

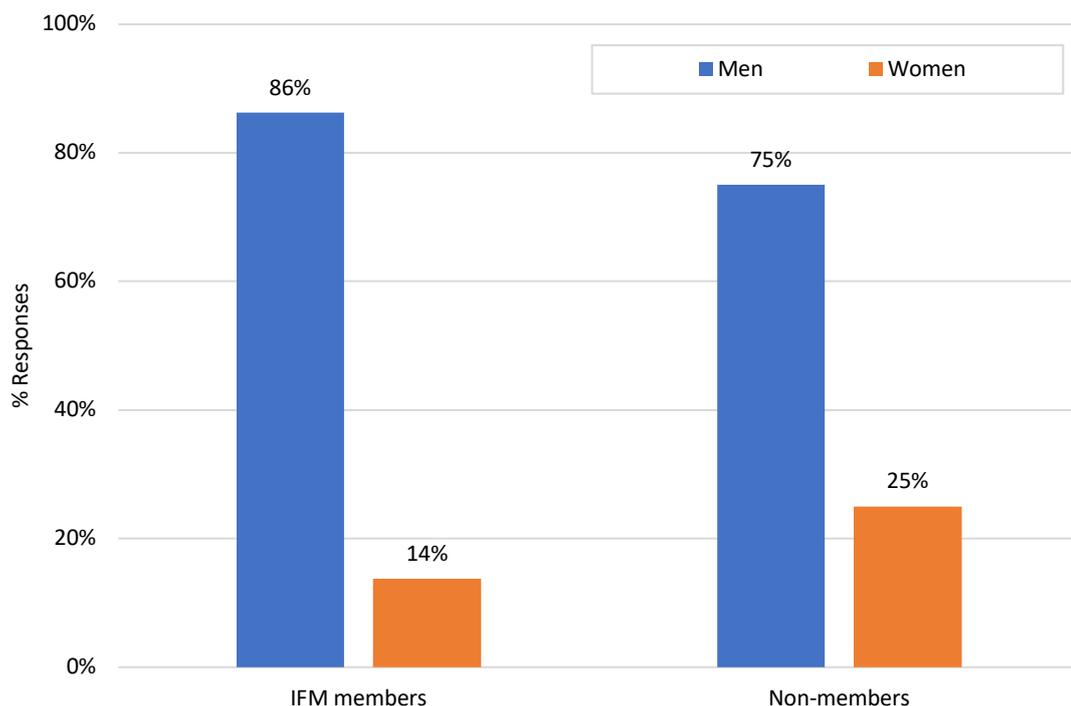


IFM Survey 2019/20

Last year, the IFM decided that an updated survey of the fisheries profession would be both timely and informative. The survey was conducted in the form of an online questionnaire run via Google Forms and consisted of 37 questions. The survey was open to both members and non-members of the Institute, with the stated purpose to take stock and gauge opinion on how we should best represent the profession and develop the services it provides over the next 10-year period. The survey was launched on 13 Dec 2019 and remained open for a 13-week period closing on 6 March 2020. A total of 260 completed questionnaires was received, with returns from 140 IFM members and 120 non-members. This is a summary of the main findings.

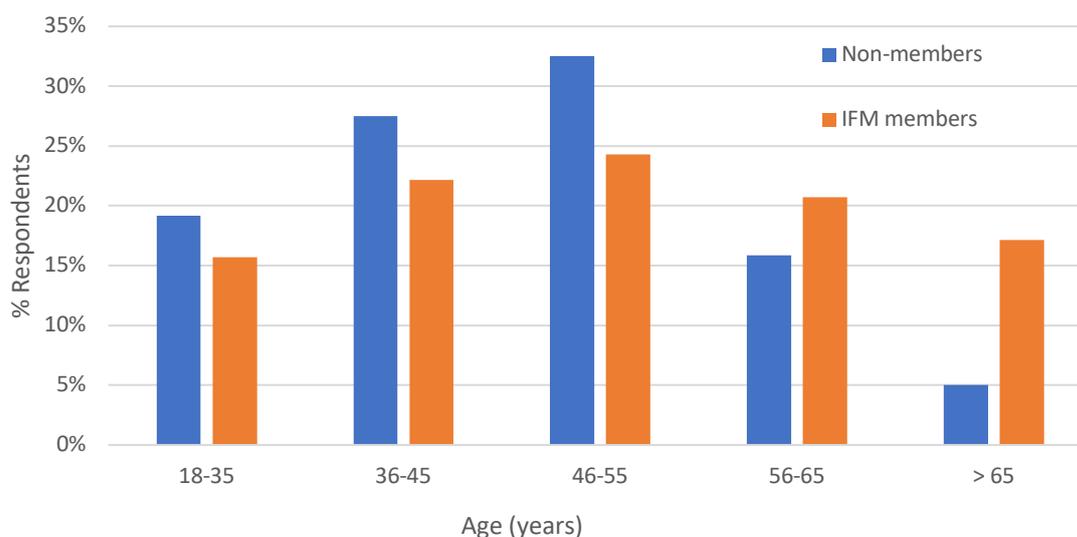
Women in IFM

Women are under-represented in fisheries in general, but female membership of IFM is even lower. Only 14% of IFM members who responded were women, in comparison to 25% of non-member respondents. An analysis of the full IFM membership indicates only 11% are women.

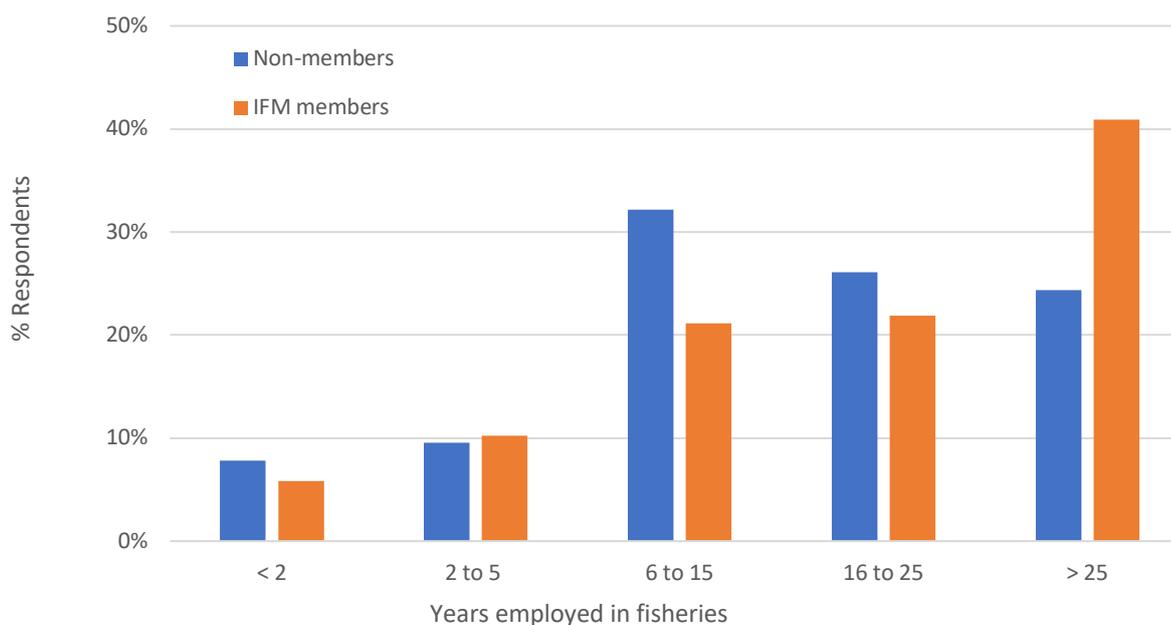


Age profile

IFM membership has an older age profile than non-members, which suggests that it may not reflect the profile of the profession.



There was also a difference in duration of employment between members and non-members, which may be a result of the older age profile of our membership.



Clearly the current demographic of IFM does not reflect that of the fisheries profession in general . We need to increase member recruitment in all age groups <55 years, in particular those established in fisheries for more than 5 years. We would also like to see increased female membership.

Reasons for not joining / leaving

The main reasons given for not joining IFM or for lapsed membership were:

- No significant benefit in being a member
- Not supported by employer

Some respondents also stated that they had simply forgotten to renew their membership - others had experienced administrative difficulties with renewal, a problem which is currently being addressed.

With regard to value for money, the vast majority of members (78%) thought that the cost of membership fees is about right, but 14% felt that it was too expensive.

Social media

Under the heading of communication, respondents were asked about their engagement with IFM via social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter), and whether they receive adequate information via these platforms. It was clear that almost half the member respondents (48%) do not use social media, but, most of those who do (77%) were happy with that they receive adequate information in this way. We are currently considering an initiative to engage more members through these platforms, while acknowledging that 19% of the membership would prefer to receive information by email.

FISH magazine

The vast majority (78%) of respondents rated the content of FISH as Good or Excellent, and several useful suggestions were made for topics to include, for example:

- Practical fisheries management issues - stocking, angling development, invasive species, predation, applied research
- Professional Development – jobs, job profiles, role of IFM, women in fisheries
- Estuarine / Marine fisheries - management issues, survey methods etc.

The role of IFM

Respondents were asked to review the performance of IFM under eight specific headings with the following ratings indicating either Satisfied or Very Satisfied in each category:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| • Keeping members informed | 53% |
| • Representation of the profession | 56% |
| • Training / skills development | 60% |
| • Annual conference | 58% |
| • Specialist conferences | 56% |
| • Opportunities for networking | 45% |
| • Local branch events/activities | 27% |
| • Mentoring & career development | 29% |

There was clearly a lower level of satisfaction with *Branch activity* and *Mentoring / career development*. These are areas that will be high on our agenda for the future.

Training

There has been a good uptake of training courses offered by IFM, with 49% of members and 39% of non-members having undertaken a course at some stage. Respondents also indicated a good level of interest across the range of future potential courses, notably:

- | | |
|--|------|
| • River rehabilitation / habitat enhancement | 523% |
| • Fish habitat assessment | 52% |
| • Engineering for fisheries - fish pass design, etc. | 50% |

This information is being passed on to the Training Team for consideration.

Climate Change

Respondents were asked what specific fisheries or environmental issues they would like to see IFM focus on over the next 3 years. Climate change was by far the leading issue, suggested by >40% of returns. We will therefore be developing a position on this issue and will endeavour to issue statements and support relevant cooperative initiatives when appropriate.

Services & benefits

A question was included that asked for suggestions on how a better service could be provided to members. Some clear messages were given on how we need to refine and develop what we offer, notably with regard to:

- Career development, mentoring, CEnv advice
- Communication with members

Regions / Branches

IFM membership is concentrated in England and Wales, with low rates of membership in Scotland and Ireland – IFM’s Executive Committee is considering how this should be addressed.

Almost half of IFM members (47%) think not enough information is communicated about branch events, while 66% consider that their branch does not run a sufficient programme of events.

It was encouraging to see that a high proportion of members (up to 58%) might be interested in assisting with their branch. Similarly, 56% indicated that they might be prepared to assist with the general running of IFM. In either case, if you provided your name, don’t be surprised to hear from us in the coming months!

What now?

The objective of the survey was to assist in determining how IFM should adapt to provide a modern and efficient service for the benefit of the fisheries profession. In this regard, it has been an extremely valuable exercise, and the views expressed will be assimilated into the next 5-Year IFM Strategy and a specific Membership Strategy. The Institute would like to thank all those who took the time to respond, both members and non-members – your views will not be ignored.