



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## Research and Information Service Briefing Note

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# Women on Boards of the Top 100 Companies in Northern Ireland

## 1 Introduction

This Note summarises a survey of the officers of company boards in the top 100 companies in Northern Ireland. The Note gives some background, explains the methodology and provides the results of the survey.

## 2 Background

The 2011 Census records 23,625 managers, directors and senior officials in Northern Ireland who identified as female. This amounts to 37% of that occupation category<sup>1</sup>.

Studies of company boards across the UK do not cover all private companies and the figures that are available do not disaggregate by region. A study of women of the boards of FTSE 100<sup>2</sup> companies indicates that 20.7% of the directors of those companies were women in 2014, compared with 17.3% in 2013 and 15% in 2012.

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<sup>1</sup> Derived from 2011 Census Tables KS609NI and KS610NI:

<http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/Theme.aspx?themeNumber=136&themeName=Census%202011>.

<sup>2</sup> FTSE 100 refers to the 100 top companies listed on the Financial Times Stock Exchange index. FTSE 250 is the top 250, etc.

However, only 6.9% of executive directors in 2014 were female<sup>3</sup>. There are no Northern Ireland companies on the FTSE 100 list.

A review of women on corporate boards in the UK by Lord Davies of Abersoch noted that, on the supply side, too few women were progressing to senior management positions and therefore the selection of individuals for board positions was limited. The review made the following recommendations<sup>4</sup>:

- Chairs of FTSE 350 companies should set out the percentage of women they aim to have on their boards in 2013 and 2015; FTSE 100 companies should aim for at least 25% women on their boards
- Quoted companies should be required to disclose each year the proportion of women on the board, senior executives and female employees in the whole organisation
- The UK Corporate Governance Code should be amended to require listed companies to establish a policy regarding boardroom diversity<sup>5</sup>
- FTSE companies should report on the matters in the above recommendations in their 2012 Corporate Governance Statement
- A separate section of the annual report should describe the work of the board nomination committee

The recommendations are reviewed every year. The 2015 review notes<sup>6</sup>:

- Women's representation on FTSE 100 company boards is 23.5%, almost double the 12.5% of 2011
- Women's representation on FTSE 250 boards is 18%, more than double the 8.4% of 2011
- There are now no all-male boards on FTSE 100 companies and 23 all-male FTSE 250 boards

The measures are voluntary, not statutory.

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<sup>3</sup> Susan Vinnicombe, Elena Doldor and Caroline Turner (2015), *The Female FTSE 100: Crossing the Finish Line*, Cranfield: Cranfield School of Management, p.10: <http://www.som.cranfield.ac.uk/som/dinamic-content/research/ftse/The%20Female%20FTSE%20Board%20Report%202014.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Lord Davies (2011), *Women on Boards*, London: HM Government:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/31480/11-745-women-on-boards.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/31480/11-745-women-on-boards.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> The current version of the Code, revised in 2012, includes a requirement to disclose a diversity policy for appointments to boards, including gender: Financial Reporting Council (2012), *The UK Corporate Governance Code*, London: FRC: <http://www.frc.org.uk/Our-Work/Publications/Corporate-Governance/UK-Corporate-Governance-Code-September-2012.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Lord Davies (2015), *Women on Boards Davies Review Annual Report 2015*, London: HM Government:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/415454/bis-15-134-women-on-boards-2015-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415454/bis-15-134-women-on-boards-2015-report.pdf).

### 3 Survey of Women on Company Boards in Northern Ireland

Formal gender-differentiated statistics for Northern Ireland do not include the representation of women on the boards of private companies<sup>7</sup>. UK-wide statistics, as shown above, do not differentiate by region. This survey takes the top 100 private companies in Northern Ireland and analyses the gender balance of office-holders on boards of directors.

#### Methodology

The survey was carried out on 19 October 2015, as follows:

- The top 100 companies are taken from the Barclays/ Dun & Bradstreet list 2015<sup>8</sup>
- Boards of directors are taken from the office bearers listed at Companies House, as at 19 October 2015
- Board members are taken as individuals, therefore:
  - Where an individual is listed as both a secretary and a director, they are taken as one individual
  - Where an office is undertaken by a company, e.g. as company secretary, this is not taken as a member of the board for ratio calculation

#### Results

The table at Appendix 1 lists the officers registered to each company on the top 100 list by gender. Where there were no officers registered at Companies House on 19 October, these are stated as 'not available' (N/A).

The survey of the top 100 companies in Northern Ireland shows that 77 of the 499 board members registered at Companies House are women (15.4%). Two of the companies surveyed have more female than male directors, five have gender parity and 42 have boards with no women at all. None of the boards have no men.

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<sup>7</sup> For example, OFMdfM (2015), Gender Equality Statistics: 2015 Update, Belfast: OFMdfM:  
<http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/gender-equality-statistics-2015-update.pdf>.

<sup>8</sup> Northern Ireland's Top 100 Companies 2015, published by Ulster Business, accessed 19 October 2015:  
<http://www.ulsterbusiness.com/download/var/files/downloads/resources/Top-100-2015.pdf>.

## Appendix 1: Women on the Boards of the Top 100 Companies in Northern Ireland 19 October 2015

<b>Company</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
Moy Park	3	1
Glen Electric	2	0
Dunbia	5	0
Gortmullan Holdings	5	1
John Henderson Holdings	2	0
Short Brothers	8	2
Caterpillar NI	4	1
Power NI Energy	2	0
Fane Valley Co-Operative	N/A	N/A
Lissan Coal Company (LCC)	4	1
John Graham Holdings	7	0
W & R Bennett	5	1
United Dairy Farmers	N/A	N/A
Northern Ireland Water	8	2
P&O Ferrymasters	5	1
Charles Hurst	4	1
SHS Group	3	4
Almac Group	5	0
Foyle Food Group	8	1

Queen's University Belfast	3	2
SSE Airtricity	5	1
Donnelly Bros.	4	0
Terex GB	3	0
Scottishpower Renewables	5	0
Musgrave Retail	4	1
North West Bookmakers	3	1
Nicholls' Fuel Oils	3	2
DCC Energy	5	0
Northern Ireland Electricity	1	1
Viridian Energy	3	1
Northstone NI	9	1
Sangers NI	8	2
Maxol Oil	5	0
Capita managed IT Solutions	2	0
NI Transport (Translink)	8	1
University of Ulster	N/A	N/A
Norbrook Laboratories	6	1
Greenfields Ireland	5	1
McLaughlin & Harvey	11	0
Schrader Electronics	2	0
AES NI	3	2

Wrightbus (Cornerstone)	10	2
Trench Holdings	6	0
Coolkeragh ESB	5	0
Lamex Foods	3	0
Lagan Construction	5	2
Creation Consumer Finance	7	0
Topaz Energy	3	0
Chain Reaction Cycles	4	2
Dairy Produce Packers	7	1
Dunnes Stores	2	1
AES Ballylumford	3	2
TMC Dairies	2	0
F P McCann	6	1
Soni	4	1
Humax Electronics	3	0
Diageo NI	4	1
Brett Martin	3	1
Willstan	2	1
Clearway Disposals	3	2
UTV Media	6	3
Musgrave Distribution	3	1
SDC Trailers	6	0

Lakeland Dairies	3	0
DevenishNI	2	0
Westland Horticulture	7	0
R & H Hall	2	1
A H Fuel Oils	1	1
H & J Martin	5	1
Montupet	5	0
Lynas Foodservice	4	1
Howden	8	2
Randox	2	0
James E McCabe	7	0
Allstate NI	6	3
First Derivatives	6	1
Ards Holdings (Gilbert-Ash)	3	0
A & W Carlisle	3	0
Philip Russell	6	0
Isaac Agnew	6	0
Ballyrashane Co-operative	N/A	N/A
Balcas	5	0
Magir	5	0
Inspired Business Investments	1	1
Bavarian Garages NI	5	0

Gardrum Holdings	1	2
D Shannon Stewart	2	2
T W Scott & Sons	2	1
Whitemountain Quarries	6	0
MacNaughton Blair	7	0
Creagh Concrete	10	2
Motis Ireland	4	0
Agnew Commercials	5	0
Haldane Shiells	2	1
Old Bushmills Distillery	5	0
McAlear & Rushe	4	0
Kingspan Environmental	2	0
Aghareany	4	3
Warner Chilcott (Galen)	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>77</b>