

Research
Report

Construction Salary and Market Trends Survey 2026

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CIOB Foreword



Construction is ultimately a people business. We can talk about technology, productivity, sustainability and new ways of building, but our ability to deliver any of those things depends on attracting, developing and retaining talented professionals. That is why surveys like this matter.

Salary is, of course, an important part of the picture. People should feel that their skills, experience and responsibilities are properly recognised and rewarded. But this survey also tells a broader story about what people value from their careers, from work-life balance and opportunities to develop, through to feeling recognised for their expertise.

There are also some encouraging signs. Despite the challenges the industry continues to face, a clear majority of respondents remain confident about the availability of construction management jobs over the next five years. That confidence matters at a time when we know construction needs to bring more people into the profession and develop the skills required for a changing industry.

For employers, there is useful food for thought here too. Attracting the best people is not simply a competition over salary. Creating good workplaces, investing in professional development, supporting wellbeing and giving people a clear route to progress are increasingly important parts of the overall offer.

I hope this survey gives construction professionals a useful benchmark for their own careers, while also encouraging employers to think about what they can do to attract and keep great people.

Most importantly, I hope it helps continue a conversation about how we make construction a profession where talented people can build rewarding, fulfilling and long-term careers.

Ruth Kennedy-Green, CIOB Director of Membership

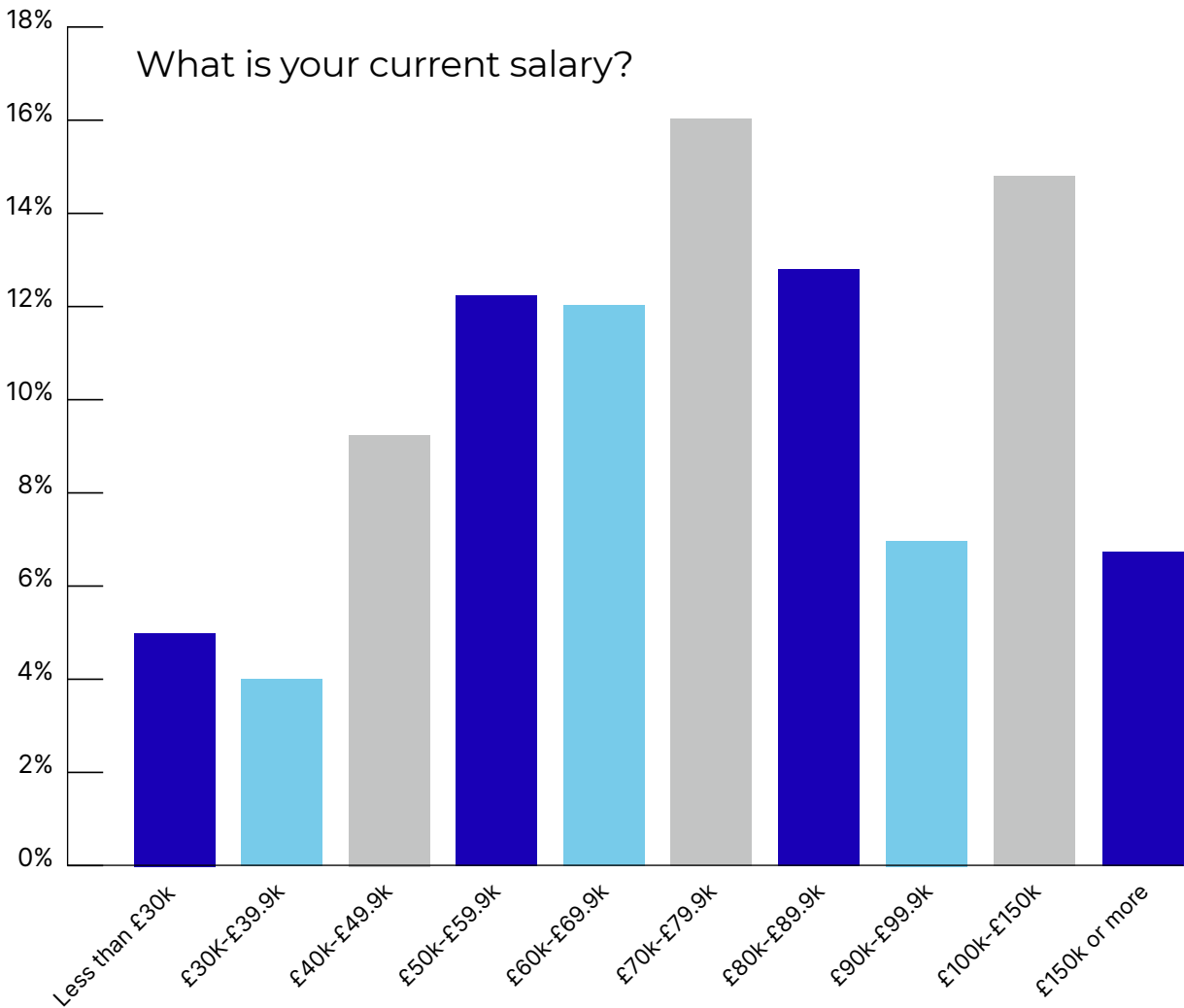
Chapter 1

Salary and employment status

Compared with the wider construction workforce, respondents to the survey are significantly higher earners. ONS figures show the median full-time employee in construction earns around the mid-£40,000s. But even comparing with professional construction occupations, the survey respondents' salaries sit higher than ONS earning data on salaries in those roles. While ONS data indicates median salaries for many professional construction occupations lie around £55,000-£65,000, the most common salary band among respondents was £70,000-£79,999. Around half reported earning at least £70,000, while more than one in five said they earned over £100,000, underlining the seniority of those taking part.

Compared with *Construction Management's* 2024 salary survey, this year's findings point to a noticeably more highly paid respondent base. The estimated average salary has risen from around £70,000 in 2024 to almost £78,000, driven largely by a greater proportion of respondents in the highest earning brackets.

More than one in five respondents (21.6%) now report earning £100,000 or more, compared with fewer than one in 10 (9.7%) in 2024. The most significant shift is in the £100,000-£150,000 salary band, where the proportion of respondents has more than doubled, from 6.8% to 14.8%. The share earning more than £150,000 has also more than doubled, rising from 2.9% to 6.8%.



Salary and employment status...

By contrast, the proportion of respondents earning between £40,000 and £69,999 has fallen. This group accounted for around 44% of respondents in the 2024 survey, but represents closer to a third (34%) this year, suggesting a smaller proportion of mid-career earners in the sample.

Despite these changes, the overall salary distribution still centres on the same point. The £70,000-£79,999 bracket remains the single largest salary band in both surveys, indicating that it continues to represent the most typical level of pay among respondents. At the lower end of the scale, there has been little movement, with the proportion earning less than £40,000 remaining broadly similar across the two surveys.

While the results suggest a shift towards higher-paid respondents in this year's survey, they should be interpreted as a reflection of the survey sample rather than definitive evidence that salaries across the industry have increased by the same amount. Nevertheless, the data indicates a stronger representation of senior, higher-earning professionals than was seen in the 2024 survey.

Employment status

The majority of respondents are in permanent employment (81%). Of those working under contract, 4.2% are fixed-term and 2% are temporary, with 10% freelance or self-employed. Fewer than 1% of respondents were apprentices.

81%

of respondents are
in permanent employment

Chapter 2

Career satisfaction

To gauge the level of satisfaction respondents feel in their current roles, our survey explored the general sentiment across five key areas: salary and incentives, health and wellbeing benefits, personal development opportunities, work-life balance, and holiday allowance.

Overall, respondents appear broadly positive about their employment package, with satisfaction outweighing dissatisfaction across every aspect measured. Holiday allowance attracts the strongest approval, with around three in 10 respondents saying they are very satisfied and a further third somewhat satisfied. Health and wellbeing benefits also score well, with around seven in 10 respondents expressing satisfaction. Given the growing emphasis employers have placed on wellbeing in recent years, this suggests many organisations are meeting employees' expectations in this area.



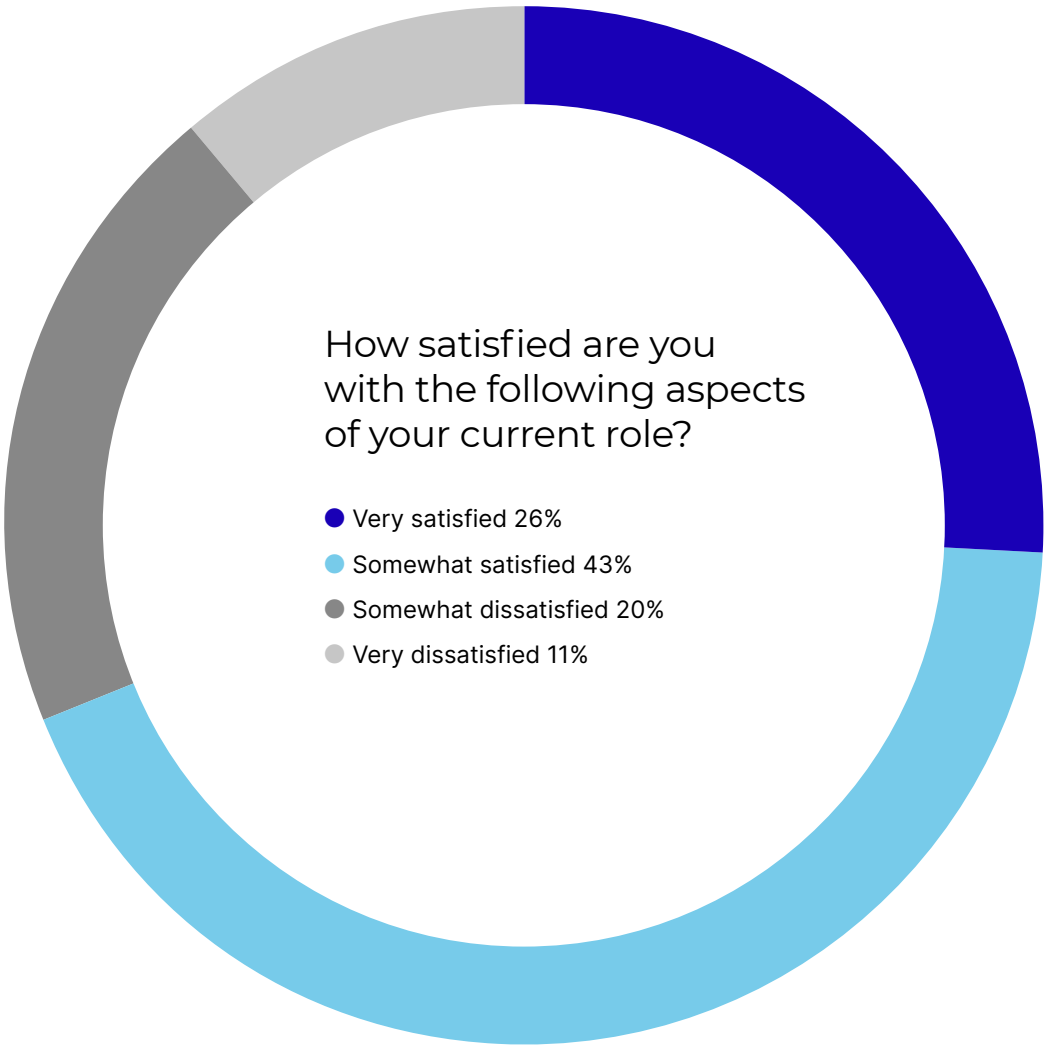
Career satisfaction...

Salary satisfaction

Salary and incentives receive a more mixed response. While almost three-quarters of respondents say they are satisfied overall, this category also records one of the highest levels of dissatisfaction, indicating that pay remains a point of contention for a significant minority despite the relatively high salaries reported elsewhere in the survey.

Work-life balance and personal development

Work-life balance and personal development opportunities follow a similar pattern. Around six in 10 respondents are satisfied with both, but roughly four in 10 express some level of dissatisfaction, suggesting that career progression and balancing work with personal life remain areas where employers have room for improvement. Taken together, the findings indicate that while respondents are generally content with the benefits they receive, non-financial factors such as development opportunities and work-life balance continue to shape overall job satisfaction.

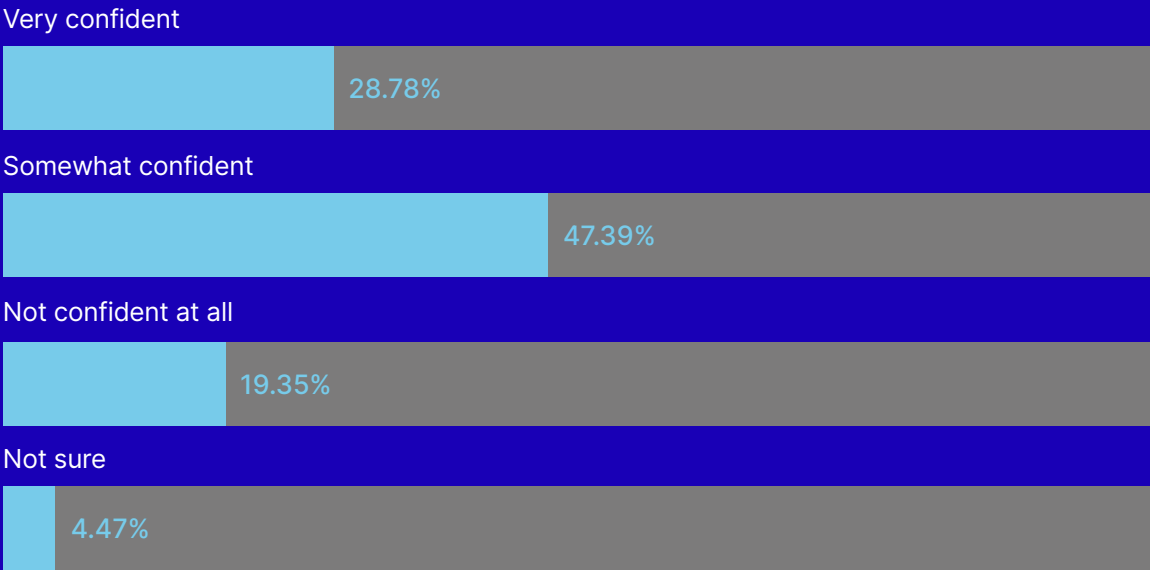


Career satisfaction...

Job confidence

Confidence in job prospects remains high despite a backdrop of economic uncertainty, technological disruption through AI and an uneven pipeline of work in parts of the construction sector. Some 76% of respondents report being either very or somewhat confident about the availability of construction management jobs in the next five years, with just under 20% lacking confidence. Compared with the 2024 survey, there is some decline in confidence: in the last survey, 85.3% of respondents said they were very or somewhat confident in the five-year outlook. Just over 11% expressed a lack of confidence, citing skill gaps, government policy and an ageing workforce as areas of concern.

How confident are you in the availability of construction management jobs in the next five years?



Chapter 3

Professional bodies and personal development

Almost 71% of respondents are CIOB members, with the majority (72%) holding MCIOB status. This is followed by FCIOB (9%) and TechCIOB (2.5%). The remaining pool of respondents included applicants and student members.

When asked about how CIOB membership has made a difference to their career, the majority of respondent reported benefits ranging from gaining skills and knowledge, gaining an advantage in the job market and professional networking. One in six respondents said that being affiliated with CIOB has allowed them to feel more connected to other professionals.

Over 20% said membership made them stand out in the job marketplace; 34% said their skills and expertise were more recognised; while over 30% said they have gained more knowledge as a result of being a CIOB member.



Professional bodies and personal development...

Professional development

Asked about how they continue their professional development, the majority of respondents use either online courses or learning experiences with independent providers, closely followed by in-house training. Around a third of respondents said they use CIOB Academy courses.

70% are members of the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)

72% are full members (MCIOB)

34% say CIOB membership made a difference to their career; skills and expertise gained more recognition

31% of members attended CIOB Academy courses

Chapter 4

Job function and employer

The most popular job role across all respondents is project manager, accounting for 29% of respondents, followed by quantity surveyor (12.6%), with various roles around design, planning and contracts making up the third largest group of respondents. Site managers, building surveyors and building control also featured.

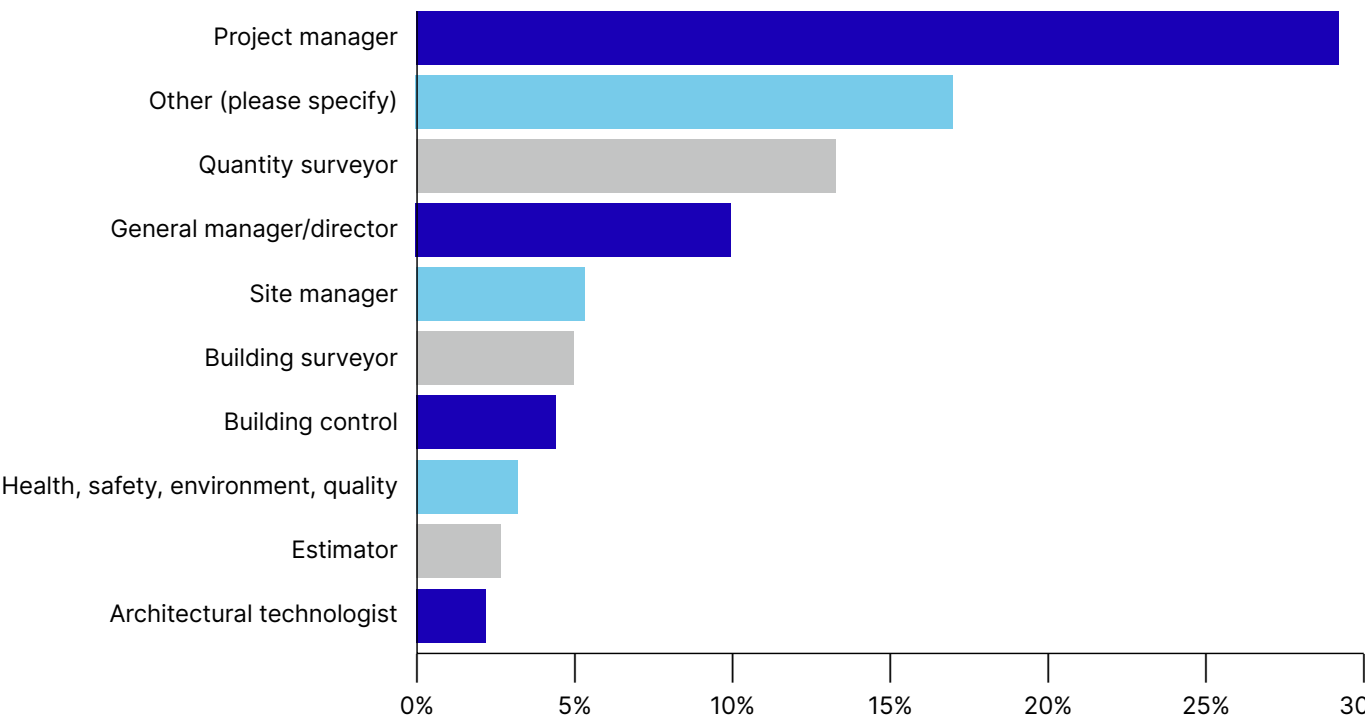


Job function and employer...

The vast majority (41%) of respondents work for main contractors. The remaining respondents were clients or consultants with many employed by local authorities, housing association or education establishment. Specialist contractors, housebuilders and architects also featured.

29%
of respondents are
project managers

What is your principal job function?

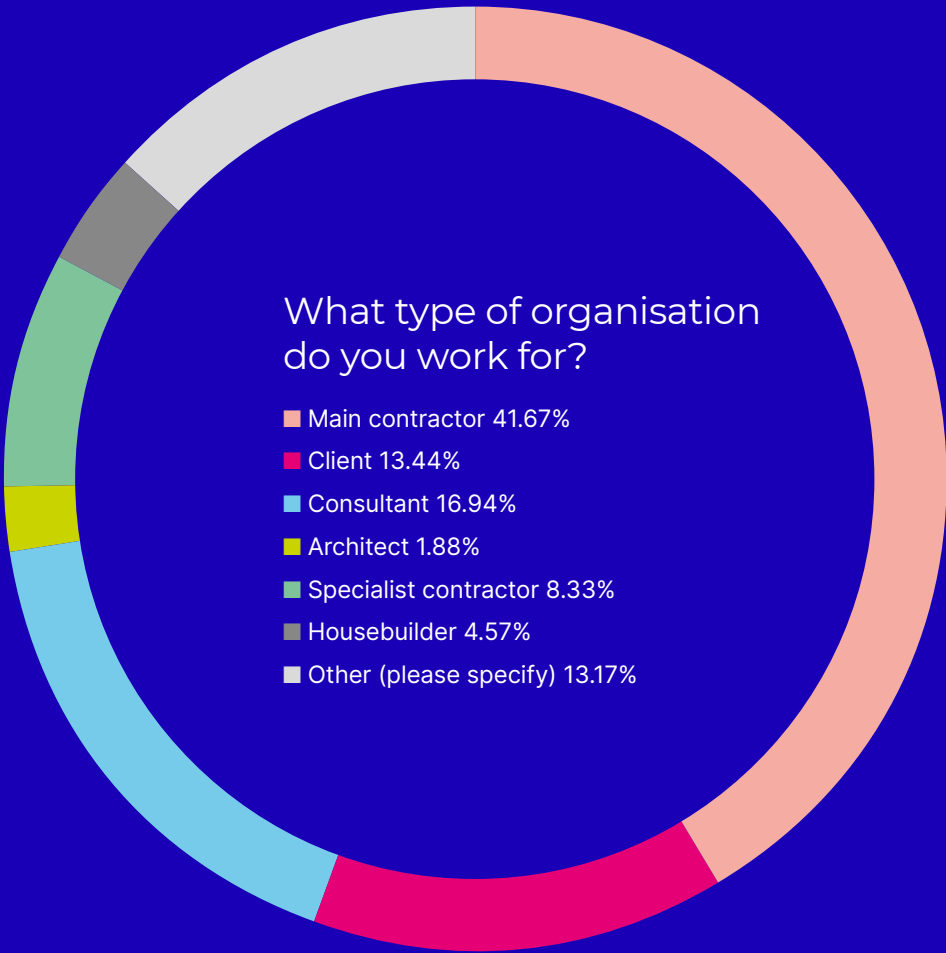
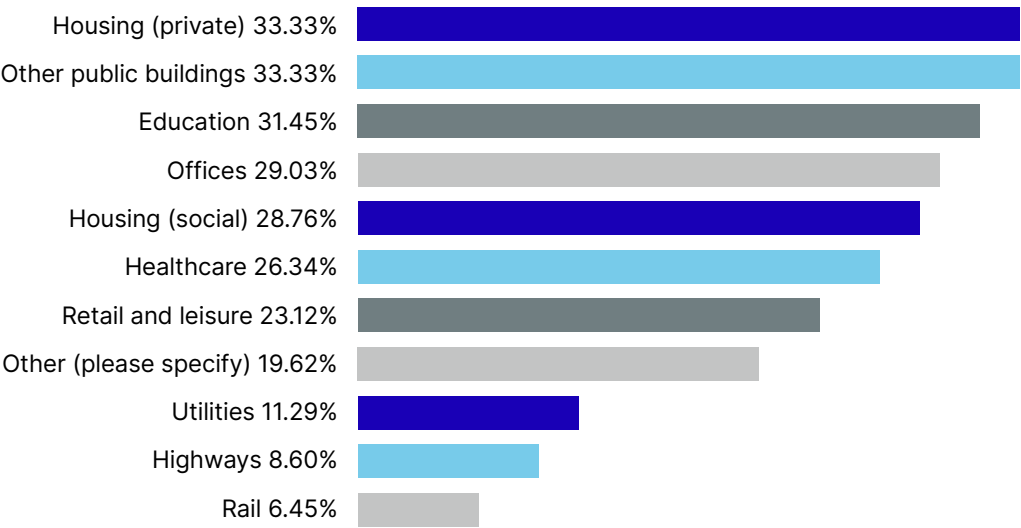


Job function and employer...

Sector

Respondents worked across a wide variety of sectors with housing (social and private) and public buildings scoring highly, closely followed by education and healthcare.

What sectors do you work in primarily?

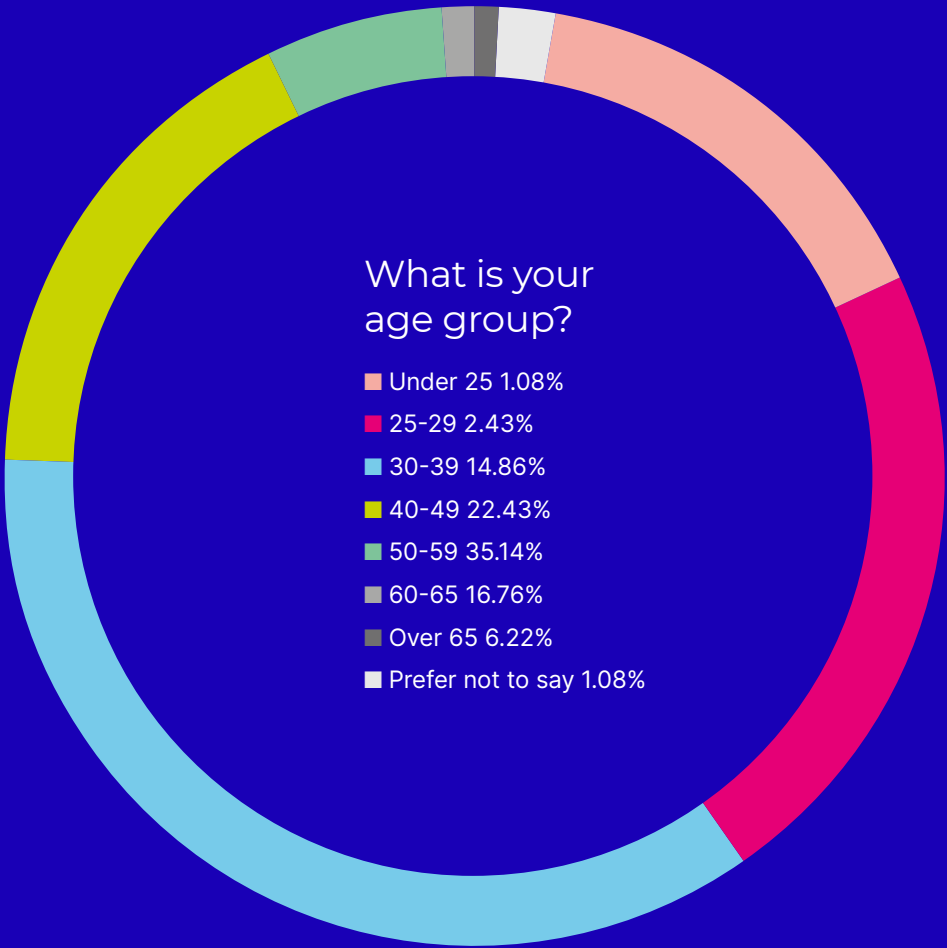


Job function and employer

Age and gender

Over a third of respondents were between 50-59, suggesting a senior and experienced pool of participants. Over 22% were in the 40-49 age bracket and almost 15% were age 30-39.

The survey highlights how little progress has been made in improving gender diversity at senior level. Women represented just 12% of respondents, compared with around 15% of the construction workforce overall. Since the industry-wide figure includes occupations where women are better represented, the proportion in senior management remains particularly low.



About the survey

This is the second Construction Management Salary and Market Trends survey. It provides insight into the salary and career development trends across the profession.

The survey was conducted by *Construction Management*. The qualitative online survey involved 420 respondents across a mix of sectors and job functions from all areas of construction management.

