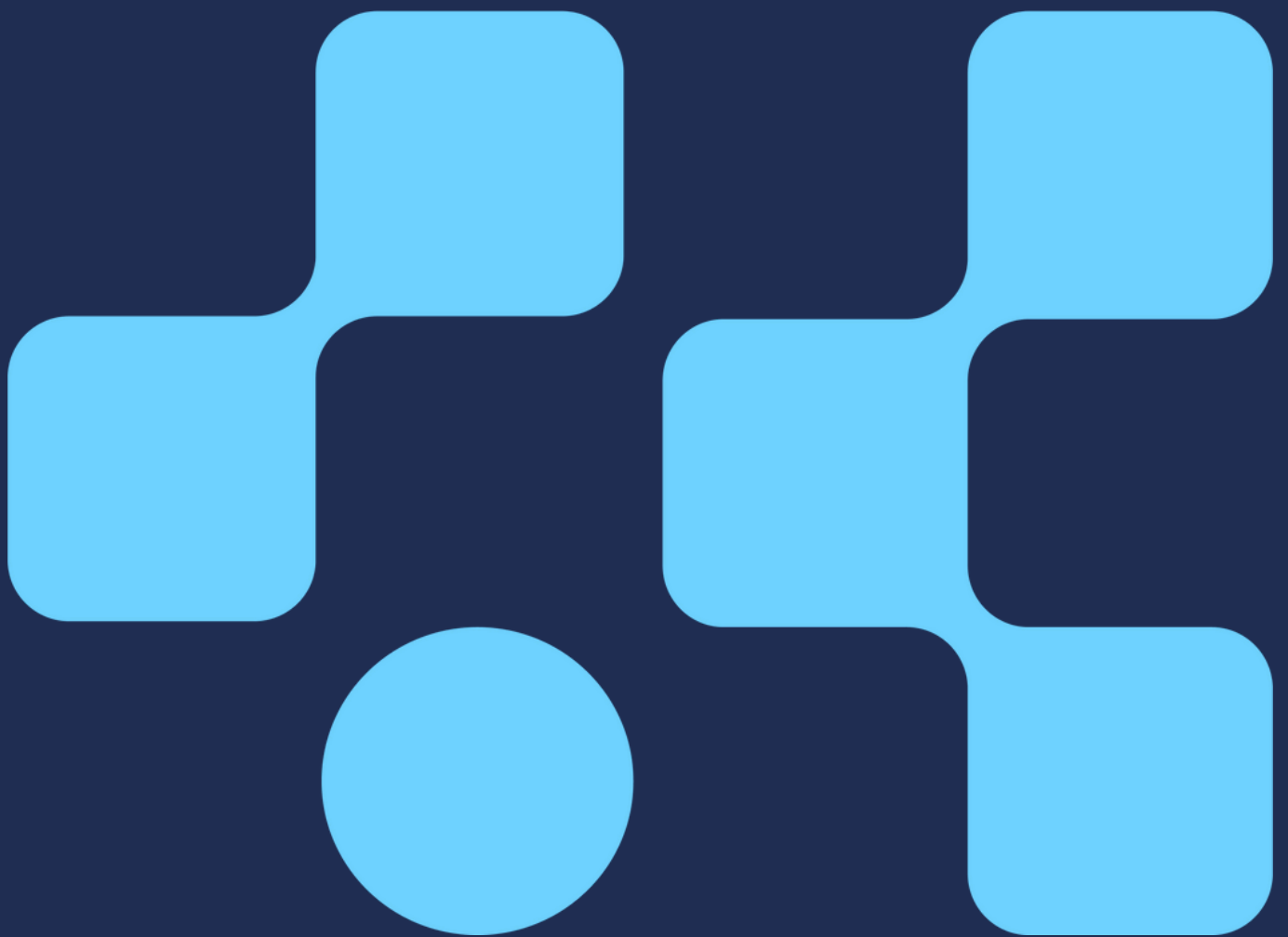


Insights Report 2025



Foreword

“ Growing socio- and geopolitical tensions this year have resulted in an extremely volatile external environment for both citizens and businesses alike. Particularly the work of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) – which continues to find itself in the eye of the storm.



And yet, when we think about what 'DEI' really aims to achieve in the context of work, it's simply about creating an environment that is characterised by fairness, where all employees are enabled to thrive. It's about recognising the unique talents of each employee, providing equal opportunities to succeed. Research shows time and time again that organisations that successfully harness the power of diversity and inclusion outperform their peers. So, despite the challenges we're navigating, it's a storm worth weathering. And LEAD Network remains resolute in our mission to attract, retain and advance all women in the Consumer Goods and Retail sector in Europe. We maintain a sharp lens on gender equity because we know that when women succeed, everyone benefits. It's the tide that raises all ships. And though these choppy waters may be causing some organisations (especially those with US operations) to be advancing inclusion more quietly, we know the work is far from over. So, I am grateful to all our Members, Partners and supporters for their unwavering support and continued commitment to staying the course.

As the voice of the industry on matters of gender diversity, equity and inclusion; LEAD Network continues to track progress on gender diversity through a bi-annual sector pulse check. Having reviewed the results of our most recent Gender Diversity Scorecard, I am encouraged to see the needle is moving in the right direction. The collective effort underpinning this progress is to be applauded. And yet, as you will see through the findings shared in this report, the rate of progress is slow. Women remain under-represented in leadership positions, despite making up 50% of the population and overall talent pool. So, if we want to break away from a pattern of marginal gains towards a truly gender-balanced C-suite, we need to redesign systems to work for all of us. It is time for the work of DEI to evolve from 'programmes' to being embedded into core business.

I hope the insights contained in this report provide a helpful springboard for our Partners' continued efforts in driving this agenda forward. It also gives me great pleasure to be shining a light on some of the good practices we're seeing among our community, which have been driving real progress over the last two years. On behalf of everyone at LEAD Network, I would like to thank the contributors to this report who generously gave their time to the completing the survey and sharing their stories. I am continually inspired by the openness and determination that characterises this community. And I remain optimistic that together, we can continue to drive progress and shape the future of work that works for all.

Allyson Zimmermann
CEO, LEAD Network

Contents

04 Executive Summary

06 Introduction

09 Key Findings

14 Spotlight on Good Practice: Company Case Studies

23 Conclusions

24 Recommendations

25 Additional Information

Executive summary

Women constitute half the workforce and are responsible for most consumer-buying decisions, yet remain under-represented at leadership level across the European Consumer Goods and Retail sector. The impact of continually overlooking talented women comes at a great cost to all of us.

Individuals face limited career growth, organisations miss opportunities to innovate and excel, and the sector risks existential sustainability challenges. Gender inequity is arguably one of the most pressing, yet unresolved business challenges. Solving it would unlock many benefits, not least based on the added value to the global economy, estimated at¹ between \$5–6 trillion.¹

At LEAD Network, we are proudly working with our Partners & Members to accelerate progress towards a more equitable and sustainable future. As part of our commitment to being a voice of the industry on this important topic, we have been tracking the proportion of women holding senior executive positions in Retail and Consumer Goods across Europe since 2017. This report therefore presents the most recent snapshot, based on our sample of Partner organisations who participated in the Gender Diversity Scorecard 2025.

At a headline level, the results of this year's data collection are encouraging; **39% of senior executive positions across the European Consumer Goods and Retail sector are now held by women.**

This is a slight improvement on the figure of 37% recorded in 2023. In other words, the needle is moving in the right direction. Additionally, there have been improvements in the representation of women across most functional areas, including finance and supply chain. It's good news for CPG, which is now tracking above the sector average at 42% women (a leap forward of 4 percentage points since 2023) and specifically for the Home and Personal Care industry that has made great progress in recent years. Yet the overall rate of progress remains slow, and some functional roles have seen a decline in the representation of women including in IT, Business Unit General Managers, and Country Managers. It is a mixed picture for Retail, having made a marginal gain of 1 percentage point on its previous position in 2023, whilst also lagging behind CPG and tracking 3 percentage points below the sector average.

This report also features three company case studies designed to shine a light on impactful practices underpinning some of the most encouraging examples of organisational progress that we have seen in recent years. These thought-provoking case studies offer inspiration and demonstrate that systemic progress is possible.

1. World Economic Forum, [How Stronger Laws and Institutions Can Help Close the Global Gender Gap and Boost the Economy](#).

The following companies have generously shared these stories for the benefit of the wider community:

DURACELL®



With a commitment to **'Doing, Not Trying'** the LEAD Network community can accelerate progress towards a more gender-equitable and sustainable future for the sector. The following calls to action are therefore intended to stimulate critical reflection and drive action towards this shared vision:

01

Shift DEI work away from bolt-on programming to embedding inclusion into core business. Research shows that when we do this, diversity and improved performance naturally follow.

02

Maximise the full breadth of offerings available via your LEAD Network partnership to advance organisational inclusion.

03

Share what types of policies and practices have had a tangible impact on gender diversity and inclusion within your organisation, to inspire action and help drive change across the industry.

Introduction

LEAD Network is a non-profit and volunteer-led organisation whose mission is to attract, retain and advance all women in the Consumer Goods and Retail sector for sustainable business value.

With over 25,000 Members, 65+ corporate Partners, and coverage across 26 countries; LEAD Network is one of Europe's fastest-growing movements dedicated to advancing gender equity and workplace inclusion. Individual Members gain access to networking, knowledge-building and leadership opportunities, while Partner organisations can leverage an enhanced suite of benefits to support their advancement of strategic DEI goals. These include exclusive invitations to C-suite events, sector-specific leadership development offerings, actionable research, tools and good practices; as well as an 'outside in' perspective through cross-company connections. Together, the LEAD Network community is driving impactful change across the industry through a commitment to 'Doing, Not Trying'.



Advancing gender equity and inclusion in Retail and CPG: an urgent business imperative

At the current rate of progress, it is estimated to take 123 years before we reach true gender parity.² Addressing the systemic root causes will require a concerted effort from many institutions and areas of society. And our sector must also step up. Because as this report shows, women remain under-represented in leadership roles across Consumer-Packaged Goods and Retail in Europe. When talented women are continually overlooked, we all pay a heavy price. Individuals carry an emotional burden and work through limited career growth, whilst organisations miss opportunities to innovate and excel by wasting talent. At a macro level, this kind of inequity also raises questions about the sustainability of the sector itself. Findings from our own research in 2023 indicated that only 28% of workers who identified as 'Next Gens' expressed interest in staying within, or joining, our sector.³

We simply cannot afford to continue as we are - there is too much at stake! The good news is, we can change this narrative. We have the authority to create a more positive outlook for individuals, a more sustainable future for the sector, and contribute to a more prosperous society. Progress is possible and the end justifies the means. Not least because achieving gender parity is anticipated to add between \$5-6 trillion to the global economy.⁴ So, at LEAD Network we are proud to be working with our Partners & Members to accelerate progress towards a more equitable future where people of all genders can thrive.

2. World Economic Forum, [Global Gender Gap Report 2025](#)

3. LEAD Network, [At the Intersection of Generation & Gender: Insights Toward Building a NextGen Fit Industry](#).

4. World Economic Forum, [How Stronger Laws and Institutions Can Help Close the Global Gender Gap and Boost the Economy](#).

The purpose of this report

The LEAD Network Gender Diversity Scorecard (GDS) is a bi-annual survey that has been tracking the proportion of women* holding senior executive positions in the European Retail and Consumer Goods sector since 2017. It is the only benchmark specifically analysing the state of gender diversity across CPG and Retail companies in Europe.

The scorecard provides individual Partner companies with a useful benchmarking tool, as well as acting as a pulse check on the general health of the sector in relation to gender diversity. By periodically reviewing anonymised and aggregated data, we can assess how far we're collectively moving the needle. This report therefore aims to present the most recent snapshot on gender diversity across the sector, based on a sample of organisations who participated in the 2025 GDS.

In addition to high-level numbers, we also showcase 3 company case studies which shine a light on impactful practices underpinning some of the most encouraging examples of organisational progress in recent years. These thought-provoking stories show how systemic progress is possible.

Quantitative Data: GDS Survey Responses

Findings in this report are based on 25 usable company responses from the 2025 Gender Diversity Scorecard survey. This data represents a total of 6,886 senior executives with responsibilities in Europe; of which 2,661 are women.

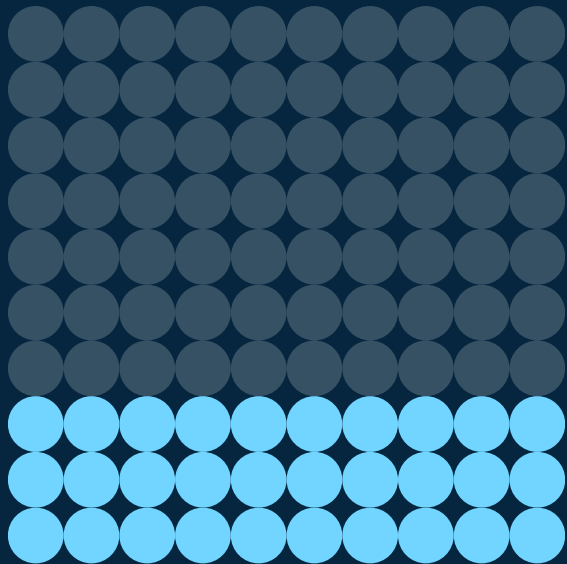
Qualitative Data: GDS Case Studies

Based on the 2025 GDS survey findings, we conducted 3 deep dive interviews with companies who appear to have made encouraging progress on gender diversity and inclusion in recent years. The case studies featured in this report focus on specific practices and approaches underpinning their progress.

It's important to recognise the limitations of this study. Gender representation can change day to day, due to job changes, turnover and other factors. These results represent a snapshot in time for the 25 participating companies. Whilst our findings may be relatively limited in scope, the data set is a good indicator of progress. For more details on our methodology and sample data, please refer to the additional information on [page 25](#).

*LEAD Network recognises that gender incorporates a wide range spectrum of identities, inclusive of trans, non-binary and genderfluid people. However, this report specifically focuses on the representation and experiences of anyone specifically identifying as a woman, in alignment with LEAD Network's vision, mission and purpose.

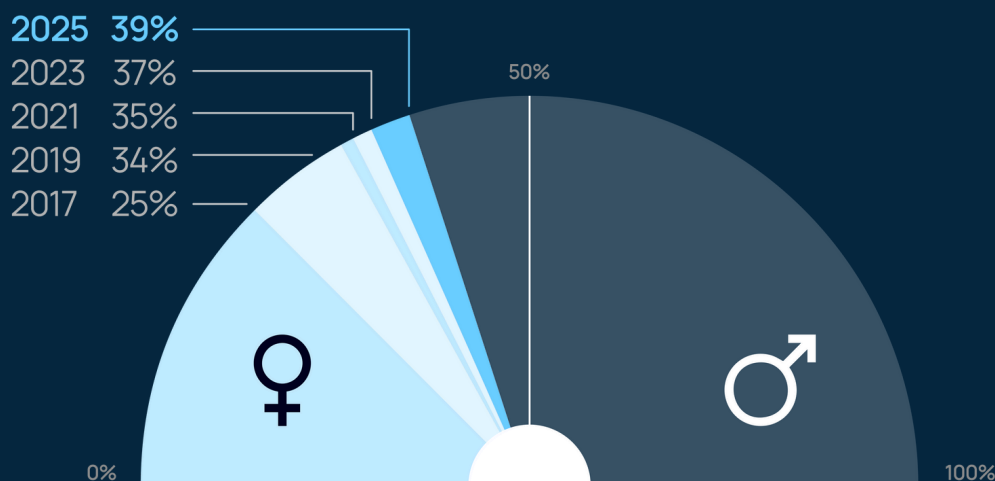
Representation of women in leadership across the sector



39%

of senior executive positions in the European Consumer Goods and Retail sector are held by women.

Percentage of women in senior executive roles across the European Consumer Goods and Retail sector over time (GDS data 2017-2025)

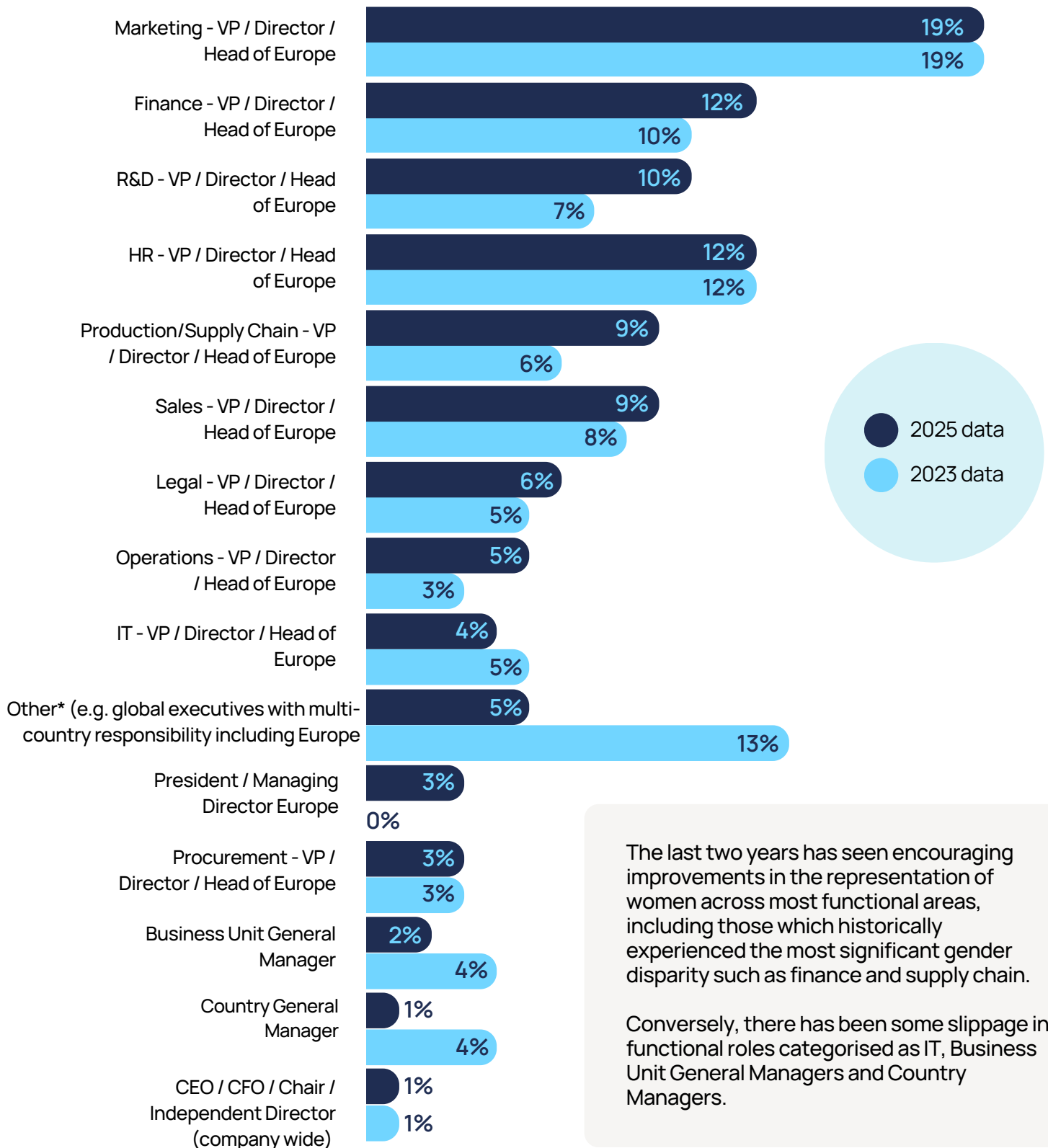


Overall, the percentage of women in senior executive positions across the European Retail and Consumer Goods sector is currently sitting at **39%**; a slight increase of 2 percentage points compared to the results of the 2023 Gender Diversity Scorecard.

Percentage of women in senior executive positions by functional role

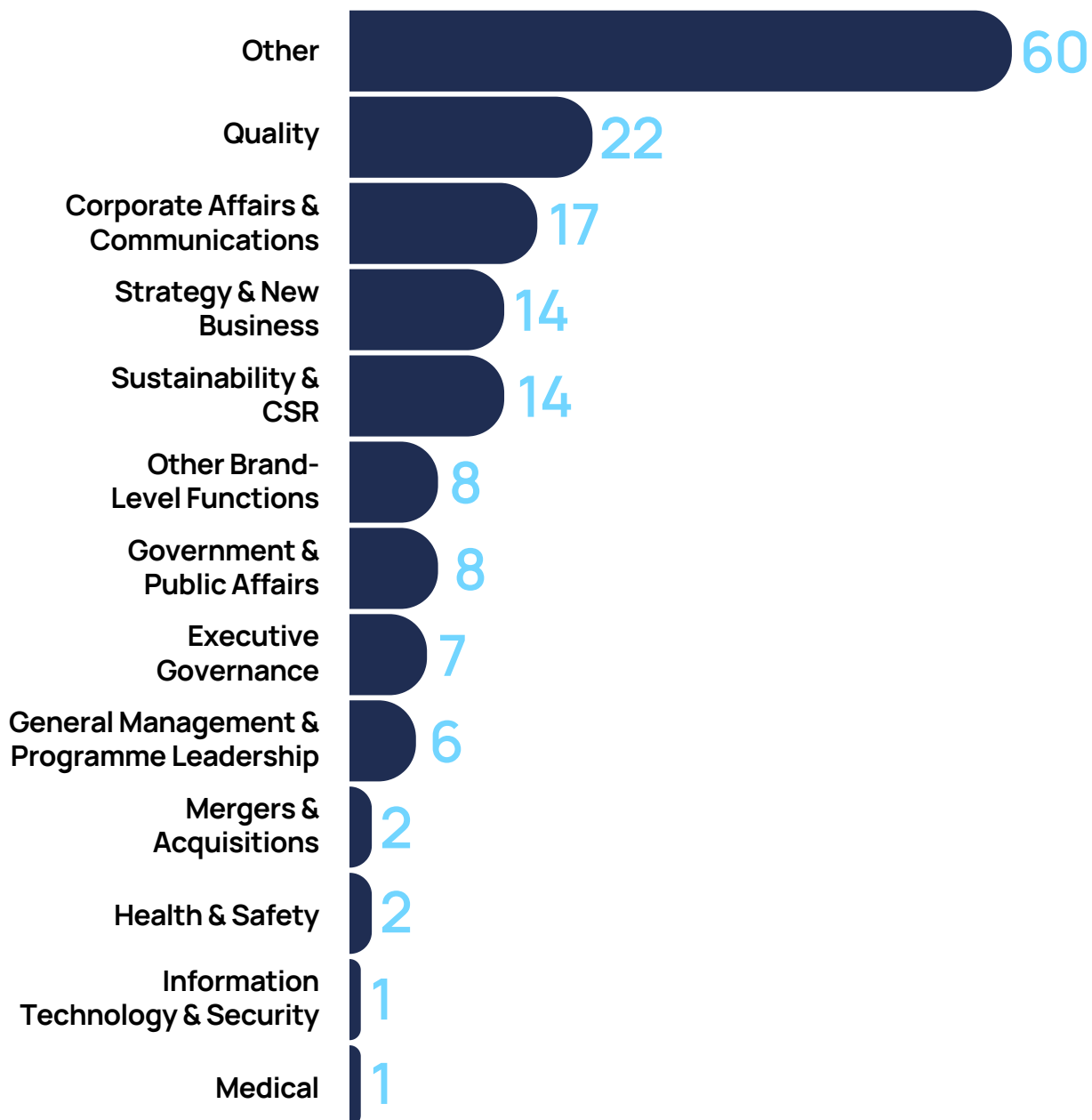
(GDS data 2023 vs. 2025)

*See next page for a breakdown of roles categorised as 'other'



Number of self-identified role titles categorised under 'other'

(GDS data 2025)

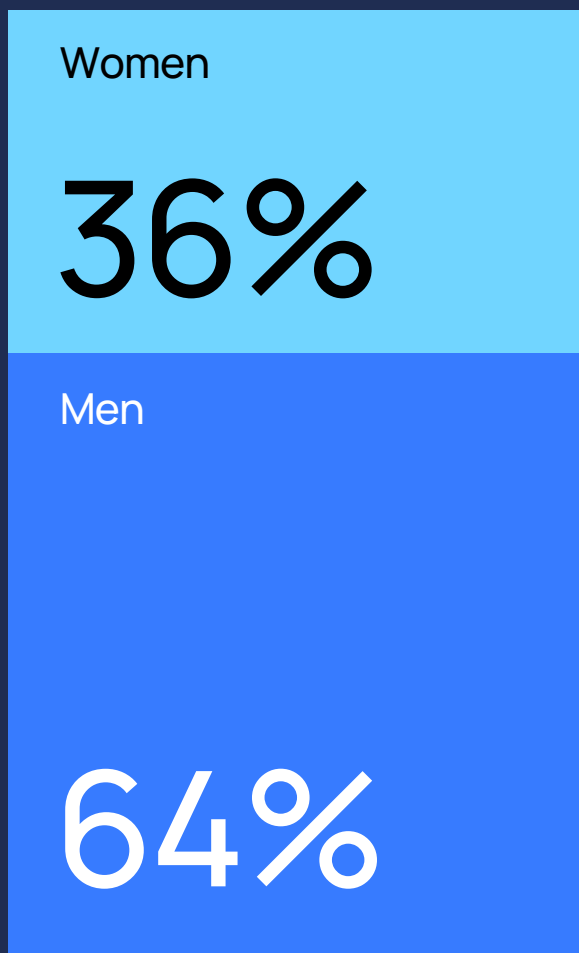


Representation of women in leadership across the sector

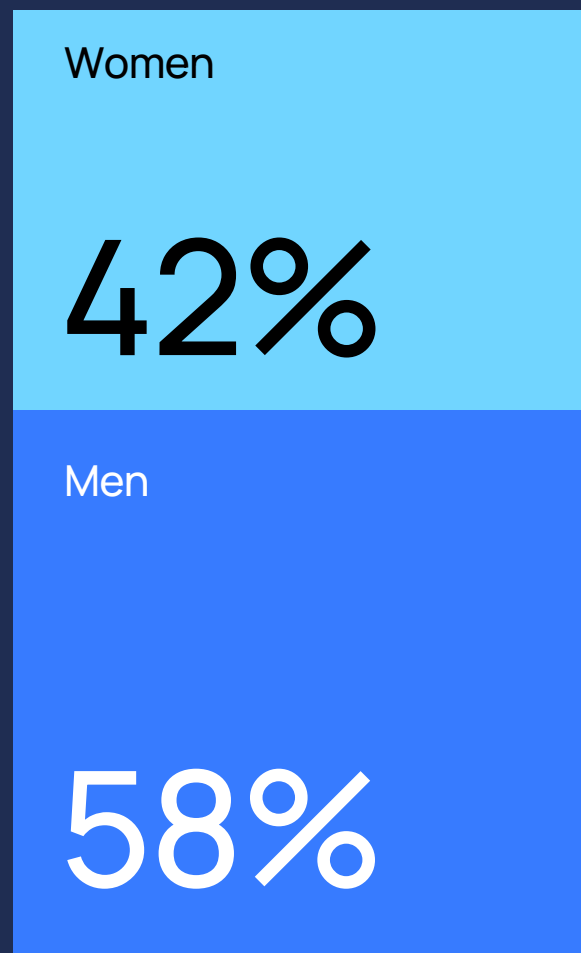
Percentage of women in senior executive positions in Retail vs CPG

(GDS data 2025)

Retail



CPG



Retail is currently tracking 3 percentage points below the combined sector average but has made a marginal gain of 1 percentage point on its previous position in 2023. Conversely, CPG is performing above the combined sector average at 42% women, with a leap forward of 4 percentage points since 2023.

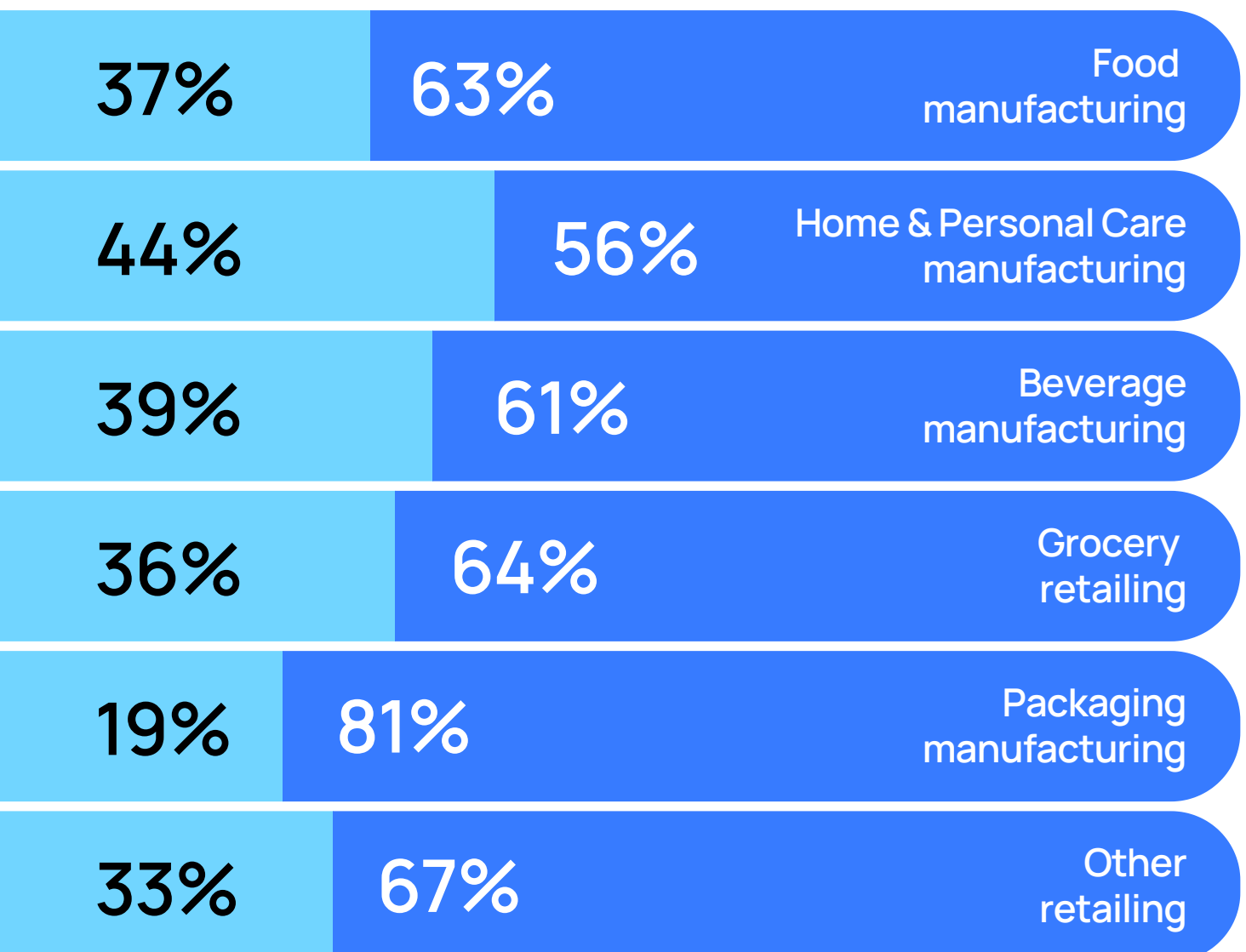
Percentage of women in senior executive positions by industry

(GDS data 2025)

Home and personal care is leading the way as the industry with the highest proportion of women in executive roles. Packaging manufacturing has the most significant journey ahead to reaching gender parity.

● Women

● Men



Spotlight on good practice

Case Study 01

Name

Duracell

Sector

CPG

LEAD Network Affiliation

Gold Partner

About

The Duracell logo, featuring the word "DURACELL" in a bold, black, sans-serif font with a registered trademark symbol, set against a white background.

A leading consumer battery company and manufacturer of high-performance alkaline batteries, speciality cells and rechargeables. Since its foundation in the early 1940s, the company has become an iconic personal power brand, trusted for compact and longer-lasting batteries. With regional hubs in the USA, EIMEA and Asia, Duracell employs 3,300+ people around the world.

Commitment to gender diversity and inclusion

As a company, Duracell understands the value of diversity and inclusion as a fundamental driver of business and organisational success. For Europe and Africa, the company is deploying their 'Power Of Diversity & Inclusion' strategy (PODI) which articulates several commitments, including a gender balance target by 2030 across all management levels and functions. To that end, the PODI strategy consists of four core pillars: leadership, talent, data analytics, and communication. In recent years, Duracell has seen encouraging progress in the representation and inclusion of women. Below are some of the activities and approaches that have been having real impact across Europe.



Spotlight features

Spotlight feature #1

'PODI' lives from top to bottom!

PODI is deeply embedded and actively embraced at every level of the organisation. Starting at the very top, Duracell's President of Europe & Africa regularly hosts regional PODI Forums for all employees. The purpose is to position inclusion as a constant drumbeat, signalling a genuine commitment and care for individuals. Employees are encouraged to consult experienced colleagues about personal challenges relating to career progression.

Furthermore, PODI-related data is regularly disclosed and discussed i.e. where the company sees progress, and where they should focus for continual improvement. One of the most effective ways that Duracell is walking the talk, is by linking inclusion outcomes directly to their General Managers' annual performance evaluations. While the tone is clearly set from the top, Duracell's dedicated PODI team also drives a strategic bottom-up programme, supported by a network of local ambassadors who play a vital role in activating change on the ground. Individual colleagues are empowered to connect, learn and drive change through a mentoring and support group known as 'Powercells', along with ongoing self-education through an online 'D&I corner'.

Spotlight feature #2

Inclusive talent management

Gender diversity and inclusion are fully embedded across the entire talent lifecycle at Duracell. From inclusive talent attraction and skills-based hiring to fair compensation, pay transparency, equitable development and succession planning; the company takes a data-driven approach to innovation and progress. A granular suite of metrics enables continuous monitoring, and recent data show no gender disparity in employee engagement, performance, or pay. While inclusion work is never truly 'done,' embedding it into the fabric of the business and maintaining a sharp focus on measurement has been key to driving organisational progress.

Duracell also invests in individual career growth through targeted development programmes for women. One standout initiative is 'Women Moving Forward™' - a confidential and transformative programme delivered by a specialist provider. It helps participants uncover and address deep-rooted belief systems that may be holding them back.



Unlike traditional leadership development or skills-based training, this programme focuses on person-centred transformation. Women who've completed it report life-changing outcomes, and the business sees measurable improvements in enablement, engagement and retention. This holistic and embedded approach to talent management is truly inspiring - bravo Duracell!

Spotlight feature #3

A LEAD Network ripple effect!

Internally, Duracell is amplifying the impact of its LEAD Network partnership to foster inclusive behaviours across the organisation. For example, one leader emphasised the power of inclusive language in creating environments where all colleagues and customers feel welcome. This inspired the team to actively promote the LEAD Network Inclusive Language Guide through their 'D&I corner' and townhalls, using it as source material for more nuanced, market-specific conversations. The Türkiye and South Africa region led by example - hosting a workshop to explore what inclusive language sounds like in their local languages. This cascade effect continued at a company townhall, where space was created to spotlight a colleague who had participated in 'IMPACT35' - a ground-breaking NextGen leadership development programme from LEAD Network.

Embedding these learnings back into the business was a natural next step. Similarly, an inspirational keynote speech given by Dr Marcia Goddard on psychological safety at the 2024 LEAD Network Conference became the catalyst for a new partnership. It's exciting to see how LEAD Network-inspired insights are being embedded and scaled to create a tangible and impactful ripple effect!



Spotlight on good practice

Case Study 02

Name

Prestige 96

Sector

CPG

LEAD Network Affiliation

Gold Partner

About



One of the leading food manufacturers in Bulgaria, specialising in confectionary and operating in over 30 countries across Europe, the Middle East and Africa. With a 30-year history, Prestige is a relatively young company that is making a huge impact and is dearly beloved by colleagues and customers alike!

An impressive journey to gender diversity and inclusion!

The Prestige story is quite a remarkable one. Anchored by their understanding of the value of diversity and inclusion, the company describe a journey that has taken them from 'talented but homogenous teams' towards 'talented and diverse teams'. And their dedication has paid off. Women now make up 62% of their employees, 50% of all management positions, and 5 out of their 7 top executives - including their CEO. They cite a three-pronged approach as the driver behind their impressive progress: awareness, the willingness and commitment of individuals to drive change, and acting with intention. So let's delve deeper into what that looks like in practice.



Spotlight features

Spotlight feature #1

Role modelling an inclusive mindset

When it comes to role modelling inclusion, Prestige are walking the talk. The leaders we spoke to described their CEO as an inspirational change agent who views inclusion as a necessary component of responsible leadership. Importantly, her 'inclusive mindset' drives inclusive behaviour among other leaders, which creates a ripple effect right across the organisation. Not only is an inclusive mindset about setting the tone through behaviour and personal leadership style, but also ensuring that inclusion is intentionally baked into management conversations and decision-making. This default mode takes them beyond simply monitoring gender diversity in recruitment and promotions, to a much deeper level of scrutiny across everyday decisions - such as who gets invited to key meetings or how new project teams might be composed. As one leader described it: 'Whoever joins the team should bring something different'. And this role modelling of an inclusive mindset across the day-to-day business is clearly having an impact, with employees feeling safe and valued. To illustrate, we were delighted to hear that 75% of employees reported feeling comfortable to openly share information with their line manager in their latest anonymised culture pulse check. Bravo Prestige!

Spotlight feature #2

'Promote for potential'

Individuality is revered at Prestige. Unlike traditional approaches to talent management which categorise and rank employees by their potential, Prestige believes that everyone has unique potential. As such, they favour a 'one size fits one' approach to professional development, recognising that each person's needs and path will vary. So as part of their culture of open and continuous feedback, employees are encouraged to take an active role in shaping their career journey, and line managers take active responsibility for identifying personalised stretch opportunities. And to top it off; they are pro-actively addressing blockers to career progression that typically hold women back from progressing upwards in the industry. They don't wait for questions to surface, or bubble away under the radar. They don't allow stereotypes and inflexible systems to prevent talent from rising. As such, their approach has enabled impressive gender representation across functions that are often traditionally male-dominated. A wonderful illustration of this commitment in action can be seen in the appointment of their Sales Director, who was offered the job whilst 6 months pregnant with her second child!

Spotlight feature #3

Accelerating progress with LEAD Network!

The Prestige team attribute a significant proportion of their recent progress to their partnership with LEAD Network. They trace the origins of their journey back to their participation in the Gender Diversity Scorecard and completion of the DEI Maturity Benchmark (based on the National Equality Standard – a government-backed diagnostic framework developed by EY). These structured assessment tools enabled them to gain visibility over how they were performing on gender diversity and inclusion, compared to industry peers. With a clearer picture of their strengths and areas needing closer attention, they were able to formalise a DEI strategy to guide action towards their vision for the future. They describe this as their 'lighthouse'; embedding inclusion across the business.

Beyond establishing a direction for travel, they also acknowledge the power of active engagement with LEAD Network as a driver for ongoing progress. They pay an enthusiastic tribute to community peers for their openness to share learnings and collaborate. And it's heartening to see a reciprocal contribution, paying it forward and helping to drive inclusion across the wider industry. An inspiring example of this is their CEO, who stepped into the role of Co-Chair for the newly established Bulgaria Chapter. An extraordinary demonstration of Doing, Not Trying!



Spotlight on good practice

Case Study 03

Name

Reckitt

Sector

CPG

LEAD Network Affiliation

Foundation Partner

About



Reckitt makes the products people trust to care for the ones they love. They are home to some of the world's best-loved consumer health and hygiene brands, including Dettol, Durex, Finish, Gaviscon, Harpic, Lysol, Mucinex, Nurofen, Strepsils, Vanish and Veet. Consumers are at the heart of everything Reckitt does. By creating innovative, science-backed solutions, Reckitt support people every day to live healthier lives. Reckitt believes good health starts at home. With every action it takes, Reckitt strives to make consumers' lives easier, cleaner and healthier, to strengthen communities and to create a more sustainable future.

Gender balance and inclusion at the heart of impact!

At Reckitt, diversity and inclusion play an integral part in driving successful business outcomes. Reckitt is committed to attracting and retaining diverse top talent, representative of the full spectrum of consumers they serve. They are also proactive about nurturing a company culture characterised by a sense of belonging and social impact, having recently launched Catalyst - an initiative to scale access to health and hygiene across the world. By providing funding, mentorship, and expertise to women and founders from other underrepresented communities, Reckitt are ensuring that world-changing ideas emerge and thrive to deliver systemic change.

As a global player, they recognise the importance of structure and governance for driving and tracking progress on gender balance within the organisation, yet also in maintaining a degree of flexibility to cater to the nuanced needs of different markets. So in recent years, they have been refining their inclusion strategy to ensure they are able to strike this balance effectively. Throughout this strategic evolution, gender has remained in focus. They are moving towards their ambition for achieving gender balance across all management levels by 2030. They are already close to reaching balance at the most senior levels, based on the composition of their Global ExCo and Board of Directors, alongside 50% women representation within junior management. So let's look at what's been driving this progress.



Spotlight features

Spotlight feature #1

ERGs as strategic partners

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are a staple of most large organisations. They provide affinity groups and allies with an important voice into the business, as well as a space for community-building and learning. At Reckitt, ERGs act as strategic partners; not only identifying challenges but actively collaborating on inclusive solutions. For example, the ERG community advised on global guidance for those experiencing the menopause. Their policies are intentionally inclusive-by-design, and compliment others, such as flexible working and a 'Work From Anywhere' Policy for up to 20 days per year. The Women's ERG also contributed to the development of the 'See My Pain' campaign by Nurofen, specifically supporting women in advocating for better pain management outcomes from healthcare providers.

Whilst this group has a presence in most markets and continues to add significant value, Reckitt also recognised the importance of understanding local nuance, particularly in relation to educational and cultural factors that have an impact on operational challenges in different markets. So in recent years, there has been an emergence of additional local ERGs, which the team have described as 'gamechanging', accelerating inclusion around the globe. For example, more tailored policy support for menstrual leave has enhanced employees' experience in a market where conversations about periods remain taboo, and in another market where elder-care is a cultural norm, colleagues there have established a local carers ERG to support the 'sandwich' generation – those caring for older and younger family members. This broader and more intersectional approach to involving colleagues in solutions, has also led to richer collaboration of the ERG community and the brand marketing team via a 'Positive Portrayal Panel' made up of ERG members - ensuring better representation in advertising. It has also led to improvements in how colleagues are supported as they navigate other experiences, such as living with cancer.



Spotlight feature #2

Building an inclusive mindset

Reckitt believes that everyone has a role to play in fostering an inclusive workplace. With that in mind, inclusion is embedded into the organisation's talent philosophy and learning culture. At the heart of their talent strategy is to hire the best talent, ensuring fairness and focus on the skills needed for future growth. By ensuring hiring includes diverse and gender balanced candidate groups, Reckitt leverages different viewpoints to problem solve and innovate. With a focus on the candidate experience, they've expanded their global interview toolkit, and their inclusion and disability confidence training for Talent Acquisition and hiring managers.

Additionally, colleagues are enabled to build progressive career pathways through functional skills academies, and formalised sponsorship is baked into a development programme aimed at building the pipeline of women into senior leadership. Almost half of Reckitt's colleagues have now progressed through their 'Conscious Inclusion' programme; based on the principle that 'if you're not consciously including, you may be subconsciously excluding'. This learning includes opportunities for senior leaders and people leaders to put key principles into practice, ensuring that inclusion is present in practical day-to-day behaviour and creates a ripple effect. Through upskilling programmes such as this, and by encouraging people managers to host conversations with their teams on topics of inclusion, they are nurturing an inclusive mindset. And this real-world activation is bearing fruit. Leaders are more confident in discussing inclusion with others, as well as benefitting from strengthened connections, new insights, and positive team dynamics. Employees experience improved communication, and an increase in the number of leaders becoming more active sponsors, allies and mentors.

Spotlight feature #3

Insight-led progress

At Reckitt, equipping decision-makers with data is seen as a critical enabler of inclusion. It raises the visibility of bright spots and highlights specific challenges in need of attention. Their in-house Gender Balance Scorecard is a customisable tool, mapped to the employee lifecycle, providing leaders with real-time insights about their teams. Additionally, they analyse the experiences of their employees through a more nuanced lens in participating markets, thanks to a series of optional self-ID questions included within employee engagement surveys.

In recent years, these layered insights have unlocked some important discoveries and solutions. For example, they became aware of a small but significant LGBTQ+ population in one market, which had not previously been on their radar. As a result, their local HR team and Leadership were able to partner with a newly formed local ERG to develop targeted support for colleagues from the community. In a first-ever for that market, this also helped colleagues navigating gender transition. A great example of data-driven insight driving meaningful action and partnering with the ERG community which created a more inclusive environment for all colleagues.

Conclusions

With 39% of senior executive positions across the European Retail and CPG sector now held by women, it is encouraging to see the needle moving in the right direction and improvements across most functional areas, including finance and supply chain.

It is particularly good news for CPG, which is now tracking above the sector average at 42% women; a leap forward of 4 percentage points since 2023. Delving deeper, this year's results also show a positive trajectory for the Home and Personal Care industry, which has made most progress over the last two years. Each of these advancements should be celebrated, as they are testament to a collective effort and continued commitment to creating more gender-equitable workplaces.

However, we have seen a decline in the representation of women in certain functional roles including IT, Business Unit General Managers and Country Managers. The journey to gender-balance is also proving a bigger challenge for some areas of the sector than others. Whilst Retail has made a marginal gain of 1 percentage point on its previous position in 2023, it continues to lag behind CPG and remains 3 percentage points below the sector average.

Advancing gender equity requires a strategic, systemic, and long-term view. The case studies featured in this report are intended to provide thought-provoking examples, showing how systemic progress is possible.

Recommendations

The following calls to action are intended to stimulate critical reflection and next steps:

01

Embed inclusion

If our sector is to break away from the pattern of marginal gains towards an accelerated path to gender-balanced leadership, we must shift DEI work away from bolt-on programming to embedding inclusion into core business. Research shows that when we do this, diversity and improved performance naturally follow.

02

Maximise your LEAD Network partnership

LEAD Network is a safe space for leaders across the sector to share challenges, learnings and solutions with each other. Furthermore, Partner companies have exclusive access to a suite of offerings designed to assist their organisations with advancing inclusion. As some of the case studies featured in this report have shown, these kinds of opportunities can really give you a boost! So if there are tools, leadership development programmes and good practice networking events you've not yet taken full advantage of, speak to your dedicated Partner Relations Manager.

03

Share your learning

If you have an impactful policy, practice or approach that has tangibly improved gender diversity and inclusion within your organisation, [let us know!](#) The DEI Content Library is a great opportunity to share your learnings with LEAD Network Partner organisations, to inspire action and help drive change across the industry.

With a commitment to 'Doing, Not Trying' we can accelerate progress towards a more gender-equitable future that works for all.

Additional information

GDS Methodology

Participation criteria

The data contained in this report relates to organisations who participated in the Gender Diversity Scorecard 2025.

Participants must be Partners of the LEAD Network and represent food and beverage, personal and home care manufacturers, or retail and wholesale companies; with revenues above \$1 billion and a significant part of that coming from Europe.

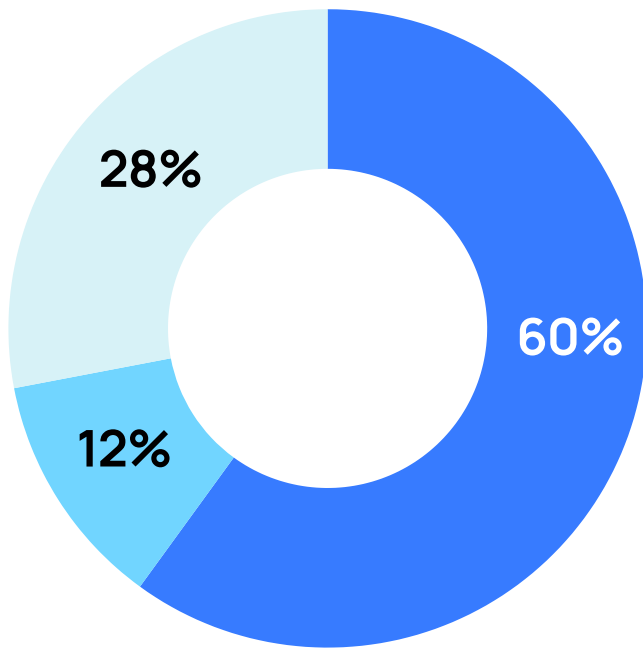


Exclusions

Whilst LEAD Network is committed to working in partnership with a broad range of organisations across the value chain (including those operating in specific market segments and service providers), the data contained in this report relates solely to CPG manufacturers & retailers operating at a European level.

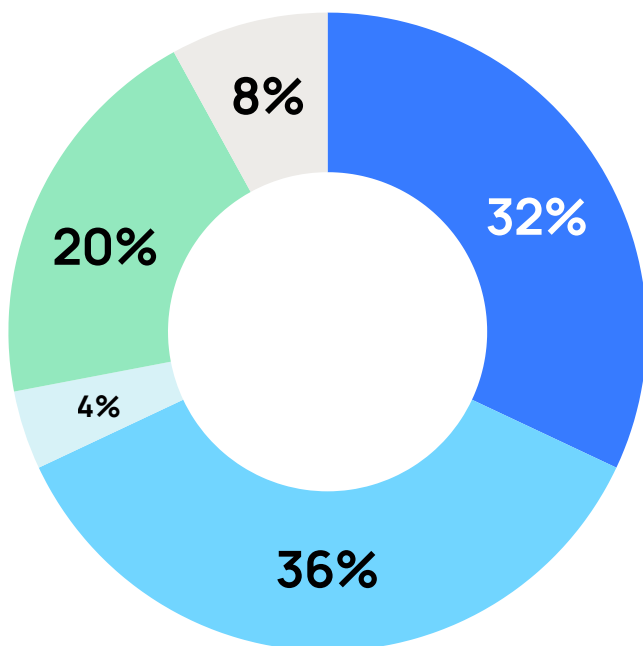
Data sample

The findings of this report are based on 25 usable company survey responses, compared with 43 responses received in 2023. 60% of this year's respondents were from Western Europe and mainly from companies earning between \$1-\$10 billion in revenue.



Where is your company headquarter located?

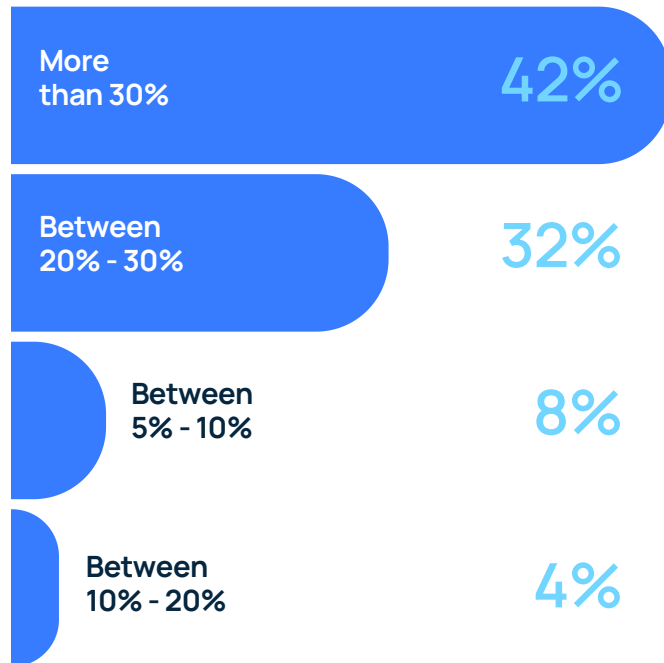
- Western Europe
- North America
- Eastern Europe



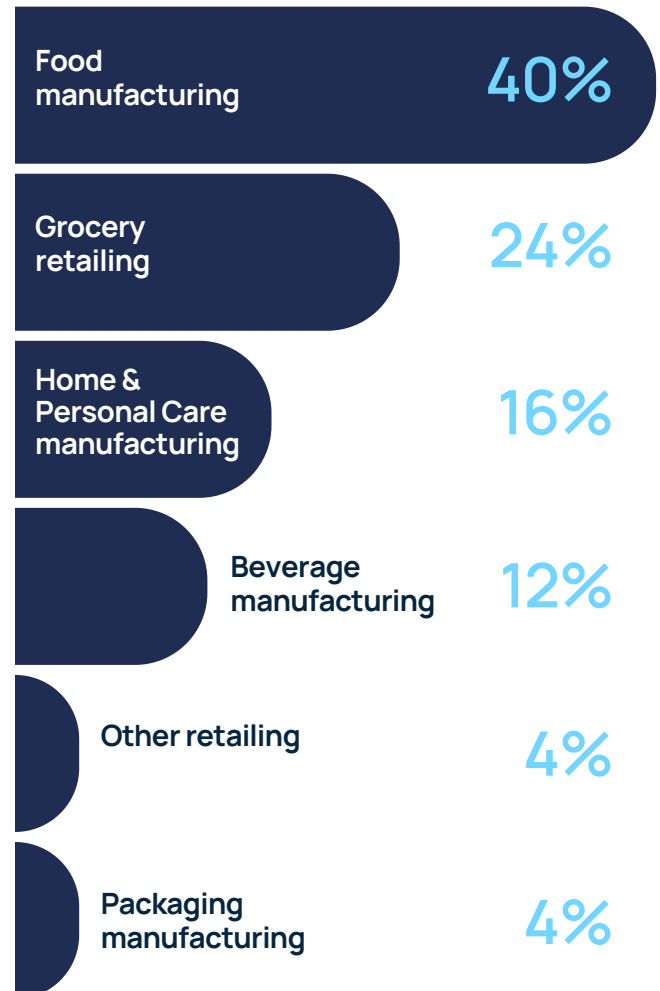
What was your company's global revenue in the most recent fiscal year in US\$?

- Between \$10b and 25b
- Between \$1b and \$10b
- Between \$500 and \$1b
- Greater than \$25b
- Between \$100m and \$500m

What percentage of your company's annual revenue is generated in Europe?



What percentage of your company's annual revenue is generated in Europe?



Data collection & analysis

Partner companies provided information on the number of women and men in senior executive roles with responsibility for operations or functions in Europe. In total, participating companies provided over 6,800 data points.

To derive overall representation, we divided the total number of women by the total number of roles. Because our sample differs year over year, we also identified a comparative sample of partner companies who participated in 2023 and 2025. For this group, we also saw a 2% increase in female representation, moving from 40% to 42%.

Author

**Jodeine Wheatcroft**

Independent Consultant and
DEI Associate, LEAD Network

Key contributors

**Regina Chitralla**

Data Analyst, LEAD Network

**Sarah McGowan**

Strategic Advisor to LEAD Network

**Catherine Bullen**

Independent Consultant and Associate
Programme Manager, LEAD Network

With heartfelt thanks to the following teams for their generous case study interviews:

- **Prestige 96** - Darina Stoyanova, Boryana Kiteva and Nadejda Zaharieva
- **Duracell** - Funda Soylemez and Zeljka Omazic
- **Reckitt** - Carrie Adams, Nameer Jamillee, Matilda Snell, Evon Lim and Gemma Gittins

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks to the following Partner companies who dedicated their time and effort to completing the 2025 Gender Diversity Scorecard:



Further resources exclusively available to Partners of LEAD Network

- [LEAD Network DEI Content Library](#)
- [LEAD Network DE&I Maturity Benchmark: Information Guide](#)
- [LEAD Network Partner Case Study Submission Guidance](#)

References

Carr, E., Cooney, G., Gray, C., Greenberg, S., Kellerman, G., Reece, A., & Robichaux, A. (2020). The Value of Belonging at Work: New Frontiers for Inclusion. BetterUp. <https://grow.betterup.com/resources/the-value-of-belonging-at-work-the-business-case-for-investing-in-workplace-inclusion>

Dobin, K. and Kalev, A. (2025). Achieve DEI Goals Without DEI Programs. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2025/07/achieve-dei-goals-without-dei-programs>

LEAD Network. (2024). At the Intersection of Generation & Gender: Insights Toward Building a NextGen Fit Industry. https://leadnetworkmembers.net/topics/40611/media_center/file/1895c6a8-7e0a-46de-bc88-9aede1ccd09c

Trumbic, T. (2025). How stronger laws and institutions can help close the global gender gap and boost the economy. World Economic Forum. <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/07/global-gender-gap-laws-institutions-world-bank-wef/>

World Economic Forum. (2025). Global Gender Gap Report 2025. <https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-gender-gap-report-2025/>



Foundation LEAD Network
Keizersgracht 241
1016 EA Amsterdam, Netherlands

Email:

operations@theleadnetwork.net

Visit:

theleadnetwork.net

Follow us:



LEAD Network Europe

© 2025 LEAD Network. All Rights Reserved.

This report is subject to copyright protection and may not be distributed,
copied and/or modified without our prior written consent.