

EQUALITY BULLETIN



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CIVIL PUBLIC & SERVICES UNION

“This groundbreaking survey is the first of its kind in the Civil Service and given the high response rate (29%), it is clear that members have something to say. A clear thread throughout the survey is a demand from members for fairness, for equality and for respect from management and from their colleagues.” – Theresa Dwyer

AS YOU know I conducted an Equality and Diversity Survey earlier this year in order to gather data on issues that affect members’ everyday lives and how members prioritise those issues. The survey was available to members across the Civil Service in paper and online format.

At this year’s Annual Delegate Conference I gave a preliminary report based on the online results but now that the work of inputting the paper surveys is complete, I am looking forward to conducting an in-depth analysis of the data gathered. This is a very important piece of work and many thanks to all of the members who completed the survey. The following is the first of a series of reports on the information collected and gives a profile and demographic of the respondents.

CPSU EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY SURVEY 2014

REPORT 1 Profile of Respondents

The survey was conducted across all CPSU grades in the Civil Service and the response rate of 29% was very good. This report illus-

trates the profile of these respondents.

When the 0.5% not answered responses are removed, 81% of respondents are female and

19% are male. This corresponds with both the profile of union membership, and is closely aligned with the gender profile of these grades

in the Civil Service, which is 75% female and 25% male. [See Chart 1]. The second question in the survey examined diversity from the perspective of sexual orientation. The results are that nearly 90% of respondents report their sexual orientation as heterosexual, and 0.7% as gay, 0.5% as lesbian, 1.8% as bisexual and 0.7% as transgender. While the numbers are small, this is generally reflective of other surveys, which report around 10% of the population being lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. [See Chart 2]

CHART 1 Gender of Respondents

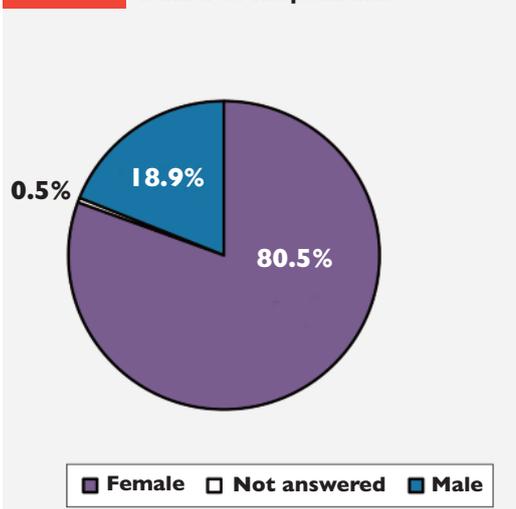


CHART 2 Sexual Orientation

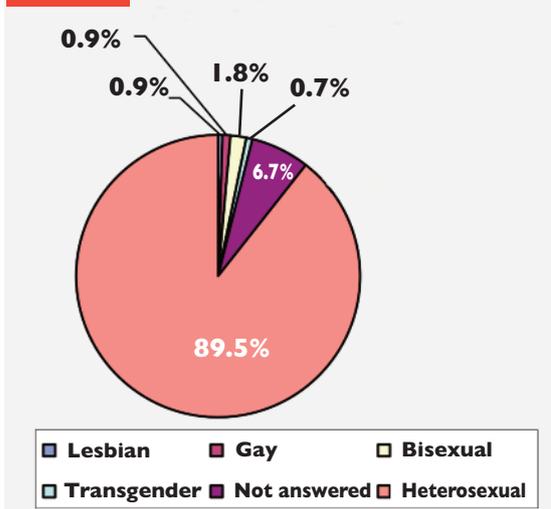
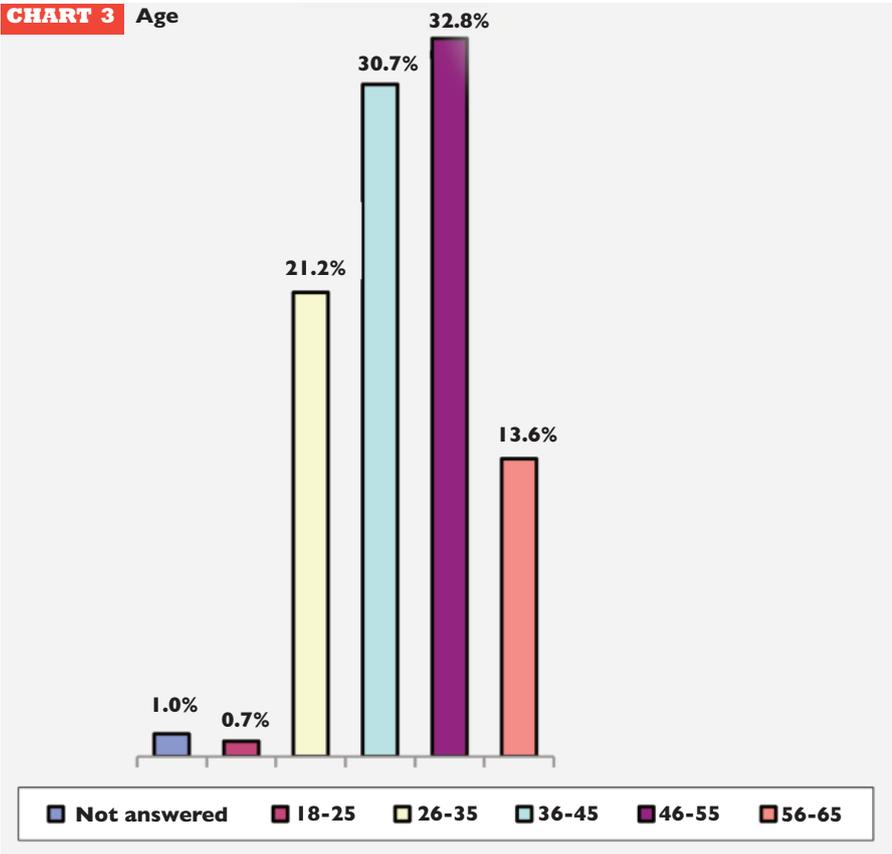


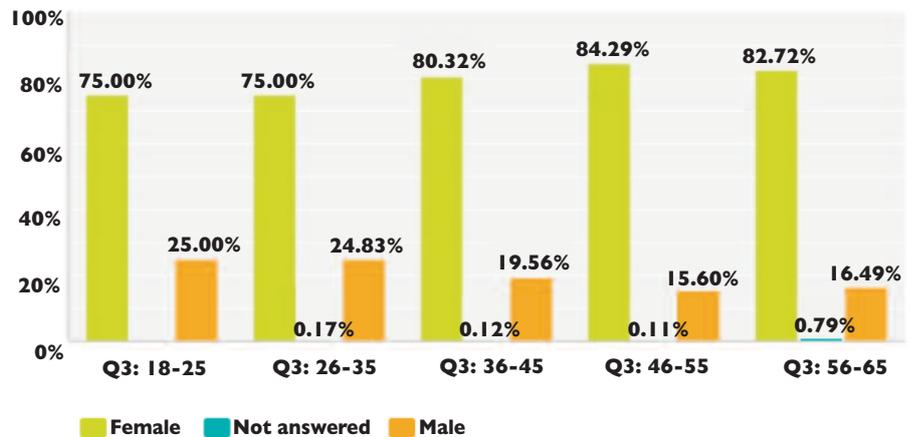
CHART 3 Age



From page one

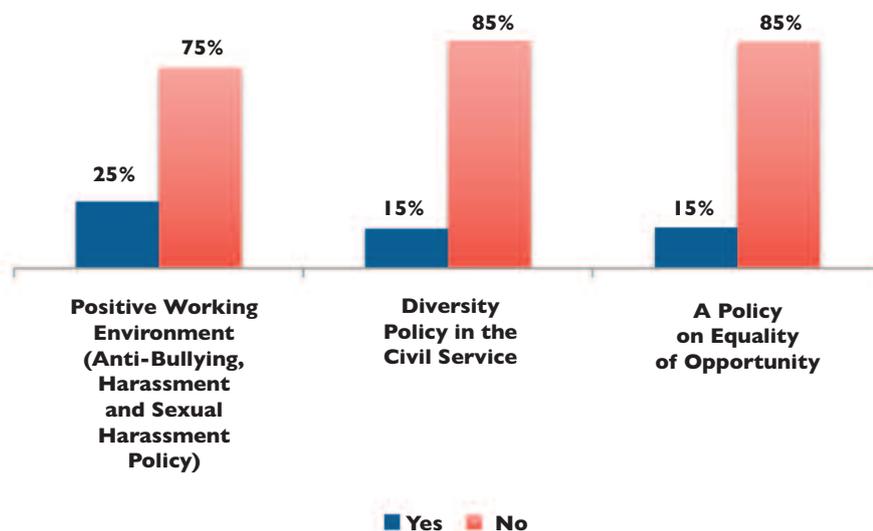
With regard to age the majority of respondents are between the ages of 46 to 55 (32.8%), and the next biggest age group are those between the ages of 36 to 45 (30.7%). The majority of respondents are in the age group 36 to 55 which is again reflective of our membership. [See Chart 3]

CHART 4 Gender and Age



The chart to the right shows the age groups broken down by gender which reveals a profile of age groups that are reflective of the gender profile of respondents. The key issue here is that we have a good spread of perspectives across age and gender. [See Chart 4]

CHART 5 Percentage informed by their manager of Equality and Diversity Policies



The chart to the left shows the picture that emerged when respondents were asked 'Were you informed by your manager of the Equality and Diversity policies?' In all cases over three-quarters of respondents reported an absence of information from management. The fact that the overwhelming majority of respondents report a lack of information about these policies in their place of work is cause for concern and shows that there is a job of work to be done. [See Chart 5]

Health and well-being in the workplace

AT THE end of July the Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS) published an *Information Guide on Mental Health & Well-being in the Workplace* which has been issued to all Personnel Officers.

The Guide is now available from the CSEAS website at the following link <http://bit.ly/loupML7> and they also have a summary leaflet on the Guide at <http://bit.ly/luQrAAA>

The Guide states: "The term 'mental health' describes a type of emotional resilience which enables

us to enjoy life and cope with the challenges that life brings. A lot of factors can influence and impact on our mental health and well-being.

"Examples of these factors can include bereavement, financial difficulties, physical ill health and any major life change. This list is not exhaustive.

"Individual responses to these factors vary. Our response can determine our self-esteem, self-confidence and sense of self-worth and dictate how we interact with our family, work colleagues, others in

our wider circle and the world around us generally.

"We should look after our mental health in the same way as our physical health. This means investing sufficient time and effort in maintaining it on an on-going basis."

While the Guide is focused on the workplace benefits of maintaining positive mental health, it is also useful as a personal guide to looking after your mental health, identifying stressors and provides self-care tips as well as the supports available.



Picture: Mark Hunter (CC BY 2.0)

Dignity at Work... policy review under way

A REVIEW of the Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy in the Civil Service is under way. A number of meetings of the General Council Equality Committee have taken place and we now have a draft document

which is being considered by a Sub Committee of the Executive Committee.

The title of the document will be changed from *A Positive Working Environment* to the more appropriate title of *Dignity at Work*.

The Policy will also incorporate the changes to legislation and the recommendations from the Health and Safety Authority. The General Council Equality Committee are working towards finalising the document in September.

Two important pieces of legislation currently before the Dail...

Workplace Relations Bill 2014

THIS Bill is on foot of a Government decision to reform the State's existing employment rights and industrial relations structures with the aim of delivering a world-class workplace relations service.

This new piece of legislation will provide a statutory basis for a new structure which will reduce the existing five State bodies

[Labour Relations Commission (LRC), the National Employment Rights Authority (NERA), the Equality Tribunal, the Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT) and the first instance functions of the Labour Court] to two – the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) and the Labour Court which will be extended to include the appellate function of

the EAT. The objective of the Bill is to create a modern, user-friendly employment workplace relations system that will benefit its users and will focus on resolving workplace disputes as quickly and inexpensively as possible. A copy of the Workplace Relations Bill 2014 as initiated is available in PDF format on this link: <http://bit.ly/lr8ZQqx>



Picture: Ted Eytan (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Gender Recognition Bill 2013

A TRANSGENDER or trans person is a person whose self-identified gender does not reflect the gender assigned to him or her at birth.

A birth certificate is a basic form of identification that is frequently required for official purposes but under Irish law transgender people cannot legally change the gender on their birth certificate under any circumstances.

Ireland is one of only a few Member States that do not allow for legal recognition of trans

people's self-identified gender even though the High Court ruling in *Foy v An t-Ard Chlaraitheoir & Ors* deemed that this was not compatible with Ireland's obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights.

In 2009 Thomas Hammarberg, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights stated: "There is no excuse for not immediately granting [the transgender] community their full and unconditional human rights."

The purpose of this Bill is to provide a legal process that enables transgender people achieve full legal recognition of their self-identified gender and allowing them obtain a new birth certificate and other documentation that mirrors their gender identity. Earlier this month the Equality Authority published their observations on the Revised General Scheme of the Gender Recognition Bill which can be viewed on this link: <http://bit.ly/lq8oocA>