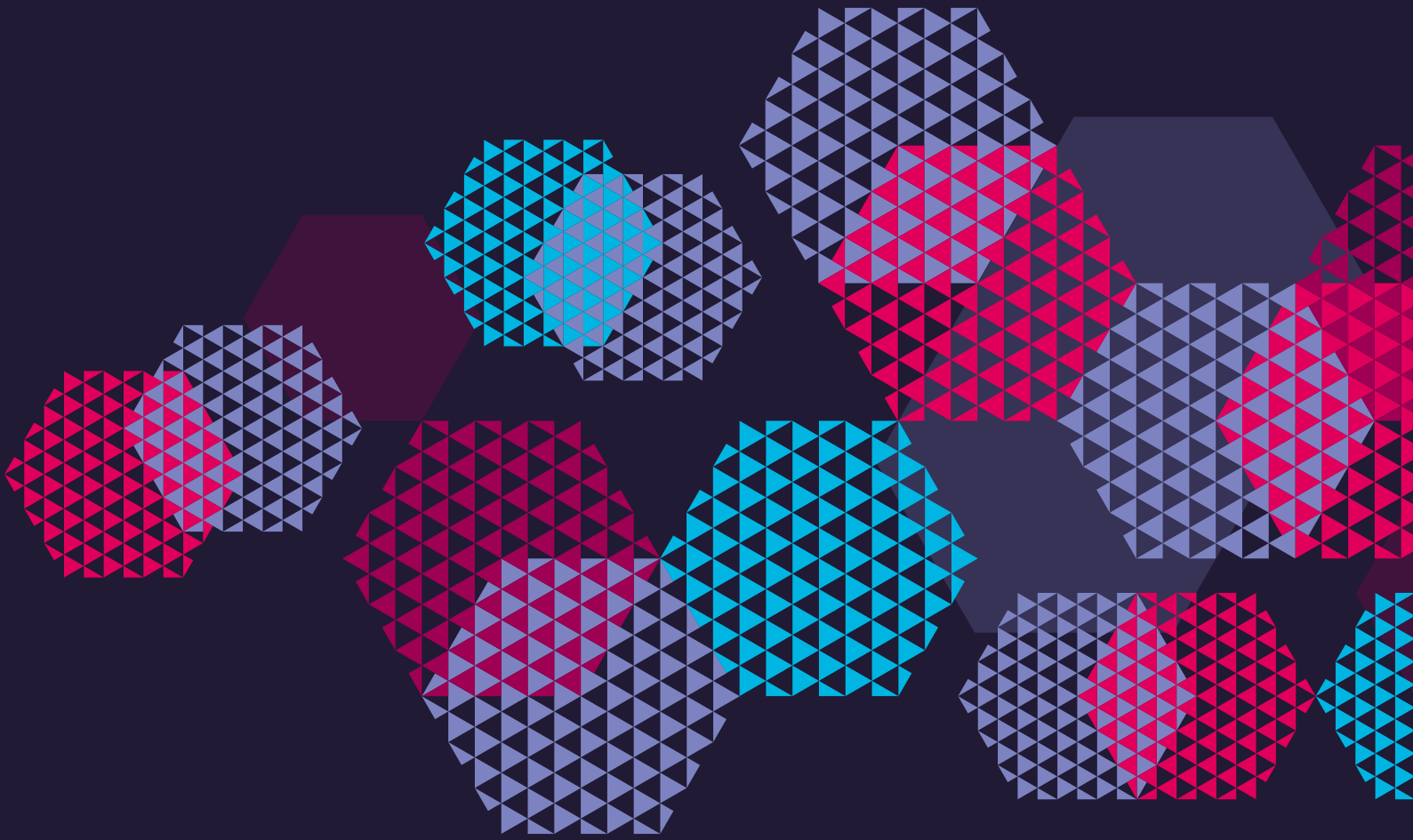




THE CHARTERED BODY FOR THE PROJECT PROFESSION



# SALARY AND MARKET TRENDS SURVEY 2020

APM RESEARCH REPORT

In partnership with

**YouGov**<sup>®</sup>



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## FOREWORD

Welcome to this year's Association for Project Management (APM) Salary and Market Trends Survey. This is the sixth edition of the survey, now established as the pre-eminent report on the state of the profession. As in previous years, we have surveyed those working in the project management profession to assess their confidence levels, their satisfaction with their work, and what forces they believe will shape the project management landscape in the coming years.

A lot has changed in the world since the survey was conducted in November 2019. However, the results provide a thought-provoking snapshot of the project profession prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, revealing how project professionals are prepared to embrace new ways of thinking and the growing number of younger people choosing project management as a viable and rewarding career.

With everything we've all seen and experienced in recent times we'd welcome your thoughts on what impact the global pandemic will have on the profession and your predictions for the future. Once you have explored the findings please join the discussion across APM's LinkedIn and Twitter channels to have your say.

We believe this survey once again offers a vital benchmark into the attitudes and trends that will shape project management for years to come. Only by learning from continual research will we be able to understand how our profession is evolving. Thank you to all of you for taking part.



**John McGlynn**  
APM chair

## ABOUT THE SURVEY

Our sixth annual Salary and Market Trends Survey aims to deliver a 360-degree view of the project management profession, the largest of its kind in the UK. It tracks salary levels, gauges the confidence of those working across a range of projects and sectors, and offers an insight into the trends that will shape the years to come. From technology to professional qualifications, skills development to job satisfaction, the survey serves as an annual health-check on our profession.

This year, for the first time, we are including a comprehensive snapshot of how the profession is doing on encouraging diversity and inclusion. We wanted to know if the growing popularity of project management among new entrants has lowered the barriers to entry for those who might feel it 'wasn't for them'. We believe this is a vital factor in the continuing success of project management, and that only by researching where we are now will we be able to shape where the profession is going.

The survey was conducted by global research company YouGov, which has set the bar for delivering insightful market research across a range of sectors. For this piece of research, YouGov undertook a quantitative survey of 4,572 project management professionals including both APM members and non-members. The research took place online between 4 and 29 November 2019.

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Please note, whole numbers are used for the report, therefore some figures may not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding. The median has been used as the average for salaries, unless stated.

## ABOUT APM

Association for Project Management is the only chartered body for the project profession, with over 30,000 individual members and more than 500 organisations participating in our Corporate Partnership Programme.

As an educational charity, we are committed to developing and promoting the value of project management in order to deliver improved project outcomes for the benefit of society.

There are a number of ways in which you can benefit from what we do, including membership, qualifications, chartered status, publications and events.

## SALARY

Project management is a rewarding career in many ways. For so long the forgotten profession, the work of the project professional has really come to the fore in recent years. With project work now firmly established as a driver for change and economic growth, the prospects for those managing projects day-to-day have rarely looked brighter.

The growing importance of the practising professional is reflected not only in an average salary just shy of £50,000 per year, but also in the sheer variety of roles working across multiple sectors in the UK and globally. Managing projects is a truly pan-sector discipline that offers exciting prospects – and rewards – for aspirant and experienced professionals alike.

# £47,500

Average salary of a project professional

# £27,500

Average starting salary for a project professional

## 'Business analyst' role

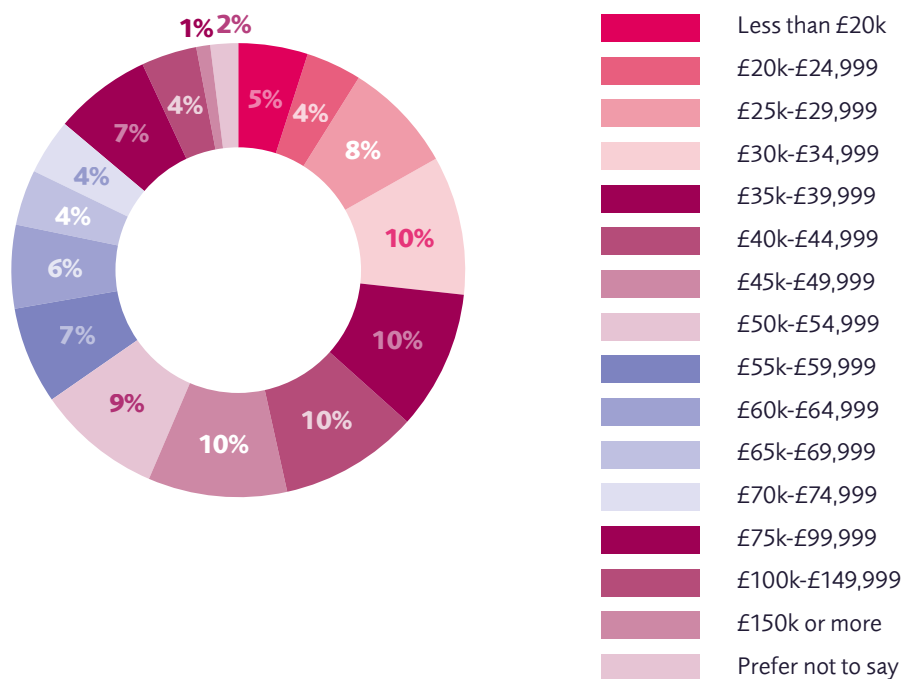
records the biggest jump in salary

# 51%

of people working in the energy sector earn over £50,000

## SALARY

## Average base salary of project professionals

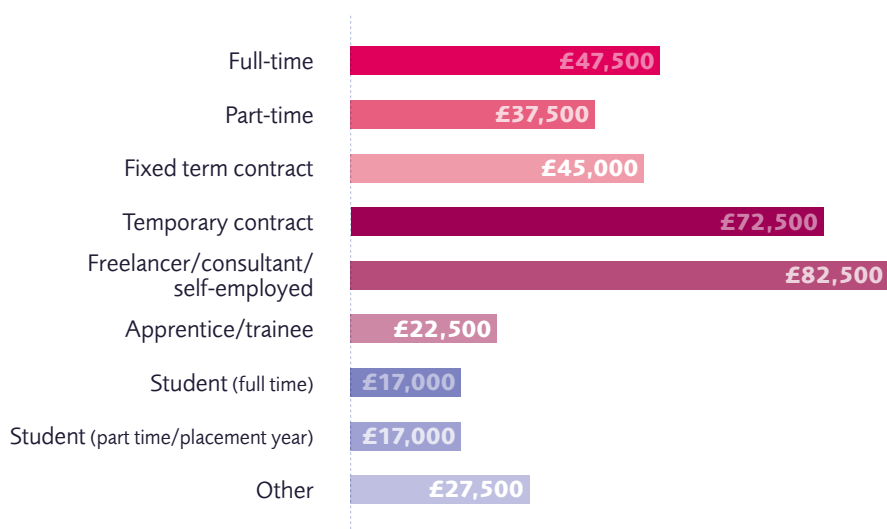


This year's headline figure shows no change in average salaries for the third consecutive year. The level remained at £47,500, but there were fewer earners in the higher bracket, with 41 per cent earning over £50,000, down from 45 per cent last year. And while 18 per cent were earning over £70,000 per year previously, only 16 per cent reported the same this time around.

The profession's average salary should be compared to the UK average full-time salary of £30,629 in 2019.<sup>1</sup>

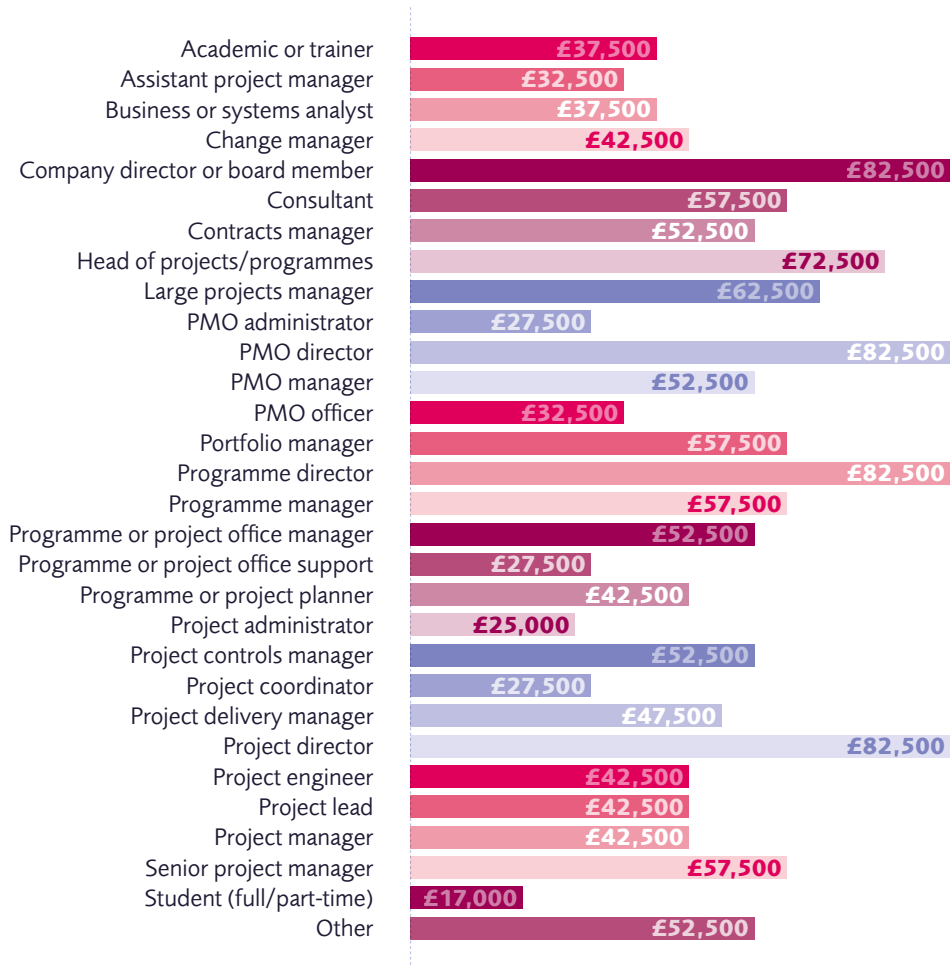
Flexible working arrangements are also increasingly lucrative, with over half (53 per cent) of both temporary contractors and freelancers earning more than £70,000.

## Average salary by working arrangement



<sup>1</sup> Office for National Statistics – Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2019

## Salary by role



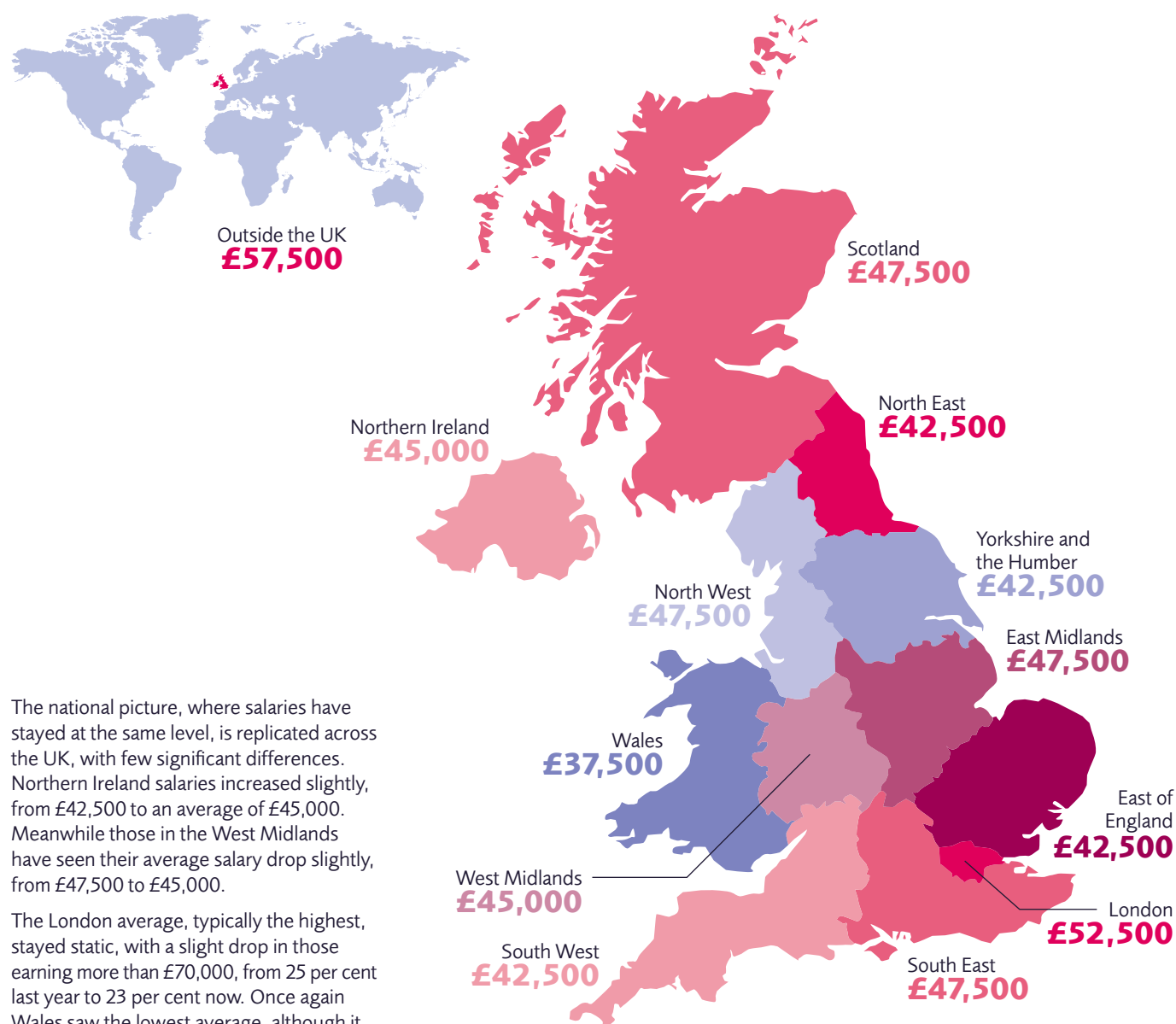
Average consultant salaries have dropped back to 2018 levels, following a spike to £62,500 last year, returning to £57,500. Project manager salaries have remained at £42,500. It's the same story for portfolio managers and programme managers, who have both seen salaries drop to £57,500.

At the highest level, project directors are earning well, with an average income of £82,500. With a number of new job titles now being reported on, only one role saw a positive change: business/systems analyst. The average salary for this role has now reached £37,500, reflecting the increasing importance of analytical skills and the rise of data as a key ingredient in delivering complex projects.



## SALARY

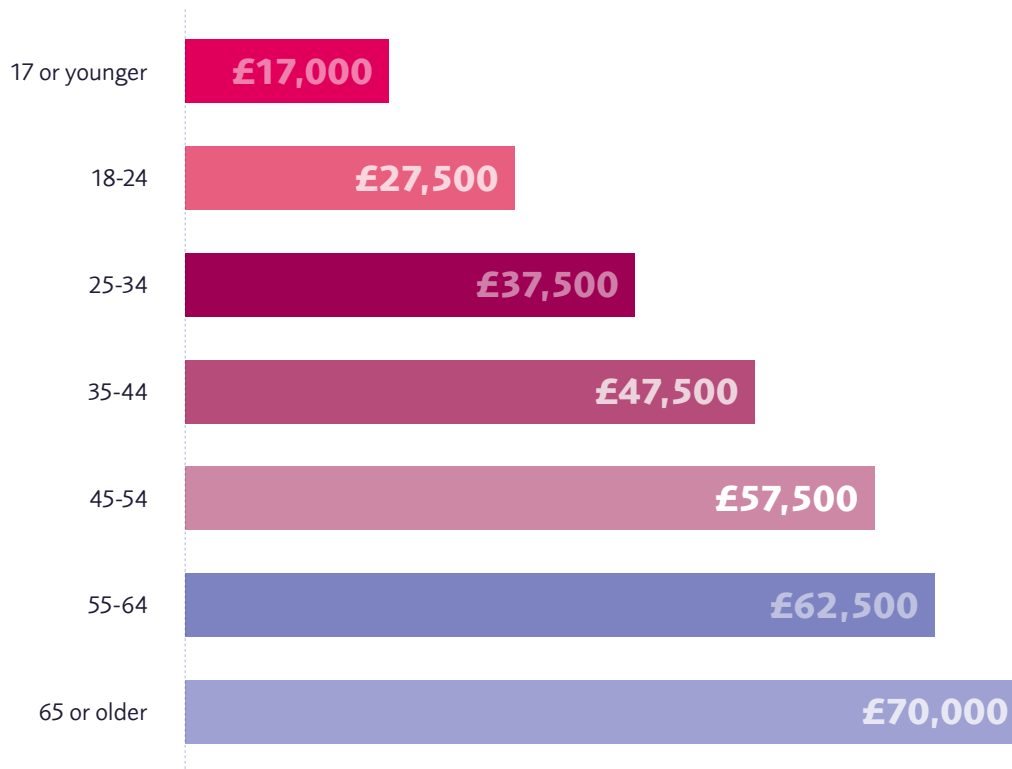
## Salary by region



The national picture, where salaries have stayed at the same level, is replicated across the UK, with few significant differences. Northern Ireland salaries increased slightly, from £42,500 to an average of £45,000. Meanwhile those in the West Midlands have seen their average salary drop slightly, from £47,500 to £45,000.

The London average, typically the highest, stayed static, with a slight drop in those earning more than £70,000, from 25 per cent last year to 23 per cent now. Once again Wales saw the lowest average, although it relinquished its status as the region with the highest proportion of those earning below £35,000. That is now held by Yorkshire and the Humber, with 33 per cent.

## Salary by age



The starting salary for those entering the world of project management stayed static, with 18-to-24-year-olds earning £27,500 on average. The proportion of higher-earning younger professionals dropped slightly, with 40 per cent earning between £25,000 and £34,999, down from 43 per cent last year.

However, the mean average starting salary for project professionals is £26,256. That compares favourably with a number of other sectors, including accounting (£25,274) and finance (£25,873). Indeed, only consultancy and engineering graduates earn more (£26,334 and £27,360 respectively).<sup>2</sup>

For more senior project professionals, the picture is very much as you were, with no significant movement across any segment.

<sup>2</sup> High Fliers report – The Graduate Market in 2019

## SALARY

## Salary by gender

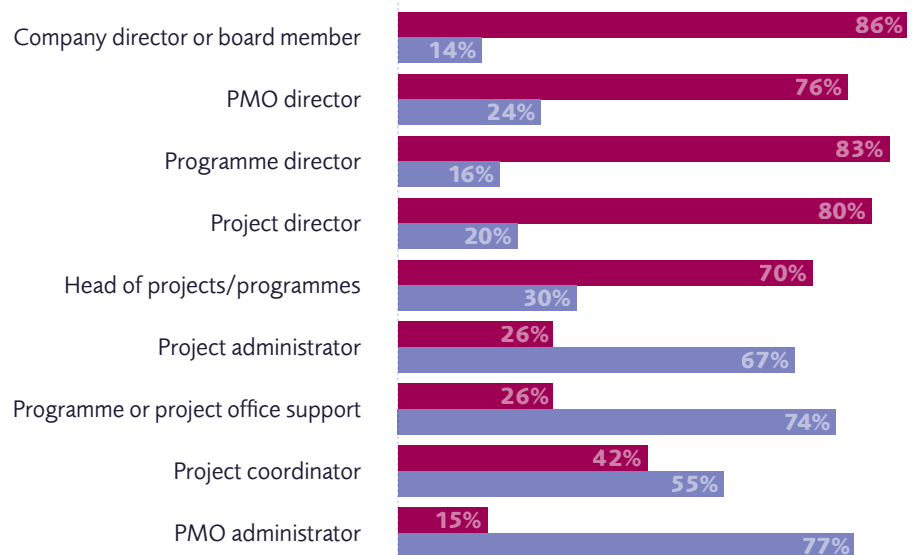
Our research shows that the average salary for men is £52,500, while for women it is £37,500 – a gap that has widened from 24 per cent last year to 40 per cent currently. That finding is concerning, but there are also signs that the profession is beginning to address the structural inequalities that continue to bother many of the professional sectors in the UK. The increase in the proportion of women entering the profession at junior level, as well as their greater participation rates in the survey, may also be a factor.

The drivers underlying this trend are complex, with no one single factor responsible. There are, however, some details that may go some way to explaining the gap. While it is encouraging to see so many new entrants to the profession – the number of those with five years or less experience has risen from 38 per cent to 44 per cent since last year. The increase is largely driven by women, many of whom will be initially occupying more junior roles in lower salary brackets. Indeed, the proportion of female respondents with five years or less experience has increased by 23 per cent, compared to a three per cent rise for men. That includes the apprenticeship intake as well, with women accounting for over half of that cohort.

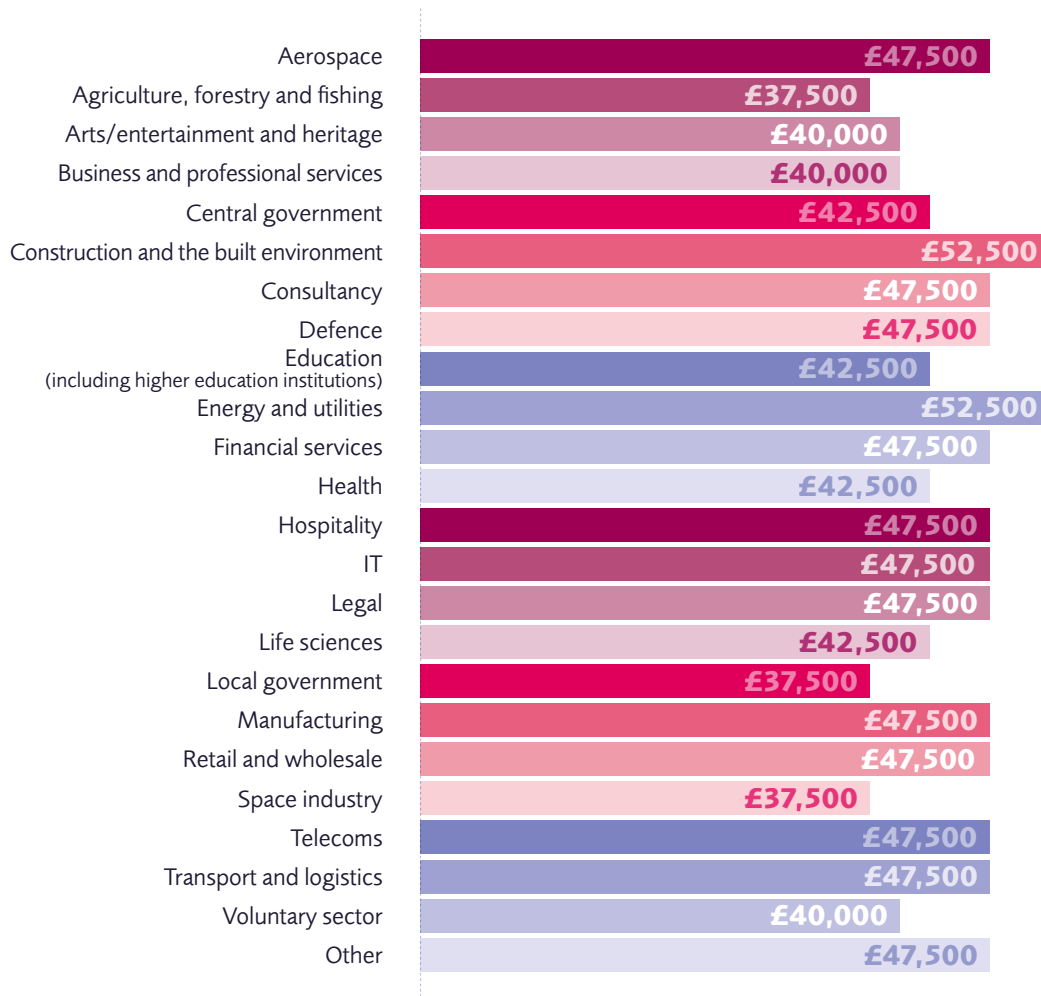
This gender split is also reflected further up the corporate ladder, with a higher proportion of men in senior roles. The research shows the highest-paid director roles (c.£82,500) are overwhelmingly held by men, typically in a four-to-one split with women. That is almost a mirror image of the lower-paid roles (c.£27,500), which are dominated by women. We believe this demographic split may be partially responsible for the existing gender gap.



## Gender split in selected job roles



## Salary by sector



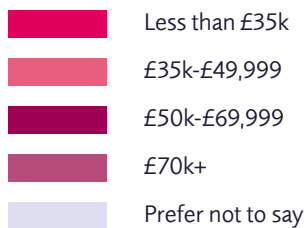
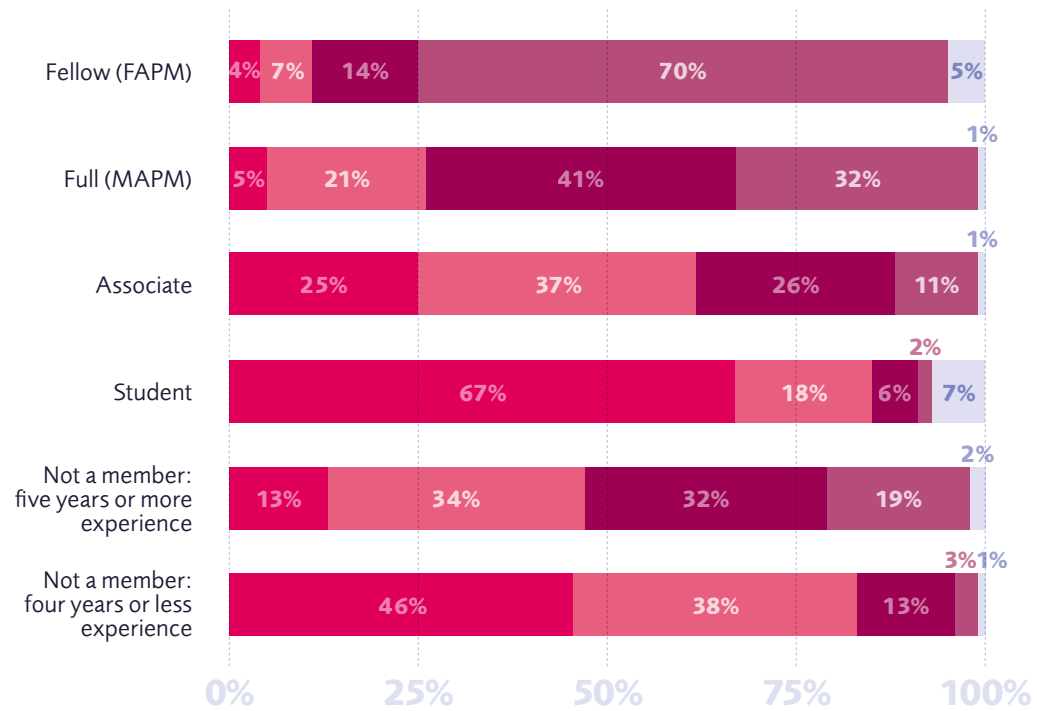
There is a mixed picture across the sectors, with some seeing sharp increases and others serious falls. The biggest gains were made by those sectors with traditionally lower pay levels, increasing from an average of £37,500 to £47,500 in hospitality and £32,500 to £37,500 in agriculture. It should be noted here that these swings may be attributable to the smaller sample sizes in these sectors.

Meanwhile some of the traditional higher-earning sectors saw significant decreases in average salaries. Last year the legal and telecoms sectors offered the highest average salaries at £57,500. This year that had dropped to £47,500, a decline that perhaps suggests last year was an outlier for activity and confidence in those sectors. Similarly, business and professional services also saw a significant drop in average salaries.

The energy sector has the greatest proportion of high earners, with just over half (51 per cent) earning over £50,000.

## SALARY

## Impact of APM membership



Being a member of APM clearly has its benefits: the average salary for members sits at £47,500, compared with £42,500 for those who haven't joined.

Full membership does have an impact for those with five years or more experience. A comparison of the average salary of Full members with those project professionals without membership, but with the same level of experience, shows an average salary figure of £62,500 compared with £52,500 for non-members. Fifty-one per cent of those non-members with five years' experience earn over £50,000, compared with 73 per cent of Full members of APM.

## WORKING LIFE AND JOB SATISFACTION

Our research paints a picture of a profession full of confidence. That confidence is centred mainly on the prospects for the profession: optimism around the pipeline of projects, pay levels and the jobs market is healthy and moving in the right direction.

There are differences by region, age and sector as we would expect. But overall the picture is hugely positive, as employers continue to prioritise the better use of technology, more flexibility in the workplace and competitive pay and benefits to attract and retain the best and brightest.

**82%**

claimed to be satisfied  
in their current role

**One in three**  
are considering a move  
in the next year

**72%**

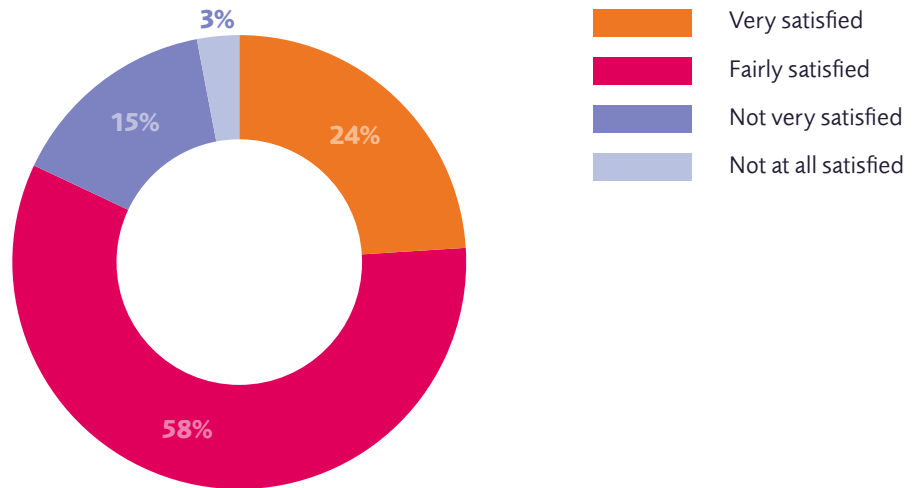
anticipating a pay increase  
in the next year

**51%**

reported that their employer  
is taking on new staff

## WORKING LIFE AND JOB SATISFACTION

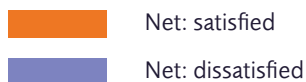
### Job satisfaction



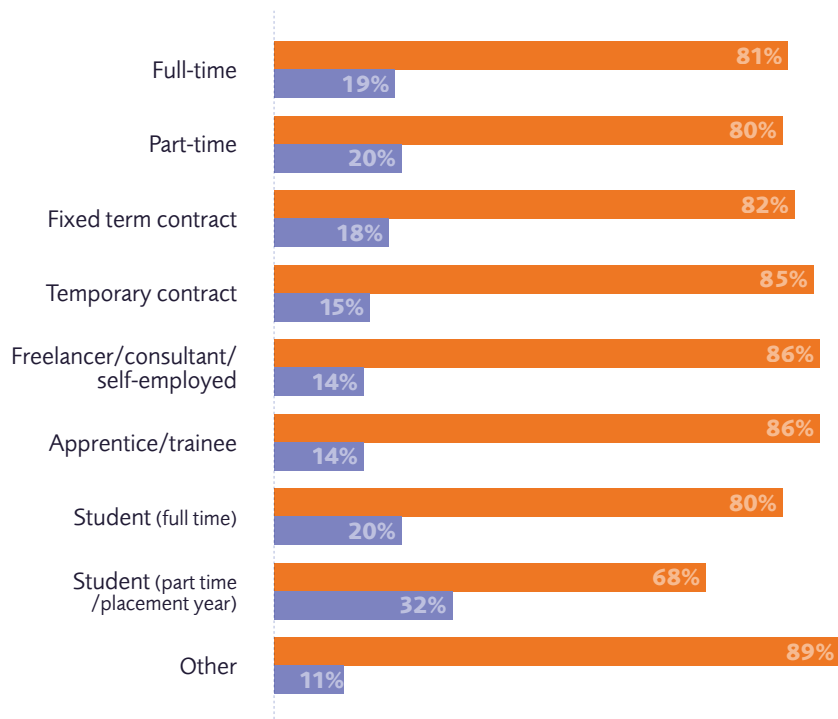
Job satisfaction remains high among project professionals, with 82 per cent of those surveyed satisfied with their role, up from 81 per cent last year.

As is consistent with last year's salary survey, there is a correlation between salaries and job fulfilment – 88 per cent of those earning an annual salary of £70,000 or more say they are satisfied, compared to 80 per cent of those earning between £35,000 and £49,999.

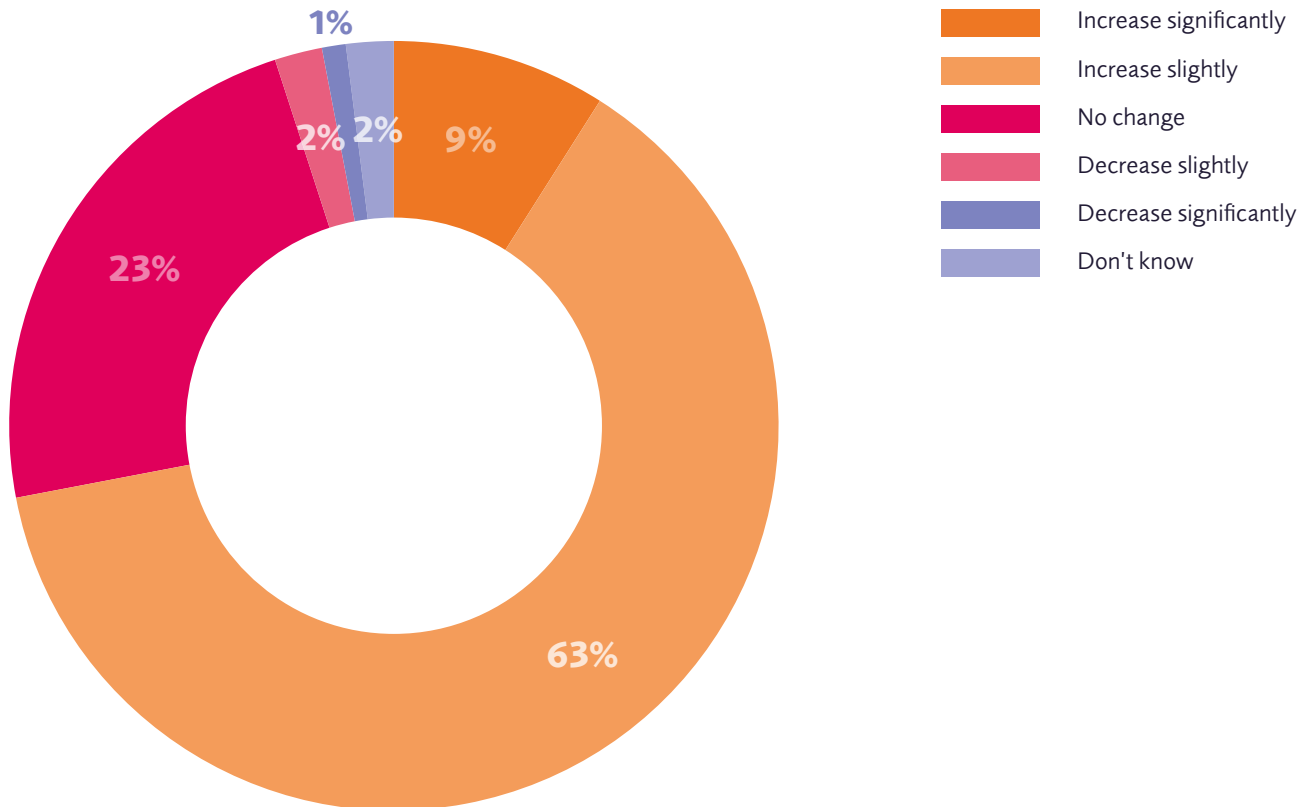
Flexibility also matters: once again freelancers, consultants and the self-employed are more likely to be satisfied with their role. Eighty-six per cent of this group are satisfied, compared with 81 per cent of those in full-time employment. Job satisfaction is higher among the young, with 88 per cent of 18-to-24-year-olds satisfied, compared to 81 per cent of 35-to-54-year-olds.



### Job satisfaction by working arrangement



## Pay and benefits package



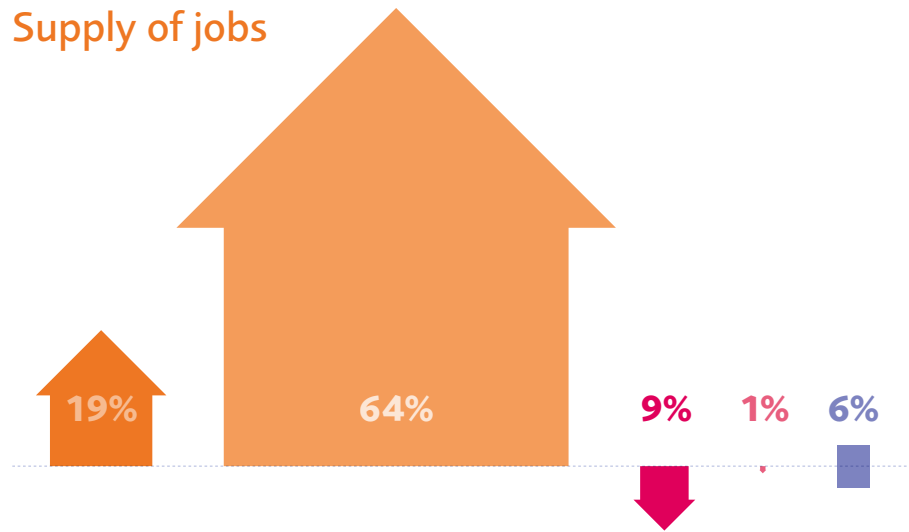
It is very encouraging that for most project professionals the job is a fulfilling one. And that sense of satisfaction is also affecting the levels of confidence among those working in the sector. That is especially pronounced in numbers expecting their pay and benefits package to improve in the near term. Seventy-two per cent of respondents said they expect to see an increase in the next 12 months. That compares favourably to the 66 per cent who said the same two years ago.

Those working full-time (74 per cent) are generally more optimistic about their compensation in the coming year than those on temporary or interim contracts, while those in the legal sector (92 per cent), consultancy (81 per cent) and aerospace (79 per cent) are the most optimistic.



## WORKING LIFE AND JOB SATISFACTION

### Supply of jobs

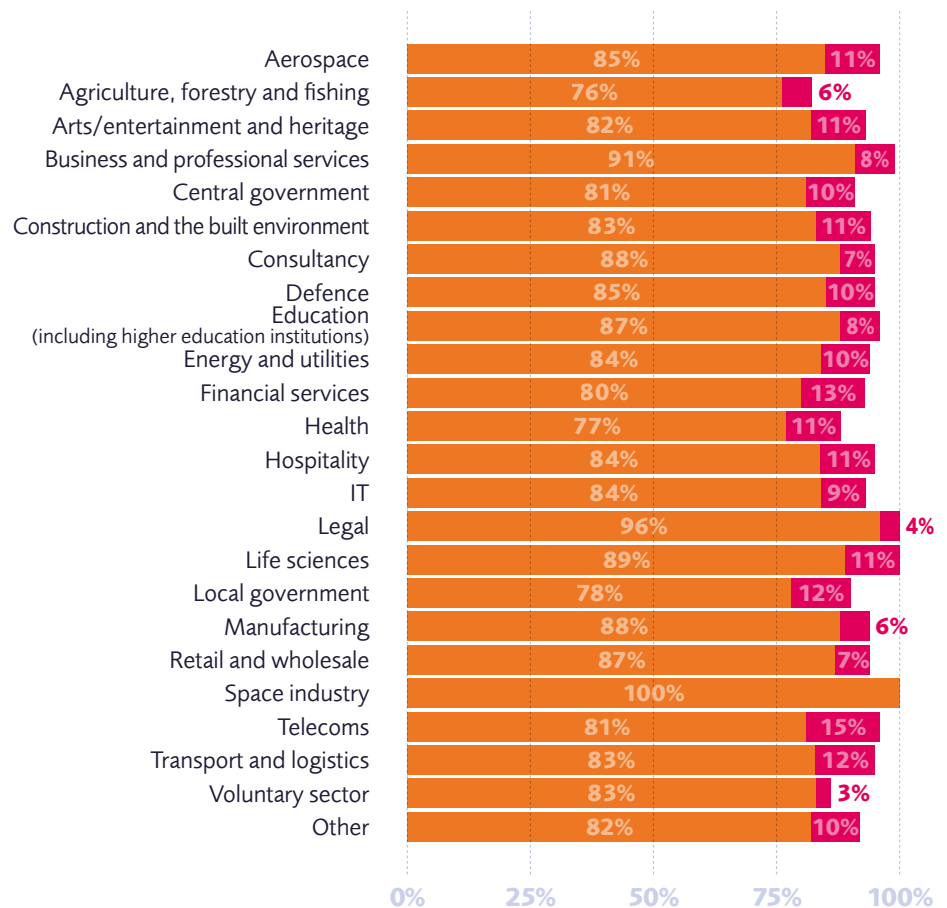


### Supply of jobs by sector

Project management has always been a dynamic profession, with movement of professionals between roles, sectors and regions. And it's clear that a growing number of those surveyed feel confident that the prospects for the job market will improve in the coming year.

In fact, 83 per cent of project professionals pronounced themselves optimistic about the supply of jobs. When compared to last year's figure of 77 per cent, this is an interesting result: increased confidence in the jobs market often translates into more movement between roles.

Optimism does split into certain sectoral patterns: respondents from health (77 per cent), agriculture (76 per cent) and local government (78 per cent) are among the least positive on the state of the jobs market, with optimism levels highest in business services, legal and the space industry.



## WORKING LIFE AND JOB SATISFACTION

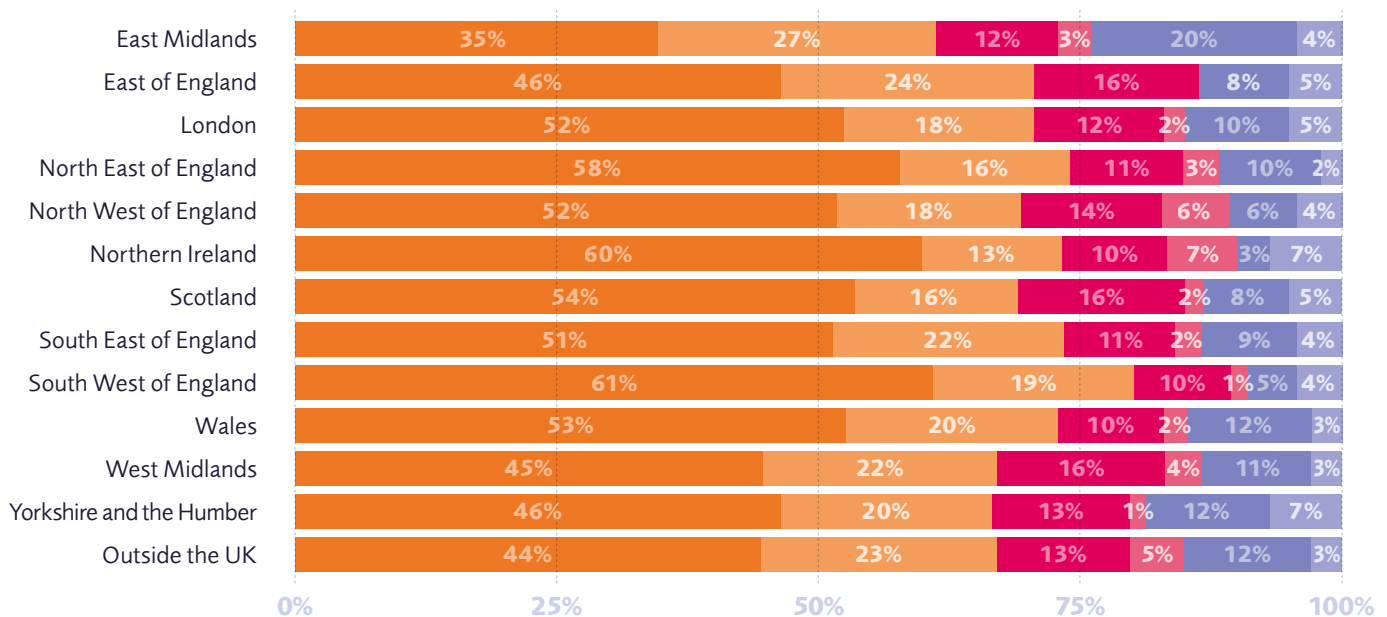
### Organisational growth



With 58 per cent of respondents feeling positive about the economic prospects for their employer (see page 22), project professionals illustrate that optimism remains high. For the third year running, research shows organisations are hiring and growing as the economy improves, with over half (51 per cent) saying their organisation is looking to add headcount, an encouraging increase on the 49 per cent who reported it last year. Meanwhile only nine per cent say their organisation is anticipating a downturn and redundancies, compared with 11 per cent last year.

There are some geographical differences: South West of England (61 per cent), Northern Ireland (60 per cent), North East of England (58 per cent) and Scotland (54 per cent) are anticipating growth the most. However, optimism levels are at their lowest among those employed in the East Midlands (35 per cent), outside of the UK (44 per cent) and West Midlands (45 per cent). It is also worth noting that APM members (52 per cent) report higher levels of optimism than non-members.

### Organisational growth by region



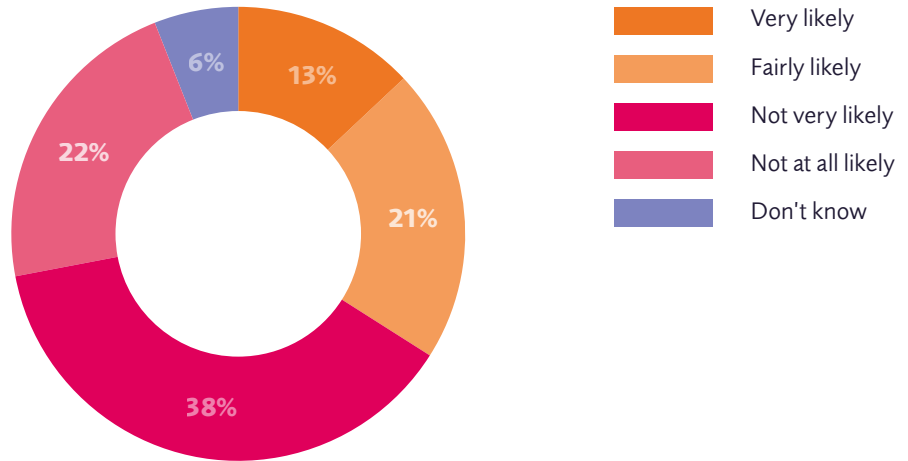
## WORKING LIFE AND JOB SATISFACTION

### Change of employer

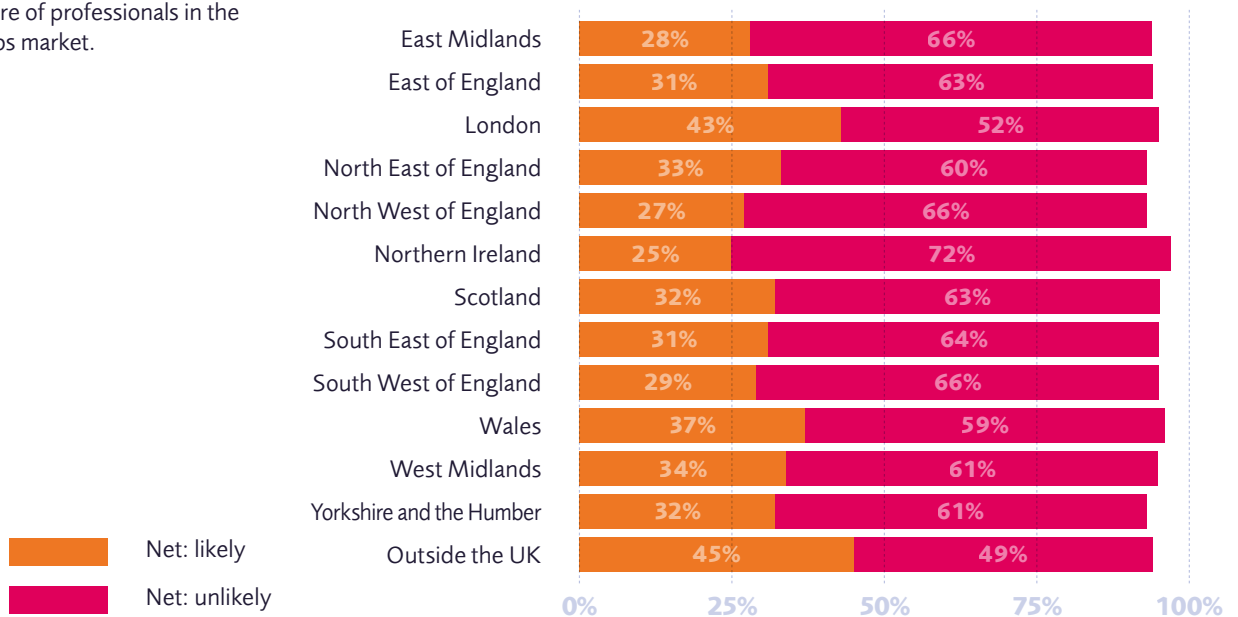
Confidence in the economy in general, and the profession in particular, is typically a good condition for a more dynamic job market, as professionals tend to transfer their valuable skills between employers keen to pay higher salaries.

However, the research shows the willingness to move jobs hasn't changed from the previous year, with around a third of those surveyed (34 per cent) saying that they are likely to change employer in the next 12 months, whereas three-fifths (60 per cent) are unlikely to do so. Those aged 45-to-54-years-old are the least likely to change jobs, suggesting that this age group has the least to gain from changing employers.

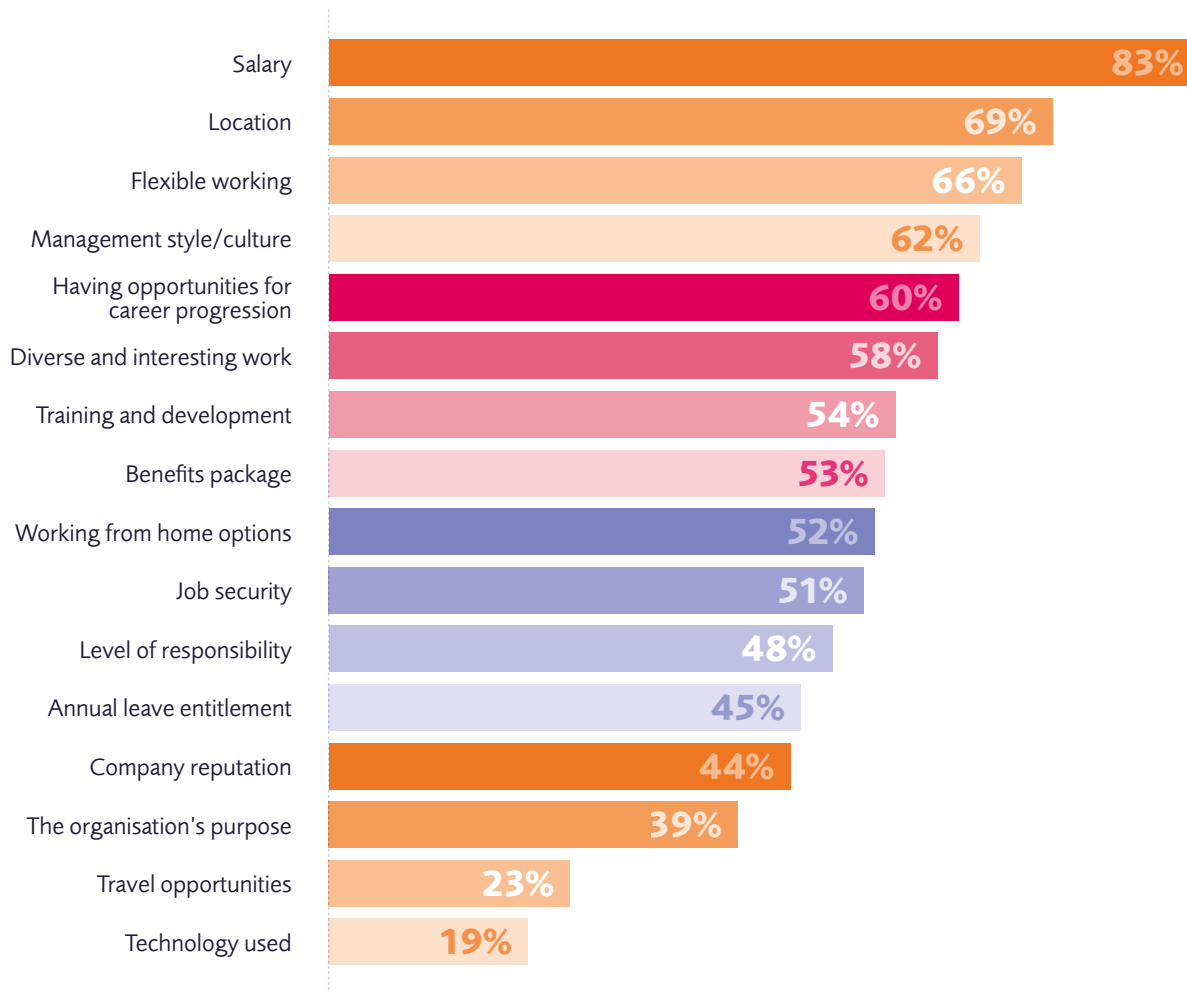
London represents the most dynamic UK job market. Forty-three per cent of those currently working in the capital say they are likely to consider a move in the coming year, which is in contrast to the rest of the UK. Outside the UK, there is a near even split between those thinking of looking for a new role (45 per cent) and those who are not (49 per cent), perhaps reflecting the mobile nature of professionals in the international jobs market.



### Change of employer by region



## Job hunting criteria



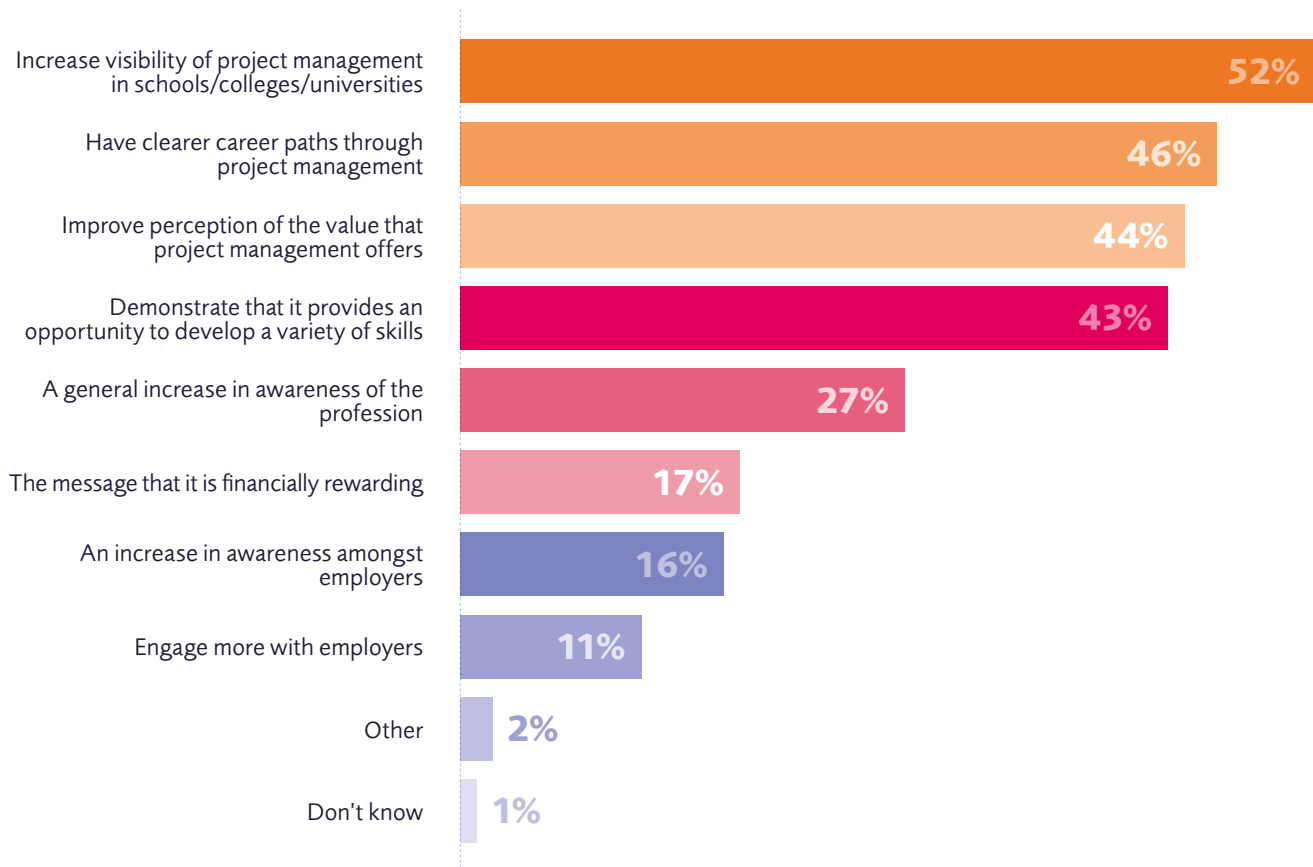
The question of pay is likely to feature highly on the list of answers given by job seekers. So, it is hardly surprising that salary is important to 83 per cent of project professionals looking for a new role. However, a number of other trends appear to be emerging.

For example, younger people value the opportunity to progress as much as salary. Eighty-two per cent of new entrants to the profession (those aged between 18 and 24) say they focus on career prospects ahead of location (67 per cent), which is only just behind salary (87 per cent).

In a generational shift that is reflected in other professions, those under 45 years of age are more likely to focus on flexible working, with over two-thirds of 35-to-44-year-olds selecting it as an important criterion. For employers there is now a growing need to offer careers that allow professionals to meet work, family and other commitments – the significance of flexible working as a driver of recruitment and retention is clearly increasing.

## WORKING LIFE AND JOB SATISFACTION

### Encouraging talent into the profession

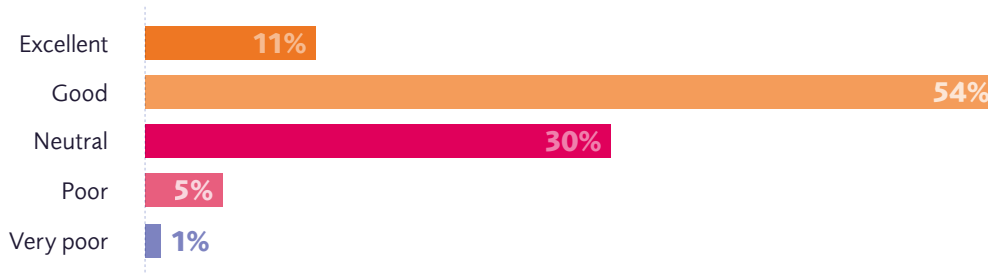


The issue of attracting talent into the profession generated a varied response. For most, getting the attention of potential recruits early was important, as more than half (52 per cent) said the key lies in improving the visibility of the profession in schools and universities.

It seems that demonstrating a project's value has become a less important metric, with only 44 per cent citing it as an effective recruiting tool, down from 50 per cent last year. It may be that this reflects the growing interest in purpose as a corporate goal, going above and beyond simple economic value.

## Economic confidence

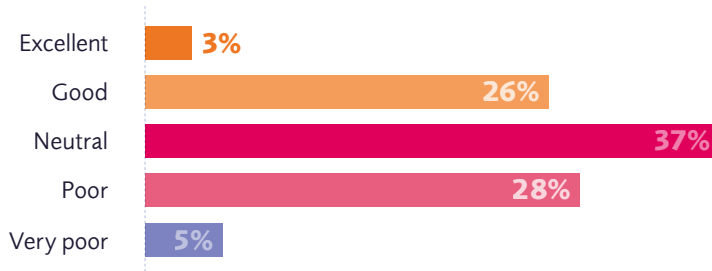
### Individual



### Organisation



### Economy as a whole



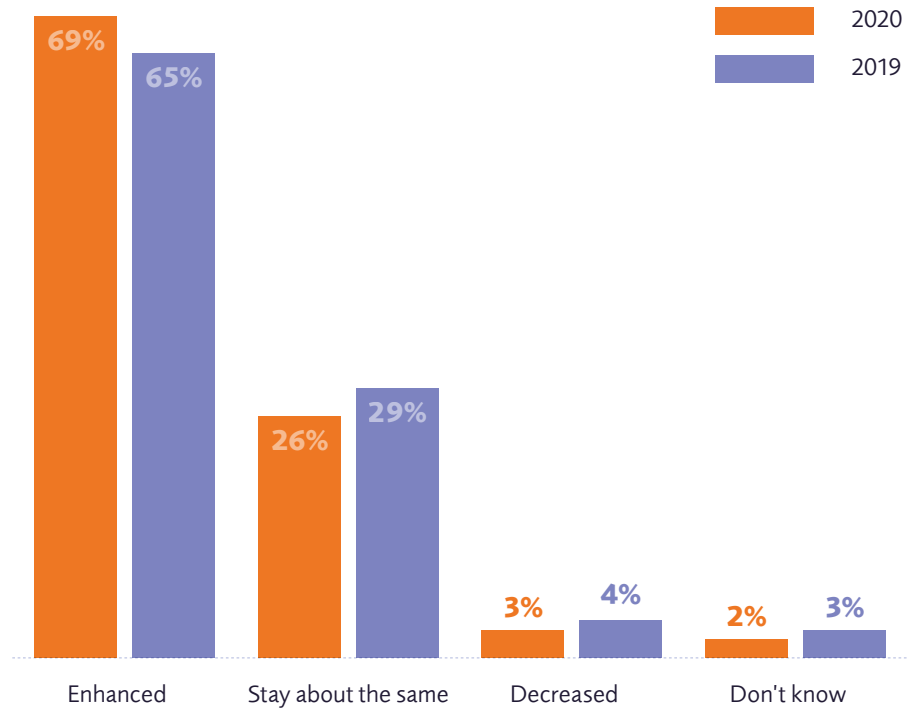
Project professionals are increasingly confident about their own career prospects. Sixty-five per cent now say they rated the economic prospects for themselves over the next 12 months as excellent or good, compared to 56 per cent who said the same last year.

That optimism is shared across all age groups, with those at the younger end of the scale especially positive (81 per cent net positive among 18-to-24-year-olds). And that theme continues into the way respondents feel about their organisations, with 58 per cent confident in their company's prospects, up from 47 per cent the previous year. Regional variations do apply: Northern Ireland has the least optimistic workforce, with only 50 per cent believing their organisation will thrive in the short term. Project professionals working for organisations outside the UK are the most positive (67 per cent).

The profession's view of the wider economic picture remains less rosy, with just 29 per cent declaring themselves optimistic for the coming year. While this is up from 23 per cent last year, many project professionals believe that, despite economic uncertainty, their own career prospects remain healthy.

## WORKING LIFE AND JOB SATISFACTION

## Future of the profession



The project profession is in competition for talent, resources and attention. But for those working in it, the belief that the profession will be enhanced in the next five years continues to strengthen. With stronger economic optimism and greater belief in the pipeline of work, 69 per cent say the profession is most likely to be enhanced over the next five years, up from 65 per cent the previous year, with a net increase on the positive figure of five percentage points to 66 per cent.

Part-time professionals are least optimistic, however, with 61 per cent believing the profession will be enhanced. Whereas those in the space industry (80 per cent), legal (79 per cent) and business and professional services (77 per cent) are among those who feel most optimistic about the profession's future health.

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The project profession, like many other others, faces a challenge to increase the diversity of representation at all levels. There are encouraging signs though. Our survey reveals that over three-quarters of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) respondents are feeling positive about the future, while over a fifth of young professionals coming into the profession are from a BAME background.

But there is still work to do. Our research also reveals a section of the profession feel excluded and concerned that their background will serve as a hindrance to career progression. Some feel employers need to do more, not only to attract a more diverse cohort, but also to open doors to better career progression for all.

**76%**

of BAME respondents feel positive about the future of the profession

**22%**

of the youngest professionals are from a BAME background

**28%**

of BAME project professionals believed their ethnicity has had a negative impact on their professional development

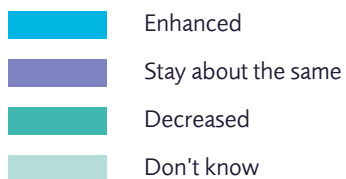
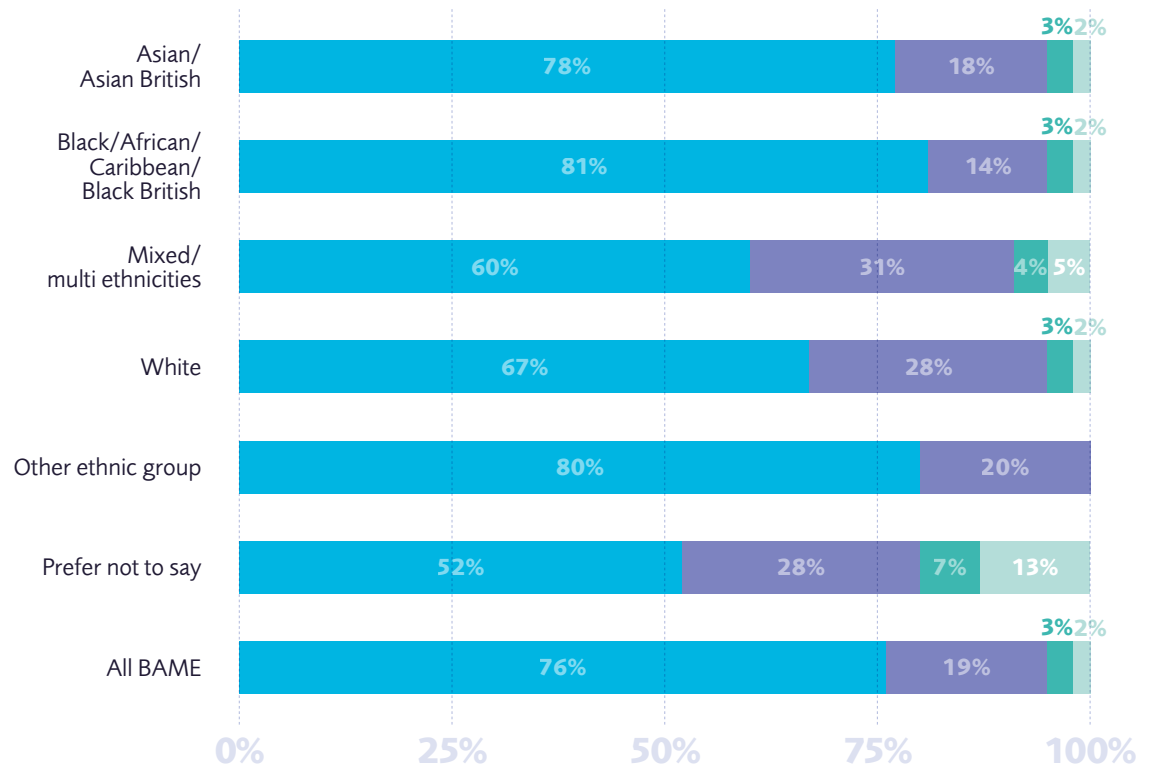
**35%**

of BAME respondents felt diversity-related networks will help make the profession more diverse and inclusive



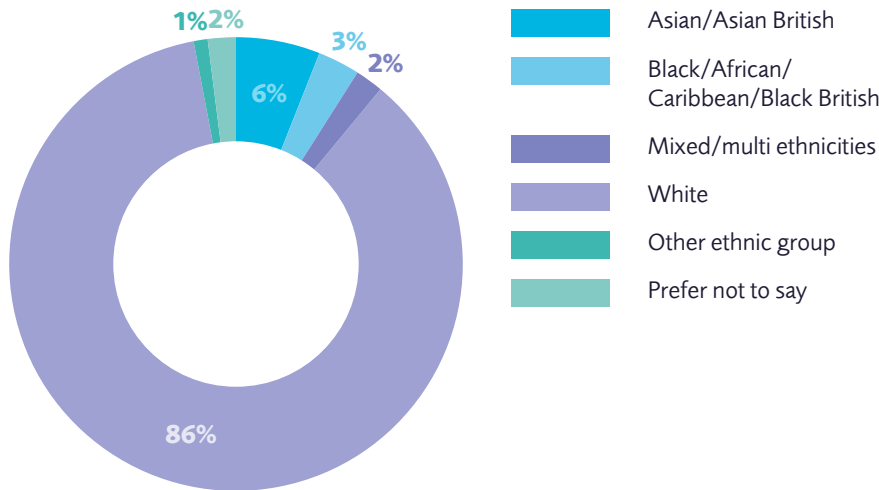
## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

## Positivity about the future



Seventy-six per cent of BAME respondents feel positive about the prospects for the profession, compared to 67 per cent of white respondents. The most optimistic group were Black/African/Caribbean/Black British respondents where 81 per cent believe the profession will be enhanced over the next five years. Asked how individual project professionals view their own prospects, white respondents (82 per cent) are slightly more likely to be satisfied with their own role than their BAME counterparts (78 per cent).

## Makeup of the profession by ethnicity



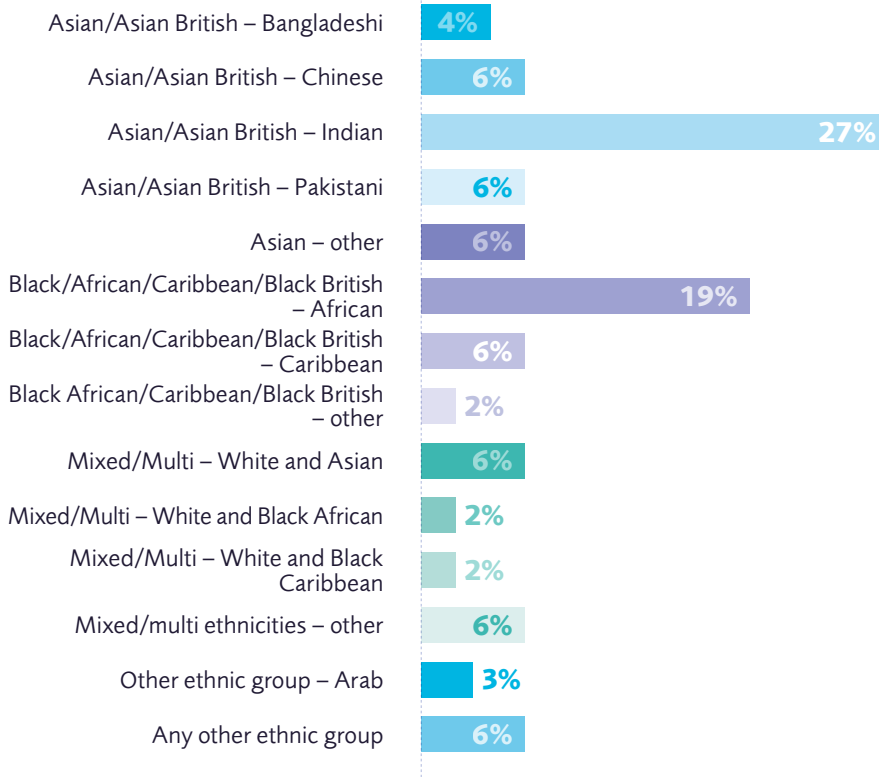
The survey revealed that the profession broadly aligns with the UK's overall ethnic makeup. Eighty-six per cent of project professionals are white – reflecting the broader national picture – with 12 per cent identifying as BAME. Of that group, Asian/Asian British – Indian respondents were the most numerous at 27 per cent of the BAME total, followed by Black/African/Caribbean/Black British – African (19 per cent).

And as further evidence that the profession's mix is changing, almost one in three project professionals from a BAME background (31 per cent) have joined the profession in the last two years, versus 19 per cent of their white counterparts.

Project management's BAME representation of 12 per cent compares well to other professions. According to official industry bodies, just under 13 per cent of practising barristers in 2018 were from BAME backgrounds; six per cent of partners from the top 10 accounting firms come from the BAME community; and staff from the Asian, Black, Chinese, Mixed and Other ethnic groups made up seven per cent of people in the 'very senior manager' grade in the NHS, and 12.5 per cent in senior grades.

Nearly half of the profession's BAME cohort are young: 15 per cent are aged 18 to 24, and 32 per cent are 25-to-34-years-old (compared with 16 per cent aged between 45 and 54).

## BAME respondents



## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

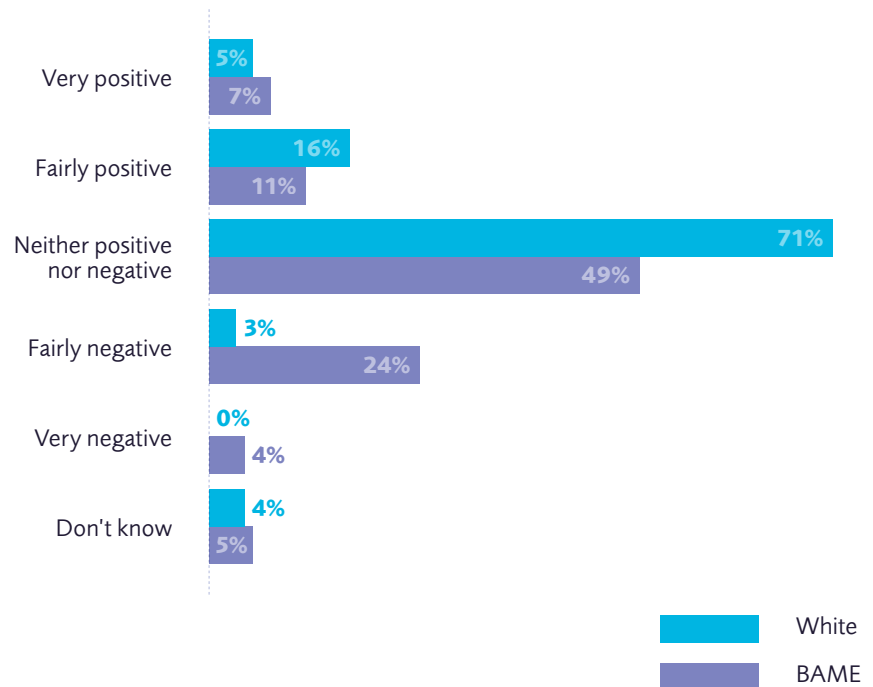
### Impact of ethnicity on career development

The way in which some project professionals of a BAME background perceive their own prospects for advancement makes for sobering reading. Most concerning is the fact that 28 per cent of BAME project professionals believe that their ethnicity has had a negative impact on their professional development (compared with 18 per cent who believe it has had a positive impact).

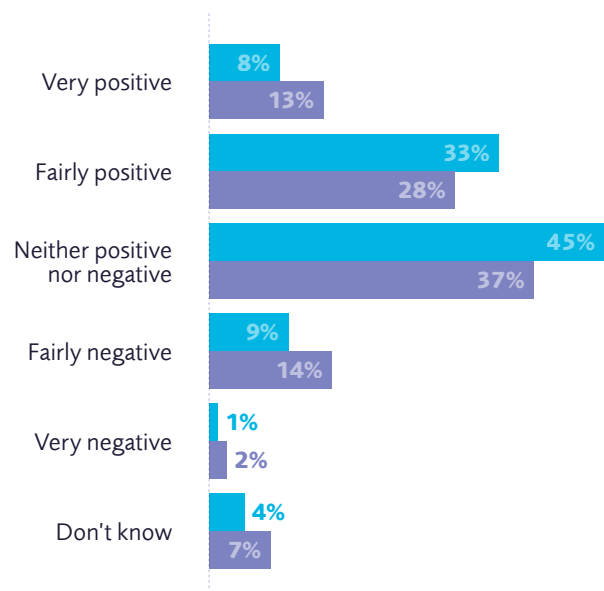
Within the BAME cohort, Black/African/Caribbean/Black British respondents feel the most frustrated: they were the group most likely to say that their ethnicity has had a negative impact on their professional development (39 per cent). And it's a concern to others: 26 per cent of British Asians felt the same way.

The results show a discrepancy on income. The average salary for a white respondent is £47,500, while BAME respondents receive an average salary of £42,500. This may be a contributing factor as to why half of BAME respondents are considering a job change in the next 12 months, compared with 31 per cent of their white counterparts.

Forty-two per cent of respondents believe that their social background has had a positive impact on their professional development, although a similar number believe it has had neither a positive nor negative effect (43 per cent). There is a shift in confidence towards those in the younger age brackets, with almost half (49 per cent) of those aged between 25 and 34 feeling the positive effects of their social background, compared with just 33 per cent of those aged between 55 and 64, which suggests that, for some people from less privileged backgrounds, the barriers are beginning to dissipate.



### Impact of social background on career development



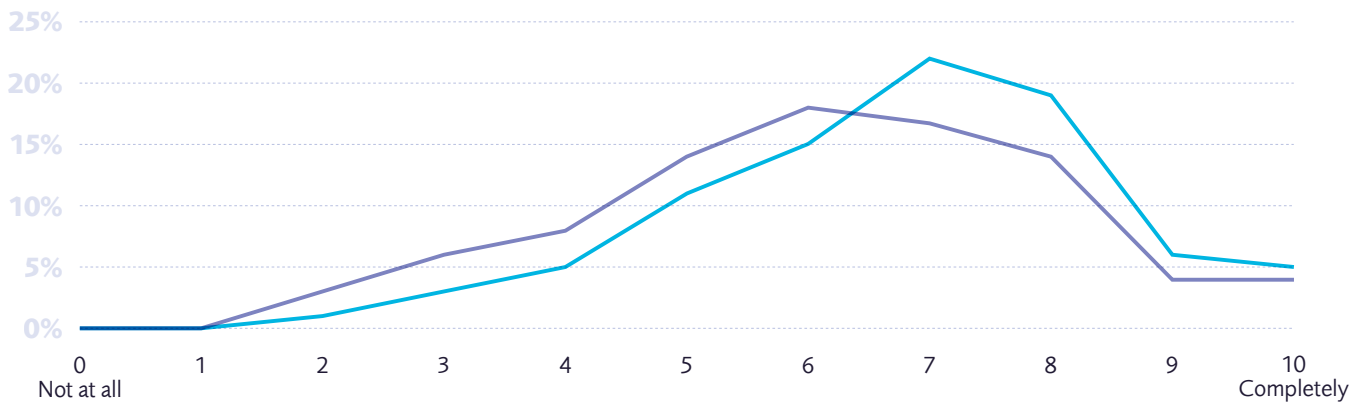
## How diverse and inclusive is the profession?



### Diverse



### Inclusive



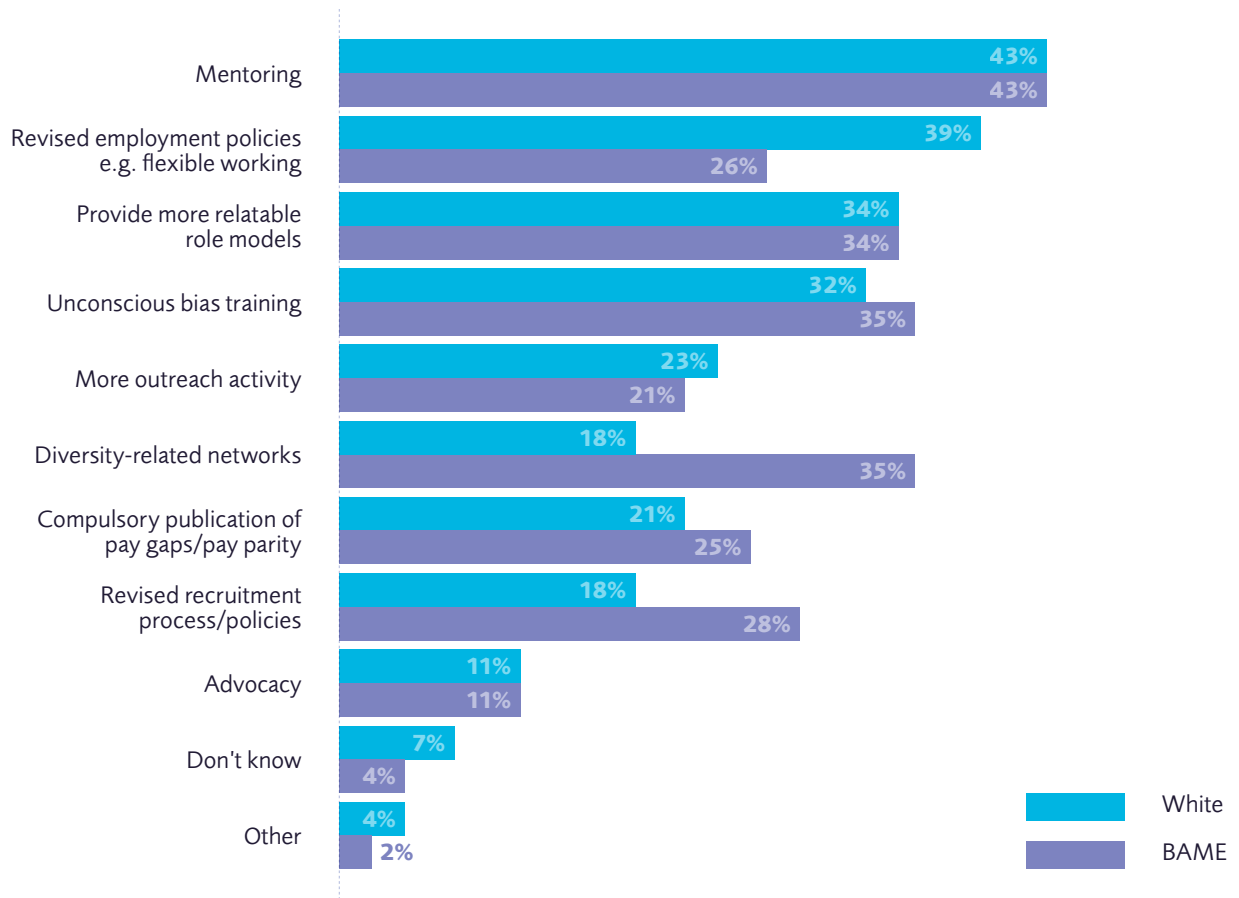
When asked how diverse the profession is, BAME viewpoints contrast with those of their white counterparts. On a scale where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'completely', 38 per cent of BAME professionals gave a score between 7 and 10. However, that should be compared with 47 per cent of white professionals.

As a whole respondents felt the profession was more inclusive, but a difference of opinion still exists with 39 per cent of BAME respondents giving a score between 7 and 10, compared to over half (52 per cent) of their white peers.

So while a number of those from a BAME background scored the profession favourably on its diversity and inclusiveness, clearly many respondents feel the profession needs to address some of the perceived embedded biases.

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

### Ways to make the profession more diverse and inclusive



The survey data suggests a difference of opinion on the ways to make the profession more diverse and inclusive. Tackling this understanding gap is vital to ensure effective measures are taken in driving diversity and inclusion. While a significant proportion of BAME and white respondents agree that mentoring and the provision of relatable role models would be useful, there is a clear distinction on the need for revised recruitment policies.

Mentoring – both classic and reverse – is the most widely suggested solution to improving diversity and inclusion, with 43 per cent of both white and BAME respondents saying the use of an advice and guidance programme can effect real change. However, beyond that the splits appear: 28 per cent of BAME respondents feel employers should consider changing their recruitment practices, while only 18 per cent of white respondents see that as a solution. Whereas 39 per cent of white respondents favoured a revision to employment policies, 26 per cent of BAME professionals felt this was important.

Significantly, a big discrepancy centres around the importance of diversity-related networks, with a growing number (35 per cent) of BAME respondents suggesting their use within organisations, with only 18 per cent of their white colleagues agreeing.

## Taking a lead

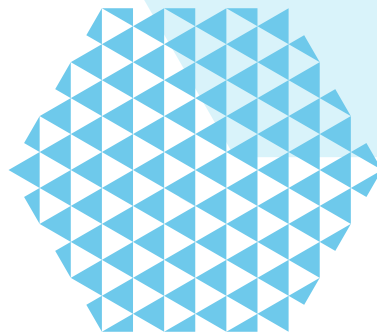
We held a series of focus groups across the UK, bringing BAME professionals to the table to get a better sense of what their challenges are. By doing that we are able to better understand BAME viewpoints but also educate our employers on ways in which they can support the diversity agenda. We have also set up a LinkedIn group where those interested in BAME issues can network. And we have encouraged wider participation in networks like this – we cannot find the solution unless we include everyone.

That is an ongoing process, with continual feedback. And we play a vital role as the honest broker in this debate, bringing different sectors, APM members, government and non-governmental organisations (NGO) into the debate and facilitating honest conversation and measuring progress. We are also committed to highlighting the many examples of good practice where they exist.

These findings can make for uncomfortable reading. But gathering this insight is vital in driving change. The levels of optimism around other aspects of the profession – the pipeline of work, the supply of good jobs, the impact well-run projects can have on society – must not obscure the work necessary to attract as diverse a range of talent into the profession as we can.

But this is a sensitive topic. It touches on some uncomfortable areas: implicit (and explicit) bias; structural barriers to equality and diversity; resistance to change and the frustrations felt by those from different ethnic backgrounds looking to forge a career in project management. To tackle this we need the engagement of everyone involved. Surveys like this and others help: only by gathering better data on the issue can we bring about change. But everyone involved in the profession needs to work together to bring about real and sustained changes in culture and practices. Only by doing that will we see a diverse workforce valued for its difference rather than aiming to 'fit in'. So getting involved in the conversation is vital to allow us to monitor and benchmark progress as it happens.

The findings in this year's survey play a crucial role in unearthing a whole host of unknowns from those working at the sharp end. Without gathering this data we would be blind to the challenges facing those from different backgrounds, be that ethnic, social or any other type of protected characteristic.



## FUTURE TRENDS

As well as trends on salary and market conditions, the survey offers a revealing snapshot of the future trends likely to impact the project management profession. Like every professional discipline, changes in technology, particularly artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics, will present new opportunities to improve and refine processes and learn new skills.

Encouragingly, the profession appears to be embracing and adopting new ways of thinking. The survey shows a growing number of professionals already incorporating data analysis into their project work. And in other areas too, such as climate change, there is evidence to suggest a profession facing up to unprecedented challenges and tackling those challenges with renewed positivity.

**43%**

chose productivity improvements as a key impact of technology

**60%**

are already using data analytics in their work

**69%**

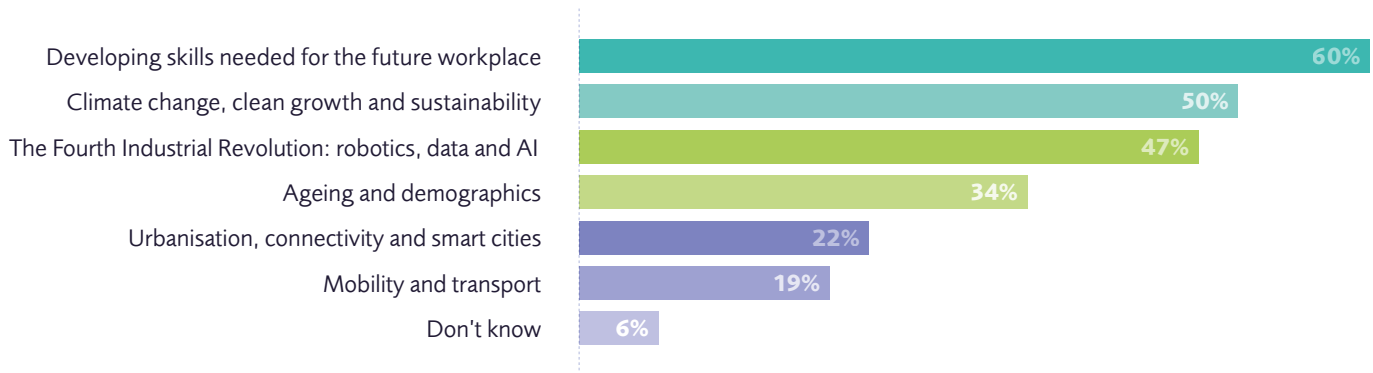
reported that automation will benefit them in some way

**37%**

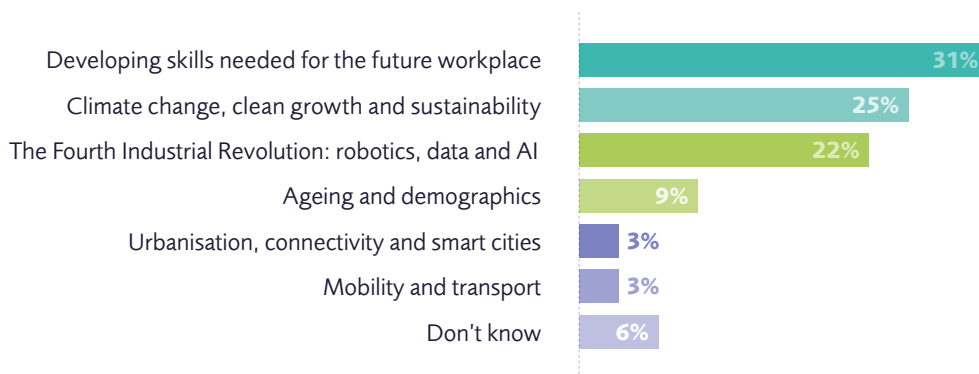
identified people management skills as the most valuable for the future

## Key concerns for the future

### Significant challenges facing the project profession in the next five years



### Single most significant challenge facing the project profession in the next five years



Developing the workforce and climate change are at the forefront of people's minds. Thirty-one per cent of all those surveyed put the issue of training, skills and development at the top of the list of challenges the profession may face over the next five years, with 60 per cent naming it as a significant concern. A close look reveals older respondents feel the people development challenge more keenly, with 34 per cent of 45-to-54-year-olds highlighting it, compared with 26 per cent of those two decades younger.

Climate change – and the effect it will have on the pipeline of new work – is a pressing concern as half of the respondents identified it as a significant challenge (25 per cent place it as the number-one challenge facing the profession).

Not surprisingly, grappling with the implications of the Fourth Industrial Revolution is a preoccupation for almost half (47 per cent) of respondents. As AI, automation, the internet of things and robotics edge into the mainstream, project professionals are well placed to embrace the new.



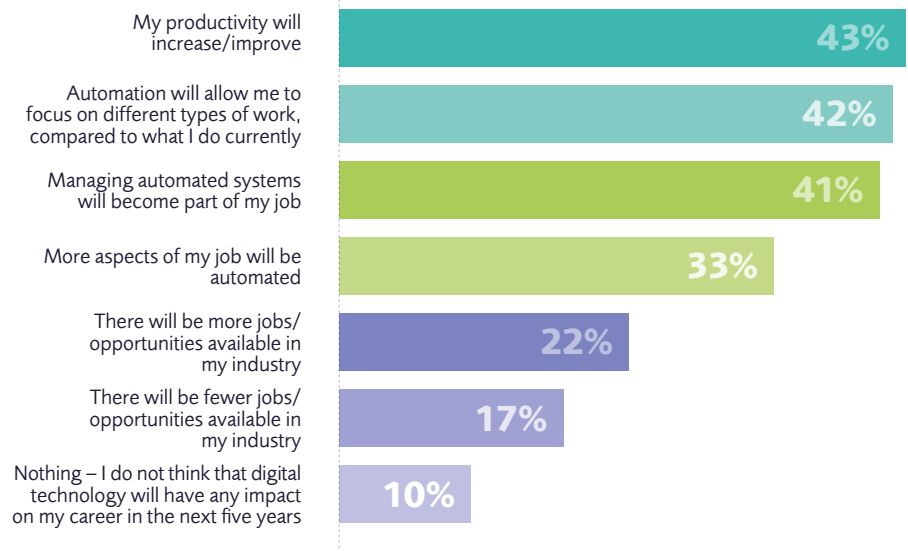
FUTURE TRENDS

### Technology implications

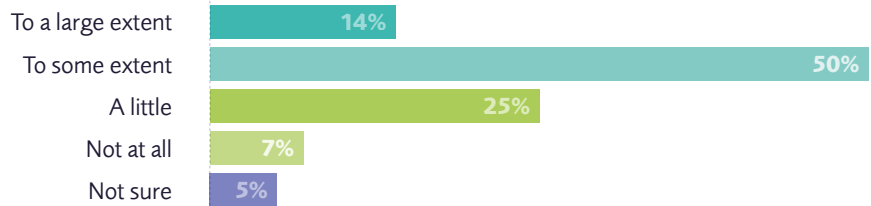
The most widely anticipated benefit of new technology is an increase in productivity (43 per cent), as well as the chance to focus on different types of work (42 per cent); a sizable number also expect the management of automated systems to become a regular part of their job (41 per cent).

Many respondents believe they will benefit from automation in particular over the coming years. Sixty-four per cent of those surveyed anticipate automation to be introduced widely across the profession, and 69 per cent express their belief that this will have a positive impact (only five per cent believe the impact will be negative).

In fact, one-third are already using automation in their projects to some or a large extent, while 33 per cent say they expect some aspects of their own job to be automated in the next five years. The current picture also shows that data analytics has been adopted most widely, with 60 per cent of respondents already using it to some extent in their work. However, a smaller proportion of respondents say they are using AI (16 per cent) or robotics (15 per cent).

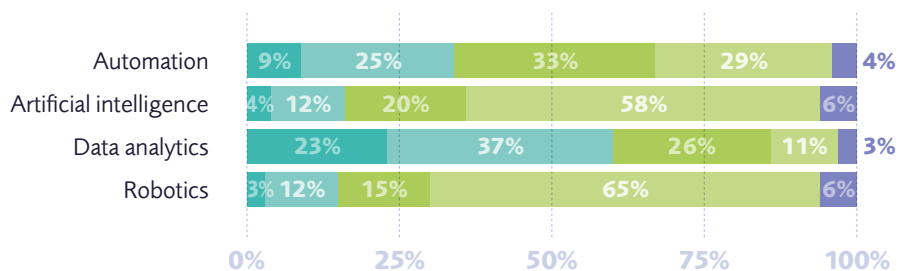


### Extent automation will be introduced into project management in next five years

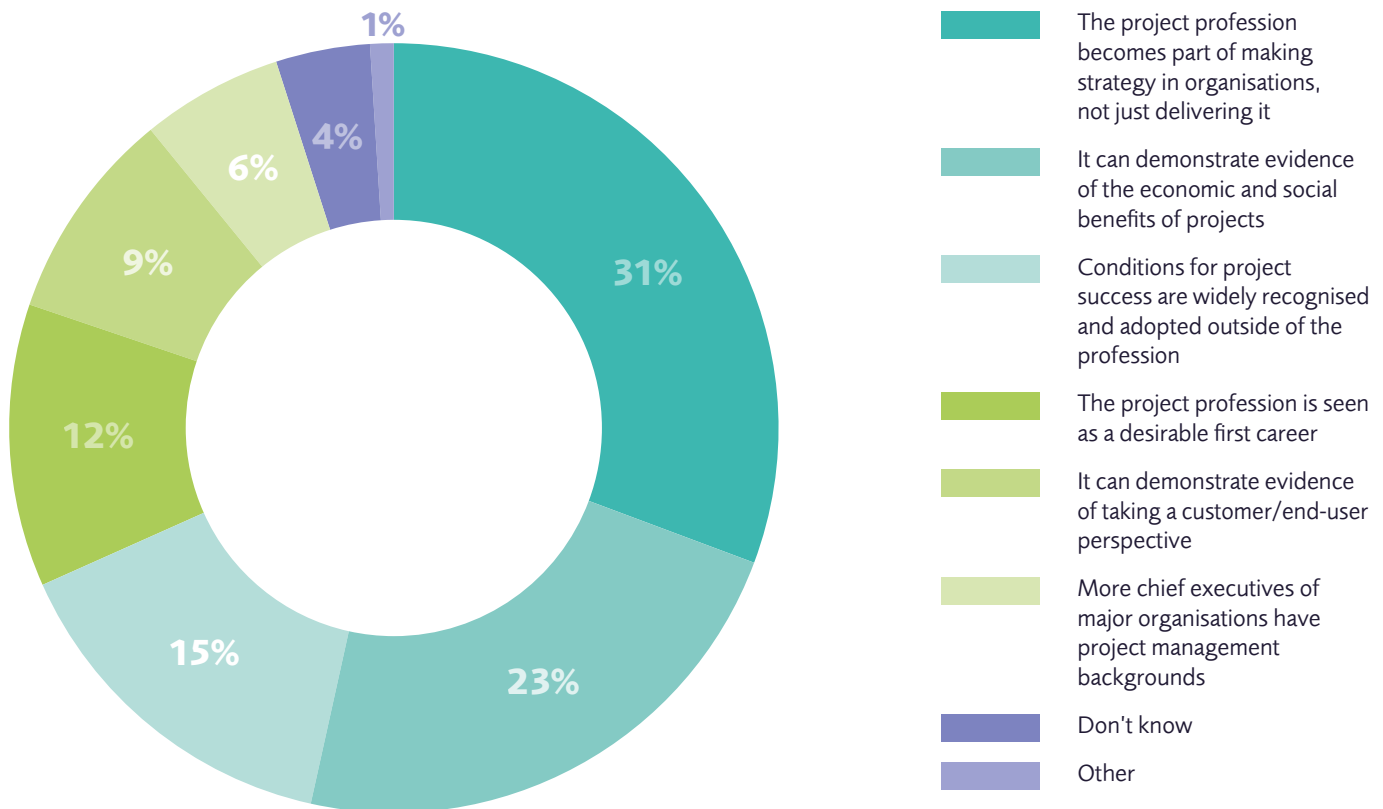


### To what extent do the projects that you are currently working on make use of...

- To a large extent
- To some extent
- A little
- Not at all
- Not sure



## The project profession's impact on society



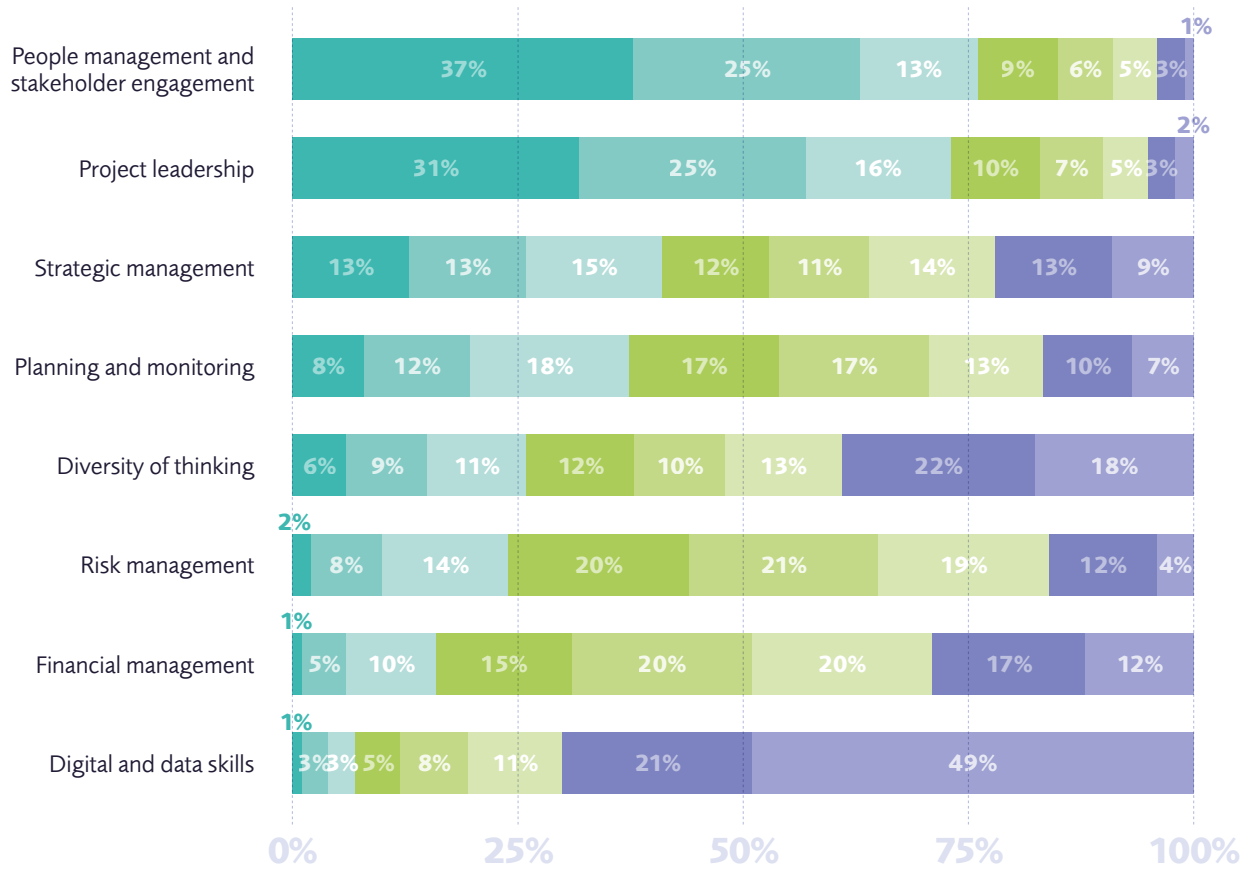
Thirty-one per cent believe the best indicator of the profession's societal impact is the extent to which project professionals can shape and define strategy in organisations, not just deliver on it. Beyond that, the bigger picture counts: 23 per cent feel it's important to demonstrate evidence of the economic and social benefits of projects.

Interestingly the wider social and economic impact was valued most highly by younger members of the profession, with 30 per cent of 18-to-24-year-olds selecting it. By contrast, one-third of 45-to-54-year-olds prefer the strategic impact on organisations as a more telling metric.

For the profession to grow its impact and influence, it will need to incorporate a whole range of skills and tools, from the latest technology and working practices to the adoption of a more diverse and inclusive recruitment policy to ensure it delivers value not only through the projects it delivers, but also to the wider set of stakeholders by encouraging long-term planning and investment in skills.

FUTURE TRENDS

Future skills



- 1 – most important
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8 – least important

Skills will need to adapt and evolve to ensure the project profession remains ready for the challenge. And in an environment characterised by disruption and an accelerating pace of change, it's not surprising that those on the ground value leadership and people management skills most highly.

In fact, 37 per cent of those surveyed ranked people management and stakeholder engagement as the most important, followed by project leadership (31 per cent ranked this first). That cuts across all age groups, sectors and employment models.

Perhaps reflecting the increasing ease with which technology is already incorporated into project work (and in particular how prevalent automation is becoming), the value of digital skills is actually falling. While 42 per cent of those at the early stage of their career anticipate the management of automated systems to become a more important requirement of their role in the coming years, almost half of all respondents (49 per cent) believe digital and data skills to be the least important in the future skills mix.

That may reflect the growing belief that effective delivery of projects cannot be outsourced to technology and that softer skills of leadership and delegation are paramount.

## The revolution will be project managed

Unsurprisingly, technology and its impact continues to dominate the future agenda for project professionals. Last year, 87 per cent of those surveyed identified technology as the number-one force impacting the way projects are managed.

For some, technology represents a threat not only to the status quo, but also to their own roles, with fears over redundancy in the face of growing automation. For others, using automated systems and augmenting decision-making through the use of data analytics and AI opens up a brave new world (and more potential career paths).

Automation is viewed especially favourably, particularly among younger respondents, 75 per cent of whom hold a positive view of its impact, expecting it to free them from mundane tasks and drive more job opportunities. This is interesting, given some of the concerns expressed elsewhere. As our recent *Projecting the Future* research highlighted, as many as 15 million jobs could be lost to automation in the UK over the next decade. However, many are optimistic that many new, more interesting jobs will replace them.

For the profession, the implications are widespread and prompt a number of questions.

- How could the project profession accelerate its adoption of new technology?
- Which parts of the project profession's work should remain human-led?
- Does the project profession have the knowledge and skills needed to deliver value to organisations as they transform and adopt new technologies?



## RESPONDENTS

The make-up of the project profession is ever shifting, but there are some underlying trends that are beginning to emerge with each year of our survey. Firstly, the profession is getting younger. This year's survey reveals that, for a growing number of younger people, project management is now a viable and attractive career, with one-fifth having less than two years' experience. The fact that 72 per cent of this group are under the age of 34 suggests a significant proportion are just beginning their careers.

It's also clear that retaining that generation of project professionals is increasingly dependent on offering a clearer career path through training, development and reward. Our survey reveals that more younger people entering project management are doing so with an eye on gaining qualifications and moving up the corporate ladder.

# 72%

of respondents who are new to project management are under the age of 34

# 29%

worked in organisations that had a staff of 25,000 or more

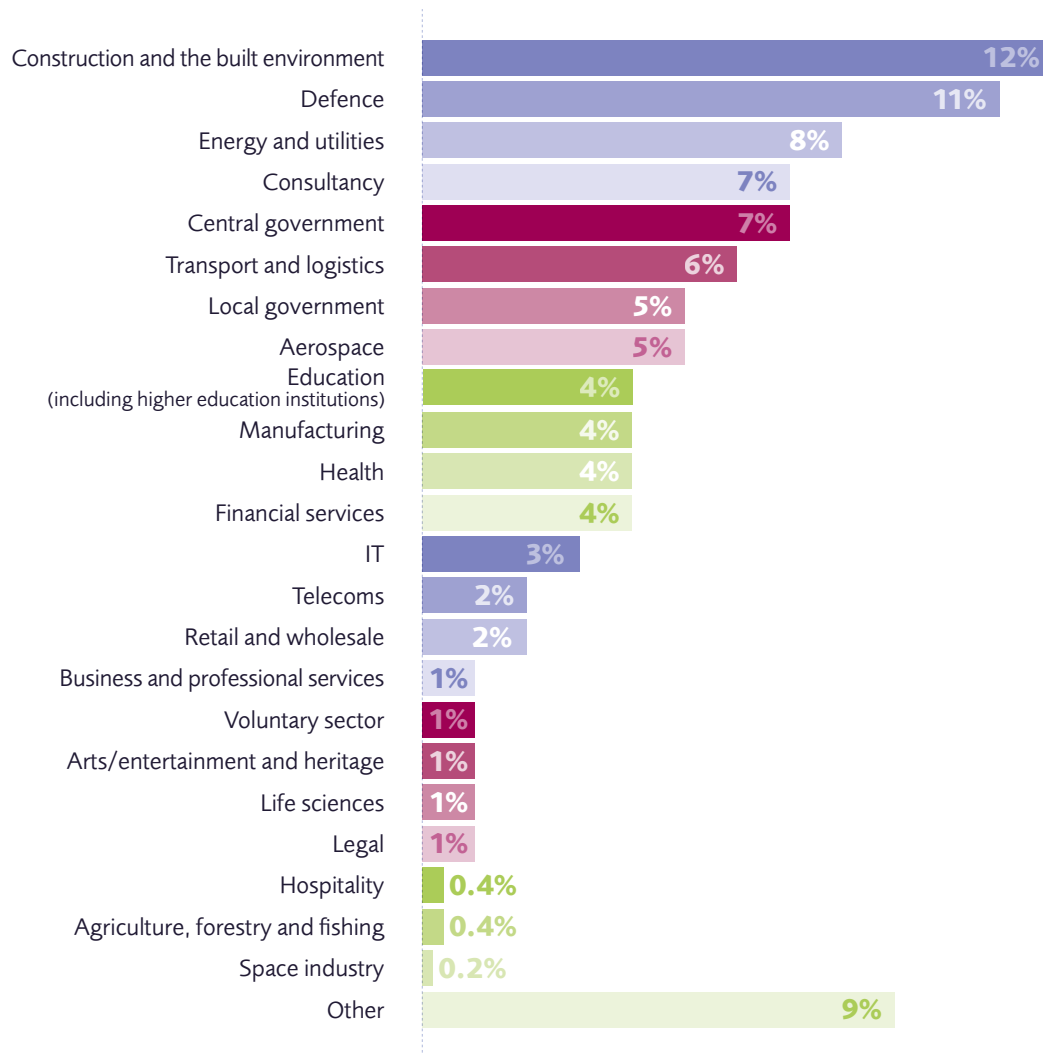
# £107m

Average project value

# 44%

have 5 years or less project management experience

## Sector

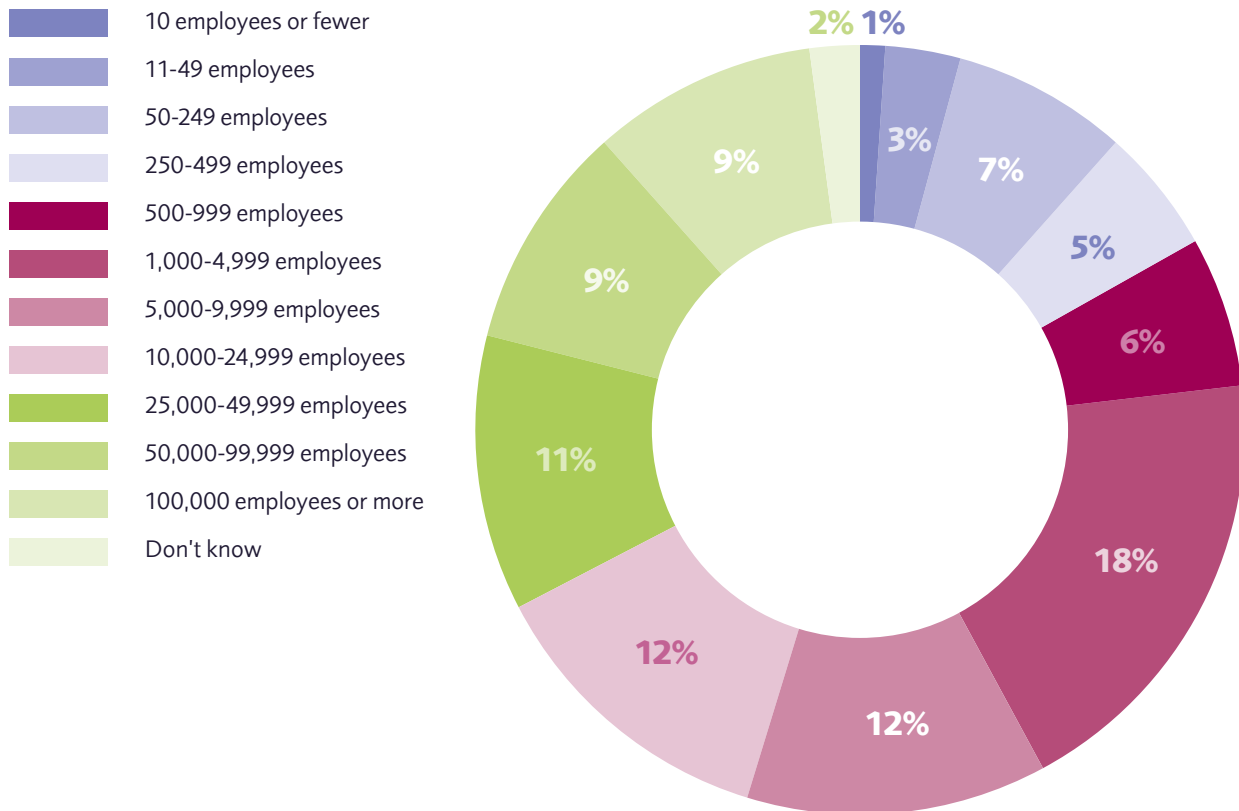


There are few changes to the sectoral make-up of the profession, with construction (12 per cent) and defence (11 per cent) the most represented sectors, in a result that reflects last year. Tellingly, those two sectors have some of the highest rates of satisfaction among their cohort, with fewer expressing a desire to move on from their current role than the average.

They were also the sectors (along with energy) with an overwhelming majority of project professionals in full-time employment, as well as offering either the average salary or higher.

## RESPONDENTS

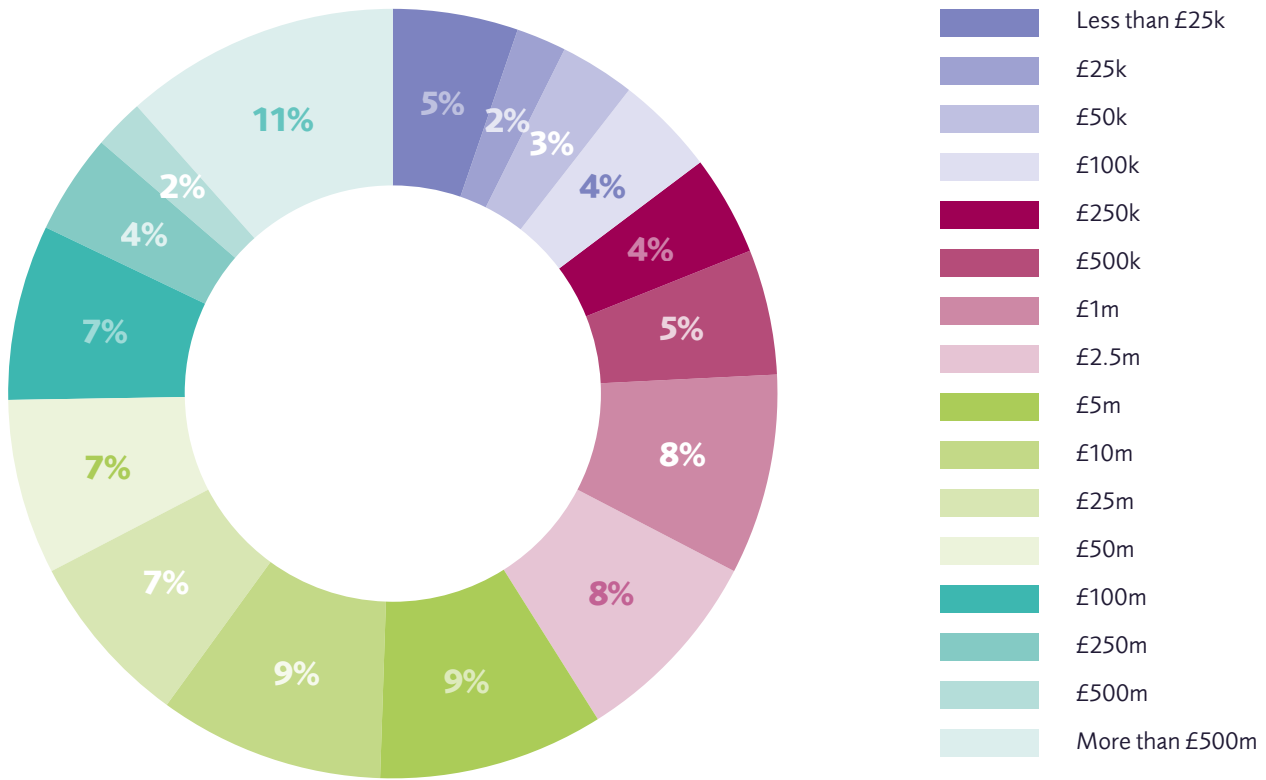
## Organisation size



The demographics of organisational size have remained largely unchanged, with the largest cohort working for organisations with between 1,000 and 4,999 employees (18 per cent). The proportion of those working at small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) – organisations with fewer than 250 employees – has dropped from 14 per cent to 11 per cent.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the scale, 29 per cent are working at large organisations, alongside 25,000 or more colleagues. That is reflected in the sector split, with traditionally larger-scale employers coming from aerospace, transport, retail and defence.

### Project size



It would seem that there are more projects underway, but many of them are at the lower end of the value scale. While most respondents report a buoyant landscape for jobs and new work, the mean value of projects currently employing project professionals has fallen by around £6m from £113m two years ago to £107m.

Projects in London have the most value, with a mean of £138m followed by projects in the South West (£132m) and North West (£126m). The regions with the lowest mean value projects are Northern Ireland (£62m), East of England (£70m) and Yorkshire and the Humber (£75m).

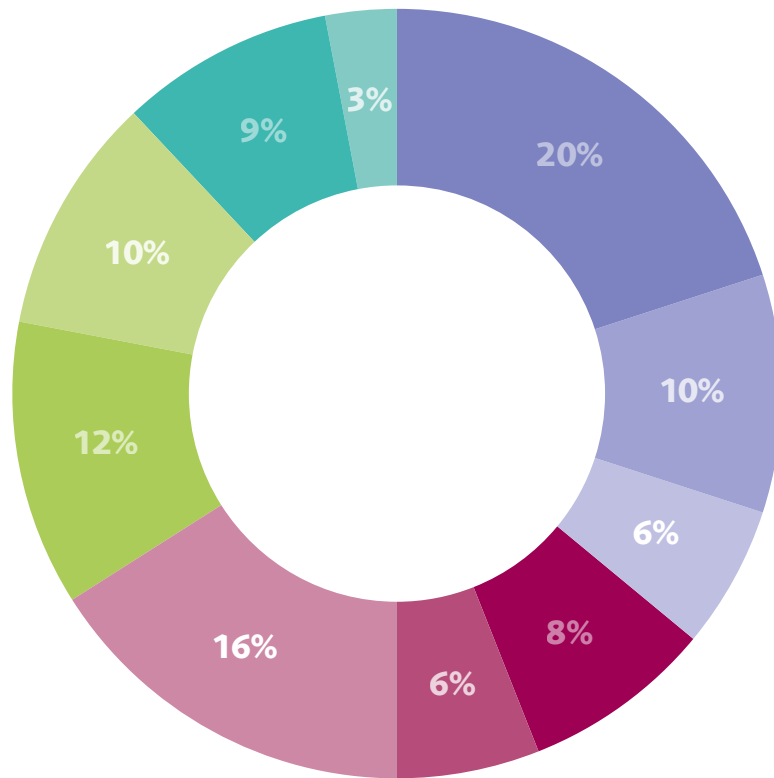
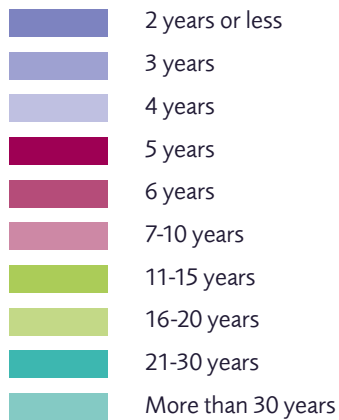
The international figures paint a similar picture to a number of home regions, with 35 per cent of respondents working outside the UK engaged on projects with a value in excess of £50m.

The impact of being a Chartered Project Professional (ChPP) is still being felt, with 65 per cent working on the biggest (£50m+) projects, compared to 31 per cent of overall respondents.



## RESPONDENTS

## Experience

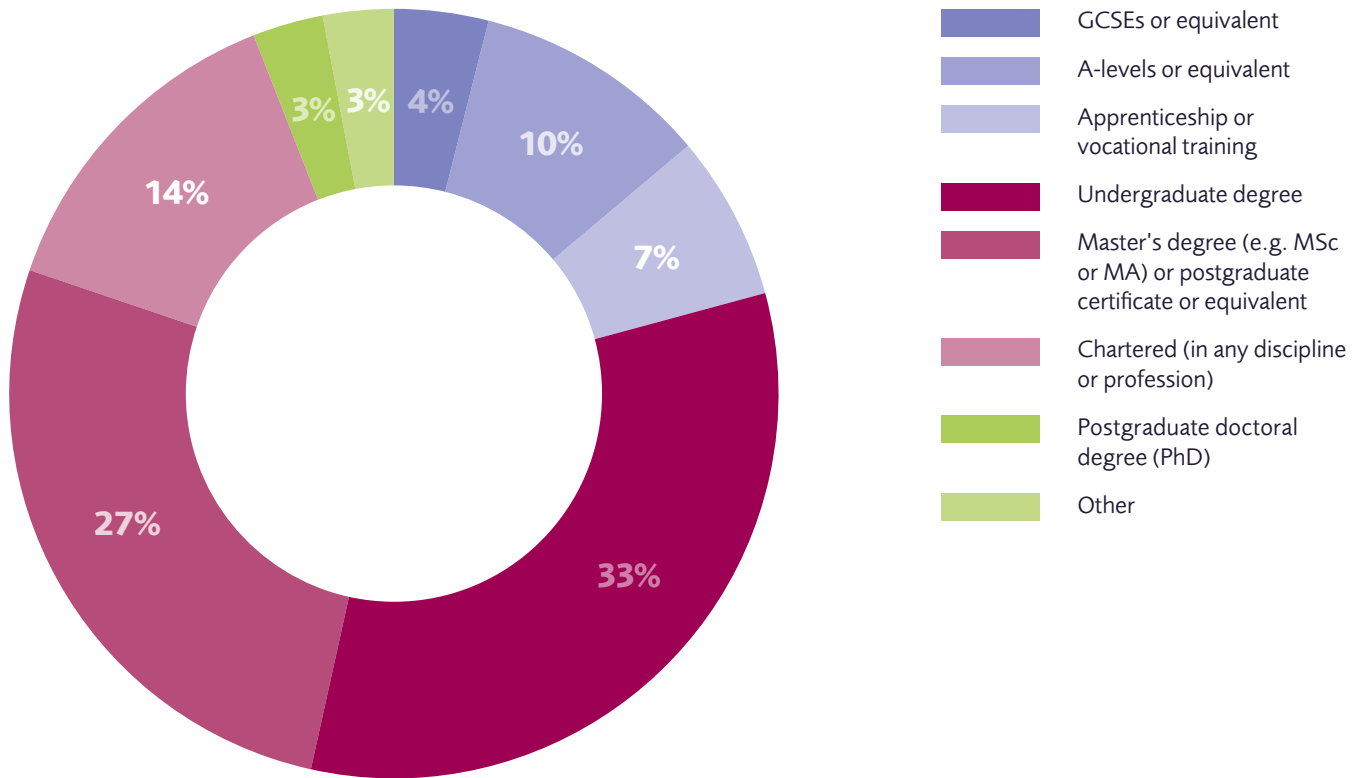


The survey offers further proof that recent efforts to improve awareness of project management as a good career option have paid off, with one in five being new to the profession (those with two years' experience or less).

The fact that almost one-third (31 per cent) of those new to the profession are already on salaries in excess of £35,000 also suggests a willingness among employers to reward enthusiasm, energy and new ideas, and not just experience.

And it would seem that a growing number of new entrants see a project management qualification as a good way to progress. The uptake of introductory professional qualifications, specifically the APM Project Fundamentals Qualification (PFQ), has grown once again, up from 17 per cent in 2018 to 21 per cent this year. It is especially popular among the 25–34 segment, with 27 per cent pursuing the qualification.

## Education



The educational landscape has changed little in the last year. In some areas, however, the educational mix is more dynamic: while project professionals are more likely to be chartered (in any discipline) than two years ago (14 per cent versus 12 per cent), they are less likely to have a master's degree – a figure which has dropped in the past two years from 32 per cent to 27 per cent. The proportion of those with a university education has remained the same, with one-third of those responding saying they have an undergraduate degree.

Meanwhile the proportion of those taking the apprenticeship route has grown, from five per cent in 2018 to seven per cent now. That suggests that although apprenticeships have yet to usurp the higher education path in any significant way, it is becoming a more established route into the profession.

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