

LDIC Survey 2023:

Feeling Welcome in the Community

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Abstract

We review the level of welcomeness that members of the lattice field theory community feel based on the results of a survey performed in May and June 2023. While respondents reported generally high levels of feeling welcome at the lattice conference, women and people with diverse gender identities, sexual orientations, ethnic backgrounds and religious affiliations feel less included and have more negative experiences at the lattice conference than their peers. Respondents report that they are actively informing themselves about inequities in the community, however a large fraction of survey participants underestimate the severity of the problem, as was found in previous surveys. The survey data indicate that this situation can be most effectively improved by organizing talks and events about issues of diversity and inclusion within the lattice community. Respondents also reported that individual readings of scientific papers on equity and inclusion are effective in giving people agency in making a change and hence it may be helpful to collate a collection of important articles on these topics.

Motivation

The LDIC has distributed regular surveys to understand whether every member of our community feels equally welcome during scientific discussion, in particular at the lattice conference. For this we inquired the respondents about how they perceived the social climate at past conferences. We asked about their subjective experience, any negative incidences that occurred and whether they felt comfortable to discuss them. We additionally asked more general questions about how equitable they perceive the lattice field theory community and whether they feel that there is sufficient information available to allow them to correct existing inequities, if they are able to.

Previous studies of diversity in the lattice field theory community can be found in (Aubin et al. 2019), (Lin 2017) and (Aubin et al. 2021).

Study Design

The survey was conducted using Google forms and advertised through two e-mails over latticecommunity.github.io and additionally send directly by conference organizers to the participants of the conference. We have received a total of 92 responses, which is a good response rate in relation to this year's 440 conference participants. For evaluation we are using the R-package [survey](https://github.com/latticecommunity/survey) assuming independent random sampling.

Diversity

The diversity of the respondents allows us to make some statements about how welcome underrepresented people feel at the conference in comparison to their peers and whether they experience negative incidents.

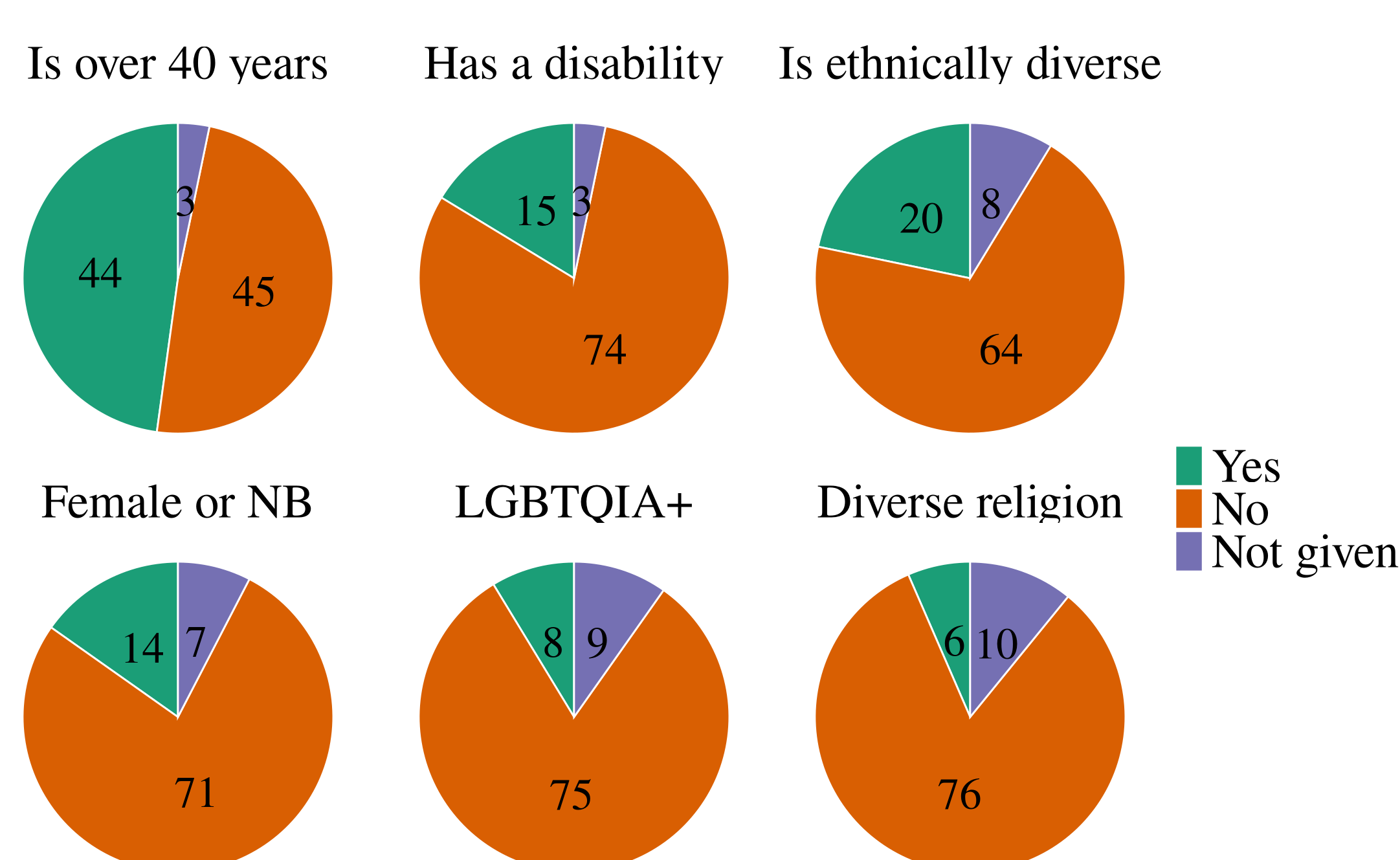


Figure 1: Diversity in responses

Demographic Groups

All age groups and positions are well represented, we are expecting to be able to identify age dependent effects in the data and make accurate statements about them. On the contrary, we have received no responses from South America and low response from Asia and Oceania. As a result, we will not be able to discuss regional differences in our data.

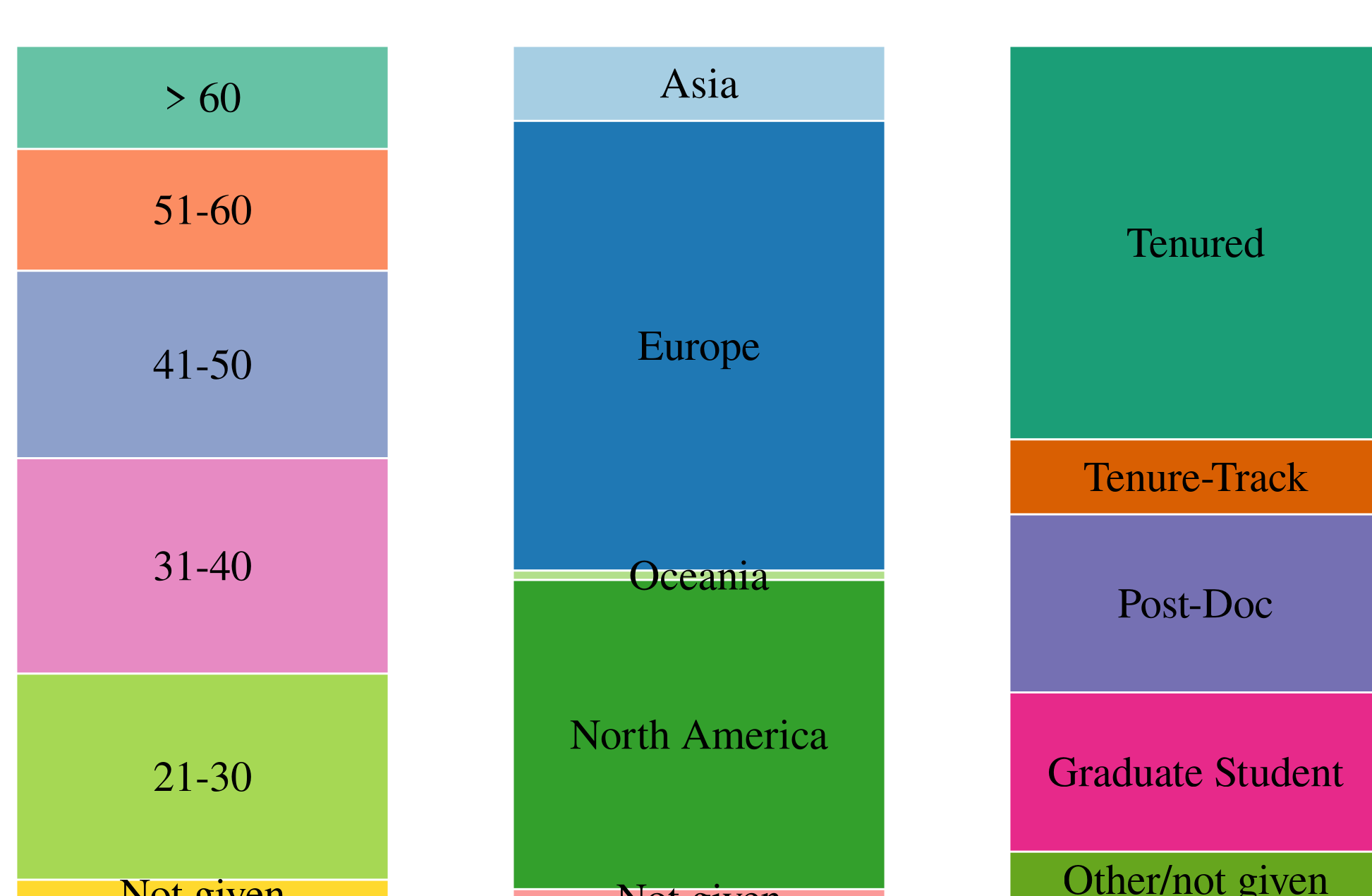


Figure 2: Representation of demographic groups in responses

Feeling Welcome in the Community

Being welcome at the conference

People generally report feeling very welcome at the conference, with most people choosing the highest option. However, we found that diverse people feel less welcome than their peers at the core element of the conference: the scientific program and talks. Specifically, ethnically diverse people feel just as welcome at social events and breaks as everybody else but less welcome at talks and the accommodations. People with a diverse religious denomination feel substantially less welcome at all parts of the conference.

People with disabilities report on average a high degree of welcomeness, even higher than people without disabilities. There is no significant age divide in feeling welcome to the community, however, people 40 years or younger feel slightly less welcome at social events.

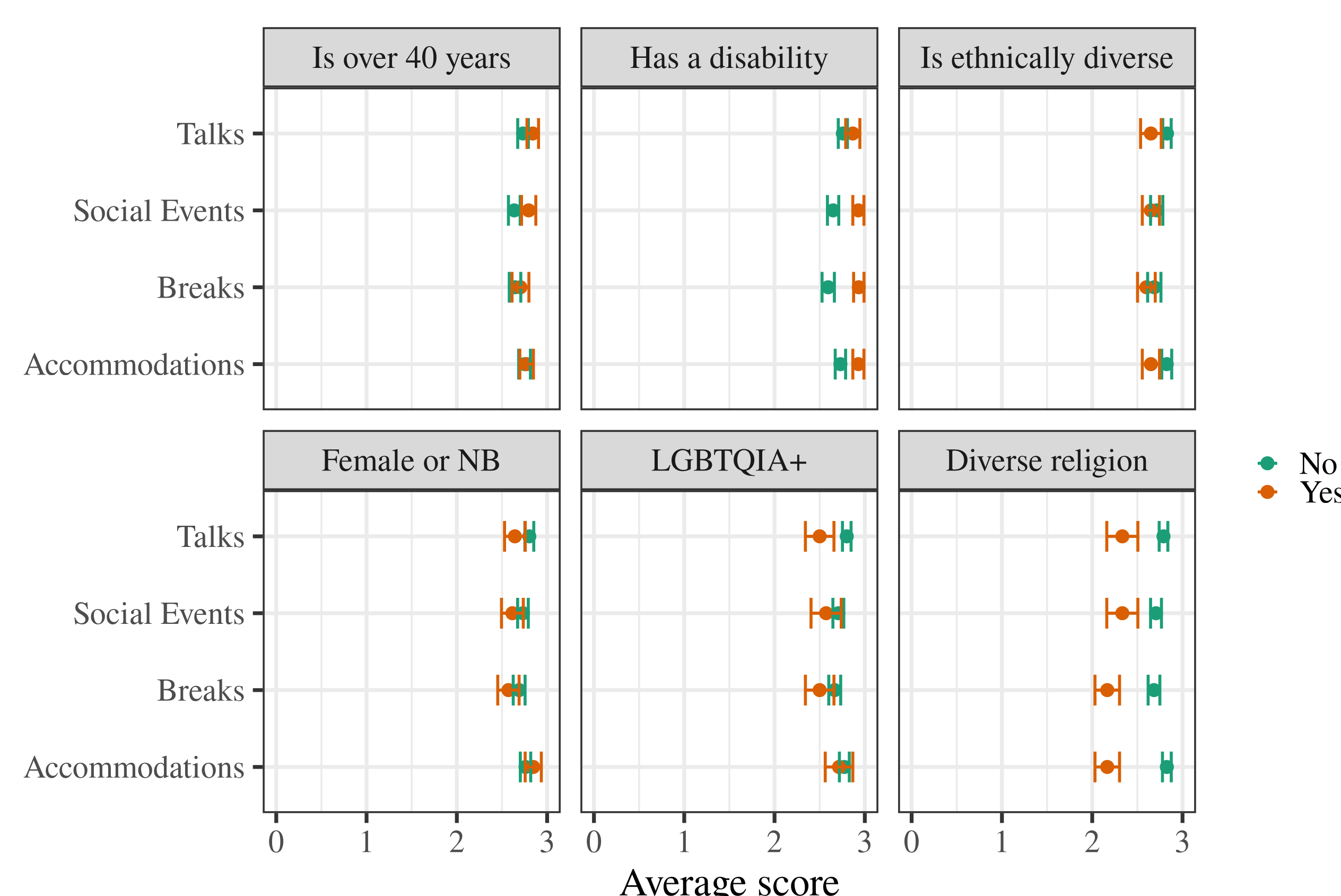


Figure 3: Average score to the questions 'Did you feel welcome during/at the...?'

Negative Experiences

We gauged the frequency of incidents by asking respondents to agree or disagree with eleven statements. A neutral answer was possible. For each respondent we then calculated a total, where agreeing to a statement about a negative incident was counted as -1 and agreeing to one about a positive incident was counted as +1. Examining this sum allows us to make a stronger statement than looking at individual statements that might in isolation also leave room for interpretation.

Negative experiences during conference participation are strongly correlated with gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion and age, but we observed no effect with regards to disabilities. The effects observed are qualitatively different, the differences in the scores are not explainable by differences in a single statement but different groups have cited different kinds of negative experiences.

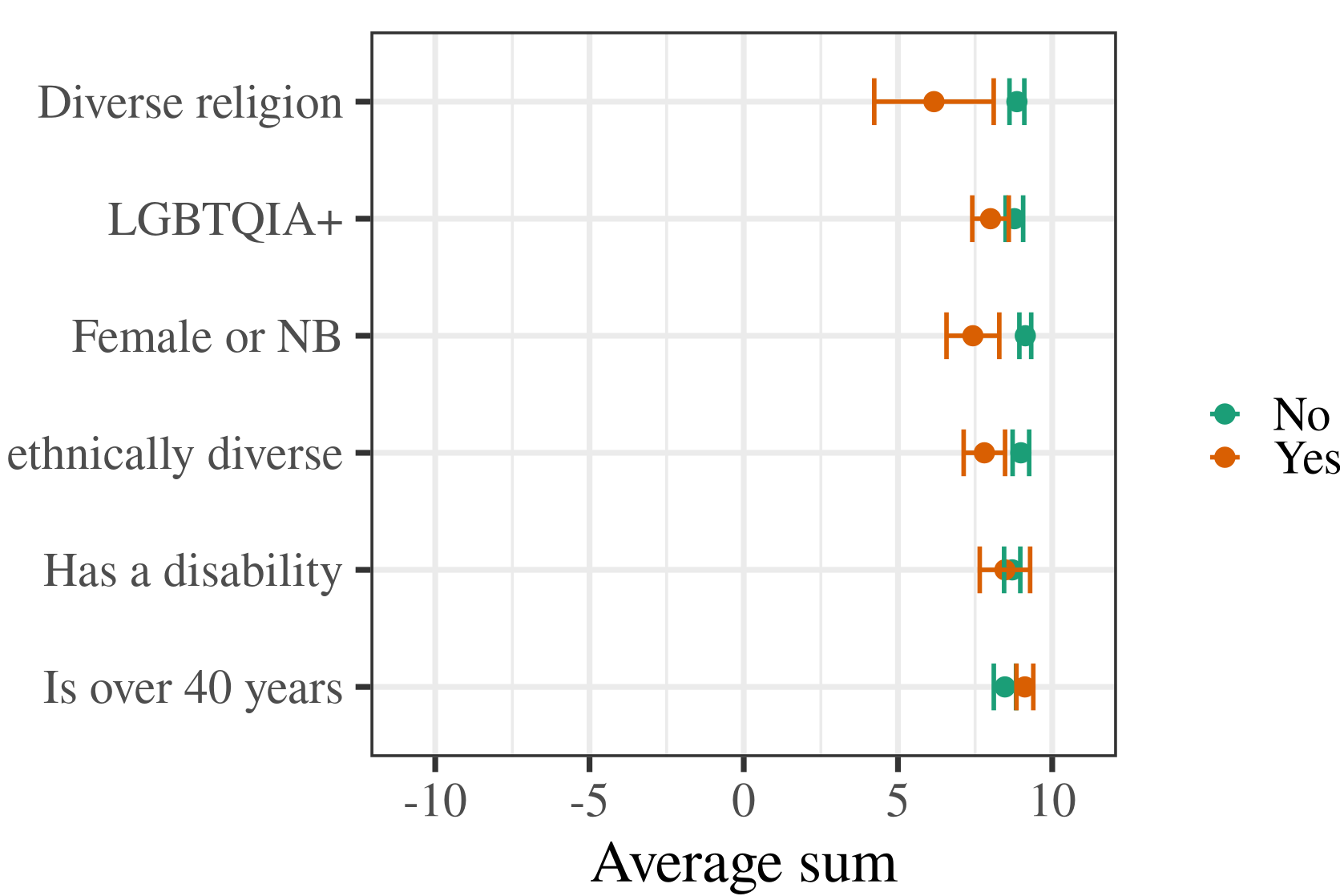


Figure 4: Summed scores of negative experiences. The more negative incidents were experienced, the lower the score. Average values are calculated for the sum and compared for different diverse characteristics.

Getting informed

Estimating Data

The community is struggling with acknowledging inequities. We can see in the data that female representation at the conference is consistently overestimated by an approximate factor of 2, a similar value that was found in the 2019 survey, see (Aubin et al. 2019).

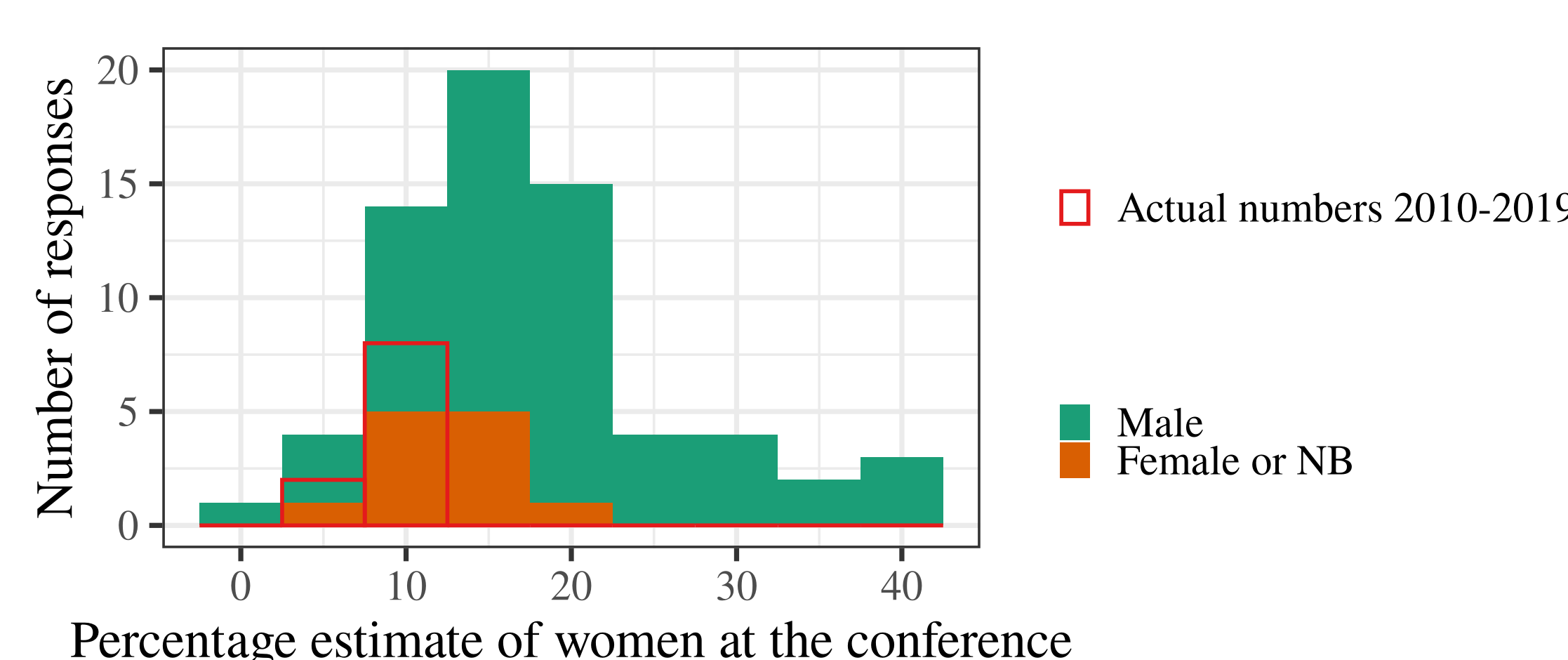


Figure 5: Perception of female representation at the conference depending on the gender of the respondent

This divide in estimating the problem correctly can also be found in the observation of discrimination, harassment and exclusion of people due to their gender identity, expression or sexual orientation. Here either

observing or experiencing incidents was reported more often by diverse respondents. It seems, that women and non-binary people are seeing incidents, that their male peers are apparently overlooking.

Effectivity of sources

For the information that people consult to inform themselves about inequity in the community, gender diverse people are consulting a broader amount of sources. It is encouraging to see that there does not seem to be an age divide between the consulted sources. The pattern of sources consulted is the same across ages.

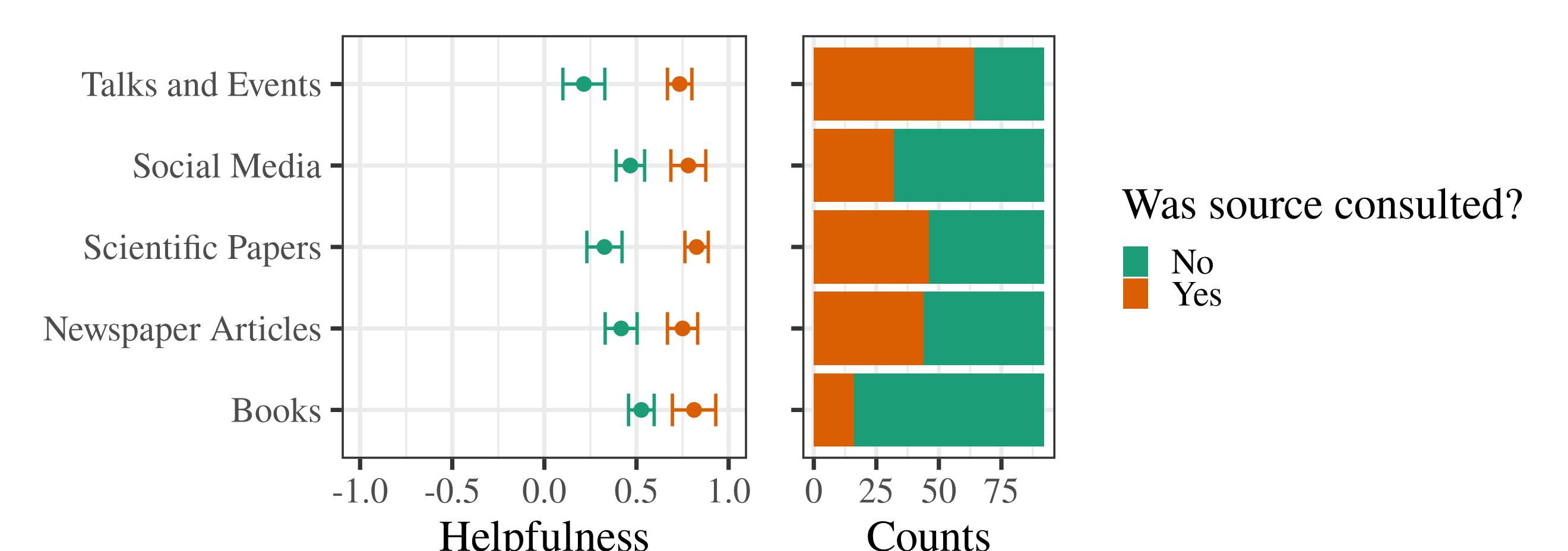


Figure 6: Counts of respondents having consulted a certain sources and how helpful they perceived it, from -1 very unhelpful to +1 very helpful.

People feel most likely enabled to take action against inequity after reading either scientific papers, listening to talks or participating in events. Talks and events generally seem to be a great source of information for the community; most of the community have attended one at some point. Overall, as one would expect, people who marked many different sources of information are more likely to say that it was helpful, than those who consulted less.

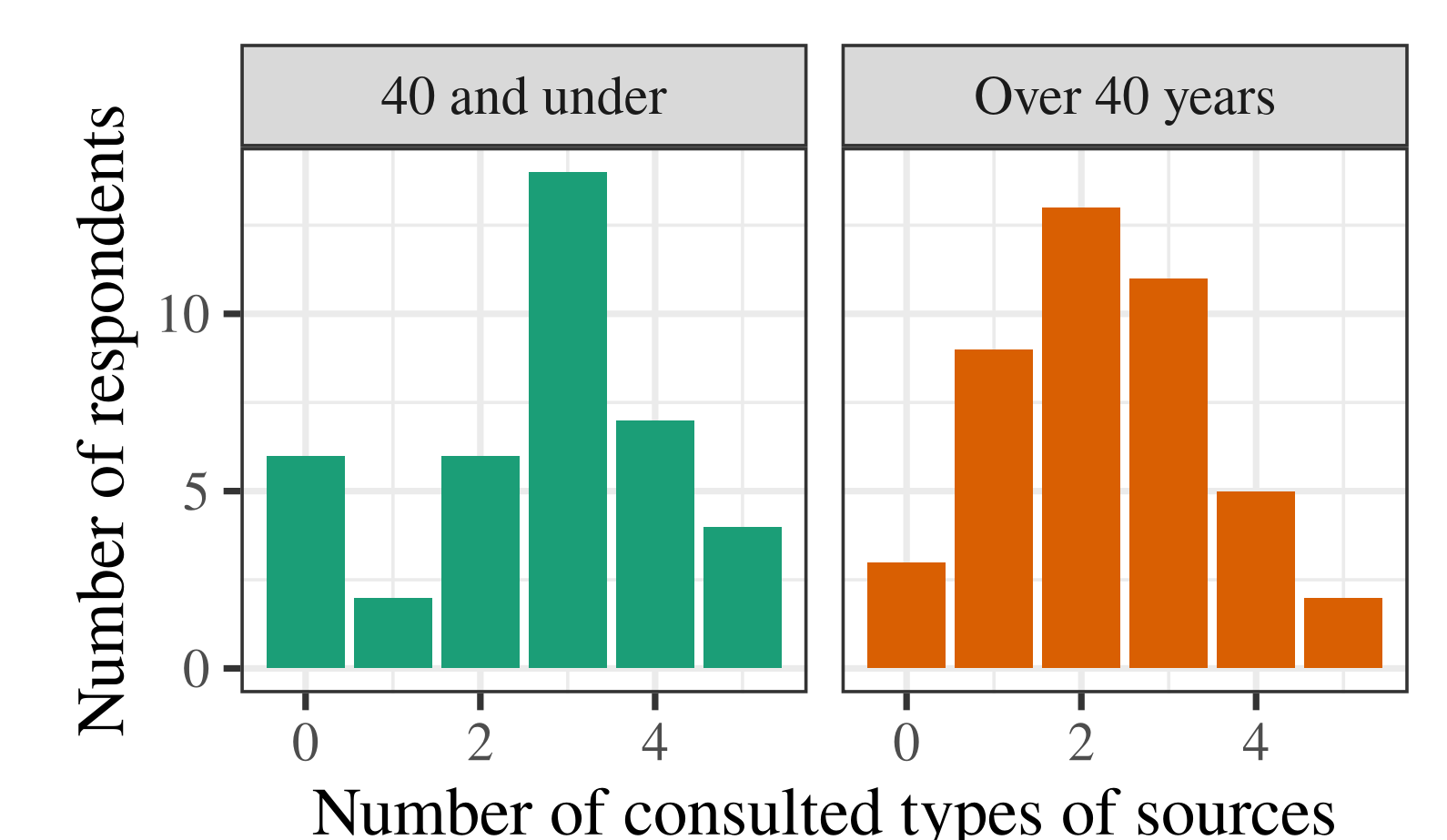


Figure 7: Age differences in information about inequities

People unengaged in diversity

The group of people that stated that they have consulted no sources on the topic of inclusion in the community are an interesting group to study. They reported lower than average scores in feeling welcome at the conference. We found no particular patterns in ages or positions. They stated low intention to report incidences to the LDIC.

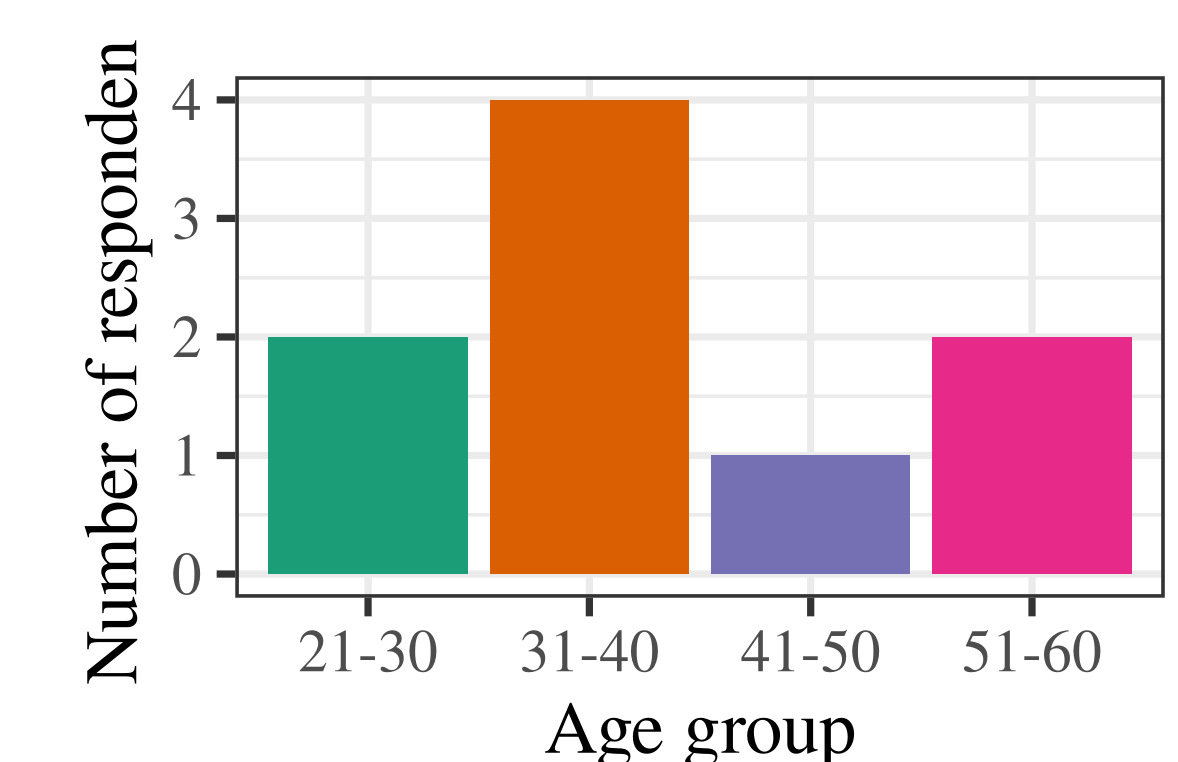


Figure 8: Age distribution of people who are unengaged in diversity

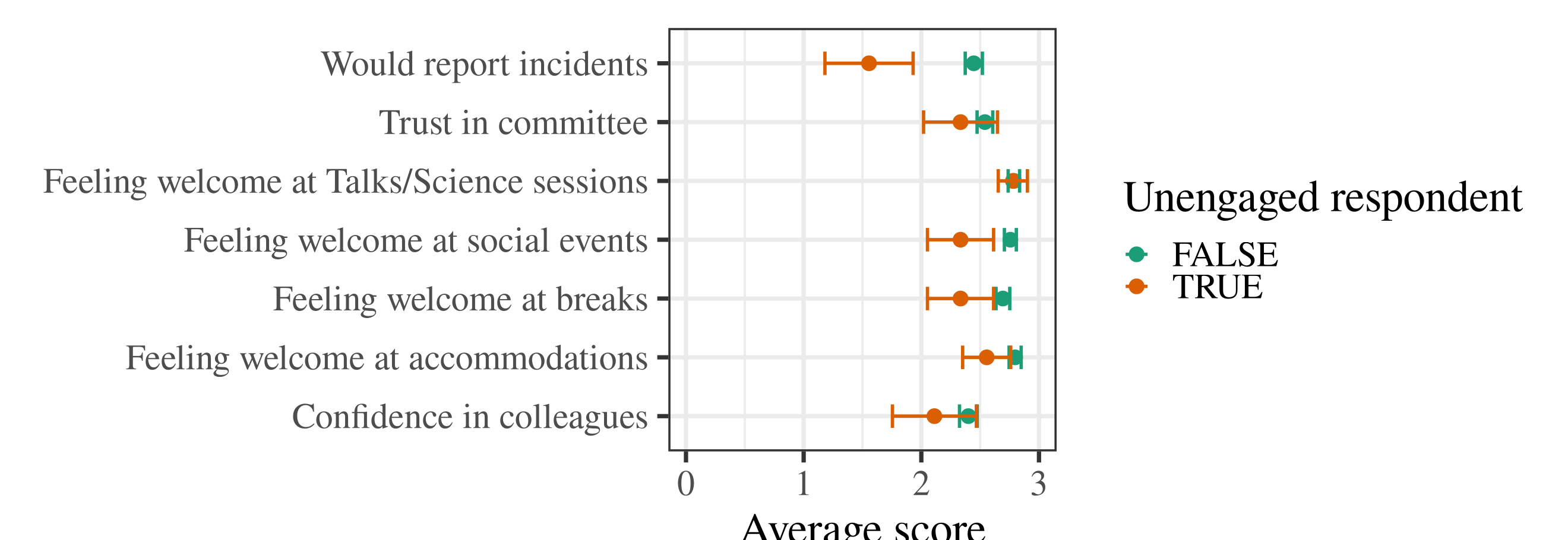


Figure 9: Welcomeness and reporting behaviour of unengaged respondents

Acknowledgements

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References

Aubin, Christopher, Gunnar Bali, Luigi Del Debbio, William Detmold, Vera Gülpers, Sophie Hollitt, Huey-Wen Lin, Liuming Liu, and Sinéad M. Ryan. 2019. "Report on the 2019 Lattice Diversity and Inclusivity Survey." *PoS LATTICE2019*: 295. <https://doi.org/10.22323/1.363.0295>.
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