



# Media Update

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## ILO

PRESS RELEASE

### Pakistan Ranks Second Lowest in Countries with Women in Top Management

***New study shows positive link between female leadership and business performance and urges boost from current 5 per cent of women in top positions.***

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GENEVA (ILO News) – While women are still under-represented in top management, the number of women in senior and middle management positions has increased over the last 20 years, a new study by the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities finds. But Pakistan ranks 107<sup>th</sup>, second lowest, just above Yemen.

According to Women in Business and Management: Gaining Momentum \*, in 80 of the 108 countries for which ILO data is available, the proportion of women managers has increased during this period.

“Our research is showing that women’s ever increasing participation in the labour market has been the biggest engine of global growth and competitiveness,” says Deborah France-Massin, Director of the ILO Bureau for Employers’ Activities.

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*D. France-Massin, ILO Bureau for Employers’ Activities*



“An increasing number of studies are also demonstrating positive links between women’s participation in top decision making teams and structures and business performance. But there is a long way to go before we achieve true gender equality in the workplace, especially when it comes to top management positions.”

Only 5 per cent or less of the CEOs of the world’s largest corporations are women. The larger the company, the less likely the head will be a woman.

### **More women on company boards**

All-male company boards are still common but are decreasing in number, with women attaining 20 per cent or more of all board seats in a handful of countries. A global survey quoted in the study shows that Norway has the highest global proportion of companies (13.3 per cent) with a woman as company board chairperson, followed by Turkey (11.1 per cent).

“It is critical for more women to reach senior management positions in strategic areas to build a pool of potential candidates for top jobs such as CEO or company presidents,” explained France-Massin. “However, ‘glass walls’ still exist with the concentration of women in certain types of management functions like HR, communications and administration,” she added.

Today, women own and manage over 30 per cent of all businesses, but they are more likely to be found in micro and small enterprises. Getting more women to grow their businesses is not only critical for equality but also for national development, underlines the report.

The report provides statistics on women in management and in business for most countries from all regions and at all levels of development. It also contains data on the gender pay gap at management and lower levels, as well as statistics on women’s achievements in education.

It identifies the growing momentum building around the world to advance women to higher levels of management and lists a selection of the numerous Flexible solutions for work and family needed.

The report also provides the following recommendations to close the remaining gender gap:



- seeking “flexible solutions” to manage work and family time commitments as an alternative to being subject to special treatment or quotas;
- providing maternity protection coverage and childcare support can bring added value to the company through the recruitment and retention of talented women;
- “changing mind-sets” to break cultural barriers and fight sexual harassment;
- addressing the so-called “leaky pipeline” whereby women fall behind despite their high level of education;
- implementing gender-sensitive human resources policies and measures;
- making sure women are given as challenging tasks as men from the very beginning of their career.

The authors underline that women and girls receive almost half of all educational resources, thus representing a significant proportion of the available talent pool. Therefore, companies’ investment in attracting, retaining and promoting skilled women is likely to be good for business.

Finally, the report says national employers’ organizations can play a major role in increasing awareness of the business case for appointing women in leadership roles.

“Unless action is taken, it could take 100 to 200 years to achieve parity at the top. It is time to smash the glass ceiling for good to avoid controversial mandatory quotas that are not always necessary or effective. Having women in top positions is simply good for business,” concluded France-Massin.

According to the report, Jamaica has the highest proportion of women managers at 59.3 per cent, while Yemen has the least with 2.1 per cent. The US is 15th in the list of 108 countries with 42.7 per cent women managers, the UK 41st (34.2 per cent). Pakistan is 107 out of 108, with only 3% women as managers.

In Africa, Ghana occupies 26th place with 39 per





cent, followed by Botswana ranking 28th (38.6 per cent). In Asia, the highest ranking country is the Philippines in 4th place (47.6 per cent), followed by Mongolia with 41.9 per cent in 17th place. With 53.1 per cent, Colombia holds the second place at the global level and ranks first in Latin America, followed by Panama in fifth place (47.4 per cent).

*\* The report presents the findings of a 2013 ILO survey of over 1,200 companies in Africa, Asia and Pacific, Eastern and Central Europe and Latin American and the Caribbean, focusing on measures and initiatives to advance women in management. The survey was carried out with the assistance of national employers' organizations in 39 countries.*

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