



Ethnic Minorities
& Youth Support
Team Wales

Tîm Cymorth
Lleiafrifoedd Ethnig
& Ieuenctid Cymru



Experiences of Belonging & Living in Wales: Findings from the All Wales Survey for Ethnic Minority People, 2018



Ginger Wiegand and Rocio Cifuentes, EYST Wales, Dec 2019

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About EYST Wales

EYST Wales is an award-winning, beneficiary-led organisation, established since 2005, which aims to support ethnic minority people in Wales to participate, integrate and be a valued part of Wales. We do this through delivering services which are targeted and culturally sensitive, addressing a broad range of areas including BAME (Black Asian Minority Ethnic) young people, families, refugees & asylum-seekers and challenging racism in the wider community. We also seek to challenge negative racial stereotypes and promote better understanding and appreciation of ethnic minorities and their contribution to Wales.

Since 2017, EYST Wales has been funded by the Welsh Government to deliver the All Wales BAME Engagement Programme, engaging broadly with ethnic minority individuals and organisations across Wales, gathering evidence of need, and influencing public bodies to better meet the needs of BAME people in Wales. It is one of seven organisations, funded through the Equality and Inclusion Programme to help Welsh Government achieve the objectives in their Strategic Equality Plan.

Background to the Survey

The All Wales BAME Engagement team consists of one full-time Research/Policy Officer plus four part-time regional coordinators: Wrexham/North Wales, Swansea/West Wales, Newport/Gwent and Cardiff/Central South Wales. Each regional coordinator facilitates a quarterly regional forum, which acts as a platform to unify and amplify the voices of various groups in working toward racial equality in the region. Likewise, the regional coordinators partner with key organisations in each local authority to organise engagement opportunities for BAME individuals and community members to express priorities, concerns and experiences. The All Wales Survey for Ethnic Minority People 2018 is intended to supplement the work of regional coordinators of the All Wales BAME Engagement Programme in understanding and evidencing the experiences of BAME people across Wales, through a common set of questions to illuminate core themes.

We would like to thank the Regional Coordinators Gerli Orumaa, Yaina Samuels, Lee Tiratira, and Rahila Hamid for their hard work in designing and disseminating the survey, and to all those who took the time to complete it and share their experiences with us.

Headline Findings

While there were many positive experiences highlighted within the responses, there was also overall concern with austerity, the changing environment post-Brexit and dogged persistence of institutional racism. There was much variation in responses, particularly in the comment boxes – as should be expected with any group of people. There were both critiques and loves about life and society in Wales.

Key takeaway and points from the survey, which must be acted upon, include the following:

- Respondents generally expressed a sense of belonging, but place, austerity and social attitudes affect a person's ability to participate socially as well as the social cohesion of locations and neighbourhoods;
- Though people find places to feel safe based on a variety of factors, there is a lot of experience of racist abuse and it can affect people's feelings of safety or freedom of movement in specific places or contexts;
- Unfair employment practices, which are institutional, normal and widespread, lead to unlocked potential and waste of talent;
- Structural and institutional racism are difficult to pinpoint and address but are persistent, ever-present, mundane, and arguably more dangerous than overt racist incidents or even hate crimes;
- Wales has valuable aspects, something to build on, but there is a long way to go and achieving racial equality in society will take intent and purposeful action from all sectors.

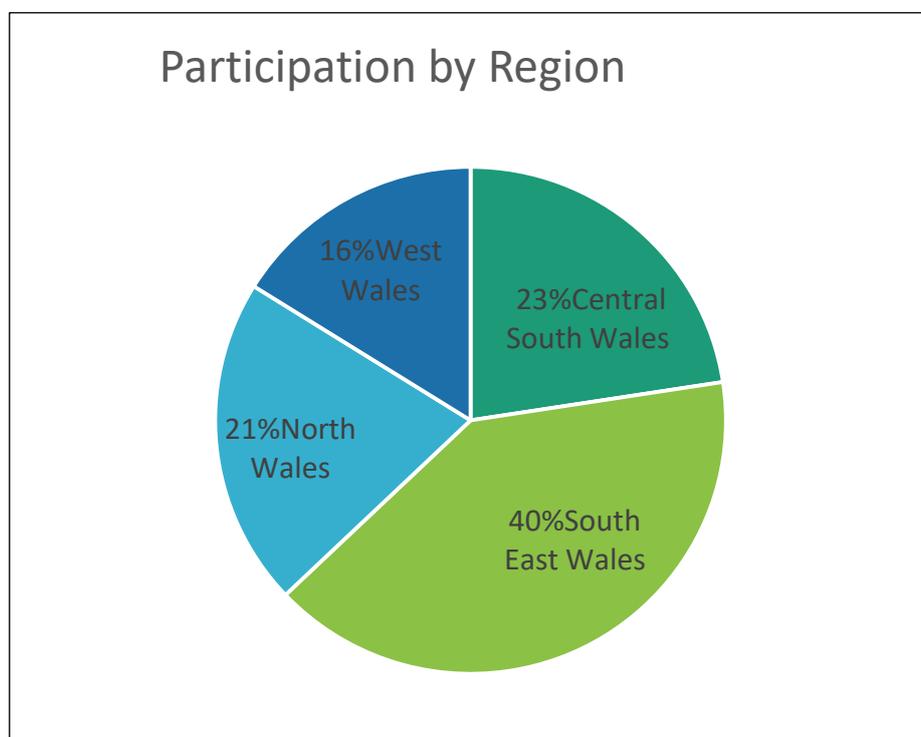
Methodology

In early 2018, two regional coordinators, Gerli Orumaa and Yaina Samuels drafted a question set, based on reoccurring topics in discussions regional fora and grassroots engagement events in local authorities. The team then worked together to finesse the questions and piloted the survey in Swansea. The survey questions focus on three primary themes: Belonging and Safety, Access to Services and Achieving educational potential/Employment experiences.

The survey went online in October 2018 and remained live through 31 December 2018. During that period, the survey was promoted continually via email and social media. Likewise, the regional coordinators, visited groups to facilitate survey responses and liaised with numerous partners to encourage them to facilitate survey responses with their client groups and service users.

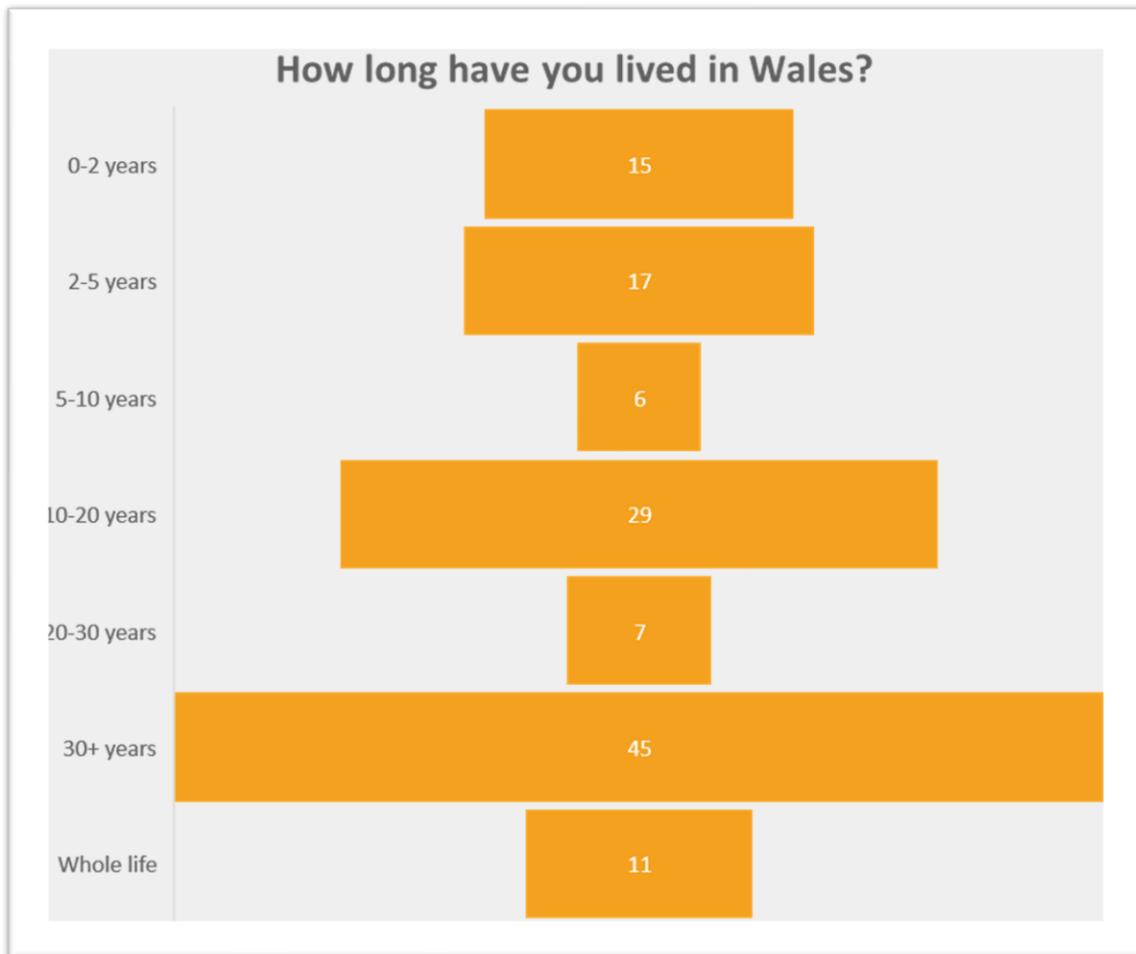
Who participated in the survey?

Over the three-month period, October – December 2018, 143 people responded to the All Wales Survey for Ethnic Minority People. We received responses from 20/22 local authorities in Wales. Most of the responses were from the largest urban areas: Cardiff, Newport, Swansea and Wrexham. We did, however receive responses from suburban and rural areas, including towns in Carmarthen, Powys, Torfaen, Ceredigion and North Wales.



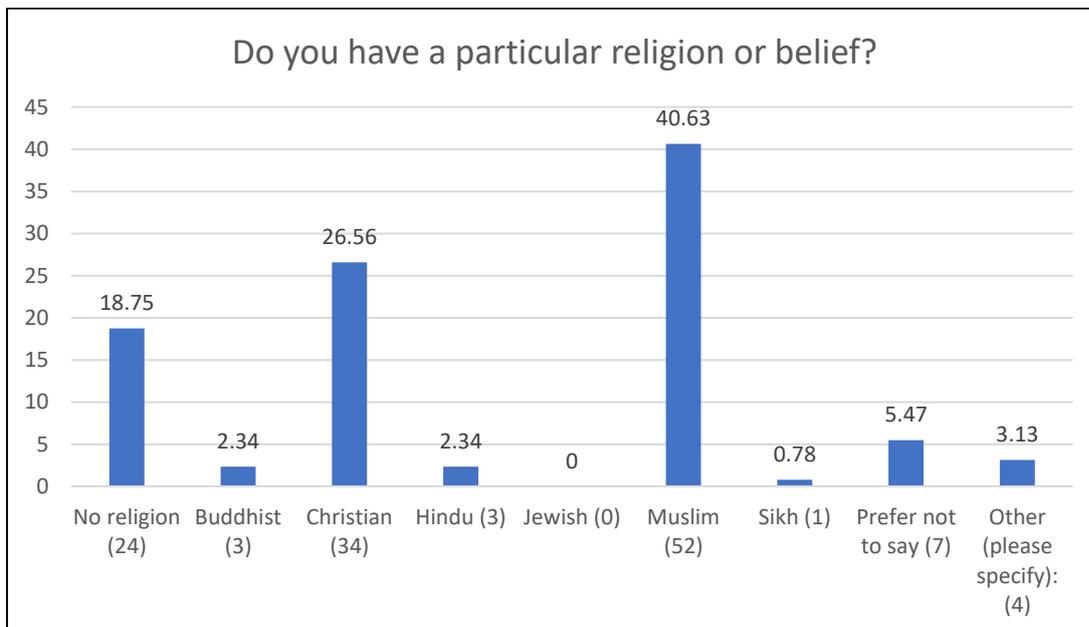
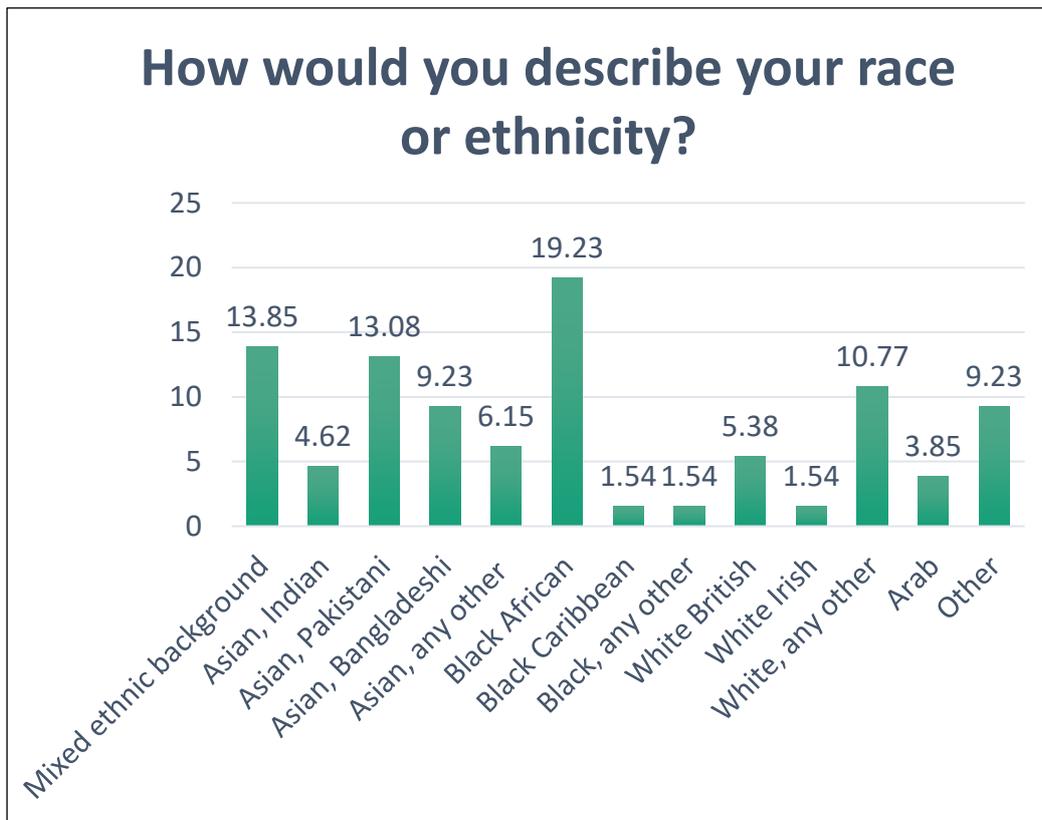
We also asked respondents how long they had lived in Wales. Most respondents (85 people or 64%) have lived in Wales their whole life or for 20+ years. As this was a blank text question, it is likely that many respondents who reported in number of years were born in

Wales. (Most people reported in number of years, but some responded in words such as “whole life”.) The long residence of most respondents does play into the experiences represented and we will comment on that when discussing results of the survey questions. Additionally, 27% of respondents lived in Wales between five and 20 years and 24% lived in Wales for less than five years. Of those who had lived in Wales less than two years, a number were students, and a few were people seeking asylum.

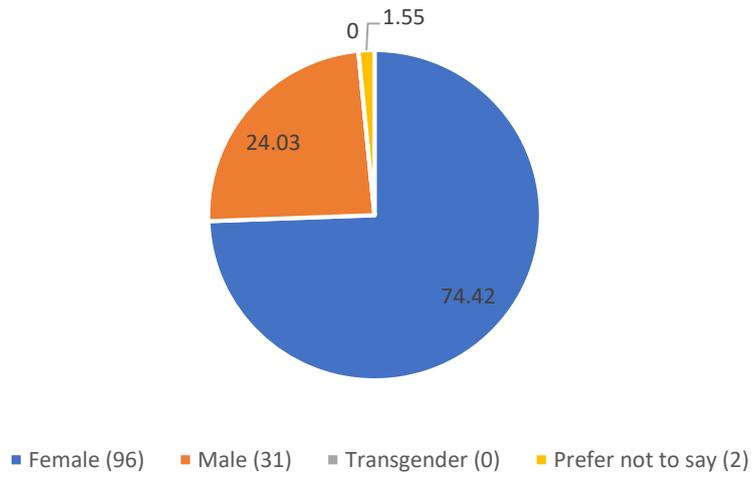


Likewise, we asked respondents about their identities in relation to specific protected characteristics: ethnicity/race, religion, gender, age, disability, and sexuality. Wales is superdiverse and that is reflected in the respondents’ ethnic make-up. The biggest group of respondents were people of Asian descent, about 40%, followed by people of African descent about 22%. Just over 10% of respondents were any White background other than British, most of those being European nationals. There is also diversity in respondents’ religion with Muslims accounting for the largest group, about 40% (not surprising as ¾ of BAME in Wales are Muslim), followed by Christian, then no religion, but with representation of Buddhist, Sikh and other religions. The vast majority (nearly 75%) were female, with about 25% male. None identified as transgender. Just over 80% of respondents identified as heterosexual and 11.5% identified as LGBTQ. Most participants, 80% were 25-64 years old,

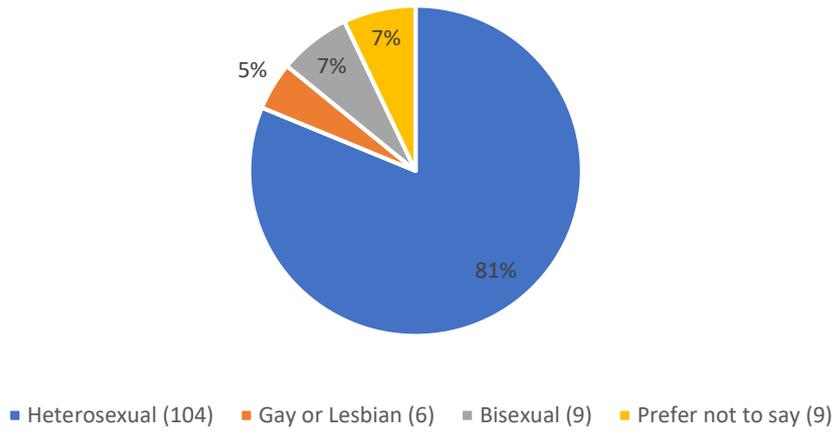
but 10% were 65+ and 9% were aged 16-24. Additionally, 21% of respondents identified as having a disability.



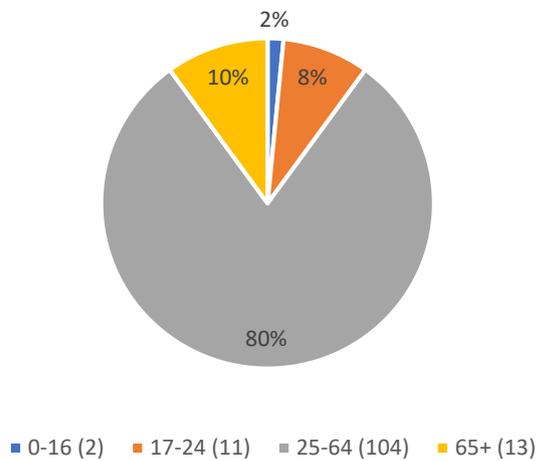
How would you describe your gender?



How would you describe your sexuality?



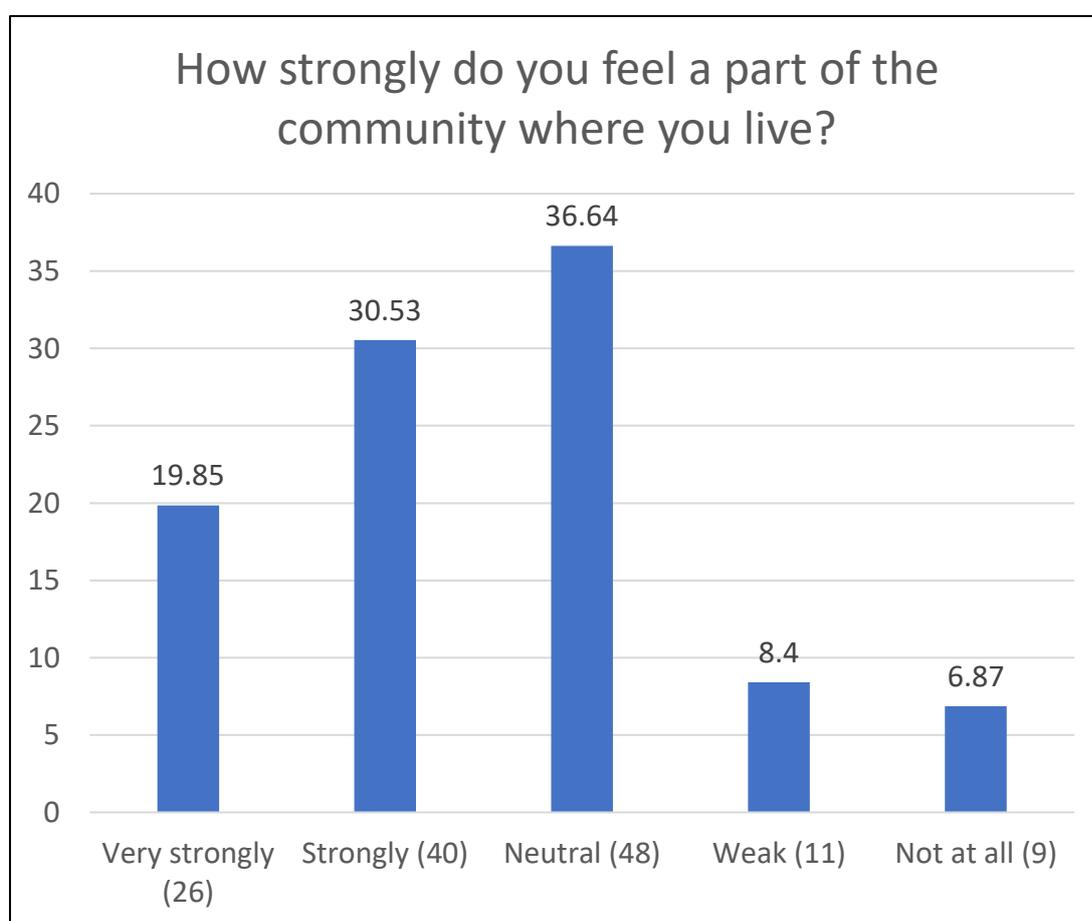
What is your age range?



Belonging & Safety

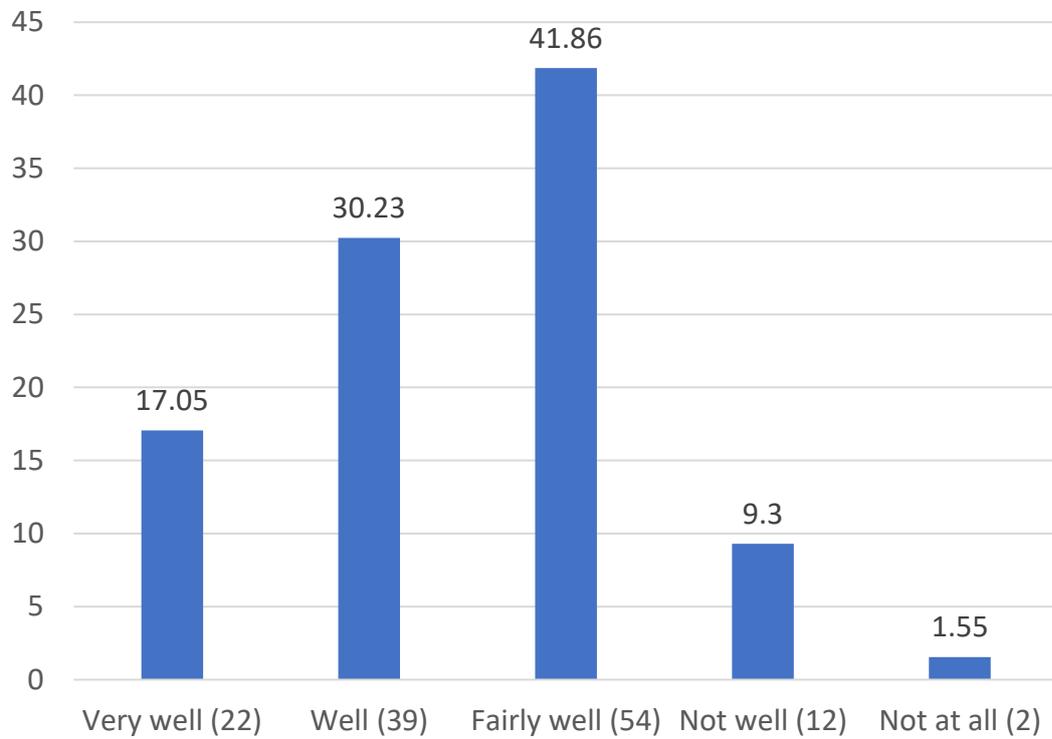
On Belonging & Getting on Together

On the topic of belonging, we asked the following questions. How strongly do you feel a part of the community where you live? Do you socialise with people from different backgrounds? How well do people from different backgrounds get on in your local area? And finally, have you ever felt unwelcome by people from different backgrounds? Each question was followed up by a free text box asking for further comment. The comments for each question had similar trends, so first we will present results of each objective question, followed by a discussion of the trend from the comment boxes associated with them.



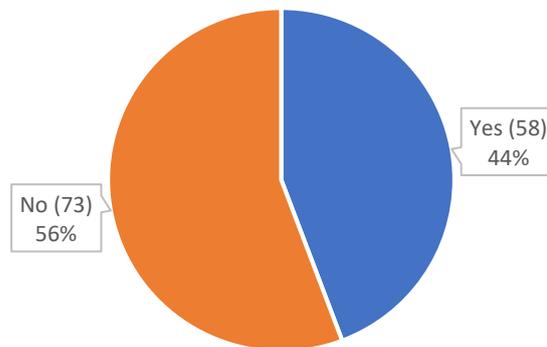
Just over 50% of respondents expressed feeling a strong or very strong connection with communities in which they live. The most common answer was neutral (about 37%). Yet significantly, just over 10% reported feeling a weak or no connection.

How well do people from different backgrounds get on in your local area?



When asked how well people from different backgrounds get on, nearly half (47%) said well or very well. The most common answer, at about 42%, was “fairly well”. A significant minority, 11%, expressed that people from different backgrounds do not get on well in their area. Respondents were also asked, if they socialise with people from different backgrounds: 63% said yes a lot; 34% said a little bit; and 5% said not at all.

Have you ever felt unwelcome by someone from a different background?



Despite the majority of respondents feeling generally positive overall about belonging to community and ability of people from different backgrounds to get on together, 44% of respondents reported feeling unwelcomed by a person of another background.

As mentioned above, each question was followed by a free text box asking for further comment.

Trends in Positive Comments:

- Many comments referred to specific places or characteristics of those places. Common references to places involved the terms “diverse”, “cosmopolitan”, “safe”;
- Strong communities, including BAME communities and neighbourhoods with intercultural history: *“I live in a community that is multi-cultural where everyone knew each other;*
- Membership in specific institutions or types of groups: unions, churches, common interest groups: *“I am a member of [a particular Union group] where we campaign for equality;”*
- Relationships with neighbours and friends;
- Volunteering and participating in community life; One respondent was a community councillor;
- Helping each other - whether in the house, in the garden, or with children;
- A few referred to intercultural workplaces;
- Recognition that mastery of English and ability to drive helps with social participation.

Trends in Ambiguous & Critical comments:

- Place was also a common reference with critiques about lack of diversity, different groups not getting on or a lack of activities on offer. There were also ambiguous comments about places, *“I live in a multicultural area with a history of good relations, however, in recent years, I have observed growing tensions between different black and minority ethnic groups;”*
- Racial abuse;
- Exclusion or limits to inclusion, in which ethnic minorities are “treated as a curiosity,” marked as “other” in interactions, or not completely included. One person said, *“[I’m] treated with curiosity. Most conversations include why I am in the country. Bonding becomes difficult when one has to explain their presence at every turn.”* Another mentioned, *“I have only been asked once to join local people.”* And yet another respondent said, *“Apart from neighbours and church, nobody interacts with us.”* One person whose circle was “professionals” felt that people were hesitant to interact and wondered if that was due to lack of trust;
- Austerity limits social potential; Austerity limits chances to socialise. Referring to people of different backgrounds socialising, one person said in all caps, *“WOULD DO IF OPPORTUNITIES AROSE.”* Likewise, the economic hardship of austerity and its effect on lives and attitudes breeds resentment between groups; Racially segregated social circles (even in multi-ethnic places): *“On a personal face to face level, people in Cardiff get on well – however, social circles seem to be pretty segregated, as well if you look to specific areas of the city;”*

- A few people referred to isolation, including geographic isolation and that which occurs with old age, disability and health issues;
- “Modern life”/disconnection/alienation: *“Cities have little community because they are so big.”*

In summary, people generally expressed a sense of belonging, but place, austerity and social attitudes affect a person’s ability to participate socially as well as the social cohesion of locations and neighbourhoods.

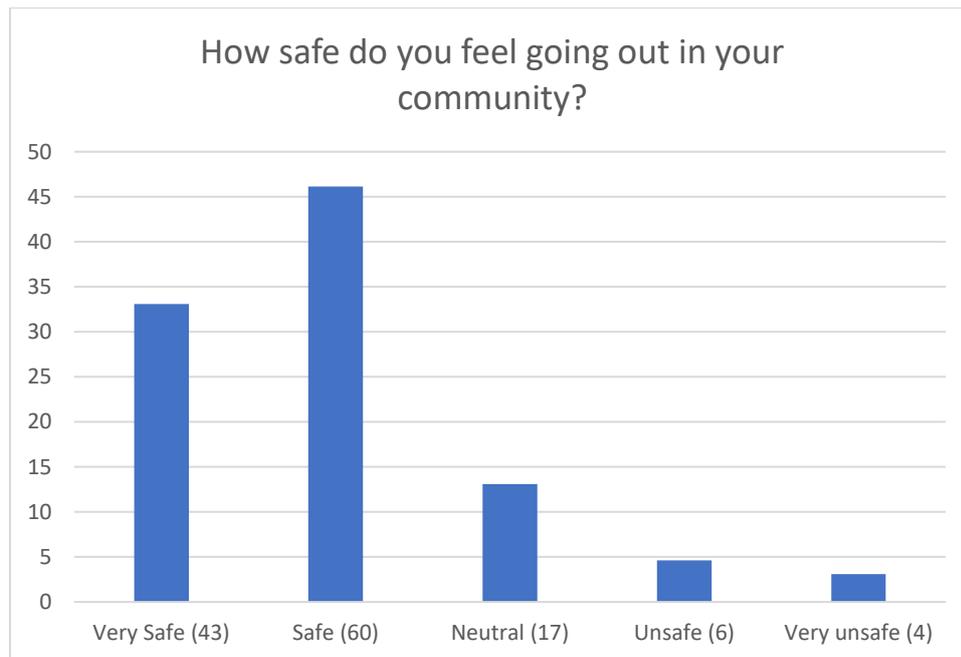
One quote summed up a few key messages in the comments about belonging:

“I think Cardiff with its deep history of immigration has helped with cohesion, but there are increased levels of racism from education, employment, [and the] criminal justice system that doesn’t help and holds BAME people from giving them equal opportunities, [which] in turn, causes resentment. Also, the media has elements of racism and unconscious bias that also does not help and polarises BAME communities.”

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On Safety

We asked the question, “How safe do you feel going out in your community?” Followed by the question, “Have you ever been a victim of abuse because of your race, religion or cultural identity?” Both questions were followed by a free text box asking for further comments. Overall, although people find places to feel safe based on a variety of factors, there is a lot of experience of racist abuse and it can affect people’s feelings of safety or freedom of movement in specific places or contexts.



A firm majority of respondents (nearly 80%) of people feel safe or very safe in their community. Positive comments about safety referred to safety of specific areas or communities, police presence, and having strong community connections – being recognised in community and being able to call upon help or police presence.

Just over 13% felt neutral, and a smaller but significant number, 7.5%, felt unsafe or not safe at all. Comments about not feeling safe typically referred to the following: disorderly or drunken public behaviour, drug dealing and drug use, Anti-social behaviour, facilities such as lights, racial harassment, There were also several comments about not feeling safe in specific places, especially for women wearing headscarf or religious clothing.

“I feel less safe now than a few years ago, current social issues such as Brexit, Trump has made the streets less welcoming for BAME people.”

Brexit Context

There were also a several references to heightened awareness and anxiety in relation to personal safety in recent years, post-Brexit and post-Trump.

“I generally feel very physically safe in Cardiff and in [name of neighbourhood]. I have been told by someone in the local park that their dog doesn’t like coloured people, and I do at times feel anxious about receiving abuse/negative comments because of the colour of my skin, but this has never happened, and I think this anxiety is fuelled by the media especially post-Brexit.”

One person who frequently travels throughout Cardiff said, *“I generally feel comfortable, because I know the areas well, but with the rise in racism, I am very conscious of my surroundings.”*

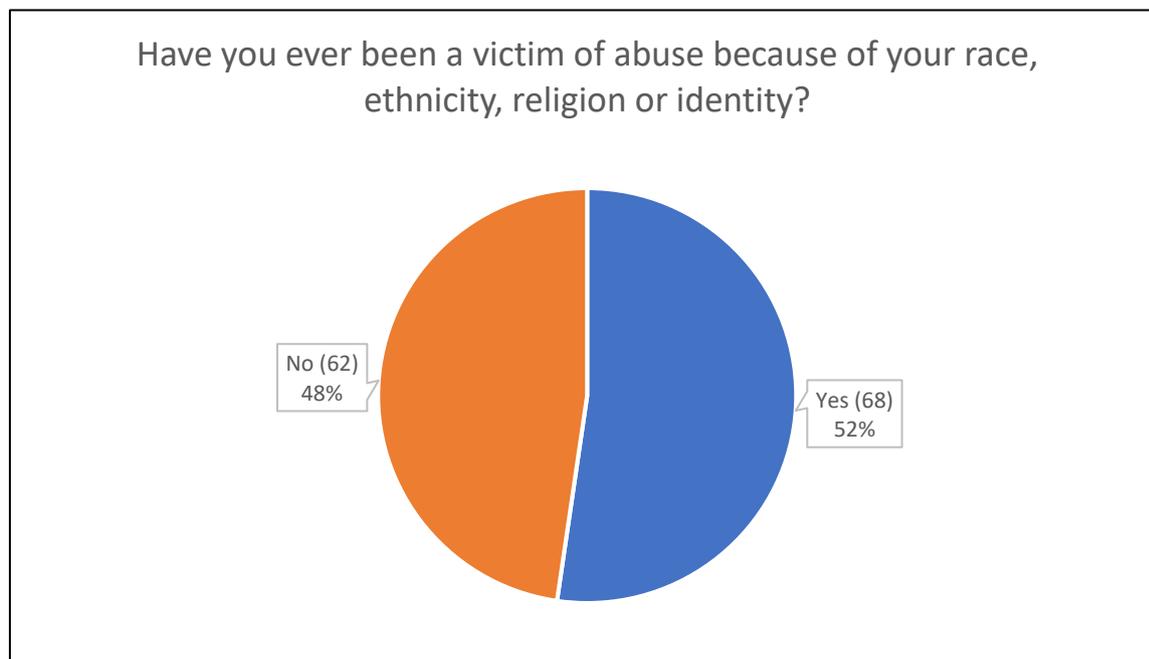
Another said: *“I feel less safe now than a few years ago, current social issues such as Brexit, Trump has made the streets less welcoming for BAME people.”*

Likewise, a few people noted feeling that institutions are not safe: *“I am a migrant but I am white. Only when I start speaking, people understand that I am foreign. [Being] White and looking European - give me an advantage to disappear in the mass. So, I feel safe as much as a White British person in an ordinary day, but I do not feel safe at an institutional level and when my background is exposed in some occasions.”*

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Hate Crime

In addition to the question about feeling safe, respondents were also asked about experiences of abuse due to racial/ethnic or religious identities. Reports of hate crimes and incidents have risen by 17% in the year 2018/19 compared to 2017/18 against a 10% overall rise across England and Wales, and figures have also doubled since 2013. Of the 3932 recorded hate crimes in Wales during 2018/19, 2676 or 68% were race hate crimes¹.



Despite the majority of people feeling safe or very safe, most people (about 52%) had experienced abuse due to their racial, religious or cultural identity. There were a wide variety of comments to the follow up free text question, “Can you tell us more?” Some referred to territory/context in which abuse takes place: drive-bys in cars, public transport, unfamiliar places or neighbourhoods, schools. A few people referred to being cautious about their movement, especially since the Brexit referendum.

A wide variety of types of abuse were recounted: name calling, spitting, vandalism of house and property, physical attack, sexual harassment. A few respondents referred to additional targeting of them as an LGBTQ person. Harassment provoked by religious clothing, was also a very common response.

There were a wide range of comments relating to whether racial abuse is worse today or back in time. Some people said that abuse was worse and more common 20/30 years ago or upon arriving in the UK in the 60’s, whilst others noted a sense that racial abuse is

¹ Home Office, 2019

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/839172/hate-crime-1819-hosb2419.pdf

growing and public racist expressions are more accepted and more common since the Brexit referendum.

Most comments referred to experience of abuse as occurring occasionally or infrequently; however, some people shared stories of persistent racial abuse and harassment spanning years. In comments relating to questions about belonging and safety, there was a pervading sense that markers of ethnic minority identity make one vulnerable to abuse, incidents and hate crimes.

More or less everyday White people pick on me because of my covered body and head scarf.”

Unsurprisingly, many Muslim women spoke of abuse and being targeted due to skin colour and religious dress: *“More or less everyday White people pick on me because of my covered body and head scarf.”* Another woman recounted multiple types of persistent abuse: being sworn at, mugged, and physically abused: *“People made comments about me carrying a weapon. Because [I] am a Muslim, and I wear traditional dress, I feel as though people think I am a terrorist.”* Some women said they restrict movements to certain areas or certain times to decrease risk of abuse.

People made comments about me carrying a weapon. Because [I] am a Muslim, and I wear traditional dress, I feel as though people think I am a terrorist.”

There were recurring comments about “normal types” and “usual types” of racial abuse – a sense it is somehow normal or inevitable. One person said, *“Nothing beyond generic, ‘All immigrants should go back home.’”*

Again, there were references to the damage of institutional racism. The same person quoted above who downplayed abusive speech as “nothing beyond generic,” went on to say, *“However, I feel devalued by the media and the government’s attitude and fearful due to Brexit”*

Access to Services

We asked people to rate how easy or how difficult it is to access specific services on a sliding scale, 1 being very easy to access and 10 being very difficult to access. The following table shows the average results:

How easy or difficult is it to access the following services? 1=Very Easy to 10=Very Hard	
Service	Average
Doctor	4.77
Dentist	4.88
Benefits	4.18
Housing	4.14
Education	3.85
Mental Health	4.77
Advice	4.37
Sports/Leisure	4.27

Overall, people found services to be somewhat accessible, with health and mental health rated least accessible. However, this may have to do with the fact that many respondents have been in Wales for numerous years. In fact, several qualitative comments referred to why the respondent had ease of access compared to someone in a different situation:

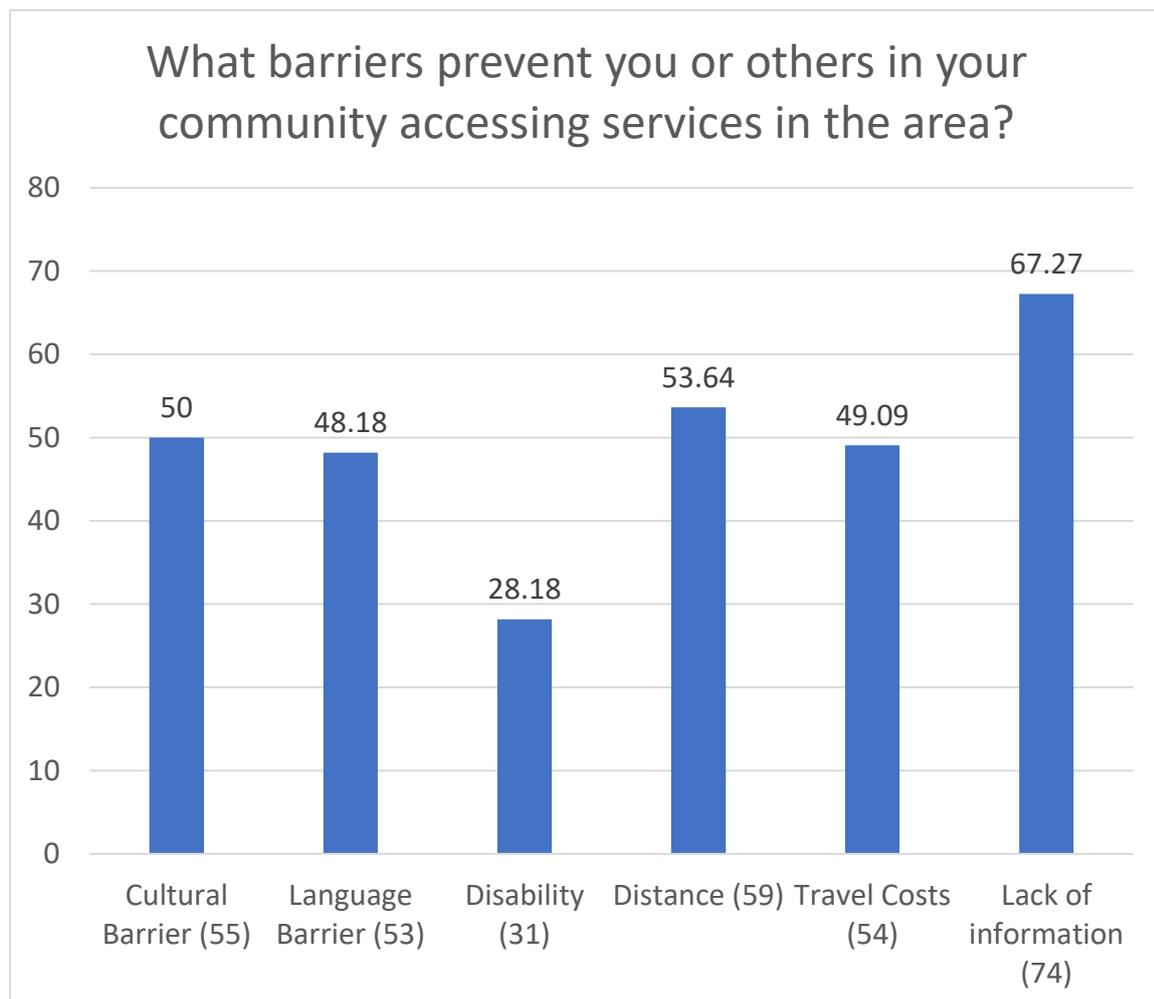
“As I am confident of how the system works, I am on a personal level very confident with all the above, however, if this was another family member like my mother, then the scale will be the opposite way round.”

“I am lucky to be brought up here; I have my own transport and speak English. But the biggest barrier for others is language”

Thus, most respondents suppose that ease of access relies on and varies according to many factors including transport, finance and language.

In qualitative comments, respondents also referenced concerns about the following issues: lack of women only sports facilities, low access to immigration solicitors, no recourse to public funds for immigrant spouses, and access to housing – both social housing and private rented sector.

In a multiple tick box question, we also asked respondents for themselves and other members of their communities, what they perceive to be barriers to accessing services.



Despite respondents rating their access to services as fair/ok, they rated some of these barriers as profound or significant. 67% of respondents noted lack of information as a barrier. Qualitative comments connected lack of information with the following: English language/reading skills, isolation, unfamiliarity with British systems, pressed services providers who lack either lack time, cultural competency or empathy. About 50% of respondents noted distance and travel costs as a barrier rendered particularly significant when living in rural areas or on a low income. Likewise, about 50% of respondents noted

cultural and language barriers noted as significant. One respondent replied, *“Accessing services for family members with [specific named conditions] is difficult as their cultural needs are not always met.”* Another respondent astutely noted that cultural barriers should be construed as White service staff having cultural bias and ethnocentric outlooks.

In a follow-up question, we asked what other barriers affected access to services for respondents or members of their community. The top three were discrimination, austerity, and transport options/lack of personal funds.

Discrimination

The biggest perceived barrier affecting access to services was discrimination, racism and unconscious bias – which one person referred to as “Hidden Discrimination.”

“I think [the barriers are] a lot to do because who you are. We understand budgets are tight, but it’s attitude as I am still an outsider!! But on opposite side so many times, I came across lovely people treating you with respect as a human, not what your colour or faith is.”

“Judgements made by professionals, discrimination and lack of sign posting”

“The public sector is crucial for all communities, unfortunately, institutional racism is very prevalent; people in important roles and positions are not affected by the increased levels of discrimination faced by BAME people. No point in having the Equality Act or Well Being of Future Generations Act if neither the Commissioners or their staff are reflective of the BAME communities.”

Austerity

Numerous comments note that austerity is a profound barrier to services. *“Services are so stretched it feels like no one cares.”* One person recounted their struggle to get information and connect with services because a one-to-one service ended, *“Professionals don’t understand the culture, nor [have] mental health understanding.”* Another person referred to being currently disconnected to information about services due to cuts in funding: *“[Previously], I had assistance from [name of organisation], but the worker left as there was huge fund cuts, so I lost that help.”* These comments mirror experiences recounted to BAME Engagement Programme regional coordinators who are told that austerity have affected BAME service users in the following ways: 1) Fewer BAME frontline workers with understanding through lived experience than in previous years and 2) Fewer frontline workers who had built understanding through months or years of working with BAME service users as key programmes were cut.

Lack of funds/low income

Several statements noted that lack of funds exacerbates barriers to services, particularly when transport is already a barrier. A few people marked higher and further education as very inaccessible, because of lack of funds. There were also comments related to caring responsibilities.

We conclude this section with a strong statement from one survey respondent, using language popular in current Welsh Government policy:

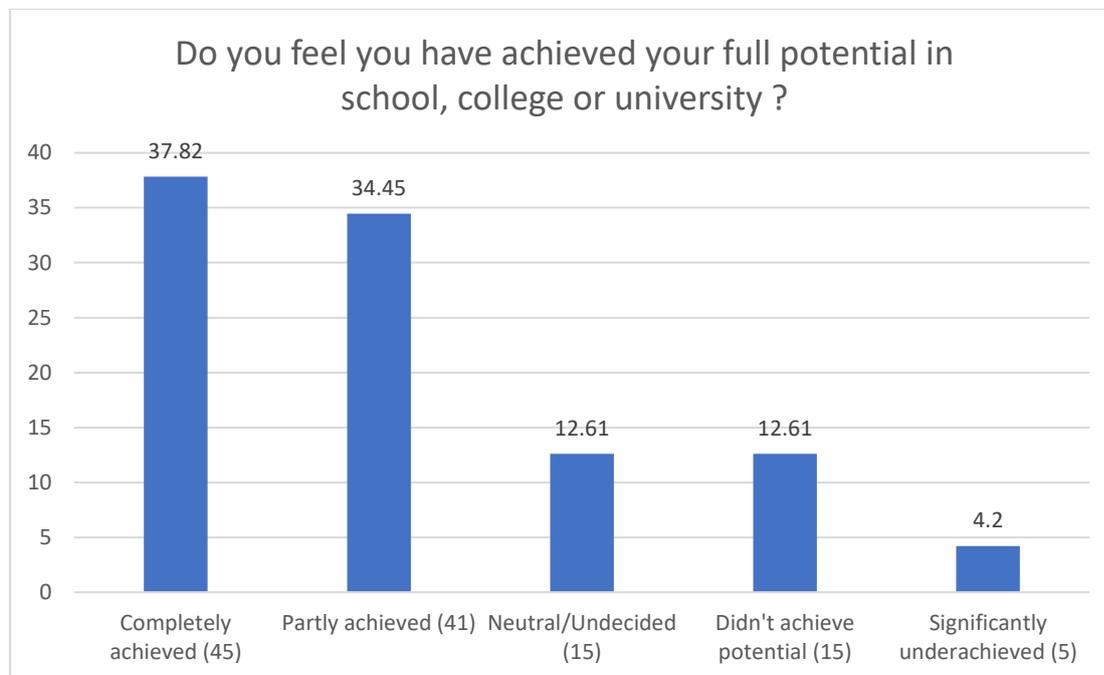
“Resilient communities do their best to support people from BAME backgrounds.”

“I think [the barriers are] a lot to do because who you are. We understand budgets are tight, but it’s attitude as I am still an outsider!! But on opposite side, so many times I came across lovely people treating you with respect as a human, not what your colour or faith is.”

Achieving Potential in Education & Experiences in Employment

We asked people three questions: Do you feel you have achieved your full potential in school, college or university? Have you had any trouble getting qualifications recognised? And finally, are ethnic minorities treated fairly in the workplace? Each question was followed by a free text box asking respondents to explain their answers.

Achievement in Education



Nearly 38% of people reported completely achieving their full potential and nearly 35% of respondents reported partly achieving potential. Nearly 30% of respondents felt undecided/neutral or that their potential remained locked, underachieved.

Positive comments referred to personal work ethics, community connections and degrees/qualifications achieved – including a number with honours and awards attached. Ambiguously, some referred to going outside Wales to access education and opportunity.

Comments referring to lack of opportunities referenced the following:

- Lack of support and information, including careers guidance.
- Being hindered or actively discouraged – there were references to low expectations of teachers as well as lack of opportunities to gain experience. One mother said, *“In primary school, the children weren’t encouraged to excel, and I feel their progress was hindered rather than promoted.”* A university student referred to the lack of opportunity to work in the lab of a supervising professor, compared to other students.
- Racism, both in terms of discrimination in institutions but also the lasting impact that previous experiences of racism have on one’s psyche, confidence and motivation.

- There were some references to finances and caring responsibilities.
- A number of people referred directly to the concept of “Whiteness” and being on the wrong side of “Whiteness”. One respondent referred to “*a White curriculum and a focus on White students*” as the root of poor educational experience. Another critiqued the “*White myth of respectability & meritocracy*”, that following the rules in White-middle class dominant culture inevitably leads to pay-off for BAME people.

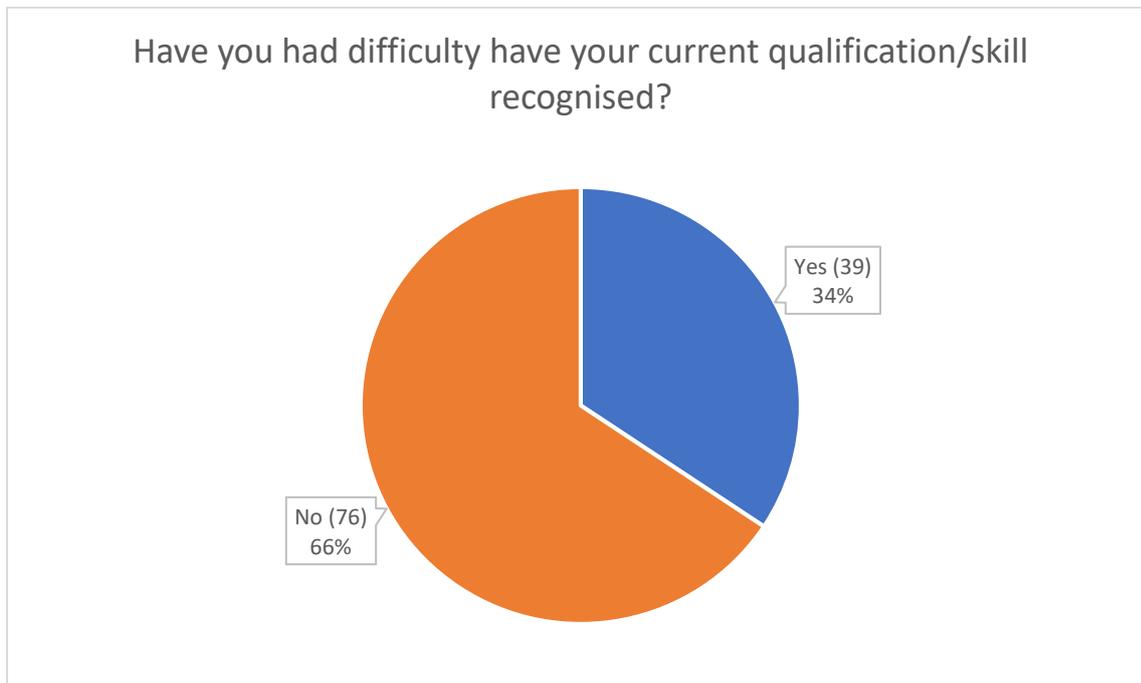
The following quote sums up a few recurring themes in the comments on achieving potential:

“Didn’t achieve full potential in school – teachers were not supportive and labelled us as ‘ethnic minority children’ difficult to manage and engage with. They couldn’t relate to our differences and our values – this impacted my schooling badly. University was better but the lack of graduate jobs has now set in and so this catch-22 situation of not having any opportunities to gain experience to get a job is much worse – particularly if you are BME.”

“Didn’t achieve full potential in school – teachers were not supportive and labelled us as ‘ethnic minority children’ difficult to manage and engage with. They couldn’t relate to our differences and our values – this impacted my schooling badly. University was better but the lack of graduate jobs has now set in and so this catch-22 situation of not having any opportunities to gain experience to get a job is much worse – particularly if you are BME.”

Recognition of Qualifications

We asked if people had difficulties having qualifications or skills recognised. Most people interpreted this as we meant it – relating to recognition of qualifications and skills garnered overseas. But a few interpreted the question to include UK qualifications/skills – thus, have you been able to capitalise on skills and qualifications you have earned in UK.



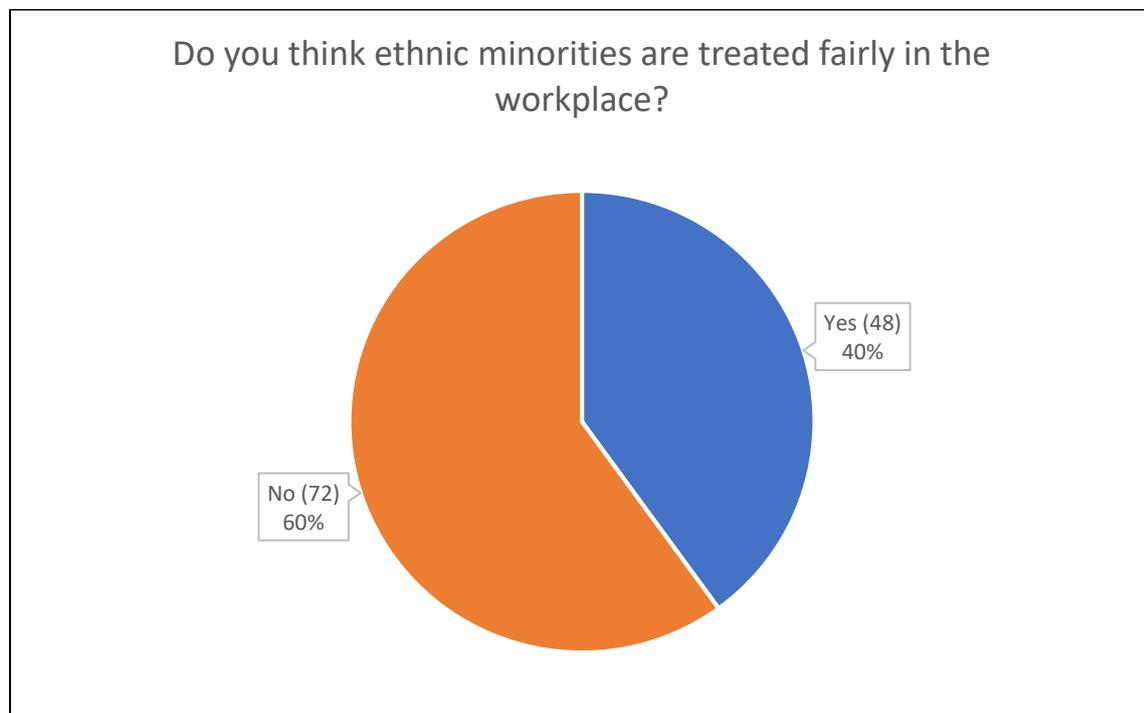
More than 1/3 of respondents reported difficulty in having skills or qualifications recognised.

A few people born outside the UK referred to needing UK NVQs in addition to HE qualifications in order to achieve work. One person said their PhD was recognised but they were only “professionally accepted” after completing UK NVQs. Another said, *“It is not the recognition; it is the acceptance. I only got work after I had done some NVQs.”* One degree-holder who achieved employment after volunteering with an organisation, felt they needed to constantly prove them self in work and professional networks. One qualified health professional “lacked know-how” on getting registered to practice in UK. Positively, one person noted that they are skilled in a shortage and priority area, so their credentials are readily recognised.

“It is not the recognition; it is the acceptance. I only got work after I had done some NVQs.”

Experiences in Employment

We asked a simple yes/no question, “Do you think that ethnic minorities are treated fairly in the workplace?”



A 60% majority of respondents think that ethnic minorities are treated unfairly in the workplace. This result mirrors 2012 research by Race Council Cymru, where a survey of 220 ethnic minority people in Wales, showed that respondents perceived employment as the least fair area of society². Likewise, it is in line with numerous academic research articles which prove ethnic penalties in UK labour markets and discrimination in recruitment practices and progression outcomes³

“Employers judge me when I walk into an environment or interview because of my religious garments - automatically I’m at a disadvantage and this unconscious bias has

² Race Council Cymru 2012

https://docs.google.com/file/d/1h63gd4YYVqq311wcV5BiR_QP9kPdaQTFpJvh107EELtOe4KqK4DITq4VNyidDVI/GyEUsJdwMYaXVzyXp/edit?pli=1

³c.f. Chwarae Teg, 2019 https://chwaraeteg.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/TGC-Barriers-to-BAME-Women_full-report.pdf

now become conscious bias, the sense of difference is felt straight away.”

The follow up qualitative question, “Why do you say this?” received the most responses of the free text boxes: 120 responses/143 participants.

The few positive comments stressed that organisations and organisational culture matters: One person said, “All depends on where you work. I have worked in a school where I had a lot of respect.” More ambiguously, one person said, “It depends on the person, nature of work and organisational culture,” but noted that “you may be very proficient at your job but may not be able to demonstrate your skills or knowledge if opportunities are not open to you.”

“I have met so many hard-working, experienced and dedicated professionals who never get promoted.”

The majority of comments were critiques of the following problematic dynamics:

- “Proven performance, passed over for promotion” was the most common theme, with numerous references to working two or three times as hard as White colleagues to gain recognition. As well as themselves, respondents just as often referred to seeing BAME colleagues and friends consistently denied progression opportunities. One representative comment: “I have met so many hard-working, experienced and dedicated professionals who never get promoted.” Another respondent who recounted similar scenarios provided an explanation, suggesting lack of progression is due to “discrimination and also [BAME people] are not given as much training compared to [White] British or Welsh people.”

“The psychology of not seeing yourself represented can stem motivation and self-belief.”

- Under-representation of BAME people in management and a consequent lack role models or mentors with lived experience to relate to BAME employees: “The psychology

of not seeing yourself represented can stem motivation and self-belief.” Likewise, homogeneity at the top reinforces the institutional racism with managers less likely to question the status quo.

- Institutional racism which is “subtle” and “goes unchallenged.” This manifests as a lack of “organisational trust” and a “*fear to implement ideas and initiatives of BAME employees*”. One person said, “*If I ever asked or express what I like to do, [I’ve] been told funding not available, or not in my work role, or I would not be able to [perform] my job [along with the] extra I wish or like to do!*” Respondents also referred to the marginalisation and isolation of BAME employees. One person referred to “*microaggressions exhibited by middle class white staff even in organisations that purport to be diversity aware and inclusive.*” Likewise, “undermine” was a recurring verb as was reference to establishment “*fear of being outsmarted, fear of change.*” Respondents also critiqued managers who can’t or won’t open pathways for BAME employees, who “*think in peer groups ...like clones ... [totally overlooking] potential in diversity ... and are afraid of mistakes so stay in their comfort zone.*”
- Again, “Whiteness” was a recurring theme. Respondents referred to being “held back by “White managers” and unprogressive “White leadership courses.”
- A few comments referred to exploitation, mostly for people who do not speak or read English well.

“microaggressions exhibited by middle class white staff even in organisations that purport to be diversity aware and inclusive”

We also asked, “What makes it hard to find and keep jobs or progress in jobs? Most common responses referred to markers of “difference” & “otherness”: skin tone, name, speaking with a non-British accent, religious dress. One person spoke at length of being “othered”: “*Employers judge me when I walk into an environment or interview because of my religious garments - automatically I’m at a disadvantage and this unconscious bias has now become conscious bias, the sense of difference is felt straight away and this impacts how they interact with me and how they will either offer me a job or even invite me to an interview.*”

Others referred to lack of opportunities to develop and gain experience: lack of training, lack of work experience opportunities and lack of trust in BAME ideas. “*Sometimes a person has to find courses themselves because they are not offered via their employer. Cost and time are huge barriers for people.*” One aspirational barrister could not find a host law firm to take the next progression step on their journey. Likewise, people on shift-work are hard-pressed to access English and Digital Literacy classes.

Other factors mentioned included:

- Racial harassment in the workplace
- Types of work available in Wales – Most jobs are low-rung employment with limited opportunities to progress and there is a lack of “higher jobs in the public sector.” *“It is sometimes not fulfilling, or it is seasonal occupation; Swansea needs to progress with regards to entrepreneurship.” “Part time work for full time mothers is difficult to find.”*
- A few referred to mastery of English Language
- A few referred to transport, geography and health/disability

The following quote exemplifies a number of dynamics and concerns repeatedly expressed in respondent comments:

“I find the racism in work so subtle that it is very difficult to prove, but they make a point of 'othering' and highlighting that I am of a different nationality and skin colour ... I have to work twice as hard as my white colleagues, I feel as though they are threatened by my skills set and keep asking me to do basic admin work to undermine me and make themselves feel better ... I find it difficult to progress in work as there is no support given to further your career, there are so few BME in senior posts that it is difficult to get mentored or coaching from someone who understands the cultural differences.”

Respondent’s comments also presented solutions to improve outcomes for BAME people in the workplace, including suggestions to:

- Change selection procedures;
- Rethink where to advertise vacancies;
- More BAME people in management and on interview panels;
- Proper inductions for all staff;
- Extra training for BAME staff members;
- Support to BAME employees and finally;
- Racial awareness efforts at all levels of organisations top/middle/bottom.

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Closing Question: Is there anything else you want to tell us as a BAME person living in Wales?

We closed the survey with an open question – ‘What else do you want to tell us about living in Wales?’ 68 people answered this question with a wide variety of opinions and topics. We coded responses into positive, ambiguous/neutral and critical categories. There were 27 critical, 22 ambiguous and 19 positive.

Recurring positive references:

- Wales is beautiful;
- Wales is safe;
- Wales is a great place to live;
- People help each other;
- Wales has strong communities; people made references to specific places to live or specific communities

Recurring ambiguous references:

- “Ok for me but I see other BAME [people] struggle;”
- We are in a position to change – or some has started - but have a long way to go.;
- Many comments were positive about Wales as a place, but austerity strains opportunities and communities.

Critical or needs to change:

- Need education at all levels (child to adult, school to service providers) about racism in order to build skills to be competent and empathetic citizens in a racially diverse society;
- Need representation of BAME people in employment in key sectors: education, service provision, public sector;
- Massive impact of austerity;
- Provision of language other than English/Welsh;
- Discrimination;
- Wales needs a more powerful and equitable labour market.

One quote seems to encapsulate a lot of survey responses:

“The discrimination is not always visible and obvious but there is definitely an unconscious bias everywhere. But, I am very happy to live in Wales, and I feel safe and hopeful here. There are great people and organisations working for race equality and diversity, supporting individuals. Even though it might be progressing with baby steps, I can see there is an intention to overcome the problems. I am worried about the wider political climate in Britain though. The uneven economic distribution, growing poverty and rising right wing politics have negative impacts on communities.”

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Concluding Remarks & Recommendations

This research has illuminated the experiences of BAME people living in Wales at a time when questions of race, diversity and immigration are very much under the spotlight. Responses to this survey highlight that while there is a wide range and variety of experiences in relation to the key themes we sought to explore, a recurring message is one of individual resilience and sense of belonging, despite a recognisably more hostile environment and more racist Wales.

In terms of their local community, over half of people surveyed feel very strongly or strongly part of their local community, and the vast majority felt that people from different backgrounds get on with each other fairly well, well or very well, in their local community. However, despite such positivity, 44% of respondents reported feeling unwelcomed by a person of another background.

Similarly, while nearly 80% of respondents reported feeling safe or very safe in their local community, over half – 52% - also reported having experienced abuse due to their racial, religious or cultural identity.

In terms of access to services, overall, people rated services to be fairly accessible, with health and mental health rated least accessible. However, respondents recognised the fact that this is enabled by key factors – such as transport and language which others may not enjoy. Attitude to diversity and ‘hidden discrimination’ were also highlighted as key factors affecting access to services.

Focusing on experiences in education and employment, the picture is equally nuanced. Overall, experiences in education were felt to be generally positive, with around 70% feeling that they had completely or partially achieved their potential. However, this changes starkly in relation to experiences in employment where 60% feel that BAME people are not fairly treated in the workplace.

Such seemingly contradictory figures show us the complexity of the BAME experience in Wales and also highlights key areas for action. Based on the key findings and points from the survey, we recommend the following actions be taken:

Finding	Recommendation
1. Respondents generally expressed a sense of belonging, but place, austerity and social attitudes affect a person’s ability to participate socially as well as the social cohesion of locations and neighbourhoods;	A) Welsh Government should build on its existing Community Cohesion work to develop a strong public campaign to reinforce Wales and Welshness as an ethnically and racially inclusive place and identity , mitigating the impact of the UK Government ‘Hostile Environment’ policy.

	<p>B) To maintain and increase local cohesion, Local Authorities should safeguard funding for places where communities can come together such as community centres, libraries, sports centres & public transport.</p>
<p>2. Though people find places to feel safe based on a variety of factors, there is a lot of experience of racist abuse, particularly Islamophobic abuse, and it can affect people's feelings of safety or freedom of movement in specific places or contexts;</p>	<p>C) Current community policing levels should be maintained, as they contribute to greater feelings of safety, however, there is a need to increase both ethnic minority representation and cultural competence within police forces and criminal justice agencies.</p> <p>D) To achieve the above, Welsh Government should consider the implications of the Commission on Justice in Wales report to explore the possibility of policing being devolved in Wales.</p> <p>E) Welsh Government and Police should review their approach to Hate Crime, shifting from a responsive/ reactive approach to a preventative/ proactive one.</p> <p>F) Measures should be taken to address the apparent growth in racist attitudes, seemingly exacerbated by Brexit. Welsh Government should ensure that the new school curriculum in Wales adequately equips children to become ethical informed citizens of a diverse Wales.</p> <p>G) Welsh Government should also use its procurement power to require all recipients of public funding to provide equality and diversity training to its senior and public facing workforce.</p>
<p>3. Unfair employment practices, which are institutional, normal and widespread, lead to unlocked potential and waste of talent;</p>	<p>H) Welsh Government and other public bodies should lead by example and introduce name blind recruitment as a standard recruitment practice.</p> <p>I) Equality and Diversity training and unconscious bias training should become mandatory for those in</p>

	<p>senior roles across the public sector and private sector, particularly for those involved in recruitment.</p> <p>J) Apprenticeships, Mentoring, Work Shadowing and Paid Internship/ Work Placement programmes which seek to tackle under-representation should be sustained and rolled out.</p>
<p>4. Structural and institutional racism are difficult to pinpoint and address but are persistent, ever-present, mundane, and arguably more dangerous than overt racist incidents or even hate crimes;</p>	<p>K) Welsh Government should drive long-term change by developing a Race Equality Strategy and Action Plan through which it can measure and monitor progress towards key outcomes and be held accountable by external stakeholders including civil society.</p> <p>L) Key outcomes to be achieved should include greater representation of ethnic minorities within senior, political and public roles; reducing poverty within certain minority ethnic groups; and, tackling the overrepresentation of BAME males within the criminal justice system.</p>
<p>5. Wales has valuable aspects, something to build on, but there is a long way to go and achieving racial equality in society will take intent and purposeful action from all sectors.</p>	<p>M) As above, agreeing a clear Race Equality Strategy for Wales with an associated Action Plan should be the main priority for the Welsh government – this new policy should also be effectively aligned to the existing and emerging legislative and policy framework in Wales including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Future Generations of Wales Act b. The Socio-Economic Duty of the Equality Act c. Prosperity for All: the national strategy for Wales. d. Any new Human Rights legislation