



# MIRROR ON THE INDUSTRY

## PART 4

HOW ARE THE LGBTQIA+  
COMMUNITY REPRESENTED IN TV  
ADVERTISING?



# Background

We're proud to be one of the UK's most recognised and authoritative voices on diversity and inclusion. It's in our blood to stand up for diversity and champion unheard voices, so we put that ambition at the heart of everything we do.

Mirror On The Industry is a major insight initiative, exploring how representative and inclusive television advertisements. We launched our first wave in 2019 and are now three waves deep, with a commitment to running this project annually.



## MOTI 1

Launched the **original project** as a temperature check on the status of diversity and inclusion in TV advertising and how well minority groups feel represented

## MOTI 2

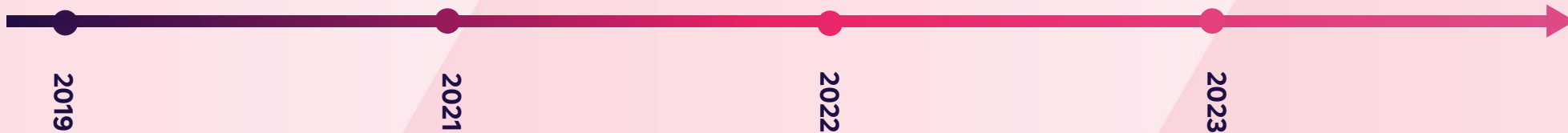
Launched a **2<sup>nd</sup> wave** see if TV adverts had progressed and whether the events of 2020 made an impact on representation, as well as evaluate how to improve representation and portrayal

## MOTI 3

Launching our **3<sup>rd</sup> wave** as the first of our annual commitment to continue tracking representation of minority, mis- and underrepresented groups year on year

## MOTI 4

The **4<sup>th</sup> wave** of our annual audit coming Q4 2023 with the addition of colourism, accents and family dynamics added to the ad audit



**Annual audit of D&I in TV advertising**

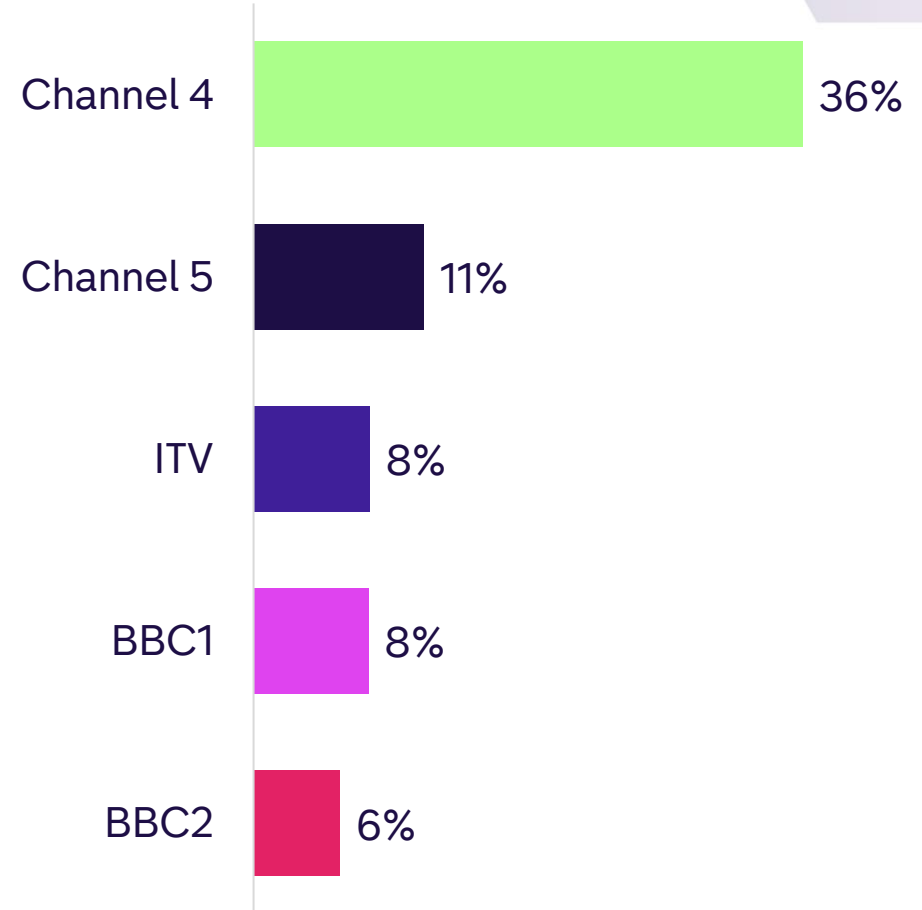
# We care about the creatives that meet our screens





**Channel 4 is  
the home for  
diverse &  
inclusive  
content and  
advertising  
alike**

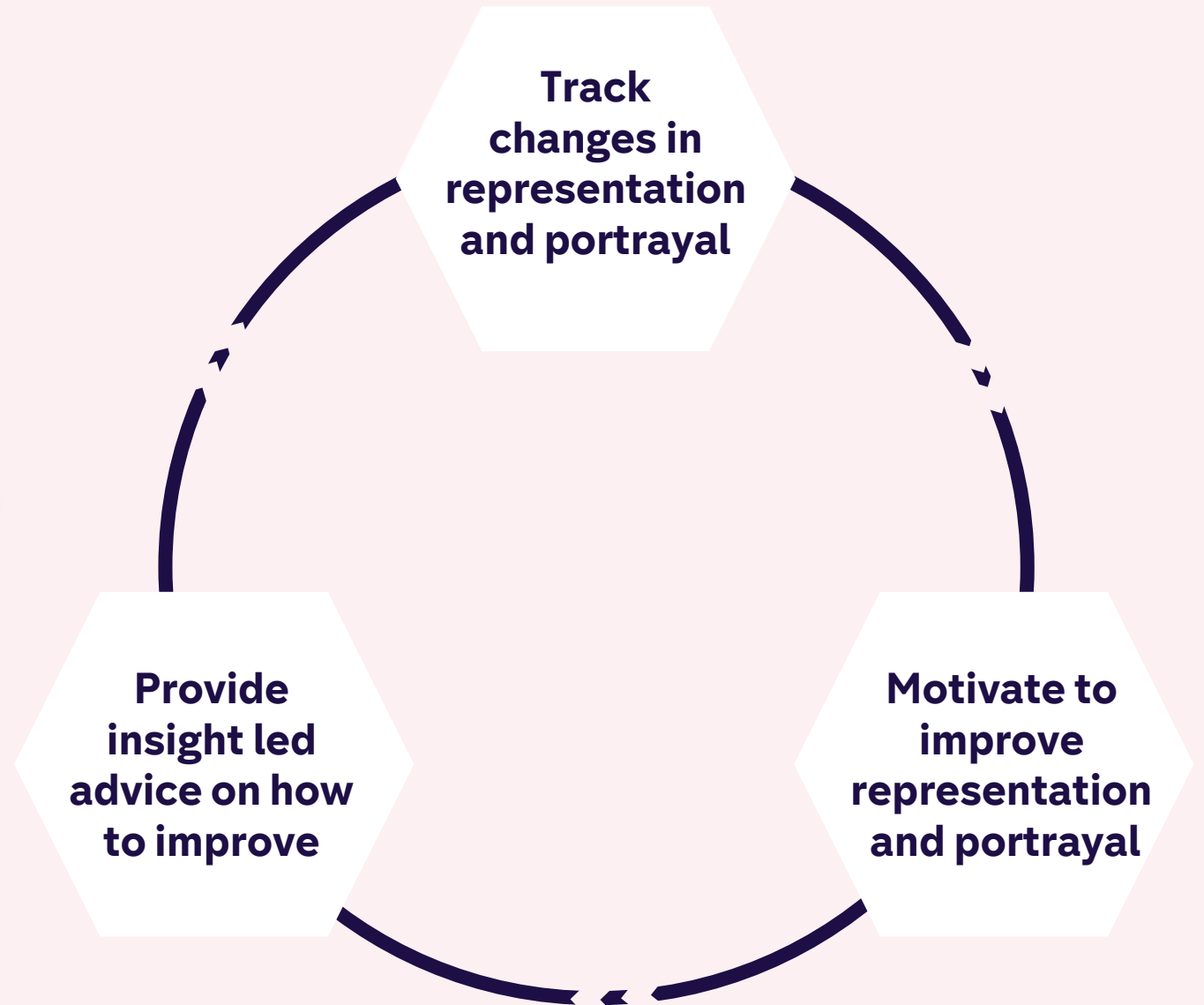
**Which of the following channels is best  
for being a home for alternative  
voices?**



Base: All respondents 16+ | 2022 FY results; Ipsos Brand Tracker; Nat Rep, c.6000 sample per year



# What are we trying to do with Mirror on the Industry?





# 60%

say they've become **more aware of the challenges** faced by different groups in society

# 1/2

have started **paying more attention** to the way different groups in society are reflected in ads

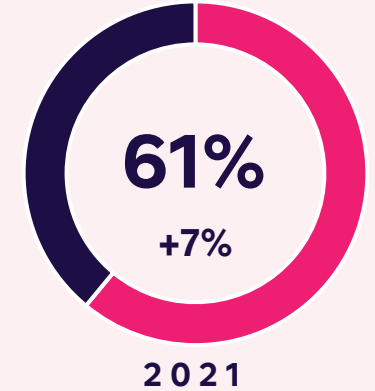
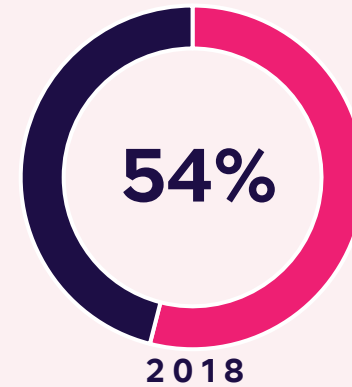
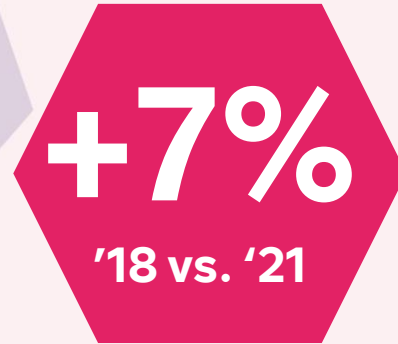
**"People from different backgrounds** and within all the groups discussed **are the backbone of this country.** Any ad campaign made today can be made using people from these groups without changing anything, other than the actors"

## Recent events have made issues and challenges around D&I even more top of mind for the public

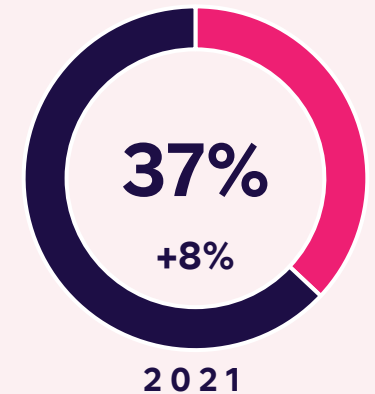
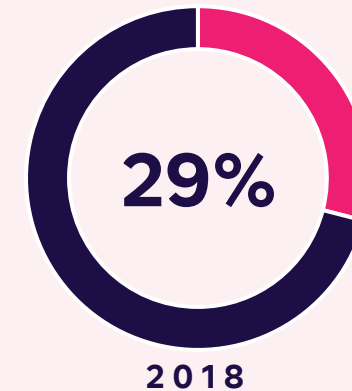
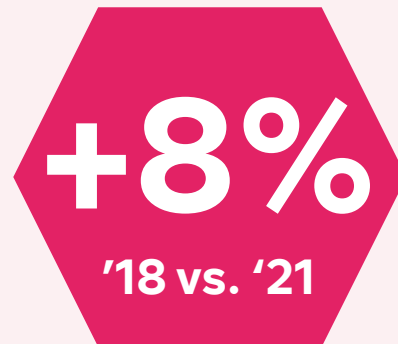


# Consumers are increasingly demanding change

BRANDS SHOULD NOW BE STANDING FOR SOMETHING BEYOND JUST SELLING PRODUCTS



THE VALUES AND ETHICS OF A COMPANY IS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR THAT INFLUENCES PURCHASE OF PRODUCTS



**4** IS MARKETING FOR GOOD GOOD FOR MARKETING?

Channel 4: Marketing for Good Study 2020





# The industry perspective



I have chosen not to work with a brand because I didn't agree with their ethics or values

2018  
**39%**



2021  
**45%**

I'm more excited to work with brands that use their advertising to engage with important issues

**66%**



**75%**

Brands should stand for something beyond just selling products

**57%**



**79%**



# Methodology

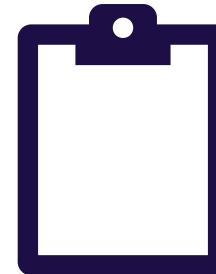
MOTI PT 1 & 2

**INDEPTH FOCUS  
GROUPS**



MOTI PT 1, 2 & 4

**ROBUST  
QUANTITATIVE  
SURVEY**



## **FULL TV ADVERTISING AUDIT PROCESS**

A series of auditors coded the **top 1000** TV ads from March and September **last year**

- Which **minority groups** appeared
- What **roles** they played
- How they were being **portrayed**
- What **type of ad** they appeared in
- How **long** they were **on screen** for





**MIRROR**  
ON THE INDUSTRY  
PART 4

# Representation of the **LGBTQIA+** community

# In a nutshell...

**1**

**Levels of representation of LGBTQIA+ people in TV ads are low and have remained stagnant throughout our audits**

**2**

**Tokenism and stereotyping is still prominent when ads try to represent this group – and it's being noticed. The format and purpose of ads featuring LGBTQIA+ people highlight this issue.**

**3**

**Lack of intersectionality and portrayal of diverse identities within this community means very few different stories are told – portrayal is limited to very set types of people within the community.**

# The representation of LGBTQIA+ people is low and stagnant

People from the LGBTQIA+ community feature in...

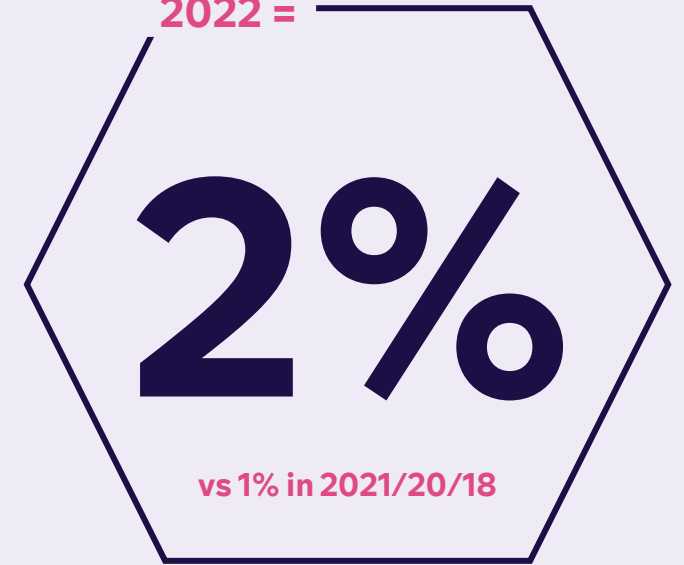
2022/21/20/18 =



of TV ads

...and play a lead role in

2022 =



vs 1% in 2021/20/18

of TV ads

**3%\***

of the UK population

Source: Tapestry/c4 Coding - Top 1000 adverts shown on TV in March & September 2022/21/20/18; \*2021 Census, this figure is thought to be higher than reported, with 7.5% of the population choosing not to answer the sexual orientation question, and the figure does not include gender identity.

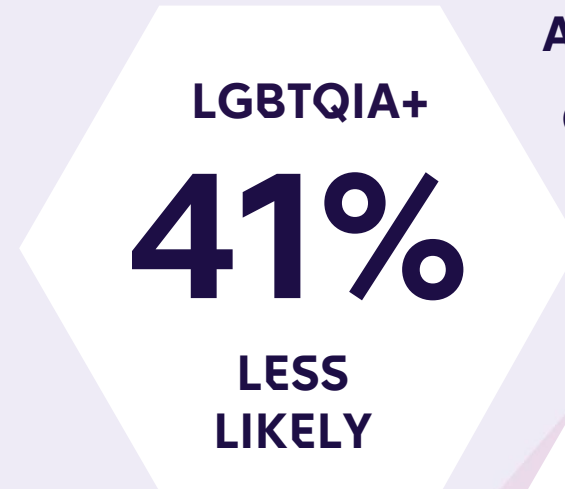


# We're starting to see an incremental shift upwards into lead roles, let's keep the momentum going

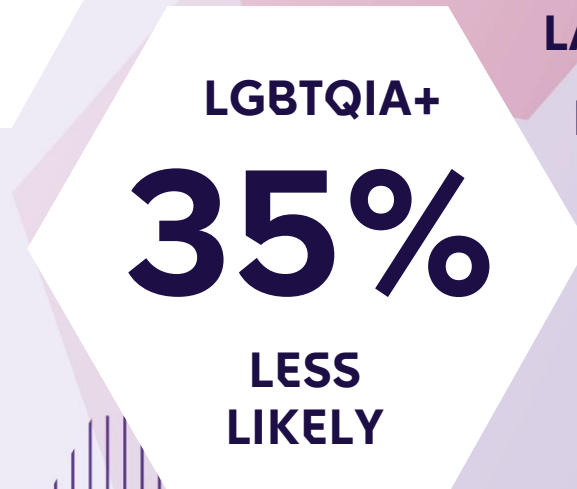




# Our second audit uncovered that LGBTQIA+ people were more likely to be featured in brand building ads and less likely to appear in BAU ads...



ADVERTISING  
A PRODUCT  
OR SERVICE



LAUNCHING  
A NEW  
PRODUCT

**This trend continues to be prevalent and points to restrictive and tokenistic inclusion**

**Brand building ads**



Over

**1/2**

of ads featuring LGBTQIA+ people

**56%** vs. **17%**  
of ads overall

**Ads for a product or service**



**44%**

of ads featuring LGBTQIA+ people

vs. **80%**  
of ads overall





**4 in**

**10**

**ads  
featuring  
LGBTQIA+  
people  
were  
montages**

# 1/2

**of ads coded as  
tokenistic were  
montages**

*"LGBT+ roles in advertising are almost exclusively background or montage roles, it's rarely (or never?) The storyline. There's all sorts of straight couple love stories but no LGBT+ that I can think of!"*

*"They are always shown in a montage of other couples, the rest of who are in an opposite sex relationship but it's apparently fine to have overtly sexualised characters in ads if they're portrayed as straight"*

# The LGBTQIA+ community are much more aware of how they are negatively represented in TV advertising

**56%**

*of LGBTQIA+ people tend to see their group represented in a negative way*

**Highest out of all the minority groups we asked**

**VS**

**33%**

*of the total population saying they tend to see LGBTQIA+ people represented in a negative way*

**LGBTQIA+**

**2x**

*More likely to have noticed stereotypical portrayal of their group than total population*

*"Just be casual and realistic. Go around and listen to different stories, a lot of them would already be diverse you don't need to come up with something new"*  
**Male, Black, LGBTQIA+, 16-24**

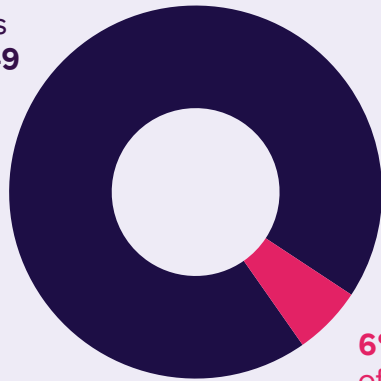
*“ Stereotypes lead to harmful perceptions of groups of people, and it becomes normal/accepted to think that the stereotypes are true, and to joke about it and spread hurtful information ”*

*“ I’ve seen some adverts which feature single, flamboyant, hypersexual gay men. not that there aren't gay men like that but there's more than one way to be gay ”*

# Looking at intersectionality revealed biases and stereotypes attached to the LGBTQIA+ community

## AGE

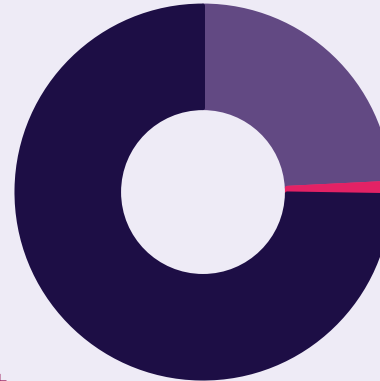
**94%** of LGBTQIA+ characters were **19-49** vs 71% of all characters



**6%** of LGBTQIA+ characters were **50+** vs 15% of all characters

## ETHNICITY

**71%** of LGBTQIA+ characters were **White** vs 63% of all characters



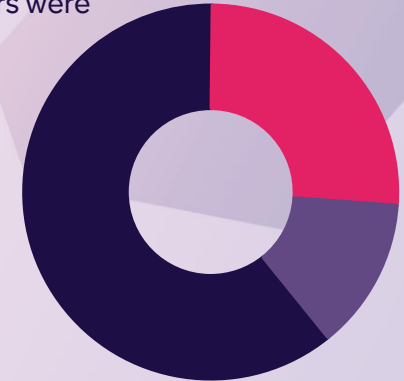
**0%** of LGBTQIA+ characters were **South or East Asian** vs 8% of all characters

**23%** of LGBTQIA+ characters were **Black** vs 24% of all characters

**6%** of LGBTQIA+ characters were **Mixed Ethnicity** vs 3% of all characters

## GENDER

**61%** of LGBTQIA+ characters were **men** vs 46% of all characters



**26%** of LGBTQIA+ characters were **women** vs 54% of all characters

**13%** of LGBTQIA+ characters were **non-binary** vs 0% of all characters

# There were three key ways we saw this people from the LGBTQIA+ community represented...

## 1

### CELEBRITY



cinch

Rylan Clark-Neal

## 2

### NARRATIVE



Nationwide

"I just want to treat my girlfriend and I to front row seats at a musical."

## 3

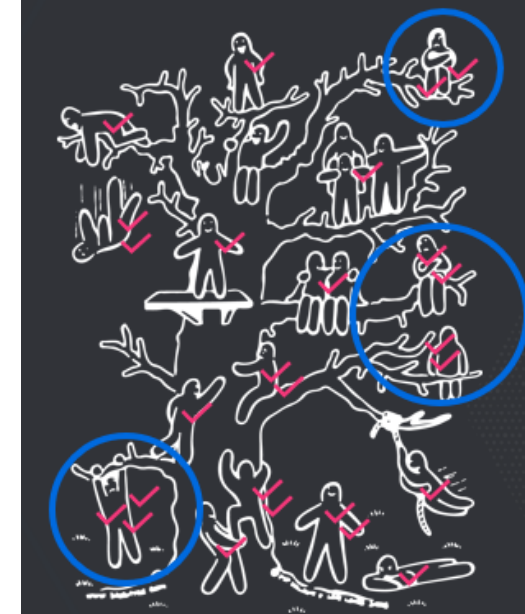
### STEREOTYPED



MECCA

meccabingo.com

# Responses to our creative exercise revealed how far we have to go when it comes LGBTQIA+ representation in ads



“The one with its back to us - it’s there but not fully or being included”





**MIRRO**  
ON THE INDUSTRY  
PART 4

**What can brands do  
to be more  
representative  
& inclusive?**



# REPRESENTATION

***BEING  
THERE***

# PORTRAYAL

***GETTING  
IT RIGHT***

# Representation



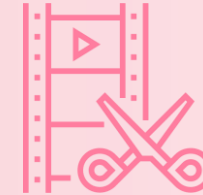
## Always-on diversity

Maintain a commitment to diversity in all comms – not just for a single product, brand, campaign or season.



## Diversify diversity

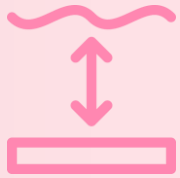
Represent diversity in a more credible way by mixing up the casting and intersectionalities



## Format matters

Don't try to tick every box in a single ad. Explore fewer characters in depth and show sustained commitment to inclusion

# Portrayal



## Go deep

**Diversity is not skin deep, characters and stories need depth to be truly inclusive**



## Lead all the way

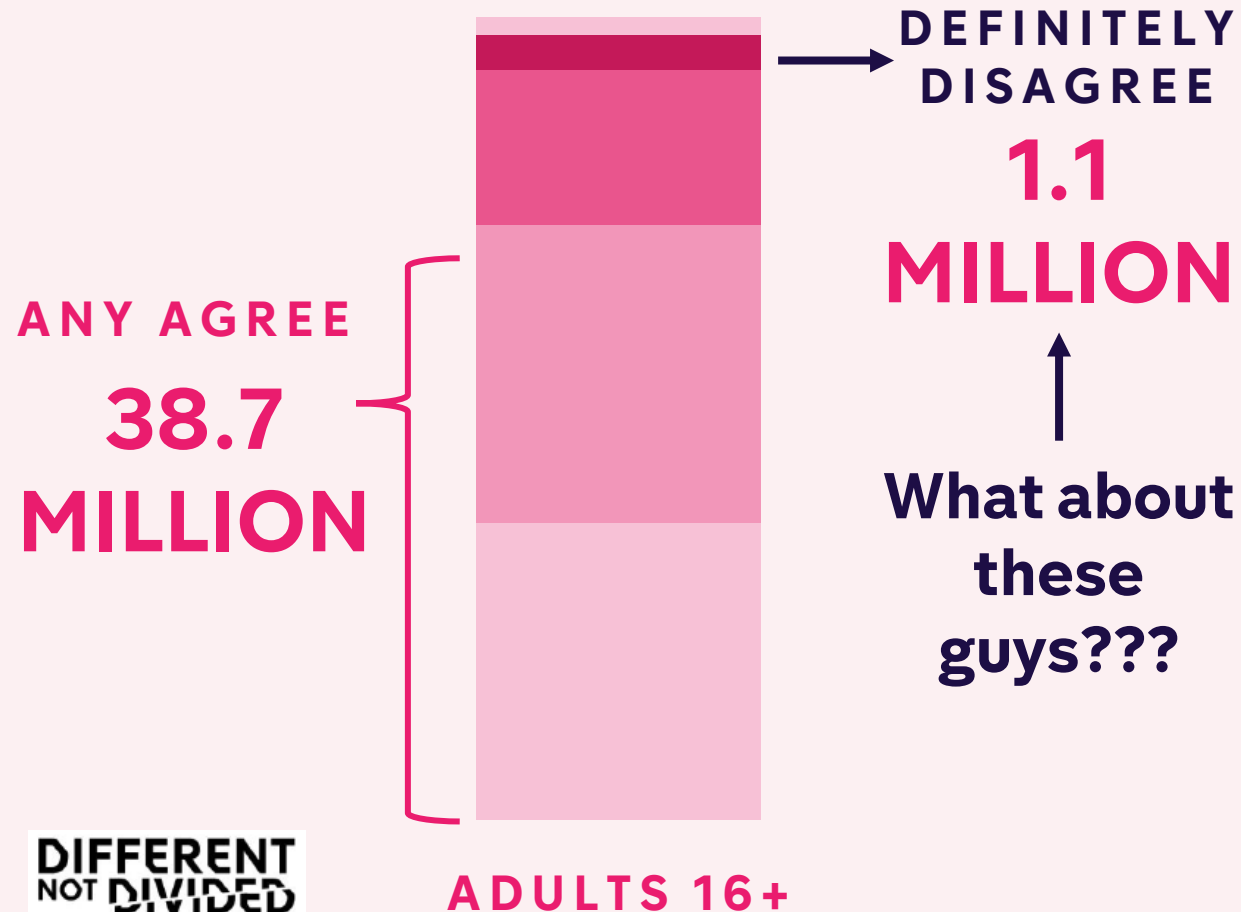
**More lead roles would play a major part in normalising diversity in a fluid way**



## Promote empathy

**Diverse audiences want to feel both understood and empowered to understand and empathise with others.**

**“I think we should strive for equality for all”**



1

Anticipate,  
don't avoid

2

Account for  
the extremes

3

Action  
insight & test  
execution

*Getting it right can still lead to criticism. It's how you respond that matters.*

# Complaints Welcome





**MIRROR**  
ON THE INDUSTRY  
PART 4

*Any questions?*

**Sam Cannons:**

**Research Manager**

scannons@channel4.co.uk

**Katya Des-Etages:**

**Senior Research Executive**

kdes-etages@channel4.co.uk