

# Ageism Quiz for Action Day

**1. What percentage of England's adults are aged over 50?**

- A** 25%
- B** 38%
- C** 45%

**2. What proportion of adults hold ageist views?**

- A** A quarter
- B** A half
- C** A third

**3. What proportion of people aged over 50 have experienced age discrimination in the last year?**

- A** A quarter
- B** A half
- C** Three quarters

**4. Where are people between the ages of 51 and 70 most likely to say they have experienced age discrimination?**

- A** At work
- B** In the media or as a consumer
- C** In health or social care

**5. What percentage of adults agree that UK society is ageist?**

- A** 25%
- B** 55%
- C** 85%

**6. What proportion of people (aged 65 and over) live in care homes?**

- A** 2.5%
- B** 10%
- C** 25%

**7. At what age do we start to develop stereotypes about older people?**

- A** 3 years old
- B** 8 years old
- C** 10 years old

**8. In a poll of over 50s, how many believe they've been turned down for a job because of their age?**

- A** One in ten (10%)
- B** One in five (20%)
- C** One in three (33%)

**9. Who do you think is most likely to hold ageist views?**

- A** Young people (against older people)
- B** Older people (against younger people)
- C** Both young people and older people

**10. What age group are most likely to have volunteered (informally) at least once in the last 12 months?**

- A** 16 - 24
- B** 25 - 34
- C** 35 - 49
- D** 50 - 64
- E** 65 - 74

# Answers

## Question 1

### 38% of England's adults are aged over 50

Our population is older than ever before - in England 38% of adults are now aged over 50<sup>1</sup>. Since the early 1980s we have seen a huge shift in the age profile of the country. The number of people aged 65 and over has increased by more than 50% - over 10 million people. There are almost three times as many people aged 85 and over as there were 40 years ago<sup>2</sup>.

These trends look set to continue over the next 40 years, with the population aged 80 and over growing most rapidly<sup>3</sup>.

## Question 2

### At least a third of adults hold ageist views

This is an estimate based on a number of different figures from the following surveys:

A recent unpublished survey<sup>4</sup> from Centre for Ageing Better (2023) asked questions about attitudes to other older people and showed a range of negative attitudes from 10% thinking ignoring or avoiding older people is acceptable to 43% thinking older adults are less tolerant.

Several answers are around the one third mark - e.g. More than a quarter (28%) agree that it's acceptable to assume older people can't understand complex information. Self-directed ageism was common too with more than a third (36%) of people who don't think they'll be able to adapt to new technology.

Our Reframing Ageing report<sup>5</sup> found that 37% of people agree that 'Older age is characterised by frailty, vulnerability, and dependency'.

An older (2004) report found that one in three respondents say the over 70s are incompetent and incapable: (How Ageist is Britain? <https://research.kent.ac.uk/stop/how-ageist-is-britain/>). This same report found that one third of people agreed that the ageing trend [i.e. ageing population] would make society worse in regards to security, standards of living, health, access to jobs and education.

## Question 3

### Half of people aged over 50 have experienced age discrimination in the last year

A recent unpublished survey from Centre for Ageing Better found that 45% of people aged 51-70 and 46% of people aged 71+ have felt badly treated because of their age in the past 12 months<sup>6</sup>.

It's also worth noting that in our survey, the age group most likely to say they had been badly treated because of their age was 18-29 year olds (75%) - so ageism cuts both ways!

## Question 4

### People between the ages of 51 and 70 are most likely to say they have experienced age discrimination at work

In our survey<sup>7</sup>, among people aged 50 - 71 who felt they'd been treated badly because of their age in the last 12 months, 37% said it was in employment/work; 32% on social media, television, movies or news reports; also 32% as a consumer, 25% in health or social care; 22% in social situations.

## Question 5

### 55% of adults agree that UK society is ageist

When asked in a recent survey<sup>8</sup> "to what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree that UK society is ageist?", the majority of respondents (55%) agreed as opposed to those who do not (13%).

Despite being the least likely group to say that the UK is ageist, 49% of 35-49-year-olds still believe it to be the case. Agreement that the UK is ageist is highest amongst the youngest (57%) and the older age groups (58% and 57%). This may well indicate that these groups have higher levels of lived experience of ageism at both ends of the age spectrum.

### Question 6

#### Just 2.5% of people aged 65 and over live in care homes

Just 2.5% of older people (aged 65 and over) live in care homes<sup>9</sup> yet the public thinks it's 25%<sup>10</sup>. We tend to overestimate the extent to which ill health and dependency are a 'normal part of ageing'. Not only does this shape the way we feel about getting older, but it can also affect whether or not we seek treatment for health problems.

### Question 7

#### We start to develop stereotypes of older people at 3 years old

A key feature of ageism is that it starts young. Children as young as three begin to develop stereotypes about older people<sup>11</sup>.

### Question 8

#### In a poll of over 50s, one in three (33%) believe they have been turned down for a job because of their age<sup>12</sup>.

The Centre for Ageing Better recently polled over-50s about work and found that:

- A quarter have been put off applying for jobs as they sound like they're aimed at younger candidates.
- A third believe they have been turned down for a job because of age.
- One in five think people at work see them as less capable as they get older.

### Question 9

#### People of all ages can hold ageist views

While there is some variation in views on ageing, the truth is most of us, at all ages, hold some kind of ageist attitudes or ideas - even when we're older ourselves. It's ingrained in our collective thinking. Evidence shows pre-school children can show an awareness of ageist stereotypes, and the majority of children display overwhelmingly negative attitudes to the notion of getting older.

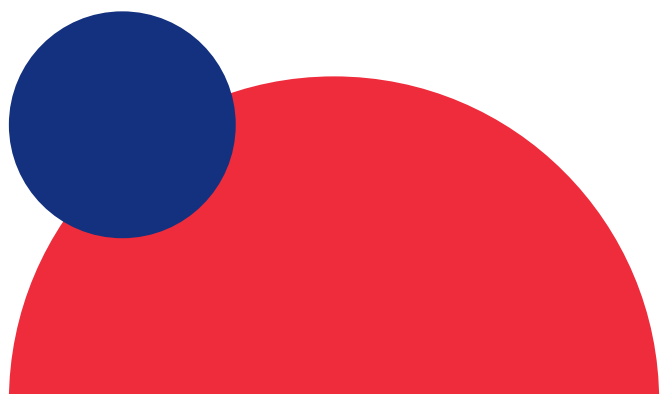
### Question 10

#### People aged 65 - 74 are most likely to have volunteered (informally) at least once in the last 12 months

We often hear about the challenges of an ageing population - but very little about the support provided to society by older age groups. Research<sup>13</sup> shows that over 50s are the most likely to volunteer, vote and provide unpaid care, alongside their significant contributions to the economy as workers and consumers.

In the Community Life Survey, informal volunteering is defined as giving unpaid help to individuals who are not a relative. For example, babysitting or caring for children, keeping in touch with someone who has difficulty getting out and about, or helping out with household tasks such as cleaning, laundry or shopping.

In 2021/22 rates of informal volunteering at least once in the last 12 months were highest for those aged 65-74 (52%) and those aged over 75 (44%). Rates for these age groups were higher than for those aged 16-24 (38%), 25-34 (42%). In 2021/22 rates for formal volunteering at least once in the last 12 months were highest for people aged 65 to 74 (32%)<sup>14</sup>.



# References

- 1 Census 2021
  - 2 Centre for Ageing Better (2023) State of Ageing. Available online: [ageing-better.org.uk/our-ageing-population-state-ageing-2023-4](https://ageing-better.org.uk/our-ageing-population-state-ageing-2023-4)
  - 3 Ibid.
  - 4 Centre for Ageing Better (2023) Age Without Limits Campaign Baseline Survey by NatCen [unpublished]
  - 5 Centre for Ageing Better (2021) Reframing ageing: Public perceptions of ageing, older age and demographic change. Available online: [ageing-better.org.uk/resources/reframing-ageing-public-perceptions-ageing-older-age-and-demographic-change](https://ageing-better.org.uk/resources/reframing-ageing-public-perceptions-ageing-older-age-and-demographic-change)
  - 6 Centre for Ageing Better (2023) Age Without Limits Campaign Baseline Survey by NatCen [unpublished]
  - 7 Ibid.
  - 8 Centre for Ageing Better (2021) Reframing ageing: Public perceptions of ageing, older age and demographic change. Available online: [ageing-better.org.uk/resources/reframing-ageing-public-perceptions-ageing-older-age-and-demographic-change](https://ageing-better.org.uk/resources/reframing-ageing-public-perceptions-ageing-older-age-and-demographic-change)
  - 9 Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 9 October 2023, Older people living in care homes in 2021 and changes since 2011 Available online: [ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/births-deathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/olderpeoplelivingincarehomesin2021andchangessince2011/2023-10-09](https://ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/births-deathsandmarriages/ageing/articles/olderpeoplelivingincarehomesin2021andchangessince2011/2023-10-09)
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  - 11 Flamion A, Missotten P, Jennotte L, Hody N, Adam S. Old Age-Related Stereotypes of Preschool Children. *Front Psychol.* 2020. Available online: [ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7198741/](https://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7198741/)
  - 12 Centre for Ageing Better (2021) Shut out: How employers and recruiters are overlooking the talents of over 50s workers. Available online: [ageing-better.org.uk/resources/shut-out-employers-overlooking-over-50s-workers](https://ageing-better.org.uk/resources/shut-out-employers-overlooking-over-50s-workers)
  - 13 Centre for Ageing Better (2023) State of Ageing. Available online: [ageing-better.org.uk/our-ageing-population-state-ageing-2023-4](https://ageing-better.org.uk/our-ageing-population-state-ageing-2023-4)
  - 14 Community Life Survey 2021/22: Volunteering and charitable giving, Updated 3 May 2023. Available online: [gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-202122/community-life-survey-202122-volunteering-and-charitable-giving](https://gov.uk/government/statistics/community-life-survey-202122/community-life-survey-202122-volunteering-and-charitable-giving)
- NB "The proportion of the usual resident population aged 65 years and over living in a care home decreased from 3.2% in 2011 to 2.5% in 2021." Note also that 60% of people in care homes are aged 85 or older.
- Note: Some questions in this quiz have been reproduced with kind permission from Age Proud Leeds/Age Friendly Leeds. The Age Proud Quiz can be found online at: [form.jotformeu.com/92592997724375](https://form.jotformeu.com/92592997724375)

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