

Only 1 in 25 of CEOs in Britain's largest publicly listed companies are women

Only 1 in 25 of CEOs in Britain's largest publicly listed companies are women, according to a new report.

Analysis of senior leadership in the FTSE 350 largest companies listed on the London Stock Exchange showed 96% of CEOs are men.

This is despite the entry level recruitment often being close to 50:50, according to analysis conducted by gender and diversity consultancy firm, The Pipeline.

Its Women Count 2022 report found three-quarters of the members of FTSE 350 executive committees are men, and a quarter are women. There were no women at all on the executive committees of 10% of the companies and nearly 70% of companies have no female executive directors at all on their main boards of directors.

The path towards becoming a CEO is dominated by men: the report found three out of four executives working their way up to CEO are men.

But when women become CEOs it is more likely that there will be women appointed to other roles in the upper echelons of FTSE 350 companies.

Companies with female CEOs are over four times more likely to appoint women executive directors onto their main board than companies with male CEOs, The Pipeline analysis found.

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The proportion of female executives on the main board of a company with a female CEO is 63% compared to 14% where the CEO is male, the report said.

The problem of a lack of equal gender representation exists across senior leadership. In the FTSE 350, 82% of chief financial officers (CFOs) are male.

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The Women Count report has tracked the gender diversity of British executive committees for the past seven years and described progress over that time as “glacially slow”.

The prospect for women seeking advancement to the senior echelons of FTSE 350 companies “looks as desolate as ever”, The Pipeline said. However, there are four more female CEOs this year compared to last year.

Other FTSE indices showed similar inequalities. In the FTSE 100 there are 91 male CEOs and 7 women CEOs and in the FTSE 250 there are 168 male CEOs and 5 female CEOs.

The numbers do not add up to 100, 250 and 350 because not every organisation listed in the FTSE has a CEO, the report said. Some investment vehicles often have only an investment manager and no further staff.

The data was gathered through by examining company websites, annual and other reports and direct contact with companies.