



Women in Leadership: A European Business Imperative



THE CONFERENCE BOARD



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Catalyst is the North American-based non-profit research and advisory organisation working to advance women in business. The leading source of information on women in business for the past four decades, Catalyst has the knowledge and tools that help companies and women maximise their potential. Our solutions-oriented approach—through Research, Advisory Services, Corporate Board Placement, and the Catalyst Award—has earned the confidence of global business leaders. Catalyst’s three groundbreaking reports on women in leadership in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom outline the landscape for women’s advancement in business.

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The Conference Board creates and disseminates knowledge about management and the market place to help businesses strengthen their performance and better serve society. Working as a global, independent membership organisation in the public interest, we conduct research, convene conferences, make forecasts, assess trends, publish information and analysis, and bring executives together to learn from one another. The Conference Board has been established in Brussels for over 20 years, operating a pan-European meeting programme for senior executives.

Women in Leadership: A European Business Imperative

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Catalyst Publication Code D52; ISBN#0-89584-228-9

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FOREWORD

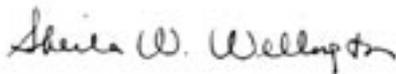
Catalyst and The Conference Board Europe have partnered on a groundbreaking study of the perceptions and attitudes of top-level women and men executives in large corporations and professional firms across 20 countries in Europe. This is an historic time for a study of women in leadership across Europe, as 12 nations now share a common currency and enlarging the European Union is currently under consideration. As a result, companies are exploring how to respond to a pan-European community.

In addition, strategic organisations are beginning to realise that capitalising on the talents of women is a business imperative. Many European business leaders know that the proportion of women in leadership does not reflect the number of women entering their companies. Employers generally consider this turnover inevitable, believing that women leave the workforce to raise children. However, the findings in this study appear to shatter many long held assumptions about businesswomen in Europe. A few key findings are listed below.

- ◆ The barriers to women's advancement in business are remarkably similar across European regions.
- ◆ The women respondents want to reach the top and are equally ambitious as men.
- ◆ The majority of women executives in this study are married, have full-time working partners, and have children.
- ◆ Women report that stereotypes and preconceptions about women's roles and abilities are the number one obstacle to advancement, closely followed by lack of role models, lack of general management experience, commitment to family and personal responsibilities, and lack of mentoring.
- ◆ The parental leave policies in many European countries are generous, but fully utilizing them is viewed as a career stumbling block.

Because Catalyst and The Conference Board Europe believe that acknowledging the barriers to women's advancement is not enough, in this report we also share strategies for making change within companies and firms.

It is our hope that this study will spark a continuing dialogue among European companies about how to capitalise on the talents of women and lead to sustainable change.



Sheila W. Wellington
President
Catalyst



Andrew Tank
Executive Director
The Conference Board Europe

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION & KEY FINDINGS

BACKGROUND & METHODOLOGY

About the Partnership

Catalyst and The Conference Board Europe, each the premier organisation in its respective area—women’s advancement and business leadership, have partnered together for this study in response to requests from companies and women executives in Europe who seek to understand and address the issues facing women in business. This study examines the views of both women and men managers and professionals and their experiences at work. The findings provide insight about how to recruit, retain, and advance women.

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Methodology¹

- ◆ Advisory board convened with seven senior-level women in Europe.
- ◆ Surveys received from 500 senior women and 132 senior men in large corporations and professional firms across the following 20 countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.
- ◆ Interviews conducted with 29 senior women and 5 senior men to design research and hone interpretation of the data.
- ◆ Interviews conducted with 19 companies to identify examples of programmes for advancing and developing women in business.

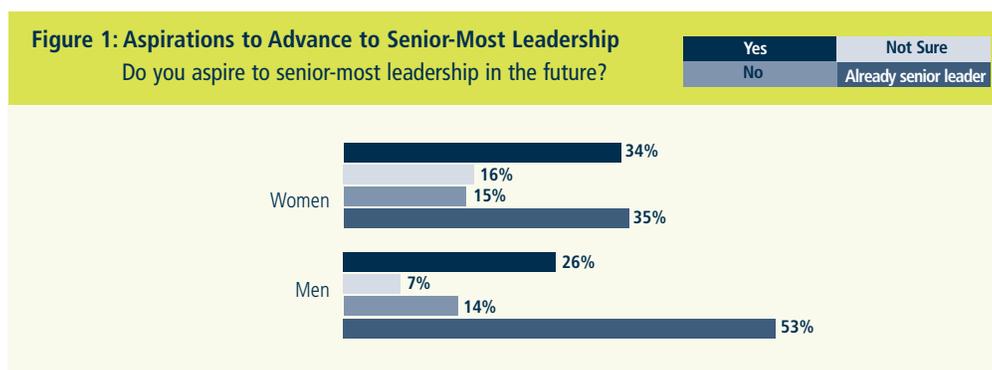
¹ An extended methodology can be found in the appendix.

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KEY FINDINGS

Profile of survey respondents. The women and men in our study work in large corporations and firms across 20 European countries and have job titles of director level or above. The majority of respondents are highly educated and are experienced in their companies. However, the men respondents tend to be at higher hierarchal levels, longer tenured, and older than the women respondents.

Career advancement. One-third of the European women respondents and one-quarter of the men aspire to senior-most leadership.² However, more men respondents (53 per cent) than women (35 per cent) believe they have already made it to the top.



Of those who don't already consider themselves senior-most leaders, 52 per cent of women respondents want to advance to the top.

In general, the managerial and professional women in this study see barriers to women's advancement, with stereotypes topping the list.

Table 1: Top 5 Barriers to Women's Advancement in Organisation, by Women

Stereotypes and preconceptions of women's roles and abilities	66%
Lack of senior or visibly successful female role models	64%
Lack of significant general management or line experience	63%
Commitment to family or personal responsibilities	62%
Lack of mentoring	61%

(Per cent who strongly agree/agree)

² In this study, "senior-most leadership" is defined as: CEO, firm managing partner, executive or management committee member.

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The men do not seem to see the same barriers to women's advancement as do the women—namely, the stereotypes that hold women back. There are only two items that more than one-half of men agree are barriers to women's advancement: lack of significant general management or line experience (63 per cent) and commitment to family or personal responsibilities (54 per cent).

Managing work and personal responsibilities. The majority of the businesswomen in this study are married (75 per cent), have full-time working partners (73 per cent), and have children (63 per cent). Compared to the women, the men respondents are more likely to be married (95 per cent) and have children (90 per cent), and are less likely to have a partner working full time (26 per cent).

Although 72 per cent of women respondents say that they can be flexible with their schedules when they have personal matters to attend to, 49 per cent say that they work too many hours. Only 36 per cent of the women have worked full time continuously throughout their careers. However, they view formal options such as leaves, flexible work arrangements, and career path flexibility as detrimental to their careers.

Outlook on change. Few women and men respondents consider the opportunities for women's advancement to have improved greatly over the last five years (11 per cent and 18 per cent respectively). However, almost one-quarter of women believe there has been no change while only 9 per cent of the men concur.

US and regional comparisons. By and large, the general issues facing businesswomen are similar across Europe and the US. The number one reported barrier to women's advancement across nations and regions is stereotypes and preconceptions about women's roles and abilities.

Recommendations. Since the general issues facing women appear to transcend borders, companies can create a global framework that allows for local customisation and implementation. The first step to capitalise on the talents of women is to build a company fact base to understand the unique issues facing women in the organisation. Then a customised strategy can be developed, which should include the following:

- ◆ Demonstrated senior leadership commitment
- ◆ An organisational structure to ensure accountability
- ◆ Strong education and communication mechanisms
- ◆ Programmatic elements, such as support for work/life integration, mentoring, women's workplace networks, and enhanced performance management systems.

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CHAPTER 2: ADVANCING WOMEN: A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Recruiting, retaining, and advancing women isn't just a matter of social responsibility. To maintain a competitive edge both within the European business community and in the global economy, strategic organisations are beginning to realise the economic significance of women as executives, investors, customers, and clients.

Mind the talent gap. During an economic downturn, some companies may not consider women's advancement, inclusion, and workplace flexibility as urgent concerns. However, the long view forecasts a dramatically shrinking talent pool as the birth rate declines and the workforce ages. In some fields, particularly science and engineering, the need for talent already is not keeping pace with demand.

One way to defuse what has been called the "demographic time bomb" is to tap women who occupy ever greater proportions of the educated and skilled labour market. In fact, European Commission President Romano Prodi recommends "removing obstacles to women's entry or re-entry into the jobs market"³ to alleviate the talent shortage.

Women occupy a substantial portion of the workforce, ranging from 38 per cent in Italy to 48 per cent in Finland.⁴ In 15 of the 20 countries in this study, women are 50 per cent or more of all recent college graduates, ranging from 41 per cent in Switzerland to 67 per cent in Norway.⁵ Furthermore, women represent between 19 and 41 per cent of student bodies in the top 10 European business schools.⁶

"We'd be crazy and stupid to ignore 50 per cent of the talent available."

—Dutch man executive

"The new French family is one where the man and the woman both work. The traditional family does not exist anymore."

—French man executive

"In Norway, more girls are educated than boys, which is a resource for industry to tap into. But somehow the women disappear—going into the public sector and not becoming industry leaders—which is a loss of a tremendous resource."

—Norwegian woman executive

Economic power. Companies can benefit by having decision makers who understand their women consumers and clients as well as by appealing to women investors and customers who are increasingly demanding better representation of women at senior levels. For example, one German woman describes how her company's business case centers around market research that reveals that women make 80 per cent of car purchasing decisions in Germany.

³ Prodi, Romano. "Letters to the Editor: Making labour mobility happen in the EU." *Financial Times*. February 15, 2002.

⁴ *ILO Yearbook of Labour Statistics*, 2000

⁵ Education—UNESCO, *Statistical Yearbook*, 1998 and National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics*, 2000

⁶ "2002 MBA Rankings." *Financial Times*. January 21, 2002.

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"A lot of the household decision-makers are women, so having only men developing products and selling them won't capture fundamentally what the consumers want. The leadership team should reflect the consumer base."

—Swedish woman executive

"Having women increases the success of the company, and it has even been recognised by our board. Women have more success with clients because they make them feel more comfortable and trusting."

—Italian woman executive

Talent magnet. Employers that value and advance women will in turn attract more talented women. Having women in leadership roles also helps retain junior-level women by signaling to them that advancement opportunities exist.

"There are companies that are ahead of society in giving opportunities. They are a magnet to attract other women."

—Spanish woman executive

Whether women resign to work for another employer or to stay home with children, turnover is costly. By providing advancement opportunities and flexibility, companies can hold onto the talents and institutional knowledge women possess.

"Banking is a people business, and we can attract and keep good women that give us an edge over our rivals."

—British man executive

As corporate social responsibility (CSR) gains prominence, European employers can enhance their corporate reputation locally and globally by having inclusive leadership teams.⁷

Inclusion advantages. European business leaders describe the need to become more "nimble" and "innovative" to survive and thrive in the global marketplace. Academic research demonstrates that bringing together people with varied perspectives and backgrounds yields more innovation and better problem-solving.⁸ As one Swedish woman executive said, "A rich balance of view points and experiences in senior leadership will yield more creative thinking and be ultimately more successful." Gender is one element of difference to add to the decision-making and brain-storming mix. Inclusion also emanates from a company's value system and culture. One Dutch man explains his company's rationale for ensuring that all employees, including women, have access to opportunities: "Our corporate values are based on team work and respect." Ultimately, companies can gain a competitive talent advantage by mining this tremendous, and virtually untapped, resource.

⁷ Maitland, Alison. "Inside Track: Europe outshines the US in corporate social responsibility." *Financial Times*. February 13, 2002.

⁸ Nemeth, Charlan J. (1986) "Different Contributions of Majority and Minority Influence." *Psychological Review*. Vol. 93 (1) p 23-32, and Adler, Nancy J. (1986) *International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior*, Kent Publishing.

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CHAPTER 3: STUDY FINDINGS

INDIVIDUAL CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Profile of Survey Respondents

The men and women in this study work in large corporations and professional firms and hold titles of Director or above. The majority are highly educated, hold positions with staff responsibility,⁹ and work in corporations. Compared to the women respondents, the men respondents tend to be older, at higher hierarchical levels, more likely to manage or supervise others, and longer tenured. Ninety per cent of both women and men in this study currently work in European-headquartered companies, with 8 per cent from U.S.-headquartered companies.

	Women (n=500)	Men (n=132)
Age in years (median)	43	50
Further university degree	57%	61%
Type of organisation: Corporation	76%	84%
Professional firm	24%	16%
Level: Senior*	55%	73%
Middle*	36%	26%
Below middle*	9%	1%
Function: Line	22%	21%
Mix of line & staff	24%	29%
Staff	54%	50%
Manage/supervise others*	88%	95%
Tenure at current organisation (median)	8 years	12 years

* Significant difference at .05

Strategies for Career Advancement

There is considerable agreement between the women and men respondents on the five most important strategies they use to advance their careers.

Women		Men	
Taking initiative	94%	Taking initiative	91%
Having recognised expertise in a specific content area	78%	Consistently exceeding performance expectations	81%
Having job assignments which are highly visible to key decision-makers	76%	Having job assignments which are highly visible to key decision-makers	81%
Consistently exceeding performance expectations	75%	Having recognised expertise in a specific content area	73%
Developing and adhering to own career goals	73%	Developing and adhering to own career goals	68%

(Per cent who indicate strategy is very important or important to their own career advancement)

⁹ Line positions are defined as those with profit-and-loss or direct client service responsibility. Staff positions provide support to the line, e.g., human resources, legal, and finance.

"Nothing comes to she who waits."¹⁰ Taking initiative is by far the number one personal advancement strategy for the women and men in this study. As an Irish woman survey respondent writes, "a can-do attitude and a willingness to have a go," are essential to career success.

"Expertise impresses."¹¹ Over three-quarters of women report that having a recognised expertise is an important career strategy. Women in interviews point out that developing an expertise in an emerging or non-traditional area lends credibility.

Get noticed. Having assignments that demonstrate talent and achievements to senior leaders is indispensable for career success. One Spanish woman credits her experience as an executive assistant to the chairman as both a high-visibility and an eye-opening opportunity.

"The best isn't good enough."¹² Three-quarters of women attribute their success to consistently exceeding performance expectations. As one French woman describes, "Be exceptional. Stand out from the class." While results are vital for men as well, some women assert that they must work harder than their men colleagues to prove themselves.

Gain cross-functional and line experience. Seventy-three per cent of women and 68 per cent of men respondents attribute their success to cross-functional experience. Several women interviewed broadened their experiences, even within the same organisation. A British woman describes, "I've taken jobs which haven't necessarily been a promotion, but have broadened my thinking and given me opportunities."

Men respondents are more likely to attribute their success to line experience—the business of the business—than are women (61 per cent and 51 per cent* respectively), although equivalent percentages of both groups currently have line responsibility.

Mentors matter. The respondents who report that they have had a mentor at some point in their careers (48 per cent of women respondents and 44 per cent of men*) are more than twice as likely as those who say they have never had a mentor to assert that mentoring is a key advancement strategy. Nearly all the women in interviews described the importance of having bosses who focused on talent rather than gender, particularly at an early career juncture.

"In the 100-year history of the bank, I was the first woman in this position. The director didn't care if I was a man or woman, he was just interested in skills and performance. When he became CEO of [another company], he asked me to come with him, which I did."

—Austrian woman executive

Mentors fulfill many different roles, from giving important career advice to "opening doors" to their personal networks. Mentors come from many sources: outside or inside the organisation; informally or through a formal programme; man or woman; supervisor, peer, or subordinate. Drawing on multiple mentors is ideal.

¹⁰ One of 8 axioms for advancement in: Wellington, Sheila and Catalyst. (2001) *Be Your Own Mentor*, Random House.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

* Significant difference at .05

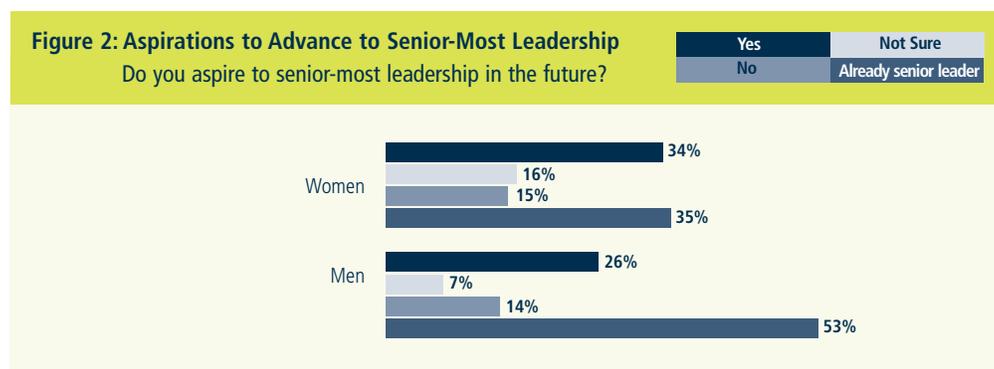
Networking know-how. Women respondents are more likely to cite networking and developing relationships with influential people as important strategies than are men (45 per cent and 33 per cent* respectively). Several women interviewed remain connected to informal networks of classmates or colleagues at their first employers. The women benefit from having a group of people to turn to for advice and gain a source of information about potential career opportunities.

"I've always valued and tried to build networks. I don't have the need to know everything myself; I just need to know someone who knows it."

—Finnish woman executive

Does style matter? There is some difference of opinion about whether the survey item "fitting your behavioural style to what is typical at your employer" is an important component of getting ahead. Some women interviewed in this study contend that European work environments are open to variations in personal style and that women can embrace their femininity. Others shared that they must be careful to be neither too feminine nor too masculine to fit in. In this study, more women than men report adjusting their behavioural styles (44 per cent and 34 per cent* respectively).

Aspirations for senior-most leadership. One-third of the European women respondents and one-quarter of the men aspire to senior-most leadership.¹³ However, more men respondents (53 per cent) than women (35 per cent) believe they have already made it to the top.



Of those who do not already consider themselves to be in senior-most leadership, over one-half of both women and men respondents aspire to advance to the top.

Several women interviewed have clear ambitions to reach the top at their organisation, such as one Greek woman who states, "I want to be the general manager, if not here then at another large company."

One reason why some women interviewed do not aspire to be at the top is because they see it as incompatible with their family lives. Another reason is that some of the women strongly associate themselves with their professions or functions, such as organisational development and investor relations, which are not common step-

¹³ In this study, "senior-most leadership" is defined as: CEO, firm managing partner, executive or management committee member.

* Significant difference at .05

pingstones to the top position at a major corporation or professional firm. These women do, however, desire to enlarge their scope of responsibility, achieve the top jobs in their functions at ever larger and more global organisations, or to go out on their own as consultants or entrepreneurs.

Barriers to Women's Advancement

Stereotypes top the list of barriers for women in general, as reported by women participants, followed by a lack of role models, lack of line management experience, commitment to family, and lack of mentoring.

Table 4: Barriers for Women's Advancement to Senior Leadership, by Gender (Strongly agree/agree)		
	Women	Men
Stereotyping and preconceptions of women's roles and abilities*	66%	34%
Lack of senior or visibly successful female role models*	64%	49%
Lack of significant general management or line experience	63%	63%
Commitment to family or personal responsibilities	62%	54%
Lack of mentoring*	61%	31%
Failure of senior leadership to assume accountability for women's advancement*	56%	35%
Lack of desire to reach senior levels*	53%	41%
Lack of job assignments which are highly visible to key decision-makers*	52%	26%
Lack of professional or executive development opportunities*	47%	17%
Lack of awareness of organisational politics*	43%	11%
Lack of opportunities to work on challenging assignments*	43%	22%
Displaying a behavioural style that is different than the organisation's norm*	36%	12%
Inhospitable corporate culture*	36%	20%
Lack of access to people who informally provide critical information about their workplace*	29%	11%
Women haven't been in workplace long enough to have reached senior levels in significant numbers*	25%	36%
Lack of skill or ability to reach senior levels	14%	11%
Sexual harassment by supervisors, colleagues, customers or clients*	10%	1%

* Significant difference at .05

Gender divide on barriers to women's advancement. Women respondents are significantly more likely than men respondents to agree that 13 of the 17 survey items are barriers for women. There are only two items that more than one-half of men agree are barriers to women's advancement: lack of significant general management or line experience (63 per cent) and commitment to family or personal responsibilities (54 per cent). Furthermore, more men than women agree that women haven't been in the workplace long enough (36 per cent and 25 per cent* respectively). Because the men respondents are on average at higher levels than the women, the men's lack of understanding about women's perceptions of barriers itself can hold women back. The executive men interviewed believe that they are already hiring the best and assert that women are welcome as long as they compete on an equal footing with their men counterparts. One Irish man sums up this sentiment as follows:

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* Significant difference at .05

"We always hire the best talent. We make no positive discrimination in favour of women and have no special policies to advance women."

—Irish man executive

Stereotypes. Nearly twice as many women respondents as men respondents cite stereotypes as a barrier. One Finnish woman calls them "invented excuses." Furthermore, 43 per cent of men disagree that stereotypes are an obstacle for women. This finding suggests that some men don't realise that they harbour misconceptions about women. In fact, 18 per cent of women report that stereotypes and preconceptions are the barriers that have slowed their own advancement the most—the most highly rated of the 17 items.

"There are assumptions made—'This assignment will be rough, so it is probably not a good idea to send a woman to take a strong position with the partner or the client.'"

—French woman executive

"Women are perceived as not as career-minded, which is nonsense...When recruiting a man, you assume he's interested in a career. As a woman, you have put your foot down and directly say that you want a career."

—Swiss woman executive

Commitment to family and personal life. Some of the women interviewed describe the notion that women are more committed to their families than to their work as one of the most powerful stereotypes holding women back.

"My friends tell me how managers expect that they will go on maternity leave soon so they won't promote them. And then I have friends who want to stay at home when their children are young, and then it's tough to go back in and advance after that."

—Finnish woman executive

However, women respondents also recognise that women generally shoulder the majority of the household and childcare responsibilities with little, if any, company support. Women with children are five times more likely than those without children to say that commitment to family is a barrier to their own advancement.

Lack of line experience. The number one barrier for women cited by men respondents is lack of significant general management or line experience. As one Irish man describes, "Most women managers come through the professional route, such as finance or legal, rather than through the businesses." Interestingly, nearly equal percentages of women and men in this study currently hold line positions. Women sometimes feel pushed into staff roles because of the perception that women are more suited for these roles. One Czech woman contends that she left an employer because, "my company gives women, even with engineering degrees, only high-level staff positions."

Lack of role models. Nearly two-thirds of women and one-half of men respondents attribute a lack of women role models as a barrier to women's advancement. Women in interviews describe the powerful signal that companies send to the rest of the organisation when appointing high-level women.

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"I've had no women role models. In the beginning, I had a lot of female colleagues because there are many junior women in banking in Poland. But when I moved to managerial positions, there were mostly men."

—Polish woman executive

Ambition and advancement. Fifty-three per cent of women respondents and 41 per cent of men contend that lack of desire to reach senior levels holds women back.* However, it is important to remember that 15 per cent of women and 14 per cent of men in this study do not aspire to reach the top.

"Many women are happy staying at home, and just as many are working on their careers with clear targets and great accomplishments."

—Czech woman executive

"Maybe women don't want the most senior positions. You are exposed. Everyone looks to you. Everyone remembers what you say."

—German woman executive

It's only a matter of time. Thirty-six per cent of men respondents contend that women haven't been in the workplace long enough to ascend the corporate ladder in significant numbers. One in four women respondents agree. However, 58 per cent of women disagree with that point-of-view, as do 47 per cent of men.*

"It isn't an issue of accepting women in the workplace because women have been working in Denmark for many years. The problem is getting women to the top."

—Danish woman executive

The comfort factor. In interviews, many women report that men leaders tend to promote in their own likeness and have general discomfort with inviting women into the leadership ranks.

"Men still feel more comfortable working with other men. The men are afraid if they let women in then they'd have to change."

—Danish woman executive

"When I was first promoted, I wasn't initially accepted at [my industry's trade association]. They said I didn't have enough experience, but the man who had held my role before me had been a member. Now, I'm the only woman member."

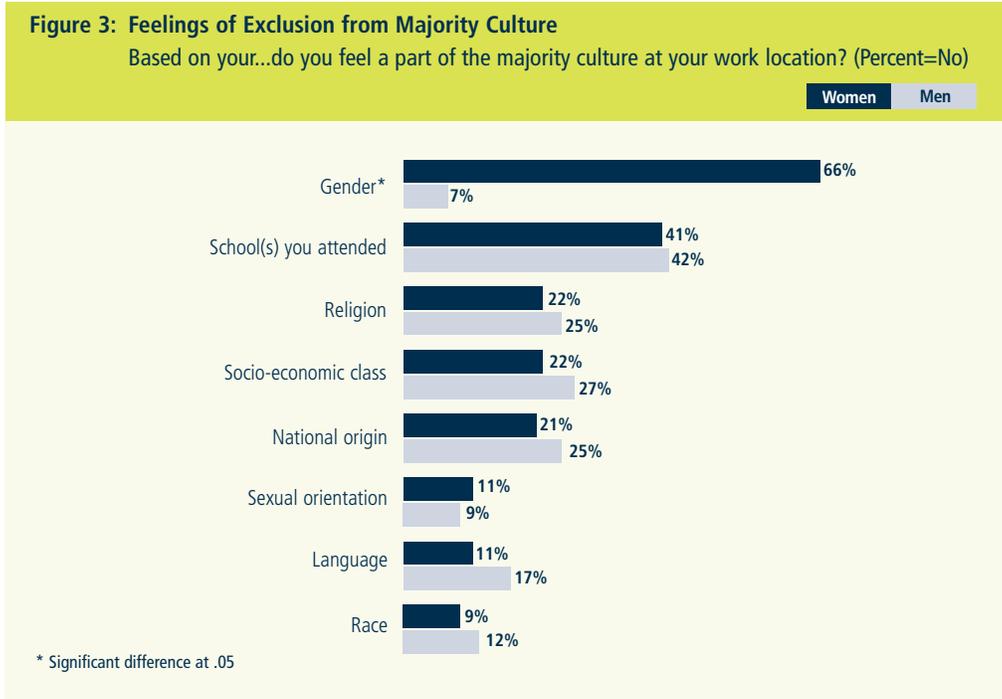
—German woman executive

Majority/Minority Culture

Two-thirds of women respondents (66 per cent), compared to 7 per cent of men, do not feel part of the majority culture at their work locations because of their gender.* Looking beyond gender, there is little difference in the responses of men and women regarding majority/minority cultures. Both women and men respondents report feeling like outsiders based on a number of other social dimensions, such as religion, class, and national origin.

* Significant difference at .05

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Although religious, racial/ethnic, and immigrant groups vary by country, the impact of outsider status is often the same. When framing diversity and inclusion across borders, the one constant is gender. If companies learn how to address gender inclusion, then in large part, they can address those other elements of difference that may vary from country to country.

RECRUITMENT, SATISFACTION, & RETENTION

Recruitment. The women in the study joined their current employers for skill development opportunities (55 per cent), intellectual stimulation (39 per cent), and authority to make decisions (38 per cent). For the most part, women and men respondents joined their employers for the same reasons.

Satisfaction. Overall, both women and men respondents are highly satisfied with their employers along a number of dimensions. However, more men than women respondents report satisfaction with compensation and advancement. Seventy-nine per cent of men respondents are satisfied with their compensation compared to 68 per cent of women.* Furthermore, 68 per cent of men compared to 56 per cent of women respondents are satisfied with their advancement opportunities.*

Retention. While few respondents intend to leave their organisations within the year, nearly one-half (45 per cent) of women age 50 and under plan to leave in the next 3 years. Fewer than one-fifth of women respondents (19 per cent) anticipate staying at their current employers until they retire. The findings suggest that women are staying for now, but not necessarily for the long term. Fewer women respondents indicate an intent to stay at their current employers than do the men.*

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Figure 4: Turnover Indicators for Respondents Age 50 and Under, by Gender

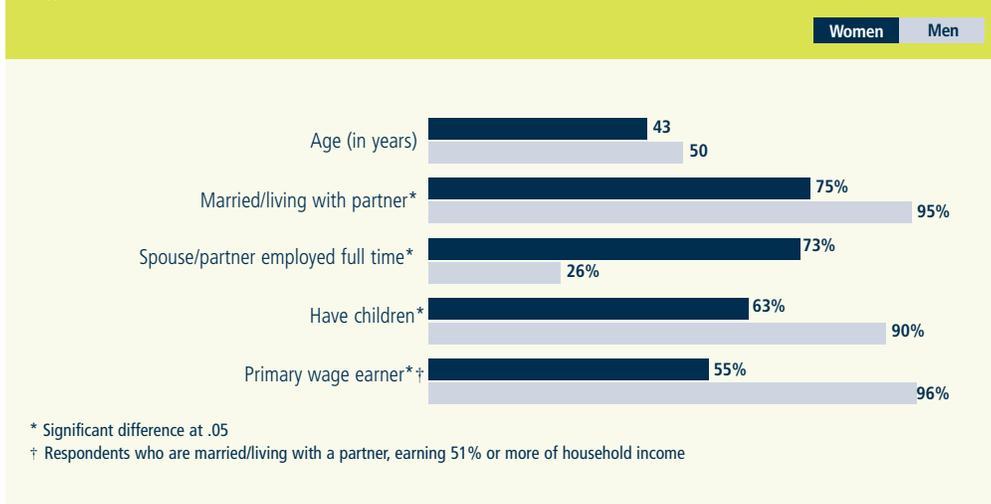


Reasons for leaving. The reasons women respondents would leave their current employers are similar to their reasons for joining. Almost one-half would leave their employers for opportunities to develop new skills or competencies, suggesting that the women do not plan to stop working. In interviews, most women indicate that they are not explicitly planning to leave, but are open to the possibility if they can no longer grow at their current employers. A few are considering less demanding positions but are not planning to leave the workforce altogether.

MANAGING WORK & PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Most of the women in this study have ascended the career ladder while managing family responsibilities. The majority of women respondents are married or living with a partner, have full-time working partners, are primary wage earners, and have children. However, men respondents are more likely than the women to be married or living with a partner and have children. Of those who are married or living with a partner, women are much more likely than men to have a full-time working partner.

Figure 5: Personal Profiles, by Gender



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Work/Life Conflict

Compared to the men respondents, more women respondents report work/life conflict.

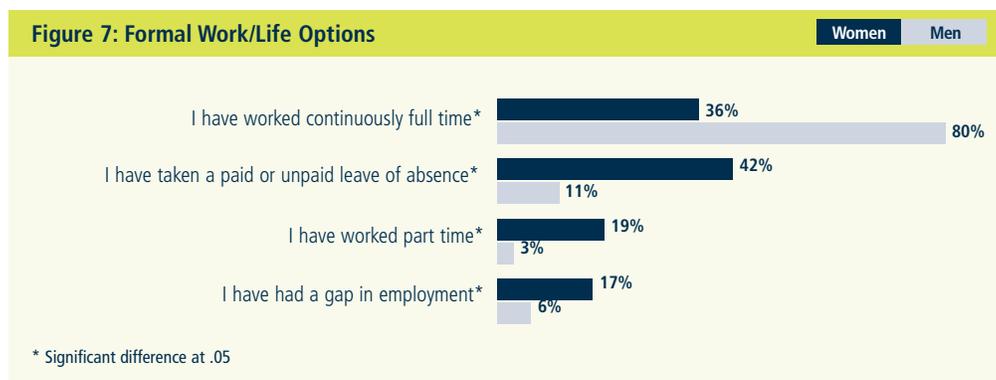


Interestingly, there are no significant differences in reports of work/life conflict between women with or without children. The women without children or whose children are grown also describe active personal lives that include fitness, travel, reading, cultural activities, etc. They are equally committed to carving out personal time separate from their demanding professional lives. As one Polish woman asserts, "I can't imagine not having a personal life."

Family and childcare responsibilities are perceived as impediments to women's advancement. One-half of both men and women respondents agree that having children hinders a woman's ability to advance. Fifty-two per cent of women respondents and 43 per cent of men believe that advancement at their organisations depends on putting their careers before their family or personal lives. Interestingly, more women who do not have children believe this to be true than do women with children (58 per cent and 47 per cent* respectively).

Formal Work/Life Options

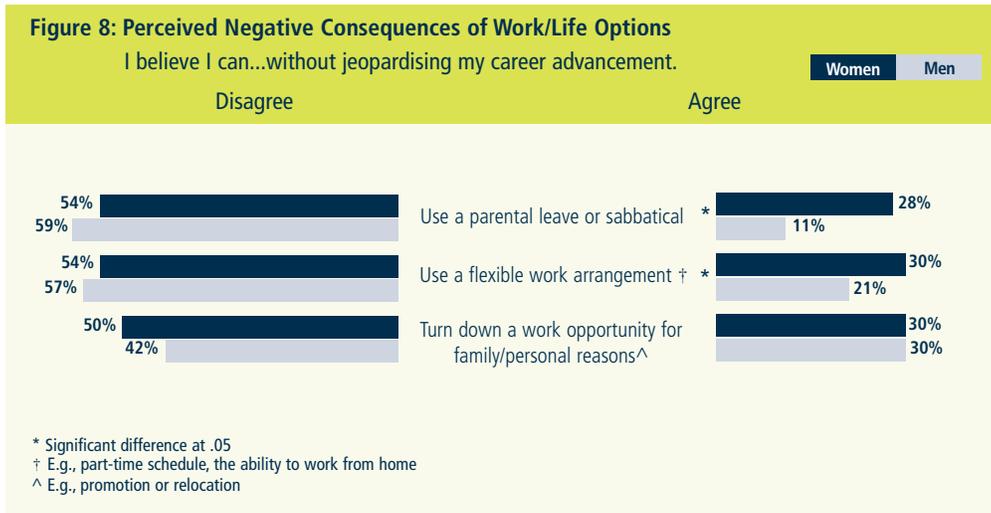
Compared to women respondents, more than twice as many men respondents have worked full time continuously throughout their careers. Only 20 per cent of women with children have worked full time continuously. Over four in ten women have taken a leave, largely due to the birth and care of a child. Nearly one in five women have worked part time or had an employment gap.



* Significant difference at .05 **For posting on intranet sites of Catalyst and The Conference Board member organizations only.**

Career Implications of Work/Life Options

Both women and men respondents believe that formal work/life options carry negative career consequences. Men respondents are even less likely than women to believe they can take leaves or use a flexible work arrangements without jeopardising their career advancement.



While generous maternity leaves are available by law, women with advancement ambitions may find it difficult to take the allotted time and continue to advance. Several women point to the availability of flexible work arrangements at their companies but most believe that managers are not able to take advantage of them.

"In Greece, we have a 16-week maternity leave which is wonderful. However, it does affect your career because you are perceived to be contributing less than your colleagues and you lose some momentum."
 —Greek woman executive

"The problem is not being away for a certain time and then coming back and working full time—this is not easy, but it's possible and you could still have career. But if you want to have a career with a part-time job, it's just not accepted."
 —German woman executive

However, the women who have worked full time continuously are more likely to believe these flexible work options threaten career progress than are women who have used these options. These divergent viewpoints may stem from the considerable effort the women interviewed exerted to make their arrangements work. The women describe setting clear limits, being personally flexible, being accessible at home, and developing their teams to handle the work in their absence.

Informal Flexibility

While acceptance of formal flexible work arrangements are viewed as limited, the women interviewed described informal, day-to-day flexibility as well-established. The vast majority of women and men respondents report that they can be flexible with their schedules when they have family or personal matters to attend to (72 per cent compared to 85 per cent*).

* Significant difference at .05

"My company is flexible during the day, so if I want to [I can] shoot off to a sports event and then come back and work later."

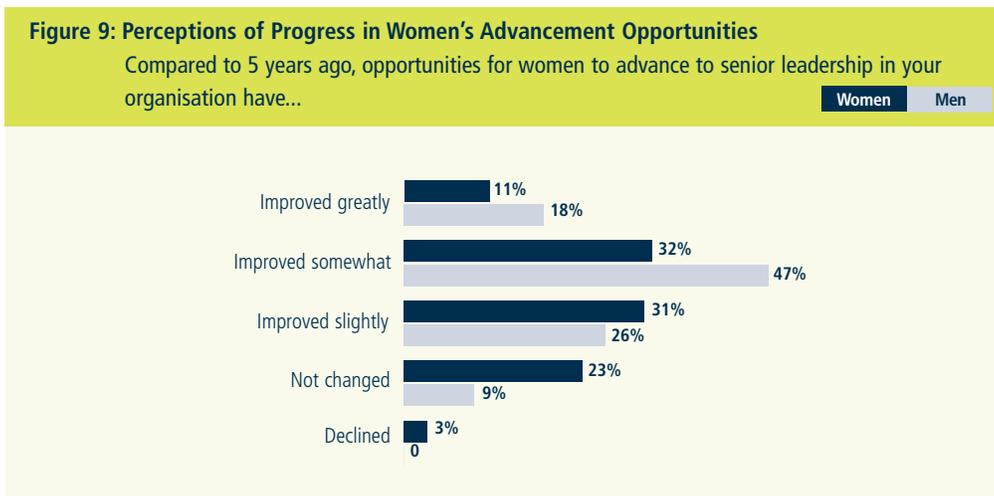
—Greek woman executive

"I have a very understanding CEO. If I have to stay home because I was gone three weekends and my husband says he can't remember my face, then my CEO understands."

—Italian woman executive

OUTLOOK ON CHANGE

Few women and men respondents consider the opportunities for women's advancement to have improved greatly over the last five years. However, almost one-quarter of women believe there has been no change while only 9 per cent of the men concur.



Representation of Women at the Top

Women and men respondents agree on the current representation of women in leadership in their respective organisations. However, men tend to be somewhat more optimistic about the rate of change in the next five years.



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* Significant difference at .05

CROSS-REGIONAL COMPARISONS

Due to the wide geographic range of respondents, we have analysed the data across regional clusters in Europe.

Region	Country Composition
Benelux	Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands
Eastern Europe	Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland
France	
Germanic	Austria, Germany, Switzerland
Great Britain and Ireland	
Scandinavia	Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden
Southern Europe	Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain

Overall, there are relatively few differences among regions in Europe. We analysed demographics, advancement strategies, barriers to women's advancement, and satisfaction with current employer items. Few differences among regions emerged, and those that do exist are relatively inconsequential. Often where there are differences, they can be attributed to demographic variations rather than true regional disparities or they are slight variations between one region and another rather than among the entire group.¹⁴ These findings suggest that the overarching issues facing women executives at major companies and firms in Europe are similar.

Demographics. There are differences among regions in terms of respondents' age, parental status, expatriate status, and management level. There are no differences in marital/partnership status, tenure, or type of organisation.

Differences include:

- ◆ Scandinavian women respondents tend to be older and more likely to have children than the women in the other regions.
- ◆ Austrian, German, and Swiss women are less likely to have children than those in other regions.
- ◆ Benelux women are more likely to be expatriates than those in other regions.
- ◆ British/Irish women are higher in organisational level than the women in Scandinavian, Germanic, and Eastern European regions.

Advancement strategies. There is little variation in the top five advancement strategies by region (see page 6), with the exception that French women respondents place less importance on developing and adhering to career goals than do women respondents from the other regions.

Barriers to women's advancement. Across the regions, stereotyping is the top barrier to women's advancement. There is only one regional disparity in the barriers to women's advancement, and it is relatively minor. British and Irish women are less likely to report that the lack of opportunities to work on challenging assign-

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¹⁴ In subsequent regional multivariate regression analyses, we control for age, parental status, expatriate status, and management level.

* Significant difference at .05

ments is a barrier than are women from Scandinavian, Germanic, Southern, and Eastern European regions. This study focuses on the broad issues faced by women who are advancing in business.

Satisfaction with current employer. The only significant differences concerning the various dimensions of satisfaction are that Southern and Eastern European women are less satisfied with both work/life balance and the ability to control their schedules than are women in other regions.

It is important to remember that the women in this study have executive positions at large corporations and professional firms. The survey results and interviews suggest that there is a commonality to that experience, and as a result, there is a value to having a cross-national strategy to address women's advancement and inclusion issues.

The following representative quotations from four women executives from different regions of Europe reflect the common problem in each of these countries: few women at the top. Thus, too few women role models, leaders, or path breakers.

"We've had a long tradition of women being employed, but it's amazing still how few women there are at the top."

—Finnish woman executive

"Things seem easier now for women, but there are still so few."

—German woman executive

"Women are faring pretty well in the Greek business community. There are more women in mid-level management positions, but then there are few women near the general manager level."

—Greek woman executive

"In the Czech Republic, there isn't any discrimination in education, but women have lower salaries and fewer opportunities to be top managers than men do."

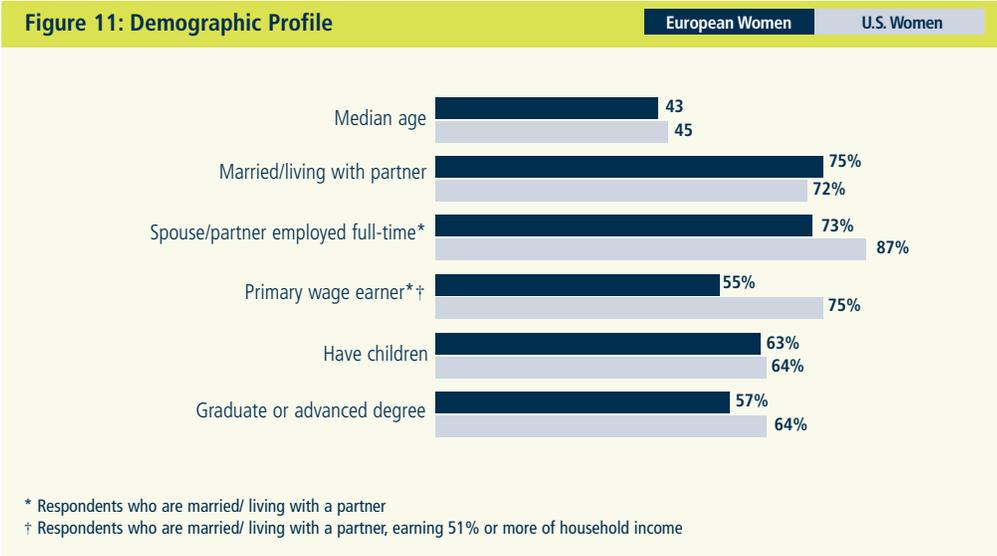
—Czech woman executive

EUROPE & US COMPARISONS

In 1996, Catalyst released the study *Women in Corporate Leadership*, which examines the success factors and barriers for women in senior management in the United States. This European study replicates some of the items from the U.S. study.

In both the U.S. and European studies, the majority of women respondents are married or living with a partner, have full-time working partners, and have children. However, compared to U.S. respondents, the European women respondents are less likely to be part of a dual-career couple and to be the primary wage earner.

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Barriers

Women in both the U.S. and European studies cite stereotyping and preconceptions of women’s roles and abilities as the number one barrier to women’s advancement. Women in both studies also point to the lack of line experience and lack of mentors as impediments.

Table 6: Top 5 Barriers To Women’s Advancement

European Women	U.S. Women
Stereotyping and preconceptions of women’s roles and abilities	Stereotyping and preconceptions of women’s roles and abilities
Lack of senior or visibly successful female role models	Exclusion from informal networks
Lack of significant general management or line experience	Lack of significant general management or line experience
Commitment to personal or family responsibilities	Inhospitable corporate culture
Lack of mentoring	Lack of mentoring

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CHAPTER 4: RECOMMENDATIONS & COMPANY EXAMPLES

The recommendations and real life examples of company efforts are a starting point for customising solutions to a specific company environment. When asked what her company is doing to advance women, one German woman sums up the sentiments expressed in interviews by declaring, "Not enough." Catalyst and The Conference Board Europe found few comprehensive programmes for women's advancement with measurable results in Europe. Therefore, we profile the way companies are grappling with these issues.

Characteristics of Successful Change Efforts:

- ✦ Motivation and rationale linked to business strategy and profitability.
- ✦ Support and leadership from the highest levels of the organisation.
- ✦ Built-in communication plan clearly stating how the programme or strategy is linked to business issues.
- ✦ Built-in accountability mechanisms to ensure employees and managers are rewarded for making change.

For more information, refer to *Advancing Women in Business: The Catalyst Guide*, Jossey-Bass, 1998.

This study suggests that gender issues are similar in large corporations and professional firms across Europe. In addition, the types of programmes and strategies to better recruit, retain, and advance women will also benefit other identity groups throughout the organisations. The key is to ensure that all talent is being developed systematically. The women in this study are taking proactive steps to manage their careers, but they cannot address the stereotypes on their own.

A comprehensive strategy to advance women includes building a company fact base, demonstrating leadership commitment, instituting a structure to ensure accountability, and educating and communicating to employees. Within a structured initiative, companies can develop tailored programmes around work/life balance, performance management, mentoring, and networks.

ADVANCING WOMEN—GETTING STARTED

1) Build a Fact Base.

Employee surveys, interviews, and focus groups are important tools to understand how women's and men's experiences in the organisation compare and what specific barriers women face. It is important to uncover what assumptions hindering women's advancement are percolating throughout the organisation. This study's findings can serve as a framework to spark a discussion between women and men in the organisation.

Elements of an Environmental Assessment:

- ✦ Analyse HR data, such as representation, hiring, turnover, and promotion.
- ✦ Gather employee input.
- ✦ Critique existing HR policies and programmes against current "best practices."

For more detailed information, refer to *Making Change: Assessing Your Work Environment*, Catalyst, 2002

Understand drivers of satisfaction and turnover for women. There is often a perception that women leave their employers to stay at home with children. Confidential exit interviews conducted by a third party can reveal the real reasons why men and women leave.

Identify organisational strengths and weaknesses. Review current workplace demographics, including trends in hiring, turnover, and promotion. Future progress can be measured against the initial data collection.

Building a Fact Base at Ernst and Young, UK

The UK practice of Ernst and Young, an accounting firm, developed a work/life initiative to address recruiting and retention issues for both women and men. The firm began by conducting focus groups, surveys, and interviews to identify work/life issues and the factors that contribute to them. Employee engagement teams were convened in various business units to facilitate information sessions, conduct surveys, and gain feedback from peers and clients. The experiences of the engagement teams were turned into case studies. Based on the assessment's findings, the firm issued a high-level position statement on its respect and support of work/life integration; designed a database to provide tools to support work/life integration at the individual, business unit, and organisational level; and re-launched the existing flexible work policy because few employees were aware of its availability. As a result of the implementation, work/life scores on the employee survey increased dramatically. The increase was attributed not only to the programmes themselves, but to the way the firm addressed the issue. According to Julia Jameson, Director of HR at Ernst & Young, LLP, "It goes to show you that you don't always have to have the answers. As long as you acknowledge the issues and are open and willing to talk about it."

2) Demonstrate Leadership Commitment to Change.

Several women interviewed describe senior-level male leaders who challenge other leaders' assumptions, raise awareness that capitalising on the talents of women is a bottom-line issue, and encourage women both professionally and in achieving work/life balance. The women respect and appreciate that support. Furthermore, 56 per cent of the women respondents cite lack of senior leadership accountability as a barrier to advancement. It is essential to engage influential leaders, particularly men who lead line businesses, to spearhead the effort. As one Swedish woman asserts, "You have to clean the stairs from the top."

Leadership Support at Accenture, UK

Accenture, a global management and technology services organisation, employs over 75,000 people across 47 countries. Diversity efforts are implemented through the various global business organisations and local geographic regions. Top-level commitment emanates from corporate headquarters, which sets global diversity targets and goals to ensure parity in various policies. Furthermore, each geographic region and global business organisation is on point to develop and execute a tailored programme based on local needs analysis. Common goals include developing the executive pipeline, representative recruitment, parity in attrition, and representative promotion rates. Gill Ryder, global Great Place to Work for Women executive sponsor and Accenture's new Chief Leadership Officer, meets regularly with senior leadership from around the world to discuss women's initiatives, raise awareness, and develop action plans for change.

3) Establish a Structure for Fostering Inclusion and Advancing Women.

Convene a team to investigate the issues, craft a strategy, and implement change. Ideally, there is an executive-level steering committee with several interlocking councils on specific constituencies (e.g., women, parents, relevant racial/ethnic groups); programmes (e.g., mentoring, work/life integration); or business units. Often, the council interfaces with an officially designated diversity or inclusion office. The team should be a partnership between human resources and influential line leaders, and represent a wide array of employees. A tiered council structure increases awareness of the issue at all levels and facilitates top-down and bottom-up communication.

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Women in Leadership: A European Business Imperative

The council can develop a sequence of goals from the immediate to the more long-term objectives. Ideally, the first goals should be quick and easy to implement so they can serve as visible platforms for continuing action on the more difficult and time intensive activities.

Institute strong managerial systems to ensure accountability and results. The steering committee should establish key metrics to track progress and refine programs as needed. Rewards and consequences can be instituted for managers based on their proven ability to recognise and develop all available talent and lead inclusive teams.

Diversity Metrics at ING Group, the Netherlands

ING is a banking, insurance, and asset management company with over 100,000 employees in 65 countries. ING has a Diversity Council made up of senior executives from around the world who advise the Executive Board on how to accelerate ING's diversity strategy. The topic of diversity—including concrete objectives—has been incorporated in all medium term planning reports. Progress against commitments is measured just like revenue, sales, customer service, etc. ING launched a Diversity Council Charter that includes the definition of diversity at ING and the council's objectives. Diversity is one of three pillars of a prestigious leadership award and is being incorporated into the curricula at their business school, which provides management and technical training for employees with management potential.

4) Build Internal Support and Awareness through Education and Communication.

Tie the initiative explicitly to a business rationale. Each organisation has to articulate the specific ways inclusion and women's advancement are linked to business objectives. The beginning of this report outlines an overarching business rationale for advancing women, which can be customised according to country or industry realities, including:

- ◆ Representation of women in the skilled labour market
- ◆ Representation of women graduates from degree programs from which the company generally recruits
- ◆ Representation of new hires who are women
- ◆ Purchasing power of women as customers or clients
- ◆ Cost of disproportionate turnover of women versus men
- ◆ Organisational need to enhance innovation and creativity by encouraging more diversity of thought and background
- ◆ Desire to be recognised as an employer of choice or a model corporate citizen

Address perception gaps and dispel myths. The number one barrier to advancement reported by women in this study is stereotypes. This barrier was virtually unrecognizable by the male respondents. It is critical to educate managers and employees on the nature of these perception gaps and provide forums to discuss how to address them. Diversity training, formal mentoring programmes, women's networks, and conferences can also facilitate dialogue on these issues.

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Raising Awareness at UBS Warburg, UK

UBS Warburg, UK, a financial services firm, conducts mandatory diversity training for senior management. The training focuses on raising awareness and understanding the business case for diversity. Objectives include getting managers to discuss the issues and develop a personal action plan to change the work environment. According to Nicola Leach, UK Diversity Manager, "The programme increases people's sensitivity to the issues or, at the very least, makes them aware that they have a commitment to do something—that it's not up to only HR or a diversity team to make a difference." Valuing diversity is part of the performance management system, and soon all employees will be required to set diversity objectives.

Changing Mindsets at IBM, EMEA.

IBM, the world's largest information technology provider, launched a Women's Executive Diversity Council in their Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) locations in 1997. The initiative focuses on eliminating barriers to women's advancement, fostering an inclusive culture, and maximising women's potential. IBM conducted focus groups, surveys, and benchmarking worldwide. Subsequently, several committees and events were launched including the annual Global Women's Leadership Conference, which aims to measure progress on women's advancement, address barriers women face, and merge the gap between the workplace and the marketplace. Global women leaders participate in a semi-annual conference call on the advancement of women.

Gayle Wiley, Director of Diversity & Leadership Recruiting for EMEA, explains that following the 2000 conference, attendees from the Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) locations determined that "Our executives and management do not believe in their hearts and minds that the advancement of women in IBM is a business imperative." A workshop—comprised of films, discussion groups, and factual data about the status of women at IBM—was designed to help participants understand the business case for women's advancement, increase awareness of different perceptions and experiences, create a culture that enables women to fully use their talent, and measure progress. The workshop is targeted to senior leadership, and both men and women participate. Men get to hear firsthand how their women peers and colleagues perceive the work environment, then the women and men work together towards a solution. Following one workshop, each senior executive committed to developing a solid developmental plan and mentoring three high-potential women. The commitments that the executive leader makes are monitored by the GM of Europe through a quarterly score card.

5) Address Work/life Balance Issues.

Examine how parental leave policies are implemented. A recurring theme in the study is that women who take advantage of the generous maternity leaves available to them believe they suffer career consequences. To alleviate this issue, some companies encourage men to also utilise leaves and sabbaticals.

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Job Coaching for Daddies, a Network for Fathers, at Telia, Sweden

Telia, a global telecommunications company, encourages men to take parental leave by increasing awareness of societal expectations that keep men from taking half of the responsibility for their children and household.

This was done in a project to focus on fathers, "Job Coaching for Daddies." The project, open to all fathers, met on-site during work time. Each participant was given assignments to explore his roles and responsibilities as a father and his relationship with the child's mother and to his work life.

By law, Swedish men and women are entitled to 80 per cent of their salaries (up to a certain level) while on parental leave for 12 months. Traditionally, men earn more money than women do, creating a financial incentive for men to continue working. As a result, Telia guarantees 90 per cent of an employee's salary (regardless of level or gender) for six months while on leave. The organisation marketed the programme on its intranet and in its company newsletter.

It is important for companies to keep women, and men, connected to the organisation during leaves.

Vacation Replacement at Siemens AG, Germany

Siemens, an electronics and electrical engineering firm, encourages parents on leave to telecommute or participate in temporary work and vacation replacement (when the employee on leave performs the job responsibilities of other employees who are on holiday). Individuals on leave are also invited to meetings and office parties, and are eligible to participate in training. The advantages of these arrangements are that the individual maintains social and psychological ties to the organisation, as well as honing job related skills through the use of training.

Provide flexible work arrangements, and support their use among managers. A common response among women interviewed is that part time and other flexible work arrangements may be available, but managers do not feel free to use them.

Flexibility at BT, UK

BT, one of the world's largest leading providers of telecommunications services, believes that employers have a responsibility to make sure their employees have balanced lives outside of work.

Out of 107,000 employees worldwide, 60,000 are able to work remotely. Currently, there are 5,000 full time home workers, 850 job shares, and 10,000 part time workers. BT also offers a "freedom to work" arrangement, which is based solely on outputs rather than where, when, and how work gets done. Employees can work from anywhere in the world, whatever time they choose (most BT buildings are open 24-hours each day) and at any location (home, various BT buildings, a colleague's house, etc.) Between 12,000 and 20,000 employees use this programme. Flexibility is available to all employees regardless of age, gender, or circumstances. Caroline Waters, Director of Employment Policy at BT Group, reports "We don't ask why. We don't make any value judgments about the need to work flexibly. We just know that an agile business creates motivated people and delighted customers."

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The benefits can be measured in all aspects of the business. For example, productivity has increased an average of 20 per cent for home workers, and 96 per cent of women return to the company after maternity leave. Also, home working enables the employment of people with disabilities, and BT has earned cost savings of £220 million in real estate and millions of miles in business travel. After BT won the 2001 Employer of the Year Award, the number of graduate applications doubled. Furthermore, morale has increased, absenteeism has decreased, and BT is able to conduct more business across time zones.

6) Evaluate Performance Management Systems for Objectivity, Inclusiveness, and Effectiveness.

Employers should examine all career development and rewards systems including compensation, performance appraisals, succession planning, and high potential identification and development. The criteria for development and advancement opportunities should be clearly delineated and communicated, with mechanisms in place to ensure that women are not being overlooked because of assumptions about their qualifications or ambitions.

Ensure that women have access to key developmental experiences. As the study demonstrates, broadening experiences, such as being on a global team or having a cross-functional assignment, is essential in many organisations for career success. Programmes do not need to be expressly developed for women; instead, an emphasis should be placed on ensuring that women are adequately represented among programme participants.

Foster professional connections for women. Lack of mentoring and role models are reported as obstacles to women's advancement. Women can cultivate professional relationships through formal mentoring programmes and women's employee networks.

Mentoring programmes can be designed and implemented internally or in partnership with other organisations.

Success Factors for Mentoring Programmes:

- ◆ Upfront planning to ensure that programme is designed to meet business needs.
- ◆ Clearly articulated programme objectives.
- ◆ Realistic expectations among participants through sufficient training.
- ◆ Leadership commitment.
- ◆ Devotion of adequate resources.

For more information on developing a mentoring programme, refer to *Mentoring: A Catalyst Guide to Programs and Practices*, 2002.

Cross-Company Mentoring Programme in Germany

In 1992, several German companies founded the Women in Business Forum in order to share ideas about advancing women in the workplace. In 1998, four of the original companies piloted a cross-company, women's mentoring programme. In 1999, the programme grew to include eight companies: Commerzbank AG, Deutsche Bank AG, Deutsche Lufthansa AG, Deutsche Telekom AG, Robert Bosch GmbH, Fraport, Merck KgaA, and Procter & Gamble GmbH. The objectives are to develop women for leadership positions, maximize the potential of women employees, improve gender equality in the work environment, create a dialogue between women from different generations and at different levels—in addition to the dialogue with men senior managers, enable benchmarking between participating companies, and position the companies as innovative employers. Three generations (totaling 120 mentees) have completed the one-year cross-mentoring programme. The next group will begin in the Fall of 2002.

In addition to the cross-company mentoring programme, Deutsche Bank and Lufthansa host multiple internal mentoring programmes that target women at different levels. Mutually beneficial relationships have developed, enabling mentors to learn more about junior women's experiences in the workplace and helping mentees to foster professional affiliations.

How to Start a Women's Network:

- ✦ Gauge interest among potential members.
- ✦ Develop a mission and objectives.
- ✦ Articulate both short-term and long-term goals.
- ✦ Determine the leadership structure.
- ✦ Build support within the company.
- ✦ Launch network and build membership.
- ✦ Evaluate the group's effectiveness.

For more information refer to Catalyst's book, *Creating Women's Networks: A How-To Guide for Women and Companies*, Jossey-Bass, 1999.

Women's networks can fulfill many roles, from showcasing women role models to advising senior leadership on issues facing women employees. Networks can also serve as a forum to surface barriers to women's advancement as well as provide career development activities.

Networking at GE, Hungary

General Electric (GE) is a diversified services, technology, and manufacturing company operating in more than 100 countries. GE has significant presence in Hungary, with 14,000 employees and \$1.1 billion invested in six businesses. The purpose of the network is to provide a forum for women to network, tools and resources for women, visibility of participants, role models, and information about the status of women. The network's activities are structured around members' needs, which surfaced in participant surveys. Members have received training on presentation skills and other career development issues. Further, senior members have offered to coach or counsel and mentor less senior members. The network also has ongoing discussions with GE's HR community to help them better understand the needs of women within the organisation. When GE's highest-ranking Hungarian woman manager presented on the network to the American Chamber of Commerce, several attending CEOs approached GE about creating their own women's network. In addition, they have developed good relationships with the scientific and business communities of the country to share GE's best practices with them.

Busygirl Network, UK.

Founded by Glenda Stone and corporate sponsor PricewaterhouseCoopers, this corporate and entrepreneurial network was launched on International Women's Day in 2000. Its mission is the economic advancement of women through business and career development. The diverse membership is comprised of over 7,500 corporate and entrepreneurial women largely from the UK. Busygirl co-sponsors events with the European Federation of Black Women Business Owners as well as with various investment banks. Speaker and networking events are held on a monthly basis. These events examine business trends and what the corporate environment is like for women. Members also form subgroups, such as an investment club, based on common interests.

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Women's Networks at Deutsche Bank, Germany, UK, and US

Various women's networks have existed at Deutsche Bank AG since 1991, differentiating themselves regionally and globally. Within Germany, the Bank sponsors eight regional women's groups. In Frankfurt, over 100 Deutsche Bank women belong to the "Women in European Business" (WEB) Network. The purpose of WEB is to further career development, networking, leadership, and business opportunities for women within and outside of the Bank. The Bank-sponsored WEB conferences are the main forums for these networking activities. Held annually since 2000, conferences have addressed the subjects of "Networks: Key to Success in a Changing World," "Balance—Key to Sustainable Success," and "An Eye to the Future." More than 1,000 participants, including female clients and Deutsche Bank employees, attend these one-day events each year. This German initiative was inspired by Deutsche Bank's US network, which launched its "Women on Wall Street®" conferences in 1995 and recently hosted 2,000 participants in New York City. Similarly, women in the UK held their inaugural WEB—London forum in January 2002, with over 800 attendees.

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APPENDIX I: SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Between July 2001 and February 2002, the questionnaire was sent to 7,500 women and 5,000 men. The 9-page, 48 question survey instrument was fielded in English. It was piloted with 10 women and men in Europe to test the clarity of language and concepts. The survey was followed up with a letter in French, German, Italian, Polish, and Spanish that was signed by the appropriate study advisor. There were two additional follow up mailings over the course of the field period. The response rates are 7 per cent for women and 3 per cent for men. Responses were received from 500 senior women and 132 senior men.

The sample was developed using a variety of sources, including a list purchased from One Stop Data, Ltd., The Conference Board's own executive database, and lists of employees from sponsor companies. The participants were drawn from companies and professional firms with more than 900 employees or 125 million Euros in sales, and with job titles of director and above. The sample included women and men from the 15 members of the European Union (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) as well as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Norway, Poland, and Switzerland. It is a stratified sample based on each country's economic size and number of senior-level women. Within each country, the participants were randomly selected.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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We thank the women and men who generously shared their experiences through the surveys and interviews.

This project was conceived under the direction of Catalyst's President, Sheila Wellington, and The Conference Board Europe's Executive Director, Andrew Tank. The study was lead by Marcia Brumit Kropf, Ph.D., Vice President of Catalyst Research and Information Services, who provided research oversight. Catalyst Research Director Meredith Moore directed all aspects of the study, conducted the interviews, and authored the report. Nicole H. Johnsen, Catalyst Research Associate, spearheaded the research into company practices and the data analysis. Karen Lyness, Ph.D., Associate Professor in the Department of Management at Baruch College, contributed to the survey design and conducted the regional data analysis. Kathrin Walther contributed her insight into German women in business by collecting secondary research and conducting best practices interviews. We are grateful to Jan Combopiano and Jackie Tyson for conducting the secondary research. Madeline Heilman, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology at New York University, provided insight into the survey design. Special thanks to Catalyst's Johanna Ramos-Boyer, Sheila Penrose, Rennie Roberts, Emma Sabin, and Jo Maitland Weiss for sharing their expertise.

Catalyst also thanks Regina Chung, who designed the finished product; Andrea Juncos, who copyedited the report; and Elizabeth McCormick, who edited and oversaw the report production process under the guidance of Nancy Guida, Vice President of Marketing and Strategy. Catalyst thanks Kathleen Farrell, who secured the Catalyst funding; Janice Swaby, who executed the media strategy; and Donya Williams, who fact checked the report.

The Conference Board thanks Janine Duchar for organizing the research conference in Berlin on 18-19 June 2002; Tamsen M. Hernandez and Henry Silvert for processing and reporting the survey data; John Gibb for arranging survey and conference mailings; Siân Tanner for providing conference direction and advice; Alex Wood for serving as a liaison with the Council network; and Sandra Lester for directing communications and European press relations.

We are indebted to our advisory board members:

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