

Ahead of International Women's Day, global leader in IT professional resourcing, Experis (part of ManpowerGroup), has some new data to share regarding female representation in STEM roles around the UK.

While some progress is being made by IT businesses in the area of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) strategies across what many still consider to be a male-dominated sector, new data reveals more work still needs to be done.

The below findings are from a survey of more than 2,000 UK businesses:

Women in STEM roles: Latest UK Snapshot

- More than a third (37%) of UK businesses claim that they are on track (24%), or have beaten expectations (13%), when it comes to increasing the number of women in STEM roles.
- One-in-five UK businesses (19%), however, still have not set any initiatives to increase women candidates in STEM roles, while more than a quarter (28%) of recent survey respondents say they have either made slow (16%) or very little (12%) progress in this area.
- Increased gender representation is very important, though, as a recent McKinsey report indicates that companies with high levels of diversity are 39% more likely to out-perform their peers.
- Survey respondents have indicated that Top 5 most effective structures and benefits for more equitable recruitment of all genders includes: (1) Supporting employee wellbeing; (2) Building trusting relationships with teams; (3) Creating equal opportunities for career development and progression; (4) Recognising employees for contributing to a positive workplace culture; and (5) Mentoring/guiding employees across differing working models.
- Given that the majority of ManpowerGroup UK survey respondents (64%) also feel that technology is making their organisation more flexible and helping to promote more gender equality, it is hoped that the IT sector can take a more holistic look at its recruitment, talent retention and career development strategies for the benefit of everyone across the gender spectrum.

UK Diversity & Inclusion 'Snapshot': Progress is slow, but optimism also evident

- Whilst only **34%** of survey respondents believe their organisations are on-track for increasing the number of women in top management roles, over half (**58%**) are indicating that Diversity & Inclusion strategies are now a HR priority and **44%** optimistically believe that full gender equality will be achieved within the next two years
 - The sectors which have the strongest sentiment in terms of believing their organisations are on-track for increasing the number of women in top management roles are - Finance & Real Estate (**44%**), Healthcare & Life Sciences (**39%**), Transport, Logistics & Automotive (**35%**)

- Regional variances are also evident, with the West Midlands (**40%**), North West (**39%**) and London (**37%**) all higher than the **34%** national average above

Technology is seen as a positive change catalyst...

- **64%** of respondents believe that technology is helping make their organisations more flexible, promoting more gender equality
- Close to half (**44%**) observe that AI is helping to recruit the best candidates, regardless of gender
- **62%** indicated that qualified candidates for IT roles are becoming more gender diverse – working of a low base, admittedly, but good news for a sector which has long had a male-dominated stereotype

More Equitable Recruitment: The Top 5 structures & benefits having the greatest impact...

- Over half of survey respondents indicated that these structures and benefits are proving to be the most effective when it comes to more equitably recruiting all genders: (1) Supporting employee wellbeing; (2) Building trusting relationships with teams; (3) Creating equal opportunities for career development and progression; (4) Recognising employees for contributing to a positive workplace culture; and (5) Mentoring/guiding employees across differing working models.

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