

EXPERTISE FRANCE – ALBANIA ENERGY SECTOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

GENDER DIAGNOSIS IN THE ENERGY SECTOR

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFD	<i>Agence Française de Développement</i> , French Development Agency
ALL	Albanian Lekë
ALPEX	Albanian Power Exchange Company
AREA	Albanian Renewable Energy Association
AWEN	Albanian Women Empowerment Network
CEDAW	United Nations Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women
CSO	Civil society organisation
D&I	Diversity and Inclusion
EF	Expertise France
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
ERE	<i>Enti Rregullator i Energjisë</i> , Albanian Energy Regulatory Authority
ERP	Economic Reform Programme
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FSHU	<i>Furnizuesi i Shërbimit Universal</i> , Universal Service Supplier
FTL	<i>Furnizuesi i Tregut të Lirë</i> , Free Market Supplier
GEO	Gender Equality Officer
GoA	Government of Albania
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
GWNET	Global Women’s Network for the Energy Transition
HPP	Hydropower Plant
HR	Human Resources
ICER WIE	International Confederation of Energy Regulators - Women in Energy initiative
ILO	International Labour Organization
INSTAT	<i>Instituti i Statistikave</i> , Institute of Statistics
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
KESH	<i>Korporata Elektroenergjitike Shqiptare</i> , Energy of Albania
KfW	<i>Kreditanstalt Für Wiederaufbau</i> , German Development Bank
MIE	Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoHSP	Ministry of Health and Social Protection
NAW-STEM	Network of Albanian Women in STEM
NCGE	National Council on Gender Equality
NECP	National Energy and Climate Plan
NSGE	National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030 and its Action Plan
OSHEE	<i>Operatori i Shpërndarjes së Energjisë Elektrike</i> , Electricity Distribution System Operator
OSSH	<i>Operatori i Sistemit të Shpërndarjes</i> , Distribution System Operator
OST	<i>Operatori i Sistemit të Transmetimit</i> , Transmission System Operator
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

TA	Technical Assistance
UNFCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN SDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
USAID	United States Agency for International Development Vocational Education
VE	Vocational Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WHO	World Health Organization
WONY	Women in Energy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Albania is pursuing its accession to the European Union (EU) and continues implementing the EU *acquis*, including the EU energy legislation. The country is engaged in an in-depth reform of its energy sector which is led by the Albanian Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE) with the support of the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD) and the German Development Bank (KfW). The gender diagnosis, which forms part of the Albania energy sector technical assistance programme launched by AFD, addresses the gender dimension in the Albanian energy sector, with special attention to electricity.

Overall, Albania has a comprehensive legal and institutional framework for promoting gender equality, ensuring gender mainstreaming, and protecting women's and girls' rights. Nevertheless, the report shows that the average proportion of women in the electricity sector in Albania is around 26% with only 4% of women holding a STEM¹ degree in the total workforce compared to 10% of men². If the national public authorities in charge of energy have more female employees than male ones, the reverse occurs in electricity companies. However, in both cases, women are predominant in gendered professional profiles (e.g., human resources, legal, customer care, cashier), and horizontal and vertical segregation applies, with technical and decision-making profiles mostly occupied by men.

Graduates from vocational education and training (VET) institutions and engineering faculties are mainly male students. Attracting girls and women into VET, STEM, and electricity companies is a challenge to be met given the large pool of skilled and talented professionals needed to meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and deliver the energy transition to achieve a carbon-neutral economy by 2050. The report highlights that women's mentoring or networking in the energy sector is at an early stage.

This research illustrates that within energy organisations, the level of granularity of gender-disaggregated data varies significantly. Moreover, the publicly available gender-disaggregated data that relate to the electricity sector are aggregated with other sectors. The collection of such data can play a critical role to improve gender equality in the energy sector.

The findings of this gender diagnosis point out that the energy sector does not have a dedicated gender equality action plan, and only one energy company has set a target for the percentage of women employed in management positions. They also reveal that the gender pay gap for the electricity sector is currently unavailable. In addition, while strategy documents in the energy sector foresee measures to define energy poverty, its gender dimension is currently absent. Specifically, women (particularly in rural areas) have little awareness of sustainable energy and how access to it in conditions which could improve their economic situation and way of life.

Finally, the report provides recommendations and an action plan for enhancing gender equality, attracting, and retaining female professionals in the energy sector, and mainstreaming gender into energy poverty policies and sustainable energy awareness programmes.

¹ STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

² Based on the data communicated by some of the participating energy organisations.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

As part of several commitments undertaken by the Government of Albania (GoA) in pursuit of Albania's accession to the European Union (EU), the country is engaged in an in-depth reform of its energy sector, including operational, financial, and structural aspects. A strategic document describing the steps to be taken during this transition phase is a Policy Roadmap, which elements (the "Policy Reform Elements") are to be implemented during an agreed period by the Albanian authorities, and more particularly by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE), with the support of two bilateral development agencies, the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD) and the German Development Bank (KfW).

To support the MIE in this endeavour, the AFD has launched a Technical Assistance (TA) programme led by Expertise France (EF) which goal is to help design the measures to be taken and define the activities to be executed, in close liaison with the Albanian public institutions and stakeholders. Among the various tasks to be implemented by the TA programme, it has been considered important to establish a gender diagnosis of the energy sector in Albania, and more specifically the electricity sector.

1.2 Objective

The objective of the gender diagnosis is to explore the present gender³ situation in the energy sector, including identifying challenges preventing women to be actors of change in the energy transition, and examine its possible evolution resulting from the implementation of the envisaged reforms in the energy sector.

This report addresses ways to increase gender diversity in the energy sector contributing to a sustainable energy transition while ensuring gender equality and socioeconomic development. It provides recommendations to the Albanian public institutions and energy stakeholders for the promotion of gender equality and empowerment in the implementation of the energy reforms, with the view of strengthening gender mainstreaming and equality in a sector that is widely regarded as male-dominated.

1.3 Methodology

The methodology used for this report includes a mix of:

- literature review and desk review of international, EU, and Albanian legal and policy documents,
- analysis of gender-disaggregated data published by INSTAT,
- semi-structured interviews⁴ with public and private energy actors,
- semi-structured interviews with national and international organisations promoting gender equality,

³ Gender is a multidimensional concept (Bereni, Chauvin, Jaunait, & Revillard, 2012). For a definition of gender, see: [EIGE](#)

⁴ A semi-structured interview is a data collection method, mainly qualitative, that relies on asking questions within a predetermined thematic framework.

- questionnaires addressed to the national public authorities in charge of energy⁵ and some electricity companies⁶ active in the Albanian electricity sector.

Its main limitations include the fact that due to time and availability constraints a selection of stakeholders concerned with gender and energy issues in Albania had to be made. Furthermore, some issues could not be thoroughly investigated due to lack of information, data, or time. Additionally, the different participants in this research are based in Tirana, and they represent the public, private and non-profit sectors. All but one of the interviewees were women. Moreover, the contributions of the different participating energy organisations in this research have been uneven. These limitations should be considered when examining the findings and pave the way for future research.

This study uses qualitative methods to illustrate women's situation in the electricity sector. Apart from data emerging from discussions with the stakeholders, the quantitative analysis is primarily based on INSTAT data, including its available gender-disaggregated data for the electricity sector which are grouped with other sectors such as gas, steam, and air conditioning supply⁷.

1.4 Structure

This report counts 5 sections:

- 1) introduction as its first section;
- 2) the second section presents an overview of the country's context. It outlines the legal and policy framework on gender equality as well as different aspects relevant for gender equality in the energy sector, such as education, labour market and civil society;
- 3) the third section concentrates on gender in the energy sector. In this section, employment and energy consumption are addressed from a gender perspective;
- 4) the main findings are presented in section four;
- 5) the fifth section provides recommendations accompanied by action proposals.

⁵ National public authorities in charge of energy or national public energy authorities refer to MIE and ERE in this document.

⁶ Electricity companies or power undertakings include the main different state-owned and private companies that generate, transport, distribute and/or supply electricity in Albania.

⁷ Electricity data are aggregated with other sectors such as gas, steam and air conditioning supply, as per EU - NACE Rev. 2 Division D35. INSTAT does not publish data related to Level 3 NACE Code D35.1 - Electric power generation, transmission and distribution". It should be noted that there is no specific NACE code for renewable energy or electricity produced from renewable energy sources.

2 ALBANIA CONTEXT

Since the fall of communism, Albania has undergone substantial economic and social changes. The country has been in the process of transposing the EU *acquis* for more than a decade and since 2014, Albania has been granted the status of EU candidate country. In April 2018, the European Commission issued an unconditional recommendation to open accession negotiations and in July 2022, the Intergovernmental Conference on accession negotiations held with Albania marks the beginning of a new, decisive phase in the accession process of Albania to the EU⁸.

Albania has a population of approximately 2.8 million. Tirana accommodates 32.2% of the population, followed by Durrës and Fier with 10.3 % and 10.1 % respectively. Women⁹ account for 50.1 % of the total population. The median age of the population is 37.6 years: 36.8 years for men and 38.6 years old for women, due to a higher life expectancy. Life expectancy at birth is estimated at 75.2 years for men and 79.6 years for women¹⁰.

The country has a GDP of EUR 13.3 billion in 2020 and an annual real GDP growth rate of -3.48% compared to the previous year. Its GDP per capita amounts to EUR 4,681¹¹. The Covid-19 pandemic has had, as in many countries, a negative economic impact in Albania, as it was still recovering from the 2019 earthquake that caused extensive damage.

In 2020, services represented the main share of the economy with about 48 % of the GDP. Industry and construction made up about 20.01 % of the GDP and the agriculture, hunting and forestry sector contributed about 19% to the GDP.

The “at risk of poverty or social exclusion indicator”¹² is 46.2 % in 2019, with women having a higher risk of poverty or social exclusion than men, respectively 46.9% and 45.5% (INSTAT, 2021).

Overall, violence against women and girls remains a significant issue in Albania¹³. It prevents them from fully participating in society and the economy (INSTAT, 2019).

2.1 Legal and institutional framework on gender equality

The equal rights of women and men and the principle of non-discrimination are enshrined in the Constitution of Albania dated 1998 (article 18).

Since many years, the strengthening of the legal and institutional framework about gender equality, gender-based violence, and domestic violence has been a priority of the GoA.

The GoA has also aimed to harmonise the national legal framework with international human rights standards, including the United Nations Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic

⁸ European Commission, European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Albania. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/countries/detailed-country-information/albania_en

⁹ In this research, the terms girls and women refer to girls and women “in all their diversity”, which means “from rural areas, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, LGBTI+, the elderly, single mothers, survivors of violence/trafficking, girls who are mothers, migrants, and asylum seekers, etc.” (MoHSP, 2021). Both “women” and “men” constitute heterogeneous groups.

¹⁰ INSTAT (2021, 7 May). Population of Albania, 1 January 2021. Available at: [INSTAT](#)

¹¹ INSTAT (2022, 31 March). Gross Domestic Product, 2020. Available at: [INSTAT](#)

¹² This refers to the sum of individuals who are either at risk of poverty, who are severely materially deprived, or who are living in a household with very low work intensity. For more details on the calculation of the ‘at risk of poverty or social exclusion’ (AROPE) rate, see: [EUROSTAT Glossary - AROPE](#)

¹³ INSTAT. Violence against Women and Girls in Albania. Available at: [INSTAT](#)

violence (Istanbul Convention), the EU Gender equality strategy 2020-2025 and the EU action plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Action 2021–2025 (GAP III), etc. In 2022, the Parliament of Albania ratified the ILO Convention No. 190 on Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work, which will be incorporated into Albanian national law.

Among the main relevant texts, as subsequently amended, transposing and implementing EU directives on gender equality and prohibiting gender discrimination, there are:

- Law No.9770/2008 on Gender Equality in Society (Law on Gender Equality) foreseeing at least 30% participation of the under-represented gender in political and public decision-making positions, as well as protection from discrimination in the education, employment, media sectors and others. It also envisages the mandatory collection of gender statistics by all state bodies,
- Law No. 10221/2010 on Protection from Discrimination,
- the Labour Code No.7961/1995,
- Law No.7703/1993 on Social Security,
- Law No.10197/2009 on Voluntary Pension Funds,
- Law No.10237/2010 on Health and Safety at Work,
- Law No.57/2019 on Social Assistance,
- Law No.111/2017 on Legal Aid guaranteed by the State,
- Law No.121/2016 on Social Care Services,
- Law No. 22/2018 on Social Housing,
- Law No. 15/2019 on Employment Promotion,
- Law No. 9936/2008 on Budget System Management,
- the Decision of the Council of Ministers (DCM) No.37/2016 on the introduction of measures regarding health and safety of pregnant workers and young mothers (European Commission, 2021a)¹⁴.

Other significant legislation concerning gender equality, gender-based violence, and/or domestic violence include:

- Law No.10019/2008 on the Electoral Code introducing a 30% gender quota in parliamentary and local elections¹⁵,
- Law No.9669/2006 on Measures against Violence in Family Relations¹⁶,
- Law No. 110/2018 on the Notary and Law 111/2018 on Cadastre ensuring gender equality regarding the protection of property and the registration of the legal ownership of property, respectively.

There are also provisions that relate to gender equality in other national legislations such as the Criminal Code; the Law on the Organisation and Functioning of Prosecution; the Law on Pre-University Education System; the Law on the Rights and Protection of the Child; the Law on the

¹⁴ Amended texts include Law No. 10221/2010 on Protection from Discrimination (2020), the Labour Code No.7961/1995 (1996, 2003, 2008 and 2015), Law No.7703/1993 on Social Security (several times until 2017 inclusive), Law No. 9936/2008 on Budget System Management (2012, 2016), (European Commission, 2021a).

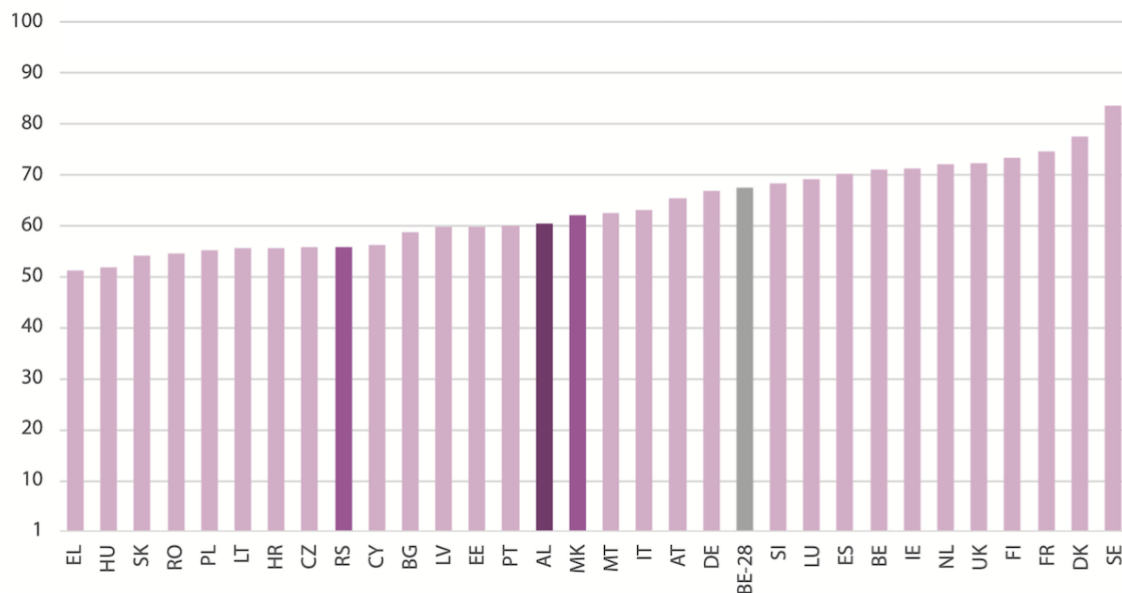
¹⁵ Law No.10019/2008 on the Electoral Code was modified in 2012, 2015 and 2020 (European Commission, 2021a).

¹⁶ Law No.9669/2006 on Measures against Violence in Family Relations was amended in 2008, 2010, 2018 and 2020 (European Commission, 2021a).

Inclusion and Accessibility of Persons with Disabilities; the Law on Civil Servants (European Commission, 2021a).

In 2020, the Gender Equality Index for Albania was published for the first time. The index measures gender equality in six core domains: work, money, knowledge, time, power, health, and two additional domains: intersecting inequalities¹⁷ and violence. The overall Gender Equality Index¹⁸ for Albania reached 60.4 out of 100, 7 points below the EU-28 average (67.4). This indicated a substantial gender gap, except in the domain of power (political, economic and social power), where Albania has higher gender parity than the EU-28, largely due to the high representation of women in political and economic power. This achievement in the domain of power compared to most EU Member States, Serbia and North Macedonia contributed to Albania being ranked 17th out of 31 countries as shown in Figure 1 (MoHSP, INSTAT & EIGE, 2020).

Figure 1: Gender Equality Index Albania, EU-28, EU Member States, Serbia and North Macedonia¹⁹



Source: MoHSP, INSTAT & EIGE, 2020

In 2021, Albania adopted its National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030. The first National Strategy was issued in 2007 for a three-year period. The National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030 and its Action Plan (hereafter NSGE), the fourth of its kind, covers a ten-year period in alignment with other national strategies and action plans, and the UN SDGs. This strategic document developed by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MoHSP) on behalf of the GoA emphasises for the first time issues such as environment and climate change, digitalisation and green economy in relation to gender equality. Monitoring the NSGE progress (indicators)

¹⁷ The domain of intersecting inequalities highlights how gender inequalities manifest in combination with family type, age, disability, education level, rural-urban, etc. (MoHSP, INSTAT & EIGE, 2020).

¹⁸ The Gender Equality Index for Albania is only available for 2020 (data used for the index calculation are from 2015 to 2018, with most indicators measured in 2018). The Index measures gender equality on a scale of 1 (full inequality) to 100 (full equality). Each domain used to measure gender equality is divided into sub-domains. For additional information on metrics and computation, see for example: [EIGE Gender Equality Index Report](#); [EIGE Gender Equality Index Main Findings](#)

¹⁹ The Gender Equality Index is based on the following data: Albania, 2015-2018 data; EU Member States, 2017 data; Serbia, 2016 data; North Macedonia, 2015 data.

and allocating the financial resources in line with the budget forecast will be key to the success of the NSGE and the implementation of its Action Plan. Indeed, a persistent funding gap hampered the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2020 on Gender Equality (European Commission, 2021b).

At the governmental level, the Deputy Prime Minister is the **National Coordinator for Gender Equality**²⁰.

The **MoHSP** is the lead ministry in charge of gender equality issues. The ministry exercises its mandate through the **Sector on Policy and Strategies on Social Inclusion and Gender Equality**²¹, which is tasked with the coordination and monitoring of actions focusing not only on gender equality and gender-based violence issues but also on minority groups, diversity, children's rights, etc.

The National Council on Gender Equality (NCGE), chaired by the Minister of Health and Social Protection, is the highest-level advisory body for gender equality issues, and for ensuring gender mainstreaming in all fields, especially in political, social, economic and cultural fields²². It comprises 9 representatives of line ministries (Deputy Ministers or Senior level Managers) and three civil society organisations.

The Law on Gender Equality foresees the appointment of a **Gender Equality Officer (GEO)** in each Ministry dealing with gender equality issues (the 11-line ministries). Similarly, each of the 61 municipalities must appoint a GEO in their structure. Although the Law specifies that the GEO holds a full-time position in the ministries or public administrations, in practice the GEO combines her, or his gender equality tasks with other responsibilities.

Within the Assembly, sits the **Parliamentary Subcommittee on Gender Equality and Ending Violence Against Women**, under the permanent Committee on Labour, Social Affairs and Health. As part of the parliamentary control process, this Subcommittee continuously requests information on the implementation of the NSGE; reports about domestic violence, discrimination against women, etc.; and conducts hearings with interest groups and institutions.

The **Alliance of Women Parliamentarians** is the result of a lobbying movement initiated by women deputies aiming to promote gender equality in Parliament and advocate for gender mainstreaming in national legislation (UN Women, 2020).

At the local level, the **National Councillors' Alliance** further aims at implementing protective and inclusive policies for women in need and achieving gender equality.

In recent years, Albania has developed a comprehensive legal and institutional framework for promoting gender equality, ensuring gender mainstreaming, and protecting women and girls' rights (see above). Regardless of these major achievements, "[...] Albanian women continue to face barriers to achieve their full potential in a still traditional, patriarchal society, especially in the rural areas. This inequality has a high social and economic cost"²³. Ensuring adequate resources associated with gender equality initiatives, as well as the implementation of these initiatives and the existing robust framework, would help to further progress in gender equality and empowerment in Albania.

²⁰ Prime Minister Order No. 32/2018.

²¹ The Sector is part of the General Directorate for Policies and Development of Health and Social Protection

²² Articles 11 and 12 of Law No.9770/2008 on Gender Equality in Society.

²³ See: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2020/06/19/toward-gender-equality-in-albania-shifting-mindsets-through-institutional-reform>

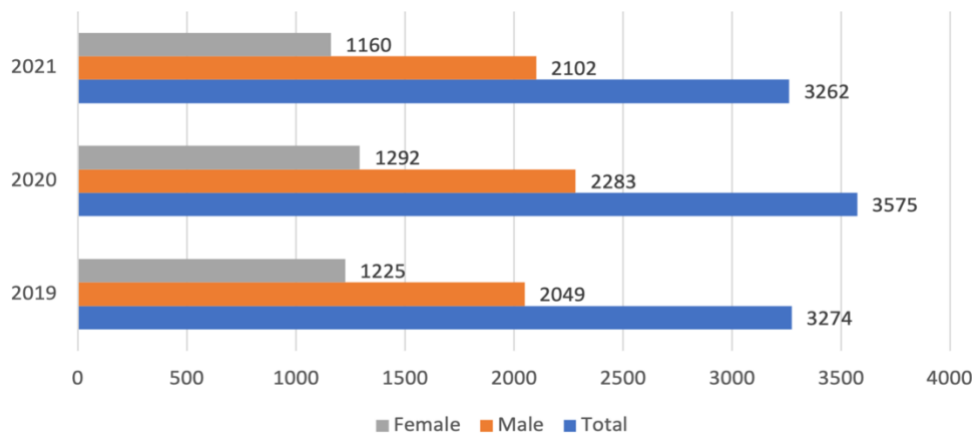
2.2 Education and training

In Albania, the educational system is divided into pre-primary; primary (1-5 grade) and lower secondary education (6-9 grade)²⁴; upper secondary education (general or vocational, 10-12 grade) and tertiary or university education (from short cycle²⁵ to Doctorate).

The share of girls graduating from upper secondary schools reached 52.7% in 2021 versus 51.1% of boys in 2020. Nonetheless, in secondary vocational education (VE), INSTAT data (2021) confirm past trends with a minority of girls: they were 19.4% of graduates in 2021 compared to 80.6% of boys²⁶ (740 girls vs. 3,081 boys). This is a slight increase from 2020 when girls represented 17% of graduates. The persistence of strong gender stereotypes associating VE with boys and “traditionally” male professions are cited among the reasons that refrain girls from enrolling in VE.

In tertiary education, there is a preponderance of females, however. In 2020-2021, 59.3% of the enrolled students were females and women constituted 66% of all graduates. If 30% of female and male students graduated in business, administration, and law²⁷, horizontal segregation occurs in other fields of study in which students graduate. For example, 82.3% of the total graduates in the field of education are females with only 17.7% males²⁸. In contrast, in engineering, manufacturing and construction²⁹, males represent 64.4% of the total graduates³⁰ (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Tertiary Education, Number of Students Graduated in Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction by gender, year 2019-2021



Source: INSTAT

²⁴ Compulsory education.

²⁵ 2 years.

²⁶ INSTAT, 2020-2021. See: [INSTAT](#)

²⁷ This is the field of study where both women and men graduate the most in Albania.

²⁸ Most of the graduates are also females in arts and humanities (79.9%); social sciences, journalism and information (79.1%) and health and welfare (77.4%).

²⁹ This field of study accounts for 10% of all graduates in 2021.

³⁰ Note that the engineering graduates' figures are similar in the EU. In its Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 (2020a), the European Commission regrets that women only represent 36% of STEM graduates.

According to the Ministry of Education and Sports data, among the graduated students in Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction in 2021, there were only 11.7% female graduates³¹ out of the 478 students who specialised in electricity and energy.

For the Network of Women in STEM in the Western Balkans³², the limited number of women active in STEM fields highlights the gender imbalance of a discipline with social and economic potential. Therefore, it aims at empowering and encouraging high-school girls and young women to enter both STEM higher education and STEM careers³³.

In Albania, the Network of Albanian Women in STEM (NAW-STEM), launched in 2021, also wants to contribute to the social and economic empowerment of women by increasing their representation in STEM, both in academia and industry³⁴.

Research from the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2017) analysing horizontal segregation in VE and tertiary education in the EU reveals that in the transition from education to work, gender plays a prominent role in “funneling” young men and women into gendered rather than “gender-atypical” jobs. Moreover, this report notes that women with “gender-atypical” profiles (VE, STEM) do not automatically embrace a career in energy companies (perception, cultural and social norms, etc.).

The horizontal segregation that occurs in secondary and tertiary education in Albania, like in EU Member States, narrows female and male employment options, limits their access to certain jobs, leads to unequal pay, further reinforces gender stereotypes, and gives rise to vertical segregation (glass-ceiling) while also perpetuating gender inequalities in both the public and private spheres (EIGE, 2017). Society incurs economic and scientific losses because of the failure to recruit and engage fully the most qualified pool of potential STEM practitioners. There is a loss to women as a group too because women are not accessing some of the highly valued occupations (Diekman, Steinberg, Brown, Belanger & Clark, 2017).

2.3 Women in the workplace

In Albania, around 1.2 million persons were employed in 2021 (INSTAT, 2022). Even though more women graduate from tertiary education compared to men, only 53.8 % of them participate in the formal workforce compared to 68.2% of men (Figure 3), which represents a gender gap in employment of 14.4 percentage points. Despite their higher level of education, women are also less likely to occupy higher paid positions. Figure 3 illustrates that the level of women out of the labour force among the female population aged 15-64 is significantly higher than men among the male population aged 15-64, 38.6% vs. 22.7%.

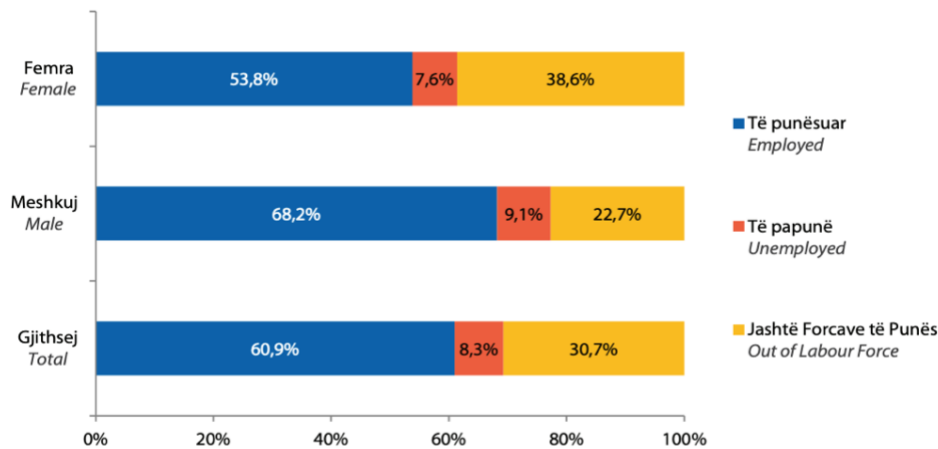
³¹ Females constituted the vast majority of the graduates in Textiles (95% of the 39 graduated students); Food Processing (80% of the 79 graduates) and Architecture and City Planning (62% of the 234 graduates). Source: Ministry of Education and Sport.

³² A joint initiative of the Regional Cooperation Council and UNDP established in 2021.

³³ More information is available at: <https://wbc-rti.info/object/link/22750>

³⁴ More information is available at: <https://scidevcenter.org/network-of-albanian-women-in-stem/>

Figure 3: Population aged 15-64 in the labour force, by economic status and gender, 2021



Source: INSTAT, Labour Market 2021

The highest share of employed persons is in the service and agricultural sectors with 44.3 % and 33.8 % of the total employment, respectively (INSTAT, 2022). As with education, horizontal segregation takes place in the labour market with respect to the economic activities in which women and men are employed (see Table 1). Agriculture occupies 40% of the employed women, compared to 28.8% for men. Both the construction sector and the mining and quarrying, electricity, gas, and water supply sector³⁵ employ less than 1% of the total employed women (respectively 0.5% and 0.9%), with men representing most of the workforce.

Table 1: Employment structure by gender and economic activity in 2021

	2021	Total	Female	Male
Total Employed (number)		1,248,749	555,435	693,314
Economic activity (%)				
Agriculture		33.8	40.0	28.8
Manufacturing		11.2	13.5	9.4
Construction		8.1	0.5	14.2
Mining and Quarrying, Electricity, Gas and Water supply		2.6	0.9	4.0
Trade, Transportation, Accommodation and Food, Business and Administrative Services		26.6	22.3	30.1
Public Administration, Community, Social and other Services and Activities		17.7	22.9	13.6

Source: INSTAT, Labour Market 2021

The average monthly gross wage for an employee in Albania is 57,191 ALL with men having a gross monthly average wage 4.5 % higher than women, a gender pay gap of 4.5 percentage points (INSTAT, 2022).

INSTAT (2021) points out that women spend considerably more time than men in unpaid domestic work (on average 5.43 hours per day compared to 2.06 hours for men). The gender

³⁵ This aggregate includes NACE sections B, D and E. These data are not further broken down to include Level 3 NACE code D35.1 - Electric power generation, transmission and distribution.

gap in unpaid domestic and care work has significant implications not only for women's ability to actively take part in the labour market and climb the career ladder but also for the type/quality of employment opportunities available to them.

2.4 Harassment at the workplace

A 2018 national population survey finds that among women who have experienced sexual harassment, 13.8% of them reported their co-workers and a few (1.3%) reported their employers (INSTAT, 2019). The ILO underlines that despite its frequency, violence and harassment at work tend to be underreported. Even if organisations commit to zero tolerance for harassment in their labour practices (code of conduct, internal policies, etc.), raising awareness on (sexual) harassment within the workplace and providing sufficient information about the policies in place to prevent harassment (procedure, monitoring, sanctions, etc.) can contribute to creating some trust in the treatment of the complaint and fighting harassment and violence at work.

2.5 Work-life balance

Finding the balance between social, domestic, and professional obligations and responsibilities is complex. Taking their higher share in unpaid domestic and care work, women's employment opportunities are narrower³⁶.

The Covid-19 pandemic forced most of the workforce to work at home and "hybrid working"³⁷ has become acceptable for many organisations. Working from home arrangements offer additional flexibility for female and male employees to combine work with care and household tasks, and they can help close the gender gap in domestic and care unpaid work.

In Albania, employees, whether working for public or private organisations, benefit from the provisions of the Labour Code, which provides, for example, for paid leave for a sick child³⁸ and reduced working hours for mothers with infants³⁹.

Since 2015⁴⁰, workers with children who meet the conditions can take parental leave. Maternity, paternity, and parental leave are distinct leave⁴¹ and there seems to be little awareness around parental leave. A recent study indicates that most employees (female and male) with children under 6 years old do not request parental leave in Albania, illustrating the lack of information about this right or, as it is an unpaid leave, limited interest in this leave (UNFPA Albania & IDRA Research and Consulting, 2022). The latter can be an opportunity for fathers to assume an equal share of caring and family responsibilities and to reduce the gender gap in unpaid domestic work. In the EU, it was also observed that most of the fathers do not use their right to parental leave and additional measures are foreseen to encourage

³⁶ See sub-section 2.3.

³⁷ Working both from home and at the workplace.

³⁸ Limited numbers of days.

³⁹ Up to 1 year old, Article 115 of the Labour Code.

⁴⁰ Implementation of Directive 2010/18/EU.

⁴¹ Paid maternity leave (up to a maximum of 390 days, including a compulsory period of some 3 months) and paid paternity leave (3 days) are provided by Law (Articles 96.3, 104.1, 105.2 of the Labour Code and Article 27 of the Social Security Law). The maternity leave is paid at 80% (salary) for 150 days by the Social Security Institute and then at 50 % for the rest of the period. The paternity leave is paid at 100%. The Social Security Law (Article 27/7) stipulates that in case the mother does not fulfil the necessary insurance requirements or does not wish to exercise her right, this maternity leave right can be granted to the father, after the compulsory period, if he is insured. An employee, female or male, is also entitled to parental leave, an unpaid leave of no less than 4 months, until her/his dependent child reaches the age of six (the duration is determined through a written agreement between the employer and employee), Article 132/1 of the Labour Code.

them to make use of it⁴². UNFPA Albania & IDRA Research and Consulting (2022) also reveal that only 3% of the male employees who responded to their survey took paternity leave.

The NSGE plans to enhance the information both parents have on parental leave, through awareness activities, information to employers on their employees' leave rights, etc. (MoHSP, 2021).

2.6 Women in Decision-Making

The participation rate of women in the Parliament of Albania was 35.7% in 2021 (a 6,2% increase compared to 2020)⁴³. Some parliamentary commissions remain however predominantly male-dominated, e.g., the Commission for productive activity, trade and environment where male members of Parliament are around 90% (INSTAT, 2021).

In the executive power, more than 70% of the ministerial positions in the government's Cabinet are held by women⁴⁴. This is the first women-dominated Cabinet since the multi-party system was introduced in the country in 1991.

The Electoral Code, with a gender quota of 30 % in parliamentary and local elections, and the Law on Gender Equality have been instrumental in increasing the number of women in both the legislative and executive power. However, women in leadership positions should not be expected to bear the sole responsibility to move forward the NSGE. Indeed, gender equality concerns both women and men, it is a shared responsibility. Focusing on having women in positions of power to achieve policy objectives removes men's equal responsibility to deliver gender equality (European Parliament, 2019).

Globally, women held 35.4% of managerial positions in Albania in 2020, a 0.7% increase compared to 2019 (INSTAT, 2021).

Despite the achievements in the political sphere, the number of female entrepreneurs and industry leaders remains low. Their share hardly increased to 25.5 % in 2020, coming from 25.4 % in 2019. Women entrepreneurs are mainly found in the service sector (33.7%) and in small enterprises (25.8 % in 2020). Only 21% of the entrepreneurs active in the electricity sector are women (compared to 79% of men in 2021)⁴⁵.

To encourage women to develop businesses specialising in the green economy and digitalisation⁴⁶, two areas that offer female and male entrepreneurs the opportunity to take a more active part in the energy transition, the NSGE envisages incentives (grants or loans) for their activity with an objective of supporting 100 female entrepreneurs annually starting from mid-2022 until mid-2025 (MoHSP, 2021). However, the needed budget associated with this measure is not specified in the national strategy document.

⁴² Directive (EU) 2019/1158 on work-life balance for parents and carers repealing Directive 2010/18/EU. This Directive introduces minimum standards for family leave and flexible working arrangements for workers and promotes equal sharing of caring responsibilities between parents.

⁴³ INSTAT. See: http://www.instat.gov.al/media/10318/press-release-women-and-men-in-albania-2021____.pdf

⁴⁴ In August 2022, the Albania government counts 12 female Ministers and 4 male Ministers, including the Prime Minister, Mr. Edi Rama. Mrs. Belinda Balluku is Deputy Prime Minister and Minister in charge of Infrastructure and Energy. See: <https://www.kryeministria.al/en/qeveria/>

⁴⁵ Source: Business Register, 2021.

⁴⁶ On digitalisation and its role in the energy transition, see for example: https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-systems-integration/digitalisation-energy-sector_en

2.7 Civil society organisations and gender equality

Since the beginning of the nineties, women's civil society organisations (CSOs) defending women's rights have been at the forefront of combatting domestic and gender-based violence. Through awareness campaigns, capacity-building initiatives, lobbying and advocacy, etc., CSOs participate in improving Albania's policy framework related to the protection of women's rights and support the country in its journey towards gender equality. Three CSOs representatives sit in the NCGE established by the Law on Gender Equality.

Even if positive examples of productive collaboration exist, the relationship between the GoA and women's CSOs is characterised by relatively limited consultation on the one hand, and major reliance for service delivery and outreach to citizens in need on the other (UN Women, 2020). On gender equality and women's empowerment, women's CSOs' knowledge and broad experience on gender issues would make them potential key partners for gender awareness training and partnerships with the GoA, public and private organisations.

3 WOMEN IN ALBANIA’S ENERGY SECTOR

3.1 Background, international and EU context

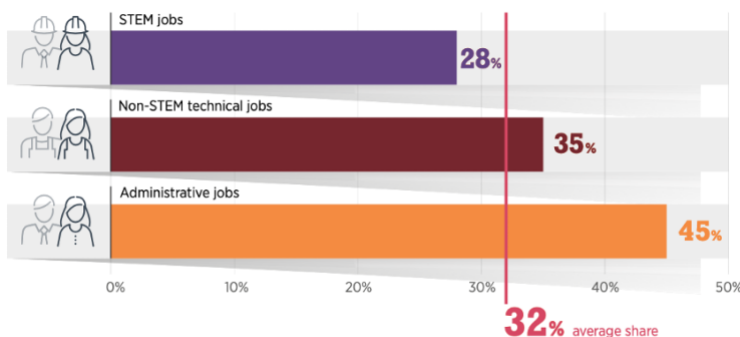
The global energy transition offers a unique opportunity to transform the energy sector. The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted in 2015 underlines that reaching the 17 SDGs⁴⁷ by 2030 would create opportunities to transform our world, and with a dedicated goal on gender equality (SDG 5), it recalls that the “systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the implementation of the Agenda is crucial” (IRENA, 2019).

The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) estimates that worldwide employment in renewable energy could increase from 12.7 million in 2021 to nearly 38.2 million in 2030, with a potential of 139 million jobs in the energy sector by 2030, including more than 74 million in energy efficiency, electric vehicles, power systems/flexibility and hydrogen⁴⁸ (IRENA & ILO, 2022).

The EU Green Deal has set a goal of climate neutrality by 2050. To achieve this binding target and as an intermediate, the EU committed to cut its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% compared to 1990 levels by 2030. The “Fit for 55” legislative proposals cover a wide range of policy areas including climate, energy, transport, and taxation, for delivering the updated 2030 greenhouse gas emissions reduction target. These proposals aim to stimulate the creation of green jobs, ensure a fair transition, and leave no one behind. The low carbon energy transition offers diverse opportunities along the value chain, requiring various skilled and talented professionals.

Taking into account these employment opportunities while considering SDG 5, IRENA launched a global survey with some 1,500 respondents from the renewable energy sector representing 144 countries in 2018. The survey results show that women account for 32% of full-time employment in the renewable energy sector compared to 22% in the global oil and gas energy industry (IRENA, 2019)⁴⁹. When analysing the nature of the positions occupied, the findings reveal that women remain underrepresented in STEM and STEM-related positions (see Figure 4). IRENA (2019) indicates that one finds persistent barriers to improving women’s representation in senior executive positions and on the boards of directors.

Figure 4: Share of women in STEM, Non-STEM and Administrative jobs in the renewable energy sector



Source: IRENA, 2019

⁴⁷ Including ending poverty (SDG 1), achieving gender equality (SDG 5), ensuring affordable and clean energy for all (SDG 7), fighting climate change (SDG 13). For more information, see: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

⁴⁸ The gender issues in these key initiatives for the energy transition are not analysed in this report.

⁴⁹ This survey is the first global survey with a gender perspective in the renewable energy sector. Its findings and conclusions have been an eye-opener for many actors in the energy sector. It is based on voluntary responses; therefore, it presents limitations such as the survey design and the sample of responses received.

In the EU, women accounted for 25% of the workforce in the “Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply” sectors in 2019 (European Commission, 2021b).

There is an urgency to attract and retain a larger pool of talented professionals and decision-makers in the energy sector to ensure innovation and the inclusive perspectives needed to successfully navigate the low-carbon energy transition, accomplish the UN SDGs by 2030 and reach a climate-neutral economy by 2050 (EU Green Deal). Removing the barriers women face to enter, remain in the workforce, and advance in their careers is thus critical to seize the additional benefits that diversity in the workforce is considered to bring (European Parliament, 2019). More broadly, the gender dimension must be addressed in the energy transition and climate change policies as women and men are not affected equally by energy poverty and climate change (European Commission, 2020a).

In line with the EU gender equality strategy 2020-2025, the European Commission launched an “Equality platform” for the energy sector in 2021 aiming at strengthening the commitment to equality in all its dimensions, notably by promoting workplaces that are more diverse and inclusive⁵⁰, and inviting energy stakeholders from all EU countries in sharing their initiatives to promote equality and inclusion.

As gender-disaggregated data and information are needed to set targets, monitor progress and guide decision-making, the European Commission has issued the ASSET study on the collection of gender-disaggregated data on the employment and participation of women and men in the energy sector (European Commission, 2021b). The purpose of the study is to create and analyse a gender-disaggregated dataset on employment in the energy sector, which forms an objective basis for the design of gender-awareness policies and for assessing progress in the sector.

In line with the ASSET study, the Energy Community Secretariat (2022) confirms that the collection of gender-disaggregated employment indicators in all Contracting Parties would provide the opportunity not only to assess the current statistical situation regarding employment and gender in the energy sector but also to identify barriers to women's entry into the energy labour market or advancement to higher job positions.

It is recognized that the collection of gender-disaggregated data can play a critical role in reducing the gender gap in the energy sector. Relevant indicators are required, and it is critical that the different organisations understand the benefits of tracking and monitoring these indicators (European Commission, 2021b; Energy Community Secretariat, 2022). Their purpose is indeed to address the existing gaps through adequate policies and measures that will lead to more gender-balanced workforce and gender equality in the energy sector.

3.2 Albania energy context overview

With hydropower representing around 95% of its installed capacity, Albania has a vibrant electricity sector. It means also that the country is highly dependent on annual rainfall for its electricity generation, making it vulnerable to climate change. Therefore, the diversification of electricity production is critical. In recent years, the GoA has taken commendable steps for the promotion of other non-hydro renewable energy sources (IRENA, 2021).

⁵⁰ See: https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-strategy/equality-platform-energy-sector_en
Expertise France- Gender & Energy Diagnosis

3.2.1 Legislation and policy framework

Albania is working towards the implementation of the EU *acquis* in the energy sector⁵¹, including liberalising its internal energy market, diversifying its renewable energy production to decrease its dependence on hydropower, tackling climate change, increasing energy efficiency and promoting trans-European and trans-regional networks (European Commission, 2020b and 2021c).

The major legislation for the energy sector⁵² includes the following:

- Law No. 43/2015 on the Power Sector,
- Law No. 124/2015 on Energy Efficiency,
- Law No. 07/2017 on Renewable Energy Sources,
- Law on the ratification of The Energy Community Treaty (2006) which provides a legal framework for convergence with the EU energy *acquis*.

Besides, the GoA adopted its National Energy Strategy for 2018-2030 in 2018. In this core document, the Government defines the country's energy strategy in accordance with other national policies and strategies and the EU Green Deal's objectives. Energy is also fundamental in the Economic Reform Programme (ERP) 2021-2023 whose goal is to enable sustainable growth, increase employment and reduce public debt⁵³.

Albania has also ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It is a Party to the Kyoto Protocol of the UNFCCC, and Albania has signed the Paris agreement. The GoA approved the National Strategy for Climate Change (2019-2030) in 2019 and Law No. 155/2020 on Climate Change in 2020. Albania's revised National Determined Contribution was submitted to the UNFCCC in 2021 and includes actions on gender and adaptation⁵⁴. The country has confirmed its commitment to the Agenda 2030 and the achievement of the UN SDGs.

Albania recently issued its National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) for the period 2021-2030⁵⁵, the plan is gender neutral⁵⁶. Moreover, in the energy sector, there is no national gender action plan. In this regard, the NSGE calls precisely for the inclusion of specific gender equality objectives in environmental strategies and action plans, pursuant to the RIO Conventions, Multilateral Environmental Agreements, and gender mainstreaming in all project documents to be further developed.

⁵¹ In addition, are also relevant the *Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans* (October 2020), which aims to spur the long-term economic recovery of the region, support green and digital transitions and foster regional integration and convergence with the EU ; the *Sofia Declaration on the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans* (November 2020) to support and accelerate changes and processes across the region with the overarching goal of addressing climate change (ETF, 2022).

⁵² As subsequently amended, if need be.

⁵³ The ERP acknowledges the gender dimension. For example, gender equality is mentioned in the sub-headings on the expected impact of the ERP structural reforms on the social outcomes. However, there is little or no assessment of the impact of these reforms on gender equality. E.g., on the further liberalisation of the energy market, the ERP mentions job creation and stresses that it is a gender-neutral measure, whereas the energy market liberalisation and its associated reforms offer opportunities to increase gender equality in the sector; regarding renewable energy, the ERP document indicates that gender equality is making progress in the renewable industry but there are no further information nor gender-disaggregated data provided to support this statement. For more details, see: [ERP 2021-2023](#)

⁵⁴ See: <https://www.energy-community.org/implementation/Albania/reporting.html#uv6giw-accordion>

⁵⁵ See NECP (July 2021 version) available at: <https://www.energy-community.org/regionalinitiatives/NECP.html>

⁵⁶ For a definition of gender-neutral policy, see: <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1193>

3.2.2 Decision-makers and electricity undertakings

Electricity stakeholders are numerous. They include, to name a few, decision-makers, producers, network operators, suppliers, consumers, associations, academics, think tanks, and local communities.

Hereafter is a short overview of the main organisations active in the Albanian electricity market:

The **Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE)**, responsible for the energy sector, oversees the National Energy Strategy, the development of energy policies and market reforms in the sector, the promotion of energy efficiency, renewable energy resources and investments in the sector.

The **Albanian Energy Regulator Authority (ERE)** is an independent public legal entity whose responsibilities include regulating activities in the electricity and natural gas sectors (tariffs' adoption, licences' issuance, etc.), developing and adopting electricity market rules while also monitoring all electricity market operations in Albania. ERE ensures a sustainable and secure electricity supply for customers by establishing an operational and competitive electricity market.

The **Transmission System Operator (OST)**, a state-owned company, performs the roles of the transmission network operator, power system operator and market operator. OST's responsibility is to provide the necessary transmission capacities for an uninterrupted supply of electricity to end-users, for the transmission of electricity generated from domestic sources, as well as for the transit and exchanges with other countries in the region through the European Network Transmission System Operators for Electricity, ENTSO-E (IRENA, 2021).

The **Albanian power exchange company (ALPEX)**, a subsidiary of OST and KOSTT (Kosovo Transmission and System Operator), is responsible for setting up the day-ahead and intraday market both in Albania and Kosovo⁵⁷.

The **Electricity Distribution System Operator (OSHEE Group, OSHEE)** is the largest state-owned enterprise in Albania both in terms of revenues and workforce in the country. It is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the distribution system below 35 kV. It supplies electricity to all consumers connected to its network. The operator is obliged to connect all consumers and/or producers to the distribution system in a transparent and non-discriminatory way. To comply with the EU *acquis*, OSHEE is unbundled in three subsidiaries: the Universal Service Supplier (FSHU), the Free Market Supplier (FTL) and the Distribution System Operator (OSSH). Distributed power producers sell their power to FTL.

Energy of Albania – KESH (KESH), a state-owned generation company, is the largest producer of electricity in Albania operating 79% of the generation capacity in the country. KESH administers and controls the Drin River cascade hydropower plants (Fierzë, Komani and Vau I Dejës) with a total installed capacity of 1,350 MW and trades its electricity production on the regulated and deregulated electricity markets.

The **Albanian Renewable Energy Association (AREA)** represents the interest of the renewable energy sector, with a special focus on independent hydropower producers. Its

⁵⁷ ALPEX is not yet operational.

members are hydropower plant companies with an installed capacity ranging from 0.1 to some 30 MW.

International players such as Ayen Enerji, Kurum International, Statkraft, and Voltalia are present in Albania, with assets in operations and/or development.

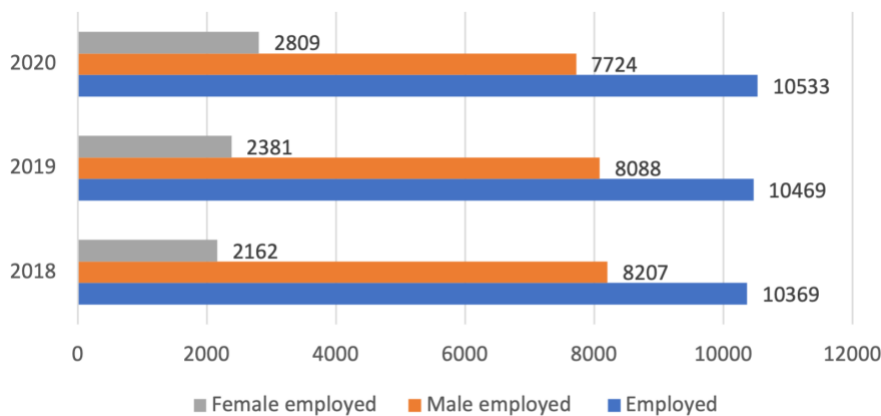
3.3 Gender and employment in the energy sector

Despite the vast opportunities the energy transition presents for both female and male professionals, the energy sector remains largely a male-dominated industry at global level and lags behind regarding gender equality within its workforce.

Barriers to entry for women in the renewable energy sector include the perception of gender norms driven by social and cultural norms, the lack of relevant skills, awareness, networks, and prevalent hiring practices. The glass ceiling⁵⁸, the difficulty to balance work and family and the lack of a supportive work environment are often cited as the principal obstacles to retention and career advancement of women in the renewable energy sector (IRENA, 2019). Evans and Diekman (2009) underline that the division of labour rests in part upon self-selection into occupational roles that are congruous with one’s gender belief system. However, the division of labour is malleable, “both in reality (Fullerton, 1999) and in perception (Diekman & Eagly, 2000)” (Evans & Diekman, 2009).

Compared to other sectors such as agriculture or services, the electricity sector in Albania represents, with some 10,000 employed people⁵⁹, a small share of the overall employment although it is a strategic sector. As illustrated in Figure 5, in 2020, 73% of the workforce in the electricity and gas supply sector were men compared to 27% women, this is a 6 percentage points increase compared to 2018 (21% women in 2018)⁶⁰.

Figure 5: Employed workforce in electricity and gas supply (year-end) in Albania, by gender and year



Source: INSTAT, Economic indicator by economic section

⁵⁸ IRENA stresses that in close to 50% of all participating private sector firms, men represent at least 75% of board members.

⁵⁹ Electricity and gas supply. No data are available for Level 3 NACE code D35.1 - Electric power generation, transmission and distribution).

⁶⁰ Similar data are found in the EU-27, with 26% of women in the electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply sector in 2020 (EUROSTAT).

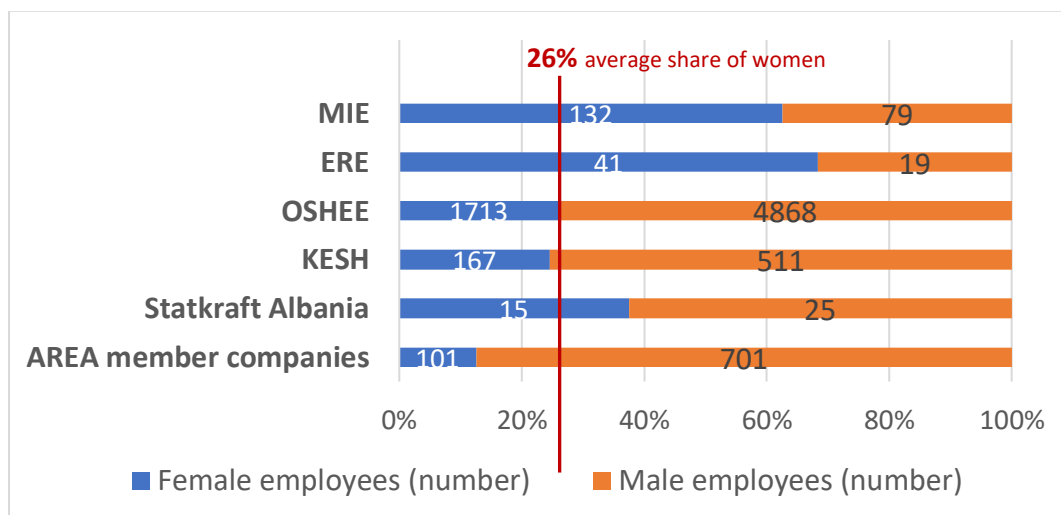
The following subheadings of subsection 3.3 focus on the gender composition, policies and practices, current and/or future initiatives of the energy organisations⁶¹ that participated in this gender diagnosis.

3.3.1 Gender composition of the workforce

In the national public energy authorities, women’s participation in the workforce is important. In **MIE**, women represent 63% of the employees (Figure 6) and 74% of the temporary workers. Women constitute most of the employees in senior, middle and lower management with a share of 60%, 58% and 66% respectively. In the highest level of the hierarchy⁶², even though there is a female Minister of Infrastructure and Energy⁶³, women are only 33%. If women are predominant in HR, legal or finance departments, they are less numerous in technical departments. Considering the recruitment procedure applicable in public administrations, with equal skills for an open position, male candidates could be preferred to women in MIE if women are overrepresented in the job category for which there is an external recruitment⁶⁴.

The female proportion is similar within **ERE**, with 68% of women employees among its 60 employees (Figure 6). Albeit ERE middle management is dominated by women, they are underrepresented in top management positions (37.5%). The current gender parity in the Board of Commissioners (2 women and 2 men) will be reversed, one way or the other, as soon as the (ongoing) selection of the 5th Commissioner is completed.

Figure 6: Energy organisations, workforce by gender, 2022



Source: MIE, ERE, OSHEE, KESH, Statkraft Albania, AREA, 2022

⁶¹ I.e., national public energy authorities (MIE and ERE), state-owned electricity companies (KESH, OSHEE, OST) and private electricity companies (Statkraft and AREA member companies).

⁶² Minister and Vice-Ministers.

⁶³ Mrs. Belinda Balluku, Vice Prime Minister and Minister in charge of Infrastructure and Energy.

⁶⁴ “[Civil servant] Candidates with equal points are ranked according to the following criteria:

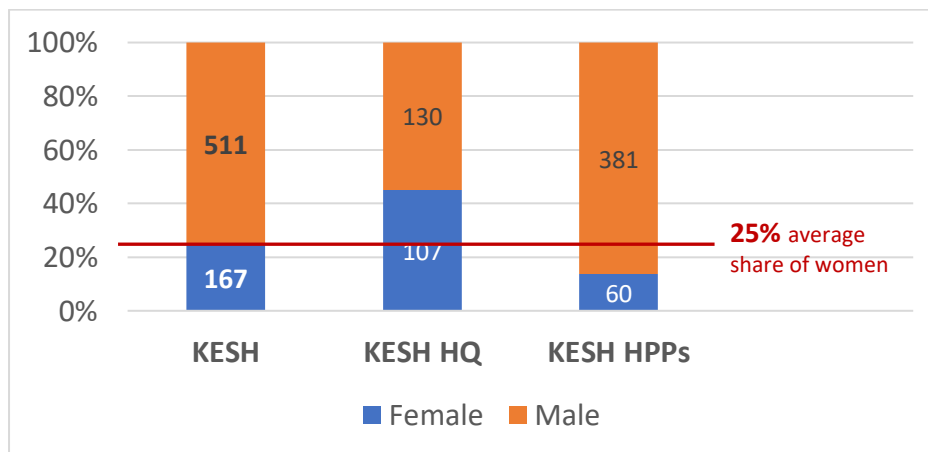
- If one of the candidates is included in the category of persons with disabilities, then [s]he is chosen first, before the rest of the candidates.

- In the case of candidates of different sexes, the order of selection is such, that the candidate belonging to the less represented gender, comes first”. See: <https://www.ohchr.org> > Issues > contributions

Compared to the national public energy authorities, the average participation of women in electricity production companies falls to 19%⁶⁵ with variation among the undertakings considered.

Men represent 75% of the total workforce in **KESH** (approximately 700 employees, Figures 6 and 7). With 25% women, the utility is below the global average of 32% women for the renewable energy sector (IRENA, 2019). However, there are major gender differences between KESH's headquarters in Tirana and its HPP sites in remote rural north-western Albania. In the former, KESH is not far from gender equality with 45% female employees. The utility supervisory board counts 2 women out of 5 members and female senior managers represent a 25% share. In KESH power plants, female participation drops to 14% with more important gender segregation according to occupations than in the Tirana office⁶⁶. The scarcity of women may be due to social and cultural norms -more rooted in rural areas-, gendered roles and the limited availability of skilled female or male workers for some specific technical roles in remote rural areas. While women occupy both technical and support roles at different levels of the hierarchy in KESH headquarters, they are found mainly in managerial and non-managerial support roles in KESH HPPs.

Figure 7: KESH total workforce by gender, 2022



Source: KESH, 2022

Statkraft Albania⁶⁷ workforce is composed of 37% of women⁶⁸ and 63% of men (Figure 6). Although 2 out of 3 directors of the board⁶⁹ are women and 45% of all managers are females, women count for less than 35% of the non-managerial roles (10 out of 29 employees).

The percentage of women working for **AREA member companies**⁷⁰ (small HPPs) is 13% of the total workforce (about 800 employees, Figure 6), a figure close to the share of women in KESH

⁶⁵ Electricity generation in Albania is largely based on hydropower, with HPPs mostly located in remote rural areas, offering mainly technical jobs (low to high-skilled roles). These elements and the difficulty of attracting workers in remote rural areas may explain the low proportion of women in power generation companies in the country.

⁶⁶ E.g., in KESH power plants, there are only male employees in some medium to low-skilled positions (e.g., pump operator, technical equipment operator, divers), while other non-technical occupations such as assistant or cleaners are occupied only by female employees.

⁶⁷ Statkraft Albania, through its subsidiary Devoll Hydropower Sh.A., employs 40 persons and operates the Banja HPP (72 MW) and Moglice HPP (197 MW).

⁶⁸ An increase of 6% compared to 2021, see <https://www.statkraft.al/globalassets/0/al/publications/dhp-annual-report-2021---english.pdf>

⁶⁹ Devoll Hydropower Sh.A.

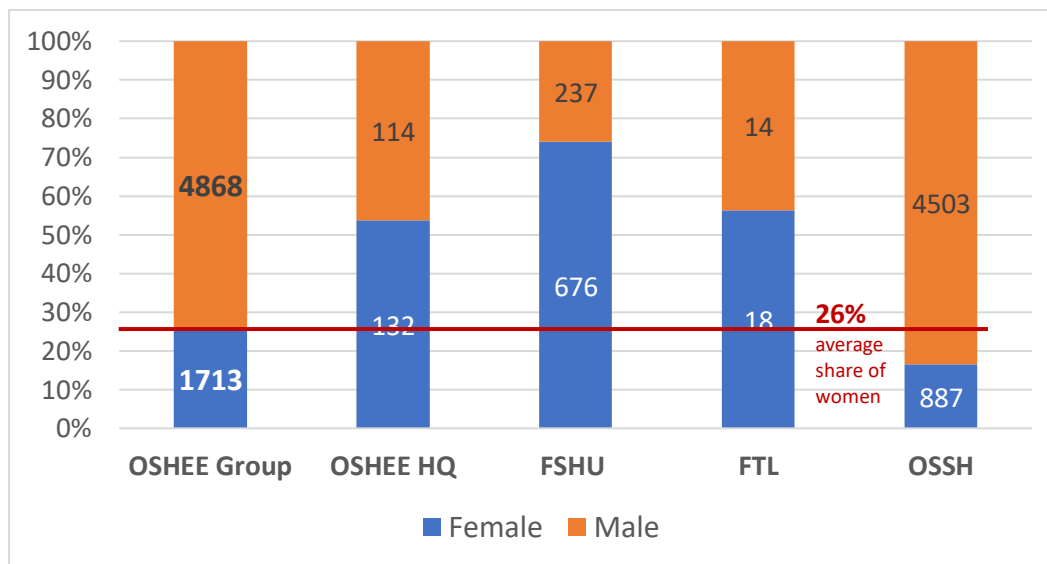
⁷⁰ AREA's 88 member companies operate HPPs in Albania representing an installed capacity of some 410 MW, and employ around 800 persons.

HPPs which suggests that working in power plants is still associated with a male profile. The female employees of AREA members work mainly in administrative roles.

In **OST**, the transmission and system operator, even though there is gender parity at the supervisory board level, the situation is different at the senior management level where women are 29% compared to 71% of men.

OSHEE is one of the main employers in Albania with over 6,500 employees, 74% of whom are men. As shown in Figure 8, most of OSHEE's employees work for its subsidiary OSSH, the distribution system operator, which employs around 5,400 people (82% of OSHEE total workforce), with a 16% share of women. Apart from office jobs, where women and men are almost at parity, men are predominantly represented in the different role categories of OSSH, with field employees accounting for 61% of OSSH total workforce. Field positions are primarily technical⁷¹ and manual, and are characterised by a very low level of female employees (7%). The remaining 18% of the OSHEE workforce is employed at OSHEE headquarters and in its subsidiaries FTL (Free Market Supplier) and FSHU (Universal Service Supplier), where the proportion of women is 54%, 56% and 74% respectively (Figure 8). In FSHU, where the proportion of women is higher than that of men from middle management to low-skilled positions, the highest proportion of women is found in occupations such as customer care (69% of the customer care employees) and cashiers (90% of them). There is gender parity within OSHEE's supervisory council (3 women and 3 men)⁷². In contrast, the executive management of OSHEE and its subsidiaries is mainly composed of men (84%), and women are even absent from OSSH top management.

Figure 8: OSHEE total workforce by gender, 2022



Source: OSHEE, 2022

3.3.2 Age, education, and wages

Most of the female employees working for MIE, ERE, OSHEE, OST⁷³ and Statkraft Albania belong to the age group 31-50. The same is true for KESH headquarters but not for its power

⁷¹ 34% of the total field employees have a VET background, including a very small share of women (1%) compared to men (33%).

⁷² OSHEE Consolidated Financial Statements for the year 2018, see: [LINK](#).

⁷³ The available data concern middle and senior management.

plants, where 47% of female and 61% of male employees are above 50 years old. In both KESH and OSHEE, young employees (age group 30 and below) are less than 20%. Attracting young female and male talents into technical occupations, reskilling employees, as well as developing the local expertise of women and men, are important to avoid possible skill gaps.

The share of males and females having a STEM or technical VET⁷⁴ background varies according to organisations. In MIE, there are more women with a STEM degree than men within the workforce (18% and 13% respectively). In ERE, the opposite occurs with 13% of male employees who studied STEM versus 2% of female employees. In the electricity production companies, KESH and Statkraft Albania, less than 10% of women hold a STEM or VET degree⁷⁵ in the total workforce compared to above 40% of men⁷⁶. Within OSHEE, the electricity distribution system operator, around 35% of the total workforce hold a STEM or VET degree, 30% are men compared to only 5% of women. Most of these employees work for OSSH, OSHEE subsidiary.

According to INSTAT, the average monthly wage in the electricity, gas, steam and air-conditioning supply sector is 53,510 ALL in 2020. INSTAT (2021) mentions a gender pay gap of 8.2% for the “Mining and quarrying, electricity, gas and water supply” economic activity (no disaggregated data are available for the electricity industry). Based on the information received from the energy organisations participating in this study, it is not possible to draw any tangible conclusions for the electricity sector and further study would be needed on this issue. It should however be noted that MIE and ERE employees’ salaries are based on the civil servants’ wage structure. Salary levels appear to differ between the national public energy authorities and the power companies. The latter are considered to offer higher wages and benefits, but less convenient working hours and more limited job security.

3.3.3 Workplace policies and programmes

There is no dedicated gender action plan for the energy sector in Albania. All institutions and companies are however bound by the existing legal and policy framework related to gender equality, non-discrimination, harassment, etc.

The 30% gender quota foreseen in the Law on Gender Equality is thus applicable in public administrations but whereas the Law provides for sanctions in cases of gender discrimination, it is not the case for the non-realisation of the gender quotas in public administration (Xheka, 2016). As per the Law, MIE appointed a Gender Equality Officer (GEO) who sits in the HR department of the Ministry. This role, which is not a full-time position, consists mainly in liaising with MoHSP regarding gender statistics within the energy sector.

ERE and electricity undertakings do not have the obligation to nominate a GEO and gender issues are usually dealt with by their HR departments.

Electricity undertakings have zero tolerance for discrimination and harassment, this forms part of their core principles embedded in their code of conduct, ethics code, collective labour agreements or human resource manual. The training programmes they offer are gender neutral, i.e. technical trainings are based on the role and/or the employee’s annual

⁷⁴ Vocational education and training.

⁷⁵ 8% in KESH and 5% in Statkraft.

⁷⁶ 41% in KESH and 45% in Statkraft.

performance assessment, career development trainings are offered according to merits and/or annual performance assessment.

KESH is currently exploring the inclusion of gender awareness training in its annual training plan for 2023. The company has no gender action plan, nevertheless, it insists on having a gender-friendly workplace and encourages women to participate in the workforce in accordance with the Law.

Statkraft Albania is the sole electricity participating company to have an objective of 40% females in its top management positions. The company encourages women to apply to open positions while the finale selection of the candidate will be based on merits, as per the legal obligation of non-discrimination. Fostering gender equality within its workforce is part of the company's diversity and inclusion pledge (D&I). All employees follow gender awareness training. Statkraft Albania's gender action plan is embedded in different policy documents and commitments: code of conduct, business ethics, gender quota, D&I training, etc. When developing projects (construction phase), Statkraft Albania is committed to hiring women and men locally, providing training, upskilling where needed. Attracting women engineers to work on-site in construction phase (D&I) is a challenge but one that the company believes it can overcome.

The energy organisations are committed to ensuring that their internship programmes are attended by female and male students or graduates. It is not clear whether there are any specific agreements with engineering faculties/vocational education and training institutions providing for special measures to attract female engineering or technical students/graduates to these programmes.

In some of these organisations, gender equality initiatives are underway, more detail is however needed to better understand their scope and how they improve the gender diversity of the workforce from entry to decision-making level.

Despite the above, the empowerment of women in the energy sector in Albania through advocacy, mentoring and networking is at an early stage.

At a global level, different initiatives contribute to empowering women in the energy sector. For example, the International Confederation of Energy Regulators (ICER) launched the Women in Energy (WIE) initiative aiming to help the advancement of women in energy and seeking to change culture and attitudes, through practical tools such as the e-mentoring programme. The ICER WIE network is open to staff of energy regulatory authorities, ERE employees can thus participate in it. There are also regional and international initiatives that could be joined by Albania women in the energy sector, e.g., Women in Energy (WONY)⁷⁷, and the Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition (GWNENET)⁷⁸. Albanian women working in the energy sector could also envisage setting up a platform to foster gender equality in the energy transition in the country.

Within Albanian electricity undertakings, OSHEE partnered with USAID to increase gender balance across the company and encourage more women to enter Albania's energy sector⁷⁹. This partnership incentivised some OSHEE employees to take part in the Gender Equity Executive Leadership Programme, a 12-month executive course that empowers decision-

⁷⁷ More information is available at: <https://www.womeninenergy.eu/>

⁷⁸ More information is available at: <https://www.globalwomennet.org/>

⁷⁹ More information is available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/engendering-industries/partners/oshee-albania>

makers to integrate gender equality initiatives into their corporate structure. Statkraft Albania takes part in D&I committees of the Statkraft Group and issues a yearly action plan to advance D&I, including gender.

The NSGE has set as an objective of reducing barriers keeping women away from the labour market and improving their access to decent work, including “non-traditional” work for women which covers STEM occupations (MoHSP, 2021). It expects an annual increase in the number of women who work in non-traditional sectors such as energy or study STEM and has set targets. Public organisations, energy undertakings and education institutions have a role to play to motivate, attract and retain women in VET and STEM studies, and related occupations.

3.3.4 Work-life balance

If flexible working hours are possible in all organisations, only one electricity undertaking states that it offers “hybrid working” to all its employees as part of its policies.

None of the energy organisations has childcare facilities in its premises or is proposing specific childcare incentives (e.g., participation in the childcare facility fees, reservation of some places in private facilities in the neighbourhood of the office, etc.). Women being traditionally in charge of care work, the lack of childcare possibilities can act as an obstacle to joining the electricity sector. However, MIE and ERE employees, by being civil servants, may have an easier access to public childcare near their place of work.

3.4 Integrating gender in energy consumption

3.4.1 Energy Poverty

UN SDGs, and more specifically SDG 7, aim to “ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all”. Most of the research related to gender equality (SDG 5) and energy access (SDG 7) have been conducted in the Global South. Gender and energy poverty is however a growing area of interest in the Global North. International studies⁸⁰ highlight that women and women-led households are disproportionately affected by energy poverty, a condition that becomes aggravated when inequality is exacerbated by gender gap in income distribution, socioeconomic status, age, etc. (EmpowerMed, 2021). Feenstra and Özerol (2021) confirm that there is strong evidence of a link between energy poverty in the household and other factors, such as women’s health burdens, time use, education, and access to information. The European Commission (2022) also stresses that women and men are not equally affected by policies tackling climate change as there are more women in energy poverty than men and calls for gender equality and equal opportunities to be an integral part of the EU social climate plans.

Energy poverty is not defined nor mentioned in the Albanian Law on the Power Sector. The Law refers to and defines the situation of a vulnerable customer, who is a “household consumer who due to social reasons, in special conditions and by definition of [the] law, is entitled to certain special rights regarding the supply of electricity” (article 3 al.87). The vulnerability criteria are determined by the ministry in charge of social affairs (MoHSP) in cooperation with the ministries responsible for energy (MIE) and finance in consultation with ERE and stakeholders. Vulnerability in the current policy framework refers to disability,

⁸⁰ See for example reports from UNDP, ENERGIA.
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health, and income status. Even though the current definition benefits the most vulnerable persons in the society, it fails to capture the broader aspects of energy poverty, including its gender perspective.

Albania draft NECP (July 2021) sets an objective of defining energy poverty, establishing a national system for systematically monitoring energy poverty and recommending measures to eradicate energy poverty. However, a definition of energy poverty, a detailed implementation timeframe, clear references to possible future measures to fight energy poverty and a concrete budget are not included in the plan⁸¹. Additionally, the gender dimension is not tackled (gender neutral/gender blind⁸²). Efforts continue to be needed to ensure that all Albanian national strategies at the central and local levels are gender mainstreamed and supported by gender responsive budgeting⁸³ (European Commission, 2021c).

The 2019 Household Budget Survey underlines that Albanian households dedicate a considerable part of their budget to utility bills, their 2019 expenditure patterns show that “housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels” absorb about 10% of their monthly consumption expenses, second only to “food and non-alcoholic beverages” at 41.3%. The survey also indicates that the share of women “heads of household” for their utilities bill is higher than men’s⁸⁴, 12.5% compared to 9.8% for men (INSTAT, 2021). Most women “heads of household” belong to the “lone person” group (with or without children), with an important share being 55 years old and above. In a context where energy prices are soaring in Europe, there is an urgent need to support women and elders⁸⁵, at a higher risk of poverty, to reduce their energy consumption and thus their bills to prevent them from falling into energy poverty.

Data such as women’s and men’s participation in the labour force, contribution to unpaid (domestic) work, unemployment situation, life expectancy, share in household with a lone person, risk of poverty and social exclusion deserve to be addressed when developing measures to fight energy poverty. Tracking and monitoring progress in addressing energy poverty requires indicators and gender-disaggregated data. Nevertheless, data coverage and overall knowledge of the question remain poor in Central and Eastern Europe, where energy poverty problems and gender inequalities are also rooted in the specific social and infrastructural legacies of socialism and post-socialist transformation (Energy Community, 2021).

⁸¹ In the EU member states, there is no common definition of Energy Poverty. The Energy Community proposes to its Contracting Parties to implement in their legislation the following: “An energy poor consumer is a consumer who cannot secure adequate warmth, cooling, lighting, and energy to power appliances necessary for essential services that underpin a decent standard of living and health”.

⁸² For a definition of gender blindness, see: <https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1157>

⁸³ Gender responsive budgeting (GRB) or gender budgeting “ is an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It involves conducting a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process, and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality. In short, gender budgeting is a strategy and a process with the long-term aim of achieving gender equality goals”. See: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gender-budgeting/what-is-gender-budgeting>

⁸⁴ Possible explanations may include a lack of energy awareness/literacy, different use of appliances/practices for the same household activities, and life expectancy difference.

⁸⁵ With women outnumbering men at old ages in Albania.

While INSTAT publishes gender-disaggregated data on “at risk of poverty”, there are none related to energy poverty. Without gender-disaggregated data, awareness of the gendered nature of energy poverty will remain limited (European Parliament, 2019).

3.4.2 Sustainable energy awareness

International and European research⁸⁶ outline that providing women access to modern energy services is a critical means of advancing gender equality and empowering women.

The UN tracking of SDG 7 shows that 81% of the Albanian population has access to clean cooking⁸⁷ and 19% does not. Additional evidence is required but it can be assumed that most of the population without access to clean cooking in Albania is living in rural areas. Traditionally around the globe, cooking responsibilities have been associated with women and girls. International research conducted mainly in the Global South⁸⁸ highlights that with clean cooking technologies, women can reduce or eliminate their exposure to household air pollution; spend less time on cooking and/or fetching cooking fuel (firewood, etc.); and dedicate the time saved to engage in other activities (productive economic activities, education, etc.).

The inadequate levels of infrastructure and technology in rural households have a direct impact on women’s unpaid workload because domestic and reproductive activities are linked with female gender roles. Rural women in Albania invest significantly more time in food preparation, cleaning, childcare and other domestic and reproductive activities than women in urban areas, and they engage 6 times more in domestic and reproductive labour than rural men (FAO, 2016). This reduces women’s economic and educational opportunities.

Even though women are the main labour force in the agricultural sector, a very limited number of farms are headed by women⁸⁹. Stereotypical links between machinery, technology and men are persistent and lead to women’s unsatisfactory access to technical knowledge on agriculture. Moreover, traditional gender roles are more entrenched in rural communities, and gender inequalities have remained socially accepted (FAO, 2016).

Engaging women in sustainable energy awareness programmes⁹⁰ would enhance their knowledge of renewable energy (solar home systems, heat pumps, photovoltaic panels, etc.) and energy efficiency. This could help them understand how better access to energy/electricity can contribute to reducing their workload and gender domestic inequalities, notably in rural areas. Raising women’s sustainable energy awareness may help them to: adopt a more efficient use of energy/electricity and possibly reduce the household’s energy bills; use/purchase efficient appliances to alleviate the burden of unpaid work and free up some time that can be reallocated to paid activities; avoid falling into energy poverty; etc. As for female entrepreneurs, better awareness of the role of sustainable energy/electricity could help to increase their productivity and strengthen their economic situation (e.g., investment in more efficient energy solutions/equipment). The former examples show the importance of mainstreaming gender in sustainable energy awareness programmes/campaigns. Furthermore, electricity can assist in making the environment safer

⁸⁶ Many of them relate to the Global South.

⁸⁷ <https://trackingsdg7.esmap.org/country/albania>

⁸⁸ See for example ESMAP and the Clean Cooking Alliance research studies.

⁸⁹ INSTAT indicates that 88.6% of the Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing enterprises are headed by men (2021).

⁹⁰ Energy awareness/Energy literacy campaigns must target a broader audience: female and male population, public authorities, policymakers, etc.

and more secure (e.g., street lighting), which benefits both men and women, and through an improved perception of security, ease the economic integration of women.

Additional research is needed to define a baseline, set realistic targets for the design and deployment of public sustainable energy awareness campaigns that consider local specificities, and establish indicators to measure progress in energy awareness. These possible targets and campaigns must be accompanied by an adequate budget that must include the gender perspective, as part of a global gender budgeting strategy.

4 KEY FINDINGS

The key findings of this gender and energy diagnosis in Albania, with a special focus on electricity, include:

1. The electricity sector, with around 10,000 employees or less than 1% of all people employed in the country, is not an employment intensive sector despite being a strategic one. Although women are represented at the highest decision level of the energy sector, this strategic sector remains male-dominated, with only 26% of women⁹¹. Perception of gender roles, driven by social and cultural norms, is one of the most important barriers to women's entry into the energy sector.
2. There is a high representation of women in the ministry in charge of energy (MIE) and the energy regulator (ERE) where female employees outnumber their male colleagues. The civil servant recruitment procedure applies to MIE and ERE employees. One explanation for the attractiveness to women of employment with the national public energy authorities is that they offer job security, a more convenient work schedule (work and family life balance) and preferential access to public childcare near their workplace⁹².
3. The gender gap is higher for on-site/in the field jobs than for positions based in the headquarters of electricity companies. Gender stereotypes and social and cultural norms appear more persistent in rural and remote areas, and combined with limited childcare options, they may prevent skilled (local) women from applying for on-site/in the field positions or from considering working in the electricity industry.
4. In contrast with art and humanities or education disciplines, girls are still underrepresented in STEM studies and vocational education (gender stereotypes of "male" and "female" domains of study). The horizontal segregation that operates at the education level is reflected in the labour market and the energy sector, where women holding a STEM degree account for only 4% of the total workforce⁹³ and where HR, communication, finance, or legal departments are mostly female-dominated. Different energy organisations offer internships to male and female university students, with recruitment possibilities once they graduate. It is unclear whether the same possibility exists with VET schools and whether measures are taken towards high school to help change the masculine perception of the electricity industry.
5. There is an uneven understanding of the link between gender equality, sustainable development and economic growth, as well as of the importance of attracting a more diverse and gender-balanced skilled workforce to achieve a carbon-neutral economy by 2050. Gender issues are mainly seen as "women's" issues. This is illustrated by the absence of a gender equality action plan and gender diversity target at the energy sector level and in most energy organisations.
6. The principles of non-discrimination and anti-harassment (zero tolerance) are mainly incorporated in the code of conduct of energy organisations, information on separate anti-harassment and gender equality policies was not found.

⁹¹ This average share is based on the data provided by the national public energy authorities, MIE and ERE, and the electricity undertakings covered by this Gender Diagnosis.

⁹² This should however be compared with other sectors to assess if it is typical for the energy sector or not.

⁹³ This average share is based on the data provided by the national public energy authorities, MIE and ERE, and the electricity undertakings covered by this Gender Diagnosis.

7. Professional training (technical, career/professional development) is gender neutral. Very few energy organisations in the energy sector propose gender awareness training to all their employees.
8. Most female and male employees work full-time in energy organisations. Flexible working hours are foreseen, as a general policy or for specific situations. Hybrid-working solutions are less common, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g., covid pandemic). While paternity and parental leave contribute as well to a better work-life balance and help alleviate women's reproductive burden, they are barely taken by men in the energy sector.
9. Most women working in the energy sector belong to the age group 31-50 years old. In the age group below 30, there are more young men especially in entry-level technical occupations confirming the gender gap in VET studies.
10. The gender pay gap for the electricity sector is currently not available.
11. Albania has a comprehensive legal and institutional framework for promoting gender equality, ensuring gender mainstreaming and protecting women's and girls' rights. Its awareness, ownership, implementation including the allocation of adequate resources, and monitoring deserve more attention.
12. Women's mentoring and networking are at an early stage in the energy sector.
13. The publicly available gender-disaggregated data related to the electricity sector are aggregated with other sectors. Within energy organisations, the level of granularity of gender-disaggregated data varies significantly among organisations.
14. The NECP addresses the alleviation of energy poverty and underlines that measures will be required to fight energy poverty. However, the gender dimension is not addressed in the NECP whereas women are disproportionately affected by energy poverty.
15. The gender gap related to sustainable energy awareness, especially in rural areas, needs to be further addressed as the reduction of this gap can help to strengthen women's economic situation.
16. This gender and energy diagnosis is the first of its kind in Albania. The current energy crisis and business priorities may be part of the reasons for the uneven participation of the contributing public and private energy actors.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS⁹⁴

Track 1: Implementation of existing legislation, policies and strategies					
Recommendation		Action		Stakeholder	Key Finding
1.1	Ensure that energy organisations' workforce is fully aware of the existing policy framework on gender equality, including why gender equality is an issue for both women and men	1.1.1	Gender awareness-raising training for all energy organisations' workforce (from entry to decision-making level), presenting the existing gender equality framework, its purpose, timeline, and why it must be implemented, monitored, and assessed <i>Comment: NSGE objectives on gender equality and empowerment must be known, understood and implemented. The concerned stakeholders should take ownership of these objectives</i>	GoA, MIE, ERE, Electricity companies, CSOs	1, 5, 7, 11
1.2	Mainstream gender in all policies and actions, including energy and climate ones	1.2.1	Integration of a gender perspective into the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures, and spending programmes, with a view to promoting equality between women and men, and combating discrimination	GoA, MIE	5, 11, 14
1.3	Confirm the importance of the GEO role within MIE whose work is supporting the achievement of gender equality in the energy sector	1.3.1	Participation of the GEO in strategic and policy debates to ensure gender mainstreaming from the outset of energy policy discussions	GOA, MIE	11
		1.3.2	Confirmation of the GEO role as a full-time position with an adequate budget and resources	GOA, MIE	11

⁹⁴ Certain of these recommendations are already addressed by some energy organisations (e.g., issuing a code of conduct, adopting gender targets, foreseeing a gender-diverse recruiting panel).

Track 2: Attract a pool of young female and male talents while challenging gender stereotypes					
Recommendation		Action		Stakeholder	Key Finding
2.1	Develop collaboration agreements between high schools, VET institutions/schools, universities/engineering faculties and energy organisations	2.1.1	Organisation of “Career orientation sessions” in high schools, VET institutions/schools, universities/engineering faculties, with the participation of female and male energy professionals (engineers, technicians, etc.) to deconstruct gender stereotypes associated with "non-traditional" professions, to describe the range of jobs the clean energy transition offers and to attract girls to VET, STEM, and the electricity sector and its undertakings	Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), high schools, VET institutions, university-engineering faculties, energy organisations, NAW-STEM	1, 2, 4, 9
		2.1.2	Commitment of energy organisations to offer internships to female and male engineering/VET students with a target of reaching gradually gender parity amongst the participating students	Energy organisations	1, 4, 9
		2.1.3	Inclusion in energy companies of a mentorship programme for future female and male engineering/VET graduates to attract a potential pool of new talent	Energy companies	1, 4, 9
		2.1.4	Setting up at least one “energy transition discovery day” per school year where girls and boys are invited to visit electricity undertakings, generation/transmission/distribution installations, etc. and receive additional information on renewable energy & climate change	High schools, energy organisations	1, 3, 4, 9

2.2	Ensure scientific, technical, and math-related subjects are taught by both female and male teachers/professors in high schools, VET institutions/schools, Universities/engineering faculties	2.2.1	Development of specific measures to increase the number of female teachers/professors ⁹⁵ of technical subjects (role models), monitoring the impact of these measures on the perception of technical/STEM roles by female and male students, and on the share of girls' participation in scientific, technical, and math-related subjects	MoES, high schools, VET institutions/schools, universities-engineering faculties	1, 4, 9
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Track 3: Recruitment, retention, and training of a skilled, diverse and gender-balanced workforce					
Recommendation		Action		Stakeholder	Key finding
3.1	Ensure vacancy advertisements related to engineering and technical positions in electricity utilities can be seen by women	3.1.1	Publication of vacancies in media, websites, notice boards, etc. consulted by both women and men	Electricity companies, employment office	1, 5, 11
		3.1.2	Description of the position resonating for both women and men, recalling the equal opportunity principle while stating that women are encouraged to apply, or in specific cases, as provided by Law, that preference will be given to a woman ⁹⁶	Electricity companies, employment office	1, 5, 11
3.2	Commit to gender-balanced interview panels	3.2.1	Establishment for all job interviews of a gender-balanced interview panel	Energy organisations	1, 6, 11

⁹⁵ This refers to situations where women are underrepresented in specific positions as foreseen in article 22 "Temporary special measures in the area of job relations", Law No 9970/2008 on Gender Equality in Society.

⁹⁶ Idem.

3.3	Increase gender diversity of the workforce in remote/rural operations' sites, especially in technical roles (low to higher-skilled jobs)	3.3.1	Collaboration with the Network of Albanian Women in STEM, employment office, municipal GEO, local authorities, etc. to identify skilled women locally or available to relocate	Electricity companies, NAW-STEM	1, 3, 4, 11
3.4	Recruit female and male professionals in the area where installations are located or projects are developed (power plant construction, new grid, grid extension, etc.)	3.4.1	Promotional campaign to recruit women and men locally in collaboration with employment office, GEO of the concerned municipality, local authorities, etc.	Electricity companies, employment office, GEO of the municipality	3
		3.4.2	Definition of a target number of women and men to fill the vacancies	Electricity companies	3, 11
3.5	Invest in training and development to attract and retain (new) female and male talents (in headquarters and sites), increase skills and relevant knowledge, and improve performance	3.5.1	Information to (future) employees about training/workshops offered to both women and men to increase their skills and professional growth, promoting a gender-balanced participation, monitoring the training/workshops' quality, attendance, and impact	Energy organisations	1, 7
		3.5.2	Leadership and development programme for high-potential female and male employees	Energy organisations	1, 7
3.6	Present career perspectives, training opportunities as well as work-life balance measures in place to attract more female engineers or holding a VET degree in electricity undertakings	3.6.1	Information for upcoming or recent STEM/VET (female and male) graduates on the attractiveness of working in electricity companies and on the equal career opportunities for women and men in the sector	Electricity companies	1, 2, 11

		Track 4: Human Resource Policies, Procedures & Practices			
Recommendation		Action		Stakeholder	Key Finding
4.1	Adopt and ensure awareness of the code of conduct, monitor compliance	4.1.1	Adoption of a code of conduct in line with the Labour Code to be respected by all employees, organisation of awareness sessions for all employees with the code presentation, information on compliance monitoring, as well as on the applicable measures in case of violation <i>Comment: Make the code of conduct available to all employees (intranet, e-copies). If the code of conduct does not contain ethics principles, develop a separate code of ethics to be implemented by all employees</i>	Energy organisations	6, 11
4.2	Organise onboarding sessions for new employees and draw their attention notably to the organisation's zero tolerance of discrimination, harassment	4.2.1	On-boarding sessions with new employees to include a detailed presentation of the code of conduct, gender equality and anti-harassment principles/policies, information on compliance monitoring and the applicable measures in case of violation	Energy organisations	1, 5, 6, 7
4.3	Set measurable targets or quotas (figure, percentage) of women at entry, mid and senior level	4.3.1	Communication of these targets to future, new and existing employees, implementation, and monitoring of the progress	Energy organisations	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11
4.4	Develop and implement a gender equality action plan (GAP), ensure its awareness and compliance	4.4.1	Development of a GAP ⁹⁷ specific to each energy organisation, in line with the Law on Gender Equality and the existing legislation, defining the (temporary) measures to raise women's participation in the electricity industry, providing a clear timeline, defined indicators, and an adequate budget	Energy organisations	1, 5, 6, 7, 11

⁹⁷ Any Gender Action Plan defined at an organisation level should be consistent (or go beyond) a Gender Action Plan defined at the sectoral level.
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		4.4.2	GAP awareness sessions for all employees, GAP implementation and progress monitoring	Energy organisations	1, 5, 6, 7
		4.4.3	Making third parties working with or for the organisation (suppliers, subcontractors, etc.) aware of the code of conduct and GAP requirements and ensure that they adhere to them (e.g., obligation to respect GAP requirements foreseen in tender documents, contracts, etc.); monitor their compliance	Energy organisations	1, 6, 11
4.5	Collect data to assess and address the gender pay gap in the electricity industry	4.5.1	Collection and monitoring of data related to the average gross hourly earnings of working women and men in the electricity industry, addressing the gender pay gap and reporting the progress made to close this gap	GoA, MIE, electricity companies	10
4.6	Prevent, fight and sanction any form of gender-based violence, including (sexual) harassment	4.6.1	Development of a gender-based violence and harassment policy in line with existing laws and ILO C190 Convention	Energy organisations	1,3, 6, 11
		4.6.2	Distribution of the gender-based violence and harassment policy to all employees	Energy organisations	1, 3, 6, 11
		4.6.3	Organisation of regular awareness sessions on the gender-based violence and harassment policy for all (new and existing) employees	Energy organisations, CSOs	1,3, 6, 7, 11
		4.6.4	Display in visible areas of the organisation's premises the key messages of the gender-based violence and harassment policy, accompanied by the contact details of the professional(s) in charge as well as the helpline number	Energy organisations	1,3, 6, 11
4.7	Develop an Employee Handbook outlining the main policies, rules, and procedures of the organisation	4.7.1	Distribution to all employees of an "Employee Handbook" which gives an overview of the principal organisation's policies and procedures (code of conduct, values, recruitment, salary range, benefits, maternity/paternity/parental leave, GAP, training,	Energy organisations	1, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11

			performance management, grievance, gender-based violence and harassment policy, etc.)		
4.8	Invest in and promote talented women, encourage mentoring and networking	4.8.1	Development of mentoring and coaching programmes for female energy professionals (e.g., pairing up new and existing employees)	Energy organisations	11, 12
		4.8.2	Creation of a national network and/or a platform to foster gender diversity and equality in the energy transition aiming at promoting gender diversity and inclusion in the workplace; improving companies' internal processes related to gender equality; sharing experiences and concrete actions that contribute to achieving gender equality in the energy sector (including regulatory and legislative framework); etc.	Energy organisations; female employees/ entrepreneurs/ decision-makers, etc. of the sector; CSOs	12
		4.8.3	Incentives to join existing networks of women in energy (national, international, e.g., NAW-STEM, ICER-WIE, GWNET) and/or to launch a network of women in energy/electricity (e.g., at sectoral or internal level)	Energy organisations	11, 12

Track 5: Work-life balance and gender-friendly workplace infrastructure					
Recommendation		Action		Stakeholder	Key Finding
5.1	Offer “hybrid” work arrangements ⁹⁸	5.1.1	Communication of a possible hybrid work arrangement as from the job description, definition and implementation of the measure ⁹⁹	Energy organisations	1, 3, 8

⁹⁸ “Hybrid work” refers to a combination of telework and work on the employer’s premises (WHO & ILO, 2021)

⁹⁹ Where a hybrid work model is compatible with the role.

5.2	Adopt flexible work hours	5.2.1	Communication of a possible flexible work arrangement as from the job description, definition and implementation of the measure ¹⁰⁰	Energy organisations	1, 3, 8
5.3	Facilitate access of employees to childcare facilities	5.3.1	Organisation of on-site childcare facilities, arrangements with childcare facilities in the vicinity of the employer's offices or provision of a financial support for childcare services	Electricity companies	2, 3, 5, 8
5.4	Ensure the workplace's infrastructure is suitable for both women and men	5.4.1	Establishment of sufficient internal/external lighting of premises (e.g., where women access the building, change, work, etc.); installation of suitable restrooms for women and men in all premises and on construction sites	Energy organisations	1, 5, 11
5.5	Install notice boards in all premises with emergency numbers	5.5.1	Communication of emergency numbers, including helplines for gender-based violence and (sexual) harassment, in a transparent and visible manner	Energy organisations	11
5.6	Provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which fits female and male professionals working on-site	5.6.1	Provision of PPE in appropriate sizes for both women and men	Electricity companies	3, 11

Track 6: Communication and reporting					
Recommendation		Action		Stakeholder	Key Finding
6.1	Develop communication supports that reflect the gender diversity of the organisation's workforce	6.1.1	Internal and external communication to be gender sensitive (word choices, speech, images, etc.)	Energy organisations	1, 4, 11, 16

¹⁰⁰ Where flexible work hours are compatible with the role.
Expertise France- Gender & Energy Diagnosis

6.2	Monitor and report workforce gender-disaggregated data	6.2.1	Collection of workforce gender-disaggregated data, at least for position, age, average wage and education, and publication of these data in the companies' annual social and environmental report	Electricity companies	1, 5, 10, 13, 16
6.3	Monitor and report the GAP achievements	6.3.1	Communication and publication of the GAP achievements in the companies' annual social and environmental report	Electricity companies	5

Track 7: Energy poverty and sustainable energy awareness					
Recommendation		Action		Stakeholder	Key Finding
7.1	Collect gender-disaggregated data on energy poverty, address the gender dimension of energy poverty when defining it and developing measures to alleviate it	7.1.1	Collection of gender-disaggregated data on energy poverty to establish indicators contributing to a definition of energy poverty that addresses its gender dimension	GOA, MoHSP, MIE, ERE, INSTAT	11, 14
		7.1.2	Development of gender-aware measures for reducing energy poverty, with a defined timeline and associated budget ¹⁰¹	GOA, MIE, ERE	11, 14
		7.1.3	Awareness-raising training about the gender dimension of energy poverty at national, local and consumers levels	GOA, municipalities, local communities, CSOs, energy organisations	11, 14

¹⁰¹ Public authorities could also consider developing partnerships with CSOs/NGOs active on these issues, e.g., to provide the necessary in-person and/or online training.
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7.2	Address gender inequalities in sustainable energy awareness, particularly in rural areas	7.2.1	Collection of gender-disaggregated data on sustainable energy awareness in rural areas to assess the gender awareness gap, define and implement measures, with a defined timeframe, indicators and budget	GOA, municipalities, local communities, INSTAT	11, 15
		7.2.2	Development of sustainable energy awareness programmes/trainings targeting women and men in rural areas, local communities, and municipalities ¹⁰²	GOA, municipalities, local communities, CSOs, energy organisations	11, 15

¹⁰² Idem.

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ANNEX 1 - LIST OF ORGANISATIONS MET

- AREA - Albanian Renewable Energy Association
- AWEN - Albanian Women Empowerment Network
- ERE - Energy Regulatory Authority
- KESH - Albanian Power Corporation
- MIE - Ministry of Infrastructure & Energy
- MoHSP - Ministry of Health & Social Protection
- OSHEE - Electricity Distribution System Operator
- OST - Transmission System Operator
- Statkraft Albania
- UN Women Albania

ANNEX 2 - QUESTIONNAIRE

Energy sector in Albania, a Gender Perspective: Questionnaire

The questionnaire focuses mainly on the workplace. Its objective is to have a good understanding of gender issues within the electricity sector in Albania.

1.	Senior Management	
1.1	Senior management in your organisation	<i>Please detail the positions/roles that are included in senior management roles (see Excel table – disaggregated data)</i>
1.2.a	How many women (%) in a senior management role hold an engineering (or STEM ¹⁰³ related) diploma?	
1.2.b	How many women (%) in a senior management role hold a non-STEM related diploma?	
1.3.a	How many men (%) in a senior management role hold an engineering (or STEM related) diploma?	
1.3.b	How many men (%) in a senior management role hold a non-STEM related diploma?	

¹⁰³ STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

2.	Gender targets/quotas and policies, does your organisation has:		
2.1	Gender targets or quotas	Y/N In preparation	<i>If yes/in preparation, please specify if these are known by (future) employees; the measures in place to reach them, etc.</i>
2.2	Gender targets or quotas for new recruitment?	Y/N In preparation	
2.3	Networks and/or mentorship programs targeting women	Y/N In preparation	<i>If yes/in preparation, please specify</i>
2.4	Gender equality policy, strategy or action plan	Y/N In preparation	<i>If yes/in preparation, please specify</i>
2.5	Dedicated policy, strategy, or equivalent to bring awareness about and fight against (sexual) harassment, gender violence	Y/N In preparation	<i>If yes/in preparation, please specify</i>
3.	Trainings, does your organisation offer:		
3.1	Gender awareness training	Y/N In preparation	<i>If yes/in preparation, please specify the targeted groups (senior management, all employees, only new employees, etc.)</i>
3.2	Technical trainings targeting women	Y/N In preparation	<i>If yes/in preparation, please specify (areas, etc.)</i>
3.3	Career development trainings targeting women	Y/N In preparation	<i>If yes/in preparation, please specify</i>

4.	Flexibility / work-life balance		
4.1	Flexible working hours	Y/N	<i>If yes, please specify. Please indicate if both female and male employees take advantage of these flexible working hours.</i>
4.2	Flexible work locations (e.g., work from home)	Y/N	<i>If yes, please specify. Please indicate if both female and male employees take advantage of these flexible work locations (e.g., %)</i>
4.3	Are there part-time employees in your organisation?	Y/N	<i>If yes, please detail their number, gender, position and age group (see. Excel table)</i>
4.4	Is there awareness about parental leave?	Y/N	<i>Please specify: i) measures taken by your organisation; ii) if both female and male employees take/have taken parental leave (%)</i>
4.5	Are there childcare facilities in your organisation?	Y/N	<i>If no, please indicate if your organisation provides (or plans to provide) any other support/incentives for childcare.</i>
5.	Gender Disaggregated data		
5.1	Does your organisation publish some gender disaggregated data?	Y/N In preparation	<i>If yes/ in preparation, please detail (e.g., URL Link)</i>
6.	Other information		
	Any other elements, measures, initiatives related to gender equality, gender empowerment (workplace, external stakeholders including customers, etc.)		