

For immediate release: 02 June 2023

1 in 4 UK adults work in their dream childhood job, Legal & General research reveals

- A quarter of working adults are in careers they dreamt of while at school.
- Teaching is the most popular childhood career aspiration (11% of respondents) and the most likely to be achieved.
- Greater London has the highest percentage of people working their childhood dream as a profession (31%), followed closely by the East and West Midlands (29%).
- 66% of adults have made or considered making a career change, rising to 74% among 18-24-year-olds.

New data from Legal & General shows that one in four people (25%) have landed the job they dreamed of as a child.

The survey of 2,000 adults across the UK, which looked at how many people were following the career path they envisaged as a child, found that becoming a teacher was the most popular childhood dream job (11% of respondents), followed by aspirations to be a vet (8%), doctor (7%), or sportsperson (6%). Other popular aspirations included being a police officer / detective, musician, or business owner (all 5%).

Teachers were the most likely to have achieved their childhood dream job (23%), followed by business owners (7%) and (6%) doctors. 5% of police officers / detectives shared that they had fulfilled their dream, whilst becoming a vet was the dream job most likely to never happen with 10% of aspiring vets never making it into the profession.

The research found that women were more realistic about their childhood career ambitions than men with 16% aspiring to be teachers compared to just 4% of men. Meanwhile, men were far more likely than women to aspire to become professional sportspeople, with 14% selecting this option compared to just 1% of women. Just 2% of those who aspired to be professional sportspeople landed their dream job.

The study found that some respondents' childhood dreams were driven to pursue a passion, with 30% choosing a job relevant to their hobbies, while 24% were interested in school subjects relevant to their job or industry. A further 16% said they were inspired by their teachers to follow their childhood ambitions.

Meanwhile, 30% of respondents revealed they were inspired by a job or industry featured on TV or in film. 16% chose their job to 'make them look cool'.

The findings also revealed regional differences, with the most popular childhood dream in the North East being to become a police officer / detective (13%).

Greater London has the highest percentage of people working their childhood dream as a profession (31%), followed closely by the East and West Midlands (29%). Those in the East of England (17%) were least likely to be following their childhood aspirations.

Of those who did not follow their dream path, more than a fifth (22%) cited a lack of self-belief or confidence. However, 22% of respondents who have not landed their dream job said they were working in their dream industry.

31% of men chose their current job as it offered a good salary, compared to 21% of women. People in the East of England were most likely to select 'location' as their reason for choosing their current job (20%), while those in Northern Ireland were the least likely (10%). The research also found that 30% of people were 'very happy' in their current role, while 41% were 'somewhat happy'.

66% of respondents have made or considered making a career change, rising to 74% among 18–24-year-olds. But the 'dreamers' were much more likely to stay put. Meanwhile, almost half (46%) of those who were working in their dream childhood job have not made or considered making a career change. Of those respondents who had previously made or had ever considered making a career change, 15% said this was to pursue their childhood dream.

Regionally, there were various reasons people gave for considering or acting upon a career change. 50% of people in Wales wanted a better work/life balance, 44% of the South East cited finances and 22% of people in Yorkshire and Humber cited changing priorities over the pandemic.

Paula Llewellyn, Chief Marketing Officer and Direct MD, Legal & General Retail

"It's great to see that one in four adults are currently working in a career they dreamt of as a child. For others, salary considerations and practical limitations, such as location, means not everyone can follow their dream career path. Our survey found that 66% of respondents have made or considered a career change. Legal & General is here to support individuals, and their loved ones, through important milestones, including any shifts and changes to income and employment."

To see the full research and videos please visit the Legal & General website:

<https://www.legalandgeneral.com/insurance/life-insurance/childhood-dreams>

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- *Legal & General commissioned a survey of 2,000 currently employed UK adults to find out how many are following the career path they envisaged as a child. Legal & General asked respondents to think back to when they were 10-15 years old and recall their early career aspirations*
- *This research is protected by Creative Commons 4.0. Please include a hyperlink to: <https://www.legalandgeneral.com/insurance/life-insurance/childhood-dreams>*

What was the main job or industry you dreamt of working in as a child?

Job	%
Teacher	11%
Vet	8%
Doctor	7%
Sportsperson / athlete	6%
Police officer / detective	5%

Business owner	5%
Musician	5%
Lawyer	4%
Actor	4%
Pilot	4%

Was your childhood dream ever realised?

<i>Dream childhood job*</i>	<i>Dream fulfilled</i>
Teacher	23%
Business owner	7%
Doctor	6%
Police officer / detective	5%
Chef	5%

*apart from those whose dream line of work was 'other', here are the top five 'yes' responses.

Are you currently working in the job you dreamt of as a child?

REGION	YES	NO
East of England	17%	83%
Greater London	31%	69%
East Midlands	29%	71%
West Midlands	29%	71%
North East	25%	75%
North West	25%	75%
Northern Ireland	25%	75%
Scotland	26%	74%
South East	23%	77%
South West	27%	73%
Wales	27%	73%
Yorkshire and Humber	19%	81%

N.B. Figures are 'net' based on the percentage of people who aren't working in their dream job, but in some cases are working in their dream industry.

What are the main reasons you made or considered making a career change?

<i>Key reasons for career change</i>	<i>%</i>
Better work/life balance	40%
To earn more money	35%
Didn't like current job/industry	29%
Significant life event	18%
Following childhood dream	15%
Location	15%
Changing priorities over the pandemic	14%
Turning side hustle into full time career	11%

Notes to editors

About Legal & General

Established in 1836, Legal & General is one of the UK's leading financial services groups and a major global investor, with over £1.2 trillion in total assets under management* of which a third is international. We also provide powerful asset origination capabilities. Together, these underpin our leading retirement and protection solutions: we are a leading international player in pension risk transfer, in UK and US life insurance, and in UK workplace pensions and retirement income. Through inclusive capitalism, we aim to build a better society by investing in long-term assets that benefit everyone.

**at 31 Dec 2022*

About Legal & General Retail

Legal & General Retail helps create brighter financial futures for all our customers. The division covers the savings, protection and retirement needs of our c.13 million retail policyholders and workplace members.

In 2022, we had total individual annuity sales of £954 million, and issued £632 million of Lifetime Mortgages and Retirement Interest Only Mortgages. Our Workplace pension platform served 4.9 million members, while our Protection businesses gave peace of mind to more than 6.3 million UK life insurance, 1.8 million group and 1.5 million US customers, taking in £3.1 billion of gross written premiums.

**at 31 Dec 2022*

Further information

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