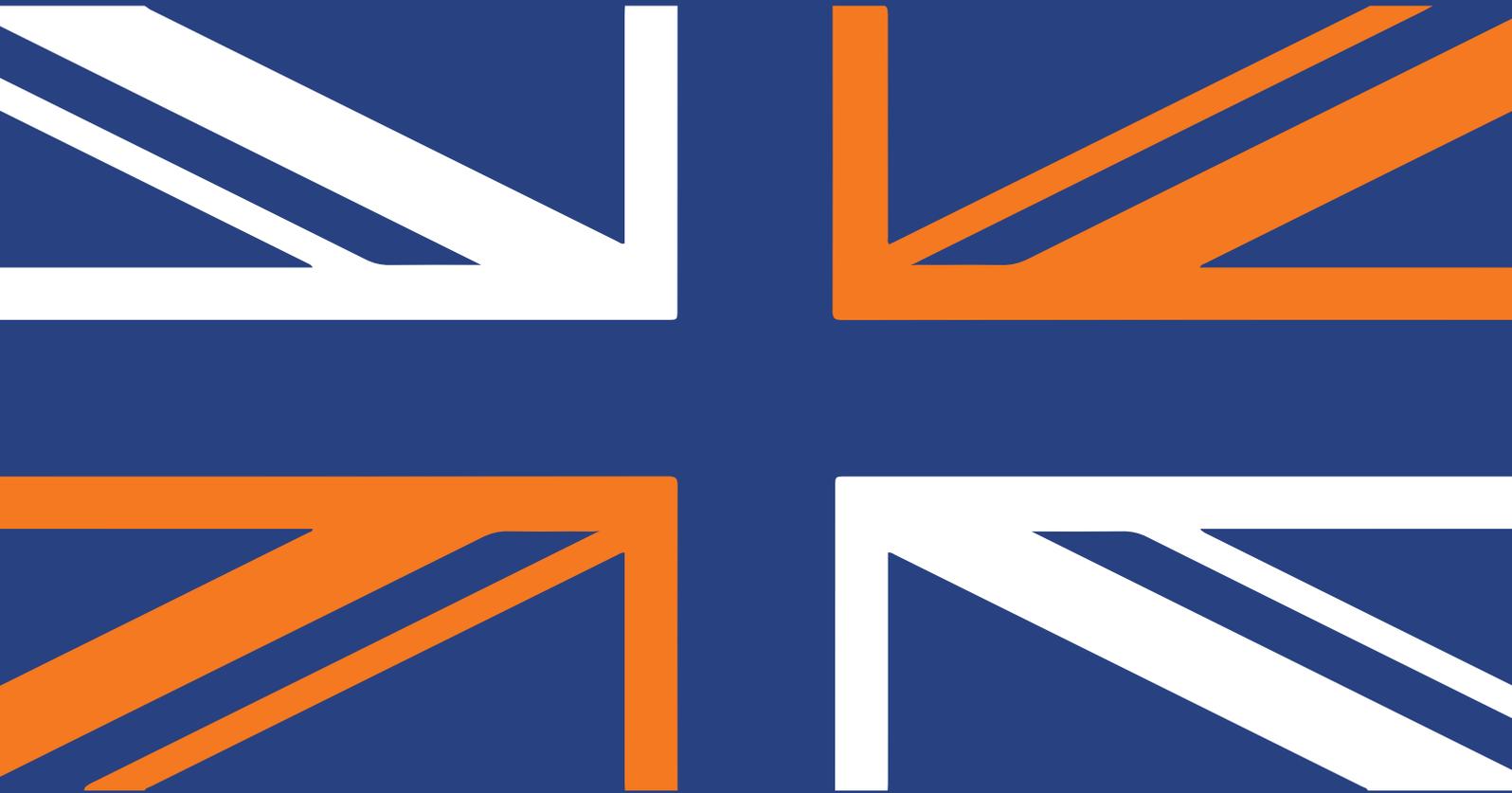


# British Sikh Report 2020

AN INSIGHT INTO THE BRITISH SIKH COMMUNITY



# Contents

01. Executive Summary	2
02. Article: Organ Donation and Advocacy in the Sikh Community	3
03. British Sikh Report 2020: Survey Introduction	13
04. British Sikh Report 2020: Demographics of the Survey	14
05. Identity and Ethnicity	15
06. Observance of Sikhi	17
07. Voting Behaviour in the December 2019 UK General Election	18
08. Employment and Education	20
09. Accommodation	22
10. Crime	23
11. Marriage and Weddings	25
12. Relationships and Sex Education in Schools	29
13. Sikh Faith Schools	34
14. Organ Donation	37
15. Disability	40
16. Loneliness	43
17. Connections with Punjab and India	47
18. Drugs in Punjab	49
19. Art	51
20. Acknowledgements	53

# Executive Summary

Welcome to the British Sikh Report 2020. This is the eighth in our series of strategic documents created by Sikhs about Sikhs, and for everyone with an interest in the lives of Sikhs in Britain. We dedicate this edition to those Sikh organisations and individuals who have been working to support their communities throughout the Coronavirus pandemic, and those who work on key front line services. The Office for National Statistics published statistics on COVID-19 related deaths by religious group on 19th June 2020, relating to the period 2nd March to 15th May. These showed that 24 per cent of Sikhs who died were aged below 65 years, compared with 10 per cent for the population as a whole.

The data for this year's report was mostly collected before the pandemic hit the UK, and therefore no questions were asked about this topic in the survey. We will aim to throw light on the impact of COVID-19 on Sikhs in the next report.

BSR is now established as a source of robust and unrivalled statistical information about Sikhs living in Britain. This highly influential document has been quoted by MPs and Peers, referred to in academic research and white papers regarding faith in modern society, and used by public authorities and private companies in identifying the needs of British Sikhs.

The questionnaire underpinning this year's report was developed after input from many organisations with an interest in data on British Sikhs' views on various topics. The BSR team includes research analysts, academics, social workers, senior consultants, teachers and managers amongst those who have volunteered their valuable time and expertise. We are deeply grateful to all who helped during this difficult year, in the midst of the pandemic.

British Sikhs are a strongly proud community with a distinct identity, as can be seen across these pages. Some of the concerns and issues are unique to Sikhs, whilst others reflect national issues. This document provides a snapshot of what it means to be a Sikh living in Britain today. We hope that you find the British Sikh Report 2020 fascinating, thought-provoking, and most of all, insightful.

## THE FINDINGS FROM THIS YEAR'S REPORT INCLUDE:

- **Organ donation:** 53 per cent of Sikhs know of the law change in 2020 relating to "Opt out", 60 per cent are happy with the change, and two-thirds consider it to be sewā.
- **Disability:** about 5 per cent reported that they have a disability, rising to 16 per cent for those aged over 65; 50 per cent are looked after by family and 19 per cent have respite care available
- **Loneliness:** impacts most on younger age groups and declines with age; those not in marriages or civil partnerships are significantly more lonely or feel left out
- **Marriage and weddings:** 44 per cent had arranged marriages, varying from 13 per cent for 20-34 year olds to 80 per cent for 65 and older
- **Relationship and Sex Education in Schools:** High support but declines by age; 37 per cent want the right to withdraw children and 48 per cent do not
- **Faith schools:** 54 per cent would like one in their area, 72 per cent for Amritdharis; Education achievement is the most important factor in choice of school
- **Accommodation:** 45 per cent live in fully owned homes; 29 per cent buying with a mortgage; just 11 per cent in rented accommodation
- **Voting in December 2019 election:** 78 per cent voted; 45 per cent Labour, 22 per cent Conservative, 6 per cent Lib Dem; Labour vote higher among younger voters, conservative vote higher in older age groups

# Organ Donation and Advocacy in the Sikh Community

**Dr Jagbir Jhutti-Johal**

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Until recently in the United Kingdom organ donation relied on donors opting in by joining the donor register, or a family consenting to donation when a loved one had died. The Organ Donation Deemed Consent Act 2019 approved by Parliament, which received royal assent on 15th March 2019 and came into effect in England<sup>ii</sup> in May 2020 changes that, and organ donation in England moved to an 'opt-out' system referred to as 'Max and Keira's Law' named after Keira Ball and Max Johnson. Keira Ball, 9, was killed in a road traffic accident in the summer of 2017. Keira's organs helped four people, her kidneys went to two adults, her liver went to a baby and her heart went to nine year old Max Johnson who had heart failure caused by a viral infection. Max and his family campaigned in favour of an opt-out system for organ donation.<sup>iii</sup>

This new system moves away from an 'opt-in' system of consent to donating organs to a 'soft opt-out' system, which means that all adults in England are considered to have agreed to be an organ donor when they die unless they have recorded a decision not to donate. It is hoped that this new legislation will increase and improve the organ donation process so that more lives are benefitted and saved.<sup>iv</sup> Importantly, England will retain both the opt-in and opt-out register, thereby enabling the public to still register their opt-in organ donation wishes if they so wish.

Following the publication of the NHS Blood & Transplant – Faith & Organ Donation Action Plan, there has been recognition of the important role that faith-based organisations can play in raising awareness and stimulating debate regarding organ donation.<sup>v</sup> Consequently, in recent years, a number of Sikh faith-based public education campaigns and donor registration initiatives have played a vital role in trying to improve the uptake of registering for organ donation in the Sikh community. As Sikhs celebrated the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh Dharam, in 2019 it coincided with a remarkable year of activism promoting organ donation within the Sikh community.

Guru Nanak's teachings which emphasize spiritual wisdom, righteous living, and responsibility towards God and its creation have been embraced to advocate for organ donation. Guru Nanak advocated for a sense of 'duty' and 'way of life' achieved through practicing three core principles: *naam japna* (recitation of God's name), *kirat karna* (earning an honest living) and *vand chakana*



*NHS Organ Donation Poster<sup>i</sup>*



The Anaya campaign at Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara Gravesend.

(selfless service).<sup>vi</sup> These core practices are both internal and external practices that enable spiritual growth and facilitate moral and ethical living. They emphasize an individual's social responsibility to ensure the well-being of society. As discussed in the [British Sikh Report 2019](#) the last core teaching, *vand chakana*, is most pertinent here to highlight how the Sikh teachings should be seen as a strong advocate for organ donation because Sikhs fundamentally believe that the body and organs are simply mechanisms to allow the eternal soul to experience life during this stage of existence

ਵਿਚਿ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈਐ

In the midst of this world, do seva,

ਤਾ ਦਰਗਹ ਬੈਸਣੁ ਪਾਈਐ ॥

and you shall be given a place of honour in the Court of the Lord.

(Guru Nanak, GGS, ANG 26)<sup>vii</sup>

Sikh teachings place great emphasis on *seva* and altruism and Sikhs engage in three forms of *seva* (selfless service): "*seva* rendered through one's body (*tan*), *seva* rendered through one's mind (*man*), and *seva* rendered through giving of one's material wealth (*dhan*). While all three forms of *seva* are considered equally important, the Sikh Gurus stressed that all *seva* should be a labour of love performed without desire (*nishkam*), without intention (*nishkapat*), and with humility (*nimarta*)."<sup>viii</sup>

In 2019 to mark the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak, and most recently in 2020 during the COVID-19 Pandemic we have countless Sikhs all over the world carrying out volunteer charity work with their ethos firmly embedded within Sikh philosophy and entirely consistent with the service of donating organs to give life to others and alleviate suffering.

## Individual Focus Campaigns

As mentioned earlier, the opt-out law is referred to as 'Max & Keira's Law' in England. This is because research has shown that for organ donation rates to increase in any country, there has to be tailored messaging regarding the experiences and impact of organ donation. There have been a number of campaigns on social media, like @AKidney4Simran;<sup>ix</sup> Meena<sup>x</sup> @Match4meena; Swab4Harj<sup>xi</sup> @Swab4H. These families who require transplants have put themselves in the public eye to raise their profiles in the hope that they will find a donor, but most importantly they aim to educate the public and provide individuals access to information so that they can make better informed decisions.

The most influential and successful campaign on social media and in the gurdwaras that we have seen has been Hope4Anaya<sup>xii</sup> @Hope4Anaya.

Below is a personal reflection on the Anaya Kaur Kandola campaign from her parents and Sandie Shokhar. They highlight the family's experiences of running a campaign and helping to inform members of the community about organ donation, and the lived experience of a family running a family-led campaign to find a living donor:

*"To us, Anaya is a gift from God. Without Anaya, there is so much we would not have learnt." Amrik Kandola.*

Anaya Kaur Kandola was born with a rare and complex condition called Autosomal Recessive Polycystic Kidney Disease (ARPKD), a condition that was identified just two days before she was born. Joety and Amrik were told to brace themselves for the worst, that the baby may not survive birth, or at best would be with them for just a matter of days. The first nine months of her life were spent within the confines of hospital and during this time, Anaya had seen both kidneys removed, endured daily dialysis and tragically suffered a stroke. The family themselves had decided, that should the situation arise, Anaya herself would be a donor.

With many health complications to contend with, Anaya's family witnessed her determination; despite the never-ending complications of such a condition,

somehow Anaya fought off every single battle and defied the odds.

Given that dialysis, although a punishing regime that does not always go to plan, was the only bridge to transplant, it was accepted that either Joety or Amrik would be Anaya's kidney donor with transplant due to take place as soon as Anaya was of appropriate height and weight.

It came as a shock therefore when continued testing determined that Anaya was no longer compatible with her parents; having undergone almost twenty blood transfusions, Anaya's tissue type had changed and there was more chance of a match being found outside of the family. For Anaya to survive, the best opportunity lay in an altruistic donor coming forward to share their spare kidney.

This raised some serious issues; Joety and Amrik had never had to consider the possibility of having to find a donor for Anaya. It also highlighted the challenges within the community. Anaya's best match would come from someone of a similar ethnicity. This in turn brought focus on the challenges of Organ Donation within the BAME community, something that would need to be addressed.

Naturally the Kandolas had been focused on Anaya's survival, yet it was apparent that to help Anaya survive, serious consideration had to be given as to how to share Anaya's story and to encourage fellow Punjabi Sikhs to consider their opportunity to be a lifesaver. The Sikh faith is known for their selfless seva, performing noble deeds to all human kind. This is highlighted in the Guru Granth Sahib - the teachings of Sikhism.

With this in mind, Hope4Anaya was launched with help from friends and extended family, an initiative conducted on social media platforms, TV, radio (both mainstream and the Sikh-faith channels), gurdwaras, football tournaments, nagar kirtans, sufi concerts, wedding fayres, school fayres and beyond. Naturally the campaign needed to raise awareness of living donation. However it was Amrik and Joety's wish that the primary message would be that of

post-life Organ Donation in order that it would benefit all those awaiting a lifesaving transplant.

The Hope4Anaya team attended events from Glasgow to Gravesend, and it was apparent from these interactions that organ donation presented a challenge to those within the Sikh Community and wider communities. There were many conversations that supported the principle of organ donation; however, there were clearly those for whom organ donation was a taboo and unwelcome discussion.

Amrik and Joety shared the need for a living kidney donor for Anaya. Over 35 unknown people came forward to be tested as living kidney donors for Anaya. In May 2019, just six months after the launch of their desperate campaign, Joety and Amrik released the news that out of 35 willing donors, one had been found to be a match for Anaya. Anaya's transplant took place on 19th September 2019, and in October 2019, Amrik and Joety met the person whose actions made Anaya's transplant possible. 36-year-old Surinder Sapal from Leeds was the kind hearted benefactor who, following an online appeal, put herself forward to be tested as a match for Anaya. Surinder's determination saw her convince her husband and two young daughters that it was her duty as a Sikh, and as a Mum, to help save the life of someone else's child.

Surinder's generosity and selflessness captured the hearts of mainstream media in December 2019, when the wider press and TV channels took the story of Anaya's campaign to the masses. That someone would respond to a Facebook appeal and give the unequivocal gift of a kidney has brought about great admiration from the Sikh community, but also from other communities who appreciate the impact of a donor on the life of an innocent child.

For the family though, they recognise the significant challenges of finding a South Asian donor, and continue to use the Hope4Anaya platforms to support others in need of a donor. As a direct result of Anaya's campaign it is known that one other person was blessed to receive an altruistic kidney donation from Azeem Ahmed, who failed as

a match for Anaya, but who was convinced of the impact he could have on someone in need.

It is intended that Anaya's campaign and existing platforms will focus on continuing to raise awareness of organ donation within the Sikh community, using Anaya's story as a case study.<sup>xiii</sup>



*Anaya's visit to Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Newcastle after her transplant.*

## Charities and Wider Campaigns

Alongside the aforementioned individual campaigns that have focused on the need for organ donation, there have been remarkable efforts to promote awareness of the experiences of organ donation. This has only been achieved through the courage of donor families who have bravely shared their stories of experiencing the loss of a loved one, and their reasoning and experience of organ donation. A number of foundations have been set up to promote organ donation among Sikh and other minority communities. One that stands out for the Sikh community is the Mandip Mudhar Memorial Foundation who received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in recognition of their efforts to promote community conversations regarding organ donation.<sup>xiv</sup> Bobby Mudhar, the Chair of the Foundation and brother of Mandip Mudhar, whose organs were donated by the family after his sudden and tragic death, said:

*"One of the core elements of the Sikh Faith is selfless service (help others) known as SEVA. At the time of making our decision to donate we were comforted knowing that we would be able to help others through this selfless act of donation. For us it was the ultimate act of seva and not only was it a human decision to donate but the values of Sikhism supported this. Furthermore, it helped us to deal with the tragedy of losing Mandip in a positive way. Since 2001, our family ethos has been "Positivity out of Tragedy" and it is the basis of the foundation we set up in Mandip's memory and how we promote awareness around organ donation."*<sup>xv</sup>

Bobby highlighted how in the 550th birth anniversary year of Guru Nanak the Foundation had been very active in raising awareness:

*"The NHSBT Community Investment Scheme has been a great opportunity to raise awareness of organ donation in the Sikh community. We know that concerns about the organ donation process can act as a barrier to people deciding to donate their organs, so having the opportunity to share Mandip's story from a family's perspective played an important part in normalising donation and demonstrating that families can take a positive out of loss through donation. In this important year The Mandip Mudhar Memorial Foundation hosted and attended numerous events from January to June 2019 to encourage organ donation awareness and registration. The Foundation was visible at events where there was a high proportion of the South Asian/Sikh Community and also supported campaigns such as DKMS and Hope4Anaya partnering with various charities such as the Sikh Arts & Cultural Association, Khalsa Football Federation Bedford, City Sikhs and British Sikh Nurses.*

*The foundation also shared Mandip's story at the launch of the British Sikh Report 2019 in Parliament and at the London health committee BAME organ donation awareness event. The charity was able to gain further reach beyond the events themselves by securing media coverage in Eastern Eye and the Sikh Channel TV station, and by using the hashtags #organsewa and #positivityoutoftragedy.'*



Bobby Mudhar raising awareness about organ donation.



Bobby Mudhar raising awareness about organ donation.

Rohit Sagoo from British Sikh Nurses has been very active in driving awareness of organ donation in the Sikh community through dialogue and conversations to bridge the gap in knowledge between the NHS and the Sikh Community about organ donation. Rohit notes:

*“I have focused on increasing the up take of BAME organ donor registrations to address the growing disparity between supply and demand for organs amongst the South Asian community.*

*Although government strategies have targeted religious perspectives and published informational resources in the Punjabi language, there is so much more that we, as a collective community can do to generate greater awareness of organ donation.*

*Having worked with Sikh media it is obvious that dialogue with the Sikh community members of all ages has concurred that what happens to our bodies after life, can be a positive discussion. Many acknowledge the need for education and awareness and welcome the opportunity to share their own thoughts on how they wish to serve others. The concept of saving a life as the highest form of Sewa has been echoed many times over.*

*I have been reaching out to the Sikh Community across different areas of the UK, and have attended religious events and functions to spread the word of healthy living and organ donation to the Sikh Community, especially when working directly with the family of @Hope4anaya. I have also worked with Gurdwaras and Sikh TV channels to raise awareness, and have also used social media to raise awareness. My long term campaign for raising awareness for organ donation in the Sikh community has led to winning funding from NHSBT to drive my campaign forward.”*

Through the support of the NHSBT Community Investment Scheme, the Mandip Mudhar Memorial Foundation, British Sikh Nurses and City Sikhs in 2019 were able to work together successfully to bring the issue to the forefront of the community's attention and promote organ donation. They developed and used a hashtag #OrganSewa to support Sikhs in exploring the Seva aspect of organ donation. Organ donation was a significant part of the British Sikh Report launch events in London, Birmingham and Manchester.

## Gurdwaras

In 2019 Sri Guru Singh Sabha Southall (SGSSS) and Sikh Welfare & Research Trust (SWRT) engaged in an Organ Donation campaign with NHS Blood and Transplant support.<sup>xvi</sup>

Harmeet Gill, a trustee at the Sri Guru Singh Sabha Southall Gurdwara described how on 12th November, to mark the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh Faith, his gurdwara decided to do something different in the UK, which would have an everlasting legacy. Taking on board the legacy of Guru Nanak and all the Sikh Gurus who devoted their lives to humanity and sacrificed their lives for the welfare of others, they decided to start a conversation amongst the community to dispel the fears, myths and misinformation that surrounds organ donation. They

also launched Project 550, a campaign to register at least 550 Sikh organ donors before the end of 2019. With just two weekends of campaigning, they exceeded their target.<sup>xvii</sup>

Harmeet noted “We were always confident of signing up 550 donors, what surprised us the most was that it took only 2 days!”

As part of the project they held lectures and talks conducted by Sikh doctors, surgeons, recipients and existing living donors. “Our small little project that started in West London, has helped raise a significant amount of awareness across our community internationally, with gurdwaras across the world beginning to do similar drives to sign up Sikh donors.”



*The Anaya campaign at Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara Gravesend.*

Whether individual, community or gurdwara initiatives, what is clear is that they have all raised awareness of the organ donation issue among Sikhs. As a community, we now need to build on this work in 2020, especially disseminating information about the change in law to opt out because consent will be presumed unless people have opted out. We need to ask each other, as to how many know about the change of law, how many had already signed up for organ donation and how many had discussed the subject of organ donation with their families. To ensure that information is disseminated correctly and effectively members of the Sikh community need to work with gurdwara leadership, community groups, NHSBT and the National BAME Transplant Alliance (NBTA).

Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara Gravesend created a "Community Engagement & Wellbeing Team" in November 2017, with a view to increasing activities related to improvement of the health and wellbeing of the *sangat* (congregation), and the local community at large. The team has organised activities related to mental health, healthy diets and eating habits, screening and checking for certain conditions such as diabetes and heart disease, guidance for healthy living, and sporting activities.

Since 2018 they have actively promoted organ donation. At *Vaisakhi* in April 2018, various organisations set up stalls at the gurdwara and among these was the "Sikhs Embrace Organ Donation Campaign." This helped to raise awareness amongst both the public and the gurdwara *sewadars* involved with the work on wellbeing. The gurdwara also has a very active Guru Nanak Sports Club, which became aware of the Swab4Harj campaign. Harj, a fellow sports enthusiast, needed a stem cell match to save his life. As a result, a session was held for recruiting potential donors, with supporters of the campaign attending and taking swabs for a whole day. Hundreds of members of the Sports Club and others were encouraged to register on a busy day at the gurdwara. He found a match and on 26 April 2019 he had his stem cell transplant.

Later in 2018, the Gurdwara was approached by supporters of the Hope4Anaya campaign, and asked to display posters. Anaya's picture touched many hearts and interest in supporting the campaign increased. Jagdev Singh Virdee, now General Secretary of Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara, and at the time head of the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Team, explained how they managed to highlight the Hope4Anaya campaign at their annual *Diwali/Bandi Chhor* celebrations:

*"Bandi Chhor is one of the busiest days of the year at the Gurdwara, finishing with a huge fireworks display in the grounds, and anywhere between 2,500 and 3,500 people attending. A stall was set up in the foyer with several volunteers ready to sign up potential donors. The evening programme included Katha<sup>xviii</sup> in English by Basics of Sikhi, which particularly attracts young people, as well as traditional Kirtan and Katha in Punjabi. We decided to get a slot on the stage for Anaya's campaign just before the English Katha, when Anaya's Masi (aunt) Sharan Kaur Chahal spoke passionately about Anaya and the family. Sharan also introduced Dr Kiran Kaur Sanghera, who has been a keen campaigner for organ donation since her father spent years waiting for a transplant. The speakers won many hearts, I think, because they said they signed up more people in a couple of hours that evening than whole days in other locations."*

Gravesend Gurdwara has maintained interest in organ donation amongst the *sangat* (congregation), and a seminar was held on the occasion of Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary celebrations in November 2019 which was also broadcast on a Sikh TV channel. The seminar focused on the changes in the law that were coming in 2020 leading to opt-out, and encouraged people to have open discussions about their views on organ donation. It also highlighted how although we may be moving to 'deemed consent', individuals still needed to tell their family what they would want because if they do not have that conversation then family can object to organ donation.

## Conclusion

Guided by a wish to relieve suffering, a sense of altruism and love for social action, younger members of the community have become very proactive in their advocacy for organ donation. They have recognised the role that the gurdwara can play in educating the community on important issues, and this is their *seva* through *man* (mind).

ਅਕਲੀ ਸਾਹਬੁ ਸੇਵੀਐ ਅਕਲੀ ਪਾਈਐ ਮਾਨੁ ॥

Wisdom leads us to serve our Lord and Master; through wisdom, honour is obtained.

ਅਕਲੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਿਹ ਕੈ ਬੁਝੀਐ ਅਕਲੀ ਕੀਚੈ ਦਾਨੁ ॥

Wisdom does not come by reading textbooks; wisdom inspires us to give in charity.

(Guru Nanak, GGS, ANG 1245)<sup>xx</sup>

Such action and activity benefits the whole community:

ਵਿਦਿਆ ਵੀਚਾਰੀ ਤਾਂ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ॥

Contemplate and reflect upon knowledge, and you will become a benefactor to others.

(Guru Nanak, GGS, ANG 356)<sup>xx</sup>

Providing such knowledge and education is altruistic and selfless because it benefits the whole community:

ਓਇ ਪੁਰਖ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ਧੰਨਿ ਜਨ ਹਹਿ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰਿਆ ॥

Blessed is that mortal being, who shares the Teachings for the good of others.

(Guru Ram Das, GGS, ANG 311)<sup>xxi</sup>

As the young take up leadership positions within their gurdwaras they will become important influencers in this debate because they recognise the impact of chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension, which may result in a need for a transplant. *Granthis* (religious priests) can also play an important role in disseminating Sikh teachings that may be applicable to organ donation, provide information on organ donation to dispel any myths and in turn provide guidance and encouragement to the community.

It is clear that health service providers have recognised the important role of local faith communities in supporting health education and are ensuring that their voices are heard and their contribution maximised. NHS Blood and Transplant has done this successfully with reference to organ donation via the Community Investment Scheme. They have developed successful health dissemination partnerships with all faith communities.

The above Sikh campaigns highlight the positive outcome of collaborating with community and religious leaders and their organisations to influence and educate a community about organ donation. It is clear that religious initiatives, especially when facilitated by religious organisations can really add value in raising the community's understanding of the life-giving benefits of organ, blood and tissue donation, especially when this is done utilizing Sikh values, such as *seva* and *daya* (compassion),<sup>xxii</sup> and in turn improving the health outcomes of the community. Importantly, these examples provide a template for developing trust between the government and the local communities, which is even more important in the context of Black Lives Matters, and the current COVID-19 Pandemic. All of the Sikh initiatives have been underpinned by building trust, using a trusted community space, working with trusted messengers such as Sikh donor families, health professionals, Sikh researchers and religious and community leaders. For Sikhs some of these conversations on organ donation have taken place in gurdwaras and in homes via the Sikh TV Channels. On a final note, it is important to also note how these conversations on organ donation have led to follow up conversations on other health conditions that may lead to the need for organ donation in the future, i.e. heart disease, obesity and diabetes. In light of this, maybe it is time for gurdwaras to reflect on how they can help improve their congregations' health, i.e. help reduce people's cholesterol and blood pressure levels through reducing sugar and salt in food and increasing fruit/vegetable consumption in the *langar* provided.<sup>xxiii</sup> Whilst these are difficult conversations it is clear that there is a growing advocacy within the community for change when it comes to health matters, and this can be harnessed by the NHS.

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- xv. The work of people like Bobby Mudhar and Rohit Sagoo, guided by the concept of selfless service *seva* performed without desire (*nishkam*), without intention (*nishkapat*), and with humility (*nimarta*).
- xvi. Aysha Khan, 10 February 2020. 'Fighting taboos, British Sikhs work to demystify organ donation.' *Religion News Service* [online] Available at: <https://religion-news.com/2020/02/10/eyeing-shortage-of-minority-organ-donors-british-sikhs-take-charge-on-demystifying-donation/> [Accessed 14 February 2020]
- xvii. In addition to Aysha Khan's article information about initiative was gained from Harmeet Singh Gill, General Secretary Sri Guru Singh Sabha (email dated 14 March 2020) and website for Sri Guru Singh Sabha Southall - 'Southall Celebrating Guru Nanak Dev Ji's 550th Avtarpurab: Become an organ donor and help save lives.' <https://www.sgsss.org/550-and-more-organ-donors/> [Accessed 14 June 2020]
- xviii. *Katha* is discussion/explanation of *Gurbani* (the Guru's teachings) and history. *Kirtan* singing of hymns from the *Guru Granth Sahib*.
- xix. [https://www.searchgurbani.com/guru-granth-sahib/ang-by-ang\\_1245](https://www.searchgurbani.com/guru-granth-sahib/ang-by-ang_1245) [Accessed 18 June 2020]
- xx. [https://www.searchgurbani.com/guru-granth-sahib/ang-by-ang\\_356](https://www.searchgurbani.com/guru-granth-sahib/ang-by-ang_356) [Accessed 18 June 2020]
- xxi. [https://www.searchgurbani.com/guru-granth-sahib/ang-by-ang\\_311](https://www.searchgurbani.com/guru-granth-sahib/ang-by-ang_311) [Accessed 18 June 2020]
- xxii. "Make compassion the cotton, contentment the thread, modesty the knot, and truth the twist. This is the sacred thread of the soul." *Guru Granth Sahib*, Ang 471. Similarly, there are many references in the *Guru Granth Sahib* that emphasize the power of love and compassion over rituals. "Upon this plate, three things have been placed: Truth, Contentment and Contemplation. The Ambrosial Nectar of the Naam - the Name of God our Master, has been placed upon it as well; it is the support of all. One who eats it and enjoys it shall be saved." *Guru Granth Sahib*, Ang 1429. Also, "Please bless me with the rice of truth and self-restraint, the wheat of compassion, and the leaf-plate of meditation. Bless me with the milk of good karma, the ghee, of compassion. Such are the gifts I beg of You, Lord. Let forgiveness and patience be my milk-cows, and let the calf of my mind intuitively drink in this milk. I beg for the clothes of modesty and the Lord's Praise; Nanak chants the Glorious Praises of God." *Guru Granth Sahib*, Ang 1329.
- xxiii. *Langar* is vegetarian meal prepared in the community kitchen and served to all visitors to the gurdwara.

# British Sikh Report 2020: Survey Introduction

This is the eighth British Sikh Report (BSR), which has now become an established annual snapshot describing the lives of Sikhs in Britain, collecting their views on topical issues. This year's survey received 2,700 responses spread across the United Kingdom, making this our largest sample to date. The survey was primarily conducted online, as in previous years, but there was a concerted effort to supplement that sample with a paper questionnaire to reach those without internet access. Responses were monitored and particular areas of shortfall were targeted to ensure that the overall sample is representative of Sikhs in Britain in terms of age group, gender, marital status and region. All responses were scrutinised and validated by applying a range of checks, and several were rejected because they were assessed to be false. The resultant sample of 2,700 is considered to be a very robust and reliable representation of all British Sikhs. The sample has also been assessed against the information on British Sikhs available from the 2011 Census. After allowing for expected changes between 2011 and 2020, the sample distributions by age and region are very close to what we would expect.

The BSR aims to collect British Sikhs' views on various aspects of life. This year's questionnaire has again focused on a range of issues that are particularly affecting the lives of British Sikhs now, asking questions about topics such as organ donations, disability, loneliness, marriage and weddings, relationships and sex education in schools, Sikh faith schools, the arts, connections with Punjab and India, drug abuse in Punjab, and voting preferences in the December 2019 General Election. The survey was conducted before the COVID-19 breakout in the UK and therefore this topic was not covered in the survey.

The BSR continues to collect basic demographic information on age, gender, marital status, disability and place of residence, as well as on employment and qualifications. We also collect information on place of birth and first arrival to Britain if not born here every year, and also how many generations live together in Sikh households.

The following sections summarise the results of the information collected through the BSR survey questionnaire.

# British Sikh Report 2020: Demographics of the Survey

The BSR 2020 survey received over 2,700 valid responses, a significant increase from last year's total of just under 2,500 responses. The sample is a good representation of the distributions of British Sikhs by age, marital status and region of residence. Just over 50 per cent of the responses were from women, 49 per cent from men, and about 0.6 per cent preferred not to declare their gender. 5 per cent of the responses were from those aged 19 or less, 30 per cent from 20 – 34 year olds, 35 per cent from those aged 35 – 49, 22 per cent from those aged 50 – 64, and 8 per cent from those aged 65 and above. We would like to increase the sample of the elderly, but this is not considered to have significant effects on the results of the survey in terms of the topics covered.

Around 29% of Sikhs responding live in London, and a similar percentage in West Midlands. The regions with the next largest Sikh population are the South East, with 14%, and East Midlands with 10%.

About two thirds of respondents are married, and a quarter are single. About 5 per cent said that they are divorced.

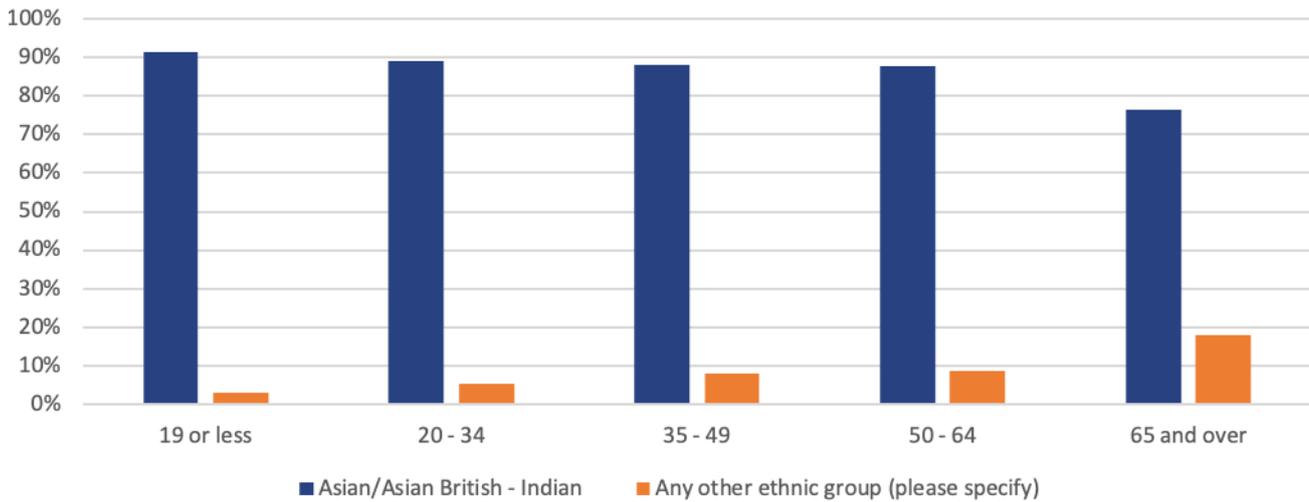
The BSR survey this year asked respondents whether they owned or rented the property in which they lived. 45 per cent owned their home outright and another 28 per cent are buying it with a mortgage. About 11 per cent live in rented accommodation, mostly rented from a private landlord (8 per cent), with the remainder from local authorities or a housing associations.



# Identity and Ethnicity

## WHAT IS YOUR ETHNIC GROUP?

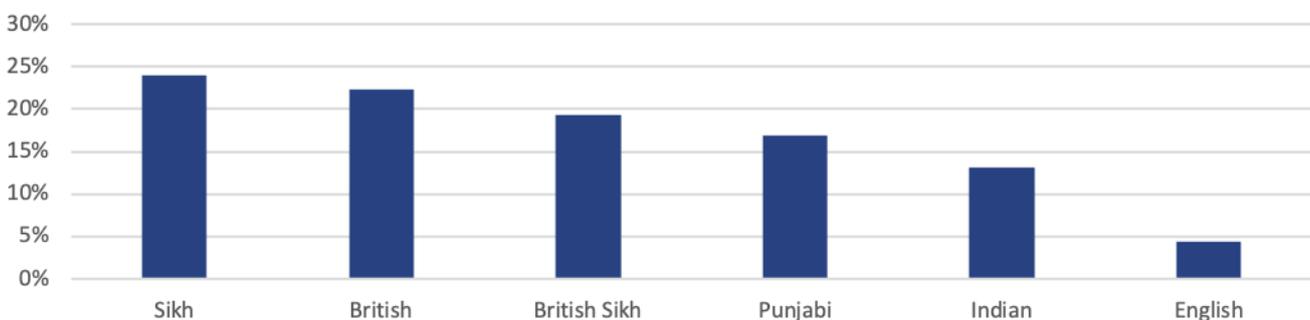
Figure 5a: Asian/Asian British Identification by Age Groups



The BSR asked, as in previous surveys, which ethnic group they identified with. A high percentage of Sikhs (88 per cent) identify as Asian/Asian British – Indian. It is higher at 92 per cent amongst female respondents compared to 83 per cent in males. The next highest category was “Other – please specify”, where respondents could write in their choice. There is a slight bias amongst older Sikhs to use the write-in categories as seen in Figure 5a.

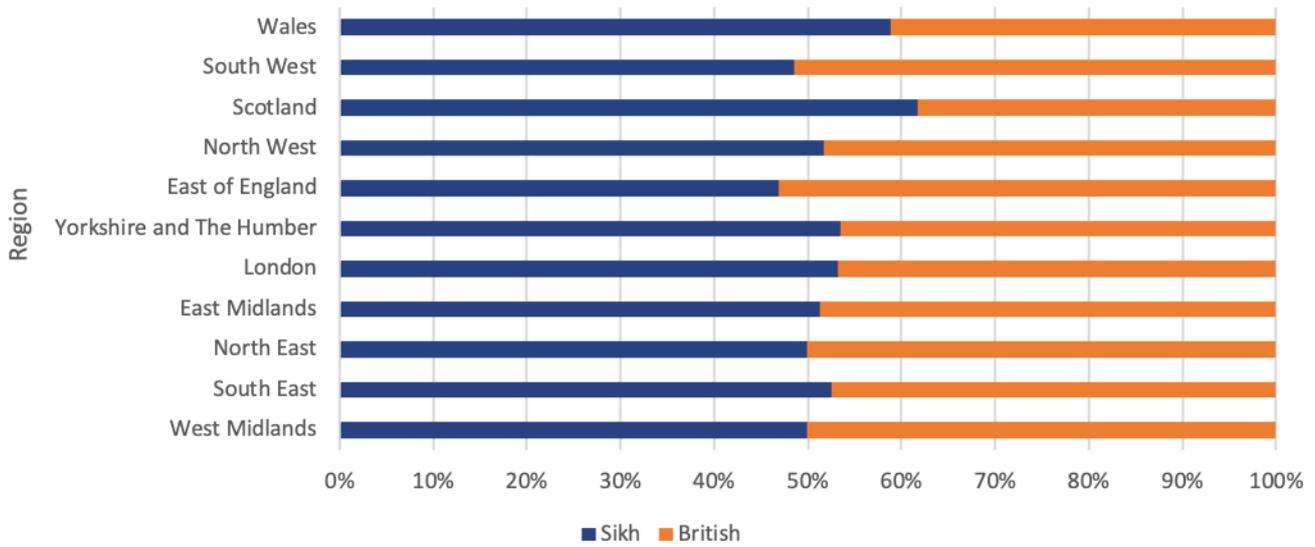
## DO YOU IDENTIFY AS:

Figure 5b: Popular Sikh Identities



When asked how they would identify themselves, British Sikhs are steadfast in their attachment to British and Indian identities. As Figure 5b shows, the most popular identities (national or otherwise) remain fairly unchanged from the previous year.

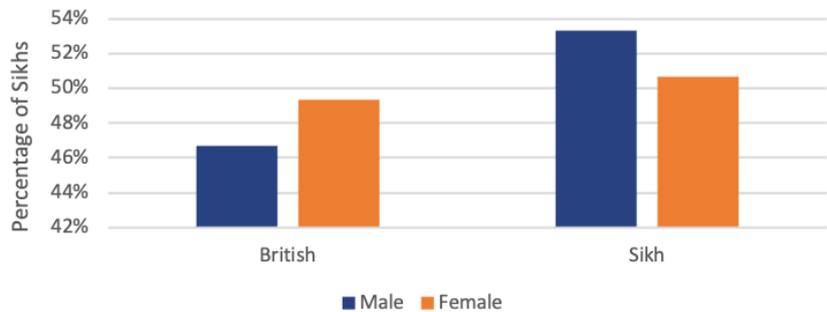
Figure 5c: Identities by Region: Identifying with “Sikh” and “British”



Examining the data by region also shows some interesting variations in those who identify themselves with the terms “Sikh” and “British”. Figure 5c shows that two of the nation’s major Sikh regions of London and West Midlands do not differ significantly in how Sikh residents decide between a national and communitarian identity. However, Scotland has the lowest percentage identifying with “British”, and East of England the highest.

When the identities of British and Sikh are analysed by gender there is a bias toward a national identity over a community one amongst Sikh females in this survey, as shown in Figure 5d.

Figure 5d: British and Sikh identities, by Gender



Overall, the data shows that multiple identities are still in use amongst Sikhs. Combinations, hybrids and dual identities are in much evidence throughout the respondents with younger Sikhs favouring less heritage categories. For example, for ‘unilateral’ heritage identities such as Sikh or Indian, there is a small but noticeable move away from these to British or English. This can be seen in the slight bias amongst those who are born in England being more likely to identify as British over Sikh.

**Has Brexit affected how British you feel?**

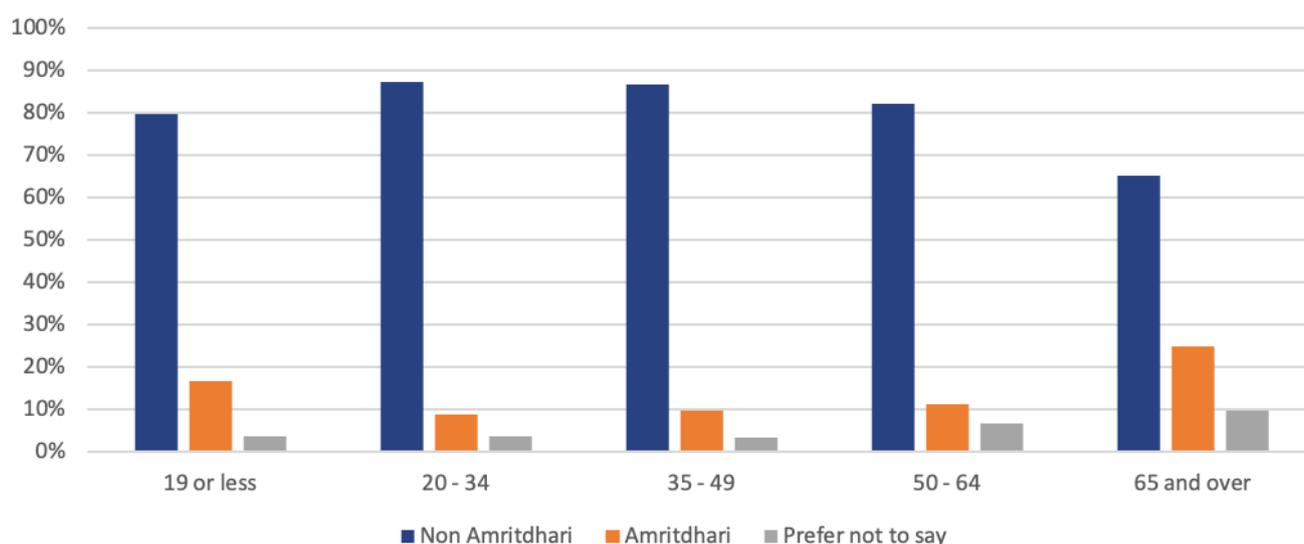
Sikhs in this survey held fairly varied views on the outcome of the UK leaving the EU. This is reflected in the 30 per cent of respondents who either felt less British (22 per cent) or more British (11 per cent). Of the latter, males were over three times more likely to feel more British than females due to Brexit. By age, older Sikhs were more likely to feel more British following the referendum result than younger Sikhs. A majority all Sikhs in this survey (60 per cent) did not feel any effect of Brexit on their Britishness.

# Observance of Sikhi

The majority (84 per cent) of respondents were not Amritdhari. 11 per cent replied “Yes” to the question “Are you a practising Amritdhari” (Figure 6a).

## ARE YOU A PRACTISING AMRITDHARI?

Figure 6a: Percentage of Total



Women are less likely to be Amritdhari compared with men. An interesting pattern emerges where age is concerned. Those who are 65 years of age and over are nearly three times less likely to be Amritdhari whereas those aged between 20-34 are nearly ten times less likely to be Amritdhari.

27 per cent of respondents wore a Dastar (turban), and 82% wore the Kara.

On practising Sikh spirituality in reciting the Japji Sahib (morning prayers) or other Bani (scripture), the majority of Sikhs in this survey practised it. Nearly 84 per cent of respondents said that they recited those prayers or scripture with frequency ranging from everyday to when they needed to. Only 16 per cent never practised this part of Sikh spirituality.

# Voting Behaviour in the December 2019 UK General Election

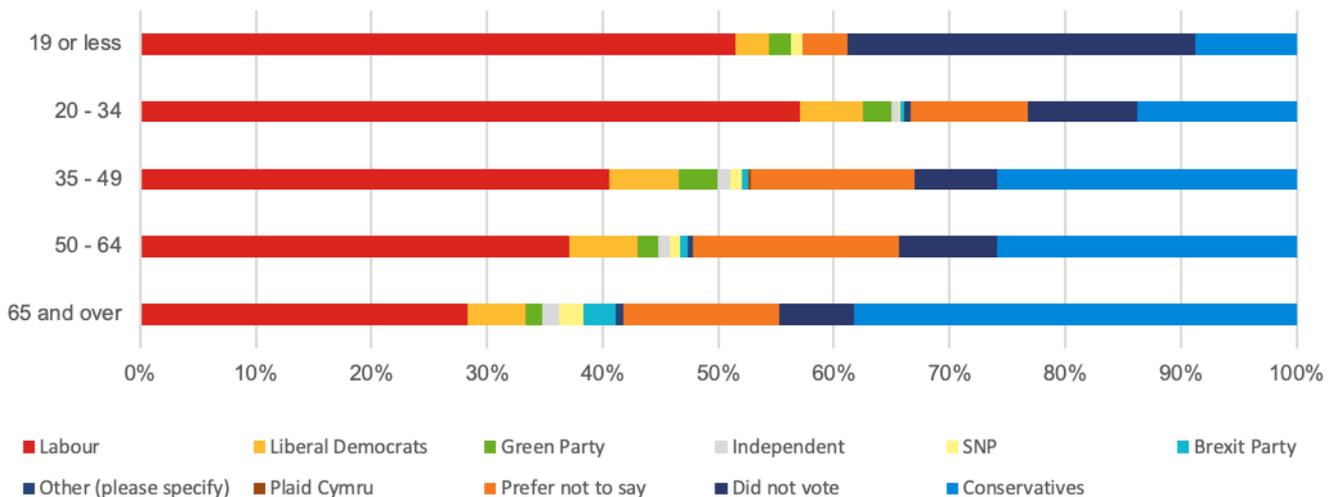
A General Election was held for the UK Parliament on 12th December 2019. The BSR asked respondents how they voted in the General Election. This section analyses the voting behaviour of British Sikhs, and also compares the patterns of voting with those of the population as a whole.

78 per cent of respondents said that they voted for a specific party, 9 per cent said that they did not vote, and 13 per cent said that they did not wish to say how or whether they voted.

45 per cent of BSR respondents said that they voted Labour, followed by the Conservatives (22 per cent), Liberal Democrats (6 per cent), Green (3 per cent), UKIP (1 per cent), SNP (1 per cent), Plaid Cymru (0.1 per cent) and others (0.3 per cent).

Analysing voting behaviour of British Sikhs and the rest of the UK electorate, age was clearly a factor in choice of political party. A majority of younger voters voted for the Labour Party whilst the Conservative Party won a larger share of the ballot than Labour among older Sikhs (Figure A).

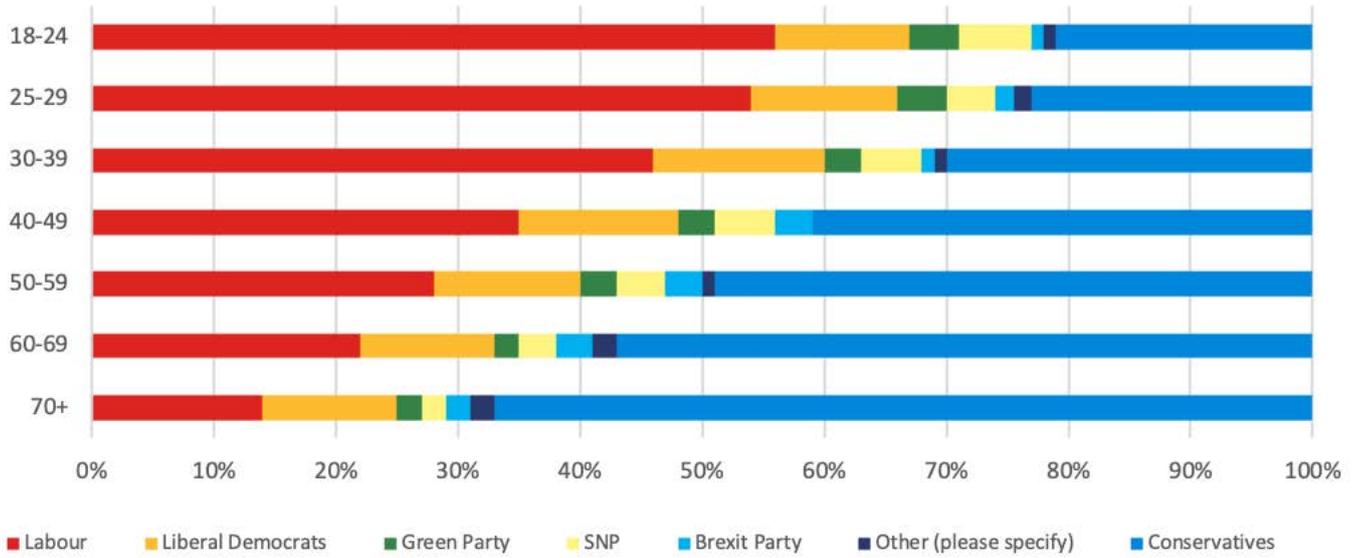
Figure 7a: Voting in General Election by Age, Sikh Population



From this, it can be seen that the older a voter is, the more likely they are to vote Conservative, while the likelihood of them voting Labour decreases. This reflects the same pattern across the UK population as a whole, as seen through the YouGov results in Figure 7b

Figure 7b: Voting in General Election by Age, UK Population

Source: YouGov



The gender split in terms of vote share is more distinct amongst the Sikh electorate (Figure 7c), compared to the UK as a whole (Figure 7d). 50 per cent of Sikh women and 39 per cent of Sikh men voted for Labour, whereas for the UK population as a whole, 35 per cent of women and 31 per cent of men voted for Labour. The inverse voting behaviour is seen in voting for the Conservative party, with only 14 per cent of Sikh females voting for the Conservatives, compared to 31 per cent of their male counterparts.

Figure 7c: Voting in General Election by Gender, Sikh Population

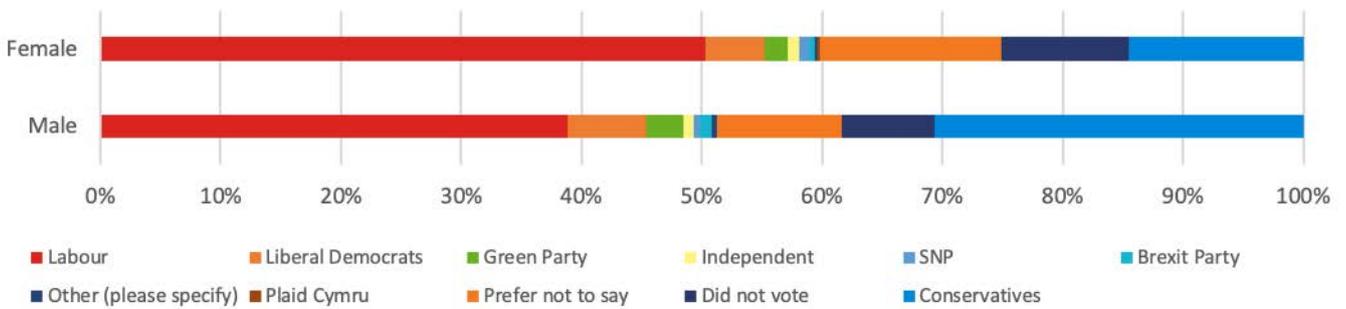
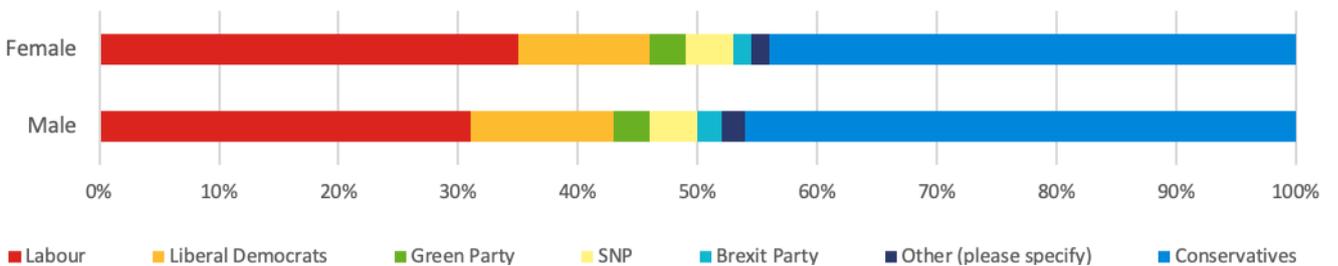


Figure 7d: Voting in General Election by Gender, UK Population

Source: YouGov

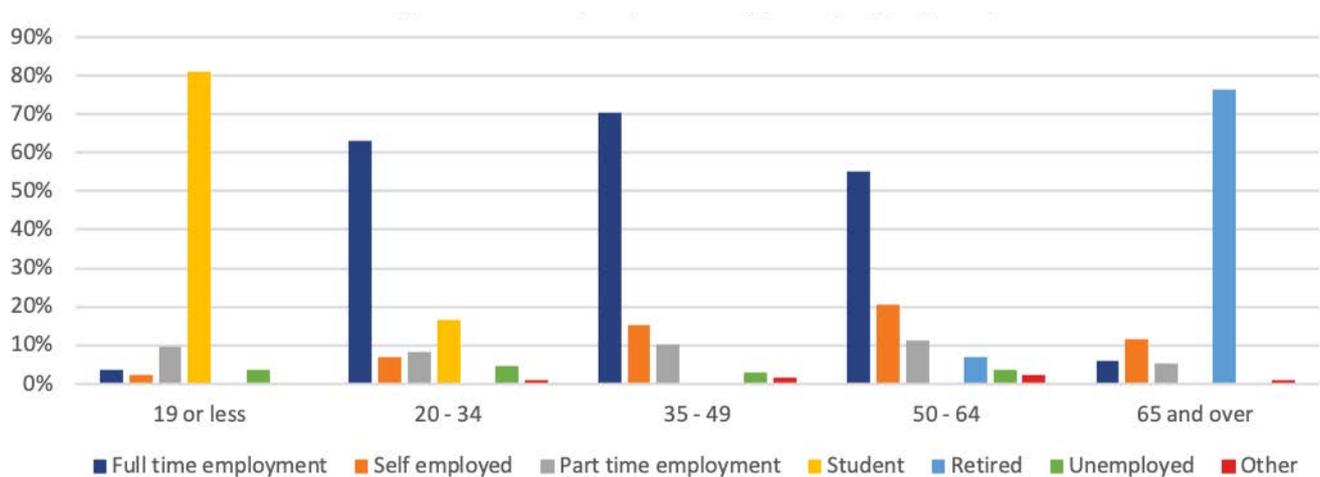


There was little difference in voting behaviour between Sikhs who were Amritdhari and those who were not, with 45 per cent of both voting for Labour. There were small differences in voting for other parties.

# Employment and Education

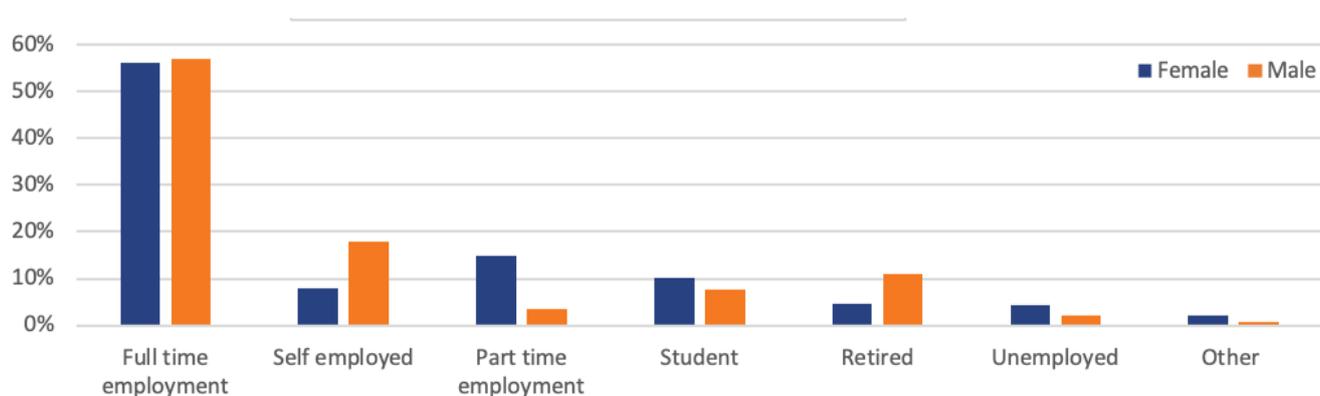
## EMPLOYMENT TYPE

Figure 8a: By Age



According to the BSR 2020 survey, 79 per cent of British Sikhs are employed or self-employed. The majority of those in employment currently work full time (56 per cent). Full time employment is highest amongst the 35-49 age group, at 70 per cent of this age group, compared with 63 per cent in the 20-34 age group and 55 per cent in the 50-64 age group. The second most popular option was self-employment (13 per cent in total). 21 per cent of those aged 50-64 were self employed, compared with just 7 per cent in the 20-34 age group and 15 per cent of those aged 35-49. Part time employment accounted for 9 per cent of respondents in total, with little variation across the age groups in the 19-64 age range. As expected, the most popular option for those aged 19 and under was “Student”, with almost 81 per cent falling under this. Similarly, as expected, the 65+ age group was most represented by “Retired” (76 per cent).

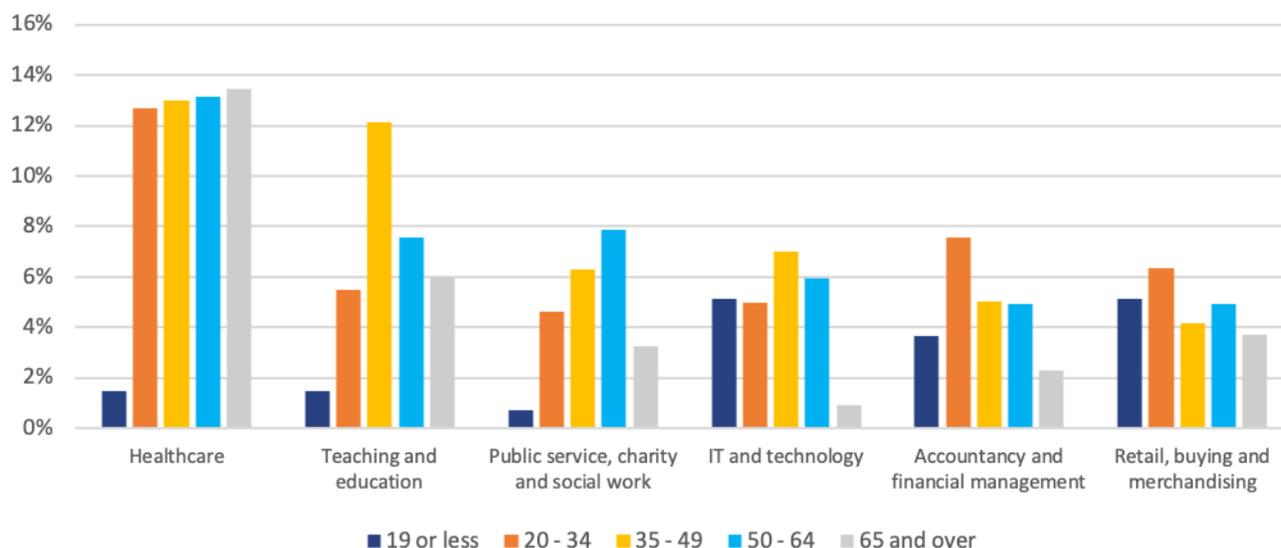
Figure 8b: By Gender



Overall, an equal proportion of men and women are in employment or self-employment, 79 per cent of each gender. More women were likely to be in part-time roles (15 per cent) compared to men (3 per cent). 18 per cent of male respondents were in self-employment compared with 8 per cent per cent of women.

## EMPLOYMENT SECTOR

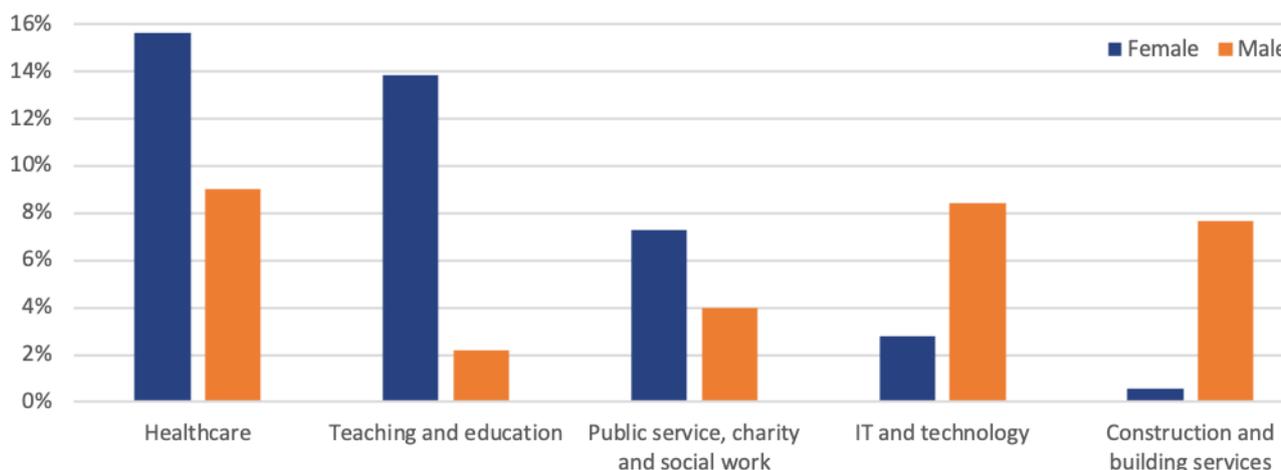
Figure 8c: Employment Sector by Age



The top sectors of employment for British Sikhs are Healthcare (12 per cent), Teaching and Education (8 per cent), Public service, charity and social work (6 per cent), IT and Technology (6 per cent) and Accountancy and financial management (5 per cent).

Healthcare was a popular choice for those in employment with 13 per cent of those in all age groups above 20 years opting for a career in the sector. Other sectors showed more variation between age groups.

Figure 8d: Employment Sector by Gender



More women work in the healthcare and teaching / education sectors compared with men (16 and 14 per cent respectively for women, compared 9 per cent and 2 per cent for men). Similarly, more women have chosen employment within the public service, charity and social work sector compared with men (7 per cent compared with 4 per cent). Within the other two most popular sectors this trend is reversed with more men choosing employment within the IT and technology and Construction and building services sectors (8 per cent and 6 per cent respectively for men, compared with 3 and 1 per cent for women).

# Accommodation

The BSR survey asked people about the ownership of the accommodation they lived in, as to whether it was owned or rented by them or their household. The data shows that almost 45 per cent of the respondents own their accommodation outright, and almost 29 per cent of respondents are purchasing their accommodation with the assistance of a mortgage. Only 1 per cent of respondents part owned and part rent their accommodation as part of a shared ownership scheme, whilst 9 per cent of the respondents live rent-free, possibly with parents or other relatives.

11 per cent of respondents live in rented accommodation. 8 per cent rent from private landlords, 2 per cent from a council and 1 per cent from a housing association. 6 per cent of the respondents preferred not to say what their accommodation status is.

The large majority of owners of their homes are within the 65 and above group compared to the large majority of renters being within the 20-34 age group. The majority of respondents that live rent free are within the age groups of 19 or less and 20-34.

Figure 9a: Accommodation by Age

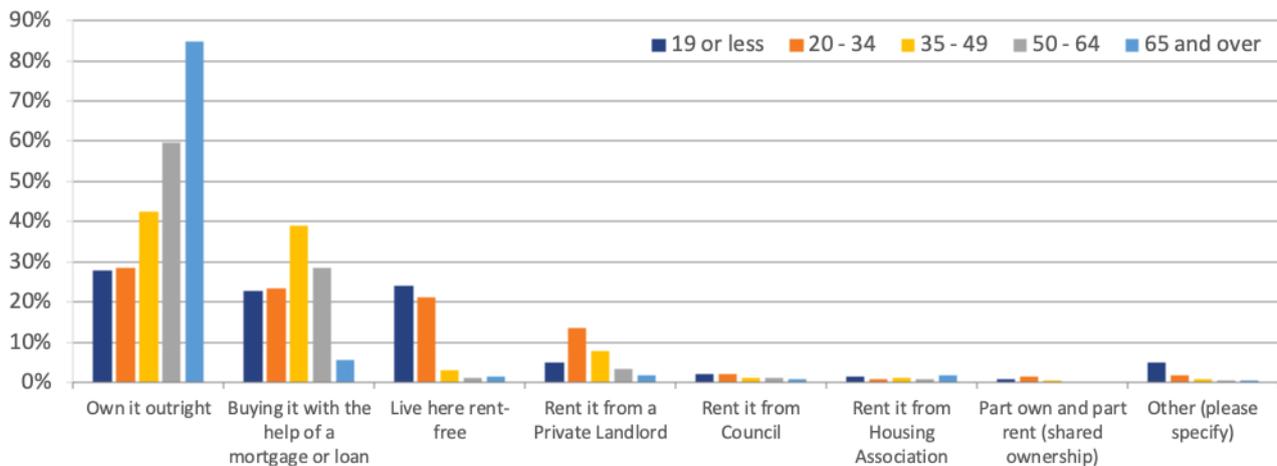
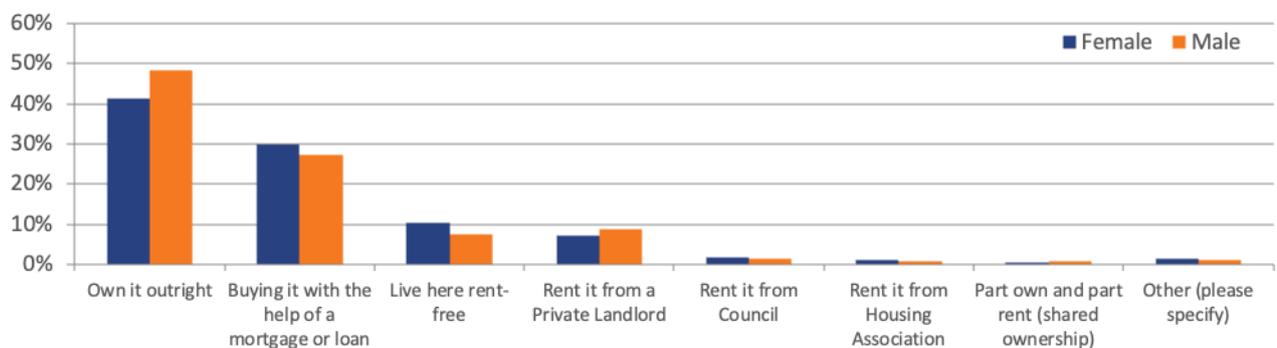


Figure 9b: Accommodation by Gender



48 per cent of males and 41 per cent of females said that they live in accommodation that is owned outright (Figure 9b). Both females and males are generally equally represented in each of the other groups and categories of accommodation status.

# Crime

Most people in the UK can go throughout their lives without being a victim of crime, but society can make some individuals fear crime, even if they have never previously experienced any. For people who do suffer some form of crime, they are statistically more likely to be fearful of further crime in the future. Following the UK referendum vote to leave the EU in 2016, there has been an increase in hate crime against ethnic minorities in the UK. Statistics also show that ethnic minorities are part of the UK demographic that are more likely to fear crime, particularly hate crime due to mistaken identity.

## HAVE YOU OR YOUR FAMILY EVER DIRECTLY EXPERIENCED ANY HATE CRIMES IN THE UK?

Figure 10a: By Age

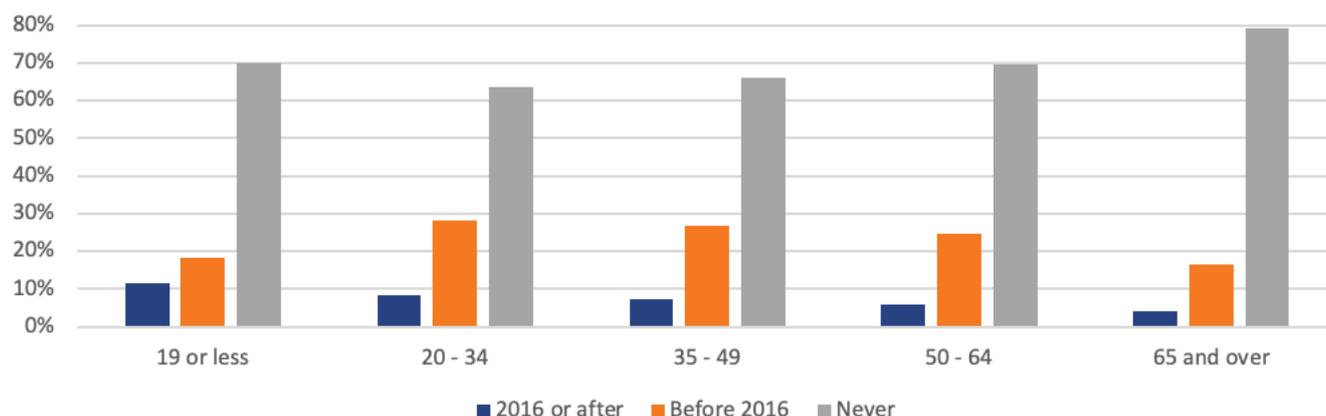
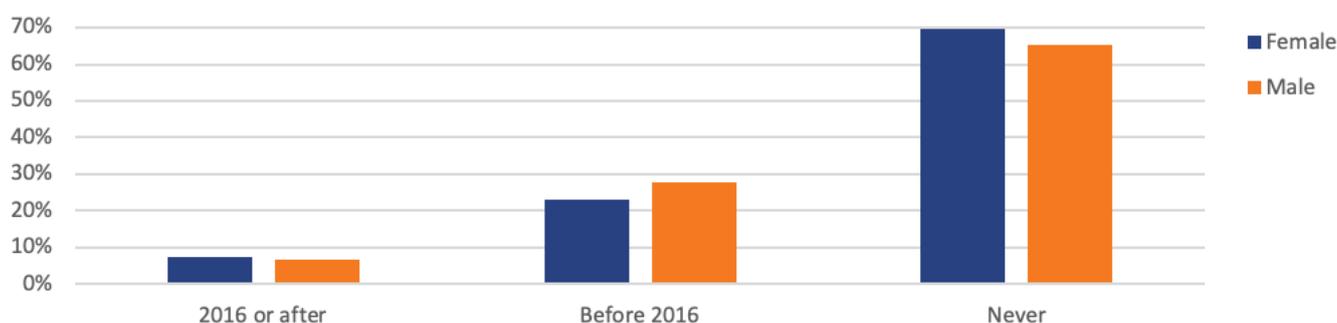


Figure 10a shows that before 2016, for the age groups 50 to 64, 35 to 49 and 20 to 34, between 24 per cent and 29 per cent stated that they had experienced some form of hate crime. The oldest age group of 65 and over and the youngest age group of 19 or less, reported 16 per cent and 19 per cent respectively. From 2016 and after, the percentage rates were considerably lower across all age groups, ranging from 4 per cent to 12 per cent. For the vast majority, across all age groups, between 63 and 80 per cent reported to never have experienced any hate crime.

Figure 10b: By Gender

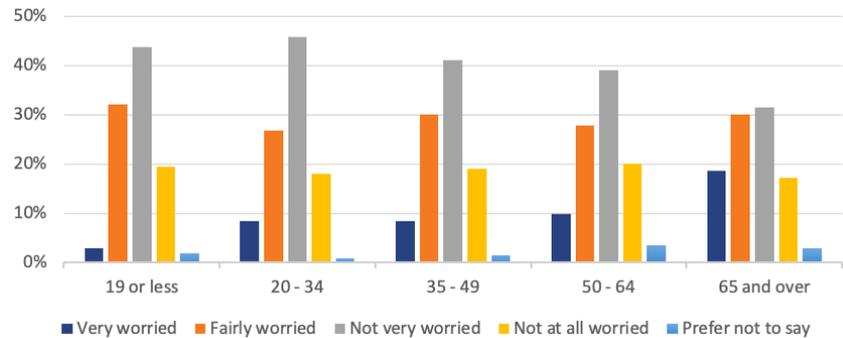


Separating the results by gender showed almost identical results between females and males (Figure 10b).

## HOW WORRIED ARE YOU ABOUT BEING SUBJECT TO A PHYSICAL ATTACK BECAUSE OF YOUR SKIN COLOUR, ETHNIC ORIGIN OR RELIGION?

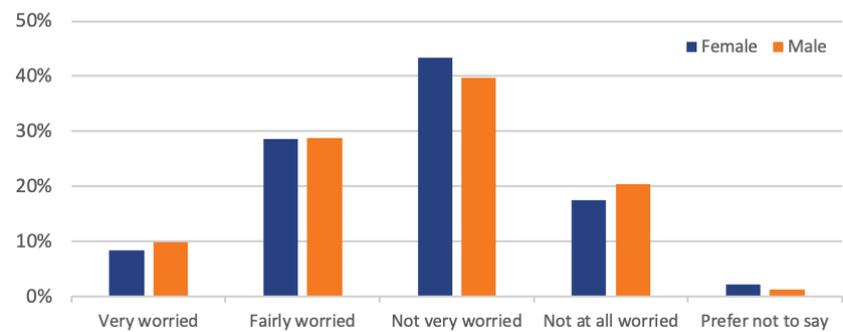
Across all age groups together, 9 per cent were “Very worried”, and another 29 per cent were “Fairly worried” about being subject to physical attack. The percentage of respondents who were “Very worried” increased by age, from 3 per cent for those aged 19 or less, to 19 per cent for those aged 65 or over (Figure 10c). Conversely, those “Not very worried” declined by increasing age group.

Figure 10c: By Age



There was little difference in terms of gender (Figure 10d), with both males and females reporting a similar pattern of worry about being subject to a physical attack because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion.

Figure 10d: By Gender



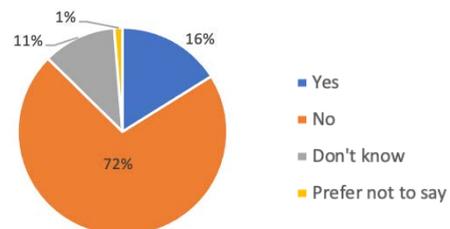
For various different reasons some people may have security concerns relating to their local Gurdwara. Gurdwaras are a very important place for Sikhs, whether to worship, to have langar, provide seva, or to socialise. Many spend a lot of time at their local Gurdwara, especially the elderly, although this may not currently be the case due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Respondents were asked:

### DO YOU HAVE ANY SECURITY CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR LOCAL GURDWARA?

The vast majority of respondents, almost 71 per cent, were not concerned. 16 per cent of respondents were concerned, while 11 per cent said, “Don’t know”, and 1 per cent “Prefer not to say”.

Figure 10e: By Gender

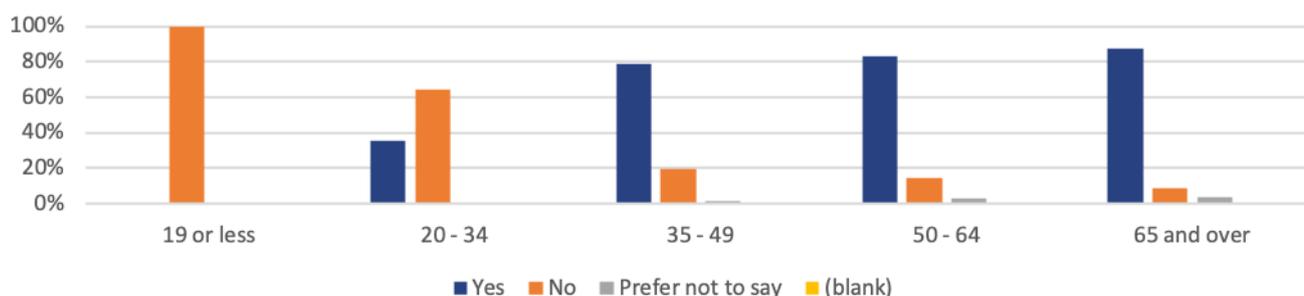


On the whole it should be noted that experiencing crime is still less likely for an individual in the UK, compared with the fear of crime which can be higher.

# Marriages and Weddings

## ARE YOU MARRIED?

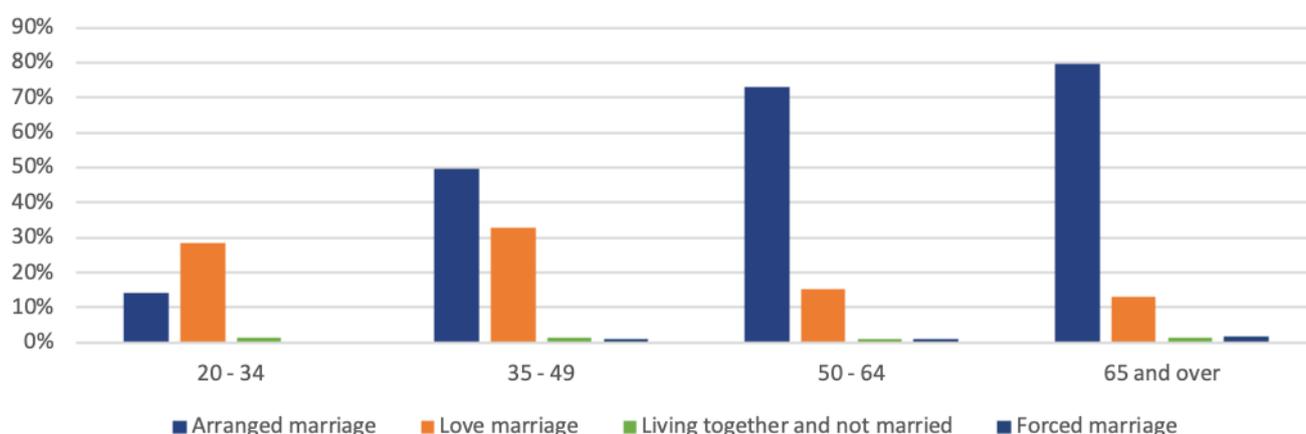
Figure 11a: By Age



The BSR 2020 asked British Sikhs whether they were married, and if so, for information about how they met their partner, and also about their wedding such as costs and ceremonies/rituals that were organised. Nearly two thirds of respondents are married, compared to about half in the UK population as a whole in 2019. Figure 11a shows that there is a trend of a decline in marriage in younger age groups. While 35 per cent of those aged 20-34 are married, this rises to around 80 per cent for age groups 35 – 49 and 50 - 64 years, and nearly 90 per cent for those aged 65 and over. It is also interesting to note that Amritdharis are more likely than non-Amritdharis to be married (74 per cent vs 62 per cent).

## HOW DID YOU MEET YOUR PARTNER/SPOUSE?

Figure 11b: By Age



BSR 2020 asked how respondents had met their partner/spouse (Figure 11b). Arranged marriage was the most popular method for meeting one's partner across all ages (44 per cent), and love marriage second (25 per cent). As one may reasonably predict, the proportion of those meeting by arranged marriage dropped with age. While 80 per cent of those aged 65 and over had arranged marriages, it fell to around 50 per cent for those aged 35 – 49, and to about 13 per cent for those aged 20 – 34. Amritdharis were more likely than non-Amritdharis to have had an arranged marriage (63 per cent vs 41 per cent), and less likely to have had a love marriage (14 per cent vs 26 per cent).

In terms of a marriage ceremony itself, 96 per cent of married respondents had had an Anand Karaj, with the proportion remaining approximately consistent across age groups. As may be expected, Amritdharis were the most likely to have had an Anand Karaj (99 per cent). After the Anand Karaj, respondents were most likely to have had a wedding reception (66 per cent), but other wedding events that may anecdotally be considered ubiquitous, were not as popular as may be expected; under 50 per cent of respondents said that they had other cultural events such as Roka, a Chunni ceremony, a Ring ceremony, a Sangeet, a Jaago, or a Mehndi event.

Figure 11c shows the range of costs of weddings within each age group. The older the respondents, the less their wedding was likely to have cost, which may be explained by a range of factors, such as customs observed at the time of the wedding, social and financial pressures of an immigrant community, and economic factors such as inflation. Some weddings may also have taken place in the country of origin of migrants, such as India, with lower costs. Weddings of 65 per cent of those aged 65 and over cost less than £10,000, and no one in this age group said that their wedding cost more than £30,000. Weddings of those in the 50 – 64 years age group cost up to £60,000, with around 40 per cent costing less than £10,000. On the other hand, for those in the 20 – 34 years old age group, wedding costs ranged from under £10,000 (16 per cent) to over £100,000.

**HOW MUCH DID YOUR WEDDING COST AS A WHOLE?**

Figure 11c: By Age

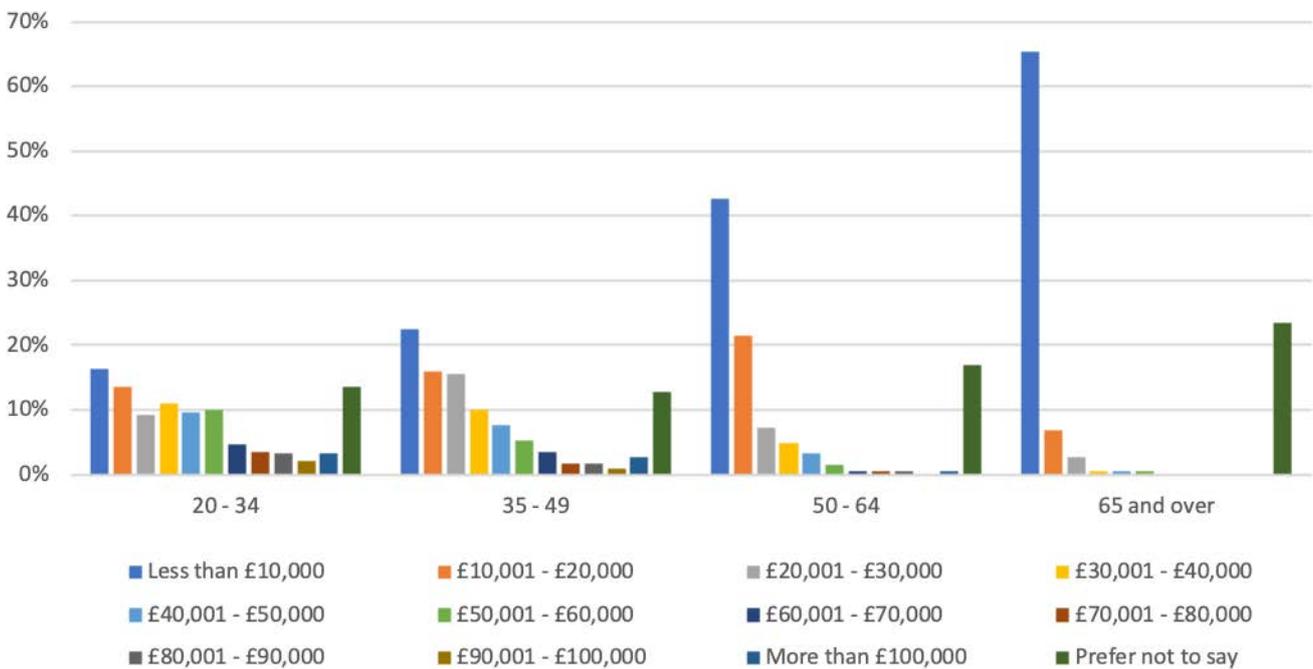
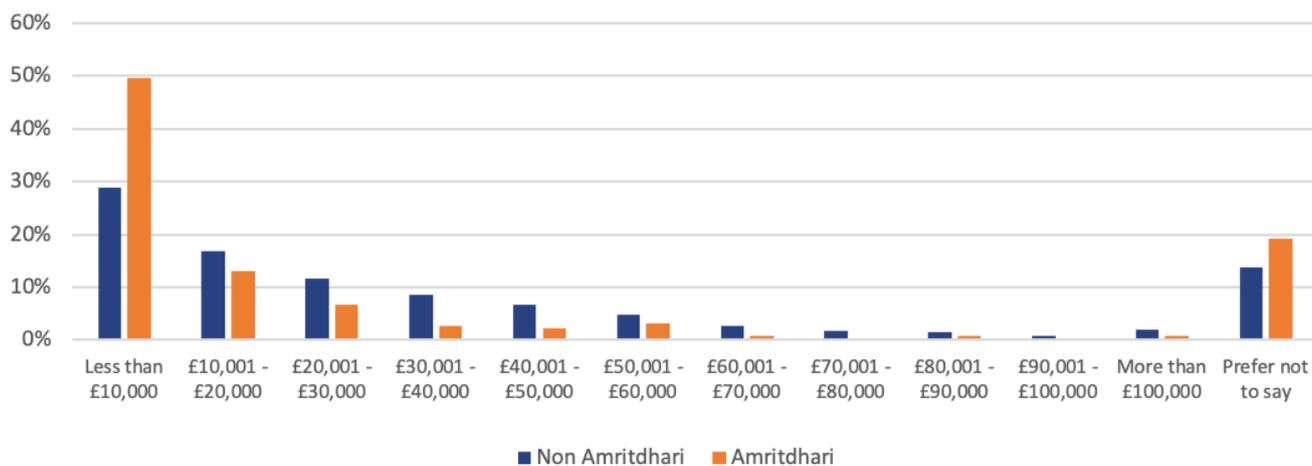


Figure 11d: By Amritdhari or Non Amritdhari

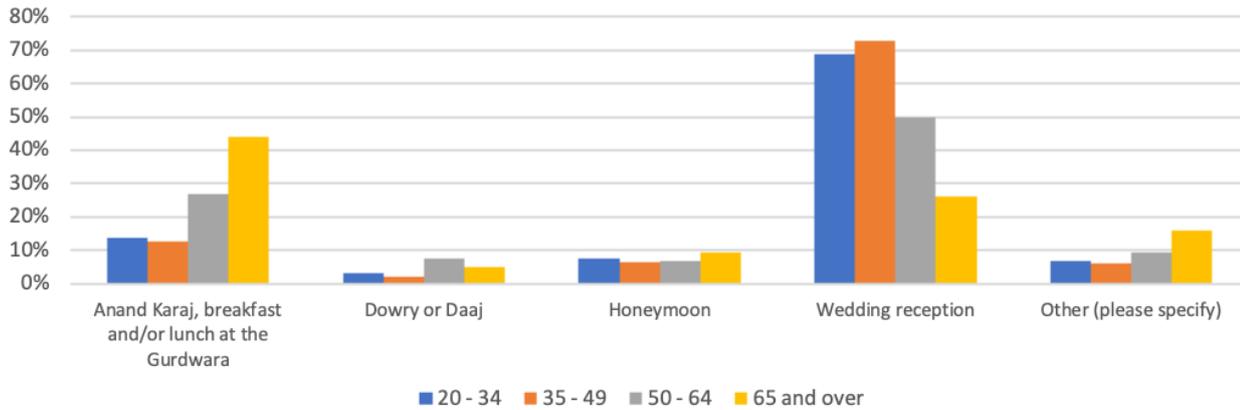


Amritdharis tended to spend less than non-Amritdharis on weddings, with 50 per cent of them spending less than £10,000 on their wedding, compared with fewer than 30 per cent of non-Amritdharis in this cost band (Figure 11d). This could be due to a number of reasons, including a greater focus on the marriage and the Anand Karaj ceremony itself rather than expensive wedding customs and celebrations.



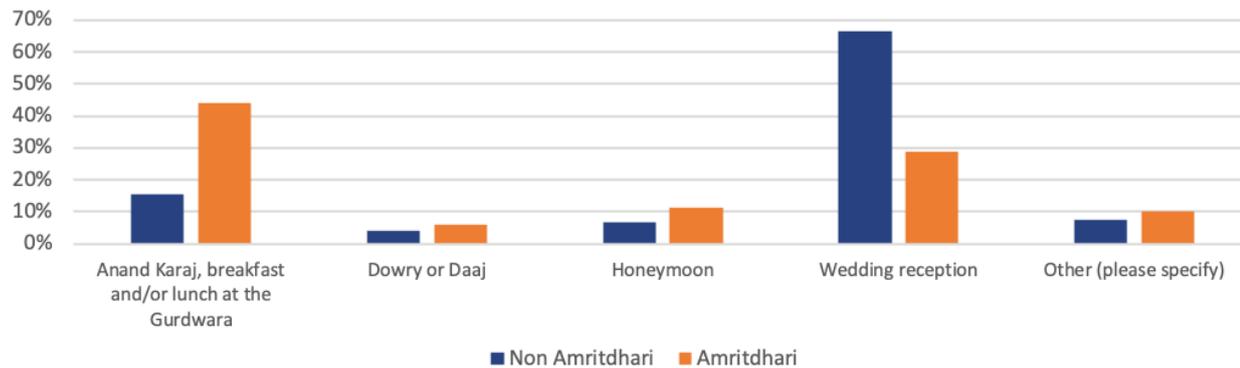
WHAT WAS THE MOST EXPENSIVE PART OF YOUR WEDDING?

Figure 11e: By Age



When asked what was the most expensive part of their wedding, 60 per cent of respondents stated that the reception was the most expensive (Figure 11e), with the next being the Anand Karaj, at 20 per cent. The proportion of each had an inverse relationship with age, and Amritdhari were more likely to have spent most on the Anand Karaj rather than a reception (Figure 11f). Interestingly, 7 per cent of respondents spent the most on their honeymoon, and 4 per cent spent the most on their dowry. Women were more likely than men to report highest spending on dowry (7 per cent vs 2 per cent for men), while men were more likely than women to have spent most on the honeymoon (8 per cent vs 6 per cent). Dowry was paid in 11 per cent of cases, with a surprising consistency of 13 per cent in all age groups except those aged 35-49 (8 per cent).

Figure 11f: By Amritdhari or Non Amritdhari



During 2020, the restrictions on weddings imposed by the Government due to the COVID-19 pandemic have led to weddings taking place with a maximum of 15 guests, and this has become accepted as a new reality by many. While some weddings have been postponed until the crisis is over, others are going ahead under the restrictions and couples are choosing not to wait. This has led to large savings for many, and a shift in views that weddings do not have to be large and lavish. It will be interesting to see whether this shift is temporary, or whether it has an ongoing effect.

# Relationships and Sex Education in Schools

On March 1st, 2017, the then Education Secretary, Justine Greening, announced her intention to put Relationships and Sex Education on a statutory footing. The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education, and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education; parents may withdraw children from all or parts of sex education only, and only up until three terms before the child turns 16. The decisions on these subjects were made after extensive engagement with parents, young people, schools, experts, and the wider public, and took into account the myriad views on understandable and legitimate areas of contention. The government's guidance on the teaching states, "Our guiding principles have been that all of the compulsory subject content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law."

For this report, respondents were asked their views on whether a range of topics should be taught as part of RSE, and also on whether parents should have the right to withdraw children from sex education lessons. The trends were very similar for several of the areas; there was broad support for teaching about single-parent families (85 per cent), mixed heritage families (85 per cent), families with parents of different faiths (84 per cent), families where grandparents are the primary carers (87 per cent), families where uncles and/or aunts are the primary carers (84 per cent), adoptive families (87 per cent), foster families (86 per cent), and online risks (88 per cent). In each case, younger people tended to be more enthusiastic about the teaching, though all age groups were positive; women tended to be more inclined to want teaching to occur, though with both sexes, the views were overwhelmingly positive; and Amritdhari respondents were slightly less likely than non-Amritdhari to want topics taught. Figures 12a, 12b and 12c show one example to illustrate these results, the case of teaching about single parent families:

## SHOULD SCHOOLS TEACH ABOUT FAMILY TYPE: SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES

Figure 12a: By Age

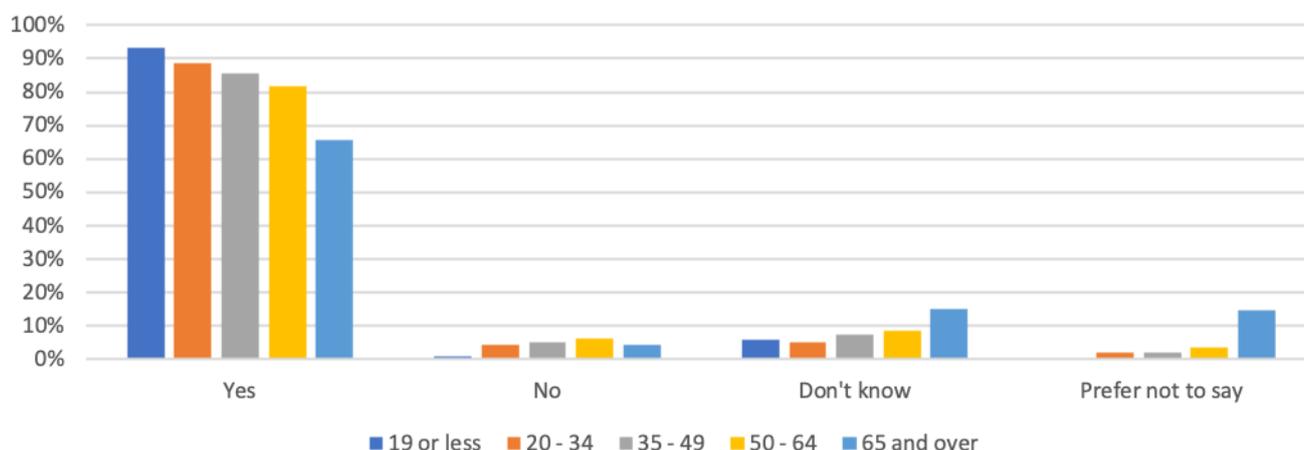


Figure 12b: By Gender

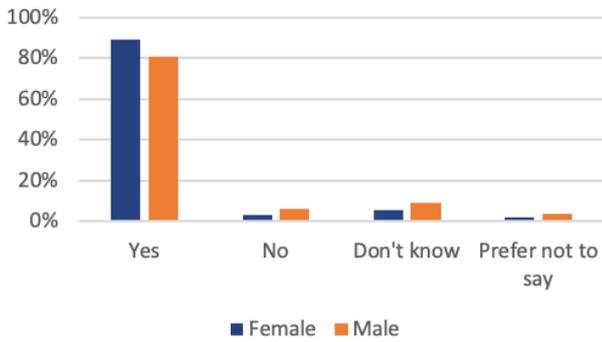
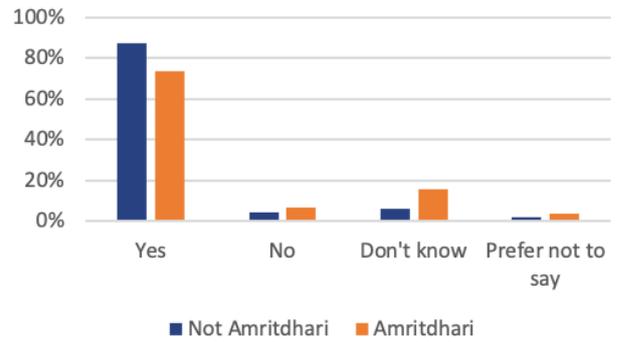


Figure 12c: By Religious Denomination



**SHOULD SCHOOLS TEACH ABOUT FAMILY TYPE: FAMILIES WITH SAME-SEX PARENTS?**

Figure 12d: By Age

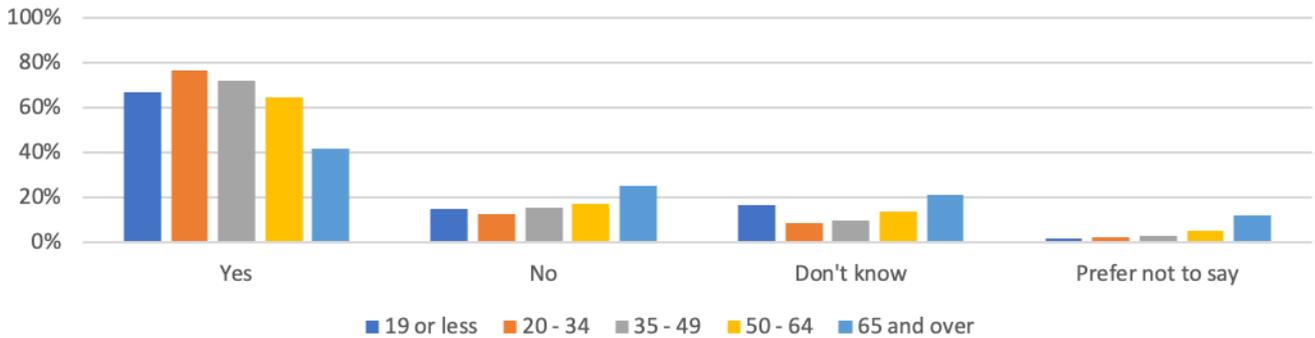


Figure 12e: By Gender

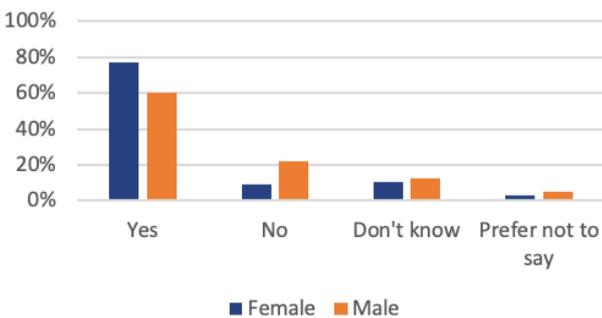
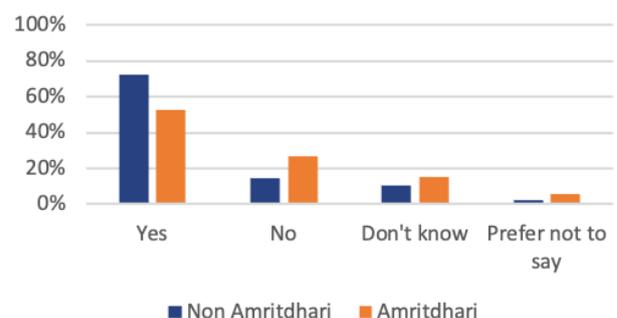


Figure 12f: By Amritdhari or Non Amritdhari



The one area where the results diverged from the trends detailed above was whether schools should teach children about families with same-sex parents. The age group most likely to be positive about this was 20-49 (74 per cent), and the age group least likely to be positive was 65 and over (42 per cent) (Figure 12d). Somewhat surprisingly, the 19 and under group was only marginally more positive at 67 per cent than the 50-64 group at 65 per cent. Women were considerably more likely than men to want this topic taught at 77 per cent vs 60 per cent (Figure 12e). Amritdharis were much less likely to want it taught than non-Amritdharis at 52 per cent vs 72 per cent. It should be noted that overall, the proportion of those that responded "Yes" to this question was still in the majority, at 69 per cent, but when compared to the topics above, there is a significant drop. In the wider community, the Government's consultation on "[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education in England](#)" found that a large proportion of respondents disagreed with the position on teaching about LGBT issues set out in the guidance.

## Attitudes Towards Sex Education

### SHOULD PARENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO WITHDRAW CHILDREN FROM THE SEX EDUCATION PORTION?

On the whole, respondents were more likely to believe that parents should not have the right to withdraw their children from the sex education portion of RSE, with 48 per cent saying “No,” and 37 per cent saying “Yes” (Figure 12g).

Figure 12g: By Respondents

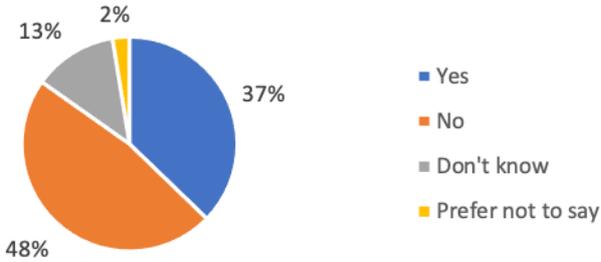
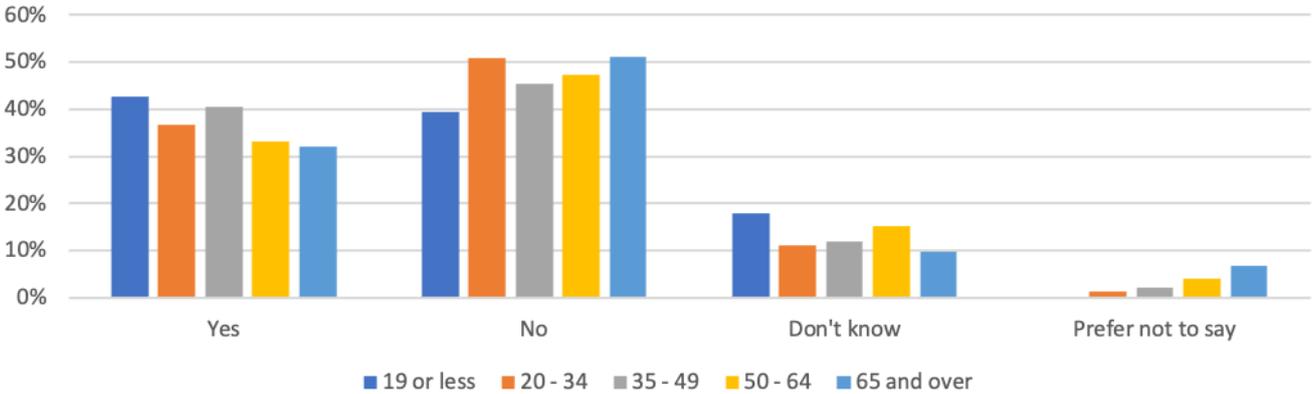
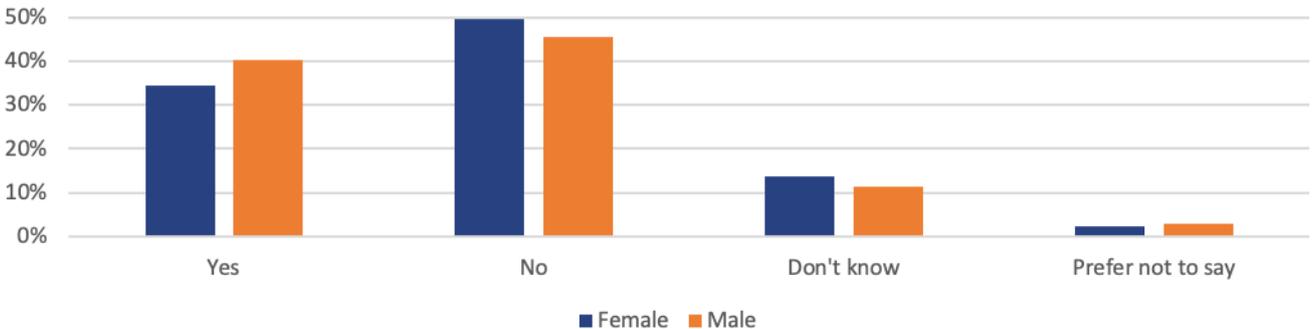


Figure 12h: By Age Group



A surprising result was that those aged 65 and over were the most likely to hold the view (51 per cent) that parents should not have the right to withdraw children from sex education, and those aged 19 and under were the least likely (39 per cent) (Figure 12h).

Figure 12i: By Gender



Women were more likely (50 per cent) than men (45 per cent) to believe that parents should not have the right to withdraw (Figure 12i).

Figure 12j: By Amritdhari or Non Amritdhari

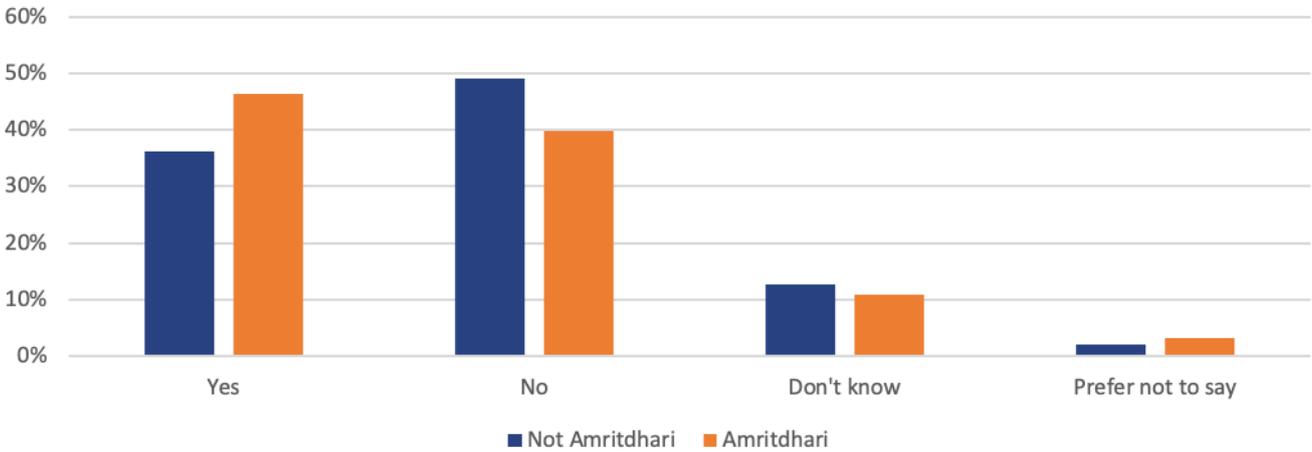


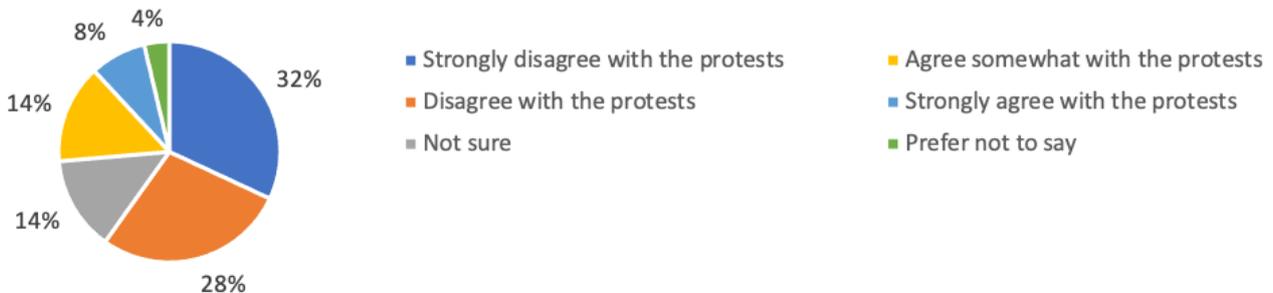
Figure 12j shows that Amritdhari respondents were more likely to believe that parents should have the right to withdraw children from sex education (46 per cent), compared with non-Amritdhari Sikhs (36 per cent).

## Protests Outside Schools

The BSR question asking for respondents’ views about protests outside schools stemmed from a petition raised in January 2019 by the parent of a child at a school in Birmingham, claiming that teaching within the “No Outsiders” programme – designed to teach children about diversity, difference, equality, and British values – contradicted the Islamic faith. Protests began at this school, then spread to others in Birmingham, before subsiding due in part to a High Court judgement ruling in favour of an exclusion zone around a school after months of protests.

### WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ABOUT PROTESTS OUTSIDE SCHOOLS?

Figure 12k: By Respondents



66 per cent of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the protests outside schools (Figure 12k), with 23 per cent agreeing, and others either not knowing, or preferring not to provide a view.

WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ABOUT PROTESTS OUTSIDE SCHOOLS?

Figure 12l shows that those aged 19 and under were the only age group in which under 50 per cent of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the protests, with a majority of all other age groups disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. The youngest age group also had the highest percentage (34 per cent) agreeing or strongly agreeing with the protests (34 per cent), showing that the views of this age group are more varied than older age groups.

Women were more likely than men to disagree with the protests (Figure 12m), but overall this was the majority view for both sexes

46 per cent of Amritdhari respondents disagreed with such protests, compared with 62 per cent of non-Amritdharis (Figure 12n). Considering the original protests were sparked by religious belief, and the fact that Amritdhari respondents in this survey were also less likely to want their children taught about families with same-sex parents, this result is perhaps not entirely surprising. It should be noted however that the proportion of those that disagreed or strongly disagreed with the protests was still much higher than those who agreed with the protests.

Figure 12l: By Age

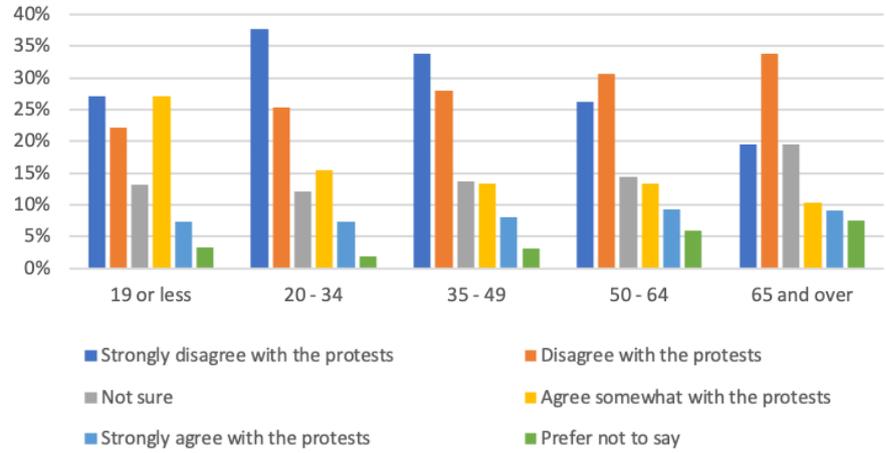


Figure 12m: By Gender

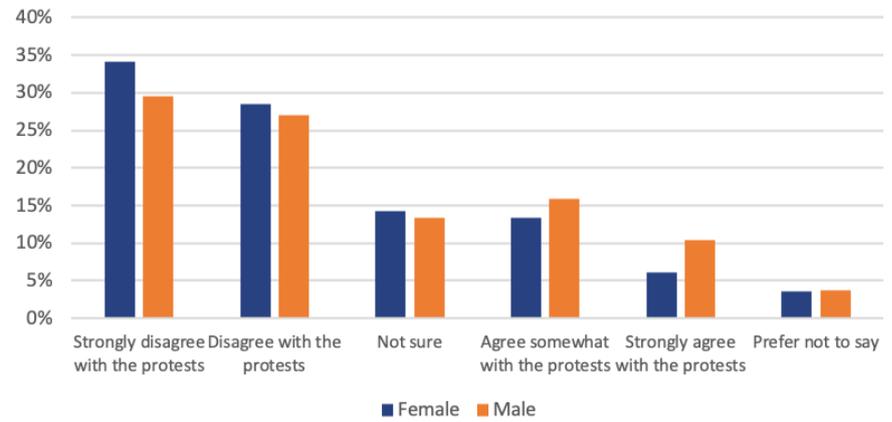
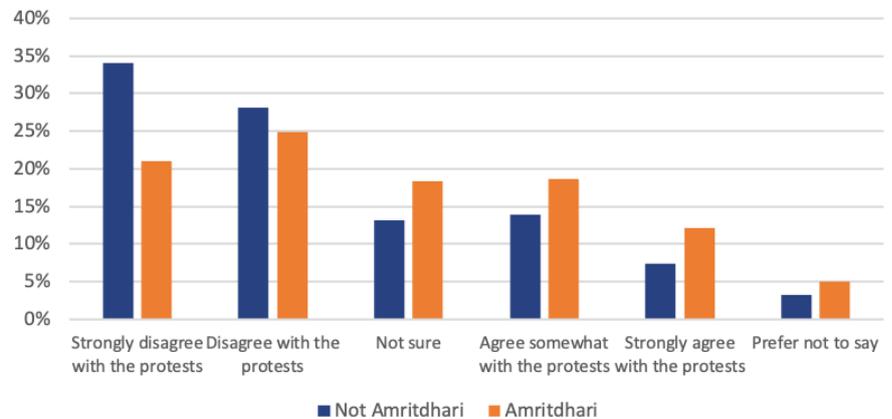


Figure 12n: By Amritdhari or Non Amritdhari



# Sikh Faith Schools

According to a House of Commons Briefing Paper from 2019, over a third of state-funded primary schools and about a fifth of state-funded secondary schools in England are faith schools. However, Sikh faith schools can only be found in England and there are fewer than 15 Sikh faith schools across the whole country. Given the relatively low number of Sikh schools compared to some other faith communities, the BSR 2020 survey aimed to find out the attitudes of British Sikhs towards Sikh faith schools as well as the factors behind choosing schools generally.

## IS THERE A SIKH FAITH SCHOOL IN YOUR AREA?

52 per cent of respondents said that there was a Sikh faith school in their area (Figure 13a), most likely due to concentrations of Sikhs in towns where a Sikh school exists.

However, this figure was higher amongst Amritdhari (initiated) Sikhs, with almost two thirds of them (64 per cent) saying that they lived near a Sikh faith school (Figure 13b).

Figure 13a

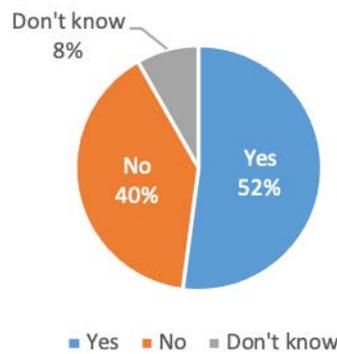
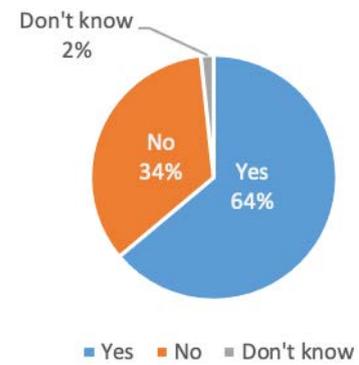


Figure 13b: Amritdhari Responses



## DO YOU THINK THAT THERE SHOULD BE A SIKH FAITH SCHOOL IN YOUR AREA?

Figure 13c

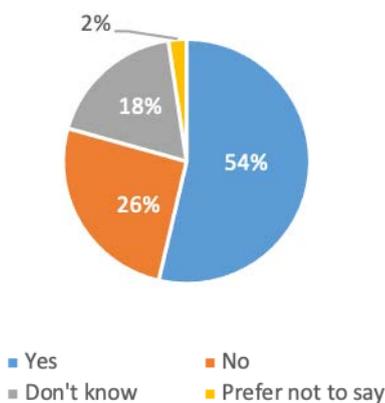


Figure 13d

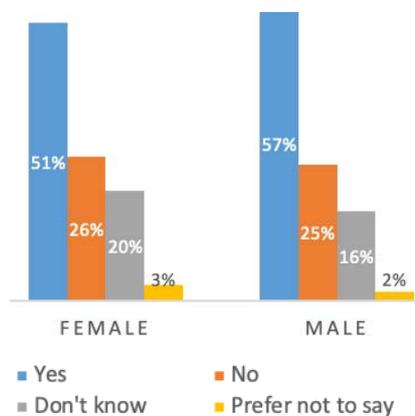
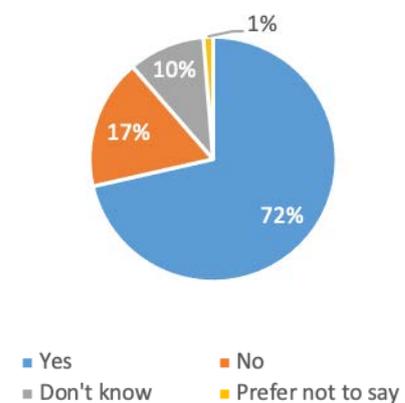


Figure 13e: Amritdhari Responses



54 per cent of British Sikhs said that there should be a Sikh faith school in their area, with only a quarter of Sikhs (26 per cent) saying that there should not (Figure 13c).

There was a clear gender divide on this question, with 51 per cent of women and 57 per cent of men saying that there should be a Sikh faith school in their area (Figure 13d).

Amritdhari (initiated) Sikhs were overwhelmingly in favour of Sikh faith schools, with 71 per cent of them saying that there should be one in their locality (Figure 13e).

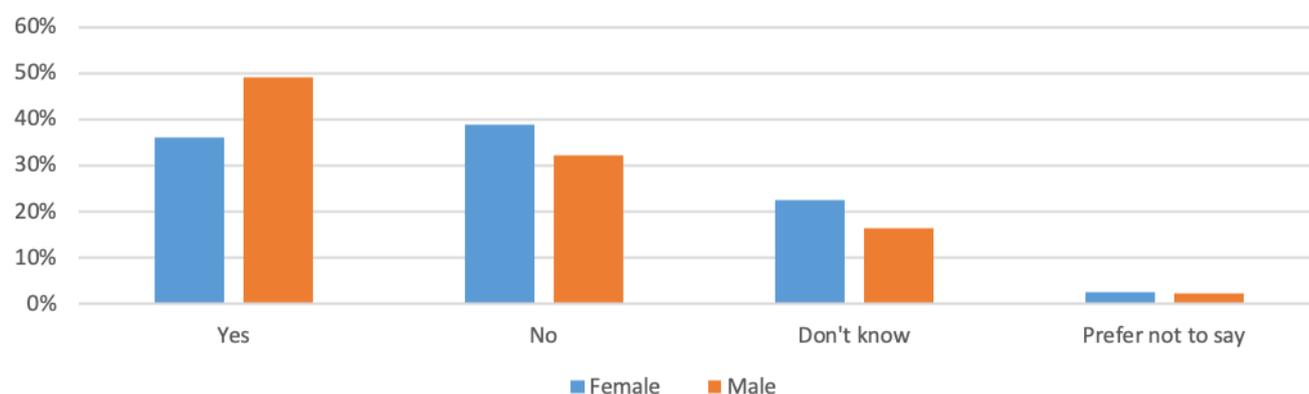
## WOULD YOU SEND YOUR CHILD OR CHILDREN TO A SIKH FAITH SCHOOL?

42 per cent of British Sikhs would send their children to a Sikh faith school. A sizeable number of respondents were unsure, with 20 per cent of Sikhs saying that they did not know if they would send their child to a Sikh faith school (Figure 13f).

Figure 13f

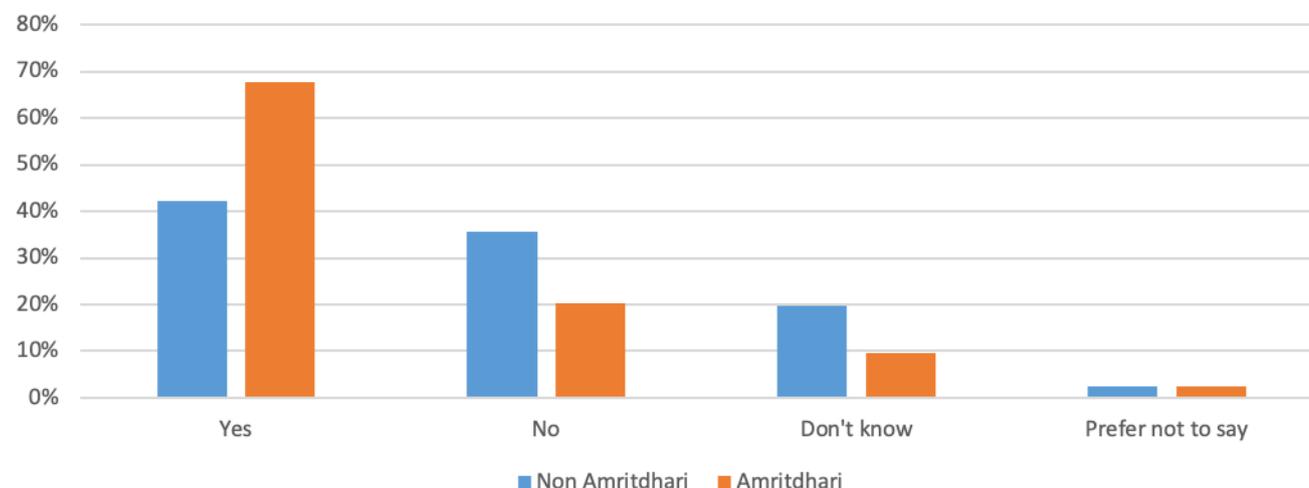


Figure 13g



Again, there was a clear gender divide. 36 per cent of female respondents would want to send their child to a Sikh faith school compared to 49 per cent of male respondents (Figure 13g). As such, men were 33 per cent more likely than women to want their child attending a Sikh faith school.

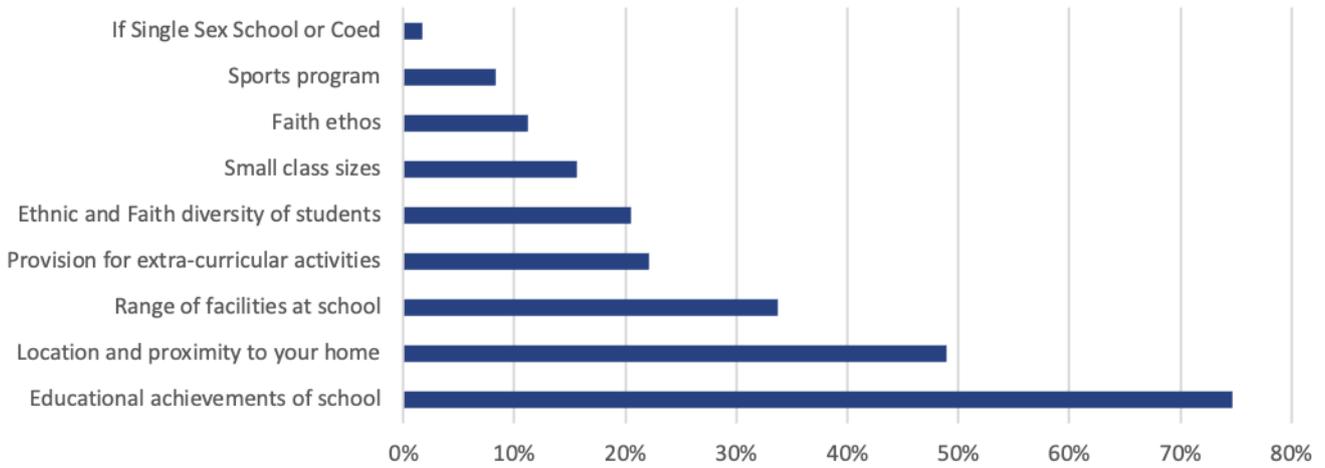
Figure 13h



67 per cent of Amritdharis (initiated) Sikhs said they would send their child to a Sikh faith school, compared to just 39 per cent of those who are not Amritdhari (non-initiated) Sikhs (figure 13h).

FACTORS FOR CHOICE OF SCHOOL

Figure 13i



Three-quarters of British Sikhs (75 per cent) said they would look at the educational achievements of the school as a factor for choosing a school for their children, and fewer than 2 per cent of Sikhs would look at whether it was a single sex or coeducation school.

Almost half of British Sikhs (49 per cent) said that the location and proximity of the school to their home was a factor of choice, whilst a third of respondents (34 per cent) said they would look at the range of facilities offered by the school.

Around one in five Sikhs (21 per cent) considered the ethnic and faith diversity of students as a factor of choice.

Surprisingly, only 11 per cent of Sikhs saw faith ethos as a factor of choice.



# Organ Donation

Until May 2020, organ donation after death in England was subject to people “opting in” through registering their wishes, or their families giving permission after their death. The [Organ Donation Deemed Consent Act 2019](#) came into effect in England in May 2020, shifting to an “opt-out” system. This assumes that your organs can be donated unless you have positively opted out. Scotland and Wales have also now moved to opt-out systems, while Northern Ireland is planning to consult on this later in 2020.

As the article earlier in this report discusses, there has been a lot of activity in recent years to increase awareness of the need for organ donation, especially during 2018 and 2019. The BSR 2020 survey sought to assess the level of awareness and acceptability that has been achieved, asking questions on whether people know about the change in law, whether they were happy to be a donor automatically, their attitude towards organ donation being considered a form of *seva* or selfless service, and whether they have discussed their wishes with family members. The responses to these survey questions are discussed below.

## DID YOU KNOW THE ORGAN DONATION LAW WAS CHANGING IN 2020?

To assess awareness of the change in law to “opt-out”, the BSR survey asked people whether they knew that the law was changing in 2020.

51 per cent of respondents said that they did know. However, this varied by age group, with those aged between 50 and 64 showing the highest level of awareness, at 59 per cent, while the level of awareness decreased with younger age groups (Figure 14a).

54 per cent of female British Sikhs were aware of the law change, compared with 49 per cent of males (Figure 14b).

Figure 14a: By Age

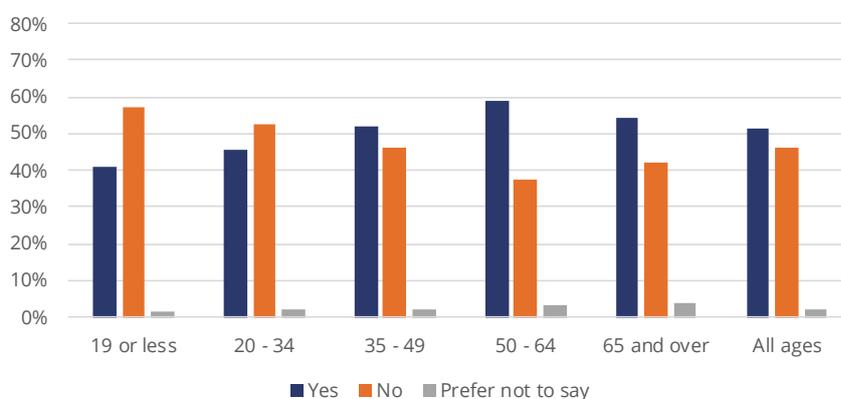
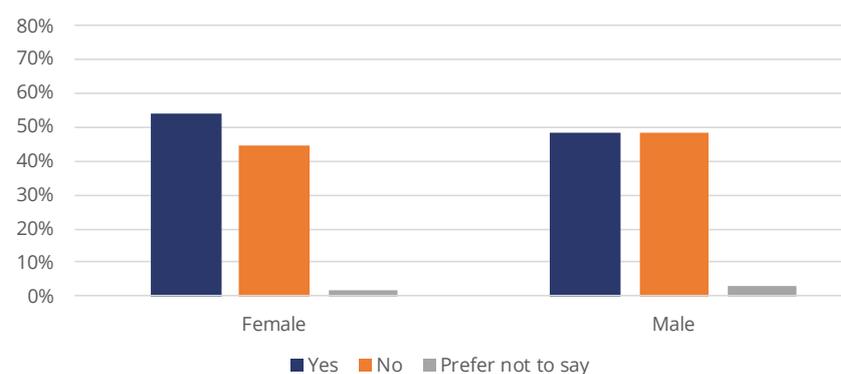


Figure 14b: By Gender



**ARE YOU HAPPY TO STAY ON THE ORGAN DONOR REGISTER AUTOMATICALLY?**

Reflecting the change to the “opt-out” system, BSR asked people whether they were happy to be automatically assumed to be on the register. 62 per cent said “Yes”, 17 per cent said “No”, and another 21 per cent said that they either did not know or did not wish to say.

Over 60 per cent of all age groups said “Yes”, except those aged 19 or less, at 54 per cent (Figure 14c). There was little difference between males and females, with over 62 per cent of both saying that they were happy to be assumed to be organ donors automatically (Figure 14d).

Figure 14c: By Age

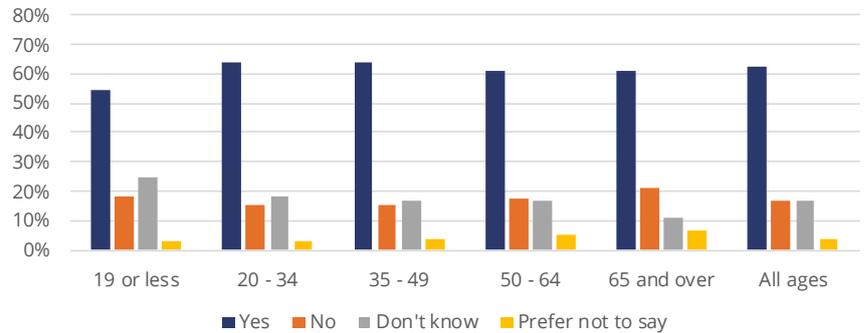
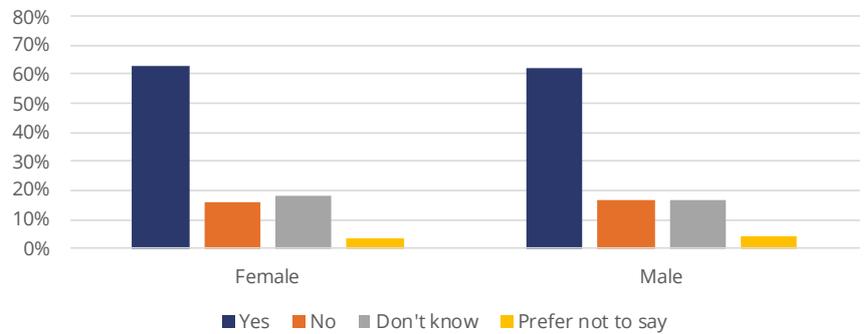


Figure 14d: By Gender



**DO YOU CONSIDER ORGAN DONATION TO BE A FORM OF SEVA AFTER PASSING AWAY?**

Some Sikhs consider organ donation to be a form of *seva* (selfless service) after they have passed away. BSR asked British Sikhs if they agree with this definition.

67 per cent said that they did consider organ donation as a form of *seva*, whereas 11 per cent said they did not (Figure 14e). 22 per cent said that they either did not know, or did not wish to say.

66 per cent of females and 68 per cent of males agreed with the idea of organ donation being a form of *seva* (Figure 14f).

Figure 14e: By Age

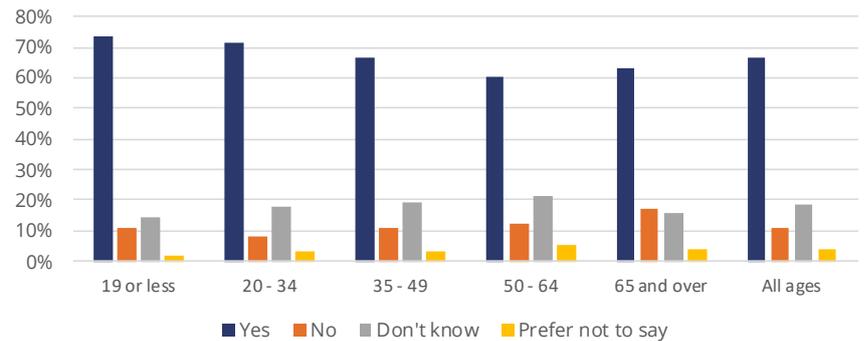
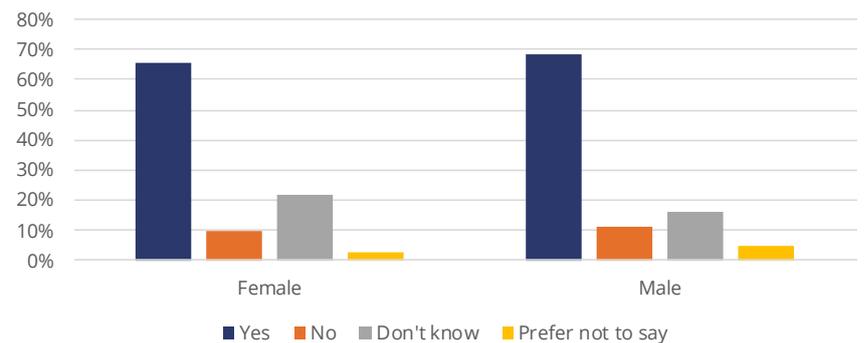


Figure 14f: By Gender



## HAVE YOU DISCUSSED YOUR WISHES REGARDING ORGAN DONATION WITH YOUR FAMILY?

Under the new “opt-out” system, family members of a deceased person can refuse permission for organs to be taken. It is therefore important that families discuss their views and wishes about organ donation, so that they are aware of each other’s opinions if such a situation was to arise. BSR asked British Sikhs whether they had discussed their wishes with their families. 34 per cent of the total said that they had discussed this issue with their families. However, there was variation between age groups, with the percentage increasing with age (Figure 14g). While only 27 per cent of those aged 19 or less had discussed within families, this rose to 34 per cent for those aged between 35 and 49 years, and over 40 per cent for those aged 65 and over. There was also a difference between males and females, with 38 per cent of females saying that they had discussed their wishes with family members, whereas only 30 per cent of men said they had done so (Figure 14h).

Figure 14g: By Age

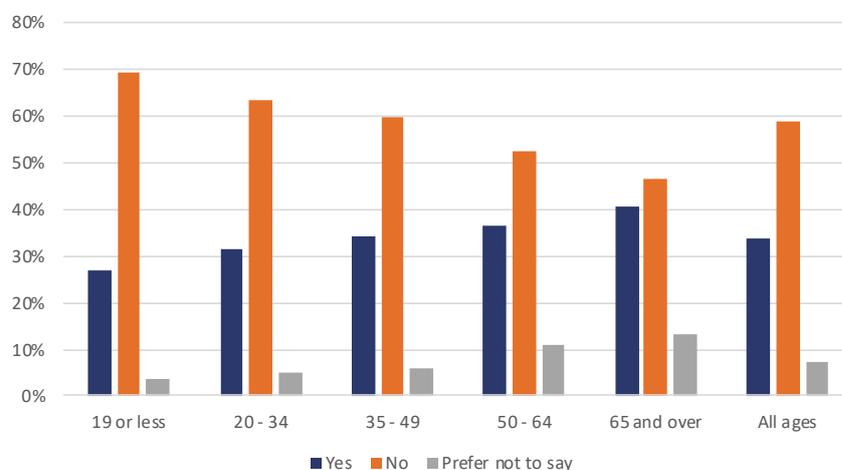
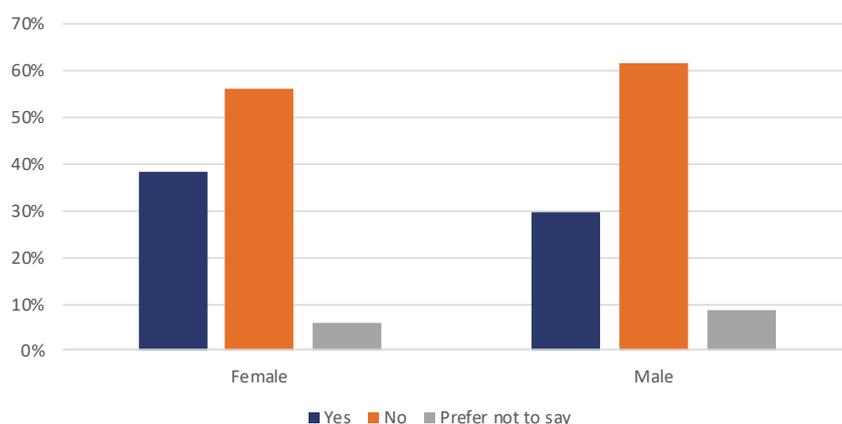


Figure 14h: By Gender



Last year, BSR 2019 had asked British Sikhs whether they had registered for organ donation or carried an organ donor card. Overall, 40 per cent had said yes. The difference between males and females was similar to that for those who said for BSR 2020 that they had discussed the issue with family members. 44 per cent of females said that they had registered or carried a donor card, whereas 35 per cent of men said they did so. It would appear that women are more likely to discuss the issue with family members, and actually act on it by registering their wish to donate organs, compared with men.

The BSR 2019 survey had also asked whether people would respect a relative’s wishes if they had registered to donate their organs. 94 per cent had said that they would respect their relative’s wishes. This reinforces the need to have open discussion of this topic, so that family members are aware of each other’s views.

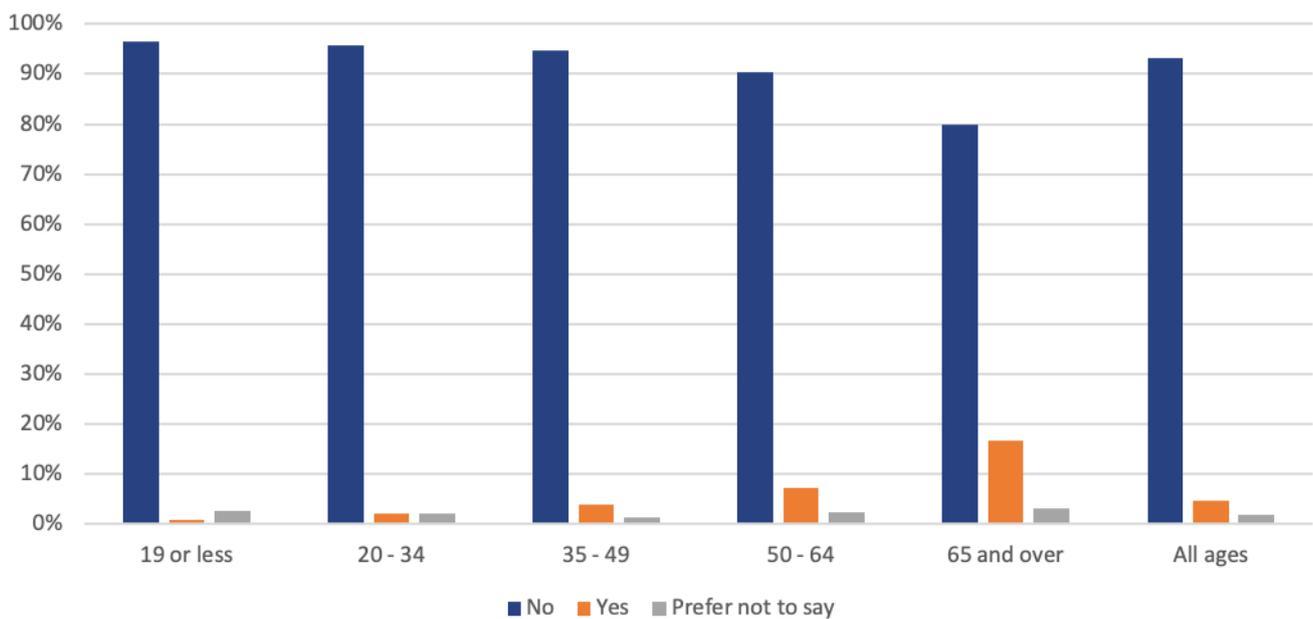
# Disability

Disability is not just about a person having an impeding health condition, but also how this state impacts them in their environment. This includes physical impairments that limit and restrict a person's normal activity of daily living as well as invisible disabilities not immediately apparent, which also affect everyday life.

Disability was not spoken about and was kept hidden because it used to be considered somewhat of a taboo subject within the South Asian community due to perceived social stigma, but with changing mind-sets it is now more openly discussed with family, friends and healthcare professionals. This has gone some way towards helping with appropriate support and assistance being provided to British Sikhs who identify as disabled, whether that help is of a physical, medical, emotional or financial nature.

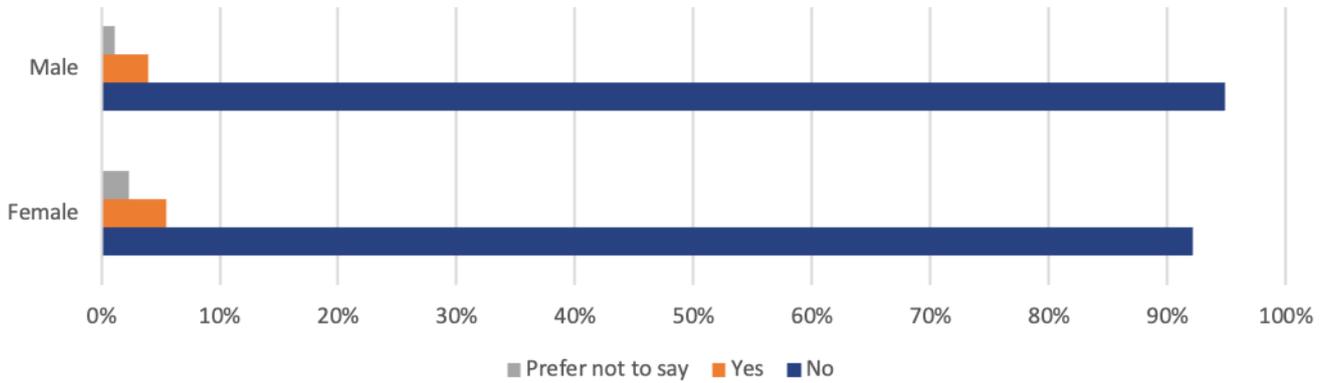
## DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE DISABLED?

Figure 15a: By Age



The data shows that there are disabled people in all age groups, with the large majority of disabled people being aged 65 and above. There were also a minor percentage of respondents who preferred not to state if they had a disability.

Figure 15b: By Gender



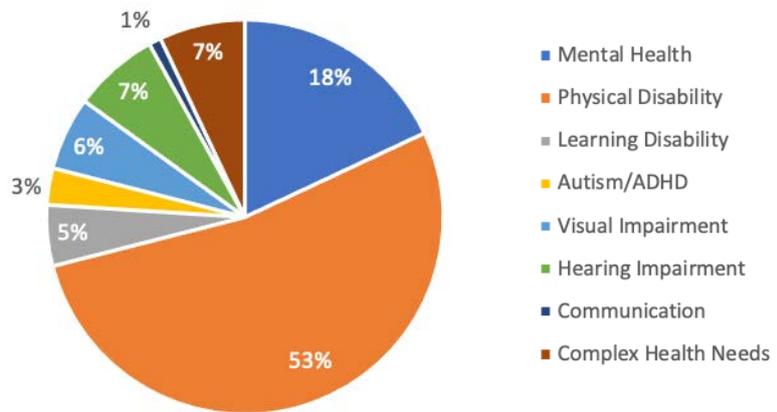
Breaking this data down further by gender showed that around 4% to 5.5% of female and male respondents admitted to having a disability.

**TYPE OF DISABILITY**

There are a range of disabilities that affect British Sikhs, such as Mental Health, Physical Disability, Learning Disability, Autism/ADHD, Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Communication, and Complex Health Needs.

More than 50% of all respondents stated that they had a physical disability, compared to 1% who indicated that their disability affected their communication.

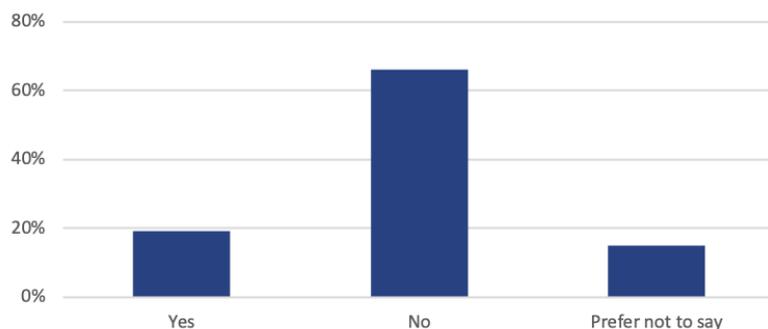
Figure 15c: By Respondents



**ARE THERE ARRANGEMENTS FOR RESPITE CARE FOR FAMILY MEMBERS?**

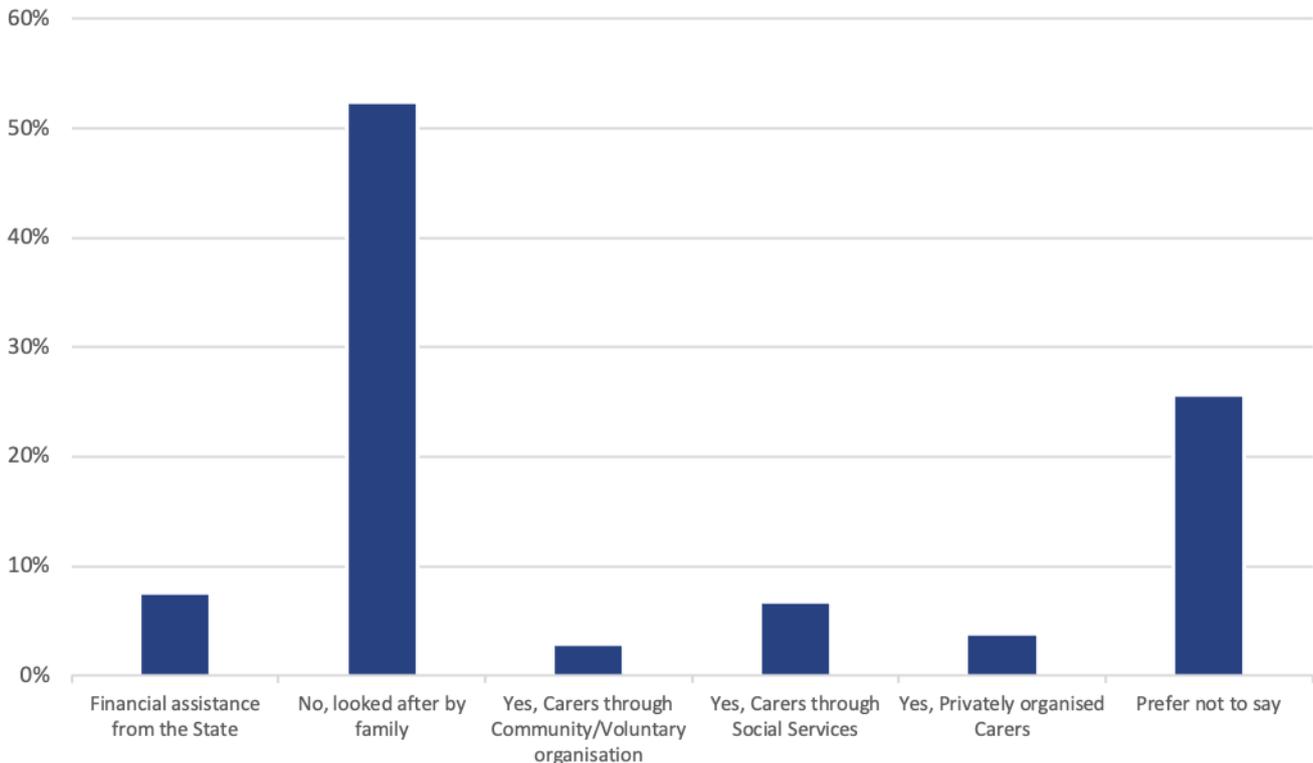
For those family members who cared for relatives, more than 65% stated that it was not possible for them to take a break from such commitments, with only around 20% indicating that they did have access to alternative arrangements that allowed them respite from caring duties. About 15% of respondents preferred not to answer this question.

Figure 15d: By Respondents



## DO YOU RECEIVE ANY ASSISTANCE FROM SOCIAL SERVICES OR CARERS?

Figure 15e: By Respondents



Half of disabled respondents said that they were looked after by family, and a quarter preferred not to say whether they received any assistance. The rest said that they received financial assistance from the state, or had carers through Social Services, community and voluntary organisations, or organised them privately.

Some people with certain disabilities and associated health concerns are at greater risk of secondary conditions, which led to many being classed as vulnerable during the early spread of COVID-19 in the UK and thereby being asked to isolate by healthcare professionals. This in turn meant these disabled people staying at home in order to keep safe, were at the same time missing out on routine and important healthcare, which they no longer had normal access to.

Whilst today disabled people still continue to have many unmet needs, with healthcare advancements, better local authority and government support, improving accessibility and more understanding social and workplace attitudes, there are reasons to be hopeful.

# Loneliness

In one-dimensional terms, loneliness is considered to be a social state due to isolation and it generally tends to affect the older generation more. This has been evident during 2020 with the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, which left many elderly people even more isolated than in normal times. However, a state of loneliness can actually occur for anyone, not just the elderly or those living alone. Loneliness can occur due to perceived isolation by an individual, even when they have people around them. This is because isolation is not just about a lack of physical connection and intimacy, but on a deeper level can be a psychological and/or emotional state for an individual.

## HOW OFTEN DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU LACK COMPANIONSHIP?

55 per cent of respondents who were aged 65 and over answered “Hardly ever or never” (Figure 16a). The age group that felt lacking in companionship “Often” most were those aged 19 or less, at just over 16 per cent. When comparing between the genders, the results showed that women felt the lack of companionship slightly more than men (Figure 16b).

56 per cent of respondents who were married and 36 per cent of those in a civil partnership said that they hardly ever felt lack of companionship, compared with 17 and 15 per cent, respectively, of those who were divorced or separated (Figure 16c). Divorced and widowed respondents were most likely to feel lack of companionship, at 33 and 27 per cent respectively.

Figure 16a: By Age

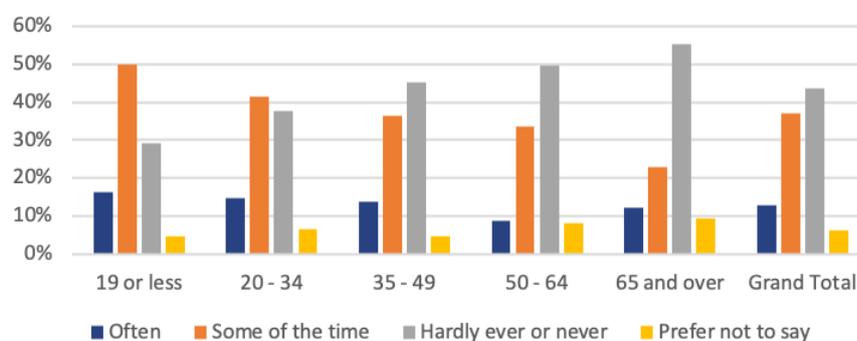


Figure 16b: By Gender

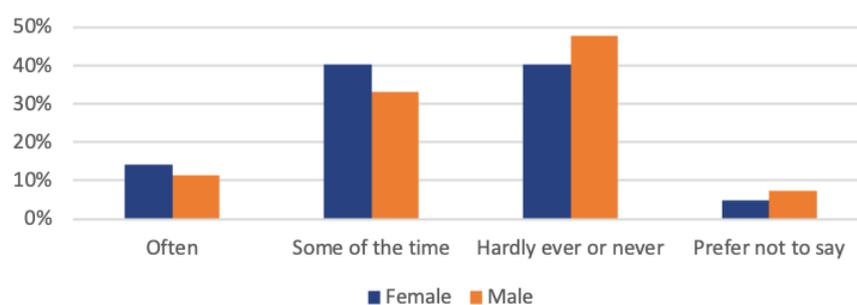
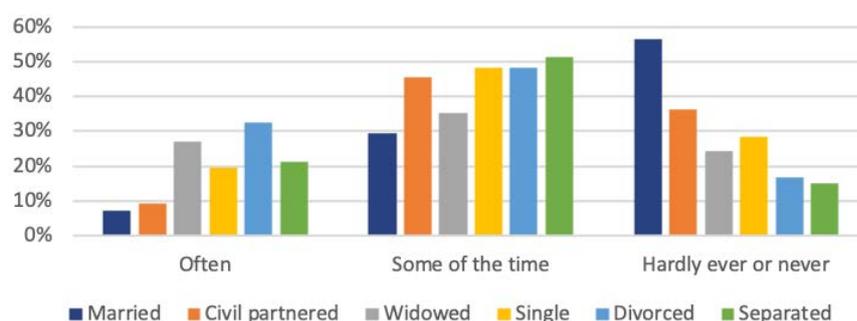


Figure 16c: By Marital Status



HOW OFTEN DO YOU FEEL LEFT OUT?

Figure 16d: By Age

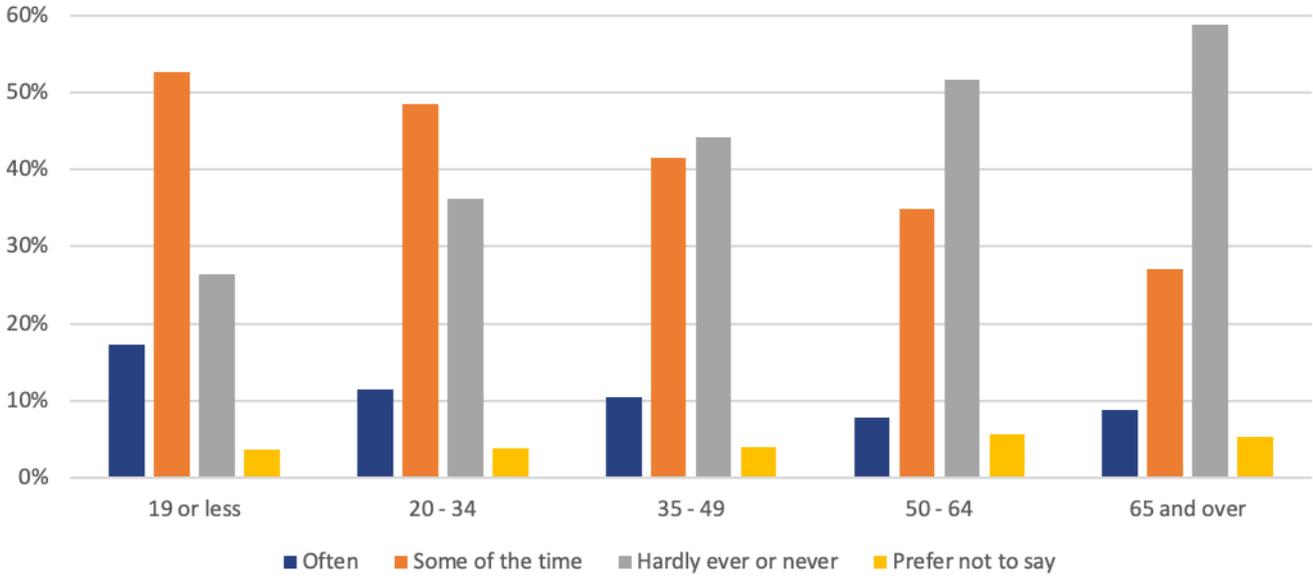
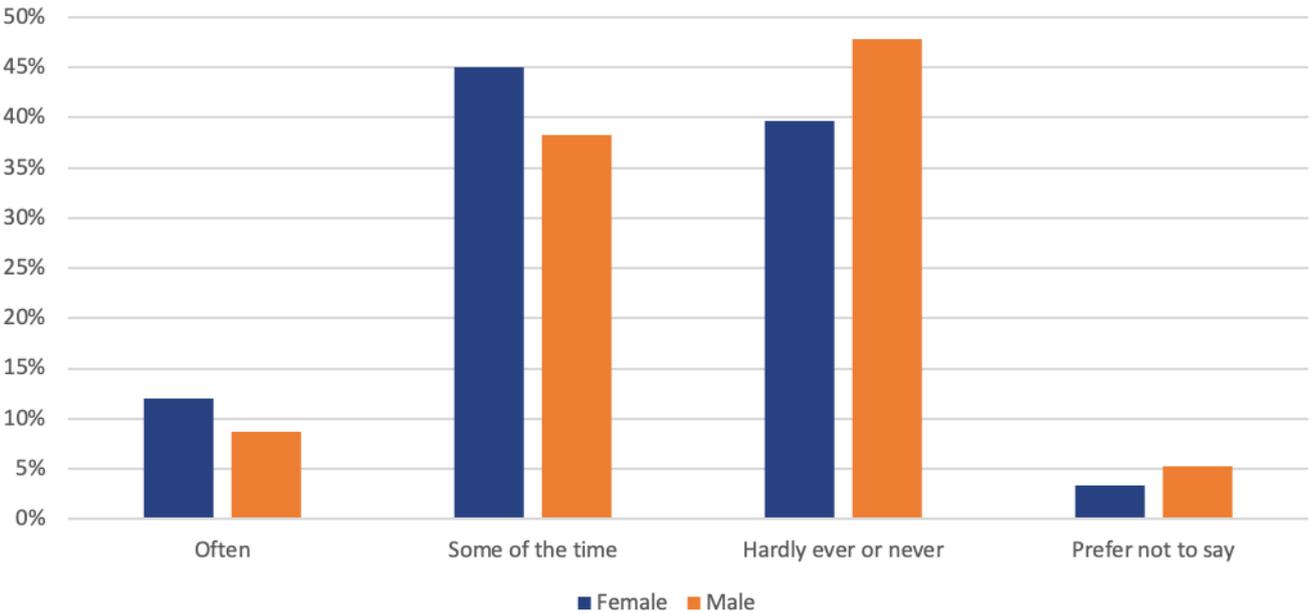


Figure 16e: By Gender



The results of the survey showed the largest disparity between the oldest and youngest age groups. Again the majority of those aged 65 and over answered “Hardly ever or never” at almost 59 per cent (Figure 16d). Those aged 19 or less felt left out the most “Often”, with over 17 per cent of respondents answering this way. Generally, the percentage of respondents feeling left out often or some of the time decreased with age, while those feeling hardly ever left out increased with age.

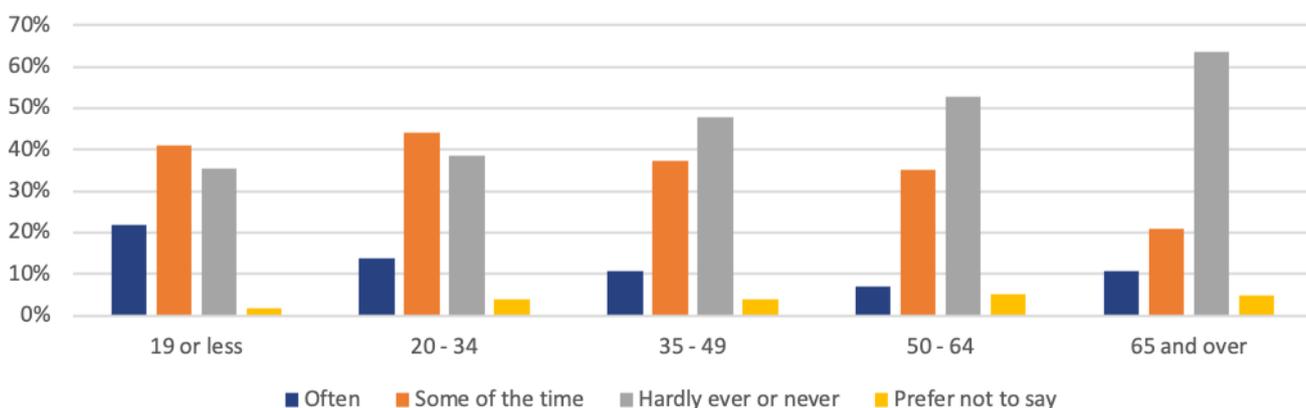
When comparing genders, women respondents felt left out more frequently than men (Figure 16e).

## HOW OFTEN DO YOU FEEL ISOLATED FROM OTHERS? AND HOW OFTEN DO YOU FEEL LONELY?

Once again there was a striking similarity between the results of these two questions and the first two questions on loneliness. The survey continued to show that for these two questions, the answer “Hardly ever or never” was attributed to those aged 65 and over the most (Figures 16f and 16h). The same was once again true for those aged 19 or less, being the age group affected the most “Often” when it came to feeling isolated and lonely. The parallels continued when looking at the results for females and males (Figures 16g and 16i).

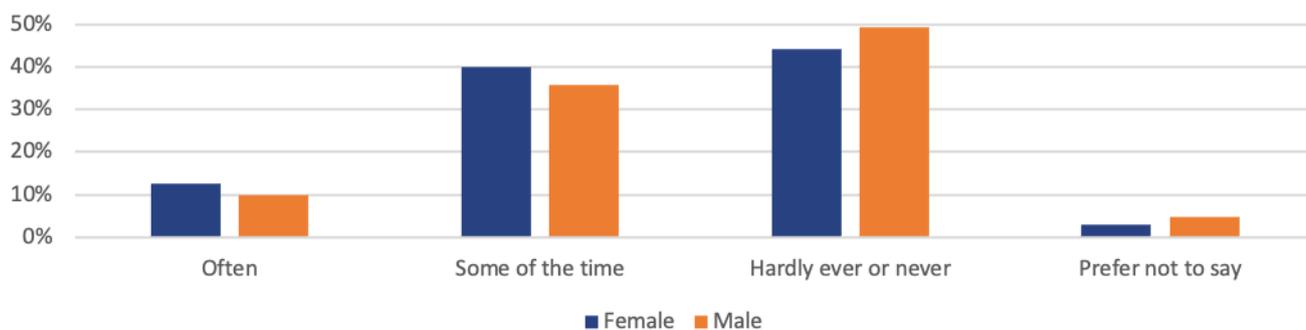
### HOW OFTEN DO YOU FEEL ISOLATED FROM OTHERS?

Figure 16f: By Age



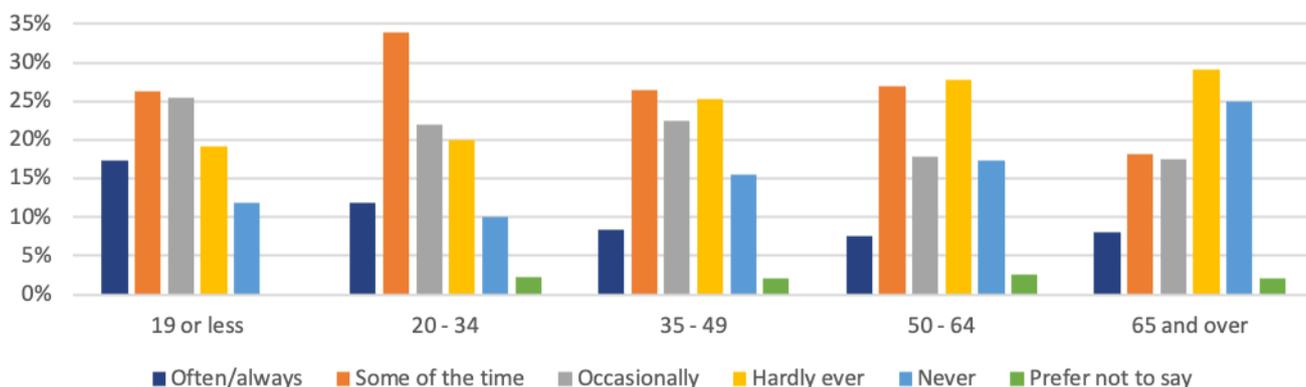
### HOW OFTEN DO YOU FEEL ISOLATED FROM OTHERS?

Figure 16g: By Gender



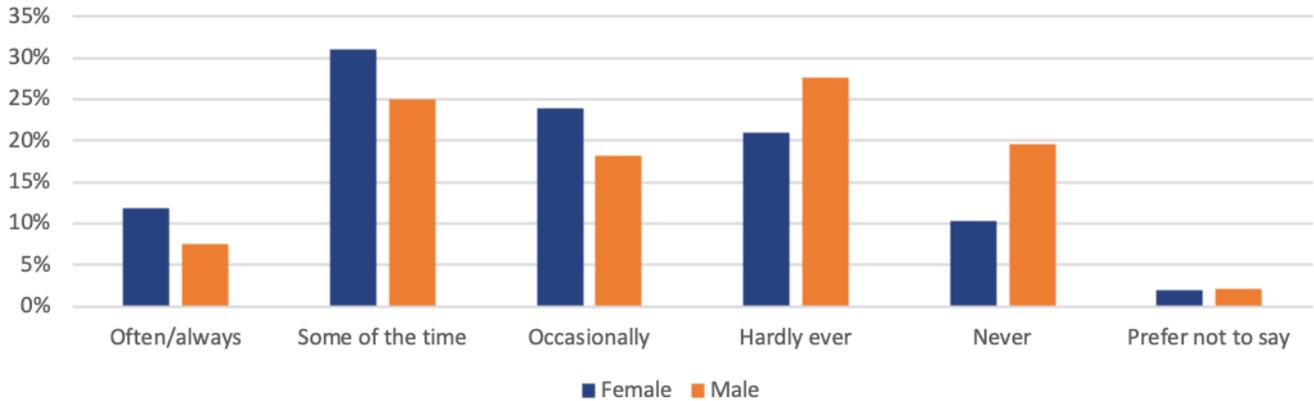
### HOW OFTEN DO YOU FEEL ISOLATED FROM OTHERS?

Figure 16h: By Age



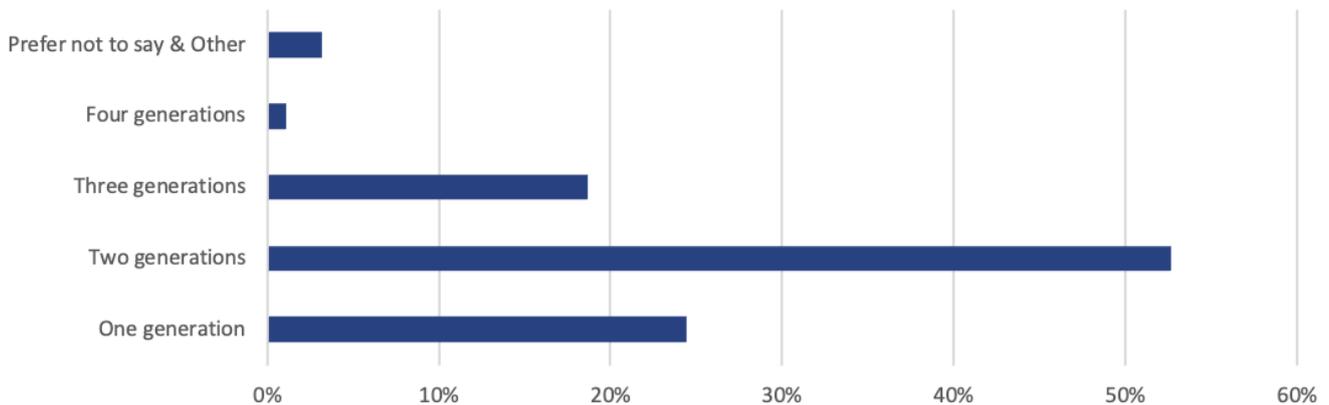
### HOW OFTEN DO YOU FEEL ISOLATED FROM OTHERS?

Figure 16i: By Age



### HOW MANY GENERATIONS OF YOUR FAMILY LIVE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD?

Figure 16j: By Respondents



A large number of families in South Asian communities tend to be of an extended nature and the BSR wanted to explore how true this still is for British Sikhs.

Respondents were asked, “How many generations of your family live in your household?”

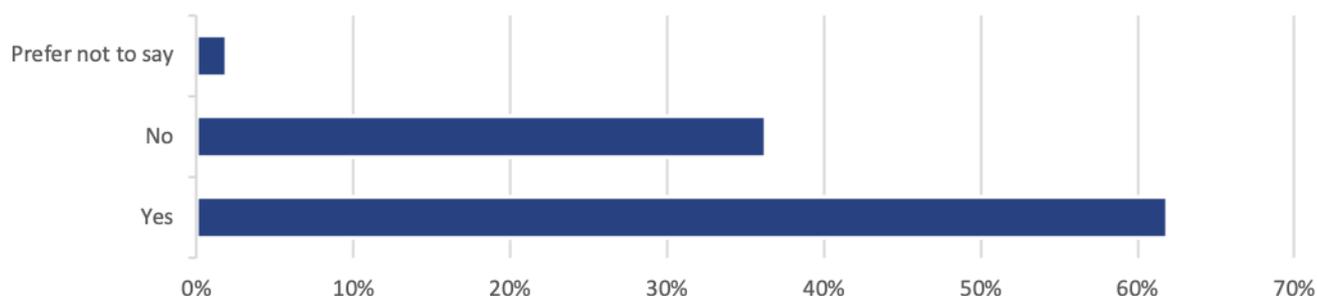
53 per cent of respondents said that they lived in a two-generations household, and 24 per cent in a one generation household, either couples or single persons (Figures 16j). 19 per cent of respondents lived in a household that contained three generations, and 1 per cent reported four generations living together.

Whilst loneliness can be experienced by anyone to some degree, whether it is of a physical or non-physical nature, the on-going COVID-19 pandemic and accompanying social restrictions in the UK is likely to continue to make isolation all the more difficult.

# Connections with Punjab and India

## DO YOU VISIT THE PUNJAB, REGULARLY OR SOMETIMES?

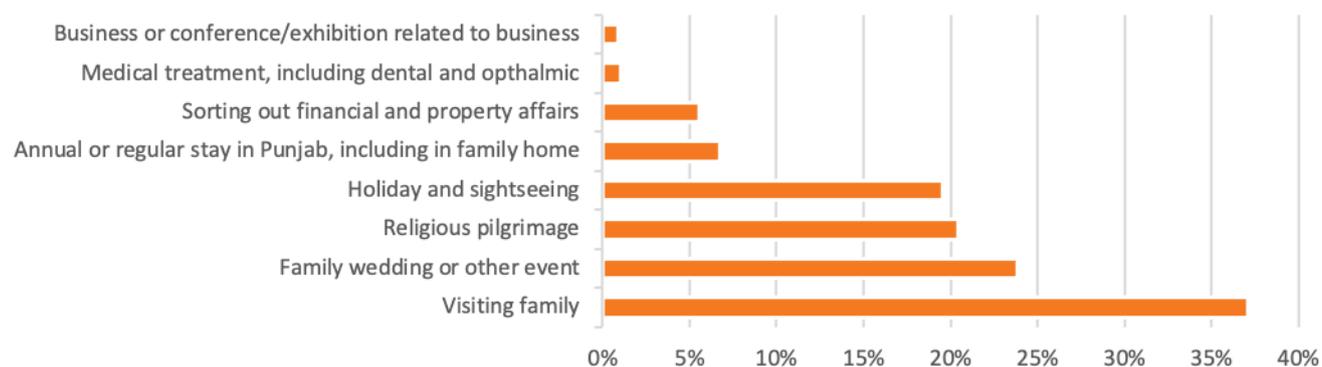
Figure 17a: By Respondents



The BSR survey this year explored the relationship between British Sikhs and Punjab/India. Although only 24 per cent of respondents were born in India, over 60 per cent of respondents said they visit the Punjab regularly (Figure 17a).

## WHAT WAS THE REASON FOR YOUR LAST VISIT TO PUNJAB?

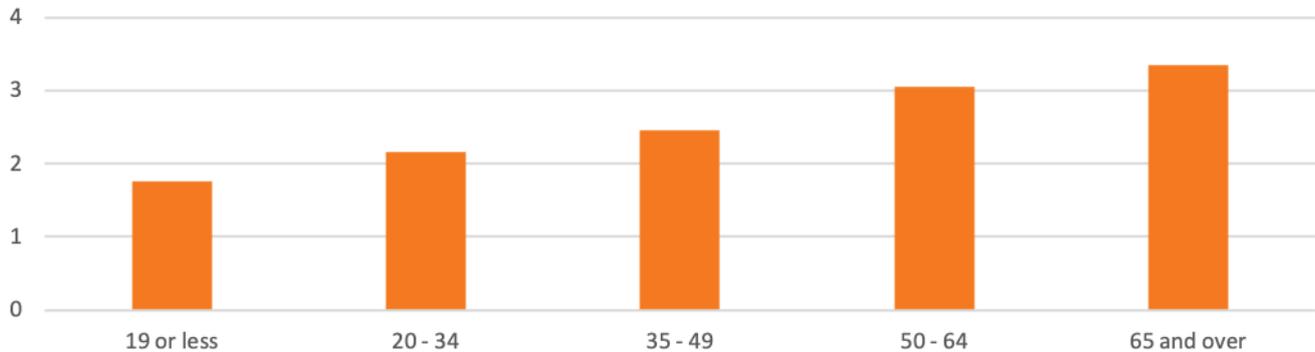
Figure 17b: By Respondents



The most common reasons for their last visit was to visit family or for a relative's wedding/event (Figure 17b). Although pilgrimage is not compulsory for Sikhs, 20 per cent visited Punjab for a religious pilgrimage. It is also worth noting that over 100,000 people visit the Harmandir Sahib (also known as the Golden Temple) every single day, with the visitors and pilgrims coming from many different faiths and backgrounds. 6 per cent of respondents said they needed to sort out financial and property affairs, requiring them to travel to the Punjab.

## HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BEEN TO INDIA LAST 5 YEARS?

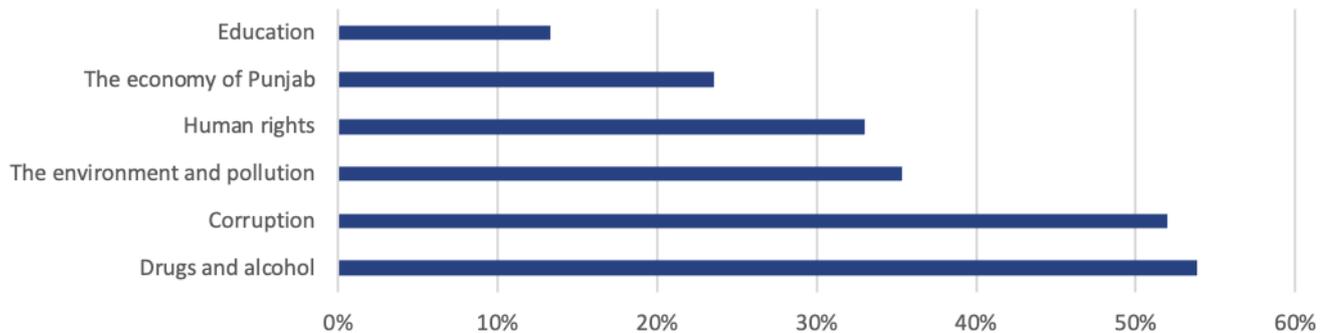
Figure 17c: By Age



The survey asked respondents how many times they have visited India in the last 5 years, with the average response being 2.5 times (Figure 17c). There is an evident trend seen in the average number of times visited by age group. The average number of times visited by the 19 or less category was 1.8 compared to 3.4 for the 65 and over category.

## WHICH PUNJAB ISSUES ARE OF MOST CONCERN TO YOU?

Figure 17d: By Respondents



This year, BSR 2020 asked respondents which Punjab issues concern them the most. It is no surprise that the issue of highest concern in the Punjab was Drugs and Alcohol, with more than half expressing concern about this issue, and also about corruption (Figure 17d). One third of respondents were concerned about the environment and pollution, and about human rights. The economy of Punjab was of concern to about a quarter.

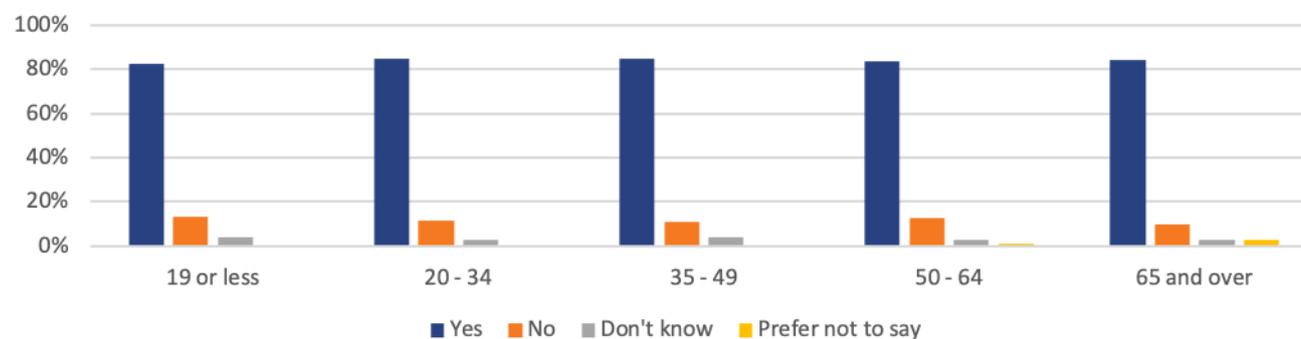
# Drugs in Punjab

The issue of Drugs in Punjab has been a discussion point for many British Sikhs for some years. In November 2018, there was a highly emotive article on the BBC News website which looked at this issue, entitled, "Punjab's drug menace: 'I wanted my son to die.'" The BSR survey this year explored how many people were personally aware of someone they know in Punjab who suffers from drug or substance abuse, whether they were aware of reports about the effect of substance abuse on Punjabi society, and how concerned they were about these reports. The survey also explored whether they were aware of any charities developing solutions and programmes to help the situation and how likely they were to welcome British charities interested in developing such solutions and programmes.

Although about 85 per cent of those surveyed were aware of reports that suggest that substance abuse and drug addiction is causing major impact on Punjabi society (Figure 18a), and youth in particular, only 36 per cent were personally aware of a family member, friend or member of their social circle in Punjab who suffers

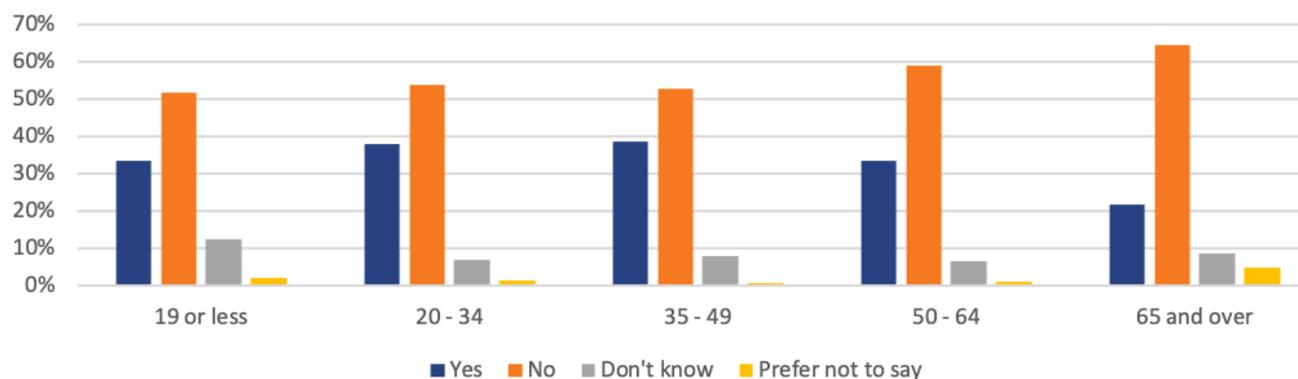
## ARE YOU AWARE OF REPORTS THAT SUGGEST SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND DRUG ADDICTION IS CAUSING A MAJOR IMPACT ON PUNJABI SOCIETY, AND YOUTH IN PARTICULAR?

Figure 18a: By Age



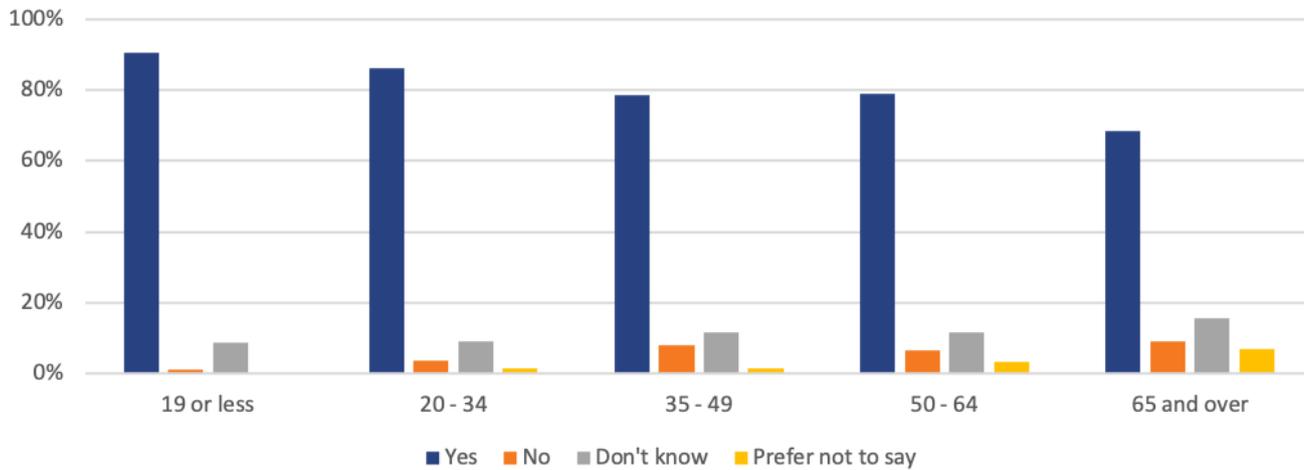
## ARE YOU PERSONALLY AWARE OF A FAMILY MEMBER, FRIEND OR MEMBER OF YOUR SOCIAL CIRCLE IN PUNJAB WHO SUFFERS FROM DRUG OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE?

Figure 18b: By Age



## WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR WELCOME BRITISH CHARITIES INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS AND PROGRAMMES TO HELP THE SITUATION IN PUNJAB?

Figure 18c: By Age



Despite this, it is positive to see that almost 81 per cent of respondents said they would support or welcome charities interested in developing solutions and programmes to help the situation in Punjab, with higher support amongst the younger age groups than the older ones (Figure 18c).

When analysing these figures, it is important to understand that the British Sikh population is made up of Sikhs with various backgrounds. Some left Punjab many generations ago, migrating to countries such as Kenya, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Afghanistan, so it is highly likely that they may not personally be aware of someone in Punjab who suffers from drugs or substance abuse. Equally, others have come directly from Punjab, some only in the UK to work or study temporarily, and they are more likely to be personally aware of a family member, friend or member of their social circle in Punjab who suffers from drugs or substance abuse. Many who are settled here still have very close connections in Punjab and also visit the region regularly.

The BSR shows that elderly respondents (65 and over) and Amritdhari Sikhs are the most concerned about these reports, with figures reaching over 70 per cent for both groups.

Although Punjab was once a transit point on the drug route, it has now become a major consumer base. The All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Delhi conducted the first comprehensive study in 2015, to estimate the magnitude of drug addiction in Punjab, and the report concluded that there were more than 200,000 addicts in the state. A recent report prepared by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, entitled 'Magnitude of Substance Use in India 2019' mentions Punjab as one of the States with higher-than-national prevalence of cannabis.

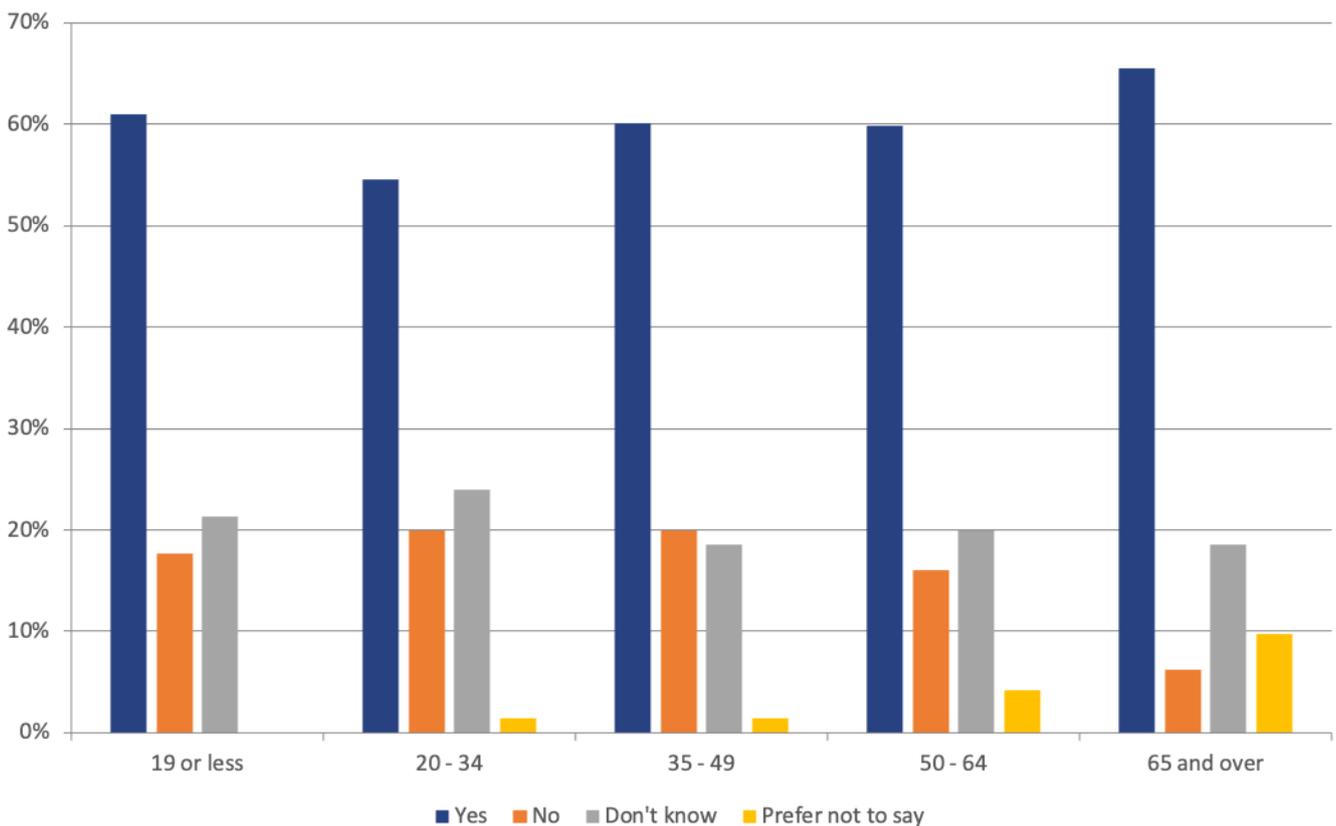
Documentaries such as 'Toxification' by Rehmat Rayatt have also raised awareness amongst British Sikhs of the plight of Punjabi farmers aged 50 and above who have turned to substance abuse due to the dire financial situation they find themselves in.

# Art

Art is considered to be important to many cultures, religions and backgrounds. The BSR survey asked whether respondents considered that art is important to them as a Sikh. 59 per cent of all respondents said that art was important to them. Figure 19a below shows that about 65 per cent of those aged 65 and over, and about 55 percent of those aged 20-34, stated that they consider art to be important to them, while about 60 per cent of other age groups felt the same. Only 18 per cent in total across the various age groups did not think that art was important, another 20 per cent did not know whether art is important or not, and 3 per cent preferred not to answer this question.

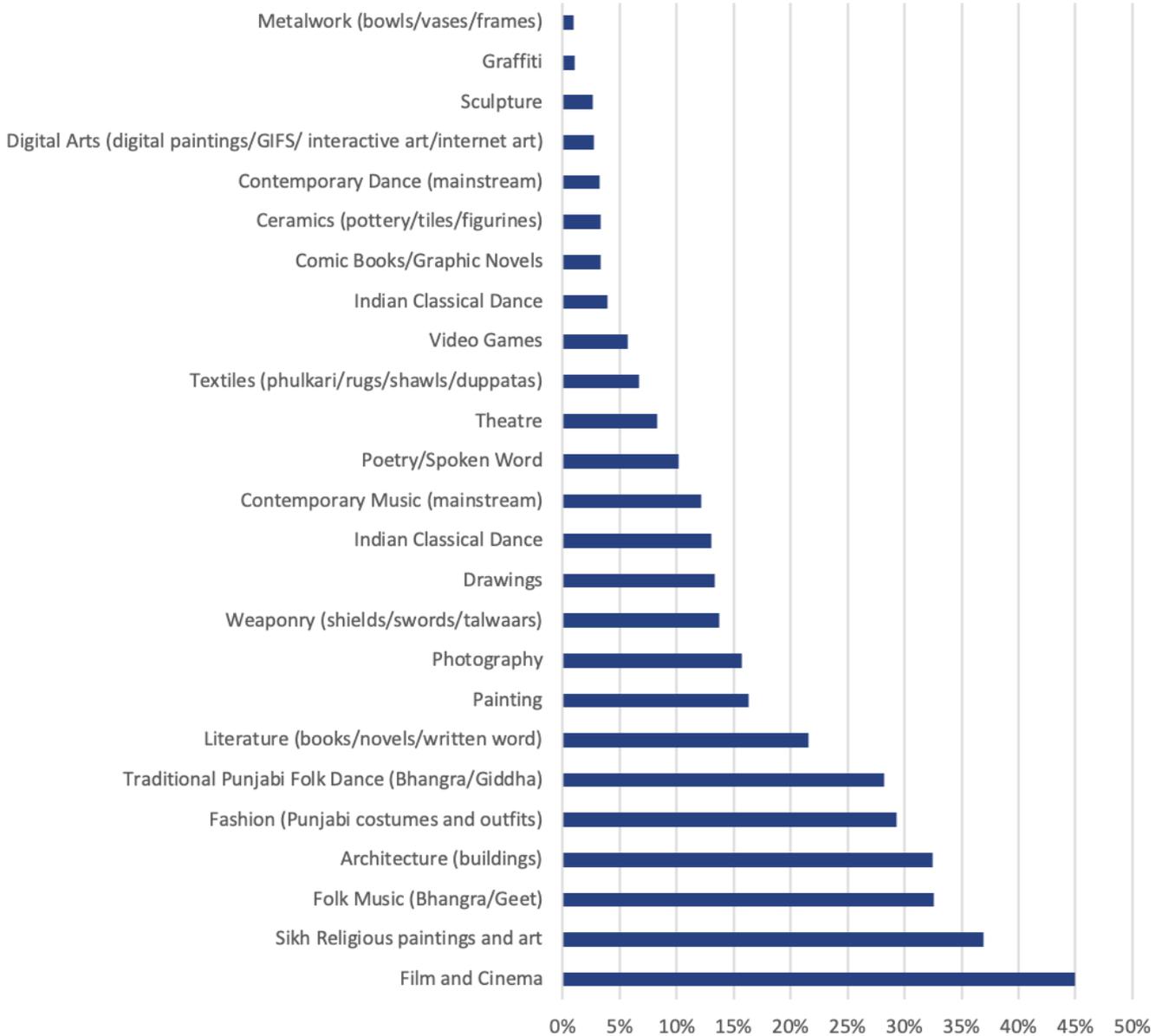
## IS ART IMPORTANT TO YOU AS A SIKH?

Figure 19a



WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ART FORMS ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN?

Figure 19b



For those that consider art is important, 56 per cent were females and 62 per cent were males. Respondents were asked to specify what types of art they are interested in, and asked to select three from a list. The most popular category of interest, at 45 per cent, was Film and Cinema followed by Sikh Religious Paintings and Art (37 per cent) and then Folk Music (Bhangra/Geet) at 33 per cent. Architecture was supported by 32 per cent and Traditional Punjabi Folk Dance (Bhangra/Giddha) by 28 per cent. Most of the respondents were interested in film, cinema, music and dance compared to ceramics, comic books/graphic novel, sculptures and video games.

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# British Sikh Report 2020

The British Sikh Report (BSR) has been published annually since 2013. It is based on a survey of Sikhs living in the UK, gathering information about views on their faith, and on topical British issues – political, economic, social and cultural

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