



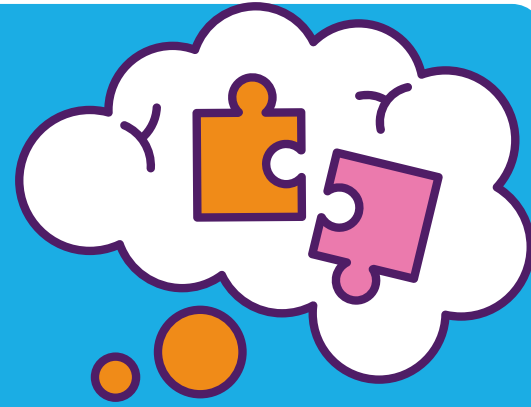
# DFN Project SEARCH

## Data Class of 2022-23

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# The DFN Project SEARCH Model

DFN Project SEARCH has a number of model fidelity components that define the programme, its values and goals. These critical components include:

1. The outcome of the programme is competitive employment that is:
  - In an integrated setting
  - Year-round work (not seasonal employment)
  - 16 hours/week or more
  - Paid the prevailing wage
2. The focus of the programme is on serving young adults with learning disabilities and autism who can benefit from personalised support during a year of internship experience and career development.

# The DFN Project SEARCH model

3. The programme is a collaborative partnership between Education, Local Authorities, Adult Supported Employment Agencies, Families and Host Businesses.
4. The programme is business focused.
5. The programme is committed to best practice and continuous improvement.
6. The programme helps young people gain competitive skills.

# The context 2022-23 Leavers

- While the economy started to recover from COVID-19, young people, those from minority groups, and those with disabilities were more likely to be [unemployed](#) in this academic year.
- Young people with learning disabilities continue to be one of the groups with the lowest employment rates [across the UK](#).
- A Prince's Trust [report](#) indicates that young people are considerably more anxious about their future since COVID-19, especially concerning their work journey and living costs.
- DFN Project SEARCH sites reported that COVID-19 impacted interns' mental health and readiness for work.
- Focus group discussions and termly safeguarding checks also show a significant increase in issues relating to mental health for all young people.

## The economy – September 2023

- The UK economy will shrink and perform worse than other advanced economies, including Russia, as the cost of living continues to hit households, the International Monetary Fund has said.
- The IMF said the economy will contract by 0.6% in 2023, rather than grow slightly as previously predicted.
- Commenting on the latest survey results from their recruitment report, Claire Warnes, Partner, Skills and Productivity at KPMG UK, said:

*“A concerning feature of this month’s data is that demand for staff is losing momentum, with total vacancies falling for the first time since February 2021 amid a fresh reduction in permanent vacancies. While both reductions are slight, employers are clearly nervous due to the long-term economic uncertainty and budget constraints that are impacting businesses everywhere. This in turn is leading to a continued reliance on temporary staff.*”

*“The labour market is starting to look slightly precarious again and recruiters will be wondering and hoping that the recent slight calming of inflation rates positively impacts the outlook for both employers and jobseekers.”*



# Outcomes class of 2022/23



**431 (61%)** interns secured paid employment



**368 (52%)** interns found full-time, non-seasonal jobs paid at prevailing wage and in an integrated workplace

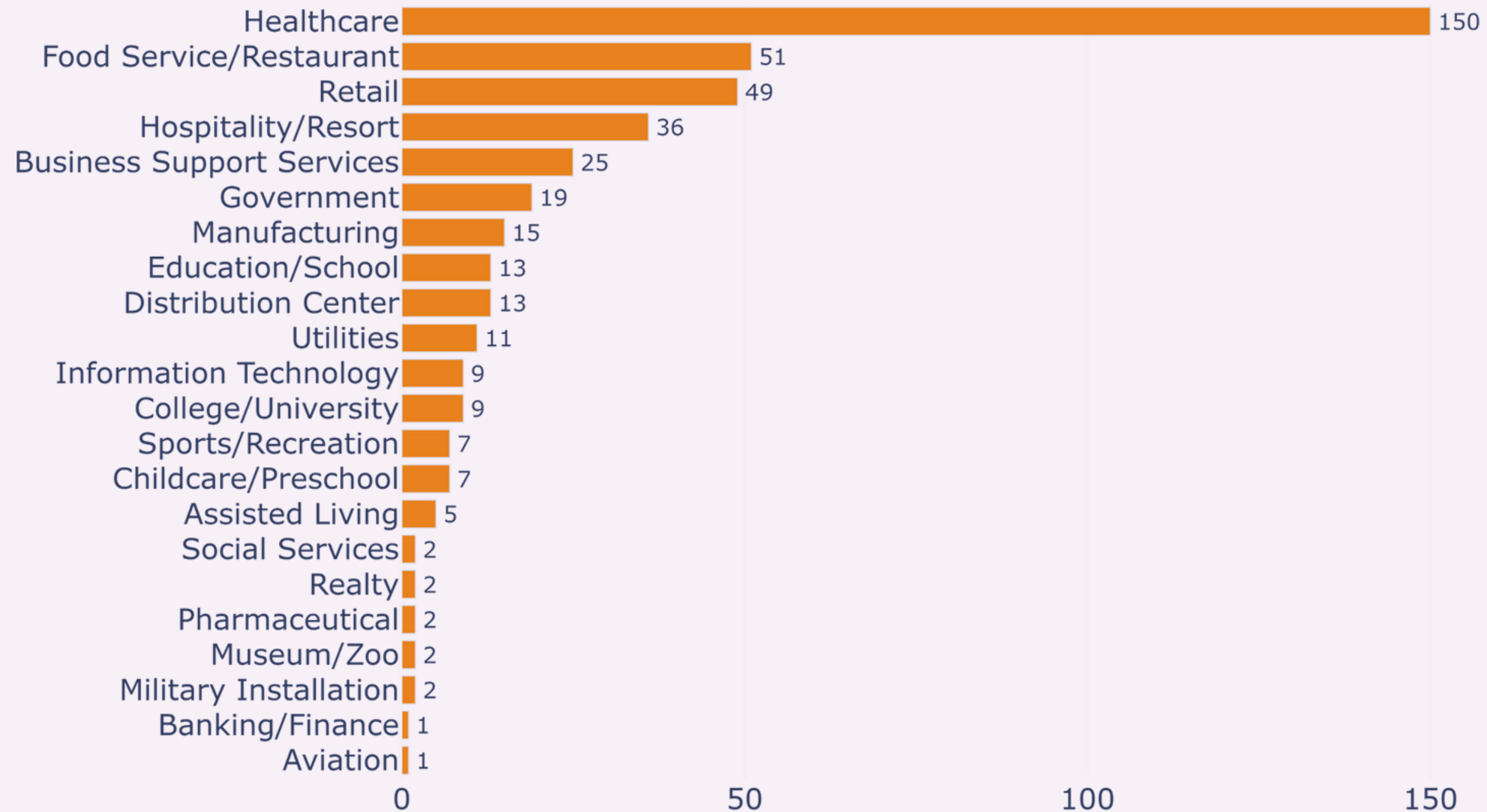


Average hourly wage is **£10.65**

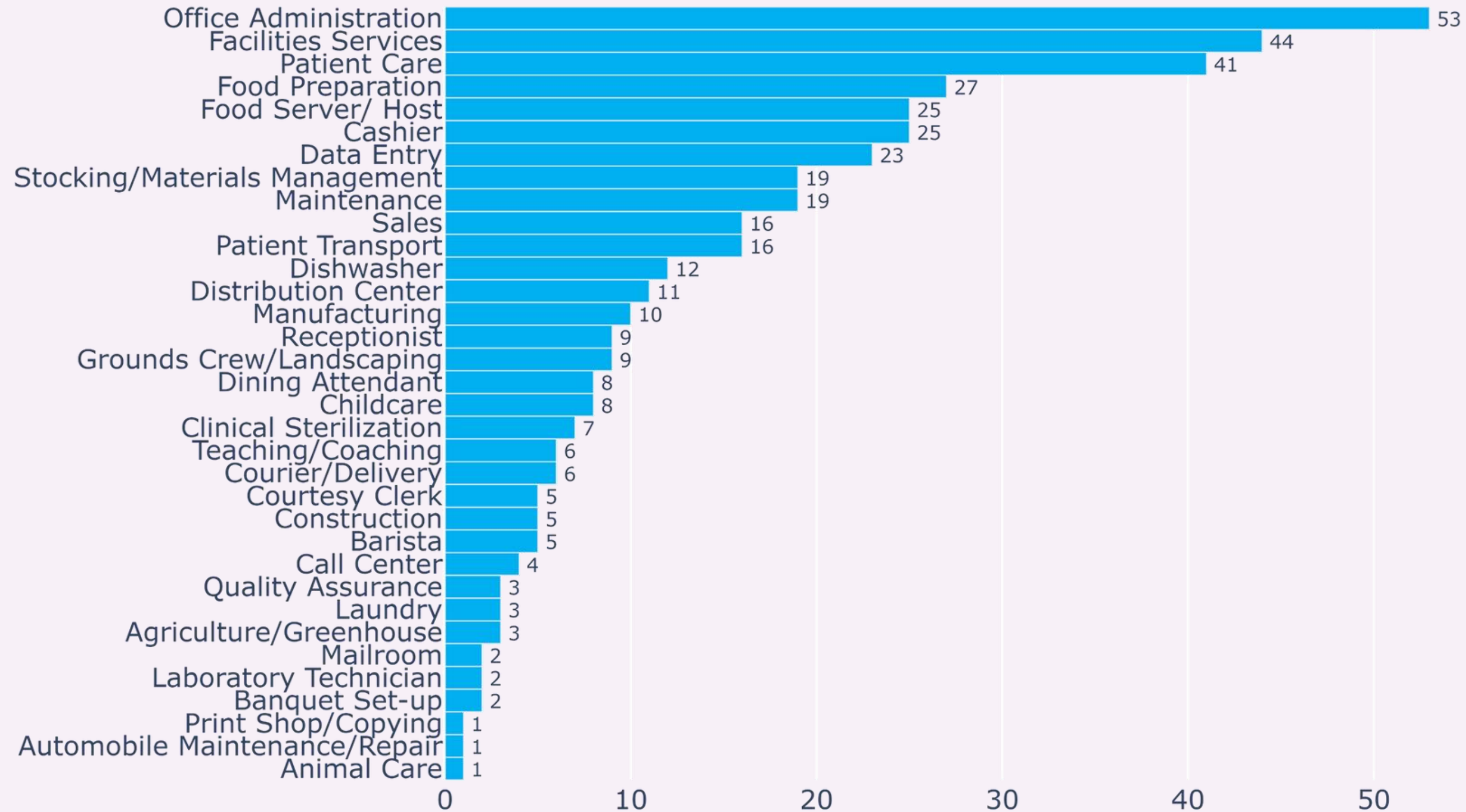


Interns work on average **25 hours per week**

## Number of jobs by sector

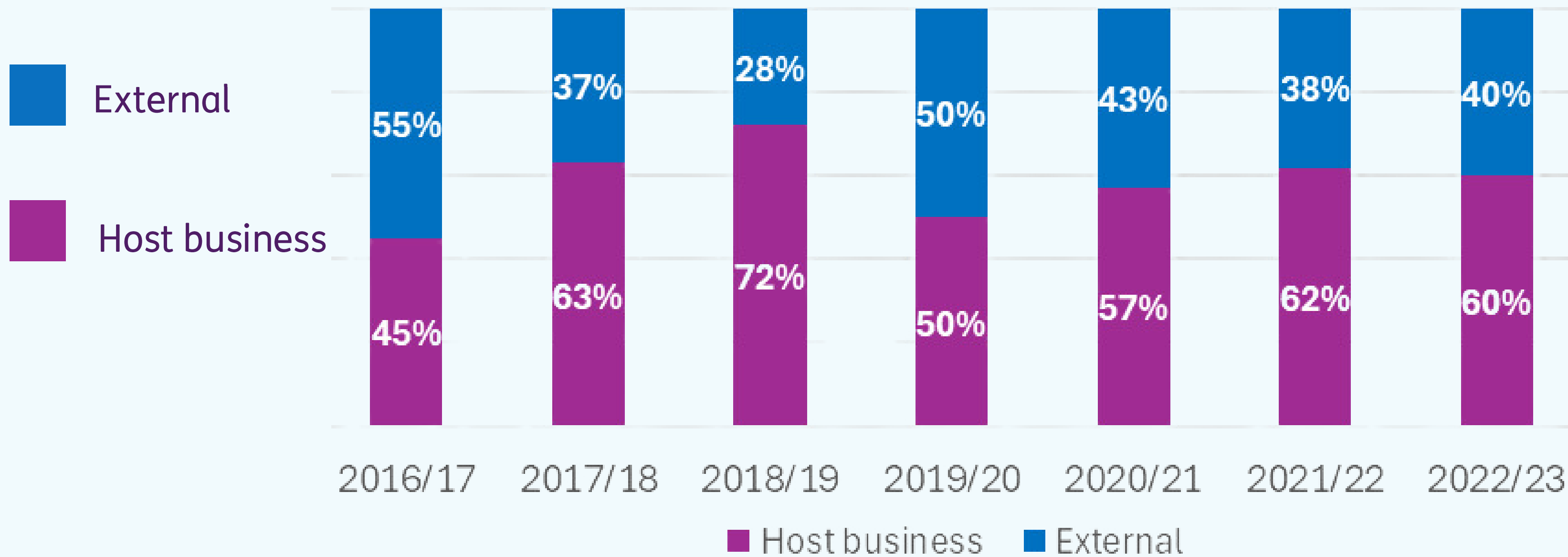


## Number of jobs by role





## Employment at Host Business and External Employers



# Hours and wages by countries

England

**24H**



**£10.72**

PER  
HOUR

Scotland

**26H**



**£10.46**

PER  
HOUR

Wales

**24H**



**£9.76**

PER  
HOUR

Ireland

**25H**



**€11.58**

PER  
HOUR

Portugal

**40H**



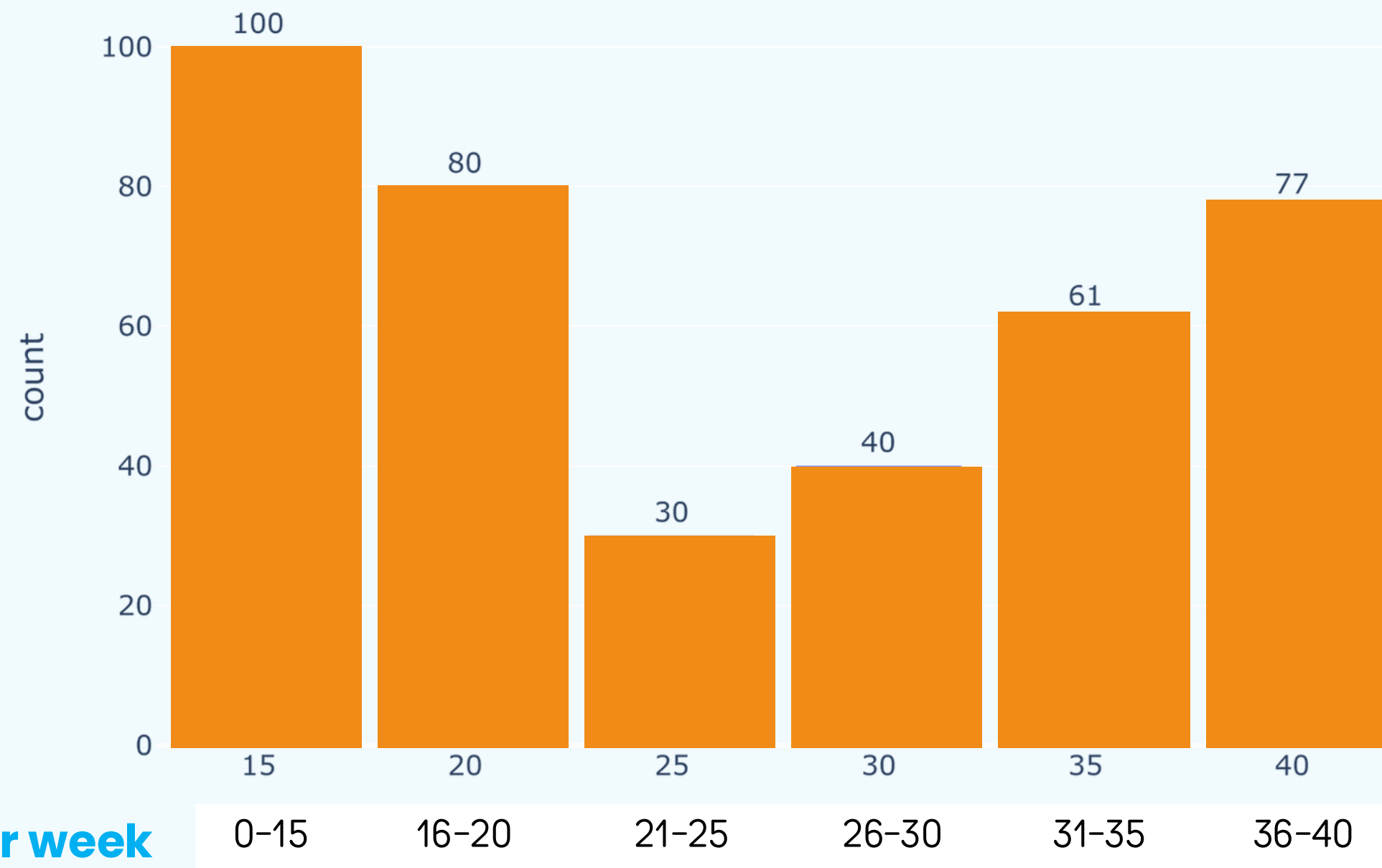
**€7.37**

PER  
HOUR

Average  
Hours/Wek

# Weekly working hours by number of jobs

## Weekly working hours above 15 hours



## Meet Bibi



**Bibi (21) gained full-time employment at Whipps Cross Hospital following her internship** in Waltham Forrest in North East London. She became the first DFN Project SEARCH graduate to secure a role in an A&E department, working as a Healthcare Assistant Specialist.

**Bibi said:** *"The department is always so busy and there is always so much to do, but I feel as though I am making a difference and helping the doctors and nurses who are working so hard. My supported internship and job coaches gave me the right skills and confidence to know I could do this role in such an important department. I wouldn't be here without them."*







**100%**  
**outcome**  
**meeting**  
**criteria**

- Calico, Burnley, England
- Forth Valley Royal Hospital & Serco, Larbert, Scotland
- University Hospital Crosshouse, Kilmarnock, East Ayrshire, Scotland
- University Hospital Wishaw, Scotland
- Calderdale Royal Hospital, Halifax, England
- Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust, England
- Royal United Hospital Bath NHS Trust, Bath, England

**80%**  
**outcome**  
**meeting**  
**criteria**



- Furness General Hospital, England
- Progress Housing Group, Leyland, England
- Naas General Hospital (NGH), Ireland
- Queen Mary University London, England
- London Marriott Hotel Twickenham, England
- Ysbyty Glan Clwyd – Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Wales
- James Paget University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, England
- Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Exeter, England

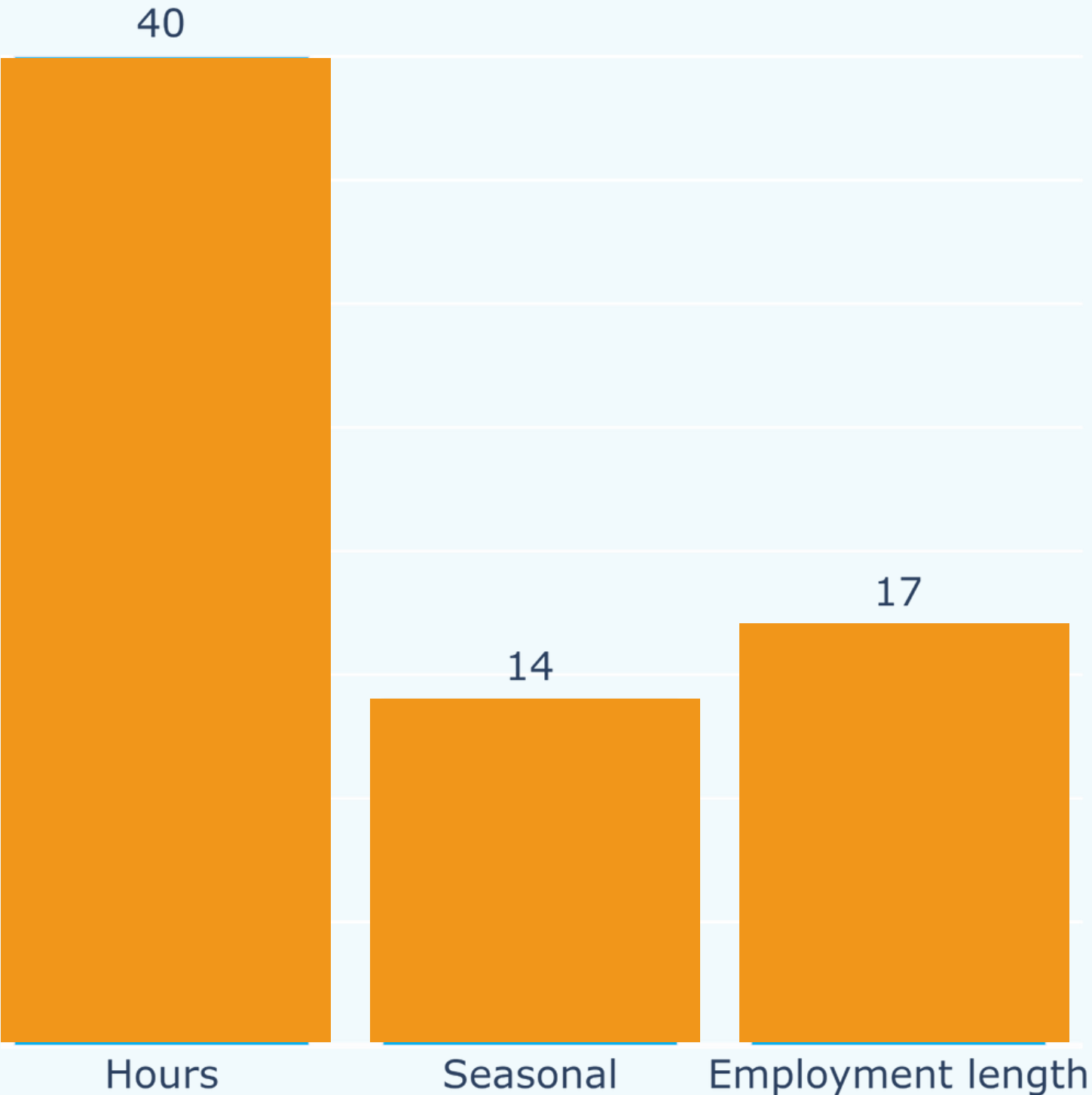
**70%**  
**outcome**  
**meeting**  
**criteria**

- Dumfries and Galloway Council, Scotland
- NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Royal Infirmary, Scotland
- NHS Tayside/Dundee Health & Social Care Partnership, Scotland
- DPD, Smethwick, England
- London Heathrow Marriott, England
- North Devon District Hospital, England
- NHS Blood and Transplant, England



# Number of jobs that did not meet criteria

**Jobs that did not meet the model criteria this year**  
(such as type of contract, number of hours worked or length of employment).



# DFN Project SEARCH

## Protected Characteristics



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# Protected Characteristics

**The Equality Act 2010 made it illegal to discriminate against people based on nine protected characteristics. They are:**

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

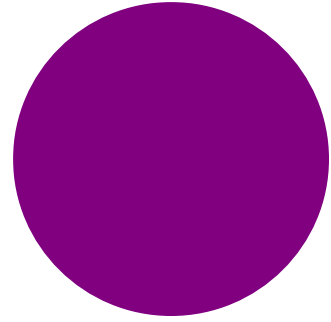
**DFN Project SEARCH teams monitor data on intern outcomes according to age, disability, race and sex.**

Data gathering is an important component in identifying inequality, initiating activity and evaluating progress. Collecting data on the protected characteristics can help institutions to:

- establish an evidence base for activities, policies and practice
- assess whether policies and practices are equitable and fair and do not disproportionately affect different groups
- use benchmarking to identify performance gaps, seek new approaches for improvements, and adopt good practice.

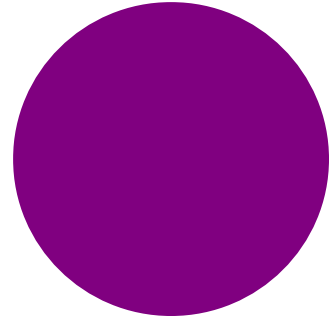
# AGE





# Outcomes by age group

Age Group	Enrolled	Completed	Completed %	Employed	Employed %	Employed Criteria	Employed Criteria %	Average Wage	Average Hours
<b>16-17</b>	39	31	79%	22	71%	19	61%	£10.25	26.3
<b>18 - 20</b>	415	369	89%	229	62%	199	54%	£10.69	25.8
<b>21-22</b>	206	187	91%	107	57%	90	48%	£10.71	24.3
<b>23+</b>	133	119	89%	73	61%	60	50%	£10.55	22.3
<b>Total</b>	793	706	89%	431	61%	368	52%	£10.65	24.9

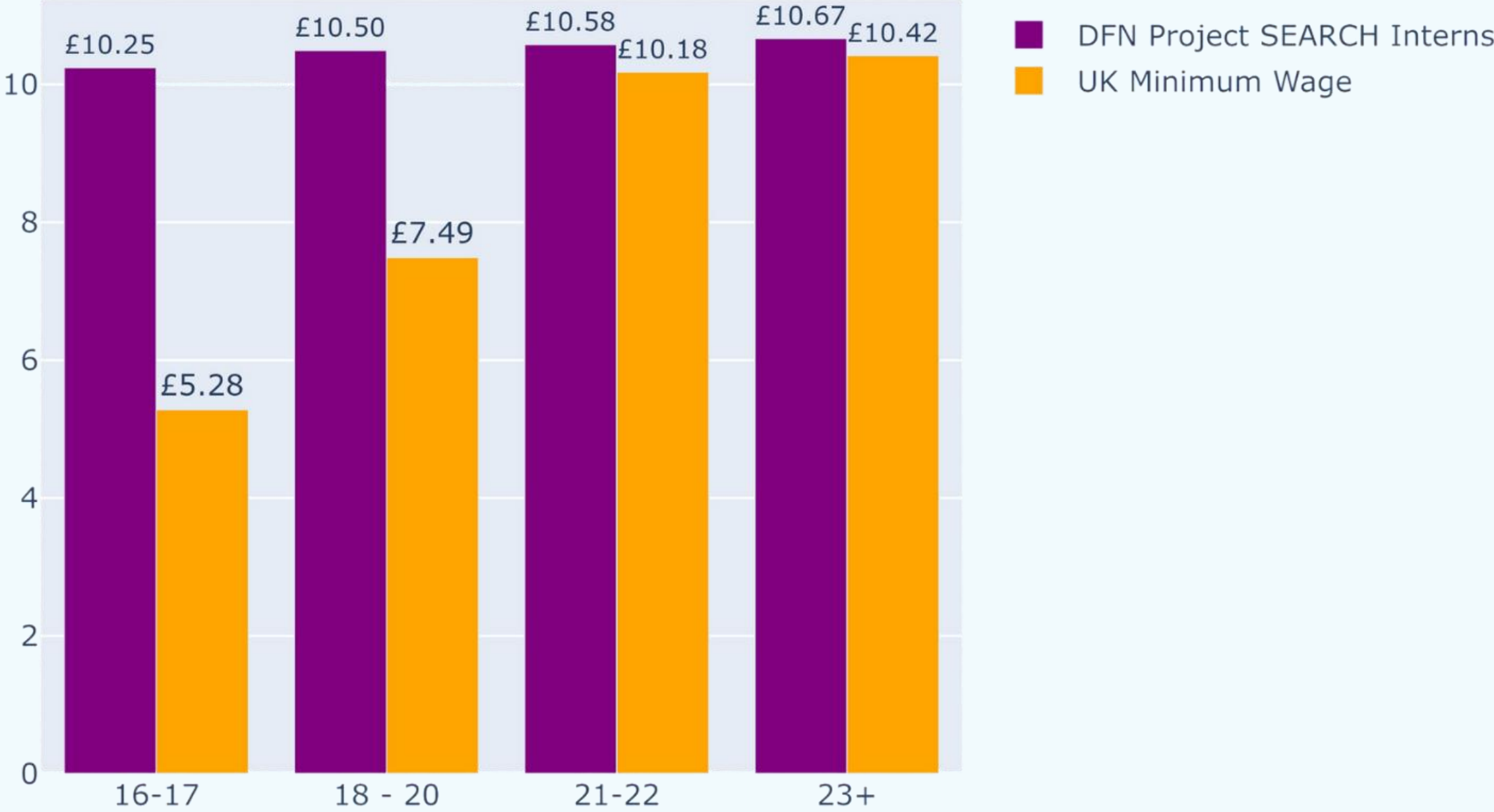


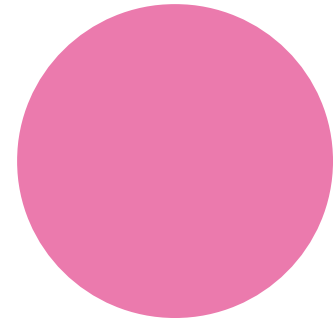
# Outcomes by age group

## Historical data

Age Group	Enrolled	Completed	Completed %	Employed	Employed %	Employed Criteria	Employed Criteria %	Average Wage	Average Hours
16-17	248	215	87%	142	66%	117	54%	£8.80	26.7
18 - 20	1893	1721	91%	1109	64%	937	54%	£9.35	26.0
21-22	815	737	90%	434	59%	348	47%	£9.51	24.5
23+	476	432	91%	264	61%	217	50%	£9.53	23.9
<b>Total</b>	3432	3105	90%	1949	63%	1619	52%	£9.37	25.4

# Wages by age group





# Wage by age group VS minimum wage

Age Group	DFN Average Hourly Wage	UK minimum wage	Hourly wage difference	Estimated wage difference in the year
16-17	£10.25	£5.28	£4.97	£6801.94
18 - 20	£10.69	£7.49	£3.20	£4304.75
21-22	£10.71	£10.18	£0.53	£673.24
23+	£10.55	£10.42	£0.13	£151.27



# Our learning

- Younger interns continue to have some of the highest employment rates and work the most hours.
- The success of younger interns highlights the continued need to ensure we market supported internships to students at an earlier stage.
- **Interns of all ages earn significantly more than the UK's minimum wage.**
- DFN Project SEARCH will continue to work with Internships Work partners to raise awareness of supported internships both nationally and locally.

# ETHNICITY

Let's look at our ethnicity data!



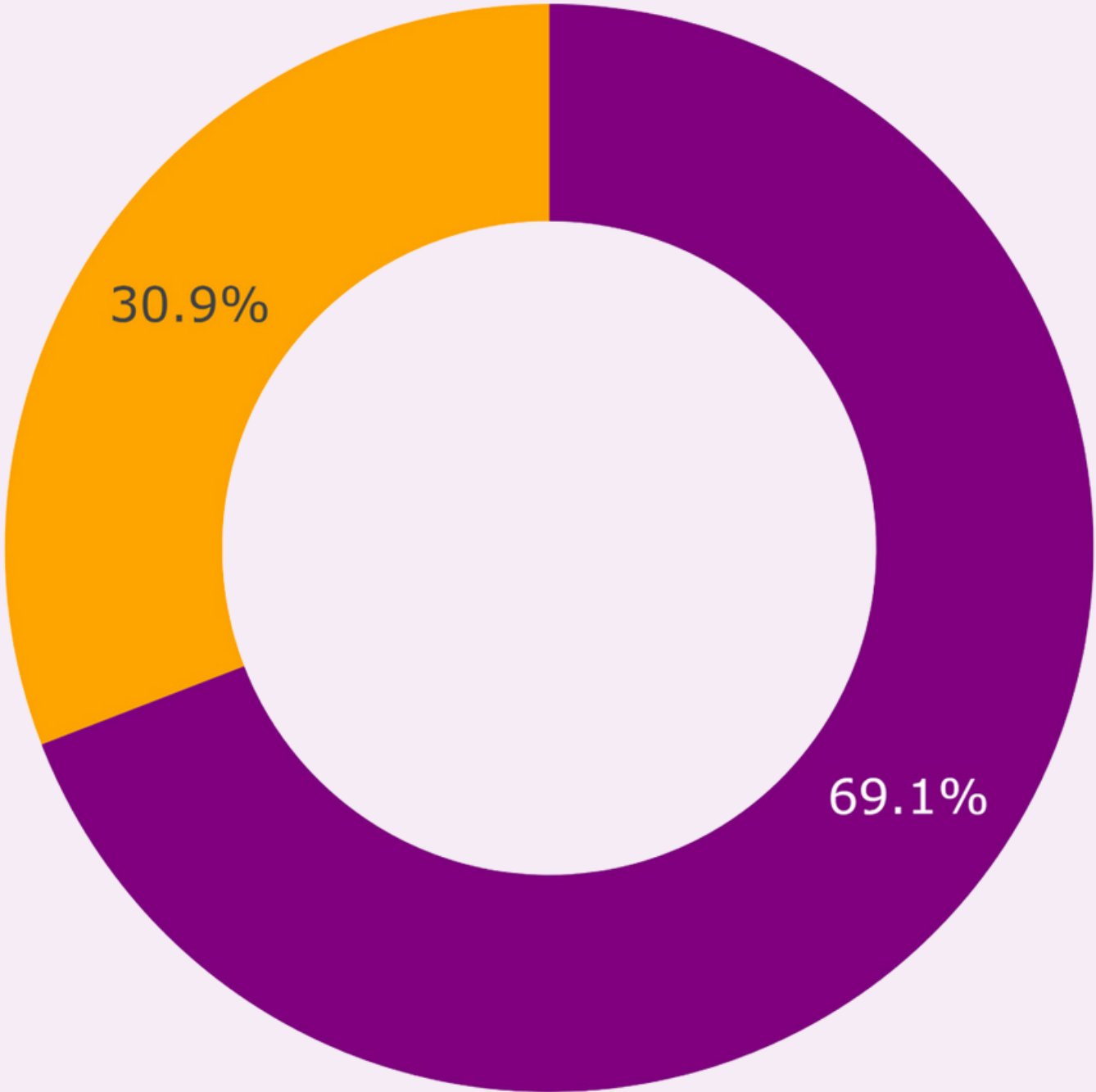
# Enrolment by ethnic background

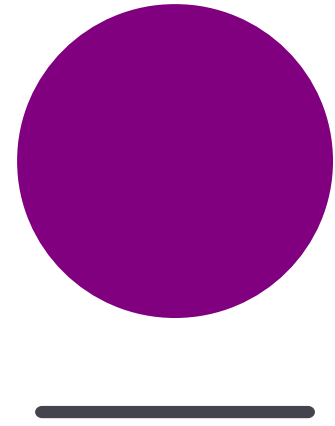
 Ethnic Minority

 White

UK Ethnic minority population: **18%**  
UK Ethnic minority population aged 15 to 24: **25%**

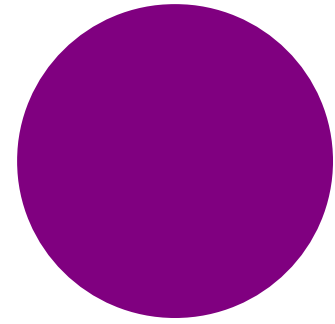
Census 2021





# Outcome by ethnic background

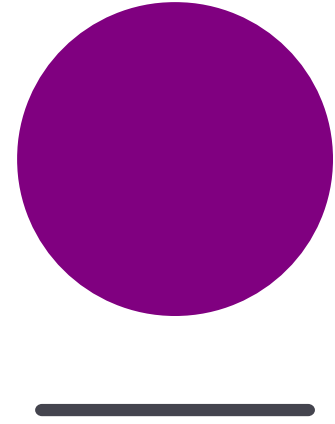
Ethnicity	Enrolled	Completed	Completed %	Employed	Employed %	Employed Criteria	Employed Criteria %	Average Wage	Average Hours
<b>Ethnic Minority</b>	243	218	90%	113	52%	97	44%	£11.07	24.6
<b>White</b>	550	488	89%	318	65%	271	56%	£10.50	25.0
<b>Total</b>	793	706	89%	431	61%	368	52%	£10.65	24.9



# Outcome by ethnic background

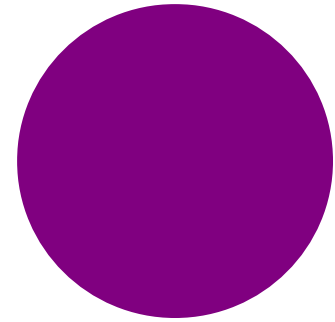
## Historical data

Ethnicity	Enrolled	Completed	Completed %	Employed	Employed %	Employed Criteria	Employed Criteria %	Average Wage	Average Hours
<b>Ethnic Minority</b>	900	828	92%	465	56%	393	47%	£9.74	26.3
<b>White</b>	2532	2277	90%	1484	65%	1226	54%	£9.25	25.2
<b>Total</b>	3432	3105	90%	1949	63%	1619	52%	£9.37	25.4



# Outcome by ethnic background

Ethnicity	Enrolled	Completed	Completed %	Employed	Employed %	Employed Criteria	Employed Criteria %	Average Wage	Average Hours
Asian or Asian British	101	91	90%	50	55%	46	51%	£ 10.91	25.9
Black, African or Black British	55	51	93%	24	47%	19	37%	£ 11.47	24.2
Other	87	76	87%	39	51%	32	42%	£ 11.04	23.1



# Outcome by ethnic background

## Historical data

Ethnicity	Enrolled	Completed	Completed %	Employed	Employed %	Employed Criteria	Employed Criteria %	Average Wage	Average Hours
Asian or Asian British	394	362	92%	201	56%	177	49%	£9.61	27.7
Black, African or Black British	177	162	92%	83	51%	66	41%	£10.24	26.5
Other	314	289	92%	172	60%	142	49%	£9.73	24.5

# Our learning

- We continue to successfully recruit interns with ethnic minority heritage across the UK.
- Interns from ethnic minority groups continue to earn the same or slightly more than White interns across the UK – in contrast with the wide ethnicity pay gap in the UK’s overall employment landscape.
- Interns from all ethnic groups work on average the same number of hours.
- Interns from ethnic minority groups are experiencing lower employment rates in England and London. We have published a [report](#) presenting strategies on how we are addressing this issue.

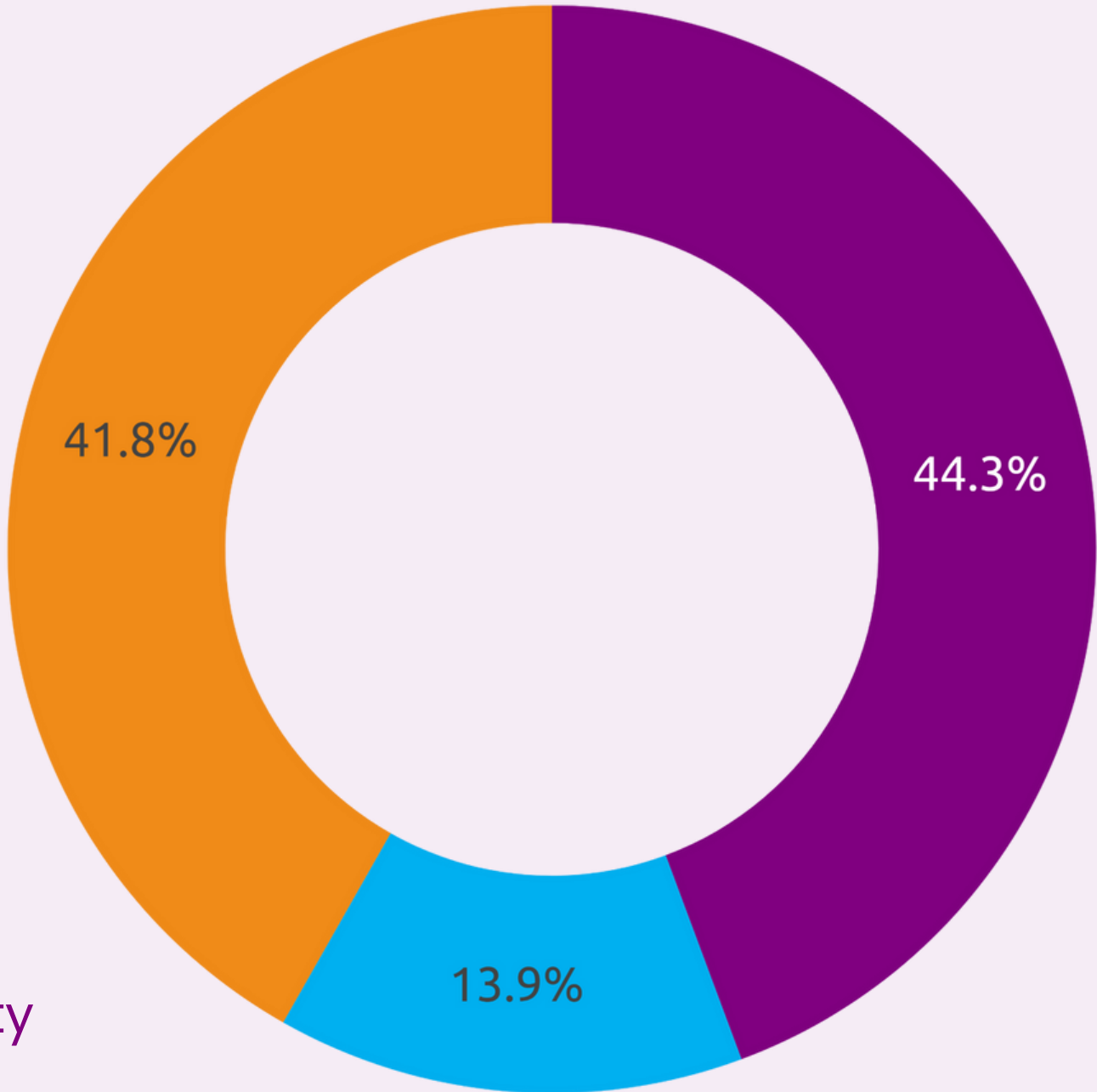


# DISABILITY

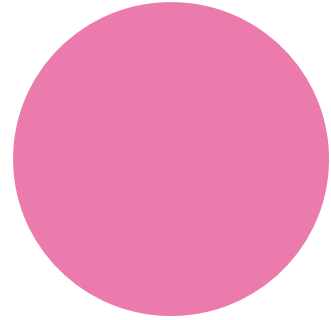


# Enrolment by disability

- Learning Disability
- Autism
- Other

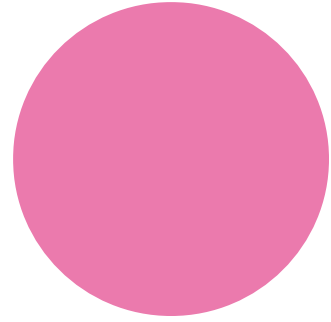


Enrolment by primary disability



# Outcomes by primary disability

Primary Disability	Enrolled	Completed	Completed %	Employed	Employed %	Employed Criteria	Employed Criteria %	Average Wage	Average Hours
<b>Autism</b>	357	313	88%	185	59%	157	50%	£10.76	24.6
<b>Learning Disability</b>	328	295	90%	184	62%	160	54%	£10.64	24.9
<b>Other</b>	108	98	91%	62	63%	51	52%	£10.36	25.8
<b>Total</b>	793	706	89%	431	61%	368	52%	£10.65	24.9



# Outcomes by primary disability

## Historical data

Primary Disability	Enrolled	Completed	Completed %	Employed	Employed %	Employed Criteria	Employed Criteria %	Average Wage	Average Hours
<b>Autism</b>	1392	1257	90%	797	63%	666	53%	£9.37	26.3
<b>Learning disability</b>	1668	1515	91%	966	64%	806	53%	£9.32	25.0
<b>Other</b>	372	333	90%	186	56%	147	44%	£9.60	24.2
<b>Total</b>	3432	3105	90%	1949	63%	1619	52%	£9.37	25.4

# Our learning

- Across our programme, interns had similar employment outcomes regardless of their primary diagnosis, including salary and hours worked.
- The proportion of interns with autism as their primary diagnosis has increased in the past two cohorts and it is now slightly higher than those with a learning disability.
- The proportions were similar across the UK.
- 46% of interns with autism and 37% of those with a learning disability had a secondary disability.
- The employment rates of those with and without a secondary disability were the same.

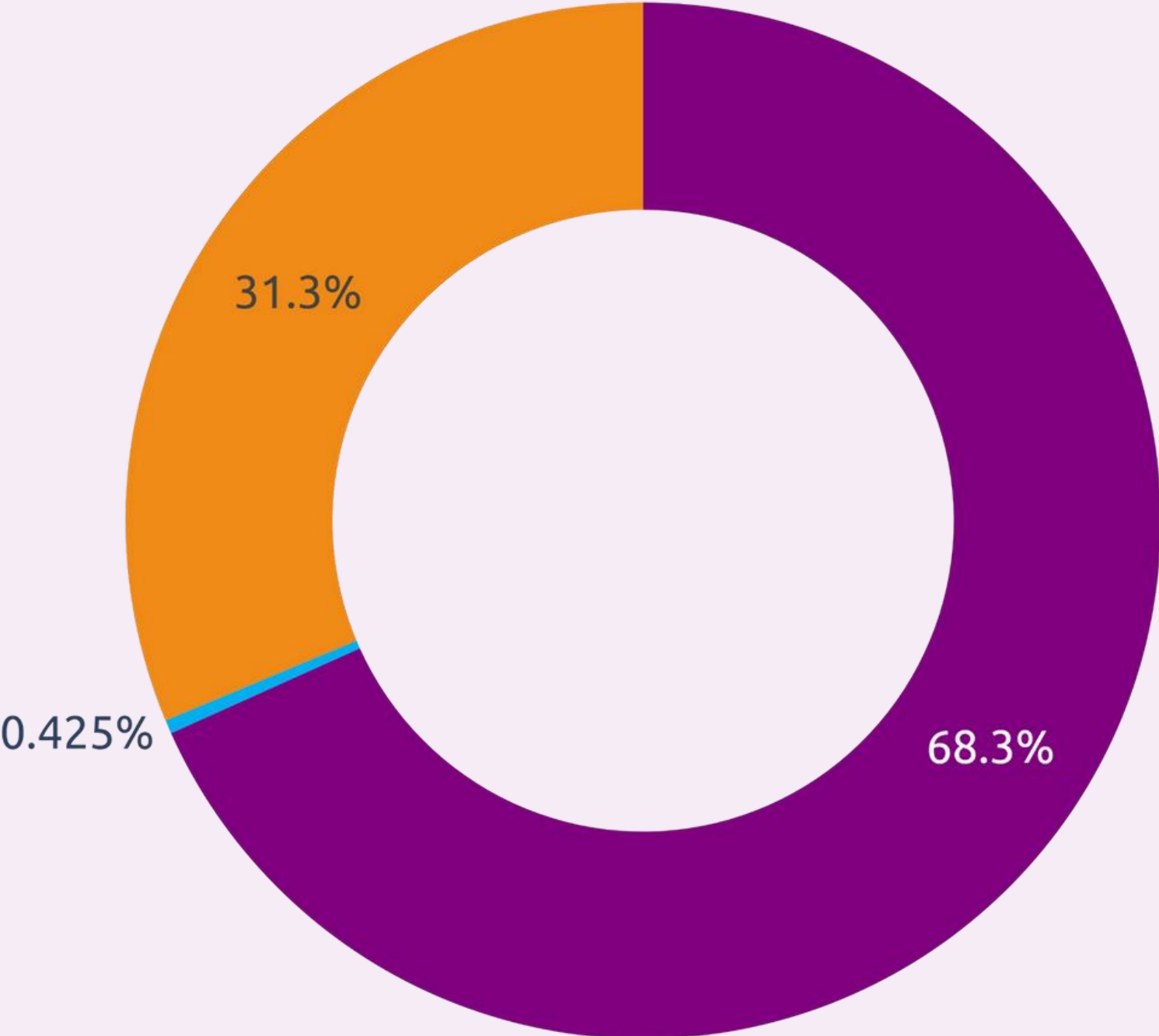
# GENDER

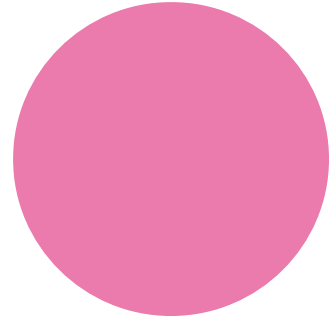


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# Enrolment by Gender

- Female
- Male
- Other

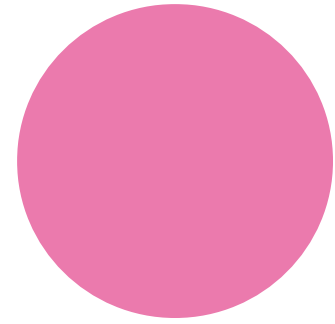




# Outcomes by gender

Gender	Enrolled	Completed	Completed %	Employed	Employed %	Employed Criteria	Employed Criteria %	Average Wage	Average Hours
<b>Female</b>	242	221	91%	121	55%	98	44%	£10.68	24.1
<b>Male</b>	547	482	88%	308	64%	268	56%	£10.64	25.2
<b>Other</b>	4	3	75%	2	67%	2	67%	£10.33	20.8
<b>Total</b>	793	706	89%	431	61%	368	52%	£10.65	24.9





# Outcomes by gender

## Historical data

Gender	Enrolled	Completed	Completed %	Employed	Employed %	Employed Criteria	Employed Criteria %	Average Wage	Average Hours
Female	1070	962	90%	549	57%	438	46%	£9.50	23.4
Male	2347	2129	91%	1392	65%	1175	55%	£9.31	26.3
Non-binary	3	3	100%	2	67%	2	67%	£10.20	33.5
Other	8	7	88%	6	86%	4	57%	£9.14	20.0
Not Specified	4	4	100%	0	0%	0	0%	£nan	nan
Total	3432	3105	90%	1949	63%	1619	52%	£9.37	25.4

# Our learning

- Since our gender [report](#) was published in late 2022, the gap in working hours and wages between women and men at DFN Project SEARCH has been decreasing. In the current cohort they earned almost the same and worked similar hours.
- The employment gender gap is still significant in England but was **not** found in Scotland where 75% of women and 74% of men were employed.
- The proportion of women recruited onto the programme is the same as the proportion of women with an EHCP in England. Wales had the highest proportion of women recruited (38%) and Scotland the lowest (27%).
- DFN Project SEARCH will continue to track outcomes by gender. We will also explore what factors may have contributed to the success of our Scottish sites in this area so we can feedback and support sites with strategies to reduce the employment gap between women and men.

# DFN Project SEARCH Summary



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# Summary

- Largest number of interns ever employed (431)
- Interns had similar outcomes regardless of their disability
- 75% of DFN Project SEARCH interns in Scotland found employment
- 70% of Project SEARCH interns across the world found employment
- Interns earn significantly more than the minimum wage for their age group
- Interns found employment in over 30 roles, including car maintenance, sales, patient care and landscaping
- 7 sites achieved 100% outcomes for their interns and 8 sites achieved 80% - 99% outcomes for their interns

# Summary

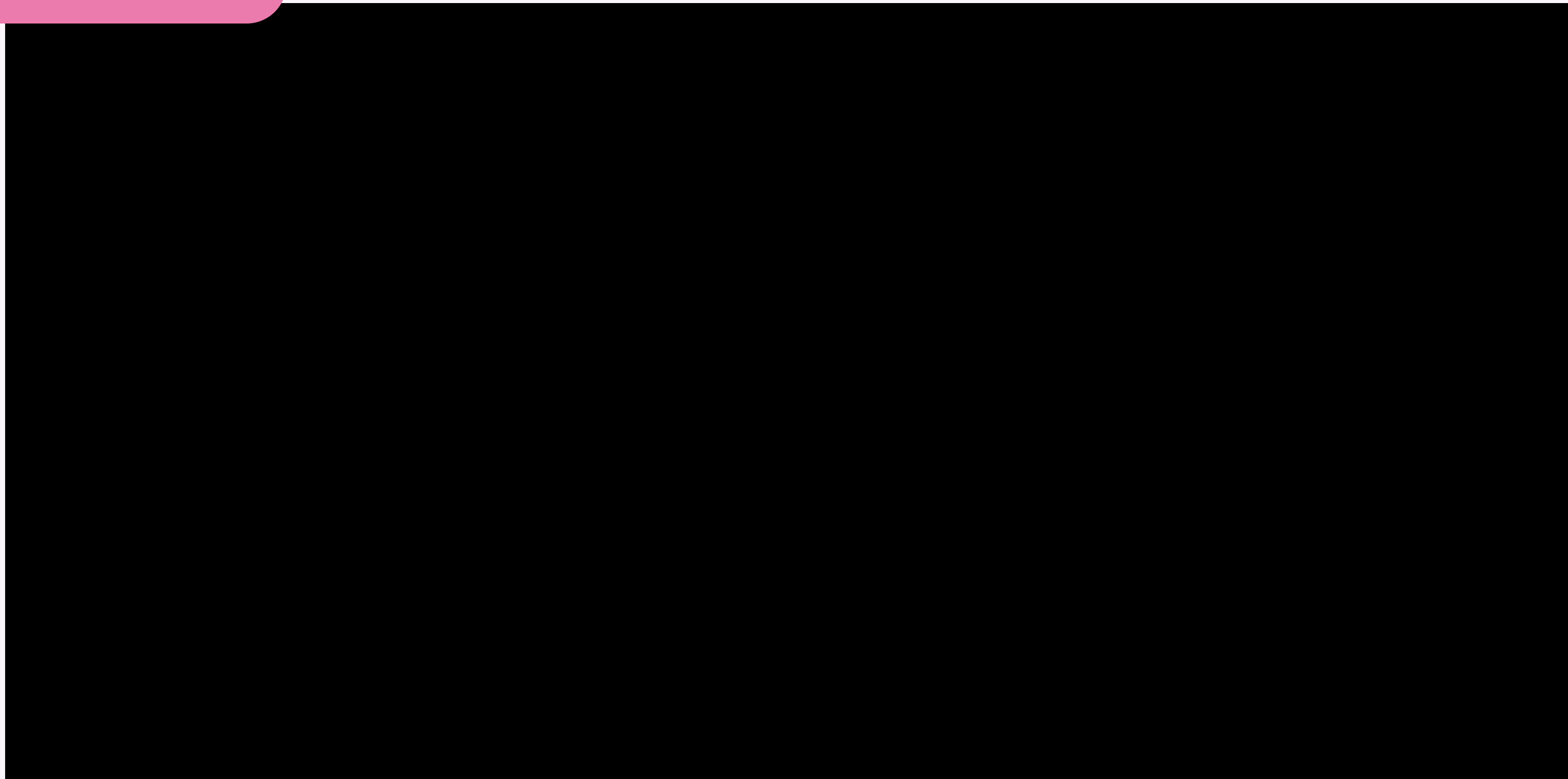
- Weekly hours in England dropped from 28 hours to 24
- Employment rate dropped from 67% to 61% in that year group. Among jobs that meet criteria, this dropped from 61% to 50%
- Outcomes for women and ethnic minority interns remains a place for action
- Lingering COVID-19 effects, economic recession and a difficult job market are likely contributing factors.
- Scotland's incredible outcomes show that model fidelity delivers.
- We want to learn from Scotland and use that learning to help improve model fidelity across England and Wales.
- Where the Project SEARCH model is followed closely, outcomes are consistently high.

# Next steps

DFN Project SEARCH is committed to continuous improvement. We will work to:

- Focus on factors that influence conversion to job rates and encourage partners to follow the model – it works!
- Increase the number of interns coming onto each programme.
- Share best practice from outstanding programmes.
- Use data collection earlier and learn from the findings to create action.
- Sustain our commitment to the goal of integrated, competitive, full-time employment. We want to change the lives of young people with a learning disability and autistic young people

**Meet Michael**



# 190+

DFN Project SEARCH Sites



# ● Get in touch

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