



General
Chiropractic
Council

Test of Competence Annual Report

2023



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Report on the 2023 Test of Competence Year

2023: an overview

Recent years have been characterised by unpredictability and individual challenges. In 2022, we saw the highest number of TOC applications since its inception in 2015, with 55 attempts. Initially, with significant decline in numbers early in 2023, there was uncertainty about whether this trend would persist. However, the trend reversed during the year, resulting in a total of 39 TOC attempts in 2023. Although this figure is lower than that of 2022, it still demonstrates a strong performance compared to both pre-COVID and COVID-affected levels, during which there were typically fewer than 30 candidates on average annually.

Recruitment of TOC Assessors and Chairs

A limited number of TOC assessors and chairs serve terms of no more than eight years. Those who began with the current version of the TOC in 2015 have already reached the end of their terms, and more members will follow suit in the coming years. To address this, the GCC conducts an annual recruitment round to replenish the pool of assessors and chairs. This year, we are pleased to welcome three new chiropractors as assessors and one as chair.

In addition to the annual recruitment round, assessors interested in becoming chairs can apply to participate in the TOC Chair Mentoring Programme. This program offers invaluable support and guidance as assessors transition into the role of chair. Two assessors completed the mentoring programme during 2023 and have now been approved by the Education Committee Chair to serve as Chairs of the TOC assessment panel in the future.

Test of Competence Review Meeting

The Annual Review Meeting was held on 11 October. It was attended by assessors, External Examiner, GCC Staff and chaired by the GCC Chief Executive and Registrar. It provided an opportunity to review administrative matters and feedback from candidates, as well as for assessors to raise concerns or issues for discussion.

The meeting discussed a number of topics, including a reflection on the TOC mentoring programme from new chairs. A number of actions came out of the Test of Competence Review Meeting, including minor amendments to processes and documentation.

Additionally, the meeting said goodbye to five panel members, who came to the end of their term in October and December 2023.

External Examiner Appraisals and Annual report

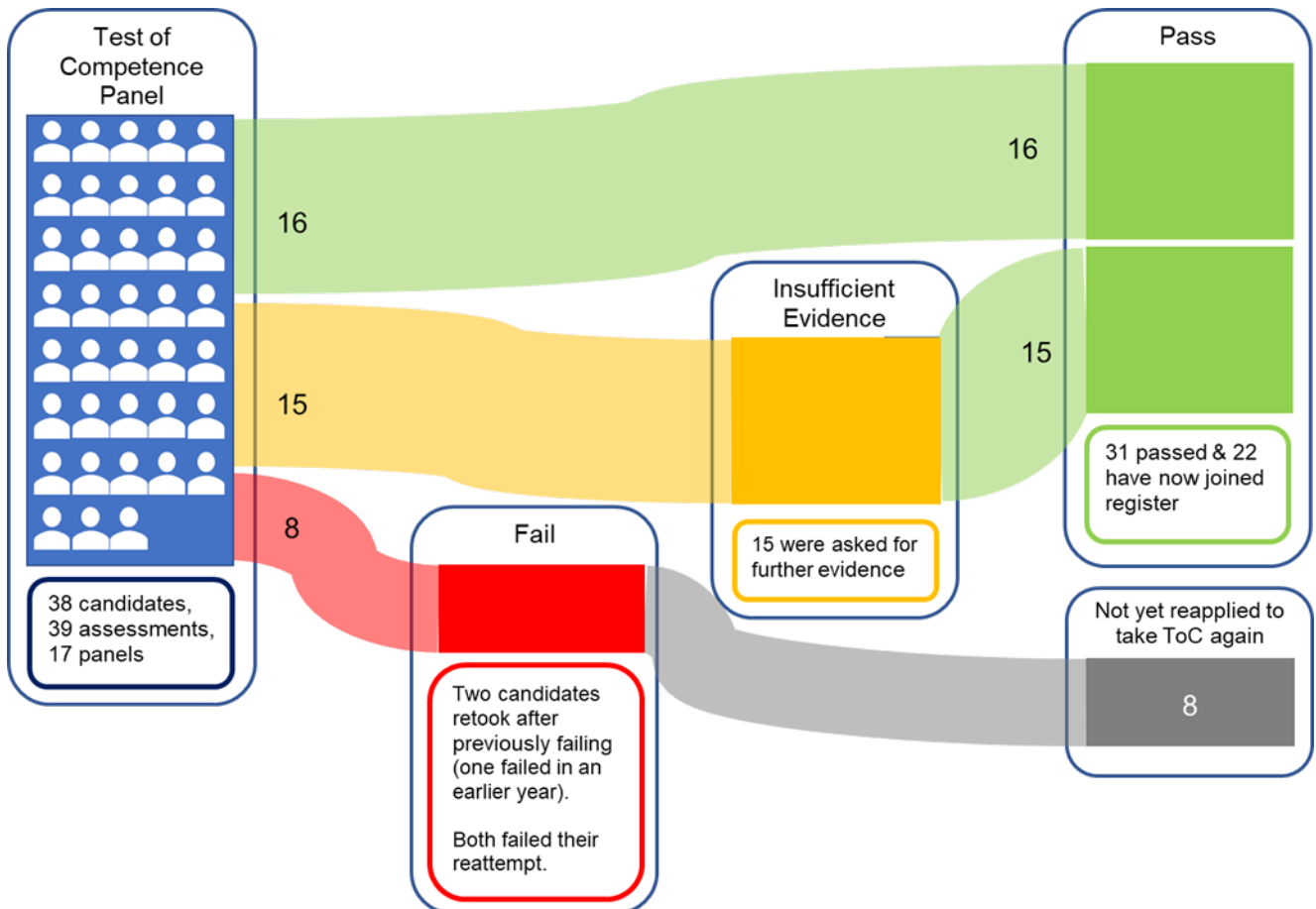
The External Examiner quality assures the ToC process, and, at the end of each year, conducts appraisals of all assessors and chairs.

The External Examiner has produced an annual report covering 2023 that sits alongside this report and includes both recommendations and suggestions for improvement of the ToC. The GCC's response is published at the end of that report.

2023 Test of Competence Results

In 2023, 38 individual candidates took the ToC and 39 attempts were made. One candidate undertook the test twice during the year. Of those 38 candidates, 22 have since been granted registration.

Candidates may either pass or fail the ToC. Those considered close to passing are asked to provide further evidence before a final decision can be taken. They will then either pass or fail based on the additional information submitted.

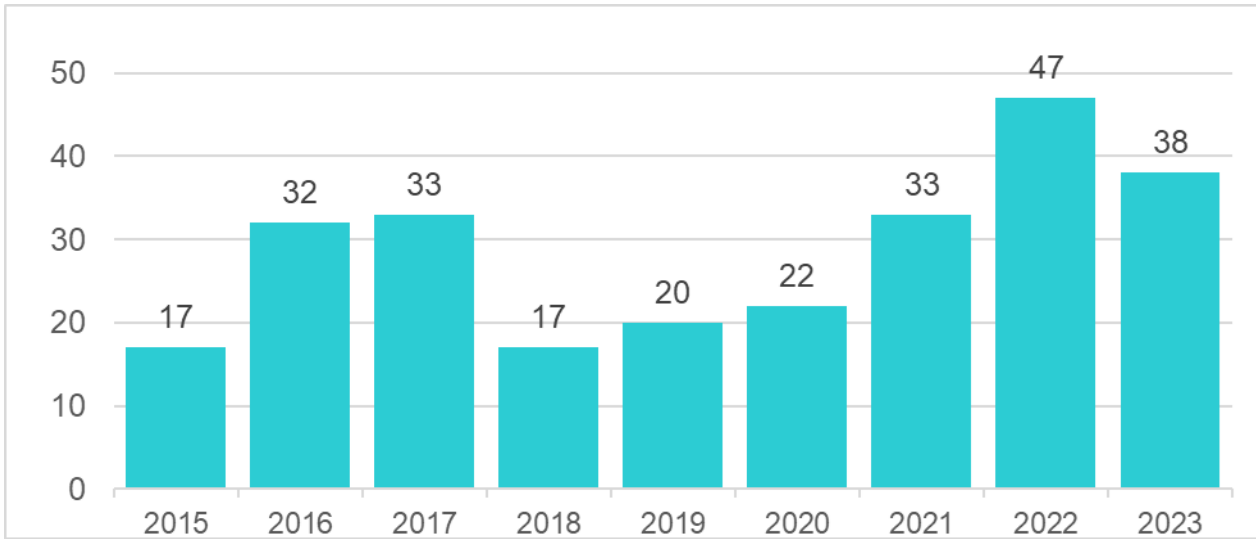


This report examines the data from the year 2023 alone. It's important to note that one candidate, who had previously failed the test, retook it in 2023. For clarity, this candidate is included in this chart as a new candidate.

When viewing graphs and figures, please consider whether the figures presented relate to individual candidates, or the total number of tests taken.

Number of annual ToC candidates since 2015

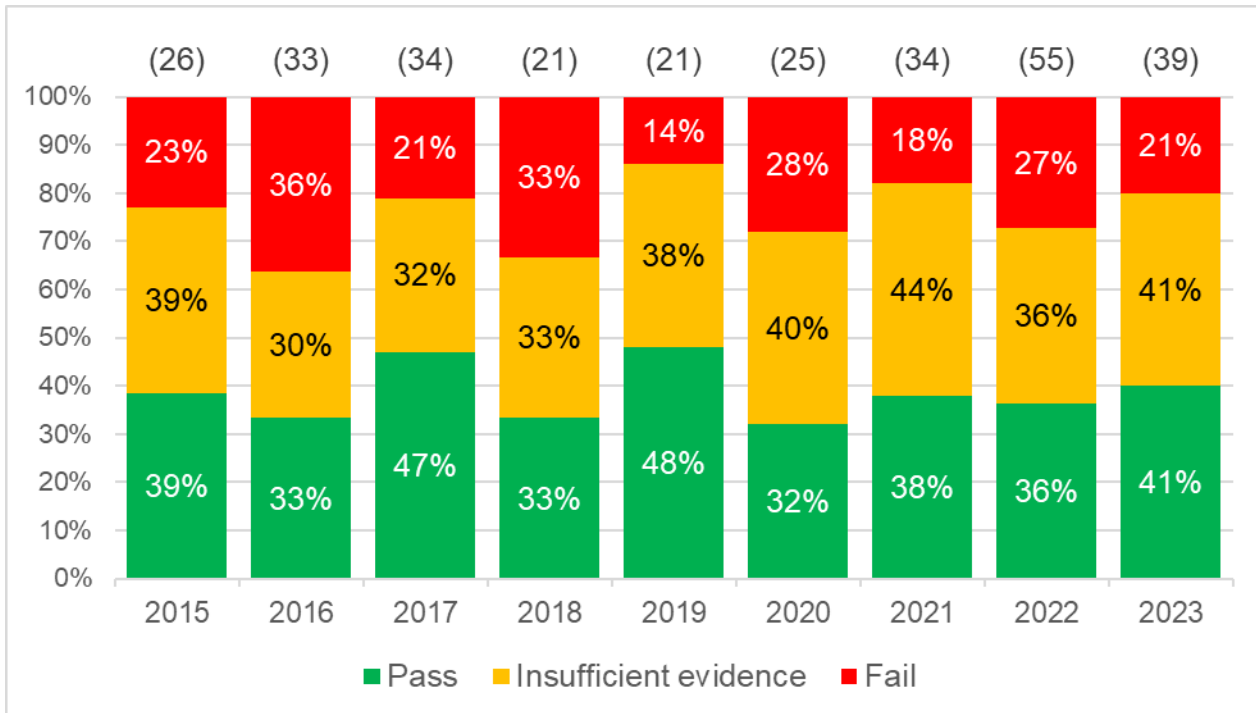
Number of candidates taking at least one test each year.



While there was a reduction in the total number of TOC attempts in 2023 this was higher than all years but 2022.

Outcomes of all tests taken since 2015

Comparison of all test outcomes since 2015 (total tests taken each year in brackets)



The percentage of tests failed decreased to 21%, while those passing a test outright rose to 41% (this is across all tests so a candidate may have failed previously).

It's noticeable that there had been a steady increase in those needing to supply further evidence since 2016, and while this dropped back in 2022, it has increased again slightly to 38% for 2023. However, and as always, it should be considered that the number of ToC

attempts annually is still relatively small and therefore any single year's statistics are not necessarily significant.

Further Evidence

Several recurring themes emerged among the subjects requiring further evidence from 2023 candidates, the main ones being: -

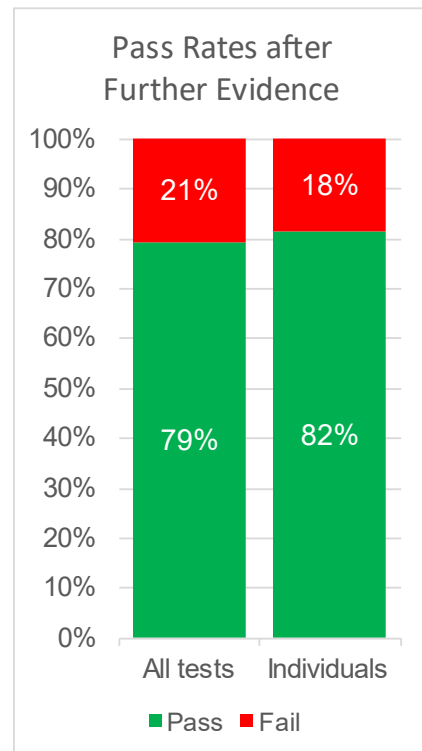
- Patient clinical records
- Contraindications of treatment
- Appropriate use of ionising radiation
- Patient reported outcome measures
- Biopsychosocial model
- Evidence based practice
- Red and yellow flags

Final results once further evidence taken into account

The final 2023 TOC results (when further evidence has been considered) reveal a final pass rate of 79%, marking a 7% increase compared to 2022, although the total number of passing candidates was higher in 2022. It's noteworthy that all candidates requested to submit further evidence ultimately passed the TOC.

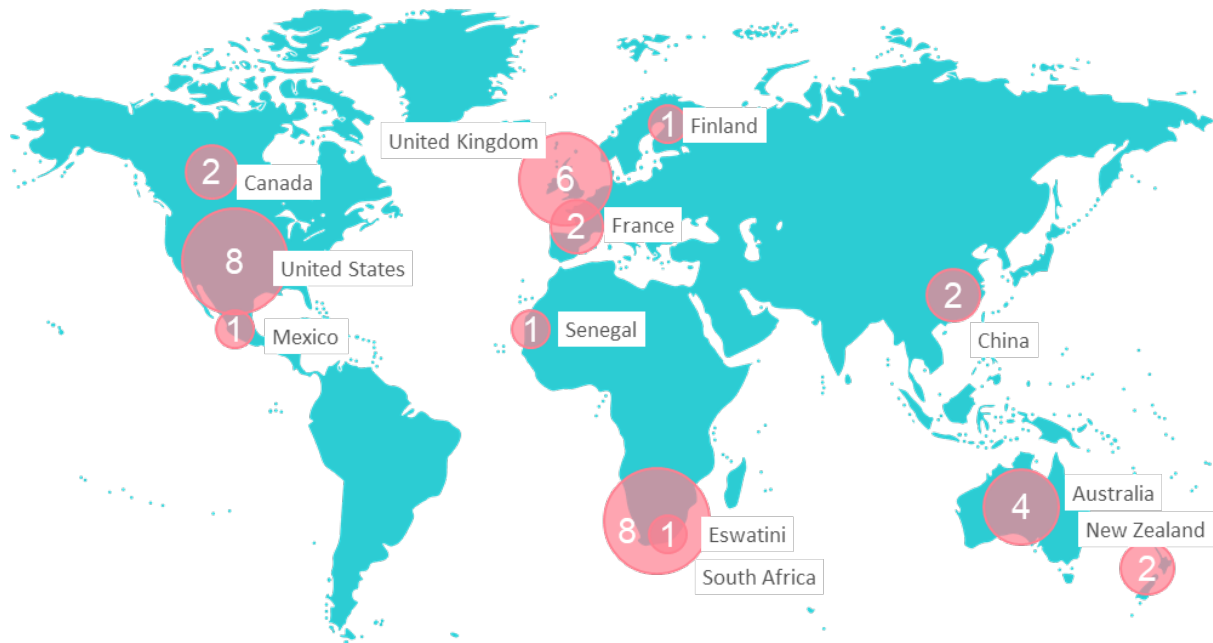
Typically, about two-thirds of candidates pass the TOC annually, with the 2023 figures surpassing this average. However, due to the relatively small sample size, it's challenging to draw specific conclusions from these results.

Fewer candidates, both numerically and as a percentage, failed in 2023. The total percentage of fails appears to peak every other year. 21% of candidates failed the TOC in 2023, which is below the mean average of 24.7%.



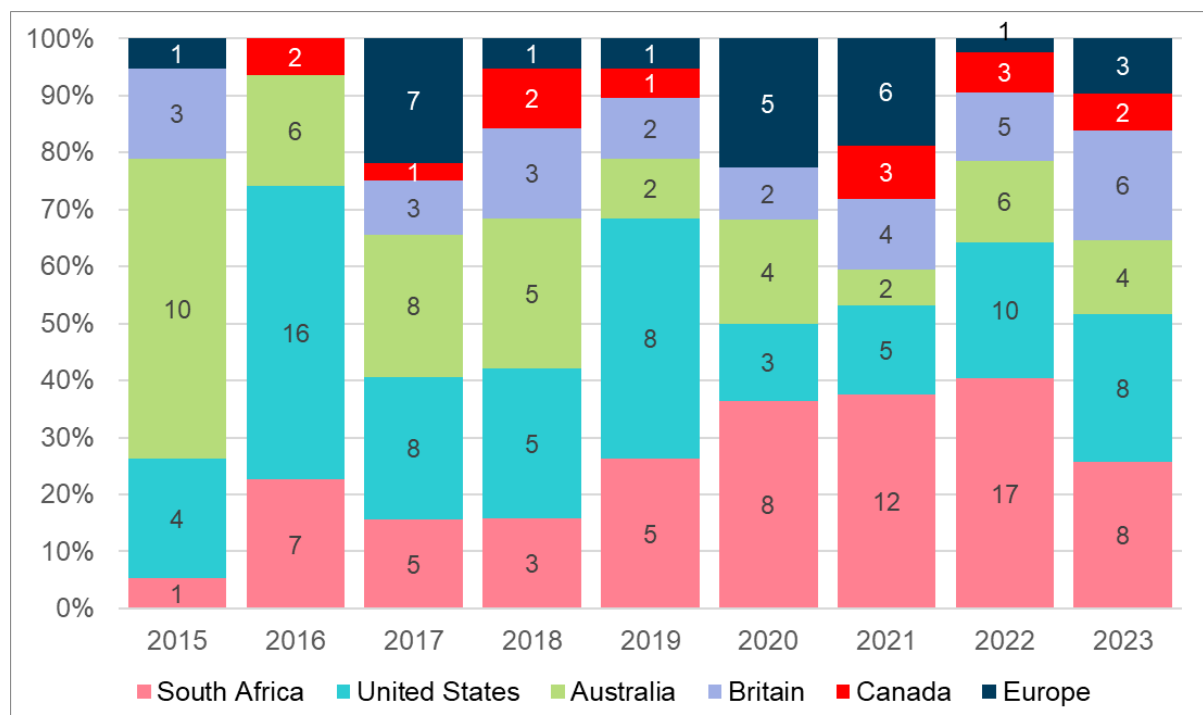
Who takes the Test of Competence?

We ask all candidates applying to take the Test of Competence to provide details of protected characteristics as well as their nationality. Further details can be found under Equality and Diversity from page 9 onwards.



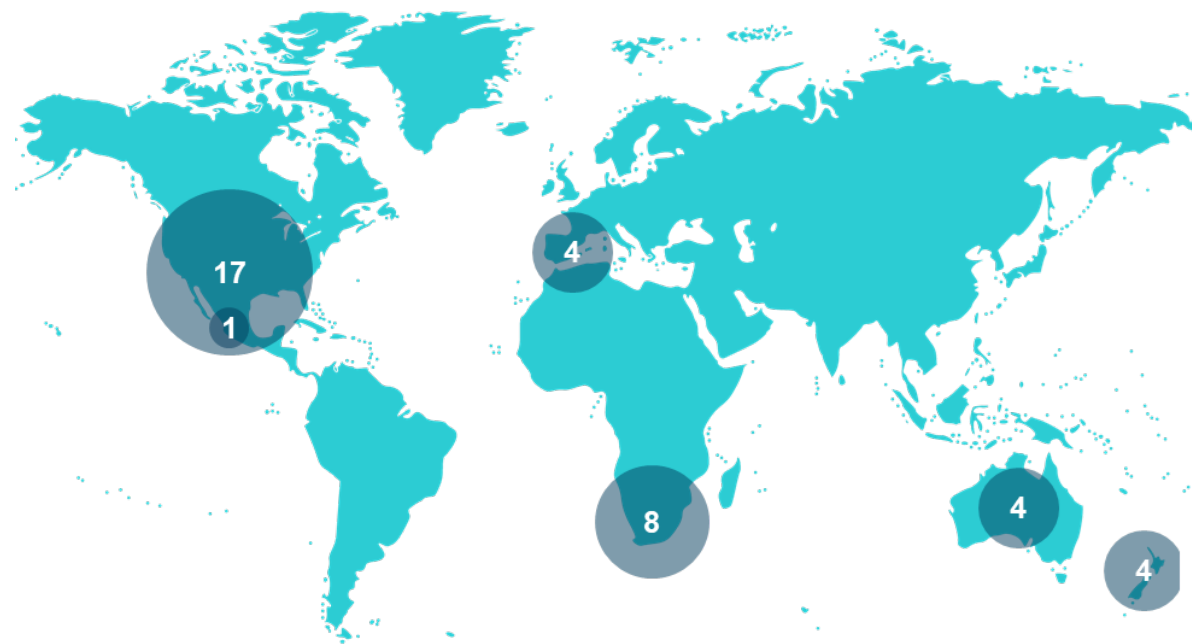
Change over Time

While we receive applications from across the globe, there are some countries more regularly represented. The graph below compares the areas with the largest cohort of candidates since 2015, which shows a more diverse cohort of candidates in the past three years. There were considerably fewer candidates from both the US and South Africa in 2023 than the year previous.



Candidates Qualifications

Nationality of qualification awarding body



The number of chiropractors applying from individual education providers remains modest. 2023 candidates were evenly distributed among several institutions, with four candidates each originating from New Zealand College of Chiropractic, Durban Institute of Technology, University of Johannesburg, and Northwestern Health Sciences University (USA). It's worth noting that 44% of candidates hailed from US chiropractic programs.

An interesting development is receipt of an application from a candidate who graduated from a chiropractic programme in Mexico, marking the first instance of a Latin American course graduate applying for the TOC. Additionally, four candidates had completed chiropractic programmes in Spain.

Graduation year of candidates

Year of graduation	Number of candidates
1990-1999	4
2000-2005	0
2006-2010	2
2011-2015	1
2016-2020	12
2021+	20

Almost 85% of candidates graduated from 2016 onwards. 16 applied to take the TOC within two years of graduating. This is unremarkable as new graduates are often more mobile than those who have been practising for several years.

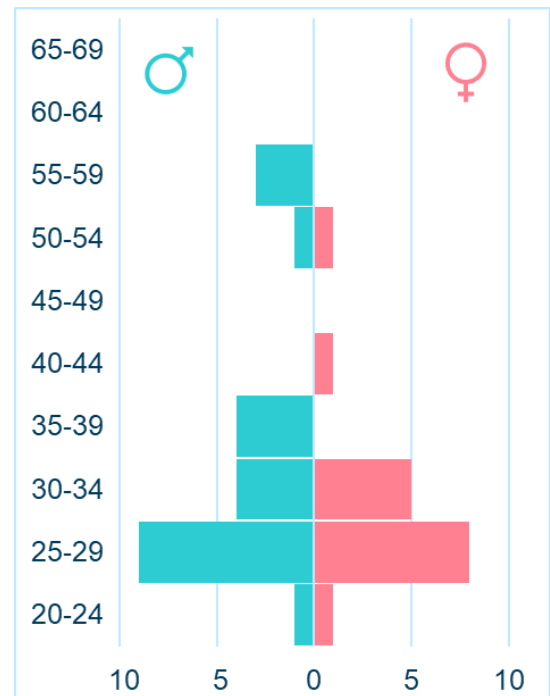
Equality and Diversity Data

As part of the application process, candidates are asked to complete an Equality and Diversity Monitoring form, which aids the GCC in ensuring TOC policies and processes are fair and inclusive. Collated data from candidates who took the ToC during 2023 is given below. The data is percentages of candidates, rather than tests taken.

Age and Sex Data

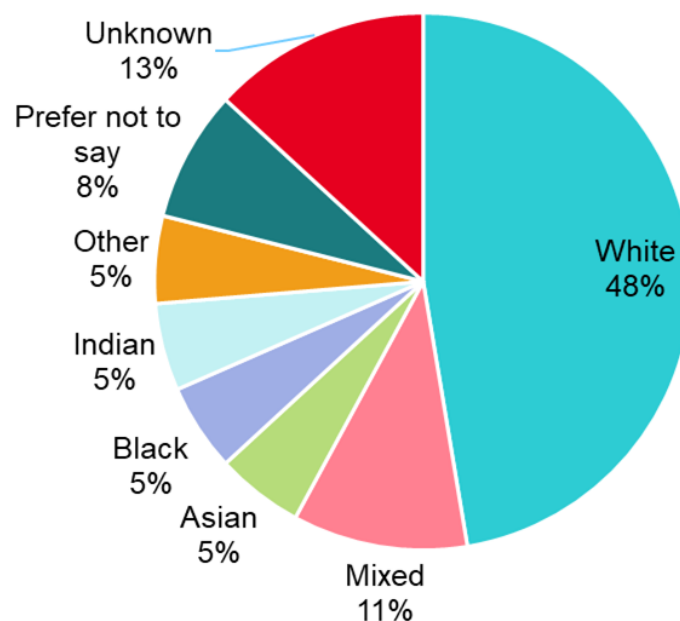
In contrast to the overall register composition, there is a slight skew towards male TOC candidates, with only 43% of candidates identifying as female.

Among age brackets where both genders were represented, the distribution was generally balanced. However, in the 35-39 and 55-59 age brackets, there were only male candidates.



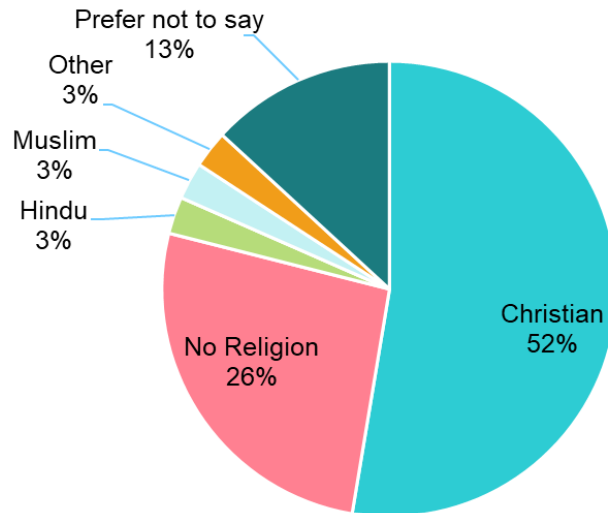
Ethnicity

The data collected is not directly comparable with the GCC register (EDI data collection is being standardised across GCC) but the proportion of White applicants is lower than in the register. However, given there is a sizeable proportion where the ethnicity of candidates is unknown, nothing can be read into the figures.



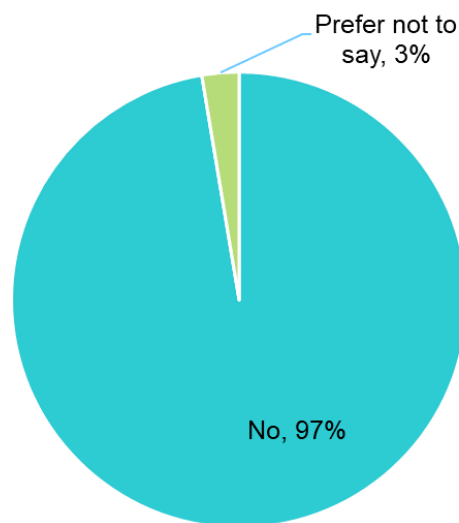
Religion/ Belief

There is no significant difference between 2022 and 2023 data collected from TOC candidates on Religion/ Belief. Applicants are more likely to have a religious belief than the general register (38% no religion).



Do you consider yourself to have a Disability?

There is no significant difference between 2022 and 2023 data collected from TOC candidates on disability, or on the GCC Registrar as a whole.



Sexuality

There is no significant difference between 2022 and 2023 data from TOC candidates on sexuality, or on the GCC register as a whole.

