



Government  
Equalities Office

# 2020 Sexual Harassment Survey

Government Equalities Office

**IFF Research**

*Lorna Adams, Laura Hilger, Emma Moselen, Tanya Basi, Oliver Gooding and Jenny Hull*

---

# Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>7</b>
Incidence of sexual harassment in the UK	7
Frequency and locations of sexual harassment	8
Reporting of sexual harassment	8
Sexual Harassment in the Workplace	8
Perceptions of employer policies and change	9
<b>1) Introduction</b>	<b>11</b>
Background to the Sexual Harassment Survey 2020	11
<b>2) Methodology</b>	<b>14</b>
Survey design	15
Reporting conventions	23
<b>3) Incidence of sexual harassment</b>	<b>32</b>
Prevalence of sexual harassment	33
Types of sexual harassment experienced	35
People who have experienced sexual harassment	37
<b>4) Experience of sexual harassment</b>	<b>48</b>
Frequency of experience	49
Experiences by location	52
Perceived risk in different locations	54
Impact of sexual harassment on quality of life	56
<b>5) Reporting sexual harassment</b>	<b>60</b>
Knowing how to report an incident of sexual harassment by location	62
<b>6) Sexual harassment in the workplace</b>	<b>67</b>
Incidence of sexual harassment in the workplace	69
Role of the victim within the organisation	70
Sexual harassment behaviours carried out in the workplace	72
Locations of sexual harassment in the workplace	73
Organisations where sexual harassment happens	74

---

Perpetrators of SH in the workplace	74
Gender of the perpetrators	74
Position of the perpetrator relative to the victims' status in the organisation	75
Victim response to sexual harassment in the workplace	76
Non-reporting reasons by demographic and business group	81
Sexual harassment outcomes in the workplace	83
<b>7) Perceptions of employer actions to address sexual harassment in the workplace</b>	<b>88</b>
Accessible work policies on sexual harassment	89
Training provided by workplace to prevent sexual harassment	90
Changes in way workplace addresses sexual harassment	90
<b>8) Conclusion</b>	<b>93</b>
Sexual harassment in general	93
Sexual harassment in the workplace	94
<b>Appendix A: Additional Data</b>	<b>97</b>
1. Incidence	97
2. Experience	100
3. Reporting	104
4. Sexual harassment in the workplace	111
5. Perceptions of employer action	129
6. Methodology	136
<b>Appendix B: Additional Section – Perpetrators of sexual harassment</b>	<b>139</b>
1. Relationship of perpetrator to victim	140
2. Individual and groups of perpetrators	143
3. Gender of perpetrators	146
4. Repeat harassment	149
<b>Appendix C: Additional Section – Witnessing sexual harassment</b>	<b>153</b>
1. Incidence of witnessing sexual harassment	154
2. People who have witnessed sexual harassment	157
3. Intervening as a witness	166
4. Witnessing workplace sexual harassment	169
<b>Appendix D: High Degree Victims</b>	<b>173</b>
1. Incidence	173

---

2. Experience	175
3. Perpetrators	177
4. Reporting	180
5. Workplace	181
6. Perceptions of employer actions	186
Noticed any changes in way workplace addresses sexual harassment	187

---

# Acknowledgements

Our thanks also go to the 12,131 individuals who gave up their time to respond to the survey, often providing detailed information on experiences that had affected them considerably. We are also very grateful for the input of the individuals who helped to test the survey and provided their considered feedback on its design.

# Chapter 1

## Executive Summary

---

# Executive Summary

In December 2018, the Government announced its plans to tackle sexual harassment in the workplace in the UK.<sup>1</sup> These plans included gathering regular data on the prevalence of sexual harassment. As part of this commitment, this research was commissioned to develop and test an alternative, comprehensive survey of sexual harassment. Data was also captured on sexual assault and rape. This approach, based on findings from recent academic research and other studies, was designed to reflect the self-determined nature of sexual harassment as per the legal definition in the workplace, allowing participants to determine what they experienced based on their own, self-determined view of the sexual harassment behaviours being unwanted. While this creates a much broader definition of sexual harassment than is seen elsewhere, it was felt this approach more accurately reflects the workplace's legal definition and takes into account many of the concerns academic and other research has raised about how sexual harassment is understood and experienced. Experience of 'sexual harassment' was not asked about as an overall concept, but instead participants were asked about a set of 15 sexual harassment behaviours that cover the full range of types of harassment, developed based on a review of academic literature and other recent surveys. A full explanation of these codes and their origins is included later in this section (Survey design, 'Selection of sexual harassment behavioural codes').

The survey was conducted online and designed to achieve a nationally representative sample by demographics such as age, gender, region, ethnicity and sexual orientation. There were 12,131 responses in total. For more information about the methodology, see the Methodology chapter.

The survey was designed in close partnership with the GEO team and with input from other government departments, in particular the Home Office, and others such as Department for Education (DfE) and Department for Transport (DfT). Its design was based in part on the findings of the literature review – particularly in the design of the behaviour code frame, as below – and sought to align itself where possible to the 2020 census and the National Crime Survey to enable greater comparability of results.

## Incidence of sexual harassment in the UK

Nearly three-quarters (72%) of the UK population experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in their lifetime, while two-in-five (43%) experienced at least one sexual harassment behaviour in the last 12 months. The three most commonly experienced sexual harassment behaviours both within individuals' lifetimes and within the last 12 months were: unwelcome sexual jokes, staring or looks, and sexual comments.

Certain demographic groups were significantly more likely to have experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in the last 12 months, these include: women, young people (ages 15-24 and 25 to 34), ethnic minorities (excluding White minorities), LGB individuals, and those with disabilities. Most people who had experienced sexual harassment felt that at least one protected

---

<sup>1</sup> Government Press Release on 18 December 2018: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-new-code-of-practice-to-tackle-sexual-harassment-at-work>

---

characteristic (e.g. sex, age, disability, race) was a factor in their harassment (75% felt this was the case).

## **Frequency and locations of sexual harassment**

Of those who experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, one fifth (18%) experienced at least one type on a daily basis, while two-in-ten (21%) experienced it on a weekly basis.

Sexual harassment was reported to happen most frequently on the street or walking around (42%), in a club, pub or bar (31%) or on public transportation (28%). However, the location where the incident occurred varied by the type of sexual harassment behaviour: for example, 88% of those who experienced provocative sounds in the last 12 months experienced this on the street, dropping to just less than a quarter for in a club, pub or bar (24%) or on public transport (23%).

More than a quarter of people in the UK who had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months experienced it on public transport (28%), and, of these, 62% reported to have experienced an incident on the bus.

A quarter of people stated that they were very worried or fairly worried about experiencing sexual harassment generally on public transport (24%) and in an outdoor public place (23%). The proportions were slightly lower for indoor public places or for places of work/study. This was asked about sexual harassment generally, not in relation to any specific behaviours.

Not all of those who experienced sexual harassment stated that it affected their quality of life. A total of 54% of people who had experienced sexual harassment in the last year reported that they felt it had very or fairly affected their quality of life.

## **Reporting of sexual harassment**

A third (33%) of those who experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months had formally reported it. Often the most frequently experienced behaviours were among the least commonly reported behaviours: approximately a quarter of the 28% experiencing unwelcome staring or sexual jokes reported these behaviours.

Conversely, the least experienced behaviours were among the most commonly reported: of the 2% of people who experienced rape or attempted rape in the last 12 months, 52% formally reported it.

## **Sexual Harassment in the Workplace**

Overall, 29% of those in employment experienced some form of sexual harassment in their workplace or work-related environment in the last 12 months. Unwelcome sexual jokes and unwelcome staring were the most common forms of sexual harassment experienced in the workplace (by 15% and 10% of those in work respectively), 9 of the 15 sexual harassment behaviours were experienced by at least one in twenty (5%) in the workplace in the last 12 months.

---

Men were almost as likely to experience workplace harassment as women (the incidence of experiencing harassment was 30% among women and 27% among men) although there were differences in the types of sexual harassment experienced. Mirroring other patterns of experience in the population overall, there were significant differences in the likelihood to experience sexual harassment in the workplace by age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability.

Almost two thirds (63%) of those who experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in the previous 12 months reported the perpetrator was a man and around a quarter (22%) reported it was a woman. Of women, 81% reported being harassed by a man/men compared to 46% of men. One-in-ten (10%) women reported being harassed by another women, whilst more than a third of men (35%) reported being harassed by another man.

In terms of the location of workplace sexual harassment, 20% of those in employment experienced sexual harassment at their physical place of work (for example in the office). Sexual harassment when socialising with colleagues outside the workplace was the second most likely setting for sexual harassment in a work-related environment (13%), followed by visits to clients or customers (9%).

Levels of formal reporting of sexual harassment in the workplace were very low: only 15% reported their experience formally (internally or externally), making it likely that employers will underestimate the amount of harassment taking place. The most common response for victims of workplace sexual harassment was to verbally address the perpetrator themselves (35% of all workplace victims), followed by telling family/friends (20%) or colleagues (18%) with no expectation of them taking any action. Among those who had chosen to report sexual harassment at work, satisfaction with the process and with the outcome were relatively low. Two-in-five (40%) victims saw their job change in some way as a result of taking action – increasing to 50% among those who reported the harassment. The most common outcome for the victim was to choose to look for a new job (17%); in contrast, two-fifths (41%) said there were no consequences for their perpetrator (19% among those who formally reported it).

## **Perceptions of employer policies and change**

Just over half (51%) of those working or studying thought their place of work or study was tackling sexual harassment well or very well. Employees were evenly split between those who thought / knew that their workplace offered training to prevent sexual harassment (48%) and those who thought / knew it did not (52%).

Four-fifths (80%) of those with a place of work or study thought it had a clear, accessible policy on sexual harassment which details how to report an incident on sexual harassment; over a third (35%) knew such a policy existed while 45% thought it did (but were uncertain). Those who had experienced sexual harassment in their current workplace during the previous 12 months were less likely to know that their organisation had a clear or accessible policy on sexual harassment (32% compared to 37% of those who had not), with (25%) knowing or thinking it did not.

Two thirds (66%) of those in work or study had not noticed any changes in how their how places of work or study addressed sexual harassment in the previous 12 months. Of those who had, it was more likely for positive changes to be reported (by 28%) than negative (6%).

# Chapter 2

Introduction and methodology

---

# 1) Introduction

## Background to the Sexual Harassment Survey 2020

In December 2018, the Government announced its plans to tackle sexual harassment in the workplace in the UK.<sup>2</sup> This was followed by the publication of its plans to tackle sexual harassment in public places in May 2019.<sup>3</sup> These plans included gathering regular data on the prevalence of sexual harassment.

To deliver this, the Government Equalities Office (GEO) commissioned a literature review and online survey to gather robust data on sexual harassment both in the workplace and in public spaces. The first phase of work was a literature review to inform the design of the quantitative survey and give an initial view of existing evidence on sexual harassment in the workplace and gaps in the literature. The 'Literature review of sexual harassment in the workplace' has been published as a separate report. Building on the literature review, the second phase of the research was to deliver a nationally representative (UK) survey exploring the prevalence and nature of sexual harassment in a variety of contexts and produce an associated research report of the findings.

The 2020 Sexual Harassment Survey is the first survey in the UK to sample a nationally representative cross section by age, gender, region, ethnicity and sexual orientation and purposely designed to meet UK government's requirement of a 2% margin of error to enable robust use in policy development. With 12,131 responses, this survey has large enough base sizes within each key demographic group to enable meaningful analysis of minority groups, critical in developing a robust picture of sexual harassment in the UK in 2020 and future policy to tackle sexual harassment. This report will present the high-level national findings from this survey.

### Influential findings from the literature review

Conducted between May and July 2019, the literature review focussed on sexual harassment in the workplace and summarised existing evidence across five key topic areas: types of sexual harassment; incidence of sexual harassment; profiling perpetrators, victims and bystanders; evidence around reporting and response; and current policies and interventions.

#### *Definition and typologies*

The definition of sexual harassment is a crucial starting point in developing a standardised measurement of sexual harassment. In Great Britain, sexual harassment is defined by the Equality Act 2010<sup>4</sup> as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the victim.

---

<sup>2</sup> Government Press Release on 18 December 2018: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-new-code-of-practice-to-tackle-sexual-harassment-at-work>

<sup>3</sup> UK Government, House of Commons – Women and Equality Committee. 2019. 'Sexual harassment of women and girls in public places: Government response to the Committee's Sixth Report of Session 2017–19' Accessed at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmwomeq/2148/2148.pdf> [August 2019].

<sup>4</sup> Equality Act 2010, section 26

---

Fitzgerald and Cortina (2017), in relation to breaches of criminal law, highlight that the focus on whether incidents meet the requirements for legal charges has been detrimental to effective action on sexual harassment,<sup>5</sup> noting that a victim does not personally need to label their experience as 'sexual harassment' for it to be both harmful and illegal. This would suggest that our understanding of sexual harassment and how to measure its incidence should go beyond legal cases and traditional definitions to understand incidence and experience of sexual harassment based on personal perceptions of behaviours being unwanted, impacting dignity and/or creating a negative environment. In contrast to other recent studies and the National Crime Survey, this research takes this approach by measuring sexual harassment based in personal perceptions and exploring experiences, reporting and witnessing on this basis. This approach to the measurement of sexual harassment, assault and rape approach is new and the results of this report are therefore experimental as a result.

### **Evidence gaps**

While the literature review phase provided a detailed picture of current typologies, incidence, profiles, reporting culture and government responses to the issue, it helped identify clear gaps in the evidence landscape that will need to be addressed in order to enable the Government to respond to and monitor the issue long term. The crucial evidence gaps include:

- A clear understanding of 'what works' to reduce and prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. The lack of empirical evidence measuring the effectiveness of different types of interventions and theoretical frameworks, resulting in an absence of best practice guidance for the Government, employers and other organisations to help effectively address sexual harassment in the UK workplace.
- A consistent, robust, evidence-based definition of sexual harassment which can be used to deliver an accurate level of incidence based on how individuals perceive and define sexual harassment and related behaviours compared to legal definitions (those used in crime statistics, for example), including secondary considerations of gender and racial harassment as linked to this.
- A robust body of evidence comparing incidence and experiences thereof among different demographic and social groups, particularly ethnicity, LGBT, and workplace position, with a specific need to robustly determine differences by age (as separate from gender), ethnicity and disability where evidence is limited.
- Evidence relating to the incidence and experience of sexual harassment for those aged 16-17 who are working (part-time, full-time and/or voluntary).
- A robust body of evidence profiling perpetrators, with particular reference to detailed profiling and acknowledging the discrepancy between sexual harassment behaviours as individuals define and perceive them compared to legal and crime data definitions.
- Further research on the behaviours and rationale thereof of bystanders who witness instances of sexual harassment and act/do not act.

---

<sup>5</sup> Fitzgerald, L. F., & Cortina, L. M. (2018). Sexual harassment in work organizations: A view from the 21st century. In C. B Travis, J. W. White, A. Rutherford, W. S. Williams, S. L. Cook, & K. F. Wyche (Eds.), *APA handbooks in psychology series. APA handbook of the psychology of women: Perspectives on women's private and public lives* (pp. 215-234). Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association, p. 20.

- 
- Further evidence on the existing reporting practices (or lack thereof) and their prevalence across UK business.
  - Citizen-led perspectives on what legislation and change is needed to support system change in relation to workplace sexual harassment.

It is within the context of these findings that the current survey of sexual harassment was created, using the evidence and other research tools as a basis to develop and test an alternative, and comprehensive survey of sexual harassment. It was the ambition of the quantitative survey element of this research to fill in many of these gaps and provide concrete evidence relating to incidence of a complete list of sexual harassment behaviours, looking across the workplace and public places, and enabling robust analysis of key demographic groups where robust evidence is lacking, namely: specific ages, ethnicity, disability and the LGBT population. This research has been used to pilot a survey design that can be considered for future measurement and monitoring of sexual harassment in the UK.

---

## 2) Methodology

The Government Equalities Office (GEO) commissioned a nationally representative online survey on the UK population. The specific requirement of the research brief was to ‘deliver a nationally representative survey exploring the prevalence and nature of sexual harassment’ with the aim ‘to consolidate existing knowledge and to enhance our understanding of the prevalence and nature of sexual harassment in the UK’. Both online and telephone methodologies were specified in the brief, however budget limitations meant only an online survey was feasible to achieve the minimum base sizes required to meet the research requirements to ‘carry out sufficient sub-group analysis with a 2% (+/-) margin of error and 95% level of confidence. Sub-groups of interest are gender, age groups, those with a disability/long term health condition, and ethnic minority status.’

In response to this, IFF Research proposed an online survey of n=10,000 with a clearly defined sampling frame and minimum base sizes to enable the 2% margin of error on all subgroups of interest. A boost of n=2,200 LGBT individuals was later added to the research to support the inclusion of robust, representative data on this population.

This section provides full detail on the survey’s methodology, including survey design, sampling, fieldwork and the weighting approach.

### **Survey scope**

Sexual harassment in the workplace and public places was a key focus of the survey, in line with commitments by GEO and the Home Office to gather data on sexual harassment in both locations, including instances of sexual assault and rape which are classified separately from sexual harassment in public places (but where employers are also accountable). Throughout this report, we use ‘sexual harassment’ as an umbrella term to refer to sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape.

Sexual harassment in private locations is captured and reported at a basic level in this research to ensure completeness of response options, however no additional information was collected, as sexual harassment in private locations qualifies as domestic abuse and is thus outside the remit of this exercise.

### **Approach to defining sexual harassment**

As noted in the introduction, this research was intended to define and test an alternative approach to measuring sexual harassment. This approach, based on findings from recent academic research and other studies, was designed to reflect the self-determined nature of sexual harassment. Whereas other studies – including the National Crime Survey – measure very specific experiences of sexual harassment (such as a very specific definition of rape), this approach was designed to allow participants to determine what they experienced based on their own, self-determined view of the sexual harassment behaviours being unwanted. While this creates a much broader definition of sexual harassment than is seen elsewhere, it was felt this approach more accurately reflects the legal workplace definition and takes into account many of the concerns academic and other research has raised about how sexual harassment is understood and experienced.

---

Sexual harassment was not asked about as an overall concept but asked specifically in relation to a set of 15 sexual harassment behaviours that cover the full range of types of harassment, developed based on a review of academic literature and other recent surveys. This allowed individuals to self-define their experience for each of these behaviours, each of which was designed to be suitably focussed on a specific type of experience but allowing for a small degree of interpretation to ensure codes did not unintentionally exclude less known experiences. For example, one code for verbal harassment is 'Unwelcome cat calls, wolf whistling or other provocative sounds', which expresses a specific experience but intentionally leaves individuals open to including another form of 'provocative sound' that may not have been included. A full explanation of these codes and their origins is included later in this section (Survey design, 'Selection of sexual harassment behavioural codes').

This perception-based approach to the measurement of sexual harassment, assault and rape is new and the results of this report are therefore experimental. The implications of this, as expected, are results for some aspects of sexual harassment experience that do not align with other recent research or with national crime statistics. In some cases, responses may seem counter-intuitive, but reflect the highly nuanced and wide-ranging ways in which sexual harassment can be experienced. Further detail about the implications of this for analysis and interpreting the results of this research is included later in this section (Reporting conventions, 'Interpreting sexual harassment data').

## **Survey design**

The survey was designed in close partnership with the GEO team and with input from other government departments, in particular Home Office, and others such as DfE and DfT. Its design was based in part on the findings of the literature review – particularly in the design of the behaviour code frame, as below – and sought to align itself where possible to the 2020 census and the National Crime Survey to enable greater comparability of results.

### **Survey content**

The survey was designed to capture the following types of information, in line with key government priorities and evidence gaps:

- Broad attitudes in relation to sexual harassment, including degree of worry and degree of action taken to prevent.
- Incidence of sexual harassment by behaviour type and overall.
- Detail on incidences of sexual harassment, including frequency, location, perpetrator profile, and impact on the survivor's life.
- Deep-dive into sexual harassment experience in the workplace, including additional location and perpetrator profiling, witness responses, survivor response, reporting and outcomes.
- Views on employer responses to the prevention of sexual harassment generally.
- Incidence of witnessing of sexual harassment by type and basic information relating to witness responses.

- 
- Extensive demographic profiling information.

This resulted in a survey based around a comprehensive list of behaviour codes to measure sexual harassment overall and by behaviour type.

### **Alignment to the 2021 Census**

Every effort was made to align key demographics to the 2021 census in the UK, based on the questions expected to be used at the time of the survey. This will enable comparative analysis and align definitions across government for wider use. In some cases, it was decided not to align certain demographic questions to the census, in the interests of questionnaire length. In all cases, this was agreed in close partnership with GEO and through conversations with the ONS census team.

### **Alignment to the National Crime Survey**

Additionally, some questions were aligned to the UK's National Crime Survey, again enabling comparison of results. The questions aligned or adapted from the National Crime Survey include:

- Concern / worry about a specific crime
- Measurement of the impact on quality of life of a specific crime
- Public transportation types

However, while some elements have been adopted from the National Crime Survey, it is not expected that these results would necessarily produce similar results to this or other national data as it asks about a much wider range of sexual harassment behaviours, as detailed above.

### **Selection of sexual harassment behavioural codes**

When reviewing sexual harassment literature and other sexual harassment surveys, it became apparent that it is best practice to capture incidence of sexual harassment by using behavioural descriptors (i.e. describing a situation to assess experience) rather than asking directly about experience (i.e. if someone has had an experience of [what they would term] sexual harassment without defining what is included). In previous surveys, using behavioural descriptors of sexual harassment has proven to produce higher incidence rates than surveys which leave identifying sexual harassment up to the respondent, yet at the time of developing 2020 Sexual Harassment Survey there was no standardised list of which behaviours to include when assessing experiences of sexual harassment.<sup>6</sup> To understand which behaviours should be included in the survey, IFF Research systematically reviewed (via the literature review phase) the inclusion of various behavioural descriptors used in other surveys and the approaches taken to the typology of sexual harassment.<sup>7</sup> For the full detail of this literature, please see the literature review report.

To develop a succinct list of behavioural descriptors of sexual harassment, the behaviour codes used in eight of the most robust, referenced and/or academically supported surveys from the UK and other countries were compared and contrasted against known typologies of sexual harassment, resulting in an initial list of 64 behaviours. Through an iterative process, GEO and IFF Research worked to reduce this to an initial list of 18 behaviours, which was further reduced

---

<sup>6</sup> McDonald, P. (2012). Workplace sexual harassment 30 years on: A review of the literature. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 14(1), 1-17, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Details on this approach can be found in the Sexual Harassment Literature Review

during survey testing (detailed below) to a final list of 15 behaviours. As discussed, this list goes beyond the legal workplace definition of sexual harassment as defined by the Equality Act 2010 to include other sexual offences covered under criminal law, meaning a very broad range of sexual harassment behaviours was included to capture all potential experiences. However, while the codes were developed from recent research and surveys, definitions (and therefore the final results) were expected to differ. The final list of behaviours can be seen below in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1 Final sexual harassment behaviour code frame**

#	Behaviour
1	<b>Displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials</b> which made <u>you feel uncomfortable</u> , including it being viewed near you
2	Unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual nature about you or others that made <u>you feel uncomfortable</u>
3	Unwelcome <b>comments of a sexual nature about your body and/or clothes</b>
4	Unwelcome <b>cat calls, wolf whistling or other provocative sounds</b>
5	Unwelcome <b>staring or looks</b> which made <u>you feel uncomfortable</u>
6	Receiving <u>unwanted messages</u> with material of a sexual nature, e.g. by text/messaging app, email, social media or another source
7	Feeling <b>pressured by someone to date them or do a sexual act</b> for them <u>in exchange for something</u>
8	Someone making <u>persistent and/or unwanted</u> attempts to <b>establish a romantic/sexual relationship</b> with you <b>despite your efforts to discourage it</b>
9	Someone <b>taking and/or sharing sexual pictures or videos of you</b> without your permission.
10	<b>Flashing</b> (e.g. the deliberate exposure of someone's intimate parts)
11	Someone physically <b>following you without your permission</b> in a way that made you feel sexually threatened
12	Someone <b>intentionally</b> , brushing up against you, or <b>invading your personal space</b> in an unwelcome, sexual way
13	<b>Unwanted touching</b> (e.g. placing hand on lower back or knee)
14	<b>Unwanted, overt sexual touching</b> (e.g. touching of the breasts, buttocks or genitals, attempts to kiss)
15	<b>Rape and/or attempted rape</b>
	Any <b>other</b> forms of sexual harassment

*As noted, sexual assault and rape have been included in this research on sexual harassment due to employers being held accountable for sexual harassment and instances of sexual assault and rape, thus making them relevant to this research. As above, use of the term 'sexual harassment' throughout this report includes sexual assault and rape.*

The 'any other forms' code was added to ensure that survey respondents were able to add anything additional that wasn't captured in the existing codes. They were then asked to explain what this was, to ensure future surveys take this into account; 'other' responses were reviewed during fieldwork and re-coded into the appropriate code where possible. No new codes emerged from this exercise, however some responses were not clear enough to re-code precisely (fitting into two potential codes); in these cases, the responses were not re-coded, but have been counted in the total incidence figures.

Two gender harassment<sup>8</sup> behaviours were initially included in the proposed survey, but due to survey length, were excluded from the final list after initial testing. This decision departs from the literature review which concluded that gender harassment is very closely linked to sexual harassment (often a foundation) and should be included in assessments of sexual harassment. Ultimately, the decision to remove these codes was based on the length of the survey and quality of data, with the conclusion that, while important, these behaviours do not fall under the legal definition of sexual harassment and were therefore lower priority.

**How incidence was asked**

Respondents were first asked, for all behaviours (set out in Table 2.1), about lifetime incidence and then about experience in the last 12 months for those selected previously. To ensure respondents understood how to answer, the behaviours were shown along with the following prompt:

*“Please select “Yes” if you experienced a behaviour that, in your opinion, was unwelcome or made you feel uncomfortable.”*

**Fieldwork**

*Cognitive testing*

The proposed survey underwent cognitive testing in October 2019, comprising of 24 face-to-face interviews. These captured individuals from a range of demographic groups and with varied experiences of sexual harassment. The profile of respondents was as follows:

**Table 2.2 Cognitive interview respondent profiles**

	Criteria	Recruited
Gender	Man	10
	Woman	11
	Other (e.g. trans / non-binary)	3
Age	16-24	7
	25 - 34	6
	35 - 49	5
	50+	6
Ethnicity	White	10
	All other ethnic groups combined	14
Employment status	Employed	13
	Studying	7
	Not economically active	4
Sexual orientation	LGBT+	8

<sup>8</sup> Defined as sex-based harassment that does not aim to elicit sexual cooperation but involves unwanted physical, verbal or other forms of harassment on the basis of sex, split as *sexist* hostility vs. *sexual* hostility. (Fitzgerald, L. F., & Cortina, L. M. (2018). Sexual harassment in work organizations: A view from the 21st century. In C. B Travis, J. W. White, A. Rutherford, W. S. Williams, S. L. Cook, & K. F. Wyche (Eds.), APA handbooks in psychology series. APA handbook of the psychology of women: Perspectives on women's private and public lives (pp. 215-234). Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association, p. 221.)

	Criteria	Recruited
	Heterosexual / Straight	16
Experience of sexual harassment	Experienced SH	22
	Experienced mild SH	16
	Experienced severe SH	6
Disability status	Disability	4
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>

The interviews asked respondents to complete the survey first alone, got their initial impressions (and noted any questions), then went through each survey question in more detail to understand how each was understood, how answers were arrived at and to capture thoughts and problems respondents experienced when completing the survey.

Changes to the survey following cognitive testing included:

- A shift from an ‘experience-based’ approach to collecting sexual harassment data to a ‘behaviour-based’ approach. The original survey was designed to enable those who experience repeat and/or very frequent sexual harassment to report these as single experiences, in line with literature and other survey findings around reporting. Ultimately while this worked for the minority who had this experience, it proved too confusing and cumbersome for the majority of respondents.
- Due to overly long survey length, the decision was taken to remove the two gender harassment codes that had been included in the original code frame, as above.
- Refinement of behaviour code frame, adding clarity to certain response options via textual changes and use of bolding/underlining of key text. Additionally, the first question asked incidence for each behaviour by showing the full response list, so respondents could see all response options before selecting codes; this was in contrast to using a carousel or other design choices that, while more engaging for respondents, created false responses.
- Re-ordering of questionnaire and within some sections to improve response continuity.
- Inclusion of additional codes across various questions to improve completeness of response options and minor textual changes throughout to improve survey clarity and improve sensitivity of questions and terminology.
- Removed unnecessary / lower priority questions to reduce overall length, as well as amends to some question formats to enhance user experience.

Timelines and budget did not allow for a second round of cognitive testing on the survey before it was launched; this meant that amends to the design, specifically around changes to how behaviour-based data was collected, were not re-tested. This resulted in some adjustments to how data was later analysed and reported due to differing response patterns amongst those with the most extreme experience of sexual harassment, explained in detail below.

---

## Survey pilot

Following amends to the survey after cognitive testing, the survey was piloted and checked in December 2019, based on the first 143 responses. The purpose of this was to do a final check on the survey function (not content), test the live completion rate and confirm the survey length before launching full fieldwork. Minor survey amends were made based on this pilot (tweaks to questions codes, addition of the 'Other' category) and to address changing policy needs.

## Survey fieldwork

Fieldwork for the survey was conducted between 17 January and 14 February 2020. The survey was conducted online using multiple panel providers, to ensure a broad base of individuals and meet the specific quota and base size requirements (see below).

The survey had an average length of 13 minutes. Quotas were monitored closely during field and relaxed slightly in the final days due to interlocking quotas, but with no impact on achieving the minimum quotas for key subgroups.

## Survey quotas

The final approach and quota targets were designed to ensure statistically robust results of 95% confidence and a maximum +/-2% margin of error at the national level and when undertaking sub-group analysis across age, gender, ethnicity, disability and among the LGBT population.

Targets set by region were used to ensure the composition of the final data would be nationally representative and ensure geographic representation across subgroups of priority interest. Population counts for key demographics at a national and regional level were sourced from the most recent data available at the time through the Labour Market Survey (October 2017 – September 2019) and through direct information requests to the Office of National Statistics to design fall-out for a nationally representative sample overall, regionally and for each priority subgroup. The Labour Market Survey only provides statistics on the LGB population, therefore excluding transgender individuals. In order to calculate net LGBT statistics, LGB data was supplemented with estimated population size provided directly from ONS, which suggests between 200,000 and 500,000 people aged 16+ in the UK identify as transgender. A mid-point estimate of 350,000 was used for population estimates, resulting in an estimate of 0.66% of the population. This was added to the national and regional figures (adjusted regionally to account for regional variation in LGB), resulting in 2.66% for LGBT nationally.

To achieve the desired level of robustness for subgroup analysis, research required a minimum of n=2,400 responses *per subgroup* of interest – namely, among gender, age, ethnicity (by ethnic group), disability and LGBT subgroups. For this to be achieved without any disproportionate sampling would have required a larger survey than could be accommodated. To overcome this, a sampling strategy using sub-group boosts was used to achieve the minimum of n=2,400 for each subgroup (aiming for n=2,500 to allow some contingency).

These formed the bases for the final survey quotas and weighting approach. These statistics can be found in the appendix. At the analysis stage, the final data was weighted to be nationally representative, further detail for which can be found in the appendix.

## Data quality and checks

To maximise reach and minimise panel bias, fieldwork was run using sample from a broad range of pre-existing panel companies, sourced through a single provider that manages sampling to

eliminate duplication and ensure quality fieldwork across all panel sources. The survey was not opened or publicised to the public at large, nor were any respondents recruited to the panels specifically for this survey.

Data checks were run both during and after fieldwork. During fieldwork, quality checks were first done on survey completion time, anything falling under 40% of the median; this rule was increased from the norm of 30%, on the basis of survey length and complexity). Open-ended questions were then checked for malicious and clearly rogue responses and removed accordingly. In total, 925 false responses were removed on the grounds of poor quality.

Due to the survey design, there was no way to run checks on survey ‘flatliners’ during fieldwork, as many instances where these might typically be expected could in this instance be genuine (e.g. selecting all male perpetrators or having experienced most/all behaviours at the same location). After fieldwork, checks were run on the data through and alongside analysis to identify potential rogue responses and determine robust rules to remove them. The final rules were based on contradictory responses, flatlining patterns across the survey, and patterned responses across multiple survey questions. This resulted in the removal of 69 completed surveys, resulting in a final base of n=12,131.

### Weighting

Findings from the core survey have been weighted to accurately represent the total population of UK over the age of 16. This has been done on based on region, age, gender, ethnicity, disability and LGBT, adding up to specific national composition reflective of the most recent UK population statistics (as outlined above). The final weights for the survey are shown in Table 2.5.

**Table 2.5 Final sample weights**

	Base n	Weighted n	Average weight	Final %
Total sample	12131	12131	1	100
Males	5141	5818	1.13	48.0%
Female	6749	6072	0.90	50.1%
Other/Prefer not to say*	241	241	1.00	2.0%
<i>NET ages 16-24</i>	3068	1612	0.53	13.3%
Ages 16-19	1178	661	0.56	5.4%
Ages 20-24	1890	951	0.50	7.8%
Ages 25-34	2566	2058	0.80	17.0%
Ages 35-49	3088	2916	0.94	24.0%
Ages 50-64	2117	2856	1.35	23.5%
Age 65+	1292	2689	2.08	22.2%
<i>NET ages 50+</i>	3409	5545	1.63	45.7%
White	9181	10621	1.16	87.6%
All other ethnic groups combined	2950	1510	0.51	12.4%

	Base n	Weighted n	Average weight	Final %
Legal disability	2896	1919	0.66	15.8%
Other or no disability	8986	9970	1.11	82.2%
Prefer not to say				
LGBT**	2465	321	0.13	2.6%
Not LGBT	9666	11810	1.22	97.4%
North East	519	491	0.95	4.0%
North West	1383	1323	0.96	10.9%
Yorkshire and The Humber	1049	998	0.95	8.2%
East Midlands	873	873	1.00	7.2%
West Midlands	1130	1060	0.94	8.7%
East	1006	1133	1.13	9.3%
London	1688	1633	0.97	13.5%
South East	1668	1662	1.00	13.7%
South West	1031	1030	1.00	8.5%
Wales	565	579	1.02	4.8%
Scotland	943	1012	1.07	8.3%
Northern Ireland	276	336	1.22	2.8%

\* Gender: with no national statistics yet available on 'other', the decision was taken to use the exact % of those stating 'other' and prefer not to say for sex and gender questions, then weight men/women proportionally against the population statistics.

\*\* LGBT: at the time of survey design and fieldwork, no national statistics existed on the number of Transgender individuals in the UK. LGB population data was supplemented with estimated Transgender population proportions from ONS to create the final LGBT weight.

This weight has a design effect of 1.7 and an effective sample size of 7,212. As per industry best practice, the average weight applied to any individual sub-groups will not be greater than +5 (average here is 0.98), less than 10% are above +2 (only 1 of 28) and no weights are close to 0 (lowest is 0.13).

### Statistical significance of survey data

To achieve the desired level of robustness for subgroup analysis, research required a minimum of n=2,400 responses *per subgroup* of interest – namely, among gender, age, ethnic, disability and LGBT subgroups. For this to be achieved without any disproportionate sampling would have required a larger survey than could be accommodated. To overcome this, a sampling strategy using sub-group boosts was used to achieve the minimum of n=2,400 for each subgroup (aiming for n=2,500 to allow some contingency). Hence, at the analysis stage, the final data were weighted to be nationally representative, further detail for which can be found below.

Table 2.6 summarises the overall base size for each sub-group achieved, the maximum standard error that applies at the 95% confidence level and also the corresponding standard error that would apply for findings closer to the extremes (for findings of either 10% or 90%).

**Table 2.6 Statistical significance of achieved sample**

	Population	Base n	Maximum standard error (for findings at 50%)	Standard error for findings at 10%/90%
Total sample	52,994,200	12,131	+/- 0.9%	+/- 0.5%
Males	25,926,800	5,141	+/- 1.4%	+/- 0.8%
Female	27,067,400	6,749	+/- 1.2%	+/- 0.7%
White	46,468,300	9,181	+/- 1.0%	+/- 0.6%
Mixed	6,476,000	2,950	+/- 1.8%	+/- 1.1%
Disability (long-term mental or physical)	8,419,100	2,896	+/- 1.8%	+/- 1.1%
Ages 16-19	2,883,200	1,178	+/- 1.8%	+/- 1.1%
Ages 20-24	4,152,700	1,890		
Ages 25-34	8,971,000	2,566	+/- 1.9%	+/- 1.2%
Ages 35-49	12,737,700	3,088	+/- 1.8%	+/- 1.1%
Ages 50-64	12,472,900	2,117	+/- 1.7%	+/- 1.0%
Age 65+	11,776,900	1,292		
LGBT	1,409,884	2,465	+/- 2.0%	+/- 1.2%

## Reporting conventions

This report will follow a consistent set of rules in how it reports on the extensive list of sexual harassment behaviours and signalling significant differences between the many demographic groups of interest across the report.

### Reporting of sexual harassment behaviours

Each of the 15 specific behaviours included in the survey had a long description included to ensure clarity of the behaviour for consistency and rigour, which was adjusted for questions relating to experiencing vs witnessing behaviours. An 'other' code was included for over incidence to allow for anything not captured by the specified behaviours. To simplify this for reporting purposes, each behaviour code has been abbreviated to a shorter phrase that is consistently used in the report, as well as short form abbreviations used in charts. These abbreviations are outlined in Table 2.7.

**Table 2.7 Behavioural code abbreviation rules**

#	Abbreviated behaviour code used through charts	Abbreviated behaviour code used throughout charts and report.	Full behaviour code used in questionnaire for participants that experienced the behaviour in their lifetime or in the last 12 months	Full behaviour code used in questionnaire for participants that witnessed another person experience the behaviour.
1	<b>Offensive materials</b>	Displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials	<b>Displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials</b> which made <b>you feel uncomfortable</b> , including it being viewed near you	Someone showing <b>displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials</b> which <b>made another person feel uncomfortable</b>
2	<b>Sexual jokes</b>	Unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual nature	Unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual nature about you or others that made <b>you feel uncomfortable</b>	Unwelcome jokes and comments of a sexual nature that <b>you think made someone hearing the jokes feel uncomfortable</b>
3	<b>Sexual comments</b>	Unwelcome comments of a sexual nature about body and/or clothes	Unwelcome <b>comments of a sexual nature about your body and/or clothes</b>	<b>Someone feeling uncomfortable</b> when another person made <b>comments of a sexual nature about their body and/or clothes</b>
4	<b>Provocative sounds</b>	Unwelcome cat calls, wolf whistling or other provocative sounds	Unwelcome <b>cat calls, wolf whistling or other provocative sounds</b>	Someone experiencing unwelcome <b>cat calls, wolf whistling or other provocative sounds</b>
5	<b>Unwelcome staring or looks</b>	Unwelcome staring or looks	Unwelcome <b>staring or looks</b> which made <b>you feel uncomfortable</b>	Someone experiencing unwelcome <b>staring or looks</b> which <b>you think made them feel uncomfortable</b>
6	<b>Unwanted messages</b>	Unwanted messages with material of a sexual nature	Receiving <b>unwanted messages</b> with material of a sexual nature, e.g. by text/messaging app, email, social media or another source	Someone showing you <b>unwanted messages</b> with material of a sexual nature they have received, e.g. by text/messaging app, email, social media or another source
7	<b>Sexually pressured exchange</b>	Feeling pressured by someone to date them/do a sexual act for them in exchange for something	Feeling <b>pressured by someone to date them or do a sexual act</b> for them <b>in exchange for something</b>	<b>Someone feeling pressured</b> by another person to date them or do a sexual act for them <b>in exchange for something</b>
8	<b>Unwanted relationship attempts</b>	Persistent and/or unwanted attempts to establish a	Someone making <b>persistent and/or unwanted</b> attempts to <b>establish a</b>	Someone experiencing <b>persistent and unwanted</b> attempts from another person to <b>establish a</b>

#	Abbreviated behaviour code used through charts	Abbreviated behaviour code used throughout charts and report.	Full behaviour code used in questionnaire for participants that experienced the behaviour in their lifetime or in the last 12 months	Full behaviour code used in questionnaire for participants that witnessed another person experience the behaviour.
		romantic/sexual relationship	<b>romantic/sexual relationship</b> with you <b>despite your efforts to discourage it</b>	<b>romantic/sexual relationship</b> with them <b>despite their efforts to discourage it</b>
9	<b>Pictures or videos shared without permission</b>	Taking and/or sharing sexual pictures or videos of you without permission	Someone <b>taking and/or sharing sexual pictures or videos of you</b> without your permission.	Someone <b>taking and/or sharing sexual pictures or videos of another person</b> without their permission.
10	<b>Flashing</b>	Flashing	<b>Flashing</b> (e.g. the deliberate exposure of someone's intimate parts)	N/A
11	<b>Following or threatening</b>	Being physically followed in a sexually threatening way	Someone physically <b>following you without your permission</b> in a way that made you feel sexually threatened	Someone <b>physically following another person without their permission</b> in a way that might have made them feel sexually threatened.
12	<b>Invasion of personal space</b>	Someone intentionally brushing up, or invading personal space in a sexual way	Someone <b>intentionally, brushing up against you, or invading your personal space</b> in an unwelcome, sexual way	Someone intentionally, brushing up against another person, or <b>invading their personal space</b> in an unwelcome, sexual way.
13	<b>Unwanted non-sexual touching</b>	Unwanted touching	<b>Unwanted touching</b> (e.g. placing hand on lower back or knee)	<b>Unwanted touching</b> (e.g. placing hand on lower back or knee)
14	<b>Sexual assault (overt sexual touching)</b>	Unwanted, overt sexual touching	<b>Unwanted, overt sexual touching</b> (e.g. touching of the breasts, buttocks or genitals, attempts to kiss)	<b>Unwanted, overt sexual touching</b> (e.g. touching of the breasts, buttocks or genitals, attempts to kiss)
15	<b>Rape or attempted rape</b>	Rape and/or attempted rape	<b>Rape and/or attempted rape</b>	<b>Rape and/or attempted rape</b>
16	<b>Other</b>	Any other forms of sexual harassment	Any <b>other</b> forms of sexual harassment	Any <b>other</b> forms of sexual harassment

### Reporting of significant differences

Throughout the report, analysis has been conducted for the following subgroups for all questions:

- Gender – men vs women (base sizes for ‘another gender’ are too small to be included); we intentionally refer to gender throughout this report, not sex

- 
- Age – split as 16-24, 25-34, 35-50 and over 50
  - Sexual orientation – heterosexual vs LGB
  - Transgender – analysed based on their selected gender but not analysed separately; this was due to a recognition that their experience will differ significantly from LGB (significantly different in most things) and will require separate analysis.
  - Ethnicity – White vs All other ethnic groups combined (including mixed)
  - Disability – based on a subjective view as to the degree of adverse effect their disability causes them in their daily lives, split as a 'highly limiting' disability, a 'somewhat limiting disability' or no disability

Significant testing has been run using independent t-tests, which compares each sub-group against the others (not against the average) and indicates significance for anything above the 95% confidence level. As indicated above, all reported results assume a 1-2% margin of error (differing by group) for each of the priority subgroups (any deeper analysis would have a larger margin of error).

The rules for the reporting of significant differences are:

- **In text:** reporting of significant difference in the report narrative will be done by stating that a group is significantly different.

Where charts are not able to show significant differences by subgroup, these will be stated in the text.

- **Tables:** where possible, significant differences are shown in tables by using an asterisk in the appropriate column, with this difference explained in the text that follows; where tables do not show significant differences by subgroup, these will be stated in the text.

Any deviations from these conventions will be based on the specific needs of that section or chart/table in order to support the clarity of the report; in these cases, they will be clearly defined.

### **Interpreting sexual harassment data**

The use of a much broader, self-defined definition of sexual harassment and sexual harassment behaviours means many of the results in this report do not match those of other public data or similar studies, i.e. where incidence of experiencing and/or witnessing certain behaviours is in some case higher than seen elsewhere. This was an anticipated consequence of the design but a consideration to keep in mind when reviewing these results.

Further, the self-determined nature of this definition has produced a number of instances where responses seem counter-intuitive to expectations, for example:

- Experiencing certain types of behaviour by groups, not individuals;
- Experiencing certain types of harassment by strangers online; or

- 
- Physical forms of sexual harassment which respondents say they experienced online, such as sexual assault or rape.

A review of these unexpected response patterns was undertaken during data quality checks to assess their validity and, based on other survey responses and open-ended comments, those remaining were deemed genuine (and some removed as disingenuous). While further research would be needed to unpick these instances in detail, analysis of the data and reference to existing literature suggest these are in fact a reflection of how highly nuanced and wide-ranging ways sexual harassment experiences can be in the modern age and are a bi-product of this wider, self-determined definition of what constitutes sexual harassment; whereby – for example – the *threat* of physical sexual harassment (like rape) online can be perceived and categorised by respondents as attempted or actual harassment (thus accounting for higher incidence of some forms of sexual harassment overall and in unusual ways, such as ‘online’).

In all instances where this occurs, we have provided insight on the potential reasons for these responses and refer the reader back to this section of the report as a reminder of the assumed reasons for these discrepancies.

### **Other interpretation considerations**

In addition to the above, there are a few aspects of the data and responses that readers should be mindful of when interpreting the results.

- A limitation of the data on socio-economic status (NS-SEC) is that people may have changed roles between the time of experiencing the sexual harassment and the time of completing the survey, which impacts the interpretation of these results. For this reason, some data split by NS-SEC can be found in the annex rather than the main report.
- Some questions about perpetrators include the option for ‘another gender identity’. In general, responses for this option (meaning someone not identifying strictly as a man or a woman) are higher than expected given the ‘another gender identity’ population. Analysis of survey data suggests that that some respondents have selected ‘another gender identity’ for LGBT individuals, e.g. for harassment from someone homosexual of the same gender, rather than based on their gender identity.
- There are many instances of inter-correlation between different characteristics affecting the findings, particularly age and particularly in the workplace. For example, where age has a strong correlation with the role of the victim and the likelihood to be in certain work situations (such as socialising). This has been referenced explicitly where it occurs.
- Like incidence of sexual harassment, reporting of witnessing (shown in Appendix C) is tied to whether the ‘witnesser’ personally defines the event as sexual harassment (which could differ from that of the victim). This could easily lead to both under- or over-reporting of witnessing, depending on the person, situation and behaviour in question. While this was an acknowledged possibility when including this in the survey design, the incidence data for witnessing should therefore be treated with extreme caution. The witnessing section was purposefully included and reported to better understand *responses* by witnesses in relation to sexual harassment, in order to better understand this aspect of sexual harassment experience.

---

## Identification and isolation of the high degree victims group

Whilst analysing the initial survey data, the research team identified unusual response patterns that suggested a small minority of respondents with atypical, repetitive and/or a high volume of experiences struggled to answer the survey using the behaviour-led format. These individuals typically experienced sexual harassment from the same person/people, in the same location, and/or at a high volume. When looking at their responses, it was clear they struggled to differentiate their experiences by behaviour, but instead responded to the survey from the perspective of their net experience. For example, indicating they experience a high volume of sexual harassment behaviours daily or weekly, when literature and cognitive testing suggest they likely experience only some of these that often, but are not able to differentiate to that degree due to how they have perceived these as a single, grouped experience of sexual harassment (often repeated from the same person or group). Anecdotal evidence from cognitive testing, the literature review and other sources supported this conclusion.<sup>9</sup> While exploring the source of these results and conducting additional quality checks, it became apparent that the minority group were genuine survey responses, but had completed the survey in a different way to expectations or instructions: where the majority was able to differentiate and respond about their experience of each behaviour discretely, this group seemed to respond in a more holistic manner based on their net or average experience. This affected all of Section B of the survey, which looked at the experiences of sexual harassment (frequency, location, perpetrators, repeat, etc.) in detail and by behaviour.

In contrast to poor quality respondents (removed during data quality checks), this group responses showed evidence of being genuine (i.e. relevant responses in open text boxes, good differentiation in response patterns, completion time, and not qualifying for specific rules poor quality respondents fit, or any other reasonable criteria), and so were not removed on data quality grounds. Once identified, a process to assess the survey data for this type of respondent was completed which used unexpected results and further depth analysis to isolate this type of respondent and develop rules through which to identify others. Experiences of other surveys that had encountered similar response patterns due to repeat victimisation were referenced when determining how best to identify and handle this group, particularly that from the National Crime Survey (looking at repeat victims of crime).<sup>10</sup> This process identified 545 respondents (2.5% of the weighted population) with a very consistent, but distinct and extreme experience of sexual harassment. A final definition based on two rules was ultimately applied to the data, with any respondents qualifying for at least one of these included in this group:

- Experience of a high volume of behaviours (11+) in the last 12 months, which have happened – on average – daily or weekly, i.e. high volume and high frequency victims; AND/OR
- Experienced (attempted) rape or sexual touching daily or weekly, i.e. may not experience as many types but have indicated they experience certain, extreme ones very regularly.

---

<sup>9</sup> For one of many examples of environments where this may occur, see BBC's 2017 sexual harassment research.

<sup>10</sup> Office for National Statistics (2016). 'Review of methodology for addressing high-frequency repeat victimisation in Crime Survey for England and Wales estimates Review of methodology for addressing high-frequency repeat victimisation in Crime Survey for England and Wales estimates'. Accessed at (September 2020): <https://www.ons.gov.uk/aboutus/whatwedo/statistics/consultationsandsurveys/allconsultationsandsurveys/reviewofmethodologyforaddressinghighfrequencyrepeatvictimisationincrimesurveyforenglandandwalesestimates>

---

In line with the National Crime Survey terminology, this group was given the label of 'high degree victims', or HDVs.<sup>11</sup> The group's validity was verified by analysing those qualifying for each rule independently to ensure they showed similar response patterns, then by combining them and comparing their response patterns to other potential definitions<sup>12</sup> and the remaining data overall to verify this definition as the most appropriate.

While this approach to isolation high degree victims is not entirely new, the way in which sexual harassment has been measured, and this high degree victims group defined, is new and differs from the approaches taken by other recent studies. The results of this are therefore experimental.

### *Approach to analysis and reporting*

While HDV survey responses were found to be genuine and do offer crucial insight into the experience of a very unique but extreme experience of sexual harassment, the way in which they responded to the experience section of the survey (section B) was deemed to be invalid on the basis of being thought to have responded based on net experience not experience by behaviour as instructed and intended. These responses skewed the final data significantly, particularly when looking at responses by behaviour, e.g. frequency, perpetrator type, impact of each behaviour, etc. Rather than exclude them from the data overall as invalid responses (which would exclude a critical minority from the research), a decision was taken to isolate HDVs, treating them differently where it would be more appropriate to show their data separately. Consequently, the data in the report is split to exclude this group and/or show their experience separately from the main data where relevant. This was applied to the report section as follows:

- Section 3 – Incidence: total, weighted sample used (including HDVs), as HDV responses patterns were not found to affect these questions. HDVs introduced in this section to set up for the remainder of the report.
- Section 4 – Experience: HDVs excluded from the weighted data on the basis of incorrect response patterns to these questions; a separate subsection summarising their responses to the same questions has been included.
- Section 5 – Reporting: HDVs excluded from the weighted data on the basis of incorrect response patterns to these questions; a separate subsection summarising their responses to the same questions has been included.
- Section 6 – Workplace: total, weighted sample used (including HDVs), as HDV responses patterns were not found to affect these questions.
- Section 7 – Perceptions of employer action: total, weighted sample used (including HDVs), as HDV responses patterns were not found to affect these questions.
- Appendix B – Perpetrators: HDVs excluded from the weighted data on the basis of incorrect response patterns to these questions; a separate subsection summarising their responses to the same questions has been included.

---

<sup>11</sup> We acknowledge that for some the word 'victim' is a loaded term. We have used it in this document to indicate someone who has experienced sexual harassment but recognise that not everyone who has experienced sexual harassment would identify with this term. The label 'high degree victim', in particular, was used to align to the approach taken by the National Crime Survey.

<sup>12</sup> Other rules considered included other volume and frequency combinations, a definition based on repeat experience, and an expansion to include high frequency for other specific behaviours beyond rape and sexual assault. While these alternatives worked theoretically, they did not show distinct enough differences to each other or against the remaining data to be deemed robust.

- 
- Appendix C – Witnessing: total, weighted sample used (including HDVs), as HDV responses patterns were not found to affect these questions.

This approach has been signposted throughout the report, with reference in each section as to which population is included in analysis.

# Chapter 3

Incidence of sexual harassment

---

## 3) Incidence of sexual harassment

This chapter provides an overview of the incidence of sexual harassment in the UK, covering both what people have experienced over their lifetime and in the last 12 months. It will also explore the differing incidence and types of harassment experienced between different demographic groups. The data in this chapter includes the full, nationally representative sample (including high degree victims).

Results throughout this report are experimental and may differ significantly from the results of other studies or statistics. For further details, including details of the behaviour-based design of this research, please refer to the methodology chapter and the 'Interpreting sexual harassment data' section in particular.

### Chapter Summary

- Nearly three-quarters (72%) of the UK population have experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in their lifetime. Two-in-five (43%) of the UK population have experienced at least one sexual harassment behaviour in the last 12 months.
- The top three reported sexual harassment behaviours experienced were: sexual jokes, staring or looks, and sexual comments. These were most common over both individuals' lifetimes and within the last 12 months.
- The following groups were significantly more likely to say they had experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in the last 12 months:
  - Women: 51% of women compared with 34% of men.
  - Young people: 71% of those aged between 16 to 24 compared with 63% of those between 25 and 34, 46% of those aged 35 to 49, and 25% of those aged 50 or more.
  - People from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities): 49% of people from an ethnic minority compared with 42% of White people.
  - LGB people: 64% of people who identified as LGB compared with 42% among heterosexual people.
  - People with highly limiting disabilities (47%) compared with non-disabled people (39%).

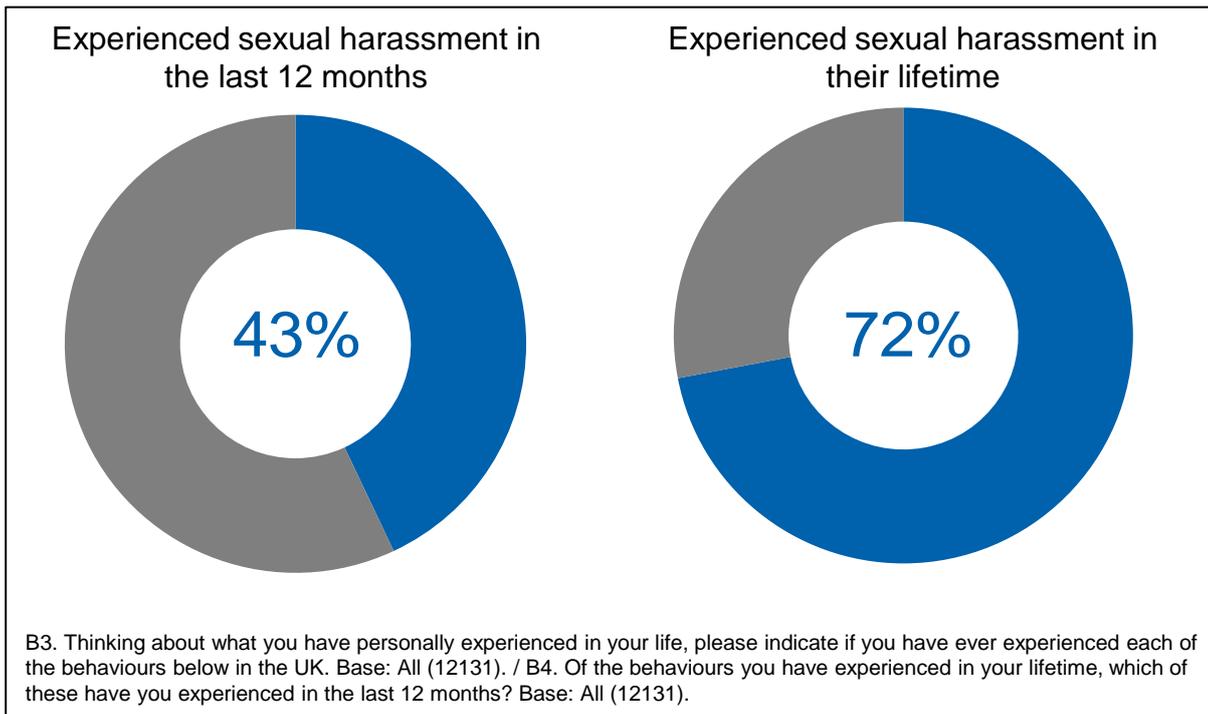
This chapter reports data from all participants (n=12,131). This sample include 545 respondents who have been identified as high degree victims of sexual harassment. High degree victims

reported experiencing a very high volume of sexual harassment in the last 12 months, on a regular basis. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 exclude high degree victims, referenced in those chapters.

## Prevalence of sexual harassment

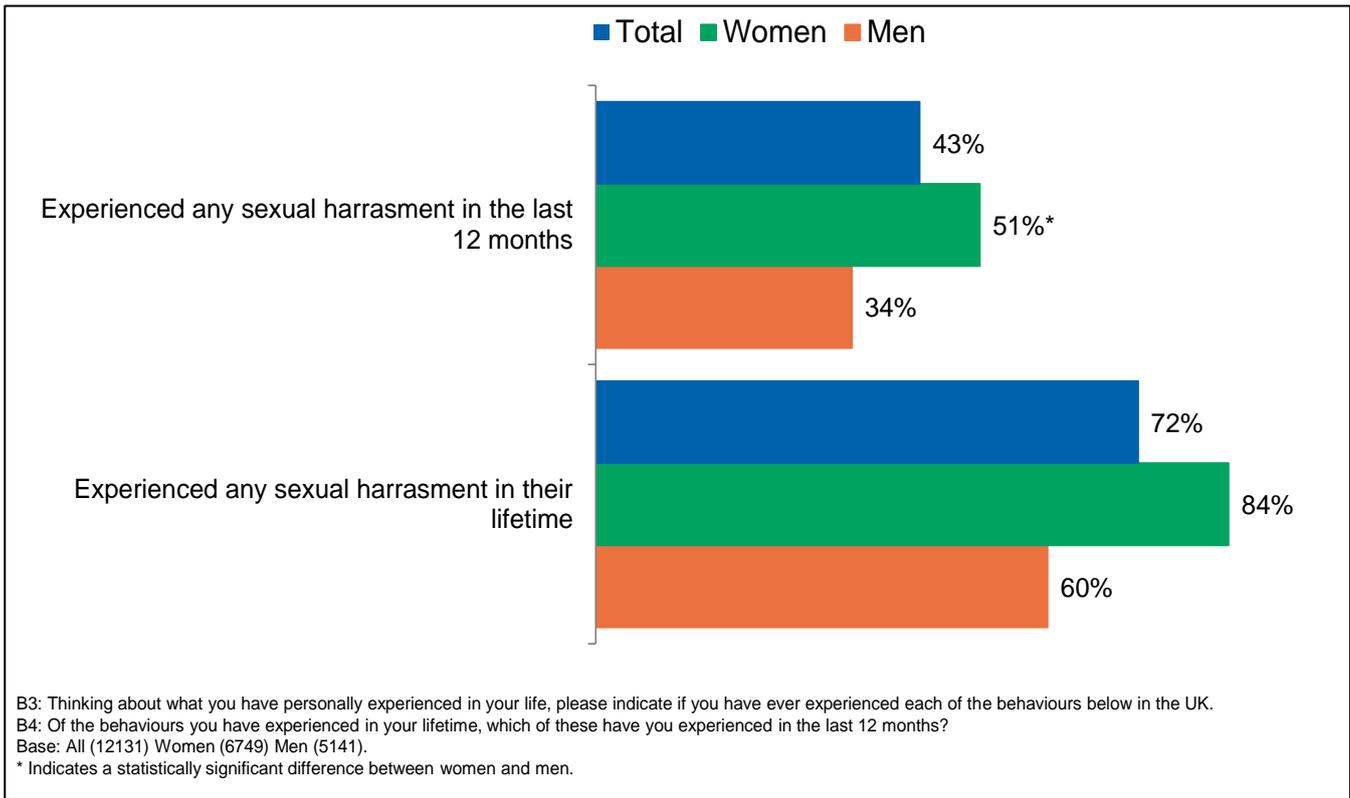
Two-in-five (43%) of the UK population have experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in the last 12 months, with nearly three quarters (72%) having experienced it over their lifetime.

Figure 3.1 Prevalence of sexual harassment in the UK



As shown in Figure 3.2, women were significantly more likely to have experienced any form of sexual harassment in the last twelve months than men: 51% of women experienced sexual harassment in the last twelve months compared to 34% of men.

**Figure 3.2 Prevalence of sexual harassment in the UK by Gender**



This pattern was reflected when looking at experience of sexual harassment throughout individuals' lifetimes; 84% of women have experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in their lifetime compared to 60% of men.

## Comparable studies

The proportion of women who have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime is comparable to other nationally representative surveys. For example, in the 2019 nationally representative sexual harassment survey carried out by StopStreetHarassment.org in the USA, 81% of women reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment in their lifetime.<sup>13</sup> This is higher than the estimation from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights that 45% to 55% of women in these EU countries have experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15, based on the survey of 42,000 people about sexual harassment across 28 member states using an 11-item list of behaviours.<sup>14</sup> The culture of a country is very relevant to sexual harassment, therefore making international comparisons between sexual harassment data limited.

In the UK, ComRes undertook a survey in 2017 on behalf of the BBC of 6,026 people, reporting 40% of women and 18% of men has experienced any type of sexual harassment.<sup>15</sup> However, even with this large base and small margin of error, the base sizes available for subgroups in this survey would in many cases be too small to enable equally robust analysis by subgroups, which requires a very low margin of error for *each subgroup*, not just for the national population.

## Types of sexual harassment experienced

### Experiences of sexual harassment

The most commonly reported sexual harassment behaviours did not vary significantly when looking at the last 12 months vs. individuals' lifetimes. As shown in Figure 3.3 below, the top three reported behaviours were:

- Unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual nature (21% in last 12 months vs. 47% over lifetime).
- Unwelcome staring or looks (21% in last 12 months vs. 41% over lifetime).
- Unwelcome comments of a sexual nature about body and/or clothes (14% in the last 12 months vs. 35% in a lifetime).

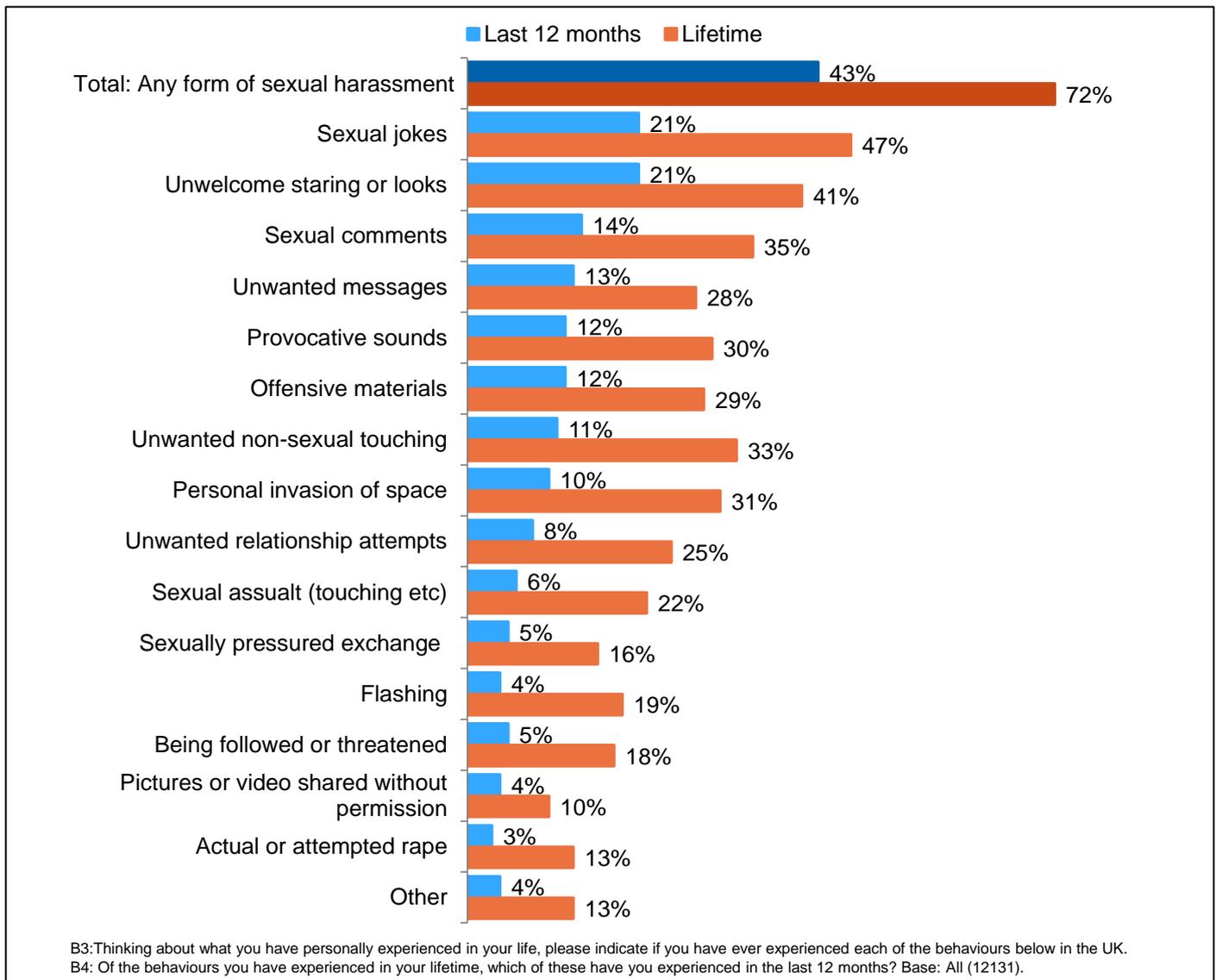
To further understand how these incidence rates are calculated, please refer to the Methodology chapter.

<sup>13</sup> Kearn, H. (2014). Unsafe and harassed in public spaces: A national street harassment report, p. 8.

<sup>14</sup> European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey p.95-117

<sup>15</sup> BBC and ComRes. (2017). Sexual Harassment in the workplace. Retrieved from: <https://www.comresglobal.com/polls/bbc-sexual-harassment-in-the-work-place-2017/>.

**Figure 3.3 Experiences of sexual harassment behaviours in the last 12 months and over a lifetime<sup>16 17</sup>**



Four percent of participants noted that they had experienced ‘other’ forms of sexual harassment in the last 12 months, and 13% reported this over their lifetime. Many of the ‘other’ behaviours entered were similar to the behaviour codes already presented but did not align clearly enough to be re-coded. These have been included in total figures, but the remainder of this report will not report the ‘other’ behaviours.

<sup>16</sup> As noted in the Methodology chapter, sexual harassment is being used as a blanket term throughout this report for sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape. See Methodology chapter for more information.

<sup>17</sup> Results are experimental and may differ significantly from results published elsewhere. For further details, please refer to the ‘Interpreting sexual harassment data’ section in the Methodology chapter.

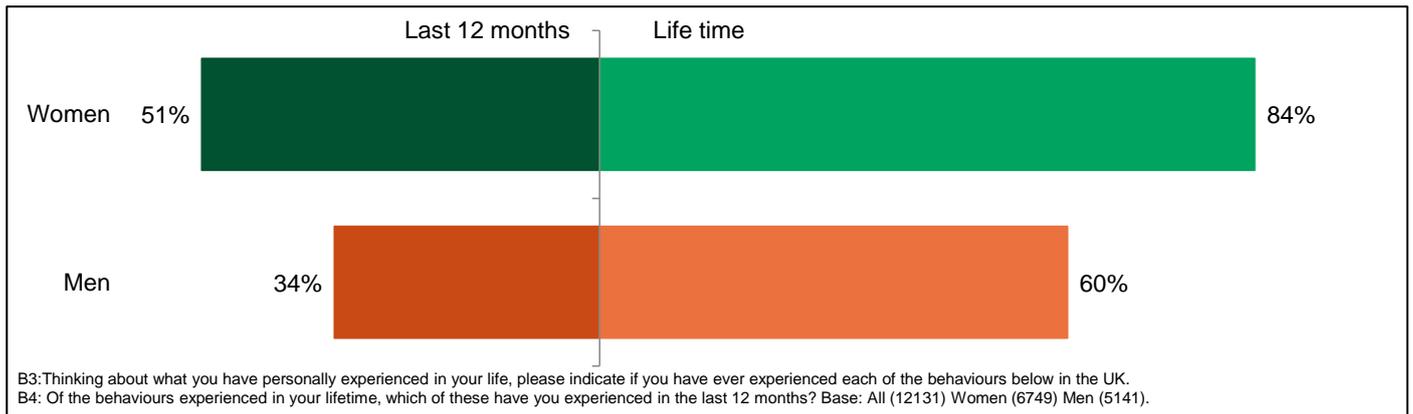
## People who have experienced sexual harassment

This section will outline the characteristics of those who have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime and in the last 12 months. These reflect trends seen in other data.

### Incidence by gender

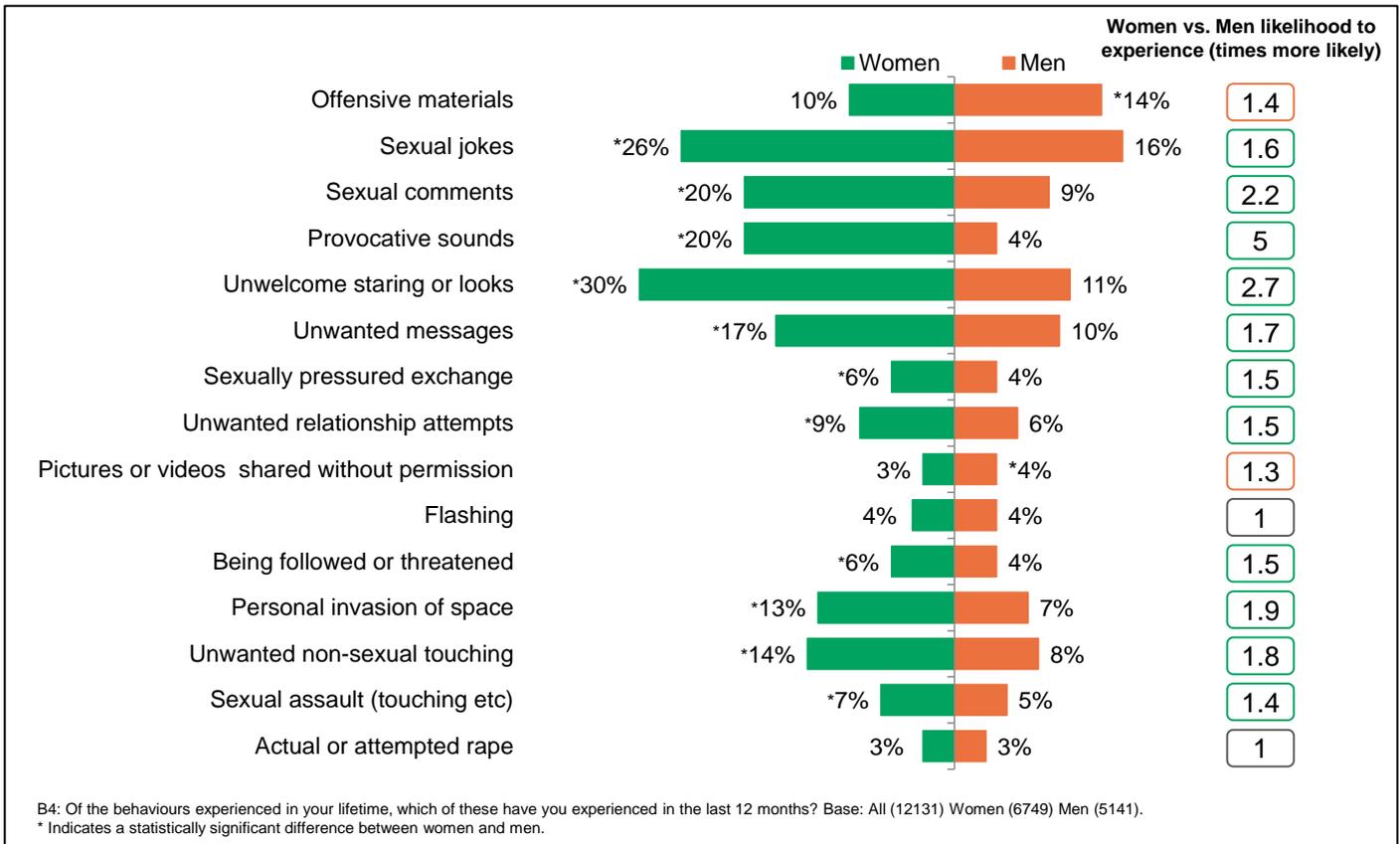
As noted in Chapter 3, significantly more women than men have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime (84% of women vs. 60% of men) and in the last 12 months (51% of women vs. 34% of men).

**Figure 3.4 Experience of sexual harassment in the last 12 months and across the lifetime by gender**



As shown Figure 3.5 below, women were also significantly more likely than men to have experienced most behaviours in the last 12 months.

**Figure 3.5 Experience of sexual harassment behaviours in the last 12 months by gender**

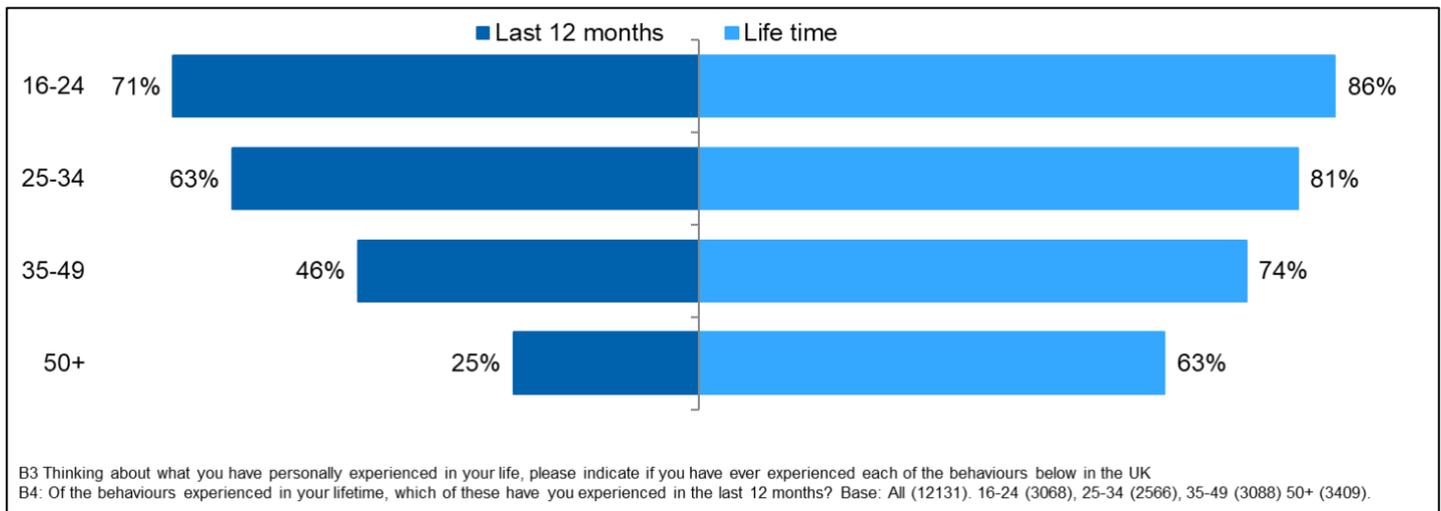


Overall, women were significantly more likely to experience most behaviours, with the most significant gaps seen for staring or looks, provocative sounds, sexual jokes and sexual comments. In contrast, men were significantly more likely to experience displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials (14% men vs 10% women) and someone taking and / or sharing of sexual pictures or videos of them without permission (4% men vs 3% women). There were no significant differences between men and women’s experience of rape and/or attempted rape in the last 12 months or flashing. These results by gender show differences to other national studies - this is likely to be linked to the behaviour-based design of this research which gave individuals more scope to self-define what behaviours they considered unwanted (as detailed in the Methodology chapter).

**Incidence by age**

Younger people (under 35) were significantly more likely than each age group in ascending order to have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months.

**Figure 3.6 Experience of sexual harassment in the last 12 months and across a lifetime by age**



Nearly three quarters (71%) of 16-24 year olds experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, as did almost two-thirds (63%) of 25-34 year olds; in contrast, less than half (46%) of 35-49 and one quarter (25%) of people aged 50+ had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months. Younger people were significantly more likely to have experienced all behaviours in the last 12 months, with those aged 50+ least likely to have experienced each. One reason for this could be that different behaviours may be unwelcome or noted as unacceptable now, compared to how the same behaviours used to be perceived. Younger generations have a different set of social norms around what is acceptable and what ‘counts’ as sexual harassment to them compared to older generations.

The differences in each behaviour experienced by age are shown in Table 3.7, with significant differences indicated via the shading of the table and the column letters referenced.

**Table 3.7 Experience of sexual harassment in last 12 months by age<sup>18</sup>**

Behaviours experienced in the last 12 months	16-24 <sup>a</sup>	25-34 <sup>b</sup>	35-49 <sup>c</sup>	50+ <sup>d</sup>
Offensive materials	19% <sup>cd</sup>	21% <sup>cd</sup>	13% <sup>d</sup>	6%
Sexual jokes	39% <sup>bcd</sup>	34% <sup>cd</sup>	23% <sup>d</sup>	11%
Sexual comments	32% <sup>bcd</sup>	25% <sup>cd</sup>	15% <sup>d</sup>	5%
Provocative sounds	33% <sup>bcd</sup>	22% <sup>cd</sup>	11% <sup>d</sup>	3%
Unwelcome staring or looks	47% <sup>bcd</sup>	33% <sup>cd</sup>	22% <sup>d</sup>	8%
Unwanted messages	25% <sup>bcd</sup>	19% <sup>cd</sup>	14% <sup>d</sup>	8%
Sexually pressured exchange	11% <sup>cd</sup>	11% <sup>cd</sup>	6% <sup>d</sup>	1%

Behaviours experienced in the last 12 months	16-24 <sup>a</sup>	25-34 <sup>b</sup>	35-49 <sup>c</sup>	50+ <sup>d</sup>
Unwanted relationship attempts	16% <sup>bcd</sup>	13% <sup>cd</sup>	9% <sup>d</sup>	3%
Pictures or videos shared without permission	8% <sup>cd</sup>	8% <sup>cd</sup>	5% <sup>d</sup>	1%
Flashing	8% <sup>cd</sup>	8% <sup>cd</sup>	5% <sup>d</sup>	1%
Being followed or threatened	12% <sup>bcd</sup>	10% <sup>cd</sup>	5% <sup>d</sup>	1%
Personal invasion of space	20% <sup>bcd</sup>	17% <sup>cd</sup>	11% <sup>d</sup>	4%
Unwanted non-sexual touching	23% <sup>bcd</sup>	18% <sup>cd</sup>	12% <sup>d</sup>	4%
Sexual assault (touching etc)	15% <sup>bcd</sup>	11% <sup>cd</sup>	6% <sup>d</sup>	2%
Actual or attempted rape	6% <sup>cd</sup>	6% <sup>cd</sup>	4% <sup>d</sup>	1%
<i>Base: All (12131)</i>	<i>3068</i>	<i>2566</i>	<i>3088</i>	<i>3409</i>

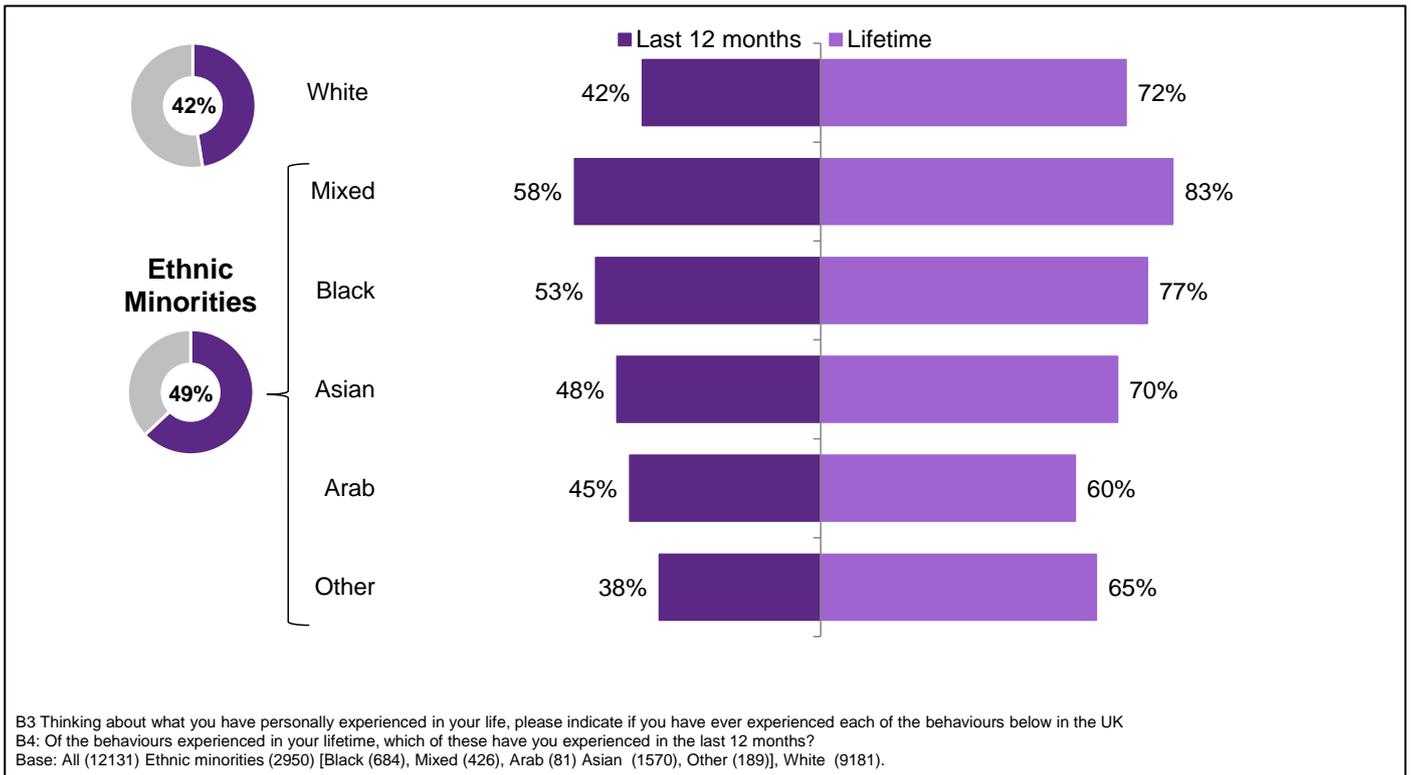
B4. Of those you have experienced, which of these have you experienced in the last 12 months?

The superscripted letters on percentages signify a significant difference between subgroups. The cells which are coloured also signify this.

### Incidence by ethnicity

People belonging to an ethnic minority were significantly more likely than White people to experience sexual harassment: nearly a half (49%) of all other ethnic groups' combined respondents had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, compared to 42% of White people.

**Figure 3.7 Experiences of sexual harassment in the last 12 months and in a lifetime by ethnicity**



There was no significant difference between ethnic minority groups, but there were some minor differences. For example, those from the Mixed ethnic group (83%) were the most likely of all minority groups to have experienced sexual harassment over their lifetime.

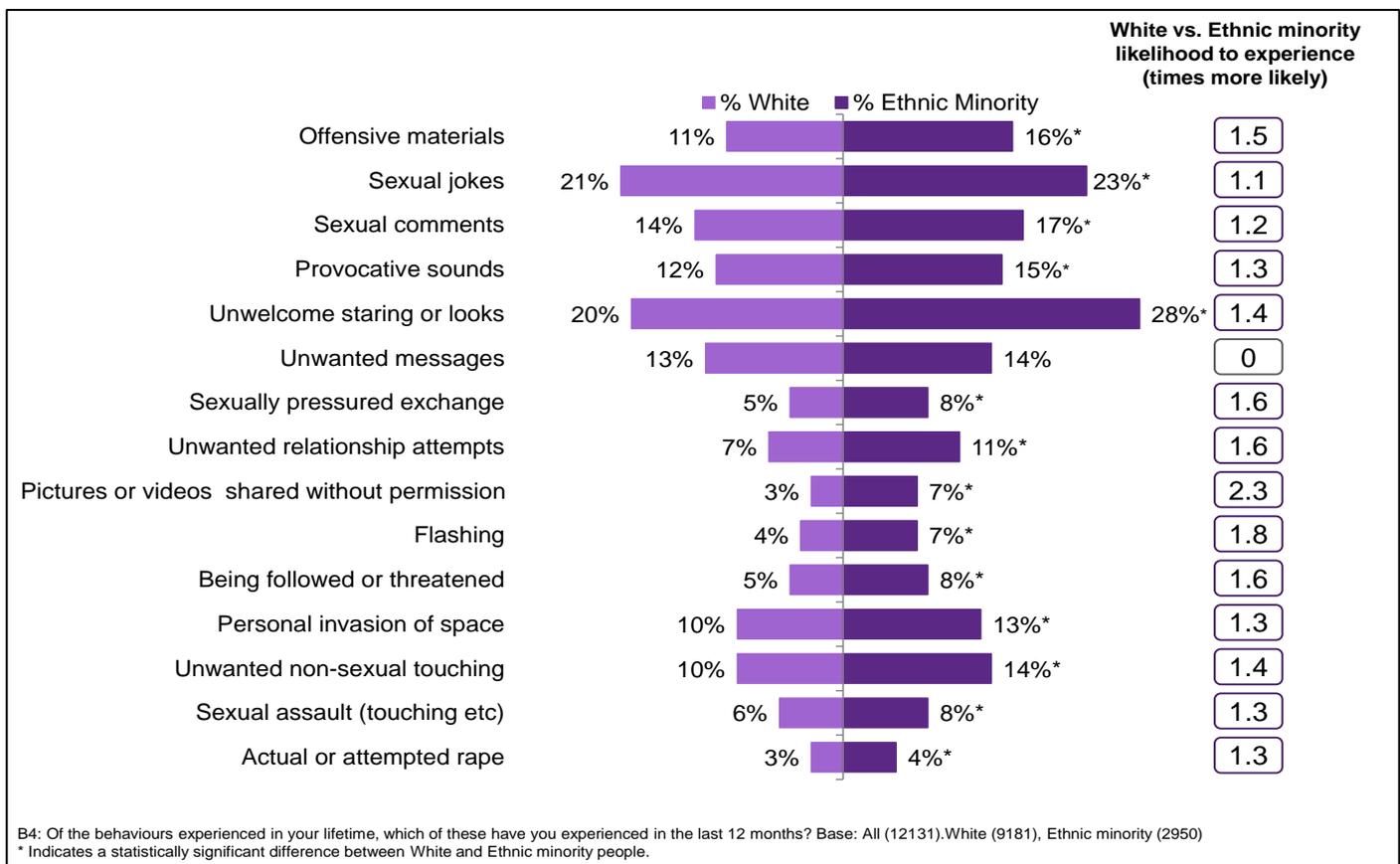
As shown in Figure 3.8, ethnic minorities were also more likely to experience most sexual harassment behaviours compared to White people. Incidence was significantly greater for all behaviours, with the exception of receiving unwanted sexual messages (which was still greater, but not statistically significant). To further understand how these incidence rates are calculated, please refer to the Methodology chapter.

## Comparable studies

There is little consistent evidence in relation to ethnicity and likelihood to experience sexual harassment. Some studies have found that being of an ethnic minority increases your likelihood of experiencing sexual harassment in the workplace. For instance, Buchanan et al. (2008) found that Black women experience higher incidences and more severe sexual harassment, while Berdahl and Moore<sup>19</sup> (2006) found that ethnic minority women reported more harassment levels overall than Caucasian women or ethnic minority men.

Others were unable to take a definitive stance. The 2016 TUC polling determined that there is insufficient evidence to determine if ethnicity significantly influences the incidence of sexual harassment,<sup>20</sup> and Fielden et al. (2010) highlighted how there are many inconsistencies within research of this group.<sup>21</sup>

**Figure 3.8 Experiences of sexual harassment in the last 12 months between White and ethnic minorities <sup>22</sup>**



These proportions show a similar 'trend' to those reported overall i.e. the ranking of incidence by behaviour does not change, though the proportions experiencing them are higher. However, a greater proportion of people from an ethnic minority have experienced some of the more extreme

<sup>19</sup> Berdahl, J. L., & Moore, C. (2006). Workplace harassment: double jeopardy for minority women. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91(2), p. 433.

<sup>20</sup> Trade Union Congress. (2016). Still just a bit of banter. *Sexual Harassment in the workplace in 2016*, p. 10.

<sup>21</sup> Fielden, S. L., Davidson, M. J., Woolnough, H., & Hunt, C. (2010). A model of racialized sexual harassment of women in the UK workplace. *Sex roles*, 62(1-2), 20-34, p. 21.

<sup>22</sup> Results are experimental and may differ significantly from results published elsewhere. For further details, please refer to the 'Interpreting sexual harassment data' section in the Methodology chapter.

forms of sexual harassment compared to White people. For example, people from an ethnic minority were almost twice as likely than White people to have experienced: Someone taking and / or sharing of sexual pictures or videos of them without permission; Flashing; Being physically followed in a sexually threatening way; and Rape and/or attempted rape. The likelihood of experiencing behaviours for both White and ethnic minority groups was most similar for unwanted messages, sexual jokes and sexual comments.

### Incidence by sexual orientation<sup>23</sup>

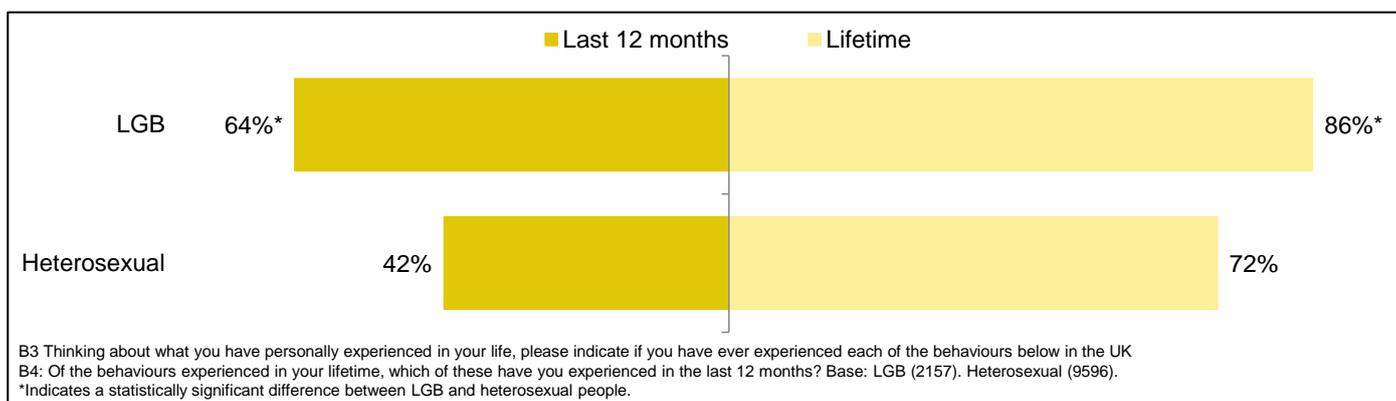
This section will explore the impact of someone’s sexual orientation and gender identity on the likelihood of their having experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months. The following definitions are used when discussing gender and sexual orientation in this report:

**Demographic definition:**

- *Heterosexual: those who said their sexual orientation was ‘straight’*
- *LGB: those who said their sexual orientation was lesbian, gay, bisexual*
- *Transgender: those who indicated they do not identify with their sex assigned at birth*

People in the LGB community reported experiencing significantly higher rates of sexual harassment than heterosexual people. As shown in Figure 3.9 below, about two-thirds (64%) of LGB people had experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in the last 12 months and the vast majority (86%) had experienced it at some stage in their lifetime. This was a significantly higher incidence compared to *heterosexual people* who had a significantly lower (though still high) incidence of two-fifths (42%) having experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months and just less than three-quarters (72%) reporting the same over their lifetime.

**Figure 3.9 Sexual harassment experienced in the last 12 months by LGB people and everyone else**



This trend seems particularly pronounced among the 298 transgender people who took part in the survey: 80% of the transgender survey participants reported experiencing at least one form of sexual harassment in the last 12 months and 92% in their lifetime.

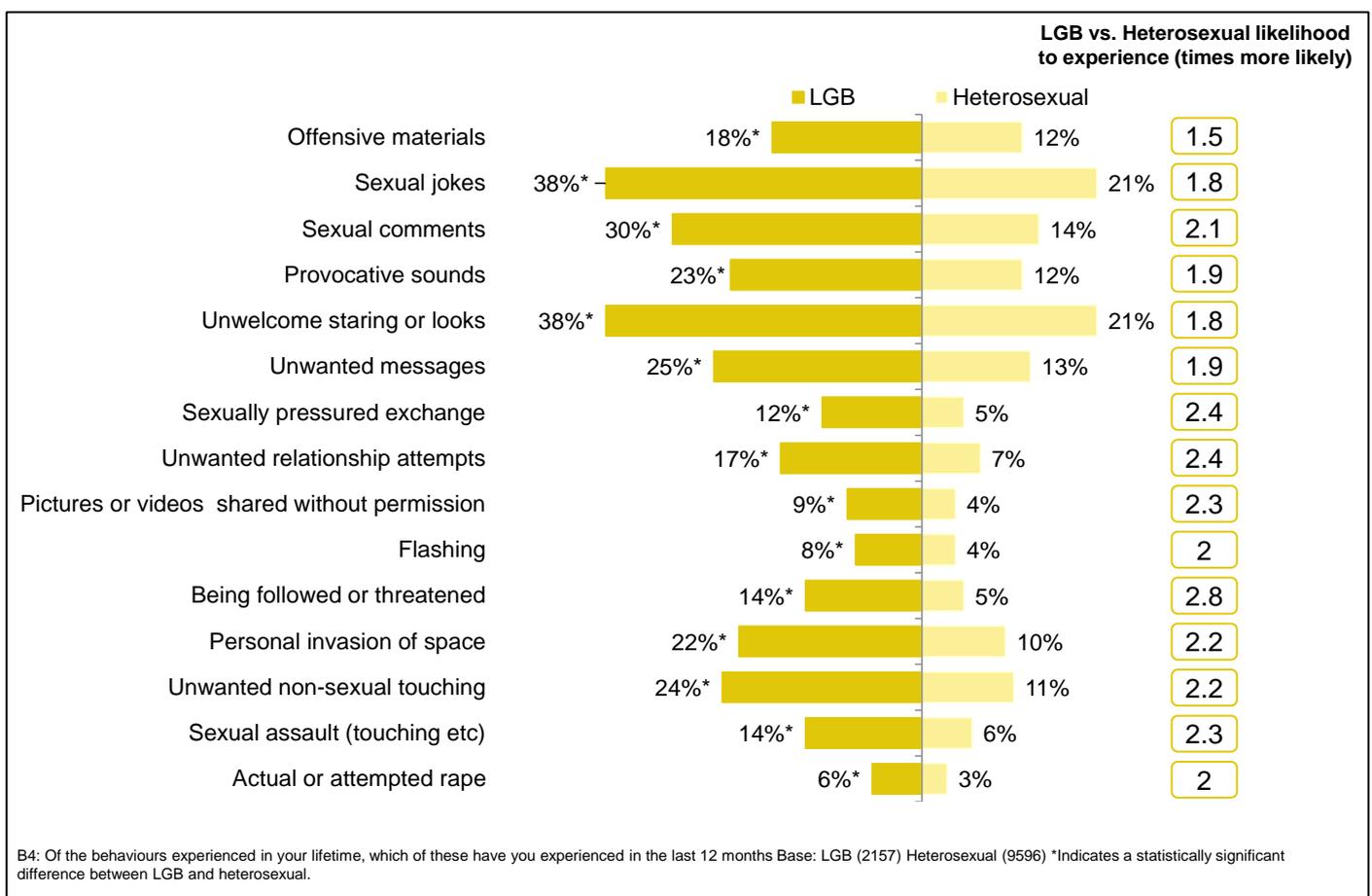
<sup>23</sup> Data was collected for LGB and T individuals in the survey design; due to the smaller base size and unique experience of transgender individuals compared to LGB individuals, the decision was taken by GEO to primarily report LGB vs. heterosexual.

## Comparable studies

Recent research by Trade Union Congress (TUC) in the UK provides evidence that there is a higher incidence of sexual harassment for LGBT employees. Of a sample of n=1,001 LGBT individuals, 68% experienced some form of sexual harassment,<sup>24</sup> higher than the 52% of women in a TUC poll of women members (sample of n=1,533).<sup>25</sup>

In the last 12 months, people who identify as LGB were significantly more likely to experience every sexual harassment behaviour than heterosexual people, as shown in Figure 3.10. To further understand how these incidence rates are calculated, please refer to the Methodology chapter.

**Figure 3.10 Experience of sexual harassment in the last 12 months in the LGB community** <sup>26</sup>



LGB people were more than twice as likely to experience most sexual harassment behaviours. This is particularly pronounced for being followed in a threatening manner, which was over 2.8 times more likely for LGB individuals.

<sup>24</sup> Trade Unions Congress (2019) Sexual harassment of LGBT people in the workplace, p. 12.

<sup>25</sup> Trade Unions Congress (2019) Sexual harassment of LGBT people in the workplace, p. 4.

<sup>26</sup> Results are experimental and may differ significantly from results published elsewhere. For further details, please refer to the 'Interpreting sexual harassment data' section in the Methodology chapter.

## Incidence among those with a disability

This section will explore the impact of disability on a person’s experiences of sexual harassment in the last 12 months.

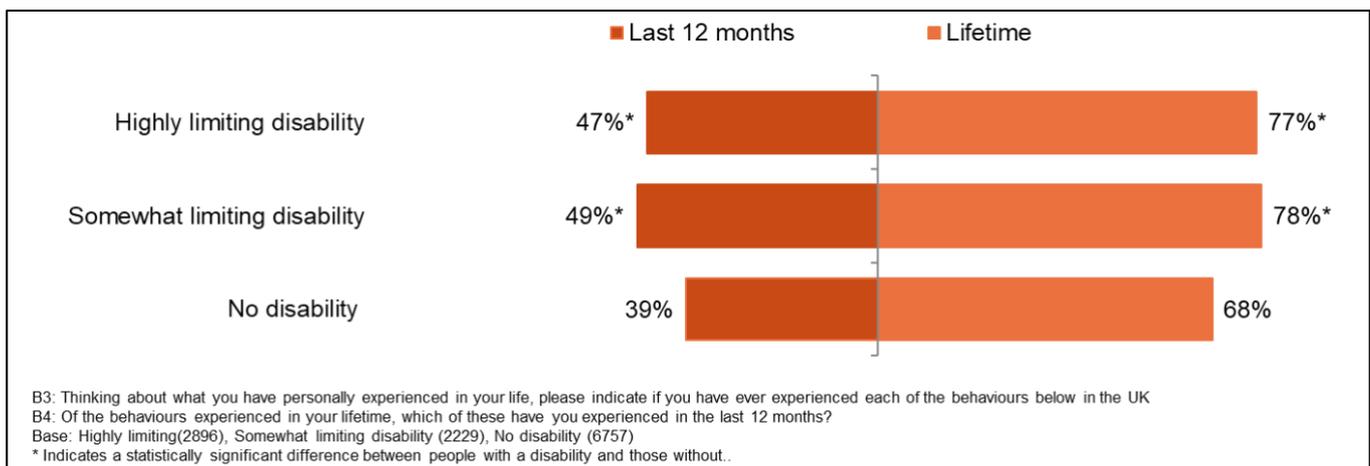
### Demographic description:

For a person with a disability to be protected under the Equality Act, they must meet its definition of a disability: they must have 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This report has distinguished between people with a disability and people without a disability based on the following self-determined definitions:

- **Highly limiting disability:** A person with physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more and that reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities a lot.
- **Somewhat limiting disability:** A person with physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more and that reduces their ability to carry out day to day activities a little.
- **No disability:** A person who does not have a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last more than 12 months.

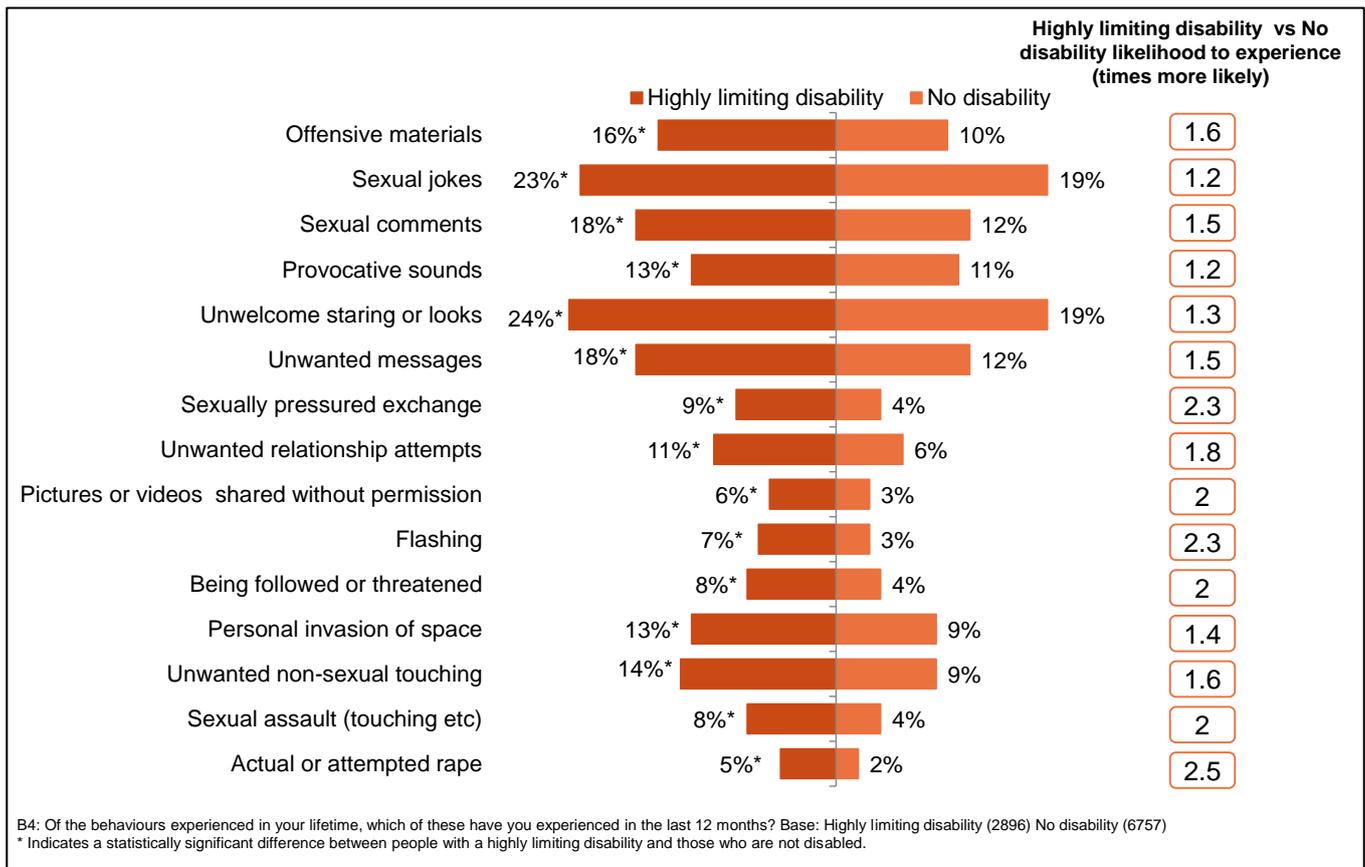
People with a highly limiting disability were significantly more likely to experience sexual harassment both in the last 12 months and across the course of their lifetime: nearly half of people with a highly limiting disability (47%) compared to two in five (39%) people without a disability who experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in the last 12 months.

Figure 3.11 Experience of sexual harassment in the last 12 months by disability



People with a highly limiting disability were significantly more likely to experience all 15 sexual harassment behaviours compared to those with no disability, as shown in Figure 3.12 below. To further understand how these incidence rates are calculated, please refer to the Methodology chapter.

**Figure 3.12 Experience of sexual harassment in the last 12 months by disability by behaviour<sup>27</sup>**



People with a highly limiting disability were significantly more likely than people without a disability to have experienced each and every behaviour in the last 12 months. People with a highly limiting disability were two-and-a-half times more likely to have experienced actual or attempted rape in the last 12 months (highly limiting disability: 5% vs. no disability: 2%). People with a highly limiting disability were more than twice as likely to have experienced feeling pressured by someone to date them/do a sexual act for them in exchange for something (9% vs. no disability: 4%), flashing (7% vs. no disability: 3%) and being physically followed in a sexually threatening way (8% vs. no disability: 4%).

For data on how sexual harassment intersects between gender and different protected characteristics (for example the likelihood of experiencing sexual harassment for people who are a women *and* LGB), please see the appendix.

<sup>27</sup> Results are experimental and may differ significantly from results published elsewhere. For further details, please refer to the 'Interpreting sexual harassment data' section in the Methodology chapter.

# Chapter 4

Experiences of sexual harassment

---

## 4) Experience of sexual harassment

This chapter will explore the details of sexual harassment experience, including frequency, location and knowledge of reporting. The data in this chapter shows responses for all those who have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months *excluding* high degree victims (with the exception of the reporting of overall incidence of experiencing sexual harassment in different places, where they are included in line with the approach taken in Chapter 3). A separate section has been included summarising the experience of high degree victims in the appendix. For more information about the rationale for this, please refer to the Methodology chapter. Results throughout this report are experimental and may differ significantly from the results of other studies or statistics. For further details, including details of the behaviour-based design of this research, please refer to the methodology chapter and the 'Interpreting sexual harassment data' section in particular.

### Chapter Summary

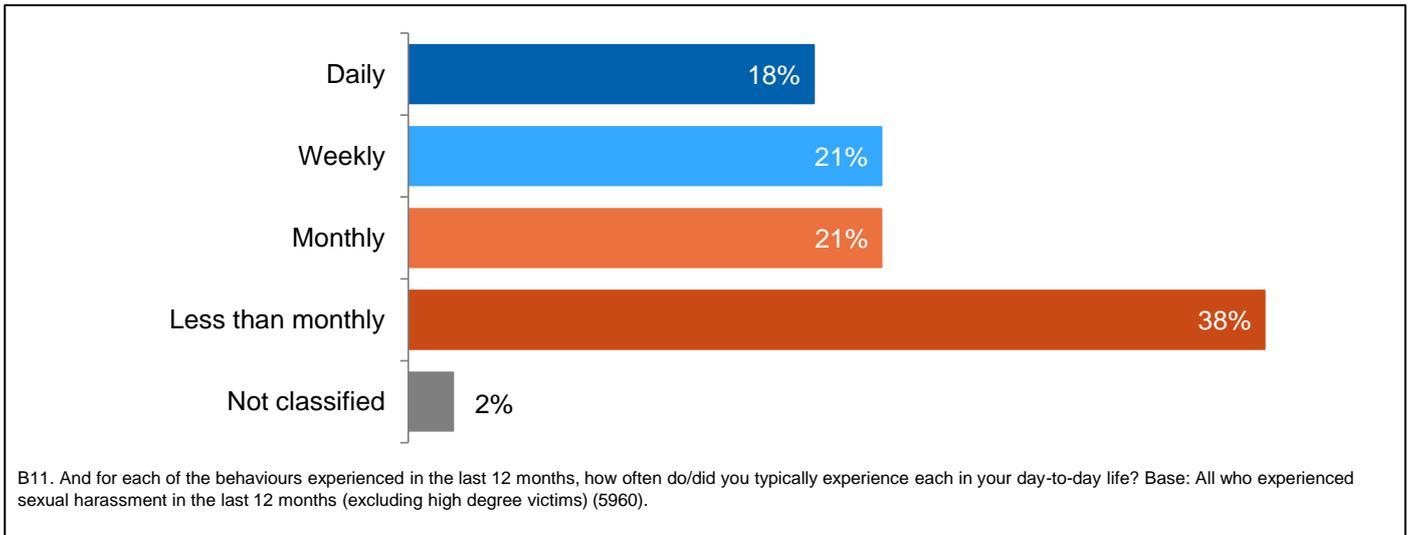
- Of those who experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months (41% of the population), one fifth (18%) experienced at least one type on a daily basis while one third (21%) experienced it weekly.
- Outside of the workplace, sexual harassment was reported to happen most frequently on the street or walking around, in a club, pub or bar or on public transportation. However, the location where the incident occurred varied by the type of sexual harassment behaviour.
- More than a quarter people in the UK who had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months experienced it on public transport (28%). Of these, 62% reported to have experienced an incident on the bus.
- More than half of all people were very or fairly worried about sexual harassment on public transport (56%) or in an outdoor public place (57%). The proportion was slightly lower for indoor public places or places of work/study.
- The groups of people who were more likely to experience sexual harassment were also more likely to be concerned about sexual harassment and change their behaviour to avoid sexual harassment (i.e. women, younger age groups, those who identify as LGB, those who are an ethnic minority and those with a highly limiting disability).
- Not all who experienced sexual harassment stated that it affects their quality of life significantly. 54% said at least one of their experiences had 'very' or 'fairly' affected their quality of life, but with significant differences by sexual harassment behaviour.

Data in this chapter shows responses for all those who have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months *excluding* high degree victims. A separate section has been included summarising the experience of high degree victims separately. For more information about the rationale for this, please refer to the Methodology chapter.

## Frequency of experience

As shown in Figure 4.1, of those who experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months (41%), 18% experienced at least one behaviour daily, while 21% experienced something weekly.<sup>28</sup>

**Figure 4.1 How often sexual harassment is experienced**



## Frequency by demographic group

There were significant differences in how often sexual harassment was experienced by key demographics including gender, age, ethnicity and sexual orientation, as shown in Table 4.1 below. Differences are particularly acute by age and sexual orientation (LGB vs. heterosexual).

<sup>28</sup> Respondents were asked the frequency they experienced each behaviour, with their most frequent experience used to determine the frequency of any experience of sexual harassment; as noted in the Methodology chapter, this behaviour-based approach means frequency may appear higher than expected, due to inclusion of frequency of more minor, but more often experienced behaviours. Please refer to the Methods section for detail on this behaviour-based approach.

**Table 4.1 How often sexual harassment is experienced by key demographics**

	Gender		Age				Ethnicity		Sexual orientation		Total
	Women <sup>a</sup>	Men <sup>b</sup>	16-24 <sup>a</sup>	25-34 <sup>b</sup>	35-49 <sup>c</sup>	50+ <sup>d</sup>	Ethnic minority <sup>a</sup>	White <sup>b</sup>	LGB <sup>a</sup>	Hetero sexual <sup>b</sup>	
<b>Daily</b>	17%	19% <sup>a</sup>	20% <sup>d</sup>	21% <sup>cd</sup>	17% <sup>d</sup>	13%	22% <sup>b</sup>	17%	18%	17%	<b>18%</b>
<b>Weekly</b>	21%	22%	23% <sup>cd</sup>	23% <sup>cd</sup>	20%	20%	21%	22%	27% <sup>b</sup>	21%	<b>21%</b>
<b>Monthly</b>	22% <sup>b</sup>	19%	24% <sup>d</sup>	22% <sup>d</sup>	21%	18%	20%	21%	23%	21%	<b>21%</b>
<b>Less than monthly</b>	40%	37%	31%	33%	39% <sup>ab</sup>	48% <sup>abc</sup>	35%	39% <sup>a</sup>	31%	39% <sup>a</sup>	<b>38%</b>
<b>Base:</b> All who experienced SH in last 12 months	3845	1974	2128	1518	1379	935	1520	44400	1325	4432	<b>5960</b>

B11. And for each of the behaviours experienced in the last 12 months, how often do/did you typically experience each in your day-to-day life?  
Base: All who had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months (excluding high degree victims) (5960)

The superscripted letters on percentages signify a significant difference between subgroups. The cells which are coloured also signify this.

Significant differences in frequency of sexual harassment experience include:

- Gender: although men experienced sexual harassment less than women overall, men who did experience sexual harassment reported experiencing it more often than women. Of those that experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, more men than women reported to have experienced sexual harassment daily.<sup>29</sup>
- Age: under 50s reported experiencing daily sexual harassment more regularly than over 50s.
- Ethnicity: participants from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) experienced sexual harassment more frequently than white participants, with 22% of respondents from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) who experienced harassment in the last 12 months experiencing it daily compared to 17% among those identifying as White.
- LGB: those who identified as LGB were significantly more likely to experience it on a weekly basis, heterosexual people were more likely to say they were experiencing sexual harassment less than monthly
- Disability: those with a highly limiting disability were also significantly more likely to experience harassment daily: 27% compared to 15% of those with no disability.

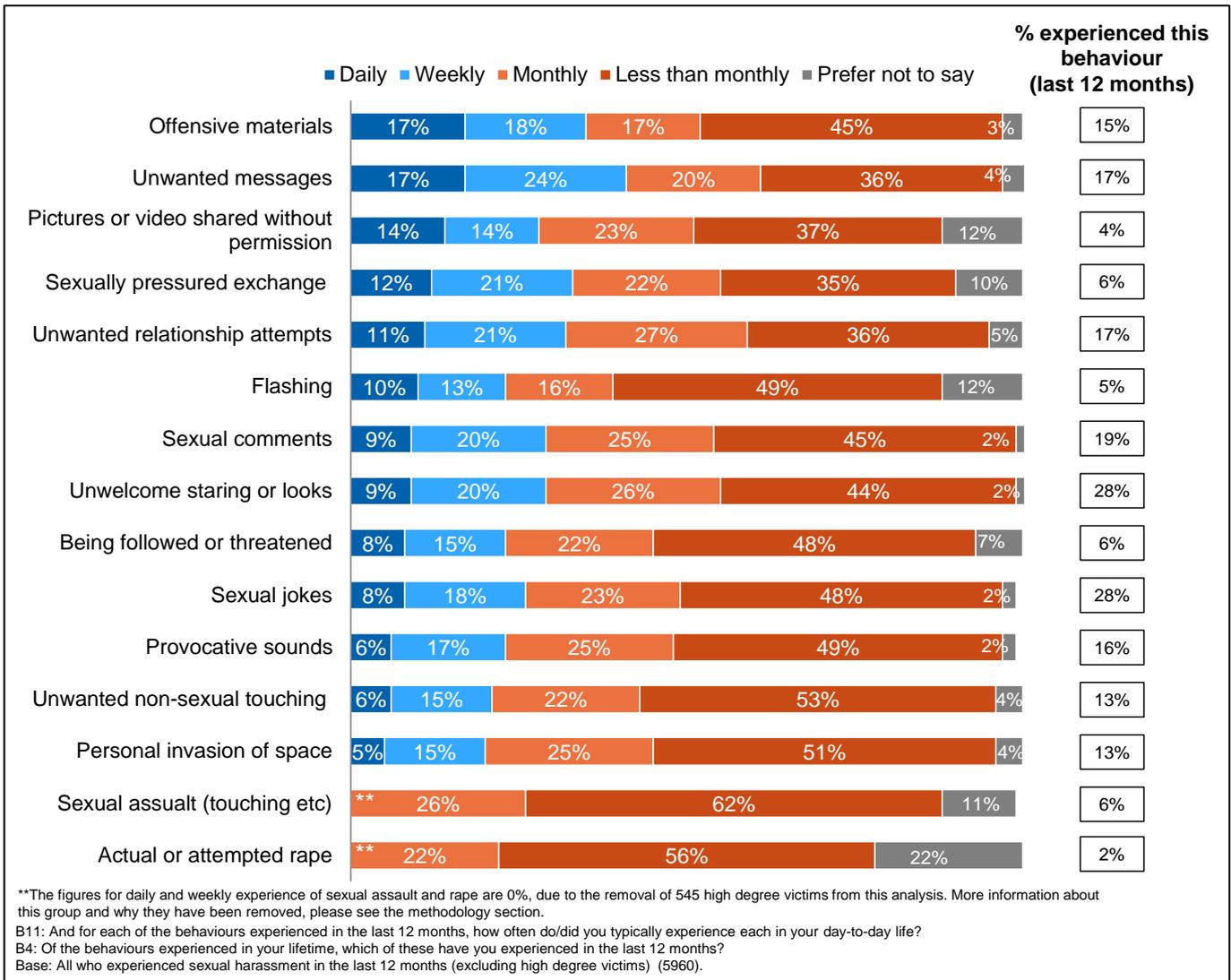
### Frequency of sexual harassment by behaviours

The frequency of sexual harassment experienced varied by behaviour. As shown in Figure 4.2 below, certain sexual harassment behaviours were more likely to occur daily, including: sexually

<sup>29</sup> Respondents were asked the frequency they experienced each behaviour, with their most frequent experience used to determine the frequency of any experience of sexual harassment; this finding regarding men vs women is in contrast to findings in some other studies, but is a product of the behaviour-based approach used in this research, i.e. part of this could be experiencing inappropriate comments, jokes or offensive materials fairly often. The differences by gender partly reflect that some of the behaviours more likely to be experienced frequently were also more likely to be experienced by men e.g. offensive materials. Please refer to the Methods section for detail on this behaviour-based approach.

offensive materials; taking and/or sharing sexual pictures or videos without permission; and receiving unwanted messages with material of a sexual nature.

**Figure 4.2 Frequency of experience by sexual harassment behaviours** <sup>3031</sup>



Other behaviours were more likely to be experienced monthly, such as: Persistent and/or unwanted attempts to establish a romantic/sexual relationship, Unwanted, overt sexual touching, unwelcome staring or looks, sexual comments, unwelcome cat calls, wolf whistling or other provocative sounds and someone intentionally brushing up, or invading personal space in a sexual way. The frequency is likely to be linked to the behaviour-based design of this research which gave individuals more scope to self-define what behaviours they considered unwanted (as detailed in the Methodology chapter).

<sup>30</sup> As noted in the Methodology chapter, sexual harassment is being used as a blanket term throughout this report for sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape. See Methodology chapter for more information.

<sup>31</sup> Results are experimental and may differ significantly from results published elsewhere. For further details, please refer to the 'Interpreting sexual harassment data' section in the Methodology chapter.

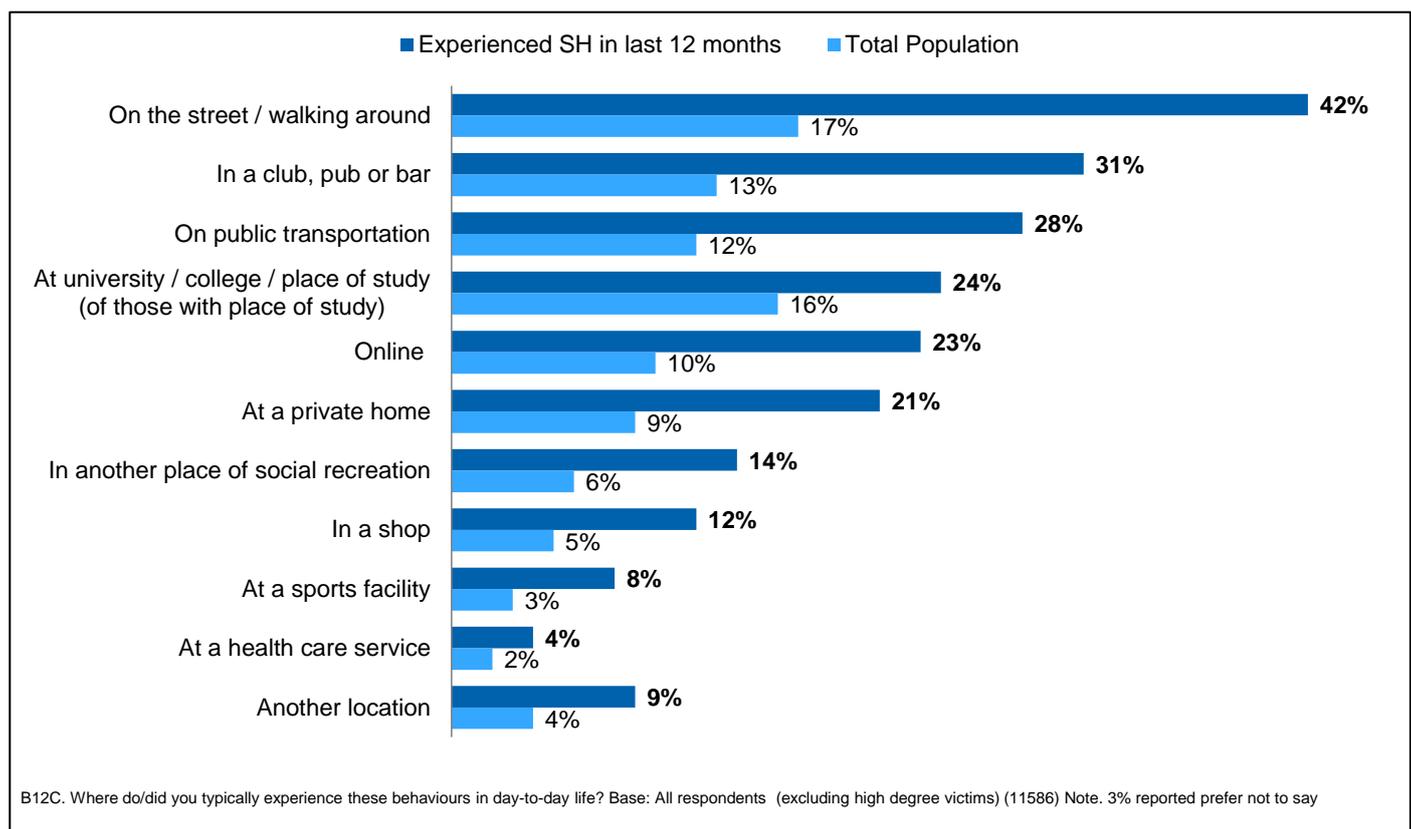
## Experiences by location

Of those who had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, nearly three quarters (57%) of people had experienced sexual harassment outside work, while over two-fifths experienced sexual harassment at their current workplace (31%). This equates to 13% of the general public experiencing sexual harassment at a current workplace and 23% experiencing it at a place outside of work (including high degree victims).

This section will focus mainly on public places where sexual harassment was experienced outside of the workplace. Experience of sexual harassment within the workplace is covered in detail in Chapter 7.

As shown in Figure 4.3, the most common places to experience sexual harassment outside of the workplace were: on the street or walking around (17% of population; 42% of those who had experienced sexual harassment), in a club, pub or bar (13% of population; 31% of those who had experienced sexual harassment) and on public transport (12% of population; 28% of those who had experienced sexual harassment).

**Figure 4.3 Where victims of sexual harassment in the last 12 months typically experience sexual harassment behaviours, outside the workplace**



The least commonly reported place to experience sexual harassment in the last 12 months was at a health care service such as a GP, walk in or hospital (4%). It was not specified in the questionnaire as to whether people were users/customers in these locations, just that these were the locations where sexual harassment occurred.

## Location of harassment by behaviour

The location where sexual harassment occurred varied by the type of sexual harassment behaviour, as reported by those that experienced sexual harassment outside of the workplace in the last 12 months, as shown in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2 Top three places where sexual harassment was reported by sexual harassment behaviour**

Sexual harassment behaviour experienced	% experienced in the last 12 months	Most commonly reported location	%	2 <sup>nd</sup> most commonly reported location	%	3 <sup>rd</sup> most commonly reported location	%
Provocative sounds	11%	On the street	88%	Club, pub or bar	24%	Public transport	23%
Unwelcome staring or looks	20%	On the street	65%	Public transport	45%	Club, pub or bar	39%
Being followed or threatened	4%	On the street	63%	Public transport	21%	Club, pub or bar	17%
Sexual comments	13%	On the street	45%	Club, pub or bar	45%	Public transport	23%
Flashing	3%	On the street	39%	Online	16%	Club, pub or bar	15%
Sexual jokes	20%	Club, pub or bar	43%	On the street	40%	Public transport	22%
Sexual assault (touching etc)	4%	Club, pub or bar	53%	Private home	21%	Public transport	13%
Personal invasion of space	9%	Club, pub or bar	48%	Public transport	39%	On the street	16%
Unwanted non-sexual touching	10%	Club, pub or bar	49%	Public transport	21%	On the street	15%
Unwanted messages	12%	Online	54%	Private home	38%	On the street	6%
Unwanted relationship attempts	7%	Online	37%	Private home	25%	Club, pub or bar	21%
Actual or attempted rape	2%	Private home	44%	On the street	16%	Club, pub or bar	11%
Sexually pressured exchange	4%	Private home	37%	Online	23%	Club, pub or bar	23%
Pictures or videos	3%	Private home	32%	Online	23%	Club, pub or bar	22%
Offensive materials	11%	Public transport	33%	Online	28%	Club, pub or bar	21%

B12C: Where do/did you typically experience these behaviours in day-to-day life? Base: All who experienced SH outside of the workplace in the last 12 months (excluding high degree victims) (2755).

The behaviours most commonly carried out on the street tended to involve non-direct contact such as unwelcome cat calls, wolf whistling or other provocative sounds, unwelcome staring or looks, being physically followed in a sexually threatening way, unwelcome comments of a sexual nature about body and/or clothes and flashing or any other forms of sexual harassment. In contrast, typically experienced in a club, pub or bar involved more direct contact such as overt sexual touching, someone intentionally brushing up, or invading personal space in a sexual way and unwanted touching.

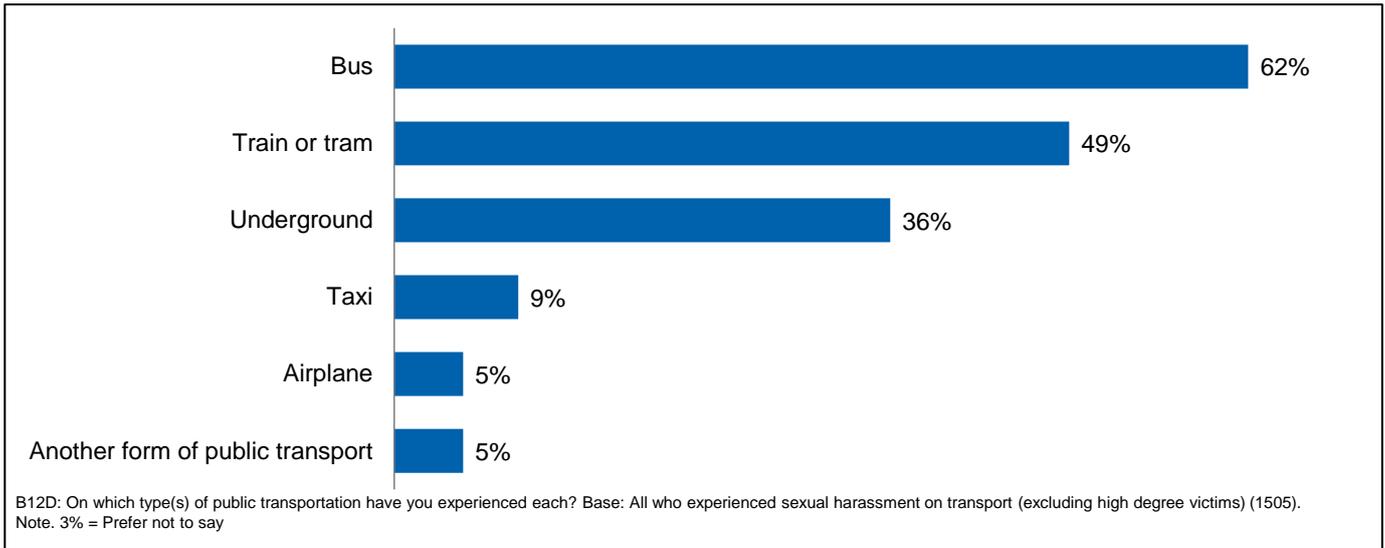
More targeted behaviours were more typically experienced online or in a private home. Unwanted messaging and persistent and/or unwanted attempts to establish a romantic/sexual relationship

were most reported to be experienced online and rape or attempted rape or sexually pressured exchanges were most likely to be experienced in a private home.

### Public transport and sexual harassment

Of those who had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, more than a quarter (28%) had experienced it on public transport (equal to 13% of the population overall). Of those that experienced sexual harassment on public transport, buses were the most commonly reported public transport method in which to experience sexual harassment (62%), followed by train or tram (49%) and the underground (36%).

Figure 4.4 Types of public transportation participants have experienced any sexual harassment

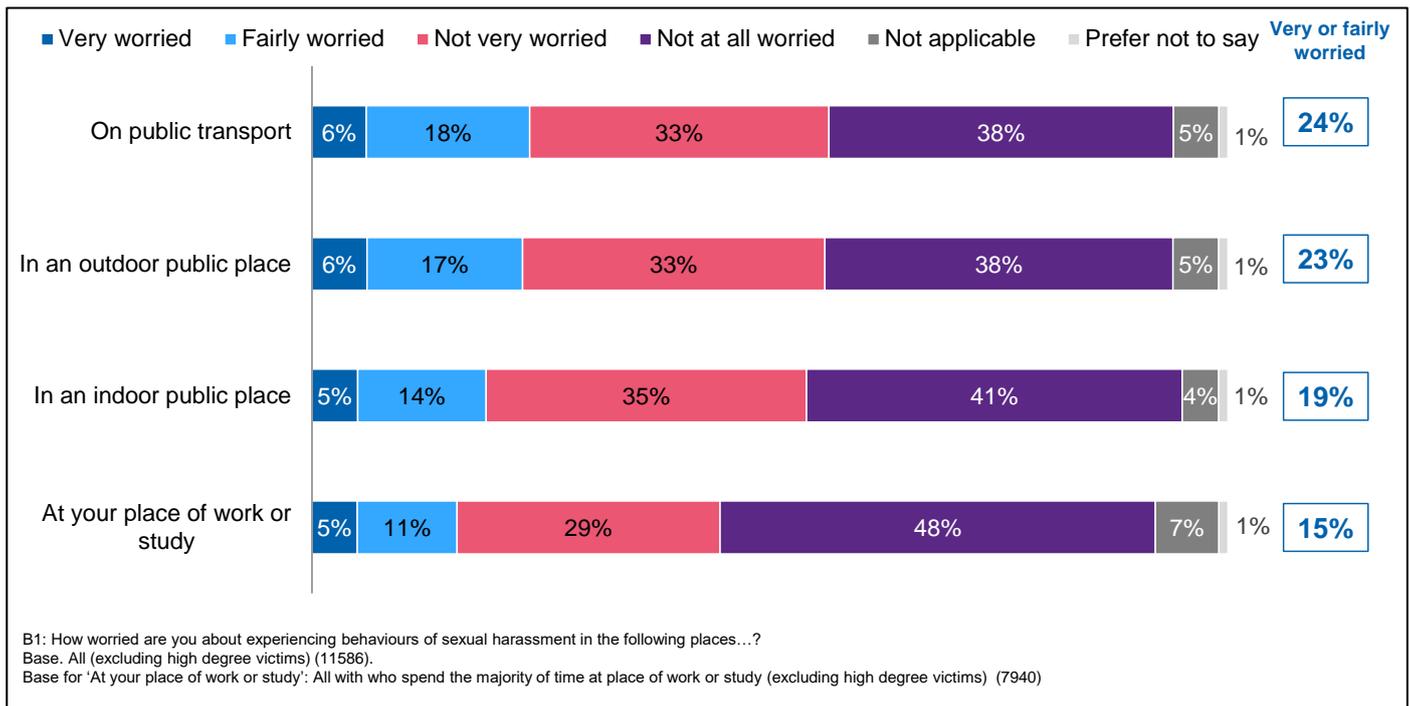


The type of public transport did not significantly influence the type of behaviours experienced. Buses, trains or trams and the underground were the top three reported behaviours for nearly all sexual harassment behaviours and, for two thirds of these behaviours, always in that order of incidence (see Table A2.1.1 in Appendix A). In the UK, underground services are limited to certain parts of the country, whereas the other public transport types are national. Those living in London were almost twice as likely to have experienced any sexual harassment on the underground compared to participants from other regions (67% vs. 36%).

### Perceived risk in different locations

About a quarter of the population were very or fairly worried about sexual harassment on public transport or in an outdoor public place and about one-fifth were worried about it in an indoor public place or at their place of work or study (of those who had a place of work or study). This was asked generally in relation to sexual harassment overall, not in relation to any specific behaviours.

**Figure 4.5 How worried participants are about sexual harassment in the following places**



**Location-based worry by demographic groups**

Across all locations, the types of individuals who were more likely to experience sexual harassment were also more likely to worry about sexual harassment. As illustrated in Table 4.3, women, younger people, ethnic minorities, people who identify as LGB and those with a highly limiting disability were more concerned about sexual harassment across all four locations than men, those over 50, White people and heterosexual people respectively.

**Table 4.3 Location-based worry about sexual harassment by key demographics**

	Gender		Age				Ethnicity		Sexual orientation		Disability		Total
	Men <sup>a</sup>	Women <sup>b</sup>	16-24 <sup>a</sup>	25-34 <sup>b</sup>	35-49 <sup>c</sup>	50+ <sup>d</sup>	Ethnic minority <sup>a</sup>	White <sup>b</sup>	LGB <sup>a</sup>	Heterosexual <sup>b</sup>	Highly limiting disability	None <sup>b</sup>	
<b>Place of work or study</b>	39%	50% <sup>a</sup>	53% <sup>c</sup> <sub>d</sub>	55% <sup>cd</sup>	47% <sup>d</sup>	29%	48% <sup>b</sup>	44%	56% <sup>b</sup>	44%	58% <sup>b</sup>	41%	44%
<b>Outdoor public space</b>	40%	73% <sup>a</sup>	74% <sup>b</sup> <sub>cd</sub>	70% <sup>c</sup> <sub>d</sub>	63% <sup>d</sup>	44%	63% <sup>b</sup>	56%	73% <sup>b</sup>	56%	58% <sup>b</sup>	55%	57%
<b>Indoor public space</b>	39%	69% <sup>a</sup>	67% <sup>c</sup> <sub>d</sub>	68% <sup>c</sup> <sub>d</sub>	62% <sup>d</sup>	42%	60% <sup>b</sup>	53%	69% <sup>b</sup>	54%	57% <sup>b</sup>	52%	54%
<b>Public transport</b>	40%	72% <sup>a</sup>	73% <sup>b</sup> <sub>cd</sub>	67% <sup>c</sup> <sub>d</sub>	63% <sup>d</sup>	44%	63% <sup>b</sup>	55%	69% <sup>b</sup>	56%	57% <sup>b</sup>	54%	56%
<b>Base: All</b>	4919	6449	2879	2359	2963	3385	2785	8801	1987	9244	2665	6571	11586
<b>Base: work / study</b>	3430	4339	2452	1893	2203	1392	2286	5654	1441	6270	1133	5180	7940

B1 How worried are you about experiencing behaviours of sexual harassment in the following places...?  
 Base for 'at your place of work or study': All with who spend the majority of time at place of work or study (excluding high degree victims) (7940)  
 The superscripted letters on percentages signify a significant difference between subgroups. The cells which are coloured also signify this.

---

However, following the overall trend that people were less worried about sexual harassment in a place of work or study than other locations, women, younger people, people from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) and LGBT people were less worried here than outdoor and indoor public spaces and public transport. Furthermore, those under the age of 34 were worried about harassment in indoor public spaces and their place of work or study, significantly more than those aged 35 and older.

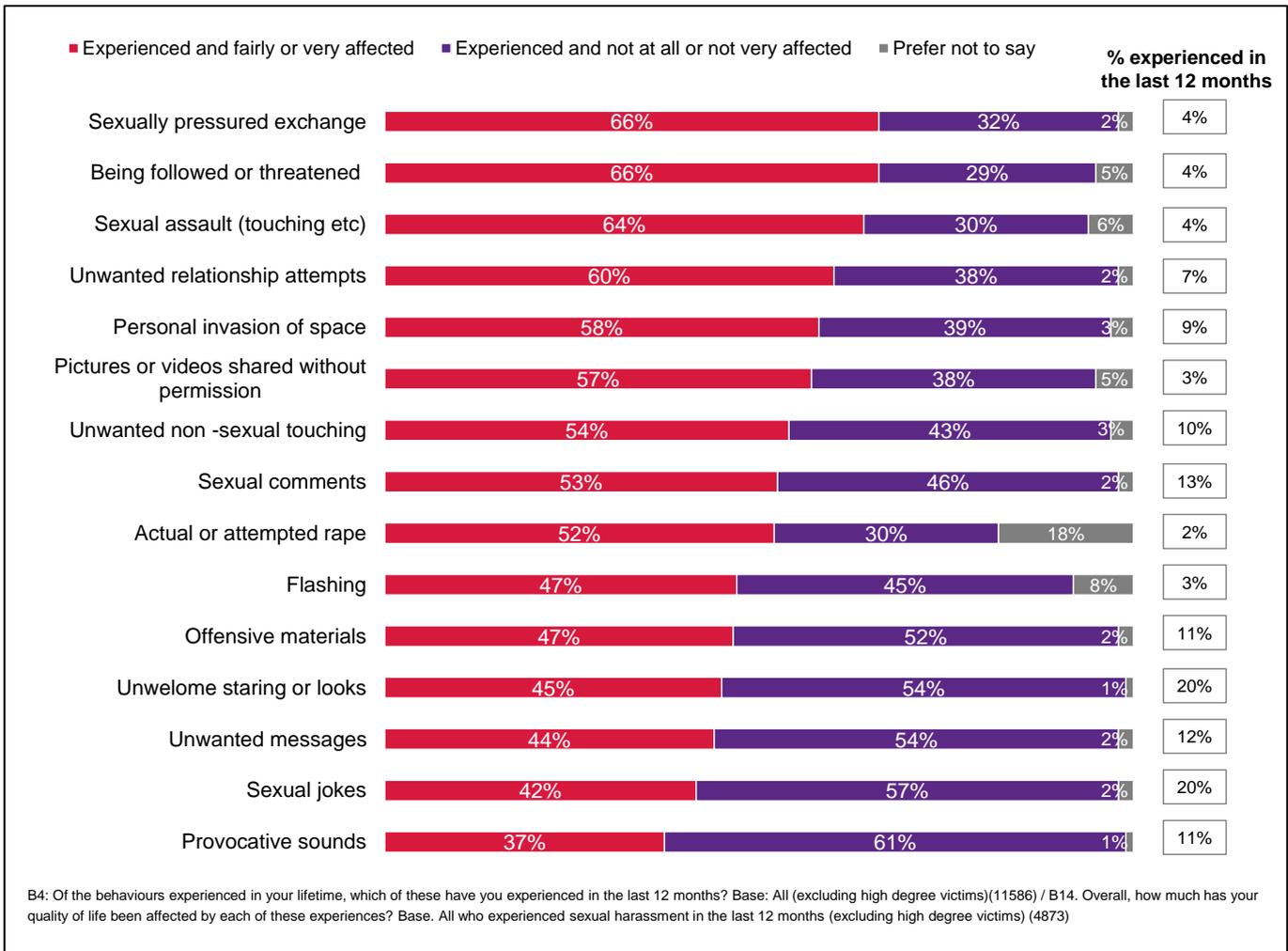
## **Impact of sexual harassment on quality of life**

Sexual harassment has an impact on people's quality of life<sup>32</sup> to a varying degree, depending on the experience of the individual in terms of type, frequency and other factors. Of those who had experienced any type of sexual harassment, 54% said at least one of their experiences had 'very' or 'fairly' affected their quality of life. However, as shown in Figure 4.6, there are significant differences in impact by behaviour.

---

<sup>32</sup> By impact on quality of life we mean if their experience of sexual harassment has affected their quality of life in any way; this is not the same as if the experience had an impact on them generally (e.g. psychologically, physically, etc.) or how it impacted them at the time of the event. This measure was adapted from the National Crime Survey.

**Figure 4.6 Impact on quality of life by behaviour<sup>33</sup>**



Around two thirds of people who experienced being followed or threatened (66%), sexual assault (64%), sexually pressured exchanges (66%) said their quality of life was very or fairly affected by these experiences. However, as expected, certain behaviours that a relatively small proportion of the population experienced do have some of the most meaningful impacts on quality of life, such as sharing of pictures or videos without permission (experienced by 3%, affects 57%). Of the 2% who experienced rape or attempted rape, 52% reported it ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ affected their quality of life, whilst 30% said it had little or no effect on their quality of life (and 18% preferred not to say<sup>34</sup>). In contrast, more widely experienced behaviours like staring or looks (experienced by 20%) or sexual jokes (experienced by 20%) were reported to affect a victim’s quality of life ‘not very much’ or ‘not at all’. However, it is crucial to note that victims were asked about how their experience affected their subsequent quality of life, not at the time the experience(s) occurred, which explains why some figures on may show a lower degree of ‘impact’ than might be expected.

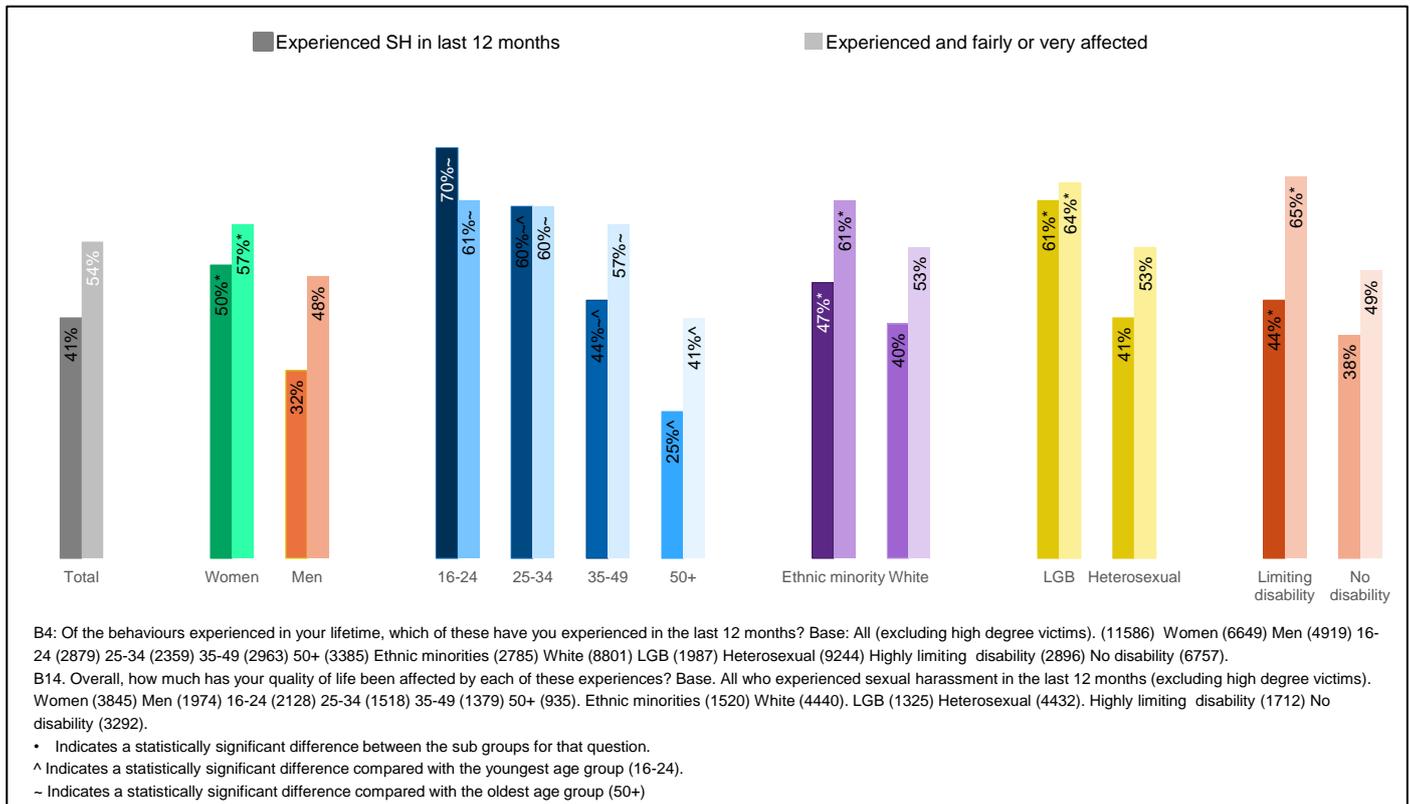
<sup>33</sup> As discussed in the Methodology section, the design of this survey allowed for considerable latitude for individuals to self-define what constituted sexual harassment on the basis of their own perceive threat; as a result, some data points will be counterintuitive due to differing experience and severity of each behaviour. This is true here where some who have experienced more severe behaviours like rape say that have not been particularly affected (e.g. they may have experienced a threat of rape, rather than a physical attack).

<sup>34</sup> As outlined in ‘Interpreting sexual harassment data’ some of the experiences of attempted rape may include online threats.

## Impact on quality of life by demographic group

Those who were the most likely to say having experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months were also the most likely to say that the behaviour affected their quality of life. This was true for women, people from an ethnic minority, LGB people, those with a highly limiting disability and younger people.

Figure 4.7 Impact of any form of sexual harassment on quality of life by demographic groups



# Chapter 5

## Reporting sexual harassment

---

## 5) Reporting sexual harassment

This chapter examines the proportion of the population who have reported their experiences of sexual harassment. In the survey, respondents were specifically asked whether they had formally reported each behaviour they had experienced, including telling the police or a supervisor at work. The data in this chapter shows responses for all those who have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months *excluding* high degree victims. A separate section has been included summarising the experience of high degree victims in the appendix. For more information about the rationale for this, please refer to the Methodology chapter.

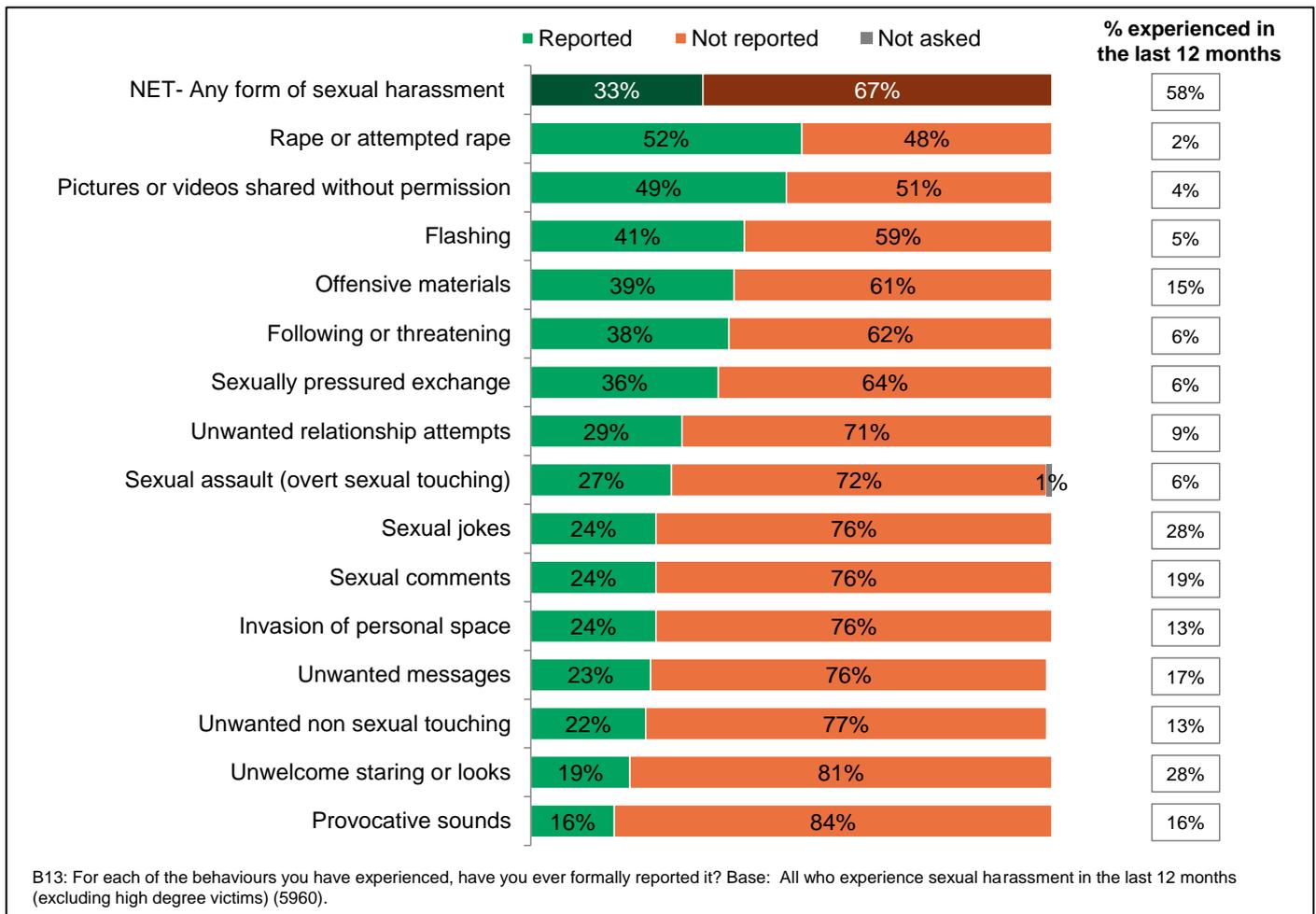
Results throughout this report are experimental and may differ significantly from the results of other studies or statistics. For further details, including details of the behaviour-based design of this research, please refer to the methodology chapter and the 'Interpreting sexual harassment data' section in particular.

### Chapter Summary

- A third (33%) of those who experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months had formally reported it
- Often the most frequently experienced behaviours were among the least commonly reported behaviours, while the least experienced behaviours were among the most commonly reported behaviours: of the 2% of people who experienced rape or attempted rape in the last 12 months, 52% formally reported it, while approximately a fifth of the 28% experiencing unwelcome staring or sexual jokes reported these behaviours.
- When they experienced it, men were significantly more likely to report harassment than women.

Of the 58% who experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, a third (33%) had formally reported the sexual harassment they experienced. As shown in Figure 5.1, the degree of reporting varied greatly by behaviour: ranging from 16% for provocative sounds to 52% attempted or actual rape.

**Figure 5.1 Comparison of experiencing and reporting sexual harassment in the last 12 months**



Often the most frequently experienced behaviours were among the least commonly reported behaviours, while the least experienced behaviours were among the most commonly reported behaviours: of the 2% of people who experienced rape or attempted rape in the last 12 months, 52% formally reported it, while approximately a fifth of the 28% experiencing unwelcome staring or sexual jokes reported these behaviours.

**Reporting by demographic group**

The likelihood to report varies significantly when comparing demographic groups, such as gender, age, ethnicity, LGBT, disability and place of work. Detailed findings for these groups can be found in Appendix A.

---

## **In context: UK data on reporting of sexual harassment**

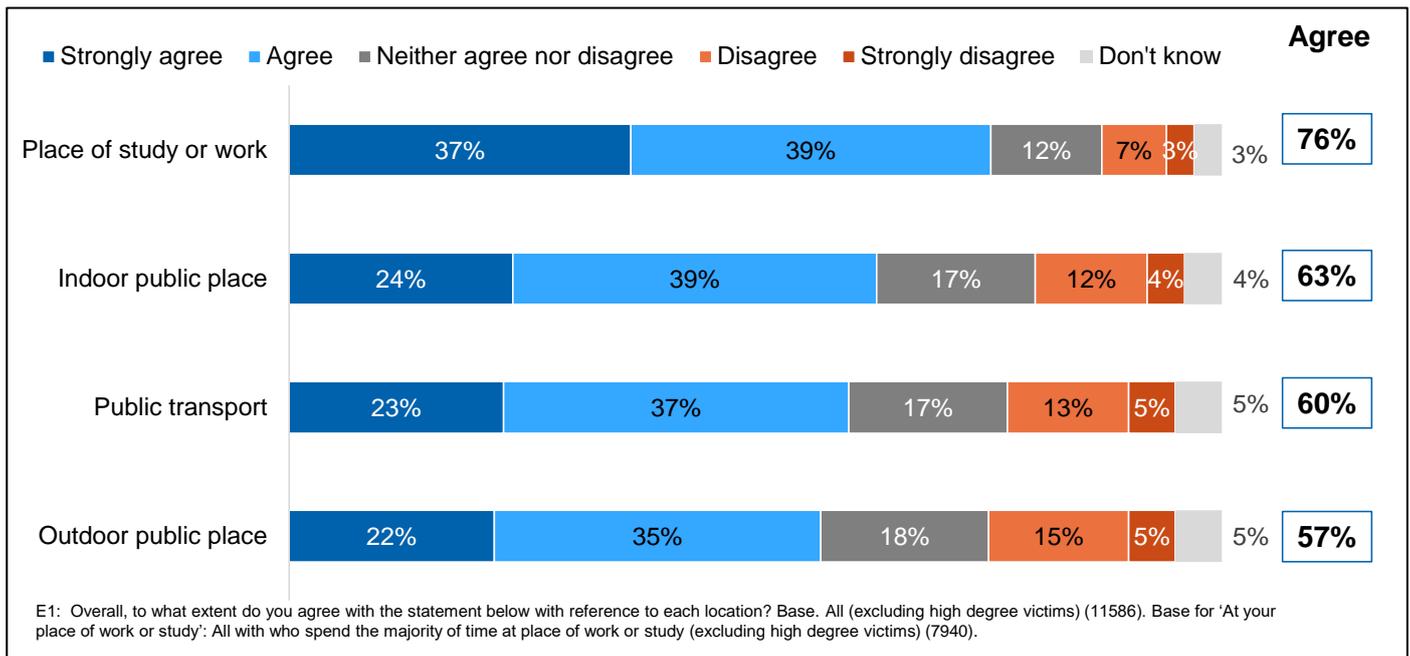
Official figures on levels of reporting are lacking, perhaps largely due to the fact that not all organisations have a monitoring procedure in place; the Equal Opportunities 2002 review found that 77% of organisations overall have a reporting policy, split as 92% of public sector organisations compared to just 54% of private sector organisations. This means that the majority of statistics available are based on self-reporting in surveys, suggesting that levels of non-reporting may be even higher than this as some victims may be reticent to report their experience even in an anonymous survey.

Non-reporting is assumed to be a common response. As the Women and Equalities Select Committee (WESC) Report noted, women who have experienced harassment often alter their own behaviour to avoid their harasser, rather than report the harassment, while the perpetrator's life remains unchanged. This leaves a gap in our understanding of the picture of sexual harassment in the workplace. It should be acknowledged that non-reporting does not necessarily mean victims are passive or accepting of the sexual harassment they are experiencing in the workplace. Existing research identifies a spectrum of responses to sexual harassment in the workplace, particularly reporting the experience to family and/or friends.

## **Knowing how to report an incident of sexual harassment by location**

Confidence in knowing how to report sexual harassment does show significant differences by location, as shown in Figure 5.2 below. People were the most confident about how to report an incident of sexual harassment at their place of work or study (76%) but least confident in outdoor public places, such as on the street or in a park (57%).

**Figure 5.2 The extent to which participants knew how to report sexual harassment by location**



In terms of how experience of sexual harassment interacted with knowledge of reporting an incident, overall three-quarters (76%) felt they knew how to report an incident in the workplace, compared to less than two thirds in public places. Those who had not experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months were more likely to agree that they knew how to report a sexual harassment incident in any location (should it happen) than those who had experienced sexual harassment, as shown in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1 Knowledge of reporting by experience of sexual harassment in the last 12 months**

% who said they know how to report an incident of sexual harassment by location	Total Population	Experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months <sup>a</sup>	Not experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months <sup>b</sup>
Place of work or study	76%	74%	78% <sup>a</sup>
Outdoor public space	57%	52%	60% <sup>a</sup>
Indoor public space	63%	59%	66% <sup>a</sup>
Public transport	60%	54%	63% <sup>a</sup>
<b>Base: All 11586</b>	<b>11586</b>	<b>5960</b>	<b>5626</b>
<i>Base for place of work or study: 7940</i>	<i>7940</i>	<i>4607</i>	<i>3333</i>

E1: Overall, to what extent do you agree with the statement below with reference to each location?

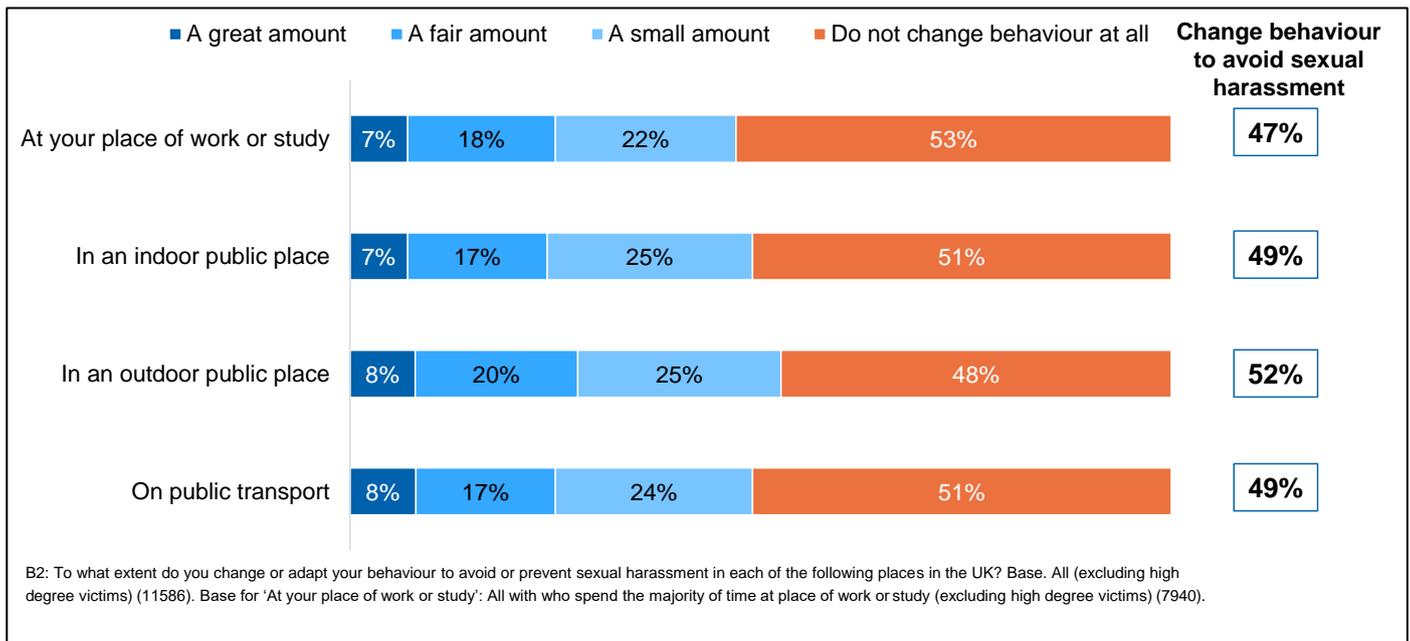
Base for 'at your place of work or study': All with who spend the majority of time at place of work or study (both excluding high degree victims)  
The superscripted letters on percentages signify a significant difference between subgroups. The cells which are coloured also signify this.

## Proactive behaviour changes adopted in different locations

As shown in previous research, people alter their behaviour to reduce the risk of sexual harassment, particularly women.<sup>35</sup>

Overall, approximately half of people change their behaviours to reduce the risk of sexual harassment, with no significant difference by location; this corresponds to the pattern that concern about sexual harassment didn't vary much by location, as shown in Figure 5.3.

**Figure 5.3 Participants concern about sexual harassment vs changing behaviour to avoid sexual harassment**



The types of individuals that changed their behaviour (across all four locations) to avoid sexual harassment is comparable to those that worried about sexual harassment: women, under 35s, individuals from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) and those who identify as LGB most likely to change their behaviours to avoid incidence of sexual harassment (see Table 5.2). Furthermore, those with a place of study (57%) were more likely to change their behaviour to avoid sexual harassment than those with a workplace (47%). This could partly be because young people are more likely to be with a place of study, and therefore could explain why change of behaviour in a place of study is higher.

**Table 5.2 Location-based behaviour change to avoid sexual harassment by key demographics**

% Change behaviour	Gender		Age				Ethnicity		Sexual orientation		Total
	Men <sup>a</sup>	Women <sup>b</sup>	16-24 <sup>a</sup>	25-34 <sup>b</sup>	35-49 <sup>c</sup>	50+ <sup>d</sup>	Ethnic minority <sup>a</sup>	White <sup>b</sup>	LGB <sup>a</sup>	Heterosexual <sup>b</sup>	
Place of work or study	44%	49% <sup>a</sup>	58% <sup>cd</sup>	58% <sup>cd</sup>	49% <sup>d</sup>	30%	58% <sup>b</sup>	45%	58% <sup>b</sup>	46%	47%

<sup>35</sup> Women and Equalities Committee (2018). Sexual harassment in the workplace, Fifth Report of Session, p. 8.

% Change behaviour	Gender		Age				Ethnicity		Sexual orientation		Total
	Men <sup>a</sup>	Women <sup>b</sup>	16-24 <sup>a</sup>	25-34 <sup>b</sup>	35-49 <sup>c</sup>	50+ <sup>d</sup>	Ethnic minority <sup>a</sup>	White <sup>b</sup>	LGB <sup>a</sup>	Heterosexual <sup>b</sup>	
<b>Outdoor public space</b>	37%	66% <sup>a</sup>	74% <sup>cd</sup>	72% <sup>cd</sup>	59% <sup>d</sup>	35%	66% <sup>b</sup>	50%	68% <sup>b</sup>	51%	<b>52%</b>
<b>Indoor public space</b>	36%	61% <sup>a</sup>	71% <sup>cd</sup>	68% <sup>cd</sup>	56% <sup>d</sup>	32%	64% <sup>b</sup>	47%	66% <sup>b</sup>	48%	<b>49%</b>
<b>Public transport</b>	35%	62% <sup>a</sup>	70% <sup>bcd</sup>	66% <sup>cd</sup>	56% <sup>d</sup>	34%	63% <sup>b</sup>	48%	64% <sup>b</sup>	49%	<b>49%</b>
<b>Base: All</b>	4919	6449	2879	2359	2963	3385	2785	8801	1987	9244	<b>11586</b>
<i>Base: work / study</i>	3430	4339	2452	1893	2203	1392	2286	5654	1441	6270	7940

B2: To what extent do you change or adapt your behaviour to avoid or prevent sexual harassment in each of the following places in the UK?  
Base for 'at your place of work or study': All with who spend the majority of time at place of work or study (both excluding high degree victims)  
The superscripted letters on percentages signify a significant difference between subgroups. The cells which are coloured also signify this.

# Chapter 6

Sexual harassment in the workplace

---

## 6) Sexual harassment in the workplace

This chapter focusses on the incidence and experience of workplace sexual harassment. The data in this chapter shows responses for all those who have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months including high degree victims. Additionally, there is a separate section included in the appendix summarising the responses for just the high degree victims, given their differing experience. For more information about the rationale for this, please refer to the Methodology chapter. Results throughout this report are experimental and may differ significantly from the results of other studies or statistics. For further details, including details of the behaviour-based design of this research, please refer to the methodology chapter and the 'Interpreting sexual harassment data' section in particular.

*Sexual harassment in the workplace encompasses the experiences of all those who were employed, self-employed, on zero hours contracts, freelancing, interning and / or volunteering at the time of research (i.e. all those who were in some form of employment). These employees were asked to consider events which may have occurred in a work-related environment (e.g. when socialising with colleagues or at a job interview) as well as any at their actual place of work.*

### **A note on survey completion for these questions:**

*All respondents who experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months were asked if they experienced any at work, and where this occurred at work. Those who reported experiencing sexual harassment in the workplace in the last 12 months were asked to complete an additional set of questions specifically about their workplace experience (either in their current or previous workplace and for any behaviours). Those who reported experiencing repeat behaviours in the workplace were asked to respond to questions about these as a whole (as one experience). Those who had not experienced repeat harassment were asked this section about one of the behaviours they had indicated they experienced (randomly selected). They were asked which of the behaviours they had experienced in the workplace in the last 12 months were by the same person, then asked more information about that person, any witnesses and witness responses, and reporting of these behaviours and the outcomes. Those who experienced behaviours in the workplace but not repeatedly by the same person were asked to select one behaviour to provide more detail on (as above).*

*In all cases, respondents were given the option to refuse the additional questions and were free to refuse any question in this section if they preferred. Information about business size, sector and industry were collected for the workplace in question (current or previous), ensuring all analysis was linked to the correct business profile. Some of the analysis in this section is about the more detailed workplace harassment questions, where people only answered about one specific behaviour (or repeat harassment as a whole). As such, some behaviours base sizes are too small to report robustly for certain questions and have been removed from analysis.*

## Chapter Summary

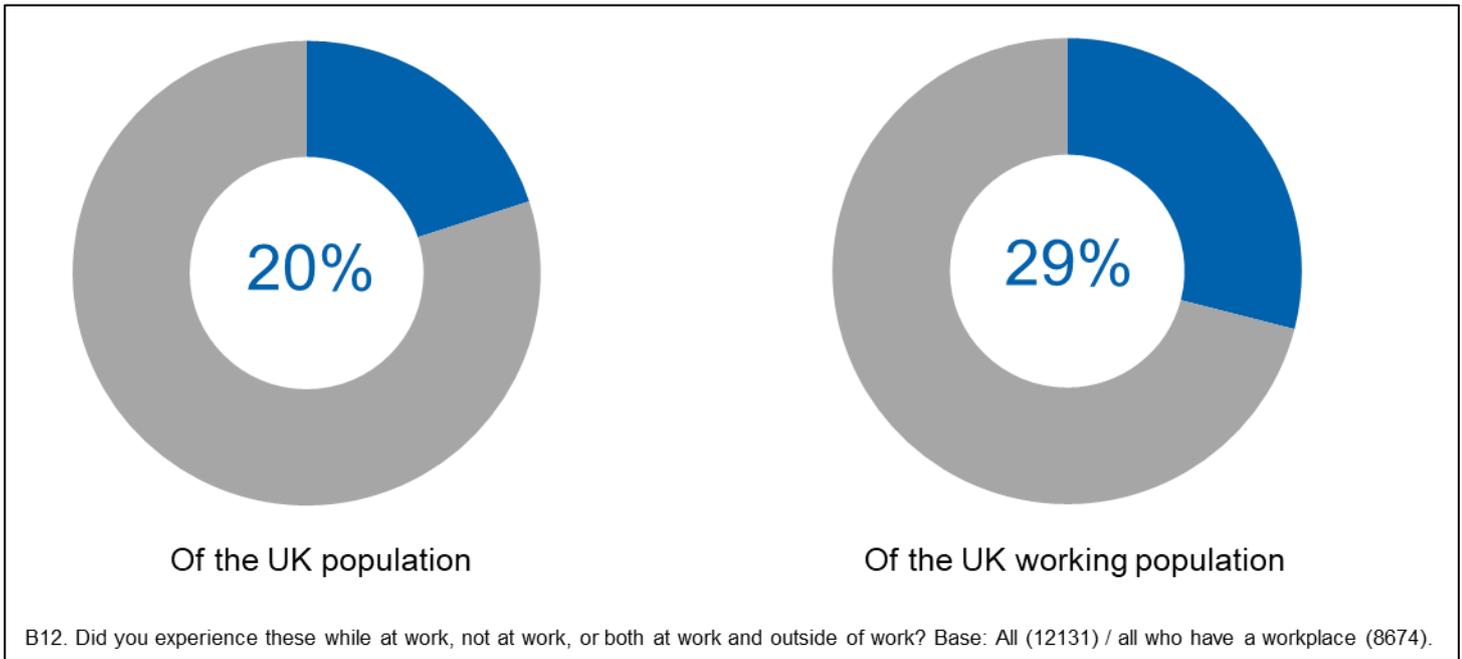
- Overall, 29% of those in employment reported having experienced some form of sexual harassment in their workplace or work-related environment in the last 12 months, equating to a fifth (20%) of the population.
- Women were only slightly more likely than men to experience sexual harassment in the workplace (30% compared with 27%) in the last 12 months. However the type of sexual harassment experienced varied by gender.
- Mirroring the pattern for the population overall, there was a higher incidence of workplace sexual harassment among those aged 16-24 and 25-34, people from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities), those identifying as LGB and those with a highly limiting disability.
- One in five (20%) of those in employment experienced sexual harassment at their physical workplace. Sexual harassment when socialising with colleagues outside the workplace was the second most likely setting for sexual harassment in a work-related environment (13%), followed by visits to clients or customers (9%).
- More than one third (38%) of victims reported that their perpetrator was the same level as them, while over a quarter of victims reported that their perpetrator was more senior. Women were more likely to have been harassed by someone more senior than them (31% compared to 26% of men) and more likely to have been harassed by someone outside the organisation (20% compared to 8% of men).
- One in ten (10%) people experienced repeat sexual harassment in the workplace from the same person.
- The most common response for victims of workplace sexual harassment was to verbally address the perpetrator themselves (35% of victims), while only 15% formally reported it (either internally or externally).
- For victims who took action, two-fifths (41%) said there were no consequences for their perpetrator; this was 19% among those who formally reported it.
- For victims who took action, 40% saw their job change in some way – increasing to 50% among those who reported the harassment. The most common outcome for the victim was for them to choose to look for a new job (17%).

It should be noted that many of the findings in this chapter are closely linked to the age of the victim. We know from previous chapters that younger people are more likely to experience sexual harassment; in the workplace, this means they are more likely to be in certain (more junior) roles, more likely to socialise, etc. This has a corresponding effect on the results in this chapter.

## Incidence of sexual harassment in the workplace

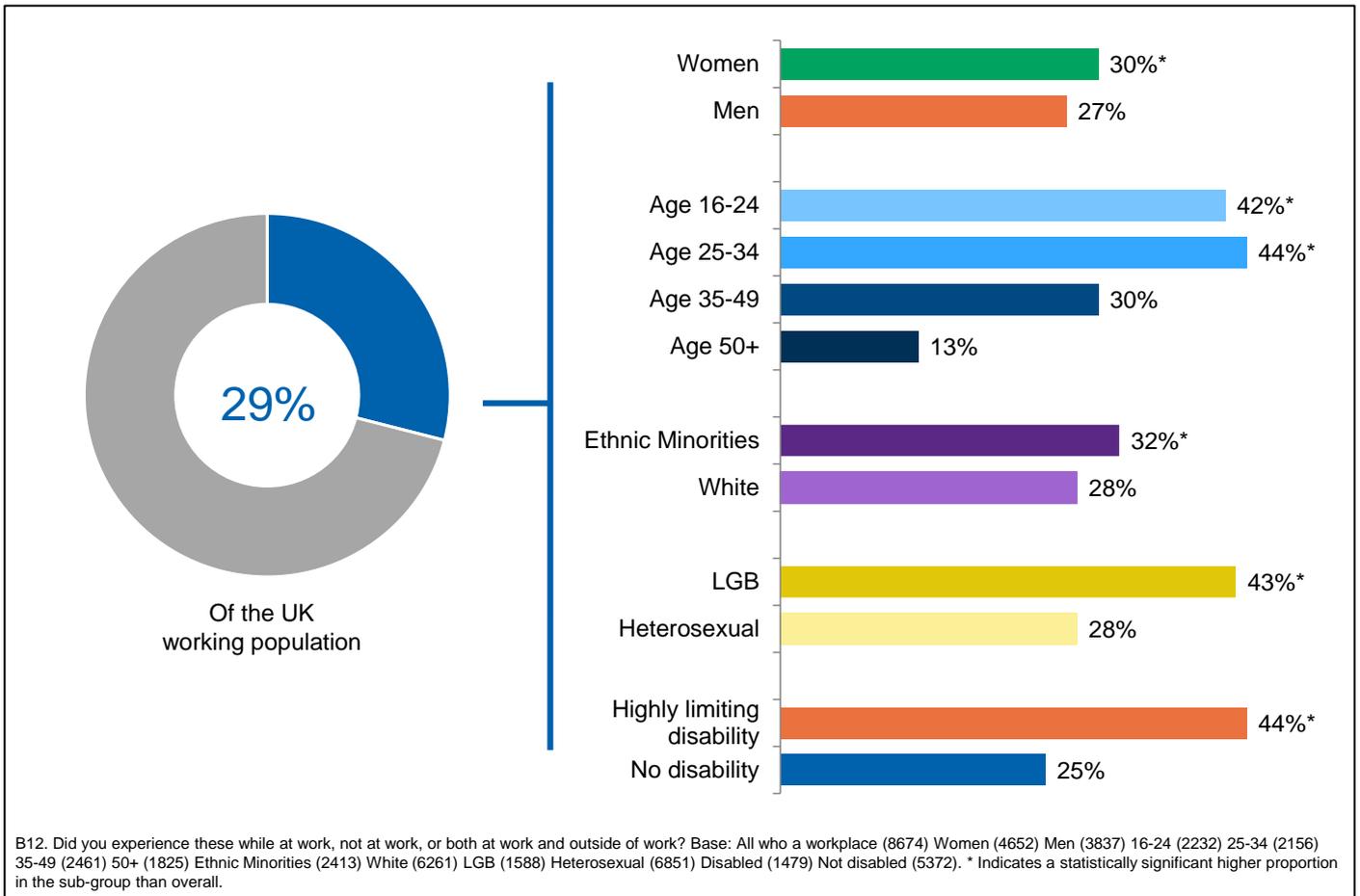
Overall a fifth (20%) of the general UK population had experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in the workplace during the previous 12 months. As shown in Figure 6.1, this equates to 29% of those in employment having experienced some form of sexual harassment in their workplace or work-related environment.

**Figure 6.1 Whether sexual harassment experienced in the workplace in the previous 12 months**



As with the population overall, there were significant differences in who experienced workplace sexual harassment across demographic groups, as shown in Figure 6.2, but broadly reflect the same trends as in the general population.

**Figure 6.2 Whether sexual harassment had been experienced in the workplace by demographics**



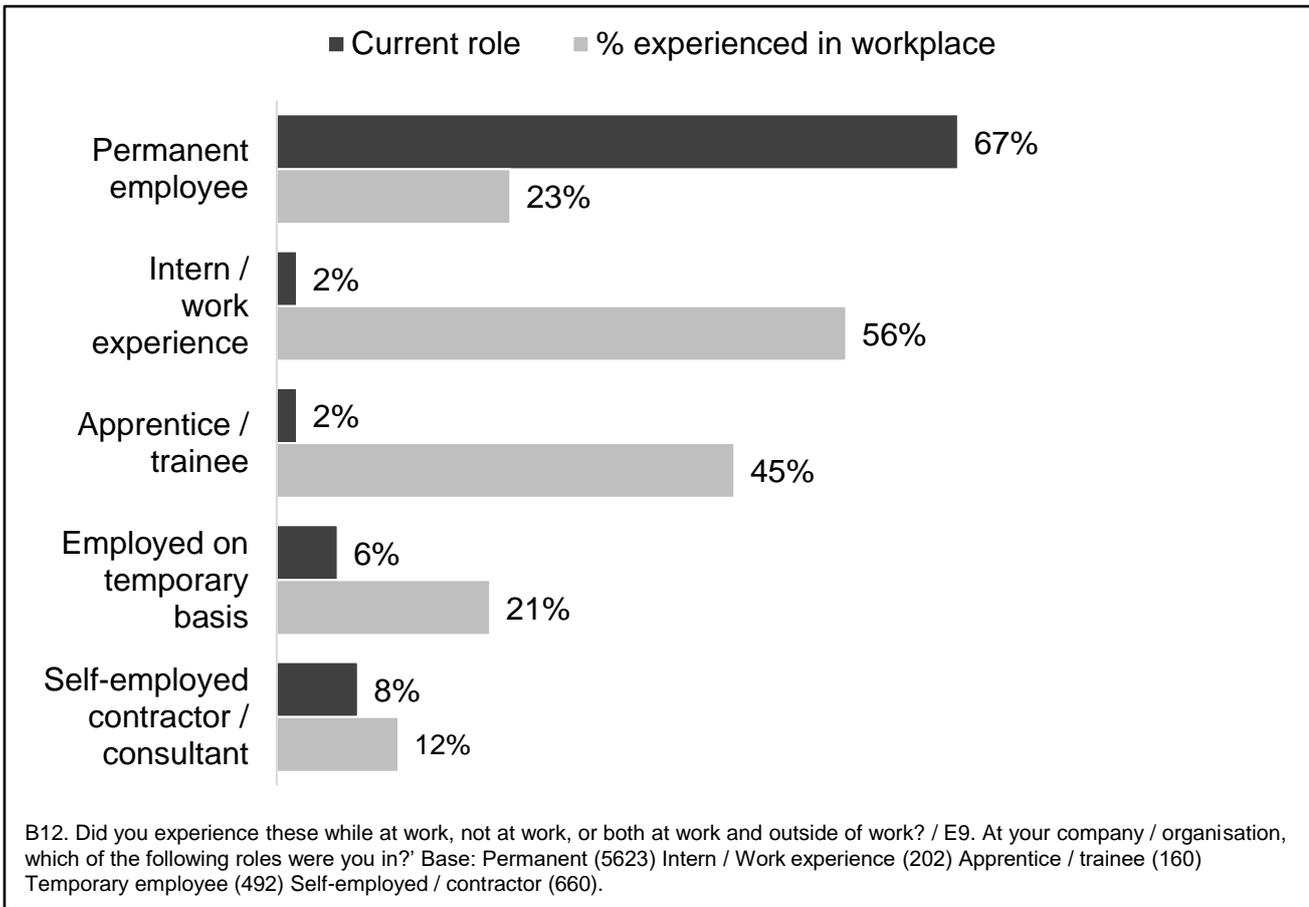
For data on how gender and other protected characteristics intersect (for example the likelihood of experiencing sexual harassment for people who are a women *and* LGB), please see the appendix.

## Role of the victim within the organisation

Nearly three-quarters (72%) of those who experienced sexual harassment in the workplace were permanent employees of the organisation where the harassment occurred.

Figure 6.3 below explores this further by comparing employment types for all workers versus sexual harassment in the workplace (rather than just those who chose to provide more detail about their experiences).

**Figure 6.3 Proportion of each role who have experienced sexual harassment (among those who experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in the previous 12 months and provided details)**



While they represent the majority of the workforce, around a third (23%) of permanent employees experienced workplace harassment in the last 12 months; in contrast, around half of interns/those on work experience and apprentices/trainees experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in their workplace in the last 12 months.

The role is often linked to key demographics, whereby certain demographics are more likely/less likely to be in certain roles when experiencing sexual harassment, particularly by age as noted above. For example, those aged 16-24 were significantly more likely than those aged 50 and over to be interns (2% vs. 0%), in casual work (9% vs. 3%), or working part time (24% vs. 6%).

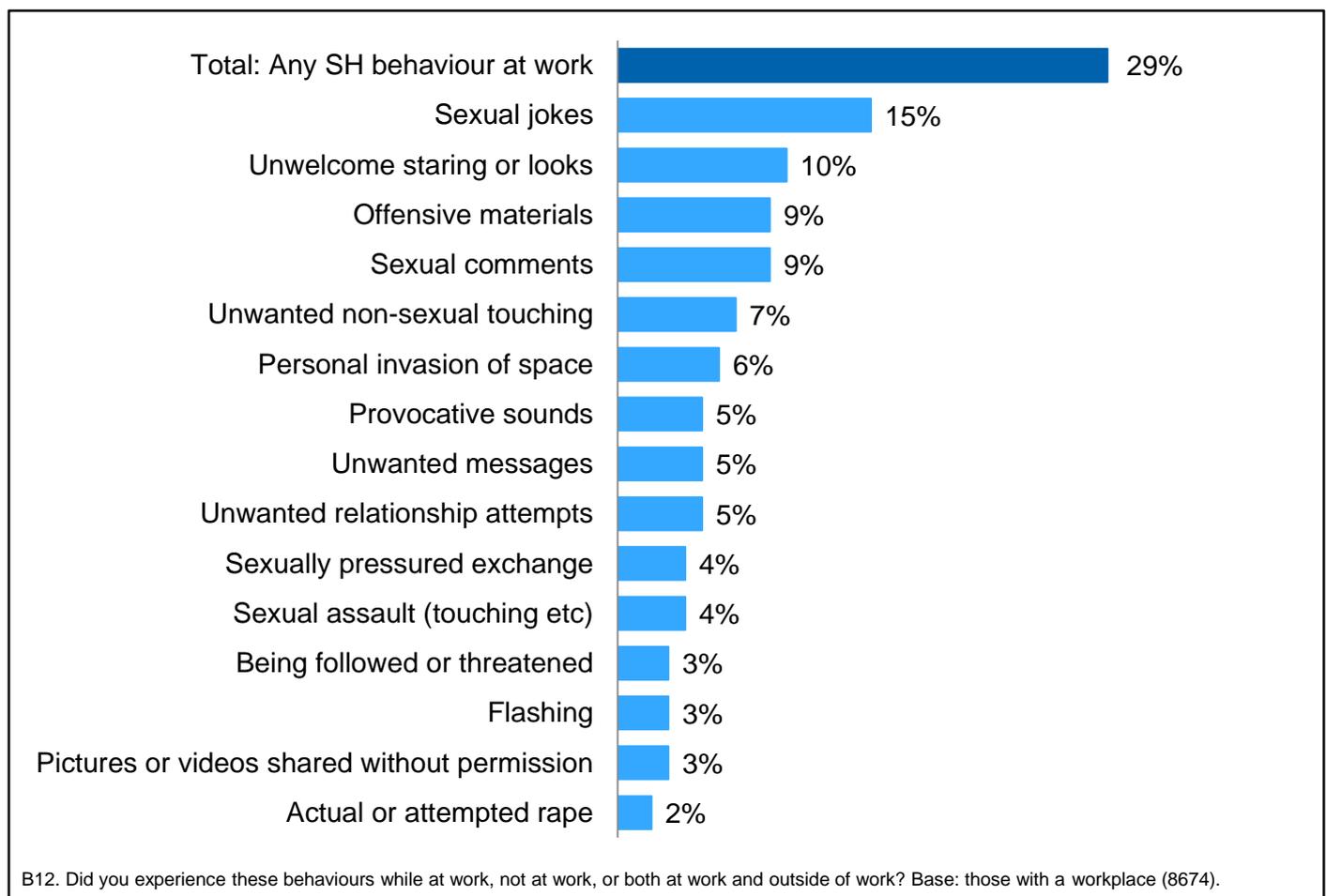
- Age: older victims of workplace sexual harassment were more likely to have been permanent employees (78% of victims 35 or older compared to 58% of those aged 16 to 24), while younger victims were more likely to have been working as interns or on work experience (10% of victims aged 16 to 24), be apprentices or trainees (8%) or to have experienced it while an applicant (8%).
- Ethnicity: victims of sexual harassment from an ethnic minority were considerably less likely to have been in a permanent role at the organisation than White victims (60% compared to 74%). Nearly one-in-ten (9%) of ethnic minority victims were interns or doing work experience, 8% were apprentices or trainees and 9% were employed on a temporary basis.

- Victims with highly limiting disabilities were also less likely to have been permanent employees (67% versus 74% of those who were not disabled).

## Sexual harassment behaviours carried out in the workplace

All forms of sexual harassment had been experienced in the workplace or in a work-related environment within the previous 12 months. As shown in Figure 6.4, unwelcome sexual jokes and unwelcome staring were the most common forms of sexual harassment in the workplace, but with many behaviours experienced by over one in twenty with a workplace.

Figure 6.4 Types of sexual harassment experienced in workplace in last 12 months <sup>36</sup>



Unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual nature were experienced by 15% of those in employment, with around one-tenth of those in employment experiencing unwelcome staring or looks (10%), displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials (9%), and / or unwelcome comments of a sexual nature about body and/or clothes (9%) at their workplace or in a work-related environment within the previous 12 months.

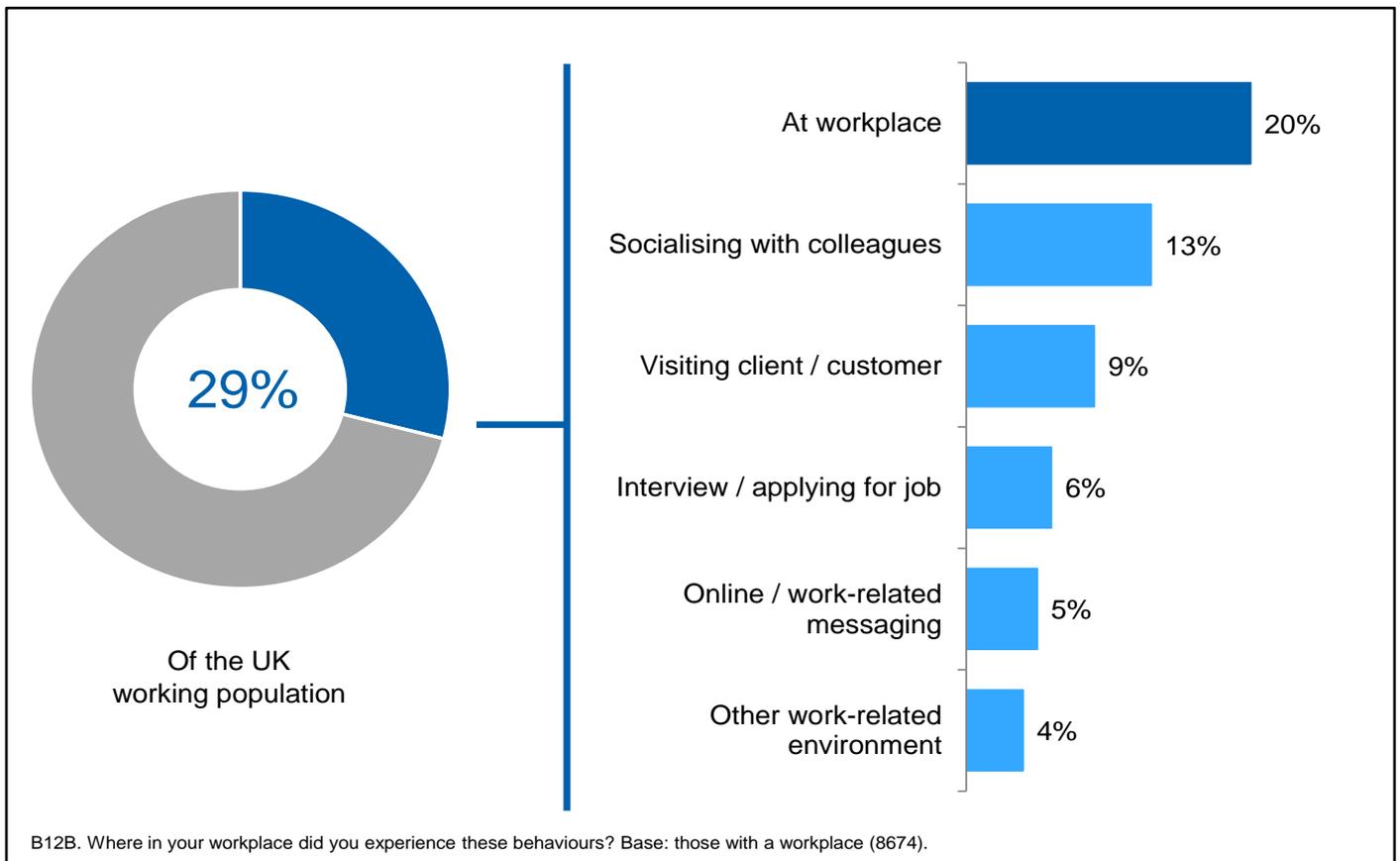
<sup>36</sup> Results are experimental and may differ significantly from results published elsewhere. For further details, please refer to the 'Interpreting sexual harassment data' section in the Methodology chapter.

Other forms of sexual harassment were experienced by around one in twenty of those in employment, while slightly lower proportions reported feeling pressured by someone to date them or do a sexual act for them in exchange for something (4% experienced), being physically followed in a sexually threatening way (3% experienced), experiencing unwanted, overt sexual touching (4% experienced), flashing (3% experienced) and / or someone taking and/or sharing sexual pictures or videos of them without permission (3% experienced). Rape and/or attempted rape at the workplace or in a work-related environment was experienced by 2% of those in employment.

## Locations of sexual harassment in the workplace

Overall, 29% of those in employment experienced sexual harassment actually at their physical workplace, as shown in Figure 6.5.

**Figure 6.5 Where in workplace sexual harassment experienced**



Sexual harassment when socialising with colleagues outside the workplace was the second most likely setting for sexual harassment in a work-related environment (13%), followed by visits to clients or customers (9%). Less likely, but still having occurred for one-in-twenty of those in work, was sexual harassment at an interview or while they applied for a job (6%) and / or sexual harassment online or via work-related messaging (5%).

## Organisations where sexual harassment happens

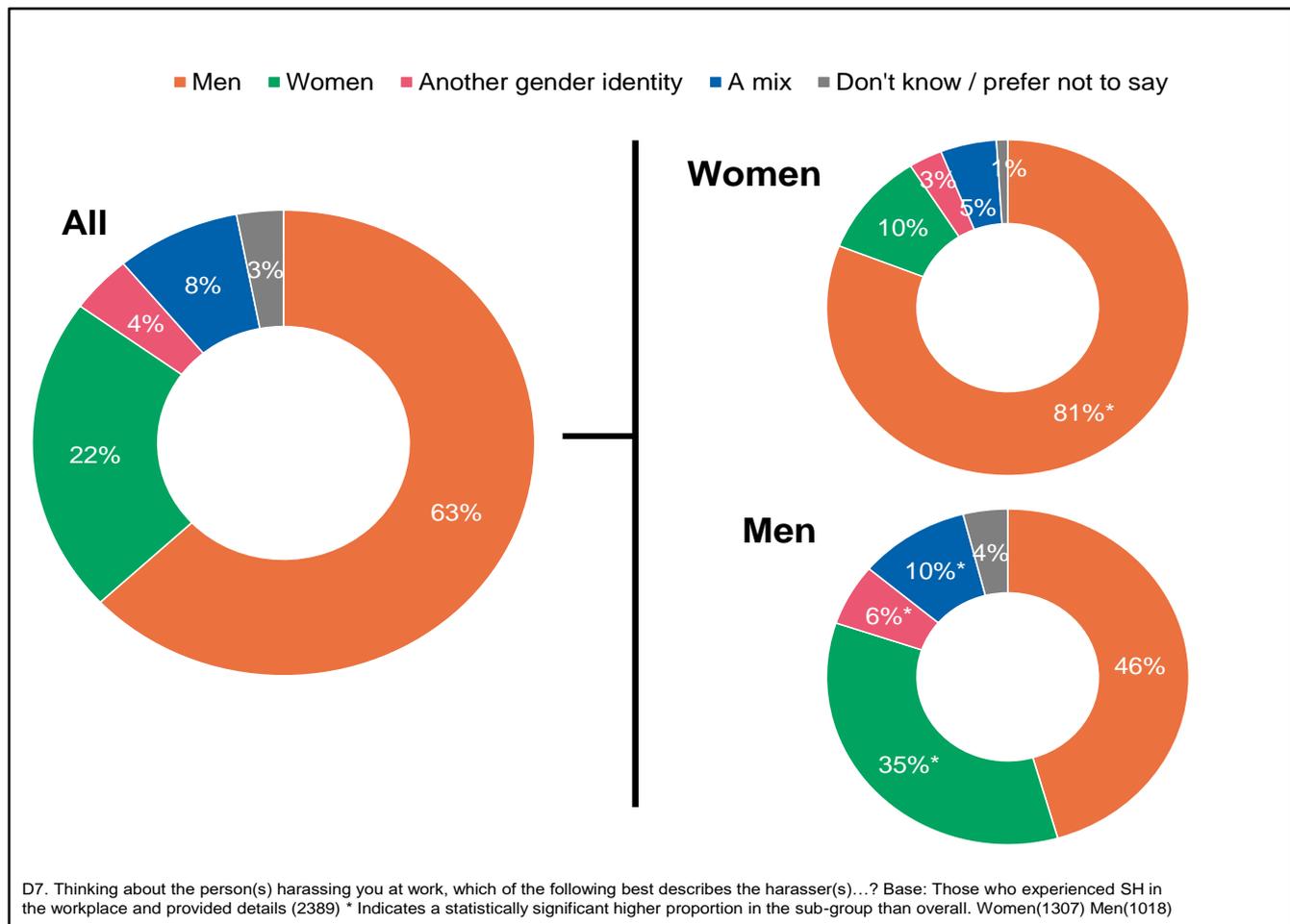
Small and medium-sized organisation were most prone to disproportionately high instances of sexual harassment. Large organisations also accounted for around a third of cases, while micro-organisations were less likely to be the setting for sexual harassment: 10% of sexual harassment experiences were among those working in organisations with less than ten employees.

## Perpetrators of SH in the workplace

### Gender of the perpetrators

The majority of people who experienced sexual harassment in the workplace experienced this from men. As shown in Figure 6.6, almost two thirds (63%) of those who experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in the previous 12 months reported the perpetrator was a man and around a quarter (21%) reported that their perpetrator was a woman.

Figure 6.6 Gender of workplace harasser(s) all and by gender of victim <sup>37</sup>



<sup>37</sup> Response for the option 'another gender identity' (meaning someone not identifying strictly as a man or a woman) is higher than expected given the nature of the question and size of the 'another gender identity' population. Analysis of survey data suggests that that some respondents have selected 'another gender identity' for LGBT individuals, e.g. for harassment from someone homosexual of the same gender, rather than based on their *gender identity*.

---

Sexual harassment of women in the workplace was by a man/men in four fifths of cases (81%), while sexual harassment of men was also more likely to be from another man/men (46%) than a woman/women (35%).

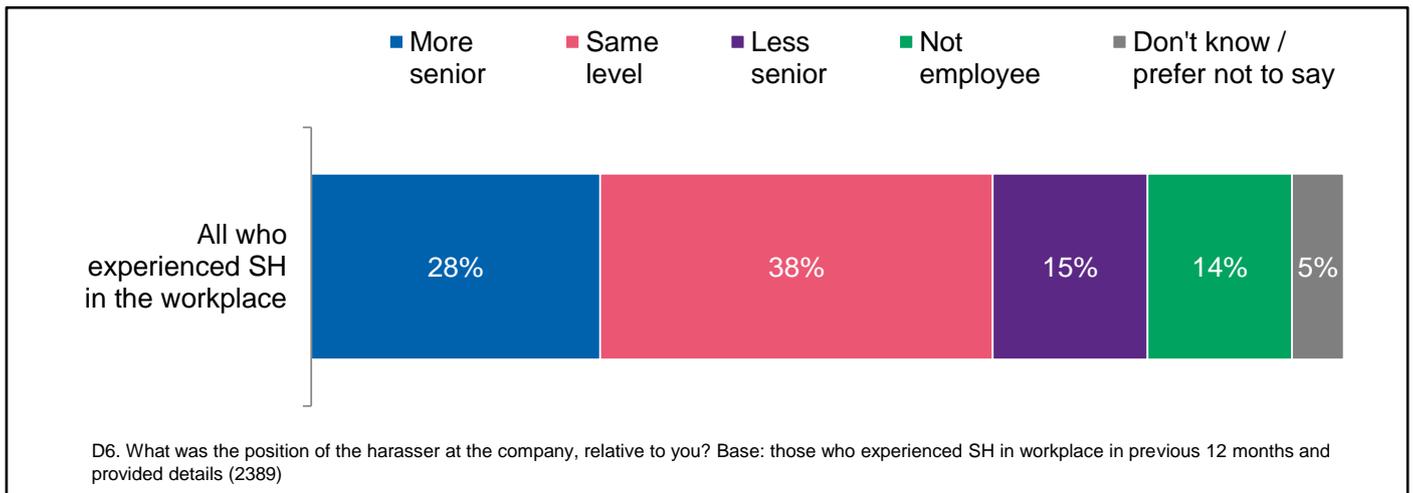
Gender of the perpetrator shows significant differences across other demographic groups:

- White victims were more likely to have been harassed by men (64% compared to 54% of victims from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities)), while both White people and ethnic minorities were equally likely to have been harassed by women (22%).
- LGB victims were more likely to have been harassed by men (68% compared to 63% of heterosexuals), and less likely to have been harassed by women (14% compared to 23% of heterosexual).
- Victims in intermediate or semi-routine and routine occupations were more likely than those in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations or lower supervisory and technical occupations to have been harassed by men (71% and 70% versus 62% and 54% respectively), while the latter two groups were more likely than average to have been harassed by women (25% and 26%).
- Victims aged 20 to 24 were particularly likely to have been harassed by a man (67% compared to 63% overall), while those aged 35 to 49 were particularly likely to have been harassed by a woman (25% compared to 22% overall).

## **Position of the perpetrator relative to the victims' status in the organisation**

Victims of sexual harassment in the workplace were most commonly at the same level of seniority within the organisation as their perpetrator, with more than one third (38%) of victims reporting that their perpetrator was the same level as them. However, as shown in Figure 6.7, over a quarter of victims (28%) reported that their perpetrator was more senior.

**Figure 6.7 Position of main harasser in workplace relative to victim<sup>38</sup>**



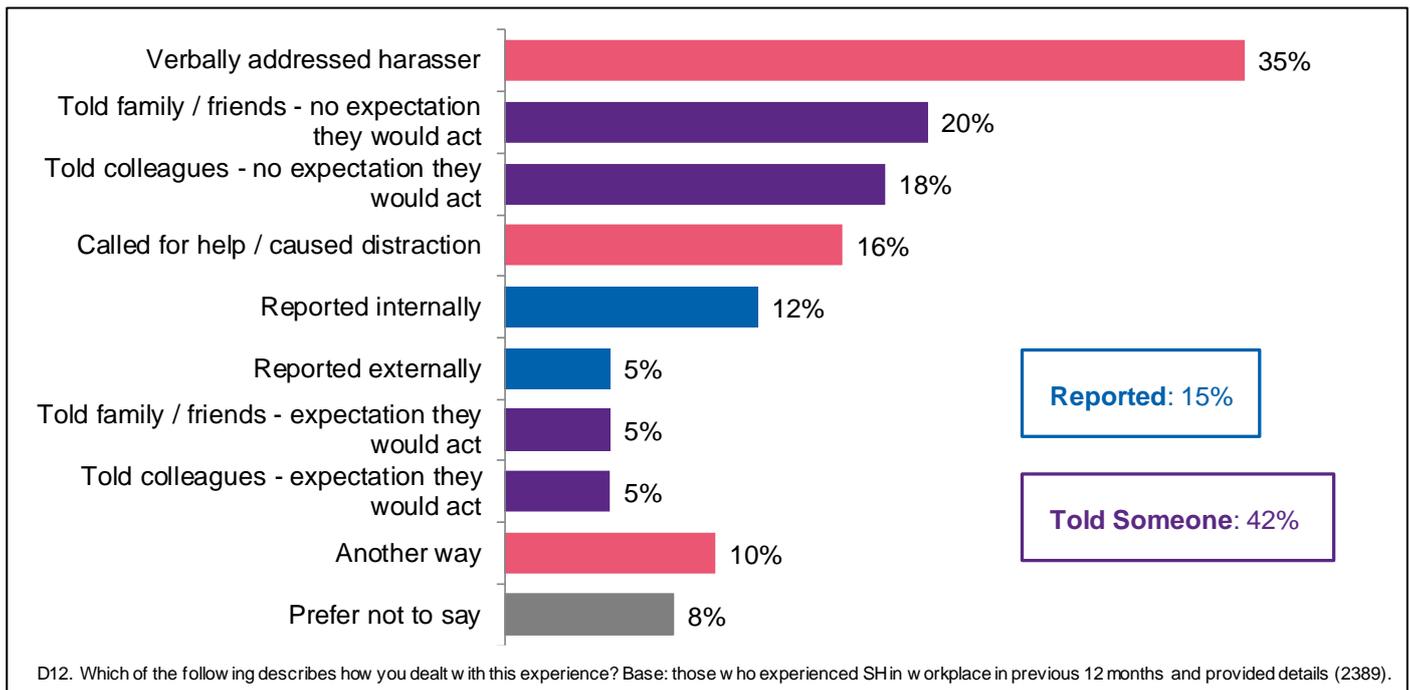
Around one in seven (15%) said the perpetrator was less senior. A similar proportion of victims (14%) were harassed by a person who was not an employee (this may have been a customer, client, patient, student etc.).

## Victim response to sexual harassment in the workplace

The most common response for victims of workplace sexual harassment was to verbally address the perpetrator themselves (35% of victims did so), as shown in Figure 6.8 below. Only 15% formally reported it (either internally or externally), with some victims doing both.

<sup>38</sup> Age and seniority are factors which could be interlinked, for example younger people tend to be in less senior roles. Please see the methodology chapter for more information.

**Figure 6.8 How sexual harassment in the workplace was dealt with by victims**



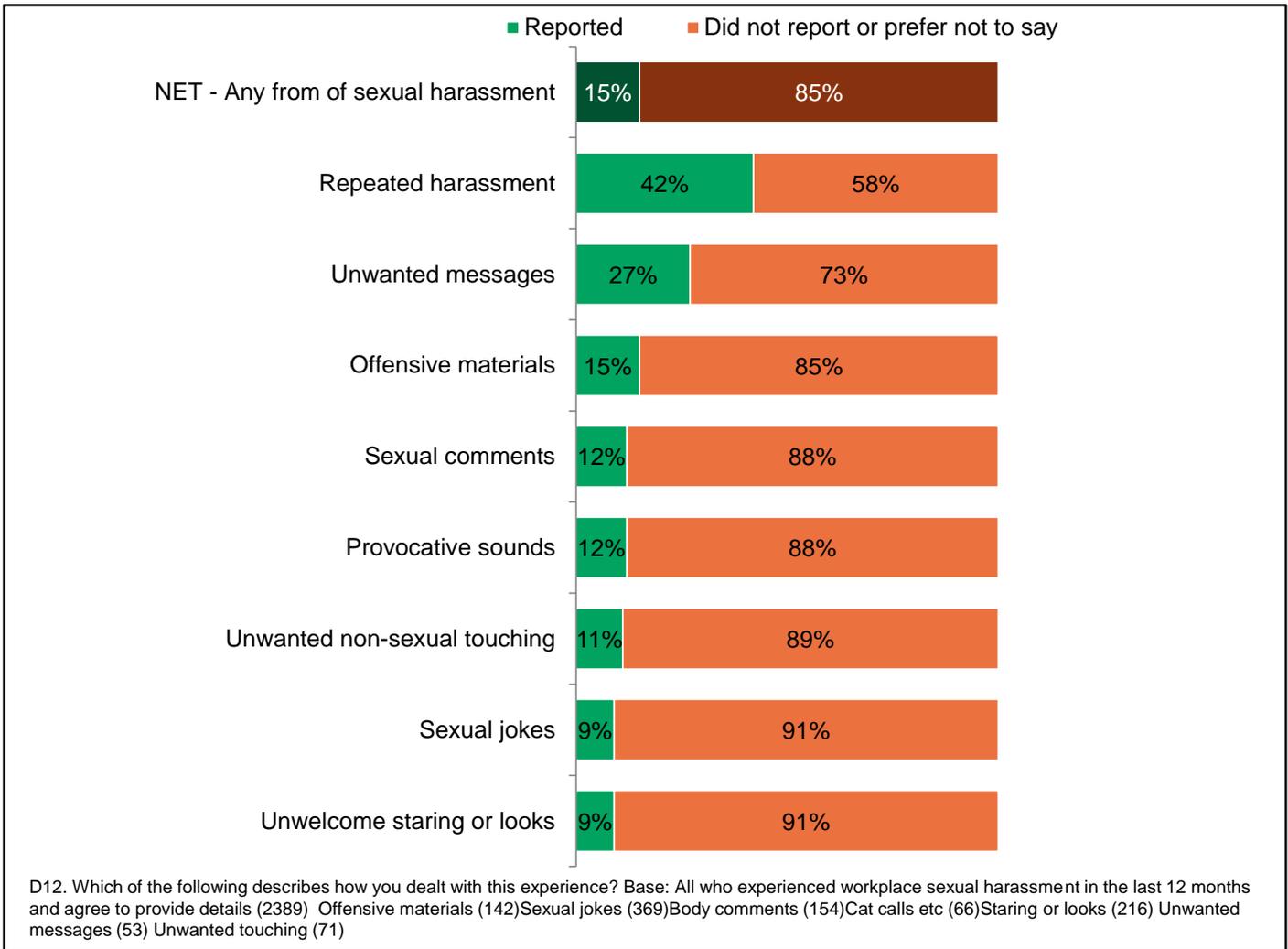
Of those who told someone about it, a small minority did so with the expectation they would do something about it: 5% of victims told family or friends and the same proportion told colleagues on this basis. This compares to 20% who told family / friends and / or 18% who told colleagues without any expectation they would act. Other common approaches included calling for help or causing a distraction in some way (16% of victims).

### Response by behaviour experienced

While verbally addressing the perpetrator was the most common action taken by victims of each of the listed behaviours, other responses to harassment do differ by behaviour:

- Verbally addressing the perpetrator was particularly common for victims of repeat harassment (43% vs. 35% overall). It was significantly less likely for the victim to verbally address the harasser for cat calls (23%) and staring or looks (15%).
- However, victims were significantly more likely to tell someone if they experienced cat calls or staring or looks (56% both vs. 42% overall). People who experienced sexual jokes or offensive materials were significantly less likely to tell someone about it (36% and 30% respectively).
- As shown in Figure 6.9, victims were significantly more likely to report the behaviour (either externally, or to a manager) for those who experienced repeat harassment (42% vs. 15% average) and those who had received unwanted messages (27% vs. 15% average). They were less likely to report sexual jokes and unwelcome staring or looks (both 9%).

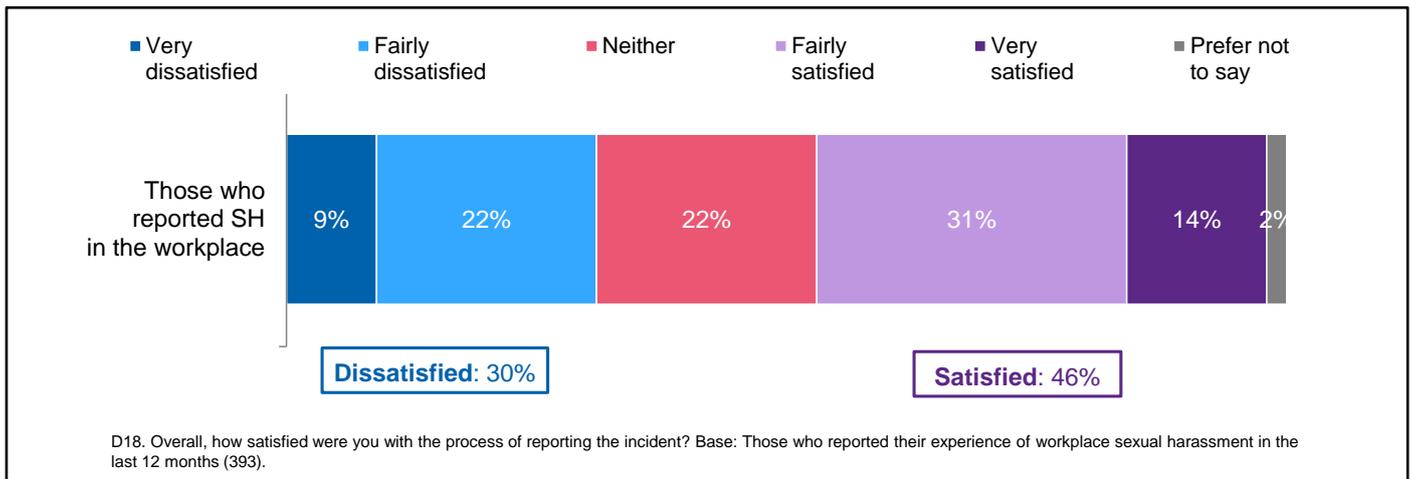
**Figure 6.9 Whether harassment at work was reported, by behaviour.**



**Satisfaction with process of reporting**

Those who had reported sexual harassment in the workplace in the previous 12 months were asked how satisfied they were with the *process* of reporting (with the outcome of reporting asked separately, see below). Overall, nearly half of those who reported (46%) were satisfied with the process of reporting the incident (14% very satisfied). As shown in Figure 6.10, a quarter (30%) of victims who reported the incident were dissatisfied with the process (9% very dissatisfied).

**Figure 6.10 Satisfaction with process of reporting**

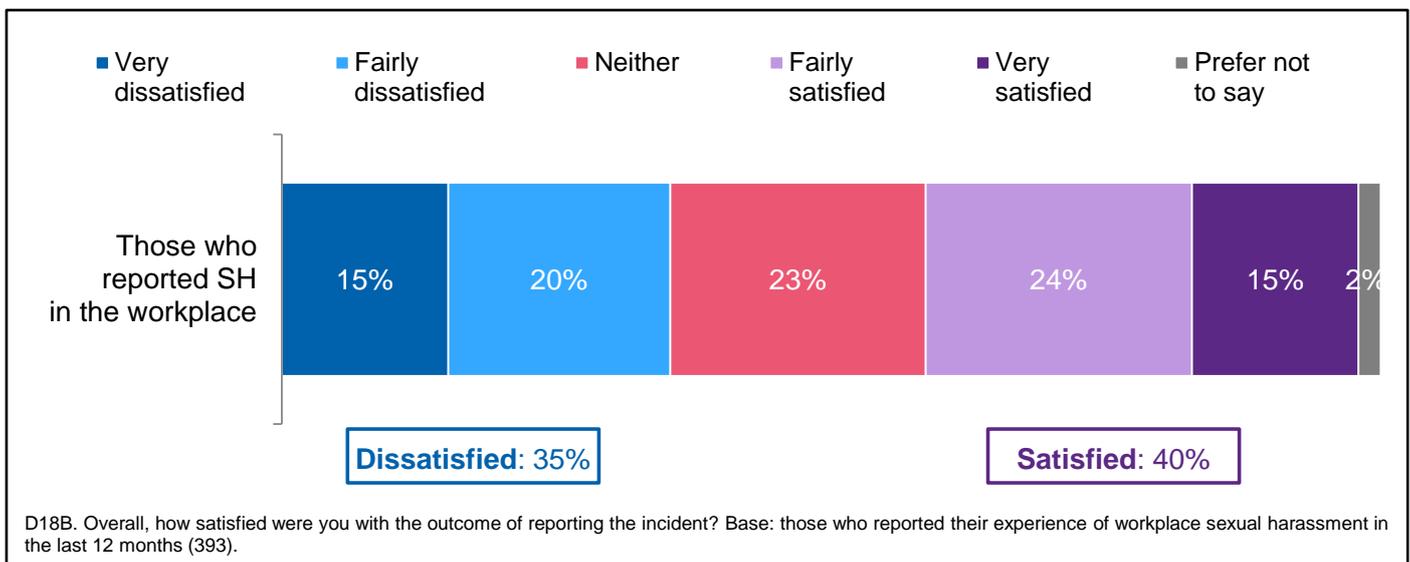


Due to low base sizes, robust comparison by behaviour was not possible.

**Satisfaction with outcome of reporting the incident**

Those who had reported sexual harassment in the workplace were asked how satisfied they were with the *outcome* of reporting. Overall two fifths (40%) were satisfied with the outcome of reporting the incident (15% very satisfied) and a third (35%) of victims who reported the incident were dissatisfied with the outcome (15% very dissatisfied), as shown in Figure 6.11.

**Figure 6.11 Satisfaction with outcome of reporting**



Due to low base sizes, robust comparison by behaviour was not possible.

**Link between process and outcome satisfaction**

There is a strong correlation between satisfaction with the outcome of reporting sexual harassment and satisfaction with the process. As shown in Table 6.1 below, those who were satisfied with the outcome had significantly higher levels of satisfaction with the reporting process.

**Table 6.1 Satisfaction with reporting process vs. reporting outcome**

Satisfaction with reporting process						
		Very dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Neither	Fairly satisfied	Very satisfied
Satisfaction with outcome	Very dissatisfied	85%	28%	3%	2%	0%
	Fairly dissatisfied	4%	53%	24%	8%	5%
	Neither	8%	12%	52%	22%	7%
	Fairly satisfied	0%	5%	16%	52%	22%
	Very satisfied	4%	3%	2%	14%	66%

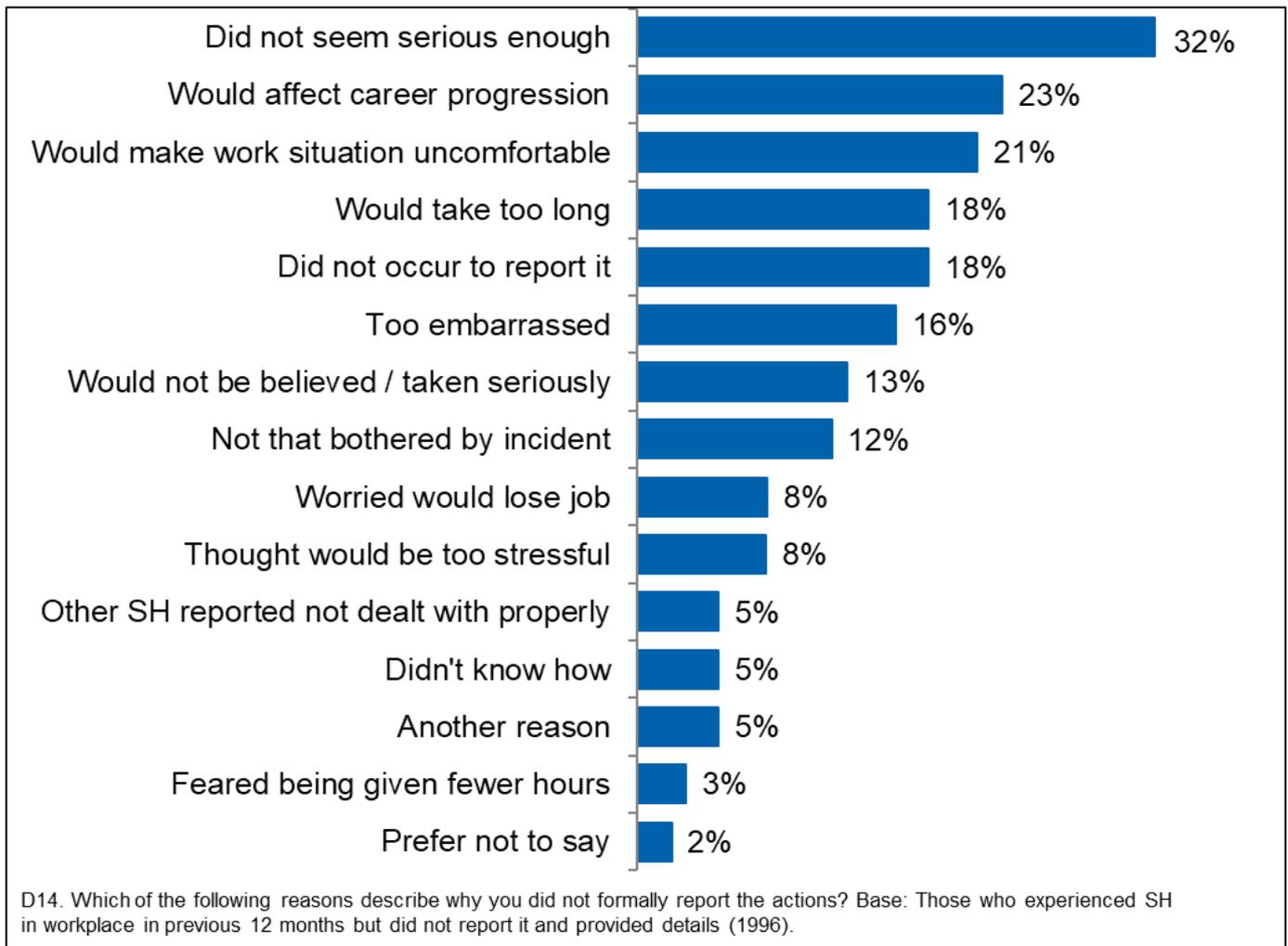
D18. Overall, how satisfied were you with the process of reporting the incident? / D18B. Overall, how satisfied were you with the outcome of reporting the incident? Base: All who experienced *and* reported sexual harassment in the last 12 months at work(286).

Of those very dissatisfied with the reporting process, nine in 10 (85%) were dissatisfied with the outcome of reporting; conversely, of those very satisfied with the reporting process, approximately two-thirds (66%) were satisfied with the outcome. However, one in 20 victims of workplace sexual harassment who were very satisfied with the process were ultimately dissatisfied with the outcome – with the inverse also true.

**Reasons for not reporting**

The vast majority (85%) of people who experienced workplace sexual harassment in the last 12 months did not report it. As shown in Figure 6.12, the most common reason for not formally reporting sexual harassment in the workplace was that it did not seem serious enough (32% of those who did not report), followed by thinking it would affect the victim’s career progression (23%) or make their work situation uncomfortable (21%).

**Figure 6.12 Reasons for not formally reporting experience of sexual harassment in the workplace**



There were also other concerns about the process of reporting which deterred some: 13% thought they would not be believed or taken seriously, 8% thought it would be too stressful, 5% felt that other sexual harassment which had been reported by others had not been properly dealt with and 5% did not know how to report it. Personal embarrassment was a barrier for 16% of those who had not reported the harassment, and 8% were worried they might lose their job.

For nearly a fifth (18%), it did not occur to them to report the harassment, while more than one-in-ten (12%) were not 'that bothered' by the incident.

### **Non-reporting reasons by demographic and business group**

As expected, reasons for non-reporting do show significant differences between certain demographic groups and business types.

#### **Gender**

Although at the overall level there was no difference by gender in the proportion of men and women who decided to report or not to report workplace sexual harassment, the reasons given by

---

men and women for not reporting did vary. Men were significantly more likely than women to have not reported because it did not occur to them (20% compared to 16% among women), while women were significantly more likely to not report harassment for most other reasons. Genders were equally likely to not report harassment due to it taking too long, not being bothered, or being worried about getting fewer hours.

## **Age**

Younger victims were also particularly likely to have avoided reporting because they thought the incident did not seem serious enough (42% of victims aged 16 to 24 who did not report, compared to 28% of their older counterparts over 50). Older victims aged 50 or above were particularly likely to have not reported as they thought it might make their work situation uncomfortable (29% compared to 18% among their younger counterparts, 16-24).

## **Ethnicity**

White victims were more likely to not report because the incident did not seem serious enough (33% White vs 25% ethnic minority) or out of fear it would make for an uncomfortable work situation (22% vs 17%).

## **LGB**

LGB victims were more likely to not report due to being too embarrassed (21% vs 16% among heterosexuals) or because they thought the process would be too stressful (13% vs 7%).

## **Highly limiting disability**

Those with a highly limiting disability were significantly more likely to not report because they thought it would take too long (38% vs 14% among those with no disability) or because it did not occur to them (22% vs. 17% among those with no disability). For a small minority, it was on the basis of worries about being given fewer hours if they did (4% vs. 3%, but a significant difference).

## **Socio-Economic group (NS-Sec)**

Those in higher managerial positions were significantly more likely to not report due to concerns about it taking too long (26% vs. 18% average), while those in intermediate occupations and semi-routine or routine occupations did not do so on the basis of embarrassment (both 22% vs. 16% average). Those in semi-routine and routine occupations were also significantly more likely than the managerial and intermediate groups to say they did not report due to a fear of losing their job (12% vs. 7%). Small employers and own account workers, in contrast, were more likely to say they were not that bothered by the incident (27% vs 12% average).

## **Business sector**

Private sector workers were especially likely to have been deterred from reporting because they thought it would take too long (24% compared to 13% of public sector), while people working in a public sector organisation were more likely not to have reported sexual harassment due to worries it would affect their career progression (27% compared to 20% private sector). Workers in the public and private sectors were also more likely not to think the incident serious enough to report (34% and 32% compared to 25% of the third sector). Public sector workers were more likely than

---

third sector to have been too embarrassed (18% vs 11% overall). Victims working in the third sector were particularly likely to say it had not occurred to them to report the incident (38% compared to 18% overall).

### **Business size**

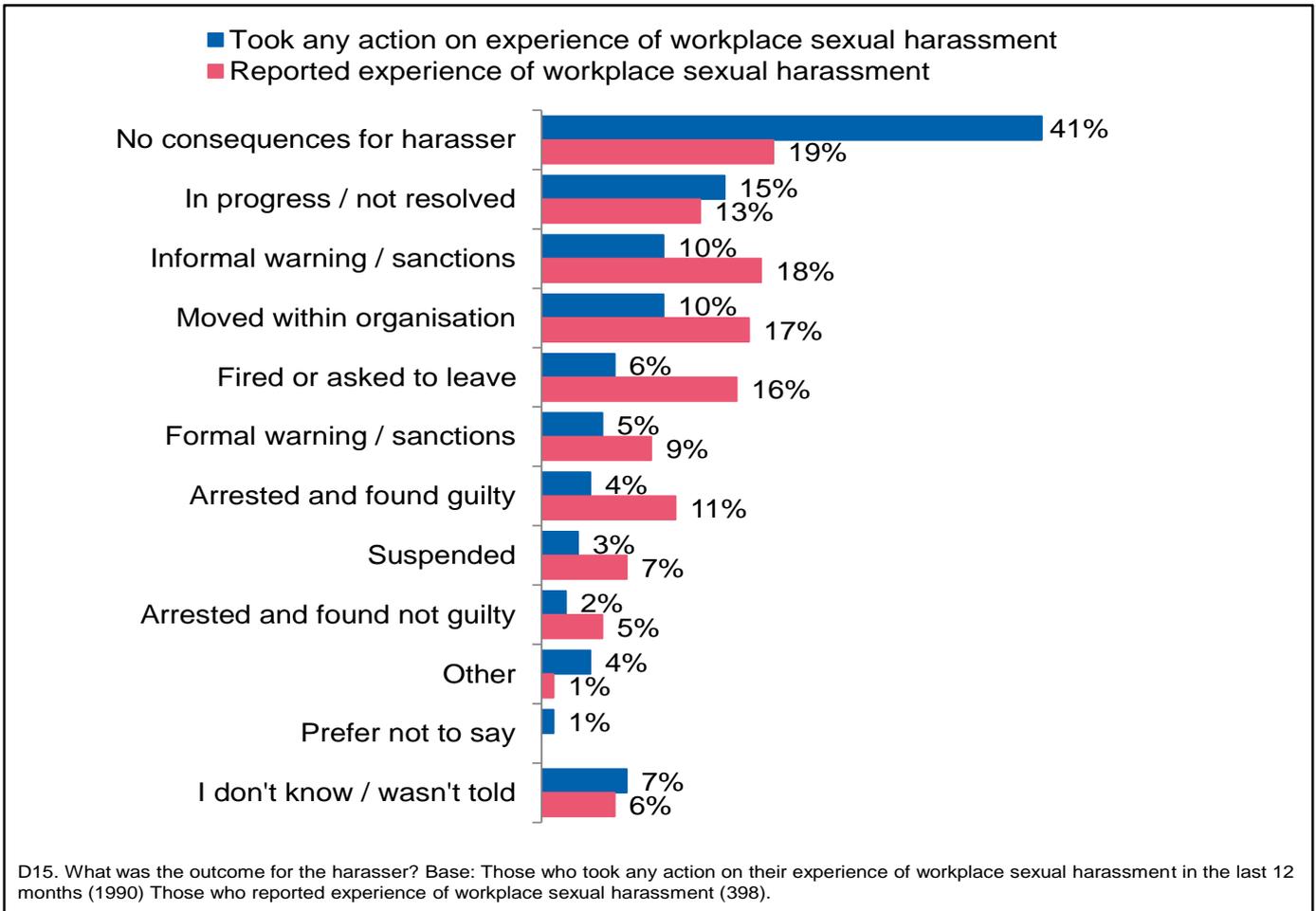
Reasons for non-report showed significant differences between micro/small businesses (less than 50 employees) and medium/large businesses (50+ employees). Victims in micro, small and medium, businesses were all significantly more likely than those in large organisations to not report sexual harassment on the belief that it would take too long, with those in micro-organisations significantly more likely than all others not to report (37% micro, 26% small and 31% medium vs 11% large). Further, those working in micro-organisations were significantly more likely to say it did not occur to them to report their harassment (25% vs 18% average). In contrast, those in large organisations were significantly more likely to not report based on the harassment not feeling serious enough (42% vs 32%), concern about it making work uncomfortable (29% vs 21%), and thinking they would not be believed or taken seriously (18% vs 13%).

## **Sexual harassment outcomes in the workplace**

### **Outcome for perpetrator**

Among victims who took some form of action when they were sexually harassed in the workplace, two-fifths (41%) said there were no consequences for their perpetrator. As shown in Figure 6.13, this drops to 19% among those who *reported* their experience of workplace sexual harassment (either internally or externally).

**Figure 6.13 Outcome for perpetrator**



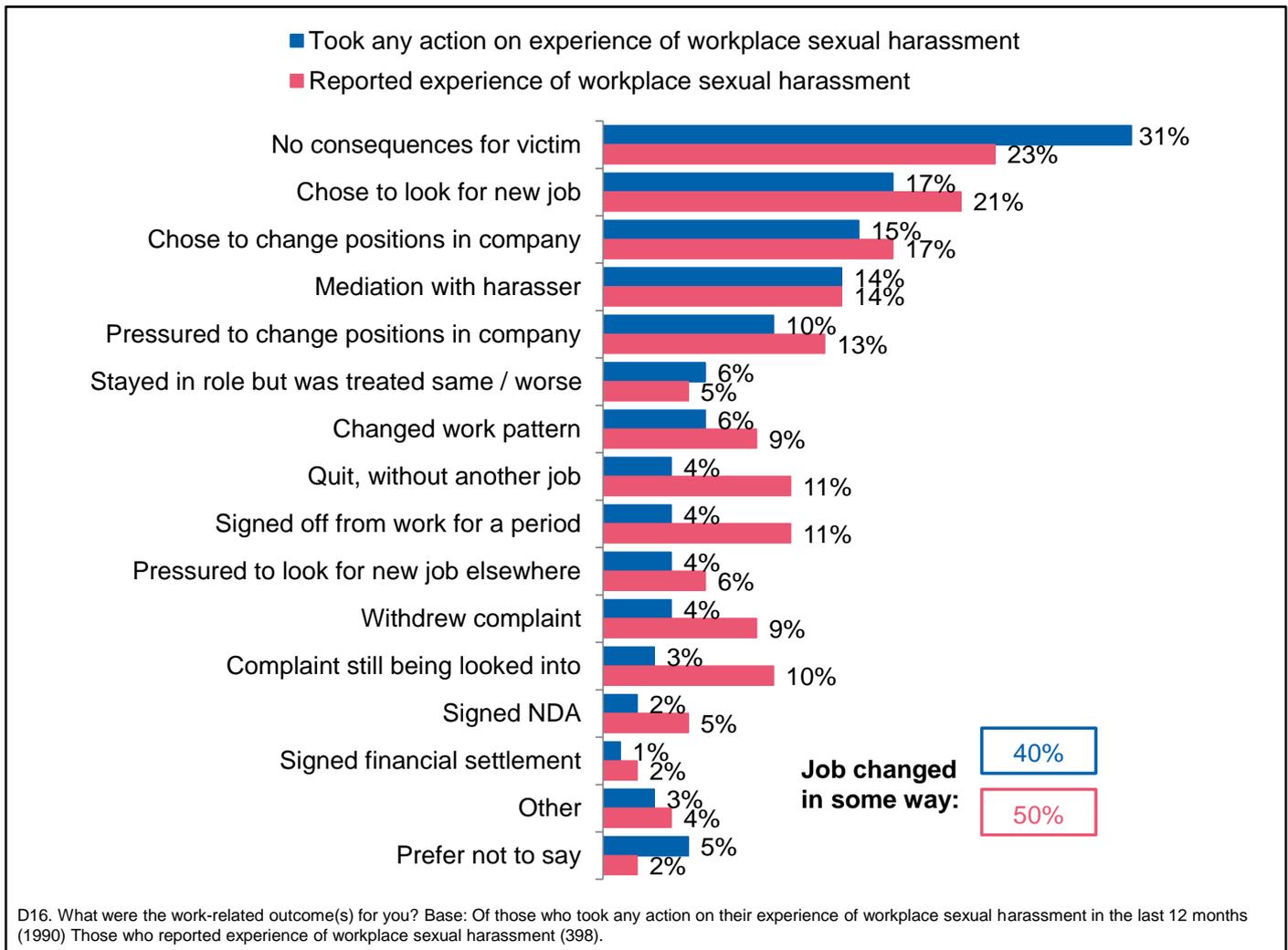
The most frequent negative outcomes for the perpetrator was an informal warning or sanctions and / or being moved within the organisation (each reported by 10% of victims who had taken action). Small minorities reported that their perpetrator was fired or asked to leave (6%), given a formal warning or sanctions (5%) and / or suspended (3%). Seven per cent of victims reported that their perpetrator had been arrested following them taking action, with 4% found guilty and 2% not guilty. Around one in seven who took some action (15%) said that the case was still in progress or not yet resolved, and a further 7% did not know or were not told what had happened to the perpetrator.

Formally reporting harassment (either internally or externally) increased the likelihood of consequences for the perpetrator by between two and six times across the outcomes compared to those who had taken some other action (e.g. verbally addressed their perpetrator or told someone) but had not reported the harassment. For example, the harasser was fired or asked to leave in 16% of cases where it was formally reported, but only 4% of cases where it was not formally reported.

## Outcome for the victim

Among those victims who took some form of action, 40% saw their job change in some way<sup>39</sup>. This rises to 50% of those who reported the harassment (either internally or externally).

**Figure 6.14 Work related outcomes for victim among those who took any action (inclusive of reporting) and among those who reported their experience**



The most common outcome for the victim was no consequences (31% for all who took any action, falling to 23% for those who reported their experience of workplace sexual harassment). This is followed by them choosing to look for a new job (17%, rising to 21% of those who reported the harassment). Similarly, 15% of those who took action after being sexually harassed chose to change positions within the company and 6% changed their work pattern. Some victims who had taken action quit without another job or were signed off from work for a time (4% each, rising to 11% of those who had reported the behaviour for both quitting and being signed off).

A small minority came under pressure to move jobs, with 10% pressured to change positions within the company and 3% to look for a new job elsewhere. Very small minorities signed both

<sup>39</sup> Respondents who reported at least one of the codes were recorded as 'changed their job in some way'; 'I chose to change positions in the company', 'I was pressured to change positions in the company', 'I chose to look for a new job', 'I was pressured to look for a new job elsewhere', 'I quit, without another job lined up' and 'I changed my work pattern'.

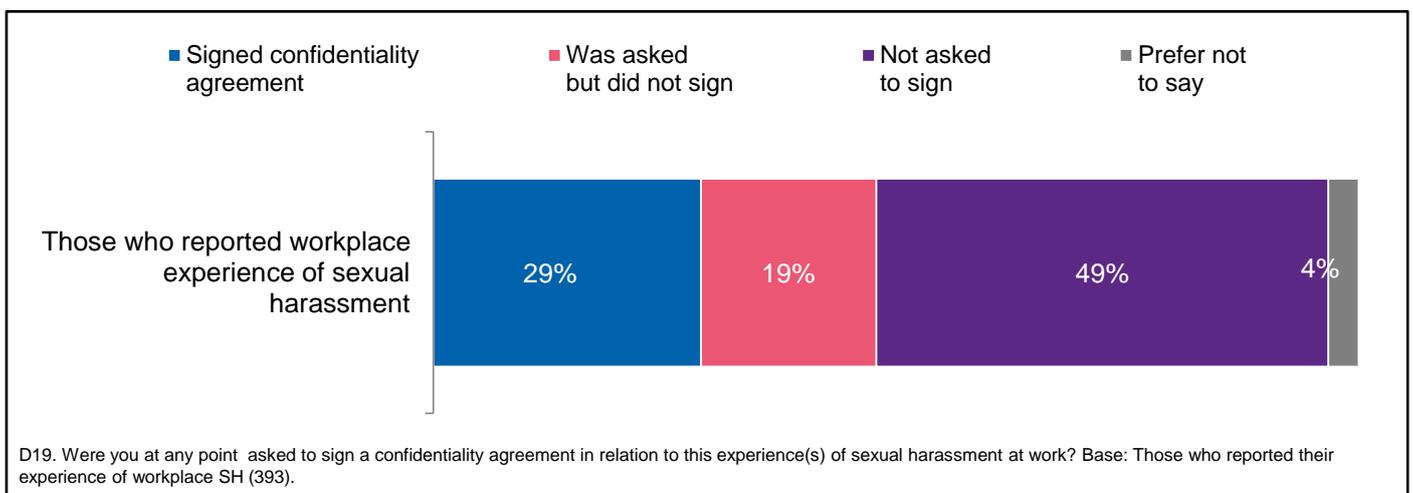
non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) (2%) and financial settlements (1%). Around one in seven victims who reported sexual harassment (14%) attended mediation with their perpetrator.

Less than a third (31%) of those who took action on their experience of sexual harassment saw no work-related consequences, dropping to less than a quarter (23%) of those who reported it. A minority (6%) reported staying in their role but still being treated in the same way or worse, while 4% of those who took action withdrew their complaint (rising to 9% of those who had reported it).

### Asked to sign a confidentiality agreement

Just over a quarter (48%) of those who reported their workplace sexual harassment were asked to sign a confidentiality agreement in relation to their experience. As shown Figure 6.15, 29% agreed to sign the NDA while 19% did not.

**Figure 6.15 Requests to sign a confidentiality agreement in relation to experience of sexual harassment**



Subgroup analysis on this question is not possible due to low base sizes.

# Chapter 7

Perceptions of employer actions to sexual harassment

---

## 7) Perceptions of employer actions to address sexual harassment in the workplace

This chapter provides an overview of how employees and students feel that their employer or place of study is tackling the issue of sexual harassment. It looks at overall views on how well sexual harassment is being handled, the extent to which employees were aware of their organisation having a policy on sexual harassment and whether training to prevent sexual harassment was provided. The data in this chapter shows responses for all those who have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months including high degree victims. A separate section has also been included in the appendix summarising the responses from high degree victims given their differing experience. For more information about the rationale for this, please refer to the Methodology chapter.

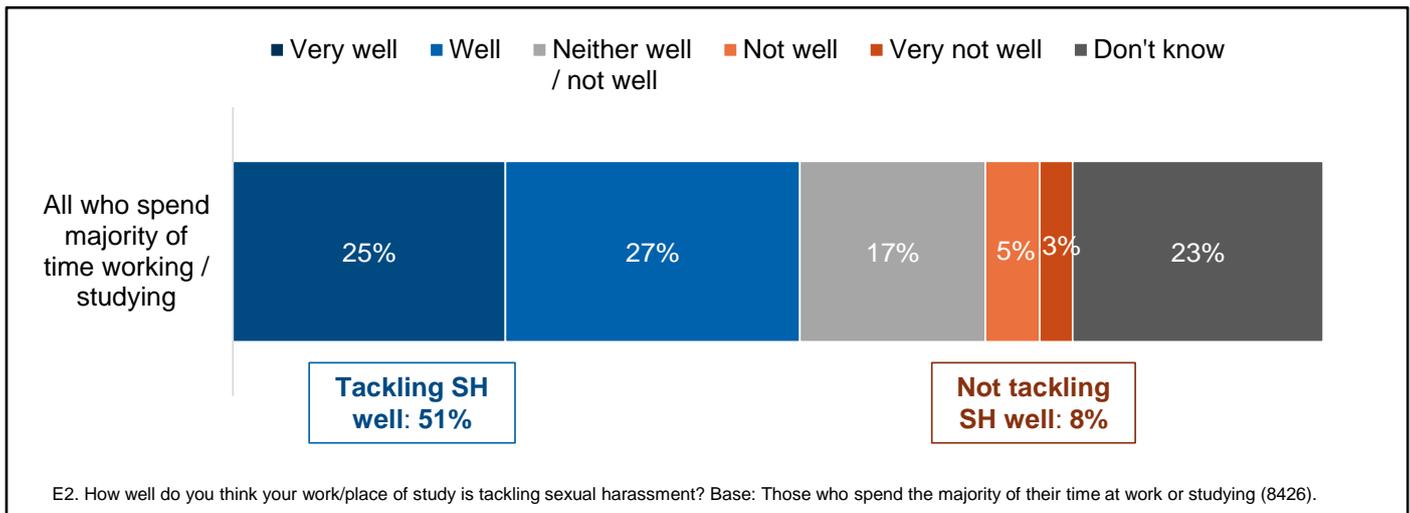
Results throughout this report are experimental and may differ significantly from the results of other studies or statistics. For further details, including details of the behaviour-based design of this research, please refer to the methodology chapter and the 'Interpreting sexual harassment data' section in particular.

### Chapter Summary

- Half of employees felt that their organisation handled sexual harassment well (and only 8% felt that it was not handled well) but a relatively large proportion were unsure.
- Most employees and students knew or presumed that their organisation had a policy on sexual harassment (80%) although only a third (35%) were sure.
- Most thought that their organisation provided training on sexual harassment (48%) but only 18% were sure it was provided.

Overall, just over half (51%) of those working or studying thought their place of work or study was tackling sexual harassment well or very well. However, as shown in Figure 7.1, there was some ambiguity: 23% did not know how well their place of work or study was tackling sexual harassment and a further 17% thought it was neither doing well nor not well. Just 8% thought they were not doing well.

**Figure 7.1 How well places of work or study are tackling sexual harassment**

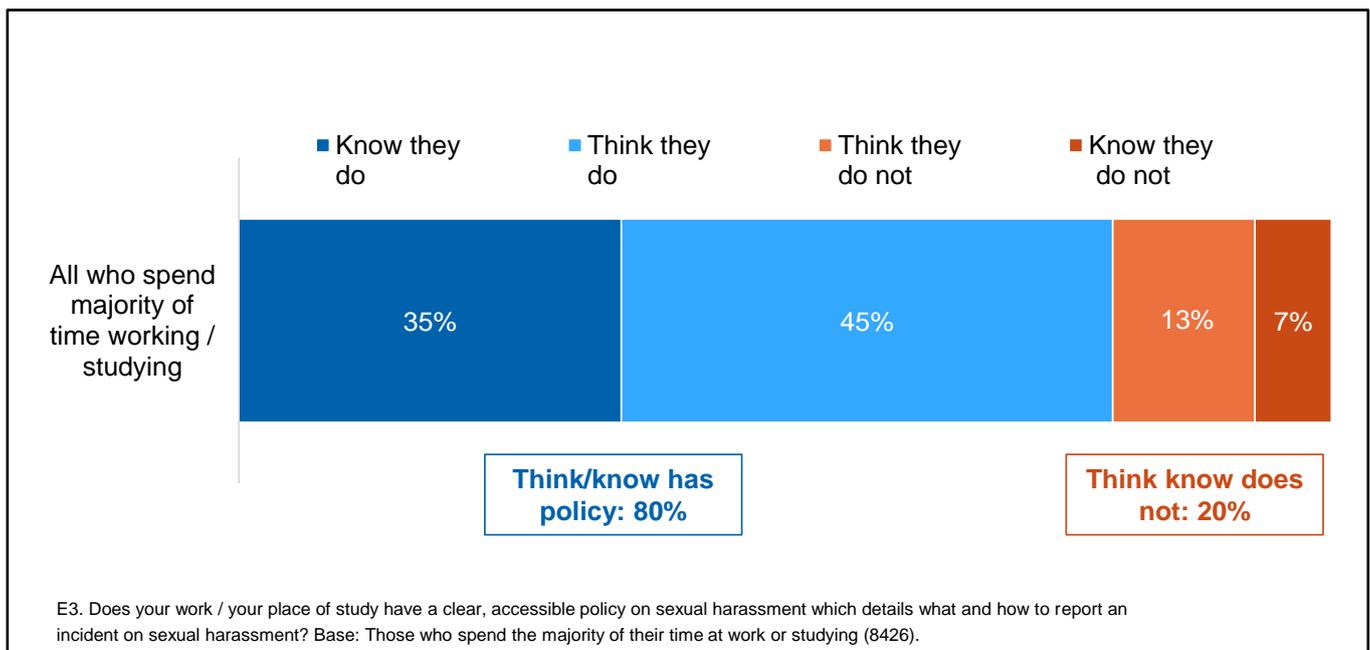


Those with a workplace were more likely than those who were studying to say their organisation was tackling sexual harassment 'very well' (25% compared to 21%), but there were no other significant differences in views of those with places of work and / or study.

## Accessible work policies on sexual harassment

Around four-fifths (80%) of those with a place of work or study thought it had a clear, accessible policy on sexual harassment which detailed how to report an incident on sexual harassment. As shown in Figure 7.2, over a third (35%) knew such policy existed while 45% thought they did (but were uncertain). The fifth of those with a place of work or study who thought their organisation did not have a policy were more likely to think there was not one (13%) than know there was not (7%).

**Figure 7.2 Whether places of work or study have a clear, accessible policy on sexual harassment**



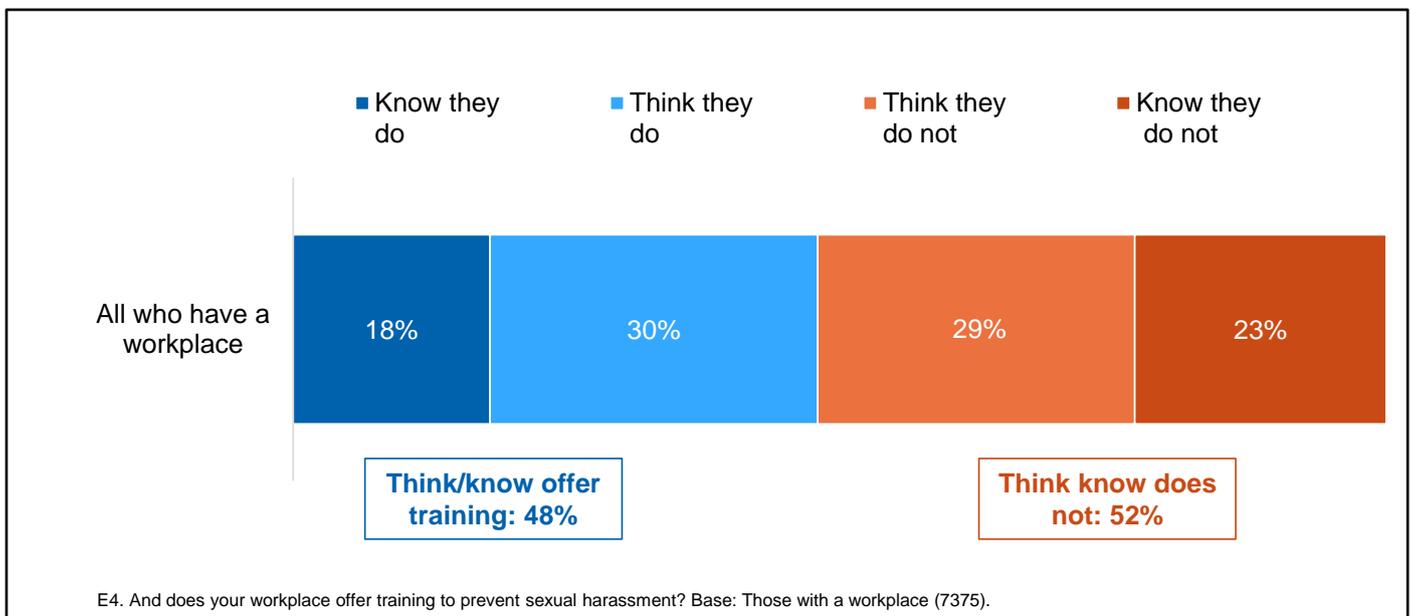
Those who have a workplace were more likely than those studying to know that their organisation had a clear and accessible sexual harassment policy (36% compared to 31%).

## Training provided by workplace to prevent sexual harassment

Training may be a useful component of a wider strategy to prevent workplace sexual harassment, for example by raising awareness of an employer’s policy, but there is limited evidence to suggest that by itself it works to prevent it. The fact an employer has training on sexual harassment is therefore not necessarily indicative that they are taking *effective* action to prevent sexual harassment but does at least indicate that they have given this issue some consideration.

People were evenly split between those who thought / knew that their workplace offered training to prevent sexual harassment (48%) and those who thought / knew it did not (52%). As shown in Figure 7.3, just under one in five (18%) knew that their employer offered training to prevent sexual harassment, a further 30% thought that they did.

**Figure 7.3 Whether workplaces offer training to prevent sexual harassment (among those with a workplace)**

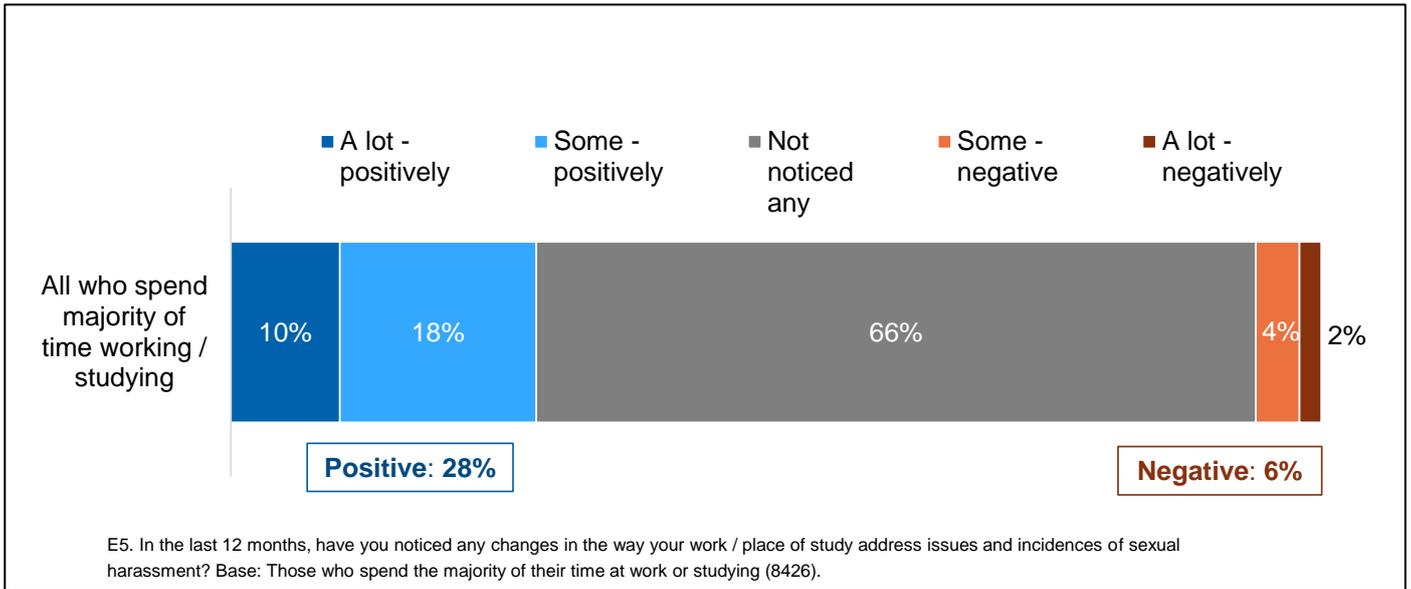


## Changes in way workplace addresses sexual harassment

Individuals who were in work or studying were asked whether they had noticed any changes in the way that their organisation had addressed sexual harassment in the last 12 months.

Two thirds (66%) of those who spent the majority of their time working or studying had not noticed any changes in how their how places of work or study addressed sexual harassment in the previous 12 months. It was more likely for positive changes to be reported (by 28%) than negative (6%), as shown Figure 7.4. It should though be borne in mind that whether a change is viewed positively or negatively is subjective – changes some may view as positive progress others may see negatively.

**Figure 7.4 Changes in respondents' perception of how places of work or study address sexual harassment in previous 12 months**



Those who had a workplace were more likely than those were studying to think that there had been no change to the way that their organisation addressed sexual harassment (66% compared to 60% of those who were mainly studying). Those who were mainly studying were more likely to have noticed positive changes from their organisation (34% compared to 28% of those mainly working).

# Chapter 8

Conclusion

---

## 8) Conclusion

This chapter summarises the key conclusions that can be drawn from this survey.

### Sexual harassment in general

**Sexual harassment is widespread. It is experienced by all demographic sub-groups (albeit to different degrees).** Almost three-quarters (72%) of the adult population had experienced sexual harassment at some point in their lifetime and two in five (43%) had experienced it in the last 12 months.

**Using a behaviour-based approach has resulted in a recording of much greater prevalence than studies which have relied on a respondent-based interpretation of sexual harassment.<sup>40</sup>**

**The majority of respondents reported that their experience of sexual harassment had impacted on their quality of life.** Of those who had experienced sexual harassment, 54% stated that their quality of life had been very or fairly affected by at least one of their experiences.

**Although it is most likely to affect women, men also experience quite high levels of sexual harassment.** Half of women (51%) had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months and 34% of men had done so. There are some differences in the types of sexual harassment experienced by gender.

**There is strong evidence of intersectionality** – where harassment based on sex or gender is also seen to be influenced by other protected characteristics (such as sex, sexual orientation, health or disability or age). This is evidenced by the fact that those who are younger, from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities), disabled or LGB were more likely to experience sexual harassment. It is also what victims often felt to be the case. Three-quarters of those who had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months stated that another protected characteristic was a factor in their experience.

**Some individuals encounter some form of sexual harassment on an extremely frequent basis** – even daily. One in five (18%) of those who experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months said that they experienced at least one behaviour on a daily basis. As well as being more likely to experience sexual harassment at all, minority groups (those who were disabled, from an ethnic minority excluding White minorities and LGB) were also more likely to experience it more frequently.

**A sizable minority of people were worried about sexual harassment in public places and almost half stated that they modified their behaviour to some extent to try to avoid it.** Around a quarter said that they were either very or fairly worried about sexual harassment in indoor or outdoor public places. The demographic groups more likely to experience sexual

---

<sup>40</sup> McDonald, P. (2012). Workplace sexual harassment 30 years on: A review of the literature. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 14(1), 1-17, p. 3.

---

harassment were more likely to say that they were worried and more likely to say that they adjusted their behaviour to avoid harassment.

**Sexual harassment is often perpetrated by someone known to the victim, not just strangers.** Of the individuals who experienced sexual harassment, three-quarters (76%) had experienced it by a stranger, but around two thirds (63%) experienced at least one behaviour from someone that they knew.

**It is relatively common for sexual harassment to be perpetrated by a group of individuals.** Of those who had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, 45% had experienced at least one behaviour from a group.

**Most commonly the perpetrators of sexual harassment were men, but this was not always the case.** Of those who had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, a quarter (23%) had experienced at least one behaviour from a woman perpetrator.

**Sexual harassment can often be a pattern of repeat behaviour.** A total of 16% of the population have experienced repeat sexual harassment from one individual or group of perpetrators. Of those that had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, a third (34%) experienced it repeatedly from the same person.

**As is widely recognised, a lot of sexual harassment goes unreported.** Only around half of those who experienced sexual harassment had reported it. For many individual sexual harassment behaviours, it was more common for victims not to report incidents than to report them.

**Witnessing sexual harassment was quite common but the reactions of bystanders were mixed.** Two in five (38%) people had witnessed sexual harassment – half of these had taken action and half had not. Only 16% had intervened in every scenario that they had witnessed. Most commonly the action taken was addressing the perpetrator directly.

**Reporting of sexual harassment among witnesses was at a similar level to victims** whereby it was more common not to report than to report. Only 32% of those who intervened had reported the sexual harassment that they had witnessed.

## **Sexual harassment in the workplace**

**Sexual harassment is also reasonably widespread within the workplace.** Of those in work, 29% had experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in the last 12 months. The most common behaviour experienced was sexual jokes but a wide range of behaviours were also experienced.

**Gender was not a particularly big differentiator in the likelihood to experience sexual harassment in the workplace.** Women were only slightly more likely to experience sexual harassment at work than men (30% had done so compared to 27% of men).

**In the workplace, men were more likely to be the perpetrators, of harassment against both women and men.**

---

**Age was much more likely to influence the experience of workplace sexual harassment.**

Among those aged under 35, around two in five had experienced workplace sexual harassment in the last 12 months compared to 30% of those aged 35-49 and 13% of those aged 50+. Individuals who were disabled or LGB were also much more likely to experience sexual harassment at work.

**Although it was most common for individuals to experience sexual harassment actually at their place of work, experiences also took place in other work-related environments** (e.g. while socialising with work colleagues or visiting clients).

**Levels of reporting sexual harassment were very low in the workplace making it likely that employers will underestimate the amount of harassment taking place.** Only 15% of those who had experienced sexual harassment had reported it either internally (to their employer) or externally although some had told colleagues (usually without the expectation that they would act).

**Procedures for handling sexual harassment are not seen to be conducive to reporting sexual harassment.** The main reason given for not reporting sexual harassment was that the process was too lengthy.

**Among those who had chosen to report sexual harassment at work, satisfaction with the process and with the outcome were relatively low.** A quarter were dissatisfied with the process and a third were dissatisfied with the outcome.

**It was quite common for victims to believe that there had been no consequences for the perpetrator** (this was the case for 43% of the workplace sexual harassment experiences where the victim had taken some form of action). It is encouraging that this figure was much lower for experiences that had been formally reported (20%).

**There was also evidence to suggest that those who report workplace sexual harassment are not properly protected.** Of those who reported their experience of sexual harassment, half said that their job changed in some way as a result (albeit that victims sometimes stated that the change was their choice).

**Use of Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) by employers seemed to be widespread.** Almost half of those who reported sexual harassment at work were asked to sign an NDA (and around two thirds of those who were asked signed one).

**Employers could do more to publicise their position on sexual harassment.** Almost a quarter of employees stated that they did not know whether their employer was tackling sexual harassment well. Only a third (35%) were sure that their employer had a clear accessible policy on sexual harassment at work (although a further 45% thought that they probably did).

# Appendix

Additional data

# Appendix A: Additional Data

This appendix includes additional data that provides additional analysis for certain subsections and demographics in the main report.

Results throughout this report are experimental and may differ significantly from the results of other studies or statistics. For further details, including details of the behaviour-based design of this research, please refer to the methodology chapter and the 'Interpreting sexual harassment data' section in particular.

## 1. Incidence

### Incidence of sexual harassment by gender

Table A1.1 shows the percentages of men and women who have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, crossed by other demographics.

*Table A1.1 Incidence of sexual harassment in the last 12 months by gender, then by ethnicity, sexual orientation, Transgender, disability status and age<sup>41</sup>*

	Total –	Men	Women
White	42%	33%	50%*
Ethnic minorities	49%	44%	54%*
Heterosexual	42%	34%	50%*
LGB	64%	52%	77%*
Transgender	80%	89%	71%
No disability	39%	31%	48%
Low impact disability	49%	39%	57%*
High impact disability	47%	39%	52%*
16-24	71%	56%	80%*
25-34	63%	55%	69%*
35-49	46%	42%	51%*
50+	25%	21%	30%
Total	<b>43%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>51%</b>

<sup>41</sup> Asterisk show significant differences between men and women. For example, white women were significantly more likely than white men to have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, as indicated by the asterisk on 50%.

---

## **Incidence by socio-economic classification (NS-SEC)**

This section will focus on incidence of sexual harassment by socio-economic status.<sup>42</sup>

*The socio-economic classification (NS-SEC) measure used classifies people based on their current work (full time, part time, zero-hour contracts and self-employment) into five different categories:*

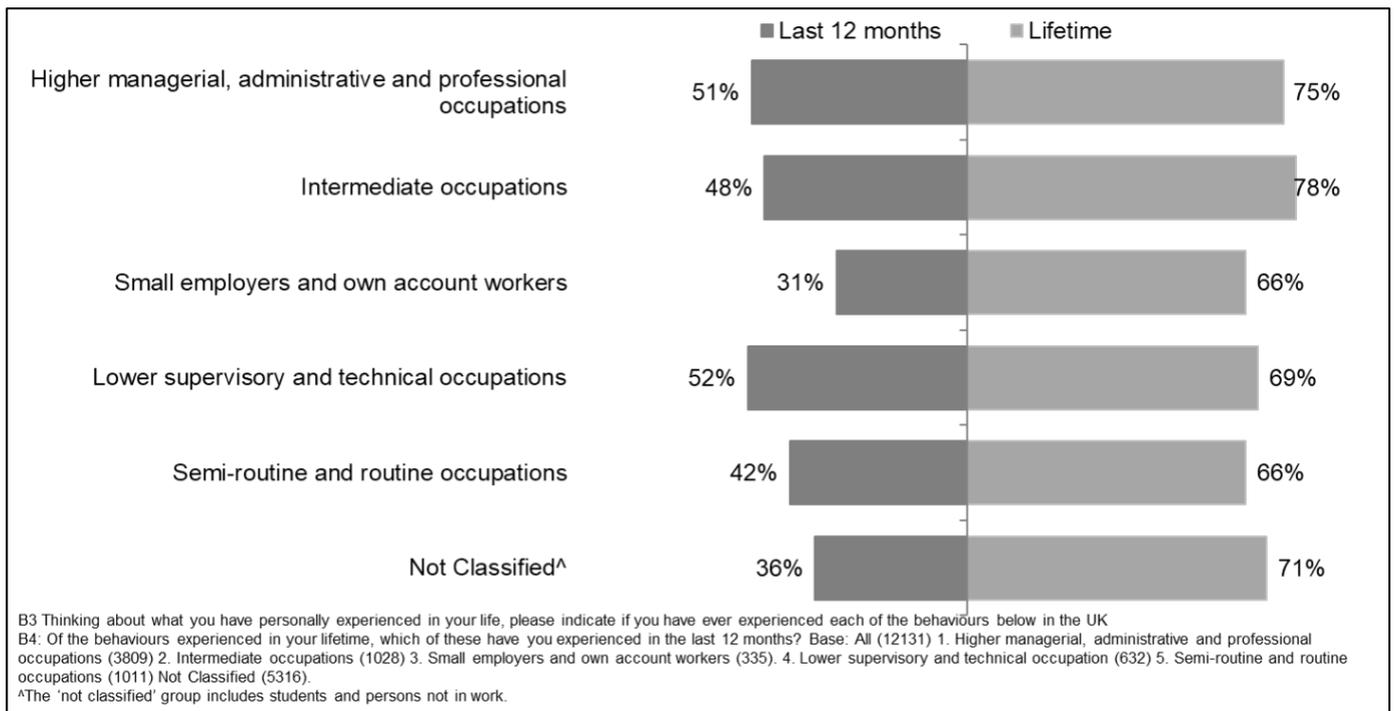
- *1: Higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations (highest SES group)*
- *2. Intermediate occupations*
- *3. Small employers and own account workers*
- *4. Lower supervisory and technical occupations*
- *5. Semi-routine and routine occupations (lowest NS-SEC group)*
- *Not classified: the NS-SEC classification system relies on current working status. Persons without a main place of work, such as students or retired people, cannot be classified and are therefore excluded from five main SES categories, instead they are captured in the not-classified group.*

Data shows there are significant differences in incidence of sexual harassment by NS-SEC level, shown in Figure A1.1 below.

---

<sup>42</sup> A limitation of the data on socio-economic status (NS-SEC) is that people may have changed roles between the time of experiencing the sexual harassment and the time of completing the survey, which impacts the interpretation of these results.

**Figure A1.1 Experiences of sexual harassment in the last 12 months and in a lifetime by SES group<sup>43</sup>**



Persons in the second to lowest NS-SEC group (lower supervisory and technical occupation workers) and the highest NS-SEC group (people in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations) were the most likely to have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months (both over 50%), while people in the middle NS-SEC group (small employers and own account workers) were the least likely to have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months (31%). Experience of sexual harassment in the workplace – including more information on victim/perpetrator roles, business size and sector – are analysed in Chapter 7 of this report.

There are significant differences by NS-SEC across the different sexual harassment behaviours. Although about half of people in the second to lowest and the highest SES groups experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, it appears that people in the second to lowest NS-SEC group (lower supervisory and technical occupation workers) are significantly more likely to have experienced a greater number of specific sexual harassment behaviours compared to the four other NS-SEC groups, as shown in Table A1.2.

**Table A1.2 Sexual harassment experienced in the last 12 months by NS-SEC groups**

	Higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations <sup>a</sup>	Intermediate occupations <sup>b</sup>	Small employers and own account workers <sup>c</sup>	Lower supervisory and technical occupations <sup>d</sup>	Semi-routine and routine occupations <sup>e</sup>
Offensive materials	17% <sup>bce</sup>	10%	7%	24% <sup>abce</sup>	10% <sup>c</sup>

<sup>43</sup> People may have changed roles between the time of experiencing the sexual harassment and the time of completing the survey, which impacts the interpretation of these results.

	Higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations <sup>a</sup>	Intermediate occupations <sup>b</sup>	Small employers and own account workers <sup>c</sup>	Lower supervisory and technical occupations <sup>d</sup>	Semi-routine and routine occupations <sup>e</sup>
Sexual jokes	27% <sup>ce</sup>	25% <sup>c</sup>	14%	27% <sup>ce</sup>	22% <sup>c</sup>
Sexual comments	18% <sup>ce</sup>	17% <sup>c</sup>	9%	18% <sup>c</sup>	15% <sup>c</sup>
Provocative sounds	15% <sup>ce</sup>	16% <sup>ce</sup>	8%	13% <sup>c</sup>	12% <sup>c</sup>
Unwelcome staring or looks	25% <sup>c</sup>	24% <sup>c</sup>	14%	24% <sup>c</sup>	22% <sup>c</sup>
Unwanted messages	15% <sup>ce</sup>	14% <sup>c</sup>	9%	16% <sup>ce</sup>	12%
Sexually pressured exchange	7% <sup>bce</sup>	3%	1%	11% <sup>abce</sup>	4% <sup>c</sup>
Unwanted relationship attempts	10% <sup>ce</sup>	9% <sup>ce</sup>	4%	13% <sup>acce</sup>	6%
Pictures or videos shared without permission	6% <sup>bce</sup>	3%	1%	8% <sup>abce</sup>	3%
Flashing	6% <sup>bce</sup>	3%	2%	9% <sup>abce</sup>	3%
Being followed or threatened	7% <sup>ce</sup>	6% <sup>e</sup>	3%	8% <sup>bce</sup>	3%
Personal space invasion	13% <sup>bc</sup>	10% <sup>c</sup>	5%	15% <sup>bce</sup>	12% <sup>c</sup>
Unwanted touching	14% <sup>bce</sup>	10% <sup>c</sup>	4%	13% <sup>bc</sup>	10% <sup>c</sup>
Sexual assault (touching etc)	7% <sup>ce</sup>	6% <sup>c</sup>	3%	9% <sup>bce</sup>	6%
Actual or attempted rape	4% <sup>bce</sup>	2%	1%	8% <sup>abce</sup>	1%
Base: All (12131)	3809	1028	335	632	1011

B4: Of the behaviours experienced in your lifetime, which of these have you experienced in the last 12 months? Not Classified (5316). The superscripted letters on percentages signify a significant difference between subgroups. The cells which are coloured also signify this.

Lower supervisory and technical occupations were more likely than every other NS-SEC group to have experienced displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials, feeling pressured by someone to date them/do a sexual act for them in exchange for something, persistent and / or unwanted attempts to establish a romantic/sexual relationship, someone taking and / or sharing of sexual pictures or videos of them without permission, flashing and actual or attempted rape.

## 2. Experience

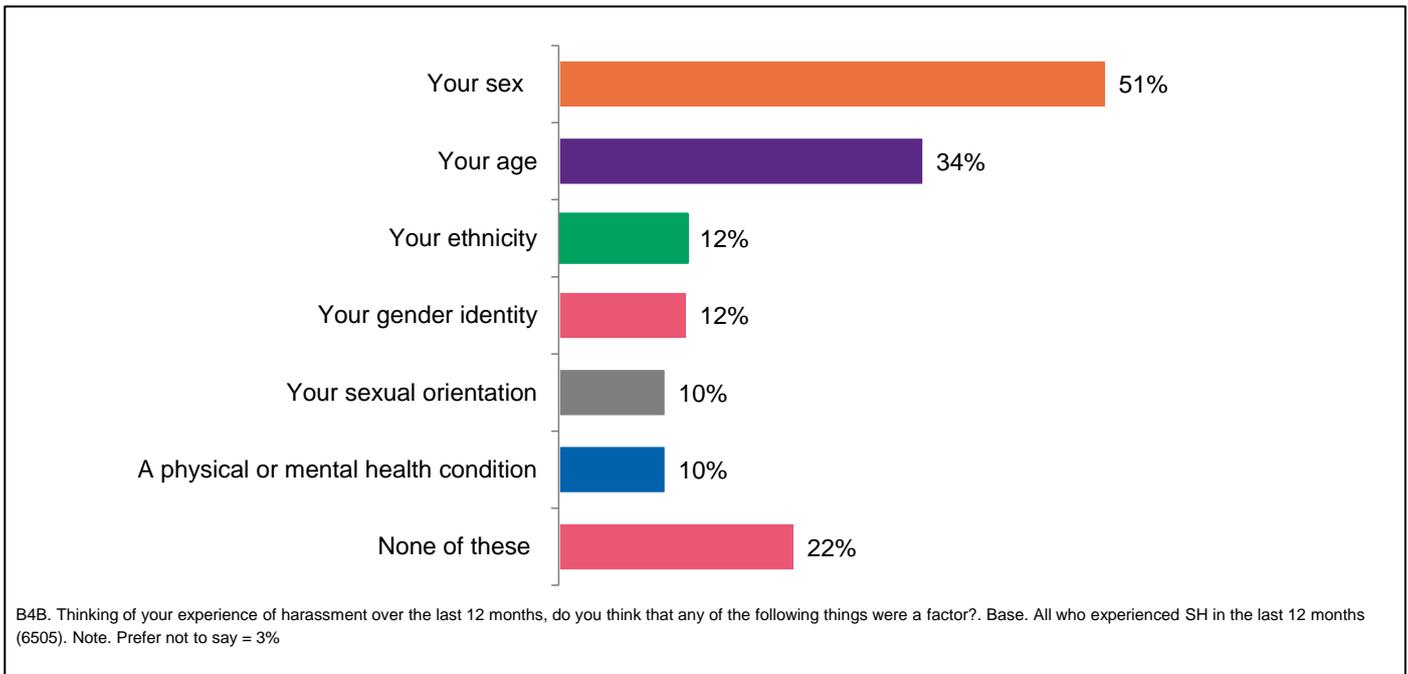
### Victims' perceptions of factors influencing sexual harassment

Three-quarters (75%) of people that had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months thought that at least one of their personal, protected characteristics was a factor in their experience.

Of those who had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, sex was the most common characteristic believed to have been a factor in their experience, with around half (51%)

reporting this. Age was the second most common characteristic with more than one-third (34%) reporting this. About one in ten thought that their ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation or a physical or mental health condition might have been a factor. Close to one quarter (22%) did not think that any of these characteristics were factors in their recent experience of sexual harassment.

**Figure A2.1 Perception of factors impacting sexual harassment experience in the last 12 months**



Across each of the demographic groups, minority groups and those more prone to experiencing sexual harassment were more likely to think these characteristics were a factor in their experience of sexual harassment in the last 12 months:

- Women were twice as likely as men to consider their sex a factor in their recent experience of sexual harassment (64% vs. 33%). Younger people were also more likely to think their sex could have been a factor (16-24 years olds: 61% vs. 51% average across all ages).
- People in the youngest age category were significantly more likely than older people to consider age to be a factor in their recent experience of sexual harassment. More than half (57%) of people aged 16 to 24 thought age was a factor, which is significantly higher than all other age groups. The concern that age was a factor significantly decreased with each age group; 43% of those aged 25 to 34, 23% of those aged 35 to 49 and 19% of those aged 50 or more that reported the same.
- Close to two-fifths (38%) of people from an ethnic minority thought their ethnicity was a factor in the sexual harassment in the last 12 months, which was significantly more than the 8% of White people that reported the same.

- More than two in five LGB people (46%) thought their sexual orientation was linked to the harassment they experienced in the last 12 months, while only 8% of heterosexual people reported this
- Close to one-third of people with a disability (31%) reported that their physical or mental health condition was a factor. People without a disability were not asked whether their physical or mental health condition was a factor.

The types of people most likely to say none of the listed characteristics were factors in their experiences, were also the people least likely to have had an experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months (but had experienced it at some point in their lifetime). This was namely men older people (aged 50 or more), White people, people not part of the LGB community and people without a disability.

### Public transport and sexual harassment

As shown in Table A2.1 below, type of public transport did not significantly influence the type of behaviours experienced.

**Table A2.1 Top three public transport where sexual harassment was reported by sexual harassment behaviour**

Sexual harassment behaviour experienced on public transport	% experienced on public transport	Most commonly reported transport	%	2 <sup>nd</sup> most commonly reported transport	%	3 <sup>rd</sup> most commonly reported transport	%
Unwanted staring or looks	45%	Bus	63%	Train or tram	52%	Underground	38%
Personal invasion of space	39%	Bus	52%	Underground	45%	Train or tram	44%
Offensive materials	33%	Bus	60%	Train or tram	45%	Underground	21%
Sexual comments	23%	Bus	67%	Train or tram	47%	Underground	33%
Provocative sounds	23%	Bus	63%	Train or tram	51%	Underground	34%
Being followed or threatened	21%	Bus	42%	Underground	39%	Train or tram	35%
Sexual jokes	22%	Bus	66%	Train or tram	53%	Underground	35%
Unwanted non-sexual touching	21%	Bus	56%	Train or tram	45%	Underground	36%

B12D: On which type(s) of public transportation have you experienced each? All who experienced sexual harassment on transport (excluding high degree victims) (1505). Behaviours with base sizes below n=50 have been excluded from analysis.

Where this differed was for personal invasion of space and being followed or threatened, which were experienced more commonly on the underground than the train or tram.

---

## Impact of sexual harassment on quality of life

### *Gender*

Whilst women have reported their experience of harassment less often, they were significantly more likely to respond that it had affected their quality of life. Overall, 57% of women responded that their quality of life was affected by their experience of sexual harassment in the last 12 months compared to 48% of men. Although women were significantly more likely to have experienced most behaviours in the last 12 months, for some behaviours men were more likely or just as likely to say that it affected their quality of life. For example:

- Significantly more men than women reported that their experience of unwelcome cat calls, wolf whistling or other provocative sounds in the last 12 months had affected them (43% of men and 36% of women).
- Similar proportions were affected by unwelcome comments of a sexual nature about your body and/or clothes in the last 12 months (54% of men vs. 53% women) and feeling pressured by someone to date them or do a sexual act for them in exchange for something in the last 12 months (63% men vs. 70% women).

### *Age*

Just less than two thirds of people aged between 16 and 24 (61%) and 25 to 34 (60%) reported their quality of life being affected by their experience of sexual harassment in the last 12 months. This was significantly more than people aged 35 or older; with 57% of 35-49-year olds and 41% of those aged 50 or more reporting that their experience had affected them. Of those who had experienced at least one form of sexual harassment in the last 12 months, the older age group was significantly more likely than any other age group to say that their experience did not affect their quality of life 'very much' or 'at all' (59%).

### *Ethnicity*

People from an ethnic minority were significantly more likely to say their quality of life was affected by their experience of sexual harassment compared to White people: 61% said they were very or fairly affected by their experience of at least one sexual harassment behaviour compared to 53% of White people. When looking at each behaviour this overall, significant difference appears to have come from the higher proportion of people from an ethnic minority than White people whose quality of life was affected by the following four behaviours, which they were also significantly more likely to have experienced in the last 12 months:

- Experiencing displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials which made them feel uncomfortable, including it being viewed near the person the last 12 months (58% vs 45%).
- Experiencing unwelcome cat calls, wolf whistling or other provocative sounds in the last 12 months (46% vs. 36%).
- Experiencing someone intentionally, brushing up against them, or invading their personal space in an unwelcome, sexual way in the last 12 months (65% vs 57%).
- Experiencing unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual nature about themselves or others that made them feel uncomfortable in the last 12 months (51% People from an ethnic minority vs. 40% White people).

---

### *Sexual orientation<sup>44</sup>*

People who identify as LGB were significantly more likely than heterosexual people to both experience at least one form of sexual harassment in the last 12 months and to say that it affected their quality of life (64% vs 53%). LGB people were significantly more likely than others to have experienced each behaviour and to say it affected their quality of life for around half of the behaviours. For all behaviours this was more likely, however only half of the behaviours were statistically significant, due to the smaller base size of LGB people. Examples of significant differences by behaviour include LGB people being more likely than heterosexual people to say their quality of life has been affected by their experience of unwanted touching (60% vs 53%) and unwelcome staring and looks (55% vs. 44%).

### *Disability*

As with the LGB group, people with a highly limiting disability were significantly more likely than those without a disability to have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months and to say that it affected their quality of life (65% vs. 49%). This pattern persisted at the overall 'any behaviour level' and for each sexual harassment behaviour asked about except for the impact of flashing; where there was no statistically significant difference in the impact that flashing had on a person with a highly limiting disability compared to those without a disability (both 55%).

## **3. Reporting**

### **Reporting sexual harassment by gender**

While women were significantly more likely to experience sexual harassment than men (at an overall level although there were differences in the type of behaviours experienced), men were significantly more likely to report the sexual harassment they experienced: only 28% of women reported at least one type of sexual harassment experienced in the last 12 months compared to 38% of men. However, this differed significantly by behaviour.

### **Confidence in reporting by demographic group**

Despite being less likely than their counterparts to have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, men, White people, older people (50 or older) and non-LGBT people were significantly more likely to 'agree' that they knew how to report sexual harassment in each of the four locations, compared with women, ethnic minorities, younger people (aged 16 to 24) and LGBT people respectively. However, those with highly limiting disabilities were more likely to agree that they knew how to report sexual harassment in all four locations than those without disabilities.

### *Confidence in reporting by gender*

Compared with women, men were significantly more likely to 'agree' that they knew how to report an incident of sexual harassment in all locations: at their place of work or study (78% men vs. 76% women); at an indoor place (65% men vs. 62% women); when using public transport (64% men vs. 57% women); and when in an outdoor public space like a park or on the street (60% men vs 54% women).

### *Confidence in reporting by age*

The same pattern emerges as older people (aged 50 or more) were more likely than young people (aged 16 to 24) to say that they would know how to report sexual harassment at their place of work

---

<sup>44</sup> Data was collected for LGB and T individuals in the survey design; due to the smaller base size and unique experience of transgender individuals compared to LGB individuals, the decision was taken by GEO to primarily report LGB vs. heterosexual.

or study; at an indoor place; when using public transport and when in an outdoor public space like a park or on the street. However, the age groups 25-34 and 35-49 were also significantly more likely to know how to report a sexual harassment incident than 16-24-year olds in all locations apart from an indoor public space. In indoor public spaces, those aged 50+ were significantly more likely to know how to report sexual harassment than all younger age groups.

### Proactive behaviour changes adopted in different locations

As shown in Table A3.1, those who had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months were significantly more likely to change their behaviour than those that hadn't across all areas. Similarly, those with a place of work or study who had experienced sexual harassment at work were significantly more likely to change their behaviour at a place of work or study (75%), than those that hadn't experienced this (35%).

**Table A3.1 Proactive change to avoid sexual harassment by experience in the last 12 months**

Proactively change behaviour to avoid sexual harassment	Experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months <sup>a</sup>	Not experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months <sup>b</sup>
Place of work or study	63% <sup>b</sup>	31%
Outdoor public space	75% <sup>b</sup>	36%
Indoor public space	72% <sup>b</sup>	33%
Public transport	72% <sup>b</sup>	34%
<b>Base: All 11586</b>	5960	5626
<i>Base for place of work or study: 7940</i>	4607	3333

B2: To what extent do you change or adapt your behaviour to avoid or prevent sexual harassment in each of the following places in the UK?  
 Base for 'at your place of work or study': All with who spend the majority of time at place of work or study (both excluding high degree victims) \_  
 The superscripted letters on percentages signify a significant difference between subgroups. The cells which are coloured also signify this.

**Table A3.2 Knowledge in reporting by age**

	16-24 <sup>a</sup>	25-34 <sup>b</sup>	35-49 <sup>c</sup>	50+ <sup>d</sup>	Overall
Place of work or study	70%	76% <sup>a</sup>	76% <sup>a</sup>	80% <sup>abc</sup>	76%
Outdoor public space	47%	54% <sup>a</sup>	55% <sup>a</sup>	61% <sup>abc</sup>	57%
Indoor public space	58%	59%	60%	68% <sup>abc</sup>	63%
Public transport	47%	54% <sup>a</sup>	58% <sup>ab</sup>	66% <sup>abc</sup>	60%
Base: All	2879	2359	2963	3385	11586
Base for place of work or study:	2452	1893	2203	1392	7940

E1: Overall, to what extent do you agree with the statement below with reference to each location?

Base for 'at your place of work or study': All with who spend the majority of time at place of work or study (both excluding high degree victims)  
The superscripted letters on percentages signify a significant difference between subgroups. The cells which are coloured also signify this.

#### *Confidence in reporting by ethnicity*

Similarly, White people were significantly more likely than people from an ethnic minority to 'agree' that they knew how to report an incident of sexual harassment at their place of work or study (77% White people vs. 71% people from an ethnic minority); at an indoor place (64% White people vs. 59% people from an ethnic minority); when using public transport (60% White people vs. 54% people from an ethnic minority); and when in an outdoor public space like a park or on the street (57% White people vs. 51% people from an ethnic minority).

#### *Confidence in reporting by sexual orientation*

Heterosexual people were significantly more likely than LGB people to 'agree' that they knew how to report an incident of sexual harassment; at an indoor place (64% Heterosexual people vs. 60% LGB people); when using public transport (60% Heterosexual people vs. 53% LGB people); and when in an outdoor public space like a park or on the street (57% Heterosexual people vs. 53% LGB people). This finding was not significant in place of study or work.

#### *Confidence in reporting by disability*

Those with highly limiting disabilities were significantly more likely than those without disabilities to 'agree' that they knew how to report an incident of sexual harassment at an indoor place (69% vs. 62% with no disability); when using public transport (64% vs. 59% with no disability); and when in an outdoor public space like a park or on the street (63% vs. 56% with no disability). This finding was not significant in place of study or work.

**Table A3.3 Experiencing and reporting sexual harassment in the last 12 months by gender**

	Experience*		Reporting	
	% women experienced in the last 12 months <sup>a</sup>	% men experienced in the last 12 months <sup>b</sup>	% women who reported experience of harassment in the last 12 months <sup>c</sup>	% men who reported experience of harassment in the last 12 months <sup>d</sup>
Offensive materials	11%	20% <sup>a</sup>	36%	39%
Sexual jokes	30% <sup>b</sup>	26%	21%	28% <sup>c</sup>
Sexual comments	22% <sup>b</sup>	13%	20%	34% <sup>c</sup>
Provocative sounds	22% <sup>b</sup>	6%	13%	30% <sup>c</sup>
Unwelcome staring or looks	35% <sup>b</sup>	18%	16%	26% <sup>c</sup>
Unwanted messages	18% <sup>b</sup>	16%	23%	24%
Sexually pressured exchange	5%	5%	32%	47% <sup>c</sup>
Unwanted relationship attempts	10% <sup>b</sup>	8%	27%	30%
Pictures or videos shared without permission	3%	5% <sup>a</sup>	48%	49%
Flashing	4%	6% <sup>a</sup>	41%	37%
Being followed or threatened	6% <sup>b</sup>	5%	32%	45% <sup>c</sup>
Personal invasion of space	14% <sup>b</sup>	10%	18%	35% <sup>c</sup>
Unwanted non-sexual touching	15% <sup>b</sup>	11%	19%	29% <sup>c</sup>
Sexual assault (touching etc)	6%	5%	25%	32% <sup>c</sup>
Actual or attempted rape	2%	2%	53%	53%
<b>Base: Experienced SH in the last 12 months (excluding high degree victims)</b>	<b>5533</b>	<b>3215</b>	<b>3845</b>	<b>1974</b>

B4: Of those behaviours you have experienced, which of these have you experienced in the last 12 months

B13: For each behaviour you have experienced, have you ever formally reported it?

The superscripted letters on percentages signify a significant difference between men and women’s experience and incidence of reporting. The cells which are coloured also signify this.

\*Note that this data is excluding high degree victims so may differ from data reported in other chapters.

Men were significantly more likely than women to report most behaviours, usually by more than a 10 percentage point difference. In most instances in which women were more likely to have experienced a behaviour, men were more likely to have reported it; the exception to this was receiving unwanted messages and unwanted relationship attempts. For example, 22% of women experienced unwelcome cat calls, wolf whistling or other provocative sounds in the last 12 months, compared to 6% of men. However, a third of men reported this behaviour (30%) compared to less than a sixth (13%) of women. The exceptions were displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials, unwanted messages, unwanted relationship attempts, pictures or videos shared without permission, flashing, and rape and/or attempted rape, where there was no significant difference in likelihood to report by gender.

### Reporting sexual harassment by age

Those aged 25-34 were most likely to report sexual harassment compared to all the other age groups: 38% of those aged 25-34 had reported at least one form of sexual harassment experienced in the last 12 months compared to 34% of those aged 16-24, 36% aged 35-49 and 24% aged 50+. However, as shown in Table A3.4, this varies significantly by behaviour.

**Table A3.4 Reporting of sexual harassment by age and behaviour**

	Age			
	16-24 <sup>a</sup>	25-34 <sup>b</sup>	35-49 <sup>c</sup>	50+ <sup>d</sup>
Offensive materials	41% <sup>d</sup>	49% <sup>acd</sup>	42% <sup>d</sup>	24%
Sexual jokes	20%	24%	30% <sup>abd</sup>	23%
Sexual comments	22%	24%	25%	30% <sup>a</sup>
Provocative sounds	14%	18% <sup>a</sup>	15%	22% <sup>a</sup>
Staring and looks	17%	18%	21% <sup>a</sup>	20%
Unwanted messages	24% <sup>d</sup>	27% <sup>d</sup>	30% <sup>ad</sup>	14%
Sexually pressured exchange	30%	45% <sup>ad</sup>	37%	24%
Unwanted relationship attempts	28%	28%	31%	26%
Pictures or videos	44%	54%	50%	41%
Flashing	49% <sup>b</sup>	36%	43%	36%
Being followed	36%	37%	44%	35%
Personal space invasion	21%	29% <sup>a</sup>	23%	23%
Unwanted non-sexual touching	23%	26% <sup>d</sup>	23%	17%
Sexual touching	24%	31%	24%	32%
Attempted and actual rape	47%	48%	57%	56%
<i>Base: All who have experienced SH in the last 12 months (excluding high degree victims)</i>	2128	1518	1379	935

B13: For each of the behaviours you have experienced, have you ever formally reported it?

The superscripted letters on percentages signify a significant difference between age groups' experience and incidence of reporting. The cells which are coloured also signify this.

Those aged 25-34 were most likely to report the sexual harassment they experienced on most behaviours, with the exception of: unwanted relationship attempts, being followed in a sexually threatening manner, pictures or videos shared without permission, and attempted or actual rape, where all ages showed an equal likelihood to report; flashing, for which those aged 16-24 were significantly more likely to report; and, for which those aged 35-49 were significantly more likely to report this than the rest. However, like those aged 25-34, those aged 35-49 were also more likely than the youngest and oldest age groups to report a series of 'milder' behaviours, such as sexual jokes, unwanted staring and looks and unwanted messages.

Those older (aged 50+) were least likely to report overall, especially for offensive materials and unwanted messages, but most likely to report sexual comments and provocative sounds.

### Reporting sexual harassment by ethnicity

Individuals from ethnic minorities (excluding White minorities) were significantly more likely to report sexual harassment than White people (ethnic minorities excluding White minorities: 41% vs White: 31%), with significant differences across behaviours. This corresponds with the finding that ethnic minorities were more likely to experience sexual harassment across nearly all behaviours (apart from sexual jokes and unwanted messages for which there are no significant differences). As shown in Table A3.5, ethnic minorities (excluding White minorities) were significantly more likely to report for 8 of the 15 sexual harassment behaviours, whereas White people were never more likely to report a behaviour.

**Table A3.5 Reporting sexual harassment by ethnicity and behaviour**

	Ethnicity	
	White <sup>a</sup>	Ethnic minority <sup>b</sup>
Offensive materials	37%	51% <sup>a</sup>
Sexual jokes	23%	29% <sup>a</sup>
Sexual comments	24%	30% <sup>a</sup>
Provocative sounds	15%	23% <sup>a</sup>
Unwelcome staring or looks	18%	26% <sup>a</sup>
Unwanted messages	22%	30% <sup>a</sup>
Sexually pressured exchange	35%	41%
Unwanted relationship attempts	27%	36% <sup>a</sup>
Pictures or videos shared without permission	48%	51%
Flashing	40%	46%
Being followed or threatened	37%	41%
Personal invasion of space	23%	33% <sup>a</sup>
Unwanted non-sexual touching	22%	26%
Sexual assault (touching etc)	26%	33%
Actual or attempted rape	53%	47%
<b>Base: Experienced SH in the last 12 months (excluding high degree victims)</b>	<b>4440</b>	<b>1520</b>

B13: For each of the behaviours you have experienced, have you ever formally reported it?

The superscripted letters on percentages signify a significant difference between ethnic groups' experience and incidence of reporting. The cells which are coloured also signify this.

The only behaviours with no significant difference in reporting were: sexually pressured exchange, sharing pictures or videos without permission, flashing, being followed in a sexually threatening manner, unwanted touching, sexual assault and rape or attempted rape.

### Reporting sexual harassment by LGBT

In contrast, there were no significant differences between LGBT individuals reporting their experience of sexual harassment than heterosexual individuals (LGB: 35% v heterosexual: 32%) although they were less likely to report sexual jokes (LGB: 20% v heterosexual: 25%) and sexual comments (LGB: 19% v heterosexual: 24%) however, there were no other significant differences by behaviour.

### Reporting sexual harassment by disability

People with a highly limiting disability were significantly more likely to report their experience of sexual harassment compared to people without a disability (highly limiting disability 40% v 28% no disability). As shown in Table A3.6, those with a highly limiting disability are significantly more likely to report all but three behaviours (sexually pressured exchange, pictures or videos shared without permission and flashing).

**Table A3.6 Reporting sexual harassment by disability and behaviour**

	Disability	
	Highly limiting disability <sup>a</sup>	No disability <sup>b</sup>
Offensive materials	51% <sup>b</sup>	30%
Sexual jokes	29% <sup>b</sup>	21%
Sexual comments	30% <sup>b</sup>	23%
Provocative sounds	26% <sup>b</sup>	15%
Unwelcome staring or looks	23% <sup>b</sup>	17%
Unwanted messages	31% <sup>b</sup>	20%
Sexually pressured exchange	39%	38%
Unwanted relationship attempts	35% <sup>b</sup>	26%
Pictures or videos shared without permission	57%	48%
Flashing	43%	40%
Being followed or threatened	43% <sup>b</sup>	34%
Personal invasion of space	26% <sup>b</sup>	21%
Unwanted non-sexual touching	25% <sup>b</sup>	19%
Sexual assault (touching etc)	41% <sup>b</sup>	24%
Actual or attempted rape	61% <sup>b</sup>	53%
<b>Base: Experienced SH in the last 12 months (excluding high degree victims)</b>	<b>1481</b>	<b>3106</b>

B13: For each of the behaviours you have experienced, have you ever formally reported it?

The superscripted letters on percentages signify a significant difference between disability and no disability experience and incidence of reporting. The cells which are coloured also signify this.

Likelihood to report was between 4 and 21 percentage points higher across all significantly different behaviours.

In most cases, those with a somewhat limiting disability were also significantly less likely to report behaviours than those with a highly limiting disability – therefore, most like those with no disability in their reporting behaviours. There were four exceptions to this, where this group were also significantly more likely to report than those with no disability: offensive materials (47%), unwelcome jokes (26%), invasion of personal space (27%) and unwanted touching (27%).

### Reporting sexual harassment by NS-SEC

Those in the lower supervisory NS-SEC group were most likely to report the harassment experience in the last 12 months (53%); however, both they and those in higher managerial roles (39%) were significantly more likely than the other groups to report harassment experienced

---

(semi-routine and routine occupations 30%, intermediate occupations 27%, small employers and own account workers 24%). This pattern largely held true across most sexual harassment behaviours, with the exception of: flashing, for which the higher managerial group was significantly more likely to have experienced these behaviour than all other groups (51% vs 41% average); and unwanted relationship attempts, sexual assault and rape or attempted rape, where there was no significant difference between the socioeconomic groups.

## 4. Sexual harassment in the workplace

### Incidence of sexual harassment in the workplace

#### *Gender*

Though only a slight difference, women were significantly more likely to have experienced sexual harassment in their workplace in the last year than their male counterparts (30% women vs. 27% men of those employed). As noted elsewhere in this report, although the difference in overall experience was relatively slight, there were differences in the types of behaviours experienced by gender.

#### *Age*

Age was more of a differentiator than gender, whereby younger people in employment were more likely than older people to have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in the last 12 months: 42% of those aged 16-24 in employment compared to 13% of those aged 50+.

Both younger women and younger men who were in employment were around three times as likely as their older counterparts to have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace: 44% of women in employment aged 16 to 24 experienced harassment, compared to 13% of women aged 50 or older, while 37% of males in employment aged 16-24 experienced harassment compared to 13% of men aged 50+.

#### *Ethnicity*

People from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) in employment were also slightly, but significantly more likely to have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace than White people.

#### *Sexual orientation<sup>45</sup>*

Among those in employment those who identified as LGB were markedly more likely to have been victims of sexual harassment in the workplace in the previous 12 months (43% compared to 28% among heterosexuals)

#### *Disability*

People with a highly limiting disability were also more likely to have been subject to sexual harassment in the workplace (44% vs 25% no disability).

#### *Socio-Economic Group (NS-SEC)*

As with general experience of sexual harassment, there was no pattern of sexual harassment being more or less likely with higher or lower socio-economic occupational groups, but there were notable differences between categories. Those in lower supervisory (36%) and the higher managerial (33%) socio-economic group were particularly likely to have experienced sexual

---

<sup>45</sup> Data was collected for LGB and T individuals in the survey design; due to the smaller base size and unique experience of transgender individuals compared to LGB individuals, the decision was taken by GEO to primarily report LGB vs. heterosexual.

harassment in the workplace in the previous 12 months (compared to 15% among small employers and account owners, 25% semi-routine and routine occupations, and 29% intermediate occupations).

**Incidence of sexual harassment by gender, in the workplace**

Table A4.1 shows the percentages of men and women who have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in the last 12 months, crossed by other demographics.

*Table A4.1 Men and women’s incidence of sexual harassment in the last 12 months in the workplace, by ethnicity, LGB, T, disability status and age<sup>46</sup>*

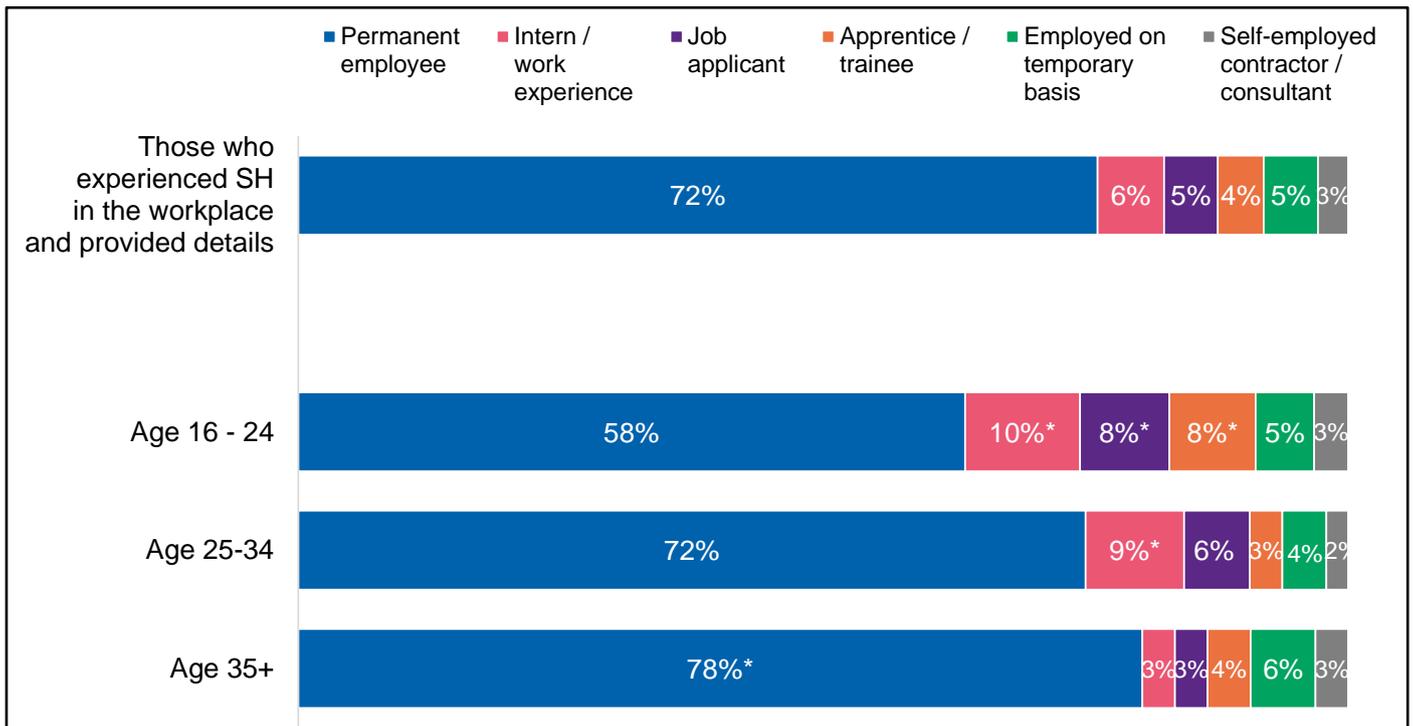
	Total	Men	Women
White	28%	26%	30%*
Ethnic minorities	32%	33%	32%
Heterosexual	28%	27%	29%
LGB	43%	38%	48%
Transgender	71%	72%	71%
No disability	25%	23%	27%*
Low impact disability	34%	32%	36%
High impact disability	44%	48%*	39%
Ages groups			
16-24	42%	37%	44%*
25-34	44%	44%	44%
35-49	30%	32%*	28%
50+	13%	13%	13%

**Role of the victim within the organisation**

As shown in Figure A4.1, smaller proportions were in intern or work experience roles (6%), or apprentice / trainee roles (4%). One in twenty (5%) experienced the harassment while applying for a job with the organisation, while equally small proportions were employed on a temporary basis (6%) or self-employed contractors / consultants (4%).

<sup>46</sup> Asterix show significant differences between men and women. For example, white women were significantly more likely than white men to have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months in the workplace, as indicated by the asterisk on 30%.

**Figure A4.1 Role of victim when experienced sexual harassment in the workplace overall and by age**



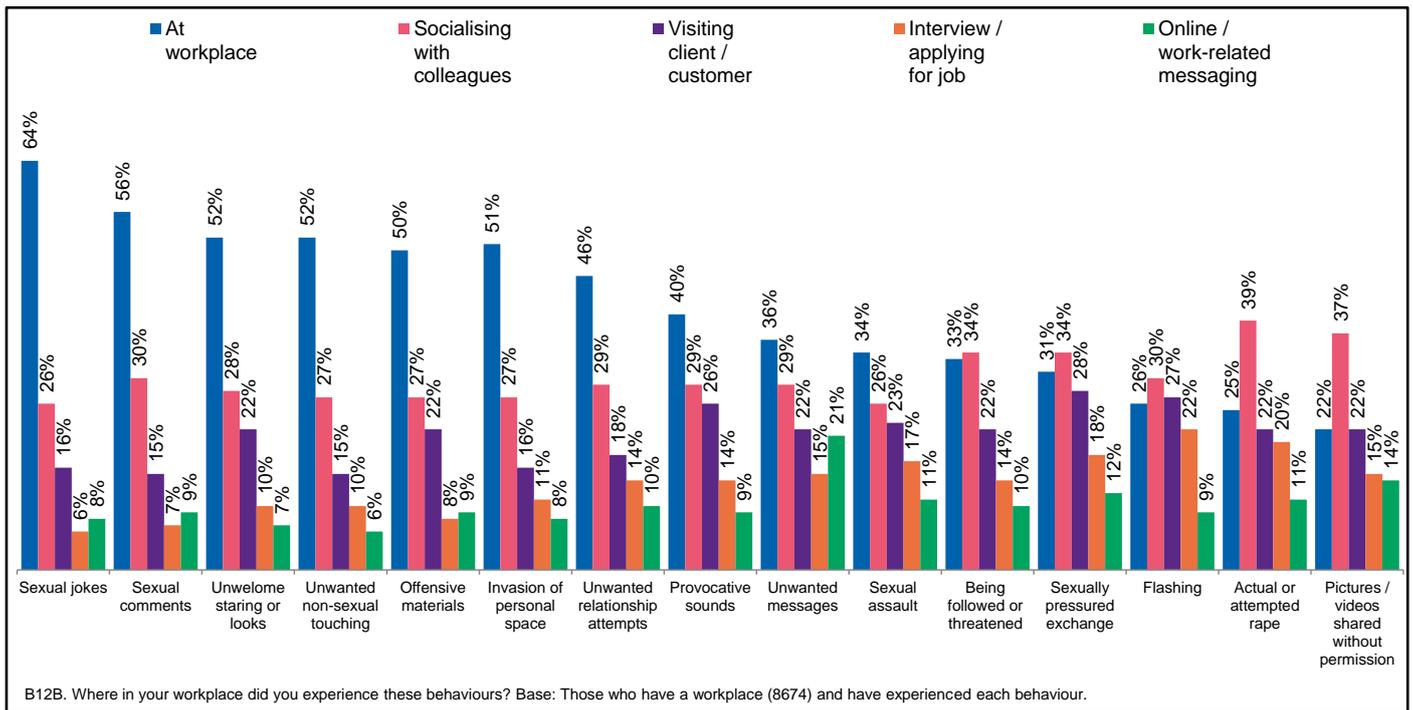
D9. At the company/organisation where this took place, which of the following roles were you in? (if at previous company) / E9. At your company / organisation, which of the following roles were you in? (if at current company). Base: those who experienced SH in the workplace and provided details (2324) \* Indicates a statistically significant higher proportion in the sub-group than overall.

Victim roles are often reflective of age and are overall proportionally in line with overall business composition, e.g. the proportion of those who experienced harassment and were in permanent roles, seems to roughly reflect the proportion of workers in these roles (i.e. 72% in permanent roles vs. 75% of those with a workplace who were full or part-time employees). However, there were a few key exceptions: a significantly higher proportion of interns experienced harassment than they represent in the workplace (6% vs. 1%), as do those aged 16-24 compared to 35+ (10% vs. 3%), likely to reflect the demographic composition of interns (they tend to be younger). In contrast, the proportion that experienced harassment while self-employed is significantly lower than the proportion among those with a workplace (3% vs. 10%).

**Workplace context for sexual harassment by behaviours**

Most of the listed sexual harassment behaviours experienced in a work-related environment were likely to have occurred at the actual workplace; however, some were more likely to have happened when socialising with colleagues outside the workplace, as shown in Figure A4.2. These figures show where each behaviour was more likely to occur, rather than overall which places were most common.

**Figure A4.2 Where in workplace specific forms of sexual harassment experienced<sup>47</sup>**



Unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual nature were particularly likely to have been experienced in the actual workplace, as were sexual comments, staring or looks, unwanted touching, offensive materials, invasion of personal space and unwanted relationship attempts. Forms of sexual harassment which were more likely to have happened when socialising with colleagues outside the workplace were rape or attempted rape and someone taking and / or sharing sexual pictures or videos without permission. Several other sexual harassment behaviours experienced in a work-related environment were as likely to have been experienced when socialising with colleagues outside the workplace as at the workplace itself, including being followed or threatened to follow, sexually pressured exchanges and flashing.

Sexual harassment online or via work-related messaging was particularly likely to be related to unwanted messages with material of a sexual nature and / or someone taking and / or sharing sexual pictures or videos of them without permission. The forms of sexual harassment most often experienced in an interview or while applying for a job were markedly more likely to be rape and / or attempted rape, flashing and / or unwanted, overt sexual touching.

A small minority of respondents reported some surprising experiences 'online', such as sexual assault, rape or attempted rape, or other very physical forms of sexual harassment. The self-defined nature of sexual harassment and, consequentially, this survey, means some of these results are counter-intuitive to our usual expectations and understanding. In this case, the unexpectedly high proportion who experienced sexual harassment online is believed to be based on self-perceived threats of sexual harassment via electronic means, e.g. a comment from a colleague in an email that could make an individual feel the threat of rape. For more explanation

<sup>47</sup> As discussed in the Methodology section, the design of this survey allowed for considerable latitude for individuals to self-define what constituted sexual harassment on the basis of their own perceived threat; as a result, some data points will be counterintuitive due to differing experience and severity of each behaviour. This is true here where some who have experienced more severe behaviours like rape or flashing online.

---

of this, please refer to the Methodology chapter of this report. The design of future surveys will take into account these results to leave less room for uncertainty in future findings.

### **Location of harassment by demographic group**

As in previous analysis, there were significant differences in harassment locations by demographic groups across gender, age, ethnicity, LGB, disability and socio-economic grade.

#### *Gender*

Men who experienced sexual harassment in a work-related environment were more likely to have done so when socialising with colleagues outside of work (48% versus 43% of women), while visiting clients or customers (35% versus 29% of women) and / or in an interview or while applying for a job (22% versus 18% of women). The only location in which women were significantly more likely than men to experience workplace sexual harassment was in 'other work-related environments' (18% versus 13% of men).

#### *Age*

Although the actual workplace was the most common work-related environment for younger people aged 16 to 24 to have experienced workplace sexual harassment, it was less likely than among older people aged 35 or above (64% compared to 75%). The other locations listed were all more likely to have been where younger victims experienced sexual harassment than where older people did so (for example, 49% of those aged 16 to 24 experienced it when socialising with colleagues versus 38% of those aged 35 or above, and 27% experienced it in an interview or while applying for a job versus 13% of those aged 35 or above). These patterns could be explained by the types of work situations which people of different ages are more or less likely to be in. For example, it could be suggested younger people are more likely to socialise with colleagues, which could explain why they are more likely to have experienced sexual harassment whilst socialising with colleagues.

#### *Ethnicity*

There was a similar pattern among victims from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities), who were *less* likely than their White counterparts to have experienced workplace sexual harassment actually at their workplace (61% compared to 71%) - though it remained the most likely location than any other work-related environment. Victims from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities), were more likely than White victims to have reported sexual harassment in all the other work-related environments, for example 55% experienced it when socialising with colleagues compared to 44% of White victims.

#### *LGB*

LGB victims of sexual harassment in the workplace were more likely than heterosexuals to have experienced harassment when socialising with colleagues (52% compared to 46%), online or via work-related messaging (24% vs 19%) and / or in an interview or while applying for a job (26% vs 20%). They were as likely as heterosexuals to have experienced it at the actual place of work (70% each).

#### *Disability*

People with a highly limiting disability who experienced sexual harassment in a work-related environment were as likely to have done so at their actual place of work as those with no disability (72% and 69% of victims respectively). However, victims with a highly limiting disability were more likely to have experienced sexual harassment in all the other locations: 62% when socialising with

colleagues (compared to 42% of those without any disability) and 54% when visiting clients or customers (compared to 26%).

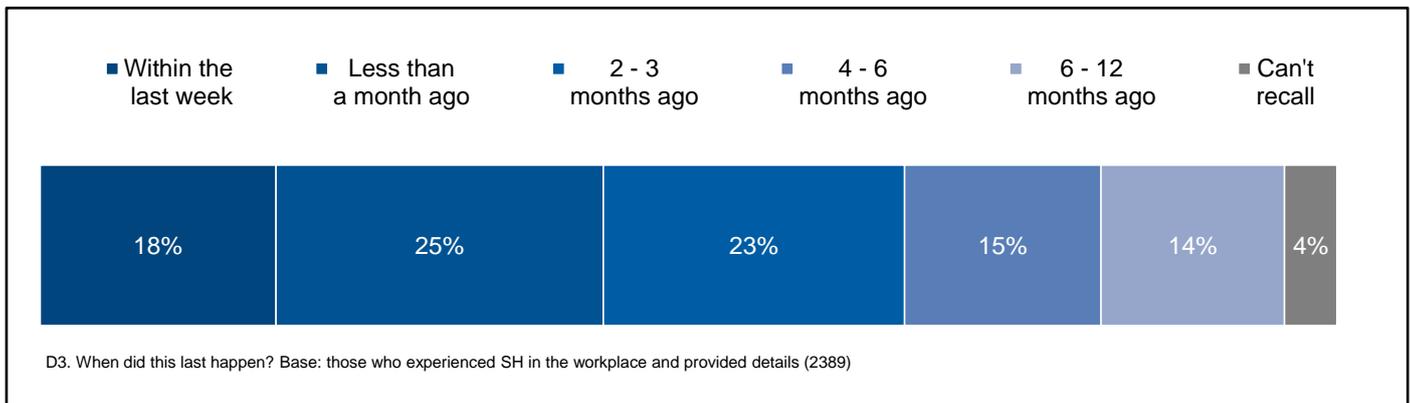
*Socio-economic grade*

Victims in intermediate occupations or semi-routine and routine occupations were particularly likely to have experienced sexual harassment in their actual workplace (77% and 78% respectively compared to 70% overall). In contrast, victims in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations and those in lower supervisory and technical occupations were more likely to have experienced sexual harassment while socialising with colleagues outside the workplace (both 51% compared to 46% overall), when visiting a client/customer (37% and 43% compared to 33% overall), and / or in an interview / while applying for a job (22% and 30% compared to 21% overall).

**Recency of workplace sexual harassment**

For the majority of victims who provided details of workplace sexual harassment, their experience had been a relatively recent experience. As shown in Figure A4.3 below, nearly half (44%) had experienced this harassment (or an incident of it) within the last month (18% in the last week).

**Figure A4.2 When sexual harassment last occurred in the previous 12 months**



Overall, two-thirds (67%) of people who had experienced workplace sexual harassment in the previous 12 months said that this occurred within the last three months, while a further 15% said it happened within the last six months and 14% between six and 12 months previously.

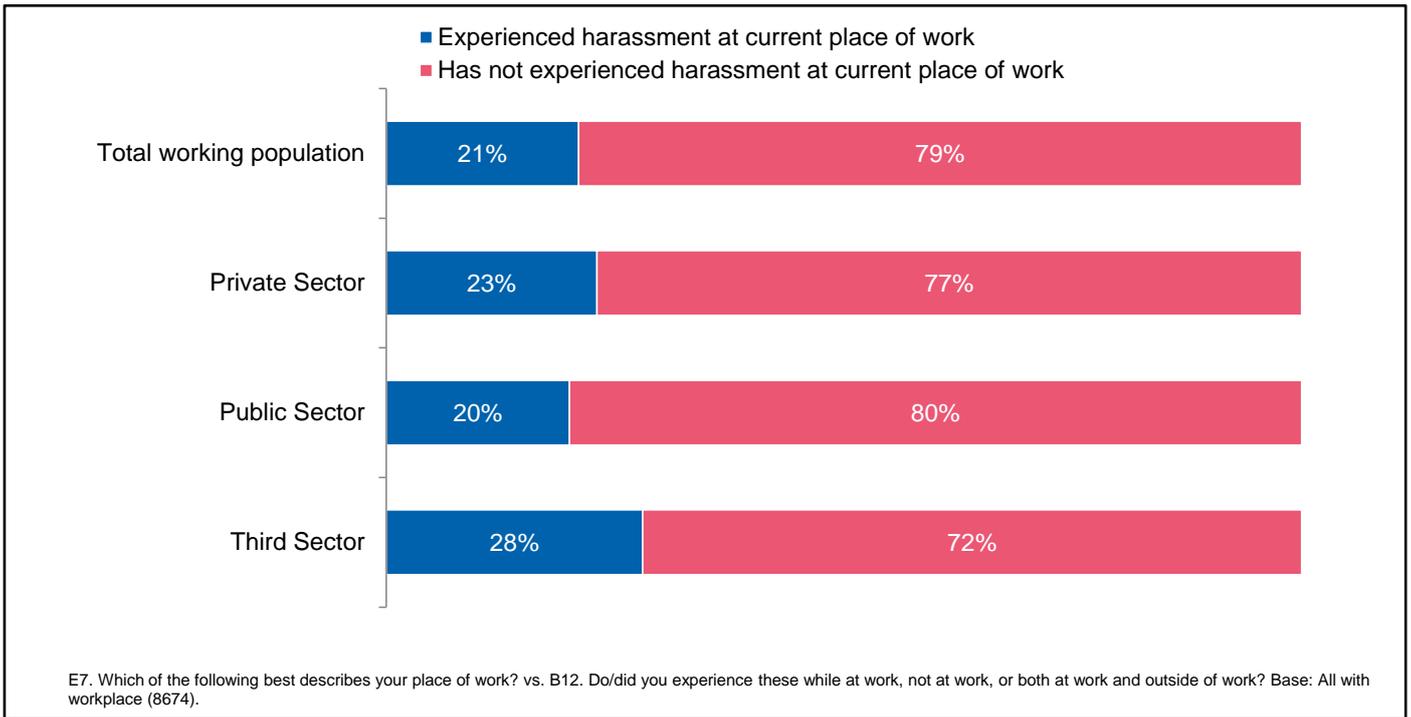
Sexual harassment in the workplace was also more likely to have been experienced in the last week by both younger people (21% of those aged 16 to 34 compared to 11% of those aged 50 or over) and those with a highly limiting disability (34% compared to 14% of those without a disability).

**The organisations where sexual harassment happens**

*Organisation sector*

Three fifths (61%) of those who had experienced workplace sexual harassment and agreed to provide more details of their experience, worked in the private sector at the time, while around a fifth worked in the public sector (19%) and around a tenth (11%) in the third sector. As shown in Figure A4.4, no one sector shows disproportionately high sexual harassment compared to others.

**Figure A4.3 Sector where sexual harassment was experienced**

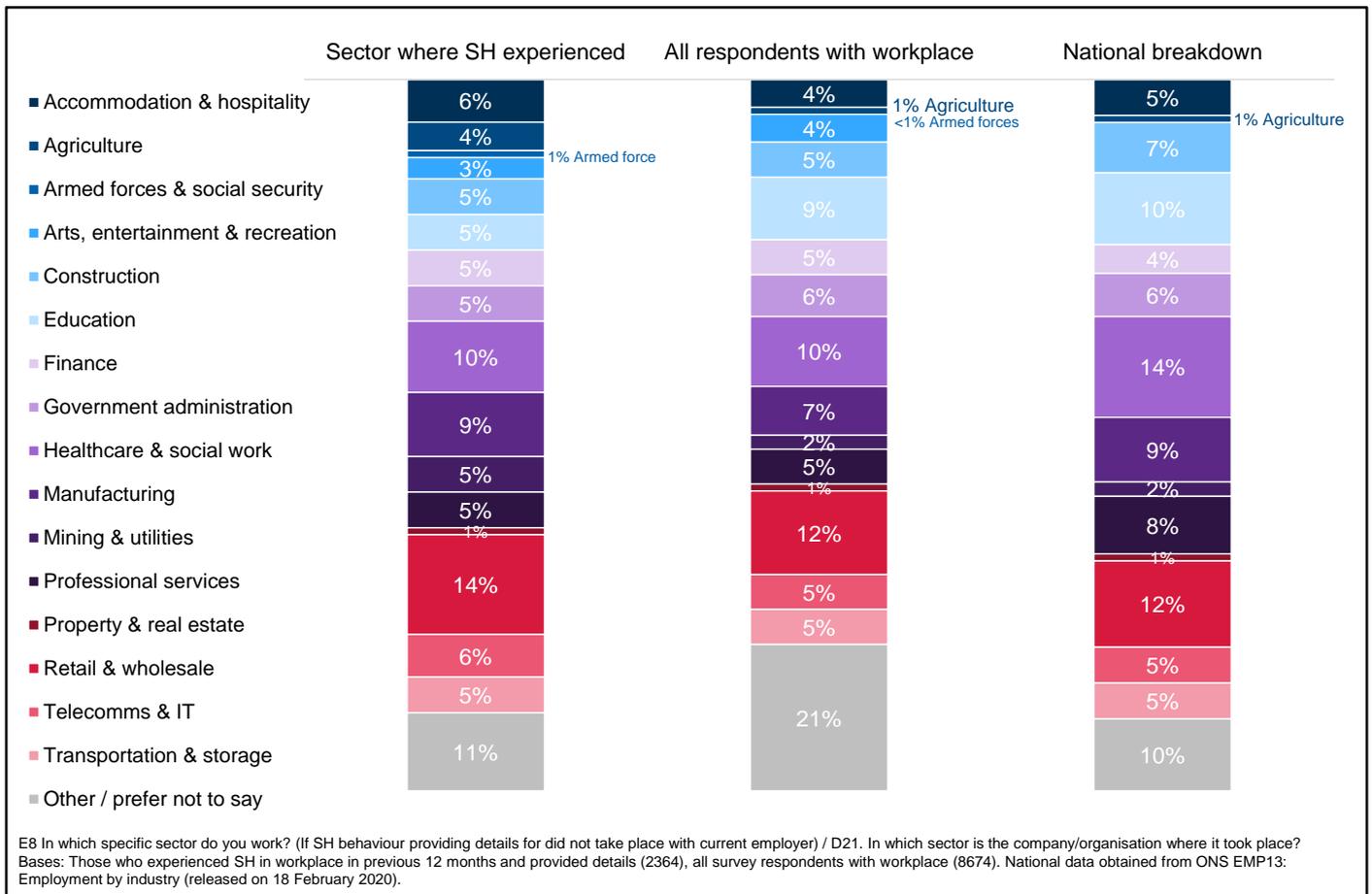


*Organisation industry*

Among those who had experienced sexual harassment, the most common industries were retail and wholesale, healthcare and social work and manufacturing (14%, 10% and 9% respectively), as shown in Figure A4.6. This largely reflects that these account for higher proportions of all who work than other sectors.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Note that the data shown in Figure A4.3 combine answers from separate groups in the survey.

**Figure A4.6 Specific sector of employment where sexual harassment was experienced**

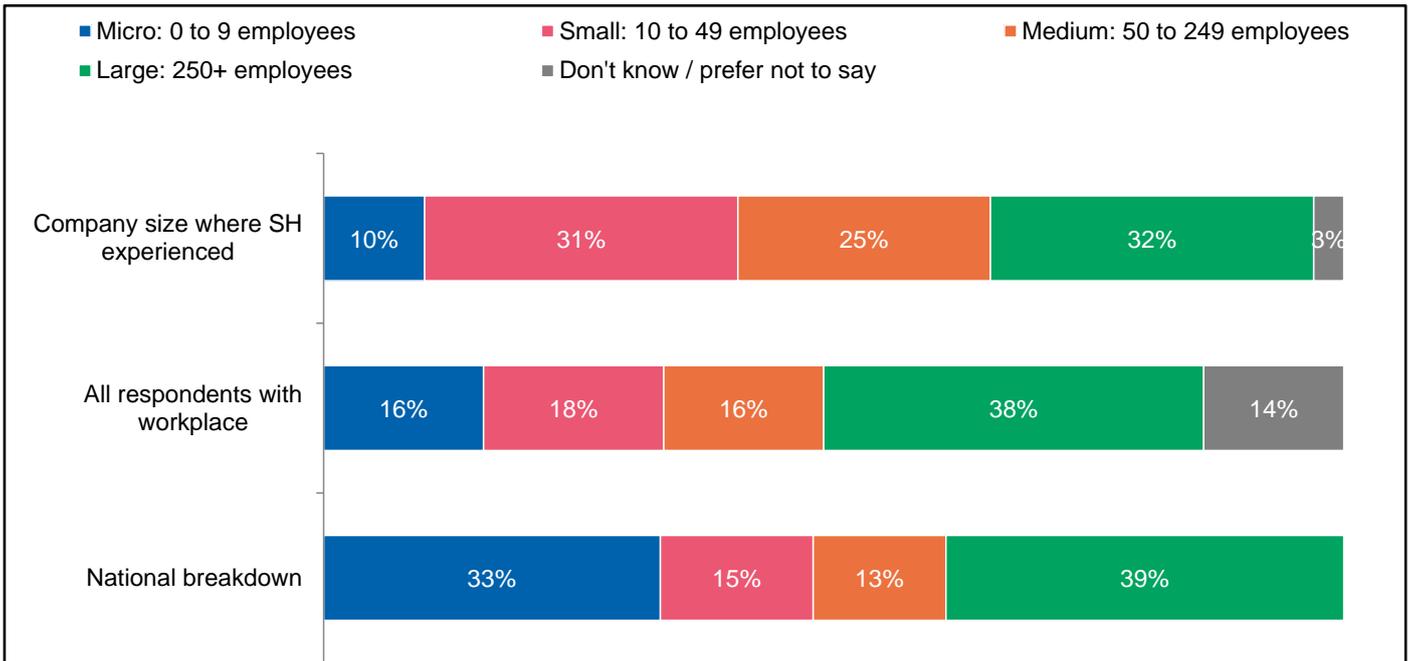


The greatest disparity (i.e. sectors which account for a higher proportion of sexual harassment than for employment in general) are accommodation (6% of sexual harassment experience compared to 4% of those in employment), manufacturing (9% vs 7%), mining and utilities (5% vs 2%), and retail and wholesale (14% vs 12%).

**Company Size**

Although it was most common for sexual harassment to be experienced by those working for large employers with 250 or more employees (33% of experiences) this reflects that overall 40% of those in work are employed by large organisations.

**Figure A4.7 Size of organization where sexual harassment experienced**

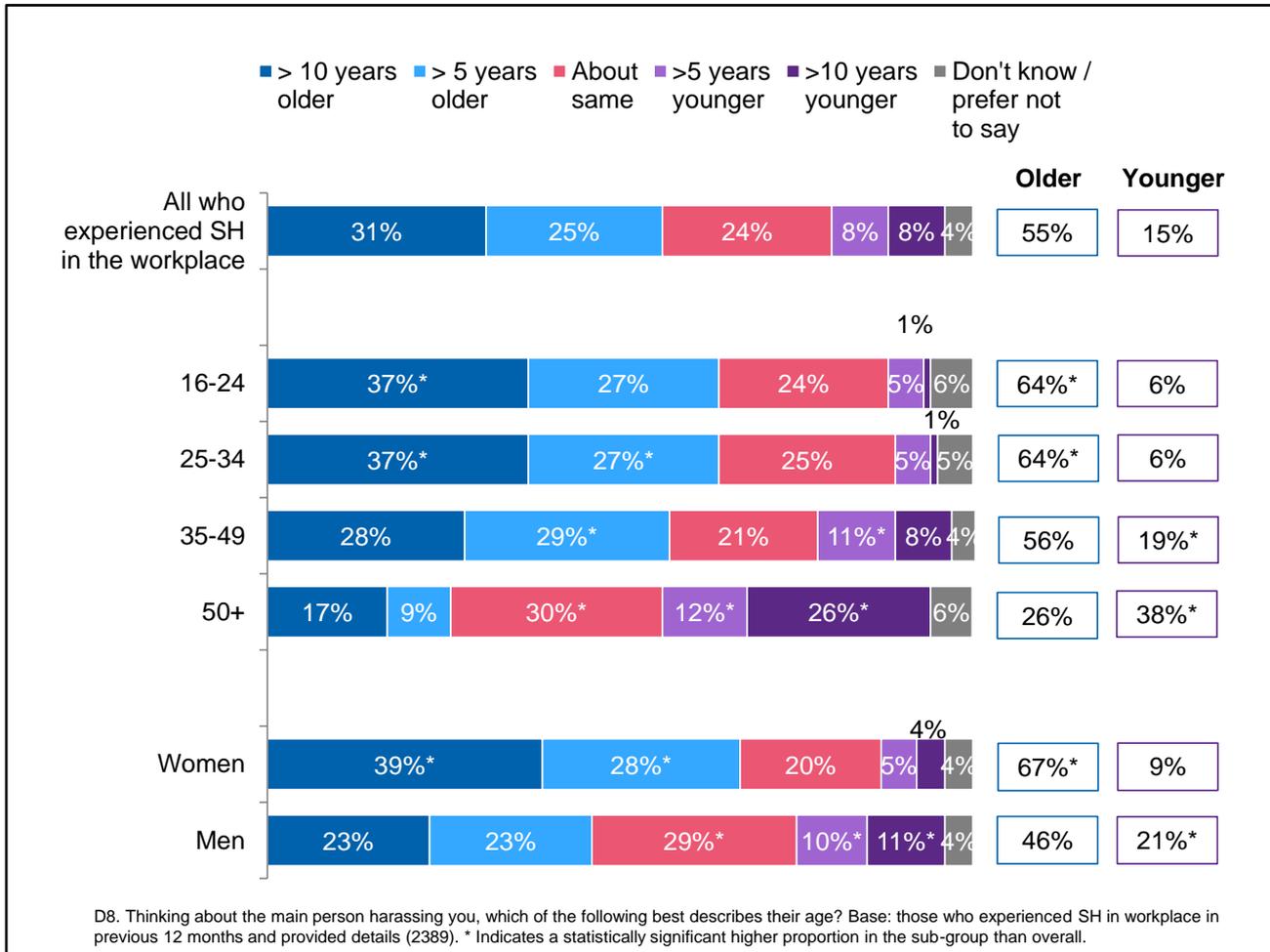


E6. Which of the following best describes your place of work? (If SH behaviour providing details for did not take place with current employer) / D5. Which of the following best describes the company / organisation where you worked when this took place? Base: those who experienced SH in the workplace and provided details (2324) / all respondents with a workplace (8674). National data obtained from ONS 'BUSINESS POPULATION ESTIMATES FOR THE UK AND THE REGIONS 2019' (Released on 10 October 2019). NOTE: this is based on the business size people work in, not the proportion of UK businesses of each size.

### Relative age of the perpetrator

Most victims of workplace sexual harassment were harassed by a perpetrator who was older than them (55%), as shown in Figure A4.8, while a quarter (24%) were harassed by someone of a similar age.

**Figure A4.8 Age of main harasser in workplace relative to victim, all and by age and gender of victim**



It was relatively rare for the main perpetrators to have been younger than the victim; this was the case for 15% of those who had experienced workplace sexual harassment.

The relative age of perpetrators are markedly different among those aged 50 or above, who were more than twice as likely to have been harassed by someone younger than them (38% compared to 15% across all victims), and less than half as likely to have been harassed by someone older than them (26% compared to 55% across all victims). Victims aged 16 to 34 were rarely harassed by someone younger (6% among both those aged 16 to 24 and 25 to 34). However, both of these findings may be related to the age distribution in the population: there are fewer people younger than 16 than older than 16, while for anyone over 50, the majority of people are younger than them. A very small minority (1%) of 16-24-year olds said they were harassed by someone more than 10 years younger than them, which is believed to be by customers, students, patients, etc. not colleagues.

Women subject to sexual harassment in the workplace were more likely than men to have had a perpetrator who was older than them, with women aged 16 to 34 particularly likely to have been harassed by someone older. Men who were victims of harassment were more than twice as likely as women to have been harassed by someone younger than them (21% vs. 9%).

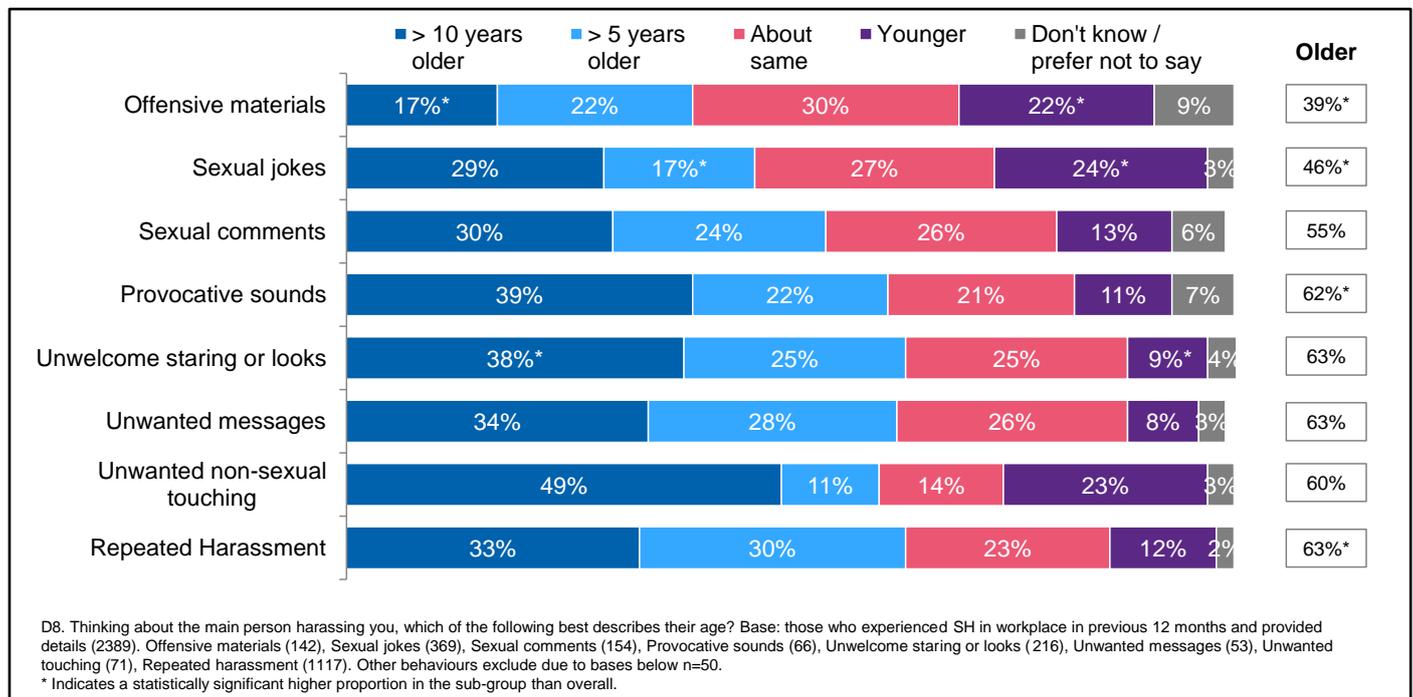
Age also played a significant role in the perpetrator across key demographic groups:

- White victims were more likely to have been harassed by someone older (56% compared to 50% among ethnic minority victims).
- People with a highly limiting disability were more likely to have been harassed by someone older than those without a disability (69% compared to 53%).
- Victims in higher socio-economic groups were also more likely to have been harassed by someone older (58% and 59% of those in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations or intermediate occupations compared to 49% of those in semi-routine and routine occupations).<sup>49</sup>

*Relative age by behaviours*

As shown in Figure A4.9, specific forms of sexual harassment were particularly likely to have come from perpetrators more than ten years older than the victim, particularly unwanted touching, provocative sounds, unwelcome staring or looks. Repeat harassment was also significantly more likely to come from perpetrators more than ten years older (33%). Perpetrators younger than the victim were not more likely to carry out any particular behaviour.

**Figure A4.9 Age of main harasser in workplace relative to victim by type of behaviour**

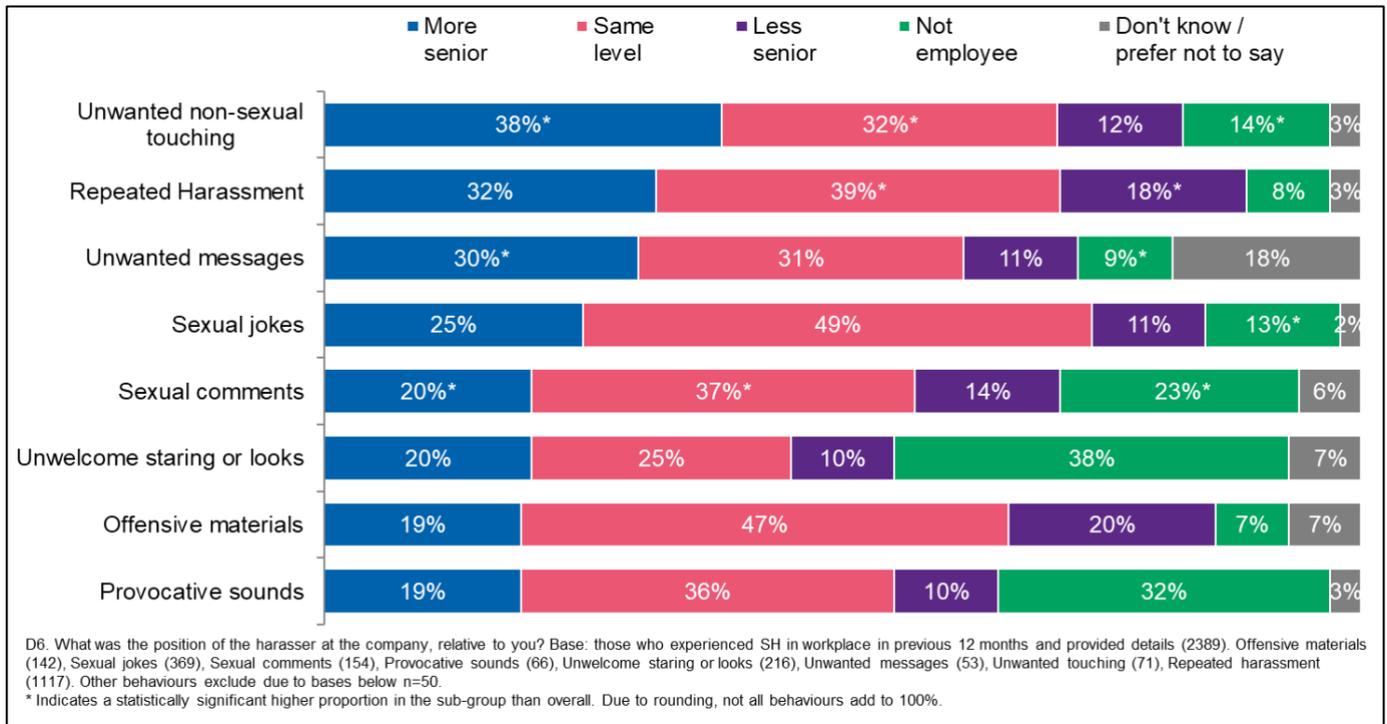


<sup>49</sup> This finding should be treated with caution due to low base sizes for some groups; intermediate occupations (267), semi-routine and routine occupations (250).

## Perpetrator position relative to the victims by sexual harassment behaviours

As shown in Figure A4.10, the forms of harassment particularly likely to have been carried out by perpetrators who were more senior than their victims were unwanted touching (38%) and repeat harassment (33%). The behaviours most likely to be perpetrated by people less senior than the victim were sexual comments (14%) and offensive materials (20%).

**Figure A4.10 Position of main harasser in workplace relative to victim by type of behaviour**



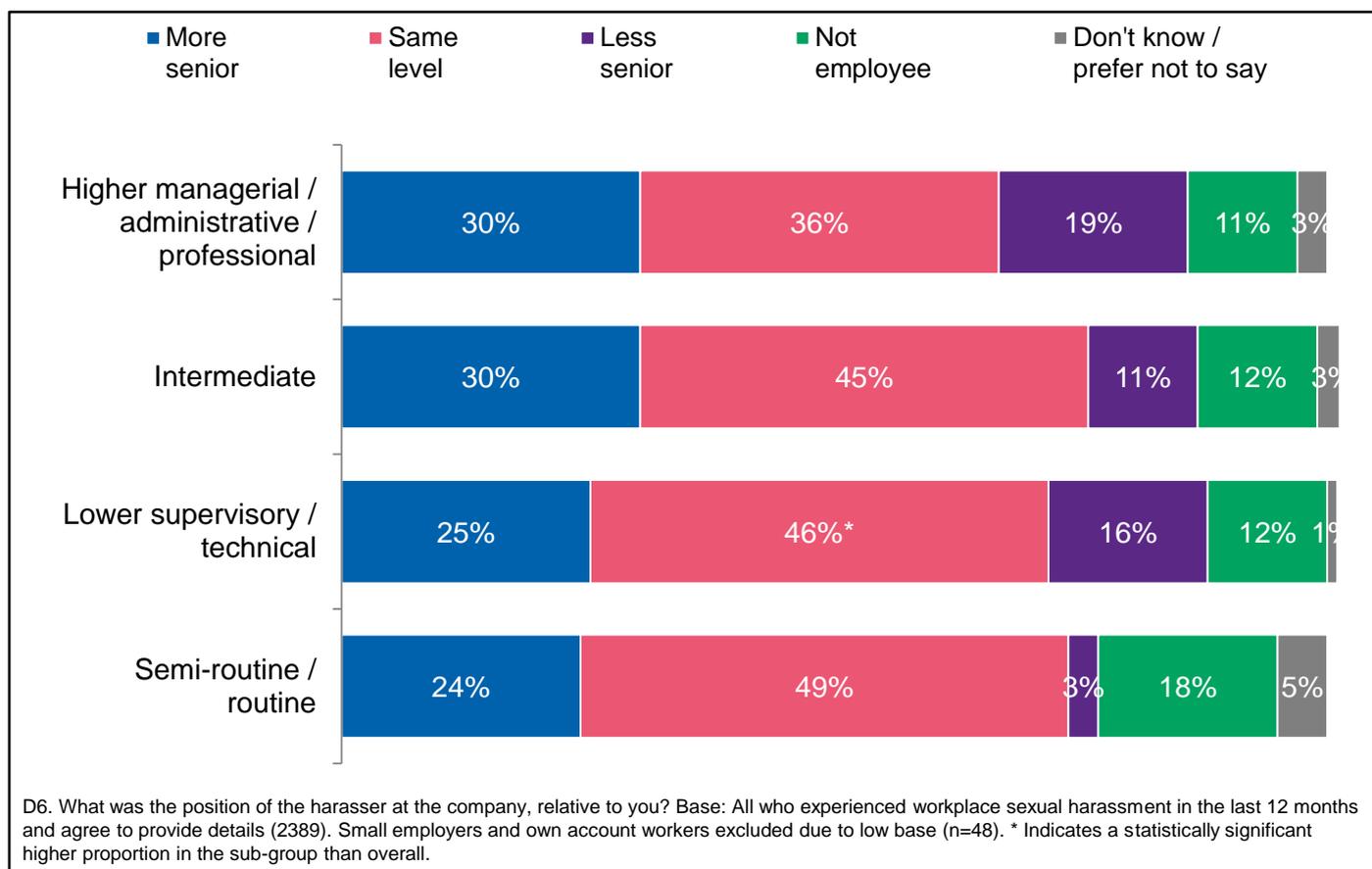
## Position of perpetrator by demographic groups

There were differences in the likelihood of being harassed by someone in a particular position of seniority at work between demographic groups:

- Women who were subject to sexual harassment were more likely than men to have been harassed by someone more senior than them (31% compared to 26% of men); women were also more likely to have been harassed by someone outside the organisation (20% compared to 8% of men). In contrast, men who were victims of sexual harassment in the workplace were more likely to have a perpetrator at the same level of seniority in the organisation (45% compared to 33% of women) or by someone less senior (17% compared to 11% of women).
- Younger victims aged 16 to 24 were particularly likely to have been harassed by someone who was not an employee (26% compared to 14% overall). Within the organisation, they were most likely to be harassed by someone at their same level (34%, compared to 20% from someone more senior and 11% from someone more junior). Those aged 25 to 34 were most likely to be harassed by someone at their same level (41%), as were those over age 35 (38%), with only minimal shift towards those more junior with age (14% of those aged 25 to 34 vs 17% of those aged 35 or over).

- White victims were more likely to have a perpetrator who was the same level of seniority as them than victims from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) (39% versus 33%). Both groups were similarly likely to have been harassed by someone more senior, less senior or external.
- Victims of workplace sexual harassment who had a highly limiting disability were significantly more likely to have a perpetrator who was less senior (24% compared to 13% of those without a disability).
- There were some differences in the seniority of the perpetrator by the type of work the victim did, as defined by the NS-SEC groups, shown in Figure A4.11.

**Figure A4.11 Position of main harasser in workplace relative to victim, by NS-SEC group**



Only victims working in higher managerial, administrative or professional occupations were significantly more likely to have been harassed by a less senior employee, while those working in semi-routine or routine, lower supervisory or technical or intermediate occupations were particularly likely to have been harassed by others working at the same level as them. Perpetrators were particularly likely to not have been employees for those working in semi-routine or routine occupation.

There were no meaningful differences between LGB victims and heterosexual victims.

---

## **Repeat sexual harassment behaviour in the workplace**

One in ten (12%) who have experienced workplace sexual harassment had experienced it repeatedly from the same person. As shown in Figure 7.18, the most common types of repeat sexual harassment experienced repeatedly in the workplace were offensive materials and sexual jokes, however all behaviours were experienced by 1% to 4% (of those who have had a repeat experience and were willing to provide additional details).

## **Response by behaviour experienced**

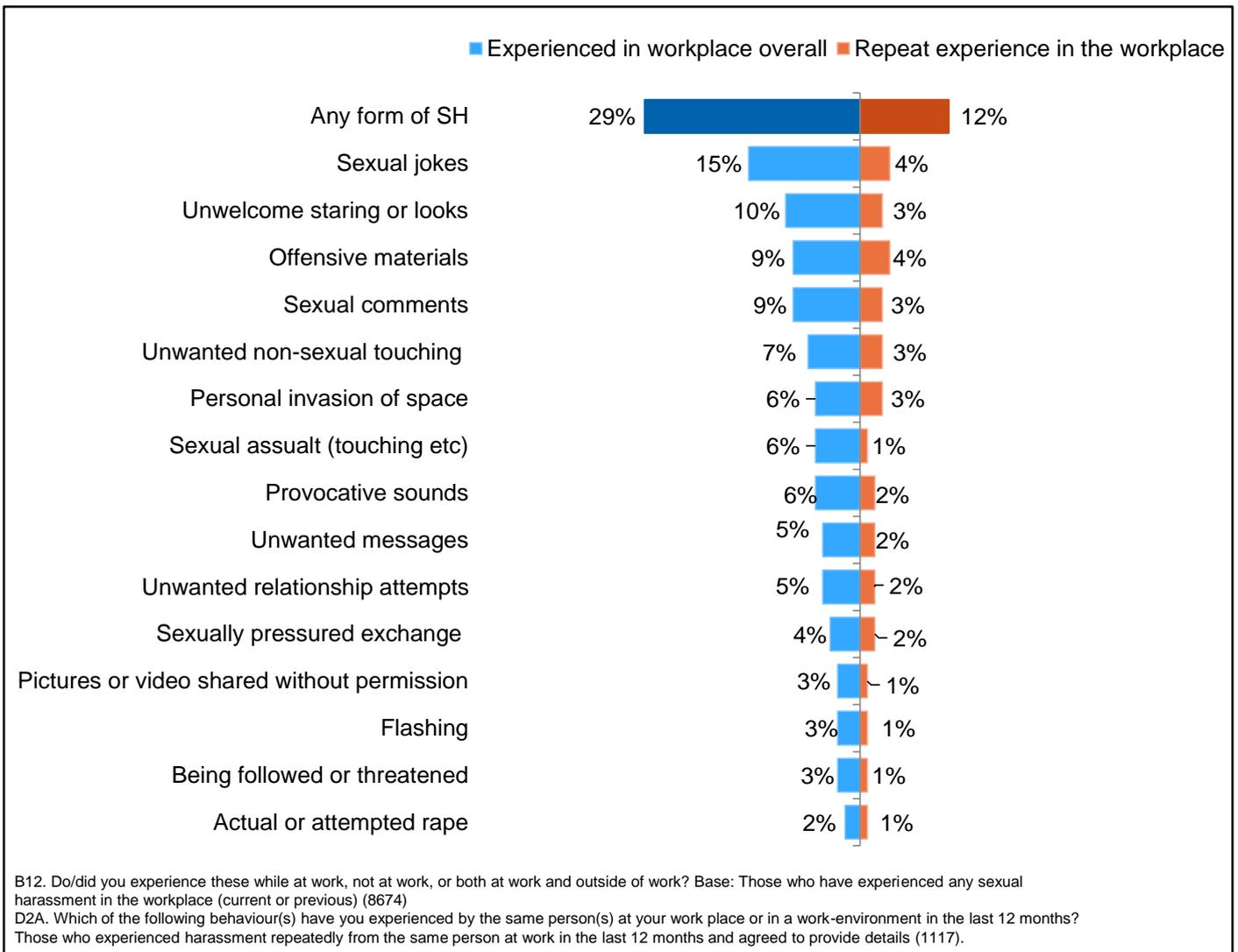
*Reporting by demographic group and business sector*

There are significant differences in responses to sexual harassment between key demographic groups and employees of different business types:

- While both men and women were equally likely to have reported harassment (15% men vs. 16% women reported internally and / or externally), women were more likely to have told someone else (49% compared to 35%).
- Younger victims of sexual harassment in the workplace were more likely to have reported it than older victims (18% of both those aged 16 to 24 and aged 25 to 34 compared to 12% of those 35 or older). They were also specifically more likely to have reported it externally although this was still rare (7% of those aged 16 to 24, 6% of those aged 25 to 34 and 3% of those 35 or older).
- Victims from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) were more likely to have reported the harassment than White victims (19% compared to 15%).
- Victims with highly limiting disabilities were more likely to have reported the harassment (18% had done so compared to 13% of those without a disability).
- Victims who were sexually harassed while working in the third sector were more likely to report it than those working in the private sector (21% compared to 14%, with 16% of those in the public sector doing so).

There were no meaningful differences in victim actions across LGB, NS-SEC or business size.

**Figure A4.12 Types of repeat sexual harassment experienced at workplace in the last 12 months<sup>50</sup>**



The least common repeat behaviours were sharing pictures or videos without permission, flashing, being followed, sexual assault and rape or attempted rape.

### Process satisfaction by demographic and business groups

Satisfaction with the reporting process among particular groups largely reflects satisfaction with the outcome of reporting. However, when looking exclusively at the reporting process, some meaningful differences emerge:

- Women who reported sexual harassment in the workplace were significantly less likely to be *satisfied* with the process of reporting than men: 35% of women were dissatisfied with the process compared to 25% of men, while 54% of men were satisfied with the process compared to 38% of women.

<sup>50</sup> These results by gender show differences to other national studies, namely differing proportions overall, by gender and by behaviour based on national statistics and some other research. This is linked to the behaviour-based design of this research, as detailed in the Methodology chapter.

- 
- Those aged 35 or older were more likely to be dissatisfied with the process or reporting harassment than those under 35: 39% of those age 35+ dissatisfied compared to 25% of those under 35.
  - Those in private and third sector organisations were significantly more likely to be satisfied with the reporting process (58% private, 56% third) compared to those working in the public sector at the time of the harassment (39%).

There were no meaningful differences across, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic status (NS-SEC) or business size or by sexual orientation.

### **Outcome satisfaction by demographic and business groups**

Those who had reported sexual harassment in the workplace were asked how satisfied they were with the *outcome* of reporting. Satisfaction with outcome varied by demographic groups.

- As with the process itself, women who reported sexual harassment were significantly more likely to be dissatisfied with the outcome than men (42% compared to 27%), while men were almost twice as likely to be very satisfied with the outcome (20% vs 11%); however, while men do have higher net satisfaction, the genders do not show a significant difference in level of net satisfaction with the reporting outcome (44% men vs 36% women).
- Nearly half (47%) of those age 35-49 were dissatisfied with the outcome of reporting, significantly higher than any other age group (16-24 29%, 25-34 32% and 50+ 33%).
- LGB victims who reported harassment were more likely to be dissatisfied with the outcome of reporting: 47% of LGB individuals were dissatisfied compared to 34% among heterosexuals.
- Those in higher managerial occupations were significantly more likely than those in semi-routine or routine occupations to be satisfied with the outcome of reporting (46% vs 29%).
- Those working in the public sector reported a significantly higher degree of dissatisfaction than those in the private and third sectors: 40% of those in the public sector were dissatisfied with the outcome compared to 27% in the private sector and 31% in the third sector.

There were no meaningful differences in across ethnicity, disability, or business size.

### **Non-reporting reasons by behaviour**

There was considerable variation in reasons for not-reporting by behaviour.

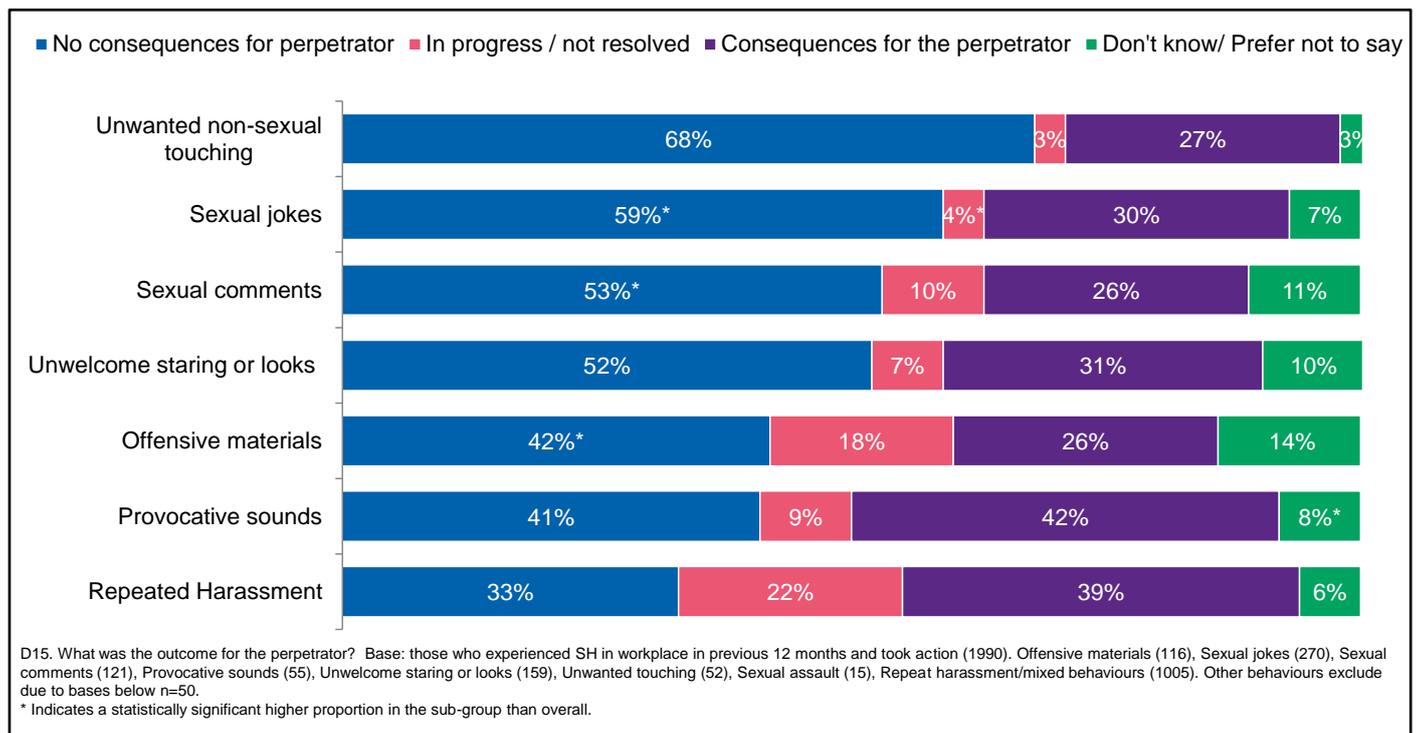
- Those who experienced unwanted touching (53%), staring or looks (52%), sexual jokes (47%) and unwanted sexual comments (41%) were significantly more likely than the average (32%) to say that they did not think the incident was serious enough to report. Those who experienced repeat harassment were significantly less likely to say this (20%).
- Those who experienced repeat harassment were significantly more likely than the average of other behaviours to give say that they did not report the harassment because it would take too long (29% vs. 18%) or that they were worried about career progression (28% vs. 23%), or that they were worried it would make their work situation uncomfortable (25% vs. 21%).

- Those who experienced staring or looks were more likely than other behaviours to say that they thought they would not be taken seriously if they reported it (21% vs. 13%).

### Outcome for perpetrator by behaviour

The likelihood of a perpetrator experiencing a negative consequence varied (often significantly) by the type of sexual harassment behaviour they carried out, with the likelihood of incurring consequences increasing for more overt forms of sexual harassment.

**Figure A4.13 Outcome for perpetrator by behaviour experienced**



Victims reported no consequences for the perpetrator most commonly following unwanted touching (68%), sexual jokes (59%), body comments (53%) and staring or looks (52%). It was significantly less likely for there to be no consequences for the perpetrator in cases of repeat harassment (33% vs. 41% on average).

Those who experienced repeat harassment were significantly more likely to say that the issue was not yet resolved (22% vs. 15%). However, they were also more likely to say that the harasser was moved within the organisation, fired, received sanctions, or arrested.

### Differences in outcomes for victims by behaviours experienced

When comparing outcomes for the victim by the specific type of behaviour experienced, outcomes for victims followed a similar pattern to those experienced by the perpetrators.

**Table A4.2 Work-related outcomes for victim by behaviour experienced in the workplace**

	NET: Job changed in some way	NET: Nothing improved	There were no consequences for me	I chose to look for a new job	I chose to change positions in the company	I attended mediation with the harasser	I was pressured to change positions in the company	I stayed in my role but was still treated the same or worse	I changed my work pattern	I quit, without another job lined up	I signed off from work for a period of time	I withdrew my complaint	My complaint is still being looked into
Row percentages													
<b>Offensive materials</b>	44%	33%	22%	20%	18%	17%	10%	9%	6%	2%	*%	2%	3%
<b>Sexual jokes</b>	25%	64%	57%	16%	7%	3%	1%	5%	4%	2%	2%	1%	3%
<b>Sexual comments</b>	31%	51%	43%	19%	7%	7%	3%	7%	2%	4%	*%	1%	0%
<b>Provocative sounds</b>	26%	41%	34%	17%	8%	6%	1%	3%	12%	5%	3%	2%	4%
<b>Unwelcome staring or looks</b>	28%	61%	55%	16%	8%	2%	5%	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%	5%
<b>Repeat Harassment</b>	50%	30%	19%	18%	21%	23%	13%	8%	7%	6%	6%	5%	4%

D16. What were the work-related outcome(s) for you? Of those who took any action on their experience of workplace sexual harassment in the last 12 months (N=1990). Offensive materials (116), Sexual jokes (270), Sexual comments (121), Provocative sounds (55), Unwelcome staring or looks (159), Repeat harassment/mixed behaviours (1005). Other behaviours exclude due to bases below n=50.

The victim was most likely to say there were no consequences for themselves when they took action on sexual jokes (57% no consequences) and unwelcome staring or looks (55%) or unwelcome sexual comments (43%). The victim was most likely to say there was some change to their job when they had experienced repeat harassment (50% compared to 40% overall). They were also less likely to say that nothing improved (30% vs. 40%).

### Differences in outcomes by demographic and business groups

There were some significant differences in victim outcomes across different demographic and business groups:

- Women were significantly more likely than men to say there were no consequences for them (34% vs 29% among men), but also significantly more likely to choose to look for another job (20% vs 14%). In contrast, men were significantly more likely to attend mediation (18% vs 10% among women) and to feel pressure to change their position in the company (12% vs 7%).
- Older victims who had taken action were more likely to see no work-related consequences (48% of those 50 or older compared to 28% of those under 50). This was particularly likely among older male victims aged 50 or older, where 57% saw no consequences (vs 15% of those aged 16-24).

- 
- Victims from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) were significantly less likely to say there had been no consequences than their White counterparts (22% vs 33%). Individuals from an ethnic minority were significantly more likely to say they had chosen to look for another job (20% vs 16%), quitting without another job and being signed off from work (both 6% vs 4%).
  - LGB victims were significantly less likely to say there were no consequences (25% vs. 32% among heterosexuals); in particular, they were significantly more likely to choose to look for a new job (21% vs 17%).
  - People with highly limiting disabilities were significantly more likely to experience consequences of some variety as a result of reporting their experience (15% reporting no consequences vs. 38% among those with no disability). They were more likely to say they chose to change jobs within the company (22% vs 13%), being signed off from work (8% vs 3%) and quitting without another job or being pressured to find a new job (6% and 5% vs 3% for both).
  - Those working in lower supervisory/technical occupation groups were more likely than the other NC-SEC groups to say they had experienced some change to their job (47% respectively vs 40% average), specifically feeling pressured to change jobs in the same organisation (17% vs 10% average). Those in higher managerial roles were significantly more likely to choose to change jobs within the organisation (18% vs. 15% average). Both of these groups were significantly more likely to have attended mediation (19% higher managerial, 15% lower supervisory vs. 3-5% for the rest).
  - Those working in the third sector were more likely to have their job change in some way (61% compared to 37% and 41% in the private and public sectors). Conversely, those who took action following harassment in the private or public sectors were more likely than those in the third sector to see no consequences (34-35% in each saw no consequences compared to 15% in the third sector).
  - Victims working in larger organisations who took action were twice as likely not to see any work-related consequences, 48% of those in companies of 250 employees or more compared to 21% of those at smaller organisations. Those in small organisations (with 10-49 employees) were significantly more likely to see some job-related change (54% vs 40% average).

## 5. Perceptions of employer action

### Perceptions by demographic and business groups

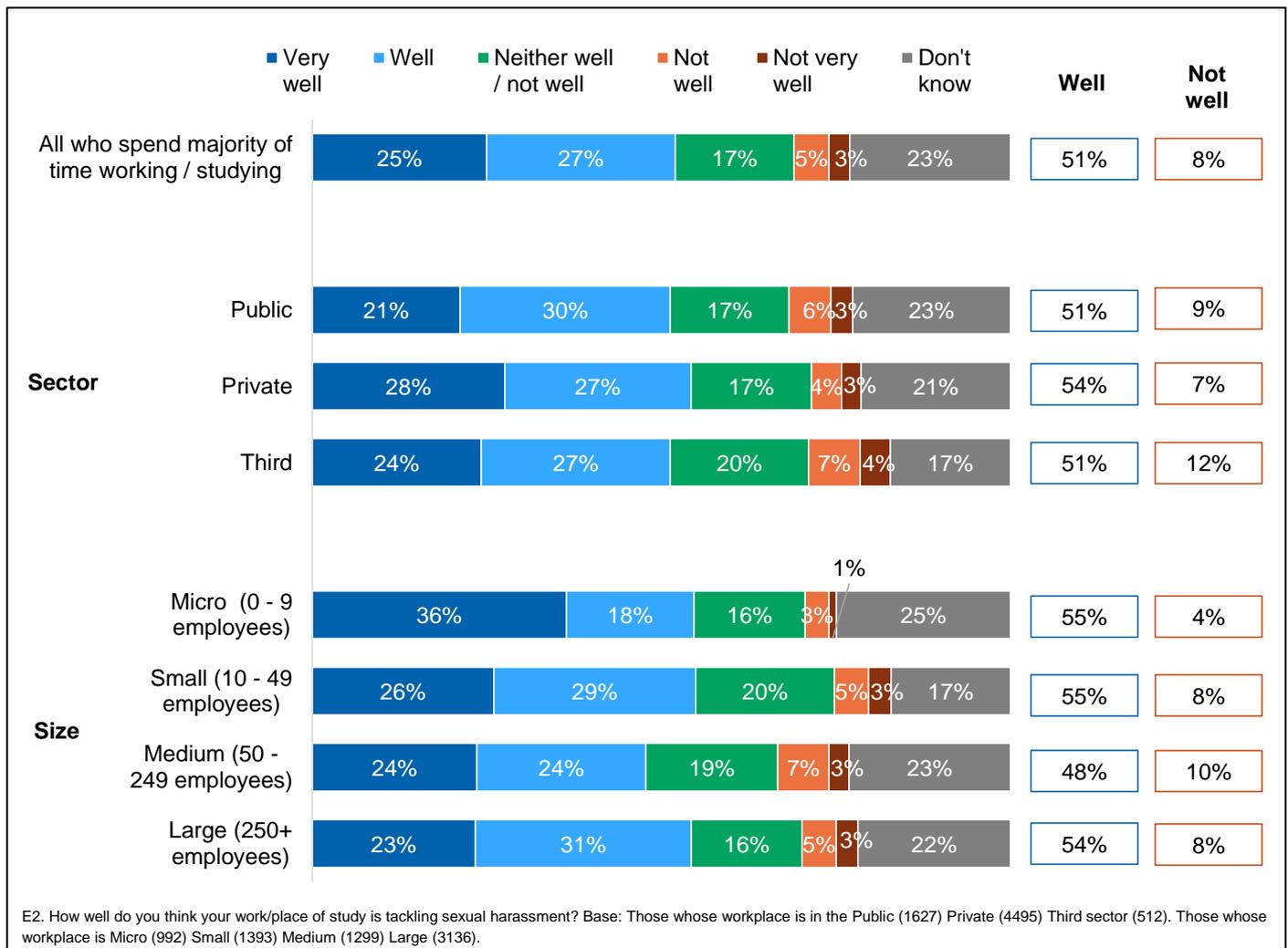
Among those who spent the majority of their time working or studying, certain demographic groups were significantly less likely to think that their place of work or study was tackling sexual harassment well:

- **Women:** around one in ten women (9%) thought their place of work or study was not tackling sexual harassment well (versus 7% of men).

- **Younger people:** one in ten of those aged 16 to 34 (10%) thought their place of work or study was not tackling sexual harassment well (compared with 6% of those aged 50 or above).
- **People from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities):** one in ten people from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) (10%) thought their place of work or study was not tackling sexual harassment well (versus 8% of those who were White).
- **LGB people:** overall, those identifying as LGB were fairly positive about how well their place of work or study was doing at tackling sexual harassment, however significantly more LGB people than heterosexuals felt they were not doing well (12% vs 8%).
- **Disabled people:** 55% felt their company or place of study was doing well compared to 52% of those without a disability.

As shown in Figure A5.1, there are some clear differences in views on how well organisations are tackling sexual harassment by the sector and size of their workplaces.

**Figure A5.1. How well workplaces are tackling sexual harassment by sector and size of workplace**



---

People working in third sector organisations were more likely to think their organisation was not tackling sexual harassment well (12% versus 7% of those who in the private sector), while private sector workers were most likely to think that their organisation was tackling it very well (28% compared to 21% of those in the public sector).

Those working in medium sized organisations with between 50 and 249 employees were the most negative about their employers tackling of sexual harassment, with 10% thinking they were not tackling it well and less than half (48%) thinking they were doing it well.

Those who had actually experienced sexual harassment in their current workplace during the previous 12 months were less likely to think their organisation was tackling sexual harassment well (43% compared to 55% of those who had not), with a fifth (19%) feeling the organisation was not tackling it well.

### **Accessible policies by demographic groups and type of workplace**

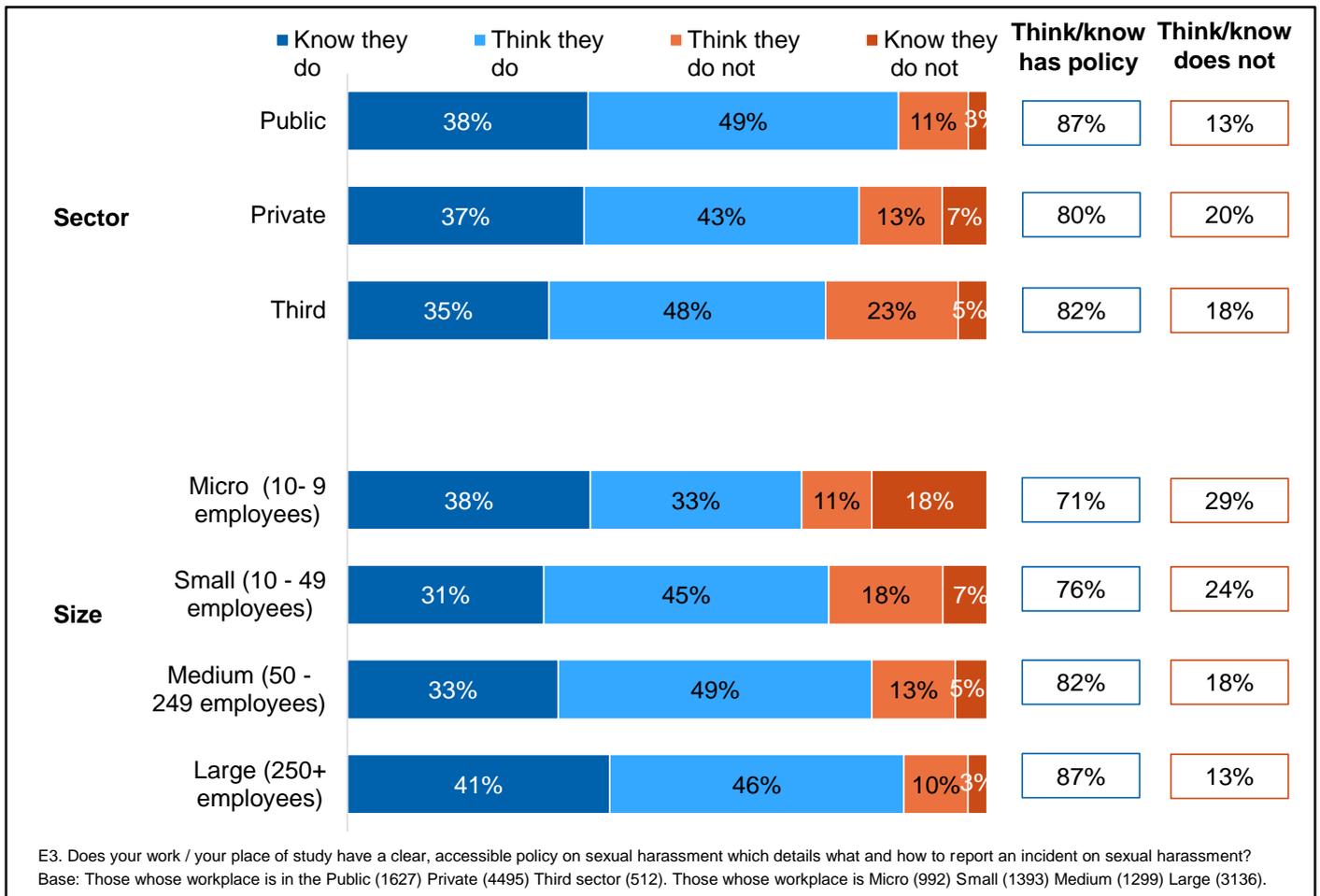
Among those who spent the majority of their time working or studying, certain demographic groups were significantly less likely to *know* that their place of work or study had a clear and accessible sexual harassment policy:

- Women (32% versus 40% of men).
- Younger people (29% of those aged 16 to 24 compared to 39% of those aged 50 or older).
- People from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) (33% compared to 36% of White people).
- Disabled people (44% compared to 35% of those without a disability).

These same groups were also more likely to *think* it was the case.

As shown in Figure A5.2, there were also differences in knowledge about whether their organisation has a clear and accessible sexual harassment policy by the sector and size of workplace.

**Figure A5.2 Whether workplaces have a policy on sexual harassment by sector and size of workplace**



Overall, key differences by type of employer included:

- People working in private sector organisations were more likely to think their organisation did not have a clear and accessible sexual harassment policy (20% versus 13% each of those in the public or third sectors).
- People working in smaller organisations with fewer than ten employees were most likely not to know of a clear and accessible sexual harassment policy (18% compared to between 7% and 3% in larger organisations), while those in the largest organisations (250+ employees) were most likely to think or know that there was such a policy (87%). There tended to be more uncertainty in mid-size companies, with over three fifths thinking but not knowing either that their organisation did or did not have a policy.

Those who had actually experienced sexual harassment in their current workplace during the previous 12 months were less likely to know that their organisation had a clear or accessible policy on sexual harassment (32% compared to 37% of those who had not), with a quarter (25%) knowing or thinking it did not.

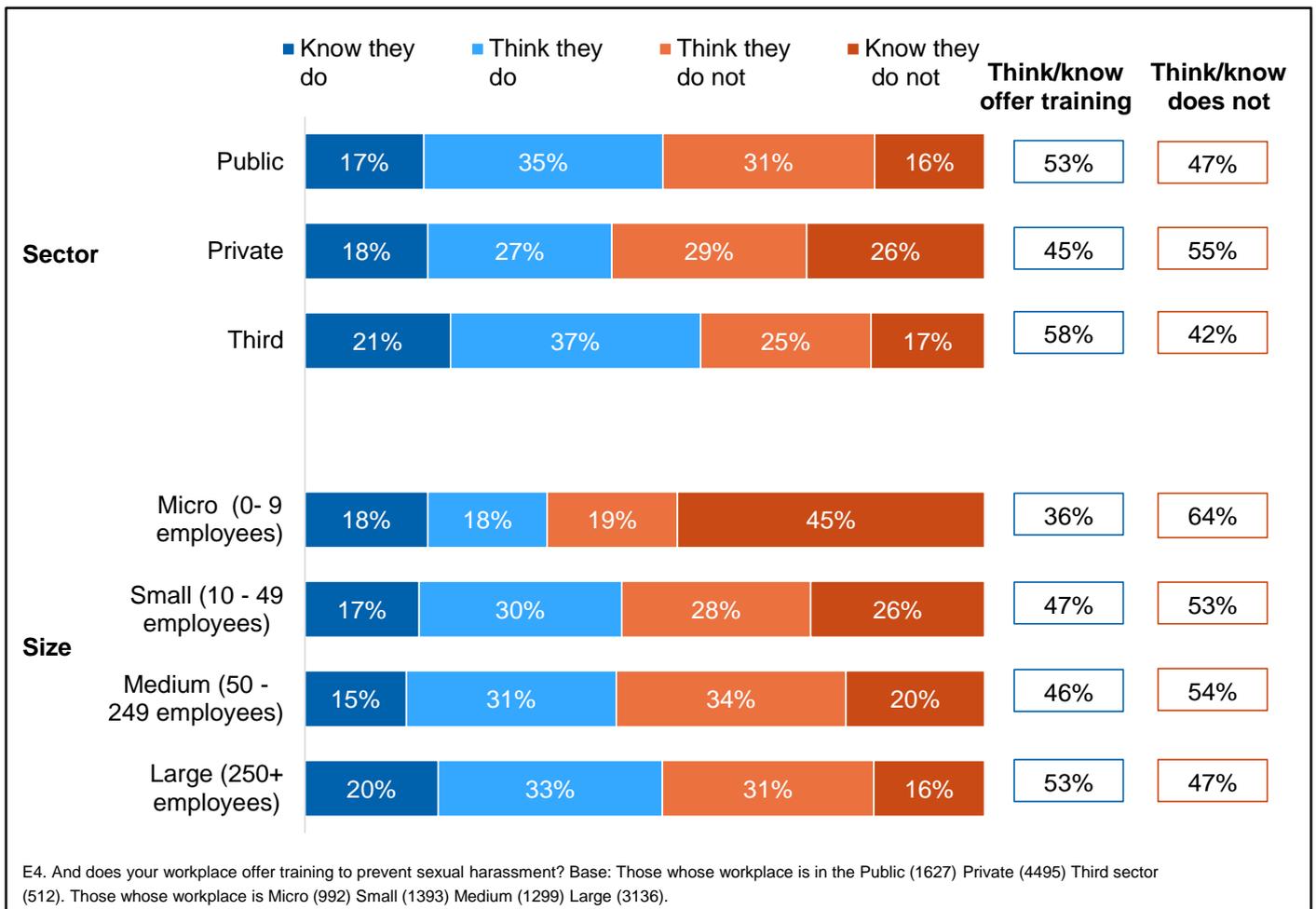
### Awareness of training by demographic and business group

Those who were significantly less likely to believe that their organisation offered training to prevent sexual harassment included:

- Women (44% stated that they ‘knew’ that their workplace offered training or thought that they did compared with 52% of men).
- Older people (40% of those aged 50 or above compared to 51% of those aged 16 to 24).
- White people (46% compared to 52% of those from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities)).
- Those without a disability (45% compared to 60% of people with a highly limiting disability).

There are some differences by the sector and size of workplaces in employees’ knowledge about whether they offer training to prevent sexual harassment, as shown in Figure A5.3.

**Figure A5.3 Whether workplaces offer training to prevent sexual harassment, by sector and size of workplace**



Key differences in awareness training by type of employer included:

- 
- People working in private sector organisations were more likely to know that their organisation did not offer training to prevent sexual harassment. Public sector workers were most likely to think or know that their organisation offered training.
    - People working in micro-organisations with fewer than ten employees were most likely to know that there was no training to prevent sexual harassment policy. Those in the largest organisations were most likely to think or know that there was such a policy. There also tended to be more uncertainty in larger organisations, with almost two thirds of those in large organisations only thinking (but not knowing) that their organisation did or did not offer such training.
  - Reflecting their likely organisation size, those working as small employers or own account workers were particularly likely to know that there was no clear or accessible sexual harassment policy at their place of work, 18% compared to 7% on average overall.

Those who had actually experienced sexual harassment in their current workplace during the previous 12 months were more likely to know that their organisation offered training to prevent it (23% compared to 16% of those who had not), with half (47%) knowing or thinking it did not.

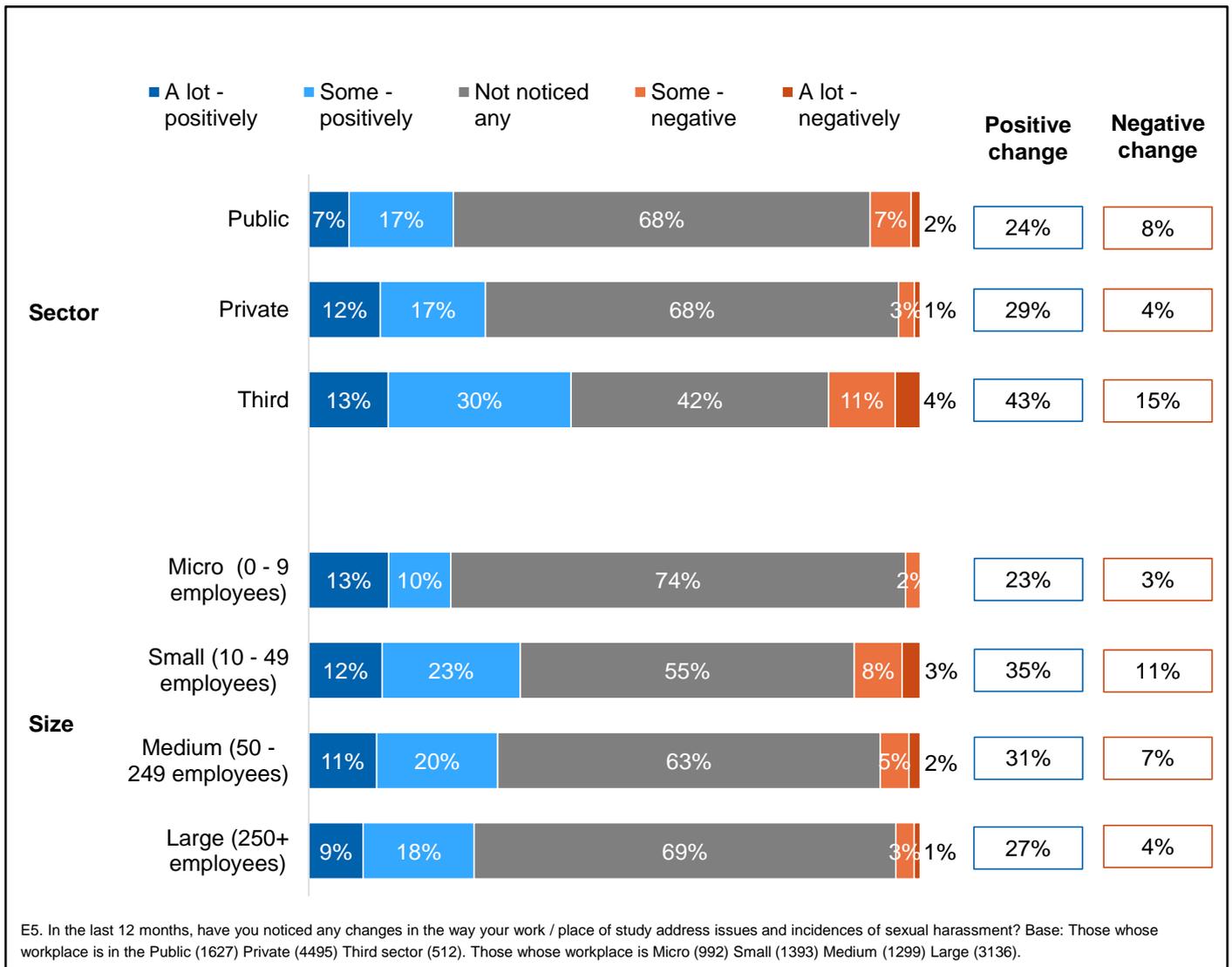
#### **Noticed change in workplace by demographic groups and type of employer**

Among those who spend the majority of their time working or studying the following groups were significantly less likely to have noticed that their place of work or study had made positive improvements to how they addressed sexual harassment:

- Women (26% versus 31% of men).
- Older people (19% of those aged 50 or older compared to 35% of those aged 16 to 24).
- White people (27% compared to 36% of those who were from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities)).
- Heterosexuals (28% versus 33% of LGB people).
- People without a disability (26% compared to 43% of those with a disability).

Whether people considered that their organisation had made changes to how they address sexual harassment differed by sector and size of employer, as shown in Figure A5.4.

**Figure A5.4 Changes in how places of work address sexual harassment by sector and size of workplace**



People working in third sector organisations were considerably more likely to think that there had been changes in the previous 12 months. Mainly these were thought to be positive (43% compared to 29% / 24% among those in the private / public sectors). However, 15% thought there had been negative changes compared to 4% / 8% in the private / public sectors.

There was no clear pattern to perceptions of change in addressing sexual harassment by size of organisation. Those in both the smallest and largest organisations were less likely than those in mid-size organisations to note positive or negative changes. Those who had actually experienced sexual harassment in their current workplace during the previous 12 months were more likely to think that there had been changes. Mainly these were positive (41% compared to 24% of those who had not), although 15% had noticed negative changes compared to 3% of those who had not experienced sexual harassment.

---

## 6. Methodology

The following tables show the national statistics used to calculate survey quotas and the final weighting.

**Table A6.1 National population counts (Labour Market Survey, October 2017 – September 2019)**

	North East	North West	Yorkshire & Humber	East Midlands	West Midlands	East	London	South East	South West	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	UK TOTAL
Total population	2,144,900	5,781,800	4,359,600	3,816,200	4,632,200	4,951,500	7,131,100	7,262,800	4,499,900	2,528,100	4,418,700	1,467,400	52,994,200
Males	1,043,900	2,831,100	2,137,800	1,871,600	2,278,100	2,419,800	3,533,000	3,545,900	2,198,100	1,237,900	2,114,900	714,700	25,926,800
Females	1,101,000	2,950,700	2,221,800	1,944,600	2,354,100	2,531,700	3,598,100	3,716,900	2,301,800	1,290,200	2,303,800	752,700	27,067,400
White	2,054,900	5,211,200	3,925,300	3,414,700	3,875,000	4,531,500	4,432,300	6,618,900	4,296,700	2,428,100	4,245,300	1,434,400	46,468,300
Mixed	7,500	46,300	44,600	32,000	50,200	56,600	205,500	73,300	34,400	14,600	18,500	1,000	584,500
Indian	9,500	88,800	56,800	152,000	184,300	78,400	506,000	144,800	34,100	11,100	18,900	3,300	1,288,000
Pakistani / Bangladeshi	20,200	192,300	183,100	51,700	226,100	77,200	409,500	101,700	16,100	13,700	38,200	0	1,329,800
Black	15,400	102,500	54,800	82,200	181,500	101,800	755,600	109,800	40,500	20,100	36,200	4,200	1,504,600
Other Ethnic Group	35,100	133,000	91,600	81,500	112,300	105,500	805,400	208,000	76,600	39,700	59,200	21,200	1,769,100
Disability (Equality Act)	410,600	985,900	772,700	637,300	729,400	728,700	988,100	1,033,500	704,500	439,800	728,700	259,900	8,419,100
Aged 16-19	117,100	319,300	250,600	213,900	264,600	260,400	368,100	394,800	235,000	140,700	227,200	91,500	2,883,200
Aged 20-24	180,500	459,200	374,900	308,700	379,500	340,500	585,900	522,700	331,300	207,800	345,000	116,700	4,152,700
Aged 25-34	339,900	961,900	711,800	590,000	771,000	775,600	1,723,700	1,099,500	650,700	384,000	716,000	246,900	8,971,000
Aged 35-49	471,900	1,345,600	1,008,900	883,400	1,082,800	1,202,600	2,032,000	1,786,700	995,500	549,400	1,015,500	363,400	12,737,700
Aged 50-64	533,700	1,390,600	1,032,600	925,900	1,077,500	1,186,100	1,400,300	1,755,400	1,101,500	612,900	1,103,000	353,400	12,472,900
Aged 65+	501,800	1,305,100	980,900	894,300	1,056,800	1,186,200	1,021,100	1,703,800	1,186,000	633,300	1,012,000	295,600	11,776,900
LGB	30,451	121,803	78,583	67,778	98,228	70,724	180,740	159,130	104,122	49,114	80,547	17,681	1,059,884

**Table A6.2 National population percentages (Labour Market Survey, October 2017 – September 2019)**

	North East	North West	Yorkshire & Humber	East Midlands	West Midlands	East	London	South East	South West	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	UK TOTAL
Total population	4%	11%	8%	7%	9%	9%	13%	14%	8%	5%	8%	3%	100%
Males	49%	49%	49%	49%	49%	49%	50%	49%	49%	49%	48%	49%	49%
Females	51%	51%	51%	51%	51%	51%	50%	51%	51%	51%	52%	51%	51%
White	96%	90%	90%	89%	84%	92%	62%	91%	95%	96%	96%	98%	88%
Mixed	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Indian	0%	2%	1%	4%	4%	2%	7%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Pakistani / Bangladeshi	1%	3%	4%	1%	5%	2%	6%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	3%
Black	1%	2%	1%	2%	4%	2%	11%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	3%
Other Ethnic Group	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	11%	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%	3%
Disability	19%	17%	18%	17%	16%	15%	14%	14%	16%	17%	16%	18%	16%
Aged 16-19	5%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%	6%	5%	6%	5%
Aged 20-24	8%	8%	9%	8%	8%	7%	8%	7%	7%	8%	8%	8%	8%
Aged 25-34	16%	17%	16%	15%	17%	16%	24%	15%	14%	15%	16%	17%	17%
Aged 35-49	22%	23%	23%	23%	23%	24%	28%	25%	22%	22%	23%	25%	24%
Aged 50-64	25%	24%	24%	24%	23%	24%	20%	24%	24%	24%	25%	24%	24%
Aged 65+	23%	23%	22%	23%	23%	24%	14%	23%	26%	25%	23%	20%	22%
LGBT <sup>51</sup>	1.89%	2.80%	2.40%	2.36%	2.82%	1.90%	3.37%	2.91%	3.08%	2.58%	2.42%	1.60%	2.66%

<sup>51</sup> At the time of survey design and fieldwork, no national statistics existed on the number of Transgender individuals in the UK. LGB population data was supplemented with estimated Transgender population proportions from ONS to create the final LGBT weight.

---

## Appendix B: Additional Section – Perpetrators of sexual harassment

This section presents data on the characteristics of perpetrators of sexual harassment as defined by people who had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months. It will explore the gender of the perpetrators, whether they were an individual or in a group, and their relationship to the victim. It will also examine if perpetrators of repeat harassment were more likely to be at work, or outside of work. Differences in these factors will be examined across the range of sexual harassment behaviours, as well as how different demographic groups are affected.

The term ‘perpetrators’ refers specifically to the people that carried out a listed behaviour that people who experienced that behaviour said made them feel uncomfortable.

The data in this chapter shows responses for all those who have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months *excluding* high degree victims. A separate section has been included summarising the experience of high degree victims in the appendix. For more information about the rationale for this, please refer to the Methodology chapter.

Results throughout this report are experimental and may differ significantly from the results of other studies or statistics. For further details, including details of the behaviour-based design of this research, please refer to the methodology chapter and the ‘Interpreting sexual harassment data’ section in particular.

### Chapter Summary

- Of those who had experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, 33% experienced this only from strangers, 20% only from people that they knew and 43% from a mix of those two groups.
- Women and men were both more likely to have been harassed by someone of the opposite gender than by someone from their own gender, however men who experienced sexual harassment were still quite likely to experience it from other men.
- Around one in six of the population (14%) had experienced repeat sexual harassment from the same person over the last 12 months.

# 1. Relationship of perpetrator to victim

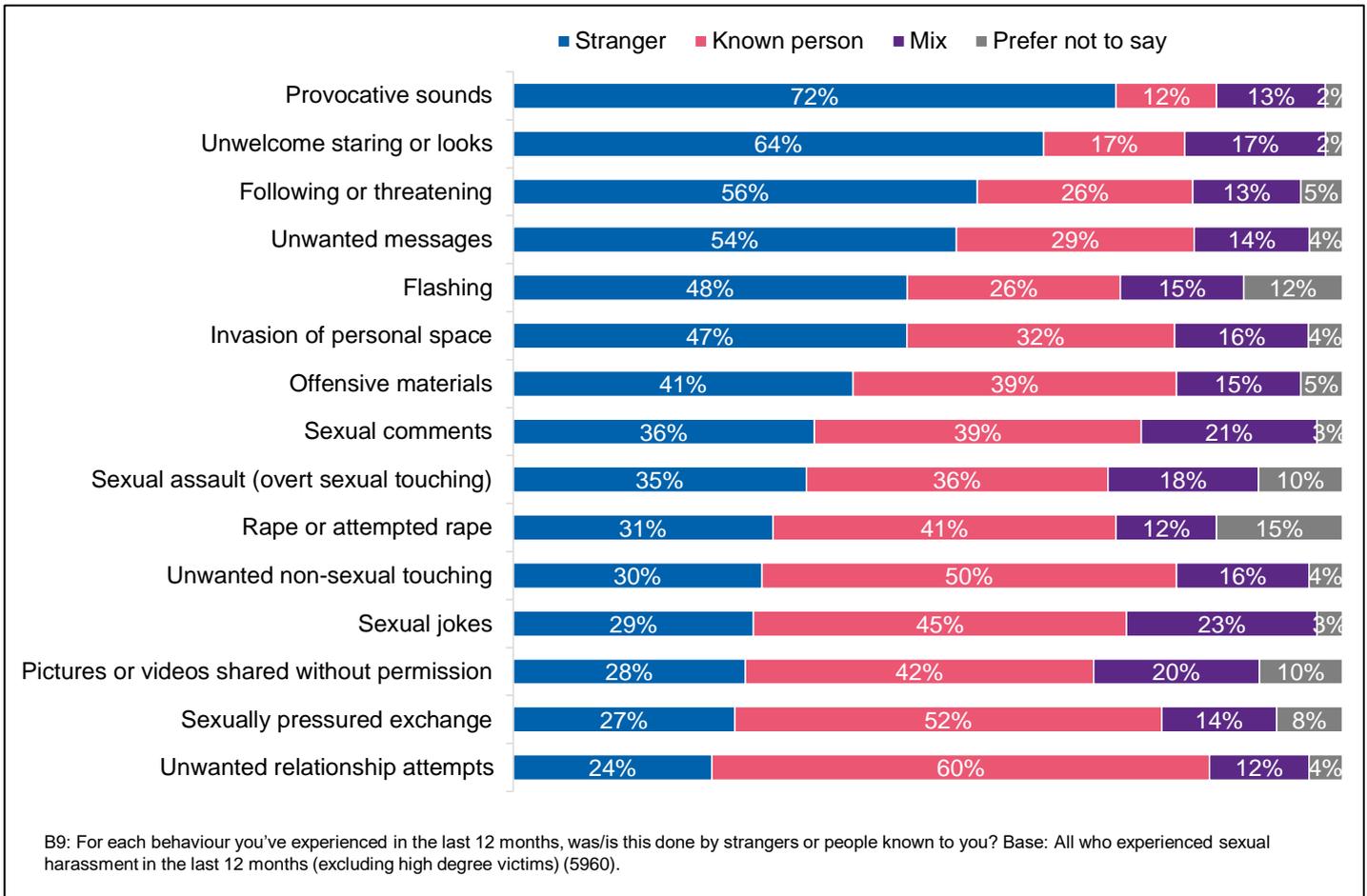
Of those who experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months, 33% experienced this exclusively from random people or strangers, while 20% experienced this exclusively from someone known to them and 46% from a mix of those known and not known.

**Figure B1.1 Relationship of victim to perpetrator of those who experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months**



However, certain behaviours were more likely to have been carried out by strangers than people known to the victim, as shown in Figure B1.2.

**Figure B1.2 Relationship of perpetrator to victim by sexual harassment behaviour<sup>52</sup>**



For some behaviours, over half of those who had experienced them stated that they were carried out exclusively by strangers, namely provocative sounds (72%), staring or looks (64%), being followed or threatened (56%) and unwanted messages (54%). In contrast, other behaviours were more likely to come from people known to the victim, particularly unwanted relationship attempts (60%), sexually pressured exchange (52%) and unwanted touching (50%) which were from people known to them more than half the time. Sexual jokes and sexual comments were the behaviours most likely to be carried out by a mix of strangers and people known to the victim more often than other behaviours (23% and 21% respectively).

<sup>52</sup> As discussed in the Methodology section, the design of this survey allowed for considerable latitude for individuals to self-define what constituted sexual harassment on the basis of their own perceived threat; as a result, some data points will be counterintuitive due to differing experience and severity of each behaviour. In this case, it may seem surprising that strangers share pictures or videos of victims without their permission, which suggests that the internet and social media may play a role.

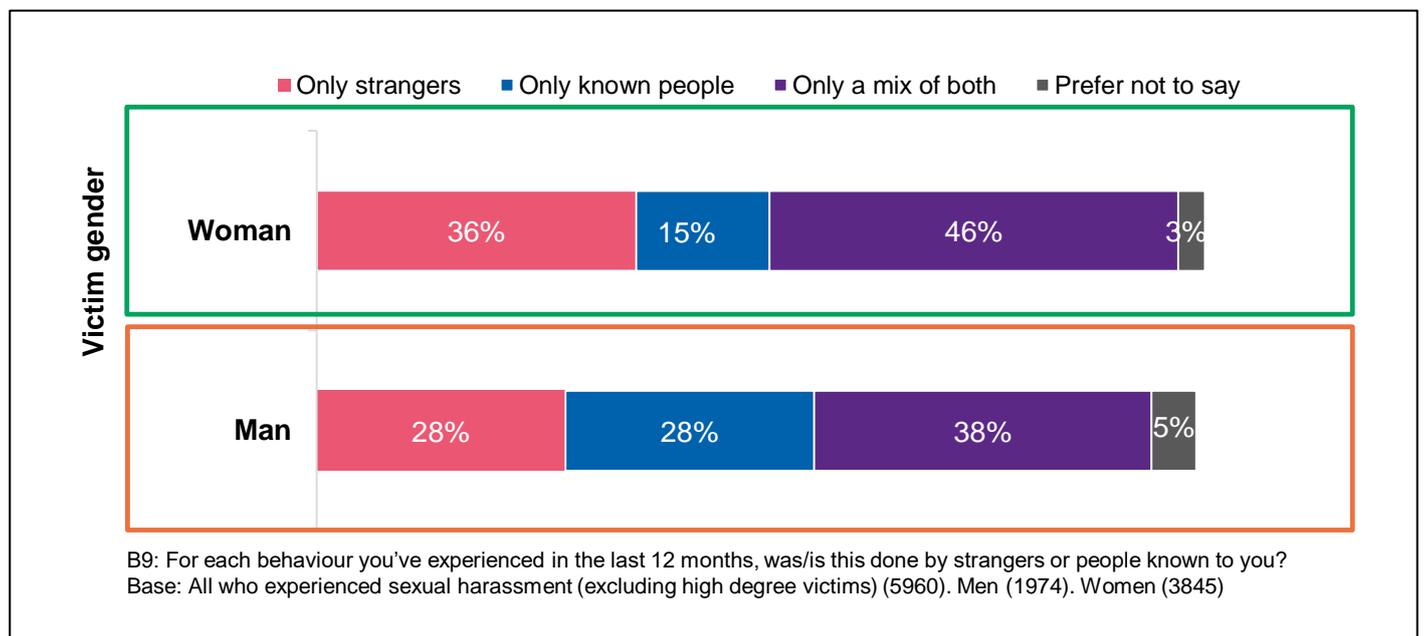
## Relationship by demographic group and behaviour

The relationship between victim and perpetrator changed significantly between demographic groups by gender, age, LGBT, disability, and working status, but showed no notable difference by ethnicity. This was true overall and for specific behaviours.

### Gender

Women who experienced at least one sexual harassment behaviour in the last 12 months were significantly more likely than men in this group to be harassed by strangers (36% vs. 28%). This finding was particularly notable when looking at experiences of provocative sounds (78% of women experienced this by a stranger compared with 43% of men), unwelcome staring or looks (68% women vs. 53% men), and being followed or threatened (67% women vs. 37% men).

**Figure B1.3 Relationship of perpetrator to victim by gender**



Conversely, men who experienced at least one sexual harassment behaviour in the last 12 months were significantly more likely than women in this group to be harassed by someone they knew (59% vs. 50%). In particular, men were more likely to experience sexual comments from a known person than women (51% men experienced this from a known person vs 35% women) in addition to sexual jokes (52% men vs 42% of women), and displays of offensive or pornographic materials (42% men vs 36% women). The behaviours that women were more likely to experience from strangers, men were more likely to experience from a known person i.e. provocative sounds (33% of men experienced this by a known person compared with 8% of women), unwelcome staring or looks (27% men vs. 14% women), and being followed in a way that felt sexually threatening (38% men vs. 21% women).

There were three behaviours where women were significantly more likely to be harassed by people known to them: unwanted relationship attempts (64% of women harassed by someone

---

known to them compared to 54% of men), sexually pressured exchange (56% vs. 47%) and actual or attempted rape (51% vs. 37%).

#### *Age*

Age also played a part in whether perpetrators were more likely to be strangers or known to the victim. People aged 16-24 who experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months were significantly more likely to be harassed by a stranger (77% vs. 67% average). This was particularly pronounced for: unwelcome staring or looks (69% 16-24 years compared to 64% average), being followed in a sexually threatening way (70% vs. 56%) and unwanted touching (36% vs. 30%).

#### *Sexual orientation*

Those who identified as LGB and experienced at least one sexual harassment behaviour in the last 12 months were significantly more likely than those who identify as heterosexual to be harassed by both strangers and people known to them. However, this group also followed the pattern of being harassed by strangers more often (73% of LGB people experienced any harassment from strangers vs. 66% for heterosexual people); this was particularly notable for unwanted touching (36% vs 29%), provocative sounds (79% vs 72%)

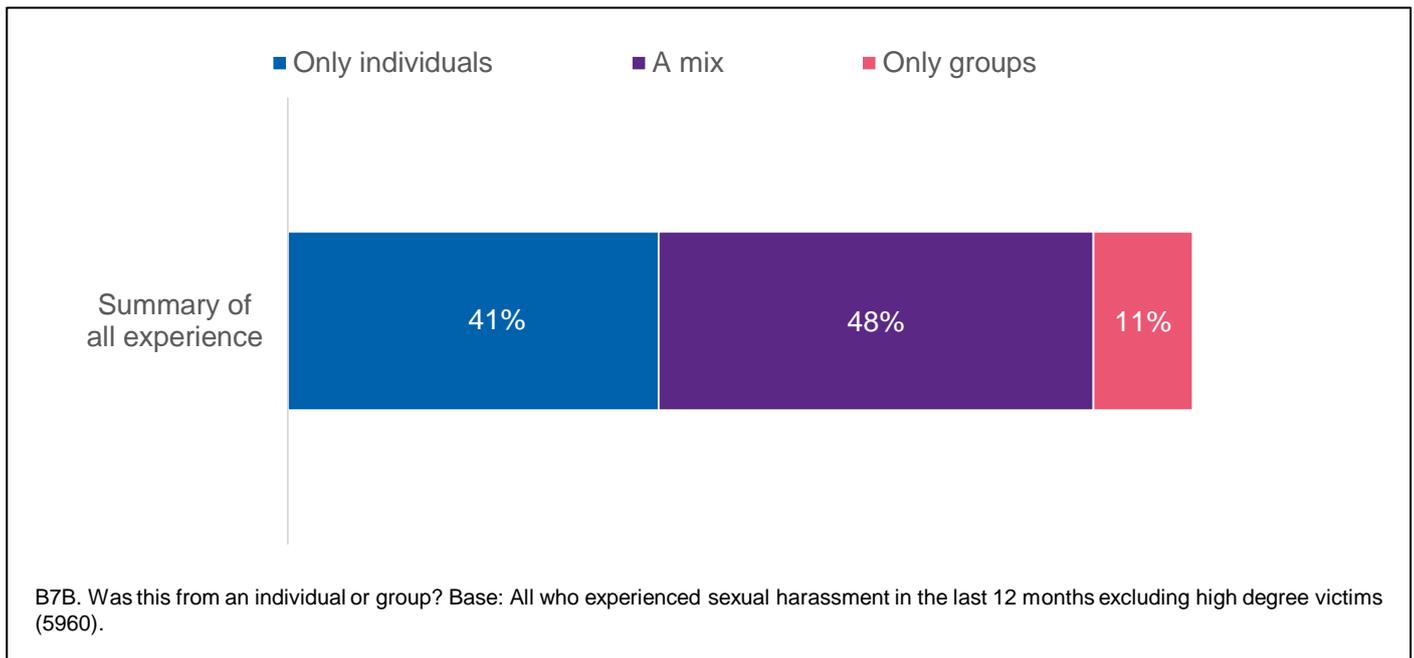
#### *Disability*

Those with a highly limiting disability who had experienced at least one sexual harassment behaviour in the last 12 months were significantly more likely than those without a disability to be harassed by strangers (70% vs 66%).

## **2. Individual and groups of perpetrators**

The balance between individual and group perpetrators is shown in Figure B2.1.

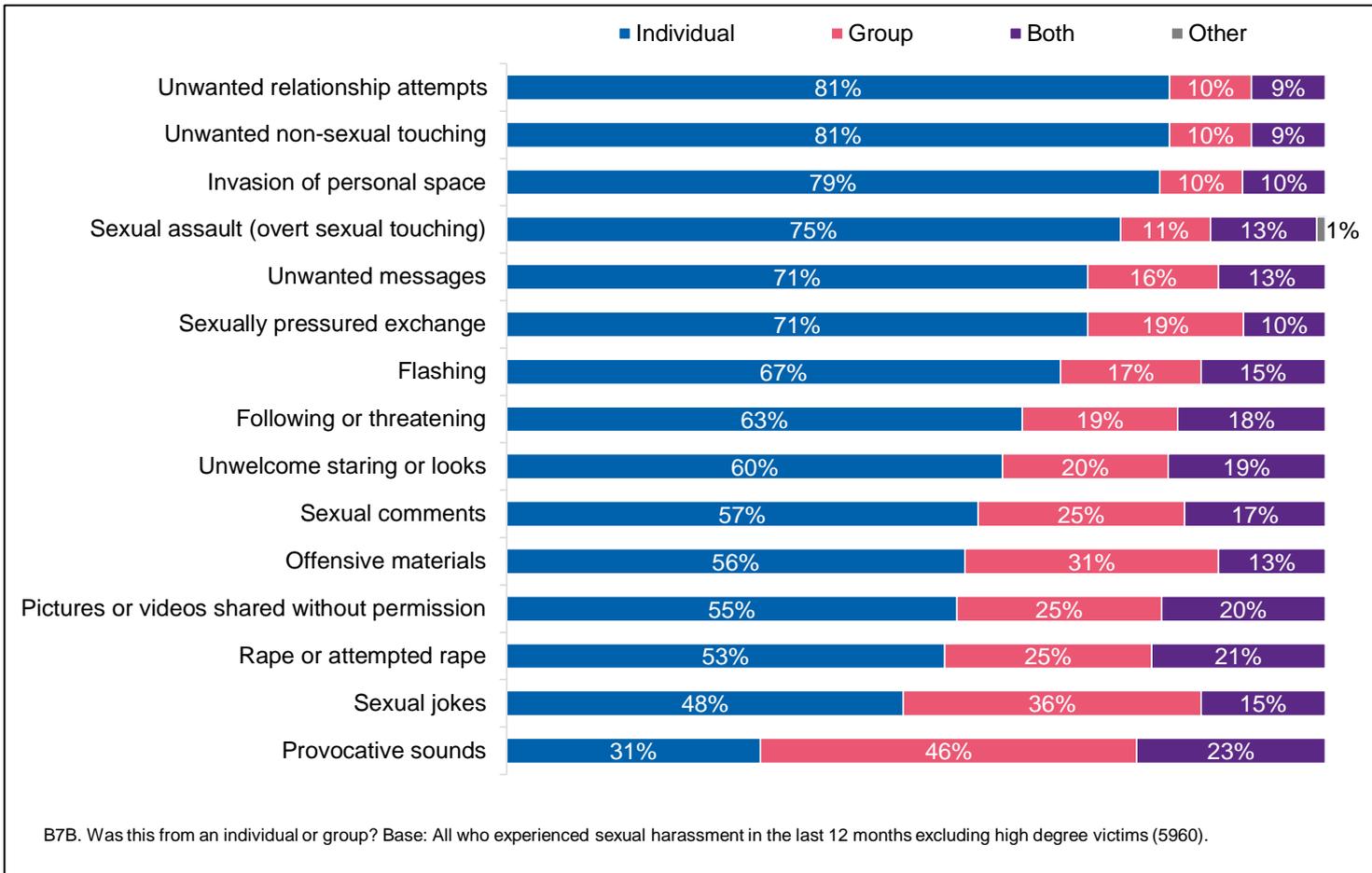
**Figure B2.1 Incidence of harassment by number of perpetrators**



One-in-ten (11%) were harassed exclusively by groups of people, while nearly a half (48%) experienced sexual harassment from both groups and individuals.

When looking at specific behaviours, most were carried out by an individual perpetrator rather than a group, as shown in Figure B2.2

**Figure B2.2 Number of perpetrators by sexual harassment behaviour<sup>53</sup>**



The behaviours most likely to be carried out by individuals were unwanted touching (81%) and unwanted relationship attempts (81%), followed by personal invasion of space (79%). In contrast, provocative sounds were more likely to be carried out by a group of perpetrators rather than an individual (46% by a group).

### Perpetrator composition by demographic group

While the majority of harassment appears to have been carried out by individuals, certain groups were more likely than others to experience this.

#### Gender

Women who experienced at least one sexual harassment behaviour in the last 12 months were significantly more likely to be harassed by an individual (85% of women compared to 76% of men experienced at least one behaviour from an individual). In contrast, men were significantly more

<sup>53</sup> As discussed in the Methodology section, the design of this survey allowed for considerable latitude for individuals to self-define what constituted sexual harassment on the basis of their own perceive threat; as a result, some data points will be counterintuitive due to differing experience and severity of each behaviour. In this case, experience of behaviours such as unwanted touching and rape or attempted rape by a group rather than an individual is believed to be the same behaviour from multiple people in the same social group or the perceived *threat* of these behaviours from a group of people.

likely to be harassed by a group (49% of men compared to 43% of women). This pattern held true across all behaviours, except provocative sounds, where men were more likely to experience this from an individual (43% vs 30% for women) and women from a group (48% vs 38% for men).

*Age*

Young people aged 16-24 and those aged 25-34 who experienced at least one sexual harassment behaviour in the last 12 months were significantly more likely than older people to be harassed by groups (53% and 50% respectively compared to 45% average of other age groups).

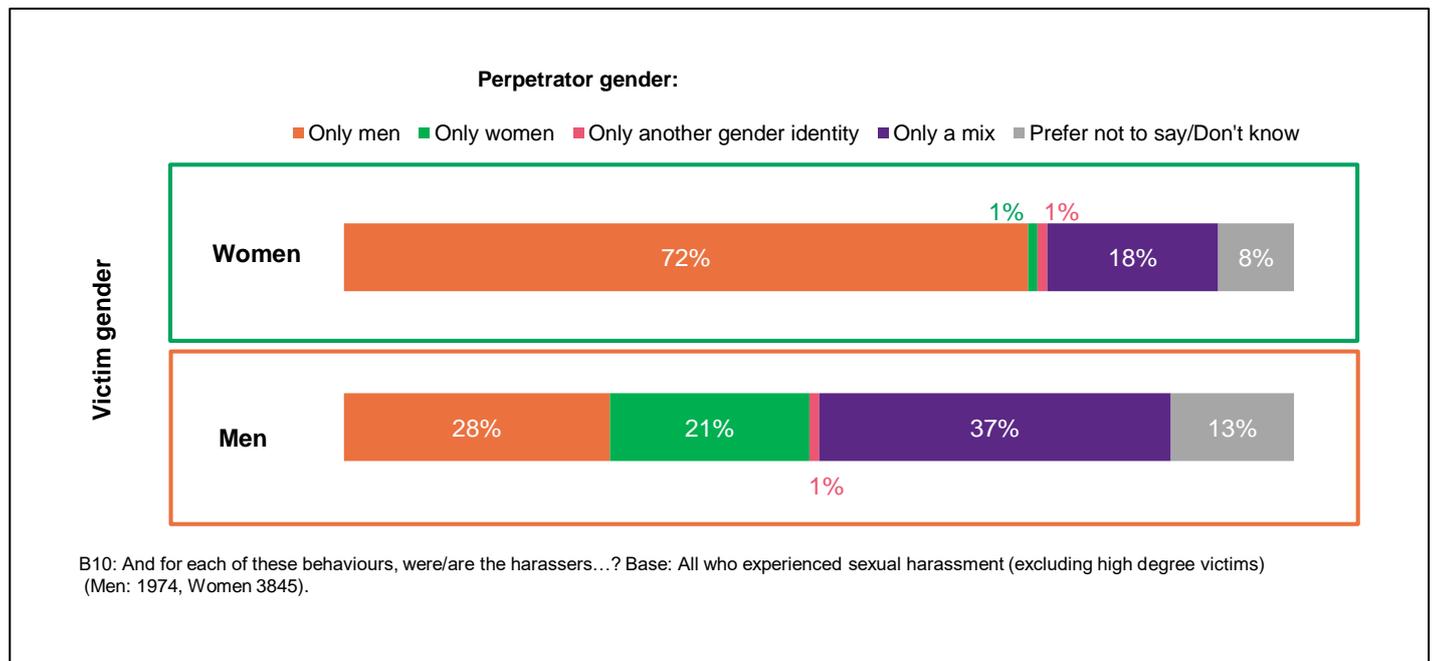
*LGB*

People who identified as LGB who experienced at least one sexual harassment behaviour in the last 12 months were significantly more likely than people who identified as heterosexual to be harassed by an individual rather than a group (49% of those who identified as LGB compared to 45% of those who identified as heterosexual).

### 3. Gender of perpetrators

As expected, women were most likely to experience sexual harassment from men, where 72% experienced reporting harassment from only men and a further 18% from a mix of both men and women (totalling 87% who had experienced sexual harassment from men overall). However, as shown in Figure 5.4, men were more likely to experience sexual harassment from a mix of genders: while 21% only experienced this from women, 28% experienced harassment only from other men and 37% from a mix of men and women.

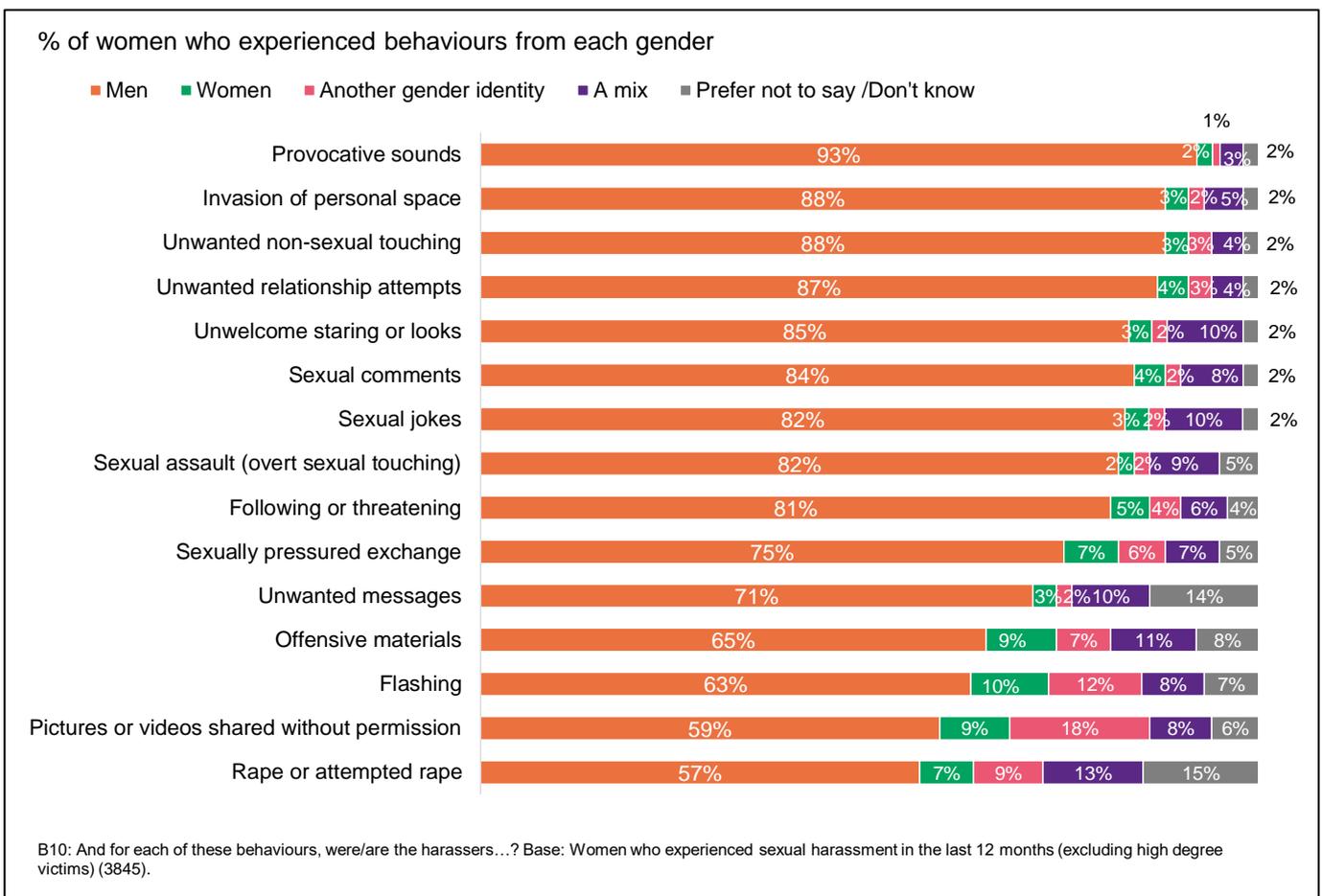
**Figure B3.1 Incidence of experiencing sexual harassment from different genders of perpetrator by gender**



Only 21% of men reported experiencing sexual harassment only from women, while 28% experience it from only men and 37% from both, totalling 65% from other men and 58% from women. This is in sharp contrast to women, 19% of which experience harassment from other women and 90% total from men. However, while this pattern holds true by behaviour overall, there were distinct differences across the behaviours by gender, with some sexual harassment behaviours more common to or from certain genders. For example, men and women were both more likely to experience sexual jokes and displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials from other men rather than women, as shown in Figure 5.5 and 5.6. For note, men were less likely to have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months compared to women.

As shown in Figure B3.2, women had broadly the same pattern across the different sexual harassment behaviours.

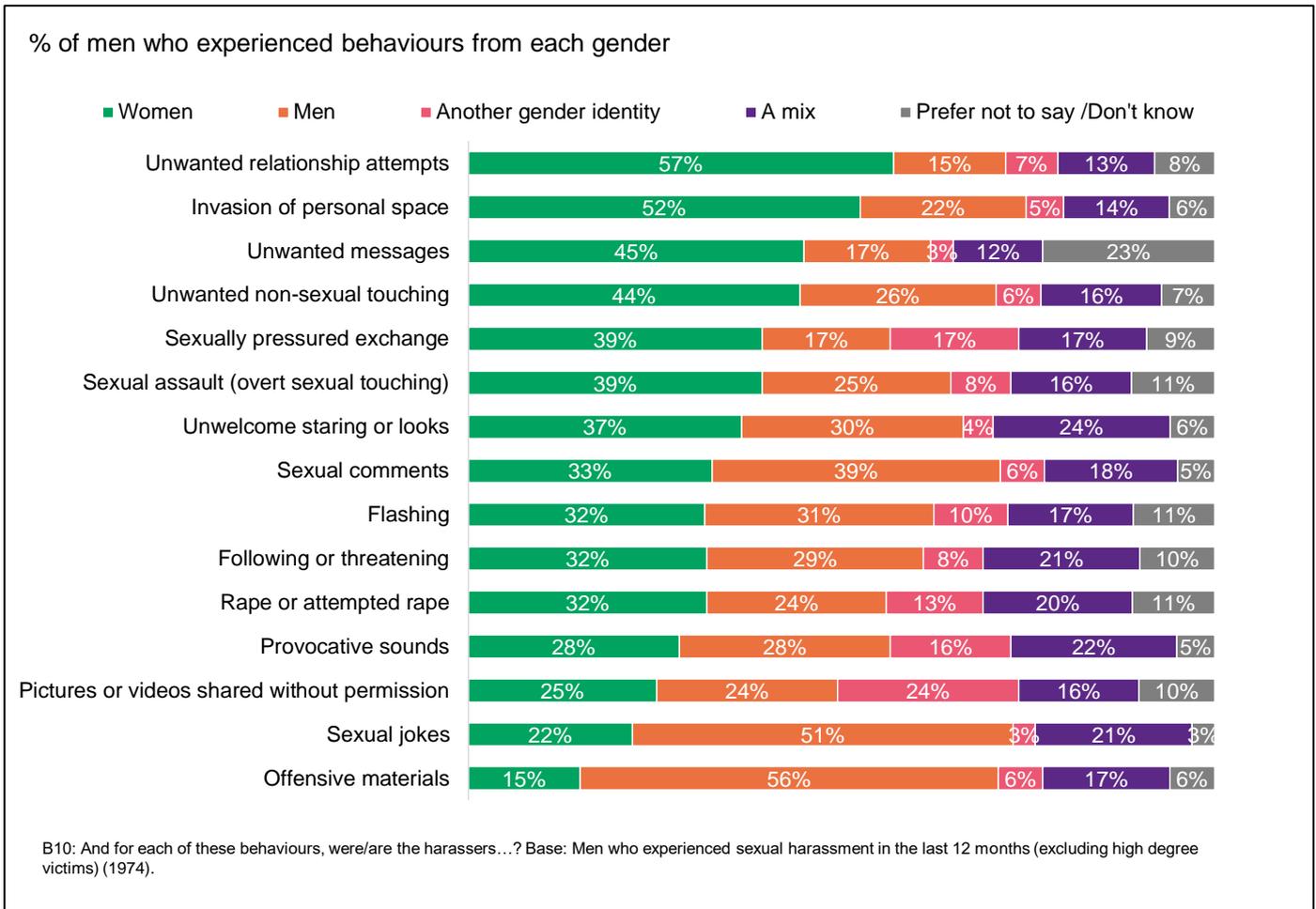
**Figure B3.2 Incidence of women experiencing sexual harassment from different genders of perpetrator<sup>54</sup>**



<sup>54</sup> Response for the option 'another gender identity' (meaning someone not identifying strictly as a man or a woman) is higher than expected given the nature of the question and size of the 'another gender identity' population. Analysis of survey data suggests that that some respondents have selected 'another gender identity' for LGBT individuals, e.g. for harassment from someone homosexual of the same gender, rather than strictly based on their *gender identity*.

In contrast, experience of men had a greater variation in perpetrator gender by behaviour, as shown in Figure B3.4.

**Figure B3.4 Incidence of men experiencing sexual harassment from different genders of perpetrator<sup>55</sup>**



Although men experienced many behaviours more often exclusively from women, men reported experiencing certain behaviours from men more than women, namely: displays of offensive or pornographic materials, sexual jokes and sexual comments. Flashing, being followed in a sexually threatening manner and having sexual picture or videos shared without permission were experienced nearly equally by men or women.

### Perpetrator gender by demographic groups

The most likely gender of the perpetrator changed between different groups, varying dependent on the age and sexual orientation of the victim.

<sup>55</sup> Response for the option 'another gender identity' (meaning someone not identifying strictly as a man or a woman) is higher than expected given the nature of the question and size of the 'another gender identity' population. Analysis of survey data suggests that that some respondents have selected 'another gender identity' for LGBT individuals, e.g. for harassment from someone homosexual of the same gender, rather than based on their *gender identity*.

---

### *Age*

Young people were significantly more likely than older people to experience sexual harassment from men: 81% of those ages 16-24 compared to 64% among those aged 50+ (73-76% for those aged 25-49).

Young people aged 16-24 were significantly more likely than other groups to be harassed by men for many behaviours, particularly: provocative sounds (88% of 16-24 year olds who experienced this behaviour were harassed by men vs 81% of the average) and unwanted touching (77% vs 68%).

### *Sexual orientation<sup>56</sup>*

Those who identified as LGB were significantly more likely than those who identified as heterosexual to experience at least one sexual harassment behaviour from men (84% vs. 73%).

LGB people were also significantly more likely to be harassed by men than other groups across almost all behaviours. This was particularly notable for unwanted touching (75% of LGB people who had experienced this behaviour vs. 67% of those who identify as heterosexual), and personal invasion of space (79% vs 65%).

## **4. Repeat harassment**

Around one in six people (14%) experienced repeat sexual harassment from the same person in the last 12 months (34% of those who have experienced sexual harassment). This was not collected by behaviour.

### **Repeat harassment by demographic group**

Different groups of people were more likely than others to experience repeat harassment. This was particularly notable for gender, age, LGBT, ethnicity and disability status.

#### *Gender*

Overall, women were significantly more likely than men to experience repeat harassment (16% vs 11%). However, when considering only those who had experienced any sexual harassment in the last 12 months, men were slightly (but not significantly) more likely than women to be repeatedly harassed: 35% of men who experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months experienced repeat harassment compared to 32% of women.

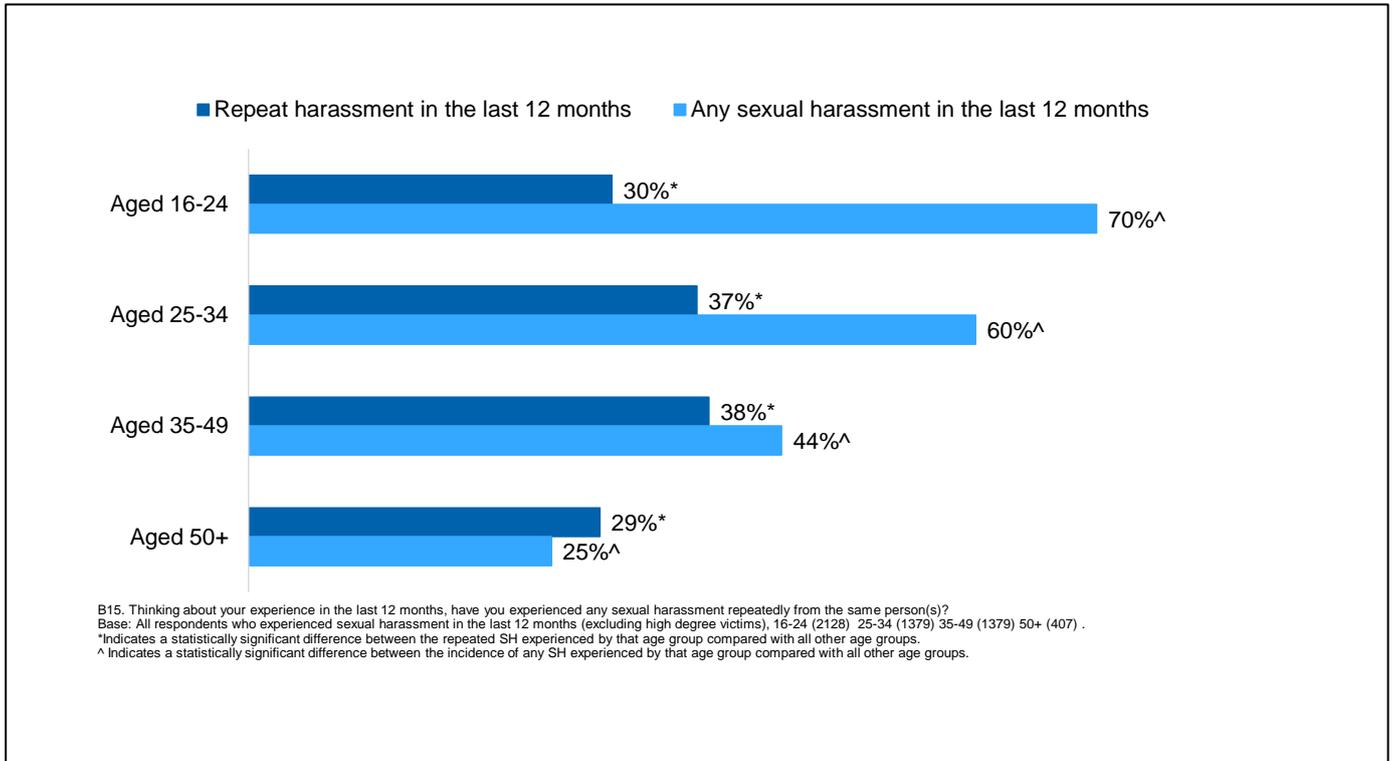
#### *Age*

Repeat harassment varied significantly by age group, with those aged 35-49 most likely to experience repeat harassment (38%), as shown in Figure B4.1. Those aged 35-49 were also significantly more likely to experience repeat harassment than average, while those aged over 50 were significantly less likely to experience repeat harassment than average.

---

<sup>56</sup> Data was collected for LGB and T individuals in the survey design; due to the smaller base size and unique experience of transgender individuals compared to LGB individuals, the decision was taken by GEO to primarily report LGB vs. heterosexual.

**Figure B4.1 Incidence of repeat sexual harassment from the same person compared to any sexual harassment in the last 12 months, by age group**



*Sexual orientation*<sup>57</sup>

Those who identified as LGB were significantly more likely to experience repeat harassment than those who identify as heterosexual (23% vs. 14%).

*Disability*

Those who had a highly limiting disability were significantly more likely to experience repeat harassment (19% vs. 11% with no disability).

*Ethnic minorities (excluding White minorities)*

The population of people from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) were significantly more likely than others to say they were experiencing repeat harassment (16% vs. 14%).

*Socioeconomic classification*

Those in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations (18%) and lower supervisory and technical occupations (22%) were significantly more likely to experience repeat harassment than average (14%).

<sup>57</sup> Data was collected for LGB and T individuals in the survey design; due to the smaller base size and unique experience of transgender individuals compared to LGB individuals, the decision was taken by GEO to primarily report LGB vs. heterosexual.

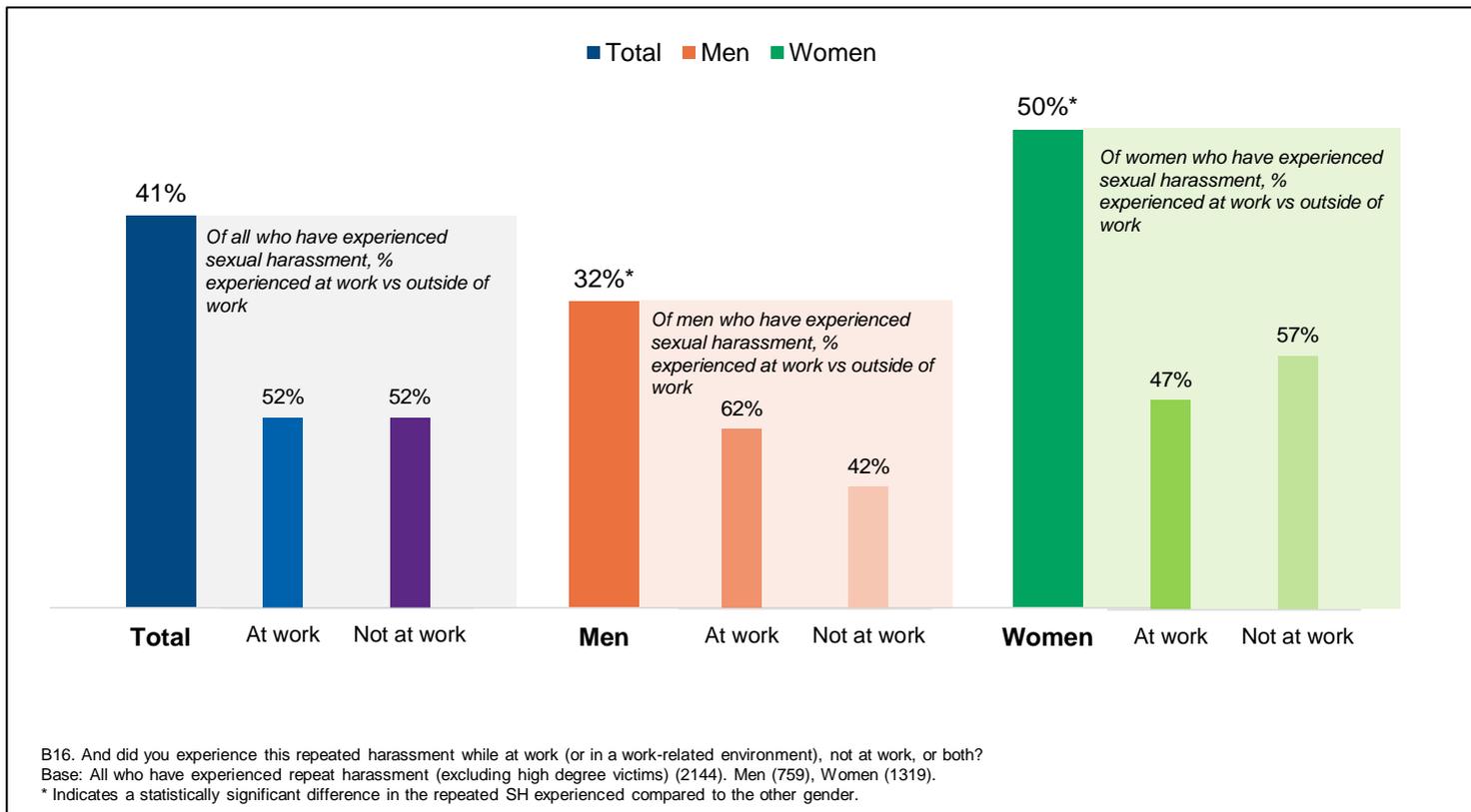
### Repeat harassment by location

Of those who experienced repeat sexual harassment from the same person in the last 12 months, over half (52%) experienced this at a workplace, while just over half (52%) experienced this at a place other than work.

#### Gender

Women experienced repeat sexual harassment more in non-work (public) locations, while men were significantly more likely to experience repeat harassment at work.

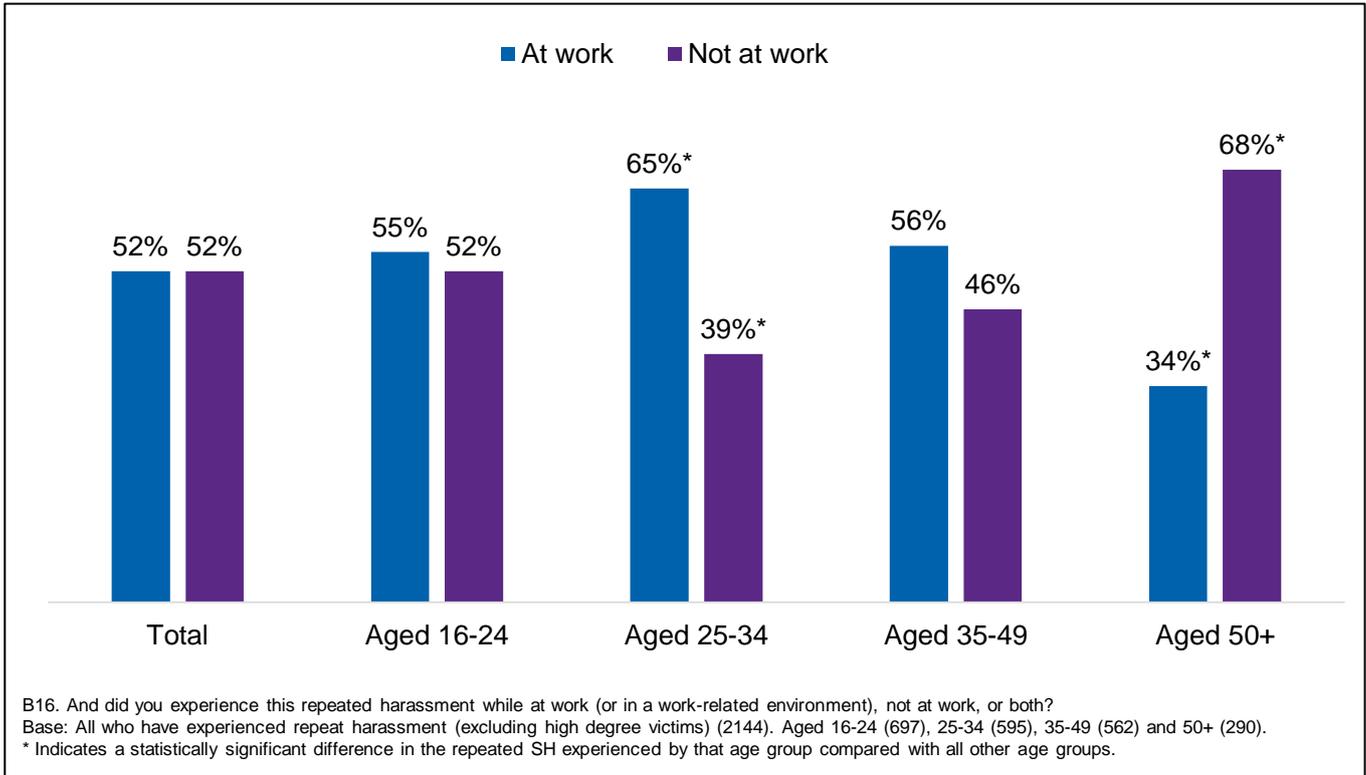
**Figure B4.2 Incidence of repeat harassment by gender and location type**



#### Age

People aged 25-34 were significantly more likely to experience repeat harassment at work (65% of those who have experienced repeat harassment) and significantly less likely than other ages to experience sexual harassment outside of work. In contrast, people aged 50+ were significantly more likely to experience harassment outside work and least likely at work.

**Figure B4.3. Incidence of repeat sexual harassment by age and location**



**Disability**

Those with a highly limiting disability were significantly less likely to experience repeat harassment at work than those without any disability (44% vs 55%) but were significantly more likely to experience harassment in non-work (public) locations (58% vs 48%).

While people from ethnic minorities and LGB individuals are significantly more likely to experience sexual harassment overall and repeat sexual harassment, there were no significant differences by location.

---

## Appendix C: Additional Section – Witnessing sexual harassment

This section looks at experiences of witnessing sexual harassment. It looks at the overall incidence of witnessing sexual harassment and how this varies by different groups of people. It also looks at the actions taken in response to witnessing sexual harassment. The second part of the chapter looks specifically at these issues for sexual harassment in the workplace. This chapter includes all those who completed the survey, including the high degree victims group.

It must be emphasised that, like incidence of sexual harassment, report of witnessing is very much tied to whether the ‘witnesser’ personally defines the event as sexual harassment (which could differ from that of the victim). This could easily lead to both under- or over-reporting of witnessing, depending on the person, situation and behaviour in question. While this was an acknowledged possibility when including this in the survey design, the incidence data for witnessing should therefore be treated with extreme caution. However, this section about witnessing was purposefully included and reported to better understand *responses* by witnesses in relation to sexual harassment, in order to better understand this aspect of sexual harassment experience.

Results throughout this report are experimental and may differ significantly from the results of other studies or statistics. For further details, including details of the behaviour-based design of this research, please refer to the methodology chapter and the ‘Interpreting sexual harassment data’ section in particular.

---

## Chapter Summary

- Two in five people (38%) felt they had witnessed some form of sexual harassment over the last 12 months.
- Half of those who had witnessed sexual harassment had intervened on at least one occasion; 16% had intervened on every occasion they had witnessed.
- Where witnesses had chosen to intervene, it was quite common for them to address the harasser (almost three quarters had done so on at least one occasion when they had witnessed sexual harassment). However, fewer than half had reported an occurrence of sexual harassment formally (32%).
- A quarter (25%) of those in employment had witnessed sexual harassment in the workplace in the last 12 months.
- Of those who experienced sexual harassment in the workplace, less than half (43%) thought that someone else had witnessed the behaviour.
- Where there were witnesses to the sexual harassment in the workplace, in the majority of cases (63%), victims reported that witnesses took some action (37% stated that witnesses took no action). In around a quarter of cases, victims stated that the witness(es) reported the case formally.

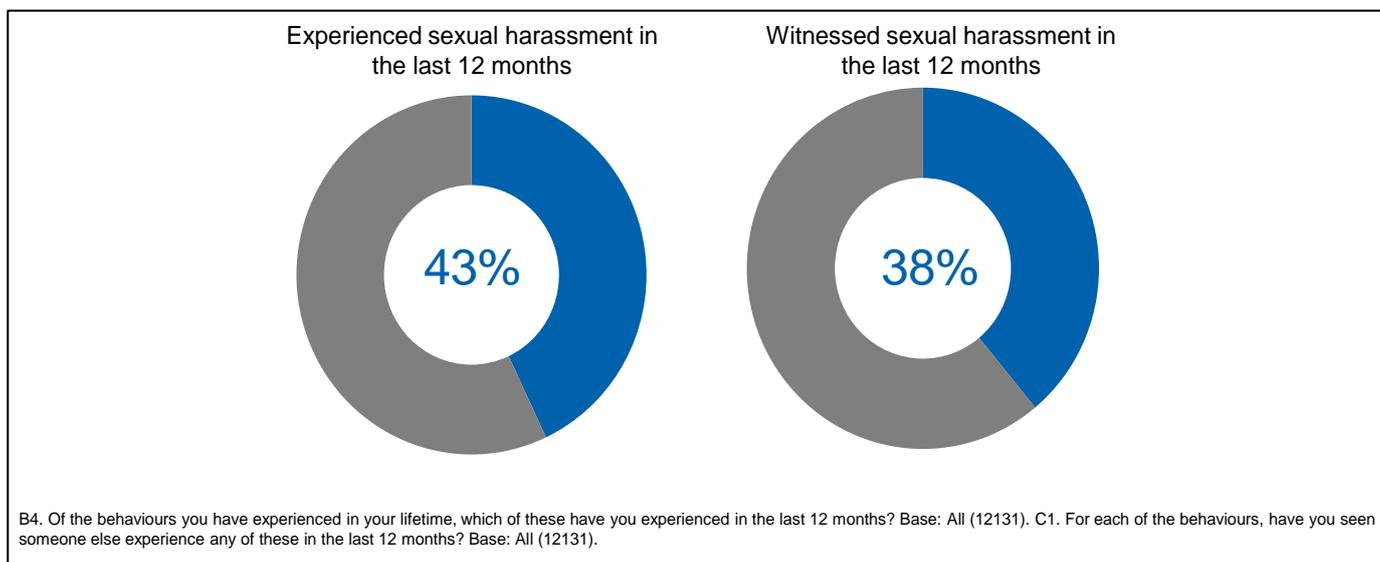
## 1. Incidence of witnessing sexual harassment

Overall, very similar proportion of people have reported witnessing sexual harassment as experiencing it in the last 12 months. As Figure C1.1 shows, 38% of people had witnessed at least one form of sexual harassment in the last 12 months<sup>58</sup> compared to the 43% who reported experiencing it.

---

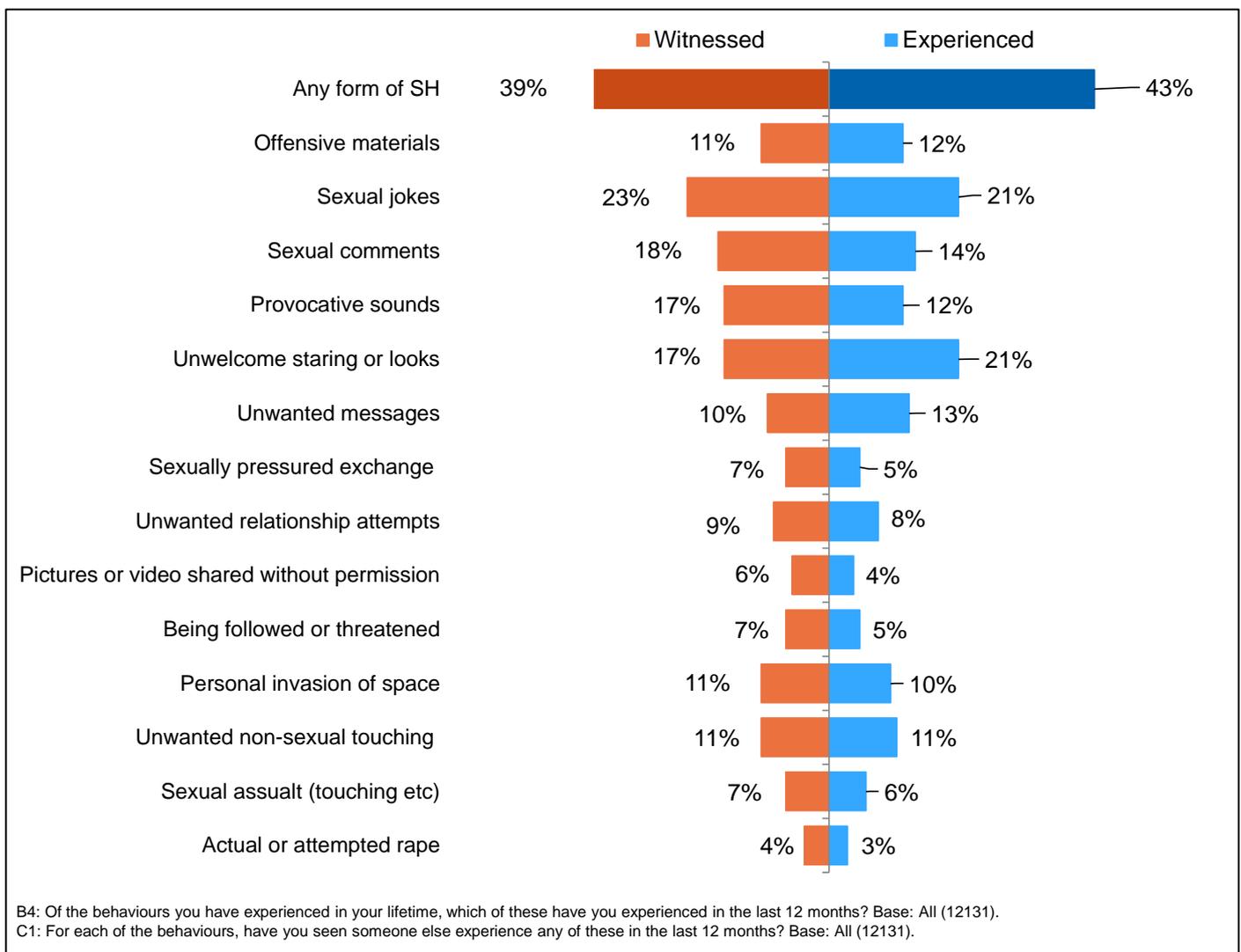
<sup>58</sup> Respondents were asked whether they had witnessed each of the sexual harassment behaviours included in the questionnaire apart from flashing (because it is was not deemed possible to witness this without also experiencing it).

**Figure C1.1 Proportions experiencing vs witnessing sexual harassment in the last 12 months**



As shown in Figure C1.2, the pattern of prevalence of witnessing different types of sexual harassment behaviour is similar to the pattern for experiencing it.

**Figure C1.2 Experienced vs witnessed sexual harassment behaviours in the last 12 months<sup>59 60</sup>**



Some behaviours – like sexual jokes, sexual comments and provocative sounds – were more commonly witnessed than experienced; this is likely due to context (e.g. they are perhaps more likely to take place in a group environment). Other behaviours such as unwelcome staring or looks and unwanted messages were more likely to be experienced than witnessed.

As noted throughout this report, self-definition of sexual harassment means results for many behaviours are higher than found in other studies; the same is true for witnessing, where self-definition of what has been witnessed will also result in slightly higher figures than perhaps expected, especially for more severe behaviours like rape or sexual assault (whereby some may have indicated witnessing an attempted rape in a broader way than traditional definitions). In

<sup>59</sup> Due to likelihood of under- or over-reporting, as noted previously, please treat this witnessing data with caution.

<sup>60</sup> Results are experimental and may differ significantly from results published elsewhere. For further details, please refer to the 'Interpreting sexual harassment data' section in the Methodology chapter.

some cases, this means a greater proportion feel they have witnessed a sexual harassment behaviour than have experienced it; this is a reflection of their own perception, rather than what the victim may have felt in that situation. This consideration applied to many of the results in this section.

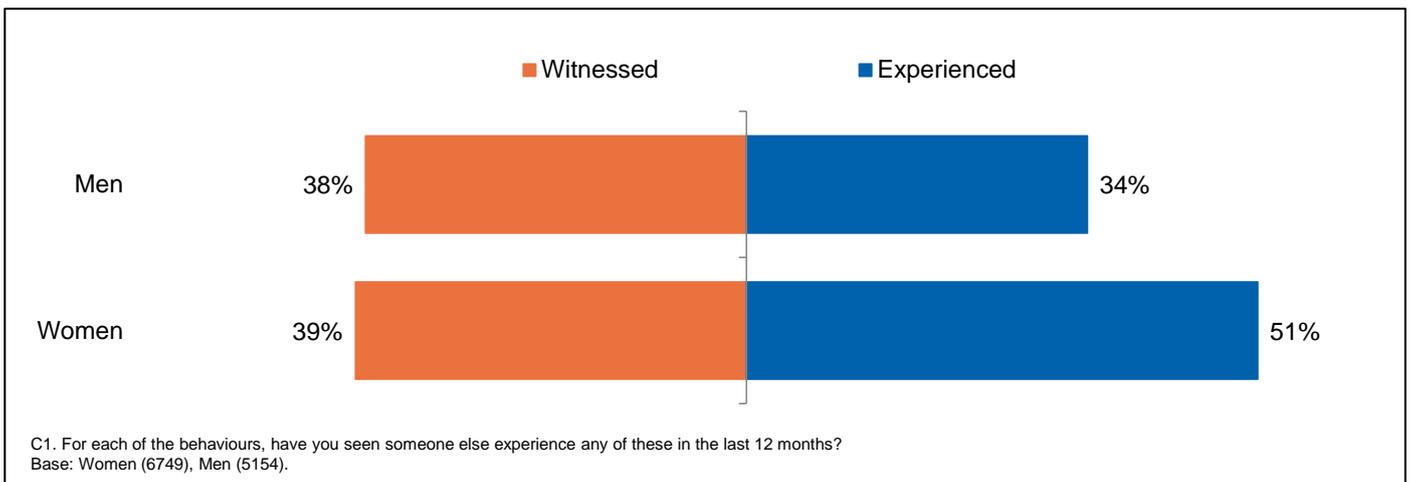
Gender, age, sexual orientation, and disability were all factors the likelihood to witness sexual harassment behaviours.

## 2. People who have witnessed sexual harassment

### *Witnessing by gender*

Women (39%) were just as likely to have witnessed sexual harassment as men (38%).

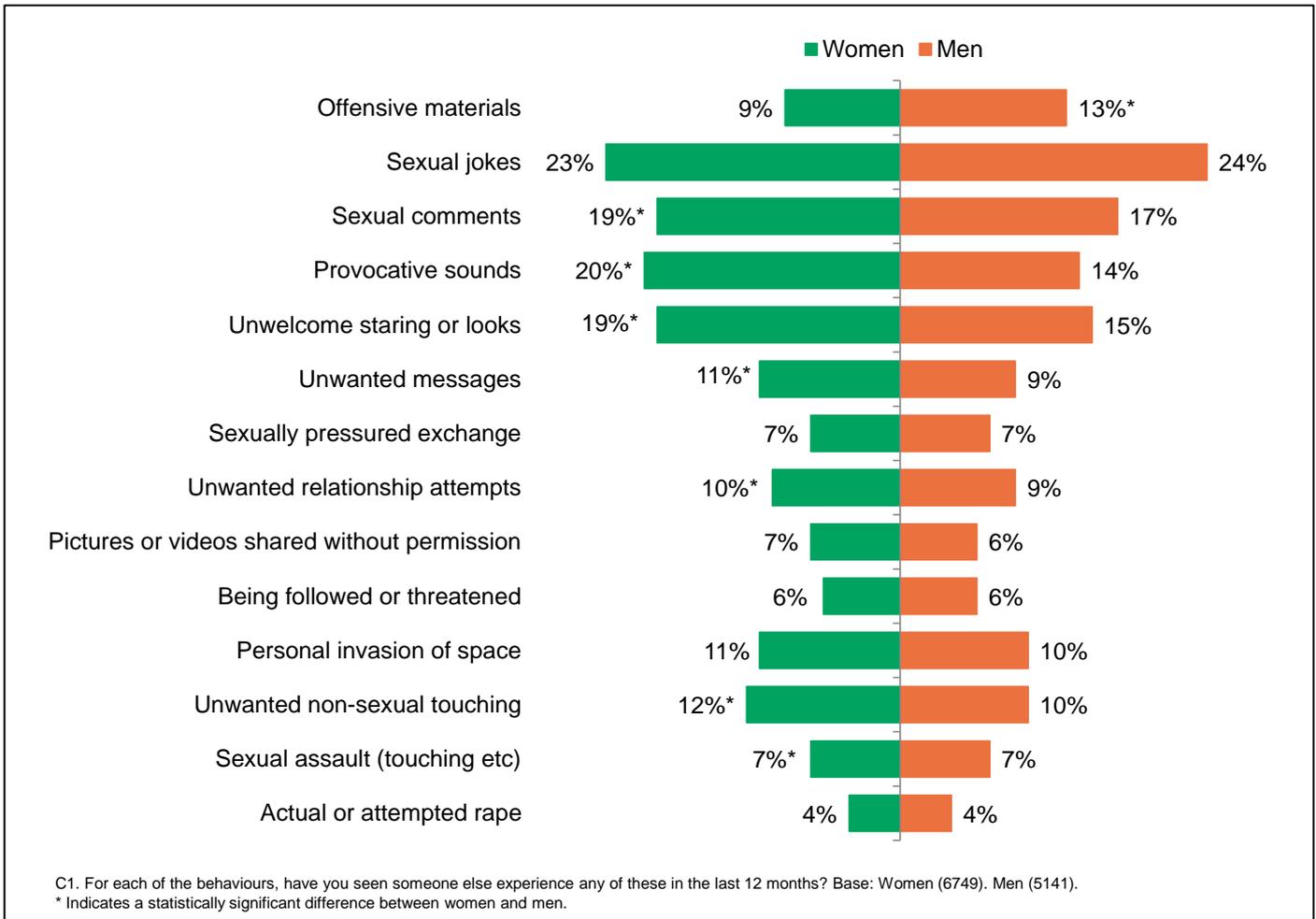
**Figure C2.1 Experienced vs witnessed behaviours by gender<sup>61</sup>**



However, as shown in Figure C2.2, this can vary significantly by sexual harassment behaviour.

<sup>61</sup> Due to likelihood of under- or over-reporting, as noted previously, please treat this witnessing data with caution.

**Figure C2.2 Witnessed sexual harassment behaviours by gender<sup>62</sup>**



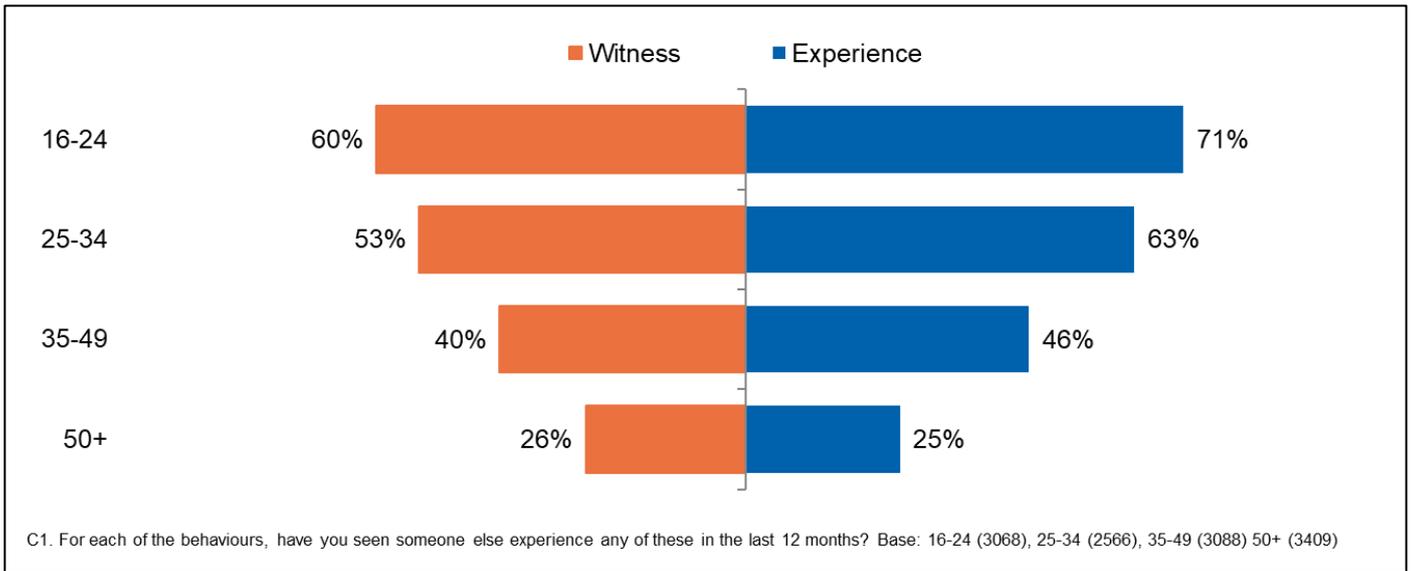
Women were significantly more likely to witness provocative sounds, staring or looks, sexual comments, unwanted touching, unwanted messages, personal space invasion and unwanted relationship attempts, whereas men are more likely to witness sharing offensive material. Men and women witnessed the other behaviours nearly equally.

*Witnessing by age*

As with experiencing sexual harassment, age had a significant impact on the likelihood to have witnessed sexual harassment, with younger ages significantly more likely to report witnessing at least one form of harassment in the last 12 months. As shown in Figure A7.3, while three in five (60%) of 16-24-year olds witnessed sexual harassment in the last 12 months only just over a quarter (26%) of 50+ year olds did so.

<sup>62</sup> Due to likelihood of under- or over-reporting, as noted previously, please treat this witnessing data with caution.

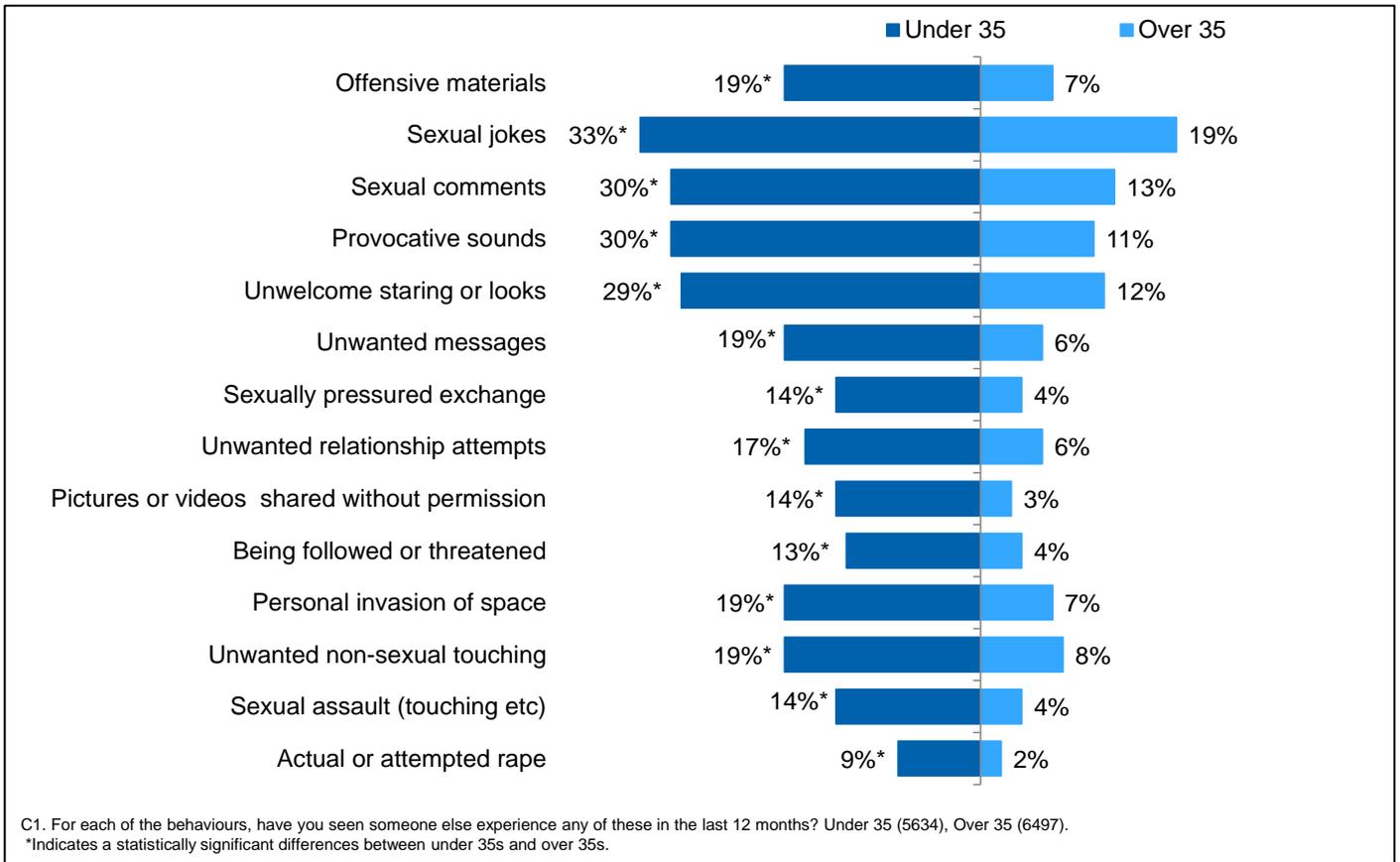
Figure C2.3 Experiencing and witnessing sexual harassment in the last 12 months<sup>63</sup>



When looking at sexual harassment behaviours, people aged under 35 were most likely to have witnessed each behaviour in the last 12 months, as shown in Figure C2.4.

<sup>63</sup> Due to likelihood of under- or over-reporting, as noted previously, please treat this witnessing data with caution.

**Figure C2.4 Experiencing and witnessing sexual harassment by age<sup>64</sup>**



Some behaviours were around five times more likely to have been witnessed by under 35s compared to over 35s. This includes actual and or attempted rape and someone taking and / or sharing of sexual pictures or videos of them without permission. Behaviours which were at around four times more likely to have been witnessed by under 35s compared to over 35s were unwanted, overt sexual touching, being physically followed in a sexually threatening way and feeling pressured by someone to date them/do a sexual act for them in exchange for something.

Perceived witnessing is higher amongst under 35s, which may be a reflection of changing views on what constitutes sexual harassment and in line with the self-determined definitions used in this research.<sup>65</sup>

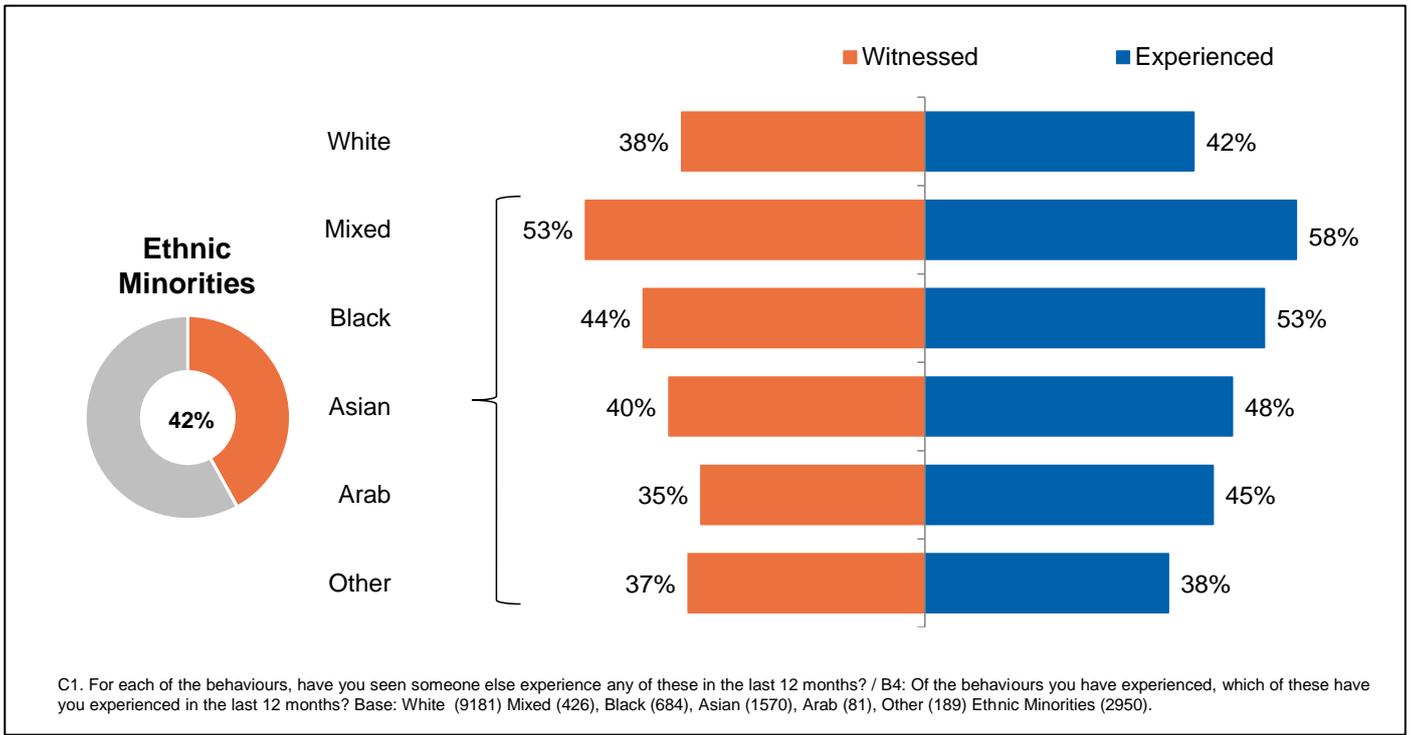
*Witnessing by ethnicity*

Overall, people from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) were slightly more likely to have witnessed sexual harassment in the last 12 months than White people (42% compared with 38% respectively) however there were considerable differences in the likelihood to have witnessed sexual harassment by individual ethnic groups, as shown in Figure C2.5.

<sup>64</sup> Due to likelihood of under- or over-reporting, as noted previously, please treat this witnessing data with caution.

<sup>65</sup> See, for example, recent news articles on NPR and USA Today.

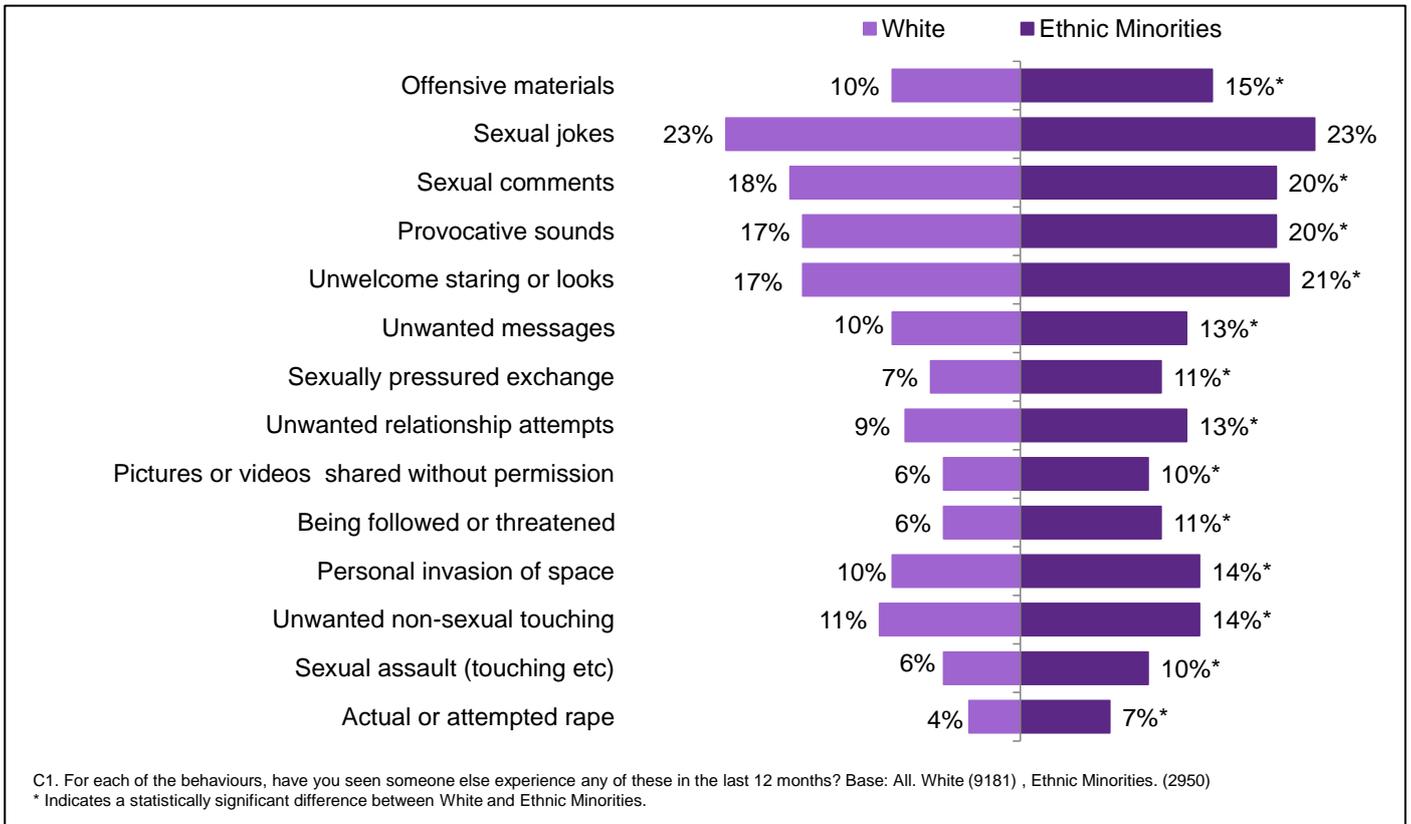
Figure C2.5 Sexual harassment experienced and witnessed by ethnicity<sup>66</sup>



People from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) were also significantly more likely to have witnessed nearly all behaviours in the last 12 months compared to White people, with the exception of unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual nature, in which there was no significant difference between White and people from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities).

<sup>66</sup> Due to likelihood of under- or over-reporting, as noted previously, please treat this witnessing data with caution.

**Figure C2.6 Witnessing sexual harassment behaviours by ethnicity<sup>67</sup>**



People from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) were almost twice as likely to have witnessed pictures or videos being shared without permission, individuals being followed and sexual assault in the last 12 months compared to White people. These patterns are consistent with ethnic minorities also being more likely to experience sexual harassment.

<sup>67</sup> Due to likelihood of under- or over-reporting, as noted previously, please treat this witnessing data with caution.

*Witnessing by sexual orientation*<sup>68</sup>

LGB people were more likely to have witnessed at least one form of sexual harassment in the last 12 months than heterosexual individuals (54% and 38% respectively).

**Figure C2.7 Sexual harassment behaviours experienced and witnessed by LGB<sup>69</sup>**

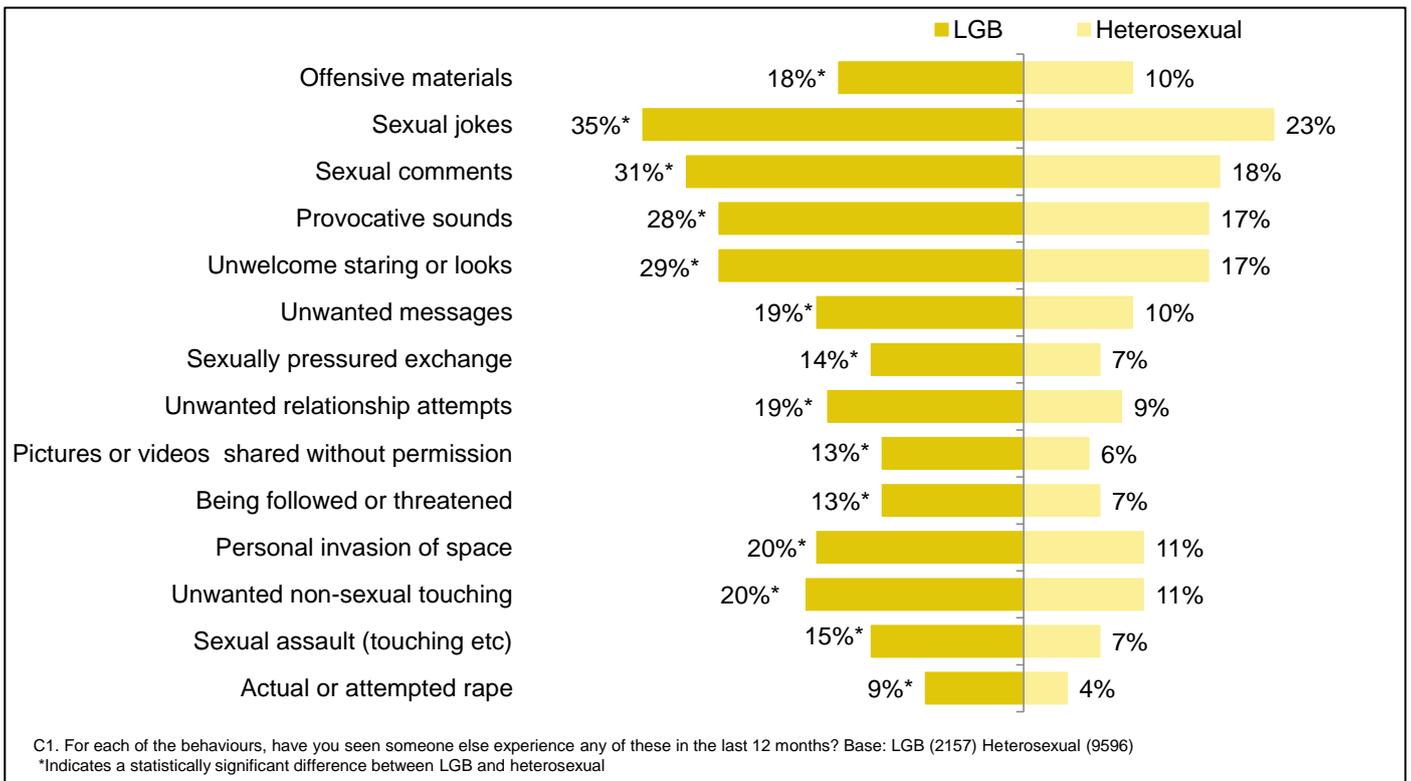


LGB people were significantly more likely than everyone else to have witnessed each individual behaviour in the last 12 months, as shown Figure C2.8.

<sup>68</sup> Data was collected for LGB and T individuals in the survey design; due to the smaller base size and unique experience of transgender individuals compared to LGB individuals, the decision was taken by GEO to primarily report LGB vs. heterosexual.

<sup>69</sup> Due to likelihood of under- or over-reporting, as noted previously, please treat this witnessing data with caution.

**Figure C2.8 Witnessing sexual harassment behaviours by LGB<sup>70</sup>**



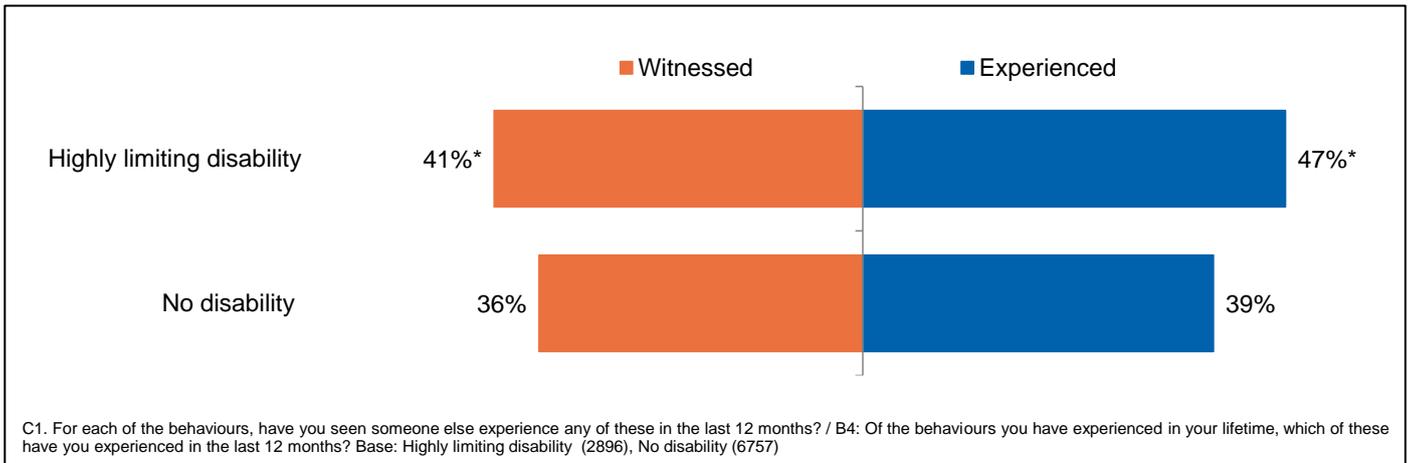
LGB people were nearly twice as likely to have witnessed most sexual harassment behaviours when compared to heterosexual people. These patterns are consistent with LGB individuals also being more likely to experience sexual harassment. The design of this survey allowed for considerable latitude for individuals to self-define what constituted witnessing sexual harassment on the basis of their own perception of the threat to another person. As a result, some data points will be counterintuitive due to differing experience and severity of each behaviour, for example witnessing behaviours such as rape or attempted rape. See the Methodology chapter for more information.

*Witnessing among those with a disability*

Disabled people were more likely to have witnessed sexual harassment in the last 12 months compared to people without a disability (41% compared with 36%).

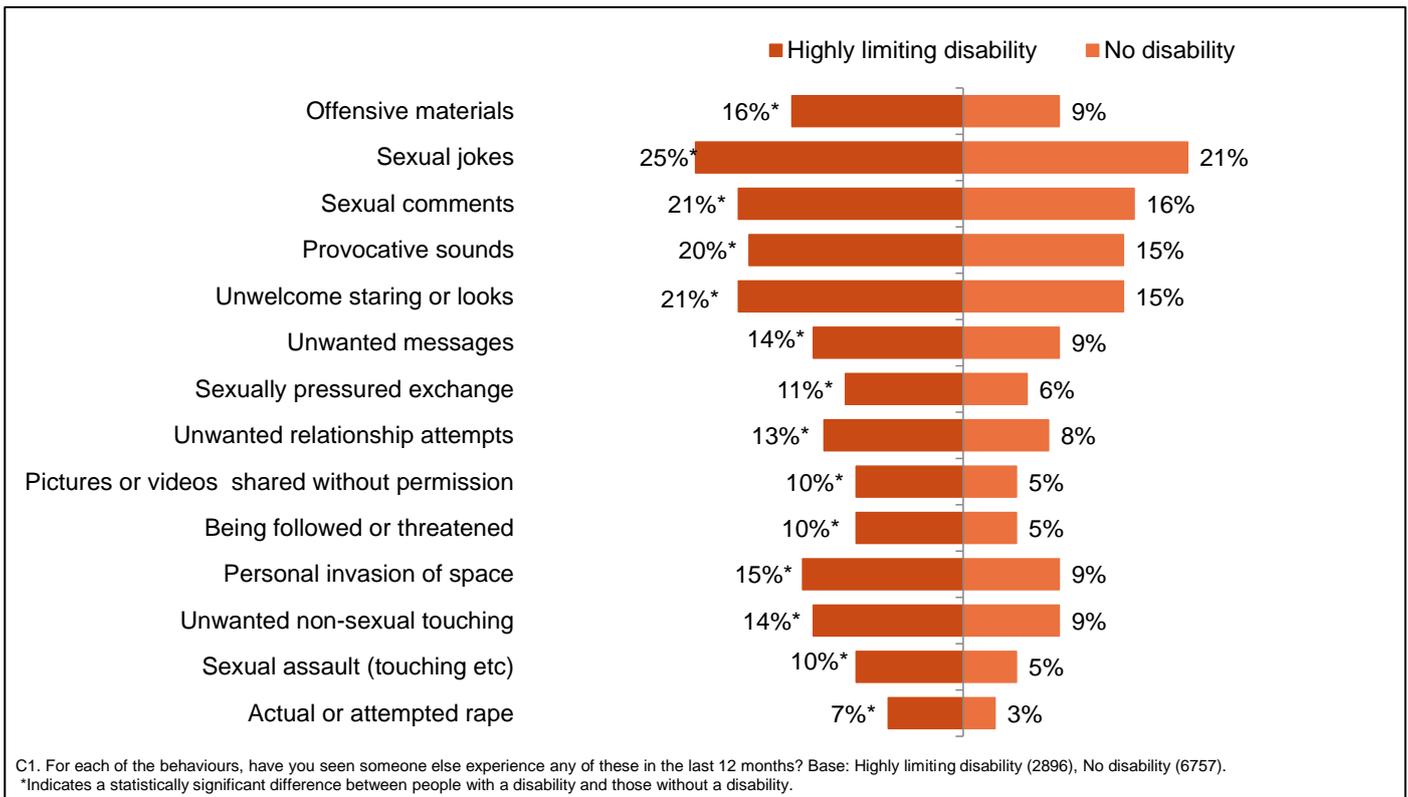
<sup>70</sup> Due to likelihood of under- or over-reporting, as noted previously, please treat this witnessing data with caution.

**Figure C2.9 Sexual harassment experienced and witnessed in the last 12 months by disability**



As shown in Figure C2.10, people with a disability were significantly more likely to witness each sexual harassment behaviour, with differences by behaviour ranging between three and seven percentage points.

**Figure C2.10 Witnessing sexual harassment behaviours by disability**



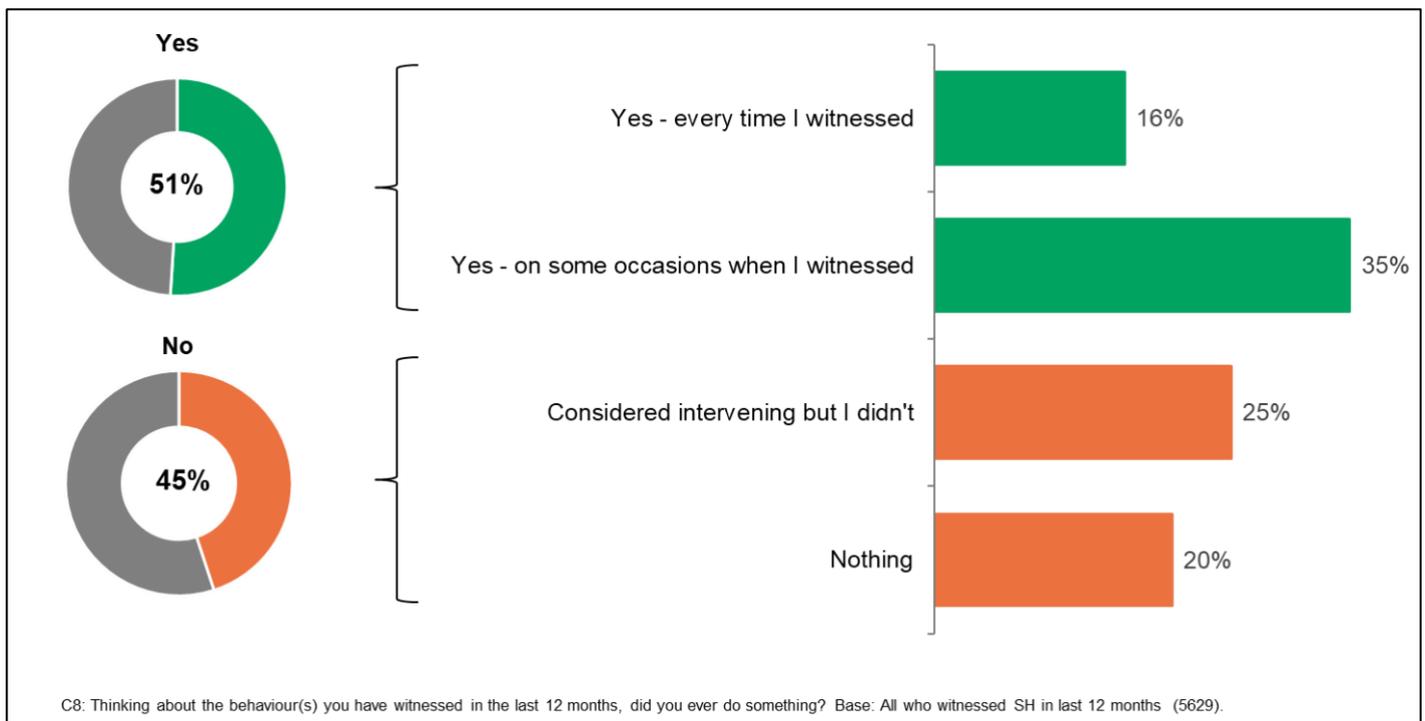
Disabled people were almost twice as likely as non-disabled people to have experienced displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials, unwelcome comments of a sexual nature about

body and/or clothes and persistent and / or unwanted attempts to establish a romantic/sexual relationship. These patterns are consistent with people with disabilities also being more likely to experience sexual harassment.

### 3. Intervening as a witness

Of those had witnessed sexual harassment, more than half (51%) said that they had intervened at some point: 35% reported that they intervened on some occasions, while 16% reported that they intervened every time they witnessed sexual harassment.

Figure C3.1 Whether or not witnesses intervened

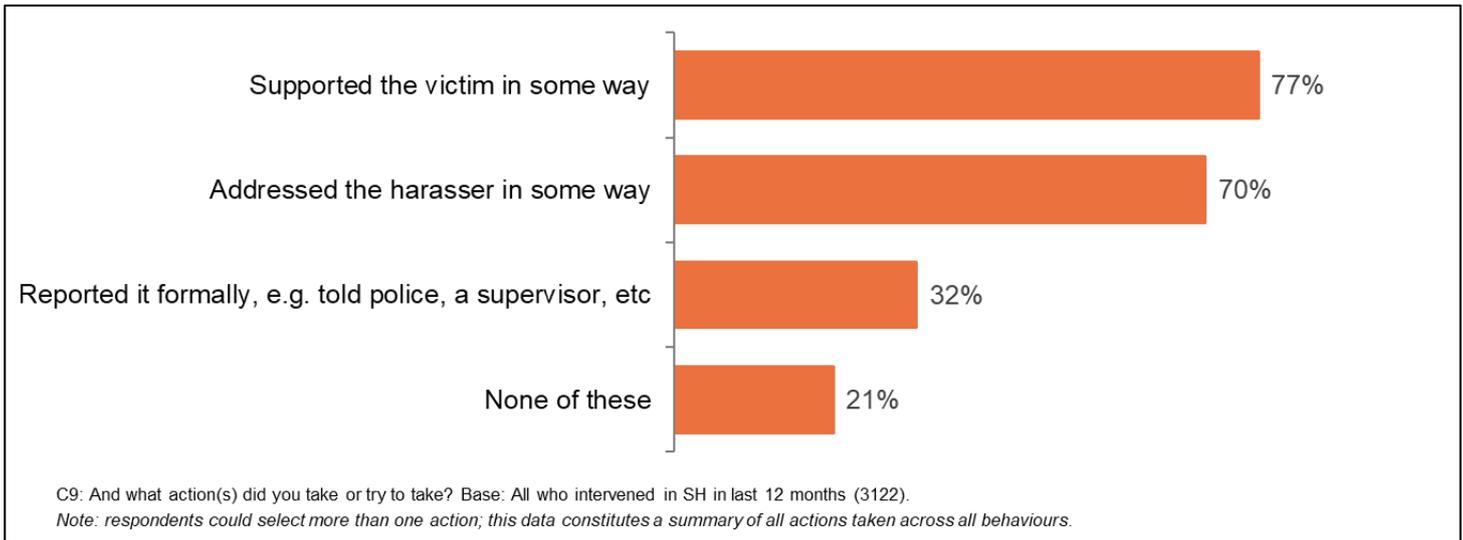


Women were slightly more likely than men to have intervened in some way when they witnessed sexual harassment; with 53% of women and 49% of men reporting to have intervened. Younger people were also significantly more likely than older people to have intervened in some way when they witnessed sexual harassment; with 57% of 16 to 24-year olds, 51% of 35 to 49 year olds and 40% of those aged 50 or more to report intervening in sexual harassment. LGB people were significantly more likely to have intervened in some way compared to heterosexual people (LGB: 58% vs. heterosexual: 51%). There was no significant difference between White and people from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) in terms of likelihood of having intervened (both 51%).

### Interventions by a witness

Looking across the different sexual harassment behaviours people witnessed, about three-quarters of the witnesses that intervened said that they supported the victim in some way (77%) or addressed the harasser in some way (70%). Less than half reported it formally (32%).

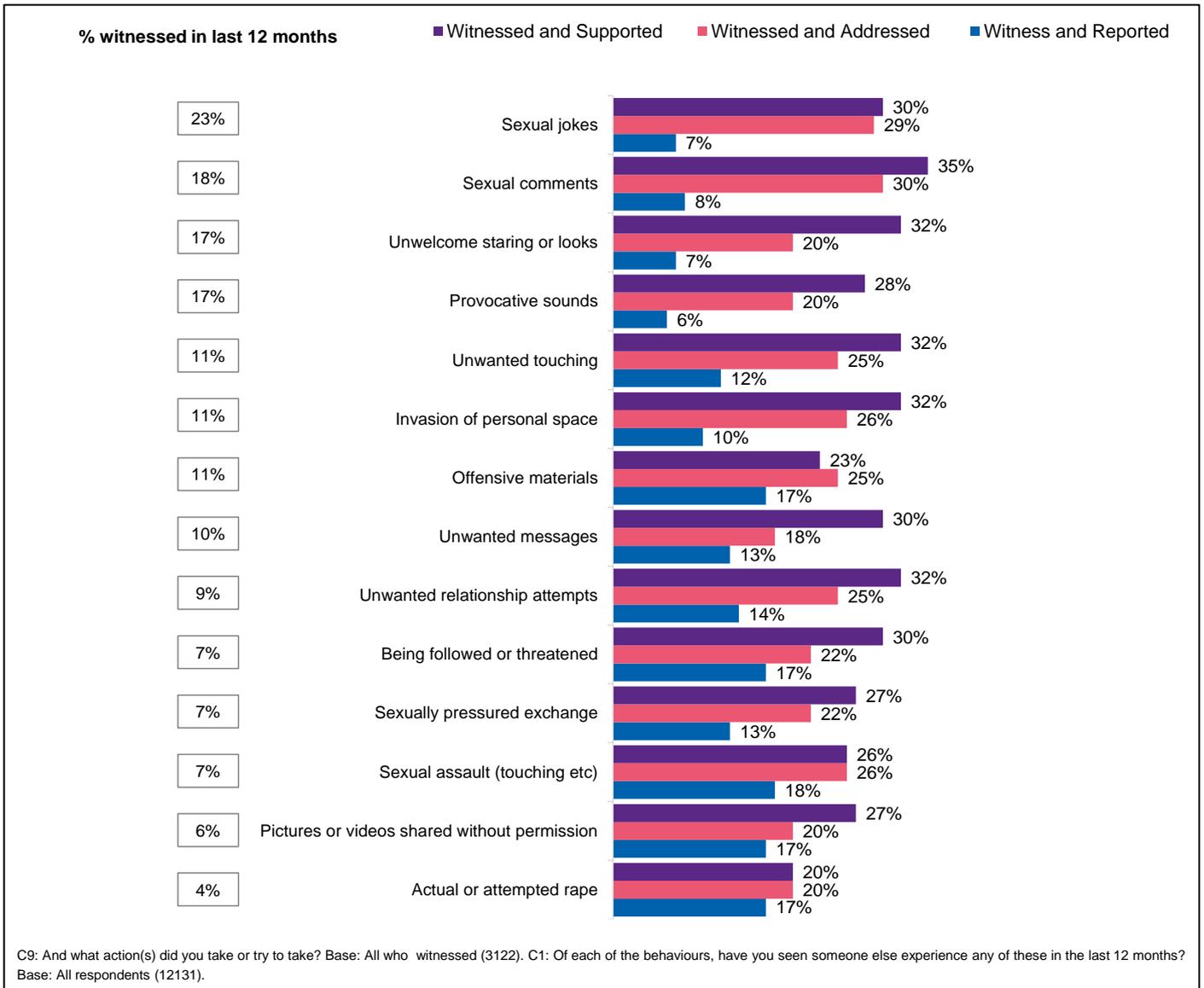
Figure C3.2 Intervention type by a witness in the last 12 months



### Methods of intervening by type of sexual harassment

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the ways in which witnesses intervened varied depending on the type of behaviour that they witnessed. Across all behaviours, supporting the victim was the most common response, followed often closely by addressing the perpetrator. Reporting sexual harassment was the least common witness response but increased in likelihood the more 'severe' the harassment witnessed.

**Figure C3.3 Methods that witnesses use to intervene for different sexual harassment behaviours**



Some of the behaviours that were experienced less frequently, but were perhaps more direct (such as rape / attempted rape or offensive materials), were met with a stronger reaction from the witnesses compared with other behaviours that occur more frequently but might not seem as invasive, such as sexual jokes or staring and looks.

**Differences in intervention approaches by demographic groups**

Some significant differences emerged when comparing interventions across demographic groups:

- The gender of the witness appears to be linked to different behaviours taken to intervene when they witnessed any form of sexual harassment in the last 12 months. Women were

---

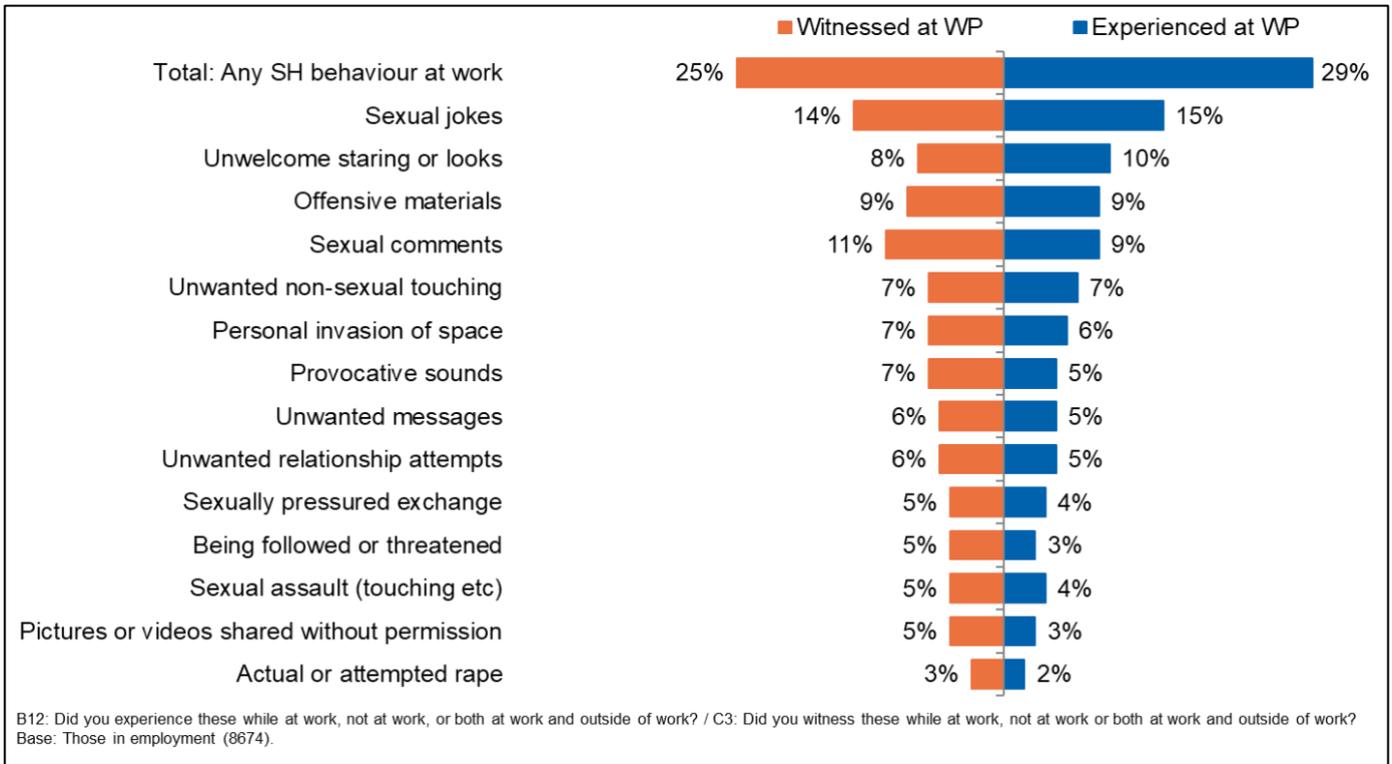
significantly more likely than men to say that they supported the victim in some way (82% of women vs 72% of men), while men were significantly more likely than women to address the harasser in some way (76% men vs 65% women). There was no significant difference in likelihood to report formally (34% vs 31%).

- Those aged under 35 were significantly more likely than those aged 35+ to report the harassment formally (39% compared with 26%).
- People from an ethnic minority (excluding White minorities) were also more likely to state that they reported the harassment formally (42% compared with 31%).
- LGB people were significantly more likely to have intervened by supporting the victim in some way (84% compared with 76% of heterosexual people) and by reporting the incident formally (38% compared with 32%).

#### **4. Witnessing workplace sexual harassment**

A quarter (25%) of those in employment had witnessed sexual harassment in the workplace in the last 12 months. As Figure 9.6 shows, all types of sexual harassment behaviour included in the survey had been witnessed in the workplace or in a work-related environment.

**Figure C4.1 Types of sexual harassment experienced and witnessed in workplace in last 12 months<sup>71</sup>**

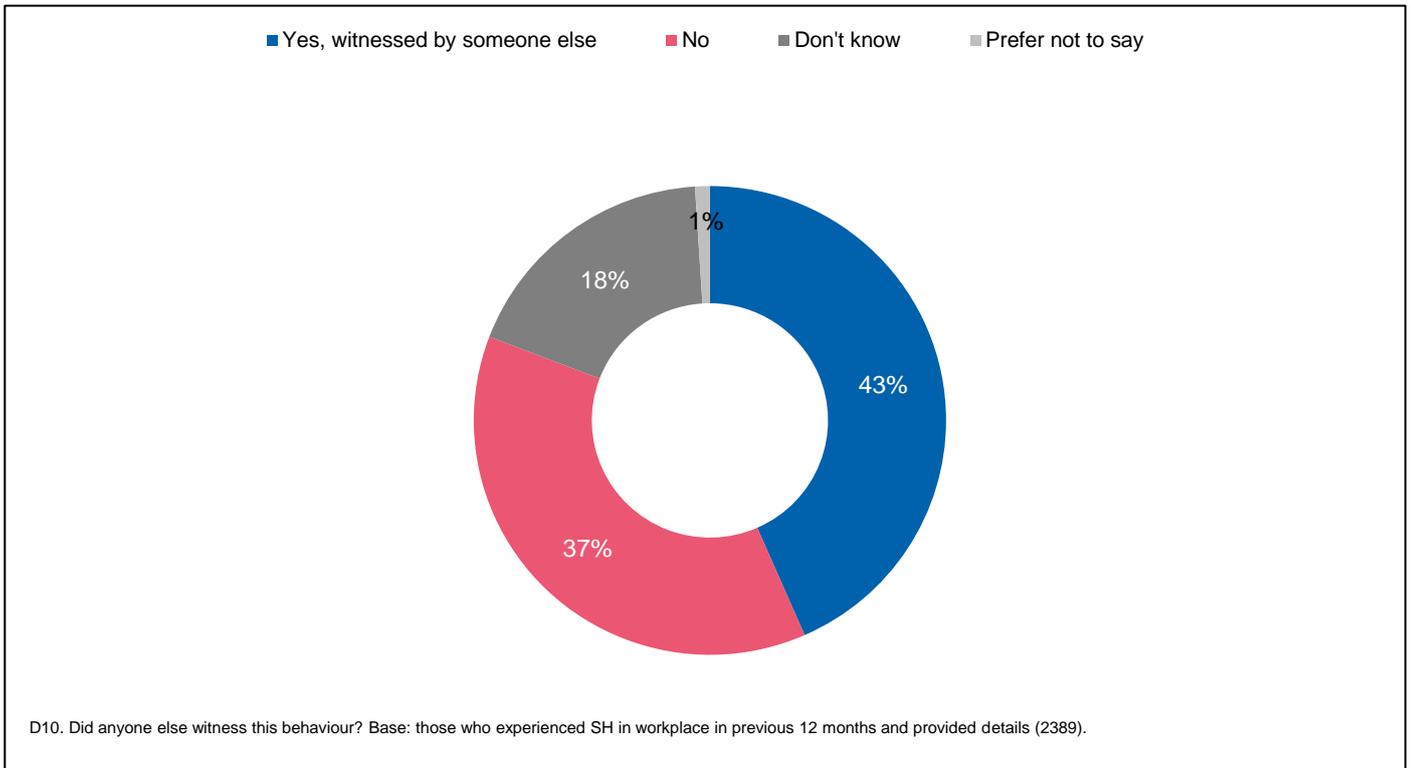


**Victims’ view on whether their experience of SH was witnessed**

The majority (43%) of those who experienced sexual harassment in the workplace thought that someone else had witnessed the behaviour, as shown in Figure C4.2. The remainder were mostly sure that no-one else had witnessed it (37%), but 18% were unsure.

<sup>71</sup> Due to likelihood of under- or over-reporting, as noted previously, please treat this witnessing data with caution.

**Figure C4.2 Whether anyone else witnessed the sexual harassment**



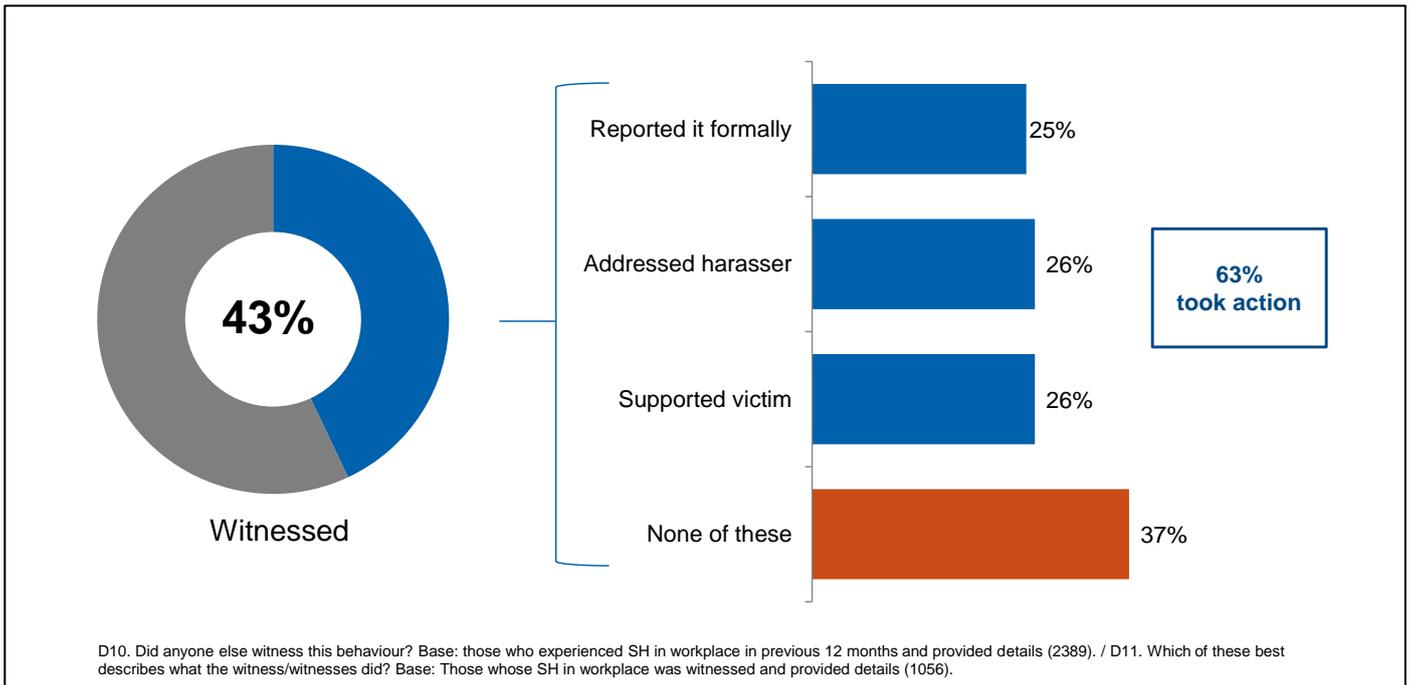
Among victims of sexual harassment in the workplace, some groups were more likely to state that their experience was witnessed by others:

- Women were slightly but significantly more likely than men (47% vs 41%).
- Those aged 25 to 49 (45% vs 37% among 16 to 24 and 42% among aged 50+).
- White victims (excluding White minorities) (44% compared to 37% ethnic minority victims)
- People with a highly limiting disability (58% compared to 38% of those without a disability).
- Those higher managerial (46%) and small employers (59%) were more likely to state that their experience of sexual harassment had been witnessed, while those in semi routine or routine occupations were most likely to think it had not been seen (45% vs 37% overall).
- Those in micro-organisations were significantly more likely than other business sizes to think others had witnessed the behaviour (56% of those in a micro-organisation vs 43% average).

### **Witness responses to the sexual harassment**

Of the 43% of workplace sexual harassment victims who said someone witnessed their recent experience of sexual harassment, the majority (62%) reported that witnesses took some action (37% no action), as shown in Figure C4.3 below.

**Figure C4.3 Actions taken by witnesses in the workplace**



Looking at the variation in actions that were reported to be taken by witnesses by type of sexual harassment shows that:

- While formal reporting was the most common reaction of witnesses across all behaviours, it was most likely for sexual assault and rape / attempted rape, unwanted relationship attempts and invasion of personal space.
- In contrast, addressing the harasser was most common for flashing, sharing pictures / videos without consent, being followed or threatened, and for sexual assault and rape / attempted rape.
- Supporting the victim by other means was most common for provocative sounds,
- For the witness to take no action was most common for sexual jokes, unwelcome staring or looks, sexual jokes and displays of sexually offensive materials.

Low bases sizes across the behaviours mean comparison by behaviour witnessed is not possible.

---

## Appendix D: High Degree Victims

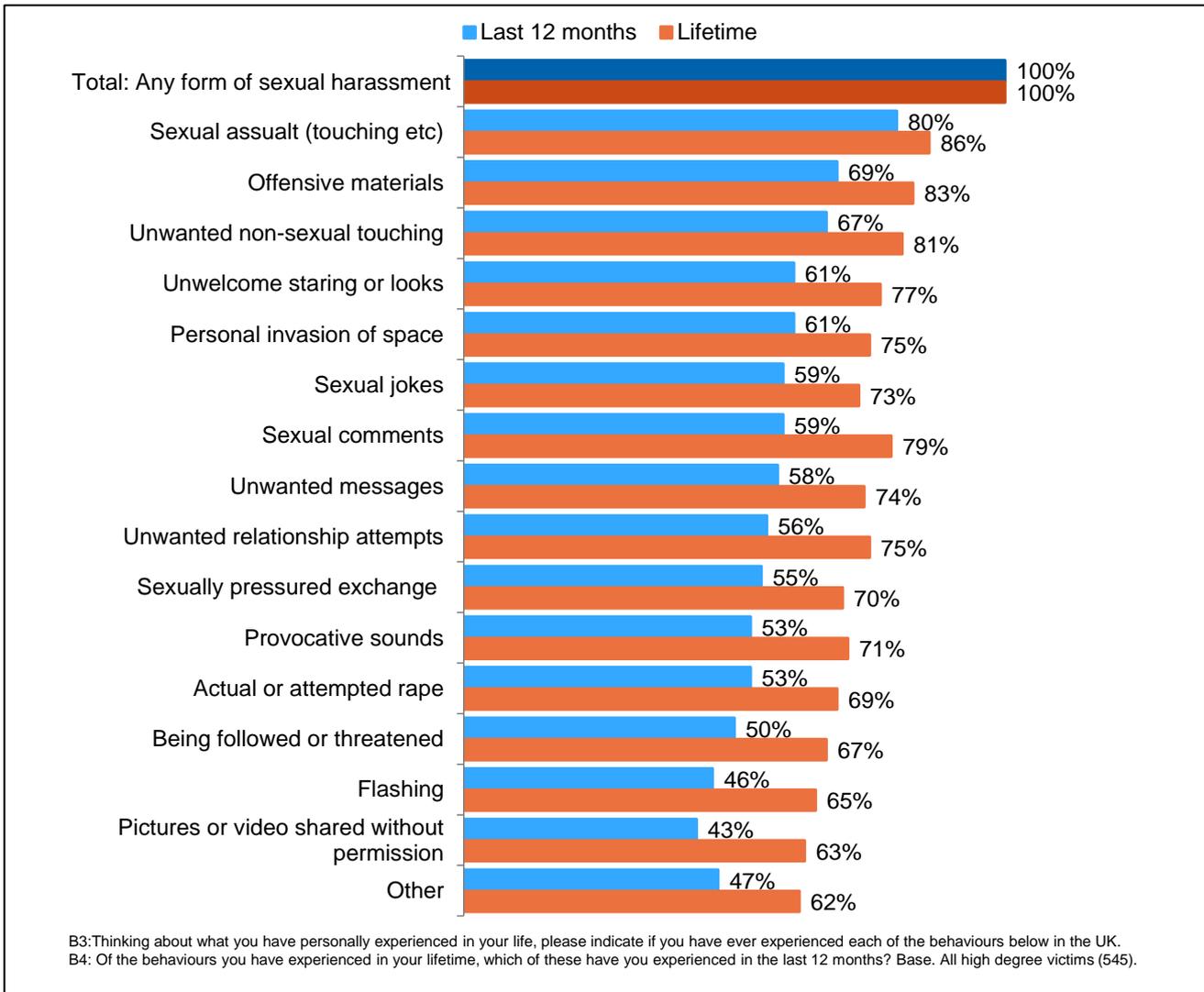
This appendix provides separate analysis on key report section specifically for the High Degree Victim group. For more information about this group and why it has been excluded from some part of the main report, please see the Methodology chapter.

Results throughout this report are experimental and may differ significantly from the results of other studies or statistics. For further details, including details of the behaviour-based design of this research, please refer to the methodology chapter and the 'Interpreting sexual harassment data' section in particular.

### 1. Incidence

Across the population, 3% of those surveyed fell into the high degree victims group. These individuals were more likely to be women (55% of high degree victims), younger in age (73% under age 35) and from a minority group (31% LGB, 30% from an ethnic minority group and 66% with a somewhat or highly limiting disability). While they experienced each behaviour overall more than the rest of the population, the same types of behaviours were more or less common as with the total population.

**Figure D1.1 Experiences of sexual harassment behaviours for high degree victims**



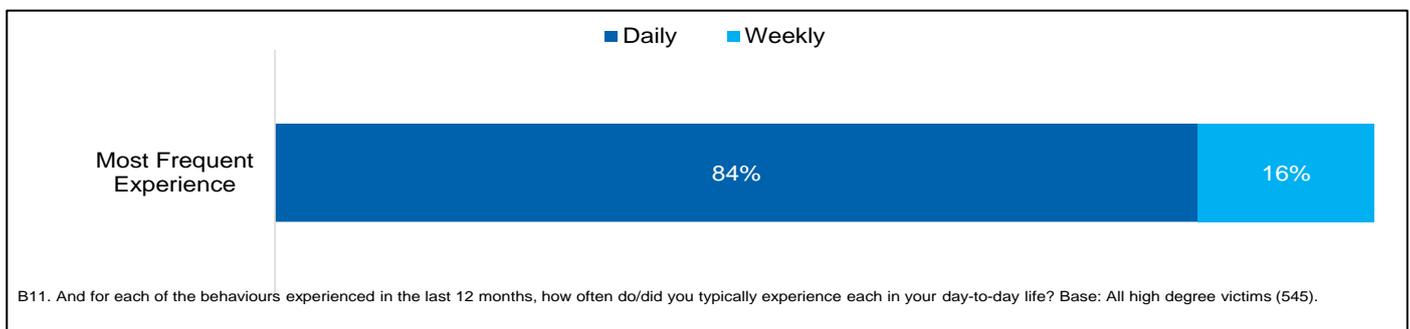
## 2. Experience

This section includes a summary of the experience of sexual harassment for high degree victims (n=585). A more thorough explanation of this group and how it is defined can be found in the Methodology chapter.

### Frequency of experience

All those in the high degree victim group experienced a severe behaviour at least weekly. The majority (84%) reported experiencing their most frequently experienced sexual harassment behaviour on a daily basis.

**Figure D2.1 Frequency of sexual harassment**



Within the high degree victim group, those with a highly limiting disability were more likely than those with no disability to say they experienced their most frequent sexual harassment behaviour daily (90% v. 78%). There were no significant differences by gender, age, ethnicity or sexual orientation for their most frequently experienced sexual harassment. The most common behaviours that this group reported experiencing daily were displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials which made you feel uncomfortable (58%), unwelcome sexual jokes (53%) and unwelcome cat calls, wolf whistling or other provocative sounds (49%).

### Experience by location

Three-quarters experienced sexual harassment in their current workplace (76%) and the same (74%) in their previous workplace (within the last 12 months), while two-thirds (64%) of this group experienced sexual harassment outside of the workplace. Around a quarter (27%) reported experiencing no sexual harassment outside of work.<sup>72</sup>

Outside the workplace, the most common location that this group reported experiencing sexual harassment was walking in the street (44%), on public transport (40%) and in a private home (38%). Just over half (54%) reported experiencing it in an indoor public place. The behaviours most commonly experienced on the street tended to involve non-direct contact such as provocative sounds, unwelcome staring or looks, being physically followed in a sexually threatening way, unwelcome comments of a sexual nature, and flashing. In contrast, behaviours typically experienced in a club, pub or bar involved more direct contact such as sexual assault and

<sup>72</sup> More information about experiences of sexual harassment within the workplace is covered in Chapter 6 of the main report.

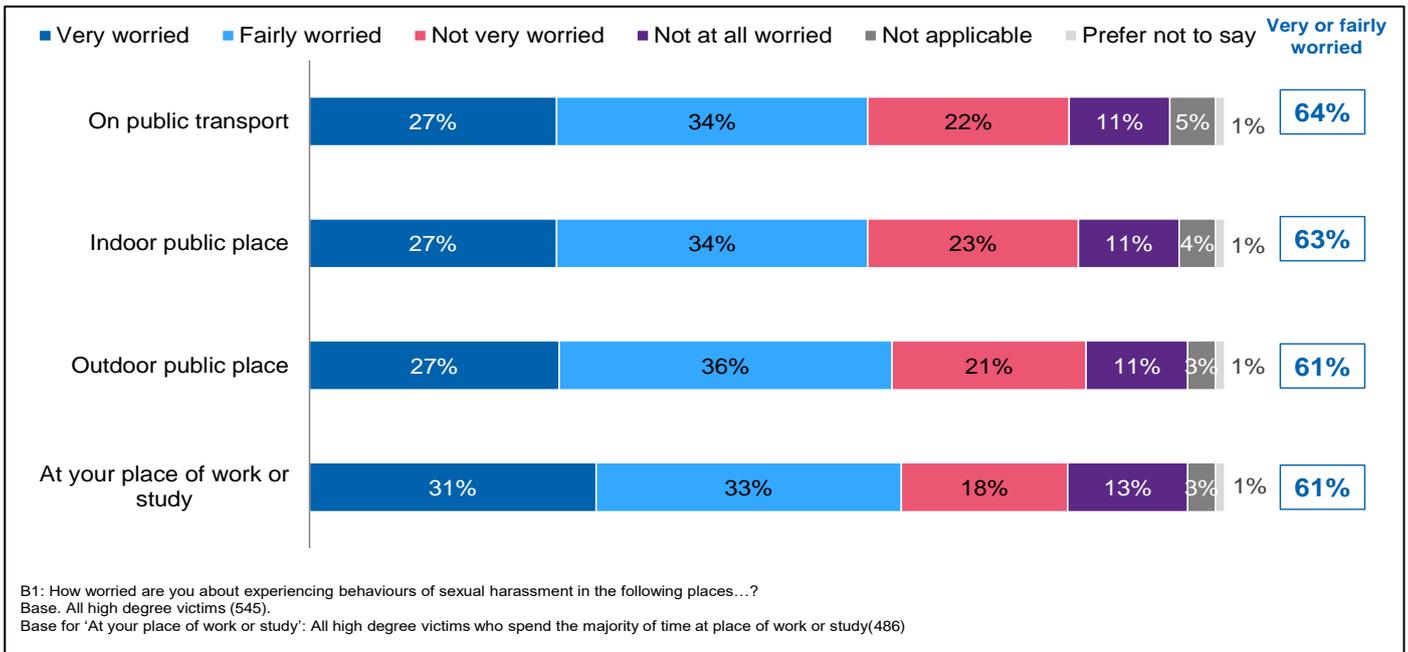
unwanted touching. Pressure to date / do a sexual act in exchange for something or rape were more likely to be experienced by this group at a private home.

Two-in-five (40%) experienced sexual harassment on public transport in the last 12 months. Of these, buses were the most commonly reported location (65%), followed by train or tram (53%) and the underground (44%, limited to London only). Two-in-five (40%) had experienced sexual harassment in a taxi. The most common behaviour experienced on public transport by this group was unwelcome staring/looks (52%).

*Perceived risk of different locations*

More than four-in-five of this group were worried to some extent about experiencing sexual harassment in an outdoor public place (85%), an indoor public place (84%), on public transport (83%), or at a place of work/study (82%). This high proportion could be accounted for by the high proportion of behaviour which this group report experiencing on regular basis.

**Figure D2.2 Worry about experiencing sexual harassment by location**



**Proactive behaviour change**

The vast majority of this group proactively changed their behaviour to avoid or prevent sexual harassment in all four locations, likely due to experiencing frequent sexual harassment in the past 12 months. Nearly all said they change their behaviour in all places: 96% in outdoor public spaces, 94% in indoor public, 93% on public transport, and 93% at their place of work/study.

Whilst high degree victim men were significantly less likely to worry about experiencing sexual harassment in their place of study or work, they were more likely to say they proactively changed their behaviour to prevent sexual harassment there than women (97% vs. 90%). This was the only location in which there was a significant difference by gender. People with a limiting disability were

more likely to proactively change their behaviour on public transport (96% vs. 90%), in outdoor public places (99% vs 93%) and in their place or study / work (97% vs. 88%), compared to people with no disability. There was no significant difference by sexual orientation or ethnicity.

### Impact on quality of life

Sexual harassment had an impact on people’s quality of life to a varying degree,<sup>73</sup> depending on the experience of the individual in terms of type, frequency, and other factors. Nearly all (96%) in the high degree victims group reported their experiences of sexual harassment affected their quality of life. Due to this high proportion, there was no significant difference between subgroups.

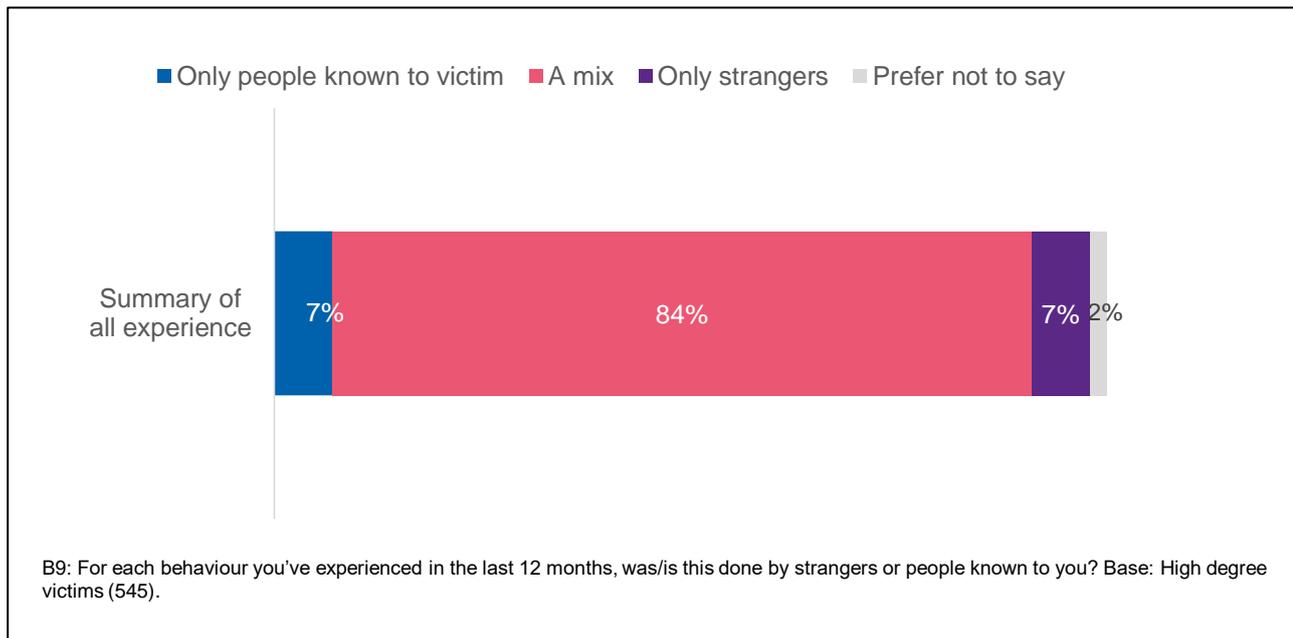
## 3. Perpetrators

This section summarises the responses on high degree victims with regard to their perpetrators.

### Relationship of perpetrator to victim

Most high degree victims experienced harassment from a mix of strangers and known individuals (84%), while a small proportion of the perpetrators to this group were only strangers (7%) or only know to the individual (7%).

**Figure D3.1 Relationship of high degree victims to perpetrator of those who experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months**



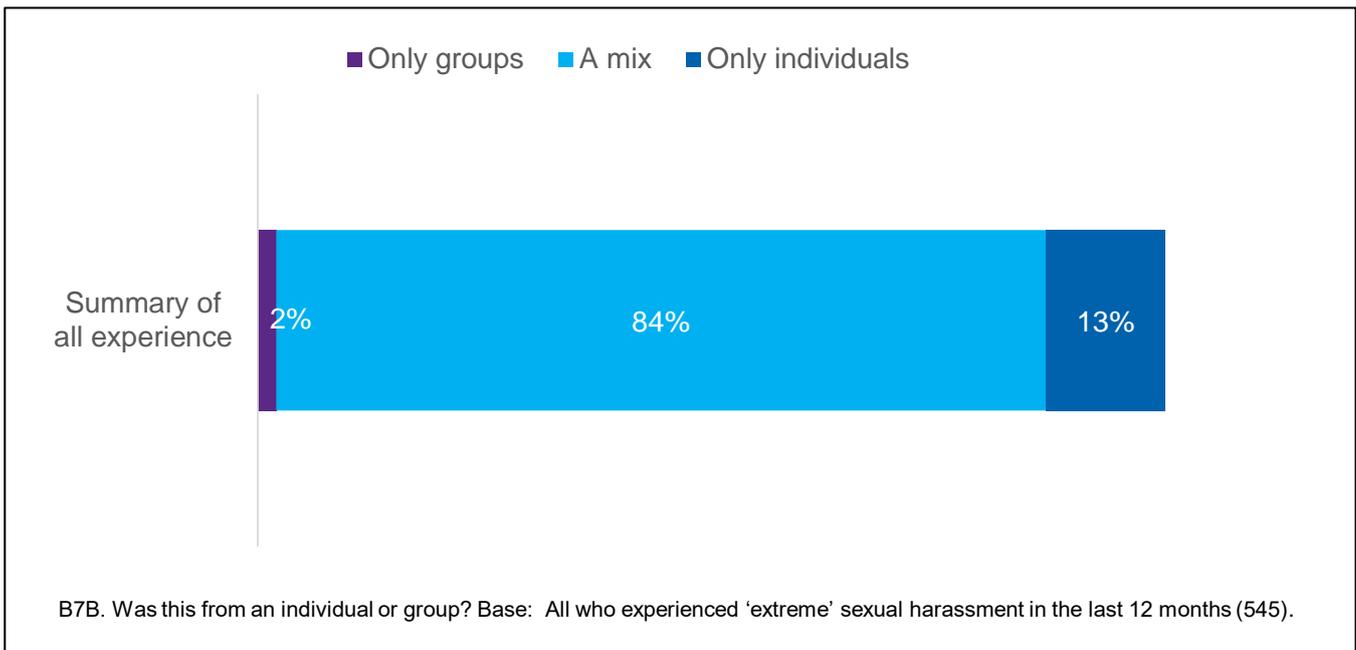
<sup>73</sup> By impact on quality of life we mean if their experience of sexual harassment has affected their quality of life in any way; this is not the same as if the experience had an impact on them generally (e.g. psychologically, physically, etc.). This measure was adapted from the National Crime Survey.

There were no significant differences in terms of the type of perpetrator by any subgroups including gender, age, disability, and sexual orientation.

### Individual and groups of perpetrators

As shown in Figure D3.2, perpetrators were mostly a mix of both individuals and groups (84%), however a minority experienced harassment only from individuals (13%) and a much smaller proportion experienced harassment only from groups (2%).

**Figure D3.2 Incidence of harassment for high degree victims by number of perpetrators**

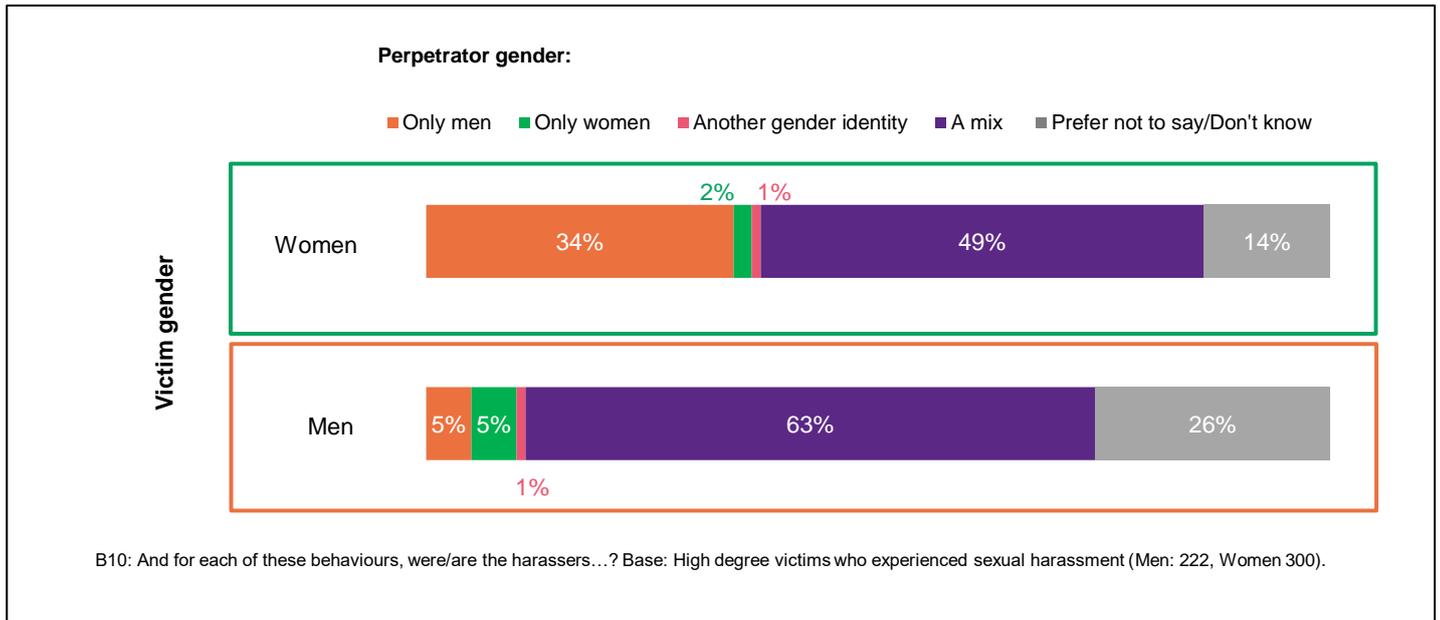


Men were more likely to have experienced sexual harassment from a group (83%) than women (72%), particularly staring, unwanted messages, sexually pressured exchanges, unwanted touching, sexual assault and rape. Conversely, there were some behaviours that women were more likely to experience by a single person than men, namely the experience of unwanted relationship attempts, and pictures or videos shared without permission, following or threatening and invasion of personal space. There were no other significant differences for key subgroups.

## Gender of perpetrators

As show in Figure D3.3, most perpetrators were a mix of genders for both men (63%) and women (49%) however a third of women had only ever been harassed by men (34%).

**Figure D3.3 Incidence of high degree victims experiencing sexual harassment from different genders of perpetrator by gender**



When looking at sexual orientation, heterosexual victims were more likely than LGB victims to have been harassed by women (63% of heterosexual victims vs 51% of LGB victims) and harassed by someone with another gender identity (53% of heterosexual victims vs 41% of LGB victims).

## Repeat harassment

The majority of high degree victims experienced repeat harassment in the last 12 months (82%). For this group, there was no significant difference in experience of repeat harassment between men (85%) and women (81%) and LGB victims (79%) compared to heterosexual victims (84%). However, those aged 25-34 (85%) and 34-49 (86%) were significantly more likely to experience repeat harassment than those aged 16-24 (75%), while victims with a highly limiting disability (93%) were also significantly more likely to experience repeat harassment than victims with no disability (67%).

### *Repeat harassment by location*

For high degree victims who had experienced repeat harassment, three-quarters experienced repeat harassment in the workplace (78%), while a third experienced it outside the workplace (30%). Women (41%) were significantly more likely to experience repeat harassment outside of work than men (16%), with men more likely to experience it at work (90%) than women. Those aged 25-34 (83%) and 34-49 (84%) were more likely to experience repeat harassment at work compared to ages 16-24 (70%).

---

## 4. Reporting

This section summarises the responses on high degree victims reporting of their harassment.

### **Reporting of harassment**

A large proportion of high degree victims had formally reported the sexual harassment they had experienced (84%), although this varied by behaviour. This group most commonly reported displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials, while other commonly reported behaviours included someone taking and/or sharing sexual pictures or videos of them without permission and actual or attempted rape. The least commonly reported behaviours for this group were provocative sounds and invasion of personal space.

#### *Reporting sexual harassment by gender*

Amongst high degree victims, men were more likely to formally report the sexual harassment (91%) than women (78%). This pattern followed for many different types of behaviours ranging from more to less extreme. For example, men in this group were more likely than women to report sexual assault, unwanted touching, invasion of personal space, unwanted relationship attempts, unwelcome staring or looks, provocative sounds, sexual comments, sexual jokes and displays of pornographic or sexually offensive materials.

#### *Reporting sexual harassment by age*

Those aged 35-49 were more likely to report certain behaviours than younger victims, particularly for harassment that involved physical contact or proximity. For example, those aged 35-49 were more likely to report unwanted touching, invasion of personal space and flashing than those aged 16-24 and 25-34. A similar pattern was found for non-physical behaviours with those aged 35-49 and 25-34 more likely to report unwelcome staring or looks, provocative sounds, sexual comments, and sexual jokes more than those aged 16-24.

#### *Reporting by sexual orientation*

Heterosexual individuals within this group were more likely to formally report sexual harassment (87%) than LGB individuals (78%). Specifically, heterosexual individuals were more likely to report sexual comments and being physically followed in a sexually threatening way than LGB individuals.

#### *Reporting sexual harassment by ethnicity*

Overall there were no significant differences between ethnic minorities (87%) and White individuals (83%) in reporting sexual harassment. However, White victims were significantly more likely to report actual or attempted rape than victims from ethnic minority backgrounds.

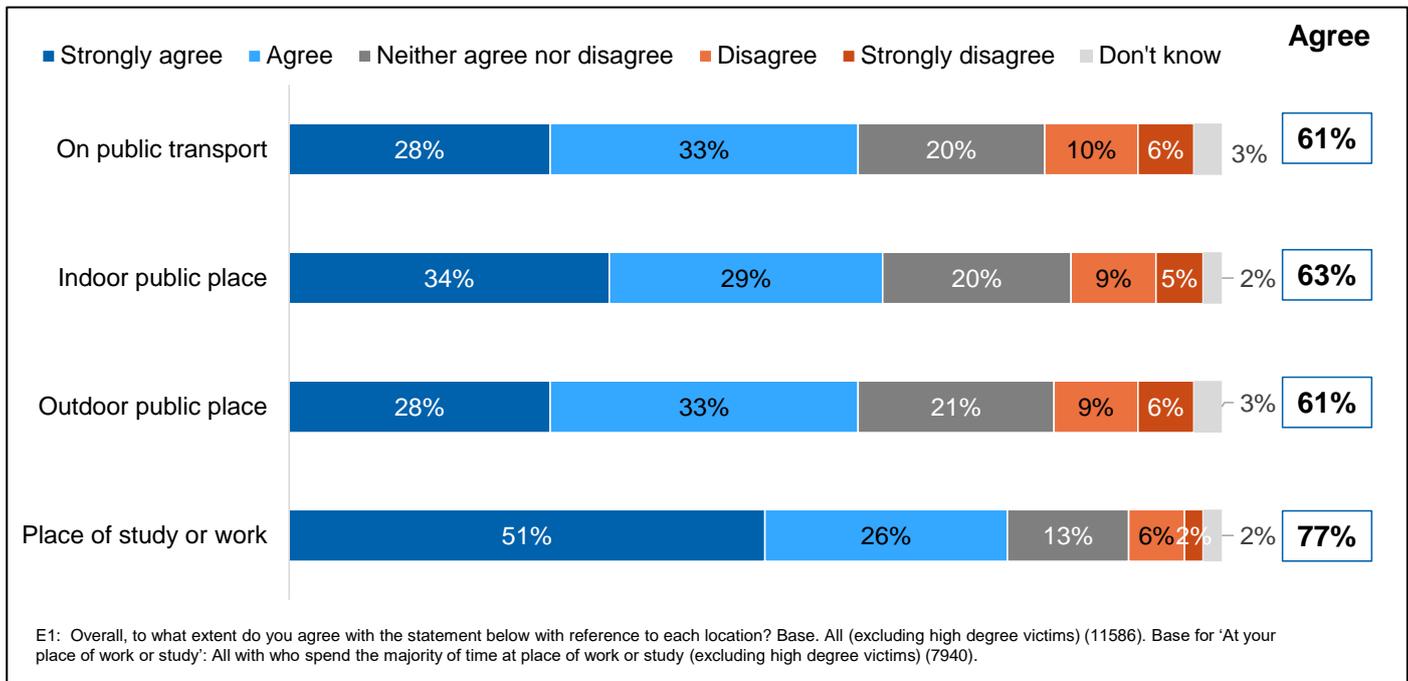
#### *Reporting sexual harassment by disability*

Overall, those with a highly limiting disability (89%) were significantly more likely to report sexual harassment than those with no disability (81%). This pattern followed for a range of specific behaviours, namely unwelcome staring or looks, taking or sharing sexual photos, flashing, unwanted touching, sexual assault and actual or attempted rape.

## Knowing how to report sexual harassment

More than three-quarters (77%) of high degree victims were aware of how to report sexual harassment in their workplace, but only 61% knew how to report in an outdoor public space.

**Figure D4.1 Knowledge of reporting sexual harassment by location**



There was no significant difference by gender or ethnicity. By age, those aged 25-49 were more likely than under 25s to know how to report in outdoor and indoor public places and on public transport. Heterosexual people were more likely to be confident of how to report in all locations compared to LGB people. People with a disability were more likely than those with no disability to know how to report in all locations, with exception of indoor public places.

## 5. Workplace

This section summarises the responses on high degree victims with regard to their experience of harassment in the workplace.

### Incidence of sexual harassment in the workplace

Overall, 85% of the high degree victims had experienced at least one form of sexual harassment at their workplace in the last 12 months. This equates to 94% of those in employment in this group having experienced some form of sexual harassment at work or in a work-related environment.

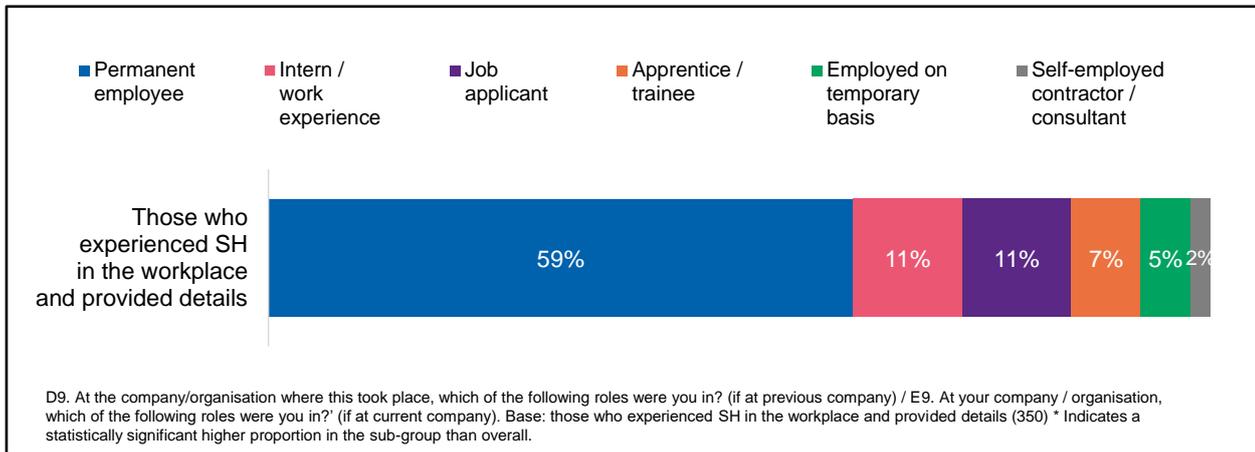
Within the high degree group, there were significant differences in who experienced workplace sexual harassment across demographic groups. Men were more likely than women to have

experienced sexual harassment at a workplace (95% vs. 77%).<sup>74</sup> Those aged 25-34 were more likely than those aged 16-24 to have experienced harassment at a workplace (88% vs. 81%), though this may be explained by higher employment in this age group. People from ethnic minority backgrounds were more likely than those from White backgrounds to have experienced any harassment in the workplace (90% vs 83%).

**Role of the victim within the organisation**

The majority of those in the high degree victims group (59%) who experienced sexual harassment in the workplace were permanent employees of the organisation where the harassment occurred. As shown in Figure D5.1, smaller proportions were in intern or work experience roles (11%), or job applicants (11%), with 7% in apprentice or trainee roles. As with the whole population figures, these proportions partly mirror the proportions who were in these roles, though interns were overrepresented (5% of high degree victims were interns, whereas 11% experienced harassment in these roles).

**Figure D5.1 Role of victims of sexual harassment at work**



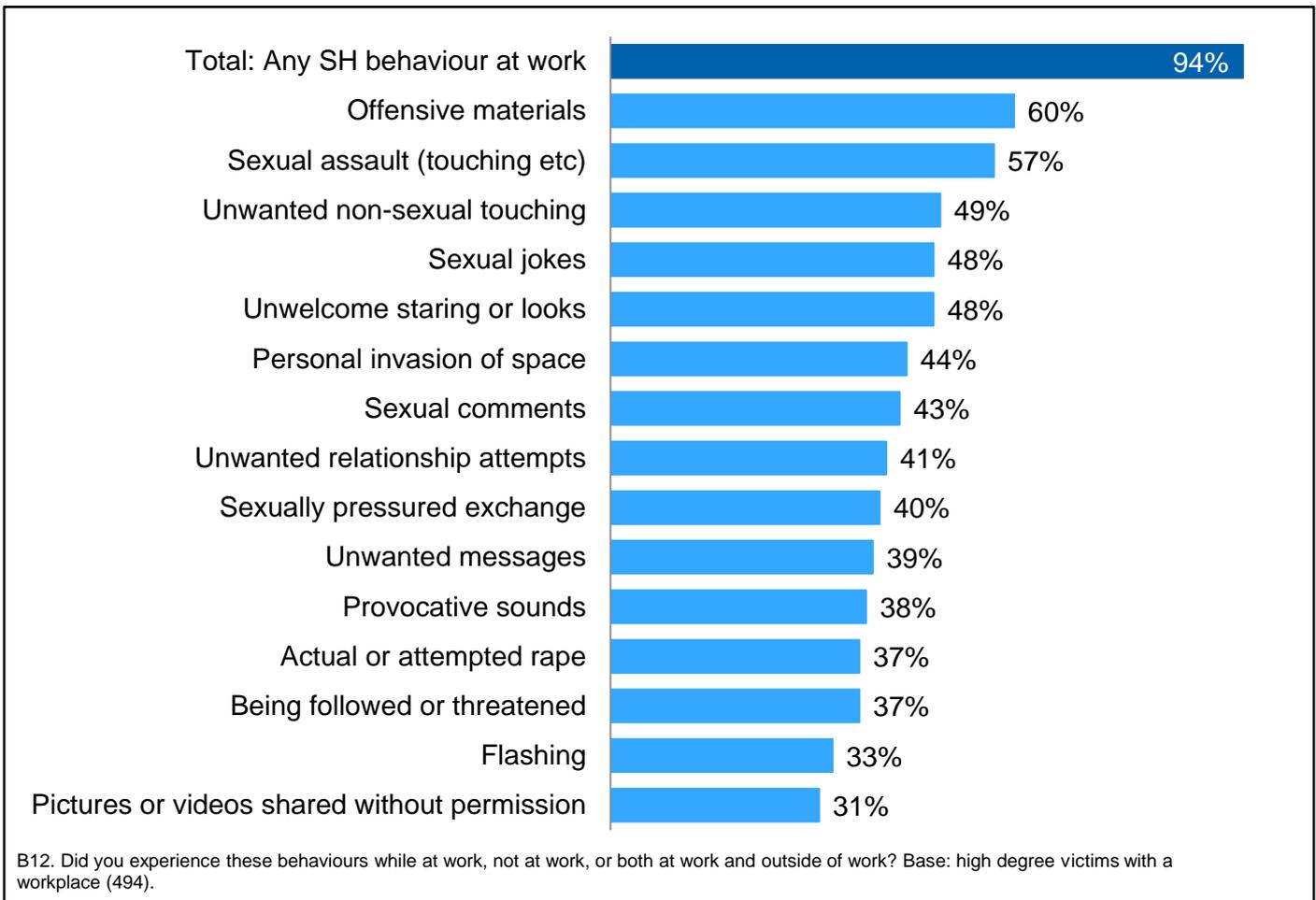
The base size here was too low to allow for comparisons between most demographic subgroups.

**Sexual harassment behaviours carried out in the workplace**

The high degree group experienced all forms of sexual harassment in the workplace or in a work-related environment within the previous 12 months, as shown in Figure B6.2.

<sup>74</sup> As noted elsewhere, women experience harassment more overall and in public space; men, when they experience harassment, are most likely to experience it at work.

**Figure D5.2 Sexual harassment in the workplace by behaviour, high degree victims**



The most commonly experienced behaviours at work were displays of pornographic or offensive material (60%) and unwanted overtly sexual touching (57%). The least commonly experienced behaviour was unwanted pictures and videos shared, which was still experienced by almost a third of this group (31%). Over a third said they had experienced actual or attempted rape in the workplace (37%).

*Recency of workplace sexual harassment*

For two-thirds of high degree victims (67%), sexual harassment at work had occurred within the last month, while over two-fifths (44%) had experienced this within the last week (at the time of the survey). Over nine-in-ten had experienced harassment in the last 6 months (91%).

*Locations of sexual harassment in the workplace*

Among the high degree group who had a workplace, around two thirds experienced harassment when socialising with colleagues (71%), visiting a client (67%) or at their physical workplace (66%). Over half had experienced harassment while applying for a job (53%), while around two-fifths (42%) experienced it online/via work-related messaging.

---

### *The organisations where sexual harassment happens*

Among high degree victims, there were no significant differences in incidence of sexual harassment at work between the broad work sectors (85% private sector, 85% third sector, 86% public sector). The base sizes for high degree victims in specific industries were too small to report on.

High degree victims that worked in micro companies (0-9 employees) (87% experienced harassment) and small companies (10-49 employees) (87%) were more likely to experience sexual harassment at work than those in medium (50-249 employees) (81%) or large companies (250+ employees) (82%).

### **Perpetrators of SH in the workplace**

For the high degree victims who experienced harassment in the workplace, the most common gender of perpetrator was men (53%), with around a quarter harassed by women (26%), and one-in-ten (10%) by someone of another gender identity.<sup>75</sup> Woman and men were not significantly more or less likely to be harassed by a specific gender of perpetrator.

High degree victims were most likely to be harassed by older people in the workplace (67%) rather than younger people (9%). Women were significantly more likely than men to say they were harassed by someone older than them (74% vs 61% for men). White people were more likely to be harassed by someone older than BAME people (73% vs. 55%).

### *Position of the perpetrator relative to the victims' status in the organisation*

High degree victims were most likely to be harassed at work by those in roles at the same level as them (37%). They were slightly more likely to be harassed by someone more senior (28%) than more junior (23%).

Those with a highly limiting disability were more likely than those with no disability to be harassed by someone junior to them (32% vs. 16%) or at the same level (43% vs. 31%).

### **Repeat sexual harassment behaviour in the workplace**

The majority of high degree victims (60%) who experienced workplace sexual harassment had experienced it repeatedly from the same person. For the high degree group, the most common types of repeat harassment in the workplace were displays of offensive materials (68%), unwelcome jokes (61%) and personal invasion of space (57%).

### **Victim response to sexual harassment in the workplace**

The most common response for high degree victims of workplace sexual harassment was to verbally address the perpetrator themselves (45% did so). Over a third (34%) called for help or caused a distraction and around a fifth (19%) told their friends or family with no expectation they

---

<sup>75</sup> Response for the option 'another gender identity' (meaning someone not identifying strictly as a man or a woman) is higher than expected given the nature of the question and size of the 'another gender identity' population. Analysis of survey data suggests that some respondents have selected 'another gender identity' for LGBT individuals, e.g. for harassment from someone homosexual of the same gender, rather than strictly based on their *gender identity*.

---

would do anything. Over one-in-five (22%) formally reported it (either internally or externally), with some victims doing both.

Heterosexual victims were more likely to report the behaviour than LGB victims (26% vs. 11%).

#### *Satisfaction with process of reporting*

Of the 78 high degree victims that reported their experience of workplace sexual harassment in the last 12 months, more were satisfied with the process (46%) than dissatisfied (37%). The same was also true for satisfaction with the outcome: 46% were satisfied, while 29% were dissatisfied. Base sizes here are too low to compare between groups.

#### *Reasons for not reporting*

The vast majority (78%) of high degree victims who experienced workplace sexual harassment in the last 12 months did not report it. The most common reason for not reporting the harassment among the high degree group was that they thought it would take too long (41%), followed by the idea of reporting not occurring to them (30%). Over a quarter (28%) did not report the incident because they were worried it would affect their career, while 15% thought the incident was not serious enough to report.

Women were more likely than men to say the incident did not seem serious enough (21% vs. 10%), and that they were worried it would make their work situation uncomfortable (18% vs. 10%), or that they would not be believed (18% vs. 7%). Those with a highly limiting disability were more likely than those with no disability to say they did not report the incident because they thought it would take too long (54% vs. 32%).

#### *Sexual harassment outcomes in the workplace*

Among high degree victims who took some form of action when they were sexually harassed in the workplace, a quarter (25%) said there were no consequences for their perpetrator. This dropped to 14% among those who reported their experience of workplace sexual harassment (either internally or externally).

One-in-five (20%) of high degree victims said that the issue was still in progress or unresolved, while a smaller proportion said that the harasser was moved on (18%) or received an informal warning (14%). One-in-ten (10%) said that the harasser was arrested and found guilty.

#### *Outcome for the victim*

Among those high degree victims who took some form of action, 63% saw their job change in some way. The most common outcome for the victim was to attend mediation with the harasser (32%), followed by choosing to change positions in the company (29%). Around a fifth (19%) were pressured to change positions in the company, and around one-in-six chose to look for a new job (16%). A small proportion (4%) signed a non-disclosure agreement (NDA).

#### *Asked to sign a confidentiality agreement*

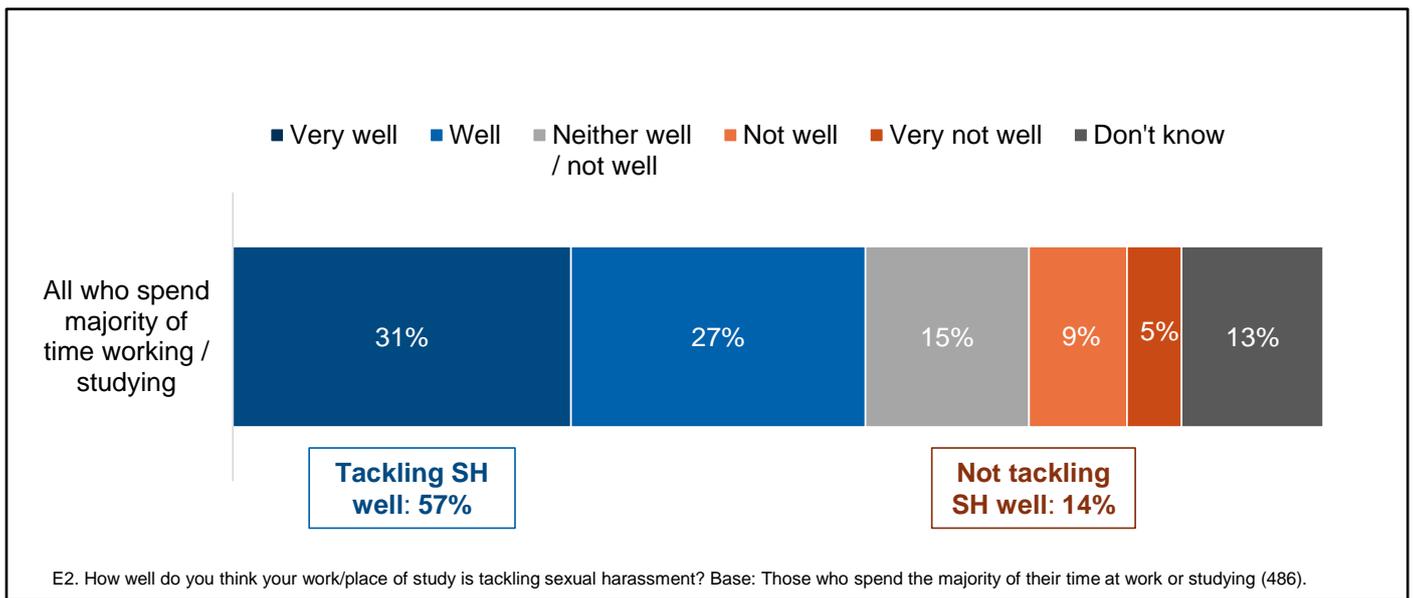
Over two-thirds (71%) of high degree victims of sexual harassment in the workplace in the last 12 months said they were asked to sign an NDA. Two-fifths (42%) said that they signed, while under a third (29%) said that they did not sign it. Heterosexual victims were more likely than LGB victims

to sign an NDA (46% vs. 32%). Those with a highly limiting disability were also more likely than those with no disability to sign an NDA (56% vs. 33%).

## 6. Perceptions of employer actions

Overall, over half (57%) of high degree victims that were working or studying thought their place of work or study was tackling sexual harassment well or very well, while only 14% thought that they were not doing well. A relatively high proportion said they were doing neither well nor not well (15%) or were unsure (13%).

Figure D6.1 How well places of work or study are tackling sexual harassment



### Perceptions by demographic and business groups

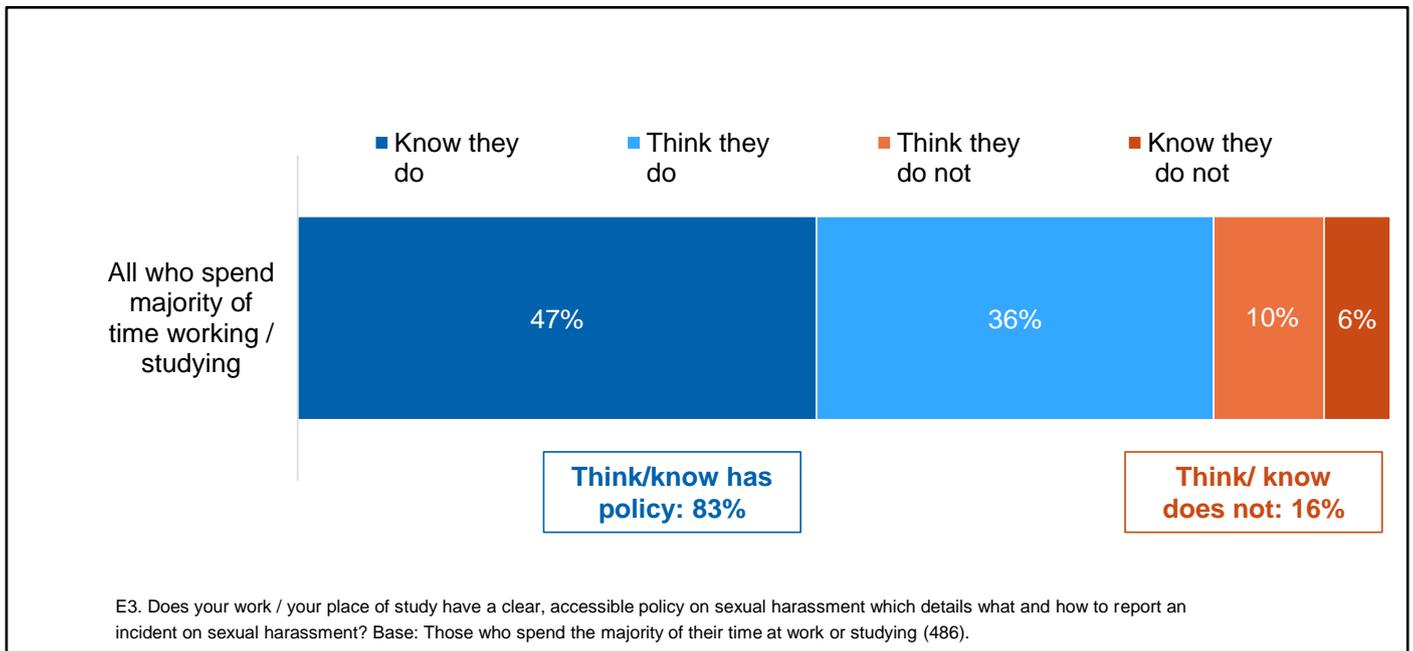
Those aged 25-34 were more likely than those aged 16-24 to say that their place of work/study was doing well tackling sexual harassment (63% vs. 52%).

Those with a highly limiting disability were more likely than those with no disability to say that their workplace was doing well (67% vs. 45%).

### Accessible work policies on sexual harassment

Around four-fifths (83%) of high degree victims with a place of work or study thought it had a clear, accessible policy on sexual harassment which detailed how to report an incident on sexual harassment. As shown in Figure B6.2 almost half (47%) knew such policy existed while 36% thought they did (but were uncertain). Around one-in-six (16%) with a place of work or study who thought their organisation did not have a policy were more likely to think there was not one (10%) than know there was not (6%).

**Figure D6.2 Whether places of work or study have a clear, accessible policy on sexual harassment**



**Training provided by workplace to prevent sexual harassment**

Over three-quarters (76%) of high degree victims thought / knew that their workplace offered training to prevent sexual harassment, while a quarter (24%) thought / knew it did not. Over two fifths (42%) knew that their employer offered training to prevent sexual harassment, while less than one-in-ten (9%) knew they did not.

**Noticed any changes in way workplace addresses sexual harassment**

Individuals who were in work or studying were asked whether they had noticed any changes in the way that their organisation had addressed sexual harassment in the last 12 months. The intention is that this question might be re-asked in future surveys to see if any interventions taken to encourage employers to address sexual harassment in the workplace are recognised by employees. As such, this question provides potential baseline data.

Two thirds (65%) of high degree victims who spent the majority of their time working or studying had noticed positive changes in how their how places of work or study addressed sexual harassment in the previous 12 months. Around one-in-five (19%) had noticed no changes, while one-in-six (16%) said there had been a negative change. As previously mentioned, positive and negative changes mean different things for different people.

---

**© Crown copyright 2019**

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3)

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concern

