



Social Security Scotland
Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba

Mainstreaming Equality

Visual Summary

Dignity,
fairness,
respect.

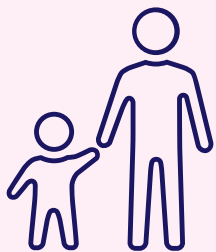
1. Introduction

Social Security Scotland was set up in 2018.

We deliver the following benefits.



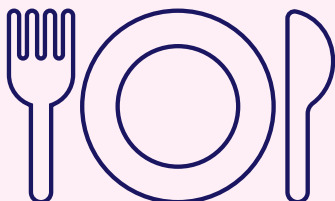
Best Start Grant
Pregnancy and
Baby Payment



Best Start
Grant Early
Learning
Payment



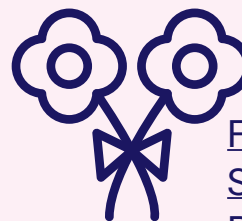
Best Start
Grant School
Age Payment



Best Start Foods



Carer's Allowance
Supplement



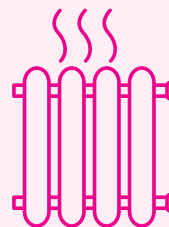
Funeral
Support
Payment



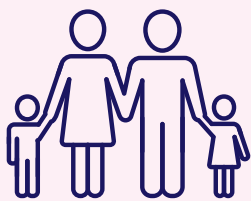
Job Start
Payment



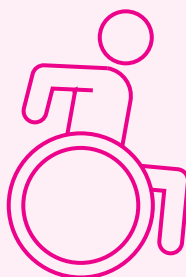
Young
Carer
Grant



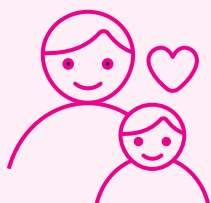
Child Winter
Heating
Assistance



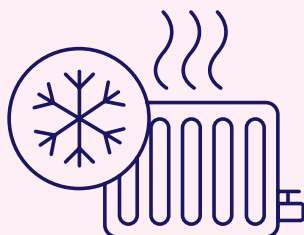
Scottish Child Payment



Adult
Disability
Payment



Child
Disability
Payment



Winter Heating Payment

2. Our progress so far.....



Our approach to equality links to our values of dignity, fairness and respect. Equality is front and centre to our approach.



We have established an internal and external equality network and inclusive communication stakeholder group.

Commitment to inclusive communication



Our clients can contact us through multiple channels.



We have a range of interpretation and translation services.



We introduced web chat during Covid-19 as another communication channel.



Agreed Inclusive Communication principles.



Our publications and guidance are available in Easy Read and Plain English.

Evidenced based decision making

Data and evidence



Quarterly workforce data
People survey
Client diversity and equality analysis
All client survey
Client Panels



Equality impact assessments

Guidance developed and published for staff
Workshops delivered to increase understanding
External stakeholders providing comment and challenge
All completed assessments published on our website

Our workforce



We have removed qualification requirements for entry level posts.



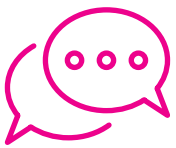
We have implemented improvements to our workplace adjustment process.



We hold candidate workshops to help people understand our process.



We are developing our approach to equality learning and have held sessions for managers on inclusiveness.

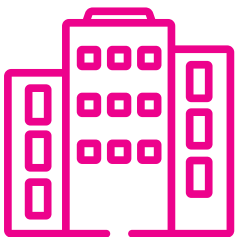


We support the Fair Work agenda and Fair Start placements and wider internships.



Client experience informs our learning. We have worked with the Carer's Trust and One Parent Families.

Building our service



Consultation with client base has informed site locations in Dundee and Glasgow.



We will continue to make sure these buildings are accessible to our diverse workforce and clients.



We are building a Local Delivery service across Scotland, co-locating with partner organisations to help improve client experience. We will also provide home visits.

3. Our equality outcomes



Outcome 1 - Our workforce

Our workforce will be as diverse as the people who are entitled to our service.

We particularly want to increase the number of employees who are disabled or from minority ethnic backgrounds. We aim to do this by 'narrowing the gap' in the recruitment process from application to job offer for people from an minority ethnic or disabled candidates compared with people who are white or who are not disabled



Outcome 2 - Our culture

We will encourage our staff to listen and respond and to be inclusive. We will increase the diversity of our workforce at decision-making and management levels. In particular, we will support people from minority ethnic backgrounds and people who are disabled to move on to more senior levels.



Outcome 3 - Delivering and improving our service

We will learn from people entitled to our service and those organisations who provide support and advocacy (representation), in order to increase the number of people who use our service and improve how we deliver our service to all those who are eligible for benefits.

This includes people who:

- currently use our service;
- may use it in the future; and
- are eligible for our services but are not currently using them.

In particular, we want to increase awareness and uptake of benefits from people from minority ethnic communities, people who communicate in different ways and people with care experience.

4. Our information

This report summaries evidence about our clients and workforce that has helped us to develop our [Equality Strategy and Outcomes](#). Additional information about our organisation is included within the [Scottish Government Mainstreaming Report 2022](#).



Workforce

- [Quarterly published workforce data](#)
- Recruitment analysis that was done to support equality impact assessments
- Our annual People Survey



Clients

- [Client equality and diversity analysis](#)
- [Client survey](#)



5. Workforce equality monitoring



Information about our workforce is important. It:

- informs our workforce planning decisions;
- informs our equality outcomes;
- helps us identify areas for improvement in our recruitment approach;
- informs equality impact assessments and
- shapes the work of our People Engagement Group.

5.1 Workforce data



We publish [reports](#) on our workforce every three months. We collect information on date of birth and gender for all colleagues. People are regularly encouraged to add extra diversity information voluntarily on the online system. There is a 'prefer not to say' option. There are some gaps in our data which are shown as 'unknown'.

The information presented overleaf is based on our published data as at December 2022.



61% of staff are female and 39% are male.



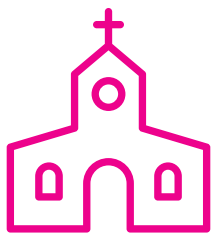
The most common age ranges of staff is 30-39 (30.5%) and 20-29 (23.9%).



9.6% of staff declared they had a disability. 1.7% of staff preferred not to say and 48.3% have not disclosed this information.



3.6% declared that they came from an minority ethnic background. 0.7% of staff preferred not to say and 41.5% have not disclosed this information.



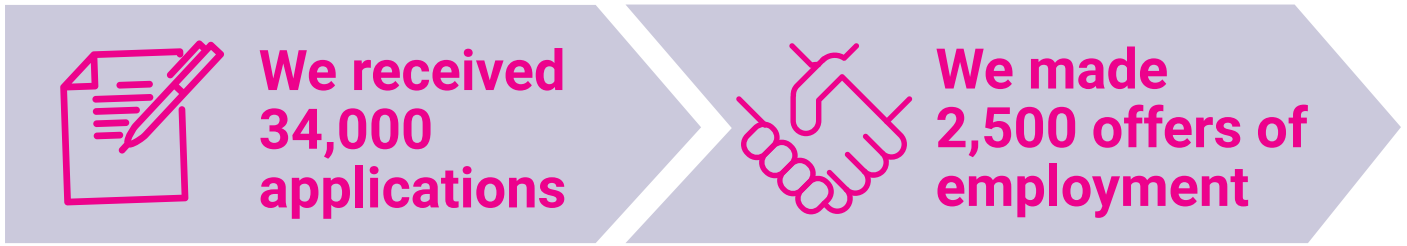
33.7% of staff stated they have no religion or belief. 9.5% stated they were Roman Catholic, 6.2% are Church of Scotland, 3.2% are other Christian and 3.1% stated other religion or belief. 2.8% of staff preferred not to say and the remaining 41.5% have not disclosed this information.



49.9% of staff were Hetero-sexual/straight. 6.4% declared their sexual orientation as 'Lesbian, gay, bisexual, other'. 2.2% of staff preferred not to say and 41.5% have not disclosed this information.

5.2 Recruitment information

We have also looked at information from job applications. This information is taken from our online vacancy systems and covers completed recruitment campaigns between December 2021 to December 2022.



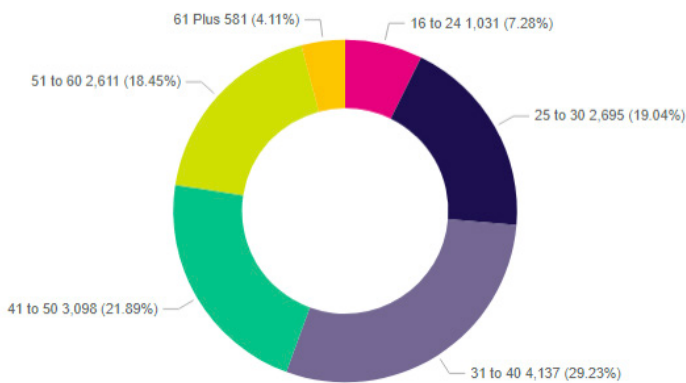
In total we received 34,000 applications covering 300 recruitment campaigns. These resulted in over 2,500 offers of employment, with 13% of offers being made to disabled candidates and 9% to those from minority ethnic backgrounds. The information is broken down by protected characteristics and can be analysed at two stages of the recruitment process, the application stage and the offer stage.

We have looked specifically at any changes in proportions across each of these stages. This information has helped inform the focus of Outcome One for 2022-2023. We are aware that further, more detailed analysis is needed to inform the actions needed to increase the diversity of our workforce. We will explore this further as part of our overall commitment to using a wide range of data and embedding an intersectional understanding to inform our approach to mainstreaming equality.

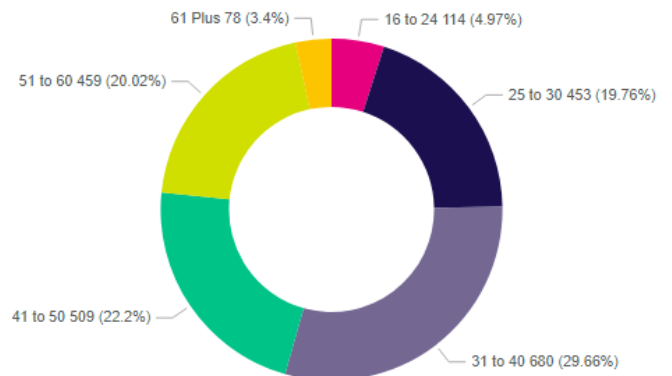
Age

The proportion of applications for each age group remained relatively stable throughout the recruitment process.

Candidates applied by Age Group



Offers issued by Age Group

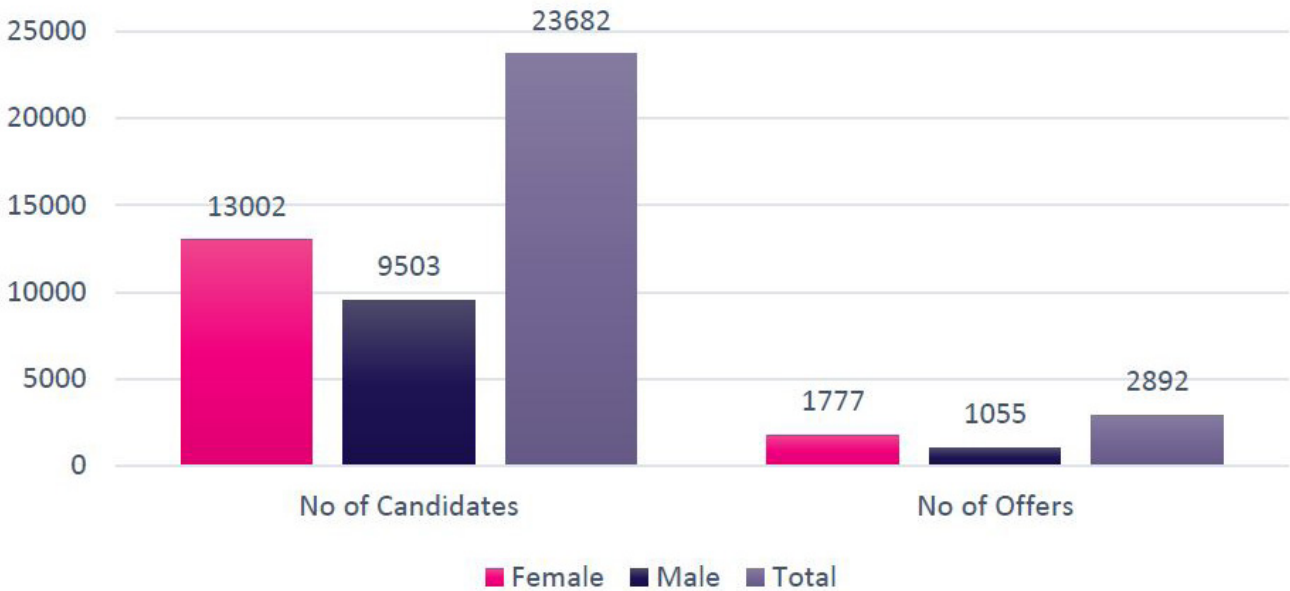


In the large scale recruitment campaigns, the age groups that had a higher proportion of successful applications compared to the proportion that applied, were the 25-30, 31-40, 41-50 and 51-60 age groups.

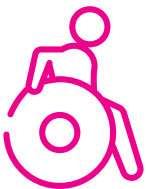
Gender



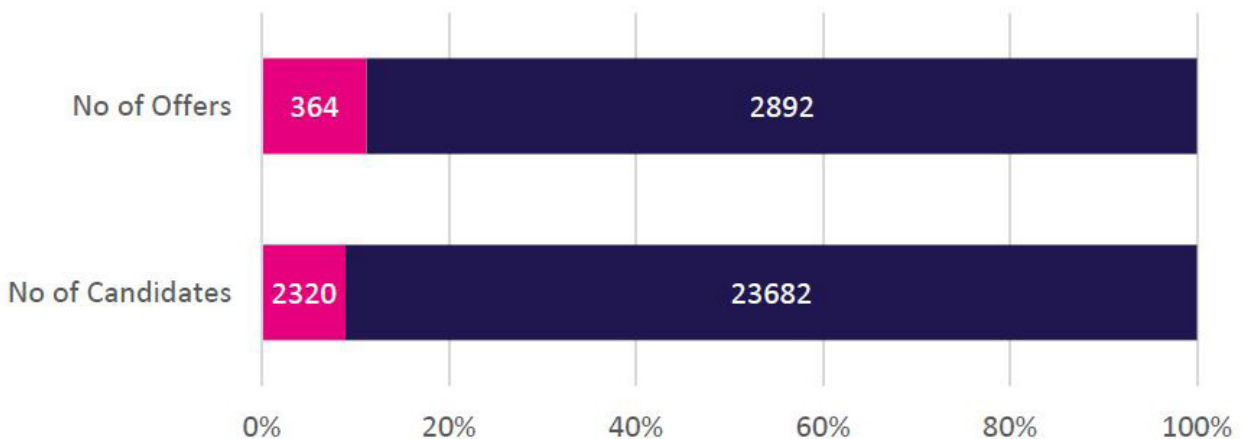
The proportion of successful female candidates increased from application to offer stage. Of the total number of candidates 61% of female candidates were offered a post compared to 55% that applied. This differs for male candidates where the proportion of successful male candidates decreased by 3% from application to offer stage.



Disability



The proportion of successful disabled candidates increased by 3% from application to offer stage. Of the total number of candidates 13% of disabled candidates were offered a post compared to 10% that applied.

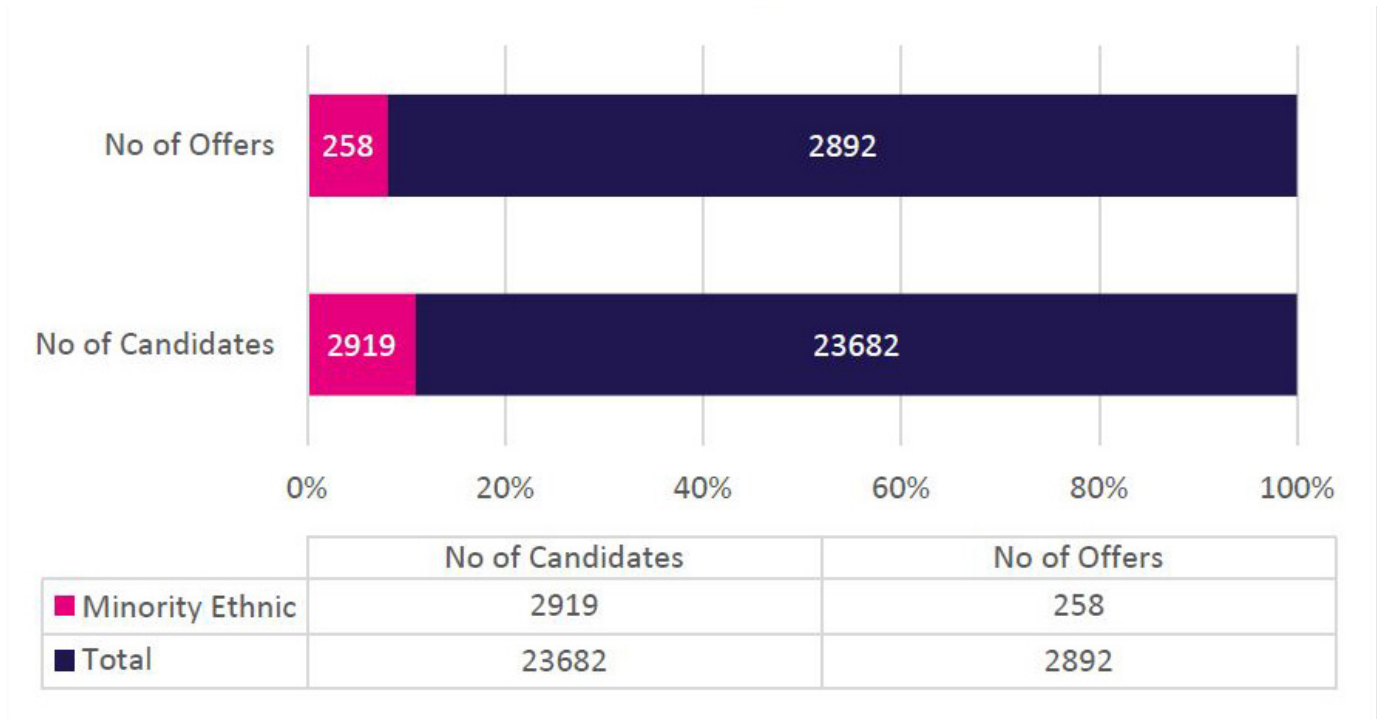


	No of Candidates	No of Offers
Yes	2320	364
Total	23682	2892

Ethnic Group



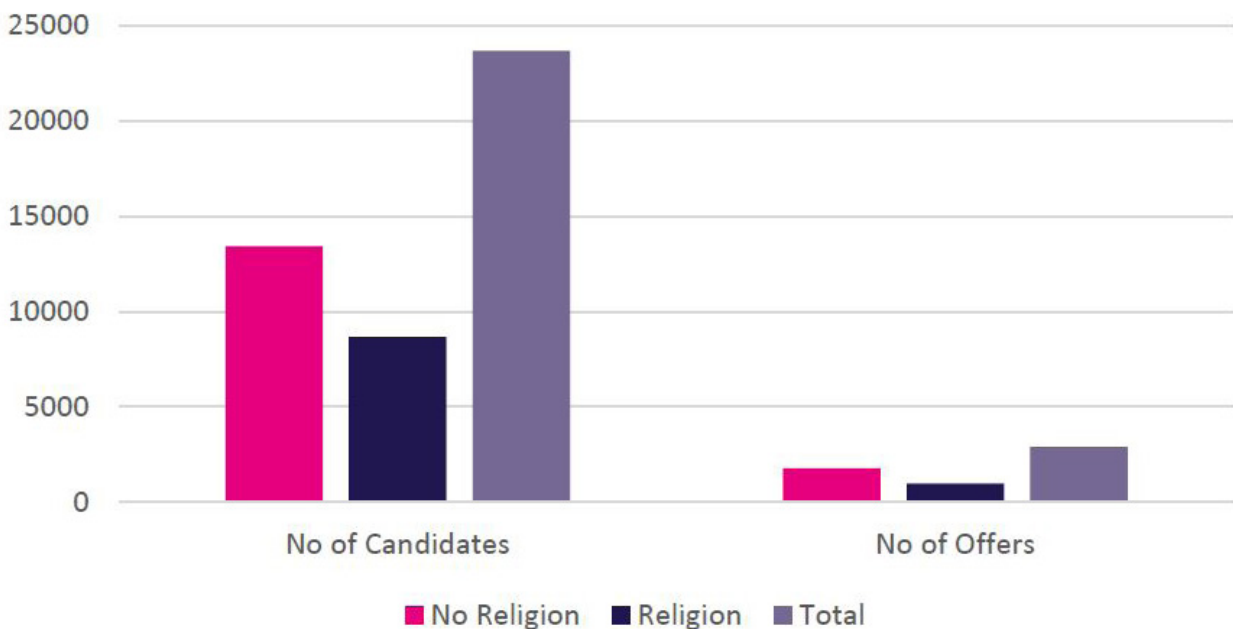
The proportion of successful candidates from an minority ethnic background decreased from application to offer stage. Of the total number of candidates, 9% of those from an minority ethnic background were offered a post compared to 12% that applied.



Religion



The proportion of successful candidates with no religion increased from application to offer stage. Of the total number of candidates, 61% of candidates with no religion were offered a post compared to 57% that applied. This differs for candidates from all other religious groups where the proportion of successful candidates decreased by 4% from application to offer stage.

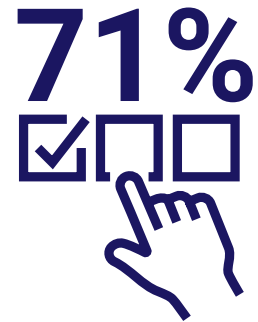


5.3 People Survey

We take part in the Civil Service People Survey every year. The results help us take action on the issues that matter to our people. The results presented are from the 2022 survey.



2763 colleagues participated in the People Survey this year, this was a response rate of 71%.



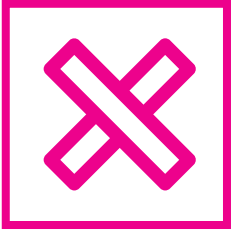
One of the main scores we look at in the People Survey is our Engagement Score. This covers questions asking:



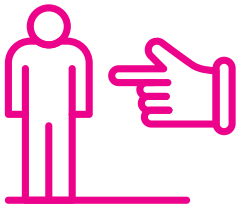
Our Employee Index score in 2022 was 78%, compared to 79% in 2021. The Civil Service average for 2022 was 65%.



There are nine core themes in the People Survey. These include inclusion and fair treatment, my manager and pay and benefits. There are average scores for each. For 2022 we scored 91% for inclusion and fair treatment, up 1 percentage point on previous year.



We did not find any significant variation by protected characteristic. Where there were lower scores to questions, the respondent had chosen the “prefer not to say” option.



The discrimination question asked whether during the past 12 months have you personally experienced discrimination at work? 4% responded yes, down 2 percentage points on the previous year.



When asked about whether someone had been subject to bullying and harassment 5% said yes, down 1 percentage point on the previous year.

6. Client equality information

6.1 Client equality and diversity analysis

Social Security Scotland collects diversity information from clients by asking them to complete an Equality Monitoring and Feedback form as part of the application process. We do this so we can identify who is using the service, and to see how our processes work for different groups of people. Information on clients diversity is analysed and published as part of statistics publication.

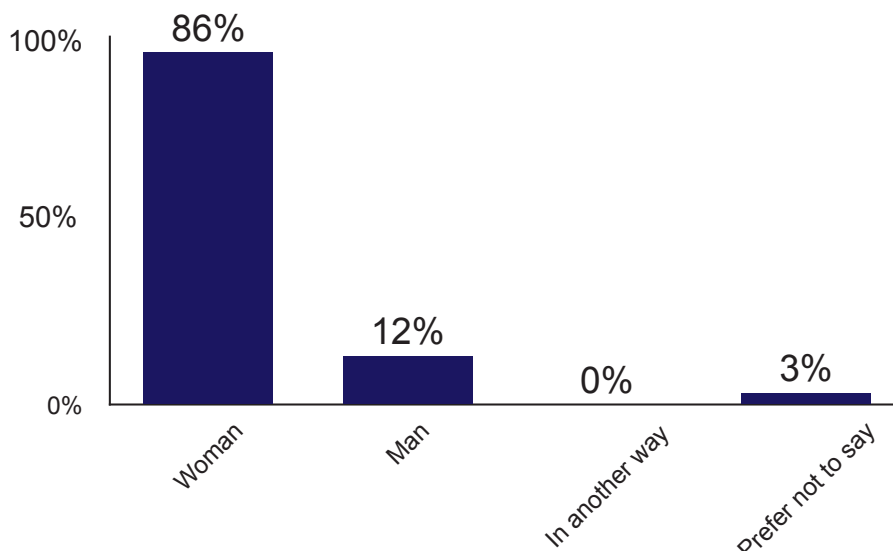
Key findings presented below are from the September 2021 statistics publication, which covers applications received between December 2020 to May 2021. This publication provided information on the diversity of clients applying for Best Start Grant and/or Best Start Foods, Funeral Support Payment, Young Carer Grant, Job Start Payment and Scottish Child Payment. Since the date of this publication, we have launched Child Disability Payment and Adult Disability Payment. In August 2023 we will publish information about applications received between June 2021 to October 2022.

90%

The majority of responses in this publication were from applicants for Scottish Child Payment (53%), or Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods (37%), as there are a greater number of applications for these benefits compared to other benefits.

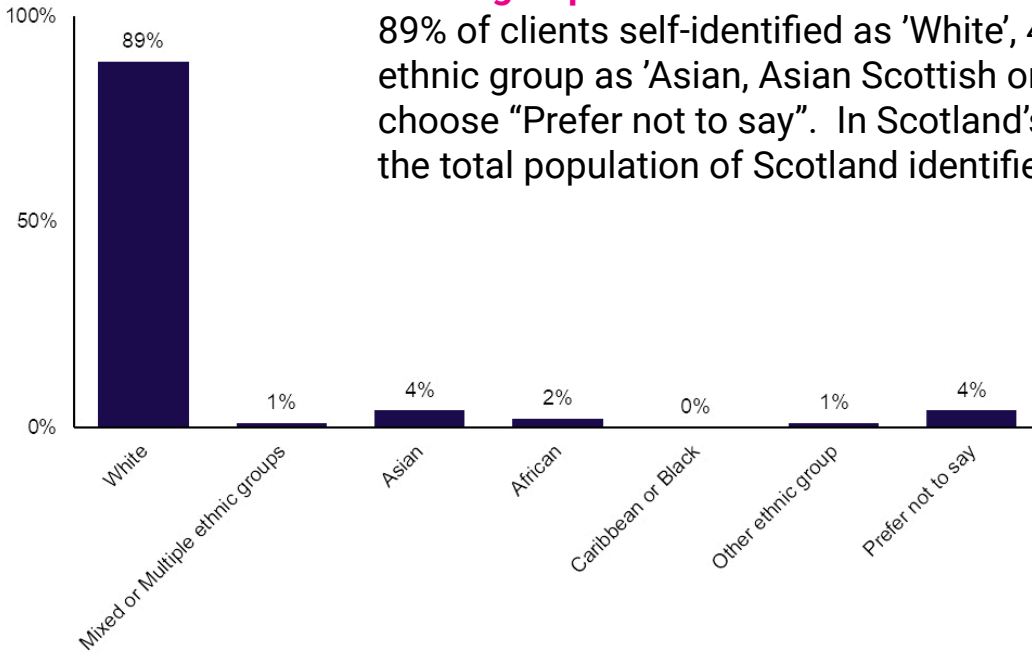
Gender

86% of clients self-identified as women. The majority of data was from applicants for Scottish Child Payment or Best Start Grant or Best Start Foods, which are more likely to be filled out by women than men.



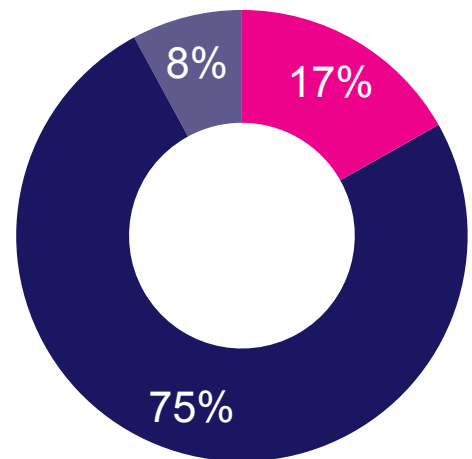
Ethnic group

89% of clients self-identified as 'White', 4% described their ethnic group as 'Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British', and 4% choose "Prefer not to say". In Scotland's 2011 census, 96% of the total population of Scotland identified as 'White'.



Physical or mental health condition or illness

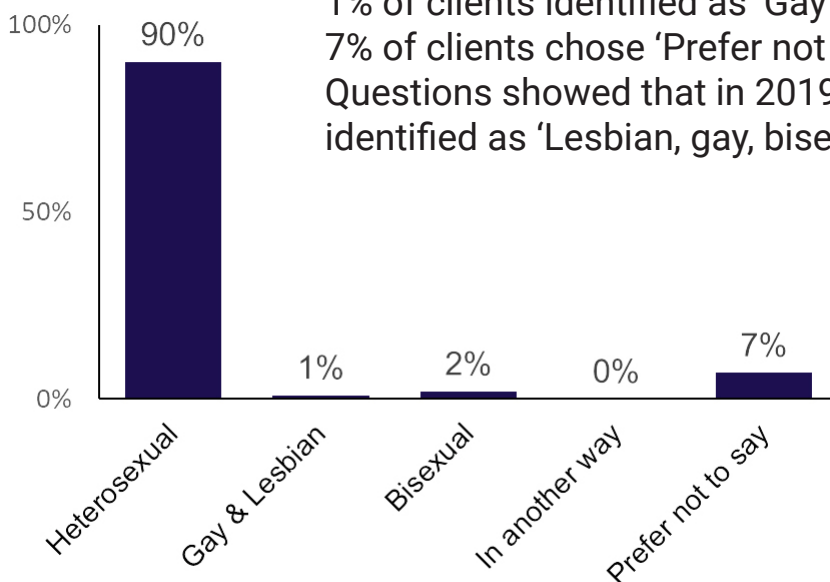
17% of clients declared that they had a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more. 8% of clients 'Prefer not to say', which is the highest proportion selecting this option of all the equalities questions. There is no directly comparable data for Scotland as a whole, but nearly half of all adults stated that they lived with a long-term health condition in August/September 2020 according to the Scottish Health Survey 2020.



- Yes (17%)
- No (76%)
- Prefer not to say (8%)

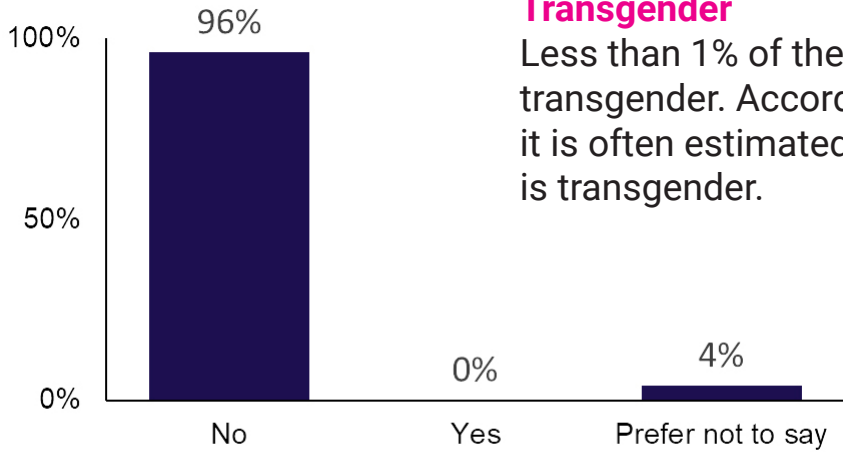
Sexual orientation

1% of clients identified as 'Gay and Lesbian' and 2% as 'Bisexual'. 7% of clients chose 'Prefer not to say'. Scottish Surveys Core Questions showed that in 2019 around 3% of respondents identified as 'Lesbian, gay, bisexual or other'.



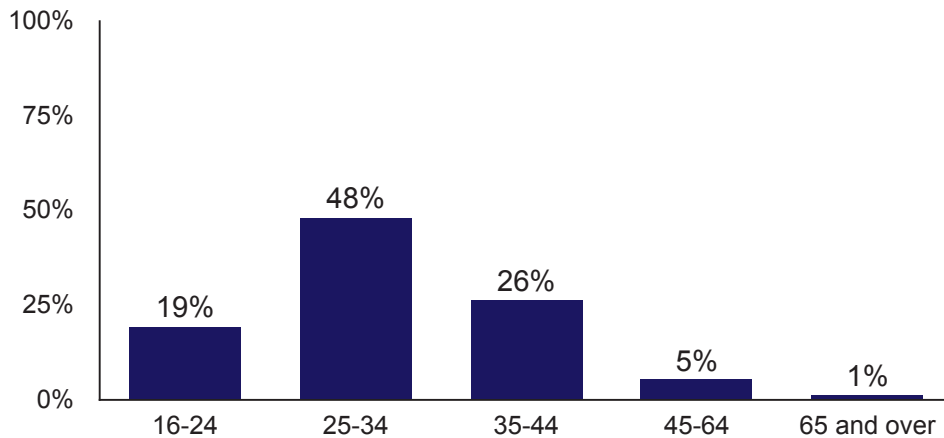
Transgender

Less than 1% of the clients self-identified as transgender. According to Scottish Public Network, it is often estimated that 0.5% Scotland population is transgender.



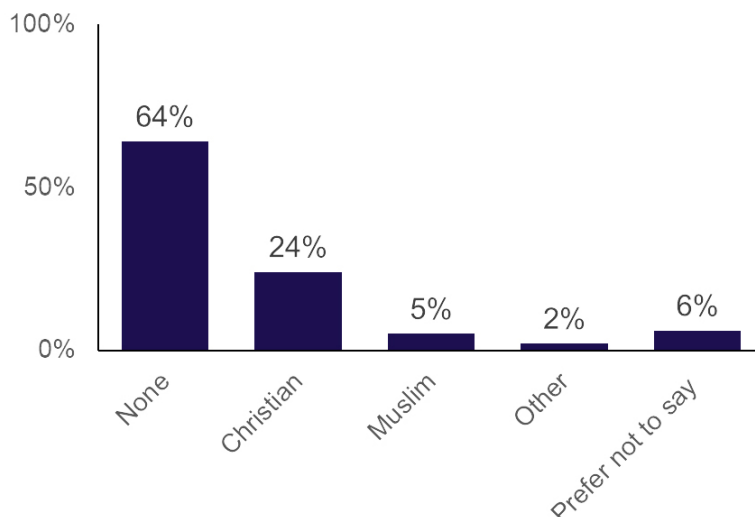
Age

93% of clients are under 45 years old. The highest proportion of clients are in the 25–34 age group. This is expected as the majority of applicants are for Scottish Child Payment, Best Start Grant or Best Start Foods and are likely to be younger with children under 6 years old. At the time of the publication Scottish Child Payment was not yet extended to children aged between 6 to 16 years old.



Religion

The majority of clients recorded their religion or belief as 'None' (64%). In Scotland's 2011 census, 36% of population chose 'No religion'. The higher percentage of clients with no religion compared to general population could be due to clients being mostly from younger age groups. Both Census 2011 and Scottish Household Survey 2019 showed that younger age groups are more likely to have 'No religion'.



6.2 Social Security Scotland - Client analysis



The Social Security Scotland Client survey 2021/22 was open to everyone who had received a decision on an application for at least one of: Best Start Grant and/or Best Start Foods, Funeral Support Payment, Young Carer Grant, Scottish Child Payment, Job Start Payment, or Child Disability Payment between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022. A survey invite was also sent to anyone who had received Carer's Allowance Supplement or Child Winter Heating Assistance for the first time, or who had completed a Child Disability Payment Case Transfer during this time.



Respondents with a long-term physical or mental health condition were less likely than people without such a condition to agree with statements related to their overall experience with Social Security Scotland. The table below shows the results for each statement broken down by whether respondents have a long-term physical or mental health condition.

Proportion who strongly agree or agree that:	With long-term physical/mental health condition	No long-term physical/mental health condition	Prefer not to say
Social Security Scotland treated me fairly	87%	89%	85%
Social Security Scotland treated me with respect	86%	89%	84%
Social Security Scotland treated me with dignity	88%	91%	86%
Social Security Scotland did not waste my time	83%	89%	83%
I understand what Social Security Scotland does	78%	84%	79%
I feel I can trust Social Security Scotland	80%	86%	80%

Proportion who strongly agree or agree that:	With long-term physical/mental health condition	No long-term physical/mental health condition	Prefer not to say
Social Security Scotland is an honest organisation	84%	87%	82%
Social Security Scotland is an open organisation	82%	87%	82%
Total	2,203	3,831	451



Respondents were asked whether they had experienced barriers getting help from Social Security Scotland. 17% of respondents said they had experienced some form of barrier getting help from Social Security Scotland.

Around a third (35%) of those who had experienced barriers said they told Social Security Scotland about them. Of that 35%, around half agreed that Social Security Scotland 'understood them' (52%). A slightly smaller proportion agreed that Social Security Scotland 'supported [them] in overcoming them' (45%).

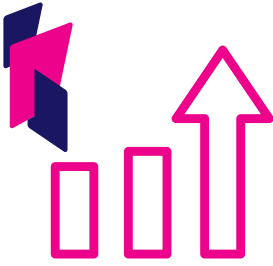


Respondents were asked if they felt they had been discriminated against at any point during their experience with Social Security Scotland. A small proportion (3%) said they had experienced discrimination, with a further 4% selecting the 'prefer not to say' response option.

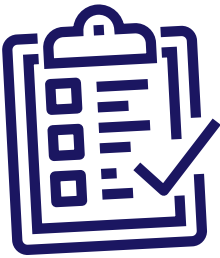


More than two-in-five of those who felt they had been discriminated against disagreed with the statements 'it was clear how to challenge it' and 'I felt I could challenge it' (43% and 46% respectively). A little over one-in-three (36% and 34% respectively) agreed with these statements.

7. Forward look



We will build on our equality Impact assessment process and other data sources to continue to develop our evidence and our understanding of what we need to do to mainstream equality. This applies to both our workforce and client information.



We recognise we have information gaps and have identified a number of actions we need to take. As our systems still align with Scottish Government for a lot of our workforce information we will continue to work in collaboration with them on improvements. We will also make sure equality information is thought about when developing our own systems. This includes our Learning and Development systems, so we get a greater understanding of how our staff are accessing opportunities to develop and how they progress through their careers with Social Security Scotland.



Intersectionality is a commitment we have made in our Equality Strategy. It is about the connected nature of the different protected characteristics and can create further opportunities for discrimination and disadvantage. As an organisation we want to improve awareness and understanding of its effect on our decision-making. We will continue to develop our approach to raising awareness of intersectionality to improve our service delivery and colleague experience.



Accessibility of our information is important. We will continue to build on our inclusive communications approach working with our stakeholders to ensure clients can access our information in ways that make it easy for them to engage with our services.



We will use the Social Security Scotland People Panel and our Internal Equality Network to help inform our approach to equality and diversity within Social Security Scotland.



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