

GAIN

Individual Member Survey

2023

Foreword by

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Analysis by

DR VINA THEODORAKOPOULOU

VIC MAZONAS





Francis McGee, Executive Chair

He/Him/His

Foreword to Report of 2023 GAIN Individual Member Survey

The founding principles of GAIN are that there is a scarcity of key talent in the insurance, investment and related financial services sectors which increases costs, holds back innovation and hampers productivity; that there is a match between these shortage areas and the specific talents – the “super-powers” – of neurodiverse individuals; and that bringing the talent and the need together across the industry is both great for individuals and good for business.

Respondents to this survey of GAIN’s individual membership are overwhelmingly neurodiverse themselves, and nearly all already work in our industry. The survey shows how this group of people feel about our industry’s workplaces and how well employers match person, role and environment to enable neurodiverse people to achieve and expand their potential. It reveals some of the challenges neurodiverse individuals can face in terms of bringing their whole selves to work, and the outlook they have towards progression and career growth.

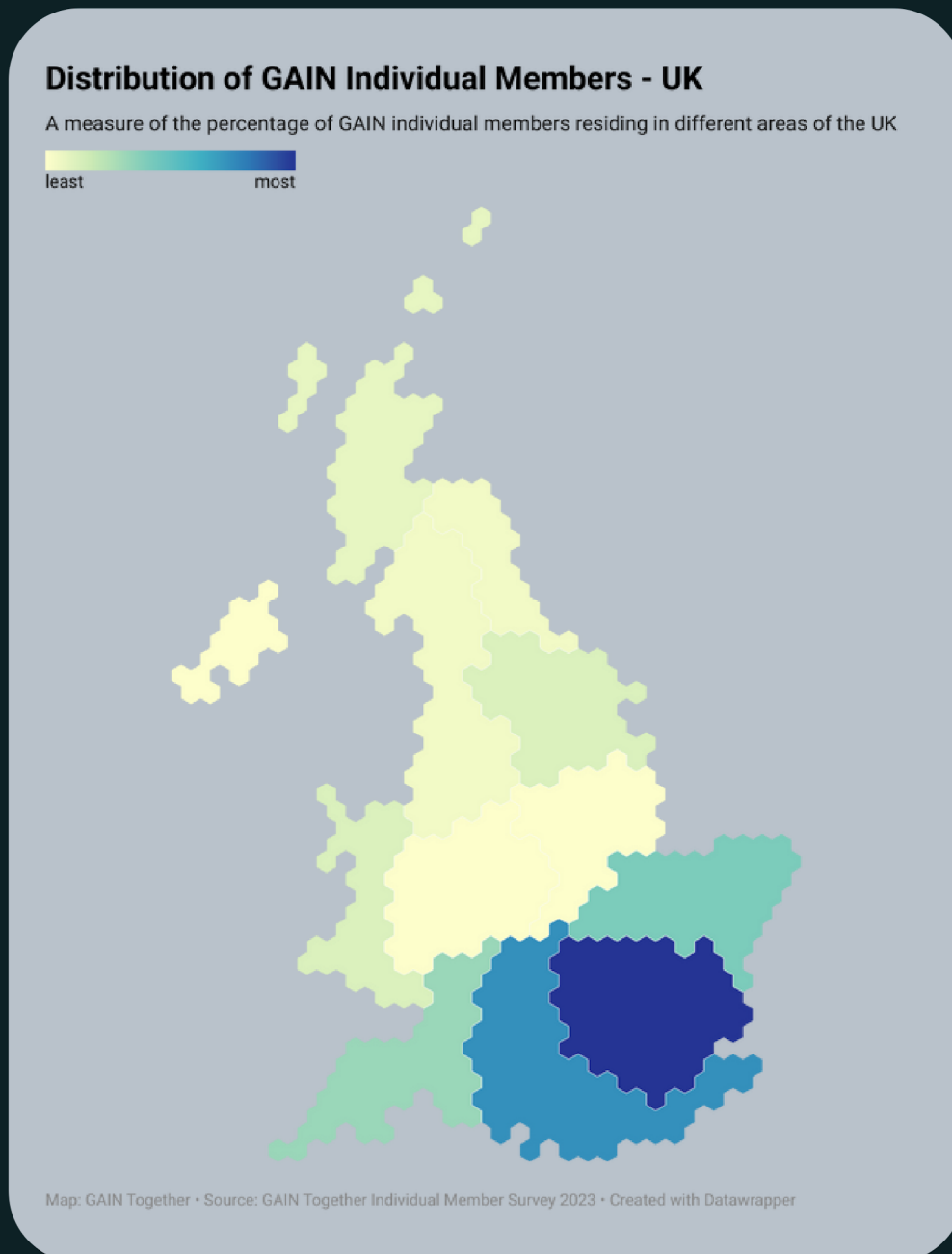
The survey reveals challenges in all these areas, and more. It provides crucial evidence which we will use in the coming months to shape our strategy for the future in pursuit of our mission to spur an industry-led transformation of the employment prospects of neurodiverse individuals in our industry.

But the survey also shows that GAIN members are viewed more positively by their ND employees than other businesses. This in turn shows that ours is an industry at the forefront of progress and willing to develop, share and emulate best practice.

The GAIN Team are hugely grateful to the individuals who took part in this research. We look forward to discussing the findings with them and with all our colleagues across the industry.

Our survey shows the vast majority of GAIN members are based in the UK, with 89.9% of our members residing there.

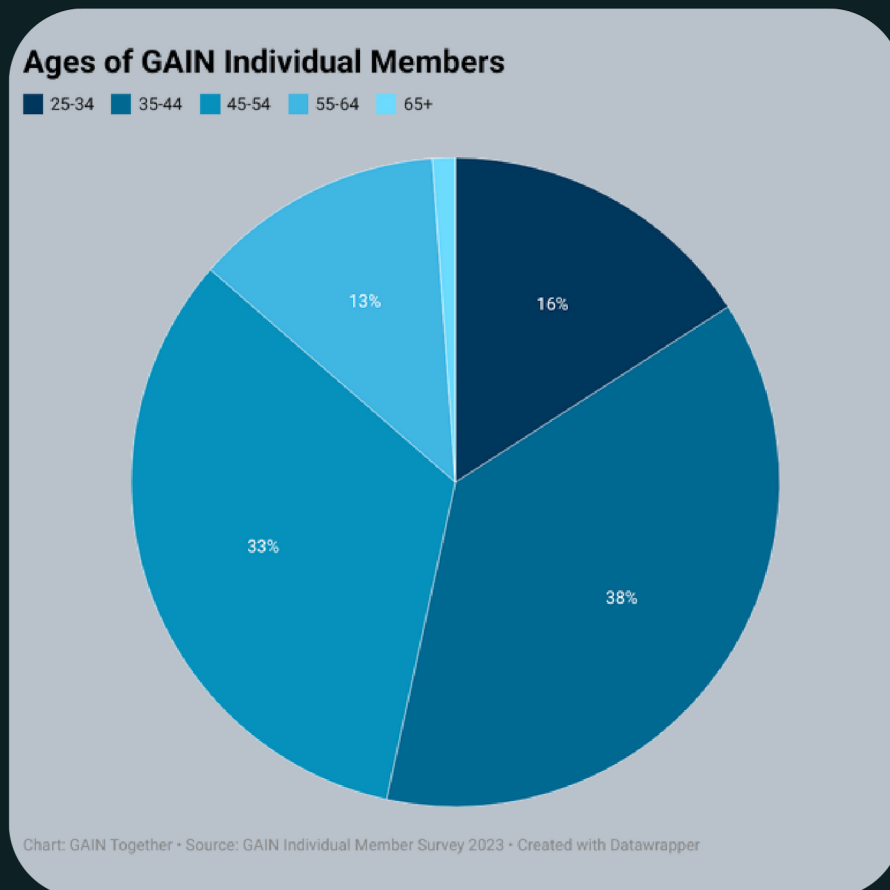
Likewise, most of our members are heavily clustered around London, with 77.5% of UK members residing in the South of the country.



With our membership focused on the financial services industry, it's not entirely surprising that so many of our members live close to London. However, there are significant hubs of industry innovation in cities in the North of England and Scotland, and it's important that we examine our activities and find ways to expand our work to ensure our peers outside of the South have access to our services, and opportunities to add their voice to the movement.

This survey was distributed to GAIN individual members, of which there were over 1,000 by the time the survey closed, and of which 719 are highly engaged and active. The survey received a 8.9-13.1% response rate (some variance accounting for membership growth over the period).

A notably absent demographic among GAIN individual members is neurodivergent adults aged 18-25. The vast majority of our members are in middle age, with 71% of our members in the age brackets of 35-44 and 45-54.



Reviewing feedback regarding GAIN’s social media, we can see that the vast majority of our members interact with GAIN through LinkedIn and our newsletters. This is unsurprising, as during our initial launch phase we have relied heavily on these and on collaborative opportunities within the industry to spread the word of our work.

- 75.7% of our members use LinkedIn, and 40% of members follow GAIN there
- 60% use Facebook
- 47% use Instagram
- 24% use Twitter (now X)

Cummulatively, only 11% of GAIN members follow us on these other social media channels.

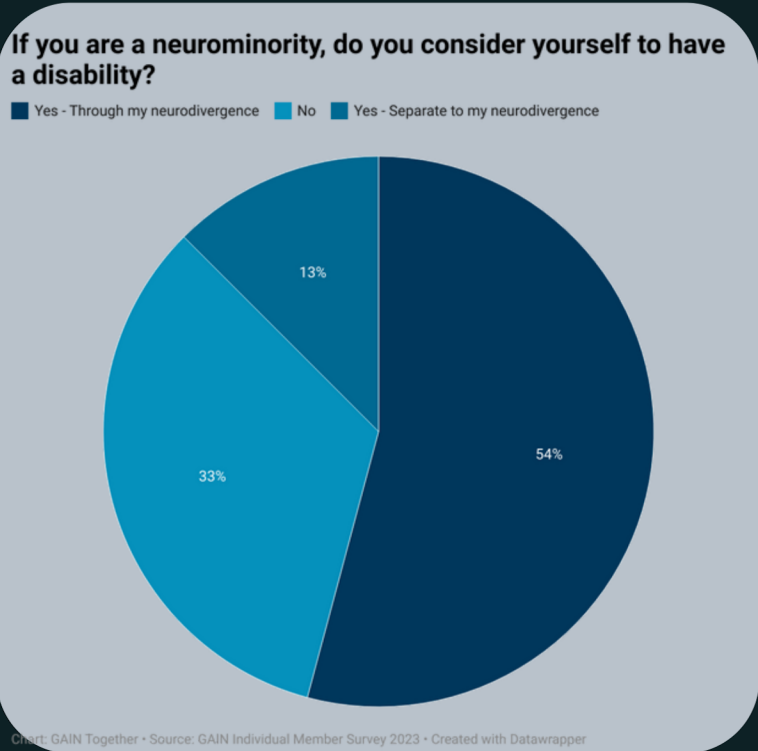
As GAIN now has a presence on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Spotify and SoundCloud, we can begin to increase outreach for 2024.

In 2022, the GAIN member survey showed that, in addition to being a majority-neurodivergent community, our members are also diverse in other ways. We're delighted to see this continuing even as our membership grows.

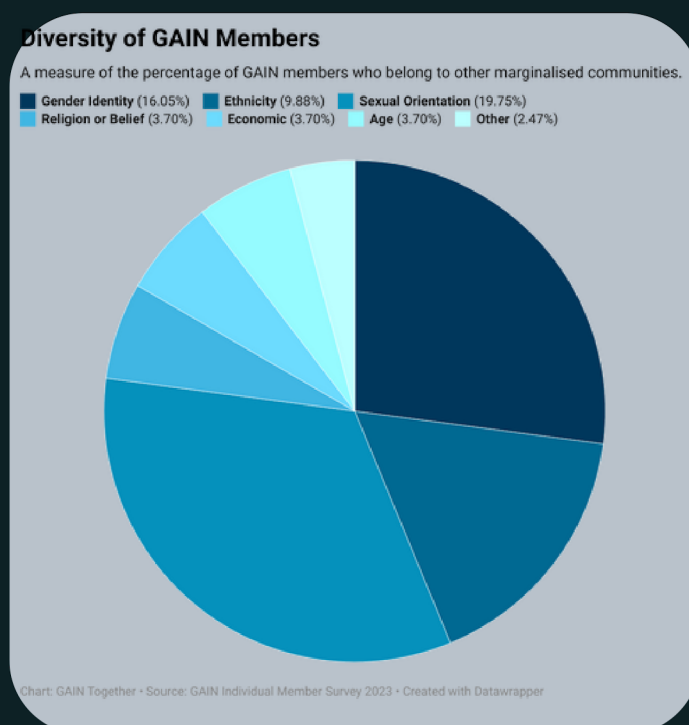
80% of GAIN members are personally neurodivergent. 37.5% are parent or carer to a neurodivergent person, and 28.75% are spouse, partner or otherwise related to a neurodivergent person.

54% of neurodivergent respondents consider their neurodivergence a disability, and 13% advised they have another disability.

The topic of disability and neurodiversity therefore clearly continues to be one about which our community has varied feelings.



38% of our members belong to other marginalised communities, with most respondents mentioning sexual identity, gender identity and ethnicity. The prevalence of LGBTQ identities in our community is consistent with research showing neurodivergent individuals are more likely to identify as such than the general population, and the overall results emphasise the importance of intersectionality in our approach.



GAIN

Dr Vina Theodorakopoulou

She/Her/Hers



GAIN's annual individual member survey has shed light on critical aspects that demand attention for a better understood and more engaged workplace

Regional Disparities:

The majority of GAIN's members being situated in the South of England highlights the need to expand outreach to other regions. The financial services sector's endorsement of hybrid working models presents an opportunity to connect with neurodivergent individuals across the country. Embracing flexible working practices aligns with the industry's values and supports the crucial balance between work and life.

Age Dynamics:

With 71% of members falling within the 35-54 age bracket, a targeted approach towards further and higher education institutions is crucial to ensure continuous support for neurodiverse individuals transitioning from education to the workplace. Simultaneously, there is a significant cohort over the age of 54 that remains under-represented. Addressing this is essential for a comprehensive understanding of neurodiversity within the financial services industry.

Intersectionality as a Driving Force:

Highlighting the importance of intersectionality is a universal design principle. It seems to me that we ought to embed the GRRRAAACCEEESSS [Gender, Geography, Race, Religion, Age, Ability, Appearance, Culture, Class/caste, Education, Employment, Ethnicity, Spirituality, Sexuality, Sexual orientation] model (Burnham, 2012) as a tool to enhance the sense of belonging for all individuals. By incorporating this framework, GAIN can promote inclusivity and enable employers to engage more effectively with their neurodiverse workforce.

The individual member survey can serve as a catalyst for positive change within GAIN as well as across the industry. As GAIN pioneers the use of frameworks like GRRRAAACCEEESSS, it has the potential to become a trailblazer in promoting sustainable employment -and hence the belonging- of neurodiverse talent in our sector.

When we talk about the importance of taking an intersectional approach to diversity and inclusion matters, we aren't saying this because it's "nice to have". Meaningful DEI initiatives cannot exist, and cannot succeed, unless we are prepared to do the work of seeing the people in our community as their whole, complex selves.

No one is "just one thing". Neurodivergent people in particular are significantly more likely to be LGBTQ than the general population. We need to be mindful to avoid treating a focus on one aspect of diversity into a tendency to create isolated silos.

GAIN is an initiative focused on neurodiversity. But through active and open collaboration with organisations and groups such as ICAN, IFN, iDAWN, ISC Group and more, we can ensure we are listening to our whole community.



Vic Mazonas

They/Them/Theirs

Following GAIN’s membership launch in June 2022, we’ve spent a solid year building foundational relationships with our member companies, developing services and pilots, and helping them make a start on the path to neuroinclusion.

In this year’s survey, we asked individual members a few simple questions about the amount of work their employers are doing to foster neuroinclusive workplaces, and we compared the responses of members employed at GAIN member companies to those employed elsewhere.

Does your current workplace have a neurodiversity ERG, EWG or employee network?

■ Yes - Specific to Neurodiversity
 ■ Yes - Included with Disability and/or Mental Health
 ■ No
 ■ Do not know

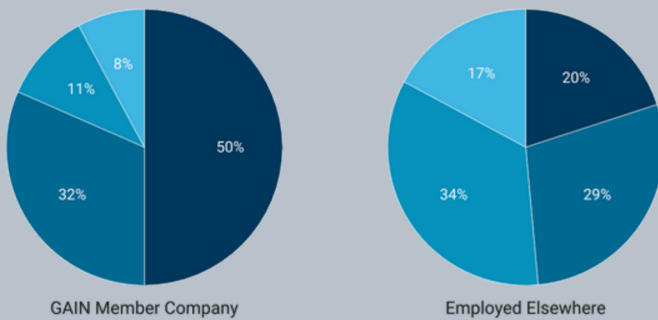


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Employees of GAIN member companies are significantly more likely to have a neurodiversity-focused ERG or employee network than those employed elsewhere.

50% of those employed by a GAIN member said their employer had a dedicated neurodiversity ERG, and 32% said there was an ERG with some inclusion of neurodiversity,

GAIN member employees also noted significantly higher rates of activity and attention being paid to neurodiversity in their workplace, with 87% having had at least one neurodiversity-related event or initiative, and 30% having seen 3 or more, or 5 or more, activities. In comparison, 35% of those employed elsewhere had seen no attention given to neurodiversity in the last 12 months.

How many neurodiversity-related projects or events have you seen your company run in the last 12 months?

■ None
 ■ 1 or more
 ■ 3 or more
 ■ 5 or more

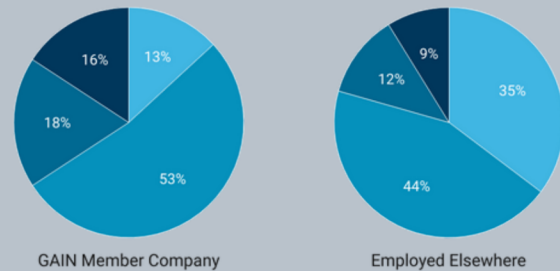
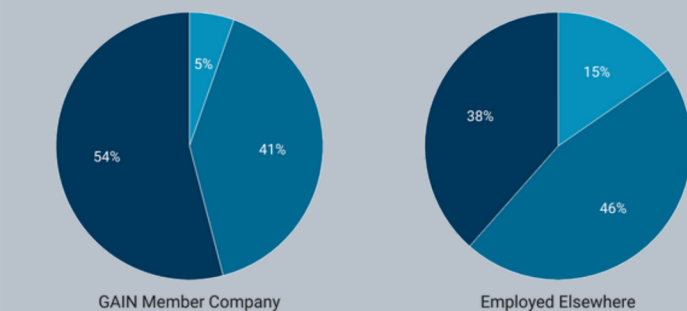


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

GAIN members are also rated as more inclusive overall, with 54% of respondents employed at GAIN member companies saying their company had become more inclusive in the last 12 months, compared to 38% of those employed elsewhere.

Do you feel your current workplace has become more or less inclusive in the last year?



■ Less inclusive than before
 ■ As inclusive as before
 ■ More inclusive than before

Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Meanwhile, 15% of those employed at other companies said their workplace had become less inclusive in the last year.

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Dr Vina Theodorakopoulou

She/Her/Hers



I applaud GAIN member corporates for their dedication to forming, running, and supporting ERGs and EWGs. Additionally, their ability to commission neurodiversity-related projects and host events on the topic offers a strong sign of corporate preparedness to accept, support and utilise cognitive diversity. This not only encourages employee openness and disclosure but also signifies a commitment to fostering an inclusive work environment.

Our benchmark analysis, designed for corporate members, highlights the areas in which each workplace can support and engage its neurodivergent employees to perform their roles to the best of their ability.

While the majority believes their workplace has become more inclusive in the last year, it is crucial to acknowledge that a notable percentage, experiencing no change or even a decline, underscores the ongoing journey towards neuro-inclusion in our sector.

Quality over quantity remains our focus as we collectively strive for a radical improvement in the employment prospects of neurodivergent individuals within the industry.

GAIN has not existed for long. I would not try to claim that the significant difference between responses by employees of GAIN member companies and those from others in the industry is solely thanks to our existence as an organisation - our members have worked hard alongside us to achieve what they have.

However, what the data shows incredibly clearly is that companies who are willing to invest their time and resources to prioritising neurodiversity are capable of fostering inclusive communities that benefit all their employees. This is borne out in the anecdotal data we have seen through interactions with our members, who are seeing more of their employees choosing to share their experiences in the workplace. There is tremendous value in the collective voice of our community and every small step forward creates ripples of greater impact.

The focus now must be on taking these very positive initial strides forward, and utilising this energy to embed a sustainable transformation in the industry. And then, I hope, to the wider world beyond.



Vic Mazonas

They/Them/Theirs

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87.5% of neurodivergent respondents are open about this in the workplace to at least some of their peers. Most are open to more than one individual or group of individuals.

- 69.6% are open with their line manager
- 60.7% are open with their team
- 53.6% are open with HR or their ERG

Are you open about your neurodivergent identity in the workplace?

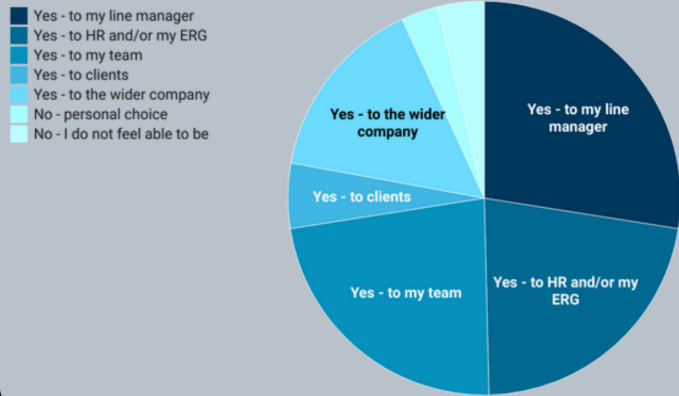


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

When asked how comfortable they would feel disclosing a new ND condition at work;

- 60.6% were somewhat or very comfortable disclosing to their EWG
- 58.9% were somewhat or very comfortable disclosing to their line manager
- 44.8% were somewhat or very comfortable disclosing to HR
- 44% were somewhat or very comfortable disclosing to co-workers

Employees of GAIN member companies expressed significantly higher rates of comfort with the idea of disclosure.

Comfort disclosing among employees of GAIN members

Very uncomfortable (lightest blue), Somewhat uncomfortable (light blue), Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (medium blue), Somewhat comfortable (dark blue), Very comfortable (darkest blue)

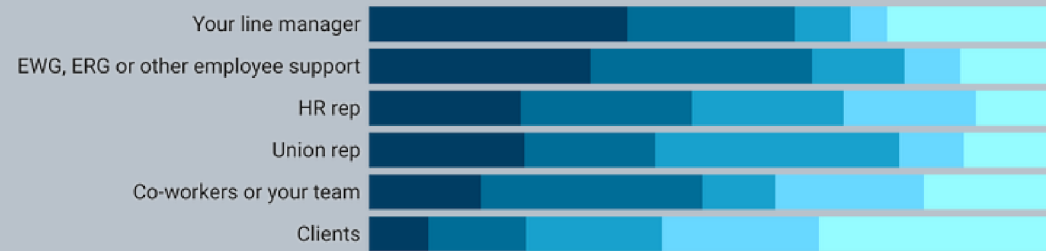


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Comfort disclosing among those employed elsewhere

Very comfortable (darkest blue), Somewhat comfortable (dark blue), Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (medium blue), Somewhat uncomfortable (light blue), Very uncomfortable (lightest blue)

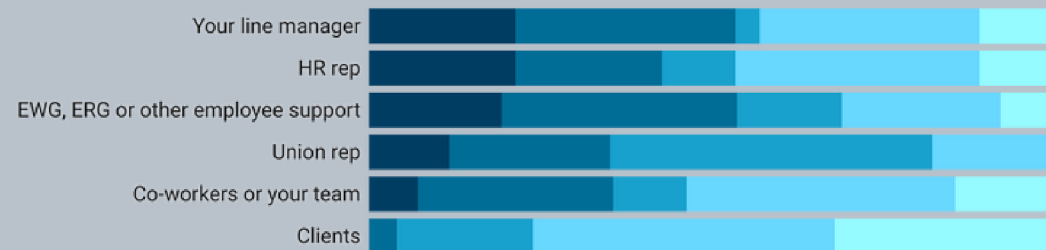


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

What are the primary barriers that might hold you back from disclosing your neurodivergence in the workplace?

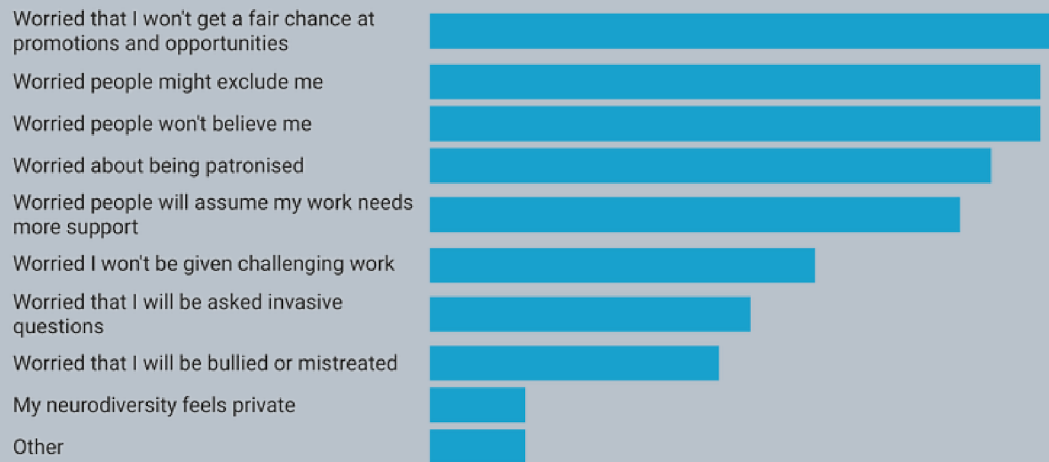


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

The most commonly cited reasons for feeling discomfort disclosing neurodivergence in the workplace were:

- 72.2% worried they won't get a fair chance at promotions & opportunities
- 70.1% worried they'll be excluded due to being perceived difficult
- 70.1% worried they won't be believed, or their ND status will be doubted or questioned
- 64.8% worried about being patronised or assumed less knowledgeable
- 61.1% worried people will assume they need more support than they actually do

Others offered further thoughts, including the following:

"I feel like I need a certificate for work to take it seriously. I feel I need to chose my words carefully so I don't come across as I can't do my job."

"Have been held back after work, cornered and screamed at by previous manager who accused me of using autism as an excuse."

"People are very judgemental and senior leaders do not understand how to support people. Those that are in top roles, don't care and make that clear in how they speak to you."

"There are no neurodiverse representatives at any senior position in our company, there is no affirmative internal promotions scheme and I therefore know that disclosing my neurodiversity would result in less opportunity for advancement."

"Example that has happened in the past at another employer who, knowing I'm quiet, added weekly engagement as a goal for performance to build relationships which had no bearing on me performing my job and just caused anxiety and me failing that goal."

"Whilst people are more accepting, there still feels like a big expectation to confirm to neurotypical ideals rather than recognising that unique approach can have huge advantages"

The Vulnerability Experiences Quotient study 2019 asked both autistic and non-autistic respondents about negative life experiences across a range of areas. Some questions in that study are similar to questions we asked in our survey:

VEQ

“I have been bullied by someone at work”

54% of autistic respondents say yes, compared to 36% of non-autistic respondents.

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“Have you ever experienced or witness bullying, exclusion or harassment in the workplace?”

75% of respondents say yes.

We asked which individuals at work were the bullies, and found that the most common instigators were people’s co-workers, cited 34% of the time, and their line managers, cited 30% of the time.

VEQ

“I left a job because I was being treated badly by colleagues”

49% of autistic respondents say yes, compared to 19% of non-autistic respondents.

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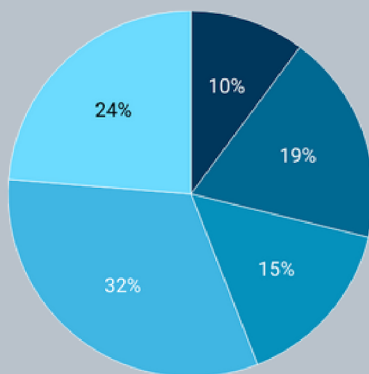
“Have you ever left a workplace, or considered leaving, due to bullying, exclusion or harassment?”

86% of respondents say yes.

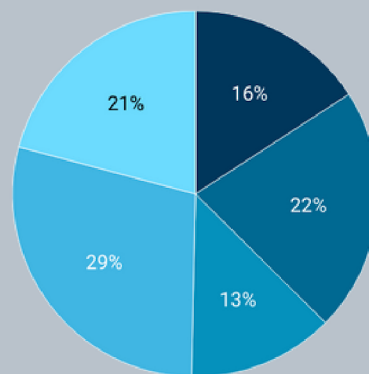
Further questions asked how safe individuals would feel raising a complaint about bullying at work. It’s perhaps unsurprising, given that line managers were the second most commonly noted as being bullies, that only 37% of respondents overall and 27.6% of autistic respondents reported feeling somewhat or very safe.

How safe would you feel raising a complaint about bullying or harassment in the workplace?

■ Very Safe
 ■ Somewhat Safe
 ■ Neither Safe Nor Unsafe
 ■ Somewhat Unsafe
 ■ Very Unsafe



Neurodivergent



Overall

We also asked our individual members about their experiences applying for adjustments in the workplace.

56% of GAIN individual members have requested an adjustment in the workplace.

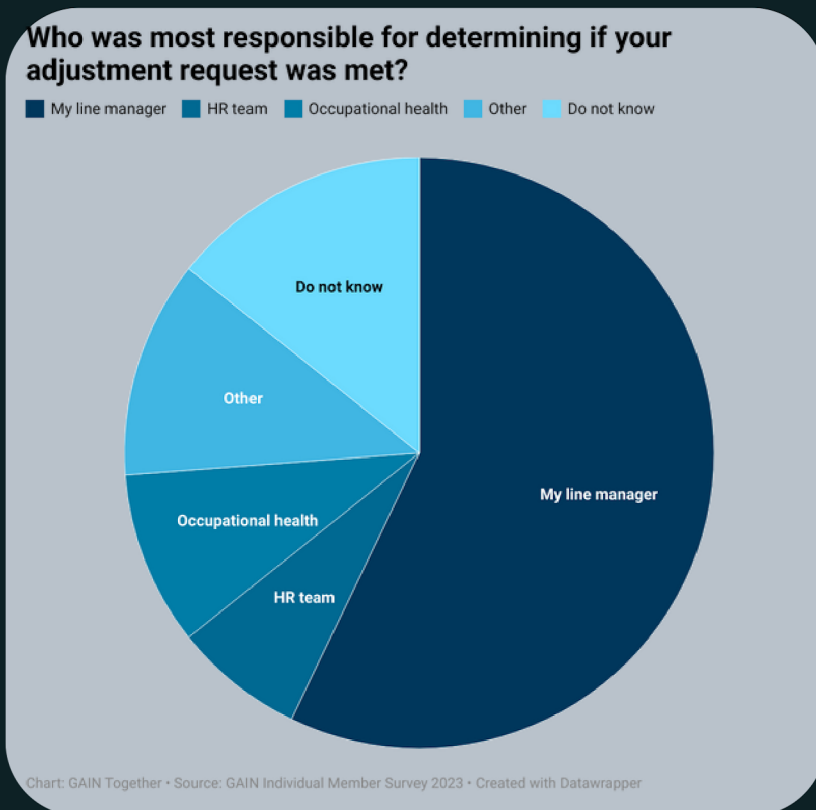
Of these;

30% had their adjustment request fully met

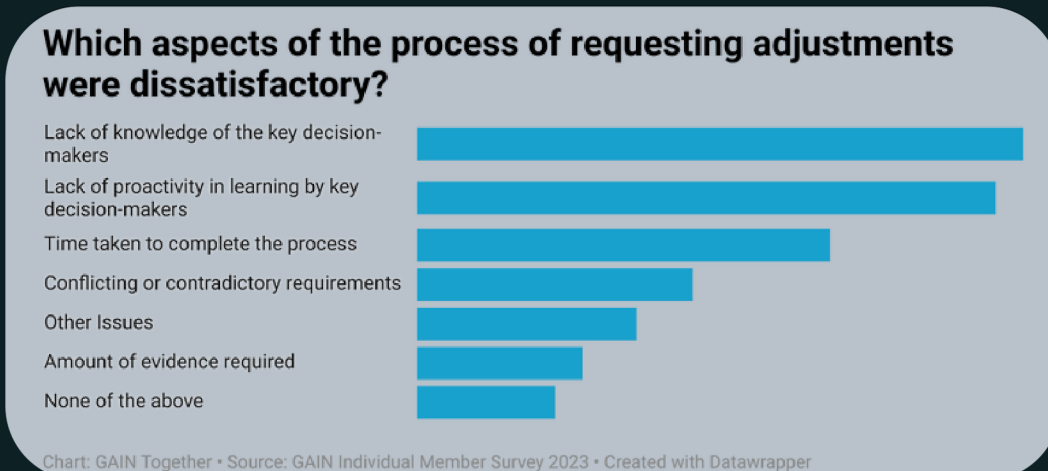
46% had their request partially met

60% of the time, the line manager was ultimately most responsible for whether a request was made

17% of respondents stated they did not know who was ultimately responsible for the decision.



The most common aspects of the process that were found to be dissatisfactory were a lack of knowledge, and a lack of proactivity in seeking knowledge and learning, by the key decision-makers involved in the adjustments process.



We asked respondents how satisfied they were with the way different areas of business responded to their request for adjustments. HR received the overall worst satisfaction rating, with 39.4% of respondents finding them some level of dissatisfactory, and only 36.4% expressing satisfaction.

Line managers and occupational health, meanwhile, scored overall very positively, as did co-workers as a whole. Occupational health, EWGs and Co-workers also received a large number of neutral ratings. Once again, however, some notable differences exist when examining responses by employees of GAIN members compared to those employed elsewhere.

Attitudes Towards Adjustments (GAIN Corporate Members)

A measure of the satisfaction felt by employees of GAIN member companies with the way different areas of business responded to their adjustments request

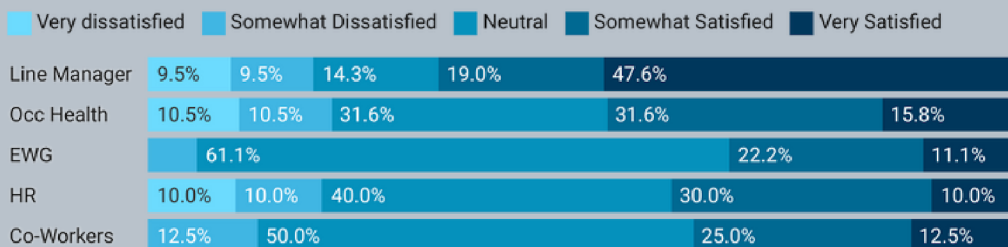


Chart: GAIN Together - Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 - Created with Datawrapper

Line managers of GAIN members are very highly rated by employees, with occupational health second and HR teams third. Meanwhile, co-workers are a close second to line managers among employees of other companies. While GAIN members lean heavily positive, with overall low rates of dissatisfaction, other companies express highly polarised views with far fewer neutral ratings.

Employees of GAIN members:

15.6% very or somewhat dissatisfied, 39.4% neutral, 45% satisfied or very satisfied

Employees of other companies:

32.6% very or somewhat dissatisfied, 22.3% neutral, 45.1% satisfied or very satisfied

Attitudes Towards Adjustments (Employed Elsewhere)

A measure of the satisfaction felt by employees of non-member companies with the way different areas of business responded to their adjustments request

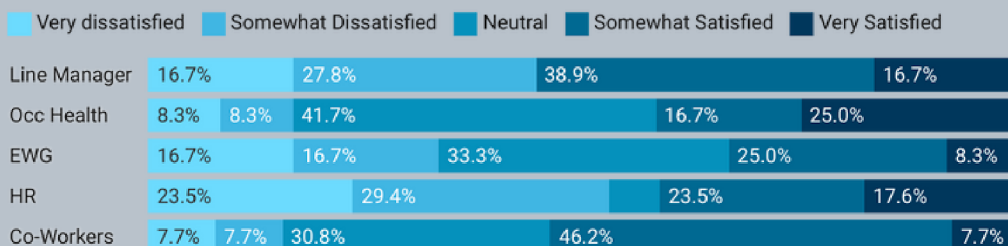


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Dr Vina Theodorakopoulou

She/Her/Hers



It is wonderful to witness the positive embrace of neurodivergence disclosure among employees at GAIN member companies. This seamlessly aligns with the organisations' commitment to showcasing neurodiversity through dynamic events, projects, ERGs, and EWGs, as highlighted earlier.

However, regardless of GAIN membership, respondents reveal persistent hurdles to disclosure, citing concerns about job progression and grappling with emotional challenges like fear, stigmatisation, exclusion and credibility issues.

The power to dismantle these barriers rests within the workplace itself. Line managers, armed with respectful curiosity, compassion, neurodiversity awareness and a dedication to supporting their teams, play a pivotal role. People managers are instrumental in the adjustment process, too.

Alarming, though, remains the prevalence of bullying, with half the respondents feeling unsafe about reporting incidents. With HR, occupational health, ERGs, even, often seen as neutral players in fostering neuro-inclusive environments, consensus points to a leadership void.

Senior leadership lacks representation of neurodiversity, leaving a void in practical steps towards neuro-inclusion.

What jumps out to me is how pivotal a role an individual's line manager plays in their experiences of the workplace.

Managers are the most positively-rated individual involved in the adjustment process. More neurodivergent individuals disclose neurodiversity to their line manager than to any other individual in the workplace, and line managers are the second-most trusted when disclosing.

However, they were the second most commonly cited source of bullying and exclusion in the workplace. And are most often the key decision-maker in whether an adjustment is granted.

Note also that the most pressing concern for those worried about disclosure, was the potential impact on promotions and opportunities.

It is overwhelmingly clear that an informed, supported and confident line manager is a crucial element in ensuring the retention of neurodivergent talent.



Vic Mazonas

They/Them/Theirs

We asked our members a variety of questions as part of our deep-dive into topics and content related to our Career Club service. In one question, we asked respondents how important different aspects of an advertised vacancy were when influencing their decision to apply for a role. Respondents were able to rate importance from “not at all important” to “crucial”.

By far the most important criterion when deciding whether or not to apply for a role was the existence of flexible or remote working options. 100% of respondents rated this as some level of important, with 45% considering it “crucial”, and 40% considering it “very important”.

After this, the next top 5 rated aspects were:

- Salary transparency (28% crucial, 92.5% overall important)
- Clearly explained application process (28% crucial, 90% overall important)
- Accessible job advert (28% crucial, 87.5% overall important)
- Explicit statement of interest in diversity in the team (30% crucial, 87.5% overall important)
- Transparency around benefits (18% crucial, 87.5% overall important)

Importance When Applying for a Role

■ Not at all important
 ■ Not very important
 ■ Neutral
 ■ Somewhat Important
 ■ Very Important
 ■ Crucial

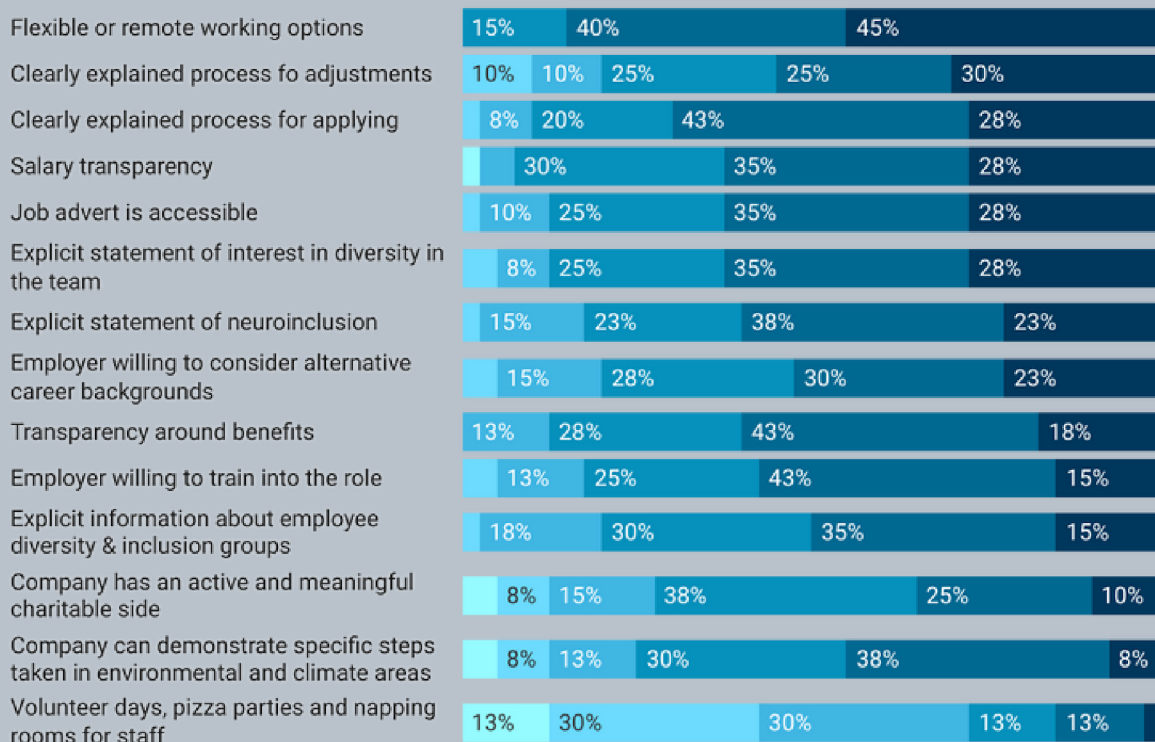


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

We can confidently say the results above are not simply a matter of respondents ranking everything as crucial or very important. Only 6.7% of respondents rated every item between somewhat important and crucial, and 25.8% rated a minimum of 2 items as not very, or not at all, important.

The insurance and investment industries are rather “incestuous”, with companies often competing for top talent. It’s already an industry norm to provide annual pay reviews, bonus schemes and employee benefits ranging from cycle purchase schemes, to free canteens, volunteer days and other substantial offerings in order to attract and retain talent that can relatively easily hop between employers. In the current climate, companies that focus on the true top benefits will have a significant advantage in reaching untapped neurodivergent talent.

GAIN

Dr Vina Theodorakopoulou

She/Her/Hers



Unmistakably, the preference for flexible or remote working options stands out as the most sought-after aspect. The advantages of such flexibility are multifaceted for neurodiverse employees, fostering an environment where they can perform optimally. Remote or flexible work arrangements provide neurodivergent individuals with the autonomy to structure their work environment in a way that accommodates their unique needs and enhances productivity. This adaptability can be particularly beneficial in minimising potential stressors that may be present in a traditional office setting.

Moreover, when examining the parameters highly rated by our members, they neatly coalesce into two overarching themes: accessibility and transparency. Our members express a strong desire for a framework that ensures accessibility, creating an equitable assessment of the skillsets and attitudes of neurodivergent applicants. The emphasis on accessibility aligns with the broader goal of fostering an inclusive workplace that recognises and harnesses the diverse talents of its workforce.

The second key theme is transparency, reflecting the neurodiverse community's sentiments of feeling marginalised and underutilised. Members appreciate workplaces that are prepared to be open about salary bands, benefits and processes. This transparency not only establishes trust but also empowers neurodivergent individuals with a clear understanding of what to expect, contributing to a positive work environment.

In essence, our members are advocating for workplaces that embrace flexibility, prioritise accessibility and champion transparency. By doing so, organisations can not only attract but also empower neurodivergent talent, fostering a culture of inclusivity and realising the full potential of diverse skill sets

Our member's priorities when applying for roles are entirely practical and understandable, from the perspective of addressing the needs of neurodivergent individuals. It's no surprise that flexible and remote working was the most important factor.

We know that neurodivergent people are more likely to have financial insecurity, from both the VEQ (Vulnerability Experiences Quotient study 2019) and the ONS Statistics on "outcomes for disabled people in the UK 2020". It makes perfect sense to prioritise salary/benefit transparency and accessibility, and explicit statements that diverse candidates are sought. We are in desperate need for a sense of security.

There is a potential crisis point on the horizon. While companies are asking people to return to the office, those offices no longer have capacity for this. At the same time, the government plans to require disabled people on benefits to apply for remote roles is going to flood the market with thousands of new applicants, who may find the accessible roles disappearing in an attempted "return to normal" that almost none of the workforce wants.



Vic Mazonas

They/Them/Theirs

Interest in Career Club Activities

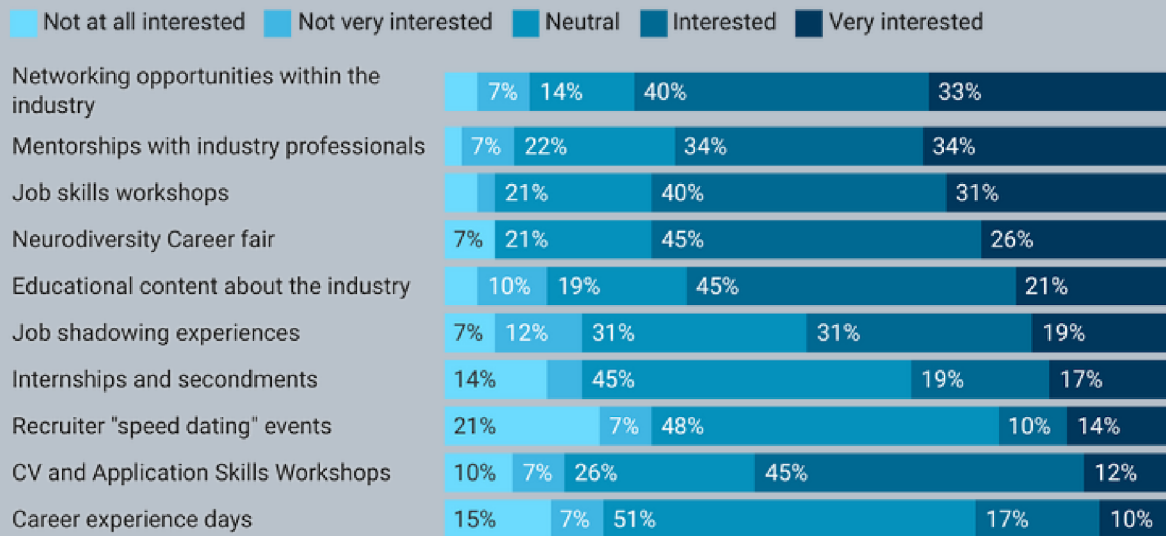


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

As we review our priorities for the coming year, it's important we focus our efforts on the types of events, programmes and projects that our members want to see. Especially as 45% of respondents have never attended a GAIN event.

We asked questions about everything from potential Career Club projects, to future events, to volunteering opportunities. The data from some of these questions is presented on the next few pages of the report with minimal commentary. A summary and review of the patterns and communicated priorities will be provided on a later page.

Interest in Potential Member Events

A measure of the most popular potential events GAIN could run in 2024

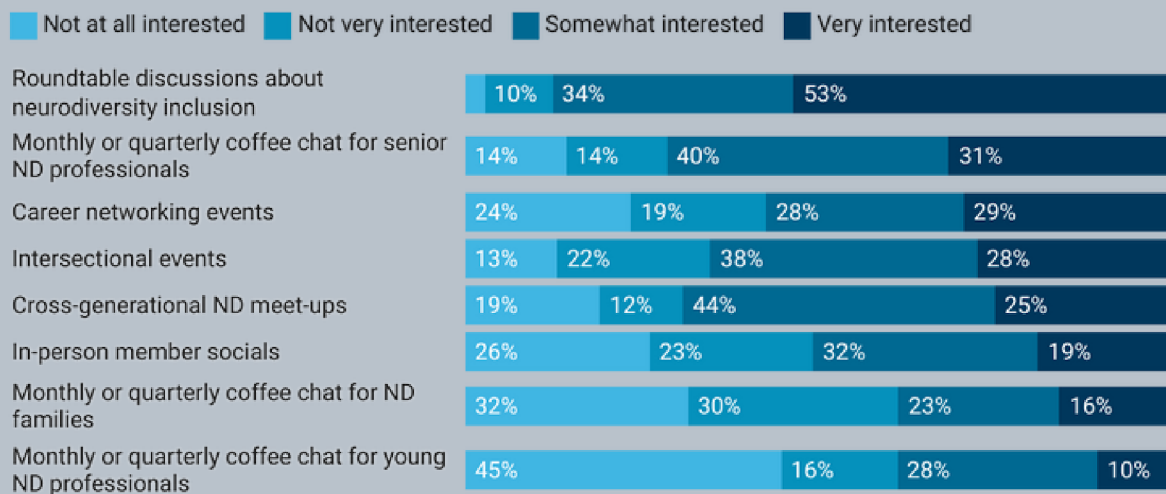


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

GAIN Priorities

The number of GAIN members who rated the following as their first, second and third most important reason for joining GAIN

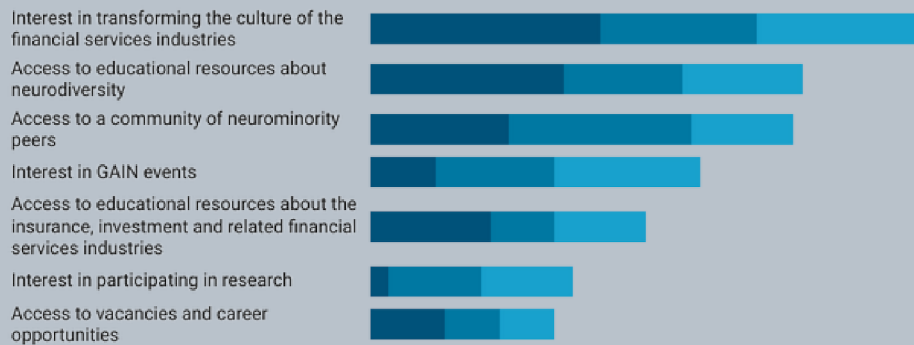


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Interest in Transforming Industry Culture

The number of GAIN members who ranked these activities as their first, second and third most important to meet the title goal.

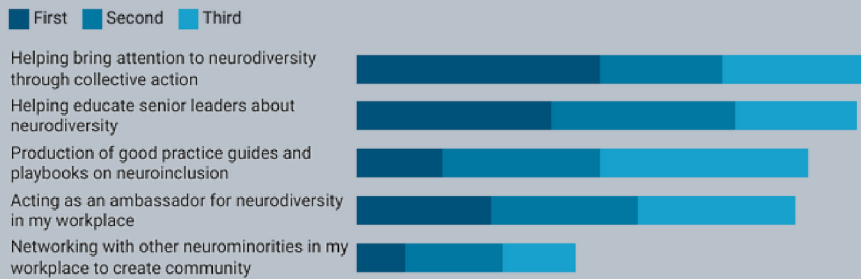


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Access to educational resources about neurodiversity

The number of GAIN members who ranked these activities as their first, second and third most important to meet the title goal.

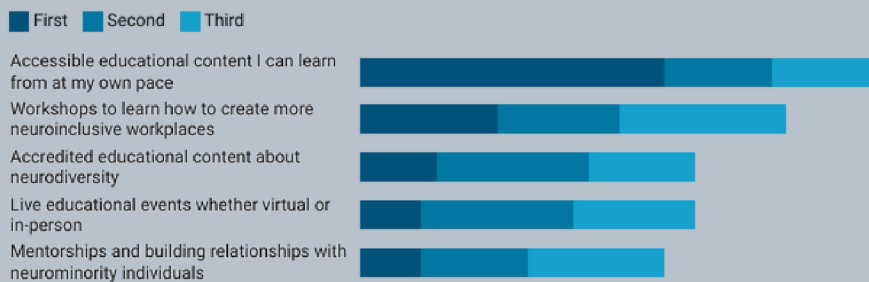


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Access to a community of neurominority peers

The number of GAIN members who ranked these activities as their first, second and third most important to meet the title goal.

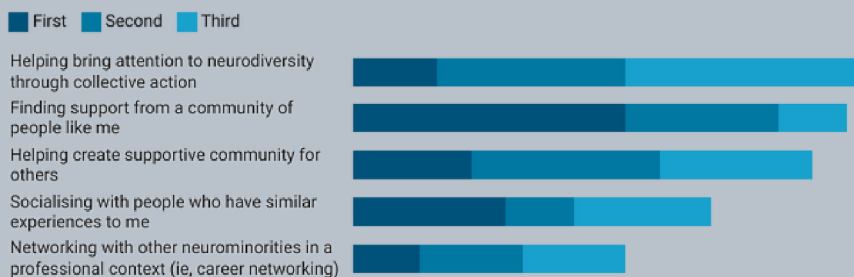


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Interest in GAIN events

The number of GAIN members who ranked these activities as their first, second and third most important to meet the title goal.

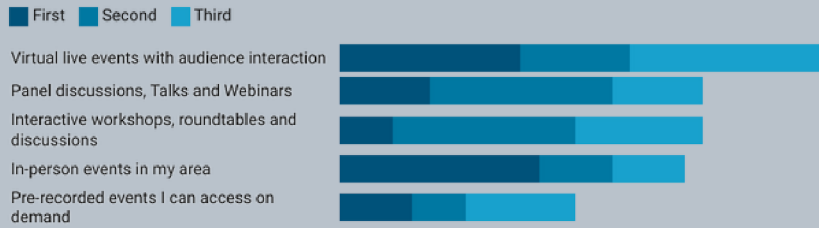


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Access to educational resources about the insurance, investment and related financial services industries

The number of GAIN members who ranked these activities as their first, second and third most important to meet the title goal.

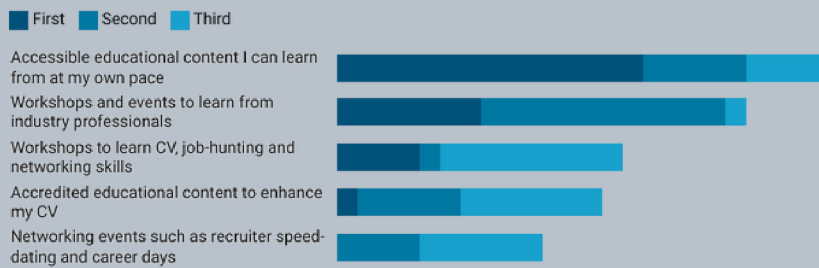


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Interest in participating in research

The number of GAIN members who ranked these activities as their first, second and third most important to meet the title goal.



Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Access to vacancies and career opportunities

The number of GAIN members who ranked these activities as their first, second and third most important to meet the title goal.

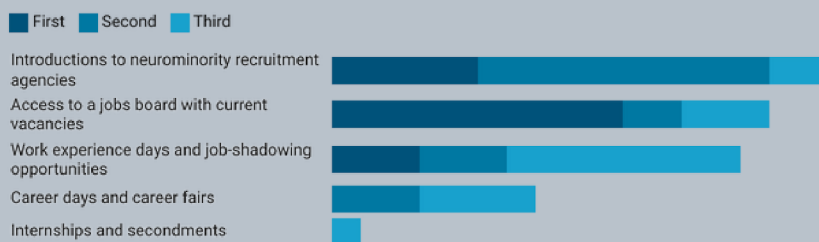


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

55% of respondents confirmed they would definitely be interested in volunteering time towards GAIN projects if we form volunteer working groups in 2024.

A further 26% advised they might be interested in volunteering.

56 individuals formally registered their interest in volunteering some amount of time towards GAIN projects. We have made it clear this does not convey an obligation, but that we will reach out to potential volunteers when opportunities arise.

Member interest in different types of volunteer activities

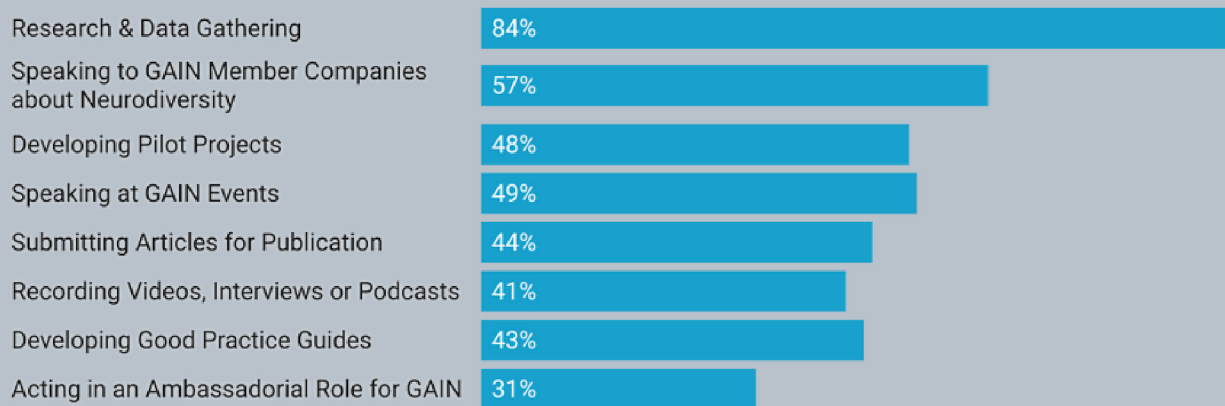


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

Interest in volunteering on projects related to specific topics

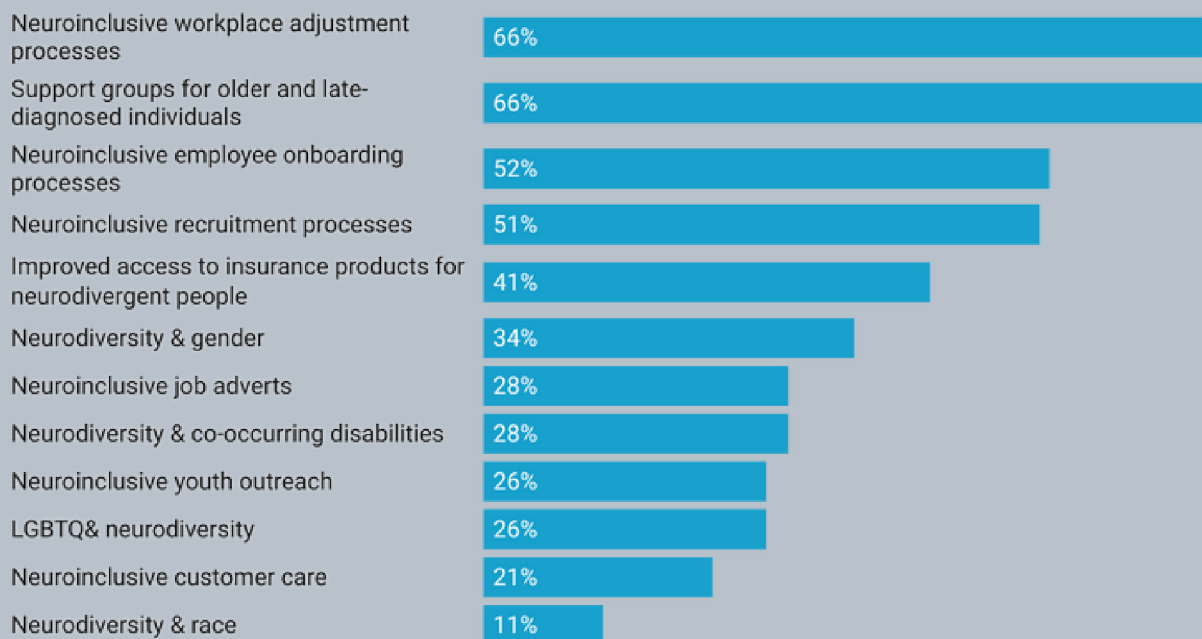


Chart: GAIN Together • Source: GAIN Individual Member Survey 2023 • Created with Datawrapper

GAIN

Dr Vina Theodorakopoulou

She/Her/Hers



No matter how advanced our technology, tools, processes, or data may be, the sustainability of our foothold relies fundamentally on the culture we foster.

The individual members of GAIN are passionate contributors with a strong sense of accountability to our sector. As a CIC owned and steered by our members, GAIN is dedicated to building practical steps that empower stakeholders to connect and make tangible contributions. Through avenues such as awareness-raising, mentorship, roundtables and research, the common denominator is co-production. This collaborative approach ensures that the voices and perspectives of our members actively shape the initiatives we undertake.

Much like the gold thread of intersectionality, neurodiversity weaves a unique story that defines a company, a sector, and, ultimately, our shared journey. It is this recognition of the importance of culture, interwoven with the principles of neurodiversity, that sets us apart and propels us forward.

The majority of our members are highly attracted to services and projects that provide opportunities for them to directly contribute to the work we do. Far from being passive recipients of GAIN services, our members overwhelmingly want an active stake in creating the industry transformation we are seeking.

Not only was “transforming the culture of the industry” the stand-out top rated reason our members joined GAIN, but even within the various proposed activities our members expressed the most interest in roundtable discussions, collective action and ambassadorial activities and mentorships. Even when ranking interest in events and resources offered by GAIN, our members are most attracted to mentorships, workshops and opportunities to participate.

Another clear priority is ensuring that, where we are offering less interactive or collaborative resources for members, that we offer these as accessible content they can enjoy at their own pace. In these areas, pre-recorded podcasts and webinars, as well as downloadable guides, are likely more valuable to members.

We know from data analysed earlier in the report that we are missing the feedback of neurodivergent young adults and neurodivergent individuals outside the industry. A campaign of outreach to those groups, alongside a clearer focus on the needs of our existing members, is vital if we are to meet the goals of our mission.



Vic Mazonas

They/Them/Theirs

December Corporate Member Round Table

Break-Out Room Sessions

Following presentations by Francis McGee, Johnny Timpson, Vic Mazonas and Bea Richardson on the Buckland Report, the GAIN Individual Member Survey and the GAIN Corporate Member Survey, GAIN corporate members convened in break-out rooms.

A high-level view of the topics covered follows.

Room 1: Supporting and Empowering Existing Neurodivergent Talent

Room Lead/Moderator: Johnny Timpson (he/him)

Assisted by: Vic Mazonas (they/them)

Theme: Myth-Busting

Idea: Developing educational content and activities for line managers

Theme: Line Manager Training

Idea: Developing educational materials on the spiky profile of neurodiversity and on appropriate language

Theme: Creating Intentional Community

Idea: Create neurominority communities within member companies, supported by GAIN and EWGs

Theme: Leadership Engagement

Idea: Launch neurodiversity-focused reverse mentoring more widely through the industry

Theme: Workspaces

Idea: Workspace sensory reviews and universal design reviews

Theme: Line Manager & Employee Engagement

Idea: Senior leader "Neurodiversity Ambassador" outreach

December Corporate Member Round Table

Break-Out Room Sessions

Room 2: Outreach to Neurominority Communities Beyond the Industry

Room Lead/Moderator: Vina Theodorakopoulou (she/her)

Assisted by: Bea Richardson (they/them)

Theme: Non-Linear Industry Pathways

Idea: Work experience Programme with Apprenticeship Potential

Theme: Improving the industry preparing for new talent

Idea: Making sure the industry is ready for neurodivergent talent

Theme: Impacting the Employment Journey

Idea: Outreach to latter school-age ND students

Theme: Industry myth-busting

Idea: Social media campaign targeting younger generations

Theme: Public Speaking & Intersectionality

Idea: Connect and collaborate on intersectional topics

Theme: Event Inclusivity

Theme: Ambassadorial Leadership

December Corporate Member Round Table

Break-Out Room Sessions

Room 3: Building Industry Maturity in Measurable Ways

Room Lead/Moderator: Francis McGee (he/him)

Assisted by: Andrew Mercer (he/him)

Theme: Talent Attraction

Idea: Measuring change (and business benefits)

Theme: Career Progression Paths

Idea: CII accessibility project

Idea: Promotions and progression comparison (neurodivergent vs neurotypical experiences)

Theme: Recruitment Practices

Idea: Good practices

Idea: Question sharing

Idea: Allowing people to show what they can do

Idea: Job descriptions reviews

Idea: Co-creation of projects with ERGs & GAIN VWGs

Theme: Neuroinclusive Workspaces

Idea: Surveying & regular data gathering.

Idea: Educating line managers & HR teams

Idea: GAIN-run CPD-accredited training

Idea: Workplace environment reviews

Idea: Policies & Practices reviews

Francis McGee, Executive Chair

He/Him/His



I heard powerful reinforcement of a familiar message about the importance of supporting line managers in their awareness and understanding of neurodiversity. They are pivotal to an individual's success in a particular role, and their next step beyond it, but they are also the engines of business performance and subject to many competing pressures.

At GAIN we need to think how we can support our members to support their managers, using what we know about neuroinclusive strategies in the particular context of our industry.

Vina Theodorakopoulou, Individuals Lead

She/Her/Hers



The round-table discussion with our corporate members emphasised the imperative of getting neuro-inclusion right in the workplace. The necessity to educate and inform the workforce about neurodiversity, including understanding the unique needs of neurodiverse employees.

Collaboration emerged as a central theme, stressing the importance of working together to ensure that employees not only fit into the organisational structure but they are acknowledged by the corporate culture.

We ought to extend our focus beyond the confines of our own company. Inclusivity demands active involvement and the creation of a rising tide that lifts all boats. Leaders, in particular, were underscored as pivotal players in this journey, with an expectation to lead by example. The roundtable participants urged the showcasing of neurodivergent leaders in our sector, recognising them as change enablers.



Bea Richardson, Operations Manager

They/Them/Theirs

The all-member roundtable demonstrated a wonderful, collaborative desire and drive to improve experiences for neurodiverse workers across the whole workplace, from company culture to policy. Many ideas were shared across the three breakout rooms, but some key points focused on: recognising the importance of different ways into employment, like apprenticeships and internships; improving all workers' knowledge and awareness about neurodiversity; and a need to involve leaders and HR in discussions about neurodiversity, and for them to lead by example.

We often talk about the business case; why neurodiverse talent is needed in our sector and the benefits these workers bring - but a stand-out theme of the round-table was a focus on our people, with an understanding that improving experiences for one group often leads to an improved experience for everyone. It was truly an honour to witness this amazing collaboration, and to be a part of the discussion.

Laurie Edmans, Co-Founder of GAIN

He/Him/His



For me, it was the number and quality of the people who attended, and the businesses they represent, which made me think what progress the industry has made, in the three years GAIN has been working, in realising the match, between the talent needs of the industry, and the too often under appreciated abilities and attributes of neurodivergent people.

It really does feel like the radical improvement in employment prospects we are seeking, could - just - really be beginning to happen, thanks to the businesses and individuals who are giving GAIN such committed support.