

Workforce Mobility and Skills in the UK Construction Sector 2022

East of England Report - May 2023



Study prepared by BMG Research from a commission by CITB.

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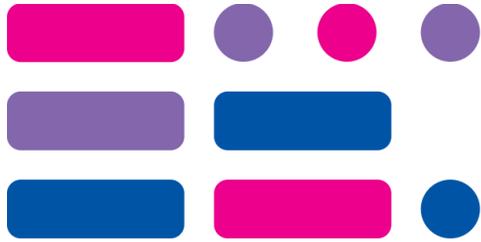
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Executive summary

CITB commissioned BMG Research to undertake the 2022 Construction Workforce Mobility Survey, which builds on previous surveys conducted in 2018/19, 2015, 2012, 2007, and 2005. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 3,005 construction workers undertaking manual roles on sites across the UK and 202 interviews were conducted with construction workers in the East of England.

Profile of the sample

All but 3% of construction workers in the East of England are male. Around two in five (37%) are aged under 35, which is in line with the general UK 16-64 years' workforce as a whole (36%), but lower than the UK average¹ in the survey (45%). Compared to 2018/19, the age profile has become somewhat older, with 61% aged 35 or over, compared to 54% in 2018/19. Just 3% of construction workers are aged 60 or over.

Overall, 5% of the East of England construction workforce is from an ethnic minority group, compared with a higher incidence of 12% in the East of England 16-64 years' population as a whole. This is in line with the UK survey average of 5%, which in turn compares to the general UK 16-64 years' population of 14%.

As was the case in 2018/19, the majority of construction workers in the East of England (78%, compared to 72% in 2018/19) originated from the UK and the remaining 22% originated from another country, 16% from within the EU, and 6% from outside the EU. At 16%, the proportion originating from within the EU is higher than the UK average of 9%, and is only exceeded in London (30%).

Reflecting this, one in five (18%) construction workers in the East of England hold a non-UK passport, which is higher than the UK average of 13%.

Three quarters (74%) of construction workers in the East of England have lived in the UK all their lives, lower than the UK average of 80%, but in line with 2018/19 (71%). While a quarter (24%) have not lived in the UK all their lives, the majority of this group (22%) have lived in the UK for more than five years.

The proportion of construction workers in the East of England who are labourers/general operatives has returned to the levels seen in 2015 (19% compared to 16%), after a dip in 2018/19 (8%), and is in line with the UK average (18%). Plant/machine operatives account for one in ten (10%) construction workers in the East of England, in line with previous years and the UK average (9%). Other occupations account for less than 10% of the sample in each instance.

¹ Unless otherwise stated, the term 'UK average' used throughout this report is the average for the UK construction workforce as estimated by this survey.

Around a quarter (26%) of all construction workers in the East of England say they perform a supervisory or management role on their site, returning this to the levels seen in 2015 (24%) after an uplift in 2018/19 (40%), and placing the region in line with the UK average of 28%.

Around half (47%) of construction workers in the East of England are self-employed, somewhat up on 2018/19 (40%), and in line with 2015 (48%), and higher than the national average of 42%. The proportion working for an employment agency has also increased, from 4% in 2018/19 to 12% in the latest survey, placing the East of England above the UK average in this respect (9%). There has been a corresponding decrease in the proportion employed directly, from 55% in 2018/19 to 41% in the latest survey, placing the East of England below the UK average in this respect (48%).

Close to two in five (37%) construction workers in the East of England are employed on a temporary basis, in line with 2018/19 (38%), exceeded only by Northern Ireland (43%), and higher than the UK average (29%), as was the case in 2018/19.

Construction workers in the East of England, as across the UK as a whole, are most likely to report that they work between 40 and 49 hours per week (58%, compared with a UK average of 59%), while 19% work more than 50 hours a week, in line with 2018/19 (21%), and with the UK average of 19%.

Work history

Time in the sector

A third (34%) of all construction workers in the East of England have worked in the construction industry for over 20 years, in line with 2018/19 (31%), and the UK average (30%). Over half (54%) have worked in the industry for at least 10 years, somewhat lower than 2018/19 (59%), but in line with the UK average (52%). The proportion who have spent more than twenty years in the industry has continued to increase over time, from 27% in 2015 to 34% in the latest survey.

At 52%, the proportion of East of England construction workers who have worked pretty much continuously in the industry has returned to the levels seen in 2015 (54%), following an increase in 2018/19 (60%), but is below the UK average of 61%. The overall proportion who has only ever worked in construction has remained consistent (65% in 2022 and 2018/19), and is somewhat below the UK average (71%).

Previous non-construction jobs

Overall, a quarter (say that their first job after full-time education was not in construction and that they moved into the industry after working in other sorts of jobs/sectors, in line with 2018/19 (29%), and with the UK average of 22%.

Among the 25% of construction workers in the East of England who worked in another sector before starting work in construction, the most common sectors in which construction workers had started their careers were wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (19%) and accommodation (17%), with an increase for the latter since 2018/19 (1%). Manufacturing has seen a significant decline, with only 6% of construction workers having previously worked in this sector, as compared to 49% in 2018/19.

In terms of the job roles that respondents have held in other sectors, the highest proportions were in elementary administration and service occupations (25%) and skilled trades occupations (21%). The first of these – elementary administration and service occupations has seen a significant increase since 2018/19 (1%).

Occupational switching within the construction sector

Overall, close to two in five (37%) of all construction workers in the East of England have worked in more than one construction trade or occupation whilst working in the construction industry, in line with 2018/19 (44%) and with the UK average (35%).

Amongst this group, 12% had worked in 1 previous role, 49% had worked in 2 previous roles, 21% had worked in 3 roles/occupations and 7% had worked in 4 roles/occupations. Workers are most likely to have previously worked as a labourer/general operative (40%), as a plant/machine operative (19%) or as a bricklayer (16%). This is largely in line with the UK average.

Four in five (83%) construction workers in the East of England would like to carry on in the same trade or occupation, in line with 2018/19 (77%) and the UK average of 80%. Close to one in ten (7%) would like to change their trade/occupation, again in line with the UK average (7%), but lower than the 13% who did so in 2018/19. The remainder would like to leave construction (6%) or were unsure (7%).

Qualifications and skills

Skills cards/certificates

While over nine in ten (91%) of all construction workers in the East of England report holding a skill card or certificate (e.g. CSCS or CSR), this is a reduction on the 96 to 98% who did so in previous surveys. While this reflects the UK picture, which has seen a similar decline (from 97% to 93%), the decrease in the East of England is among the most marked, such that they now have among the lowest levels of card-holding. Correspondingly, the proportion who have no cards has risen from 3% in 2018/19, to 9% in the latest survey.

In terms of the type of skill card or certificate held by construction workers in the East of England, the CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme (GB) is the most commonly held (83%), in line with 2018/19 (84%) and 2015 (83%). Close to one in five (17%) hold the CPCS (Construction Plant Competence Scheme), somewhat higher than 2018/19 (12%), and 6% hold the CISRS (Construction Industry Scaffolders Record Scheme).

Construction-specific qualifications

Overall, close to half (46%) of construction workers in the East of England report having no construction-related qualifications when they started their first job. This is significantly lower than the 75% who reported this in 2018/19, and the 79% who did so in 2015, and is in line with the UK average of 47%.

Around two-thirds (68%) of construction workers in the East of England report holding a construction-related qualification, a significant decline on the 77% who did so in 2018/19. This reflects the UK-wide picture, where there has been a decrease in the proportion of workers holding a qualification, from 72% in 2018/19 to 69% in the latest survey.

As in previous years, the qualifications most likely to be held by construction workers in the East of England are NVQ/SVQ qualifications (72%), returning this to levels seen in 2021 (75%) following a dip in 2018/19 and 2015 (both 61%). One in five (23%) construction workers with qualifications hold City & Guilds qualifications (compared to 16% in 2018/19 and 25% in 2015), whilst 12% hold an apprenticeship, an uplift on the 4% who did so in 2018/19 and 2015. One in twenty construction workers with qualifications hold a Construction Award or a degree (both 3%), and the latter is a reduction on the 9% who held a degree in 2018/19.

Current study for qualifications

Overall, 13% of all construction workers in the East of England are currently working towards formal qualifications relevant to the construction industry (excluding supervisory or managerial qualifications). This is in line with the UK average (13%), and compares with 14% in 2018/19 and 13% in 2015.

Supervisory/managerial training

Amongst the 26% who do not currently perform supervisory/management roles and have not had this role before, 17% want to become a supervisor or manager in the future, fewer than the 29% who did so in 2018/19, and one in twenty (6%) previously held the role and want to return to that status (in line with 7% in 2018/19). Over two thirds (67%) are certain that they do not want to, higher than the UK average of 59%, and close to one in five (18%) are unsure.

A third (34%) of all construction workers in the East of England have received formal training designed to improve managerial or supervisory knowledge or skills, somewhat down on the 41% who had in 2018/19, but in line with the UK average of 33%. Among those who have or

have had some form of supervisory or management responsibilities, four in five (71%) have received formal training, again somewhat down on 2018/19 (82%), and somewhat lower than the UK average (80%).

In terms of the types of supervisory/managerial training undertaken, SMSTS (Site Manager Safety Training Scheme) is most frequently mentioned by those who have undertaken any training (35%), followed by Site Safety Supervisors Courses (29%) and in-house training (16%). These were also the top three most mentioned types of supervisory training in 2018/19, 2015 and 2012.

Basic skill needs

Overall, one in six (18%) construction workers in the East of England believe they would benefit from some form of training in basic skills (compared to 15% in 2018/19, 19% in 2015 and 22% in 2012). This is a similar proportion to the UK average (19%), which has seen an increase since 2018/19 (11%).

Overall skill levels

As in previous years, the vast majority (94%) of construction workers in the East of England have a construction-related qualification and/or skills card/certificate (or were working towards a qualification at the point of interview): only 6% of those interviewed could not say that they were at least working towards obtaining a CSCS card (or similar) or construction qualification.

The proportion of construction workers in the East of England who hold a skill card/certificate, but has no other construction qualification remains at around one in five (19% compared to 17% in 2018/19), and is in line with the UK average (19%).

At 13%, the proportion of construction workers who are working towards a construction qualification is largely in line with 2018/19 (14%) and 2015 (13%), and the UK average (13%).

Overall, 61% of construction workers in the East of England have qualifications equivalent to Level 2 or above, in line with 2018/19 (66%) and 2015 (56%), and 29% have qualifications equivalent to Level 3 or above, again in line with 2018/19 (31%). Both of these figures are in line with the UK average (61% and 32% respectively).

Geographic mobility

Work history in the region/nation

All workers were asked what made them decide to work in the region/nation that they are currently working in. Over half (53%) report that it was because their employer sent them there, in line with 2018/19 (56%). The pattern of results is similar to the UK average, with over half (53%) saying it was because their employer sent them there (compared to the UK average of 47%), and a similar proportion (49%) saying it was because they grew up there/have always lived there (compared to the UK average of 46%).

The pattern of results largely reflects that in 2018/19, with the exception that a greater proportion report they are in their current location because they grew up there (49% compared to 28% in 2018/19), returning this to the levels seen in 2015 (43%).

Half (50%) of construction workers in the East of England have worked within their current region for their whole career, a significant increase on the 27% who had done so in 2018/19, but in line with the UK average (49%). A further third (31%) have worked in their current region for most of their career, meaning that 81% have remained in the East of England for all or most of their career, higher than previous years (56% in 2018/19 and 71% in 2015), and in line with the UK average (83%).

Two thirds (66%) of construction workers in the East of England were in the same region as their previous job, and while this is an increase on 2018/19 (52%) and 2015 (49%), it is still amongst the lowest of any region/nation.

Worker origins

Two thirds (67%) of construction workers in the East of England were interviewed in the same region/nation in which they were living when they started their construction career, and while this is an increase on 2018/19 (44%) and 2015 (55%), it is still amongst the lowest of any region/nation.

Travel to site

The proportion of construction workers in the East of England who were interviewed on a site that was located within the same region/nation as their permanent home has increased to 71% since 2018/19 (60%) and 2015 (63%). However, this is lower than the average across all regions of 85%. Of the 29% who travel outside of their region to their current site, almost all (26%) are from a neighbouring region.

A third (34%) of construction workers in the East of England have worked no more than 20 miles away, continuing an upward trend since 2015 (12%) and 2018/19 (16%), and in line with the UK average of 33%.

A further third (31%) have worked between 21 and 50 miles away, in line with 2018/19 (32%) and 2015 (34%), and with the UK average of 34%.

This leaves a third (35%) who have worked more than 50 miles away from their permanent or current home, including 8% who have worked more than 100 miles away. This compares to 52% and 15% respectively in 2018/19, so there has been a reduction in the proportion who have travelled over 50 miles.

The average (mean) distance from workers' current residence (taking into account temporary residences) to their current site is 20 miles, continuing the downward trend since the survey began (24 miles in 2018/19, 27 miles in 2015 and 42 miles in 2012). This downward trend is also reflected in the national picture, where the average distance is 17 miles, down on 18 miles in 2018/19, 22 miles in 2015 and 28 miles in 2012.

A third (33%) of those providing a response travel less than 10 miles to work, in line with the 36% who did so in 2018/19, and lower than the UK average of 43%, the same proportion (33%) travel between 10 and 19 miles, and close to a further third (28%) travel between 20 and 49 miles.

Use of temporary accommodation

In the East of England, one in twenty (3%) construction workers report that they are currently staying in temporary accommodation while working at their site, in line with 2018/19 (5%) and the UK average (5%).

Site duration and change

A third (32%) of temporary workers do not know how much longer they expect to be working, in line with 2018/19 (34%), and the UK average (32%). One in ten (8%) expect to work for another week or two, 7% for another two to four weeks, a quarter (27%) for one to six months, one in five (18%) for six to twelve months, and one in ten (8%) for more than a year.

Overall, 12% of construction workers in the East of England do not expect to work on that site for more than a month, in line with 2018/19 (9%) and the UK average (12%), and remaining considerably lower than 2015 (30%) and 2012 (25%). Just 2% believe they will be there for less than a week.

Over half (52%) anticipate being on site for more than a month but less than a year, somewhat lower than the 60% who did so in 2018/19, but in line with the UK average of 53%.

Both nationally and in the East of England, one in ten (13%) expect to be on site for more than a year, which is down on 2018/19 (23%) but in line with 2015 (13%).

More than one in five (22%) are uncertain in this regard, higher than 2018/19 (7%), but in line with the UK average of 22%. While around two-thirds (68%) of construction workers in the East of England are confident that when they finish this job they will get a job that allows them to travel from their permanent home to work on a daily basis, this is considerably lower than the 90% who were confident in this respect in 2018/19, and more in line with 2015 (70%). However, it is in line with the national average of 69%.

The proportion who are sure that this will not be the case has remained stable (6% compared to 5% in 2018/19), while the proportion who say it depends where the work is has increased, from 4% in 2018/19 to 20% in the latest survey, as is the case across the UK overall (from 8% in 2018/19 to 20% in 2022).

Sub-sector and sector mobility

Sub-sector mobility

New housing continues to be the most common type of construction work undertaken (79%), followed by housing repair and maintenance (44%), as was the case in 2018/19 (79% and 48% respectively).

While a third have undertaken private industrial work (34%), commercial work (33%) and public non-housing work (28%), these are significantly lower levels than was the case in 2018/19 (54%, 53%, and 60% respectively), returning them to levels that are more in line with 2015 (36%, 39% and 39% respectively).

There has also been a decrease in the proportion of construction workers in the East of England who have worked on infrastructure projects, from 38% in 2018/19 to 21% in the latest survey, returning this to 2015 levels (23%), and placing the East of England in line with the UK average in this respect (23%).

In terms of the number of types of work undertaken, the results are in line with the UK average, but reflecting the findings outlined above, there has been a significant increase in the proportion who have done only one type of work, from 24% in 2018/19 to 45% in the latest survey. One in five (17%) have done two types, and around one in ten have done three types (12%), four types (9%) or five types (11%), and one in twenty (5%) have done six types.

Leaving the sector

In line with the UK average of 86%, over four in five (83%) construction workers in the East of England think it is likely that they will still want to do so, including 45% who say they definitely will be (an increase on the 32% who thought this in 2018/19), and 24% who think it is very likely.

One in ten (10%) say they definitely will not, or it is unlikely that they will, still want to work in construction in five years' time (compared with a UK average of 7%).

Introduction

Aims and objectives

Following on from previous surveys conducted for CITB in 2018/19, 2015, 2012, 2007 and 2005, BMG Research was commissioned to undertake a UK-wide survey of the mobility and skills of UK construction workers in 2022.

The primary aim of this project is to provide robust and reliable information from site-based workers across the UK construction industry on their qualification levels and the extent of their occupational and geographic mobility. This work enhances the evidence-base for skills planning, particularly in respect of profiling the existing workforce and identifying where skills gaps might emerge as a result of occupational and geographic movement. The findings will assist the industry, government, training providers and others with responsibility for industry skills development to direct their work with greater accuracy and effect.

The specific objectives of this research project are to:

- Examine the qualification levels of the construction industry workforce in the UK and analyse what part qualifications have played in career progression.
- Identify, quantify and analyse the extent to which the workforce in each region/nation within the UK comprises workers originating or living in other parts of the UK (or further afield) and mobility and travel to work.
- Examine the occupations and qualification levels of the mobile UK-origin workforce and of that part of the workforce with overseas origins.
- Examine the scale and extent of occupational mobility within the construction workforce to see how workers in construction occupations change their occupations over time, both within construction and in relation to other sectors, and, related to this, the extent to which managers and supervisors have received training specifically to enhance their managerial skills.

The focus of the survey is on site-based physical delivery of construction projects and, therefore, excludes associated clerical and sales occupations and professionals such as architects, surveyors and office-based managers.

Method

The 2022 Construction Workforce Mobility Survey followed a similar methodology to that used in the last wave of this research in 2018/19. Overall, 3,005 interviews with construction workers in site-based roles across the UK were required, split between the 12 standard regions/nations. In total, 202 interviews were conducted in the East of England.

Sampling

This sub-section provides an overview of the sampling methodology employed for the survey. Further detail is provided in the technical report that accompanies this analytical report.

Although this survey focuses on the mobility of individual workers, the sampling strategy was to select construction projects (generally referred to in this report as 'sites') with sufficient workers on-site each day to enable a minimum of 10 interviews. This site-based approach was employed to ensure cost-effective face-to-face interviewing, comparable to that used in previous editions of the survey.

Also as in previous surveys, the commercially produced 'Glenigan' database of construction projects was used as the sampling frame.

Project eligibility criteria were:

- value: £250,000+
- contract stage: 'start on site'; 'contract awarded' or 'bills called' only
- site start date/end date: Active throughout planned fieldwork period

Where sites met these criteria, they were deemed eligible to participate. A target of 30 sites per English region and in each of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland was set in order to achieve a sufficient number of interviews in each. However, in some instances this target was not achievable due to site refusals to take part, some sites not meeting the eligibility criteria on further screening, or lower than expected numbers of on-site workers being available. In some regions, more than 30 sites were recruited to compensate.

Telephone-based site recruitment

BMG's research team recruited sites that were eligible and willing to support the research by allowing an interviewer to visit the site to interview at least 10 workers who were mainly in manual trades/roles. A recruitment questionnaire (reproduced in the technical report) was used to check the eligibility of the site and to collect important operational information that would be required by the interviewer visiting the site. The majority of recruitment was undertaken with individual site managers, but in a number of cases the recruiters also spoke with local, regional or national managers (often dependent upon the size of the company). At this stage recruiters booked a convenient time and appointment date for an interviewer

to visit the site and a confirmation email was sent to the relevant individual. Confirmation calls were made ahead of site visits to ensure recall of the visit.

Site visits

In the majority of cases, interviewers were allocated space to conduct interviews in the offices or canteen area. However, on some sites interviewers worked 'on-the-hoof' in active parts of the site (with or without a 'chaperone'). All interviewers had completed the CSCS Health & Safety Test for Operatives immediately prior to fieldwork and had a PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) kit to comply with site requirements.

Interviews were completed using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) techniques as well as self-completion techniques. They were undertaken between May and December 2022

Further detail on the interviewing process is provided in the technical report.

The following table shows the number of interviews achieved in each region/nation. In order to obtain strong bases for regional/national analysis, a quota of 200 completed questionnaires per region/nation was set, with an allowance of +/- 50 interviews per region/nation. However, at the analysis stage, weighting factors were applied to survey data to ensure that, for national analysis, regions/nations were represented in their correct proportions according to the size of the construction workforce per region/nation as reported in the government's Annual Population Survey of economically active adults aged 16 and over.

Figure 1: Number of interviews in the weighted sample by region/nation

	Interviews	Weighted percentage
North East	206	3.3
North West	271	11.2
Yorkshire and the Humber	200	8.1
East Midlands	232	7.1
East of England	306	7.0
East of England	202	11.2
London	443	13.6
South East	283	15.5
South West	201	8.9
Scotland	233	8.2
Wales	202	4.0
Northern Ireland	226	2.5
UK	3,005	100.0

*Source Annual Population Survey via Nomis: Economically Active adults aged 16+, Oct 2021-Sep 2022; note that total percentage does not add exactly to 100 because of rounding

Further information on sampling and the sites included can be found in the technical report.

Methodological points to note

In discussing findings from this 2022 survey of mobility and skills in the UK's construction industry workforce, a number of methodological points are relevant, as follows.

Sampling variation (for example, random differences in the composition of the samples in different editions of the survey or in the different regional sub-samples within this year's survey) may induce apparent differences or exaggerate actual differences in survey findings over time or between regions which owe more to these sampling effects than to real world change. This effect is particularly likely when considering smaller sub-sets of data where such effects have the potential to have a proportionately greater impact. The point is not that differences in findings for different groups or over time are necessarily unreal but that a degree of care needs to be applied in interpreting the findings such that their consistency with other related data and with extraneous knowledge of the environment in which the survey took place is taken into account.

Further, on this question of interpretation, it is evident that a broad survey, as here, of large numbers of respondents using a structured questionnaire, produces statements of fact (as far as best survey practice can estimate 'fact') but does not necessarily explain the reason for a particular statistic or its change over time.

Notes on reading this report

A number of conventions have been employed within this report to assist with the concise presentation of numeric data and with brevity within text.

The base for statistics is described under each figure (table or graph) heading, with the base counts (unweighted) on dedicated rows of tables. Where tables include statistics on many different bases, the unweighted bases for 2022 data are shown in brackets.

All tables and graphs present percentages (unless otherwise stated) calculated upon the bases shown. Where 'mean' averages are shown, these are calculated upon the stated base, minus any responses 'not stated' or choosing a 'don't know/not applicable' response.

Tables and graphs are all labelled with a simple sequential 'Figure Number' and title. All tables and graphs have clearly labelled base sizes (for all sub-groups) and textual definitions of bases. The total of percentages shown in a table may vary slightly from 100% due to rounding to the nearest percentage point.

'**' is used to denote a statistic of less than 0.5% but greater than 0.

Analysis by region/nation should be read with caution because of their limited sub-sample sizes. Unweighted bases are shown throughout for guidance on this point.

Profile of construction site workers

This first section of the report provides a profile of construction site workers interviewed in the survey and where possible makes comparisons with previous years' surveys. The section examines: *personal demographics*, including gender, age, ethnicity, nationality (including length of time that workers have been resident in the UK) and disability; *current occupation*; *employment status* i.e. whether employed directly, self-employed or by an agency; and *employment contract basis* i.e. whether working on a temporary or permanent basis.

The section then moves on to examine career histories, including: the number of years respondents have worked in the construction industry, pre-construction employment histories, occupational switching, and progression within the construction sector.

Personal demographics

Figures 2 to 5 detail the demographic profile (gender, age, ethnicity, nationality and disability) of the 2022 sample of construction workers, compared with the 2018/19 and 2015 surveys and official statistics from the Annual Population Survey (where comparisons are possible).

Gender

As in previous years of the survey, the vast majority of construction workers in manual roles interviewed in the East of England were male (97%), in line with the UK average. Male dominance is greater in the survey sample than in the UK construction workforce as a whole as this survey does not include those in office-based roles within the construction industry (either administrative or professional, where the incidence of female workers is higher) and interviews were conducted on relatively large construction sites (valued at £250,000+, with at least 10 workers), thereby excluding female construction workers on small building sites and in maintenance and repair (an industry segment in which women, for example in some small all-female businesses, may be slightly more frequent). More detail is shown in the following figure.

Figure 2: Gender profile of the sample compared with the UK profile and the Annual Population Survey

Base: All respondents

	EE 2022 %	UK 2022 %	UK Workforce* %
Male	97	97	52
Female	2	2	48
Transgender	<0.5	<0.5	-
Non-binary	<0.5	<0.5	-
Prefer not to say	0	<0.5	-
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	202	3,005	33,808,600

Q43 *Source Annual Population Survey via Nomis: Economically Active adults aged 16+ Oct 2021-Sep 2022

Age

Within the East of England, 15% of construction workers are aged 16 to 24, in line with the UK average, and the wider UK workforce. A fifth (22%) are aged 25 to 34, and close to a third (31%) are aged 35 to 44, a higher proportion than the UK average of 24%, but in line with the UK workforce (33%). The remaining 30% are aged 45 or over.

Compared to 2018/19, the age profile has become somewhat older, with 63% aged 35 or over, compared to 54% in 2018/19.

Figure 3: Age profile of the sample compared with 2018/19, 2015 and 2012 and the Annual Population Survey

Base: All respondents

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/9 %	EE 2015 %	EE 2012 %	UK 2022 %		UK Workforce* %
16 to 19 years	4	4	4	3	6	16 to 19 years	4
20 to 24 years	11	10	17	14	13	20 to 24 years	9
25 to 34 years	22	32	31	26	26	25 to 34 years	23
35 to 44 years	31	26	20	28	24	35 to 49 years	33
45 to 54 years	17	17	17	17	17	50 to 64 years	28
55 to 59 years	10	5	5	12	8		
60+ years	3	5	5		6	65+ years	4
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>366</i>	<i>407</i>	<i>3,005</i>		<i>33,808,600</i>

Q44 *Source Annual Population Survey via Nomis: Economically Active adults aged 16+ Oct 2021-Sep 2022

Ethnicity

In terms of ethnicity, the vast majority of construction workers in the East of England continue to be of White origin (94% compared to 94% in 2018/19, 96% in 2015 and 94% in 2012).

On this basis, 2% are of Black, Asian or Mixed origin, lower than the UK working age population (12%).

Figure 4: Ethnic profile of the sample compared with previous surveys and the UK population

Base: All respondents

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %	EE 2012 %	UK 2022 %	UK population aged 16 to 64* %
White	94	94	96	94	91	84
Black	1	1	2	1	2	4
Asian	0	2	0	2	2	6
Mixed	1	1	0	0	1	2
Other/Not stated	4	1	3	3	3	4
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>366</i>	<i>407</i>	<i>3,005</i>	<i>41,439,500</i>

Q49 *Source Annual population Survey via Nomis: UK population aged 16-64 Oct 2021-Sep 2022

Figure 5 summarises the proportion of construction workers of non-white (ethnic minority) origin overall and within each region/nation and compares the profile with construction workers from the 2018/19, 2015 and 2012 surveys and with the population (aged 16-64) of each region/nation as a whole.

At 5%, the proportion of East of England construction workers of ethnic minority origin is fourth highest after London (19%), the South East (11%), and the West Midlands. However, this is a significantly lower proportion than is the case among the East of England working age population (12%).

Figure 5: Proportion of construction workers of ethnic minority (Non-White) origin

Base: All respondents

	UK 2022 %	UK 2018/9 %	UK 2015 %	UK 2012 %	Non-white (ethnic minority) population aged 16-64* %
UK	7	6	4	4	14
East Midlands	3	2	2	2	14
East of England	5	5	3	4	12
London	19	15	15	12	41
North East	2	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5	6
North West	1	3	1	2	13
South East	11	10	8	3	12
South West	3	5	2	1	6
West Midlands	7	7	5	9	22
Yorkshire and the Humber	5	5	2	1	12
Wales	3	2	2	<0.5	5
Scotland	3	1	2	1	6
Northern Ireland	1	1	1	<0.5	4
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>3,005</i>	<i>4,048</i>	<i>4,771</i>	<i>4,933</i>	<i>41,439,500</i>

Q49 *Source Annual population Survey via Nomis: UK Population aged 16-64 by ethnicity Oct 2021-Sep 2022

Country of origin

Construction workers were asked for details about their nationality and country of origin. The table below focuses on the non-UK nationalities that are most frequent in the 2022 survey.

As was the case in 2018/19, the majority of construction workers in the East of England (78%, compared to 72% in 2018/19) originated from the UK and the remaining 22% originated from another country, 16% from within the EU, and 6% from outside the EU.

At 16%, the proportion originating from within the EU is higher than the UK average of 9%, and is only exceeded in London (30%).

Figure 6: Country of origin of non-UK national construction workers in the UK by region/nation as a percentage of the total workforce

Base: All respondents

Row percentages	Unweighted bases	EU %	Non-EU %	Albania %	Romania %	Lithuania %
UK	3,005	9	8	1	5	1
East Midlands	232	5	8	1	2	1
East of England	202	16	6	1	8	5
London	443	30	29	5	19	2
North East	206	2	1	0	<0.5	0
North West	271	2	2	0	1	0
South East	283	11	7	1	6	1
South West	201	2	2	<0.5	1	0
West Midlands	306	2	6	0	<0.5	<0.5
Yorkshire and the Humber	200	6	3	0	1	1
Wales	202	3	3	0	1	0
Scotland	233	4	2	<0.5	0	0
Northern Ireland	226	4	2	0	0	0

Q45 Note: Romania and Lithuania are included in the EU proportion. Albania is included in the non-EU proportion. In neither case, therefore, are these individual country proportions *additional* to the respective EU/non-EU proportions

Holding of passports

Reflecting the results above, where one in five workers originated from a non-UK country, one in six (18%) construction workers in the East of England hold a non-UK passport, which is higher than the UK average of 13%.

Three quarters (75%) hold a UK passport, and 5% do not have a passport.

Length of time living in the UK

Again, reflecting the results above, three quarters (74%) of construction workers in the East of England have lived in the UK all their lives, lower than the UK average of 80%, but in line with 2018/19 (71%). While a quarter (25%) have not lived in the UK all their lives, the majority of this group (22%) have lived in the UK for more than five years.

Figure 7: Length of time that construction workers have lived in the UK by region/nation

Base: All respondents

Row percentages	Unweighted bases	All their lives %	Up to 5 years %	More than 5 years %
UK	3,005	80	5	14
East Midlands	232	83	3	13
East of England	202	74	2	22
London	443	39	16	39
North East	206	96	<0.5	4
North West	271	93	<0.5	6
South East	283	77	7	16
South West	201	87	1	8
West Midlands	306	91	1	7
Yorkshire and the Humber	200	91	0	9
Wales	202	90	2	6
Scotland	233	92	5	3
Northern Ireland	226	92	2	5

Q39

Disability

Amongst all construction workers in the East of England, 5% cent report that they have a long-term illness, health problem, or disability which limits the type of work they can do (as compared to 2% in 2018/19), in line with the UK average of 3%.

Occupational profile

Current job role

All workers were asked what their current trade or occupation is at their site. Respondents in a supervisory role were asked to detail their trade/occupation background, as their supervisory roles would be asked about later in the survey. Figure 8 summarises all the

trades/occupations mentioned by at least 1% of the sample and compares this with the occupational profile from the 2018/19 and 2015 surveys.

The proportion of construction workers in the East of England who are labourers/general operatives has returned to the levels seen in 2015 (19% compared to 16%), after a dip in 2018/19 (8%), and is in line with the UK average (18%).

Plant/machine operatives account for one in ten (10%) construction workers in the East of England, in line with previous years and the UK average (9%).

Other occupations account for less than 10% of the sample in each instance.

Figure 8: Occupational profile

Base: All respondents. Mentions 1%+

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %	UK 2022 %
Labourer/General operative	19	8	16	18
Plant/machine operative (e.g. Fork lift/JCB)	10	10	8	9
Carpenter/joiner	8	6	6	9
Site manager	7	13	7	9
Bricklayer	6	9	13	10
Ground worker	6	5	7	5
Dryliner	6	5	2	3
Plumber	5	6	4	3
Technical e.g. surveyor, maintenance technician	4	4	2	3
Electrician	3	8	13	5
Scaffolder	3	2	4	3
Supervisor/foreman	2	3	Na	2
Ceiling fixer	2			1
Banksman/Banksperson	2	2	1	2
Pipe fitter	1	3	2	1
Roofer	1	3	3	3
Project Manager	1	1	Na	1
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	202	298	366	3,005

Q5

Supervisory roles

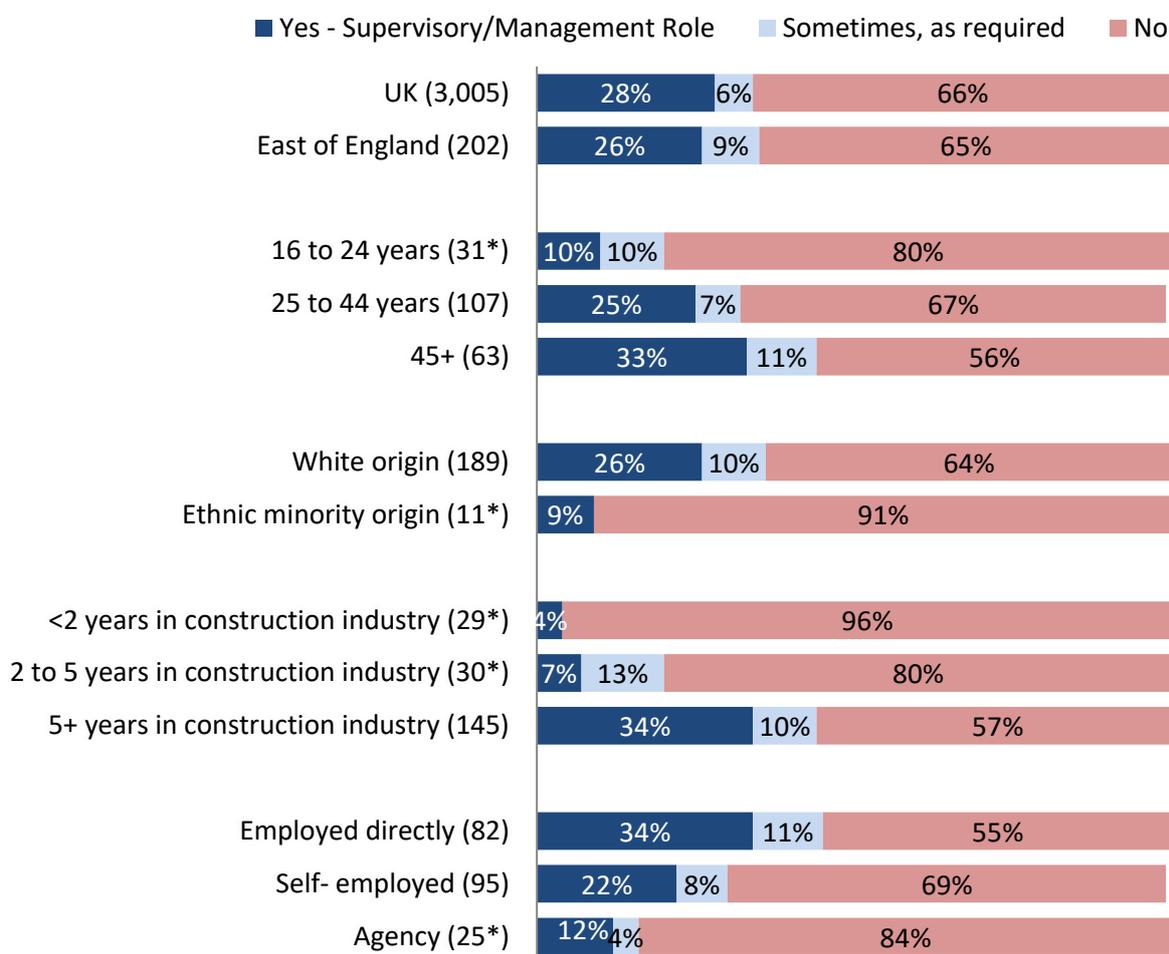
Around a quarter (26%) of all construction workers in the East of England say they perform a supervisory or management role on their site, returning this to the levels seen in 2015 (24%) after an uplift in 2018/19 (40%), and placing the region in line with the UK average of 28%.

As was the case previously, the incidence of workers in a supervisory role increases with age, from 10% of 16 to 24 year olds to 33% of those aged 45+, and by length of time in the industry, from 5% of those in the industry for less than two years, to 34% of those in the industry for more than five years.

As would be expected, workers who are directly employed by a company continue to be significantly more likely than those who are self-employed or work for an agency to perform a supervisory role (34% compared to 22% and 12% respectively).

Figure 9: Whether respondents perform a supervisory or management role

Base: All respondents



Q8. Unweighted bases in parentheses

* Caution: low base

Employment status

Around half (47%) of construction workers in the East of England are self-employed, somewhat up on 2018/19 (40%), and in line with 2015 (48%), and higher than the national average of 42%.

The proportion working for an employment agency has also increased, from 4% in 2018/19 to 12% in the latest survey, placing the East of England above the UK average in this respect (9%).

There has been a corresponding decrease in the proportion employed directly, from 55% in 2018/19 to 41% in the latest survey, placing the East of England below the UK average in this respect (48%).

Figure 10: Employment status

Base: All respondents

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %	UK 2022 %	Years working in construction %			
					Up to a year	1 to 2 years	2 to 5 years	5+ years
Self-employed	47	40	48	42	45	25	37	52
Employed directly by a company (contractor or sub- contractor)	41	55	46	48	27	44	37	42
Working for an employment agency	12	4	6	9	27	31	27	6
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>366</i>	<i>3,005</i>	<i>11*</i>	<i>16*</i>	<i>30*</i>	<i>145</i>

Q20

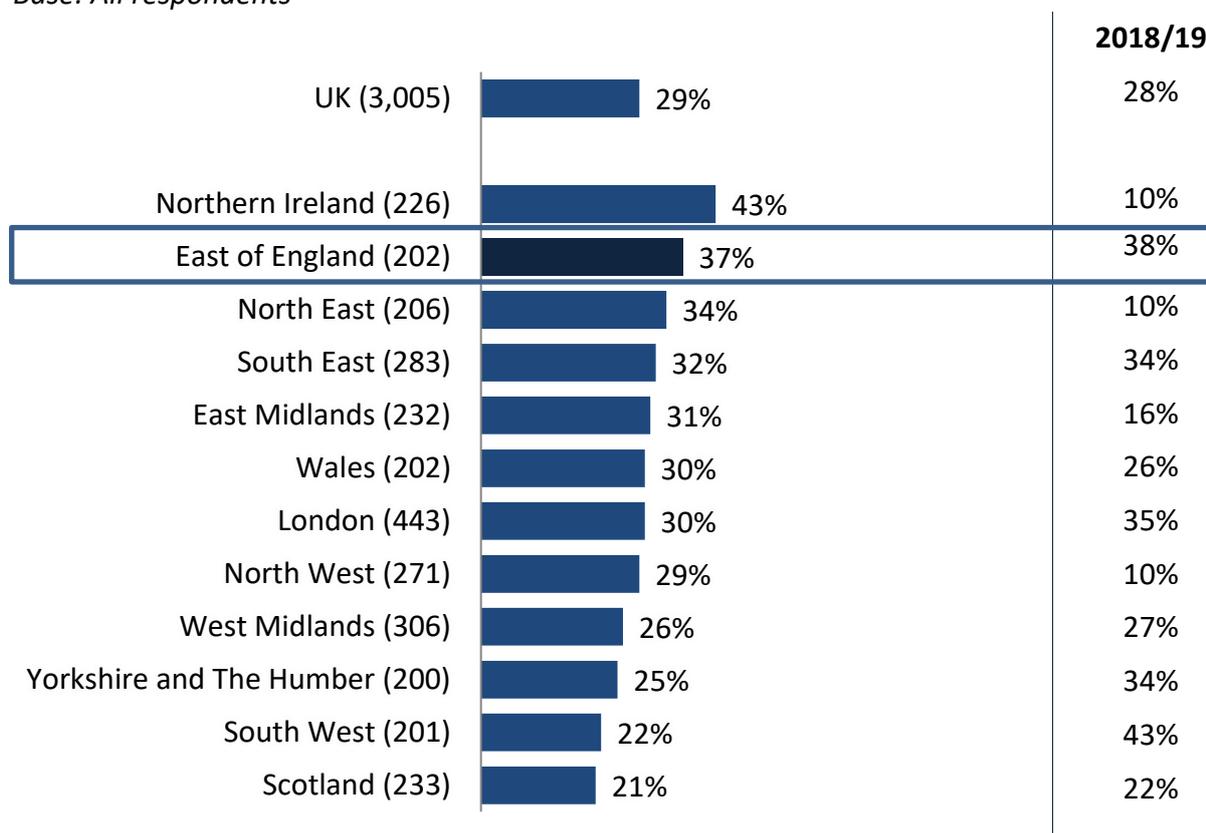
* Caution: low base

Employment contract basis

Close to two in five (37%) construction workers in the East of England are employed on a temporary basis, in line with 2018/19 (38%), exceeded only by Northern Ireland (43%), and higher than the UK average (29%), as was the case in 2018/19.

Figure 11: Proportion of workers employed on a temporary basis, by region/nation (including fixed-term contracts)

Base: All respondents



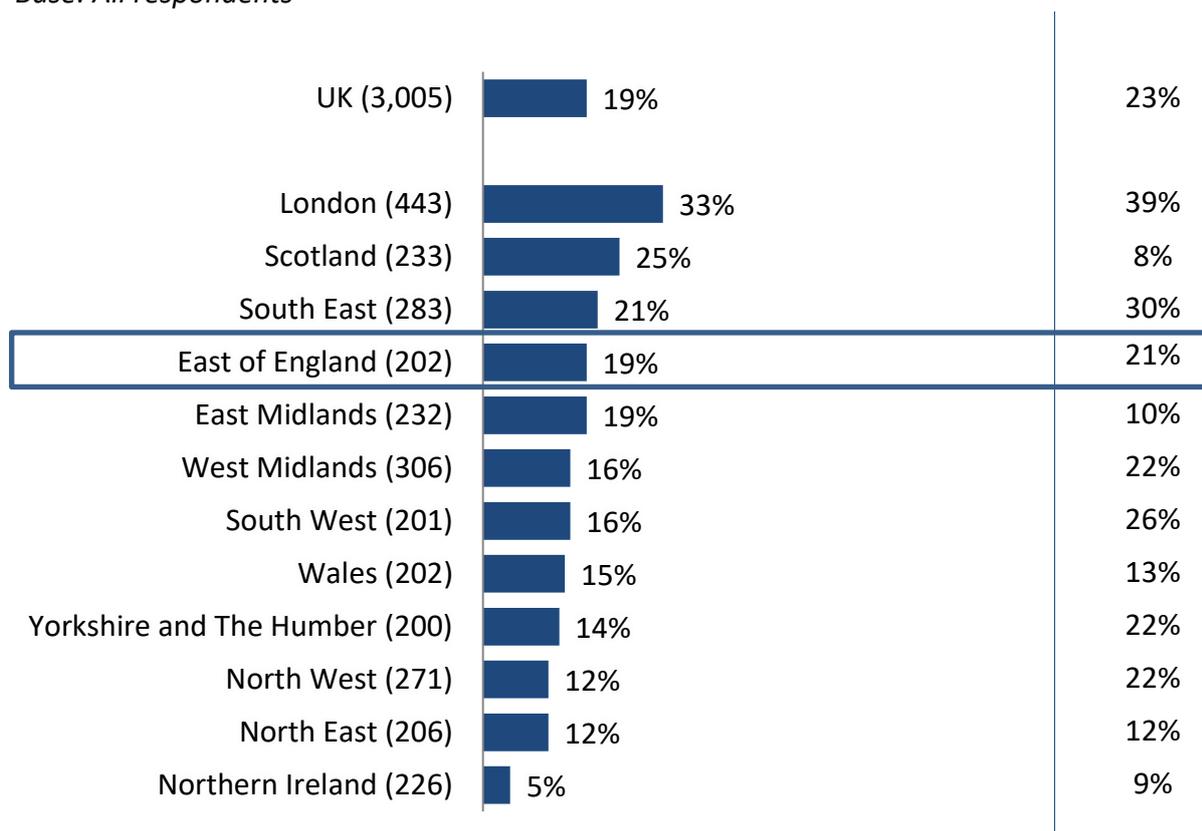
Q21. Unweighted bases in parentheses

Hours worked

Construction workers in the East of England, as across the UK as a whole, are most likely to report that they work between 40 and 49 hours per week (58%, compared with a UK average of 59%), while 19% work more than 50 hours a week, in line with 2018/19 (21%), and with the UK average of 19%.

Figure 12: Proportion of workers that typically work 50 or more hours per week, by region/nation

Base: All respondents



Q22. Unweighted bases in parentheses

Work histories

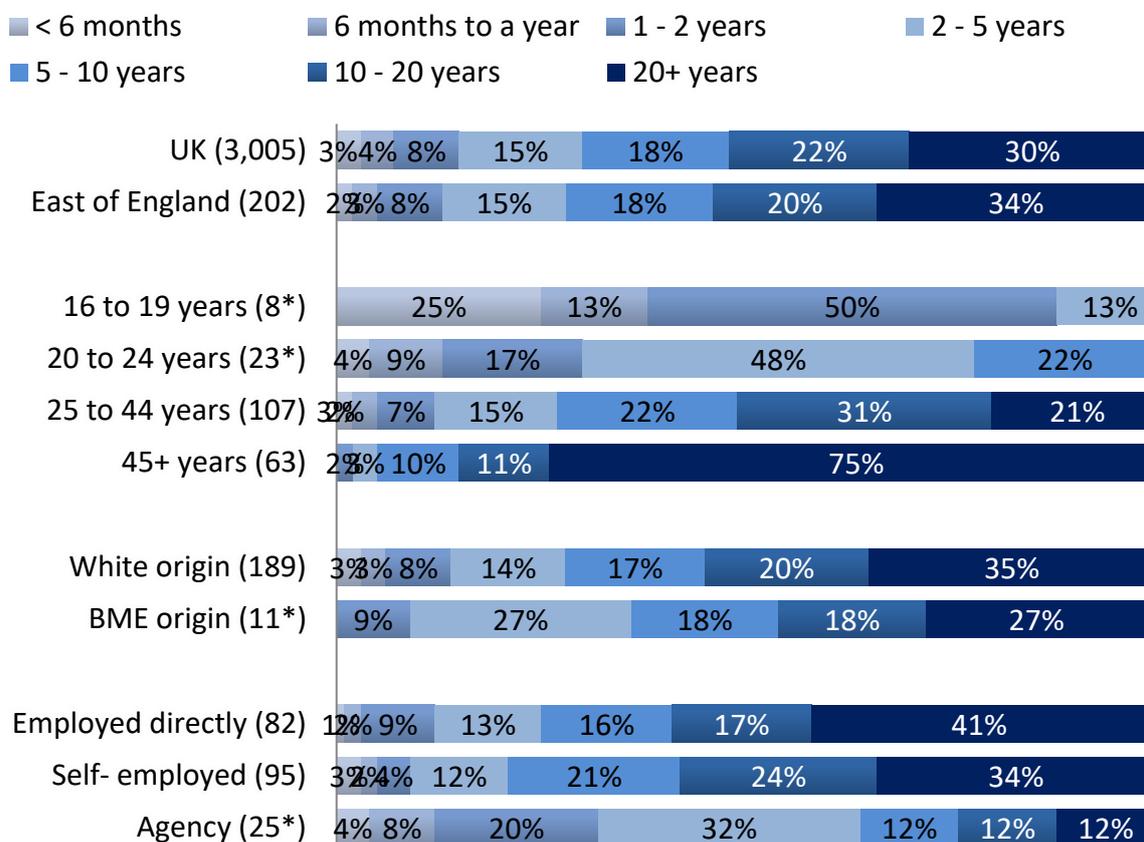
Time in the sector

A third (34%) of all construction workers in the East of England have worked in the construction industry for over 20 years, in line with 2018/19 (31%), and the UK average (30%). Over half (54%) have worked in the industry for at least 10 years, somewhat lower than 2018/19 (59%), but in line with the UK average (52%).

As would be expected, the length of experience in the industry increases with age, with three quarters of all construction workers aged 45 and over having more than 20 years' experience of working in the sector (75%), although this is somewhat lower than was the case in 2018/19 (84%).

Figure 13: Years spent working in the construction sector

Base: All respondents



Q1. Unweighted bases in parentheses

* Caution: low base

The proportion who has spent more than twenty years in the industry has continued to increase over time, from 27% in 2015 to 34% in the latest survey.

Figure 14: Years spent working in the construction sector (cumulative)

Base: All respondents

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %	UK 2022 %
Less than 6 months	2	4	4	3
Up to a year	5	6	8	7
Up to 2 years	13	11	13	14
Up to 5 years	28	24	27	29
Up to 10 years	46	41	47	48
Up to 20 years	66	69	72	70
More than 20 years	34	31	27	30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>366</i>	<i>3,005</i>

Q1

Pre-construction employment histories

At 52%, the proportion of East of England construction workers who have worked pretty much continuously in the industry has returned to the levels seen in 2015 (54%), following an increase in 2018/19 (60%), but is below the UK average of 61%.

The overall proportion who has only ever worked in construction has remained consistent (65% in 2022 and 2018/19), and is somewhat below the UK average (71%).

Figure 15: Statement that best describes respondents' work histories since leaving full time education and starting their first job in construction.

All respondents

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %	UK 2022 %	Age %			
					16 – 19*	20 – 24*	25 - 44	45+
I've worked in construction pretty much continuously (and not worked in any other industry)	52	60	54	61	50	13	56	60
I have only worked in construction jobs but have had spells of being out of work	8	2	7	6	0	13	10	3
My first job was in construction but I've also worked in other sorts of jobs in one or more other industries	9	5	9	8	0	13	7	13
My first job after full time education was NOT in construction. I moved into the industry after working in other sort(s) of jobs	21	28	20	18	13	22	23	19
This is my first job. I haven't worked in any other industry.	5	3	5	4	25	17	3	2
This is my first job in construction but I have worked in other sorts of jobs in one or more other industries	4	1	2	4	13	22	1	3
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	202	298	366	3,005	8*	23*	107	63

Q2

* Caution: low base

Overall, a one in five (21%) of construction workers in the East of England say that their first job after full-time education was not in construction and that they moved into the industry after working in other sorts of jobs/sectors, fewer than in 2018/19 (29%), but in line with the UK average of 22%.

Those who had worked in other sectors before starting their construction careers were asked to give details of what they were doing immediately before they started working in construction.

The most common sectors in which construction workers had started their careers were wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (19%) and accommodation (17%), with an increase for the latter since 2018/19 (1%).

Manufacturing has seen a significant decline, with only 6% of construction workers having previously worked in this sector, as compared to 49% in 2018/19.

Figure 16: Industry worked in before starting work in the construction sector

Base: Where first job was not in construction Sectors mentioned by >5% of respondents

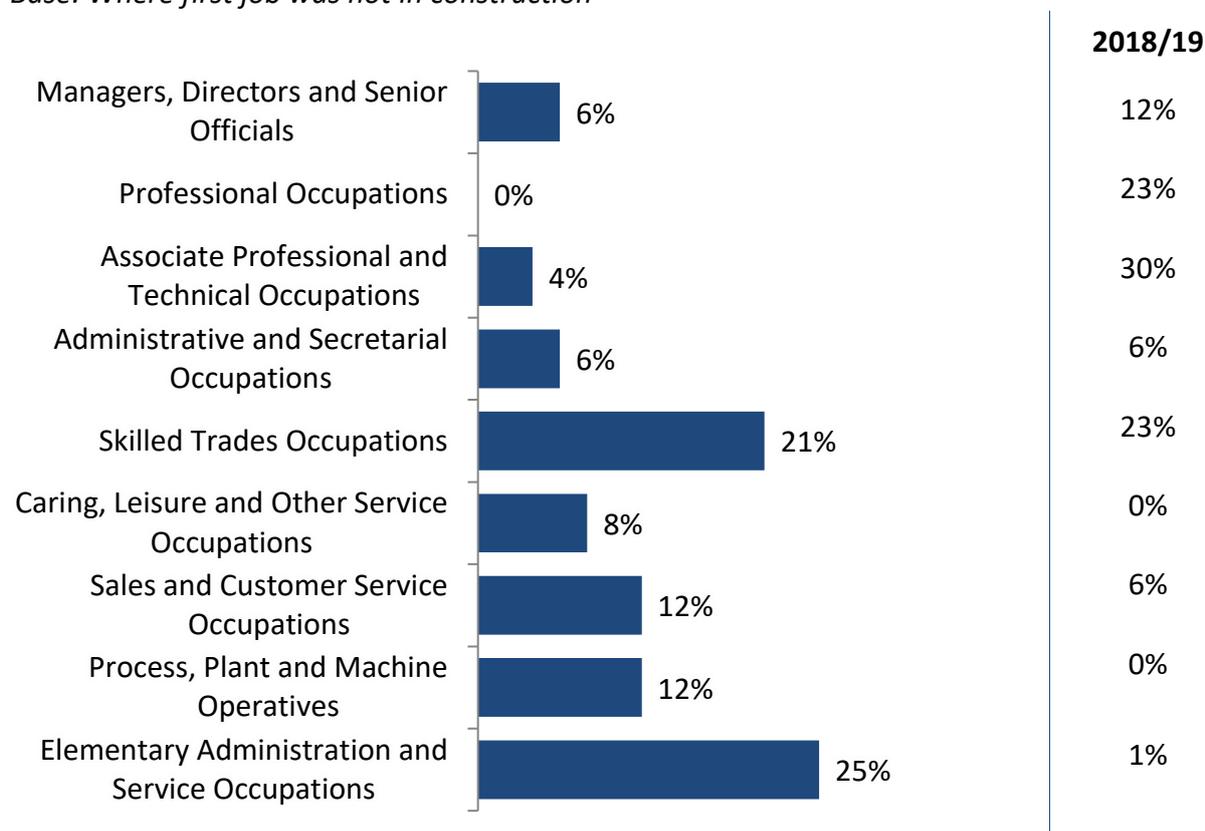
	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %	UK 2022 %
G – Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	19	12	17	22
I – Accommodation	17	1	11	10
A – Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	8	12	4	4
C – Manufacturing	6	49	25	20
R – Arts, entertainment and recreation	6	-	-	3
Q – Human health and social work activities	6	-	-	5
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	52	84	81	624

Q3

In terms of the job roles that respondents have held in other sectors, the highest proportions were in elementary administration and service occupations (25%) and skilled trades occupations (21%). The first of these – elementary administration and service occupations has seen a significant increase since 2018/19 (1%).

Figure 17: Job roles undertaken in other sectors in 2022 compared with 2018/19

Base: Where first job was not in construction



Q3. Unweighted base (52)

Occupational switching and progression within construction

All workers were asked whether they have worked in differing construction roles or occupations whilst working in the construction industry.

Overall, close to two in five (37%) of all construction workers in the East of England have worked in more than one construction trade or occupation whilst working in the construction industry, in line with 2018/19 (44%) and with the UK average (35%).

Construction workers who have worked in other roles/occupations within the construction industry, other than the role they are currently in, were asked to specify which trades/occupations they had previously worked in, with each worker able to list all previous occupations.

Amongst the 37% of all East of England construction workers that had worked in at least one other role/occupation, 12% had worked in 1 previous role, 48% had worked in 2 previous roles, 31% had worked in 3 roles/occupations and 9% had worked in 4 roles/occupations.

Workers are most likely to have previously worked as a labourer/general operative (40%), as a plant/machine operative (19%) or as a bricklayer (16%). This is largely in line with the UK average.

Figure 18: Previous occupations/trades in the construction sector

Base: Workers that have switched occupations within construction

Occupation	EE 2022 %	UK 2022 %
Labourer/General operative	40	39
Plant/machine operative (e.g. Fork lift/JCB)	19	10
Bricklayer	16	12
Carpenter/joiner	12	15
Painter/decorator	9	4
Plasterer	7	5
Roofer	7	4
Dryliner	5	5
Banksman/Banksperson	5	7
Floorer	4	4
Ceiling fixer	3	3
Site manager	3	4
Pipe fitter	3	2
Mechanical fitter	3	2
Scaffolder	1	2
Other	12	10
<i>Unweighted base</i>	75	1,082

Q7

Future career plans

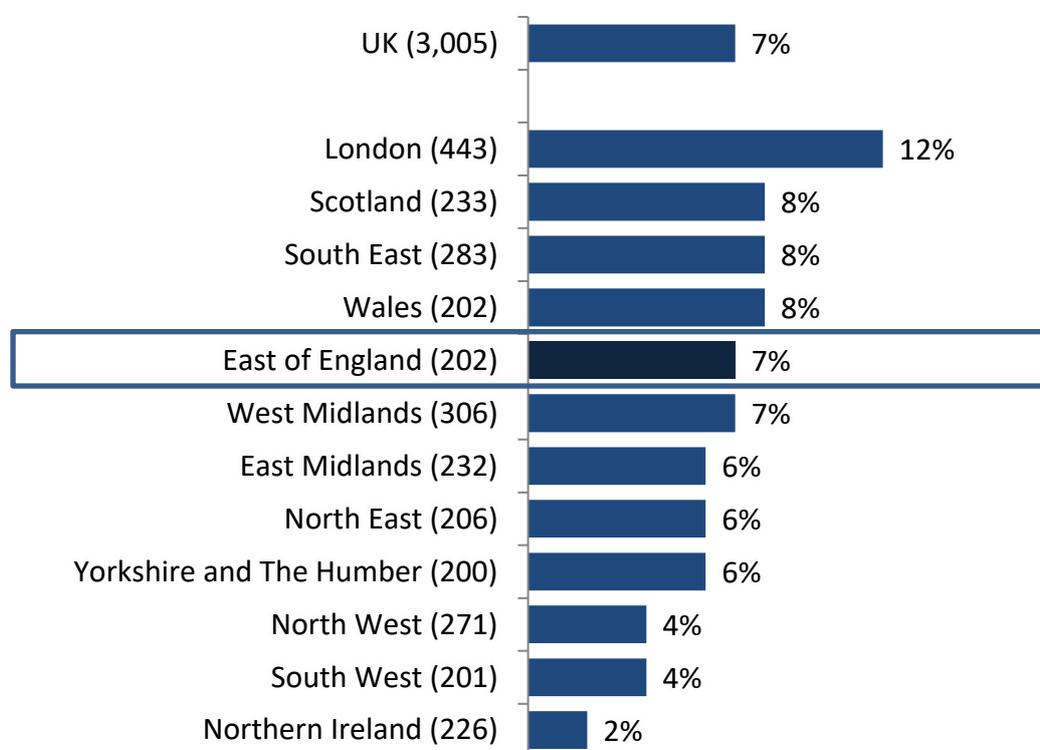
Four in five (80%) construction workers in the East of England would like to carry on in the same trade or occupation, similar to 2018/19 (77%) and the 2022 UK average of 80%.

Close to one in ten (7%) would like to change their trade/occupation, again in line with the UK average (7%), but lower than the 13% who did so in 2018/19. The remainder would like to leave construction (6%) or were unsure (7%).

Those in the industry for between two and five years are more likely than average to want to change trade (17%) or to leave construction (17%).

Figure 19: Proportion of construction workers who would like to change their trade or occupation within the construction sector, by region/nation

Base: All respondents



Q33. Unweighted bases in parentheses

Qualifications and skills

This section of the report explores construction workers' qualification levels and other accreditations, examining differences by key variables such as region/nation, occupation and length of experience. The issues covered in this section include:

- the range of skill cards and certificates held by workers
- construction-related qualifications: gained before starting work in the construction sector; since starting work in the sector; and being worked towards
- workers' self-perceived need for additional training in basic skills

Construction skill cards and certificates

While over nine in ten (91%) of all construction workers in the East of England report holding a skill card or certificate (e.g. CSCS or CSR), this is a reduction on the 96 to 98% who did so in previous surveys. While this reflects the UK picture, which has seen a similar decline (from 97% to 93%), the decrease in the East of England is among the most marked, such that they now have among the lowest levels of card-holding.

Correspondingly, the proportion who have no cards has risen from 3% in 2018/19, to 9% in the latest survey.

Figure 20: Proportion of workers who have a skill card/certificate, by region/nation

Base: All respondents

	2022 %	2018/19 %	2015 %	2012 %
Total (3,005)	93	97	96	97
South West (201)	97	97	96	97
Northern Ireland (226)	97	97	90	100
North East (206)	97	94	96	99
Wales (202)	95	92	92	92
Yorkshire and the Humber (200)	94	98	97	97
South East (283)	93	98	98	96
London (443)	92	98	98	96
West Midlands (306)	91	99	98	100
Scotland (233)	91	99	88	98
North West (271)	91	98	97	99
East of England (202)	91	97	96	98
East Midlands (232)	90	93	93	99
<i>Unweighted bases for 2022 in parentheses</i>				

Q12

In terms of the type of skill card or certificate held by construction workers in the East of England, the CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme (GB) is the most commonly held (83%), in line with 2018/19 (84%) and 2015 (83%).

Close to one in five (17%) hold the CPCS (Construction Plant Competence Scheme), somewhat higher than 2018/19 (12%), and 6% hold the CISRS (Construction Industry Scaffolders Record Scheme).

Those employed directly are more likely than average to hold CISRS (12%), and those who are self-employed are less likely than average to hold it (2%).

Those employed on a permanent basis are more likely than average to hold CPCS (24%), CISRS (10%) and CSR (7%), and to hold a card/certificate overall (94%).

Figure 21: Type of skill card/certificate held

Base: All respondents

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %
CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) (GB)	83	84	83
CSR (Construction Skills Register) (NI)	4	0	1
CISRS (Construction Industry Scaffolders Record Scheme)	6	2	4
CPCS (Construction Plant Competence Scheme)	17	12	12
Other	4	3	6
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>366</i>

Q12

Workers who hold a CSCS card were asked what colour their cards are.

Overall 13% of CSCS card holders have Red cards, over a quarter (27%) have Green cards, and a third (35%) have Blue cards. One in seven (15%) have Gold cards and 6% have Black cards, with other types of card held by less than 5%.

Figure 22: Colour of CSCS card held

Base: Where CSCS card is held

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %
Red – Trainee	9	2
Red – Experienced worker card	4	3
Green – construction site operative card for general site workers	27	34
Blue – skilled	35	26
Gold – Advanced craft/skilled worker	8	12
Gold – supervisor card	7	6
Black – contracts manager card	6	8
Academically Qualified Persons Card	1	Na
Professionally Qualified Persons Card	1	Na
Construction Site Visitor Card	0	Na
Apprentice Card	1	Na
Other	1	4
Unsure	2	1
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>168</i>	<i>250</i>

Q13

Construction qualifications held

Respondents were asked about the qualifications they held after leaving full-time education and starting their first proper job in construction.

Overall, close to half (46%) of construction workers in the East of England report having no construction-related qualifications when they started their first job. This is significantly lower than the 72% who reported this in 2018/19, and the 79% who did so in 2015, but is in line with the 2022 UK average of 47%.

Those in temporary positions are more likely than average to report having no qualifications (31%), and this rises to 42% of those working as labourers/general operatives.

After being asked about the qualifications they had when they first started their career, all workers were asked what other formal qualifications relevant to construction they have gained since starting in the industry. By combining the responses to both these questions the highest level of construction qualification held at the time of interview (including the type of qualification, the subject of the qualification, and its level) is derived.

Overall, two-thirds (68%) of construction workers in the East of England report holding a construction-related qualification, a significant decline on the 77% who did so in 2018/19. This reflects the UK-wide picture, where there has been a decrease in the proportion of workers holding a qualification, from 72% in 2018/19 to 69% in the latest survey.

Figure 23: Proportion of workers that hold any construction-specific qualification

Base: All respondents

		EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %	EE 2012 %	UK 2022 %
Total (202)		68	77	60	65	69
Age	16 to 19 years (8*)	50	62	67	0	54
	20 to 24 years (23*)	61	61	49	62	64
	25 to 44 years (107)	72	76	62	68	67
	45+ years (63)	65	85	64	64	78
Length of time in construction	<1 year (11*)	18	26	27	0	46
	1 to 2 years (16*)	38	53	31	20	45
	2 to 5 years (30)	60	61	55	57	62
	5+ years (145)	77	85	68	71	75
Current contract type	Employed directly (82)	65	79	61	72	69
	Self-employed (95)	79	75	60	64	74
	Agency (25*)	36	69	64	33	50
<i>Unweighted bases for 2022 in parentheses</i>						

Q15/Q16

* Caution: low base

Type of construction qualifications held

Based on the qualifications that workers had when they first started working in the construction industry and any they have gained since, Figure 24 summarises the types of qualifications that workers hold and compares the figures to previous surveys (amongst those who have any qualifications and who provided a response).

As in previous years, the qualifications most likely to be held by construction workers in the East of England are NVQ/SVQ qualifications (72%), returning this to levels seen in 2012 (75%) following a dip in 2018/19 and 2015 (both 61%).

Close to a quarter (23%) of construction workers with qualifications hold City & Guilds qualifications (compared to 16% in 2018/19 and 25% in 2015), whilst 11% hold an apprenticeship, an uplift on the 4% who did so in 2018/19 and 2015.

Fewer than one in twenty construction workers with qualifications hold a Construction Award or a degree (both 3%), and the latter is a reduction on the 9% who held a degree in 2018/19.

Figure 24: Main type of qualification held

Base: Workers with qualifications (valid responses)

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %	EE 2012 %	UK 2022 %
NVQ/SVQ	72	61	61	75	69
City & Guilds	23	16	25	12	18
Apprenticeship	11	4	4	2	11
Construction Award	3	-	-	-	3
Degree	3	9	6	0	5
HNC/HND/BTEC Higher	2	4	4	1	5
Other	6	25	9	5	12
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>137</i>	<i>190</i>	<i>158</i>	<i>170</i>	<i>2,093</i>

Q15/Q16

Additional formal training

Self-assessment of basic skills needs

Given the need for construction workers to read instructions and record information it is important to ensure that the workforce has the skills required to perform these tasks. The survey therefore asked all workers whether or not they perceive the need for training in any of a list of specified basic skills to help with their work.

Overall, one in six (18%) construction workers in the East of England believe they would benefit from some form of training in basic skills (compared to 15% in 2018/19, 19% in 2015 and 22% in 2012). This is a similar proportion to the UK average (19%), which has seen an increase since 2018/19 (11%).

In terms of the type of training required, one in ten (11%) identify a requirement for reading, and around one in twenty a need for training in speaking English (6%), writing (5%), maths (4%) and digital skills (3%).

Figure 25: Self-assessed need for training in basic skills

Base: All respondents

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %	EE 2012 %	UK 2022 %
ANY	18	15	19	22	19
Reading	11	6	8	9	9
Speaking English	6	8	11	7	9
Writing	5	7	9	9	7
Maths	4	6	9	11	6
Digital skills	3	-	-	-	4
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	202	298	366	407	3,005

Q37

Current study for additional construction qualifications

Overall, 13% of all construction workers in the East of England are currently working towards formal qualifications relevant to the construction industry (excluding supervisory or managerial qualifications). This is in line with the UK average (13%), and compares with 14% in 2018/19 and 13% in 2015.

As in previous surveys, the likelihood that workers are currently working towards qualifications is significantly lower amongst older workers (3% of those aged 45 or over) and those on temporary contracts (4%).

Figure 26: Proportion working towards additional construction qualifications

Base: All respondents

		EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %	UK 2022 %
Total (202)		13	14	13	13
Age	16 to 19 years (8*)	75	54	43	43
	20 to 24 years (23*)	35	23	25	24
	25 to 44 years (107)	10	15	13	11
	45+ years (63)	3	5	2	5
Length of time in construction	<1 year (11*)	36	47	37	28
	1 to 2 years (16*)	25	27	32	27
	2 to 5 years (30)	27	21	20	20
	5+ years (145)	8	10	8	8
Contract type	Employed directly (82)	17	25	17	15
	Self-employed (95)	13	7	11	10
	Agency (25*)	4	15	5	8
Highest qualification level	None (48*)	15	19	17	11
	Level 1 (17*)	12	50	25	17
	Level 2 (61)	13	11	18	12
	Level 3 (39*)	5	9	4	11
	Level 4+ (20*)	20	15	17	16
<i>Unweighted bases for 2022 in parentheses</i>					

Q18

* Caution: low base

Of the 27 construction workers in the East of England² who are currently studying for a qualification (and who provided a response) half (48%) are studying for an NVQ/SVQ, one in six for an apprenticeship or a degree (both 15%), one in ten for a City & Guilds (11%), and 4% for a Construction Award.

² Number of workers (unweighted)

Supervisory and managerial qualifications and training

As reported earlier, a quarter (26%) of construction workers in the East of England perform a supervisory or management role at their site.

Amongst those who do not currently perform supervisory/management roles and have not had this role before, 16% want to become a supervisor or manager in the future, fewer than the 29% who did so in 2018/19, and one in twenty (6%) previously held the role and want to return to that status (in line with 7% in 2018/19). Over two thirds (67%) are certain that they do not want to, higher than the UK average of 59%, and around one in ten (9%) are unsure.

Figure 27: Whether those who are not currently supervisors want to be one in the future

Base: Where do not perform supervisor/management roles on site

		Yes, but have not done it before %	Yes and have done it before %	No %	Maybe/ depends %
2022 UK (1,982)		17	6	59	18
2022 East of England (132)		16	8	67	9
Age	16 to 19 years (8*)	25	0	13	63
	20 to 24 years (17*)	35	0	59	6
	25 to 44 years (72)	15	10	68	7
	45+ years (35*)	6	11	80	3
Length of time in construction	<1 year (11*)	9	0	64	27
	1 to 2 years (15*)	7	0	73	20
	2 to 5 years (24*)	38	0	54	8
	5+ years (82)	12	13	70	5
Contract type	Employed directly (45*)	13	2	71	13
	Self-employed (66)	20	15	58	8
	Agency (21*)	10	0	86	5
<i>Unweighted bases in parentheses</i>					

Q9

* Caution: low base

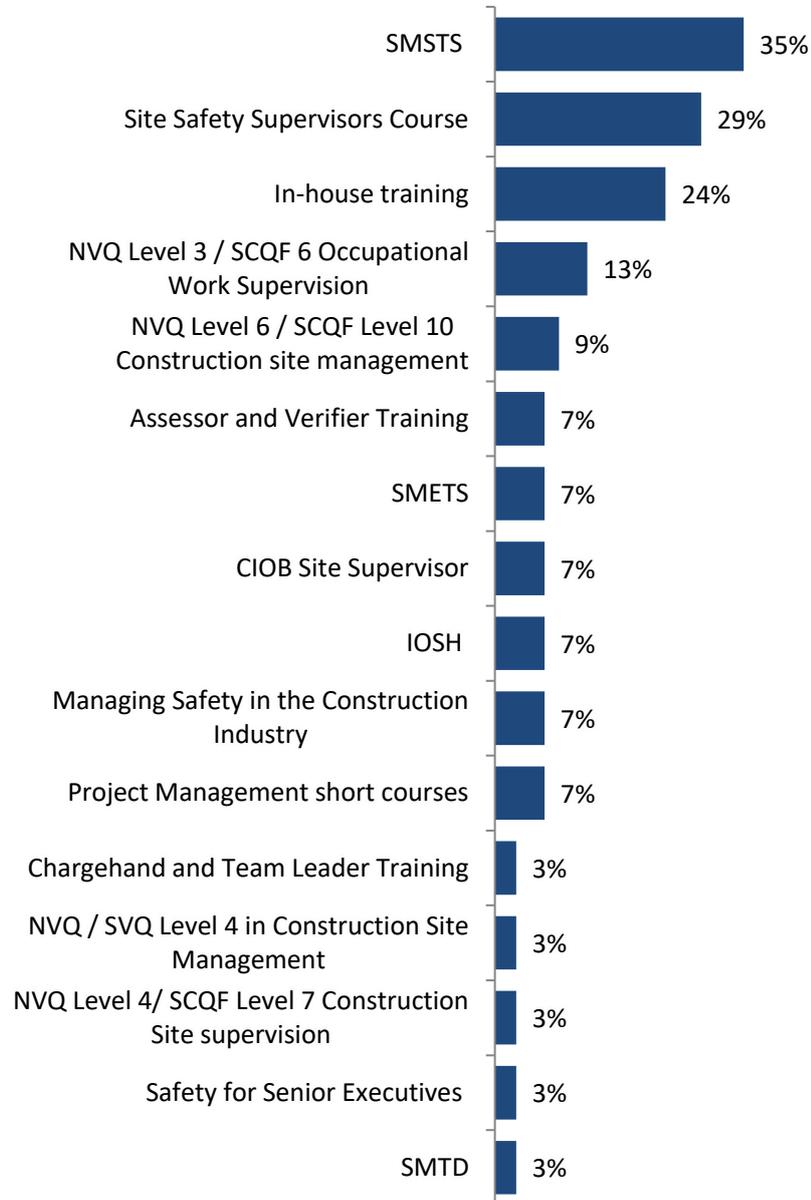
A third (34%) of all construction workers in the East of England have received formal training designed to improve managerial or supervisory knowledge or skills, somewhat down on the 41% who had in 2018/19, but in line with the UK average of 33%. Among those who have or have had some form of supervisory or management responsibilities, four in five (71%) have received formal training, again somewhat down on 2018/19 (82%), and somewhat lower than the UK average (80%).

In terms of the types of supervisory/managerial training undertaken, SMSTS (Site Manager Safety Training Scheme) is most frequently mentioned by those who have undertaken any training (35%), followed by Site Safety Supervisors Courses (29%) and in-house training

(16%). These were also the top three most mentioned types of supervisory training in 2018/19, 2015 and 2012.

Figure 28: Types of managerial/supervisory training undertaken

Base: Where received formal training designed to improve managerial or supervisory knowledge or skills



Q11. Unweighted base = 68

Overall skill levels

An overview of the qualification and skill levels of construction workers surveyed has been derived by combining data from various separate measures and is presented in Figure 29 below.

As in previous years, the vast majority (94%) of construction workers in the East of England have a construction-related qualification and/or skills card/certificate (or were working towards a qualification at the point of interview): only 6% of those interviewed could not say that they were at least working towards obtaining a CSCS card (or similar) or construction qualification.

The proportion of construction workers in the East of England who hold a skill card/certificate, but has no other construction qualification remains at around one in five (19% compared to 17% in 2018/19), and is in line with the UK average (19%).

At 13%, the proportion of construction workers who are working towards a construction qualification is largely in line with 2018/19 (14%) and 2015 (13%), and the UK average (13%).

Figure 29: Qualification status summary

Base: All respondents

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %	EE 2012 %	UK 2022 %
Holds a formal construction qualification or a skills card/certificate or working towards a qualification	94	99	97	99	96
Holds a formal construction qualification or a skills card/certificate	94	98	97	99	96
Holds a skills card/certificate	91	97	96	98	93
Holds a skills card/certification but no other qualification	19	17	29	57	19
Working towards a qualification	13	14	13	11	13
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>366</i>	<i>407</i>	<i>3,005</i>

Q12/Q15/Q16/Q18

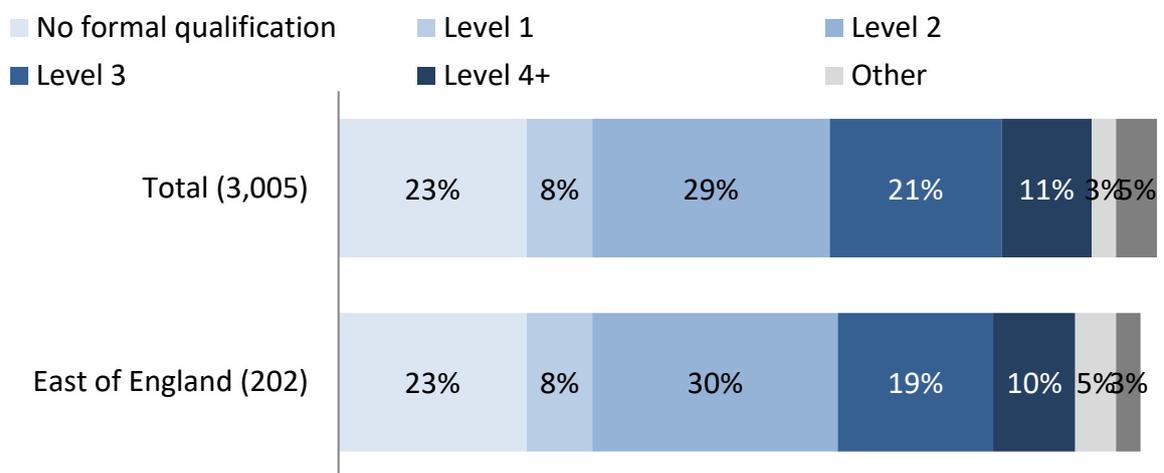
Based on all questions relating to qualifications it is possible to calculate each worker’s highest qualification level, and Figure 30 summarises construction workers’ highest level of qualification, overall and by occupation.

The proportion of construction workers in the East of England with no formal qualification has reduced from 32% in 2018/19 to 23% in the latest survey.

Overall, 61% of construction workers in the East of England have qualifications equivalent to Level 2 or above, in line with 2018/19 (66%) and 2015 (56%), and 29% have qualifications equivalent to Level 3 or above, again in line with 2018/19 (31%). Both of these figures are in line with the UK average (61% and 32% respectively).

Figure 30: Current qualification level, by occupation

Base: All respondents who provided a valid response



Q15/Q16. Unweighted bases in parentheses

* Caution: low base

Geographic mobility

This section of the report on geographic mobility helps to identify which regions/nations of the UK are net 'importers' or 'exporters' of construction workers, as well as which elements of the construction workforce are the most mobile (based on region/nation of residence, region/nation of birth and type of contract). The measures included in this section are:

- reasons for working in current location
- comparisons of current location with workers' region/nation of origin
- proportion of construction workers' career that has been spent working in the current region/nation
- whether workers commute daily to their current site or whether temporary accommodation is used
- miles travelled to site each day
- whether their next site will be in commuting distance or will require temporary accommodation

Work history in the current region/nation

All workers were asked what made them decide to work in the region/nation that they are currently working in. Over half (53%) report that it was because their employer sent them there, in line with 2018/19 (56%).

The pattern of results is similar to the UK average, with over half (53%) saying it was because their employer sent them there (compared to the UK average of 47%), and a similar proportion (49%) saying it was because they grew up there/have always lived there (compared to the UK average of 46%).

The pattern of results largely reflects that in 2018/19, with the exception that a greater proportion report they are in their current location because they grew up there (49% compared to 28% in 2018/19), returning this to the levels seen in 2015 (43%).

Figure 31: Reasons for choosing to work in current location – prompted, multiple response
Base: All respondents

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %	UK 2022 %
Employer sent you here	53	56	50	47
You grew up here/have always lived here	49	28	43	46
Family reasons	3	2	4	5
Came to the area to take up this or another job	6	7	3	5
Construction work is better paid in this area	<0.5	1	2	4
There are more jobs available in this area	1	5	2	3
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>366</i>	<i>3,005</i>

Q28

Half (50%) of construction workers in the East of England have worked within their current region for their whole career, a significant increase on the 27% who had done so in 2018/19, but in line with the UK average (49%).

A further third (31%) have worked in their current region for most of their career, meaning that 81% have remained in the East of England for all or most of their career, higher than previous years (56% in 2018/19 and 71% in 2015), and in line with the UK average (83%).

Figure 32: Proportion of construction workers' career worked in current region/nation

Base: All respondents

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %	EE 2012 %	UK 2022 %
All of your time	50	27	37	28	49
Most of it	31	29	34	37	34
Around half your time	10	14	10	14	8
A small proportion of your time	6	23	9	18	5
Only on this job (this is the first site you've been to in this region/nation)	2	6	7	1	1
Don't know	1	1	2	2	3
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>366</i>	<i>407</i>	<i>3,005</i>

Q26/Q27

In the East of England, three quarters of construction workers (76%) indicate their employer operates nationwide, with a quarter (22%) reporting that their employer operates in particular parts of the UK including the East of England, while 2% are unsure.

These results are much in line with 2018/19.

Region/nation worked in before current site

Thinking about the last construction site they worked on before their current one, in the majority of cases, workers' last sites are in the same region/nation as they are working in now. However, the extent to which this is the case varies considerably by region/nation, as Figure 33 illustrates.

Two thirds (66%) of construction workers in the East of England were in the same region as their previous job, and while this is an increase on 2018/19 (52%) and 2015 (49%), it is still amongst the lowest of any region/nation.

Figure 33 Region/nation currently working in compared with the region/nation of workers' immediately previous construction sites

Base: Where had previous job(s) *denotes less than 0.5%

Region/nation of last site	Region/nation currently working in											
	EM %	EE %	GL %	NE %	NW %	NI %	SC %	SE %	SW %	WA %	WM %	YH %
East Midlands (EM)	51	6	*	6	1	0	0	1	0	1	9	5
East of England (EE)	5	66	1	0	*	0	*	5	2	1	6	2
London (GL)	3	10	81	1	1	0	0	12	1	2	4	2
North East (NE)	1	4	0	65	1	0	1	2	1	1	*	1
North West (NW)	2	0	1	8	87	0	*	4	0	0	8	13
South East (SE)	6	10	11	0	1	1	0	66	3	2	1	1
South West (SW)	*	2	1	0	0	0	0	5	84	6	0	1
East of England (WM)	13	1	0	10	5	0	0	5	1	3	66	3
Yorkshire & Humber (YH)	15	1	0	10	2	*	0	*	1	0	2	72
Northern Ireland (NI)	1	0	0	0	0	85	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scotland (SC)	1	0	*	0	0	1	98	0	0	0	1	0
Wales (WA)	0	1	0	0	*	0	0	*	3	84	1	1
Republic of Ireland	0	0	*	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	*	0
Other parts of Europe	0	0	1	0	1	0	*	*	0	0	0	0
Outside of Europe	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	*	1	0	0	0
Other / Unsure	1	0	3	0	*	0	0	1	5	1	2	1
<i>Unweighted Bases</i>	216	183	392	195	252	226	226	264	183	193	290	184

Q32

Worker origins

Workers were asked which region/nation they were living in just before they got their first job in construction in the UK.

Two thirds (67%) of construction workers in the East of England were interviewed in the same region/nation in which they were living when they started their construction career, and while this is an increase on 2018/19 (44%) and 2015 (55%), it is still amongst the lowest of any region/nation.

Figure 34: Region/nation currently working in compared with workers' region/nation of residence prior to first starting work in construction

Base: All respondents *denotes less than 0.5%

Original home	Region/nation currently working in											
	EM %	EE %	GL %	NE %	NW %	NI %	SC %	SE %	SW %	WA %	WM %	YH %
East Midlands (EM)	53	5	1	7	*	0	0	1	*	1	5	5
East of England (EE)	7	67	5	0	0	0	0	3	1	*	6	1
London (GL)	2	13	64	1	*	1	0	14	3	1	1	4
North East (NE)	2	3	*	67	3	0	1	1	*	*	*	0
North West (NW)	1	0	1	6	89	0	0	4	*	1	6	13
South East (SE)	3	7	10	*	*	0	0	64	3	*	2	1
South West (SW)	*	*	1	*	0	*	0	5	81	3	*	0
East of England (WM)	13	1	1	8	4	*	0	4	*	0	74	1
Yorkshire & Humber (YH)	15	2	1	8	2	*	0	0	0	0	2	75
Northern Ireland (NI)	1	0	*	0	0	92	0	*	0	0	0	0
Scotland (SC)	1	0	1	1	*	0	94	1	*	0	1	1
Wales (WA)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	*	5	90	2	0
Republic of Ireland	*	0	*	0	*	4	2	*	0	0	*	0
Other parts of Europe	1	0	7	*	*	2	3	2	*	1	*	0
Outside of Europe	0	1	3	*	0	*	*	*	*	0	*	1
Other / Unsure	0.0 4	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
<i>Unweighted Bases</i>	232	202	443	206	271	226	233	283	201	202	306	200

Q40

Travel to site

Location of current workplace in relation to the location of workers' current homes

The proportion of construction workers in the East of England who were interviewed on a site that was located within the same region/nation as their permanent home has increased to 71% since 2018/19 (60%) and 2015 (63%). However, this is lower than the average across all regions of 85%.

Of the 29% who travel outside of their region to their current site, almost all (25%) are from a neighbouring region, and this is the pattern for most other regions, with the exception of the North West, where 19% travel outside of their region, and only 5% travel to a bordering region

Furthest distance worked in last 12 months

All workers were asked to indicate the furthest distance they have worked from their permanent or current home in the last 12 months.

A third (34%) of construction workers in the East of England have worked no more than 20 miles away, continuing an upward trend since 2015 (12%) and 2018/19 (16%), and in line with the UK average of 33%.

A further third (31%) have worked between 21 and 50 miles away, in line with 2018/19 (32%) and 2015 (34%), and with the UK average of 34%.

This leaves a third (35%) who have worked more than 50 miles away from their permanent or current home, including 8% who have worked more than 100 miles away. This compares to 52% and 15% respectively in 2018/19, so there has been a reduction in the proportion who have travelled over 50 miles.

Compared with workers in other regions/nations, workers based in the East of England are just as likely as workers in the UK as a whole to have travelled more than 100 miles from their permanent home to work in the last 12 months (both 8% compared to a UK average of 12%).

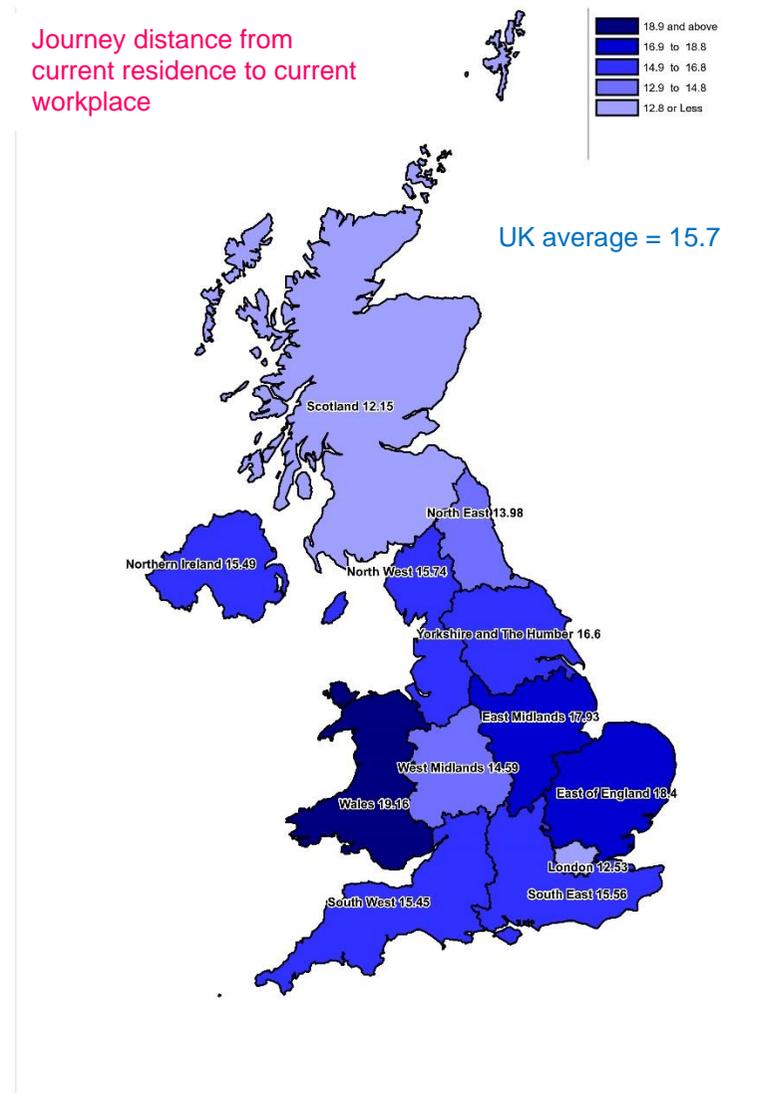
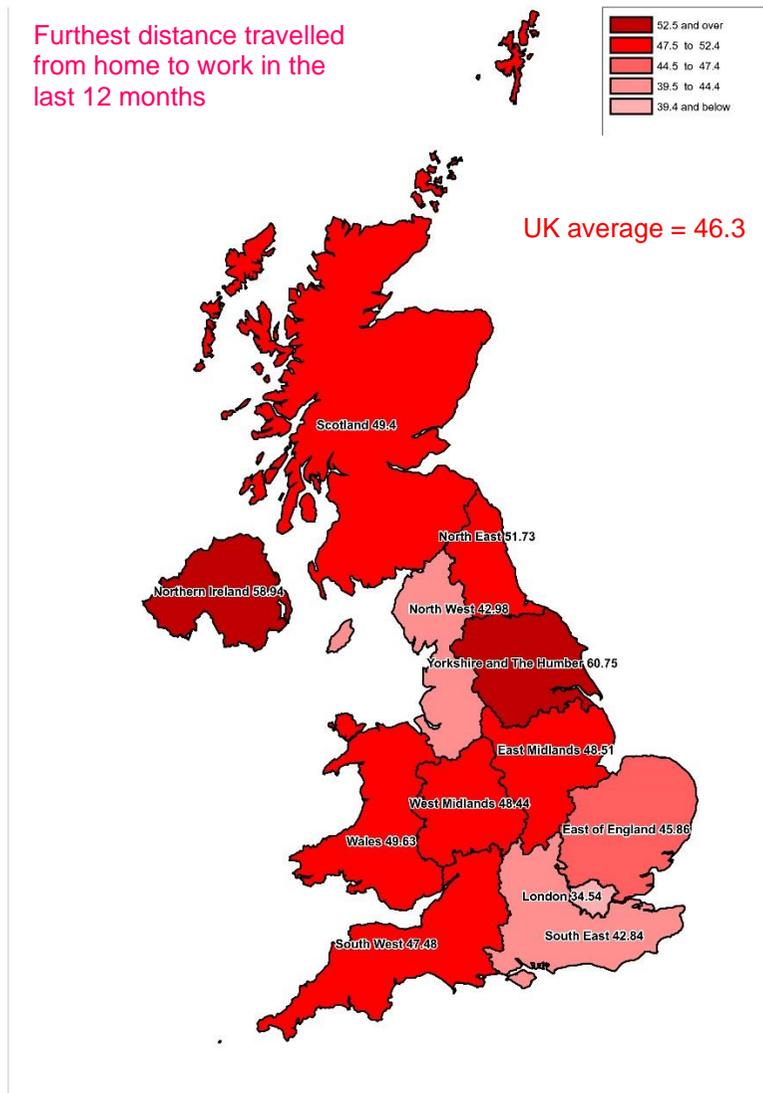
The average furthest distance travelled is 46 miles in the East of England, in line with the UK average of 46 miles.

Journey distance to work

The average (mean) distance from workers' current residence (taking into account temporary residences) to their current site is 20 miles, continuing the downward trend since the survey began (24 miles in 2018/19, 27 miles in 2015 and 42 miles in 2012).

This downward trend is also reflected in the national picture, where the average distance is 17 miles, down on 18 miles in 2018/19, 22 miles in 2015 and 28 miles in 2012.

A third (33%) of those providing a response travel less than 10 miles to work, slightly lower than the 36% who did so in 2018/19, and lower than the UK average of 43%, 14% travel between 10 and 19 miles, and 26% travel between 20 and 49 miles.



Use of temporary accommodation

In the East of England, fewer than one in twenty (3%) construction workers report that they are currently staying in temporary accommodation while working at their site, in line with 2018/19 (5%) and the UK average (5%).

Expected site/phase duration

All the workers in the East of England who are currently employed on a temporary basis (37% of all construction workers) were asked how much longer they expect to be working for the company/person/agency paying them.

Responses range from 8% who expect to work for another week or two, 7% expecting another two to four weeks, a quarter (27%) for one to six months, one in five (18%) for six to twelve months, and one in ten (8%) for more than a year.

A third (32%) do not know how much longer they expect to be working, in line with 2018/19 (34%), and the UK average (32%).

In order to get a measure of workplace stability amongst all construction workers, all respondents, whether temporary or permanent, were asked to indicate how long in total they expect to work at that specific site during this phase.

Overall, 12% of construction workers in the East of England do not expect to work on that site for more than a month, in line with 2018/19 (9%) and the UK average (12%), and remaining considerably lower than 2015 (30%) and 2012 (25%). Just 2% believe they will be there for less than a week.

Over half (52%) anticipate being on site for more than a month but less than a year, somewhat lower than the 60% who did so in 2018/19, but in line with the UK average of 53%.

Both nationally and in the East of England, one in ten (13%) expect to be on site for more than a year, which is down on 2018/19 (23%) but in line with 2015 (13%).

One in five (22%) are uncertain in this regard, higher than 2018/19 (7%), but in line with the UK average of 22%.

Figure 35: Length of time workers expect to work at that specific site during current phase*Base: All respondents*

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	UK 2022 %
Less than a week	2	2	2
1-2 weeks	2	4	3
2-3 weeks	3	2	3
3-4 weeks	4	2	4
1-3 months	11	17	11
3-6 months	19	18	17
6-12 months	22	25	25
More than a year	13	23	13
Don't know	22	7	22
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>3,005</i>

Q24

Expected next site location

While a majority (68%) of all construction workers in the East of England are confident that when they finish this job they will get a job that allows them to travel from their permanent home to work on a daily basis, this is a decline on the 90% who were confident in this respect in 2018/19, and more in line with 2015 (70%). However, it is in line with the national average of 69%.

The proportion who are sure that this will not be the case has remained stable (6% compared to 5% in 2018/19), while the proportion who say it depends where the work is has increased, from 4% in 2018/19 to 20% in the latest survey, as is the case across the UK overall (from 8% in 2018/19 to 20% in 2022).

The remaining 5% do not know.

Sub-sector and sector mobility

This final section of the report explores sub-sector mobility (movement between project types within the construction sector) and how this varies between different groups of construction workers. Attitudes towards future employment in the sector are also examined.

Sub-sector mobility

All workers were asked which (if any) of six types of construction work they have undertaken for a continuous period of at least 3 months.

While the pattern of response is similar to the UK average, there have been some movements since 2018/19, making the latest results more comparable with 2015.

New housing continues to be the most common type of construction work undertaken (79%), followed by housing repair and maintenance (44%), as was the case in 2018/19 (79% and 48% respectively).

While around a third have undertaken private industrial work (34%), commercial work (33%) and public non-housing work (28%), these are significantly lower levels than was the case in 2018/19 (54%, 53%, and 60% respectively), returning them to levels that are more in line with 2015 (36%, 39% and 39% respectively).

There has also been a decrease in the proportion of construction workers in the East of England who have worked on infrastructure projects, from 38% in 2018/19 to 21% in the latest survey, returning this to 2015 levels (23%), and placing the East of England in line with the UK average in this respect (23%).

In terms of the number of types of work undertaken, the results are in line with the UK average, but reflecting the findings outlined above, there has been a significant increase in the proportion who have done only one type of work, from 24% in 2018/19 to 45% in the latest survey.

One in six (17%) have done two types, and around one in ten have done three types (12%), four types (9%) or five types (11%), and one in twenty (5%) have done six types.

Figure 36: Type of projects on which workers have spent significant periods of time
Base: All respondents

	EE 2022 %	EE 2018/19 %	EE 2015 %	EE 2012 %	UK 2022 %
New housing	79	79	77	80	78
Housing repair and maintenance including extensions/loft conversions	44	48	36	47	42
Private industrial work such as factories, warehousing, mechanical engineering, land reclamation	34	54	36	57	35
Commercial work such as shops, office, pubs etc	33	53	39	61	39
Public non-housing work such as schools, sports facilities, landscaping	28	60	39	68	32
Infrastructure building projects, such as road/rail/airport, sewerage/water treatment, power stations	21	38	23	35	23
Off-site manufacturing	3	Na	Na	Na	6
ONE TYPE ONLY	45	24	40	19	42
TWO TYPES	17	18	18	13	17
THREE TYPES	12	13	11	15	13
FOUR TYPES	9	9	10	16	9
FIVE TYPES	11	15	8	20	9
SIX TYPES	5	20	11	15	6
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>366</i>	<i>407</i>	<i>3,005</i>

Q4

Leaving the sector

In order to assess the potential outflow from the sector in the next five years (led by worker preference), all workers were asked how likely it is that in 5 years' time they will still want to be working in construction.

More than four in five (83%) construction workers in the East of England think it is likely that they will still want to do so, including 45% who say they definitely will be (an increase on the 32% who thought this in 2018/19), and 24% who think it is very likely. This compares with 86% UK-wide who are likely to still want to be working in construction in 5 years' time overall.

One in ten (10%) say they definitely will not, or it is unlikely that they will, still want to work in construction in five years' time (compared with a UK average of 7%).

Figure 37: Likelihood of construction workers still wanting to be working in the construction sector in five years' time

Base: All respondents

	All %	Age %			
		16 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 44	45+
Definitely will be	45	50	43	48	40
Very likely	24	50	35	19	25
Quite likely	14	0	13	16	13
Quite unlikely	2	0	0	4	0
Very unlikely	5	0	0	6	8
Definitely will not be	3	0	9	4	2
Hope to be retired	2	0	0	1	6
Don't know	4	0	0	4	6
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>8*</i>	<i>23*</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>63</i>

Q38A

* Caution: low base

Excluding those aged 60 and over (as those over 60 may be assumed to be considering retirement in the next 5 years), 45% believe they will definitely want to be working in the construction sector, 24% believe it is very likely they will want to be working in the construction sector, and 14% believe it is quite likely they will want to be working in the construction sector.

Overall, 83% of this group are likely to some degree to want to be working in the sector, in line with the 84% who did so in 2018/19. One in ten (10%) of this age group think it unlikely they will want to be working in the construction sector in five years (compared with 7% in 2018/19).

The East of England construction workforce 2022 summary

The UK construction industry

Across the UK, the survey findings point us towards the conclusion that the construction industry is not in a particularly dynamic phase.

Following the sharp dip in industry output in value terms during the worst months of the Covid pandemic, there was a very sharp recovery from April to June 2021 followed by more steady growth to a point where output is broadly at its pre-pandemic level. Low growth is anticipated in the near future, with a relatively high rate of inflation and increases in the base interest rate likely to increase costs and dampen demand.

Correspondingly, the industry's workforce which suffered minor decline in 2020/2021 is also anticipated to be fairly static in aggregate with the major labour and skills driver being a need to recruit around 200,000 new workers per year as a result of an industry 'churn rate', estimated at around 8% of a 2.6 million total workforce, rather than substantial change in the total workforce (*The Skills Construction Needs*, Construction Skills Network, CITB, January, 2023).

Stability within the construction industry in the East of England

However, a substantial proportion of industry workers, as surveyed here, have been in the industry for lengthy periods. Across the UK around 70% of workers have worked in the industry for 5 years or more (72% within the East of England), and this reflects findings from previous surveys. Demographic and other characteristics of the workforce therefore change little overall, and with only 11% of workers (12% in the East of England) expecting to leave construction in the next 5 years, changes to the demography of the workforce can occur only at the margin. A doubling of the percentage of female or ethnic minority entrants would have only a minor effect on the overall structure of the workforce.

The structure of the workforce remains – and is set to remain in the near future - very substantially white and male in its composition, particularly as, in this case, the 'workforce' was defined as comprising on-site and predominantly manual staffing, largely excluding clerical, administrative, technical, and professional construction occupations in which women, particularly, are more strongly represented.

The occupational profile of the workforce as identified by the survey also remains unchanged from previous years with labourers, bricklayers, site managers, carpenters, and plant operators remaining most frequent followed by much lower levels of representation of other industry trades.

Where survey respondents reported that they had changed roles within the industry, the distribution of prior occupations broadly reflects the current distribution of occupations in the workforce as a whole. Aspirations to a different future occupation are infrequent, as

only 7% of workers – across the UK but also within the East of England - want to change their occupation.

Some indicators of change

Across the UK a further area of observed stability includes broad measures of qualification and training. For example, around seven in ten workers hold a construction-related qualification, 13% are working towards a qualification and 33% have had supervisory or management training. All these figures are broadly similar to those observed in 2018/19.

However, within the East of England, a lower proportion of workers hold a construction-related qualification than in 2018/19 (68%, compared with 77%), while a similar proportion of workers are working towards qualifications (13%, compared with 14%).

There appears to be greater reticence in taking on more responsibility this year than previously, with fewer respondents certain they want to become a supervisor or manager in the future (23% across the UK; 22% in the East of England, compared with 30% and 36% respectively in 2018/19), and fewer workers than in 2018/19 have had formal training in managerial or supervisory knowledge or skills (34%, compared with 41%), reflecting their lower level of interest this year in moving into management and supervisory posts, or perhaps lower levels of interest in these roles are due to less formal training being offered in this area?

While the proportion of workers holding industry Skills Cards is still high, it has fallen somewhat since 2018/19, from 98% to 94%. (97% to 93% across the UK over this period).

Overall, a higher proportion of construction workers in the East of England in 2022 than in 2018/19 held construction-related qualifications prior to starting their first job in construction, with just under half (46%) of construction workers in the East of England reporting having no construction-related qualifications when they started their first job, compared with 72% in 2018/19, and 79% in 2015. However, at the time of interviewing, two-thirds of construction workers in the East of England reported holding a construction-related qualification (68%), which is a significant decline on the 77% who did so in 2018/19.

Since 2015 and 2018/19 surveys, within the East of England (as across the UK) the proportion of direct employees in the workforces has decreased (from 46% in 2015, 55% in 2018/19 to 41% in 2022) while self-employment has remained strong in the sector (48% in 2015, 40% in 2018/19, 47% in 2022). There has also been an increase in the level of agency employment, while temporary employment is high in the region compared with the UK average (37%, compared to 29%). The increase in self-employment and relatively high levels of agency and temporary employment are likely to positively impact both employers - enabling increased flexibility and cost control – and workers - increased independence, but they may also have a negative impact, with greater uncertainty and insecurity in the industry for workers. Potentially, this change may result in lower levels of employer-led training, and attention to improving the skills of the workforce. Although a similar

proportion of workers are working towards a qualification in 2022 as in previous studies (13% within the East of England), this proportion has also not increased as we would perhaps like to see it increase, and is particularly low, and lower than previously, among the core workforce age group of 25 to 44 (10% within the East of England, compared with 15% in 2018/19).

The survey identified that across the UK fewer workers are travelling long distances to work (32% had worked more than 50 miles from home in 2022, compared with 41% in 2018/19). This change is also evident in the East of England: 35% of workers had worked more than 50 miles from home in the last year, compared with 52% in 2018/19. The average travel distance to work was 20 miles in 2022 and 24 miles in 2018/19, compared with 17 miles and 18 miles respectively across the UK.

Focus on how the East of England differs from the UK average

Compared with the construction workforce across the UK as a whole, the East of England stands out in a few respects:

- One in six construction workers in the East of England originates from an EU country, compared with less than one in ten across the UK (16%, compared to 9%), while a higher proportion of workers in the region than the UK average holds a non-UK passport (18%, compared to 13%).
- At 47% the East of England construction workforce has more self-employed staff than the UK average (42%)
- Fewer construction workers in the East of England than the UK average have worked pretty much continuously in the industry (52%, compared to 61%)
- Construction workers in the East of England are less likely than the UK average to be located within the same region as their permanent home (71%, compared to 85%)

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