

AGEING  
WORKFORCE  
READY   
PROJECT

# Metrics Dictionary

August 2021



# Introduction

This template contains examples of the types of data that may be relevant in an ageing workforce dashboard. Commentary has been included to highlight the significance of the data and other relevant information like trends, industry benchmarks and things to look out for.

This template is to be used in conjunction with:

- The “Report Example”, which illustrates how a report could look once it has been designed and created.
- The “Reporting Metrics” document, which outlines the process for designing and creating a dashboard.

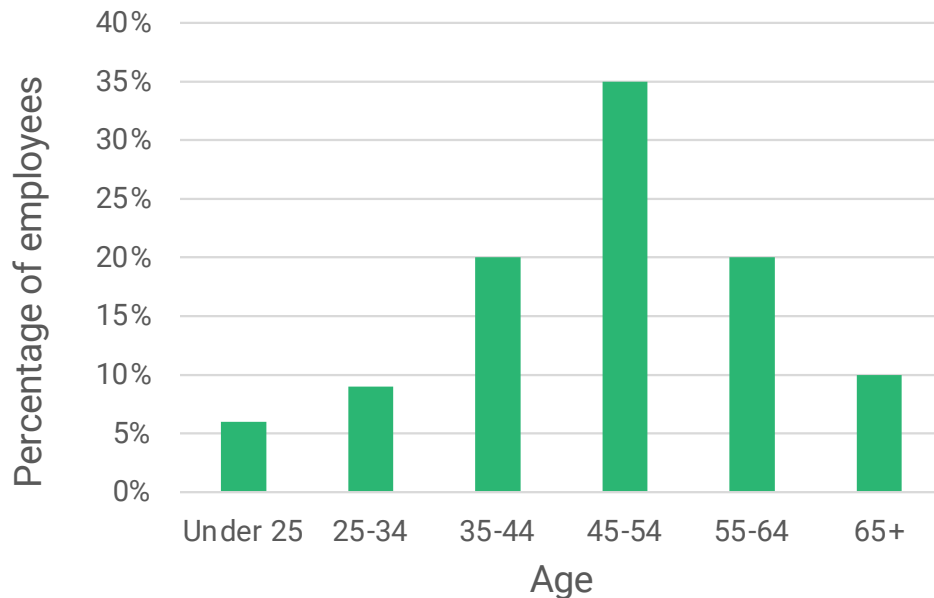
## Notes:

- It can be useful to look at trends over time. While these examples do not illustrate time comparisons, this can be built into the design of the dashboard.
- Many of the graphs and tables can be presented in different ways, such as using employee numbers instead of percentages, or different age group break downs. As you develop and use the Dashboard you will get a better understanding of how to present the data based on the data available to you and the preferences of those who use the Dashboard.
- For a more general guide to organisational metrics, see “A Dictionary of People Metrics” and the associated Guide published by the Victorian Public Service Commission:  
<https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/resources/a-dictionary-of-people-metrics/>

# Age Distribution of Employees

## AWR Pillars: Roadmap and Recruitment

This graph shows the distribution of employee for the whole organisation.



### Benchmarks & Trends

- A higher proportion of employees aged under 35 and/or over 60 years could be a red flag. If there are a higher proportion of older workers, then this could signal succession planning issues, while a higher proportion of younger employees may point to a culture that is not inclusive of older workers.
- Look for relatively even distribution across the age groups that is not heavily weighted towards any particular group.
- Any targets must be set with care to avoid creating any discriminatory impact on protected age classes.

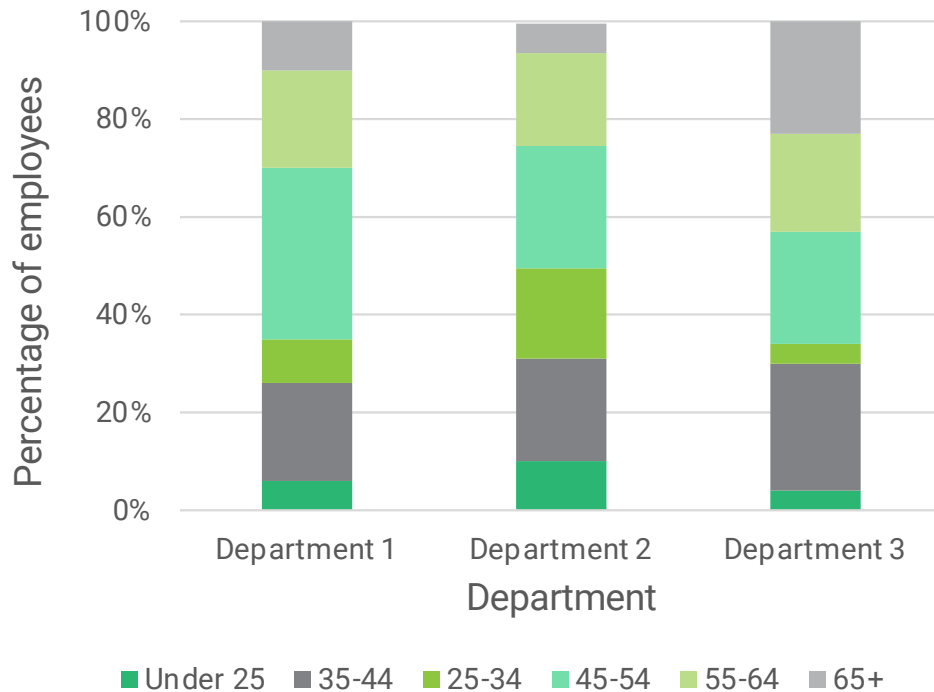
### Implications

- If your organisation has a disproportionately large number of younger workers, then consider reviewing your recruitment approach. Does your organisation have a recruitment process that is biased towards younger applicants? Does your organisational culture consciously or inadvertently place greater value on younger people?
- If your organisation has a disproportionately large number of older workers, then consider ways to increase age-diversity. It may also be beneficial to review succession planning, retirement planning support and other initiatives aimed at supporting an ageing workforce.

# Age Distribution by Department

## AWR Pillars: Roadmap, Recruitment, Retention

This graph shows the distribution of employee age by departments. Depending on the organisational structure, other useful age break downs may include job function or location.



### Benchmarks & Trends

- It is understandable to have some variation in age distribution across departments. Some jobs/departments naturally attract more of one age demographic.
- However, it is still important to strive for a reasonably equal distribution of ages. Having age diversity is proven to provide several benefits to organisations.
- Ideally, there will be a similar pattern of distribution across different age groups.
- If an age group is under represented in a department, it could point to a particular issue effecting that area of the organisation.

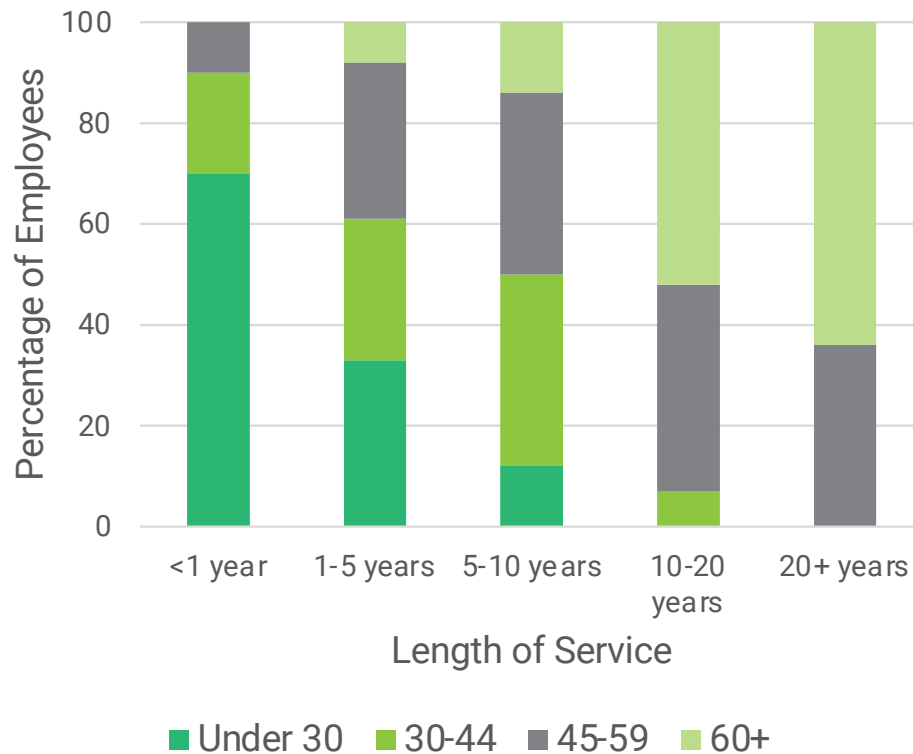
### Implications

- If there are differences across depots, then consider differences in the management style, employment practices or culture at each. Are there ideas or initiatives that could be shared between sites?
- A lack of age diversity in a particular department could help guide interventions. For example, reasonable adjustments may be needed to retain older workers.
- A difference in the representation of ages between departments may be addressed by a targeted recruitment processes (e.g. striving to hire more older workers in a particular department).

# Length of Service by Age

## AWR Pillars: Roadmap and Retention

This graph shows the length of employee service stratified by age.



### Benchmarks & Trends

- Generally, you would expect to see more older employees in the longer service sections. If there are very few employees with long tenure, it could point to an issue with retention.
- A high proportion of employees with long service can point to good retention practices.
- If you notice relatively few older employees in the longer service categories, it could indicate a need to improve the retention of older workers.
- The graph can also provide some insights into recruitment trends. For example, if the 1-2 years category is predominantly younger workers, it can indicate that recent hiring has favored younger people.

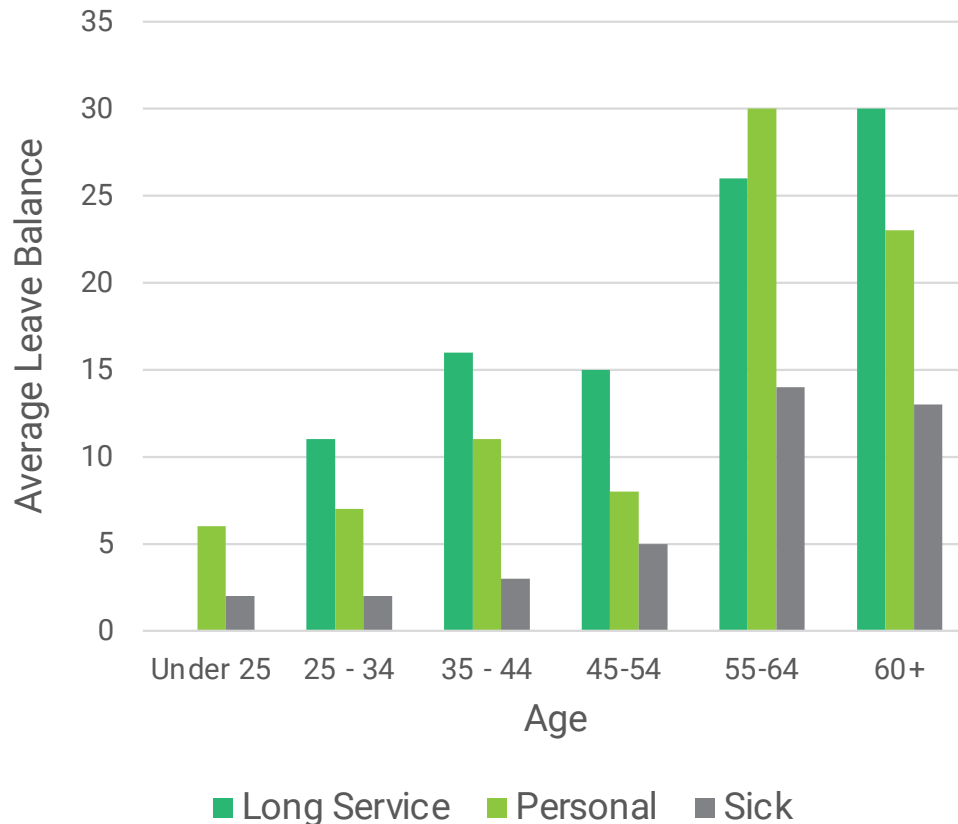
### Implications

- This graph can provide valuable insight into engagement and job satisfaction. Employees that feel engaged and satisfied with their work are more likely to remain.
- Organisations should consider ways to reward those in the longer service categories. This graph can help guide how many 'awards' will need to be given and the demographics of the employees receiving them. Older employees often appreciate being recognized for their longer tenure.
- It could be useful to create a knowledge transfer program between your more experienced and newer employees. This data can help in the designing of such a program (e.g. we have x number of experienced workers who can participate). Such an initiative this can improve retention across age groups as well as organizational knowledge.

# Leave Balance by Age

## AWR Pillars: Roadmap, Retention, Retirement

Displays employee leave balance stratified by age



### Benchmarks & Trends

- Leave balances are an important consideration in organisations as they have implications for people’s health and wellbeing as well as financial aspects and sometimes even fraud.
- From a health and wellbeing perspective you may aspire for all employees to take their leave allocation each year, while encouraging them to take at least part of it in a one-two week block.
- You would be looking for patterns of leave balances to be similar across age groups.

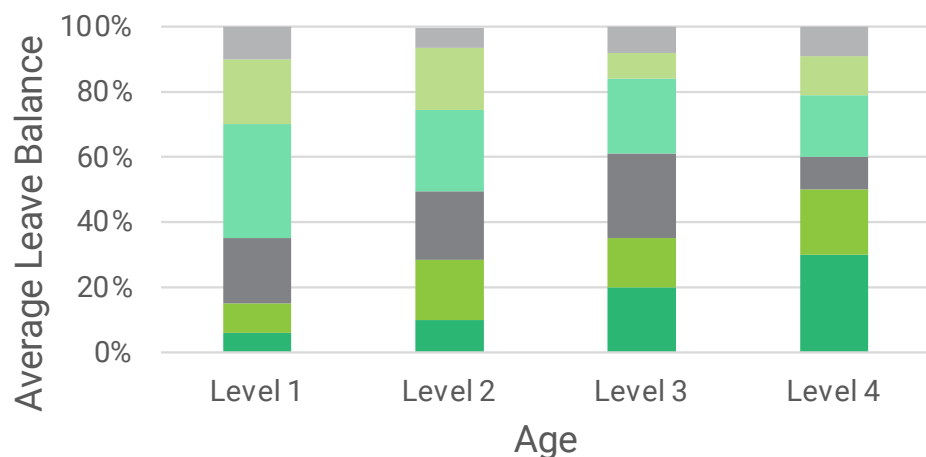
### Implications

- If leave accumulation is an issue across all age groups then an initiative to address the taking of leave could be beneficial. It would be important to understand further why people are not using their leave. An initiative to address leave balances could include reviewing policies, communication to employees and managers, and short-term incentives that bring leave balances down.
- Older employees may be accumulating leave to use as they approach retirement. If this has the potential to cause knowledge retention, hiring and hand over issues, it may be worth introducing a retirement policy that addresses the use of leave. Formal flexible work options may also be reviewed to provide transparent options for ramping down and discourage accumulation of leave.

# Level by Age

## AWR Pillars: Roadmap, Retention

Displays employee seniority and number of promotions stratified by age. This could be indicated by level, band, job title, classification, salary level, or some other way in your organisation.



Legend: Under 25 (dark green), 25-34 (medium green), 35-44 (grey), 45-54 (light green), 55-64 (pale green), 65+ (lightest green)

	Under 25 yrs	25-34 yrs	35-44 yrs	45-54 yrs	55-64 yrs	65+ yrs
Promotions						

### Benchmarks & Trends

- In many organisations, you would expect to see more older people at the more senior levels.
- It can be useful to have older people at all levels of the organisation to bring their experience and maturity to the range of roles in the business.
- Looking at age by level in conjunction with promotion numbers can add additional insights. It is important that promotions occur for people in all age groups.

### Implications

- If older people are not adequately represented at the more senior levels, consider what may be causing this. Are older people being given the training and development opportunities they need to progress? Is there age discrimination happening in the hiring or promotion process? Are the senior jobs designed so that flexibility and other work adjustments can be utilised?
- Similarly, if older people are not being promoted check that if there is discrimination occurring in the process, that older people have access to development opportunities, and that the senior roles are designed in ways that are attractive to diverse groups within your organization.
- This information can be used to inform interventions tailored to particular level. For example, if there are a large proportion of older people at Level 2, then that may influence the design of training at that level.



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# Learning & Development by Age

## AWR Pillars: Roadmap, Retention

Displays participation in training and development stratified by age.

Age	Percentage of employees participating (Total)	Percentage of employees participating (Course 1)	Percentage of employees participating (Course 2)
Under 25 yrs			
25-34 yrs			
35-44 yrs			
45-54 yrs			
55-64 yrs			
65+ yrs			

### Benchmarks & Trends

- All employees benefit from learning and development, so these numbers should be relatively high and similar percentage across age groups.
- The data could be broken down so that participation in specific programs can be compared. For example, participation a formal mentoring scheme, or manager participation in AWR training.
- Participation is calculated by dividing the number of participants in training courses or development programs by the number of employees who are eligible to participate in this learning. Multiply this answer by 100 to get a percentage figure.

### Implications

- Low numbers across age groups may indicate that learning and development options are not known about, not in areas that are useful or attractive to employees, or that employees are not able to take time away from their daily tasks to attend.
- Low numbers in specific age groups may also indicate these things, and may also be due to age discrimination.
- It is important to gain additional insight into the causes of low participation so that the right issue is addressed. Without employee feedback it can be easy to make incorrect assumptions about participation based on ageist stereotypes.





# Separation Rates and Reasons by Age

## AWR Pillars: Roadmap, Retention, Retirement

These tables shows the average age for each separation reason along with separation rates.

Separation Reason	Average Age	Separation Rate
Resigned		
Terminated		
Retired		

	Under 25 yrs	25-34 yrs	35-44 yrs	45-54 yrs	55-64 yrs	65+ yrs
Separation Rate (Total)						
Separation Rate (Involuntary)						
Separation Rate (Voluntary)						

### Benchmarks & Trends

- The average age at separation can provide insight to help with late-career and retirement planning.
- It can also indicate potential retention issues if people of a certain age are continually resigning (e.g., if average age of resignation tends to be relatively young, this could point to an issue with career progression opportunities).
- Excessively high and excessively low separation rates can cause issues for an employer.
- Separation rates are calculated by dividing the total number of separations by the average headcount. This number is multiplied by 100 to make it a percentage figure.

### Implications

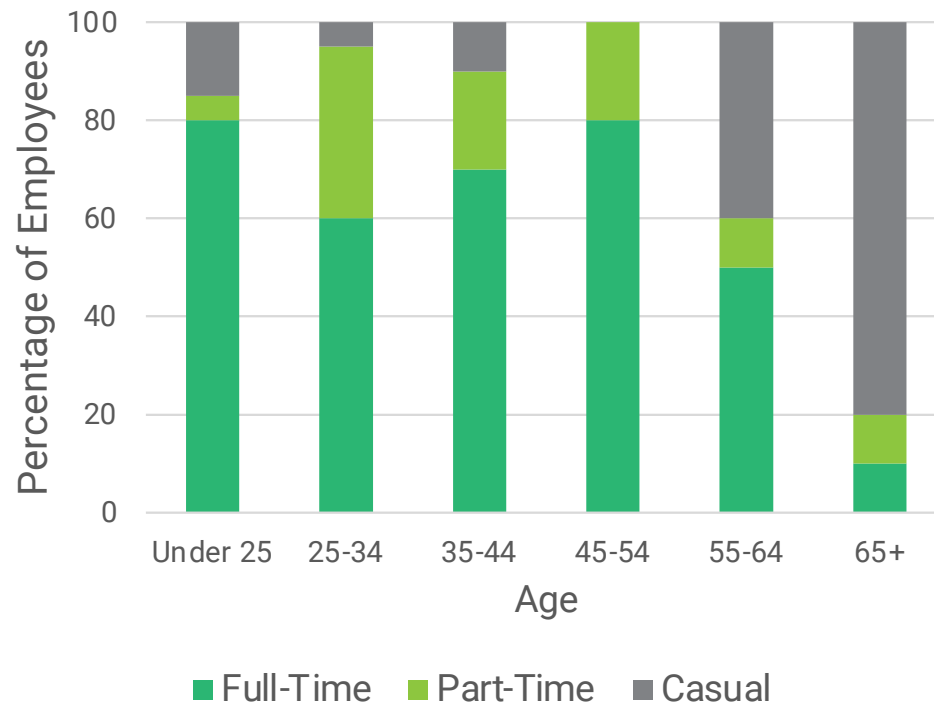
- The separation reason table can help organisations to understand at what age retirement planning might be useful. Although everyone will want to retire at different times, this data can inform the delivery of late-career and retirement support.
- High separation rates for older workers may be healthy, but may also point to ageism in the workplace. In particular, high involuntary separation for older workers may suggest age discrimination. High voluntary separation rates may indicate low engagement for that age group.
- If separation rates remain high, the organisation may need to consider knowledge management practices to protect against lost skills and experience.
- Exit interviews can help the organisation to understand the reasons for voluntary separation.



# Flexible Work Practices by Age

## AWR Pillars: Roadmap, Retention

This graph shows employee contract/employment type stratified by age. Note this could be extended to specify other flexible work practices such as job-share, purchased leave or formal flexible work agreements.



### Benchmarks & Trends

- What is acceptable will differ based on the organisation's needs. Some industries will need more casual employees while others rely on a predominately full-time workforce. However, it is important to challenge assumptions and comfort with the status quo when considering organisational needs.
- It is useful to look at what age brackets are accessing flexible and part-time work. For example, more older people with part-time contracts may indicate a 'slowing down' before retirement.
- It is useful to notice where the organisation may be out of balance (e.g. having a high proportion of full-time employees being older can create issues with succession planning).

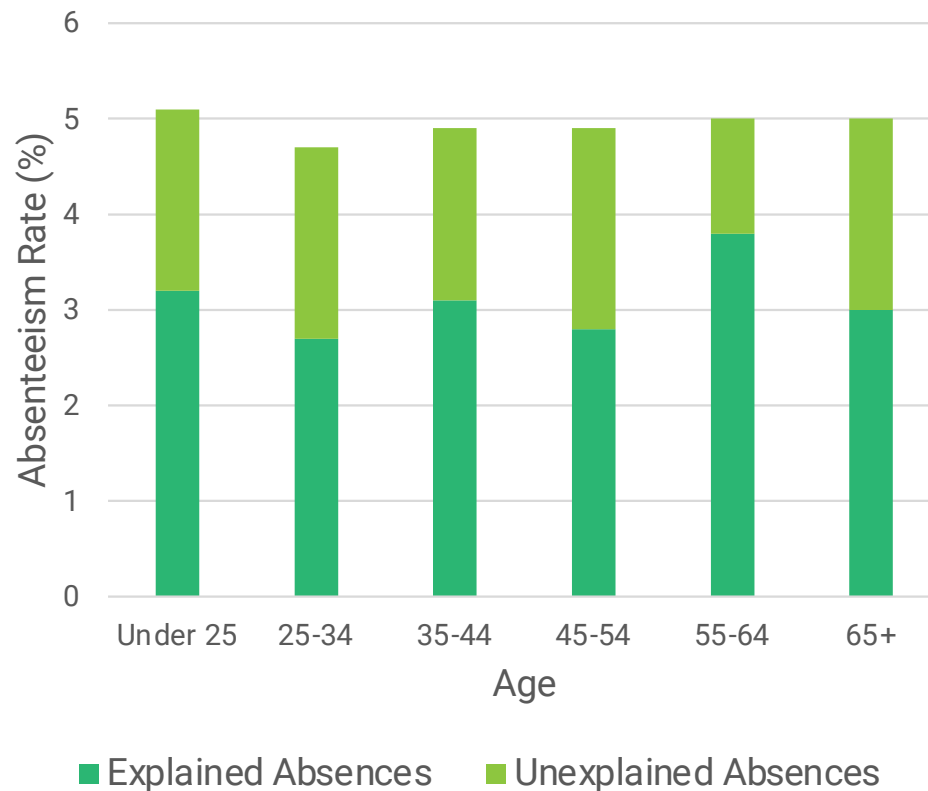
### Implications

- If you notice that a large proportion of the more flexible work options are taken by older workers, it could be a sign that there is a big demand for phased retirement options. If so, developing a strategic plan in this area may be beneficial.
- The graph can provide insight into the take-up of flexible work initiatives. For example, if a program was designed to support flexible work for parents, but an increase is seen in older employees. This could point to motivations and expectations of employees that haven't been properly understood.
- A low number of younger full-time employees, could point to succession planning issues.

# Absenteeism Rate by Age

## AWR Pillars: Roadmap, Retention

Displays the employee absenteeism rate stratified by age



### Benchmarks & Trends

- Absenteeism is the total days absent as a percentage of working days during a certain period. An absenteeism rate of 3% means that on an average day, three of every 100 employees are absent for uncontrollable reasons.
- Explained absences relate to leave that was planned (holidays, surgery etc.) or sick leave with a medical certificate. Unexplained absences usually refer to missed days of work that are unexplained or unplanned.
- Often, legitimate absences go unexplained (unexpected events etc.) and the presence of an unexplained absence rate isn't necessarily a concern. However, if you notice this rate is much higher than industry average or has increased significantly overtime, it may point to other issues.
- Absenteeism is calculated by dividing the total number of absence days by the total expected workdays during the reporting period. This answer is multiplied by 100 to get a percentage figure.

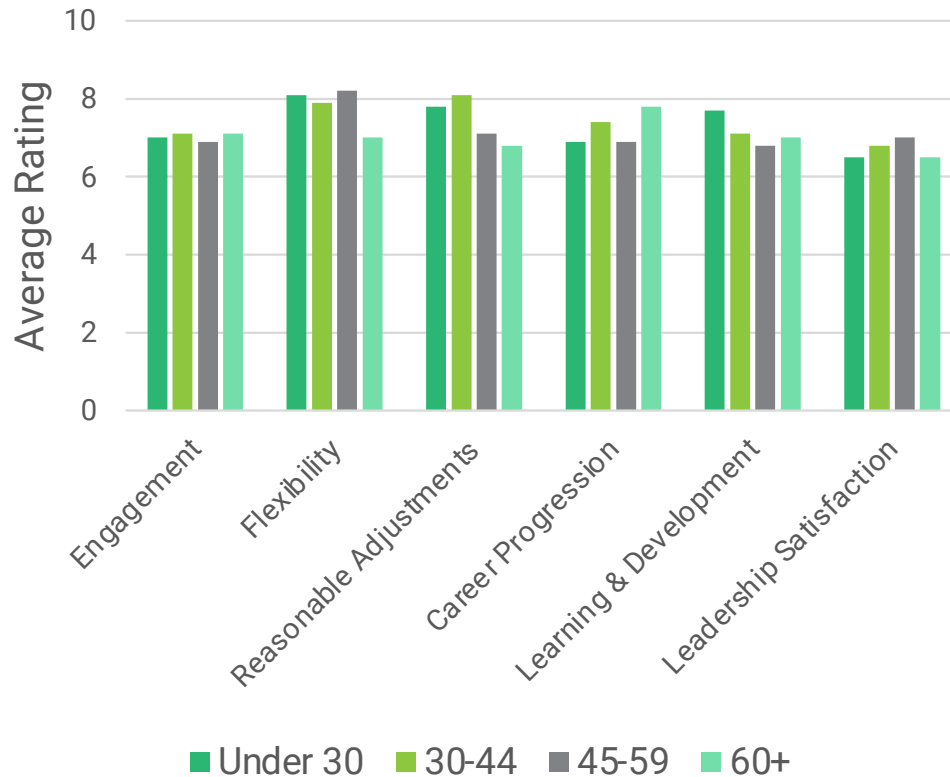
### Implications

- A high number of unexplained absences could point to a number of issues. Employee opinion data or focus groups can help to understand the underlying drivers.
- If a certain age bracket has a higher number of absenteeism rates, then there could be benefit in developing initiatives that improve engagement for that group.

# Employee Perceptions by Age

## AWR Pillars: Roadmap, Retention, Retirement

Displays employee satisfaction levels for L&D, flexibility, engagement, career progression and reasonable adjustments.



### Benchmarks & Trends

- This graph is useful because it can indicate both overall issues (e.g. low levels of engagement for everyone) and age specific issues (e.g. poor L&D ratings from older workers).
- Often providers of employee opinion surveys provide useful benchmarks, targets, and can track organisational performance over time. However, they may not draw attention to ageing workforce issues in their standard reporting.
- Looking at change over time can provide insights into the effectiveness of certain interventions. When noticing a change in ratings, it is useful to consider which events or interventions could have contributed to improvements.

### Implications

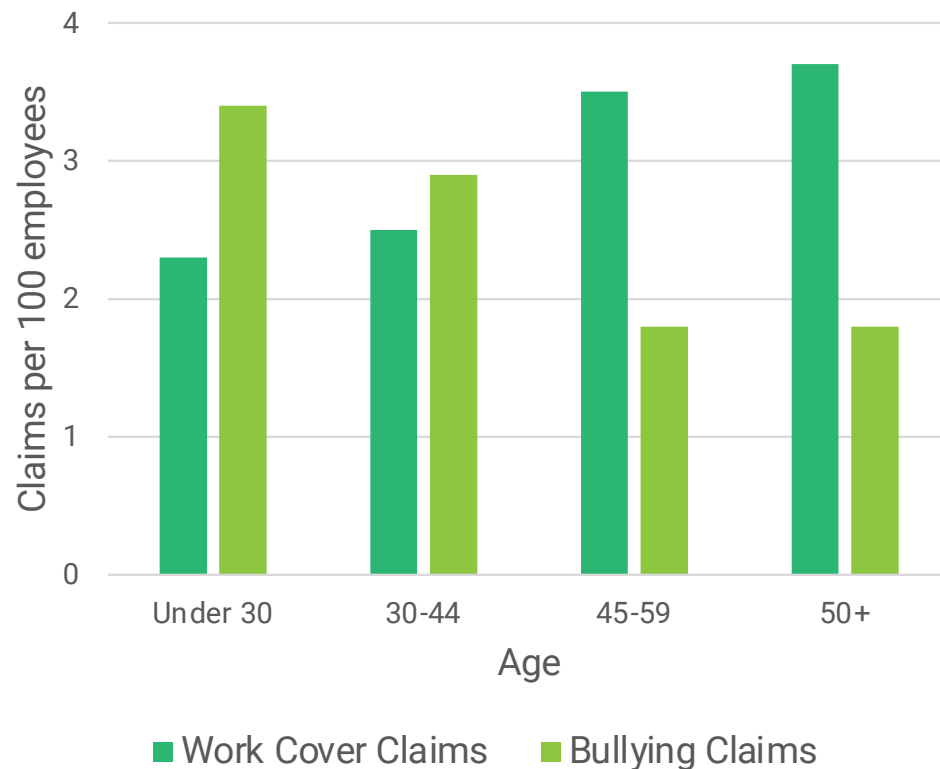
- Focus groups aimed to further understand the employee survey feedback are often recommended (and facilitated) by survey providers.
- Low ratings across the board will point to the need for more general interventions. For example, improving leadership capability, or organisational strategy.
- If low ratings are common in a particular age bracket, then a more targeted intervention may be needed. For example, low ratings by older employees may point to a lack of support or experiences of discrimination.
- If older people are scoring low in a particular area, then consider what expectations employees may have, and the barriers they are experiencing.



# Work Cover & Bullying Claims by Age

## AWR Pillars: Roadmap, Retention

Displays work cover and bullying claims stratified by age.



### Benchmarks & Trends

- Ideally, both these number will be low and equally spread across the age brackets. A significant difference between age brackets could point to particular issues. For example, a high number of work cover claims in a particular age bracket may point to an issue in the job design.
- An uneven distribution of bullying claims could point to certain issues in the organisations culture. For example, if a high proportion of older workers report bullying, it may indicate an ageist culture.

### Implications

- If certain age brackets have high amounts of work cover claims, it may be valuable to implement preventative measures (e.g. extra training on certain topics) or assess the reasonable adjustment process to see if this can be improved.
- Ageism is a common issue in the workplace, and if you notice a high proportion of bullying claims by older workers, this could be a sign that ageism exists in your organisation. If so, interventions that break down untrue stereotypes and demonstrate the benefits of older workers can help.
- It is important to remember that a low number of claims does not immediately indicate a culture free of ageism. This could be due to a lack of employees making claims or a general acceptance of particular behaviours.

# Gender Distribution by Age

## AWR Pillars: Roadmap, Recruitment, Retention

This table shows the distribution of gender stratified by age

Age Bracket	Male	Female
Under 25 yrs	68%	32%
25-34 yrs	59%	41%
35-44 yrs	70%	30%
45-54 yrs	62%	38%
55-64 yrs	55%	45%
65+ yrs	84%	16%

### Benchmarks & Trends

- Targets for gender distribution and numbers may be informed by industry trends, but also may be an aspirational target based on company strategy and values.
- If you notice age distribution differences across genders (e.g. more younger females, but the numbers decline with age) it could point to either societal trends/norms, or practices within your organisation.
- Compare with other data sources to understand the trends further, and whether this may be a hiring or a retention issue.

### Implications

- Gender distribution data can guide changes to recruitment processes. For example, adjusting job advertisements to be more appealing to a certain gender, and ensuring there is no discrimination in the decision making.
- If you are wanting to attract older women to your organisation, it can be useful to seek feedback about how you are perceived in the market and actively shape your public reputation. You might also actively address typical life stage issues that women experience, such as menopause and elder care responsibilities.
- If a retention issue is identified, consider what adjustments could be made. For example, you may introduce access to training, more options to work flexibly, or other work adjustments.



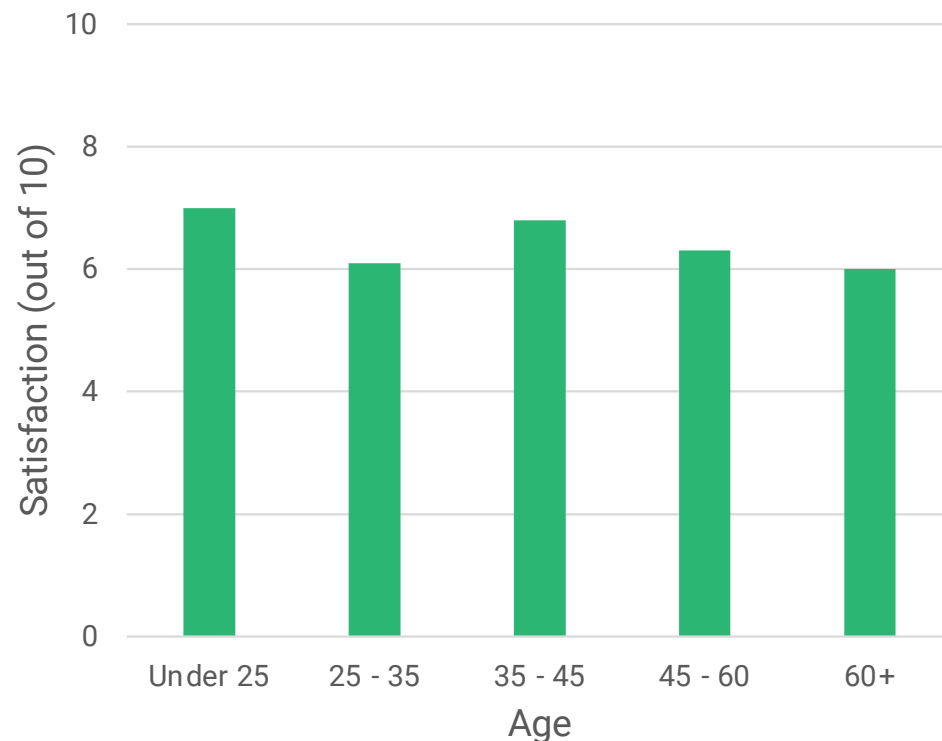
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# Hiring Process Satisfaction by Age

## AWR Pillars: Roadmap, Recruitment

This graph shows employee satisfaction with the hiring process stratified by age.



### Benchmarks & Trends

- The graph can provide valuable insight into how new employees experience the hiring process
- Ideally, the ratings would reflect a reasonable level of satisfaction with the process and be similar across the different age groups
- If one age group has a particularly low satisfaction rating, it could point to age discrimination in the hiring process
- If you notice low ratings across the board, then it likely points to general problems with the hiring process
- This graph is a useful way to measure the impact of changes to the hiring process. For example, an increase in satisfaction overtime is a sign that the changes have been positive.

### Implications

- A low satisfaction rating amongst older workers could indicate potential age discrimination in the hiring process. If this is the case, interventions related to the recruitment pillar are advised.
- If there is a low satisfaction rating generally, then it would be beneficial to implement changes that improve the recruitment process across the board. Consider things like how the job is advertised? How long is the recruitment process? Could communication be improved?
- The graph also provides a useful way to track the impact of changes to the recruitment process.



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