

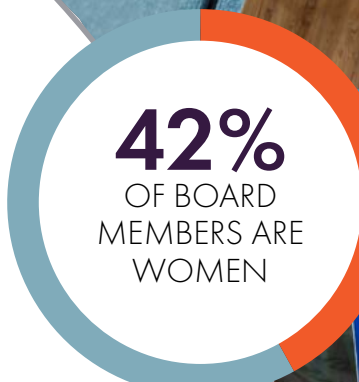
ESB Case Study

In this case study, ESB have provided some examples of how they are implementing actions that align with the focus areas of the Balance for Better Business Roadmap.




ESB Deputy Chief Executive and Gender ERG Executive Sponsor Marguerite Sayers with panel members of the ESB 'Women in Our Business' Series.

ESB was established in 1927 as a statutory body under the Electricity (Supply) Act 1927, with a commitment to driving society forward and delivering a brighter future for the customers and communities we serve. ESB operates across the electricity market, from generation through transmission and distribution, to the supply of our customers. Participation of women has traditionally been low across the energy industry and recognising this, ESB has set an ambitious target for women to represent 30% of its workforce. Women currently represent 27% of ESB's workforce – a number that has increased steadily over time. We are progressing in the right direction with women now holding 27% of all roles; 35% of Senior Manager roles; 40% of Executive roles and 42% at Board Level. Non-STEM Business Units are well balanced in terms of gender, with women holding 50%+ of roles. This target, supported by a range of initiatives across ESB, sets a clear goal for us to actively increase the number of women working across the organisation, with a particular focus on STEM roles.




42%
OF BOARD
MEMBERS ARE
WOMEN



40%
OF EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE ROLES
ARE HELD BY
WOMEN



35%
OF SENIOR
MANAGERS ARE
WOMEN



"ESB has set an ambitious target for women to represent 30% of its total workforce by the end of 2025."

ESB has implemented a series of actions across the company, aligned to the Balance for Better Business 2024-28 Strategy Pillars:



PLAN AND MEASURE

ESB's Board oversees ESB's Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Strategy, as part of the ESB People Strategy. The Safety, Sustainability & Culture Board Sub-Committee reviews the DEI Strategy and progress against key metrics to ensure the culture and capability to deliver ESB's strategy is in place. The ESB Board participates in regular DEI training and has a dedicated Diversity Equity and Inclusion Policy which is published on ESB's website. The purpose of the Policy is to provide leadership on DEI, valuing difference and sustaining a culture of belonging right across the business. The policy recognises that a diverse Board with a range of views, insights, perspectives, and opinions will enhance decision-making, help to avoid the risk of groupthink, and ultimately benefit the company's shareholders and other stakeholders through better business performance.

Ownership of the 30% target sits with ESB's Executive Committee. Each Business Unit Leadership Team is responsible for identifying and delivering actions that focus on the attraction, development, and retention of women.

Our internal gender dashboards provide a comprehensive view of gender representation and pay across the organisation, by level, by role type, and by business unit. This is helping us to focus on the areas of impact and measure progress against the 30% target.

It has been very encouraging to see a record intake of women start their careers at ESB as Network Apprentices in 2023 (27%) and 2022 (24%). We know we have more to do to attract more women into engineering and craft roles. This will take time and will require a strategic approach to attracting women towards these roles.



SUCCESSION PLANNING

We include gender analysis in succession planning, Integrated Business Planning and annual pay and performance cycle. This allows us to put the right interventions and supports in place where gaps exist, ensuring equality of opportunity.

Each Business Unit is responsible for identifying and driving actions that attract, develop, and retain women. Business Units review demographic data and headcount forecasts to develop specific targets around the retention and progression of women in their business unit.



TALENT DEVELOPMENT & RETENTION

Following the successful pilot of a bespoke career development programme, 'Pathways to Success' for women at ESB, the programme will be rolled out to women at junior to middle management levels in the year ahead. This programme was designed for women, by women, at ESB following extensive focus groups.

- Our long-standing engagement with schools through ESB Science Blast, STEM Transition Year Programme, School Visits, and Connecting Women in Technology's STEM Teacher Internship Programme

aims to increase the number of girls choosing a career in STEM.

- Our Gender Employee Resource Group is a voluntary, employee-led group of colleagues established in 2023. Our Gender ERG works to further progress gender equity through initiatives and action-planning.
- Women from ESB regularly speak at events and participate on panels – both internally and externally – to share their career journeys at ESB. We encourage women in every business unit to act as visible role models, to show that careers at ESB are both varied and rewarding.
- Our award-winning, evidence based 'Managing Successful Parenting Transitions' Programme provides parents of all genders with the tools, skills and support they need at each stage of their parenting journey. We offer this programme to all parents with the aim of levelling the playing field.



RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Our Inclusion Principle is a commitment to seek gender balance at interview stage. We know that ensuring a diverse slate of candidates at interview stage supports our efforts to increase gender diversity.

Gender-neutral language software is used to ensure the language in job descriptions is inclusive. Job description templates have been updated to include ESB's commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. We share roles on external job boards such as the Open Doors Initiative and Business in the Community to expand our reach for talent.

Our IT Department partners with Digital Skillnet Women's ReBOOT programme which supports women who have taken time out of their career in tech, to return to the workplace. The Programme is a combination of formal training, self-directed learning, and individual coaching sessions.

Drill down on attracting more women into Network Technician Roles:

- The development and design of recruitment campaigns was changed to be more inclusive and to appeal to women as potential applicants. This approach is now our standard for the annual apprenticeship recruitment campaign. We mobilised our technical women to support these campaigns including participation in media and in the recruitment process to work with HR.
- We ensure at every stage of the recruitment process that we adopt a diversity lens and track the gender profile of the applicants through the various process stages. We also ensure that all women who are shortlisted are interviewed by a panel which includes a technical woman.
- Every year we conduct school visits, host Talent Acquisition programmes for female students, and connect with schools and with career guidance counsellors to market the apprenticeship programme as a viable career choice for female students. Early on, we sought endorsements from teachers groups and directly from parents to impact these key influencers in career choice. These were used in social media promotional material.



ESB Networks People & Organisation Capability team receiving the award for Best Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion Initiative at the 2024 Learning & Development Institute Awards for their submission: Diversity Equity & Inclusion in Craft Electrician Careers

- A network was created across ESB Networks to connect all the ESB Networks women who have progressed through the craft route. As women join the organisation, they have the support of this group and the more experienced women in craft roles mentor the new joiners.
- At intervals, we conduct focus groups with women participating in the apprenticeship programme and those qualified and working as Network Technicians to determine changes and improvements, adopting a design thinking approach to the programme so we continuously learn and improve. At the early stages we conducted focus groups with women external to ESB and not connected with the apprenticeship to identify perceived barriers to the participation of women.
- ESB Networks has the highest participation of women in craft electrical work of any employer in Ireland.



STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

We have embedded Diversity, Equity and Inclusion principles within our competency based selection processes for managers and within leadership development programmes. ESB's Executive Committee undertakes regular Inclusive Leadership training which will be rolled out to all senior managers in 2025.

We encourage colleagues to attain cross-company experience and development through internal mobility or 'rotations'. Providing colleagues with the opportunity to grow and develop internally, helps us to retain and nurture the best talent. Many of our senior leaders have worked across multiple business units, honing their expertise and understanding of the business, setting them up for long-term success. We encourage each of our employees to own their careers and define what success looks like for them.