



# EQUALITY PLATFORM for the energy sector

## Meeting conclusions – 26 September 2023

**There is a lot of interest to make workplaces in the energy sector more equal, not only focusing on the topic of gender but bringing it wider and considering the intersectionality of exclusion/inclusion.**

With this guiding idea, members and signatories of the Equality Platform for the energy sector met in Brussels to share experiences and good practices. The focus of this meeting was on anti-discriminatory and inclusive practices towards the LGBTQ+ community in attracting, managing, and retaining talent in the energy sector. Engagement of the participants, vivid discussions, and exchanges showed there is a willingness to engage and a need to learn from each other.

Isabelle Albertone, DG Energy Equality co-Coordinator, in her opening speech referred to the European Commission LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025 and progress report on its implementation, issued in April 2023. Apart from this strategic approach, she referred also to the importance of personal responsibility for promoting diversity in workplaces. She also expressed hope that the energy sector becomes the *avantgarde* and a good example for other economy sectors.

Joshua Atkins, representing Pride in Energy, gave a keynote speech on LGBTQ+ situation in the energy industry. His presentation summarised the results of a survey conducted annually by Pride in Energy and listed recommendations on what can be done within the organisation to become truly more inclusive. The basics covered solid and supportive HR policies for LGBTQ+ staff, training on diversity and inclusion along with training for the managers on handling inappropriate behaviour, securing clear support of senior executives for D&I practices and increasing the visibility of LGBTQ+ staff. The following questions and answers touched upon various topics from counteracting the casual everyday sexism in workplaces to supporting mentorship within the organisations.

The Platform gives room for members to engage with each other, share valuable experiences, and encourage members and signatories to make their workplaces more equal. With this in mind, Allyson Zan and Nabil Kharrat, representing ENGIE Impact, shared how ENGIE Group approaches supporting their LGBTQ+ employees and how allyship is embedded in the entity's core values. ENGIE Impact's Pride Network's mission is to support, empower, and celebrate Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and/or Queer (LGBTQ+) and ally members at ENGIE Impact and in our communities, through the promotion of unity and inclusion of sexual and gender diversity of expression. The network has currently over 160 global members across ENGIE entities. The network members organise educational workshops and Pride events, liaise with other LGBTQ+ groups at ENGIE and externally and engage in many more initiatives. For its efforts and commitment to preventing discrimination and promoting diversity, ENGIE Group has been awarded with the Diversity Label by the French government. The following discussion among participants showed many common threads, from the need for synchronisation of grassroot initiatives and support from senior leadership, to avoiding the traps of pinkwashing.

The final session of the meeting was dedicated to the operations of the Platform itself, with focus on what the members need and want to further develop and what shape the platform could take in the future. This discussion will certainly continue with DG ENER openness to members' initiatives.

Creating and encouraging collaboration in an (international) network greatly supports opportunities for women, disabled persons, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ communities and other vulnerable groups to build capacity and encourage leadership. The Equality Platform for the energy sector aims to facilitate and advance this process.

Sign up as a member and become part of the platform to stay updated on all events and activities.