

# GENDER DIVERSITY in the European accountancy profession

| *An AFECA study*

with the support of FEE

# FOREWORD

## of AFECA's co-chairs



Marie-Ange  
Andrieux

Marie-Dominique  
Cavalli

### Why a European benchmark on valorising women capital in the accountancy profession ?

Initiated by AFECA (Association des Femmes diplômées d'Expertise Comptable Administrateurs), the French CPA women on board association, under the aegis of the President of the French Institute of Certified Public Accountants (CSOEC – Conseil supérieur de l'ordre des experts-comptables) Philippe Arraou, and with the support of the European Federation of Accountants (FEE – Fédération des Experts Comptables Européens) and EFAA (European Federation of Accountants and Auditors for small and medium-sized enterprises), this benchmark is a first. What is its aim? To present a realistic picture of the accountancy profession and, without going into comparisons or awarding medals right and left, obtain an overview of progress within the 24 institutes representing 22 countries which responded to this survey with respect to the valorisation of women capital and provoke exchanges and sharings of best practices.

“Obtain an overview of progress within the 24 institutes from 22 countries which responded to this survey with respect to the valorisation of women capital and provoke exchanges and sharings of best practices”

The advantage of a benchmark is to generate dynamic movement without stigmatisation and making value-based judgements. We hope that this study will enable each member institute of FEE or EFAA to situate itself in a European context with respect to parity and maybe draw lessons for their own strategies in the field of the development and balance of human capital. AFECA would also like this initiative to be followed by other independent professions and incite them to undertake this sort of study, which can only reinforce collective action with respect to parity and professional balance.

“The very different results from our study show the diversity of the profession in Europe.”

The very different results from our study show the diversity of the profession in Europe. This diversity is a source of wealth but also complexity, for example, when it involves applying regulations or professional standards on the scale of the continent.

Beyond this, it would be inappropriate to imply causal links between factors, as each case is so individual. Thus, the existence of hard law that favours professional equality does not guarantee a higher level of women in the profession whereas soft law seems to be working in several countries. In the same way, no correlation could be established between the presence of women in accounting firms and on boards of companies. Finally, a geographical approach by zone (North/South...) is not a relevant indicator for feminisation in the studied profession.

Consequently, we wanted to avoid drawing general lessons from the results in this document, but rather present a collection of “key findings” as proposed below.

We would like to thank the institutes that we contacted for having identified certain key challenges. To make the findings legible, we have opted to present the information sheets country by country with a summary table at the end of the presentation.

## Study methodology

*The study was carried out with institutes making up the FEE and EFAA and 24 of them accepted to provide their data and participate in this benchmark.*

*In some countries with two professional institutes, FEE was asked to choose the institute that was the most representative of the profession. The United Kingdom is an exception with three institutes: ACCA, ICAEW and ICAS.*

# KEY FINDINGS

## The legislative environments are very diverse

The majority of the countries (13) recognise the principle of gender equality in their law or even in their Constitution with respect to rights, pay and opportunities. Even more have voted in measures to fight against gender-based inequality (19). In the Czech Republic, on the other hand, there is no such law on the subject. The more specific subject concerning the presence of women on boards of directors also illustrates the diversity in approaching the subject: while no provision is made in some countries (Czech Republic, Romania, Poland, Ireland, Greece, Albania, Hungary, Turkey), some have established mandatory quotas (France, Switzerland, Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Germany, Albania, Portugal, Italy) and, finally, others prefer soft law with voluntary targets (UK, Denmark, Spain, Sweden).

## The professional contexts also differ

Certain institutes multiply initiatives to promote the attractiveness of the profession for women: the creation of dedicated associations or commissions, the establishment of charters with respect to best practices, flexible work organisation, events for networking or consideration about the valorisation of women capital, the taking into account of gender in recruitment policies, the establishment of directories and studies... Others have not established specific policies with respect to women (Georgia, Austria, Belgium, Greece, Germany, Spain, Hungary), sometimes undoubtedly because women are already well represented in the profession (Czech Republic, Romania, Poland).

## The presence of women in the profession varies strongly

The average presence of women in the institutes studied shows a strong disparity : women CPA represent 25% in the French profession, 19% in the Dutch profession, 15% in the Swiss profession, but we have in the same time 64% women in Poland, 70% in Hungary and 77% in Romania.

## The inclusion of women is increasing overall but at different rhythms

Even if figures concerning the progression of women could not be obtained with respect to all institutes, the overall tendency seems to be increasing in the 12 institutes solicited. Our study revealed that the percentage increase is concentrated over the last three years : +50% in Georgia, +8% in Scotland and Germany but in the same time we can notice +3% in France, +2.7% in Kosovo, +2-3% in Austria and +1.6% in Portugal.

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Institute of Authorized Chartered Auditors of Albania (IEKA)



Institut österreichischer Wirtschaftsprüfer (IWP)

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

Encouraging the participation of women in commission or working groups, committees.

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work.

55%  
of accountants  
are women

↑  
+5%  
increase  
since 2013

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### NO ACTION TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work - Providing services allowing workers to achieve a better balance between work and family life

### CHALLENGES:

- Creating a family-friendly work environment, especially regarding part-time work and more flexible work hours
- Dealing with the fact that there is an audit season with long work hours, in which short deadlines have to be met and which do not allow for part-time work in many cases.

40%  
of accountants  
are women

↑  
+2-3%  
increase  
since 2013

## National Legal Framework

31%  
of boards  
members  
are women

### GENDER EQUALITY

Law on Gender equality in society (2008): regulates the equal treatment of women and men regarding equal chances and opportunities. Implements normative policies to promote gender equality in society.

### VOLUNTARY TARGET FOR BOARDS

Representation of over 30% of both sex in the decision-making process.

## National Legal Framework

18%  
of boards  
members  
are women

### GENDER EQUALITY

**The Federal Equal Treatment Act for Civil Servants and Employees (1993):** deals with working conditions of federal personnel as well as with career advancement for the least represented sex.

**The Equal Treatment Act (2004):** regulates gender equity in the private sector.

### QUOTAS FOR BOARDS IN PUBLIC SECTOR

**Existence of a 50% quota regulation:** if female candidates for any position have the same qualifications as men, they have to be preferred until the group within the public sector organization shows a 50% women quota. This rule also applies for promotions and professional education programs.



Institut des Réviseurs d'Entreprises (IRE)



Chamber of Auditors of the Czech Republic (KACR)

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

Various initiatives to develop the attractiveness of the profession but none aim at women specifically.

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work - Providing services allowing workers to achieve a better balance between work and family life.

### CHALLENGES:

- Improving and promoting communication between men and women.
- Emphasizing female work efficiency and reducing pay gap.
- Promoting the profession attractiveness
- Changing people's mentality
- Improving flexibility at work



## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

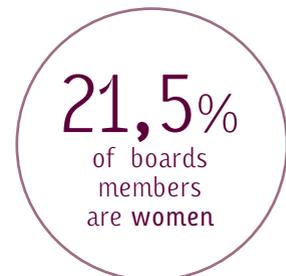
### NO ACTION TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work



## National Legal Framework



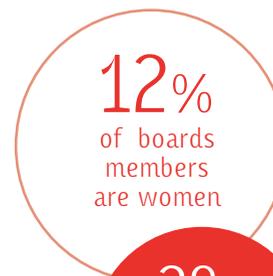
### GENDER EQUALITY

**Pay Gender Gap Law** adopted on April 2012: differences in pay and labor costs between men and women should be outlined in companies' annual audit that will be publicly available.

### QUOTAS FOR BOARDS

**Quotas for boards of public and listed companies** (Law of July 28th 2011): at least one-third of male or women members by 2012 for public companies, by 2017 for listed companies and by 2019 for listed SMB. Any appointment made after the deadlines that will not comply with the obligation will be cancelled.

## National Legal Framework



### GENDER EQUALITY

No legislation

### NO VOLUNTARY TARGET NOR QUOTAS FOR BOARDS





## Danish Auditors (FSR)



## Conseil supérieur de l'ordre des experts-comptables (CSOEC)

# Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

Setting up a special committee on women in the auditing profession some years ago which is now closed.

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Providing services allowing workers to achieve a better balance between work and family life

### CHALLENGES:

- Changing people's mentality on parental leave: 12 months for women while men rarely go on paternity leave in the financial sector, especially in the audit sector besides the 2 weeks that are compulsory.
- Enhancing the value of flexible work hours



# National Legal Framework



### GENDER EQUALITY

**Financial Statements Acts (2013):** introduce the same obligation on all national public companies and institutions to set realistic and ambitious targets for the gender composition in top-level management and formulate a policy oriented toward increasing the share of underrepresented gender.

### VOLUNTARY TARGET FOR BOARDS

Companies are required to set a share of the underrepresented gender in their corporate boards and the time-scale within which the company seeks to achieve that proportion.

# Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

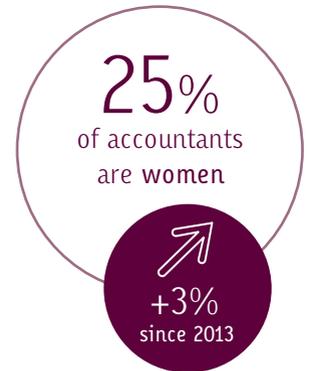
- Setting up a special committee on women in the CSOEC
- Creation of AFECA (Association des Femmes diplômées d'Expertise Comptable Administrateurs) in 2011 which aims at enhancing woman human capital in the accounting profession (ranked in the Top 20 out of 400 French women organisations)
- Charter promoting professional equality by the enhancement of human capital initiated by AFECA
- Collaborative platform to collect and disseminate good practices
- Publication of a «Good practices guide» for accounting firms in 2016

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY :

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work - Internal quotas - Promotion rules - Providing services allowing workers to achieve a better balance between work and family life

### CHALLENGES:

- Reaching 50% of women in the association of chartered accountants by 2020-2025
- Reaching 50% of women named partners in accounting firms by 2020-2025



# National Legal Framework



### CIVIL SERVICE

**The Law "Sauvadet" (2012)** on the reduction of precariousness and professional equality between women and men: ensures progressive quotas for the appointment of women and men to positions as high-level civil servants.

### GENDER EQUALITY

**The "real equality between women and men" Bill (2014):** includes a series of measures to address inequalities.

### QUOTAS FOR BOARDS

The Zimmermann Cope Law (2011): **mandatory quotas : 40 % of women directors on boards by 2017** for listed companies (making at least 50 million euros in turn over and employing more than 500 workers).



Federation of Auditors, Accountants and Financial Managers of Georgia (GFAAFM)



Bundessteuerberaterkammer Körperschaft des Öffentlichen Rechts (BStBK)

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

**NO ACTION TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL**

**GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:**

Work from home - Part-time work - Providing services allowing workers to achieve a better balance between work and family

**CHALLENGES:**

- Raising public awareness on gender equality
- Enforcing the law

40%  
of accountants  
are women

  
+50%  
since 2013

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

**NO ACTION TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL**

**GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:**

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work.

**CHALLENGES:**

- Enhancing the value of flexible work hours to achieve a better balance between work and family life.

35,2%  
of accountants  
are women

  
+8%  
since 2013

## National Legal Framework

nd%  
of women  
on boards

### GENDER EQUALITY

**Georgian Law about gender equality** (2010) establishes guarantees of equal rights and opportunities for women and men and defines legal mechanisms for their implementation.

### QUOTAS FOR BOARDS IN PUBLIC COMPANIES

30%

## National Legal Framework

25,8%  
of supervisory  
boards members  
are women

### GENDER EQUALITY

**The General Equal Treatment Act** (2006): protects citizens against all sorts of discrimination in employment including gender discrimination.

**Law for the Equal Participation of Women and Men in Leadership Positions in the Private Sector and the Public Sector** (2015): aims at increasing the number of women in leadership positions in the private and public sectors. Includes a requirement to set aside 30 % of the new board seats for women since 2016 for more than 100 companies that are listed.

### QUOTAS FOR BOARDS

Quotas for public and private companies: 30 %.



The Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Greece (SOEL)



Hungarian Certified Tax Experts (Moklasz)

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

**NO ACTION TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL**

**GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:**

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work - Internal quotas (ad hoc basis).

**CHALLENGES:**

- The high demands of the profession and the time constrains for the submission of the auditor's report, which require long working hours, continuous training and studying in order to obtain the qualification and be technically competent at all times.

40%  
of accountants  
are women

=  
equal  
since 2013

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

**NO ACTION TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL, DUE TO DOMINANCY OF WOMEN IN THE PROFESSION**

**GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:**

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work

70%  
of accountants  
are women

↘  
-5%  
since 2013

## National Legal Framework

11%  
of boards  
members  
are women

### GENDER EQUALITY

**Principle enshrined in the Constitution:** authorizes measures to promote equality between men and women and call for equal pay for work of equal value for all employees

### Wide range of legislation promoting gender equality:

- Law 4097/2012 on the equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity;
- Law 3896/2010 on the equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in employment and occupational matters;
- Law 3769/2009 on the equal treatment for men and women as regards access to goods and services and their provision;
- Law 3584/2007 on supporting public sector employees with family obligations.

**NO VOLUNTARY TARGET NOR QUOTAS FOR BOARDS**

## National Legal Framework

7%  
of boards  
members  
are women

### GENDER EQUALITY

**The Constitution** states that there should be no legal discrimination between men and women.

**Act CXXV of 2003 on Equal Treatment and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunities:** specifies groups of people to be protected, including women and mothers, names indirect discrimination as punishable and introduces the possibility of positive discrimination.

**NO VOLUNTARY TARGET NOR QUOTAS FOR BOARDS**



## Chartered Accountants Ireland (CAI)



## Consiglio Nazionale Dei Dottori Commercialisti E Degli Esperti Contabili (CNDCEC)

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

## ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

- Supporting qualified accountant women on their career path
- Organizing events to cover a range of topics related to woman human capital.

## GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work.

## CHALLENGES:

- Overcoming gender stereotypes and/or actions that undermine women's work.

40%  
of accountants  
are women

## National Legal Framework

15%  
of boards  
members  
are women

## GENDER EQUALITY

**Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2011:** outlaw discrimination in employment on nine distinct grounds including gender. Cover discrimination in relation to access to employment, advertising, conditions of employment, equal pay for work of equal value, promotion...

**Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2011** based on the principle that everyone has an equal right to participate in our society: provide protection against direct and indirect discrimination outside of employment on the same nine grounds.

## NO VOLUNTARY TARGET NOR QUOTAS FOR BOARDS

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

## ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

- Working committees in charge of gender equality issues established in all the territorial chapters in order to create a network to exchange ideas
- National database collecting résumés of registered women members of CNDCEC that are interested in being appointed to boards
- Collection at the national level of signs of discrimination to assess actions to promote gender equality
- Promotion of legal reforms to enhance gender equality

## CHALLENGES:

- Making the best of IT opportunities to manage professional work from home
- Overcome the cultural barrier
- Reaching equal pay for work of equal value although the gap is less significant for the younger generation
- Encouraging women to aspire to higher level of professional activities and governance positions
- Challenging cultural models where women are represented in certain roles which promote a negative image rather than a positive and professional one

31,6%  
of accountants  
are women

+3,9%  
since 2013

## National Legal Framework

31%  
of boards  
members  
are women

## GENDER EQUALITY

**Law on gender equality (2011):** establishes a gender quota in the boards of directors for the least represented gender.

## QUOTAS FOR BOARDS

**33,3% quotas for companies listed in the Stock Exchange.** Non-compliance results in a warning, followed by financial sanctions and, in the case of continued non-compliance, the potential dissolution of the board.



Society of Certified Accountants and Auditors of Kosovo (SCAAK)



The Royal Netherlands Institute of Chartered Accountants (NBA)

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

Commitment to provide equal opportunities for both genders in terms of membership within the society as well as in the recruitment of staff in its executive office

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:

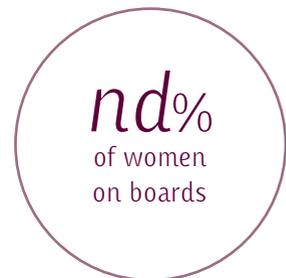
Flexible work hours

### CHALLENGES:

- Giving women the same support in terms of executing higher positions within a firm as their male colleagues.
- Challenging the idea that there is a conflict between work life and personal life.
- Increasing the visibility and advancement of women in the accounting profession.



## National Legal Framework



### GENDER EQUALITY

**Law on Gender Equality** (No. 05/L -020) adopted on May 2015: determines measures to ensure and protect the equal rights of men and women.

### QUOTAS FOR BOARDS IN PUBLIC SECTOR

Quotas for public companies: **50%** of women.

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

Recruitment policy aims at a well-adjusted reflection of society, including male/female ratio.

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work - Providing services allowing workers to achieve a better balance between work and family life.

### CHALLENGES:

- Being more open to the specific wishes of women (and men) to combine work and family in a well-adjusted way.
- Too much focus on male qualities for promotions. Specific female qualities should be appreciated more in the profession.



## National Legal Framework



### GENDER EQUALITY

**General Equal Treatment Act** (1994): makes illegal for employers to favor people on the basis of personal characteristics such as gender.

**Legislative Amendment to the Dutch Civil Code** (2016) to increase the level of diversity in the boards of large companies.

### VOLUNTARY TARGET FOR BOARDS

**At least 30 % of women (/men)** for large private companies in their board of directors and their supervisory board. If they do not comply, the board has to explain why they did not meet the target in their annual management report and what actions they will take to reach the target in the future.



National Chamber of Statutory Auditors (KIBR)



Ordem dos Contabilistas Certificados (OCC)

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

**NO ACTION TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL**

**GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:**

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work.



## National Legal Framework



**GENDER EQUALITY**

**The Constitution** and the **Polish Labour Code** include provisions on the equal rights of men and women, including the workplace market.

**The Election Code of January 5, 2011** deals with parity on electoral lists at political elections.

**NO VOLUNTARY TARGET NOR QUOTAS FOR BOARDS**

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

**ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:**

Annual Women Congress and multiple conferences during the year on the role of CPA (Certified Public Accountant) women in society, business and the economy.

**GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:**

Work from home.



## National Legal Framework



**GENDER EQUALITY**

**Law on gender equality (2015):** protection of pregnant workers and mothers with grants and public subsidies.

**QUOTAS FOR BOARDS**

**33,3% quotas** for public and private listed companies.



Body of Expert and Licensed Accountants of Romania (CECCAR)



Consejo General de Economistas (CGE)

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

No particular actions directed to female human capital among accountant but promotion of young talents.



## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### NO ACTION TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work.

### CHALLENGES:

- Achieving a balanced representation of gender in boardrooms without compulsory quotas.



## National Legal Framework



### GENDER EQUALITY

**Law no. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and treatment for women and men:** includes measures regarding the equality of opportunities and treatment in the labour market, education and the elimination of gender roles and stereotypes.

### NO VOLUNTARY TARGET NOR QUOTAS FOR BOARDS

## National Legal Framework



### GENDER EQUALITY

**Law 3/2007 on substantive equality between women and men:** aims at eliminating the social obstacles and stereotypes standing in the way of achieving real, effective equality with legal measures to prevent discriminatory behavior. Introduces active equality policies in the public and private sector like the principle of "equal pay for equal work of equal value" and of a balanced representation of women and men in boardrooms.

**Equality plans** that cover different issues including gender pay gap, access to employment, occupational classification... Companies with over 250 employees are obliged to formulate and implement gender equality plans.

### VOLUNTARY TARGET FOR BOARDS

**40%** of women in the private sector and public administration boardrooms "Good Governance Code of Listed Companies" written by the Spanish national securities market Commission which promote gender equality and set target to reach a balance representation of genders.



The Institute for the Accountancy Profession in Sweden (FAR)



Association suisse des experts en audit, fiscalité et fiduciaire (Expert Suisse)

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

Studies on the level of female partners among the 7 biggest Swedish accounting companies published in the Journal for accounting *Balans* since 2005.

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:

Flexible work hours - Providing services allowing workers to achieve a better balance between work and family life.

### CHALLENGES:

- Overcoming the reproduction process in recruitment at the top positions.
- Enhancing female role models in leadership for a more balanced recruitment.



## National Legal Framework



### GENDER EQUALITY

**The Constitution** and its fundamental law **“The Instrument of government”**: state that the public institutions shall combat discrimination of persons on grounds of gender.

**Act concerning the Equality Ombudsman**: creates a government agency that fights discrimination and protects equal rights and opportunities for everyone in the workplace, the school system and other areas.

### VOLUNTARY TARGET FOR BOARDS

The **Swedish Corporate Governance Code** (set of guidelines for good corporate governance) recommends that companies should strive for gender balance on the board.

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

- Organization of networking events for women
- Extension of the maternity leave
- Role model function of EXPERTsuisse for the whole industry in offering part-time jobs (for both male and female employees), home-office facilities and having 50% of women in the extended board of management.

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:

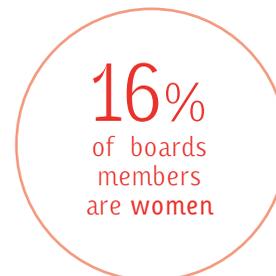
Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work - Providing services allowing workers to achieve a better balance between work and family life.

### CHALLENGES:

- Promoting part-time work for management jobs in order to enhance its social acceptance
- Developing child care facilities and financial support



## National Legal Framework



### GENDER EQUALITY

The principle of gender equality was anchored in the **federal Constitution** in **1981**.

**The new gender equality law**, in force since 1996, forbids discrimination in the workplace and includes provisions to facilitate equal opportunities at work.

### QUOTAS FOR BOARDS

**Quotas for the largest listed companies**: 30 % for the boards of directors and 20 % for the executive board.



## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

Women commissions in the 85 Chambers of TÜRMOB that conduct studies on the presence of women in the profession.

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:

Work from home - Part-time work.



## National Legal Framework



### GENDER EQUALITY

**Law No 5982** (2010) ensures that the State shall have the obligation to ensure equality between men and women. Measures taken for this purpose should not be interpreted as contrary to the principle of equality.

**Law No 5840** (2009) aims at achieving gender equality and protecting women's rights.

### NO VOLUNTARY TARGET NOR QUOTAS FOR BOARDS

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

- Back-to-work community programs for women returning to the workforce
- Agile and part-time working to achieve a better balance between careers and other commitments.
- Parental leave schemes that encourage parents to share childcare responsibilities.
- Peer-to-peer support networks and partnership with various associations.

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work - Internal quotas - Agile working allowing employees to achieve a better balance between work and family life.

### CHALLENGES:

- Creating better support structures to attract and retain women in the workforce
- Raising aspirations in young women to address the pipeline problem responsible for fewer women reaching executive positions
- Changing workplace culture to measure performance on results not hours worked



## National Legal Framework



### GENDER EQUALITY

**Equality Act 2010**, Section 78: contains a power to make gender pay gap reporting mandatory. New requirements are expected to come into force.

Since 2014, obligation for employers to report on gender pay differences (via a formal audit) but only if they have been deemed to i) fail to comply with equal pay legislation or ii) discriminated on the grounds of sex in non-contractual pay matters. This power can be exercised by Employment Tribunals.

### VOLUNTARY TARGET FOR BOARDS

**Voluntary target of 25 %** of women on FTSE boards (revised target of 33% by 2020).



Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (ICAS)

SCOTLAND (ICAS)

ACCA

Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

- Supporting steps to achieve more balanced and diversity in the workplace.
- A new Women as Leaders development programme is about to be launched, it is designed specifically for women aspiring to further their careers.

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS IN TERMS OF PROFESSIONAL EQUALITY:

Work from home - Flexible work hours - Part-time work

34%  
of accountants  
are women

+8%  
since 2013

## Gender equality IN THE PROFESSION

### ACTIONS TO DEVELOP ATTRACTIVENESS, SUPPORT AND VALUE WOMAN HUMAN CAPITAL:

Sharing knowledge and best practice with national bodies, members and employers to create an environment that promotes and supports inclusivity across the wider profession.

### GOOD PRACTICES CURRENTLY BEING IMPLEMENTED WITHIN ACCOUNTANCY FIRMS:

Vary from firm to firm.

### CHALLENGES:

- Sharing best practice around creating working environments that promote gender equality
- From anti-discrimination legislation to transparency in corporate reporting on matters relating to gender equality (pay differences, positions of seniority held...).

46%  
of ACCA's  
members are  
women

## National Legal Framework

25,9%  
of boards  
members  
are women

### GENDER EQUALITY

- **Equality Act 2010, Section 78:** makes gender pay gap reporting mandatory for organisations employing more than 250 people. New requirements are expected to come into effect.
- Since 2014, **obligation for employers to report on gender pay differences** (via a formal audit) but only if they have been deemed to i) fail to comply with equal pay legislation or ii) discriminated on the grounds of sex in non-contractual pay matters. This power can be exercised by Employment Tribunals.

### VOLUNTARY TARGET FOR BOARDS

- **Voluntary target of 25 %** of women on FTSE boards (revised target of 33% by 2020).

## National Legal Framework

30%  
of boards  
members  
are women

### GENDER EQUALITY

- **Equality Act 2010, Section 78:** makes gender pay gap reporting mandatory for organisations employing more than 250 people. New requirements are expected to come into effect.
- Since 2014, **obligation for employers to report on gender pay differences** (via a formal audit) but only if they have been deemed to i) fail to comply with equal pay legislation or ii) discriminated on the grounds of sex in non-contractual pay matters. This power can be exercised by Employment Tribunals.

### VOLUNTARY TARGET FOR BOARDS

- **Voluntary target of 25 %** of women on FTSE boards (revised target of 33% by 2020).

# Challenges

## Gender diversity *in Europe at a glance*

### Achieving a balanced representation of men and women

- within the profession - among accountants but also among partners in the highest positions.
- in governance : in accountancy bodies, private companies and national institutions to increase the presence of female role models and help women aspire to leadership position.

### Creating a working environment that promotes gender equality

by allowing to reconcile work and private life. In a profession with high demands and time constraints, flexible work hours must be promoted and IT opportunities used. Workplace culture needs to change to measure performance on results not hours worked.

### Reducing pay gap between men and women in accounting firms

wherever it exists to create a positive work environment, make the best use of human resources and retain the best employees. It will also promote the development of a more equal and cohesive society.

### Changing our perspective on gender roles

overcoming gender stereotypes and cultural models in education and the media.

### Moving towards a European platform for co-action and exchanges in the accountancy profession

by capitalizing on this survey which identifies and brings to the attention of the profession the innovative tools or initiatives developed by the institutes (like the Charter for gender equality and the guide of best practice for professional equality in France).

					
	ALBANY (IEKA)	AUSTRIA (IWP)	BELGIUM (IRE)	CZECH REPUBLIC (KACR)	DENMARK (FSR)
LAW ON GENDER EQUALITY	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES
QUOTAS ON BOARDS	VOLUNTARY 30%	MANDATORY 50% (Public sector)	MANDATORY 33%	NO	VOLUNTARY
% WOMEN ON BOARDS	31%	18%	21,5%	12%	23%
% WOMEN IN ACCOUNTANCY	55% (+5%)	40% (+2-3%)	27,2% (+5,4%)	48% (=)	20% (nd)
ACTIONS	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES
GOOD PRACTICES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Work from home	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Flexible work hours	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Part-time work	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Internal quotas					
Promotion rules					
Services allowing workers to achieve a better balance between work and family life		✓	✓		✓

																				
	FRANCE (CSOEC)	GEORGIA (GFAAFM)	GERMANY (BSIBK)	GREECE (SOEL)	HUNGARY (MOKLASZ)	IRELAND (CAI)	ITALY (CNDCEC)	KOSOVO (SCAAK)	NETHERLANDS (NBA)	POLAND (KIBR)	PORTUGAL (OCC)	ROMANIA (CECCAR)	SPAIN (CGE)	SWEDEN (FAR)	SWITZERLAND (EXPERT suisse)	TURKEY (TÜRMOB)	UNITED KINGDOM England & Wales (ICAEW)	UNITED KINGDOM Scotland (ICAS)	UNITED KINGDOM (ACCA)	
LAW ON GENDER EQUALITY	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
QUOTAS ON BOARDS	MANDATORY 40% by 2017	MANDATORY 30% (Public sector)	MANDATORY 30%	NO	NO	NO	MANDATORY 33,3%	MANDATORY 50% (Public sector)	VOLUNTARY 30%	NO	MANDATORY 33,3%	NO	VOLUNTARY 40%	VOLUNTARY	MANDATORY 30%	NO	VOLUNTARY 33% by 2020	VOLUNTARY 33% by 2020	VOLUNTARY 33% by 2020	
% WOMEN ON BOARDS	34,4%		25,8%	11%	7%	15%	31%		21,3%	18%	12%	12%	12%	30%	16%	10%	30%	25,9%	30%	
% WOMEN IN ACCOUNTANCY	25% (+3%)	40% (+50%)	35,2% (+8%)	40% (=)	70% (-5%)	40% (nd)	31,6% (+3,9%)	23% (+2,7%)	19% (=)	64% (=)	51% (+1,6%)	77,9% (+3-6%)	34% (nd)	33% (nd)	15% (nd)	25% (=)	28% (+2%)	34% (+8%)	46% (nd)	
ACTIONS	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
GOOD PRACTICES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Work from home	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Flexible work hours	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Part-time work	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Internal quotas	✓			✓													✓			
Promotion rules	✓																			
Services allowing workers to achieve a better balance between work and family life	✓	✓							✓					✓	✓					

# afeca

FEMMES EXPERTS-COMPTABLES

Association des Femmes diplômées  
d'Expertise Comptable Administrateurs

19 rue Cognacq-Jay  
75341 Paris Cedex

Géraldine DE LEON  
gdeleon@cs.experts-comptables.org

tél. : +33 (0) 1 44 15 60 93

femmes-experts-comptables.com

 @femmes\_EC\_adm



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