

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Alberta's Energy Sector

Survey Results



About the survey

Eligible participants
261

Questions
35

Duration of survey
Sept. 20 – Oct. 21, 2022

Purpose

Careers in Energy, a division of Energy Safety Canada, in partnership with EY, conducted a survey to identify key challenges and opportunities in addressing the diverse needs of Alberta's energy workforce.

The purpose of the survey was to inform the development of a 10-webinar series. Each webinar is focused on a different aspect of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) that reflects individuals' unique experiences; highlights best practices and resources; and encourages equal access to employment and supports for equitable hiring, training and promotion opportunities. Upon completion of the webinar series, participants will earn a digital badge.

Definitions



Diversity

Diversity is about the individual. It is about the variety of unique dimensions, qualities, and characteristics we all possess, and the mix that occurs in any group of people. Race, ethnicity, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, economic status, varying abilities, lived experiences and other perspectives can make up individual diversity.



Equity

Where everyone is treated according to their diverse needs in a way that enables them to participate, perform and engage to the same extent.



Inclusion

Inclusion is creating a culture that embraces, respects, accepts, and values diversity. It is a mindful and equitable effort to meet individual needs so everyone feels valued, respected, and able to contribute to their fullest potential. Where diversity occurs naturally, creating the mix in the organization, inclusion is the choice that helps the mix work well together.

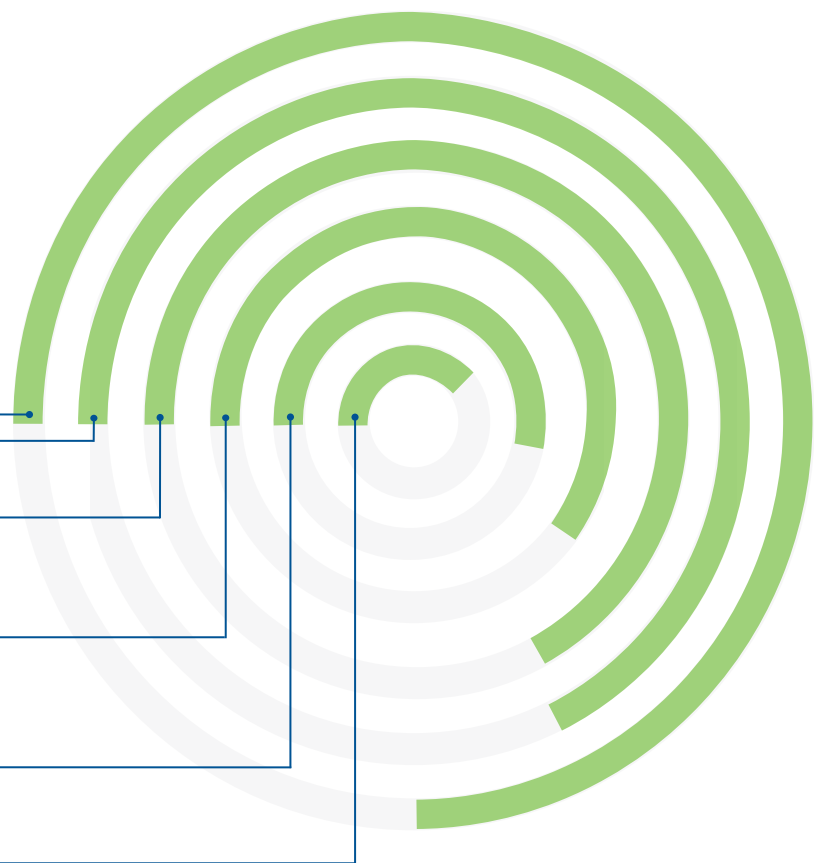
From Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion's Glossary of Terms.

Survey Highlights

“We are seeking inclusion and diversity with our partners outside of our walls as well.”

SURVEY PARTICIPANT

- 75% said their organization has made a commitment to DEI as part of its policies, strategies, and/or mission, vision and values.
- 68% believe leadership behaviour would help their organization become more diverse, equitable and inclusive.
- 67% said their organization offers or encourages employees to increase their knowledge of DEI through training and education.
- 60% said their organization has active programs or initiatives in place to advance DEI in the workplace.
- 53% feel their organization is diverse, equitable and inclusive.
- 39% perceive the DEI programs or initiatives that are in place in their organization to be effective.



“The energy sector has many very progressive employers, with some laggards still early in the DEI journey.”

SURVEY PARTICIPANT

- 17% feel they are personally impacted in a NEGATIVE way by diversity, equity and inclusion at work.
- 25% said “not wanting to make others feel uncomfortable” is a barrier to openly discussing DEI at work.
- 32% believe the energy sector overall has not adopted diversity, equity and inclusion at the same pace as other sectors.
- 34% feel they are personally impacted in a POSITIVE way by diversity, equity and inclusion at work.
- 44% said they rarely or never openly discuss DEI at work with their team and/or colleagues.
- 46% absolutely agree their organization provides a work environment where they feel free and safe to be their true authentic self.



Effectiveness of DEI Programs



YES, these programs or initiatives are effective

“They help everyone feel like they belong and are not being judged. They ensure the employees know that inappropriate behaviours to others because of their diversity is not acceptable.”

“Inclusion of everyone in the workplace only helps to build a stronger workplace foundation.”

“We are an international multi-cultured organization and these programs help to promote unity within the organization.”

“Our workforce is already quite diverse, and management leads by example, treating everyone with respect and seeking diverse perspectives.”



NO, these programs or initiatives are not effective

“When you force diversity, you run the risk of trying to fit people into a structure they may not be the most qualified for.”

“They seem to be more divisive.”

“Participation is completely voluntary and mainly involves and appeals to those who are minorities.”

“No C-Suite executives really reflect diversity. Middle management often just talks about the initiatives but rarely takes action.”

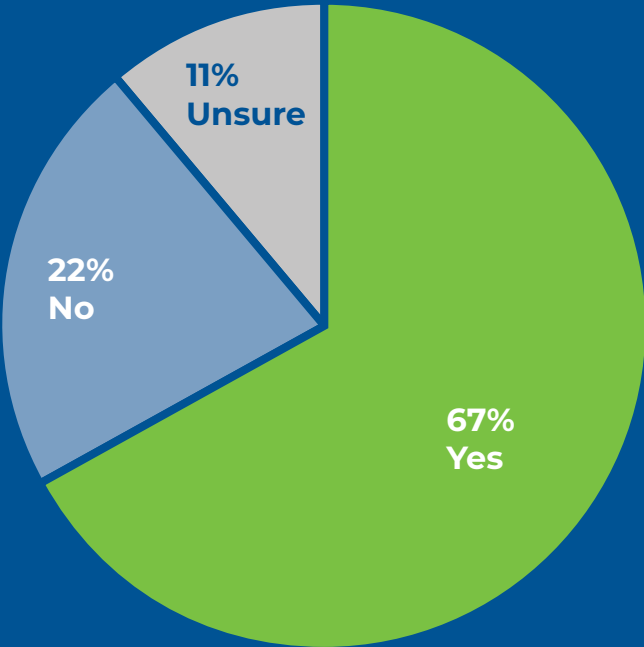
“Not necessary in my opinion. We have always hired based on merit and qualifications.”

Training and Education

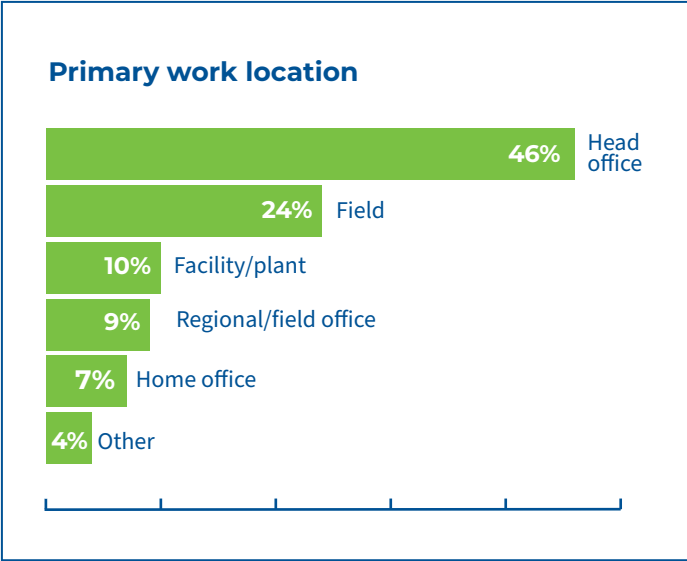
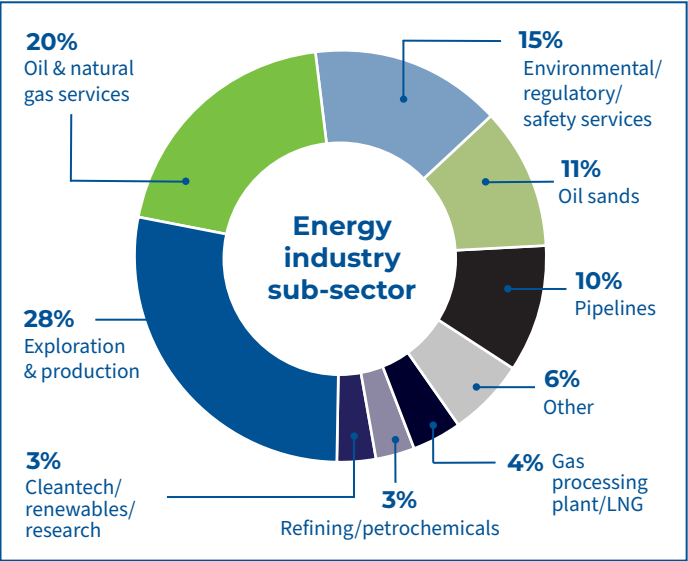
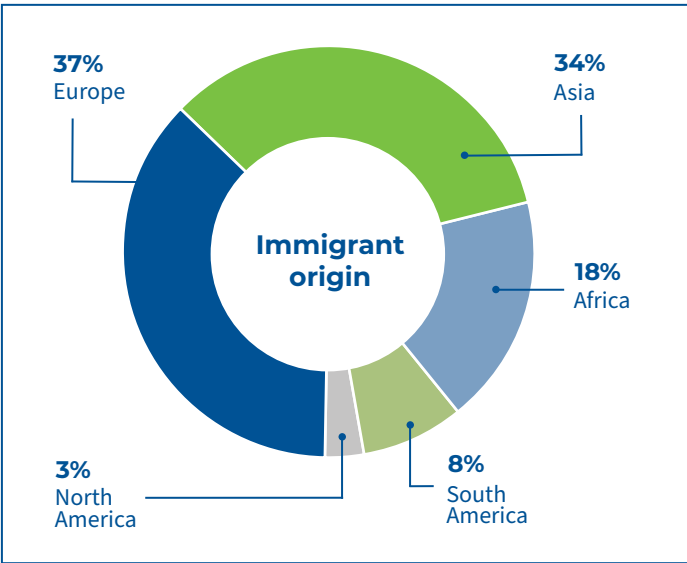
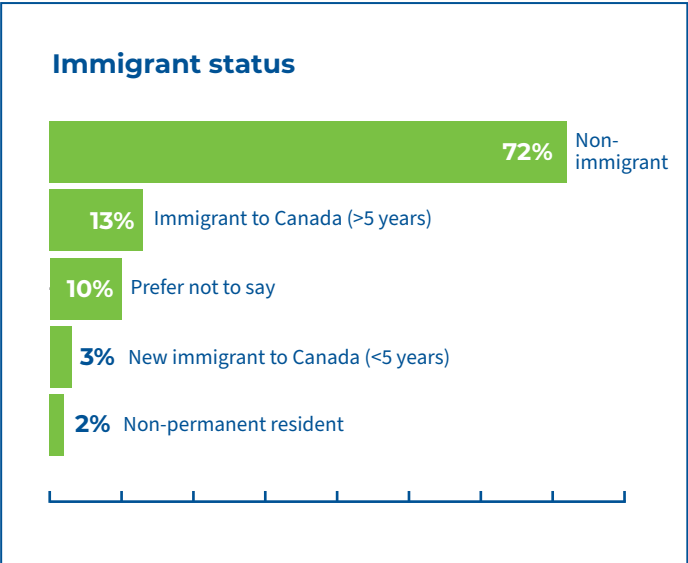
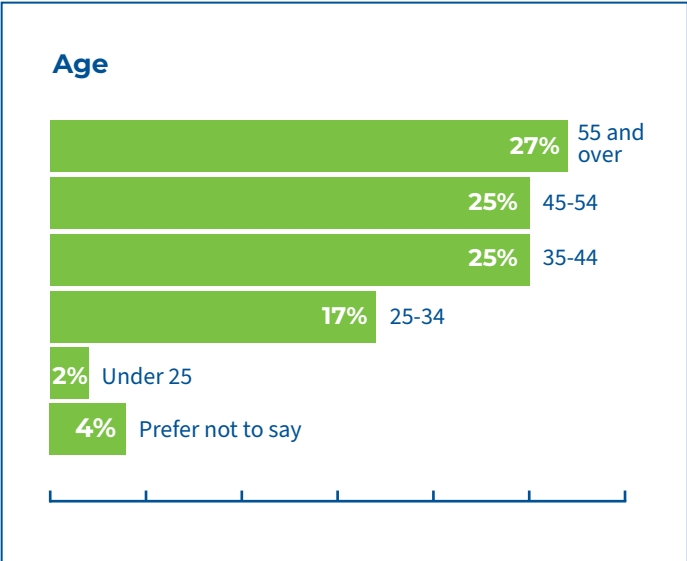
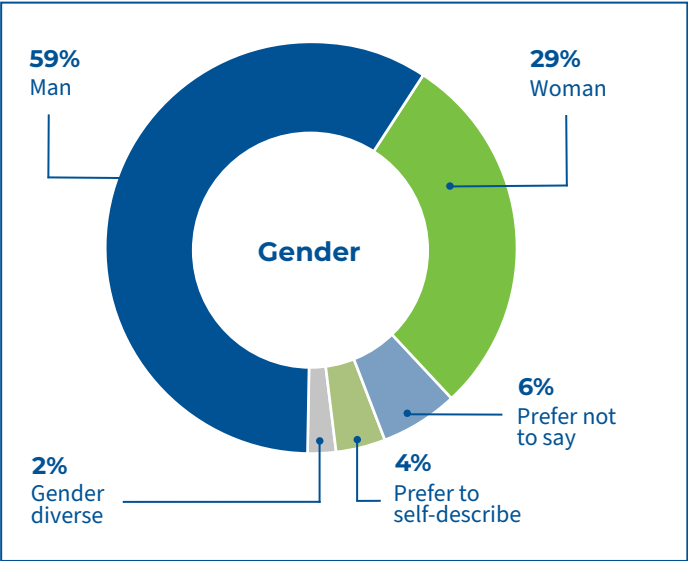
Does your organization offer or encourage employees to increase their knowledge of DEI through training and education?

Diversity, equity and inclusion training aims to help organizations and their employees become more inclusive in their way of thinking and operating.

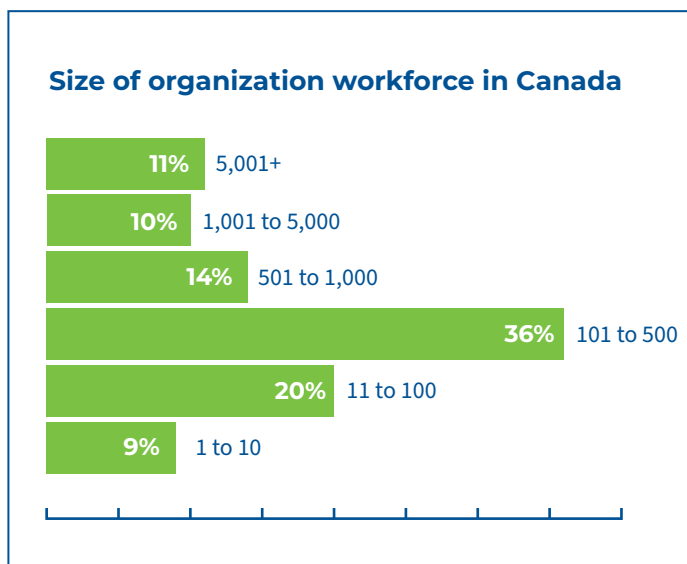
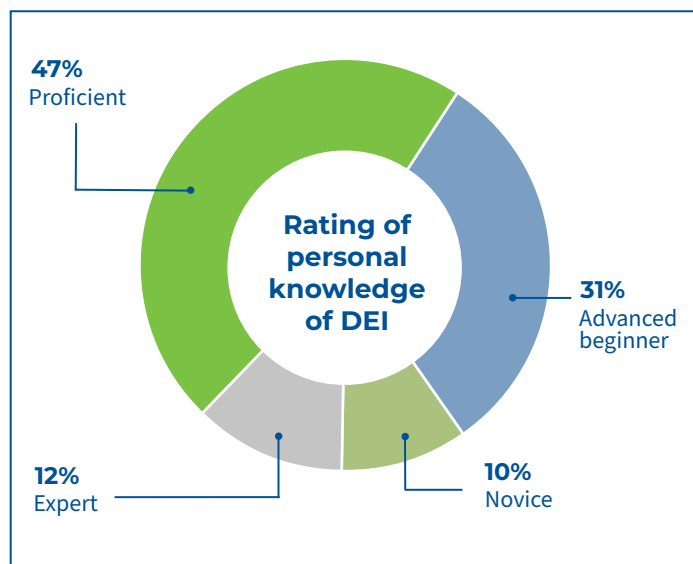
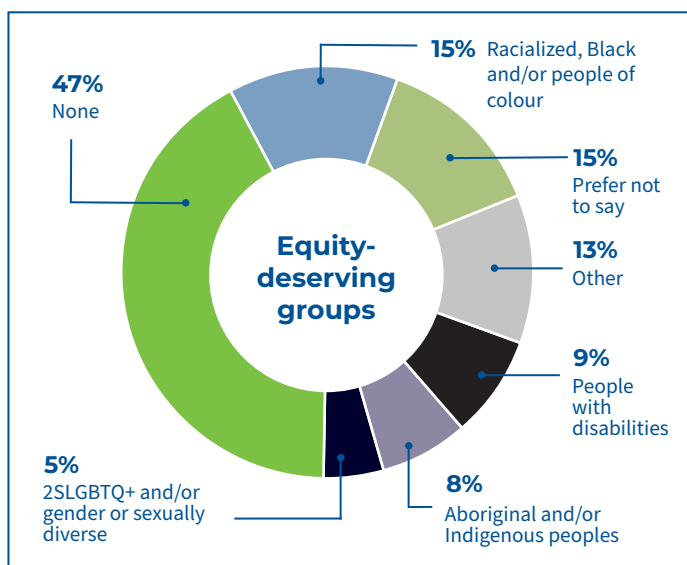
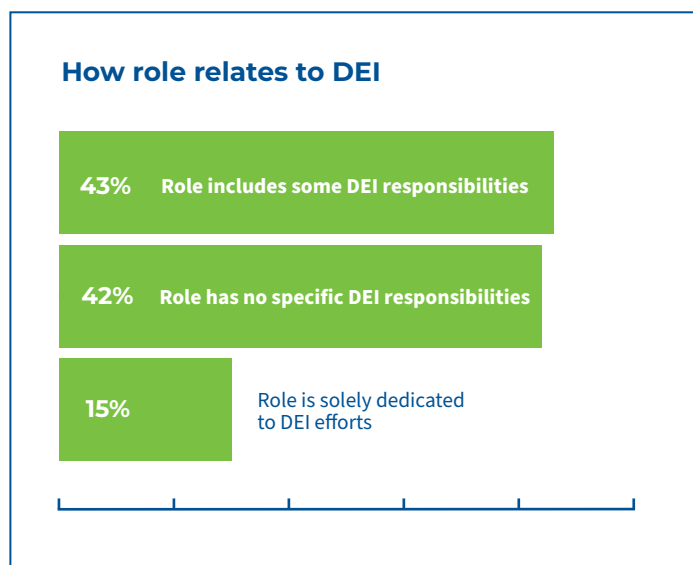
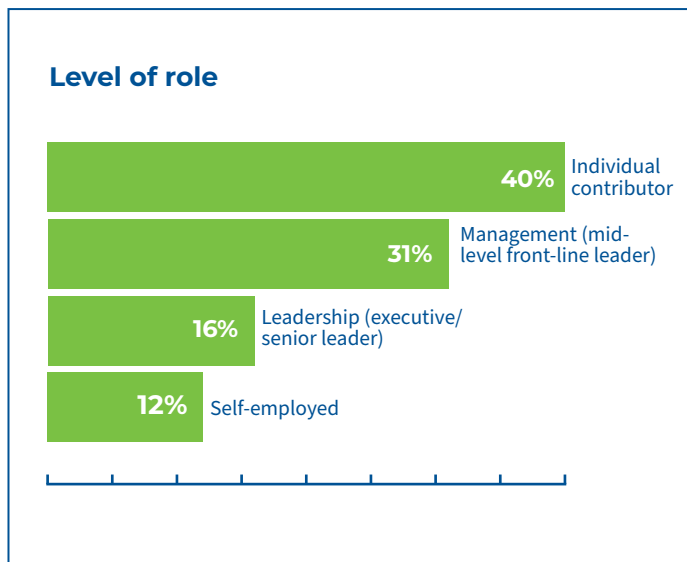
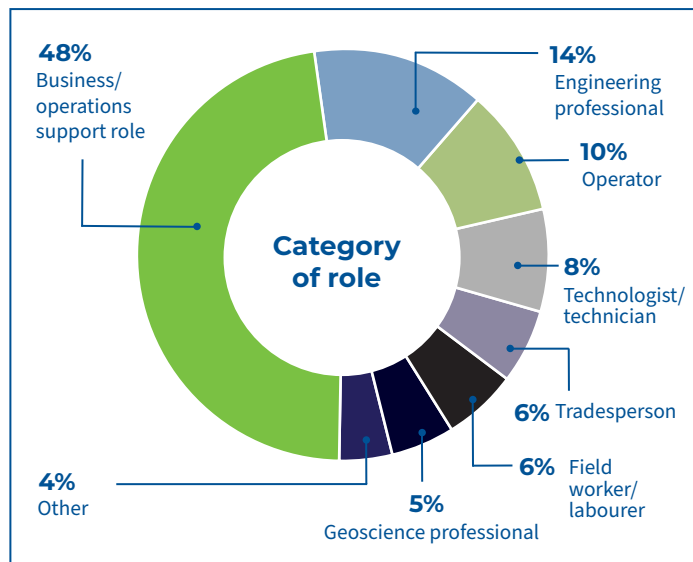
Two-thirds (67%) of energy workers said their organization offers or encourages employees to increase their knowledge of DEI through training and education.



Participant Overview



Participant Overview



Organizational Commitment to DEI

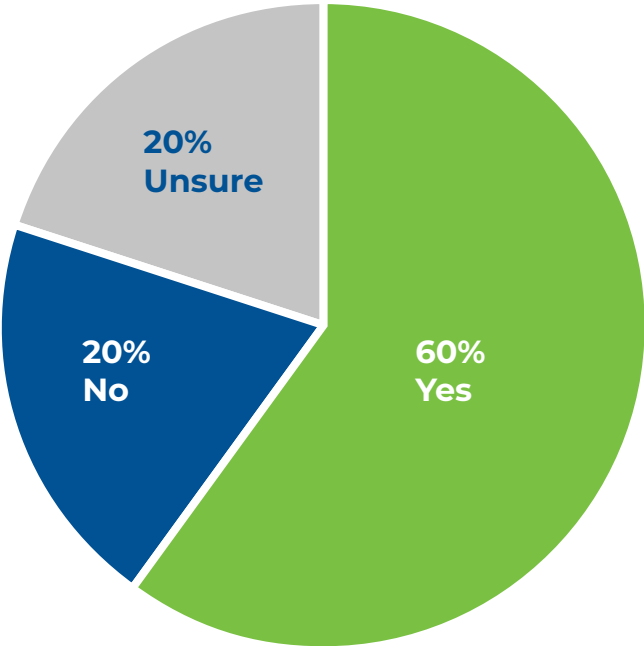
Having a formal DEI statement helps to align stakeholders and serves as a declaration of an organization’s commitment to DEI initiatives. Three quarters (75%) of energy workers said their organization has made a commitment to DEI as part of its policies, strategies, and/or mission, vision and values.

Has your organization made a commitment to DEI as part of its policies, strategies, and/or mission, vision and values?



Presence of DEI Programs

Does your organization have any active programs or initiatives in place to advance DEI in your workplace?



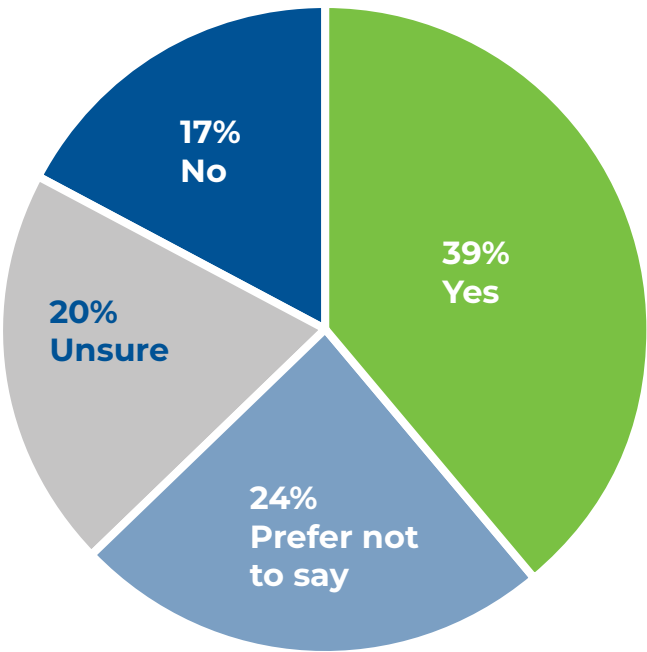
While 75% of energy workers said their organization has made a commitment to DEI, only 60% said their organization has active DEI programs in place, and just 39% believe these programs are effective.

Effectiveness of DEI Programs

“In the energy and resources industry, DEI is not just a desirable aspect, but a necessary one to stand out and be seen as a leader in the field.”

EY FUELING INCLUSION REPORT

If yes, do you perceive these programs or initiatives to be effective?



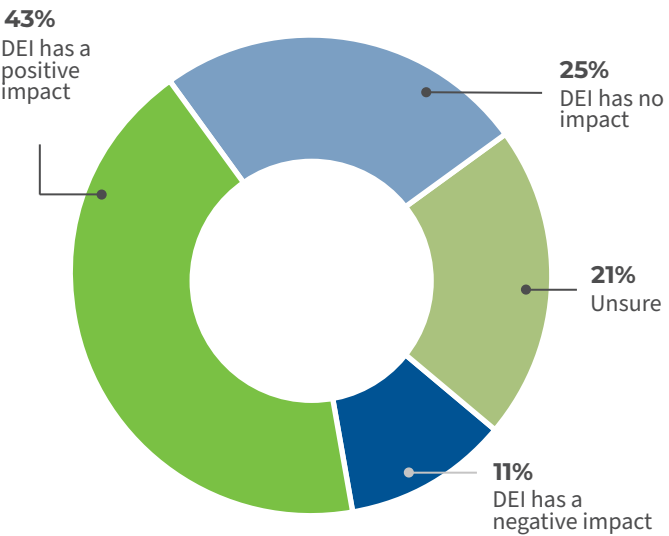
Advancing DEI in the workplace is more than just hiring from a diverse candidate pool. It’s also about fostering an environment that integrates equity and inclusion in everyday work so everyone can succeed. The data suggests that some energy organizations have not continued to evolve their programs to adequately address the needs of their entire workforce. In some cases, this may be a “check the box” approach to DEI.

Energy organizations are clearly at different stages of the DEI journey, as demonstrated by the varied responses from energy workers on the priority their organization places on DEI. While about 3 in 10 energy workers strongly agree their organization places a high priority on DEI and 4 in 10 somewhat agree, about one-quarter (26%) of respondents disagree.

Business performance is defined as the ability of employees to complete their roles, the quality of work produced, and an organization’s ability to procure customers and/or vendors.

Impact on Business Performance

Based on my personal perception, the priority my organization places on DEI has an impact on business performance.



While 43% of respondents believe the priority their organization places on DEI has a positive impact on business performance, 25% believe it has no impact and 11% believe it has a negative impact.

Employees are more likely to support DEI efforts if they understand the many potential benefits, so it’s up to an organization’s leaders to understand and share these proven benefits with their teams, including:

- Diverse, equitable and inclusive organizations are more likely to reach financial goals
- DEI helps workers feel safe, respected and connected
- Diverse teams innovate faster
- Diverse cultures reach a wider audience
- A diverse, equitable and inclusive work environment retains workers.

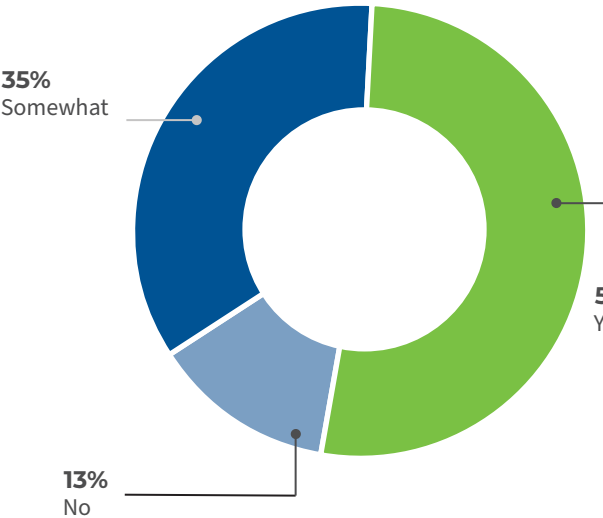
Without leadership buy-in and commitment to DEI, policies to attract and retain new generations of skilled employees may be compromised, leading to a high turnover rate, lack of organizational loyalty and perpetuation of discriminatory attitudes or biases.

Perception of DEI in Organization

- > Diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives are about more than just numbers.
- > Workers’ perceptions of equity and inclusion are driven by organizational culture and leadership behaviour.

Just over half (52%) of the energy workers surveyed feel their organization is diverse, equitable and inclusive.

Do you feel your organization is diverse, equitable and inclusive?

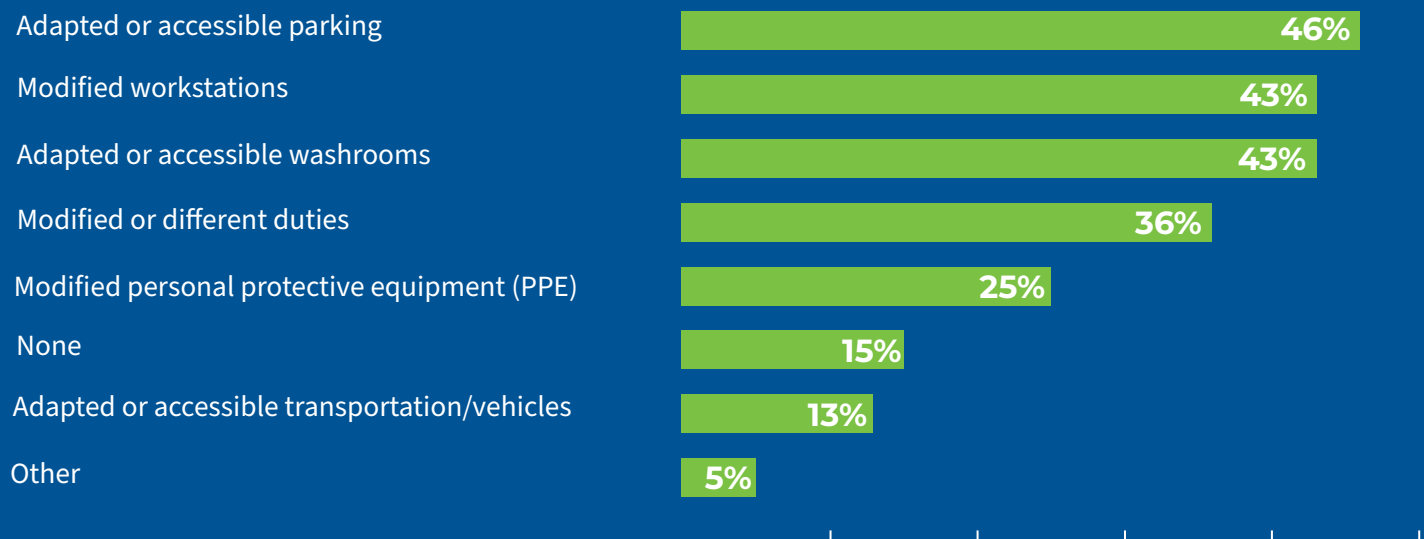


Accommodations in the Workplace

Accommodations are adjustments made to policies, programs, practices, facilities, or resources to allow for equitable access in the workplace.

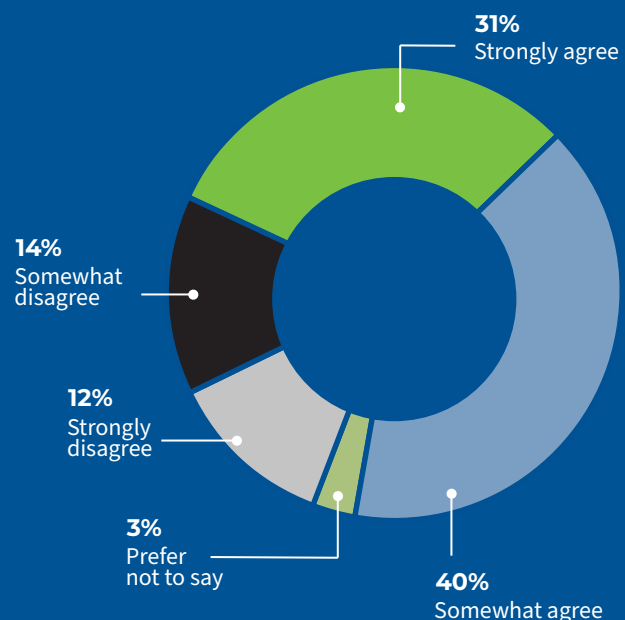
When organizations accommodate the needs of their employees effectively, they can promote productivity, an accepting work environment and healthy workplace culture.

What accommodations are you aware of in your organization to allow for equitable access for employees in the workplace?



Priority on DEI

Based on my personal perception, my organization places a high priority on diversity, equity and inclusion.



Energy workers that feel their organization is either somewhat or not diverse, equitable and inclusive provided insights on what they believe would help their organization become more diverse, equitable and inclusive.

If no or somewhat, what do you believe would help your organization become more diverse, equitable and inclusive?



While leadership behaviour and training and education were the top responses, approximately 4 in 10 energy workers believe better communication would be helpful, and nearly one-third believe employee resource groups (ERGs) would be helpful.

Organization Barriers and Successes

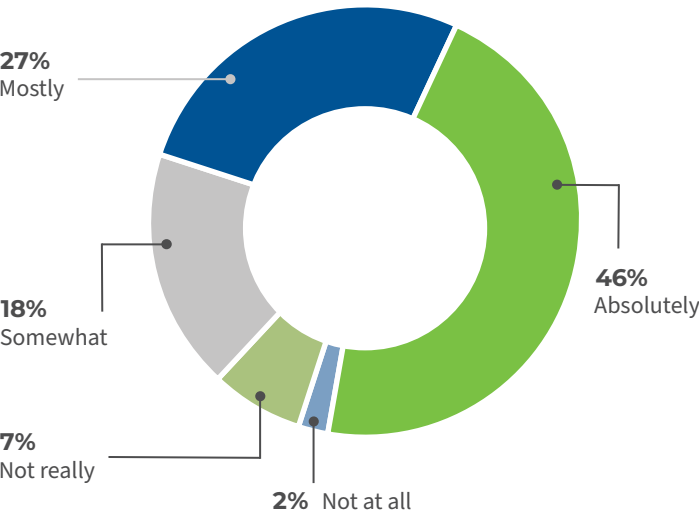
What are the barriers in your organization to building a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace?
“Fear and reluctance of employees to approach and see things differently.”
“Personal biases and systems that don’t support non-dominant groups is thriving.”
“Time and resources.”
“DEI training is not mandatory - leaders and senior employees are seen as being non-participatory.”
“Current executive mindset – lack of desire and willingness to evolve.”
“Years and years of not being considered an issue.”

What is your organization doing well to build a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace?
“There are a lot of resources available internally, we have employee resource groups, and our talent team is partnered with a number of organizations.”
“Women are well represented in Senior Leadership positions; Indigenous Peoples represent 10% of our workforce and other visible minorities another 10%.”
“We perform gender pay gap analysis twice a year.”
“Visible executive leadership willing to learn and grow.”
“We are seeking inclusion and diversity with our partners outside of our walls as well.”

Authenticity in the Workplace

Authenticity is the alignment between our internal sense of self and our outward behaviour – as opposed to creating facades. Research suggests that when we feel that we’re living out our personal values and perspectives and can be authentic, we feel a greater sense of well-being and are more highly engaged in our jobs.

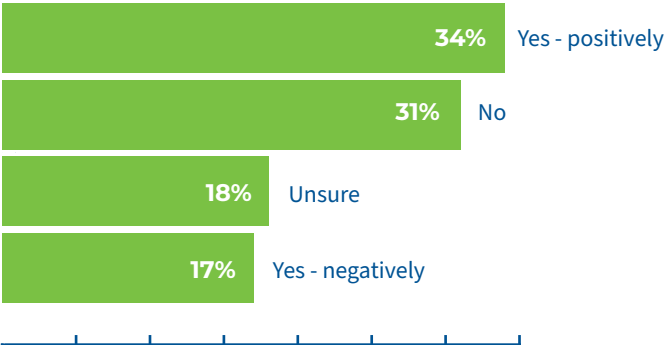
Does your organization provide a work environment where you feel free and safe to be your true authentic self?



Close to half (46%) of energy workers absolutely agree their organization provides a work environment where they feel free and safe to be their true authentic selves, while the remaining responses varied from not really to mostly. This suggests that, in the eyes of their workers, organizations have more work to do in the DEI journey.

Personal Impact of DEI

Do you feel that you are personally impacted, either positively or negatively, by diversity, equity and inclusion at work?



- To attract and retain difference-making employees, DEI should be embedded into every aspect of an organization.
- Great employees can and will pack up their talents, skills and knowledge and move on when a more fitting opportunity arises. Fostering feelings of value and belonging can help reduce staff turnover.

I feel I am POSITIVELY impacted by diversity, equity and inclusion at work.

“People from different cultural backgrounds make interactions at work more fulfilling.”

“I don’t feel judged and I feel as though I can be myself and won’t have to worry about others excluding me from activities based on my looks and views.”

“I earned a seat at the table, with both respect and influence within the organization, as a minority.”

“It makes me proud to work for an organization that thinks about DEI.”

“I have been a tradesman for 41 years - this has been a positive change to the company and the business.”

“I get to see different perspectives from people with different backgrounds and in my opinion, these differences can be a source of strength for the organization and I feel they add to my experience.”

“I feel like I can be my true self, that the people around me feel the same, and we can work well together and learn from one another.”

I feel I am NEGATIVELY impacted by diversity, equity and inclusion at work.

“I am a younger educated female. Do I really need to describe the attitudes of men I meet on work sites? It's basically 1955 out there.”

“Often, as a middle-aged white guy with 30 years of experience, I am overlooked on work opportunities as I don’t tick any of the boxes.”

“I am too busy working our job to accommodate all the lifestyle needs that some want to bring to the job.”

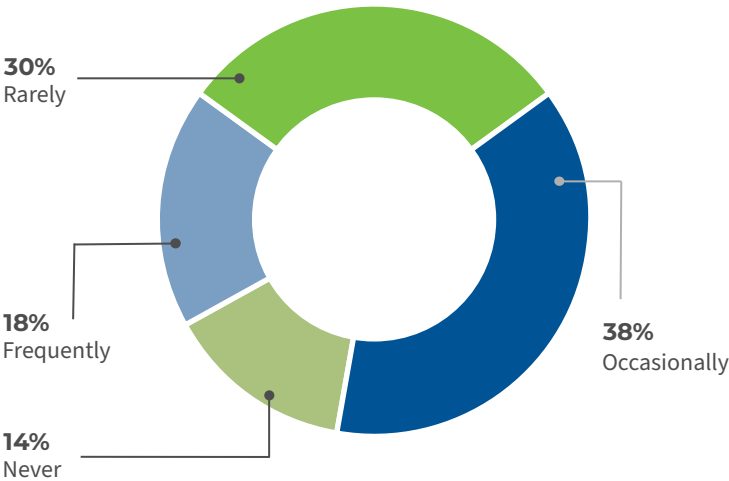
“I feel held back and unable to grow in this organization while I see my Caucasian colleagues with considerably less experience and education be promoted or hired into senior positions.”

“As a senior professional with over 40 years of direct experience, there are times when I am passed over for younger (and less costly) geoscientists.”

“Management has stated they do not want to track specific numbers (because they know the numbers will reflect poorly, but instead of fixing the issue, they prefer to not track it).”

Discussing DEI at Work

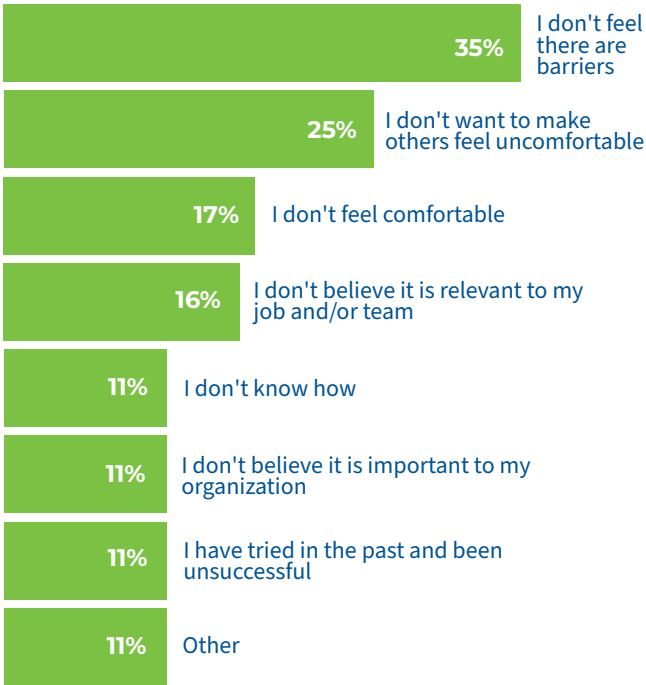
How often do you and your team and/or colleagues openly discuss diversity, equity and inclusion at work?



Discussing DEI topics at work offers an opportunity to connect with co-workers, openly address workplace challenges, and create solutions together, yet 44% of energy workers surveyed said they rarely or never openly discuss DEI at work.

Barriers to Discussing DEI at Work

What barriers do you feel prevent you from discussing diversity, equity and inclusion at work?



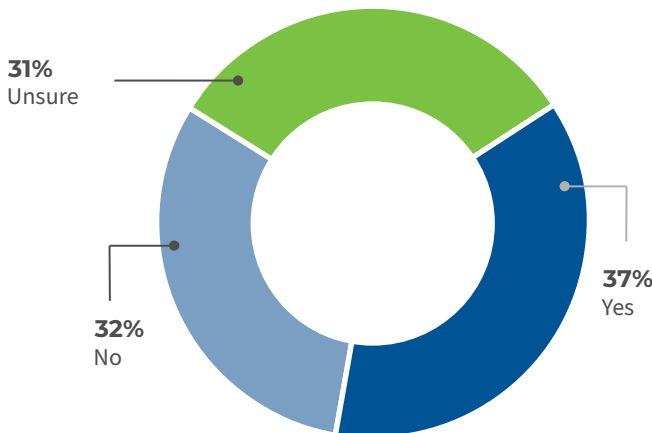
When asked about the barriers preventing energy workers from discussing DEI at work, one-quarter of respondents said they don't want to make others feel uncomfortable, while another 17% said they don't feel comfortable talking about it themselves.

Pace of DEI Adoption in the Energy Sector

Adopting DEI practices in the workplace has become a greater focus for many organizations in Alberta’s energy sector in recent years.

The question is – do workers believe the energy sector as a whole is keeping pace with other sectors?

Do you believe the energy sector, overall, has adopted diversity, equity and inclusion at the same pace as other sectors?



The results are mixed, highlighting the reality that, while progress is being made, there is clearly more work to be done.

YES, I feel the energy sector has kept pace with other sectors.

“Especially in recent years (I’ve been in the industry 20+), I’ve personally noticed a shift in hiring and opportunity and equality.”

“I work internationally as well as domestically and our sector is one of the most diverse, particularly in the service sector.”

“Many oil/gas organizations, are cognizant and actually hiring and placing minorities, Indigenous [Peoples] and women in roles of importance. I don’t see many other sectors in Canada who are so engaged in industry improvements. 10 out of 10 for our oil and gas industry.”

“After working in the oil sands for 6 years, I was exposed to how many different types of people from all parts of the world are part of our energy industry. It was interesting to meet people from all cultures who came to work together.”

“I feel that we’ve shed the blue-collar stigma towards DEI.”

“There is still work to be done, but I think it is on par with other sectors.”

NO, I don’t feel the energy sector has kept pace with other sectors.

“There is definitely some progress in DEI awareness in the energy sector, but it’s still an area full of stigma and barriers.”

“I believe there are some gaps in the energy sector when it comes to DEI - the industry is made up of primarily one demographic - which can impact the industry’s ability to adapt to emerging practices in DEI.”

“Once CEOs are more diverse and are not just of one dominant identity, then we can call it a success. Until then it’s all for show (or in progress).”

“My experience tells me that this industry has progressed very slowly, and most small employers do not actively seek diversity.”

“This industry is very focused on performance and does not necessarily see actions that work to increase DEI as being of value. I think the general thought is if one does not show overt racism or bias, all is good, but in reality, some actions in the other direction would really help.”

Fueling Inclusion

The survey results reveal a variety of perspectives on DEI in the energy industry, indicating that organizations, leaders and individuals are at different stages of the journey. As energy organizations work to establish effective DEI measures, there are many important questions to consider. EY's report, *Fueling Inclusion* provides additional insights.

[Read the report](#)

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Energy Sector

To take action on DEI, register for the Careers in Energy webinar series, *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Energy Sector*. Designed to challenge common perceptions of DEI in the energy industry and increase knowledge, participants who complete the 10-part webinar series will earn a digital badge identifying them as a DEI Champion.

[Sign up now](#)

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