

Women@Work No. 2

**Women on Boards:
Moving Beyond Tokenism**

Véronique Bourez



European Professional Women's Network

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First Edition

www.EuropeanPWN.net

The Author



Véronique Bourez

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Introduction

This book is in keeping with the current debate on how to improve corporate performance through better corporate governance. Pushed by new laws and regulations, more companies are revisiting their board's composition and practices.

Women will have the opportunity to take a growing part in this evolution principally for two reasons:

- Serving on a board is becoming more demanding. For this reason current board members are choosing to serve on fewer boards simultaneously, which results in the need for a larger pool of qualified candidates. In the very near future companies will need to enlarge the spectrum of their recruitment. Women represent a vast opportunity they cannot afford to ignore.
- Diversity and independence of board members have been highlighted as two of the key criteria with which to improve a board's effectiveness. As such, diversity of experience, culture and gender will become increasingly important in board evaluation systems. Since women often have different perspectives from their male counterparts on how a business is run, boards with women contribute more to a business than boards made up only of men.



The Conference Board of Canada has concluded based on its research that:

“Far from focusing on traditionally ‘soft areas’, boards with more women surpass all-male boards in their attention to audit and risk oversight and control”.

The purpose of this book is to present the results of a survey conducted in the spring of 2004 by the European Professional Women’s Network (EuropeanPWN) and Egon Zehnder International, which measured female representation on the boards of the top 200 European corporations. More broadly, it strives to explain the value that women add to boards and what needs to be done to increase their access to board positions.

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Part One:
The EuropeanPWN
BoardWomen Monitor 2004



Survey Methodology

Which Companies Are Included?

The survey focused on the 200 largest companies in Europe as defined by sales, in addition to the 20 largest banks and insurance companies which have worldwide headquarters in their home country.

The ratings for the top European companies were based on the rankings by revenue published by Les Echos and Reuters in “Le Grand Atlas des Entreprises”.

In addition, with the exception of Luxembourg and Ireland, for those countries with fewer than 10 companies included in the “Top 200” in Europe list, we added their next largest companies to offer a reasonable size pool in each country.

In all, some 270 companies were considered, of which 53% are based in the UK, Germany or France.

What is the Source of the Data?

The survey was carried out by Egon Zenhder International using publicly available information. The data was collected in late March and early April 2004.



Executive Summary

In Europe's top 200 companies women occupy only 8% of corporate boardroom seats.

This figure is the result of two different phenomena:

- The high percentage of companies which still do not have any women on their board : 38%.
- From those companies having a mixed board, the majority of them with only one woman on their board : 55%.

This result puts Europe well behind North American board statistics. Recent studies by Catalyst state that in the United States in 2003 13.6% of the members of Fortune 500 corporate boards were women. Moreover, only 10% of the Fortune 500 companies lacked a female board member.

In Europe, Nordic countries clearly lead the way. Norway has 22% of its board seats occupied by women and is closely followed by Sweden with 20%. It is no surprise to see these countries far in advance of their European counterparts since their governments have been very active in pushing companies to develop gender diversity.



The most disturbing result is the even lower percentage of women represented in the senior management of these top 200 European companies - a mere 5%. This demonstrates that companies are not actively building a pipeline of talented and experienced women to take over board positions in the future.

When analyzed by sector, retail and telecom lead the way with the most women on boards. There are however, some strong disparities among the different sectors and even some surprises such as the food industry where only 4% of its board members are women.

The most advanced companies have about 30% women on their boards. Statoil in Norway stands out with 44%. This is a significant representation which allows women to have a real influence on the board's style and practices.



Key Findings

Still Very Low Figures

The survey shows that women only occupy 8% of European corporate board seats in 2004. This is not a big surprise, but it is still a very low figure. This result does not reflect the place occupied by women today in the business world. Nor does it reflect the necessity and will for parity claimed by most European countries.

The study also shows that nearly two-thirds of large European companies have one or more women on their board. Not that bad one might think...

The problem however, is that when digging into the results, it turns out that only a fourth of these companies have more than one woman on their board. This means that female representation is still exceedingly low and indeed in many cases little more than symbolic. This limits women's ability to influence a board's style, process and practices.

Women struggle to access these positions for two main reasons:

- The influence of men's networks and co-optation remains predominant in the way board members are recruited in most European countries.



- Women do not fight hard enough for visibility. Who has not heard the following statement: “The problem is not that we don’t want women. The problem is that we can’t find any”?

The results achieved by Norwegian companies in identifying talented women have led us to believe that the main barriers are not those listed above, but a simple lack of determination (see *Norway*, page 33). The most important factor in increasing female representation on a board is determination combined with a conviction that diversity, including gender diversity, is one of the key success factors in good corporate governance.

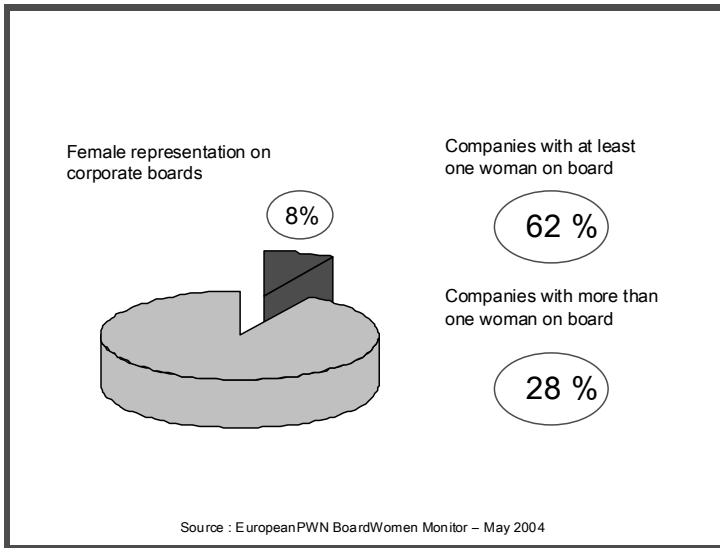


Figure 1 - Growing Pressure for Women in Europe



**» Chairman Interview: Tim Fallowfield,
Company Secretary, Sainsbury, UK**

“At 30 March 2005 , there were two female Non Executive Directors of J. Sainsbury PLC. There are currently eight board directors in total. At operational level, there are two women on the Company's Operating Board and a large number of women in senior management positions, including an increasing number of store managers.”

“Sainsbury's has acknowledged the importance of equality and diversity as a criterion for business success and has embedded it into its operating practices. The company recognises that to succeed in the current economic climate its internal structure and make-up should reflect the diversity of its customers and potential customers. The Company is therefore pleased to have established, on merit and ability, a strong female representation from Boardroom to shop floor.”



International Comparison

A recent study by Catalyst put the US figure for women on Fortune 500 corporate boards at 13.6% in 2003. Only 10% of these companies have no women on the board. Canada stands a little behind at 10.6%.

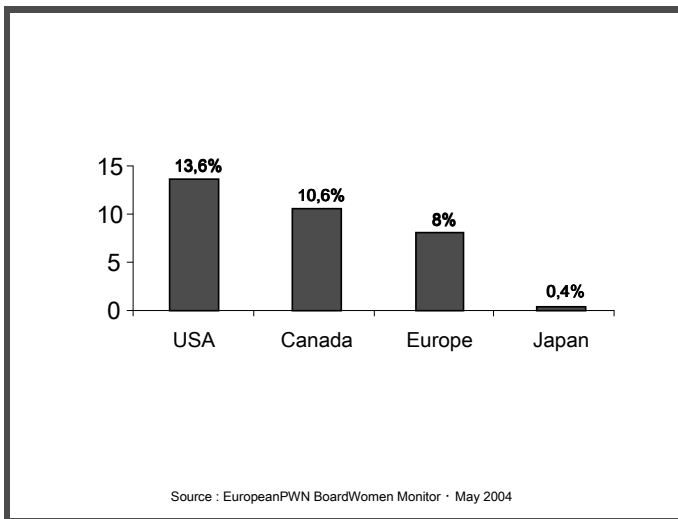


Figure 2 - Europe's Corporate Boards Lag Behind North America



» The Conference Board of Canada

The Conference Board of Canada tracked the progress of Canadian corporations with two or more women on the board from 1995 to 2001. Their conclusions are valuable in understanding how gender diversity can influence the functioning of a board.

The main governance practices affected by the presence of women are those associated with more active and independent boards of directors. Far from focusing on traditionally ‘soft’ areas, boards with more women surpass all-male boards in their attention to audit and risk oversight and control.

The Conference Board found a major increase in the use of non-financial performance measures such as innovation and social and community responsibility. 74% of boards with three or more women explicitly identify criteria for measuring strategy; only 45% of all-male boards do. 94% of boards with three or more women explicitly monitor the implementation of corporate strategy; 66% of all-male boards do. Gender diversity on the board and senior management team helps organizations to attract and retain valuable female talents.



Another North-South Divide

The most significant variable in the amount of access women have to corporate boards is the nationality of the company. Europe can be segmented into three general groups regarding board gender diversity:

The Trail-Blazers

As noted above, Scandinavian countries top the list. Norway is first with 22% of board seats filled by women, while Sweden is second with 20%. Finland ranks a little lower with 14%. All three however, are well above the European average of 8%.

The Middle of the Roaders

France, Germany and the UK provide the largest number of female board members but the overall percentage for each of these countries is around the European average at 6%, 10% and 10% respectively. The Netherlands also fits into this group with 7%.

The Slow Going

Italy trails the European group with only 2% of board seats filled by women, the lowest score in Europe. Belgium, Spain and Denmark are not much further ahead with 3%, 3% and 4% respectively.

In interpreting these numbers it must be kept in mind that in several countries a significant number of female



board members are labour union appointees. In France for example, 10 of the 41 female board members were union appointees and in Germany 66 of the 83 were union appointees. We can surmise from this that in certain countries unions may be more progressive regarding gender issues than many corporate boards.

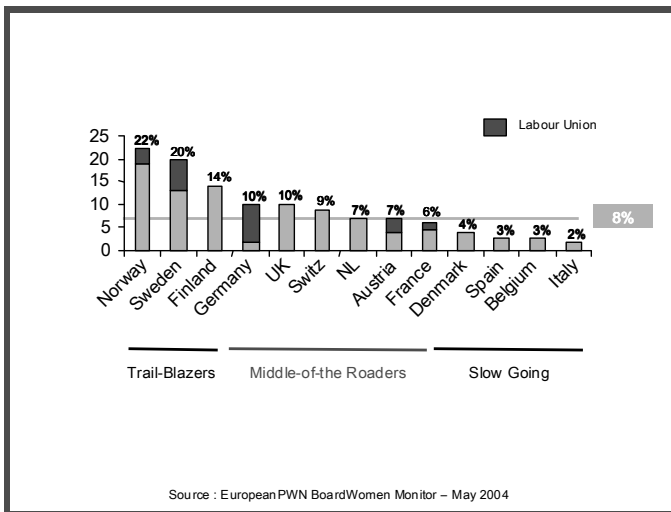


Figure 3 - Nationality of Company is Determining Variable



Beyond Tokenism¹

As shown in Figure 4, except in the Nordic countries, a large majority of companies only have one woman on their board. In Germany, the number of women on boards is boosted by the high proportion of labour union representatives, which is less the result of an active strategy than of a legal duty.

As long as there is only one woman representative on a board, it will be hard for her to make a significant impact on the board's style and practices beyond that of her immediate business skill set. To truly give women the chance to participate in improving corporate governance it is vital that they have a more significant presence on the board. Companies need to make moving beyond tokenism a strategic objective.

Some will argue that it is hard to find the right women with the required experience and competencies. This argument seems increasingly less valid as women gain more experience in the work force. Companies need to consider a broader range of profiles and experiences when looking for potential board recruits. Companies all over Europe certainly generate a pool of talented top

¹ **TOKENISM** noun [U] DISAPPROVING; actions which are the result of pretending to give advantage to those groups in society who are often treated unfairly, in order to give the appearance of fairness. from Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary



management executives who could be excellent potential board members. The challenge is to identify these new potential board recruits by researching these businesses, working in close collaboration with specialized recruiters as well as with women’s networks when they exist in those countries.

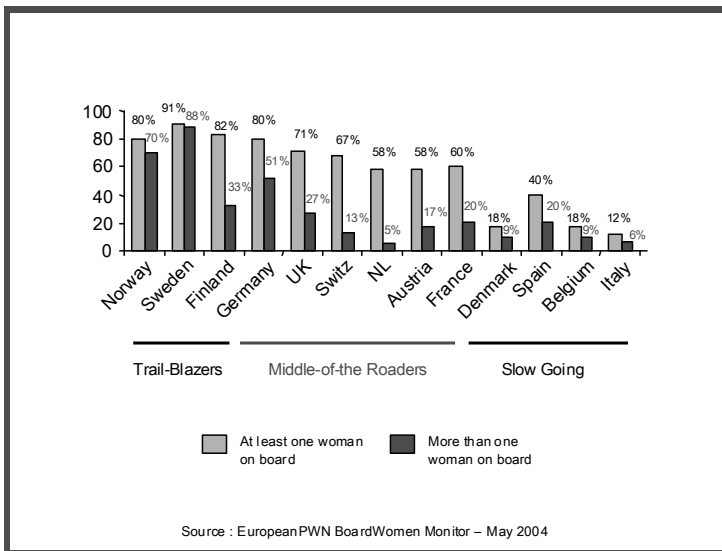


Figure 4 - Champion Countries Have More than One Woman on Boards



» Board Woman Interview: Karen Guerra, CEO, Colgate Palmolive in France

Karen sat on the board of More Group in the UK

“Sitting on a board gave me a different perspective on how other companies operate that I would not have had if I had been focused on solely executing my own job. With More Group I was involved in strategy and acquisitions, a role that would not have been presented to me in a subsidiary. It brought me different learnings about other business models and other procedures. It was of great benefit for my own business because I got exposed to more ideas. It gave me flexibility and the ability to think ‘out of the box’”.

“I am not sure that being a woman was so important to be appointed to this board position. I believe I was recruited for my competencies and experience: international exposure, consumer goods focused, position of senior management as General Manager”.

“I was head hunted to get to this position. But it was a result of the network I had built over many years of working in the UK consumer goods and retail industry”.

“Getting more women [in] to top management and general manager positions will be the best way to increase the female representation in the board room. But I don’t see more women coming up the ladder and the current move of management styles in most companies doesn’t always fit with women”.

“Women will do better when board recruitment will be achieved through an upfront process with a clear brief and an expertise of the Non Executive role rather than personal recommendation. I believe



[the] UK today is in advance in Europe in having clear recruitment processes”.

Gender Diversity / International Diversity

The survey compared gender diversity to the nationality of board members. The assumption was that gender diversity was strongly linked to other elements of the diversity policy. The results invalidate this hypothesis. They show no correlation between female representation and non-headquarters nationality representation.

International diversity clearly appears to be more developed than gender diversity: 18% of the corporate board seats of top European companies are occupied by members of a different nationality than that of the corporate headquarters.

Intense and rapid international expansion by many companies increased their need to include the vision and expertise of people with different cultural and business experience on their boards. Nevertheless the difference of perspective provided by women is still overlooked despite recent studies by Catalyst in the U.S. and the Conference Board of Canada, which both demonstrate that having a significant number of women on boards positively impacts the performance and good practices of these boards (see Part 3). Another Catalyst study introduced the assumption that women have higher expectations regarding their responsibilities as board



members, which can lead the board to becoming more effective.

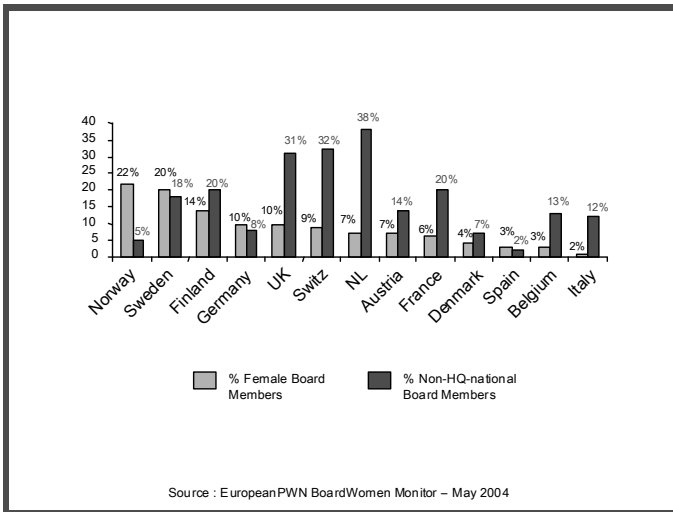


Figure 5 - No Correlation Between 'Diversity' Definitions



No Pipeline, No Progress

If the figures for European boards seem low, the figures for women on management committees and in the top levels of company management are even lower: 5% average across Europe. This does not bode well for the future development of female board members and contradicts any suggestion that time will solve the issue.

For example in Norway, the European leader with 22% of board filled by women, the number of women in upper management is only 9%. The same is true of Sweden, which boasts 20% of women on corporate boards but only 11% of upper management positions are filled by women. Despite these discrepancies, these countries retain their lead in both categories across Europe.

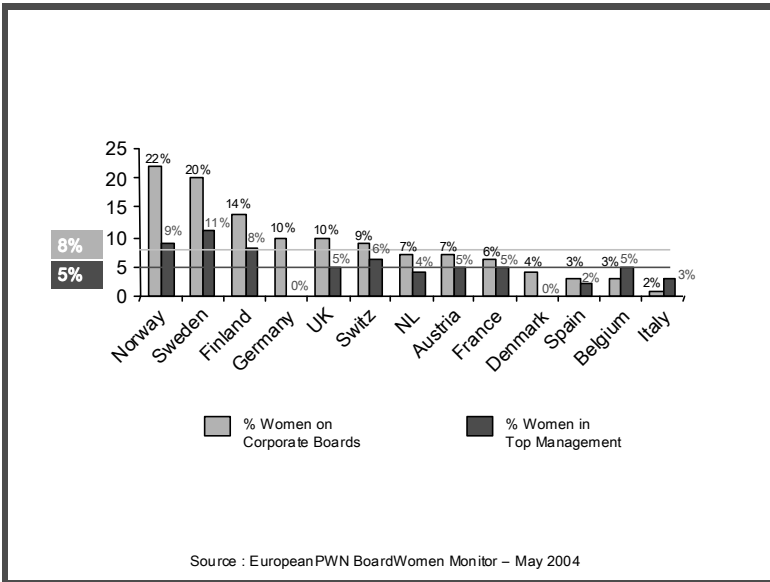


Figure 6 - Lower Statistics for Top Management Bodes III for Future



» Chairman Interview: Sir John Bond, Group Chairman, HSBC Holdings plc.

HSBC Holdings plc has 4 women on its board, that is to say 22% of the total. It ranks fifth of the UK corporate champions.

“The main purpose of inviting an individual to join the board is to appoint the best person for the job, irrespective of gender. The second purpose is to ensure that our board is more reflective of our clients and workforce – women compose half of both groups.”

“Women and men have the same intellectual capacity and the same technical skills. However, they bring different perspectives to bear which is a powerful argument for having mixed boards.”

In regards to the ‘talent pipeline’, HSBC has recently introduced a scheme whereby every senior appointment must have a woman on the shortlist. If not, managers are challenged and must explain why. In addition, the Women’s Development Program for middle management grades actively hones the interview skills needed and helps to identify potential candidates.

“We still do not do enough but we plan to do it better and a lot better than we are doing it now.”

Retail and Telecom Sectors Lead the Way

Retail and telecom were, perhaps unsurprisingly, the two sectors with above average female representation with 12% and 11% respectively.



The retail sector largely serves women who are the primary purchasers of consumer goods. For the same reason, it is surprising that the food sector has some of the lowest statistics for women on boards.

The relatively new telecom sector has sometimes been portrayed as being more open to women, and this seems to be confirmed by our survey. Insurance and pharmaceuticals, next in the rankings, are two industries that have made long-term efforts in attracting and promoting women.

Retail	12%
Telecoms	11%
Insurance	10%
Pharmaceuticals	10%
Oil	9%
Chemicals	8%
Banking	8%
Automotive	7%
Energy	5%
Food	4%
Steel	1%

Source: EuropeanPWN BoardWomen Monitor – May 2004

Table 1 – Sector Has a Clear Impact on Figures



Corporate Champions

Considerable differences exist in the number of women on boards at different companies.

Unsurprisingly the corporate champions are in the Nordic countries, with Norwegian Statoil leading the way with 44% of women on its board. Like Statoil, most of the corporate champions have three to four women on their boards, which is in fact a significant presence. Based on these examples, we can assume that the strong presence of women has an important impact on the board's style and functioning (see Best Practices examples and Chairmen interviews throughout the book).

Another conclusion drawn from these corporate champions is that the larger the board, the better the chance for women to obtain a seat on the board. The companies with the largest number of women on their board in absolute value have 6 women out of a total of 20 or more board members. Among these companies are Deutsche Post and Deutsche Bank (all labour union representatives) in Germany and Migros in Switzerland. This leads us to believe that the largest companies are more disposed to search out and actively manage for diversity.



France	Publicis, Sodexo	27%	Eiffage	17%
Germany	Deutsche Post, Deutsche bank	30%	Metro/ Fresenius	25%
Italy	La Fondiaria-SAI	20%		
Netherlands	ABNAMRO	17%		
Norway	Statoll	44%	Norsk Hydro	33%
Switzerland	Migros	21%		
Sweden	Telia	36%	SAS	33%
UK	Astrazeneca	29%	Shell Transport	27%

Source : EuropeanPWN BoardWomen Monitor – May 2004

Figure 7 - Corporate Champions



» Chairman Interview:
Maurice Levy, Chairman & CEO
Publicis Groupe

Publicis is the number one corporate champion in France, with four women, 27% of the total on its board.

“I find it fascinating to watch the reactions during a board meeting. The women board members have a perspective which is always interesting to hear. They bring instinct and common sense, and care about aspects that men consider as less important. We wouldn’t like to miss that component.”

“How can we favour women’s progress? One possibility is via a “positive action” policy. However, I feel at the same time it would be deplorable to appoint a woman just because of her gender. I believe instead that the real path is via recruitment. We must really balance recruitment.”

“Women’s careers still remain an individual choice. Women have to manage the desire to build a family.”

“We see women today in key positions at important companies And at least we notice them! I think things are progressing. There is a strong evolution in the mentality [of corporations].”

“Executives who do not have any women on their boards should be bored! It is interesting having exchanges with different standpoints. I’m under the impression that we are a bit privileged [to have such diverse opinions].”



Conclusion

This European BoardWomen Monitor demonstrates that the proportion of women on corporate boards is still very low and is almost nothing when you exclude labour union representatives.

We believe that the way to increase the number of women in board positions needs to come from both sides:

- *From women*, who need to publicize their successes and increase their participation in formal and informal networks to gain visibility. In this way they will refute the argument that there is no potential female candidate for a board position.
- *From companies*, by making the increase of female representation in the board room a clear and stated objective, starting with the CEO. Moreover, they need to implement an appropriate process to identify top talented women in the organization and push them to become potential board candidates.



Progress is slow. Introducing diversity to a board room can require significant effort and may require additional time to digest different viewpoints and resolve disagreements. On the other hand, it can add great value by bringing different perspectives, experiences and opinions to the table. It is also worthwhile to consider the impact gender diversity can have on board efficiency and performance.



Part Two:
A Tour of Europe



Norway

Norway is the trailblazer in Europe, with 22% of corporate board seats occupied by women, even more than in North American companies. Eight companies out of ten in Norway have a woman on their board. But the most impressive is that 70% of the Norwegian companies surveyed have more than one woman sitting in a board position. This shows a real interest in female representation and transcends tokenism.

Initiatives begun in many areas of Norwegian public and business life have strongly contributed to these results: the Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry NHO²'s Female Future, Innovasjon Norge's board qualification course, networking seminars and a freely accessible database that includes executive women are just a few. In addition, it has been very important to have key women and men publicly support this issue and the linked initiatives. Public policy related to gender equality in the work place has supported women's involvement and is increasingly supporting men's equal role in parenting in Norway.

The only downside is the percentage of female representation at the top management levels in the

² NHO stands for Næringslivets Hovedorganisasjon



companies of the study. This is at a low 9%, which is a huge gap compared to the percentage of women with positions in the board rooms.

The “women on boards” corporate champions in Norway are Statoil (50%), Telenor (42%), and Hydro (33%).

Female representation on corporate boards	22%
Companies with at least one woman on board	80%
Companies with more than one woman on board	70%
Female representation in top management	11%

Source: EuropeanPWN BoardWomen Monitor – May 2004

Table 2 - Norway

» Norway: The Female Future Program

Norway is probably one of the most advanced countries regarding gender diversity. The Norwegian government has been the first and only to establish a goal of 40% female representation on the boards of joint stock companies by the end of 2005.

To achieve this goal the NHO has launched a pilot project called “Female Future” which not only aims at



reaching the right level of female representation but also focuses on quality. This program is remarkable for its simplicity and ease of implementation.

The NHO has clearly identified the two main challenges to increasing female representation: First, identify the right candidates. Second, make sure they build the skills and competences to succeed in board positions.

The program is composed of 3 parts:

- Monitoring candidates for management and board of directors

The NHO has selected a pool of joint stock companies in order to secure results quickly. These companies have signed a letter of intent, committing themselves to employ one or more women in leading positions during a period of 1-2 years. These companies have also nominated 3 talented women from their own staff who joined the “Female Future Network”. This sounds easy but, in reality, requires that they take a careful look at the potential talent in their own staff, in what is called “pearl diving”. By developing this network, the NHO plans to build a comprehensive database of talented women which companies can search and use to identify future board candidates.



- Offering tailor-made development of skills and competences

In order to increase the competencies of the candidates the NHO has created special courses accessible to the women in the “Female Future Network”. It offers customized development programs covering all aspects of a board’s responsibilities: finance, strategy, legal aspects and so forth. The project also includes leadership mentoring tailor-made for each female candidate in collaboration with the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration and the Norwegian Industrial and Regional Development Fund.

- Developing understanding about women and a multi-faceted leadership

Through a detailed follow-up of the project the NHO aims to develop a practical knowledge basis with tools, models and references for future use. In the end, such a project “only” requires willingness and commitment. This is a “Best in Class” approach to increase female representation in senior management and on boards of directors.



Sweden

Sweden is the second best country in terms of female representation on corporate boards, with 20%. Sweden is remarkable for its very high proportion of companies with more than one woman on their board, a fantastic 88%. Out of 11 companies in the survey, 5 have three or four women on their board, and only one has none.

It looks like there is a real place made for women and by women in the business sphere in Sweden. It is also in Sweden that women have the best representation in senior management (11%), which is well above the European average.

Swedish “women on boards” corporate champions are TELIA (36%) and SAS (33%).

Female representation on corporate boards	20%
Companies with at least one woman on board	91%
Companies with more than one woman on board	88%
Female representation in top management	11%

Source: EuropeanPWN BoardWomen Monitor – May 2004

Table 3 - Sweden



Germany

Women occupy 10% of corporate board seats in Germany which is above the European average. This result is due to the number of labour union representatives who account for 80% of the female board members in the country. About two companies out of three who have women on their boards only have labour union representatives.

Germany is recognized as a laggard in terms of public policy focused on helping women in the workplace. The number of women in senior levels in business is certainly one of the lowest in Europe as was discovered in this survey. The companies researched had no women in top management.



German “women on boards” corporate champions are:

		% of labour union representatives
Deutsche Bank	30%	100%
Deutsche Post	30%	83%
Metro	25%	100%
Fresenius	25%	66%

Female representation on corporate boards	10%
Companies with at least one woman on board	80%
Companies with more than one woman on board	51%
Female representation in top management	0%

Source: EuropeanPWN BoardWomen Monitor – May 2004

Table 4 - Germany



The UK

Women occupy 10% of corporate board seats in the UK, a figure above the European average. 71% of the firms have at least one female board member, almost 10 percent above the average. But there is a huge difference when you compare the percentage of companies with more than 1 woman on their board. This scores only 27%. Similarly, female representation in top management is at a very low level of 5%. The UK does not appear to be particularly active at promoting women in the companies surveyed. Of the 61 women on boards in the UK, 4 women hold 2 board appointments.

British “women on boards” corporate champions are AstraZeneca (29%), Sainsbury (27%), Shell Transport (27%) and Marks & Spencer (23%).

Female representation on corporate boards	10%
Companies with at least one woman on board	71%
Companies with more than one woman on board	27%
Female representation in top management	5%

Source: EuropeanPWN BoardWomen Monitor – May 2004

Table 5 - The UK



» UK: The Female FTSE 100 - Report 2004

The Female FTSE 100 is an annual benchmarking study across the top 100 UK listed companies that was launched 6 years ago by the Cranfield Centre for Developing Women Business Leaders to monitor the progress of women on top corporate boards. The overall project is managed by Susan Vinnicombe, Professor of Organisational Behaviour and Diversity Management, and Dr Val Singh, Senior Research Fellow in Organisational Behaviour, both working at the Centre for Developing Women Business Leaders at Cranfield School of Management.

Key Findings 2004:

- From 2000 to 2004 the total number of companies with women directors increased from 58 to 69; there are still 31 companies with no women directors.
- The more encouraging result is the increase in the number of companies with multiple women directors the figure more than doubled from 12 in 2000 to 29 in 2004.
- In 2004 women comprised 17% of new FTSE 100 boardroom appointments.
- Companies with women directors scored significantly higher than companies with all-male boards on “good



corporate governance”, as measured on 13 key indicators. The particular indicators that showed significant differences were director training, induction, reviewing board skills, reporting succession planning, using search consultants and evaluating board performance.

- Companies with women on their boards have slightly higher performance measured by ROE (Return on Earnings): the 69 companies with women directors have an average ROE of 13.8 compared to a ROE of 9.9 for the 31 companies with all-male boards.

The study also highlights characteristics of Companies with Women Directors:

- Market capitalisation is significantly higher than in companies without women directors.
- Board size is also higher, averaging 12 directors compared with 10 for all-male boards.
- The number of non executive directors is higher.
- The chief executive is significantly more likely to be younger than in all-male board companies.



Extracted from the report, a quote from Patricia Hewitt, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and Cabinet Minister for Women, interprets the mindset change:

“Diversity in our Boardrooms isn't about political correctness or box-ticking; it's about getting the right people to the right jobs every time.... There is now a cohort of executives who are taking action. They realise that equality for women isn't just a moral issue- it's something which has a positive impact on their business too. ... I hope that the next generation of female board members will find it easier to reach their goals”.

» UK FTSE 100 Cross Company Mentoring Program

In 2003 a group of professional women from across industry, academia and government founded an organisation called Women Director on Boards to work in partnership with business leaders to address the lack of women at the top of British business. Working with a core group of Chairs and CEOs from the FTSE 100, they set up the FTSE 100 Cross-Company Mentoring Programme in order to support progress of women on top corporate boards.



Their cross-company mentoring programme is organized this way:

Each FTSE 100 chairman who participates nominates a senior executive woman from the “marzipan layer³” of his or her company to be mentored by another FTSE 100 chairman/CEO; at the same time the chairman agrees to mentor a woman from another, non-competing FTSE 100 company.

There are currently 24 FTSE 100 companies committed to the programme.

³ **marzipan layer** n. In a business or professional firm, the level of managers and other senior staff just below the topmost level of directors or partners



Switzerland

Women occupy 9% of corporate board seats in Switzerland, slightly above the European average. 67% of the firms have at least one female board member, which is also above average. But there is a huge difference with the percentage of companies which have more than one woman on their board, which scores at a low 13%.

Female representation in top management is at 6%.

Swiss “women on boards” corporate champion is Migros, with 21%.

Female representation on corporate boards	9%
Companies with at least one woman on board	67%
Companies with more than one woman on board	13%
Female representation in top management	6%

Source: EuropeanPWN BoardWomen Monitor – May 2004

Table 6 - Switzerland



The Netherlands

The Netherlands are still in the phase of having a token female representative on its boards. Women occupy only 7% of corporate board seats. Only 58% of the companies surveyed have women on their board. The issue of female representation has not been considered as significant by companies in Holland as is clearly demonstrated by the very low percentage of companies with more than one female board member (5%) and women in top management (4%).

Dutch “women on boards” corporate champions are ABNAMro (17%), Wolters Kluwer (17%), Ahold (14%) and KPN (14%).

Female representation on corporate boards	7%
Companies with at least one woman on board	58%
Companies with more than one woman on board	5%
Female representation in top management	4%

Source: EuropeanPWN BoardWomen Monitor – May 2004

Table 7 - The Netherlands



France

In France, women hold only 6% of corporate board seats, just below the European average. The move towards gender diversity is slow since 40% of French companies still do not have any women on their board of directors. Moreover, female representation, when existing, is always very limited: only 20% of French companies have more than one woman on their board.

When looking at the ‘origin’ of the women sitting on a French board we see that 24% are labour union representatives and another 20% are members of the owner’s family. This shows that there is a long way to go for women coming strictly from the business environment who do not have those connections. Among the list below, Eiffage is the only company without a labour union or family representative. Among the French companies reviewed in this survey, 4 women sit on more than 1 board.



French corporate champions are Publicis (27%), Sodexho (27%), Eiffage (17%), Bouygues (16%), and France Telecom (14%).

Female representation on corporate boards	6%
Companies with at least one woman on board	60%
Companies with more than one woman on board	20%
Female representation in top management	5%
BoardWomen “origin”	
Labour Unions	24%
Family	20%
Others	56%

Source: EuropeanPWN BoardWomen Monitor – May 2004

Table 8 - France



Italy

Italy scores the lowest in Europe for female representation on corporate boards. Of the 15 Italian companies in the study only 2 have women on their boards, or 12%, vs. the European average of 62%. The total number of corporate board seats occupied by women is a mere 2.2% vs. the European average of 8%. The Italian corporate champion is La Fondaria but the women representatives have strong ties to the owning family. Promoting women in business and from within the business world is still not a part of the culture or habits of Italian companies.

Female representation on corporate boards	2%
Companies with at least one woman on board	12%
Companies with more than one woman on board	6%
Female representation in top management	3%

Source: EuropeanPWN BoardWomen Monitor – May 2004

Table 9 - Italy



Part Three:
Impact of Diversity and Independence
on Board Effectiveness



***Speech at European Professional Women's Network in
Paris, February 10, 2005***

***Chris Thomas, Leader, Board Consulting Practice Group,
Egon Zehnder International***

Introduction

The purpose of the study that we undertook in conjunction with the European Professional Women's Network was to look at two of the more obvious signs of diversity on the boards of Europe's largest companies. More specifically, we looked at the number of female board members and at the number of directors who are not nationals of the country where the company is headquartered.

Governance Codes

Since May 1999 when the OECD released its first "Principles of Corporate Governance" which it subsequently revised in May 2004, more than 40 codes or sets of principles have been introduced in the OECD area alone. This includes Vienot II July 1999 and the Bouton Report Sept 2002 in France or the Combined Code July 2003 in the UK for example. The typical form of these codes has been a mix of legal and regulatory instruments and voluntary approaches



frequently backed by an obligation to comply or explain, or at the very least to disclose.

The corporate governance codes of the early 2000s were introduced by governments and regulators in response to the business failures of the late 20th century. These failures were due, as is typically the case historically, to bad business plans, poor managerial decisions and outright fraud. Their impact on society was, however, greater than in the past given the size of some of the failures such as Worldcom, Enron, Ahold etc., their coincidence with the bursting of the dot-com bubble, and because personal and corporate pension funds now have a significant part of their assets invested in equities.

Corporate governance, in very broad terms, is the system by which companies are directed and controlled and a code of expectations and conduct is needed if only because of the separation under the capitalist system of ownership, monitoring and control.

The changed or new corporate governance codes have broadly focussed on issues related to disclosure and transparency in financial reporting and risk management and on questions to do with board composition and duties including limiting or eliminating conflicts of interest. Additionally they have sought to introduce better financial and accounting standards and improve auditor independence and external oversight. They have also focussed on shareholder rights including the



equitable treatment of all shareholders, and the positions of other stakeholders are now much more clearly on the agenda.

Despite all the national differences, the new and revised codes have common features. For example, they emphasise that the board must supervise management and that the quality of directors needs to be improved. They also look at ways of improving accountability to shareholders and how better corporate governance and board intervention can improve company performance and improve their access to capital. The codes typically suggest that the key determinants of an effective board are the number of independent or outside Directors, the process leading to the nomination at the selection of new board members, separation of the roles of Chairman and Chief Executive, board size, the creation of specific Board Committee such as audit and remuneration and so on.

As a consequence of the codes, and sometimes as directed by the codes, boards have sought to broaden the pool of individuals from whom they select board members. Increasingly they are using the services of the executive search firms to assist in this endeavour, and the opportunities for women directors have gradually but substantially increased.

The “old boys network” has effectively been badly damaged if not destroyed by the code requirements.



Governance Codes and Board Effectiveness

However, the evidence linking the structure or composition factors to improved company performance is at best questionable and the cost of compliance particularly to the US required Sarbanes-Oxley, SEC and NYSE requirements is particularly high. Given that the evidence linking issues of composition and structure to performance is so scant - is this evolution sustainable?

Regarding the studies, particularly from US, linking the performance of companies with female board members and returns on investment etc.: while many of these studies do not seek to make a causal link between these two factors, the implication of what they have tried to say is very clear. Put very simply, put more women on the board and the company performance will improve.

My own view is that better managed companies will tend to have better managed and structured boards with better people on them and that to isolate one issue, e.g., “females on boards” and link it with company performance is a very tenuous piece of logic.

Board Effectiveness

Interestingly, the developers of the codes of good governance concur with the view that the structures and processes that they recommended do not really lead to



more effective boards. For example, Derek Higgs, the key reformer in the UK, states that, “effective boards depend on the best people and on their behaviours and relationships” and Alain Bouton suggests that, “although procedural rules and recommendations concerning the operation of the board and its committees are essential corporate governance standards, any procedure will only be as good as the people implementing it.”

In essence, they are implying that **there is a difference between satisfactory corporate governance and board effectiveness.**

At Egon Zehnder International, we have been advising boards of Directors on issues related to board membership and more recently on board performance and effectiveness for well over a decade. Perhaps, not surprisingly, given the nature of our profession we are strong believers in the view that it is the quality of people and how they interact rather than how they are classified or arranged which determines whether a board will be effective or not.

Much work has been undertaken in recent times in order to determine what really makes a board effective. I have quoted both Higgs and Bouton. A noted US academic, Jeffrey Sonnenfeld says that “It is not rules and regulations. It is the way people work together that makes a board great.” He argues that there is a strong link between board process and effectiveness and



suggest that an effective board engages in constructive conflict but avoids destructive conflict, works together as a team, knows the appropriate level of strategic involvement and addresses decisions comprehensively.

Another leading academic, Canadian Richard Leblanc similarly contends that board effectiveness is linked to the independence of judgement, competencies and behaviours of the Chairman of the Board; the behavioural posture of the CEO within the boardroom or his/her relationships with the boards; and the effectiveness of individual Directors including their independence of mind, competencies and behaviours.

Based on our experience undertaking board reviews, we believe that an effective board is the result of choosing the right group of people and having them effectively led.

Diversity & Independence

I would now like to return to the two initial concepts of diversity and independence.

Unfortunately, I think that both these words and their place in the debate on good corporate governance and board effectiveness has been shrouded in semantics.

When we think of diversity, we immediately think of gender, nationality or ethnic backgrounds. I suggest this



is because they are the most obvious forms of diversity. However, it can easily be argued that someone who has a background career as a functional specialist as opposed to someone whose career developed as a General Manager will have a different view of the world and thus diverse opinions will be represented.

Similarly, most of the governance codes go out of their way to endeavour to define what independence means. Through elaborate definitions, members of the family of current employees or past employees, significant shareholders, etc. are deemed to lack independence on the grounds that they may or will have conflicts of interest. On the other hand if one thinks of true independence, it is really a state of mind: the ability to think independently and express the views that result from this thinking.

Wisdom of Crowds

As I struggled with these concepts and their meaning sometime in the middle part of the last year, I came across an excellent book published in the US by a staff writer for “The New Yorker”. His name is James Surowiecki and the book is called “The Wisdom of Crowds.”

As the “blurb” says, “In this endlessly fascinating book, Surowiecki explores a deceptively simple idea that has



profound implications: large groups of people are smarter than an elite few, no matter how brilliant—better at solving problems, fostering innovation, coming to wise decisions, even predicting the future.”

In the book, the passage that struck me as most relevant in the context of boards was the following:

“Diversity and independence are important because the best collective decisions are the product of disagreement and contest, not consensus or compromise. An intelligent group does not ask its members to modify their positions in order to let the group reach a decision every one can be happy with. Instead, they figure out how to use mechanisms to aggregate and produce collective judgements to represent not what any one person in the group thinks but rather in some sense what they all think. Paradoxically, the best way for a group to be smart is for each person in it to think and act as independently as possible.”

Surowiecki then goes on to define the four conditions that categorise what he calls “wise crowds” and which therefore need to be understood in the context of an effectively functioning Board of Directors. They are:

- Diversity of opinion: Each person should have some private information even if it is just an eccentric interpretation of the known facts. Diversity adds perspectives that would otherwise be absent and importantly, it weakens some of the destructive characteristics of group decision making. Groups that are too much alike find it harder to



keep learning because each member is bringing less new information to the table.

- **Independence:** Peoples' opinions are not determined by the attitude of those around them. Independence is important to intelligent decision making because it keeps the mistakes people make from being correlated; i.e. it keeps them less dependent on each other for information. Independent individuals are also more likely to have new information rather than the same old data everyone is familiar with.
- **Decentralisation:** People are able to specialize and draw on "local knowledge". There are two key characteristics about decentralisation that matter in this context. Firstly, it fosters and is fed by specialization. Specialization tends to make people more productive and efficient and it increases the scope and diversity of the opinions in the system. Secondly, if a person is closer to the problem the more likely he or she to have a good solution.
- **Aggregation:** Some mechanism must exist for turning private judgements into a collective decision. The process of the board meeting allows for the aggregation of diverse, independent and decentralized perspectives if the meeting is well chaired.



Conclusion

So let me now try to bring the threads together.

Based on the multitude of discussions that our consultants have with Chairpersons, with directors and with senior executives we are convinced that corporate governance will remain on the agenda for many years to come. But compliance with the new codes will not be the big issue in the future. Pressure due to listing rules, legislation, investor or public opinion and the like will ensure that “comply or explain” will take hold.

However, if you acknowledge that it has now been established that in the last five years more shareholder value has being destroyed as a result of the strategic mismanagement and poor execution than was lost in all the recent scandals, then within or despite the rules, boards will be seeking to increase their effectiveness and their ability to monitor and support management.

Chairpersons together with nominating committees, if not the board as a whole, must define the governance approaches and style that they wish to adopt. A complex mix of contexts governance, strategic and operational, roles of the board v management and of the board team and relationships with management and within the boardroom must be agreed upon. Directors can then be chosen against this background and for their



potential contributions as individuals and team members based on the competencies and experience required. Board members who have diverse backgrounds, thus ensure balance and accountability exist around the board table, will be chosen and the performance of the board as well as its role, style and membership will be reviewed regularly.

Role of the Non-Executive Director

The crucial role of any non-executive Director, male or female, is to create accountability within the executive team. For this to occur, non-executive Directors or external board members must be capable of challenging, questioning, testing, probing, debating, advising and informing. For executives to take the board seriously and thus to have effective accountability, the value of non-executive Director contributions needs to be recognised. To hold the executives to account, non-executive Directors need to have relevant experience gained elsewhere, an adequate knowledge of the particular board on which they are serving and of the directors they are interacting with, and of the company or business for which the board is responsible. Failure to acquire such an understanding of the company is likely to weaken the credibility and the perceived value of the non-executive Directors' contribution.



Effective non-executive Directors must have the will and the skill to generalise some of their experience and the ability to transfer their knowledge on particular issues to another organisation. They must be engaged but non-executive, they must both challenge and support, and they must demonstrate both independence as well as involvement.

To do this we would argue that all board members need four basic competencies: the knowledge and experience that allow them to demonstrate results orientation, strategic orientation and at the same time be both independent and collaborative.

Thus, the basis for a woman to be a successful Director is the same as it is for a male. The career, which a woman has had as an executive and the exposure that has been gained along the way must be relevant to the task at hand. Thus, to me at least, the idea of searching out potential Directors in an extremely lateral way is one containing very high chance of risk. Relevant experience is the key.

However, if one accepts the arguments on the value of real diversity and independence then women are streets ahead of their male counterparts. It is my firm belief that the opportunities available to women will increase substantially as we move from compliance to performance, a trend that I see as inevitable going forward.

Appendix

List of Women Sitting on Boards of the Top 200 European Companies March 2004

Belgium/Netherlands

Annemieke Roobeek Fortis

Belgium

Cecile Combien Almanuij Group
Beatrice Dubaere-Van Houtte Almanuij Group
Marita Orlant-Heyvaert Almanuij Group

Denmark

Marie Elisabeth Gauffin Arla Foods
Ane Maersk Mc Kinney Uggla AP Moller-Maersk
Leise Maersk Mc Kinney Moller AP Moller-Maersk

Finland

Maija-Liisa Friman Metso
Sirkka Hamalainen Kone
Satu Huber Metso
Birgitta Kantola Fortum
Donna Kaufman Upm-Kymmene
Barbara Kux Stora Enso
Maarit Nakyva Kesko
Leena Saarinen Outokumpu
Marjorie Scardino Nokia
Soili Suonoja Outokumpu

France

Delphine Arnault	LVMH
Elizabeth Badinter	Publicis Groupe
Patricia Barbizet	Air France, Bouygues, Pinault-Printemps-Redoute
Astrid Bellon	Sodexo Alliance
Monique Bercault	Publicis Groupe
Francoise Bettencourt Meyers	L'Oréal
Liliane Bettencourt	L'Oréal
Isabelle Bouillot	Accor, Saint-Gobain
Madame Bouyges	Bouygues
Beatrice Breneol	Eiffage
Sophie Clamens	Sodexo Alliance
Marie-Christine Coisne	Sonepar
Sophie Dulac	Publicis Groupe
Sylvia Jay	Carrefour
Sylvia Jay	Saint-Gobain
Maree-Josee Kravis	Vivendi Universal
Anne Lauvergeon	Suez, Total
Elizabeth Lulin	Societe Generale
Veronique Morali	Eiffage, Valeo
Helene Ploix	BNP Paribas, Lafarge, Publicis Groupe
Seham Razzouqi	Aventis
Marie-Helene Roncoroni	PSA Peugeot Citroen
Nathalie Szabo	Sodexo Alliance

Germany

Simone Bagel-Trah	Henkel Group
Jella S Benner-Heinacher	Tui
Karin Benz-Overhage	BMW
Heide Detmar	Franz Haniel
Heidi Esche	Franz Haniel
Anke Fuchs	RAG
Susanne Klatten	BMW

Renate Kocher	Allianz, BASF, MAN
Gabriele Kroner	Fresenius
Liz Mohn	Bertelsmann
Ulrike Staake	Deutsche Post
Elke Stickle	Franz Haniel
Irmgard Ulderup	Zf Friedrichshafen
Grigitte Weber	Henkel Group
Anneliese Wilsch-Irrgang	Henkel Group
Margareta Wolf	Die Bahn Ex-Deutsche Bahn

Italy

Giulia Maria Ligresti	La Fondiaria, Pirelli
Jonella Ligresti	La Fondiaria

Netherlands

Virginia Bottomley	Akzo Nobel
Judy Boynton	Shell Transport
Eileen Buttle	Shell Transport
Baroness Chalker	Unilever
Jane Frost	Wolters-Kluwer
Louise Groenman	ABN AMRO
Luella Gross Goldberg	ING Group
Nina Henderson	Shell Transport
CCM Kolster-Ruigrok	Gasunie
Trude Maas-de Brouwer	ABN AMRO
Toni Rembe	Aegon
Cynthia Schneider	Ahold
Lutgart van den Berghe	KLM
Marieke van LierLels	KPN

Norway

Siri Austeng	KLP
Hanne de Mora	Telenor
Lone Fonss Schroder	Aker Kvaerner
Elisabeth Grieg	Norsk Hydro
Anne Grimsrud	KLP

Anne Chatrine Hoeg Rasmussen	Norsk Hydro
Liselott Kilaas	Telenor
Berit Kjoll	Den Norske Bank
Kaci Kullman Five	Statoil
Anne Birgitte Lundholt	Orkla
Gisele Marchand	Norske Skog
Ase Aulie Michelet	Orkla
Ingvild Myhre	Norsk Hydro
Kate Rodin	Aker Kvaerner
Eli Saetersmoen	Statoil
Grace Skaugen	Statoil
Ingjerd Skjedrum	Den Norske Bank
Anne Carine Tanum	Den Norske Bank
Bjorg Ven	Telenor

Spain

Ana Botin	Santander Central Hispano
Maria Isabel Gabarro Miquel	Abertis
Carmen Godia Bull	Abertis
Rosalie Mera	Inditex
Irene Miller	Inditex
Susana Rodriguez Vidarte	BBVA

Sweden

Maarit Aarni	Vattenfall
Indra Asander	Svenska Cellulosa
Monica Bergstrom	Ericsson
Malin Bjonberg	Electrolux
Annika Bolin	Securitas
Peggy Bruzelius	Electrolux
Lone Fons Schrodter	Vattenfall
Ulrika Francke	Skanska
Haruka Fukuda	Volvo
Jane Garvey	Skanska
Yvonne Karlsson	Teliasonera
Briet Kjoll	SAS

Neelie Kroes	Volvo
Eva Liljeblom	Teliasonera
Christina Palm	Skanska
Anitra Steen	SAS
Caroline Sundewall	Teliasonera
Barbara Thoralfsson	Electrolux
Lena Torell	Ericsson
Berith Westman	Teliasonera

Switzerland

Birgit Breuel	Novartis
Jacqueline Demierre	Swisscom
Rajna Gibson	Swiss Re
Rosalind Gilmore	Zurich
DeAnne Julius	Roche
Irene Kaufmann-Brandi	Coop
Kirsten Rausing	Tetra Laval
Lilia Rebsamen	Coop
Franziska Tschudi	Swiss Life

UK

Helen Alexander	Centrica
Kate Avery	Legal & General
Mair Barnes	Scottish Power
Ornella Barra	Alliance Unichem
Michele Barzach	Glaxosmithkline
Sue Birley	BAE Systems
Amy Bondurat	Rolls-Royce
Alison Carnwath	Gallaher Group
Marisa Cassoni	Royal Mail Group
Anna Catalano	Aviva
Rita Clifton	Dixons Group
Hilary Cropper	Barclays
Sandra Dawson	Barclays
Nancy Jane de Lisi	Sabmiller
June de Moller	Sainsbury

Baroness Dunn	HSBC
Rona Fairhead	HSBC, Pearson
Valerie Gooding	Compass Group
Frances Heaton	Legal & General
Jane Henney	AstraZeneca
Michele Hooper	AstraZeneca
Susan Hooper	Royal & Sun Alliance
Beverley Hudson	Legal & General
Penny Hughes	Vodafone
Judi Johansen	Scottish Power
Margaret Joy	BT
Deanne Julius	BP, Lloyds
Angela Knight	Lloyds
Neelie Kroes	MM02
Maria Lilja	Diageo
Ana Maria Llopis	BAT
Bridget Macaskill	Prudential, Sainsbury
Eileen MacKay	Royal Bank of Scotland
Patricia Mann	Centrica
Coline McConville	HBOS
Erna Moller	AstraZeneca
Veronique Morali	Tesco
Baroness Noakes	ICI
Baroness O'Cathain	British Airways
Kathleen O'Donovan	Prudential
Bridget Ogilvie	AstraZeneca
Louise Patten	GUS, Somerfield
Carole Piwnica	Aviva
Helene Ploix	Boots Group
Laurel Powers-Freeling	Marks & Spencer
Alison Reed	Marks & Spencer
Maria Richter	NGT Group
Stella Rimington	Marks & Spencer
Margaret Salmon	Kingfisher
Marjorie Scardino	Pearson
Lucy Shapiro	Glaxosmithkline

CS Taylor

Rosemary Thorne

Elizabeth Vallance

Helen Weir

Sara Weller

Baroness Wilcox

HSBC

Royal Mail Group

Aviva

Lloyds

Sainsbury

Cadbury Schweppes

Resource List

Documents / Articles / Books

“Leveraging Diversity to Maximum Advantage: The Business Case for Appointing More Women to Boards” - by Carol Stephenson, IVEY Business Journal, Sept/Oct 2004

“Women on Boards – Not Just the Right Thing but the ‘Bright’ Thing” by David A.H. Brown, Debra L. Brown and Vanessa Anastasopoulos, The Conference Board of Canada Report, May 2002

“The Bottom Line: Connecting Corporate Performance and Gender Diversity” – by Catalyst, 2004, codeD58 ISBN#0-89584-244.0

Web Sites

www.europeanpwn.net/tht_wob/tht_wob.html	EuropeanPWN Think Tank on Women on Boards
www.ifa-asso.com	Institut Français des Administrateurs
www.icd.ca	Institute of Corporate Directors, Canada
www.conferenceboard.ca	Conference Board of Canada
www.directorsandboards.com	Directors & Boards Journal
www.ecgi.org	European Corporate Governance Institute
www.catalystwomen.org	Catalyst

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What is EuropeanPWN?

EuropeanPWN is a vibrant network of international professional women aimed at promoting professional progress. The association's objective is to give women the tools, networks and training they need to assume leadership. EuropeanPWN connects more than 2,000 members across national networks in Europe's major cities.

Mission

- Promote the professional progress of women through all their career phases, from potential through the pipeline to power by networking, mentoring and training.
- Promote sustainable professional career paths for all by working to disseminate information on innovative best practices.
- Encourage companies to recognise the necessity of diverse and innovative management approaches and the need to maximise the human and creative potential of all employees by promoting women's success stories.
- Raise the volume of European women's voices by increasing women's presence in the media and public life.

Ambition

- To build Europe's pre-eminent online and offline professional women's network dedicated to leading positive and progressive change for and through their organizations.
- The European network focuses on raising our voices, connecting the generations and sharing best practices and knowledge across Europe.
- National networks focus on developing offline networking, training and personal development for women in their cities and countries.

Benefits

For Individuals: Network with a highly international pan-European group of peers, exchange information and skills, increase visibility in the business community and promote your own career development.

For Companies: Offer women employees access to a cross-sector networking platform and participate in a forum for exchanging best practices on managing diversity

Key Initiatives

Website – Think Tank, networking and Mentoring:

EuropeanPWN's website is a central pillar that brings members together. Sophisticated software and powerful networking tools encourage cross-border, cross-sector as well as crucial inter-generational communication. Our renowned Think Tank is a succinct, easy-to-read summary of some of the best research on the issue of women, careers and organisations. It is nourished by European-wide input from national associations and is an essential European information resource for professional women.

Women Leading Change: To heighten visibility of women who are leading change in Europe the EuropeanPWN website regularly features a list of interesting and successful women who are having an impact – on their companies, on their countries or on Europe.

Women on Boards: Building on our bi-annual EuropeanPWN BoardWomen Monitor, Women on Boards is a pole of activities enhancing the visibility of our members interested in being appointed to boards. National networks support women interested in board appointments with relevant training and workshops in association with the leading national players in this area.

Mentoring and Coaching: With funds from the European Community through its Leonardo programme, EuropeanPWN is a partner in testing an ambitious tool to develop online coaching and mentoring for professional women. It aims to create a way for women

to connect easily and efficiently across generations so as to share learning and experience.

Tomorrow's Leaders: Business School Links: An essential part of our cross-generational mentoring role is offering free memberships to students of Europe's top business schools. They benefit from easy access to a wide pool of executive women across Europe and are valuable partners in our online mentoring programme.

Values

Win/win : We seek to lead by serving women, men and the companies for which we work.

Realistic: Our actions are grounded in an experienced, pragmatic understanding of the private sector business world and scrupulous standards of professionalism.

Egalitarian: We believe that women and men are different, complementary and equal in all spheres of personal and professional life.

Positive: We are optimistic and constructive contributors to progress - and we do so with pleasure.

Generous: We recognise the responsibility of privilege and seek to 'give back' to other women and society from a position of relative strength.

Who is Egon Zehnder International?

Egon Zehnder International was founded in 1964 with a distinctive vision and structure aimed at achieving two basic goals – to place the clients’ interests first and to lead the profession in creating value for the clients through the assessment and recruitment of top-level management resources. The firm specialised in assessing and recruiting business leaders with outstanding track records who will create competitive advantage and sustainable value.

EZI’s culture of seamless collaboration and global knowledge sharing allows the firm to go well beyond recruitment in facilitating and influencing business relationships towards value creation.

Underpinning their unique structure is the private ownership which ensures people are motivated solely by the desire to exceed clients’ expectations and remain independent of any outside shareholder interests.

EZI functions in three principal areas: executive search, management appraisal, and board consulting. The firm has 60 offices, all of which are wholly-owned and has approximately 300 Consultants around half of whom are part of the single profit-centre partnership.



EuropeanPWN is a lively forum for over 2,000 international business women across a dozen European cities, and is a recognised voice on issues concerning women's professional progress, career management and corporate best practice. The network was acknowledged by France's *Journal du Management* as one of the country's twelve most influential Think Tanks.

The first European BoardWomen Monitor, run by EuropeanPWN in partnership with Egon Zehnder International, has featured the situation of women on the boards of Europe's top companies. The European BoardWomen Monitor will be updated regularly to track the progress of women in corporate Europe.

Women on Boards: Moving Beyond Tokenism extensively develops the most important findings of the survey.

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