Environment, Marine & Fisheries Group
Marine & Fisheries Division

Department of
Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Our Reference: DAERA/23-15

[redacted]

Fisheries Inspectorate
Rathkeltair House
Market Street
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BT30 6AJ.
Tel [redacted]

Date 25/01/2023

[redacted]@daera-ni.gov.uk

Dear [redacted]

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000

Thank you for your request for information received by the Department on 16th January 2023 where you sought information on vessel registration, fish landing data into Northern Ireland and employment data for fishing vessels within Northern Ireland.

I can confirm the Department holds most of the information you requested and for clarity I have responded to each question individually.

1. In each of the last 5 calendar years, outline how many fishing boats were registered in Northern Ireland.

DAERA does not register fishing vessels. Responsibility for vessel registration falls to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, Registrar of Shipping and Seamen, Anchor Court, Keen Road, Cardiff CF24 5JW. To assist with your enquiry, I have included information on fishing vessels licensed by DAERA, at 1st January each year. (N.B. these figures are subject to fluctuation throughout the year as boats join and leave the NI fleet.)

2018 – 323 Fishing Vessels Licensed by DAERA
2019 – 313 Fishing Vessels Licensed by DAERA
2020 – 297 Fishing Vessels Licensed by DAERA
2021 – 298 Fishing Vessels Licensed by DAERA
2022 – 293 Fishing Vessels Licensed by DAERA

2. In each of the last 5 calendar years, outline how many tonnes of fish were landed

in ports by NI registered vessels, giving detail of the estimated value of the fish each year?

Details of fish and shellfish landed into Northern Ireland ports by NI registered/licensed vessels by species, weight and estimated value are attached at Annex A. Please note that the 2022 data is currently provisional.

3. In each of the last 5 calendar years in Northern Ireland, how many tonnes of fish were landed, giving detail of the estimated value of the fish each year?

Details of fish and shellfish landed into Northern Ireland ports by all vessels (including NI) by species, weight and estimated value are attached at Annex A. Please note that the 2022 data is currently provisional.

4. For each of the last 5 calendar years in NI please outline the fishermen and deckhand employed here.

DAERA does not collate accurate information pertaining to employment on fishing vessels however "Seafish" have issued a publication entitled "2021 Employment in the UK Fishing Fleet" which you may find helpful, a copy of which is included at Annex B.

If you require any clarification, believe that any part of your request has been overlooked, misunderstood or misinterpreted, please contact me in the first instance to see if it is a matter that can be resolved.

If you are unhappy with the manner in which your request for information has been handled or the decision to release/withhold information you have the right to request a formal review by the Department. If you wish to do so, please write to The Review Section, The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Information Management Branch, Room 507, Dundonald House, Upper Newtownards Road, Ballymiscaw, Belfast BT4 3SB, within two months from the date of this letter.

If after such an internal review you are still unhappy with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

[redacted]

Senior Fisheries Officer

If you are deaf or have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via the Next Generation Text Relay Service by dialling 18001 + telephone number.

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Annex B

Here to give the UK seafood sector
the support it needs to thrive.

seafish

2021 Employment in the UK Fishing Fleet

Author: Marta Moran Quintana April 2022

Contents

Executive Summary

- In the 2021 Seafish survey of the UK fishing fleet, researchers collected employment and demographic data on a sample of 268 vessels and 788 workers across the UK catching sector.
- Overall, most workers in the sample (64%) were from the UK.
- Most non-UK workers were from the Philippines, Ghana and Latvia and employed as deckhands. They were mainly employed on over 10m demersal trawlers and Nephrops trawlers registered in Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- The average age of employees sampled was 40, two years younger than the average of the sample collected in 2018. Deckhands were the youngest workers in the sample, with an average age of 34. The average age of vessel owners was 50, and of hired skippers, 43.
- Most workers in the sample (99%) were male. The largest proportion of female workers (21%) was among 'other' roles (vessel owners and onshore workers).
- Over 80% of the skippers and over 65% of the owners/skippers held a professional skipper qualification. The most common professional qualification held by deckhands was Basic Safety Training.
- The most common work pattern of onboard workers in the sample (69% of them) was full-time, all year-round work. Most 'other' (owners and onshore) workers (57% of them) worked part-time, all year-round.
- Most UK and EU workers in the sample (92%) were paid by crew share. Among workers from outside the UK, the most common remuneration methods were fixed salaries and agency contracts (73% of these workers).

Introduction

This report describes the findings of the employment component of the 2021 Seafish Fleet Survey of the UK fishing fleet. The aim of this report is to assist discussion and inform decisions on the employment situation and needs of the UK catching sector, in particular after the impacts of Covid-19 and EU exit.

This report presents a snapshot of employment in the UK fishing fleet as of summer 2021. **All data presented in this report focuses solely on the sample collected during the survey.** The sample is based on the availability of people in ports at the time of the survey and their willingness to participate. The sample is therefore not random and should not be extrapolated or used to represent a full picture of employment in the UK fishing fleet.

The report presents data on nationality, age, gender, professional qualification, work and remuneration patterns of workers in the UK catching sector. Results are presented by home nation, fleet segment and job role. **Sample coverage by parameter (i.e., nationality, age) varies. In this report all figures indicate the sample size (n) for each parameter reported.**

Bespoke analyses of the data presented in this report are available on request, subject to confidentiality rules. If you have any comments about this report or would like more information, please contact us at:

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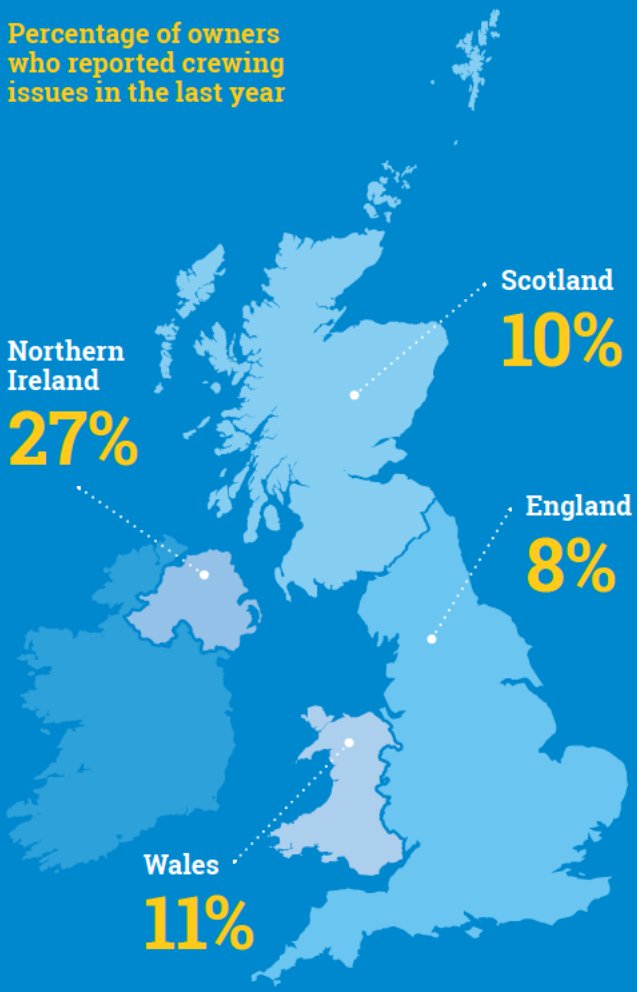
2021 Seafish Fleet Survey **Highlights on employment**

During our 2021 Survey of the UK fishing fleet we collected demographic data on **788 workers** on **268 vessels** across the UK.

We asked vessel owners what factors had negatively affected their recent performance.

Over a quarter of Northern Ireland vessel owners said crewing issues had been a challenge in the last year.

Percentage of owners who reported crewing issues in the last year



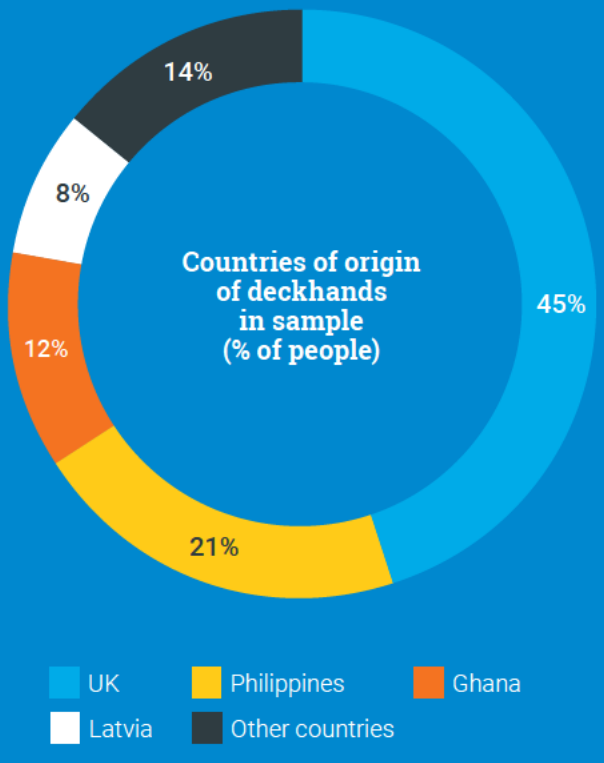
Nationality

The majority of workers in the sample were from the UK. Most non-UK workers were employed as deckhands: over half of the deckhands sampled in the survey were from outside UK.

Percentage of UK workers by job role

Owner + works onboard	Skipper	Engineer
99%	86%	64%

Deckhand	Other
45%	100%



Age

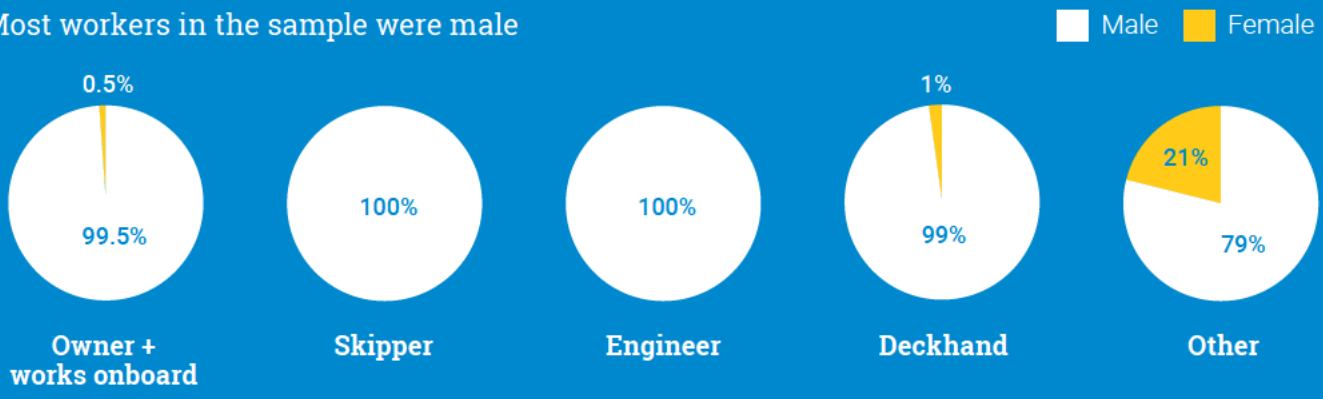
Deckhands were, on average, the youngest workers in the sample.

Average age (years)

Owner + works onboard	Skipper	Engineer	Deckhand	Other
50	43	43	34	61

Gender

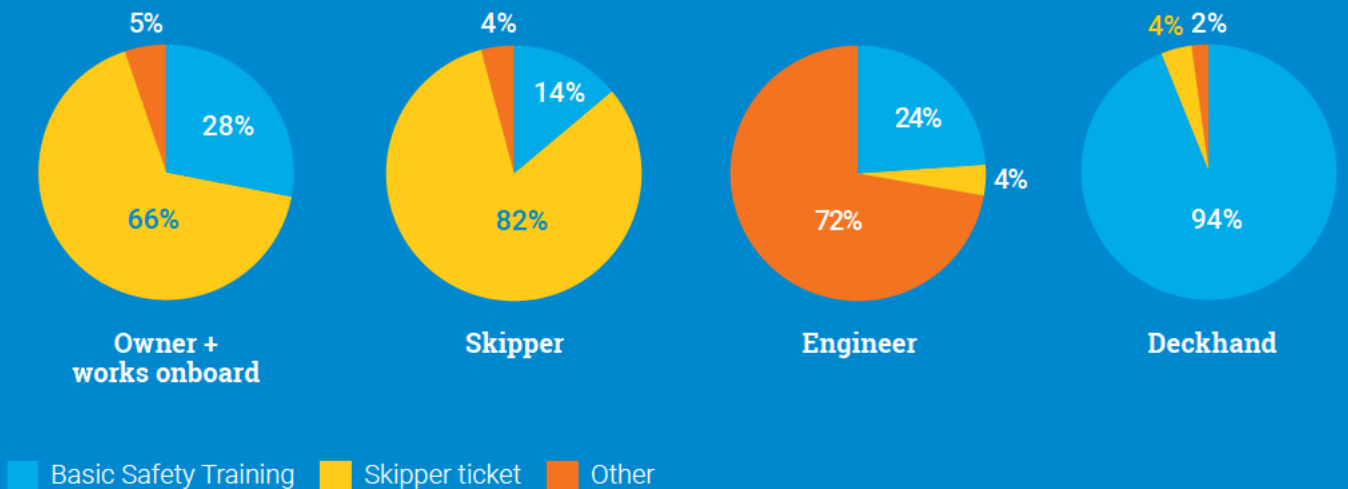
Most workers in the sample were male



Professional qualification

Most skippers and vessel owners had a professional fishing skipper qualification.

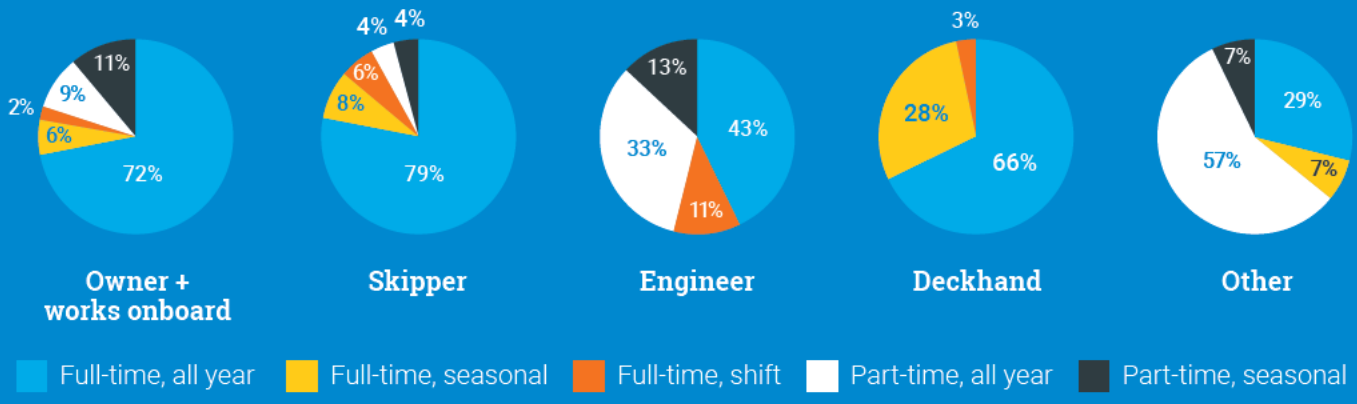
Percentage of onboard workers by professional qualification



Working patterns

Most onboard workers worked on a full-time basis, while most onshore workers worked part-time. Nearly a third of full-time deckhands were foreign workers on seasonal contracts.

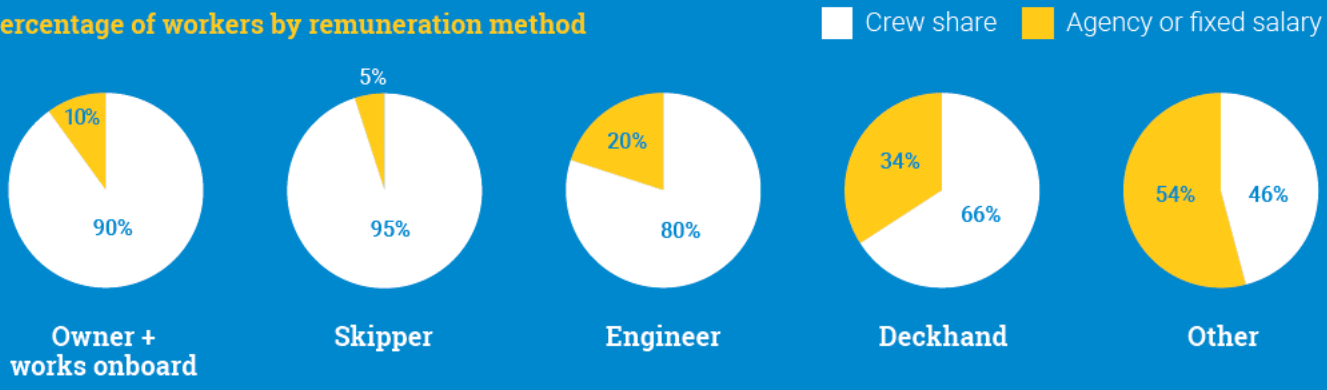
Percentage of workers by working pattern



Remuneration

Crew share was the most common remuneration system overall but most deckhands from outside the UK/EU were on fixed salaries or agency contracts.

Percentage of workers by remuneration method



For full definitions of the descriptors used in this summary, go to page 32.

Survey overview and coverage

The 2021 Seafish Fleet Survey gathered employment data on 268 UK fishing vessels accounting for 788 workers. Tables 1 and 2 below show the sample size in terms of numbers of vessels and workers sampled by fleet segment and by home nation.[1]

Table 1. 2021 survey sample size and average number of workers per vessel by fleet segment

Fleet segment	Number of vessels	Total number of workers	Average number of workers per vessel
Nephrops	40	207	5
Scallop dredgers	19	41	2
Demersal/beam trawlers > 10m	27	156	6
Demersal trawlers < 10m	11	18	2
Static gears > 10m	24	135	6
Static gears < 10m	92	146	2
Low activity	39	50	1
Inactive	11	18	2
Miscellaneous gear/not allocated	5	17	3

Table 2. 2021 survey sample size by home nation

Home nation	Number of vessels	Total number of workers
England	97	233
Scotland	108	339
Northern Ireland	32	154
Wales	19	40
Not allocated	12	22

1 Vessels are allocated a home nation based on their registered port of administration.

A note on inactive vessels

Inactive vessels are defined in this report as those that did not report any landings during the calendar year.

Landings in England and Wales are reported to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) via logbooks (for vessels over 10m) or sales notes (vessels under 10m). There is an exemption from reporting landings under 30kg per trip. Vessels landing under 30kg will be classed as inactive if they choose not to submit sales notes. This exemption can result in some small-scale vessels being classed as inactive in the MMO landings dataset. In addition, some types of landings such as hand-picked cockles and clams are not included in MMO landings statistics. Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own landings reporting systems which require owners of vessels under 10m to report all landings.

In our sample, 11 vessels were classed as inactive, even if they were fishing at the time of the survey. Most of them were small scale vessels or cockle vessels as described above. We have not reported findings on these vessels as they cannot be allocated to a home nation or fleet segment due to lack of data.

In July 2019, the MMO began a phased introduction of the Catch app, a new landings reporting system for under 10m vessels in England and Wales. The use of the Catch app was fully enforced on 28 February 2022. Under 10m vessels will now need to report all landings after every trip. We expect that the use of the Catch app will capture previously unrecorded landings and the number of vessels classed as inactive will decrease in future reports.

The 2021 survey sampled an average of 8% of active UK fishing vessels by fleet segment or home nation. Figures 1 to 3 show the sample coverage as a percentage of the total population of UK fishing vessels in 2021. The highest coverage was achieved for Northern Ireland demersal/beam trawlers over 10m (63% of these vessels were sampled).

Figure 1. 2021 survey sample coverage by fleet segment (n = 263)

Excludes miscellaneous gear vessels and vessels not allocated to a segment.

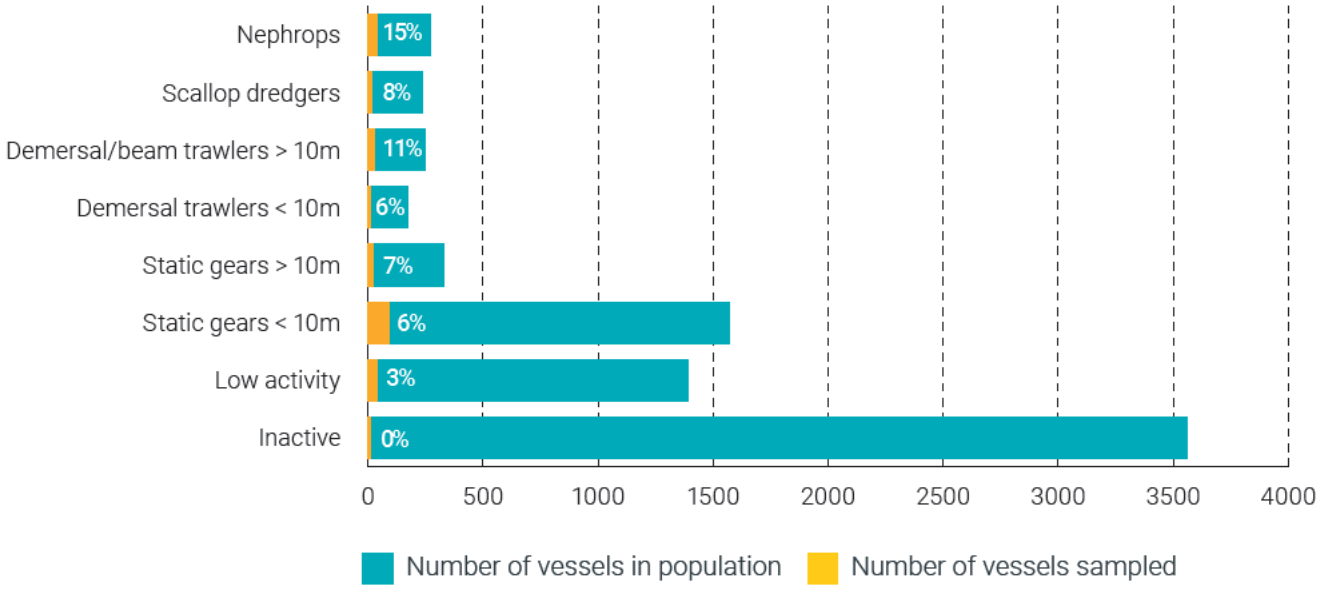


Figure 2. 2021 survey sample coverage by home nation of vessel (n = 256)

Excludes inactive vessels and vessels not allocated to a home nation.

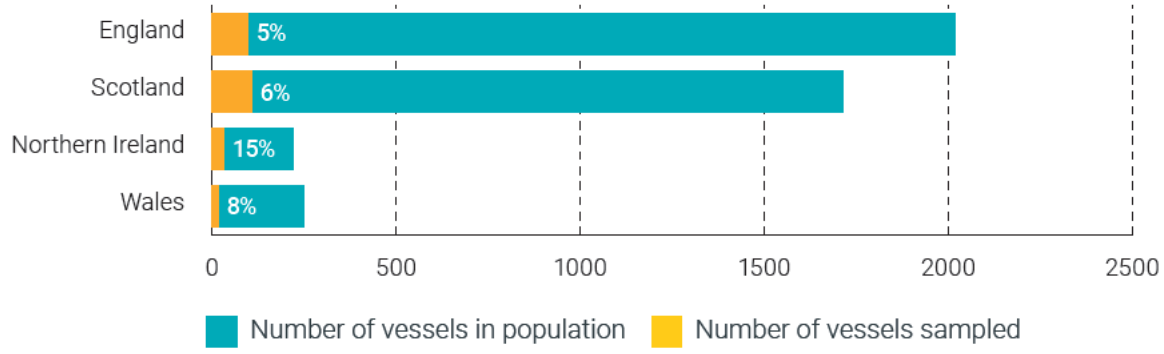


Figure 3. 2021 survey sample coverage by home nation and fleet segment

Excludes miscellaneous gear vessels and inactive vessels. Note there were no Nephrops vessels registered in Wales in 2021.

Most workers in the sample were deckhands, followed by owners who also worked onboard the vessel (typically as skippers).

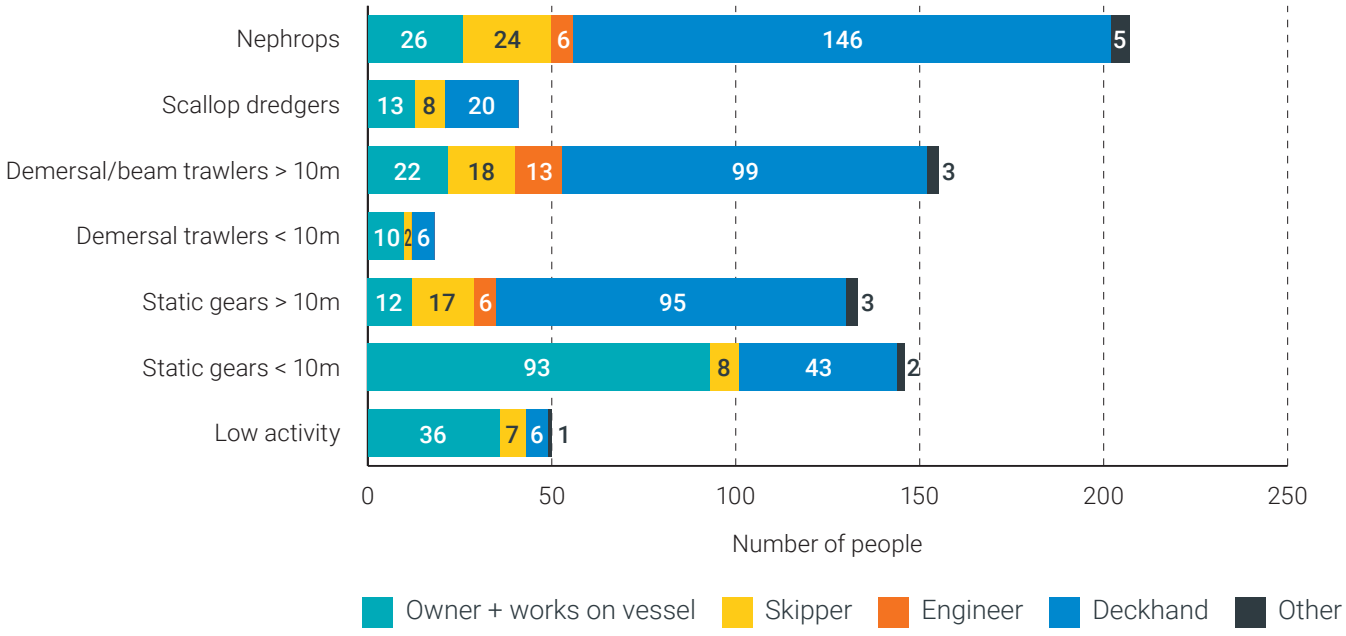
Table 3. 2021 survey sample by job role

Job position	Total number of workers
Owner + works on vessel	223
Skipper	89
Engineer	25
Deckhand	434
Other (cook, owner, onshore worker)	14
Position not reported/unknown	3

Larger vessels, such as Nephrops trawlers and other large trawlers/static gear vessels in the sample reported a larger number of crew, most of them deckhands. Smaller vessels had a larger proportion of owners who also worked onboard, a situation typical of many small-scale fishing businesses.

Figure 4. 2021 survey sample composition by fleet segment and job position (n = 750)

Excludes inactive and miscellaneous gear vessels, vessels not allocated to a segment in 2021 and workers of unknown/unreported role.



Crewing and business performance

Our 2021 general survey of the UK fishing fleet returned 372 responses from vessel owners and skippers.[2] We asked interviewees about their business performance, their expectations for the future and the main factors behind their response.

A tenth of respondents (37 people) said that crew issues had negatively affected their business performance in the last year. This view was not evenly spread among home nations and fleet segments: it was reported as a particular problem by owners of vessels registered in Northern Ireland and by owners of Nephrops vessels and demersal trawlers under 10m (most Northern Irish vessels sampled were Nephrops vessels).

The main crewing issues cited by interviewees were difficulties in finding reliable and/or local crew, and financial struggles meaning they couldn't afford to pay an extra crew member. Owners who employed foreign crew also mentioned that Covid-19 restrictions made it difficult for these workers to travel to and from the UK.

"I would like a fourth crewman but there's no one around." Owner of Nephrops vessel

"I had to make one crew redundant as I wasn't making enough money to pay a wage."
Owner of static gear vessel under 10m

"Crew is an issue. It has been difficult getting people over due to lockdowns and lots of added expenses: tests, quarantine, etc."
Owner of Nephrops vessel

Figure 5a. Percentage of vessel owners interviewed who reported being negatively affected by crewing issues in the last year, by home nation

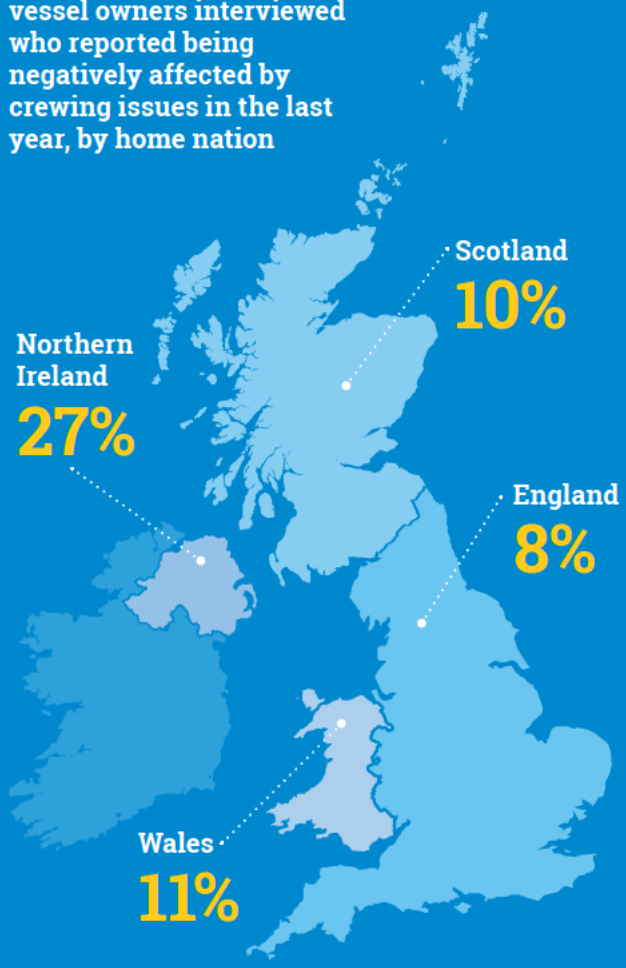
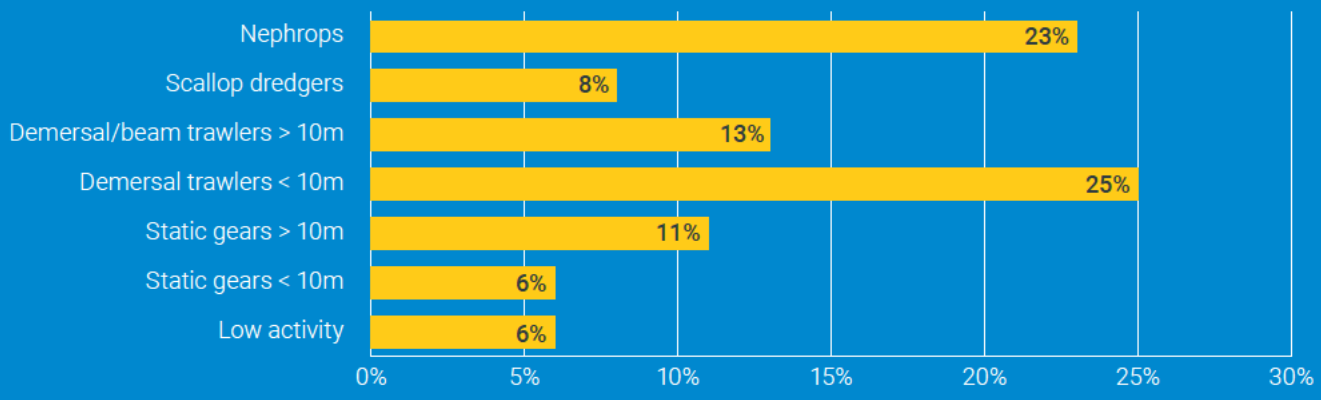


Figure 5b. Percentage of vessel owners interviewed who reported being negatively affected by crewing issues in the last year, by fleet segment



2 All 372 respondents took part in the wider survey but not all provided employment data.

Interviewees were more pessimistic when it came to crew and future business performance: 13% of respondents (48 people) said they believed crew issues would negatively affect their future performance.

Again, it was mostly owners of Northern Ireland registered Nephrops vessels who held this view; followed by owners of static gear vessels over 10m.

The main issue discussed in relation to expected future performance was difficulties in getting local people into fishing, especially if fishing was perceived as a low wage career.

"I'm looking to sell at least one of my boats due to a lack of crew."

Owner of static gear vessel over 10m

"It's hard to attract crew for seasonal boats because of poor earnings."

Owner of static gear vessel under 10m

Some respondents said they intended to stay in business regardless of performance so they could pass the vessel on to a family member, also reflecting the way most people in the sample said they got into fishing.

"I have decided to keep the boat so my son can take it over."

Owner of scallop vessel

Figure 6a. Percentage of vessel owners interviewed who expected to be negatively affected by crewing issues in the near future, by home nation

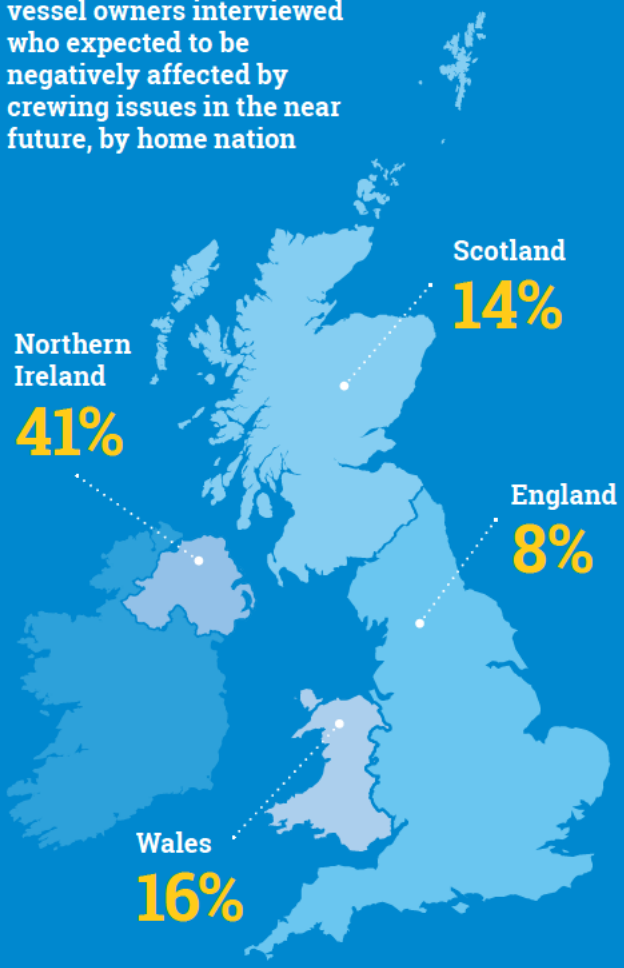
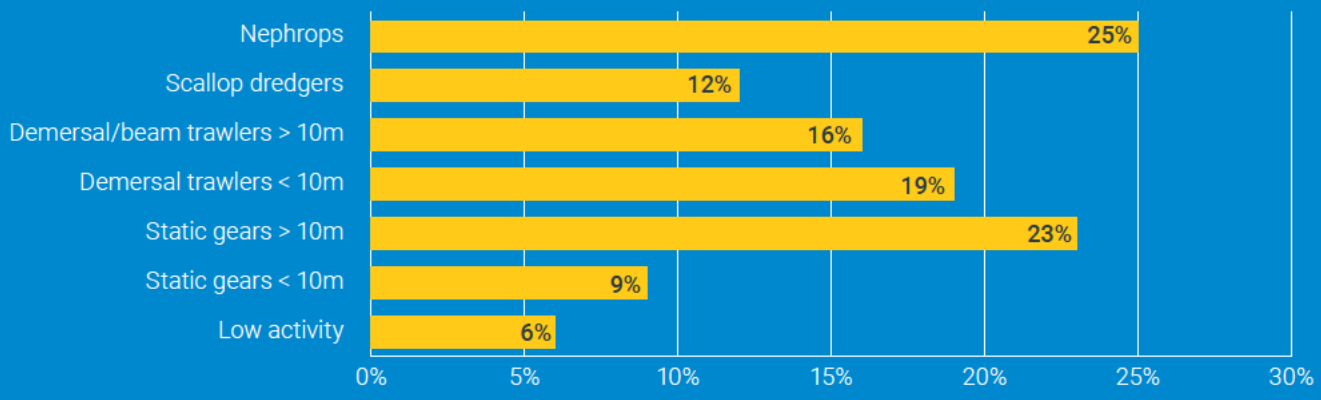


Figure 6b. Percentage of vessel owners interviewed who expected to be negatively affected by crewing issues in the near future, by fleet segment



Survey findings
Nationality

Overall, the majority (64%) of workers in the sample were from the UK. The most common other nationalities of workers in the sample were Philippines (11%), Ghana (7%), Latvia and Indonesia (5% each). This represents a lower percentage of UK workers than found in our 2018 sample, when 85% of workers sampled were from the UK.[3] A full list of the nationalities of workers in the sample can be found in Appendix 1.

By home nation of vessel

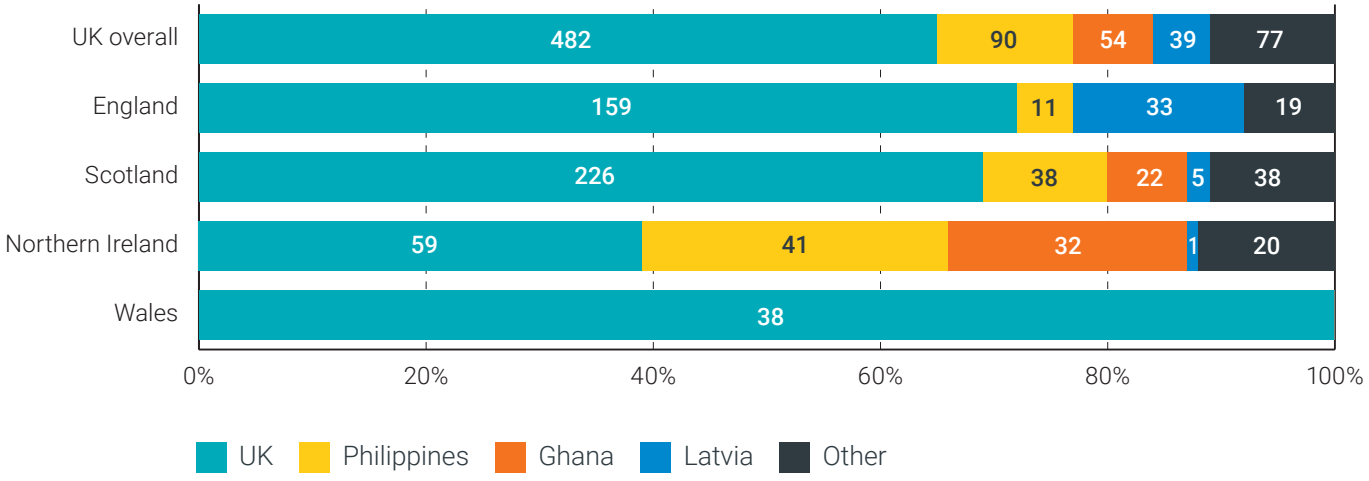
All workers on Welsh vessels were from the UK. The Welsh fleet is mostly composed of low activity and small-scale vessels (Figure 3). In the sample these types of vessels tended to employ mainly workers from the UK (Figure 8).

Northern Irish vessels had the highest proportion of workers from outside the UK (61% of all workers on these vessels). Most were from the Philippines and Ghana.

The largest fleet segment in Northern Ireland (both in the population and the sample) is Nephrops vessels, which employed a large proportion of workers from outside the UK as deckhands. A similar pattern is found on Scottish vessels, with a third of workers coming from outside the UK. Most of these workers are employed on demersal trawlers over 10m which represented the largest share of Scottish vessels in the sample (12%) (Figure 3 and Figure 8).

Figure 7. Number and share of workers in the sample by nationality and home nation of vessel (n = 742)

Excludes vessels not allocated to a home nation.



3 The '2018 Employment in the UK fishing fleet report' is available at www.seafish.org

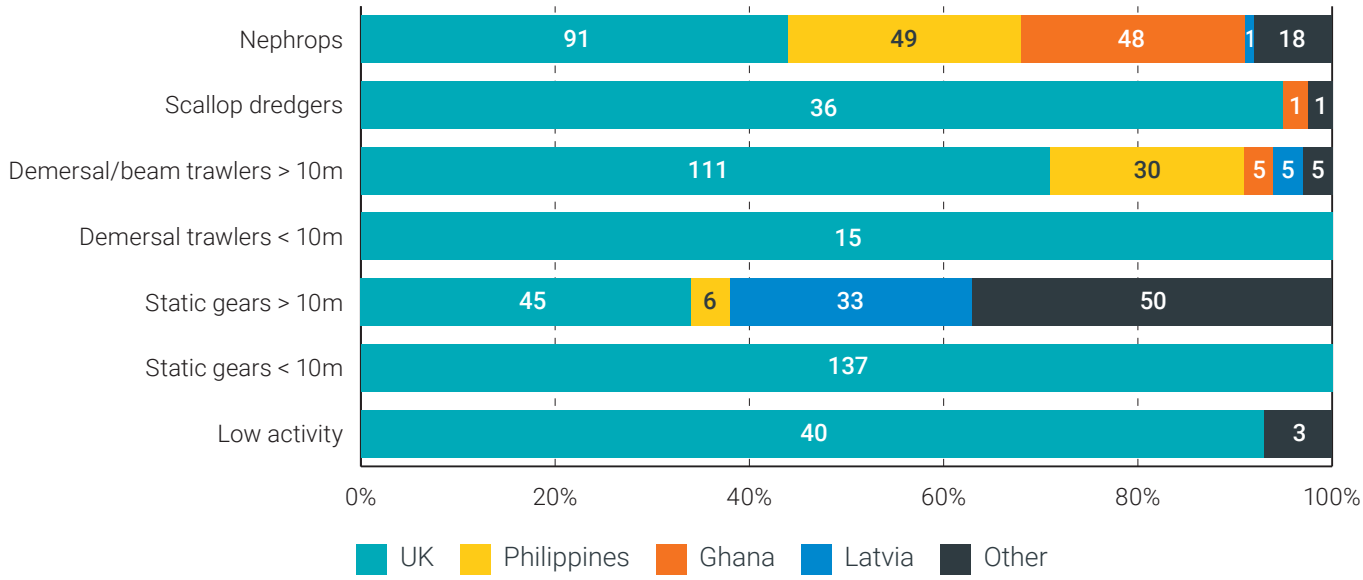
By fleet segment

All workers in the segments 'demersal trawl under 10m' and 'static gears under 10m' (the small-scale fleet) were from the UK. There was also a high proportion (over 90%) of workers from the UK in low activity vessels and on scallop dredgers. Workers from outside the UK were found mainly on larger vessels and most were from the Philippines, Ghana and Latvia.

Non-UK workers represented nearly a third of workers on demersal trawlers over 10m (29%) and more than half of those on vessels over 10m using static gears (66%) and Nephrops vessels (56%). These are the segments that employed more deckhands (Figure 4), many of which were from outside the UK (Figure 9).

Figure 8. Number and share of workers in the sample by nationality and fleet segment (n = 730)

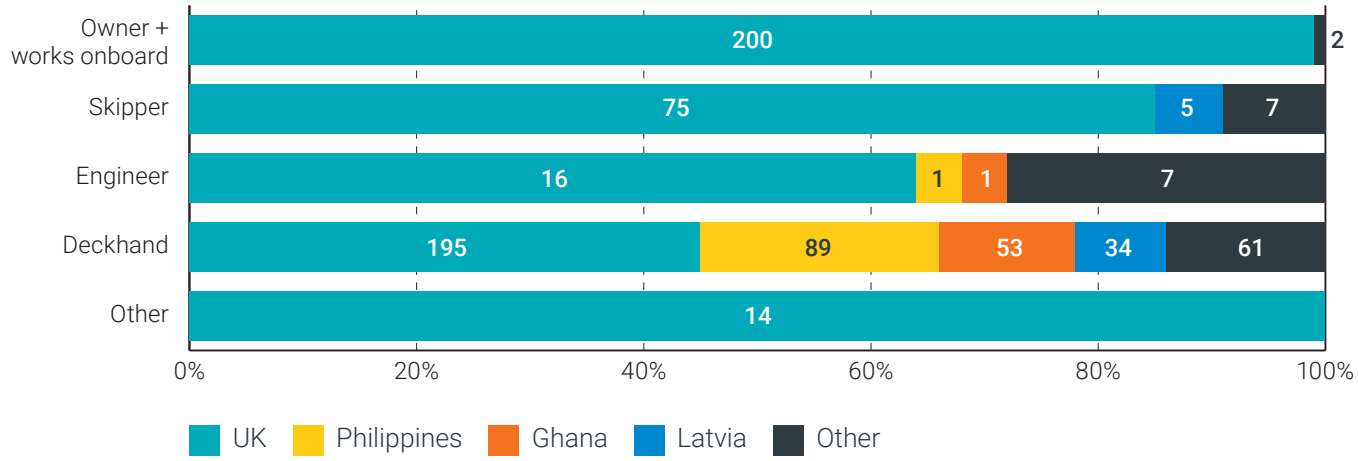
Excludes inactive and miscellaneous gear vessels, and vessels not allocated to a segment.



By job position

Over half of deckhands in the sample (55%) were from countries other than the UK. Many engineers were also from outside the UK (36%). Vessel owners who also worked onboard and other workers were almost entirely from the UK. A fifth of deckhands in the sample were from the Philippines.

Figure 9. Number and share of workers in the sample by nationality and job position (n = 760)



Recruitment under new UK immigration rules

From April 2021, the UK introduced a new immigration system. This system applies to non-EU and new EU citizens coming to work in the UK. The new rules do not affect EU citizens who were working in the UK before the new system was implemented.

The Skilled Worker route is now the main option available to UK employers for recruiting overseas. Under this route, potential employers need to be licensed as sponsors and pay a fee of between £536 and £1,476 depending on the type of licence applied for. Potential new recruits need a job offer from a licensed sponsor at a skill level RQF 3 or above. The job must meet a minimum salary threshold, which is the higher of either a general salary threshold of £25,600 per annum or the specific salary requirement for their occupation, known as the 'going rate'. New recruits must also meet an English language requirement.[4]

'Share fisherman' and 'trawler skipper' are listed as skilled professions under the new immigration rules, meaning vessel owners can recruit overseas for these positions. Their going rate is £18,800 for a 39-hour week.

When the survey was undertaken the new immigration requirements had recently started and as such were very new for vessel owners. A few interviewees shared anecdotal evidence on their early experiences with the system.

"[Foreign crew] need a visa, English tests and a guaranteed salary. These are high costs even before the workers start."

Owner of static gear vessel over 10m

Workers on vessels that operate mainly outside the 12nm limit (territorial waters) need permission to enter the UK to join the vessel, but they do not need permission to work in the UK. Hence, non-UK crew on these vessels can be recruited on a transit visa rather than the Skilled Worker route.

4 https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules

Survey findings
Age

The average age of workers in the sample was 40 years, slightly younger than the average age in our 2018 sample (42 years old).

Table 4. Number of workers in the sample by age band (n = 746)

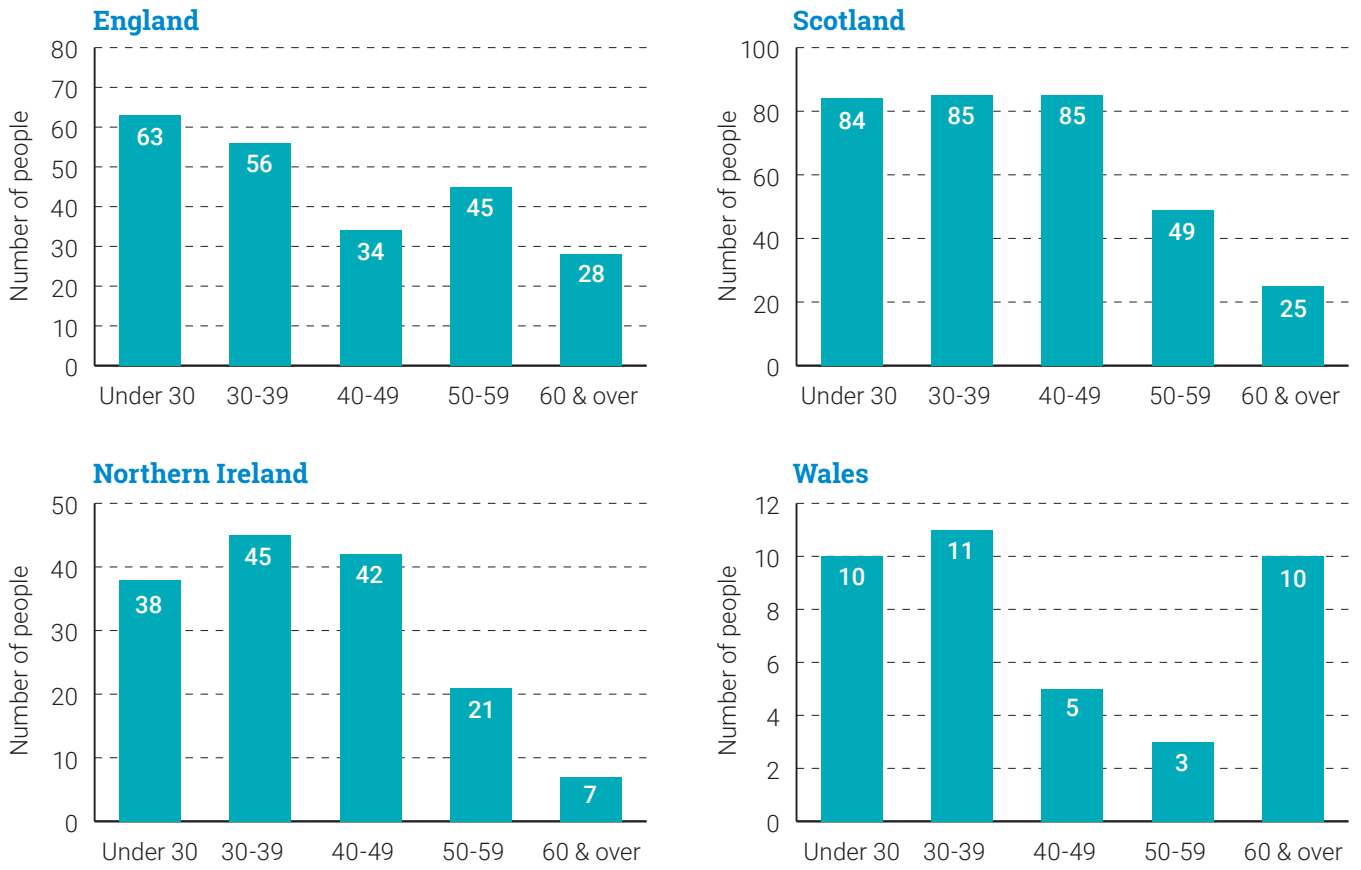
Age band	Number of workers
Under 30	195
30-39	197
40-49	166
50-59	118
60 and over	70

By home nation of vessel

In the sample, vessels registered in Scotland and Northern Ireland employed a lower proportion of workers over 50. This is likely due to the higher number of larger vessels registered in these nations in the sample (Nephrops and demersal trawl vessels over 10m). These larger vessels tend to employ a higher number of younger deckhands from outside the UK. Vessels registered in Wales had a relatively high proportion of workers over 60 (26%). Nearly half of Welsh vessels in the sample were low activity vessels, which have a high proportion of older workers.

Figure 11. Number of workers in the sample by age band and home nation of vessel (n = 746)

Excludes vessels not allocated to a home nation.



By fleet segment

Workers on larger vessels (Nephrops, demersal trawlers over 10m, vessels using static gears over 10m) were younger on average. This likely reflects the presence of workers from outside the UK on these vessels working as deckhands, who tend to be younger than UK workers. Conversely, on smaller vessels the age distribution of workers was roughly even across age bands (vessels using static gears under 10m) or skewed towards older age bands (low activity and demersal vessels under 10m). On demersal trawl vessels under 10m, 39% of workers in the sample were aged 30-39.

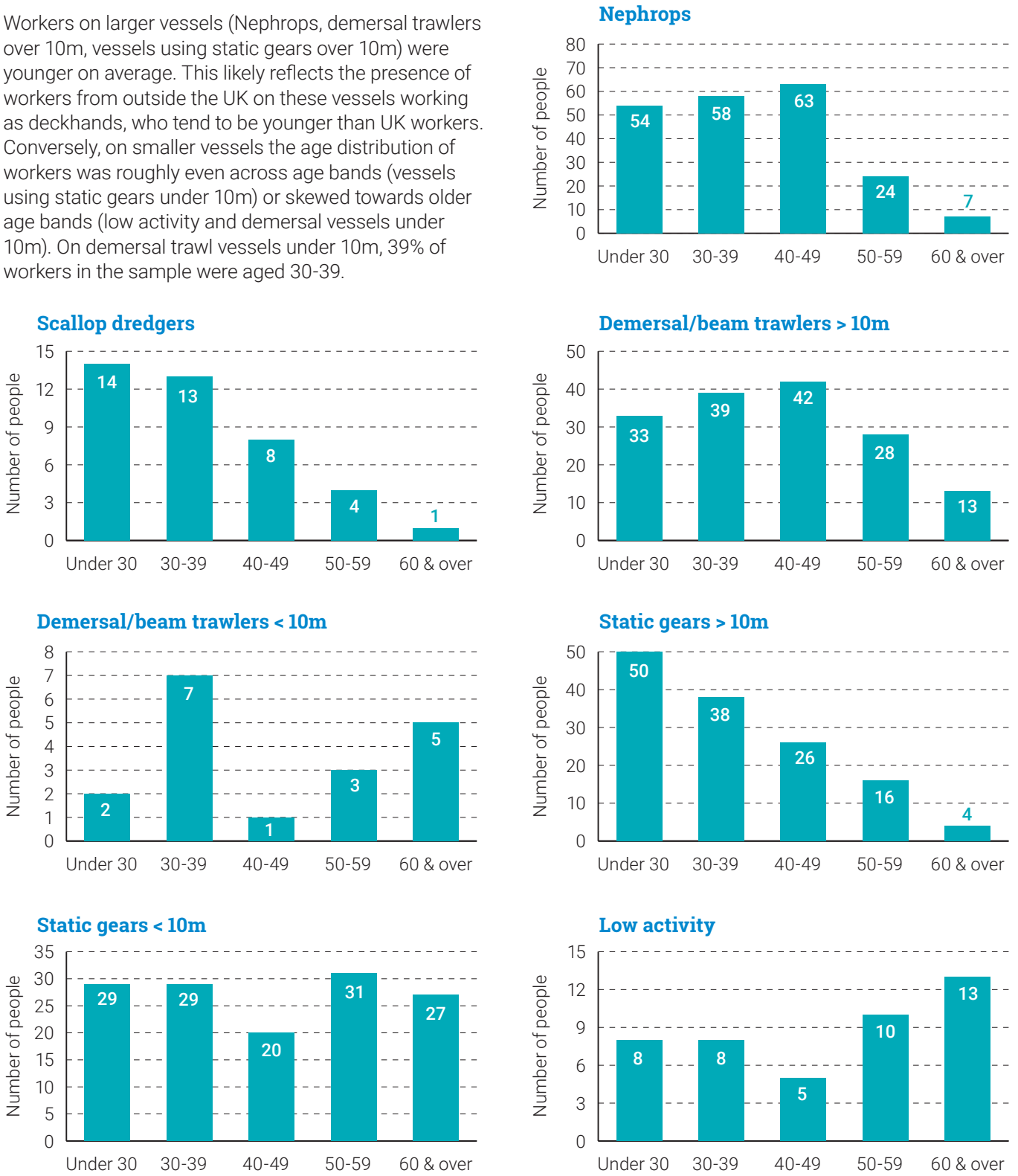


Figure 12. Number of workers in the sample by age band and fleet segment (n = 733)

Excludes inactive and miscellaneous gear vessels, and vessels not allocated to a segment.

By position

Deckhands in the sample were the youngest workers with an average age of 34. 'Other' workers were the oldest, with an average age of 61, followed by owners who also work onboard their vessel (50 years old on average). The sample data indicates that workers coming from outside the UK (mostly deckhands) are younger on average than UK workers (mostly owners, skippers and other workers – Figure 9).

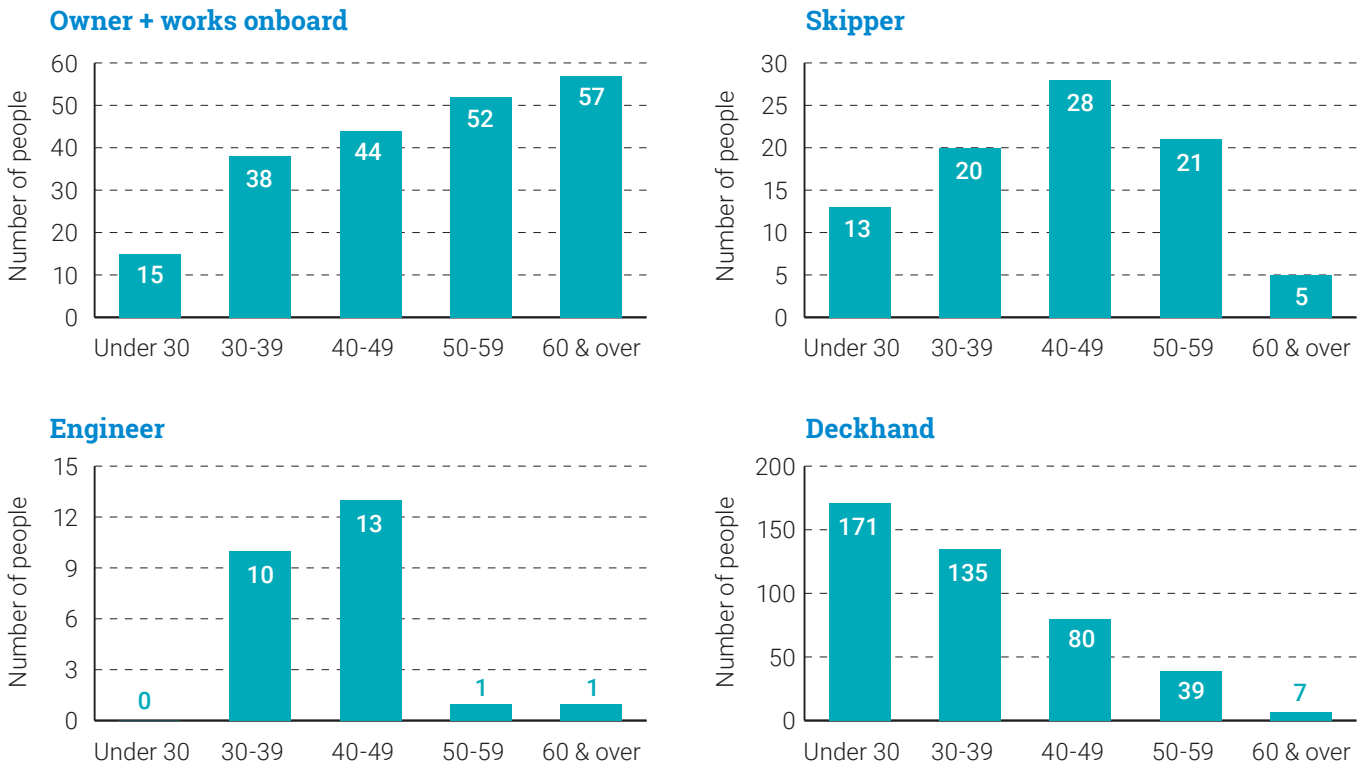
Figure 13. Average age of workers by job position (n = 785)

50	43	43	34	61
Owner + works onboard	**Skipper**	**Engineer**	**Deckhand**	**Other**

Most deckhands were in the younger age bands, while owners working onboard their vessel and other workers were mainly in the older age bands. Most skippers and engineers in the sample were in the 40-49 age band.

Figure 14. Number of workers in the sample by age band and job position (n = 750)

Excludes workers in the 'other' job role.



Survey findings
Gender

The vast majority of workers in the sample (777 workers or 99% of the sample) were male, similar to the 2018 sample.

By home nation of vessel

Half of the female workers in the sample worked on vessels registered in England.

Table 5. Number of workers by gender and home nation of vessel (n = 763)

Home nation	Male	Female
England	227	4
Scotland	337	1
Northern Ireland	152	2
Wales	39	1

Excludes vessels not allocated to a home nation.

By fleet segment

Most women in the sample worked on vessels using static gears over 10m or Nephrops vessels.

Table 6. Number of workers by gender and fleet segment (n = 750)

Fleet segment	Male	Female
Nephrops	205	2
Scallop dredgers	41	0
Demersal/beam trawlers > 10m	155	1
Demersal trawlers < 10m	18	0
Static gears > 10m	132	2
Static gears < 10m	143	1
Low activity	49	1

Excludes inactive, miscellaneous gear vessels and vessels not allocated to a segment.

By position

The highest proportion of female workers in the sample was in the 'other' category (21% of these workers, compared to 30% in the 2018 sample), reflecting that many women fill onshore and support roles in the UK fishing fleet.[5] There were also four female deckhands (representing less than 1% of all deckhands sampled).

Table 7. Number of workers by gender and job position (n=782)

Job position	Male	Female
Owner + works on vessel	220	1
Skipper	89	0
Engineer	25	0
Deckhand	429	4
Other	11	3

Excludes inactive, miscellaneous gear vessels and vessels not allocated to a segment.

A note on onshore workers

The data presented in this report is as reported by vessel owners and skippers during the 2021 Fleet Survey.

There may be underreporting of some types of jobs. People undertaking onshore roles, such as vessel owners, administrators or bookkeepers may not be known to the skipper being interviewed or not formally considered 'fishing industry workers', especially when such work is done on an ad hoc, unpaid basis, or by relatives or friends. Thus, such roles may not be reported during the interview.

Underreporting may partially explain the low number of onshore roles reported during the 2021 Fleet Survey (14 workers, or 2% of the sample; compared to 3.5% in the 2018 sample and 6% in 2017). The underreporting of onshore roles may also affect statistics by gender, given that many onshore (sometimes unpaid) roles in the UK, particularly for small scale businesses, are filled by women. However, it is impossible to know the extent of potential underreporting that may have occurred, as there are no official statistics on numbers of onshore workers, or women, in the UK fishing industry.

5 Women in Fisheries: Voices from the industry. Policy Brief. Available at: women-fisheries com/s/WiF-Policy-Brief.pdf

Survey findings
Professional qualification

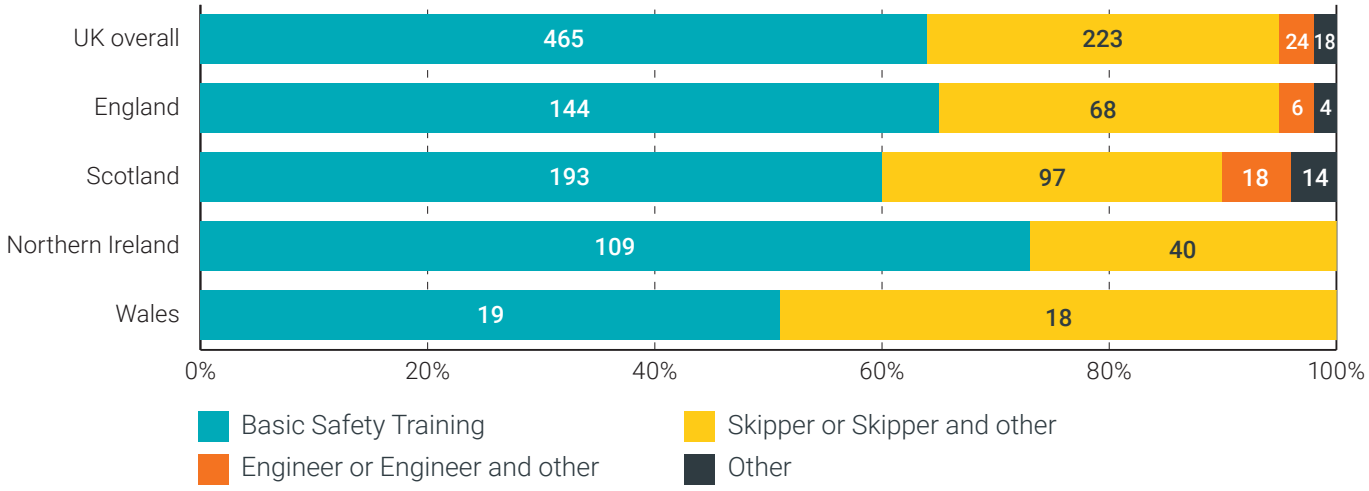
The most common professional qualification of workers in the sample was Basic Safety Training (61% of all workers), which is mandatory to work on a UK fishing vessel.

By home nation of vessel

Across all home nations, most workers' highest job-related qualification was Basic Safety Training (between 51% and 73% of all workers). Of the four home nations, Northern Irish vessels had the highest proportion of workers whose highest qualification was Basic Safety Training. Most Northern Irish vessels in the sample were Nephrops vessels, which employed more deckhands who were more likely to hold Basic Safety Training as their highest professional qualification (Figure 17).

Figure 15. Number of workers in the sample by highest professional qualification and home nation of vessel (n = 730)

Excludes vessels not allocated to a home nation.



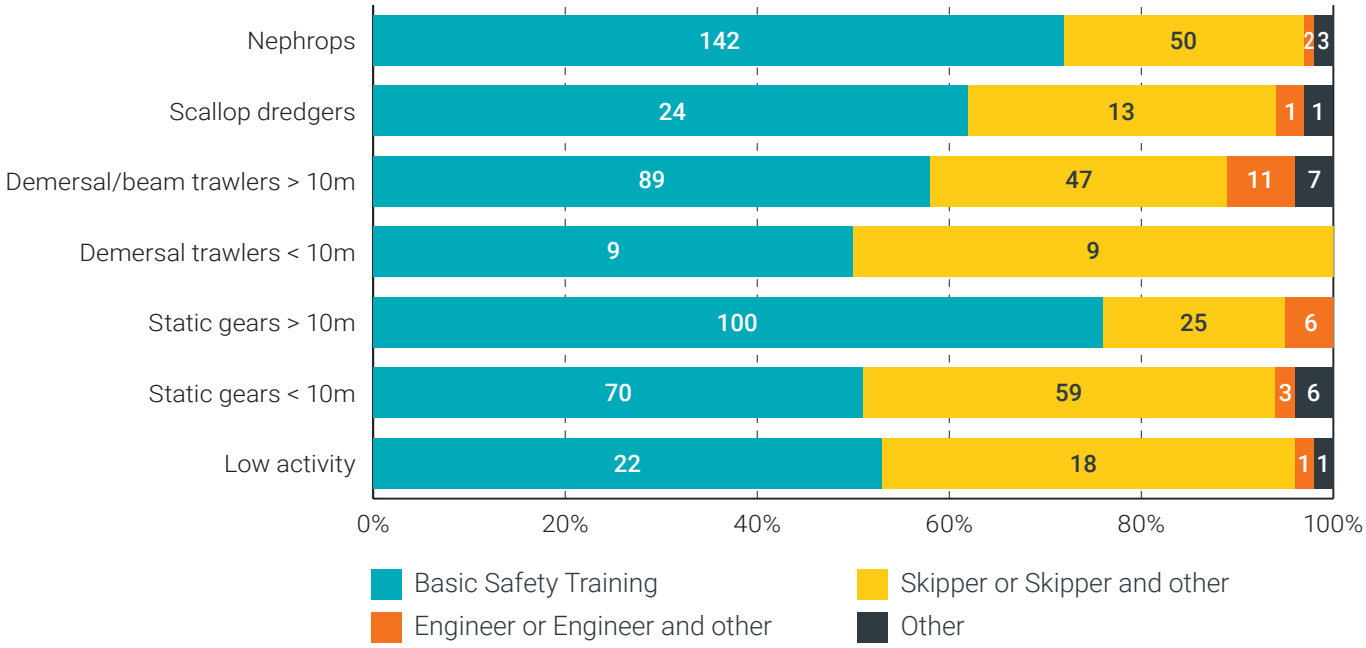
By fleet segment

Across all fleet segments the most common professional qualification was Basic Safety Training (between 50% and 76% of all workers). Half of workers on vessels using static gears under 10m and demersal trawlers under 10m had an additional skipper qualification as well as Basic Safety Training, reflecting that many of these small vessels are operated single-handedly by a skipper.[6]

6 It is not a legal requirement to hold a skipper ticket for a vessel under 16.5m.

Figure 16. Number of workers in the sample by highest professional qualification and fleet segment (n = 719)

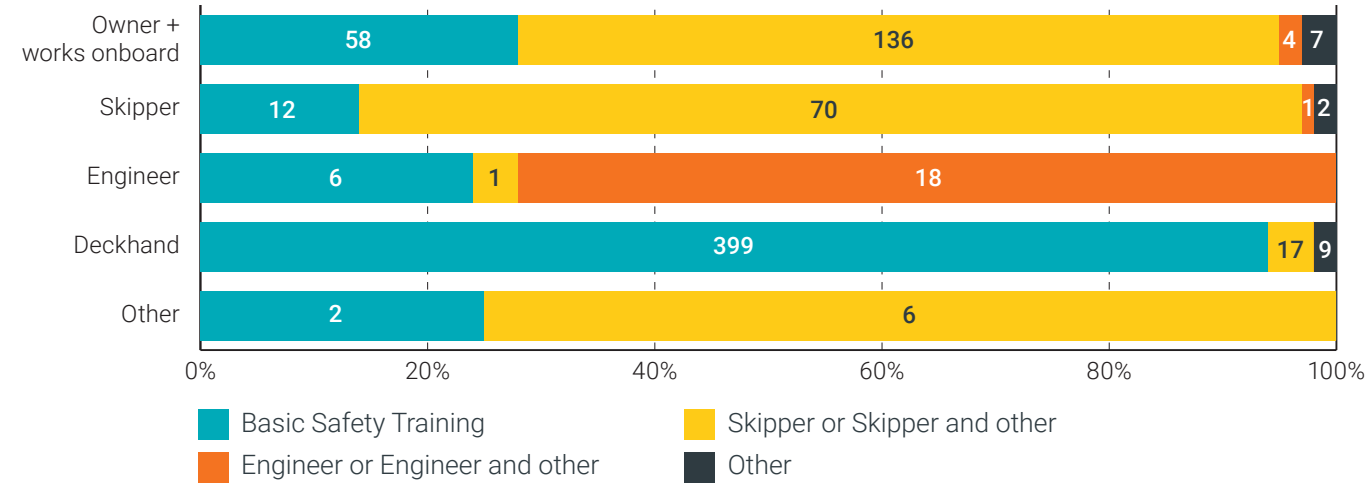
Excludes inactive and miscellaneous gear vessels, and vessels not allocated to a segment.



By job position

The most common single professional qualification held by deckhands in the sample was Basic Safety Training (94% of all deckhands). Most skippers and vessel owners who also worked onboard their vessels had a skipper ticket as well as their Basic Safety Training, sometimes complemented with additional qualifications.

Figure 17. Number of workers in the sample by highest professional qualification and job position (n = 749)



Survey findings
Work patterns

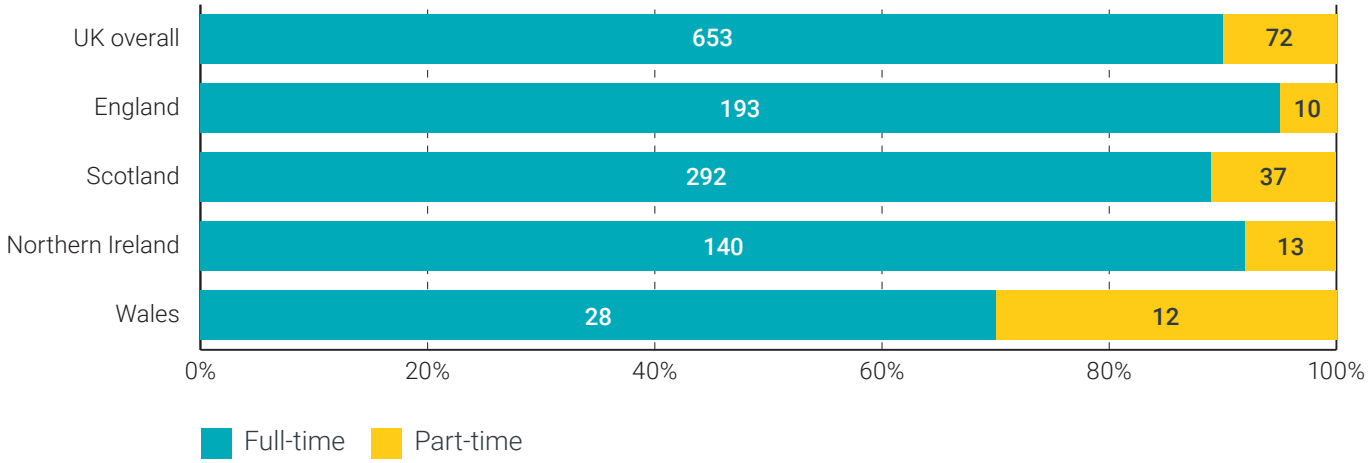
The survey questionnaire asked respondents to differentiate between full or part-time work and annual/seasonal/shift work patterns. No official definition was provided for these categories, and so responses to this question were based on the skippers/vessel owners' opinion. Most workers in the sample (64%) worked full-time, all year-round.

By home nation of vessel

Across all home nations, most workers worked on a full-time basis (between 70% and 95% of workers in each nation). Wales, which has a largely small-scale fleet, had the largest proportion of part-time workers (30%) in the sample.

Figure 18. Number of jobs in the sample by working pattern and home nation of vessel (n = 725)

Excludes vessels not allocated to a home nation.



Nearly half of all full-time workers on Northern Irish vessels worked on a seasonal basis. These seasonal positions were mainly held by deckhands from outside the UK.

Figure 19. Number of full-time workers in the sample by working pattern and home nation of vessel (n = 644)

Excludes vessels not allocated to a home nation.

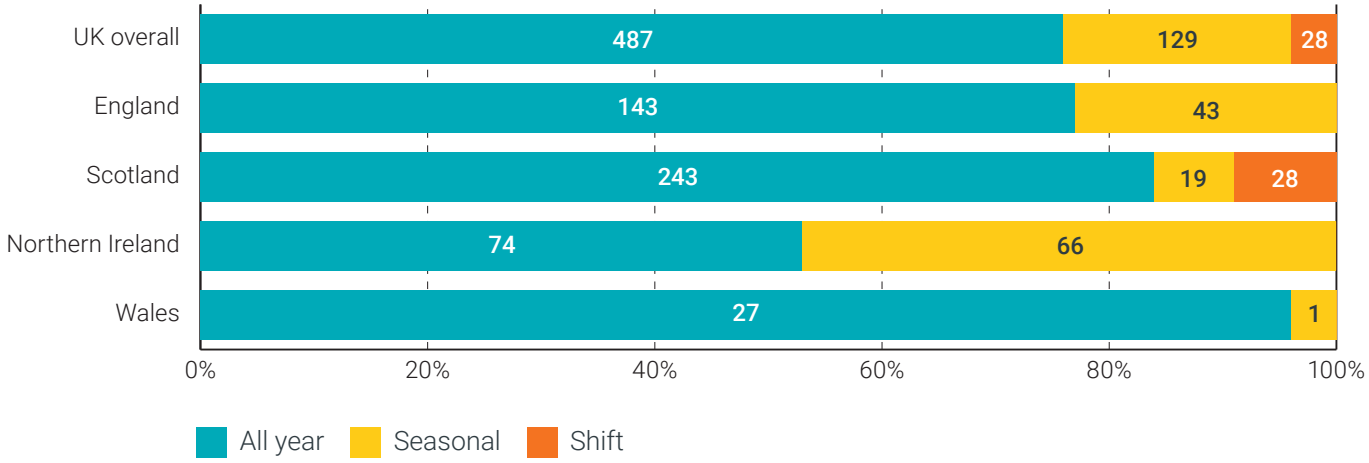
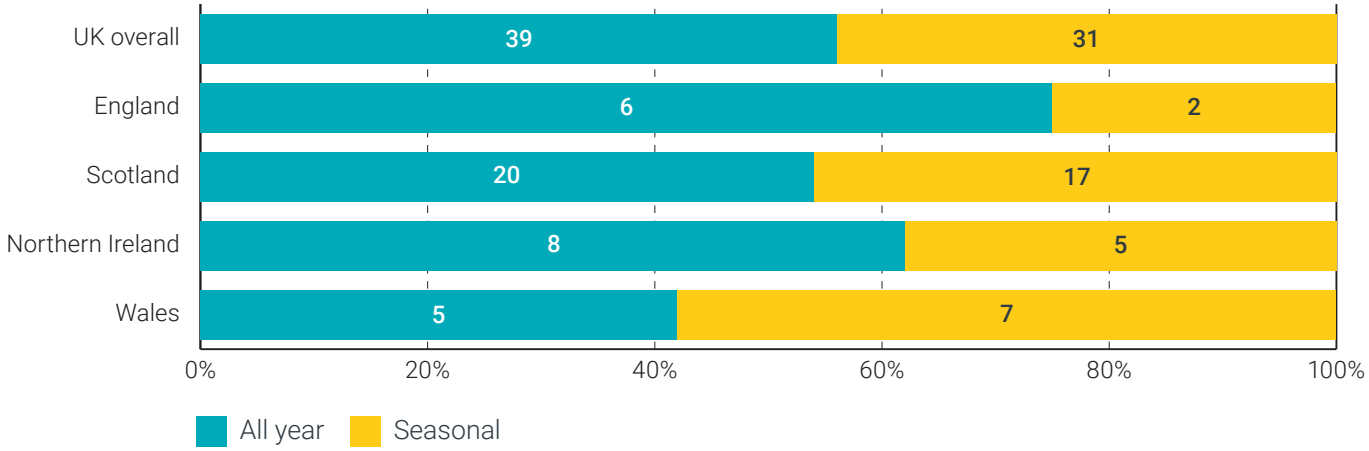


Figure 20. Number of part-time workers in the sample by working pattern and home nation of vessel (n = 70)

Excludes vessels not allocated to a home nation.

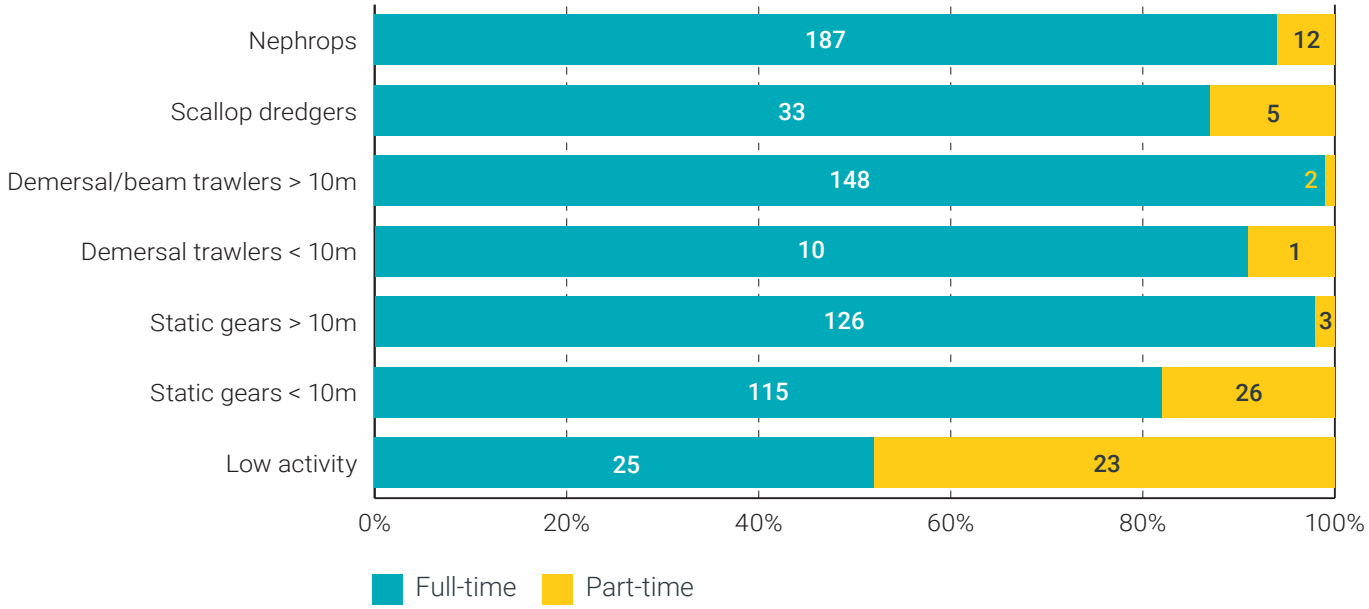


By fleet segment

Most workers in the sample across all fleet segments worked on a full-time basis. The highest proportion of part-time workers (48%) was found on low activity vessels, many of which are seasonal businesses or those whose owners have a second job.

Figure 21. Number of jobs in the sample by working pattern and fleet segment (n = 716)

Excludes inactive and miscellaneous gear vessels, and vessels not allocated to a segment.



Across both full-time and part-time workers, most worked all year-round. Seasonal workers were mostly employed on Nephrops vessels and demersal trawlers over 10m, with deckhands from outside the UK holding these positions. Demersal trawlers over 10m also employed UK workers on a shift basis, normally one trip on, one trip off.

Figure 22. Number of full-time workers in the sample by working pattern and fleet segment (n = 636)

Excludes inactive and miscellaneous gear vessels, and vessels not allocated to a fleet segment.

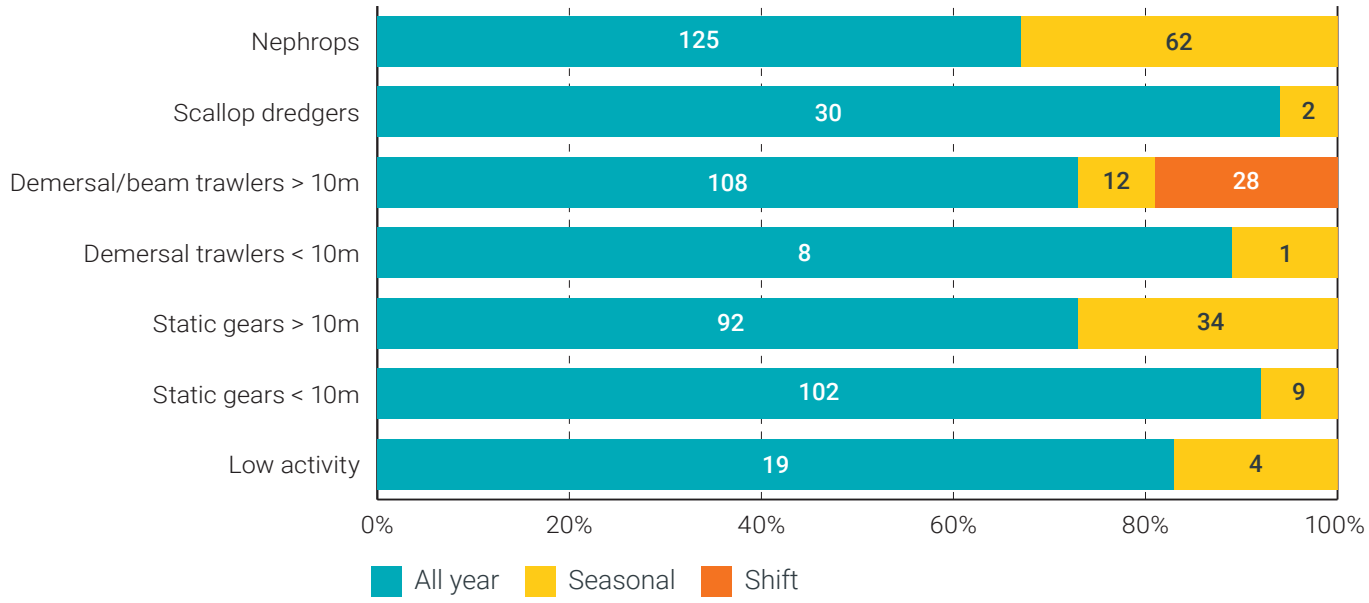
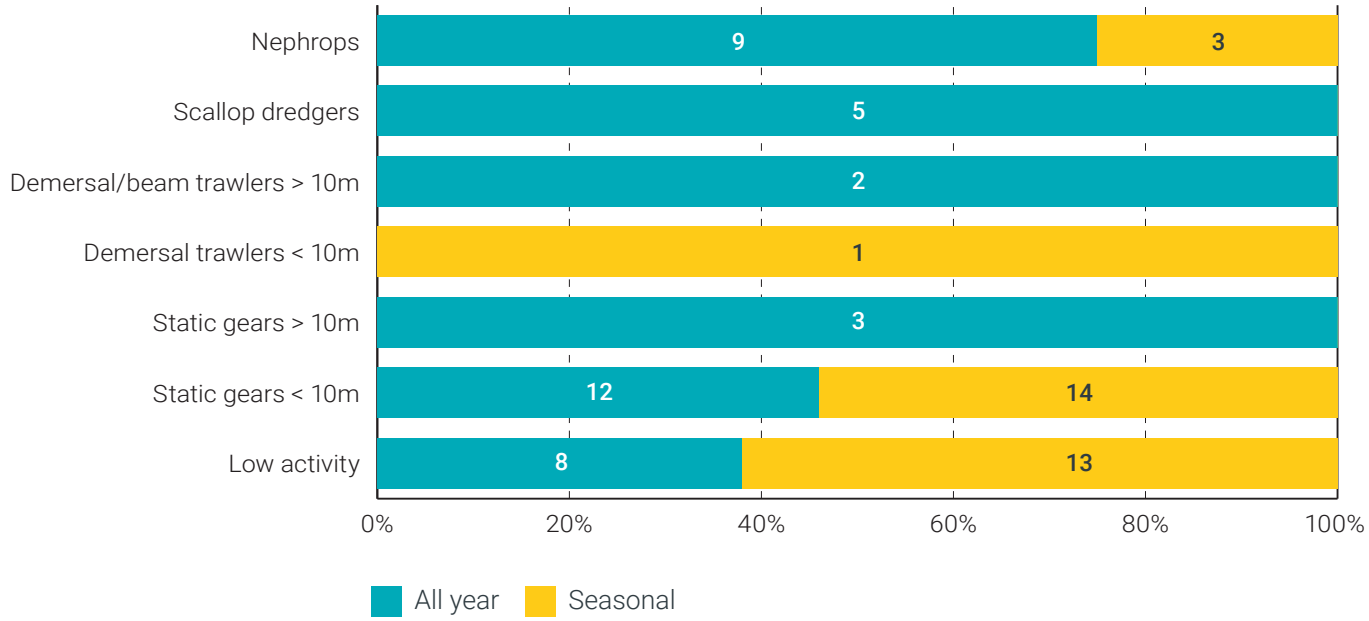


Figure 23. Number of part-time workers in the sample by working pattern and fleet segment (n = 70)

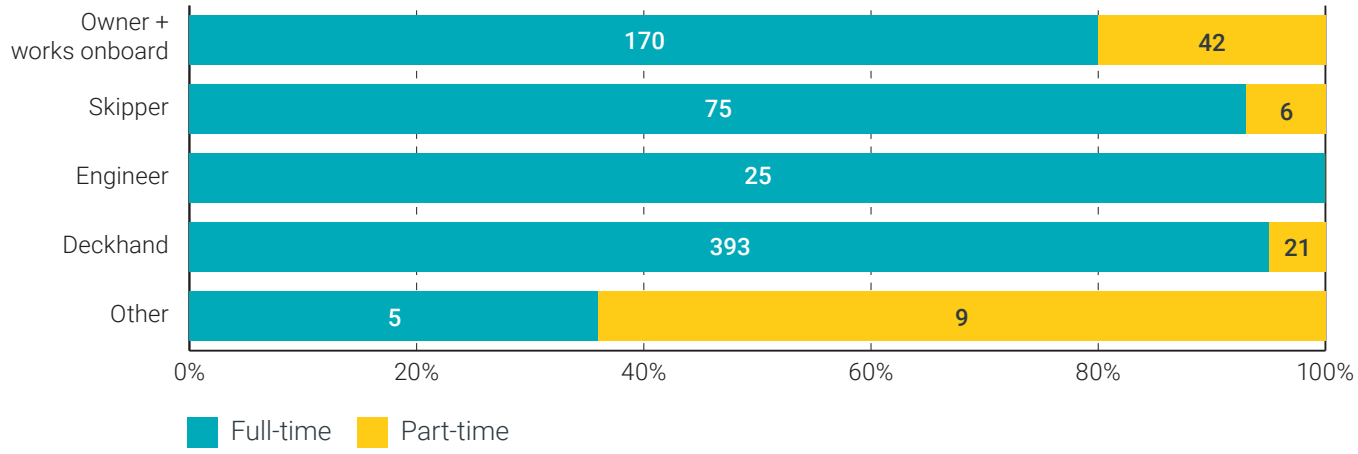
Excludes inactive and miscellaneous gear vessels, and vessels not allocated to a fleet segment.



By position

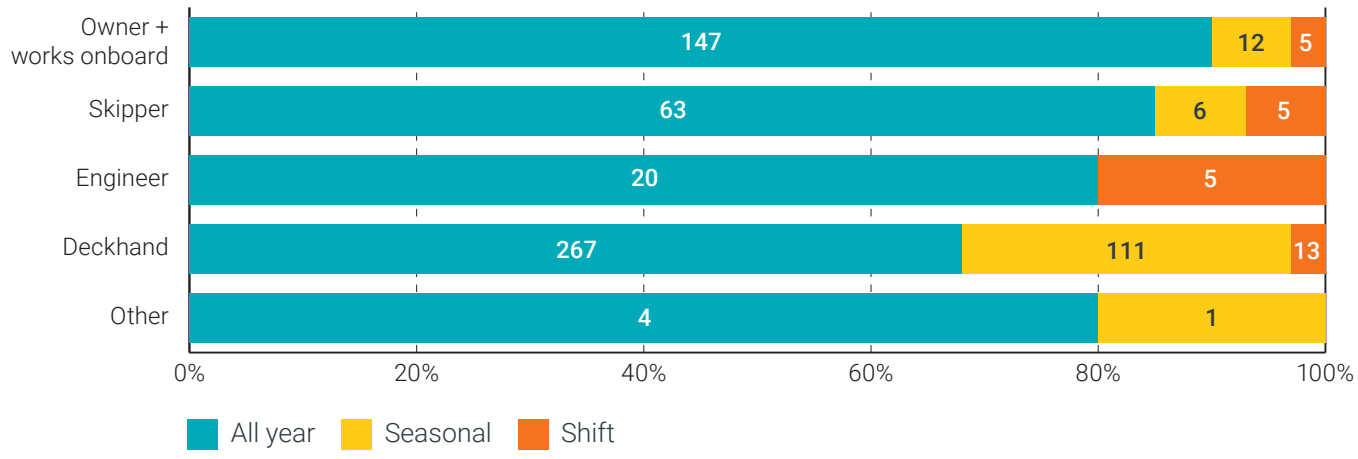
Most workers in the sample reported working full-time.
However, most workers in the 'other' category worked part-time.

Figure 24. Number of workers in the sample by working pattern and job position (n = 746)



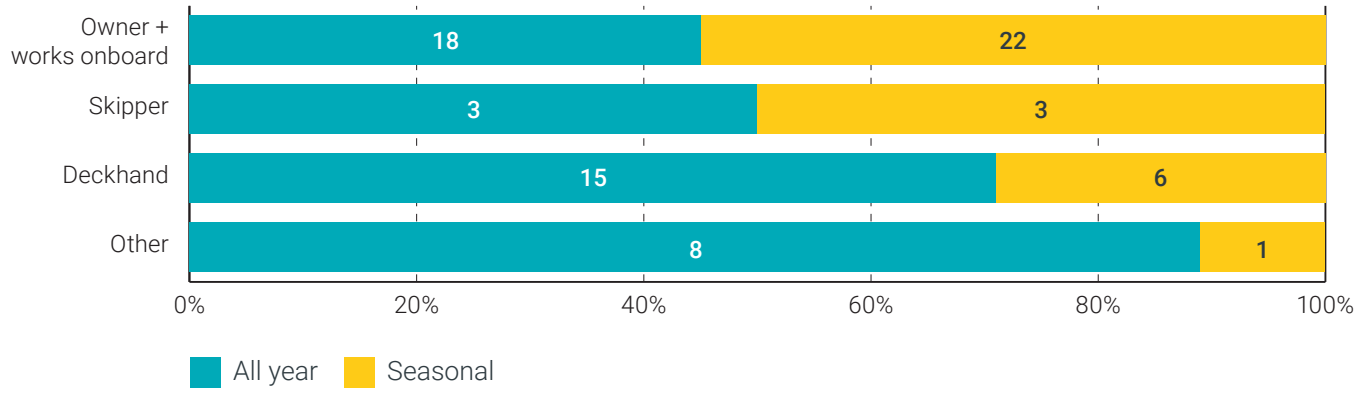
Among full-time workers, most people worked all year-round (between 68% and 90% of all full-time workers). Nearly a third of all full-time deckhands worked on a seasonal basis. These workers were primarily from outside the UK and worked an 8 to 10-month season in the UK before returning to their home countries for two to four months. There were also a small number of shift workers.

Figure 25. Number of full-time jobs in the sample by working pattern and job position (n = 659)



Among part-time workers, there was a higher proportion of seasonal workers than among full-time workers, particularly among skippers and vessel owners working onboard (50% and 55% of all part-time workers in these groups respectively). There were no part-time workers in the sample working on a shift basis.

Figure 26. Number of part-time jobs in the sample by working pattern and job position (n = 76)



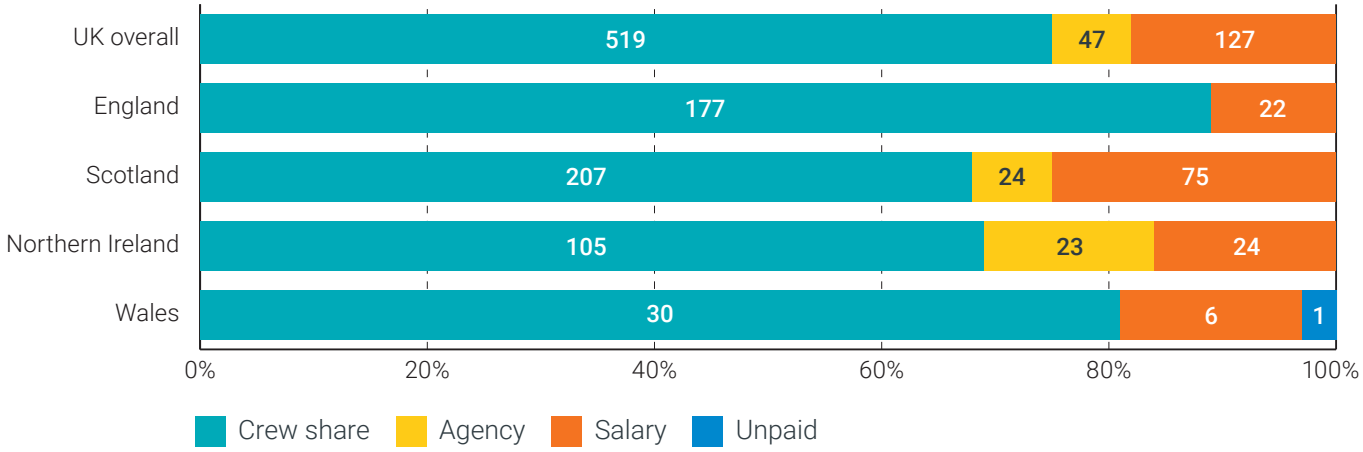
Survey findings
Remuneration method

By home nation of vessel

Most salaried and agency workers were employed on large Northern Irish and Scottish vessels. Many of these vessel owners use agencies to find non-UK crew to work as deckhands.

Figure 27. Number of workers in the sample by remuneration method and home nation of vessel (n = 694)

Excludes inactive and miscellaneous gear vessels, and vessels not allocated to a segment.

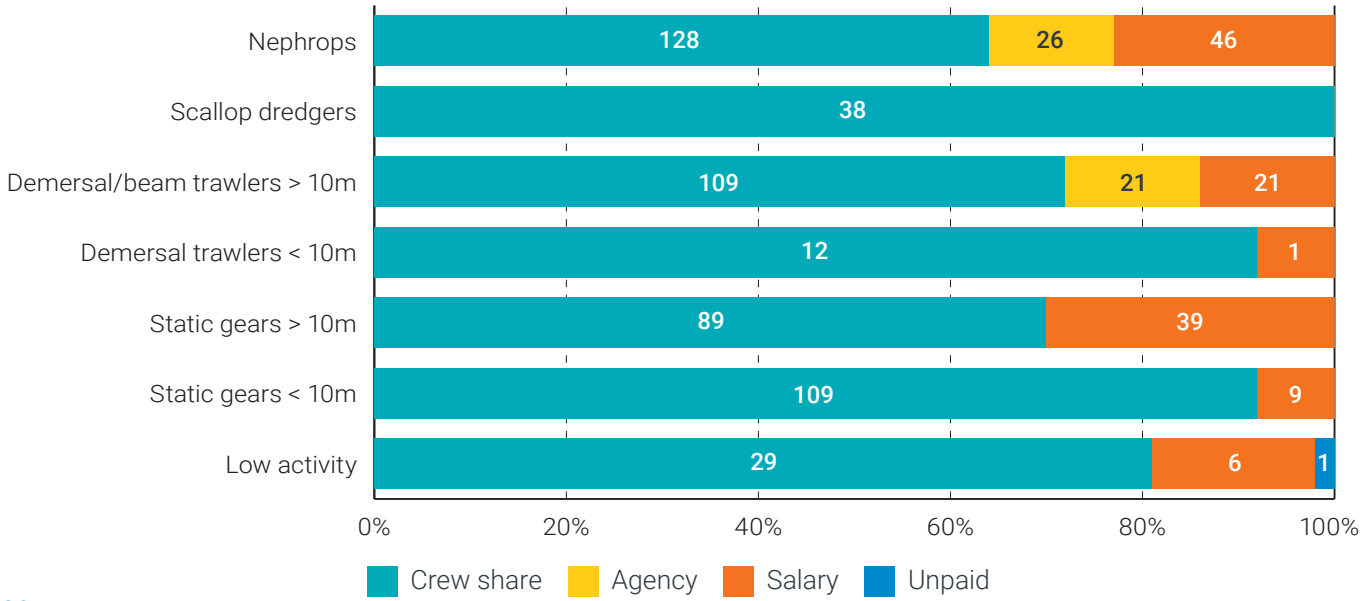


By fleet segment

All agency workers in the sample were from outside the UK and worked onboard demersal trawlers over 10m and Nephrops trawlers on a seasonal basis. In general terms, most salaried and agency workers were employed on larger vessels.

Figure 28. Number of workers in the sample by remuneration method and fleet segment (n = 684)

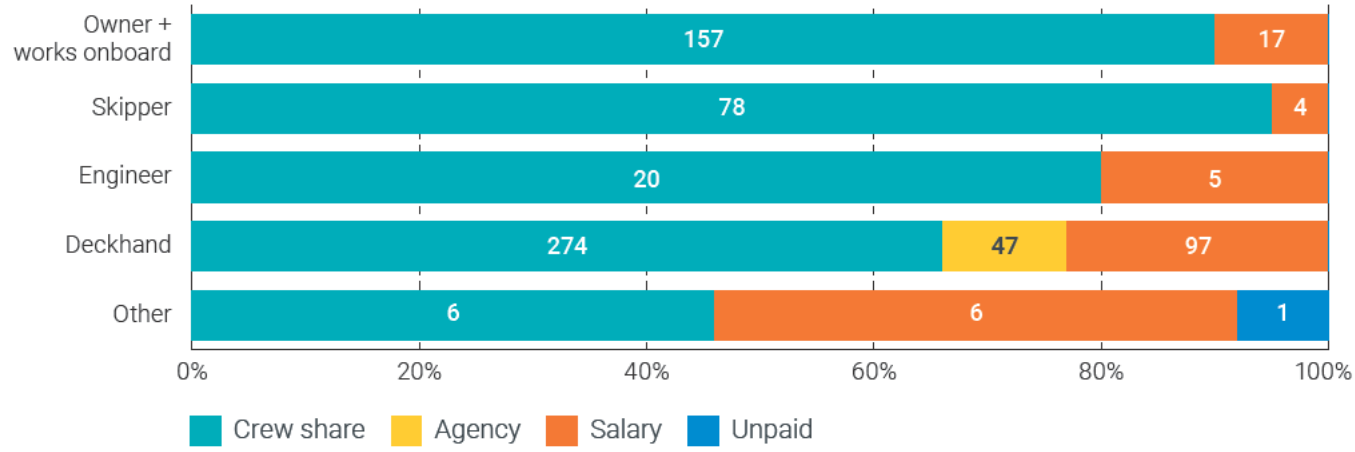
Excludes inactive and miscellaneous gear vessels, and vessels not allocated to a segment.



By position

Across all positions except 'other' workers, most workers were paid via a crew share. 'Other' workers were either paid by a crew share or a fixed salary, with one person being unpaid (a typical case when the person involved is a family member or friend providing occasional help). Around a third of deckhands were paid a fixed salary or via an agency. This remuneration method is common for workers from outside the UK.

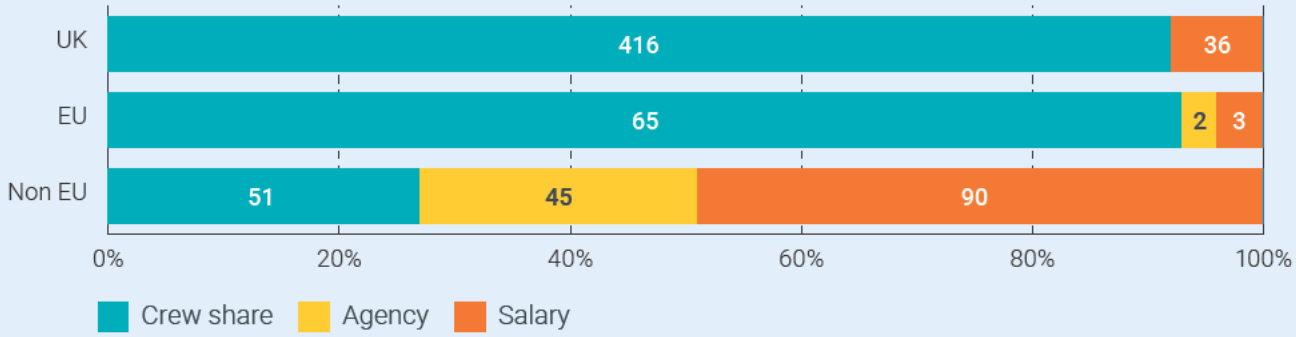
Figure 29. Number of workers in the sample by remuneration method and job position (n = 712)



Remuneration method by nationality

People from non-EU countries were much more likely to be paid via an agency or paid a fixed salary compared to UK and EU workers (73% of non-EU workers compared to 7% of EU workers and 8% of UK workers). Anecdotal evidence suggests that some of these workers from outside the UK and EU receive a 'catch bonus' on top of their fixed payment, similar to workers employed on a crew share basis; however, we do not have data on how widespread this practice is.

Figure 30. Number of workers in the sample by remuneration method and country of origin (UK/EU/non-EU) (n = 709)



Methods

Data collection

Seafish collects employment data on the UK fishing fleet as part of its regular fleet data collection programme. Data collection is a staged process involving government administrations, vessel owners and Seafish.

Government administrations data collection

Government administrations gather data on vessel numbers and characteristics, catch, landings, sales, gear type and days at sea. This information is transmitted to a central UK database which keeps logbook, sales notes and fleet register data.

Field research

Every year Seafish researchers visit ports around the UK interviewing fishing business owners to gather information about their vessels. Every three years the survey includes an additional questionnaire on the people employed by fishing businesses and the demographics of employees.

To ensure an adequate sample size for financial data we use a self-selecting stratified sampling approach, i.e., researchers interview a sufficient number of vessel owners from each of the 32 Seafish segments who choose to participate in the survey when our researchers visit the ports. Those 32 Seafish segments then form the basis of the segmentation used in this report.

All the employment data reported here was obtained from interviewees during the 2021 Fleet Survey or follow-up phone calls. The data provided was not checked against vessel financial records or any other administrative records. Such checks could improve the reliability of the data collected and enable researchers to verify data provided, but at the expense of cost efficiency.

Fleet segmentation

The results of the survey were merged with the 2021 Seafish fleet segmentation dataset. The merge enabled vessels in the sample to be attributed to specific fleet segments and grouped based on their characteristics, such as vessel length, gear type and main species landed.

The following eight fleet segments were created and used for this analysis based on the characteristics of the vessels that were involved in the survey. These eight segments are based on the 32 Seafish fleet segments used during the data collection phase.

Table 8. Fleet segmentation used in report

Fleet segment	Main gear by number of days at sea	Main species landed by value	Vessel length	Value of landings
Demersal trawl vessels under 10m	Demersal trawls and seines		Under 10m	Over £10,000
Demersal trawl vessels over 10m	Demersal trawls and seines, beam trawl	Not Nephrops	10m or over	Over £10,000
Nephrops trawl vessels	Demersal trawls and seines	Nephrops		Over £10,000
Scallop dredgers	Dredges	Scallops, queen scallops, cockles		Over £10,000
Vessels using static gears under 10m	Drift nets and fixed nets, longliners, hooks, pots and traps		Under 10m	Over £10,000
Vessels using static gears over 10m	Drift nets and fixed nets, longliners, hooks, pots and traps		10m or over	Over £10,000
Low activity				Under £10,000
Inactive				Zero

Job position

The job position of workers in the sample were allocated to one of the following positions:

- **Skipper:** in charge of operating the vessel.
- **Engineer:** in charge of running the vessel equipment.
- **Deckhand:** workers on deck that operate the fishing gear, sort and process the catch.
- **Owner + works onboard:** the vessel owner, who also works onboard the vessel as skipper or deckhand. This is a typical business model of many small-scale vessels.
- **Other:** includes other workers onboard the vessel that do not fit into the above categories (i.e., cooks, others), vessel owners working exclusively onshore, and onshore workers (i.e., accountants, administrators and similar).

Professional qualification

Interviewees were asked about the professional qualifications they held at the time of the survey. Responses given were allocated to one of the following categories:

- None.
- **Basic Safety Training:** minimum requirement for all crew working on a UK fishing vessel, not required for onshore personnel.
- **Skipper:** vessels under 16.5m/16.5m and above.
- **Engineer certificates:** for vessels less than/above 750kW.
- **Other qualifications:** these include non-fishing skipper qualifications such as MCA Boatmaster Licence, RYA Yachtmaster Offshore and RYA Coastal Skipper.

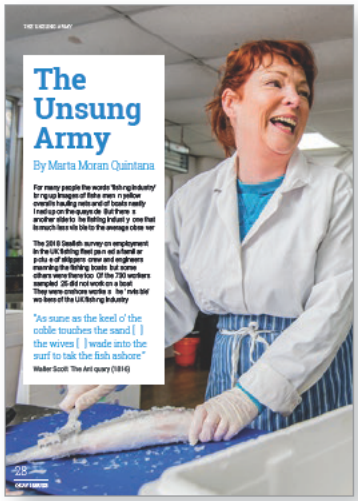
Where a person held more than one qualification, the highest qualification has been considered for analysis purposes. For example, a person holding Basic Safety Training and a skipper ticket has been reported under the category 'Skipper'.

Remuneration method

The following options were available as remuneration methods:

- **Crew share:** remuneration as a share of the value of fish landed after deducting operating costs.
- **Fixed wage:** remuneration as a fixed monthly amount, regardless of the value of landings.
- **Agency:** remuneration received by the worker from a crewing agency to which the worker is contracted.

Further reading



The Unsung Army
Quay Issues Volume 6 (pp. 28-33)

A feature on the work carried out by onshore workers in the UK fishing fleet, including research and survey data and interviews with researchers, industry representatives and workers.

Available online at: https://issuu.com/seafishuk/docs/quay-issues_vol6-2020

Planning for the future
Quay Issues Volume 7 (pp. 24-27)

This feature investigates the business succession of Northern Irish vessel owners and the challenges they face amidst a lack of local crew and the implications of EU exit.

Available online at: https://issuu.com/seafishuk/docs/quay-issues-vol7-2021_issuu

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- Joe Cooper, Nick Patience, Carlos Paredes and Oscar Wilkie who contributed to the survey preparation and conducted the data collection phase of the research.
- Arina Motova and Ana Witteveen who reviewed the report.

Appendix 1

Table 1. Full list of nationalities of workers in sample

	Deckhand	Owner + works onboard	Skipper	Engineer	Other
UK	195	200	75	16	14
Philippines	89	-	-	1	-
Ghana	53	-	-	1	-
Latvia	34	-	5	-	-
Indonesia	35	-	-	1	-
Spain	2	-	6	6	-
India	7	-	-	-	-
Ireland	4	2	-	-	-
Lithuania	5	-	1	-	-
Romania	3	-	-	-	-
Poland	2	-	-	-	-
Mozambique	2	-	-	-	-
Congo	1	-	-	-	-

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