



International Women's Day 2012 update

Who runs Wales?

The journey towards gender equality



Comisiwn
Cydraddoldeb a
Hawliau Dynol

Equality and
Human Rights
Commission

International Women’s Day

The International Conference of Working Women in 1910 voted on a proposal to create an International Women’s Day.

This suggested that every year there should be a global celebration to pay tribute to the role of women in society and push for further social change, including getting more women into public office. The Conference, made up of over 100 women from 17 different countries, unanimously agreed the proposal and International Women’s Day was born.

The first International Women’s Day took place in 1911. Meetings were held across the world and the largest street demonstration was made up of 30,000 women. Every year since 1911 there have been celebrations across the world.

This year, events will be held in Thailand, Zambia, Barbados and many other places around the world to celebrate the achievements of women and aimed at getting more women into positions of power and influence.

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Front cover images

Welsh suffragettes marching on London in 1911.

The National Assembly celebrates gender equality in 2003.

The unfinished journey: getting women to the top in Wales

In this report, we mark some of the steps taken since 1911 towards getting women into positions of power and influence. And we assess how far we still have to go in Wales towards achieving gender balance at the decision-making tables in Wales.

The National Assembly led the way with a world-first perfect gender balance in 2003. This sets a benchmark for fairness.

However, the stark facts show that overall progress is far too slow. Wales remains a country where those taking the big decisions that impact on all of our lives are overwhelmingly men.

Some of the results are startling. Only one of our 22 Council leaders is a woman. There have only ever been thirteen female MPs from Wales since the 'Act of Union' between England and Wales in 1536. Our 2011 survey of 50 top Welsh companies found only two female chief executives.

These figures aren't just about a lack of women in decision-making positions.

They highlight a much wider failure to ensure the people in our corridors of power reflect the breadth of society and include people from under-represented groups, such as ethnic minority and disabled people.

This matters because personal experience plays an important part in the decisions people take and the priorities they set. So if those making the decisions are drawn from a narrow section of society, most people's needs will be overlooked.

Our research shows that good intentions are not enough. We need to take urgent action across all areas of life. If we don't, it will be over another 100 years before our leaders represent the diversity of our country.

By publishing these statistics, we are highlighting the need for change and we look forward to working with you in transforming the top tables in Wales.



Ann Beynon, Commissioner for Wales

Kate Bennett, National Director for Wales

Introduction

This report has been updated for International Women's Day events in 2012. Where possible, the statistics reflect changes that have occurred at the most senior positions in Wales over the past twelve months.

Where new data isn't readily available, the charts show the 2011 position. We will publish a thorough update following the 2012 local elections in Wales.

The report provides a snapshot of who sits in positions of power and influence in Welsh life. It looks at our politicians, chief executives and business leaders to see whether they reflect the people they serve.

Politics and the private sector are two of the most pressing areas of concern. This issue of *Who Runs Wales?* has a particular focus on these areas.

In terms of politics, we have fewer women MPs than before the 2010 general election. And there was a decline in the number of women Assembly Members following the 2011 elections. So effective use of legislative levers to increase opportunities for people from under-represented groups to enter politics is essential.

In 2011, Lord Davies of Abersoch published a report into the gender imbalance in private sector boardrooms. We hope the momentum this report has created leads to businesses introducing clear, practical measures to increase the number of women on our boards.

This report sets out the reasons why this issue matters and suggests some steps that can be taken.

Why we need more representative decision-making

Evidence shows there are many good reasons why we need our decision-makers to come from more diverse backgrounds, including:

- Greater diversity at top tables leads to different issues being put on the agenda and discussed at meetings
- Decisions are more likely to take account of different viewpoints which leads to more responsive services and better business practice
- Leaders lack legitimacy if they only reflect part of the population
- Diversity helps organisations to be in tune with the people they serve
- Government, businesses and other organisations are missing out on a huge pool of talent by having so many leaders from similar backgrounds

In private sector boardrooms

“It is shocking that almost half of the FTSE 250 businesses do not even have a female board member...for real progress the whole of the corporate sector, government and the head-hunting industry must come together and get behind this.”

Lord Davies of Abersoch, who led a review on behalf of Government into the obstacles that prevent women reaching senior positions in business.

Our report highlights the minimal presence of women in senior positions in the private sector in Wales. Our 2011 survey of 50 top Welsh companies found only two women in the most senior position. This figure points to the overwhelming barriers that women still face in the world of business.

From a business perspective, it clearly pays to understand customer requirements and to ensure that shareholders feel every avenue has been explored to bring talent and creativity into the business.

In 2011, the Commission jointly-hosted an event with the CBI to hear Lord Davies outline why this issue matters and to discuss what action can be taken to ensure our private sector boardrooms are taking advantage of the full pool of talent available in Wales.

As CBI Deputy President Helen Alexander has said, business needs fresh approaches and different outlooks if it is to thrive in an increasingly challenging and competitive future. Greater gender diversity will help to achieve exactly that.

● Female
● Male

Chief executives of 50 top Welsh companies



The World of Welsh politics

In 1929 Megan Lloyd George became the first female MP in Wales. It has been slow progress since then – Wales has only ever had 13 female MPs.

Wales now has its first ever female Secretary of State, Cheryl Gillan. However, overall the picture isn't improving. The 2010 general election saw a disappointing drop in the number of women MPs in Wales from eight to seven. And the National Assembly elections in May 2011 saw a concerning drop from 48% to 42% women Members.

Rosemary Butler is the Assembly's first female Presiding Officer and Kirsty Williams is the first female leader of a party at the National Assembly.

Our findings present a clear challenge to every political party – to identify and implement the best methods for increasing the number of women representatives.

In local government, we found only one female Council Leader, and only 25% of councillors in Wales are women. We hope to see improvements following the 2012 council elections.

Our elected representatives in Wales

● Female
● Male

Welsh Government Cabinet

33%

67%

National Assembly for Wales Members

42%

58%

Members of Parliament

18%

82%

Members of European Parliament

50%

50%

Council Leaders

5%

95%

Councillors

25%

75%

The importance of special measures

There have only ever been thirteen female MPs from Wales since the 'Act of Union' between England and Wales in 1536. Seven of these were selected by all-women shortlists.

It is only because the Labour Party used all-women shortlists that Wales has had even this many female MPs. The Conservatives and Plaid Cymru have never had a woman MP in Wales.

This shows that special measures are crucial to getting women selected as candidates and elected to Parliament.

New legislation gives parties the opportunity to use all-women shortlists until 2030. Parties need to take advantage of this if Wales is to achieve fair gender representation.

The chart below shows how crucial all-women shortlists have been to securing women MPs in Wales.

Women MPs in Wales since 1536

Name	Political Party	Date
Megan Lloyd George	Liberal Labour	1929 - 1951 1957 - 1966
Dorothy M. Rees	Labour	1950 - 1951
Eirene White	Labour	1950 - 1970
Ann Clwyd	Labour	1984 - present
Jackie Lawrence	Labour	1997 - 2005
Julie Morgan	Labour	1997 - 2010
Betty Williams	Labour	1997 - 2010
Jessica Morden	Labour	2005 - present
Sian James	Labour	2005 - present
Nia Griffith	Labour	2005 - present
Madeleine Moon	Labour	2005 - present
Jenny Willott	Liberal Democrats	2005 - present
Susan Elan Jones	Labour	2010 - present

Key: Red - selected by all-women shortlists

Progress remains too slow

Our report shows that some significant female appointments have been made in Wales in recent times. However, overall progress remains far too slow, and in many areas we are going backwards.

Wales now has its first ever female vice chancellors: Julie Lydon at the University of Glamorgan and April McMahon at Aberystwyth University. But this still amounts to only 20%.

The percentage of women chief executives of local authorities has risen from 9% in 2006 to 23% in the present day.

Following Barbara Wilding's retirement in 2009, Wales had no female chief constables. But this figure rose back up to one when Carmel Napier became Chief Constable at Gwent Police in 2011.

Only one of the ten Welsh Government sponsored bodies we surveyed has a female chief executive.

Women make up 75% of our teachers, yet only 32% of our secondary school headteachers are female. Only 0.3% of registered teachers have declared that they have a disability.

In the NHS, women make up 75% of the workforce. Women are in charge at three of our seven Local Health Boards. Our three NHS Trusts are currently all led by men.

We found only two female editors at the newspapers we surveyed in 2011.

These statistics show that Wales is missing out on a pool of talent and the potential for more effective decision making during an economic downturn when we can least afford it. Together we can change that.

The gender balance in Wales

● Female
● Male

Welsh Government Civil Servants

Board members

27%

73%

All Welsh Government staff

58%

42%

Welsh Government sponsored bodies

Chief executives of sponsored bodies

10%

90%

Board members of sponsored bodies

31%

69%

Police

Police Authority Chairs in Wales

50%

50%

Chief Constables in Wales

25%

75%

All Police Officers in Wales

26%

74%



Local Authorities

Local government chief executives



All staff in local authorities



Education

University vice-chancellors



Heads of further education colleges



Secondary school headteachers



Headteachers



All teachers





Health

Chief executives of NHS Health Boards and Trusts



All NHS Staff



Media

Senior management teams at major broadcasters



Editors of daily and national weekly newspapers



Trade Unions

Wales TUC Executive Committee



Wales TUC Annual Conference delegates



The Equality and Human Rights Commission aims to reduce inequality, eliminate discrimination, strengthen good relations between people, and promote and protect human rights.

This report and more information about us can be found at

www.equalityhumanrights.com/wales

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Sources

Our data was obtained in February 2011. Where new statistics are readily available (as indicated below), updated figures have been included in this 2012 edition.

Private sector

Western Mail Top 300

Wales Yearbook 2010

Direct enquiries

Our elected representatives (Feb 2012)

UK Parliament website

Local authorities in Wales websites

National Assembly for Wales website

Welsh Government website

European Parliament website

Local authorities and education (Feb 2012 except colleges)

Local authorities in Wales websites

General Teaching Council for Wales

College websites

Civil servants, sponsored bodies and police (Feb 2012, except for sponsored body board members and all police officers)

Welsh Assembly Government website

Sponsored body websites

Police authority and force websites

Health, media and trade unions (Feb 2012 except Wales TUC conference delegates)

NHS websites

Direct enquiries

Wales Yearbook 2011