

# Workforce Mobility and Skills in the UK Construction Sector 2022

North East Report - May 2023



Study prepared by BMG Research from a commission by CITB.

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## Executive summary

CITB commissioned BMG Research to undertake the 2022 Construction Workforce Mobility Survey, which builds on previous surveys conducted in 2018/19, 2015, 2012, 2007, and 2005. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 3,005 construction workers undertaking manual roles on sites across the UK and 206 interviews were conducted with construction workers in the North East region.

### Profile of the sample

All construction workers in manual roles interviewed in the North East are male, compared to the UK average of 97%.

Within the North East, the age profile has remained stable over time, with the youngest age group (16 to 24 year olds) accounting for 23% of construction workers, those aged 25 to 44 accounting for 50%, those aged 45 to 59 accounting for 21% and those aged 60 or over for 14%. This is very much on line with the UK average.

In terms of ethnicity, the vast majority of construction workers in the North East continue to be of White origin (97% compared to 100% in 2018/19 and 99% 2015 and 2012).

At 2%, the proportion of construction workers of ethnic minority origin is among the lowest of any region/nation, as has been the case in previous iterations of the survey. This is lower than the North East working age population (6%).

At 2%, the proportion coming from outside of the UK is in line with 2018/19 (1%), and lower than the UK average of 17%.

Reflecting the findings above, less than one per cent of construction workers in the North East hold a passport for another country, similar to 2018/19, and significantly lower than UK average of 13%.

Almost all (96%) of construction workers in the North East have lived in the UK all their lives, the highest proportion of any region, and in line with 2018/19 (97%). Of the 4% who have not lived in the UK all their lives, virtually all have lived in the UK for more than five years.

Just 4% of construction workers in the North East report that they have a long-term illness, health problem, or disability which limits the type of work they can do, compared to 2% in 2018/19 and in line with the 2022 UK average (3%).

As in 2018/19, labourers/general operatives account for the highest proportion of construction workers in the North East, (25%, compared to 23% in 2018/19), and to a greater extent than is the case across the UK (18%). Bricklayers account for 16%, and again this is higher than the UK average of (10%). Around one in ten are plant/machine operatives (10%), site managers (9%) and carpenters/joiners (7%). These are largely in line with the UK average.

More than one in five (22%) construction workers in the North East say they perform a supervisory or management role on their site (compared to 21% in 2018/19 and 22% in 2015), which is lower than the UK average (28%).

While at 57%, the proportion of construction workers who are directly employed in the North East remains significantly above the UK average (48%), it is significantly lower than was the case in 2018/19 (69%) and 2015 (78%). There has been a corresponding rise in the proportion who are self-employed, from 26% in 2018/19 to 40% in the latest survey, such that self-employment in the region is now in line with the UK average (42%). Few in the region are agency workers (3% compared to the UK average of 9%).

A third (34%) of construction workers in the North East are employed on a temporary basis (66%), higher than with the UK average (29%), and significantly above 2018/19 (10%).

Construction workers in the North East are less likely than the UK average to work very long hours, with 12% working more than 50 hours a week, compared to the UK average of 19%.

## Work history

### Time in the sector

Three in ten (31%) construction workers in the North East have worked in the construction industry for over 20 years, fewer than in 2018/19 (36%), but in line with the UK average (30%). Over half (56%) have worked in the industry for at least 10 years, compared to a slightly higher proportion in 2018/19 (59%) and a lower UK average in 2022 (52%).

There has been an increase in the proportion of construction workers in the North East who have worked pretty much continuously in the industry, from 40% in 2018/19 to 66% in the latest survey, placing the North East more in line with the UK average in this respect (61%). Three quarters (74%) have only ever worked in construction, as in 2018/19 and compared to a slightly lower UK average (71%).

### Previous non-construction jobs

Overall, 15% of construction workers in the North East have moved into the industry after working in other sorts of jobs/sectors, fewer than in 2018/19 (20%) and compared to the UK average (18%).

They are most likely to have transferred from transportation and storage (22%), wholesale and retail trade (22%), accommodation and food services (17%), manufacturing (14%) and administrative support services (11%) sectors.

In terms of the job roles that respondents have held in other sectors, these were most likely to be in skilled trades occupations (31%), elementary administration and service occupations (25%) and process, plant and machine operatives (22%).



### Occupational switching within the construction sector

Overall, a third (31%) of all construction workers in the North East have worked in more than one construction trade or occupation whilst working in the construction industry, with a higher proportion than in 2018/19 (27%) but fewer than the UK average (35%).

North East workers are most likely to have previously worked as labourer/general operatives (31%), bricklayers (19%), carpenters/joiners (16%) and/or plant/machine operatives (13%).

Just one in twenty construction workers in the North East (6%) would like to change their trade/occupation, fewer than in 2018/19 (9%) but similar to the 2022 UK average (7%).

### Qualifications and skills

#### Skills cards/certificates

Almost all (97%) construction workers in the North East report holding a skill card or certificate (eg CSCS or CSR). The North East is one of only two regions/nations that has seen an increase in this respect since 2018/19 (94%).

In terms of the type of skill card or certificate held by construction workers in the North East, the CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme (GB) is the most commonly held (93%), and to a greater extent than 2018/19 (85%) and the UK average (80%).

Overall, 6% of CSCS card holders have Red cards, three in ten (32%) have Green cards, and nearly two in five (38%) have Blue cards. One in seven (14%) have Gold cards and one in twenty (5%) hold Black cards, with other types of card held by 2%.

#### Construction-specific qualifications

Overall, half (52%) of construction workers in the North East reported having no construction-related qualifications when they started their first job. This is significantly lower than in 2018/19 (73%), but is higher than the 2022 UK average (47%), which has also seen a significant decrease since 2018/19 (72%).

Overall, 88% of construction workers in the North East reported holding a construction-related qualification, a significant uplift on the 69% who did so in 2018/19. This is in contrast to the UK-wide picture, where there has been a decrease in the proportion of workers holding a qualification, from 72% in 2018/19 to 69% in the latest survey.

As in previous years, the qualifications most likely to be held by construction workers in the North East are NVQ/SVQ qualifications (81%, above the UK average of 69%). There has been a decrease in the proportion holding City & Guilds (from 20% in 2018/19 to 7%), HNC/HND/BTEC Higher, (from 12% to 6%) and degrees (from 10% to 2%), while an increase in apprenticeships (from 2% to 9%).

### **Current study for additional construction qualifications**

Overall, 6% of all construction workers in the North East are currently working towards formal qualifications relevant to the construction industry (excluding supervisory or managerial qualifications), a decrease since 2018/19 (11%), and lower than the 2022 UK average of 13%.

### **Supervisory and managerial qualifications and training**

Amongst those who do not currently perform supervisory/management roles and have not had this role before, 16% want to become a supervisor or manager in the future, in line with the 17% who did so in 2018/19, and fewer than one in twenty (3%) previously held that role and want to return to that status (in line with 2% in 2018/19). Around seven in ten (69%) are certain that they do not want to, which is higher than the UK average (59%).

A quarter (24%) of all construction workers in the North East have received formal training designed to improve managerial or supervisory knowledge or skills, fewer than in 2018/19 (30%), and compared to the 2022 UK average (33%). Among those who have or have had some form of supervisory or management responsibilities, close to nine in ten (87%) have received formal training (86% in 2018/19), s higher than the UK average (80%).

In terms of the types of supervisory/managerial training undertaken, Site Safety Supervisors Courses is most frequently mentioned by those who have undertaken any training (46%), followed by SMSTS (Site Manager Safety Training Scheme) (42%) and in-house training (20%).

### **Basic skill needs**

Overall, one in twenty (6%) construction workers in the North East believe they would benefit from some form of training in basic skills (compared to 7% in 2018/19 and 2015). This is significantly lower than the 2022 UK average (19%).

### **Overall skill levels**

The vast majority (98%) of construction workers in the North East have a construction-related qualification and/or skills card/certificate (or were working towards a qualification at the point of interview): only 2% of those interviewed could not say that they were at least working towards obtaining a CSCS card (or similar) or construction qualification.

Overall, over four in five (82%) construction workers in the North East have qualifications equivalent to Level 2 or above, higher than the 59% who did in 2018/19, and the UK average of 61%.

## Geographic mobility

### Work history in the region/nation

When asked what made them decide to work in the region/nation that they are currently working in, compared with 2018/19, there is an increase in the proportion who grew up there, from 51% in 2018/19 to 76%, such that this is now the main reason for being in the region, and is to a significantly greater extent than the UK average (46%). There has been a corresponding decrease in the proportion who say that their employer sent them there, from 70% in 2018/19 to 42% in the latest survey.

Over four in five (82%) construction workers in the North East have worked in their current region for all or most of their career, in line with the UK average of 83%, including 38% in the North East who have worked there for their whole career (compared to 49% UK-wide).

Unlike 2018/19, where construction workers in the North East were among the most likely to state that their last site was in the same region (90%), in the latest survey they are among the least likely to do so (65%), with one in ten (10%) reporting that they last worked in Yorkshire and Humber, the same proportion (10%) that it was in the West Midlands, and a fewer stating the North West (8%).

### Worker origins

Again unlike 2018/19, where construction workers in the North East were among the most likely to state that they were living in the same region (93%), in the latest survey they are among the least likely to do so (67%).

### Travel to site

The majority (81%) of construction workers in the North East were interviewed on a site that was located within the same region/nation as their permanent home, although this is lower than 2018/19 (96%).

Of the 19% who travel outside of their region to their current site, 5% travel from a bordering region, and 14% from a non-bordering region, unlike the pattern for most other regions, where travel is most likely to be from a bordering region.

Approaching a quarter (23%) of construction workers in the North East have worked no more than 20 miles away, (23% in 2018/19), which is lower than the UK average of 33%. A further two in five (42%) have worked between 21 and 50 miles away, up on 2018/19 (33%) and the UK average of 34%. This leaves a third (34%) who have worked more than 50 miles away from their permanent or current home, in line with the UK average (32%), including 17% who have travelled over 100 miles (17%), which is a higher proportion than the UK average (12%).

The average furthest distance travelled from home to site is 52 miles in the North East, significantly higher than the UK average of 46 miles.

### **Journey distance to work**

The average (mean) distance from North East construction workers' current residence (taking into account temporary residences) to their current site is 14 miles, in line with 2018/19 (15 miles) and 2015 (14 miles), and similar to the UK average of 16 miles.

### **Use of temporary accommodation**

Just 1% of construction workers in the North East report that they are currently staying in temporary accommodation while working at their site, as in 2018/19 (1%) but lower than the 2022 UK average (5%).

### **Site duration and change**

Where employed on a temporary basis, half (49%) the North East construction workers did not know how much longer they would be working for the company/person/agency paying them. This is a higher proportion than in 2018/19 (35%) and compared to the UK average (32%).

Overall, 10% of construction workers in the North East do not expect to work on that site for more than a month (compared to 14% in 2018/19). Half (52%) anticipate being on site for more than a month but less than a year (57% in 2018/19), and one in ten (13%) expect to be on site for more than a year (15% in 2018/19). A quarter (24%) are uncertain, significantly higher than in 2018/19 (15%), but in line with the 2022 UK average of 22%.

Fewer construction workers in the North East than previously are confident that when they finish this job they will get a job that allows them to travel from their permanent home to work on a daily basis (75%, compared to 87% in 2018/19), but they are more confident that the 2022 UK average (69%).

### **Sub-sector and sector mobility**

#### **Sub-sector mobility**

New housing continues to be the most common type of construction work undertaken in the North East (81%), followed by commercial work (48%), private industrial work (46%), housing repair and maintenance (42%) and public non-housing work (40%).

In terms of the number of types of work undertaken, the results are largely in line 2018/19 and the UK average, with 31% undertaking one type, 21% two types, 23% three or four types, and 20% more than this.

#### **Leaving the sector**

Around nine in ten (88%) construction workers in the North East think it is likely that they will still want to work in construction in five years' time, including 42% who say they definitely will be, and 30% who think it is very likely. This is in line with the UK average of

82%. One in twenty (6%) say it is unlikely that they will still want to work in construction in five years' time, again in line with the UK average of 7%.

## Introduction

### Aims and objectives

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

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

The specific objectives of this research project are to:

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

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

This report discusses the findings within the North East region.

## Method

The 2022 Construction Workforce Mobility Survey followed a similar methodology to that used in the last wave of this research in 2018/19. Overall, 3,005 interviews with construction workers in site-based roles across the UK were required, split between the 12 standard regions/nations. In total, 206 interviews were conducted in the North East.

### Sampling

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

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

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

Project eligibility criteria were:

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

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

### Telephone-based site recruitment

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

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

### Site visits

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



### Methodological points to note

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

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

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

### Notes on reading this report

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Profile of construction site workers

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

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

### Personal demographics

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

#### Gender

All construction workers in manual roles interviewed in the North East are male, as compared to the UK average of 97%.

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

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

*Base: All respondents*

	<b>NE 2022</b> %	<b>UK 2022</b> %	<b>UK Workforce*</b> %
Male	100	97	52
Female	0	2	48
Transgender	0	<0.5	-
Non-binary	0	<0.5	-
Prefer not to say	0	<0.5	-
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>3,005</i>	<i>33,808,600</i>

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

## Age

Within the North East, the age profile has remained stable over time, with the youngest age group (16 to 24 year olds) accounting for 23% of construction workers, those aged 25 to 44 accounting for 50%, those aged 45 to 59 accounting for 21% and those aged 60 or over for 7%. This is very much on line with the UK average.

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

Base: All respondents

	NE 2022 %	NE 2018/9 %	NE 2015 %	NE 2012 %	UK 2022 %		UK Workforce* %
16 to 19 years	9	7	7	4	6	16 to 19 years	4
20 to 24 years	14	11	10	10	13	20 to 24 years	9
25 to 34 years	26	22	25	21	26	25 to 34 years	23
35 to 44 years	24	19	21	27	24	35 to 49 years	33
45 to 54 years	14	25	22	22	17	50 to 64 years	28
55 to 59 years	7	10	9	14	8		
60+ years	7	5	5		6	65+ years	4
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	206	411	427	394	3,005		33,808,600

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

## Ethnicity

In terms of ethnicity, the vast majority of construction workers in the North East continue to be of White origin (97% compared to 100% in 2018/19 and 99% 2015 and 2012).

On this basis, 2% are of Black, Asian or Mixed origin, lower than the UK average (5%), and the working age population (12%).

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

Base: All respondents

	<b>NE 2022 %</b>	<b>NE 2018/9 %</b>	<b>NE 2015 %</b>	<b>NE 2012 %</b>	<b>UK 2022 %</b>	<b>UK population aged 16 to 64* %</b>
White	97	100	99	99	91	84
Black	<0.5	0	0	0	2	4
Asian	0	0	<0.5	0	2	6
Mixed	1	<0.5	-	-	1	2
Other/Not stated	1	0	<0.5	1	3	4
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>411</i>	<i>427</i>	<i>394</i>	<i>3,005</i>	<i>41,439,500</i>

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

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

At 2%, the proportion of construction workers of ethnic minority origin is among the lowest of any region/nation, as has been the case in previous iterations of the survey. This is lower than the North East working age population (6%).

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

Base: All respondents

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

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

## Country of origin

For the first time in 2018/19, construction workers were asked for details about their nationality and country of origin. The table below focuses on the non-UK nationalities that are most frequent in the 2022 survey.

At 3%, the proportion coming from outside of the UK is in line with 2018/19 (1%), and lower than the UK average of 17%.

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

Base: All respondents

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

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

### Holding of passports

Reflecting the findings above, less than one per cent of construction workers in the North East hold a passport for another country, similar to the 1% reported in 2018/19, and significantly lower than the UK average of 13%. The majority hold a UK passport (92%), with a further 7% reporting that they do not have a passport.

### Length of time living in the UK

Almost all (96%) of construction workers in the North East have lived in the UK all their lives, the highest proportion of any region, and in line with 2018/19 (97%).

Of the 4% who have not lived in the UK all their lives, virtually all have lived in the UK for more than five years.

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

Base: All respondents

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

Q39

### Disability

Amongst all construction workers in the North East, 4% cent report that they have a long-term illness, health problem, or disability which limits the type of work they can do (as compared to 2% in 2018/19), in line with the UK average of 3%.

### Occupational profile

#### Current job role

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

trades/occupations mentioned by at least 2% of the sample and compares this with the occupational profile from the 2018/19 and 2015 surveys.

As in 2018/19, labourers/general operatives account for the highest proportion of construction workers in the North East, (25%, compared to 23% in 2018/19), and to a greater extent than is the case across the UK (18%). Bricklayers account for 16%, and again this is higher than the UK average of (10%).

Around one in ten are plant/machine operatives (10%), site managers (9%) and carpenters/joiners (7%). These are largely in line with the UK averages.

### Figure 8: Occupational profile

Base: All respondents. Mentions 2%+

	NE 2022 %	NE 2018/19 %	NE 2015 %	UK 2022 %
Labourer/General operative	25	23	19	18
Bricklayer	16	13	21	10
Plant/machine operative (e.g. Fork lift/JCB)	10	10	6	9
Site manager	9	8	7	9
Carpenter/joiner	7	12	11	9
Ground worker	6	3	3	5
Roofer	6	3	4	3
Scaffolder	5	2	7	3
Electrician	3	5	4	5
Plumber	2	2	4	3
Technical e.g. surveyor, maintenance technician	2	6	2	3
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>411</i>	<i>427</i>	<i>3,005</i>

Q5

### Supervisory roles

More than one in five (22%) construction workers in the North East say they perform a supervisory or management role on their site (compared to 21% in 2018/19 and 22% in 2015), and this continues to be lower than the UK average (28%).

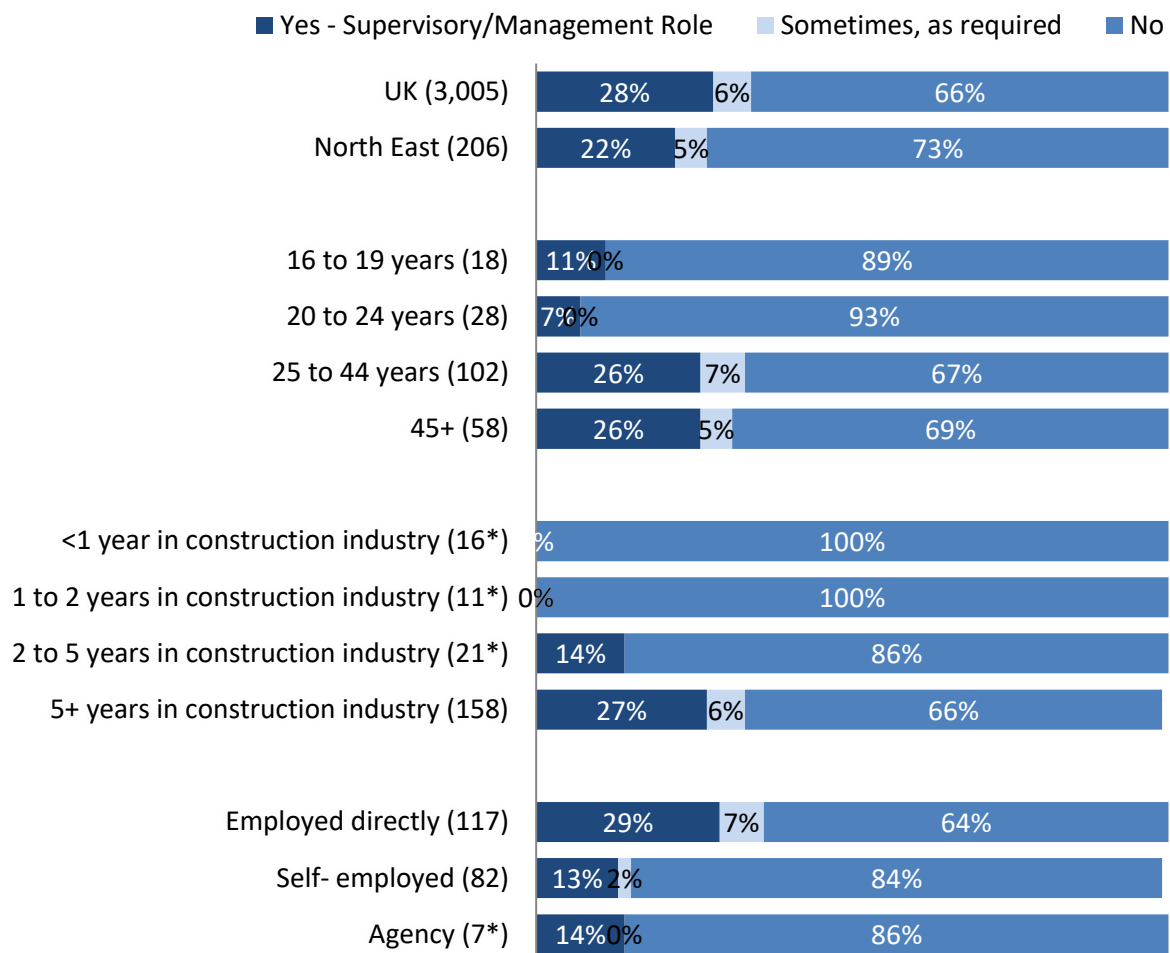
The proportion who work in supervisory roles increases with time in the industry, to 27% of those in the construction industry for more than 5 years, and is higher among those directly employed (29%) and permanent (27%) staff.

These differences are summarised in the following figure.



**Figure 9: Whether respondents perform a supervisory or management role**

Base: All respondents



Q8. Unweighted bases in parentheses

\* Caution: low base

### Employment status

While at 57%, the proportion of construction workers in direct employment in the North East remains significantly above the UK average (48%), it is significantly lower than reported in 2018/19 (69%) and 2015 (78%).

There has been a corresponding rise in the proportion who are self-employed, from 26% in 2018/19 to 40% in the latest survey, such that self-employment in the region is now in line with the UK average (42%).

Few are agency workers (3% compared to the UK average of 9%).

### Figure 10: Employment status

Base: All respondents

	NE 2022 %	NE 2018/19 %	NE 2015 %	UK 2022 %	Years working in construction %			
					<1	1-2	2-5	5+
Employed directly by a company (contractor or sub-contractor)	57	69	78	42	63	73	62	54
Self-employed	40	26	19	48	38	27	33	42
Working for an employment agency	3	4	3	9	0	0	5	4
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>411</i>	<i>427</i>	<i>3,005</i>	<i>16*</i>	<i>11*</i>	<i>21*</i>	<i>158</i>

Q20

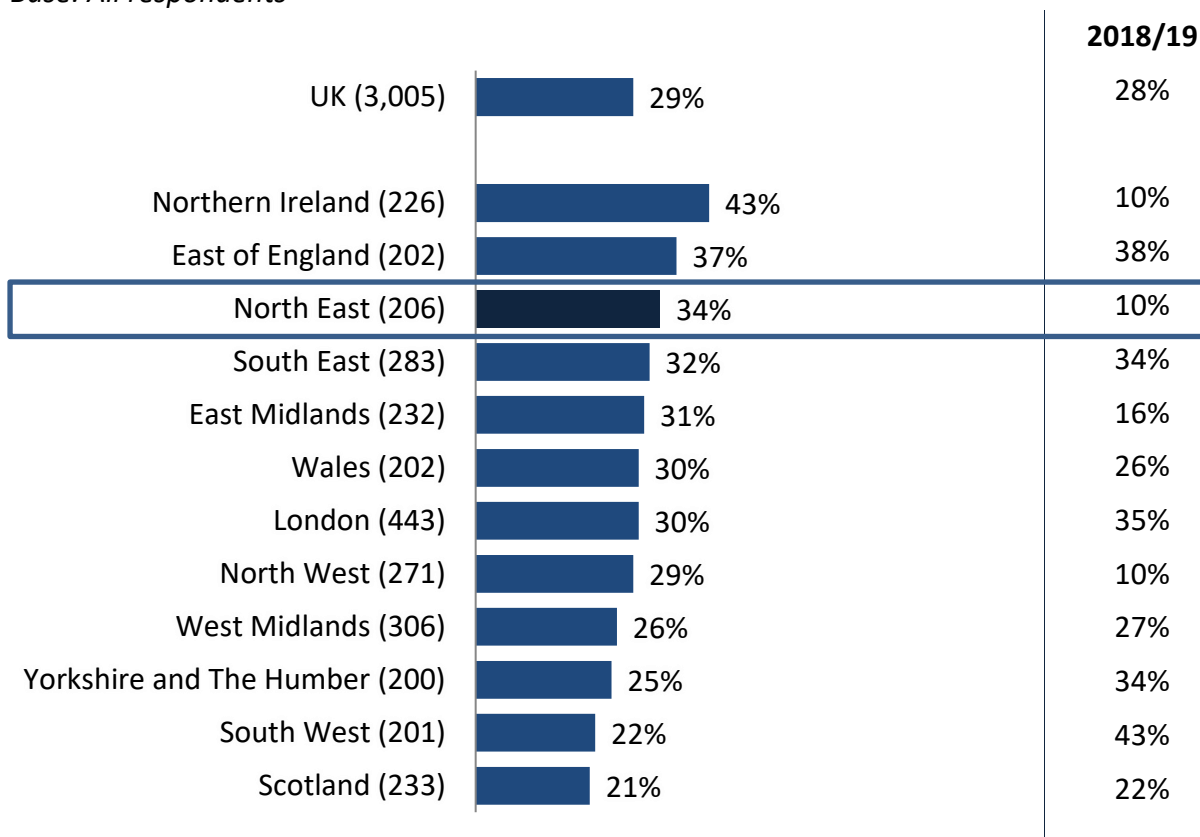
\* Caution: low base

**Employment contract basis**

A third (34%) of construction workers in the North East are employed on a temporary, rather than a permanent basis (66%), broadly in line with the UK average (29% and 67% respectively), but significantly above what was reported in 2018/19 (10%).

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

Base: All respondents



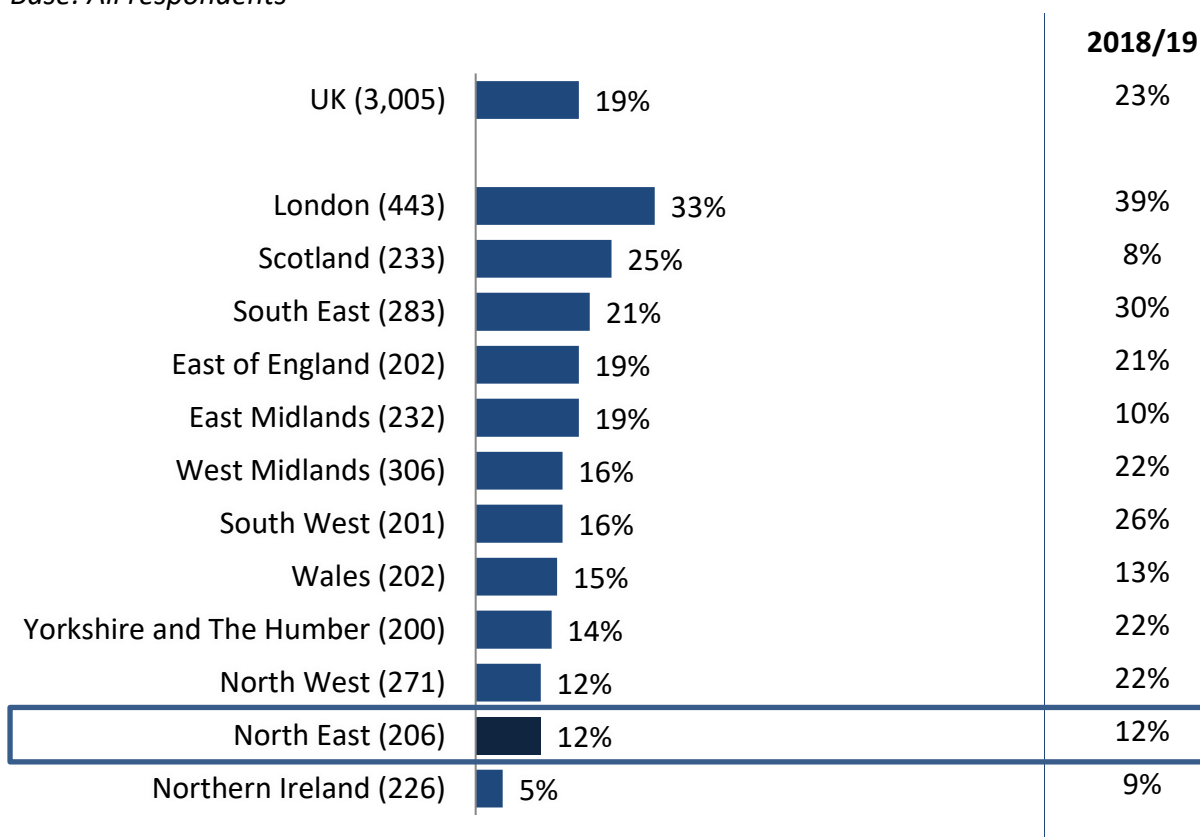
Q21. Unweighted bases in parentheses

### Hours worked

Construction workers in the North East, as across the UK as a whole, are most likely to report that they work between 40 and 49 hours per week (55% in the North East and 59% across the UK), while 12% work more than 50 hours a week, in line with 2018/19 (12%), although lower than the UK average of 19%. Construction workers in the North East are among the most likely to report working between 30 and 39 hours (32%, compared to the UK average of 16%).

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

*Base: All respondents*



*Q22. Unweighted bases in parentheses*

## Work histories

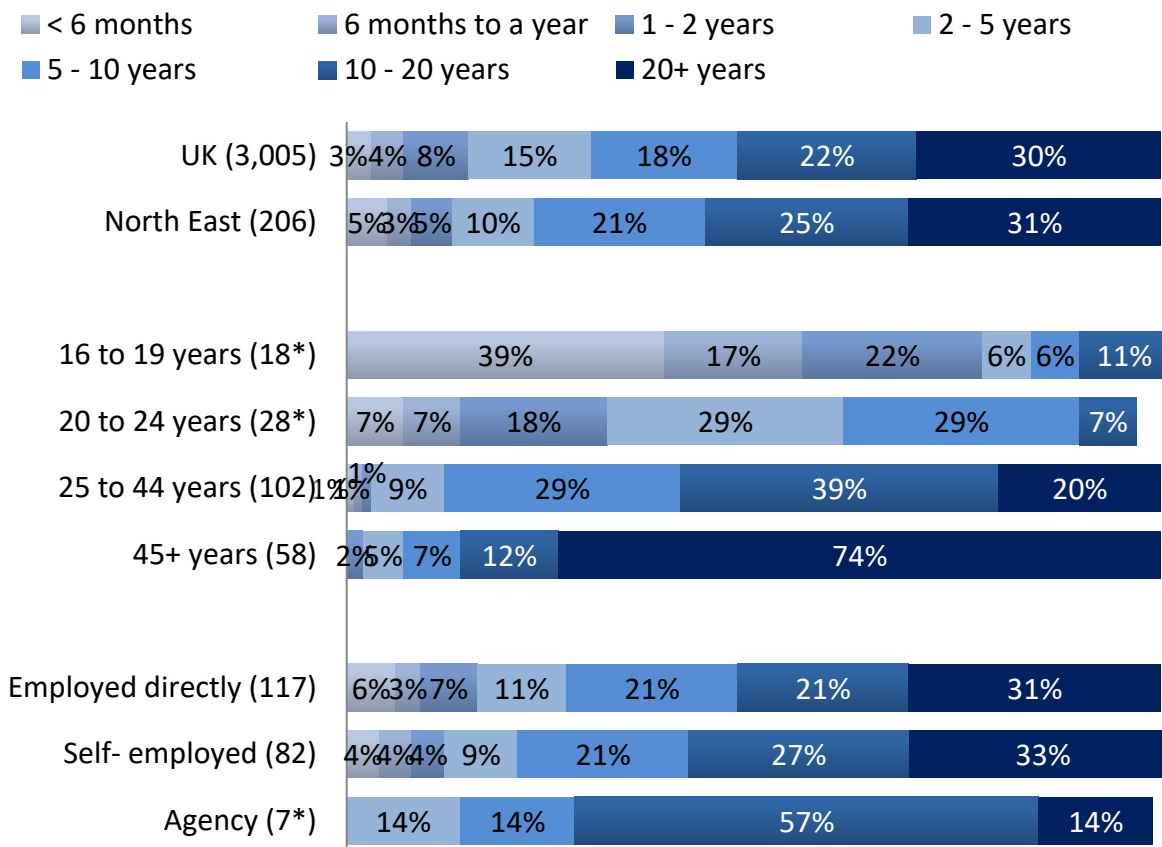
### Time in the sector

Three in ten (31%) construction workers in the North East have worked in the construction industry for over 20 years, fewer than in 018/19 (36%), but in line with the UK average (30%). Over half (56%) have worked in the industry for at least 10 years, again slightly fewer than in 2018/19 (59%) but more than the UK average (52%).

As would be expected, the length of experience in the industry increases with age, with three quarters (74%) of construction workers aged 45 and over having more than 20 years' experience of working in the sector, a similar proportion to in 2018/19 (72%).

**Figure 13: Years spent working in the construction sector**

Base: All respondents



Q1. Unweighted bases in parentheses

\* Caution: low base

Compared with previous years, Figure 14 shows a relatively consistent picture over time in the North East, and one that is largely consistent with the UK.

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

*Base: All respondents*

	<b>NE 2022 %</b>	<b>NE 2018/19 %</b>	<b>NE 2015 %</b>	<b>UK 2022 %</b>
Less than 6 months	5	3	4	3
Up to a year	8	6	7	7
Up to 2 years	13	10	13	14
Up to 5 years	23	23	21	29
Up to 10 years	44	41	39	48
Up to 20 years	69	64	64	70
More than 20 years	31	36	36	30
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>411</i>	<i>427</i>	<i>3,005</i>

Q1

## Pre-construction employment histories

There has been an increase in the proportion of construction workers in the North East who have worked pretty much continuously in the industry, from 40% in 2018/19 to 66% in the latest survey, placing the North East above the UK average in this respect (61%).

Three quarters (74%) have only ever worked in construction, as in 2018/19, and slightly higher than the 2022 UK average (71%).

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

All respondents

	NE 2022 %	NE 2018/19 %	NE 2015 %	UK 2022 %	Age %			
					16 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 44	45+
I've worked in construction pretty much continuously (and not worked in any other industry)	66	40	51	61	67	54	73	59
I have only worked in construction jobs but have had spells of being out of work	6	4	6	6	0	14	6	3
My first job was in construction but I've also worked in other sorts of jobs in one or more other industries	8	5	7	8	0	11	8	10
My first job after full time education was NOT in construction. I moved into the industry after working in other sort(s) of jobs	15	20	15	18	11	4	12	28
This is my first job. I haven't worked in any other industry.	3	30	16	4	22	4	1	0
This is my first job in construction but I have worked in other sorts of jobs in one or more other industries	2	1	4	4	0	14	1	0
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	206	411	427	3,005	18*	28*	102	58

Q2

\* Caution: low base

Overall, 15% (36 individuals on an unweighted basis) of construction workers in the North East say that their first job after full-time education was not in construction and that they moved into the industry after working in other sorts of jobs/sectors, fewer than in 2018/19 (20%) but similar to the 2022 UK average (18%).

Among this group, the most common sectors in which construction workers had started their careers were transportation and storage (22% - higher than the UK average of 8%), wholesale and retail trade (22%), accommodation and food services (17%), manufacturing (14%) and administrative support services (11%).

In terms of the job roles that respondents have held in other sectors, the highest proportions were in skilled trades occupations (31%), elementary administration and service occupations (25%) and process, plant and machine operatives (22%). Other roles had been held by 6% or less,



## Occupational switching and progression within construction

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

Overall, a third (31%) of all construction workers in the North East have worked in more than one construction trade or occupation whilst working in the construction industry, a higher proportion than in 2018/19 (27%) but lower than the 2022 UK average (35%).

Naturally, the proportion of workers who have had more than one role increases with the length of time respondents have worked in construction, up to 37% amongst those with 5 or more years of experience.

Amongst the 31% of all North East construction workers that had worked in at least one other role/occupation, 5% had worked in 1 previous role, 72% had worked in 2 previous roles, 16% had worked in 3 roles/occupations and 8% had worked in 4 roles/occupations.

Workers are most likely to have previously worked as a labourer/general operative (31%), while 19% had previously worked as a bricklayer, 16% as a carpenter/joiner, and 13% as a plant/machine operative.

### Figure 16: Previous occupations/trades in the construction sector

Base: Workers that have switched occupations within construction

Occupation	NE 2022 %	UK 2022 %
Labourer/General operative	31	39
Bricklayer	19	12
Carpenter/joiner	16	15
Plant/machine operative (e.g. Fork lift/JCB)	13	10
Plasterer	6	5
Painter/decorator	6	4
Banksman/Banksperson	5	7
Plumber	5	3
Scaffolder	5	2
Steel erector/rigger	5	2
Electrician	3	2
Pipe fitter	3	2
Dryliner	2	5
Rofer	2	4
Ceiling fixer	2	3
Welder	2	1
Mechanical fitter	2	2
Insulation specialist	2	2
Other	5	10
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>1,082</i>

Q7

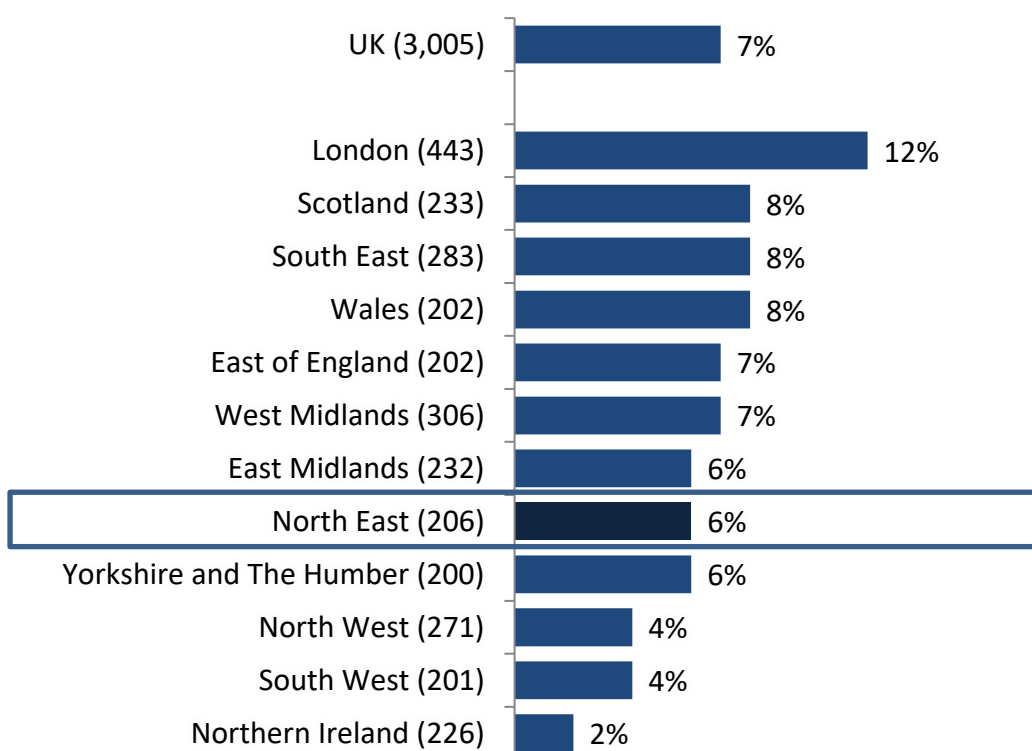
### Future career plans

Over four in five (83%) construction workers in the North East would like to carry on in the same trade or occupation, in line with 2018/19 (82%) and the 2022 UK average of 80%.

One in twenty (6%) would like to change their trade/occupation, which is slightly lower than reported in 2018/19 (9%) but in line with the 2022 UK average (7%). The remainder would like to leave construction (7%) or were unsure (3%).

**Figure 17: Proportion of construction workers who would like to change their trade or occupation within the construction sector, by region/nation**

*Base: All respondents*



Q33. Unweighted bases in parentheses

## Qualifications and skills

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

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

### Construction skill cards and certificates

Almost all (97%) construction workers in the North East report holding a skill card or certificate (e.g. CSCS or CSR). The North East is one of only two regions/nations that has seen an increase in this respect since 2018/19 (94%), the other being Wales, with North West and Northern Ireland seeing no change and other regions seeing a decline.

Along with the North West and Northern Ireland, construction workers in the North East are most likely to hold skill cards/certificates.

#### Figure 18: Proportion of workers who have a skill card/certificate, by region/nation

Base: All respondents

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

Q12

In terms of the type of skill card or certificate held by construction workers in the North East, the CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme (GB) is the most commonly held (93%), and to a greater extent than in 2018/19 (85%) and compared to the 2022 UK average (80%).

The proportion holding CPCS (Construction Plant Competence Scheme) certificates has reduced, from 16% in 2018/19 to 3% in the latest survey, lower than the UK average of 14%.

**Figure 19: Type of skill card/certificate held**

*Base: All respondents*

	<b>NE 2022 %</b>	<b>NE 2018/19 %</b>	<b>NE 2015 %</b>
CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) (GB)	93	85	88
CSR (Construction Skills Register) (NI)	0	3	0
CISRS (Construction Industry Scaffolders Record Scheme)	4	2	7
CPCS (Construction Plant Competence Scheme)	3	16	10
Other	2	4	4
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<b>206</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>427</b>

Q12

Workers who hold a CSCS card were asked what colour their cards are. Overall, 6% of CSCS card holders have Red cards, three in ten (32%) have Green cards, and two in five (38%) have Blue cards. One in seven (14%) have Gold cards and one in twenty (5%) hold Black cards, with other types of card held by 2%.

### Figure 20: Colour of CSCS card held

Base: Where CSCS card is held

	NE 2022 %	NE 2018/19 %
Red – Trainee	4	2
Red – Experienced worker card	2	1
Green – construction site operative card for general site workers	32	32
Blue – skilled	38	28
Gold – supervisor card	11	7
Gold – Advanced craft/skilled worker	3	15
Black – contracts manager card	5	7
Academically Qualified Persons Card	2	2
Other	2	3
Unsure	2	1
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>191</i>	<i>350</i>

Q13

### Construction qualifications held

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

Overall, half (52%) of construction workers in the North East report having no construction-related qualifications when they started their first job. This is significantly lower than the 73% who reported this in 2018/19, and the 68% who did so in 2015.

In this respect the North East is above the UK average (47%) which has also seen a significant decrease since 2018/19 (72%).

Those aged 45 or over are more likely than average to report having had no qualifications when they started their first job in construction (71%).

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

Overall, the vast majority (88%) of construction workers in the North East report holding a construction-related qualification, a significant uplift on the 69% who did so in 2018/19. This

is in contrast to the UK-wide picture, where there has been a decrease in the proportion of workers holding a qualification, from 72% in 2018/19 to 69% in the latest survey.

Construction workers in the North East are significantly above the UK average in this respect (69% UK-wide), and the most qualified of any region/nation.

The proportion of workers in the North East who have a construction-related qualification increases with length of time in the industry, to 92% of those with five or more years of experience, and is higher than average among those who are self-employed (94%).

**Figure 21: Proportion of workers that hold any construction-specific qualification**

*Base: All respondents*

		<b>NE 2022 %</b>	<b>NE 2018/19 %</b>	<b>NE 2015 %</b>	<b>NE 2012 %</b>	<b>UK 2022 %</b>
Total (206)		88	69	80	78	69
Age	16 to 19 years (18*)	83	83	57	-	54
	20 to 24 years (28*)	79	76	83	58	64
	25 to 44 years (102)	91	84	78	53	72
	45+ years (58)	88	75	79	71	69
Length of time in construction	<1 year (16*)	63	52	-	25	46
	1 to 2 years (11*)	82	91	50	28	43
	2 to 5 years (21*)	76	70	77	43	62
	5+ years (158)	92	83	81	66	75
Current contract type	Employed directly (117)	85	77	78	59	69
	Self-employed (82)	94	88	78	60	74
	Agency (7*)	71	83	82	50	50
<i>Unweighted bases for 2022 in parentheses</i>						

Q15/Q16

\* Caution: low base

## Type of construction qualifications held

Based on the qualifications that workers had when they first started working in the construction industry and any they have gained since, Figure 22 summarises the types of qualifications that workers hold and compares the figures to previous surveys (amongst those who have any qualifications and who provided a response).

As in previous years, the qualifications most likely to be held by construction workers in the North East are NVQ/SVQ qualifications (81%), placing this above the levels seen in 2015 (72%), following a dip in 2018/19 (39%), and above the UK average of 69%.

There has been a decrease in the proportion holding City & Guilds, from 20% in 2018/19 to 7% in the latest survey (now below the UK average of 18%). While there has been a decrease in those holding a HNC/HND/BTEC Higher (from 12% to 6%), or a degree, (from 10% to 2%). A higher proportion than in 2018/19 have gained an apprenticeship - increasing from 2% to 9% in 2022.

### Figure 22: Main type of qualification held

Base: Workers with qualifications (valid responses)

	<b>NE 2022 %</b>	<b>NE 2018/19 %</b>	<b>NE 2015 %</b>	<b>NE 2012 %</b>	<b>UK 2022 %</b>
NVQ/SVQ	81	39	72	75	69
City & Guilds	7	20	15	22	18
Construction Award	1	Na	Na	Na	3
Apprenticeship	9	2	18	1	11
HNC/HND/BTEC Higher	6	12	2	1	5
Degree	2	10	2	0	5
Other	5	29	9	1	12
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>129</i>	<i>286</i>	<i>186</i>	<i>2,093</i>

Q15/Q16

## Additional formal training

### Self-assessment of basic skills needs

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

Overall, one in twenty (6%) of construction workers in the North East believe they would benefit from some form of training in basic skills (compared to 7% in 2018/19 and 2015 and 16% in 2012). This is significantly lower than the UK average (19%), which has seen an increase since 2018/19 (11%).

Interestingly, those who are employed directly are more likely than average to identify a need for training in each skill, with the exception of digital skills.

### Figure 23: Self-assessed need for training in basic skills

Base: All respondents

	NE 2022 %	NE 2018/19 %	NE 2015 %	NE 2012 %	UK 2022 %
ANY	6	7	7	16	19
Writing	4	3	2	10	7
Maths	4	4	4	10	6
Reading	3	4	4	9	9
Speaking English	3	3	1	5	9
Digital skills	2	Na	Na	Na	4
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>411</i>	<i>427</i>	<i>394</i>	<i>3,005</i>

Q37



### Current study for additional construction qualifications

Overall, 6% of all construction workers in the North East are currently working towards formal qualifications relevant to the construction industry (excluding supervisory or managerial qualifications), fewer than the 11% who were doing so in 2018/19, and compared with the 2022 UK average of 13%.

**Figure 24: Proportion working towards additional construction qualifications**

Base: All respondents

		NE 2022 %	NE 2018/19 %	NE 2015 %	UK 2022 %
Total (206)		6	11	12	13
Age	16 to 19 years (18*)	22	57	71	43
	20 to 24 years (28*)	11	23	15	24
	25 to 44 years (102)	3	8	11	11
	45+ years (58)	3	4	2	5
Length of time in construction	<1 year (16*)	19	38	56	28
	1 to 2 years (11*)	27	29	33	27
	2 to 5 years (21*)	10	25	20	20
	5+ years (158)	3	6	6	8
Contract type	Employed directly (117)	6	13	14	15
	Self- employed (82)	6	5	7	10
	Agency (7*)	0	6	0	8
Highest qualification level	None (22*)	14	9	9	11
	Level 1 (12*)	0	44	45	17
	Level 2 (99)	5	9	14	12
	Level 3 (50)	8	15	5	11
	Level 4+ (20*)	0	27	14	16
<i>Unweighted bases for 2022 in parentheses</i>					

Q18

\* Caution: low base

Of the 12 construction workers in the North East<sup>1</sup> who are currently studying for a qualification (and who provided a response) 75% are studying for an NVQ/SVQ, and around one in ten for an apprenticeship, City & Guilds, or a degree (all 8%).

<sup>1</sup> Number of workers (unweighted)

### Supervisory and managerial qualifications and training

As reported earlier, more than one in five (22%) construction workers in the North East perform a supervisory or management role at their site.

Amongst those who do not currently perform supervisory/management roles and have not had this role before, 16% want to become a supervisor or manager in the future, in line with the 17% who did so in 2018/19, and less than one in twenty (3%) previously held that role and want to return to that status (in line with 2% in 2018/19).

Around seven in ten (69%) are certain that they do not want to, and while this is broadly in line with 2018/19 (65%), it is higher than the 2022 UK average of 59%.

There are few real differences by sub-group, with the exception that those aged 45 or over are more likely than average to not wish to take on a supervisory role (88%).

#### Figure 25: Whether those who are not currently supervisors want to be one in the future

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

		Yes, but have not done it before %	Yes and have done it before %	No %	Maybe/ depends %
2022 UK (1,982)		17	6	59	18
2022 North East (150)		16	3	69	13
Age	16 to 19 years (16*)	38	0	50	13
	20 to 24 years (26*)	19	4	62	15
	25 to 44 years (68)	19	3	65	13
	45+ years (40)	0	3	88	10
Length of time in construction	<1 year (16*)	56	0	38	6
	1 to 2 years (11*)	0	0	82	18
	2 to 5 years (18*)	22	6	67	6
	5+ years (105)	10	3	72	14
Contract type	Employed directly (75)	16	0	72	12
	Self-employed (69)	16	6	65	13
	Agency (6*)	17	0	67	17
<i>Unweighted bases in parentheses</i>					

Q9

\* Caution: low base

A quarter (24%) of all construction workers in the North East have received formal training designed to improve managerial or supervisory knowledge or skills, fewer than in 2018/19 (30%), but lower than the UK average of 33%. Among those who have or have had some form of supervisory or management responsibilities, close to nine in ten (87%) have received formal training, in line with 2018/19 (86%), but somewhat higher than the 2022 UK average (80%).

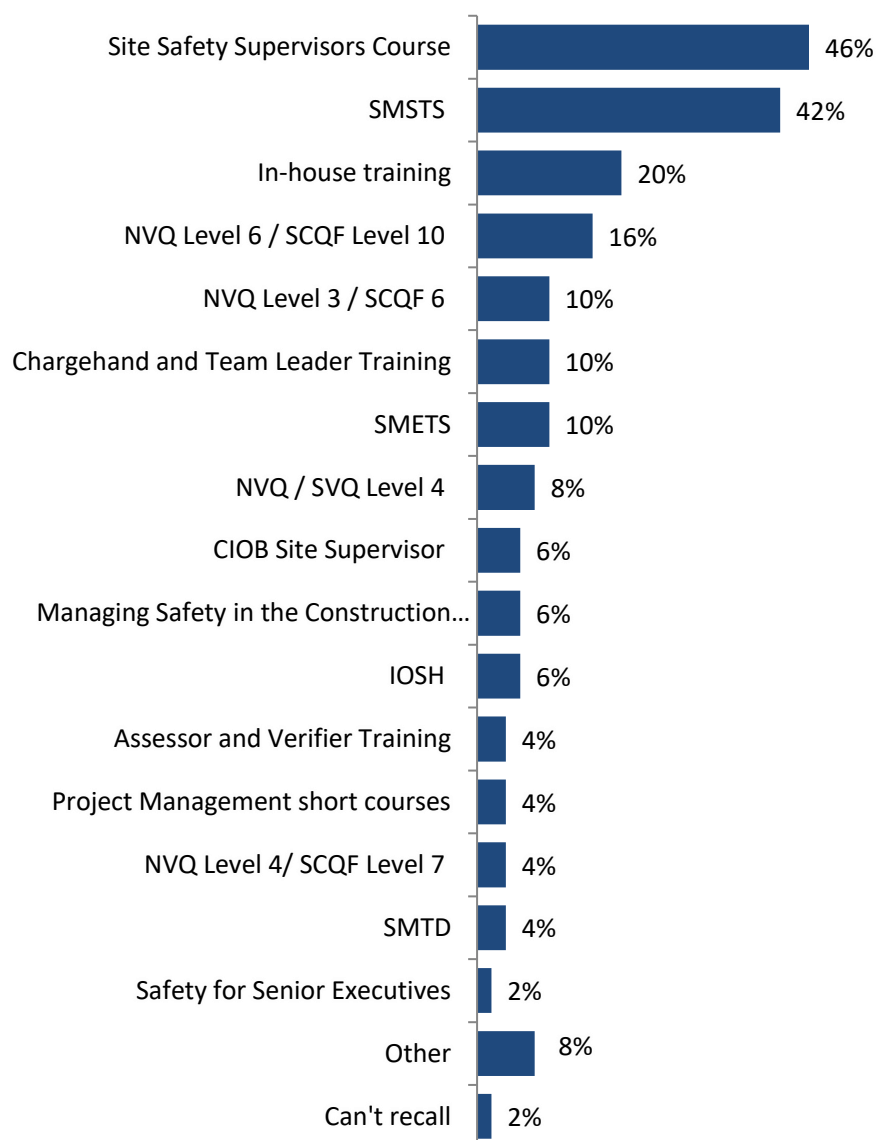
The proportion that has undertaken any managerial or supervisory training rises with length of time in the industry, to 30% of those in the industry for five or more years.

Those employed directly (30%) and permanent staff (30%) are more likely than average to report having received such training.

In terms of the types of supervisory/managerial training undertaken, Site Safety Supervisors Courses is most frequently mentioned by those who have undertaken any training (46%), followed by SMSTS (Site Manager Safety Training Scheme) (42%) and in-house training (20%). These were also the top three most mentioned types of supervisory training in 2018/19, 2015 and 2012, although in-house training has reduced from 43% in 2018/19, and Site Safety Supervisors Courses has increased from 28% in 2018/19.

**Figure 26: Types of managerial/supervisory training undertaken**

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



Q11. Unweighted base = 50

### Overall skill levels

An overview of the qualification and skill levels of construction workers surveyed has been derived by combining data from various separate measures and is presented in Figure 27 below.

As in previous years, the vast majority (98%) of construction workers in the North East have a construction-related qualification and/or skills card/certificate (or were working towards a qualification at the point of interview): only 2% of those interviewed could not say that they were at least working towards obtaining a CSCS card (or similar) or construction qualification.

The pattern of response is largely consistent with previous years, and with the UK average, although a higher proportion in 2022 hold a skill card/certificate than in 2018/19 (97% compared to 93%), and also compared to the UK average (93%), while a lower proportion than in 2018/19 hold only a skill card/certificate (10% compared to 26%), and this is also lower than the UK average in 2022 (19%).

#### Figure 27: Qualification status summary

Base: All respondents

	NE 2022 %	NE 2018/19 %	NE 2015 %	NE 2012 %	UK 2022 %
Holds a formal construction qualification or a skills card/certificate or working towards a qualification	98	97	100	100	96
Holds a formal construction qualification or a skills card/certificate	98	96	99	99	96
Holds a skills card/certificate	97	94	95	99	93
Holds a skills card/certification but no other qualification	10	26	18	52	19
Working towards a qualification	6	11	12	6	13
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>411</i>	<i>427</i>	<i>394</i>	<i>3,005</i>

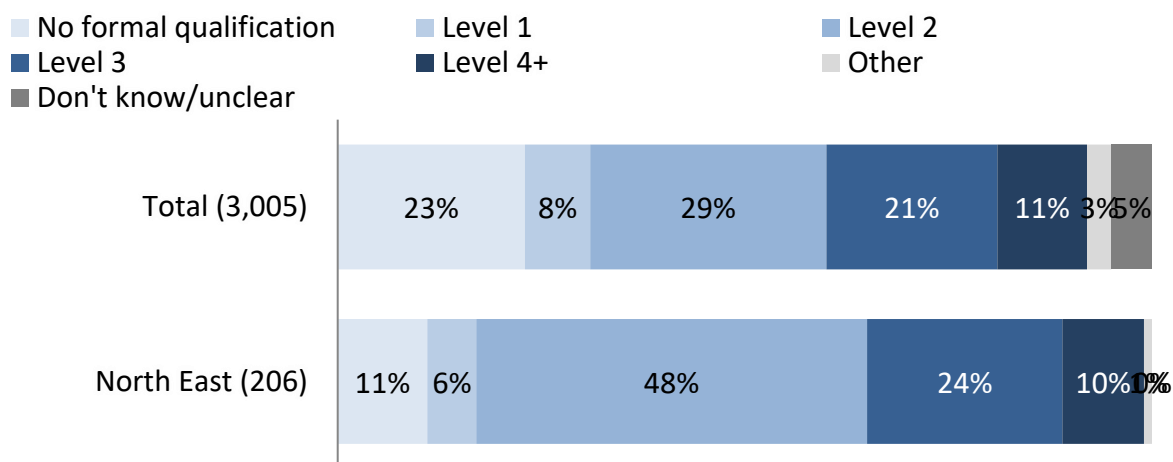
Q12/Q15/Q16/Q18

Based on all questions relating to qualifications it is possible to calculate each worker’s highest qualification level, and Figure 28 summarises construction workers’ highest level of qualification, overall and by occupation.

Overall, over four in five (82%) construction workers in the North East have qualifications equivalent to Level 2 or above, higher than the 59% who did in 2018/19, and the 2022 UK average of 61%.

**Figure 28: Current qualification level**

*Base: All respondents who provided a valid response*



*Q15/Q16. Unweighted bases in parentheses*

## Geographic mobility

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

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

### Work history in the current region/nation

All workers were asked what made them decide to work in the region/nation that they are currently working in.

The pattern of results is somewhat different to 2018/19, with an increase in the proportion who grew up there, from 51% in 2018/19 to 76% in the latest survey, such that this is now the main reason for being in the region, as was the case in 2015 (80%), and to a significantly greater extent than the UK average (46%).

There has also been an increase in the proportion who are there for family reasons, from 2% in 2018/19 to 16% in the latest survey, and this is also higher than the UK average of 5%.

There has been a corresponding decrease in the proportion who say that their employer sent them there, from 70% in 2018/19 to 42% in the latest survey.

### Figure 29: Reasons for choosing to work in current location – prompted, multiple response

Base: All respondents

	NE 2022 %	NE 2018/19 %	NE 2015 %	UK 2022 %
You grew up here/have always lived here	76	51	80	46
Employer sent you here	42	70	16	47
Family reasons	16	2	7	5
Came to the area to take up this or another job	0	1	3	5
Construction work is better paid in this area	1	1	1	4
There are more jobs available in this area	1	1	3	3
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	206	411	427	3,005

Q28

Over four in five (82%) construction workers in the North East have worked in their current region for all or most of their career, in line with the UK average of 83%. However, within the North East, this includes 38% who have worked in the region for their whole career, compared to a higher UK average of 49%.

**Figure 30: Proportion of construction workers' career worked in current region/nation**

Base: All respondents

	<b>NE 2022 %</b>	<b>NE 2018/19 %</b>	<b>NE 2015 %</b>	<b>NE 2012 %</b>	<b>UK 2022 %</b>
All of your time	38	48	56	31	49
Most of it	43	40	32	49	34
Around half your time	11	7	7	9	8
A small proportion of your time	6	4	5	6	5
Only on this job (this is the first site you've been to in this region/nation)	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5	3	1
Don't know	1	1	-	1	3
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>411</i>	<i>427</i>	<i>394</i>	<i>3,005</i>

Q26/Q27

In the North East, 85% indicate their employer operates nationwide, higher than the 52% who did so in 2018/19, and the UK average of 73%.

## Region/nation worked in before current site

Thinking about the last construction site they worked on before their current one, in the majority of cases, workers' last sites are in the same region/nation as they are working in now. However, the extent to which this is the case varies considerably by region/nation, as Figure 31 illustrates.

Unlike 2018/19, where construction workers in the North East were among the most likely to state that their last site was in the same region (90%), in the latest survey they are among the least likely to do so (65%), with one in ten (10%) each reporting that it was in Yorkshire and Humber or the West Midlands, and a similar proportion in the North West (8%).

### Figure 31 Region/nation currently working in compared with the region/nation of workers' immediately previous construction sites

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

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

Q32



## Worker origins

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

Again unlike 2018/19, where construction workers in the North East were among the most likely to state that they were living in the same region (93%), in the latest survey they are among the least likely to do so (67%).

**Figure 32: Region/nation currently working in compared with workers' region/nation of residence prior to first starting work in construction**

Base: All respondents \*denotes less than 0.5%

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

Q40

## Travel to site

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

The majority (81%) of construction workers in the North East were interviewed on a site that was located within the same region/nation as their permanent home, although this is lower than 2018/19 (96%).

Of the 19% who travel outside of their region to their current site, 5% travel from a bordering region, and 14% from a non-bordering region, unlike the pattern for most other regions, where most travel tends to be from a bordering region.

### Furthest distance worked in last 12 months

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

Approaching a quarter (23%) of construction workers in the North East have worked no more than 20 miles away, in line with 2018/19 (23%), but lower than the 2022 UK average of 33%.

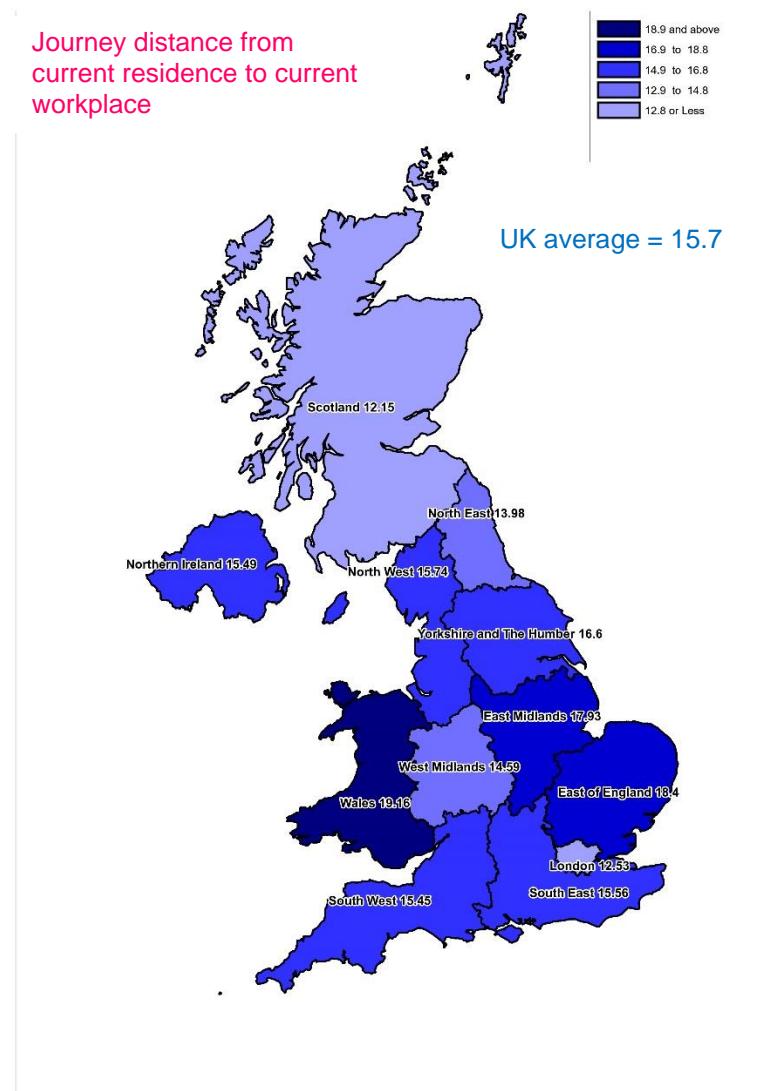
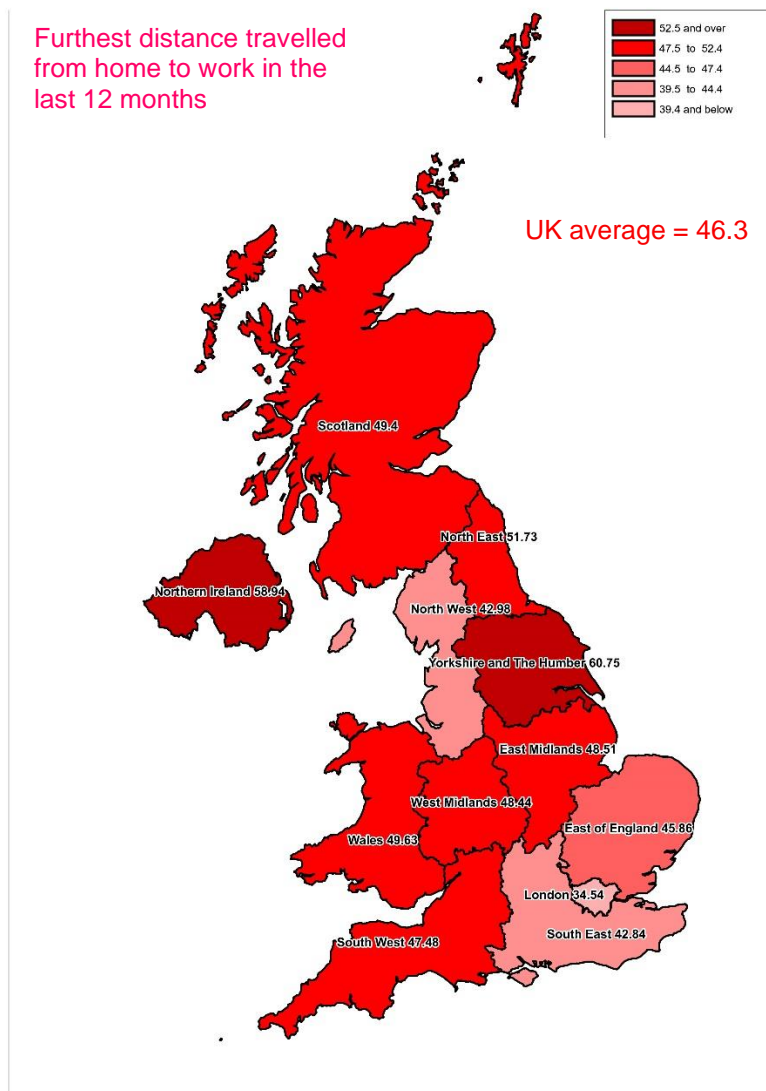
A further two in five (42%) have worked between 21 and 50 miles away, up on 2018/19 (33%) and higher than the 2022 UK average of 34%.

This leaves a third (34%) who have worked more than 50 miles away from their permanent or current home, in line with the UK average (32%). It is evenly split between those who have travelled between 50 and 100 miles (17%) and those who have travelled over 100 miles (17%). The latter is significantly higher than the UK average of 12%.

The average furthest distance travelled is 52 miles in the North East, significantly higher than the UK average of 46 miles.

### Journey distance to work

The average (mean) distance from workers' current residence (taking into account temporary residences) to their current site is 14 miles, in line with 2018/19 (15 miles) and 2015 (14 miles), but lower than the 2022 UK average of 16 miles.



### Use of temporary accommodation

Just 1% of construction workers in the North East report that they are currently staying in temporary accommodation while working at their site, in line with 2018/19 (1%) and lower than the UK average of 5%.

### Expected site/phase duration

All the workers in the North East who are currently employed on a temporary basis (34% of all construction workers) were asked how much longer they expect to be working for the company/person/agency paying them.

Responses range from none who expect to work for the rest of the week, to 3% expecting another one to four weeks, 19% - one to six months, 17% - six to twelve months, and 11% for more than a year.

Half (49%) do not know how much longer they expect to be working, up on 2018/19 (35%), and higher than the 2022 UK average (32%).

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

Overall, 10% of construction workers in the North East do not expect to work on that site for more than a month, compared to 14% in 2018/19. Just 1% believe they will be there for less than a week (compared to 3% in 2018/19).

Around half (52%) anticipate being on site for more than a month but less than a year, fewer than in 2018/19 (57%), and one in eight (13%) expect to be on site for more than a year, slightly fewer than in 2018/19 (15%).

A quarter (24%) are uncertain in this regard, significantly higher than 2018/19 (15%), and 2015 (11%), although in line with the 2022 UK average of 22%.

**Figure 33: Length of time workers expect to work at that specific site during current phase***Base: All respondents*

	<b>NE 2022 %</b>	<b>NE 2018/19 %</b>	<b>UK 2022 %</b>
Less than a week	1	2	2
1-2 weeks	4	5	3
2-3 weeks	3	2	3
3-4 weeks	2	5	4
1-3 months	16	18	11
3-6 months	14	11	17
6-12 months	23	28	25
More than a year	13	15	13
Don't know	24	15	22
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>411</i>	<i>3,005</i>

Q24

**Expected next site location**

While a majority (75%) of all construction workers in the North East are confident that when they finish this job they will get a job that allows them to travel from their permanent home to work on a daily basis, this is significantly lower than the 87% who did so in 2018/19, and more in line with 2015 (76%) and 2012 (71%). It is higher than the UK average in 2022 (69%).

The proportion who are sure that this will not be the case has decreased (4%, compared to 13% in 2018/19), while the proportion who say it depends where the work is has increased (from 8% in 2018/19 to 17% in the latest survey), as is the case across the UK overall (from 8% in 2018/19 to 20% in 2022).

The remaining 4% do not know.

## Sub-sector and sector mobility

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

### Sub-sector mobility

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

New housing continues to be the most common type of construction work undertaken in the North East (81%), followed by commercial work (48%), private industrial work (46%), housing repair and maintenance (42%) and public non-housing work (40%).

The North East has moved ahead of the UK average in the most recent survey in relation to commercial work (48% compared to 39%), private industrial work (46% compared to 35%), public non-housing work (40% compared to 32%) and infrastructure projects (31% compared to 23%).

In terms of the number of types of work undertaken, the results are largely in line 2018/19 and the UK average, with 31% undertaking one type, 21% two types, 23% three or four types, and 20% more than this.

**Figure 34: Type of projects on which workers have spent significant periods of time**  
**Base: All respondents**

	<b>NE 2022 %</b>	<b>NE 2018/19 %</b>	<b>NE 2015 %</b>	<b>NE 2012 %</b>	<b>UK 2022 %</b>
New housing	81	74	86	69	78
Commercial work such as shops, office, pubs etc	48	55	37	61	39
Private industrial work such as factories, warehousing, mechanical engineering, land reclamation	46	49	31	62	35
Housing repair and maintenance including extensions/loft conversions	42	38	35	53	42
Public non-housing work such as schools, sports facilities, landscaping	40	54	33	69	32
Infrastructure building projects, such as road/rail/airport, sewerage/water treatment, power stations	31	35	17	53	23
Off-site manufacturing	8	Na	Na	Na	6
ONE TYPE ONLY	31	34	49	1	42
TWO TYPES	21	11	12	17	17
THREE TYPES	15	12	11	10	13
FOUR TYPES	8	15	9	15	9
FIVE TYPES	7	12	11	16	9
SIX TYPES	13	16	8	23	6
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>411</i>	<i>427</i>	<i>394</i>	<i>3,005</i>

Q4

## Leaving the sector

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

Nine in ten (88%) construction workers in the North East think it is likely that they will still want to do so, including 42% who say they definitely will be, and 30% who think it is very likely. This is higher than the UK average of 82%.

One in twenty (6%) say it is unlikely that they will still want to work in construction in five years' time, again in line with the UK average of 7%.

Age is the predominant factor in this respect. Most obviously, the proportion that hopes to be retired in five years' time increases to 16% of construction workers aged 45 and over.

### Figure 35: Likelihood of construction workers still wanting to be working in the construction sector in five years' time

Base: All respondents

	All %	Age %			
		16 - 19	20 - 24	25 - 44	45+
Definitely will be	42	50	50	48	27
Very likely	30	28	21	33	34
Quite likely	12	11	21	7	20
Quite unlikely	2	6	4	3	0
Very unlikely	1	0	4	2	0
Definitely will not be	3	6	0	5	0
Hope to be retired	8	0	0	0	16
Don't know	1	0	0	2	2
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>206</i>	<i>18*</i>	<i>28*</i>	<i>102</i>	<i>58</i>

Q38A

\* Caution: low base

Excluding those aged 60 and over (as those over 60 may be assumed to be considering retirement in the next 5 years): 44% believe they will definitely want to be working in the construction sector, 31% believe it is very likely they will want to be working in the construction sector, and 13% believe it is quite likely they will want to be working in the construction sector. Overall, 88% of this group are likely to some degree to want to be working in the sector, in line with 2018/19 (87%). Less than one in ten (8%) of this age group think it unlikely they will want to be working in the construction sector in five years.



## The North East construction workforce 2022 summary

### The UK construction industry

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

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

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

### Stability within the construction industry in the North East

However, a substantial proportion of industry workers, as surveyed here, have been in the industry for lengthy periods. Across the UK, around 70% of workers have worked in the industry for 5 years or more, and this rises to 77% in the North East, and this reflects findings from previous surveys. Demographic and other characteristics of the workforce therefore change little overall, and with only 7% of workers (just 6% in the North East) expecting to leave construction in the next 5 years, changes to the demography of the workforce can occur only at the margin. A doubling of the percentage of workers of BME origin or female entrants would have only a minor effect on the overall structure of the workforce.

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

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

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

only 7% of workers across the UK (6% within the North East) want to change their occupation.

### **Some indicators of change**

Across the UK a further area of observed stability includes broad measures of qualification and training. For example, around seven in ten workers hold a construction-related qualification, 13% are working towards a qualification and 33% have had supervisory or management training. All these figures are broadly similar to those observed in 2018/19 for the UK as a whole, however, in the North East a higher proportion hold a construction-related qualification (88%) while a lower proportion are working towards a qualification (6%) or have had supervisory or management training (24%).

There appears to be greater reticence in taking on more responsibility this year than previously, with fewer respondents certain they want to become a supervisor or manager in the future (23% across the UK, compared to 30% in 2018/19). Workers in the North East continue to be particularly likely to say that they do not wish to take on such responsibilities (69% compared to a UK average of 59%).

Almost all (97%) construction workers in the North East report holding a skill card or certificate (e.g. CSCS or CSR). The North East is one of only two regions/nations that has seen an increase in this respect since 2018/19 (94%), the other being Wales, with most others seeing a decrease. Along with the North West and Northern Ireland, construction workers in the North East are most likely to hold skill cards/certificates.

Overall, half (52%) of construction workers in the North East report having no construction-related qualifications when they started their first job. This is significantly lower than the 73% who reported this in 2018/19, and the 68% who did so in 2015. The North East echoes the UK average (47%), which has also seen a significant decrease since 2018/19 (72%).

Since 2015 and 2018/19 surveys, within the North East (as across the UK) the proportion of direct employees in the workforces has decreased (from 78% in 2015, 69% in 2018/19 to 57% in 2022) while self-employment, always strong in the sector, has increased (19% in 2015, 26% in 2018/19, 40% in 2022). There is little change in the level of agency employment. The increase in self-employment is likely to positively impact both employers - enabling increased flexibility and cost control – and workers - increased independence, but may also have a negative impact, with greater uncertainty and insecurity in the industry for workers. Potentially, this change may result in lower levels of employer-led training, and attention to improving the skills of the workforce.

### **Focus on how the North East differs from the UK average**

In its consideration of geographical variation in survey findings, compared with the UK-wide picture, the North East stood out in several respects:

- All construction workers in manual roles interviewed in the North East are male, compared to the UK average of 97%
- At 2%, the proportion of construction workers of ethnic minority origin is among the lowest of any region/nation, as has been the case in previous iterations of the survey. This is lower than the North East working age population (6%)
- At 2%, the proportion coming from outside of the UK is in line with 2018/19 (1%), but significantly lower than the 2022 UK average of 17%
- Almost all (96%) of construction workers in the North East have lived in the UK all their lives, the highest proportion of any region, but this is in line with 2018/19 in the region (97%)
- More than one in five (22%) of all construction workers in the North East say they perform a supervisory or management role on their site and this is lower than the UK average (28%)
- Fewer construction workers in the North East than the UK average believe they would benefit from some form of training in basic skills (6%, compared to 19%).
- Where employed on a temporary basis, half (49%) the North East construction workers employed on a temporary basis indicate more uncertainty in respect of how much longer they would be working for the company/person/agency paying them (49% did not know, compared to a UK average of 32%), but amongst all workers there is greater confidence that they will be able to travel to their next site from home than average (75%, compared to 69%).

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