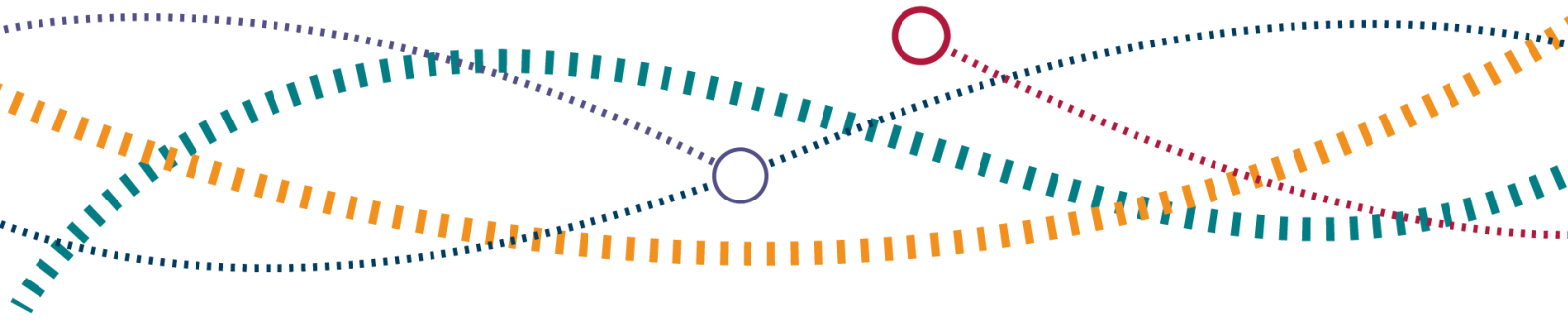
Gender Pay Gap Report

Reporting Year April 2024 to March 2025

Published 20 March 2026



Contents

Gender Pay Gap **3**

What is Gender Pay Gap Reporting? 3

ORR gender pay gap **4**

Review of results 5

Action to reduce the gender pay gap **11**

Annex 1 – profile of workforce **13**

Gender Pay Gap

What is Gender Pay Gap Reporting?

From 2017, all organisations employing 250 or more people have been required to publicly report on their gender pay gap. The gender pay gap uses the hourly rates of men and women taken at a specific date (the ‘snapshot date’) and shows the percentage difference in earnings across the organisation between them.

Reporting specifically requires: the mean and median gender pay gaps; the mean and median gender bonus gaps; the proportion of men and women who received bonuses, and the number of men and women according to quartile pay bands. ORR has a snapshot date of 31 March 2025.

This report analyses our gender pay gap figures in more detail, makes comparisons with our previous reported data where relevant, and sets out what we are doing to close the gender pay gap.

ORR gender pay gap

The data presented is a snapshot at 31 March 2025 covering 367 employees, of which 55.9% were male and 44.1% were female.

The mean pay gap figure is calculated using the average hourly rate of pay of all the men and women in the organisation and the difference between these two figures makes up the pay gap. The median pay gap figure is calculated using the mid-point hourly rate of pay of all the men and women in the organisation and the difference between these two figures makes up the pay gap. A positive percentage figure indicates that on average, women are paid lower than men. A negative percentage figure indicates that on average women are paid higher than men. The higher the percentage, the greater the gender pay gap.

Our mean and median pay gap shows, overall men are paid more than women. The table below shows that ORR has a mean gender pay gap of 7.9%, a 0.3 percentage point increase from last year of 7.6% and a median gender pay gap of 5.1%, a 1.1 percentage point decrease from 6.2% last year.

As a relatively small organisation, movement in a small number of roles can have a noticeable impact on our pay gap figures. We have made progress to date and remain committed to further improving diversity across all levels of the organisation.

Table 1 Female pay against male pay, 2021 to 2025

Mean and Median pay gap	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Mean pay gap – **hourly rate**	7.9%	7.6%	7.1%	11.1%	14.4%
Median pay gap – **hourly rate**	5.1%	6.2%	2.9%	10.7%	15.2%
Mean pay gap – **bonus payments**	1.4%	8.3%	16.0%	-2.3%	-13.9%
Median pay gap – **bonus payments**	0.0%	20.0%	16.7%	-4.2%	-33.3%

Review of results

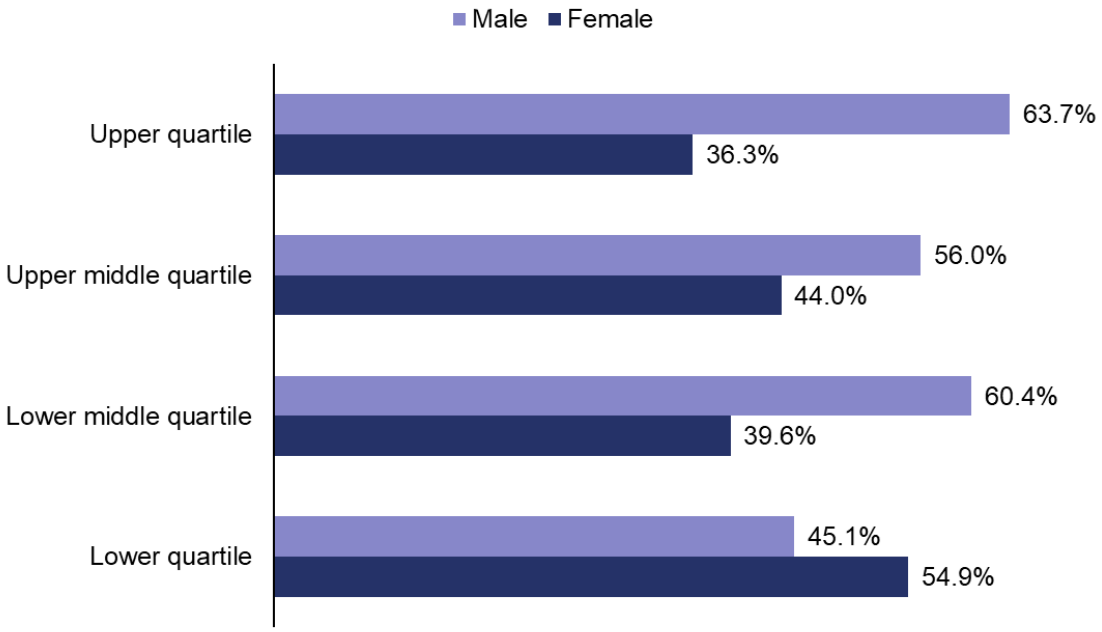
An analysis of the past five years shows that, although there has been a slight increase in the mean pay gap over the last two years, our overall gender pay gap has reduced substantially—from 14.1% in 2021 to 7.9% in 2025. The calculation of ordinary hourly pay includes basic pay, relevant allowances, and any bonus payments issued in March 2025. As a small organisation, changes affecting a limited number of employees can have a significant influence on our results. In particular, ad hoc payments made in March can distort the hourly rate; for example, the number and value of in-year awards received in March 2025 may differ from those awarded in the previous year. For these reasons, a modest increase in the mean pay gap does not necessarily indicate that the gap is widening, nor does it represent a cause for concern.

The median pay gap has decreased by 1.1 percentage points compared with the previous year, indicating continued progress in narrowing the disparity. It is important to acknowledge that we are advancing in the right direction, with a notable reduction from 15.1% in 2021 to 5.1% in 2025.

We continue to see improvements in our equal pay data and we are confident that people at ORR are paid equally for doing equivalent roles, considering skills, experience, performance and competence.

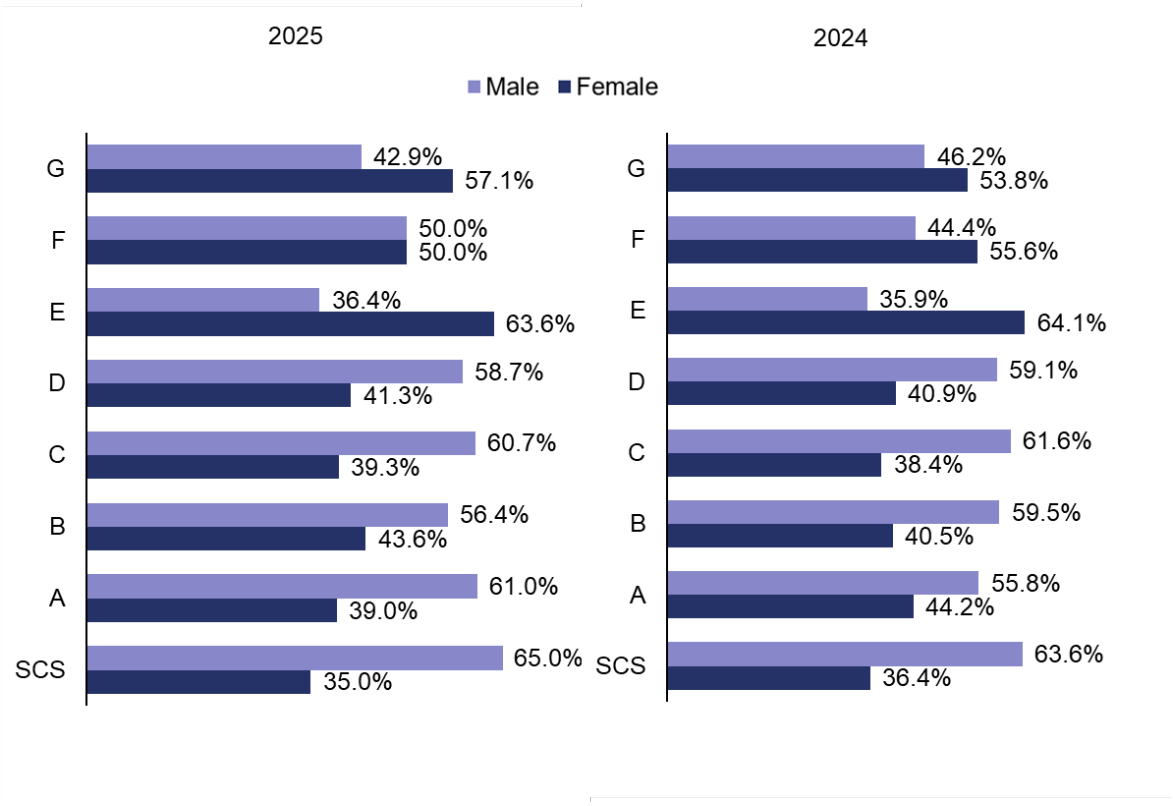
Pay quartiles are where an organisation is split into four equally sized chunks of employees based on their hourly earnings and then the gender split is recorded. Using the quartile percentages our lower quartile (up to £23.14 per hour) is made up of 54.9% women while the upper quartile (from £36.61 per hour) is made up of 36.3% women, a decrease from last year (was 40.4%).

Figure 1 Percentage of females and males in each quartile, 2025



Promotions secured by women between April 2024 to March 2025 has positively improved their representation in the higher grades and we can see a positive impact on this year's results with female representation in the upper middle quartile increasing to 44% from 41%.

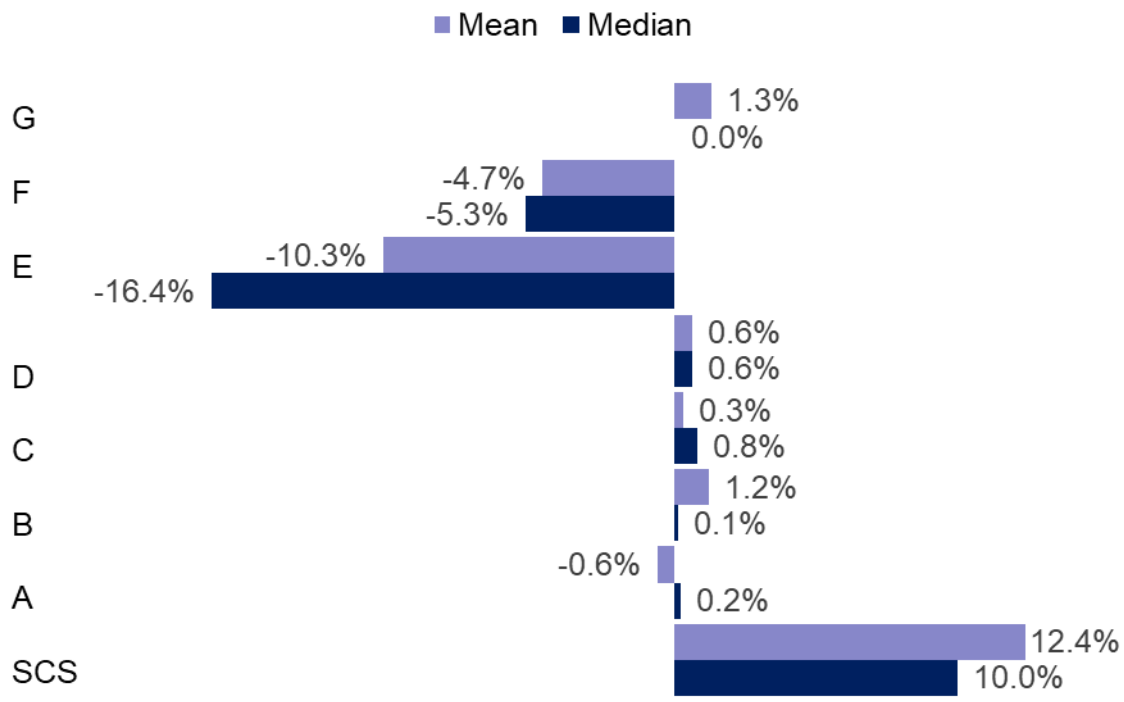
Figure 2 Distribution of females and males within each grade, 2025 and 2024



Our gender pay gap reflects the fact that we have more male employees in middle and senior positions, and traditionally more female in the lower administrative roles. Our challenges remain that some of the sectors and specialist professions we recruit from are traditionally male dominated and this can impact on our pay gap figures, whereas some lower graded roles such as administration roles, have been typically dominated by females. This is the main cause for the gender pay gap in ORR and across the Civil Service.

Analysis of the mean and median pay gap by grade (Figure 3) shows that women are paid more favourably at lower grades, while men are paid more at higher grades. However, the pay gap at the higher grades is narrowing excluding SCS where 65% are male. A positive percentage figure indicates that on average, women are paid lower than men. A negative percentage figure indicates that on average women are paid higher than men.

Figure 3 Mean and median pay gap of females and males by grade, 2025



Reducing the gender pay gap is a long-term process, particularly in periods of modest overall pay growth and when any increases benefiting colleagues in the lower quartile are relatively small. Nonetheless, we remain fully committed to narrowing the gap, and the actions we are taking to support this objective are outlined later in this report.

Bonus payments (non-consolidated)

The bonus pay gap figure is calculated on actual bonus payments received between 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

Performance related, non consolidated bonus payments—referred to as in year awards—are available to employees at all levels. These awards may be granted at any point during the year to colleagues who have made an exceptional contribution, recognising both performance and behaviour. Award values typically range from £250 to £3,000. Throughout this report, the term *bonus* primarily refers to these in year awards.

A negative percentage figure indicates in favour of female and a positive percentage figure indicate in favour of male. Bonus pay can fluctuate year on year depending on who has been nominated for an in year award. A higher percentage of women (85.8%) received a bonus compared to men (80.0%). The percentage bonus pay gap indicates that, for the

first time this year, there is a 0% difference, meaning males and females were equally recognised for their contribution.

Figure 4 Female bonus pay against male, 2021 to 2025

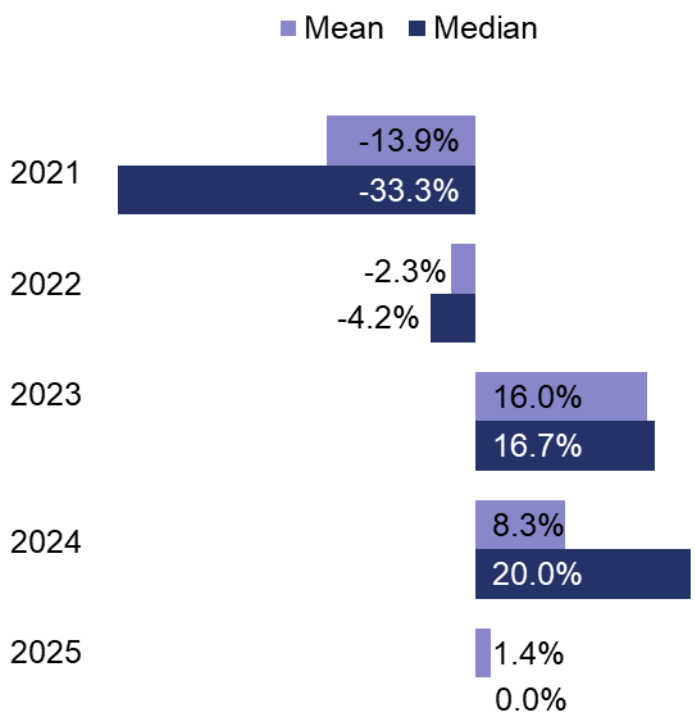
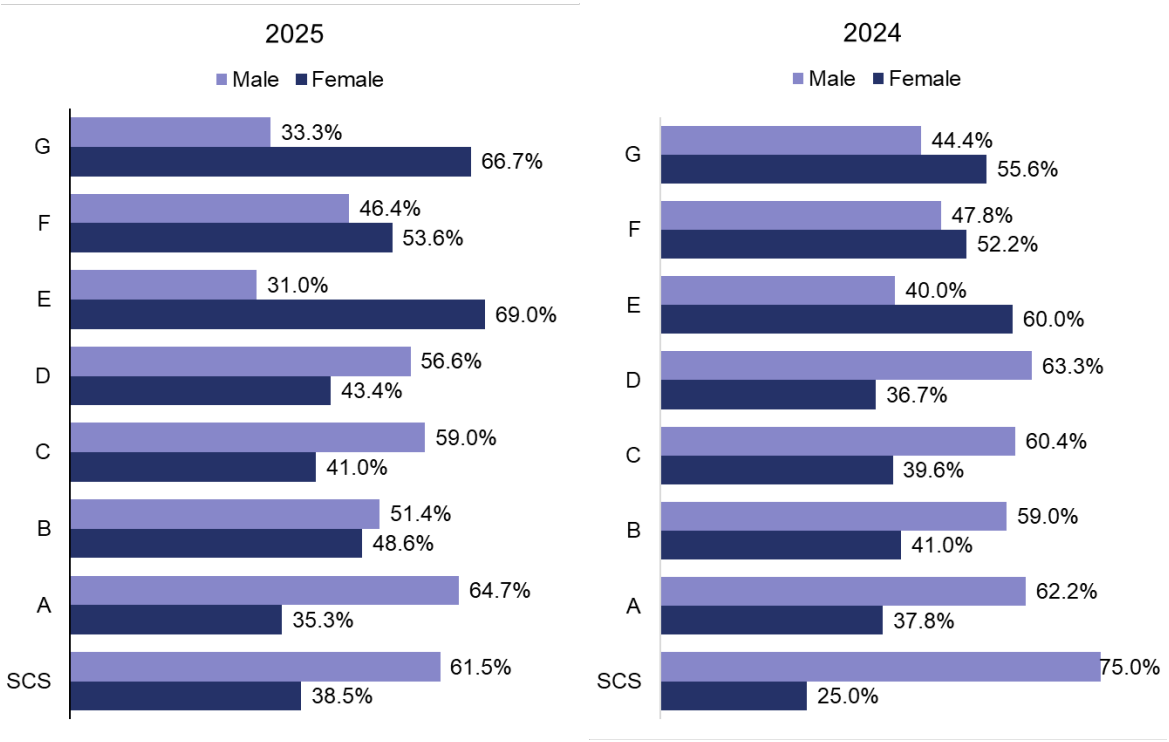


Figure 5 Proportion of male and females receiving an award, 2025 and 2024



Action to reduce the gender pay gap

Since 2018 we have seen reductions to both the mean and median hourly pay gap and this has been further supported by our Pay Strategy which was introduced in 2020.

ORR continues to build on the actions outlined in the 2024 report.

We are committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace. Through the initiatives set out in our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, we aim to attract, develop and offer rewarding careers to people regardless of race, sexual orientation, religion, age, gender or disability. We continue to identify and remove barriers to inclusion, supporting a culture where people feel engaged, valued and able to contribute their best, while strengthening our ability to attract and retain talent.

We continue to focus on the following priority areas to improve gender balance across our organisation.

Recruitment

We continuously work to improve our attraction and recruitment practices to drive transparency and fairness, including simplifying our role descriptions and removing desirable criteria. The proportion of women starting at ORR continues to grow and represented 36% of new hires between April 2024 to March 2025. Since last year's report, 8 promotions to higher grades were secured by the female population compared to 10 males. We will continue to explore how to attract underrepresented groups into our organisation. Additionally, we continue to commit to the following:

- Sustain the number of vacancies advertised as available on flexible working, part-time, job share basis and the option to be based in any of ORR's six office locations across the country;
- Offer flexible employment for all employees allowing regional and hybrid working supported by mobile technology;
- Advertise our roles in a broad range of media;
- All people involved in recruitment to undertake Inclusion in the Civil Service training;
- A continuation of 'blind' recruitment where all personal information including gender is redacted and not visible to those making decisions until the interview stage; and

- Ensure mixed gender selection panels are in place for interview panels.

Pay and Reward

We will undertake an equality impact assessment on our pay practices to ensure they are applied fairly.

Flexibility

Our hybrid working means that we currently work from our workplace a minimum of 40% of our working week, which means our employees have the ability to balance the demands of their role with commitments outside of work. Our population of staff working a flexible pattern has increased from 9.7% in 2024 to 12.8% in 2025.

Performance

We continue to improve our talent management and career development practices to actively promote and deliver opportunity for all talented people seeking development across the organisation e.g. management development and senior leadership programmes. All employees will continue to be offered access to various talent programmes, aimed at supporting the right people into the right roles. This includes our support of the Civil Service 'Beyond Boundaries' programme, which aims to tackle the under-representation of certain groups. In parallel, ORR undertakes talent management reviews, which provides a source of data that helps monitor diversity with a view to informing development opportunities. Additionally, we will continue to support and encourage women into higher levels of responsibility within our organisation.

Performance management and reward are inextricably linked. Having the right tools available to managers is essential to embedding a performance culture where everyone can do their best. We have fully launched our performance management processes with our HR system to empower staff to track and monitor their performance conversations throughout the year.

Mentoring

We continue to actively participate in the Women in Rail mentoring scheme by offering opportunities to colleagues to either be mentored or mentor colleagues from across the sector. The programme champions diverse thinking, cross-fertilisation of ideas and networks and promote diversity in rail, starting with gender diversity as the core focus.

Annex 1 – profile of workforce

At 31 March 2025 ORR had 367 employees, 55.9% of whom were male and 44.1% female.

The number of employees working a flexible non-standard working pattern has increased from 9.7% to 12.8%. Many staff take advantage of the ability to work from home, to help optimise their work-life balance.

The number of employees with an ethnic minority background increased from 18.2% to 20.5%. Through our data disclosure campaign, our declaration rate for disability has improved, with disclosure rate from 61% in 2024 to 50.7% in 2025. Colleagues aged 40 or over accounts for 67.6% of the population.

Figure 6 Employees by ethnicity, 2024 and 2025

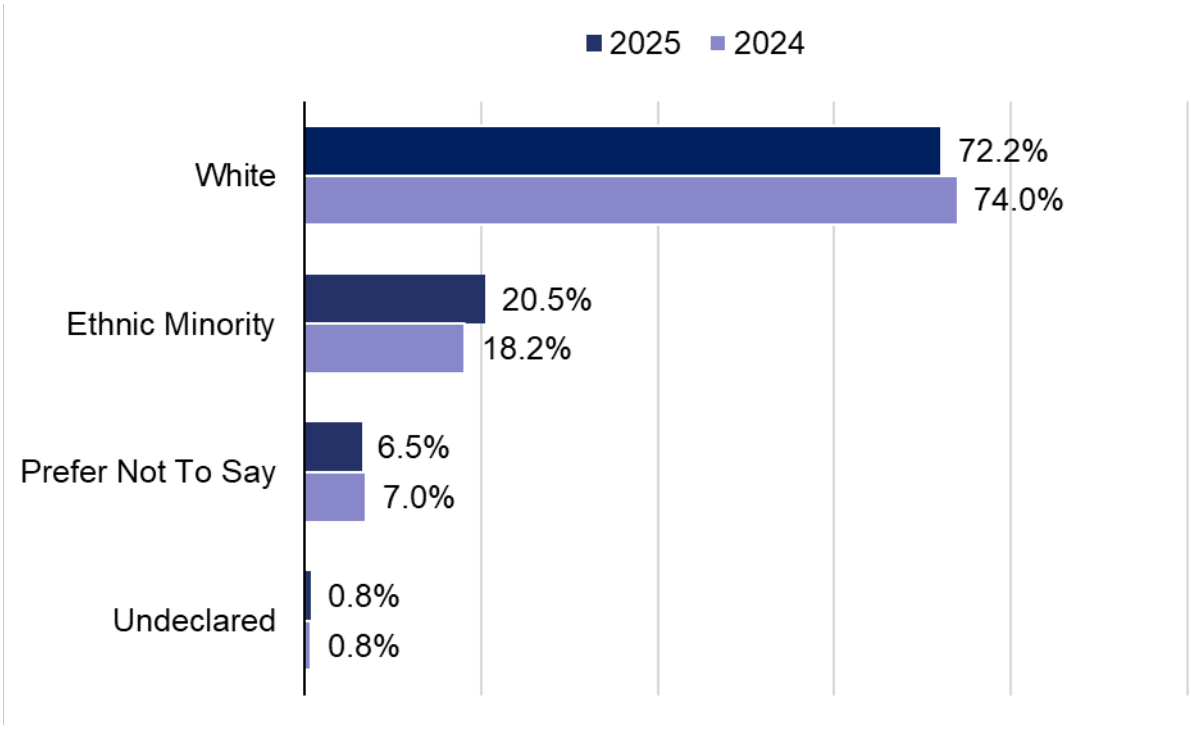


Figure 7 Employees by disability, 2024 and 2025

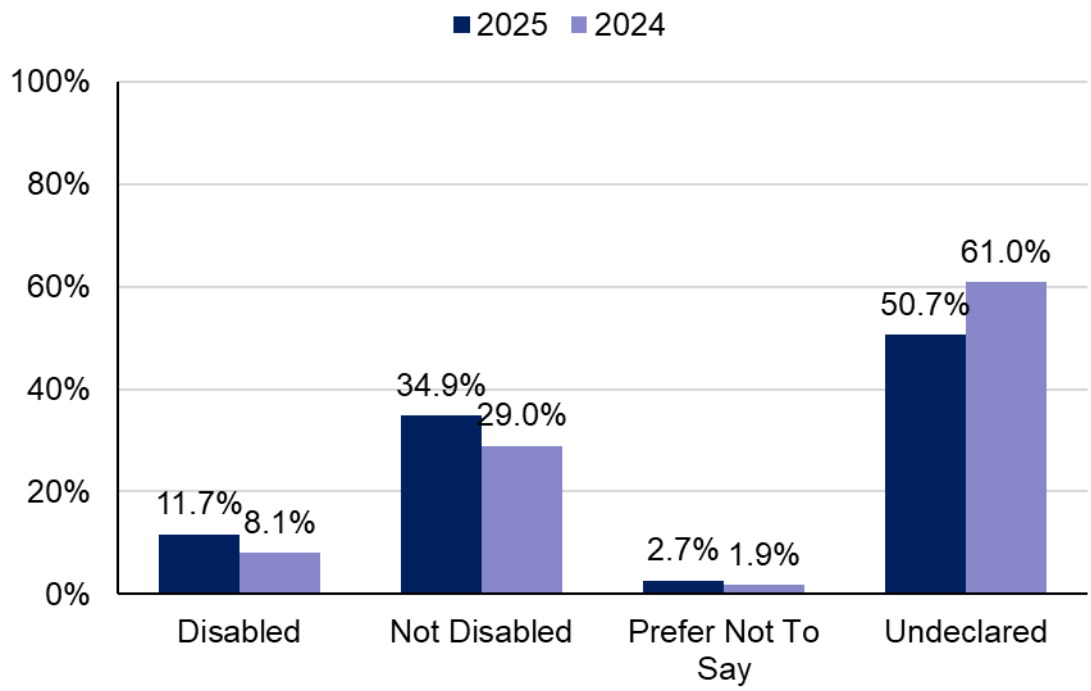


Figure 8 Employees by age band, 2024 and 2025

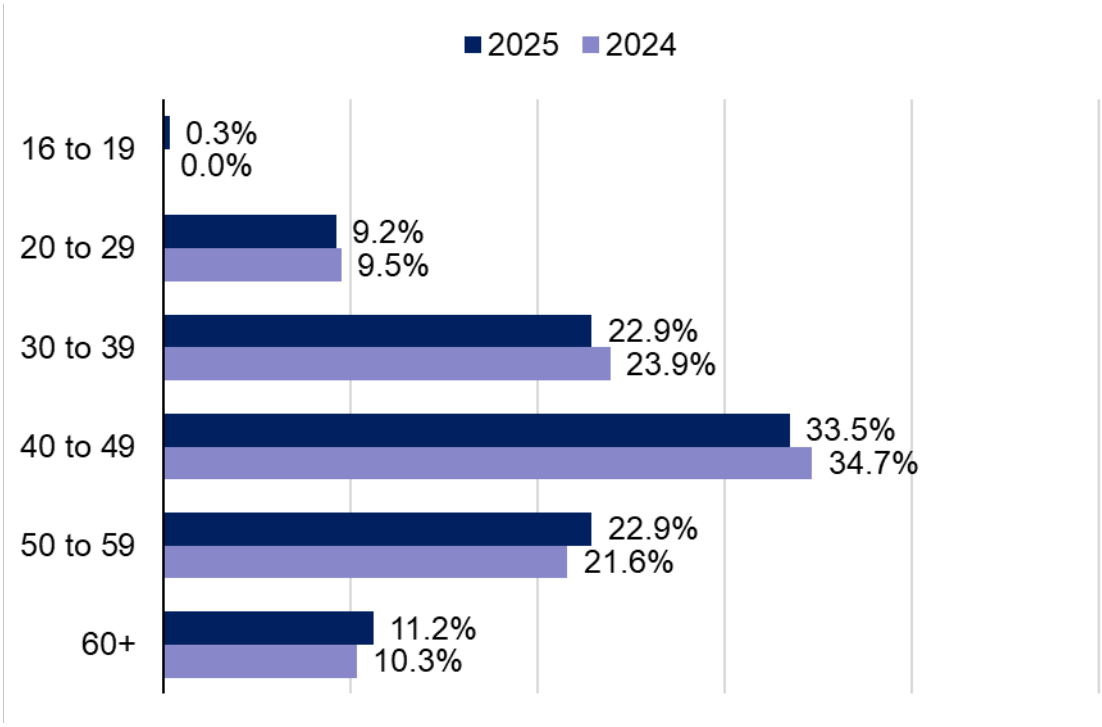


Figure 9 Employees by working pattern, 2024 and 2025

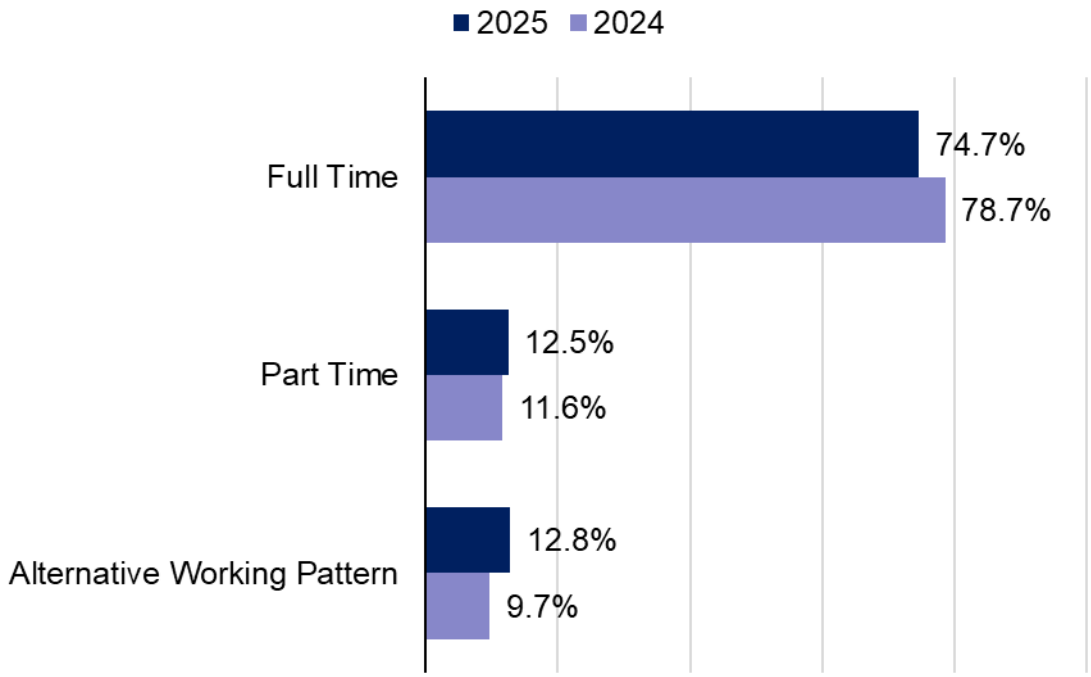


Figure 10 Employees by sexual orientation, 2024 and 2025

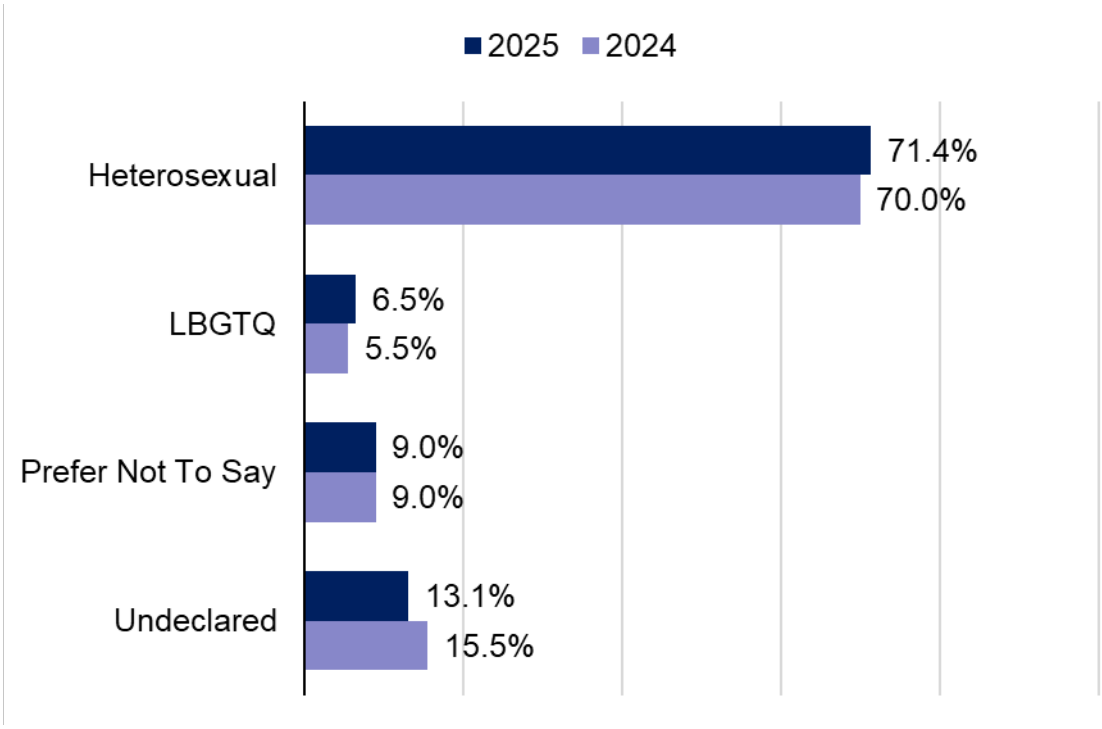
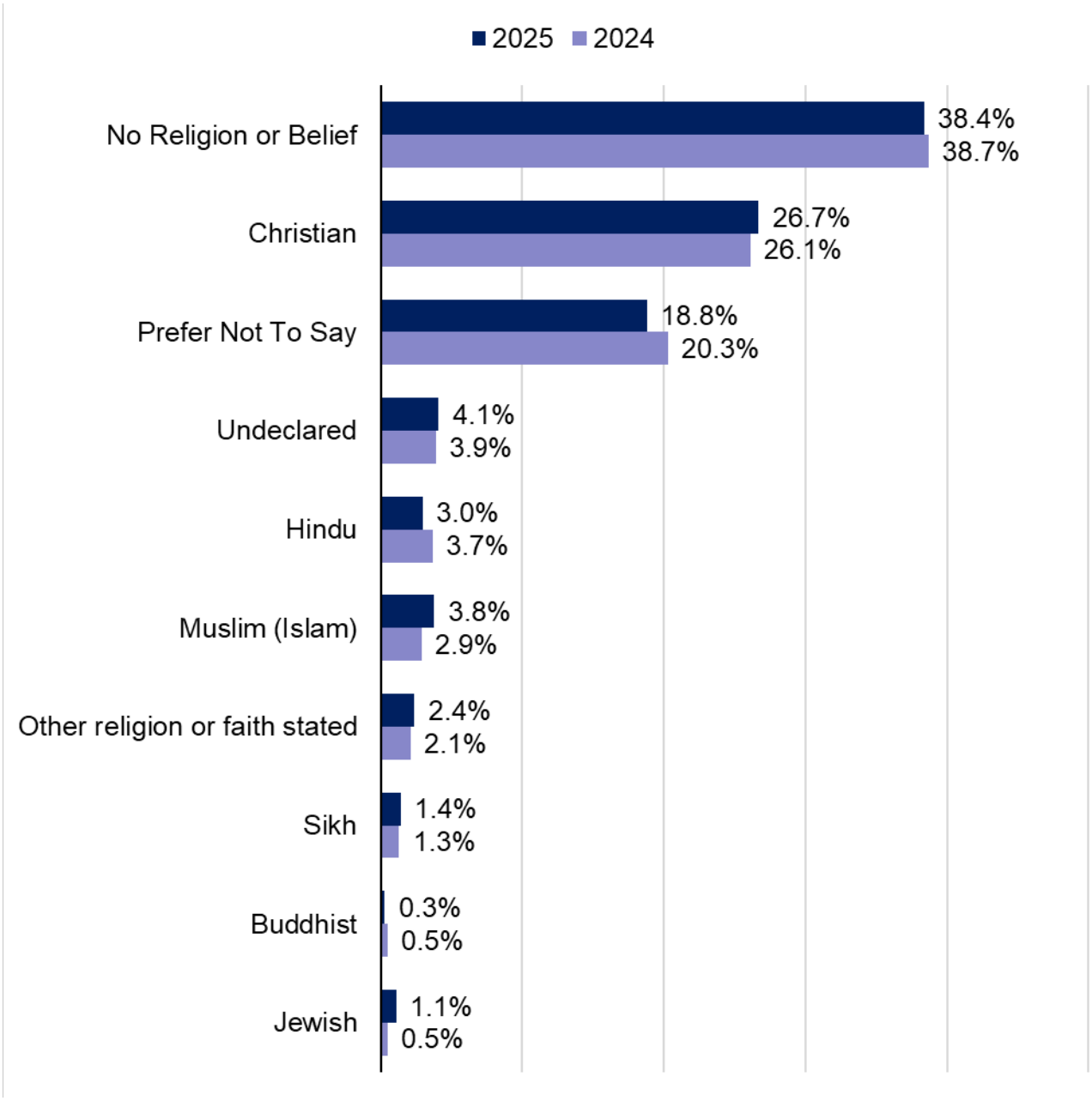


Figure 11 Employees by religion, 2024 and 2025



© Office of Rail & Road 2026

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3

Where we have identified any third-party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at orr.gov.uk

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at orr.gov.uk/contact-us

