

# Lamp House, Chambers and Partners Annual Report 2025

**A review of law firm responsible business activity**





## Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Methodology	6
3	Key Findings	8
4	Leading Firms	12
5	Deep Dive: UK Market	16
6	Deep Dive: US Market	26
7	What's Next	32

## Introduction

# Lamp House's third Annual Report arrives towards the tail-end of an unsettling year for responsible business practitioners and advocates.

The political headwinds from the US have had far-reaching effects, and we have heard similar questions and concerns repeated throughout the year: What does this mean for responsible business within law firms? How are firms adapting or changing their approach? Do clients still care? What is the impact on talent? Will law firms remain steadfast in their commitment to responsible business?

It bears reminding that we define responsible business, in a law firm context, as the strategic imperative to create value for a firm's wider stakeholders and not only its shareholders. Law firms at their core are people businesses: responsible business means proactively supporting mental health and wellbeing in a notoriously stressful profession and ensuring there is space and opportunity for people of all backgrounds to be included and thrive there within.

It is also about the wider impact the firm can have in using its skills, expertise and resources to support its local community, charitable and humanitarian causes and the planet itself.

Despite the real risks and obstacles to navigate, Lamp House and Chambers and Partners' wider research confirms that responsible business does remain important for many key stakeholders.

## Introduction

## Talent

Our Leading Teams research explores associates' views of responsible business in their firm from both sides of the pond: our US research captured the views of almost 7,000 associates between September 2024 and January 2025, with our more recently launched UK research hearing from around 1,000 associates between February and April 2025.

### How does talent experience life in big law firms?

Find out more through our [Leading Teams research](#)

72%

felt it is very important for their firm to prioritise the mental health and wellbeing of its people

65%

felt it is very important for their firm to be diverse and inclusive

56%

felt it is very important for their firm to invest in pro bono and social impact

44%

felt it is very important for their firm to focus on reducing climate impact

The proportion of talent who felt these issues were important was strikingly similar across the US and the UK. The only real difference was that US associates felt even more impassioned about pro bono and social impact work: 91% of US associates felt it was important for their firms to focus on this, compared to 56% of their UK counterparts.

The research also showed that there is a sizeable number of associates who feel that their firms should go further and be doing even more to advance their commitment to each of these areas. The impact of doing so has big benefits for engaging and retaining talent: motivation and likelihood to recommend a firm are higher for associates who feel their firm does a good job on responsible business issues, with flight risk also reduced. Despite challenging circumstances, firms should remain confident that continuing to take action and implement responsible business programming is the right thing to do if you want a highly motivated and committed talent pool.

# Introduction

## Clients

Chambers and Partners' interviews with law firm clients also suggest that the importance placed on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in particular has remained intact.

In the US, our research tracked the proportion of clients who spontaneously mentioned that DEI is a factor in their hiring of firms. This stood at 5% prior to the 2024 Presidential Election, 8% following the election and increased to 19% after the signing of three Executive Orders targeting DEI programmes in the public and private sector.

On the surface, this is a stark increase in the proportion of clients saying DEI informs their hiring decisions, but it does not necessarily represent that DEI has become more important to even more clients. It more likely suggests that there has been a galvanising effect where those clients who always cared about DEI to some extent became even more pre-disposed to talk about this and cite it as a selection factor. It also aligns with UK-based clients, where a similar proportion (18%) said DEI is a factor when selecting law firms. It is also worth noting that though a fifth of clients were vocally positive about DEI in our research, this doesn't mean the remainder of clients took a stance against it; only 3% of clients interviewed expressed more extreme, strongly felt views in opposition to DEI.

As the talent data also shows, not every single person will care about what a firm is doing around responsible business, but firms cannot afford to ignore it or disengage from it completely when it remains important to a sizeable chunk of clients – around a fifth in both the US and UK markets – and for some particular clients it will be a decisive factor in pitches and RFPs.

There is also an important link not to overlook between talent and clients: embedding responsible initiatives will positively contribute to associate motivation, happiness and retention, which all has a bearing on the experience and service clients receive.

## Responsible Business professionals

Lastly, ahead of our annual members' event in May this year, we surveyed responsible business practitioners from Lamp House member firms about the year ahead. The overall feeling was optimistic: 90% of Lamp House member firms felt their leadership's commitment to responsible business would strengthen, or at least stay the same, in the next 12 months. This was the case in spite of the fact that external rhetoric around responsible business and ESG was twice as likely to be cited as a significant challenge in the role this year compared to last. Resourcing and team size was also more likely to be mentioned as a constraint to firms this year. The reasons for optimism well predicted the results we see in this year's analysis, with UK firms in particular continuing to improve and enhance their communication and public commitment to responsible business strategies.

That said, at the time we hypothesised that this optimism was taken from a slightly biased sample of already committed firms who expected the commitment to remain strong at firm level, and that what we might see emerging is a splintering across the market in its approach to responsible business. This is certainly what we have seen play out when looking at the results on a more global level.



# As in previous years, this report presents findings from an analysis of the responsible business activity carried out by 150 leading law firms.

This is as reported on law firm websites, including specific responsible business reports, during July and August 2025. This includes the top 100 UK firms and top 50 US firms by revenue.

Just as a prospective employee, client or any other stakeholder might try to investigate a firm's commitments and progress in this space, a Lamp House researcher reviews and analyses each website and any relevant content published on that site.

We continue to use our legal industry specific framework to measure activity across three broad categories: People, Planet and Governance.

Given the additional attention firms have been receiving around their communication of responsible business strategies and the uncertainty of how this might need to change at the time we were planning our research, we decided to make minimal changes to our research framework and the criteria we use to evaluate and score firms this year. This is to help maintain continuity and to track year-on-year changes effectively.

That said, we have incorporated a few new metrics to our framework, especially expanding our section on Wellbeing.

We have developed these to align with the areas that law firm talent feels would have the greatest positive impact on their mental health and wellbeing (as captured in our Leading Teams research). Our mission has always been to evolve our framework over time so it can represent and reward firms for adopting leading practices, not just common practices, and we hope to continue to develop the suite of metrics we use in next year's research.

We also continue to recognise that it can be difficult to implement strategies on a firm-wide basis (especially for global and international firms), and we factor this into our scoring approach for specific metrics. For example, firms are not penalised in our scoring for not being able to report on certain diversity statistics at a firm-wide level.

Our framework also remains flexible and allows US firms to be analysed and compared on metrics which do not include any affirmative action initiatives which are aimed at specific protected groups.

In addition to law firms, we will also be making the results of our market analysis available to General Counsel and legal department leaders via Lamp House Analytics, our interactive dashboards system.

## Methodology

### Lamp House Analytics

Through Lamp House Analytics, law firms and in-house teams can view how each of the 150 firms included in our analysis performed.

We make this tool free for General Counsel and their teams to use so they can compare their firms across a consistent set of legal industry specific metrics. This can be an invaluable source of intelligence as part of pitch and RFP processes, as well as in guiding general relationship management meetings with their law firms. The dashboards help GCs to easily identify a firm's strengths and opportunities to collaborate on responsible business initiatives, as well as relative weaknesses where they may need to ask more questions of their firms.

Firms can use it similarly to access deep competitor intelligence: the site helps firms to visualise their market position, benchmark themselves against peers and spot gaps in their strategy.



## Overall Findings

### Key finding 1 – UK firms make heartening progress, while US regresses

Despite the well-publicised scaling down of responsible business programmes from some large corporates, there is comfort to be found in this year's results. Law firms continue making progress, expanding their programming and remaining transparent about their responsible business journey.

This is most visible, not surprisingly, in the UK market where firms were already communicating more than other regions. Collectively, the UK Top 100 firms (by revenue) increased their overall score in Lamp House's research by an average of +12% compared to 2024. This doesn't quite match the rapid progress the market made between 2023 and 2024, but it shows sustained commitment to advancing responsible business causes within the legal industry.

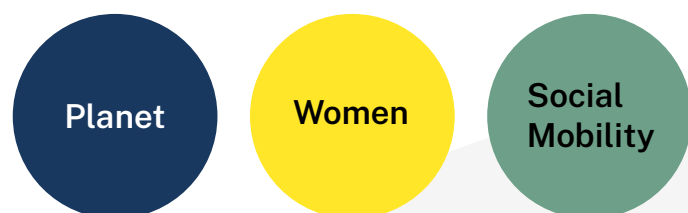
The average score has increased across all three categories—Planet, People and Governance—and, similar to last year, it is the Planet area where we have seen firms making the most progress. At the same time, this is the main area responsible business professionals felt they were making least progress on when asked in our survey.

This was particularly felt in the challenge of managing growth against sustainability commitments and the short-term pressure to show positive impact when the actions needed to achieve that are necessarily long-term and complex in their scope (for example, tackling supply chain emissions and securing buy-in for looming Net Zero targets). It will be interesting to monitor how firms look to approach this in the coming year and whether progress in our Planet category will eventually reach a plateau.

Two sub-sections of our People category are also included in the areas of greatest growth for the UK market: that is in the action being taken to support the advancement and retention of women in the profession, as well as social mobility.

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#### Three biggest areas of increase for UK





## Key finding 1

Of course, the picture is quite different for the US and we unpack the trends in greater detail later in the report. At a high level, the AmLaw 50 firms' average score year-on-year has dropped by -30%. Every single category we track recorded a decrease in the US, with the biggest decrease being in the People section, representing how much US firms' public-facing communications on DEI particularly have been scaled back.

Last year, there were three People categories where US firms on average actually scored higher than the UK: Women, Ethnic Minorities and LGBTQ+. These areas are now the three which recorded the biggest decline in score across AmLaw 50 firms, with the biggest decrease being in the communication of initiatives designed to support the recruitment, retention and progression of talent from an ethnic minority.

The message we hear from US firms is that they are still maintaining all of the same programming and initiatives as were in place previously, but that their firm's outward commitments and language has required rethinking and repositioning. Indeed, it is important to make the distinction that our research is tracking the volume of communication and range of responsible business initiatives which firms are making known through their own channels; it does not necessarily hold that these initiatives have been discontinued entirely. Still, some US firms bucked the trend: four individual firms recorded a positive increase to their score compared to 2024, with one prominent US firm sitting among the top 20 highest rising scores year-on-year.

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### Three biggest areas of decrease for AmLaw 50



**Ethnic  
Minorities**

**LGBTQ+**

**Women**

## Overall Findings

### Key finding 2 – Continued momentum and dynamism in responsible business

Responsible business remains an area where firms must keep telling their story to keep it current, relevant and authentic to what life at the firm is really like. Failing to do so risks firms falling behind their competitors in how they appeal to talent and clients.

Like last year, the top scoring firms in Lamp House's research look different to 12 months ago. Six firms in the top 20 highest scoring firms overall are new entrants to this esteemed group. All of these firms, unsurprisingly, are UK-headquartered.

The highest scoring firms named in our 2024 Annual Report have continued to increase their score, but their +3% year-on-year increase in average score falls well below the UK market average of +12%, meaning more firms are closing the gap on last year's leaders.

In terms of which firms are growing the most in the market, firms ranked in the UK Top 11-20 by revenue have made the biggest year-on-year increase, followed by firms sitting in the Top 41-50 range, showing that firms of all sizes are making the commitment to do more and say more about responsible business.

The fact that it is not the same firms year-on-year who sit atop our rankings is also further evidence that responsible business is a strategic choice that a vast range of firms are choosing to commit to. These are reasons to be optimistic for the future of responsible business within law firms; this was echoed by responsible business practitioners in this year's survey, with greater embedding of responsible business into decision making process and strategy—coupled with greater support and engagement from leadership—as the two main cited 'reasons to be cheerful'. The momentum behind responsible business is not stopping.

## Overall Findings

### Key finding 3 – Firms not communicating enough on the wellbeing measures that talent want to see

Though changes to our methodology were intentionally minimal this year, wellbeing was one area where we did expand our metrics to cover a wider range of interventions. Last year, we had already begun to evolve the wellbeing metrics we capture so that they focused more on preventative strategies, as well as measures to support wellbeing that could only be offered and implemented by the firm itself for the benefit of its people. This year, we developed these even further in line with what we heard in our Leading Teams research when asking associates what they feel would improve their overall mental health and wellbeing.

One of the main messages across both the UK and US markets was the need for more protections around people's personal time. Some of the more common suggestions from associates were about having more dedicated mental health and wellbeing days (or some billable 'wellbeing' hours) and – particularly in the US – more guardrails around vacation time being respected and even mandated. Very few law firms are openly communicating the approach they take to meet talents' wants in these two areas.

2%

of firms say they have implemented strategies or policies to encourage the uptake of, and respect towards, vacation time

6%

of firms say they offer dedicated mental health and wellbeing days

7%

of firms say they actively monitor hours and work allocation to make proactive interventions on individual workloads

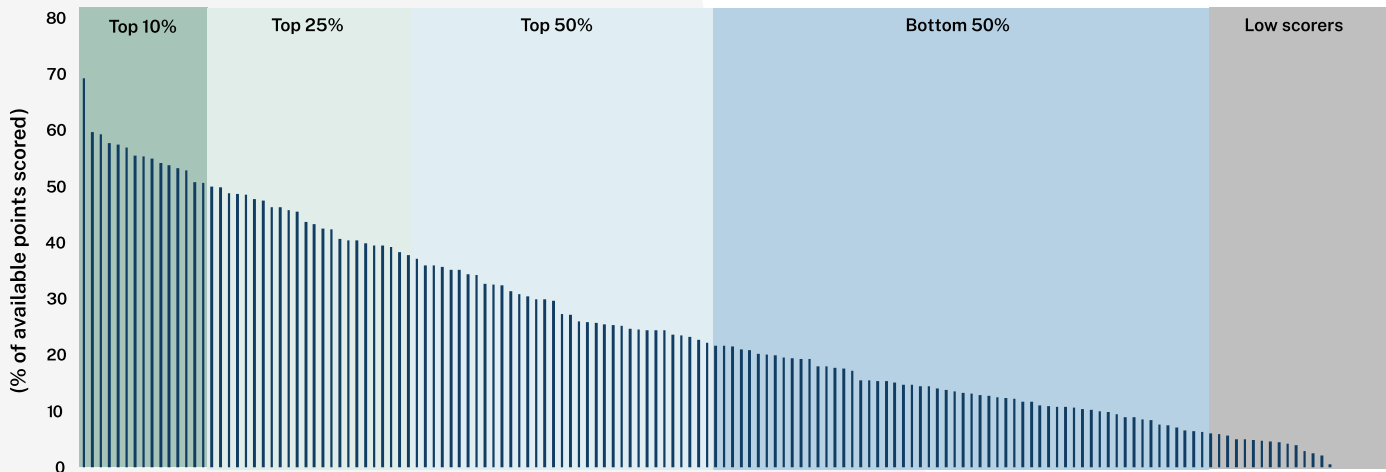
The most commonly communicated wellbeing measures continue to be designated mental health champions and advocates within the firm (adopted by 48% of firms across the UK & US), public alignment with the Mindful Business Charter or similar industry level guidelines (39%) and free access to mental health professionals (36%).

# Leading Firms

The chart below shows the overall score attained by each of the 150 firms analysed as part of this year’s research. This year, there is far greater polarisation between the firms at the top and those at the bottom. In 2025, 11% of firms amassed at least half of the total points on offer (compared to 4% of firms reaching this threshold in 2024). Whereas only two firms attained a score of 5% or less in 2024, 15 firms now sit in the group of particularly low scorers.

This seems to lend credence to our theory that the market is fragmenting in its approach to responsible business, with a greater distance between the firms who are committed and continuing to make progress, those who are disengaging from the concept entirely, and those that sit somewhere between those two extremes.

## Overall score for all 150 firms





## Leading Firms

### Overall Leader

Our overall leader for 2025 is Taylor Wessing. Taylor Wessing achieved the highest overall score of any firm in this year's research. It is also the firm that has experienced the biggest year-on-year increase in score, driven by the firm's latest Responsible Business Impact Report and its recent mid-year update which gives a round-up of the vast amount of activity and progress made since the firm's last published report.

The firm was building off already strong foundations. In the previous two years of Lamp House's research, Taylor Wessing was one of the Top 10 highest scoring firms in the People category, which our overall scoring is weighted towards. This year, the firm has increased its score by communicating a wider range of initiatives in place which are designed to deliver a more inclusive culture across the firm. One thing the firm has done particularly well is in exemplifying how it has listened to under-represented groups within the firm to create meaningful programmes and policies. For example, the firm's reporting clearly articulates the range of structured career development initiatives in place to support women in the firm and how this has been shaped by the firm's people. The firm also uses data to demonstrate the positive impact such initiatives are having on retention.

## TaylorWessing

Taylor Wessing is also the leading firm in this year's Planet category, doubling its score from last year. This has been driven by more communication of a fuller range of activity happening within the firm, from receiving approval of the firm's science-based targets by the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) and its active participation in the Legal 1.5's working group looking at the climate impact of legal advice to clients. The firm has also disclosed a lot of information around how it is managing travel-related emissions; teams are now assigned carbon and cost budgets, with a demonstrative positive impact on how travel decisions are being made in the firm. Our congratulations to Taylor Wessing and everyone at the firm who is bringing the commitment to responsible business to life.

# TaylorWessing

## Claire Rainsford, Head of Sustainability at Taylor Wessing



We are really pleased to be recognised as the overall leader in Lamp House's 2025 benchmarking, this reflects our commitment to driving progress across all areas of responsible business. At Taylor Wessing, we believe that fostering innovation and promoting opportunity for all enables us to deliver measurable value for our clients, colleagues, and communities. By focusing on data-driven decision-making and efficient practices — whether in resource management or supporting career development — we continue to raise standards and contribute positively to long-term business success.

Being a responsible business is an ongoing and dynamic commitment — one that underpins long-term value creation for Taylor Wessing. While we are encouraged by the tangible strides we've made, we maintain a realistic perspective on the magnitude of the task ahead, recognising the need to drive ongoing change across the organisation and to keep improving."

# Leading Firms

## Overall Leaderboard

### Top 5 Firms (A-Z order)

- Clyde & Co
- DWF
- Pinsent Masons
- Simmons & Simmons
- Taylor Wessing

### Rest of Top 20 Firms (A-Z Order)

- Addleshaw Goddard
- Ashurst
- Burges Salmon
- Charles Russell Speechlys
- Clifford Chance
- CMS United Kingdom
- DLA Piper (International)
- Freshfields
- Kennedys
- Linklaters
- Mishcon De Reya
- Norton Rose Fulbright LLP
- Osborne Clarke
- RPC
- Shoosmiths

We would also like to give a special mention to four other firms who sit outside of this group but who attained a higher than average increase to their score in the last year: A&O Shearman, BCLP, Cripps and Freeths.

**In a year of uncertainty, UK-headquartered firms have continued to embed their responsible business strategies as we see incremental improvements made across all of our three pillars – Planet, People and Governance.**

At a high level, this year's research of the UK Top 100 found that:

- Overall, UK firms' average total score was double that of their AmLaw 50 counterparts
- The majority of UK firms (65%) saw their overall score increase, with 14 firms increasing their score by 10 or more percentage points
- Only five firms saw their score decrease by 5 or more percentage points; while 3 of these firms were not previously high scorers, the other two were more likely influenced by a strong US presence in their firm

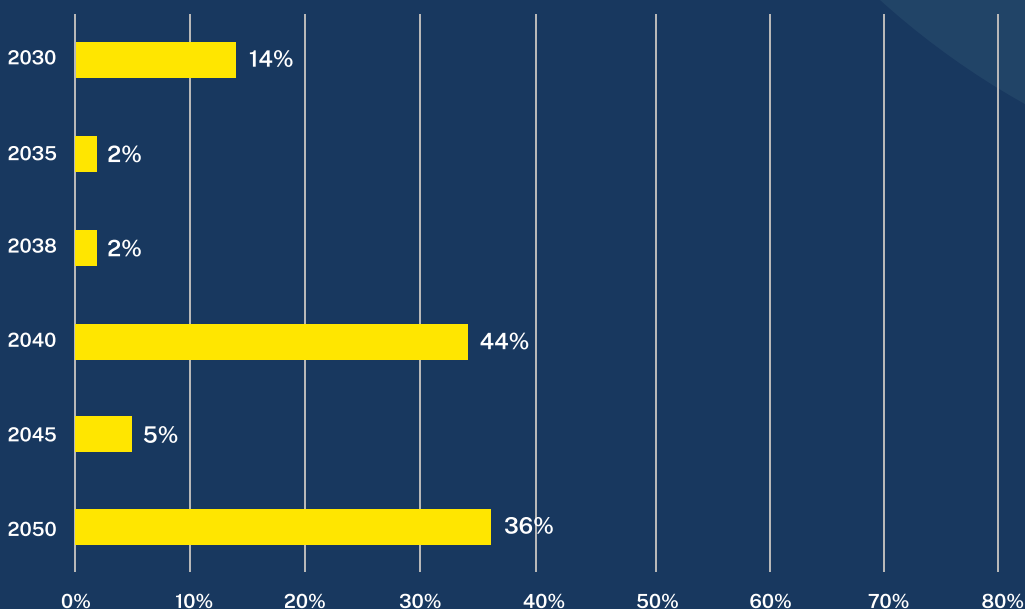


## Deep Dive: UK Firms

### Planet

Like last year, Planet is the category where UK firms attain the highest average score. Year-on-year, we see a growing proportion of firms who are measuring their emissions and setting reduction targets: the majority of UK firms now have a publicly-declared Net Zero target in place (57%), which is an increase on the 44% with a target last year. Among the largest UK Top 20 firms, 80% have a target in place which is an increase from 50% last year. The range of ambition in targets does vary—eight firms in total are aiming to reach Net Zero by 2030, with 2050 being the most common target end date.

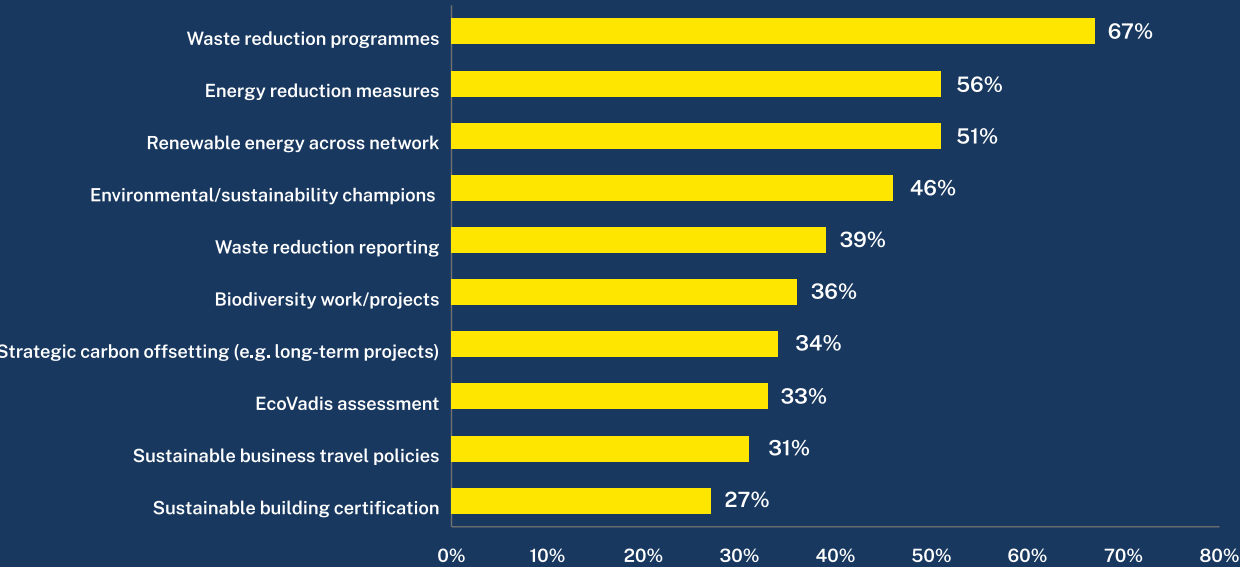
### Net Zero Target Dates for UK Firms



# Deep Dive: UK Firms

There is a strong uptake of different strategies to support these reduction goals. Waste reduction programmes, measures to reduce energy consumption (e.g. LED lighting, office controls) and using renewable energy across most of the firm's network are the three strategies most commonly described, and by the majority of firms we analysed.

## Top 10 Planet actions in UK firms



Since last year, we are seeing a greater proportion of firms now reporting on their progress to tackle business travel related emissions—an area that has notoriously been challenging for the industry. The increased level of transparency around this (especially when firms are being honest that, in some cases, business travel emissions are rising) is positive to see in that firms are clearly trying to create more accountability for this area of their sustainability strategy. Another area of increase is that over a third of firms now describe strategies for long-term

carbon offsetting (compared to a quarter in the previous year). This is a controversial strategy, but the increase in firms adopting it this year is reflective of the time that has been invested to source high-quality offsets which meet the highest standards of certification.

People

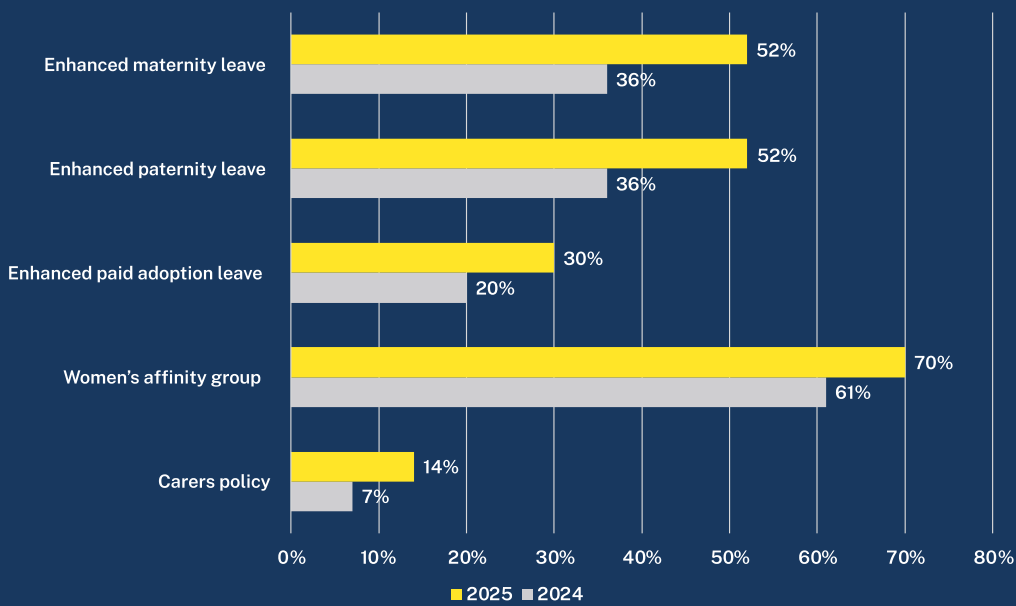
Despite what is happening in the US, an increase to the average score in the People category shows that UK firms are choosing to confidently disclose a wide range of initiatives. Out of all our categories for People, it is the category looking at initiatives to support the retention and progression of women that showed the most growth, with a 6 percentage point increase over the last 12 months.

What has made the difference is a higher proportion of firms disclosing what policies they have in place to support women. Over half of UK firms now disclose that they have an enhanced parental leave offering, compared to a third last year. Of those that have enhanced maternity (or primary caregiver) leave, 44% offer the most generous provision of at least 26 weeks at full pay.

For paternity (or secondary caregiver) leave, a third of firms are offering three to four weeks at full pay, with 13% matching the minimum of 26 weeks at full pay for primary caregivers. We also see a doubling in the proportion of firms offering paid carers leave.

The fact that far more firms are reporting on these benefits shows the industry's understanding that it must look at what support systems (beyond career development initiatives) it can implement to aid with retention across the different stages of life where women are disproportionately affected.

Biggest year-on-year increases in UK to support female talent



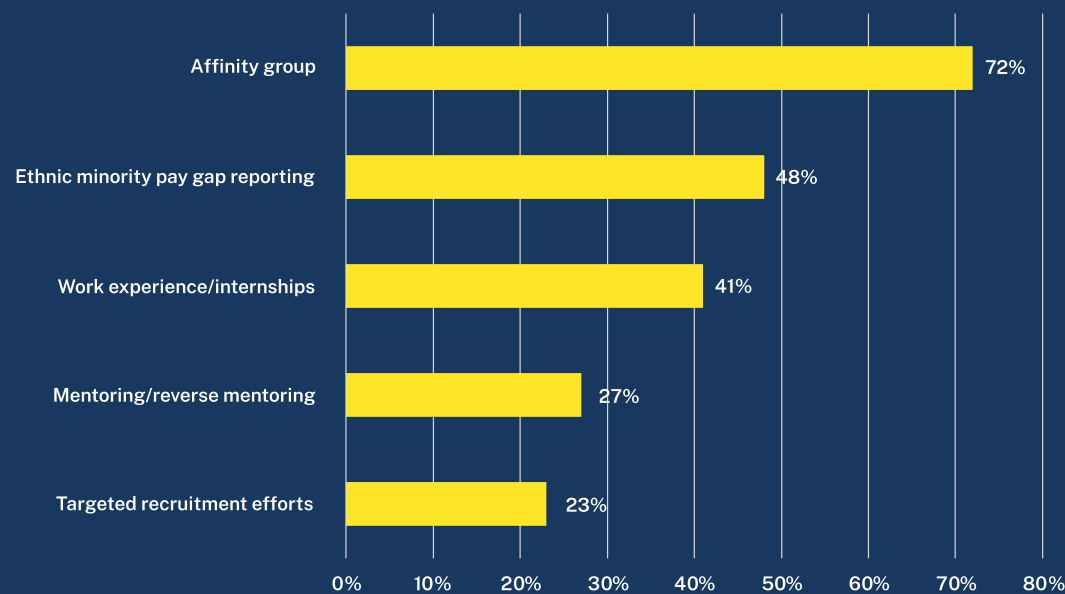
# Deep Dive: UK Firms

The other pillars we analyse in our People research cover what firms are doing to support ethnic minorities, social mobility, LGBTQ+ colleagues and those with a disability.

We have highlighted the top 5 strategies being communicated by firms across these pillars.

## Ethnic minorities

### Top 5 Practical Actions supporting Ethnic Minorities



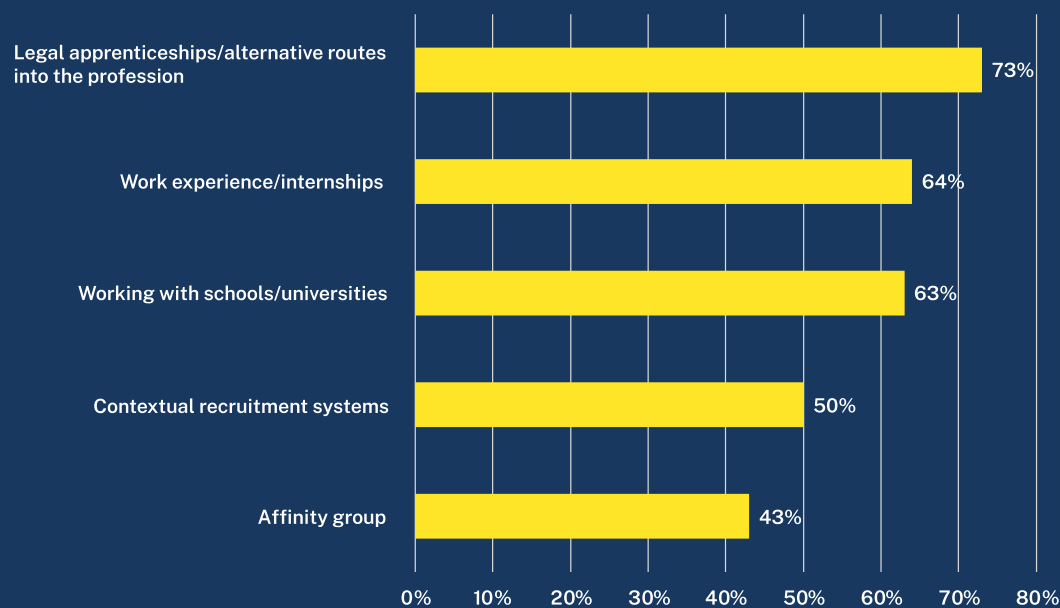
This year, firms are offering an impressive range of initiatives that are designed to both retain and recruit people from ethnically diverse backgrounds, including affinity groups and mentoring, pay gap reporting and targeted recruitment efforts. What is also promising to see is an increase in the number of firms who are designing and promoting career development programmes for ethnic minority talent within their firm – 13% of UK firms are now doing this, compared to 8% last year.

We are also seeing a slight increase in the number of firms talking about how they are actively conducting listening and consulting exercises to design interventions and policies based on the input and experience of ethnic minority colleagues.



# Social mobility

## Top 5 Practical Actions supporting Social Mobility



In terms of social mobility, it is clear that firms are doubling down on their recruitment efforts. More than half of firms say they are using contextual recruitment systems, working with schools or universities, providing work experience or internships and offering alternative routes into the legal profession via apprenticeships.

What is stark about the social mobility category is that so much of the activity is centred around recruitment and there is very little discussion of how firms are helping those from lower socio-economic backgrounds to thrive once they enter the firm.

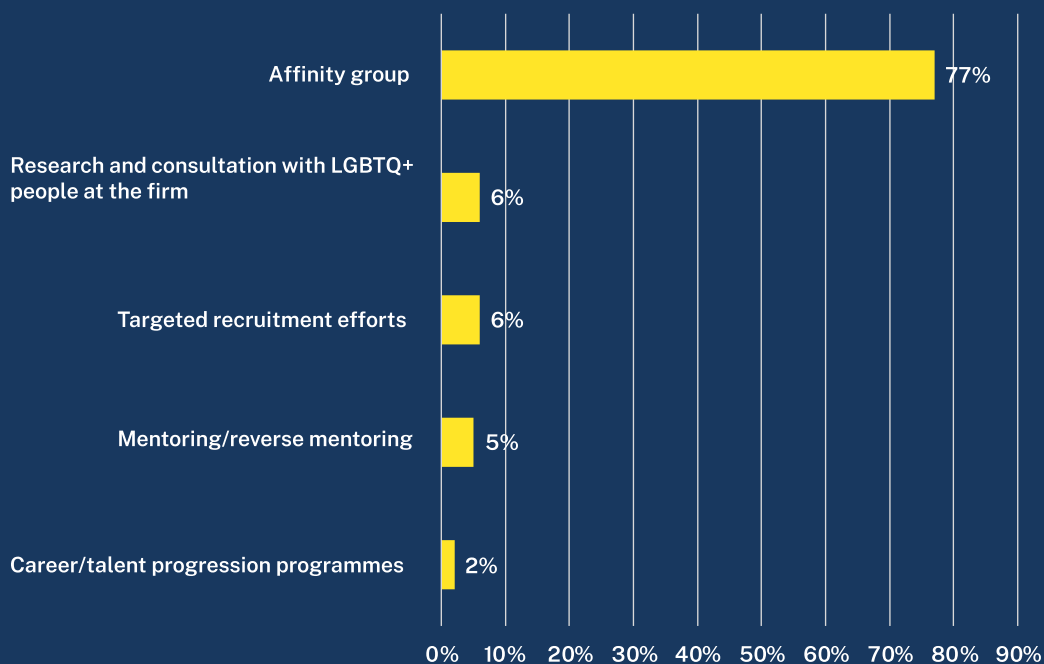
Setting targets is one example where there is a big difference: only 2% of firms have any kind of target about improving socio-economic representation within their firm, compared to a third of firms setting targets for female representation at partner level and a fifth setting targets for the proportion of partnership from an ethnic minority.

## Deep Dive: UK Firms

### LGBTQ+

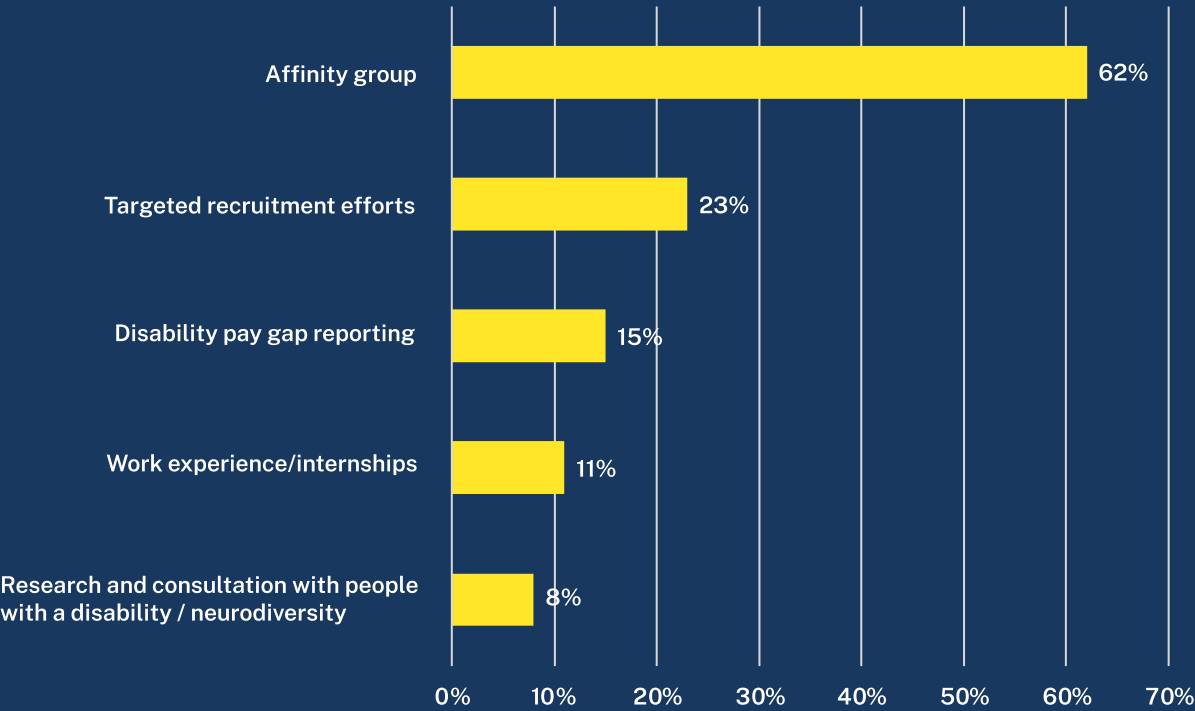
LGBTQ+ is the lowest scoring category within People; over three quarters of firms have an LGBTQ+ affinity group in place, though it is rarer for firms to talk about specific recruitment, retention and progression activities beyond this. We recognise that the range of what firms are doing to create an inclusive, LGBTQ+ friendly culture extends beyond the list of metrics we cover in our research, and we would be eager to work with member firms in the year ahead to ensure our metrics are focused on the kinds of activities that can have the greatest positive impact on this under-represented group.

### Top 5 Practical Actions supporting LGBTQ+ colleagues



# Disability

## Top 5 Practical Actions for Disability



Disability has also been a very low scoring area relative to other under-represented groups. This year, though activity in some areas is still low, there are positive incremental increases in the different actions being taken to support people with a disability in the firm.

Close to a quarter of firms are now making it clear how they are evolving their approach to recruitment to be more inclusive of talent with a disability and there is also an uplift in firms publishing their disability pay gap, which may be indicative that this group is receiving more attention as part of DEI strategies.

Governance

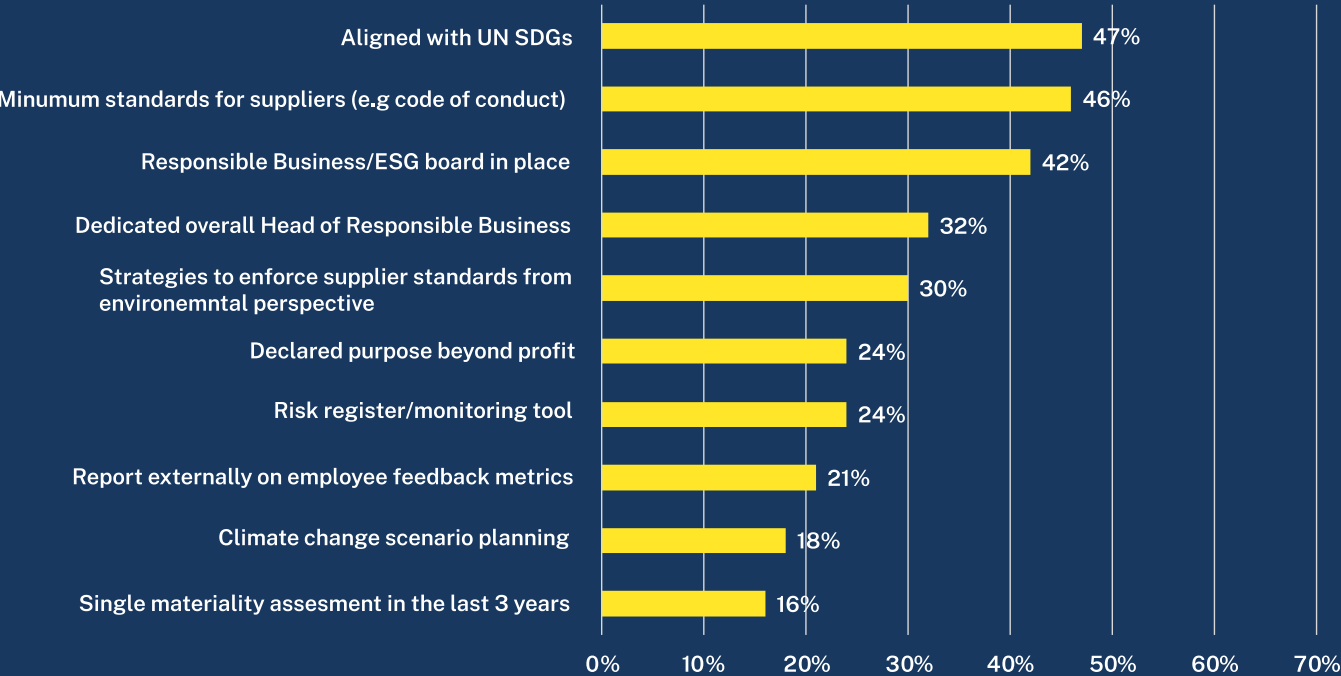
Embedding responsible business within the firm’s overall governance structure seems to be an area where UK firms are only growing stronger.

Firms are elevating responsible business as a strategic priority at the highest level of the firm; this is reflected in the fact that just under half of UK Top 100 firms (42%) have a Responsible Business Board / Steering Committee which reports into the overall Board, and this proportion has increased from 32% last year.

In the last twelve months, the UK market has retained the same level of dedicated Heads of Responsible Business, which are in place at 32% of firms overall.

The biggest year-on-year increase in the governance category is that there is also an increased number of firms describing how ESG-related risks form a part of their risk register or risk monitoring tools and processes.

Top 10 Governance actions in UK firms





## Deep Dive: UK Firms

A few new metrics have been added into the governance section this year: alongside almost half of firms saying they have minimum standards for suppliers to comply with, 30% are going a step further to describe how they enforce these standards and supplier take-on from an environmental perspective. This may include having set targets for the percentage of suppliers who must have SBTi-targets or regular mandatory audits around suppliers' sustainability commitments.

A challenge for the industry is also looking at how they begin to enforce supplier standards from a social impact perspective: only 6% of UK firms are evidencing this in some way at the moment, with strategies such as applying the Living Wage throughout the entire supply chain and tracking suppliers on specific labour and human rights metrics via platforms like EcoVadis. AI is another new area; 13% of UK firms are now publishing information about how they are committing to responsible use of AI, with the introduction of particular policies, principles or steering groups to guide this in the firm.

# Overall, as to be expected, there is less communication and disclosure of responsible business activities compared to 12 months ago.

At a high level, this year's research of the AmLaw 50 found that:

- The average overall score for US firms dropped by -30% compared to 2024. The vast majority of the AmLaw 50 recorded a decrease in their score on last year, with 43 firms (86%) experiencing a decline in score, representing less communication on their responsible business initiatives
- 13 US-based firms saw their score decrease by 10 percentage points or more
- Three firms attained a score of 0; while all of these firms were not particularly high scorers in years gone by, this does represent a total retraction of communication on responsible business activity from their website
- By contrast, there were actually four firms who increased their score by more than one percentage point

Within the context of the current political environment and the real risks involved with expressing how responsible business initiatives are being implemented inside firms, these results are as predicted. Interestingly though, there is no huge gulf in the approach taken by firms that were directly targeted by Executive Orders or under investigation by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

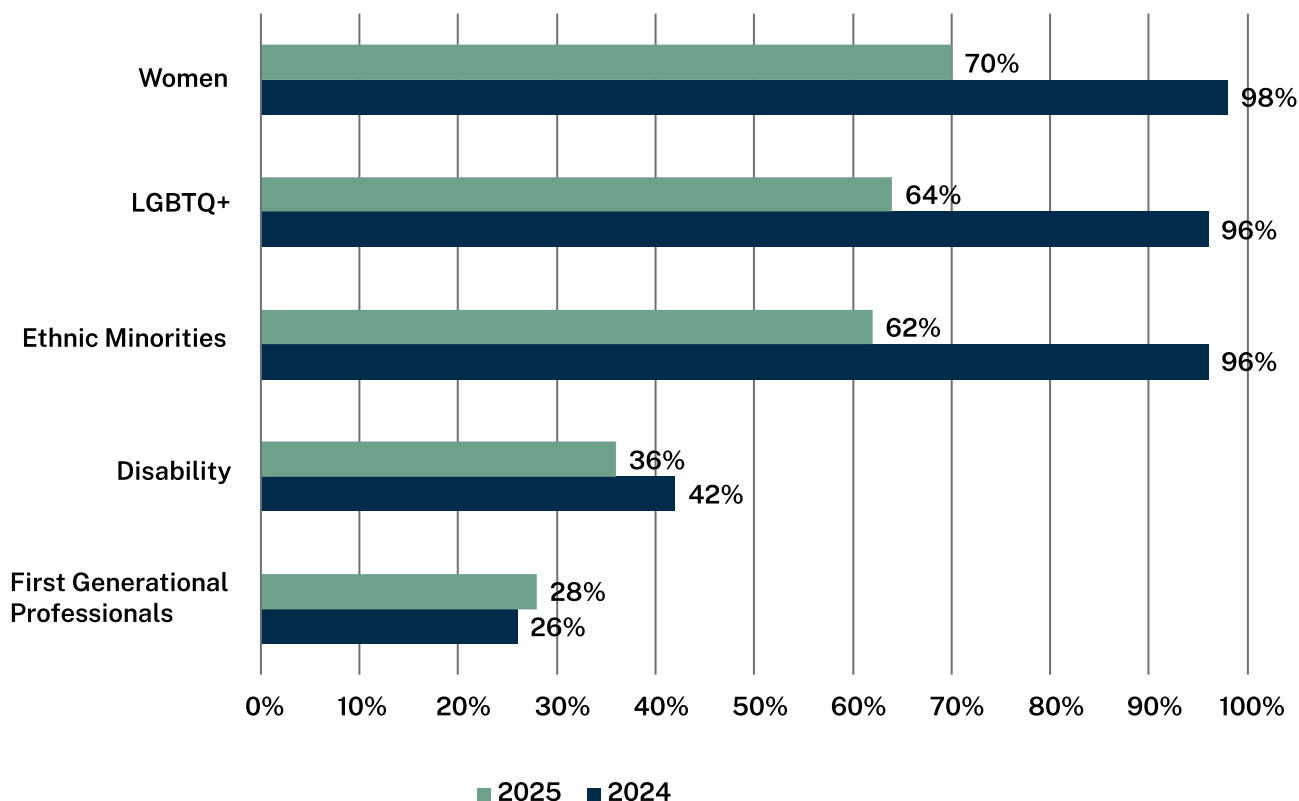
In fact, quite the opposite: firms that were targeted actually scored higher on average than their counterparts and the two firms with the biggest year-on-year increases in the US both faced EEOC investigations. Though some individual firms may have been unphased and indeed doubled down on responsible business commitments, clearly the impact and tone set by the current Administration was so far-reaching that almost all firms have taken a cautious and pre-emptive response. More than 500 law firms supported the Perkins Coie Amicus Brief challenging the legality of the Executive Orders, but only one firm in the AmLaw 50 was within this group. This widespread cautious approach is no more obvious than in the People category.

# How US firms are reframing their approach to DEI

Open communication of DEI-related programming has changed significantly in the past year. Last year, virtually all US firms described having affinity networks or employee resource groups for specific under-represented groups—particularly women, LGBTQ+ staff and those from ethnic minorities. In this year's results, just under a third of firms have removed mention of these initiatives from their websites.

## Affinity groups

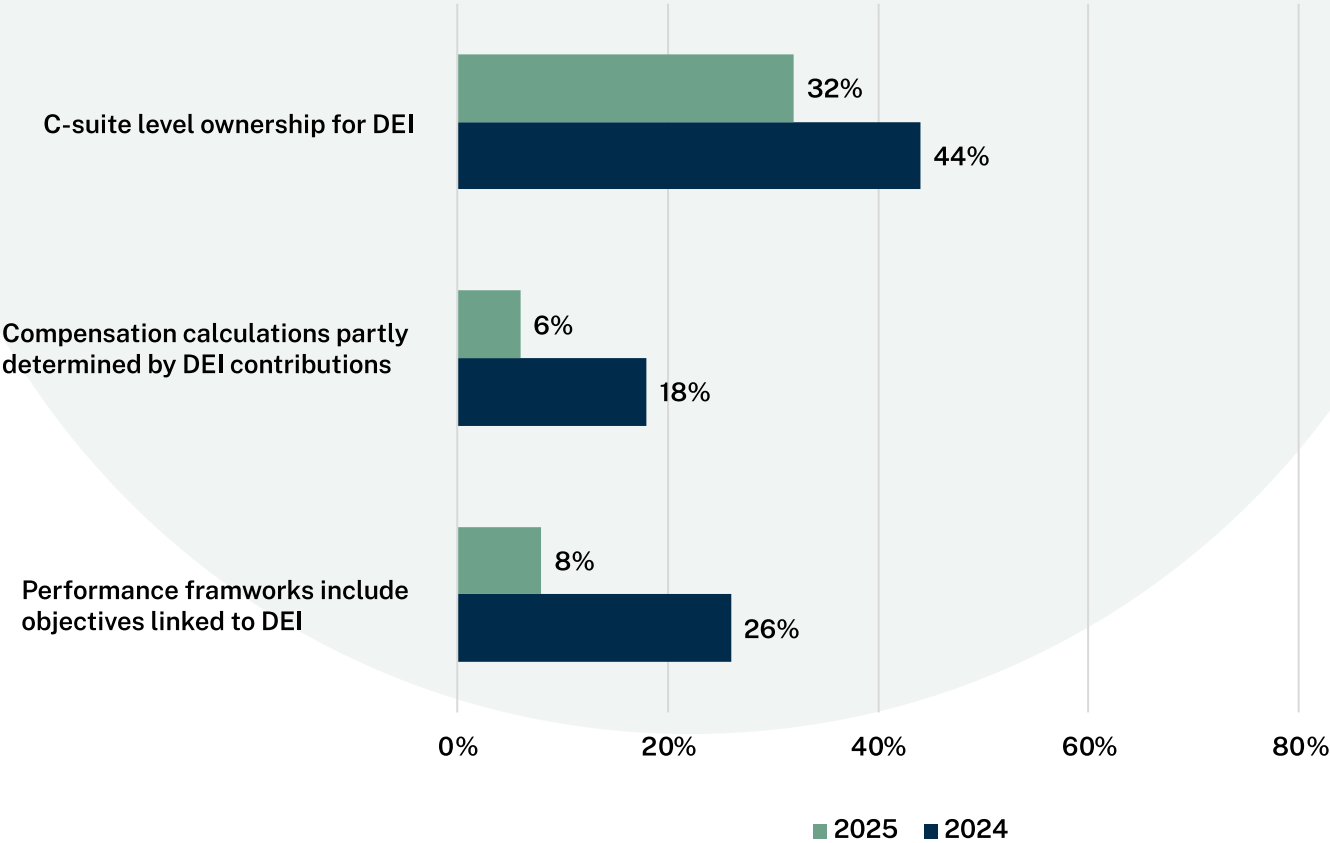
% of AmLaw 50 firms communicating that they have affinity groups and networks



# Deep Dive: US Market

Last year, US firms were also leading in demonstrating overall ownership for DEI and how this cascaded down into individual accountability and incentivisation for contributing to DEI activities. In 2024, the US led the UK for the proportion of firms who had assigned C-Suite level ownership for Diversity & Inclusion, and for talking about how DEI related objectives formed part of personal performance frameworks and compensation decisions. However, mention of these initiatives has been dramatically retracted from the market.

## Governance: biggest year-on-year changes among AmLaw 50



## Deep Dive: US Market

In addition to tracking the communication of different initiatives, this year we also tracked the language AmLaw 50 firms are using to position their People strategies, including DEI-adjacent activities.

There is variation across the market: just over a quarter (28%) of AmLaw 50 firms retain the word 'Diversity' within their overall branding, though this is considerably different to what is observed in the UK (where 77% opt for this term). More common in the US is framing this programming as an 'Inclusion' strategy, with this being the most used term, adopted by 40% of US firms.

There is also a wider variety of terminology used: Culture (16%), Opportunity (16%) and Engagement (8%) featured across our research. Lesser used, but still observed in our review of firms, were definitions such as Belonging and Respect.

Interestingly, firms that retained the word 'Diversity' in their branding attained a higher score in the People section than those using the word 'Inclusion', underscoring that they are still making efforts to communicate some of the more targeted facets of their people strategies.



# Where US firms are still showing commitment

Despite the reduction in responsible business-related communications, there were some areas across our research where activity is similar, and in some areas even growing, compared to 2024.

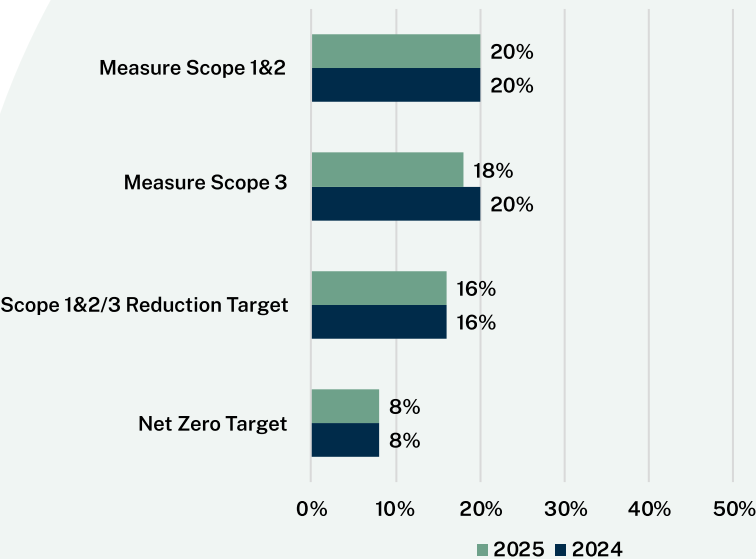
### Pro bono

Pro bono as a whole is an area where US firms have pulled backed slightly, and the decrease is most notable in the proportion of firms who showcase their head of pro bono for the firm on their website. This is perhaps linked to the decline in the number of Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officers who remain visible in firms’ external communications, with details of specific individuals responsible for these areas intentionally removed from websites. However, firms have been showing a strong commitment to pro bono in other ways: a higher volume of AmLaw 50 firms are mentioning that pro bono is a factor in individual performance frameworks or that it can be counted towards billable targets. Elsewhere in our Planet category, we have more firms communicating about biodiversity-related pro bono efforts over the last year.

### Planet

Overall, the commitment to sustainability remains relatively stable. Though only around a fifth of AmLaw 50 firms are measuring emissions and making setting reduction targets, it is pleasing to see that these commitments have been retained this year.

## Continued commitment to measuring environmental impact and setting reduction targets



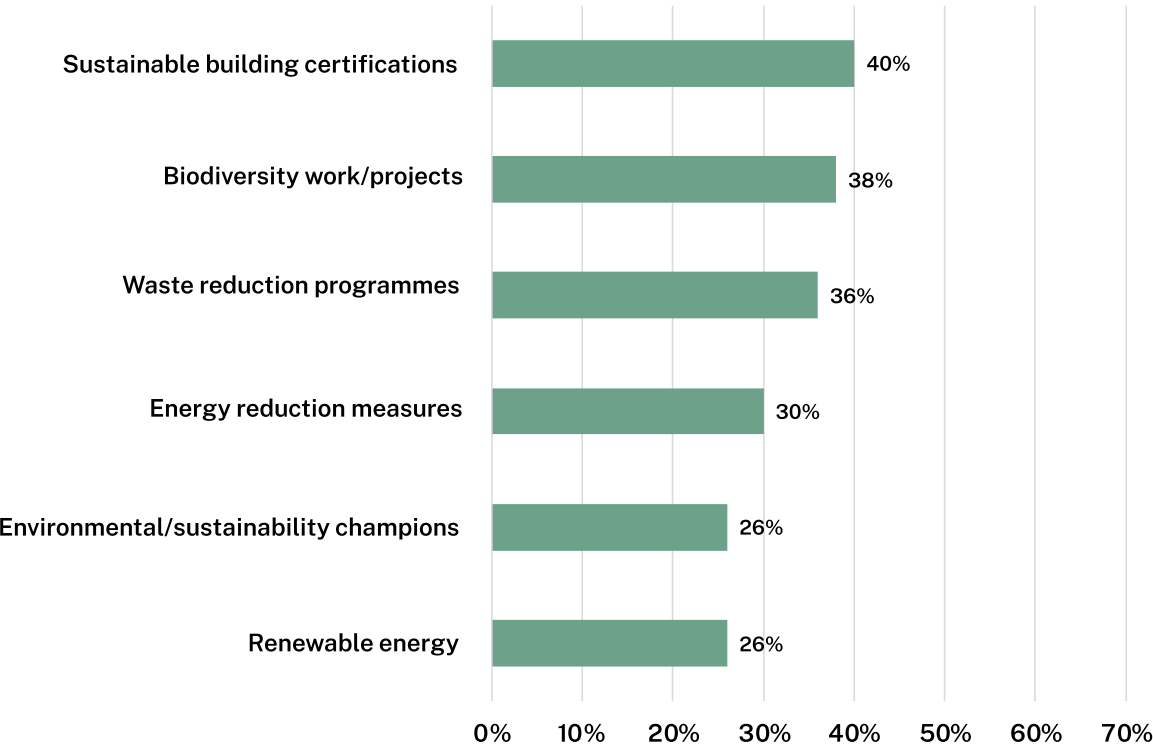
# Deep Dive: US Market

We are seeing recurring themes in how firms are taking practical action around sustainability, with 40% of AmLaw 50 firms holding sustainable building certification like LEED for one or several of their offices; this remains the most common sustainability strategy mentioned by US firms, followed by pro bono work to support biodiversity and waste reduction initiatives.

Just over a quarter of AmLaw 50 firms have introduced environmental champions and employee groups to take more localised action, which may be indicative of some firms beginning to embed sustainability into their culture.

As with last year, it is still rare to see US firms communicating actions they are taking to tackle higher emitting activities such as business travel, with only 2% communicating that they have a sustainable travel policy in place.

## Main Actions the AmLaw 50 is taking on sustainability



## What's Next

# Following the launch of this year's report, we will be working with Lamp House member firms to deliver more bespoke analysis and insights.

This covers how their firms have performed year-on-year, how they compare to peers and where there are still gaps in the firm's responsible business strategy and communications.

Lamp House Analytics will also be refreshed with updated data on all 150 firms analysed, giving member firms access to competitor intelligence on how every firm performs across all of our categories and what they are doing (or not) to attain its scores.

We also look forward to organising more events with our member community to discuss trends and topical issues affecting the legal industry, and of course to share our new insights from our wider Chambers and Partners' research.

If you would like to hear more about our plans or the data within this report and how it could be used to benefit your firm's strategy, contact Jo Summers at [jo.summers@chambers.com](mailto:jo.summers@chambers.com)

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Lamp House Strategy is now a part of Chambers and Partners.

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To learn more about how we can help  
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