographics in industry education and outreach programmes**

Existing and future industry outreach and education programmes should develop targeted engagement with underrepresented demographics within the games workforce and should also commit to independent evaluation to better understand impact and success.

5

### **Ensure the ongoing contribution of essential international games talent**

The sector should make an ongoing commitment to the critical skills, talent and cultural importance of a diverse, international workforce, through staff recruitment, retention and support, as well as wider industrial and political activity.

6

### **Advocate the importance of diversity to games and creative industries on a global stage**

Building on the work achieved in this report, the games industry should co-operate with national and international games and creative industry organisations, Government agencies and other relevant partners to share best practice and collaborate to improve diversity work worldwide.

# 8



## Methodological appendix

The process of bringing the UK Games Industry Census to life has involved a lot of work from a wide range of people. This section summarises the different elements of the survey design. The overall project was granted ethical approval by the University of Sheffield (ethics application 030542).

The project consisted of a survey of people working in the games industry. This survey was administered through the online survey platform Qualtrics, through the Sheffield Methods Institute (University of Sheffield). The methodological approach, detailed in this section, differs from other estimates of diversity in games in the UK.

Because of these differences, comparisons between data sources are likely to be misleading: our estimates should not be treated as increases or decreases relative to earlier estimates derived from different methodological approaches.

### 8.1 Questionnaire design

In designing the questionnaire, we had two main priorities. The first was to ask questions about diversity, broadly conceived, in such a way that the results could be meaningfully compared with other national sources of data.

The second was to make the experience of answering the survey feel as non-invasive and manageable as possible, so that it would be quick and easy for participants to respond to.

With the exception of the first question, which asked participants to confirm that they had read and understood the information explaining the survey contents and consented to their data being used for analysis, no survey questions were compulsory, so participants could skip any question for any reason. The questionnaire design was an iterative process.

The academic team put together drafts, which were shared with:

- the Ukie team
- membership of the Ukie EDI working group, a group of mostly games companies from across the sector
- key groups focusing on elements of EDI in and around games, including: Women in Games, BAME in Games, PoC in Play, Autistica, as well as various relevant individuals across the sector

These different individuals groups fed back to Ukie and to the academic team with suggestions for how the questionnaire might be adapted, both privately and in collective settings.

These suggestions included some that were specific to games, such as the list of occupational roles that people might work in, and other suggestions about questions on EDI that might be asked about in other settings.

The main consequence of this consultation was to extend the length of the survey, with a feeling that earlier drafts could be extended without the survey being too long. This process consisted both of people

submitting comments on drafts, and piloting the survey as if it were for real (University of Sheffield ethics application 025630).

### **8.1.1 Questionnaire design: questions**

The survey questionnaire consisted of three main sections:

- people's jobs, including the jobs they do, the length of time they've worked in the sector, their seniority
- people's personal characteristics, including their gender, their ethnic group, and any long-term conditions they have
- people's backgrounds, including the kinds of households they grew up in, the type of school they went to, and their qualifications

With the exception of the question on the specific roles that people hold in the games industry, all questions use the same phrasing as in national surveys or other key sources of data. This allows comparisons to be made.

The full questionnaire presented to participants is available on the Ukie website.

## 8.2 Recruitment

The recruitment for this survey took place in two parts. In the first part, an open link to the survey was disseminated in order to maximise participation in the survey from people working across the UK games industry. This open link was disseminated through key industry sources including [gamesindustry.biz](#)<sup>37</sup>, [MCV](#)<sup>38</sup> and [gamasutra](#)<sup>39</sup>, as well as through Ukie's own website and social media. This approach is consistent with what has happened in other surveys in the creative industries focusing on diversity.

However, such an approach on its own is likely to lead to biased estimates. Not everyone who works in games reads these industry sources, or Ukie's Twitter account, and so on. In addition, as the survey was packaged as a "diversity census", it is likely that the people responding to it were more likely to consider diversity to be important than the overall games workforce.

In addition, a public-facing link has the potential for malicious actors to engage with – for example, someone might post it to a private forum and encourage other people to submit false data. For this reason, we also incorporated a second strand of recruitment. Ukie worked with a representative cross-section of

games companies of all scales and parts of the country, who were sent individual custom links to disseminate. These custom links meant that we were able to monitor ongoing response rates within these organisations, as well as in general. However, no analysis was to take place of any organisation on its own; the data were to be combined.

This second strand of recruitment was coordinated such that the academic team had a list of organisation IDs and of custom links, but not any knowledge of which link and ID connected to which organisation, while Ukie's research team held the information on which organisations corresponded to which links.

The survey was open for a six week period from the 4th of September to the 16th of October inclusive.

Following the period in which the survey data collection was open, we ended up with a total of 3,253 responses. After removing irrelevant or unusable responses, including suspected trolls, our eventual survey sample – on which estimates in the previous sections are based – is 3,208 people working in games.

37: <https://www.gamesindustry.biz/articles/2019-09-04-ukie-launches-uk-diversity-census>

38: <https://www.mcvuk.com/ukie-hopes-its-new-diversity-census-will-be-the-most-detailed-analysis-on-the-diversity-of-the-industrys-workforce-ever-conducted/>

39: [https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/350041/Ukie\\_launches\\_diversity\\_census\\_to\\_analyse\\_shape\\_of\\_the\\_UK\\_games\\_industry.php](https://www.gamasutra.com/view/news/350041/Ukie_launches_diversity_census_to_analyse_shape_of_the_UK_games_industry.php)

### 8.3 Weighting

Options for weighting the data to adjust for sampling bias were limited, as no high-quality data on the makeup of the UK games industry workforce exist. However, what does exist is data on the sizes of organisations in the games industry, and their locations. We also compared responses across the two strands of recruitment, identifying whether patterns were different across relevant variables.

This allowed us to build weights incorporating the measures of geographical region, organisation size, and data source (open link or organisational link). As shown in the report, there were some discrepancies, with smaller organisations and organisations in Wales & Northern Ireland being underrepresented in the survey relative to Ukie data.

Marginal frequencies for individual questions were within a percentage point in all cases, other than variables used for weighting themselves. For this reason, and because of concerns that responses from organisations that might be under-represented were not themselves representative of such organisations, we have elected to present the results of the unweighted data.

### 8.4 Job classification

In several figures, we've combined job categories together to ease comparison. The grouping of jobs into larger categories is explained in the table here.

Job Title	Category
Animation	Art
Artist (2D or 3D)	Art
Technical art	Art
UI / UX (user interface / user experience)	Art
VFX	Art
Audio / sound design	Audio
Composer / music	Audio
Admin / general	Business operations
Finance	Business operations
HR (human resources)	Business operations
Legal	Business operations
Office management	Business operations
Operations	Business operations
Senior management / leadership	Business operations
Programming / developments	Programming
Designer ( games / level)	Design
IT / technical support / infrastructure	IT
Localisation	Localisation
Other	Other
Production / project management	Project management
QA (quality assurance)	QA
Community Management	Sales / marketing / communications
Marketing	Sales / marketing / communications
PR (public relations) / communications	Sales / marketing / communications
Consumer / customer services	Sales / marketing / communications
Business development / commercial	Sales / marketing / communications
Data / analytics	Sales / marketing / communications
Distribution	Sales / marketing / communications
Sales	Sales / marketing / communications
User research	Sales / marketing / communications
Writer / narrative	Writing

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following people and organisations, without whom this research would not have been possible:

**Dr. Mark Taylor**, Senior Lecturer, Sheffield Methods Institute and principal report author

**Luke Hebblethwaite**, Insight & Innovation Manager, Ukie and industry lead

**The Arts & Humanities Research Council** for providing funding support to enable this project

**Helen Thornham & Jędrzej Niklas**, University of Leeds for their work on the project, and their work on data and games more generally

**Daniel Wood, Anderona Cole and the rest of the Ukie team** who helped organise and co-ordinate industry workshops, roundtables and data collection

**The games company representatives from Ukie's EDI working groups** for their commitment and support throughout

**Women in Games, BAME in Games, POC in Play, Out Making Games, Gayming Magazine, Autistica and other industry representative groups and individuals** for their insight and guidance

**Jay Roerade** for design, layout and graphic illustrations for this report

**All the games companies involved** throughout the process for their enthusiasm, feedback, and for championing the census to their staff

**And most importantly, to all the people in the games industry** who took the time to complete the census and enabled us to produce this report

ukie



The University  
Of  
Sheffield.



Arts and  
Humanities  
Research Council

 @uk\_ie | [ukie.org.uk](http://ukie.org.uk)