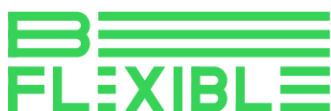


D9.5

# Gender Action Plan



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D1.1	Work Package No.	WP9	Task/s No.	9.1
Work Package Title	Project Management			
Linked Task/s Title	Data management plan and Gender Action plan and monitoring. A GAP to foster a gender-balanced leadership and to evaluate and monitor the involvement of women and men in the team and activities.			
Status	Final	(Draft/Draft Final/Final)		
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### List of abbreviations

SDG (Sustainable Development Goals)
UN (United Nations)
GAP (Gender Action Plan)
IAP (Inclusion Action Plan)
WP (Work Package)

# 1. Executive Summary

This deliverable represents the outcome of task 9.5 (WP9), consisting of creating a Gender Action Plan for the BeFlexible project development. The importance of including gender perspectives in this project reflects the general European strategy of guaranteeing gender practices to fulfill our equal transition goals. A Gender Action Plan is a document that works as a tool and mechanism for ensuring the gender-inclusive design and implementation of practices and solutions and also to create awareness of the Gender Equality strategy guidelines and objectives of the European Union.

**The Gender Action Plan III** provides the EU with a **policy framework** with five pillars of action for accelerating progress towards meeting international commitments and a world in which everyone has space to thrive, such as leading by example, measuring results, or ensuring that all new actions contribute to gender equality of women's empowerment.

The energy sector remains one of the minor gender-diverse sectors, **male-dominated, and where women earn lower wages than men** [6]. But to speak beyond gender towards inclusion in the energy sector, we can observe that two of the four "D" objectives regarding energy transition in the world are to digitalize the services and products and democratize access and participation in the energy markets, in addition to decentralizing systems and decarbonizing production and consumption. This means that all individuals should have the option to use renewable energy through democratization and digitalization. This is why our vision of a GAP goes beyond gender. We assume as a working principle that the intersectionality between **gender** and other variables such as **age, cultural background, religion, capabilities, or sexual preferences** should be achieved together as they construct people's identities, and they are so closely interconnected with human rights.

The way to approach the GAP for BeFlexible was creating an initial picture of how BeFlexible is in terms of diversity and inclusion to develop later the guidelines to ensure equal participation during the project.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1. About BeFlexible

The high shares of renewable energy, combined with the rise in a distributed generation, profoundly impact electricity markets and the demand for system flexibility and business models of traditional utilities and distribution companies. This requires a rethinking of how electricity markets are designed and operated and a timely and efficient adaptation of traditional market and operational mechanisms. The recently created clean energy legislation requires that Electricity Markets are made with "active customers/consumers and citizens" and "energy communities." This new legislation asks for enhanced roles of DSOs and TSOs, mainly for better coordination among stakeholders, procurement of ancillary services, flexibility, congestion, data management, and integration of Electric Vehicles, and must adapt network access and congestion tariffs. Markets must encourage the development of more flexible

generation and demand and the elimination of obstacles to market-based pricing, remove regulatory distortions, and enable scarcity pricing, interconnection, Demand Side Response, and storage.

Final customers must be enabled to buy electrical energy from aggregated, multiple power-generating facilities or load from multiple demand response facilities to provide joint offers on the electricity market and be jointly operated in the power system. Citizens must be offered competitive electricity prices.

**BeFlexible aims at increasing energy system flexibility, enhancing cooperation among DSOs and TSOs, and easing participation of all energy-related actors through the validation and large-scale demonstration of adapted and proven cross-sectoral services, interoperable platforms for smart grids operation, developing further already demonstrated solutions and the creation of required system architecture framework to enable the creation of new business models providing additional value to meet consumers' needs in compliance with a stable regulatory framework.**

## 2.2. Participants

BeFlexible is built upon past and ongoing national and international research efforts. The consortium partners count on vast collaborative and previous experiences in each of their areas and European Projects so that we can ensure effective use of knowledge already gathered in initiatives. This consortium brings together 21 partners and 3 Affiliated Entities from 7 different European countries (Spain, Italy, Portugal, Belgium, Germany, Sweden, and Denmark), providing a broad stakeholder approach including the whole value chain of energy systems and cross-sector-related services. The consortium will demonstrate the results in four demos in Spain, Sweden, Italy, and France. In sum, BeFlexible is formed by a well-balanced set of partners with vast experience and differentiated roles that complement each other to ensure project objectives and expected impacts.

## 2.3. Deliverable objectives, why a Gender Action Plan?

As we know, in the last few years, countries across the globe realized the importance of working in terms of gender, inclusion, and equality to fulfill our transition goals. We understood that our level of interdependence makes others' welfare works towards our welfare. More specifically, this deliverable has the objective of:

- Be **aligned** with the European Union's goals and work towards gender and inclusion.
- To work as a **tool and mechanism** for ensuring the gender-inclusive design and implementation of BeFlexible services and solutions.
- Create **awareness** (internally and externally) of the Gender Equality Strategy guidelines and objectives of the European Union.

In general, a Gender Action Plan should help to guide and navigate tough inclusion choices, resolve social conflict, prevent backsliding, provide for progressive realization, and build resilience in a world that otherwise risks remaining unequal, unstable, and unsustainable. In a nutshell this deliverable is a guide to foster innovation and make the energy transition more egalitarian, fair, and inclusive of all stakeholders and social strata by ensuring that the project first applies the best guidelines and approaches regarding inclusion. GAPs are NOT stand-alone projects or separate project components for women with different

funding sources. GAPS mirror and are closely aligned with project outputs. They are necessary arrangements and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. [\[1\]](#)

### 3. Where is the world on gender

The SDG framework (**Sustainable Development Goals**) elaborated by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations and adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), an urgent call for action by all developed and developing countries in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests [\[2\]](#). But it is also a reminder that the transformational promise of the 2030 Agenda can only be achieved with the respect, protection, and fulfillment of **human rights**.

Promoting and protecting human rights is about empowering people to stand up for themselves and each other for equality and inclusive societies. This is how the power of human rights can foster and accelerate a transformative development agenda. [\[3\]](#)

Communities that have endured discrimination have long called for their **voices to be heard**. Now the global conversation on inclusion is gaining momentum. Younger generations, taking up the charge from their forebears, have higher social justice and equity expectations [\[4\]](#). There is now a cohort who will not work for businesses that do not prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion. The world over, populations are becoming more diverse, not less. And there is a global audience of millions ready to co-create the future of inclusive design, experiences, and marketing. While consumer, cultural and business trends flow in one direction, tides are pushing back. This is still a biased world in which 86% of Fortune 500 CEOs are White men and less than 1% identify as LGBTQ+. To genuinely deliver on equity, brands must empathize with marginalized communities' real-world struggles and use their power to dismantle systemic discrimination and oppression. [\[4\]](#)

**Some aspects are making the world look towards inclusion**, such as the **Covid-19** situation that lived around the world, which showed our interdependence. It highlighted individual differences and the importance of house space or mobility. **Climate change**, a reality that not everyone lives in the same way, has also shown the relationship and importance of working towards equality when we face a high percentage of people migrating to other countries due to climate adversities. **Digitalization**, as working positively towards a more efficient world, leaves behind a part of society, such as the elderly or people with few resources. However, it is also a tool for people to protest and mobilize about topics related to inclusion. **Political inequalities** between countries also make Europe a vital challenge in adapting inclusion goals to each country's realities (Image 1). Finally, **transition times** have always been times of inequality, and instability and, sometimes, widen the length of inequalities between individuals; this is why the époque we are living in today makes visible the things we have worked for but also the things we have not worked towards a transition where there is not only a place for everyone but a good place for everyone.

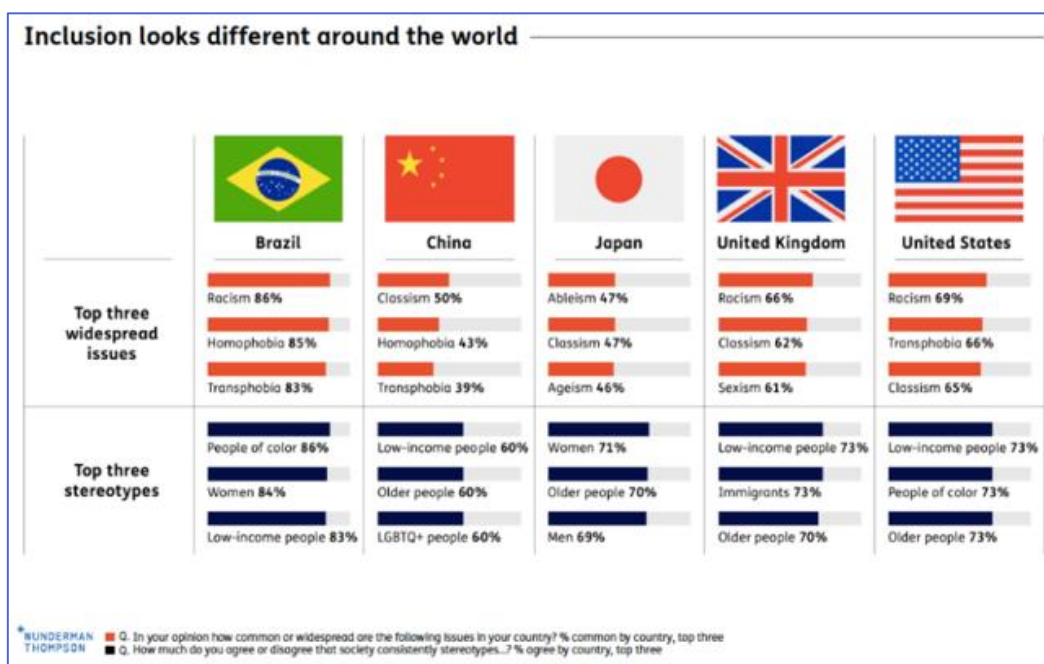


Image 1: Inclusion around the world. Wunderman Thompson 2022.

**Promoting and protecting human rights is about empowering people to stand up for themselves and each other for equality and inclusive societies. This is how the power of human rights can foster and accelerate a transformative development agenda.**

## 4. European gender policy

No country in the world is on track to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, despite significant progress in advancing women’s and girls’ rights over the years. Moreover, the health and socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 crisis are disproportionately affecting women and girls. To address this, the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy put forward ambitious plans to promote gender equality and women's empowerment through all external action of the European Union, the **Gender Action Plan III (2021-2025)**<sup>[5]</sup>.

This external Gender Action Plan reflects the objectives of the **EU Gender Equality Strategy**, the first Commission strategy in the area of equality, which delivers on the commitments made by President von der Leyen in her political guidelines.

Josep Borrel, a high-representant of the European Union and vice president, says, “Ensuring the same rights to all empowers our societies. It makes them richer and more secure, which goes beyond principles or moral duties. The participation and leadership of women and girls are essential for democracy, justice, peace, security, prosperity, and a greener planet. With this new Gender Action Plan, we are pushing for more and faster progress towards gender equality.” <sup>[5]</sup>



The **Gender Action Plan III** provides the EU with a **policy framework** with five pillars of action for accelerating progress toward meeting international commitments and a world in which everyone has space to thrive:

1. 85% of all new actions throughout external relations will contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment by 2025.
2. Shared strategic vision and close cooperation with Member States and partners at multilateral, regional, and country levels.
3. GAP III calls for accelerating progress, focusing on the key thematic areas of engagement.
4. Leading by example.
5. Measuring results.

GAP III will promote a transformative and intersectional approach and mainstream gender in all policies and actions. It aims to address structural causes of gender inequality and gender-based discrimination, including by actively engaging men and boys in challenging gender norms and stereotypes. Finally, to leave no one behind, the action plan seeks to tackle all intersecting dimensions of discrimination, paying specific attention to women with disabilities, migrant women, and discrimination based on age or sexual orientation.

## 5. Our vision about diversity and inclusion

In view of these arguments and the preliminary research conducted to develop this document our vision about gender goes beyond gender. We believe that the intersectionality between **gender** and other variables such as **age, cultural background, religion, capabilities, or sexual preferences** should be addressed together as they construct people's identities and are closely interconnected with human rights.

By working thinking of people's intersectional **identity**, we will be able to look further and wider to understand that individuals are more than their gender, or their religion and that identity or personality modifies the experience of life itself, that it is not something static. Most importantly, we know that people do not fit neatly into categories: identities are, of course, intersectional, overlapping in multiple ways.

As Rhonda Hadi, associate professor of marketing at the Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford, explains: "We should be thinking about people in a much richer, three-dimensional way, acknowledging that people rarely fit into neat categories." [4]. The civil rights advocate and critical race theory scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw initially coined intersectionality. It provides a lens through which to view the many ways oppression or privilege can converge and be amplified.

By creating opportunities to work on the construction of this identity, we will not leave any variable behind, and the intersectionality will make that one growth is everyone's growth. For all this, we believe that the role of brands, organizations, and individuals is to work towards empowerment, inclusion, and equality of intersectional identity, which includes gender, age, sex preferences, cultural background, religion, and capabilities.

## 6. Gender, diversity, and inclusion in the energy sector

The energy sector has historically been a male-dominated field, and its workforce needs to be more representative of the population and workforce at large. On average, there are 76% fewer women than

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men working in the energy sector, a significant difference from the average 8% gap seen in the total workforce, according to 2018 data from 29 countries (22 IEA members). The energy sector remains one of the least gender-diverse sectors, **male-dominated, and women earn lower wages than men.** [\[6\]](#)

The barriers women face in the energy sector are similar to those they face elsewhere in the economy. However, there is an urgency for countries to attract and retain a diverse workforce in the energy sector to ensure innovation and the inclusive perspectives needed to navigate the low-carbon energy transition successfully. The sector's transformation towards sustainable clean energy sources provides a golden opportunity for greater gender diversity. [\[6\]](#)

The challenges of the energy sector are more pressing since the sector is going through a process of transformation (as many other industries); clean energy transitions will require innovative solutions and business models to be adopted and greater participation from a diverse talent pool and women are key drivers of innovative and inclusive solutions. Also, the transition must be inclusive; otherwise, at the system level, it would not work. We need all.

Regarding inclusion in the energy sector, we can observe that one of the main objectives regarding energy in the world is to digitalize the services and products to achieve the energy transition goals and to democratize access and participation in the energy markets. This means that all individuals should have the option to use renewable energy through democratization and digitalization. However, we are far from this objective. Only in Europe today, people aged 65 or over represent 21% [\[7\]](#) of the population and that many of them struggle with digital technologies, especially the elderly (over 80). In three of the four BeFlexible demo countries, the population rate over 80 years old is higher than the EU average, considering Italy as an extreme case of an aging society and Sweden keeping a stable pace that since 2014 been lower than the EU's (Image 2). How can we design a transition facilitating the inclusion of segregated populations? How can we ensure that we are not leaving anyone behind?

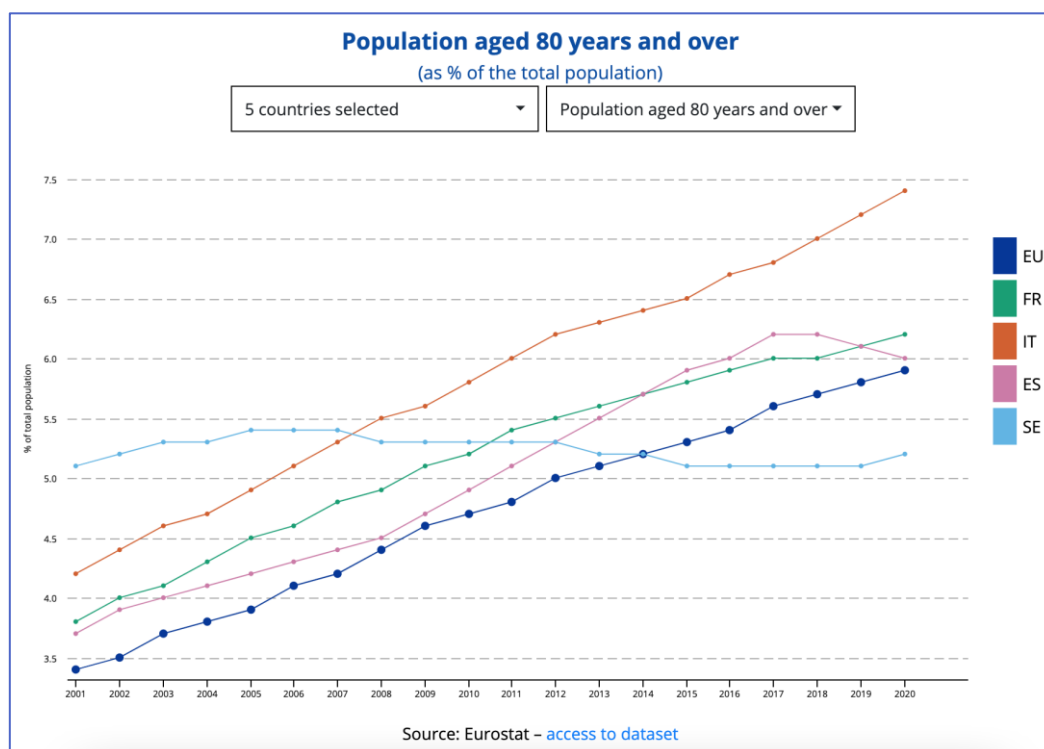


Image 2: Demography of Europe. Eurostat.

The EU aging reflects in different statistical indicators: the evolution of the share of the elderly population, the old age dependency ratio, and the median age, to give some examples. Looking first at the development of the percentage of the elderly in the population: in 2020, 21 % of the population was aged 65 and over, compared with 16 % in 2001, and it is estimated to get to 28.5% in 2050. The share **of those aged 80+ almost doubled between 2001 and 2020** [7]. Also, a relatively high share of older people in the EU lives in rural areas; this distribution may have an essential bearing on policymakers when assessing access to various services for older people. [8]

## 7. Diversity and inclusion in BeFlexible

### 7.1. Methodology

To analyze the inclusion situation on the BeFlexible project and to design de Gender Action Plan, we developed three main actions: the **analysis of the project consortium** regarding gender and decision-making. We created an online **questionnaire** with demographics and inclusion questions. Then we held a **workshop with some consortium partners to co-create** the initiatives we want to implement in BeFlexible.

### 7.2. Analysis of the consortium

The first action was to analyze the number of women vs. men participating in the project, and how many of them had decision-making roles. This analysis was taken from the consortium excel file updated on

December 13<sup>th</sup>. As can be seen in Image 3, from the total of the consortium, which are 138 people involved from different countries, 60% are men and 40% are women, which is a considerably more diverse rate than the one of the energy sectors. But the reality is that not all 138 participants are equally participative, as evidenced in the questionnaire answers and confirmed by the workshop participants. 18% of the project's women, 10 in total, are leading a work package lead versus only five men (9%).

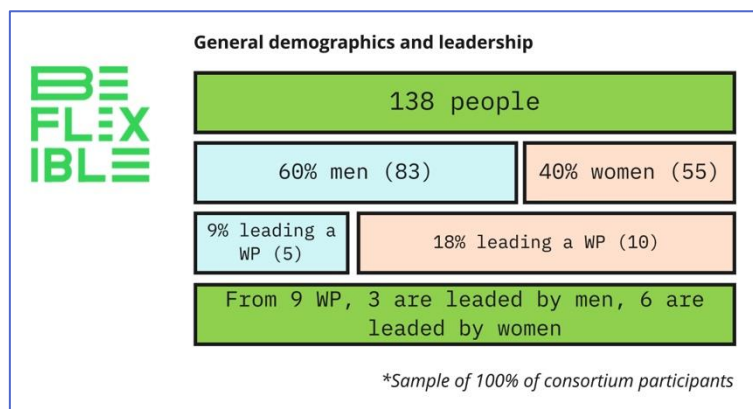


Image 3: BeFlexible consortium gender and leading split.

### 7.3. The questionnaire

The second action developed for this deliverable was the development of a questionnaire with topics that comprise access, control, decision-making, and empowerment regarding gender, age, country of origin, studies and capabilities, responsibility level and type of role, religion, etc., or and that would help us create de inclusion action plan for BeFlexible. This questionnaire was sent to the consortium, with an extension of questions only to the partner's representatives.

#### 7.3.1. Results “about you.”

This questionnaire was answered by 58 from the total of 138 from the consortium, which corresponds to 42% of the total consortium, and men and women responded to it in a similar 40% women -60% men distribution based on the list of all the partners (Image 4). It was divided into three sections: about you (demographics, role, and studies), about your organization (inclusion and gender in their organizations), and the project (inclusion and gender actions or strategies planned for the BeFlexible project). Results can be found in Annex 1. It is essential to notice that the following results correspond to the questionnaire respondents and not to the total consortium.

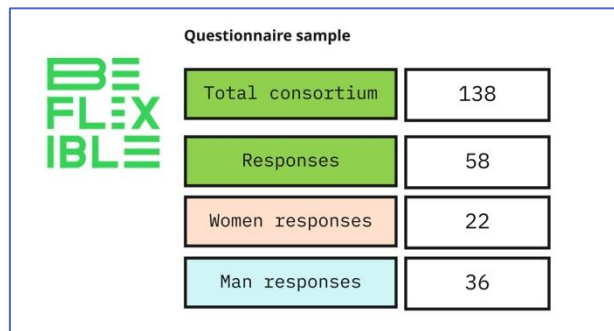


Image 4: Questionnaire sampling

The age distribution (Image 5) and study levels (Image 7) show that most of the participants are experienced workers, with the majority being between 30-60 years with a master's (more than 60%) and almost one-third with a Ph.D. Regarding the responsibility and decision-making roles, the majority (57%) declare to have a kind of associate position, with no responsibility for a team. There were only 3 three persons that claimed to have a Director role (responsible for several groups/ or a department/area and have strategic decision-making responsibilities), and the rest, 22, answered to be Managers (responsible for a couple and having decision-making responsibilities). Regarding the role, most are Associates or Managers with only 3 Directors. Almost half of the women have Associate positions. However, in this case, we lack women in responsible positions (Managers and Directors), as seen in Image 6.

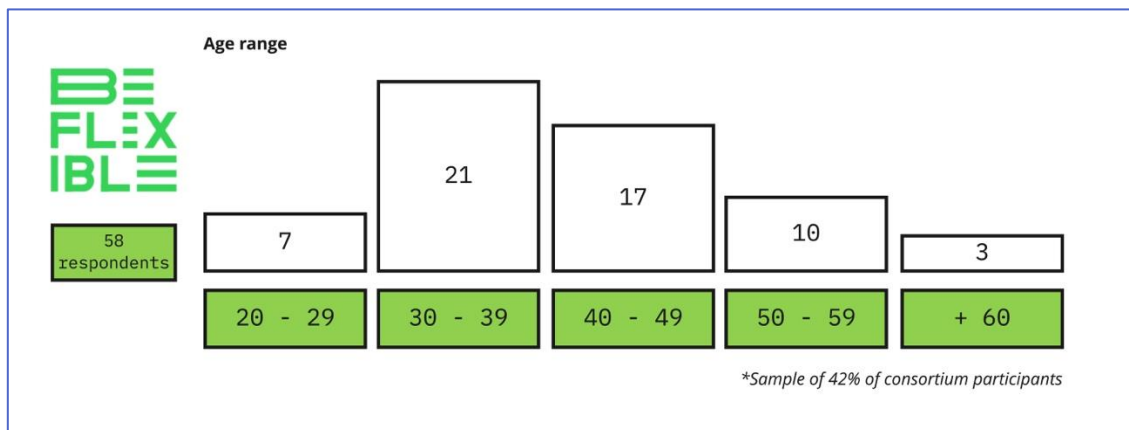


Image 5: Age distribution

	Role or position	Total	Women	Age range
	Associate	33	16	All ranges
	Directors	3	1	50-59
	Managers	22	5	40-59

Image 6: Role or position

The consortium comprises engineers in different areas such as electricity, energy, or industrial engineering. The rest of the consortium are people from economics, computer sciences, communications, marketing, and other studies such as law, data & security, or design. (Image 7).


	Studies	Total	Women	Level of studies	Total	Women
	Engineers	38	16	Bachelor	6	2
	Economics & Law	9	6	Master	36	17
	Comms, Marketing & creativity	4	5	PhD	16	3

\*Sample of 42% of consortium participants

Image 7: Studies and level of studies

### 7.3.2. Results “about your organization.”

In terms of the perspective about gender and inclusion in their organizations, several questions were made, such as: “My organization/team gives people from all origins/geographical backgrounds, ethnicities, etc. equitable opportunities to advance their careers.” Or “My sexual orientation or preference does not interfere with my career.” After analysing the data, in general terms, we could say that there is a good result as the answers with “strongly agree” and “agree” are the majority. However, the exciting analysis comes from seeing the sum of “undecided,” “disagree,” and “strongly disagree.” When doing so, we can observe that the topic regarding “age” and “decision-making” is the most worrying to people. Still, the “opportunity to advance in their careers” is more of a women's preoccupation, and the influence that sexual preferences can have on their career is more worrying to younger participants. (Image 8).

Your organisation		Strongly disagree + Disagree + Undecided	Women	Majority age range
	My organization/team gives people from all origins/geographical backgrounds, ethnicities, etc. equitable opportunities to advance their careers.	5	4	40-59
	My sexual orientation or preference does not interfere with my career	5	3	20-39
	My organization/team provides the same opportunities in decision-making tasks to men and women	7	5	20-39
	My organization/team includes and provides the same opportunities to people discarding their age.	14	7	30-49
	My organization/team gives people from any religion an opportunity to advance in their career.	2	1	30-49
		33		

\*Sample of 42% of consortium participants

Image 8: Sum-up of negative affirmations regarding their organizations

### 7.3.3. Results “about the project.”

Regarding the project section, the questions were about the plans of the partners related to different topics for the management of the project, such as self-expression, women/vulnerable collectives as target groups, language, other groups' priorities considered, etc. There was the option to leave blank answers when not applicable. When we ask about minority/vulnerable collectives, we consider children, low-income households, elders, people with diseases or disabilities, migrants, etc. After analysing the results, we can assume as well as in the organization questions, that the perspective is positive, mostly in topics about everyone’s self-expression and neutral language used either internally or externally. Still, we can see few answers related to activities that consider minority or vulnerable collectives (monitor the involvement, engagement strategies, dedicated activities, or communication materials), assuming that there is an opportunity to support partners in this topic with the action plan.

### 7.4. The workshop

To design jointly the initiatives and actions to ensure gender & inclusion in BeFlexible, we extended an invitation to all the consortium to participate in a workshop on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023, where 17 people assisted and participated (Image 9) in the creation of some initiatives (Image 10). The workshop lasted one hour with a brief introduction of the attitudes of the session and the objectives of either of the workshop, and the deliverable that works for the Gender Action Plan. During the co-creation and the brainstorming, we visited some questionnaire results to inspire the attendees.



Image 9: Inclusion and gender workshop participants

### Some of the initiatives to work internally on gender and inclusion were

- To better know the different cultural backgrounds and how they influence the ways of working of the various partners, provide guidelines on how to interact with other cultures, and improve collaboration.
- Physical meetings to work closer and dedicate time to each other.
- Participate in women’s Energy conferences.
- Share learnings between us about different projects.
- To ensure that everyone has space in the project meetings to contribute, providing the space and time and not only the ones with a “stronger” voice.
- If new people join the project, ensure an onboarding and introduction to the consortium.
- Define a standard glossary for the project with technical concepts to ensure we all speak the same language.
- Broader meeting with all the consortium to inform about the status of gender, diversity, and inclusion of the project.

### Initiatives regarding external touchpoints on BeFlexible:

- Ensure that our communications are inclusive of language.
- Share publications about the percentages of the energy sector vs. our project for Women’s day in March.
- Use different communication methods to ensure we reach all ages.
- Consumer engagement strategies with an inclusive approach.
- Ensure we show role models in our communication sharing the diversity we have in the consortium.
- Ensure the participants in the Demo Pilots are diverse (age, gender, etc.)
- Ensure transparent criteria for the election of participants.
- Be sure that the technical language is translated for users to understand their role.
- Consider the limitations of the local energy markets and regulations to reach the needs of each country.



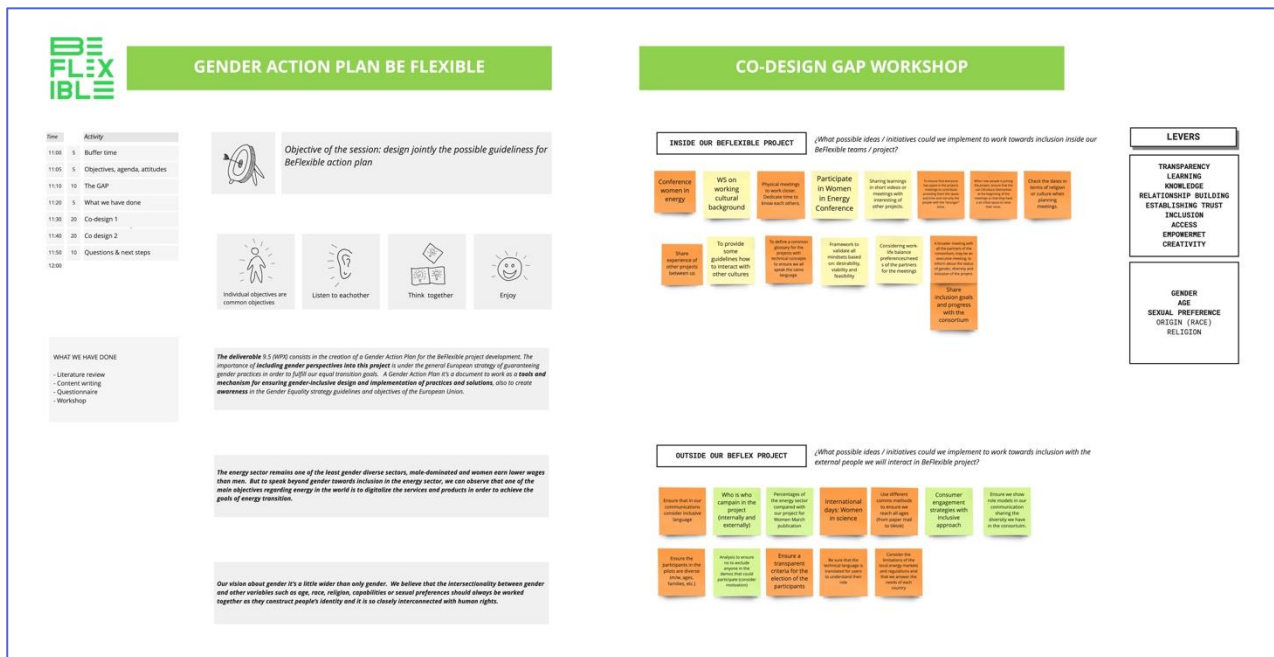


Image 10: Screenshot of Inclusion and gender workshop agenda and initiatives

## 8. How to work towards inclusion: Inclusion Action Plan

After analysing the data gathered and adapting it to the BeFlexible project, we selected some initiatives we believe are **reachable** and **relevant**. We categorized them to match the deliverable objectives and the European Union goals.

The three categories (Image 11) we propose have a twofold orientation: inside and outside the consortium (the latter comprising actions towards participants, society, researchers, etc.) Both orientations are reciprocally affected.

- a) **Empathy:** Everything should start with accepting and understanding the other’s diversity and richness. In the BeFlexible project, we encourage you to consider the valuable part of the difference between the rest of the partners, participants, etc. and work towards it so that they feel included and considered.
- b) **Connection:** Once we have empathized with others, we are ready to connect in a meaningful and effective way to boost the power of diversity. Fostering interrelations among partners or the rest of society through the proper channels and formats is critical to making people feel part of and promoting innovative and relevant solutions.
- c) **Visibility:** Finally, we have to enhance the power of diversity and collaboration that has led us to the success of the consortium and the solutions proposed. This role model empowers different collectives to act and get involved in sectors like energy, where inclusion and diversity are urgently needed to rethink the system. Visualizing it fosters transparency and leads to empathy, closing the virtuous loop.

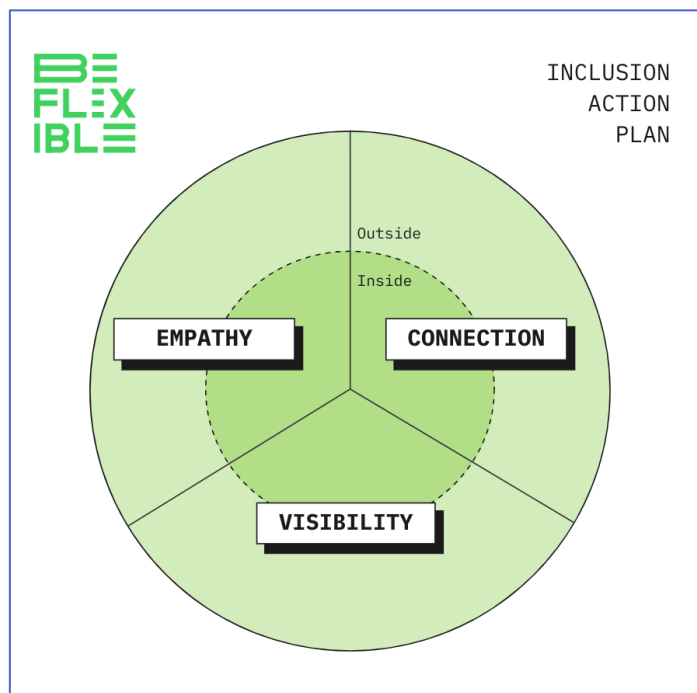


Image 11: Inclusion Action Plan Framework

### 8.1. Initiatives and responsibilities

An action plan must be a guide to ensure that the initiatives are considered and practiced during the project. This is why a description of the activities, and the response is key for the IAP monitoring to track the progress and keep the consortium updated. A list of 15 initiatives structured in the three areas and organized under the internal or external focus is presented in Table 1. Those initiatives are taken from the workshop conducted with the project partners and iterated to provide a simple but effective Inclusion Action Plan for the BeFlexible project.

The deployment of these initiatives and the responsible of each initiative are WP2 suggestions however they will be settled on a specific meeting with the consortium in order to accept or suggest changes. \*

AREA	SCOPE	WHAT	HOW	WHO *
EMPATHY	INSIDE	<b>Understanding other's working culture</b>	Cultural workshop where we share how our culture influences our way of working and what to consider fostering collaboration among partners of the different countries.	Zabala
		<b>Be Flexible's one language</b>	Define a common glossary with all the technical concepts used during the projects of all disciplines so that every partner, regardless of their background, understands key concepts and the consortium is aligned.	WP leaders
	OUTSIDE	<b>User friendly language</b>	Ensure complex concepts and words is translated to understandable and inclusive language for the many of the society to allow accessibility to participate and/or learn from the project	Communication (WP9) Demo Pilots Engagement Strategy
		<b>Usable services</b>	Ensure BeFlexible services are usable and understandable for all kind of users despite their age, energy literacy, etc. and that are adapted to the local context.	INESTEC Demo Pilots Soulsight
CONNECTION	INSIDE	<b>Teambuilding</b>	Ensure there is space for teambuilding dynamics in physical meetings (e.g.: yearly PTC meetings) so partners have the chance to better connect among each other's.	Zabala
		<b>Who is who</b>	Create a digital <i>wall of fame</i> , with pictures from all members including name, company, role in the project and where can s/he add more value according to the expertise. Take the chance of do quick presentations in batches in the <i>Executive Meetings</i> .	Executive Board leaders & Soulsight
		<b>New integrant onboarding</b>	When there is someone new in the meetings, provide space at the beginning to introduce him/herself.	Executive Board meeting leaders & all
	OUTSIDE	<b>Accessible communication channels</b>	Ensure we use different communication methods/channels (online and offline) to reach all ages and minority collectives.	Communication (WP9) Demo Pilots
		<b>Minority / Vulnerable collectives included</b>	Ensure diversity by onboarding families, low-income households, elders, people with diseases or disabilities, migrants, etc. in the Demo Pilots as participants so a heterogeneous sample of the local society is represented.	Demo Pilots
VISIBILITY	INSIDE	<b>Share inclusion goals</b>	Initial meeting to share the IAP and a yearly meeting to review progress and iterate plan if needed.	Soulsight
		<b>Cross-pollination</b>	Trimestral meetings to share interesting knowledge, experiences in BeFlexible or other projects that could enrich other partners with different points of view.	Zabala
		<b>Last but not least</b>	Encourage to use of the hand risen reaction to coordinate participation in online meetings. Meeting coordinators should provide 5-10min at the end of every meeting to allow everyone who wants to participate and contribute to have a last chance.	Executive Board meeting leaders & all
	OUTSIDE	<b>Remarkable people in remarkable days</b>	Ensure that BeFlexible publishes on key international days like women day, women in science day, etc. and that we take the chance to show role models in energy, tech and science that are attractive for new generations.	Communication (WP9)
		<b>Richness of BeFlexible diversity</b>	Ensure that the project publications show the diversity of the project, both the consortium profiles (sex, disciplines, ages, cultural background), and the participants (culture, profession, civil state, age, etc.)	Communication (WP9)
		<b>BeFlexible is in on it</b>	Participate in events that promote diversity in the energy and ITC sectors like Women in Energy Summit.	Communication (WP9)

Table 1: Inclusion Action Plan Initiatives

## Measurement and KPIs

Project coordinators and established partners with inclusion responsibilities will be advised of their role and the proposed initiative to take into action. Every year in October, Soulsight will hold a meeting with the partners involved to discuss and progress the GAP initiatives established and review if we need to include a new one or modify the existing ones.

### General KPIs:

- One yearly meeting with inclusion goals and progress.
- One project glossary.
- Four annual meetings to share knowledge about other projects or engaging experiences related to BeFlexible.
- One cultural workshop.
- One physical meeting /year.
- One session to convey limitations about local energy markets of Demo Pilots.

### Attitudes on meetings:

- Ask if there is someone new and let them introduce you to the consortium.
- Ask a one-team question before the session starts (check with Soulsight for examples). This will help create community and break the ice.
- Ask at the end if there is someone who wants to add or share something, anything about the project.

### Communication KPIs:

- Review technical language on-site and on publications.
- One presence in a Women on Energy Summit or similar.
- Review inclusive language on site and on publications.
- At least one publication regarding women in the energy sector and BeFlexible position.

### Demo Pilots KPI's:

- Ensure diversity in Demo Pilots by choosing inclusive people to participate in the Pilots.
- Try different communication channels to reach all audiences.

## 9. Conclusions

BeFlexible Inclusion Action Plan is a path to define how to manage inclusion and gender during the project, both at the consortium level to avoid bias and at the demo level to provide an inclusive solution where diversity is representative. This plan should always be created with people, not for people, so everyone's involvement and acknowledgment are crucial to success. This type of plan inside Horizon 2020 projects are part of SDG implementation across Europe and an intelligent way to accelerate more sustainable and equitable development. This is why we need to work towards facilitating the path to work on what composes identity. To achieve that, we propose that the intersectionality between **gender** and other

variables such as **age, cultural background, religion, capabilities, or sexual preferences** should be addressed together as they construct people’s identities and are closely interconnected with human rights.

Organizations at all levels should work towards ensuring this in every sector or industry. Energy has historically been a male-dominated field, and its workforce needs to be more representative of the population and workforce at large. On average, there are 76% fewer women than men working in the energy sector. Despite this reality, BeFlexible consortiums initially show an equal balance between gender, albeit. However, there are nuances and things to work towards inclusion, such as ensuring everyone is heard or inclusive participation at a Demo level. Communication efforts inside BeFlexible and external communications are vital to creating trust and relationship building.

## 10. References

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