

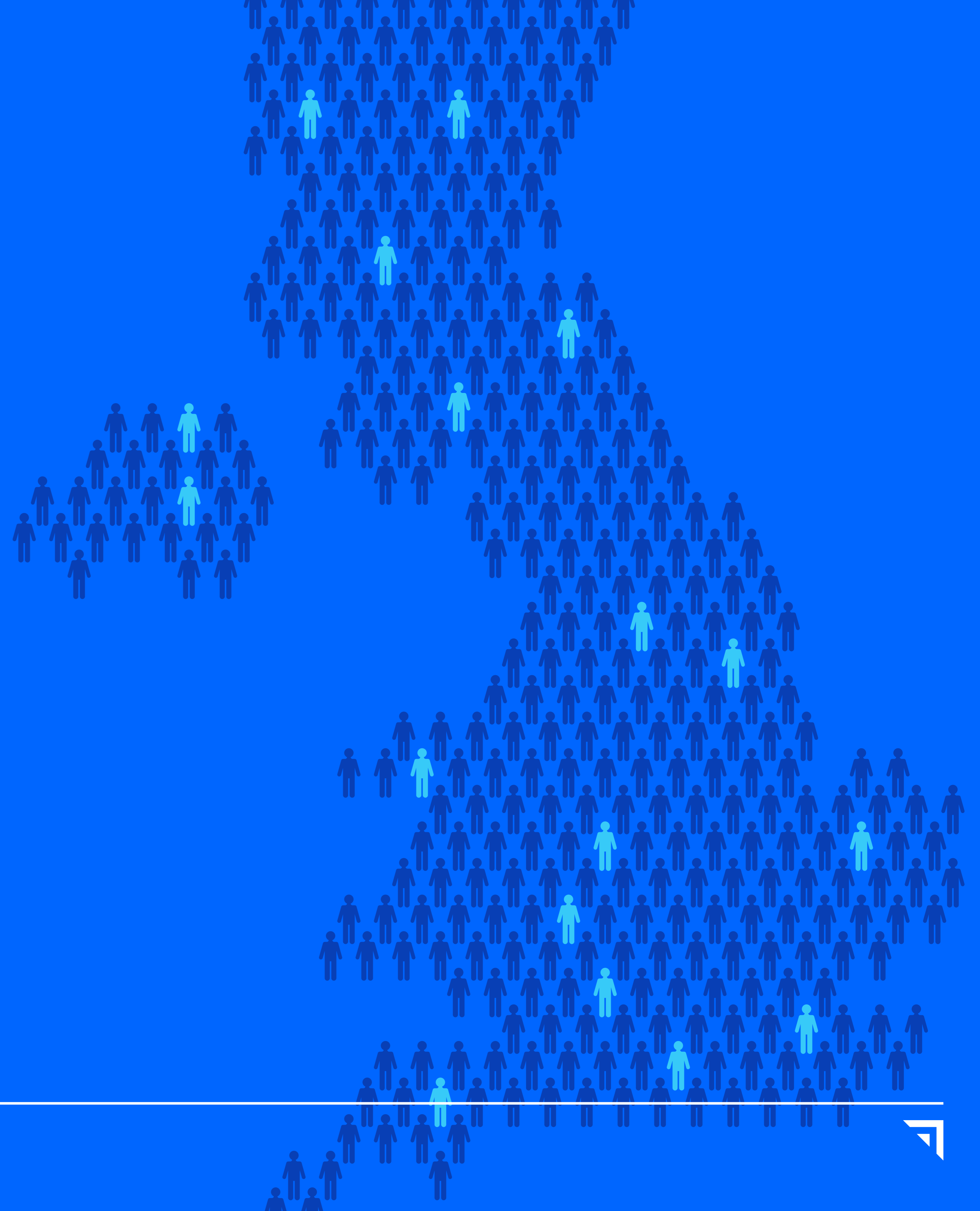
Time to make a change

Our first-ever diversity and inclusion
survey of UK marketing agencies



It started as a partnership between The Agency Collective and Hallam, sparked by our curiosity about how representative agencies are of the UK population.

We believe that a diverse business is a healthy business. Not only is diversity a moral imperative, but diverse workforces are more creative, productive and innovative.



“We still have a way to go with regards to diversity and representation. But now, with this survey, there’s a place to start from and progress can be measured.”



Gabrielle Austen-Browne
Co-founder, Diversity Ally



A recent report by the Wall Street Journal concluded that ‘diverse and inclusive cultures are providing companies with a competitive edge over their peers.’

This report joins a growing number of studies which support the fact that socially and ethnically diverse groups are more creative, productive and innovative.

However, as this survey from Hallam and The Agency Collective highlights, there is a lot of work still to be done, at every level, if agencies are to become a true reflection of our diverse population.

We hope that the findings and case studies in this report inspire you to create a more diverse and inclusive culture within your agency, reaping the rewards that will come as a result.



Create a benchmark.

100+ agencies.

For the industry to become more diverse, we must first understand where we are now.

Over 100 agencies have contributed to this survey, ranging from niche start-ups through to established full-service agencies with over 100 staff. This level of participation is a hugely encouraging first step to improving diversity within our sector.

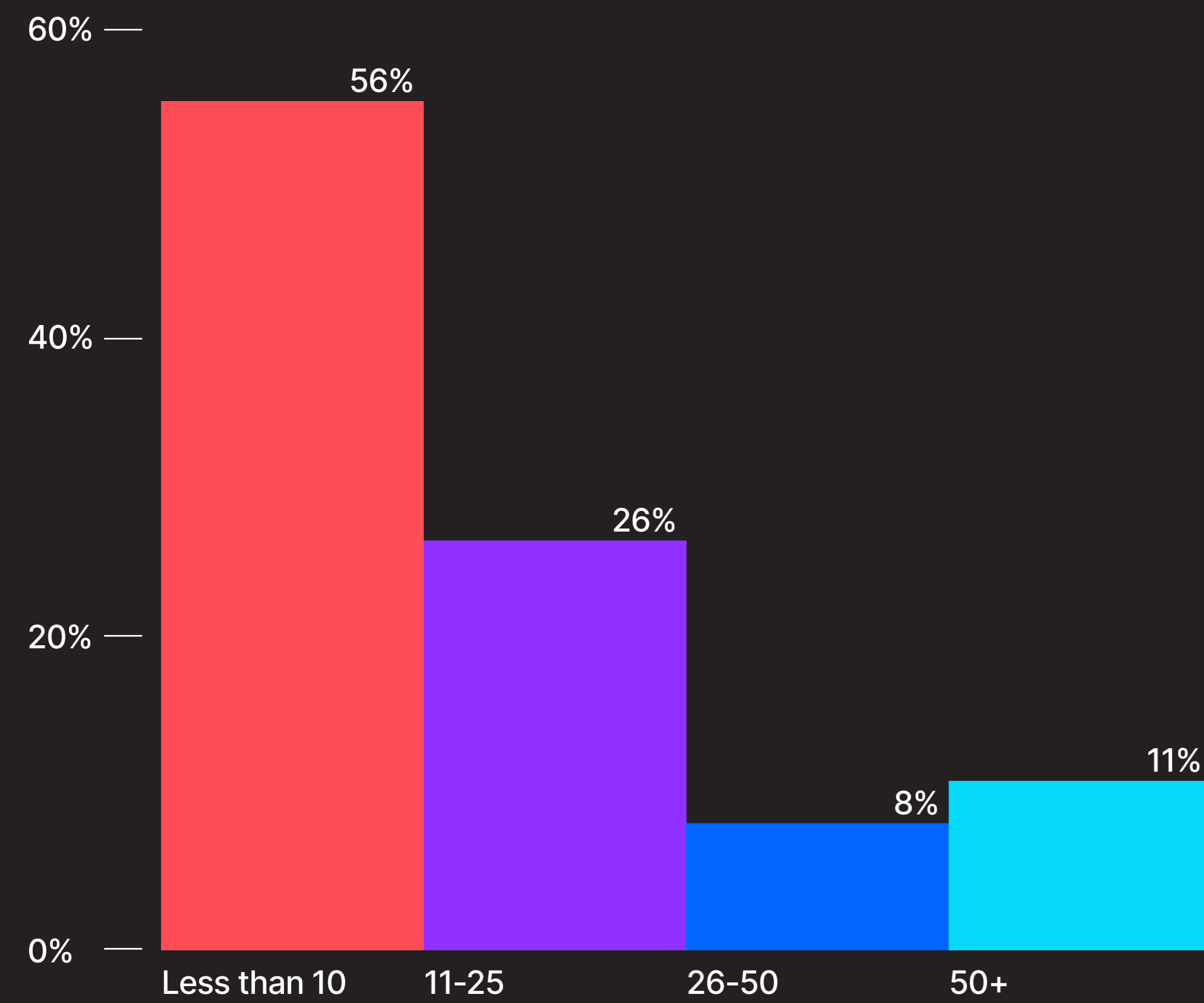




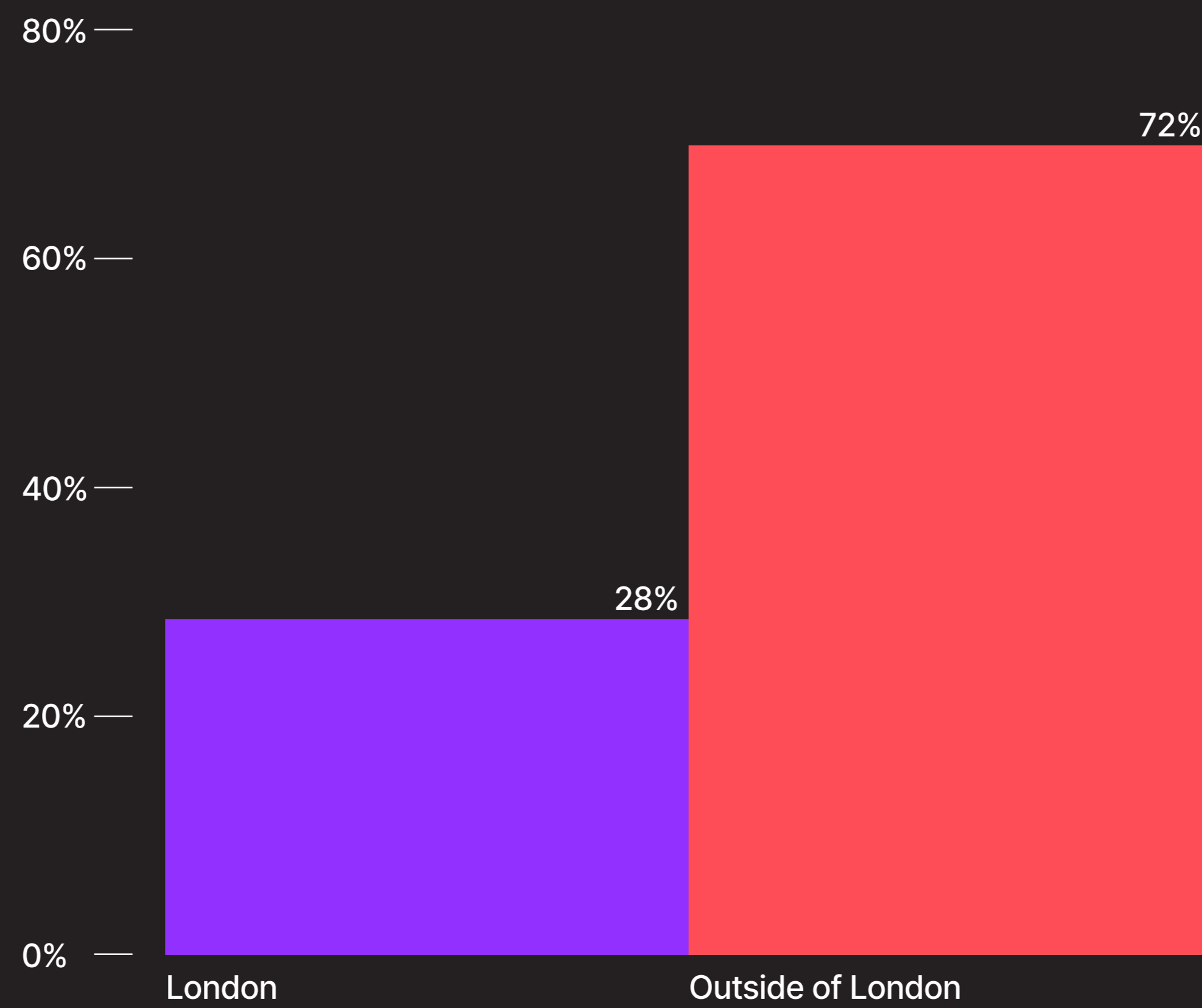
Who completed
the agency
survey?



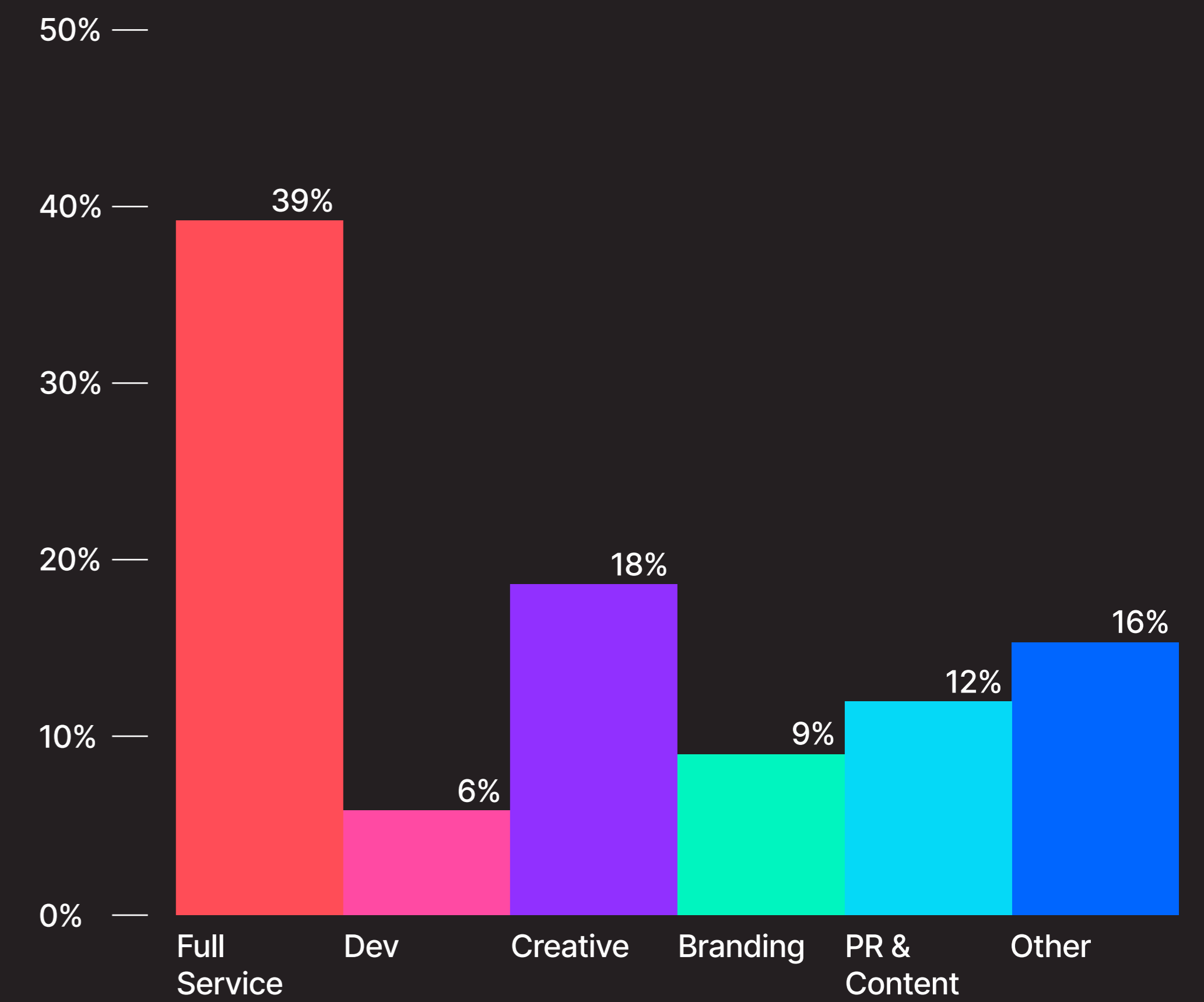
Sizes of firms in the survey



Number of agencies vs location



Number of agencies vs agency type





The headlines



39%

of agencies employ no
people of underrepresented
ethnic groups

75%

of agency leadership
teams are 100% white

43%

of senior leadership team
members are female



3x

as many LGBTQ+ people
in agencies compared to
general population

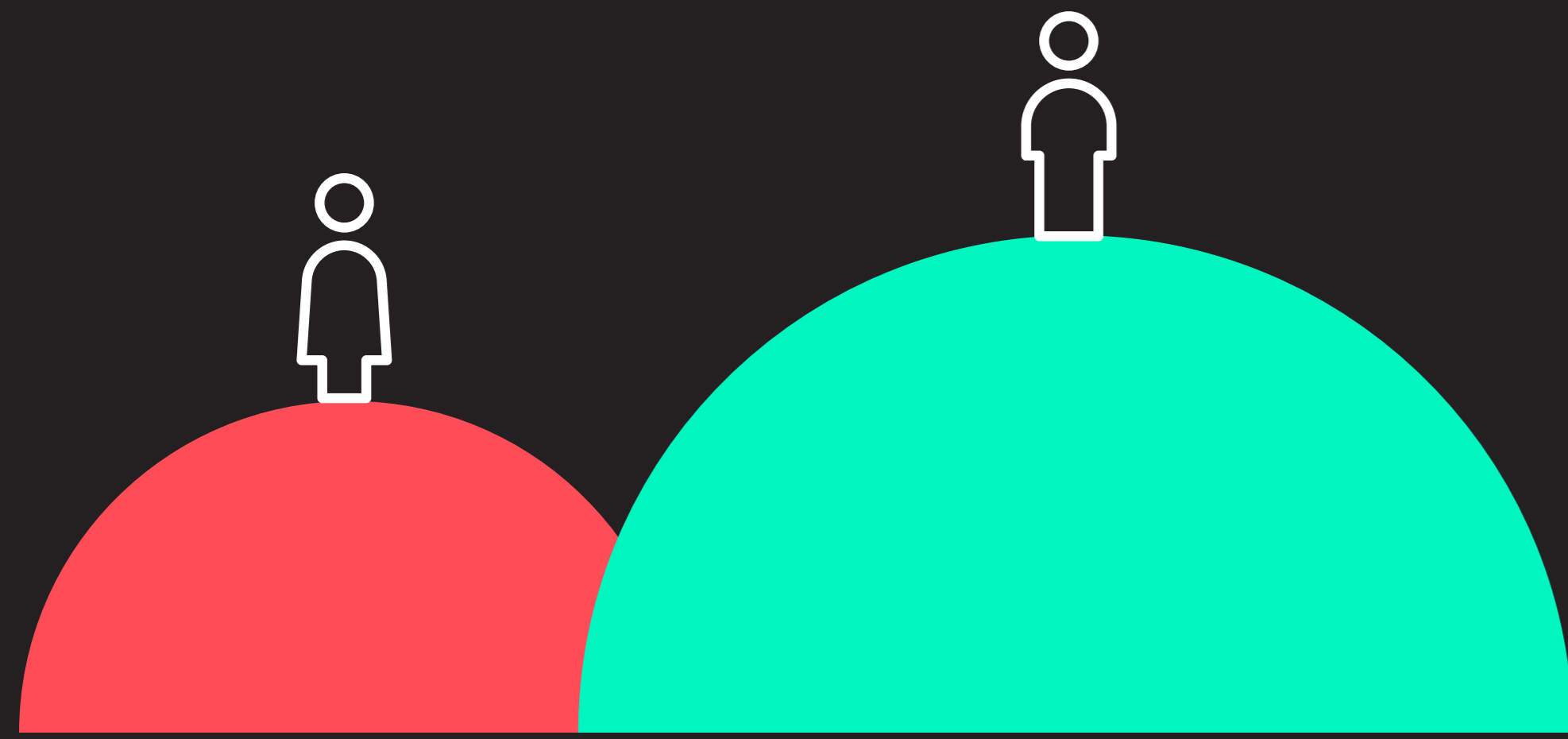
It should be noted that this figure may not be a true reflection, as many LGBTQ+ organisations believe government statistics are far below the actual number, due to people not wanting to disclose their sexuality.

Based on the Kinsey Scale, a 2020 YouGov survey found that as many as 28% of the general population identified as LGBTQ+. So it's likely agency numbers are actually representative of reality, rather than being three times higher.



Key stats

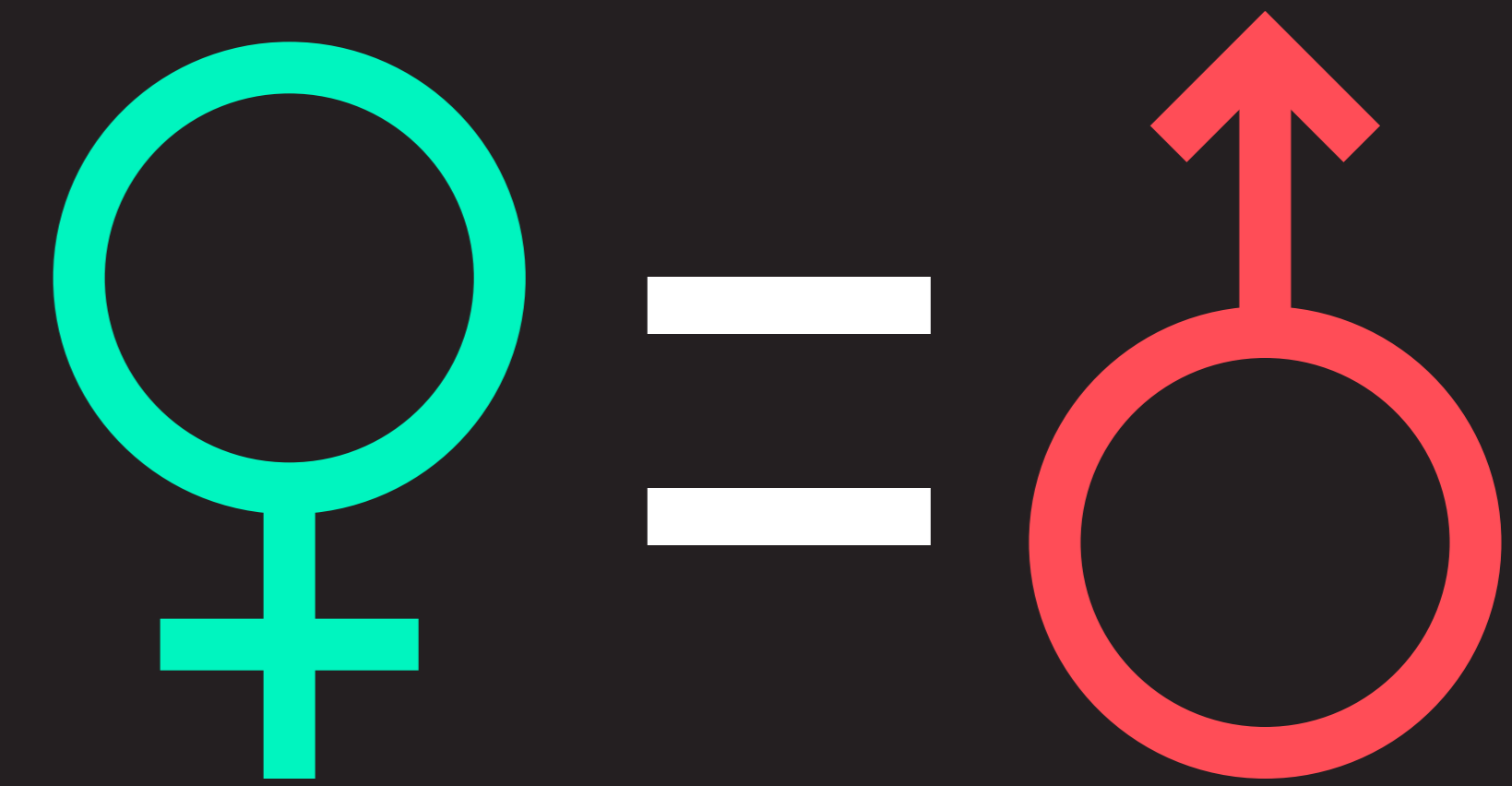




Agency leadership teams are 60% male



Over 50% of agencies are less diverse than general population



Agency workforces are gender balanced - nearly 50:50



Ethnicity: a tale of two agencies



Looking at the makeup of agencies as a whole, the statistics may appear to show that they are all ethnically diverse.

However, we did find a number of individual agencies where their entire team was of the same ethnicity.



3%

Marketing agencies in aggregate employ 3% more people from underrepresented ethnic groups compared to the UK baseline.*

39%

However 39% of agencies are 100% white.

23%

In addition, 23% of agencies are well above the UK average in terms of ethnic diversity.

*~14% based on UK census data and ~40% in London



“I’ve often worked in places where I have been the only person who isn’t white. The typical agency culture isn’t progressive or diverse. Those who can effect change are often not making any changes, so it’s left to those who are affected to be the trailblazers.”

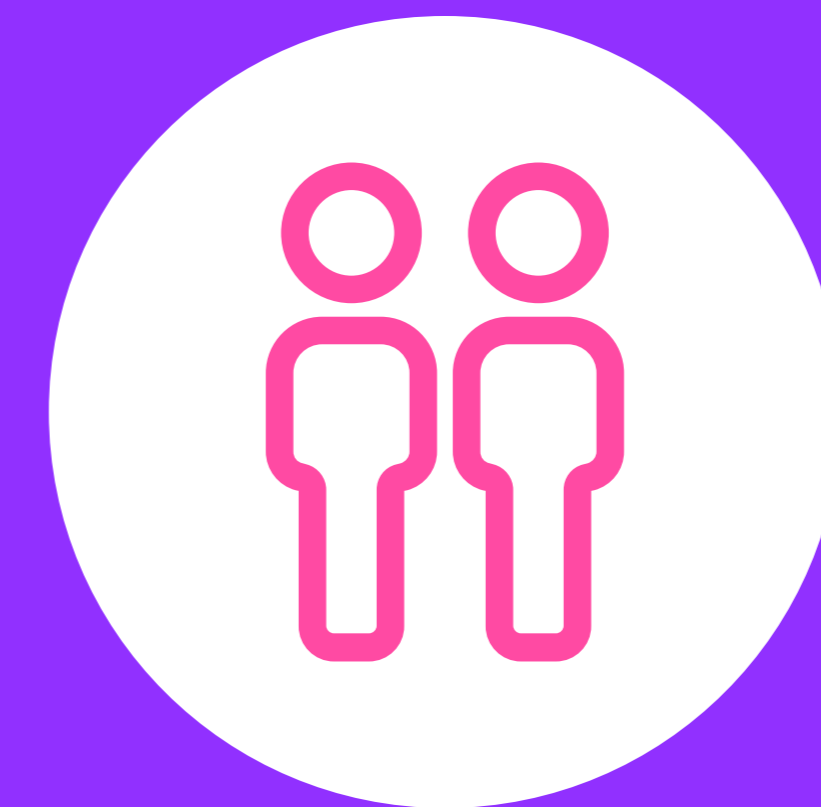
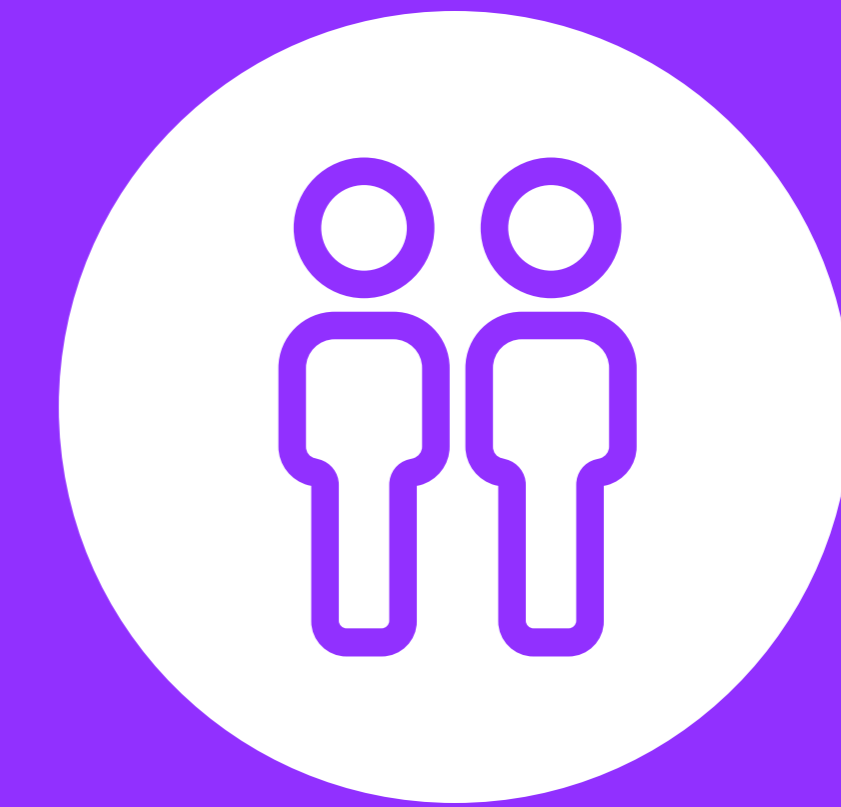
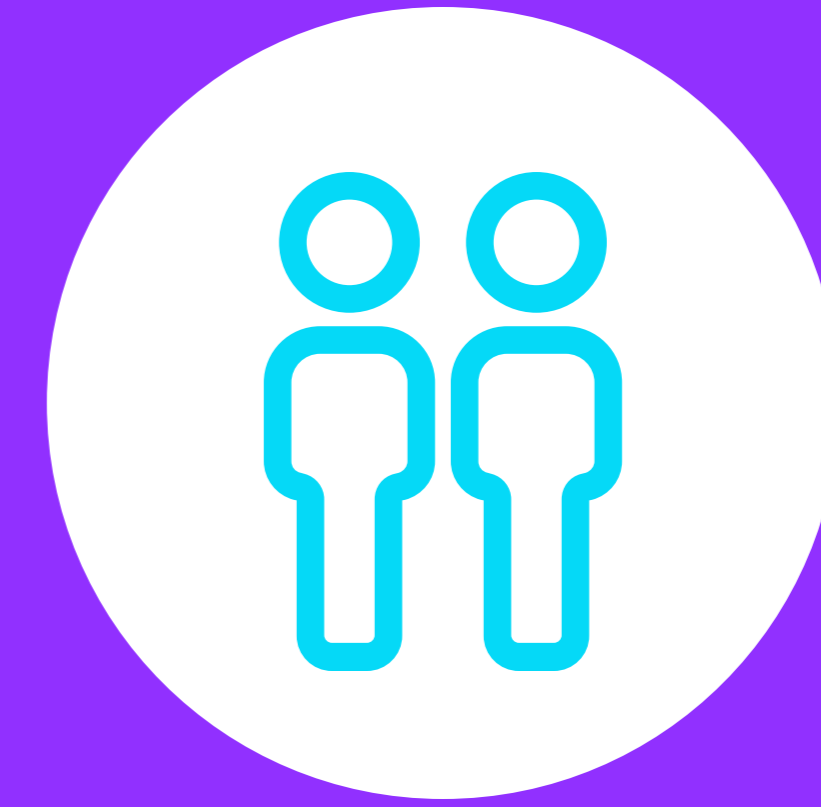


Kiorhte Aghoghogbe

Hallam Account Manager and Diversity and Inclusion Lead



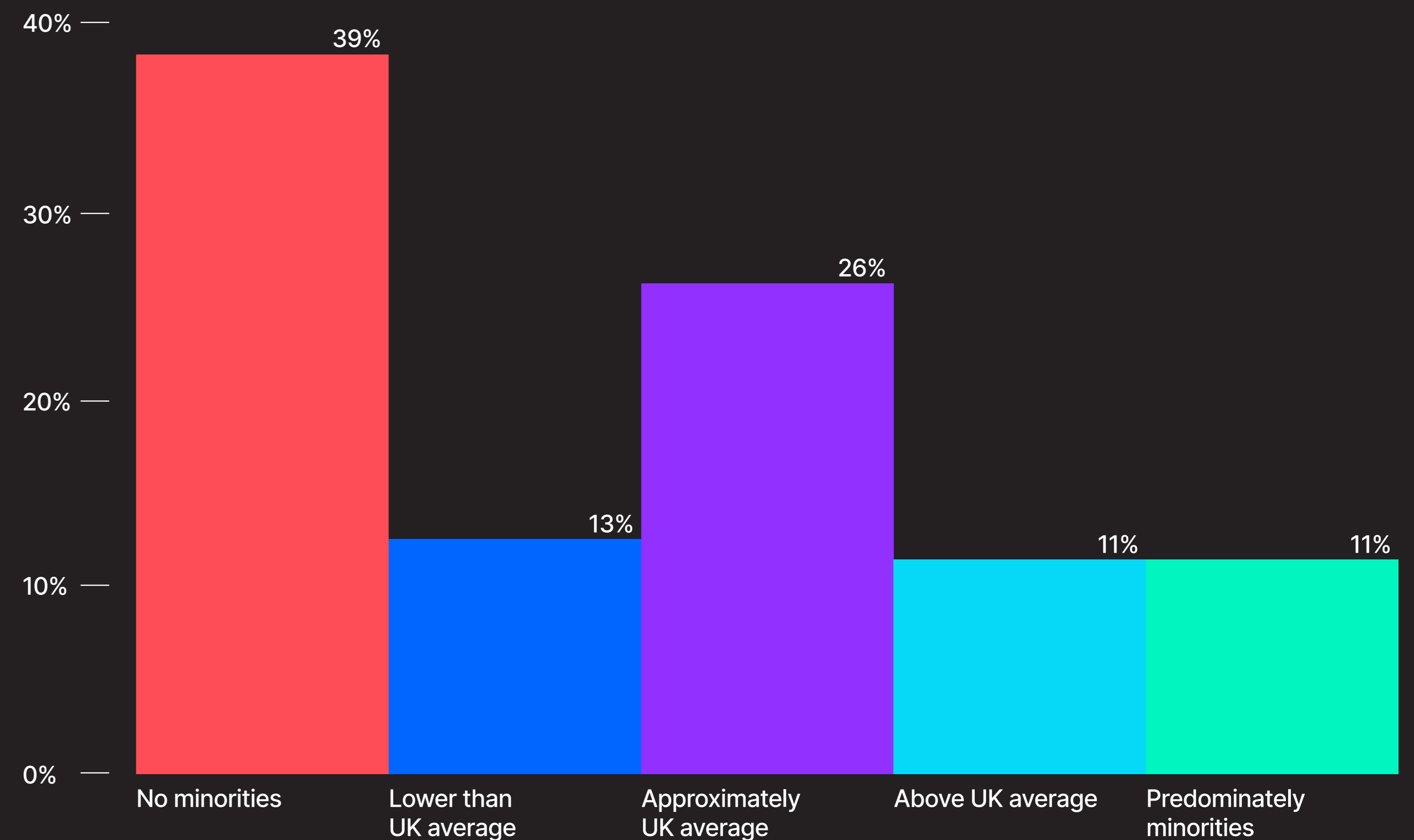
We are seeing
agencies grouped
by ethnicity.



What this survey has found is that if a leadership team is predominantly white, so is the workforce. If the leadership team has ethnic diversity, then the agency tends to have a higher concentration of people of underrepresented ethnic groups.

One potential explanation for this is affinity bias - having a more favourable opinion of someone like us. In fact, we are biologically hardwired to align more closely with people like us and reject those whom we consider different.

Ethnic breakdown of marketing agencies



“As agencies representing brands who want to reach diverse customer segments, it makes business sense to ensure that your workforce is as representative as possible.”



Tara Tomes
Founder of East Village





Underrepresented ethnic groups

in agency management vs teams



52%

of agency teams are below
the UK average

39%

of agency teams have
no ethnic diversity at all



81%

of agency management are
below the UK average

75%

of agency management
have no ethnic diversity
at all

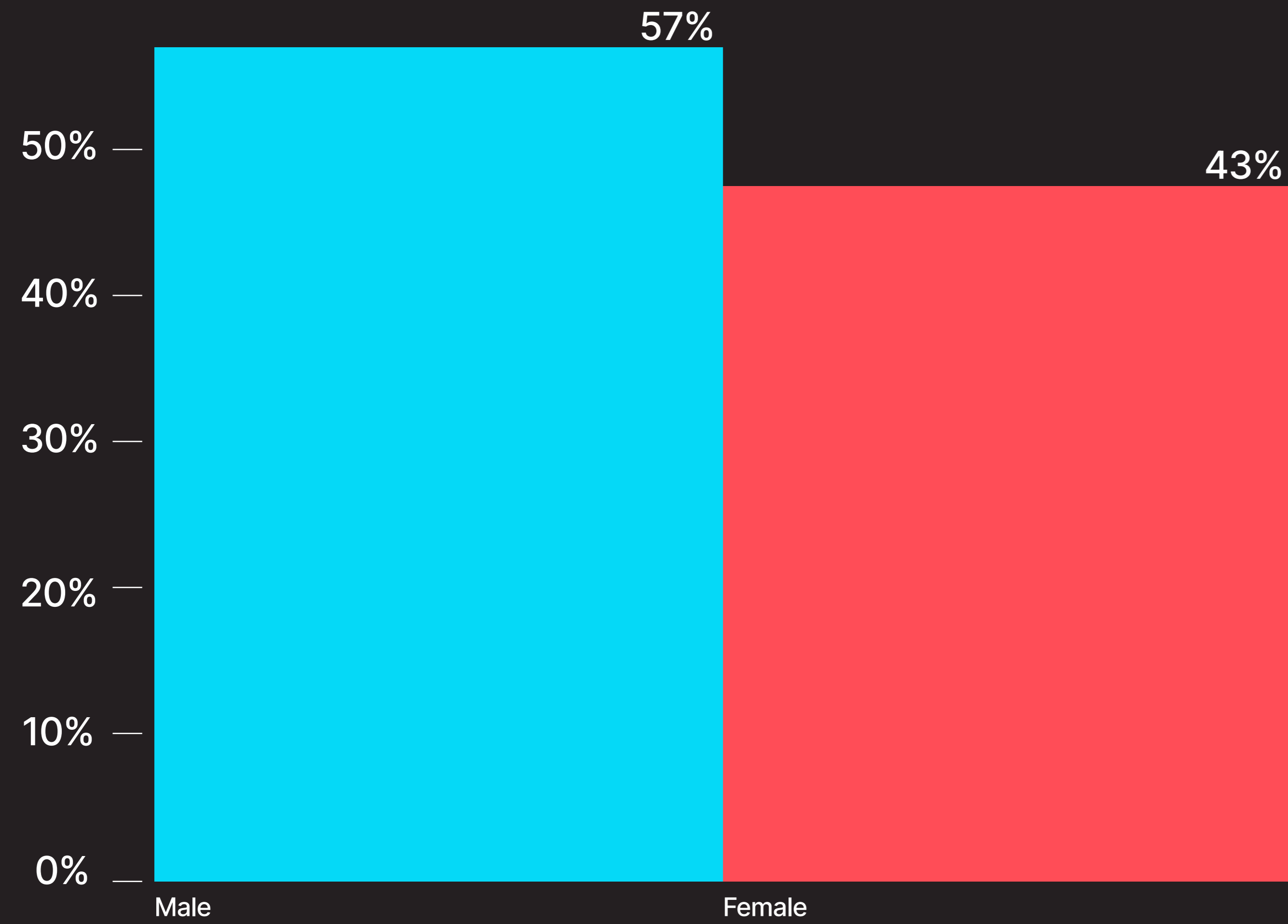


Gender representation

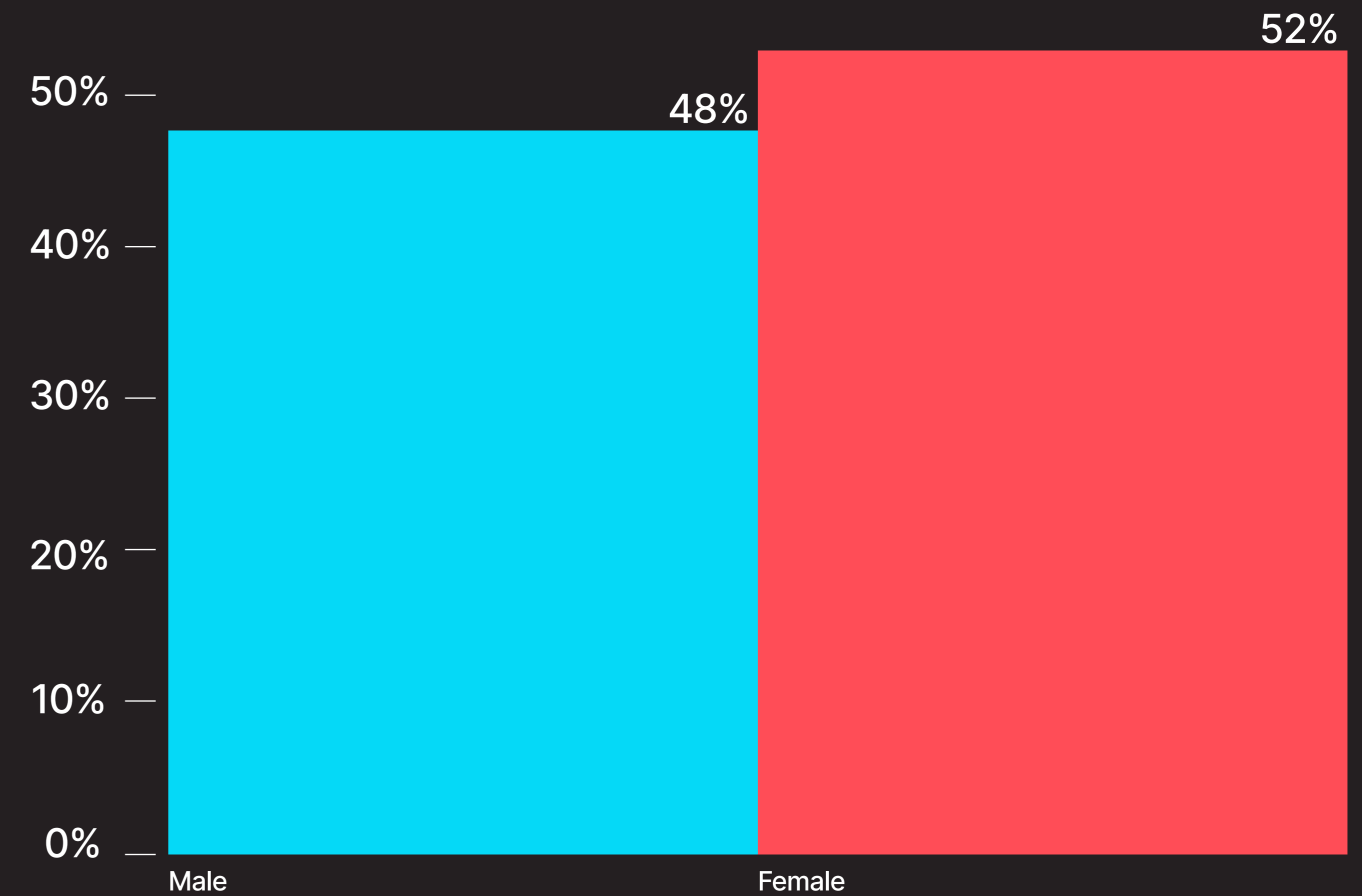
in agency management and workforce



Management



General workforce



Lack of progression for women

While women outnumber men at junior level, they aren't progressing through agencies at the same rate as men. Only 43% of senior leadership team members are female.



“I have been in positions where I have had to fight tooth and nail to be paid the same as my male counterpart. This simply shouldn’t be the case, and gender equality within agencies needs to be consistently addressed.

Look at your hiring process. Look at your career development paths for your teams.

Look at what you are doing to actively support and encourage women in leadership roles?

Women in agencies deserve to be heard, be recognised and be promoted.

Be an advocate and let’s do away with any career ceilings.”



Ellie Hale
Managing Director, The Agency Collective





LGBTQ+

representation



38% of respondents didn't know how many of their employees identify as LGBTQ+

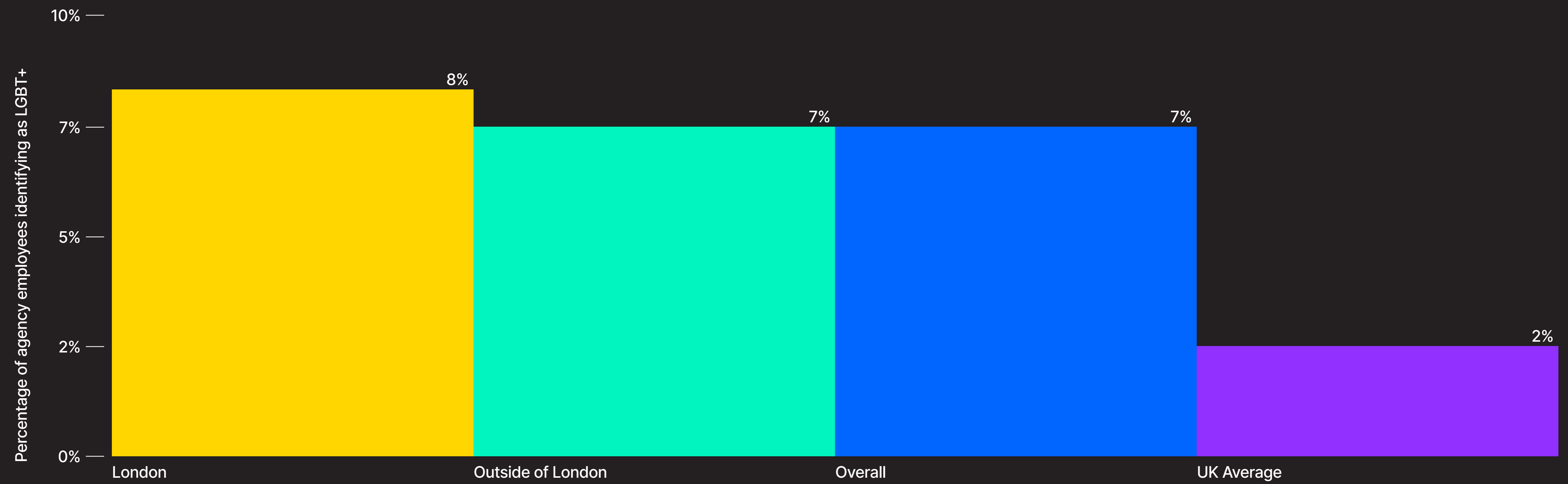
Does agency culture create an environment that would allow LGBTQ+ people to be themselves and reveal their sexual orientation if they wanted to?

We should continue to strive to create an inclusive and supportive environment that is appealing to the LGBTQ+ community.

We found that 73% of agencies don't include pronouns in their email signature or LinkedIn profile. This is something which is very simple to do and can show you and your organisation is committed to trans equality.



LGBTQ+ representation



A dark teal door is slightly ajar, revealing a bright red interior space. The door is set against a dark background, and the red light from the room behind it creates a strong contrast. The text "Disability and accessibility" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

Disability and accessibility

44%

of agencies don't include a diversity statement in job descriptions

70%

of agencies haven't made any adjustments to the workplace to improve accessibility

57%

of agencies don't ask if their employees are neurodiverse e.g. they have dyslexia, dyspraxia or autism



“Not asking a person if they’re on the autism spectrum could cause issues later on. For example, they may be unable to do a certain task because of their disability. Knowing who in your team needs support shows that you care. So always be direct, but polite, and ask about a person’s abilities and disabilities.”



Daniel Jones
The Aspie World



According to Scope, there are 4.4 million disabled in work in the UK. But 31% of agencies don't know how many of their employees have a disability.

The stats above show agencies are just not doing enough to make their workplace suitable for all its employees.

From recruitment right through to onboarding, we should be asking questions and putting measures in place to make the workplace accessible for everyone.





**What can
you do?**



“A lack of diversity means a lack of different perspectives and ideas, with less innovation and more knowledge gaps within a team.

It may also mean companies launch products or campaigns which are culturally offensive, or insensitive to certain groups. Mistakes which would likely have been avoided if they had a more diverse range of voices in the conversation.”



Nathan Nalla
Be The Riot



Seek

Seek the opinion of the less-represented groups and communities who can offer valuable advice on how to improve diversity, equity and inclusion within your workforce

Build

Build a short and long term plan for diversity, equity and inclusion that is suitable for the size, finances and needs of your business

Change

Changing job statements, employee feedback and reviewing policies are not costly and can be done relatively easily



Top 5 tips to recruiting a diverse team



1

Stop looking for the 'culture fit' and start looking for the 'culture add'. In other words, people who are going to add to your culture?



2

Source candidates from new places. Don't advertise roles on the same old websites if you get the same sort of people applying. It's worth using diversity-focused recruitment sites.



3

Don't stop recruiting for a role until you have candidates from various ethnic backgrounds and an equal gender split.



4

Make sure the interview panel is diverse and gender balanced. This is proven to make a significant difference.



5

The questions you ask at interviews should be exactly the same for each candidate. Use a score chart to keep the process consistent and as objective as possible.



“A simple act of spreading the recruitment net a little wider or promoting from within could have an unbelievable impact. Not just on your business and that person, but for disillusioned people that believe these opportunities do not exist.”



David Ogiste
Founder of Nobody's Cafe



Remember

A photograph of three diverse women sitting around a table in a meeting. The woman on the left has curly hair and is wearing a light blue top. The woman in the middle has long brown hair and is wearing a white blazer. The woman on the right has short dark hair and is wearing a yellow and black patterned top. They are all looking towards the right side of the frame.

- It's ok to not know what to do or where to start
- It's ok to ask questions
- It's ok to be unsure of what language or terms to use
- Let's start some conversations and not be afraid to ask questions



Make the
change



Our survey has highlighted that there's still a long way to go when it comes to diversity, equality and inclusion in our industry.

All people matter and all people should be represented. As agencies, we are responsible for driving change. Not just in our own businesses, but those of our clients too.

It's a continuous journey, we can all learn from each other and, as we evolve, support each other. We shall continue to carry out this survey year on year and report on improvements.

 **Hallam**TM





Creating an inclusive culture is challenging.
But let's take up that essential challenge
together and change our world for the better.

Make the change



Create a DEI policy within your own agency

Go to the many available sources on the Agency Collective [website](#) or click [here](#) to download The Agency Collective DE&I Guide

Change the way you recruit and engage with people from less represented backgrounds



Thank you

