



CIS KnowledgeBase: Analysing Head of School Salary Gaps 2021

Part I—Published January 2022



Report Outline

1. Research summary	P.3
2. Evolving our research	P.4
3. Methodology	P.5
4. Findings	
4.1 Salary gaps	P.6
4.2 Salary and benefits fairness perception	P.11
4.3 Salary and benefits negotiation	P.15
4.4 Advice on career progression	P.18
4.5 Biggest challenges heads have experience in their career	P.22
5. Conclusion	P.31
6. Appendix A	P.33

Research Summary

This research analyses the salaries of heads of schools in international schools worldwide. The research seeks to understand salary differences and find explanations for the gender, ethnicity and contract category salary gaps.

This year, we focused our analysis on how salary fairness perceptions and negotiation practices relate to the salary gaps. We also explored two questions, 'Who do heads reach for advice on career progression?' and 'What is the biggest challenge heads have experienced in their career?'

Findings:

- For a fourth consecutive year, the findings make evident a gender, ethnicity and contract category salary gap. The ethnicity and contract category gaps are statistically significant and larger than in previous years.
- Males and White leaders are more satisfied with their salaries and benefits when compared to females and Non-White leaders.

- Males and internationally hired heads negotiate their salary either prior to accepting the job offer or while in their current role more frequently than females and locally hired heads.
- Males, White, and internationally hired heads rely on their private network and recruitment agencies for career progression more frequently than females, Non-White and locally hired heads.

We conclude the analysis by summarizing challenges for career progression faced by heads in international schools worldwide. Females named gender inequality more frequently than men. Non-White leaders and locally hired heads named racism more frequent than White leaders and internationally hired heads.

This analysis can be relevant for young leaders and heads seeking salary equity or to advance in their career.

Evolving our Research

2017

The Head of Schools Salary and Benefits Survey was relaunched and made available to Heads of CIS member schools to aid recruitment and compensation negotiations.

2018

In our analysis, we identified a gender salary gap. We further analysed if level of education, years of experience in leadership positions, years of experience as a head at the current school, and school enrolment size could explain the salary gap for females. Heads of member schools of The Council of British International Schools (COBIS) and The Association of American International Schools in the Americas (AMISA) participated in the survey for the first time.

2020

We expanded the survey, and the new questions identified an ethnicity and contract category salary gap. We further analysed if level of education, years of experience in leadership positions, years of experience as a head at the current school, and school enrolment size could explain the salary gaps for Non-White and locally hired heads. Heads of member schools of the British Schools in the Middle East (BSME) and East Asia Regional Council of Schools (EARCOS) participated in the survey for the first time.

2021

In addition to the salary gap analysis, we analysed how salary fairness perceptions and salary negotiations relate to the salary gaps for females, Non-White and locally hired heads. Heads from the four partner agencies mentioned above participated in the survey for consecutive years.

Methodology



This research project began in August 2021 and concluded in October 2021. The research population comprises heads of schools that are members of The Council of International Schools (CIS), The Association of American International Schools in the Americas (AMISA), British Schools in the Middle East (BSME), The Council of British International Schools (COBIS) and East Asia Regional Council of Schools (EARCOS).

308 heads in 96 different countries

completed a salary and benefits survey that asks a combination of quantitative and open-ended questions. However, not all respondents answered each survey question; thus, the sample size was in the range of 270 to 308 responses.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for questions that required a numerical response. We removed outliers and focused the analysis on data without outliers, as a small number of highly-paid heads were skewing the results. Appendix A summarizes the methodology used to identify outliers. Answer choices with less than six responses were excluded from the analysis to guarantee the anonymity of individual responses. This was often the case with the answer choice 'Prefer not to answer' available in demographic questions.

A thematic content analysis was used for open-ended questions. This type of analysis identifies response patterns within the data through inductive coding, which arise directly from the survey responses.

Salary Gap Findings

In 2020, we found that males earn on average 8,500 USD more than females, White leaders earn on average 17,000 USD more than Non-White leaders, and internationally hired heads earn on average 33,000 USD more than locally hired heads.



In 2021, we see the salary gaps are still evident and larger than in 2020.

- Males earn on average 12,433 USD more than females. For the first year since 2018, the difference in net salary between males and females is not statistically significant. In previous years, this difference was statistically significant.
- White leaders earn on average 33,860 USD more than Non-White leaders. The difference is statistically significant.
- Internationally hired heads earn on average 39,246 USD more than locally hired heads. The difference is statistically significant.

We surveyed different individuals each year; thus we cannot conclude the gaps increased from 2020 to 2021, but we can conclude the salary gaps were still evident in 2021.

Salary Gap Findings

Summary of average annual net salary (USD) per group.



Male
137, 618 USD

Female
125,185 USD

Gender salary gap
12,433 USD

White
138,627 USD

Non-White
104,767 USD

Ethnicity salary gap
33,860 USD

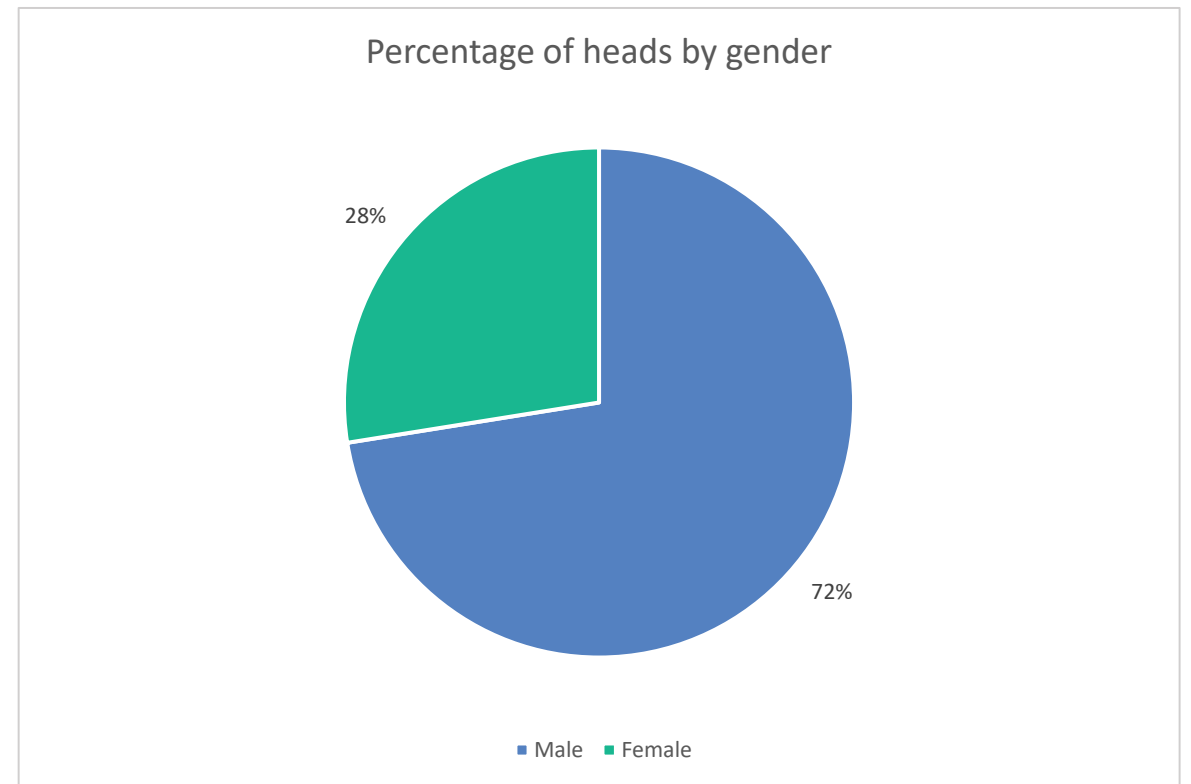
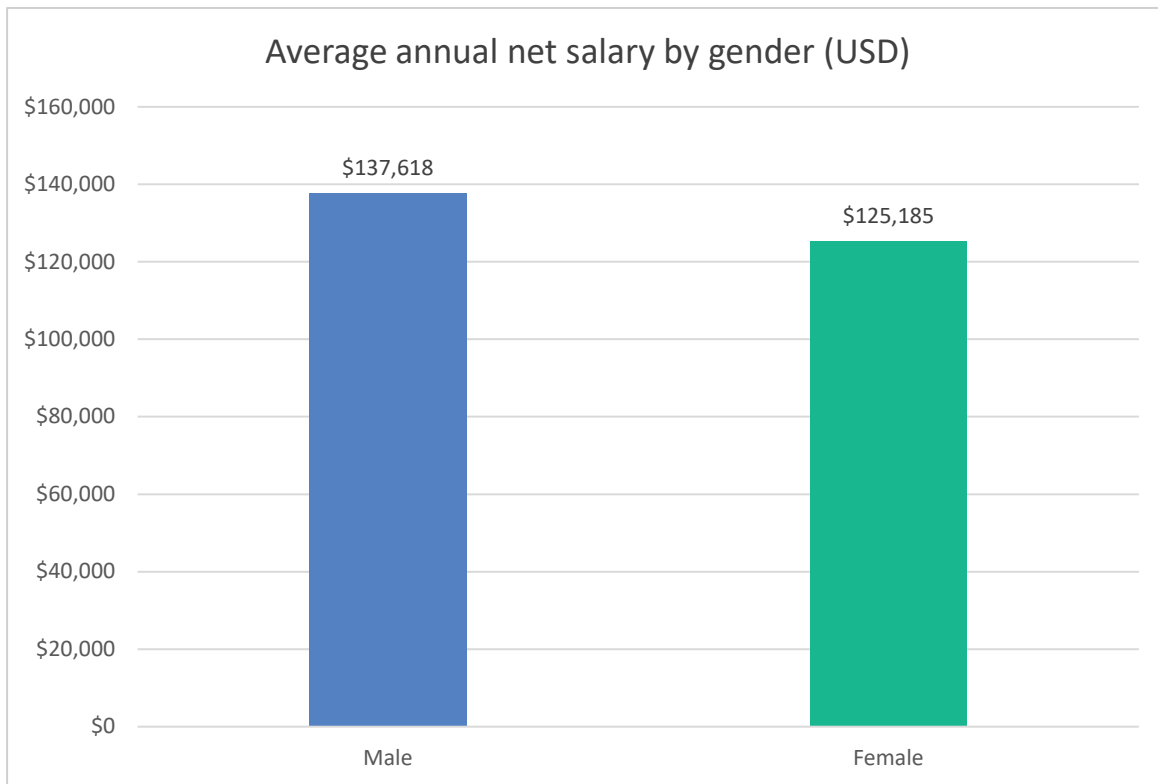
Internationally
hired
142,454 USD

Locally
hired
103,208 USD

Contract category
salary gap
39,246 USD

Average annual net salary by gender (USD)

The average annual net salary for males is 137,618 USD and 125,185 USD for females. **The gender salary gap persists.** Males are paid on average 12,433 USD more than females. However, the difference in net salary between males and females is not statistically significant (p value = 0.14). The result we see in the sample may not exist in the population.



Average annual net salary by ethnicity (USD)

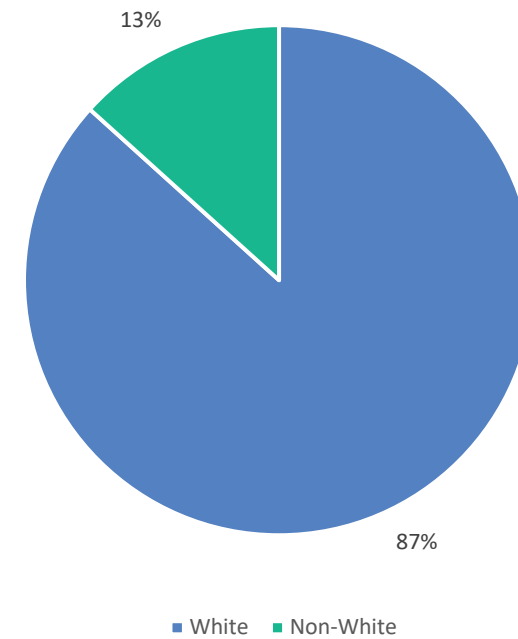
The average annual net salary for White leaders is 138,627 USD and 104,767 USD for Non-White leaders. **The ethnicity salary gap persists.** White leaders are paid on average 33,860 USD more than Non-White leaders. The difference in net salary between White and Non-White leaders is statistically significant.

Both White males and females have higher salaries than Non-White males and females.

Average annual net salary by ethnicity (USD)



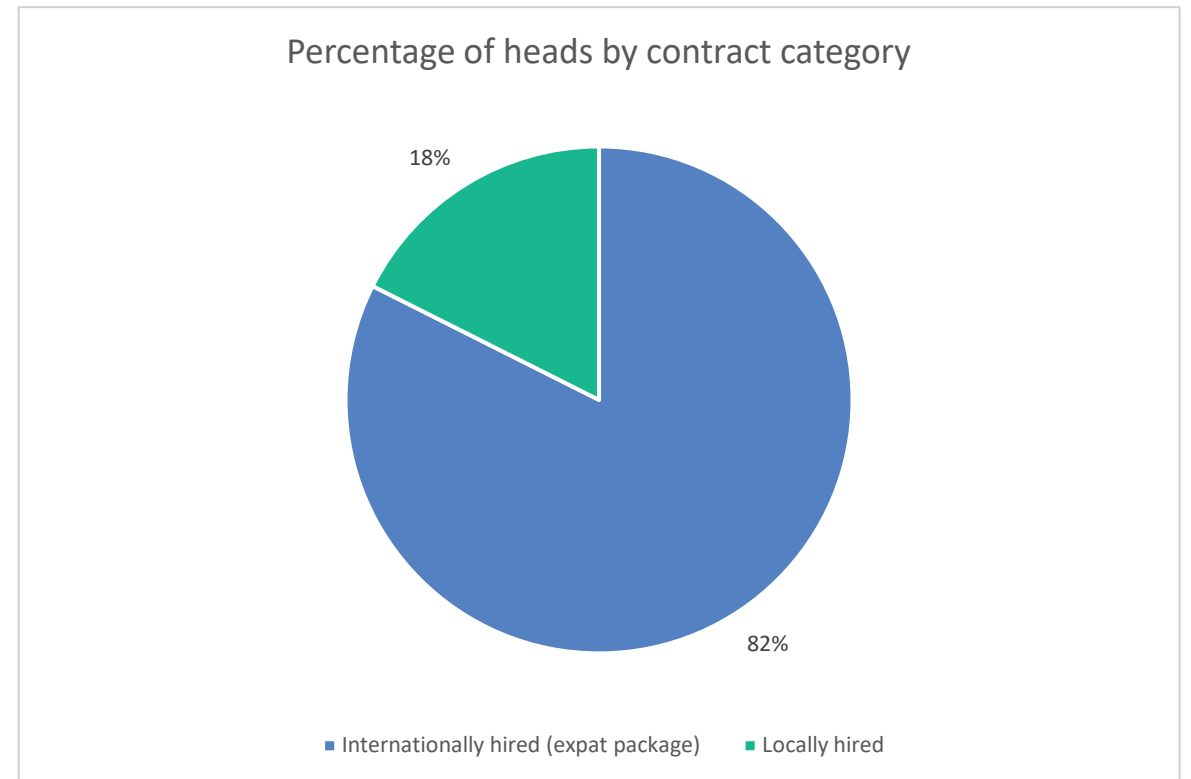
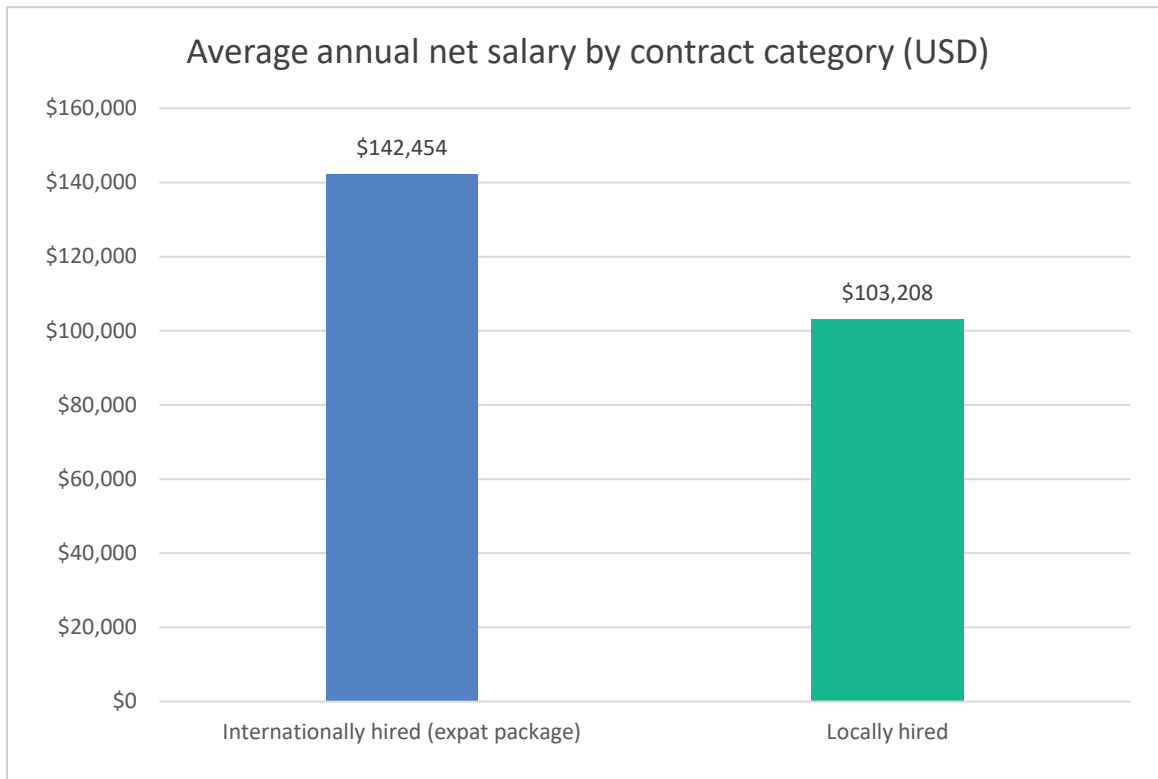
Percentage of heads by ethnicity



Average annual net salary by contract category (USD)

The average annual net salary for internationally hired heads is 142,454 USD and 103,208 USD for locally hired heads. **The contract category salary gap persists.** Internationally hired heads are paid on average 39,246 USD more than locally hired heads. The difference in net salary between internationally hired heads and locally hired heads is statistically significant.

Females and Non-White leaders are more likely to be locally hired.



NEW

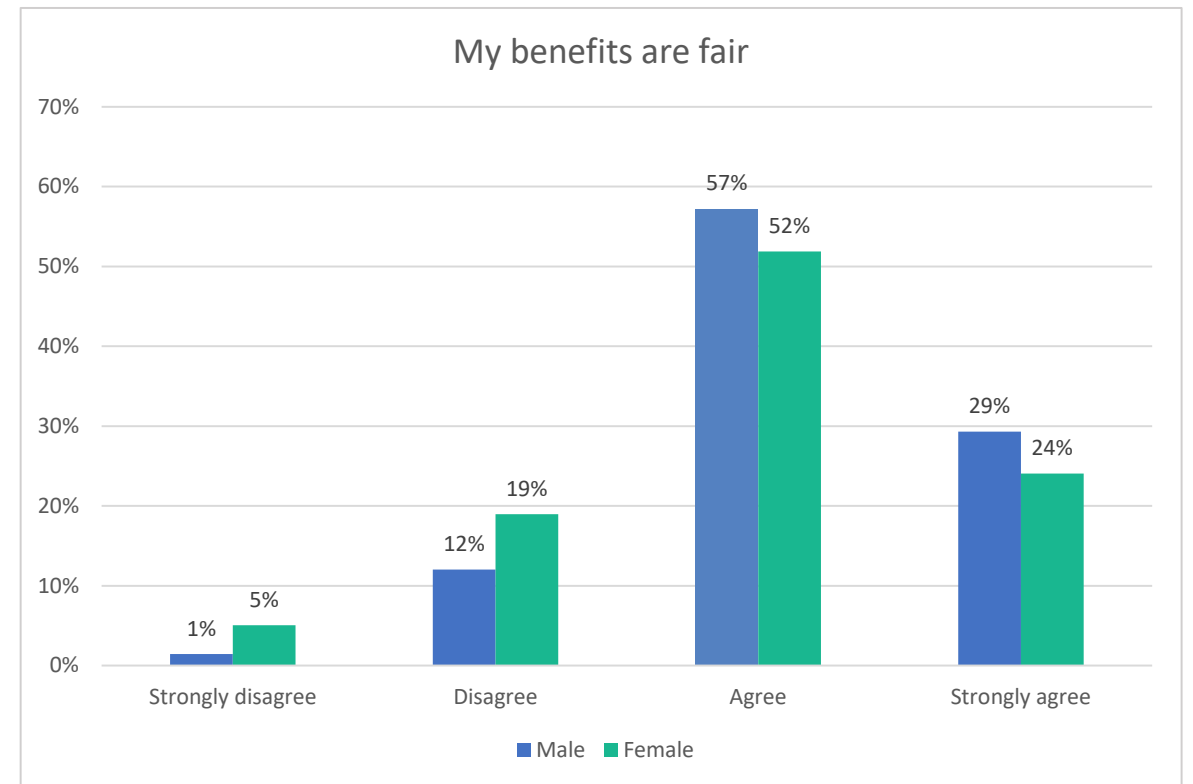
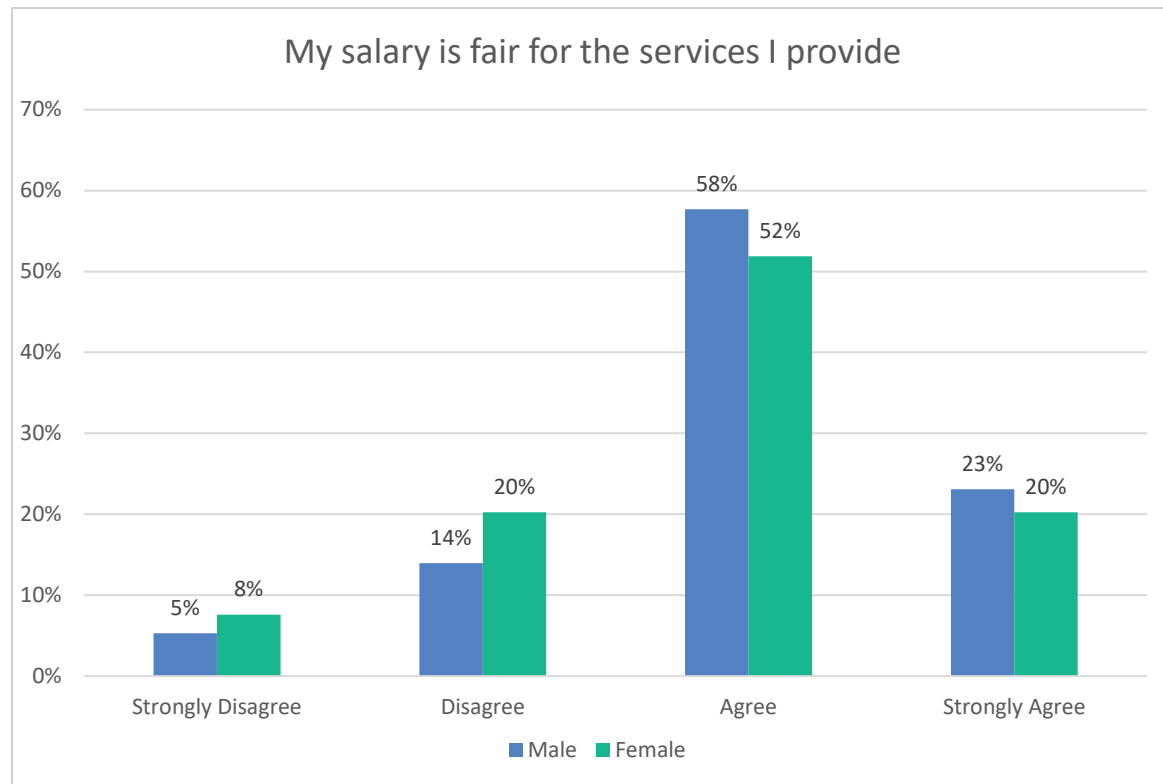
Salary and benefits fairness perception

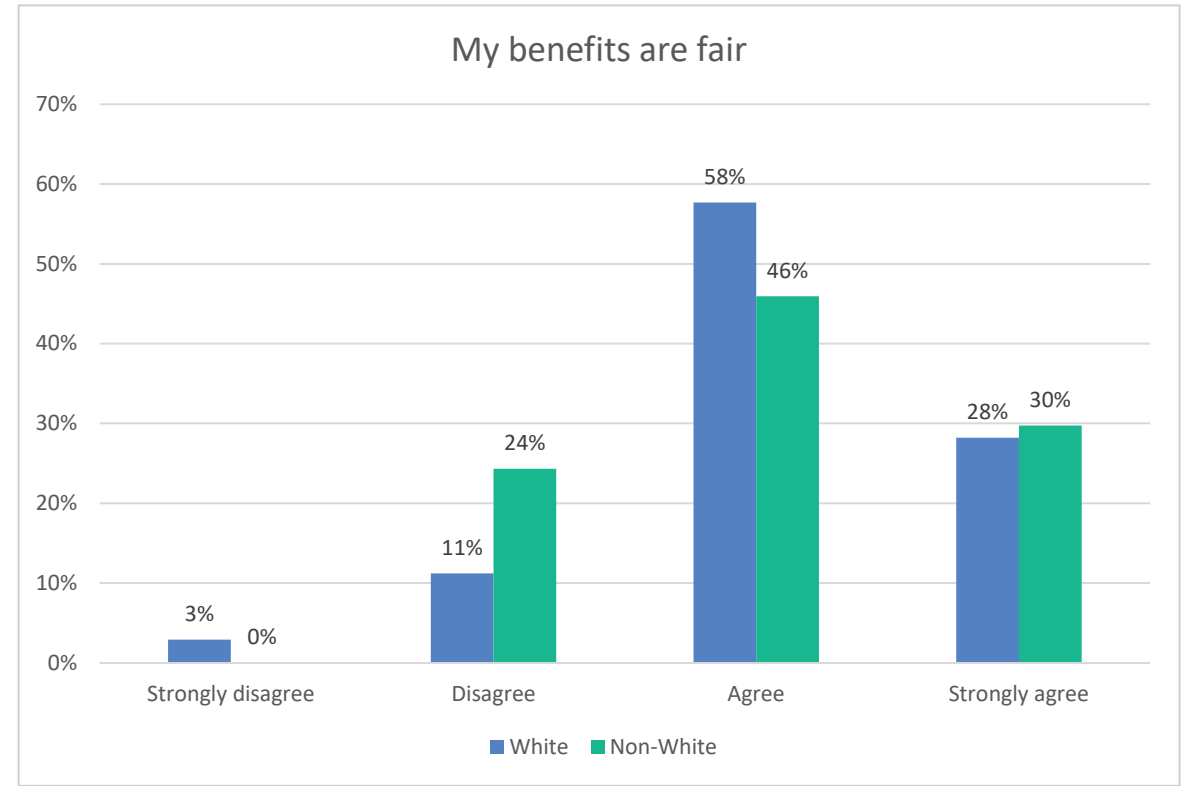
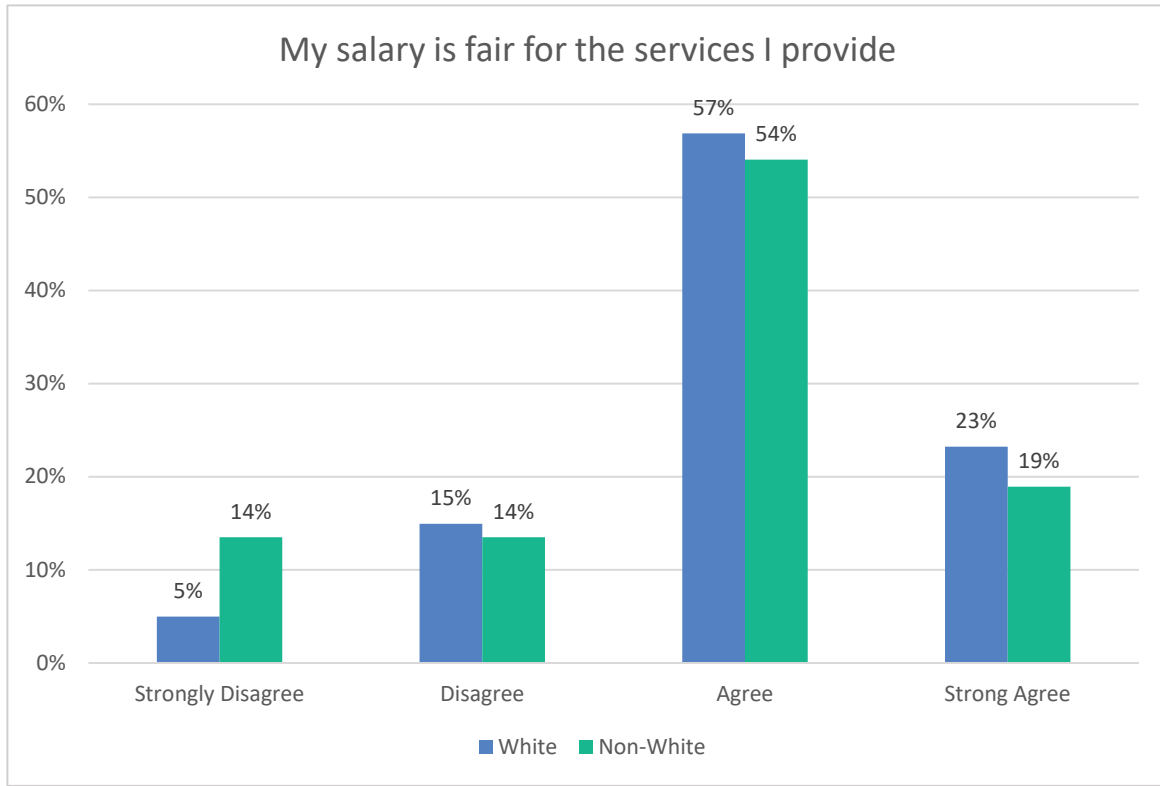
We explored whether salary and benefits fairness perceptions of females, Non-White and locally hired heads were different than that of males, White leaders, and internationally hired heads.

79% of heads agreed with the statement 'My salary is fair for the services I provide', while 21 % disagreed. 83% of heads agreed with the statement 'My benefits are fair', while 16% disagreed.

Salary and benefits fairness perception by gender

Males agree more than females that their salaries and benefits are fair. 80% of males agree that their salary is fair for the services they provide, compared to 72% of females. 86% of males agree that their benefits are fair compared to 75% of females.



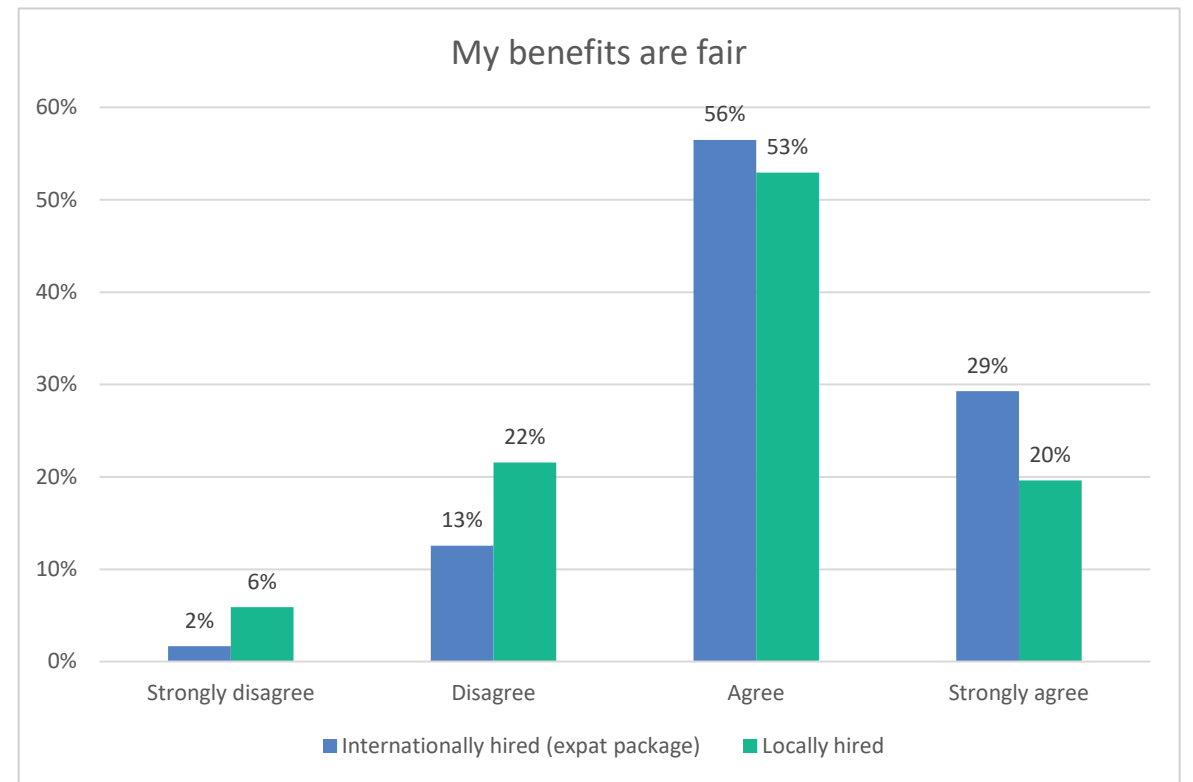
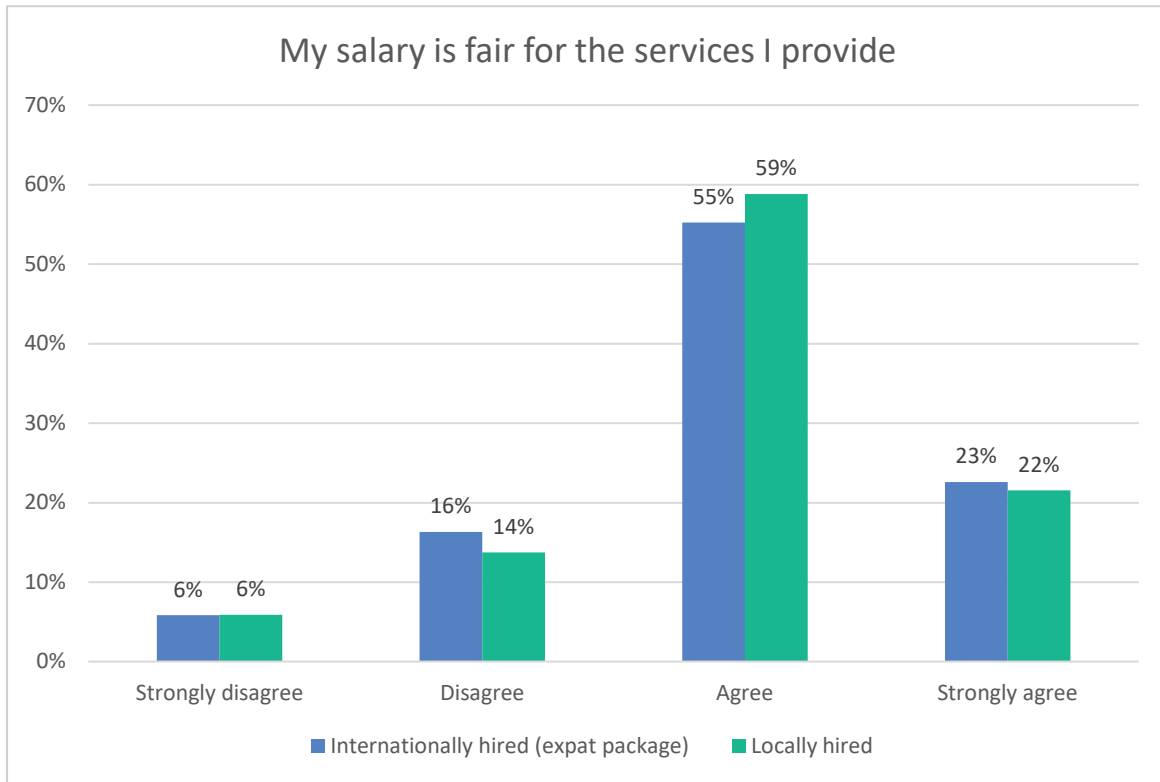


Salary and benefits fairness perception by ethnicity

White leaders agree more than Non-White leaders that their salaries and benefits are fair. 80% of White leaders agree that their salary is fair for the services they provide, compared to 73% of Non-White leaders. 86% of White leaders agree that their benefits are fair compared to 76% of Non-White leaders.

Salary and benefits fairness perception by contract category

80% of locally hired heads agree that their salary is fair for the services they provide, compared to 78% of internationally hired heads. Internationally hired heads agree more than locally hired heads that their benefits are fair. 85% of internationally hired heads agree that their benefits are fair compared to 73% of locally hired heads.





Salary and benefits negotiation

We explored the proportion of heads who have negotiated their salary either before accepting a job offer or while in their current role. We asked:

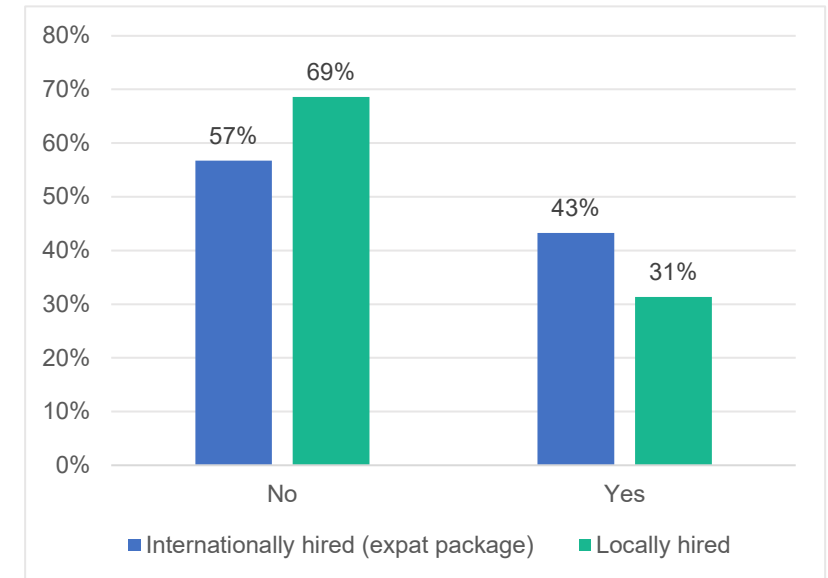
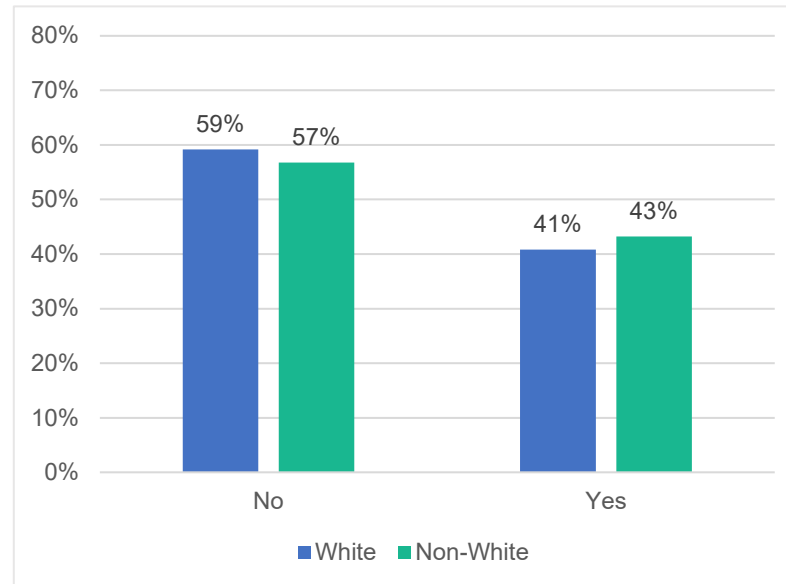
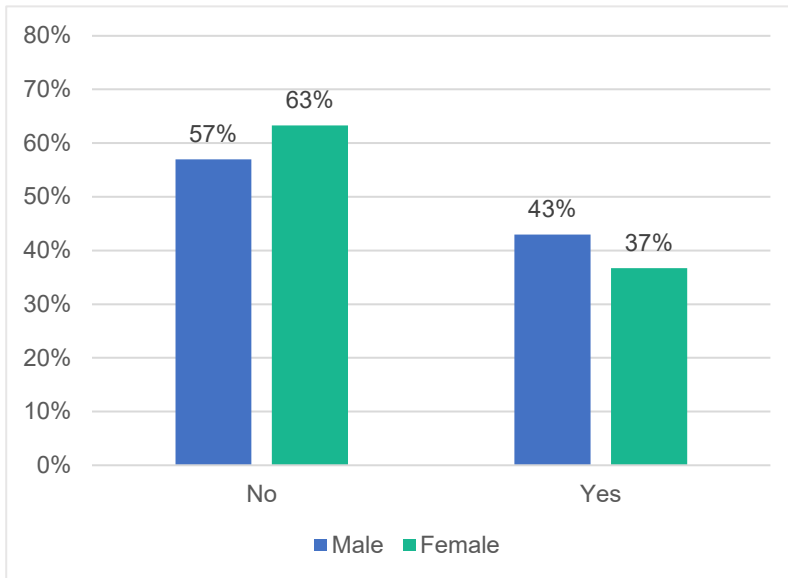
- Prior to accepting the job offer for your current role, did you or someone on your behalf negotiate the salary or other benefits?
- In your current role, have you or someone on your behalf renegotiated your salary or other benefits?

We found out that 41% of heads renegotiated their salary or benefits prior to accepting the job offer. While 34% of heads renegotiated their salary or benefits while in their current role.

Prior to accepting the job offer for your current role, did you or someone on your behalf negotiate the salary or other benefits?

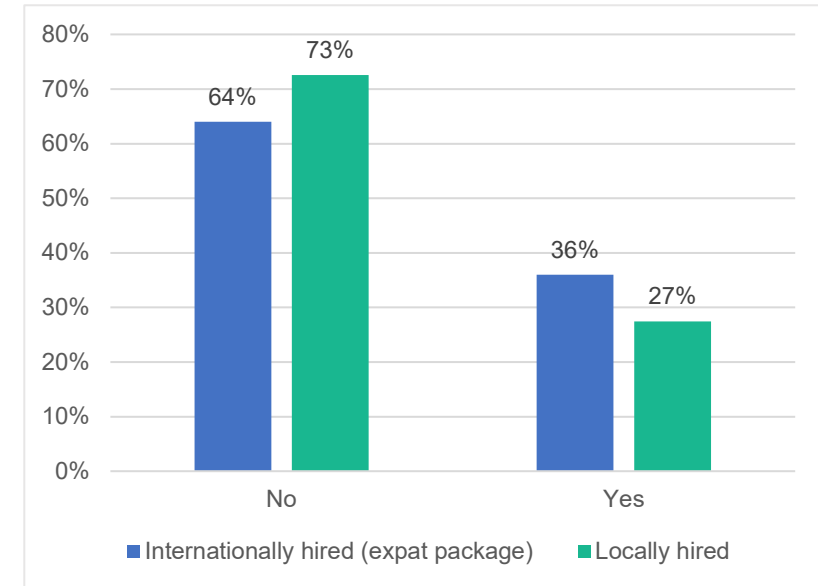
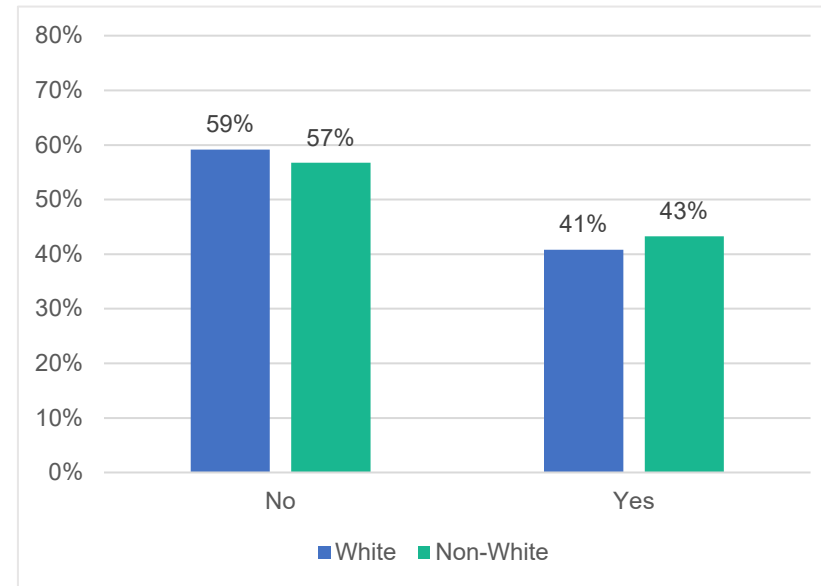
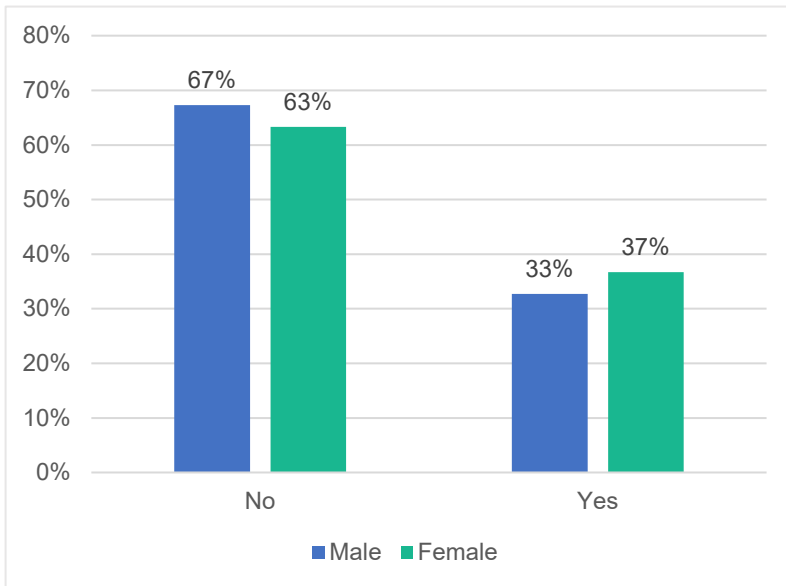
Males and internationally hired heads have negotiated their salary or other benefits prior to accepting the job offer more frequently than females and locally hired heads.

The distribution of responses is similar for White and Non-White leaders.



In your current role, have you or someone on your behalf renegotiated your salary or other benefits?

Internationally hired heads have negotiated their salary while in their current role more frequently than locally hired heads. The distribution of responses is similar for gender and ethnicity.



NEW

To whom do you reach out for advice on career progression?

The question provided five default answer choices and the option to add other responses as free text. Multiple selections were possible.

The default answer choices were:

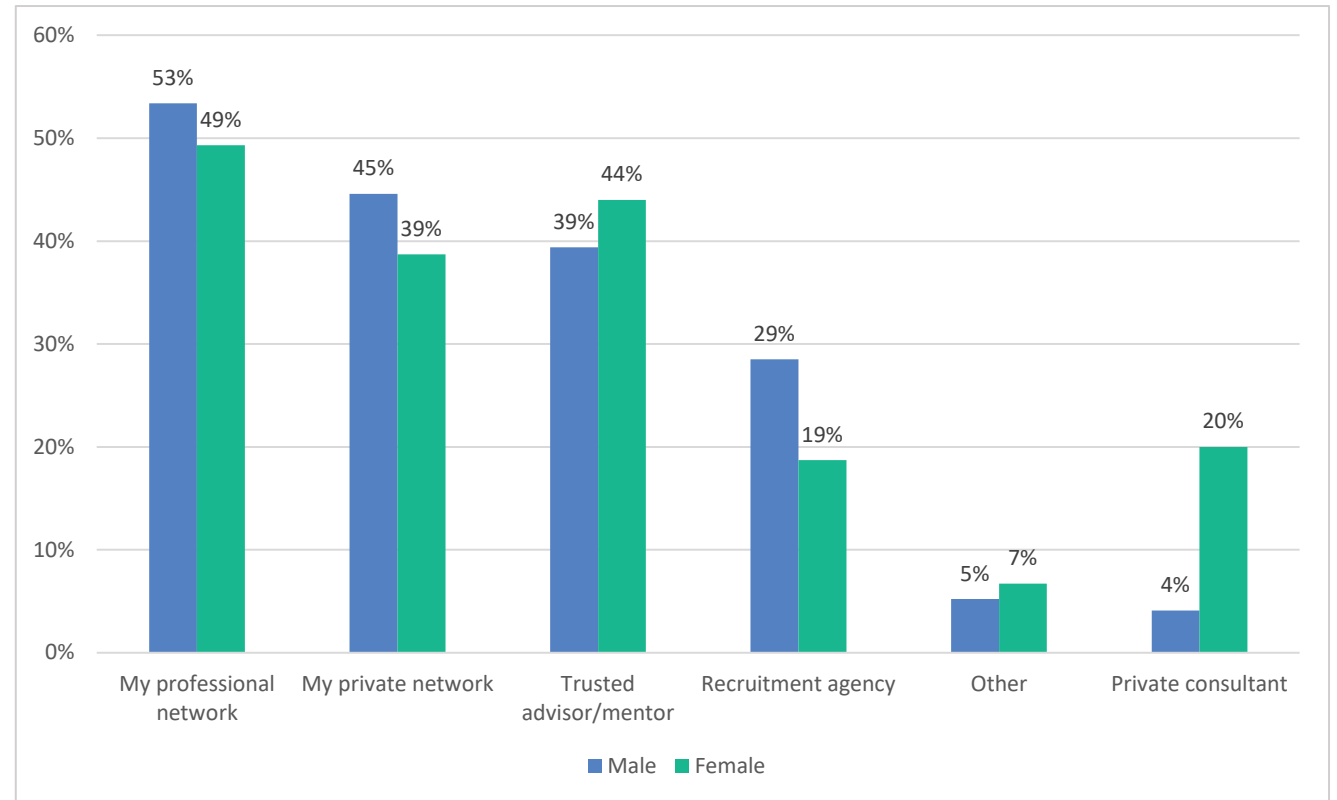
- my private network
- professional network
- private consultant
- recruitment agency
- trusted advisor/mentor

We found that heads rely to a greater extent on their professional network (141 responses), private network (120 responses) and a trusted advisor/mentor (111 responses).

To whom do you reach out for advice on career progression?

By gender

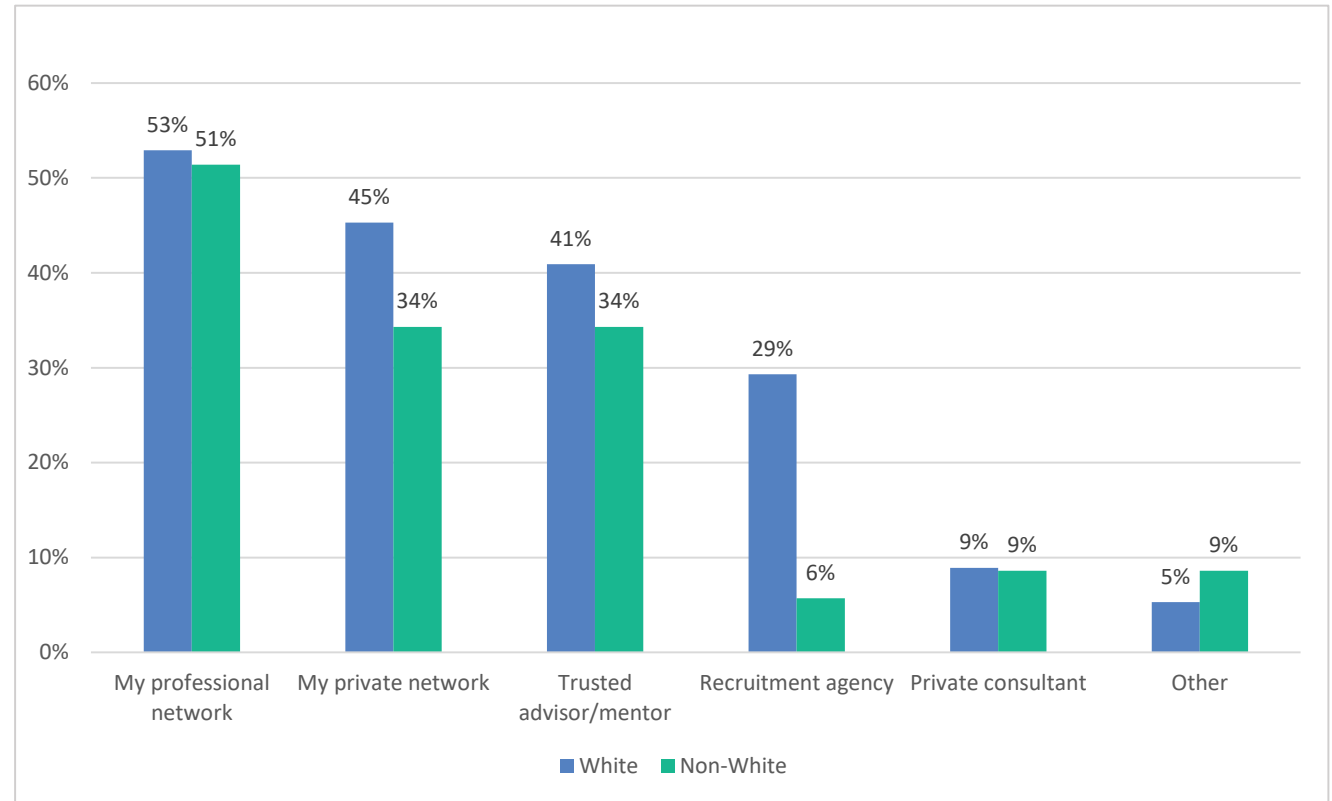
- Males rely more on recruitment agencies and their private network when compared to females.
- Females rely more on private consultants and mentors when compared to males.
- Females and males rely to a similar extent on their professional network.



To whom do you reach out for advice on career progression?

By ethnicity

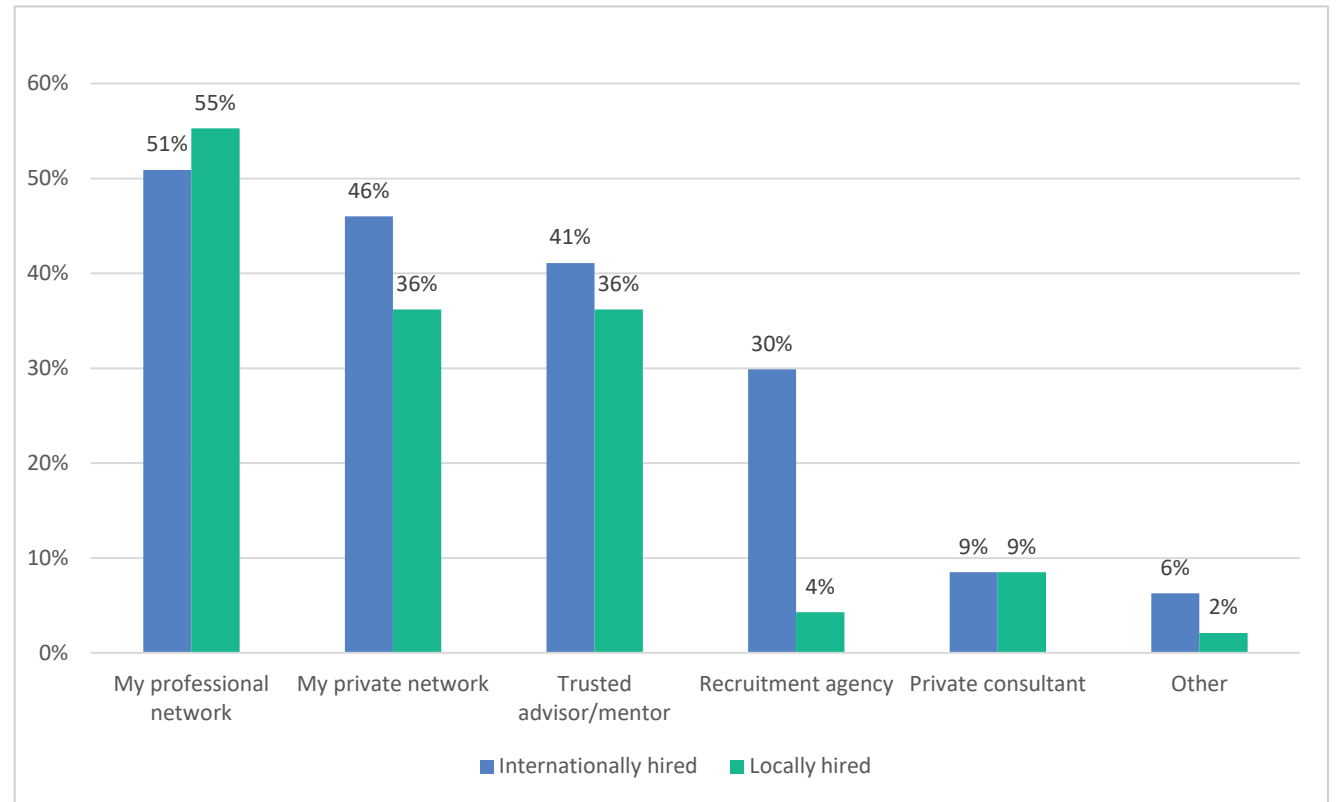
White leaders rely more on their private network, recruitment agencies and mentors when compared to Non-White leaders.



To whom do you reach out for advice on career progression?

By contract category

Internationally hired heads rely more on their private network, recruitment agencies and mentors when compared to locally hired leaders.



NEW

What is the biggest challenge you have experienced in your career?

We explored the challenges heads experienced in their career. The question provided an open text field for responses which were analysed and categorized for this report.

Females and Non-White leaders were more likely to answer this question as noted in the following pages of the report. We noticed that many Heads entered 'none' to this open-ended question. We are not sure if the Heads had not experienced significant challenges or did not want to share those challenges.

The most frequent responses were Covid, racism, gender equality and work-family balance.



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What is the biggest challenge you have experienced in your career?

By gender

41% of women who answered the question named gender inequality their biggest challenge.

Some disadvantages are:

- Feeling work is less valued compared to work of male counterparts
- Bias in hiring
- Lower salary
- Disadvantages when taking maternity leave



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What is the biggest challenge you have experienced in your career?

By ethnicity

White leaders were more likely to answer that they experienced no challenges when compared to Non-White leaders.

30% of Non-White leaders who answered the question named racism their biggest challenge compared to 6.3% of White leaders.

Some disadvantages are:

- One's nationality
- Disadvantage of not speaking English as a native language and speaking with an accent
- Being local
- Prejudice against religion



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What is the biggest challenge you have experienced in your career?

By contract category

Locally hired heads were more likely to answer that they experienced no challenges when compared to internationally hired heads.

18.2% of locally hired heads named racism their biggest challenge compared to 8.9% of internationally hired heads.

13.4% of internationally hired heads name gender inequality their biggest challenge compared to 13.6% of locally hired heads.

What is the biggest challenge you have experienced in your career?

Summary of the top answers per group

Male

1. Covid
2. None
3. Work-family balance
4. Racism
5. Switching position

Non-White

1. Racism
2. Gender equality
3. Covid
4. Community related
5. Professional development

Locally-hired

1. None
2. Racism
3. Gender equality
4. Community related
5. Application process

Female

1. Gender equality
2. None
3. Racism
4. Covid
5. Working abroad

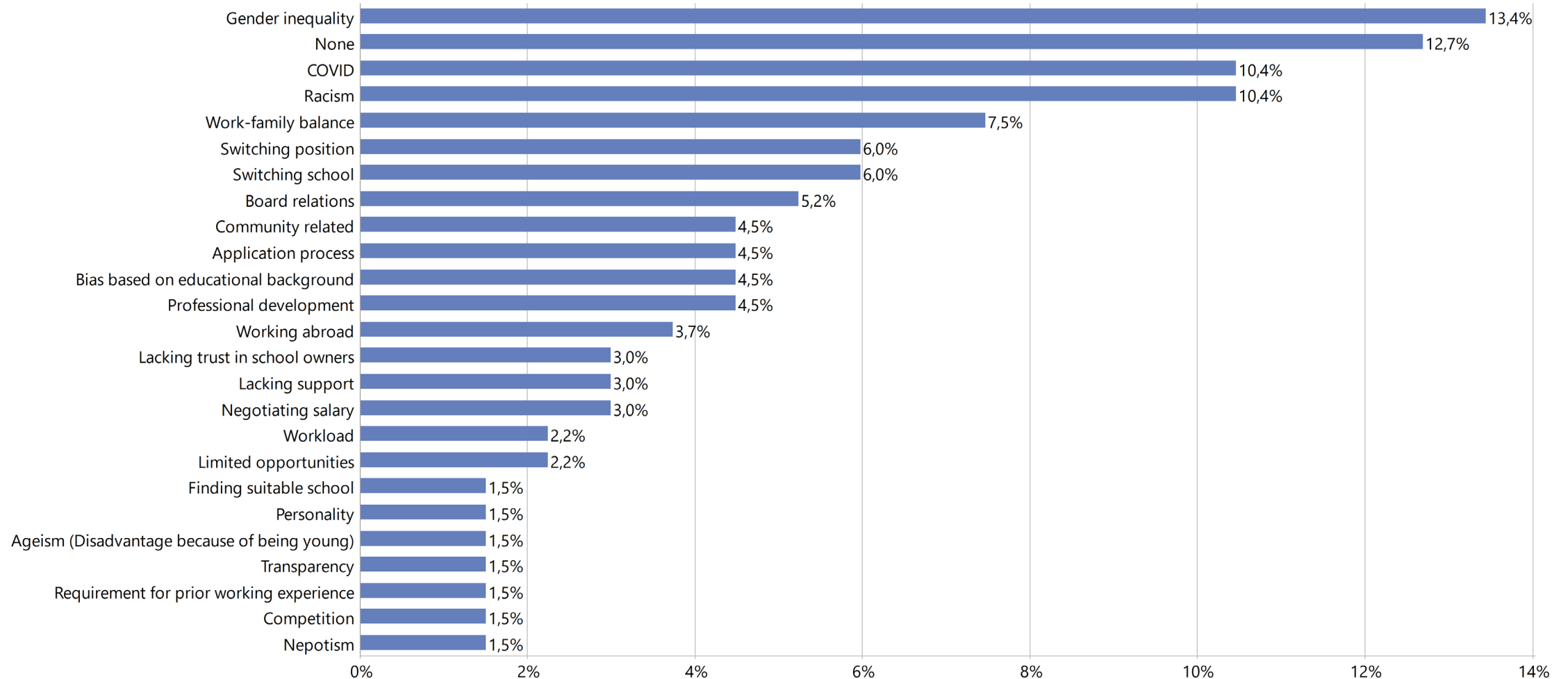
White

1. None
2. Gender equality
3. Covid
4. Work-family balance
5. Racism

Internationally-hired

1. Gender equality
2. Covid
3. None
4. Racism
5. Work-family balance

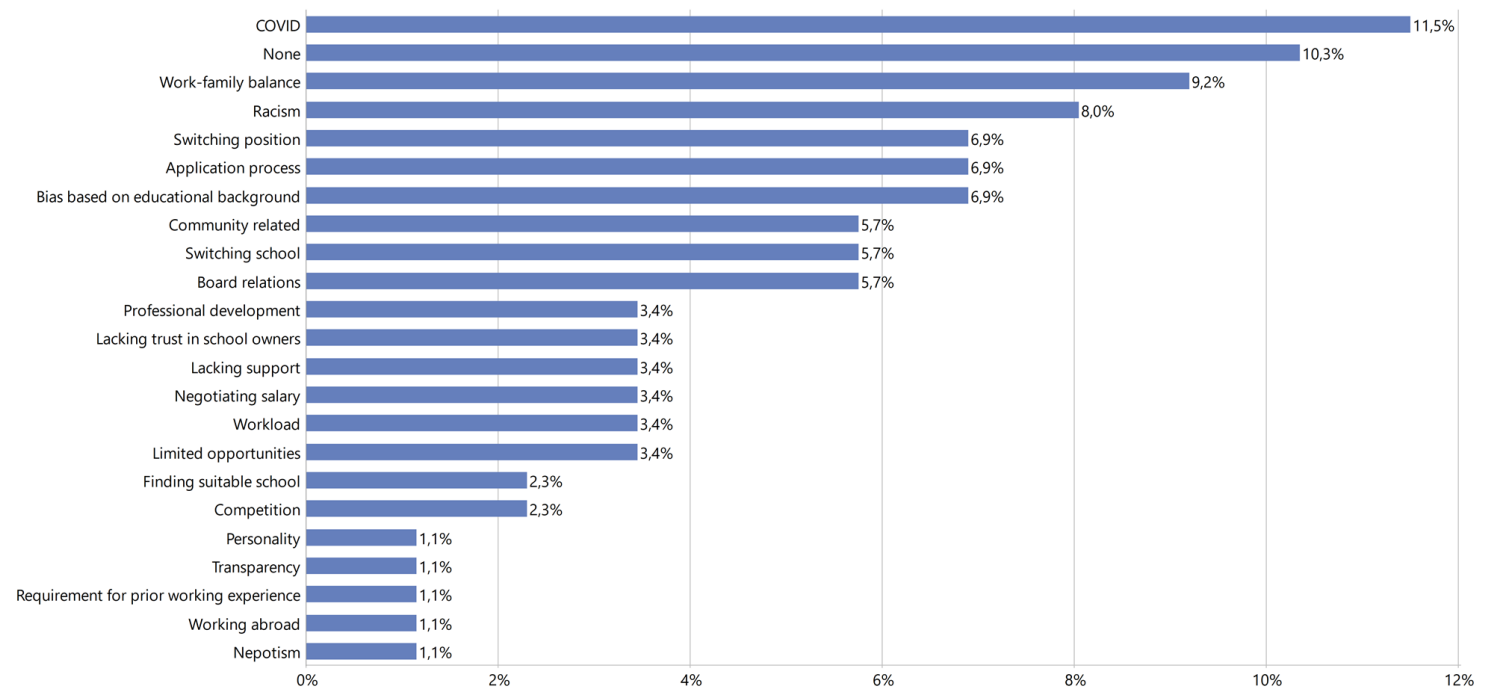
What is the biggest challenge you have experienced in your career? (All responses)



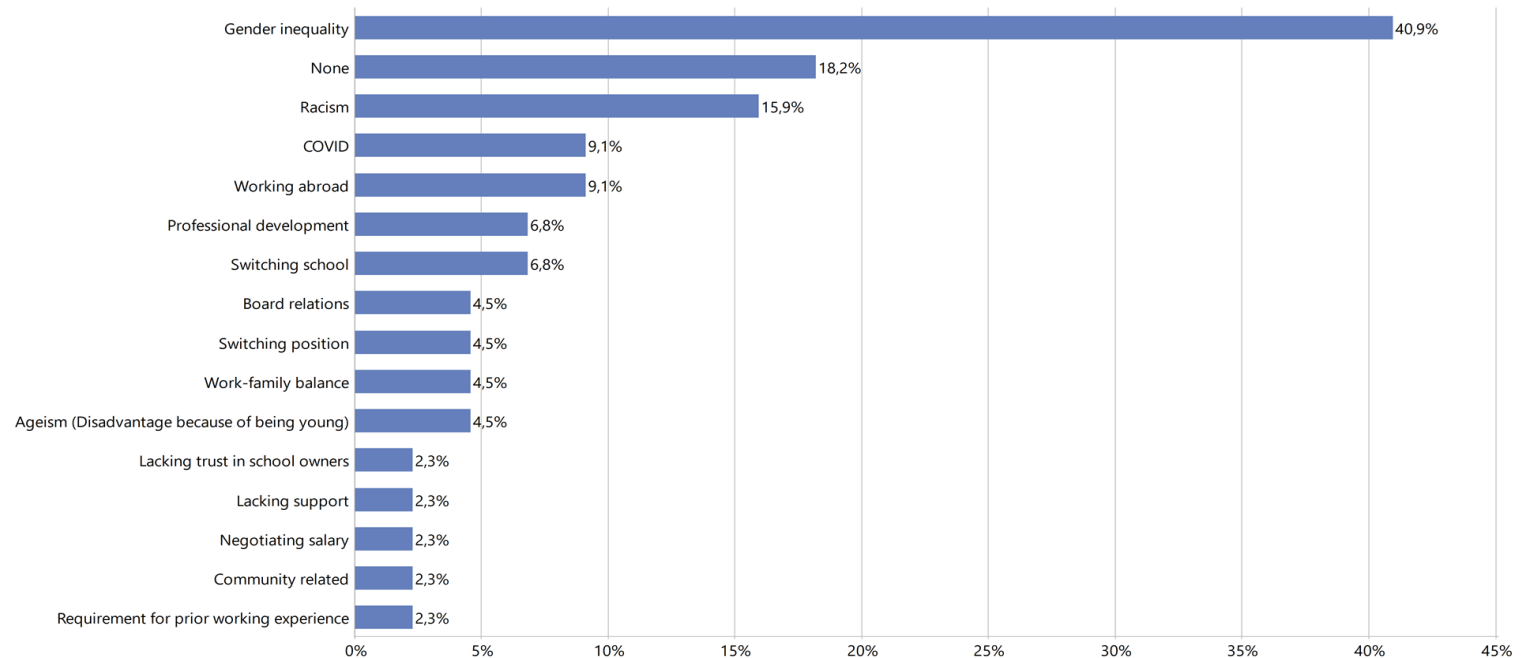
What is the biggest challenge you have experienced in your career?

The details by gender

Male



Female

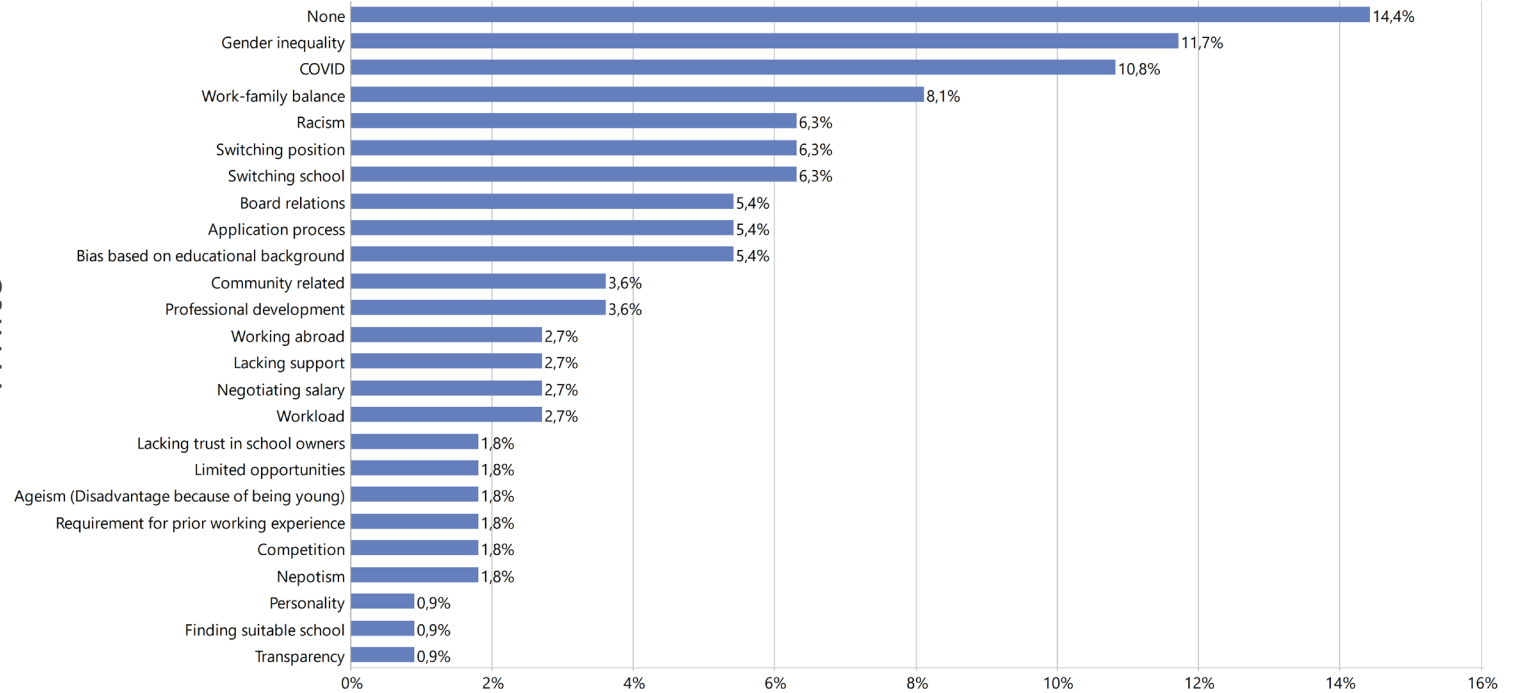


What is the biggest challenge you have experienced in your career?

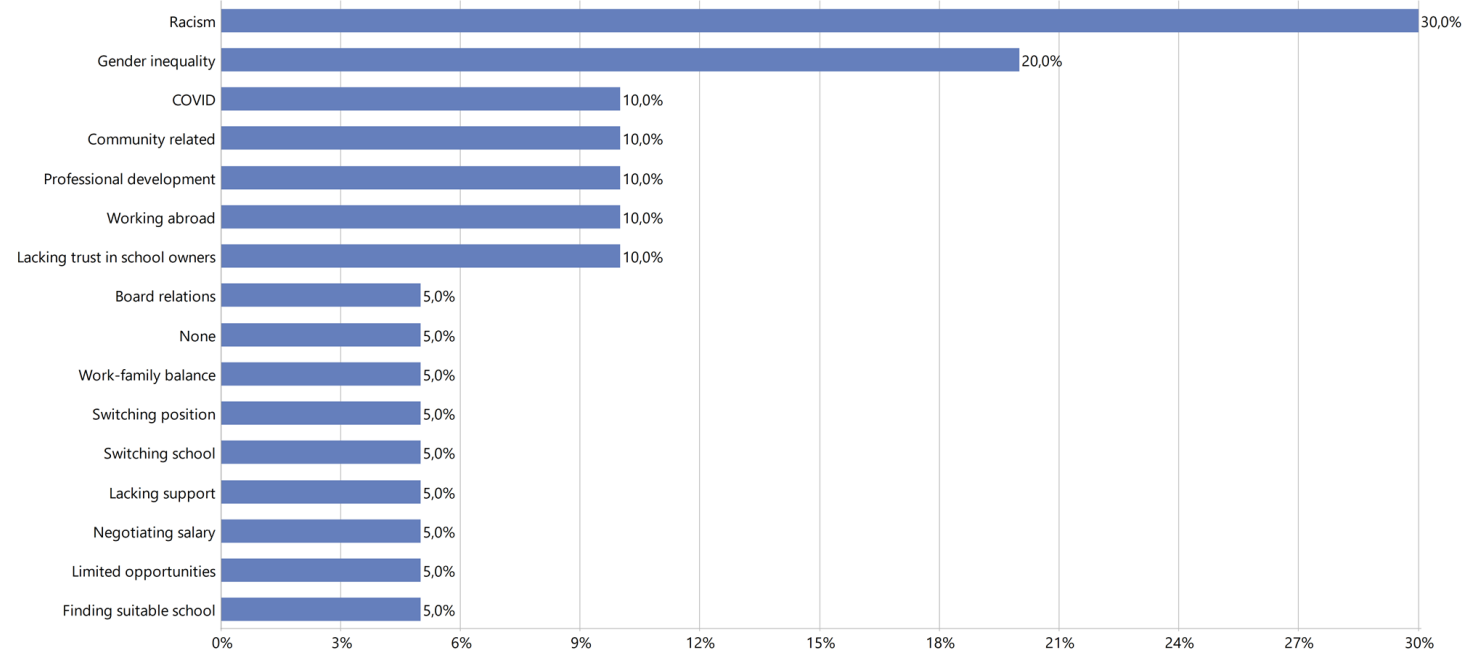
The details by ethnicity



White



Non-White

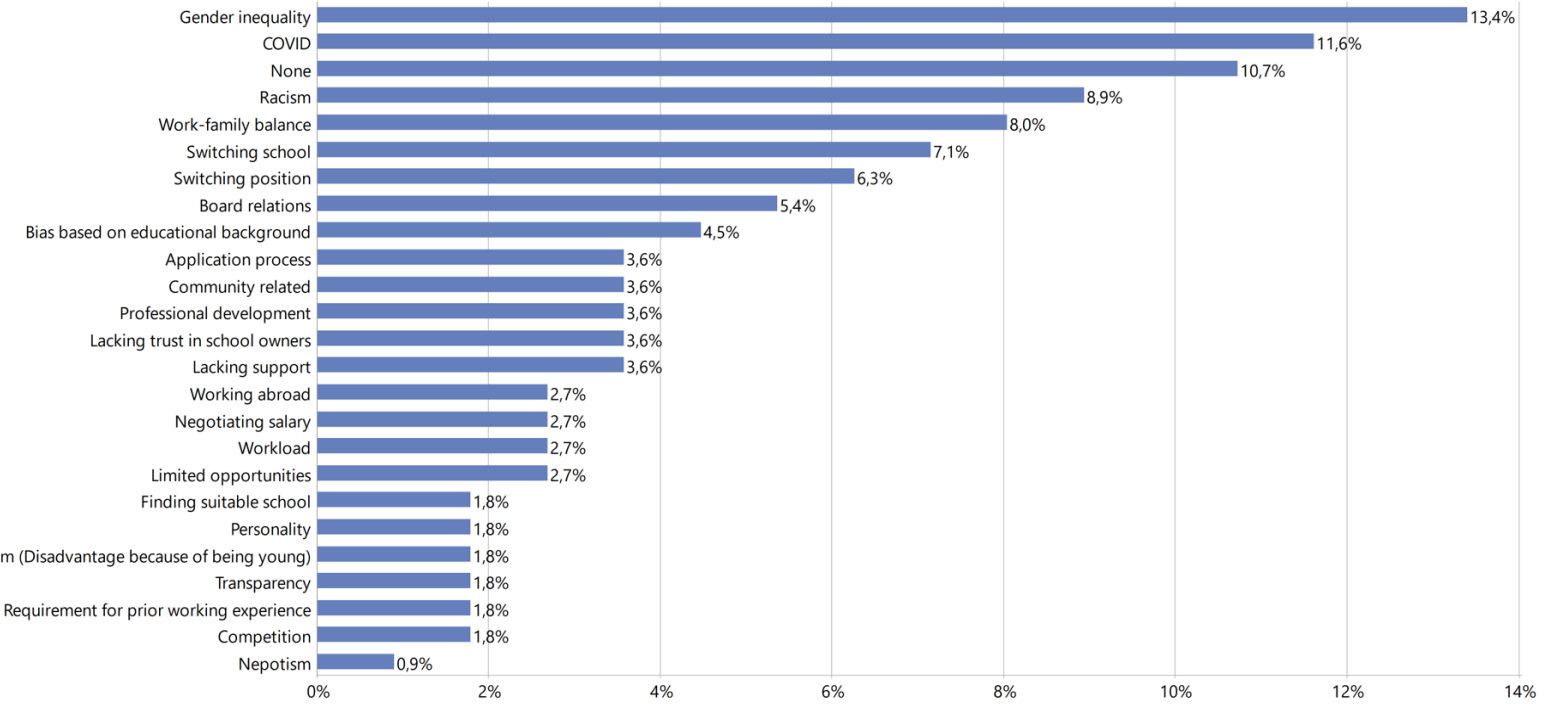




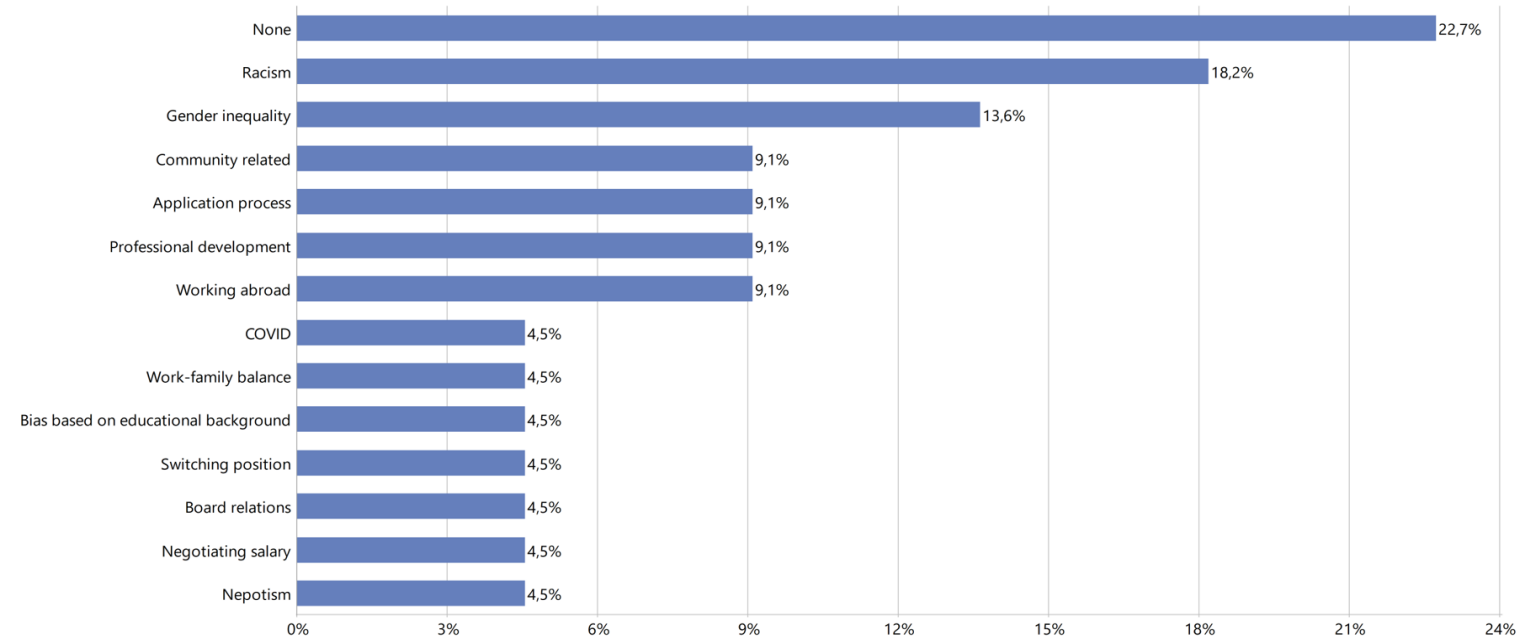
What is the biggest challenge you have experienced in your career?

The details by contract category

Internationally hired



Locally hired



Conclusion

This study analyses salaries of heads of schools in international schools around the worldwide and seeks to understand salary differences to the gender, ethnicity and contract category salary gaps.

The gender, ethnicity and contract category gaps were still evident in 2021. For the first time in this research, the difference in net salary between males and females is not statistically significant. As in previous years, the difference in net salary between White and Non-White leaders and internationally hired and locally hired heads was statistically significant. A bigger sample size is recommended to monitor the gaps in the future.

The findings make evident males and White leaders are more satisfied with their salaries and benefits when compared to females and Non-White leaders.

Males and internationally hired heads renegotiate their salaries more frequent than females and locally hired heads.

On career progression, males rely more on recruitment agencies and their private network when compared to females. Females rely more on private consultants and mentors when compared to males. White leaders and internationally hired heads rely more on their private network, recruitment agencies and mentors when compared to Non-White and locally hired leaders.

When asked about the biggest challenges in their careers, the most frequent answers were Covid, racism, gender equality and work-family balance.

Future research is recommended to study factors influencing the salary gaps and effective practices that drive salary equity in leadership positions in international schools.



Visit the CIS KnowledgeBase in the CIS Community Portal for additional reports and data.



CIS Members can register for the webinar 'Exploring gender and ethnicity gaps' on 8 March 2022

If you have any questions about this report, please contact us at membership@cois.org

Appendix A—Methodology to identify outliers

Outliers

We used the IQR method to determine a Lower Bound of $(Q1 - 1.5 * IQR)$ and an Upper Bound of $(Q3 + 1.5 * IQR)$ where $Q1$ = the first quartile, $Q3$ = the third quartile and $IQR = Q3 - Q1$. Any data point less than the Lower Bound or more than the Upper Bound was considered as an outlier.

We identified salaries above 300,000 to be statistical outliers and removed 18 outliers from the data set.

The Lower Bound was less than zero, therefore, no low-salary outliers were identified.

Sample size

Not all respondents answered every demographic question, thus the number of data points available for each analysis varied slightly.