

# Wales could lead the way in attracting women into industry, says Eluned Morgan

That was the message given today by Eluned Morgan the Welsh Government Skills Minister at an event at Valero Pembroke Refinery – a global energy company in Pembrokeshire which is pushing the boat out to attract more women into the industry.

Speaking at the final of a competition of secondary school engineering clubs which the company have been hosting in both Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire the Minister said:

“In 2016, the report ‘Talented Women for a Successful Wales’ found that only 20% of women science graduates pursued careers in STEM subject areas compared to 44% of men.

“The lack of women in STEM professions matters for their individual life chances. They risk missing out on many well-paid and rewarding jobs.

“More broadly, however, it limits the talent available to our science base and to businesses in Wales and has the potential to constrain our wider economic prosperity and social well-being. Put simply, if this continues Wales will be left behind.

“In the Welsh Government, we’ve already looked at the programmes we fund and our policies to make sure that girls, in particular, are aware of what they can achieve through these subjects and the many fantastic jobs that are out there.

“More broadly, we also need to encourage a new way of thinking in relation to these subjects and for people to understand how engineering touches almost every aspect of our lives.

“Valero, through their various programmes and initiatives and the competition today, have shown how to tackle this issue of head-on and have made real strides in showing our young people the wealth of opportunities that STEM subjects and careers can offer.

“I am determined that we will turn this situation around but in order to do that we need a concerted, all-Wales effort from schools, industry, employers and the Welsh Government. Over the next few months, I’ll be setting out what steps we’ll be taking.