

Women in Boards of Directors and Executive Boards of medium-sized companies: Solutions for sustainable promotion

The Federal Office for Gender Equality supports the project with financial aid under the Gender Equality Act.

Project background

Taking on board mandates and business performance functions is still particularly challenging for women. Greater diversity in the composition of the board of directors and executive board would also be beneficial for companies.

The professionalism of the approach to filling mandates, but also the diversity of possible candidates, currently varies considerably. Depending on the ownership, structures, governance, sector or size of the company, the search for candidates is carried out by using the immediate personal network or consultants.

Already changing the access to competent candidates would in many cases increase the amount of options and, together with an appropriate selection, make better use of available women's potential.

The aim of our project is to further professionalise the appointment of women to boards of directors and to simplify (new) ways for women to join boards.

In a first step, we interviewed the players involved in filling board and management mandates and used the results to establish reference networks of existing appointment practices.

In the second step, we want to use software to map the existing networks of "young" women board members and of women who are currently seeking their first mandate.

As a result of the project, alternative profiles for board mandates as well as an offer for the analysis and targeted optimisation of candidates' networks will be developed.

Project participants



Prof. Dr. Sibylle Olbert-Bock – Project leader - Competence Centre Leadership and Human Resource Management of the IQB-OST Institute
sibylle.olbert@ost.ch



Dr. oec. Nicole Bischof, Competence Centre Leadership and Human Resource Management of the IQB-OST Institute



Rosella Toscano-Ruffilli, lic.oec./dipl.Hdl.HSG, Lecturer in the Department of Economics OST. Project manager at Dr. Pius Küng & Partner



Astrid Ottiger, external project collaborator
Group Head of Human Resources at RONDO Burgdorf AG



Bernhard Oberholzer, Research associate at the IQB-OST Institute

Sounding Board



Yosra Tekaya, Director of Operations LHH Schweiz. Expert in Transformation, Leadership, Recruiting, Diversity & Inclusion.



Dominic Lüthi, Founder of the first digital mediation platform for boards of directors and advisory boards (f/m) in Switzerland. Lecturer in the course "Certified Board Member SAQ" of AKAD Business.



Dr. iur. Marcel Würmli, Managing owner of Hermes Personalberatung & Executive Search AG and NachfolgeTeam AG.
Board member of Kraemer, Schwab & Co. AG and Vanmilia AG. Lecturer in Private Law and President HSG LAW University of St. Gallen.