

UK Veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds

FINAL REPORT

by

Gaby Atfield, David Owen, Emily Erickson and Adreana
Glendinning

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Warwick Institute for Employment Research
University of Warwick

Contact details

Gaby Atfield

Warwick Institute for Employment Research

University of Warwick

Coventry CV4 7AL

+44(0)24 76 150419

g.j.atfield@warwick.ac.uk

<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier>

WARWICK INSTITUTE *for*
EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH



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Executive Summary

This project was commissioned by the Office for Veterans' Affairs to provide a better understanding of the lived experience of UK armed forces veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds, and the factors influencing their experiences. This involved undertaking a quantitative survey and qualitative interviews with veterans from ethnic minorities across UK, representing a range of demographic groups. The detailed information gathered from ethnic minority veterans has been placed within the context of the experience of veterans from the white majority through a review of the literature and analysis of data from MoD and ONS statistical sources.

The project gathered information on the experience of people from ethnic minorities while serving in the Armed Forces as part of the ethnic minority group; how ethnic minority veterans find relevant information and access veterans support services; the socio-economic characteristics of ethnic minority veterans; their experience in accessing housing, the labour market and health; and their views about public perceptions of service, the ethnic minority UK veteran community, and how this affects them post service.

A key focus of the research was to understand the aspirations and expectations of ethnic minority veterans in order to identify gaps in support and areas of good practice that can be developed further to meet unmet needs.

Key findings

Existing data on veteran transitions and integration

- There is a lack of literature that specifically looks at the experiences of ethnic minority veterans' experiences of integration into civilian life. The strongest body of evidence relates to experiences of employment and labour market integration, with relatively little or no evidence being available on issues such as housing, finance and debt and social integration and cohesion. The literature review indicated that cultural factors might result in ethnic minority veterans experiencing a less successful transition to civilian life than white veterans.
- The main sources of existing quantitative data are the Career Transition Partnership statistics on veteran transitions to civilian employment and the 2021 Census of Population. These sources revealed that ethnic minority veterans are younger on average than white veterans, and thus are less likely to have health problems, but are less successful than white veterans in accessing employment. Ethnic minority veterans are more likely than white veterans to be unemployed (Black veterans are more than twice as likely than white veterans to be unemployed) and work in lower-skilled occupations. The public sector is a major source of employment for veterans, especially those from ethnic minorities.

Employment

- The majority reported that they had a good transition to civilian life, with those whose role in the forces had a civilian equivalent (e.g. nurses) having the easiest experiences.
- The survey found the public and financial sectors were the largest source of employment and the most common occupations were skilled jobs. No clear association

was found between service branch and type of civilian employment for ethnic minorities.

- There was polarisation in the extent to which veterans aspired to finding employment that closely matched the type of work they had done while in the Armed Forces. Some veterans aimed to move into employment that shared many of the same characteristics of the job in the Armed Forces, particularly where this job involved some degree of managerial or leadership responsibility. However, another significant group wanted a clean break from the military and wanted more advice about how to demonstrate the transferability of their skills into a very different working environment.
- A fifth of respondents thought their current job closely matched their skills and experiences, while 14 per cent thought their job was unsuitable. Participants generally felt that their experience in the forces was beneficial in finding work. About a fifth had encountered racism related to employment. To an extent, veterans experience the same difficulties as the civilian population in making transitions in the labour market. However, perceptions and stereotypes of the military and the type of person who had been in the military affected veterans' experiences, both positively and negatively. For the ethnic minority veterans, this was further complicated by perceptions about people from different ethnic backgrounds and, in particular, a disjuncture or mismatch between how employers tended to think about veterans and how they tended to think about people from particular ethnic minority backgrounds. Participants noted that employers found it hard to relate to their experiences or to work out what to expect of them because they did not align with their more general view of what a veteran would be like or the attitudes and attributes that they would possess. This points to a need to promote better understanding amongst employers of ethnic minority veterans in the labour market.
- The survey of ethnic minority veterans conducted for this project found that those veterans who had been able to plan for their post-Service experiences had the most successful transitions into civilian employment.

Finance and debt

- Overall, 42% of veterans participating in the survey had not received any form of financial advice before leaving the services and it was a commonly held view that certain groups of veterans lacked experience in managing their financial affairs as they had not needed to do so to a great extent while in the Services. Most had gained their knowledge after leaving the armed forces, with this knowledge largely coming as a result of simple experience. Financial security was a major concern for ethnic minority veterans, with nearly a quarter being concerned about paying bills, but most of the concerns of the ethnic minority veterans echo the concerns of people in wider society about the cost of living.
- There was little evidence that veterans from an ethnic minority background had specific needs over and above the needs of veterans generally in relation to finance and debt.

Health

- Advice on health-related issues was commonly given to veterans before they left the Services, and this was particularly evident amongst the most recent Service-leavers. Views on how good this advice had been were somewhat mixed, with many veterans

being happy with a largely sign-posting service, but there was some evidence that support for veterans experiencing particular challenges was somewhat lacking or not delivered appropriately.

- The largest barrier to the delivery of appropriate advice to ethnic minority veterans appears to be an unwillingness on the part of veterans to admit to difficulties and to seek advice. This was particularly the case in relation to mental health support. This suggests that there is a need for more proactive advice giving, but also in promoting attitudinal change amongst the veteran population as a whole. There was little evidence to suggest that ethnic minority veterans were in need of specific support alongside the support delivered to veterans generally.

Social and community integration

- Ethnic minority veterans reported low levels of advice and support in relation to social and community integration. As in the case of employment, there appeared to be some anxiety about how ethnic minority veterans would be received by the wider civilian population, but despite this, participants reported high levels of satisfaction with their personal experiences of integration in this sphere.
- Again as in the case of employment integration, aspirations were somewhat polarised in terms of the extent to which participants aspired to retain and enact a veteran identity after leaving the Services, with some aspiring to a continued sense of belonging to a wider veteran, or ethnic minority veteran, community while others sought a clean break from this. There were particular concerns about the loss of what some participants regarded as a ready-made social group in the military and while the majority of participants reported having good relations with their neighbours, 22% reported that they sometimes or often felt lonely.
- To a certain extent, the difficulties faced by ethnic minority veterans in integrating into local communities were simply those most people experience when attempting to integrate into a new community, and those who reported the greatest difficulties were also those who had been living in their local area for the shortest time. Family, and in some cases, pre-existing friendships were most frequently mentioned as facilitators in making a smooth transition into the community.
- Roughly a quarter of ethnic minority veterans reported that people responded positively when learning that they were a veteran, while a similar proportion reported that people responded negatively. There was also evidence of the disjuncture between ideas and expectations of veterans and those around ethnic minorities, with participants again reporting that people were surprised to learn that someone from an ethnic minority background had served in the Armed Forces.

Housing

- As in the case of the other domains of integration, there was a relatively high degree of polarisation in the experiences of ethnic minority veterans, in this case between those who had been in the military for a relatively long time and who had achieved a higher rank, often with a job that offered some degree of geographical stability, which had allowed them to buy a house and establish local relationships and those who were younger and who had spent less time in the military who were living with family or private renting after being discharged. This second group expressed concerns about the affordability and stability of their accommodation in line with the civilian population.

While being a veteran had delayed some people's entry into the housing market, meaning that they were in more unstable accommodation at a later age than they liked, there was little evidence that being an ethnic minority had particularly affected their housing situation beyond, in some cases, limiting the areas where they were willing to live.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research, a number of recommendations have been made for the support of ethnic minority veterans

- *Employment:* A more bespoke and individualised service prior to transition that takes into account the existing knowledge and aspirations of all veterans, including those from an ethnic minority background/
- *Finance and debt:* A better tailored advice service for veterans should be made available for longer after leaving the Armed Forces.
- *Health and wellbeing:* A clearer message should be delivered while people are in the Armed Forces and afterwards that seeking support is not a weakness. The stigma in certain communities around needing mental health support in particular should be addressed.
- *Community and relationships:* Support the creation of more geographically diverse veteran communities (using the internet and social media) in order to strengthen social connections for ethnic minority veterans.
- *Housing:* More advice should be provided to ethnic minority veterans about rights to housing and about the financial support that the Armed Forces can offer them to make the transition into civilian housing.
- *Promoting awareness and uptake of advice:* It is necessary to maintain a consistent effort to reach those who are less engaged but who nonetheless may benefit from support.
- *An advice service for veterans from an ethnic minority background:* There is a need for further research to determine both the need for and feasibility of offering more targeted support for veterans from an ethnic minority background, and how this would fit into the existing support framework (were it to be considered necessary).

1. Introduction and background

This project was commissioned by the Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA), which leads UK Government efforts to ensure that the United Kingdom is the best place in the world to be a military veteran (via the Strategy for our Veterans). The UK Armed Forces are now more diverse than ever before, and it is therefore vital that the OVA understands the needs and experiences of all those who have served in the Armed Forces, including those from ethnic minority backgrounds. Support for veterans to lead fulfilling lives while they are in Service and after they have moved on into civilian life will help ensure that the UK is one of the best places in the world to be a veteran. It is important to improve the understanding of the needs and experiences of veterans from minority ethnic backgrounds to make sure that they receive the support necessary for them to live in- and contribute to- society.

However, there is currently a lack of evidence about the experiences or needs of UK service people from ethnic minority backgrounds after leaving the UK Armed Forces, which is vital for policy development. It is crucial that Government and other service providers (such as service charities) are able to better understand their needs in order to ensure that policies towards supporting veterans are inclusive of sections of the veteran population. Research into the experience of veterans in finding work, housing, health, education and building families has identified the diversity of outcomes by service branch, rank and military experience. However, there is very limited evidence about the experiences of ethnic minority veterans. This research project was intended to provide an opportunity for ethnic minority veterans to make their experiences, needs and aspirations known to those who can provide support and bring about the changes necessary to ensure that veterans are not disadvantaged either by their Service or by their ethnic background.

This project used qualitative research techniques because they could provide a more in-depth understanding of the experiences of ethnic minority members of the UK armed forces once they have left the military.

1.1. Aim of this project

This project aimed to provide a better understanding of the lived experience of UK veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds, and the factors influencing their experiences. This was to be achieved through qualitative interviews with veterans from across UK, representing a range of demographic groups (including protected characteristics), within the constraints of the available sample.

The information which the project was designed to yield included:

- a) the experience of veterans in the Armed Forces as part of the ethnic minority group;
- b) their experience of accessing veterans support services;
- c) where ethnic minority UK veterans find information on Government and Veteran related issues.
- d) The characteristics of UK ethnic minority veterans in terms of employment status, well-being, health, housing and education and their experience in accessing housing, the labour market and health, including their experience with service providers.

- e) The views of UK veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds on public perceptions of service, the ethnic minority UK veteran community, and how this affects them post service.

A key focus of the research was to understand the aspirations and expectations of ethnic minority veterans in order to identify gaps in support and areas of good practice that can be developed further to meet unmet needs.

1.2. Methodology

The project took a mixed-methods approach to understanding the integration experiences of ethnic minority veterans. Following a review of the literature and existing quantitative data, an online survey was used to gather information on the experiences of a range of ethnic minority veterans, combined with qualitative interviews with veterans and with stakeholders. The research was organised around the issues and domains of integration highlighted in the “Strategy for our Veterans” (community and relationships; education, employment and skills; finance and debt; health and wellbeing; housing; and the law).

The first stage was to undertake a rapid evidence review of extant literature from the UK and internationally in order to provide a baseline of current evidence.

Analysis of the UK Census of Population 2021 data (veteran data which was published from 2023 onwards) was undertaken to provide analysis of the characteristics of the ethnic minority veteran population. Other datasets (e.g. from the CTP) were also analysed to provide a fuller picture of the labour market experience of veterans.

Eight stakeholder interviews were undertaken with those working with veterans in order to understand their perspective on ethnic minority specific services and support, and what works.

A quantitative and qualitative survey was disseminated to UK veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds via our networks, charities and other stakeholders and snowball sampling with the aim of reaching veterans from different branches of the armed forces. The survey gathered data on veteran demographics, background and personal situation, subjective and objective aspects of lived experience focussing on choices, aspirations and expectations in each of the domains of integration, and access to support services. The survey yielded 163 responses.

1.2.1 Profile of the survey sample

Ethnicity

Broad ethnic group (Ethnic group)	Number	Percentage
Asian or Asian British	46	28
<i>Indian</i>	14	9
<i>Pakistani</i>	19	12
<i>Bangladeshi</i>	5	3
<i>Other Asian background</i>	8	4
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	56	34
<i>Caribbean</i>	17	10
<i>African</i>	30	18
<i>Other Black, Black British, or Caribbean background</i>	9	6
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	61	38
<i>White and Asian</i>	18	11
<i>White and Black Caribbean or Black African</i>	37	23
<i>Any other Mixed or multiple ethnic background</i>	6	4

* No responses were received from veterans from a Chinese background or an Arab background. People from white minority groups were not eligible to participate in the survey.

Gender

	Number	Percentage
Male	114	70
Female	47	29
Prefer not to answer	2	1

Branch of the military

	Number	Percentage
Royal Navy / Royal Marines	62	38
British Army	86	53
Royal Air Force	15	9

Highest rank achieved before leaving the Armed Forces

Rank	Number	Percentage
Junior Non-Commissioned Officer (JNCO) and Other Ranks (OR)	64	39
Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (SNCO) or Warrant Officer (WO)	59	36
Commissioned Officer	21	13
Senior Commissioned Officer	15	9
Other or prefer not to answer	4	3

Time since leaving the Armed Forces

Time	Number	Percentage
Less than 2 years	71	44
2 years but less than 3 years	21	13
3 years but less than 5 years	35	21
5 years but less than 7 years	27	17
7 years but less than 10 years	5	3
More than 10 years	4	2

Qualitative interviews were undertaken with 26 veterans to discuss issues in more depth. These adopted a cross-cutting life-cycle approach, beginning with veterans' experiences while in Service, then moving on to their transition to civilian life, and finally their post-Service experience. Interviews gathered in-depth information on lived experiences in the different domains of integration, focussing on individual experience and experiences of being with others, and on access to support services, focussing primarily on the mechanisms of sourcing information and experiences of engagement, to address issues of why and how (good) engagement occurs.

1.3. Support programmes for veterans

There has been increased attention to the experience of UK armed forces veterans in the aftermath of involvement in the Gulf War and Afghanistan campaigns. This has included the creation of the Office for Veteran Affairs and the adoption of the Veteran Covenant (in the Armed Forces Act, 2006), which includes a range of commitments to improving the welfare of veterans by government departments and local authorities. Most of these were concerned with the welfare of service leavers and their families, but there are some actions directed towards integration into the labour force. For example, the DWP is committed to having an "armed forces champion" in each JobCentre, who is expected (among other things) to raise awareness of the issues faced by veterans in finding employment and to liaise with potential employers of veterans. While the DWP maintains records of contacts with veterans at JobCentres, no statistics are published.

When service personnel leave the armed forces, they can approach the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) for assistance with the transition into civilian employment. The CTP provides employment support to service leavers (including those made redundant and medically discharged) via three types of programme; the Core Resettlement Programme (CRP) for those whose length of service was at least six years; the Employment Support Programme (ESP) for those who had four to six years and the Future Horizons Programme (FH) for those who had served less than four years. Their career support services include workshops, one-to-one guidance and job finding support. They produce regular statistics on the employment status of veterans.

1.4. Statistical information about veterans and leavers

1.4.1. Data sources

The main source of data on service leavers is the annual statistical reports and data sets produced by CTP. These report the labour market status of leavers who used CTP “billable services” 6 months after their contact. This is the only regular time-series data source of information on the changing employment status of veterans leaving the armed forces. The CTP data covers the whole of the UK for the period April to March each year (the most recent published data is for April 2022 to March 2023).

Other sources provide a perspective on all veterans present in the population. From 2014 to 2018, the Ministry of Defence funded the inclusion of questions on armed forces veterans in the Annual Population Survey (APS), which covers the whole UK and makes anonymised data for individuals (microdata) available for analysis. These included whether or not they were a veteran, the year in which they left the armed forces and the branch in which they served. The large number of other variables collected by the APS meant that a detailed socio-economic, demographic and labour market profile of veterans could be constructed. However, the relatively small number of veterans in the population meant that small numbers in the survey limited the detail which could be published from APS data. It also meant that there was a significant risk of disclosing data on identifiable individuals, which meant that the data could only be accessed via a secure analytical environment. Since this source is now rather out-of-date, it was not drawn upon for this report.

The 2021/22 Census of Population was the first to incorporate a question on veteran status. It asked whether an individual was currently serving or had been a member of the regular or reserve forces. Unfortunately, no other questions on veteran status (e.g. date of leaving) were included. The question was not asked in Northern Ireland (due to the high degree of sensitivity to the question revealed in the Census Test). The Census was delayed to June 2022 in Scotland, which makes it difficult to create tabulations for the whole of Great Britain. For England and Wales, the number of standard tables presented which include veteran status is rather limited and does not reveal data on employment status by ethnicity. However, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has made a system available through which users can design their own tables, which enables such tables to be generated. Moreover, microdata has been released for a 5 per cent sample of the population (the Controlled Access Microdata Sample) which also allows bespoke tabulations to be produced.

This report draws upon the CTP statistics in order to provide a picture of the circumstances of veterans 6 months after leaving the forces and the Census of Population to provide a picture of all veterans in the population of England and Wales in 2021.

CTP statistics on the labour market experience of service leavers

The CTP statistics are not comprehensive, because they only cover leavers who used CTP services. This represents about two-thirds of service leavers: 11,427 out of the 16,453 leavers (69.5 per cent) during 2022/23. Employment outcomes were unknown for a further sixth of leavers (1,719 or 15 per cent) and thus employment statistics were based on 9,708 leavers. A high level of attachment to the labour market is demonstrated (Table 1.1), with over 90 per cent of leavers economically active in each year from 2018/19, except for 2020/21 (covering the Covid-19 pandemic). The percentage of leavers in employment 6 months after leaving is over 80 per cent and has increased since the pandemic to 89.3 per cent. The unemployment

rate has fallen from 6.3 per cent in 2018/19 to 3.7 per cent in 2022/23. The percentage of leavers economically active increased over this period, while the overall economic activity rate for the population aged 16 to 64 was falling.

Table 1.1: Employment outcomes for all service leavers, 2018/19 to 2022/23

Year	Leavers	Economic Activity rate (%)	Employment rate (%)	Unemployment rate (%)	Status unknown (%)
2018/19	11,489	91.8	86.1	6.3	18.4
2019/20	12,258	90.0	83.9	6.7	15.5
2020/21	9,471	88.5	83.5	5.6	13.2
2021/22	10,200	90.7	87.6	3.4	14.3
2022/23	11,427	92.7	89.3	3.7	15.0

Source: Career Transition Partnership (CTP) Annual Statistics 2024: UK Regular service personnel employment

Table 1.2: Employment outcomes by type of service leaver, 2022/23

Demographic Group	Valid	Economic activity rate (%)	Employment rate (%)	Unemployment rate (%)
All	9,708	92.7	89.3	3.7
Royal Navy	2,376	93.3	90.7	2.8
Army	5,475	92.5	88.6	4.2
RAF	1,857	92.6	89.4	3.4
Male	8,802	93.3	90.0	3.6
Female	906	86.3	82.5	4.5
Officers	1,366	89.9	85.7	4.6
Other Ranks	8,342	93.1	89.8	3.5
White (including white minorities)	9,057	93.1	90.0	3.3
Ethnic Minorities (excluding white minorities)	535	85.8	77.0	10.2
<i>Non-UK Ethnic Minority</i>	131	73.3	63.4	13.5
Aged under 25	2,495	91.1	86.9	4.7
25 to 29	1,557	94.5	92.2	2.4
30 to 34	1,530	96.1	94.0	2.2
35 to 39	669	91.5	87.0	4.9
40 to 44	1,728	94.7	92.2	2.6
45 to 49	669	94.9	92.1	3.0
50 and over	1,060	84.8	78.7	7.2

Source: Career Transition Partnership (CTP) Annual Statistics 2024: UK Regular service personnel employment

Table 1.2 presents the percentage of leavers economically active or employed, and the percentage of the economically active unemployed 6 months after leaving the armed forces during 2022-23 for a range of demographic characteristics. Navy veterans were most likely to be economically active or employed, while Army veterans were most likely to be unemployed.

Women veterans were less likely than men to be economically active or employed and more likely to be unemployed. Officers were less likely to be in work than Other Ranks (which could be because they leave the forces when they are older). Indeed, the percentage of leavers aged 50 and over economically active was much lower than for other age groups, with 30 to 34 year olds most likely to be economically active. The percentage unemployed was highest for those aged 50 and over, followed by 35 to 39 year olds and those aged under 25.

Veterans from minority ethnic groups were much less likely than white veterans to be economically active or employed. The unemployment rate for ethnic minority veterans was more than 3 times the rate for white veterans. The disadvantage of non-UK ethnic minority veterans was even greater, with less than three-quarters still economically active and more than an eighth of those economically active unemployed (compared to 3.7 per cent for all leavers). A third of economically inactive ethnic minority leavers had not sought employment, compared with a quarter of white veterans. The other main reasons for inactivity among white veterans was being in education (42 per cent) or retirement (18 per cent), but sample size was too small to reveal these percentage for ethnic minorities.

Table 1.3 presents a profile of the type of jobs service leavers held 6 months after leaving the armed forces, using the 9 “major groups” of the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification. The CTP report notes that service leavers as a whole were under-represented compared with the UK population as a whole amongst Managers and Professional occupations, Administrative and Secretarial, Caring and Sales and Customer Service occupations, but over-represented in Associate Professional and Technical, Skilled Trade, Process, Plant and Machine Operative and Elementary Occupations. This pattern of concentration in manual and lower-status occupations was even more marked for ethnic minority service leavers. They were much less likely than white leavers to work in SOC major groups 1 to 3 or 5. However, they were much more likely to work in Administrative and secretarial occupations, Caring and Leisure occupations, Process, Plant and Machine Operative and Elementary Occupations.

Table 1.3: Occupational profile of service leavers by ethnicity 76 months after leaving the armed forces, 2022/23

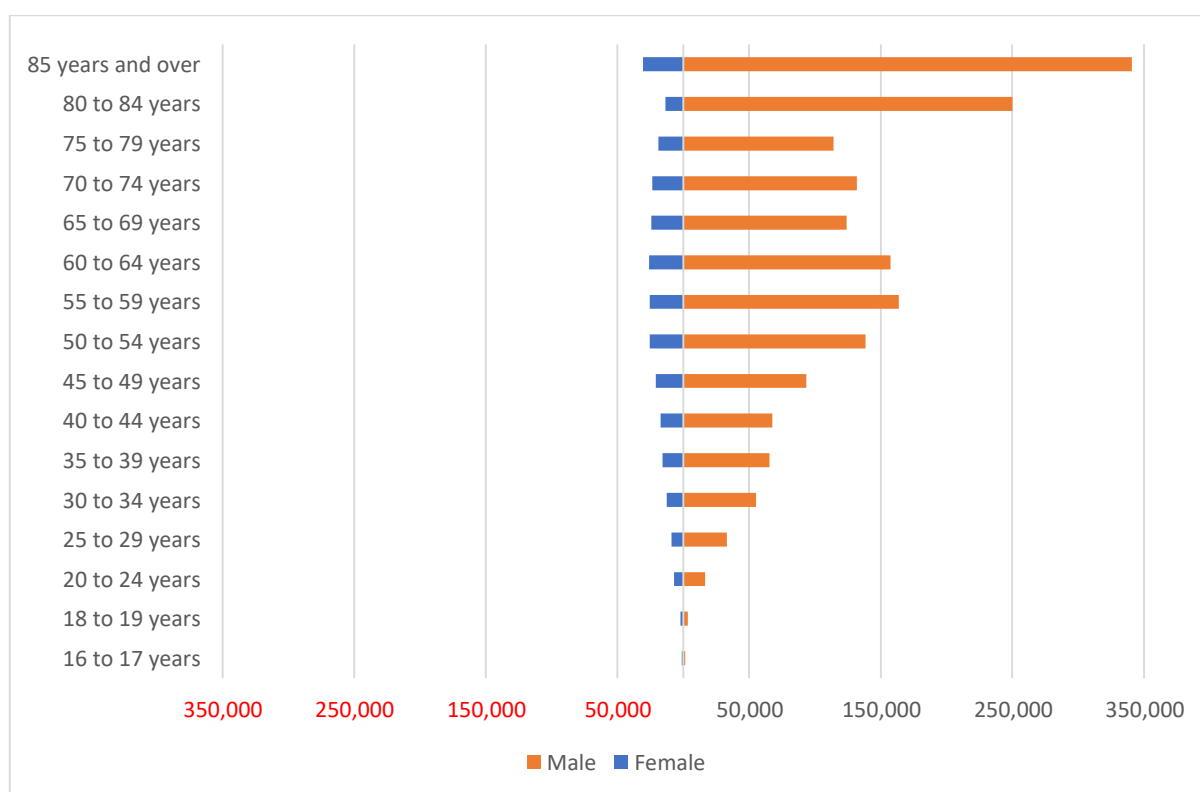
SOC Major occupation group	Number			Percentage of total		
	All	White	Ethnic minority	All	White	Ethnic minority
Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	655	625	25	7.6	7.7	6.1
Professional Occupations	1515	1435	60	17.5	17.6	14.6
Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	1610	1525	65	18.6	18.7	15.9
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	310	285	20	3.6	3.5	4.9
Skilled Trade Occupations	1435	1370	55	16.6	16.8	13.4
Caring, Leisure and other Service Occupations	280	260	20	3.2	3.2	4.9
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	305	290	10	3.5	3.6	2.4
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	920	865	50	10.6	10.6	12.2
Elementary Occupations	875	780	75	10.1	9.6	18.3
All	8665	8150	410	100	100	100

Source: Career Transition Partnership (CTP) Annual Statistics 2024: UK Regular service personnel employment

1.4.2. Age and sex profile of all veterans in Great Britain, 2021/22

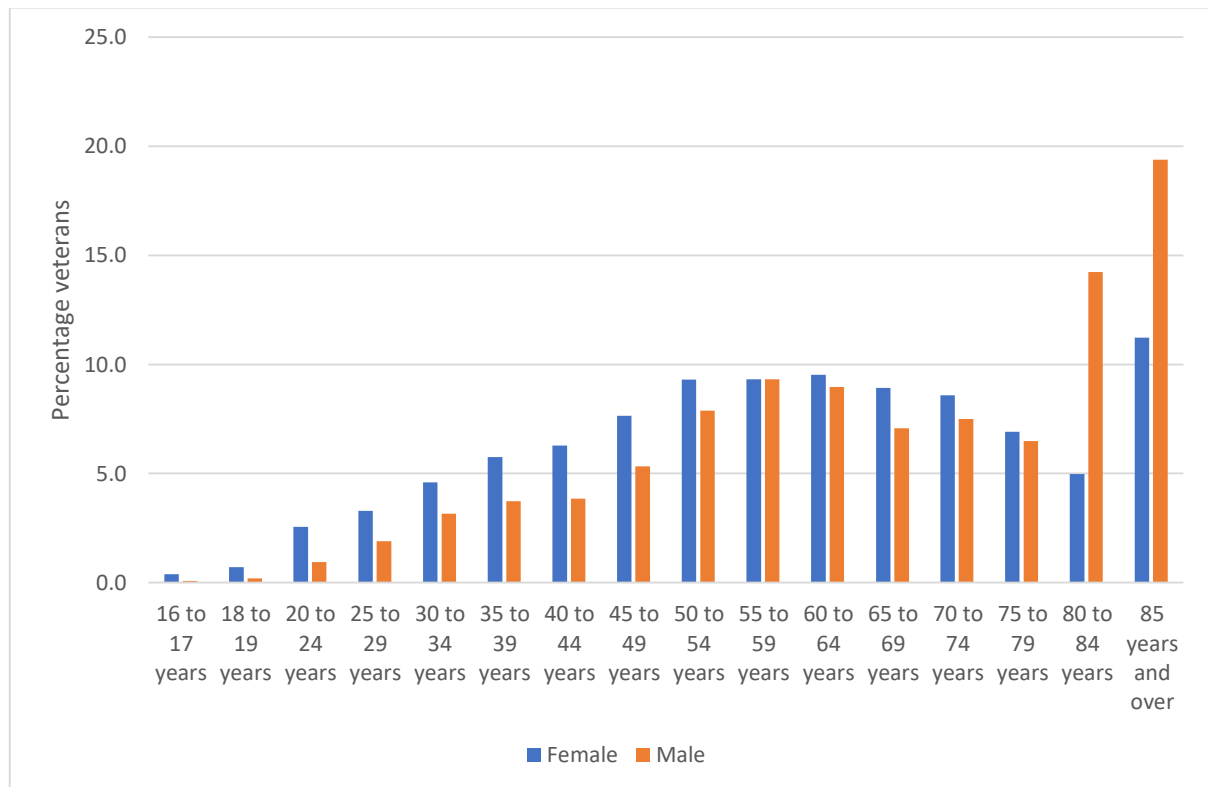
It is important to recognise that armed forces veterans in the population as a whole are relatively concentrated into the older age groups. Figure 1.1 presents a population pyramid of the number of males and females who had ever served in the UK armed forces living in Great Britain in 2021/22, taken from the Census of Population. Of the 2.029 million veterans, half (1.07 million) were aged over 65 and 958 thousand of conventional working age (16 to 64). Of these, 536 thousand were aged between 50 and 64. Only 3.1 per cent of the population had served in the armed forces, with a further 0.7 per cent having served in the reserve forces. The percentage of the population who had served in the armed forces was highest for the oldest age groups and increased with increasing age for those below retirement age (Figure 1.2). The high percentage of veterans among the oldest age groups is largely composed of those who had served in World War 2 or as National Servicemen. The percentage of the population who had served in the armed forces was higher for females than males in the economically active age groups.

Figure 1.1: Number of veterans by sex and 5-year age group in Great Britain, 2021/22



Source: Office for National Statistics (2024) UK armed forces veterans, Great Britain: Census 2021 and Census 2022.

Figure 1.2: Percentage of each age and sex group who had served in the armed forces, Great Britain 2021/22



Source: Office for National Statistics (2024) UK armed forces veterans, Great Britain: Census 2021 and Census 2022.

The ethnic composition of all veterans in England and Wales in 2021 is presented in Tables 1.4 and 1.5. Of the 1.85 million veterans classified by age and sex, 67.5 thousand were from minority ethnic groups (Table 1.4). The largest minority groups in the veteran population were of Mixed parentage, Asian-Others (which would include Gurkhas), Black-Caribbean, Black-African and “Other” ethnicity (including Arab). Overall, 4 per cent of the entire population, 4 per cent of White people and 0.9 per cent of people from minority ethnic groups had served in the armed forces (Table 1.5). Amongst minority ethnic groups, this percentage was highest for those from the Mixed parentage, Black-Caribbean and Other-Asian ethnic groups.

Table 1.4: Ethnic group breakdown of veterans in England and Wales, 2021

Ethnic group	Aged 16 to 24 years	Aged 25 to 34 years	Aged 35 to 49 years	Aged 50 to 64 years	Aged 65 years and over	All ages
White-British	23537	90175	228420	454873	956230	1753235
Other White	1074	2958	8445	8263	11661	32401
Asian-Bangladeshi	321	377	481	150	62	1391
Asian-Indian	551	979	1901	1393	1492	6316
Asian-Pakistani	732	871	1217	647	353	3820
Asian-Other	435	833	1835	4572	3532	11207
Black-African	994	1475	4017	1092	373	7951
Black-Caribbean	312	671	2095	3032	3016	9126
Black-Other	173	186	718	845	475	2397
Other-Chinese	246	279	386	332	318	1561
Other	508	876	2239	2315	1981	7919
Mixed parentage	1204	2569	4205	4797	3013	15788
<i>Ethnic minorities</i>	<i>5476</i>	<i>9116</i>	<i>19094</i>	<i>19175</i>	<i>14615</i>	<i>67476</i>
All ethnic groups	30087	102249	255959	482311	982506	1853112

Source: Census of Population, 2021

Table 1.5: Percentage of age group who were armed forces veterans, by age group. England and Wales, 2021

Ethnic group	Aged 16 to 24 years	Aged 25 to 34 years	Aged 35 to 49 years	Aged 50 to 64 years	Aged 65 years and over	All ages
White-British	0.5	1.7	3.1	5.0	10.6	5.0
Other White	0.3	0.3	0.6	1.3	3.1	0.9
Asian-Bangladeshi	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3
Asian-Indian	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.8	0.4
Asian-Pakistani	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.3
Asian-Other	0.3	0.5	0.7	3.3	5.6	1.5
Black-African	0.4	0.7	1.1	0.5	0.7	0.7
Black-Caribbean	0.4	0.8	1.8	1.8	3.4	1.7
Black-Other	0.4	0.6	1.8	1.8	4.2	1.4
Other-Chinese	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.8	0.4
Other	0.3	0.4	0.7	1.3	2.2	0.8
Mixed parentage	0.4	1.0	1.8	3.6	7.0	1.7
<i>Ethnic minorities</i>	<i>0.4</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>2.1</i>	<i>0.9</i>
All ethnic groups	0.5	1.3	2.3	4.3	9.7	4.0

Source: Census of Population, 2021

1.4.3. Labour market status of veterans in England and Wales

The standard published Census tables do not include breakdowns of the veteran population by economic activity. These can be produced using the flexible table builder released by the

Office for National Statistics, which permits all census variables to be cross-tabulated against each other. However, this facility does not allow tables to be generated which include numbers which could disclose the characteristics of identifiable individuals. Since there were only 67.5 thousand veterans in total, this becomes a significant constraint when attempting to generate information for individual ethnic groups. This problem is eased by grouping ethnic groups into larger aggregates. Thus, the tables on labour market status presented here use a broader 5-fold breakdown of the population, using the Asian, Black, Other, Mixed and White groupings. Because a large percentage of the veteran population is older than 65 and therefore mostly not in the labour force, the focus also switches to people in the conventional economically active age range (aged 16 to 64).

Of the 871 thousand veterans of economically active age, 674 thousand were of white ethnicity and only 42.2 thousand were from minority ethnic groups. There were 689 thousand veterans in work, 39 thousand of which were from ethnic minorities, comprising 30.5 thousand men and 8.9 thousand women (Table 1.6). The share of ethnic minorities in the economically active veteran population is higher for women (8.8 per cent) than for men (5.5 per cent).

Table 1.6: Labour market status of veterans by ethnic group, England and Wales, 2021

Broad ethnic grouping	Employed	Unemployed	Inactive	All	Economically active	% of active
Asian	3061	224	1425	4710	3285	3.1
Black	3036	310	1076	4422	3346	3.0
Mixed or Multiple	2059	130	672	2861	2189	1.9
Other ethnic group	748	74	400	1222	822	0.8
<i>Ethnic minorities</i>	<i>8904</i>	<i>738</i>	<i>3573</i>	<i>13215</i>	<i>9642</i>	<i>8.8</i>
White	103603	3473	29435	136511	107076	91.2
All Females	112507	4211	33008	149726	116718	100.0
Asian	10870	609	2351	13830	11479	1.9
Black	8447	702	2040	11189	9149	1.6
Mixed or Multiple	7606	530	1784	9920	8136	1.4
Other ethnic group	3569	213	930	4712	3782	0.7
<i>Ethnic minorities</i>	<i>30492</i>	<i>2054</i>	<i>7105</i>	<i>39651</i>	<i>32546</i>	<i>5.5</i>
White	545782	21769	113678	681229	567551	94.5
All Males	576274	23823	120783	720880	600097	100.0
Asian	13931	833	3776	18540	14764	2.1
Black	11483	1012	3116	15611	12495	1.8
Mixed or Multiple	9665	660	2456	12781	10325	1.5
Other ethnic group	4317	287	1330	5934	4604	0.7
<i>Ethnic minorities</i>	<i>39396</i>	<i>2792</i>	<i>10678</i>	<i>52866</i>	<i>42188</i>	<i>6.1</i>
White	649385	25242	143113	817740	674627	93.9
All Persons	688781	28034	153791	870606	716815	100.0

Source: Census of Population, 2021

Overall, 82.3 per cent of veterans were economically active, with males (83.2 per cent) more likely than females (78 per cent) to be active in the labour market (Table 1.7). For both men and women, white people were most likely to be economically active, but there was little variation by ethnic group for men. However, women from Mixed/multiple or Black ethnic groups were most likely to be active and Asian women least likely. There was more variation for employment rates, with white people most likely to be employed and Black men and women from the Other and Asian ethnic groups least likely to be employed. White people were least likely to be unemployed and Black people most likely to be unemployed. Both male and female veterans were as or more likely than all people from their ethnic group to be economically active or employed. Veterans from all ethnic minority groups experienced higher economic activity and employment rates than all people from their corresponding ethnic group. The unemployment rate was lower for veterans from all ethnic groups than the average for the population in the corresponding ethnic group, for both men and women.

Table 1.7: Labour market participation of veterans by ethnic group, England and Wales, 2021

Broad ethnic grouping	Labour market rate			Relative to rate for entire population (=1.0)		
	Economic activity	Employment	Unemployment	Economic activity	Employment	Unemployment
Asian	69.7	65.0	6.8	1.2	1.2	0.8
Black	75.7	68.7	9.3	1.1	1.1	0.8
Mixed or Multiple	76.5	72.0	5.9	1.1	1.2	0.6
Other ethnic group	67.3	61.2	9.0	1.2	1.2	0.9
<i>Ethnic minorities</i>	73.0	67.4	7.7	1.2	1.2	0.8
White	78.4	75.9	3.2	1.1	1.1	0.7
All Females	78.0	75.1	3.6	1.1	1.1	0.7
Asian	83.0	78.6	5.3	1.1	1.1	0.7
Black	81.8	75.5	7.7	1.1	1.2	0.6
Mixed or Multiple	82.0	76.7	6.5	1.2	1.2	0.6
Other ethnic group	80.3	75.7	5.6	1.1	1.2	0.6
<i>Ethnic minorities</i>	82.1	76.9	6.3	1.1	1.2	0.7
White	83.3	80.1	3.8	1.0	1.0	0.7
All Males	83.2	79.9	4.0	1.0	1.1	0.6
Asian	79.6	75.1	5.6	1.2	1.2	0.7
Black	80.0	73.6	8.1	1.1	1.2	0.7
Mixed or Multiple	80.8	75.6	6.4	1.2	1.2	0.6
Other ethnic group	77.6	72.8	6.2	1.2	1.3	0.6
<i>Ethnic minorities</i>	79.8	74.5	6.6	1.2	1.2	0.7
White	82.5	79.4	3.7	1.1	1.1	0.7
All Persons	82.3	79.1	3.9	1.1	1.1	0.7

Source: Census of Population, 2021

Table 1.8 demonstrates variations in labour market participation by age for veterans from minority ethnic groups. The percentage economically active was lowest among 16 to 24 year olds and was highest for women aged 25 to 34 and men aged 35 to 49. Economic activity rates for minority ethnic groups were lower than for veterans from white ethnic groups. The percentage of both men and women employed was lowest for 16 to 24 year olds, and increased up to the age of 50 for both men and women. The unemployment rate declined with increasing age for both men and women, and more than a fifth of economically active 16-24 year olds were unemployed. Economic activity and employment rates were both lower for ethnic minority than for white veterans in each age group. The unemployment rates was over twice that for white veterans amongst women aged 25 to 49. The differential was only slightly smaller for male veterans.

Table 1.8: Labour market participation of ethnic minority veterans by age group, England and Wales, 2021

Age group	Labour market rate			Relative to white veterans (=1.0)		
	Economic activity	Employment	Unemployment	Economic activity	Employment	Unemployment
<i>Females</i>						
Aged 16 to 24 years	53.1	41.6	21.6	0.8	0.7	1.8
Aged 25 to 34 years	79.6	74.2	6.8	0.9	0.9	2.0
Aged 35 to 49 years	78.4	74.0	5.6	0.9	0.9	2.3
Aged 50 to 64 years	72.7	69.5	4.4	1.0	1.0	1.5
<i>Males</i>						
Aged 16 to 24 years	58.7	45.7	22.1	0.7	0.7	1.5
Aged 25 to 34 years	87.3	80.8	7.4	0.9	0.9	1.8
Aged 35 to 49 years	87.6	83.3	4.9	1.0	1.0	1.6
Aged 50 to 64 years	79.9	75.9	4.9	1.0	1.0	1.3
<i>Persons</i>						
Aged 16 to 24 years	56.3	44.0	21.9	0.7	0.7	1.6
Aged 25 to 34 years	84.8	78.7	7.2	0.9	0.9	1.8
Aged 35 to 49 years	85.2	80.9	5.1	0.9	0.9	1.7
Aged 50 to 64 years	78.7	74.9	4.9	1.0	1.0	1.3

Source: Census of Population, 2021

1.4.4. Industrial and occupational breakdown of veteran employment by ethnic group

White veterans (especially men) are more likely than those from minority ethnic groups to work in agriculture, manufacturing and construction and less likely to work in financial services or public administration (Table 1.9) Public administration represents more than half of employment for female veterans from both white and minority ethnic groups, but is highest for those from the Black and mixed/multiple ethnic groups. Distribution is a more important source of employment for Asian than other ethnic groups, especially for women.

Table 1.9: Industry breakdown of ethnic minority veteran employment, England and Wales, 2021

	Asian	Black	Mixed or Multiple	Other	Ethnic minority	White	All
Female							
A, B, D, E Agriculture, energy and water	0.9	0.5	0.9	0.5	0.7	1.4	1.4
C Manufacturing	3.3	1.7	3.7	3.3	2.8	4.1	4.0
F Construction	1.3	2.4	2.2	2.6	2.0	2.3	2.3
G, I Distribution, hotels and restaurants	17.6	9.9	14.6	19.3	14.4	14.5	14.4
H, J Transport and communication	6.6	6.2	6.2	4.9	6.2	5.3	5.4
K, L, M, N Financial, real estate, professional and administrative activities	18.3	14.2	16.0	19.4	16.5	13.8	14.0
O, P, Q Public administration, education and health	48.6	60.6	51.1	45.6	53.0	54.1	54.0
R, S, T, U Other	3.2	4.5	5.5	4.4	4.3	4.6	4.6
Male							
A, B, D, E Agriculture, energy and water	1.6	1.9	3.8	2.0	2.3	4.3	4.2
C Manufacturing	5.2	6.1	8.8	6.3	6.5	11.1	10.9
F Construction	5.1	8.4	11.3	9.5	8.1	13.0	12.8
G, I Distribution, hotels and restaurants	16.9	12.7	13.0	15.4	14.6	14.3	14.3
H, J Transport and communication	17.5	21.2	16.5	17.3	18.2	16.3	16.4
K, L, M, N Financial, real estate, professional and administrative activities	26.5	17.4	16.4	22.9	21.1	14.8	15.1
O, P, Q Public administration, education and health	24.8	29.3	26.7	23.3	26.3	23.2	23.3
R, S, T, U Other	2.4	2.9	3.6	3.3	2.9	3.0	3.0
Persons							
A, B, D, E Agriculture, energy and water	1.5	1.6	3.2	1.7	1.9	3.9	3.7
C Manufacturing	4.8	5.0	7.7	5.8	5.7	10.0	9.8
F Construction	4.3	6.9	9.4	8.3	6.7	11.4	11.1
G, I Distribution, hotels and restaurants	17.0	12.0	13.3	16.0	14.5	14.3	14.3
H, J Transport and communication	15.2	17.3	14.3	15.2	15.6	14.6	14.6
K, L, M, N Financial, real estate, professional and administrative activities	24.7	16.6	16.3	22.3	20.0	14.7	15.0
O, P, Q Public administration, education and health	29.9	37.4	31.8	27.1	32.2	27.9	28.2
R, S, T, U Other	2.6	3.3	4.0	3.5	3.2	3.2	3.2

Source: Census of Population, 2021

However, the section “G, I Distribution, hotels and restaurants” forms a smaller share of employment than for the entire population for all ethnic groups (Table 1.10). The share of employment in agriculture, manufacturing, construction, transport and public administration (sections A to F, H, J, O, P and Q) is higher among veterans than in the entire working population in most ethnic groups.

Table 1.10: Percentage shares of Industry of employment by ethnic group of veteran employment compare with employment of all people, England and Wales, 2021

Sex and industry section	Ratio of veteran employment share to employment share of entire population (=1.00)						
	Asian	Black	Mixed or Multiple	Other	Ethnic minority	White	All
<i>Female</i>							
A, B, D, E Agriculture, energy and water	1.4	1.0	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.1	1.1
C Manufacturing	0.8	0.9	1.1	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9
F Construction	1.1	1.6	1.2	1.3	1.4	0.9	1.0
G, I Distribution, hotels and restaurants	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.7
H, J Transport and communication	0.9	1.3	1.0	0.8	1.0	1.1	1.1
K, L, M, N Financial, real estate, professional and administrative activities	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8
O, P, Q Public administration, education and health	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.2
R, S, T, U Other	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.9	1.1	0.8	0.8
<i>Male</i>							
A, B, D, E Agriculture, energy and water	1.6	1.4	2.0	1.6	1.9	1.1	1.3
C Manufacturing	0.8	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1
F Construction	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.9
G, I Distribution, hotels and restaurants	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.7
H, J Transport and communication	0.9	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.2
K, L, M, N Financial, real estate, professional and administrative activities	1.5	0.9	0.8	1.3	1.1	0.9	0.9
O, P, Q Public administration, education and health	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.3
R, S, T, U Other	1.0	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.8
<i>Persons</i>							
A, B, D, E Agriculture, energy and water	1.8	1.7	2.3	1.8	2.1	1.5	1.6
C Manufacturing	0.9	1.4	1.6	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.3
F Construction	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.6	1.2	1.3
G, I Distribution, hotels and restaurants	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7
H, J Transport and communication	1.1	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.6	1.5
K, L, M, N Financial, real estate, professional and administrative activities	1.4	1.0	0.8	1.1	1.1	0.9	0.9
O, P, Q Public administration, education and health	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9
R, S, T, U Other	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.7

Source: Census of Population, 2021

Table 1.11 presents the occupational profile of employment for veterans by ethnic group and sex. The columns of the table present the percentage of total employment accounted for by each of the major groups of the Standard Occupational Classification 2020. The largest major groups for veterans were Professional Occupations, Associate Professional Occupations and Manager and Directors, followed by Process, Plant and Machine Operatives and Skilled Trade Occupations. For males, the largest category was Process, Plant and Machine Operatives while for women, the largest was Professional Occupations (accounting for nearly a quarter of

employed veterans), followed by Administrative and Secretarial Occupations. The percentage in Professional Occupations was higher in all minority groups than for white women. Women from mixed or multiple ethnic groups were more likely than white women to work in Associate Professional and Technical Occupations and Black women were more likely than white women to work in Caring, Leisure and other Service Occupations. Men from all minority ethnic groups were less likely than white men to work as Managers, Directors and Senior Officials but all except those from the Other group were more likely to work in Professional Occupations. Black men were more likely to work in Professional Occupations. Male veterans from all minority ethnic groups were less likely than white veterans to work in Skilled Trade Occupations, but all minorities except those from mixed or multiple ethnic groups were more likely than white veterans to work in Elementary Occupations.

Thus, there is considerable occupational segregation by gender among veterans, with men more likely than women to work as managers and in skilled manual occupations, while women were more likely to work in professional or caring occupations. Men from minority ethnic groups were more likely than white men and women from the same ethnic groups to work in semi-skilled and Elementary occupations.

Table 1.11: Percentage shares of occupation of employment by ethnic group of veterans, England and Wales, 2021

Sex and SOC major group	Asian	Black	Mixed /Multiple	Other	Ethnic minority	White	All
<i>Female</i>							
Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	9.8	6.3	11.5	9.3	8.9	11.0	10.8
Professional Occupations	30.3	31.2	27.1	20.9	29.0	24.0	24.4
Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	13.5	12.9	17.8	12.4	14.2	15.8	15.7
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	13.6	11.4	13.2	11.5	12.6	16.2	15.9
Skilled Trade Occupations	1.9	2.3	2.5	3.6	2.3	2.5	2.5
Caring, Leisure and other Service Occupations	12.0	21.2	12.0	17.4	15.6	14.2	14.3
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	9.6	6.0	6.9	6.1	7.5	7.3	7.3
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	2.2	1.7	2.4	2.8	2.1	2.3	2.3
Elementary Occupations	7.1	7.0	6.7	16.0	7.7	6.6	6.7
<i>Male</i>							
Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	10.9	9.5	14.5	10.9	11.4	16.2	15.9
Professional Occupations	16.0	19.1	18.2	13.9	17.2	14.8	14.9
Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	11.4	15.0	19.3	11.7	14.4	15.8	15.7
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	4.0	4.1	3.6	2.9	3.8	3.8	3.8
Skilled Trade Occupations	7.5	9.9	13.6	11.9	10.2	16.1	15.8
Caring, Leisure and other Service Occupations	3.7	6.9	4.3	3.7	4.7	4.0	4.0
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	4.7	3.5	3.7	3.0	3.9	3.2	3.2
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	14.8	18.9	13.6	17.3	15.9	17.2	17.2
Elementary Occupations	27.1	13.1	9.2	24.6	18.5	9.0	9.5
<i>Persons</i>							
Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	10.6	8.6	13.9	10.7	10.8	15.4	15.1
Professional Occupations	19.0	22.2	20.0	15.1	19.8	16.2	16.4
Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	11.9	14.4	19.0	11.8	14.3	15.8	15.7
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	6.0	6.0	5.6	4.4	5.7	5.7	5.7
Skilled Trade Occupations	6.3	8.0	11.2	10.5	8.5	14.0	13.7
Caring, Leisure and other Service Occupations	5.4	10.6	5.9	6.0	7.1	5.6	5.7
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	5.7	4.1	4.3	3.6	4.7	3.8	3.8
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	12.1	14.5	11.2	14.8	12.9	14.9	14.8
Elementary Occupations	22.9	11.5	8.7	23.1	16.1	8.6	9.0

Source: Census of Population, 2021. Italics highlight column percentages higher than for white group.

2. Literature Review

To understand the lived experience of UK Veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds (EMBs) in their transition from military to civilian life, the research team reviewed academic and grey literature from the UK and beyond. We found very little research that centres on or recognizes the unique experiences of EMB veterans in the United Kingdom, while there is a more substantial body of knowledge in other regions, such as North America. As such, this review, while originally designed to focus exclusively on the UK has incorporated some key findings from across the globe to serve as guideposts.

A systematic search was deployed across major online databases using a series of keywords. This systematic approach was used to ensure a robust and transparent process and outcome.

The table below lists the keywords utilised. These search operands were used to identify sources in the following databases: EBSCO, ProQuest ABI, Sage, Emerald, Wiley, and Science Direct. Because such limited sources emerged the research team included miscellaneous search phrases.

Keyword 1	Keyword 2	Keyword 3	Misc.
Veteran	Military	Ethnic minority	Military transition to employment
Ex-military	Airforce	BAME	Military transition to civilian employment
Ex-service personnel	Armed forces	Black	Military transition to civilian life
	Army	Ethnicity	Second career of military
	Marine	Identity	Transitions to civilian workforce
	Navy	Race	Employment transition
	RAF	Citizenship	Military transition to civilian life
	Royal air force		Second career
	Service personnel		Transitions to civilian workforce
	Servicemen/women		
	Services		

Results from these keyword searches were screened first by title, then abstract, and eventually full text analysis. In total, there were 7,969 search results of which 320 were included based on titles (and the removal of duplicates).

While there is much known about the transition of military personnel to civilian life, there is little known about the specific transition experiences of veterans from an ethnic minority background. Within the literature on UK veteran transitions, only a handful of research disaggregates the veteran identity to consider multiple, intersecting, and overlapping identities. Even among the handful of studies that report the ethnicity of research participants, very few include it as a level of analysis or in the narrative discussion. More commonly, it is simply reported as a demographic trait in a table and then ignored in subsequent analysis. While there is more research from other parts of the globe, in particular the United States, this is an area of knowledge with very little formal research.

The largest bodies of literature on the general veteran population in the UK cover employment of veterans and health and wellbeing. The review found little literature on community and relationships, finance and debt, housing and the law. This may be explained partly by the continuing issue of racism in the civilian workforce, which remains a stubborn part of life for many of UKs EMB labour force¹, as well as the prevalence of mental health issues amongst the combat veteran population as a whole.

Overall, the literature search showed that there are:

- Very few studies disaggregating the UK veteran identity to take into account multiple, intersecting and overlapping identities. This is particularly true for EMB veterans.
- Some studies report the ethnicity of research participants but do not use this information in the analysis.
- Identity is a significant factor in military and civilian life, this includes military identity. But again, there is no work that disaggregates this identity.

Of the sources that refer to the ethnic diversity of the UK veteran population, none of them includes ethnicity as an analytical lens or as a central component of the narrative. For example, Phillips et al. (2020) report the ethnic background of participants in the research project, but this information is not used to compare results by ethnic background, nor does it feature in the narrative write up of findings. Some call for more research and data to examine the unique experiences of EMB veterans, but do not have the necessary data to include this level of analysis in their own work (e.g., Wang et al., 2022).

2.1. Transitions to civilian life

A 2021 report (Fisher et al.) identified several barriers and pathways to long term success for UK service-leavers. The mixed method study combined interviews with service-leavers, spouses of leavers, and stakeholder organisations (n=71 interviews) and a survey of service leavers ranging from 24 months to 10 years out of service (n=534). The report identified a number of structural challenges facing service leavers which included:

- skill and qualification matching as a major challenge; leavers felt they lacked business related skills.

¹ [tuc-full-report \(manchester.ac.uk\)](https://www.tuc-full-report (manchester.ac.uk))

- the transition process lasts longer than the transition services (two-year cap) while challenges persisted for some even into year ten of the transition.
- adjusting to civilian work cultures and employer (negative) perceptions
- mental and physical health challenges served as a barrier to 'success'.

Additionally, some facilitators of success were identified, most of which were individual rather than structural. These included personal traits (e.g., confidence), skills and qualifications, family and friend support, and networks, demonstrating how the different domains of integration are interlinked.

Fisher et al., 2021's data allowed for limited analysis of results by the ethnicity of the respondent (5.2 per cent of respondents identified as mixed or non-white ethnicity). They found that ethnic minorities faced greater challenges, and therefore had a more complex transition out of service and into civilian workforce, than other groups. However, the data presented in the report was limited in the degree or description of how this was seen in the data. Difference in experiences is acknowledged but not examined.

Lyonette et al. (2020) conducted mixed-method research which included a systematic literature review to assess the employment transitions of Senior Non-Commissioned Officers leaving the UK armed services (20 pieces of evidence used in the review). The report identified challenges faced in securing civilian employment for SNCOs across various points in the process including pre-resettlement, resettlement, transition, and post-transition. Some of the major challenges faced by SNCOs include:

- a reluctance to leave the Services.
- lack of sufficient or quality support
- perceived undervaluing of SNCO skills in the civilian labour market; lower salaries and more limited managerial opportunities
- employer biases toward older veteran SNCOs (perceived initialisation and cultural biases).
- work cultures and management styles in civilian workforce were post-transition challenges that persisted.

The report does identify differences among various demographic traits, in particular gender. For example, they found that Male SNCO veterans were more likely to report lower than expected earnings than female SNCOs. However, there is no analysis by ethnic background.

Two other reports coming from IER with X Forces and QinetiQ include a report on self-employment among the veteran community (Lyonette et al., 2018b), and the employment of military spouses or partners (Lyonette et al., 2018a). Self-employment is significant among the veteran population, and this includes Black and Minority Ethnic veterans who the report found are more likely to be employed than non-veterans, although a similar proportion are self-employed. Identified factors contributing to successful self-employment among all veterans were found to include: the ability to apply skills obtained in service such as teamwork, organisation, and decision making; the ability to plan ahead and identify market gaps, peer support among veterans. Pensions (or lump sums) were found to be beneficial but not essential to the success of the self-employed. The study on military spouses addressed that the majority of military spouses are women and while women generally face greater barriers

in the labour market, this is especially true among military spouses. They tend to select jobs in transferrable areas such as teaching or nursing.

2.2. Career opportunities and barriers for UK workers of Ethnic Minority Background

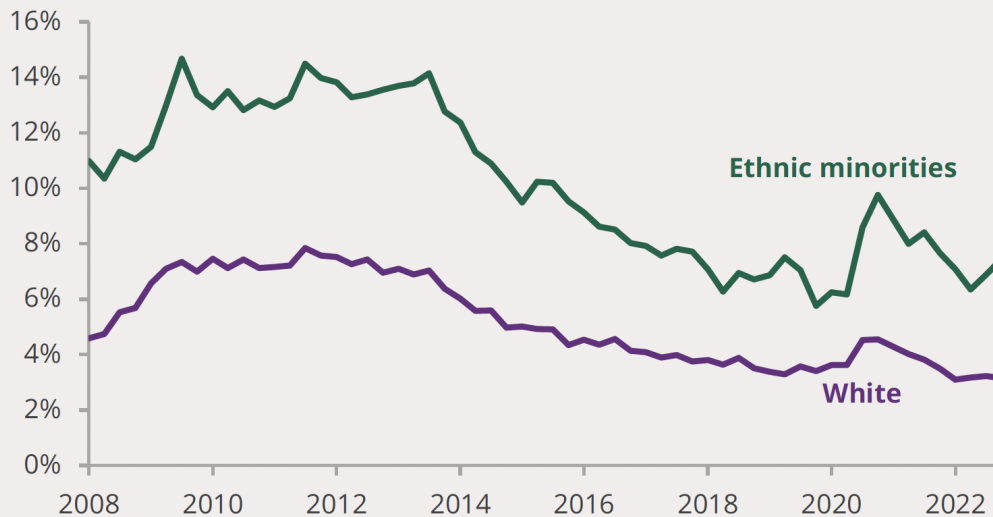
While the above describes the experiences of UK veterans, it does not address the particular experiences of veterans who are from ethnic minority backgrounds. As briefly demonstrated below, there is ample evidence to suggest that this group of veterans may face additional barriers or challenges in the transition to civilian employment in particular. This section briefly reviews the experiences of individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds in the UK labour market.

The UK is rapidly becoming more diverse. In the 20 years between 1991 and 2011, "the white population in England and Wales grew by less than 2% - including rapid growth in White migrant populations - while all other ethnic groups combined grew by 166%" (Mirza and Warwick, 2022). While migration is part of the story, increasingly it is natural growth which is fuelling this diversification. Experiences within and across ethnic groups are varied in many areas, including the labour market. Although in general employment gaps between White British and ethnic minorities have shrunk since the 1990s, this is not a universal trend and other ethnic gaps persist including median earnings, occupational success, and poverty rates. For example, for Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black African men, employment rates are 'notably' lower than White British men with similar characteristics (Mirza and Warwick 2022). For UK born Black Caribbean men there is an 'unexplained' employment penalty which cannot be explained by demographics, household, or health variables (Mirza and Warwick 2022: 51). Ethnic penalties in employment have declined substantially, but unemployment gaps specifically have remained stubbornly persistent (Manning and Rose, 2021). Space and community opportunities play a role in this story as well. Neighbourhood ethnic concentration can reinforce disadvantage as the greater concentration of co-ethnics is linked to lower rates of labour market participation, particularly for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. However, because Indian men in co-ethnic neighbourhoods experience better outcomes, this may indicate that access to 'ethnic capital' is varied within minority communities (Zuccotti and Platt, 2017; Mirza and Warwick, 2022). While culture, history, geography, education, and social class are important, there is 'undoubtedly a role for discrimination too' in explaining the employment gaps between White British and EMBs (Mirza and Warwick 2022: 56). Although racial discrimination in employment has been illegal in the UK for more than half a century, discriminatory practices exist at the point of hiring (e.g. ethnic minorities are less likely to receive call-backs) and within employment (Heath and Di Stasio, 2019, Rolfe et al., 2009, Mirza and Warwick, 2022).

The ethnic employment gap persists. The unemployment rate (Oct-December 2022) for UK residents of ethnic minority backgrounds was 7.5 per cent compared to just 3.1 per cent for those from a White ethnic background (Powell and Fancis-Devine, 2023). People with a mixed or multiple ethnic backgrounds had the highest unemployment rate at 11.3 per cent followed by those from a Pakistani background at 8.7 per cent (Powell and Fancis-Devine, 2023). Following the start of the pandemic in 2020, there was a rise in unemployment for all people, but the impact was greater for those from ethnic minority backgrounds. The graph below demonstrates the persistence of the unemployment gap and the sharp spike for ethnic minority unemployment rates in 2020 (Powell and Francis-Deville 2023).

Unemployment rate by ethnic background: UK, 2008-2022

People aged 16+, not seasonally adjusted



Source: ONS, UK labour market, August 2022, [Table A09](#)

Unemployment by ethnic background, UK

October-December, Thousands

	2021		2022	
	Level	Rate (%)	Level	Rate (%)
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	38	7.6%	66	11.3%
Pakistani	52	10.2%	48	8.7%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	99	8.6%	99	8.5%
Chinese	16	7.6%	19	7.8%
Bangladeshi	23	9.3%	17	7.3%
Indian	47	4.4%	68	5.9%
Other ethnic group	83	8.4%	62	5.4%
White	1,022	3.5%	914	3.1%
Minority ethnic group	358	7.7%	380	7.5%
Total	1,382	4.1%	1,294	3.8%

Notes: All numbers rounded to nearest 10,000 and may not sum due to rounding. Estimates based on survey responses so subject to sampling error.

Source: ONS, UK labour market, [Table A09](#)

In a 2022 survey of working age adults in Britain, Slaughter (2022) found that 20 per cent of respondents had experienced discrimination either at work or in the search for work within the previous year - this covered all forms of discrimination including on the basis of age, sex,

ethnicity, religion, and other protected characteristics. The most reported manifestation of discrimination was people being turned down for a job (13%) for those in work, 8 per cent of respondents reported being denied a promotion and 7 per cent reported being denied training opportunities. Respondents from ethnic minority background experienced discrimination at slightly higher rates with 21 per cent reporting workplace discrimination due to their ethnicity (Slaughter 2022).

For those in employment, there is a job quality gap between those from ethnic minority backgrounds and their white counterparts. Clark and Ochman (2022) found that ethnic minority men have more difficulty finding a 'good job' and that while over time the unemployment rate of this group has declined, their share of bad jobs has increased. In short, "bad jobs have replaced no jobs" and it is worse for Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean, and Black African men (Clark and Ochman, 2022).

Some ethnic minorities have made progress in moving up the 'professional and occupational class ladder,' although there remains a lack of representation at the top (Sewell et al., 2021). Black Caribbean and the combined Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic groups are the exception as they remain well behind White men in terms of occupational advancement and accessing employment in the "top occupational classes (including jobs such as teacher, manager, social worker and engineer)" (Sewell et al. 2021: 112). Assessment of top leadership roles in the UK also indicate the persistence of achievement gaps as people from ethnic minority backgrounds accounted for less than 5% of the 'most powerful jobs' (Park 2020 in Sewell et al., 2021). Workers from ethnic minority backgrounds are also more likely to attribute failure to achieve career goals (e.g. not receive a promotion) to their experiences of workplace discrimination (Sewell et al, 2021). Black workers had a higher experience of discrimination at work, 29% compared to 20% for all ethnic minority backgrounds and just 11% for those from a White British background (Sewell et al., 2021).

When looking at the labour market integration (wage and employment rates) of ethnic minority migrants, Clart et al. (2019) find that integration is largely positive after arrival but that there are important distinctions within the broad category of 'ethnic minority.' The authors also compare outcomes based on levels of local deprivation across England. They find that the extent of local deprivation 'dampens wage trajectories' for new arrivals (Clark et al., 2019).

Likewise, in assessing the role of neighbourhood in either amplifying or reducing the ethnic employment penalty in the UK, results again find a diversity of experiences within the UK's ethnic minority populations. Contrary to theories of ethnic social capital and reduced ethnic discrimination, some ethnic groups faced enhanced penalties while living in ethnically denser neighbourhoods - particularly for Pakistani women and Indian men. Unemployment was higher in ethnically dense neighbourhoods for mixed, Indian, Bangladeshi and Caribbean men (Jivraj and Alao, 2023).

2.3. Transitions of UK Veterans from Ethnic Minority Backgrounds

There are a small number of studies that examine the transitions of UK veterans of ethnic minority backgrounds. There is clearly a gap in this literature as we can see from previous work there is ample reason to believe that veterans from minority backgrounds will experience a diversity of barriers and outcomes in their transition to civilian life.

Wang et al. (2022) studied leavers over the age of 50 and found that structural inequalities, particularly rank, within the military led to different outcomes for military leavers. Lower ranking leavers are more likely to take below-skill-level jobs in the civilian workforce. The study did not further disaggregate the veteran identity and more research is needed to understand how this may or may not be compounded by challenges faced both within and outside of the military for leavers from ethnic minority backgrounds. Further unknowns include how higher-ranking veterans from EMB are treated as compared to NCO leavers – do employers and the public make assumptions about rank and skill that are based on the ethnicity of an applicant?

In a study that looked at how the British public views military veterans, Phillips et al., (2020) identified a dual vision – veterans as heroes and veterans as victims. Again, this duality is not disaggregated. Important questions remain for example, the hypervisibility of some ethnic minorities and the invisibility of the veteran status of ethnic minorities interact with the hero victim dichotomy.

Applying Bourdieuan theory to the career transitions of veterans, (Cooper et al., 2016) argues that this is a process of acculturation in which cultural capital changes from military to civilian. The authors do not disaggregate veteran and service leaving identities leaving unanswered questions about how variations in civilian cultures may facilitate or hinder the transition. Likewise, Hatch et al. (2013) found that veterans and leavers had fewer social connections than did their in-service counterparts. But less is known about the connections in different cultural ethnic and social classes.

A study that confirmed the value of peer support (Verey and Smith, 2012) made the case for service providers to employ individuals with combat experience in order to better serve combat veterans. With further research, it may be found that veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds with combat experience may be in the best position to provide services to other EMB combat veterans.

3. Education, employment and skills

Summary

The ethnic minority veterans who experienced the easiest transitions into civilian employment were those whose job in the military had a broad equivalent in the civilian labour market, e.g., nursing, veterinary work, and who wanted to remain in this type of employment. Veterans who had been able to plan for their post-Service experiences, including getting advice and support, had the most successful transitions into civilian employment.

No clear association was found between service branch and type of civilian employment for ethnic minorities and the survey found little evidence of occupational clustering by ethnic minority group.

As will be seen throughout the report, the ethnic minority veterans are a polarised group in relation to their aspirations and experiences. Some veterans aspired to moving into employment that shared many of the same characteristics of the job in the Armed Forces, particularly where this job involved some degree of managerial or leadership responsibility. However, another significant group wanted a clean break from the military and wanted more advice about how to demonstrate the transferability of their skills into a very different working environment.

Participants generally felt that their experience in the forces was beneficial in finding work. To an extent, veterans experience the same difficulties as the civilian population in making transitions in the labour market. However, perceptions and stereotypes of the military and the type of person who had been in the military affected veterans' experiences, both positively and negatively. For the ethnic minority veterans, this was further complicated by perceptions about people from different ethnic backgrounds and, in particular, a disjuncture between how employers tended to think about veterans and how they tended to think about people from particular ethnic minority backgrounds.

As noted in the Strategy for our Veterans report (2018), stable and fulfilling employment is closely linked to other types of integration and resilience, particularly in relation to health and wellbeing and financial literacy and management of finances, but also impacting on community and social integration and, although not covered in this report, legal issues. The Strategy for Our Veterans notes that veterans leave the Services with many transferable skills, but that it can be challenging to demonstrate those skills when a veteran is seeking employment or to fully utilise these skills in the workplace. They particularly note that some employers hold stereotypes, both positive and negative about veterans that can impact on their employment situation both when they transition out of the Services and in their longer-term careers. As a result, the aspiration expressed in the report is that veterans enter appropriate employment and can continue to enhance their careers throughout their working lives.

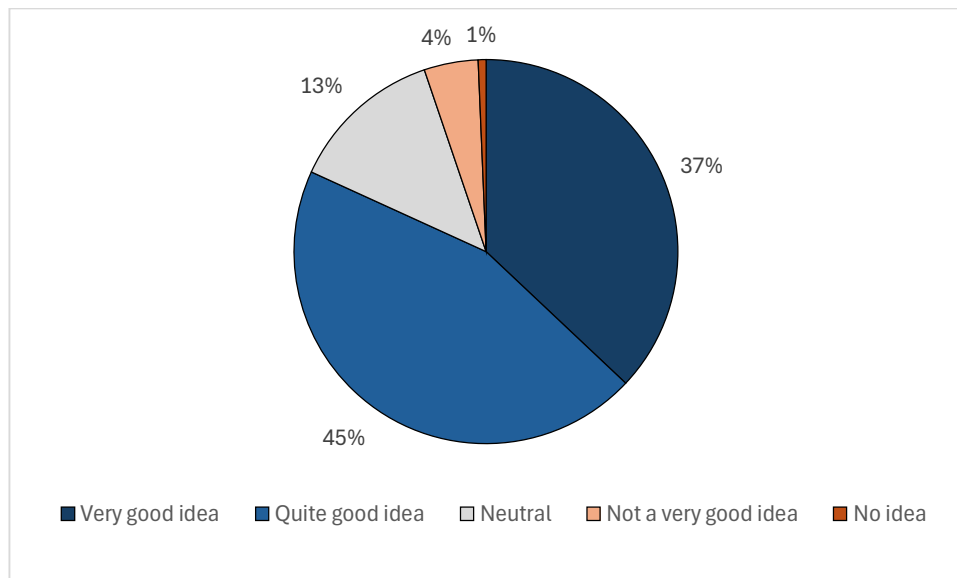
Employment was one of the issues that was most frequently raised by participants in the interviews and was a source of some concern, particularly in the initial transition to civilian life when many participants experienced a high degree of uncertainty about not only what employment they would be able to find, but what it would be like working in an environment that they perceived to be structured somewhat differently to the Armed Forces. For many

participants in both the survey and the interviews, their only experience of employment was in the Armed Forces.

3.1. Experiences while in service

While participants were in the Armed Forces, their future employment was seen to be of particular concern, but it was also an area where most participants had engaged in some planning for the future, whether this involved preparing for seeking work or actually finding a job to move into. As Figure 3.1 shows, 82% of survey participants stated that before leaving the Services, they had a good idea about the kind of work they would do when they left, with only 5% saying that they did not have a good idea or that they had no idea at all. The interviews suggest that the veterans who faced the biggest problems were those who had been unable to plan for their transition to civilian life, for example, because health issues meant that this transition came unexpectedly. There were also some participants whose immediate plan upon leaving the Services was to have or look after their children, meaning that their transition into the labour market was delayed. This was a particular issue when seeking advice, as people in these groups could find that the advice they received was not available at the time they needed it, and suggests that there is an ongoing need for career support for these groups, as well as for all veterans who are seeking to change or develop their careers at some point after they have left the Services.

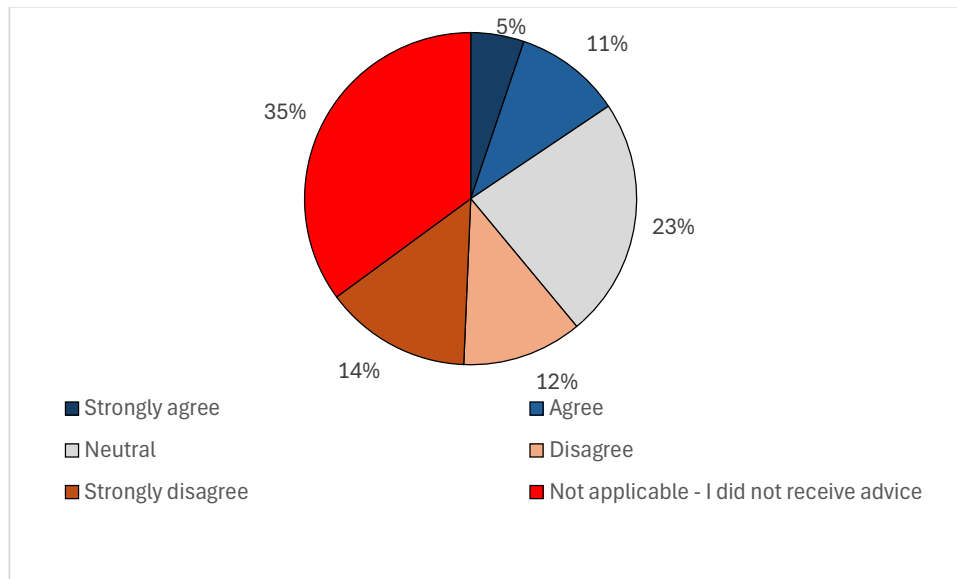
Figure 3.1: Before leaving the Services, I had a good idea of the kind of work I would do after I left



Source: All survey participants in employment, $n = 154$.

This may in part explain the findings shown in Figure 3.2 which shows that 35% of survey respondents stated that they did not receive any advice about future employment, although this finding also reflects the time at which participants left the Services, with those who had left a longer time ago being more likely to say that they had received no support. Neither ethnic group nor branch of the Armed Forces appeared to be related to whether or not a participant had received advice or whether they thought that they had been given good advice.

Figure 3.2: Before leaving the services, I was given good advice about my future employment



Source: All survey participants in employment, n = 154.

A greater concern is perhaps the proportion of participants who thought that the advice they received was not good. Again, this may not reflect the current situation. Two issues were raised by participants. The first concerned the type of support provided, with participants wanting more support to help them to decide the kind of employment that would be suitable for them, given their skills and aspirations, and more advice based on evidence from the kind of work other veterans had gone into. They also expressed a desire for more support in how to demonstrate their transferable skills and the benefits being a veteran brought to a potential employer. Interviewees commented that they received a lot of practical support in how to find a job, including such things as how to write a CV and how to search for a job on the internet, which was useful, but which did not go far enough in helping them to find suitable, and sustainable, employment. Secondly, some interviewees commented that there were assumptions about the type of work they would be suitable for or would want to do, with an over-emphasis on employment that was in some way similar to the kinds of work they did while in the Services. This involved both the nature of the work and the level of work they would be qualified for, with officers being directed towards managerial roles, while non-commissioned ranks were directed towards more routine and manual employment. In some cases, interviewees had higher aspirations than they felt that they were expected to have, and in other cases they thought that it was not recognised that the transition into civilian employment represented an opportunity to make significant career changes, rather than seeking to replicate, as far as possible, the working conditions and environment of the Armed Forces. It was also noted by participants that the advice they received did not take into account their ethnic background and any additional challenges they might face in finding employment as a result. Over half of the survey participants (51%) said that the advice they received did not take into account their ethnic background, while 7% agreed that it did.

3.2. Transitions to civilian life

The pre-planning engaged in by participants for their post-Service employment meant that a large proportion (77%) of participants stated that their transition into civilian employment had been either very or quite easy and 67% said that their transition had been either easier than what they had expected. It was notable that amongst the people who made the easiest transitions were a group of participants whose job in the Services had an equivalent in civilian life, for example, nurses and people involved in training and some administrative areas.

“I mean, I was a nurse, and I wanted to continue with that, but I just wanted a change. I’d done my time. So if you compare me to other people, well I was lucky because there are other nursing jobs and people actually think you are pretty hardcore if you’ve been in the Service, so they think you will be a pretty good person to have around” [Female, Asian, Navy, discharged 5 to 7 years ago]

However, for a significant minority of participants, the transition had been fractured and 16% of survey respondents stated that the transition had been not very or not at all easy and a third said it had been more difficult than they had anticipated. These views were more commonly represented amongst participants who had left the Armed Forces in what may be considered mid-career roles, particularly participants who had left the military having reached SNCO level. The interviews suggested that this may be due to a miss-match between expectation and reality related to recognition of experience in the military, with some participants feeling that their experience in the military held so little value for employers that they were expected to ‘start again at the bottom’, rather than moving into roles that they felt were commensurate with the amount of time they had been in employment in the military or the level they had achieved.

Almost a quarter of survey participants said that they had been unemployed at some point for a period of at least three months and there was evidence from the interviews that job changes occurred fairly frequently for some participants in the early stages of their transition into civilian employment. These participants were more likely to be young, to have been in the military for a relatively short amount of time, and to have left as JNCOs or in other roles, which suggests that their experiences may reflect the experiences of younger people in the labour market generally, rather than necessarily being particularly related to their status as veterans or as ethnic minorities.

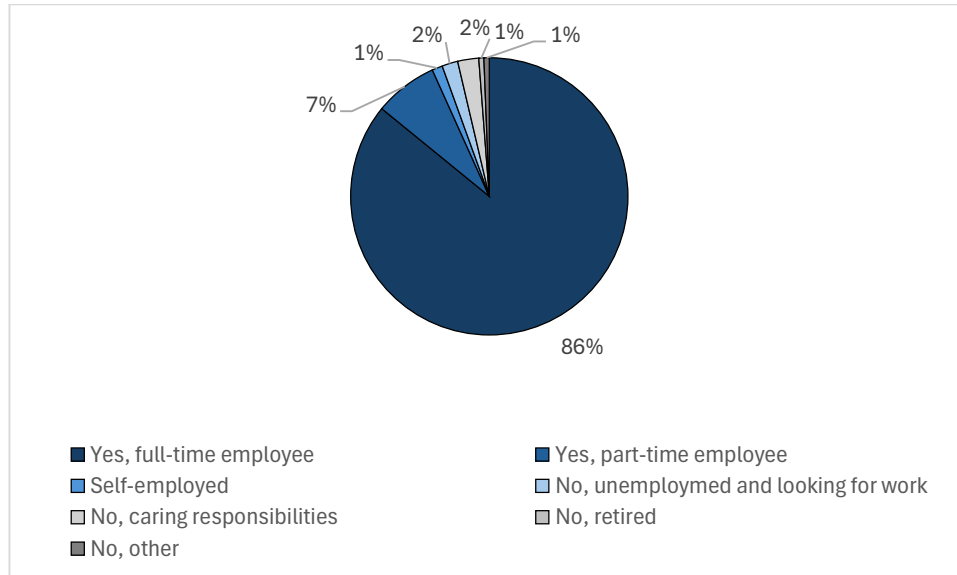
“At first, I was just going for any job because I wanted to work and I needed to earn money. So I worked for [a delivery company] at first and then moved onto doing [supermarket deliveries] but that was like a temp thing and honestly, they will take anyone. When I was doing that, I was always looking for something else and then I found [my current job] and I’ve been there for three years, more, now. The pay is not great, but it’s what I want to do because it’s giving back and that’s important. That’s really why I got into the Army in the first place, so it’s a continuation of that really” [Male, Asian, Army, discharged 3 to 5 years ago]

This disparity of experience continued to some extent when looking at post-service experiences of employment, although there was evidence that participants became more settled into employment after the transition phase and were able to develop their careers further, regardless of difficulties they experienced in the initial transition phase.

3.3. Post-service experiences

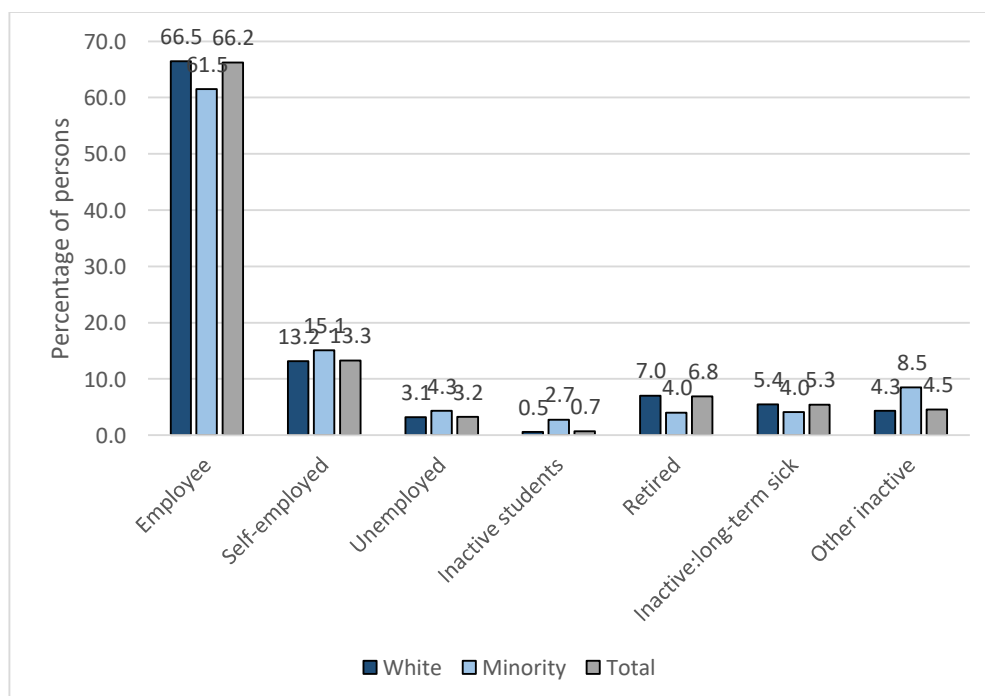
Figures 3.3, 3.5 and 3.6 show the nature of survey participants' current job. As Figure 3.3 shows, 86% were in full-time employment and 94% were in some form of employment. Only 2% were unemployed and looking for work.

Figure 3.3: Are you currently in employment, either full or part time?



Source: All survey participants, n = 163.

Figure 3.4: Employment status of White and Ethnic Minority veterans in the 2021 Census

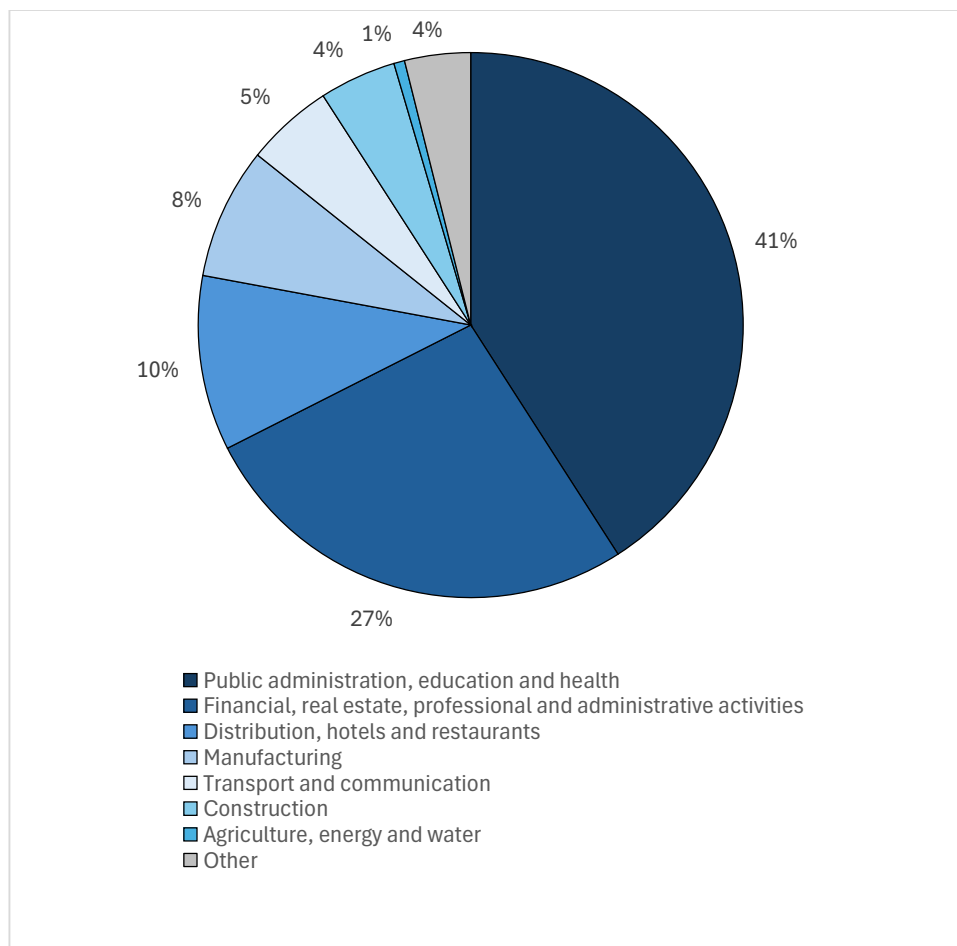


Source: 2021 Census of Population for England and Wales (5% Individual Safeguarded Individual Microdata Sample)

As Figure 3.4 shows, in the 2021 Census, Ethnic Minority veterans were less likely on average than White veterans to be employed, more likely to be unemployed, less likely to be retired or inactive due to long-term sickness, but more likely to be economically inactive for other reasons. The survey sample showed higher levels of employment, and lower levels of self-employment, retired people and people who were inactive due to long-term sickness, which is likely to reflect the emphasis recruitment for the survey put on recruiting more recent leavers from the Armed Forces.

In the survey, the most common employment sector was the broad sector covering public administration, education and health, with 41% of survey participants working in this sector. Financial, real estate, professional and administrative occupations accounted for 27%. These figures are somewhat higher than those found in the Census of Population 2021 (reported in Section 1) at 27% and 22% respectively and possibly reflects some skewing of the sample arising from the snowball sampling methods employed to recruit participants for this study.

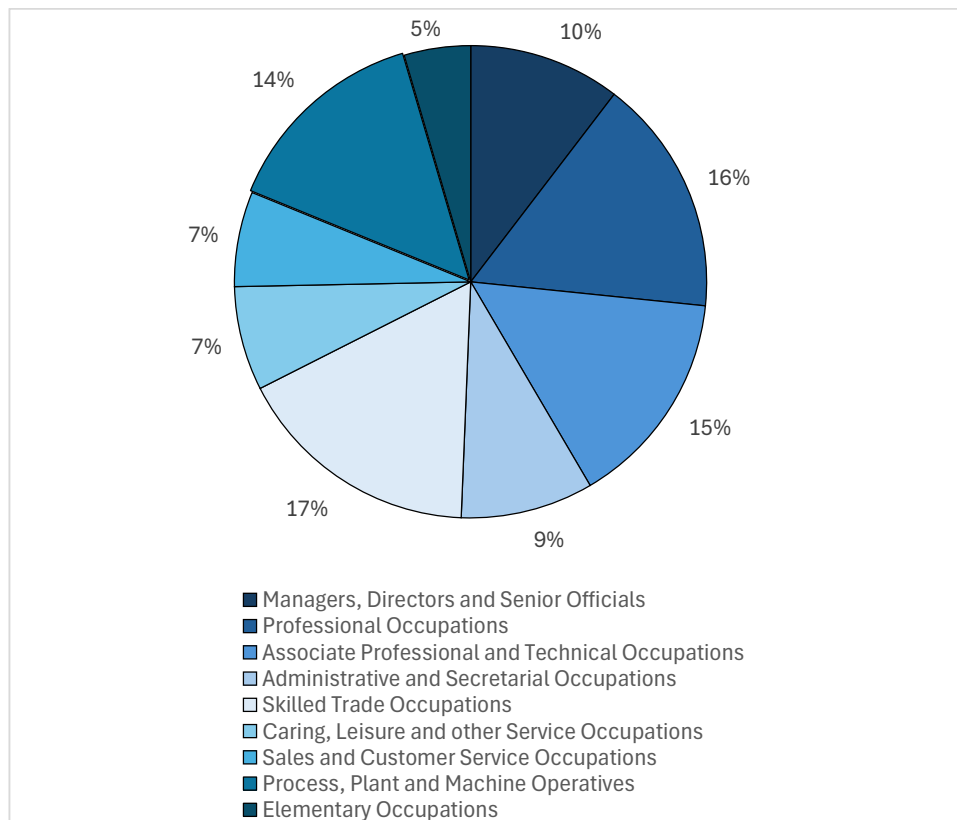
Figure 3.5: In what sector is your current job?



Source: All survey participants in employment, n = 154.

There was a fairly even distribution across the major occupational groups, as shown in Figure 3.6. The largest group of participants were in skilled trade jobs, but this group only accounts for 17% of the survey sample. There appears to be some association between rank achieved in the Services and having a job in one of the higher SOC occupational groups but this picture is complicated by the length of time some participants had been out of the Services. There was no clear pattern in relation to the branch of the Armed Forces participants had served in or by ethnic background.

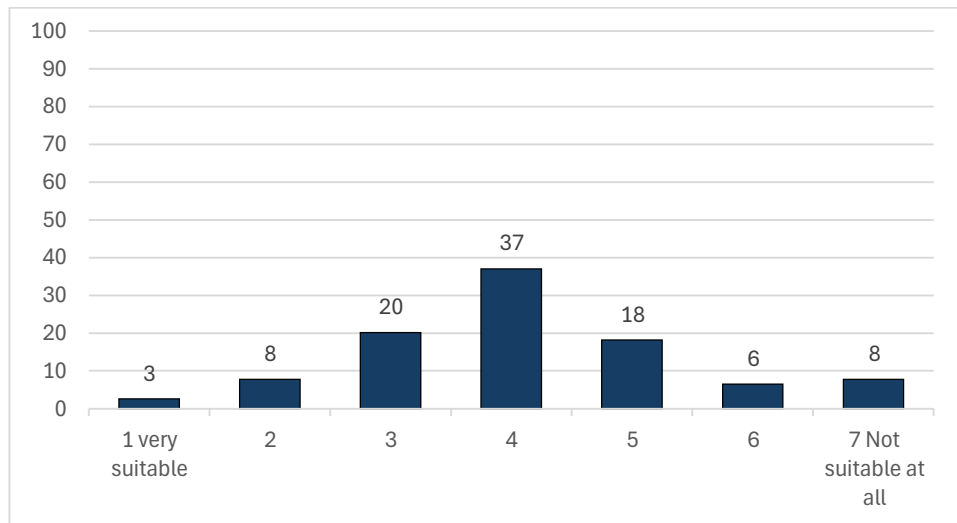
Figure 3.6: What best describes the level of your current main job?



Source: All survey participants in employment, n = 154.

While the previous discussion has focussed on participants having a job, a key component of the Veterans Strategy is that this employment should be appropriate. This was addressed in the survey by asking participants whether they thought their current job was suitable for someone with their skills and experience (Figure 3.7) and whether participants were satisfied with their current job (Figure 3.8).

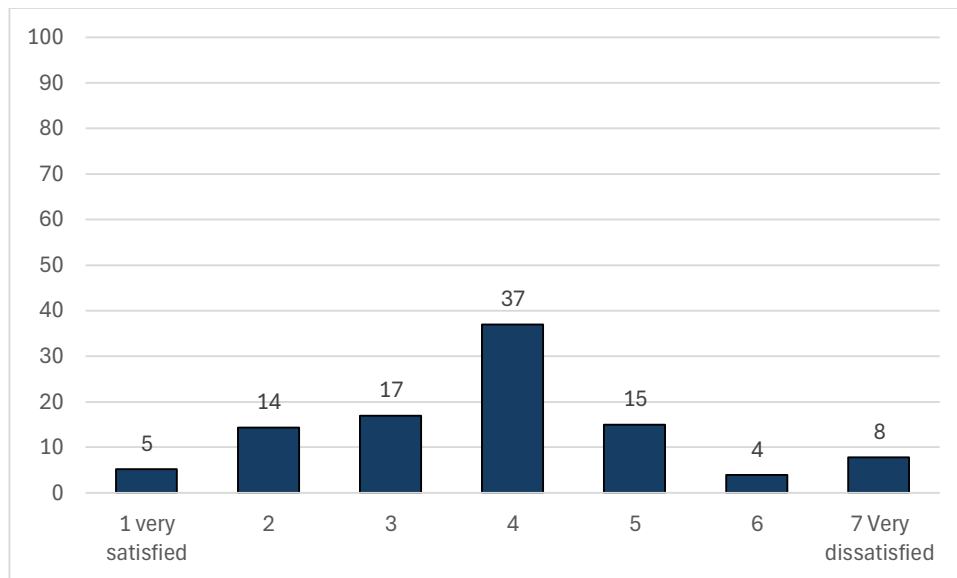
Figure 3.7: On a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 being most suitable and 7 being least suitable, how suitable do you think your current job is for someone with your skills and experience?



Source: All survey participants in employment, n = 154.

As the Figures show, neutral responses to these questions were relatively common. Only 10% of participants rated their current job as 1 or 2 on the Likert scale on suitability indicating that they considered their job very suitable for them, while 14% rated it as 6 or 7, indicating that they thought the job was not suitable for someone with their experience and skills. Similarly, 19% rated their job as 1 or 2 on the Likert scale for job satisfaction, while 12% rated it as a 6 or 7. As would perhaps be expected, participants whose role in the military had a high level of direct transferability to roles in civilian life, for example, nurses, people involved in training, were most likely to say that their job was very suitable for someone with their skills and experience. When these people are excluded from the analysis, there is some disparity between the Army and the Navy (the Airforce group is small and very polarised and has a higher proportion of participants who left the Armed Forces more than 7 years ago). Participants who had been in the Navy were more likely than those who had been in the Army to rate their job between 5 and 7 on the Likert scale, in other words, to consider that their job was to some degree not suitable for someone with their skills and experience. It was not clear why this was the case. One participant who had been in the Navy suggested that employers thought that people who had been in the Navy might 'only know about boats' which was an inaccurate perception and that they had a greater understanding of the Army and what being in the Army involved. Similarly, female veterans were less likely, once nurses particularly were excluded, to think that their job was suitable, and this was consistent across all branches of the Services and all ethnic groups.

Figure 3.8: Overall, how satisfied are you with your current job?



Source: All survey participants in employment, n = 154.

Job satisfaction was most closely related to being in a job that the participant considered suitable for someone with their skills and experience. In one interview, the participant suggested that some veterans may struggle to find employment that they find as satisfying as they had found the military. They commented that in their opinion, people who had a good time in the military tended to have a very good time and other jobs could not compare to the experience of being so immersed in a working environment that you enjoy, making civilian jobs seem less satisfying by comparison to those individuals.

In order to further understand these patterns, participants in the survey and interviews were asked about whether they thought employers valued their experience as veterans. In the survey, findings were somewhat mixed. There was, again, a high level of neutrality, when survey participants were asked whether they thought their experience in the Services was an advantage when they applied for their current job and the 'don't know or not applicable' category was also relatively large, as Figure 3.9 shows.

While 36% of participants said that they thought that the experience in the Services was an advantage when applying for their current job this experience could encompass both the skills they had gained, their experience of work, as well as the specific experience of being a veteran and it was not clear if the survey participants believed that employers valued them specifically as veterans. This was particularly the case where participants had several jobs since leaving the Armed Forces, which built up their non-military experience. A further 18% thought that their experience in the Services had not been an advantage in applying for their current job. However, in the interviews, participants spoke about the assumptions they thought that employers made about veterans – that they would be organised, punctual, hard working and able to follow instructions. Conversely, they also spoke about negative perceptions that they believed employers held about veterans – that they would be inflexible, hierarchical and unwilling or unable to adapt to how things were done outside the military. These perceptions were also bound up with perceptions surrounding ethnicity and, as will be seen throughout this report, a lack of understanding bordering on confusion when these perceptions conflicted.

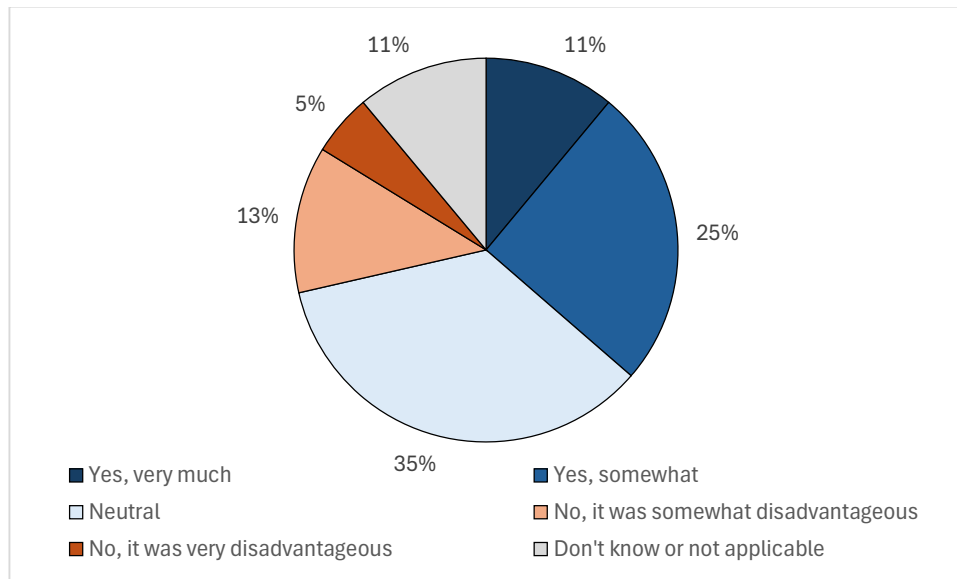
“I’m all things, I’m serious and hardworking because I’m a veteran, but I’m loud and lazy because I’m black. People don’t know what to make of me. And of course, you know, I’m a black, woman, veteran, I’m bossy, always bossy [laughs] that’s a constant [...] People are always going to have an idea about you, a stereotype if you like, and you have to find a way to play it to your advantage.” [Female, Black, Army, discharged 1 to 2 years ago]

“Employers have very specific ideas about veterans. There is undoubtedly a stereotype. Positive and negative. You would hope that employers would be able to look beyond that. Perhaps that is a sign of a good employer. [...] Would I look to employ other veterans? Let’s just say that I am not immune to stereotypes either. Although I would like to think I am a good employer.” [Male, Asian, RAF, discharged more than 10 years ago]

“I think at my level, being an ethnic minority is almost irrelevant in my line of work. Or not irrelevant, but, how to put this... I think that there is an idea that being in the Forces has civilised me. That’s perhaps too strong a way of putting it, but that rhetoric, I think that I am seen as having learned the right things in the Army, I have learned to behave as a white person is expected to behave, I do the right things and this is divorced from the general view of black people, black men in particular. I think if you asked my colleagues, they would say that my skin colour is irrelevant to them or to my work, that they don’t think about it. Which of course, may be quite different to my own perception of course [laughs] but it is what it is. And I don’t think that is extended to maybe some of the ranks, to the younger guys who are viewed first and foremost as black men with all the expectations that come with that” [Male, Black, Army, discharged 5 to 7 years ago]

This perception that the people they encountered in civilian life, including employers, “*did not know what to make of [ethnic minority] veterans*” because they were not “*the type of people who are veterans, the type of people who are in [the Armed Forces]*” was one of the most frequent differences highlighted by ethnic minority veterans when considering their experiences in relation to white veterans. While some participants thought that this protected them against some of the more negative stereotypes of veterans, they conversely were also less likely to benefit from positive associations people held in relation to veterans.

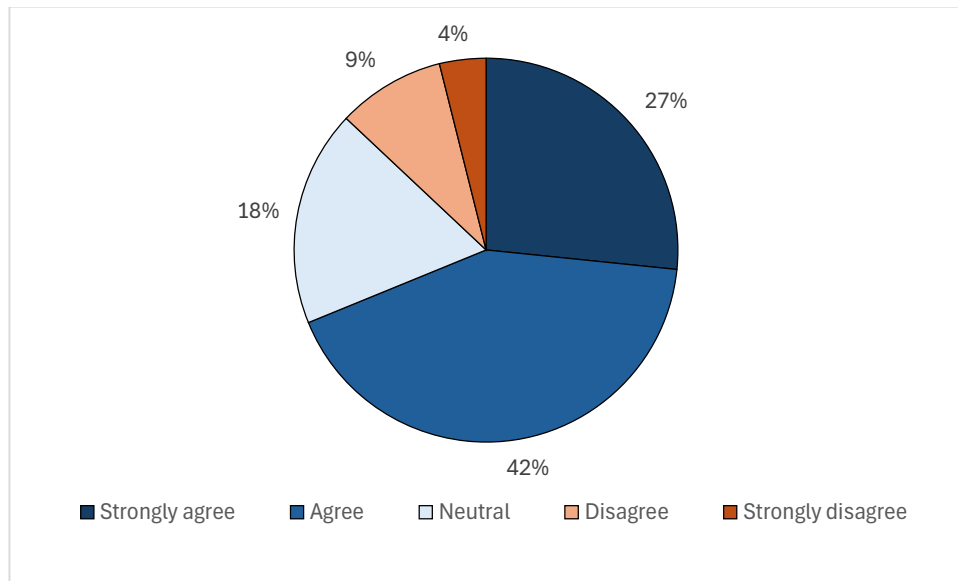
Figure 3.9: When applying for your current job, do you think that your experience in the Services was an advantage?



Source: All survey participants in employment, n = 154.

Survey participants were more positive about how useful the skills they had gained in the Services were for finding employment, as is shown in Figure 3.10. Over three quarters (69%) agreed that their experience in the Services had provided them with useful skills for post-Service employment, and 13% disagreed. A small number (8%) had studied for an additional qualification while they were in the Services and 10% had studied for an additional qualification after leaving. In the interviews, participants mentioned a combination of job-specific and transferable skills that they considered useful, and included both skills and attitudes in their discussion. Interestingly, many of the skills and attitudes they mentioned were also ones that they thought employers stereotyped veterans as having, which supports their earlier discussion about being able to turn stereotypes of veterans to their advantage. However, only one interview participant mentioned that stereotypes about particular ethnic groups could be used to their advantage. While this may suggest that it is the participant's status as a veteran that is more likely to determine their labour market experiences, rather than their ethnicity, the data collected on experience of prejudice at work suggests that this does not tell the whole story. Of those who chose to answer, 21% of participants said that they had experienced racism at work, while 11% said that they had experienced prejudice against veterans in the workplace. This indicates that some ethnic minority veterans are likely to experience a 'double disadvantage' where they are perceived or treated differently both because they are veterans and because they are from an ethnic minority background, and that being a veteran and from an ethnic minority background can work in combination to disadvantage some veterans.

Figure 3.10: I think that my experience in the Services provided me with useful skills for post-Service employment



Source: All survey participants in employment, n = 154.

4. Finance and debt

Summary

It was a commonly held view that certain groups of veterans lacked experience in managing their financial affairs as they had not needed to do so to a great extent while in the Services. Despite this, accessing financial advice was relatively low amongst the ethnic minority veteran population and most had gained their knowledge after leaving the armed forces simply through experience.

Financial security was a major concern for ethnic minority veterans, with nearly a quarter being concerned about paying bills, but most of the concerns of the ethnic minority veterans echo the concerns of people in wider society about the cost of living.

There was little evidence that veterans from an ethnic minority background had specific needs over and above the needs of veterans generally in relation to finance and debt.

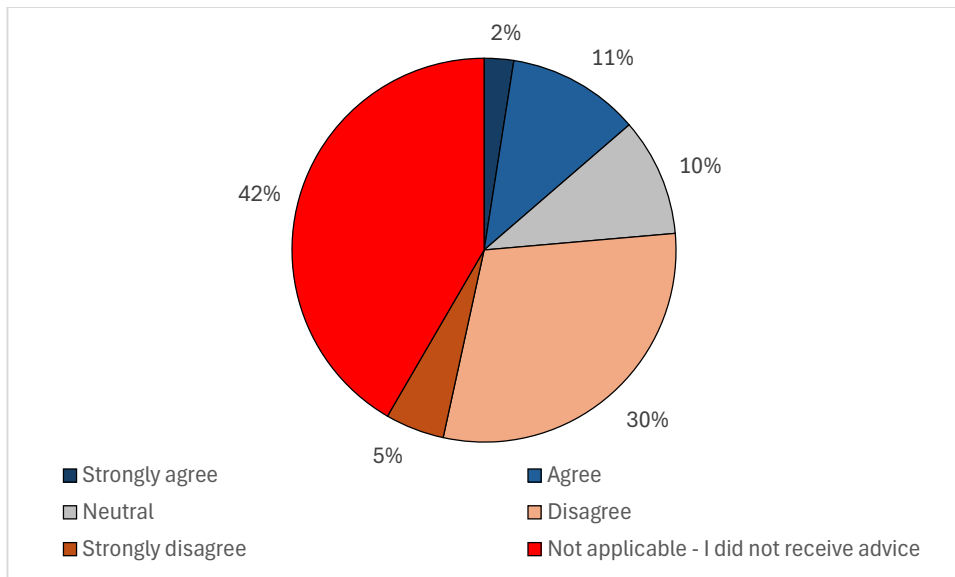
The strategy for Our Veterans report (2018) highlights the particular difficulties faced by veterans in managing their financial situation. It notes that while veterans can face the same financial issues as the civilian population, having spent a significant part of their adult lives in the Armed Forces can leave veterans uniquely unprepared for balancing the financial demands of civilian life at a time when their civilian peers have years of experience of doing so. For this reason, the aspiration expressed in the report is that veterans leave the Armed Forces with sufficient financial education, awareness and skills to be financially self-supporting and resilient.

Being resilient and self-supporting and being able to manage finances relates both to income and to financial knowledge, and as will be seen, while most participants were relatively confident in both these things, a significant proportion were not.

4.1. Experiences while in service

Overall, 42% of survey participants said that they did not receive any advice about managing their finances while they were in the Services, although it is not clear how many of this group sought advice. However, of those who had received advice, just 23% agreed or strongly agreed that the advice they had received was good, while 60% disagreed that the advice they received was good. It was not clear from the survey or interviews why this was. It was suggested by some participants in the interviews that the advice was inappropriate or not applicable to their situation, while others noted that it focussed on managing money of an amount that they simply did not have.

Figure 4.1: Before leaving the services, I was given good advice about how to manage my financial affairs



Source: All survey participants, n = 161.

When discussing their experience while in the Services, participants noted that they were very worried about finding a source of income or a drop in income, that they were worried about the general cost of living, as well as, in some cases, their lack of experience in managing all of their finances.

"I just worried about having enough money, that was the main thing. You can't manage money you don't have, so all the advice in the world about that is kind of irrelevant" [Female, Asian, Army, discharged 5 to 7 years ago]

No participants in the interviews related this specifically to being from an ethnic minority background, believing it to be a common experience amongst all veterans due to the nature of life in the Forces.

4.2. Transitions to civilian life

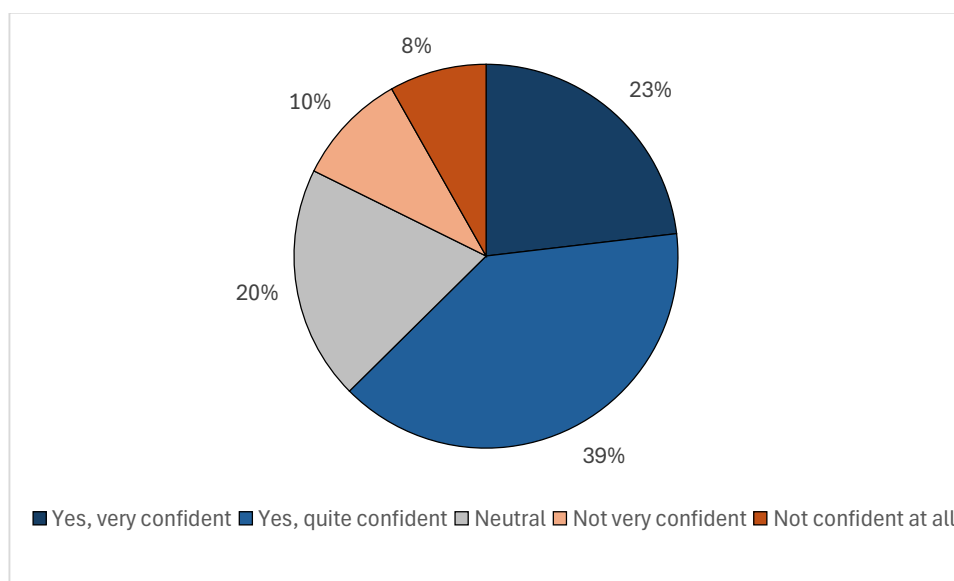
Finding a secure income appeared to be the main priority for participants when thinking about their transition into civilian life. This was mentioned much more frequently than having financial knowledge. When people left the Services without first securing employment, or where they had taken employment that was in some way insecure, financial concerns played a large part in how they perceived their transition.

Overall, half of the survey participants said that they had found managing their finances either very or quite easy, but 21% said that they had found it not very easy or not easy at all. Similarly, 19% said that they had found managing their finances to be more difficult than they anticipated. For some participants, this was linked to the unstable nature of their employment, particularly when they had recently left the Forces, while others, as noted, thought that they lacked experience. Generally, those who reported experiencing difficulties were younger participants and it was noted by some respondents in the interviews that veterans were more likely to experience difficulties when they had less experience of needing to manage their income while they were in the Forces, for example, people who had lived in certain types of military accommodation.

4.3. Post-service experiences

Overall, as Figure 4.2 shows, 62% of survey participants stated that they were either very or quite confident in managing their finances. As before, it must be noted that a significant proportion of participants had been out of the Services for some time, and so had gained experience and confidence in managing their finances that they may not necessarily have had when they first transitioned into civilian life. The group who expressed less confidence in managing their finances (18%) tended to have left the Services more recently, to be in lower paid employment and to have low levels of savings. It may be that in the future their views will change as they become more accustomed to managing their own finances and, potentially, move into higher paid employment. No participants in the interviews thought that being from an ethnic minority background had affected their experiences.

Figure 4.2: Do you feel confident in managing your finances?



Source: All survey participants, n = 161.

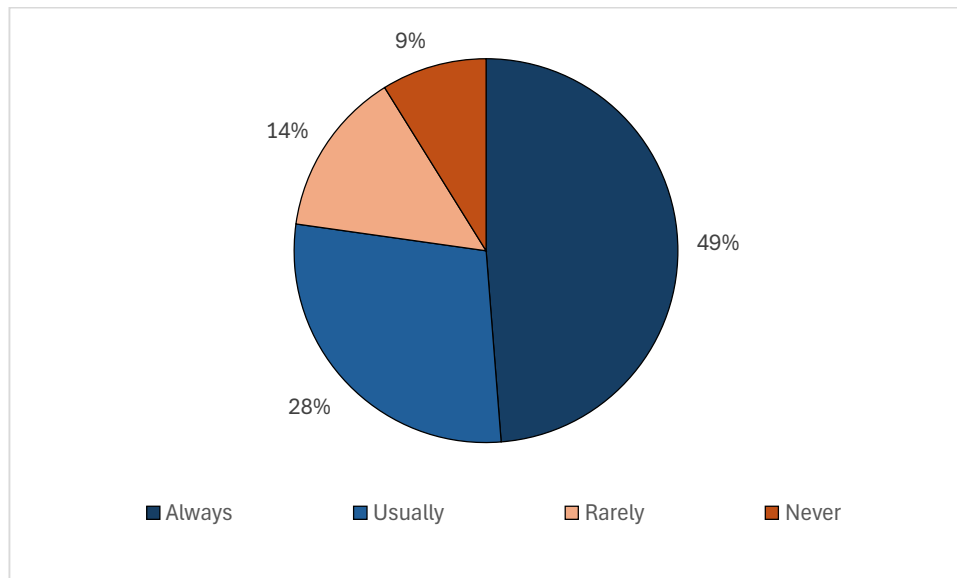
Table 4.1 shows the distribution of earnings amongst the survey participants who were in full-time employment. As the Table 4.1 shows, there is clustering around the £30,000 to £49,000 level, but 18% were earning less than £29,999.

Table 4.1: How much do you earn? (Full-time employees only)

Earnings	Per cent
Less than £24,999	3
£25,000 to £29,999	14
£30,000 to £39,999	35
£40,000 to £49,999	28
£50,000 to £59,999	13
£60,000 to £69,999	5
Over £70,000	3

This disparity in incomes is reflected in the responses to questions concerning savings, debt and confidence in having sufficient money for everyday living. As Figure 4.3 shows, 77% of survey participants were always or usually confident that they would be able to pay their bills on time, but 23% said that they were rarely or never confident that they would be able to do this. Similarly, 22% of participants said that they had significant debts that concerned them and two thirds of this group had sought advice about managing their debt. Over half of the survey participants (53%) said that at the end of the month they did not have savings of at least £1,500 that they did not consider to be savings for a specific purpose such as paying bills. These findings appear to support the contention by interview participants that it was an absolute lack of money that was causing the greatest concern for participants, rather than necessarily their ability to manage the money that they did have, and that this largely reflected wider trends in the general population rather than being an issue specific to veterans or to ethnic minority veterans.

Figure 4.3: I feel confident that I will be able to pay all my bills on time



Source: All survey participants, $n = 158$.

5. Health and wellbeing

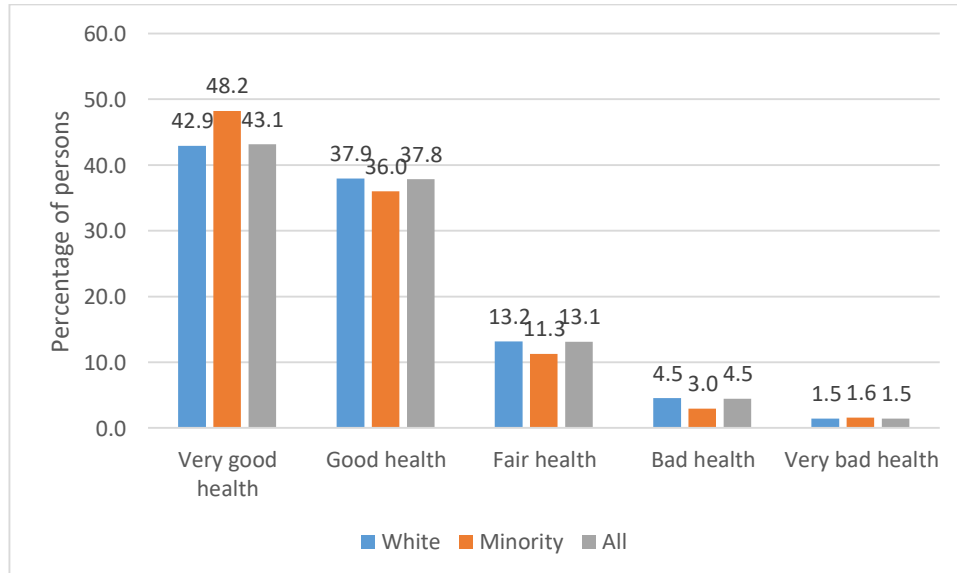
Summary

Provision of advice related to health, and in particular mental health, for ethnic minority veterans appears to have improved in recent years. Views on how suitable this advice was varied, in part due to the different advice needs amongst participants.

While there were some barriers related to the delivery of health-related advice, and in particular advice related to mental health support, limited take-up of existing advice was also seen to be an issue. Participants reported that there was a continuing stigma around needing support for mental health issues, as this was seen as a sign of weakness. There was limited evidence to suggest that this applied more particularly to veterans from an ethnic minority background rather than veterans as a whole. This finding suggests that there is a need to promote attitudinal change alongside a growth in provision of services and to ensure that services are delivered in a way that is appropriate to veterans and sensitive to their particular needs and experiences.

The Strategy for Our Veterans document (2018) notes that veterans health and wellbeing is generally consistent with or better than the rest of the population. This is reflected in the data from the 2021 Census (Figure 5.1) which shows that ethnic minority veterans were more likely than their white counterparts to report being in very good health.

Figure 5.1: Veterans' perceptions of their health in the 2021 Census



Source: 2021 Census of Population for England and Wales (5% Individual Safeguarded Individual Microdata Sample)

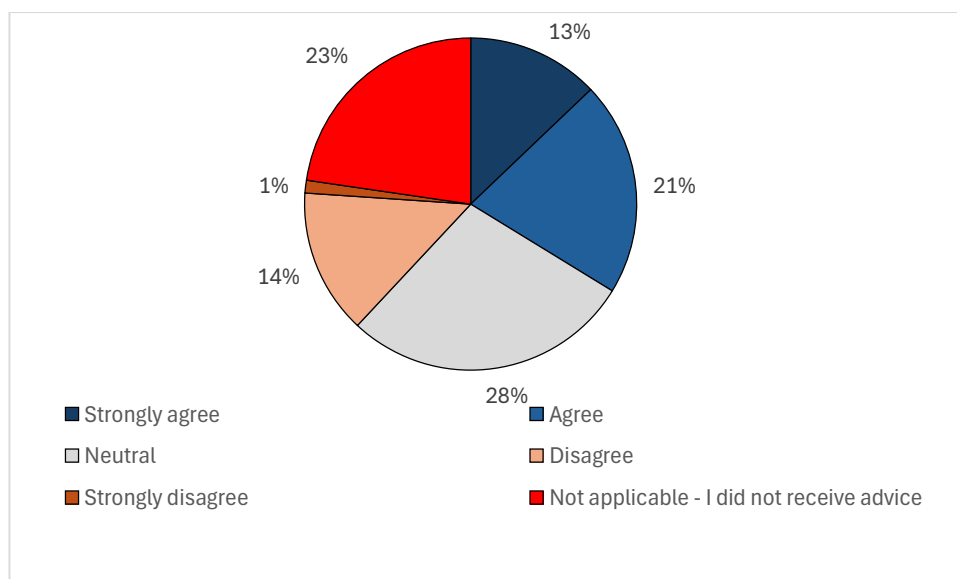
However, as was noted earlier, a significant proportion of the veteran population report experiencing both physical and mental health issues, some arising from their service but others arising from issues in their post-Service life. For this reason, the aspiration expressed in the Strategy for Our Veterans is that all veterans enjoy a state of positive physical and mental health and wellbeing, enabling them to contribute to wider aspects of society. This highlights the interconnection between health and wellbeing and the ability to undertake other

activities to promote integration, while it must also be noted that issues in other areas of integration can have a negative effect on health and wellbeing.

5.1. Experiences while in service

Advice about where to seek support for physical or mental health issues was one of the most common types of advice veterans reported receiving, with 77% stating that they had received some advice related to this, as Figure 5.2 shows. As in the case of other types of advice, particularly around social integration, much of this advice focussed on alerting participants to the existence of support services, although some interviewees noted that they had received more targeted support particularly related to managing physical issues that had arisen during their time in the Services. Of those who had received some form of advice, including those who had simply been given the details of organisations to contact if they needed them, 44% thought that the advice they had received was good or very good, while 20% disagreed or strongly disagreed that the advice they had received was good. It is notable that participants who had left the Forces more than 7 years ago were less likely to mention that they had received any support, which is likely to reflect the significant efforts the Armed Forces have made recently to address the wellbeing of their recruits. When controlling for the profile of participants from each of the branches of the Armed Forces in terms of the time at which they left the Services, there appeared to be no real difference in the likelihood that someone would have received advice or whether they thought the advice available was good.

Figure 5.2: Before leaving the services, I was given good advice about where to seek support for my health and wellbeing



Source: All survey participants, n = 163.

5.2. Transitions to civilian life

Two issues related to health and wellbeing in the transition to civilian life were commonly mentioned in the interviews. The first was whether pre-existing conditions were likely to have an impact on other areas of integration, such as finding employment or engaging with the wider community.

“There is an expectation that if you have been in the Forces, you are more suited to physical work or doing stuff outdoors and that’s the only thing you are good at or what you want, because that is what people think the Army involves, but that isn’t and hasn’t been the case for me because of my disability. So it’s kind of like, ‘so what can you do then? What value do you bring? How can we use you?’ Like we were talking about before, people have an idea of the type of person who has been in the Army and what they can do and if you don’t meet that, they don’t know what to do with you” [Female, Asian, Army, discharged 3 to 5 years ago]

The second issue related to having or developing physical or mental health issues but being reluctant to seek support. Participants in the interviews commented that seeking this kind of support could be seen as a sign of weakness, that you were not resilient or tough enough, and that having been in the Armed Forces, it was expected that you would be tough and resilient.

“You are supposed to be a machine, if you have been in the Army or the Navy or whatever. When you are on base, you would never admit that you were struggling or finding things difficult and people take that attitude with them, it’s hard to let go of it and say ‘actually, I need some help’. So I think that people don’t always get the help they need, just because they won’t ask for it. I do think there is probably a lot of support out there because everyone recognises that there have been a lot of problems, but you have got to get through to the individual that it is OK and that’s quite tricky” [Female, Navy, discharged 5 to 7 years ago]

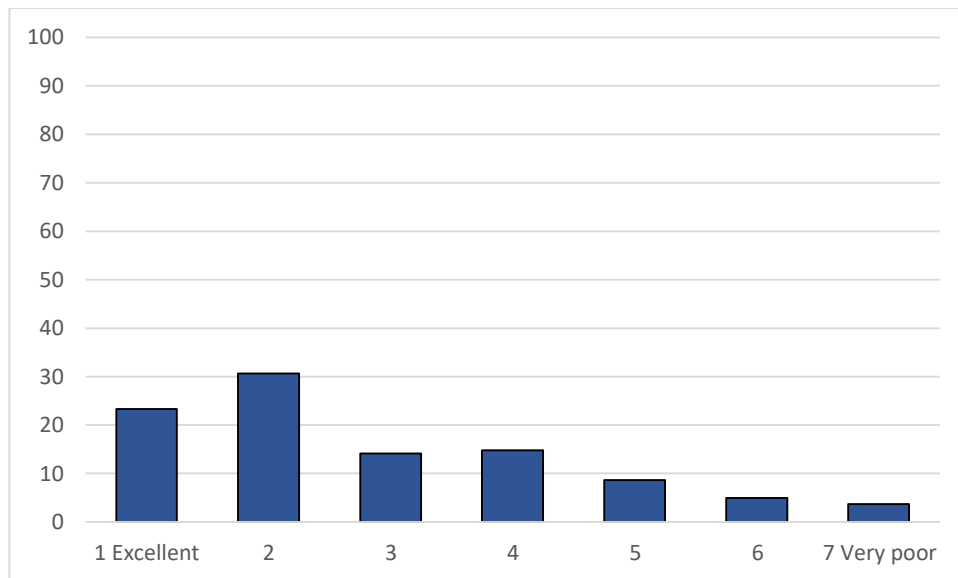
This suggests that both the provision of support and, perhaps more importantly, attitudinal changes amongst veterans themselves and the wider population would facilitate an easier transition to civilian life for veterans who have or would go on to experience issues with their health and wellbeing. Although there is evidence on disparities between ethnic minority groups and white groups in the general population in relation to seeking advice and support for mental health issues in particular, this was not mentioned by any of the interview participants.

5.3. Post-service experiences

In the survey, 16% of participants reported that they had a physical health condition expected to last for 12 months or more, while 12% reported that they had a mental health condition expected to last for the same duration and 4% said that they had another condition. It should be noted that an individual could report having both a physical and a mental health issue. These figures are somewhat lower than has been seen in other research (see, for example, Hooks et al, 2023).

Figure 5.3 shows survey participants’ subjective rating of their current health. As the Figure shows, over half (54%) described their current health as either 1 or 2 on the scale, suggesting it is either excellent or very good. At the other end of the scale, 9% of participants rated their current health as 6 or 7, suggesting they consider it poor or very poor. Over three quarters of participants (78%) stated that they knew where to find information on support for people with health issues.

Figure 5.3: On a scale of 1 to 7, how would you describe your current health?

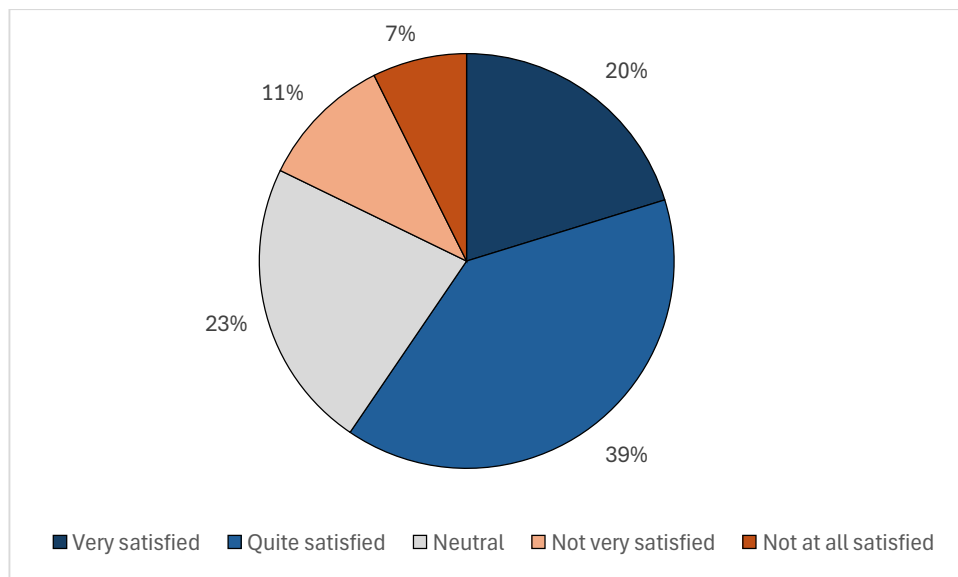


Source: All survey participants, $n = 163$.

Overall, the 2021 Census showed that veterans from minority ethnic groups were more likely to report being in “very good health” than white veterans and less likely to report “bad” or “very bad” health.

A similarly relatively high level of satisfaction can be seen in relation to wellbeing. As Figure 5.3 shows, 59% of survey participants stated that they were either very or quite satisfied with their life, while 18% said that they were not very satisfied or not satisfied at all.

Figure 5.4: Overall, how satisfied are you with your life?



Source: All survey participants, $n = 163$.

There are many different factors that can influence satisfaction with someone’s life, including those such as employment and feeling a sense community and belonging and these findings should be contextualised by the findings in the sections of the report covering these issues.

However, overall, the findings suggest that while there may be a case for targeted support for veterans who are experiencing particular mental or physical health issues, especially when those physical or mental health issues have arisen as a result of their time in the Services, there was little evidence to suggest that ethnic minority veterans experienced worse health and wellbeing outcomes than other veterans.

6. Community and relationships

Ethnic minority veterans reported low levels of advice and support in relation to social and community integration but also expressed the view that advice and support may have limited efficacy in this domain of integration.

As in the case of employment, there appeared to be some pre-discharge anxiety about how ethnic minority veterans would be received by the wider civilian population, as well as dealing with the loss of the readily available service personnel community, but despite this participants reported high levels of satisfaction with their personal experiences of integration.

The majority of participants reported having cordial relations with their neighbours and others in their local community, but almost a quarter reported that they sometimes or often felt lonely.

To a certain extent, the difficulties faced by ethnic minority veterans in integrating into local communities were those experienced by any new-comer to a local area, with these largely being resolved by time. Ethnic minority veterans who were able to draw upon support from family and friends living in the local area found the transition somewhat easier.

Roughly a quarter of ethnic minority veterans reported that people responded positively when learning that they were a veteran, while a similar proportion reported that people responded negatively. There was also evidence of the disjuncture between ideas and expectations of veterans and those around ethnic minorities, with participants again reporting that people were surprised to learn that someone from an ethnic minority background had served in the Armed Forces.

The Strategy for our Veterans (2018) highlights the value of social relationships and community in helping people to make important life transitions. It notes that a loss of camaraderie and sense of purpose can occur when people leave the Armed Forces and that Armed Forces charities report that many of their beneficiaries report experiencing loneliness and isolation. The aspiration in the Strategy for our Veterans is that veterans are able to build healthy relationships and integrate into their communities.

Social integration is usually seen to encompass connecting with other people in a meaningful way, playing an active part in the community and relating to others as an equal. Participants in the study were asked a series of questions designed to measure social and community integration, including their social relationships and civic and other engagement with the wider community, as well as their own subjective feelings of belonging and acceptance.

As will be seen in this Section, for veterans from an ethnic minority background, this is a multi-level process, involving forming relationships with the wider White population as well as with people from their own (or other) ethnic group and navigating those relationships both as a veteran and as an ethnic minority, along with other salient cross-cutting identities, particularly sex and religion. Such relationships also existed on a variety of scales, encompassing both local-level relationships and more geographically diffuse relationships, as in the case of 'a community of veterans'. As has been noted earlier in this report, participants particularly highlighted the difference in perceptions that people in civilian life have of ethnic minority veterans vis-à-vis white veterans and how this relates to their identity and integration in a variety of ways.

To provide context, survey participants were asked how long they had lived in their local area. Over half (54%) had lived in their local area for less than two years, and this must be borne in mind when considering the findings, as developing strong social ties and a sense of belonging can take time.

Table 6.1: How long have you lived in your local area?

Time lived in local area	Per cent
Less than 1 year	26
1 year but less than 2 years	28
2 years but less than 5 years	31
5 years but less than 10 years	12
10 years or more	3

Overall, community integration appears to be one of the least difficult areas of transition for veterans from an ethnic minority background, and one that proceeded much as the participants had expected. While participants noted the loss of a ‘ready-made’ community in the Armed Forces, the majority reported having at least cordial or neutral relationships with those in their new local community. However, there were some participants who reported experiencing difficulties, either initially or on an ongoing basis. However, it is also evident that the processes and expectations that ethnic minority veterans have to navigate in post-Service life are, in some cases, somewhat different than those experienced by white veterans.

6.1. Experiences while in service

Unlike in the cases of employment and training and finance and debt, participants reported receiving little practical advice about social integration, beyond being provided with contact details of various charities who could provide support to combat isolation and encouragement to maintain contact with regimental or other groups to develop and maintain a community amongst serving and veteran personnel.

Views of participants on preparation and views while in service were mixed. Some participants broadly felt that *‘you can’t teach people to make friends’* and there were also differing aspirations for continued involvement with serving personnel and other veterans. Some participants favoured ‘a clean break’, wanting to establish a new life and a new identity that they viewed as being future-focussed. These participants commonly viewed their time in the Services as simply a stage in their lives that was now over and were less likely to consider being in the Services or being a veteran as a core part of their identity.

“I think for your own mental health, you have to move on. However you have seen things while you are in the Army, that isn’t your life any more and you can’t cling on to that. For my own sanity, I have had to think of my life then as a job. I don’t work there anymore, I’ve moved on” [Male, Asian, Army, discharged 5 to 7 years ago]

“I don’t want to be one of those saddo exes, hanging around, living in the past” [Female, Black, Army, discharged 1 to 2 years ago]

However, other participants commented that they had been worried about leaving the friendships and community they had developed while in the Armed Forces, with one participant going as far as to describe it as “*almost like a death*”. These participants were more likely to say that they had been concerned about how they would be perceived by others, both as veterans and as people from an ethnic minority background and how this would affect their future friendships, both with the wider population and with their former colleagues.

“It’s basically forced on you, being able to get on with people at least at a basic level, you have got to relate [but] now you don’t have to do that, you can shut yourself away, other people can too, so how do you like make those connections when no one is guiding it?” [Female, Asian, Navy, discharged 3 to 5 years ago]

“You think to yourself, ‘what do I have in common with people? What do I talk about?’ because you can’t just start a conversation about, I don’t know, the mess or [...] training or whatever and everyone knows what you are talking about, everyone has been there. For me, it has been religion. I’m not what you would call like hyper religious, but I’ve turned to it more as something that is something I have in common, I go to church and that has really helped me” [Female, Black, Army, discharged 3 to 5 years ago]

“I definitely had the view that people are, would be, pretty negative about the Army, being in the Army” [Male, Asian, Army, discharged 5 to 7 years ago]

“Yeah, racism, yeah. You can’t deny it. That’s why I went home, because I know there, I know my people” [Male, Black, Army, discharged 1 to 2 years ago]

“It’s been a massive part of my life, it’s been my life and I don’t know how you just move on from that, and to be honest, I am not sure I really want to. It’s something you should be proud of, to have served your country, whatever anyone might think. I will always be proud and I will always stand up and say this was my life, I’m not going to hide it and I don’t want to” [Female, Asian, Navy, discharged 5 to 7 years ago]

6.2. Transitions to civilian life

Little information was obtained about transitions into civilian life in relation to social integration, and many of the issues people raised related to finding suitable housing and employment, rather than developing a social network or establishing themselves in a community. Some participants reported that they had initially found the transition somewhat difficult, but this appeared to largely be related to uncertainties around their living situation and finding employment, as having stability in these areas was regarded as a necessary precursor for starting to develop ties to local communities and to other people in their lives. When people regarded their transition situation as temporary, they were less likely to feel they either could, or should, invest effort in developing relationships as these would only be temporary.

Family, and in some cases, pre-existing friendships were most frequently mentioned as facilitators in making a smooth transition into the community, although, as in the quote above, other social and cultural organisations, such as religious establishments, and schools in the case of parents were mentioned as initial sources of community support and engagement. Notably, almost half of the participants in the survey were living close to other family members and several participants in the interviews noted that they had returned to live with family immediately after discharge for a combination of practical and emotional reasons.

“So at first, I was at my mum’s because I didn’t have anywhere else to go. I didn’t know what to do with myself and I needed, you know, decompress and then like get on my feet again. And it helped her out, so it was OK, but, well, you know, living with your mum, like I know people do it, but it wasn’t for me, long-term [...] But, yeah, it gave me a chance to look around and decide what I wanted, where to live, that kind of thing, and I live only like 2 streets away from my mum now, so I can drop by to see her” [Male, Black, Army, discharged 1 to 2 years ago]

“Pretty much everyone I knew before is still there, so it was kind of weird because I’m not the same person, but it was also kind of good to reconnect with my mates from school and so on, like all down to the pub. I picked things up. There were some jokes, you know, about Army boy and stuff, but I got back in” [Male, Black, Army, discharged less than 1 year ago]

For other participants, there was less of a sense of transition, as they had already established various ties to the local community while they were in the Armed Forces and they remained in the area after they had left. These participants tended to be older, to have served in the Armed Forces for longer and to have achieved a higher rank, they were more likely to own property and to have children in school, and to have had periods of stability in their career that facilitated the development of these things.

“Actually, we have lived in [redacted] for quite a while now. My wife wanted to settle down and it made sense for us to buy somewhere and establish that base. It’s a nice area. Of course, it hasn’t been the easiest when I have been posted away, but it made sense. So from, as you said, a community perspective, we were already part of the community, my wife more so than me certainly, so of all the transitions we have been talking about, that was probably the least problematic for me at least” [Male, Asian, Army, discharged 5 to 7 years ago]

Despite some participants reporting that they had been concerned that they might experience racism, race was rarely mentioned by participants as playing a part in their transition into civilian communities, either positively or negatively. The simple fact of having to make a transition into civilian life as a veteran had much greater prominence in their narratives of their experiences. As will be seen below in discussions of post-service experiences, this continued to be the case for the majority of participants.

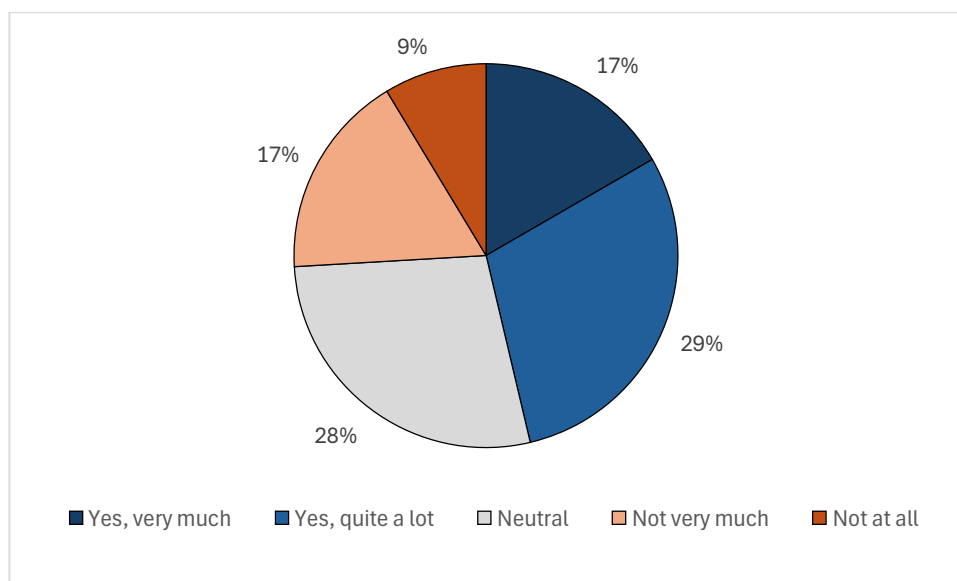
6.3. Post-service experiences

Participants in the survey and interviews were asked a series of questions about their integration into their local areas and communities. As Figure 6.1 shows, almost half of participants said that they felt that they belonged in their local area either very much or quite a lot. The key facilitators of this sense of belonging appeared to be length of time spent living in the area and, as is shown in Figure 6.2, having chosen to live in the area because participants already knew people, either friends or family, already living in the area. Both of these features meant that participants were able to draw upon pre-existing ties in establishing or re-establishing social connections. Just over a quarter of participants said that they did not feel very much of a sense of belonging to their local area and 28% responded neutrally about their sense of belonging. This was most commonly reported amongst people who had not lived in the area for very long, suggesting that it is not particular a feature of being a veteran or being an ethnic minority veteran, but is simply a feature of undertaking a life transition. The interviews also indicated that in some cases, participants had not developed a sense of belonging to their local area because they found it to be unimportant or unnecessary.

“I can’t say I really like it round here. There’s not much going on. But it’s convenient for my job. [...] Long-term, no, I don’t think I will stay here. I’ve got my eye on some other places, it’s just a matter of working it out. [...] It’s not that I don’t get on with people or anything like that, I just don’t have much to do with them, I don’t really see anyone” [Male, Asian, Navy, discharged 2 to 3 years ago]

“Everyone keeps to themselves, and I don’t mind that. I keep to myself too!” [Female, Asian, Army, discharged 2 to 3 years ago]

Figure 6.1: Do you feel you belong in your local area?



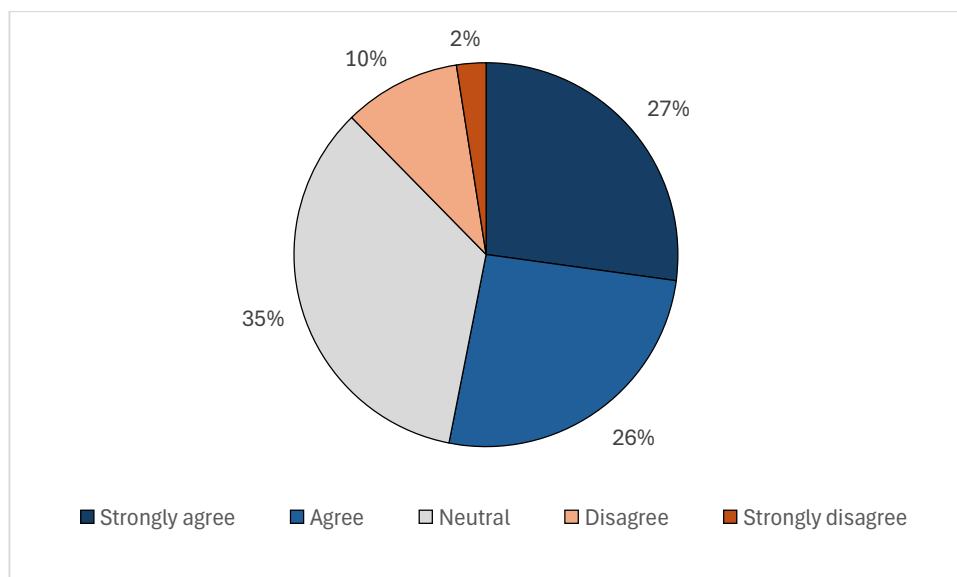
Source: All survey participants, n = 162.

In the interviews, only one person described feeling actively excluded from their local community. This person had experienced significant difficulties with their neighbours, which they attributed to their ethnicity. Overall, 71% of survey participants reported that they got on well with their neighbours most or all of the time, while just 5% stated that they rarely did. Similarly, 65% stated that on the whole they had good experiences of people living in their area while just 6% reported that they did not. This pattern of having at least cordial relationships with local people is reflected in Figure 6.2. Over half of the survey participants (53%) agreed or strongly agreed that people from different backgrounds got on well in the area where they lived, while a further 35% were neutral. In part, this is likely to reflect the participants' preference for living in an area where they thought they would fit in and get on with other people and participants in the interviews noted particularly that they had chosen to live in areas where they felt that they would be safe and be able to make friends and that they avoided areas where they knew there were ethnic tensions.

“If you have got any choice, you aren’t going to choose somewhere where you know there are problems, where you can see the flags and so on. The problem is if you don’t have a choice” [Female, Asian, Marines, discharged 3 to 5 years ago]

It was also notable that a relatively large number of participants remained in the local area where they had been serving, meaning that they were not only already somewhat integrated into the local population, but also that the local population had a level of awareness of veterans and their experiences and, in some cases, there were networks of veterans who could provide local support.

Figure 6.2: To what extent do you agree that in the area where you live, people from different backgrounds get on well?



Source: All survey participants, n = 162.

In the survey, 12% of participants stated that people from different backgrounds did not get on well in their local area. The interviews suggest that this was due to various ethnic tensions in some areas, but it must be kept in mind that the interviews were focussed on discussing race and ethnicity, so these kinds of issues were more likely to be raised than, for example, issues related to social class. Asian participants were somewhat more likely than other participants to say that people from different backgrounds did not get on well. None of the participants reported not feeling a sense of belonging or not getting on well with people specifically because they were a veteran. Being a veteran meant that in many cases they were new to the area where they lived and it could take time to develop a sense of belonging and to make friends, but participants did not report that being a veteran was a barrier in itself.

This is somewhat contrary to the findings shown in Figure 6.3. While around a quarter (24%) reported that people responded mostly positively to learning that they were a veteran, almost the same proportion (22%) reported that people responded mostly negatively. However, more than half (51%) stated that people's response was mostly neutral. Three interviewees commented that they had particularly faced negative responses from people of the same ethnic group to themselves. They attributed this to people having negative views about the Armed Forces in general, as well as to the unusualness of people from their ethnic background being in the Armed Forces. This view of there being a kind of cognitive dissonance in people's responses to finding out that someone from an ethnic minority background was also a veteran was echoed in the write-in comments to the survey.

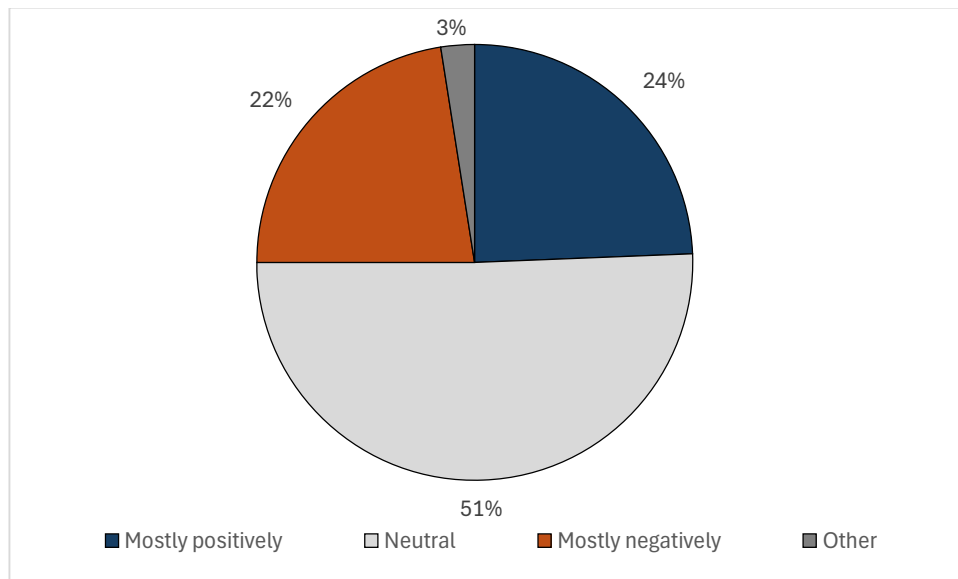
"People are like 'what was a person like you doing in the Army?' because black people are not in the Army" [Male, Black, Army, discharged 3 to 5 years ago]

"So many questions! Why did you go in the Army? What was it like? There is an expectation that it must have been awful, because of racism, like how could you ever fit into that environment. And of course, for some people it is awful, we've all heard the stories, but when I tell them it was fine, good, they don't know what to say except more questions" [Female, Black, Army, discharged 2 to 3 years ago (interview)]

"People are curious more than anything. I don't think they know how to respond. They have stereotypes about what someone in the Army is like, and they have stereotypes of what a Black person is like, and they don't really match up" [Male, Black, Army, discharged 3 to 5 years ago (interview)]

"People are surprised. I suppose I'm not a typical RAF person to them" [Male, Asian, RAF, discharged 7 to 10 years ago]

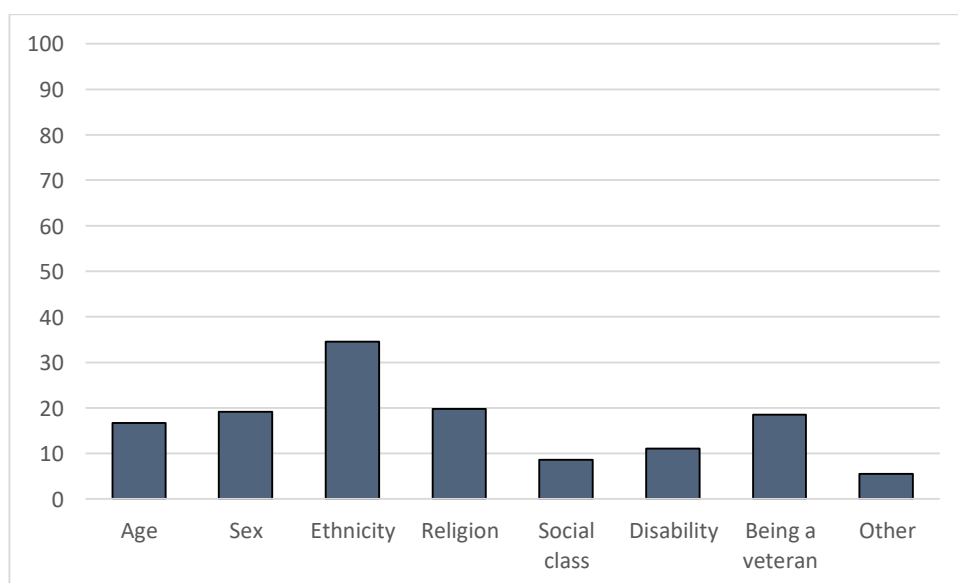
Figure 6.3: When people other than your friends and family learn that you are a veteran, do they respond?



Source: All survey participants, n = 160.

This highlights the ways in which ethnicity and veteran status can cross-cut in how people are perceived and how they navigate establishing ties in their communities. However, these were not the only characteristics that impacted on participants' ability to integrate and to feel treated fairly and as equals. As Figure 6.4 shows, while participants raised issues about how they were treated as a result of being from an ethnic minority background and as a result of being a veteran, religion, sex and age were all mentioned by participants as contributing to them feeling that they were treated unfairly by people in the wider population.

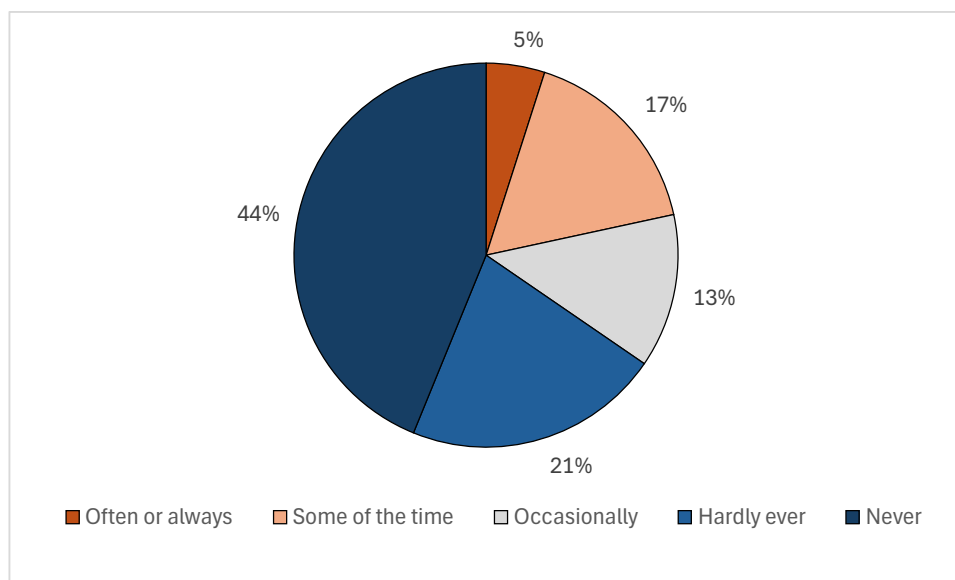
Figure 6.4: Over the past year, do you feel that you have been treated unfairly by people other than your friends or family for any of the reasons below?



Source: All survey participants, n = 160. Please select all that apply.

As has been noted, combatting loneliness and isolation was reported by participants as a key feature in the support they received while they were still in service. As Figure 6.5 shows, 65% of survey participants reported that they never or hardly ever felt lonely.

Figure 6.5: How often do you feel lonely?



Source: All survey participants, $n = 162$.

Having a partner and other close family members was associated with not experiencing loneliness, as was the length of time people had been out of the Services, with people who had been out of the Services for a longer amount of time being less likely to report that they felt lonely. In contrast, 17% of participants reported feeling lonely some of the time and 5% reported feeling lonely often or always. Amongst these groups, people who were not in work were more likely to report feeling lonely, as were people who had more recently left the Armed Forces, people who had lived in their local community for a short amount of time, who felt a lack of belonging to their local community and people who reported poor or neutral relationships with their neighbours. This is not an unexpected finding. Employment, in particular, has been shown to be a facilitator of social integration, as has engagement with civic institutions, and loneliness appeared overall to reflect a lack of integration in other areas that could facilitate the development of relationships. Loneliness was rarely mentioned in the interviews, although two participants mentioned feeling lonely when they initially left the Armed Forces and moved away from their established friendship groups. It has been suggested that one way to combat loneliness is for veterans to engage in volunteering, either with veterans charities or in the wider community, and the survey showed that 20% of participants had engaged in some kind of volunteer work since leaving the Armed Forces, which may also have played a role in preventing loneliness and isolation. The interviews also suggested that the development of social connections that were not geographically bounded played a role in preventing isolation. The idea that there was a 'community of veterans' who could offer mutual support through social media and events and maintaining contact with former colleagues, whether they were still in the Service or not was mentioned by some interviewees, but views

were mixed on how much individuals wanted to engage in this way, as well as how beneficial this would be as a long-term strategy, reflecting the earlier expressed views on the desirability of a clean break versus maintaining an identity and relationships as a veteran.

7. Housing

Overall, there was little evidence to suggest that ethnic minority veterans experienced unique challenges when it came to finding appropriate housing, although some mentioned a reluctance to live in certain areas due to perceptions of ethnic tensions or feeling that they would be unwelcome in a particular area.

As in the case of the other domains of integration, there was a relatively high degree of polarisation in the experiences of ethnic minority veterans, in this case between those who had been in the military for a relatively long time and who had achieved a higher rank, often with a job that offered some degree of geographical stability, which had allowed them to buy a house and establish local relationships and those who were younger and who had spent less time in the military who were living with family or private renting after being discharged.

Ethnic minority veterans who did not own housing prior to transitioning out of the military, and those with low salaries expressed concerns about the affordability and stability of their accommodation, similar to the concerns expressed by the civilian population who similarly struggled with these issues. There was some evidence that practical support was lacking for veterans and such support that did exist could be unreliable or difficult to access.

Housing and making a home in civilian life is an area where there have been significant developments in the support provided to veterans. The Strategy for Our Veterans document (2018) notes that there are issues around public perception of veterans, with many believing that homelessness amongst veterans is a significant problem, despite veterans not being over-represented amongst the homeless. Nonetheless, housing security is a key issue for veterans and the aspiration in the Strategy for Our Veterans is that veterans should have a secure place to live either through buying, renting or social housing.

7.1. Experiences while in service

Experiences while in service were a key facilitator of housing security which resulted in considerable diversity in the experiences of participants when they left the Services. Earnings and seniority, length of time in the Armed Forces, stability of placements and relationship status all appeared to play a role in determining both how participants viewed their transition into civilian life and how easy they believed it would be, as well as the advice and support they needed.

A significant proportion of participants already owned a home before they left the Armed Forces and while some expressed having concerns about a potential drop in salary affecting, for example, mortgage repayments, this group were secure and confident in their housing situation prior to leaving the Services. In contrast, another group of participants reported that they had been very concerned about their housing situation when considering their transition out of the Armed Forces. Many on this group had spent most or all of their adult lives living in accommodation provided by the Armed Forces. They felt that they lacked knowledge about how to find housing, particularly when their employment situation was also uncertain, and they were very concerned about the affordability of housing and the general availability of property in areas where they wanted to live.

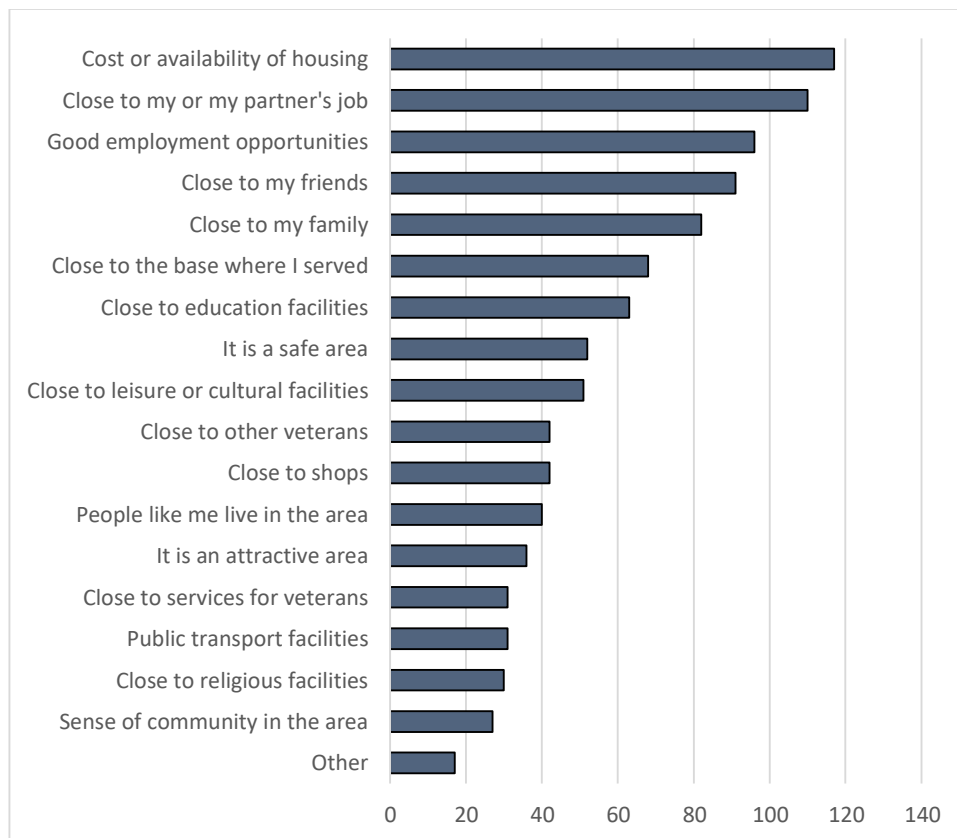
“I think the main difficulty is that you have got to do everything yourself, you don’t just get assigned. I had never really had to think about that before. There are always issues, but I always knew I would have somewhere to live” [Male, Asian, Army, discharged 3 to 5 years ago]

7.2. Transitions to civilian life

As has been noted, for a group of veterans, transition to civilian life did not involve any significant changes in their housing situation. Others managed the initial transition by returning to live in their family home with parents or other relatives. Overall, 55% of survey participants reported that their transition with regards to housing had been either very or quite easy and 72% reported that the transition had either been easier or as they expected. In contrast, 29% stated that their transition in relation to housing had been either very or quite difficult and 28% said that it has been harder than they expected. The write-in comments in the survey suggest that cost of housing was a key issue for participants who had found the transition more difficult, with participants reporting that they did not have sufficient money to pay deposits and rent upfront, and that there were difficulties with lump-sum payments when leaving the Forces, that they were concerned about the affordability of housing that was available and, amongst those renting, that they were concerned about the security of their housing. While some participants were aware of support they could receive from the Armed Forces to help their transition, many believed that this was not an area over which the Armed Forces could have any control or provide any help to them.

Figure 7.1 shows why people chose to live in a particular area. This is not necessarily the area they chose to live in when they first left the Services, but provides a guide to the key factors in their decision-making. As the Figure shows, cost or availability of housing was the most commonly mentioned reason for choosing to live in a particular area, with 72% of participants giving this as one of their reasons. Two employment-related reasons, being close to their or their partner’s job and there being good employment opportunities in the area were also mentioned by more than half of the survey participants, as were being close to family and friends. Being close to other veterans was less frequently mentioned, although 26% selected this as one of the reasons they chose to live in the area and 19% selected being close to services for veterans as a reason. Being close to the base where they served was selected by 42% of participants, but this is a mixed group, encompassing people who were living in their own home close to the base while they were in the Armed Forces and who had chosen where to live to allow them easy access to their job, as well as those who decided to remain in the area and find housing there either because they liked and knew the area or because they wished to receive practical support or maintain some level of contact with the base or the people there.

Figure 7.1: Why did you choose to live in this area?



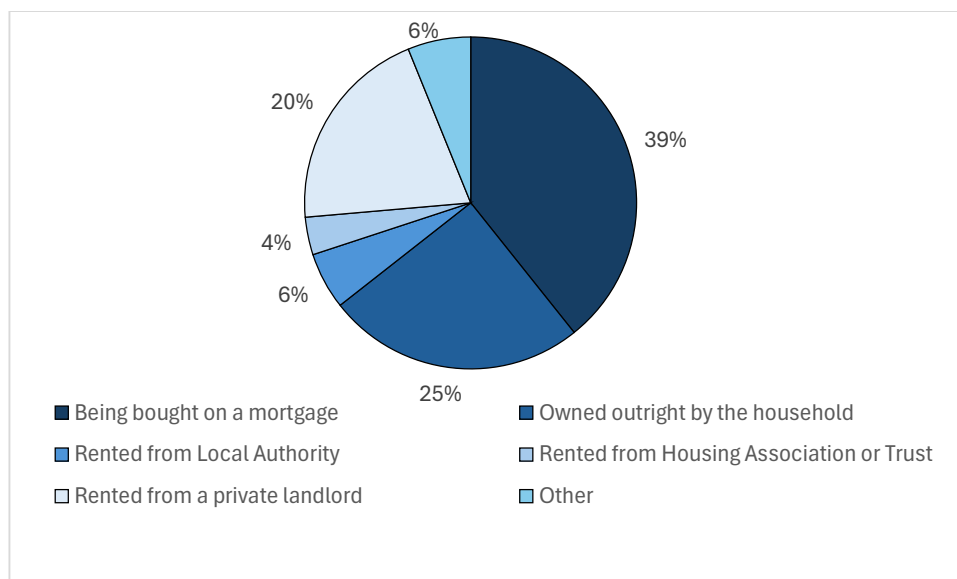
Source: All survey participants, n = 163. Please select all that apply.

Wanting to live in an area where there were people like them (25%) and wanting to live in an area where there was a sense of community (17%) were relatively less frequently mentioned as a reason for choosing the area where they lived, but were still important to a significant minority of participants.

7.3. Post-service experiences

As Figure 7.2 shows, home ownership was relatively high amongst survey participants, with 64% owning their own home, either outright or with a mortgage. In part, this reflects the amount of time many of the survey participants had been out of the Armed Forces, as well as the prevalence of home-buying amongst while in the Forces amongst certain groups.

Figure 7.2: Which of the following best describes your home?



Source: All survey participants, n = 163.

In total, 30% were living in rented accommodation of some kind, with private renting being the most common situation. Private renters tended to be younger and to have spent less time in the Armed Forces, as well as to have achieved less seniority while they were in the Services. They were also the group that expressed the most concerns about affordability and security of housing, which is not unexpected. Security and affordability of housing was an important issue for some participants. While two thirds of participants reported that they felt that their housing situation was secure, 16% reported that they felt it was not. This uncertainty tended to focus on not having a long-term contract for rental properties and the possibility that their current accommodation might become unaffordable, particularly for those who were not in jobs that they perceived to be well-paid or which were in some way insecure. Twenty-two per cent of survey participants reported that they spent more than a third of their income on housing.

“When you rent, it’s always in the back of your mind that the landlord might kick you out or put the rent up so you can’t afford it. I’d love to be able to buy somewhere, but that isn’t on the cards and I don’t know if it will ever be. I need to earn more money!”
 [Female, Black, Army, discharged 3 to 5 years ago]

As in the case of some of the other findings in relation to finance and debt particularly, it appears that the difficulties faced by ethnic minority veterans can more readily be attributed to having experienced a life-transition, with their experiences showing a commonality with non-veteran groups making similar life transitions in the current economic and social context. There was little evidence that the experiences of ethnic minority veterans in relation to housing could be attributed to their being veterans or being from an ethnic minority.

8. Conclusions and recommendations

Throughout this report, it has been shown that veterans have both positive and negative experiences of transitioning into civilian life, but for veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds there is an added layer of complexity to this transition. In functional areas such as finance and housing, there appeared to be little difference between veterans of all ethnicities and the wider population, while in other areas, such as employment and community integration there was evidence of a considerable diversity of experience whereby some participants reported negative experiences as a result of being a veteran, others as a result of being from an ethnic minority background and others from the interplay between being a veteran and being from an ethnic minority. However, another common thread in some veteran's experiences was the ways in which they had been able to subvert particular negative perceptions of veterans and of ethnic minorities as a result of their status as ethnic minority veterans.

Key to this complexity appears to be a lack of compatibility between ideas the wider population have (or participants believe they have) about veterans and ideas they have about people from ethnic minority backgrounds. This appears to be particularly an issue in the domains of employment and community or social integration but it also features in the participants' narratives around health and wellbeing and to an extent in the overlap between community integration and housing. This is not to say that all veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds experience significant, or exceptional, difficulties in transitioning into civilian life. However, it is notable that while discussion around expectations of veterans focussed on both positive and negative perceptions and how being a veteran could be an advantage in certain circumstances, with the exception of integrating into an ethnic community, there were few examples provided by participants of circumstances where they felt that their ethnicity, whether combined with their veteran status or not, was an advantage.

Employment, education and skills

The Strategy for Our Veterans report included the aspiration that veterans should be able not just to enter employment, but to enter appropriate employment and that they should be able to enhance their careers throughout their working lives.

This report has shown that despite participants noting that they had significant concerns about being able to find civilian employment, while some took some time to find employment and to settle into jobs, the majority were able to find work. At the time of the survey, just three participants were currently unemployed and looking for work.

However, when considering whether veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds were able to find appropriate employment, findings were much more mixed. Only a small proportion of participants considered their current job appropriate for someone with their skills and experience. While there was some evidence that the skills and experiences of veterans may be under-valued by employers, it also appeared that there were more systemic or structural issues that led to some veterans feeling that they were employed in jobs that did not make the most of their prior experiences. Two reasons for this were suggested by participants. Firstly, that employers or potential employers had particular expectations not just of the skills veterans would have, but also of their attitudes, which was seen to result in pigeon-holing veterans into certain types of work or having concerns about the extent to which the attitudes they believed veterans possessed would fit into a civilian working structure. Secondly, there were some issues raised in relation to the advice veterans received, both its general existence and

applicability in relation to individuals' aspirations and in its recognition of the particular challenges veterans from an ethnic minority background may uniquely face in seeking employment. There was a suggestion that providers of advice were either unwilling or unable to broach the issue of the specific challenges veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds may face, as one participant stated "*no one wants to tell you about racism*".

Recommendation 1: Employment

While the provision of generic support for seeking work, including making CVs and understanding sources of employment, there is a need for a more bespoke and individualised service prior to transition that takes into account the existing knowledge and aspirations of all veterans, including those from an ethnic minority background.

Finance and debt

The Strategy for Our Veterans report focusses its aspirations on ensuring that veterans receive sufficient financial education to acquire the skills they need to be financially self-supporting and resilient and the findings in this report show that the majority of participants were confident in managing their financial affairs, but that a significant proportion lack financial resilience.

Although some participants expressed concerns about being able to manage all their own financial affairs in civilian life having not had to do so in the same way while in the Services, this appeared to be something that resolved over time for most participants as they gained experience and confidence. At the time of the survey, 63% of participants were very or somewhat confident in managing their financial affairs. However, a minority experienced significant difficulties in managing their finances, with 22% reporting that they had significant, and often persistent, debt that concerned them and similarly 22% stated that they were rarely or never confident that they would be able to pay their bills. There was evidence of a lack of financial resilience in the savings levels amongst ethnic minority veterans, with 53% stating that they had less than £1,500 in unassigned savings. This was less frequently attributed to a lack of financial management skills and more to a general lack of money, which is not an issue exclusive to veterans.

Recommendation 2: Finance and debt

Based on the findings presented in this report, it could be argued that the best way for veterans to gain financial management skills is through doing. This may be the case for many veterans, but for those with problematic debt and concerns about paying their bills, while signposting exists to various debt advice services, it is unclear to what extent these services take into account people's pre-existing lack of experience in managing all their own financial affairs and this is an area where a more tailored service for veterans should be made available for a more considerable time after they have left the Services.

Health and wellbeing

The health and wellbeing of the veteran population is explicitly linked to their ability to engage in other domains of integration and it is also noted that issues in other domains can have an impact on the physical and mental health of veterans.

Two issues were identified in supporting the health and wellbeing of veterans as they transition into civilian life. Firstly, that there was a general lack of support provided, although it must be

noted that this appears to be a situation that has been improving rapidly, and secondly that there was an unwillingness amongst veterans, and perhaps particularly due to cultural norms in particular communities, amongst veterans from an ethnic minority background to take up the support that is available. The report demonstrates how a prevailing culture of needing to be tough and resilient and to not show weakness or make trouble serves as a particular barrier to veterans getting the support they need.

Recommendation 3: Health and wellbeing

In relation to health and wellbeing, there is a clear issue around messaging. While there is a relatively extensive network of services for veterans, and veterans were usually aware that they could find support, there is a need to address their reluctance to use the support available. A clearer message should be delivered while people are in the Armed Forces as well as after they have left that seeking support is not a weakness. There is also possibly a related need to address the stigma in certain communities around needing mental health support in particular.

Community and relationships

Participants indicated that they had been given little support in navigating social relations as they transitioned into civilian life, but it was also the case that many participants did not think that this was necessary or even possible.

The veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds in this study could be divided into two broad groups: those who wanted to make a relatively clean break from Service life and forge new relationships amongst the non-veteran population, and those who wanted to maintain at least some degree of support and camaraderie from other Service personnel or other veterans.

In the transition into civilian life, it was clear that many veterans relied on their family and non-veteran friends to offer initial support when they left the Armed Forces and those who could not draw on such support were at a disadvantage. However, after this initial transition period, it appears that the majority of veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds go on to develop more extensive and diverse social networks that enable them to integrate socially into their local communities, including both communities formed around ethnic identities and the wider population. As a result, issues related to loneliness were rarely mentioned by those who had left the Services some time ago, although they were more prevalent amongst those who had left more recently and participants reported that they had been concerned about being lonely when they were removed from the familiar Services environment and the ready-made relationships that existed in that setting.

Recommendation 4: Community and relationships

Due to the diversity of aspirations expressed by the ethnic minority veterans in this study, it is clear that there is no one-fits-all type of advice that can be provided and it was unclear generally what advice many veterans would find useful to aid their social integration. However, it is notable that a relatively large proportion of participants made reference to a 'veteran community' and wished to continue some engagement with other veterans. This was somewhat challenging when the participant had moved away from the area around their base and, in particular, when they had moved to areas with a low number of veterans. There have been various developments to establish more geographically diverse veteran communities using the internet and social media and this should be supported further.

Housing

Experiences in finding somewhere to live were diverse amongst the veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds in this study. A significant group had been able to buy property before they left the Services and so experienced few issues when they left the Armed Forces. This group tended to be older and to have achieved a higher rank in the Services which provided them with sufficient income to purchase property. However, there was also a group of ethnic minority veterans who were reliant on renting and, particularly, in renting from private landlords. This group noted that they often received inadequate advice about renting and that they did not have sufficient financial resources to pay for deposits and up-front rents. They were also significantly concerned about the cost of housing.

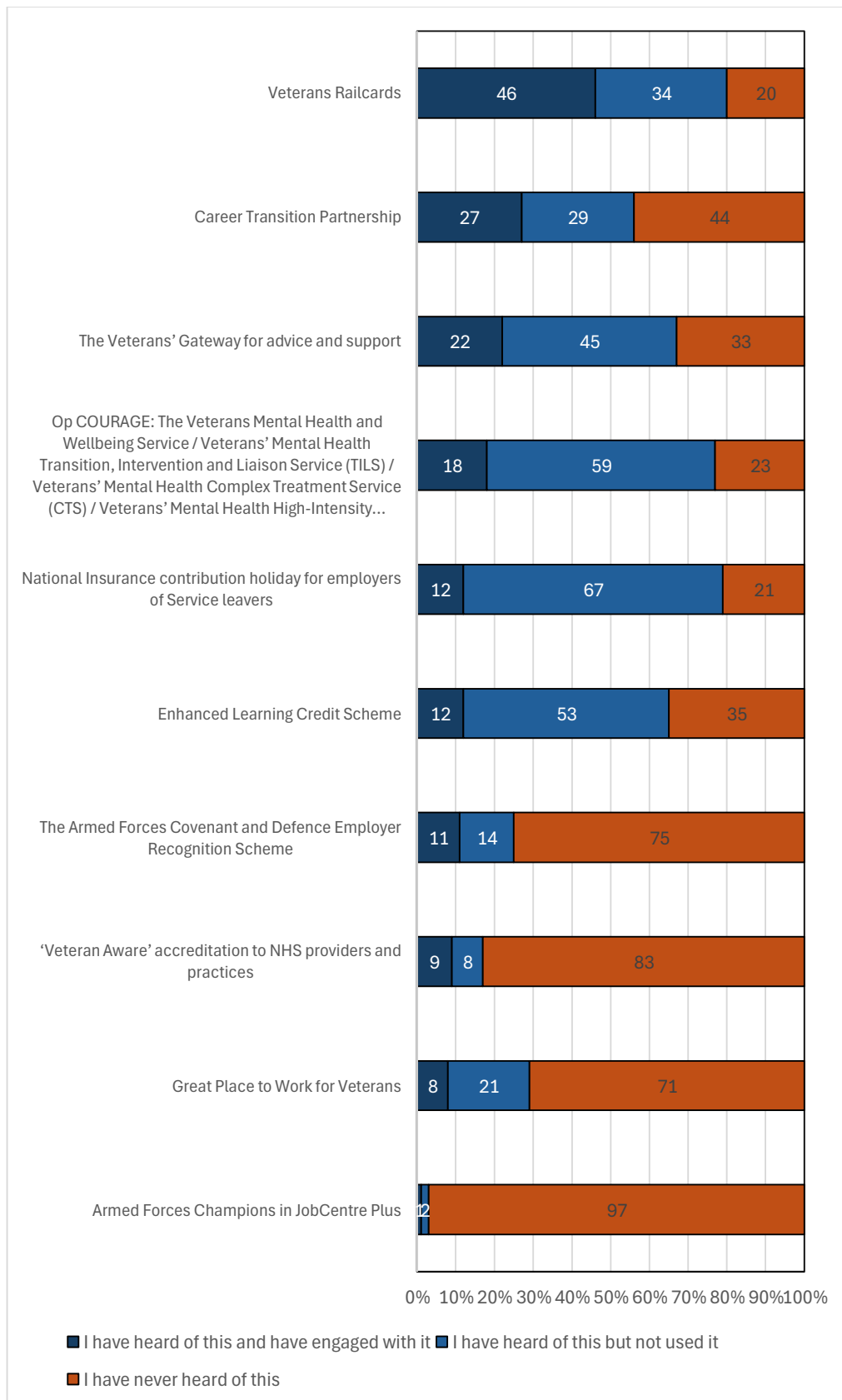
Recommendation 5: Housing

There appears to be a need for better and more focussed advice for veterans who are entering the private rental market, including more advice about their rights and about the financial support that the Armed Forces can offer them to make the transition into civilian housing. Several participants noted that although they were aware of various types of financial support, there were issues in its administration with participants either not receiving support or not receiving it in a timely enough manner.

Promoting awareness and uptake of advice

A common theme across the report is that in each domain of integration, a significant proportion of participants had not received any advice about how to make a smooth transition into civilian life. As has been noted, this partially reflects a previous situation and is not as prevalent amongst more recent leavers. However, it is also clear that there is a general lack of awareness of advice services available to veterans, whether or not they are from an ethnic minority background. Figure 8.1 shows the awareness and uptake of some initiatives that have been developed to support veterans. It should be noted that some of these initiatives were instituted relatively recently and participants' time of discharge in some cases predates their existence. When this question was asked to participants, it should be noted that a small amount of description was added to explain what the initiative involved, which is not included in the Figure. It should also be noted that the earliest respondents to the survey were not asked this question. As the Figure shows, for all initiatives except the veterans railcard and the support provided as part of the Career Transitions Partnership, less than a quarter of participants had engaged with each initiative. For some of these initiatives, this is not particularly surprising, as they are initiatives that would only be sought out by people with particular needs, for example, in the case of the small Armed Forces Champions within JobCentre Plus. However, a more concerning issue is the proportion of participants who said that they had heard of particular initiatives, whether or not they had engaged with them. This was a particular issue for some of the initiatives related to employment and health, which have been shown to be key areas in facilitating integration across a range of other domains.

Figure 8.1: Awareness and uptake of initiatives to support veterans in civilian life



Source: Survey participants n = 126.

Recommendation 6: Initiatives to support veterans

Consistency and continual messaging appear to be necessary to promote awareness and uptake of bespoke services for veterans. While it is important to provide advice prior to individuals leaving the Services, continued support across the lifetime of the veteran as they face new challenges or as appropriate initiatives are developed is also important to some veterans. While some participants engaged closely with charities and other support services on an ongoing basis, there needs to be a consistent effort to reach those who are less engaged but who nonetheless may benefit from support.

An advice service for veterans from an ethnic minority background?

One of the key questions that arose during this research was whether veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds needed additional or different support to other groups of veterans, and, if so how this support should be promoted and delivered. Views on this were very mixed. While there was general acknowledgement across the ethnic minority veterans and amongst stakeholders that some veterans from an ethnic minority background required specific support, there was a reluctance to be seen to be singling this group out as being particularly problematic and creating division amongst the veteran population as a whole. There were also concerns about spreading funding for advice services too thinly if it became too bespoke and focussed on specific population groups and some stakeholders raised concerns about their own capacity and ability to deliver specific advice to ethnic minority veterans when they were not from an ethnic minority background themselves.

Recommendation 7: An advice service for veterans from an ethnic minority background

There is a need for further research to determine both the need and feasibility of offering more targeted support for veterans from an ethnic minority background, and how this would fit into the existing support framework were it to be considered necessary.

Table 8.1: Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation	Most relevant to	Timescale
Recommendation 1: Employment		
<p>Create a more bespoke and individualised service prior to transition directed towards ethnic minority veterans that takes into account their existing knowledge and aspirations and provides more specific and relevant support in addressing the barriers they face in obtaining employment. Consider whether a bespoke service should be provided for ethnic minority veterans or whether this could simply be discussed more within the existing provision.</p>	<p>Department for Work and Pensions, branches of the Armed Forces</p>	<p>Ongoing, tying into changes to the services provided by JCP. Further consultation to be undertaken with ethnic minority veterans and advice providers about the nature of support required.</p>
<p>Extend the period over which support is provided to take into account circumstances such as maternity leave, frequent job transitions or periods away from the labour market due to injury or ill-health</p>	<p>Veterans' charities, branches of the Armed Forces</p>	<p>Short-term implementation. Outcomes measured over a longer term, recognising that this recommendation focusses on longer-term and ongoing support.</p>
Recommendation 2: Finance and debt		
<p>A more tailored service for veterans should be made available for a more considerable time after they have left the Services.</p>	<p>Office for Veterans' Affairs, Money and Pensions Advice Service. Veterans' Charities</p>	<p>Tied into the recommendation about employment, as it similarly requires the extension of support over an extended period</p>

Recommendation 3: Health and wellbeing		
<p>Address the reluctance of veterans to use the support available. A clearer message should be delivered while people are in the Armed Forces as well as after they have left that seeking support is not a weakness. There is also possibly a related need to address the stigma in certain communities around needing mental health support in particular.</p>	<p>Branches of the Armed Forces / MOD, Office for Veterans' Affairs, Charities, NHS</p>	<p>The process of messaging could begin in the short-term and be built into the existing support offered to personnel as they prepare to leave the Armed Forces. However, this also requires a longer-term concerted effort amongst stakeholders to change perceptions around mental health (a process that has already begun)</p>
Recommendation 4: Community and relationships		
<p>Create more geographically diverse veteran communities using the internet and social media.</p>	<p>Office for Veterans' Affairs, Armed Forces Charities, Branches of the Armed Forces / MOD</p>	<p>This would be an ongoing initiative involving some co-ordination between different interest groups in the voluntary sector and the branches of the Armed Forces.</p>
Recommendation 5: Housing		

<p>Better and more focussed advice for veterans entering the private rental market, including more advice about their rights and about the financial support that the Armed Forces can offer them to make the transition into civilian housing.</p>	<p>Local Authorities, Office for Veterans' Affairs, Branches of the Armed Forces</p>	<p>Short-term this could be built into the existing advice given to people leaving the Armed Forces. Longer-term there is a need for capacity building in Local Authorities where needs specifically related to veterans and particularly ethnic minority veterans are identified.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6: Initiatives to support veterans</p>		
<p>Consistency and continual messaging are necessary to promote awareness and uptake of bespoke services for veterans. While it is important to provide advice prior to individuals leaving the Services, continued support across the lifetime of the veteran as they face new challenges or as appropriate initiatives are developed is also important to some veterans.</p>	<p>OVA, MOD, Veterans' charities</p>	<p>A longer-term extension of existing provision.</p>
<p>Recommendation 7: An advice service for veterans from an ethnic minority background</p>		
<p>Further research to determine both the need and feasibility of offering more targeted support for veterans from an ethnic minority background, and how this would fit into the existing support framework were it to be considered necessary.</p>	<p>Academic research organisations, Equality and Human Rights Commission, Veterans' charities, OVA</p>	<p>In the short-term, more research is needed to establish the most appropriate delivery mechanisms and stakeholders. Longer-term, there is a need to resource any such initiatives adequately.</p>

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Appendix 1

Literature Tracking

Author/Year	Title (abbrev)	Geo	EMB Mention	EMB Analysis	Notes
Dandeker et al. 2006	What's in a Name	UK	Yes	No	Useful discussion of terminology. Mentions EMB twice: 1. Gov knows veteran needs dependent on a variety of factors including ethnicity. Brief mention of ethnicity and gender as a challenge when balancing business and equity goals.
Godier-McBard et al. 2022	A Preliminary	UK	Yes	No	Health study. Impact of blindness. Report ethnicity, but no analysis or narrative.
Meyer 2022	He Does Not Appear	UK	Yes	No	WW1 Veterans. One line mentions race and post-injury shellshock treatment.
Moran et al. 2021	How Many Prison	UK	Yes	No	How veterans end up in Prison services. 25% of prison staff are estimated to be former military. This is down considerably. Masculinized professions.
Phillips et al. 2020	Exploring the Victimization	UK	Yes	No	Reports ethnic background of participants but does not include it in analysis or reference in the text of the narrative. Focus is on how British public sees veterans: heroes and victims.
Price 2019	From Troops to Teach	UK	Yes	No	Discussion of ethnicity is in regard to students not the veteran teachers. "TtT appears to be aimed predominately at 'poor and racially subordinate youth'" p 337
Wang et al. 2022	The Next Mission	UK	Yes	No	Structural inequalities in the military mean different outcomes for leavers. Older veterans face double discrimination. Calls for further research on EMB but no data or analysis or anything other than one-line call.
Binks et al. 2018	The Transition Experience	UK	No	No	Focus on personal identity experiences in transition to civilian life. No mention of race/ethnicity.

Author/Year	Title (abbrev)	Geo	EMB Mention	EMB Analysis	Notes
Brunger et al. 2013	No man's land	UK	No	No	Role of identity in transition from military to civilian is important. Trauma and sense of loss after transition may be barriers to re-employment
Cooper et al. 2016	Transition from the Military	UK	No	No	Applying Bordieuan theory to the idea of transition. This is a process of acculturation in which cultural capital changes from military to civilian.
Fulton et al. 2018	Transition from Service	UK	No	No	Mental health focus
Gordon et al. 2020	Outside the Military	UK	No	No	Mental health focus. Identity and mental health needs of veterans and their families.
Hatch 2013	Life In and After	UK	No	No	Veterans have fewer social connections that in-service and higher rates of PTSD/Mental health.
Iversen et al. 2005	What Happens to British	UK	No	No	Longitudinal study of service leavers. Most do well, a minority do not. Mental health problems are associated with poor employment outcomes.
Manthrope et al. 2019	Supporting ex-service	UK	No	No	Transition from service to social care (working with older people). Review paper. Gap in literature identified in if military skills are transferable and what training would be needed.
Mumford 2012	Veteran Care	UK	No	No	Assessing decline in military covenant in UK.
Roy et al. 2020	Making the Transition	UK	No	No	Transitions in NI are more challenging due to "ongoing security concerns and political tensions." Vets live under the radar in NI. Need to work with civil employers to recognize value of employing veterans. Transition support should begin months before departure from military.
Stewart 2017	A Sense of Betrayal	UK	No	No	Disabled veterans hurt by austerity in civilian world.
Turner et al. 2021	Bridging the Gap	UK	No	No	Study of UK prison workforce.

Author/Year	Title (abbrev)	Geo	EMB Mention	EMB Analysis	Notes
Verey et al. 2012	Post-combat adjustment	UK	No	No	Qual study on how combat shapes civilian life. Peer support important. And service provides would benefit from employing people with combat experience
White 2019	Soldier Contractor	UK	No	No	Theorizing private military
Williams et al. 2018	You're Just Chopped	UK	No	No	Retired vets create 'modified military self' identity through engagement with network after retirement EG Royal British Legion. Focus is on transition from military to retirement.
Moore et al. 2016	A national benchmark	USA	Yes	Yes	Return to work probabilities are poorest for African Americans and Native Americans/Alaskan Natives. Based on data from Rehabilitation Services Administration.
Park et al 2021	Post 9/11	USA	Yes	Yes	Mental health, stress and wellbeing among transitioning. "The frequency of stressful events decreased over time but was higher for men and minority-race veterans...Minority race and Latinx veterans had higher symptom levels and slower rates of symptom reduction."
Vick et al. 2017	Gender, Race &	USA	Yes	Yes	Earnings using ACS data 2009-13. Male veterans earned 9% less than non-veterans. Black veterans experienced a 7% wage premium.
Ward 2020	Major Barriers	USA	Yes	Yes	Barriers to transition into civilian workforce include discrimination and stereotypes. Discrimination = lack of equal employment, racial discrimination, gender-based discrimination, disability. Stereotypes = job-fit stereotypes and bias from managers.
Gonzalez et al. 2020	Coming home	USA	Yes	No	Includes ethnicity as a descriptive statistic but does not discuss or analyze it. Useful term: "veteran identity strain" is the mismatch between civilian work and military identity.

Author/Year	Title (abbrev)	Geo	EMB Mentio n	EMB Analy sis	Notes
Hirudayaraj et al. 2019	Experiences of Women	USA	Yes	No	Intersectional identity of female veterans in the private sector: not women enough, not veteran enough. Acknowledging race as important but not part of study.
Kleykamp et al. 2021	Military Identity	USA	Yes	No	Military identity can hinder civilian success: weaker military identity made for easier transition. For them the military was part of a strategic plan, not the end goal. Race reported but not addressed in narrative analysis.
Robertson 2013	Income Support and	USA	Yes	No	Focus on teacher. Transition time and income support predicts successful transition from military to teacher. Reports race but does not include analysis or narrative.
White 2017	Beyond Iraq	USA	Yes	No	Name checks authors looking at race/nationality of private military participants. Calls for more data/research on how race and nationality influence life-course trajectories of private military veterans
Alonso et al. 2021	Building Effective Networks	USA	No	No	Strength of weak ties - who veterans should network with upon leaving military. Not empirical work, just presents a framework
Greer 2020	Adult Learning	USA	No	No	Intersecting identities of female veterans create unique transition challenges. Double identity and identity formation central. Presents summary of military transition theory.
Kulkarni 2020	Holding On to Let Go	India	No	No	Veteran as a master status. Identity change among disabled veterans.
Carpenter et al. 2020	Veteran-civilian career	USA	Yes	No	If US military is largest workforce training groups, why do veterans struggle in civilian society/careers? Argues for human resource development to help reduce veteran-civilian career identity conflict.