



QUICK TAKES • Women in the Labour Force in the UK

POPULATION

- In the UK in 2005, there were 30.7 million women (51.0%) compared with 29.5 (49%) million men.¹

LABOUR FORCE

- In the UK, women are 34.7% of managers and senior officials.²
- As in other countries, a pay gap exists between women in men. The pay gap has narrowed since 1985—while women working full time previously made 74% of what men made, in 2005, women made 83% of men's salaries.³
- Women and men follow very different career paths—22% of women are engaged in administrative or secretarial work, compared to 5% of men; 20% of men are engaged in skilled trades, while less than 5% of women are.⁴

EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

- In the UK, women receive approximately 56.6% of bachelor-degree equivalents. The percentages of women receiving degrees drops in relation to men as the degree level rises. Women receive 50.6% of master's degrees, and 43.2% of doctorate degrees.⁵

WOMEN BOARD DIRECTORS

- Women hold 10.4% of all director positions in FTSE 100 companies.⁶
- 77 out of 100 FTSE companies have at least one woman board director, and 23 companies have no women directors.⁶
- Astra Zeneca has the highest percentage of women on a board—28% (four women directors). British Airways closely follows suit, with three women directors comprising 27% of their board.⁶
- Of the 181 new appointments to director positions in 2006, women are 12.5% of the positions, down from nearly 17%.⁶

WOMEN CEOs

- 2% of FTSE 100 companies have women CEOs.⁶
 - The two women CEOs are Dame Marjorie Scardino of Pearson (ranked 49 on FTSE) and Dorothy Thompson of Drax (ranked 96 on FTSE).^{6,7}

WORKING MOTHERS

- Most working-age women with children under five (56%) were in the labour force.⁸
- A third of working mothers used some form of flexible work arrangements.⁸
- 38% of working mothers compared with 11% of working fathers have left a job or did not take a job because of the difficulties of combining the position with family responsibilities.⁹

Sources

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3. National Statistics, "Personal finances: the Pay Gap Narrows" (2006) <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=1656>
4. National Statistics, "Working Lives: Half of Women's Jobs are Part Time," <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=1654>, 2006.
5. HESA Student Record 2005/06, unpublished data, 2007. (Copyright HESA 2007; HESA cannot accept responsibility for any inferences or conclusions derived from the data by third parties).
6. Val Singh and Susan Vinnicombe, *Identifying the New Generation of Women Directors: The Female FTSE Report 2006*. (2006)
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8. National Statistics, "Work and Family: Half of mums of under 5's are in employment" (2006).
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