

## The Australian Women's Leadership Census 2012 - a synopsis

The Australian Women's Leadership Census 2012 was released last week and reveals the current status of women's leadership in top Australian companies.

It highlights that while women's representation on boards has skyrocketed proportionately since the 2010 Census. There has been a decade of negligible change for women in executive roles. It also shows for the first time that women have lower levels of representation in the ASX500.

The table summarises key data from the 2012 Australian Census of Women in Leadership report.

	In ASX 200 companies	% change in ASX 200 since 2010	In ASX 500 companies
Female executive KMPs	174 (9.7%)	1.7%	260 (9.2%)
Female executive KMPs in line roles	57 (6.0% of all line roles)		141 (6.2% of all line roles)
Female KMPs in support roles	51 (22.0% of all support roles)		119 (22.5% of all support roles)
Companies that have at least 1 female KMP	79 (39.4%)	3.4%	117 (36.9%)
Companies that have zero female executive KMPs	60.6%		298 (63.1%)
Female CEOs	7 (3.5%)		12 (2.4%)
Female directors (with one or more board appointments)	12.3%	46.4%	292 (9.2%)
Companies that have at least 1 female director	61.5%	33.7%	219 (43.8%)
Companies that have zero female directors	38.5%		281 (56.2%)
Female chairs	3.0%		13 (2.6%)

### Key conclusions:

- The increase in women on boards has been significant but the number of women in senior executive roles has changed little: in fact it has decreased from its peak of 12.0% in 2006
- Larger companies are more likely to have women on the board

- ASX 20 companies have a better representation of women in executive key management personnel (KMP) roles (12.9%) and in directorships (18.8%)
- Women are excluded from roles that enable them to be a part of the leadership pipeline (i.e., they are over represented in support roles as opposed to operational roles)
- The report encourages organisations to take note of the research that identifies that companies with female board representation outperform others in terms of share price

### Female executives

Women are best represented in KMP executive roles in the pharmaceuticals, biotechnology and life sciences industry across ASX 200 and 500.

Women executives outnumber men in the human resources area, where they are most likely to be found.

### Female directors

Larger companies are more likely to have more female directors, as are companies with a high overall percentage of women employees. The insurance and banking sectors have the highest percentage of female directors across ASX 200 and 500. Australian boards have more women than those of the UK and NZ but fewer than the US, Canada and South Africa.

By contrast, women hold 35.3% of 3,960 positions of 466 commonwealth government boards.

The report analyses the experience base of 262 female directors, identifying that 113 have senior executive experience, 110 have professional legal, accounting or finance qualification and 35 have company-relevant experience. Compared with male directors, women are disproportionately likely to have professional legal, accounting or finance qualifications while men are more likely to have senior executive experience.

As board members, women are almost as likely as men to chair the audit, remuneration or nomination committees.

The Australian Women's Leadership Census 2012 can be found at [http://www.eowa.gov.au/Information\\_Centres/Resource\\_Centre/EOWA\\_Publications/EOWA\\_Census/2012\\_Census/CENSUS%20REPORT\\_Interactive.pdf](http://www.eowa.gov.au/Information_Centres/Resource_Centre/EOWA_Publications/EOWA_Census/2012_Census/CENSUS%20REPORT_Interactive.pdf)