

PRESS RELEASE

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Stronger leadership needed on gender balance, say energy CEOs

- **New statistics show limited progress on number of women on UK energy boards**
- **Energy Leaders' Coalition publishes first anniversary progress report**

The leaders of eight of the UK's leading energy companies – between them representing 56,000 employees – are urging a renewed effort to drive up the number of women at senior levels in the energy sector, to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

The Energy Leaders' Coalition [1] made a public commitment in May last year to improve gender balance within their own companies and the sector as a whole. Publication today of POWERful Women's annual statistics on the composition of boards in the top 80 UK energy companies [2] shows that while there are 'pockets of success' feeding the pipeline, progress at board level across the sector as a whole is disappointingly slow:

- Women still occupy only 16% of board seats (a marginal increase from 13% in 2018);
- Women still occupy only 6% of executive board seats (no improvement);
- 42% of the companies have no women on their boards at all (a small improvement from 50% in 2018)

The statistics are being released at POWERful Women's second annual conference in London, to be addressed by Energy Minister Claire Perry.

Ruth Cairnie, Chair of POWERful Women, commented;

"It is clear that we still have a very long way to go to truly tap into the pool of female talent available in the energy sector so that it is fit to meet the challenges and opportunities of the energy transformation. The 2019 statistics show that progress is disappointingly slow, and has even gone backwards when we look at progress towards targets."

Today the Energy Leaders' Coalition - EDF Energy, Good Energy, innogy, National Grid, Ørsted, ScottishPower, Shell and SSE - publishes a report [3] on its progress in the past 12 months. The CEOs are urging other energy leaders to follow them in making a public pledge.

The Coalition's first anniversary report sets out:

- the results of its research to identify the barriers to better gender balance within their own companies
- case studies of diversity and inclusion initiatives that are aiming to overcome the barriers – and the women who are benefiting and

- their plans for year 2 - continuing to learn, share best practice and make tangible improvements.

Keith Anderson, Chief Executive of ScottishPower, said;

“The first year’s work of the Energy Leaders’ Coalition has been important in identifying the barriers to gender balance at senior level. We all know that a diverse workforce is the best way to drive success not just in our own business, but also for the sector as a whole. The energy industry is changing. If we are to overcome the challenges of becoming a net zero country by 2045 and make the most of the opportunities - of decarbonisation, digitalisation and changing customer expectations - we also need to make the most of the talent available. That means addressing the under-representation of women at senior levels.”

Juliet Davenport, Chief Executive and Founder, Good Energy, said:

“I am proud of the positive steps we have made on gender balance and the women who are already benefiting. But all of us on the Energy Leaders’ Coalition recognise that we have much more to do to move from unconscious bias to ‘conscious inclusion’. The latest statistics make that clear and we must work harder across the industry. Energy leaders should make a public pledge for positive change.”

The Energy Leaders’ Coalition First Anniversary Report ‘Positive Steps to Gender Balance’ includes a series of case studies showing initiatives that have already been implemented – on tackling unconscious bias in recruitment, attracting and developing talent, flexible working and visible leadership and targets. It showcases those who are benefiting from the programmes and policies, and looks at next steps to overcome barriers.

Alistair Phillips-Davies, Chief Executive of SSE said;

“SSE are committed to improving diversity and inclusion across the company. We were one of the first FTSE 100 companies to publish its gender pay gap in 2016 and have further implemented a wide range of measures to ensure we are a more inclusive employer. Across the business we are making everyday changes to ensure we are better placed to attract and retain the absolute best people for the job, no matter their gender. That said we recognise there is much work to be done across the industry, that is why I am very proud to be a part of the Energy Leaders’ Coalition drive for positive change.”

Ruth Cairnie added;

“In some companies we are starting to see positive initiatives on the ground that are starting to feed the pipeline of future female leaders. But this will take time to come through and we need much more concerted action and leadership to really shift the dial.”

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. The Energy Leaders' Coalition comprises the following eight CEOs:

- **Keith Anderson**, Chief Executive, ScottishPower
- **Juliet Davenport OBE**, Chief Executive, Good Energy
- **John Pettigrew**, Chief Executive, National Grid
- **Alistair Phillips-Davies**, Chief Executive, SSE
- **Simone Rossi**, Chief Executive, EDF Energy
- **Matthew Wright**, Managing Director, Ørsted UK
- **Paul Cowling**, Managing Director, innogy Renewables UK
- **Sinead Lynch**, UK Country Chair, Shell

2. 2019 Board statistics

Each year POWERful Women measures the performance of the top 80 UK energy companies with regard to the number of women at board and executive board member level. The full set of POWERful Women statistics by company for 2019 are available to download from the PfW website <http://powerfulwomen.org.uk/board-statistics-by-company/>.

3. **Energy Leaders' Coalition First Anniversary Report, May 2019: 'Positive Steps Towards Gender Balance'** – report available to download from the PfW website <http://powerfulwomen.org.uk/energy-leaders-coalition/>

About POWERful Women

POWERful Women is a professional initiative that seeks to promote the professional growth and leadership development of women across the energy sector. Our goals are to see 30% of executive board roles and 40% of management roles filled by women by 2030. We do this in three ways: campaigning and reporting (for example publishing annual board statistics), supporting women in their careers (for example through our mentoring programme, POWERful Connections) and providing practical support to companies committed to increase their gender diversity (for example through D&I working groups). More information at www.powerfulwomen.org.uk