REFUGEE ACTION

**EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE & PARTNERSHIPS**

INSIGHT HUB
BULLETIN #28

MAPPING THE MIGRATION SECTOR'S RESILIENCE AND RESPONSE: ANTI-RACISM AND INCLUSION

DATA DISCLAIMER PLEASE NOTE: The data in this bulletin is based on the responses from organisations who participated in the survey. The sample group is small and therefore the results shown in this report may contain bias and should be used as indicative only. Please contact the Hub team for any validation and verification required.

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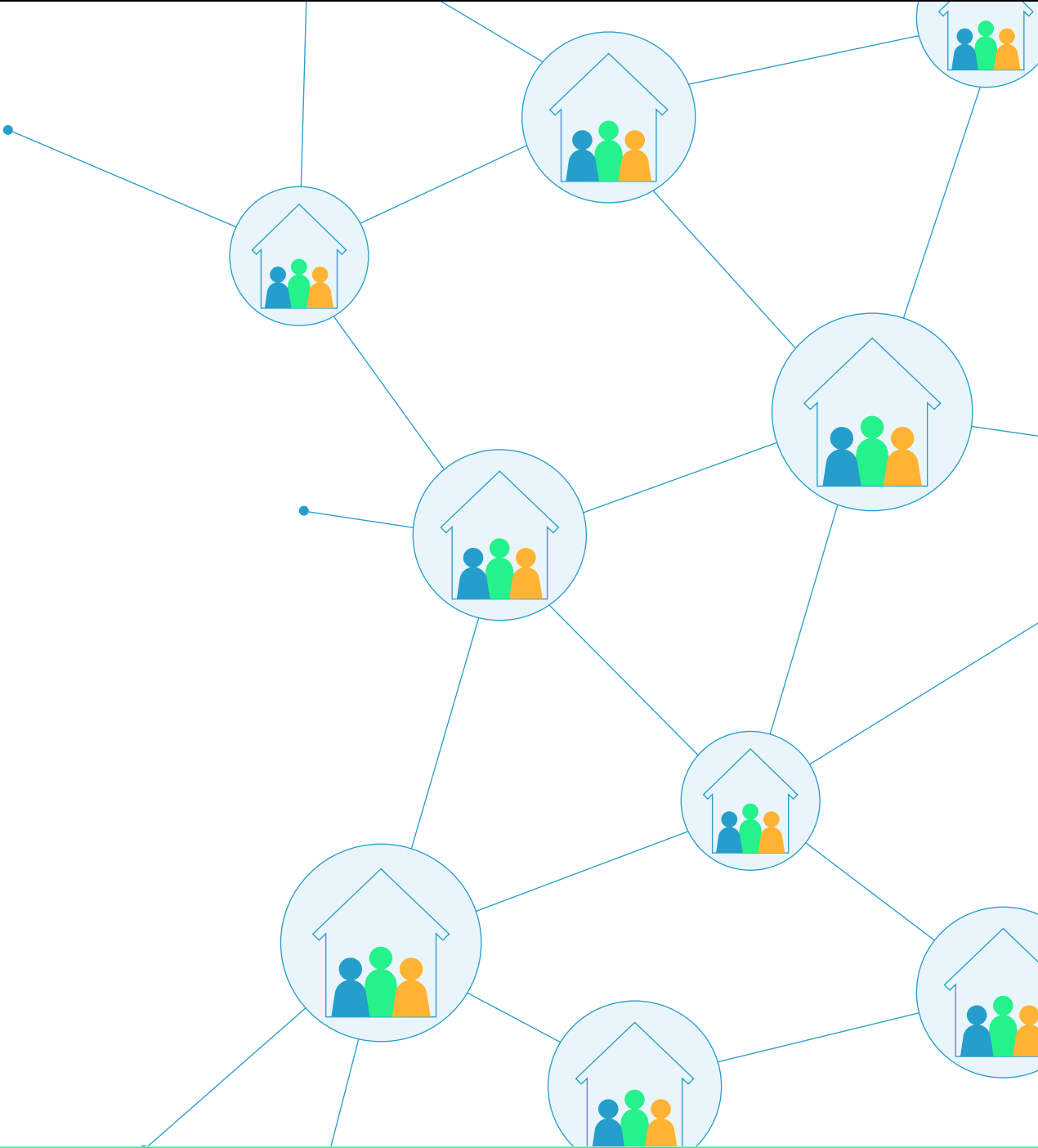
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Discrimination, Hate, and Anti-Racism

a Organisational readiness & internal capacity

- 49% of organisations have faced threats, hostility, or safety concerns since the August 2024 far-right riots, including online abuse and occasional physical attacks. Some have increased security or temporarily closed.

- Responses include enhancing physical/online security, hate crime training, updated safeguarding, and stronger police and council engagement; some shifted to online-only services.

- 55% have clear internal guidance on racism/hate incidents. Support and protocols vary, with ongoing efforts to better protect frontline staff and vulnerable clients.

- Organisations often respond to far-right protests by prioritising safety—cancelling events, closing offices, moving activities online, and coordinating with police and local safety networks.

- Barriers to action on anti-racism include limited capacity, funding, political sensitivity, trustee reluctance, and balancing anti-racism with core service delivery; nonetheless, commitment to change remains strong.
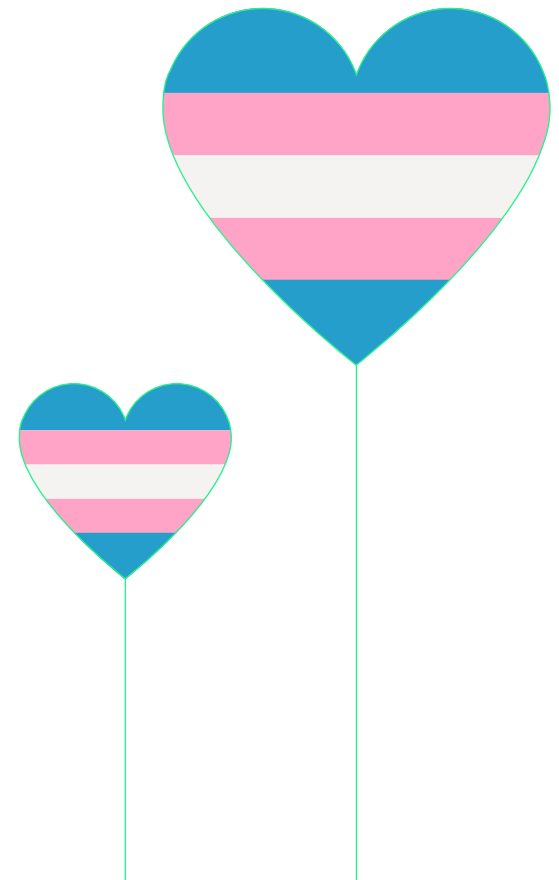
b External engagement & influence

- Organisations are engaging with: Law Enforcement & Criminal Justice, Government & councils, Community & Voluntary Forums, Campaigns & Anti-Racism Groups, National & Sector Networks, Academic & Research Bodies, International & Regional Networks and other collaborations.

- 90% of organisations are engaging with sector networks, local authorities, police or hate crime networks on issues regarding racism and discrimination and far-right activity. 65% of organisations have taken part in shaping public messages or campaigns about migration, racism, or building stronger communities. 27% of organisations believe that cultural events are the most effective activities for shifting perceptions in their areas, compared to other initiatives such as storytelling, art exhibitions, community meals, and protests.

c Resources, funding & gaps

- 35% of organisations sought funding for anti-racism or community cohesion work in the past year.

- Key gaps include insufficient staff capacity, funding, time, leadership support, clear policies, digital strategies, and training.

- Political neutrality concerns and hostile local environments open challenges to racism and far-right sentiment.

- Organisations seek deeper community engagement, balanced involvement of lived experience voices, more funding, affordable lived-experience-led training, practical guidance (e.g., HOPE Not Hate), infrastructure for collaboration, and improved recruitment.
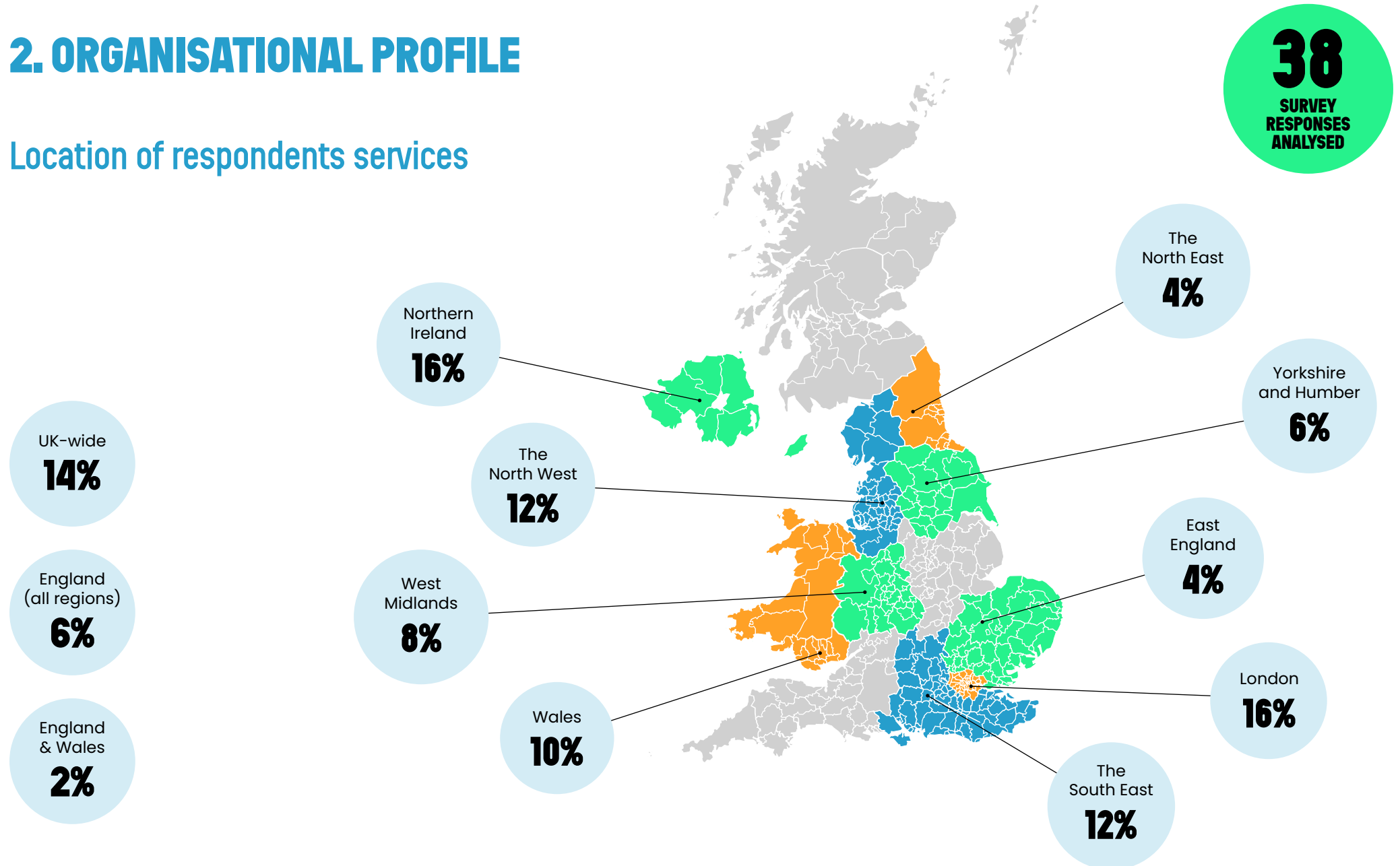
Trans-Inclusion

- 20% of organisations report impacts from recent Supreme Court rulings on gender definition; 24% run trans-inclusive gender-specific services.

- 33% of staff feel confident advising on trans issues and 7% organisations have revised policies/practices accordingly.

- Need for clearer government guidance (e.g., from Citizens Advice, EHRC) on gender inclusion, especially in sports and facilities.

- Training and lived experience input are critical, considering many refugees come from backgrounds with low LGBTQ+ tolerance.

- Most organisations provide some Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) or specialist LGBTQ+ training, but some, with limited resources, have little formal training.

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2. ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

Location of respondents services

38 SURVEY RESPONSES ANALYSED

The North East
4%

Northern Ireland
16%

Yorkshire and Humber
6%

UK-wide
14%

The North West
12%

England (all regions)
6%

West Midlands
8%

East England
4%

London
16%

England & Wales
2%

Wales
10%

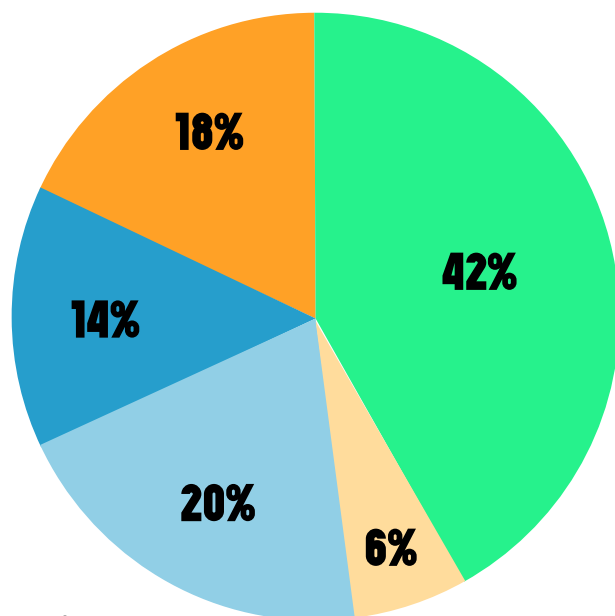The South East
12%

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Organisation Annual Turnover

Most of the respondents have an annual turnover of between

£150,000 AND £1 MILLION PER YEAR

- 42%
- 6%
- 20%
- 14%
- 18%

Legend:
- 🟢 £150,000 or under
- 🟡 £150,001 to £250,000
- 🔵 £250,001 to £500,000
- 🔵 £500,001 to £1,000,000
- 🟠 £1,000,001 or over

The approximate number of people organisations are currently support (incl children)

- 46%
- 26%
- 18%
- 10%
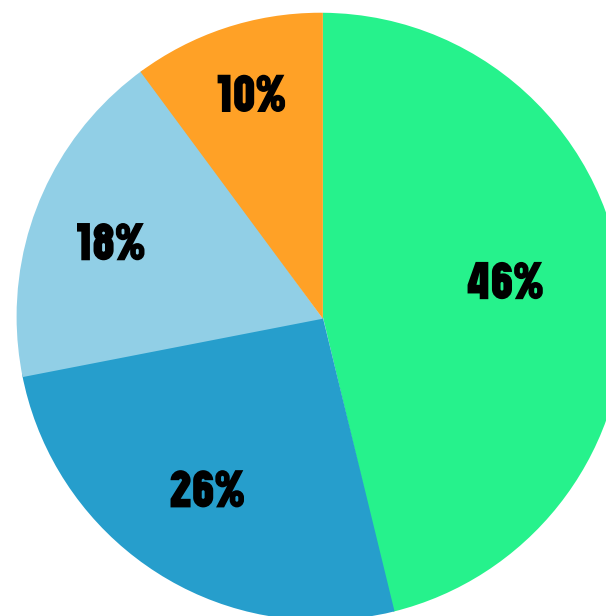
Legend:
- 🟢 < 500
- 🔵 500 - 1000
- 🔵 1001 - 5000
- 🟠 5001+

3. INSIGHTS & ANALYSIS

3.1. Discrimination, Hate and Anti-Racism

Organisational Readiness & Internal Capacity

a **Threats, disruptions and safety concerns**

49% of organisations have experienced some threats, disruptions, or safety concerns since the August 2024 far-right riots. These threats are as follows:

Online Threats and Harassment

- Multiple organisations reported **online threats**, including trolling, hostile emails, and intimidating Facebook posts.
- **Video recordings of premises** were taken and shared in far-right online groups.
- Organisations experienced **harassing phone calls** and threatening messages via telephone or social media.

Physical Incidents and Security Concerns

- **Verbal abuse and intimidation** at premises, including people shouting at doors and making threats to staff.
- **Suspicious activity** observed at drop-ins and around offices.
- A **male asylum seeker threatened a staff member** during a drop-in session, using their shared first language.
- **Wethersfield clients were chased** in a nearby town, although no incidents occurred at the Colchester base.
- **Following the Southport riots**, SWAP was named on a far-right hit list; police conducted safety checks, the office closed temporarily, and negative social media commentary followed.
- **Two separate physical attacks** were reported on beneficiaries—one in the Anfield area, the other in the city centre.
- **Roma families were targeted in racial riots**, including:
  - Over 200 Roma Romanian families affected in Leeds (2024).
  - Incidents near Ballymena in June 2025.
- **Albanian heritage children** faced increased bullying at school; volunteers reported ethnic-based bullying or "banter" in their workplaces.
- **Additional security measures** were introduced at some premises due to the perceived increased threat level.

Institutional/Community Climate and Organisational Response

- **WARM** (a voluntary initiative) was formed in response to rising hate after the riots, with people working cautiously from home.
- Organisations reported feeling **psychological pressure** due to widespread anti-refugee sentiment in their communities.
- **Advice from authorities** (e.g. police) led some groups to close offices and switch to remote work due to lack of staff capacity and understanding of how to manage threats.
- **Open drop-in sessions** and offices became focal points for tension, requiring review of access and safety arrangements.

b To better address racism, discrimination, and hate-related incidents organisations followed some of the following steps

Security and Safety Measures

- **Planning to relocate premises to a less visible location for safety reasons.**

- **De-published the 'how to find us' page from the website.**

- Safety risk assessments conducted with police; met with senior police to discuss safety plans.

- Office entry access is now supervised at all times.

- Tightened office security and implemented protocols to ensure staff are never alone in the office.

- Installed CCTV and liaised more closely with local police, including Hate Crime Officers.

- Strengthened safeguarding procedures and referral links.

- Made contact with the Community Security Trust and MOPAC; organising a sector seminar on safety and security (3rd July 2025).

- Requested inclusion in the London Resilience Forum's emergency communications.

Anti-Racism and Hate Crime Response

- **Participated in awareness-raising initiatives with local Schools of Sanctuary and engaged local councils and police.**

- **Closed public-facing work and moved services online to reduce risk; secured 30 laptops to support digital access for communities.**

- Conducted hate crime awareness sessions at the centre and outreach venues; guided clients on how to report racism.

- Connected with local hate crime police teams as part of safeguarding enhancements.

- Held bystander training for staff and volunteers on how to support people facing abuse.

- Updated anti-racism policy and advocated through platforms like the ICB EDI Community of Practice.

Wellbeing, Community Engagement, and Cultural Response

- **Supported migrant women in experiencing joy as a form of resistance. *"We aim to support migrant women to experience fun and joy as a way of resistance as we believe joy is our birthright."***

- **Staff well-being consultations conducted in response to rising threats.**

- Organised community engagement activities and promoted awareness through local collaboration.

Online-Only Operational Measures

- Operating exclusively online, with enhanced digital safety:
  - All events require registration.
  - Zoom links not shared publicly to prevent disruptions.

c **We asked organisations whether they have clear internal guidance, support, and training in place to respond to incidents of racism or hate involving staff, volunteers, or clients.**

8% Don't know

37% No

55% Yes
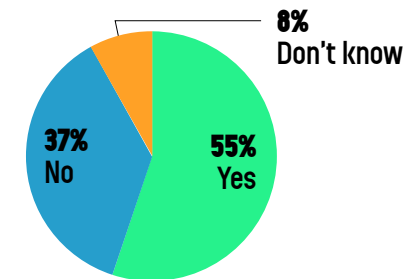
Organisational Preparedness & Safety

These quotes illustrate how organisations are responding to physical threats and improving on-site safety:

- *"We have had to create a safe room where all of us could be contained in the event of an attack while the police arrived."*

- *"We operate a zero-tolerance policy to racism, xenophobia... it applies also to user-to-user relationships as in the past there were tensions."*

- *"Measures in place to safeguard people on site in case of assault or attack on premises. Measures in place to provide sanctuary to service users if threatened."*

- *"We have personal safety procedures for staff working in the office and out-of-office, and risk assessments for various settings."*

- *"We've tightened our entrance and security procedures."*

Staff Support & Advocacy

These quotes focus on internal support mechanisms and the role of advocacy:

- *"We have a staff helpline available for people to be able to talk through any racism or discrimination they are facing."*

- *"We have supervision support for all staff."*

- *"Clients know very well that we will advocate for them through any difficulties or external prejudices because we have signed up telling them, we inform them and we do it and word gets round."*

- *"Commissioned an external trainer to support staff on safety. We have received a lot of guidance, which is accessible to all staff."*

Policy & Organisational Gaps

These quotes reflect the limitations, uncertainty, or work in progress within organisations regarding formalised responses:

- *"I'm not sure if we have an explicit written protocol that addresses specifically racism, xenophobia and hate incidents – we focus more on the concept of safety and security."*

- *"Not enough. There is insufficient buy-in from those above us (e.g. trustees, board, senior managers) to do anything about this."*

- *"To some extent. On a day-to-day level and involving staff, volunteers and service users yes, but still ongoing at a larger level."*

- *"We have a section within our Health & Safety Policy."*

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d ## How do organisations prepare when they learn ahead of time about an upcoming far-right protest?

Event Cancellation or Postponement

Cancel or postpone activities to reduce risk:

- *"We cancelled our Ukraine Club... clients basically run this for themselves."*

- *"Our approach to the far-right riots was to cancel our community event scheduled on the same day..."*

- *"We may also cancel community-based activities if they are near a protest."*

Move to remote working:

- *"We lock down, with all engagements either postponed or moved online/telephone."*

- *"Staff stop using the organisation's premises to increase security."*

- *"Staff and volunteers who need to stay at home can do so."*

Staff and Volunteer Safety

Staff are notified and supported:

- *"Send out all-staff emails and a text alert."*

- *"Give staff options to decide what they would feel safest to do."*

- *"Allow staff to work from home, support all colleagues."*

Internal safety measures:

*"**We have a safe room — lockable from the inside and with a back fire escape. We also do drills.**"*

*"**SLT leads each office... balance between keeping staff informed and not raising unnecessary alarms.**"*

- *"Staff were allowed to go home early, but those who wanted to stay and face them off did so."*

Client and Community Communication

Inform and advise service users:

*"**Ensure young people are given advice as to how to avoid the protest.**"*

- *"We inform all staff, volunteers, and staff of the protest..."*

- *"Make our beneficiaries aware... and encourage them to report and reach out for support."*

Avoid creating panic:

- *"Verify the legitimacy of the information first to avoid causing unnecessary panic."*

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Liaison and Collaboration

Work closely with police and local authorities:

- *"Handled wonderfully in Wakefield due to collaborative working."*

- *"We liaise with the police and council community safety team."*

- *"We have a great relationship with our local police community team... they have installed extra CCTV near us."*

Part of wider response networks:

- *"We are linked to the anti-fascist network, and have close ties with the Police and Local Authority."*

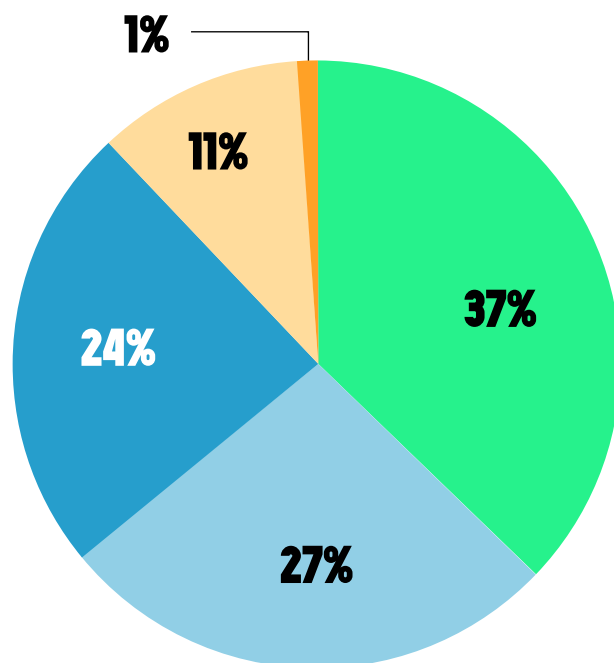- *"We are part of relevant WhatsApp groups that organise counter protests."*

Information sharing and resources:

- *"Share toolkits from Hope not Hate."*

- *"Watch the news/online for updates."*

e **The extent to which organisation's strategic plans include anti-racism work?**

37% — To a great extent
27% — To a moderate extent
24% — To a small extent
11% — Not at all
1% — N/A

- To a great extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- Not at all
- N/A

f **To what extent has lived experience leadership informed organisation's anti-racism initiatives?**

24% — To a great extent
37% — To a moderate extent
29% — To a small extent
10% — N/A
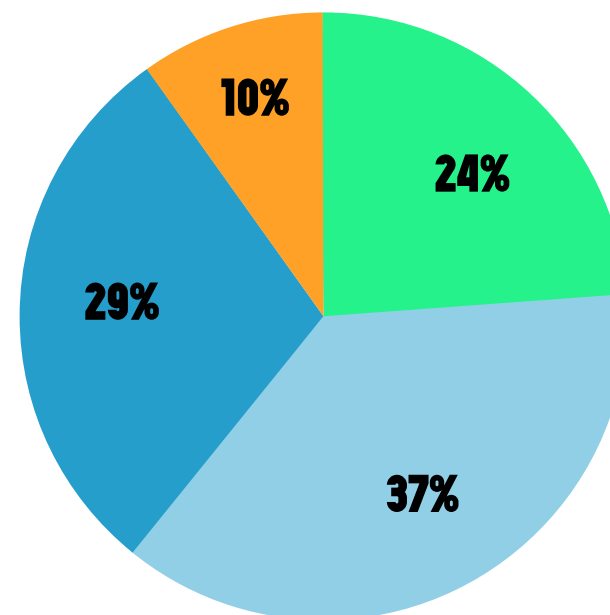
- To a great extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- N/A

g What barriers do organisations face in turning internal discussions on racism into concrete actions?

Limited capacity, resources, and competing priorities

> *"Lack of adapted knowledge and understanding and capacity to organise discussion."*

> *"We have found that a number of staff are from colonised countries and decolonising ourselves is a process that takes time and understanding. Other barriers are time constraints – we are too busy delivering to growing numbers with smaller budgets so have not prioritised this as fully as we should. However, it is something we keep on the agenda, strive to spend more focus on and have set aside some time for."*

- *"Our main barriers include limited resources and staff capacity, which make it difficult to sustain anti-racism initiatives. There's also a need for stronger leadership accountability and more staff confidence in addressing racism. Competing priorities can sometimes delay action, even when there's a clear commitment to change."*

- *"We don't have funding to engage consultants to support us to progress quickly so we are doing what we can when we can."*

- *"Lack of capacity and guidance. Easy to think about in terms of policy, but not so much in concrete steps."*

- *"We are primarily a service facing organisation, so the biggest barrier is capacity and resources to do additional work beyond delivering our services to young people."*

Governance and Organisational Constraints

> *"Trustees are unwilling for us to campaign on issues. We have two lived -experience trustees. We fight systemic racism daily."*

> *"Concerns from trustees about being seen as overtly campaigning. Lack of real support from the council."*

- *"Our organisation aims to be non-political. Much of the reality of racism against refugees and asylum seekers is inherently political. This makes it difficult for us to have honest conversations about deconstructing racism in our community. We sometimes shy away from getting publicly involved in these discussions for fear of riling up far-right activists who might harm our clients."*

Strategic and Conceptual Challenges

> *"We do not term what we do as anti-racism work. We talk strategically of creating an enabling environment for our young people, countering the wider narrative with lived experience, and being young people centred in all that we do."*

- *"Threats have been more perceived than actual, so the efforts we've put in place have yet to be really tested out. We're mindful of our vulnerability, and that our first duty is to service users."*

Community and Staff Strength

- *"Fortunately, among staff there is a strong tradition of standing up to racism in our communities, but we haven't faced any specific barriers."*

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h What examples of organisational efforts in anti-racism do organisations feel are worth building on or replicating?

Policy, Advocacy & Structural Change

"Welsh Government has pledged an Anti Racist Wales. However, to turn that aspiration into a reality requires real grassroots work amongst disenfranchised poor white communities."

"We are working towards being an organisation that integrates anti-racist practice into all organisational decision-making, budgeting, and communications—not just through training but by changing structures. We continue to work with people from racialised communities to co-produce projects, policies and resources. We continue to advocate to the Welsh Government to collect and publish better ethnicity-related data to monitor disparities and drive accountability."

- *"The hostile environment has to be DISMANTLED – we need to have a process for this so the statutory organisations we work with are made aware how racist and prejudiced their systems are – how our clients face many barriers and most are based on prejudice, misinformation and a belief that our clients are not as worthy as others. We sit in ICB/NHS/Local Government and Police groups and speak out constantly and with examples so that these groups understand the barriers clients face and where they have imposed and reinforced those barriers."*

Community Engagement, Education & Awareness Raising

"Awareness raising by those with lived experience in local schools, at different events and collaborating with different sectors to change mindsets and narratives."

- *"We don't really think of it as anti racist but have done a lot of work on community cohesion, providing opportunities for contact and understanding. Our Choir works with others to produce joint performances and workshops paid for by the city council. **The Action Asylum project is coordinated from our centre, providing volunteering opportunities for Asylum Seekers outside the sector and allowing others to learn about asylum seekers.**"*

- *"Community engagement activities. School of sanctuary work."*

- *"We provide awareness raising sessions to other agencies and groups. This is well received locally where no other similar offer exists."*

- *"Our refugee football team is often the only team with non-white players. We hold meals and social events to introduce local community members to the fabulous food and hospitality our refugees bring."*

- *"I would love to see more efforts made to have an open community dialogue about racism and to actively challenge racist narratives, e.g. in schools, workplaces. There is much about the asylum system that people simply do not know and I think education is an important aspect of anti-racism. If refugees and asylum seekers can also safely meet (e.g. at community centres) with people in the community, this would also dispel a lot of fear and assumptions that people have."*

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Internal Practice & Organisational Culture

- *"Monitoring tension between communities, reporting and observing patterns in case of an escalation into something serious."*

- *"Strengthening relationships with the wider migrant community as this is a gap in our service."*

- *"Collecting diversity data in an ethical way and having a lead person/staff on everything about equality across the organisation. Anti-racism pilot initiative from Refugee Council Lived Experience Career Development project has been immensely useful for our staff to understand anti-racism efforts. More training would be useful in cohort-based learning spaces."*

- *"It is essential to centre the voices and experiences of people who have lived through racism. As such, it is important to ensure appropriate support and safeguarding for racialised staff and volunteers throughout this process."*

Zero Tolerance and Safer Spaces

- *"In our experience, users are very disheartened to approach services when they fear that they may be affected by hostility from other users (let alone staff), in particular in settings where different minority groups intermingle. It's worth looking into ensuring that the whole organisation and all of its processes – including such things like waiting rooms and workshops – are under the zero-tolerance policies."*

ⓘ Organisations' concerns regarding the recent "White Paper" and the government's narrative around this?

Narrative & Rhetoric Concerns

> *"It seems to legitimise the use of negative terminology and divert blame for our failings of infrastructure back onto those seeking sanctuary."*

> *"I think there's a concern that the government is parroting far-right lines instead of adopting their own anti-racist stance, and this is extremely disappointing."*

- *"Language being used. Attitudes being evoked through lack of clarity/inaccuracy in information shared with the public."*

- *"That it just continues to heap blame for society's problems on migrants of all types (and the media and public are good at lumping everyone together), which just continues to put people at risk."*

- *"The use of alienating, racist, and 'us vs. them' language continues to provide ammunition for the far right to target refugees and migrants."*

- *"The continued anti-refugee rhetoric and othering. The lack of engagement with smaller, front-line agencies and lack of lived experience input. The lack of 'reality' from our perspective."*

Impact on Communities: Fear, Instability, and Hopelessness

> *"Many! The two biggest concerns that I have heard from the people we support is an increased sense of instability to those with regularised status feeling like the government could take it away from them, as well as an increased sense of hopelessness, isolation and rejection as it is now a Labour government that is also anti-migrant. Many people believed that their situation would improve with a change of government."*

- *"Concerns that everybody has. But the sense of uncertainty among our communities is probably the most palpable (those individuals who are aware of the White Paper – most of our users don't really follow national politics)."*

- *"I understand the 'new' government is thinking ahead about next elections and wants to deliver something to stay in power and the rise of Reform is affecting the discourse of the government too. This rhetoric will only make things worse for experts by experience who are looking for safety (let alone integration and thriving). It is a very discriminatory approach towards people who have a right to seek safety here and we are concerned that a lot of refugees and people seeking asylum will continue to be targets for the far right."*

Practical & Sectoral Impacts

- *"The taking out of mid-range sponsorship codes is of huge concern as we have sponsored staff here. We also host around 10 placement students – majority from Essex Uni social care MA and BA and most are international and the newest ones may find there is no job now to apply for."*

- *"We already work with many people who have come on false sponsorships and while it would be great to think they will all find work, that will not fill the gaps this paper will cause – what happens when there are no international social work students (currently at our local uni 52 of the 53 MA students are international)?"*

- *"The increasing costs of staying here are of enormous concern. We work a lot with domestic abuse clients where payments to the Home Office are a consistent factor in the stresses on families (never a reason or excuse but it doesn't help)."*

- *"I also have concerns that domestic talent does not exist and it's been too long since people were incentivised within the care industry in particular – and this will in turn have an effect on the care given to our clients who struggle to get what they need anyway."*

- *"English language requirements might impact family reunions, making it harder for families and dependents obtaining a visa."*

- *"Impact on social care – employers can no longer recruit workers from abroad, thus creating a shortage of care working staff."*

Denial of Structural Racism

"I have some concerns that the White Paper seems to downplay the existence of institutional racism, which can make it harder for real issues to be addressed. While there are some useful points in it, the overall narrative feels like it shifts focus away from lived experiences of racism. It's worrying that this might discourage organisations and individuals from taking meaningful action."

External Engagement & Influence

a **Organisations and networks that charities collaborate with, locally and nationally, to respond to racism and far-Right Threats**

Law Enforcement & Criminal Justice

- Gwent Police – IAG member, community cohesion consultation
- Staffordshire Police
- South Wales Police
- Local Police Forces (town and county levels)
- Police Scrutiny Boards – Stop & Search, arrests
- CPS Panels – Reviewing evidence on hate crime
- Metropolitan Police Hate Crime Reference Group
- Local Hate Crime Reporting Networks
- Victim Support

Government & Councils

- Newport City Council
- Cambridge City Council
- Cambridge County Council
- South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Swansea City and County Council – Tackling Poverty Team
- Welsh Government (including AM Jayne Bryant)
- MPs (e.g. Jessica Morden, Nigel Farage) – mixed engagement
- Deputy Mayor for Communities (GLA) – past engagement
- Local Authority Community Cohesion Team
- Community & Voluntary Forums

- VCFSE Forums & Steering Groups
- EDI Community of Practice
- Immigration Network (East of England – JTI Funded)
- CATCH Consortium – Hate crime advocacy (MOPAC-funded)
- Essex Migrant Agency Forum
- Dialogue Society

Campaigns & Anti-Racism Groups

- Hope not Hate – Guidance, campaign resources
- Stand Up to Racism – WhatsApp coordination, local organising
- Tell MAMA – Islamophobia monitoring
- United Staffordshire Against Hate (CASNS Project)
- Anti-Raids Network – Know-your-rights & police engagement
- Prevent

National & Sector Networks

- Asylum Matters – Newsletters, updates

- Right to Remain – Briefings, toolkits

- Refugee Action / FIAP – Learning and collaboration

- BRAP – Training, support

- NACCOM – Policy and practice support

- Migrants Rights Network

- Freedom of Movement

- IMIX – Media and communications

- Asylum Welcome – Briefings

- City of Sanctuary (Swansea & others)

- Strategic Migration Partnerships

Academic & Research Bodies

- Cardiff University – Community-led research

- Other relevant research projects

International & Regional Networks

- EU Delegation

- Migration Exchange

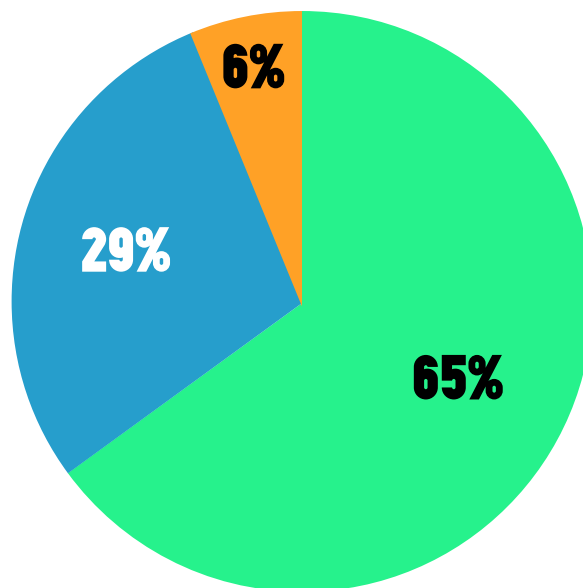- BASNET

Other Collaborations

- Local partner organisations and community networks

- "The Circle" – A safe space initiative

- General coordination with councils, police, and anti-racism groups

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b **Are you engaging with sector networks, local authorities, police or hate crime networks on the issues above?**
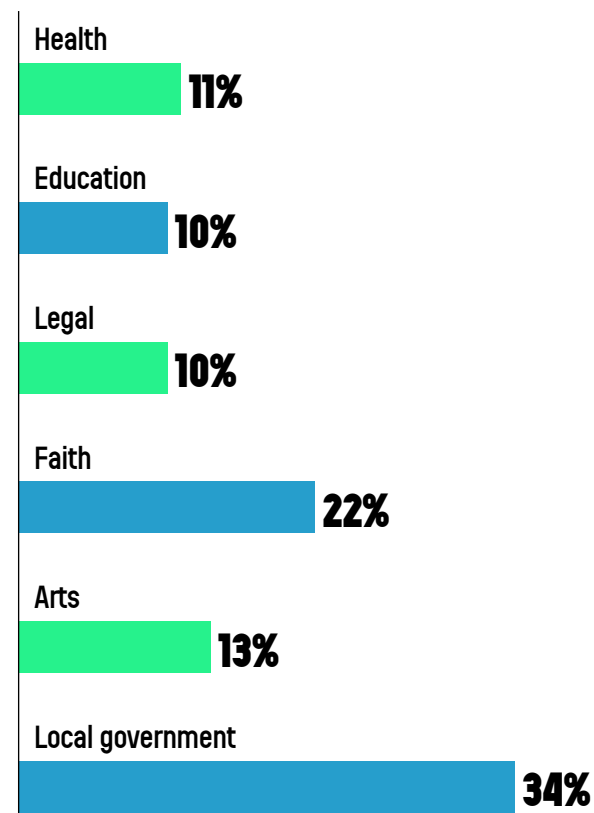
10%

90%
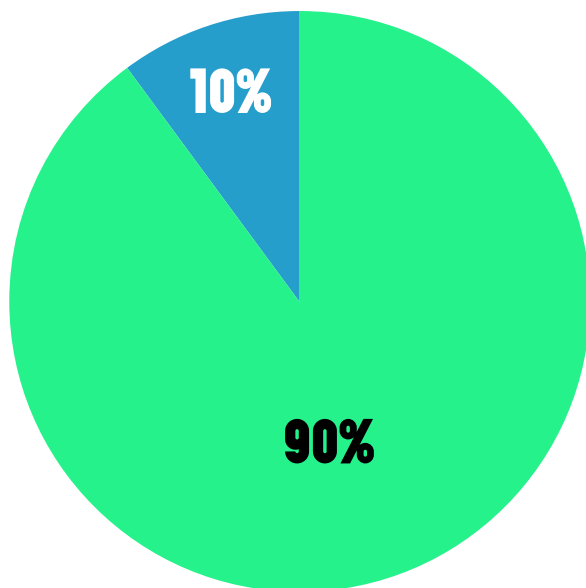
● Yes ● No

c **Have you taken part in shaping public messages or campaigns about migration, racism, or building stronger communities?**
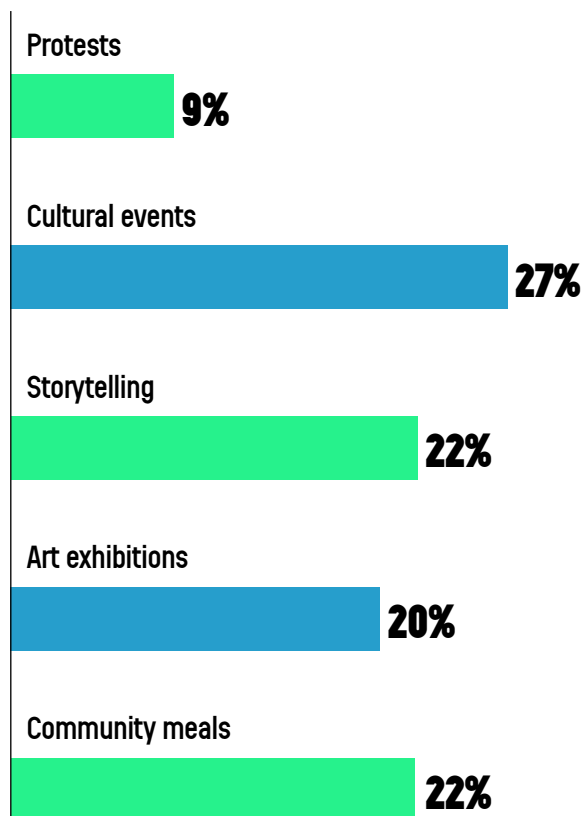
6%

29%

65%

● Yes ● No ● Don't know

d **Who are organisations' allies in other sectors?**

Health
11%

Education
10%

Legal
10%

Faith
22%

Arts
13%

Local government
34%

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e **What kinds of initiatives have been most effective in shifting perceptions in your area?**

Protests

9%

Cultural events

27%

Storytelling

22%

Art exhibitions

20%

Community meals

22%

g **Organisations share examples of approaches and best practice from other contexts or countries that have been successful in shifting attitudes and public opinions.**

Community Events & Cultural Engagement

"Community events, exhibitions, meals, etc. are well received, but it's unclear how to measure shifts in attitudes or whether these impact people susceptible to far-right narratives."

Storytelling by Lived Experience

"People with lived experience collectively telling their stories through exhibitions, film, anthology, etc."

Art Activism

"Working with artists in public spaces to challenge assumptions and attitudes. We worked with Peoples United to create a poem and install it on a climbing wall at a local climbing centre used by the general public."

International Example – Spain

"Spain is always a great example for me. A country with its own racism problem, but one that has firm leadership from a committed anti-racist government."

Case Study – Northern Ireland

"Northern Ireland experienced racially motivated riots in Ballymena recently. After a peaceful protest, the violence escalated, leading to attacks on ethnic communities as well as the police. The authorities responded by deploying additional police forces from all over the UK. There was community engagement, arrests were made, public messages emphasised that hate crimes are not accepted."

Resources, Funding & Gaps

a **Has your organisation sought funding for anti-racism or community cohesion work in the past year?**

- ● Yes
- ● No
- ● Don't know

Pie chart: 35%, 55%, 10%
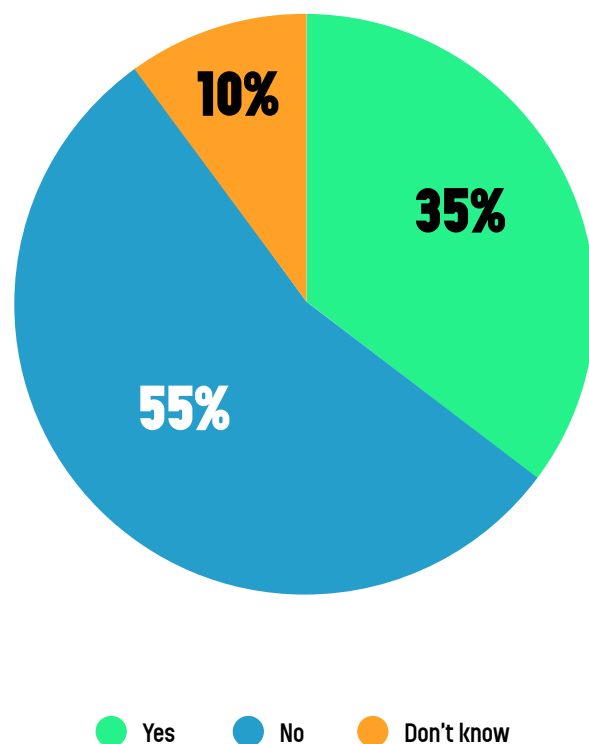
b **What gaps remain in your organisation's ability to respond to racism, discrimination, and far-right activity?**

Staffing and Capacity

- *"Staff capacity."*

- *"Capacity."*

- *"Energy!"*

- *"We are a frontline organisation delivering a much-needed advice service, it's hard work, and can be exhausting. Sometimes we expect too much of staff to then get involved in this longer-term change activity when they have clients needing help now."*

- *"People with lived experience – we have many people from a migrant background but primarily from a white migrant background in our team."*

Knowledge and Training

- *"Staff knowledge."*

- *"Training for staff."*

- *"Community trust issues, there might be a need to train staff to keep up to date with recognising systemic racism and discrimination."*

Time and Funding Constraints

- *"Time, funding, training."*

- *"Time and money – and knowledge – the online battleground is hateful and massive – no idea how to go at that one."*

- *"Not being able to get funding."*

- *"Funding, staff and volunteers, awareness raising opportunities."*

- *"Lack of resources."*

Leadership and Governance

- *"Trustee support."*

- *"Buy-in from management."*

- *"Our new leadership lacks any real understanding of these issues and is very 'conservative' in their approach."*

- *"We are a very mainstream organisation and need to be seen as [politically] impartial."*

Political and External Pressures

- *"Community Engagement and Strategic Direction."*

- *"The County Council is now led by Reform and it is quite likely that the City Council will go the same way – our identification with supporting asylum seekers may make us a target."*

- *"Where we are currently based, it would be dangerous to openly challenge…"*

- *"We want to do more community development and organising work with our young people and the wider community to celebrate culture and diversity, beyond just trips and activities for young people."*

- *"A clear digital campaign to raise awareness and education."*

- *"Clear policies/guidelines for specific actions."*

Understanding the Problem and Solutions

- *"An understanding of what works, or, more specifically, a robust analysis of the problem and a theoretical base to the interventions that will address the problem."*

- *"For example, we are (correctly so), keen to involve experts by experience from the refugee community. But do we involve similar people from the other side of the fence? No, we don't. Without sounding too flippant, we need to go into Wetherspoons on a Tuesday lunchtime and ask people what are the problems, find out why people are becoming so anti-migrant, and then look at how this can be tackled."*

Understanding the Problem and Solutions

- *"It needs more people involved in the response – not just those of us who represent and are people from culturally diverse communities. So much is focused on people from those communities, people who are exhausted, trying to live their lives – the people who create this 'hostile' environment are the ones that need challenging – e.g. all the embedded racism in our systems – we can't change that locally – it has to be done nationally and by people who have responsibility."*

c | What additional resources or support would strengthen your organisation's work in this area?

Resources and Funding

- *"We are seeking reduced income and increased demand for support."*

- *"More resource allocation, more core costs for management and admin."*

- *"Capacity building and more resources."*

- *"Funding for an Engagement Manager."*

- *"Time, patience, a real coordinated plan, empowering people... and funding for that time."*

Training and Learning

- ***"We need more accessible resources to bring anti-racism into everyday conversations and its association with lived experience leadership too."***

- *"Training would be fantastic but most of what we have found is hugely expensive and delivered by organisations who do not have lived experience on their teams."*

- *"Continuous learning and educating staff and communities to recognise racist acts."*

- *"Digital media campaigns. Also, additional training for frontline staff and councillors."*

Support and Infrastructure

- *"Support from national Citizens Advice might help."*

- *"We need to have infrastructure support to facilitate collaborations and joint initiatives across different sectors locally."*

- *"Guidance such as that produced by HOPE not Hate was very useful last year—more of the same which we can circulate would be very helpful."*

Inclusive Practices and Recruitment

- *"We have unconscious bias recruitment, and all interview panels are made up of a diverse team, inclusive recruitment, improving ethnicity data collection to address disparities and measure effectiveness of interventions."*

- *"Ability to recruit young volunteers."*

Action and Organising

- *"I honestly don't think this is something talking shops can solve, but action takes numbers and bravery. A decent organising network to counter protests and meet them on the streets is the only way to stop it, and we don't have that."*

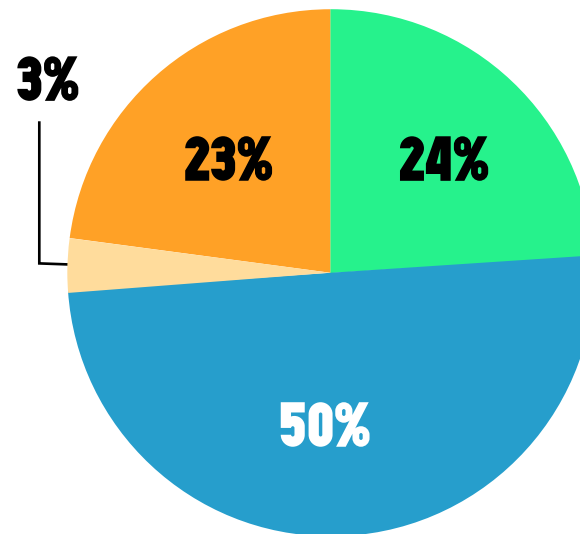- *"An extra body and a tool for online response."*

3.2. Trans-Inclusion

a **Has your organisation noticed any impact of the Supreme Court's recent ruling on the definition of gender under the Equality Act 2010, particularly for the trans individuals you support?**
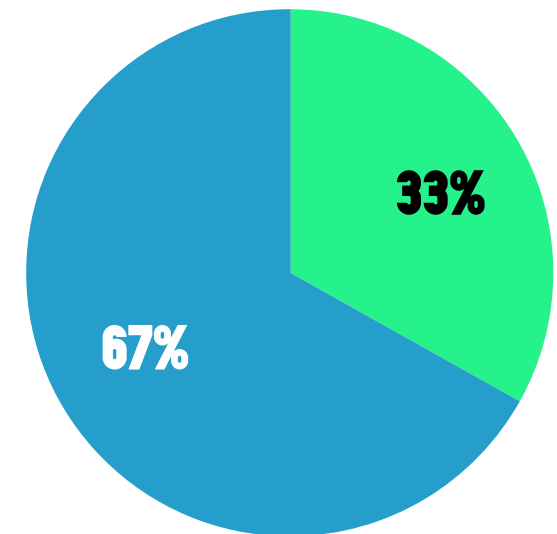
20%

20%

6%

54%
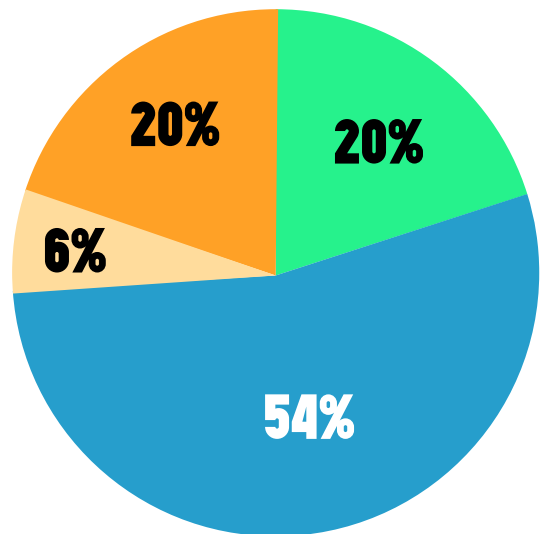
- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- N/A

b **Do you run gender-specific trans-inclusive services?**
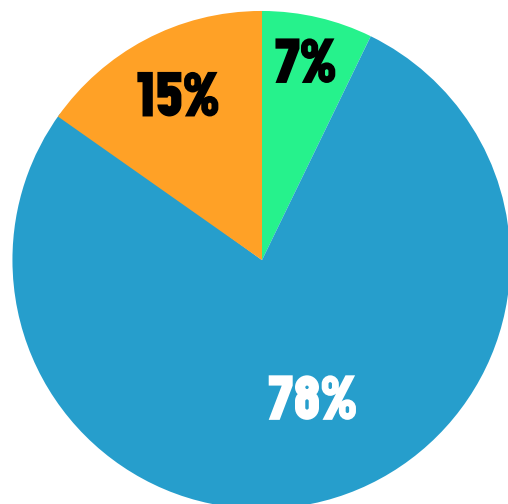
3%

23%

24%

50%

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- N/A

c **How confident do your staff feel in advising and/or supporting trans-specific issues such as healthcare, safe housing, name changes and asylum claims?**

33%

67%

- Confident
- Not confident

REFUGEE ACTION EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE & PARTNERSHIPS

d **Do you run gender-specific trans-inclusive services?**

- 7% Yes (green)
- 78% No (blue)
- 15% Don't know (orange)

Legend: ● Yes ● No ● Don't know

e **What support or guidance would help your organisation navigate this issue in a way that supports inclusion and safety for all genders?**

Resources and Funding

> *"Interpretation of what the ruling means to women's groups that are trans inclusive."*

- *"We are trying to understand exactly what the implications are around sports as we have some blended teams who are on the brink of entering local leagues. But in terms of toilets – we know where we stand!"*

- *"Clear policy from the government and guidance from national Citizens Advice."*

- *"Greater clarity from Government and EHRC."*

- *"This conversation is still ahead of us."*

Training, Education, and Lived Experience

- *"We need more training and insights from lived experiences."*

- *"Increased involvement of those with lived experience in project design, policies and decision-making."*

Cultural Attitudes and Refugee Context

> *"Many (most) refugees come from countries which do not tolerate LGBTQ+ people. So many refugees have bad attitudes to LGBTQ+ people, and this is a bigger problem."*

Structural Support and Inclusivity

- *"There are support networks and groups for various diverse communities within the council – there is a Muslim network, LGBTQI+, people of colour network, carers network, etc."*

- *"We have an inclusivity policy and amend when and if needed to support all our colleagues and the wider community."*

- *"An understanding of how this impacts people when we have very few transgender individuals – but they are particularly vulnerable."*

Wider Systems and Barriers

- *"Much like racism, this feels like government policy is the main thing against us."*

REFUGEE ACTION EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE & PARTNERSHIPS

f **What training or learning opportunities have staff received on recognising and responding to issues related to gender diversity and inclusion?**

Organisations That Have Received Training

- *"Just about to have further training from the Outhouse – our local LGBTQ+ group – we have it regularly anyway."*

- *"Previous training for all staff. One day training session specifically regarding refugees, and our new project developer is focusing on a new project."*

- *"All staff have mandatory EDI training from national Citizens Advice."*

- *"Diversity and Inclusion Training and policies."*

- *"Mandatory training."*

- *"We have digital/online training which is updated and refreshed annually."*

- *"Training from Gendered Intelligence. Workshops with JMB. Safeguarding adults."*

- *"We had several social workers in the organisation (who had quit social work) and they seemed far better acquainted with the issues than me, so I was happy for them to lead."*

Organisations With No or Limited Training

- *"None, no paid staff."*

- *"None that I am aware of."*

- *"None, but we treat everyone equally which feels like a good starting point."*

g **Which organisations do you work with locally and nationally to respond to issues affecting transgender and gender-diverse individuals?**

Local Partnerships

- The OUTHOUSE East, USAH, Islington Mind Outcomes Project, Galop (for hate crime support), Glitters Cymru, Local Authorities (LA), Longboat, Wakefield Pride, Local Pride London (through LGBTQI+ staff and allies' participation).

   Note: Some have approached local organisations but they showed no interest in collaboration..

National Partnerships

- Rainbow Migration, Pride London (as a national event), LGBT Consortium, Stonewall, LGBT Foundation, Mermaids, Trans Actual, Equality Network, Scottish Trans, The Kite Trust.

f Is there anything else you want to tell us?

Appreciation and Encouragement

- *"Thanks for all you do!"*

- *"Keep going."*

Challenges and Complexities

- *"There is a dilemma given the religion and beliefs of some of our young people and how to support them to understand, respect and accept LGBTQ+."*

- *"I think we need to be incredibly careful about using the word racist. Whilst it is true for a certain section of the population, for many it is more ignorance and lack of experience. If we alienate a large section of the population by labeling them as racist then that will not help matters; a better way would be to engage and educate. This aligns with our approach to community cohesion and highlights the mobilisation of communities by the far right last year. Our stories and engagement need to be more effective, using feelings and emotions as well as facts.."*

Sector Reflections and Concerns

- *"Our sector has stuck its head in the sand about refugee migration for far too long. Numbers are massive (108,000!), not sustainable, but we offer no solutions. The void will be filled by Reform and racists."*

REFUGEE ACTION EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE & PARTNERSHIPS

4. KEY LEARNINGS

Organisational Preparedness & Safety

- 55% of organisations reported being prepared for racist or hate-related incidents.

- 37% said they are not prepared, revealing gaps in readiness across the sector.

- Common safety responses included:

  - Creation of safe rooms for emergency containment.

  - Relocating premises to less visible or lower-risk areas.

  - De-publishing location information from websites.

  - Advising young clients on how to avoid protests or unrest.

  - Highlighting collaborative local models (e.g. Wakefield) as examples of effective response.

Challenges & Gaps in Anti-Racism Work

- Insufficient buy-in from trustees, boards, or senior leadership.

- Fear of appearing political or "overtly campaigning" limits action.

- Limited support from local authorities or councils to push anti-racism forward.

- Structural racism is often denied or downplayed, which hinders meaningful progress.

- Staff with lived experience from colonised countries noted that decolonising organisational culture is a complex, ongoing process.

Turning Anti-Racism Discussion into Action

- Many organisations report ongoing internal discussions, but struggle to translate them into concrete structural change

- Discomfort in discussing power, colonialism, and whiteness within diverse teams

- A need for more accessible resources to support:

  - Lived experience leadership.

  - Everyday anti-racist practice and communication.

Responses to the White Paper

- Widely viewed as normalising harmful language and shifting blame for systemic failures (e.g., housing, healthcare) onto migrants.

- Causing increased fear and instability among those with regularised status.

- Described as fueling hopelessness, isolation, and rejection, especially under a Labour government.

- Concern that the paper downplays structural racism, potentially discouraging organisations from taking strong anti-racist action.

Trans Inclusion & Organisational Confidence

- Only 33% of organisations feel confident supporting trans-specific needs (e.g., healthcare, housing, name changes, asylum claims).

- 67% report a lack of confidence in addressing these issues.

- Requested supports include:

  - Clearer legal guidance on gendered spaces and recent rulings.

  - Inclusive training to promote gender safety and respect across services.

  - Greater sensitivity to LGBTQ+ inclusion challenges, particularly for refugees from intolerant regions.

REFUGEE ACTION EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE & PARTNERSHIPS

TURN INSIGHT INTO IMPACT

44% of organisations are already using our Insight to Action bulletins to support funding bids, guide trustee discussions, and inform internal planning. These bulletins strengthen arguments for more inclusive recruitment and stronger representation of lived experience — but not enough people know about them. Help us change that.

REFUGEE ACTION EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE & PARTNERSHIPS

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