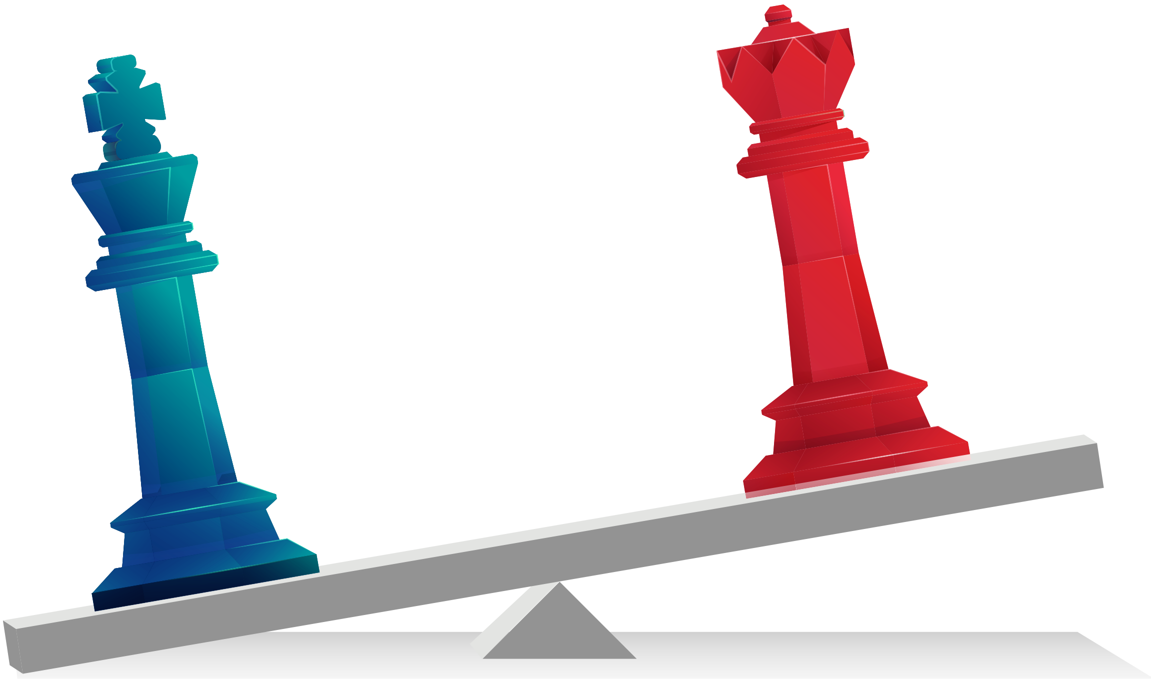
GENDER INTELLIGENCE REPORT 2024

LET'S MOVE TO POWER BALANCE



advance-hsg-report.ch

University of St.Gallen
Research Institute for International Management
www.ccdi.unisg.ch

Advance
GENDER EQUALITY IN BUSINESS
www.weadvance.ch

WELCOME TO THE GENDER INTELLIGENCE REPORT 2024

The Gender Intelligence Report is a collaboration between Advance and the Competence Centre for Diversity & Inclusion at the University of St. Gallen. The annual report creates transparency about the development of gender equality in the Swiss workplace and appears for the 8th time.

The 2024 edition is based on analyzing 370,000 anonymized employees' HR data, of which 138,000 are in management positions from over 90 companies and organizations located in Switzerland. This is a unique data set in quantity and quality, corresponding to almost 7% of the Swiss work force. As organizations largely record the gender category in binary form, the analysis in this report needs to follow this logic. We strongly encourage our members to build the structures needed to be able to include all genders in their statistics in the future.

This year's edition focuses particularly on power distribution and corresponding gaps and what can be done to create more gender equity.

We wish you an inspiring read.

"Imagine we lived in a power-balanced business world where an equal share of women and men were in positions to create a positive impact at scale. I'm convinced that this would be a better place for everyone."

Alkistis Petropaki
General Manager Advance

"When power is distributed more evenly, you unlock diverse perspectives, drive innovation, and create stronger, more resilient leadership teams, achieving greater success for everyone."

Dr. Ines Hartmann
Co-Director Competence Centre for Diversity & Inclusion

CONTENT

	Management summary	**4**
I	**GIR key performance indicators**	**5**
	Gender distribution by management level	5
	Promotions and hiring	9
	Talent pipeline	10
	Retention and attrition	12
	Employment percentages	13
	Implemented inclusion and diversity measures	15
II	**Deep dive: Let’s move to power balance**	**22**
	Unpacking the power gap	22
	From past to present to future definitions of power	34
	How to reshape power dynamics to empower all	36
III	**Gender equality by industry**	**42**
	Banking	43
	Consulting	45
	Insurance	47
	Pharma/med-tech	49
	Public sector	51
	Service sector	53
	Tech industry	55
IV	**Recommendations**	**57**
	Promote Post-heroic Leaders	58
	Empower through Power Sharing	60
	Recognize Privilege and Leverage it for Inclusion (Culture)	62
V	**Best practices**	**64**
	Approach for analysis	**65**
	References	**67**
	Credits	**72**

Management summary

Women comprise about one-fifth of top management positions
There has hardly been any change in women's representation at the various management levels.

Advance member companies are ahead of the game
The Glass Ceiling index has slightly improved compared to last year. With an index of 2.0, Advance members show a pronounced head start vs. non-members with 2.7. The higher the index, the bigger the overrepresentation of men in management positions.

Men remain heavily overrepresented in positions with influence and power
Almost three-quarters of all power positions – measured by the indicator "personnel responsibility" – are in the hands of men. Men get promoted and hired to power positions at between twice and three times the rate of women.

The power gap culminates in an incredible 54% bonus gap
Starting at a 7% difference in gross salary between women and men in non-management, the difference increases to 18% in middle and top management. Looking at bonuses as a condensed expression of perceived employee value, range of power, and influence reveals a stunning average bonus gap of 54%.

Women aspire for power but get less support
Approximately 90% of 1,200 surveyed women desire career advancement across all age groups. 70% indicated they do not receive the necessary support, while men get encouraged to take leadership positions over three times more than women.

Retaining and developing is the new recruiting
Especially in times of skills shortage, talents need to be consciously retained and developed. Companies cannot afford losing so many potential female leaders when moving up the hierarchy ladder, as we currently do. Especially talented women in lower and middle management today need to be retained as they are the pipeline for tomorrow's top management.

Equalizing succession planning for power positions is key to closing the power gap
Consciously giving women access to enablers of power needs to increase and start early to create more balance in power positions. Systematic career sponsorship programs can be game-changing.

How to reshape power dynamics to empower all
In this year's GIR, we show how companies can harness power-sharing to empower the promising diverse talents in their talent pipelines. Most companies have the necessary tools – we show you how to use them.

GIR KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

We present the GIR Key Performance Indicators, a set of KPIs that allow readers to get a snapshot of gender equity in Swiss business. These key figures will be your constant companion through every year's GIR.

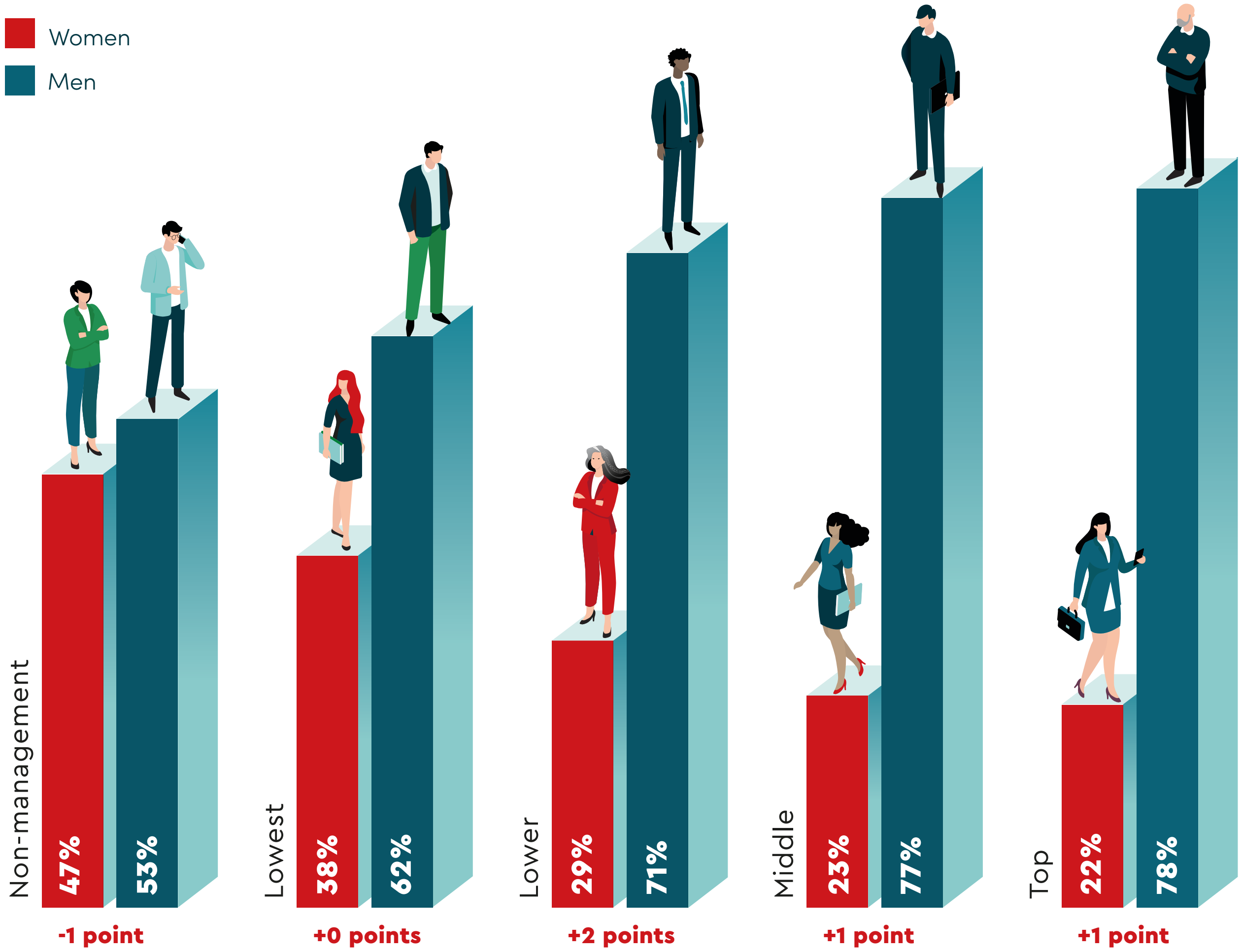
GENDER DISTRIBUTION BY MANAGEMENT LEVEL

A look at the gender distribution at all management levels shows that participating companies still have a long way to go regarding gender parity in the workplace.

Women are still heavily underrepresented at the top

The leaky pipeline, where women are (nearly) equally represented in non-management yet barely represented in top management positions, has been a fixture in the Gender Intelligence Report every year. 2024 is no exception. Although women hold 47% of non-management positions, they are only represented at 22% in top management.

Gender distribution by management level



How we measure progress over time

To show progress over time and allow for accurate comparability, we created a sub-sample of 71 companies with 305,600 employees' HR data from companies that participated in the report in both 2023 and 2024.

Gender representation by management level 2023-2024

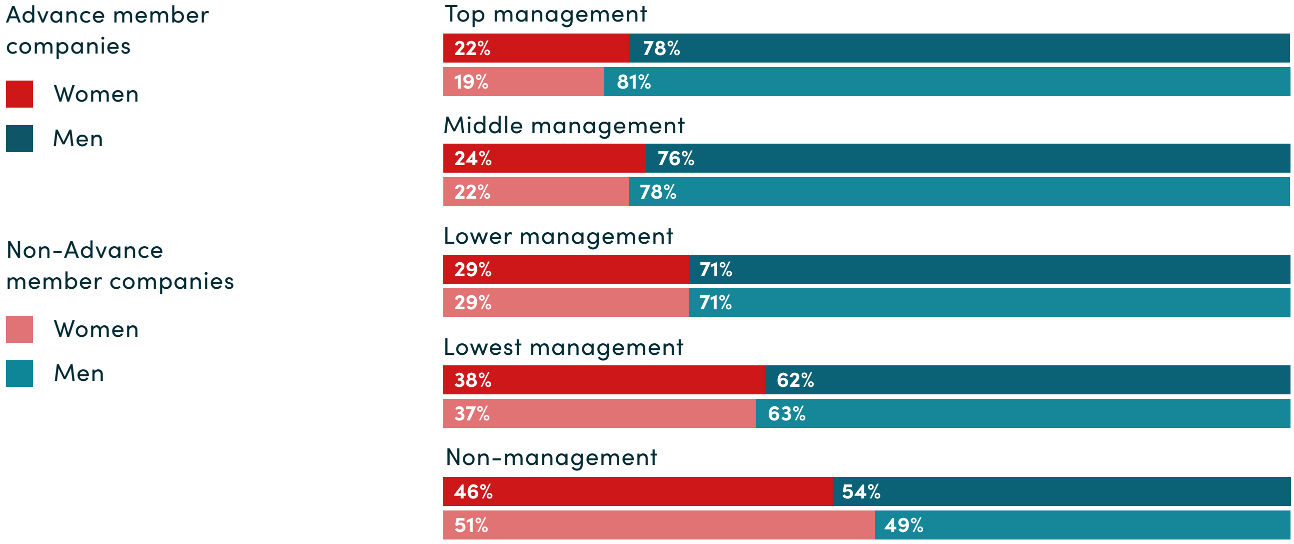
Top management	+1 percentage pointt
Middle management	+1 percentage point
Lower management	+2 percentage points
Lowest management	0 percentage points
Management overall	+1 percentage point

Looking at all management levels, the percentage of women increased by one percentage point between 2023 and 2024. Looking at the different management levels, we can see that the share of women did not change in the lowest management, increased by two percentage points in lower management and by one percentage point in middle management and in top management. This means there is very minimal progress.

Women advance further in Advance member companies

In 2024, Advance members still do better than non-Advance members regarding the share of women at each management level, except for lower management. In top management, women at Advance member companies represent 22% of the total and only 19% in non-Advance companies. However, the pattern is the same in all companies, and the share of women decreases at each management level.

Advance member companies vs. non-Advance members

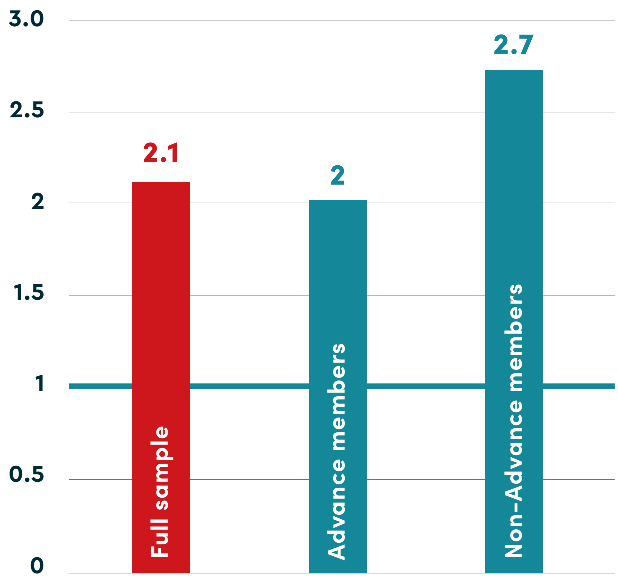


Men occupy power positions

The Glass Ceiling Indey (GCI) shows that across the board, women are underrepresented in middle and top management positions. This is considerably more pronounced in non-Advance than Advance companies.

When looking at the development between 2023 and 2024, there is very limited improvement in the glass ceiling index, it decreased by 0.2.

Glass Ceiling Index – Middle and top management



What does the Glass Ceiling Index (GCI) tell us?

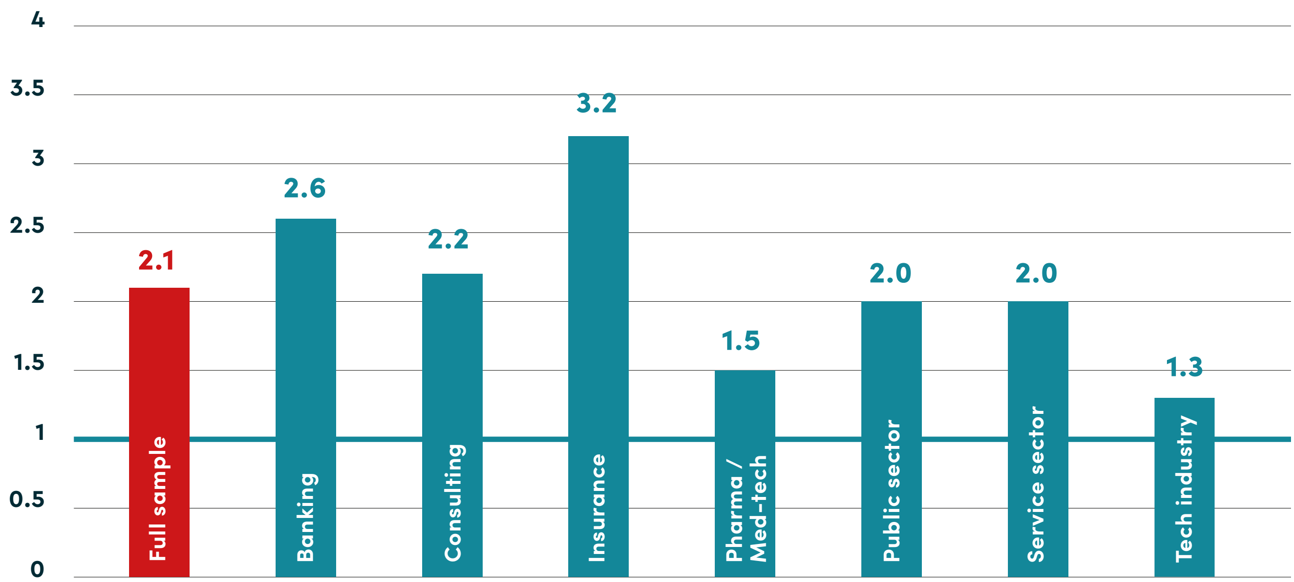
If women are represented in similar proportions across all hierarchy levels they can reach management positions without significant hurdles. The Glass Ceiling Index compares the gender distribution in management (or at a specific management level) with the gender distribution in the overall workforce. A Glass Ceiling Index of 2 would indicate that the overrepresentation of men at a particular management level doubles. If men are represented at a ratio of 1:1.5 in the overall workforce (e.g., 40% to 60%), then at a specific management level, men are represented at a ratio of 1:3 (e.g., 25% to 75%).

A GCI of 1 is optimal and means that the gender distribution at a given management level is the same as in the overall workforce. This optimal value means no female talent is lost on the way up. If the index is above 1, women are underrepresented (compared to their share of the total workforce). The higher the value, the thicker the Glass Ceiling and the more pronounced the overrepresentation of men. If the index is above 1, improvement is shown as a decrease in the index value.

Notable differences in the Glass Ceiling Index among industries

While each industry has different starting points, unique challenges, and specific cultural traits, the Glass Ceiling Index indicates how well a sector uses its diversity pipeline potential via promotions and recruitment.

Glass Ceiling Index by industry – middle and top management

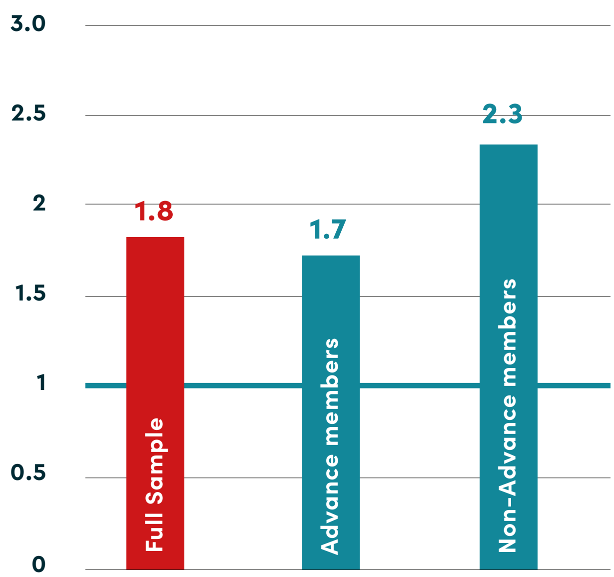


What do the best do better?

The two industries with the best Glass Ceiling Index – Tech industry and Pharma/Med-tech – leverage their female pipeline potential very well through both hires and promotions. Moreover, they have anchored inclusion and diversity in their corporate strategy, recognizing their interconnectedness. They emphasize the importance of inclusive leadership, making it a cornerstone of their leadership development. Consequently, they have implemented inclusion goals for managers, measured by their employees' inclusion perception. Lastly, they care about discovering why employees leave by systematically conducting and analyzing exit interviews.

Gender equality by industry

Power Index



In addition to the GCI, the "Power Index" denotes the gender distribution in positions with personnel responsibility compared to the gender distribution in the overall workforce. The higher this index is, the more underrepresented women are in positions with real influence and decision-making power.

The Power Index shows there is still a way to go until women are equally represented in power positions. Like for the GCI, Advance members do better than non-Advance members when elevating women into influential positions. Between 2023 and 2024, the Power Index has also decreased very slightly by 0.1 points.

PROMOTIONS AND HIRING

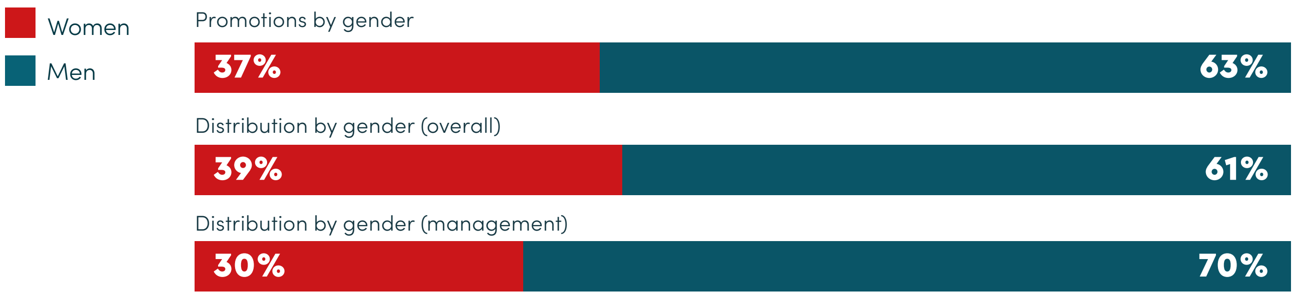
Companies lay the groundwork for building a female talent pipeline through promotions and hiring.

Men are still promoted at higher rates

Compared with their overall share of employees, men are promoted more than women. With 39% of the total average workforce in the sample being female, only 37% of promotions go to women. However, the share of women being promoted is higher than the share of women currently in management (30%), which means promotions help growing the female talent pipeline.

At the same time, at 37%, the share of female promotions is clearly lower than the share of women in non-management (47%), which shows that the talent pool in non-management is not utilized well.

Comparison of female employees and women promoted

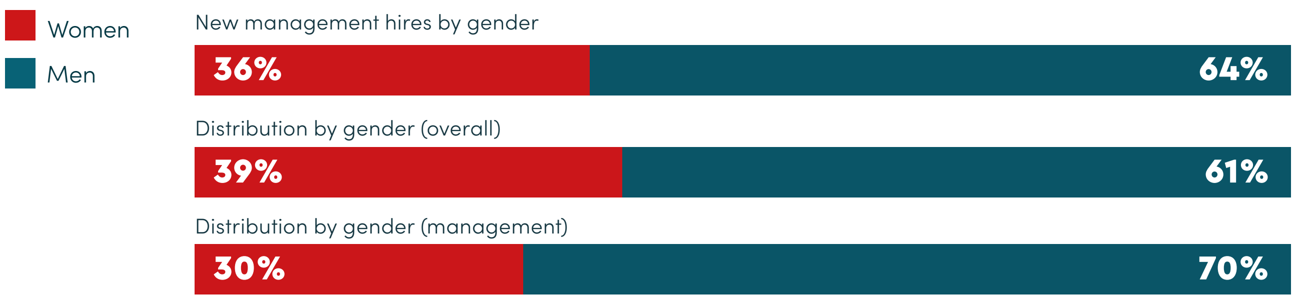


Similar patterns with hiring as with promotions

In management positions, hiring trends slightly contribute to increasing the share of women: 36% of new hires are women compared to 30% already employed in management positions.

However, women are less likely to be hired into management roles compared to their overall share in the workforce. Thus, the same trend holds for management hires and promotions: They contribute to increasing the share of women in management, but the diverse talent pipeline remains underutilized.

Comparison of female employees and women hired into management



TALENT PIPELINE

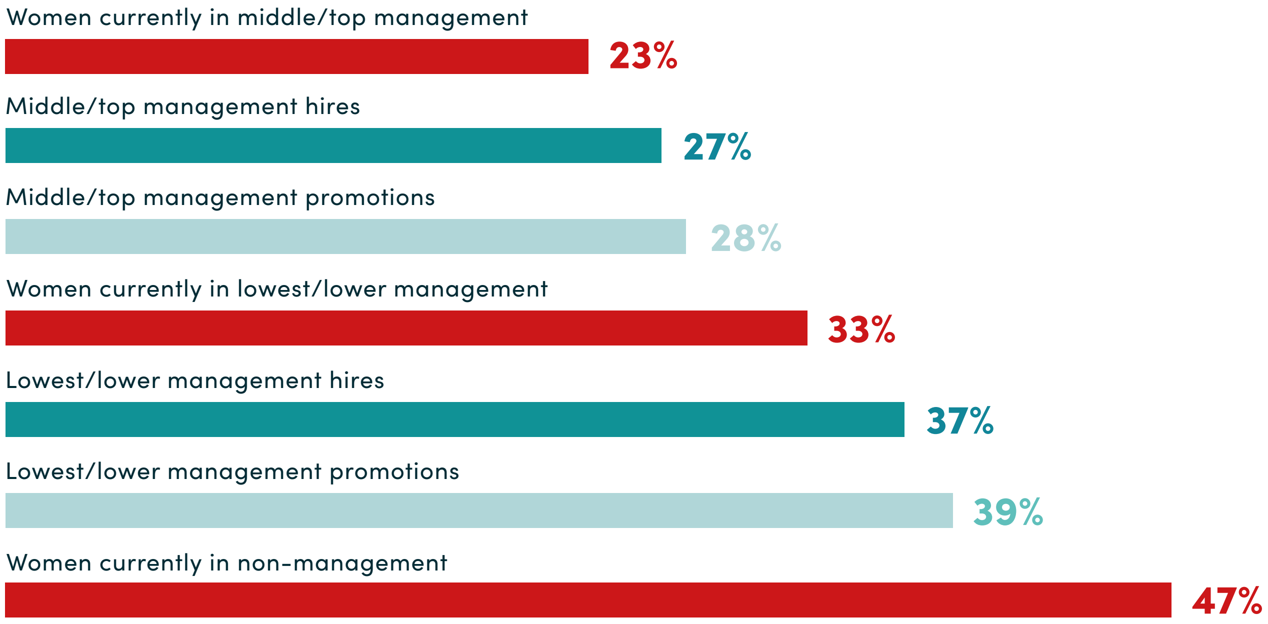
What does a closer look at different management levels reveal about the state and use of female talent pipelines in companies?

Companies are not fully utilizing their (gender) diverse talent pipelines

While women make up 47% of non-management, only 39% of lowest and lower management promotions are women. Among hires for these levels, women's share is even slightly lower with 37%. In lowest and lower management, the percentage of women is 33%. This means that, even though hires and promotions contribute to increasing the proportion of women in lowest and lower management levels, there is much more female talent in non-management that companies don't utilize yet.

We see a similar trend when looking at middle and top management promotions. Women's share among promotions to higher management levels is 28%, showing that the talent pool in lowest and lower management (33% women) is not well utilized. Also, for middle and top management levels, the proportion of women among new hires is slightly lower than that among promotions (27% vs. 28%).

Pipeline management



Minimal progress over time

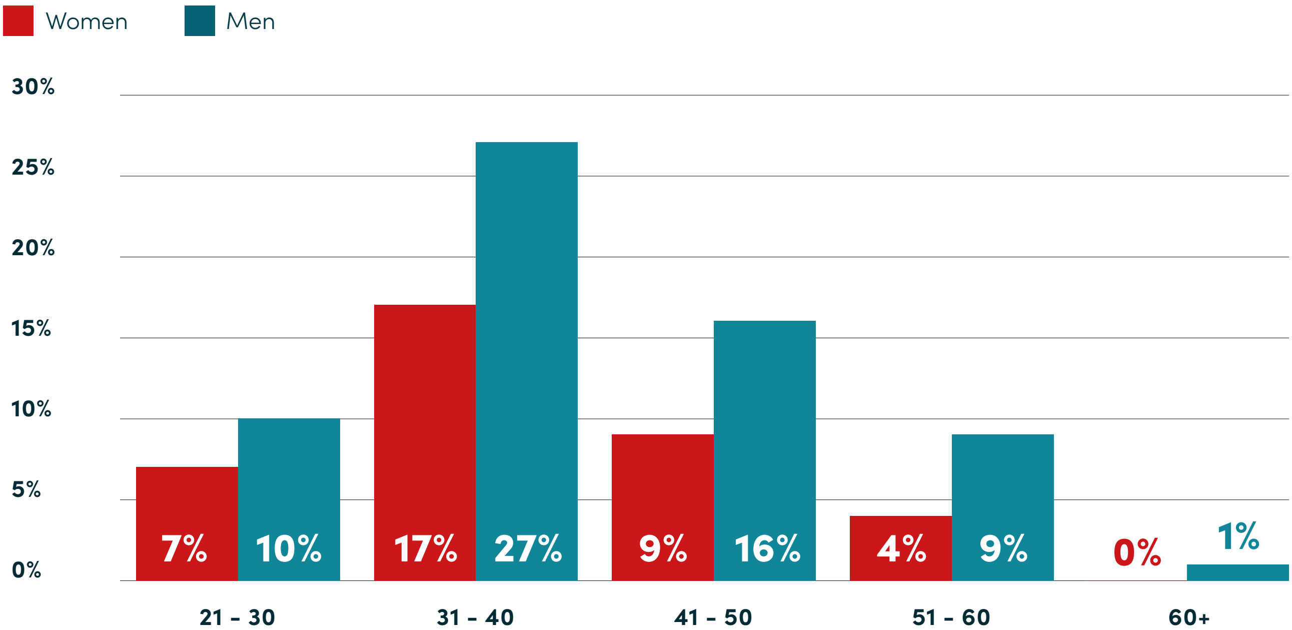
Women in middle/top management	+2 percentage points
Middle/top management hires	+0 percentage points
Middle/top management promotions	-2 percentage points
Women in lowest/lower management	+1 percentage point
Lowest/lower management hires	+2 percentage points
Lowest/lower management promotions	-1 percentage point
Women in non-management	-1 percentage point

Progress between 2023 and 2024 regarding the percentage of women in the different management levels is minimal at one percentage point for lowest and lower management and two percentage points for middle and top management. If we look at personnel movements at different management levels, we see mixed results. The percentage of women in lowest/lower management promotions decreased by one percentage point, the one in middle/top management promotions by two percentage points. The numbers show different results for recruitment: Hires for lowest/lower management increased by two percentage points. Those for middle/top management did not change compared to 2023.

"Family primetime" gives men the career edge

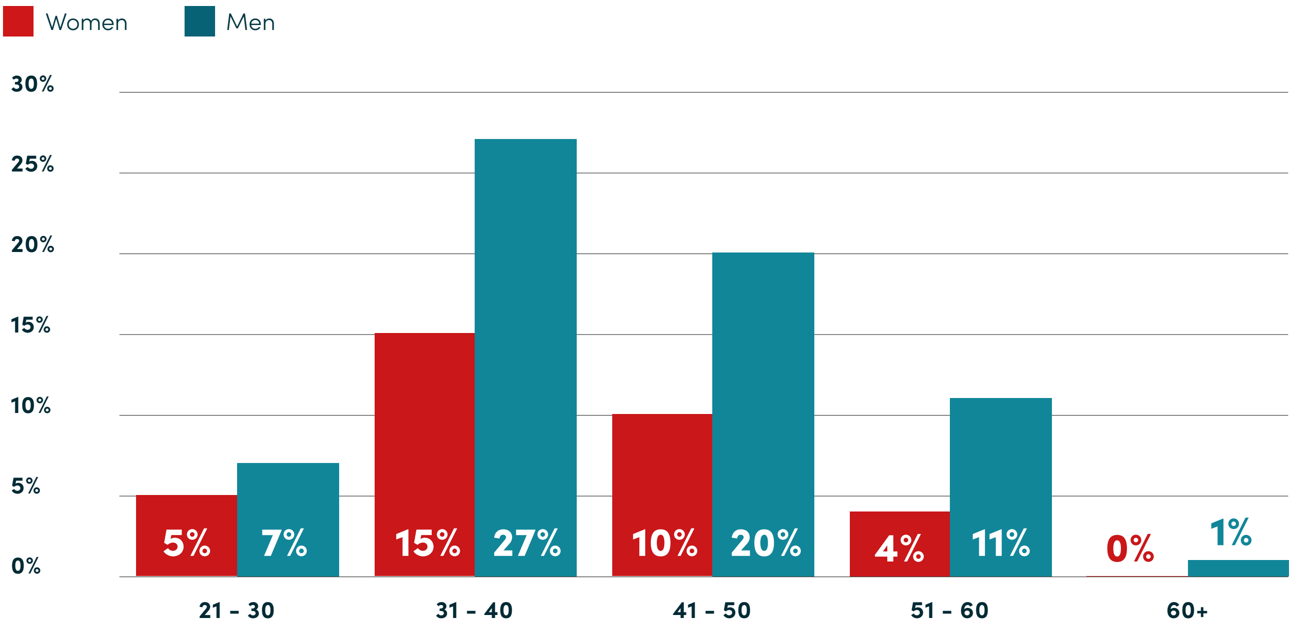
Starting around age 30, men gain an advantage over women. This life period can therefore be viewed as a "career killer" for women and a "career accelerator" for men. There is a small gap between the promotion rates of men and women between 21 and 30. That gap is at its widest between the ages of 31-40, and slightly shrinks as people age.

Percentage of promotions by gender and age



The same tendency holds for management hires. The gap between men's and women's hiring rates starts between 21 and 30 but is at its widest from 31 to 40.

Percentage of management hires by gender and age

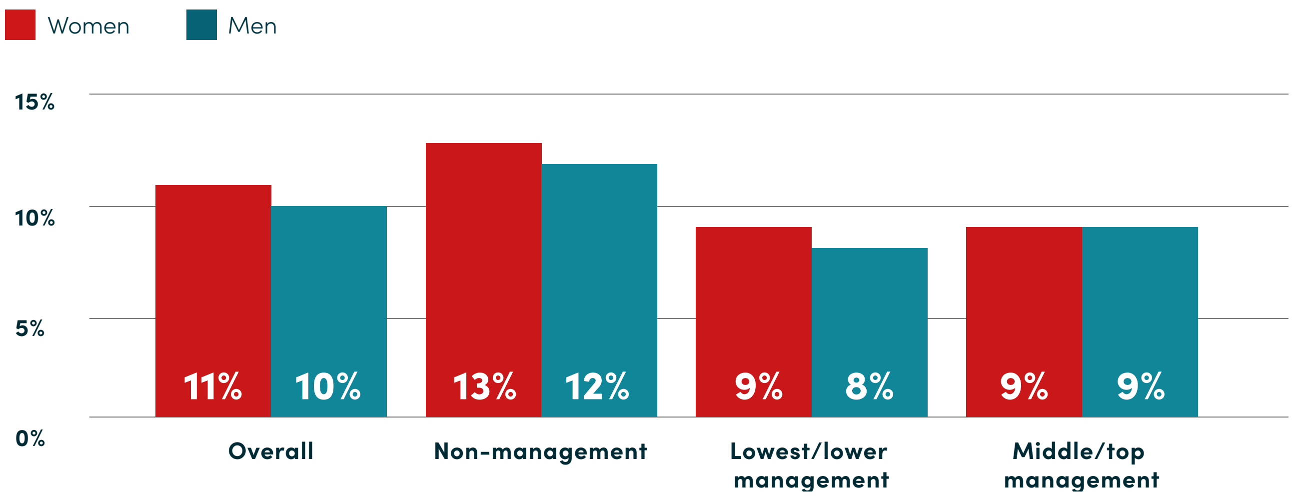


RETENTION AND ATTRITION

The overall attrition rate of women is 11%, and that of men is 10%. In the key "springboard level" of lowest and lower management, the difference between men's and women's attrition rates is also a mere 1 percentage point. Thus, there are no clear indications that women are leaving companies at higher rates than men.

As seen below, the **attrition rate** is the ratio of exits to the number of employees at the end of the previous year plus new hires. The higher the attrition rate, the higher the share of employees of a certain group who are leaving!

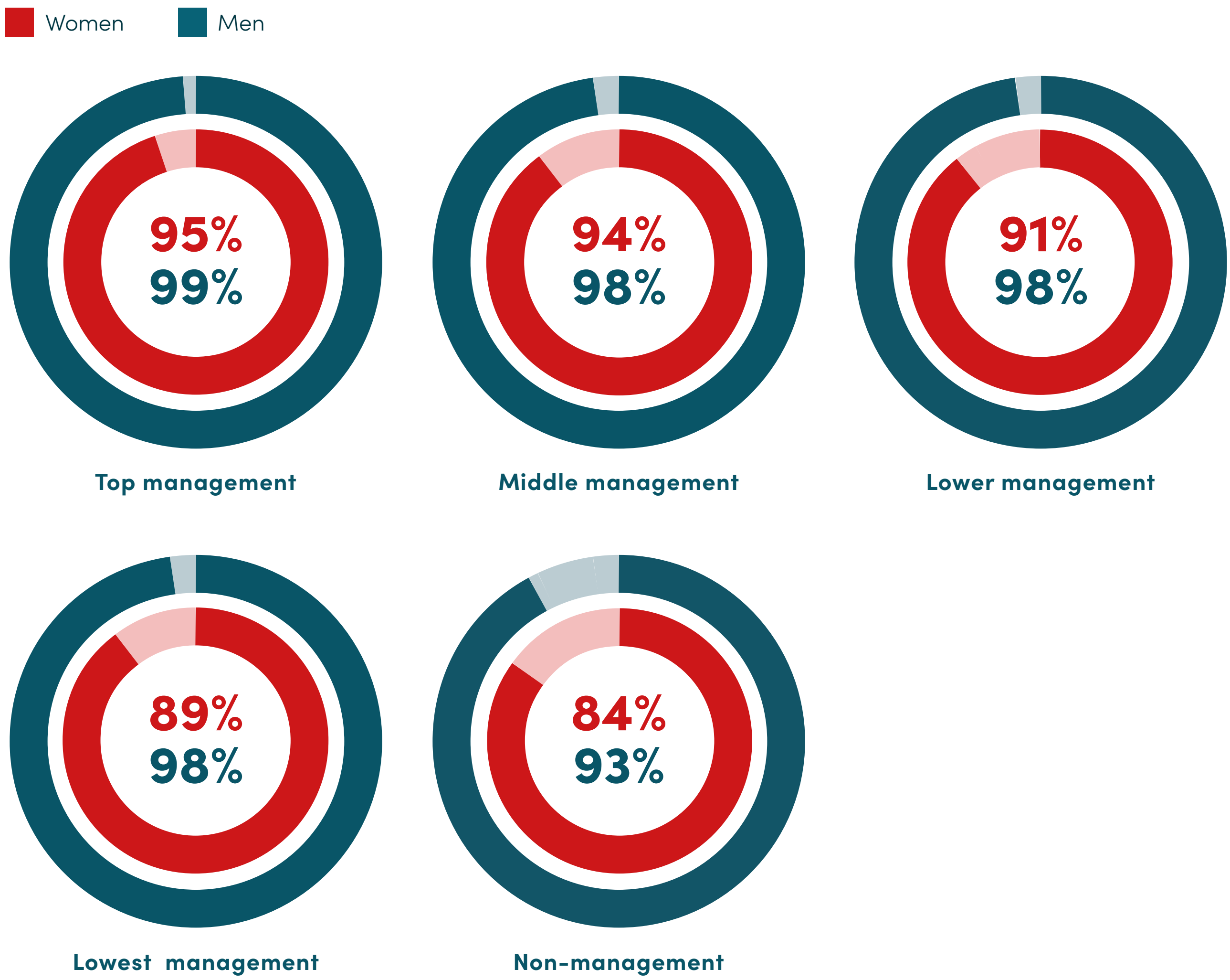
Attrition rate by gender



EMPLOYMENT PERCENTAGES

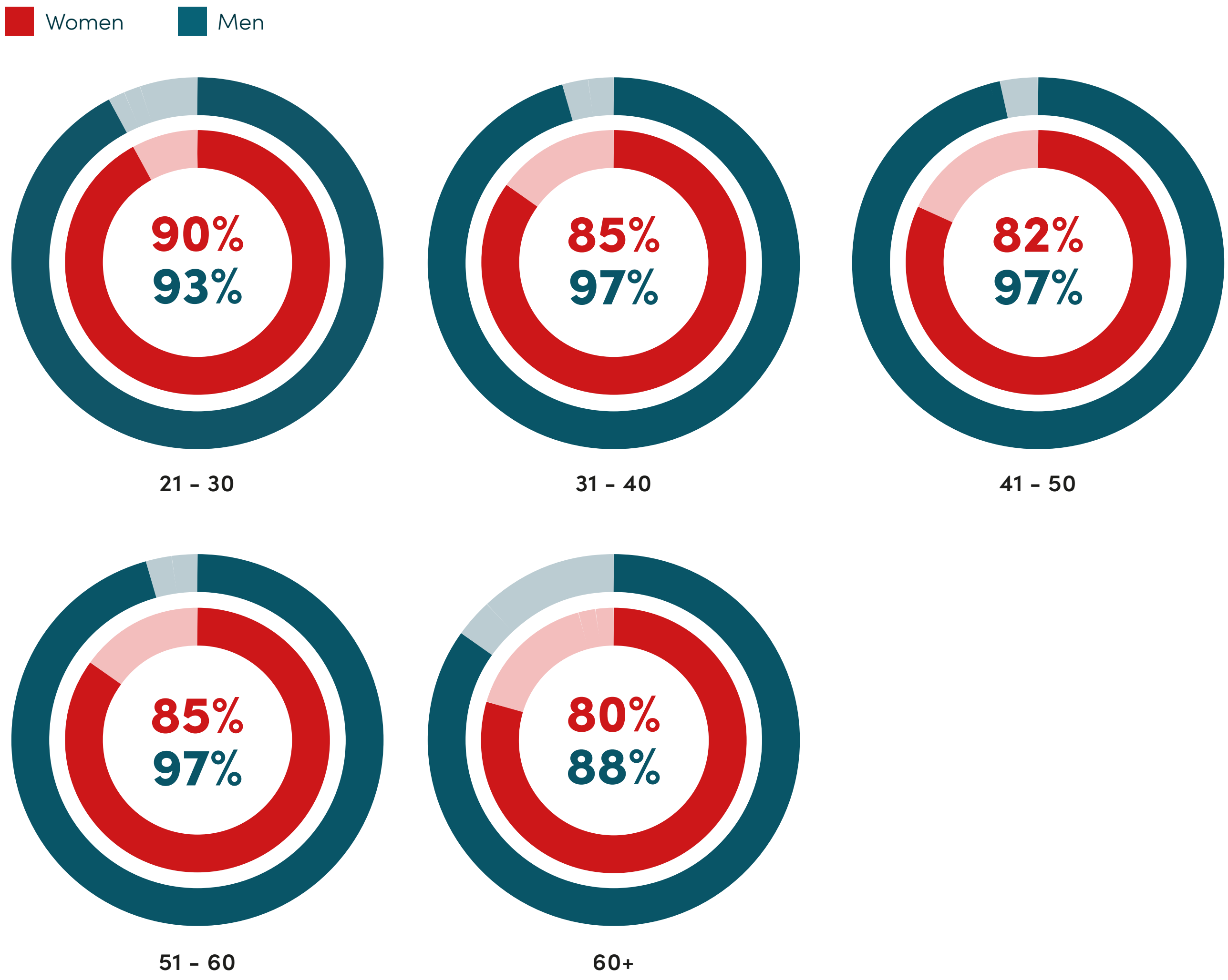
Men work at higher employment percentages (full-time or nearly full-time) at all hierarchical levels. At the same time, women are much more likely to work part-time (though the higher the management level, the closer women's employment percentages edge towards men's). Therefore, women must likely increase their employment rate to achieve a higher level – or be left out of the talent pool for promotions if they work at lower employment percentages.

Employment percentage by gender and management level



This can be challenging due to timing and life phases. Right around "family primetime," women decrease their employment percentages. This timing coincides with the age group where most promotions happen, between ages 31 and 40.

Employment percentage by gender and age



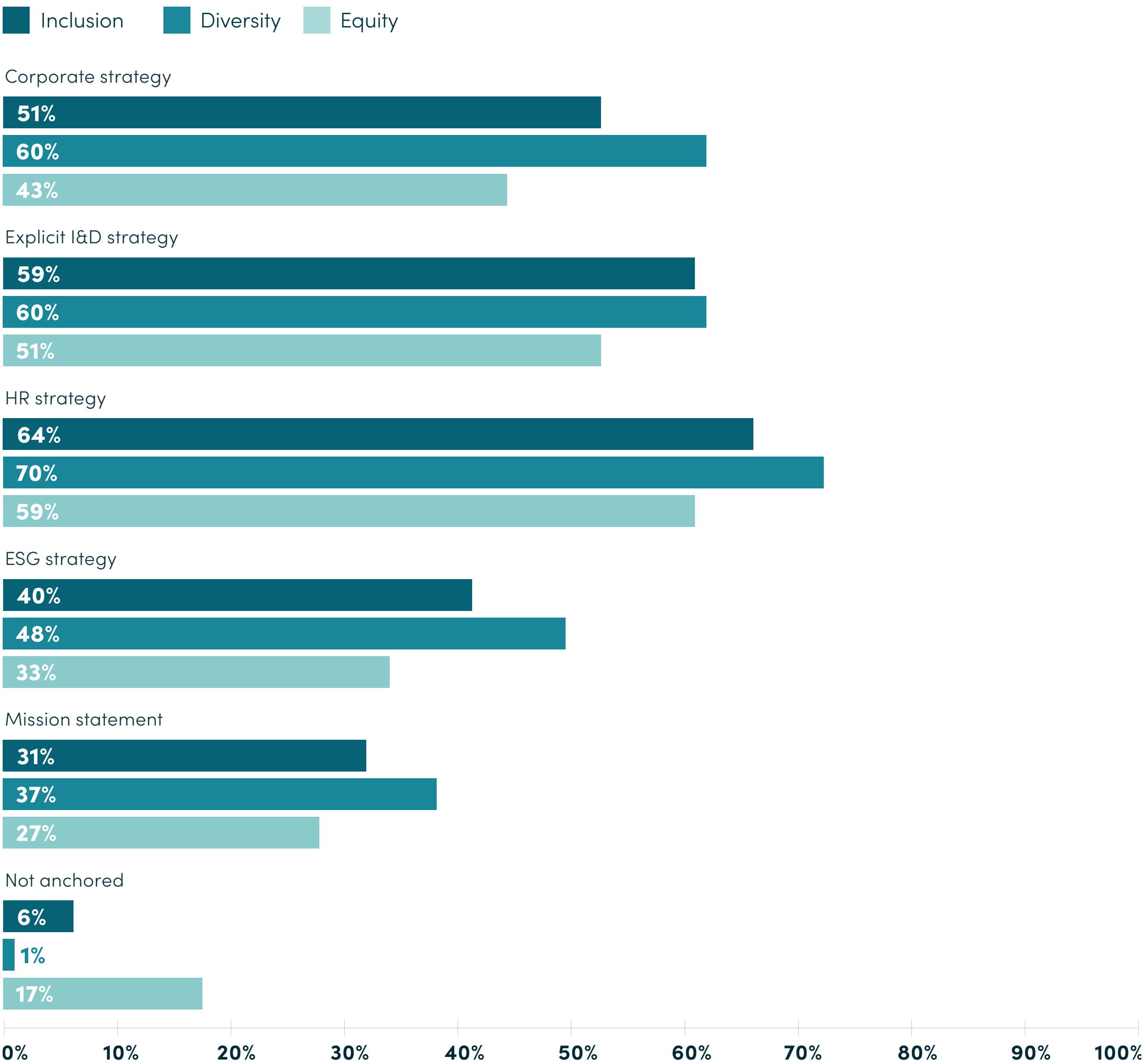
IMPLEMENTED INCLUSION & DIVERSITY MEASURES

Every year, we want to know: How are Swiss companies championing I&D? What are Swiss organizations doing to build inclusive cultures and foster inclusive leadership?

Diversity, equity and inclusion are still mainly HR business

Most Swiss organizations still prioritize diversity over inclusion. Since equity is becoming more and more popular, this was analyzed for the first time this year. This concept is less common but shows a similar pattern with being mostly anchored in companies' HR strategies. As ESG strategies are becoming more widespread, the 2024 survey also included that as a possible answer. Approximately a third (equity) to half (diversity) of the organizations anchor DE&I (also) in an ESG strategy.

How are inclusion and diversity anchored in the organization?

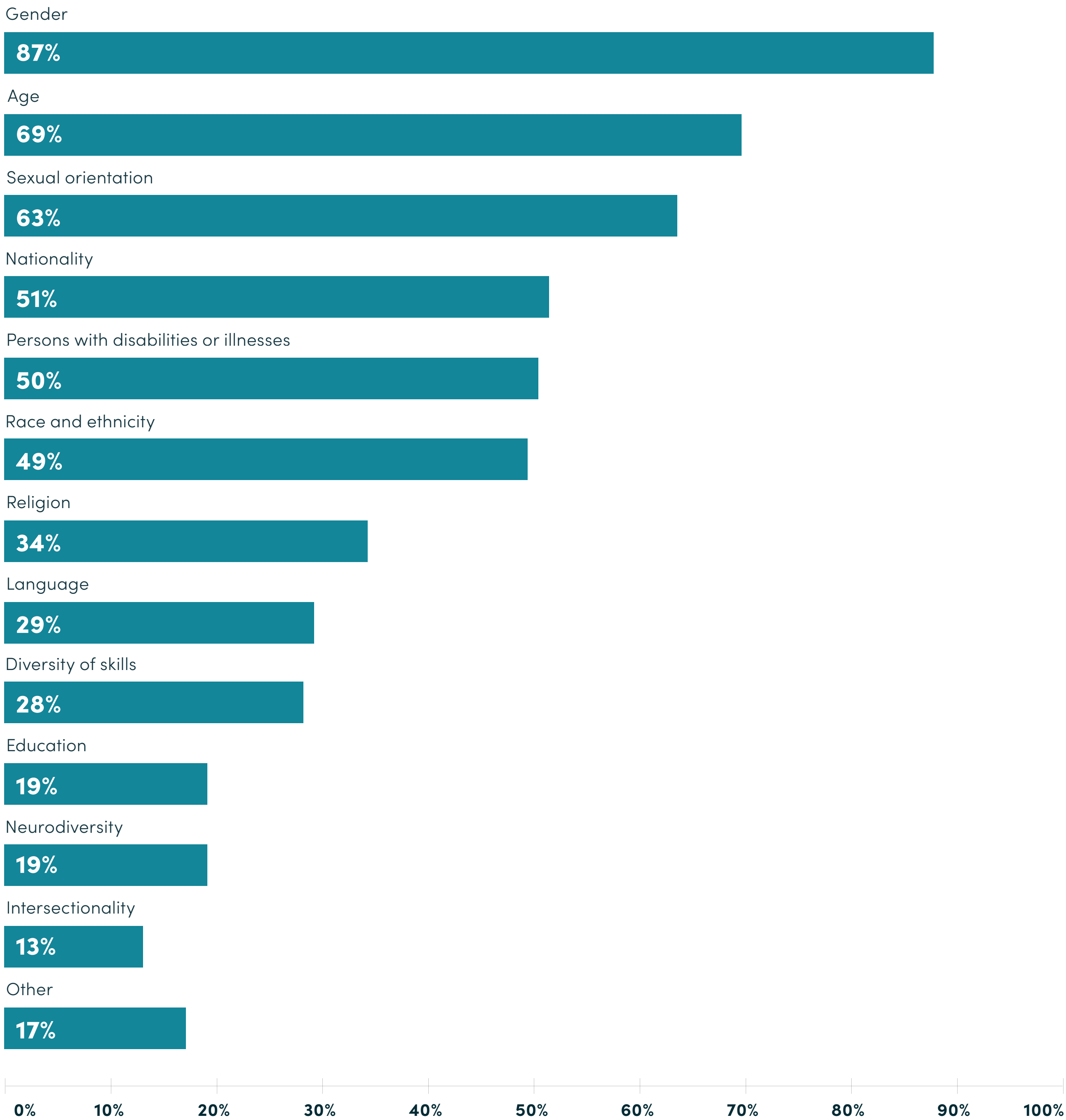


More companies feature diversity than inclusion or equity as part of their HR strategy, DE&I strategy, corporate strategy, or all the above. On the one hand, slightly over half of participating companies mention inclusion and diversity as part of an explicit corporate strategy, while less than half include the concept of equity. About one third tie these concepts into their mission statement and core purpose. This difference in strategy and statement shows an understanding that DE&I may provide benefits to strategy, but are not part of many organizations core values or mission.

Gender diversity as a topical focal point

Looking at the diversity dimensions explicitly named in GIR companies' strategies provides insight into what dimensions are the focus of I&D efforts in different companies. The dimensions mentioned most frequently are gender, age, and sexual orientation, as was already the case in 2023. Approximately half of the companies mention nationality, persons with disabilities or illnesses, and race and ethnicity in their strategy. This is also similar to last year. However, this year there was a noticeable drop in the recognition of "language" and "diversity of skills" as dimensions listed in companies' strategies.

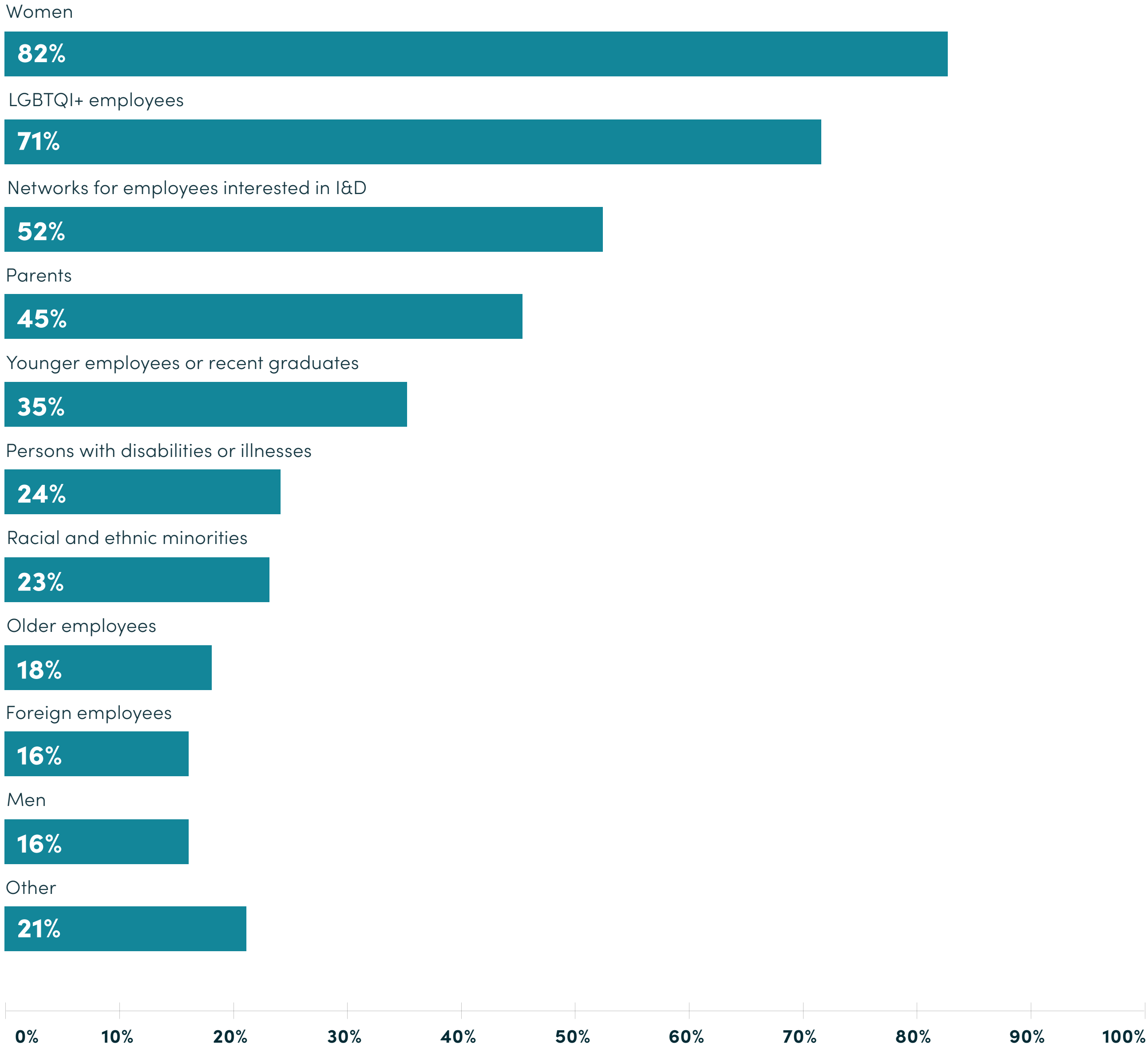
Which diversity dimensions are explicitly mentioned in your strategy?



Trends in I&D networks and employee resource groups follow a very similar pattern. Most companies have ERGs for women, followed by LGBTQI+ employees and networks for employees interested in I&D. This trend is similar to last year, even though the percentage of companies having ERGs for women decreased a bit. The share of companies with ERGs for younger employees or recent graduates, persons with disabilities or illnesses and racial and ethnic minorities remain similar as in 2023.

Notably, 27% of GIR companies don't have any employee networks or ERGs. Again, this is similar to last year's GIR. For some companies, this might be due to their smaller size.

For which groups does your organization have I&D networks or ERGs?



Inclusion goals less common than diversity goals

64% of companies have measurable inclusion goals. While this number may seem high, it is still lower than those companies with measurable diversity goals (78%). Companies focusing on diversity goals without the combination of inclusion goals may promote assimilation into the old organizational culture rather than a sense of value and belonging for diverse employees (Shore et al., 2011). The trend that more companies have diversity than inclusion goals is similar to 2023, however, the difference between the two increased slightly.

Does the organization have measurable I&D goals?

I&D gets measured but not necessarily managed

What gets measured gets done. Approximately three quarters of GIR companies regularly report on I&D.

Is there regular I&D reporting?

Goals hold managers accountable for fostering a diverse workforce and inclusive culture in their teams and units. Inclusion goals for managers may include proven conflict resolution skills, participation in inclusion trainings (e.g., psychological safety or inclusive leadership), team-level results of engagement surveys related to inclusion, etc. Diversity goals hold managers accountable for diversity in their teams and units.

Though only 36% of companies have measurable inclusion goals for managers, and 49% of GIR companies have diversity goals, this is a minimal increase from last year. At the same time, this is approximately half the number of companies who in general have I&D goals. If not managers, who could be responsible for achieving organization-wide I&D goals?

Does the organization have I&D goals for managers?

Unconscious bias trainings are very common

Compared to 2023, fewer companies are offering unconscious bias trainings for managers and HR professionals. However, it does seem like trends in offering unconscious bias trainings for all employees have not changed. Are unconscious bias trainings more streamlined, rather than specialized workshops for HR and managers? Or were these trainings more a one-off initiative?

Does your organization have unconscious bias trainings for...

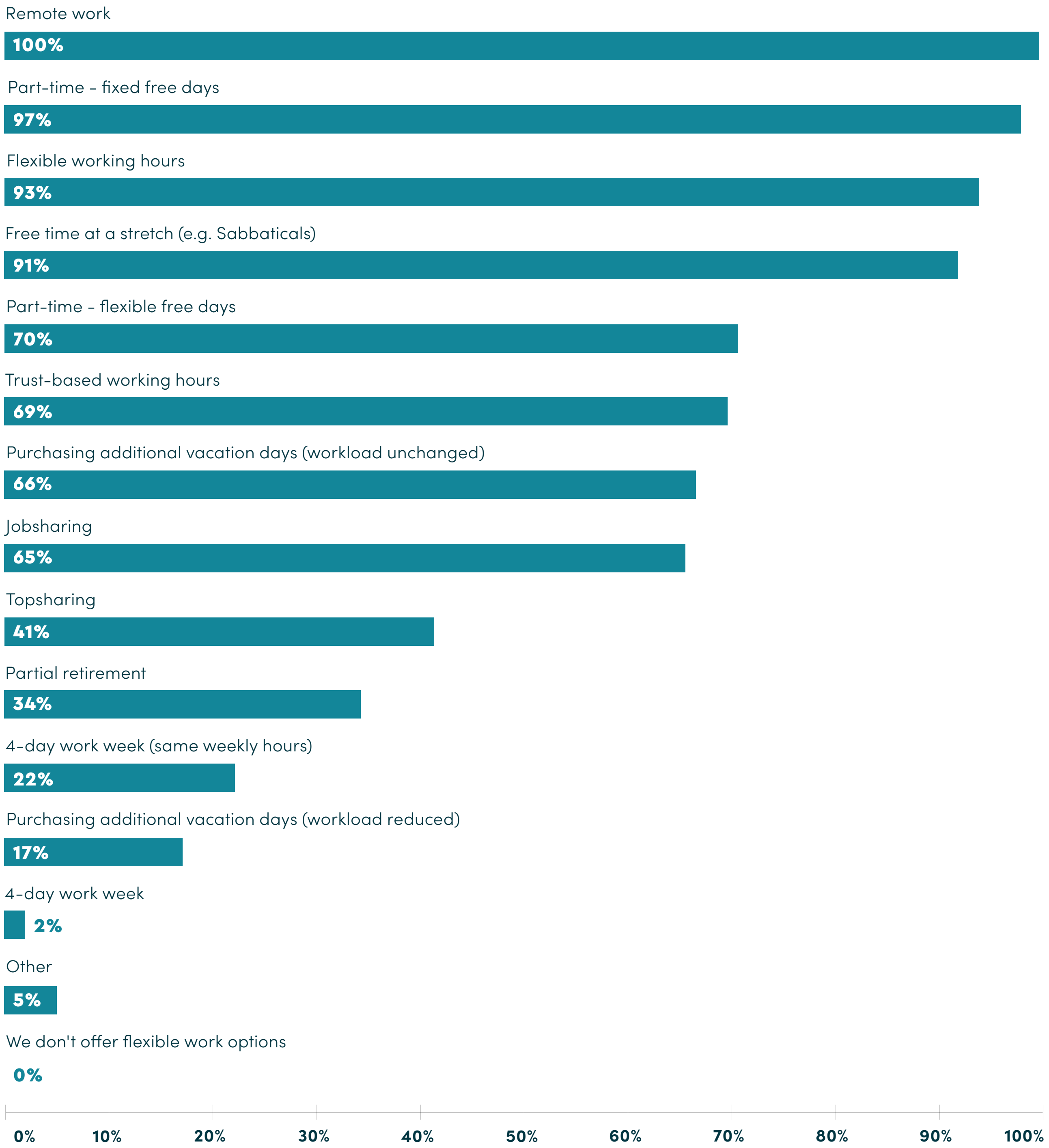
Most companies allow (some) remote work, part-time and flexible hours

Companies have adapted to a new way of work, as all GIR companies offer remote work options. Most companies also offer fixed part-time days, flexible working hours and sabbaticals are common.

65% of companies offer jobsharing for non-leadership positions and 41% offer topsharing. This difference shows that leadership is still considered a one-person, full-time job. And in contrast to many other European countries, the four-day workweek is not common in Switzerland.

In general, the results on flexible work options are very similar as last year.

Which flexible work options does your organization offer?



GIR companies offer slightly more parental leave than required by law

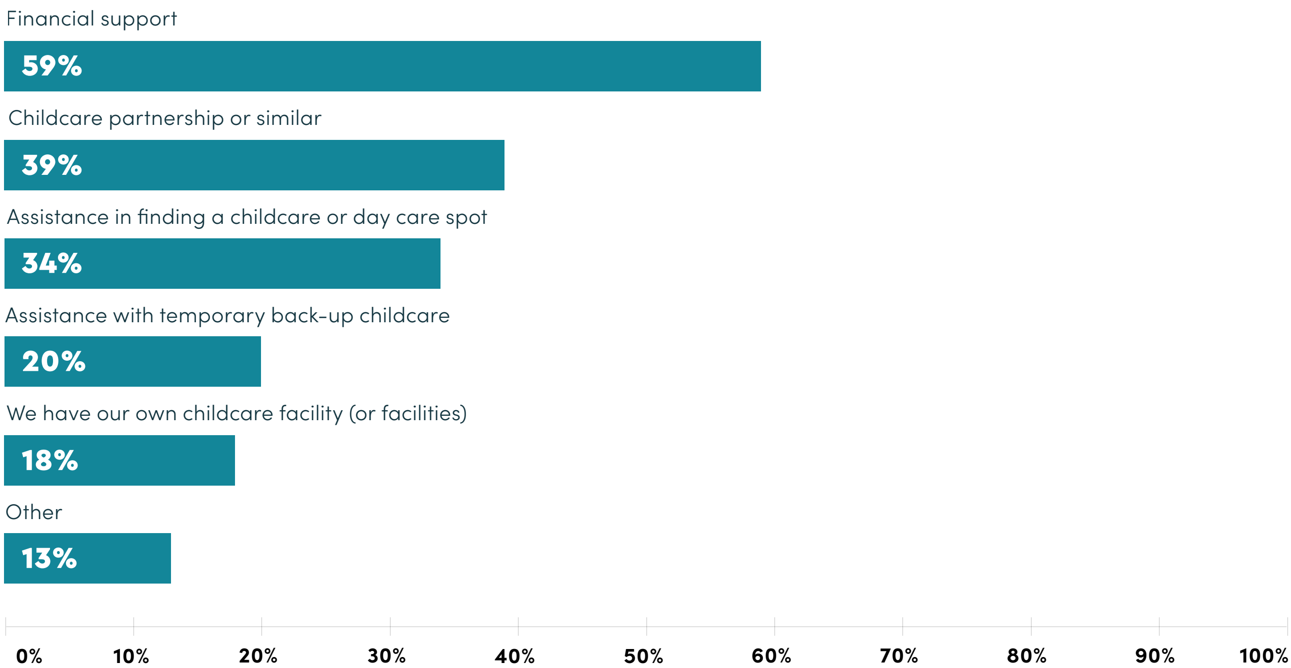
The average GIR company offers more parental leave than is legally required: 17.5 weeks for mothers, 4.3 weeks for fathers, and 9.5 weeks for adoption. The contrast between maternity and paternity leave shows a rather traditional attitude towards caregiving and provider roles for women and men, that is also reflected in the Swiss legal structures. Only 22% of the companies offer parental leave (i.e., shared leave entitlement).

How many weeks is paid...

Two thirds of GIR companies actively support childcare

34% of GIR companies do not support their employees' childcare in any way, even though Switzerland has an expensive and complex childcare system. Among companies that do provide support, 59% provide financial support. Only 18% of GIR companies have their own childcare facility.

How do you support childcare?



CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK

While it seems to become more commonplace to anchor inclusion and diversity in companies' DNA, GIR companies show little progress when it comes to gender diversity. How can we quicken this progress? In this year's focus topic, we call on companies to change power dynamics to increase the representation of women in leadership roles. These measures will not only help women and other (in leadership roles) marginalized groups advance, but also contribute to a better organizational climate.

Recommendations

Read more

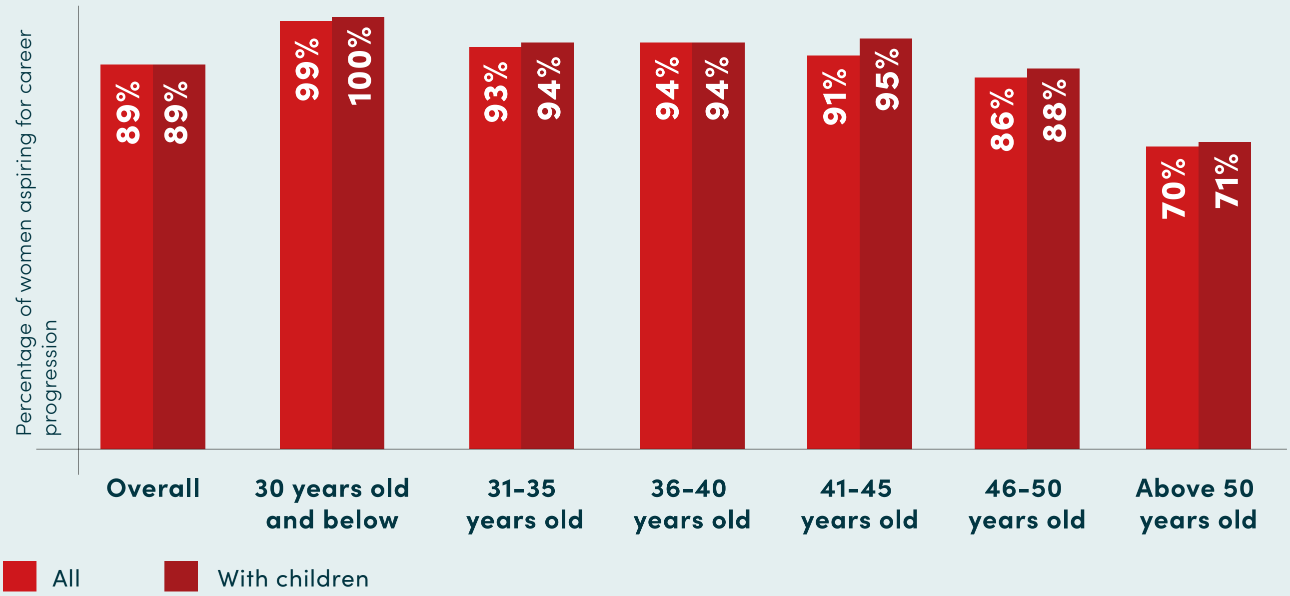
Let's move to power balance

UNPACKING THE POWER GAP

Men have held (most of) the power for millennia. While women's share of management positions has incrementally increased over the last few years, the power imbalance stubbornly persists.

Why are women still looking from the outside in when it comes to power? After all: A dedicated survey of over 1,200 professional women in Switzerland, conducted in 2024 by Advance in collaboration with EY Switzerland and the CCDI, found that approximately 90% of the women surveyed desire career advancement across all age groups. This contradicts the assumption, particularly about women of childbearing age and those who have (smaller) children, that they are not inclined to take on leadership responsibilities. This begs the question: **What is keeping women out of power, and men in power?**

Willingness for career progression



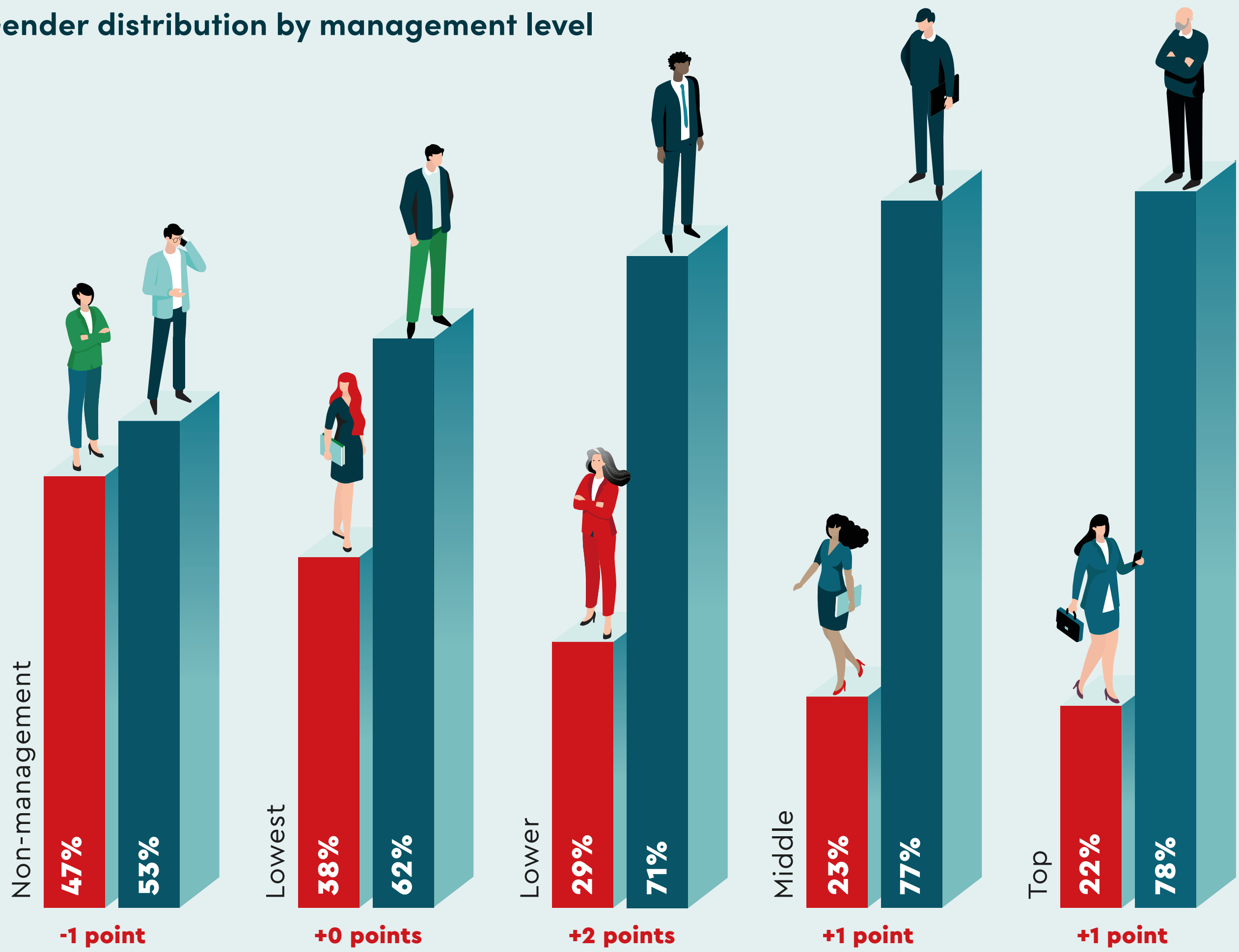
Who is in (real) power?

The key figures paint a clear picture: Women are (heavily) underrepresented in positions of power. They make up only about a fifth of top management positions in the Swiss workplace. Progress remains slow: Increases between zero and two percentage points per management level indicate that the needle moved only slightly compared to last year.

How we measure progress over time

To show progress over time and allow for accurate comparability, we created a sub-sample of 71 companies with 305,600 employees' HR data from companies that participated in the report in both 2023 and 2024.

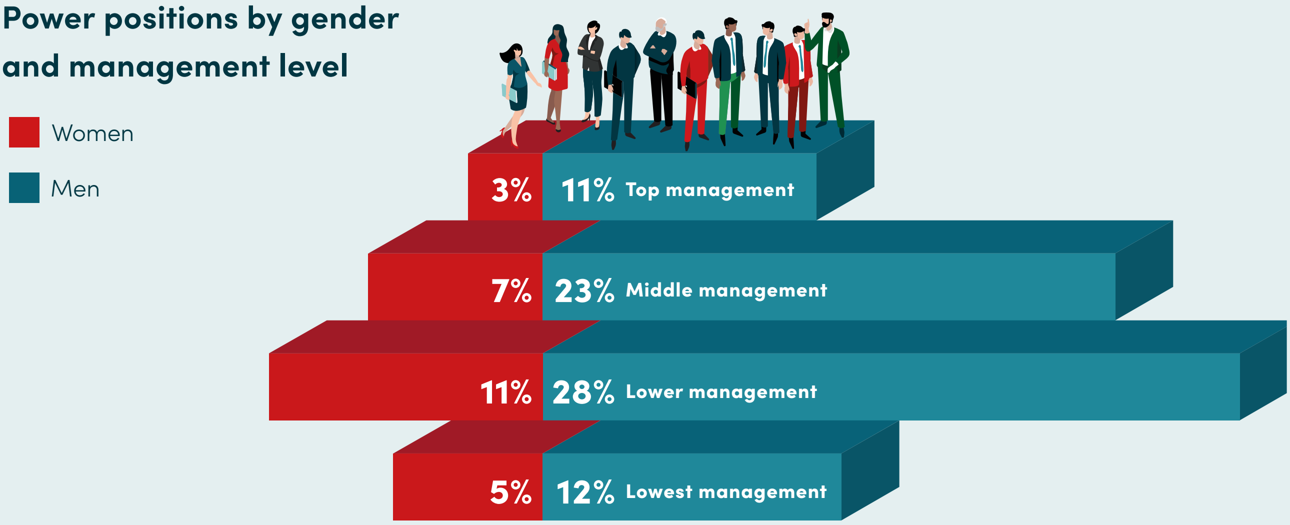
Gender distribution by management level



Even more striking: Men are still very predominant in power positions. This report applies the term "power positions" to roles with the power to make key decisions, plot strategy, steer financial flows, and influence a wider circle of stakeholders. Such roles are measured by the indicator "personnel responsibility" in the data analyzed, as such roles are likely also to comprise profit and loss responsibility and are often career-critical.

Among GIR companies, women hold just 27% of power positions. There is only a small share of such positions in the lowest management, while the bulk is in lower and middle management. On these levels, women are strongly underrepresented. In middle and top management power positions, men's share is more than three times the share of women. And: A recent analysis of almost 1000 large companies around the world showed that women hold just 29% of revenue-generating management roles. These kinds of roles can be steppingstones to the C-suite as they can provide experience in running businesses or making operational decisions (Hall et al., 2024).

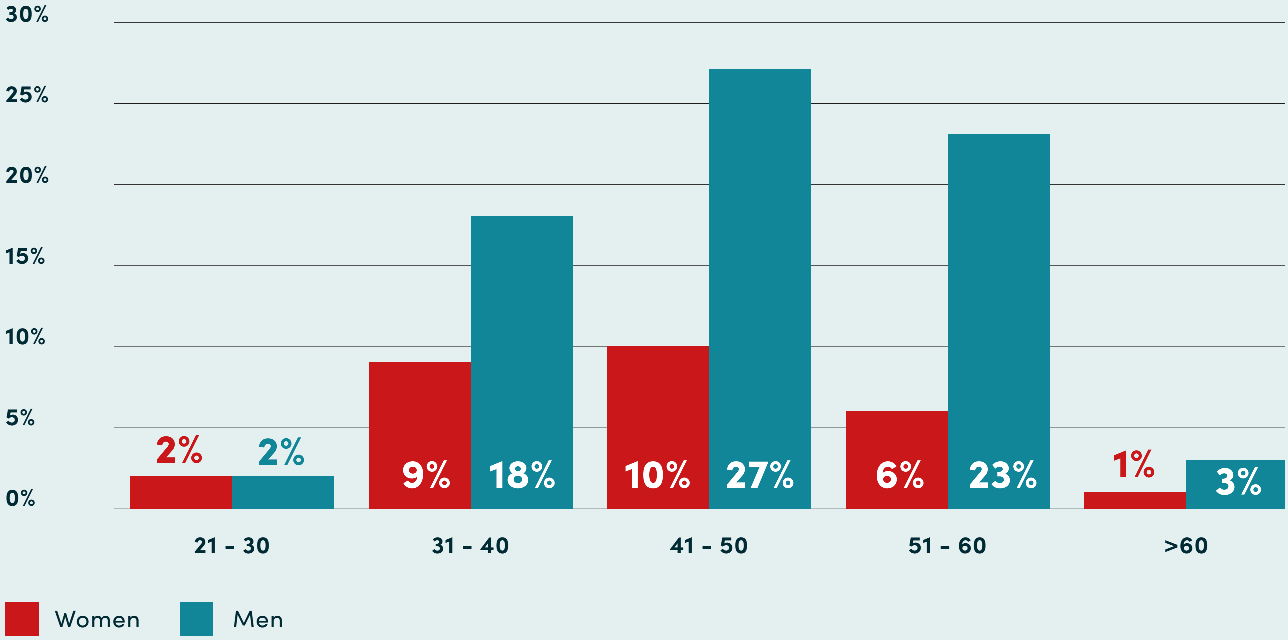
Power positions by gender and management level



The power gap is here to stay – for now

Over the age of 40, men outnumber women in power positions three- to four-fold. However, looking at younger generations of leaders and taking an intersectional perspective on individuals in power positions, we see somewhat more gender diversity – below 30, men and women are equally represented (though few employees under 30 hold such roles). Between 31 and 40, twice as many men as women have personnel responsibility. At least at this level, they are above the critical threshold of one third representation where they can affect the (inclusion) culture for the better (Kanter-Moss, 1977).

Power positions by gender and age



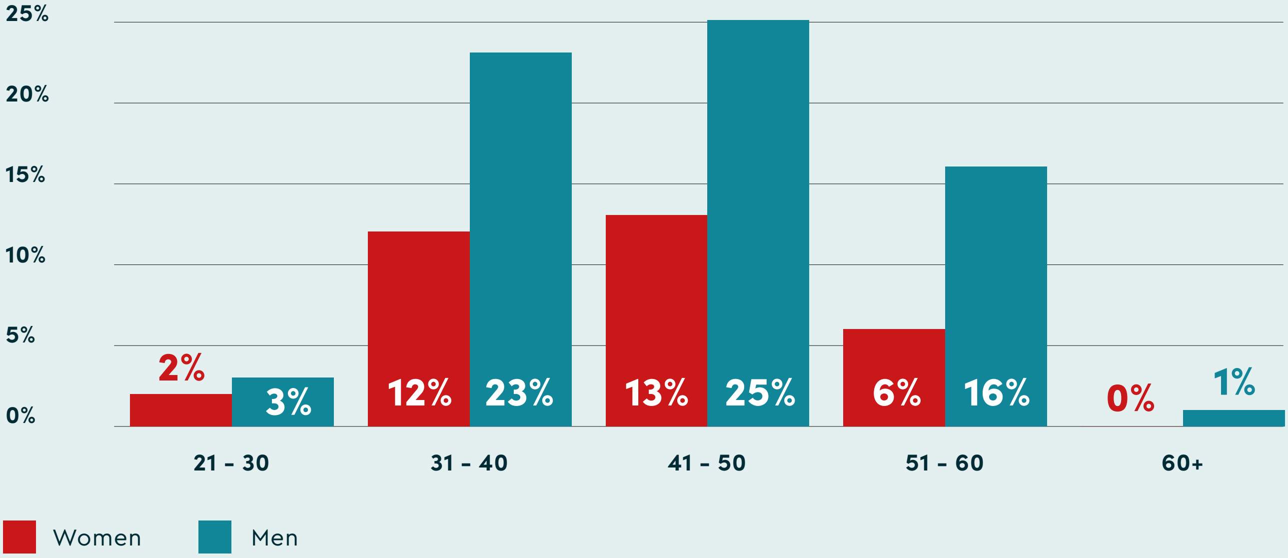
Is the future of business leadership more (gender) diverse? Are there indications that point to cultural change when it comes to gender and other forms of diversity? The answer is a qualified "yes". For one, younger women are as well or better educated than their male counterparts. In the age group of 50 and older, there is a significant education gap of 22 percentage points: 42% of women and 64% of men hold a tertiary degree. In contrast: There are as many women as men with a tertiary degree (45% each) in the age group 30 and younger. In fact, by now, there are more women than men completing their education with a tertiary degree. This indicates that the talent pipeline to the very top is brimming with young, female talents – but it is up to companies to make use of this opportunity.

Are companies making use of this opportunity? Overall, there are considerably more men than women newly hired and promoted to power positions.

As of 30, men get hired into power positions between twice and three times the rate of women

Looking at how the power position pipeline has developed via hiring reveals significant discrepancies between women and men, except in the youngest age bracket, which only makes up 5% of all hires to power positions. The gap opens widely after 30.

New hires to power positions by gender and age

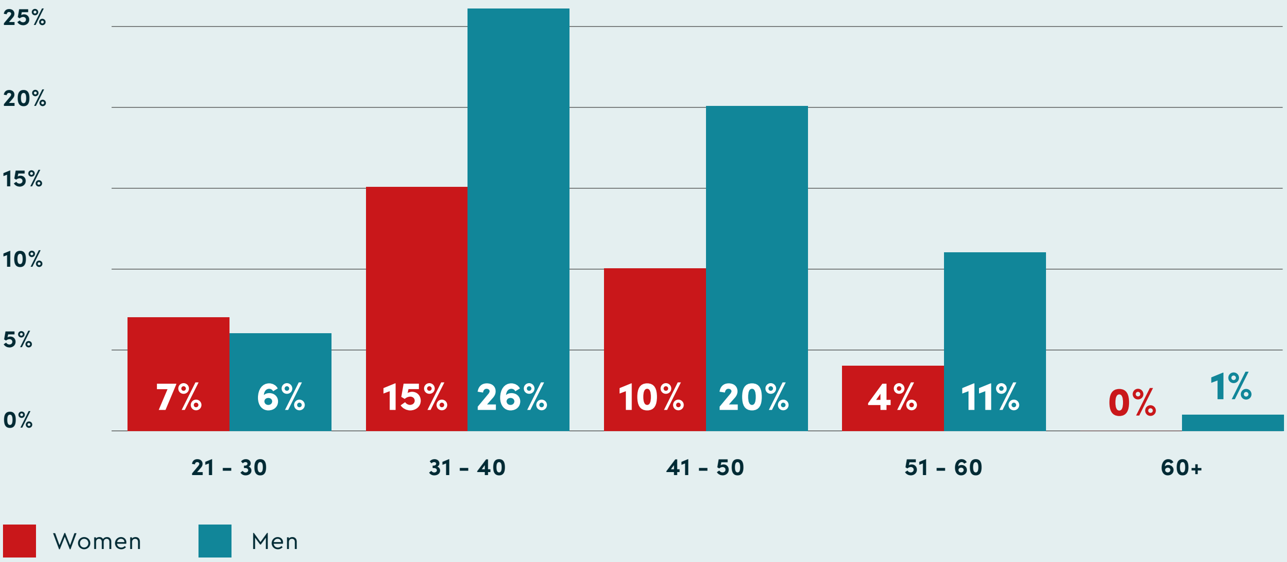


Due to the mathematical rounding of each bar (.5 and higher are rounded up, below .5 is rounded down), the total amounts to 101%.

Men get promoted to power positions at approximately twice the rate of women

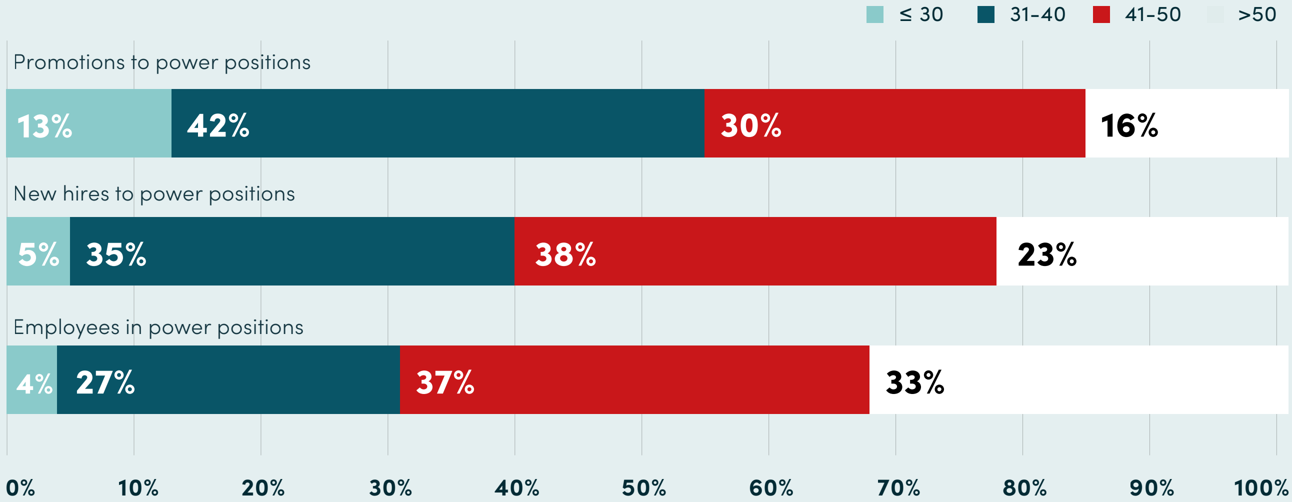
Compared to their representation in the talent pool, men are strongly overrepresented in promotions to power positions. This is most pronounced in the age brackets 31 to 40 and 41 to 50, where most promotions happen. The exception is between 21 and 30. In this age bracket, women get promoted into power positions even slightly more than men. This is a silver lining on the horizon, indicating that the younger generations may move the needle – provided both genders have the same career opportunities across life phases.

Promotions to power positions by gender and age



Some good news: There are more young employees promoted to power positions, compared to the existing age distribution. This indicates that age diversity might be increasing!

Promotions and new hires to power positions by age group



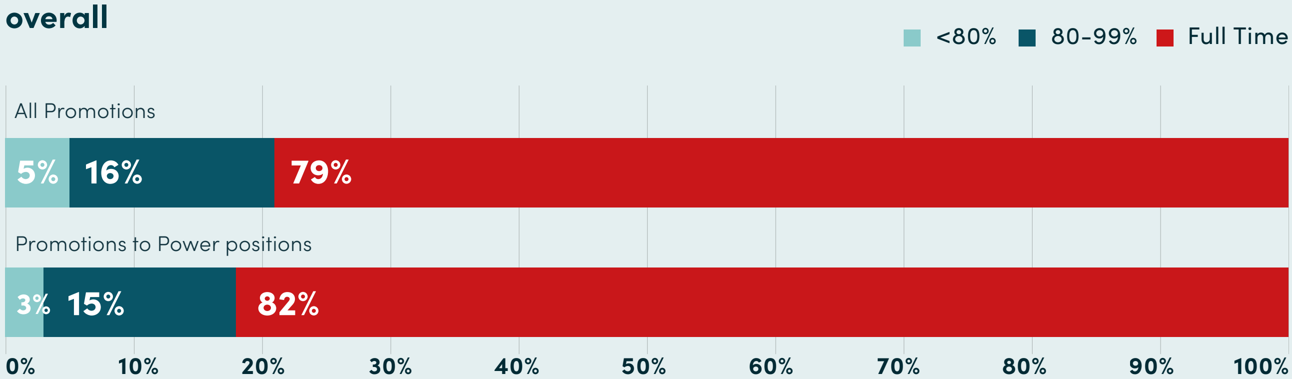
Even so, the lion's share of promotions into power positions happen between 30 and 40, right around "family primetime." 42% of all promotions to power positions go to employees aged 31 to 40 (even though only 27% of employees fall into this age category). The same is true for 35% of new hires. This falls squarely within family primetime, i.e. when Swiss people on average have their first child at the age of 31, which disadvantages employees with care responsibilities (FSO, 2023).

The formula to attain a power position is full-time

The power system is skewed towards employees able to focus on work full-time (or more than full-time): While 56% of all women work full-time, the same is true for 85% of those newly hired into power positions, with the vast majority of "part-timers" working 80% or more. This means that women would have to significantly increase their work percentage to take on a leadership role, while for men, it would be just business as usual. It is also notable that this perfectly dovetails the work percentage distribution of men, who seemingly do not have to adapt their work percentage to take on a power position. In other words, the male career model still rules the (power) game.

Again, the silver lining is the age group between 21 and 30: There is hardly any gap in the average employment percentages of women and men between 21 and 30 (three percentage points). From age 31 onwards, the gender divide regarding full-time vs. part-time begins, amounting to a 12-percentage point difference in the age bracket from 31 to 40 and 15 percentage points in the age bracket 41 to 50.

Promotions to power positions by employment percentage compared to promotions overall



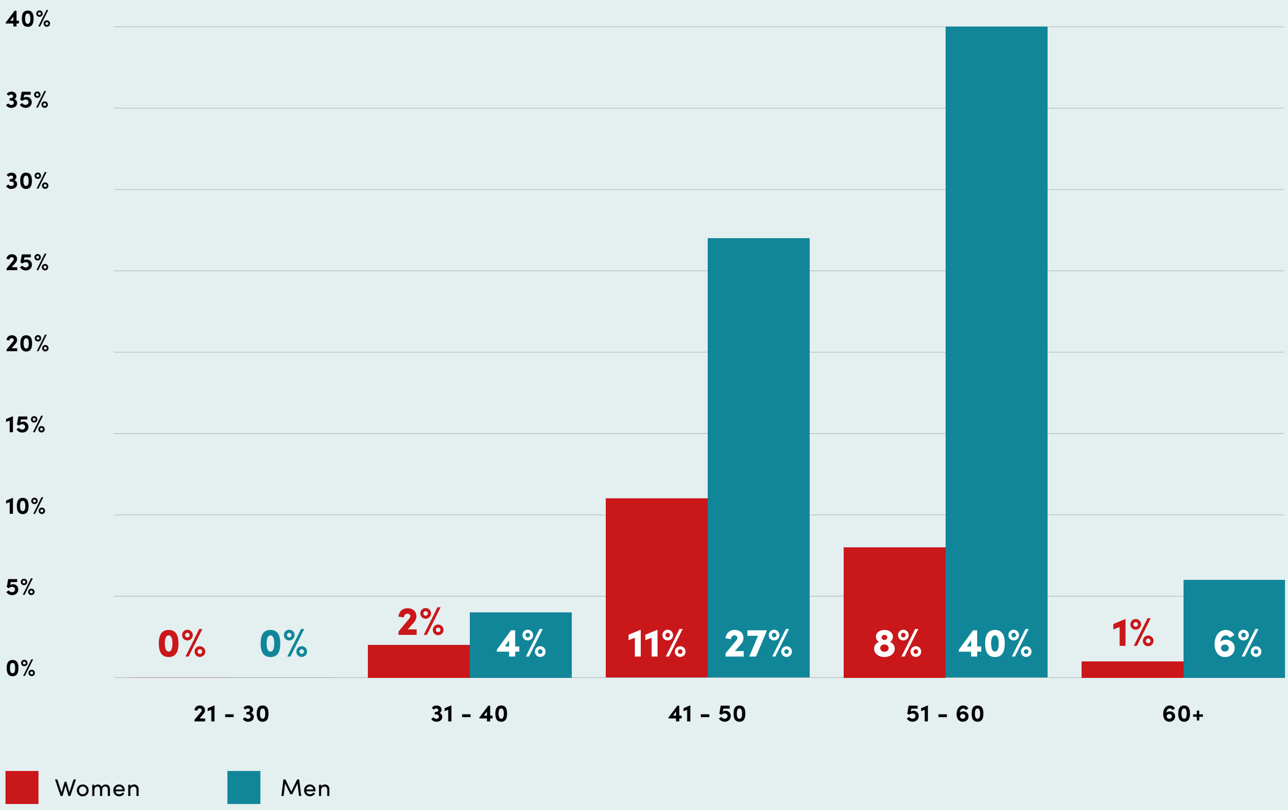
Top management is largely homogeneous

To understand how the prevalent norms in the power structure of Swiss business came to be, we have to take a closer look at the typical "business leader" in Switzerland. In our GIR dataset, this means looking at top management, a hierarchy level that includes C-suite, managing directors, and their peers. Many of us associate these decision-makers with a White[1]man who is Swiss-born and / or German speaking, typically over the age of 50, able-bodied, and works full-time. The data confirms this:

- 78% of top managers are men
- 55% of top managers are over 50 years old – 46% of all top managers are men over 50
- 71% of top managers are Swiss (specifically, 73% of male top managers and 62% of female top managers)
- 92% of top managers work full-time (95% of men and 81% of women)

[1] The term "Black" is not an adjective or a color designation, but a political and cultural self-designation of Black people, so "Black" should definitely be capitalized in this context (GRA). We capitalize "White" as well, following the explanation of sociologist Eve Ewing: "Whiteness is not incidental. Whiteness is a thing. Whiteness is endowed with social meaning that allows people to move through the world in a way that people who are not white are not able to do" (quoted by Eligon, 2020). Learn more here.

Top management by gender and age



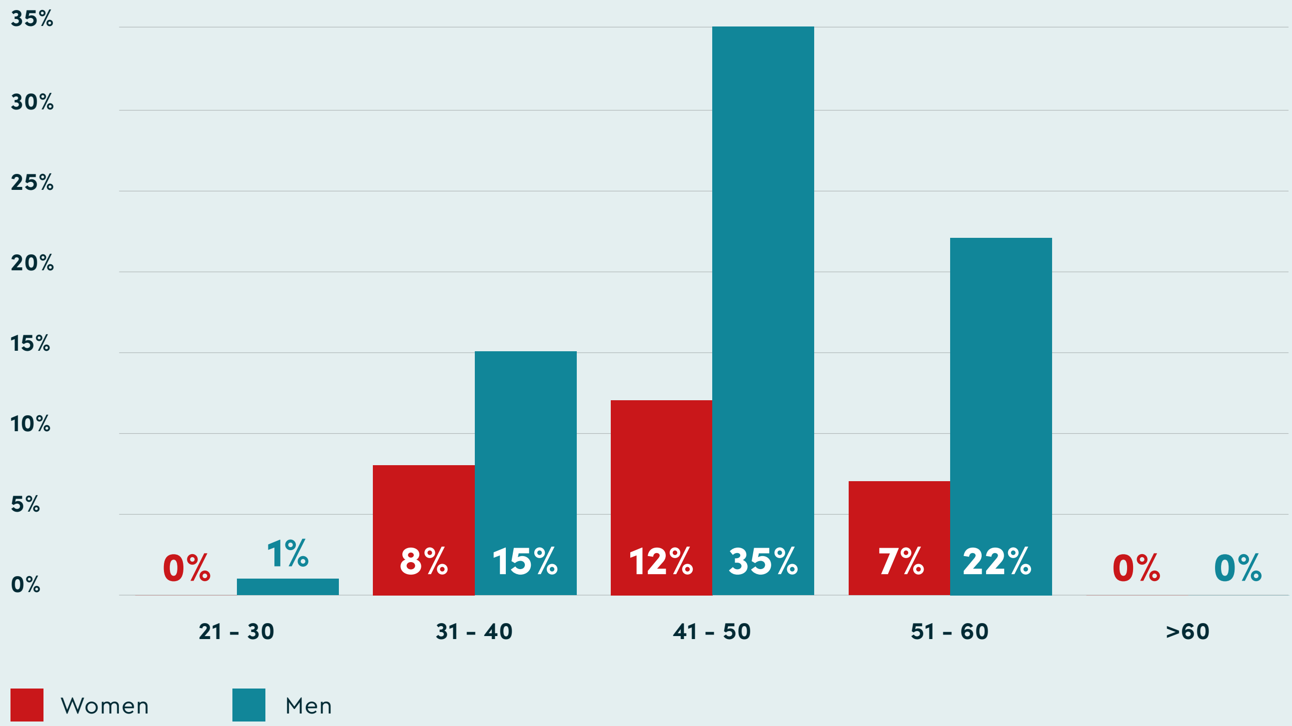
Due to the mathematical rounding of each bar (.5 and higher are rounded up, below .5 is rounded down), the total amounts to 99%.

Thousands of top positions will be vacated soon due to retirement wave

With 55% of all top managers over 50, several thousand top management positions will be vacated in the coming 5 to 10 years. This is a tremendous opportunity for conscious succession planning now to not only start closing the power gap but also to see the diverse and inclusive leadership that has the potential to deliver sustainable solutions and mitigate risks. Now is the time to think about what the top management of the future should look like in terms of diversity – both in terms of demography as well as values, competencies, perspectives, experiences, etc.

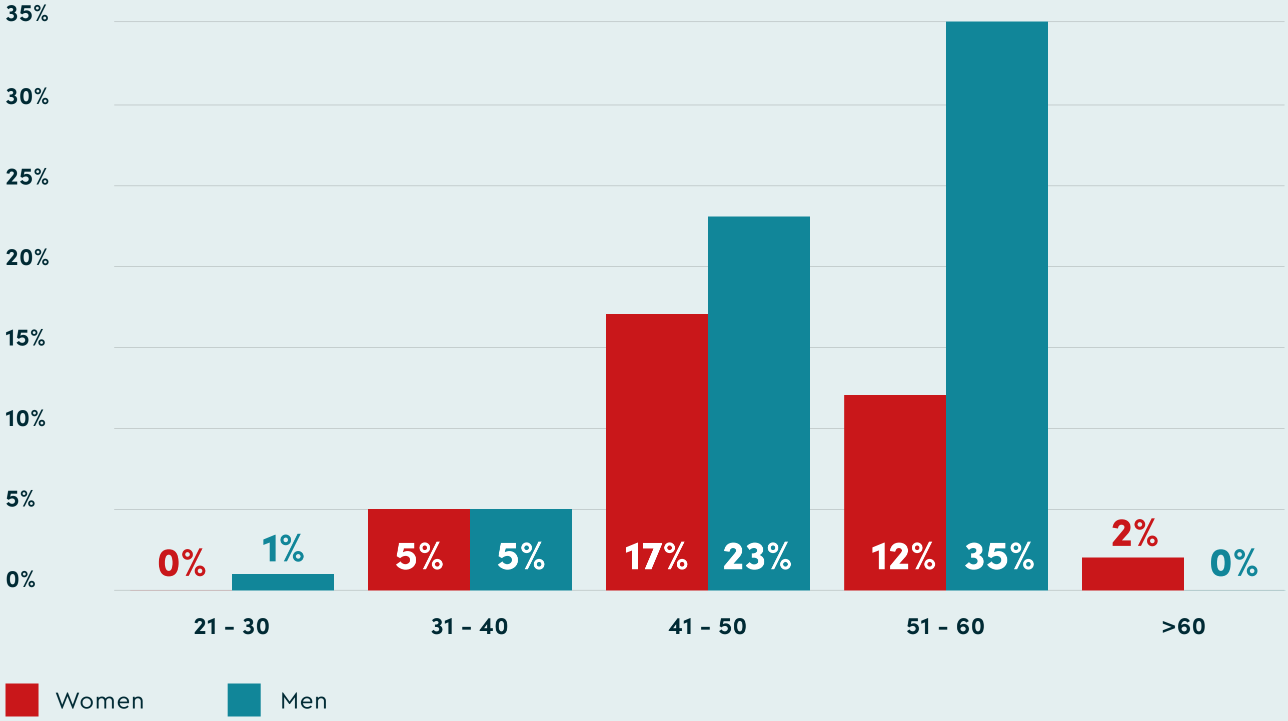
When it comes to promotions to top management positions, women are still outpaced by men 3:1 in the age group from 41 to 50. The better news is that the promotion gap between 31 and 40 between genders is considerably smaller, which indicates a certain generational change with who becomes a leader.

Promotions to top management by gender and age



Even more encouraging are the numbers for new hires: Although there are few external top management hires between 31 and 40, they are very gender balanced. And between 41 and 50, women are hired at almost equal rates as men, though the gap is considerably wide post age 50 (note that external top management hires tend to be older than employees promoted to the same positions). For both hires and promotions to top management, the "new leaders" are more gender- and age-diverse than top management incumbents.

New hires to top management by gender and age



"Not all men"

This image of the "typical leader" also excludes men who do not fit into the categories above. Because older White men have been dominant so long, our understanding of power has been shaped by one relatively homogenous group. This notion continues to bear the burden of historical White, able-bodied male dominance, still evident in our present-day organizational frameworks (Livingston & Rosette, 2021).

This has excluded not only women and other marginalized groups but also men who do not align with the classifications listed earlier. (Dyke & Murphy, 2006). For example:

Black men: Power can be misattributed to Black men when there is a lack of intersectionality. For instance, in Switzerland young Black men face significant barriers when looking for an apprenticeship (Bericht zu rassistischer Diskriminierung in der Schweiz, 2023).

Gay men: Gay men are significantly less likely than comparable heterosexual men to be in the highest-level managerial positions that come with higher status and pay. Moreover, this "gay glass ceiling" is stronger for racial minorities than for whites. Corresponding effects for lesbians exist but are notably weaker (Aksoy et al., 2019).

Women between the ages of 31 and 40 (who are either mothers or considered to be "at risk" of being mothers) (Gloor et al.,2021).

"Older" women: The combination of sexism and age discrimination is a unique disadvantage for older women in the workforce. College-educated women over 50 are much less likely to receive a callback after an interview for an administrative position than younger college-educated women (Farber et al. 2015). Disadvantages when it comes to career advancements begin as early as 40 (Ghilarducci, 2022): as the recent White Paper by Advance, EY and the CCDI shows!

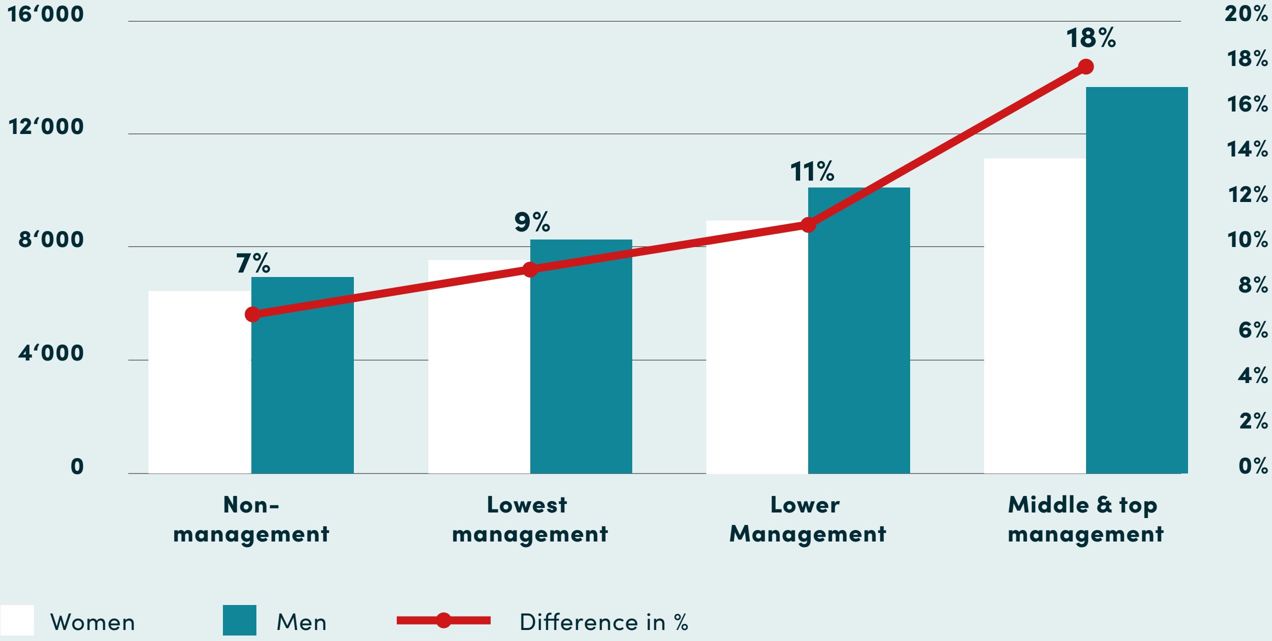
People with disabilities: disability and leadership are rarely put together. Experiences of prejudice, ableism, and discrimination lead to fear of disclosure (Chan & Hutchings, 2023). Leaders with disabilities (LWD) typically emerge only when they have exceptional talents, even in the most progressive contexts. A lack of trust and the devaluation of their credentials, experiences and achievements lead to an emergence of LWD in the workplace (Özbilgin & Odabaşı, 2023).

Our narrow conceptions of what a leader looks like limits these groups' ability to pursue their careers, in part because the prevalent (business) norms and expectations, images, and biases are deeply anchored in the prevalent power structure.

The gender imbalance of financial power

All factors taken together culminate in a big financial power gap. On average, women's gross salaries are 16% lower than those of men. Here, too, the power gap increases with hierarchy level: The higher the professional position, the greater the difference between the average gross salaries of men and women. Starting at a 7% difference in gross salary at the non-management level, it rises to a stark 18% in middle and top management.

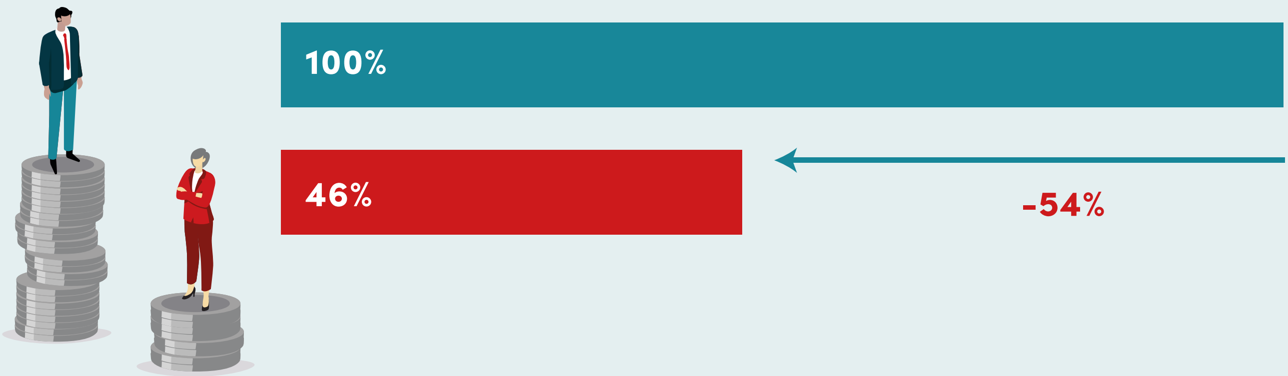
Differences in gross salaries by gender and management level



Source: Swiss Earnings Structure Survey (ESS), Federal Statistical Office (FSO), 2024

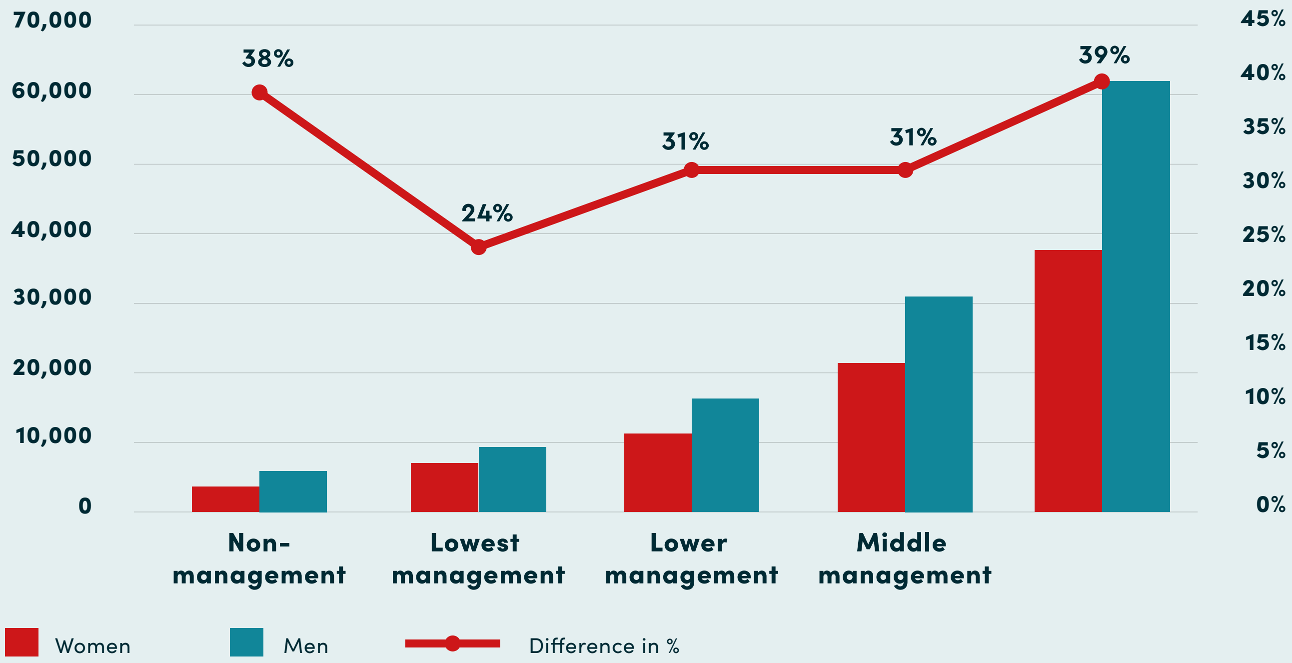
This is even more pronounced, if we look at bonuses[2] as a condensed expression of perceived employee value, range of power, influence, and appreciation. If we compare the average bonuses received by men and women in 2022, there is a difference of 54%. If we extrapolate the average bonus difference for all women and men working in Switzerland, taking into account their respective levels of employment, the difference amounts to around 13 billion Swiss francs – annually.

[2] Payments that are paid irregularly, for example bonus payments, gratuities, profit- or revenue-sharing bonuses, entry and severance payments or loyalty bonuses are considered.



While women in lowest management are already receiving on average almost 25% lower bonuses, in top management, the difference is almost 40%. The big bonus difference in non-management indicates that men are more often in valued and financially rewarded jobs and positions than women. Moreover, these jobs and positions feed more easily into future power positions. If we do not change the system so that women get a real chance to attain power positions, reaching gender equity will remain difficult.

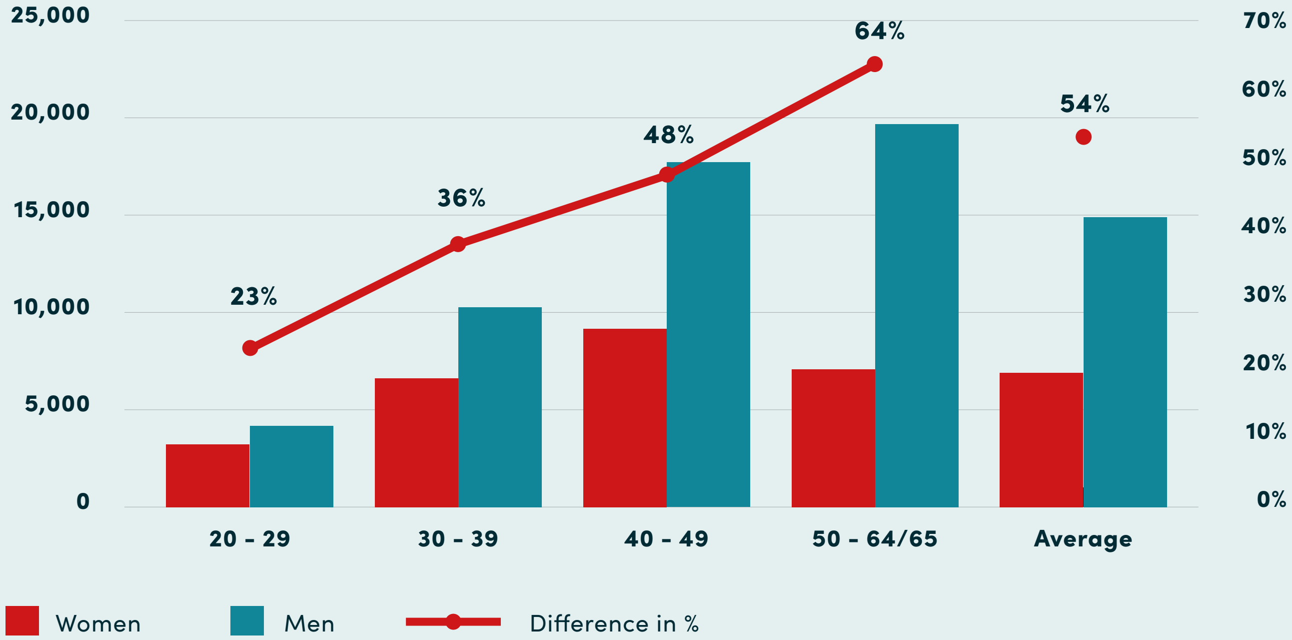
Bonus gap by gender and management level



Source: Swiss Earnings Structure Survey (ESS), Federal Statistical Office (FSO), 2024

Regarding the development of the bonus gap across age groups, it is already substantial in younger ages and peaks between 50 and 64/65 and goes as high as 65%.

Bonus gap by gender and age



Source: Swiss Earnings Structure Survey (ESS), Federal Statistical Office (FSO), 2024

Biases reinforce rigid power structures

Biases and stereotypes about who is considered "powerful" reinforce the power gap. Our biases and prejudices tend to reinforce pre-existing power dynamics by coding them as typical and then make decisions to fit (Kanter-Moss, 1977). An example: If a hiring manager is male, he may recruit or promote a male candidate with similar characteristics to himself because he subconsciously associates these with what a leader looks like (similarity bias) (ibid).

If older, White, educated men who work full time are considered the epitome of "powerful", we are more likely to judge them as suitable for powerful positions. A recent MIT study based on 30,000 management-track employees at a large North American retail chain showed: Women received higher performance ratings than male employees but received 8.3% lower ratings for potential than men. The result was that female employees on average were 14% less likely to be promoted than their male colleagues (Somers, 2022). Potential ratings, which are much less likely to be based on measurable, specific criteria than performance ratings, are still overwhelmingly used to determine whether employees are considered "talents"(ibid).

Biases also make it so women cannot win: The same trait that appears positive in a man might appear negative in a woman. For instance, when a man asks for a promotion, it is seen as assertive and ambitious. If a woman makes the same request, she may be viewed as pushy or demanding. Similarly, a man who confidently voices his opinions is considered strong and decisive, while a woman doing the same may be labeled as aggressive or bossy (Gross, 2023; Tiwana, 2016). This is the so-called "double-standard bias" at work, defined as "the use of different requirements for the inference of possession of an attribute, depending on the individuals being assessed" (Foschi, 2000). Status characteristics (gender, race, socioeconomic background...) become a basis for applying stricter standards for the lower status person. The double standard bias is well documented for the evaluation of women's (versus men's) work (Cecchi-Dimeglio, 2023).

Patriarchal attitudes also play a key role here. These refer to normalized and learned beliefs and behaviors that often manifest in actions privileging men and disadvantaging women (Adisa et al., 2019). These attitudes emphasize a hierarchical bias that undervalues women's voices. For example, women are often interrupted during meetings, their opinions are frequently disregarded, and their contributions only gain recognition when echoed by a male colleague. Such behaviors can lead women to experience gaslighting, where they begin to doubt their own perceptions and contributions due to the persistent undermining and devaluation of their input (Mallick, 2021; Westover, 2021).

Do individual choices determine who is in power?

None of this is to say that individual choices don't matter. Women and men do still make different choices when it comes to field of education, acquisition of financial literacy, or career tracks, to name just a few.

1. Financial literacy

A key root cause of the power gap is financial literacy. In Switzerland, there is a notable lack of financial literacy among women and marginalized groups (Klatzer et al., 2018; OECD, 2023). In the context of power, this literacy refers to both professional and personal settings and is the knowledge that comes with financial management, budgeting, and investing. This knowledge is extremely important in a pathway to financial independence, stability, and empowerment. Financial literacy empowers individuals by equipping them with tools vital for the future.

On financial literacy tests conducted in the German-speaking part of the country, women tend to perform over 50% worse than men and are much more likely to answer "I do not know" to questions than men (Kendzia & Suozzi Borrero, 2022).

Both personally and professionally, those who are financially literate are more likely to have control over financial situations and are able to have an impact on economic policies and development (Hung et al., 2012). The good news: In Switzerland, there are finance platforms like Ellexx and Smartpurse which offer financial planning education, tools and investment support to women to confidently manage their finances. Learn more from Johnson&Johnson's best practice!

2. Educational choices

This issue is also reflected in educational choices, where STEM subjects are still perceived as male domains. In 2022/2023, women made up 35% of MINT students at university level (FSO, 2024a) though there are considerable differences between different fields: In chemistry and life sciences, well over half of students are female (57%), whereas the same is true of only 16% of all information technology students and 18% of tech students (ibid). Also interesting: The share of Swiss women is lower than the share of foreign women across all MINT subjects (ibid). In economic sciences, women make up 36% of students at universities (FSO, 2024b). Such early specialization perpetuates existing power dynamics related to gender roles, reinforcing the imbalance. For example, it may not be as easy as motivating more girls to study STEM subjects, or encourage young female talents in banking to study for the CFA. Research shows that when women enter fields in greater numbers, pay declines — for the very same jobs that more men were doing before (Levanon et al., 2009; Miller, 2016).

3. Career choices

Women are strongly underrepresented in profit and loss (P&L) responsibility and positions with personnel responsibility. Why? Women often choose career tracks that do not feed into future roles with significant responsibility – HR, legal, communications, etc. These choices are path dependent – for example, escalating levels of P&L experience are a must-have qualification for high-level executive and C-suite roles (DDI's 2020 Global Leadership Forecast project). Consequently, those without P&L roles find themselves at a disadvantage within the system. Is the answer for why there are not more women in leadership roles simply – that they made the wrong career choices?

While this may be part of the answer, the question remains "why". Women often do not receive the knowledge and mentoring necessary to learn P&L management skills (Robinson, 2023). A representative survey of US men and women in business found that only 14% of women — compared to 46% of men – were actively encouraged to consider P&L roles, and the same survey found men to be over three times as likely to be well-informed about career paths to P&L roles in their respective companies (Seramount, 2019). Siemens provides a good example for supporting women to make well-informed career choices.

While blaming gender inequality in money and power on individual choices is a simple yet tempting perspective to take, individual choices are never made in a vacuum, but inside of an existing power system. The power system was made for men, by men – this is not about "fixing the women". However, raising awareness for the consequences of these individual (career or education) choices could still lead to them being taken more consciously.

FROM PAST TO PRESENT TO FUTURE DEFINITIONS OF POWER

Power structures have always been designed and maintained by those in power, particularly socioeconomically privileged men (especially White, cisgender, tall, with low voices, heterosexual full-time working men above 50). This 'hegemonic masculinity' explains how such particular groups of men "inhabit positions of power and wealth, and how they legitimate and reproduce the social relationships that generate their dominance" (Donaldson, 1993).

A brief history of power

From an evolutionary perspective, men have always needed and sought (as they still need and seek) resources that increase their potential or real value in the race and market of mating and reproduction (Finuras, 2019). This drive to secure and control resources, such as food, territory, and social status, has shaped male behavior and social structures. In contemporary societies, this evolutionary impetus can be seen in how men seek positions that offer financial stability and influence, which are still perceived as attractive qualities in the context of mating and reproduction.

Since ancient times, the image of the 'heroic' leader has been persistent. The earliest known human stories that healed and inspired the ancients were stirring accounts of the exploits of heroes and heroic leaders (Allison & Goethals, 1978). Popularized as a term in 19th and early 20th centuries largely through the 'Great Man Theory', heroic leadership built on these epic stories of extraordinary individuals (Carlyle & Gunn, 1893). A hero is "defined as an individual who (a) voluntarily takes actions that are deemed to be exceptionally good, or that are directed toward serving a noble principle or the greater good; (b) makes a significant sacrifice, and (c) takes a great risk" (Allison, 2016). However, a hero is also characterized by features like individualism, assertiveness, and control, all of which strengthen hegemonic masculinity and exclude women and other marginalized groups (Fletcher, 2004).

In 1959, social psychologists John French and Bertram Raven defined power as the ability to influence or impose one's will upon others to control their actions (French & Raven, 1959). They identified five bases of power, divided into personal and organizational categories. Legitimate, reward, and coercive powers are organizational, defined by company policies and procedures. For example, this occurs when a manager assigns tasks to team members, gives a bonus for excellent performance, and issues a warning for failing to meet deadlines. In contrast, expert and referent powers are personal, stemming from an individual's character and influence. An example is when team leaders are highly respected for their expertise and knowledge, and their charismatic and approachable personality.

These forms of power are still evident in today's workplaces, though their distribution and arrangement depend on the organization's structure. Power structure represents the formal and informal relationships, hierarchies, and mechanisms through which authority, influence, and decision-making are exercised and shared among individuals or groups. They define who holds power and how that power is exercised. Power structures can be hierarchical, with decision-making power concentrated at the top, or they can be decentralized, with decision-making power distributed more broadly across the organization (Kanter, 1977; Kanhaiya, 2023). Moreover, power structure affects the organizational culture significantly, including how employees behave, communicate, and collaborate.

In most organizations, power is concentrated at the top in the hands of a small group of leaders making decisions that affect the entire company. This often manifests as a hierarchical structure where the highest levels of management control, to a significant extent, strategic decisions, resource allocation, and organizational policies, structures, and culture.

The current (hierarchical) power structure

In short: The current hierarchical power structures were historically designed to exclude women and other marginalized groups from accessing positions of power. This design was not accidental; it was a systematic exclusion meant to uphold patriarchal norms that favored men in positions of power (Castro et al., 2023). Riane Eisler calls the patriarchal system the "dominator model", which features "power over" (rather than "power with") others. You fight to stay on top or you're a loser (Eisler, 1988).

This form of power thrives in a hierarchical organization, where there are fewer positions available with increasing seniority, their scarcity increasing their desirability. Hierarchies are thus integral to the distribution of power and nowadays remain the basic structure of most, if not all, large, ongoing human organizations. As Nigel Nicholson posits: "Why do hierarchical models persist [in a business context]? The disturbing answer is that structures and systems are chosen by the people who prefer them and the people who do best in them: Men will sustain the systems in which they have been successful"(Nicholson, 2010). Indeed, "old habits are like the undead; they just won't stay buried. As companies aim to flatten their structures, the remnants of past hierarchies can linger, haunting the change effort" (Anicich et al., 2024).

The power of networking

Not only is it difficult to move outside this framework because norms are "sticky", those in power also want to hold on to power (Finuras, 2019). Power, once gained, is jealously guarded, creating a substantial reservoir of influence. For example, in the so-called and resembling "old boys' clubs," men are more likely to secure positions of power through increased face-to-face interactions with their managers, compared to their female colleagues (Cullen & Perez-Truglia, 2023). This situation is exacerbated by the fact that men tend to withhold knowledge more often than women (Andreeva & Zappa, 2023); or that they are significantly more likely to request a referral from a pal (Tockey & Ignatova, 2018).

In this context new forms of power should be considered which are generated collectively by many individuals, embracing openness and participation. These fluid, open, and participatory power structures have objective not to amass it but to direct and channel it effectively. For instance, the concept of relational power, also known as the power of networking, has gained prominence in the business world. Relational power often surpasses hierarchical power, allowing individuals without specific titles to attain influence, while those in senior positions are not automatically assured of it (Lingo & McGinn, 2020).

So why don't women simply "network more"? Study after study indicates that women's networks are just less powerful than men's, and women are less able to utilize the networks they do have (Monica L. & Dougherty, 2004; Lalanne & Seabright, 2011). That's because how we network is also male-coded. When networking, women don't necessarily seek out the most powerful employee or most senior manager. Instead of considering how a potential network member might help them advance their career, women seem to focus on the social aspect of networking, desiring networks with interesting or likable members, or with individuals where they see a mutual benefit. Networking opportunities open happen after-hours, and childcare responsibility can make participation more prohibitive to women. Moreover, this exclusion is amplified by the lack of women in powerful roles which reduces opportunities to network with them. Finally, people tend to prefer to network with those like them, which can make it easier for men to access networks of power (Greguletz & Kreutzer, 2019).

HOW TO RESHAPE POWER DYNAMICS TO EMPOWER ALL

If power in business refers to the potential or capacity to influence others to achieve organizational objectives, then empowering others is the best way for realizing these goals. Leaders who empower others are not new. As Lao Tzu already posited: "A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves." How can organizations transition to making empowerment a lived reality? What steps can they take to get there?

Instead of concentrating power in the hands of one single person or a small (homogenous) group, power should be understood as empowerment distributed among many. While by the very nature of hierarchies not everyone can be at the top, it is still possible to devolve and share power. One of the most common indictments of hierarchical organizations is that they are outdated—too slow, too unbending for the turbulence of the modern world (Leavitt, 2003). The rapidly changing surroundings require organizations to go beyond exerting control over others – the traditional concept of power – and mobilize others' energy and commitment (Lingo & McGinn, 2020).

Done right, empowerment boosts creative problem-solving, cooperation, decision quality, overall and individual performance, the pursuit of innovative solutions, confidence in achieving positive outcomes, and motivates the entire team (Barsade, 2002). By distributing power across a network of employees, organizations can tap into a wider range of talents and insights, fostering a culture of engagement.

In contrast, the opposite occurs when power is centralized in a small handful of homogenous leadership teams. This can significantly impact individuals' perceptions, actions, and cognition, potentially resulting in detrimental effects on relationship-building, communication, and overall managerial performance (Ziemianski, 2022). Studies have shown how groupthink can lead to bad decisions due to the absence of dissenting opinions, limited creativity, overconfidence in consensus, overlooked optimal solutions, and insufficient feedback on decisions, all of which negatively impact organizational profitability and performance (Umana & Okafor, 2019). One classical example is financial crisis in 2008 where a dominant fraction of the assets held by major U.S. investment banks were instead valued according to the bank's own models and projections, or even according to management's best estimates. This means that the diversity of thought and perspectives – a key benefit of a diverse team – cannot actually have any positive effect.

Shared power aligns with the principles of equity and social justice by ensuring that marginalized voices are heard and valued in decision-making processes (Nishii & Leroy, 2022). In this way, empowerment helps companies reap the full benefits of their diverse workforces. But how can companies get there?

CALL TO ACTION 1:
PROMOTE POST-HEROIC LEADERS

Traditional structures of power perpetuate the image of the "heroic" leader. But, as Tina Turner famously sang: "We don't need another hero."

We need to make a new vision of leadership that offers an alternative to traditional leadership models to disrupt the existing power structures (Fletcher, 2004). So-called post-heroic leadership emphasizes collaboration, collective success, decentralized decision-making, and empowerment. By emphasizing individual personality, motives, and competences, the relevance of gender is de-emphasized. Thus, post-heroic leadership focuses solely on leadership skills rather than gendered attributes, and should not be associated with ideas of masculinity or femininity. Post-heroic leadership prioritizes achieving success and confronting contemporary challenges by questioning and redefining entrenched power hierarchies (Nentwich et al., 2023). Post-heroic leaders foster inclusive environments where diverse perspectives are valued, collective problem-solving is encouraged, and power is distributed more equitably. As such, empowerment and power sharing require post-heroic leaders.

But: How can we get leaders, companies, and employees to empower others? While many acknowledge that the current leadership model is inadequate, they may lack the knowledge or tools to effectively navigate this transition.

De-couple people management from career

People management is still seen as synonymous with having a career. Today's business leaders are expected to do (and know) it all: People management, project management, P&L responsibility, subject matter expertise. This contributes to homogenous corner offices, since there are more women in expert roles than in leadership positions, which can result in a bias toward valuing leadership roles over expertise, which often favors men over women (Galsanjigmed & Sekiguchi, 2023). Diversifying career paths and de-coupling them from (often unspoken) expectations of people management also opens the door for a wider, more diverse range of talents to advance. For instance, women could assume leadership positions within tech companies, even if they are not the foremost technical experts. Separating people leadership from expertise also acknowledges that individuals have different goals and motivations – one size does not fit all.

Why does this matter? Expecting leaders to do everything can lead to inefficient management. Universities and hospitals are notorious for this: For example, a full professor at a university might lead a staff of dozens, made up of researchers, doctoral students, administrative personnel, etc., and might take on additional management responsibilities, for example as head of department, head of an academic search committee, or similar. At the same time, the professor cannot rely on the positional power or status normally associated with a management role, but what really counts is their very narrow expertise in a subject matter, measured in publication output and funding success (Hengartner, 2012). Everything that is not directly related to the latter is considered secondary or even a hindrance to the central goals of the institution. Who among the experts is interested in internal process definitions or interdisciplinary personnel development when you have to create knowledge and advance science (professor) or train the elite of the future or save lives (doctor)?

Furthermore: In many organizations, power and decision-making authority tend to be concentrated among CFOs and core business leaders, while leaders in legal or HR roles may have less influence (Harrison & Malhotra, 2024; Logue & Casteel, 2024). However, there are compelling reasons to reconsider this imbalance and provide legal and HR leaders with comparable levels of power such as strategic alignment and risk management. In today's age of skills shortage, HR becomes a strategic topic. Additionally, legal issues, such as lawsuits related to discrimination, can pose significant risks to the survival of a company. In this way, organizations can leverage their expertise more effectively, drive strategic value and enhance overall organizational performance.

De-couple development from promotions

Businesses have traditionally taken a rigid approach to career progression – complete your goals and move up to the next rung of the ladder. In this way, development is closely tied to upward mobility (i.e. promotions) and to having a career in the traditional sense.

This isn't good for business, or for employees. Employees end up tied into one particular progression pathway, unable to acquire new skills outside of their immediate remit or shift into another department where they could add value. If employees are unfulfilled in their role, they often have little choice but to leave, even if they would rather not. Swiss businesses and organizations simply can't afford this!

Companies and their managers need to shift the focus of career conversations from promotion to developing in different directions. Also: Companies need to shift away from development within business units only, i.e. shift from a focus on business units to focusing on the company overall. Employees need to be empowered to explore opportunities beyond the boundaries of their existing team, to learn a skill not directly related to their current role, to rotate into a different location or department. Call it spiral career, portfolio career, zig zag career, or whatever you will – trying out somet-hing new shouldn't only be encouraged but rewarded (Bilderback & Miller, 2023).

Managers need to shift their focus from the tiny fiefdom of their team to the needs of the organization as a whole, creating a "one for all" mentality. This requires a rethinking of how power is exercised – and how rewards are allocated – in a hierarchical organization. But how? Managers who have individual or team-level goals regarding talent development are incentivized to focus on keeping their "best" people, becoming territorial over their talents. This is often to the detriment of individuals' career development, leads to a myopic view of who is a talent and hampers the organization's ability to access its own talent.

Find concrete recommendations to support post-heroic leaders here!

CALL TO ACTION 2: EMPOWER THROUGH POWER-SHARING

How power is allocated in an organization determines how decisions are made – and whether the best ideas get heard and finally implemented. A hierarchical organization with a top-down leadership approach can display inertia and rigidity, making it difficult to adapt to changes in the external environment (Arnone & Stumpf, 2010). Why? Argues Esmee Arends, head of business transformation services at SAP: "Hierarchies stacked in too many layers are unhelpful, because they slow down decision making" (Arends, The Institute of Leadership). Conversely, embracing shared power enables organizations to unlock the full potential of their teams by hearing the voices of the employees who have their ears to the ground (Hieu, 2020).

Pyramidal and flat structures represent two extremes, one concentrating power at the top and the other evenly dispersing power among members. The trend toward flatter organizational structures emphasizes collaboration and requires understanding and fostering shared power for success. Distributing power on more shoulders instead of centralizing it in a small handful of people diminishes the dependency on a single individual. Decentralization facilitates quicker decision-making processes as there is no bottleneck caused by waiting for approval from a sole authority figure. Organizations have implemented practices that promote shared distribution of power, moving away from a hierarchical structure while showing that this change can still maintain effective decision-making processes (Bolden, 2011). This approach allows for a more democratic distribution of power within the organization while ensuring effective management (Schippers & Rus, 2021).

In case of urgency or emergency, or even in the absence or incapacity of the primary leader, advocating for shared power and decentralized decision-making is crucial to manage risks and safeguard the continuity and efficiency of business operations (Mizrak, 2024). For example, the dynamic environment of disasters makes it imperative to invest in inter-sector and inter-agency cooperation and coordination (Kapucu & Garayev, 2011).

The good news: Alternative decision-making models not only exist but are already in use in many companies!

Agile work means empowerment

In the last few years, "agile work" has been at the tip of everyone's tongues. For roughly a century – since the days of Henry Ford and Frederick Taylor – companies have embraced the so-called "machine model", built on the principles of scientific management. Effectiveness and efficiency was maximized through specialization and rigid hierarchical structures (Morgan, 1998). And yet, these "machine organizations" do not thrive as they used to; for example, fewer than 10 percent of the non-financial S&P 500 companies in 1983 remained in the S&P 500 in 2013 (Aronowitz et al., 2015). "Agile organizations" are seen as one response to an environment that evolves quickly, where disruptive technology is constantly introduced, where digitization and democratization of information are accelerating, and where there is a new war for talent (Aghina et al., 2018).

McKinsey describes the agile organization as an "organism", characterized by a strong shared purpose across the organization, clear, flat structures with clear, accountable roles in a network of empowered teams, rapid decision and learning cycles, role mobility and shared and servant leadership, and evolving technology architecture, systems, and tools (McKinsey, 2018). Agile organizations or units also follow a project management approach that involves breaking the project into phases and emphasizes continuous collaboration and improvement. Teams follow a cycle of planning, executing, and evaluating, where responsibility and accountability are divided up and shared. In flatter and agile organizational structures, power is distributed among team members based on expertise and skills. Furthermore, empowering individuals to make decisions and take initiative also enhances job motivation and satisfaction (Modise, 2023; Tessem, 2014). While few organizations have achieved wide agility, many have started pursuing it in performance units. According to a McKinsey Quarterly survey, nearly one quarter of performance unit were agile as early as 2017! (Salo, 2017)

Within agile structures, the implementation of shared power can facilitate democratic decision-making processes. Decisions take into account the input and perspectives of all team members. This approach goes beyond 'simply' expanding leadership spans by reducing hierarchies; it fosters a collaborative environment where authority and responsibility are distributed across the team and can change hands over time, resulting in more equitable power dynamics.

This might sound scary – after all, as a manager, you have end responsibility for your team's output — but empowering your teams isn't about giving them free rein to do whatever they want. Collaboration is paramount in these environments, encouraging teamwork, idea-sharing and collective goal achievement. This also means continuously measuring whether and how goals are achieved, and how employees felt while doing so. Forming and managing an agile team is just another management challenge. Managers are essential in setting team tone, providing clarity of purpose, and establishing clear expectations.

From top-sharing to power sharing

The term top sharing or shared leadership refers to the sharing of a management function. This doesn't have to mean two people sharing one role. Rather, shared leadership involves maximizing all of the human resources in an organization by empowering individuals and giving them an opportunity to take leadership positions in their areas of expertise (Goldsmith, 2010). Responsibilities and tasks are shared, and many decisions made jointly or in consultation. While there are some startup costs associated with implementing a top sharing model, there are crucial benefits.

At its best, top-sharing makes use of the combined best of leaders' abilities (ibid). Top sharing provides a prime opportunity to increase leadership diversity. Different cultural backgrounds, different personalities, genders or generations of the "tandems" create different perspectives on the leadership role. The two managers can learn from each other both professionally and personally during their work, which continuously improves the quality of the work. When making decisions on important issues, they have both professional experience and expertise at their disposal in order to make the best possible decision. At the same time, the planning of substitutions is easily secured. Read more about implementing top sharing in last year's GIR or learn from Vontobel's best practice!

This approach not only addresses gender discrepancies in power dynamics but also fosters a more innovative, resilient, and sustainable business environment.

Use your inclusive leadership toolbox!

If companies have been championing inclusive leadership, they already have all the tools they need for their managers to successfully share power. After all: Inclusive leadership is about how leaders enable employees to flourish and bring their unique selves to the workplace but also empowers employees to feel a sense of autonomy and competence, and psychological safety (Shore et al., 2011; Hornung, 2023; Nishii, 2013). Refresh yourself on inclusive leadership practices here.

Find concrete recommendations on power-sharing here!

CALL TO ACTION 3: RECOGNIZING PRIVILEGE AND LEVERAGING IT FOR INCLUSION

A wise man once said: “With great power comes great responsibility.” This includes the responsibility to reflect on one’s power and how one got it in the first place.

When reflecting on power, it is key to think beyond the “on paper” hierarchical position in the org chart and think more broadly about formal and informal power bases. Almost any manager, colleague, team member, etc. is in a position to hurt or judge others, embolden others, share or withhold key resources or information, etc. None of these require a specific position in a hierarchy; they are examples of referent power that comes from one’s ability to nurture relationships and others viewing you as a go-to source or influencer.

Every member of an organization has the responsibility to exemplify the values of inclusion and equity. But while everyone can have an impact, and thus some responsibility to exemplify the values of inclusion and equity, power and responsibility are still associated with one’s position in the organization. Leaders and managers have a particular and unique opportunity to role model inclusive behaviors in ways that set the tone and establish a clear expectation for performance. Thus, it is a key responsibility for leaders to both acknowledge their power and critically reflect on their own power.

A key part of this is reflecting on privilege (Jourdan, 2021). Why does privilege matter in a discussion on power? Privilege is about the benefits one receives from society’s existing power structures (Johnson, 2000). It means that certain parts of your background and demographic make-up have created advantages for you that others do not have (Jourdan, 2021). Specifically, when looking at gender privilege, we can see certain groups, such as cisgender White men, experience greater privilege in the workplace simply due to their gender (and regardless of power). Privilege eases the way to power – and acknowledging it and talking about it matters. Therefore, when discussing these concepts, it is important to do so from an intersectional lens in order to understand how other dimensions (such as race) may impact the privileges that one has in the workplace (Clark et al., 2017).

For those with privilege, it may be uncomfortable to recognize the truth about the advantages they have had. However, it is a necessary step to confront the systemic issues which afford both power and privilege. Becoming aware of privilege often involves actively listening to the experiences of those who come from marginalized groups and reflecting on one’s own position within existing power structures. Talking honestly and openly about one’s own privilege is a key leadership task. Lee Jourdan maintains that doing so “lowers defenses, demonstrates vulnerability, and sets the tone for inclusive behaviors” (Jourdan, 2021).

It’s crucial to recognize that meaningful change requires internal transformation and a departure from the status quo. This also requires action from those currently in power positions. It’s a paradox and partly explains why change does not occur, as those who conform to and support the existing understanding of power tend to ascend to these positions of power.

Find concrete recommendations on recognizing and leveraging privilege here!

Gender Equality by industry

Banking
Read more

Consulting
Read more

Insurance
Read more

Pharma/Med-tech
Read more

Public sector
Read more

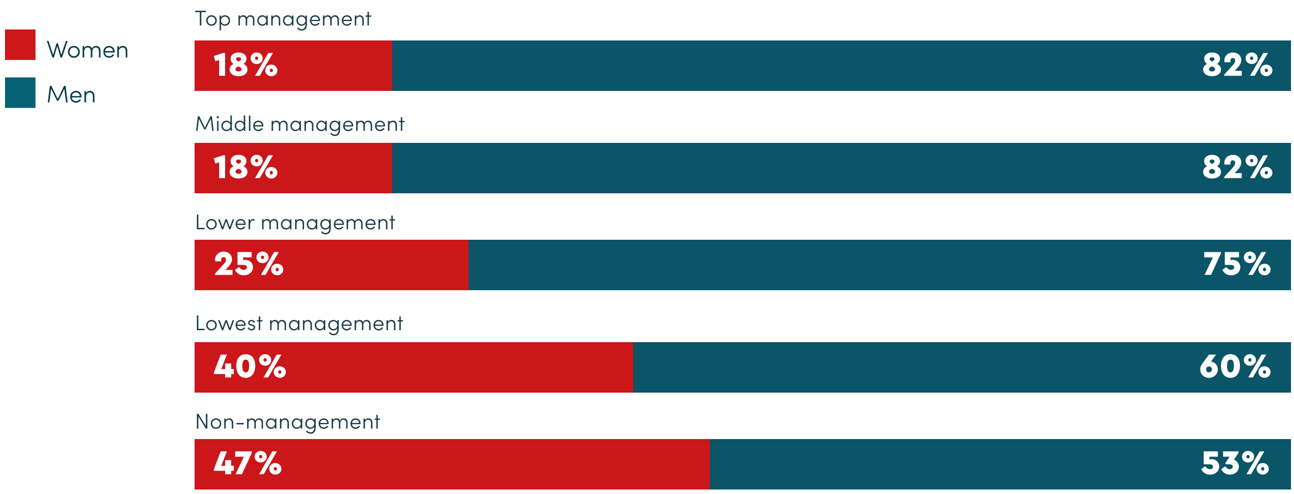
Service sector
Read more

Tech Industry
Read more

Gender equality in Banking

In the Banking sector it is particularly evident that the higher the management position, the lower the percentage of female managers. The distribution of female and male managers is more balanced at the lowest management level. However, men predominate from the lower management level upwards. Clearly, the Banking sector needs to improve when it comes to utilizing the potential of female talents.

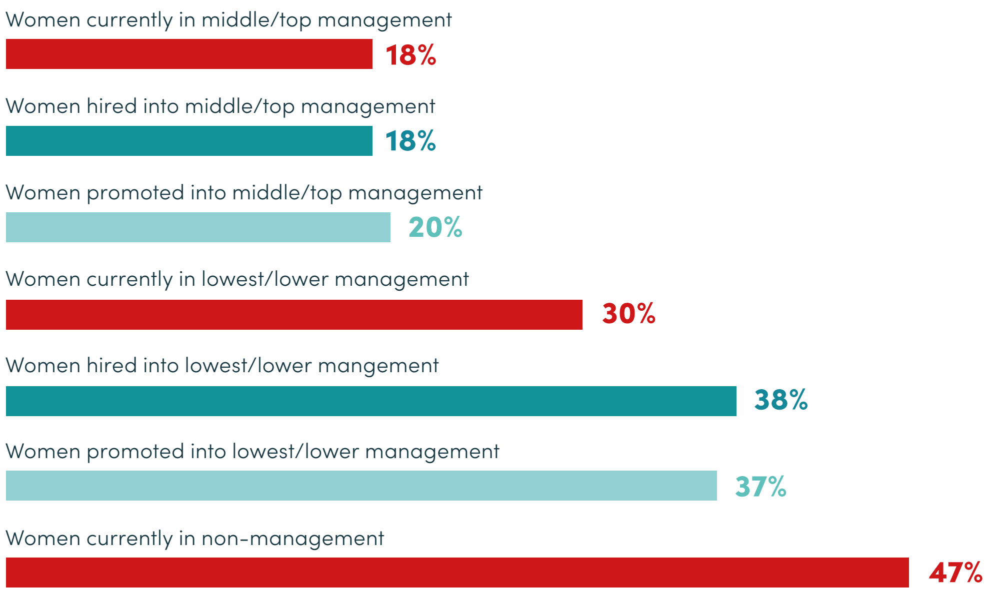
Gender distribution by management level - Banking



Last year's overall positive trend of women entering management positions through both recruitment or promotion continues. Here, too, the share of women tapers off the higher the management level. Almost 40% of positions are awarded to women at the lowest and lower management levels. However, only one in five positions go to women in the middle and top management. This means a 20% percentage gap in recruitment and promotions between junior and senior management (i.e., lowest/lower and middle/top management levels).

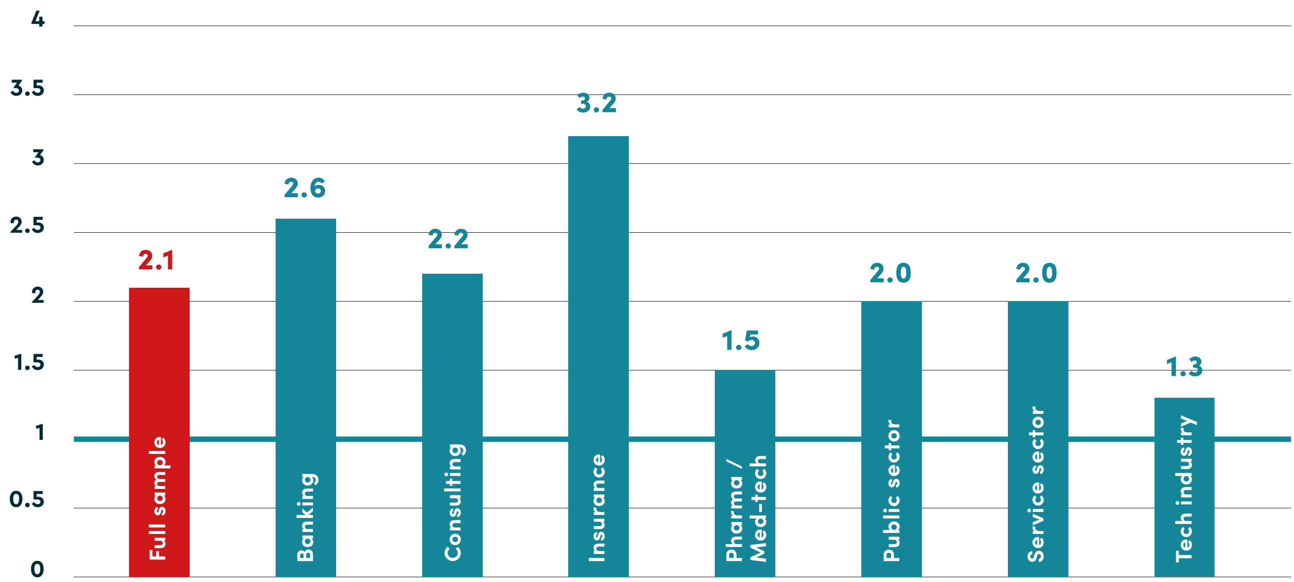
Interestingly, the percentage of women who enter management through recruitment is almost identical to that of women who enter due to promotions at all management levels. Yet, at no level do banks and financial organizations make anywhere near full use of their female talent pipeline. Much must be done in recruiting, developing, and promoting women into managerial positions.

Female talent pipeline – Banking



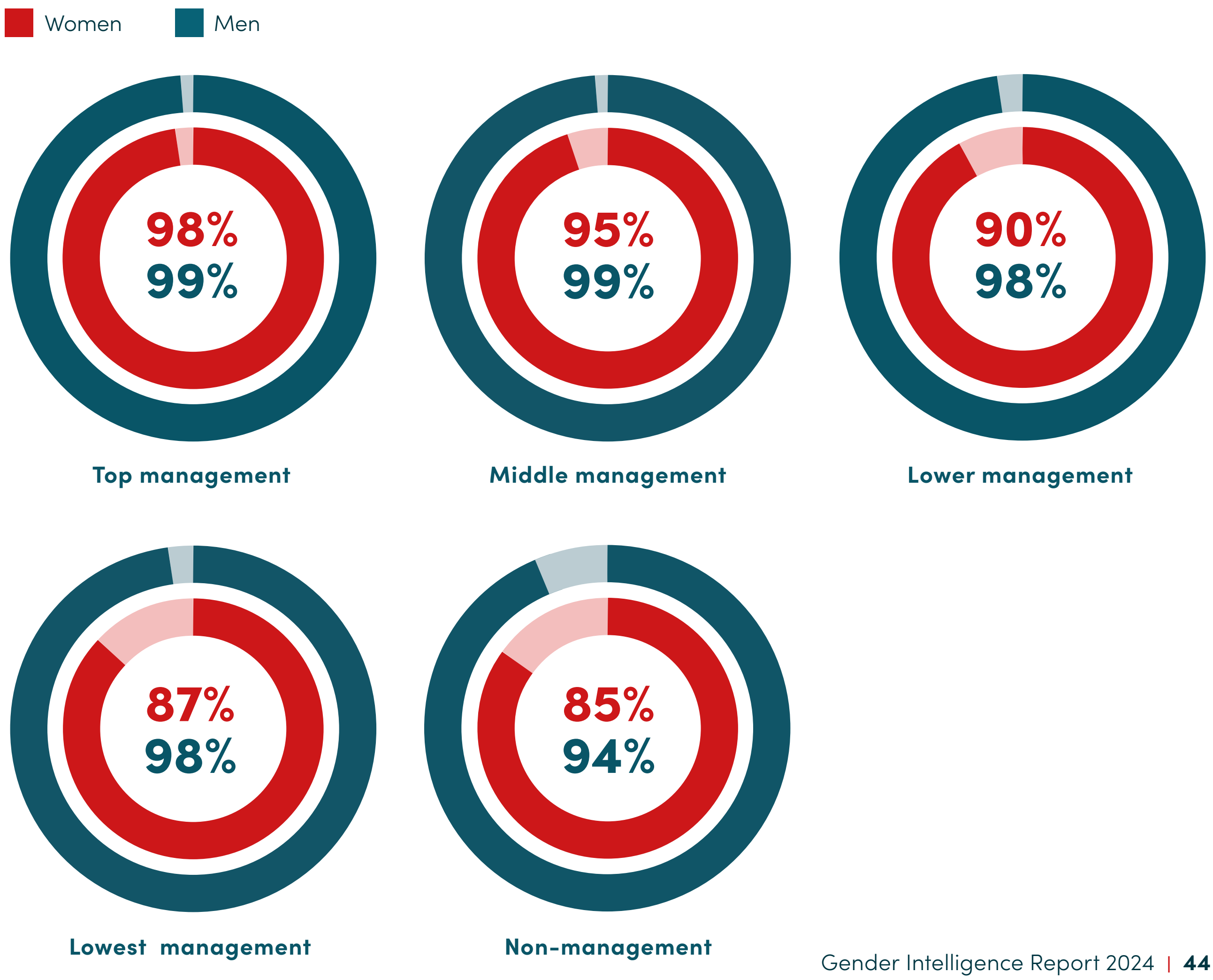
It is evident from the Banking industry Glass Ceiling Index of 2.6 that women face significant obstacles to reach middle and top management positions in this sector. It is the second highest GCI of any industry.

Glass Ceiling Index for middle and top management by industry



In the Banking industry, there is a clear difference in employment percentages between men and women at all levels except for top management, where full-time work is the norm for everybody. As the gap narrows with each management level, women still face a disadvantage in reaching top management roles. This may be due to the expectation of full-time work, even though women are more likely than men to work part-time at some point (and thus are likely expected to increase their work percentage. See the "Key Figures" section for further information on differences in part-time/full-time employment between men and women across different age groups.

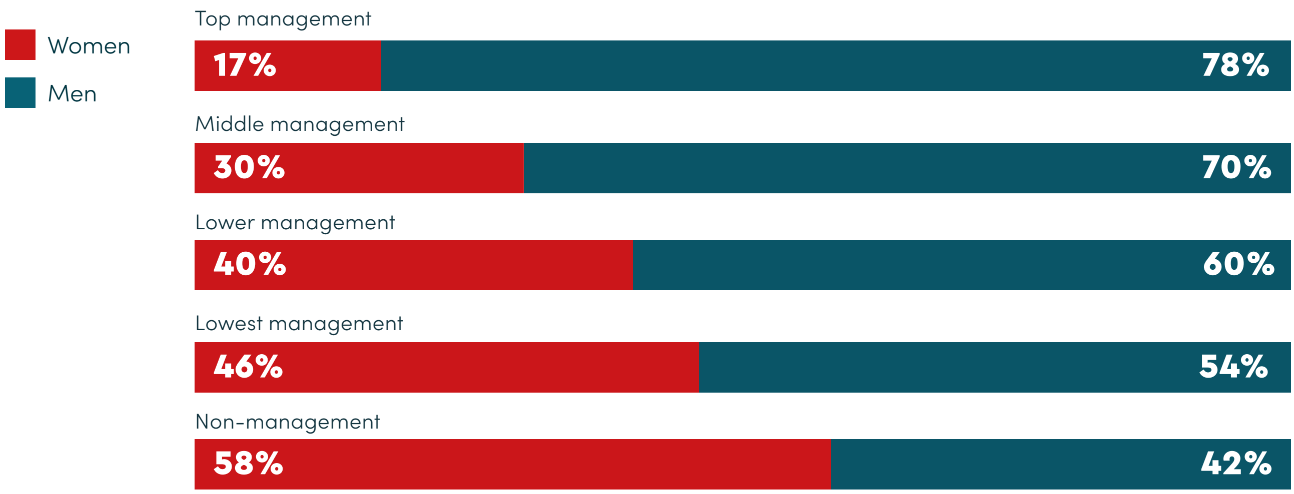
Employment percentage by gender and management level



Gender equality in Consulting

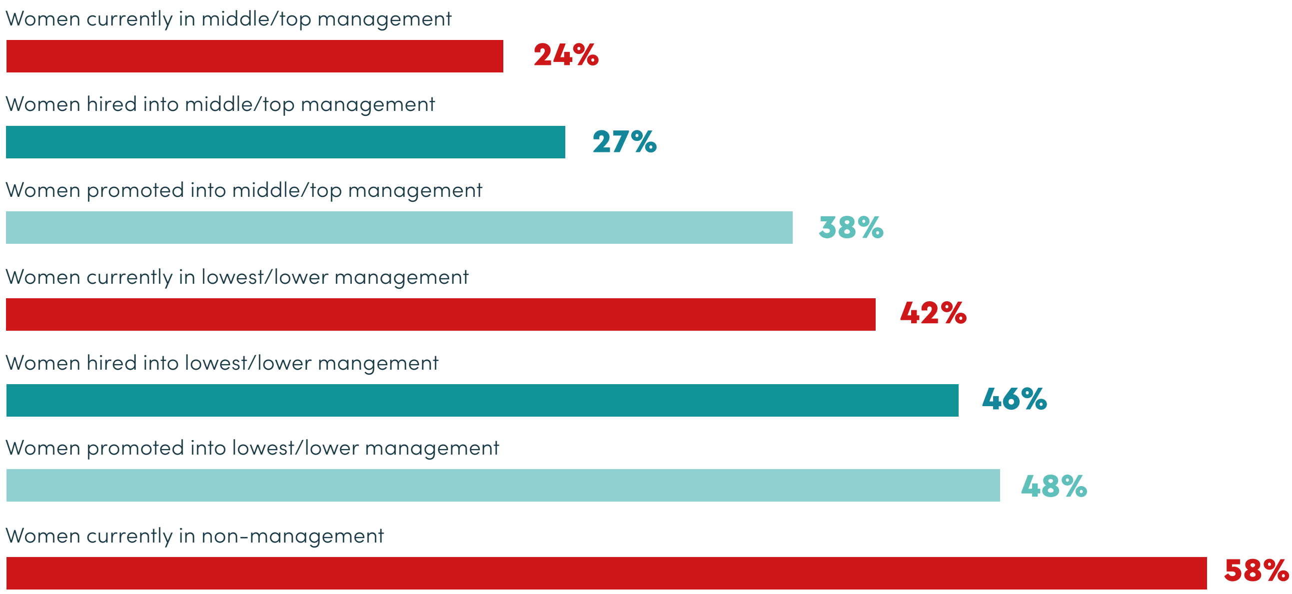
The Consulting industry has a higher share of women in non-management functions than almost any other industry. There are more women than men in non-management positions. The opposite is true as we move up the management hierarchy, with fewer than one in five women in top management positions. There is an overall trend of fewer women at higher management levels.

Gender distribution by management level - Consulting



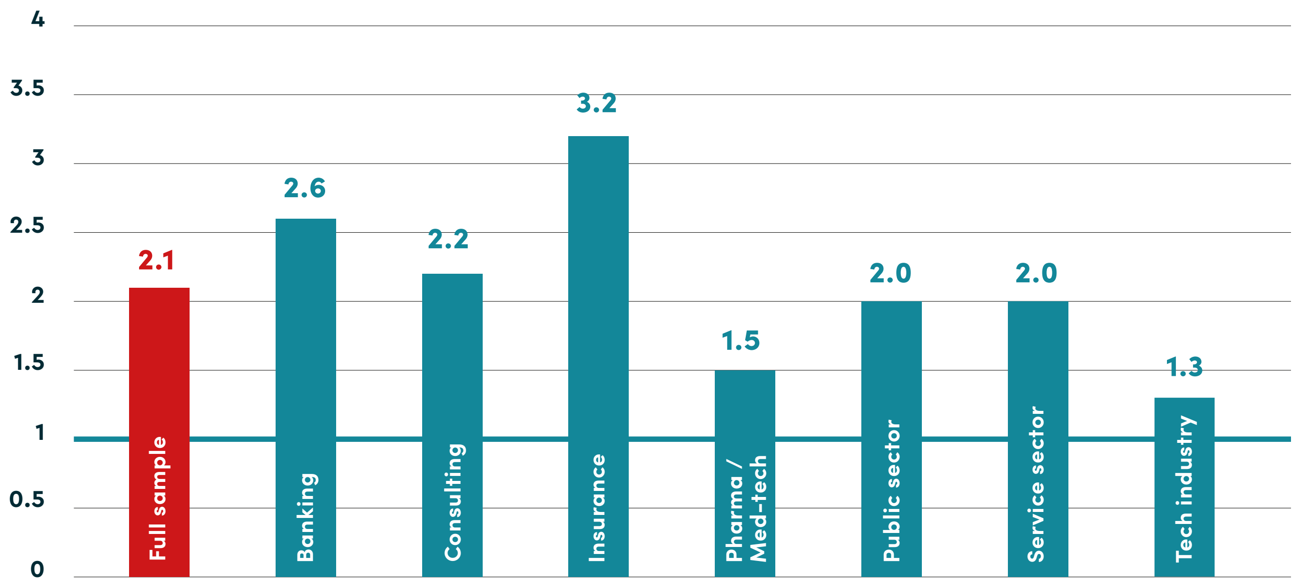
Women are equally likely to enter lowest and lower management through recruitment and promotion. It is mostly promotions rather than recruitment that brings women into middle or top management. While it is good news that women are moving into management while already employed by the company, recruitment into these positions could be intensified.

Female talent pipeline – Consulting



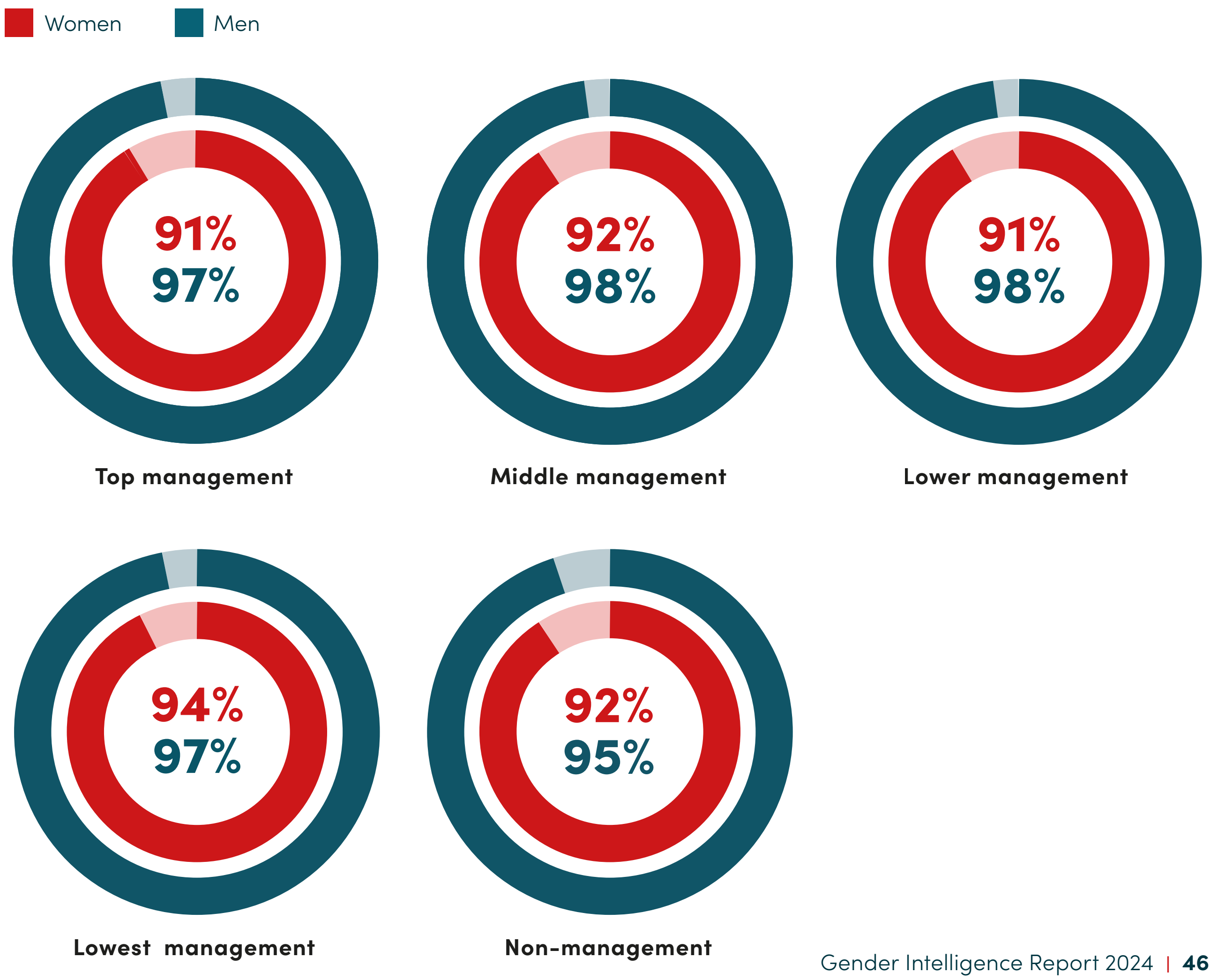
The Glass Ceiling Index of 2.2 means that women are disadvantaged in reaching management positions, especially those in the upper levels of the career ladder. Women face higher barriers to reach middle and top management positions than in other industries.

Glass Ceiling Index for middle and top management by industry



The employment rate is essentially the same for men and women regardless of hierarchy level (men's employment rate ranges from 95 to 97%; women's from 91 to 94%). This means that in Consulting, there are considerably fewer differences in the average employment percentages across different management levels. Women have a slightly lower average employment rate than men, showing that even in an industry where part-time work is not the norm, women consistently work at slightly lower rates than men.

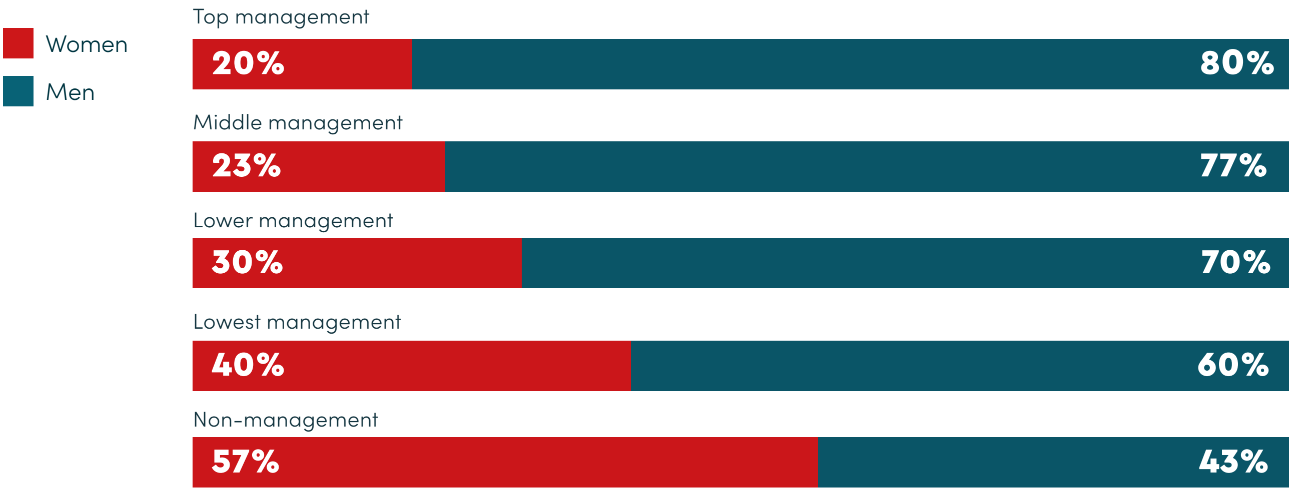
Employment percentage by gender and management level



Gender equality in Insurance

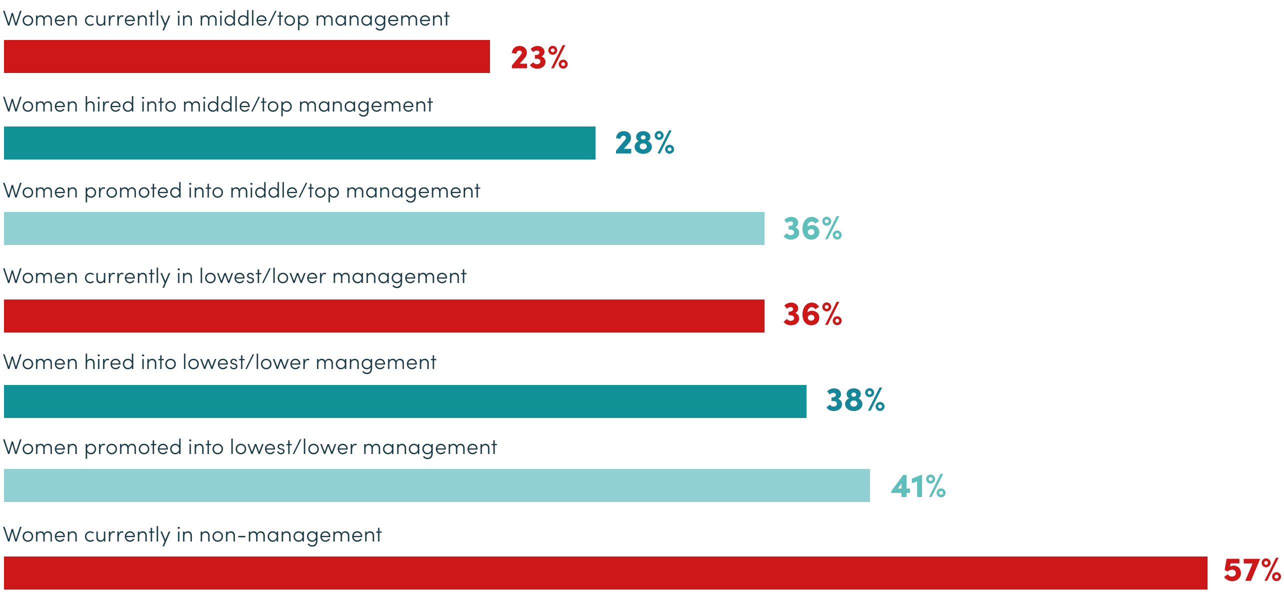
There is a large difference between the representation of women in non-management and upper management jobs in the Insurance sector. While there are proportionally significantly more women than men in non-management jobs, all other levels of management have more men than women. Only one in five positions in top management is held by a woman, among the lowest of any industry.

Gender distribution by management level - Insurance



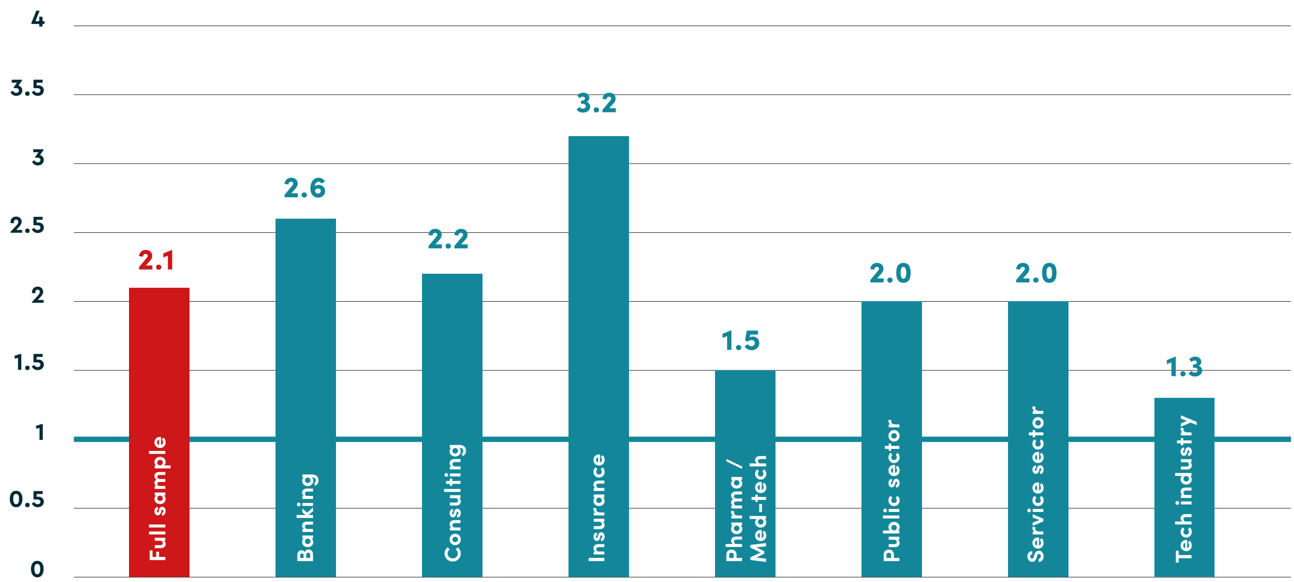
Women are almost equally likely to enter lowest and lower management through recruitment and promotions. For middle and top management, promotions are more likely to bring women into these positions. There is still much to be done to develop and promote women and, even more so, attract and be open to female candidates who aspire to senior management positions.

Female talent pipeline – Insurance



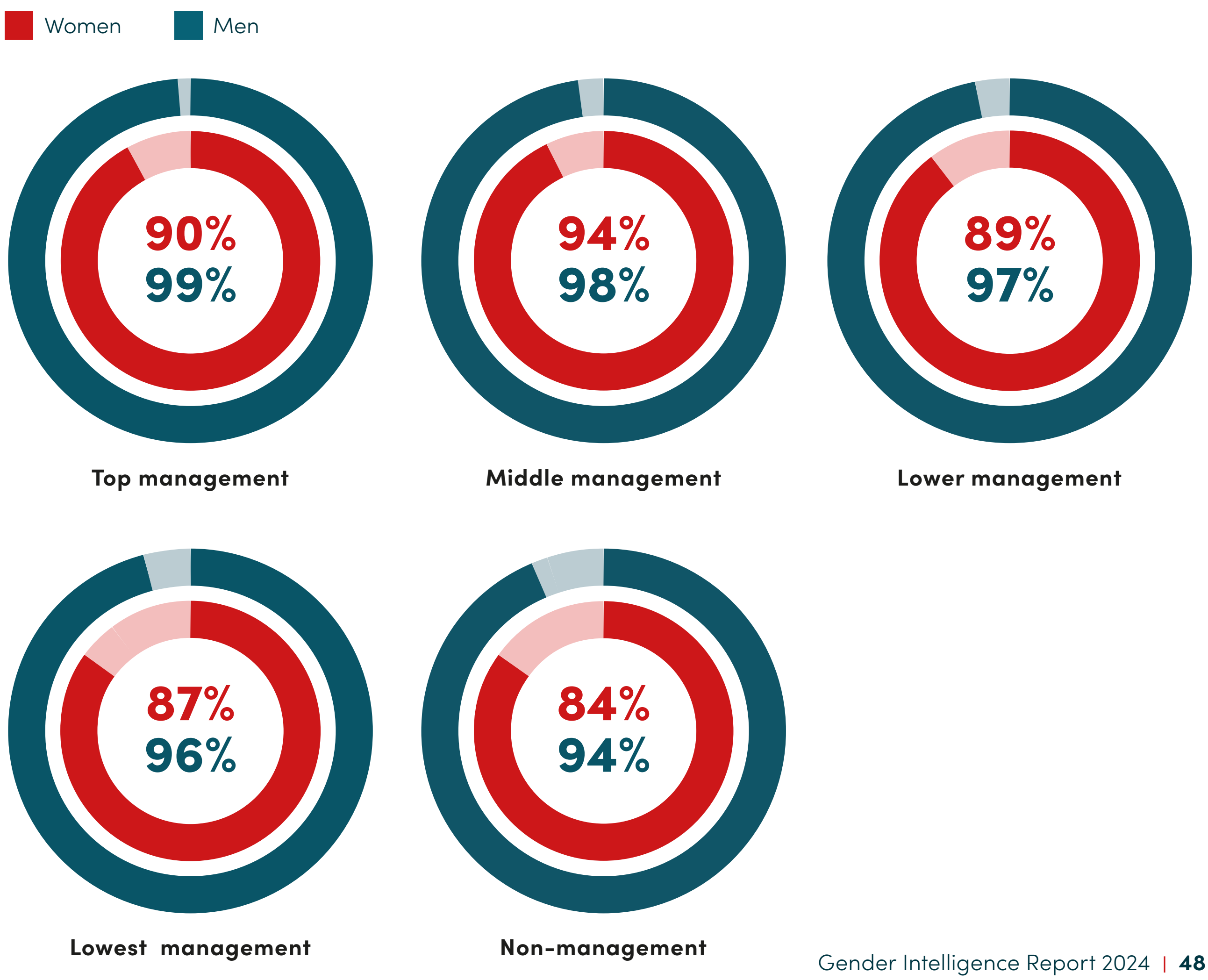
The Glass Ceiling Index of 3.2 is the highest of all industries, meaning that women face the most significant hurdles to attain a middle and top management position — action is needed to recruit, develop, and promote female talents.

Glass Ceiling Index for middle and top management by industry



Women and men differ significantly in employment rates in the Insurance sector. More women work part-time, especially at non-managerial and lower management levels. This gap narrows at higher management levels but never disappears (compared to other industries, the gap is large even in top management). Compared to men, women are more likely to reduce their employment rate at some point in their lives (especially between the ages of 31 and 40), which makes a later career progression more difficult.

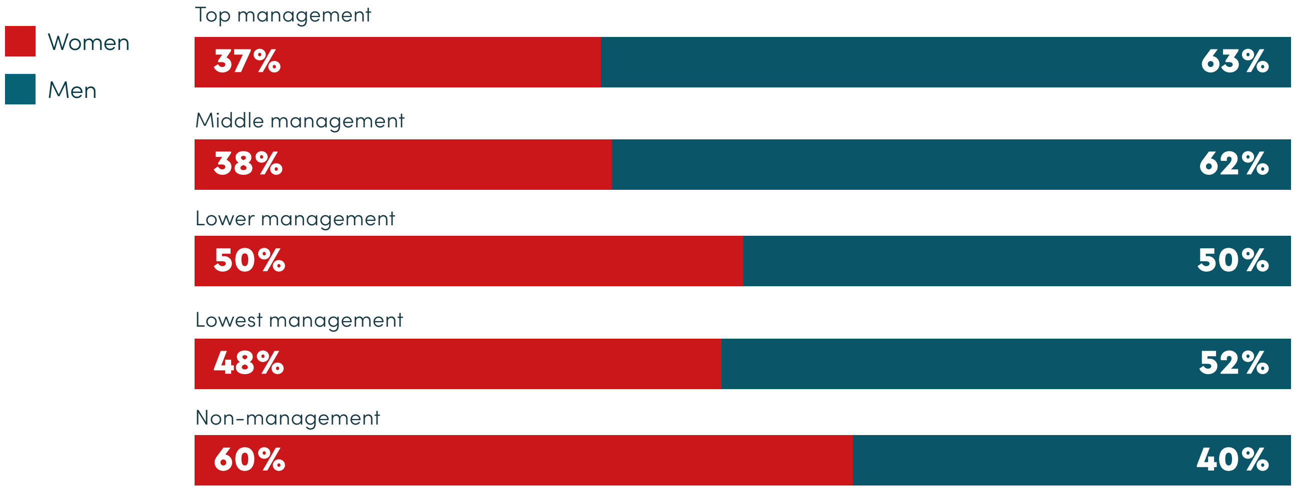
Employment percentage by gender and management level



Gender equality in Pharma/Med-Tech

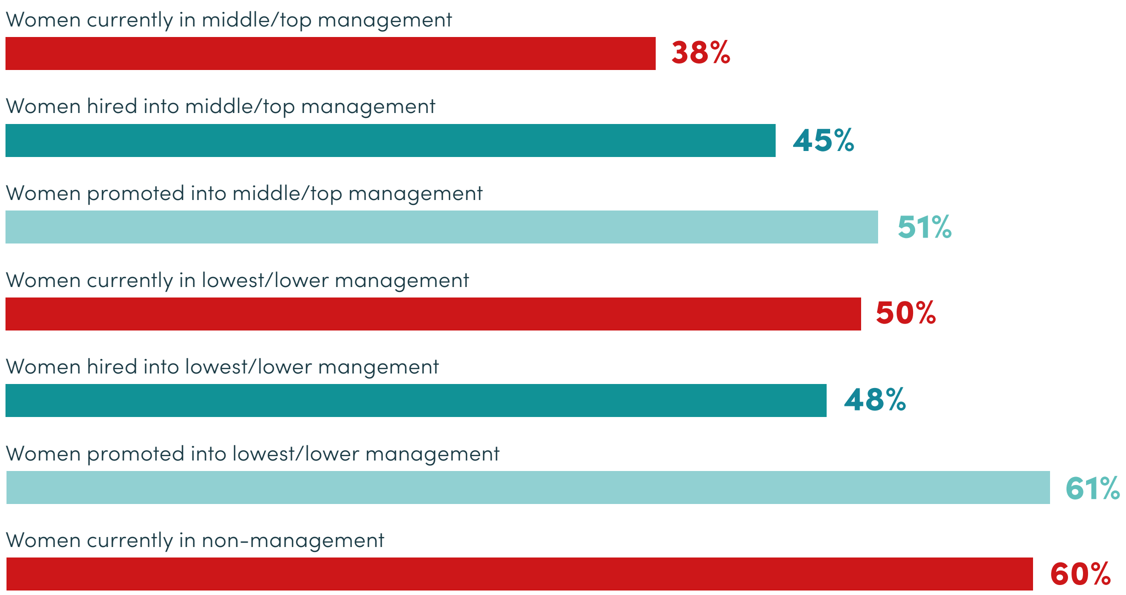
Compared to all other industries, the ratio of women to men in non-management is highest in the Pharma/Med-tech industry. The proportion of women in middle and top management is also higher than in any other sector.

Gender distribution by management level - Pharma/Med-Tech



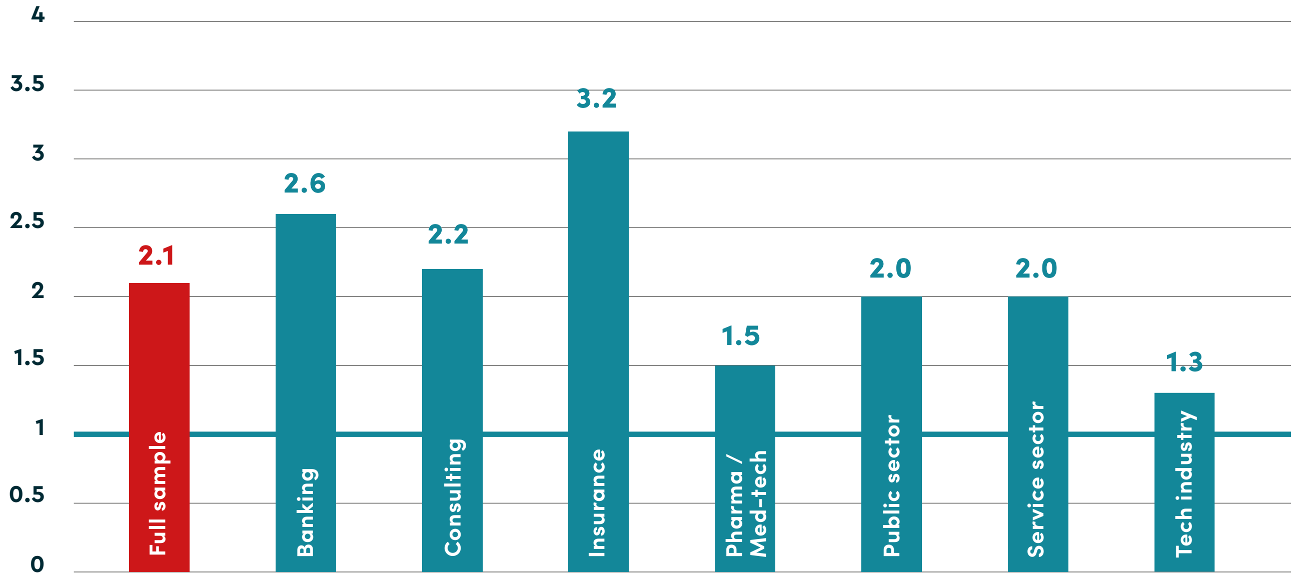
Women are likelier to enter both lower and upper management positions through promotions than recruitment. Even though the external talent pool is not used as well as the internal talent pool, the percentage of women hired is higher than in other industries.

Female talent pipeline – Pharma/Med-Tech



With a Glass Ceiling Index of 1.5, the Pharma/Med-tech industry is one of the sectors with the lowest GCI. The only sector with a lower GCI is the Tech industry. While this is good news, women still face difficulties for reaching middle and top management levels in this sector.

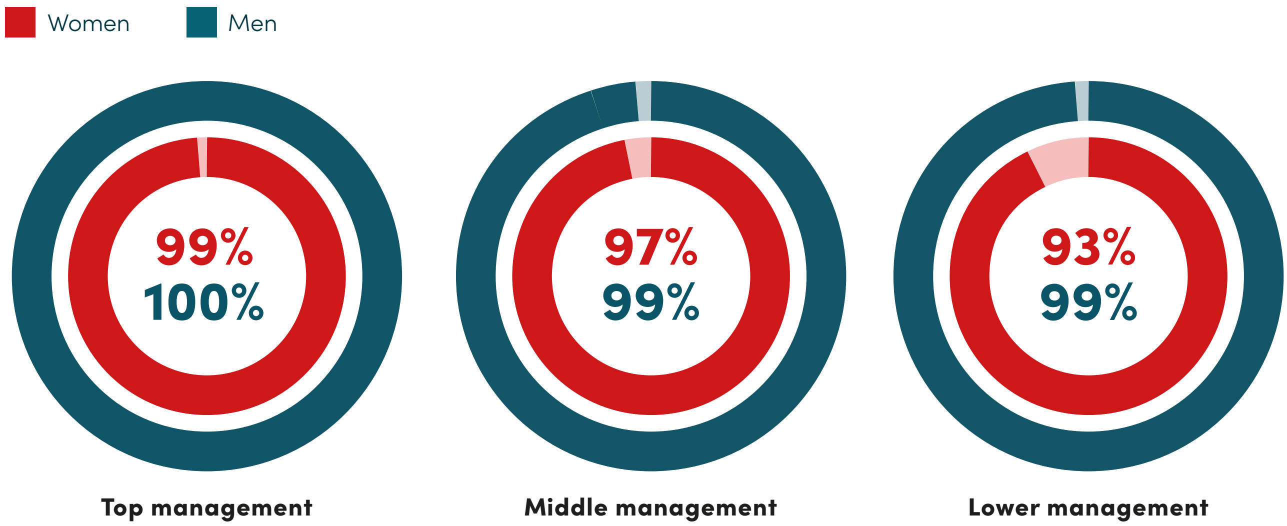
Glass Ceiling Index for middle and top management by industry

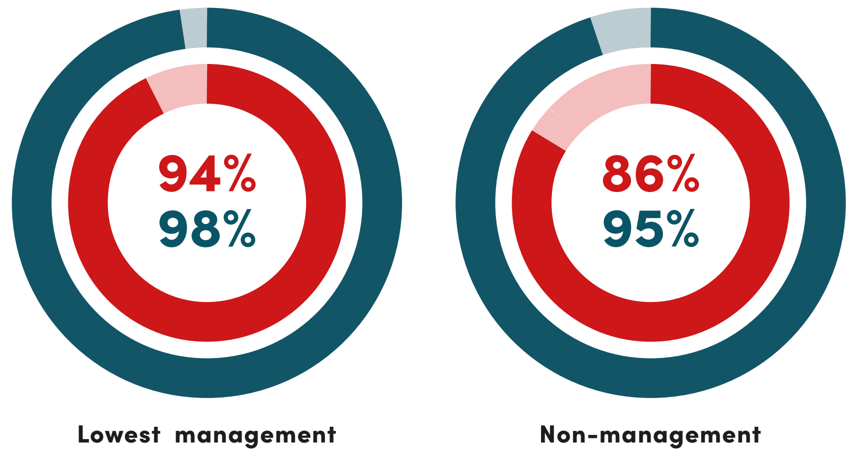


Almost all men in management work full-time, and the few working part-time have non-management jobs. The trend is similar for women. However, this difference between non-management and management is more significant than for men. Both men and women must increase their employment rate to move into management.

This increase makes it more difficult for employees who cannot increase. Companies with more flexible career progression and part-time work may attract these employees.

Employment percentage by gender and management level

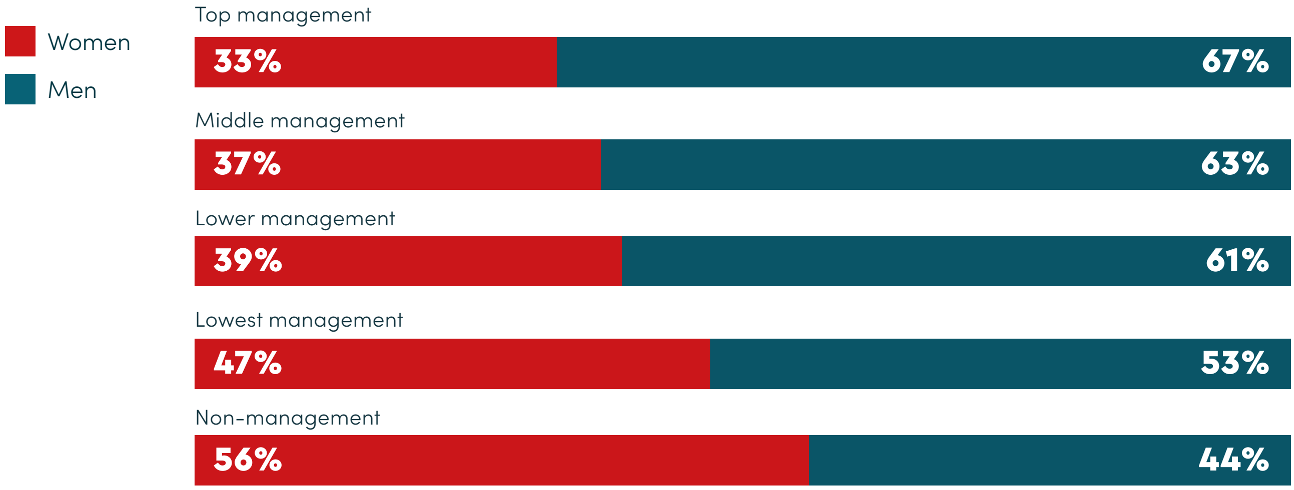




Gender equality in the Public Sector

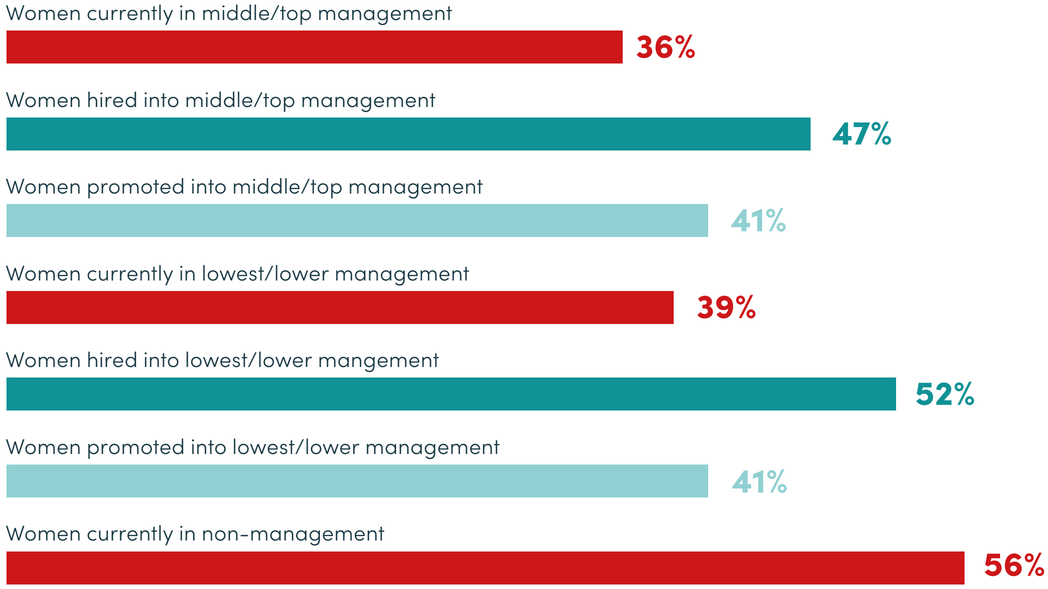
The Public Sector has more women than men who work in non-management, and the male-female proportion is nearly balanced at the lowest management level. However, the opposite is true for upper management. The percentage of women in the three upper-most management levels is quite similar, ranging from 39% in lower management to 33% in the top management.

Gender distribution by management level - Public Sector



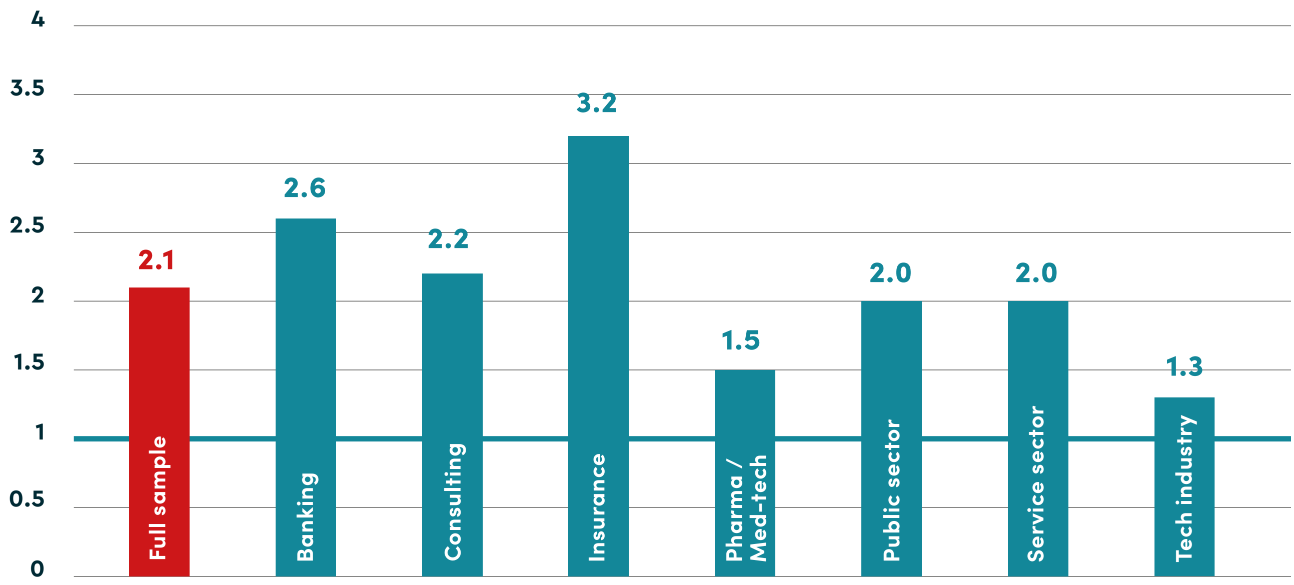
The percentage of women in management is about 20% lower than in non-management. More women enter management through recruitment than promotions at both lowest/lower and middle/top management levels. Therefore, promotions could be used more effectively to boost (future) female leaders. This hiring trend is more pronounced in lower management levels than higher up. Given the high share of women in non-management and lowest management, only a small percentage of women enter middle and top management through promotion (the talent pipeline is insufficiently utilized).

Female talent pipeline – Public Sector



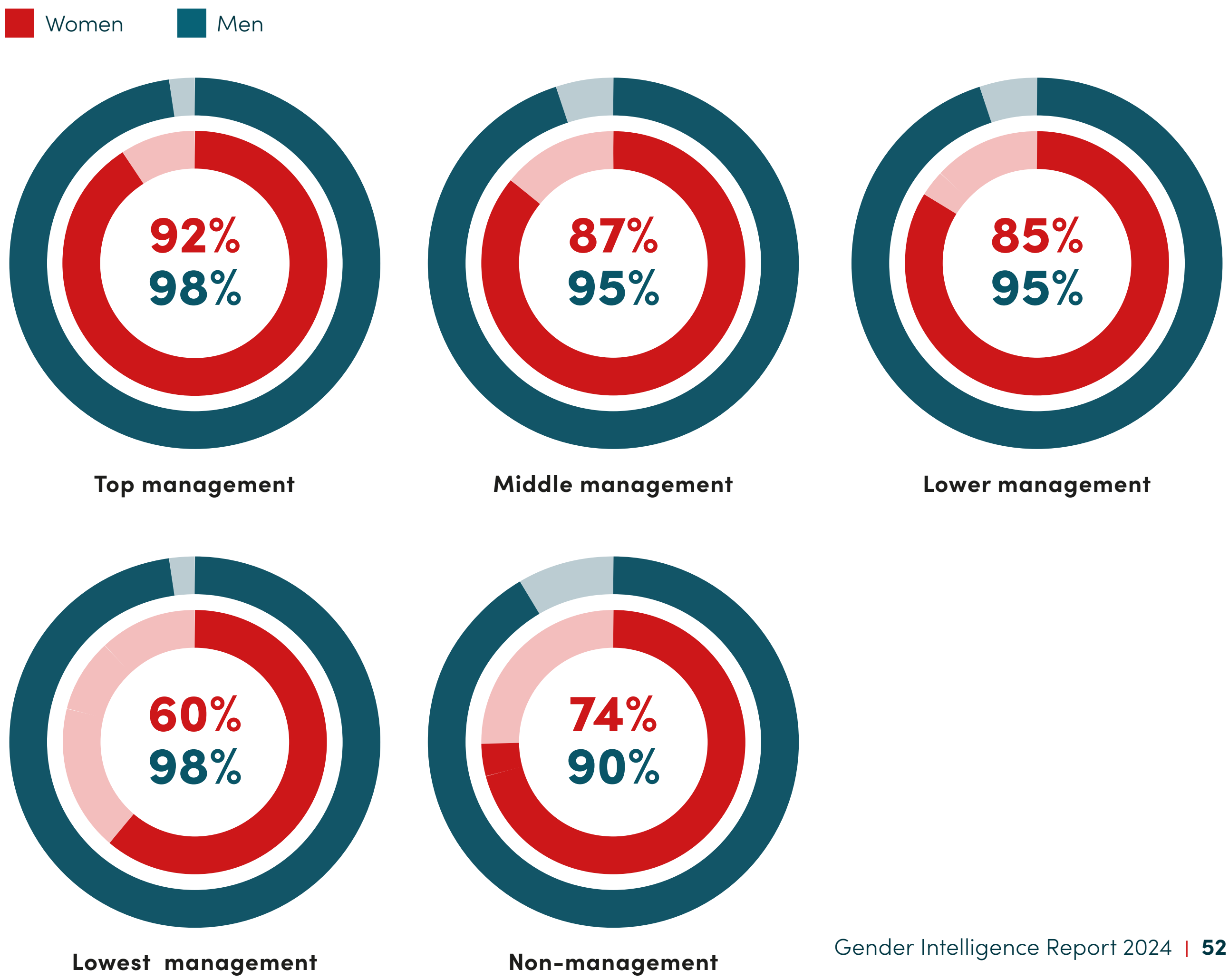
With a Glass Ceiling Index of 2, women in the Public Sector still face difficulties in career advancement to the middle and top management levels.

Glass Ceiling Index for middle and top management by industry



Two trends are straightforward in the Public Sector: a) the higher the management level, the lower the percentage of women working part-time; b) men work at higher work percentages, regardless of hierarchy level. Interestingly, there is a drop in the average employment percentage of women between non-management and lowest management. The average employment percentage of women increases again in lower, middle and top management. This may discourage womenn from considering a career in senior management.

Employment percentage by gender and management level

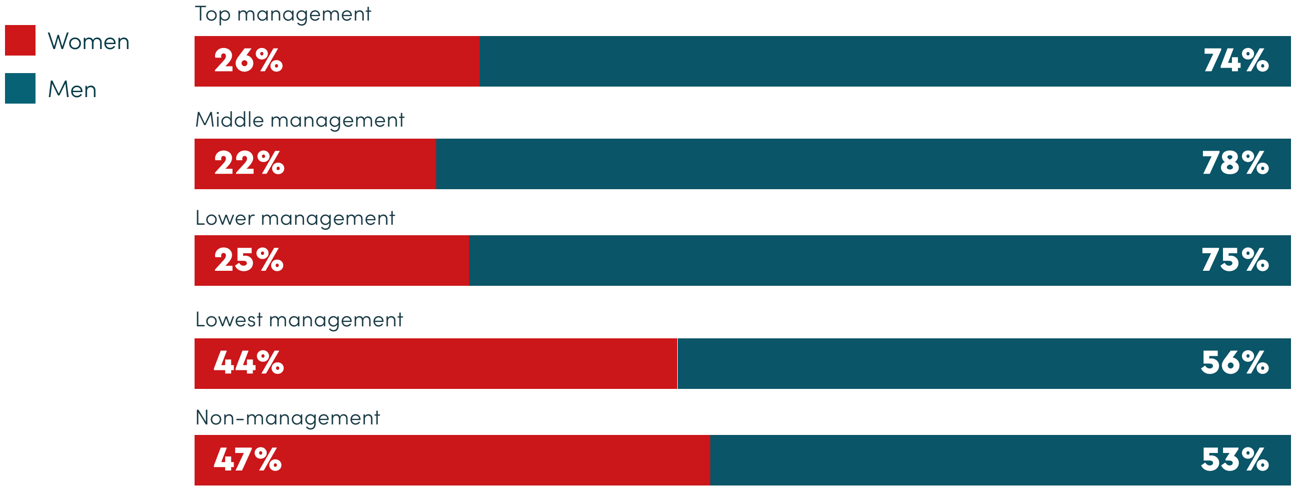


Gender equality in the Service Sector

There is a relatively balanced distribution of men and women in non-management and lowest management positions of the Service sector. At all other hierarchical levels, the percentage of women remains relatively stable, but at much lower levels. The most significant drop in the percentage of women managers is between the lowest and lower management levels. This drop suggests that it may be difficult for women to move beyond the lowest management level.

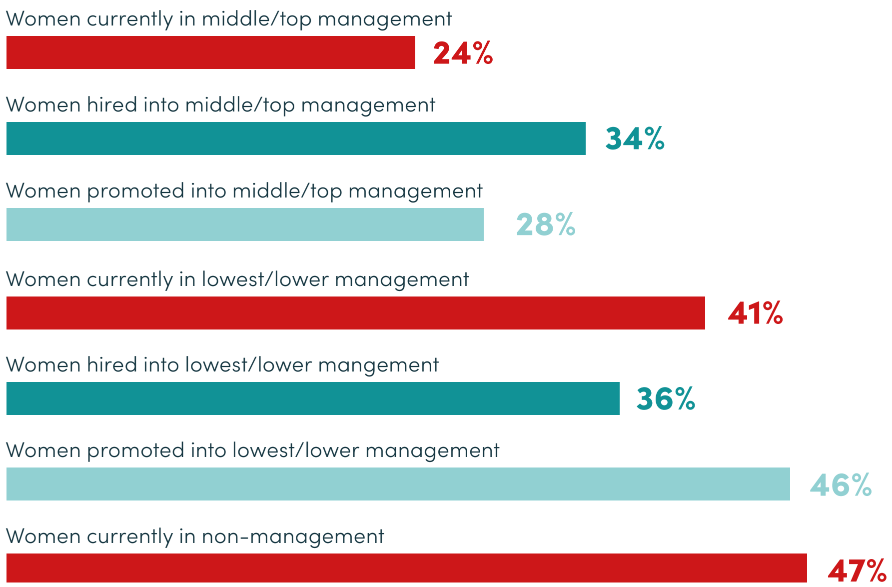
This sector encompasses a wide range of companies, leading to significant variations in gender representation, mostly in non-management and lowest management. The median values often differ from the average, mainly due to the presence of outliers, highlighting the diversity of experiences within the sector.

Gender distribution by management level - Service Sector



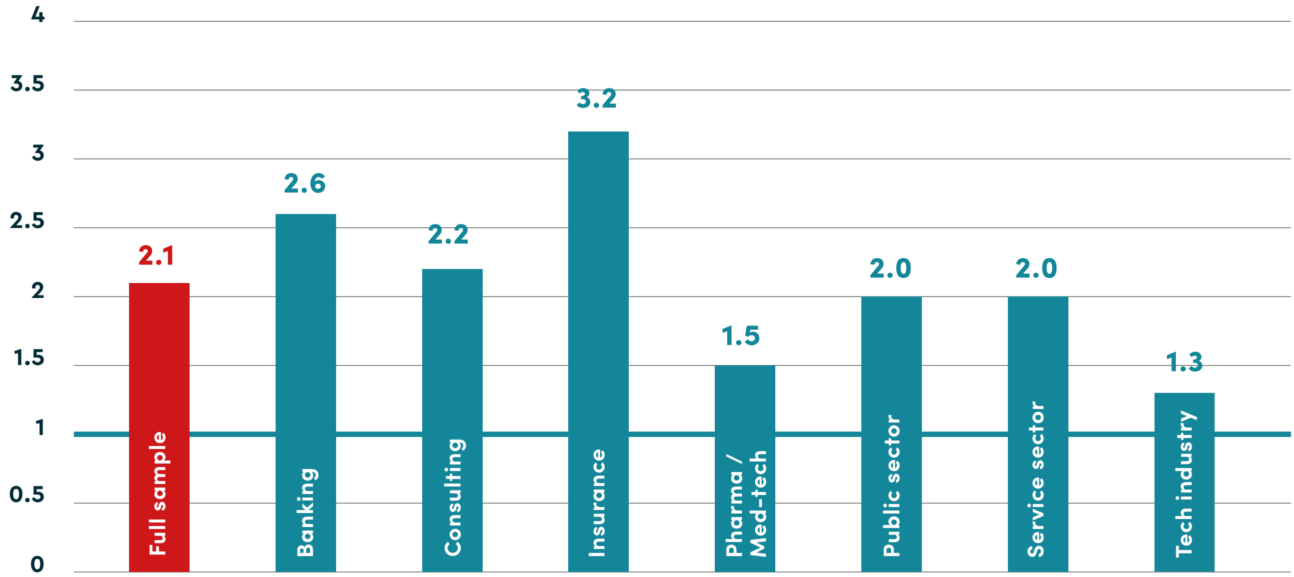
More women enter the lowest/lower management level through promotions than through recruitment. The opposite is true for middle/top management. It is thus likely that some internal female talents in both non-management and lowest/lower management still need to be recognized and move up the management ladder.

Female talent pipeline – Service Sector



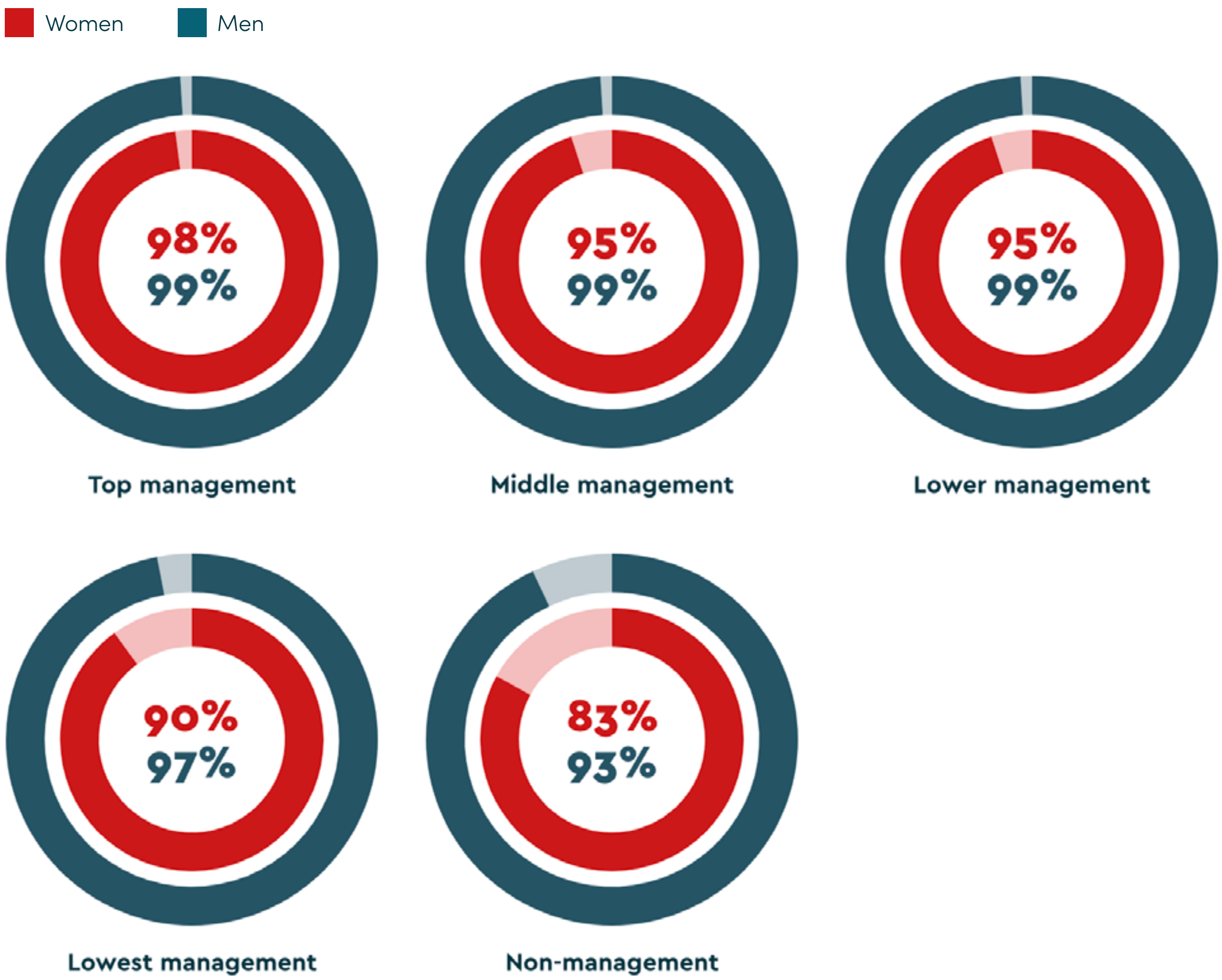
The Glass Ceiling Index of 2 for the Service sector implies that women in this industry face significant difficulties reaching upper management levels.

Glass Ceiling Index for middle and top management by industry



Although the variations are relatively small, the higher the management level, the higher the average employment percentage of women. The option of working part-time – even in a non-managerial role – seems to be more readily available to women than to men.

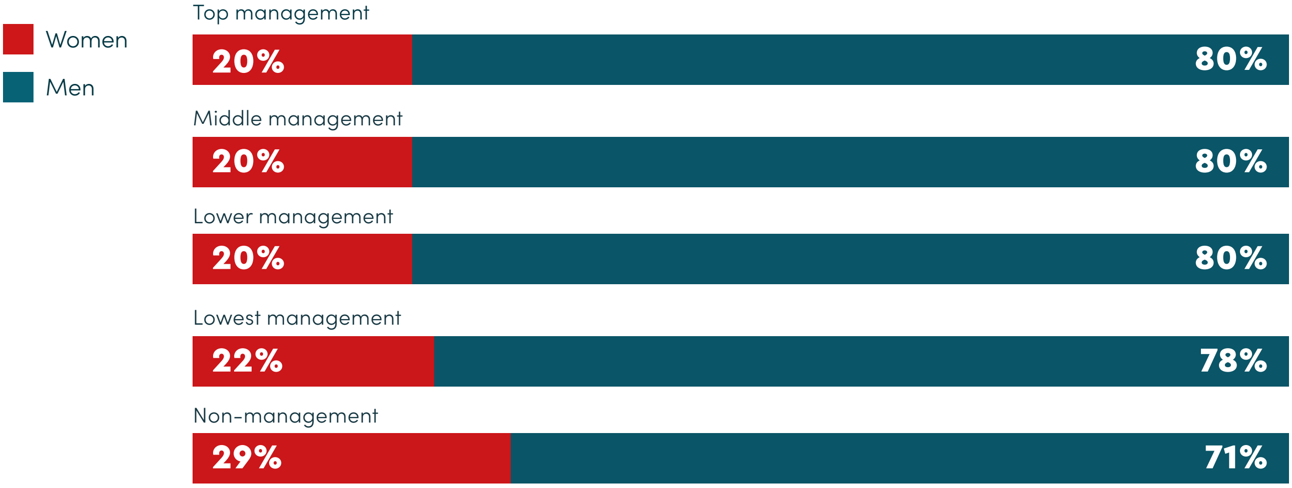
Employment percentage by gender and management level



Gender equality in the Tech Industry

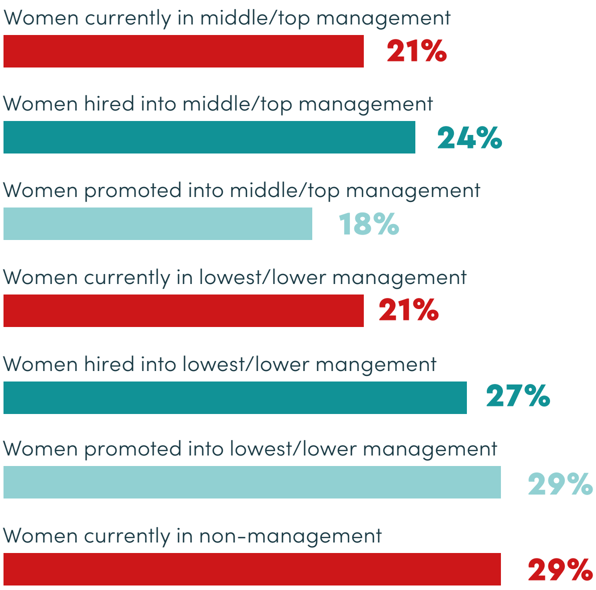
The percentage of women is much lower in both non-management and all four management levels than in other sectors. However, except for the lowest management (where the divergence is slight!), the share of women does not vary between the lower, middle, and top management. That means there are no significant hurdles for women to reach leadership positions, or at least fewer than elsewhere.

Gender distribution by management level - Tech Industry



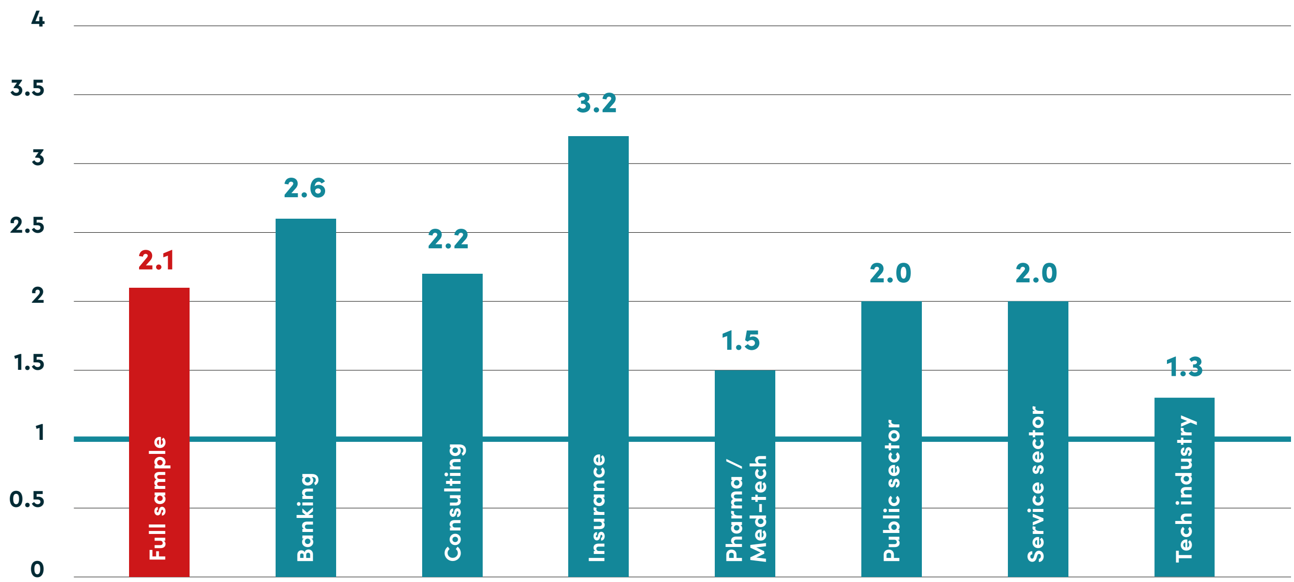
Women are equally likely to enter lowest and lower management through recruitment and promotions. They are promoted to the lowest levels of management at the same rate as they are currently represented in non-management positions, implying an effective use of the internal talent pipeline at this level. On the other hand, more women are recruited into middle and top management than promoted. Women's recruitment rate for these positions is higher than their current representation in these positions, implying a steady increase in the percentage of female senior managers over time.

Female talent pipeline – Tech Industry



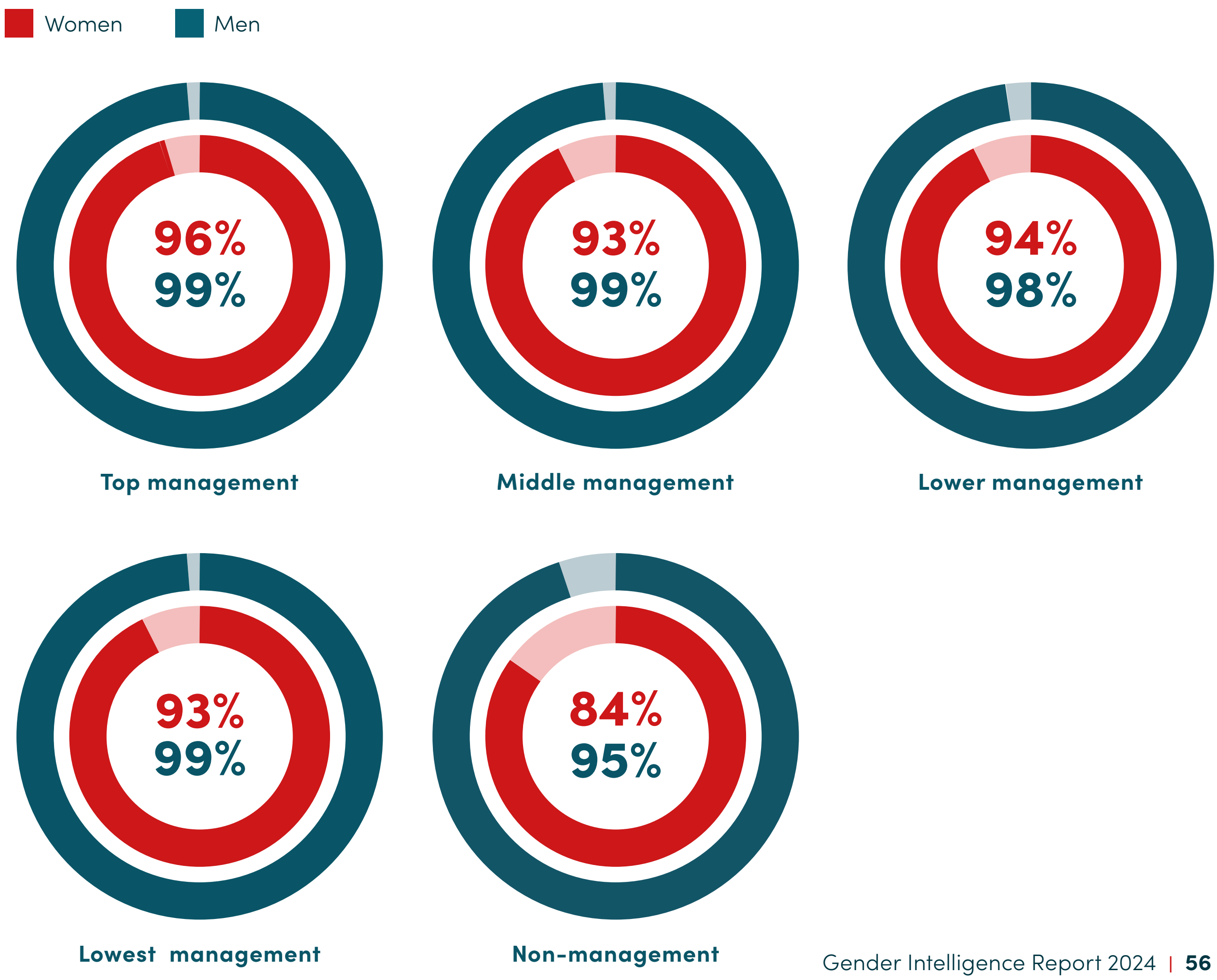
The GCI of 1.3 is the lowest of all industries, implying that women face fewer obstacles in their career advancement here. However, It should be noted that the Tech industry has few women overall.

Glass Ceiling Index for middle and top management by industry



It is quite apparent that working as a manager in the Tech industry means working full-time – and this is more pronounced than in other sectors. While this is truer for men than women, near-full-time employment percentages seem required (e.g., 95% and not 100%). This is unfortunate since also more and more men are interested in such employment solutions.

Employment percentage by gender and management level



Recommendations

Promote Post-heroic Leaders

Read more

Empower through Power Sharing

Read more

Recognize Privilege and Leverage it for Inclusion (Culture)

Read more

PROMOTE POST-HEROIC LEADERS

The post-heroic leader emphasizes collaboration, empathy, and collective achievement and adaptability. Post-heroic leaders champion inclusivity and value difference. In other words: The traditional image of the leader as a solitary, authoritative figure is evolving. Heroic leadership is outdated and strictly connected to a binary idea of masculinity (Nentwich et al., 2023). Here is how organizations can foster this new leadership model to overcome the paradox of the post-heroic leader (Fletcher, 2004) and create more gender equity.

1. Develop your leaders to be post-heroic

Empathy and emotional intelligence are key for post-heroic leadership. The good news – they can be learned! Successful leadership depends on a learning environment that creates conditions for collective learning (Fletcher, 2004). Therefore, programs that focus on developing empathy and emotional intelligence among leaders should not only be offered, but you should communicate to your (aspiring) leaders that they are important and should be taken seriously.

Coaching for change: If you want to shift from heroic leadership to post-heroic leadership rather than just having new leaders, external coaching can help your organization and be a resource for your employees to use individually. External coaches, similar to external consultants, can benefit your organization by leveraging a different perspective. Employees may feel more comfortable speaking candidly to a coach and incorporating their advice. Projects such as Leaders for Equality right here at the University of St.Gallen can significantly impact your organization.

Role-model nontraditional leadership: Use storytelling to share examples of post-heroic leadership within the organization who exhibit non-traditional leadership traits, such as leaders who have helped employees when it was not a required part of the job. For example, a senior leader in an organization once spent hours helping an employee who is a first-generation college student prepare for a business school entrance exam. While it was not required of the leader, this changed that employee's life.

2. Use metrics to create accountability

Feedback systems: Implement 360-degree feedback systems where employees at all levels can provide input on leadership performance. Use this feedback to identify and promote post-heroic leadership traits. Expect your leaders to model how to receive feedback well and implement change.

Leadership metrics: Develop metrics to evaluate leadership based on team engagement, employee satisfaction, and collaborative success rather than solely on financial performance.

3. Make transparent decisions

Use behavioral design to your benefit: Let behavioral design support your change process. Don't only collect and track but also analyze your HR data to understand patterns and trends and make forecasts; use these as a basis for changing HR processes to make them more transparent (Bohnet, 2016). For example: Implement standardized evaluation processes to reduce biases. Use objective metrics and structured interviews to assess candidates for promotion. Measure progress and adapt if necessary!

Clear criteria: Define clear and transparent promotion criteria that include technical expertise and leadership qualities, including emotional intelligence, empathy, and empowering others. Communicate these criteria widely within the organization and make their application mandatory in different HR decisions.

Equitable hiring practices: Implement hiring practices that actively seek to include underrepresented groups. Use blind recruitment techniques and diverse interview panels.

4. Diversify career paths

Expert career paths: Career paths can transcend traditional leadership expectations, for instance, by offering opportunities for experts who may not wish to lead teams. Individuals may then be promoted to management positions based on expertise rather than leadership skills, which usually represents an overlap of personnel responsibility and management function.

People management and project management pathways: Conversely, good people managers could advance to leadership positions even if they do not have the most specific expertise in the field. Good project managers can be called upon to manage complex projects, bringing in a fresh perspective, without being in a formal supervisory position to the project team members.

Skills-based recruiting: Recruiters and hiring managers should move away from a rigid approach to recruitment based on roles and elaborate job descriptions towards a more flexible approach based on skills and experience.

5. Rethink development opportunities

Equity in development opportunities: Development opportunities must align with individual employees' skills, goals, and motivations. This fairness in programs will allow leaders to develop their potential best rather than applying the same development to everyone.

Redefine what it means to "develop": Companies and their managers need to shift the focus of career conversations from promotion to developing in different directions. Development might mean shifting laterally into a new role, completing a rotation in a different team or different location, or a shift in responsibilities, such as giving up some people management responsibilities in favor of more expertise-based tasks.

Rethink manager goals for development: The question should not be "How do I keep this person on my team?" but "How do I keep this person in my organization?" Empower managers to support their people in exploring opportunities beyond the boundaries of their existing team or business unit. Metrics matter in driving behavior changes, and managers need to be recognized and rewarded for enabling the internal mobility of their (diverse) talents. For example, managers should have goals tied to the number of development opportunities they sponsored outside their immediate team (Tupper & Ellis, 2022).

EMPOWER THROUGH POWER SHARING

By now, we all know the business case for diversity, namely, that it provides a strategic advantage that positively affects the bottom line. But to reap these benefits, managers have to empower their diverse team members and colleagues to take ownership over their work. For managers, this means giving up power of their own, decentering themselves, actively championing others, and challenging their own assumptions. But how can empowerment be implemented into daily management business?

1. Redesign collaboration

Cross-functional teams: Create cross-functional teams that combine diverse skill sets to work on specific projects. These teams should have the autonomy to make decisions and manage their workflows because of their unique dynamics. The unique dynamics of these teams are: 1. Usually have competing identities and loyalties 2. Undergo significant pressure and conflict 3. Face high-performance expectations (Holland et al., 2000)

Decentralized decision-making: Empower teams and individuals at all levels to make decisions. Establish clear guidelines and boundaries within which they can operate independently.

2. Implement agile practices

Adopt agile methodologies (Mishra et al., 2020): Implement agile methodologies such as Scrum or Kanban. Provide training and resources to ensure teams understand and use these practices effectively.

Iterative processes: Encourage iterative processes where teams can continuously plan, execute, review, and adjust their work. This allows for rapid adaptation to changes and continuous improvement.

Learn from your best practices: Many organizations have teams or units that already utilize (some) agile practices. Give them visibility, use them to track what works (and what does not), and roll out their successful practices elsewhere.

3. Make structural changes to empower all

Flatten hierarchies: Reduce the number of hierarchical levels within the organization to promote a more democratic distribution of power (also sometimes referred to as "unstructuring"). This encourages leaders to be more accessible and collaborative. To be effective, this process needs to be managed carefully: Manage your employees' expectations closely; purposively redefine leadership roles; reconfigure communication channels and decision-making processes (Anicich et al., 2024).

Flexible leadership: Expect (and enable) your leaders to adapt their leadership style so that they can best serve their team and, in the process, respond to unforeseen scenarios. The combination of flexible leadership and culture offers a competitive advantage and improves communication and coordination among people (Anning-Dorson, 2021). Flexible leadership requires a constant openness to feedback, an eagerness to develop new habits and willingness to try new techniques.

A few questions you might ask yourself to increase your flexibility as a leader:
– Am I dependent on a specific behavior or technique?
– Do I respond to feedback or criticism with defensiveness?
– Do I consider multiple approaches when solving an issue, and am I willing to change course?
– Am I able to admit to personal mistakes?
– Am I willing to try new strategies suggested by my (subordinate) team members?

4. Change the culture

Promote team-based achievements: Shift the focus from individual to team accomplishments that highlight the team's strength and enhance trust among members. This enhanced trust will impact the team's performance (Verburg et al., 2018).

Increase workplace experimentation: Currently, 91% of top management believes there is room for experimentation and creativity in the workplace, compared to 35% of lower management (Agile Business Consortium, 2023). Shifting organizational culture to allow employees to have the time to experiment will help lead to more creativity and innovation.

RECOGNIZE PRIVILEGE AND LEVERAGE IT FOR INCLUSION (CULTURE)

Recognizing and leveraging privilege to promote inclusion involves understanding how privilege operates within the organization and using it to create opportunities for underrepresented groups.

1. Help managers understand privilege

Privilege training: Conduct training sessions on privilege and its impact. Help employees understand their privileges and how to use them to support others. It is also essential for employees to understand how their privilege may harm others (McIntosh, 1989).

The Privilege Walk: DEI Facilitators use various illustrations to demonstrate the concept of privilege. While media is great for understanding privilege, an exercise that can get people involved is the privilege walk (Ma et al., 2022). This involves participants visually seeing the "head start" they may have due to privilege to increase awareness.

2. Take allyship seriously

Ally Training: Develop programs that train employees to be influential allies in a post-heroic world. This includes understanding the experiences of marginalized groups and learning how to support them.

Leverage Employee Resource Groups: Establish networks of allies to advocate for underrepresented groups within the organization. These networks can provide support and resources for inclusive initiatives.

3. Link leadership with accountability

Ensure that post-heroic leaders understand inclusion: Leaders should model inclusive behavior and hold themselves accountable for promoting diversity and inclusion.

Intersectional team diversity metrics: Track and report on diversity metrics beyond binary genders and what you may traditionally measure through your HR functions. Keep in mind an intersectional perspective of your employees that may offer dimensions not commonly asked but give them the agency to choose whether to provide the information. A key is including representation at different levels of the organization. Use this data to identify areas where privilege may hinder the organization (Rodriguez et al., 2021).

4. Understand your power

Though the team helps support post-heroic leaders in being accountable, it does not absolve leaders of their responsibilities. Therefore, it is essential that you, as a leader, maintain accountability for your privilege and power.

Here is a set of questions to ask yourself as a leader, manager, or team member.
- How do I exert influence over others?
- Who do I have power over?
- Am I actively championing others?
- Am I creating space for others?
- Am I emphasizing co-creation over delegation?
- Am I asking for and incorporating feedback?

Embracing the post-heroic leadership model is not just a strategy but a fundamental shift in how we perceive and practice leadership. It calls for leaders to prioritize empathy, collaboration, and shared success over individual accolades. By fostering a culture that values these qualities, organizations can create agile structures that democratize power, promote equity, and leverage privilege for inclusion. The recommendations outlined—promoting post-heroic leadership, empowering through power sharing, and recognizing privilege—are essential to building workplaces where power is distributed and shared responsibly. Organizations will close the power gap through this evolution and inspire a more inclusive, innovative, and resilient future.

New Best Practices from Advance Member Companies

What's under way in Advance member companies?
Learn from what works and take a read of the game changing practices and initiatives that Swiss companies are investing in for better and gender inclusive business. – Together we #advance faster!

Accenture

Inclusion and Diversity Meets Generative AI

EY

Leading with Trust: Path to Impact

IKEA

50/50 Gender Share by Store Managers

Johnson & Johnson

"Let's talk about money" - Increased Financial Confidence for Johnson & Johnson Employees

JTI

Fostering Inclusion through Our New JTI Culture and a Comprehensive DEI Plan

MSD

Gender-Neutral Parental Leave

Nestlé

Embracing Job Sharing in Factories

SAP

Driving Impact with Intention: SAP Business Women Network Switzerland

Siemens

NxtGenFemLeader Program

Swiss Re

PowHer - Mentoring by and for Women

Vontobel

Co-CEO: Collaborative Approach in the Company's Operational Leadership

Discover new Best Practices

For inspiration on what works in other companies, visit the rich selection of Best Practices published with the Gender Intelligence Report. Read

APPROACH FOR ANALYSIS

Sample

The 2024 edition is based on analyzing 370,000 anonymized employees' HR data, of which 138,000 are in management positions from over 90 Swiss companies and organizations. This is a unique data set in quantity and quality, corresponding to almost 7% of the Swiss workforce. 69 organizations are Advance member companies, 22 companies participated in the HSG Diversity Benchmarking and are not Advance members.

Unique data set

The Advance & HSG Gender Intelligence Report is the only report in Switzerland that is based on anonymized raw data provided by participating companies on a yearly basis. Consistent key performance indicators (KPIs) using the same formula and the same type of data for all companies have been calculated, which provide transparency on the progress of gender diversity in the Swiss workplace. The methodology allows for an objective, transparent comparison of results between companies. For companies interested in a more detailed analysis of their performance on such KPIs, the HSG Diversity Benchmarking allows deeper in-company analysis and cross-company comparison.

Hierarchical levels

The analysis is based on five hierarchical levels: non-management, lowest management, lower management, middle management and top management. They are defined according to the Swiss Earnings Structure Survey of the Federal Statistical Office and are also used by Logib, the Federal Government's equal pay self-test tool.

Diversity dimensions

The analysis of employee diversity is inherently limited in the relevant diversity dimensions. In Switzerland, companies can only collect data on gender (but not gender identity), age, nationality, (sometimes) language, and education. Conversely, no data on sexual orientation or gender identity, religion, race and ethnicity or illnesses and disabilities may be collected due to data protection regulations. To map these dimensions, anonymized surveys may be necessary.

Why is gender treated as binary in the Gender Intelligence Report? As Swiss organizations largely record the gender category in binary form – due to a lack of legal basis and because not all HR software supports a third gender – and the analyses are based on the HR data provided by the companies, the analyses on gender follow this binary logic. This choice does not reflect the authors' conceptualizations or personal views.

How to interpret your company's metrics

To illustrate progress or setbacks, we work with indices which we also recommend using when you interpret your own company's diversity KPIs. We are often asked how to interpret results, set internal diversity benchmarks or how to evaluate HR numbers. Here is how we do it in this report:

We compare the gender distribution at every step along the employee life cycle (i.e. new hires, departures, promotions etc.) with the existing gender distribution in the relevant group. For instance, to assess whether women are hired for management positions at an adequate rate, we compare the gender ratio of newly hired female managers with the gender ratio of the female managers already working in the company. For example: Today, a company has a 23% share of women in middle management.

This rate could be improved if more than 23% of new hires for this level were women. This practice establishes how results from recruitment, promotions and turnover impact the existing gender distributions in the companies. Thus, you can see at one glance whether a result has a positive or negative effect on women's representation.

If you would like to learn exactly how your company's I&D metrics compare to your peers', we encourage you to participate in the HSG Diversity Benchmarking. You can find more information here.

Industry analyses

Once more, the Gender Intelligence Report 2024 includes analyses by industry. To do this, participating companies were sorted into 7 industries: banking, consulting, insurance, pharma/med-tech, public sector, service sector, and tech industry. Organizations were sorted into the industry that fits best.

I&D Questionnaire

This year's Gender Intelligence Report also includes metrics derived from an organization-level questionnaire. The questions aim to reveal implemented I&D measures (such as diversity and inclusion goals or I&D or unconscious bias trainings) and policies (such as a sexual harassment policy). One representative (usually placed in an I&D and / or HR function) filled out the questionnaire per organization.

REFERENCES

Adisa, T. A., Cooke, F. L., & Iwowo, V. (2019). Mind your attitude: the impact of patriarchy on women's workplace behaviour. Career Development International, 25(2), 146-164. https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-07-2019-0183

Advance (2024). White Paper "Ambitious. Qualified. Overlooked! Revealing the untapped talent pool of women over 40" in collaboration with EY Switzerland and the Competence Centre for Diversity & Inclusion of the University of St. Gallen (HSG). https://www.weadvance.ch/en/whitepaper/ambitious-qualified-overlooked

Aghina, W., Ahlback, K., De Smet, A., Lackey, G., Lurie, M., Murarka, M., & Handscomb, C. (2018, January 22). The five trademarks of agile organizations. McKinsey & Company. https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/the-five-trademarks-of-agile-organizations

Agile Business Consortium, JCURV, & Truthsayers. (2023). The third annual State of Culture Report. Agile Business Consortium. https://www.agilebusiness.org/static/d2c9787c-0b5c-4578-9da04cc1df878094/3rd-State-of-Agile-Culture-Report.pdf

Aksoy, C. G., Carpenter, C. S., Frank, J., & Huffman, M. L. (2019). Gay glass ceilings: Sexual orientation and workplace authority in the UK. Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, 159, 167-180. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2019.01.013

Andreeva, T., & Zappa, P. (2023). Whose lips are sealed? Gender differences in knowledge hiding at work. Journal of Organizational Psychology. https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12444

Allison, S. T., & Goethals, G. R. (1978). Now he belongs to the ages: The heroic leadership dynamic and deep narratives of greatness. In Kerenyi (Ed.), The heroes of the Greeks (Chap. 10). https://www.socialpsychology.org/download/107617/HLDchapter.pdf

Allison, S.T. (2016). Heroic Leadership. In: Farazmand, A. (eds) Global Encyclopedia of Public Administration, Public Policy, and Governance. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-31816-5_2344-1

Anderson, R. H. (2020, January 6). Challenging our gendered idea of mentorship. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2020/01/challenging-our-gendered-idea-of-mentorship

Anicich, E. M., Lee, M. Y., & Sánchez Celi, J. P. (2024, March 21). The challenges of becoming a less hierarchical company. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2024/03/the-challenges-of-becoming-a-less-hierarchical-company

Anning-Dorson, T. (2021). Organizational culture and leadership as antecedents to organizational flexibility: Implications for SME competitiveness. Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies, 13(5), 1309-1325. https://doi.org/10.1108/JEEE-08-2020-0288

Arnone, M., & Stumpf, S. A. (2010). Shared leadership: From rivals to co-CEOs. Strategy & Leadership, 38(2), 15-21. https://doi.org/10.1108/10878571011029019

Arends, E. How should leaders structure organisations for resilience? The Institute of Leadership. https://leadership.global/resourceLibrary/how-should-leaders-structure-organisations-for-resilience.html

Aronowitz, S., De Smet, A., & McGinty, D. (2015, June 1). Getting organizational redesign right. McKinsey Quarterly. https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/getting-organizational-redesign-right

Barsade, S. G. (2002). The Ripple Effect: Emotional Contagion and its Influence on Group Behavior. Administrative Science Quarterly, 47(4), 644-675. https://doi.org/10.2307/3094912

Bericht zu rassistischer Diskriminierung in der Schweiz. (2023). Rassismusvorfälle in der Beratungspraxis 2023: Auf der Grundlage des Dokumentations-Systems Rassismus DoSyRa. https://www.network-racism.ch/rassismusberichte/rassismusvorfalle-in-der-beratung-praxis-2023

Bilderback, S. L., & Miller, G. J. (2023). Importance of employee development programs in business. Journal of Management Development, 42(4), 327-336. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-03-2022-0054

Bohnet, I., van Geen, A., & Bazerman, M. (2016). When performance trumps gender bias: Joint vs. separate evaluation. Management Science, 62(5), 1220–1234. https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.2015.2186

Bohnet, I. (2016). What works: Gender equality by design. Harvard University Press.

Bolden, R. (2011). Distributed leadership in organizations: A review of theory and research. International Journal of Management Reviews, 13(3), 251-269. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2011.00306.x

Bourke, J., & Titus, A. (2020). The key to inclusive leadership. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2020/03/the-key-to-inclusive-leadership

Carlyle, T., Linson, C. K. & Gunn, A. (1893) On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History. [New York, Frederick A. Stokes company] [Pdf] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/item/25002119/

Castro, P., Tascón, M. T., & Corral, S. (2023). Can patriarchal attitudes moderate the relation between women on boards and firm economic performance? European Research on Management and Business Economics, 29(3), 100222. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iedeen.2023.100222

Cecchi-Dimeglio, P. (2023, June 26). Watch out for these 3 gender biases in performance reviews. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2023/06/watch-out-for-these-3-gender-biases-in-performance-reviews

Clark, C., Matthew, D., & Burns, V. (2017). Power, privilege and justice: Intersectionality as human rights? The International Journal of Human Rights. https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2017.1390333

Cullen, Z. B., & Perez-Truglia, R. (2023). The old boys' club: Schmoozing and the gender gap. American Economic Review, 113(7), 1703–1740. https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.20210863

Chan, X. W., & Hutchings, K. (2023). Inequalities, barriers, intersectionality, and facilitators of careers of women with disabilities: Themes and future research agenda from a scoping review. Frontiers in Psychology. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1104784

Donaldson, M. (1993). What is hegemonic masculinity? Theory and Society, 22(5), 643–657. https://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1149&context=artspapers

Dyke, L.S., Murphy, S.A. How We Define Success: A Qualitative Study of What Matters Most to Women and Men. Sex Roles 55, 357–371 (2006). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-006-9091-2

Eisler, R. (1988). The chalice and the blade. Harper & Row.

Eligon, J. (2020, June 26). A debate over identity and race asks, are African-Americans 'Black' or 'black'? The New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/26/us/black-african-american-style-debate.html

Farber, H. S., Silverman, D., & von Wachter, T. (2015). Factors determining callbacks to job applications by the unemployed: An audit study (Working Paper No. 21689). National Bureau of Economic Research. http://www.nber.org/papers/w21689

Federal Statistical Office (2023). Births and deaths. Average age of women at birth of the 1st child. https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/statistiken/bevoelkerung/geburten-todesfaelle.html

Federal Statistical Office (2024a). MINT-Fächer: Verteilung nach Geschlecht, 2022/23. https://www.bfs.admin.ch/asset/en/28665064

Federal Statistical Office (2024b). Universities and institutes of technology. https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/en/home/statistics/education-science/pupils-students/tertiary-higher-education-institutions/universities.html

Federal Statistical Office (2024c), Swiss Earnings Structure Survey (ESS), https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/en/home/statistics/work-income/surveys/ess.html

Finuras, P. (2019). Why do men dominate leadership and power positions? ResearchGate. https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.24173.23527

Fletcher, J. K. (2004). The paradox of postheroic leadership: An essay on gender, power, and transformational change. The Leadership Quarterly, 15(5), 647–661. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2004.07.004

Foschi, M. (2000). Double standards for competence: Theory and research. Annual Review of Sociology, 26, 21–42. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.26.1.21

French, J., & Raven, B. (1959). The bases of social power. University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/215915730_The_bases_of_social_power

Galsanjigmed E, & Sekiguchi T. (2023). Challenges Women Experience in Leadership Careers: An Integrative Review. Merits. 2023; 3(2):366-389. https://doi.org/10.3390/merits3020021

Ghilarducci, T. (2022, January 28). The unique disadvantage older women face in the workforce. PBS News. https://www.pbs.org/newshour/economy/the-unique-disadvantage-older-women-face-in-the-workforce

Gloor, J. L., Okimoto, T. G., & King, E. B. (2021). "Maybe baby?" The employment risk of potential parenthood. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 52*(8), 623-642. https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12799

Goldsmith, M. (2010, May 26). Sharing leadership to maximize talent. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2010/05/sharing-leadership-to-maximize

GRA Stiftung gegen Rassismus und Antisemitismus. (2022). Glossar: Schwarz: Weitere Begriffe zum Thema Diskriminierung und Verfolgung von Minderheiten (unter Mitarbeit von Dr. phil. Darja Pisetzki, ehem. Projektmitarbeiterin der GRA). https://www.gra.ch/bildung/glossar/schwarz/

Greguletz, E., Diehl, M.-R., & Kreutzer, K. (2019). Why women build less effective networks than men: The role of structural exclusion and personal hesitation. Human Relations, 72(7), 1234-1261. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726718804303

Gross, L. B. (2023, October 31). Why are women called aggressive while men are called assertive? LinkedIn. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-women-called-aggressive-while-men-assertive-limor-bergman-nfmfc/

Hall, L., Laidlaw, J., Almtoft, A., Dhanasarnsombat, S., & Ramirez, D. (2024, March 7). Women in leadership: What's the holdup? S&P Global. https://www.spglobal.com/esg/insights/featured/special-editorial/women-in-leadership-what-s-the-holdup

Harrison, J. S., & Malhotra, S. (2024). Complementarity in the CEO-CFO interface: The joint influence of CEO and CFO personality and structural power on firm financial leverage. The Leadership Quarterly, 35(2), 101711. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2023.101711

Hengartner, M. (2012, November 14). Führung an Hochschulen – Professionelles Management und kollegiale Entscheidungsfindung ... aus der Sicht der mittleren Führungsstufe einer Universität [Präsentation]. Modernes Hochschulmanagement. Zunfthaus zur Saffran, Zürich. https://www.berinfor.ch/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/2012-Referat_Hengartner.pdf

Hieu, V. (2020). Employee empowerment and empowering leadership: A literature review. Technium, 2, 20-28. https://doi.org/10.47577/technium.v2i7.1653

Holland, S., Gaston, K., & Gomes, J. (2000). Critical success factors for cross-functional teamwork in new product development. International Journal of Management Reviews, 2(3), 231–259. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2370.00040

Hornung, S. (2023, November 14). "Good failures happen in new territory": Interview with Amy Edmondson. New Management. https://newmanagement.haufe.de/en/organisation/interview-with-amy-edmondson

Hung, A., J. Yoong and E. Brown (2012), "Empowering Women Through Financial Awareness and Education", OECD Working Papers on Finance, Insurance and Private Pensions, No. 14, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/5k9d5v6kh56g-en

Johnson, A. G. (2000). Privilege, power, and difference. Mayfield Publishing Company.

Jourdan, L. (2021, August 2). Talk about privilege at work. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2021/08/talk-about-privilege-at-work

Kanhaiya, K. S. S. (2023). Power structure as a guide to organizational culture: OC strategies for adapting to change. In Using organizational culture to resolve business challenges (pp. 24). IGI Global. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-6567-7.ch007

Kanter-Moss, R. (1977). Some Effects of Proportions on Group Life: Skewed Sex Ratios and Responses to Token Women. American Journal of Sociology, 82(5), 965–990.

Kanter, R. M. (1977). Men and women of the corporation. Basic Books.

Kapucu, N., & Garayev, V. (2011). Collaborative Decision-Making in Emergency and Disaster Management. International Journal of Public Administration, 34(6), 366–375. https://doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2011.561477

Kendzia, M. J., & Suozzi Borrero, Y. (2022). Financial literacy among the youth in Switzerland. Journal of Financial Risk Management, 11(2), 323–341. https://doi.org/10.4236/jfrm.2022.112017

Kivel, P. (2010). Understanding white supremacy, challenging white privilege, and working for social justice. Understanding and Dismantling Privilege, 1(1), 1–10.

Klatzer, E., O'Hagan, A., & Mader, K. (2018). A brief overview of gender budgeting in Europe. In A. O'Hagan & E. Klatzer (Eds.), Gender budgeting in Europe (pp. 47–62). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64891-0_3

Lalanne, M., & Seabright, P. (2011, October). The old boy network: Gender differences in the impact of social networks on remuneration in top executive jobs (CEPR Discussion Paper No. DP8623). Centre for Economic Policy Research. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1966540

Levanon, A., England, P., & Allison, P. (2009). Occupational feminization and pay: Assessing causal dynamics using 1950–2000 U.S. Census data. Social Forces, 88(2), 865–891. https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.0.0264

Leavitt, H. J. (2003). Why hierarchies thrive. Harvard Business Review, 81(3), 96-102, 141. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/12632808/

Lingo, E. L., & McGinn, K. L. (2020, July). A new prescription for power: Spend less time exerting control and more time mobilizing energy and commitment. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2020/07/a-new-prescription-for-power

Liu, W. M. (2017). White male power and privilege: The relationship between White supremacy and social class. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 64(4), 349–358. https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000227

Livingston, R. W., & Rosette, A. S. (2021). Stigmatization, subordination, or marginalization? The complexity of social disadvantage across gender and race. In B. M. Ferdman, J. Prime, & R. E. Riggio (Eds.), Inclusive leadership: Transforming diverse lives, workplaces, and societies (pp. 39–59). Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429449673-3

Logue, C., & Casteel, D. (2024, July). From the boardroom to the bottom line: Why the CEO-CFO relationship matters more than ever. Stanton Chase Insights Blog. https://www.stantonchase.com/insights/blog/from-the-boardroom-to-the-bottom-line-why-the-ceo-cfo-relationship-matters-more-than-ever

Ma, A., Fath, S., & Rosette, A. S. (2022). Research: People can learn to recognize their racial privilege. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2022/08/research-people-can-learn-to-recognize-their-racial-privilege

Mallick, M. (2021, September 16). How to intervene when a manager is gaslighting their employees. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2021/09/how-to-intervene-when-a-manager-is-gaslighting-their-employees

McIntosh, P. (1989). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. Peace and Freedom, 10–12.

McKinsey & Company. Aghina, W., Ahlback, K., De Smet, A., Lackey, G., Lurie, M., Murarka, M., & Handscomb, C. (2018, January 22). The five trademarks of agile organizations. https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/the-five-trademarks-of-agile-organizations#/

Miller, C. C. (2016, March 18). As women take over a male-dominated field, the pay drops. The New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/20/upshot/as-women-take-over-a-male-dominated-field-the-pay-drops.html

Mishra, A., Abdalhamid, S., Mishra, D., & Ostrovska, S. (2021). Organizational issues in embracing Agile methods: An empirical assessment. International Journal of System Assurance Engineering and Management, 12(6), 1420–1433. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13198-021-01350-1

Modise, Dr. (2023). The Impacts of Employee Workplace Empowerment, Effective Commitment and Performance: An Organizational Systematic Review. 8. 25. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/376260679_The_Impacts_of_Employee_Workplace_Empowerment_Effective_Commitment_and_Performance_An_Organizational_Systematic_Review

Modise, Dr. (2023). The Impacts of Employee Workplace Empowerment, Effective Commitment and Performance: An Organizational Systematic Review. 8. 25. ; Tessem, B. (2014). Individual empowerment of agile and non-agile software developers in small teams. Information and Software Technology, 56(8), 873-889. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.infsof.2014.02.005

Monica L. Forret, & Dougherty, T. W. (2004). Networking Behaviors and Career Outcomes: Differences for Men and Women? Journal of Organizational Behavior, 25(3), 419–437. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4093697

Morgan, G. (1998). Images of organization: The executive edition. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Nentwich, J., Tuckermann, H., & Steingruber, N. (2023). Paradoxes of post-heroic leadership: Why do heroic leadership and gender inequality persist? Leaders for Equality.

Nicholson, N. (2010, June 7). Gender and the future of the hierarchical organization. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2010/06/gender-and-the-future-of-the-o

Nishii, L.H. (2013) The Benefits of Climate for Inclusion for Gender-Diverse Groups. Academy of Management Journal, 56, 1754-1774. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2009.0823

Nishii, L. H., & Leroy, H. (2022). A Multi-Level Framework of Inclusive Leadership in Organizations. Group & Organization Management, 47(4), 683-722. https://doi.org/10.1177/10596011221111505

OECD (2023), Joining Forces for Gender Equality: What is Holding us Back?, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/67d48024-en.

OECD (2024), PISA 2022 Results (Volume IV): How Financially Smart Are Students?, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/5a849c2a-en.

Özbilgin, M., Erbil, C. & Odabaşı, E. (2023). 11 Leaders with Disabilities: A Boardroom Challenge. In J. Beatty, S. Hennekam & M. Kulkarni (Ed.), De Gruyter Handbook of Disability and Management (pp. 189-204). Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110743647-012

Robinson, C. (2023, August 12). Women, Do You Want To Become CEO? Manage P&L Responsibility. Forbes. https://www.forbes.com/sites/cherylrobinson/2023/08/12/women-do-you-want-to-become-ceo-manage-pl-responsibility/?sh=4a4a7a477bac

Rodríguez, J. E., Tumin, D., & Campbell, K. M. (2021). Sharing the power of white privilege to catalyze positive change in academic medicine. Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities, 8(2), 539–542. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-020-00947-9

Salo, O. (2017, October 2). How to create an agile organization. McKinsey & Company. https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/how-to-create-an-agile-organization

Schippers, M. C., & Rus, D. C. (2021). Majority decision-making works best under conditions of leadership ambiguity and shared task representations. Frontiers in Psychology, 12. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.519295

Seramount. (2019, May). The gender gap at the top: What's keeping women from leading corporate America? https://seramount.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/The-Gender-Gap-At-The-Top-Whats-Keeping-Women-From-Leading-Corporate-America-.pdf

Shore, L. M., Randel, A. E., Chung, B. G., Dean, M. A., Holcombe Ehrhart, K., & Singh, G. (2011). Inclusion and Diversity in Work Groups: A Review and Model for Future Research. Journal of Management, 37(4), 1262-1289. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206310385943

Škerlavaj, M. (2022). Post-heroic leadership: Context, process, and outcomes. Palgrave Macmillan Cham.

Sobral, F., & Furtado, L. (2019). Post-heroic leadership: Current trends and challenges in leadership education. RAE – Revista de Administração de Empresas, 59(3), 209–214. https://doi.org/10.1590/S0034-759020190306

Somers, M. (2022, April 12). Women are less likely than men to be promoted. Here's one reason why. MIT Sloan School of Management. https://mitsloan.mit.edu/ideas-made-to-matter/women-are-less-likely-men-to-be-promoted-heres-one-reason-why

Tessem, B. (2014). Individual empowerment of agile and non-agile software developers in small teams. Information and Software Technology, 56(8), 873-889. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.infsof.2014.02.005

Tiwana, P. (2016, February 23). We are decisive, not pushy. LinkedIn. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/we-decisive-pushy-payal-gupta-tiwana/

Tockey, D., & Ignatova, M. (2018). Gender insights report: How women find jobs differently. LinkedIn Talent Solutions. https://www.linkedin.com/talent-solutions/resources/gender-insights-report

Tupper, H., & Ellis, S. (2022, July 4). It's time to reimagine employee retention. Harvard Business Review. https://hbr.org/2022/07/its-time-to-reimagine-employee-retention

Umana, E. A., & Okafor, L. C. (2019). The menace of groupthink on organizational performance. EPRA International Journal of Economic and Business Review, 7(4). http://www.eprajournals.com/Journals/epraijebr.html

Verburg, R. M., Nienaber, A.-M., Searle, R. H., Weibel, A., Den Hartog, D. N., & Rupp, D. E. (2018). The role of organizational control systems in employees' organizational trust and performance outcomes. Group & Organization Management, 43(2), 179–206. https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601117725191

Westover, J. H. (2021, October 28). How to avoid and counteract gaslighting as a leader. Forbes Coaches Council. https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbescoachescouncil/2021/10/28/how-to-avoid-and-counteract-gaslighting-as-a-leader/

Ziemianski, P. (2022). Identifying and Mitigating the Negative Effects of Power in Organizations. Journal of Applied Social Science, 16(1), 140-159. https://doi.org/10.1177/19367244211014789

Credits

Release: September 17, 2024

Issued by

Alkistis Petropaki
General Manager Advance
Advance - Gender Equality in Business
alkistis.petropaki@weadvance.ch
www.weadvance.ch

Alexandra Rhiner
Communication Manager
Co-author & Project Lead
alexandra.rhiner@weadvance.ch

Priska Burkard
Thought Leadership Specialist
& Best Practices Lead
priska.burkard@weadvance.ch

Visual illustrations & layout
Sandra Medeiros
Art Direction, Illustration
www.wildfactory.ch

Dr. Ines Hartmann
Co-Director Competence Centre
for Diversity & Inclusion (CCDI)
Research Institute for International
Management, University of St.Gallen
ines.hartmann@unisg.ch
www.ccdi.unisg.ch

Prof. Dr. Gudrun Sander
Co-Director Research Institute for International
Management (FIM-HSG), Co-Director CCDI
gudrun.sander@unisg.ch

Dr. Nora Keller
Senior Researcher CCDI
nora.keller@unisg.ch

Dr. Natascia Leotta
Senior Researcher CCDI
natascia.leotta-cascone@unisg.ch

Christian Pierce
Senior Researcher CCDI
christian.pierce@unisg.ch