

BOLTON DIVERSITY COMMISSION SURVEY ANALAYSIS

October 4, 2022





The Commission

The Bolton Diversity Commission was created in January 2021.

Created because the town "may not fully be aware of issues of diversity and inclusion that may arise within Bolton" and "the Board of Selectmen recognizes that the Town can do more to Address issues of diversity and inclusion in town."

9 Nine member, multi-partisan, diverse commission



The Survey

Methodology

- Created by looking at an altering questions from five other municipal diversity, equity and inclusion surveys

Limitations

- Self -Selection Bias
- Some questions inadvertently left out some subpopulations identities.

Distribution

- Voluntary participation
- Hard copies at Town Hall, Library and Senior Center
- Online Version - Google Form shared via social media and Bolton Bulletin
- Flyers posted at businesses with QR code

Reponses

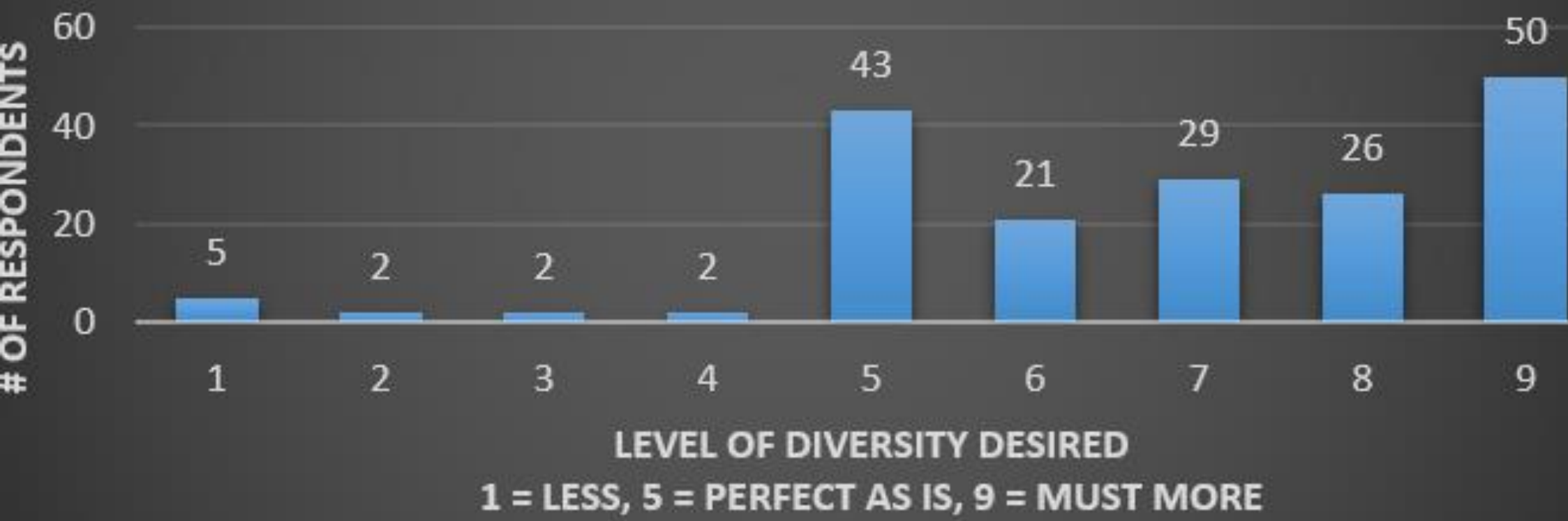
182 or 4.1%

There were 182 survey response. Representing 4,1% of adult aged persons in Bolton.

The folliwng groups were over represented among survey respondents when compared to the composition of the overall town:

- 35-44 year olds
- Females
- those with higher educational attainment
- those with a disabling condition
- those with left- leaning political ideology

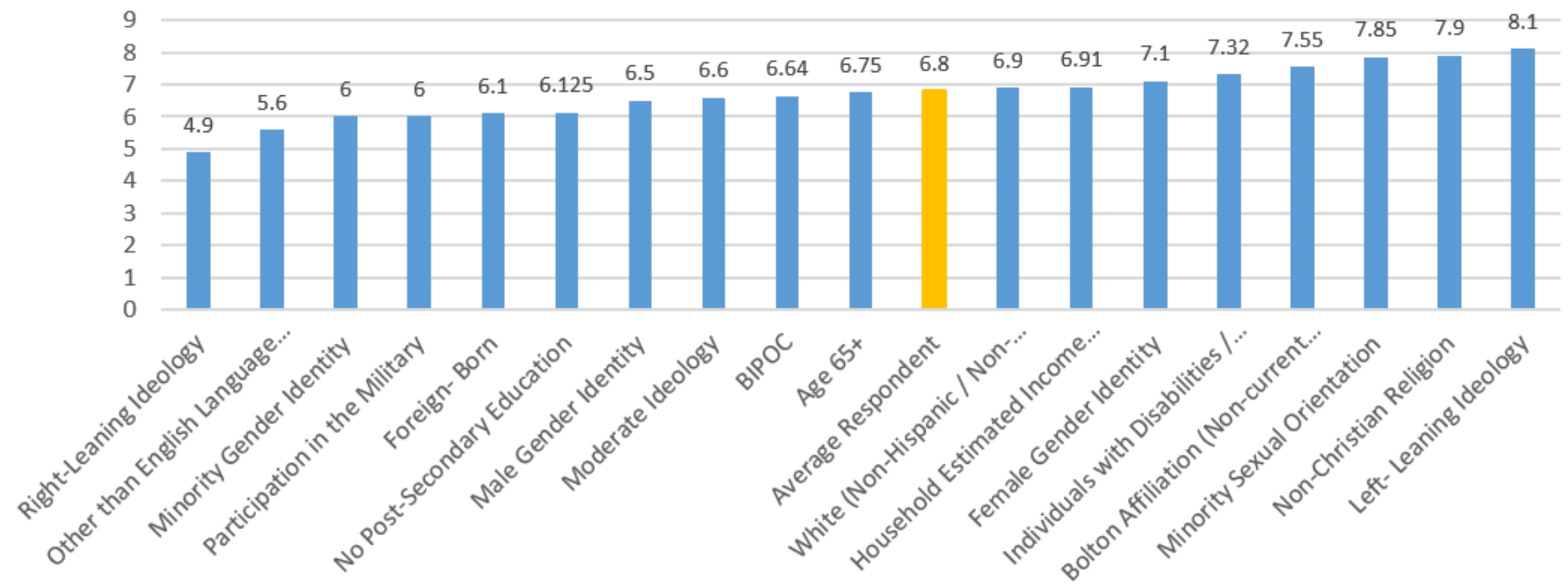
Level of Diversity Desired by Respondents



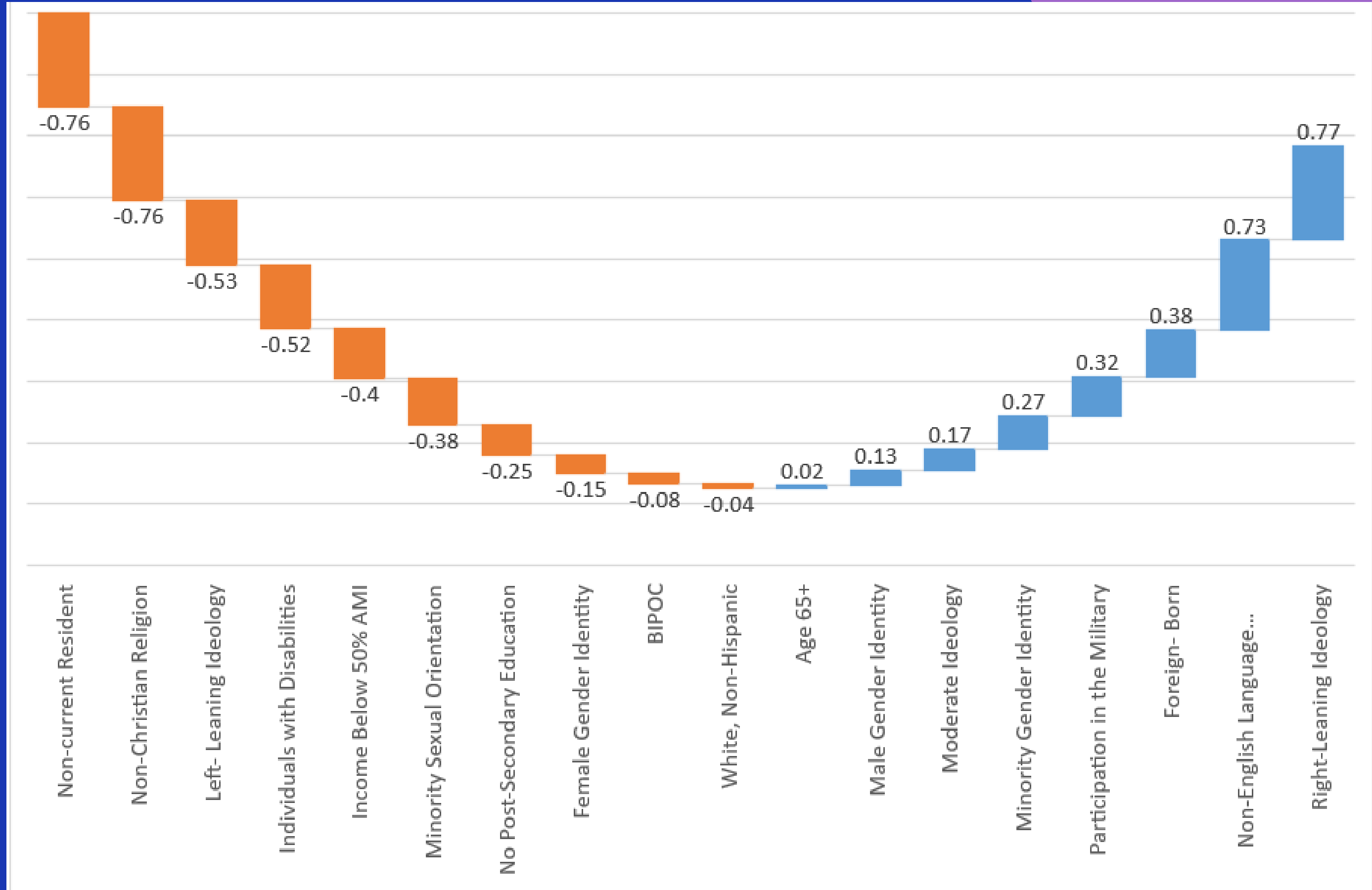
Desired Diversity Level

6.8
AVG RESPONSE

Avg Desired Diversity Level By Population



Deviation of Average Rating by Population



A magnifying glass with a black handle and frame is positioned over a blue notepad with horizontal lines. In the background, there is a white surface with a blue bar chart. The word "Findings" is written in a large, bold, blue font at the top right of the image.

Findings

Following quantitative and qualitative analysis the Commission identified 7 themes to elevate as findings.

- Respondents were torn about whether Bolton is welcoming
- Some people feel that diversity, equity and inclusion efforts are unnecessary and unwelcome in Bolton
- Those with Non- Christian religions rated Bolton unfavorably
- Sense of mistreatment for people with disabilities
- Reduced Sense of Belonging among Minority Populations in Bolton
- Affordability and Affordable Housing
- Opportunities to Interact and to Celebrate Diversity



Torn about Bolton Being Welcoming

- “I believe the community has a strong base of welcoming, supportive, and driven individuals that are ensuring [diversity equity and inclusion] are a reality for Bolton.”
- “While once a member on one of the town boards and discussing town development, another member made a statement of keeping "those people" out of our town. Since all participants were white, I assumed that he must have assumed everyone else shared his position. While there are many people here that are welcoming to other people regardless of differences, in my many years living here I have seen enough others who would concur with this man.”



Affordability and affordable housing

- “Affordable housing for lower income families to have the opportunity to move here, increase the diversity in the Town office and school staffing”
- “Affordable housing for the disabled”
- “There are few places for low income to rent and work. Those that offer apartments are very discriminating. It's not a very friendly place for parents or single parents to rent.”



Some feel DEI Efforts are unnecessary and divisive

- “Shove this PC crap that the dems/progressives R shoving down our throats & let me live in peace, I earned all of what I have & I will not pander nor cater to the perpetually aggrieved 13%”
- “Stop focusing on sexual identity, orientation, gender, and race and let people live their lives the way they see fit. There isn't much appeal to a small rural town if we decide to act like these issues are a major element of Bolton life.”



Opportunities to interact and celebrate diversity

- “We need a safe place to gather, have a coffee and meet each other. The only way to get a more welcoming environment is to get to know more that just our few near neighbors.”
- “Schedule monthly web diversity meetings with each group i.e. LGBTQ, Veterans, etc. and invite guest speakers”



Reduced Sense of belonging among minority populations

Difference in Rating From Avg Respondent						
	BIPOC	Disability	Sexual Orientation	No Post 2nd Edu.	Low Income	Non-Christian Religion
Avg Rating Q 1-5	-0.07	-0.56	-0.41	-0.21	-0.34	-0.85
Authentic Self	-0.31	-0.79	-0.56	-0.71	-0.99	-1.22
Recommend Bolton	-0.56	-0.6	-0.53	-0.38	-0.74	-0.58
Raise issues w/o fear	-0.18	-0.82	-0.25	-0.55	-1.1	-1.1
Sense of Belonging	-0.45	-0.35	-0.42	-0.64	-0.5	-1.06



Those with non-Christian Religions rated Bolton poorly

- Those who fell into a non-Christian religion category had Favorability Percentages between 10-30%
- Their Average Rating was .76 less than the general respondent.
- 64% of those with a non-Christian religion report being discriminated against because of their religion



Those with disabling conditions have had negative experiences

- Those with a disabling condition had an Average Rating .52 less than the general respondent.
- 54% of those with a disabling condition report being discriminated against because of their condition in Bolton
- “The entire town but especially the School System has HUGE issues in this department. Whether race issues or learning disabilities or physical ailments. I have stacks of information and documents as well as personal accounts from not just myself but other Bolton families to support my statements.”
- “I live with a disability and there are often handicap accessibility issues. Lack of accessible parking, building access etc. I am made to call ahead and make special plans instead of just being able to go to an accessible building. I couldn't wear a mask because of my disability and I was told I couldn't access town hall without one.”

Commission Recommendations



1

Board of Selectmen should adopt a formal proclamation declaring a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion as a community priority

2

Board of Selectmen should institute a permanent voluntary Human Rights and Equity Commission

3

Town should implement formal, regular, diversity, equity and inclusion training for all Town Employees, elected officials and volunteers serving on a permanent Town Committee or Commission

4

Town of Bolton should make increasing affordable housing a top priority

5

Town should take further action to assess how Bolton is ensuring the rights of Bolton's residents with disabilities are being met

6

The Town should be deliberate about providing opportunities for Bolton residents to engage with one another on the topics of diversity, equity and inclusion to increase awareness and empathy through the building of relationships



Questions or Comments?



For more information or future questions please contact:

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