

Hardly Any Women at the Top of German Enterprises

KIT Publishes the Most Comprehensive Study on Women in Management Positions so Far



Managing top enterprises – a job that still is hardly done by women. (Photo by: photocase.de)

In 2008, only 42 of the 1721 management board members of the 600 leading German enterprises were women – this is a proportion of 2.4%. In supervisory boards, women have a share of 8.2%. In both cases, no clear tendency of an increase in these shares was observed in the past ten years. These are the results of a study made by the KIT Institute of Management. The study focused on the presence of women on the top management level of the 600 most important enterprises in Germany, which are quoted on the stock exchange.

The small proportion of women in German boards and supervisory boards is frequently discussed in the public. So far, however, reliable data have been lacking. The KIT Institute for Enterprise Management has now analyzed the 600 most important enterprises in Germany, which are quoted on the stock exchange (CDAX which also includes DAX30, MDAX, SDAX, and TecDAX). The study was supported by the Initiative for New Quality of Work (INQA) of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. It focused on the proportion of women in executive boards and supervisory boards of German enterprises and its development from 1998 to 2008. The

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central result: The share of women in German boards amounted to 2.4% in 2008, compared to 1.2% in 1998. Since 2005, this share has even declined slightly. Few women can also be found in supervisory boards – in particular on the side of the shareholder representatives: In 2008, 307 of the 3758 members of supervisory boards were women (8.2%). 63% of them were representatives of the employees. No clear trend is obvious.

The study covers an average of 6300 positions per year, which corresponds to nearly 70,000 evaluated board and supervisory board years. Hence, it is the largest of its type in Germany. It also considers size-, index-, and branch-specific effects. Based on their results, the authors of the study suggest to shift the focus of discussion to the causes. For this reason, the Institute of Management, in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, will now identify criteria and factors influencing the appointment of women to management positions.

About the Study

The study is part of the research activities of the Institute of Management (IBU) in the field of corporate governance supported by Dr. Christine Watrinet. The initiative New Quality of Work (INQA) of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health are supporting the project. Within the framework of this research project, the team extensively studies the topic of women in management positions.

Further information on the study and the authors can be found under <http://www.ibu.uni-karlsruhe.de>

The Institute of Management

Research of the Institute of Management focuses on strategic management and strategic business wargaming, corporate governance, and organization management.

The Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) is the merger of the Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe, member of the Helmholtz Association, and the Universität Karlsruhe. This merger will give rise to an institution of internationally excellent research and teaching in natural and engineering sciences. In total, the KIT has 8000 employees and an annual budget of 700 million Euros. The KIT focuses on the knowledge triangle of research – teaching – innovation.

The Karlsruhe institution is a leading European energy research center and plays a visible role in nanosciences worldwide. KIT sets new standards in teaching and promotion of young scientists and attracts top scientists from all over the world. Moreover, KIT is a leading innovation partner of industry.

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