[News story: Business Minister Margot James urges FTSE 350 firms to improve gender transparency](#)

Business Minister Margot James is urging chief executives of FTSE 350 companies to be transparent about the number of women in their leadership positions and hand over data to independent reviewers on increasing female representation in business.

It comes after the leaders of an independent review into increasing female representation in the senior ranks of the UK's largest businesses wrote to FTSE 350 companies requesting their latest data for the number of men and women in the executive pipeline.

In November 2016, Sir Philip Hampton, Chairman of GlaxoSmithKline, and Dame Helen Alexander, Chair of UBM, who are chairing the review, set a voluntary target for FTSE 100 companies to increase the proportion of women sitting on executive committees and their direct reports to 33% by 2020. Statistics published at the time showed just 25% of those positions were occupied by women.

The latest statistics on gender representation at the top of business are expected to be published later this year.

Business Minister Margot James said:

> Businesses have already made great strides over the last six years by more than doubling the number of women in board positions.
>
> But our largest businesses must continue to grasp the nettle which is why today I am urging CEOs of FTSE 350 companies to help drive the agenda for greater inclusivity in the workplace by becoming more transparent about the gender makeup of their leadership teams.

Sir Philip Hampton and Dame Helen Alexander said:

> We look forward to receiving the data from FTSE 350 companies on the gender representation at Executive Committee and Direct Reports over the summer and will be compiling our report on progress and the sharing of best practice for publication later this year.
>
> We anticipate the majority of companies will have robust action plans in place now to address any shortfall of women in their top teams, and welcome efforts from all companies to improve the gender

balance, particularly those companies yet to meet the 33% target.

In the coming months, Business Minister Margot James is expected to chair the first ever meeting of the Business Diversity and Inclusion Group, set up to make sure government and industry work more closely to remove barriers in the workplace.

The group will bring together the leaders of four industry-led diversity reviews:

- Sir Philip Hampton and Dame Helen Alexander
- Baroness McGregor-Smith, who led a review into BME participation and progression in the workplace
- Sir John Parker, who is leading a review into diversity on boards
- Jayne-Anne Gadhia, Government champion for women in finance

Separately, on 6 April 2017 legislation came into effect, requiring employers with more than 250 staff to publish their gender pay gaps. They must publish the following figures on their own website and on a government website:

- Gender pay gap (mean and median averages)
- Gender bonus gap (mean and median averages)
- Proportion of men and women receiving bonuses
- Proportion of men and women in each quartile of the organisation's pay structure

Notes to editors

1. The Hampton-Alexander Review was published in November 2016. The key recommendations were:
   - 33% target for FTSE 350 Boards by the end of 2020
   - 33% target for FTSE 100 Executive Committees and Direct Reports to the Executive Committee on a combined basis by 2020
   - FTSE 350 companies to increase number of women roles of Chair, Senior Independent Director and into Executive Director positions on their boards.
2. The Government has invited the following individuals and organisations to be founder members of the Business Diversity and Inclusion Group, which will meet quarterly:
   - Sir Philip Hampton and Dame Helen Alexander
   - Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith
   - Sir John Parker
   - Jayne-Anne Gadhia
   - Confederation of British Industry
   - Institute of Directors
   - BITC
   - Financial Reporting Council
   - Equality and Human Rights Commission