

# New data from auticon reveals causes and solutions for the employment gap among autistic professionals

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GLOBAL, April 4, 2023

/EINPresswire.com/ -- auticon, a social enterprise that exclusively [employs autistic adults as technology consultants](#), today released a compelling new report on autism in the workplace. The report [Neurodiversity at Work](#), available inside the company's latest Impact Report, asked 985 autistic professionals about their autism diagnosis, finding quality career opportunities, and disclosing their autism to employers.

The auticon logo, consisting of the word "auticon" in a bold, blue, lowercase, sans-serif font.

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With the Neurodiversity at Work Survey report, we want to demystify neurodiversity and shine a light on employment and workplace barriers that so many autistic professionals face. ”

*Meeta Thareja, Chief People & Social Innovation Officer*

A crisis of unemployment among autistic adults

It is estimated that less than 22% of autistic adults are in any form of meaningful employment (Office for National Statistics, UK, 2020). Data from organizations such as UK's National Autistic Society reveal that most autistic people want to work and have much to offer. Autistic people commonly have cognitive strengths that make them particularly well-suited for careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Despite this, they are faced with barriers such as an exclusionary recruitment process, poor autism awareness, and employers feeling unprepared to offer support.

- 31% signalled that the recruitment process was the most challenging aspect of their career.
- Once in work, 35% said settling into a new organisation has been the most challenging phase of

working life for them.

- Only 44% felt they could be their authentic selves at work.
- Only 7% stated that they had an autistic role model in the workplace.

### Confusion and fear after autism diagnosis

Getting an autism diagnosis can be challenging emotionally. When asked how they felt when they first found out about their diagnosis or were old enough to understand what this

meant, 30% of respondents said they

felt confusion, 27% fear; 53% said that a lack of information was a barrier to diagnosis. Said one respondent, "My parents didn't want me to have autism, so they thought if I was never diagnosed I didn't have it."

### Disclosing autism at work

The decision to disclose an autism diagnosis can be complicated. From social stigma to fear of being judged, misunderstood, or straight-up fired for needing accommodations, a variety of reasons can lead an autistic person to mask their autistic traits instead of disclosing to an employer. Although 70% of employed autistic people have shared that they are autistic with someone at work such as a trusted colleague (62%) or a manager that they work closely with (68%), only 30% have disclosed it to HR. "I unknowingly hid my symptoms well," said one respondent.

### Asking for support at work

To a large extent, seniority in the organisation determines whether someone requests a reasonable adjustment. 80% of business owners and 78% of senior management asked for adjustments, but only 50% of those in junior roles raised a request for reasonable adjustments. Only 2% of respondents said they did not get the adjustments they requested, while a majority 56% got everything they asked for, and 42% got part of the adjustments requested.

"Autism is still widely misunderstood, resulting in stereotyping of autistic people. This often perpetuates fears about what it means to employ neurodivergent people. With the Neurodiversity at Work Survey report, we want to demystify neurodiversity and shine a light on employment and workplace barriers that so many autistic professionals face. Our aim ultimately is to enable the wider cultural shifts necessary for organisations and our societies to benefit from alternative thinkers," adds auticon's Chief People & Social Innovation Officer, Meeta Thareja. "Our report editor, Louise Stone – an autistic role model herself – has eloquently taken the report beyond statistics to bring alive the life and work experiences of neurodivergent professionals. We hope the insights from Neurodiversity at Work inspire change and action to



make workplaces more neuro-inclusive."

[Download the full report here](#)

#### About the data collection process

This online survey of 985 employed autistic adults in the UK, US, Germany, France, Italy, Canada, Australia, and Switzerland was commissioned by auticon and conducted by market research company OnePoll, in accordance with the Market Research Society's code of conduct. Data was collected between the 7th to 23rd of February, 2023. All participants are double-opted in to take part in research and are paid an amount depending on the length and complexity of the survey. This survey was overseen and edited by the OnePoll research team. OnePoll are company partners of the MRS and has corporate membership to ESOMAR.

#### About auticon

auticon is an award-winning social innovation company. As an autistic-majority company, we're a resource for talent. We integrate our technology consultants into client organizations, performing as software developers, data analysts, QA engineers, and more. Clients experience our outstanding autistic professionals first-hand, opening minds and achieving diversity goals.

Our model improves the economic and social conditions of the autistic community with quality careers, unlocking opportunity, and empowering client organisations through actionable neurodiversity training and advisory services. Here, our employees build lifelong careers in technology, discovering personal autonomy and improved self-esteem.

auticon has international offices in Germany, the United States, Canada, France, Switzerland, Italy, Australia, New Zealand, and throughout the United Kingdom. Investors include Sir Richard Branson of Virgin Group Ltd., Felix and Susanne Porsche, Ananda Impact Ventures, Ferd AS, and Ferst Capital Partners.

For more information, visit [auticon.com](https://auticon.com).

David Reeve

auticon

[David.reeve@auticon.com](mailto:David.reeve@auticon.com)

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