

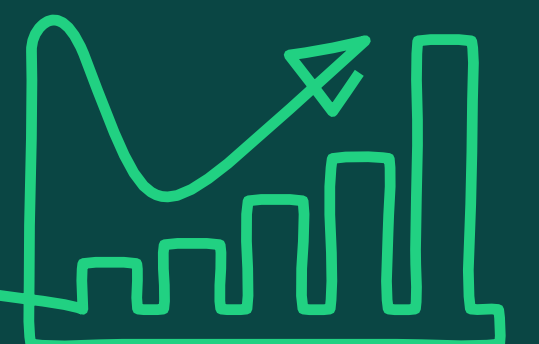
# Salary and Market Trends Survey 2023

Research report



# Contents

Foreword .....	3	Chapter 2: Working life and job satisfaction .....	14	Chapter 4: Dealing with volatility .....	35
About the survey .....	4	• Employment status .....	15	• Key concerns for the future .....	36
About APM .....	4	• Job satisfaction .....	16	• Impact of global energy supply on sustainability strategies .....	37
Chapter 1: Salary .....	5	• Pay and benefits package .....	17	• Future skills .....	38
• Average base salary of project professionals .....	6	• Supply of jobs .....	18	• Skills shortage .....	39
• Salary by role .....	7	• Supply of jobs by sector .....	19	• In summary: Facing multiple challenges head on .....	40
• Salary by region .....	8	• Organisational growth .....	20	Chapter 5: Respondents .....	41
• Salary by age .....	9	• Change of employer .....	22	• Sector .....	42
• Salary by gender .....	10	• Job hunting criteria .....	23	• Organisation size .....	43
• Salary by sector .....	11	• Encouraging talent into the profession .....	24	• Project size .....	44
• Impact of APM membership .....	12	• Economic confidence .....	25	• Experience .....	45
• In summary: Signs of recovery .....	13	• Future of the profession .....	26	• Qualifications .....	46
		• In summary: Bouncing back with confidence .....	27		
		Chapter 3: Diversity and inclusion .....	28		
		• Make-up of the profession by ethnicity .....	29		
		• Impact of ethnicity on career development .....	30		
		• Project professionals with a disability or long-term health condition .....	31		
		• How diverse and inclusive is the profession? .....	32		
		• Ways to make the profession more diverse and inclusive .....	33		
		• In summary: Keep improving for greater reward .....	34		



# Foreword

Welcome to the 2023 Association for Project Management (APM) Salary and Market Trends Survey research report.

Now in its eighth edition, the survey provides the project profession with an in-depth examination of its levels of salary, confidence, satisfaction, diversity, inclusivity, and resilience when faced with a number of national and international challenges. It not only contains key details about the current state of the profession but offers a range of insights into the trends that will define the profession for years to come.

This year's survey marks the first large-scale analysis of the profession since the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, and shows how individuals and organisations have adapted to new working practices and the long-term effects of the pandemic. It also comes during a period of economic turbulence, with high energy costs and sustainability now front-of-mind for many in the profession.

This report contains a wide range of talking points, from how the economy has affected the profession to the best ways to attract and retain talent. Along with diversity and inclusivity, and gender equality, these are all key points for debate and we invite all readers to add their opinions and reactions to the survey on our LinkedIn and Twitter channels using #APMsalarysurvey.

We'd like to express our thanks to everyone who took part. By participating in this survey, you're making a vital contribution to the profession, not only in understanding the key issues and trends, but ensuring it remains an attractive career choice for future talent.



**Professor Adam Boddison OBE, APM Chief Executive Officer**



# About the survey

This is our eighth APM Salary and Market Trends Survey, a groundbreaking piece of research that provides a detailed overview of the project profession. Since its launch in 2015, the APM Salary and Market Trends Survey has received over 30,000 responses from across the profession. This has allowed us to paint a clear picture of the employment landscape, offering a comprehensive overview of salaries and working life, as well as the latest trends and key issues that'll have the biggest impact on project management.

The survey was conducted by global research company YouGov, which delivers robust and insightful market research across a wide range of sectors. For the 2023 research, YouGov undertook a quantitative online survey of 2,806 project professionals between 7 November and 6 December 2022. The respondents were a broad mix of people from all areas of the project management profession, and included both APM members and non-members.

The previous survey was carried out in November 2020, with fieldwork done during the second COVID lockdown and results published in 2021. Therefore, comparisons to



2021 results may reflect the impact of COVID-19 at that time. Please note that whole numbers will be used for the report, and so some figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding. The median has been used as the average for salaries, unless stated.

## About APM

In our changing world, project professionals are at the forefront of delivering change and the environment for delivery is becoming ever more complex. The project profession needs to be better understood, to have consistent standards and to set the highest bar.

We're APM: Association for Project Management. We're the only chartered membership organisation representing the project profession in the world. We set the standards for the profession and raise its profile. We're a registered charity, delivering learning opportunities and developing qualifications, conducting research and providing resources. We run events, share best practice and give the project management community – individuals, our volunteers and corporate partners – the opportunity to connect and collaborate.

We know that better project delivery is about achieving your desired outcome. We believe that's about more than process alone. When doing so will make a difference, we challenge the status quo and champion the new. So, in a complex and shifting world, we help the project profession deliver better, because when projects succeed, society benefits.





# Chapter 1 Salary

Financial reward is just one of the many benefits of a career in project management, but it is of course, important. Project professionals enjoy a salary comfortably above the UK average (£38,600<sup>1</sup>) and rank above the finance and insurance, energy supply, and IT industries<sup>1</sup>.

However, the average salary for project professionals has remained at £47,500 since 2020, with high inflation and the subsequent increase in the cost of living driving real-terms pay packets lower. But the positives for the profession include many sectors providing average salaries way above that national level, with salaries remaining equally attractive all over the country and not centred on London and the South-East.

Taken with the strong career progression, wide variety of projects, and embracing of new technology in all areas of the profession, it's little surprise that project management continues to attract new talent and offer lifelong fulfilment for all those who work within it.

**£67,500**

Average salary of an APM Full member

**47%**

earn above £50,000

**£62,500**

Energy, financial services, and life sciences<sup>2</sup> offer the highest average salaries

**22%**

drop in average salary for overseas earners

**£47,500**

Average salary of a project professional

<sup>1</sup> Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2020

<sup>2</sup> Based on a sample of 23 respondents

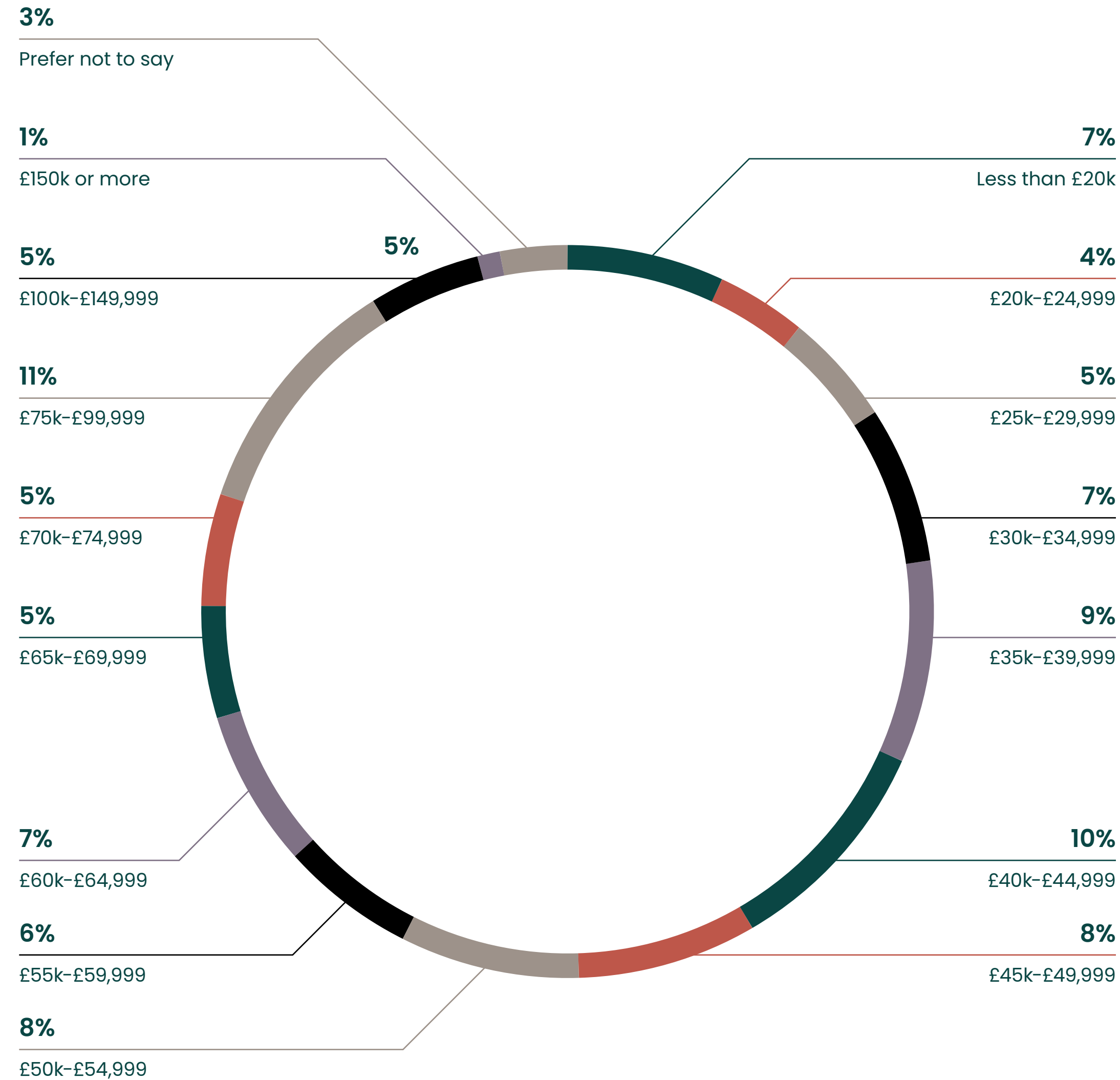
## Salary

# Average base salary of project professionals

For the fifth year in a row, the average base salary for a project professional stands firm at £47,500. Given that the cost of living has risen dramatically in the past two years, it could be argued that the average salary is actually decreasing in real-terms value, and to attract and retain the best talent, salaries need to rise.

While London and outside the UK currently offer the highest salaries, consistent with 2021, the number of project professionals based in the South-East earning over £70,000 has risen to equal those in the capital.

The stable average salary combined with 65% seeing a pay increase in 2022 indicates the attractiveness of project management as a profession, with the percentage of high earners (£70,000+) increasing from 20% to 22%, along with the average salary for apprentice and trainees (up by 11%). Working arrangements also appeared to have shifted slightly, with the average salary for freelancers, consultants and the self-employed decreasing from £72,500 in 2021 to £62,500, while those in permanent employment and on temporary contract have seen their salaries rise by 5%.



## Average salary by working arrangement

Permanent employment	£52,500
Fixed term contract with the organisation I work for	£42,500
Temporary contract with the organisation I work for	£55,000
Freelancer/consultant/self-employed and not working within an organisation	£62,500
Apprentice/trainee	£25,000
Student in full time study	£17,000
Student working part time or on a placement year	£17,000

## Salary Salary by role

Despite the challenges facing the project management industry, salaries for the more prevalent roles have either risen or remained the same. Project managers have enjoyed an increase from £42,500 to £47,500 while consultants have seen their salary boosted from £57,500 to £62,500. Project coordinators and senior project managers have also received larger pay packets, with an 18% and 9% increase respectively.

There were a few salary drops, namely business or systems analyst (£40,000 to £37,500) and project planner (£47,500 to £42,500), but more common roles such as assistant project manager, head of projects/programmes and programme manager remained the same.

Academic or Trainer	£37,500	PMO Director*	£82,500	Project Director	£82,500
Account Manager*	£45,000	PMO Manager	£52,500	Project Engineer	£47,500
Assistant Project Manager	£32,500	PMO Officer	£37,500	Project Lead	£42,500
Associate Project Director*	£67,500	Portfolio Manager	£67,500	Project Manager	£47,500
Business or Systems Analyst*	£37,500	Programme Director	£82,500	Project Office Support	£27,500
Change Manager*	£47,500	Programme Manager	£62,500	Project Planner	£42,500
Company Director or Board Member*	£125,000	Programme Office Support*	£37,500	Senior Project Manager	£62,500
Consultant	£62,500	Project Administrator*	£27,500	Student (Full-time)	£17,000
Contracts Manager*	£55,000	Project Controls Manager	£62,500	Student (Part-time)	£17,000
Head of Projects/Programmes	£82,500	Project Coordinator	£32,500	Other	£47,500
Large Projects Manager*	£55,000	Project Delivery Manager	£52,500		

\* Based on a sample of 20-29 respondents

## Salary

# Salary by region

Pay remains strong across the UK, with the East of England, Northern Ireland, South West of England, and Yorkshire and the Humber all increasing their average salaries by £5,000. The only areas that decreased were the East Midlands, which reduced from £52,500 to £47,500, and the North East, which reduced from £47,500 to £42,500.

In London and the South East, the average salaries stayed at the same levels as 2021, along with Wales, the North East and Scotland. However, while Wales and the North East showed a marked decrease in the numbers of project professionals earning £70,000+, the South East increased its number of high earners to the same level as London.

Outside the UK, there's been a significant decrease in salary, dropping 22% from £67,500 to £52,500. After three years of strong growth, the pay of the top overseas earners (£70,000+) has also decreased from 43% to 35%.

Outside the UK  
**£52,500**

Scotland  
**£47,500**

Northern Ireland  
**£52,500**

North West  
**£47,500**

Wales  
**£42,500**

West Midlands  
**£47,500**

South West  
**£52,500**

North East  
**£42,500**

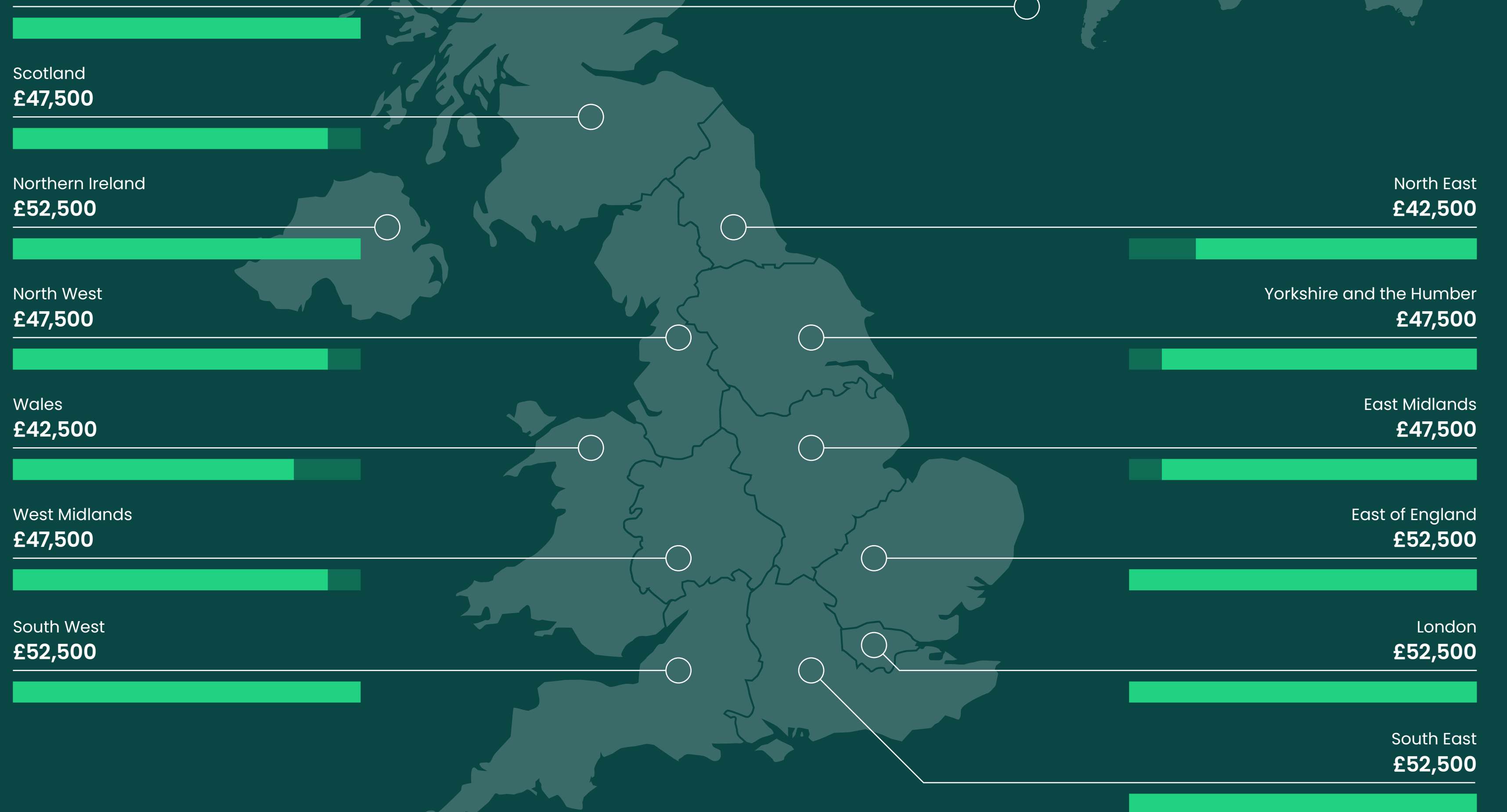
Yorkshire and the Humber  
**£47,500**

East Midlands  
**£47,500**

East of England  
**£52,500**

London  
**£52,500**

South East  
**£52,500**





## Salary

# Salary by age

After two years of largely static pay, salaries are showing signs of increasing, with all age groups over 35 enjoying a boost to their pay packet. Of those groups, the 35-44 year-olds experienced a 10% increase, 45-54 year-olds had 9%, and 55-64 year-olds had 8%.

At the younger end of the scale, the average salary for 18-24 year-olds has remained at the same level since 2021 at £27,500. Compared to the current average graduate salary in the UK of £24,000<sup>3</sup> this clearly demonstrates the financial appeal of the project management profession. However, those at the next stage of their careers (25-34) have seen a 12% drop in salary, going from £42,500 to £37,500.



<sup>3</sup> Graduate Outcomes report, HESA (Higher Education Statistics Agency), 2022

\* Based on a sample of 20-29 respondents



## Salary

# Salary by gender

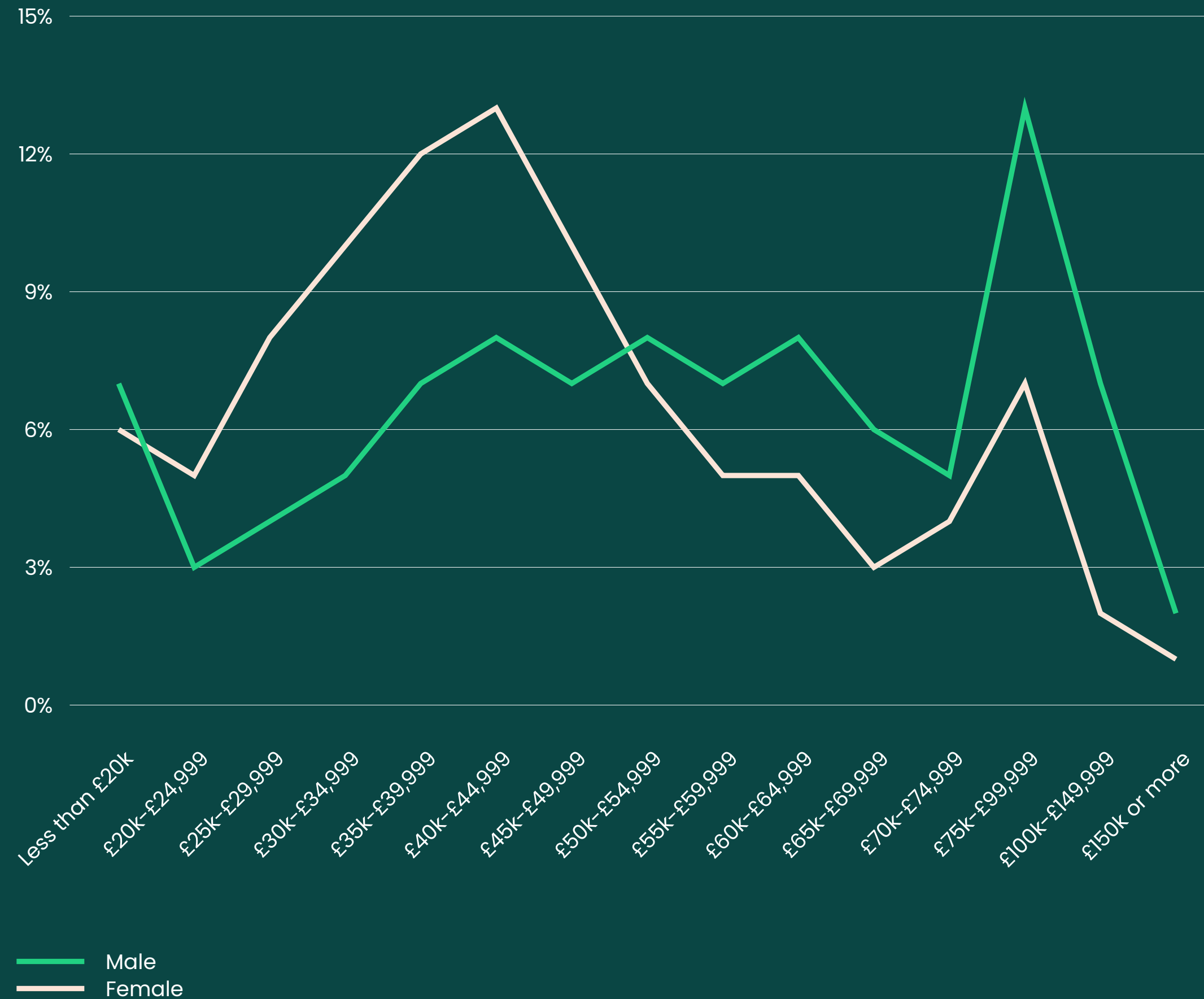
Since the average salaries for men and women haven't changed since 2021, the gender pay gap within project management remains at 24%. Furthermore, looking at the proportion of women earning between £50,000 and £69,999, this has dropped back down to 20% following an increase to 24% in 2021. There's clearly more that the project profession needs to do to close the gap on the disparity in pay between the sexes, as the UK gender pay gap in April 2022 was 8.3%<sup>4</sup>.

However, when you start to look at the detail of gender within certain project management jobs, a more encouraging picture starts to emerge. Traditionally, senior positions such as consultant and project director have been dominated by men, but this year, the amount of women in those roles has been increasing. Almost a third of consultants and project directors are now female, while the number of head of projects/programmes and senior project managers that are female is also on the rise.

This small shift towards equality in senior positions is matched by a similar increase in men holding more junior roles, such as programme office support and project coordinator. While women still dominate the project administrator role, holding 79% of the positions<sup>5</sup>, this indicates positive signs of equality in junior roles.

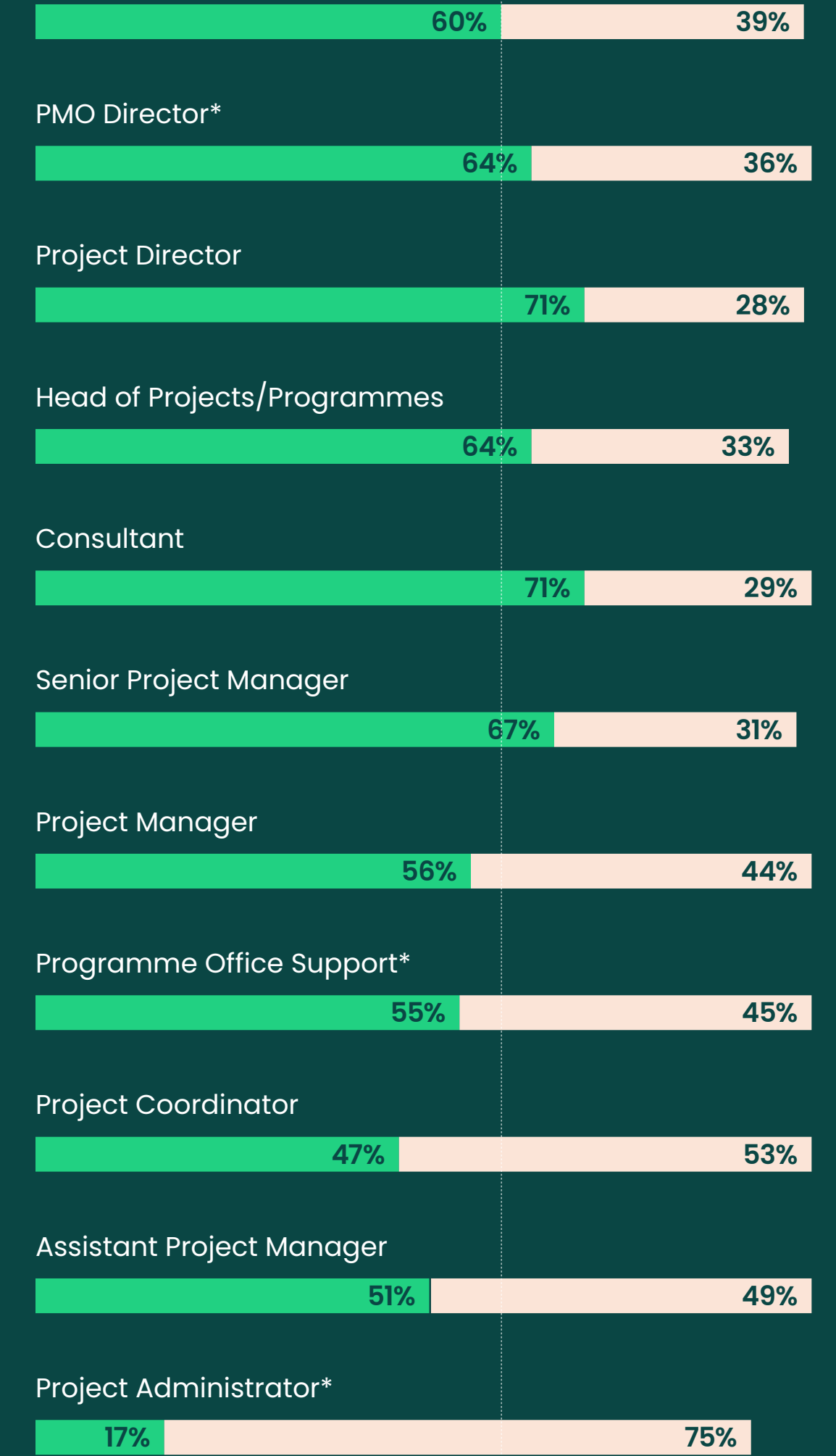
<sup>4</sup> Office for National Statistics: Annual Survey for Hours and Earnings (ASHE), April 2022

<sup>5</sup> Based on a sample of 24 respondents



## Gender split in selected job roles

Overall (dotted line compares overall gender split to other roles)



\* Based on a sample of 20-29 respondents



## Salary

# Salary by sector

Looking at specific roles, there's a greater proportion of salaries that are increasing rather than decreasing, with almost double the amount of sectors seeing their average salary rise. While energy and utilities remains at the top of the highest average salary list, it's now joined by financial services and life sciences<sup>5</sup> – two areas that have seen significant investment over the past two years. Life sciences shows a particularly strong salary increase, going from £47,500 to £62,500<sup>6</sup>.

Other sectors that have enjoyed salary rises include aerospace, construction, defence, telecoms, IT, and transport and logistics, which rose by 11%.

There were however, a number of sectors that experienced a reduction in average salary, most notably business and professional services, and retail, which both dropped by 20%. The retail sector in particular is currently suffering with the challenges of the economy and the energy crisis.



<sup>6</sup> Based on a sample of 23 respondents

\* Based on a sample of 20-29 respondents

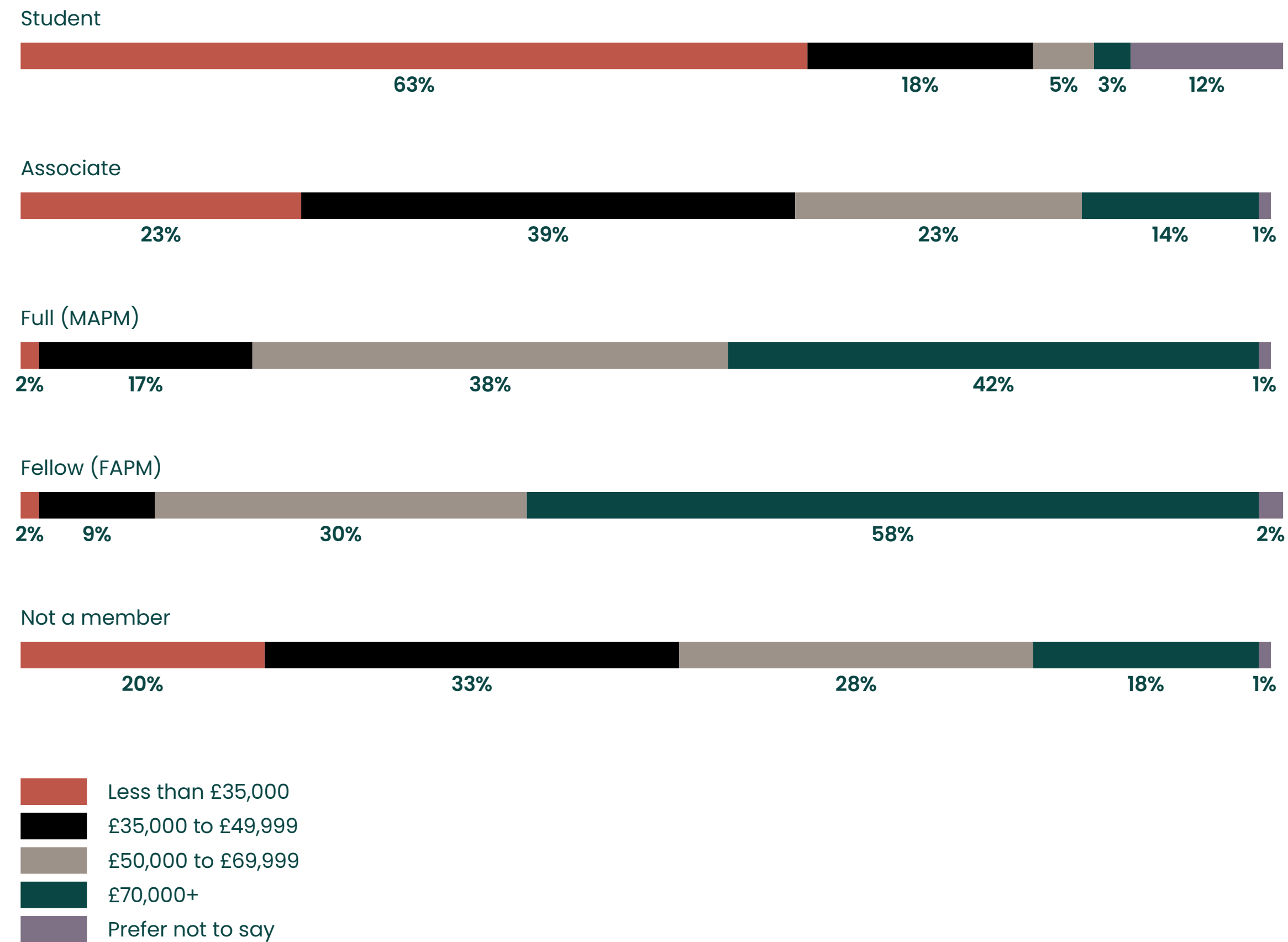


## Salary

# Impact of APM membership

With an average salary of £47,500 for 2023, Full APM members (MAPM) earn an average of £67,500 – 42% above the standard – while the average salary of Fellow members is £72,500. For those in the earlier stages of their careers, Student members earn an average of £27,500, and Associate members £42,500.

From other research we've found that 45% of APM members felt that membership has a positive impact on salary, as did 48% of Chartered Project Professionals (ChPP). Obviously, there are many factors that impact salary, but being an APM member brings with it professional recognition, knowledge and resources that can help with all areas of the project management profession.





## Salary

### In summary: Signs of recovery

An attractive salary is one of the key drivers for recruitment and retention in project management, and this year those salaries are showing clear signs of increase. While the average base salary across the industry remains at the same level as the previous five years, a number of roles, regions and sectors boast above-average increases.

The reasons for this are varied. Like all industries, project management is going through a skills shortage, with companies keen to invest and grow but needing skilled people to do it. In addition, many projects that were postponed during the pandemic are now back up and running, driving up salaries for in-demand roles. The average salary increase for apprentice and trainees is also a healthy sign that companies are seeing the value of this route into the profession.

Another encouraging finding is the increasing number of women in senior positions, along with a better gender balance in more junior roles. While the gender pay gap hasn't changed this year, this interesting development is a sign that the size of the gap could be on its way down.

For us at APM, the fact that Full members earn an average of £20,000 more than the profession average is tangible proof of the value of APM membership. And while we understand that salary is just one aspect of a fulfilling career in project management, it gives us all a welcome boost.





## Chapter 2

# Working life and job satisfaction

After a tumultuous couple of years that saw the entire world grind to a halt, it's heartening to see an overriding feeling of optimism in the profession. Job satisfaction is high, pay and benefits are on the rise, and organisations are increasing recruitment.

There are, of course, differences in optimism within certain sectors and age ranges, but the general feeling is one of positivity, with strong indications that the profession is back to pre-pandemic levels. This not only broadens the range of opportunities for those building their careers, but also the size and scope of the work.

81%

say they are satisfied in their role

65%

have seen their pay and benefits increase

80%

are optimistic about the supply of jobs

59%

of organisations are looking to recruit new staff

Clearer career paths

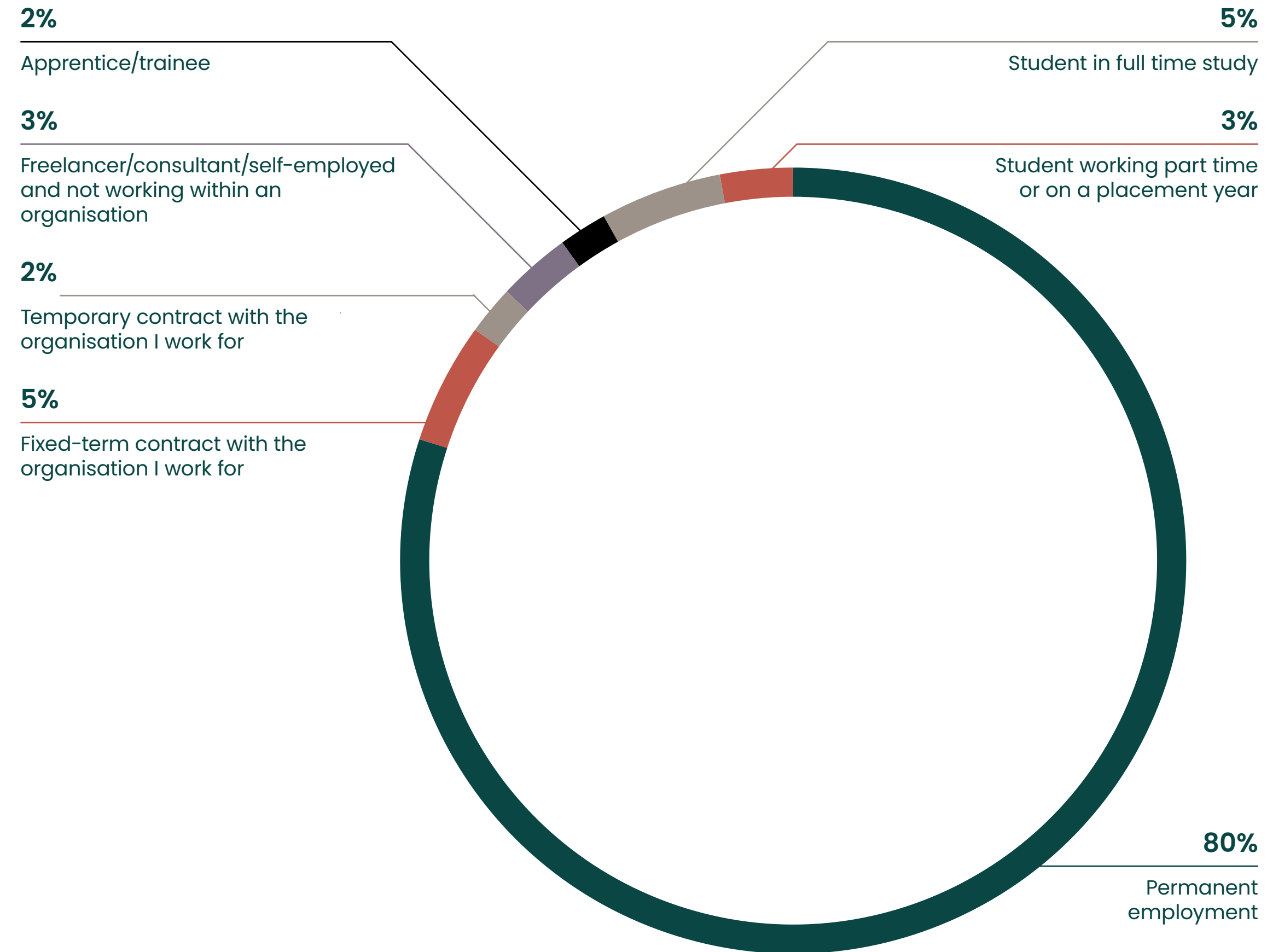
is the top way to encouraging new talent



## Working life and job satisfaction

# Employment status

There are no big swings in employment status, with 80% currently in permanent employment compared to 82% in 2021. There are, however, a couple of notable changes, with the amount of project professionals working on contract (fixed-term and temporary) up slightly, from 5% to 7%, and the total amount of student respondents up from 3% to 8%.





## Working life and job satisfaction

# Job satisfaction

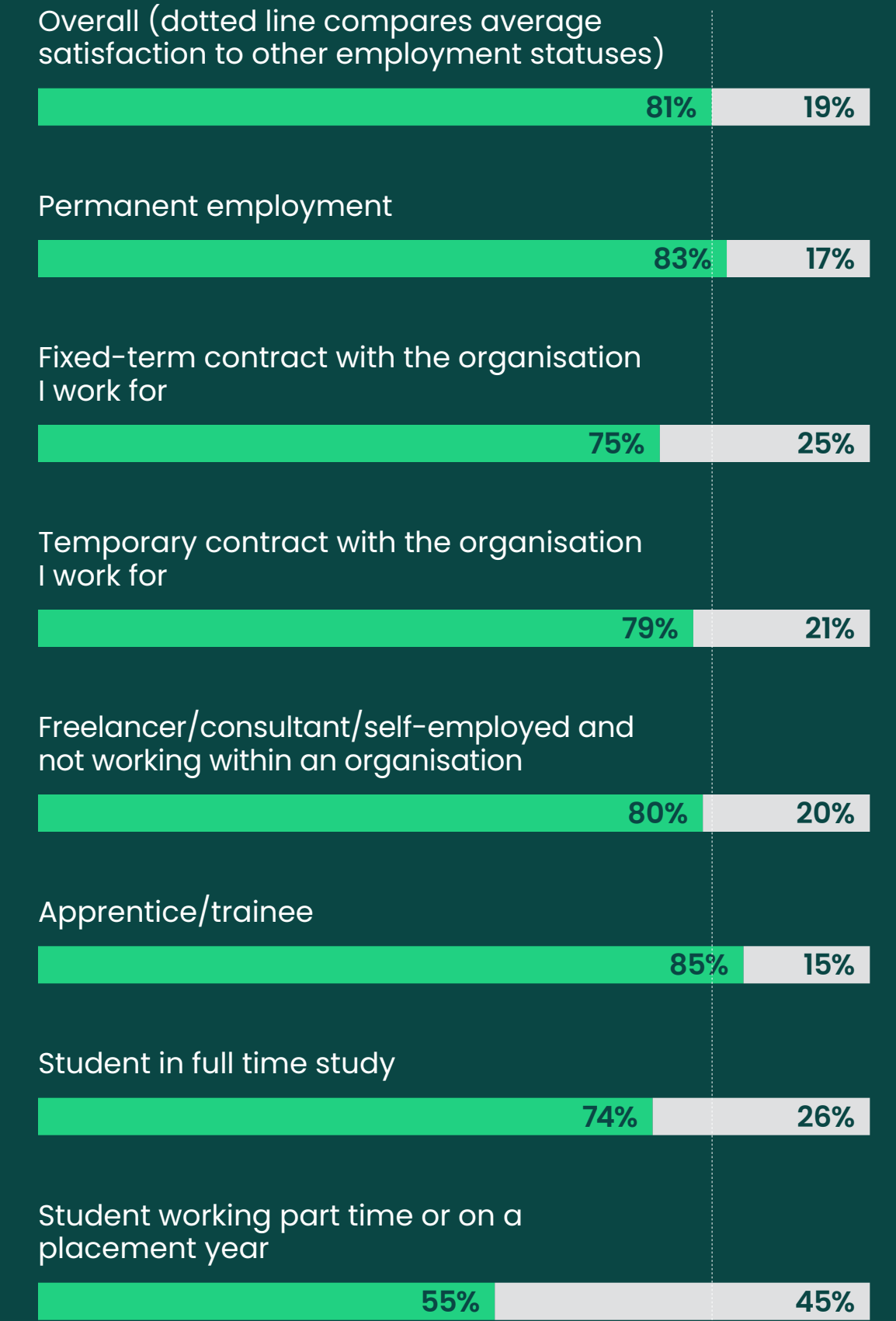
It's heartening to note that overall job satisfaction in the project management industry remains high at 81%, staying at similar levels to 2021 and 2020. As you may expect, the level of job satisfaction increases in line with salary, going from 77% for salaries below £35,000 to 88% at £70,000+.

However, the relationship between job satisfaction and age isn't quite so linear, with 35-44 and 55-64 year-olds dipping below the average.

Looking at employment status, those in permanent employment, along with freelancers, consultants and the self-employed, show roughly equal levels of satisfaction as 2021, but those on contract appear to be less content with their careers. Those on fixed-term contracts went from 81% satisfaction levels in 2021 to 75%, while those on temporary contracts dropped from 86% to 79%. This could be an indication of the desire for a more stable employment situation given the current uncertain economic environment.



## Job satisfaction by employment status



■ Satisfied  
■ Dissatisfied



Working life and job satisfaction

# Pay and benefits package

After the industry finally shakes off the disruption of the pandemic, pay and benefits are clearly on the rise, with 65% reporting an increase in financial reward. This is a significant leap from the 46% that saw their pay packages rise in 2021, and a strong indication that the profession is returning to pre-pandemic levels, when 72% stated that their pay and benefits had increased.

This financial boost is translating in healthy optimism for the next 12 months, with 66% expecting their pay and benefits to rise and just 4% expecting them to decrease. This is in marked contrast to 2021, when 48% anticipated an increase in remuneration and 8% expected a decrease.

That optimism is most keenly felt in consultancy, with 79% of consultants expecting their pay and benefits to rise, along with project professionals in energy and utilities (75%), construction (71%) and defence (71%). Those in central and local government, however, have a much lower expectation of increased pay, with just 45% and 43% respectively anticipating a rise.

Looking at the role of gender in pay expectation, men are statistically more likely to believe their pay and benefits will rise in the next 12 months. Along with the fact that senior positions in the project management profession are more likely to be held by men, the reason for this pay optimism could lie in gender studies that show that men have greater self-esteem in the workplace, leading to greater confidence in their own abilities and worth<sup>7</sup>.

## Pay and benefits package – last 12 months



## Pay and benefits package – next 12 months



- Increased significantly
- Increased slightly
- No change
- Decreased slightly
- Decreased significantly
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

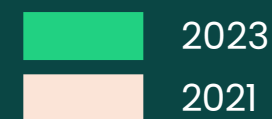
<sup>7</sup> 1970 British Cohort Study, Centre for Longitudinal Studies, UCL, 2022.

## Working life and job satisfaction

# Supply of jobs

There's an overwhelming optimism about the supply of project management jobs over the next five years, with 80% of respondents either optimistic or very optimistic. Indeed, the percentage of those that are very optimistic has risen from 14% in 2021 to 23% in 2023, with a corresponding drop in those that are pessimistic (16% to 12%).

This reflects a general sense of positivity in the profession that seems to be most keenly felt by the young and those building their careers, with above-average optimism within the 18-24 (83%) and 25-34 year-old (85%) groups.



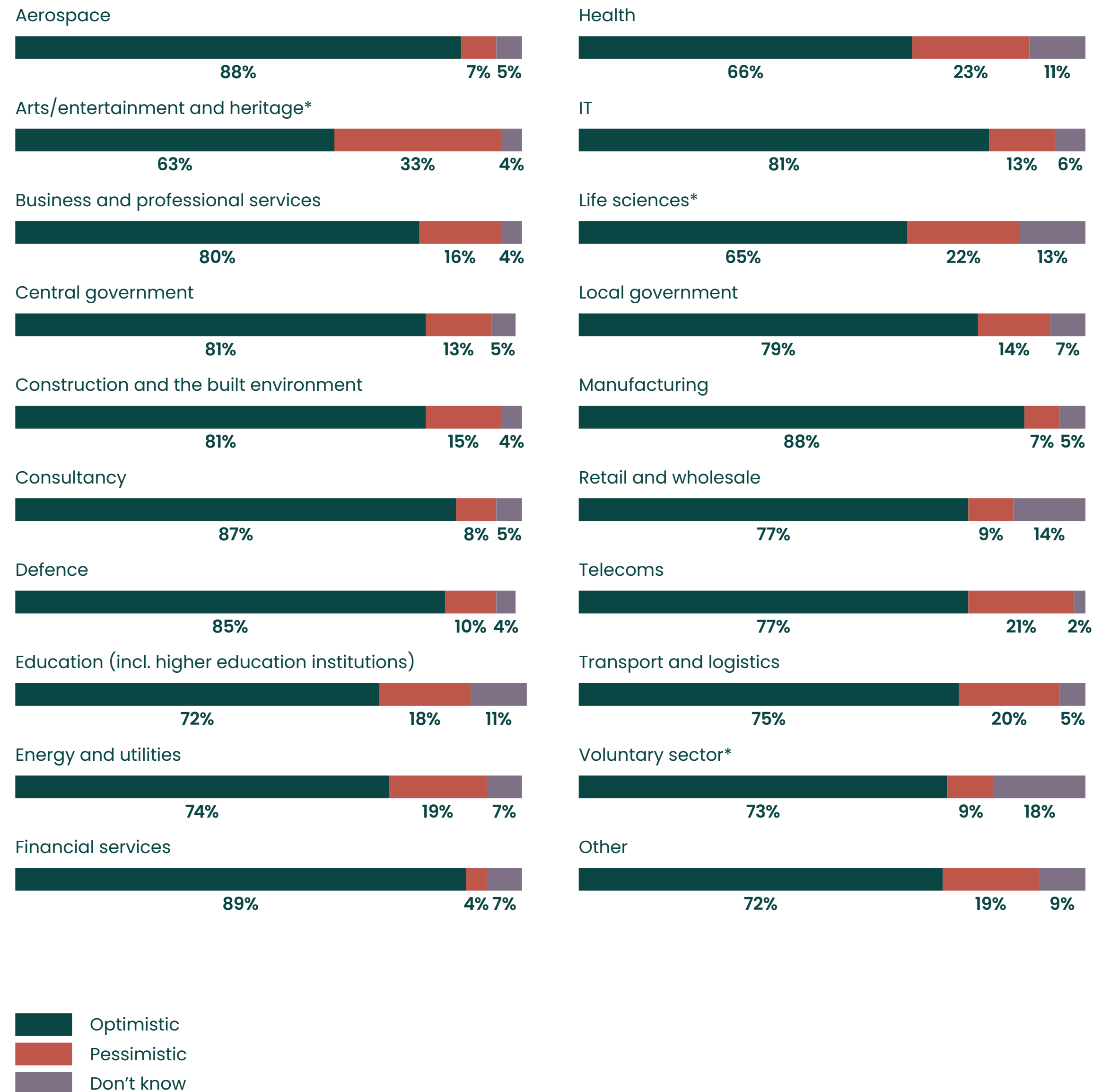


## Working life and job satisfaction

# Supply of jobs by sector

In keeping with the general levels of optimism within the industry, we see a significant uptick in many of the individual sectors. Aerospace (up to 88% optimism from 76% in 2021), financial services (89% from 74%) and manufacturing (88% from 72%) all demonstrate resounding levels of positivity.

However, there are some sectors that aren't so optimistic about the supply of jobs, in particular, arts/entertainment and heritage, which fell from 80% in 2021 to 63%<sup>8</sup>, health (79% to 66%), and life sciences (75% to 65%)<sup>9</sup>.



<sup>8</sup> Based on a sample of 27 respondents.

<sup>9</sup> Based on a sample of 23 respondents.

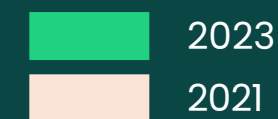
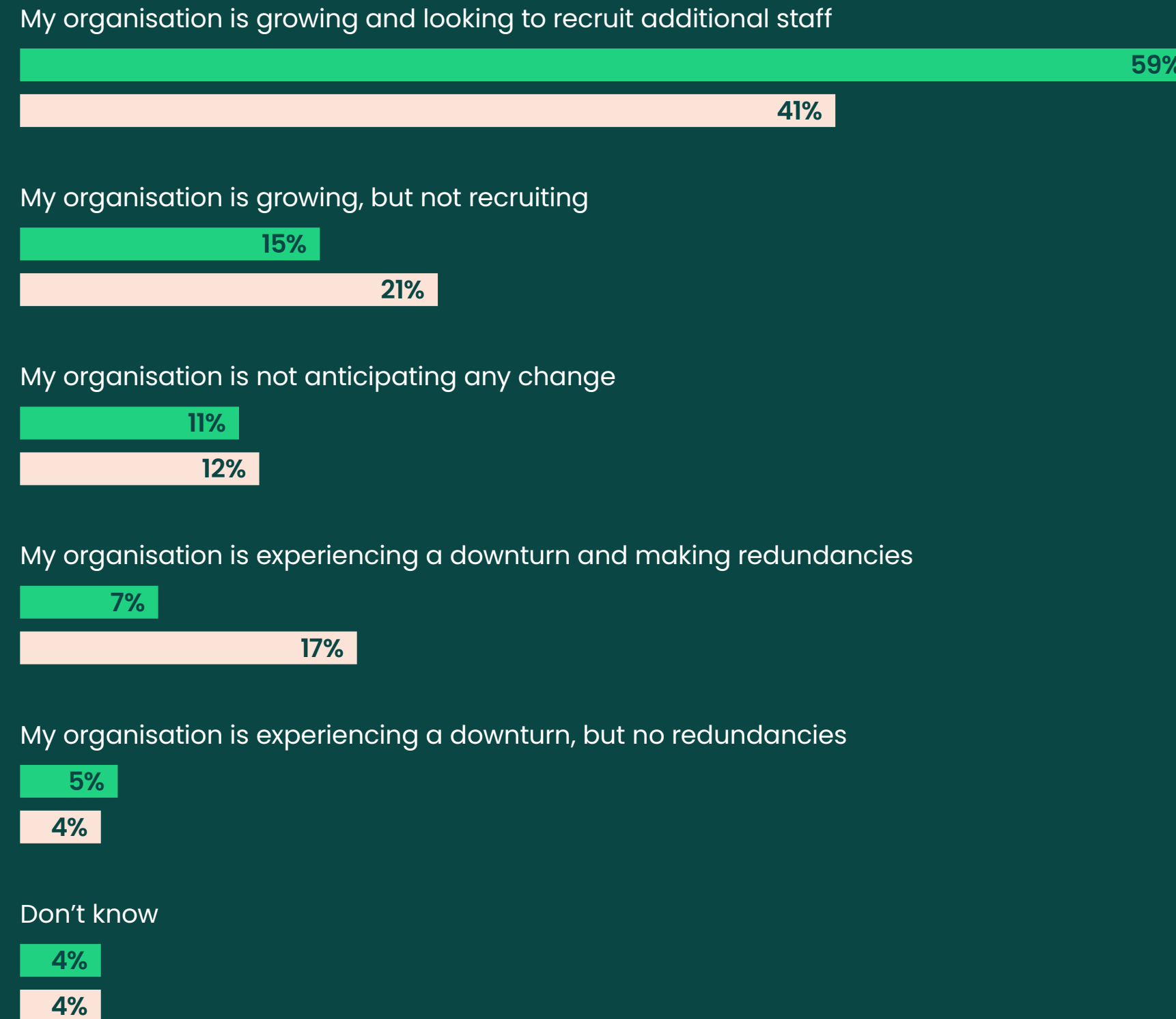
\* Based on a sample of 20-29 respondents

## Working life and job satisfaction

# Organisational growth

After a period of low growth in 2021 caused by the pandemic, the profession has bounced back with renewed vigour, increasing recruitment and boosting growth. The proportion of respondents' companies looking to recruit additional staff is now at a five-year high at 59%, with a corresponding fall in businesses making redundancies. Given the current economic climate, this optimism is testament to the strength and resilience of the project management industry.

However, while many sectors are looking to boost growth and recruit, such as construction (72%), consultancy (85%) and defence (76%), there are some that are experiencing a downturn and making redundancies, in particular, the health sector (up from 5% of companies in 2021 to 12%) and central government (2% to 9%). This reverses the levels of optimism seen in the 2021 survey.



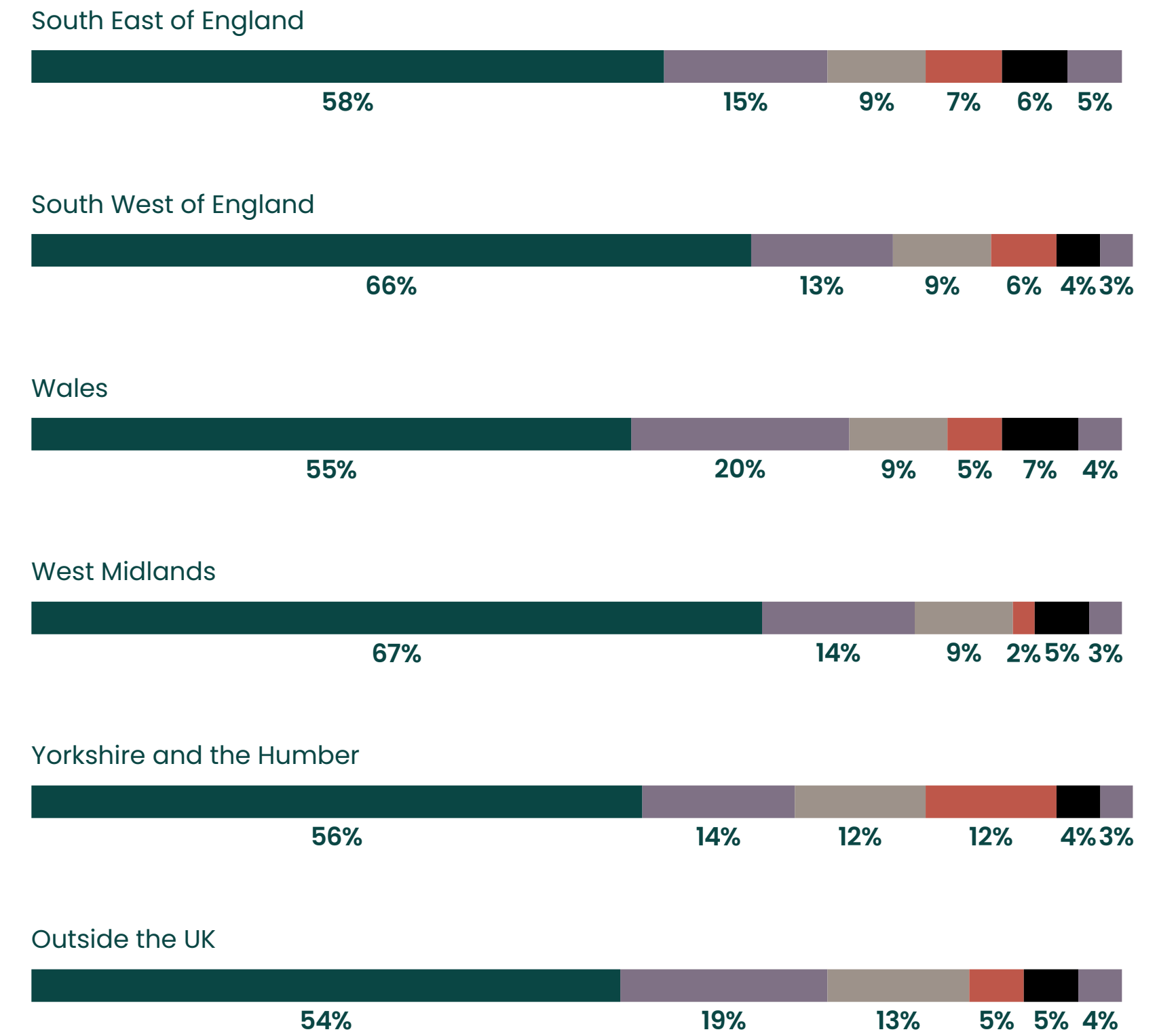
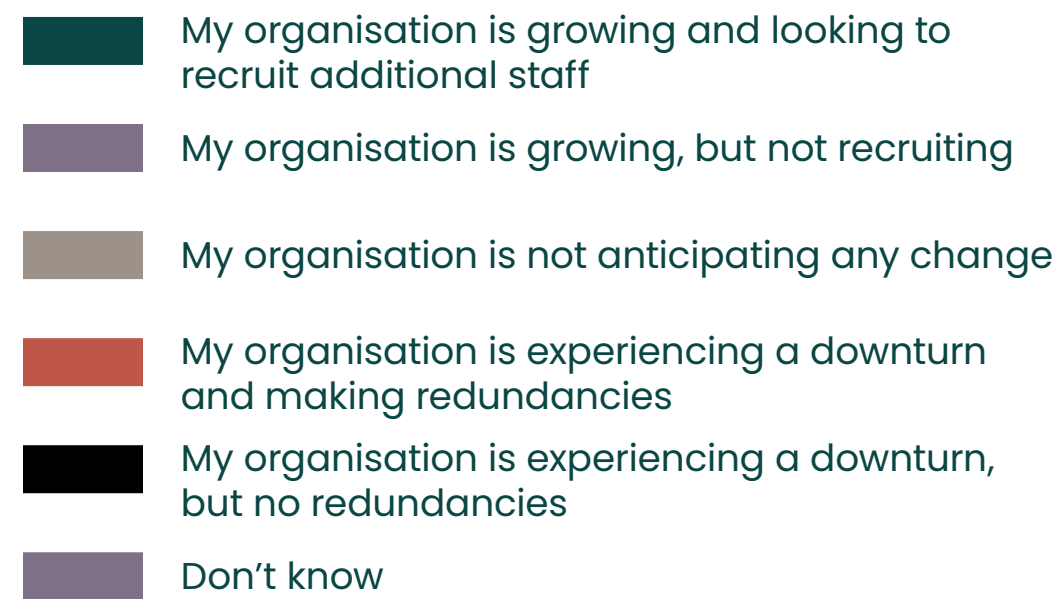


# Working life and job satisfaction

## Organisational growth

### Growth by region

Looking at organisational growth by region for people whose role involves project management, it's clear that companies in the South West and the West Midlands are demonstrating above-average levels of expansion, with 79% and 81% respectively growing their businesses. In contrast, business optimism for London-based companies has decreased, along with those in the East of England and Yorkshire and the Humber.



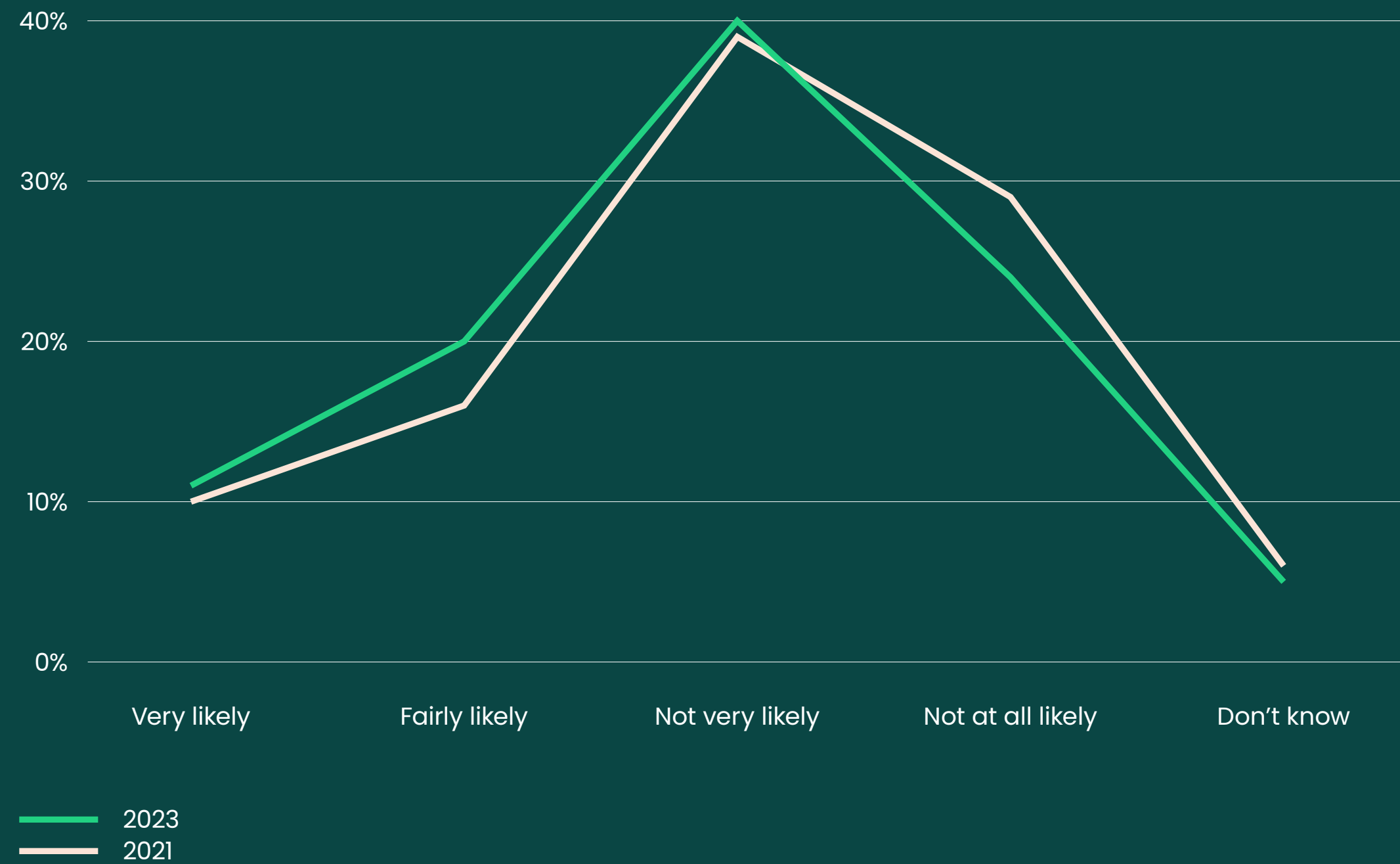
## Working life and job satisfaction

# Change of employer

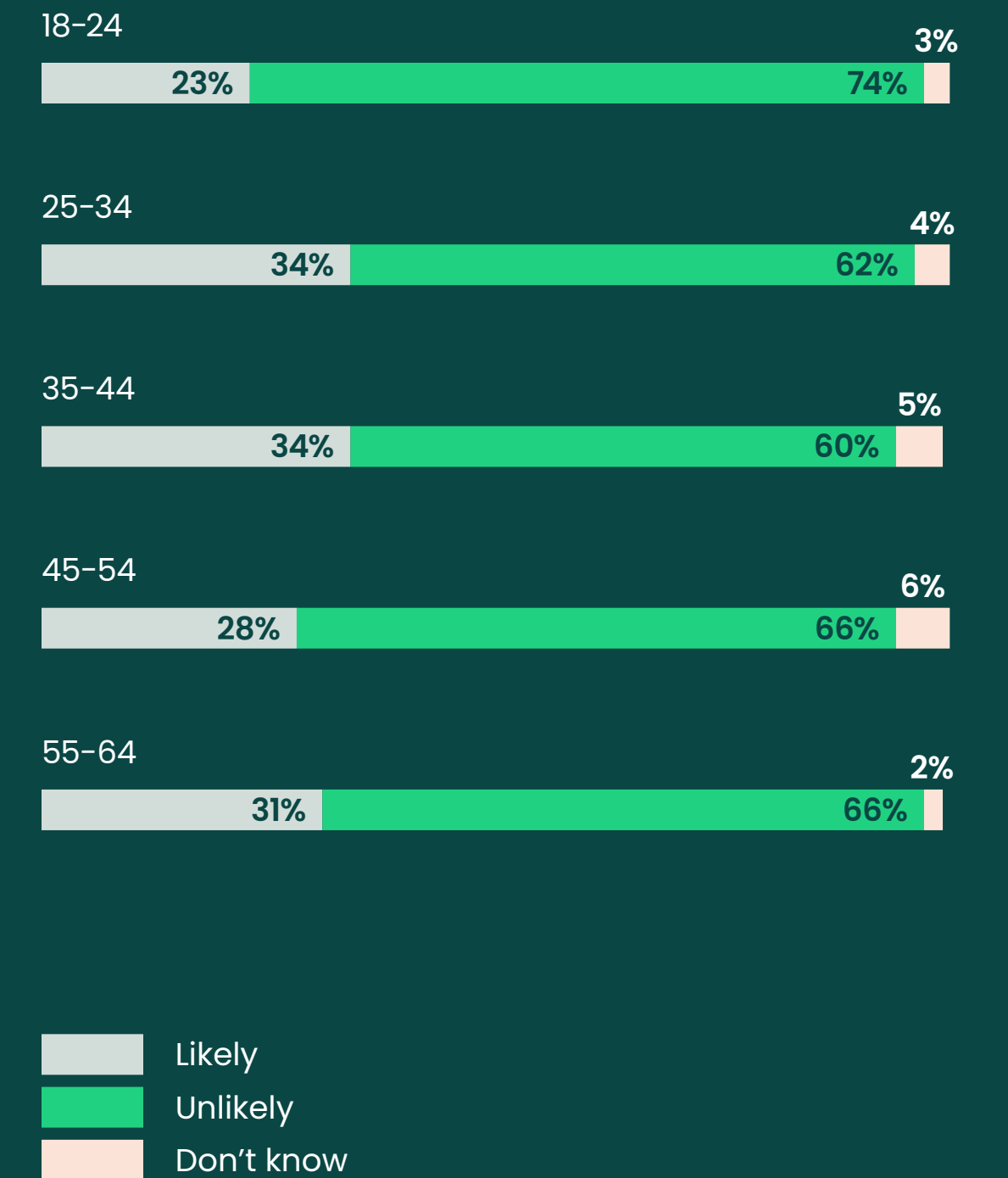
In the employment world, the pandemic caused people to carefully consider their choice of employer, and many decided to either move to a different company or change career altogether. And while the survey shows the project management profession has an increase in those stating they are likely to change their job in the next 12 months, up from 26% in 2021 to 32% in 2023, it's still not back up to pre-pandemic levels.

Looking at age, the highest proportion of those showing the most reluctance to change jobs are the young, with 74% of 18-24 year-olds stating they are unlikely to move to a different employer, a similar figure to 2021.

After an unsettling couple of years, many areas of the profession such as construction, defence, energy, and tellingly, consultancy are choosing to stay where they are, but above-average levels of project professionals in areas such as agriculture, arts/entertainment, health, and retail are predicting a job change in the next 12 months.



## Change of employer by age – next 12 months



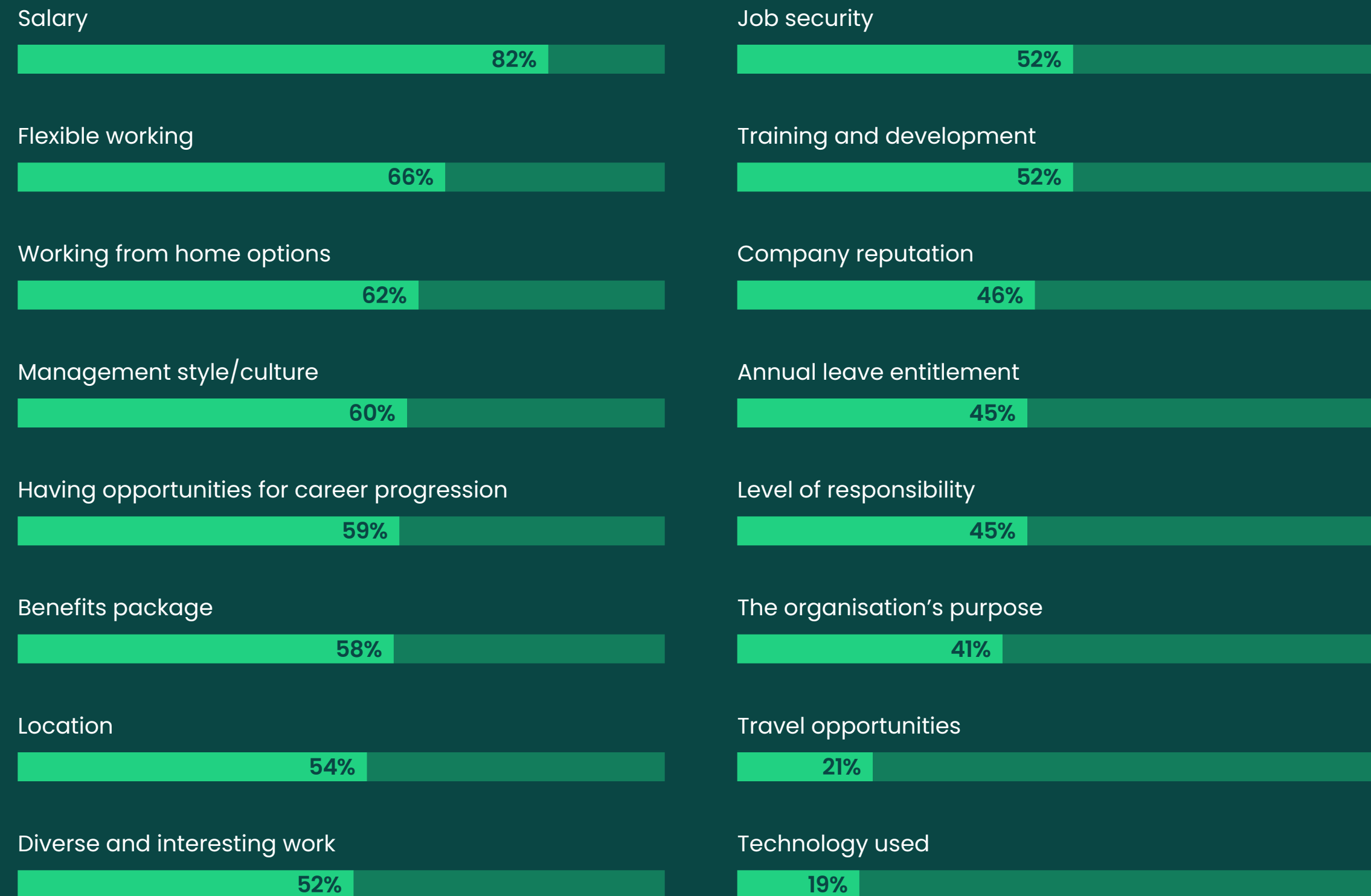


## Working life and job satisfaction

# Job hunting criteria

When asked which aspects are important when looking for a job, the prospect of a higher salary still ranks highest on the list of desires, with 82% citing it as important. However, an increase in remote working has lifted flexible working (66%) and working from home options (62%) into second and third place, above management style/culture, which has dropped to 60% from 64%.

The large-scale changes in employment culture and technology has had a significant effect on many areas of work, resulting in a marked decrease in location as a key criteria for a new role, which has dropped from 69% pre-pandemic to 54% this year. Following this, the prospect of more opportunities for flexible working has increased in importance for those likely to change employer in the next 12 months.

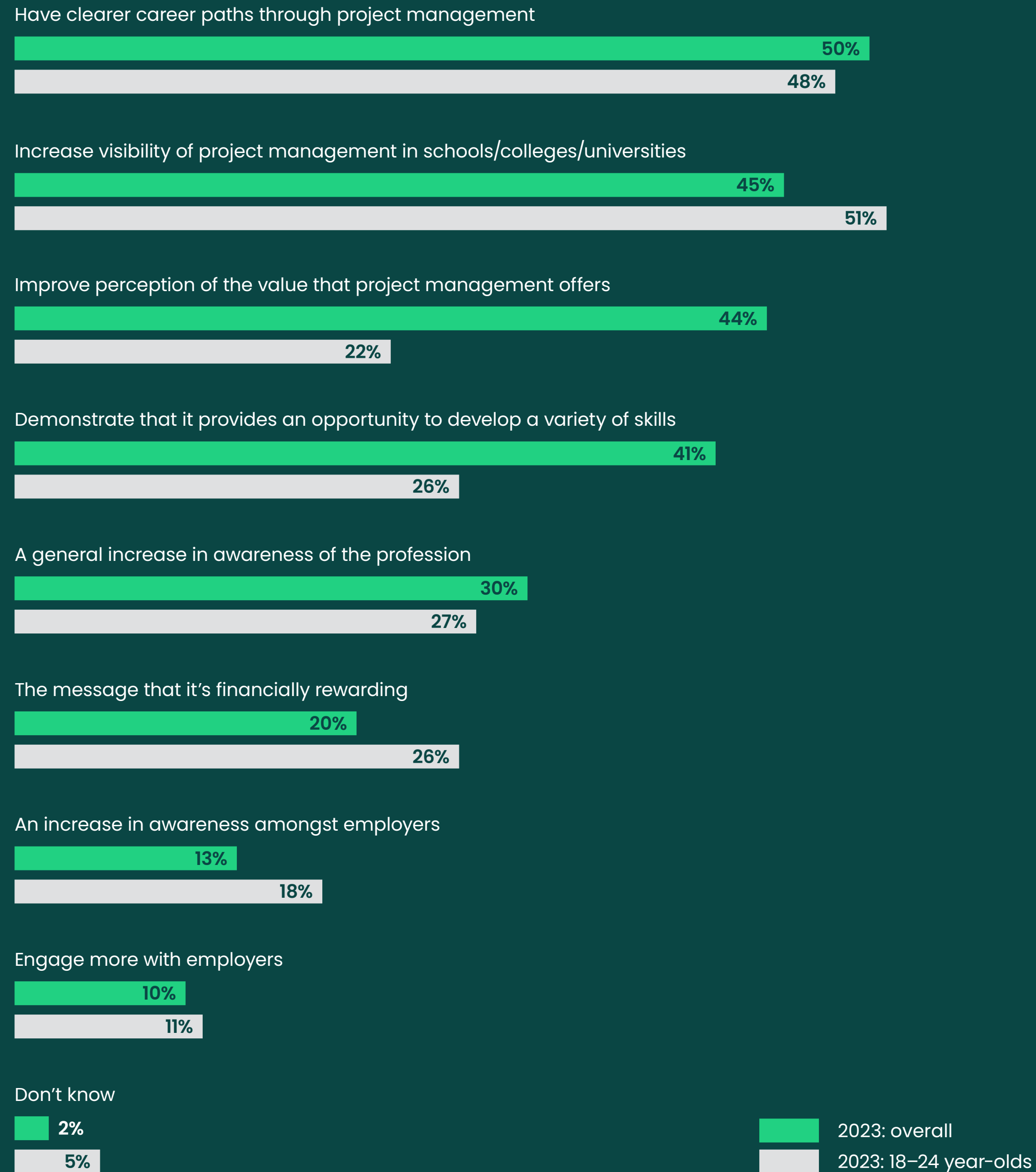


## Working life and job satisfaction

# Encouraging talent into the profession

Making a career as attractive as possible to young people and career changers to bring in fresh energy and ideas is vital for all professions, and project management thrives on a steady supply of new talent. But how that talent is encouraged is always hotly debated. This year, having clearer career paths through project management has unseated increasing the visibility of project management in schools, colleges and universities at the top spot, indicating the value of transparency when it comes to career progression.

Since they are closest to the initial recruitment process, one of the best groups to ask when it comes to understanding how to bring more people into the profession is the 18-24 year-olds. They prefer having more information about project management in their school, college and university, and show a greater need for financial details. Knowing more about the value that project management offers and its ability to develop a variety of skills, however, is less important to them than the general respondents.





## Working life and job satisfaction

# Economic confidence

The personal and business challenges of the energy crisis and high inflation coming so soon after the pandemic has hit confidence in the economic prospects not only of the individual and general economy, but also the respondents' organisations. For the individual, confidence for their own economic prospects continues to fall, down from 55% in 2021 to 51% in 2023. This follows a high of 65% in 2020.

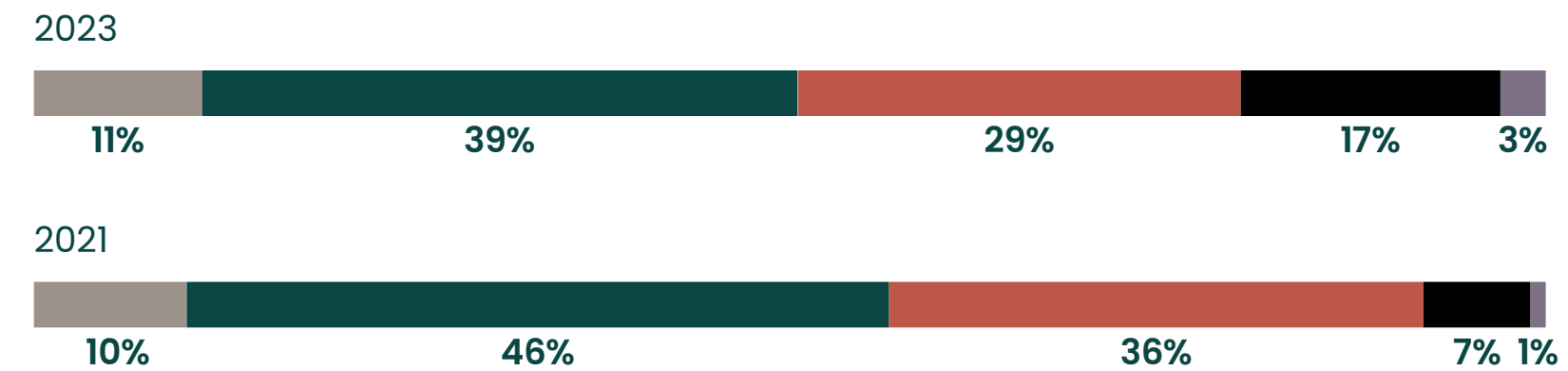
While the survey found it was the young that felt the economic downturn the hardest, down from 82% in 2020 to 72% in 2021, this year it's those in the 35-44 and 45-54 age brackets, dropping down to 50% and 41% respectively. In contrast, individual optimism for the 18-24 year-olds has held steady at 71%.

There's also a marked difference in genders, with women now more pessimistic than men, showing a significant decline in optimism from 57% in 2021 to 47% in 2023.

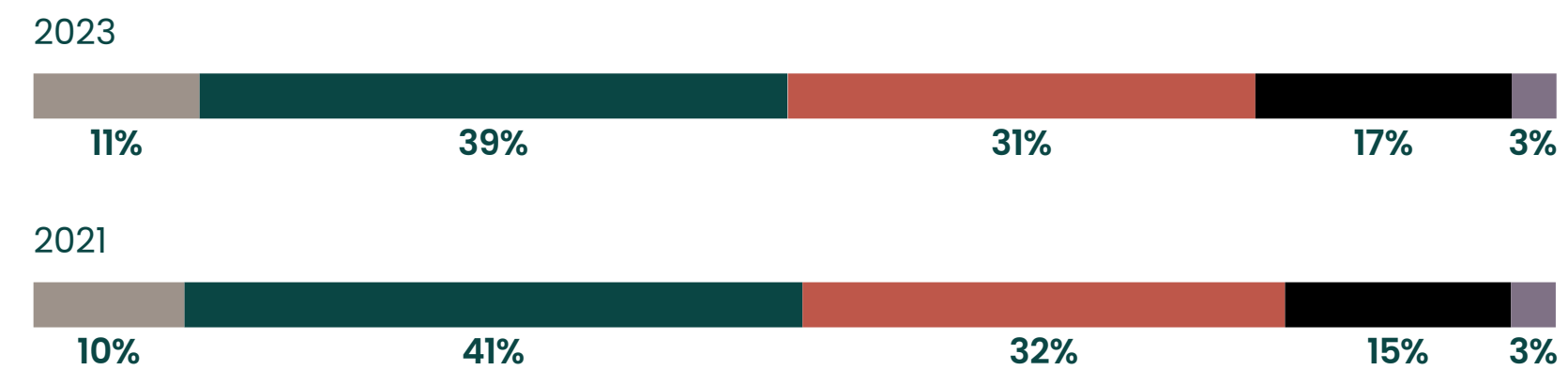
As with the findings on pay and benefits (page 17), this difference could be explained by a larger proportion of men holding positions of seniority in the project management profession, leading to greater confidence<sup>10</sup>.

The general increase in economic pessimism extends to organisations and the economy in general, with the lowest levels of optimism reserved for the economy. While exactly half the respondents are optimistic for their organisation, just 18% have the same feelings about the economy in general. Given the recent pressures on the economy and threat of recession, this should come as no surprise.

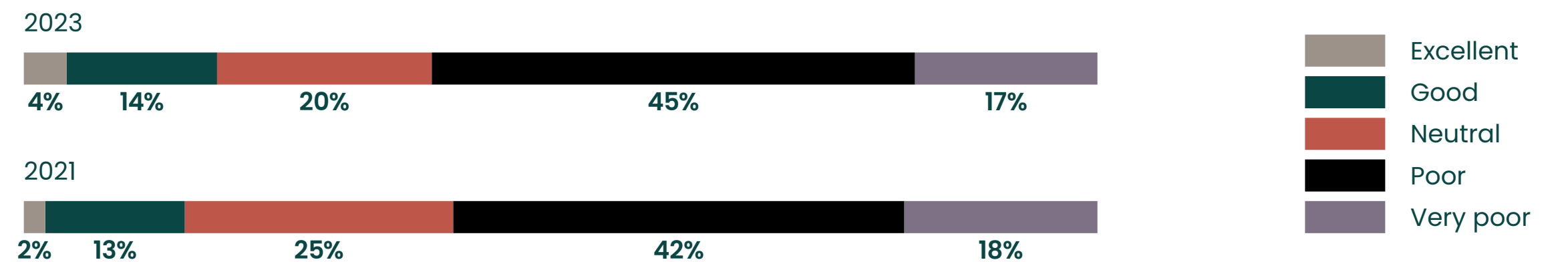
### Individual



### Organisation



### Economy as a whole



<sup>10</sup> 1970 British Cohort Study, Centre for Longitudinal Studies, UCL, 2022.

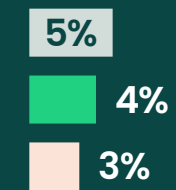
## Working life and job satisfaction

# Future of the profession

After the inevitable confidence dip seen in the previous survey, the amount of project professionals that feel that the industry will be enhanced in the next five years has remained steady at 67%, with just 5% stating it will decrease. This belief in the growth and development of project management is a strong indication of the high levels of resilience and optimism within the profession and its people.



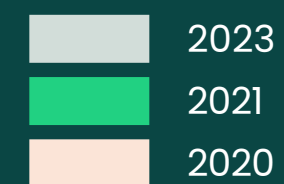
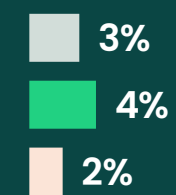
Decreased



Stay about the same



Don't know





## Working life and job satisfaction

# In summary: Bouncing back with confidence

It takes a lot of resilience for an industry to come through a global pandemic and remain optimistic and fulfilled, but project management is both resilient and strong, with a good feeling about the future spreading through the profession. As well as two-thirds expecting their pay and benefits to rise, and an overwhelming optimism about the future supply of jobs, people seem to be full of confidence.

Companies across the vast majority of sectors are seeking to invest and grow, making up for lost time by recruiting skilled staff to deliver new projects. These new staff now have different priorities when it comes to job hunting, with more looking for flexible working options and the ability to work from home.

The fact that project management has adapted well during the past two years of upheaval and now has effective systems in place to enable this stands it in good stead for the workplace revolution. The confidence that currently flows through the industry and trust in its long-term growth is something that not only encourages its existing talent to stay, but attracts new talent to join.





# Chapter 3 Diversity and inclusion

Ensuring project management continues to work on improving its levels of diversity and inclusion is key to ensuring that it reflects wider society, bringing in new talent from all backgrounds to develop a stronger profession with a broad range of voices.

The results this year are encouraging, with the number of people from ethnic minorities and disabled people continuing to increase, with 20% of new recruits now made up of ethnic minorities. This compares favourably with the overall proportion of ethnic minorities in England and Wales of 18.3%<sup>11</sup>. However, there is still a lot of work to be done in making the profession more diverse and inclusive at all levels in all sectors. One of the key ways that can be done is mentoring, along with unconscious bias training and providing more relatable role models.

At APM we regard improving levels of diversity and inclusion as one of the key challenges the profession faces and, along with this survey, we have a number of resources available to help organisations improve their initiatives and policies around this vital area.

20%

of new entrants are from an ethnic minority

14%

of project professionals are disabled

24%

of ethnic minorities feel their ethnicity has had a negative impact on their career

56%

of professionals feel the profession is inclusive

42%

say mentoring is the best way to improve diversity and inclusivity

<sup>11</sup> ONS, Census 2021, released November 2022.



Diversity and inclusion

# Make-up of the profession by ethnicity

The range and proportion of people from ethnic minorities within the project management profession is something we have tracked for a number of years, so we can provide an accurate snapshot of how our diversity and inclusion work is changing the ethnic make-up of the industry.

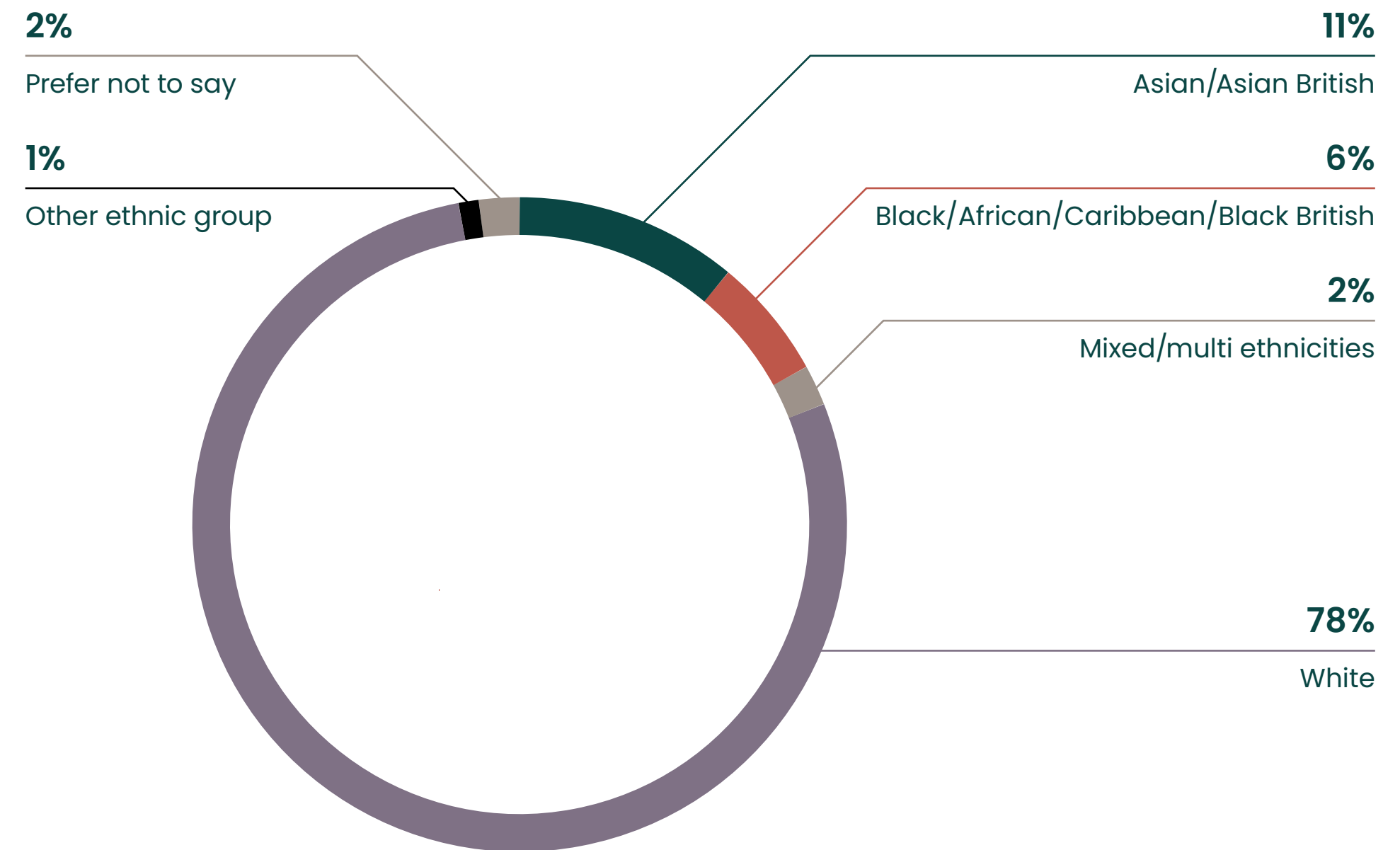
This year, the results show a continuing move upwards in terms of the number of people from ethnic minorities, with the total amount increasing from 15% in 2021 to 20% in 2023, a proportion that's continued to rise since 2020.

Looking at the individual demographics, there's a marked increase in the number of people identifying as Asian/Asian British, which has risen to 11% from 8% in 2021, as well as Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, which is now 6%.

As you may expect, it's the younger generation that's showing the greatest proportion of people from ethnic minorities, making up 36% of those who have been in the profession for two years or less, and 22% of those with three to five years' of experience. This is an extremely positive sign that the industry is changing in

make-up and becoming more attractive to ethnic minorities, with their increasing presence making the profession even more appealing to people of all ethnic backgrounds.

However, while the number of ethnic minorities is rising, the pay gap between them and their white counterparts also appears to be increasing. This year, their average salary has dropped to £35,000, far below the overall average of £47,500 and white average of £52,500. The answer to this troubling drop could lie in the large increase of those ethnic minorities who have been in the sector for five years or less compared to the previous time the research was done, but there is clearly more work to be done in closing this gap.



## Average salary – 2023



## Average salary – 2020



## Diversity and inclusion

# Impact of ethnicity on career development

The issue of how a professional’s ethnicity affects their career development is one that’s important not only for the individual but for the profession as a whole. Seeing the success of ethnic minorities at all levels of project management encourages young ethnic minorities to view the profession as welcoming and nurturing, as well as increasing the amount of senior voices from different backgrounds.

This year, there’s an overall positive feeling among ethnic minorities that their ethnicity has had a positive impact on their professional development – an amount about equal to that of white people – with 24% stating a negative impact. Looking at the demographics, the proportion of Asian/Asian British people with a positive feeling is almost double that of those that are more negative. But for the mixed/multi community, the negative feelings far outweigh the positive.



Asians tend to look younger than Caucasians of the same age, sometimes I feel I’m not being taken seriously or passed over for more senior or leadership roles.

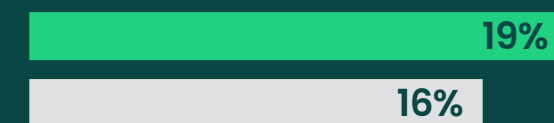
Survey respondent

## Impact of ethnicity on career development

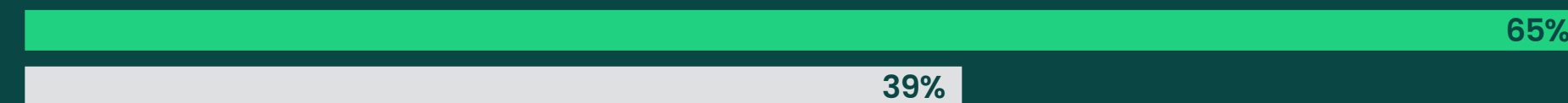
Very positive



Fairly positive



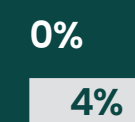
Neither positive nor negative



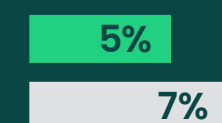
Fairly negative



Very negative



Don't know

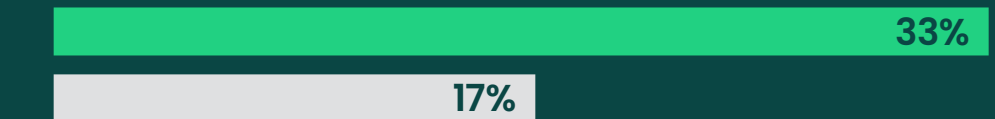


I believe my ability has out-weighted my ethnicity, as it’s that, that has accounted for selection for projects and thus development.

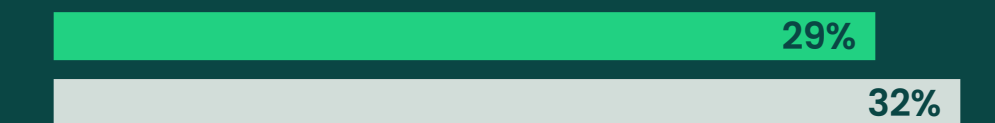
Survey respondent

## Impact of ethnicity on career development – by ethnic group

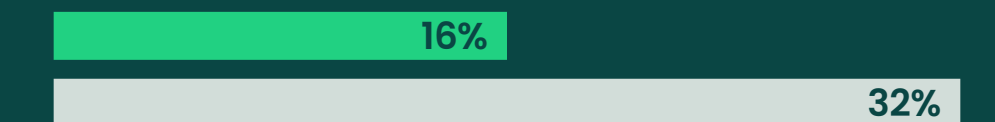
Asian/Asian British



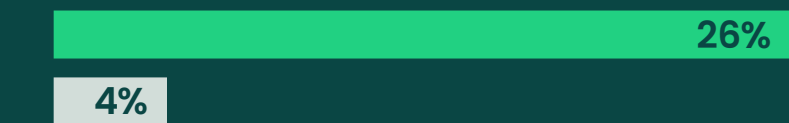
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British



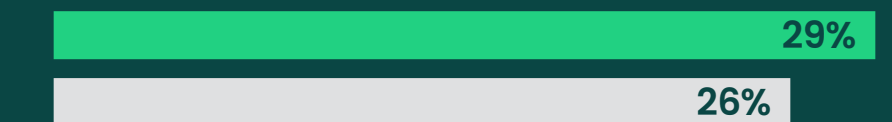
Mixed/multi ethnicities



White



Other ethnic group



Prefer not to say



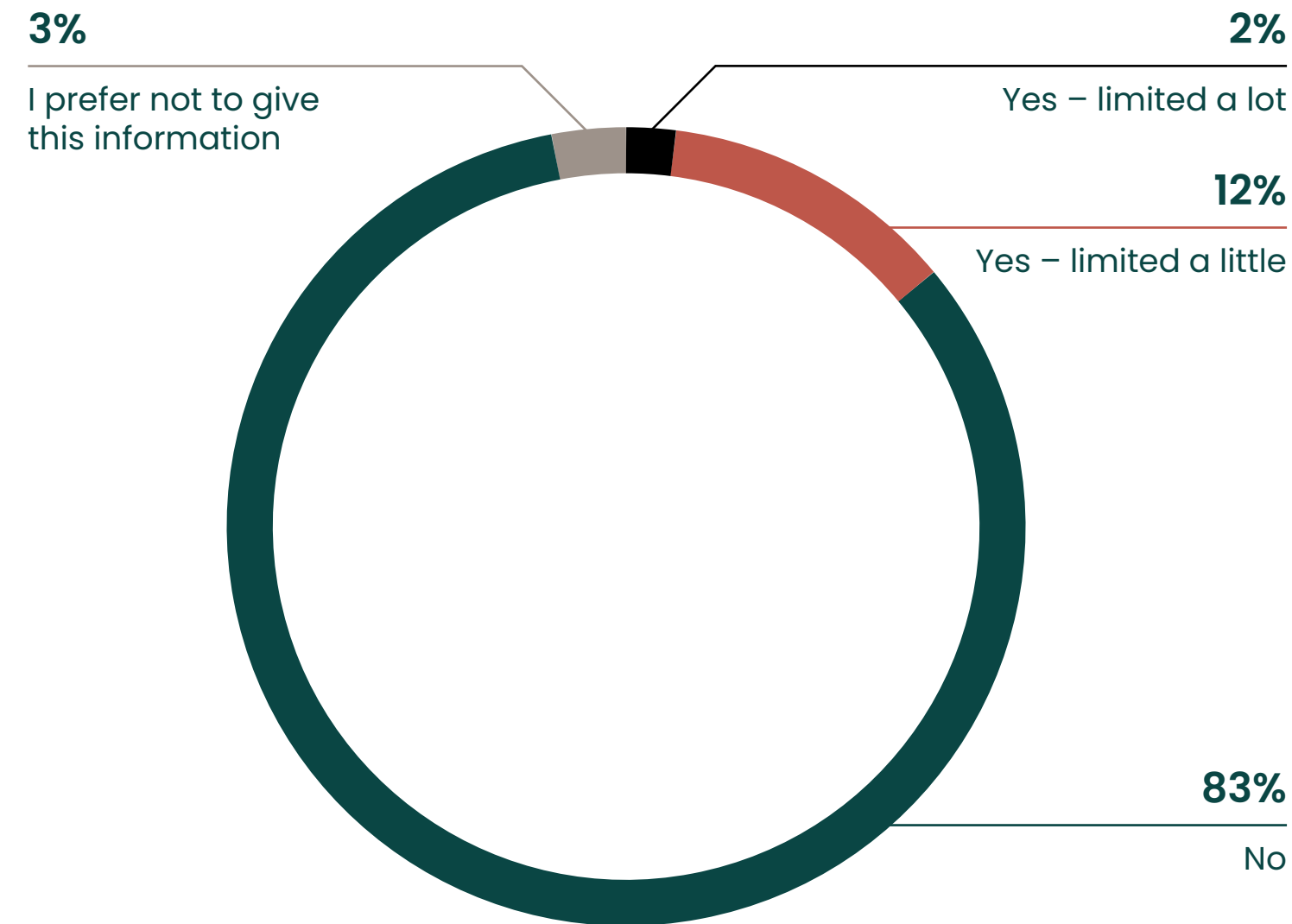


Diversity and inclusion

# Project professionals with a disability or long-term health condition

The Equality Act 2010 describes a disabled person as “Anyone who has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities.” This year, the amount of survey respondents with a disability or longstanding physical or mental health condition, has increased slightly, from 11% in 2021 to 14%.

When it comes to professional development, a third of those with a disability or health condition feel that it’s had a negative impact on their career (31%), compared to a fifth who said it had a positive impact (21%) – something that the profession clearly needs to address. Going into more detail, women were more likely than men to feel their disability or health condition impacted them negatively (37% vs 25%), while ethnic minority professionals were more likely than their white counterparts to say that their disability or health condition had a positive impact on their progression (42% vs 13%).

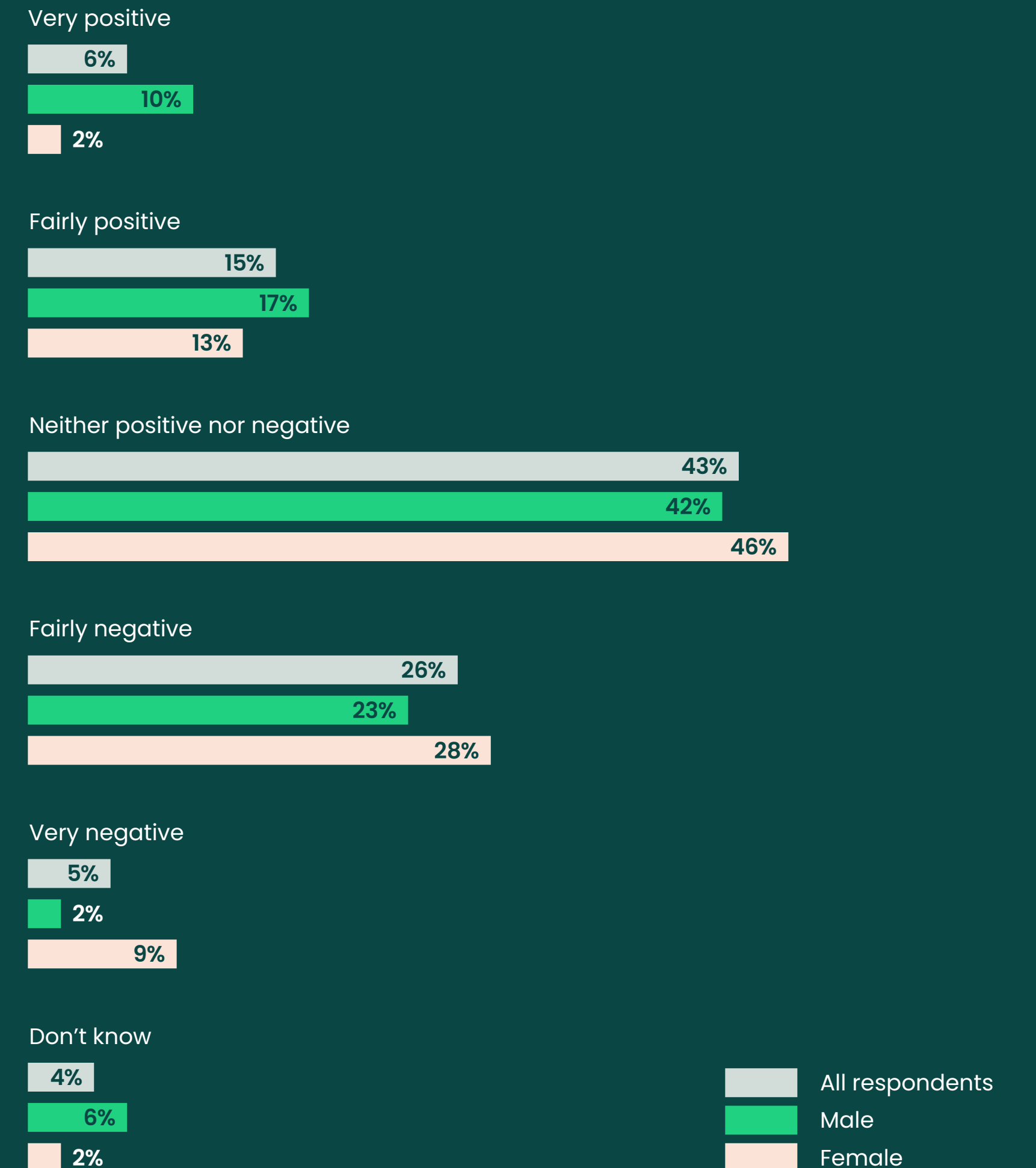


I have always been able to find a role or employment that has been within my physical and mental capability and have had very supportive employers throughout my career.  
Survey respondent



There is pressure not to take time off, and this is doubly so with invisible disabilities. I have been uncomfortable asking for time off in the past, and have ended up needing serious treatment as a result.  
Survey respondent

## Impact of disability or health condition on career development



## Diversity and inclusion

# How diverse and inclusive is the profession?

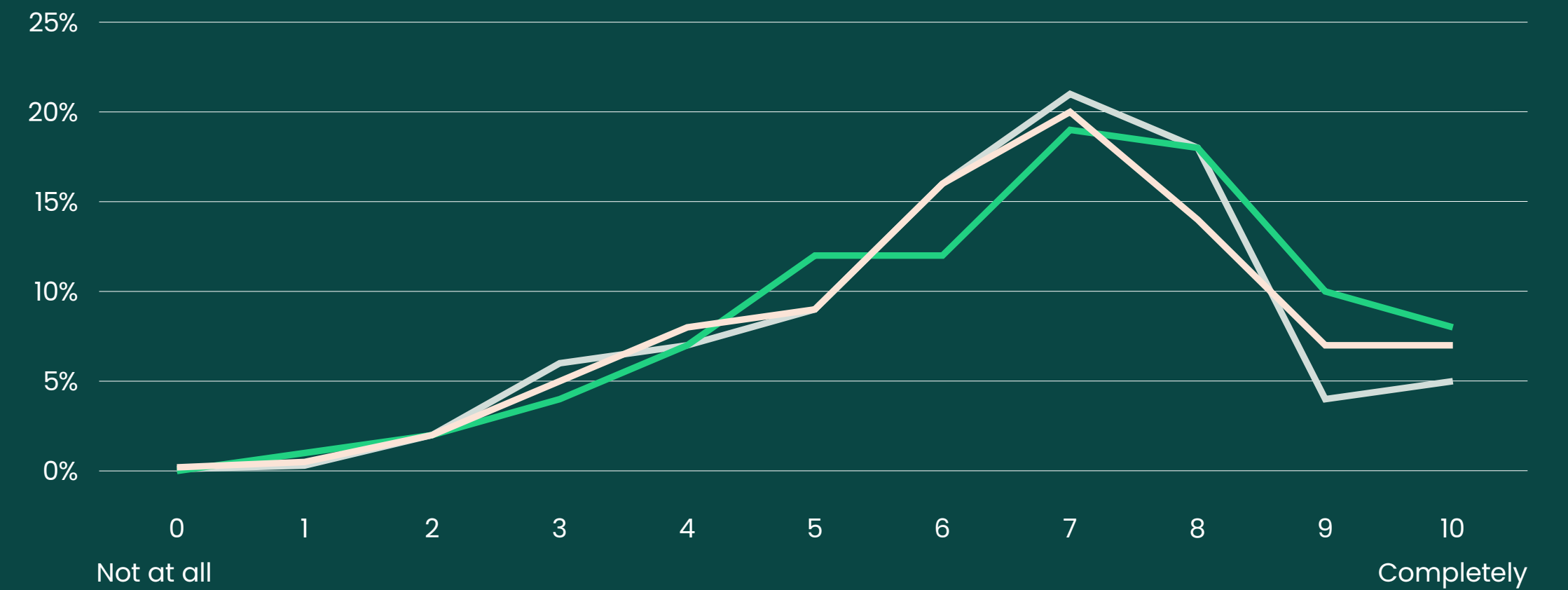
The perception of those working in the profession of how diverse and inclusive project management is, is a key question that provides a 'real-world' assessment of the success of diversity and inclusivity work across the industry.

In previous surveys, those with an ethnic minority background were significantly less likely to consider the project profession to be diverse than their white colleagues. In both the 2020 and 2021 surveys, ethnic minorities gave a mean score of 5.93 when asked how diverse they think the profession is (where zero is not at all and 10 is completely). However, this year, that score has risen to 6.71 – slightly above that of white respondents (6.41).

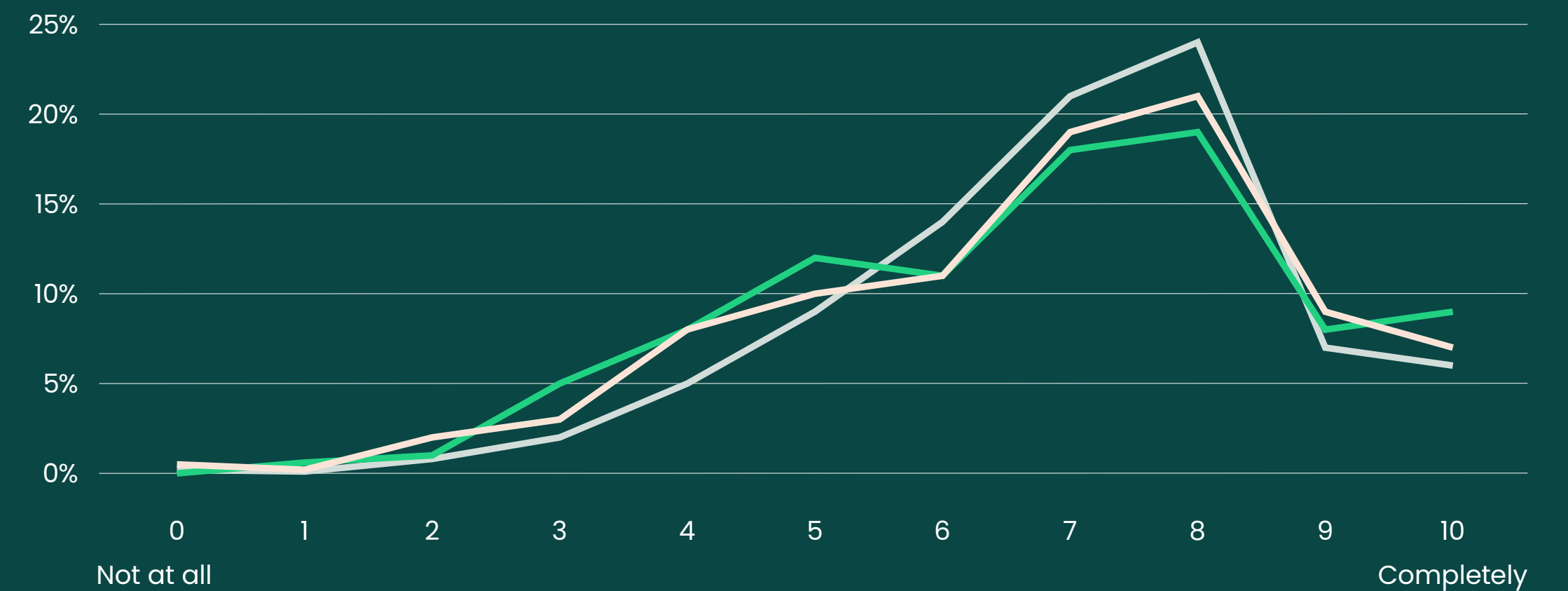
While that certainly looks like a shift in perception, the decrease in the amount of ethnic minorities declaring no strong feeling either way (38% in 2021 to 31% in 2023) demonstrates the increasingly polarised nature of the debate.

Regarding inclusivity, 56% of professionals now feel that the profession is inclusive. While this is certainly encouraging and testament to the work the sector is doing in the area, there is always room for improvement.

### Diverse



### Inclusive



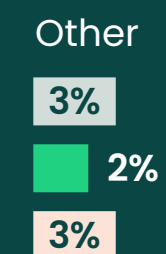
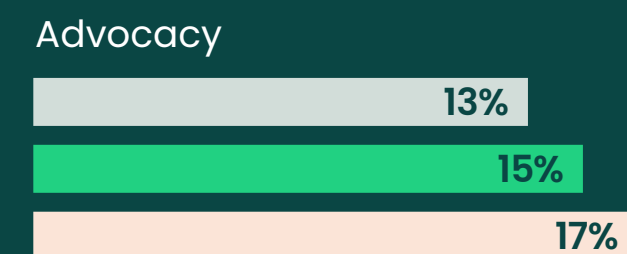
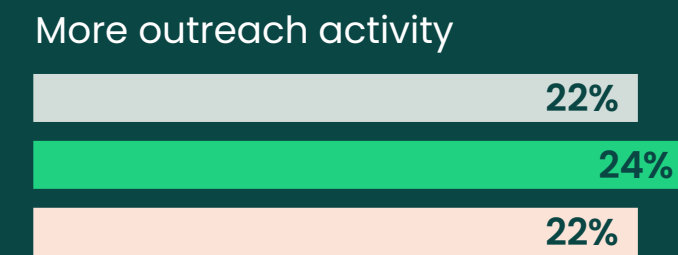
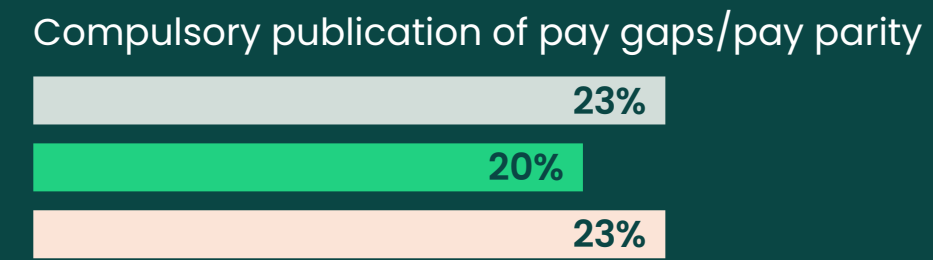
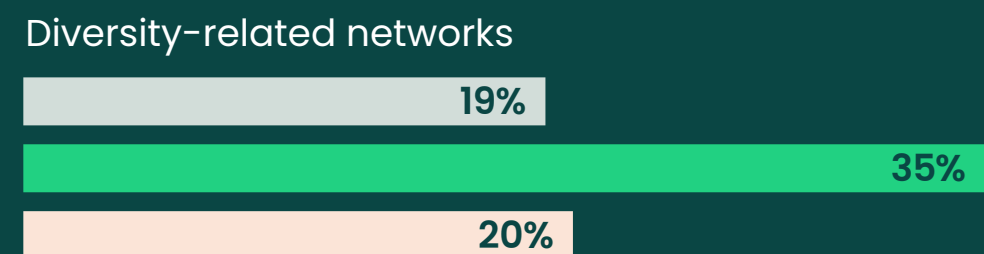
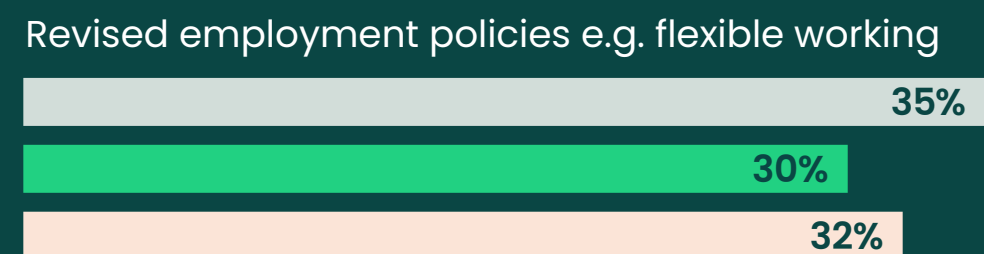
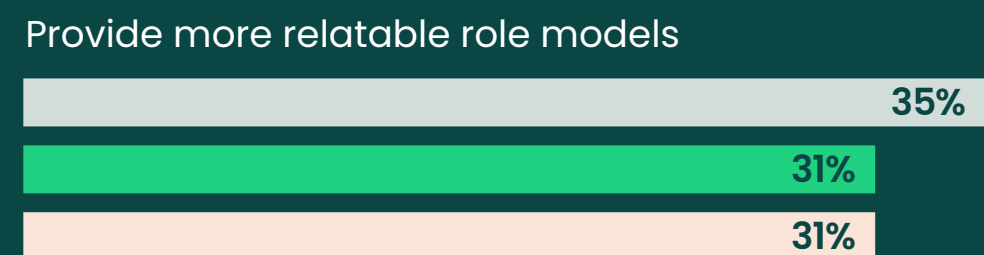
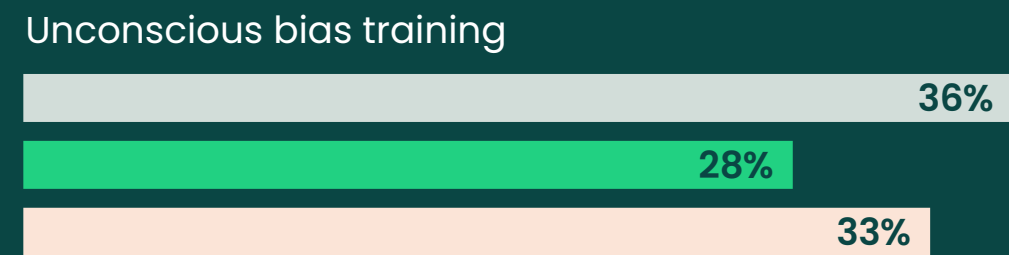


## Diversity and inclusion

# Ways to make the profession more diverse and inclusive

It's vital that all businesses and organisations continually look at their work in diversity and inclusion to ensure that the make-up of their workforce reflects that of general society. Among the ways the sector can do this, mentoring remains the number one choice for ethnic minorities and disabled people, a fact that repeats the findings of the past two surveys.

Other popular methods include unconscious bias training, providing more relatable role models, and revised employment policies. Of these, professionals with a disability prefer unconscious bias training, while ethnic minority professionals would like to see more diversity networks set up, enabling them to inform, support and advance professionals of a similar ethnic background.





## Diversity and inclusion

# In summary: Keep improving for greater reward

The challenge of increasing diversity and inclusion is one that is complex with no easy solutions, and like other industries, the project management profession has a distinct lack of disabled people within its workforce. This lack of diversity and inclusion only discourages new talent from minority groups becoming aware of the profession and making the decision to join, which exacerbates the problem further.

This is something that we're very aware of, and we continue to work hard in making the profession more diverse and inclusive, running a number of initiatives and programmes to improve awareness within the project management community and work with educational organisations to engage with young people from all backgrounds. A key focus of our strategy is on diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB), which is being supported by an advisory group we're setting up. In October 2022, we also held our first ever event to mark Black History Month, with the theme of 'Accelerating Black Talent'.

This year's survey certainly shows signs that the profession is improving its diversity and inclusion, particularly among the younger generation, but the overwhelming image of the profession is still white and non-disabled. We all need to do more to address this and make project management more appealing to ethnic minorities, the physically disabled, and neurodiverse.

Creating a more diverse and inclusive profession not only benefits the organisation through a broader skills base, increased innovation, and a wider range of ideas, but opens up the entire industry to new talent that it would otherwise have missed.





## Chapter 4

# Dealing with volatility

In any year, there are a number of concerns for the future. But the past year has had more than its fair share, with the conflict in Ukraine, UK political instability, and the twin fallout of the pandemic and Brexit still having a detrimental effect on business. Something that all of these challenges have contributed to is inflation, which emerged as the chief concern for project professionals.

Changes in technology and ways of working are also having an impact, but this time in a good way, with the ability of professionals to work flexibly and virtually regarded as the most positive future trend. This is backed up by communication skills now being the most important skill for the project professional.

The past few years have thrown an unprecedented set of challenges at project management, but the profession has handled them all with confidence and positivity, something everyone should be proud of.

66%

feel inflation is having a negative impact on projects

44%

say communication is the top skill to have in the future

72%

say flexible working is having a positive impact on projects

67%

are concerned about recruitment for future projects

25%

say their organisation's sustainability strategy has been negatively impacted by the energy crisis

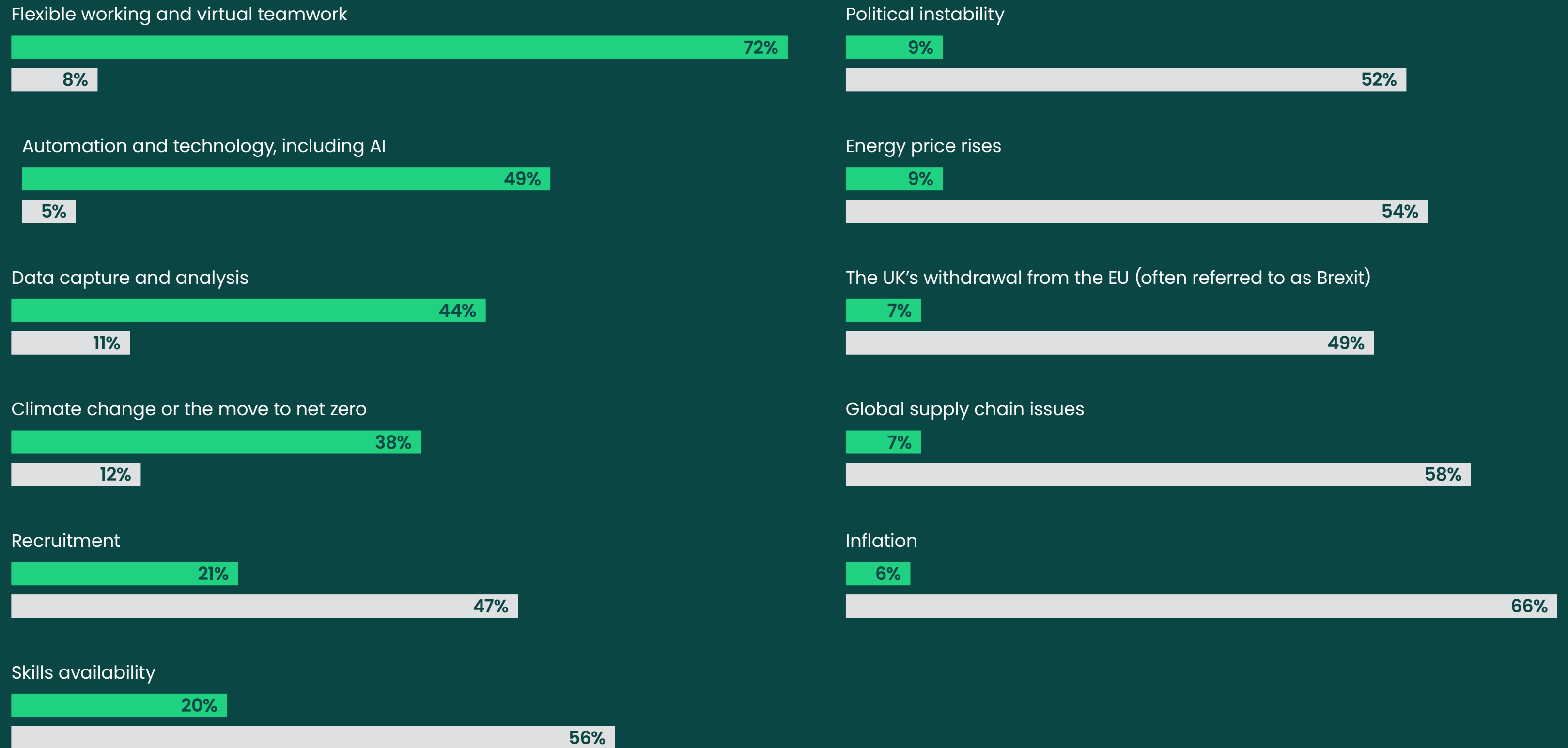
Dealing with volatility

# Key concerns for the future

The project management profession always has to have one eye on world events and quickly assess how they may affect future projects. Right now, it's inflation that keeps them awake at night, with 66% feeling that it's having a negative impact on their projects, closely followed by global supply chain issues (58%) and availability of skills (56%).

The impact of inflation is most keenly felt by the older age groups, with 72% of 55-64 year-olds being concerned about its impact, while those in the construction and local government sectors show higher than average unease.

On a more uplifting note, flexible working and virtual teamwork is regarded as having a positive impact on projects by almost three quarters of project professionals. Indeed, technology has a central role in improving the efficiency and success of the sector, with almost half stating that automation and AI has a positive impact.



■ Positive impact  
■ Negative impact



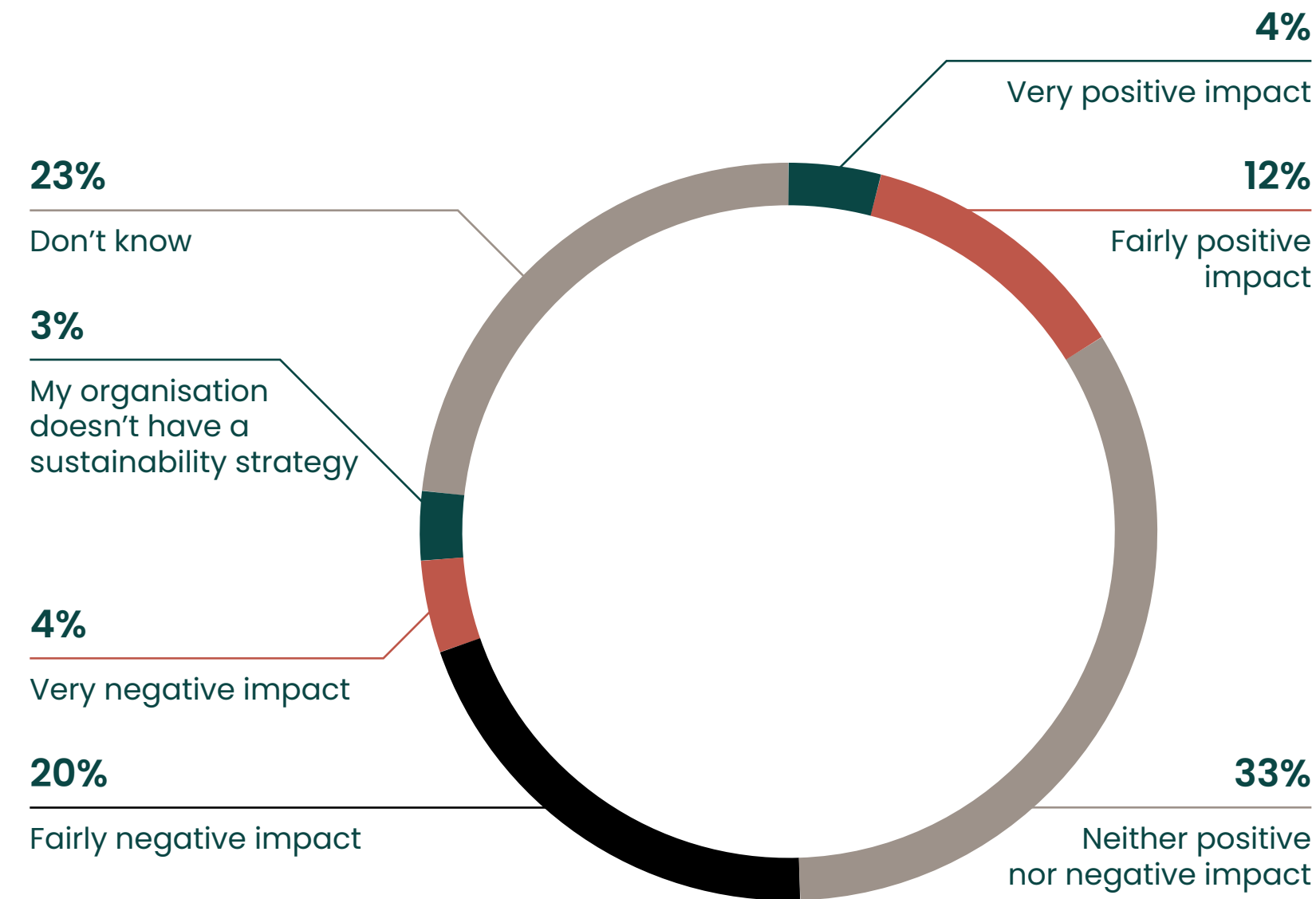
## Dealing with volatility

# Impact of global energy supply on sustainability strategies

The issue of sustainability has increased in importance for companies in every industry around the world, and the current energy crisis has sharpened the focus on using renewable energy sources, reducing usage, and making sustainability a key focus in new projects.

Overall, a greater proportion of respondents stated that the sustainability strategy of their organisation had been negatively impacted by the energy crisis (24%) than positively (16%). Of those whose organisation's sustainability strategy had been impacted by the energy crisis, 44% cited new workplace measures to reduce energy consumption as having an effect, 35% reported increased investment in energy reduction facilities, and 37% stated that new measures had been introduced around project planning.

While reducing energy consumption and considering sustainability in new projects can be seen as positive moves for the sector, the fact that 27% of projects had been cancelled or paused because of the energy crisis is a key concern.



## How the global energy supply has impacted sustainability strategies

New workplace measures introduced with the goal of reducing energy consumption



New measures introduced around project planning (e.g. new guidelines or energy reduction targets for specific projects)



New/increased investment in energy reduction facilities (e.g. solar panels, heat pumps or similar)



Projects have been cancelled or paused



None of these have happened



Other



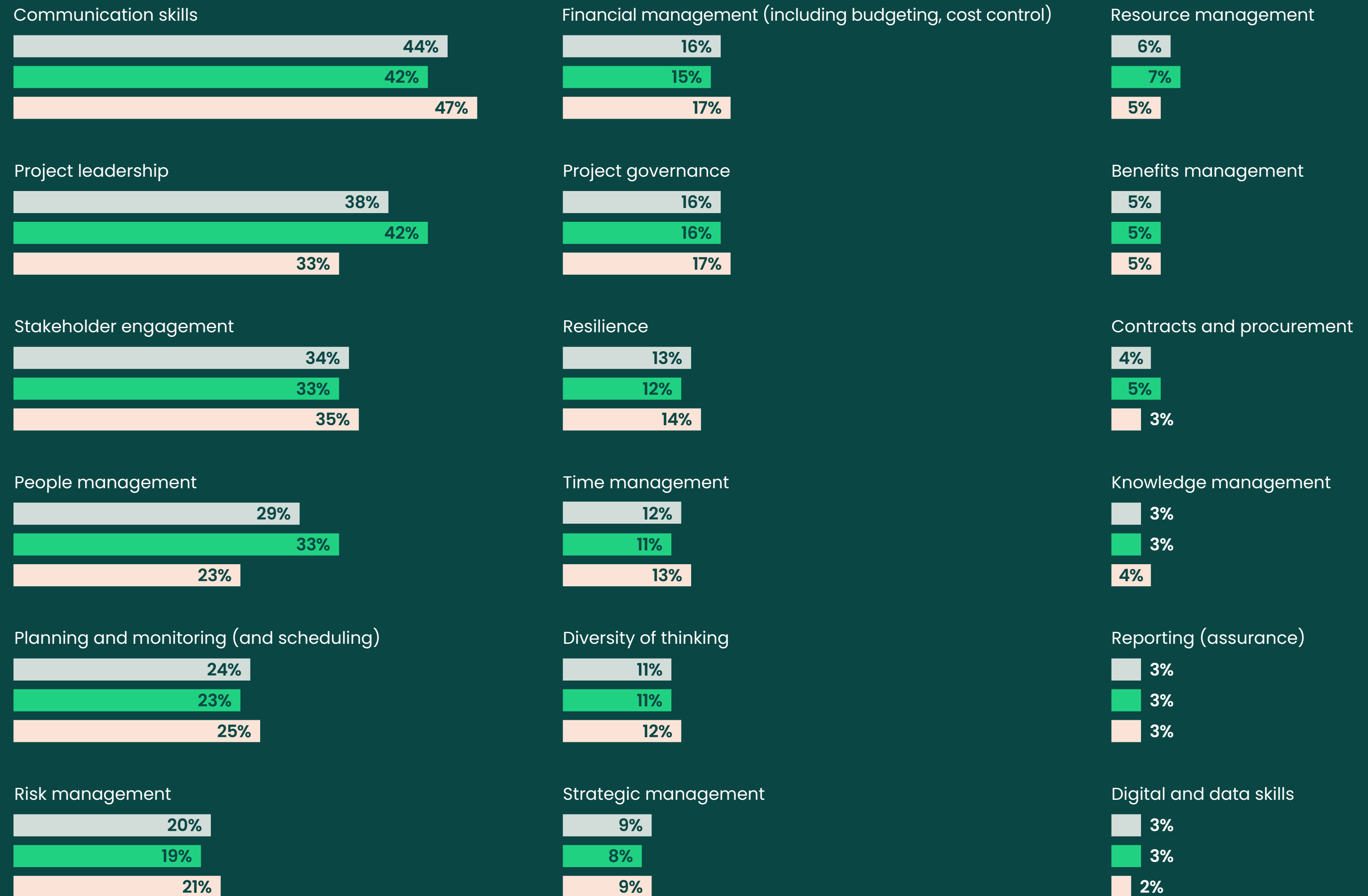
## Dealing with volatility

# Future skills

With changes in technology and working practices, the project management profession of the future will need to prioritise different skills to those required in the past. The demands of increasingly complex projects, with new considerations and regulations, will require professionals to broaden their knowledge and abilities.

This increase in required skills is seen in the results of the question of important skills for the model project professional, where almost all areas increased in importance. Project leadership (38%), stakeholder engagement (34%), people management (29%) and planning and monitoring (24%) all increased compared to 2021, with the latter rising by an impressive 18%.

However, communication skills is now the outright leader, leaping ahead of project leadership to reflect the industry's changing working culture. With more remote working, the ability to communicate quickly and clearly is an obvious requirement, and something that the younger generation and women particularly value.





## Dealing with volatility

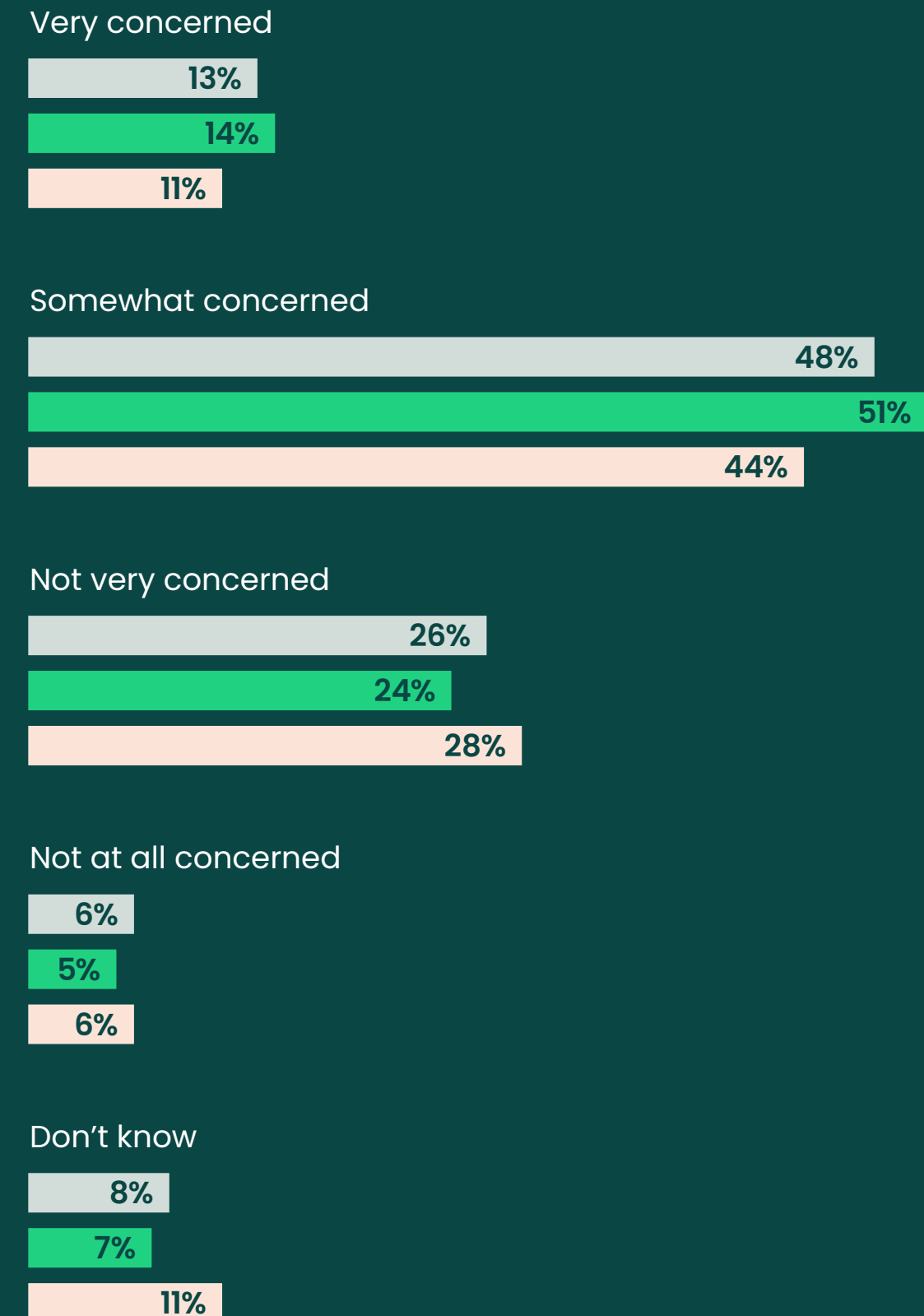
# Skills shortage

A key challenge for companies in many industries around the world is the recruitment of skilled workers, and the project management profession is no different. There is an overriding concern that companies don't have enough skilled staff, with 61% of respondents worried that this shortage will result in projects not being delivered successfully. This concern is heightened when thinking about recruiting for future projects, with 67% showing concern.

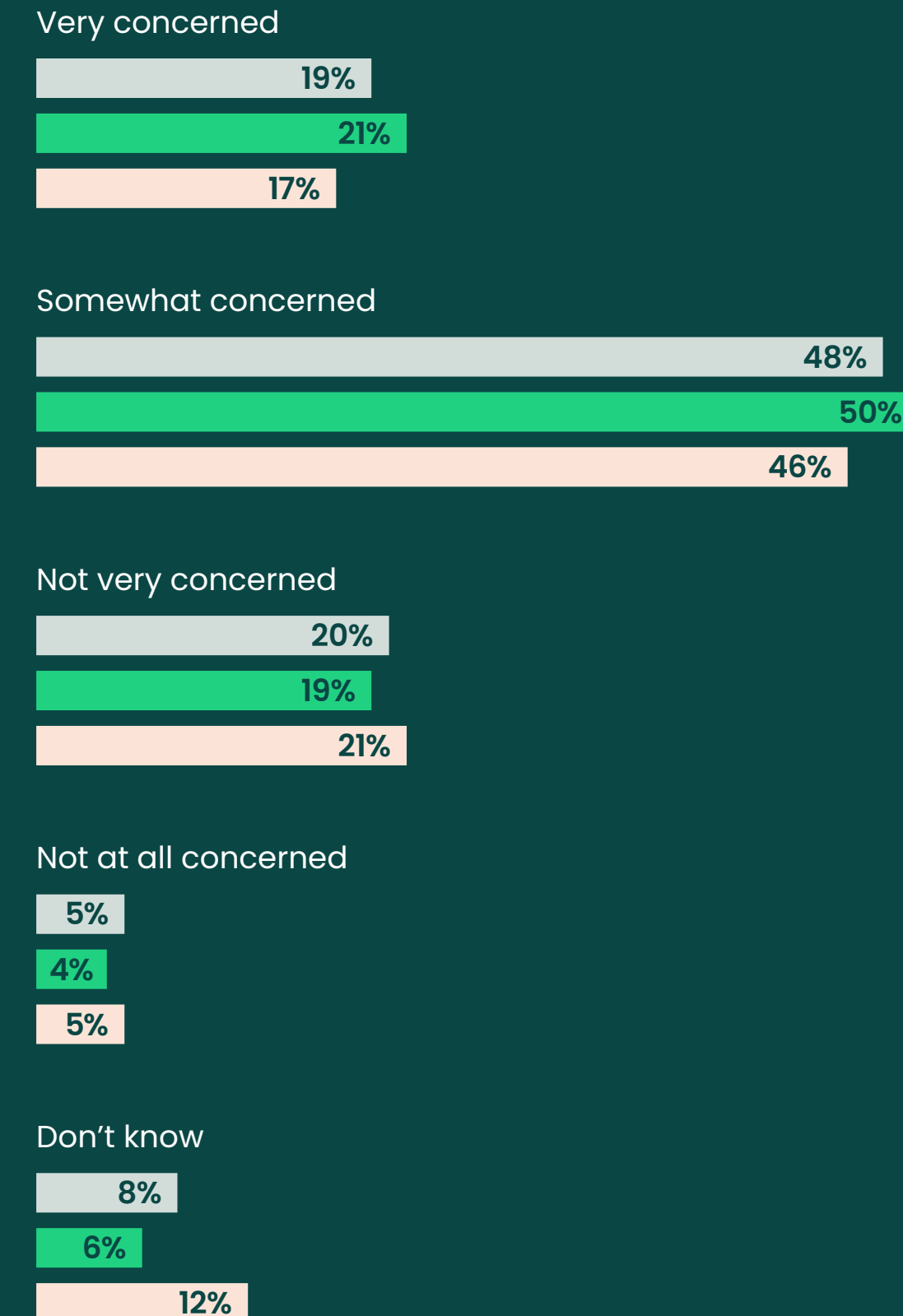
For both questions, there's a difference in response from men and women, and young and old. While men show more concern about their organisation's current project workforce than women (65% vs 55%), and its ability to recruit enough skilled workers in the future (71% vs 63%), it's the older male generation that are the most concerned about future people resources (80%).

An explanation for this disparity could lie in the fact that older men hold a greater proportion of senior positions and are therefore more likely to be involved in the recruitment process.

### Organisational concern about not having the required skills to deliver projects successfully



### Organisational concern about being able to recruit enough skilled project professionals in the future





## Dealing with volatility

# In summary: Facing multiple challenges head on

Project management is a future-facing profession, not only having to assess the impact of current events on their projects, but how those events will play out in the future. That not only requires experience and knowledge of a broad variety of areas, but a certain level of intuition to decide what the profession of the future will require.

Following a year of post-pandemic challenges such as supply chain issues and skills shortages, the conflict in Ukraine is adding inflation and high energy costs to their list of concerns. But the profession cannot control most of these issues, it's adapting to what it can, investing in energy reduction facilities and considering sustainability in new projects.

Project professionals are also adjusting well to the new skills demanded by a rapidly changing workplace, understanding that communication is now the key to effective project management. It's not going to solve all of the profession's challenges overnight, but coupled with good leadership and stakeholder engagement, it will make project management fit for the future.





# Chapter 5 Respondents

The project management profession is made up of a fascinating number of professionals at different stages of their careers, working in a vast range of sectors. The size and nature of the projects may shift every year, but the overall picture shows a workforce that remains highly resilient in the face of demanding challenge.

One of the main trends this year is that respondents to the survey are getting younger, with 41% being in the industry for five years or less – a jump back up to pre-pandemic levels. Within those who have recently joined the industry, there’s also an increase of women, ethnic minorities and the disabled, demonstrating the widening appeal of the profession to everyone.

**£100m**

Average project value worked on

**14%**

work in the construction sector

**29%**

drop in the average cost of projects outside the UK

**33%**

hold a master’s degree or postgraduate certificate

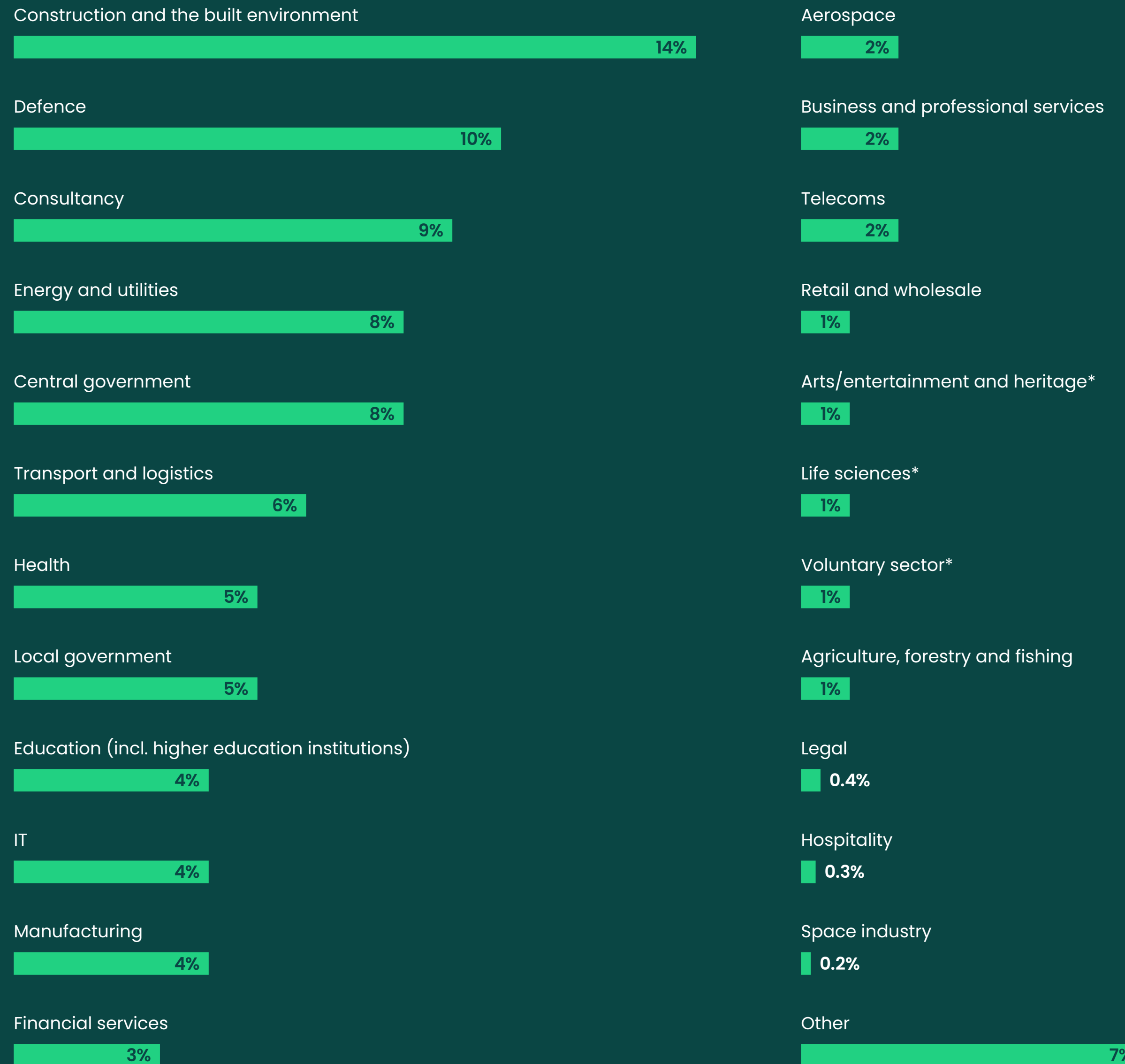
**41%**

have five years or less experience

## Respondents Sector

With the current economic uncertainty, there's little movement between roles and sectors in the past 24 months since the last survey, with most staying within their chosen field. Construction and defence remain the most popular sectors, with energy and central government firmly placed in the top five.

However, one significant movement is the rise of consultancy, up from fifth place in 2021 to third this year. This could be a consequence of career reassessment during the pandemic, with working from home and technology developments enabling more professionals to shift from working for a single organisation totaking on different projects for different employers.



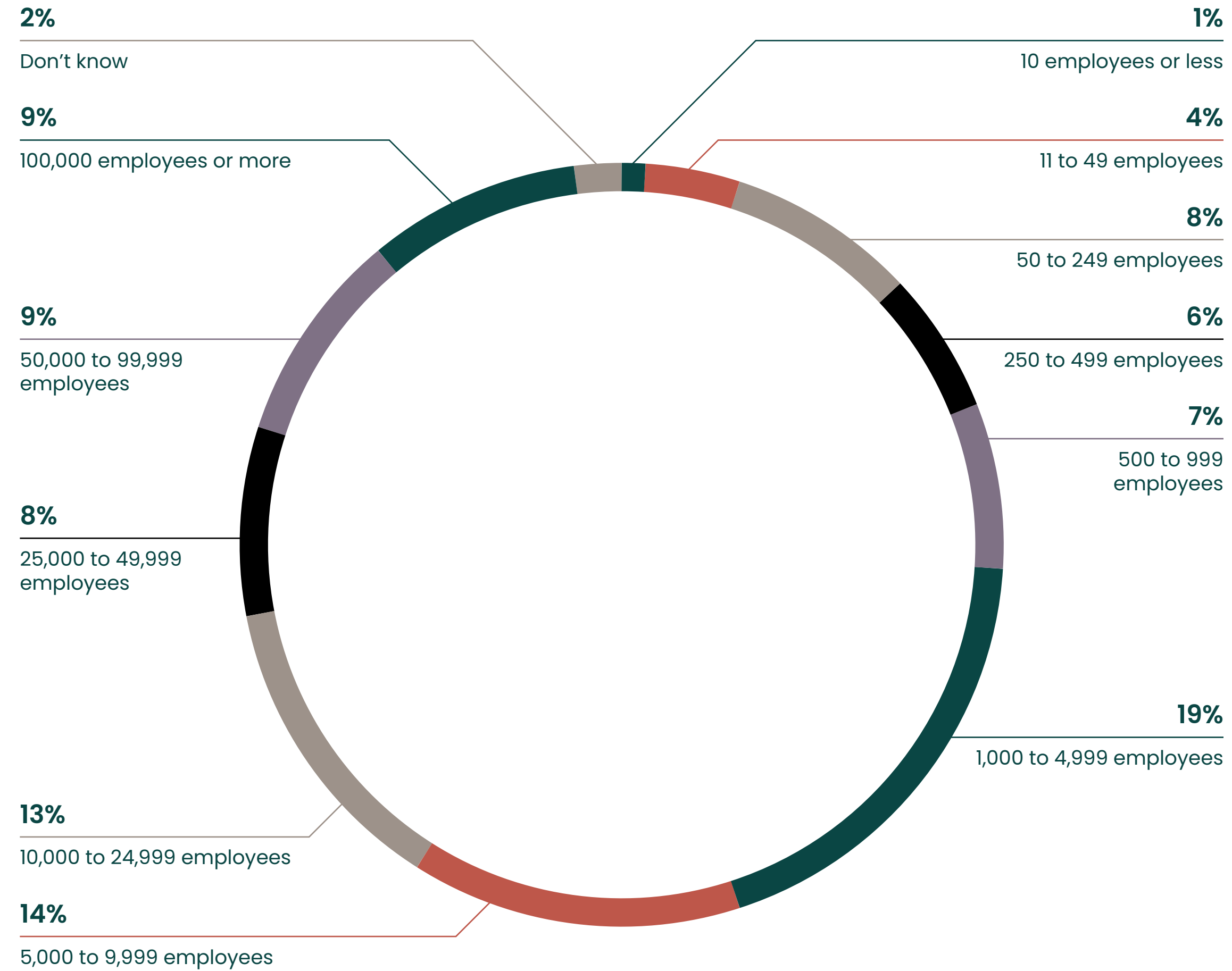
\* Based on a sample of 20-29 respondents



Respondents

# Organisation size

As with sector, there's little movement in terms of organisation size, with firms employing 1,000 to 4,999 staff making up the largest section. There is a small decline in the amount of companies employing 25,000 to 49,999 employees, from 11% in 2021 to 8% in 2023, with a corresponding decrease in large firms (25,000 staff or more) from 31% to 26%.



## Respondents Project size

There's been a marked decrease in the average cost of projects across the UK, dropping from £118m in 2021 to just under £100m in 2023. This £18m fall is largely attributable to the reduction in projects worth over £500m, but there's also been a decrease in the cost of projects worth between £1-5m and £25-250m.

Around the UK, the North West continues to have the projects with the highest average cost (£125.5m), higher than those in London (£113m) and the South East (£91m), while the South West and West Midlands aren't too far behind with average project costs of £119m and £112.5m respectively. Along with the average cost of projects in the UK, those outside the country have also dropped, decreasing from £161m in 2021 to £114m in 2023.

When looking at the cost of projects undertaken by those who are Full APM members, the proportion managing projects worth over £500m rises to 15% – significantly above the average. That proportion rises further to 28% for those who have Chartered Project Professional (ChPP) status, demonstrating how this standard can lead to managing larger projects.

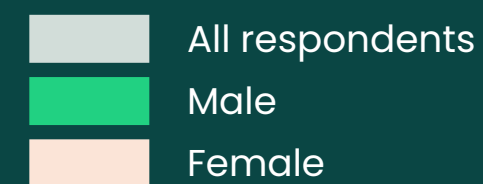
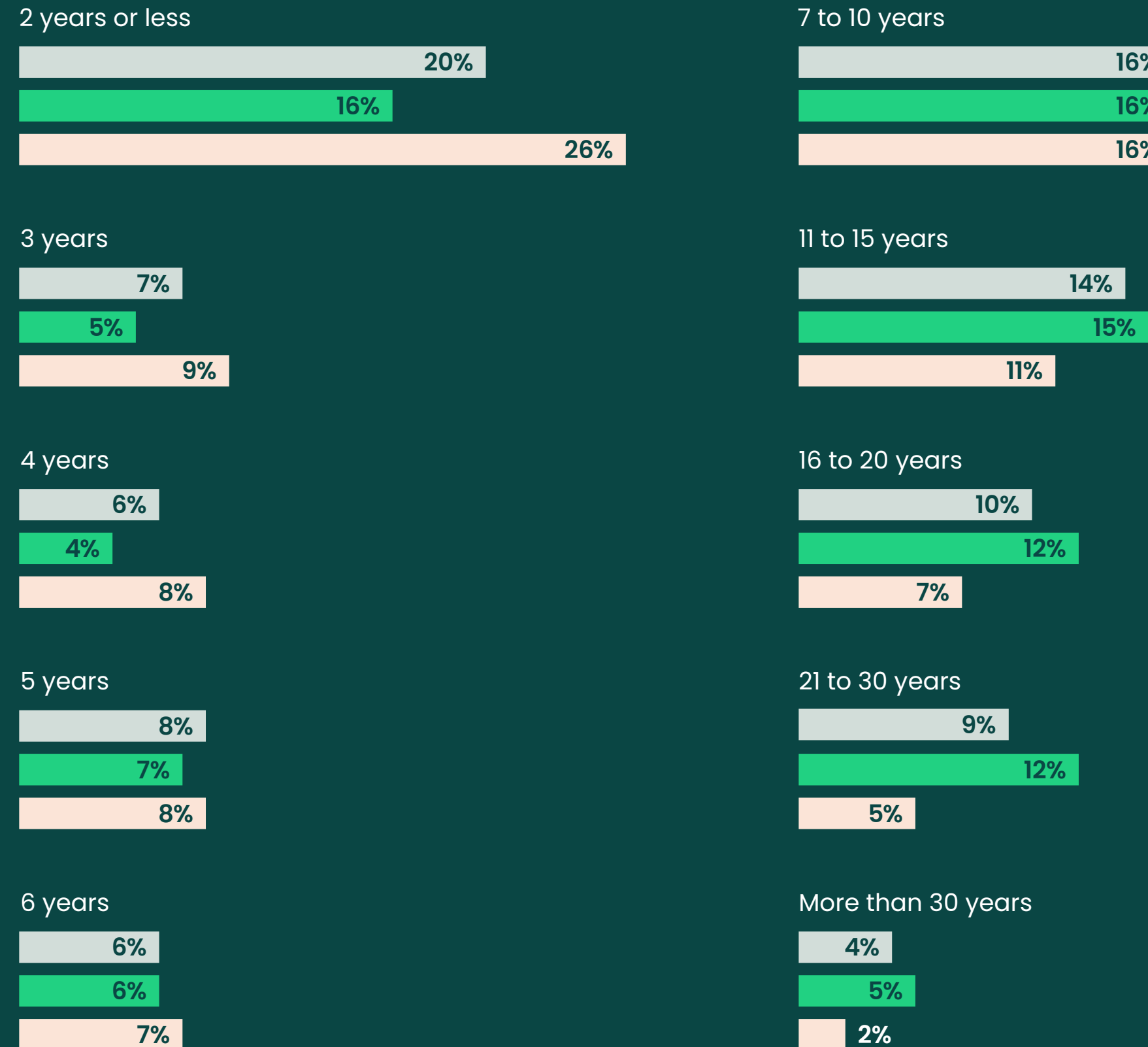




## Respondents Experience

After a dip in the amount of project professionals with less than two years' experience, this year shows a significant rise, back to the pre-pandemic level of 20%. This is highly encouraging and indicates a healthy influx of new talent into the industry.

Further up the scale, the proportion of more experienced project professionals is dropping, with most age ranges decreasing in size, in particular, those with 16-20 and 21-30 years of experience. However, it's encouraging to note that the proportion of women new to the industry with less than two years' experience is now one in four compared to one in five in 2021.



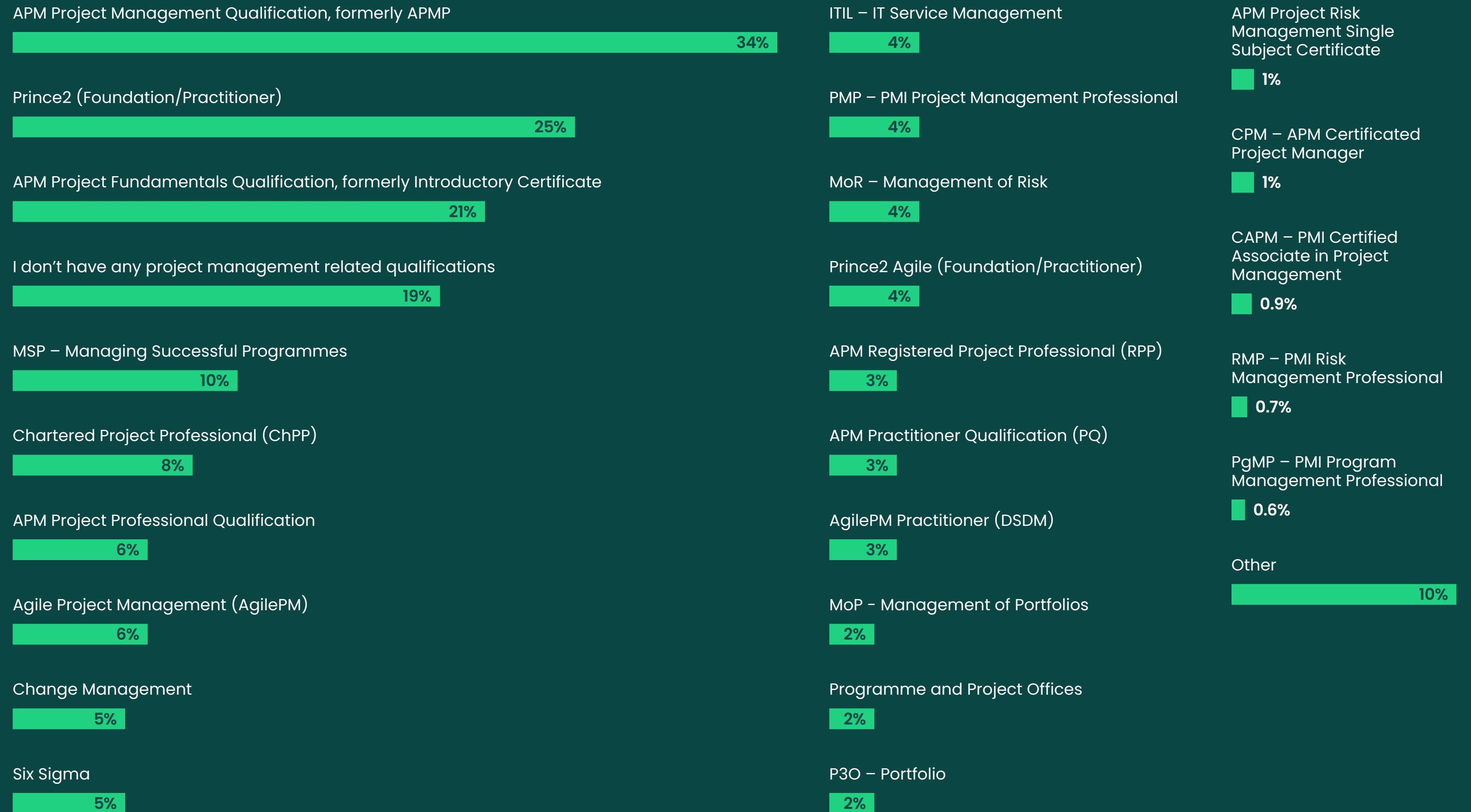
## Respondents Qualifications

Gaining an APM project management qualification has long been a way for professionals to boost their knowledge and demonstrate their commitment to their careers, from the most popular (APM Project Management Qualification, held by 34%) to the more specialist (APM Practitioner Qualification, 3%).

Following the APM Project Management Qualification, the APM Project Fundamentals Qualification is held by 21% of respondents. For those just entering the industry, this is by far the most popular choice to gain a broad knowledge of the profession.

The designation that continues to gain in popularity is Chartered Project Professional (ChPP), which is held by 8% of respondents, up from 2% in 2019. While the previous survey found that the energy sector held the highest proportion of professionals with chartered status, this year it's the consultants that have the top spot with 18%, closely followed by construction (16%).

In terms of general education, levels of qualification have remained broadly similar across the board since the last survey, with the vast majority (80%) educated to degree level and above.







**We are the only chartered membership  
organisation for the project profession**

**Association for Project Management**  
Ibis House, Regent Park, Summerleys Road  
Princes Risborough, Bucks HP27 9LE  
0845 458 1944  
[apm.org.uk](http://apm.org.uk)



Association for Project Management is incorporated  
by Royal Charter RC000890 and a registered charity  
No. 1171112. Principal office as shown.