Women in Management

The Leadership Pipeline

5 YEAR REVIEW

2015 - 2019

30% Club
GROWTH THROUGH DIVERSITY

Ibec
For Irish Business

DCU

BNY MELLON

"This five-year study makes a welcome contribution to our knowledge concerning the progress of women in the leadership hierarchy in Ireland. It is my hope that Irish organisations will continue to recognise the value of inclusive processes and cultures that support the efforts of all employees."

Professor Anne Sinnott, Executive Dean,
DCU Business School

"As sponsors of this report since 2015, BNY Mellon is pleased to see that progress has been made in improving gender balance in business leadership in Ireland. Many new and creative initiatives have been introduced in organisations since this study commenced. It would be a great legacy to see such initiatives being adopted even more widely and the impact multiplied over the coming years"

Joe Duffy, Head of Global Client Management EMEA,
BNY Mellon.

Contents

Forewords

The 30% Club Ireland was launched in 2015 and we are proud to count today on the senior leader support of 260 organisations. Our purpose is to be useful to businesses in achieving their gender balance and inclusion ambitions by providing a business-led forum for collaboration and development of best practice. We focus on raising awareness of the business benefits of gender balance; supporting businesses in their efforts to achieve balance; and work to improve the gender talent pipeline through mentoring programmes, business scholarships, board readiness and leadership development initiatives.

As business leaders, we recognise the importance of data as the life blood of organisations – ultimately what gets measured gets done. In 2015 employee data on prevailing and potential pipelines on a gender basis was scarce. Addressing this data gap was the focus of our five-year study, to both set a baseline to measure progress and to provide indicators for change. Over the five-year period we have been privileged to partner with Ibec, and Dublin City University, and we are especially grateful to our Steering Committee member Anne-Marie Taylor, who has led the survey each year, and to BNY Mellon who generously provided the financial support.

As we begin a new decade, the amount of data around gender has improved significantly. Reports from Balance for Better Business, the CSO, 30% Club sector groups, Ibec, DCU D&I Centre of Excellence and others, ensure we are better informed on data for Ireland and the progress still required. This has meant that in our fifth and final year we could take a qualitative approach and focus on what has changed within Irish organisations during the period and look to where we go next. The good news is that gender diversity is now core to the operating model for a number of organisations, with progress in the areas of agile work practices, support for family absences for men and women and prioritisation of gender initiatives for talent attraction and retention. It is also interesting to note different stages of maturity in strategy across respondents, with more

advanced organisations focusing on target setting, career structures, sponsorship and return to work programmes. It is less encouraging to note the number of organisations yet to make progress on such initiatives. This will create challenges for them in attracting and retaining new talent as these supports become the norm across competitors.

Better gender balance is now evident at middle management but we still need to drive for progress at the most senior levels within organisations. We hope this final chapter in our research will be useful to all organisations in assessing the competitive landscape in Ireland and that we can continue to deliver the range of diverse talent that will support the future success and sustainability of the Irish economy.

Rachel Hussey
Partner, Arthur Cox
Chair, 30% Club Ireland

Ibec is delighted to partner once again with the 30% Club Ireland and DCU to examine the landscape for gender balance in Ireland; what progress has been made over the last five years and what areas need more focus. Thanks to my colleagues Geraldine Anderson, Head of Research and Dr Kara McGann, Head of Social Policy for their work in supporting this initiative.

It is clear that there is no "silver bullet" or single solution to the challenge of gender balance. Change is hard and must take place simultaneously at many different levels and across various structures. The most progressive companies are shifting their focus from generating awareness to taking action on levelling the professional playing field. Our research shows a clear focus across companies of all types on implementing concrete initiatives to improve gender balance, providing supports for women in the workplace and working towards a culture that supports women's career progress.

There is no doubt that to achieve our goal of gender parity will require the continued commitment of all stakeholders and a willingness to address the structural issues in our society that resist needed change. Every major cultural, operational or strategic change in business requires commitment, and the good example of senior leadership, to be successful. Gender balance is no exception.

DCU is proud to be associated with this five-year study of the leadership pipeline as it pertains to Irish industry. It is encouraging to see the increasing inroads being made by women into the management hierarchy in Ireland, although clearly there is still some way to go. The success of efforts made in this regard in the Public Sector is to be celebrated and endorsed as a model for organisations in other sectors.

While there are many sectoral reasons for differing rates of female progression into senior management, the fact that women appear to have greater success in some fields (HR and Marketing) than others (Sales and Operations) speaks to the need for role models and better information about careers in certain fields. It may also be of value for organisations to consider how corporate culture and embedded processes and practices could be rendered more amenable to the pattern of women's careers to avoid losing highly talented women from the workforce. Thus, there is still work to be done to ensure organisations create environments where all employees can flourish and achieve their potential. In highlighting steps that organisations can take in this regard, this report is a helpful resource and a valuable contribution to work in this field. I thank Dr Melrona Kirrane and Sandra Healy for their work on this initiative and look forward to witnessing the impact of this work in Irish industry.

Danny McCoy
CEO, Ibec

Brian MacCraith
President,
Dublin City University

01

Introduction

This report is the final in a five-year series of reports by the 30% Club Ireland on women in management. Ibec has been a partner in collecting data for this report for the final three years of the study. In previous years, the reporting focussed on measuring the female management pipeline in companies.

In this year's report, we provide analysis of that female pipeline over the five years of the study, as well as taking a more holistic view of diversity and inclusion strategies over the period. Our objective is to determine the extent of change in gender diversity and inclusion activity and focus across a broad range of companies.

The area of diversity and inclusion has been receiving increasing attention as internal interest and external pressure combine to emphasise its importance. Studies have identified a strong association between gender diversity and a range of positive organisational outcomes. Benefits include increased profits and return on equity;

improved corporate governance; increased innovation and creativity while also yielding higher quality decisions and problem-solving. Yet while much progress has been made in putting women and men on an equal footing in the workplace, today in Ireland as in Europe, women continue to be under-represented in corporate and political life. The reports of the Balance for Better Business Review Group have clearly shown the extent of gender imbalance in corporate Ireland. Many global leaders have embraced the issue and furthering the economic engagement of women at all levels of the organisation has become a business priority in many countries.

"We have increased our revenue by 20% over the last 2 years with our women in leading roles"

Company 1, Aerospace industry

02

Summary Findings

The survey was distributed in September / October 2019 to a broad sample of Ibec and 30% Club Ireland members. A total of 350 responses were received from a variety of organisation sizes, activities and locations. Full details on the profile of respondent organisations can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.

Almost half of respondent organisations indicated that opportunities for women have improved in the last five years. This is reflected in the data which shows that the proportion of women in corporate leadership has increased at every level of the management hierarchy. However, women continue to be significantly under-represented, particularly at the most senior levels.

Almost all respondent organisations reported some level of commitment to a diversity and inclusion agenda, which is a marked improvement on 2015, but the levels of progress and maturity vary. The greatest area of improvement is in the provision of diversity and inclusion initiatives with a particular focus on modern workplace supports and better management around family absence. Organisations with a more mature diversity agenda show a strong emphasis on career and talent pipeline.

One in ten respondents reported difficulties in implementing gender balance initiatives within their organisations, with lack of funding and buy-in from senior management cited as the most common barriers.

The findings in relation to specific initiatives are summarised on the following pages.

D+I Policies and other supports

- One in six respondents (16%) have had a formal diversity and inclusion policy in place for over five years, with a further 30% implementing a formal policy more recently. However, together these account for fewer than half the respondents.

- The same pattern applies to a range of other policies and supports, such as maternity coaching, employee resource networks, dedicated D&I lead, formal mentoring / sponsorship / career progression programmes for women, and career returner programmes, which have all become more prevalent in the last five years. However, half to two-thirds of organisations have no plans to introduce such supports. This may be influenced by the fact that the survey respondents include a mix of organisations of differing sizes, and some initiatives may be a lower priority in smaller organisations with more informal structures.
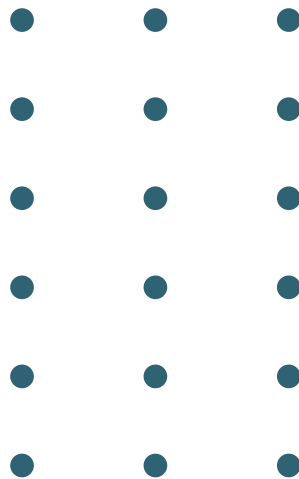
Training

- Engagement in training on diversity and inclusion is significantly more likely to have taken place in the last five years than previously, including training for HR staff and interviewers, as well as unconscious bias training.

Metrics

- There is a significant increase in the number of organisations focussing on measurement, with gender data being collected on promotion rates, attrition rates and reasons for leaving, as well as numbers availing of flexible working arrangements and parental leave.

- Given the upcoming introduction of gender pay gap reporting, it is not surprising to see an increased focus on tracking pay levels by grade and gender (from 6% to 38% over the last five years).

Recruitment

- The most significant change in this area in the last five years has been in the percentage of organisations now examining the language of their job descriptions and advertisements for gender bias (from 12% to 43%).

- Somewhat surprisingly, only 27% of respondents actively seek balanced shortlists at recruitment.

Leave and childcare

- Topped-up maternity leave has been in place in almost half of organisations for more than five years (45%) and has been implemented in a further 22% of respondent organisations in the last five years.

- Paternity leave has seen a substantial increase in popularity from 19% to 54% over the five years.

Flexible working arrangements

- Organisations are highly likely to offer some form of flexibility to employees. Flexible start and finish times are in place in almost nine out of ten respondent

organisations. Part-time work and working from home are available in around three out of four organisations. Job sharing is available in around one third of respondent organisations, with term time working available in around one in seven organisations.

Targets

- The majority of organisations (75%) do not have targets for gender representation. Of those with targets in place, only (38%) communicate information about their organisations targets publicly. Just over a quarter (27%) include gender representation measures as a people requirement on their balanced scorecard and 43% held senior leaders accountable for the achievement of gender targets. Among those with targets in place, they were set for CEOs (50%), heads of function (68%), and senior management (59%).

03

Key Changes in the Last Five Years

In the last five years we have seen progress in the representation of women in organisations in Ireland. Since this survey series commenced in 2015, the number of women in corporate leadership has grown at every level of the management hierarchy. Although this is a positive step in the right direction, women continue to be underrepresented at every level relative to men.

Figure 1. Women in Management by Level
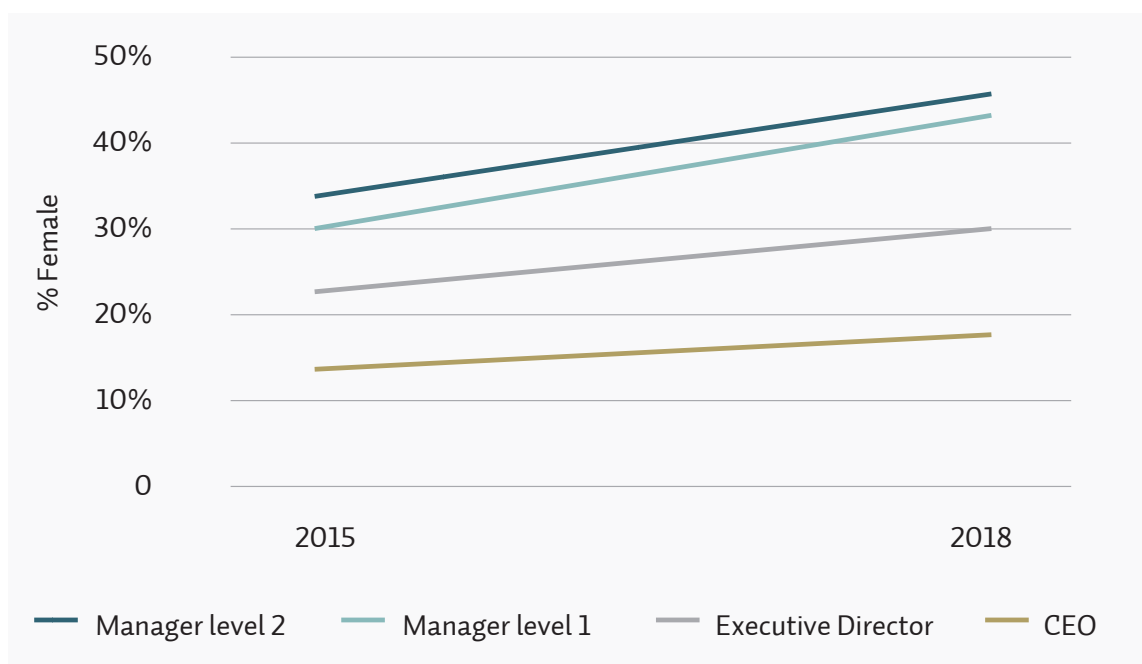
For almost half the respondent organisations (48%), opportunities for females within their organisation improved over the last five years. However, in a similar proportion of respondent organisations, opportunities for females have not changed within the last five years.
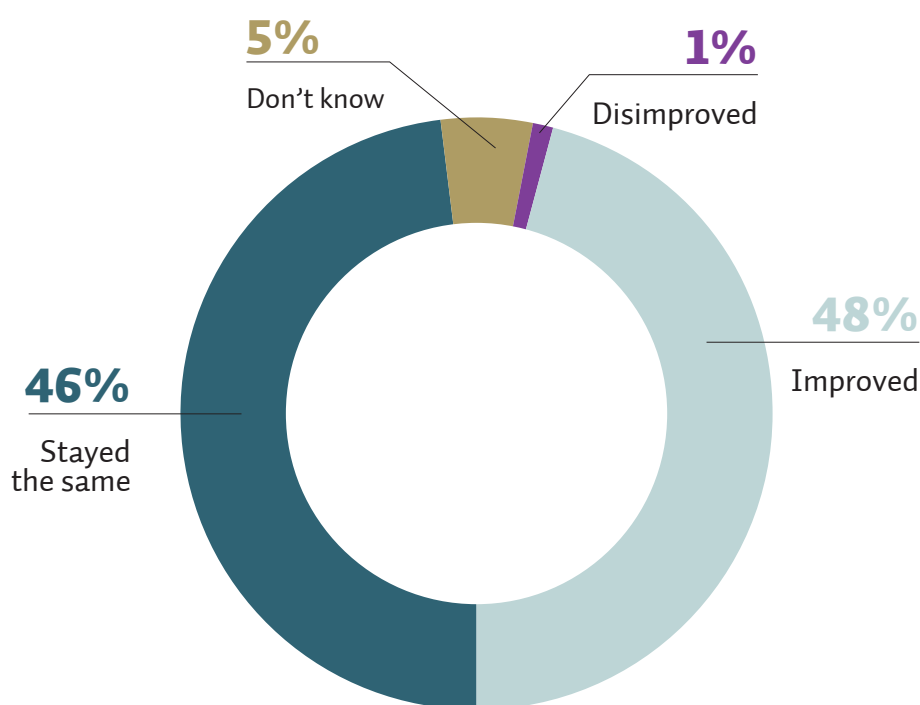
Overall, would you say that opportunities for women have improved over the last five years within your organisation?

5%
Don't know

1%
Disimproved

48%
Improved

46%
Stayed
the same

To complement the five-year review, the survey this year focussed on the development of diversity and inclusion strategies and initiatives over the period. Where organisations believed that opportunities for women had improved in the preceding five years, the average number of initiatives in place was 10, while it was half that for organisations where opportunities had stayed the same.

While this does not prove that all initiatives are successful, it does point to a situation where improvements are seen to occur if an organisational focus exists. Of course, some organisations have had initiatives in place for a long time so they may have stayed at the same level of excellence in the last five years.

Later sections analyse in more detail the specific initiatives that organisations have introduced in the last five years. It

is clear that, except for maternity leave top-up, initiatives are significantly more likely to have been implemented in the last five years, than to have existed previously.

Around a third of respondent organisations have introduced topped up paternity leave (35%), a formal diversity and inclusion policy (30%), diversity and inclusion training for HR staff (33%) and for interviewers (31%), and unconscious bias training (30%) in the last five years.

A small minority have gender proofed their supply chain procurement policies (7%). We expect to see this area grow given the increased focus by many investors on diversity and inclusion and the introduction of diversity and inclusion clauses into many tender documents. Career returner programmes saw an increase from 4% to 7% over the period.

Initiatives by Implementation Period

Initiative	In place over 5 years	Implemented in last 5 years	Under consideration	No	Don't know/NA
Topped up maternity leave	45%	22%	5%	25%	3%
Topped up paternity leave	19%	35%	7%	37%	2%
A formal diversity and inclusion policy	16%	30%	21%	32%	1%
Training for HR staff in diversity and inclusion	9%	33%	21%	35%	2%
Training for interviewers in diversity and inclusion	8%	31%	22%	36%	3%
Maternity Coaching/Keep in Touch programmes	7%	16%	17%	54%	6%
A dedicated diversity and inclusion lead for the organisation	6%	24%	12%	56%	2%
Employee Resource or Diversity Network Groups in-house	6%	23%	10%	56%	3%
Paid parental leave	6%	10%	9%	72%	3%
Unconscious bias training	5%	30%	16%	44%	5%
Career returners programme (for those on extended >2 years leave from organisation)	4%	7%	16%	61%	12%
Gender proofed supply chain procurement policies	3%	4%	9%	68%	16%
Contribution to childcare costs	1%	2%	3%	92%	3%

Legend: In place over 5 years · Implemented in last 5 years · Under consideration · No · Don't know/NA

D+I Policies and other supports

Only one in six respondents (16%) had a formal diversity and inclusion policy in place five years ago, but a further 30% had implemented such a policy more recently. However, together these still only account for less than half of all respondent organisations.

The same pattern emerges in relation to many other initiatives. Having just been in place in a small percentage of organisations five years ago, they have become much more prevalent over the last five years, in particular:
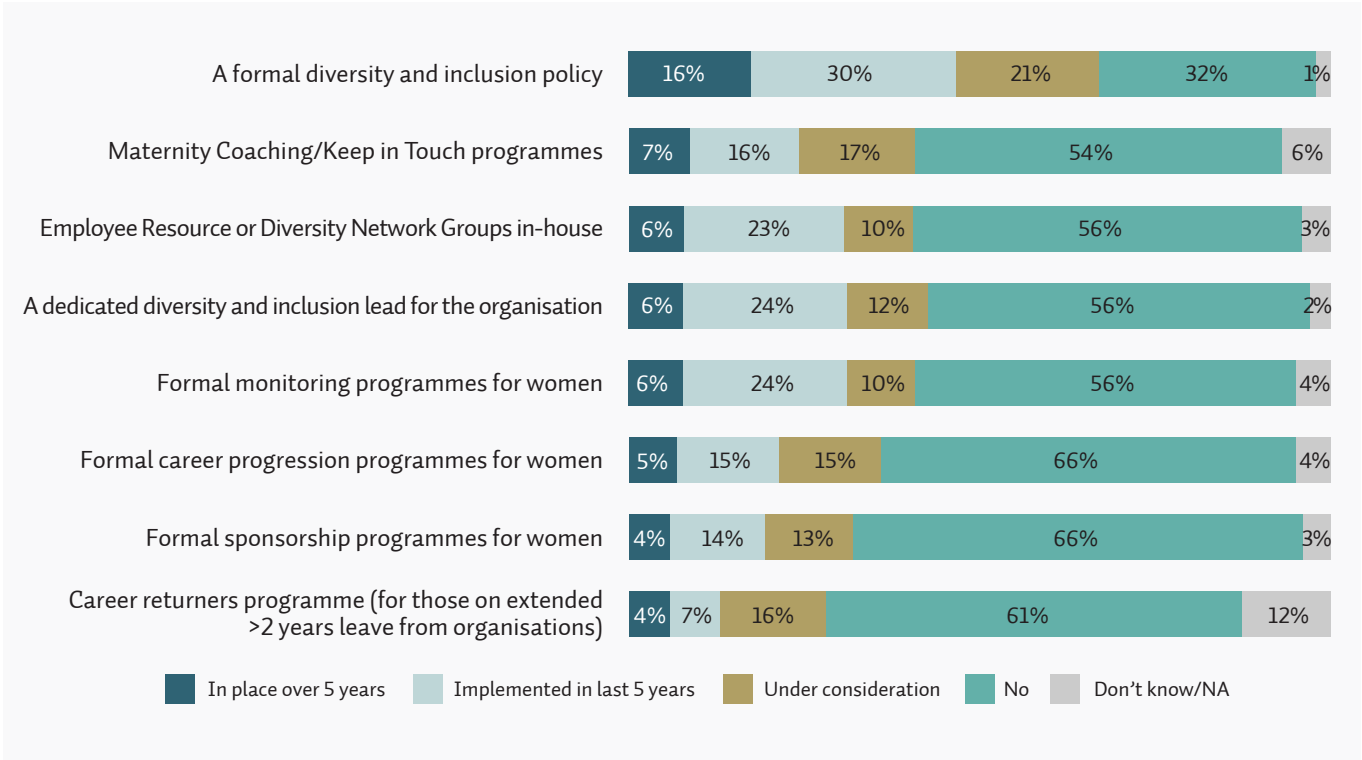
- maternity coaching/keep-in-touch programmes (from 7% to 23%)
- employee resource or diversity network groups in-house (from 6% to 29%)
- a dedicated diversity and inclusion lead (from 6% to 30%)
- formal mentoring programmes for women (from 6% to 30%)
- formal career progression programmes for women (from 5% to 20%)
- sponsorship programmes for women (from 4% to 18%)
- career returner programmes (from 4% to 11%).

Many respondents who currently do not have such policies indicated that they are considering their introduction in the future. However, somewhat surprisingly, for most of the initiatives listed, the majority of respondents had no plans for their introduction, although this could be because the survey respondents represent organisations of varying sizes. Smaller, more flexible organisations may not have the scale to warrant the full range of formal policies and initiatives that larger organisations have in place.

The popularity of maternity coaching and keep-in-touch programmes is supported by research which shows that many organisations experience a loss of female talent following maternity leave or an unsuccessful return from leave. When the causes of this attrition were examined, often the issue was one of confidence or a concern regarding how commitments inside and outside the organisation would be managed. Some women complained of changed attitudes towards them following return and/or being overlooked as no longer career-focused or ambitious. The introduction of maternity coaching has been very helpful in ensuring that individuals explore the transition from maternity and paternity leave to work, effectively meet the challenges created and maintain performance levels and a balance between working and family lives.

It is somewhat surprising that career returners programmes are not more popular with respondents given that they have been identified as successful ways for experienced talent to re-enter the workplace. People move out of the workforce for many different reasons, such as redundancy, career change or a move to family care roles. A return to work is typically activated by a desire to regain professional ambition or commit to a renewed career goal. Yet such transitions can trigger self-doubt, a crisis of confidence and a loss of professional identity and thus may benefit from a structured programme to support successful return.

	In place over 5 years	Implemented in last 5 years	Under consideration	No	Don't know/NA
A formal diversity and inclusion policy	16%	30%	21%	32%	1%
Maternity Coaching/Keep in Touch programmes	7%	16%	17%	54%	6%
Employee Resource or Diversity Network Groups in-house	6%	23%	10%	56%	3%
A dedicated diversity and inclusion lead for the organisation	6%	24%	12%	56%	2%
Formal monitoring programmes for women	6%	24%	10%	56%	4%
Formal career progression programmes for women	5%	15%	15%	66%	4%
Formal sponsorship programmes for women	4%	14%	13%	66%	3%
Career returners programme (for those on extended >2 years leave from organisations)	4%	7%	16%	61%	12%

Career returners also feature in various government strategies developed in the last five years such as the National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017-2020. Minister Regina Doherty also plans to introduce a returner programme in early 2020 aimed at women who have been inactive in the workforce for family reasons. Such initiatives have been introduced in many European countries primarily focusing on financial services, consulting and STEM. Ibec's technology sector has developed a national programme, Women ReBoot aimed at attracting qualified women back into the ICT sector.

The low uptake of sponsorship programmes is also surprising given that many commentators believe sponsorship is a significant support for women's careers. While mentoring and development programmes may provide advice or guidance for a woman in her role, sponsorship involves a proven leader acting as an advocate for that woman and connecting her with opportunities and experience. Sponsors help identify goals, set expectations, engaging women in their career and ensuring obstacles are removed.
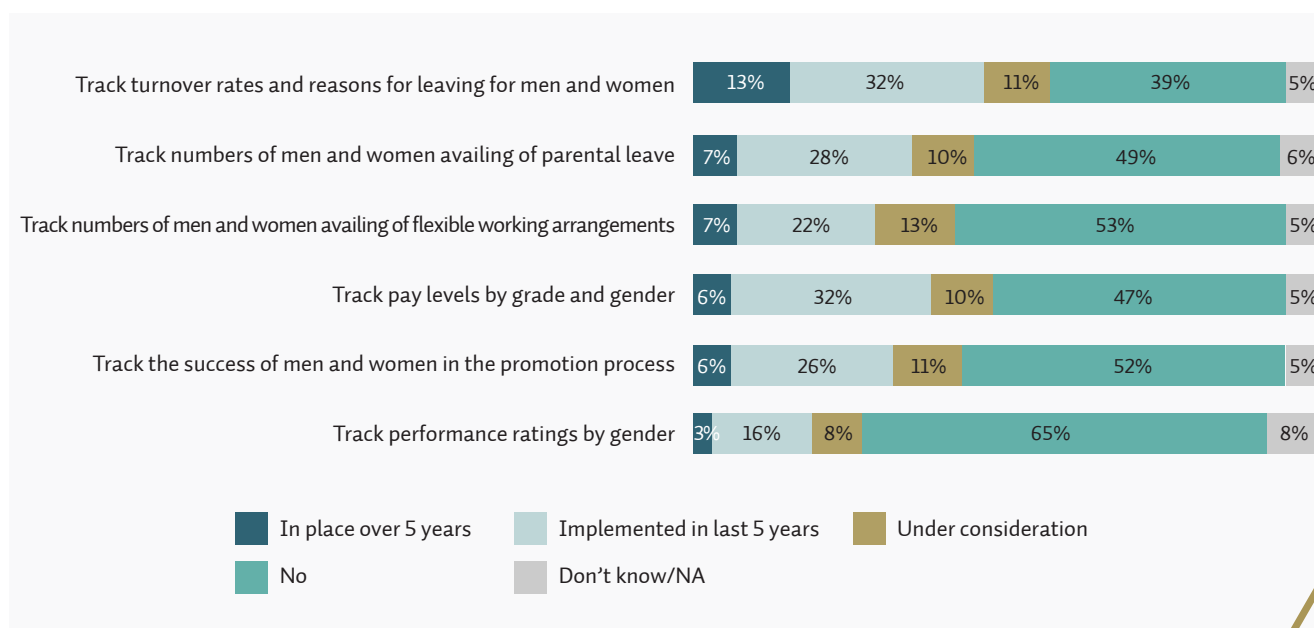
Metrics

There is a much greater focus by employers on monitoring data and gathering metrics in recent years. Data on men and women is collected on promotion rates, attrition rates and reasons for leaving as well as numbers availing of flexible working arrangements and parental leave. Given that gender pay gap reporting is due to be introduced shortly in Ireland it is unsurprising to see a very significant increase in the number tracking pay levels by grade and gender (from 6% to 38%).

Many of these metrics help to form a picture within the organisation of obstacles or barriers to progression that may be in place for men or women. If such metrics are used correctly, they can generate understanding of how different policies or practices may impact the progression of women within the organisation and give rise to actions to address this.

The tracking of turnover rates by gender is the most likely metric to have been in existence longer than five years (13%) and also one of the most likely to have been implemented in the last five years (32%).

Relatively few organisations track performance ratings by gender (19%) and there appears to be little interest in doing so in the future. However, research indicates that most performance evaluations are biased[1] so this may be another area of measurement for organisations to consider.

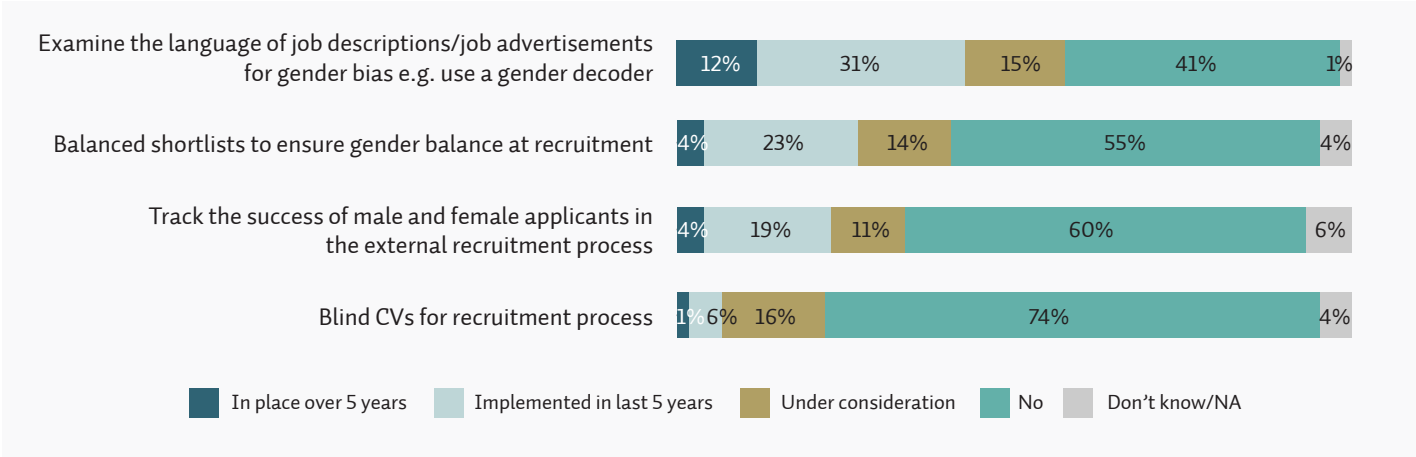|	In place over 5 years	Implemented in last 5 years	Under consideration	No	Don't know/NA
Track turnover rates and reasons for leaving for men and women	13%	32%	11%	39%	5%
Track numbers of men and women availing of parental leave	7%	28%	10%	49%	6%
Track numbers of men and women availing of flexible working arrangements	7%	22%	13%	53%	5%
Track pay levels by grade and gender	6%	32%	10%	47%	5%
Track the success of men and women in the promotion process	6%	26%	11%	52%	5%
Track performance ratings by gender	3%	16%	8%	65%	8%

1 | Mackenzie et al. 2019

Recruitment

There has been a significant increase in the number of organisations examining the language of job descriptions and job advertisements. Five years ago, one in eight (12%) organisations engaged in such a practice. Now 43% do so. Language plays a key part in whether a role appeals to males and females.

The use of stereotypical male or masculine toned language such as "drive, competitive, aggressive" can turn female candidates away from a role, whereas the introduction of stereotypically female or feminine toned terms such as "collaborative, intuitive, catalyst" can change it to a gender neutral description, attracting both men and women. There are various tools available to support employers in achieving gender neutral descriptions such as the Gender Decoder and Textio.

Furthermore, research finds that women often will not put themselves forward for a role unless they have all the required competences or skills while men typically will apply with only some of the requisite skills and competences[2]. Sometimes job descriptions contain requirements that are carried over without questioning their appropriateness. There is, therefore, a need for language within job descriptions and essential requirements to be reviewed if greater gender balance within applications is desired. It is somewhat disappointing that over half of respondents to this survey (57%) do not currently engage in this practice of examining recruitment language.

	In place over 5 years	Implemented in last 5 years	Under consideration	No	Don't know/NA
Examine the language of job descriptions/job advertisements for gender bias e.g. use a gender decoder	12%	31%	15%	41%	1%
Balanced shortlists to ensure gender balance at recruitment	4%	23%	14%	55%	4%
Track the success of male and female applicants in the external recruitment process	4%	19%	11%	60%	6%
Blind CVs for recruitment process	1%	6%	16%	74%	4%

2 | Mohr, 2014

"We are very open to female participation – it is of considerable frustration when women of talent self-select to take a back seat as contrasted with their male colleagues who are more focused on career progression and client service"

Company 2 Law Firm

Some respondents in the survey questioned whether the issue of gender imbalance lies with women themselves who fail to go forward for roles or promotions. Such comments beg the question as to why women may not apply for particular roles, and perhaps point to the need to review whether there is something about the process that is less encouraging for women than men. Aside from language and perceived capacity to do the job, women may fail to apply for roles for several other reasons, including difficulties around managing caring responsibilities along with work commitments; a lack of female role models, or the culture that exists within the organisation, which may be signalled during the recruitment process. Research also tells us that ensuring that recruiters have a diverse slate of candidates is essential to driving change at every level. If two or more women are included in the short list of candidates for a position, the likelihood of a female being successful in attaining the position rises significantly[3].

It is important in creating a pipeline of female management talent that barriers do not exist to female entry or progression within the organisation. To this end, balanced shortlists for interview and tracking metrics on female application and success rate at recruitment are critical. While these initiatives have become more popular in the last five years, still only about a quarter of respondents have implemented them to date. A very small number of organisations (6%) have implemented blind CVs as a way to eliminate recruitment bias.

In some industries, the pipeline is severely impacted by subject provision in second level schools. Higher level science subjects and mechanical drawing, for example, may not be available in girls' schools while home economics may not be available in boys' schools, or a gendered curriculum may exist in mixed schools. Even where the subject choice is available, girls may not choose STEM subjects, for a variety of reasons, such as parental influence on career choice. This narrows subject choice for further education and career choices overall very early on, which has particular ramifications, for example, in industries that rely on graduates with STEM capabilities.

"The biggest challenge for our organisation is the low participation rate of women taking up STEM related subjects in secondary school and university"

Company 3, Pharmaceutical Sector
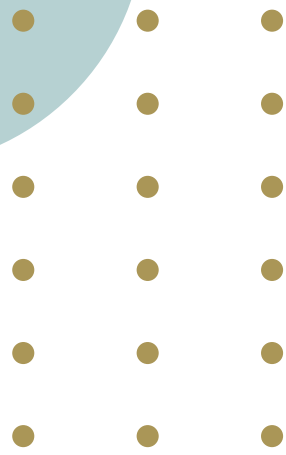
Case Study

Building an integrated D&I Plan - Hovione
Members of the 30% Club Pharma Group

Our commitment to driving a programme of diversity and inclusion in our business is led from the very top team, which itself is gender balanced at 50:50. Our programme over the last few years has required attention and focus on a number of priorities, all of which are designed to work together. We improved balance in job applicants by engaging with the institutions from which we take placements and actively seeking more female applicants. As a result of student placements now 50% of our Process Engineers are female. At senior leadership level, we make our recruitment agencies aware that we want a diverse pool of candidates. To help build the pipeline of female STEM candidates we encourage local girls' schools to visit our company and check out the types of careers available.

Internally we have a strong record of coaching, mentoring and sponsorship of high potential employees. Women are often not as vocal about their achievements as their male counterparts or are more reluctant to put themselves forward for opportunities so we reach into the business and identify female candidates and encourage them, giving them visible projects and setting them up for success. Two years ago we supported the development of an external four-day programme that brings high potential females from a range of companies together to network, develop their confidence, presentation and various other skills, thereby supporting their leadership development.

We still have work to do in placing more women into our engineering roles and also more men into our QA Specialists area. We don't set targets as we don't feel we need to – with strong support from the senior leadership team there is no issue with commitment to gender balance which is a constant on the agenda. We challenge unconscious biases and pre-conceived ideas or assumptions on stereotypes. Processes and decisions around recruitment, promotion and development stage are continuously assessed for objective outcomes.

We are very proud of our achievements to date. When we present to our customers we talk about our great technologies, our great team and the fact that gender balance and cultural diversity are hallmarks of our company.
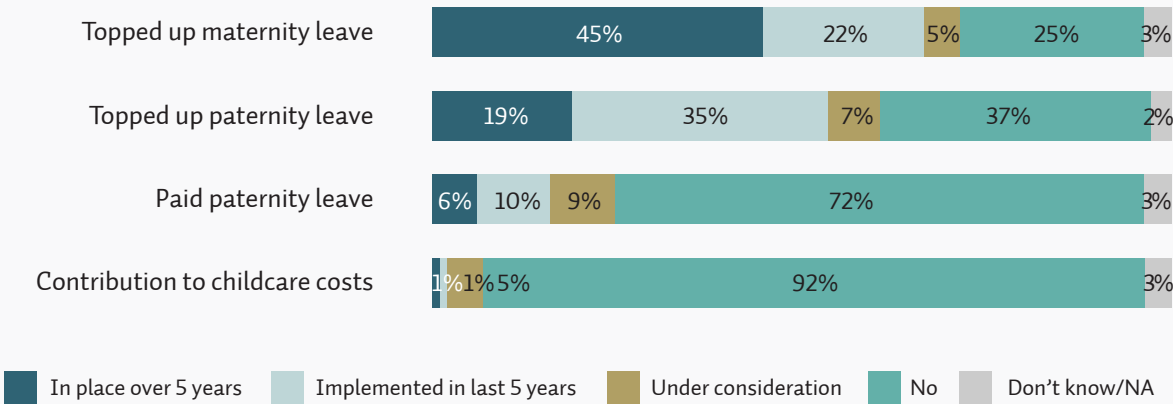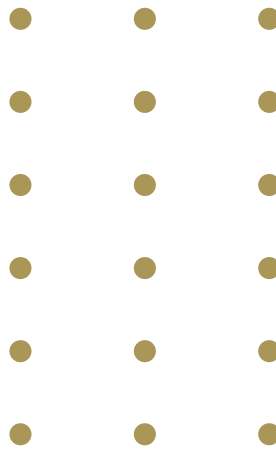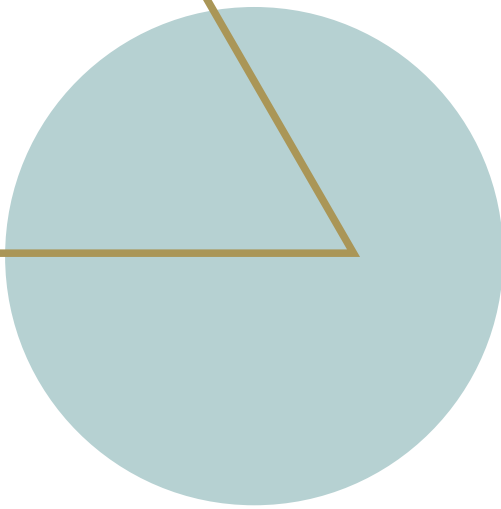
Leave and Childcare

Top-ups to maternity and paternity leave payments are relatively widespread in respondent organisations and generally have been in place over a longer period of time than other D&I initiatives. While it is heartening to note the significant increase in the number of organisations which have introduced topped-up paternity leave in the last five years (35%), it is surprising that a quarter of organisations have no plans to introduce topped-up maternity leave and two out of five have no plans for topped-up paternity leave.

Paid parental leave is less common, in place in around one sixth of organisations (16%), an increase of just ten percentage points in the last five years. Very few organisations either currently contribute to, or would consider contributing to, childcare costs (5%).

The cost of early childhood care in Ireland for parents is among the highest in Europe and directly impacts labour market participation. It is a barrier for families across a range of salary levels, not just those on lower incomes. For households with children, childcare costs represent the largest additional costs associated with taking up employment. The implicit cost of returning to work amounts to 90% of potential earnings in Ireland, compared with 57% in the OECD (National Competitiveness Council 2016 "Ireland's Competitiveness Scorecard"). The impact of these costs can result in a parent, usually the mother, reducing their work pattern or indeed leaving the workplace for a period of time.

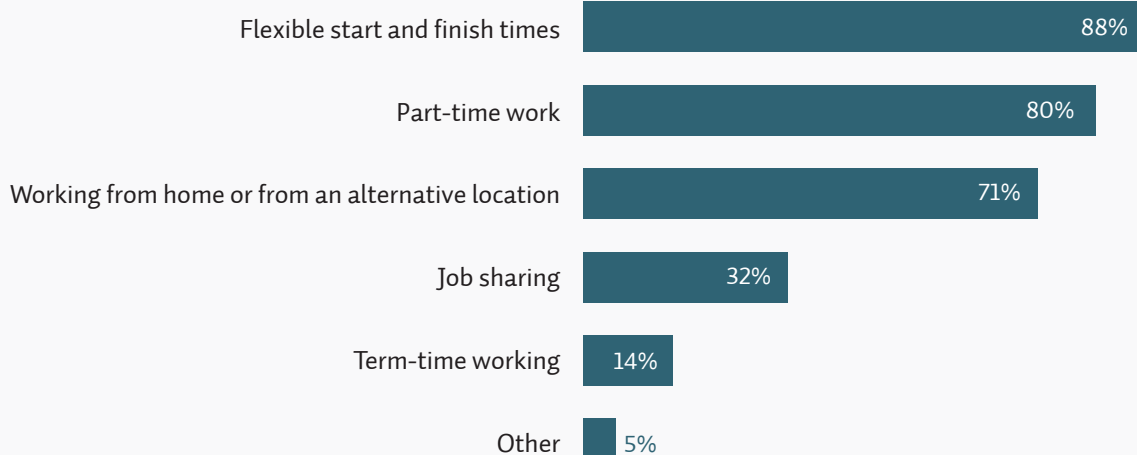|	In place over 5 years	Implemented in last 5 years	Under consideration	No	Don't know/NA
Topped up maternity leave	45%	22%	5%	25%	3%
Topped up paternity leave	19%	35%	7%	37%	2%
Paid paternity leave	6%	10%	9%	72%	3%
Contribution to childcare costs	1%	1%	5%	92%	3%

Flexible Working Arrangements

Flexible working arrangements have been identified as one important means of balancing work and other commitments. Organisations are highly likely to offer some form of flexibility to employees. Flexible start and finish times are in place in almost nine out of ten respondent organisations (88%). This is a significant finding as often flexibility around the margins facilitates individuals successfully delivering at work when emergencies like a sick child or parent arise.

Part-time work is available in four out of five organisations (80%) and working from home in 71% of organisations. Job sharing was available in around one third of respondent organisations, with term time working available in around one in seven organisations. Other flexible working arrangements identified by respondents include career

breaks, compressed working hours, flexibility in availing of parental leave, school hours based in office, but ability to work at home outside of school hours, facilitation of working from home on an ad hoc basis and time off/time out policies.

It is worth noting that the data refers to the availability of the arrangement within the organisation, and not to the take-up levels for either men or women. This is an important distinction because an excellent flexible working policy can be undermined by an organisation's culture if the initiative is seen only to apply to working mothers or those not serious about their career progression, rather than something that is not alone open to all, but actively encouraged, at every level of the organisation.

Flexible start and finish times	88%
Part-time work	80%
Working from home or from an alternative location	71%
Job sharing	32%
Term-time working	14%
Other	5%

Case Study

Work Life Balance – Deloitte
30% Club Supporters and members of the
30% Club Professional Services Group

As part of our commitment to diversity and inclusion, we launched a "Time Out" Programme to allow any employee, regardless of seniority, to apply for a one-month unpaid leave of absence. The absence can be taken for any reason, or to pursue any interest.

The primary aim of the programme is to improve engagement, helping people at Deloitte to explore other aspects of their lives for a period, without any impact on their current benefits or career progression. It also offers an opportunity for people who may not have entitlements to the range of parental or maternity leaves, to also have the option to take some time out of the workplace.

We try to ensure that any potential challenges or difficulties are identified and dealt with at the outset. People applying for the programme discuss it with their manager and agree how their work would be covered during their absence. If we can't grant an application in a specific timeframe, for example if we have multiple applications from the same team, then we commit to accommodating the request in the next available timeframe.

We launched the programme with a comprehensive communications campaign, which included a message of support from the CEO. So far, 35 employees, including members of senior management, have availed of the programme and their stories are widely shared across the organisation showing the wide variety of reasons for taking it, including travel, family reasons and further education. The sharing of stories inspires other colleagues to consider the option. The fact that senior management have also availed of the programme ensures that it is 'safe' for more junior colleagues to engage.

The programme has achieved the objective of improving employee engagement and has been very successful in helping men and women alike to create new opportunities for themselves. We continue to consider new initiatives, supporting greater work life balance, as core to Deloitte's inclusion agenda.

Targets

The majority of organisations (75%) do not have targets for gender representation. However, a number have attached targets to the performance evaluation of leaders, or quarterly scorecards of senior managers.

Around one in five respondents had set targets for gender representation (19%). Of the 63 organisations that had targets in place:

- Almost two out of five (38%) communicate information about their targets publicly
- Just over a quarter (27%) include gender representation measures as a people requirement on their balanced scorecard
- Just over two out of five (43%) held senior leaders accountable for the achievement of gender targets.

Among those with targets in place, they were set for CEOs (50%), heads of function (68%), and senior management (59%). Targets were set at middle management level in two out of five organisations.

One organisation highlighted how they have successfully used targets and achieved greater gender balance in recruitment in the past but their experience pointed out the problem that can occur if culture change is not achieved alongside the targets, as once the "stick" is removed the behaviour reverts.

"Targets with regard to hiring 5 years ago had a significant impact. These targets have since been removed and we have fallen down in our gender hiring since."

Company 4, Financial Services Sector

Organisations need to do more to implement their commitment to gender balance and treat it like the business imperative that it is. This requires concrete actions like setting diversity targets and publicising diversity metrics across the organisation as relevant to all. It is essential to hold managers accountable in this area, as we know that what gets measured and rewarded gets done. Failing to hold managers accountable enables decisions to be made using the same factors that created the situation in the first place and can result in reliance on unconscious bias and "the way we've always done things" to justify decisions. Instead connecting performance evaluations and rewards to targets focuses managers on activating more objective measures to support their decisions.

The focus on setting targets is also supported by the Government's initiative, Balance for Better Business, an independent business-led review group tasked with improving gender balance in the governance and senior leadership of companies in Ireland. This will be achieved through the introduction of progressive targets to 2023 for the boards and leadership teams of publicly listed companies and large private companies, and the leadership teams of multinationals. Since the launch of the initiative in 2018, the percentage of women on Irish publicly-listed boards has increased from 14% to 19%. By 2023 the intention is for 33% of the board members on the largest listed companies (ISEQ 20) to be female (up from 18% in 2018) and 25% on other listed companies (up from 9.6% in 2018).

Does your organisation set targets for gender representation?

6% Don't know

19% Yes

75% No
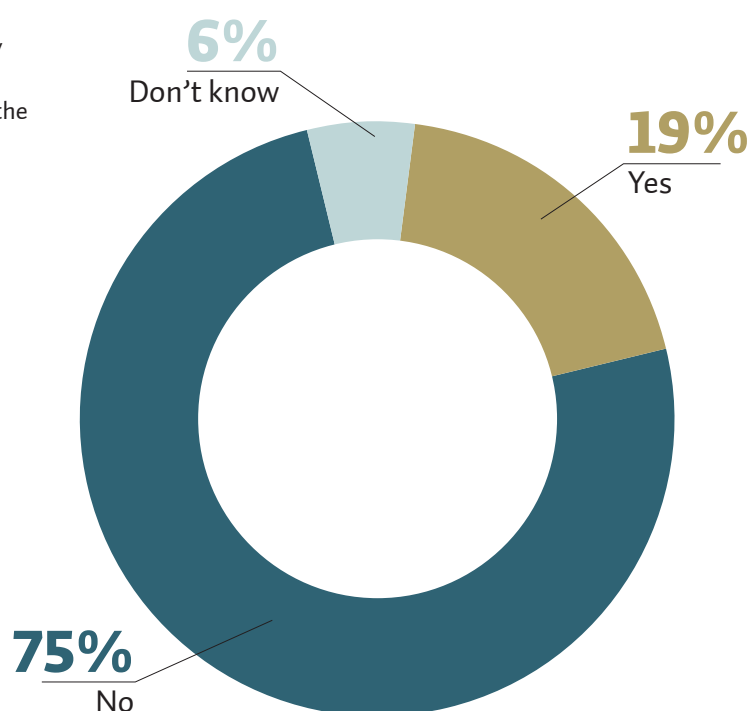
Importance of culture

An important area of focus for organisations is on the creation of an overall culture where all contributions are valued regardless of the gender or other characteristics of the contributor. The case study on the following page outlines the efforts of the Central Bank to create just such a culture, in tandem with a number of D&I initiatives, to provide an environment where the right mindset and behaviours are promoted, supported and championed by senior management.

Case Study

Shaping Culture to Build Inclusion - the Central Bank of Ireland
Supporters of the 30% Club

There were a number of drivers for our growing focus on diversity and inclusion, including the changing demographics of Ireland, reflections on the lessons learned from the financial crisis, particularly in relation to the role that groupthink and insufficient challenge played across the financial system and beyond; and our desire to harness the rich benefits that difference can bring. We created a vision and action plan for future diversity in the organisation, with an emphasis on shaping culture based on **inclusion**. For us, that means creating an environment grounded in fairness and respect where everyone can thrive and maximise what they can bring to the workplace.

Gender is just one dimension of our focus on diversity, and we are already in a strong position with women in over 40% of leadership roles and nearly 50% of total roles. Our second Gender Pay Gap Report in 2019 showed a 2.4% gap in favour of men, down 0.3% from 2018.

The senior executive team are strong believers in D&I and communicate frequently and genuinely about its importance. On a practical level, our leaders are encouraged to involve people in decision-making, ensure that meetings are run in a way that encourages contribution and constructive challenge, to ensure that all team members have a voice and opportunities for development. To support our leaders in doing this, an Inclusive Leadership module has been included in our Leadership Development Programme. A pre and post programme 360 feedback survey, as well as inclusion indicators in our employee engagement survey, help us to measure progress and the effectiveness of our actions over time.

In addition to supporting our own workforce, the Central Bank also focuses on diversity across the financial services sector. We expect the firms we regulate to meaningfully address diversity and inclusion in the boardroom, at the executive level and the pipeline of talent needed to run the organisation in the long-term.

Over the next few years, we plan to focus on understanding more about what inclusion means in practice, providing the training, supports and resources for all our people to ensure that behavioural change is being embedded, and that good, inclusive practices are happening across the organisation.

"Building diversity is really important but without inclusion it is not enough. It would be a lost opportunity which many organisations, like ourselves, cannot afford."

Have you had any difficulty implementing gender balance initiatives in your organisation?

13%
Yes

33%
Don't know

54%
No
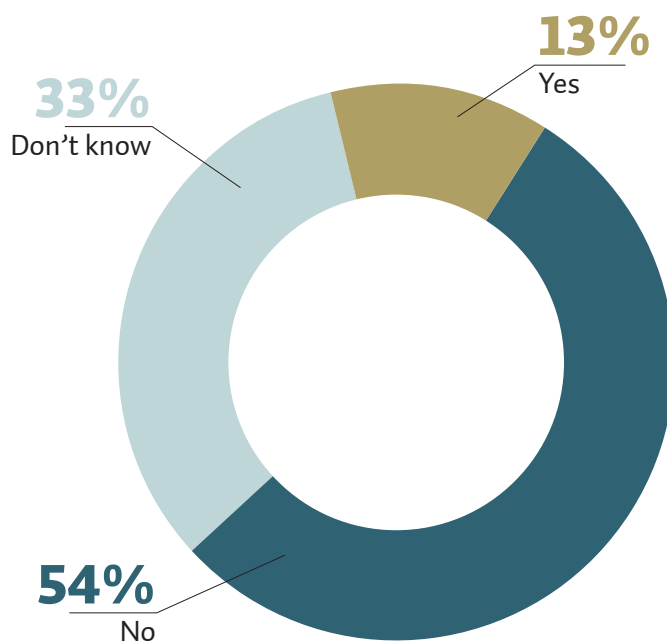
Barriers to Implementation

A small percentage of respondents (just over one in ten) indicated they had difficulties implementing gender balance initiatives within their organisations. They cited lack of funding and buy-in from senior management and line management as the most common barriers. Another barrier identified was that of attracting female applicants for available roles as discussed in the recruitment section of this report.

Barriers to implementation

2%

26%

50%

5%

3%

8%

3%

3%

- Buy-in from senior management
- Buy-in from line managers
- Buy-in from staff
- Difficulty attracting female job applicants
- Culture of organisation does not support gender initiatives
- Lack of company policies to support
- Lack of funding for supporting initiatives
- Other
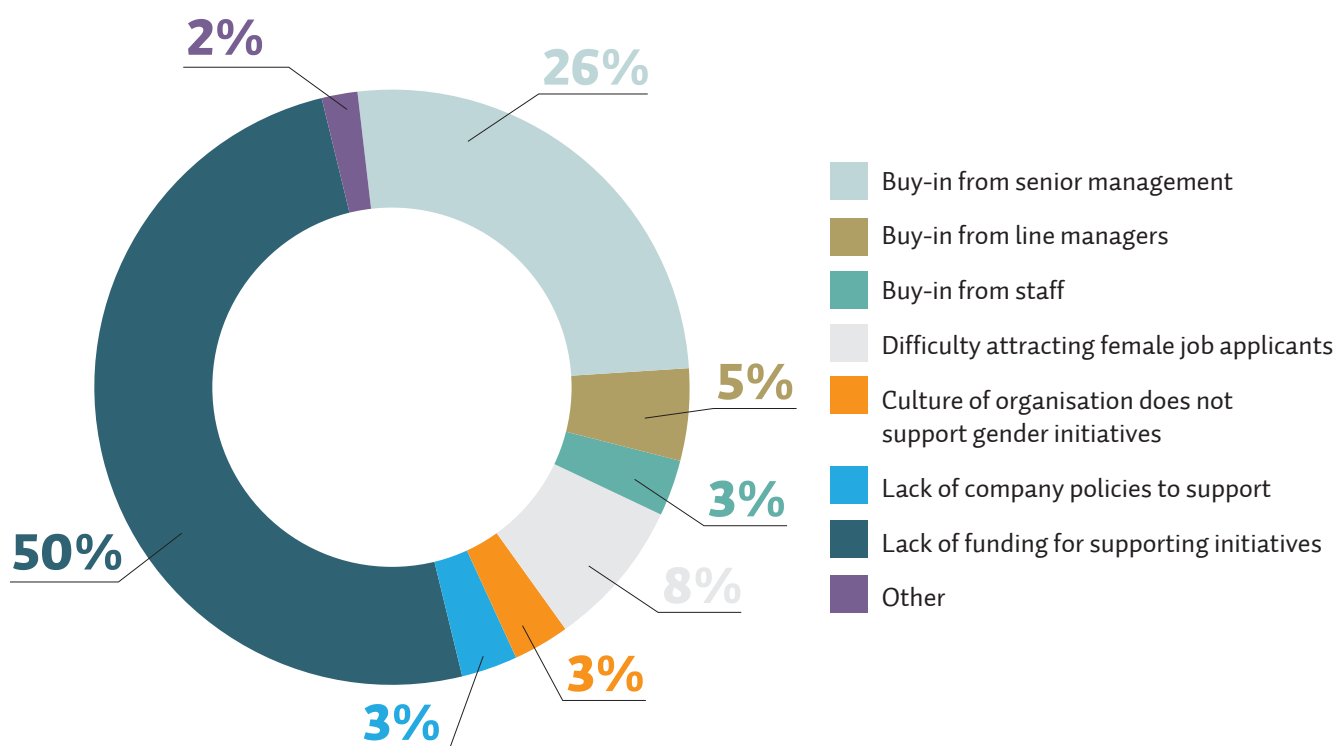
Diversity and inclusion journey

The vast majority of respondent organisations (85%) are already on the D&I journey, with almost one in five (18%) having a well-established approach, and 44% having some structures or initiatives in place. More than one in five (23%) indicated that they are just starting to develop their approach.

18% **15%** **23%** **44%**

Legend:
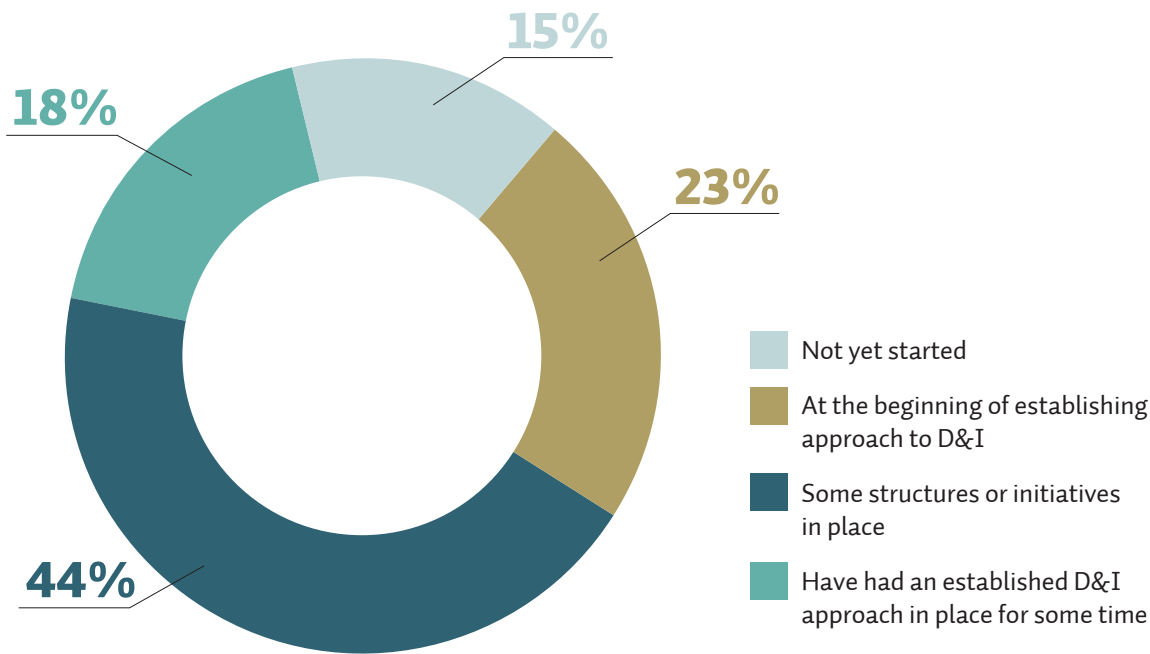- Not yet started
- At the beginning of establishing approach to D&I
- Some structures or initiatives in place
- Have had an established D&I approach in place for some time

Of the 26 diversity and inclusion initiatives that were examined, over 9 out of 10 organisations have more than one initiative in place.

Number of D&I Initiatives in Place

	Number of cases	%
No initiatives in place	28	8
Fewer than five initiatives in place	132	38
5 – 10 initiatives in place	89	25
10 -15 initiatives in place	55	16
More than 15 initiatives in place	46	13
Total	**350**	**100**

An organisation's position on the diversity and inclusion (D&I) journey impacts the number of initiatives in which they are involved. Those with an established D&I approach in place were more likely to have a higher number of initiatives. For example, 21% of organisations identifying themselves as having an established D&I approach in place for some time, had between ten and fifteen initiatives in place, with 28% having over 15. Those newer to diversity and inclusion had fewer initiatives in place.

**Average Number of Initiatives by Position
on D&I Journey**

Position on D&I journey	Average number of initiatives in place
At the beginning of establishing our organisational approach	5.39
Some structures or initiatives in place	9.06
An established diversity and inclusion approach in place for some time	10.40
Total	**7.46**

Appendix 2 shows the full list of initiatives by positioning on the D+I journey. Those further along their journey prioritised initiatives such as formal diversity and inclusion policies, training for HR staff and interviewers in D&I and unconscious bias, reviews of the languages of job descriptions, formal sponsorship and career progression programmes for women, employee resource networks, and paid parental leave. They were also more likely to have a dedicated diversity and inclusion lead for the organisation. Many of the initiatives in place in organisations with a history of D&I initiatives take time to design, deploy and establish.

Conversely, organisations at the beginning of establishing their diversity journey are likely to be engaged in fewer overall initiatives, tending to engage more on items relating to training and metrics, for example, tracking numbers of men and women availing of flexible working arrangements, tracking turnover rates for men and women and providing training for interviewers and HR staff in diversity and inclusion.

Initiatives around maternity, paternity and parental leaves are common areas of activity, while initiatives that take longer to establish, or may be more innovative, not surprisingly are less well represented among organisations beginning activity in this area. Formal sponsorship programmes for women (9%), career progression programmes (10%), and career returners programmes (9%) and are less likely to occur in organisations at the early stages of development in this area.

Future priorities

Organisations were asked to identify their priorities in the area of diversity and inclusion over the next five years. Implementing initiatives to engage all staff on greater inclusion was the top priority in over half (57%) of the respondent organisations. The importance of providing flexibility was also underscored by the proportion (47%) that identified 'implementing more flexible working arrangements' as a key objective.

Around a third of respondents (35%) intended to review or develop their diversity and inclusion policy, while similar proportions expect to examine recruitment and promotion practices (34%) and provide unconscious bias training (30%).

Priority	%
Implement initiatives to engage all staff on greater inclusion	57%
Implement more flexible working arrangements	47%
Develop or refine organisation diversity and inclusion policy	35%
Examine recruitments and promotion processes to support balanced recruitment practices	34%
Provide training on unconscious bias to staff	30%
Provide mentoring and support programmes for women	23%
Develop a diversity working group within the organisation	20%
Develop programmes to support career returners	15%
Implement new metrics to support women engagement	12%
Recruit a diversity and inclusion lead for the organisation	5%
Other	4%

In the shorter term, around one in five respondents (21%) are expecting to implement new initiatives relating to gender balance in the next 12 months, with a further 13% considering their introduction.

Does your organisation plan to implement any new initiatives relating to gender balance in the next 12 months?

12%

54%

21%

13%

Legend:
- Yes
- Considering
- No new initiatives planned
- Don't Know
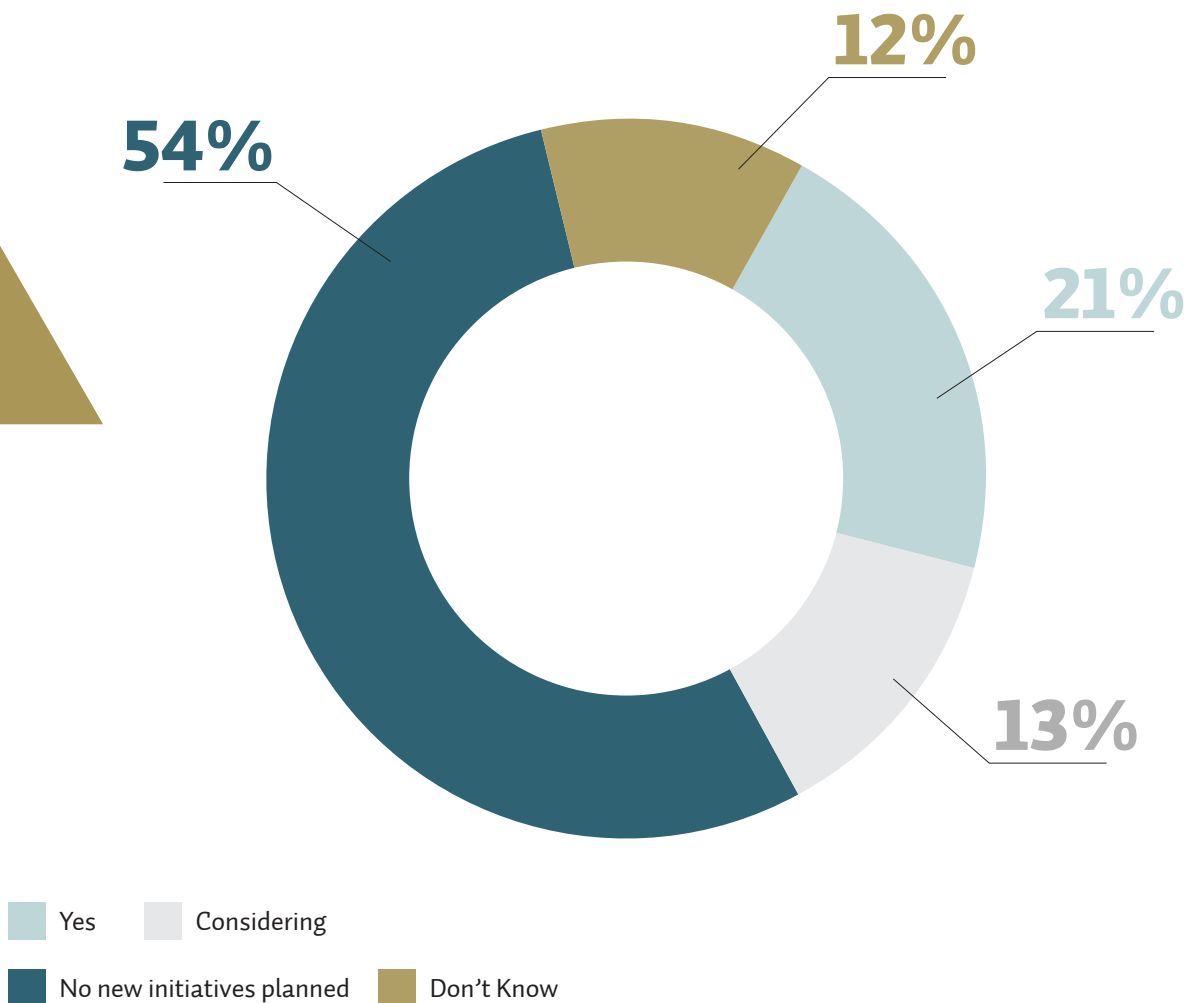
The most popular initiatives to be implemented in the next 12 months include:

- The introduction of diversity and inclusion policy and awareness-raising initiatives around gender balance
- Targeted programmes to support women's progression in organisations such as mentoring, sponsorship, coaching and development programmes
- Targeted programmes to encourage women into business such as career returner programmes, women-only posts and graduate or apprenticeship schemes

- The introduction or formalisation of flexible working arrangements
- Setting up employee resource groups or networks
- Setting targets for recruitment and board positions
- Gathering and monitoring data including gender pay gap data
- Examining gender pay gap data.

04

The Numbers in Review

The original objective of the "Women in Management – The Leadership Pipeline" series was to map the Irish leadership pipeline as it pertains to gender and chart its evolution over a five-year period.

From 2015 to 2018, a quantitative survey was issued to organisations with over 150 employees in the Republic of Ireland. In 2019, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) conducted a major national survey of large Irish companies (>250 employees)[4]. In view of the significance of this survey it was decided to use the fifth year of the Women in Management research to focus instead on a review of changes over the last five years, complemented by a four-year lookback at numeric trends. While it is difficult to draw firm conclusions due to differences between respondent organisations over the years, and the fact that the sample sizes were relatively small (100-150 companies), the data do reveal some interesting trends within Irish business, which are consistent with the findings from the CSO survey.

Women continue to make inroads into the management hierarchy, with percentages of women at all levels in the respondent showing increases over the five-year period (Figure 1). That said, however, women continue to dominate lower rather than upper management levels. The number of females in the lower levels of management has shown an increase from approximately 30% in 2015 to approximately 45% in 2018. The number of women in Executive Director roles has risen from 23% to 30% over this period, and female CEOs have risen from 14% to 18%.

Figure 1. Women in Management by Level

Legend: Manager level 2, Manager level 1, Executive Director, CEO

4 | CSO: Gender Balance in Business (2019)

The pattern of increased female representation at each level is repeated within all organisation types - PLC, private, and public / semi-state - as well as in companies of all sizes, although the increase is more pronounced in the largest companies (Figures 2 and 3 below).

Figure 2. Women in Management by Organisation Type

**Figure 3.** Women in Management by Company Size

The pattern by sector is similar for professional services, finance and manufacturing with increasing female representation at each management level, except the most junior management level in finance where there is a slight decline (Figure 4).

In the technology and transport sectors there is a decline in the representation of women at all levels. The technology

decline is particularly concerning given the importance of the technology sector to the Irish economy. Recent data published by Ibec[5] shows that less than a quarter of all employees at management level in the IT function were women.

Figure 4. Women in Management by Sector
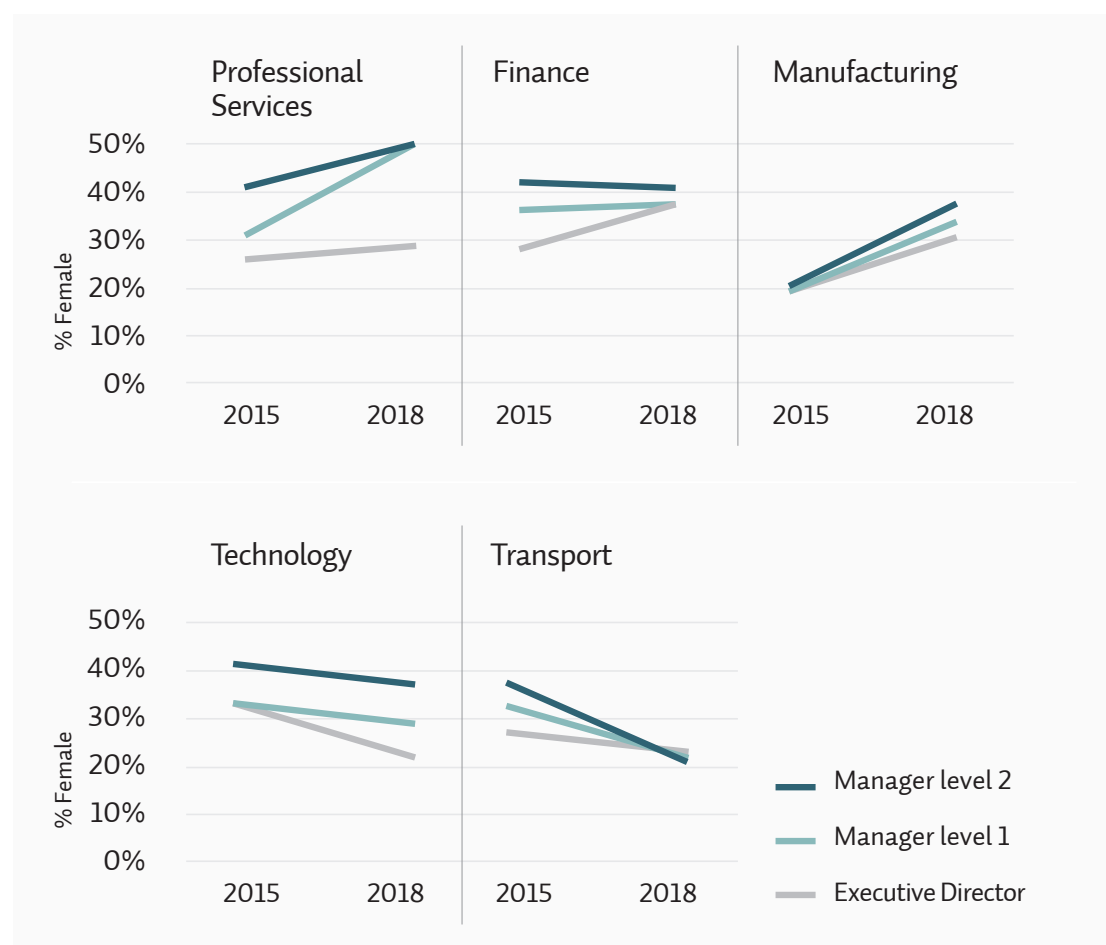

5 | https://www.ibec.ie/connect-and-learn/research Women in Management in Ireland: An Ibec Update

In functions where women already predominate, specifically HR and marketing, there has been a decline in their representation at virtually all levels, although in the legal function women continue to increase their representation, rising to 67% at the junior management level (Figure 5) over the years of the study. However, even in HR and marketing where women are very well represented at the junior and middle management levels, their representation is lower at senior management levels.

Finance/Accounting and IT show increasing representation of women at all levels, albeit from a relatively low base. The more junior levels in sales are declining, although the executive director level remains static at around 25%.

Figure 5. Women in Management by Function
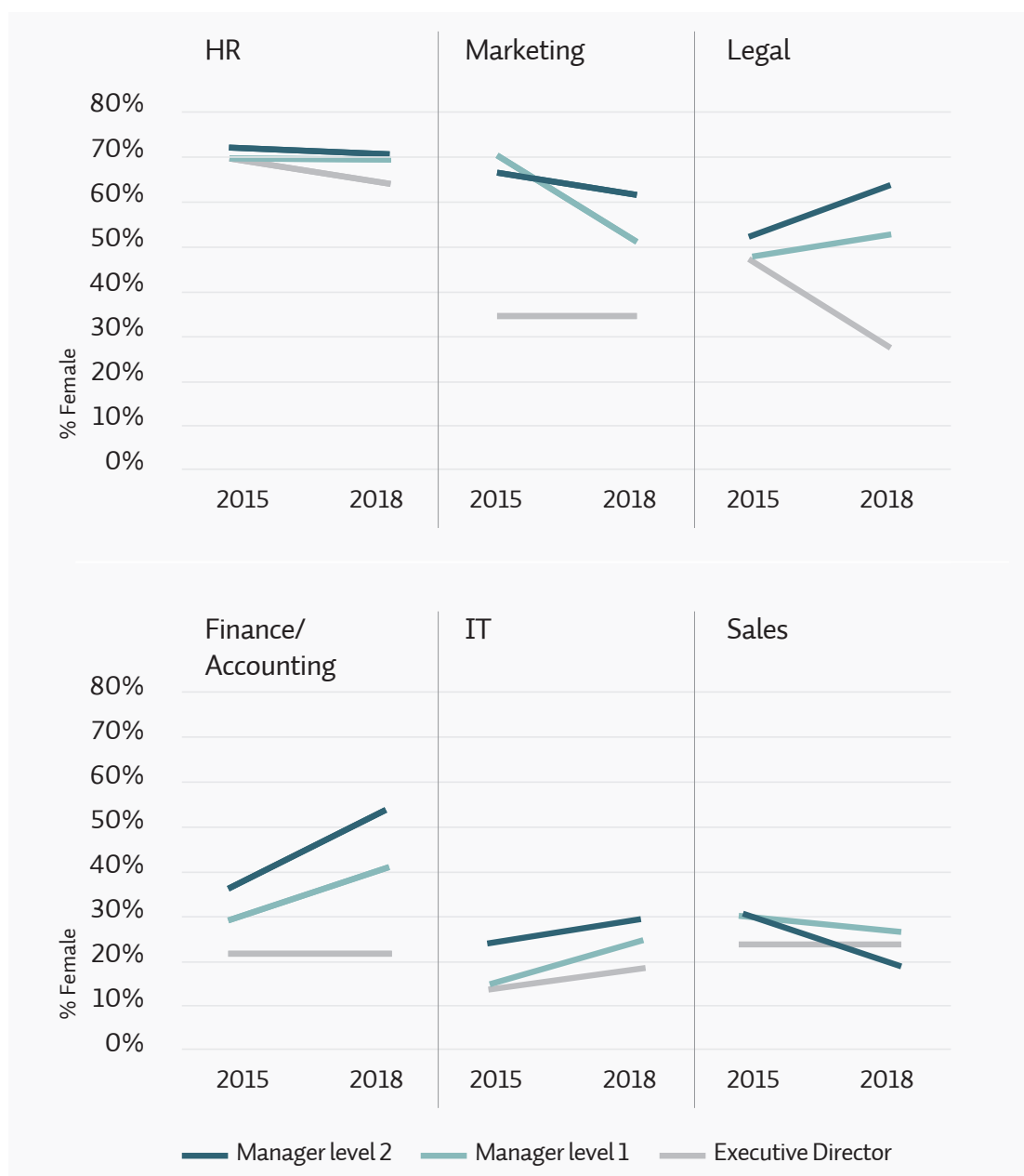
There are many explanations for these trends which are well-documented in the scientific literature. For example, research tells us that as societies become more gender equal, differences in occupation choice by men and women increase[6]. Thus, what we could be witnessing are the early consequences of increasing gender equality within Irish society.

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6 | Falk, & Hermle 2018; Stoet & Geary, 2018

05

The Bigger Picture

Globally, there is evidence to support both optimistic and pessimistic views about women's progress in attaining leadership roles. On the optimistic side, 33 of the Fortune 500 now have female CEOs[7]. Moreover, the leadership role itself is increasingly welcoming of female leadership styles[8] and in certain contexts, it is positively associated with a number of indicators of organisational performance[9].

On the other hand, as our data indicates, change is slow and statistics still show that women remain underrepresented in leadership in both the private and public sector. Research has identified a number of factors that operate as barriers to women's progress in the leadership hierarchy which prevail within and beyond the boundaries of organisations.

- Women are less likely to get the leadership development opportunities and support to skill them up for future leadership positions[10].
- Female leaders are often perceived and treated as though they are lower in status and power than their male counterparts[11]. This can translate into conscious and unconscious bias against women in leadership roles.
- The demands inherent in balancing caring commitments not only has negative effects on women's perceived promotion potential[12] but also leads them to leave their jobs when they become mothers[13].

The cumulative effects of these types of barriers exert a powerful influence that perpetuates women's underrepresentation in leadership, particularly at senior levels.

Complex issues are unlikely to be resolved with easy solutions thus a multi-faceted approach is required. At a socio-cultural level, government-mandated reporting requirements, targets, and quotas encourage organisations to extend their search for leaders among females[14]. Indeed, evidence suggests that organisations too have increased their focus on including women at leadership levels[15]. But organisational initiatives that focus only on recruiting more women or only on providing training without also addressing systemic gender barriers are unlikely to succeed.

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7 | Catalyst, 2019
8 | Lyness & Grotto, 2018
9 | Hoobler, Masterson, Nkomo & Michel, 2018; Dezsö & Ross, 2012
10 | Ibarra et al. 2010, Kaiser & Wallace 2016
11 | Vial et al. 2016
12 | Li et al. 2017, Wayne et al. 2017; Hurley & Choudhary 2016
13 | Stone & Hernandez 2013,
14 | Sojo et al. 2016
15 | Catalyst, 2019

Combining such efforts with educating people about unconscious gender bias and providing the types of support that women need to facilitate the interpersonal process of leadership development is likely to deliver more robust results[16]. In particular, the following interventions have been found to be effective in this regard:

- Establishing accountability among leadership for good female representation is most effective at increasing the number of women in managerial jobs.

- Encouraging men to further support women by serving as mentors and sponsors as well as ensuring that women are included in networks[17].

- Addressing powerful barriers such as unconscious bias, that are embedded in organisational cultures by raising awareness of the prevalence and impact of stereotypical notions[18].

- Considering the extent to which organisational culture and processes ensure equitable opportunities for development and promotion, fair and transparent promotion procedures, equal performance standards for men and women, rewards for both masculine and feminine leadership styles, and work-family support for all employees[19].

- Supporting male champions of fairness, gender equity and female leadership to role model such advocacy within and beyond the boundaries of their organisations[20].

- Providing for employees' careers based on contemporary career models which acknowledge the importance of people's family lives and other personal priorities.

- Cultivating new leadership aspirations among women beyond their traditional domains of HR and Marketing[21].

- Providing opportunities for women to develop their leadership competencies including negotiating, decision-making, managing power and taking on challenging development experiences.

Interventions such as these will encourage more women to move into leadership roles. As they do, other women will feel encouraged to develop and contribute within the networks necessary for promotion and advancement to leadership positions[22].

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16 | de Vries & van Den Brink, 2016

17 | Ramaswami et al. 2010

18 | Kassotakis 2017; Diehl & Dzubinski 2017

19 | Burke 2017, Fitzsimmons & Callan 2016, Glass & Cook 2016, Goodman et al. 2003, Muller-Kahle & Schiehll 2013, Murphy & Kram 2014
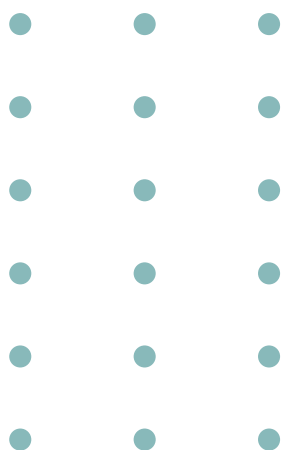
20 | Prime & Moss-Racusin 2009; Ragins et al. 2017

21 | Lyness & Schrader 2006; Cheung & Halpern 2010

22 | Kurtulus & Tomaskovic-Devey 2012; Glass & Cook, 2016

06
Conclusion

In the past five years more and more organisations are putting the right mechanisms in place and demonstrating a commitment to gender balance in their organisations.

However, there is more to be done. Gender diversity efforts need to be essential elements of employer business strategies rather than a "nice to have" if real systemic change is to be achieved.

Among survey respondents an average of 7 initiatives per organisation have been implemented. While it is clear that organisations are at different points in terms of the development and implementation of their D&I approach, it is heartening that more than nine in ten had at least one gender balance initiative in place. Organisations with a longer history of engagement in this area are more likely to have a variety of initiatives in place, while those beginning their journey start with a small number of priorities, with a focus on statutory requirements such as maternity and paternity leaves.

While it is evident that much work is being done in providing flexibility and supporting the collection of metrics on men and women's engagement in the workplace, there remains scope to improve the provision of career returners programmes, targets, and sponsorship programmes for women, all of which have been proven to have a significant positive impact on women's ongoing participation in the workforce.

Appendix 1:
Profile of Participating Organisations

	No. of cases	Percentage
Less than 50 employees	82	23
50 - 99 employees	64	18
100 - 249 employees	73	21
250 - 499 employees	45	13
Over 500 employees	86	25
Total	**350**	**100**

	No. of cases	Percentage
Manufacturing	118	34
Distribution [Retail and Wholesale]	20	6
Services	212	60
Total	**350**	**100**

	No. of cases	Percentage
Financial Services	49	14
Professional Services	17	5
Technology	41	12
Transport	14	4
Manufacturing (excl Food)`	76	22
Food	14	4
Pharma	25	7
Retail	6	1
Other*	108	31
Total	**350**	**100**

*Includes a broad range of activities, such as hotels, social and health care, educational institutions, etc.

Appendix 2:
Initiatives by position on D&I Journey

Initiative	Long-established approach	Some structures	Establishing approach
A formal diversity and inclusion policy	80%	58%	24%
Topped up maternity leave	69%	70%	69%
Training for HR staff in diversitiy and inclusion	62%	51%	24%
Topped up paternity leave	59%	57%	52%
Examine the language of job descriptions/job advertisiments for gender	59%	50%	25%
Training for interviewers in diversitiy and inclusion	57%	50%	22%
Unconscious bias training	57%	41%	18%
A dedicated diversity and inclusion lead for the organisation	56%	38%	11%
Track turnover rates and reasons for leaving for men and women	54%	56%	43%
Track the success of men and women in the promotion process	50%	44%	18%
Track pay levels by grade and gender	48%	51%	27%
Formal mentoring programmes for women	47%	40%	16%
Employee Resource or Diversity Network Groups in-house	47%	36%	23%
Track success of male and female applicants in the external recruitment proccess	42%	32%	9%
Maternity Coaching/Keep in Touch Programmes	39%	28%	17%
Balanced shortlists to ensure gender balance at recruitment	35%	33%	21%
Paid parental leave	35%	15%	15%
Formal sponsorship programmes for women	33%	21%	9%
Track numbers of men and women availing of parental leave	33%	41%	35%
Formal career progression programmes for women	31%	27%	10%
Track numbers of men and women availing of flexible working arrangements	28%	36%	31%
Track performance by gender	26%	24%	15%
Career returners programme (for those on extended >2 years leave from organisation)	18%	14%	9%
Blind CVs for recruitment process	14%	5%	4%
Gender proofed supply chain procurement policies	10%	9%	6%
Contribution to childcare costs	0%	3%	1%

Legend:
- Long-estabilished approach
- Some structures
- Establishing approach

Appendix 3:
Further Reading

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