NEW ZEALAND WORKPLACE DIVERSITY SURVEY 2020

DIVERSITY WORKS NZ

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

This report was commissioned by Diversity Works New Zealand. It was produced by Dr Ritu Parna Roy at University of Auckland and Dr Jessica Terruhn and Distinguished Professor Paul Spoonley at Massey University.

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INTRODUCTION

Diversity, both societally and in workplaces, remains a defining feature of contemporary New Zealand. Gender has received particular attention, especially evident in calls for more gender representation in management and governance, and in campaigns such as the #MeToo movement. But diversity is more than this. The changing demography of New Zealand society has meant that an ageing society and workforce requires more attention, from employers and organisations as much as from government. And ethnic diversity continues to define New Zealand, whether this is recognition of Māori as tangata whenua or the growing immigrant and minority ethnic diversity of the country. Between 2013 and 2018, New Zealand experienced a net gain from immigration of 260,000, the largest by some margin (both in terms of the actual numbers and as a proportion) in this country's history. So how are firms and organisations responding to this changing environment?

The New Zealand Workplace Diversity Survey provides an annual snapshot of how New Zealand firms and organisations see and respond to diversity. The survey contributes to public understanding and debate and seeks to highlight both good practice and what needs further attention. The responses, as in previous years, are mixed, as this report demonstrates. There are some issues which have received the same – or almost the same – responses in this survey but there have been other matters which have changed. One matter that is confirmed in this survey is that public sector organisations continue to place more emphasis than private sector firms on diversity issues. A second would be that there are some interesting variations in the issues that large, medium and small organisations see as important. And finally, there are disparities in how organisations deal with diversity issues, both in terms of what they see as important and sometimes, while they acknowledge an issue as significant, there are relatively few actions to accompany to address the matter.

What follows is the most recent survey results.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The 2020 edition continues Diversity Works New Zealand's regular monitoring, exploration and reporting of how organisations experience and respond to diversity. While we have changed from a biannual to an annual survey, we've maintained a similar format allowing for comparability with past years, assessing the 11 key diversity indicators.

Of these minor changes, an open-ended question regarding bullying that was included in the 2019 survey has been modified to a closed, multi-response option. We asked respondents to indicate what actions their organisation took in response to reported bullying and harassment incidents. We also added two more options, "Don't know" and "Not applicable" to the question: "Does your organisation encourage the recruitment of workers over the age of 55 years old?", in the hope of understanding more about how organisations address the issue of an ageing workforce.

RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

A total of 929 respondents took part in the March 2020 New Zealand Workplace Diversity Survey.

Participating organisations operate in a variety of industries. The largest share, 21.3 per cent of all respondents, said they worked in 'Professional, Scientific and Technical Services' followed by 12.6 per cent in 'Other services' and a further 9.2 per cent in 'Electricity, gas, water and waste services' (see Table 1).

Of the 929 respondents, 499 (53.7 per cent) are in the private sector and 430 (46.3 per cent) in the public sector.

Organisations from all over New Zealand, including areas outside the main centres are represented in this survey. The largest number of organisations are located in the Auckland region (N= 384 or 41.3 per cent), followed by 200 organisations in the Wellington (21.5 per cent) and 96 in Canterbury (10.3 per cent).

Large organisations with 200+ employees constitute more than half of all respondents (N=580 or 62.4 per cent), while medium-sized organisations (20-199 employees) and small-sized organisations (0-19 employees) make up 25.2 per cent and 12.4 per cent respectively.

INDUSTRY	Responses	%
Professional, scientific and technical services	198	21.3
Other services	117	12.6
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	85	9.2
Public administration and safety	82	8.8
Construction	78	8.4
Education and training	62	6.7
Financial and insurance services	57	6.1
Health care and social assistance	56	6.0
Manufacturing	38	4.1
Transport, postal and warehousing	36	3.9
Information media and telecommunications	31	3.3
Retail trade	27	2.9
Arts and recreation services	16	1.7
Administrative and support services	12	1.3
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	11	1.2
Wholesale trade	10	1.1
Rental, hiring and real estate services	6	0.7
Accommodation	5	0.5
Mining	2	0.2
Total	929	100

TABLE 1: INDUSTRY TYPE

DIVERSITY ISSUES THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO ORGANISATIONS

A key objective of this survey is to identify the diversity issues that are most important to organisations and to examine trends across time. The detailed findings are presented in Table 2 below.

This year, wellbeing/wellness, gender and bias retained their places as the three most important diversity issues for organisations (75.4 per cent, 56 per cent and 54.6 per cent respectively). In fact, there is no shift or movement in the rank of any diversity issues in this year's survey.

Wellbeing/wellness, gender, bias and flexibility are seen as important by more than half of all respondents. Disability (ranked 10th with 26.3 per cent) and religion (ranked 11th with 14.7 per cent) remained the least important diversity issues.

DIVERSITY ISSUES	March 2020 (%)	March 2019 (%)	April 2018 (%)	April 2017 (%)
Wellbeing/wellness	75.4 (1)	79.6 (1)	62.4 (1)	66.9 (1)
Gender	56.1 (2)	66.8 (2)	36.1 (5)	45.0 (5)
Bias	54.6 (3)	63.0 (3)	42.0 (4)	48.3 (3)
Flexibility	54 (4)	58.4 (4)	49.0 (2)	54.6 (2)
Ethnicity	47 (5)	47.3 (5)	33.9 (6)	41.4 (6)
Bullying and harassment	45 (6)	42.1 (6)	31.5 (7)	35.8 (7)
Aging	34.3 (7)	37.0 (7)	42.9 (3)	47.0 (4)
Sexuality	29.8 (8)	29.6 (8)	12.4 (10)	17.9 (10)
Disability	26.3 (9)	24.2 (10)	21.2 (9)	24.2 (9)
Employment transition for younger staff	24 (10)	26.1 (9)	26.8 (8)	27.5 (8)
Religion	14.7 (11)	11.7 (11)	8.5 (11)	12.3 (11)

TABLE 2: IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY ISSUES FOR ORGANISATIONS, PERCENTAGE AND RANKING, 2017-2020

IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY ISSUES BY SECTOR

Differences by sector noted previously are also evident in this iteration of the survey. Organisations from the public sector regarded the majority of diversity issues (8 out of 11) as more important than organisations from the private sector. Gender, bias, and flexibility were the only exceptions. Notably, a significantly higher percentage (61.3 per cent) of participants from the private sector reported 'gender' as an important diversity issue when compared to 50 per cent of their counterparts in the public sector (see Figure 1).

As shown in Figure 1, differences in the importance of diversity issues between the public and private sector are most pronounced in the areas of gender, disability, and bullying. More than 30 per cent of public-sector respondents reported disability as an important diversity issue compared to only 21 per cent of respondents from the private sector. Similarly, there is gap of almost 10 per cent between the public and private sector organisations in terms of reporting bullying and harassment as a diversity issue (51.6 per cent and 39.5 per cent respectively). Overall, these findings are consistent with those from last year.

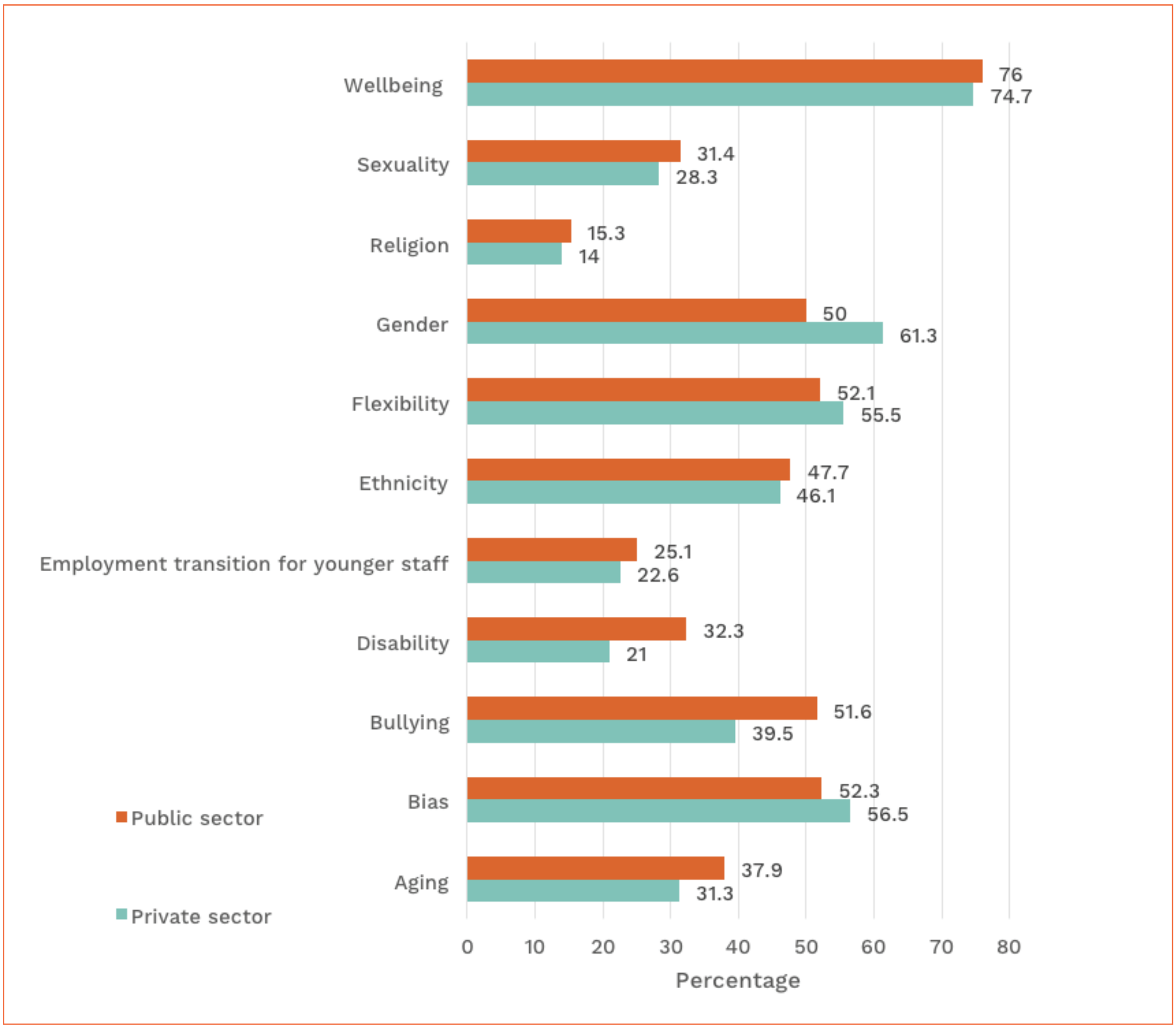

FIGURE 1: IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY ISSUES BY SECTOR

IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY ISSUES BY SIZE OF ORGANISATION

Differences in the importance of diversity issues to organisations become more pronounced when we consider their size (see Figure 2). Large organisations regarded almost all diversity issues as more important than medium-sized and small organisations.

As in previous years, wellbeing/wellness is by far the most important diversity issue irrespective of an organisation's size. Flexibility and bias continued to rank as the second and third most important diversity issues in small and medium-sized organisations, while gender continues to be the second most important diversity issue for large organisations, followed by bias.

Even though the top rankings are unchanged, we note an overall decrease in the importance of most diversity issues in large organisations. For example, the importance of gender as a diversity issue within large organisations has dropped from 78.3 per cent in March 2019 to 62.8 per cent in March 2020 and bias from nearly 75 per cent to 57 per cent in the same period of time

Differences between small, medium-sized and large organisation are most noticeable for sexuality, gender, and bullying and harassment. Sexuality is an important diversity issue for 37.2 per cent of large organisations while it is regarded as an important diversity issue by only 18.4 per cent and 14.8 per cent of medium-sized and small organisations respectively. Similarly, half of all participating large organisations identified bullying and harassment as an important diversity issue while that figure is 40 and 25 per cent respectively for medium-sized and small organisations.

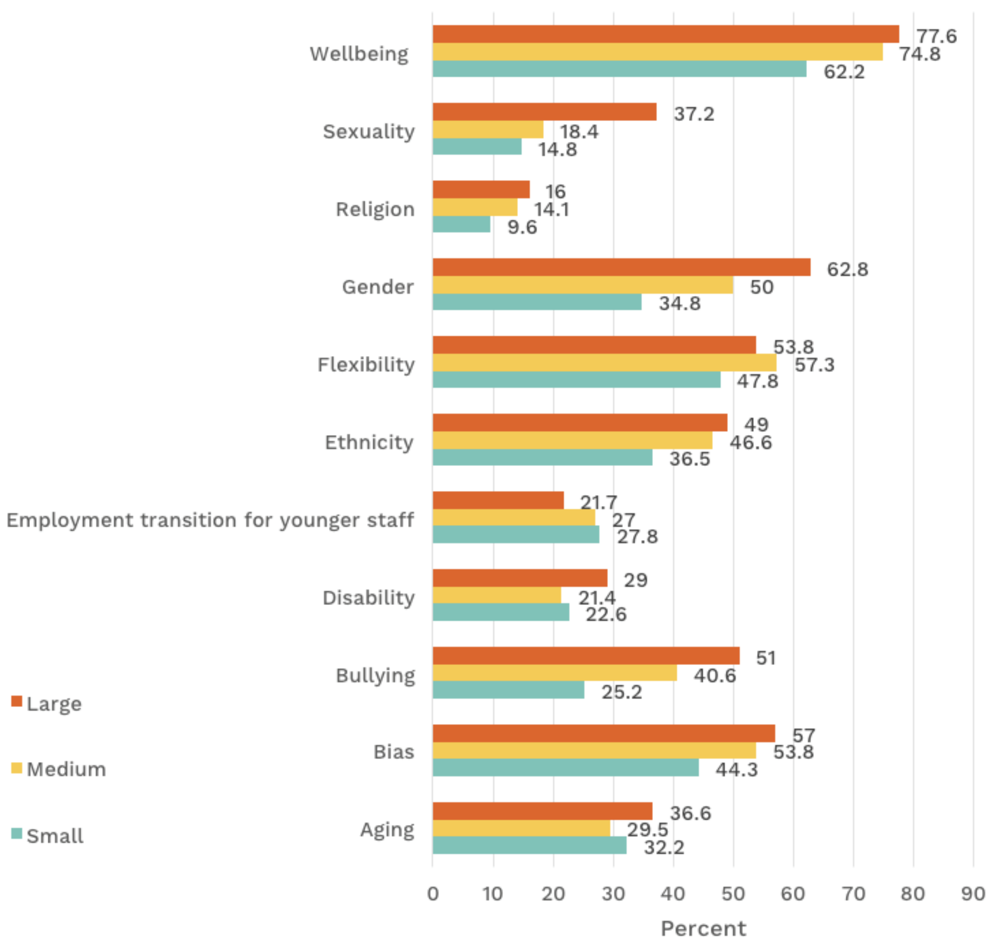

FIGURE 2: IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY ISSUES BY SIZE OF ORGANISATION

ADDRESSING DIVERSITY ISSUES

Respondents were asked to indicate whether their organisation had a formal policy, a programme or initiative, or neither of these, in place for each of the diversity issues we surveyed. As shown in Table 3, the three diversity issues for which participating organisations are most likely to have either a formal policy or a programme/initiative in place are bullying and harassment (81.6 per cent), wellbeing/wellness (80 per cent) and flexibility (69 per cent). This is consistent with last year's results although the share of organisations who reported to have formal policies and/or programmes and initiatives in place slightly decreased compared to last year, when the figures were 84.4 per cent, 83.3 per cent and 77 per cent respectively. This decrease was most pronounced for gender. This time, only 53.7 per cent organisations reported that there are formal policies and/or programmes in place to address gender as a diversity issue, almost 10 per cent lower than last year (62.3 per cent).

Aging remains the diversity issue for which organisations have the least formal structures in place and has further decreased from previous years. Less than one-fifth (18.5 per cent) of all respondents stated that they had either a formal policy or programme/initiative in place for aging.

DIVERSITY ISSUE	Responses	Formal policy or programme/initiative %	Neither policy nor programme/Initiative %	Don't know %
Bullying and harassment	924	81.6	8.5	9.3
Wellbeing/wellness	924	80.1	11.2	8.2
Flexibility	915	69.0	15.4	14.0
Gender	915	53.7	25.0	20.0
Ethnicity	907	46.0	25.8	25.8
Bias	890	43.6	31.2	21.0
Disability	908	43.2	25.6	28.8
Sexuality	910	42.9	31.0	24.0
Employment transition	899	29.0	36.6	31.2
Religion	902	27.4	32.6	33.7
Aging	852	18.5	41.0	32.0

TABLE 3: DIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES/INITIATIVES

As illustrated in Figure 3, public-sector organisations are more likely to have formal policies and/or programmes and initiatives in place for diversity issues such as disability, bullying and harassment, and wellbeing/wellness. However, the gap between the public and private sector is now less pronounced compared to the March 2019 data. In contrast to the previous surveys, private organisations appear to be more equipped with the formal policies and programmes compared to the public sector for diversity issues such as bias, employment transition for younger staff, gender and religion.

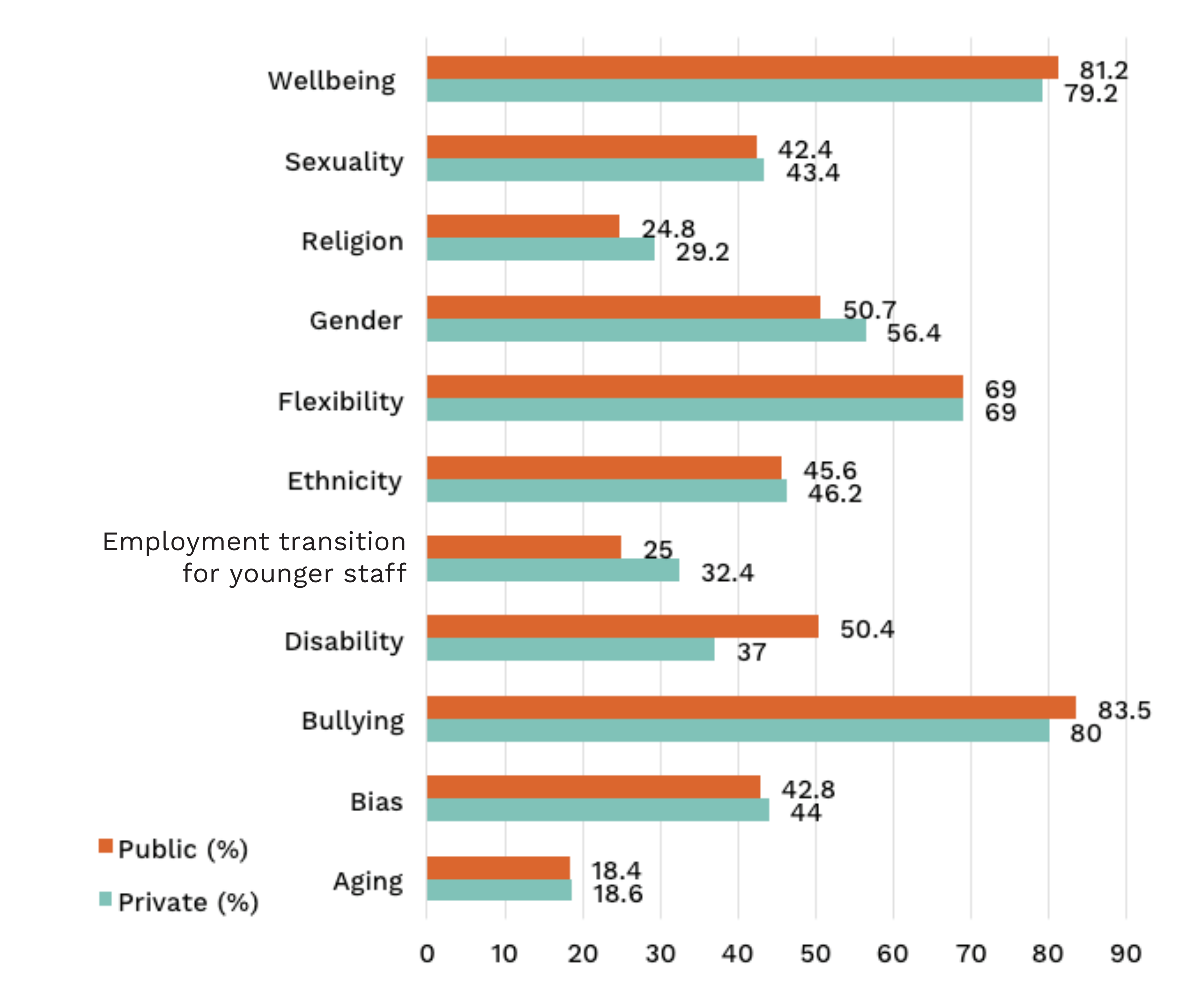

FIGURE 3: DIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES/INITIATIVES BY SECTOR

An organisation's size is a strong indicator of whether they have implemented policies and/or programmes and initiatives to address the surveyed diversity issues (see Figure 4). Six out of the 11 given diversity issues are addressed with policies or programmes by more than 50 per cent of respondents from large organisations. Only three issues (bullying and harassment, wellbeing/wellness and flexibility) are addressed by more than 50 per cent of medium-sized and small organisations. It is noteworthy that the large and medium-sized organisations consistently continued to report more formal policies and programmes/initiatives in place compared to the small organisations for all 11 diversity issues.

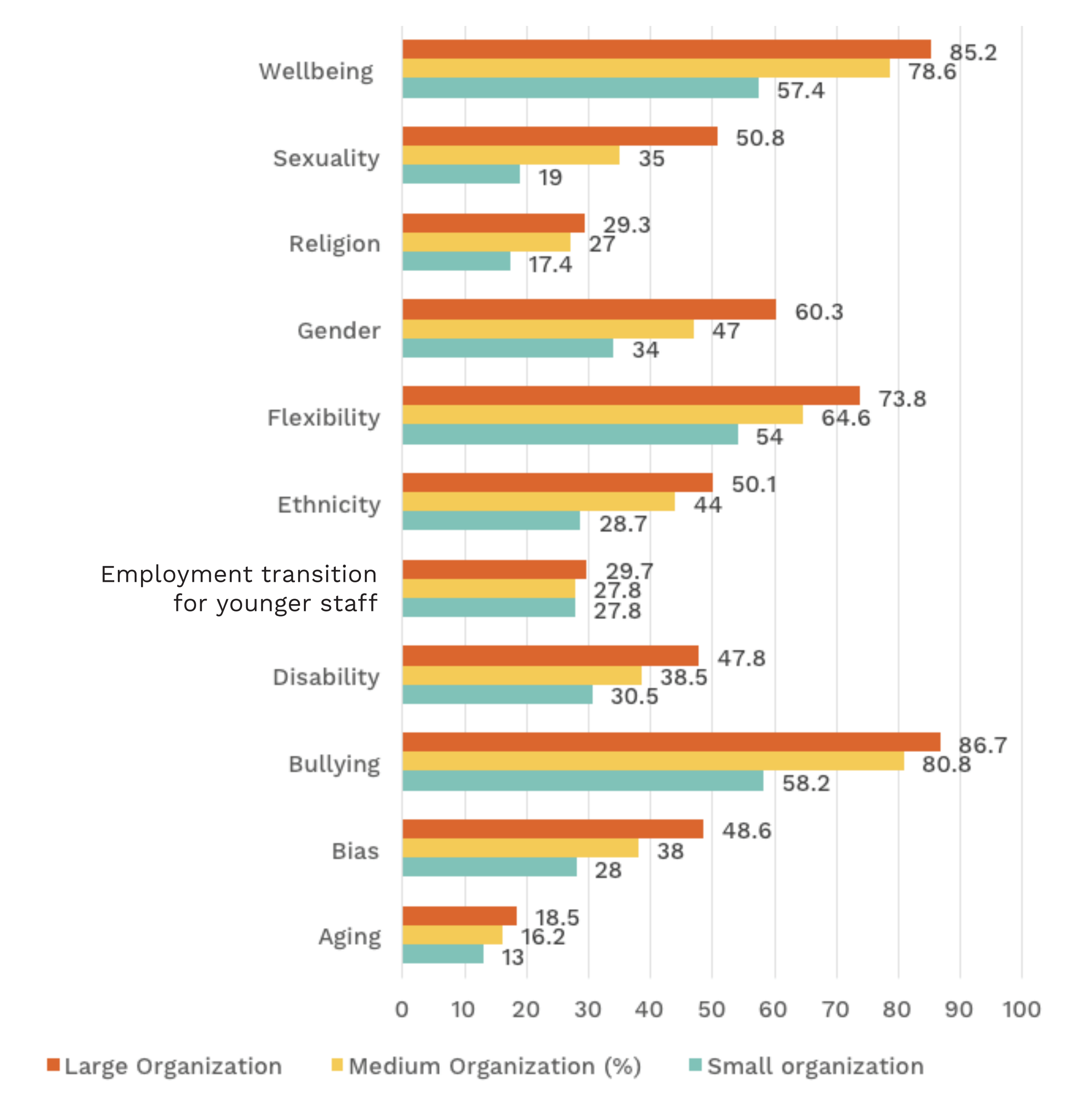

FIGURE 4: DIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES/INITIATIVES BY SIZE OF ORGANISATION

METHODS OF ADDRESSING DIVERSITY IN THE ORGANISATION

Respondents were asked to reflect on how their organisation addresses the surveyed diversity issues by selecting from multiple response options. As shown in Table 4 below, the most commonly reported method for addressing diversity in the organisation are 'Consideration of diversity in relevant HR policies' (61.7 per cent), followed by 'Top management commitment to and involvement in diversity issues' (53.7 per cent) and 'Diversity strategy and plan' (42.9 per cent).

METHODS OF ADDRESSING DIVERSITY	March 2020 (%)	March 2019 (%)	April 2018 (%)	April 2017 (%)
Consideration of diversity in relevant HR policies	61.7 (1)	67.7 (1)	51.2 (2)	59.6 (1)
Top management commitment to and involvement in diversity issues	53.7 (2)	66.8 (2)	53.0 (1)	54.0 (2)
Diversity strategy or plan	42.9 (3)	46.2 (4)	28.8 (3)	31.8 (3)
Communication and promotion of diversity to internal stakeholders	41.2 (4)	47.3 (3)	28.8 (3)	31.8 (3)
Diversity council, committee, team or taskforce	38 (5)	38.5 (5)	19.0 (6)	22.8 (8)
Diversity support networks	37.5 (6)	35.1 (6)	21.5 (4)	25.8 (4)
Diversity education and training for people managers	34.6 (7)	34.8 (7)	17.1 (8)	24.8 (5)
Diversity education and training for existing employees	32.3 (8)	29.6 (9)	16.3 (9)	24.5 (6)
Monitoring and reporting diversity performance	28.4 (9)	31.8 (8)	20.5 (5)	23.5 (7)
System or mechanisms for reporting diversity-related concerns	23.3 (10)	28.8 (10)	18.3 (7)	18.9 (9)
Communication about diversity-related issues to external stakeholders	21.2 (11)	29.6 (9)	15.1 (10)	16.9 (10)
Diversity education and training for new employees	20.5 (12)	18.5 (11)	12.2 (11)	16.2 (11)
Other	12.4 (13)	13 (12)	15.1 (10)	13.6 (12)
Diversity-related employment benefits	11.6 (14)	12.5 (13)	5.8 (12)	9.6 (13)
Diversity-related managerial incentives	7 (15)	7.6 (14)	5.8 (13)	4.6 (14)

TABLE 4: TRENDS AND RANKING OF METHODS OF ADDRESSING DIVERSITY IN ORGANISATION, 2017-2020

MEASURING AND EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIVERSITY INITIATIVES

When asked if their organisation formally measures and evaluates the effectiveness of their diversity initiatives, 26 per cent of respondents indicated that their organisation does, which is four per cent lower than last year. Of the organisations that do measure and evaluate the effectiveness of their diversity initiatives, most use internal reporting (55.6 per cent), tracking statistics or metrics (54.6 per cent), and/or regular reviews and stocktakes (27.8 per cent) to do so.

There were no significant differences observed between the private and public sector organisations' formal evaluation of the effectiveness of diversity initiatives. This year, 27 per cent of private-sector organisations and 25 per cent of public-sector organisations reported that they formally measure and evaluate diversity initiatives. The figures were 32.5 per cent and 25.6 per cent respectively for private and public organisations in the March 2019 survey.

Large organisations continued to have more formal evaluation and monitoring of the effectiveness of diversity initiatives. Thirty one per cent of large organisations monitored the effectiveness of their diversity initiatives, compared to 19.2 per cent of medium-sized organisations and 15.7 per cent of small organisations. The figures for large, medium-sized and small organisation respectively were 38.2 per cent, 24 per cent and 11.5 per cent last year.

METHODS OF MEASURING AND EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIVERSITY INITIATIVES	Responses	%
Internal reporting	184	55.6
Tracking statistics or metrics	181	54.6
Regular review or stocktake	92	27.8
External reporting	55	16.6
Don't know	96	29
Other	15	4.5

TABLE 5: METHODS OF MEASURING AND EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIVERSITY INITIATIVES

DIVERSITY ISSUES UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

This section reports the results from those survey questions that were designed to learn more about specific diversity issues broadly categorised in the previous sections. Respondents were asked:

- in what ways wellbeing/wellness presents a challenge to their organisation;
- whether any incidents of bullying and harassment were recorded over the previous 12 months;
- how their organisations responded to recorded cases of bullying and harassment;
- what forms of flexibility the organisation employs;
- what percentage of staff are on non-permanent contracts;
- how organisations engage with workers over the age of 55;
- the gender representation at their organisations' governance and leadership levels;
- whether organisations actively promote gender pay equity;
- in what ways ethnicity constitutes a diversity issue and how it is addressed;
- how the literacy, language and numeracy need of a diverse workforce are addressed;
- and, lastly, the ways in which bias constitutes a diversity issue and how it is addressed.

WELLBEING/WELLNESS

The results on wellbeing/wellness do not suggest any significant divergence from last year's findings; 'mental health of employees' (74 per cent), 'work/life balance' (70.6 per cent), and 'stress' (69 per cent) continued to be the three most important wellbeing issues (see Table 6).

WELLBEING/WELLNESS CHALLENGES	March 2020 %	March 2019 %	April 2018 %
Mental health of employees	74.0	72.0	56.8
Work/life balance	70.6	71.2	71.9
Stress	69.0	70.7	66.8
Physical health of employees	48.8	45.7	51.3
Health and safety	48.2	53.8	43.7
Flexibility	42.6	45.4	37.9
Cultural inclusion/diversity	36.7	32.1	25.4
Implementing wellbeing measures	32.6	31.0	22.1
Illness and absenteeism	19.7	17.9	18.6
Aging	18.6	20.1	23.1
Disability	9.8	11.1	7.0
Don't know	3.4	2.2	0.7
Other (please specify)	1.7	2.17	3.8
None	1.3	1.4	3.3
Not applicable	0.6	0.3	2.0

TABLE 6: WELLBEING/WELLNESS CHALLENGES, 2018-2020

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

In this survey, more than a third of all respondents (37 per cent) stated that instances of bullying and harassment had been reported in their organisation over the past 12 months which is only two per cent higher than last year but continues an upward trend.

Bullying and harassment continue to occur more frequently in public-sector organisations (42 per cent) than in private-sector organisations (32.5 per cent). These figures are consistent with the March 2019 survey.

Again, the size of the organisation matters; 42 per cent of all large organisations had recorded incidents of bullying and harassment, compared to 33 per cent of medium-sized and 19 per cent of small organisations.

Last year, we introduced a new open-ended question about responses to bullying and harassment in order to understand why this is such a prevalent issue when the vast majority of organisations have formal policies and programmes or initiatives in place to address bullying and harassment. This year, we asked a closed question with multiple response options. When organisations were asked to indicate what actions were taken in response to reported cases of bullying and harassment, a combined 55 per cent of respondents reported that either formal or informal actions were taken in response to reported incidents of bullying and harassment. It is also notable that a high percentage (32.6 per cent) of respondents stated that they do not know what actions were taken by their organisations.

RESPONSE OPTIONS	Responses	%
Formal actions were taken	190	42.1
Informal actions were taken	59	13.1
No actions were taken	32	7.1
Don't know	147	32.6
Other	23	5.1

TABLE 7: RESPONSES TO REPORTED INCIDENTS OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

FLEXIBILITY

We asked respondents to indicate what forms of flexibility they provide to their employees (see Table 8). Unchanged from both April 2018 and March 2019 surveys, the most common form of flexibility in organisations was flexible work time (77.7 per cent). Organisations noted the possibility to work remotely (76.7 per cent) and part-time work/reduced hours (75.5 per cent) as the second and third most common forms of flexibility within their organisation respectively. Some forms of flexibility such as flexible/extended leave arrangements, flexible/extended break arrangements, and job share have decreased somewhat when compared with last year's data. However, there are no discernible trends over longer periods of time.

FORMS OF FLEXIBILITY	March 2020 %	March 2019 %	April 2018 %
Flexible work time	77.7	79.1	77.0
Possibility to work remotely	76.7	76.6	64.9
Part-time work/reduced hours	75.5	75.8	70.0
Family-friendly arrangements	59.0	60.3	57.8
Flexible/extended leave arrangements	55.0	59.0	45.5
Time in lieu	51.5	54.6	50.0
Phased return to work	35.7	41.6	28.3
Flexible/extended break arrangements	32.7	39.9	29.3
Flexible workload	15.6	17.4	18.4
Flexible roster	14.7	12.2	16.4
Job share	14.7	19.0	17.4
Flexible roles	14.0	16.8	20.2
Other	2.8	3.3	2.3
Don't know	2.6	1.4	0.7
Not applicable	1.7	0.3	4.5

TABLE 8: FORMS OF FLEXIBILITY IN ORGANISATIONS, 2018-2020

TEMPORARY, FIXED TERM, AND CASUAL CONTRACTS

Respondents were asked to note the approximate percentage of staff on temporary, fixed term, and casual contracts across organisations. The findings are detailed in Figure 5. Only eight per cent of all respondents reported that there is no staff on non-permanent contracts which is two per cent lower than last year. More than half of all organisations (52.6 per cent) stated that less than 25 per cent of their staff hold non-permanent positions (dropped from 56.5 per cent in March 2019). In less than three per cent of organisations, more than half the workforce is employed on either temporary, fixed term or casual contracts.

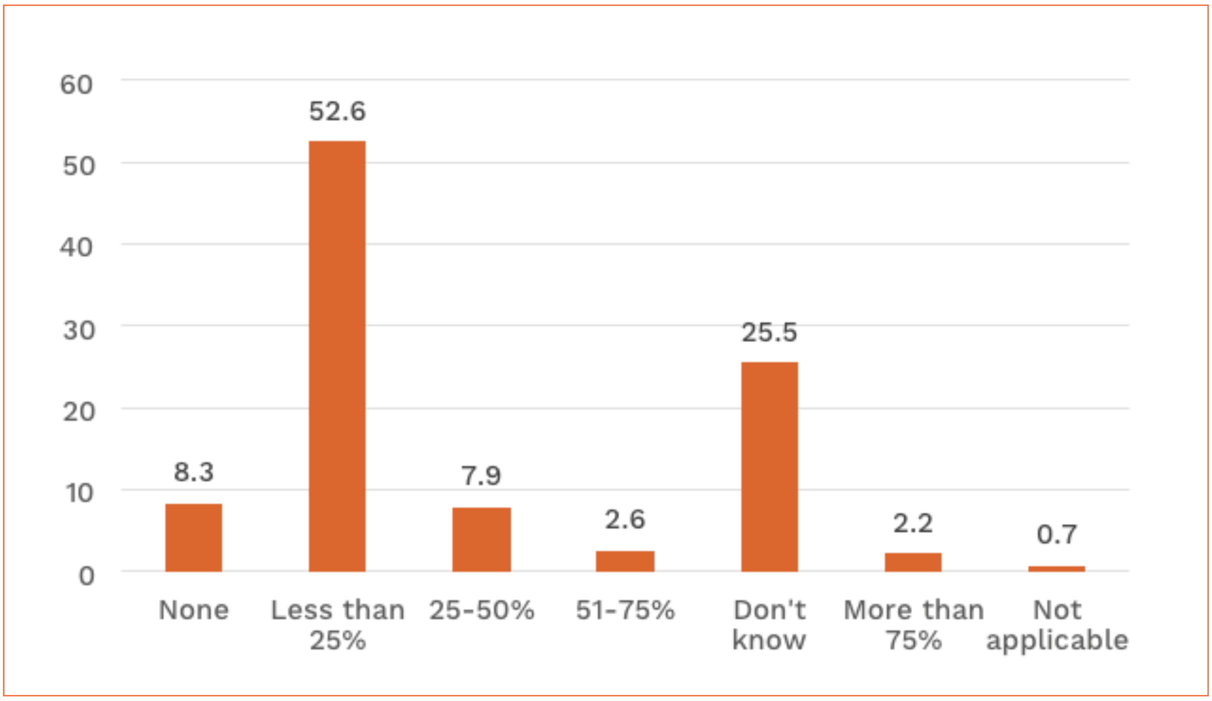

FIGURE 5: STAFF ON TEMPORARY, FIXED TERM AND CASUAL CONTRACTS

AGING

As was the case last year, aging is reported as the seventh most important diversity issue. This continues the decrease in importance we first saw last year. Aging also remains the diversity issue for which organisations are least likely to have formal policies and/or programmes or initiatives in place. Less than one fifth (18.5 per cent) of respondents stated that their organisation had formal policies and/or programmes or initiatives in place, while 41 per cent stated that their organisation had neither of these in place.

This year, we also note a continued decrease in the percentage of respondents who indicate that their organisation encourages the recruitment of workers over the age of 55, from 60 per cent in April 2018 to 47.3 per cent in March 2019 to just under a third of all respondents (31.8 per cent) in this survey. However, this drastic decrease may be at least partially explained by the addition of 'don't know' and 'not applicable' as further response options. Indeed, 41.6 per cent of respondents who answered this question stated that they did not know whether their organisation encouraged the recruitment of workers over the age of 55.

The effects of adding the 'don't know' and 'not applicable' options are therefore also reflected in the figures for different sectors. In this iteration, public-sector organisations (34 per cent) were marginally more likely to encourage the recruitment of workers over the age of 55 than organisations in the private sector (30 per cent). However, when compared with last year's survey data, the percentage of both public (50.4 per cent in March 2019) and private (45.4 per cent in March 2019) organisations encouraging the recruitment of workers over the age of 55 have decreased drastically while more than a third of each ticked the 'don't know' option.

The percentage of small, medium-sized and large organisations that encourage the recruitment of employees over the age of 55 were respectively 52.5 per cent, 33.3 per cent and 27 per cent which constitutes a significant drop from 67 per cent, 46 per cent and 43 per cent in March 2019. However, again large shares of respondents used the don't know option. For instance, 50 per cent of large organisations stated they did not know whether their organisations encouraged the recruitment of older workers.

When asked how their organisation engaged with workers over the age of 55, 34.3 per cent of respondents stated that their organisation had no specific strategy for engaging with workers in that demographic (see Table 9). By far the most common form of engaging with older workers was to value their experience (32.4 per cent) which decreased from 39.7 per cent in March 2019, continuing a downward trend. A larger share of respondents (30.3 per cent) than before, stated they did not know how their organisation engaged with workers over the age of 55.

FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT WITH WORKERS OVER THE AGE OF 55	March 2020 (%)	March 2019 (%)	April 2018 (%)
No specific strategy/treat everyone equally	34.3	37.2	40.6
Value experience	32.4	39.7	42.3
Don't know	30.3	15.8	12.5
Flexible or reduced hours	23.5	32.6	27.9
Older employees in mentoring roles	14.4	20.4	19.5
We offer retirement seminars	6.7	6.5	3.3
Other	5.0	5.2	4.3
Not applicable	4.7	5.7	15.5
Networking opportunities	3.5	4.1	4.9
We offer fitness programmes for older workers	1.8	3.0	3.3

TABLE 9: FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT WITH WORKERS OVER THE AGE OF 55, 2018-2020

GENDER REPRESENTATION

The survey findings show that in 88 per cent of all organisations, women are represented at the 'governance' level and in 91.7 per cent at the 'leadership/decision making' level. These figures are similar to last year.

There is no significant difference in the patterns of female representation between public and private sector. Female representation at the governance level in public and private organisation were 93.5 per cent and 94.3 per cent respectively. The figures for leadership/decision making role were 88.2 per cent and 87.6 per cent respectively.

Overall, gender distribution at governance and leadership/decision-making levels follows patterns observed in previous years. In nearly one third of all organisations, women continue to occupy less than 25 per cent of these roles.

	March 2020	
GENDER DISTRIBUTION	Governance level (%)	Leadership/decision-making level (%)
Less than 25%	32.7	31.5
25-50%	36.1	36.4
51-75%	13.1	15.4
More than 75%	6.0	10.7
Don't know	12.1	6.0

TABLE 10: FEMALE REPRESENTATION AT THE GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP/DECISION-MAKING LEVELS

As before, differences in female representation are slightly more pronounced when we consider the size of the organisations. For example, as shown in Table 11 overleaf, medium-sized and large organisations are more likely to have less than 25 per cent of women in both governance and leadership/decision-making positions (more than 30 per cent) than small organisations (less than 15 per cent).

Conversely, the percentage of small organisations with 75 per cent or more female representation at the governance and leadership/decision-making levels is notably higher than that of the large and medium-sized organisations.

GENDER DISTRIBUTION	Governance level (%)			Leadership/decision-making level (%)		
	Small	Medium	Large	Small	Medium	Large
Less than 25%	13.0	37.0	34.5	14.1	31.8	34.6
25-50%	46.2	36.6	34.1	38.3	33.6	37.1
51-75%	15.0	11.7	13.3	14.1	19.1	14.1
More than 75%	20.4	7.8	2.8	29.2	14.5	5.8
Don't know	5.4	6.8	15.2	4.0	0.9	8.2

TABLE 11: FEMALE REPRESENTATION AT GOVERNANCE AND DECISION-MAKING LEVELS BY SIZE OF THE ORGANISATION

For the second time, participants were also asked if their organisation actively promoted gender pay equity. In response, 440 participants (47.4 per cent) indicated that gender pay equity is actively supported by their organisation, which is approximately 10 per cent lower than last year, when 58.4 per cent reported the active promotion of gender pay equity.

However, there is no significant change in the percentage of the organisations that do not actively promote gender pay equity. Notably, almost a quarter of all respondents (24.7 per cent) reported that they did not know whether gender pay equity was actively promoted within their organisation (up from 16 per cent last year). Consequently, while fewer respondents said that their organisation promotes gender pay equity, it might be that this cohort was simply less aware of such initiatives.

	March 2020		March 2019	
	Responses	%	Responses	%
Yes	440	47.4	215	58.4
No	211	22.7	80	21.7
Don't know	229	24.7	59	16.0
Not applicable	49	5.3	14	3.8
Total	929	100	368	100

TABLE 12: RATES OF PROMOTING GENDER PAY EQUITY, 2019-2020

ETHNICITY

When asked in what ways ethnicity constituted a diversity issue for their organisation, the largest shares of respondents (over 40 per cent) highlighted the underrepresentation of Māori and Pasifika. All other responses to this question are much in line with previous surveys without any discernible trends though a slightly higher share of respondents stated that ethnicity is a focus in recruitment and/or retention of staff (18.1 per cent compared to 13.9 per cent).

RESPONSE OPTIONS	March 2020 (%)	March 2019 (%)	April 2018 (%)
Māori are underrepresented in our organisation	44.9	44	25.9
Pasifika are underrepresented in our organisation	41.5	43.8	22.9
Skills and qualifications are most important in recruitment and/or retention of staff	37.1	38.6	33.9
Finding diverse candidates with the right skills for the job is difficult	29.0	30.4	21.1
Our workforce needs to represent our clientele/ community better	25.2	28.3	16.0
Our workforce lacks ethnic diversity	23.9	23.1	17.3
Ethnicity is a focus in recruitment and/or retention of staff	18.1	13.9	14.7
Ethnicity is not an area of concern for our organisation and does not need to be addressed	12.5	11.4	31.7
Ethnicity is not an area of concern for our organisation because it is addressed	12.0	10.3	13.9
There is a lack of acceptance and understanding of cultural diversity amongst staff	11.5	7.1	6.9
Culturally appropriate service delivery	11.3	10.1	10.4
Don't know	9.0	4.1	7.2
There are language barriers within the workforce or between workforce and clients	5.1	7.9	5.9
Other	4.8	6.5	6.4

TABLE 13: ETHNICITY AS A DIVERSITY ISSUE FOR ORGANISATION, 2018-2020

When asked how their organisation addresses ethnicity as a diversity issue, the largest share of respondents (41.3 per cent) indicated that their organisation fostered an 'institutional culture of inclusion, equity and respect'. This was followed by 'increasing ethnic diversity through hiring practices' (26.7 per cent) and 'cultural competence training' (24.8 per cent). Perhaps most significant is a decrease in the share of participants who state that their organisation hires based on skills and qualifications alone. In 2018 and 2019, this was one of the most common responses at nearly 30 per cent. This year, only 23.7 per cent of respondents chose this response option. Further, there is a notable increase in the percentage of respondents noting that there is cultural competence training offered by their organisation (24.8 per cent) which was only 15 per cent in the last survey. It is also important to note that a higher percentage of respondents (17 per cent) stated that they do not know how ethnicity is addressed as a diversity issue within their organisation compared to only 8.7 per cent in last year.

RESPONSE OPTIONS	March 2020 (%)	March 2019 (%)	April 2018 (%)
Fostering an institutional culture of inclusion, equity and respect	41.3	43.8	28.8
Increasing ethnic diversity through hiring practices	26.7	23.4	20.2
Cultural competence training	24.8	14.9	17.8
Hiring based on skills and qualifications alone	23.7	29.9	29.1
Bias training	22	18.2	10.5
Ethnicity is not specifically addressed	20.7	18.2	31.3
Networking opportunities for employees	19.7	19.0	15.1
Don't know	17	8.7	9.2
Other	3.7	6.8	5.9

TABLE 14: METHODS OF ADDRESSING ETHNICITY AS A DIVERSITY ISSUE, 2018-2020

LITERACY, LANGUAGE AND NUMERACY (LLN)

When asked how their organisation meets the literacy, language and numeracy needs for employees that do not speak English as their native language, nearly 60 per cent of the respondents stated that this is not an area of concern for their organisation. This remains a significant share but continues a downward trend since 2018 (see Table 15).

Smaller shares of respondents indicated that they engaged with LNN issues through informal coaching and mentoring for employees with LLN issues (13.8 per cent) or offering training programmes (8.6 per cent).

These findings indicate that there has been little change in the way organisations respond to the literacy, language and numeracy needs of a diverse workforce.

RESPONSE OPTIONS	March 2020 (%)	March 2019 (%)	April 2018 (%)
This is not an area of concern for our business	59.3	64.4	68.5
This is an area of concern for our business, but we do not at this stage address LLN issues	15.9	14.4	10.0
Informal coaching and mentoring for employees with LLN issues	13.8	13.3	11.7
Offering other training and programmes that support LLN skills development, e.g. financial literacy programmes	8.6	7.6	6.1
Taking LLN needs into account when other training is offered	7.6	8.4	7.1
Referring employees who identify with LLN issues to external providers	7.5	8.7	8.5
Formal workplace LLN training initiatives	7.0	7.1	6.6
Building business awareness of the impact of LLN issues	4.8	4.3	5.8

TABLE 15: FORMS OF ADDRESSING THE LITERACY, LANGUAGE AND NUMERACY (LLN) NEEDS OF A DIVERSE WORKFORCE, 2018-2020

BIAS

When asked about bias in their organisation, nearly 50 per cent of all respondents indicated that there is unconscious bias in their organisations which is an increase from last year's figure of 41.4 per cent. At the same time, however, the percentage of respondents suggesting that bias affects decisions regarding recruitment, promotion, and pay in their organisation has significantly dropped from 53.6 per cent to 37.5 per cent.

BIAS AS A DIVERSITY ISSUE	March 2020 (%)	March 2019 (%)	April 2018 (%)
There is unconscious bias in our organisation	48.9	41.4	22.3
Bias affects decisions (e.g. recruitment, promotion, pay) in our organisation	37.5	53.6	19.3
There is a lack of awareness of bias in our organisation	37.1	36.7	23.6
There is a lack of diversity in the leadership of our organisation	32.8	35.1	16.9
There is a lack of diversity in the workforce of our organisation	24.9	24.7	13.1
Don't know	13.5	7.6	14.8
Bias is not area of concern for our organisation because it is addressed	12.1	10.6	18.0
Bias is not an area of concern for our organisation and does not need to be addressed	6.9	10.9	27.1
Other	4.8	4.6	4.6

TABLE 16: BIAS AS A DIVERSITY ISSUE FOR ORGANISATIONS, 2018-2020

The findings on how these organisations address bias was largely consistent with last year's survey. A higher share than previously indicated that their organisation offers unconscious bias training (27.5 per cent compared to 22.6 per cent) and a slightly smaller percentage stated that bias was addressed informally (19.8 per cent compared to 26.4 per cent).

FORMS OF ADDRESSING BIAS	March 2020 (%)	March 2019 (%)	April 2018 (%)
Bias is addressed in recruitment practices	29.6	31.3	24.4
Our organisation offers unconscious bias training	27.5	22.6	14.5
Bias is not specifically addressed	24.6	22	24.9
Bias is addressed in formal policy	22.4	20.7	16.1
Don't know	20.7	8.7	12.1
Bias is addressed informally on a needs basis	19.8	26.4	25.7
Bias is monitored through regular reporting	8.2	8.2	7.5
Other	3.5	5.2	4.0
Not applicable	3.5	3.8	16.4

TABLE 17: FORMS OF ADDRESSING BIAS, 2018-2020

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

To conclude this year's snapshot, we briefly highlight the key results and consider the implications and questions that arise from them.

These latest results indicate that gender is regarded as one of the most important diversity issues for those businesses which completed this survey. Alongside wellbeing/wellness and bias, and for the second year in a row, gender is among the top three issues of interest. Notably, this has not always been the case. In the 2017 and 2018 surveys, gender ranked mid-table at rank five and as low as rank seven in October 2017. As this survey attests, gender is seen as an increasingly important issue for firms.

The same does not apply to age or ethnicity, however. Age is considered the seventh most important issue, and has dropped in importance from 47 per cent of respondents in April 2017 to 34 per cent this year. It is hard to know why this is the case, especially as the number of over 65s still in paid employment continues to grow and as the number of over 65s generally will double within the next decade (from 600,000 in 2013 to 1.2 million in the late 2020s). This seems counterintuitive and needs to be queried. Why isn't it gaining in importance for businesses and organisations as it gains in demographic importance? Is there a lag between what happens societally and what happens within businesses and organisations?

A similar puzzle is provided by the lack of importance accorded to ethnic diversity. There has been an increase in those responding who see ethnicity as an issue; from 41 per cent in April 2017 to 47 per cent in 2020. But it does not appear as one of the top three in a period when ethnic diversity is changing New Zealand society in significant ways. Of those firms that do acknowledge that ethnicity is an important issue, they are most likely to say that the underrepresentation of Māori and Pasifika is the major concern. This is understandable and important. But why is there not also greater acknowledgement that the fastest growing set of communities – as consumers, as workers – are Asians? Or that ethnic diversity, like age, is transforming New Zealand society at a point where labour and skill shortages have grown?

When we consider how the effectiveness of policies designed to address diversity are implemented and evaluated, we draw the same conclusion as we have in previous years. Those most likely to have policies and to implement those policies are larger organisations and firms. There are undoubtedly reasons for this – the need to achieve financial sustainability, the lack of human resource facilities or a department/section – but it does suggest that important dimensions of diversity are not being considered – and responded to by smaller organisations. This is compounded by the lack of any measures to evaluate success and effectiveness. Only 26 per cent of respondents sought to establish whether what they were doing was having the desired outcome.

This report is being released as New Zealand is in lockdown as part of the country's response to the threat posed by Covid-19. This will disrupt and change work in ways that are still not fully understood – and which might not be fully realised for some time. One assumption is that the changing nature of work will be accelerated by what has been required during the lockdown. Working remotely using new technologies is one example. What will happen to the recognition and responses to diversity that are reported here? Will issues of diversity become less or more important? The responses to the 2021 survey will measure just how disruptive Covid-19 will be on New Zealand organisations and firms. As always, it will be important to gather data on what is happening in the diversity space and to report on the trends over time.

CONTACT US

info@diversityworksnz.org.nz or 0800 DIVERSITY (348 377)

DIVERSITY WORKS NZ