



2022

**Nurturing differences:**  
Equity, Diversity &  
Inclusion within UK  
Government's DDaT  
Function

## Foreword



**Jessica Smith**

Regional Vice President,  
Human Resources

**Hitachi Solutions Europe**

Equity, diversity, and inclusion (ED&I) are more important today than ever before for both private sector businesses and UK government. There is increasing recognition that organisations need to prioritise the values of harmony, trust, respect, and fairness within the workplace. For Hitachi Solutions, building diverse teams that feel safe and included is a priority, and this can enhance employee and organisational performance, create a feeling of well-being and impartiality within teams, and make organisations, attractive to a diverse range of potential employees.

For most organisations, the human resource department is responsible for implementing ED&I initiatives across departments and teams. At Hitachi Solutions, the heart of our ED&I work is to create a company where we can build diverse teams in which people feel safe and included - an open space where employees can express their experiences and opinions, knowing they will be heard. These dedicated working groups, collect views from across the entire organisation, which makes it truly inclusive in its very nature. Creating this environment not only enhances employee and organisational performance, but creates a feeling of well-being within teams, and makes the organisation attractive to a more diverse pool of potential employees. IT fits squarely with our company values of harmony, trust and respect sincerity, fairness, and a pioneering spirit.

Within the traditionally male-dominated technology sector, gender imbalance and age discrimination are still common. However, it is also recognised that progress is being made through a variety of methods including unconscious bias training and a focus

on inclusive recruitment and retention strategies. There is more to be done - one challenge we face is embedding flexible working practices across all the technology sector - but there are also ways to affect change even as we strive for more progress. At Hitachi Solutions, one of our most recent initiatives creating working groups which allow employees at all levels to feed into our strategy and business decisions. This not only improves staff motivation and engagement but allows us to harness a diverse range of perspectives at a time when we still have work to do in improving diversity at senior levels.

Our ED&I strategy has four pillars. The first three – ‘leadership’, ‘culture’, ‘recruitment and retention’ – set out the areas where we are seeking to improve – whether that be through increasing representation at senior levels, promoting inclusive behaviours or ensuring we target and support diverse talent. Our fourth pillar – ‘progress and productivity’ – underpins all of this with a series of metrics and reports to ensure we are seeing impact through the initiatives we introduce.

To build a fair, equal, and inclusive workplace, it is essential that employers within both the private and public sector are not only committed to ED&I initiatives, but willing to track and report progress, sharing data on gender, pay, and recruitment with openness and transparency. It is in this spirit that we have partnered with Dods Research to survey a sample of UK civil servants involved in HR, service delivery and DDaT functions. This whitepaper highlights the key research findings and reveals a range of strategies and policies government organisations are implementing to tackle this.

It is our hope that in supporting this research and sharing our own experience, we can help to drive change across not only in our own business but also through our partners in government and the wider technology sector as a whole.

## Background

In 2020, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement demonstrated how strongly today's societies are opposed to discrimination. In the wake of the BLM movement, and as social issues gain increasing importance, many organisations are stepping up efforts to meet Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) expectations. At the same time, evidence to support the key business benefits of building diverse and inclusive teams is growing. However, within workplaces, especially in the traditionally male-dominated technology sector, gender imbalance, racial bias, and age discrimination are still common.

In September 2021, Dods Research teamed up with Hitachi Solutions to survey more than 100 UK civil servants to understand whether their organisations have ED&I strategies in place and if they collect and report data on workplace diversity – with a special focus on the Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) function. This research was supported by a series of in-depth interviews among key public sector decision makers with involvement in driving the ED&I agenda within their organisations. This whitepaper explores in depth the workplace advantages of ED&I within DDaT teams, whilst focusing on the ED&I goals and actions underway within UK government organisations. Our research also reveals the key challenges to diversity & inclusion within DDaT teams and provides people, policy, process, and supplier recommendations to maintain and nurture diversity & inclusion in tech-based roles.





## Objectives

Across UK's public sector, the importance of workplace ED&I is widely acknowledged. Yet, women and ethnic minorities remain underrepresented within traditionally male-dominated sectors such as technology. This research-led whitepaper sets out to examine whether government organisations' plans to improve ED&I within their DDaT function are turning into action. The paper evaluates the importance of ED&I within government organisations, and explores the barriers to ED&I, particularly within tech-based functions. Lastly, the paper looks at the importance of ED&I when government organisations are selecting suppliers to work with.

## 01 —

### Strategies, Data Collection and Reporting

Over the last decade, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) have been gaining increasing importance across UK central government departments. As part of its' Workforce Plan 2016 to 2020, the Civil Service set out the ambition to become the UK's 'most inclusive employer.' Aligning with this goal, various government departments have chalked out dedicated Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) strategies to guide their present, and future workplace practices. Our research reveals that government organisations in the UK have made inroads into laying the foundations for upholding and improving workplace ED&I.

92% of civil servants surveyed reported that their organisation has a ED&I strategy in place. Additionally, over eight in ten (84%) said that their organisation collects data on ED&I. Whilst a small 2% of civil servants said that their organisation does not collect data on ED&I.



#### UK Government Workplace Diversity & Inclusion - Strategy & Data Collection

My organisation has a ED&I strategy in place



My organisation collects data on ED&I

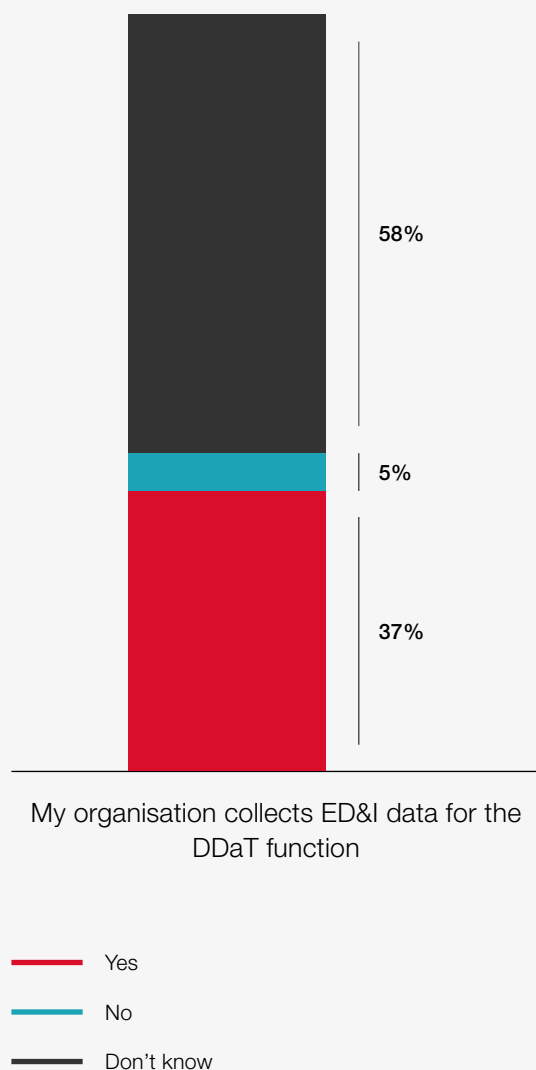


— Yes  
— No  
— Don't know

Q: Does your organisation have a ED&I strategy in place?  
Q: Does your organisation collect data on ED&I?

Although data collection is prevalent within UK government at organisational level, when it comes to collecting ED&I data for the DDaT function specifically, visibility on the collection and reporting of the data falls. Of those who said that their organisation collects data on ED&I, only about four in ten (37%) reported that their organisation also collects diversity data for the DDaT function specifically. Whilst 5% stated their organisation does not collect diversity data for the DDaT function, the majority (58%) were unsure.

### Government Organisations' DDaT Function - Diversity & Inclusion Data Collection



Q: Does your organisation collect ED&I data for the DDaT function

It is worth noting that contractors and suppliers represent a significant share of the workforce within government DDaT teams and notably, only 5% of all civil servants surveyed claimed that their organisation collects diversity data for suppliers and contractors with the vast majority (85%) unsure. This suggests that even among organisations that currently collect ED&I data for their DDaT functions, a considerable part of the workforce is left unreported. Contract work is often associated with higher staff turnover, and this, coupled with the high volume of contractors often seen within government DDaT functions, makes the task of maintaining a diverse team, and ED&I data collection and reporting more challenging. Furthermore, if there is no data available on contractor diversity, recruiting diverse teams is an impossible task, and questions the value, and need for diverse contractor recruitment panels.

The process of contractor ED&I data collection and reporting is blurred within organisations, which may also explain the high proportion of civil servants who are unclear whether their organisation collects supplier/contract ED&I data. But in their bid to become representative of the citizens they serve, it is crucial that government organisations collect and report data on all employees involved in product design and delivery, including external contractors, as they form a key part of the talent pool utilised to serve citizens.

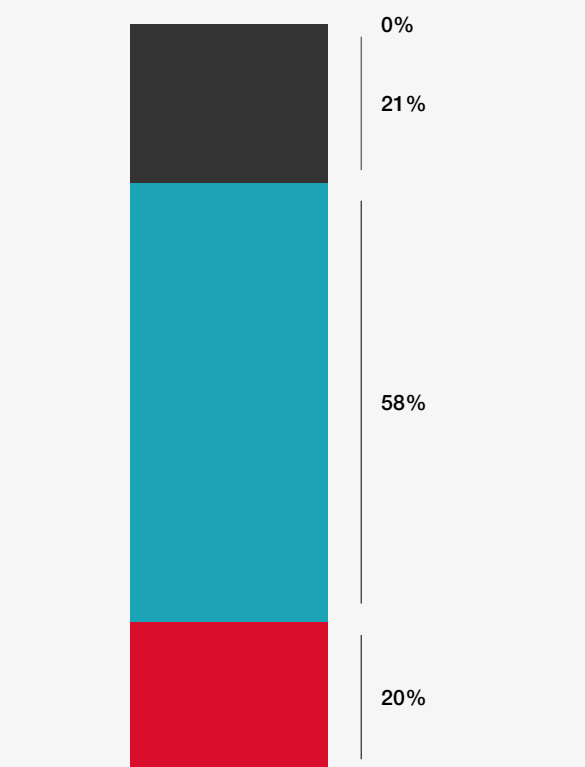
Despite this, the outlook is positive, with over three quarters (78%) of all civil servants surveyed stating that diversity declaration/reporting rates for their organisation's DDaT function had increased in the last five years. Whilst a fifth (20%) reported that declaration rates had 'increased significantly,' 58% reported a 'slight increase' and 21% reported 'no change' in reporting rates. None of the civil servants surveyed reported a decrease in reporting rates.



Self-declared diversity data can help government organisations gain useful insights into their workplaces' diversity status and direct data-informed actions. Taking steps to ensure employees feel comfortable sharing diversity data can enable government organisations to elevate the value of their diversity data.



### DDaT function: Diversity declaration / reporting rate change



Diversity declaration/reporting rate change within the DDaT function - past 5 years

- Significantly increased
- Slightly increased
- No change
- Slightly decreased
- Significantly decreased

Q: Over the last 5 years, how has the diversity declaration/reporting rate changed within your organisation's DDaT function?

## 02 —

### Transparency and Accountability

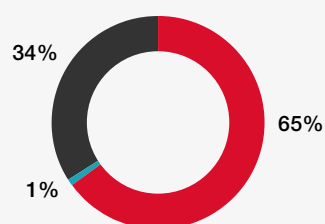
In terms of transparency around ED&I strategies and data collection, about two thirds (65%) of those who reported that their organisation has a Diversity & Inclusion strategy in place said that the strategy is published – providing access to their ED&I objectives, gaps, and actions. An equal proportion (65%) of those who said that their organisation collects data on ED&I reported that this data is published.

However, when it came to reporting diversity data for their DDaT function specifically, 45% of those who stated that their organisation collects diversity data for DDaT roles said that this data is publicly available. About two in ten (18%) said diversity data for the DDaT function was not published, suggesting that on the function level, data might be collected only internally. On the other hand, 36% did not know if the data collected on the diversity of the DDaT function was published.

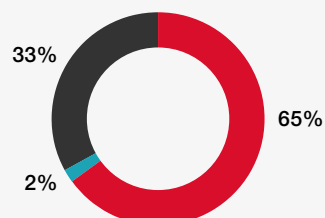


#### UK Government Workplace Diversity & Inclusion - Data Collection Transparency

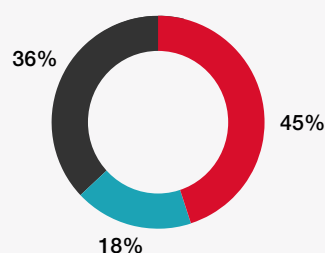
Is your organisation's Diversity & Inclusion strategy published?



Is the data your organisation collects on Diversity & Inclusion published?



Is the data your organisation collects on Diversity & Inclusion for the DDaT function published?





**Inside View:****Why transparency around ED&I is important for government departments**

“We seek to publish data like the gender pay gap and so on to be held accountable. I think it is absolutely critical. We are public servants funded with public money, so we want to be held to account.”

Kitcat further added, “Being transparent and publishing data prompts conversations that might not otherwise happen. Knowing that the data will be published focuses the minds of people holding positions of responsibility. And it is a useful way for all organisations to have a discussion, and to challenge each other.”

**Jason Kitcat****Director of Digital Data & Technology**

Department for International Trade

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“Public sector organisations have to be completely transparent! The Home Office in particular, because of the nature of the work we are involved in - from policing, to security, to immigration, and everything around safety.”

“I think it is imperative, and we should be doing more, and we should be talking more about what we are trying to do to improve it.”

**Margaret O'Brien****Change Manager**

UK Home Office



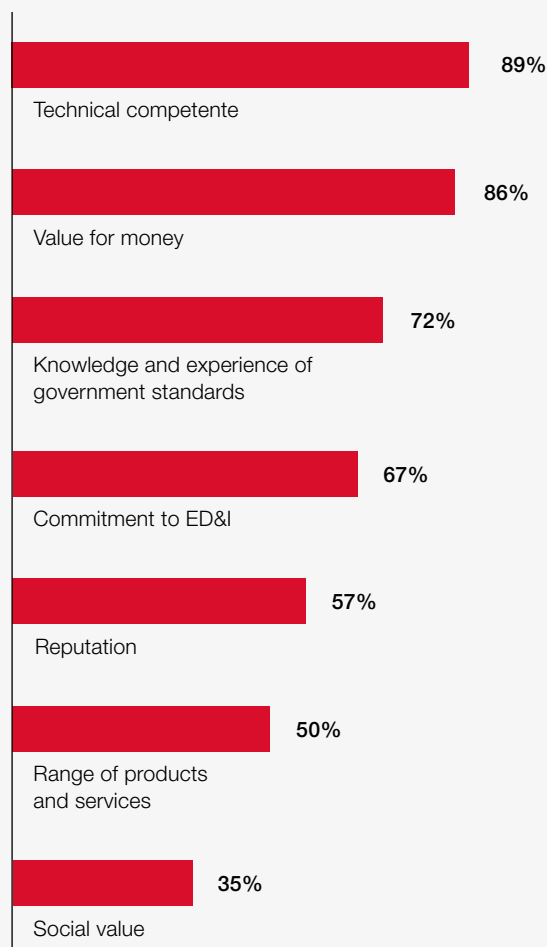


## 03 —

### Supplier Partnerships

Within UK government supply chains, when reviewing and selecting a new supplier/contractor, government departments consider traditional expertise and pricing-based factors as most crucial to collaborating with external contractors. When asked which factors they consider to be the most important when reviewing/selecting a new supplier, almost nine in ten (89%) stated that 'Technical Competence' was the most important, followed by 'Value for Money' (86%), and 'Knowledge and experience of government standards' (72%).

#### Most important factors when reviewing/selecting a new supplier



Q: Which FIVE factors do you consider to be the most important when reviewing/selecting a new supplier? Please select TOP 5.

'Commitment to ED&I' (67%) was highlighted as the fourth most important factor when reviewing/selecting a new supplier. This suggests that there is some work to be done to move ED&I higher up the agenda when considering contract renewals or working with a new supplier.

Whilst about two third (65%) of civil servants surveyed agreed with the statement 'It is important to work with businesses committed to diversity and integration,' only a small 11% reported that their 'DDaT function's procurement process encourages suppliers to provide diverse teams.' This reflects a significant gap between the perceived importance of supplier diversity, and active action in collaborating with suppliers with strong ED&I values.

Government organisations – as large-scale buyers of technology-based product and services – can play a key role in influencing their supplier ecosystems by stressing and promoting the importance of ED&I. Additionally, this presents a great opportunity for government organisations to leverage the diversity strengths of their suppliers in building their own services.



## Inside View:

### Moving 'social value' up the priority list of supplier review processes

"If someone is delivering value for money but it is on the very end points of ethical values that speaks to the overall trust you can have in the competence of the company. So, I think when you artificially extract social value, you need to link it into financial risk to make people appreciate it."

"Even if you are a consumer, you are looking at value for money and whether the product or service aligns with your values, but ultimately, it depends on how important the values are to you, and whether you would maybe pay more for something aligning with these values. In government, it is even more important when you are dealing with taxpayers' money."

**Margaret O'Brien**

**Change Manager**

UK Home Office

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"Social value has become increasingly important in the procurement landscape. But if you look at our accountabilities, how we will be held to account by ministers, by parliament, or by National Audit Office, we will be, first and foremost, held to account to see if the product/service meets the standards, works, and is good value for money. And so, we are responding to external pressures to an extent."

"I do think there needs to be a bigger conversation about the context in which we are operating. We do know there are companies operating in the DDaT space, who bring a lot of social value to the table as well. And that helps. But is it right that that would outweigh technical competence on the scoring model? I think that is a difficult debate. Or are we looking at this wrong? Is a scoring mechanism the wrong way?"

"One alternative model would be to say you have a minimum benchmark. So could we have a ratchet effect where we say at the moment the minimum social value you are bringing to the table is 'X', whether that is environmental or diversity & inclusion, and each year, we try and move the bar up. And you can only bid if you are over that bar. At the moment, it is a scoring mechanism. And someone could get a very low score on social value but knock the ball out the park on price and quality and so comes top, whereas someone who is OK at all three, comes seconds. So, I think there are different models to look at it, and perhaps just saying we need to up the weighting on social value may not be the answer, which is not to say it is not important."

**Jason Kitcat**

**Director of Digital Data & Technology**

Department for International Trade (DIT)

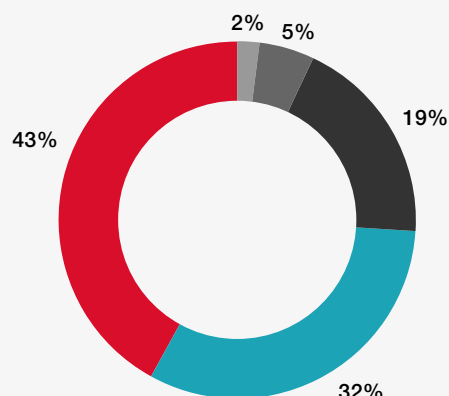
## 04 —

### Embracing the Difference

The ‘Government Transformation Strategy 2017 to 2020’ policy paper, acknowledged that... “the Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) function across government (and indeed across the whole sector) is predominantly male, white, able-bodied and heterosexual... and mostly based in London.”

Whilst ED&I gaps within DDaT roles exist across departments, there is an increasing appreciation of the importance and benefits of addressing workplace diversity issues. Reflecting this, three quarters (75%) of civil servants surveyed considered gender balance, diversity, and inclusion to be ‘important’ within their organisation’s DDaT function. Over four in ten (43%) considered it ‘very important,’ about a third (32%) considered it ‘somewhat important,’ and only a small 5% considered ED&I to be ‘not very important,’ within their organisation’s DDaT function.

#### Importance of gender balance, diversity, and inclusion within the DDaT function



- Not important at all
- Not very important
- Neutral
- Somewhat important
- Very important

#### Q: How important is gender balance, diversity, and inclusion within the Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) function within your organisation?

When exploring the advantages of ED&I within DDaT roles, civil servants emphasised that diverse teams work from an expanded, varied pool of exposures, experiences, and skills, thereby developing more inclusive, innovative solutions and services:

“A better appreciation of the issues presented by different parts of the business, an ability to come up with innovative solutions to problems more easily as different perspectives bring a more rounded view of the issue.” **Data Profession, UK Export Finance**

“Greater awareness of different user needs, more creativity, more understanding and better teams.” **Senior Civil Service, Department for International Trade**

“Stronger work collaboration and productivity, better for society as we will implement better services that work for everyone in society.” **Product/Delivery Profession, Department for Work & Pension**

“Diversity helps everyone’s point of view to be seen and addressed, it ensures diverse systems and processes are delivered that work for diverse people” **Technology Profession, Department for Work & Pensions**





**Q. In a few sentences, what are the benefits of addressing gender balance, diversity, and inclusion issues within your DDaT function?**

In our research, civil servants also underscored the significance of fair and open workplace opportunities in enabling staff to feel safe, valued, and contribute to the best of their capabilities. Over six in ten (61%) of government staff 'strongly agreed' with the statement 'Diverse teams yield better results,' whilst over half (52%) 'strongly agreed' with the statement 'Greater representation enhances performance.' The benefits of ED&I lead to enhanced employee and organisational performance, improving the image of an organisation, in addition to boosting employee confidence and promoting a feeling of well-being and impartiality within departments:

"People feel more at home and willing to work when they are understood." **Commercial/Procurement, Ministry of Defence**

"They help an organisation to perform better as well as bring a good reputation. By addressing gender balance, ED&I within organisation, they will definitely boost staff confidence as well as helping them to reach their goals and help the organisation to achieve its objectives." **HR, UK Export and Finance**

"Diversity opens talent pool – and strong diverse teams achieve better results" **Head of Team, Ministry of Defence**

**Q: In a few sentences, what are the benefits of addressing gender balance, diversity, and inclusion issues within your DDaT function?**

## **Inside View:**

### **Why government departments consider workplace ED&I crucial**

"In the public sector ED&I is key, if you do not have a representative workforce, it is impossible to deliver meaningful services to your people."

**Margaret O'Brien**  
**Change Manager**  
UK Home Office

"ED&I is important for many reasons. Firstly, because we need to be reflective of the society we are serving, so we need diversity in all areas – ethnicity, sexuality, gender, educational backgrounds, age, and so on."

"There is also lots of evidence to show that you get better work when you involve people from different backgrounds and perspectives. For DIT, because we are an international department serving businesses and people around the globe, we need more perspectives to be able to understand and reflect different needs. Whether we are trying to help a UK business land a deal in Azerbaijan or helping someone in Argentina to invest in a British business, diversity is important."

"I also think it has a morale impact – the more activities we do around ED&I, the more positive people feel about working at DIT."

**Jason Kitcat**  
**Director of Digital Data & Technology**  
Department for International Trade (DIT)

## 05 —

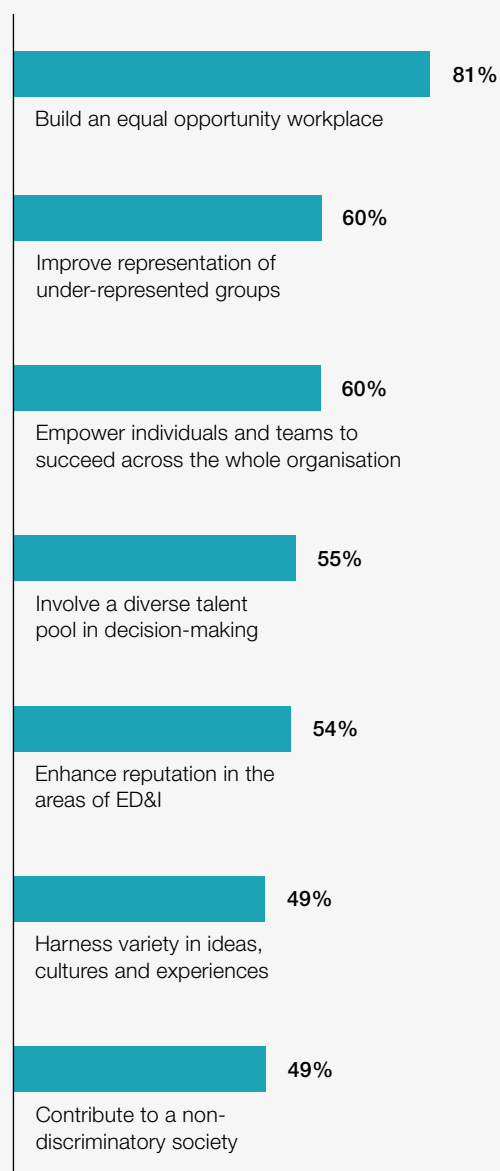
### Initiatives in action

Workplace diversity & inclusion initiatives can succeed by laying the pillars of proactive support, inclusion, and empowerment for employees. In order to drive change, and address diversity gaps within tech-based roles – especially in terms of inclusion of women and BAME staff (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) – government organisations are undertaking a number of steps. When asked what initiatives their organisation's DDaT teams have implemented regarding gender balance, diversity, and inclusion, a vast majority of civil servants reported that their DDaT function aimed to 'Build an equal opportunity workplace' (81%) i.e. eliminating hiring discrimination based on traits such as gender, age, race, religion or sexual orientation.

Initiatives especially geared towards the on-boarding and empowerment of minorities across different roles and decision-making levels are also being implemented within DDaT teams. An equal proportion of civil servants stated their DDaT functions were 'Improving representation of under-represented groups' (60%) and 'Empowering individuals and teams to succeed across the whole organisation' (60%). In addition, 55% reported their DDaT teams were 'Involving a diverse talent pool in decision-making,' and half (49%) said that they had implemented initiatives to 'Harness variety in ideas, cultures, and experiences'.



#### DDaT team's initiatives regarding gender balance, diversity, and inclusion



Q: Has your organisation's DDaT team implemented any of the following initiatives regarding gender balance, diversity, and inclusion? Please select all that apply

In terms of explicit workplace actions undertaken to ensure and improve gender balance, diversity, and inclusion, the vast majority of civil servants surveyed highlighted that their DDaT function was taking steps to ‘Tackle discrimination, harassment, and bullying’ (72%) and ‘Develop staff networks’ (72%). Eight in ten (80%) agreed with the statement ‘All employees in my organisation go through some form of diversity awareness training,’ whilst almost seven in ten (68%) agreed that ‘Leaders actively encourage ED&I within my organisation.’

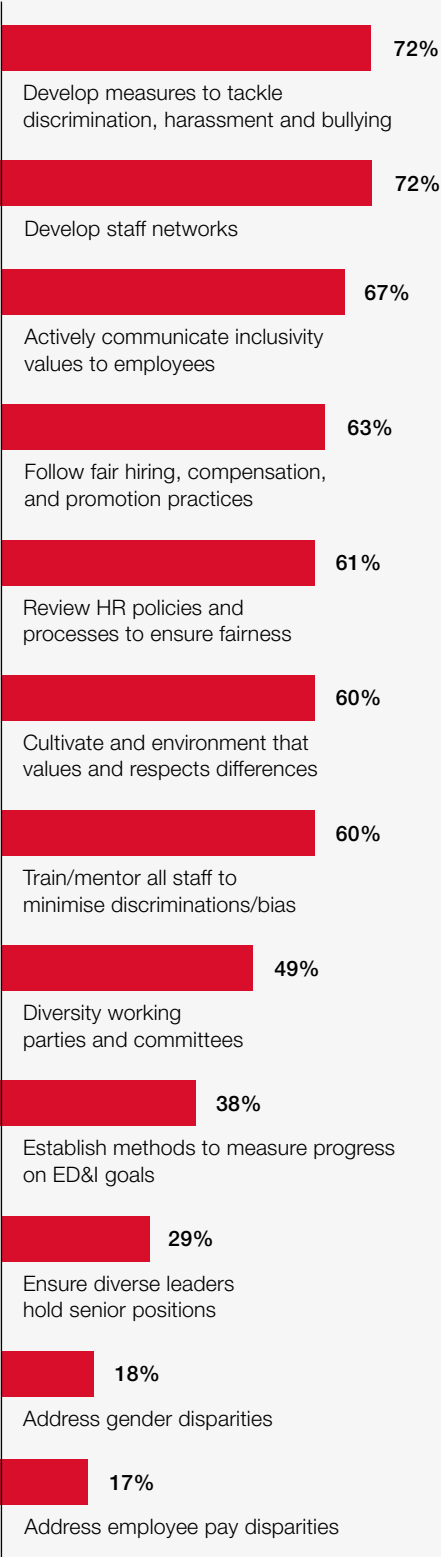
Other top actions undertaken included ‘Actively communicate inclusivity values to employees’ (67%), ‘Following fair hiring, compensation, and promotion practices’ (63%) and ‘Reviewing HR policies and process to ensure fairness’ (61%).

Whilst higher proportions of civil servants highlighted actions around HR policies, support networks, and education and training, when it came to actively measuring progress, a lower proportion reported action. Only 38% said their DDaT function had ‘Established methods to measure progress on ED&I goals.’ Similarly, a lower percentage of civil servants reported action around addressing disparities – with only three in ten (29%) stating their DDaT function had taken steps to ‘Ensure diverse leaders hold senior positions.’ Only 18% reported action around ‘Addressing gender disparities’ and 17% around ‘Addressing employee pay disparities.’

Furthermore, only about a third (32%) of civil servants agreed with the statement ‘There is a gender balance within DDaT within my organisation.’ Without dedicated efforts to address existing gender and diversity imbalance and pay gaps, the technology sector is set to continue to be male-dominated, not tapping – and even undervaluing – a large talent pool.



**Actions DDaT function has taken to ensure/improve gender balance, diversity, and inclusion**



Q: What actions has your organisation's DDaT function taken to ensure/improve gender balance, diversity, and inclusion?



## Inside View

### Diversity & Inclusion practices at DIT and the Home Office

“We are very thoughtful about how we are placing, targeting, and writing adverts to try to make sure we have a good diversity of candidates applying. The recruitment activities where we have been working hard on the language we use in adverts, have had an impact. Also, being very mindful of the placement of them has helped, because we found that there are some groups who tend to only feel able to apply if specifically encouraged”

“We are trying to do training around unconscious bias. We are mandating diversity on recruitment panels to prevent group thinking. We always have, wherever possible, one non-DDaT person on panels because people naturally tend to prefer people like themselves in the recruitment processes. And we keep monitoring the data as well to try and hold ourselves to account.”

“We have a great offer for part-time working and flexible working so working parents, or people who have other caring responsibilities have great support within the civil service.”

“We are also doing work within existing teams about celebrating ED&I. There are active groups to support various religious affiliations, ethnic groups, language interest groups, and so on. We are trying to make it supportive and inclusive within, but also in trying to attract candidates as well.”

#### Jason Kitcat

**Director of Digital Data & Technology**

Department for International Trade (DIT)

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“There has been a lot of good work like listening circles that gather employee views, rather than just trying to create solutions without talking to people. There is a lot of work looking at why people are not moving through the organisation – some of our figures show that we have quite diverse workforces, but not at every grade, or in every area.”

“Thinking about interactions, we have had development programmes, we have looked at recruitment. But I think it is more about actively working towards a cultural change. I think that is really important. It has to be an overall culture change where people’s voices are listened to.”

#### Margaret O’Brien

**Change Manager**

UK Home Office

## 06 —

## Barriers to Building Diverse and Inclusive DDaT Teams

When asked about the main barriers to ED&I within their organisation's DDaT functions, 'Unconscious bias at any level of the organisation' (74%) was the primary obstacle, followed by 'Conforming to sector/job role stereotypes' (43%) and 'Lack of diversity in the market' (37%). These chief barriers indicate that UK government's DDaT roles mirror the diversity gaps largely associated with the wider tech sector. Whilst ethnic minorities face racial bias, women face gender stereotyping as well as pay & promotion inequalities – affecting their roles, growth potential, and decision-making capacities.

### Top barriers to ED&I within organisation's DDaT function



Q: Please select the TOP THREE barriers to ED&I within your organisation's DDaT function.

There is clear acknowledgement of workplace bias among civil servants. Among those surveyed, they reiterated the significant prevalence of white, male employees, and highlighted how this affects minorities, creating barriers to workplace ED&I:

"I think that society is still unconsciously biased towards non-whites. The organisation is still largely led by 'white, middle-aged men'. There is a need for real change towards non-whites and stereotypes and leadership roles. As much as an organisation tries to improve, society needs to change and non-whites' experiences need to be listened to and actually heard. There is too much denial." **Head of Team, Central Government**

"There are clear existing biases in market for certain skills which make it very hard to maintain diversity whilst also delivering." **Senior Civil Service, Department for International Trade**

"Unconscious bias that certain type of people are best fit to certain roles and are a better fit for the organisation." **Product / Delivery Profession, Ofgem**

"Not providing apprenticeships or other avenues for people to upskill. It is no surprise that the main Development team is all male and the testing team has a better gender balance." **Data Profession, UK Export Finance**



Whilst some government staff were of the view that gaps in recruitment processes impact diversity, others pointed to “actual action” as a key barrier to workplace ED&I:

“The organisation pays lip service to gender, ED&I issues, but then very little practically happens on the ground to ensure these aspirations are followed through. Also attitudes of individual members of staff.”

**Data Profession, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**

“Sadly, there are strategies etc. in place to become more inclusive, fair and transparent however this does not seem to trickle through across and down the organisation into day-to-day operational decisions made, and actions agreed.” **Change, Engagement, People, Local Government**

“Need better publicity and transparency of the true gender balance, ED&I goal picture set out by region/city. We can have all the policies in the world, but ultimately organisations need to identify the problem and need to take action to address the underlying issues/problem. Research, studies, ED&I metadata should already have been produced given employment laws factoring in gender, disability and race - time for meaningful action” **Change, Engagement, People, HMRC**

“There are opposing forces e.g.: sifting for jobs is done “Blind” where names are removed, and candidate numbers allocated. This means that it is not possible to tell whether those being selected for interview are spread across the different ED&I factors.” **Technology Profession, Department for Work & Pensions**

## Summary

The results of the Dods Research and Hitachi Solutions survey show that the importance and advantages of workplace ED&I are highly recognised within the UK’s public sector. Whilst several initiatives and actions are in place to improve workplace diversity, our research reveals an ‘Intention vs. Action’ gap within the DDaT function of government organisations.

Moving away from implementing ED&I actions and training as tick-box exercises, there is need for a more nuanced, consistent, and measurable approach to resolving diversity issues. As government departments continue to address ED&I challenges within white, male dominated DDaT roles, transparency and accountability will be key in enabling meaningful change. Furthermore, in their bid to harness the advantages of ED&I, government organisations also need to extend their values to their supply chain. However, at present, pricing and technical competency-related assessment factors take precedence in supplier review processes over ED&I practices.





## Recommendations

Although the importance of workplace ED&I is widely understood, there is a significant gap in addressing challenges. Whilst the importance of people sits at the heart of most organisations when addressing ED&I issues and implementing associated strategies, workplace policies, processes and peers can have a significant impact on the ability of individuals to contribute to the best of their potential. This research highlights four ED&I pointers for UK government DDaT functions focusing on People, Policy, Process and Suppliers.

### People

All employees within an organisation can potentially contribute to workplace discrimination – whether knowingly or unknowingly. Therefore, it is important that government organisations' DDaT teams foster a culture where ED&I values are clear to all. Actively communicating anti-discrimination values and providing relevant training to staff at all levels on identifying and reducing bias is crucial. Additionally, government organisations can multiply the benefits of ED&I by encouraging their suppliers to provide diverse teams.

### Policy

Policies reflect an organisation's stance on ED&I and are a sure way of upholding ED&I values and objectives. The implementation of rules, regulations, and measures can act as robust assurance to minorities and enable them to feel safe, understood, and supported. Policies can also guide the behaviour of all employees, educating and training them on non-acceptable, discriminatory attitudes and corrective actions. Fair on boarding, compensation, performance evaluation, and promotion policies need to be in place to ensure employees are not discriminated against at any stage in their career progression. Lastly, it is highly crucial that ED&I inclusion policies are drafted in a clear, all-encompassing, relevant manner – as well as consistently followed.

### Process

Organisational processes – ranging from recruitment to product/service development to decision-making – are key areas with substantial potential to filter out/discriminate against people. To successfully exploit the advantages of ED&I, government organisations need to set up processes across all divisions and decision-making levels that minimise the influence of bias. In addition to this, government organisations should ensure that ED&I ethics and policies are a consideration in the supplier selection process. Finally, government departments including DDaT functions need to be held accountable for building a fair, equal, and inclusive workplace. In order to deliver this, transparency is crucial. ED&I initiatives need to be monitored, and it is essential that data on gender, pay, ethnicity, and other ED&I priorities is collected, shared, and published.

### Suppliers

External contractors and suppliers represent a significant proportion of UK government DDaT teams. Without including them in the data collection and reporting process, government organisations cannot ensure that the teams designing their products and services are representative of the citizens they serve. Furthermore, without data on diversity of suppliers and contractors, public sector organisations cannot be held accountable for their on-contract workforce if it lacks diversity. Therefore, it is essential that government organisations step up the ED&I data collection and reporting process of suppliers and contractors, particularly for DDaT functions. This will provide crucial visibility on the workforce employed by the public sector to serve citizens.

**These four pointers can be summarised in an action plan through the lens of culture, communication, and accountability:**

## Action Plan



### People



### Policy



### Process



### Suppliers

#### Culture

- Ensure all employees – at all levels – feel supported and included
- Leaders need to actively uphold ED&I values within their organisation
- Ensure underrepresented groups have role models at work (e.g. women in tech leadership roles)
- Develop a strong understanding of areas of job role stereotyping and bias

- Set out a clear stance on ED&I via policies
- Leverage policy focus areas as a guide for behaviours and actions across the organisation

- Develop and adopt broad, encouraging, and inclusive hiring methods
- Educate and train staff to eliminate influence of factors that can lead to bias in HR processes
- Draft clear policies that outline all rules, process practices as well as support initiatives for all staff
- Customise ED&I support according to every underrepresented group's unique challenges and needs

- Cultivate business ecosystems that promote and harness ED&I across the supply chain
- Partner with suppliers and contractors that value workplace ED&I
- Ensure all contractors feel supported and included across all departments. This is particularly important for the DDaT function where the contractor rate is often high

#### Communication

- Encourage and enable staff to voice opinions, concerns and suggestions on ED&I issues
- Educate all staff on ED&I values to minimise/eliminate instances of discrimination/ bullying/ harassment
- Communicate ED&I data to all relevant internal and external stakeholders

- Communicate ED&I principles via policies
- All ED&I policies need to be communicated and accessible to all relevant internal and external stakeholders (such as contractors)

- Boost awareness and training around unconscious bias in critical processes such as recruitment, evaluation and promotion
- Equip leaders and other decision-makers with training on understanding and handling issues faced by minority staff

- Encourage suppliers to provide diverse teams
- Communicate support for suppliers building and utilising diverse teams
- Educate all contractors on ED&I values to minimise/eliminate instances of discrimination/ bullying/ harassment

#### Accountability

- Assess and improve minorities' representation within the workplace
- Take steps to improve diversity self-declaration rates across all departments
- Ensure ED&I training and education programmes are in place for all staff

- Develop measurable diversity goals
- Periodically measure progress on ED&I goals as part of overall business review
- Clearly lay out and follow disciplinary and corrective actions

- Embed transparency and accountability into recruitment, performance evaluation and promotion processes
- Develop processes to monitor progress on ED&I objectives
- Embed assessing ED&I practices into supplier review processes

- Monitor diversity of contractor teams in the recruitment and commissioning process
- Ensure ED&I training and education programmes are in place for all staff (including contractors)
- Collect and report ED&I data on suppliers and contractors

## Survey Profile

Half of all respondents worked for HMRC, MoD of Department for Work and Pensions. A further 12% worked for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs or Department of Health & Social Care. In terms of the top job functions/roles, 35% work in HR, Change, Engagement or People roles, 22% work in DDaT functions, and 16% work in Product or Delivery professions. Looking at age, 35% were under 44, 33% aged 45-54, and 32% aged 55+. 5% preferred not to say. 71% of the survey sample were female and 23% male. The ethnicity profile was mixed, and can be summarised as follows:

### Ethnic Group

English, Welsh, Scottish, Irish, Northern Irish or British	56%
Other White	5%
BAME (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic)	30%
Prefer not to say	9%



## About Dods Group PLC

Dods is a specialist content, media services and events company delivering information and analysis across multiple platforms. Dods provides the relevant information, topical knowledge, actionable insights and critical connections vital for its global client base to understand, navigate and engage in the political and public policy environments across the United Kingdom and European Union.

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## About Hitachi Solutions

Hitachi Solutions understand what it takes to digitally transform organisations, harnessing the power of data and technology and seamlessly integrating them into the Public Sector. As a global consultancy firm, we specialise in user centred business applications based on the Microsoft cloud as we believe technology should be part of the solution, not part of the problem. As the biggest Microsoft Dynamics 365 specialist in Europe, we work alongside public sector organisations, delivering a suite of solutions in the cloud within Case management, CRM, Grants, Finance and Operations, Agile DevOps and ERP.

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