

## 2019 Women in Business report by Grant Thornton

Building a blueprint for action (#BlueprintForAction ) shows that progress is being made towards gender parity at the senior management level.

The last 12 months have seen increases in both the proportion of senior roles held by women and the proportion of businesses with at least one woman in senior management.

Beyond publishing the figures, we have also outlined the conscious and deliberate action businesses can take. These practical steps will help to increase the number of women in senior management, across all job roles, industries and regions.

As leaders of the world's dynamic businesses, you hold the power to drive change. We are calling on you to join the conversation using the hashtag #BlueprintForAction and share your views on how we can all play our part to maintain momentum towards gender parity in senior management.

London. 1 March 2019 – The percentage of businesses globally with at least one woman in senior management has risen to 87%, an increase of 12% in the last year, according to the latest Women in Business research from Grant Thornton International.

Overall, women now hold 29% of senior leadership positions globally. While this is only up 10% over the past 15 years of research, half this increase (5%) has been achieved in the last 12 months alone.

Francesca Lagerberg, global leader, Grant Thornton International says: "These figures are incredibly encouraging and a strong indication that gender parity is starting to be taken seriously by businesses. External factors such as increasing organisational transparency, gender pay gap reporting and highly visible public dialogue like the #MeToo movement appear to be making businesses wake up to the change that is needed."

While the number of women in senior leadership is increasing, gender parity at the head of the table is still a significant way off. When it comes to the role of CEO or managing director, only 15% of businesses globally have a woman leading the business.

Francesca Lagerberg says: "Despite the strong business case in favour of gender diversity, change at the top has been slow until now. Hopefully, the sharp increase in the representation of women in senior leadership we're seeing this year is not purely a knee-jerk reaction to the current social climate and we'll see similar progress in the coming years.

"If we want to continue seeing female representation trend upwards in senior positions, more deliberate action needs to be taken and leaders will play a critical role. Policies that address equal opportunity in career development, bias in recruitment and flexible working can't just be a nice to have. To achieve meaningful progress, they must be adhered to, enforced and regularly revisited to assess their effectiveness and when that is combined with real commitment from senior leadership, you begin creating a truly inclusive culture."

Full report: <https://www.grantthornton.global/globalassets/global-insights---do-not-edit/2019/women-in-business/women-in-business-2019-report-grant-thornton.pdf>