

LGBT+ Workers - threats to workplace equality and community inclusion

A TUC report

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About Us

The TUC exists to make the working world a better place for everyone. We represent more than 5.3 million working people in 47 unions across the economy. We campaign for more and better jobs and a better working life for everyone, and we support trade unions to grow and thrive.

We believe all workers deserve respect, and the opportunity to make the most of their talents.

We have a long and proud history of promoting equality for all our members. We strive to end all forms of discrimination, bigotry and stereotyping. We oppose any violence or intimidation, bullying or disrespect, towards any group that faces discrimination, and from whatever quarter. The TUC's commitment to equality is written into our constitution and into that of our member unions.

Executive Summary

This report examines the potential implications of proposals to repeal the Equality Act 2010 and the Employment Rights Act 2025, alongside actions taken by some local authorities affecting LGBT+ visibility, inclusion and support. It explores the likely impact of changes to workplace and equality protections for LGBT+ people and considers public opinion on these issues.

The findings demonstrate strong public support for maintaining key workplace rights and equality protections. Overall, 77% of respondents supported retaining provisions in the Employment Rights Act 2025 requiring employers to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and introducing protections from third-party harassment, while 74% supported retaining the Equality Act 2010. Support for these protections exceeded support for repeal across the wider public, including among Reform voters.

The research also demonstrates the importance of these protections to LGBT+ workers. A majority of LGBT+ respondents¹ believed that repealing both the Employment Rights Act (55%) and the Equality Act (73%) would have a negative impact on LGBT+ workers. Across every measure tested, LGBT+ respondents were significantly more likely than the full polling sample to anticipate real world harm to LGBT+ workers from repeal.

LGBT+ respondents believed that removing Equality Act protections would increase discrimination and exclusion in the workplace including increases in verbal abuse (71%), homophobic and transphobic jokes (73%), bullying and harassment (72%), and physical violence (56%). They also anticipated workplace consequences, including avoiding certain work situations (71%), taking time off due to work-related stress (64%), leaving their job (59%) exclusion from workplace social events (55%) and conversations (52%).

The findings also highlight that LGBT+ respondents believe repealing equality protections would negatively affect not only workplace experiences but also their mental and physical health. Three-quarters of LGBT+ respondents expected a negative impact on mental health (75%), confidence (74%), work performance (66%) and physical health (57%).

The report also considers the impact of decisions by some local authorities to reduce visible support for LGBT+ communities. LGBT+ respondents overwhelmingly opposed bans on Pride flags at civic buildings (78%) and restrictions on the promotion of Pride events in public libraries (81%). Nearly three-quarters (72%) believed that withdrawing public funding from Pride events would negatively affect LGBT+ people, most commonly by reducing feelings of inclusion (34%) and belonging (16%) and increasing concerns about discrimination (21%).

¹ LGBT+ results are based on a cross-break of respondents within the nationally representative UK sample and are not a standalone representative sample of LGBT+ adults.

Altogether, these findings suggest that workplace equality protections and visible support for LGBT+ inclusion continue to command broad public backing. They also indicate that changes to these protections or reductions in local support could have significant consequences for the experiences, wellbeing and participation of LGBT+ people.

The report also highlights there is a role for trade unions in supporting LGBT+ communities where local authority support has been withdrawn. For example, in Durham, trade unions worked with Durham Pride and the Durham Miners Association to help sustain Pride activity following the withdrawal of council funding, demonstrating a continued commitment to equality, inclusion and community solidarity.² It will also have gone some way to addressing and minimising the negative impacts LGBT+ people were concerned Pride funding cuts would cause.

The evidence is clear, public opinion supports retaining workplace and equality protections as a whole, but also specifically for LGBT+ people. The public also oppose measures that reduce LGBT+ visibility and inclusion.

² <https://www.tuc.org.uk/news/neyh/pride-marches-durham-pride-uk-teams-durham-miners-and-trade-unions-major-fundraiser-after>

Recommendations

Government

- Improve public awareness of workplace rights and equality protections. While the polling found clear support for retaining protections contained within the Equality Act 2010 and Employment Rights Act 2025, a significant proportion of respondents were unsure about these rights and their impact. The Government should work with employers, trade unions and civil society organisations to improve awareness and understanding of workplace rights and how they can be exercised in practice.
- Reinstatement employment tribunals' power to make wider recommendations. The Equality Act 2010 gave employment tribunals the power to make wider recommendations for the benefit of the wider workforce, not just the individual claimant, in relation to discrimination claims. This power was removed by the Deregulation Act 2015. In workplaces where a culture of bullying, harassment and discrimination has been allowed to flourish or where there are systemic failures of the organisation to respond adequately to complaints of harassment, the power to make wider recommendations would be of great benefit.
- Outline regulations that ensure LGBT+ workforce data is collected both through the Labour Force Survey and other data monitoring exercises.
- Reform the Gender Recognition Act, giving trans and non-binary people the right to self-determination. Maintain protections for trans and non-binary people in the Equality Act.
- Work with unions to develop strategies for safer workplaces for all LGBT+ people.

Given the importance of effective enforcement of equality law, the Government should ensure that the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has the independence, authority and resources necessary to carry out its statutory functions effectively.

Recommendations for the government include specific calls to support the EHRC by:

- Safeguarding the operational and political independence of the EHRC so that it can act as an effective regulator and guardian of equality and human rights protections.
- Providing sufficient funding and resources to enable the EHRC to discharge its responsibilities, particularly in relation to monitoring and enforcing compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

- Supporting effective enforcement of equality law to ensure that workplace and public sector protections remain meaningful in practice and accessible to those who rely on them.

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Given the growing number of actions taken by some local authorities that may affect LGBT+ visibility, inclusion and support within public services, the EHRC should strengthen its oversight, monitoring and enforcement activity. As the statutory body responsible for promoting and enforcing equality law, the Commission should:

- Provide clear guidance to local authorities on their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty and how it pertains to the LGBT+ community.
- Monitor the impact of local authority decisions on people with protected characteristics, including LGBT+ communities.
- Investigate potential non-compliance where appropriate and take enforcement action where there is evidence that public bodies are failing to meet their statutory responsibilities.
- Promote good practice by highlighting examples of effective approaches to advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations within local communities and how to exercise that in practice when considering the LGBT+ community.

Local Authorities

Local authorities should ensure that all policy, funding and service decisions are consistent with their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. Councils must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

To meet these responsibilities, local authorities should:

- Embed equality considerations throughout decision-making processes and assess the potential impact of policies on LGBT+ residents and other groups with protected characteristics.

- Consider the impact of decisions on inclusion, participation and community belonging, particularly where changes affect visibility, representation or access to support.
- Ensure that public services are accessible, inclusive and responsive to the needs of LGBT+ residents.
- Work constructively with local LGBT+ organisations, community groups and trade unions to understand local needs and support positive community relations.
- Give full and proper consideration to the Public Sector Equality Duty when making decisions relating to service delivery, commissioning, funding, community safety, housing, education, culture and civic engagement.

Taken together, these actions would help ensure that local authorities fulfil both the letter and spirit of their equality obligations while supporting inclusive, cohesive and thriving communities.

Employers

- Make all workplace policies inclusive. Ensure all their policies, including those on harassment and sexual harassment, are LGBT inclusive, using appropriate language, examples and case studies. Policies should be negotiated with unions. All staff should receive training on these policies, including new staff in their induction and line managers, so that the whole workforce understands the policy and their role in ensuring the workplace is free from harassment and victimisation
- Employers should take a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination and harassment (and sexual harassment). This should include workplace policies and training, including what bystanders should do to challenge harassment.
- Take action to make sure that appropriate workplace policies translate into an inclusive culture. Provide training and information about LGBT+ issues and identities. Ensure that staff and managers can identify homophobia, biphobia and transphobia when it occurs, and work with unions to design safe reporting systems.
- Make sure that senior staff are equipped to set a clear culture of inclusivity from the top, and quickly and effectively stamp out bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Employers should analyse trends and introduce steps to support LGBT+ staff to thrive, such as training for hiring managers, and providing information to

candidates about the employer's commitment to inclusion, as well as monitoring internal LGBT data on who accesses training and promotion opportunities.

- Training. HR and all levels of management should receive training on sexual harassment, what constitutes sexual harassment, stalking and online harassment, relevant law and workplace policies, and how to respond to complaints of sexual harassment. In some workplaces, training for all staff may be appropriate.

Trade Unions

Given the unique role of trade unions with deep roots in local communities, democratic accountability to their members, and a long-standing commitment to equality and inclusion, unions should:

- Strengthen support for LGBT+ members experiencing bullying, harassment and discrimination by ensuring that guidance, casework procedures and representative training are fully LGBT+ -inclusive and reflect the specific experiences of LGBT+ workers.
- Work with employers to improve workplace policies and practice by reviewing bullying, harassment and discrimination policies to ensure they are inclusive of LGBT+ workers and supported by appropriate language, examples and workplace training.
- Build LGBT+ workplace representation and organising capacity by proactively recruiting, supporting and developing LGBT+ representatives, ensuring that trade union representatives have a strong understanding of LGBT+ identities, issues, terminology and relevant legal protections.
- Increase the visibility of trade unions as allies of LGBT+ workers by actively communicating the support available to LGBT+ members, publicising campaigns, and maintaining a visible presence at local and national LGBT+ events, including Pride.
- Challenge actions that reduce LGBT+ visibility, inclusion and support by working alongside LGBT+ members, allies and community organisations to hold local authorities and other public bodies to account where decisions risk increasing exclusion, discrimination or community division.
- Defend workplace and equality protections by campaigning for the retention and strengthening of rights contained within the Equality Act 2010 and Employment Rights Act 2025, highlighting the strong public support for these

protections and continuing to build partnerships with LGBT+ organisations and community groups where public support has been withdrawn.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that trade unions have an important role to play in defending equality, supporting LGBT+ workers and communities, and ensuring that public policy reflects both the lived experiences of LGBT+ people and the strong public support for workplace and equality protections.

Introduction

This report examines the potential implications of removal of equality and employment rights legislation, as well as local authority actions to remove support for Pride initiatives on LGBT+ people, alongside public support for those policies and actions. It combines analysis of emerging policy developments with findings from new public opinion polling conducted by YouGov online between 15-16 July 2026 with a total sample size was 2,317 adults.³

The report has been commissioned at a time when the impact of decisions taken by Reform UK-run councils on LGBT+ inclusion is emerging, making it important to understand both the implications of these actions for LGBT+ workers and LGBT+ people and the communities they live in and the extent to which they align with public opinion.

The Great Repeal Act

In February 2026 Deputy Leader and business spokesperson for Reform UK, Richard Tice, announced during a keynote policy speech in Birmingham the 'Great Repeal Act.' If enacted, it would repeal key legislation that provides workers with fundamental protections including the Employment Rights Act 2025 and the Equality Act 2010.

If Reform were to enact their 'Great Repeal Act' it would remove a range of employment rights, including sick pay, bereavement leave, pregnancy protections and protections against discrimination at work. They could also allow the return of fire-and-rehire practices. These are not simply regulations; they are hard-won rights that help make work fairer, more secure and more equal.

The Equality Act 2010 provides important safeguards that support millions of workers across the labour market, including older and younger workers, disabled people, new mothers and LGBT+ workers. The Public Sector Equality Duty – which has also been attacked by the Conservative party – is outlined in the Equality Act and ensures that agencies carrying out public functions need to consider the impact of their policies and practices on those with protected characteristics.

There are a number of protections under the Equality Act which we rely on to ensure people are treated fairly. Because of the Equality Act, cancer is treated as a disability from the point of diagnosis, meaning workers with cancer are automatically protected from discrimination at work. There are currently around 890,000 working-age people living with cancer, a figure expected to rise to 1.15 million by 2030. The Act also protects women from discrimination related to pregnancy and maternity, affecting more than 850,000 new mothers in the workforce with a child under the age of two, equivalent to around one in twenty women.⁴ In addition, the Act provides protections against discrimination on grounds including sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

³ The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).

⁴ In the wake of the announcement of the 'Great Repeal Act' Reform UK have has proposed the introduction of the 'Women and Motherhood Protection Act' to replace the many of the rights removed with the 'Great Repeal Act.'

Repealing these protections would therefore weaken safeguards relied upon by millions of workers.⁵

Impact on LGBT+ Workers

The protections in the Employment Rights Act 2025 and Equality Act 2010 are particularly important to LGBT+ workers who are more likely to experience workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination.

A TUC 2024 report looking at Bullying, harassment and discrimination of LGBT+ people in the workplace found LGBT+ workers experience disturbingly high levels of verbal abuse and physical violence, as well as unfair treatment, like being excluded from meetings or being made to feel uncomfortable at work.⁶

Over half of respondents told us that they had experienced at least one form of bullying or harassment at work in the last five years. Around one in five respondents (19%) had been exposed to verbal abuse about LGBT+ people in the workplace. And one in 20 respondents (5%) told us that they had experienced physical violence, threats and intimidation because they are lesbian, gay, bi or trans. These findings highlight why it is unsurprising that large numbers of LGBT people aren't open about their sexual orientation (29%) or gender identity (38%) with anyone at work.⁷

Reform Council decisions affecting LGBT+ visibility, inclusion and support in public services

Our research also considered the impact of decisions taken by Reform UK-led councils to remove funding and support for LGBT+ initiatives run by local authorities.

These actions have included the removal or banning of Pride flags from council buildings, the withdrawal of financial support for Pride events, restrictions on Pride-related activities and displays in libraries, limits on the promotion of LGBT+ events, and the removal or restriction of LGBT+-themed books and materials.

It is important to note local authorities have a legitimate role in creating places where people want to live, work and build careers. People do not experience inclusion only when they walk through the doors of their workplace. They experience it in their communities, through the services they use, the events they attend and the signals their local area sends about who belongs.

Research increasingly recognises that a place's identity, reputation and sense of belonging influence whether people choose to stay, relocate, invest and build careers there. Supporting Pride and other LGBT+ initiatives is part of that wider picture.

⁵ For more information on the impact of the 'Great Repeal Act' on workers see the TUC's 'Stop the Steal' campaign - <https://www.tuc.org.uk/campaigns/stopthesteal>

⁶ <https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/bullying-harassment-and-discrimination-lgbt-people-workplace>

⁷ <https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/bullying-harassment-and-discrimination-lgbt-people-workplace>

These visible expressions of inclusion signal that LGBT+ people are welcome, valued and able to participate fully in civic life. Workers increasingly consider whether they and their families will feel safe, respected and able to be themselves when deciding where to live and work, while employers benefit from being based in places with a reputation for openness and inclusion.

For trade unions, this is ultimately about ensuring worker can thrive. LGBT+ workers cannot thrive if inclusion ends at the workplace door. Councils that withdraw support for visible LGBT+ inclusion risk undermining that. Councils such as Durham and Warwickshire, were the first to take steps to remove local authority support for LGBT+ communities, similar policies have subsequently been adopted across a widening range of Reform-controlled authorities including Essex, Norfolk, Staffordshire, Gateshead, Sunderland, Barnsley, Havering and St Helens, suggesting a broader and increasingly coordinated approach to limiting LGBT+ visibility and inclusion.

These actions overlook the fact that LGBT+ people are residents, taxpayers and service users who are entitled to access inclusive public services. Removing visible signs of support and restricting LGBT+-inclusive activities sends a message that LGBT+ people are less welcome in local communities. There are also concerns that reducing LGBT+ visibility and engagement within council services risks making those services less responsive to the needs of LGBT+ residents, potentially contributing to poorer outcomes and lower levels of trust and participation in public services which could lead to more sickness absence and lower job security.

The Law: The Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty and LGBT+ People

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, local authorities are subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). When exercising their functions, they must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Sexual orientation is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Gender reassignment is also a protected characteristic, meaning the Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the needs and experiences of trans people, as well as lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

The duty extends beyond avoiding discrimination. It requires councils to have due regard to how their decisions, policies and services affect LGBT+ residents and to embed equality considerations throughout decision-making. This applies across the full range of local authority functions, including service delivery, commissioning, funding decisions, community safety, housing, education, cultural programmes and engagement with local communities.

The duty to advance equality of opportunity requires councils to consider how they can remove or minimise disadvantage, meet different needs and encourage participation in public life where people with protected characteristics face barriers. The duty to foster good relations requires councils to have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding between different groups. The Equality and Human Rights Commission's Statutory Code of Practice explains that fostering good relations includes taking action to deal with prejudice and promote understanding, providing a clear statutory framework within which councils may support initiatives that promote inclusion, strengthen community cohesion and increase the visibility and participation of LGBT+ people in civic life.

This means local authorities may legitimately choose to support a wide range of initiatives that help deliver these statutory objectives. These can include Pride events, LGBT+ community organisations, awareness campaigns, inclusive cultural programmes, partnerships with voluntary organisations, anti-hate initiatives, community engagement projects and other activities that encourage participation, reduce prejudice and build understanding between communities. The Public Sector Equality Duty does not require councils to fund any specific organisation or event. However, it gives democratically elected local authorities the flexibility to determine the most appropriate ways of advancing equality, fostering good relations and delivering inclusive services in response to local needs. Where councils decide to withdraw support for LGBT+ initiatives, they must have due regard to the likely equality impacts of those decisions, including their potential effect on eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.

Finally, the Equality and Human Rights Commission's Statutory Code of Practice makes clear that public authorities should integrate equality considerations into policy development, service design and day-to-day decision-making. For LGBT+ residents, this means considering whether services are genuinely accessible, free from discrimination and harassment, responsive to different needs and designed so that everyone can participate on an equal basis.

Polling Findings - Support for Existing Legislation

Employment Rights Act 2025

A previous TUC 40,000-person poll highlighted huge support for key policies in the Employment Rights Act across every UK constituency.⁸

Support for retaining these protections was evident in every parliamentary constituency currently represented by Reform UK MPs:

- Over three-quarters of people (77%) support banning exploitative zero hours contracts by giving workers a contract that reflects their regular hours
- Eight in ten (81%) support ending fire and rehire
- Two thirds (66%) support the right to sick pay from day one of illness

⁸ <https://www.tuc.org.uk/campaigns/stopthesteal>

- More than four-fifths (86%) support turning the minimum wage into a real living wage⁹

To further understand public levels of support for the Employment Rights Act 2025 respondents in our recent survey conducted with YouGov were asked whether the part of the Employment Rights Act 2025 that requires employers to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and extends protection against harassment by third parties, such as customers or clients, should be repealed or kept.

There was clear support for retaining the provision, 77% said it should be kept, compared with 7% who said it should be repealed and 17% selected "don't know".¹⁰

Among those that voted Reform in the 2024 general election¹¹, 55% said it should be kept, compared with 22% who said it should be repealed, while 23% said they did not know.¹²

The findings suggest that Reform UKs proposed "Great Repeal Bill" which would scrap the requirements for employers to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and extends protection against harassment by third parties rights secured through the Employment Rights Act 2025, is out of step with both national opinion and the views of many people who voted Reform at the 2024 General Election.

Impact of repealing the Employment Rights 2025 on LGBT+ workers

Respondents were asked whether repealing the Employment Rights Act 2025 would have a positive, negative or no impact on LGBT+ workers.

Across the total sample, 28% believed repeal would have a negative impact on LGBT+ workers, compared with 8% who believed it would have a positive impact. 20% said it would have no impact, while 44% said they did not know.

Among LGBT+ respondents, concern about the impact of repeal was substantially higher. 55% said repeal would have a negative impact on LGBT+ workers, compared with 9% who said it would have a positive impact. 12% said it would have no impact, while 24% said they did not know.

The results show that LGBT+ respondents were considerably more likely than the full polling sample to believe that repealing the Employment Rights Act 2025 would have a negative impact on LGBT+ workers, suggesting that the wider public may underestimate the importance of these protections to those most directly affected by them.

⁹ <https://www.tuc.org.uk/news/reforms-plan-rip-workers-rights-massively-out-step-british-public-new-poll-reveals>

¹⁰ YouGov survey conducted between 15 and 16 July 2026.

¹¹ References to "Reform voters" relate to survey respondents who reported voting for Reform UK at the 2024 General Election.

¹² Reform voter results are based on a cross-break of respondents who reported voting for Reform UK at the 2024 General Election and are not a standalone representative sample of all Reform UK voters.

Equality Act 2010

To better understand levels of support for legislation that could be affected by proposals for a so-called "*Great Repeal Bill*", we included a polling question on whether the Equality Act 2010 should be kept or repealed. The Equality Act protects people against discrimination on the basis of nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Respondents were asked whether the Equality Act 2010 should be repealed or kept.

In the total sample, there was clear support for retaining the Equality Act. 74% said it should be kept, compared with 11% who said it should be repealed. 15% selected "don't know".

Among those that voted Reform in the 2024 general election, 44% said the Act should be kept, compared with 34% who said it should be repealed, while 21% said they did not know.

The findings suggest that Reform UKs proposed "Great Repeal Bill" that would remove protections secured through the Equality Act 2010 are out of step with national opinion and are not supported by the majority of people who voted Reform UK at the 2024 General Election.

Impact of repealing the Equality Act 2010 on LGBT+ workers

All respondents were asked whether repealing the Equality Act 2010 would have a positive, negative or no impact on LGBT+ workers.

Across the total sample, 49% believed repeal would have a negative impact on LGBT+ workers, compared with 7% who believed it would have a positive impact. 17% said it would have no impact, while 26% said they did not know.

Among LGBT+ respondents, concern about the impact of repeal was substantially higher. 73% said repeal would have a negative impact on LGBT+ workers, compared with 5% who said it would have a positive impact. 10% said it would have no impact, while 13% said they did not know.

LGBT+ respondents were considerably more likely than full polling sample to believe that repealing the Equality Act 2010 would have a negative impact on LGBT+ workers, suggesting that the wider public may underestimate the importance of these protections to those most directly affected by them.

Expected impact of repealing the Equality Act 2010 on LGBT+ workers

Respondents were asked whether repealing the Equality Act 2010 would lead to an increase, decrease, or no change in a range of experiences faced by LGBT+ workers.

Across all four measures, respondents were substantially more likely to believe that repeal would lead to an increase rather than a decrease in negative experiences faced by LGBT+ workers. LGBT+ respondents were consistently more likely than full polling sample to expect increases, particularly in relation to verbal abuse (71%), homophobic and transphobic jokes (73%), and bullying or harassment (72%). Concerningly 56% of LGBT+ respondents thought it would lead to an increase in physical violence.

Issue	Sample	Total Increase (%)	Total Decrease (%)	Don't Know (%)
Physical violence	Full sample	34	4	25
	LGBT+	56	3	12
Verbal abuse	Full sample	46	3	21
	LGBT+	71	3	10
Homophobic or transphobic jokes	Full sample	46	3	21
	LGBT+	73	2	9
Bullying or harassment	Full sample	47	3	21
	LGBT+	72	3	9

Across every measure tested, LGBT+ respondents were more likely than full polling sample to expect repeal of the Equality Act 2010 to increase negative experiences faced by LGBT+ workers. This suggests that those most directly affected by the Act perceive significantly greater risks from its repeal than the wider public, particularly in relation to abuse, harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

Expected workplace impacts of repealing the Equality Act 2010 on LGBT+ workers

Respondents were asked how likely they thought a range of workplace impacts would be if the Equality Act 2010 were repealed.

Across all measures, LGBT+ respondents were more likely than full polling sample to expect negative workplace consequences from repeal of the Equality Act 2010. The largest concerns related to LGBT+ workers avoiding certain work situations (71% of LGBT+ respondents, compared with 48% of the full sample), taking time off due to work-related stress (64% of LGBT+ respondents, compared with 49% of the full sample), leaving their job (59% of LGBT+ respondents, compared with 34% of the full sample), being excluded from work social events (55% of LGBT+ respondents, compared with 31% of the full sample), and being excluded from workplace meetings and conversations (52% of LGBT+ respondents, compared with 29% of the full sample). Across every workplace outcome tested, LGBT+ respondents were more likely than the full polling sample to anticipate negative consequences, suggesting that those most directly affected perceive substantially greater workplace risks from repeal of the Equality Act than the public.

Potential impact	Sample	Total Likely (%)	Total Unlikely (%)	Don't Know (%)
Be excluded from work social events	Full sample	31	36	32
	LGBT+	55	30	14
Be excluded from work meetings	Full sample	29	39	32
	LGBT+	52	31	16
Leave their job	Full sample	34	27	39
	LGBT+	59	21	20
Avoid certain work situations	Full sample	48	20	32
	LGBT+	71	15	14
Change their role in the company	Full sample	28	30	43
	LGBT+	48	26	26
Take time off due to work	Full sample	49	18	33
	LGBT+	64	19	17

Across every workplace impact tested, LGBT+ respondents were more likely than the full polling sample to believe that repealing the Equality Act 2010 would have negative consequences for LGBT+ workers. The gap was particularly pronounced on measures relating to workplace participation, retention and wellbeing, suggesting that LGBT+ people anticipate a greater deterioration in their working lives following repeal than is recognised by the wider public.

Expected impacts of repealing the Equality Act 2010 on LGBT+ workers' health and workplace performance

Respondents were asked whether repealing the Equality Act 2010 would have a positive, negative or no impact on a range of outcomes for LGBT+ workers.

Across all measures, respondents were substantially more likely to believe repeal would have a negative rather than a positive impact. LGBT+ respondents were consistently more likely than full polling sample to expect negative consequences. The largest concerns related to

LGBT+ workers' mental health (75% of LGBT+ respondents expected a negative impact compared with 49% of the full sample); confidence (74% of LGBT+ respondents expected a negative impact compared with 50% of the full sample); work performance (66% of LGBT+ respondents expected a negative impact compared with 38% of the full sample); and physical health (57% of LGBT+ respondents expected a negative impact compared with 33% of the full sample). Across each measure, LGBT+ respondents were markedly more likely than full polling sample to anticipate negative consequences from repeal of the Equality Act 2010.

Outcome	Sample	Total Positive Impact (%)	Total Negative Impact (%)	Don't Know (%)
Confidence	Full sample	4	50	27
	LGBT+	3	74	10
Mental health	Full sample	4	49	27
	LGBT+	3	75	7
Physical health	Full sample	4	33	31
	LGBT+	2	57	12
Work performance	Full sample	5	38	31
	LGBT+	2	66	11

LGBT+ respondents were considerably more likely than full polling sample to believe that repealing the Equality Act 2010 would have a negative impact on LGBT+ workers' wellbeing and performance. The gap was particularly pronounced in relation to confidence, where 74% of LGBT+ respondents expected a negative impact compared with 50% of the full sample, and mental health, where 75% expected a negative impact compared with 49% of the full sample.

These findings suggest that LGBT+ people anticipate substantially greater personal and workplace consequences from repeal than are recognised by the wider public.

Restrictions on LGBT+ visibility and support

As highlighted above, local authorities play an important role in shaping places where people want to live, work and build careers. Decisions about public services, community activities and civic representation help determine whether residents feel welcomed, included and able to participate fully in local life. Since taking control of a growing number of councils, Reform UK administrations have introduced measures affecting LGBT+ visibility and inclusion, including restrictions on Pride flags, Pride funding and LGBT+-related library

activity. While these measures have been justified on grounds such as political neutrality and a focus on core services, they risk reducing LGBT+ visibility, weakening community inclusion and making public services less responsive to LGBT+ residents, despite councils' responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. To understand public opinion on these initiatives, and their perceived impact on LGBT+ people, we asked respondents a series of questions about a few of the key measures introduced or proposed by Reform UK-led councils.

Local authority measures affecting LGBT+ visibility and support

Respondents were asked about a range of proposed or enacted local authority measures affecting LGBT+ visibility and support, including the display of Pride flags, the promotion of Pride events in libraries, and public funding for local Pride events.

Across each measure, opposition outweighed support for restrictions among both the full sample and LGBT+ respondents. LGBT+ respondents were consistently more likely than the public to oppose restrictions and to believe that withdrawing support for Pride events would have a negative impact on LGBT+ people. The largest gaps were seen in opposition to banning the promotion of Pride events in public libraries, where 81% of LGBT+ respondents opposed the measure compared with 54% of the full sample, and banning Pride flags from civic buildings, where 78% of LGBT+ respondents opposed the measure compared with 49% of the full sample.

Restricting LGBT+ visibility and support

Proposal	Sample	Total Support (%)	Total Oppose (%)	Don't Know (%)
Banning LGBT+ Pride flags being flown on civic buildings	Full sample	35	49	16
	LGBT+	16	78	6
Banning the promotion of Pride events in local public libraries	Full sample	30	54	16
	LGBT+	14	81	6

Impacts of withdrawing public funding for Pride events

Impact on LGBT+ people	Sample	Total Positive Impact (%)	Total Negative Impact (%)	Don't Know (%)
Some local councils have said they will not provide public funding for local Pride events. Do you think this will have a	Full sample	6	44	16

positive, negative or no impact at all on LGBT+ people?				
	LGBT+	5	72	6

Across all three measures, LGBT+ respondents were considerably more likely than full polling sample to oppose restrictions on LGBT+ visibility and support, and to believe that withdrawing public support for Pride events would have a negative impact on LGBT+ people. While opposition outweighed support among the full sample, the strength of feeling was significantly greater among LGBT+ respondents, suggesting that the wider public may underestimate the importance of visible support, community events and inclusive public spaces to LGBT+ people themselves.

Impact of withdrawing public funding for Pride events from LGBT+ respondents

LGBT+ respondents who believed that withdrawing local authority funding for Pride events would have a negative impact on LGBT+ people were asked what they thought the largest negative consequence would be.

The most identified impact was that LGBT+ people would feel less included in society (34%). This was followed by increased discrimination against LGBT+ people (21%), a reduced sense of community and belonging (16%), and LGBT+ people feeling less safe (14%). Smaller proportions identified a reduction in awareness of LGBT+ needs in public services (6%) or LGBT+ people feeling less comfortable using public services (3%) as the largest negative impact.¹³

Which of the following, if any, do you think will be the largest negative impact?	LGBT+ (%)
LGBT+ people will feel less included in society	34
Increased discrimination against LGBT+ people	21
Reduces sense of community and belonging	16
LGBT+ people will feel less safe	14
Reduces awareness of LGBT+ needs in public services	6
LGBT+ people will feel less comfortable using public services	3
Other	1
Impact to local businesses and local economy	1

¹³ Total N for LGBT respondents that answered this question was N=176

Don't know	4
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For LGBT+ respondents, the primary concern was that withdrawing public funding for Pride events would undermine feelings of inclusion and belonging. Respondents were also concerned that funding cuts could contribute to greater discrimination and reduced feelings of safety, suggesting that Pride events are viewed not simply as celebrations but as an important part of creating visible, supportive and inclusive communities for LGBT+ people.

Conclusion

The findings of this report suggest that proposals to repeal the Equality Act 2010 and the Employment Rights Act 2025, alongside actions taken by Reform-led councils affecting LGBT+ visibility and inclusion, are out of step with public opinion. There is clear public support for retaining key workplace and equality protections, with 77% of respondents supporting the retention of protections against third-party harassment in the Employment Rights Act 2025 and 74% supporting the retention of the Equality Act 2010. Importantly, support for keeping these protections exceeded support for repeal even among Reform 2024 voters. The research also demonstrates that LGBT+ people view these rights as critically important. The majority of LGBT+ respondents believed that repealing both Acts would negatively affect LGBT+ workers and anticipated increases in discrimination, bullying, harassment and exclusion at work, alongside wider impacts on mental health, confidence, physical health and work performance. Across every measure tested, LGBT+ respondents were significantly more likely than full polling sample to anticipate negative consequences, suggesting that those most directly affected perceive substantially greater risks from the loss of these protections.

The findings also indicate strong opposition to measures that reduce LGBT+ visibility and inclusion in local communities. LGBT+ respondents overwhelmingly opposed bans on Pride flags and restrictions on Pride promotion in public libraries, while nearly three-quarters believed that withdrawing public funding from Pride events would negatively affect LGBT+ people. The most cited concerns were that LGBT+ people would feel less included in society and face increased discrimination. They also underline the continuing role of trade unions in supporting LGBT+ workers and communities where local authority support has been withdrawn, as demonstrated by the response of trade unions and community partners in Durham following council funding cuts to Pride. Taken together, the evidence points to a clear conclusion: the public supports retaining workplace and equality protections, while those most directly affected by the proposed changes expect significant harm from their removal.

Methodology

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Fieldwork was conducted between 15 and 16 July 2026. The total sample size was 2,317 UK adults aged 18 and over. The survey was carried out online and the results have been weighted to be representative of the UK adult population.

Where findings are reported for LGBT+ respondents, these are based on a cross-break drawn from the overall nationally representative sample. The LGBT+ cross-break comprised 238 respondents unweighted and 230 respondents weighted. While this sample size is sufficient for reporting and comparison with the wider population, the LGBT+ findings are not based on a dedicated survey of LGBT+ people and should not be interpreted as fully representative of all LGBT+ adults in the UK.

The total number of LGBT+ respondents who answered the question, 'Which of the following, if any, do you think will be the largest negative impact?' was 176.

Where findings are reported for Reform voters, these are based on respondents who reported voting for Reform UK at the 2024 General Election. The Reform voter cross-break comprised 233 respondents unweighted and 243 respondents weighted.

Statistics referenced on page 10 in the section entitled "Impact of the Great Repeal Act on LGBT+ Workers" are drawn from polling conducted by Number Crunchers Politics between 1 May and 20 November 2023. The findings relate to the experiences of LGBT+ people of bullying, harassment and discrimination in the workplace and are published in the report *Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination of LGBT People in the Workplace: A TUC Report*.¹⁴

References on pages 12 and 13 to the previous TUC poll are based on research conducted by HOPE not Hate and Focaldata. The study surveyed 45,349 adults across the UK online between 1 August and 11 September 2025. Results were projected to Westminster parliamentary constituencies using Multi-level Regression and Poststratification (MRP), a statistical modelling technique that combines large survey datasets with census and demographic information to estimate public opinion at constituency level.¹⁵

¹⁴ <https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/bullying-harassment-and-discrimination-lgbt-people-workplace>

¹⁵ <https://www.tuc.org.uk/news/reforms-plan-rip-workers-rights-massively-out-step-british-public-new-poll-reveals>