

# Women in Energy Global Study 2021



# Welcome

**More than twenty months have passed since the Covid-19 outbreak was declared a pandemic. Hundreds of millions of people have experienced numerous nationwide lockdowns and the energy sector has seen significant impacts on its markets, operations and people, with workplace changes, career moves and job losses.**

As the world shifts from pandemic to endemic, how can businesses hope to maintain and advance the climate change and diversity agendas that were previously set and how do they need to be adapted for the post-Covid world?

Since the first edition in 2019, the Women in Energy Global Study has evolved into a critical guide revealing the wants and needs of women working across the energy industries.

This report details four key topics affecting the world of work right now, as well as the concrete actions companies can take to build diversity, equity and inclusion into systems and processes, but also into the whole breadth of company culture.

It should come as no surprise that many professionals' situations have changed and female workers are no exception, with many respondents placing great importance on:

## **Flexibility -**

Today's female professionals have reaped the benefits of working flexibly during the pandemic and hope it continues.

## **The energy transition -**

Women are more enticed by the Net Zero agenda than men, while male respondents report a passion for new technologies.

## **Sponsored training and learning -**

For women, training was by far the most desired employee benefit, indicating a keen desire to develop within and beyond their current roles.

There were also a number of aspects of the changed workplace that women found challenging, such as:

## **Travel -**

There remains greater caution round the prospect of travelling for work than among their male counterparts.

## **Lack of career progression -**

Female respondents cited a lack of career progression opportunities during the pandemic.

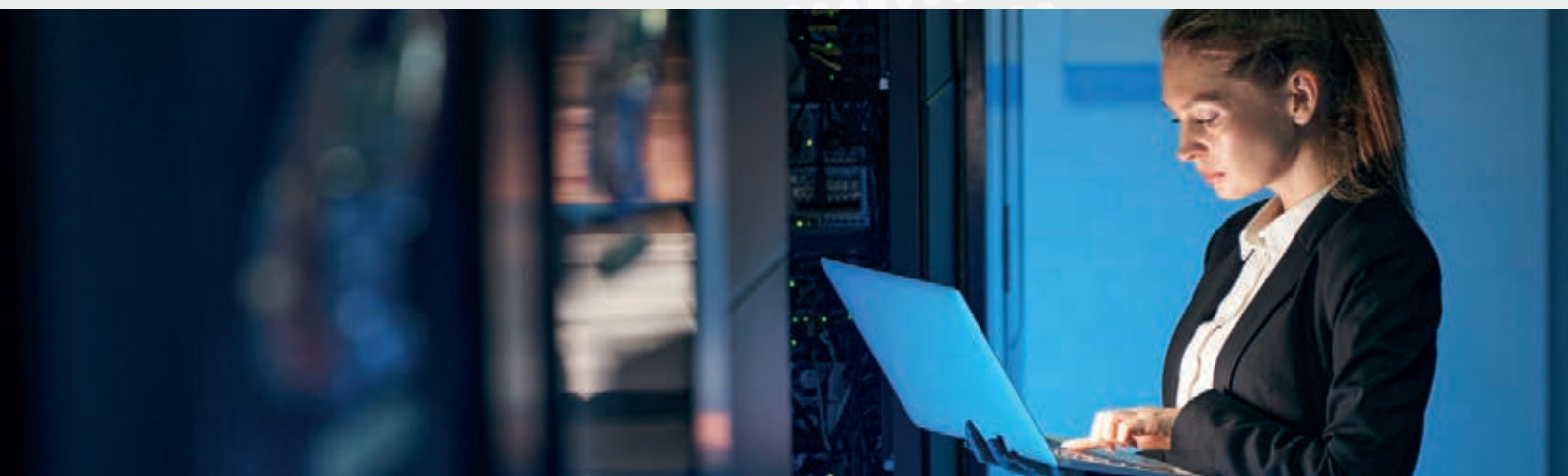
We were delighted with not only the response to this year's survey, which shows women are asking to be heard, but also the support we received from our latest project partner, the **Energy Institute**, throughout the analysis phase of the report, as well as **POWERful Women**, who provided gender diversity expertise for the entire project lifespan.

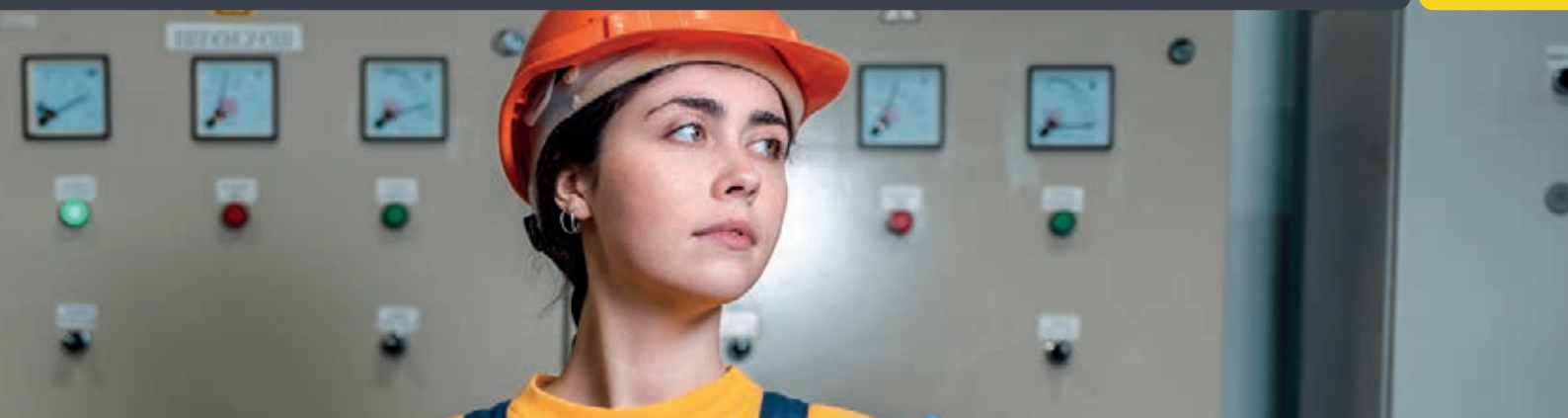
On behalf of everyone at **NES Fircroft** and **Energy Jobline**, we would like to thank the thousands of energy professionals that took our 2021 survey, allowing us to support our clients in making a concerted effort to ensure equality, equity and honesty in the workplace and reap the full benefits of gender D&I.



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# Methodology

**The Women in Energy Global Study is an annual report produced by energy recruitment leaders NES Fircroft and Energy Jobline, which looks to highlight the barriers women in the sector are currently facing, as well as the opportunities that will allow energy firms to successfully attract and retain women in energy.**

The initial survey, completed by 1,330 women and 1,180 men in energy in 2021, investigates the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on women in the sector, how important the Net Zero agenda is to women working in each of the energy industries, as well as timely answers to how to recruit and preserve female talent.

The survey, hosted in August/September 2021 via Survey Monkey for six consecutive weeks, asked respondents a total of 24 questions. The survey was circulated to a combination of **Energy Jobline** and **NES Fircroft's** databases, as well as the audiences of the report's associative partners: the **Energy Institute** and **POWERful Women**.

Once the survey was finalised in September, representatives from **Energy Jobline**, **NES Fircroft**, **POWERful Women** and the **Energy Institute** commenced the analysis phase of the project by conducting a detailed review of the results, filtered by gender, sector and other key demographics.

The overarching topics in this report are:

**What does the sector look like? -**

Exploring the demographics and career details of survey respondents, such as gender, job type and seniority level.

**The post-Covid workplace -**

A woman's dream or logistical nightmare?

**Gender diversity for Net Zero -**

How women are engaging with the energy transition.

**Nurturing female talent in 2022 -**

Strategies & initiatives that will make a difference.

Whilst recruitment and retention have always been a focus for this report, our two new sections on Covid-19 and Net Zero were chosen due to their inescapable impacts on today's world, particularly as we release this report soon after the close of the 2021 UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), but also the weeks following the lifting of many Covid-19 travel restrictions.

**NES Fircroft** and **Energy Jobline** hope this study is well received by all and invite anybody requiring further detail or insights to reach out via [marketing@energyjobline.com](mailto:marketing@energyjobline.com).

# About Us



**NES Fircroft (NES) is an award-winning workforce solutions specialist that provides staffing services across the Oil & Gas, Power & Renewables, Infrastructure, Life Sciences, Mining and Chemicals sectors worldwide.**

NES offer a full range of staffing solutions: Contract, Permanent (Direct) Hire, Managed Solutions and mobility services. It has over 80 offices in 45 countries and 1,550+ employees across the globe. NES has grown exponentially in the last 6 years both organically and following 7 successful acquisitions of companies in both the Oil & Gas and Life Science space. In 2019 the company received 17 industry awards, winning recognition for every aspect of the business from Compliance and Payroll to the growth strategy and international operation. NES were also recently listed by Staffing Industry Analysts as one of the largest Engineering staffing providers in the world.

**For more information visit [nesfircroft.com](https://nesfircroft.com)**



**Energy Jobline is the largest and fastest growing global Energy Job Board and Energy Hub.**

With an audience reach of over 4 million people, and 400,000+ monthly advertised global jobs, we work with the leading Energy companies worldwide. We focus on the Oil and Gas, Renewable, Power, and Nuclear markets as well as emerging technologies in EV, Battery, and Fusion. We are committed to generating the most talented professionals for our client recruitment campaigns and ensuring we offer the most exciting career opportunities for our jobseekers.

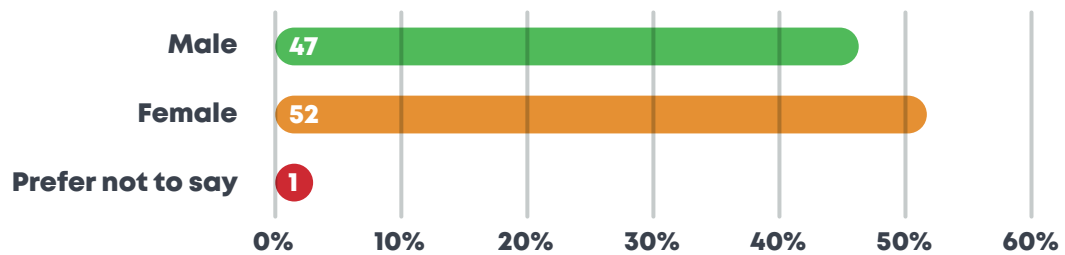
At Energy Jobline we appreciate that the energy industry's greatest resource is people, and that is why we work with the leading clients and best energy professionals worldwide. Our commitment to Women In Energy, BAME and Diversity Groups, as well as unique and passive audiences, aids in setting us apart from our key competitors. No other online recruitment platform has aligned itself with the same breadth and depth of quality partners including female engineering bodies, online energy news hubs, community platforms, industry associations and more. The strength of these partnerships allows us to deliver an exceptional database.

**Learn more at [energyjobline.com](https://energyjobline.com)**

# Demographics

## 01 | Please state your gender

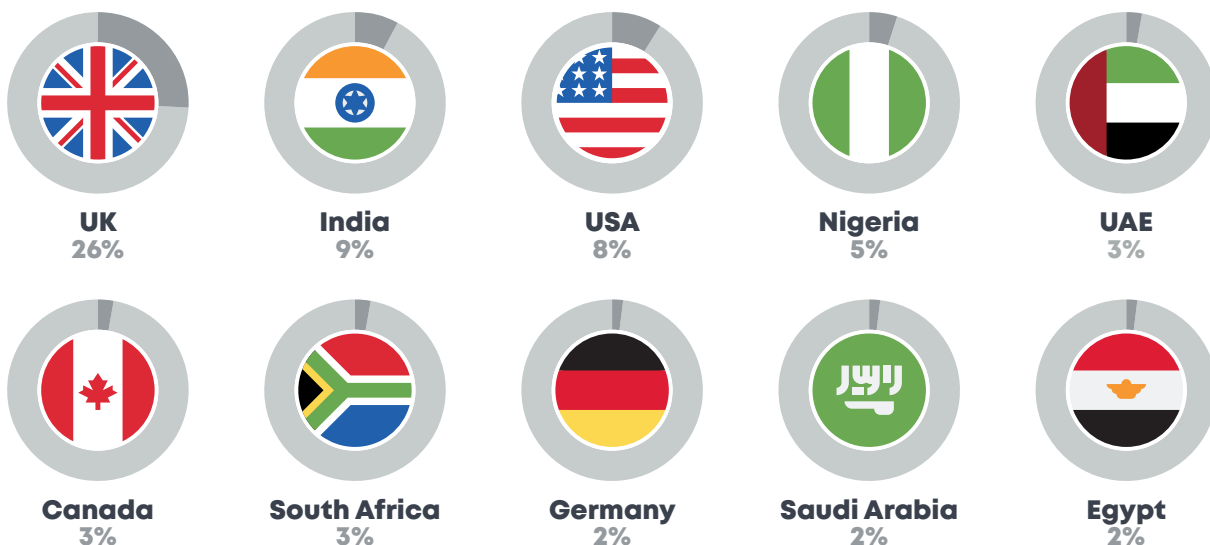
A



## 02 | Where are you currently based?

[ Top 10 countries only ]

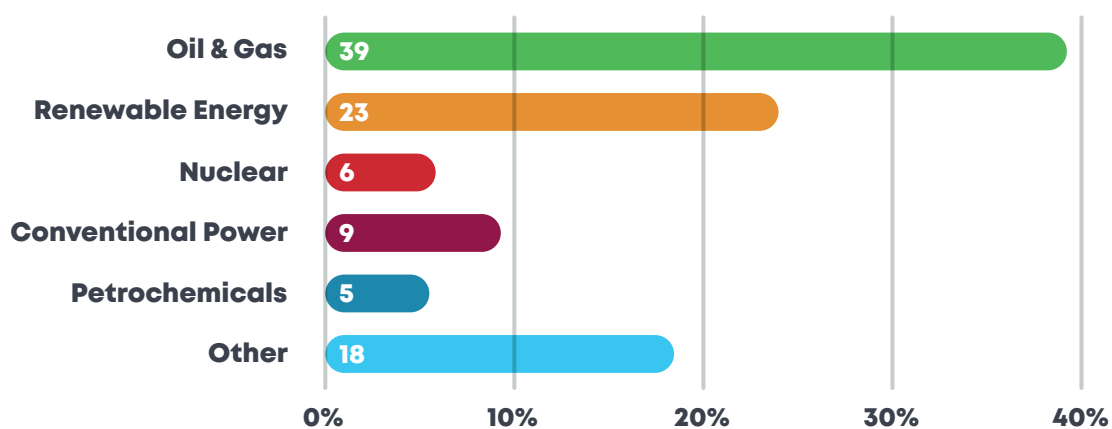
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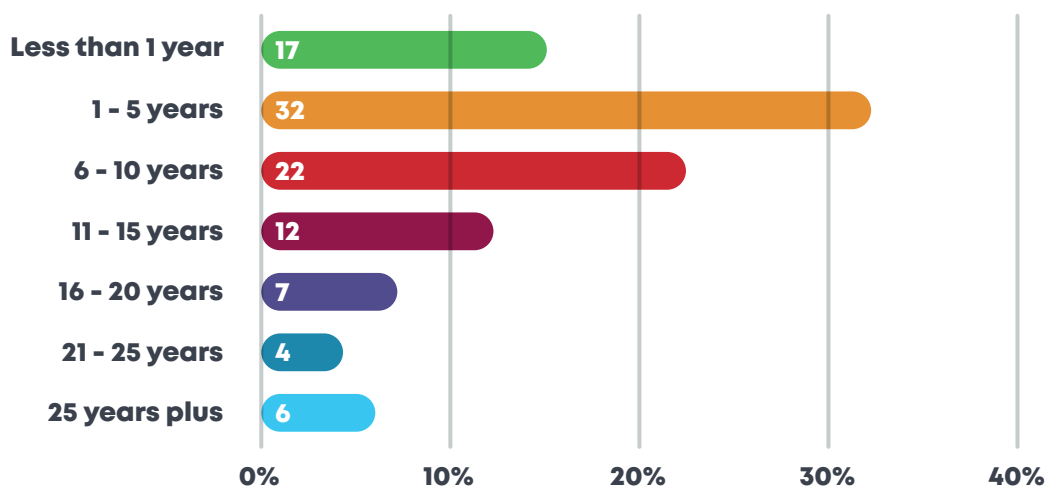
### 03 | Which energy sector do you work in?

A



### 04 | How long have you worked in the industry?

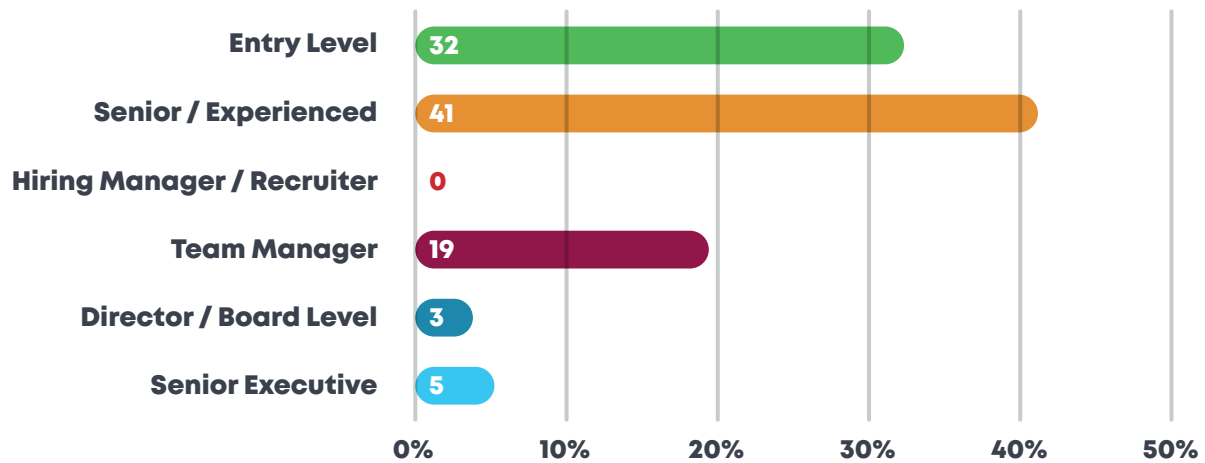
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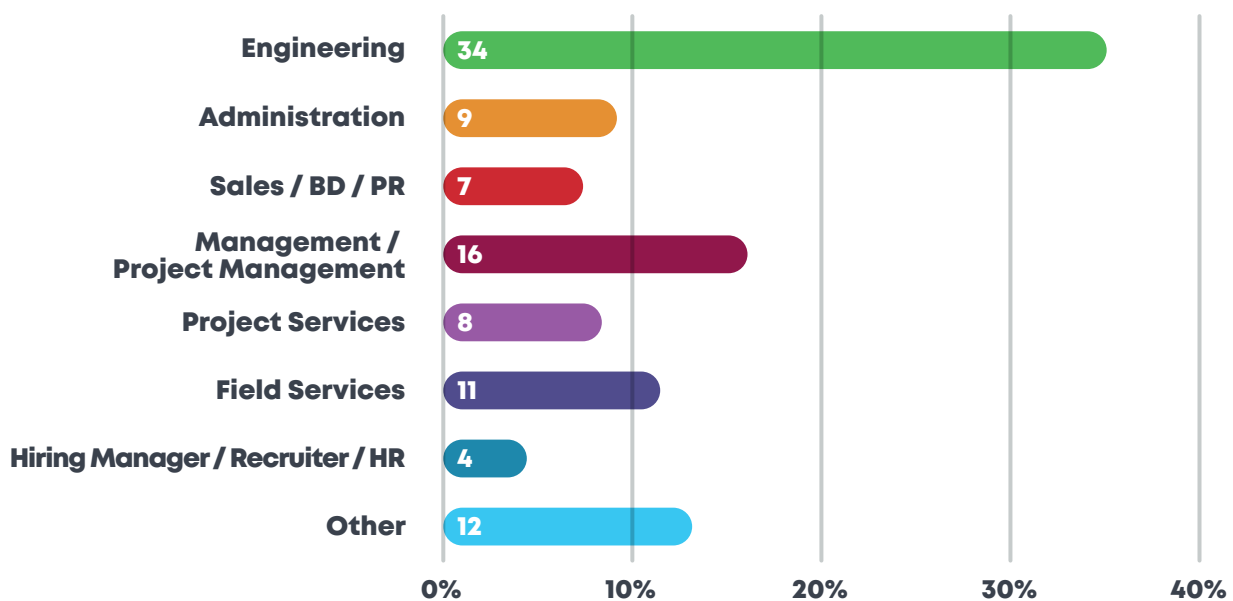
## 05 | What is your current level of seniority?

A



## 06 | Please select a job category that most resembles your role

A



# The post-Covid workplace

**As we enter a third year of the Covid-19 pandemic, it's no secret that the ongoing global restrictions have significantly impacted companies' ways of working. With little warning, firms have been forced to re-think their entire working procedures and place a level of trust in their staff that, 18 months ago, would have made most bosses nervous.**

While evidence shows that women's jobs and livelihoods have been disproportionately impacted by the global pandemic, these working practice developments mean that

many more flexible options such as remote and hybrid working have been permanently initiated. But who is currently benefiting most and are employers getting it right?

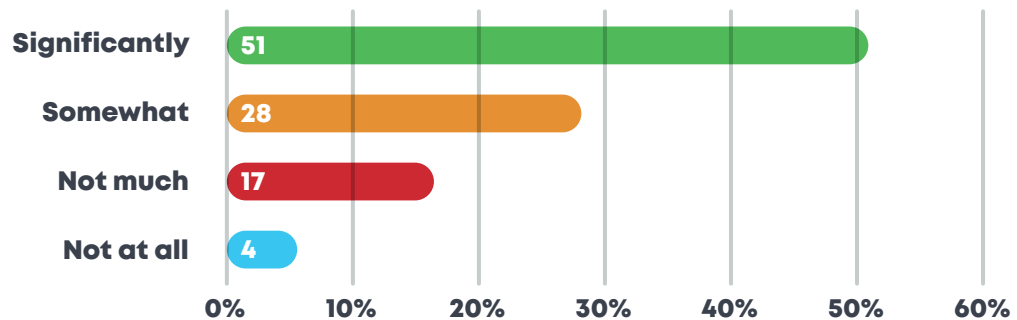


# Flexible working

## 07 | How has the Covid-19 pandemic advanced aspects of flexible working in your current role?

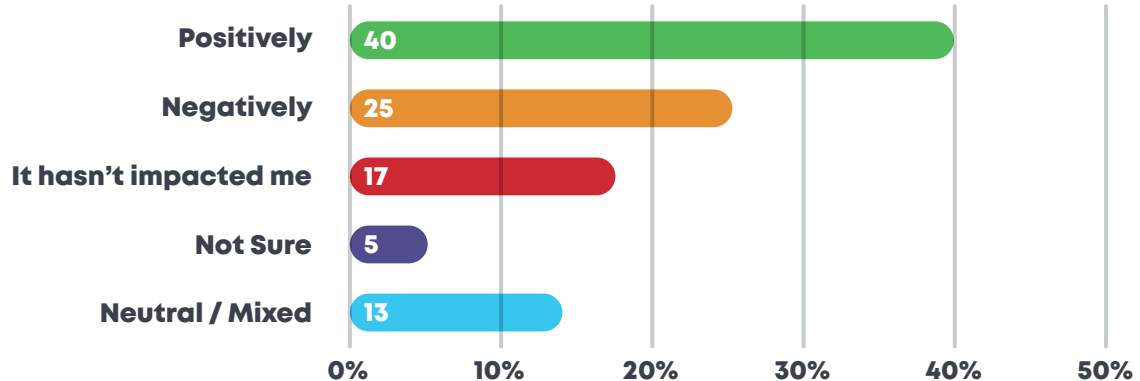
[ Eg. remote working, flexitime, job sharing, compressed / annualised / staggered hours ]

W



## 08 | How has the advancement of flexible working opportunities since Covid-19 impacted you personally?

W



When survey respondents were quizzed on flexible working, 52% of women thought the Covid-19 pandemic had significantly

advanced aspects of flexible working in their current roles (and 44% of men felt the same).



With societal norms resulting in many women to becoming the at-home support for their families during the pandemic, could this explain the greater significance in the lives of women working in energy, compared to men? Despite this, men working in the sector also recognised the impact, suggesting all professionals were subject to change. The question is, was the change positive?

Of the 1,330 women that took the survey, 40 per cent felt the advancement of flexible working opportunities due to Covid-19 had been a positive change, compared to 29% of men. Interestingly, while most men also thought it was a positive change, they were much more inclined to say that it had 'negatively' impacted them, as opposed to 'it hasn't impacted me', 'not sure' or 'neutral / mixed'.

“

**We've all had to flex our business models in recent months and many companies are now operating in ways which would have been unimaginable 12 months ago.**

**The pandemic has made us all think differently, adapt new models of working and innovate to ensure we could continue to operate successfully. Flexible working appears to be one of the positive outcomes of the change, but organisations must continue the dialogue with their employees to ensure it makes a positive long-term impact for all parties.”**



**Vicki Codd**  
Global Marketing Director  
NES Fircroft



## 09 | Do you think flexible working is here to stay?

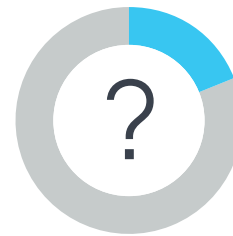
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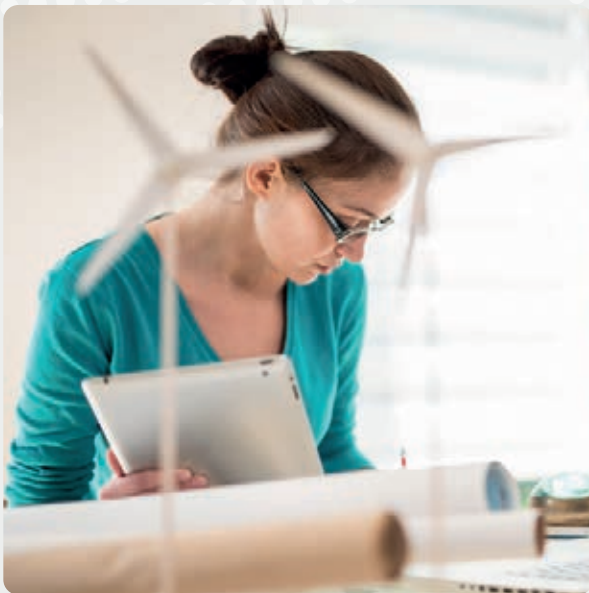
**Yes**  
64%



**No**  
19%



**Unsure**  
17%



The survey shows an overwhelming number of respondents (64%) believe flexible working is here to stay and women were even more optimistic (with 68% of respondents choosing 'yes').

“

It's fantastic news that flexible working is becoming more 'the norm' following the pandemic as women have repeatedly stated they would welcome it in all our previous surveys.

The study also reveals that men and women firmly agree that the advancement of flexible working is sustainable but seem to differ slightly on their feelings towards that.

Employers should be mindful of this and remember that one rule doesn't always fit all. Communication will be key to ensuring changes within the business (such as adaptations to employee benefits and flexibility options) continue to benefit women's careers but are positive for all employees.”



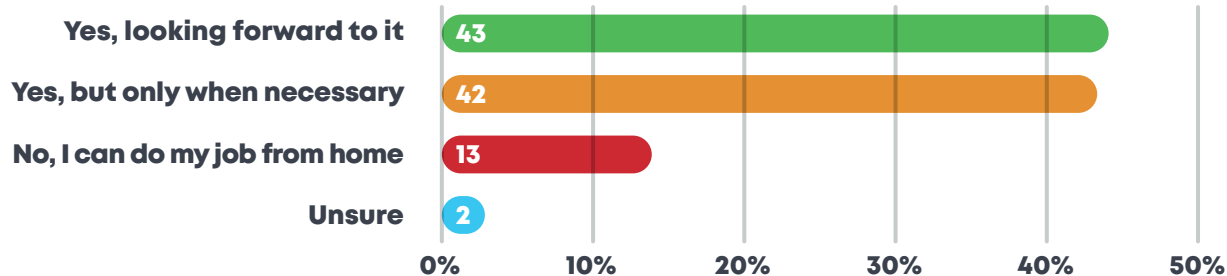
**Josh Young**  
Director  
Energy Jobline

# Travel - too soon?

## 10 | Once restrictions are lifted, would you feel comfortable travelling for work?

[ For commuting or long distance work travel ]

W



When it came to travelling for work, men were considerably more optimistic, with 66% revealing an eagerness to travel. Female respondents were less certain, with 43% claiming to look forward to travelling and 42% choosing 'Yes, but only when necessary'.



With women often having to be the main support mechanism at home (even today) this result could reflect a pressure on women to be more flexible about family time.

Or perhaps more women are being cautious about the continuing risks of COVID-19. Either way, it's important employers listen to each individual worker's needs when it comes to travel and continue to offer an agile approach.



**Vicki Codd**  
Global Marketing Director  
NES Fircroft



# Work & life

## 11 | How has Covid-19 affected your work / life balance?

W



**Improved**  
46%



**Negatively Impacted**  
37%



**About the same**  
17%

Female respondents were somewhat split on how Covid-19 had affected their work-life balance, with 46 per cent claiming the pandemic had improved the balance and a closely matched 37% citing the opposite.

Certainly, women's work/life balance has been vastly altered by the COVID outbreak, but the impacts of this has been shown in both a positive and negative light, depending on the individual.

“

I can certainly understand why opinion is divided on this point. As a working mum myself I have always had to juggle work life with my home life and whilst it has been brilliant to be at home more with my daughter, I've found different pressures have emerged as a result.

As the home becomes your office and there is no separation between the two we must all ensure we take breaks and take care of our mental health. The holy grail of the perfect work-life balance, is still difficult to achieve”.



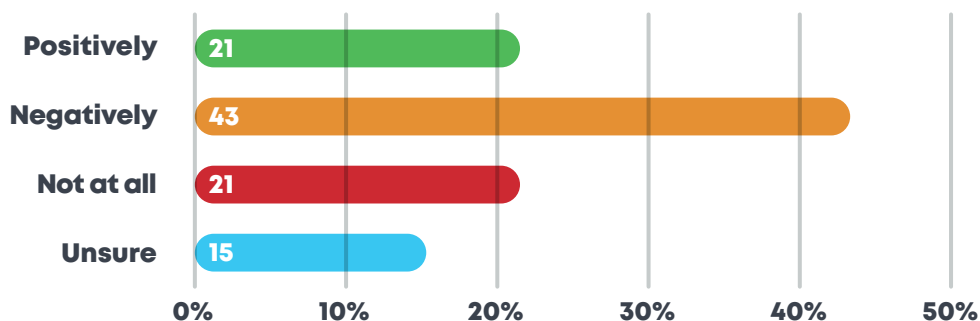
**Vicki Codd**  
Global Marketing Director  
NES Fircroft



## Moving forward

### 12 | How has Covid-19 affected your overall career progression?

A



Both men and women were in agreement that career progression opportunities had slowed since the start of the pandemic, with 44% of respondents claiming the virus outbreak had negatively impacted their overall career progression.



Whilst this global-scale crisis was taking hold, it's no surprise employers were more focused on operations, but when does this grace period end? When does it become too late for companies to start setting career development plans for their workers that remained resilient and engaged throughout the pandemic? Furthermore, a crucial loss will likely be professionals from the female talent pool, which now needs our full support, as a sector, to thrive."

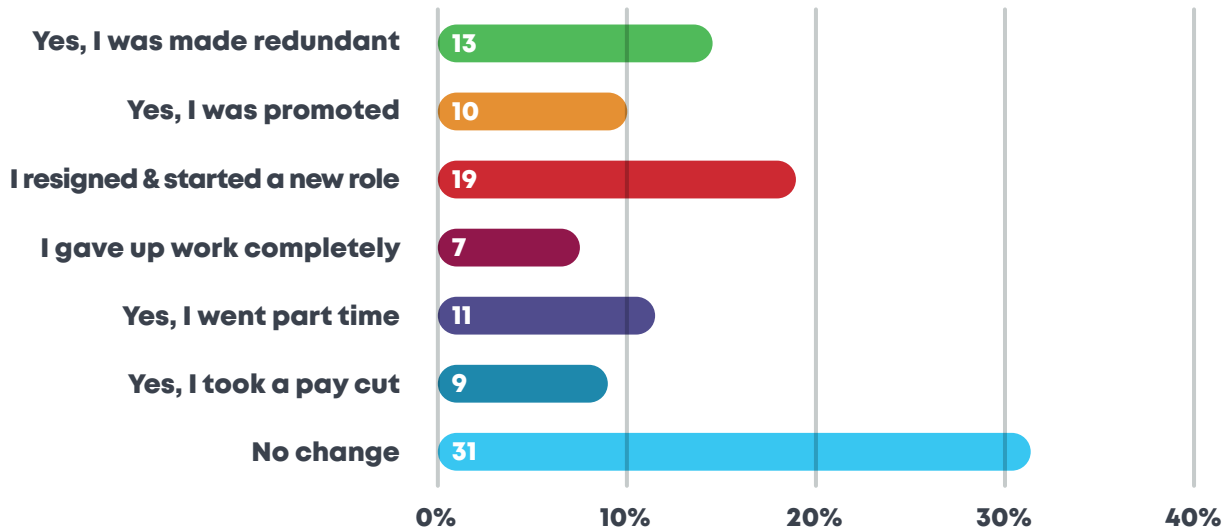


**Georgina Worrall**  
Project Manager  
POWERful Women



### 13 | Did your job status change during the pandemic?

A



Around a third of both men and women reported 'no change' to their job statuses during the first year of the pandemic - specifically, 31% of female and 35% of male respondents.

Despite this, the survey shows that more women 'resigned and started a new role' and 'gave up work completely' compared to their male counterparts. A number of women were also 'made redundant' at 13% or 'went part-time' at 11%.



As stated in the reports such as the McKinsey Covid-19 and Gender Equality study, released in July 2020, there were more negative changes to women's careers during the outbreak, which saw more female redundancies, as well as more women moving to part-time or even giving up work completely.

This is possibly because of a mix of the kind of roles women tend to be hired into (which are more likely to be lost during corporate restructuring) and the higher domestic burden."



**Josh Young**  
Director  
Energy Jobline

**14 | If you could use one word to summarise the impact of Covid-19 on your career, what would it be?**

A



**15 | To what extent do you feel your company is aligned to its pre-pandemic Diversity & Inclusion objectives?**

A



**Now more committed**  
37%



**Stayed the same**  
51%



**Now less committed**  
12%

Positively, the majority of respondents believe their current employers have remained committed to their pre-pandemic D&I targets, with 51 per cent stating the level of commitment 'has stayed the same' and 37 per cent said their firms are now 'more committed'.



It's good to see that employees perceive their firms have remained committed and really positive to see that more than a third believe they are more committed. This could be a response to tangible benefits employees have experienced, such as flexible working, but it's important that company leaders also continue to voice commitment to diversity & inclusion and recognise that it has to stay on the agenda for a successful recovery."



**Vicki Codd**  
Global Marketing Director  
NES Fircroft



## 16 | Do you believe companies focused on reaching Net Zero / Carbon Neutral attract more talent?

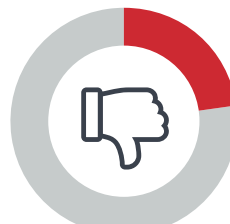
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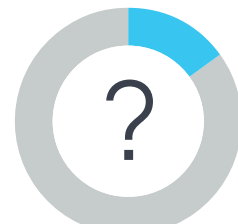
**Women**



**Yes**  
61%



**No**  
23%



**Unsure**  
16%



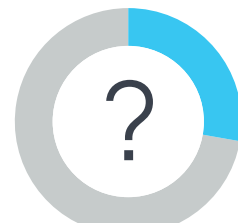
**Men**



**Yes**  
55%



**No**  
17%



**Unsure**  
28%

For more than 60% of female respondents, there was a strong assumption that firms focused on achieving Net Zero emissions attract more talent. For men, the figure was

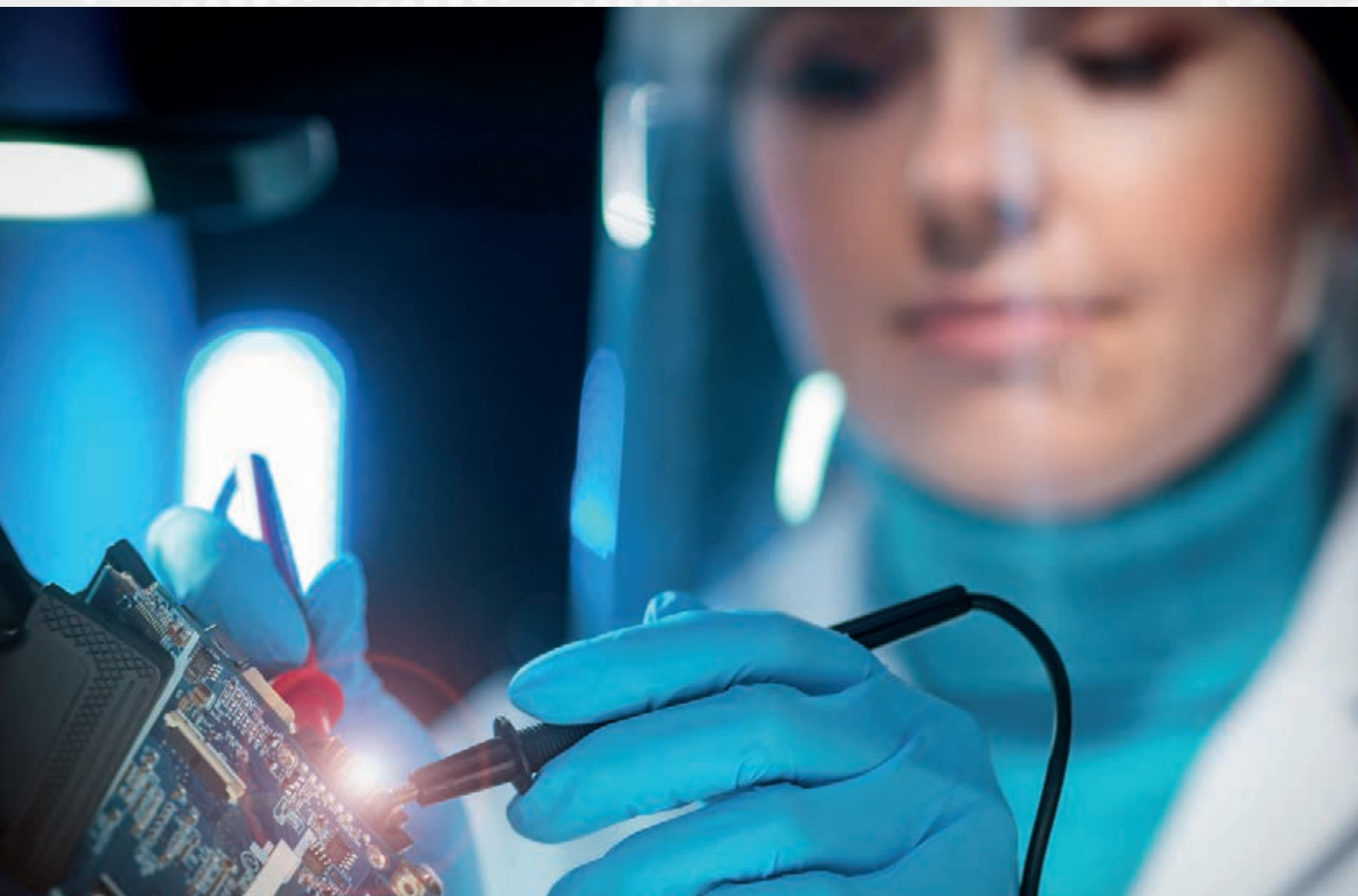
slightly less but both genders were in agreement that keeping climate change on the agenda would benefit a company's employer brand.

# Workforce for the Energy Transition

**The race to Net Zero is on and global commitments and actions are growing rapidly to limit rising temperatures and combat the world's climate challenge.**

This section of the Women in Energy Global Study focuses on the decarbonisation agenda as part of the energy transition, and its significance for women in the industry.

Thanks to our 2021 survey, we can now reveal whether companies that are most dedicated to achieving Net Zero are also the most appealing employers to diverse talent.”

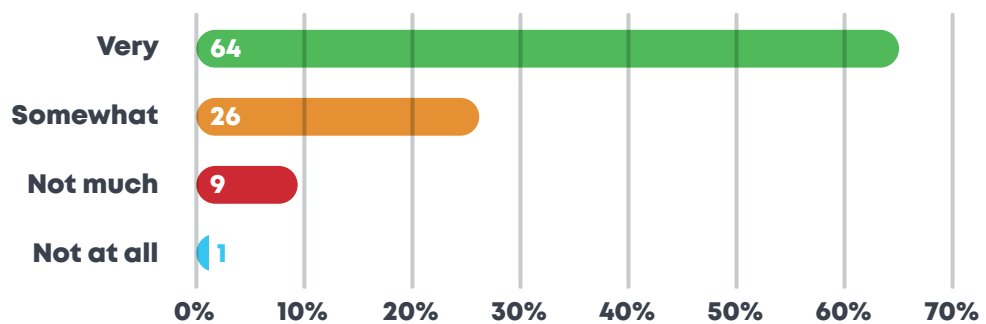






## 17 | How passionate / driven are you personally by the climate change agenda / achieving Net Zero?

A



Women were also more driven by their contribution to the energy transition, with 64% selecting 'very' when asked how passionate they are about the agenda (compared to 51% of men).



Women are noticeably more driven by the journey to Net Zero, so employers looking to attract more female talent should remember this when forming their job advertisements, but also internal communications.

A section talking about the company's contribution to the climate change agenda could significantly improve the number of female applicants to job roles."



**Josh Young**  
Director  
Energy Jobline

# Attracting and developing potential

**Women are well positioned to fill a large proportion of the vacancies needed for not only the energy transition, but also the global skills shortage. But how can companies boost the size of the female pipeline whilst maintaining a focus on retaining the talent that already exists?**

With this section of the study, we hope to provide employers with a guide on how to gain the diversity edge through inclusive recruitment and how

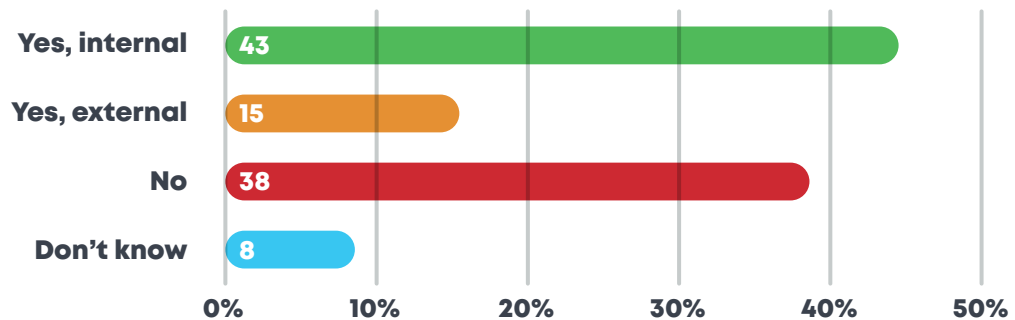
women's career needs have shifted since the start of the pandemic.



# Get with the mentoring programme

## 18 | Does your employer offer formal mentoring programmes?

W



Whilst men and women had similar understandings of their employer's mentoring offerings, more male respondents (62%) said that their company offers mentoring programmes of some kind, compared to 58% of women. A further 38% of women said their current employer doesn't offer a mentoring programme (verses 29% of men).

“

It's a little disconcerting that women are either less aware than men of the mentoring programmes that exist within their companies, or know that there is in fact a lack of support available.

Mentoring is a commonly prescribed method that supports women with the challenges they face working in a male dominated sector, such as a lack of female role models, isolation, unconscious bias and a non-inclusive culture - just to name a few! It's important that women, in particular, are being made aware of these and other support systems, such as sponsorship and coaching, to enable them to thrive at work.”



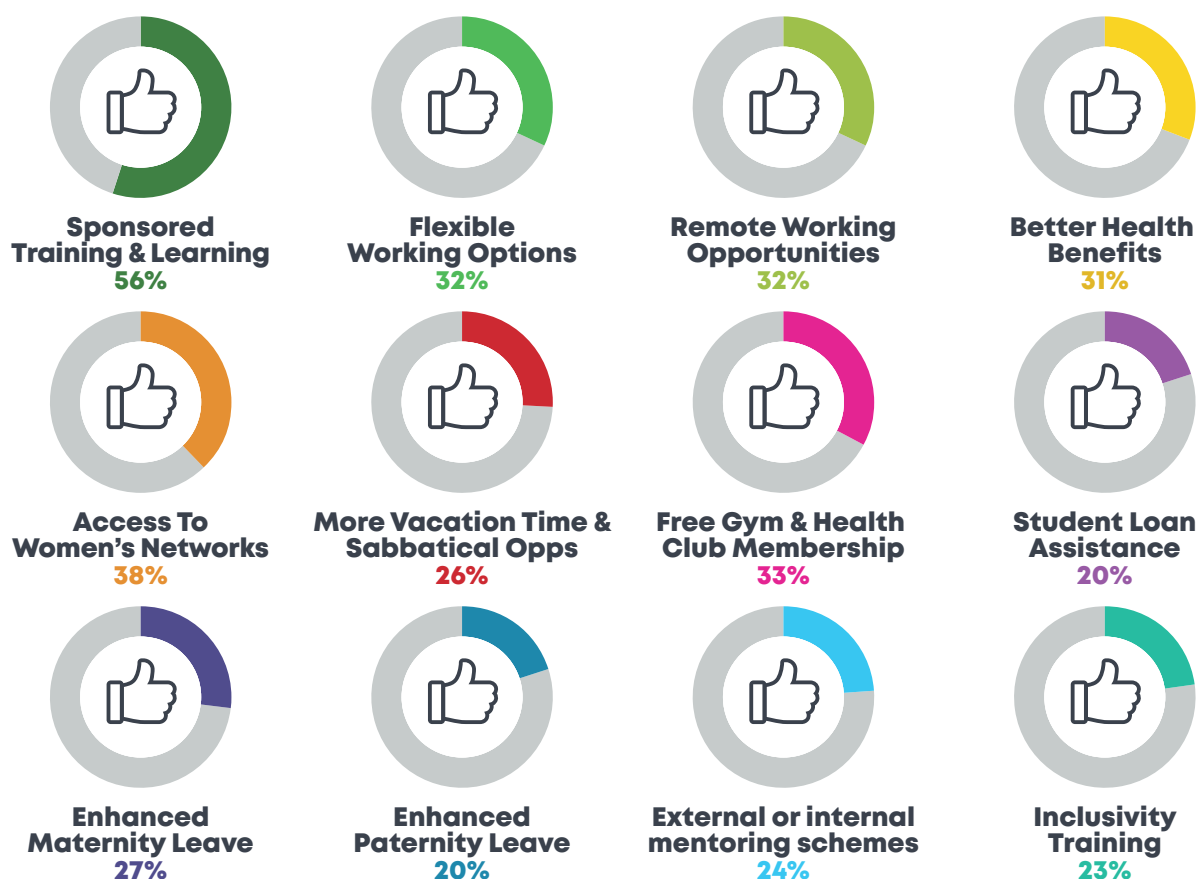
**Georgina Worrall**  
Project Manager  
POWERful Women

# The most attractive workplace benefits

19 | Which working benefits would you like to see more of in your organisation

[ Multiple Choice ]

W



Of the twelve options provided, 'sponsored training and learning', 'access to women's diversity and inclusion networks' and 'free gym / health club membership' were the top benefits for women in energy. In 2019, 'sponsored training and learning' was also on top (at 70%), but this was closely followed by

'flexible working' and 'remote working opportunities'.

This differed slightly from the wants of male respondents, who favoured 'sponsored training and learning', 'flexible working / family-friendly options' and 'better health benefits'.





The fact that male respondents are thinking about flexible working benefits is a positive development. It's important that companies take note and don't assume it's just women in their companies that can gain from flexible options.

There is also a strong desire from women to have access to female networking circles, showing again the lack of formal support on offer. This could be a huge

opportunity for companies looking to attract female expertise and be competitive in the job market.

When we compare this to our last (pre-pandemic) study, we can see that women's desire for flexible working benefits has declined since the pandemic, which could be because companies have now permanently introduced these benefits."

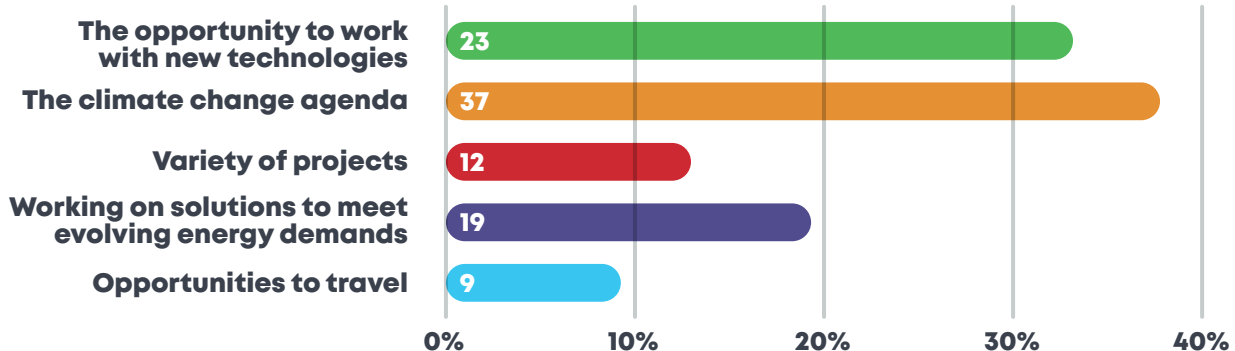


**Josh Young**  
Director  
Energy Jobline

## Love what you do

### 20 | What excites you most about the energy sector?

W



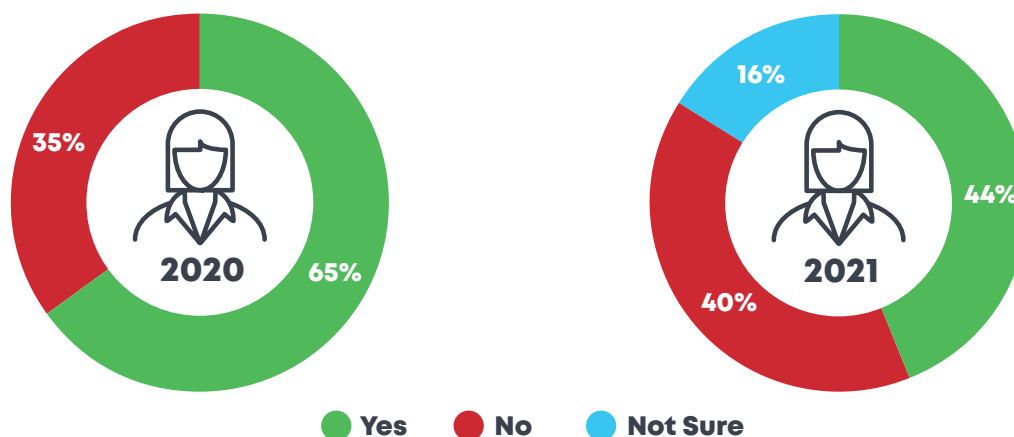
Amongst women, by far the strongest motivation for working in the energy industry is 'the climate agenda' chosen by 38% of female respondents. This reaffirms women's passion for the energy transition. This again differed from male responses, where 'the

opportunity to work with new technologies' was the most popular option (at 44%). Technology was also high on the agenda for women (at 23%) alongside 'working on solutions to meet evolving energy demands' (at 20%).

# Job mobility

## 21 | Are you considering leaving your current role?

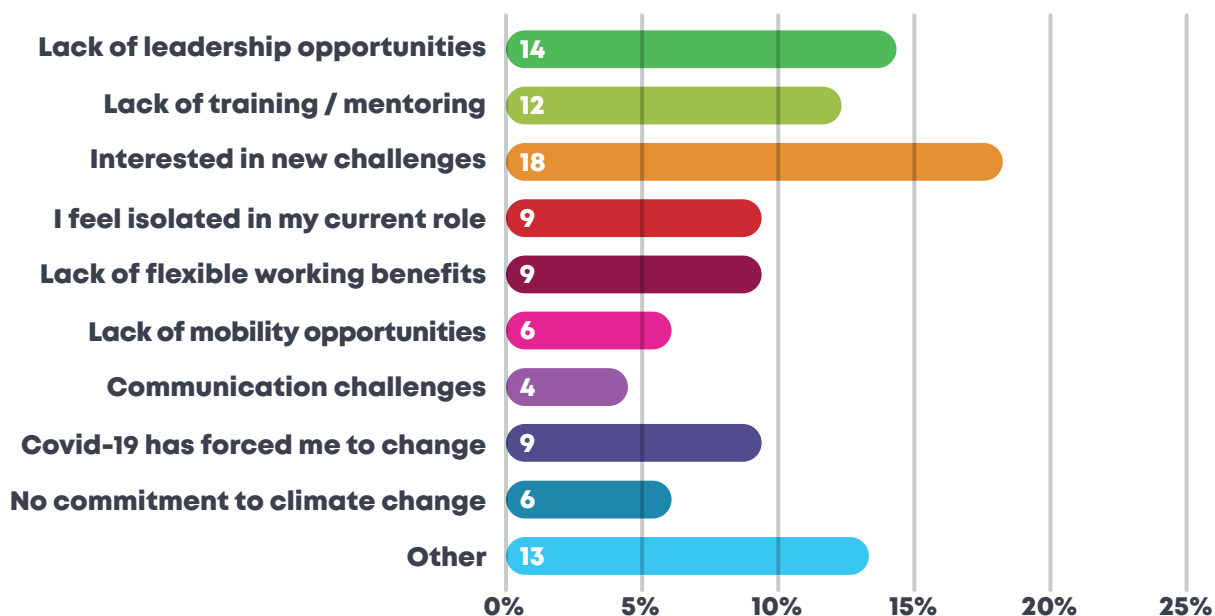
W



## 22 | If yes, why?

[ All Energy ]

W



## 22 | If yes, why?

[ Industry comparison ]

W

● Nuclear
 ● Oil & Gas
 ● Renewables
 ● Petrochemicals

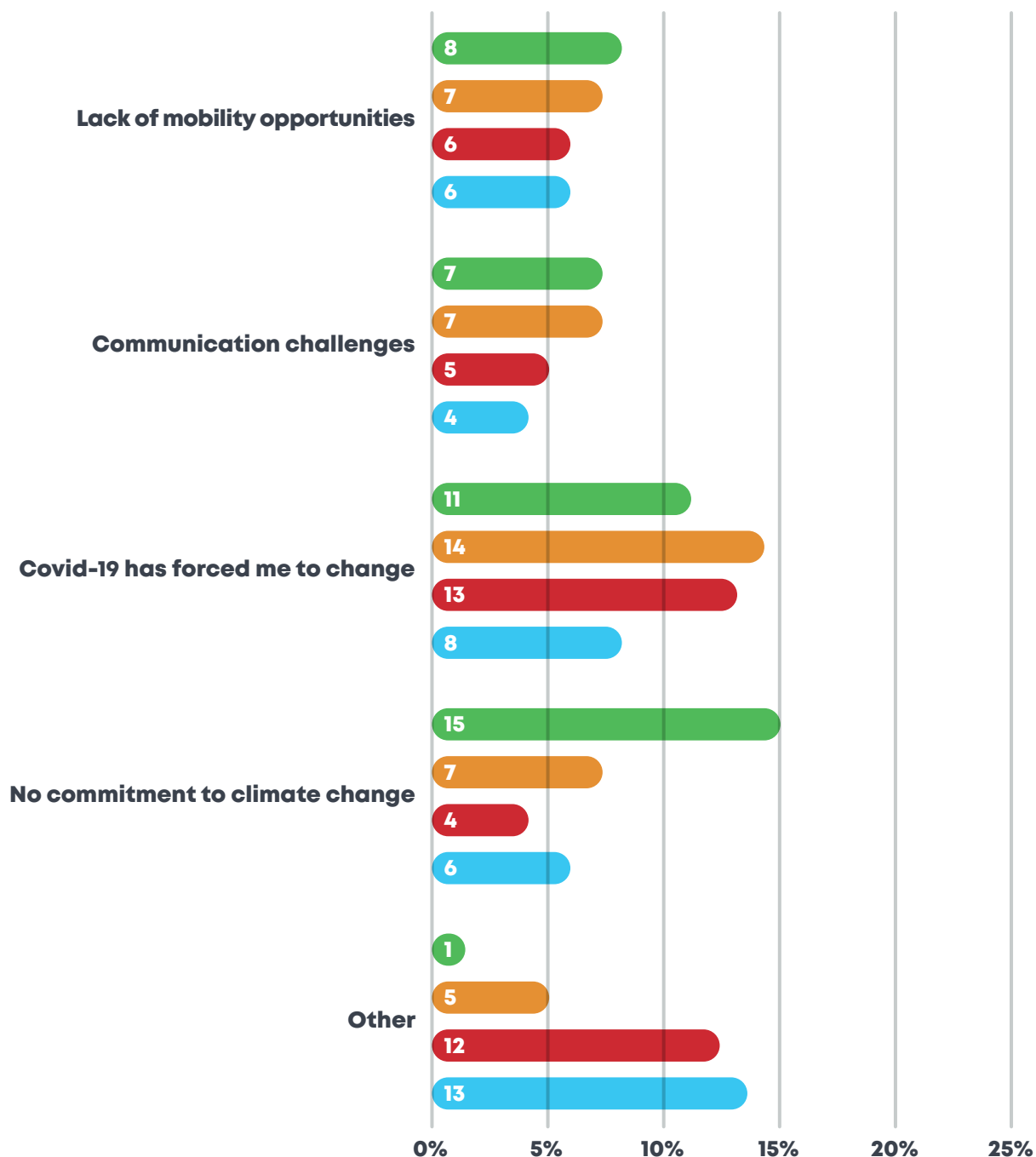


## 22 | If yes, why?

[ Industry comparison ]

W

● Nuclear
 ● Oil & Gas
 ● Renewables
 ● Petrochemicals





When we compare answers to this question with last year's results, we see that job mobility is surely slowing. But is this due to the impacts of Covid-19 and the lack of job security across the industry since the crisis commenced? The survey revealed that this year, 45% of women were considering leaving their current role, compared to 65% in last year's survey.

And what are drivers for career changes? This year, women mainly cited an 'interest in a different sector or new challenges' and 'lack of leadership opportunities' as reasons for leaving their current role.

When the results were split by sector, there was general agreement across most energy industries that an interest in new challenges was the main reason behind a job move. For women working in nuclear, however, it was more driven by their company's 'lack of commitment to the climate change agenda' (16%) and also 'lack of leadership opportunities' (15%), while women in the oil and gas sector were the only segment who were less likely to indicate a 'lack of leadership opportunities' as a reason to leave.

“

**It's important employers don't see low job mobility figures as a reason to become relaxed about staff retention. Professionals are likely to be more than aware of just how uncertain the working world is and will be all the more hesitant about taking the plunge.**

**But this is not sustainable and won't guarantee successful recruitment or retention. Companies that think ahead and take note of the drivers for career moves here will retain the female talent in their organisation, as well as those looking to move.”**



**Vicki Codd**  
Global Marketing Director  
NES Fircroft







# Conclusion

**Covid-19 will change the ways in which we live, work and behave long after the outbreak has settled, so what's next for women in energy and how can companies benefit from this new era of vast change and adaptation?**

After all, the pressure is on (more than ever) to contribute to climate solutions and the companies thought to be at the forefront of this mission are the ones that employ the most unique and innovative teams - something that is statistically more likely to be achieved with diversity, equity and inclusion.

This year's study has taught us that things are not always as they seem and while companies may be rushing to offer their female staff flexible working opportunities, there could be fathers in their companies crying out for more flexitime.

The report also shows that women are being cautious about travel since the outbreak, with many respondents asking their employers not to force them to work away from home unnecessarily.

Career progression opportunities have slowed for all, but we urge companies not to let precious talent go to waste, particularly as women were more likely to move to part-time, give up work completely or be made redundant during the pandemic.

Companies considering their Net Zero position can now make a link between the energy transition and gender diversity, as women are clearly highly

motivated by the climate change agenda and are arguably more passionate than their male colleagues.

Women are also not being directed to mentoring programmes, which could be hindering their development within companies. This presents a significant challenge to organisations looking to promote more women into senior positions.

Finally, job mobility has indeed subsided compared to last year, but there are signs that some women want to make the transition to other sectors, showing that sector mobility could be on the rise.

The energy sector is in the middle of an exciting period of growth and innovation. Companies must now focus on their strongest asset: people, ensuring the Net Zero workforce is built of unique mindsets, diverse perspectives and inclusive leaders. As the data shows us, group think will always be the enemy of success.

We thoroughly enjoyed producing this piece of research and we appreciate our clients and respondents allowing us the privilege of continuing to shine a light on this important topic.





# Women in Energy Global Study 2021

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