

Garda Representative Association (GRA)

Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

**2024 to 2027
(3-year Strategy)**

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Strategy Statement: *Creating a Diverse and Inclusive environment at GRA*

Purpose

To articulate the Diversity & Inclusion strategy for the GRA and to recognise the value of creating an environment where every GRA staff member, Representative and member has fair and equal access to support and resource. The objective of the Diversity and Inclusion strategy is to provide systematic, effective and efficient way for managing D&I activities, tracking, and reporting and to ensure it is consistent with the Mission, Vision and Values of the GRA.

Our Vision

As the only permissible members’ organisation for members of the Force of Garda Rank, the Association’s vision is of a “world-class police service enabled by dignity and fairness for our members. We believe that to maintain public safety and security and support social cohesion; our members should be part of a well-equipped, well-trained organisation, visible in the community and representative of the diversity of Irish society”

The GRA’s D&I Strategy recognises the external influences on our members of the D&I positioning statements of An Garda Síochána and therefore takes account of the Outcomes and Priorities of the AGS Strategy Statement 2022-24 where these have a D&I focus.

Specifically:

An Garda Síochána values being a **people focused organisation**

Outcomes

Recruit

An Garda Síochána is an employer of choice, reflecting the diversity of Irish society.

Develop

Garda personnel have the appropriate training, information and supports they need to succeed in their role.

Empower

A transparent and responsible police service citizens trust and value, with employees empowered to make a difference.

Retain

Garda personnel feel safe and supported in their working environment, with wellbeing and balance at the forefront.

Priorities

Enhance a workplace culture that includes, supports and values all personnel.

Foster and embrace diversity whilst attracting and recruiting personnel into the organisation.

Develop a forward-looking people strategy, supporting and adapting to shifts in ways of working.

Develop enhanced and more efficient ways of enabling learning, development and information-sharing throughout the organisation.

Adopt and implement initiatives to support health and wellbeing and employee engagement across the organisation.

Foster a culture of empowerment and trust, rooted in **integrity and the protection of Human Rights**

Outcomes

Ethics

A trusted, reputable and ethical organisation, with our Code of Ethics and protection of Human Rights at the core of what we do.

Decision Making

Optimal outcomes delivered through empowered, agile and ethical decision-making.

Structure

Personnel empowered to deliver an effective service through clearly defined roles, responsibilities and supports.

Priorities

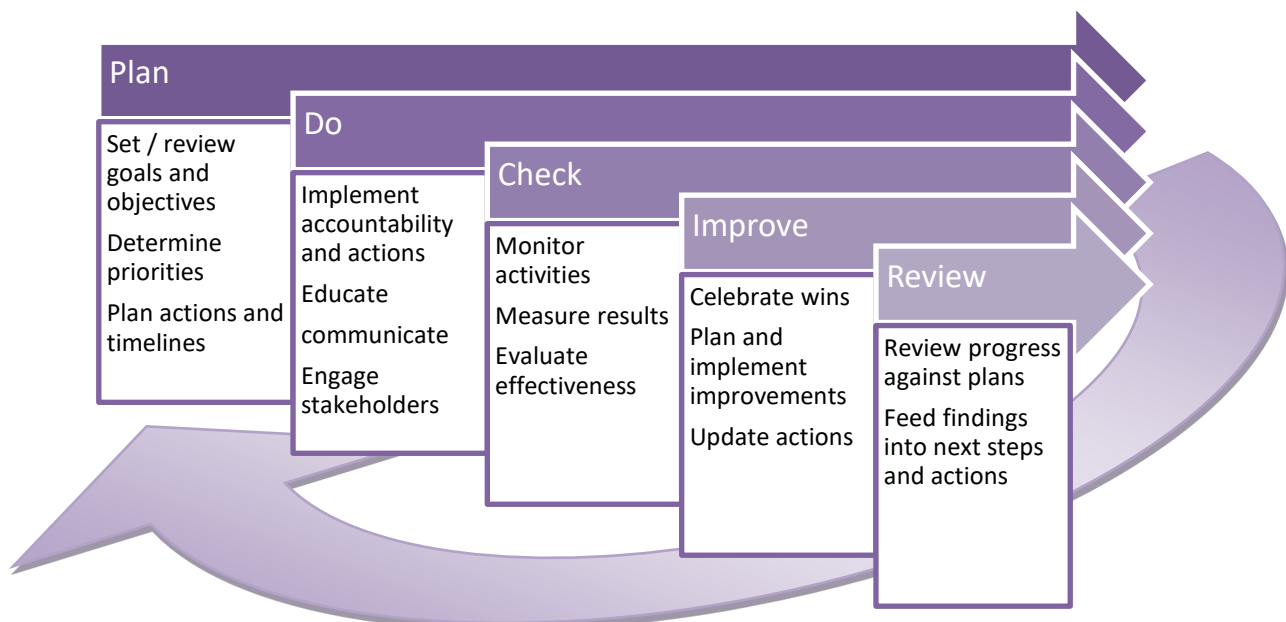
Promote and champion An Garda Síochána values within and outside of the organisation, having cognisance to our obligations under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014.

Empower our personnel, providing them with effective processes, appropriate tools, and placing the Code of Ethics and human rights at the core of their decision making.

More efficient and effective processes to support management and front line operations in providing a consistent and effective service, recognising the significant financial investment in An Garda Síochána.

How

The content of this strategy has been informed by input from GRA Reps and members of the GRA, through a diagnostic survey and review of the GRAs Constitution and Roles in relation to its diversity and inclusion content. The results will be used to implement an improvement cycle as follows:



Key findings from the Surveys

Two surveys were conducted as part of the process of developing this Strategy. These were:

1. Diversity and Inclusion Survey

- Open from 25th September to 16th October 2023
- All GRA members invited to participate.
- A total of 835 responses were received.
- 18 D&I-related and 9 'About you' demographic questions were asked.
- Respondents were also asked whether they were a GRA Rep or not, and to select their Division.

2. Follow up Equality Diversity and inclusion survey for GRA reps only

- Open from 25th to 31st October 2023
- Approximately 400 GRA Representatives invited to participate.
- A total of 118 responses were received.
- 4 D&I-related questions were asked, along with an additional question focussing on the resources respondents felt they needed to carry out their GRA Representative role.

To aid context the full results from both surveys are provided in Appendix 2,

The aim of the surveys was to understand the perspectives and lived experiences of GRA members and Representatives in terms of Diversity & Inclusion in order to identify themes that should be reflected in GRAs 3-year D&I Strategy.

Several strands were explored through the two Surveys, which were:

- ***Communications***

Many of the questions received quite a high 'neutral' response, such as 'neither agree or disagree' or 'I don't know', suggesting that the GRA needs to do more to share its messages and approaches to D&I across the membership.

32.9% neither agreed or disagreed when asked if they were aware of the things the GRA is doing to make sure everyone knows how important Diversity is to them.

44.7% responded in the same way when asked how good they felt GRA was at asking them what they thought about the services it provides

When asked how frequently they contact their GRA representatives, only around a quarter (24.2%) responded 'quite' or 'frequently'. 21.4% said 'not at all'. The largest single response to this question was "Infrequently, around once every one or two years" (29.2%)

- ***Inclusive Behaviours***

Positively, 69.6% of respondents agreed that the elected representatives of the GRA accept people whatever their background. This appears to be supported by responses to the GRA Representatives survey, where 75.4% agreed or strongly agreed that members from diverse communities feel confident that the GRA Reps would listen to any concerns they have.

However, the 'agree' responses drop to 43.2% when asked if the GRA is working hard to make sure that people from different backgrounds feel included. 45.2% neither agreed or disagreed with this statement.

GRA Reps were strongly positive (88.1%) when asked if they work hard to make sure that people from different backgrounds feel included, suggesting a disconnect between GRA Reps activities and members' perceptions.

Of the 298 people who responded to the supplementary question "which groups do you think the association could do more to include", 39.3% said 'women', 22.2% said 'people of different races, ethnicity or nationality' and 20.1% said 'people of different ages'.

Although a relatively small number compared to total number of responses, 45 people agreed or strongly agreed that they had been treated differently by the GRA due to their gender, 41 due to family status and 39 due to age. Around a third of respondents neither agreed or disagreed that they had been treated differently against each of the 9 Grounds, suggesting that more proactive inclusive behaviours are needed.

There is a direct correlation between the proximity of a GRA Representative/Officer to members and the degree to which those groups demonstrate to members how seriously they take diversity and inclusion. A much higher percentage agreed that this was the case when referencing District Representatives (57.2%) compared to Divisional Reps (53.2%), CEC Reps (46%) and GRA HQ staff (32.9%). It is worth noting that the majority of the remaining responses were neutral (I don't know – 30% to 55.7%) rather than negative (No – 11.2% to 12.9%).

- ***Culture***

A significant proportion of respondents agreed that they felt respected by the elected representatives of the GRA (62.2%), listened to by them (53.8%) and could trust them (54.3%). Around a fifth neither agreed or disagreed with each these statements.

25.2% did not agree that they felt listened to, 22.4% did not trust the elected representatives of the GRA and 15.7% did not feel respected by them.

The majority of GRA Reps (84.7%) agreed that they demonstrate to members that

the GRA takes EDI seriously in the way GRA Reps behave and the things they say

- ***Understanding of Diversity***

Similar to the question regarding different groups within GRA taking diversity & inclusion seriously, there is a direct correlation between the proximity of a GRA Representative/Officer to members and the degree to which those groups understand members' wants and needs.

56.8% felt that District Reps understood their needs, 52.5% said the same of Divisional Reps and 44.6% of CEC Reps. Only 29.1% said this was the case when it comes to GRA HQ Staff.

When reviewing responses to the GRA Reps survey, 17.8% said 'yes, completely' in response to the question on whether they felt that they fully understand the wants and needs of members from all backgrounds. A further 52.5% responded 'yes, to some extent' to this question. 16.1% felt that they would need more information to be confident.

When asked if they felt that the GRA is aware of issues related to them, members were split almost equally between positive (42.6% - yes/I think so) and negative (41.1% - no/I don't think so) responses.

In response to the supplementary question (do you feel that the GRA addresses these issues), 56% were positive and 26.7% were negative, with 17.3% being unsure

50.4% of those responding to the GRA Reps survey identified the need for training on EDI topics to undertake their role as a GRA Rep. 32.7% felt that they need information to build personal knowledge about D&I and 16.8% indicated a need for materials to share with members.

- ***Contact with the GRA***

As indicated within the 'Communications' section, 21.4% of respondents to the main survey indicated that they had not had any contact with their GRA Rep at all with their GRA Representatives. Only 17.1% have had cause to call the GRA Head Office for any reason in the last 12 months.

In response to the follow up question, whether they received the information and/or support they needed, 53.3% said 'no'.

- ***Commitment to the GRA***

41.3% of respondents said they have considered putting themselves forward as an elected member of the GRA. When asked why they responded 'no', 240 responses were given. The reasons cited include; other commitments/responsibilities, insufficient time and that it is a closed shop/boys club.

Strategic Themes

The consultation and review activities have determined that there are XX key themes that GRA needs to address as part of its Diversity and Inclusion journey moving forward. These are:

1. Diversity & Inclusion Vision and Strategy
2. Inclusive Behaviours
3. Communications
4. Learning and Education
5. Assessment, Measurement and Research

A number of measurable objectives have been identified against each theme, and these are provided in the next section.

Measurable Objectives

1. Diversity & Inclusion Vision and Strategy

Develop a strong rationale for D&I vision and strategy and align it to the GRA Objectives

Measurable Objectives

- 1.1. D&I is embedded in the values, culture and processes of the GRA
- 1.2. D&I is integrated into annual reporting
- 1.3. There is an effective D&I Steering Group / Committee in place, which is led by a CEC member.

2. Inclusive Behaviours

Introduce and promote behaviours across the membership that are inclusive of all

Measurable Objectives

- 2.1. Inclusive language is used at all times across GRA activities
- 2.2. Consultation activities are carried out across the GRA membership to identify members' wants and needs
- 2.3. GRA Officers and Reps role model inclusive behaviours in all communications with members.

3. Communications

Ensure D&I communications are frequent and ongoing

Measurable Objectives

- 3.1. GRA's commitment to D&I at all levels is clear and strong
- 3.2. Diversity within GRA and among its members is celebrated throughout its communications
- 3.3. D&I is represented in all communications
- 3.4. GRA Officers, Reps, members and An Garda Síochána are aware of the contents

of the Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

4. Learning and Education

Educate GRA staff, reps and members to ensure a consistently high level of understanding of D&I

Measurable Objectives

- 4.1. Our staff and Reps are consciously competent about D&I
- 4.2. Our members are consciously competent about D&I
- 4.3. All those involved with GRA activities, staff, Reps and members, have the tools to ensure Dignity and Respect sit at the core of behaviours
- 4.4. D&I are embedded into all aspects of learning and education

5. Assessment, Measurement and Research

Ensure D&I actions and decisions made are based on internal and external research

Measurable Objectives

- 5.1. Measurements are multi-dimensional
- 5.2. Information on all aspects of D&I is gathered and evaluated
- 5.3. There are clear D&I reporting structures in place
- 5.4. Progress against the D&I Strategy is publicised

In order to deliver on these objectives, specific tasks and actions have been identified and a Strategic Implementation Plan is in place to progress and monitor achievements.

Appendix 1: Strategy Implementation Plan

Please note: The reference numbering used in this Implementation Plan links to the specific Measurable Objectives under the Strategic Themes included in the GRA Diversity & Inclusion Strategy 2024-2027

	Task	Resources	By who	By when	RAG
1.1	Review the key messages communicated through the website to reflect commitment to D&I and the benefits to members, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About Us • 'Mission' statement • 'Vision' statement • 'Values' statement 				
	Develop and communicate a clear understanding of the rationale for D&I, which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilitates the development of measurements to track progress • provides clarity on the benefits of diversity and inclusion for members • clarifies roles and responsibilities around D&I 				
	Complete a detailed review of key documentation to ensure consideration of D&I is evident. This could include as a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment, selection & retention policy • Disciplinary/grievance • Dignity at work / anti-bullying and harassment 				

	Task	Resources	By who	By when	RAG
1.2	<p>Include a standard entry in the Annual Report that communicates: Progress against the GRA's D&I strategy and goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on the D&I activities completed Measurable impact of initiatives against the 9 Grounds of discrimination 				
	Add a D&I page to the website, which provides further detail and statistics to support the content of the Annual Report				
1.3	<p>Prepare D&I Steering Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> terms of reference roles & responsibilities meetings cycle membership structure communication methodologies 				
	Communicate remit of the D&I Steering Group to all staff, GRA Reps and members and invite them to volunteer to take part				
	Where volunteer numbers exceed required membership numbers, undertake an application / shortlisting / recruitment process, with a 'reserve' list identified				
2.1	Review all materials to ensure that the language used is inclusive and reflective of all (e.g. using gender neutral pronouns)				
	Appropriate and inappropriate terminology are defined and shared with GRA Officers, Reps and members				
2.2	Undertake annual survey of members to identify their diverse information and support needs				
	Communicate findings to all members and actions that will be taken in response				
	Prepare action plan to ensure actions are delivered				
2.3	GRA Officers and Reps undertake Inclusive Language training				
	All communications with members are reviewed to ensure that they are inclusive of all.				
3.1	<p>Create a strong message from the General Secretary, in different formats (written, video etc), covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> what D&I means to them why it's essential to the success of GRA 				

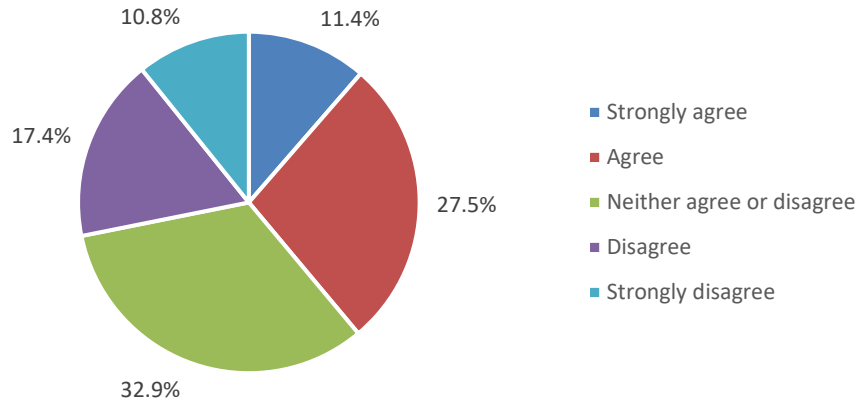
	Task	Resources	By who	By when	RAG
	(for both GRA Reps and Members).				
	Create internal videos/articles of GRA Officers and GRA Reps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reflecting on the strategy and plans why D&I is important to them personally. 				
3.2	Develop a series of 'case studies', using individual stories of members and GRA Reps focusing on an aspect of D&I to show that the GRA supports everyone.				
	Develop a D&I calendar of events that includes key dates in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Religious holidays International 'Days' Cultural celebrations 				
	Create a D&I newsletter (quarterly) that could include topics such as (but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developments in D&I Research information Statistics on GRA's development Activities of GRA Reps Links to informative and relevant articles 				
3.3	Review content of GRA literature and online presence to ensure that it includes a range of diverse images and profiles				
	Build partnerships with a range of neuro-diverse representative organisations to ensure that the GRA is accessible to all				
	Complete a website review for accessibility and meets the industry standard (e.g. WCAG 2.0)				
3.4	Formally launch the D&I Strategy to GRA Officers, GRA Reps and members. Create and implement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> specific D&I messages a clear communication plan 				
	Communicate the final strategy and next steps to those who completed the surveys and ask how they would like to be involved in the future.				
	Ensure specific actions coming from the new strategy are communicated across the GRA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reemphasise the members' benefits, 				

	Task	Resources	By who	By when	RAG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> allow for comments/feedback ensure GRA employees, Reps and members see this as two-way communication and not a one-sided download. 				
4.1	Develop a framework that provides GRA Officers and Reps with the tools to support members fairly				
4.2	Identify materials and information to support members' understanding of key legislation and behaviours around D&I				
4.3	Introduce training for GRA officers and Reps on Unconscious Bias and ensure that it addresses micro-incivilities				
	Develop bullying / harassment-related policies to support inclusive behaviours throughout GRA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> focus on Dignity and Respect develop a framework for dealing with inappropriate behaviour 'in the moment' In the long-term 				
4.4	Introduce a dedicated intranet site that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> up-to-date personal stories links to events links to communications 				
5.1	Identify methods to gather information to inform measurements that represent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attitudes opinions culture qualitative quantitative 				
	Communicated the data gathering methods to be used to all GRA Reps and members so that there is clear understanding about how these will inform: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support frameworks Members' schemes Content of Member Information 				

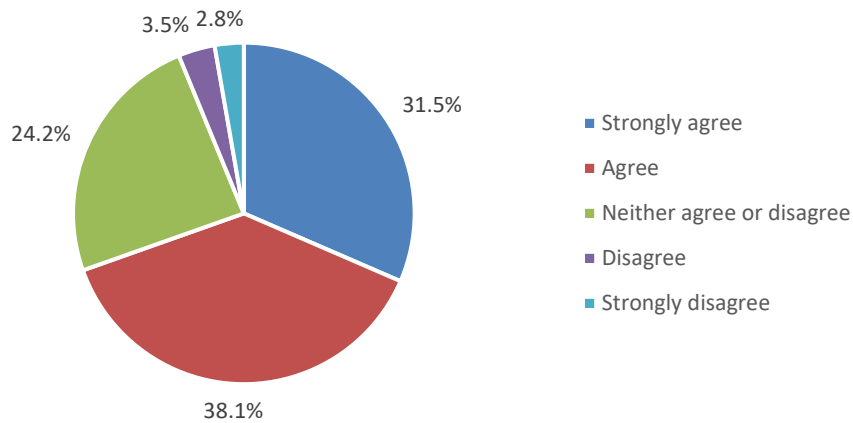
	Task	Resources	By who	By when	RAG
5.2	Undertake consultation with members to identify appropriate methods to gather D&I feedback, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 360-degree feedback, • focus groups • opinion/engagement surveys. • Suggestions boxes 				
	Create a matrix of data gathering against the 9 Grounds to ensure that all aspects are represented				
5.3	Develop a D&I dashboard that will monitor and track progress against this strategy.				
	Identify utilise existing data where this has been gathered and seek to collect new data through the members' records.				
5.4	Incorporate progress reports into District, Divisional and Central Executive Committee meetings and Annual Conference to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is working well • What still needs improvement • Changing priorities • Seeking support for next steps 				

Appendix 2: Members' Survey Results

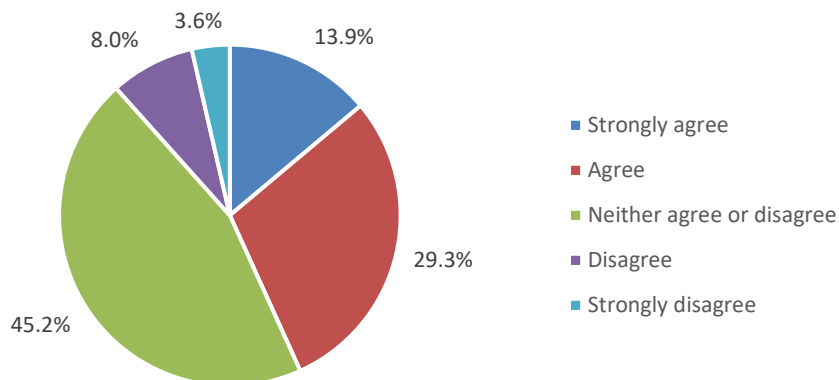
Q2. I am aware of the things the GRA is doing to make sure everyone knows how important Diversity is to them



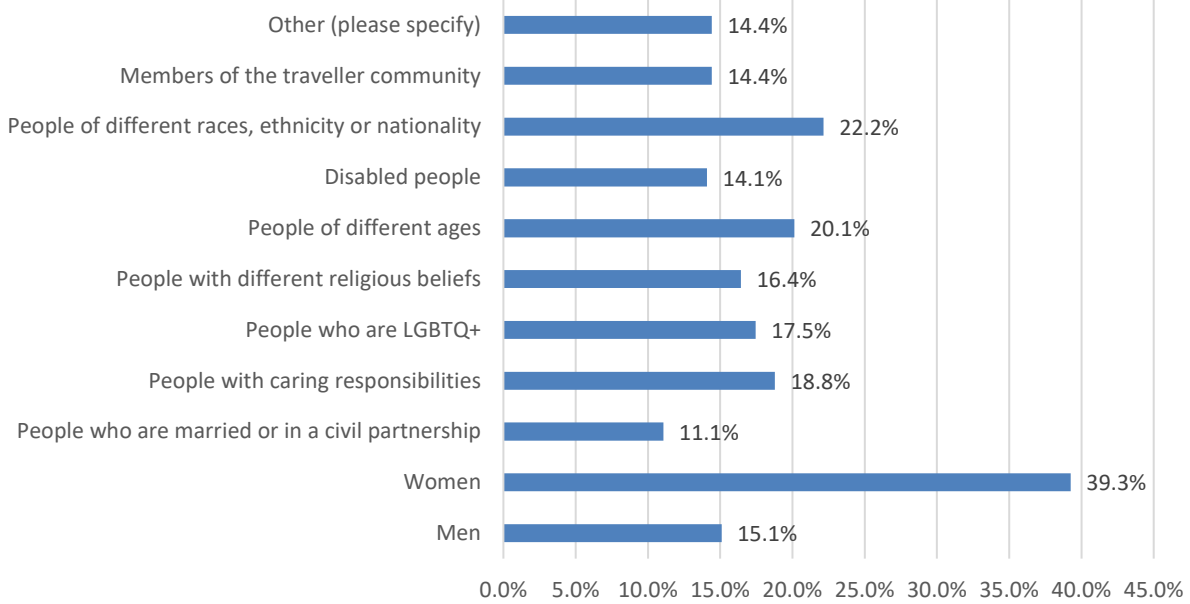
Q3. The elected representatives of the GRA accept people whatever their background



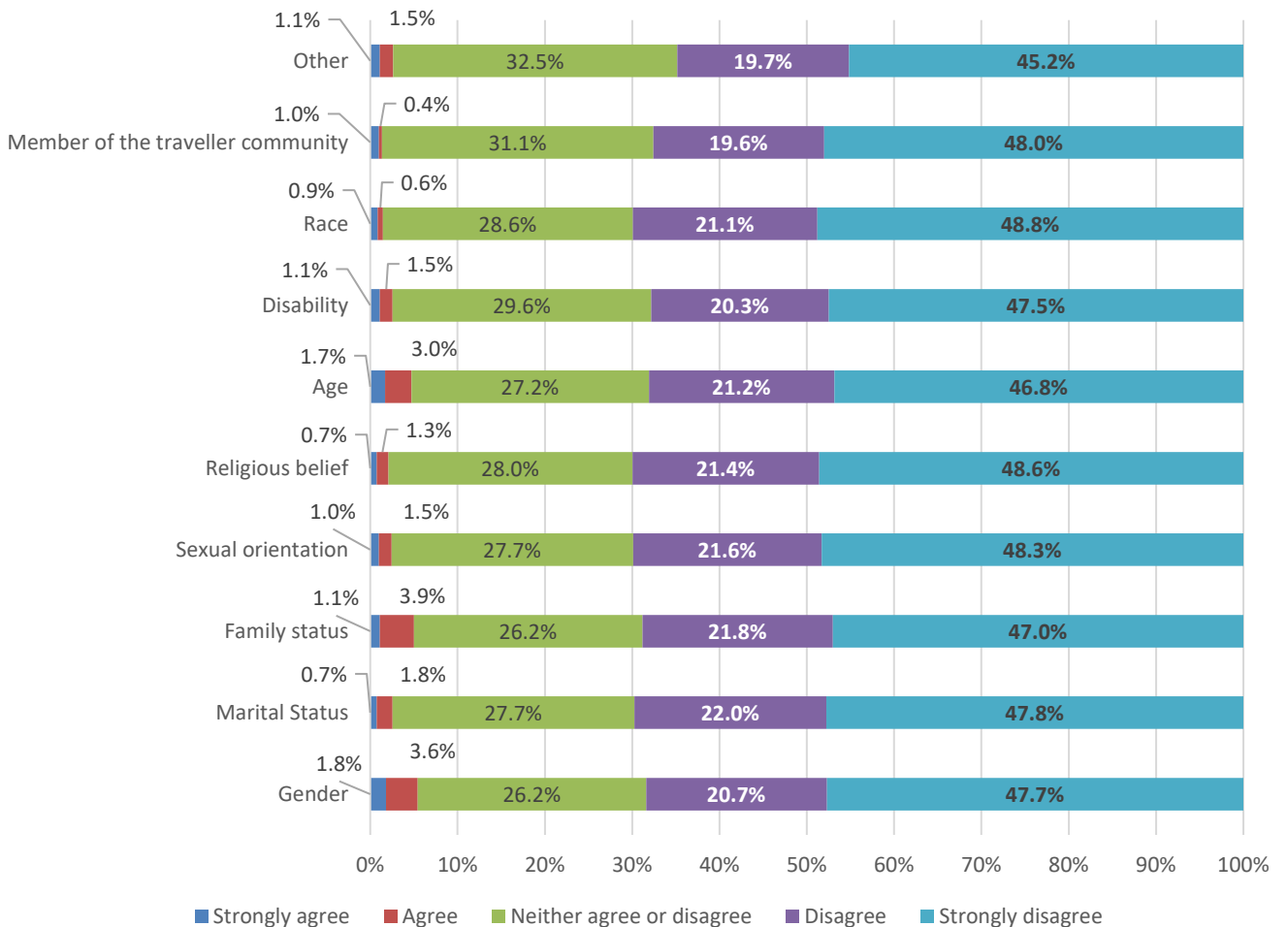
Q4. The GRA is working hard to make sure that people from different backgrounds feel included.



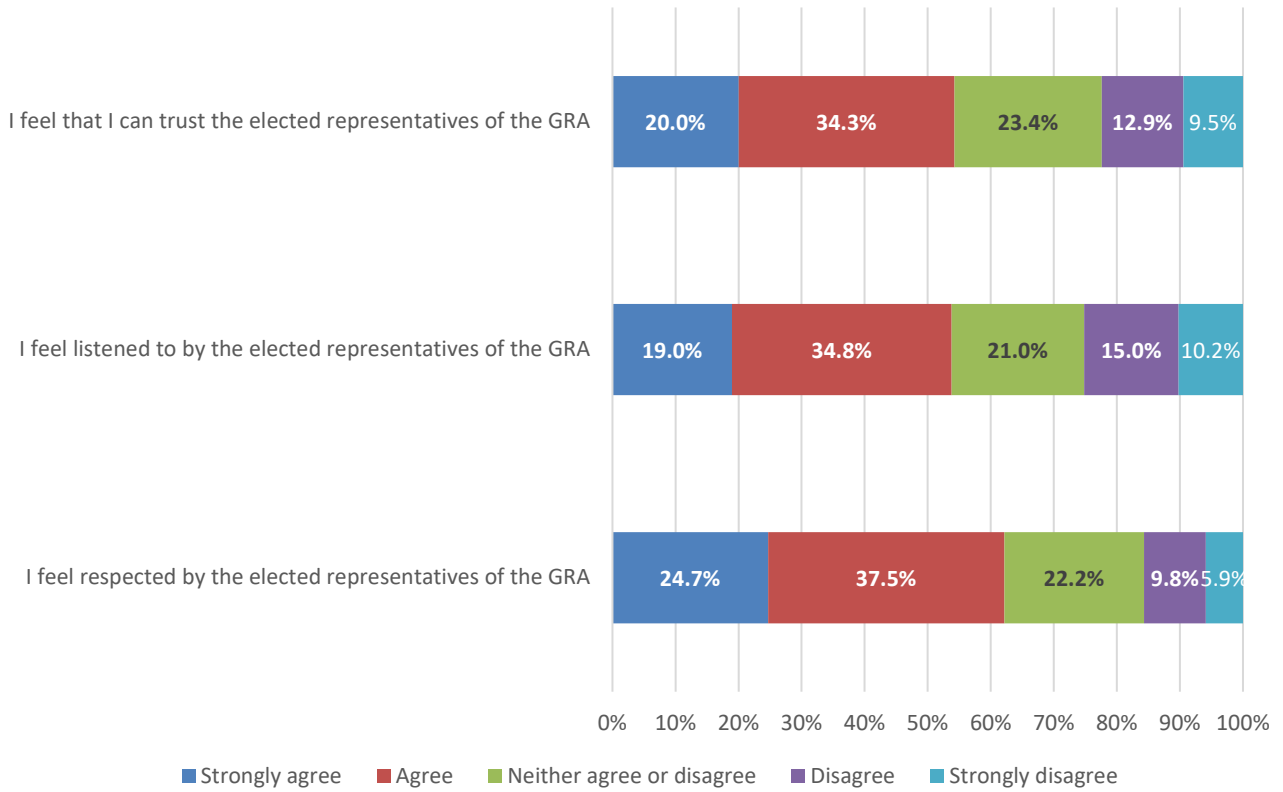
Q5. (if disagree or strongly disagree with above) Which groups do you think the association could do more to include?



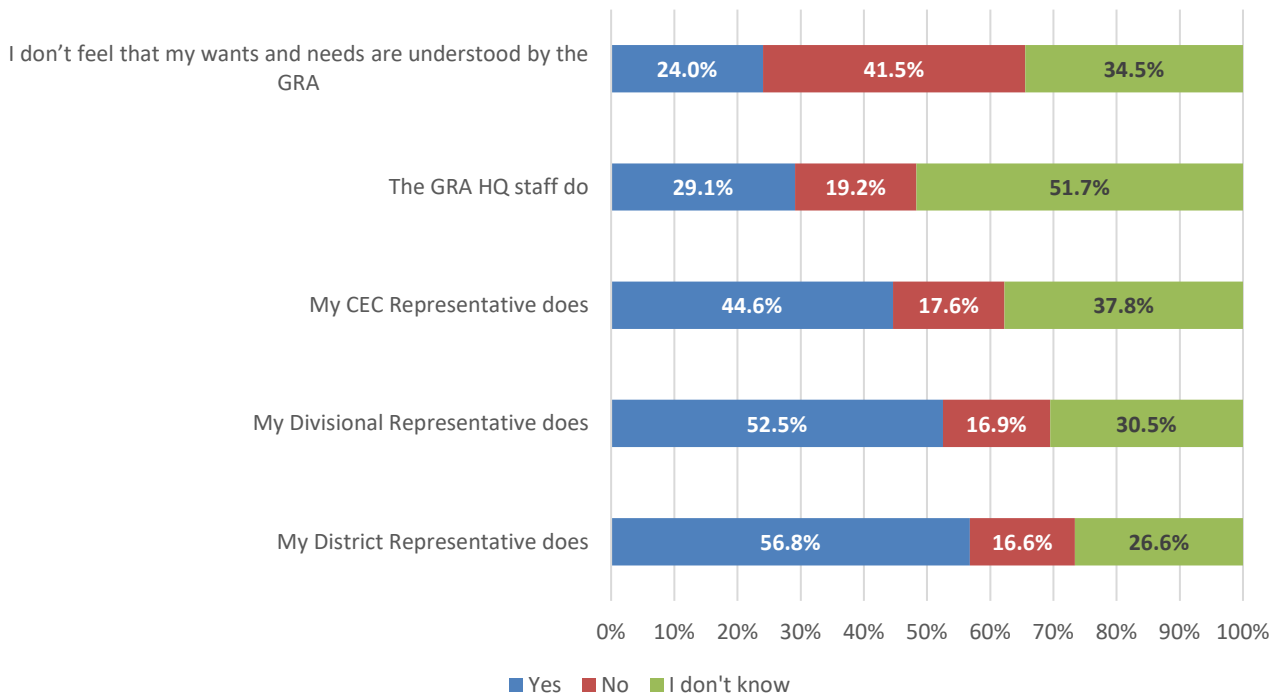
Q6. In your experience, in the last 12 months have you been treated differently by the GRA because of the 9 grounds:



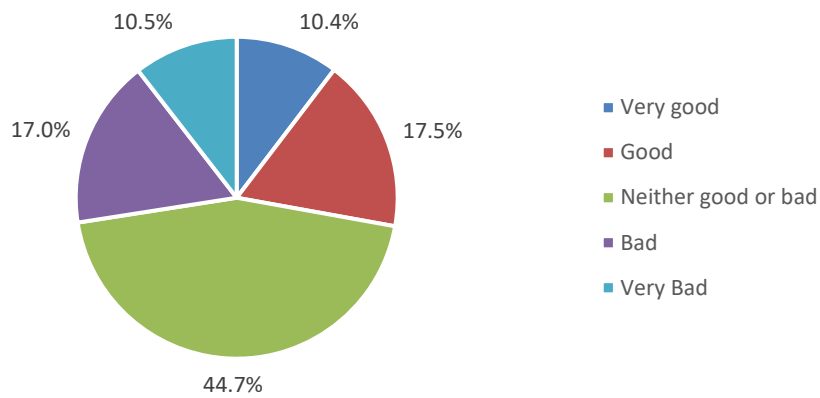
Q7. How much do you agree with the following



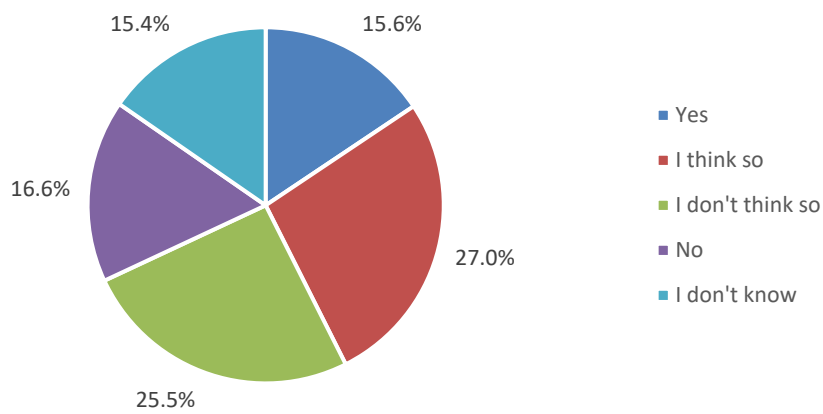
Q9. In the context of Diversity and Inclusion do you feel that the people representing you in the GRA fully understand your wants and needs?



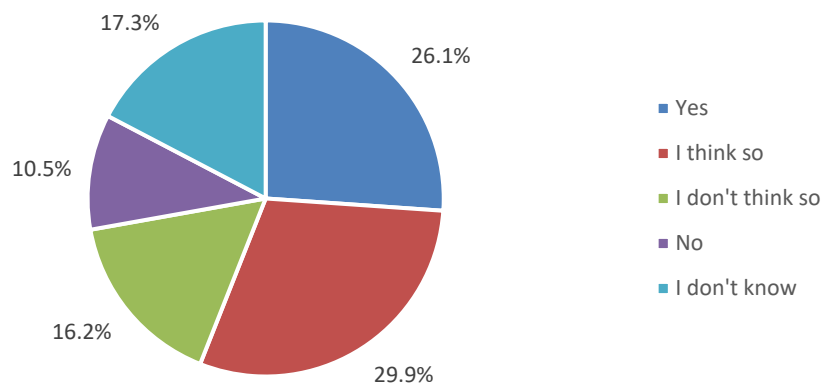
Q10. In the context of Diversity and Inclusion how good is the GRA at asking you what you think about the services it provides?



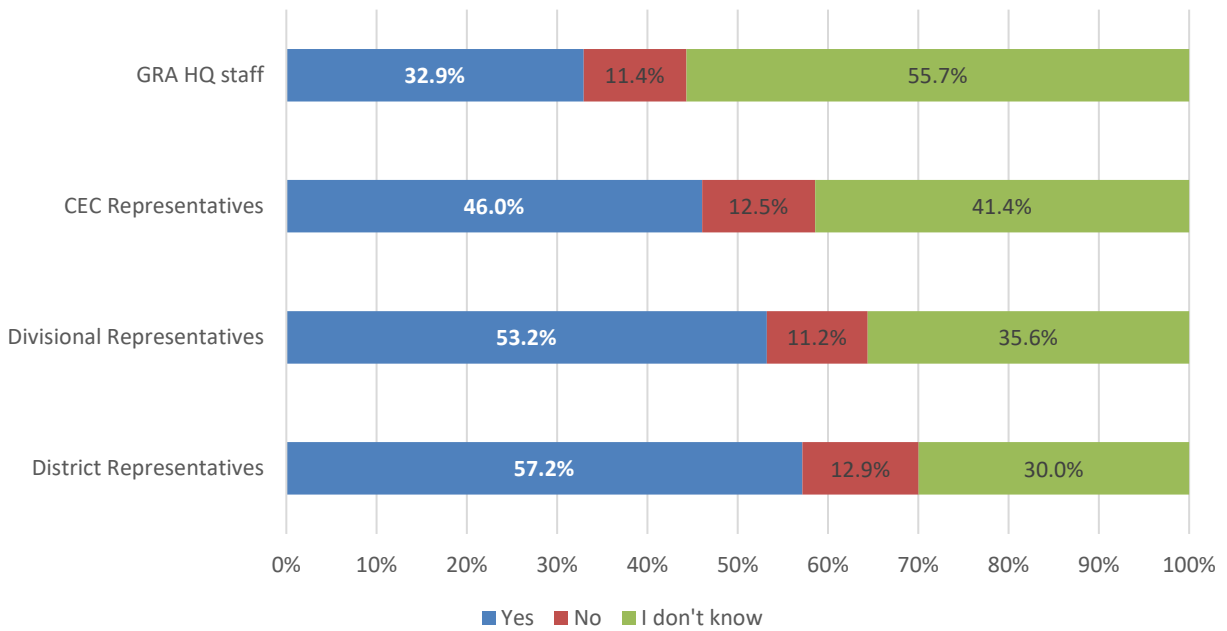
Q11. In the context of Diversity and Inclusion do you feel the GRA is aware of issues that relate to you?



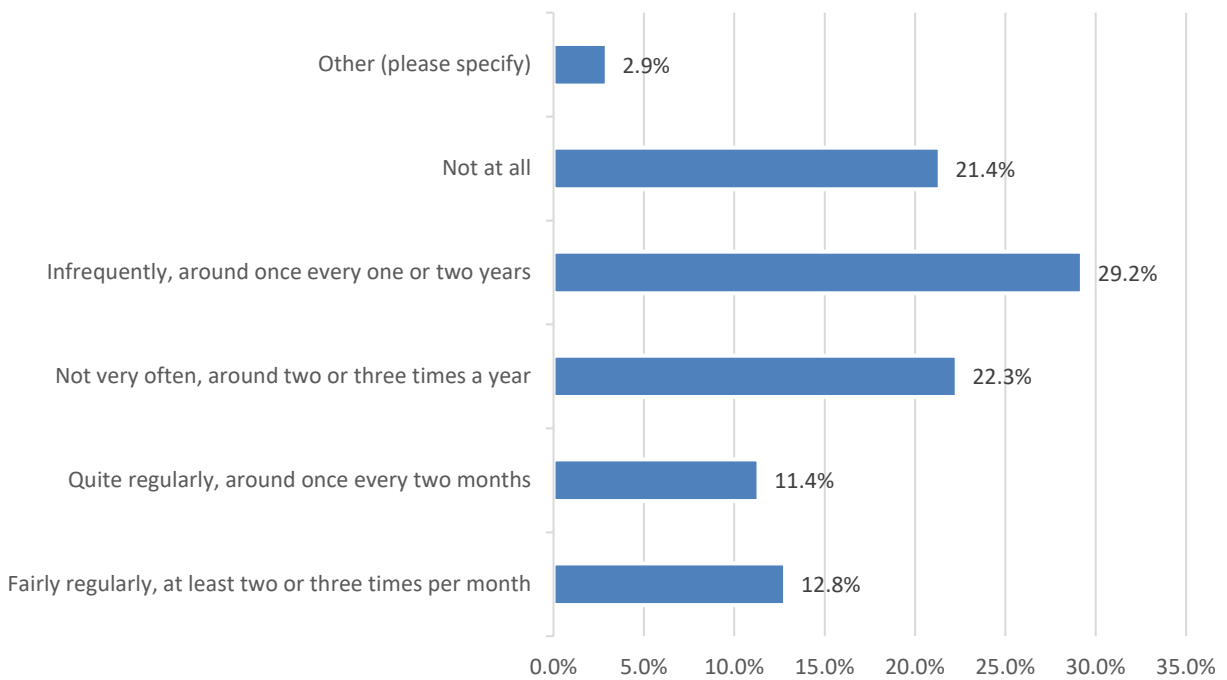
Q12. If you said yes or I think so to the previous question, do you feel that the GRA addresses these issues?



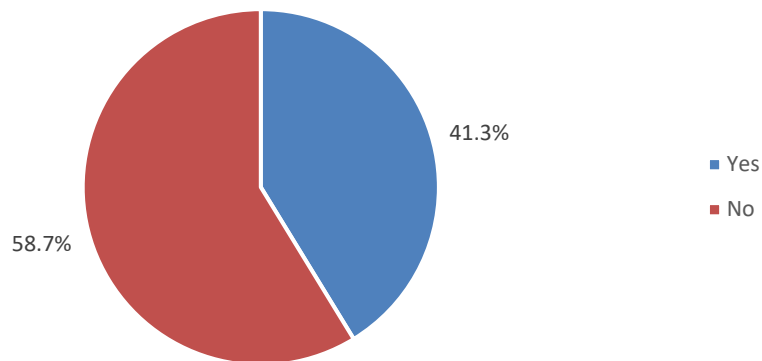
Q13. Do you believe the following groups in the association show that they take Equality Diversity and Inclusion seriously in the way they behave and the things they say?



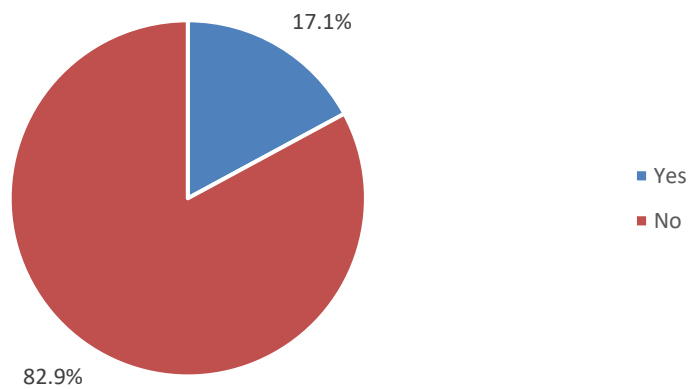
Q15. How frequently would you say you contact your GRA representative?



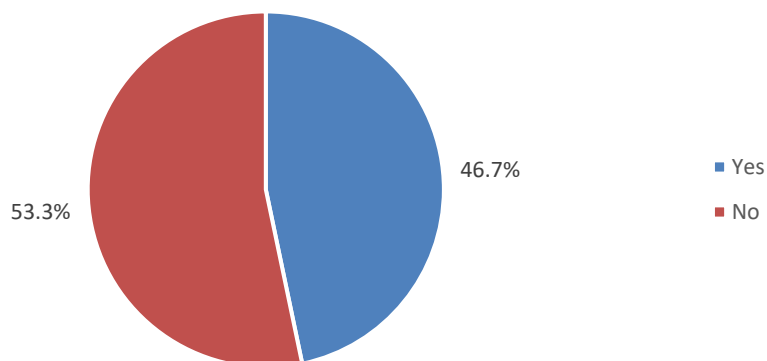
Q16. Have you ever considered putting yourself forward as an elected member of the GRA?



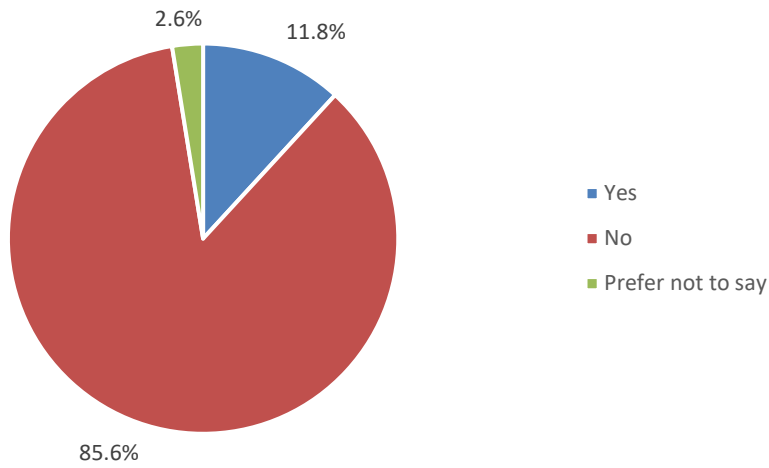
Q18. Have you had cause to call the GRA Head Office for any reason in the last 12 months?



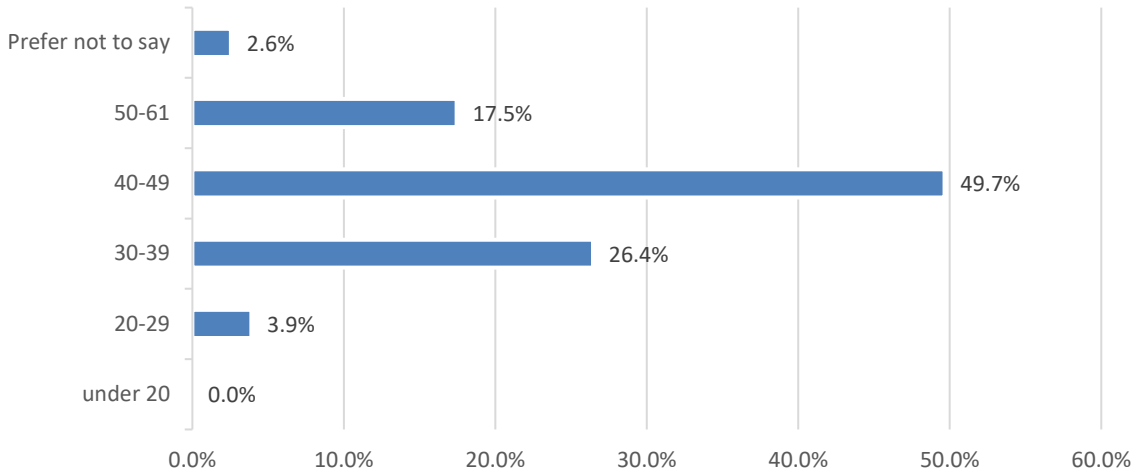
Q19. If yes, did you receive the information and/or support you needed from the person you spoke with?



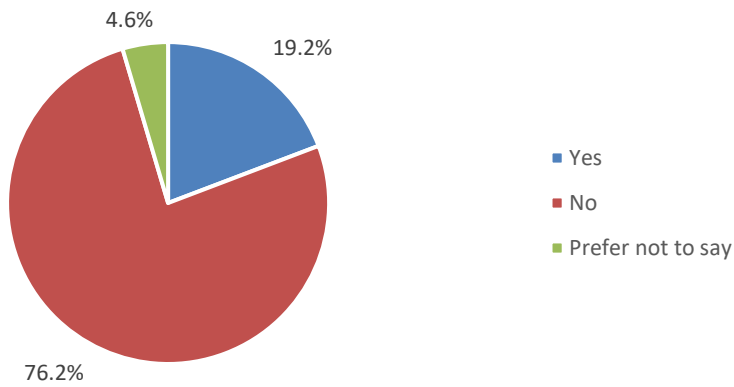
Q20. Are you an elected representative of the GRA?



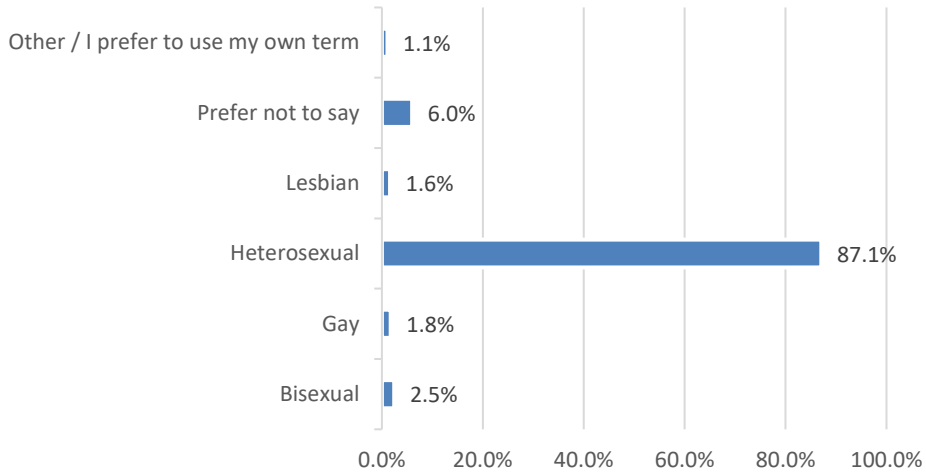
Q21. What is your age?



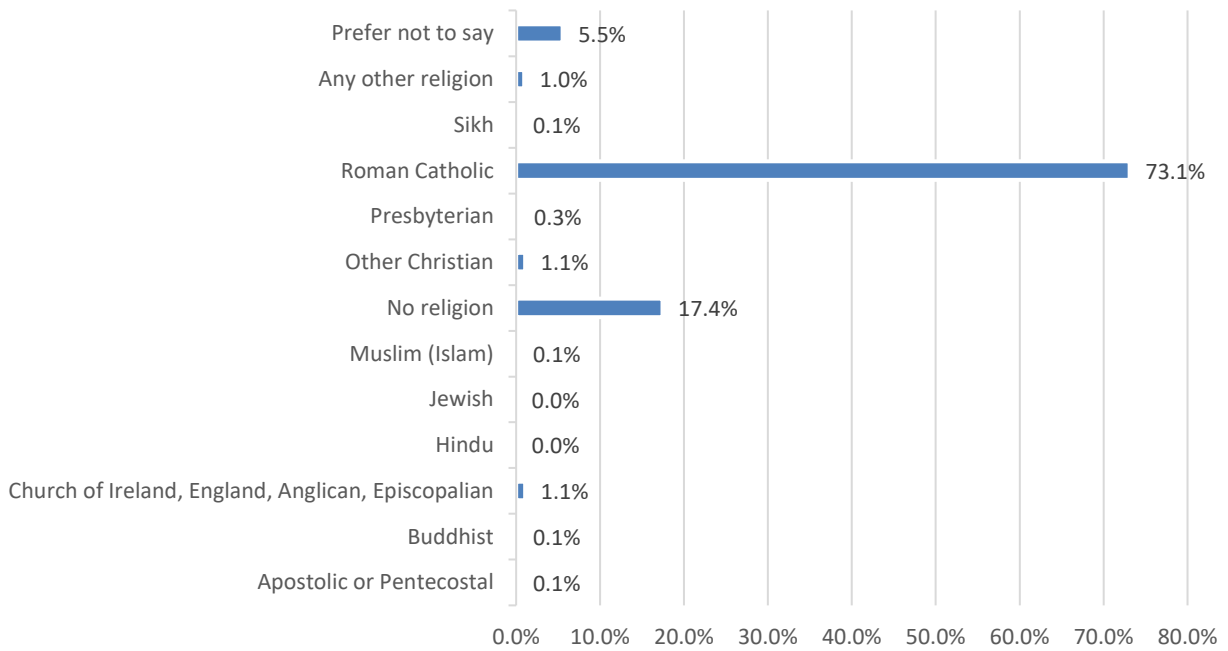
Q22. Do you currently have, or have you previously had, a longstanding physical or mental health condition or disability?



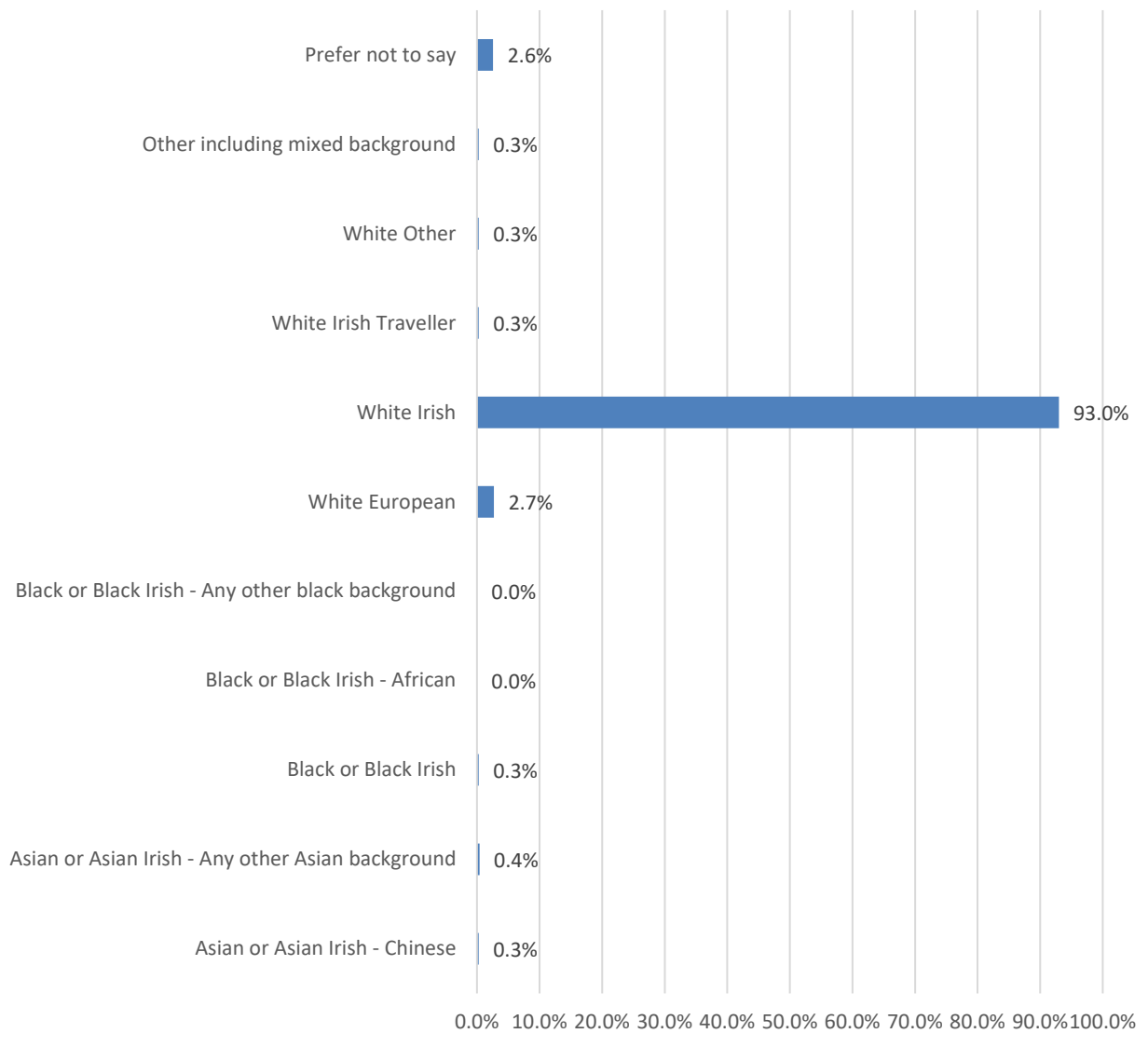
Q23. How would you describe your sexual orientation?



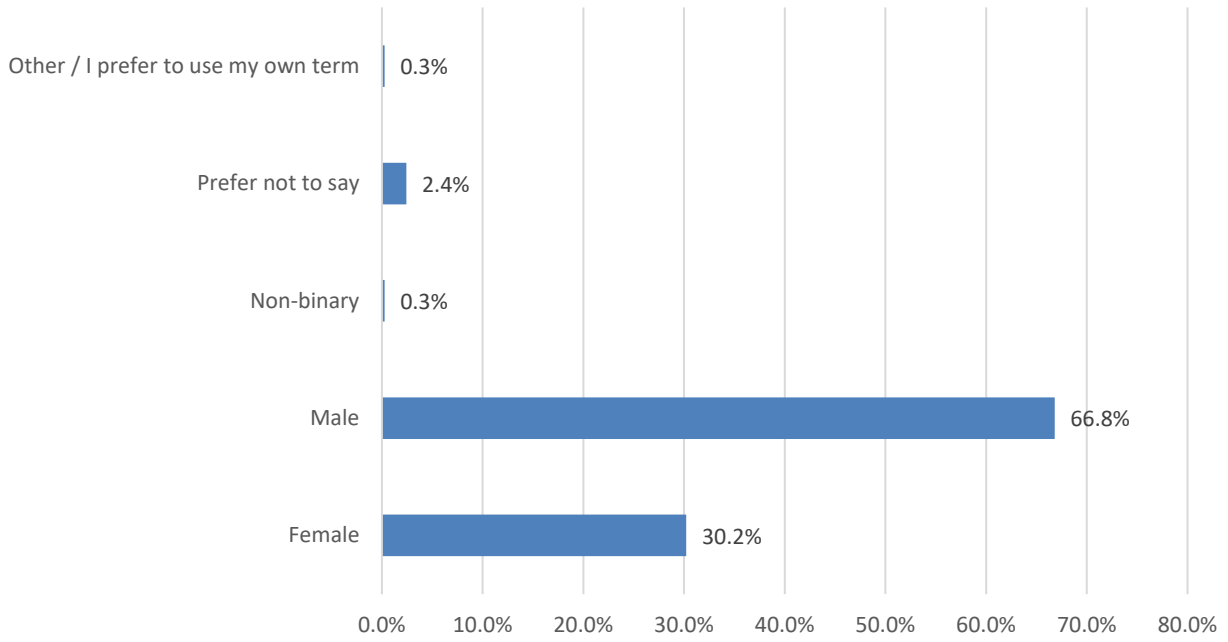
Q24. What are your religious beliefs?



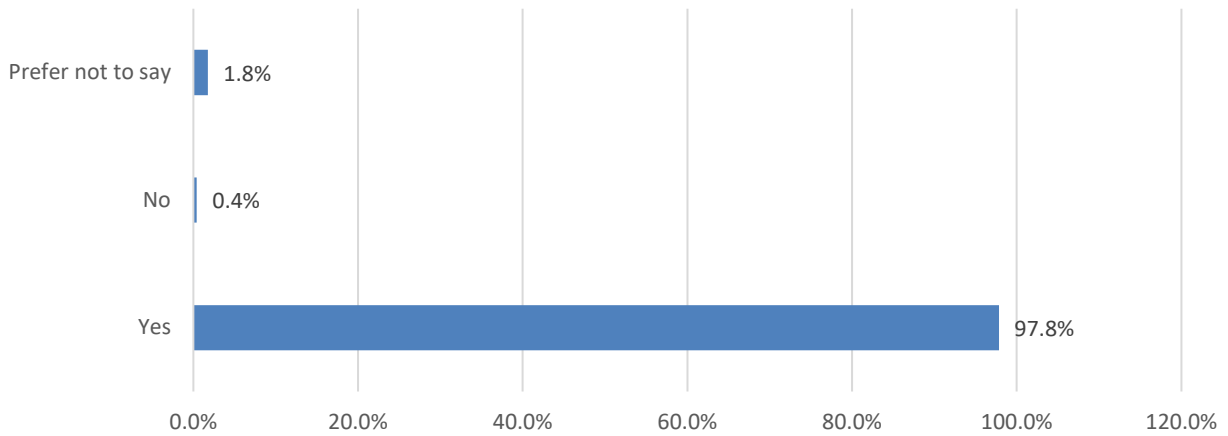
Q25. What is your ethnic group?



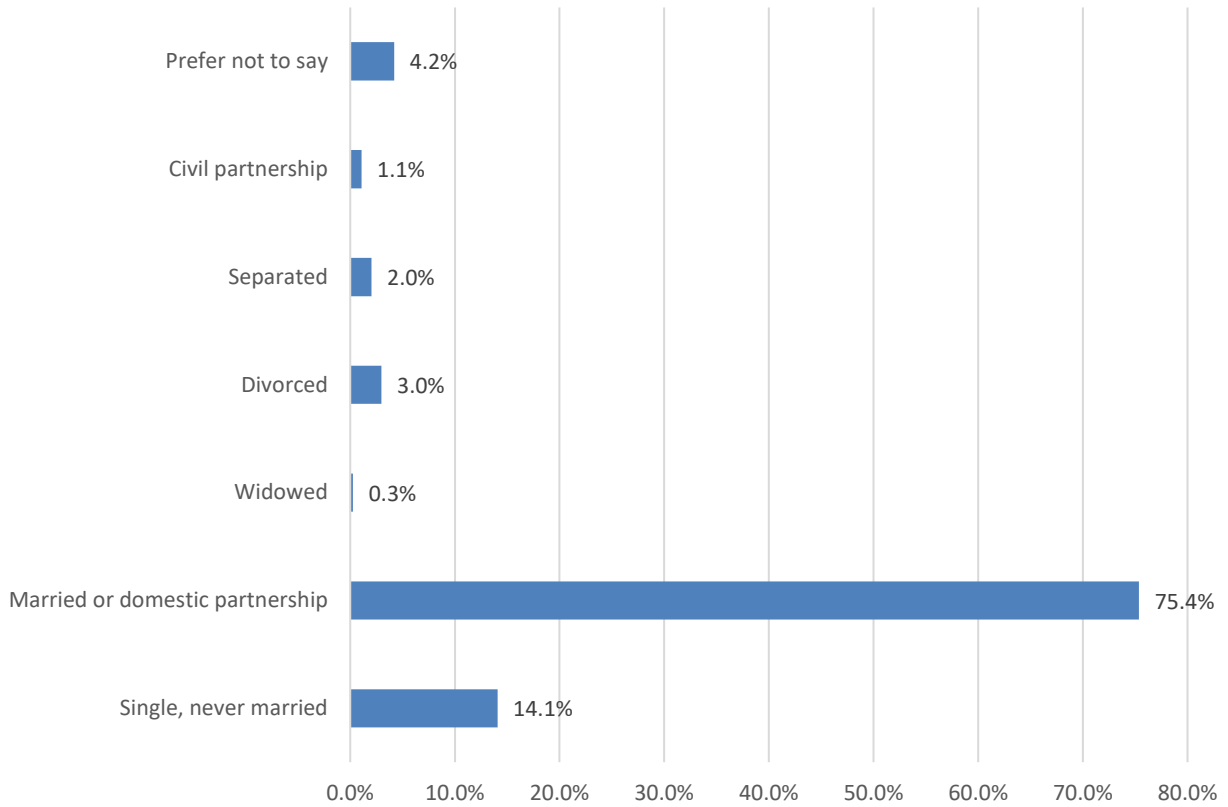
Q26. Gender: Which of the following describes how you think of yourself?



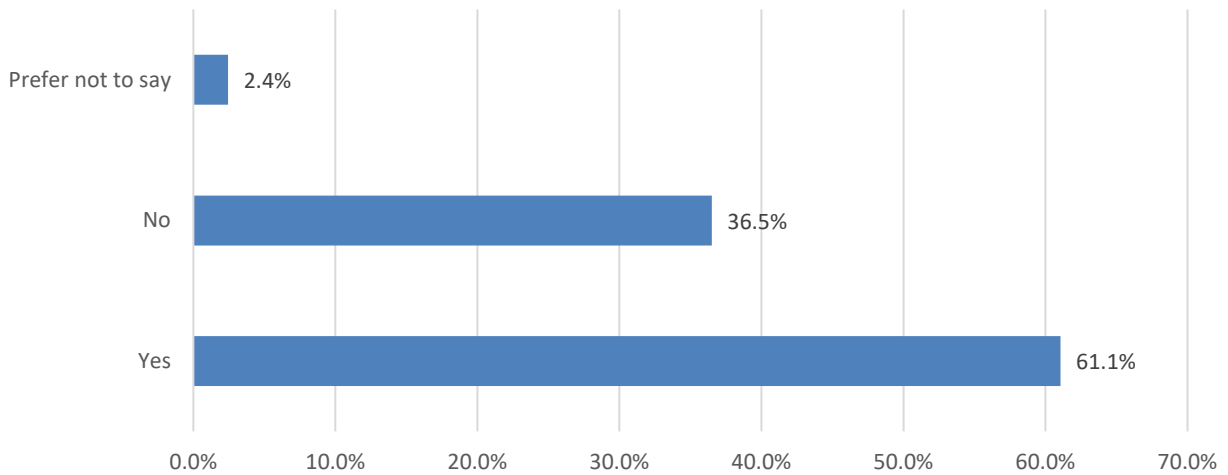
Q27. Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?



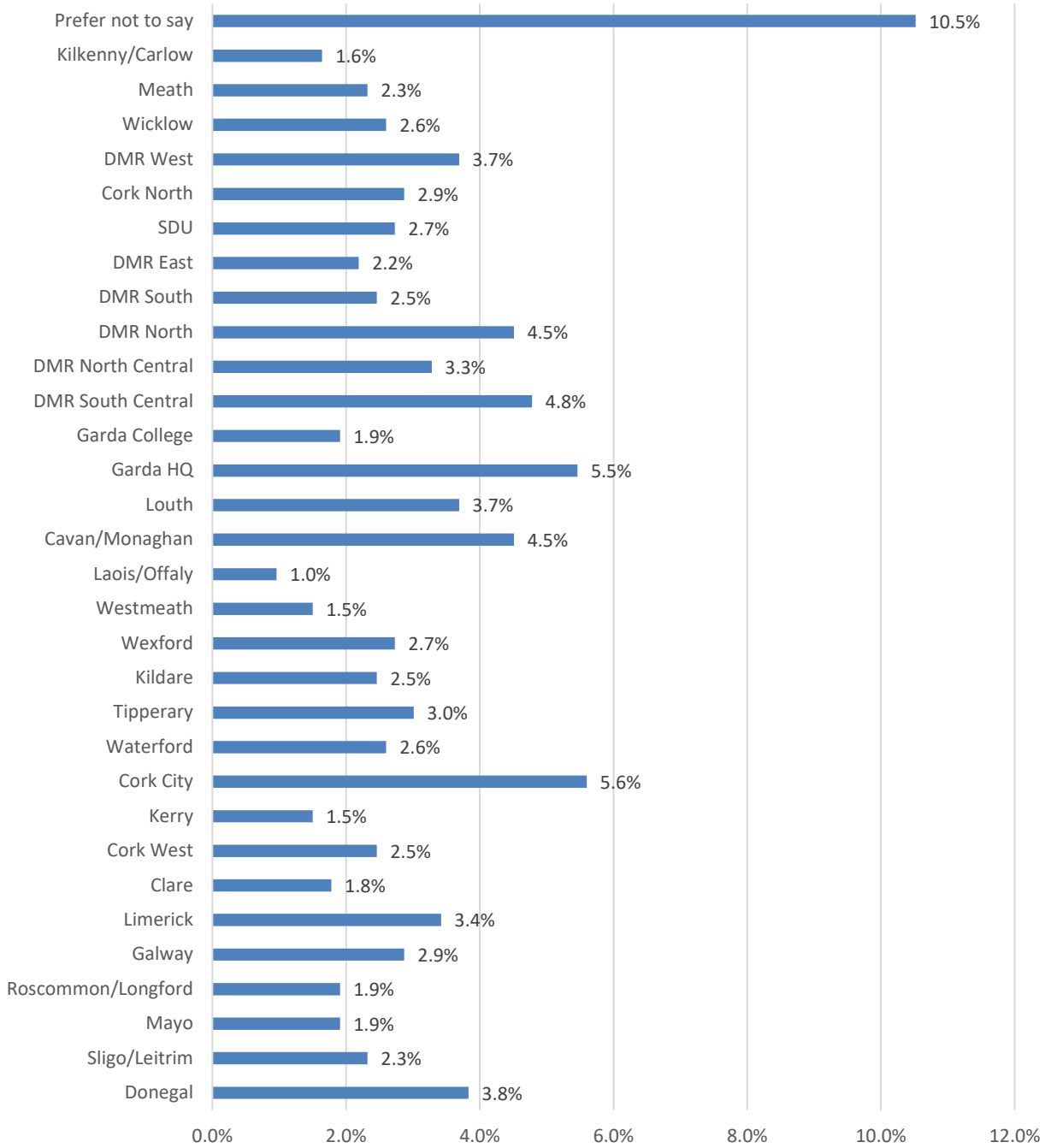
Q28. What is your marital status?



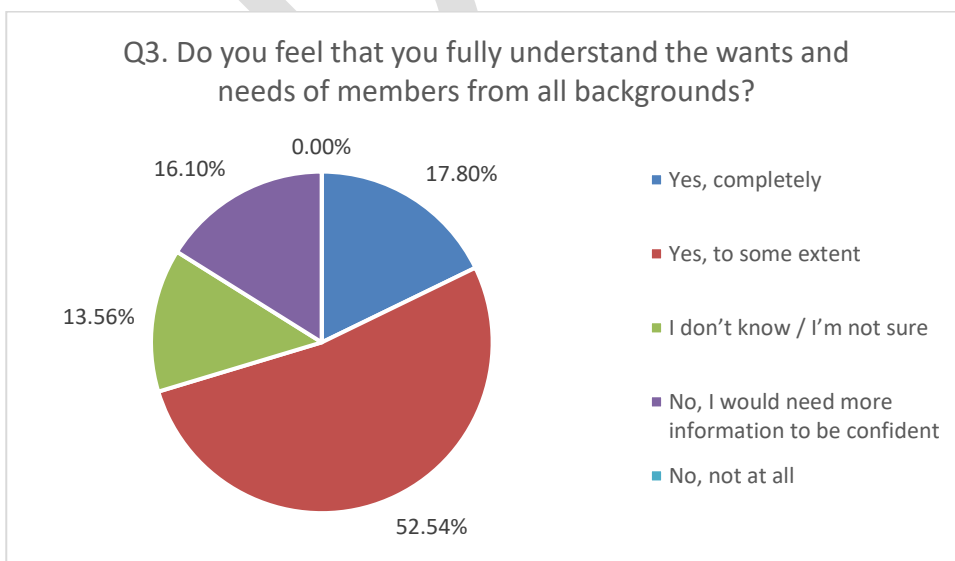
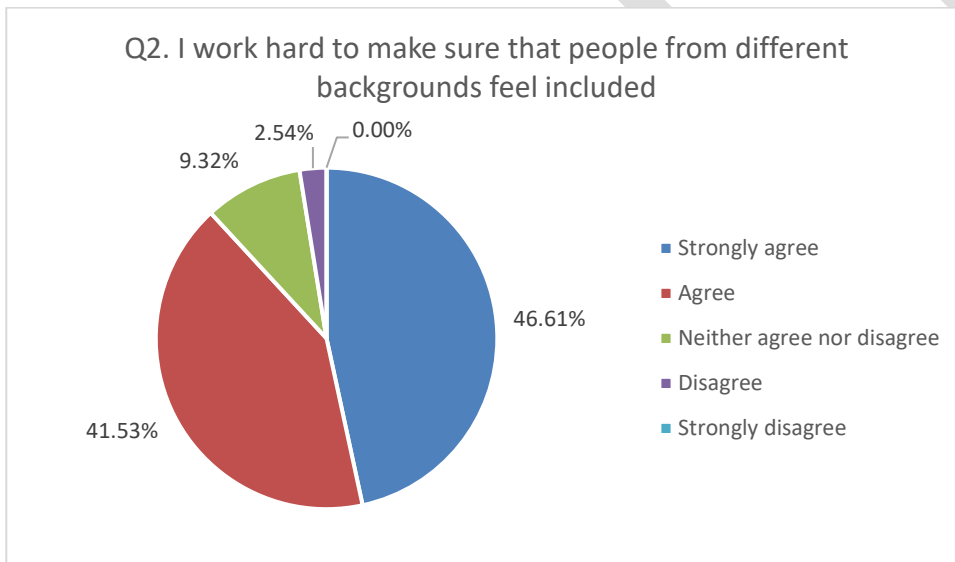
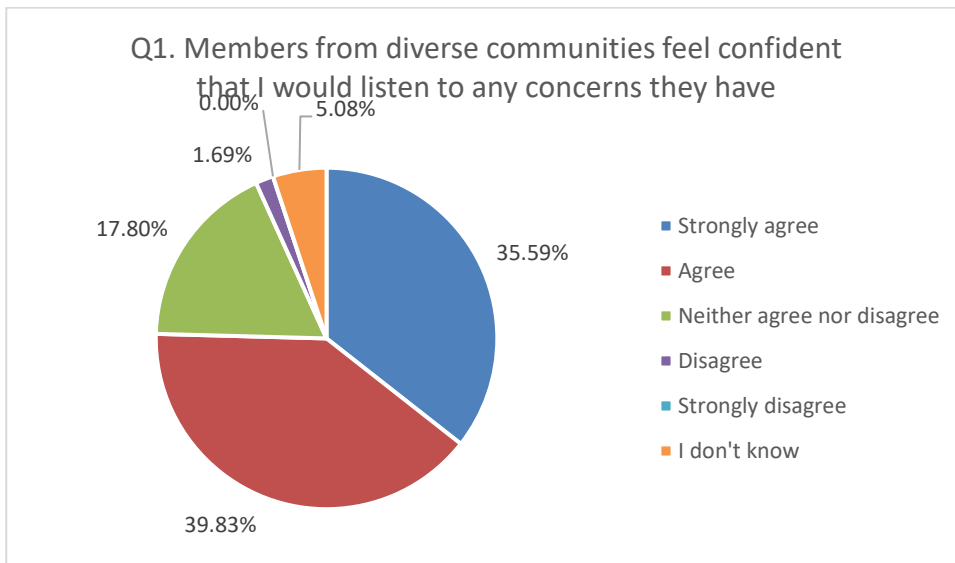
Q29. Do you have caring responsibilities?



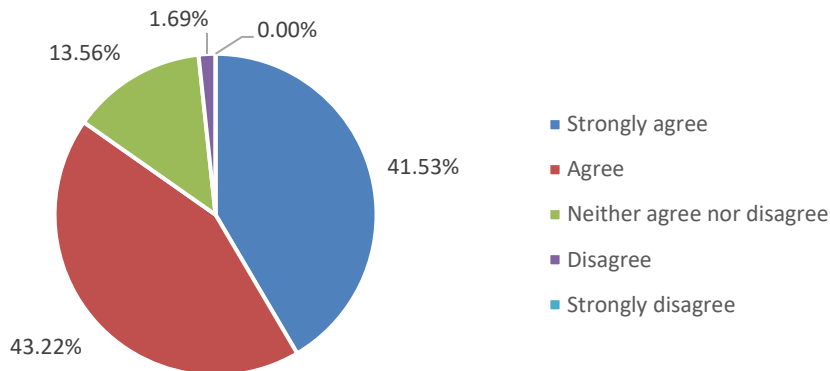
Q30. Please select your Division



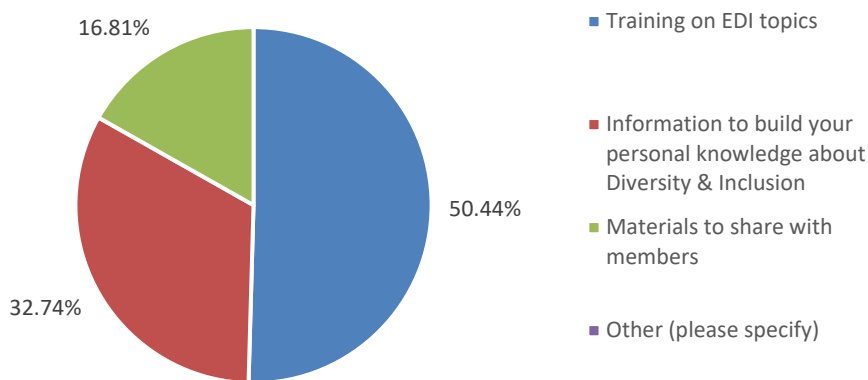
Appendix 3: GRA Reps Survey Results



Q4. I demonstrate to members that the GRA takes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion seriously in the way I behave and the things I say?



Q5. What resources do you feel you need to undertake your role as a GRA Representative?



All three above

Diverse communities, give me a break, they are Guards, get on with the job they are employed to do. When my 'needs and feelings' are catered for I'll start to worry about the disenfranchised snowflakes.

None

All of the above from Question 5

All of the above

All of the above

Nothing. Its not an issue.