

Diversity of in-house solicitors

10 January 2024

About the data

We ask all solicitors to provide their diversity information through their mySRA account once they are admitted. From this data, we built a profile of diversity among in-house solicitors. They are solicitors working in, for example, multinational corporations, local government, high-street businesses, charities and educational establishments. They make up around 20% of all practising solicitors.

It is not compulsory for solicitors to provide their diversity data, and the response rates vary for different characteristics. We are working to increase the declaration rate so we can report more fully in the future. However, we had sufficient data to report on sex, ethnicity and age. For all three characteristics, we have removed the unknown category but included those who prefer not to say.

This information was taken from our records as of 25 April 2023. It covers in-house solicitors with a practising certificate and those working without one in a Government department, which is 92% (33,584) of the in-house community. We have not included the 8% of solicitors who are admitted to the roll but do not have a practising certificate.

Where do in-house solicitors work

We categorise whether they work in the private sector, public sector and other sector organisations, with subcategories as shown:

- 66% work in private sector organisations
- 28% work in public sector organisations
 - 13% - local government
 - 7% - Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)
 - 4% - Government Legal Profession
 - 1% - court
 - 1% - Government body
 - 1% - Government funded service
- 6% work in other organisations
 - 2% - regulatory body
 - 2% - educational establishment
 - 1% - advice services.

Please note that the total numbers differ due to rounding.

When reporting on sex, ethnicity and age, due to the small numbers in certain sub - categories we will only show the breakdown for the largest subcategories where applicable:

- Private sector
- Public sector - the CPS and local government
- Other sector - educational establishments and regulatory bodies.

Breakdown of the in-house solicitors by sex

The table below shows a breakdown by sex. There is a greater proportion of women in the public and other sectors compared to the private sector.

| Sector | Women | Men | Prefer not to say | Total |
|-------------------------|-------|-----|-------------------|-------|
| All in-house solicitors | 61% | 39% | 0% | 100% |
| Private sector | 57% | 43% | 0% | 100% |
| Public sector | 68% | 32% | 0% | 100% |
| Other sector | 70% | 30% | 0% | 100% |

Distribution of men and women across different sectors

The table below shows the distribution of men and women across each in-house sector. About a third of all women working in an in-house role are based in the public sector compared to about a quarter of all men working in-house

| Sector | Women | Men |
|----------------|-------|-----|
| Private sector | 62% | 73% |
| Public sector | 32% | 23% |
| CPS | 8% | 7% |

| | | |
|-------------------------|------|------|
| Local government | 16% | 9% |
| Other sector | 3% | 3% |
| Education establishment | 2% | 2% |
| Regulation body | 2% | 2% |
| Total | 100% | 100% |

Breakdown of the in-house solicitors by ethnicity

The table below shows a breakdown by ethnicity. There is a slightly larger proportion of White solicitors in the private sector compared to the public and other sectors. And a slightly smaller proportion of Black, Asian and minority ethnic solicitors in the private sector compared to the public and other sectors.

| Sector | White | Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups | Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups | | | | Prefer not to say | Total |
|-------------------------|-------|---|---|-------|----------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| | | | Black | Asian | Mixed/Multiple | Other | | |
| All in-house solicitors | 80% | 19% | 4% | 11% | 2% | 2% | 1% | 100% |
| Private sector | 81% | 18% | 3% | 11% | 3% | 2% | 1% | 100% |
| Public sector | 79% | 21% | 6% | 12% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 100% |
| Other sector | 78% | 22% | 5% | 13% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 100% |

The [Office for National Statistics employment figures from 2023](https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/labourmarketstatusbyethnicity) (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/labourmarketstatusbyethnicity>) showed that 15% of the workforce in England, Scotland and Wales were from Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds (6% Asian, 4% Black, 2% Mixed/Multiple and 4% Other) compared to 19% of all practising solicitors and 85% were White.

Distribution of ethnic groups across the different sectors

The table below shows the distribution of ethnic groups across each sector. Two-thirds of all White solicitors work in the private sector, compared to just under half of all Black solicitors.

| Sector | White | Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups | Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups | | | | Prefer not to say | Total |
|-------------------------|-------|---|---|-------|----------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| | | | Black | Asian | Mixed/Multiple | Other | | |
| Private sector | 66% | 61% | 46% | 62% | 73% | 73% | | |
| Public sector | 29% | 32% | 46% | 31% | 22% | 23% | | |
| CPS | 7% | 8% | 11% | 8% | 5% | 4% | | |
| Local government | 13% | 17% | 27% | 16% | 10% | 12% | | |
| Other sector | 6% | 7% | 8% | 7% | 5% | 5% | | |
| Education establishment | 2% | 2% | 2% | 21% | 1% | 1% | | |
| Regulatory body | 2% | 3% | 3% | 3% | 2% | 2% | | |
| Total | 100% | | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | | 100% |

Breakdown of the in-house population by age category

The table below shows a breakdown by age category. The highest proportion of in-house solicitors are in the age category 35-44.

| Sector | 16-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65+ | Prefer not to say | Total |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------------------|-------|
| All in-house solicitors | 0% | 14% | 40% | 29% | 14% | 2% | 0% | 100% |
| Private sector | 0% | 15% | 44% | 29% | 10% | 1% | 0% | 100% |
| Public sector | 0% | 13% | 32% | 31% | 22% | 3% | 0% | 100% |
| Other sector | 0% | 12% | 40% | 29% | 16% | 3% | 0% | 100% |

Distribution of age categories across the different sectors

The table below shows the distribution of age categories across each sector. For the three younger age categories, a larger proportion work in the private sector. For the three older categories, a smaller percentage work in the private sector.

The youngest age group (16-24) includes fewer than five individuals so that column is not shown in the table.

| Sector | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-64 | 65+ |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| Private sector | 71% | 72% | 65% | 49% | 47% |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Public sector | 25% | 22% | 29% | 44% | 44% |
| CPS | 6% | 5% | 8% | 12% | 7% |
| Local government | 12% | 10% | 14% | 22% | 22% |
| Other sector | 5% | 6% | 6% | 7% | 9% |
| Educational establishment | 1% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 4% |
| Regulatory body | 1% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 1% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

To find out about other practising solicitors, read our [diversity in law firms' workforce report](https://news.sra.org.uk/sra/equality-diversity/diversity-profession/diverse-legal-profession/)
[\[https://news.sra.org.uk/sra/equality-diversity/diversity-profession/diverse-legal-profession/\]](https://news.sra.org.uk/sra/equality-diversity/diversity-profession/diverse-legal-profession/).