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# RACE AT WORK 2015-2017 SURVEY INSIGHTS

**BAME Women at work**





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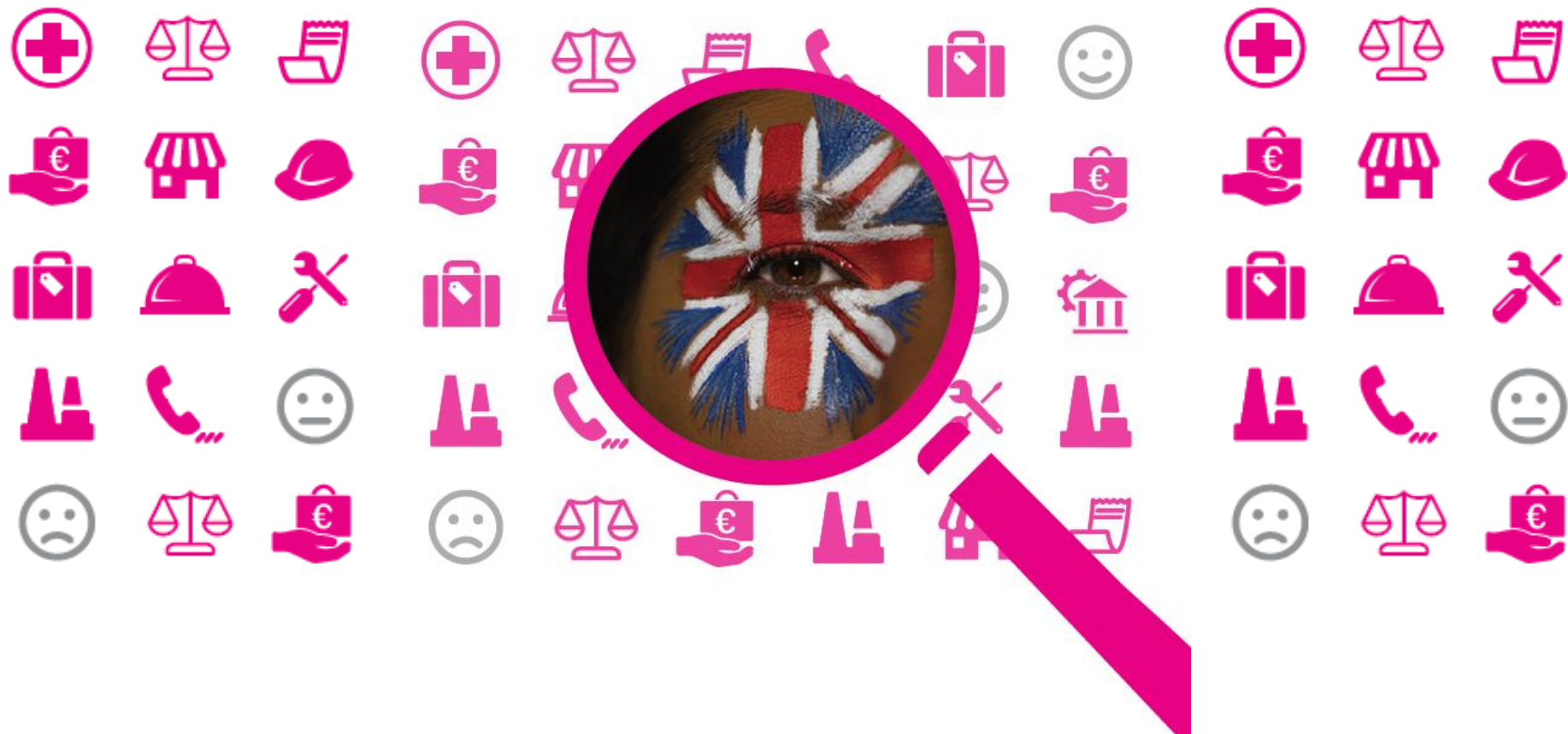


## About This Document

This document was published in 2017, hence it uses our old branding. Despite its age, the document contains relevant and useful information. However, some specific links, case studies and statistics may be out of date.

## Race at Work 2015 - 2017 Survey Insights

BAME women at work



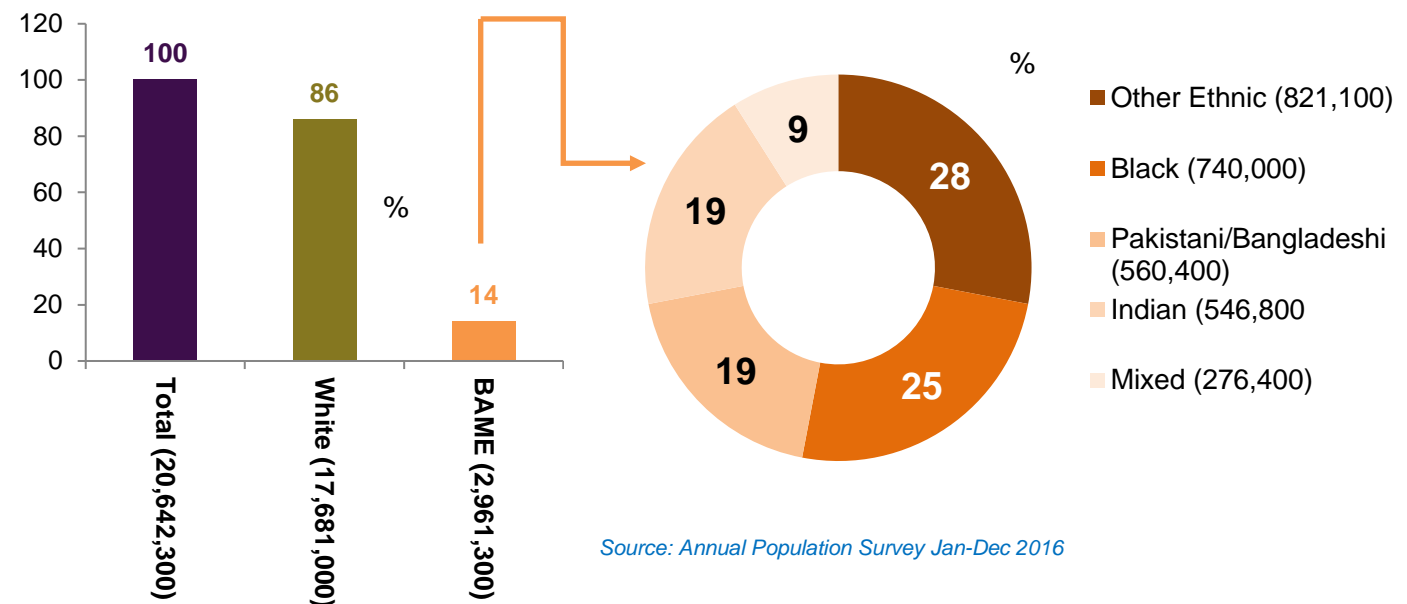
## BAME women in the UK

There are over 20.6 million women in the UK's working age population of which 2.9 million (14%) are from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background. Amongst ethnic minority women, those from the Other Ethnic group alongside black women have significant representation - being 28% and 25% respectively, although collectively, the broader Asian group that includes Indian/

Pakistani and Bangladeshi women is by far the largest group representing 38% of all BAME women. See *Figure 1*.

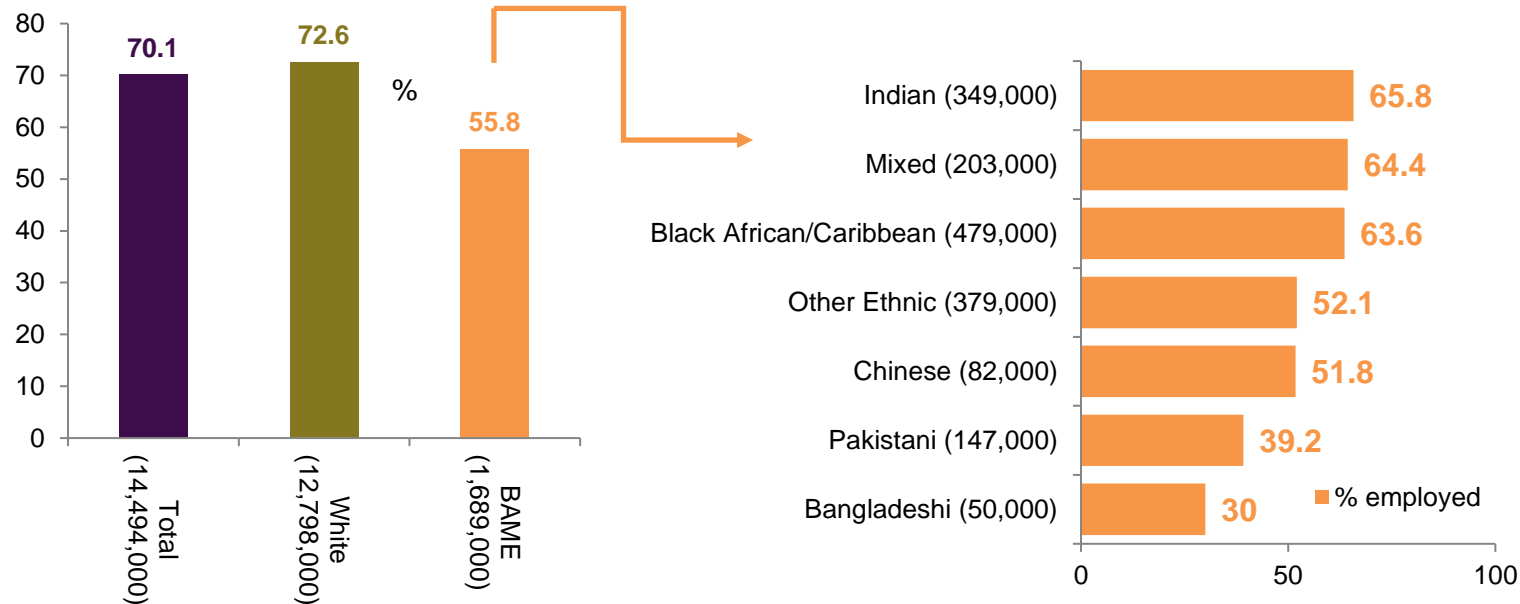
There is a significant difference in the employment rates between white women (72.6%) compared to BAME women (55.8%). Whilst Indian, mixed race and black women experience employment rates of 65.8%, 64.4% and 63.6% respectively, it is in total stark contrast to Bangladeshi and Pakistani women whose employment rates are 30% and 39.2% respectively. See *Figure 2*.

Figure 1: Female working age population by ethnicity, UK (Jan - Dec 2016)



Source: Annual Population Survey Jan-Dec 2016

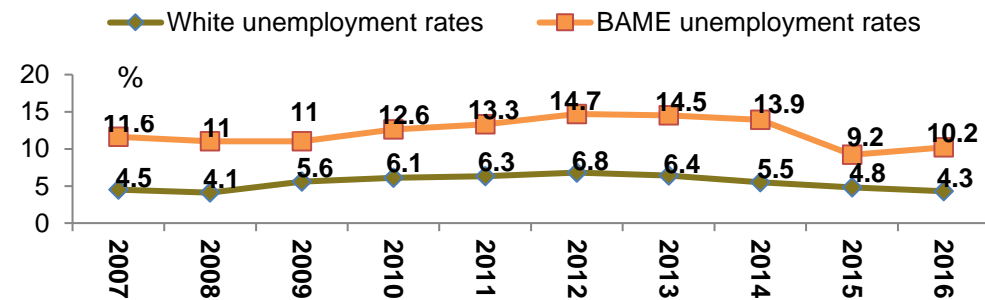
Figure 2: Female employment rates by ethnicity, UK (Q1 2017)



Source: Labour Force Survey Jan-Mar 2017. Employed women aged 16 - 64 as a % of all women aged 16 - 64. Total includes people who did not state their ethnicity. The total does not therefore equal the sum of the 'white' and 'BAME' series. BAME includes all people stating their ethnicity as non-white.

Turning to unemployment, since records began in 1991, there has always been a significant gap between the unemployment rates of white women and BAME women. In 2007 there was a seven-percentage point difference. A decade later in Q4 2016 we find an improvement, but still an underlying 5.9 percentage point difference in the unemployment rates. See Figure 3. Data from the first quarter of

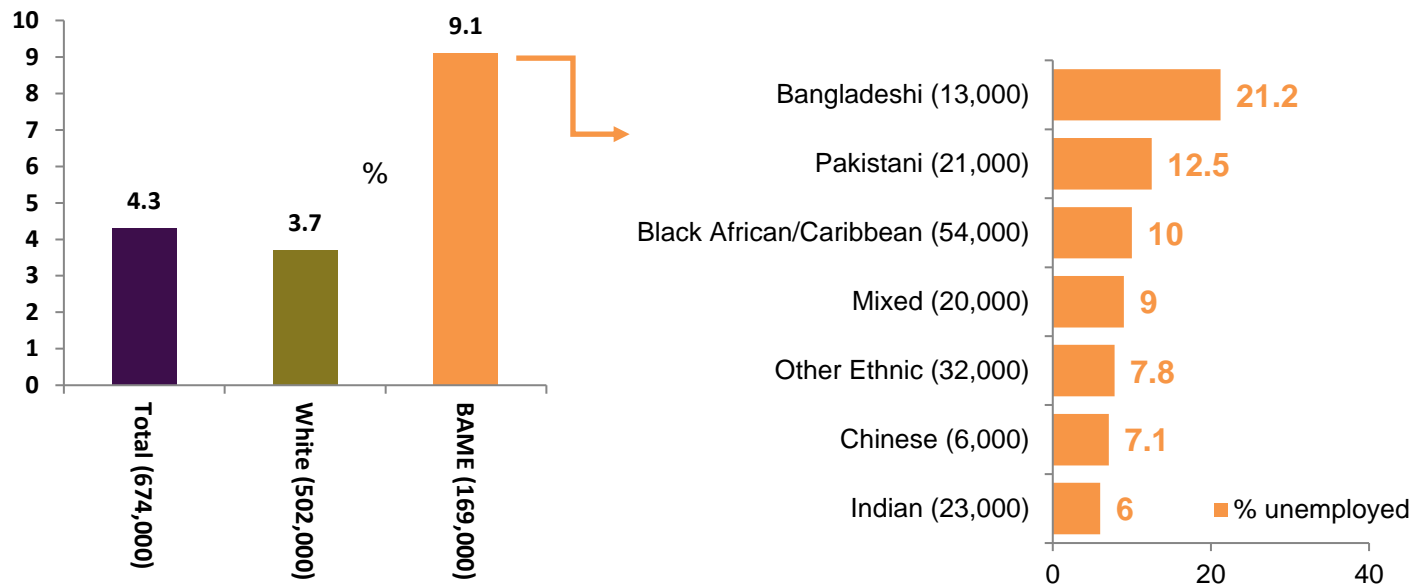
Figure 3: Female unemployment rates by ethnicity, UK, 2007 - 2016



Source: Labour Force Survey 2007 - 2016

2017 shows the unemployment rate for BAME women as 9.1% which is almost two and half times the rate of white women (3.7%). See *Figure 4*. For Bangladeshi women unemployment rates are far more extreme, with 21.2% of Bangladeshi women more likely to be unemployed. Pakistani women also experience very high unemployment rates at 12.5%.

**Figure 4: Female unemployment rates in the UK, by ethnicity (Q1 2017)**



Source: Labour Force Survey Oct - Dec 2016. Notes: Total includes people who did not state their ethnicity therefore total does not equal the sum of the 'white' and 'BAME' series.

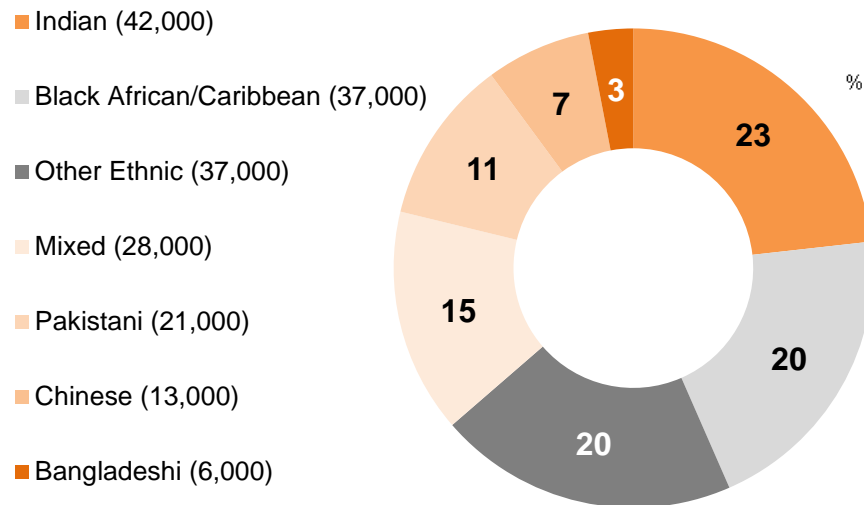
The number of women who are self-employed has continued to increase. At the start of 2017 there were 1.5 million self-employed women of which 1.3 million (88%), were white women and the remaining 12% were BAME women. The number of BAME women in self-employment has increased rapidly over the last year alone. In the first quarter of 2016 there were 141,000 self-employed BAME women. At Q1

2017 their numbers had risen to 185,000. *Figure 5* shows that women from the Indian, Black African/Caribbean and Other Ethnic group have the highest representation amongst BAME self-employed women and Bangladeshi women the smallest representation. We find that most of the self-employed women are in professional and managerial occupations<sup>1</sup>, 17% and 19% respectively. The highest proportion of women were in associate professional and technical occupations where over a fifth (22%) were deployed. A high proportion (17%), were also in caring, leisure

<sup>1</sup> LFS Occupation: Women Jan-Mar 2017

and other services occupations. The high volume of self-employed BAME women requires further scrutiny to better understand if this is because of the difficulties gaining mainstream employment from existing employers with the flexibility that may be required. The

**Figure 5: Self-employment amongst all BAME women aged 16+ in the UK**



Source: LFS Q4 2016

number of women that are working part-time is also rising. At the end of 2016, 41% of women in employment were working part-time. At the start of 2017 (Q1) this had risen to 42%. 9.5% of these women stated they could not find a full-time job whilst 33% of female part-time workers said they did not want a full-time job<sup>2</sup>. The average actual weekly hours of work for female part-time workers in their main job was 16.2 hours as of February 2017, which was slightly less than in January 2017 and December 2016 when it was 16.3 hours.

## Women and work

Business in the Community's race equality campaign conducted a survey in collaboration with YouGov to find out, amongst others concerns, how BAME women and white women felt about work. 24,457 UK workers took part in the survey that took place between 28 July and 14 September 2015. 6,076 of the responses were from the YouGov statistically weighted panel of which 1,496 were BAME women and 1,478 were white women. The survey sought to find out what helps women most when trying to find employment, how women applied for their current role and how they would search for the next job. The percentages shown in the following graphs are for 'Net Agree' or 'Net Disagree'.

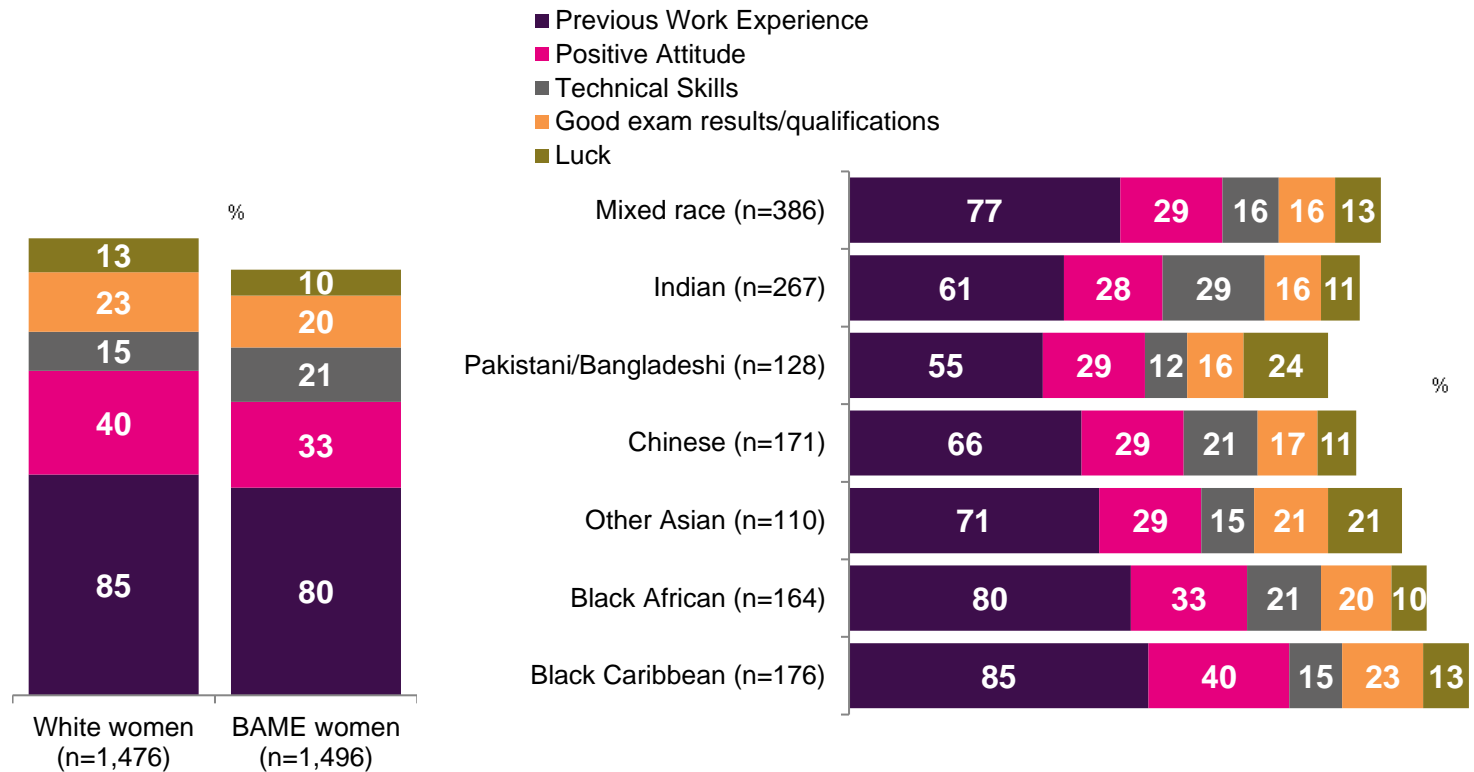
<sup>2</sup> LFS Oct - Dec 2016 and Jan-Mar 2017 - Self employed by ethnicity: women  
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## Looking for work

The survey revealed that 'previous work experience' was the number one factor for all women, that helped the most when they were trying to get a job. However, there were significant differences in the levels of importance amongst ethnic minority women with 85% of Black Caribbean women rating it the highest, the same as white women, compared to just 55% of

Figure 6: "What do you believe helps you MOST when trying to get at job?"



Pakistani/Bangladeshi women. A positive attitude was ranked second for all ethnicities, see *Figure 6*. The survey also asked female workers to rate apprenticeships/internships, career advisors/mentors and activities outside work as enablers for finding a job. All women gave these options less than 10% relevance so the data has not been included in this graph. Another question explored how women applied for their current position - See *Figure 7*. The most popular route for all women was directly, but it was interesting to note the differences in the preferred channels between white and ethnic minority women. 20% of BAME women overall, compared to just 10% of white women would use a recruitment agency. We welcome the recommendation in the McGregor-Smith Review - Race in the Workplace (2017), which urges employers to reject non-diverse short lists, which must surely be applied to recruitment agencies.



Figure 7: "How did you apply for your current position?"

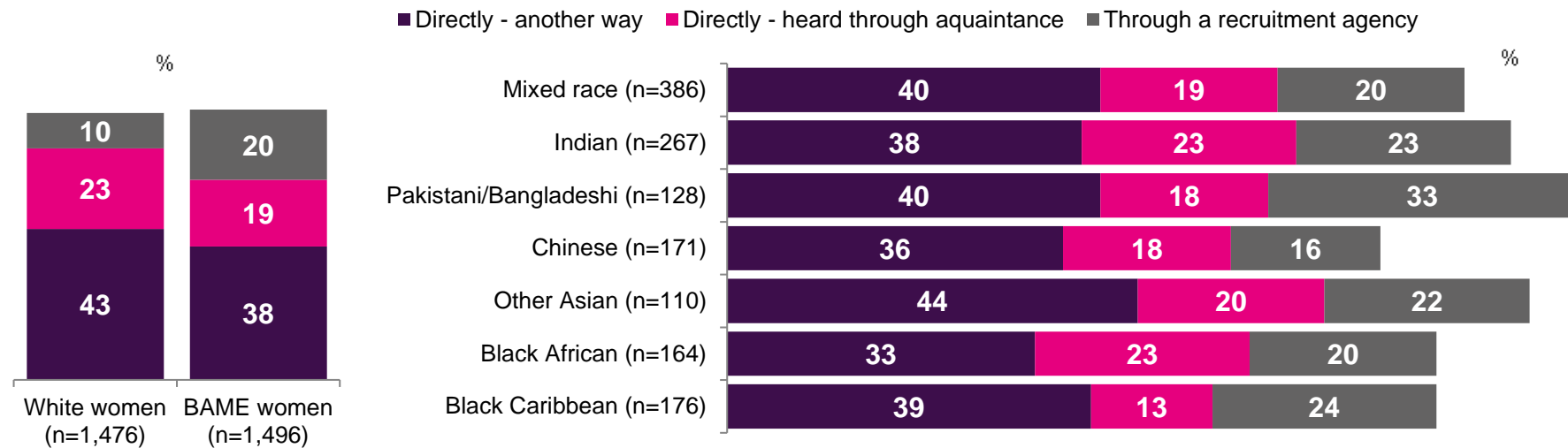
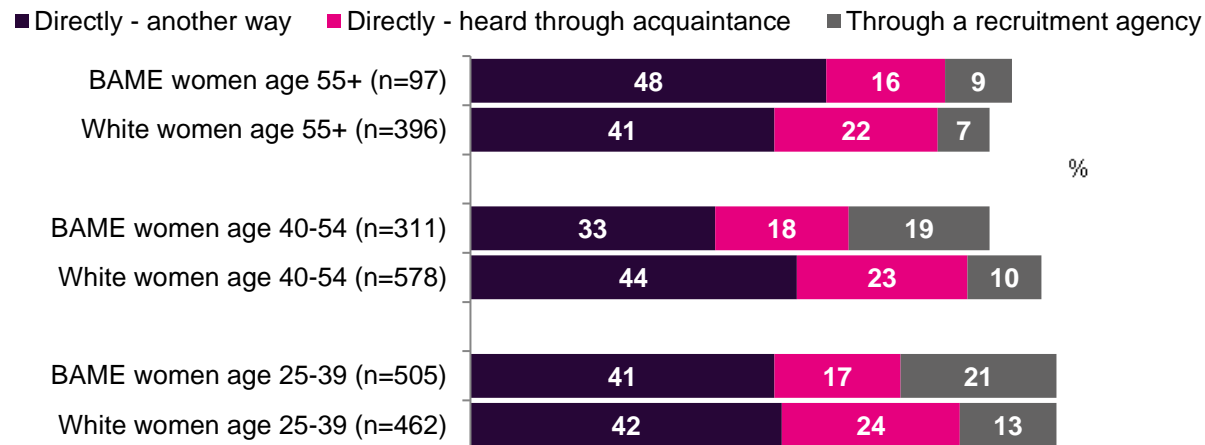


Figure 8 "How did you apply for your current position?" (by age and ethnicity)



It is also worth noting the importance of personal networks. The data shows evidence that white women use the acquaintance network significantly more than BAME women, 23% and 19% respectively. However, Indian and Black African women were equally as likely as white women to have heard directly through an acquaintance. Figure 8 shows that these differences apply in all age groups.

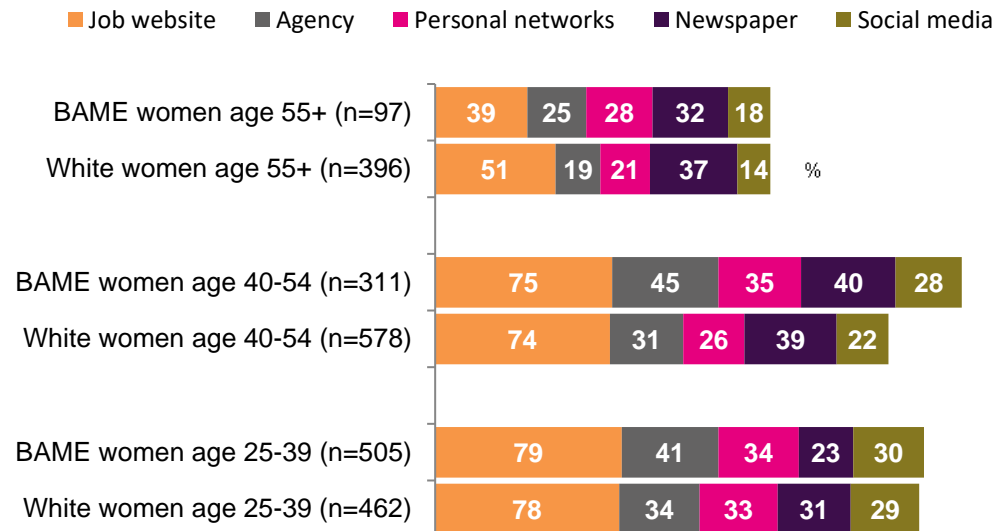
## Moving on up

In terms of how women would search for their next job, it was interesting to observe that BAME women would significantly increase their use of recruitment agencies. A trend that

Figure 9: "How would you search for your next job?"



Figure 10: "How would you search for your next job?" (by age and ethnicity)



was identified in Business in the Community's *'Race and recruitment: exposing the barriers'* report (2012), alongside evidence from Business in the Community's *Race at Work* research (2015), which indicated that BAME workers are over qualified for many of the jobs they hold.

To learn more about BAME women at work see '*BAME women and their experiences of career progression*', '*BAME women and enterprise*', '*Race to progress: breaking down the barriers*'. Also visit <http://race.bitc.org.uk/> to view the campaign's extensive store of reports, research, toolkits, case studies and infographics on race in the workplace.

## What can employers do?

- ✓ Use your workforce data to benchmark current levels of BAME women within your workplace.
- ✓ Set targets that reflect the gender and race diversity of your talent pool for recruitment and progression, using Census 2011 ethnic categories. (*Recommendations 2 and 11 of The McGregor-Smith Review reinforce the necessity for publishing data and rejecting non-diverse lists*).
- ✓ Wherever possible, include both male and female BAME interviewers on your selection panels.
- ✓ Embed ethnicity into your gender initiatives which focus on increasing the representation of BAME women in the workplace, and breaking down occupational segregation.
- ✓ Ensure gender pay gap monitoring includes a scrutiny of pay by gender and race as highlighted in recommendation 2 of The McGregor-Smith Review.
- ✓ Ensure that flexible work options are available for jobs at all levels as highlighted in the recent EHRC ethnicity pay gap report.

## Appendix

YouGov data - sample breakdown by ethnicity

Ethnic group	YouGov panel Female Weighted figures N=
Net: White	1,478
Net: Black African	164
Net: Black Caribbean	176
Net: Chinese	171
Net: Indian	267
Net: Mixed race	386
Net; Pakistani/Bangladeshi	128
Net: Other Asian	110
Net: Other Black	24
Net: Other Ethnic	71

Compiled by Gloria Wyse, Business in the Community Race Equality Campaign, June 2017