Survey report March 2007

Diversity in business
A focus for progress

Contents

Introduction

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has undertaken a range of research about managing diversity. In 2006, we carried out the first UK national-level survey to find out what resources organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors invest in progressing diversity management, and the status and power given to those with diversity roles.

Working with the Queen Mary Centre for Research at London University, a unique electronic survey was designed to obtain quantitative information about the influence of the business case and legislation in driving diversity progress. The results provide some important and enlightening statistical information and show what kinds of policies and practices organisations have developed and how well they seem to be working.

Following further analysis of the results that were first published in July 2006 in a report called *Managing Diversity: How much progress have employers made?*, this second report draws out more findings from the data.

The survey results are based on the responses of 285 individuals across all economic sectors and give a clear picture about the role of law in informing what organisations pay attention to and how significant the business case is for taking action.

This report helps organisations to assess their performance on managing diversity and see where they need to focus their attention to ensure that managing diversity has an increasing impact on business performance. It enables them to do this by comparing what they do with the simple diversity sophistication index developed from the survey results.

Overall, the results deliver good and bad news. The survey shows that, despite good progress, a large majority of employers have a long way to go to make diversity a mainstream business issue and deliver on the rhetoric they espouse.

Measuring how sophisticated organisations are in managing diversity

Measurement is essential to show what progress organisations are making in progressing diversity. We've developed a scale based on 146 variables included in the questionnaire and the survey results to evaluate how much progress businesses have made. Organisations can use this scale to compare what they do against the survey findings, which provide unique data in the diversity field.

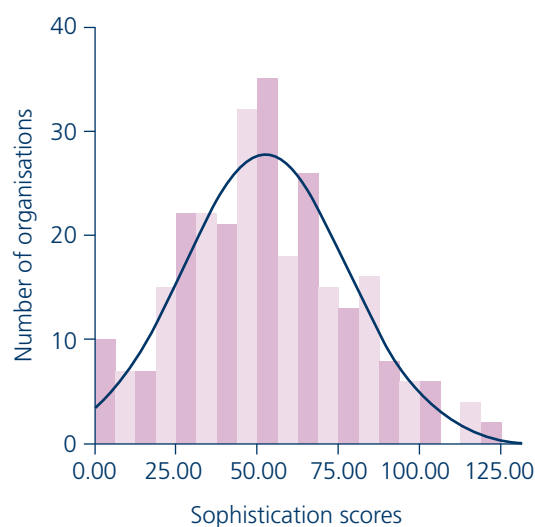**Organisational sophistication in diversity management**

Figure 1 shows that the range of sophistication among organisations varies dramatically – the average sophistication score is 52 out of a possible score of 146.

The most sophisticated organisation in managing diversity scored 122 and the score of the least sophisticated (there were five in the survey sample) was zero. The range of scores and the median scores show that there's much more potential for organisations to

benefit from managing diversity than they already do. The gap in activity relates to the under-utilisation of the broader business case arguments. It's a focus on the delivery of diverse business benefits, beyond litigation costs and public reputation, that can add value to business performance when initiatives support the delivery of organisational goals and objectives.

From the research results, we can speculate that many organisations aren't likely to be benefiting from diversity at all – for example, where there is neither diversity experience nor defined responsibility for diversity – bearing in mind that all the respondents to the survey have some experience or responsibility for progressing diversity in their organisations. The survey findings show that, where experience and understanding about managing diversity are poor or less well informed, organisations will score low on the diversity sophistication scale.

Figure 1: Frequencies of sophistication scores across all organisations

Base: 285 respondents

Table 1: Sophistication score and organisational size

Diversity sophistication (percentile)	Size of organisation		
	Large (1,000 or more employees)	Medium (250–999 employees)	Small (less than 250 employees)
20.00	9	13	30
40.00	12	16	35
60.00	19	12	18
80.00	30	14	15
100.00	38	11	3
Total	108	66	101

Table 1 shows that larger organisations are more likely to be sophisticated in their approach to diversity management. This reflects the greater dedicated resources they assign to managing diversity.

Differences between economic sectors in terms of levels of sophistication of diversity management are striking. Table 2 shows that public sector organisations are more sophisticated than those in the private and voluntary sectors.

Only 7% of private sector organisations achieve the highest levels of sophistication (top 20 percentile), compared to 34% of public sector organisations and 18% of voluntary sector organisations.

It's interesting to note that, despite the strong business case rhetoric from the private sector, such organisations are in fact generally less sophisticated in their diversity management approaches compared to public and voluntary sector organisations. The real pioneers in making diversity progress are among the top public sector organisations.

But no organisation represented in the survey sample scored maximum marks. The gap in the very top scores, achieved by only five organisations, and the potential that could be achieved is 16%.

Table 2: Sophistication score and sector

Diversity sophistication (percentile)	Percentage within sector		
	Private sector	Public sector	Voluntary sector
20.00	20	10	10
40.00	32	12	23
60.00	17	17	21
80.00	14	26	28
100.00	7	34	18

National-level drivers for diversity management

An inclusive approach to managing diversity focuses on valuing people as unique individuals rather than on group-related issues covered by legislation. But the survey results show that compliance is the top factor in informing what organisations do and that approaches to diversity follow the diversity strands covered by the law.

Key drivers at national level

Despite the noise made by many organisations about the importance of the business case in driving diversity progress, this view isn't upheld by our research findings – even though its importance is not insignificant and is shown to be vital to the achievement of high levels of sophistication in managing diversity.

The survey results make it clear that the law has the top influence on organisations in progressing diversity, with 32% of respondents identifying it as the most important of the top five drivers. Organisations are almost half as likely to say the business case is the most important driver (17%).

This is surprising, given the general resistance to regulation often loudly voiced by employers. However, in connection with discrimination regulation, this finding chimes with that from an earlier CIPD survey published in July 2005, *Employment Regulation, Burden or Benefit?*, which showed that it's not regulation itself, but bad regulation, that causes problems for employers. In that study, the majority of respondents regarded discrimination statutes as helpful rather than problematic.

The managing diversity sophistication index based on the current survey findings shows the importance of the business case in making progress. Although it's disappointing that the buy-in to the business case for managing diversity is weaker than the attention given to legal obligations, this is understandable for a number of reasons:

- Discrimination law has existed in the UK for over three decades and has had more time to permeate into employment policies and practices than the more recently articulated business case arguments.
- Fear of legal action forces strategic defensive responses from employers, even though they're often based on a damage-limitation, and therefore minimalist, agenda.
- The broader concept of managing diversity as an inclusive approach based on valuing all individuals only emerged in the UK in the mid-1990s.
- The limited resources shown by the survey to be dedicated to managing diversity is bound to influence the way organisations set their priorities regarding compliance.

The survey evidence signals the need to profile both the importance of the business case for progressing diversity management and the contribution better diversity management can make to business performance, as well as the need for widespread awareness-raising to make it more visible on employers' radar screens.

Table 3 shows the other most important business drivers for managing diversity. These include recruiting and retaining best talent (12%), corporate social responsibility and 'because it's morally right' (both 13%), being an employer of choice (15%), and because it makes business sense (17%).

Table 3: The key drivers for diversity (respondents ranked their top five on a scale of 1–5, with 1 being the most important)

Drivers	Percentage of respondents ranking as …					Overall importance
	Most important	Very important	Important	Less important	Least important	
Legal pressures	32	13	6	5	12	**68**
To recruit and retain best talent	13	17	19	8	7	**64**
Corporate social responsibility	13	17	15	11	7	**63**
To be an employer of choice	15	15	14	10	7	**61**
Because it makes business sense	17	14	14	7	8	**60**
Because it's morally right	13	11	15	10	11	**60**
To improve business performance	6	10	15	10	7	**48**
To address recruitment problems	8	11	12	8	7	**46**
Belief in social justice	9	11	12	9	5	**46**
Desire to improve customer relations	5	8	15	8	7	**43**
To improve products and services	10	9	13	5	7	**44**
To improve creativity and innovation	6	8	14	8	7	**43**
Desire to reach diverse markets	6	7	11	7	8	**39**
To improve corporate branding	5	7	13	7	5	**37**
To enhance decision-making	3	8	15	5	4	**35**
Trade union activities	3	4	8	6	11	**32**
To respond to the competition in the market	6	6	10	7	4	**32**
To respond to the global market	6	3	8	6	7	**30**

Base: 285 respondents

The research examined a broad range of business case reasons why organisations manage diversity.

Almost half (48%) of respondents say improving business performance is one of the most important drivers for managing diversity, with almost two-thirds (64%) seeing its contribution to the bottom line in terms of recruiting and retaining best talent.

Surprisingly, despite the rhetoric about the importance of managing diversity in connection with improving customer relations and market share, this connection isn't strongly recognised by the survey respondents. Only 43% of respondents ranked 'the desire to improve customer relations' and 39% ranked the 'desire to reach diverse markets' among the top five drivers of diversity in terms of the business case, with a further 29%

seeing globalisation and competition and 32% 'responding to market competition' as important.

The survey shows that the business benefits of diversity management are particularly focused on more effective people management, for example, recruiting and retaining talent.

While this is important, there's little evidence of organisations mainstreaming diversity into operational practices such as marketing, product development and customer services – which is where significant gains could be made in improving business performance.

Few respondents regard improving the quality and performance of the workforce, improving creativity and innovation, improving products and services, and enhancing decision-making as being among the top five drivers (Table 4).

Table 4: Key drivers for diversity in terms of business benefits (respondents ranked their top five on a scale of 1–5, with 1 being the most important)

| Drivers | Percentage of respondents | | | | | |
	Most important	Very important	Important	Less important	Least important	**Overall importance**
To recruit and retain best talent	13	17	19	8	7	**64**
Because it makes business sense	17	14	14	7	8	**60**
To improve business performance	6	10	15	10	7	**48**
To address recruitment problems	8	11	12	8	7	**46**
Desire to improve customer relations	5	8	15	8	7	**43**
To improve products and services	10	9	13	5	7	**44**
To improve creativity and innovation	6	8	14	8	7	**43**
Desire to reach diverse markets	6	7	11	7	8	**39**
To improve corporate branding	5	7	13	7	5	**37**
To enhance decision-making	3	8	15	5	4	**35**
To respond to the competition in the market	6	6	10	7	4	**33**
To respond to the global market	6	3	8	6	7	**30**

Base: 285 respondents

These findings emphasise the limited understanding of the broader business case for managing diversity and the importance of communicating what this is about. This would encourage faster progress in mainstreaming diversity management into operational practices, as well as those related to people management and development activities, and would ensure that managing diversity adds greater value to business performance.

Organisations with legal case arguments demonstrate higher levels of sophistication in their diversity management approaches than those who don't cite legislation as a driver (Table 5). This is also evident, but to a lesser extent, in the correlation between the business case arguments and the level of sophistication (Table 6).

Table 5: Legal case and diversity sophistication cross-tabulation

| | | Diversity sophistication scale (percentile) | | | | | |
		20.00	40.00	60.00	80.00	100.00	Total
Legal case	No	27	18	15	13	13	86
	Yes	29	45	34	44	41	193
Total		56	63	49	57	54	279

Base: 285 respondents

Table 6: Business case and diversity sophistication cross-tabulation

| | | Diversity sophistication scale (percentile) | | | | | |
		20.00	40.00	60.00	80.00	100.00	Total
Business case	No	33	30	18	20	11	112
	Yes	23	34	32	39	43	171
Total		56	64	50	59	54	283

Base: 285 respondents

Organisations that acknowledge both the importance of legislation and the business case show higher levels of sophistication in their approach to diversity management (Table 7). Organisations that take a polarised approach to driving diversity management initiatives forward don't reach the high levels of sophistication that can be achieved.

Table 7: Business case and legal case cross-tabulation (in percentages)

| | | Legal case | | |
		No	Yes	Total
Business case	No	20	20	40
	Yes	11	49	60
Total		31	69	100

Base: 277 respondents

Organisational-level drivers for diversity management

The results of the survey show that the inclusive nature of diversity management isn't very well understood, with only 20% of the respondents stating that their organisations' diversity policies cover 'all forms of difference'.

Figure 2 shows that organisations tend to focus on issues covered by legislation, such as disability, with only a few focusing attention on the diversity issues, such as weight, physical appearance and mental health, which, as we know from statistics, affect large numbers of people and can influence job and training prospects as well as access to goods and services.

The survey explored the activities organisations use to progress diversity. Awareness and diversity training for employees (66%) and employee attitude surveys (62%) are the most commonly used tools.

Very few organisations undertake activities to make sure that diversity is mainstreamed into either the way people do their jobs or operational practices. Figure 3

shows that only 16% include diversity objectives as part of managers' performance assessments and just 30% build diversity into business goals. A further 95% of organisations fail to reward and recognise diversity achievements and just 20% of respondents report that their organisation adopts diversity standards. These statistics show significant gaps in making diversity management a coherent mainstream business issue.

Figure 3 shows a large proportion of diversity professionals, over two-thirds (70%), admitting that they don't set objectives to progress diversity, which suggests that it's not a strategic issue in their organisations. Again, these findings demonstrate that diversity management activities in the majority of UK organisations remain at a very superficial level, which spotlights how much more can be gained by paying attention to diversity in ways that support business objectives.

In the absence of objective-setting, measurement, and reward and recognition, it's hard to see how the necessary fundamental cultural changes to create inclusive workplace environments can be achieved.

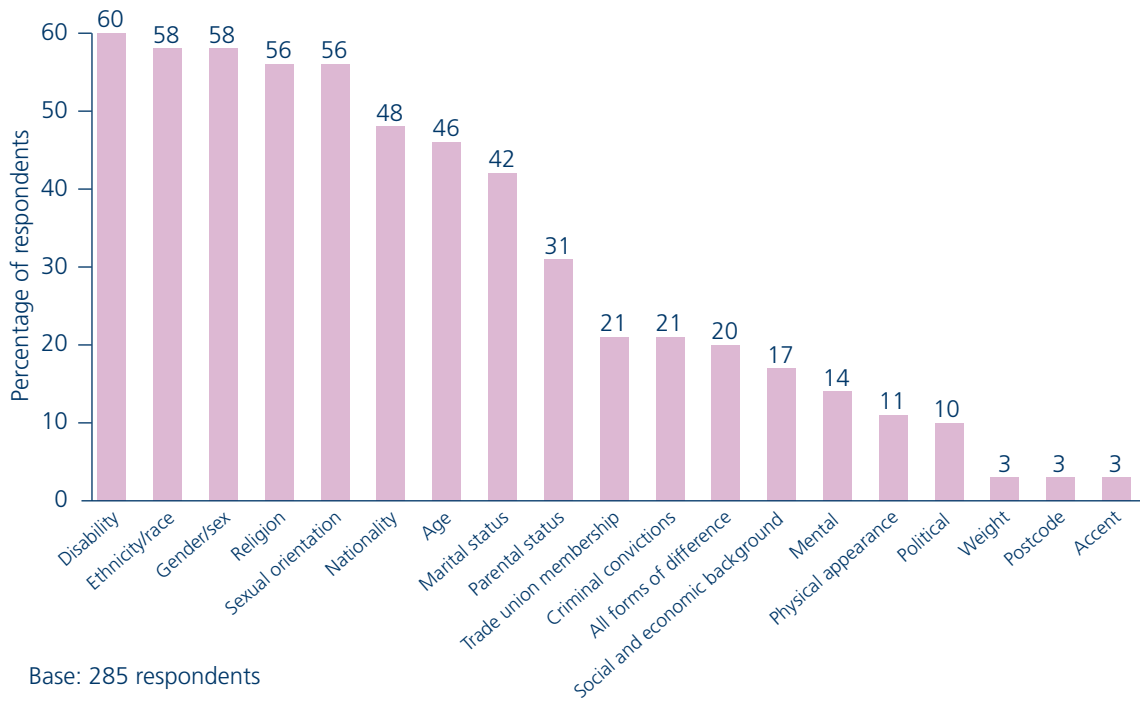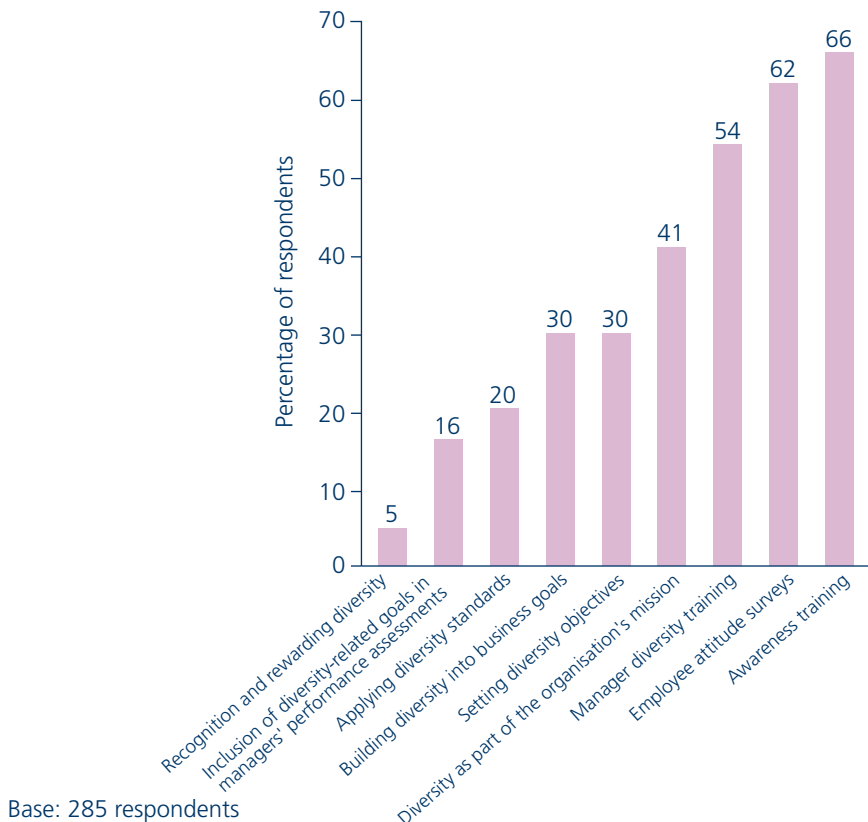Figure 2: Diversity categories covered by organisations' policies

Percentage of respondents

Category	%
Disability	60
Ethnicity/race	58
Gender/sex	58
Religion	56
Sexual orientation	56
Nationality	48
Age	46
Marital status	42
Parental status	31
Trade union membership	21
Criminal convictions	21
All forms of difference	20
Social and economic background	17
Mental	14
Physical appearance	11
Political	10
Weight	3
Postcode	3
Accent	3

Base: 285 respondents

Figure 3: Diversity activities undertaken in organisations

Percentage of respondents

Activity	%
Recognition and rewarding diversity	5
Inclusion of diversity-related goals in managers' performance assessments	16
Applying diversity standards	20
Building diversity into business goals	30
Setting diversity objectives	30
Diversity as part of the organisation's mission	41
Manager diversity training	54
Employee attitude surveys	62
Awareness training	66

Base: 285 respondents

The survey explored how organisations measure the success of diversity management initiatives and the affect they have on the bottom line. Only a limited number measures are used (Table 8). These include employee attitude surveys, complaints and grievances, turnover rates, appraisal, recruitment and absenteeism figures. Practices that are not commonly used but which would show what contributions managing diversity can make to business performance are techniques such as the balanced scorecard, statistics about the diversity of an organisation's customer base, and qualitative information about improvements in problem-solving and decision-making.

Table 8: Measures that organisations use (or would use) to monitor diversity

	Percentage of respondents
Employee attitude surveys	72
Number of complaints and grievances	56
Labour turnover	56
Employee performance appraisals	46
Absenteeism	45
Ability to recruit	40
Number of tribunal cases	31
Impact assessment	27
Level of customer satisfaction	24
Employee commitment surveys	19
Business performance	19
Balanced scorecard	17
Diversification of customer base	13
Improvements to problem-solving and decision-making	7
Psychological contract issues	6

Base: 285 respondents

The people who drive diversity progress

Individuals play a vital role in influencing the progress of managing diversity. In fact, everyone in an organisation can make a difference, but those with a special responsibility, such as diversity, people management and development professionals, and line managers with dedicated responsibility for diversity, act as crucial change agents.

This part of the report explores the resources and level of authority and influence such individuals have and their views about their roles and responsibilities for managing diversity.

The status and influence of the diversity 'change agent'

It's well recognised by those experienced in managing diversity that the support of senior management and top teams is vital to facilitate progress. Yet Table 9 shows that less than half (42%) the survey respondents feel that their own senior managers encourage diversity in their organisation. In fact, only 16% were positive about senior management support.

Table 9: Perceptions about the strength of senior management support for progressing diversity

Statement	Percentage of respondents saying ...				
	Strongly disagree 1	2	3	4	Strongly agree 5
In my organisation, those in senior management encourage diversity	4	17	36	27	16
It's very important for my diversity role to know the names and faces of senior staff and to be able to approach them easily	–	2	9	42	47
My organisation aims to make sure that diversity and equality are at the heart of everything it does	4	25	33	27	11

Base: 285 respondents

The survey explored perceptions about the amount of personal ownership people at different levels in organisations tend to have with regard to managing diversity. The findings show that ownership increases according to level – 43% of board members and 45% of senior managers are seen to display some degree of ownership of diversity.

In line with findings in other research, in which the attitudes of employees are seen as a main obstacle to diversity progress, the perception is that lower-level employees feel less ownership towards diversity. Table 10 shows the figure decreasing by job level, from 31% for middle managers and 22% for junior managers to 13%

for non-managerial workers. This suggests that there's less activity than is needed in relation to diversity management training for people at lower levels in the organisation.

The fact that 35% of organisations don't involve all their employees in the design and implementation of diversity policies and practices supports the marginalisation of lower-level employees regarding the progress of diversity and leaves organisations less effective than they could be in maximising the benefits of diversity. These survey results spotlight areas for serious attention by organisations seeking to make diversity a mainstream business issue.

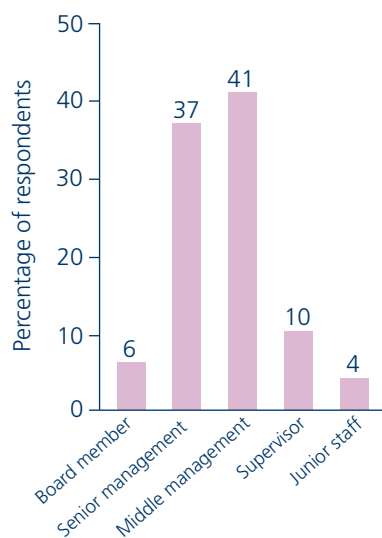Table 10: Degrees of management ownership of diversity

| | Percentage of respondents saying ... | | | | |
Organisational level	No ownership 1	2	3	4	Total ownership 5
Board members	10	16	31	28	16
Senior management	5	13	33	36	13
Middle management	6	20	43	23	8
Junior management	8	27	43	18	4
Non-managerial workers	15	30	42	11	2
Trade union representatives	8	11	44	28	9

Base: 257 respondents

Figure 4 shows that the majority of the respondents with some responsibility for diversity (41%) occupy middle management positions. This doesn't sit comfortably with the survey finding that shows that the people who are most likely to be noticed as taking ownership for progressing diversity are at board or senior management levels. This situation suggests there

is a damaging disconnection between the levels of authority, influence and commitment that would support diversity progress better, and this dilutes the power organisations have to make change happen. By having more people with a responsibility for diversity positioned at senior levels in organisations, the pace of change and benefits to business could improve.

Figure 4: What level is your current role in the organisation?

Base: 280 respondents

Titles for diversity officers

Area Diversity and Equality Manager

Assistant Director, Equality and Diversity

Diversity and HR Policy Director

Diversity Development Manager

Diversity Group Member and National Member

Diversity Manager

Diversity Officer

Employee Relations and Diversity Manager

Equal Opportunities Adviser

Equal Opportunities and Diversity Manager

Equal Rights Officer

Equalities and Disabilities Adviser

Equality and Diversity Adviser

Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator

Equality and Diversity Manager

Equality and Diversity Officer

Head of Diversity

Head of Equal Opportunities

HR and Diversity Consultant

HR Consultant/Diversity Project Manager

HR Project Manager, Equality

Vice-President, Talent Management and Diversity

The research indicates inconsistency in organisations with regard to diversity roles. Although most are in the HR function, individual job titles vary considerably. More than 20 different titles and positions were reported by the survey respondents.

Professional-level qualifications can help people improve their knowledge and understanding. Yet the survey results show that most people with diversity-focused roles tend not to gain their knowledge through formal qualifications.

A big majority of individuals with a responsibility for diversity have gained their expertise through work experience, external training programmes or involvement in diversity networks (Table 11). In-house training and formal education are less significant methods. These results illustrate the need for more formal training for those responsible for progressing diversity.

Table 11: Sources of expertise for diversity management roles

	Percentage of respondents
Work experience	65
External training	51
Diversity networks	37
In-house training	35
Formal education	32

Base: 285 respondents

Table 12: Skills that are needed most in diversity management jobs

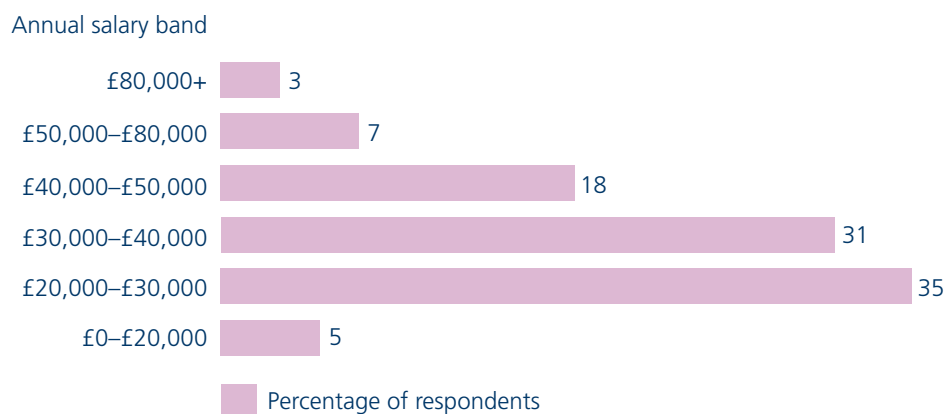|	Percentage of respondents
Understanding of law	79
Understanding of human resource/personnel management procedures	71
Understanding of the perspectives of the diverse groups and individuals	68
Sense of fairness	67
Negotiating and influencing skills	62
Communication and consensus building skills	58
Understanding of business environment	54
Coaching, mentoring and facilitating skills	51
Networking	46
Leadership skills	41
Understanding of inter-group relations	39
Analytical and critical thinking skills	38
Chairmanship	11

Base: 285 respondents

Table 12 shows that an understanding of law and HR management procedures are most frequently cited by diversity officers as being needed in their job. This is because most activities focus on compliance with legislation and people management and development issues, rather than on operational activities and the production of goods and services.

Although almost half of the survey respondents say that networking is an important skill for their job role, less that one-fifth report that they're a member of a diversity network themselves. This might suggest the need for more accessible networks in this field as a way of learning and sharing knowledge.

Figure 5 shows that the earning potential of most diversity specialists (66%) is between £20,000 and £40,000 annually. The vast majority of the respondents are in middle stages of their careers – 30% of respondents are aged 31–40 and 42% are aged 41–50.

An important finding is that, although 87% of the respondents work full-time, only 18% of them are contracted to work full-time on diversity management (Figure 6). This shows that managing diversity isn't highly prioritised by employers and that they're not paying serious attention to making progress. It also reveals the cosmetic nature of the responses being made.

Figure 5: Annual salary bands of diversity specialists

Annual salary band

Salary band	Percentage of respondents
£80,000+	3
£50,000–£80,000	7
£40,000–£50,000	18
£30,000–£40,000	31
£20,000–£30,000	35
£0–£20,000	5

Percentage of respondents

Base: 280 respondents

Figure 6: Number of hours respondents are contracted to spend on diversity management per week

Hours

|	
Over 35	18
31–35	10
21–30	5
10–20	3
1–9	4
0	53

Percentage of respondents
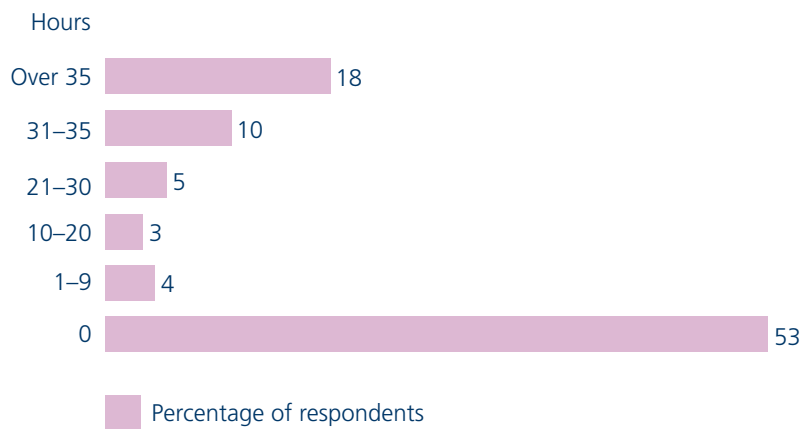
Base: 265 respondents

Figure 7 shows that 64% of organisations don't have a specialised diversity or equal opportunities function, and Figure 8 shows that 70% don't allocate a dedicated budget for diversity. The absence of a diversity function and/or a budget supports other evidence from the survey regarding the relatively poor understanding about the business case for diversity, which suggests organisations aren't seriously addressing the progress of diversity, despite the focus on legal compliance, and that there is a lack of understanding about the contributions that managing diversity can add to business performance.

While few organisations have dedicated resources for diversity, 61% of respondents state that the tasks they have undertaken in relation to managing diversity have increased in the last few years. Only 14% of them report that the number of people under their supervision has increased in parallel with the increase in their tasks.

Figure 7: Presence of diversity function/office

No	64
Yes	36

Percentage of respondents
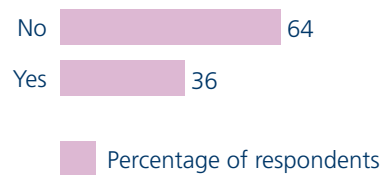
Base: 275 respondents

Figure 8: Presence of budget for diversity

No	70
Yes	30

Percentage of respondents
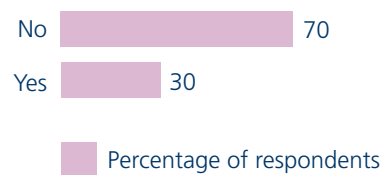
Base: 271 respondents

Table 13: Amount of influence/authority held by the diversity function and its most senior person

	Percentage of respondents saying ...				
Influence/authority	No influence/power 1	2	3	4	High influence/power 5
Diversity function Base: 184 respondents	5	16	40	32	7
Most senior diversity person Base: 192 respondents	4	16	34	36	10

Even in organisations where there is a senior person responsible for diversity, only 46% of respondents believe that this person has some level of authority over others in the organisation (Table 13). Similarly, only 39% of the respondents think that their diversity function (where one exists) is influential.

Only 38% of respondents report that their organisation makes sure that diversity is at the heart of everything – that is, integrating diversity into business activities (Table 9, page 13). Diversity activity focuses on people management and development issues, with 82% of respondents saying that diversity is central to HR (Table 14).

Only 61% of respondents say diversity is central to advertising; 51% say it is central to customers and consumers; and only 49% feel it has a central role in corporate social responsibility. Even in marketing and sales, where maintaining and growing market share is a key objective for sustaining economic success, just 35% identify a link with diversity. These figures drop even lower for other 'core' business functions, with only 11% of organisations reporting that diversity is central to their finance and accounting functions, 18% saying it's central to manufacturing and production; and just 23% say it is central to suppliers despite the duty in the public sector to promote the importance of equality regarding race.

The lack of a diversity focus in core business activities spotlights enormous potential for business growth opportunities.

Table 14: The extent to which diversity is central to the activities of different functions/departments in the organisation

	Percentage of respondents saying ...				
Function	Not central 1	2	3	4	Very central 5
Human resources	1	3	15	40	42
Advertising	7	7	26	39	22
Customers and consumers	6	9	34	30	21
Corporate social responsibility	9	13	29	28	21
Strategic management/ corporate strategy	10	10	27	33	20
National/regional/local branches/chains	15	20	28	20	18
Marketing and sales	24	17	25	19	16
Shareholders	19	17	35	17	12
Manufacturing and production	27	26	28	12	6
Suppliers	19	27	32	19	4
Finance and accounting	32	28	28	9	2

Base: 285 respondents

Conclusions and implications

Organisations have made good progress in managing diversity, but the results of the CIPD unique electronic survey suggest that the state of the nation in managing diversity reflects a more cosmetic than deep-rooted success and that businesses are missing out on ways that diversity can add greater value.

Although most organisations seek to follow the law and use this as the main lever for change, most are failing to recognise the broader aspects of the business case that can support business objectives and deliver improvements to the bottom line.

The failure to adopt the good practices used by the pioneering public sector organisations that understand the integral nature of managing diversity highlights rich opportunities for managing diversity as a mainstream business process that can add real value to business performance.

For managing diversity to move away from being a cost burden to a performance driver, it's imperative that information about the business case arguments and diverse business benefits are well communicated. This can be done through general education and awareness-raising based on evidenced arguments, case study material and management tools. In addition, there is a need for more formal training to help those responsible for driving progress, which is not limited to specialist understanding of diversity issues, but extends to an understanding of the broader business case arguments for diversity, ability to understand and engage with business needs and expertise in change management and influencing skills.

To be sophisticated in managing diversity, organisations need to meet their legal duties in addition to integrating diversity into all their operational activities – contrary to popular opinion, to be sophisticated in managing diversity and a leader in the diversity field, an 'either/or' approach just isn't an option.

The differentiator in good diversity practice is the adoption of the broader aspects of the business case, as shown by the diversity sophistication index developed from the survey results.

The survey shows that the majority of respondents see the law as already being important and work to meet its requirements. But the evidence also shows up the importance of paying more attention to understanding the business case.

Organisations shouldn't simply focus on increasing diversity but need to learn how to manage it better in ways that address organisational and personal needs. This requires greater understanding about what managing diversity is and how to manage it effectively.

This knowledge gap needs to be filled. It should be placed at centre-stage by the Commission for Equality and Human Rights. This new organisation could gain considerable mileage in driving diversity progress in the UK by focusing energy and attention on the issue of education and awareness-raising. This activity should be informed by research into good practice and the provision of guidance and support, rather than policing legislation as a priority.

A facilitated network for those with responsibilities for driving diversity would help to support them in making progress.

This survey shows that education and awareness-raising engages employers' interest and commitment and triggers change, as evidenced by the activity of many organisations to tackle age discrimination well ahead of the introduction of age law in October 2006.

Background

The questionnaire survey was designed as a multi-level tool, based on the many different drivers at the national, organisational and individual levels, which organisations have identified as reasons for addressing diversity.

The survey was carried out electronically through a self-completion online questionnaire, which was piloted for clarity and accessibility. This was promoted on the CIPD website, supported by the Equal Opportunities Commission, Age Positive, the Commission for Racial Equality and other diversity networks, over a six-week period in February and March 2006. Direct emails were sent to 4,200 CIPD members who had expressed an interest in equality and diversity. Articles were also placed in the CIPD's *People Management* magazine and in other CIPD member communications.

The research generated 285 completed questionnaires from people with a responsibility for diversity. The overall response rate provides a representative sample in terms of organisational size, location, industry, and sector. See Table 15 for further details of distributive attributes of the survey participants.

The sample reflects the female-dominated nature of diversity and equality professionals in the UK – only a quarter of the respondents were male. The largest age group was 41–50 years, and middle management was the most common organisational status for survey participants.

While there were a few participants whose diversity roles stretched beyond national level, the majority of the participants had organisational- and unit-level responsibility in diversity management. All economic sectors, geographical areas and sizes of organisations were fairly represented in the survey.

Profile of the respondents

Table 15: Distributive attributes of survey participants

Sex	Percentage of respondents
Male	21
Female	79

Age group	
16–25	3
26–30	11
31–40	30
41–50	42
51–60	13
61–65	1

Managerial level	
Board member	6
Junior staff	4
Middle management	41
Senior management	37
Supervisor	10

Level of diversity role	
European-level responsibility	3
International/global-level responsibility	3
National-level responsibility	13
Organisation-level responsibility	41
Unit-level responsibility	35

Sector	
Chemicals, oils and pharmaceuticals	3
Construction	0.4
Electricity, gas and water	1
Engineering, electronics and metals	3
Food, drink and tobacco	2
General manufacturing	1

Table 15: Distributive attributes of survey participants (continued)

Sector	Percentage of respondents
Mining and quarrying	0.4
Paper and printing	0.4
Textiles	1
Other manufacturing/production	4
Professional services	11
Finance, insurance and real estate	5
Hotels, catering and leisure	2
IT services	2
Call centres	0.4
Media	1
Retail and wholesale	4
Transport, distribution and storage	3
Communications	1
Other private services	4
Private sector services – voluntary, community and not-for-profit	3
Private sector services – care services	1
Private sector services – charity services	2
Private sector services – housing association	0.4
Private sector services – other voluntary	1
Central government	0.6
Education	13
Health	6
Local government	12
Other public services	7
Voluntary, community and not-for-profit – care services	4
Voluntary, community and not-for-profit – charity services	4
Voluntary, community and not-for-profit – housing association	4
Voluntary, community and not-for-profit – other voluntary	3

Number of employees	
250 or less	35
251–500	10
501–1,000	14
1,001–5,000	21
5,001–10,000	7
10,001 or more	11

Table 15: Distributive attributes of survey participants (continued)

Region	Percentage of respondents
North-east England	4
North-west England	8
Scotland	12
London	18
Yorkshire and Humberside	7
Midlands	16
Wales	3
South-east England	18
South-west England	12
East of England	5
Northern Ireland	2

Acknowledgements

We explore leading-edge people management and development issues through our research. Our aim is to share knowledge, increase learning and understanding, and help our members make informed decisions about improving practice in their organisations.

We produce many resources on diversity management issues including guides, books, practical tools, surveys and research reports. We also organise a number of conferences, events and training courses. Please visit www.cipd.co.uk to find out more.