



## BRIEFING

# RACE AT WORK: COMMITMENT TWO

Capture ethnicity data  
and publicise progress –  
part two





## Contents

Race at Work Commitment Two .....	2
Trends and insights .....	2
How employers can act on data captured .....	3

## Race at Work Commitment Two

### Capture ethnicity data and publicise progress

Capturing ethnicity data is a crucial step towards an organisation reporting on pay and tracking performance on recruitment, access to development opportunities, retention, and progression. This data is important for establishing a baseline to measure the progress and impact of policies in the workplace.

### Trends and insights

Understanding the ethnic composition of your workforce is not just a data capturing exercise, it is a strategic imperative. When you monitor and analyse ethnicity data, you gain the insight needed to ensure fair access to development and opportunity for all employees. This helps build a truly inclusive organisation where talent thrives and can drive creativity and innovation.

Knowing the ethnicity breakdown of your workforce empowers you to:

- Track every stage of candidate engagement during your recruitment cycle
- Ensure fair and equitable access to career development and progression
- Identify and address potential barriers to opportunity
- Create a culture of fairness, transparency, and trust
- Harness the full benefits of a diverse workforce for individuals and the organisation

Measuring the success of ethnicity data strategies means going beyond numbers. It is about tracking both the quality of the data and the impact it enables.

- **54%** of large employers are currently capturing ethnicity data by level within their organisation.<sup>i</sup>
- This paper is designed for the employers in the 54% who are already capturing data at different levels within their organisation. However, it will also support the **46%** who are not yet capturing ethnicity data to understand what some of the benefits are to having this insight.

- We have produced a paper which gives some hints and tips about how you can improve your data capture across the organisation and though the focus is on ethnicity, many of the ideas and principles work for capturing data on disability and other protected characteristics too.

## **How employers can act on data captured**

Employers can use ethnicity data to ask and answer critical questions at every stage of the employee journey:

- Who applies to join us?
- What is the profile of the communities in which we operate?
- Who do we hire and what happens to them after joining?
- Are our recruitment processes (e.g. tests, assessment centres) fair and inclusive?
- How do appraisals and performance management vary across ethnic groups?
- What is the ethnic distribution across roles, grades, and levels of seniority?
- How do different groups respond to employee opinion or attitude surveys?
- Are we retaining diverse talent effectively?
- Are remuneration, reward, and promotion equitable and fair?
- Who participates in training?
- Who reports incidents of bullying, harassment, or other complaints?

Insights that you can capture to enable you to ask these questions include:

## **Quantitative metrics to help you track improvements in data completeness and representation**

- **Disclosure rates:** monitor the percentage of employees who voluntarily share their ethnicity data. A rising rate suggests growing trust.
- **Representation analysis:** compare workforce demographics against local or national benchmarks to identify gaps.
- **Leadership diversity and representation:** track the proportion of ethnically diverse employees in senior roles over time.
- **Retention and promotion rates:** examine whether progression and retention are equitable across ethnic groups. If progression rates are slower for some employees, these results may require a deeper dive into the employment policies and practices that contribute to these results.
- **Pay equality audits:** identify disparities in compensation by ethnicity and track changes after interventions.

### Qualitative insights to reveal how employees experience inclusion and trust

- **Employee surveys:** use anonymous inclusion surveys to assess perceptions of fairness, belonging, and psychological safety in your organisation. Include updated mapping indicators to enable you to examine results by demographic group.
- **Focus groups:** gather experiences and insights from underrepresented groups to understand barriers and opportunities. You can follow up with listening circles and/or focus group conversations to draw out the stories behind the findings and to explore potential solutions.
- **Exit interviews:** look for patterns in why employees from certain ethnic backgrounds may be leaving, and if this attrition is happening at a higher rate than other employees. Be mindful that this may be a challenging time to get information as leavers may be keen not to 'burn their bridges' with full disclosure as they leave an organisation.

## Process and system checks: how well is your data strategy embedded?

- **System integration:** is ethnicity data consistently captured across HR platforms and processes? This includes capturing data on fair and equitable access to training and development opportunities.
- **Data quality audits:** check for missing, inconsistent, or outdated entries. Some employers enable employees to check and update their data on the organisation's HR system. Demographic data on all characteristics can be included in this.
- **Feedback loops:** are employees informed about how their data is used and what actions follow? Frequently asked questions (FAQs) when conducting data capture exercises, is a great way to assure employees that you are being safe and responsible to fully guard and protect their data.

## Impact and accountability: measure how data drives change

- **Policy changes:** track how insights from ethnicity help you to understand the fairness, any bias, and impact of your recruitment, development, or wellbeing policies. Share insights on this with employees when you can. Ensure your reporting does not unintentionally spotlight any individuals where the numbers are small.
- **Transparency reports:** publish findings and progress to build trust and signal commitment. That can be via dashboards or just sharing insights in internal messages and internal and external reports.
- **Leadership accountability:** use scorecards or KPIs to hold leaders responsible for improving representation and inclusion. Include employees in advisory and governance groups that review data as part of performance.

- **Humanise the data:** gather the stories of employees impacted by policies, practices, or change and challenge, inspire, and empower the leaders and employees in your organisation to take action where it would be helpful to do so.

---

<sup>i</sup> BITC Progression:10-Years Trend Paper



Business in the Community is the UK's largest and most influential responsible business network dedicated to building a fairer and greener world together, supported by His Majesty the King for over 40 years. We inspire, engage and challenge purposeful leaders to take practical action to mobilise their collective strength as a force for good in society.

**Business in the Community**

137 Shepherdess Walk  
London  
N1 7RQ

[www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk)  
020 7566 8650

Business in the Community is a registered charity in England and Wales (297716) and Scotland (SC046226). Company limited by guarantee No. 1619253.