

Are Spanish companies just paying lip service to gender equality?

Although most Spanish companies say they are committed to equal opportunities between men and women, only 16% have established incentives to promote them.



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Do Spanish companies promote gender diversity and equal opportunities between men and women? A report by [IESE's Carmina Roca and Rafael Pich-Aguilera Women and Leadership Chair](#), based on a survey of the Spanish Association of Executives and Counselors, shows that there is still plenty of room for improvement.

Although the vast majority of respondents affirm that the senior management of their

company shows a public commitment to equality of opportunity (87%) and gender diversity (76%), this is not reflected in corresponding incentives to achieve these goals. Only 16% of respondents say they have such incentives in place.

Meanwhile, only 1 in 3 companies has conducted a study on the gender pay gap in the organization. Among those companies that have, only a third has internally published the results.

Survey respondents identified a number of areas holding women back from accessing and remaining in the labor market, chief among them motherhood, and family and domestic responsibilities. It doesn't stop there, as participants also flagged wider society as driven by machismo, and noted that women were undervalued in the labor market. They may also be held back by the difficulty of networking in male-dominated settings and by women's own tendency to disengage from certain management positions.

The report, prepared by [Nuria Chinchilla](#) and [Esther Jiménez](#), also highlights that only 1 in 3 companies (31%) uses blind résumés in the first phase of a selection process, only half (51%) includes at least one final candidate of the less-represented gender in all selection processes and only 37% applies positive discrimination to the underrepresented gender.

Even so, 2 out of every 3 participating companies (62%) claim that gender diversity is a priority in their professional promotion plans.

Some positive trends

The report shows that a large majority of companies (78%) have a flexible work policy, although the questionnaire does not specify what percentage of the workforce has access to it. Surprisingly, it is the medium-sized companies and those of fewer than 50 employees that are most likely to offer flexibility policies.

Meanwhile, 77% of respondents claim that their company promotes gender diversity among governing bodies and higher management. A similar percentage (74%) points out that women's participation in decision-making is an important issue for the steering committee. Forty-five percent of respondents even indicated that their organization has a senior management team or person responsible for managing aspects related to equality of opportunity.

Methodology, very briefly

The survey was distributed among more than 100 Spanish companies or subsidiaries operating in Spain. In most cases, the person in charge of the company's management department responded, although some board members, general directors and directors of corporate social responsibility also participated.

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