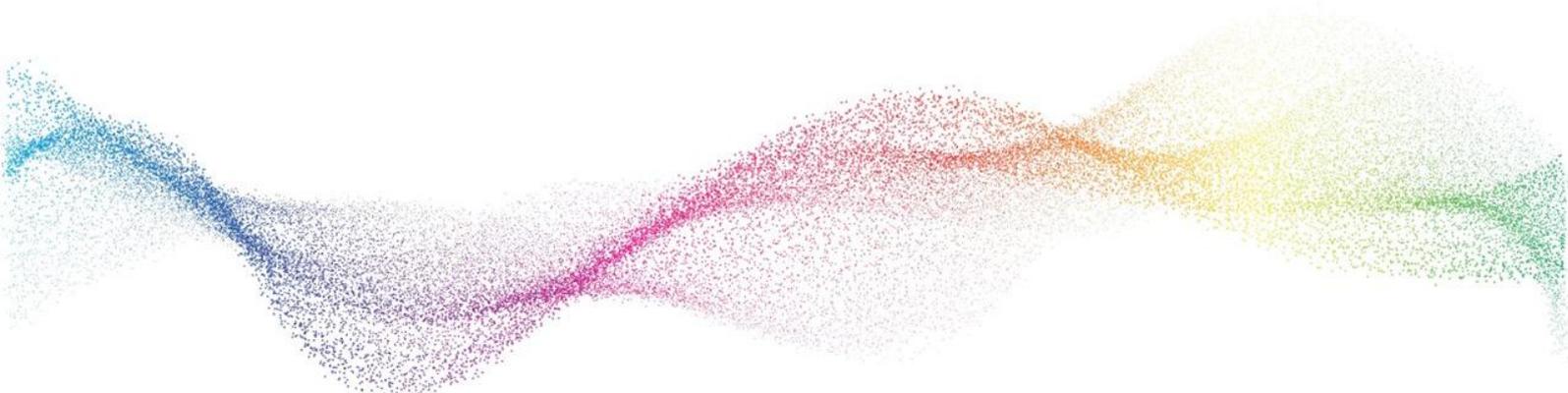


PRIDE IN ENERGY



Defending Inclusion

Fifth annual survey report
September 2025



Foreword

The 2025 Pride in Energy survey is our most important yet, on two counts.

First, because it's our milestone fifth year. In total since we began the survey in 2021 we've clocked up almost 1,200 responses from LGBTQIA+ colleagues and allies, and we're grateful for the time, insight and honesty of everyone who's taken part. This remains the only full picture of the experiences and sentiment of our community across the breadth of the UK energy industry, and having this time series makes the findings all the richer.

Second, this is also a significant year for less positive reasons. Many of our hard-won rights and protections are under fresh assault. Not only do this year's findings suggest discrimination is still concerningly high but there is also deep concern from many of our respondents about the permissive impact of anti-inclusion rhetoric on progress in UK energy workplaces.

An inclusive, welcoming and safe workplace is essential to a fulfilling working life and for businesses means they can attract and retain the best employees. Our survey also seeks to inform solutions and there's a clear call for greater 'top down' visibility and advocacy from senior leaders.

"The charged social and political context reinforces the need for all of us to redraw lines in the sand, and to be loud and proud in defending inclusion.

Joshua Atkins

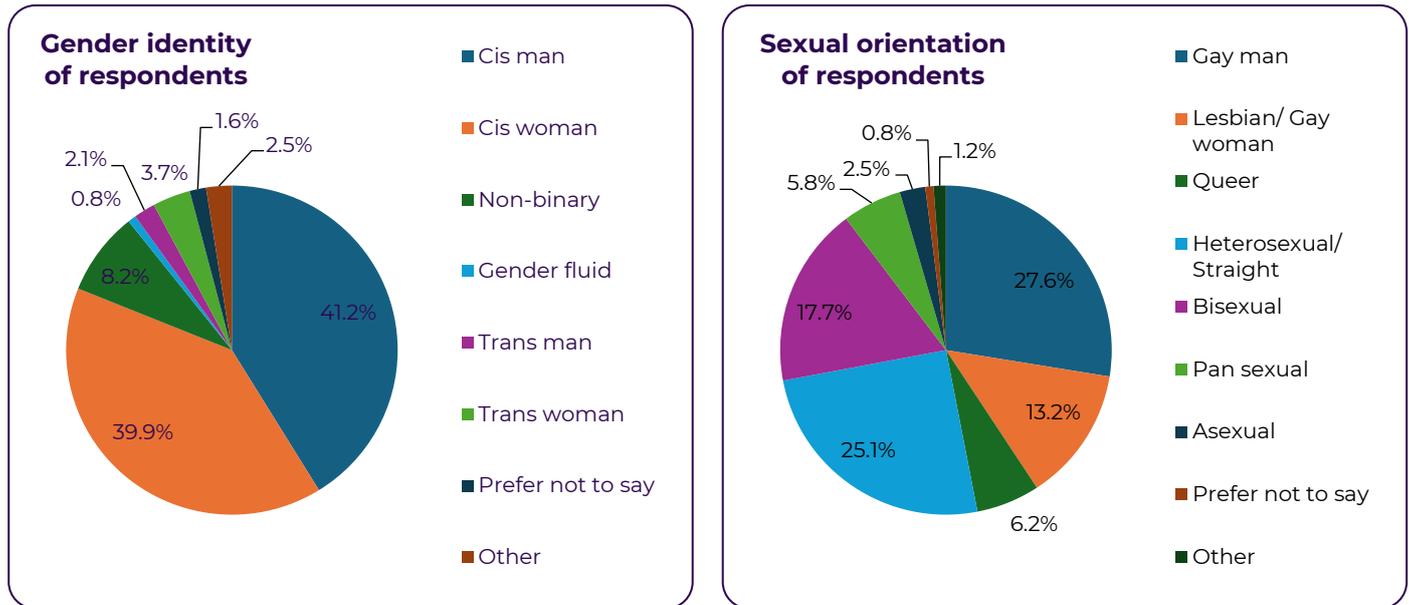
Chair, Pride in Energy



The 2025 survey

Survey respondents

The fifth annual Pride in Energy survey was undertaken on an anonymous and voluntary basis during June and July 2025. The 243 respondents work across the energy sector in the UK, from field engineering to corporate services, and are of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. We value the perspectives of allies, therefore responses from straight respondents are included too, other than for questions related specifically to LGBTQIA+ experiences.



Key findings

Lived experiences and perceptions of inclusion (see page 4)

67% of LGBTQIA+ respondents are out to everyone at work...

...but **42%** of all respondents have experienced or witnessed LGBTQIA+ discrimination in the UK energy workplace during the past five years.

68% rate their own employer as very inclusive...

...but only **24%** say the same about the wider UK energy industry.

Impacts of the 'culture war' (see page 5)

71% express strong concern that criticisms of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) being voiced by international and national political figures may undermine progress in our sector...

...and **73%** express strong concern about the impact on protections for transgender employees following the UK Supreme Court's ruling on the definition of sex in the Equality Act.

Defending inclusion, from the top down (see page 6)

The **number 1** ask for improving negative perceptions of the UK energy industry is 'More visible LGBTQIA+ role models and advocacy by senior leadership'...

...but **20%** have no visible role models or allies within the senior levels of their organisation.

Defending inclusion, from the bottom up (see page 7)

73% are aware of an LGBTQIA+ network within their organisation...

...but anecdotal evidence suggests the effectiveness of such groups is **mixed**.

Lived experiences and perceptions of inclusion

Just over two thirds (67%) of this year's LGBTQIA+ respondents are out to everyone in their workplace, comparable to previous years. A further 23% are out in a limited way, for example they have informed close colleagues or HR. 10% are not out at work at all, either through preference or because they do not feel comfortable to be their true selves at work.

Experience of discrimination

The proportion of all respondents who have experienced or witnessed LGBTQIA+ discrimination in the workplace during the past five years remains high at 42%. This is down on last year's spike of 49% but still higher than the prior three years. Recent experiences appear to be a driving factor, with 18% experiencing or witnessing discrimination in the last year alone, a significant rise from 10% when the survey began in 2021.

While many respondents are positive about the sector, and have observed improvements over recent years, others still recount experiences to the contrary, including:

- Casual homophobia, jokes, overt name-calling, microaggressions and deliberate misgendering, sometimes at senior levels and in particular in non-office environments.
- Derogatory and abusive responses to LGBTQIA+ posts on intranets and social media.
- Homophobic graffiti in toilets.
- The absence of appropriate toilet facilities, and general lack of understanding towards people of trans and other less common identities.
- Feeling intimidated and unable to challenge behaviours in socially conservative and male-dominated environments.
- Evidence of pervasive unconscious bias affecting progression and promotion.

Perceptions of the industry

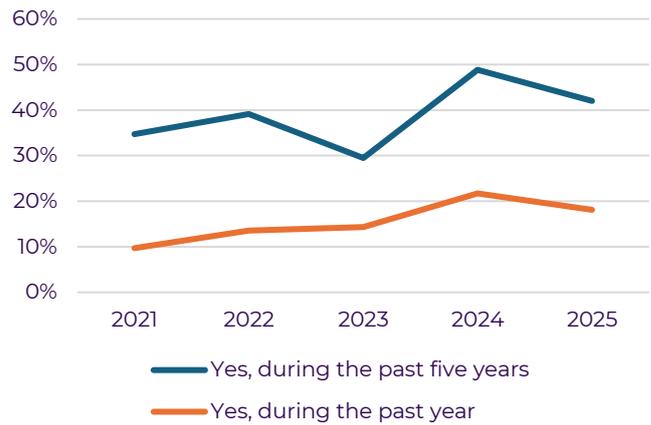
Furthermore, a perception gap exists that rings alarm bells for an industry needing to attract the best talent from all parts of society.

While the proportion of respondents who rate their own employer as very inclusive of LGBTQIA+ people (scoring them 8, 9 or 10) remains high at 68% in 2025, the proportion who see the UK energy industry as a whole as very inclusive sits at only 24%, only marginally better than last year's all-time low. This perception gap has been the pattern since the survey began in 2021.

"There's still a boys' club/'bloke' culture among a lot of field staff which needs updating."

"Consideration is needed, much as there already is with women, as to the barriers to the LGBTQIA community and why they do not feel motivated to pursue careers in our field."

Have you experienced or witnessed workplace discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation whilst working in the energy industry?



On a scale of 1-10 (least to most) how inclusive do you think your employer and the wider energy industry are of LGBTQIA+ people?



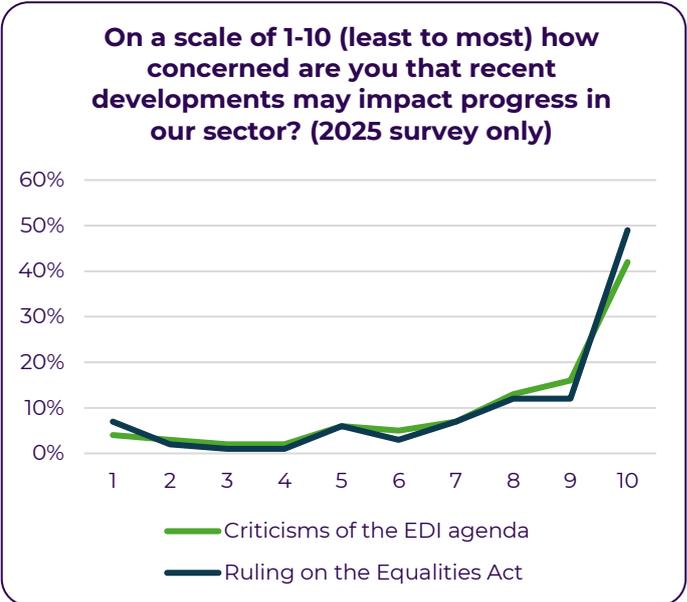
Impacts of the ‘culture war’

Layered over the top of existing experiences and perceptions in our workplaces has been the rising temperature over the past year of the so-called ‘culture war’. Criticisms of EDI principles have intensified during and following elections in the US, the UK and elsewhere.

Impact of general anti-EDI rhetoric

71% of our respondents express strong concern (scoring 8, 9 or 10) that criticisms of EDI being voiced by international and national political figures may undermine progress in our sector. Only 9% express little concern (scoring 1, 2 or 3).

Many respondents commented on how their employers have reacted, as well as on how the normalisation of derogatory language is impacting the workplace.



“The ripples from Trump will be felt across the world in all sectors.”

“I feel personally scared and would like to hear senior leaders reassure us that these toxic opinions won't be influencing our company.”

“The biggest risk is that EDI becomes seen as a non-essential side project rather than core to creating high performing teams.”

“My employer is firmly pushing back against the anti-EDI agenda and in support of our LGBTQIA+ colleagues.”

“Politicians 'saying the quiet thing' about EDI opens the gates to prejudiced individuals in everyday life - for instance in energy workplaces, including offshore.”

“A workplace that turns a blind eye to it makes you feel like you could be cast out at any point.”

“It is emboldening people who seek to erase us.”

Impact of trans critical rhetoric

The past year has also seen an increasingly polarised debate around transgender rights and protections, with heated debates in universities, in the media and politics. This was heightened in April with the ruling by the UK Supreme Court that the definition of sex in the Equalities Act is binary and determined by biological sex assigned at birth.

73% of respondents express strong concern (scoring 8, 9 or 10) about the impact on protections for transgender employees in our sector as a result of the ruling.

“There's a risk employers feel they have to take action now, ahead of considered statutory guidance.”

“It's terrifying how far the conversation has shifted over the past 12 months.”

“The community in my workplace are really scared. Which rights will be taken away next?”

“There's increasingly open transphobic discussion with the people I work with.”

“The Supreme Court has placed a very powerful bullet in the ammo belt of those that wish us ill.”

“One positive from this is the rallying around the LGBTQIA+ community in my work.”

Only 10% express a low level of concern (scoring 1, 2 or 3). This includes those who do not see the ruling affecting trans protections, and those with strong views that safe spaces for women in the workplace are threatened by “identity politics”, “gender ideology” and “trans-activism”.

Defending inclusion, from the top down

Our survey findings suggest there is ongoing discrimination, a perception problem, and serious concern about the heightened social and political context within which our sector operates. What should the response to this be?

Importance of senior visibility and advocacy

It is clear that leadership at the top has a central role to play, in sustaining a culture of inclusion in which all employees can contribute to the full and in which challenging discrimination is easy.

Asked how negative perceptions of the industry can be addressed, the most favoured solution is 'More visible LGBTQIA+ role models and advocacy by senior leadership'. This has been consistent since 2023. Conversely, we see a rejection of so-called 'pinkwashing', with 'Corporate visibility in community media and at Pride events' consistently ranked least important.

"Currently it seems all senior voices conform to a heteronormative world view."

"Until you have someone vocal at the top, I don't think things will change drastically; the younger workforce is more LGBTQIA+ inclusive, however they don't have power in their voice to make change."

"The lack of meaningful engagement from the highest level makes previous support seem like tokenistic, 'fair-weather' allyship."

Role models and allies in senior positions

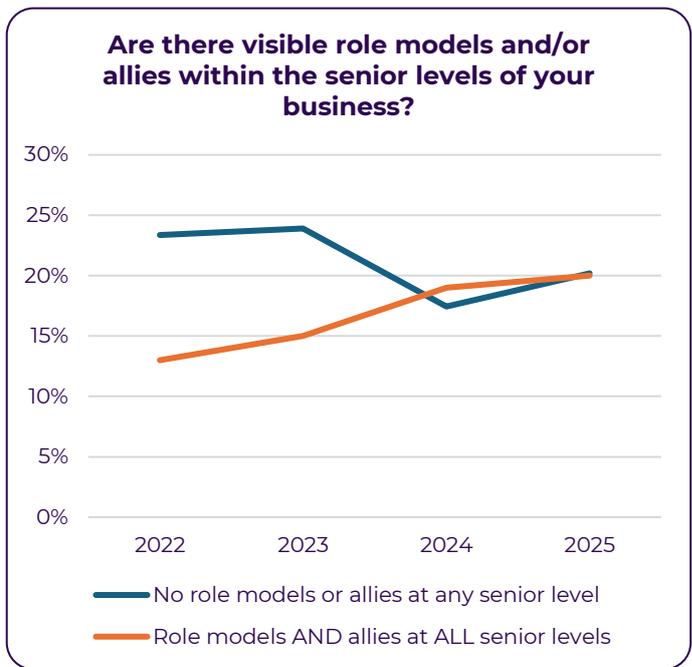
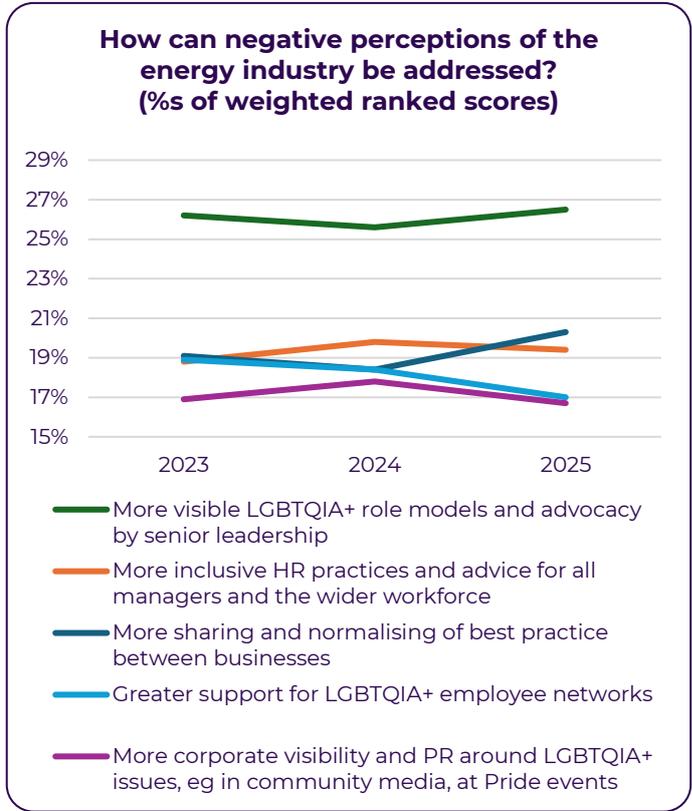
On a positive note, the proportion of respondents saying there are visible role models and allies at both managerial and executive/leadership levels has been steadily increasing since 2022, now at 20%. Conversely those with no visible role models or allies at all within any senior levels has come down, now also at 20%. The remaining majority have varying levels of senior visibility in between those extremes.

"I'm sure that at least some of the managers are allies. However, no effort seems to be made to communicate that."

"We are consistently preaching to the converted with little to no contribution from our all-straight white male C-suite."

"The executive and senior managers are allies, but that has not cascaded all of the way down to mid and junior managers."

"I think it speaks volumes that either we don't have many LGBTQIA+-identifying people in senior management, or we do and they don't feel safe being open about it. People don't owe their identity to anyone, but I do see it as a potential red flag."



Defending inclusion, from the bottom up

Looking to other means of building and defending inclusive work cultures, the survey also asked about sentiment relating to internal LGBTQIA+ networks and employee resource groups (ERGs). Almost three quarters (73%) of respondents this year are aware of a network within their organisation, up from 63% in 2023.

Such groups are typically volunteer employee-led, are often sponsored by an executive team member, and focussed on fostering an environment in which colleagues can meet, learn and engage.

But qualitative responses to the survey suggest there is a mixed spread of practice and experience. Notably, many of the factors determining success relate to the level of support and engagement offered by the organisation and its senior leadership.

Positive goals and outcomes

Many respondents point to positive outcomes of networks and ERGs in their organisations:

- Championing EDI through awareness-raising, education, advocacy, influencing policy and language.
- Promoting inclusion of the LGBTQIA+ community through visibility.
- Providing a safe space, mutual support and validation for members of the LGBTQIA+ community.
- Promoting allyship among non-LGBTQIA+ colleagues.
- Networking, Pride-related events and social activities.

“A wonderful community full of genuinely authentic caring people that are passionate about driving equity and celebrating those within the community.”

“Where discrimination happens, the network is very good at catching it, escalating as appropriate, and safeguarding community members going forward.”

“Activities such as the flag raising in June each year have made me personally feel seen and supported. It's encouraging to know I'm not alone.”

“Our network has the ear of directors but is allowed to be independent. We have suggested a number of changes that have now been implemented by the senior management.”

Common challenges

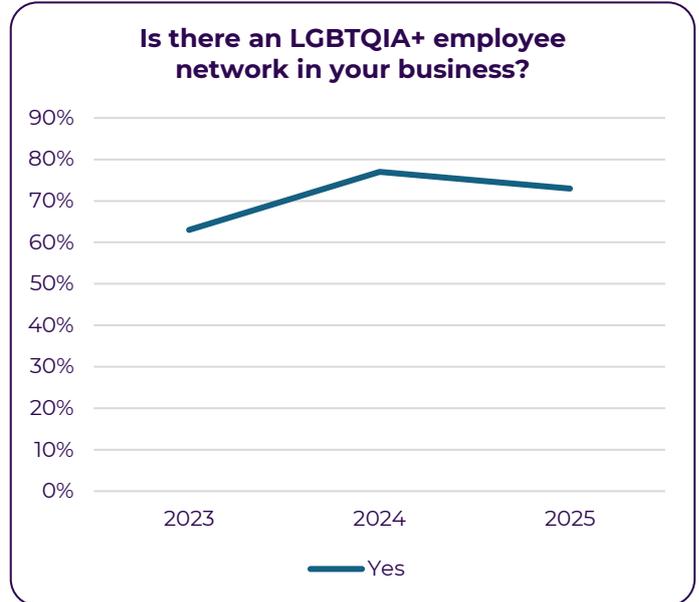
Other respondents have had less positive experience, pointing to a range of difficulties:

- Senior leadership not being engaged enough and not listening.
- Non-LGBTQIA+ colleagues not being interested in learning about their role as potential allies.
- Difficulty building cohesive groups in large businesses with many employees working in the field or in other geographies.
- Always the same people in the room, preaching to the converted.
- Lack of resources and time, as organising a group is extra-curricular, on top of the day-job.
- The LGBTQIA+ community is heterogenous; it's hard to meet everyone's expectations.

“We try, but the business views it as a side-of-desk activity and keeps reducing our capacity.”

“It doesn't have the presence that it should do. Inclusion isn't baked into the company; we're trying to change a culture that has been well established for decades.”

“It needs a top-down approach to inclusive policies and providing space for bottom-up organising such as pride events.”



About Pride in Energy

Pride in Energy is the diversity forum and network for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual and more (LGBTQIA+) people and their allies working across the UK energy industry.

It was created in 2017 in response to a need to address inclusion issues in the sector and seeks to shine a light on experiences and best practice through events, media activity and an annual survey. It is run by a volunteer committee with the backing of key industry bodies.

Pride in Energy Committee

Chair



Joshua Atkins
(he/him)

UK Head of Corporate
Affairs (Ventures),
National Grid



Louise Bailey
(she/her)

Belonging Lead,
OVO Energy



Jane Francis
(she/her)

Head of Equity,
Diversity and Inclusion,
EDF Energy



Howard Low
(he/him)

Founder & CEO,
Enverse



Lewis McKenzie
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Principal Consultant,
Moorhouse



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