

# Move over John (and David, Ian, Mark and Andrew)! Hampton Alexander report: strongest year of progress for women on boards but step-change needed for women in senior leadership roles

Back in 2015, the Guardian reported that, among chief executives and chairs of FTSE 100 companies, there were 17 men called John (or Jean) – outnumbering all the female bosses put together. Female leaders of FTSE 100 companies were outnumbered by Davids, Ians, Marks and Andrews by nearly 5:1. Move forward to November 2019 when the Hampton-Alexander’s fourth annual report on improving gender balance in FTSE leadership, was published.

The report is an independent, voluntary and business-led initiative supported by the Government. In 2016 it set five key Recommendations aimed at increasing the number of women in leadership positions of FTSE 350 companies, including a target of 33% by the end of 2020.

The report captures over 23,000 leadership roles in Britain’s largest listed companies. It covers the board and extends down two leadership layers below. It assesses progress, shares best practice and identifies key challenges.

## Overview

This report shows strong progress continues to be made, with the FTSE 250 outperforming the FTSE 100 this year. But, senior leadership roles continue to be dominated by men and the trend of male-appointments to these positions continued across the FTSE 350.

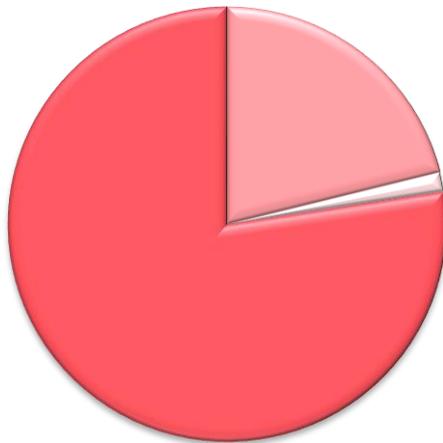
- FTSE 100 on track to reach the 33% target for Women on Boards ahead of the 2020 deadline. Women now hold 32.4% of FTSE 100 board positions (up from 30.2% in 2018), but 51 FTSE 100 companies have not yet achieved the 33% target. There are 20 FTSE 100 companies that have already reached the 33% target.
- FTSE 250 made good progress this year and with sustained effort will also meet the 2020 deadline. Women now hold 29.6% of FTSE 250 board positions (up from 24.9%), but 139 FTSE 250 companies have not yet achieved the 33% target.

## Percentage of Women on Boards (%)



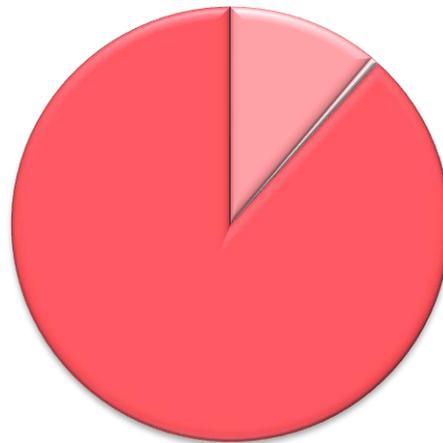
- The “One & Done” boards challenge is also credited with having an impact, with only 39 companies having only one-woman boards (down from 74) and only 2 all-male boards in the FTSE 350 (down from 5 in 2018).

## The FTSE 350 in 2018



■ "One & Done" boards ■ All male boards  
■ Other boards

## The FTSE 350 in 2019



■ "One & Done" boards ■ All male boards  
■ Other boards

- Across the FTSE 350 there are only 25 female chairs (5 in the FTSE 100), 80 female SIDs (20 in the FTSE 100) and 14 female CEOs (6 in the FTSE 100). There are only 74 female executive directors (30 in the FTSE 100), being 11% of executive directors in the FTSE 350.

For the first time, the Review report includes data on key functional roles within FTSE 100 companies. Women are strongly represented in HR Director roles, and to some extent as Company Secretary. But, only 17% of Chief Information Officers and only 15% of Finance Directors are female.

The report contains useful case studies of companies which have been successful in addressing gender balance. Practical tips include how to shake off cultural norms around parental leave, accelerating female leaders at the most senior level, a "flex my day" policy allowing colleagues to help meet their work and home commitments, and roundtable discussions with women in the workplace to listen to and share ideas, and championing inclusion.

Source: [Hampton-Alexander Review: fourth annual report](#) and [press release](#).

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