

A photograph of three business professionals in a meeting. A woman with dark curly hair, wearing a grey blazer, is in the center, gesturing with her hands as she speaks. To her left is an older woman with short white hair and glasses, wearing a light blue blazer. To her right is a man in a dark suit, also gesturing. They are seated around a table with papers and a pen holder. The background is a light-colored wall with faint diagrams.

CIPD

Report  
October 2023

# People Profession 2023

UK and Ireland survey report

The CIPD has been championing better work and working lives for over 100 years. It helps organisations thrive by focusing on their people, supporting our economies and societies. It's the professional body for HR, L&D, OD and all people professionals – experts in people, work and change. With over 160,000 members globally – and a growing community using its research, insights and learning – it gives trusted advice and offers independent thought leadership. It's a leading voice in the call for good work that creates value for everyone.

## Report

# People Profession 2023: UK and Ireland survey report

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## Author profile

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# 1 Introduction

As we settle into the post-pandemic 'new normal', we see significant shifts in the behaviours of workers and workplaces, which have brought new challenges and opportunities for the people profession.

Macro trends, including advancing technology and digital transformation, economic instability, the transition to net zero and new models of working, are driving constant change. It is under these conditions that businesses need to adapt or risk being left behind. It's up to senior leaders and people teams to influence and shape current strategy and people practice to navigate this ever-changing landscape.

## **Aims of this report**

This report gives a snapshot of the current HR landscape in the UK and Ireland. It provides insights into how external factors are impacting current HR practices, and the challenges and opportunities these bring. It also explores how people professionals perceive their careers and working lives amidst these changes.

We investigate the following questions and give recommendations on how people professionals can navigate the challenges they are facing:

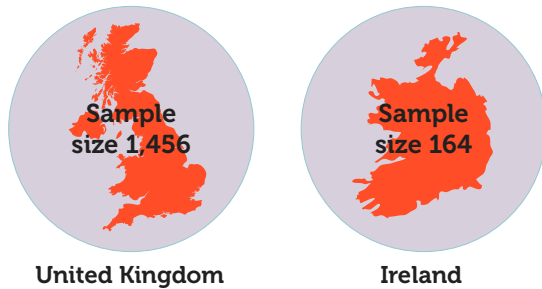
- What are the key drivers of change for organisations?
- What are the top workforce priorities for organisations?
- How are people management tasks being delegated?
- How is digital transformation changing the way people teams operate?
- What is the impact of hybrid working on people practice?
- How does people professionals' work affect their wellbeing?
- How are practitioners developing their skills and capability?
- How do people professionals feel about their career prospects and progression?

Our accompanying [international survey report](#) explores how global issues are affecting regions differently by comparing findings in nine countries across Asia-Pacific (APAC), the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), the UK and Ireland. As well as the questions above, it also looks at how people professionals across the world perceive:

- the impact and value of people teams
- how the role of people professionals is changing
- how people professionals are using evidence in practice
- the role of HR in the sustainability agenda.

As well as this UK and Ireland report, we also provide individual reports for the [Asia-Pacific region](#), the [Middle East and North Africa region](#), and [Canada](#).

## Survey participants



Full details of the research methodology are included in the [Methodology](#) section.

Sample demographics are included at the end of [Section 2](#).

### A note on the survey findings

- The findings are based on the perspectives of those who took part in the *People Profession survey* in April and May 2023.
- We refer to the 'people profession' throughout this report, which includes a range of people-related roles, such as human resources (HR), learning and development (L&D), organisational development (OD), employee relations and other HR specialisms. It does not include people managers.
- Our sample included those responsible for HR, both in-house and as independent consultants.
- The data collection, carried out by the CIPD and YouGov, was conducted across the UK and Ireland. The sample is diverse, and there will be different contextual factors influencing the findings.
- Reported percentage figures are rounded up and therefore the total may be above 100%.
- Further information on our sample can be found at the end of [Section 2](#) and in the [Methodology](#) section.

## 2 UK and Ireland findings

In certain instances, it is useful to see how the UK and Ireland compare with the global sample surveyed (see our accompanying [international survey report](#)). Where there are significant similarities or contrasts, this may be referenced.

### **What are the key drivers of change for organisations?**

In the UK and Ireland, the common levers driving change within businesses are economic uncertainty, flexible and hybrid working, and changing workforce demographics (see Table 1).

Economic instability continues to be impacting households and businesses across the UK,<sup>1</sup> and the average cost of living in Ireland is said to be 16% higher than it is in the UK,<sup>2</sup> with the highest prices for goods and services in the EU.<sup>3</sup> Therefore it's no surprise that we found economic change to be the top driver of change for businesses in both the UK and Ireland.

The demand for flexible and hybrid working also remains a significant driver of change in both countries. Ireland has seen the biggest growth in hybrid working in the EU<sup>4</sup> and has one of the largest numbers of hybrid working job postings in Europe, a close second to the number of UK postings.<sup>5</sup> Other research shows that there is substantial variation in flexible working behaviours across sectors, industries, job level and age, with 2022 UK data suggesting that over 80% of pandemic homeworkers now prefer a hybrid working model.<sup>6</sup>

In the UK, another standout area is the impact of digital transformation and technology on working lives. Although AI is on the radar for many businesses, [current usage varies across sectors and business size in the UK](#). Given that AI solutions for managing and analysing data are prevalent and adoption rates are predicted to rise across all businesses,<sup>7</sup> people professionals will need to become more involved with AI in their organisations, which will require critical skills and knowledge.

In Ireland, the demand for new working patterns alongside industrial change and organisational agility appear key in terms of influencing the workplace. Technological solutions are central to dealing with the pace of economic growth and the tight labour market. With projections for [further economic growth](#), HR's voice will be critical to ensure people-centric decisions are made.



**Table 1: The top driver of change for UK and Ireland businesses is economic change and rising costs**

*The top five drivers of change for organisations in the UK and Ireland (ranked by number of cases)*

Rank	UK	Ireland
1	Economic change and rising costs	Economic change and rising costs
2	Digital transformation and advancing technology	Demands for flexible, hybrid and new ways of working
3	Demands for flexible, hybrid and new ways of working	Digital technology platforms
4	Changing workforce demographics	Changing workforce demographics
5	Digital technology platforms	Industrial change and organisational agility

Base: UK (n=1,456); Ireland (n=164).

Question: Which of the following, if any, are drivers of change in your (client) organisation? (Please tick up to three responses.)

### What are the top workforce priorities for organisations?

With economic change perceived as a critical driver of change, we see this translated through to the people priorities of businesses, with organisations keeping a close eye on productivity, financial performance, and recruitment and turnover (see Table 2).

Other CIPD research in the [UK](#) and [Ireland](#) shows that employers are continuing to experience skills shortages and recruitment difficulties. We find that building skills and capability is a top priority, most likely in response to ongoing recruitment challenges. It is also reflective of the wider trends driving change, particularly digital and advancing technology, which will require a basic level of competency across the entire workforce.

For both countries, engaging with the workforce is another key priority. Given that hybrid and flexible ways of working are significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels,<sup>8,9</sup> people professionals and line managers need to adapt their people management approaches to consider how to engage and retain workers in remote and dispersed teams. The CIPD's [effective hybrid working guidance](#) offers practical insights into people management, recruitment, inclusion, and health, safety and wellbeing in a hybrid context.

For the UK, workforce planning is also a people priority. Considering the pressured economic climate and the tight labour market, planning current resource against operational plans is critical and will support other HR initiatives and wider business objectives. The CIPD [Resourcing and talent planning survey report 2022](#) (based on UK data) found that 30% of organisations that were surveyed plan their workforce requirements on a short-term basis, looking only six months ahead for their future workforce needs. Additionally, nearly half of respondents said their business is not collecting data to inform workforce planning decisions, such as identifying skills gaps and future skills requirements.

In Ireland, managing performance and delivering productivity is the top people priority. There is a strong focus on building performance capability and showing evidence of impact, demonstrating the added value of the people profession. [Health and safety](#) also features as a top people priority. Health and



safety legislation in Ireland consists of over 20 different acts and 200 statutory instruments, and maintaining compliance and wellbeing while adapting to new ways of working and a more digital environment can be challenging.

**Table 2: There is broad agreement on the top workforce priorities across UK and Ireland respondents**

*The top five workforce priorities in the UK and Ireland (ranked by number of cases)*

Rank	UK	Ireland
1	Engaging with the workforce	Measuring productivity and financial performance
2	Focusing on recruitment, mobility and turnover	Upskilling, reskilling and building capability
3	Workforce planning and management	Focusing on recruitment, mobility and turnover
4	Measuring productivity and financial performance	Prioritising health and safety
5	Upskilling, reskilling and building capability	Engaging with the workforce

Base: UK (n=1,456); Ireland (n=164).

Question: Which, if any, of the following are your [client] organisation's workforce priorities? (Please tick up to three responses.)

## Recommendations

Engaging with the workforce is seen as more difficult in a hybrid working environment. People professionals can help in the following ways:

- Provide training to managers on how to support hybrid teams effectively, including performance management, remote communication, collaboration and wellbeing.
- Emphasise the purpose of employees being onsite and put plans in place to create strong face-to-face engagement opportunities.
- Undertake ongoing listening activity with employees, managers and employee representatives to understand whether hybrid working is delivering anticipated benefits to individuals and the organisation.
- Review HR processes and procedures across the employee lifecycle to ensure they support hybrid working in practice, while also enabling inclusion and wellbeing.
- Revisit organisational culture to ensure that company values and people managers' behaviours align with the new ways of working.
- Keep any hybrid working policies and principles under ongoing review, including the impact on workers with protected characteristics, and ensure that action is taken to address any negative or unintended outcomes of hybrid work.
- Be mindful that hybrid working is just one form of flexible working: employees also desire time flexibility, and benefits can also be realised by providing this, both for employees and the organisation itself.

See our [guide](#) for further advice.

To measure productivity and performance, people professionals can help in the following ways:

- Set goals: ensure that workforce priorities align with the organisation's goals, and measure and communicate the success or actions required to deliver against the goals.
- Use data: audit the data, technology infrastructure and capability currently available and how it can be enhanced and connected to performance and productivity goals.
- Build ownership: help line managers to align SMART team goals with agreed strategic goals and monitor regularly, supporting individuals with training when needed.

See our [report](#) and [evidence review](#) on how to measure individual and team performance.

## How are people management tasks being delegated?

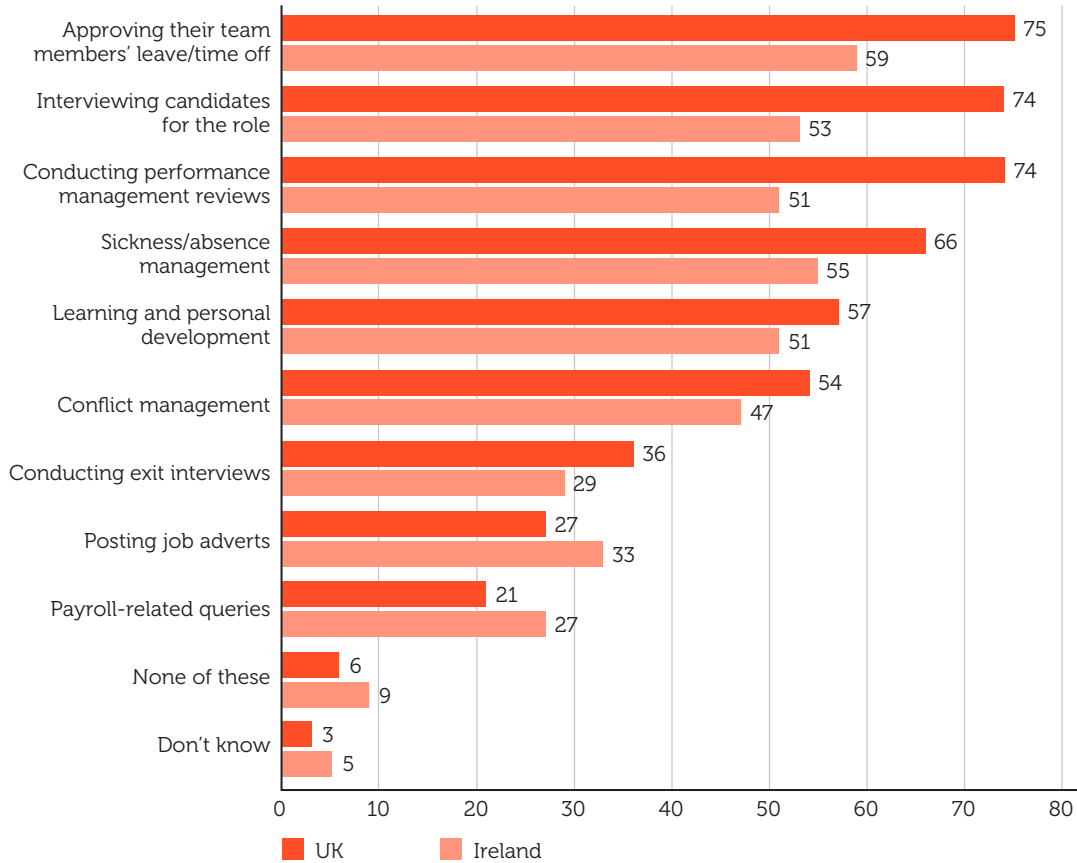
### Delegation to line managers

Several studies show that the people practices performed by line managers can have a small to moderate impact on HR outcomes, such as improved employee engagement, performance ([Alfes et al, 2013](#)), innovation, employee commitment ([Alhaqbani et al, 2016](#)) and reduced employee turnover ([Friebel et al, 2022](#)). Other research has found that delegating people tasks to the line does not lead to increased workload or stress, provided that there is adequate support, advice and training from the HR function ([Gilbert et al, 2011](#)).

In most cases, UK respondents were more likely to say that they delegate various recruitment and people management tasks to line managers than their Irish counterparts (see Figure 1). The most commonly delegated tasks are approving time off, interviewing potential candidates, carrying out performance reviews and managing sickness absence. Dealing with payroll queries and posting job adverts were far less likely to be devolved to line managers.

**Figure 1: Three-quarters of UK people professionals said they delegate absence management, recruitment and performance management tasks to line managers, but just over 50% delegate such activities in Ireland**

*People management tasks that are delegated to line managers (% of respondents)*



Base: UK (n=1,456); Ireland (n=164).

Question: Are line managers in your [client] organisation responsible for any of the following? (Please select all that apply.)

As you would expect, the delegation of HR to line managers varies across business size, and SMEs were significantly less likely to delegate compared with larger businesses within the UK sample. We also note differences across sectors within the UK, with private sector respondents less likely to delegate to line management than the public and third sectors.

CIPD research in [Ireland](#) identified that weak line management capacity and capability has been a consistent constraint to delegating HR tasks for the last five years. Sixty-four per cent of respondents cited the lack of available time to carry out people management tasks, and two in five cited ineffective devolvement of HR to line managers. Both need to be addressed to deliver a strategic approach to human resource management.

### Outsourcing of HR functions

Payroll and complex case management were the most commonly outsourced HR functions. Generally, the UK and Ireland outsource functions at a similar rate, with the exception of administrative support, which is more likely to be outsourced by Irish respondents. Compared with the global sample, UK respondents were most likely to say that none of their HR functions are

outsourced (37%, compared with the global average of 28%). This stood at 29% for Ireland respondents.

## Recommendations

Considering the high levels of HR delegation to line management and the crucial impact line managers can have on HR outcomes, it is important for people professionals to support managers in leading and nurturing their teams. They should consider the following points:

- Ensure managers have a reasonable number of direct reports or 'span of control'. A larger span of control will decrease the available time people managers have to manage their employees effectively.
- How is managerial workload prioritised and rewarded? Do managers' roles allow them enough bandwidth for good people management?
- Remember that training and development are vital – there's strong evidence that shows training can have a positive effect on managers' communication skills, leadership behaviours, goal-setting, ability to motivate their team and change management skills. However, CIPD UK-based research on the importance of people management showed that only half of line managers feel they receive adequate support and training. People professionals will need to reassess the support and development available to line managers if devolvement to the line continues at this level.

The CIPD's evidence review on effective people managers highlights several influential factors for effective managers, including leadership style, management skills and organisational support.

## How is digital transformation changing the way people teams operate?

Digital change and new technology are developing at a rapid rate. Less than a year ago, few people knew about the power of generative artificial intelligence (AI), its possible uses and the impact it would have on work and working lives. Fast-forward to now, and AI airtime and debate is rife – and it's evolving at a pace that even the experts in the field can't keep up with. ChatGPT is the fastest-growing application, hitting 100 million users after just two months following its launch in December 2022.<sup>10</sup>

As digital change and emerging technology change the way we work, people professionals are a key stakeholder who will champion workers and shape the people strategy to support the workforce through such transformations. So how are people teams and individual roles within the profession changing?

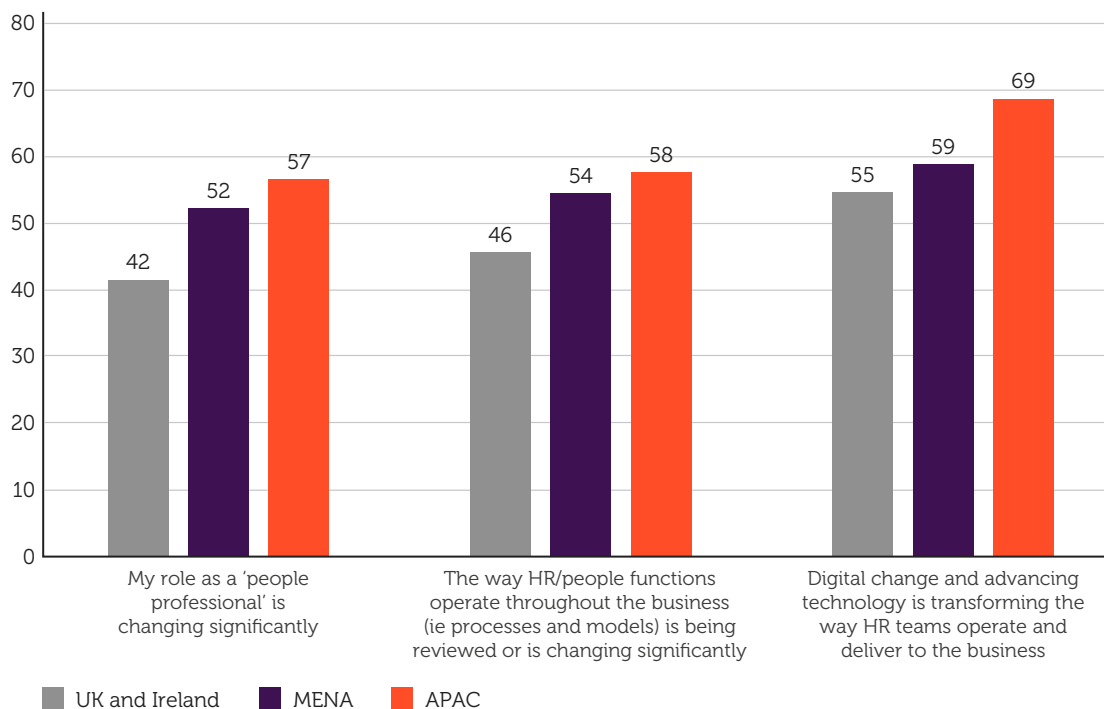
Surprisingly, UK respondents were among the least likely to agree that the way their HR function operates is changing (or under review) and that their role as a people professional is changing significantly. Given the maturity of the HR profession within the UK, it's interesting that digital HR and the way

the function operates and evolves is slow to change. We found the impact of digital transformation on HR functions was significantly higher in larger businesses (63%, compared with 47% in SMEs), with no significant differences across UK sectors.

By comparison, Figure 2 shows how these views vary across the other regions we surveyed. Asia-Pacific (APAC) countries were most likely to say their role, people function and people operations are transforming.

**Figure 2: Compared with MENA and APAC countries, UK and Ireland people professionals are less likely to agree that their role, people function and operations are changing due to advancing technology**

**Comparison of how regional people teams and practitioners are evolving (% of net agree)**



Base: UK and Ireland (n=1,620); MENA countries (n= 525); APAC countries (n=812).

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your [client's] HR function? (Please select one option on each row.)

### What is the impact of hybrid working on people practice?

The profound shift in how and where we work, through hybrid, remote and flexible working, is having a disproportionate impact across business areas and operations, but also across cultures.

We found the UK and Ireland were significantly more likely to say that hybrid working has made several people management practices more challenging. In contrast, MENA and APAC markets perceive the impact of hybrid working very differently, with respondents generally much more positive.

In the UK, supporting employees' mental health and wellbeing appears to be the most challenging area. The CIPD *Health and wellbeing at work* report (based on UK data) found that presenteeism (working when ill) remains prevalent for both homeworkers (78%) and employees working in the workplace (76%).

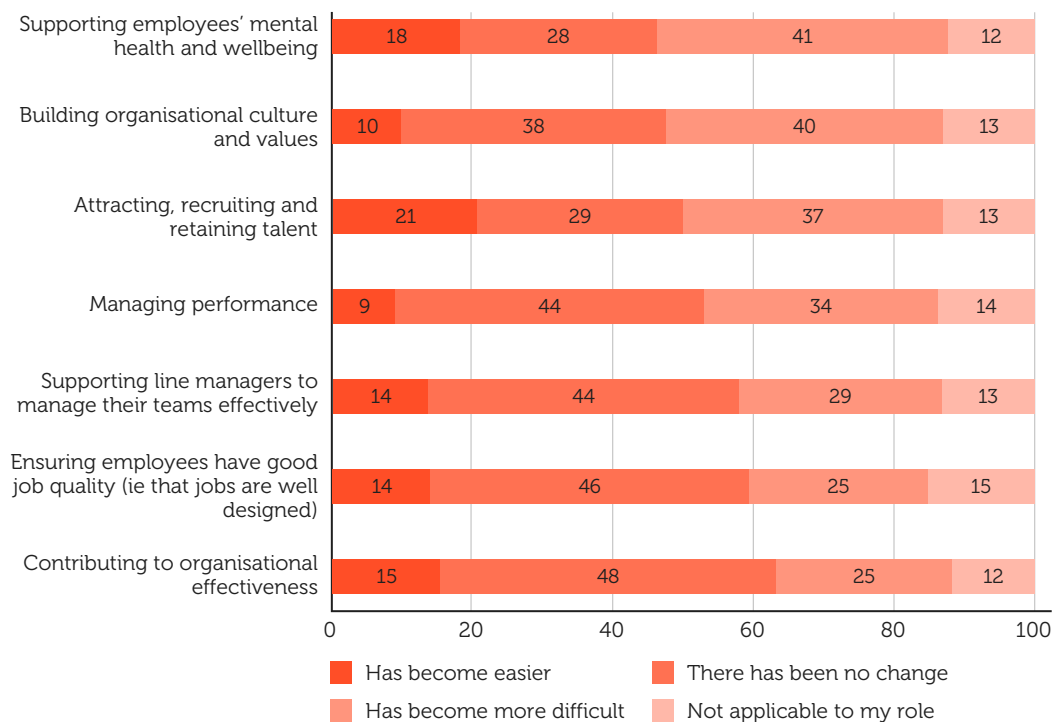
In response, 41% of those surveyed are taking steps to address this trend and investigate potential causes, compared with 53% last year. Leaveism (when employees use annual leave to work or because they are unwell, or work beyond contracted hours) is also noted by 63% of respondents, although only 35% said their organisation has taken steps to tackle this rising trend.

The nature of hybrid and remote working means that practices like leaveism and presenteeism can go unnoticed for longer, given the lack of face-to-face and onsite interaction with employees. The trend data outlined above supports our findings that practices exacerbated by hybrid working can negatively impact employee wellbeing if not tackled, investigated and addressed by the organisation and people teams.

Figure 3 shows other areas of people practice that are perceived as being more challenging in a hybrid working environment.

**Figure 3: Supporting employee mental health and building organisational culture are seen by UK respondents as the biggest challenges of hybrid working**

*Impact of hybrid working on people practices for UK respondents (% of respondents, ordered by "has become more difficult")*



Base: UK (n=1,456).

Question: We are now going to ask you about some aspects of working as an HR/people professional. Please indicate how, if at all, these have changed due to the shift towards 'working from anywhere' and hybrid working.

In Ireland, attracting, recruiting and retaining talent is perceived as the most difficult aspect in a hybrid context. In 2022, Ireland's economy was the fastest growing in Europe, despite global economic challenges. In the same year, multinationals increased their employment numbers in Ireland by 9%,<sup>11</sup> despite the slowdown in the technology sector. This is making talent shortages and skills gaps in the labour market feel even more prominent for employers and people teams responsible for recruitment and retaining talent.

In line with our findings, other [CIPD research](#) in Ireland highlights increased challenges with work culture, wellbeing, managing performance and innovation, suggesting that businesses need a cultural 'reset' to compensate for the operational challenges borne from new ways of working.

Figure 4 shows other areas of people management that are perceived as being more challenging in a hybrid working environment for Ireland people professionals.

**Figure 4: Recruiting and retaining talent is the biggest challenge of hybrid working for Irish respondents (%)**

**Impact of hybrid working on people practices for Ireland respondents (% of respondents, ordered by "has become more difficult")**



Base: Ireland (n=164).

Question: We are now going to ask you about some aspects of working as an HR/people professional. Please indicate how, if at all, these have changed due to the shift towards 'working from anywhere' and hybrid working.

### How does people professionals' work affect their wellbeing?

The CIPD [Health and wellbeing at work 2023](#) survey report (based on UK data) found stress to be one of the main causes of short- and long-term sickness absence, with 76% of respondents reporting some level of stress-related absence in their organisations. This is even higher for large organisations (92%). Additionally, the research found high workloads to be the most common cause of stress at work by far, with 67% citing this. The CIPD [HR practices in Ireland](#) survey report identified workload/burnout and work-life balance as among the top factors contributing to employees leaving their organisation, suggesting that employees are not willing to compromise their wellbeing for the sake of their job.

In 2022, we collected wellbeing data on the people profession for the first time, to understand how work impacts upon mental and physical health. Our findings at the time showed that, sadly, around a third of UK people



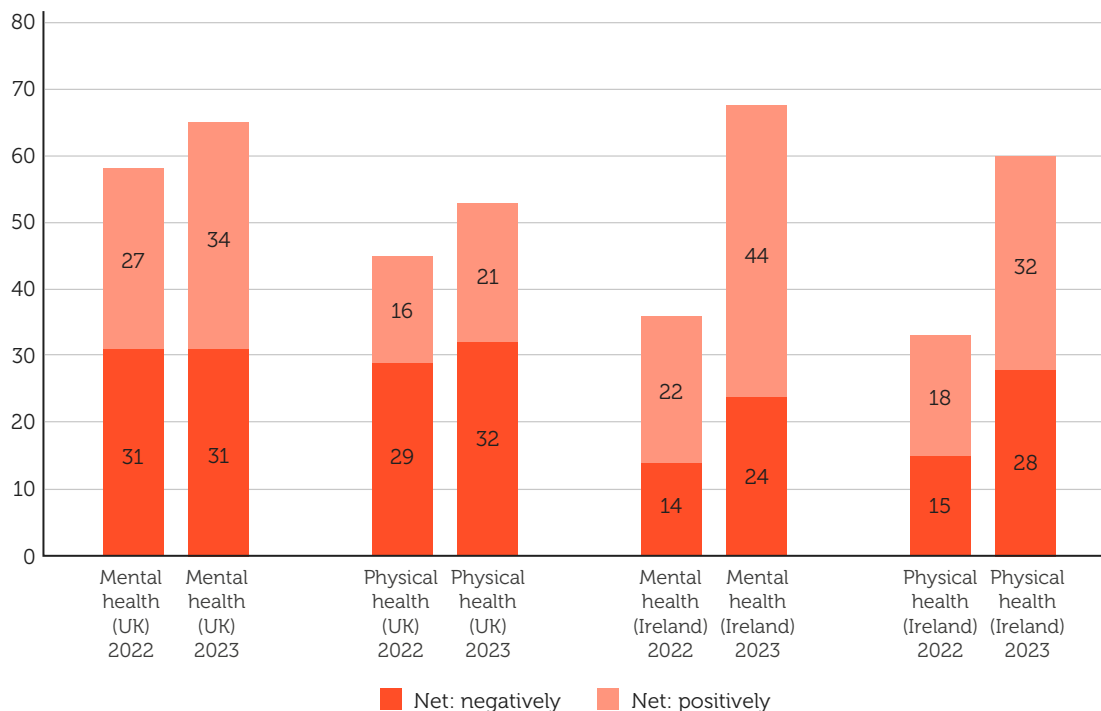
professionals reported that their work was negatively impacting their mental and physical health. In 2023, we see that this has largely remained the same among UK respondents. However, on a more positive note, the proportion of respondents who felt their work positively or very positively impacts their mental and physical health has increased since 2022, as shown in Figure 5.

In Ireland, although this year has seen an increase in the number of respondents saying their work negatively impacts their health, overall there has also been a dramatic increase in the positive impact of work on wellbeing, for both physical and mental health (also see Figure 5).

Encouragingly, in 2023, we found proportionately more respondents in both the UK and Ireland declaring the positive impact that work has on their personal wellbeing. Additionally, nearly two-thirds of UK and Ireland respondents believed their work makes them happy (64%) and around 60% said they feel energised by their work.

**Figure 5: The number of respondents stating that work positively affects their physical and mental health has risen in 2023**

**Comparison data on how work impacts upon mental and physical health in the UK and Ireland from 2022 (% of respondents' net scores)**



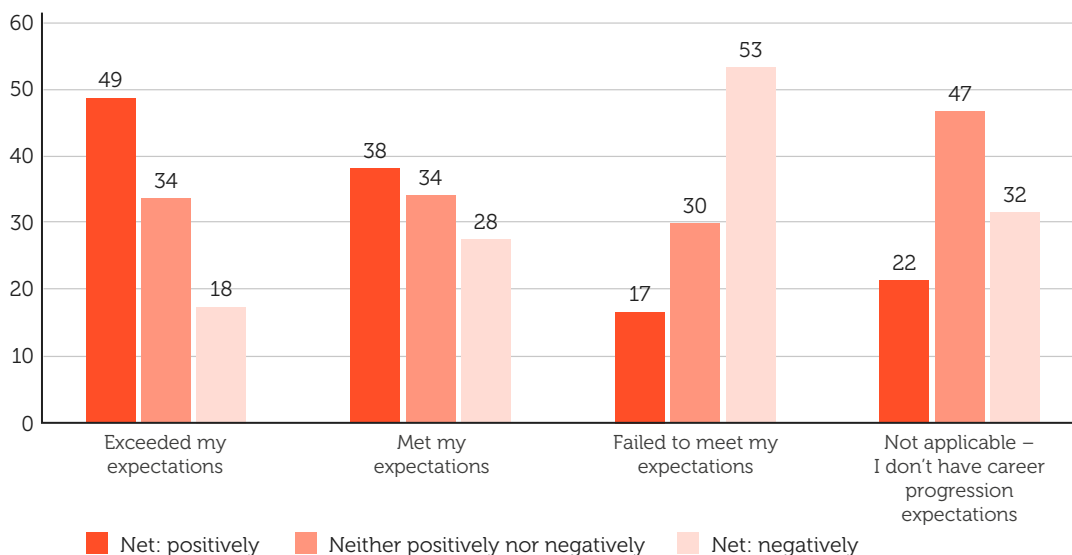
Base: UK 2022 (n=1,496); UK 2023, mental health (n=1,387); UK 2023, physical health (n=1,389); Ireland 2022 (n=125); Ireland 2023 (n=160). Excludes "neither positively or negatively", "don't know" and "prefer not to say" responses.

Question: To what extent does your work positively or negatively affect the following: mental health, physical health.

We also found a significant association between the impact of work on wellbeing and in-house and independent people professionals in the UK and Ireland.<sup>12</sup> Nearly half of independent professionals said their work positively impacts their mental health, significantly more than in-house professionals (33%). Additionally, only 13% of independent professionals felt their work negatively impacts their mental health, compared with 33% of in-house practitioners. Across the sample, there is also a significant association between how people perceived their career and their wellbeing.<sup>13</sup> Those who felt they have exceeded or met their career expectations were more likely to feel that work positively affects their mental health. Conversely, respondents who felt they have failed to meet their career expectations were more likely to feel that their mental health is negatively affected by work.

**Figure 6: Respondents with positive views on their career are far more likely to say their work positively impacts their mental health (%)**

*Career progression expectations and the impact of work on mental health (% of respondents' net scores)*



Base: UK and Ireland (n=1,547).

Question: To what extent does your work positively or negatively affect the following: mental health?

We found no significant differences on wellbeing responses for full-time/part-time employees and those with (or without) line manager responsibilities.

### How are practitioners developing their skills and capability?

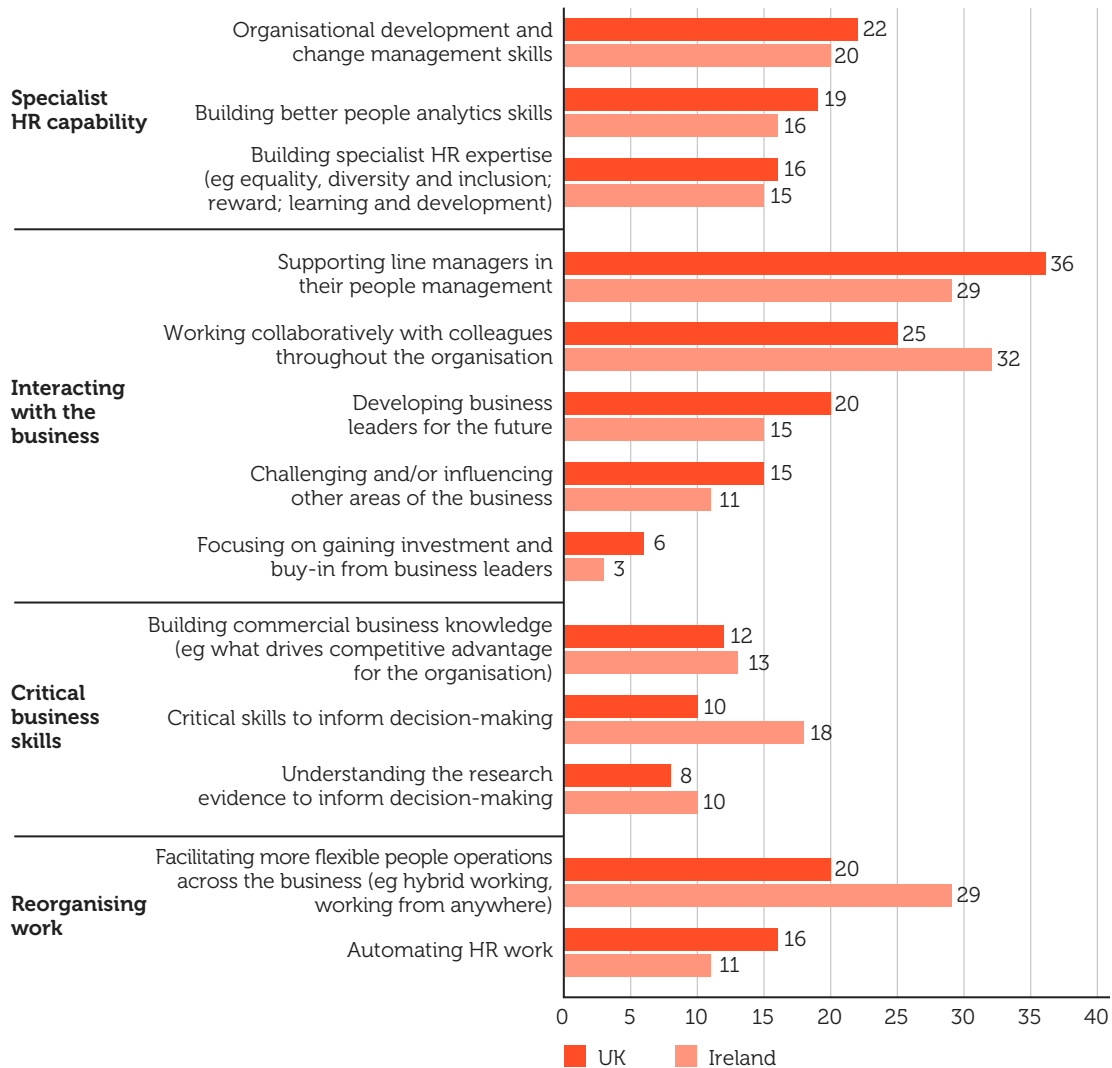
Across both the UK and Ireland sample, people professionals said there is a focus on building capability to support line managers with people management issues and on working collaboratively across functions throughout the business.

In the UK, organisational development and design skills are also a key capability focus area for people teams. This has been a consistent area for building HR capability since 2021. Although 14% of our sample identified organisational development and design as their specialist area, the majority of respondents said they have some level of decision-making or influence in organisational development (55%) and design (66%) within their organisation, which indicates that these specialist skills are being adopted in a more generalist way.

In Ireland, a key capability for people professionals is facilitating flexible people operations. Again, this aligns with the demand for flexible, hybrid and new ways of working being a key trend driving change for businesses.

**Figure 7: Supporting line managers and working collaboratively with colleagues are the priority areas for improvement in the UK and Ireland**

*Priority areas for improving HR capability in the UK and Ireland (% of respondents)*



Base: UK (n=1,456); Ireland (n=164). Excludes "not applicable", "don't know" and "other" responses.

Question: In your opinion, which of the following, if any, are priority areas for improvement across the HR capability in your (client) organisation? (Please tick up to three responses.)

The proportion of professionals saying they have had to upskill has remained relatively consistent in the UK in the last year (62%). Continuous learning and upskilling remain critical for a majority of people professionals, perhaps influenced by the rapid pace of change.

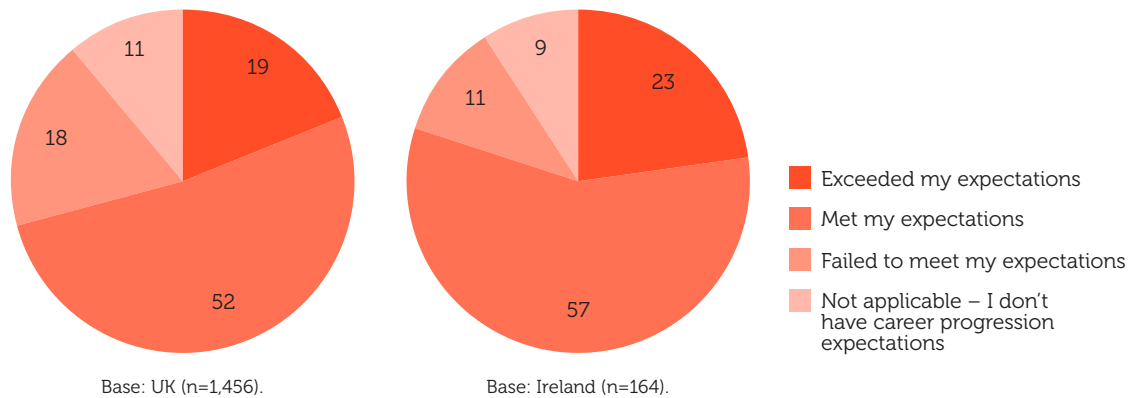
However, among our Ireland sample, fewer respondents have upskilled in the last year (60%, compared with 72% in 2022). Thirty-four per cent feel they have not needed to change their skills (previously 28%).

## How do people professionals feel about their career prospects and progression?

While practitioners in both the UK and Ireland are positive about their career progression, Irish respondents appear more satisfied than their UK counterparts (as shown in Figure 8).

**Figure 8: Seventy-one per cent of UK people professionals said their career progression has either met or exceeded their expectations, while this was 80% in Ireland**

*Career perceptions in the UK and Ireland (% of respondents)*



Question: Has your career progression to date met, exceeded or failed to meet your expectations?

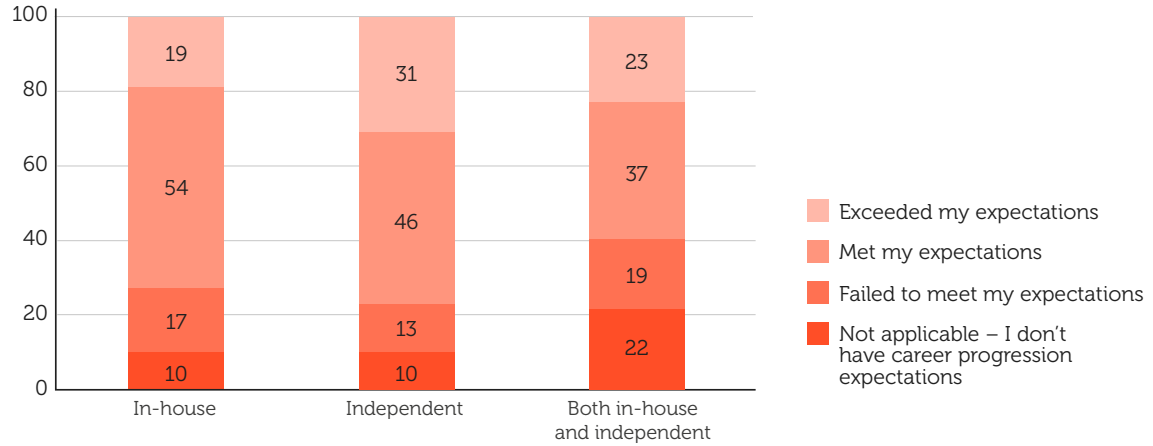
Collectively, respondents from larger organisations were more likely to say their progression has failed to meet expectations (20%) compared with those in SMEs (14%). Additionally, 20% of public sector respondents said their progression has not lived up to expectations, compared with 17% in the private sector and 11% in the voluntary sector.

A consistent finding from previous years showed that independent professionals are far more likely to say their progression has exceeded expectations, and are overall more positive about their progression, in comparison with in-house professionals and those who split their role between the two (see Figure 9).

This is partly down to their personal networks, as 58% of independent professionals across the UK and Ireland said their networks are a key enabler for career progression (compared with 35% of in-house professionals). Additionally, independents said professional qualifications (56%) and skills development (52%) support career progression as an independent professional, both of which are more in line with in-house perspectives.

**Figure 9: Independent people professionals are more positive about their career progression compared with in-house professionals and those who split their role**

**Career expectations, by working role (% of respondents)**



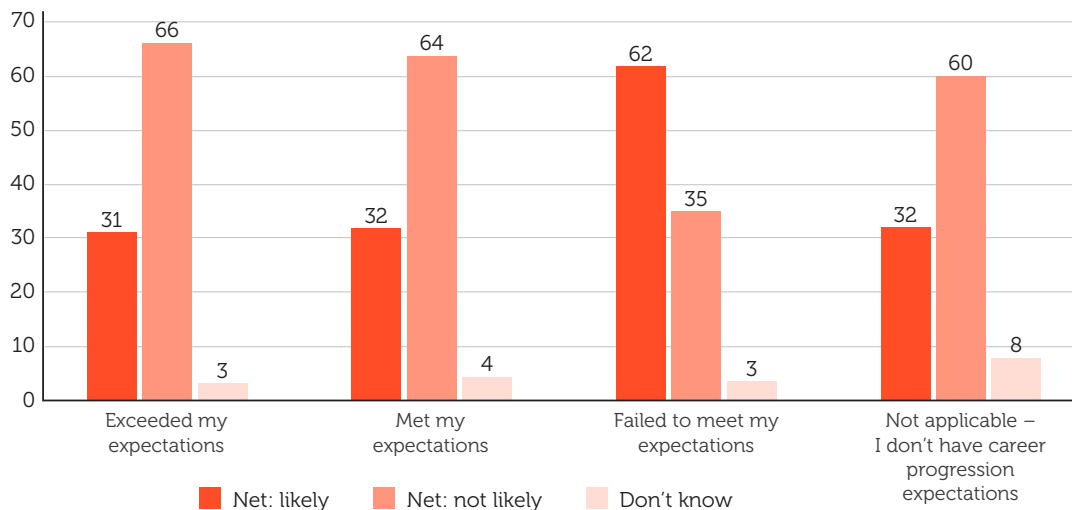
Base: UK and Ireland: in-house (n=1,397); independent (n=117); both in-house and independent (n=106).  
 Question: Has your career progression to date met, exceeded or failed to meet your expectations?

Our previous findings showed that recruitment and turnover is a key workforce priority for businesses right now. Understanding people professionals' intentions to leave their current organisation provides some insight on potential turnover behaviours within the profession itself.

When we explored this in relation to career progression, we found that respondents who had unmet career expectations were significantly more likely to say they intend to leave their current organisation within the next year, compared with those who felt more satisfied with their progression to date (see Figure 10). We found the association between career progression and intentions to leave is statistically significant.<sup>14</sup>

**Figure 10: Respondents with negative career perceptions are significantly more likely to say they intend to leave their organisation**

**Career expectations, by intention to leave their current organisation for UK and Ireland in-house and split-role professionals (% of respondents' net scores)**



Base: UK and Ireland: all in-house and split role (in-house and independent) (n=1,503).  
 Question: How likely or unlikely are you to do each of the following within the next year? Leave your current organisation.

Finally, we also note observed differences between those who have upskilled (or not) in the last year and their satisfaction with their career progression. Specifically, people professionals who have upskilled are significantly more likely to say their career progression has exceeded their expectations (23%), compared with respondents who haven't developed their skills (15%).

In terms of what's stopping practitioners' progress, self-confidence ranks as the top hurdle. Again, professional development, qualifications and building your network to draw on peer expertise will support overall skills and development, which, in turn, will boost confidence. Nearly a quarter of UK respondents believed there aren't any barriers to their career progression, compared with 18% of Ireland respondents.

## Recommendations

We found that people professionals who are unhappy with their career progression are more at risk of leaving their organisation. Sixty-eight per cent of the UK and Ireland sample hold line management responsibility and should therefore consider the following:

- Ensure teams are fully supported to reach their potential and perform well. Line managers should set objectives, instigate regular reviews, feed back on performance and offer support and resources to help team members succeed. The CIPD's [performance management factsheet](#) and [using technology to support performance management guide](#) can support professionals to navigate these areas.
- Encourage upskilling effort. Skills development is a key enabler to progression, and those who actively improve their skillset are more positive about their career. Emphasise the importance of [continuing professional development](#) and allow teams to have protected time to upskill.
- Assess the current and future skills of the team. This will identify more targeted upskilling efforts and reduce future skills gaps.

Our [talent management journey planner tool](#) provides tailored, practical recommendations on how to recruit and retain more effectively.

The CIPD [Profession Map](#) reflects the international standards for key skills, knowledge and behaviours for people professionals, with guidance on using the Profession Map to [support your career](#).

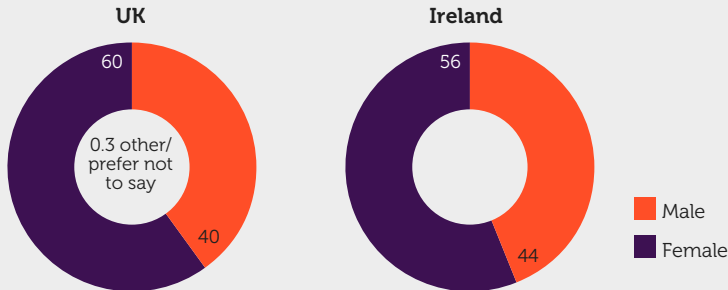
CIPD members have free access to the [Learning hub](#), which includes a library of learning programmes and essential insight courses.

For more detailed analysis on how the UK and Ireland compare with the overall global sample, see our accompanying [People Profession 2023: International survey report](#).

For analysis of trends in other regions, see our accompanying [Asia-Pacific](#), [Middle East and North Africa](#), and [Canada](#) reports.

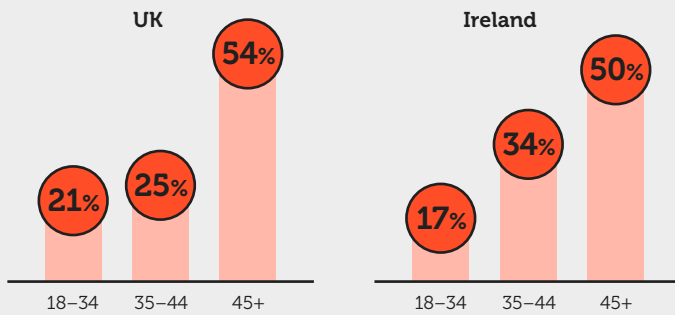
### UK and Ireland: Sample demographics

#### How would you best describe your gender? (%)



Base: UK (n=1,456); Ireland (n=164).

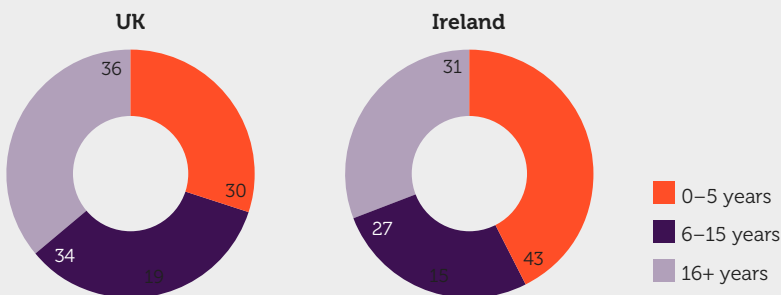
#### What is your current age?



UK mean age = 44, Ireland mean age = 41

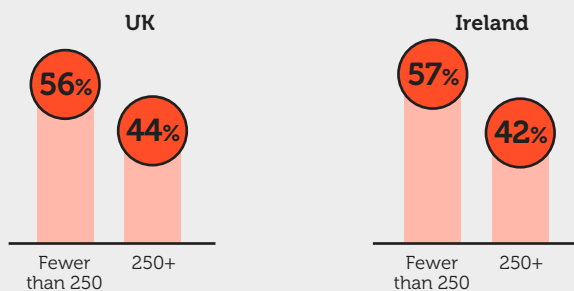
Base: UK (n=1,456); Ireland (n=164).

#### How many years of work experience do you have in the HR/people profession? (%)



Base: UK (n=1,456); Ireland (n=164).

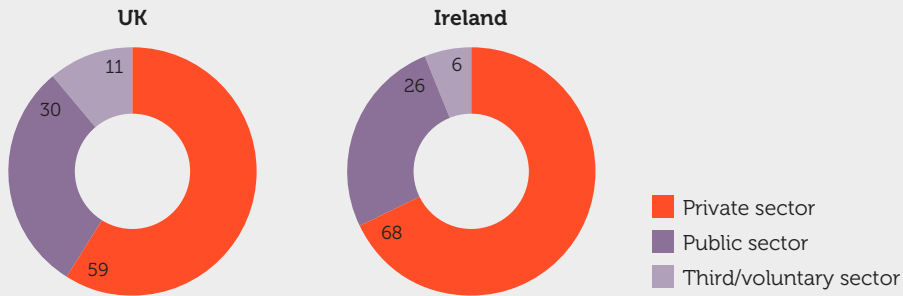
#### Approximately how many people are employed by your company/employer in the country you live in?



All in-house or split role: UK (n=1,295); Ireland (n=163).

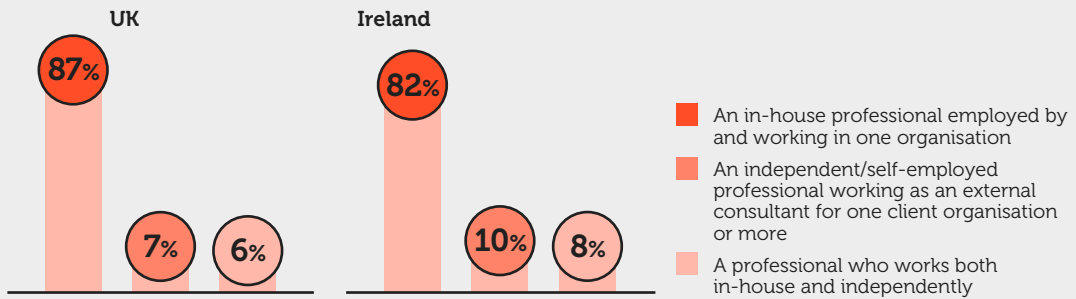


**What kind of organisation do you work for? (%)**



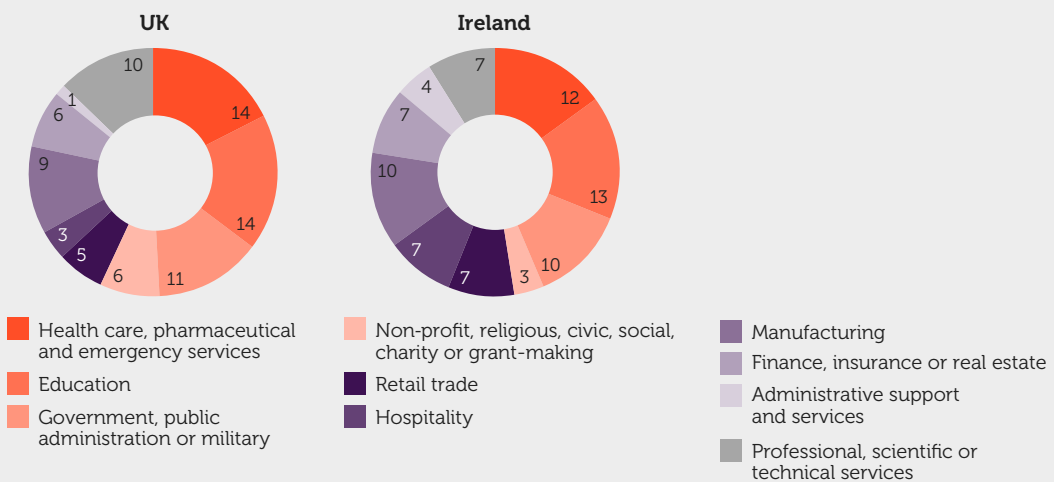
Base: UK (n=1,350); Ireland (n=140).

**Which, if any, of the following areas reflect your role, decision-making or the services you provide? (Please tick one option on each row.)**

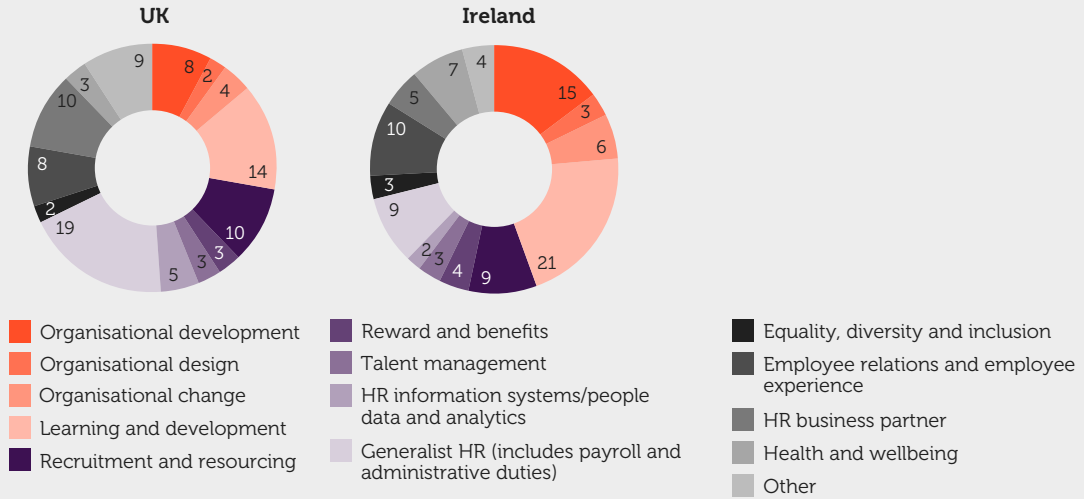


Base: UK (n=1,456); Ireland (n=164).

**In which of the following industries do you work? (%) (Top 10 industries represented in this survey.)**

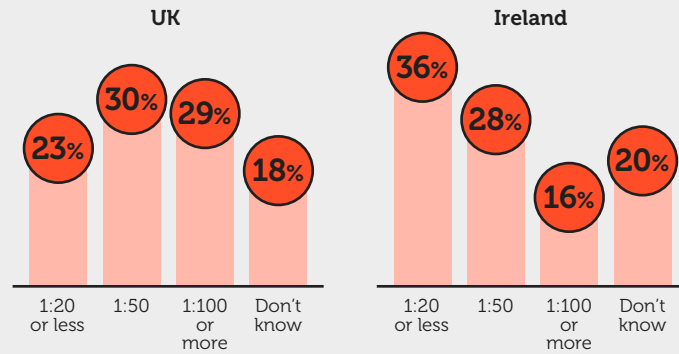


Please indicate which one of the HR/people profession areas listed most accurately reflects your decision-making responsibilities. (%)



Base: UK (n=1,456); Ireland (n=164).

What is the approximate ratio of HR/people department staff to employees in your organisation?



Base: UK (n=1,356); Ireland (n=147).

# 3 Methodology

The *People Profession survey* is a long-standing research programme that showcases the current views of people professionals' working lives and careers. This survey has developed into an international snapshot of the profession and provides the latest insights on people practices across the globe. Our sample included CIPD members and non-members, and is a mix of in-house and independent professionals from a range of specialisms (including HR, learning and development (L&D), organisational development (OD) and others). Full demographic details of our UK and Ireland sample can be found at the end of [Section 2](#).

## Survey instrument and method

Since 2018, the survey has been tested and refined, and what was originally a UK-based survey has become an international survey instrument that has now been piloted in over 14 countries through CIPD-led research, and in 20 countries alongside our research partners: the [WFPMA](#), [SHRM](#) and [AHRI](#).

This year, our data collection spans nine countries: Australia, Egypt, Hong Kong, Ireland, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom, with additional data from Canada, collected by the Chartered Professionals in Human Resources Canada ([CPHR Canada](#)). The findings are presented in a series of reports, including:

- the [People Profession 2023: International survey report](#), which explores the collective sample and makes comparisons across regions
- this report, the *People Profession 2023: UK and Ireland survey report*, which details the findings in the UK and Ireland, and draws on comparisons between the two countries
- the [People Profession 2023: Asia-Pacific survey report](#), which details the findings in Australia, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore, and draws on in-region comparisons
- the [People Profession 2023: Middle East and North Africa survey report](#), which details the findings in Egypt, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates and draws on in-region comparisons
- the [People Profession 2023: A Canadian perspective](#), which draws on data and analysis from a separate survey conducted by Chartered Professionals in Human Resources Canada ([CPHR Canada](#)), and gives a comparable view of the opportunities and challenges faced by people professionals in Canada.

Commissioned by the CIPD, the data was collected by YouGov between 18 April and 27 May 2023 via an online survey. The survey was translated into the official language of each country to ensure the questions were accessible and correctly interpreted within each region. The data analysis was conducted by the CIPD. We surveyed a total of 2,957 people professionals; the sample sizes for each region are shown in Table 3. The data is unweighted and therefore the sample of respondents is not

representative of the total HR population within those regions. However, this data represents the perspectives of the 2,957 people professionals who participated in this survey.

**Table 3: Sample sizes of the countries surveyed in this report**

Country	Sample size
Australia	202
Egypt	154
Hong Kong	155
Ireland	164
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	158
Malaysia	251
Singapore	204
United Arab Emirates	213
United Kingdom	1,456

The details of the CPHR Canada survey are included in the [Canada](#) report. This data has been analysed and written by CPHR Canada.

### Survey questions

Each year, the survey instrument is reviewed and refined where changes are appropriate, or where there are new research questions to be explored. For the 2023 survey, we added new questions that explore attitudes and behaviours around applying evidence and research in practice and people teams' involvement in their organisation's sustainability agenda. The findings from these questions can be found in the [People Profession 2023: International survey report](#).

Where sample sizes are large enough, the data was cross-tabulated by business size and sector. We also explore other demographic variables such as age and experience within the profession throughout the reports, where significant differences are noted. Where we compare with the global sample, given the larger UK sample in comparison with other regions, the global average percentages will be skewed towards the UK findings.

### Supplementary data

We have included qualitative data collected throughout the survey and through the CIPD's research panel to provide some further context on the quantitative data. We would like to thank those participants who contributed their views and experience in relation to the key findings from the survey.

If you are interested in being part of the CIPD's research panel, please email [customerresearch@cipd.co.uk](mailto:customerresearch@cipd.co.uk)

# 4 Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> ONS. (2023) *UK economy latest*. Office for National Statistics. 12 October.
- <sup>2</sup> *Ireland vs United Kingdom – cost of living comparison*. LivingCost.org.
- <sup>3</sup> Burke-Kennedy, E. (2023) *Ireland, the most expensive EU state, has bloc's highest male life expectancy*. *Irish Times*. 8 August.
- <sup>4</sup> Cox, J. (2023) *Ireland sees biggest remote working growth in EU*. *Breakingnews.ie*. 8 August.
- <sup>5</sup> Business Plus. (2023) *Ireland leads the way in EU with hybrid working options*. *Business Plus*. 12 June.
- <sup>6</sup> Mutebi, N. and Hobbs, A. (2022) *The impact of remote and hybrid working on workers and organisations*. UK Parliament POSTbrief. 17 October.
- <sup>7</sup> GOV.UK. (2022) *AI activity in UK businesses: Executive Summary*. 12 January.
- <sup>8</sup> ONS. (2023) *Characteristics of homeworkers, Great Britain: September 2022 to January 2023*. Office for National Statistics. 13 February.
- <sup>9</sup> Eurostat. (2022) *Rise in EU population working from home*. Eurostat News. 8 November.
- <sup>10</sup> Hu, K. (2023) *ChatGPT sets record for fastest-growing user base – analyst note*. *Reuters*. 2 February.
- <sup>11</sup> KPMG. (2023) *Global economic outlook – March 2023*. KPMG.
- <sup>12</sup> Pearson chi square 21.775, p<.001.
- <sup>13</sup> Pearson chi square 124.987, p<.001.
- <sup>14</sup> Pearson chi square 89.843, p<.001.

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