

Government proposes new measures to address boardroom inequality

UK companies may be required to report on progress towards a better gender balance in the boardroom, under new Government proposals announced to mark International Women's Day. The Financial Reporting Council has been asked to consider including a new principle in its code of conduct requiring firms to report on actions to increase the number of women in senior management positions. This move comes as the Government Equalities Office publishes new research showing that 60% of British people think there are not enough women in big business. Of the 1,071 people surveyed, a clear majority believe that balanced boards will make better decisions, understand customers better, and make the most of the business talent available in the country. 50% also believe that there will be equal numbers of men and women in UK boardrooms within the next 20 years. However, research has suggested that at the current rate of progress it will take 60 years for women to gain equal representation on the boards of the top 100 companies. The proposed changes to the UK Corporate Governance Code to promote diversity would build on measures included in the Equality Bill which allow employers to take positive action to balance their workforce. However, Government has indicated that if these new moves fail to quicken the pace of change, further actions will be considered. Read more at

http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/100311_Report_representation_FINAL.pdf