



Closing the Gender Leadership Gap: Benchmarking Women's Leadership Across the Commonwealth



Executive Summary

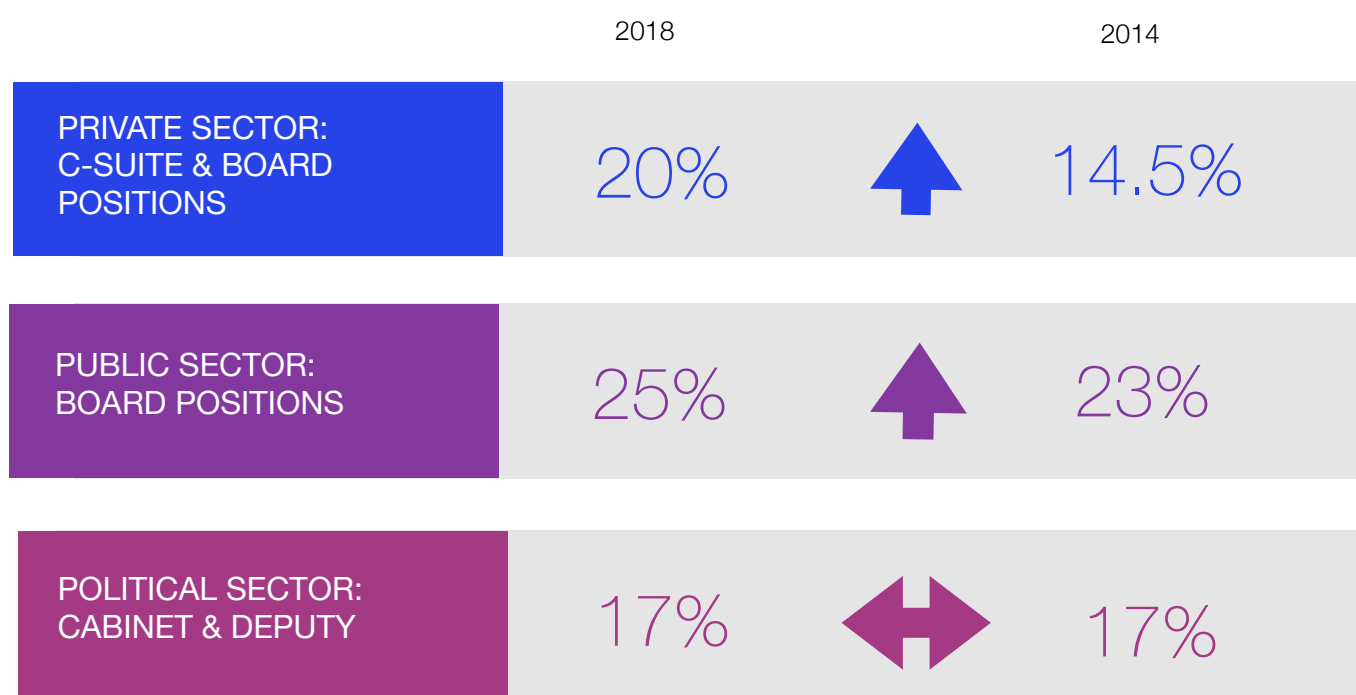
The Gender Leadership Gap Commonwealth Report commissioned for the Heads of Government Summit in 2018 identifies gaps in leadership opportunities for women based on organisations achieving the minimum benchmark of 30% female representation. The report presents the 2nd benchmarking report on women in leadership roles in the Private, Public and Political sectors across the Commonwealth Countries. Baroness Scotland, the Secretary General, has called for 50:50 male: female economic participation by 2030. Full and equal participation of both genders requires women to be decision-makers at the highest levels of policy, business and society.

The data presented in this report identifies what progress has been made since the inaugural

benchmarking report in 2015**. The report identifies which countries have made significant progress in achieving more women holding leadership positions and where there has been minimal or negative movement. We are presenting the data in a different format, identifying the Gender Leadership Gaps in each country and across sectors. This approach is aligned with the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report (2017) and allows a comparable approach to data to ensure greater tracking and transparency.

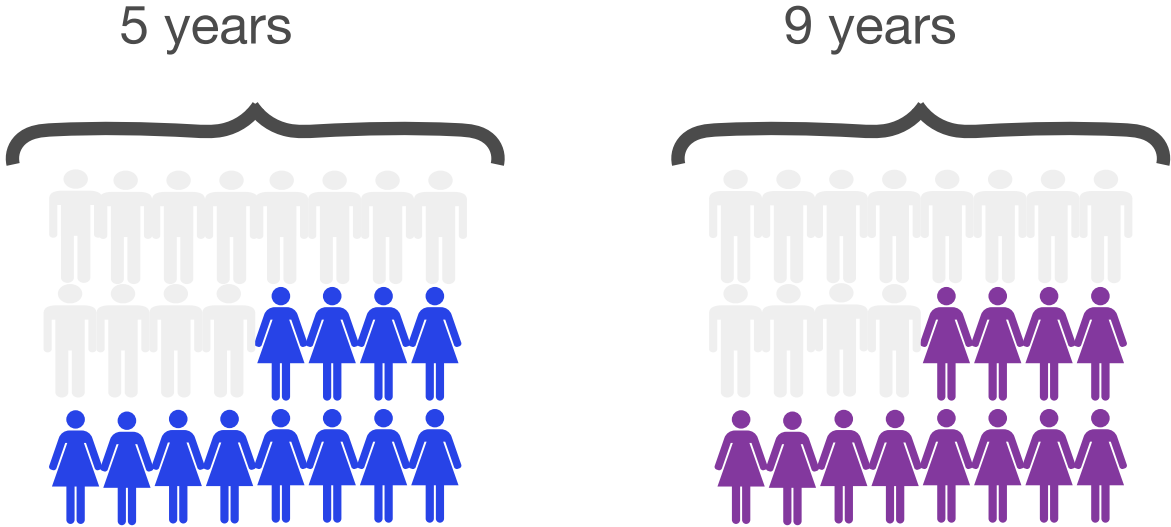
The rate of progress varies considerable across the sectors

Key findings across the Commonwealth – the current status of women in leadership



The rate of progress has been mixed. Political leadership has remained the same, although there will be variations within each country. Private and public sectors has seen marginal increases in the number of women holding leadership roles.

Overall rate of growth to achieve gender parity



Private sector

The rate of growth is 37.7%, if this momentum is maintained it will take 5 years to reach 50% women in leadership roles.

Public Sector

The rate of growth is 4.4%, with this rate of momentum it will take 9 years to reach 50% women in leadership roles.

Political sector: No change overall since 2015

The private sector has achieved strong growth over the last two years due to specific interventions and goals set within sectors and by global companies. If this rate of targeted growth were to continue the overall trend across the Commonwealth States the private sector would reach 50% gender leadership parity in 5 years.

The public sector has had a stronger starting point but a more modest rate of growth and a greater fragmentation across regions in terms of goals set for women in leadership. With the current growth rate projections, it would take 9 years for the Commonwealth average to reach 50% of public sector positions being held by women.

Disappointingly with no growth recorded in the political sector, progress has stalled at 17%.

Political sector leadership is the most susceptible to change based on the culture of the government as illustrated by dramatic shifts in countries following elections. The swings in political leadership demonstrate that a great deal more work is required to ensure balanced gender leadership is normalised in this sector.

Trends

PRIVATE SECTOR: CORRELATION BOARDS & C-SUITE

In the private sector two of the smallest states; Samoa and Antigua & Barbuda have reached the 50% benchmark for women in leadership. Four more countries have between 30 – 46% private sector leadership roles held by women.

PUBLIC SECTOR

The overall lack of momentum masks a great deal of turbulence in this sector. Canada has made great strides with a growth rate of 34% achieving 52% gender balance in political leadership positions. Nine other countries have reached the 30% benchmark of political leadership positions held by women. At the other extreme ten African countries have experienced a decline in women holding leadership positions, the largest being Uganda with a 34% drop.

POLITICAL SECTOR

Canada has reached 50% gender balance for women in political leadership with nine other countries reaching 30 – 47% female representation in political leadership.

A note on quotas: the application of quotas across the Commonwealth varies from legally enforceable quotas to voluntary targets to no specific goals in place. Targets and quotas also vary across different sectors and industries. Analysis of the data does not indicate a correlation between the number of women in leadership roles and the presence of quotas.

Indeed some countries with legally enforced quotas that have been in place for a while demonstrate a decrease in women holding leadership positions; India (private sector), Tanzania (public sector) Botswana (Private sector).

Recommendations

MEASUREMENT

Incorporate measures and ways of tracking progress aligned with a plan, with opportunities to collate and review data on a regular basis.

01

ACCOUNTABILITY

Identify key individuals who are accountable for gender leadership progress – both within governments and within organisations.

02

VISIBILITY

Building strong relationships with key business media to provide a platform for gender leadership in each country and region.

03

Presenting the Data



For the private sector in each country, the largest stock market has been included in the data, for the UK this means the FTSE 100 has been included. The same banding approach has been adopted for public sector boards and political leadership roles. The gender leadership gap measures the opportunity for boards to be gender balanced, i.e. what further effort needs to happen for that board to be gender balanced (50:50). Whilst we acknowledge different countries may have national targets or quotas in place we are applying 50% gender balance as the aim in this report.

In each sector, each country is ranked according to the ranking by attainment gap (RAG), the lower the

gender gap in each section the higher the ranking of the country.

The data was collected between October 2017 and January 2018. Since that time changes in leadership positions due to elections or recruitment will not be reflected in the data.

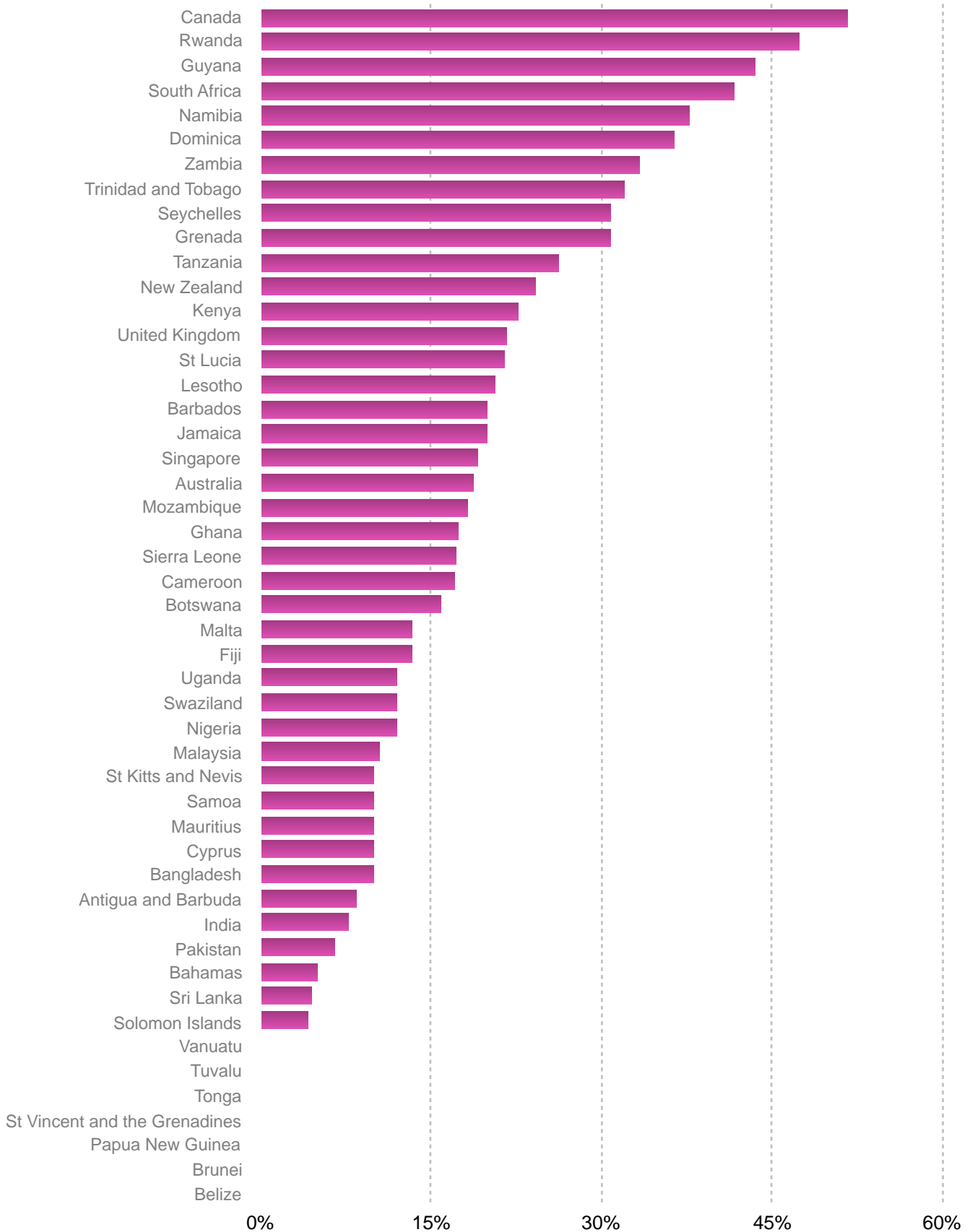
The data was collected from primary sources and cross-checked. Public sector data was supplied to countries for verification.

In cases where data is missing for specific countries, countries were requested to submit data but were unable to do so in the time-period.



Political Sector

Ranking of countries for % of Political Sector Leadership Positions held by Women





The data for women in political sector leadership measures the percentage of Cabinet and Deputy Cabinet positions held by women.

The average percentage of senior political leadership positions held by women across the Commonwealth States is 17%.

10 of the Commonwealth countries have reached the 30% benchmark of senior leadership positions held by women; Canada is at the helm with 51.7%. Nine other countries have reached the 30% benchmark of political leadership positions held by women; Rwanda, Guyana, South Africa, Namibia, Dominica, Zambia, Trinidad & Tobago, Seychelles and Grenada. Although percentage figures for Australia seem low at 19% this is a result of

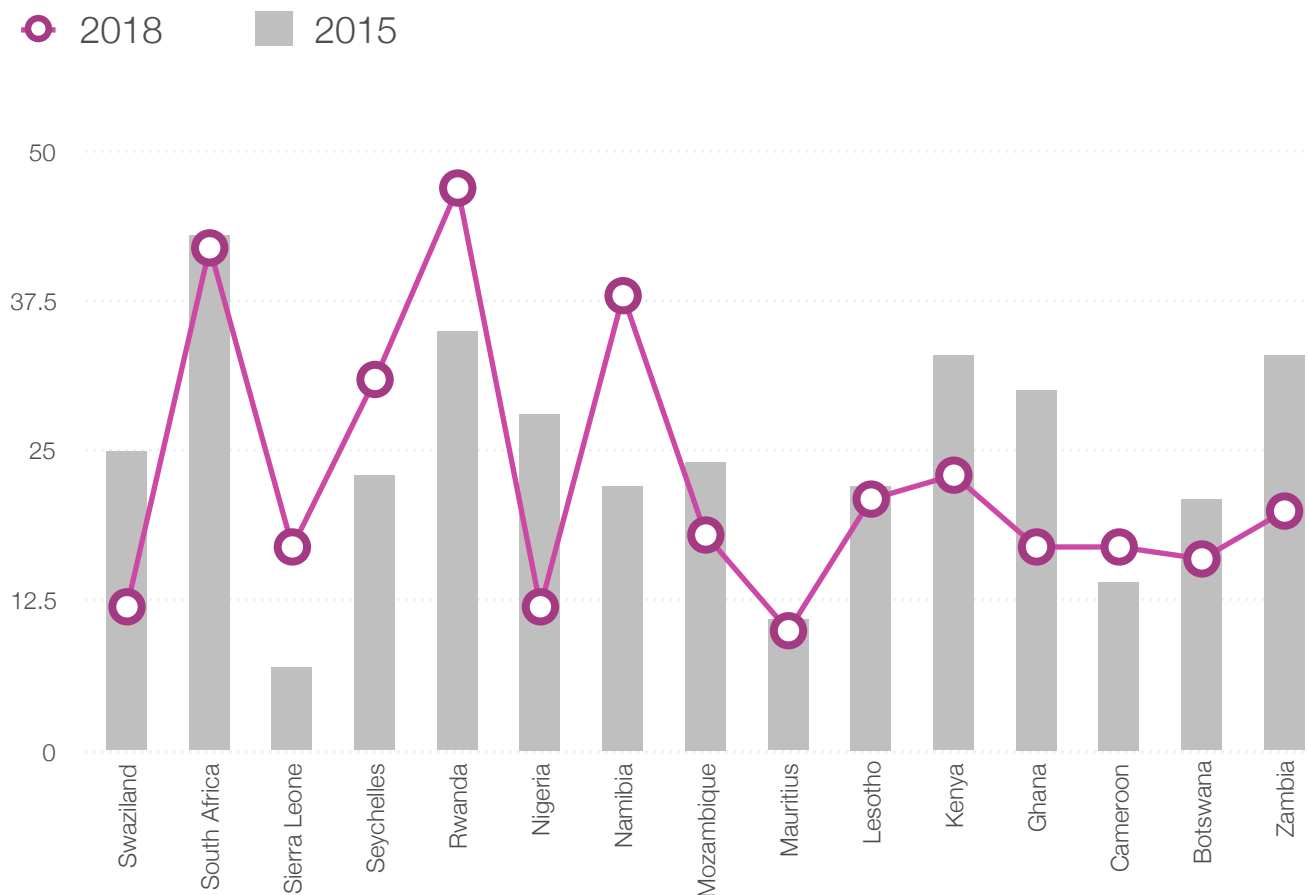
phenomenal growth with 140% increase since 2015.

At the other extreme ten African countries have experienced a decline in women holding leadership positions, with Uganda showing a 34% drop followed by Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Botswana, Tanzania, Swaziland, Lesotho, South Africa. In Asia India has experienced a dramatic decline of 70% amongst senior leadership positions.

**Brunei, Gambia, Kiribati and Nauru, did not submit data for this report.*



% of Senior Political leadership positions held by women in African Commonwealth Countries

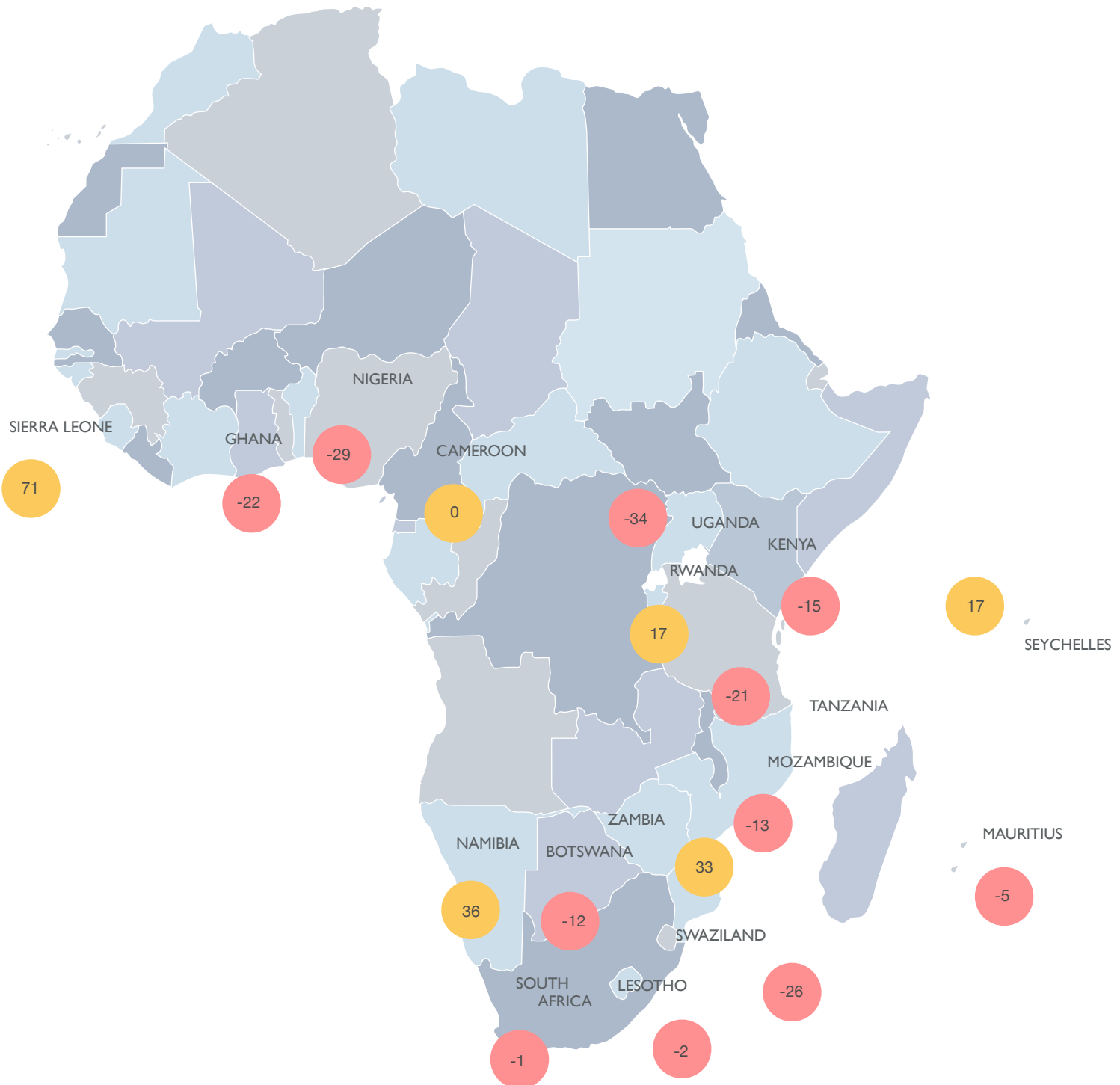


Progress since 2015 has slowed or stalled; notable exceptions are Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Cameroon and Namibia with a higher proportion of women in political leadership roles compared to 2015. Four countries have reached the 30% benchmark for women holding leadership positions. Kenya and Ghana had reached the 30% benchmark in 2015 but have declined in 2018 around the 20% level.

In terms of growth rate percentages, Sierra Leone has experienced phenomenal acceleration of 71% (increasing from 7 to 17 women in political

leadership) followed by Namibia which has the next highest rate of growth at 36%. Both of these countries do not have gender quotas in place for political leadership. In terms of decline Uganda has declined by 34% and Nigeria by 29%. General elections account for the high levels of decline in these countries. A larger number of countries experiencing higher rates of decline have gender quotas in place.

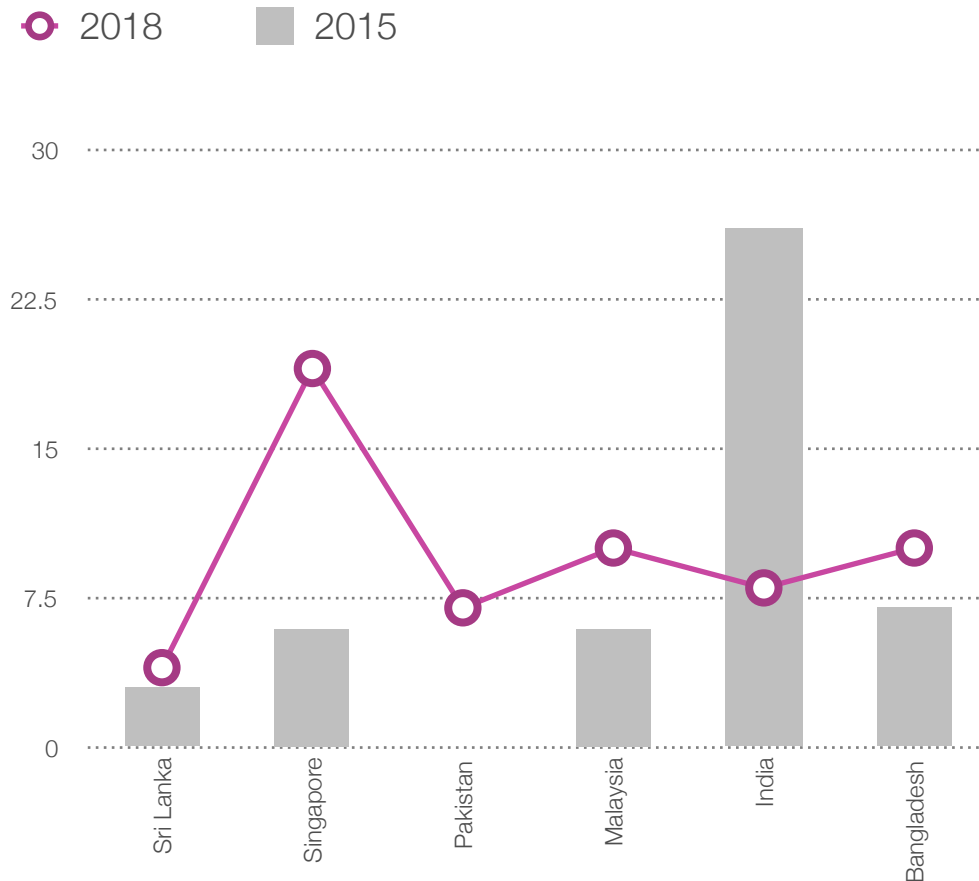
Map showing the change in % of senior political leadership positions held by women in African Commonwealth Countries



This map is not a true representation of the region. Some countries have been removed to focus in on the Commonwealth countries

Asia

% of Senior Political leadership positions held by women in Asian Commonwealth Countries

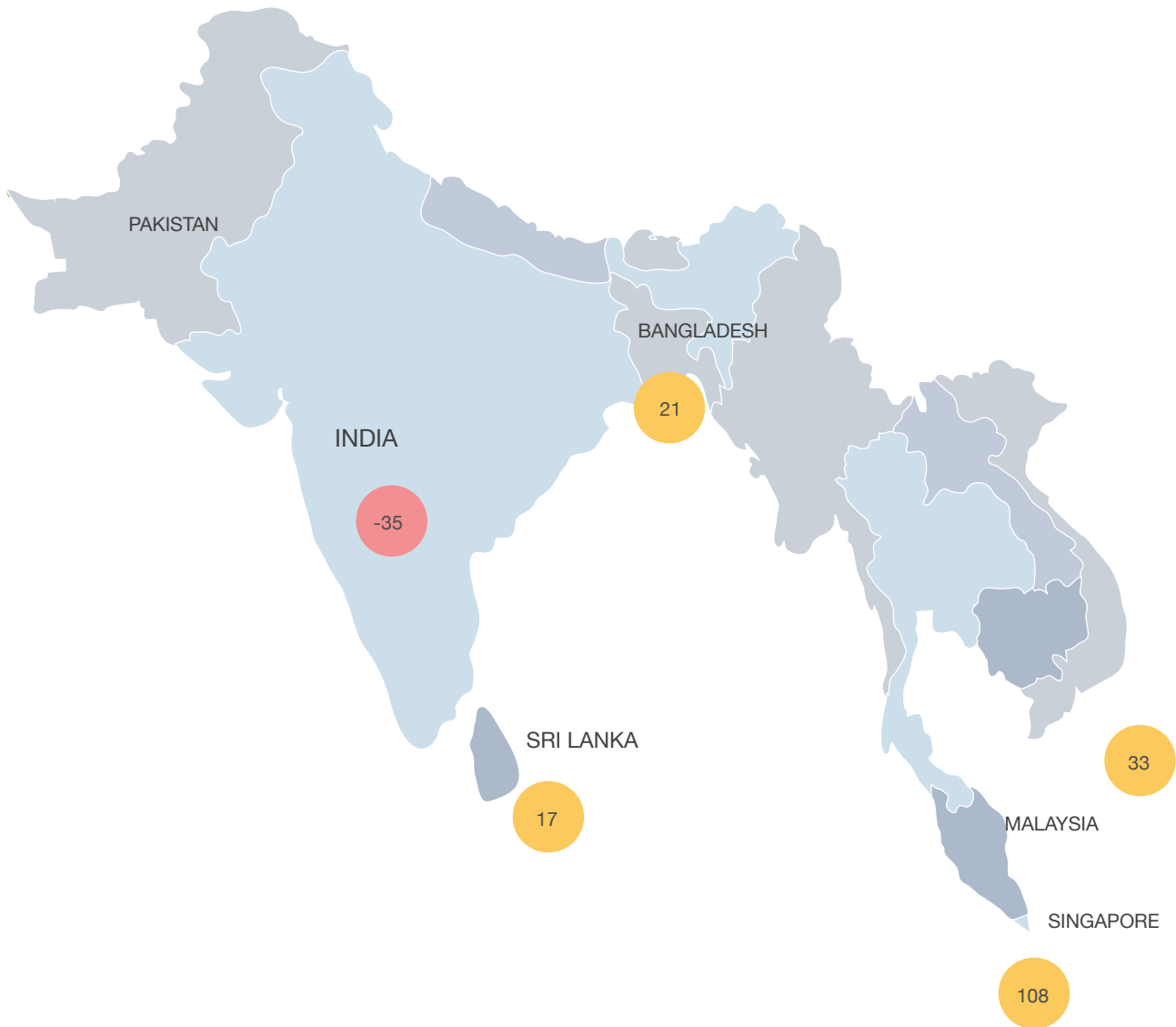


This is the first full set of data for political leadership in Asian Commonwealth countries; in 2015 the data for Pakistan was unavailable. Overall greater progress has been achieved in 2018 with Singapore tripling the percentage of women holding political leadership positions. India is the only country to have experienced a significant decline as numbers dropped from 26% to 8%. None of the countries have reached the 30% benchmark of women holding leadership positions in the political sector.

Singapore has the fastest acceleration of women into political leadership, 108%, and does not have a system for gender quotas in place for political leadership. Countries with quotas have achieved mixed results with more moderate levels for rates of growth; Bangladesh (25% increase) and Sri Lanka (17% increase) and India with a 35% decline.

**Brunei, did not submit data for this report.*

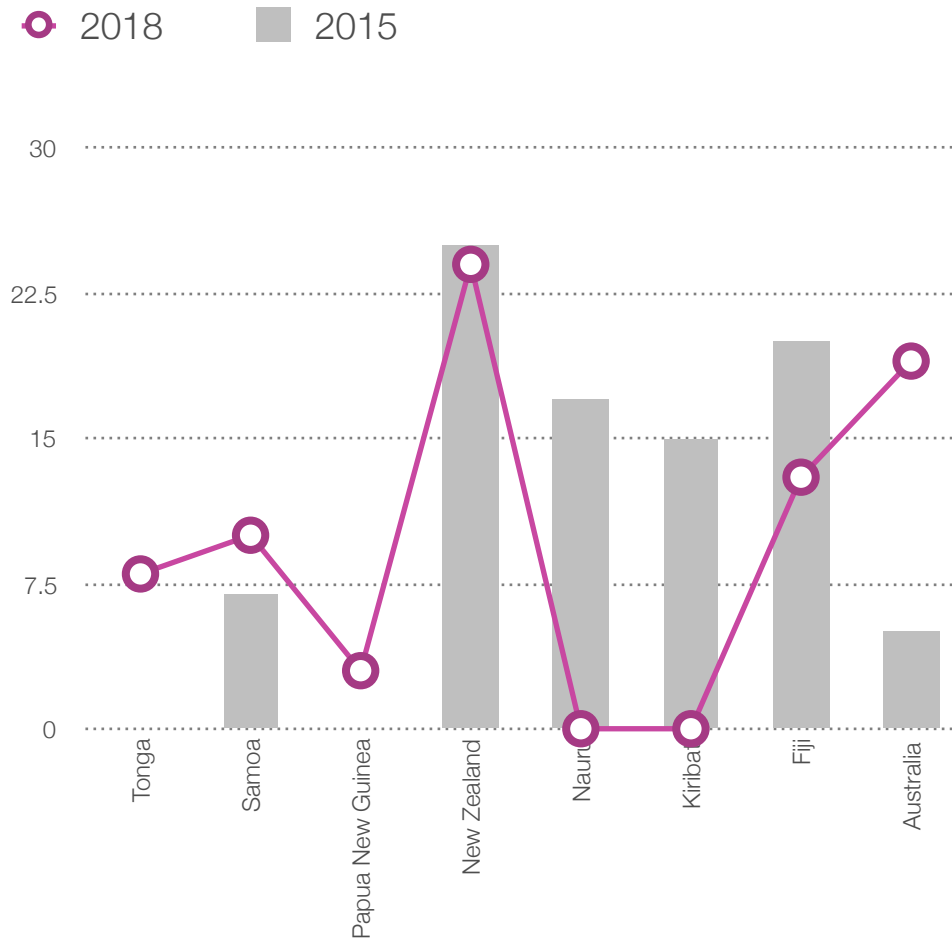
Map showing the change in % of senior political leadership positions held by women in Asian Commonwealth Countries



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Pacific Region

% of Senior Political leadership positions held by women in the Pacific Region in the Commonwealth

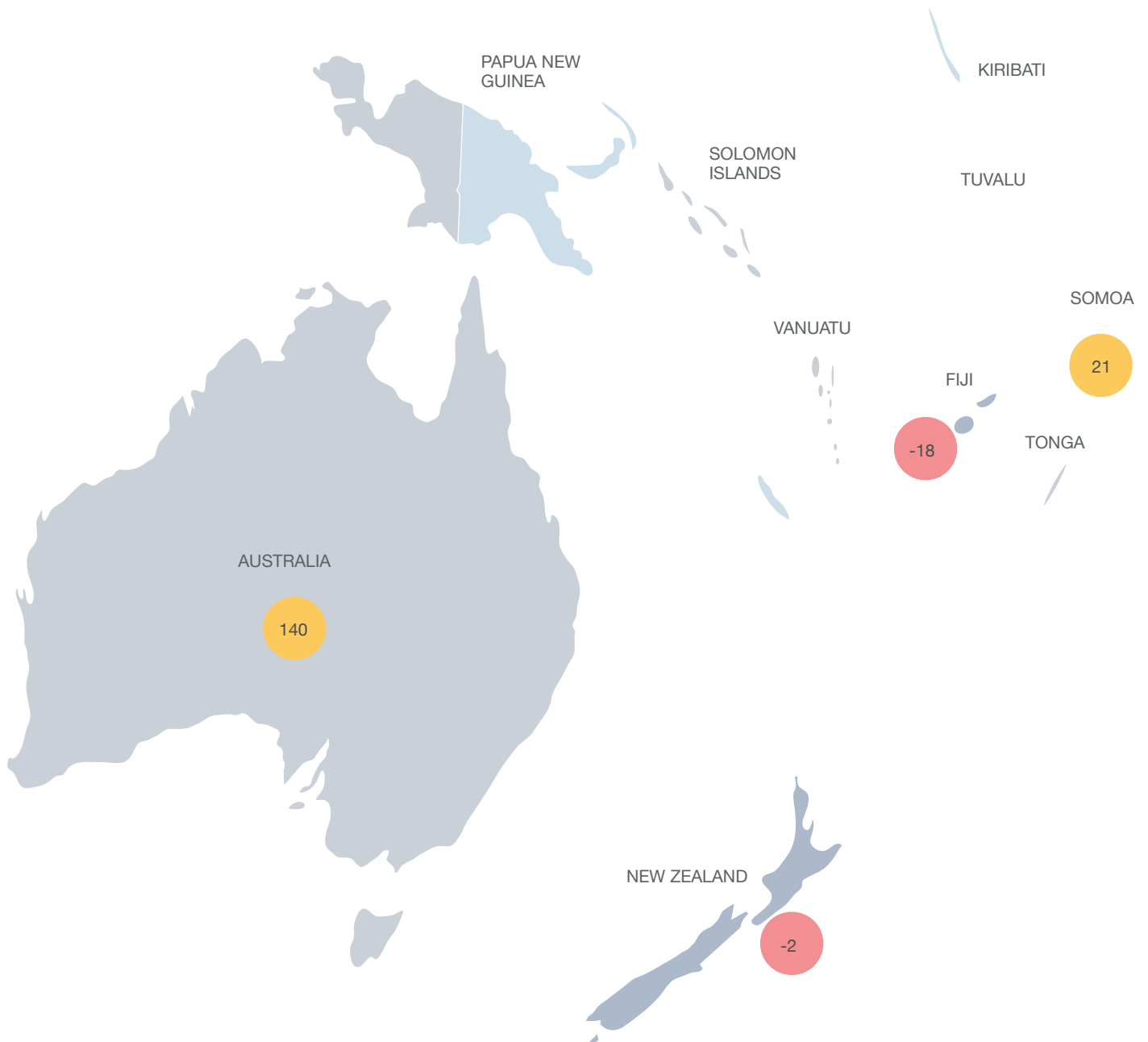


New Zealand has maintained momentum from 2015 and still has the highest number of women in political leadership roles despite a 2% drop since 2015. Australia has achieved notable progress from 5% to 19% following the 2016 election and the highest rate of acceleration (140% growth), Samoa follows with 21% growth. Fiji has

experienced an 18% decline in women holding leadership positions.

** Kiribati and Nauru, did not submit data for this report.*

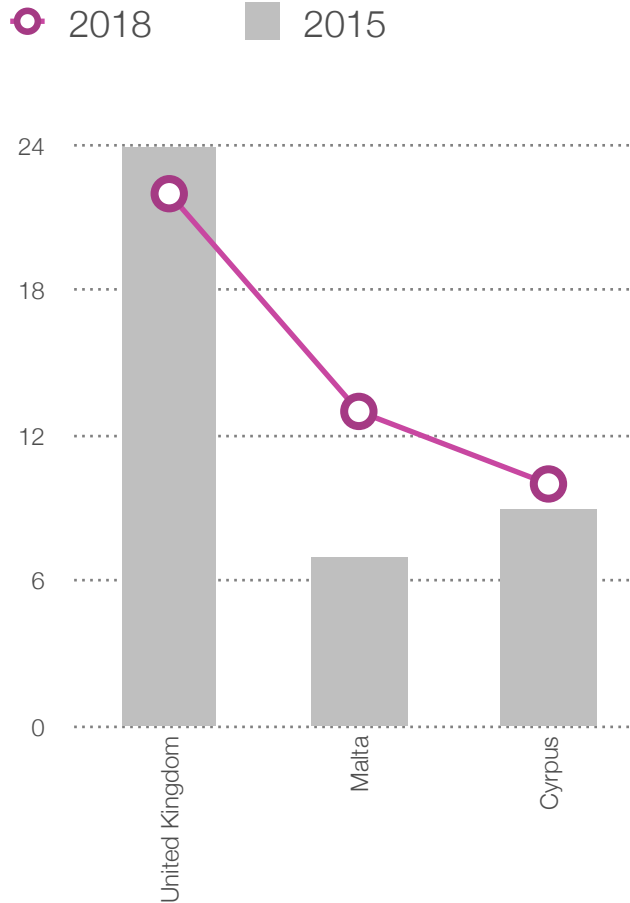
Map showing the change in % of senior political leadership positions held by women in the Pacific Region in the Commonwealth



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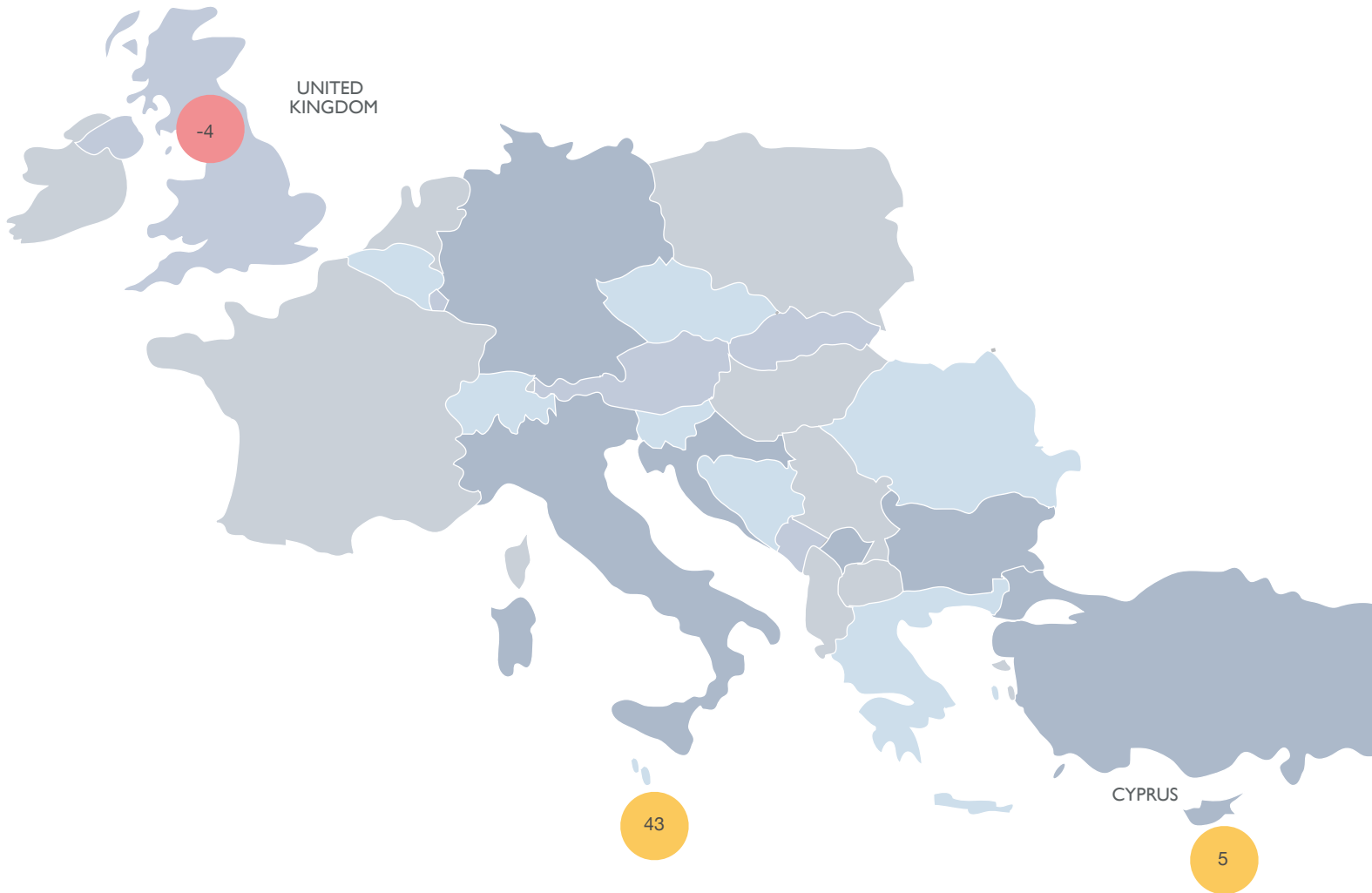
% of political leadership positions held by women in Europe



The United Kingdom has maintained momentum since 2015 with a slight drop following the 2017 election (5%). Malta has achieved a significantly strong rate of growth with 43% increase since

2015 and is considering introducing legislation for gender quotas in leadership. Cyprus has achieved a growth rate of 5% with 10% of senior political leadership roles held by women.

Map showing the change in % of senior political leadership positions held by women in the European Commonwealth Countries

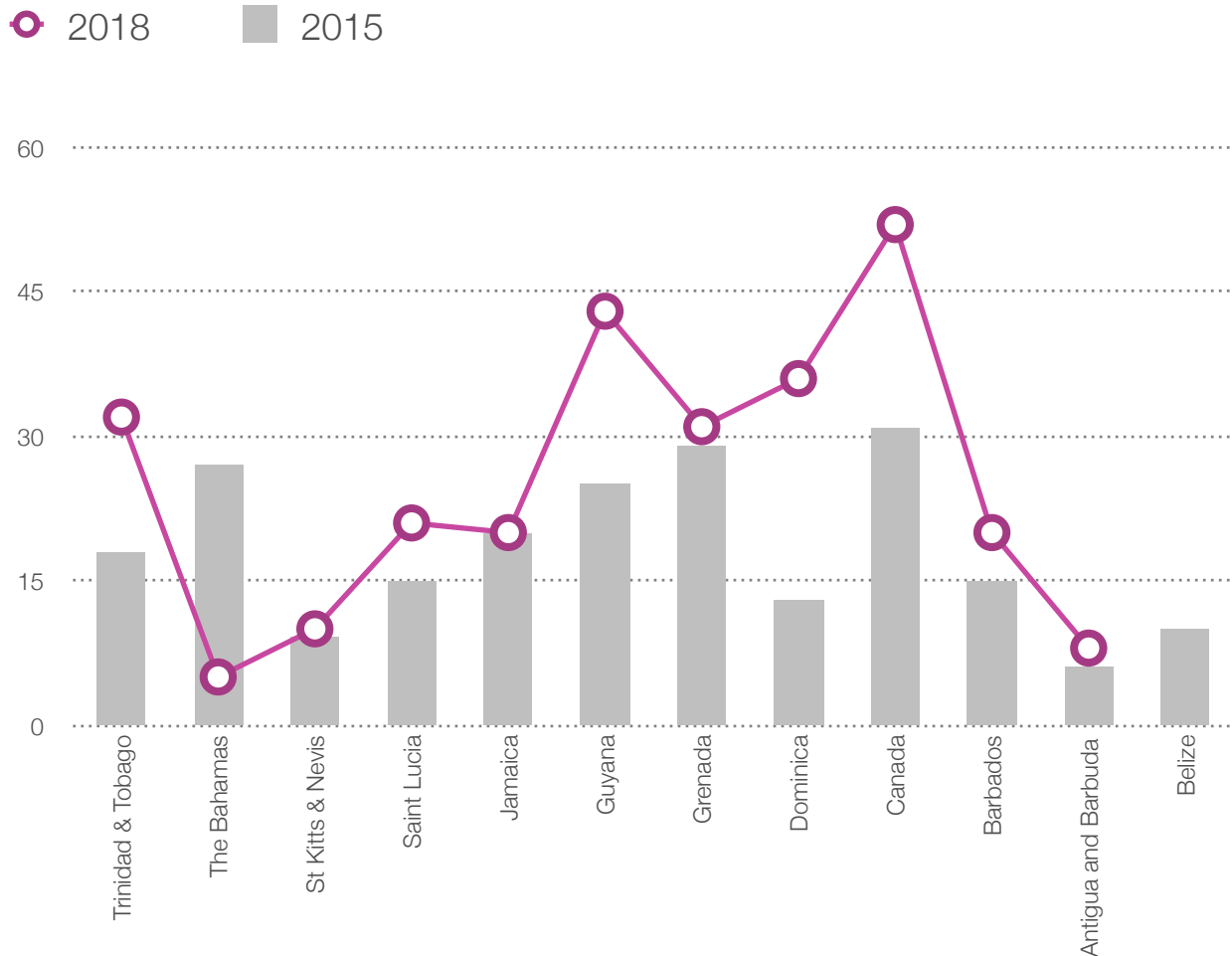


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Canada & The Caribbean

% of Senior Political leadership positions held by women in Canada and the Caribbean Islands in the Commonwealth



The progress in this region shows significant movement since 2015 with five countries having reached the benchmark of 30% women in political leadership: Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, and Canada having achieved gender balance with 52% of positions held by women. The rate of progress in this region is noticeably strong with all countries experiencing growth

except for Jamaica (no change) and The Bahamas (dropped by 41%). The rates of growth peaked at 88% for Dominica.

**Data for Belize was not submitted for this report.*

Canada & The Caribbean - political sector growth rate in %



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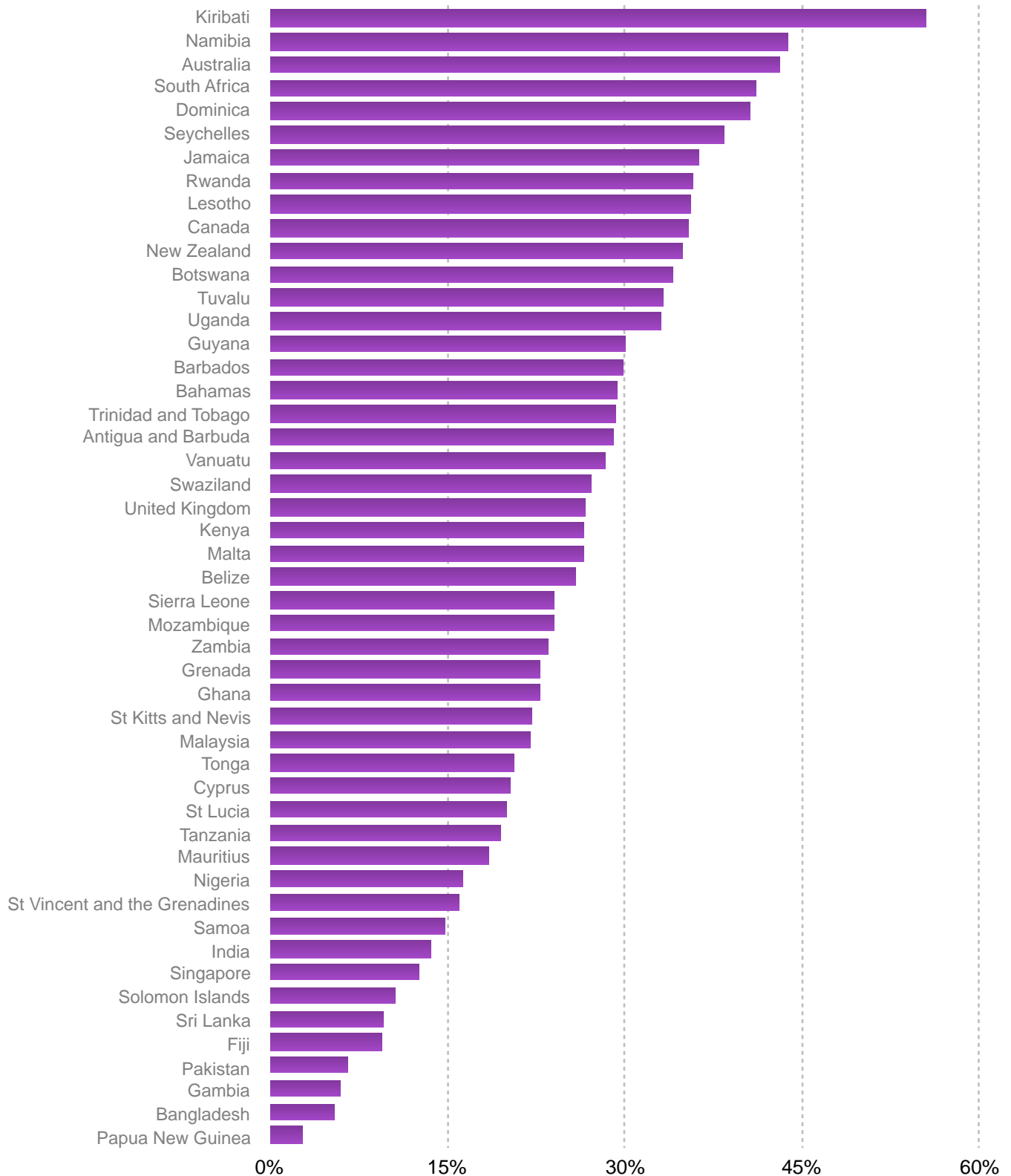
Summary of Political Leadership

Change text: Canada having achieved gender balance with 51.7 of senior political leadership positions held by women.. Three of the countries in the top five positions are African states. The countries with the lowest representation of women holding senior political leadership roles range from Papua New Guinea at 3% to three countries at 8%: Antigua & Barbuda, India and Tonga. Elections leading to changes in political leadership with different priorities for gender leadership demonstrate how results can dramatically alter growth both in a positive and

negative manner and hint at a dependence on the steer from governmental leaders. This section shows quotas have mixed results. Whilst they may have provided a strong foundation for propelling progress in certain regions there is no evidence to suggest quotas are correlated with women in leadership positions. Rwanda has demonstrated that building a strong pipeline of women with political experience from grassroots creates a strong channel for women to achieve leadership positions in a sustained manner.



Ranking of countries for % of Public Sector Leadership Positions held by Women





The data for women in public sector leadership measures women holding Director or Board positions in public sector organisations (these are also described as government enterprises or state owned enterprises in different countries). 16 of the Commonwealth countries have reached the 30% benchmark of senior Public sector leadership positions being held by women. Amongst these countries, six have gone on to reach between 40 – 50 % of positions held by women; Kiribati, Namibia, Australia, United Kingdom, South Africa

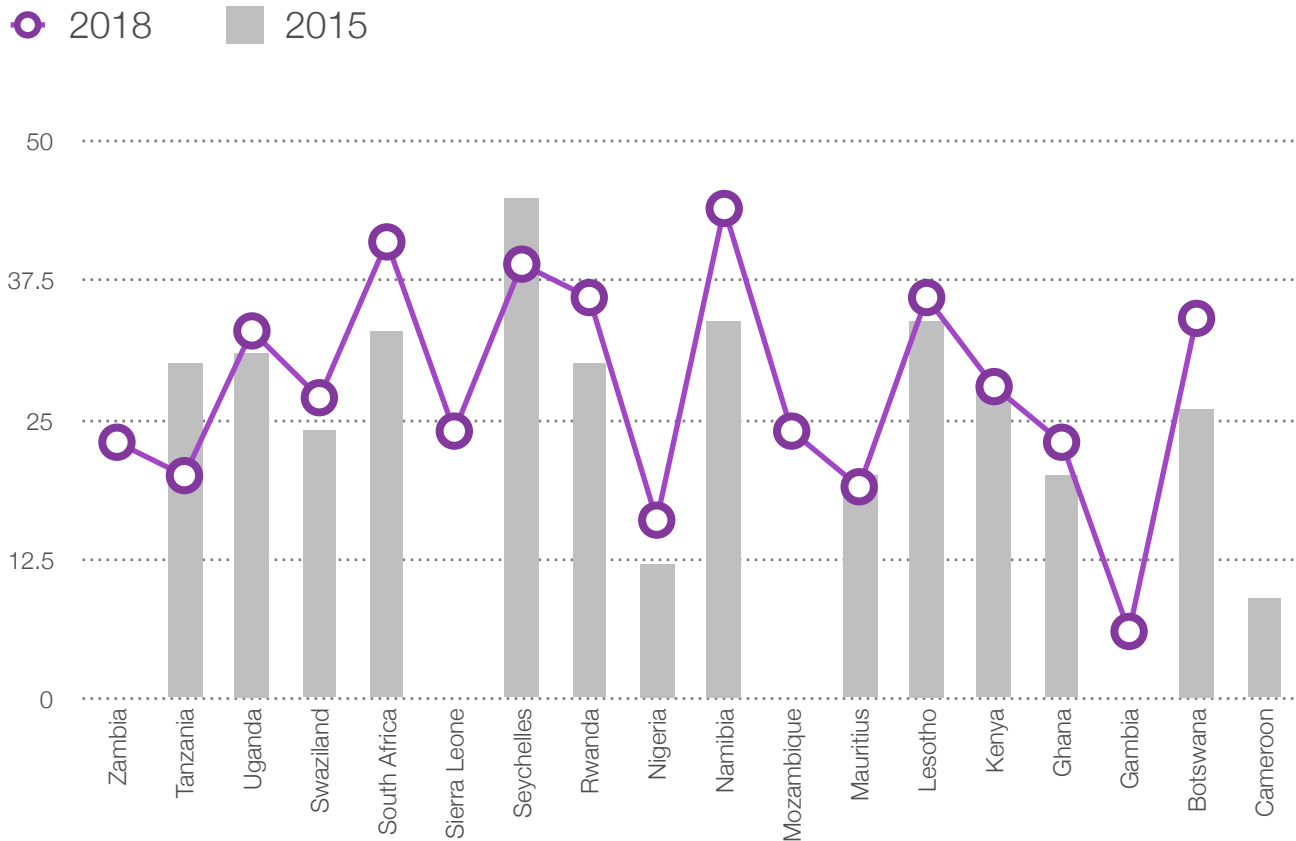
and Dominica. Australia has made substantial leaps in terms of gender leadership in countries with the largest number of board positions available. Countries with smaller numbers of board positions perform better in terms of gender balance, with three out of ten reaching the 30% mark and a further three reaching between 40 – 50%.

**Brunei, Cameroon and Nauru did not submit data for this report.*



Africa

% of Senior Public sector leadership positions held by women in Commonwealth African Countries

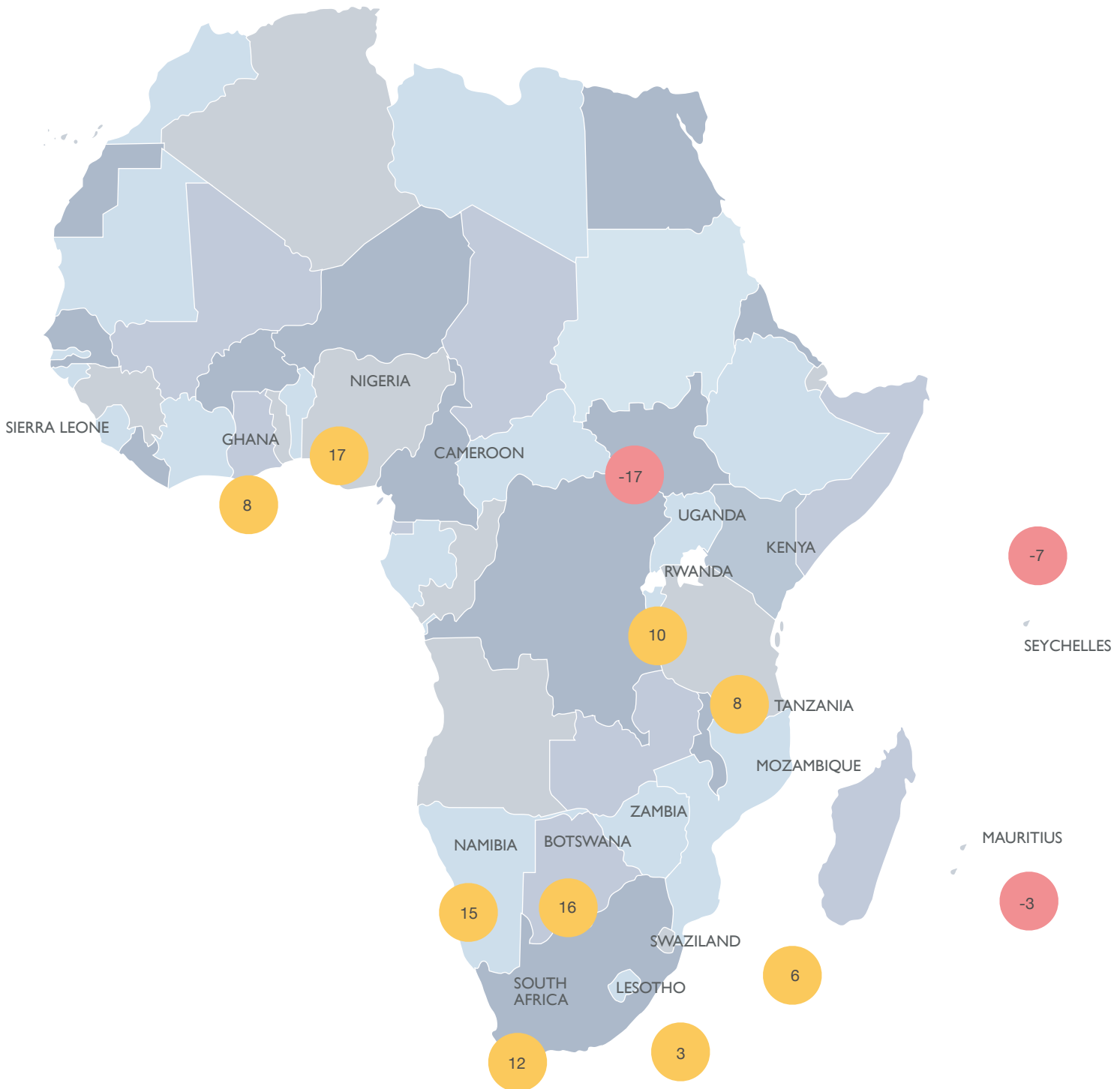


In 2015 seven of the African states had achieved the 30% benchmark for women in leadership positions, this number remained the same for 2018 but the composition of countries had changed. Tanzania for example has dropped from 30% to 20%. South Africa has charged ahead to reach the 40% benchmark and the Seychelles that had reached 45% in 2015 has now dropped to 39%.

**Cameroon did not submit 2018 data for this report.*

Tanzania has experienced the greatest rate of decline (-17%). Nigeria, Botswana and Namibia have experienced the fastest rates of growth between (17 – 15%) in promoting women into leadership roles.

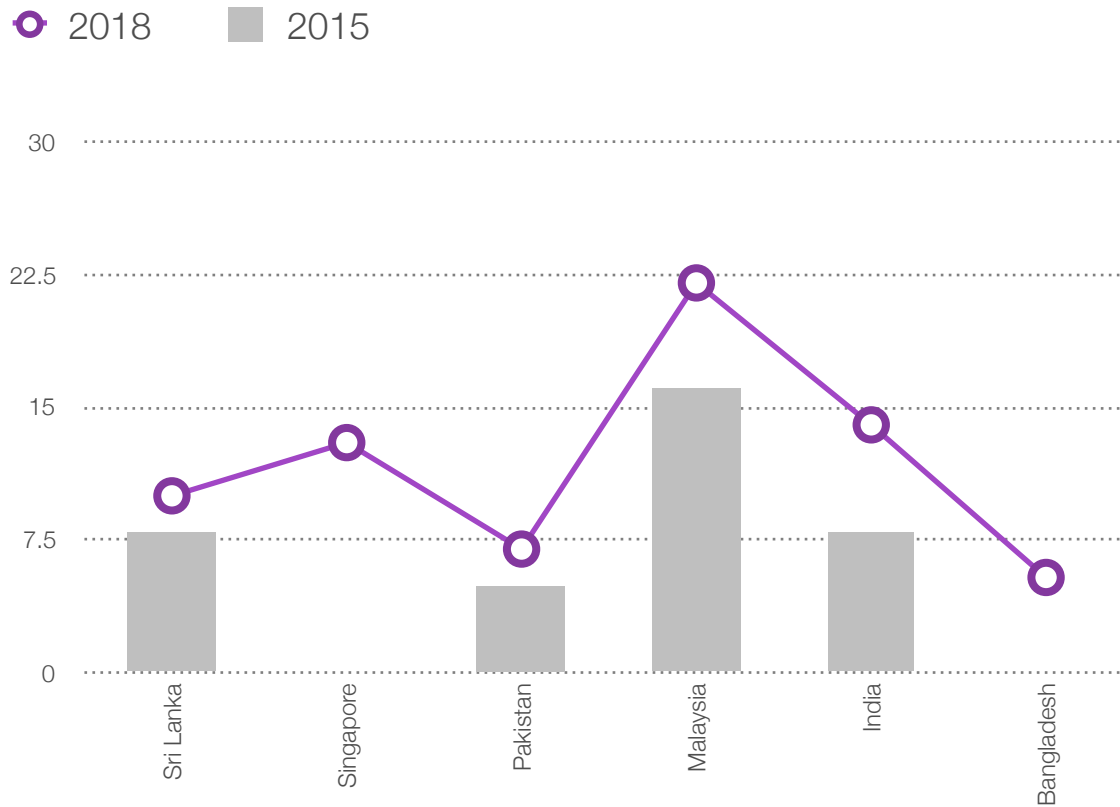
Map showing the change in % of senior political leadership positions held by women in Commonwealth African countries



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% of Senior Public sector leadership positions held by women in Commonwealth Asian Countries

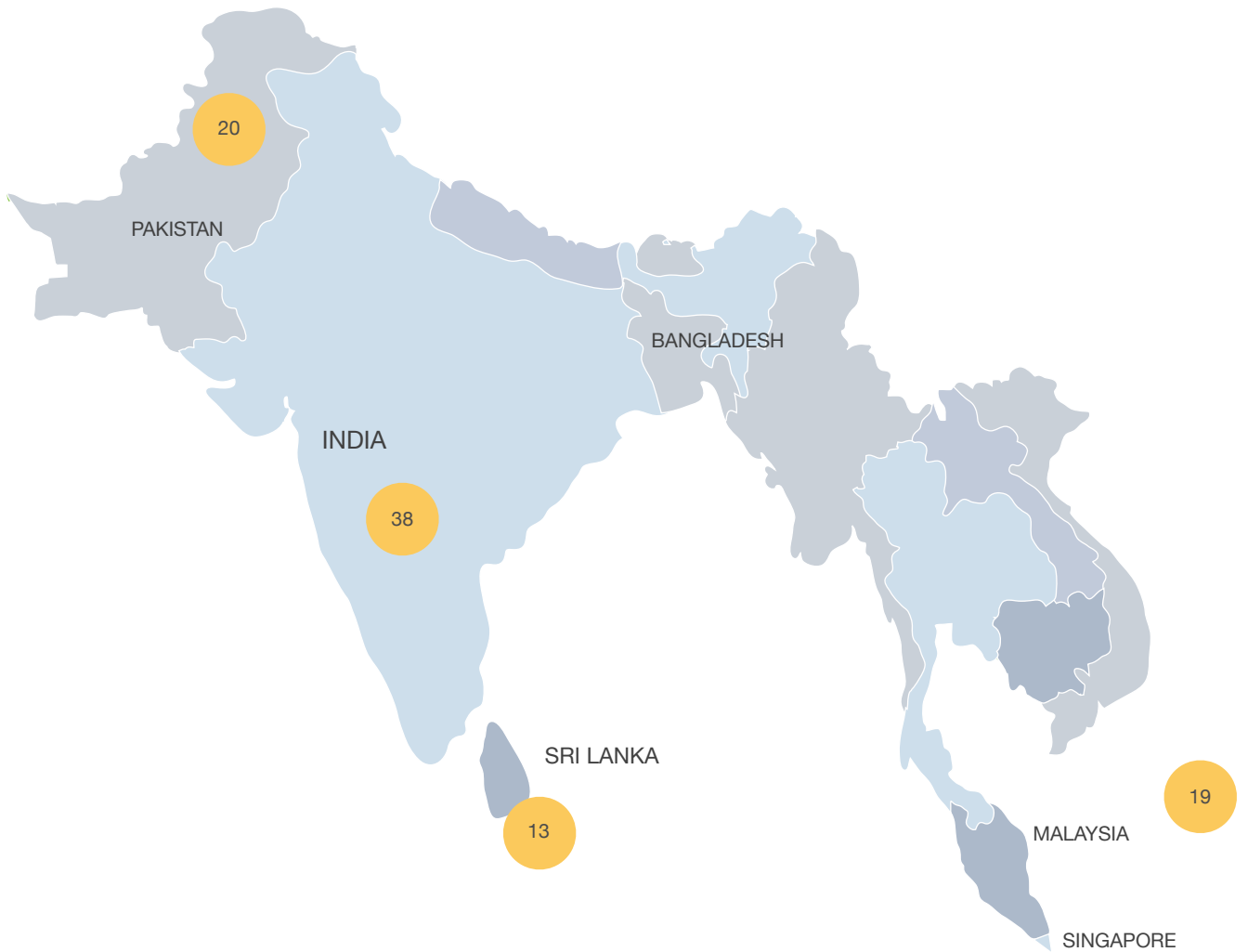


Although none of the Asian countries have reached the 30% benchmark, India and Malaysia have made good progress appointing women into public sector leadership positions. Sri Lanka and Pakistan demonstrate similar levels of growth since 2015.

India has achieved 38% rate of growth, achieving a significant level of momentum, Sri Lanka is at the lower end at 13%.

**Brunei did not submit 2018 data for this report.*

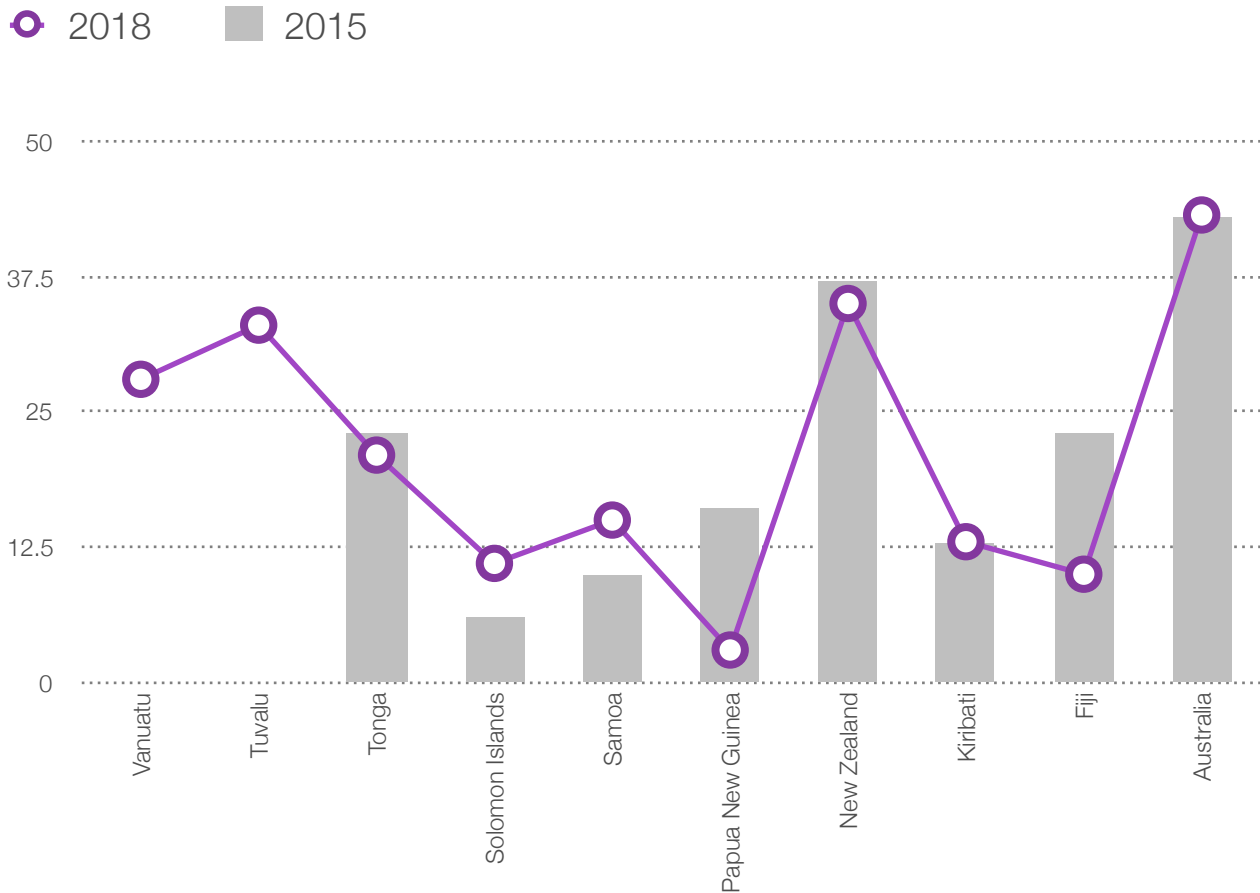
Map showing the change in % of senior political leadership positions held by women in Commonwealth Asian countries



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Pacific Region

% of Senior Public sector leadership positions held by women in the Pacific Region in the Commonwealth

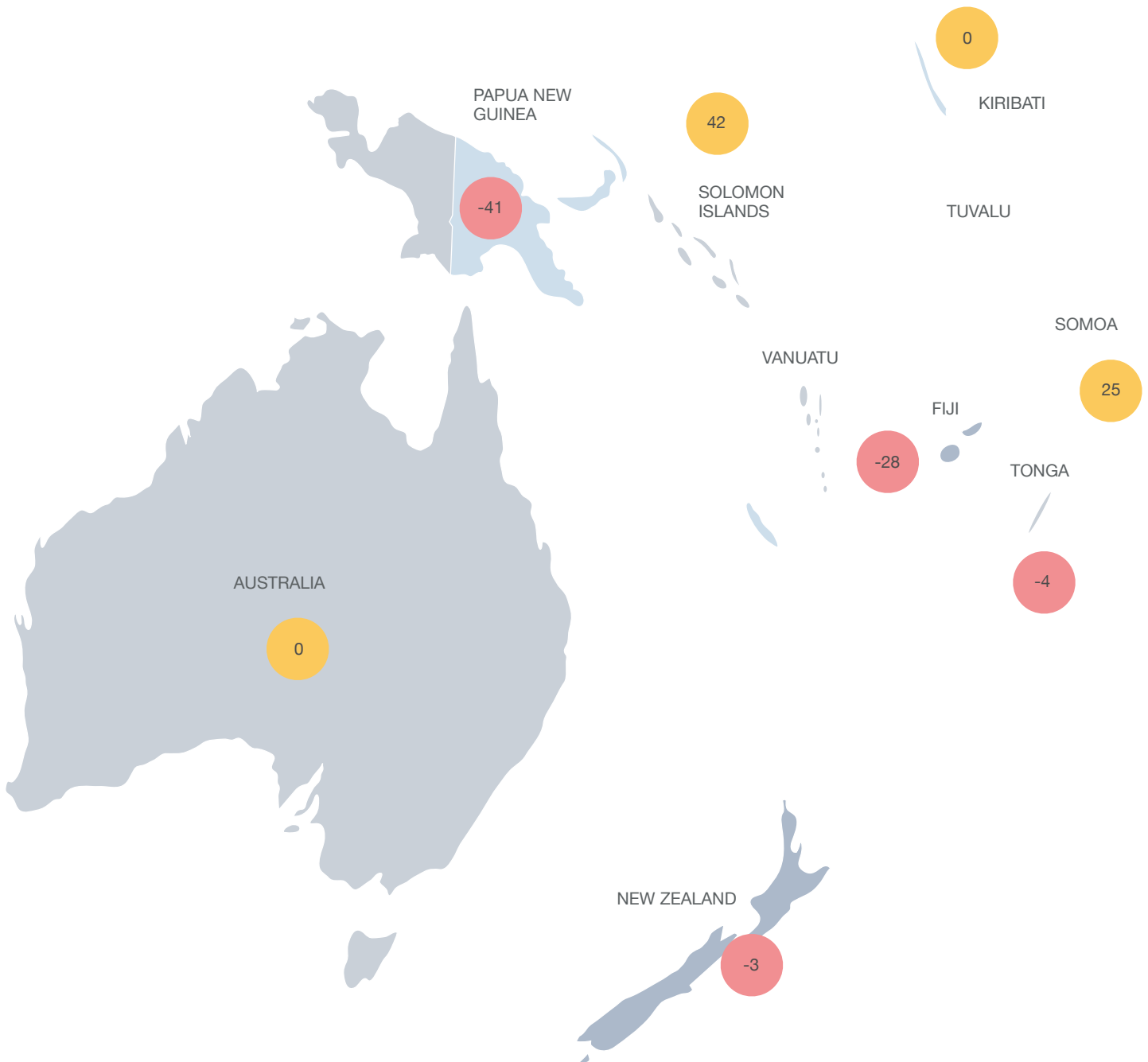


In 2015 Australia had achieved 43% of public sector leadership roles held by women and has maintained this figure in 2018. The other country that had reached the 30% benchmark was New Zealand at 37% which has dropped slightly to 35%. Papua New Guinea has experienced a decline at the rate of 41% and the Solomon

Islands has achieved growth at a rate of 42%. Australia and Kiribati have remained static since 2015 and Samoa has achieved a growth rate at 25%.

**Nauru did not submit data for this report.*

Pacific Region - public sector growth rate in %

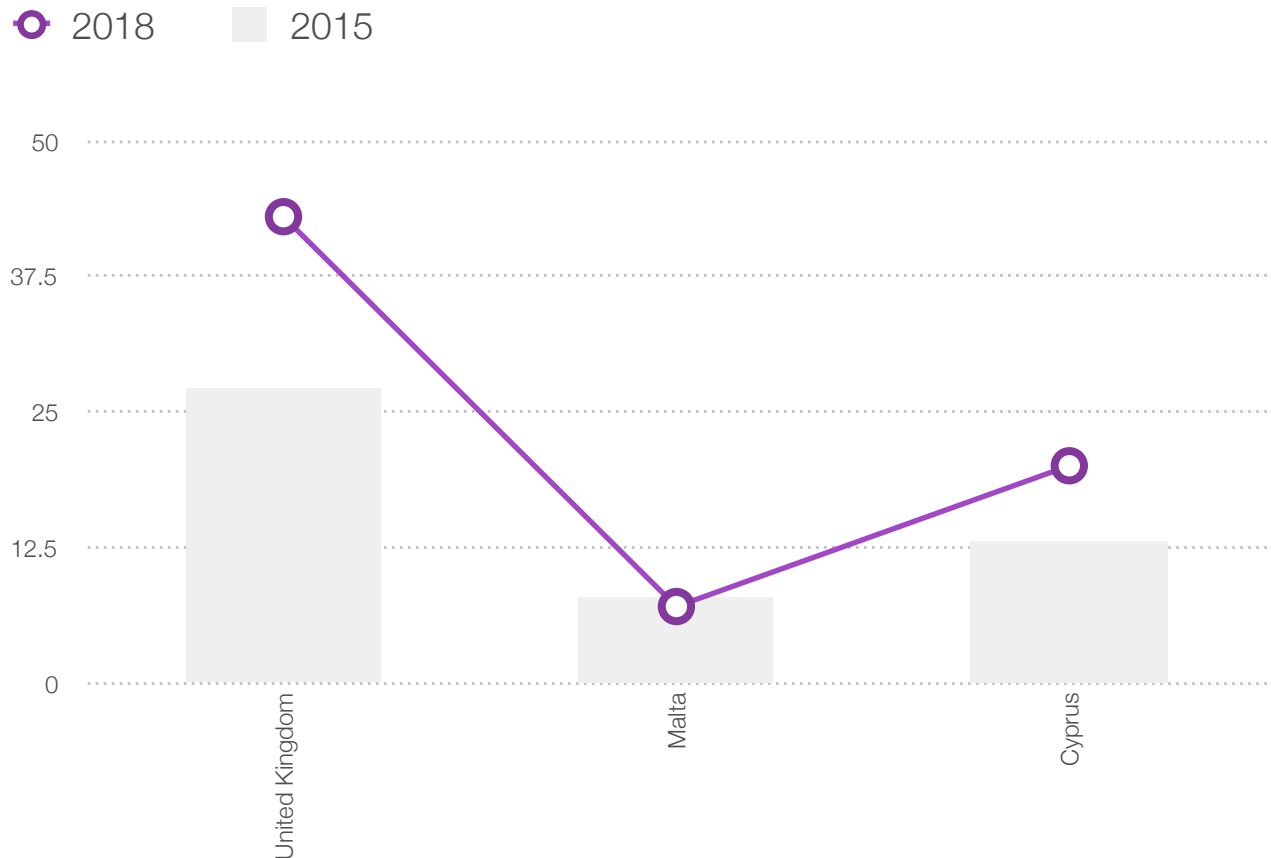


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Europe

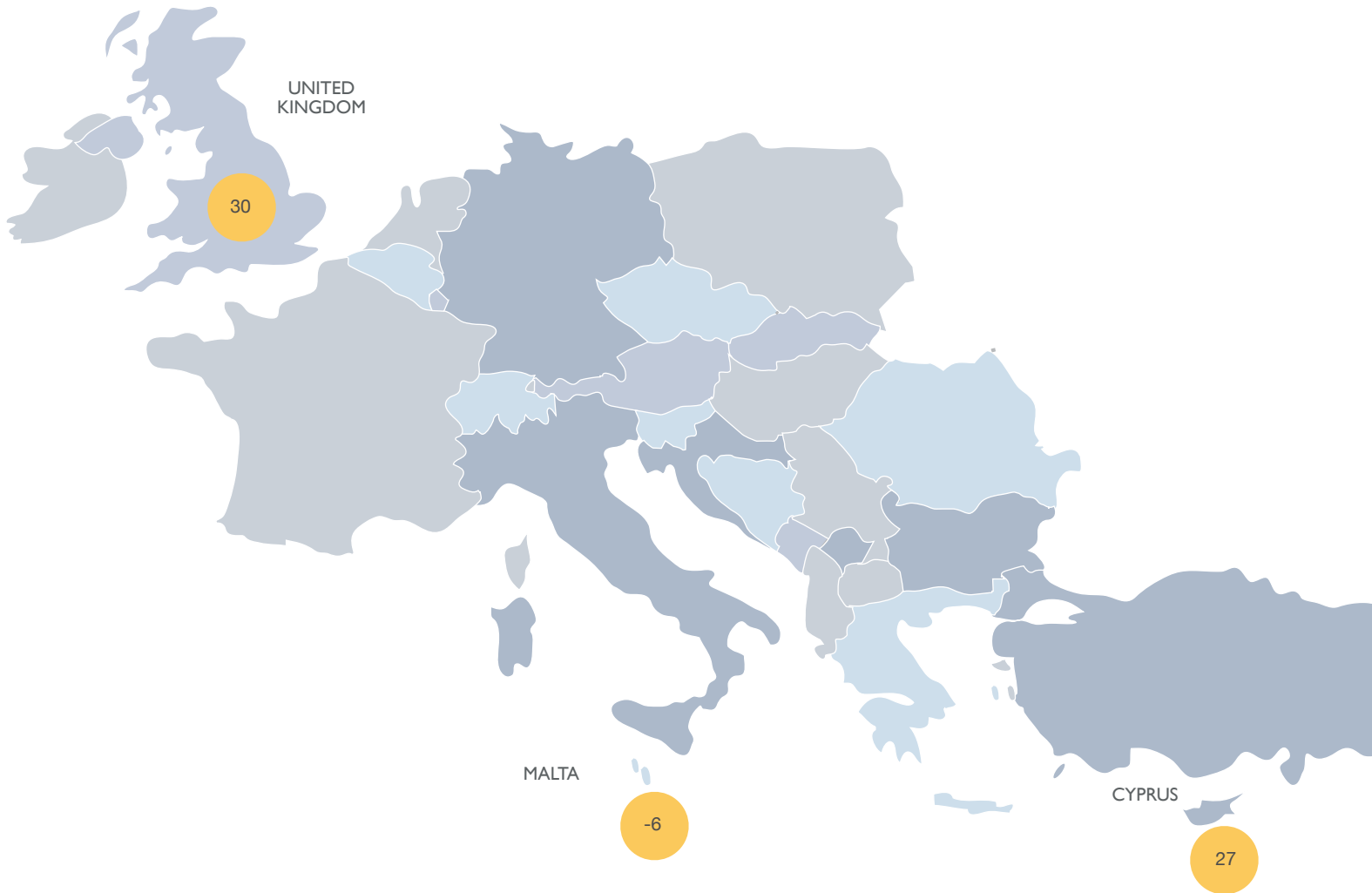
% of Senior Public sector leadership positions held by women in European Commonwealth Countries



The United Kingdom experienced the greatest increase of women into senior leadership positions in the public sector; jumping from 27% to 43%.

The UK and Cyprus have achieved similar rates of growth, UK at 30% and Cyprus 27% whilst Malta had declined at a rate of 6%.

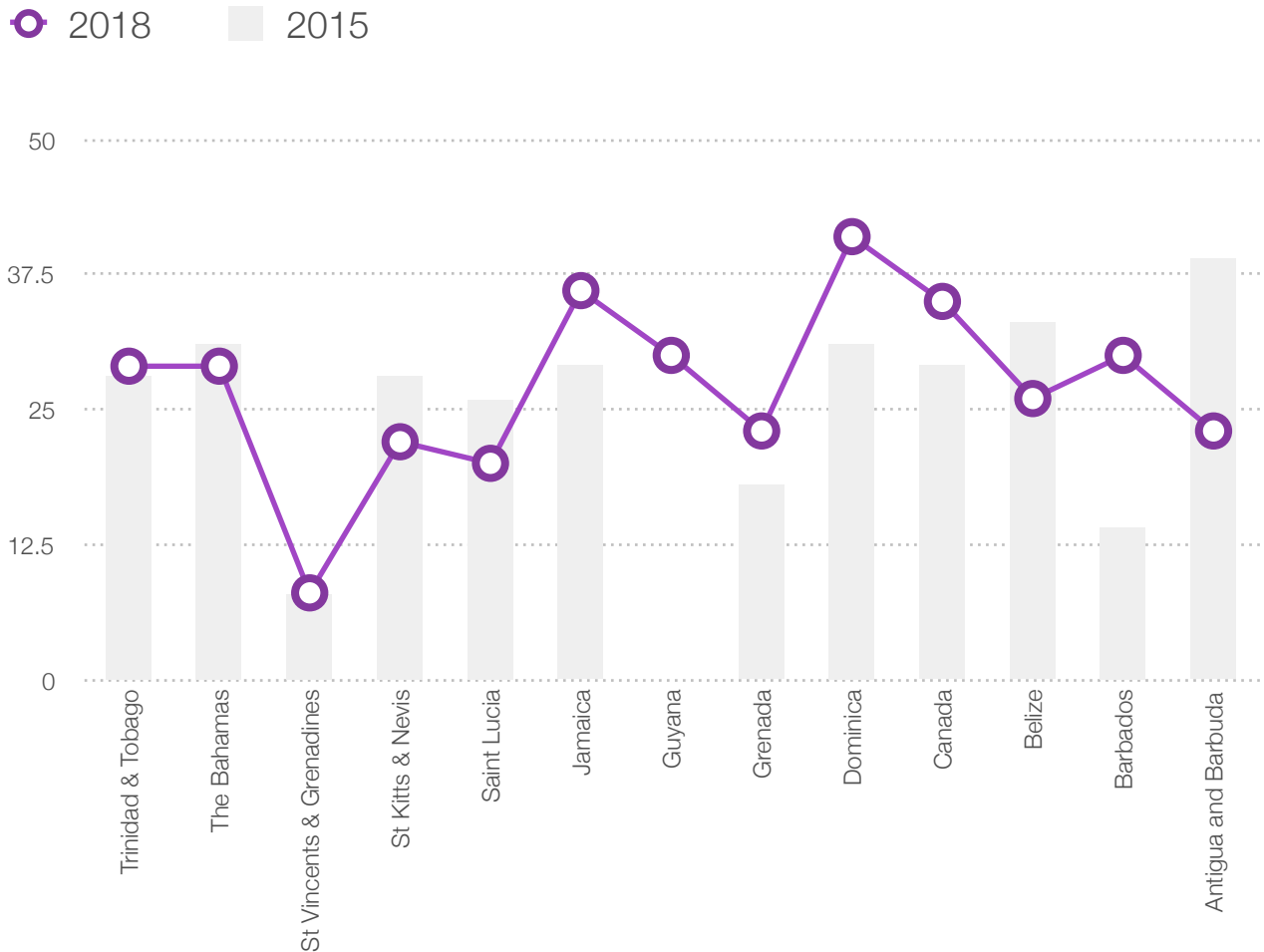
Map showing the change in % of senior political leadership positions held by women in European Commonwealth Countries



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Canada & the Caribbean

% of Senior Public sector leadership positions held by women in Canada and the Caribbean Islands in the Commonwealth



In 2015 four countries had achieved the 30% by 2018 the number had edged up to five countries, although the compositions of countries had changed. Barbados has seen a phenomenal rate of growth at 57% since 2015, one of the strongest

rates of progress across any sector. Antigua & Barbuda declined at a rate of 21%. Three states have experienced decline around the 11 -12% rate; Belize, St Lucia, St Kitts & Nevis.

Canada & The Caribbean - public sector growth rate in %



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Summary of public sector leadership

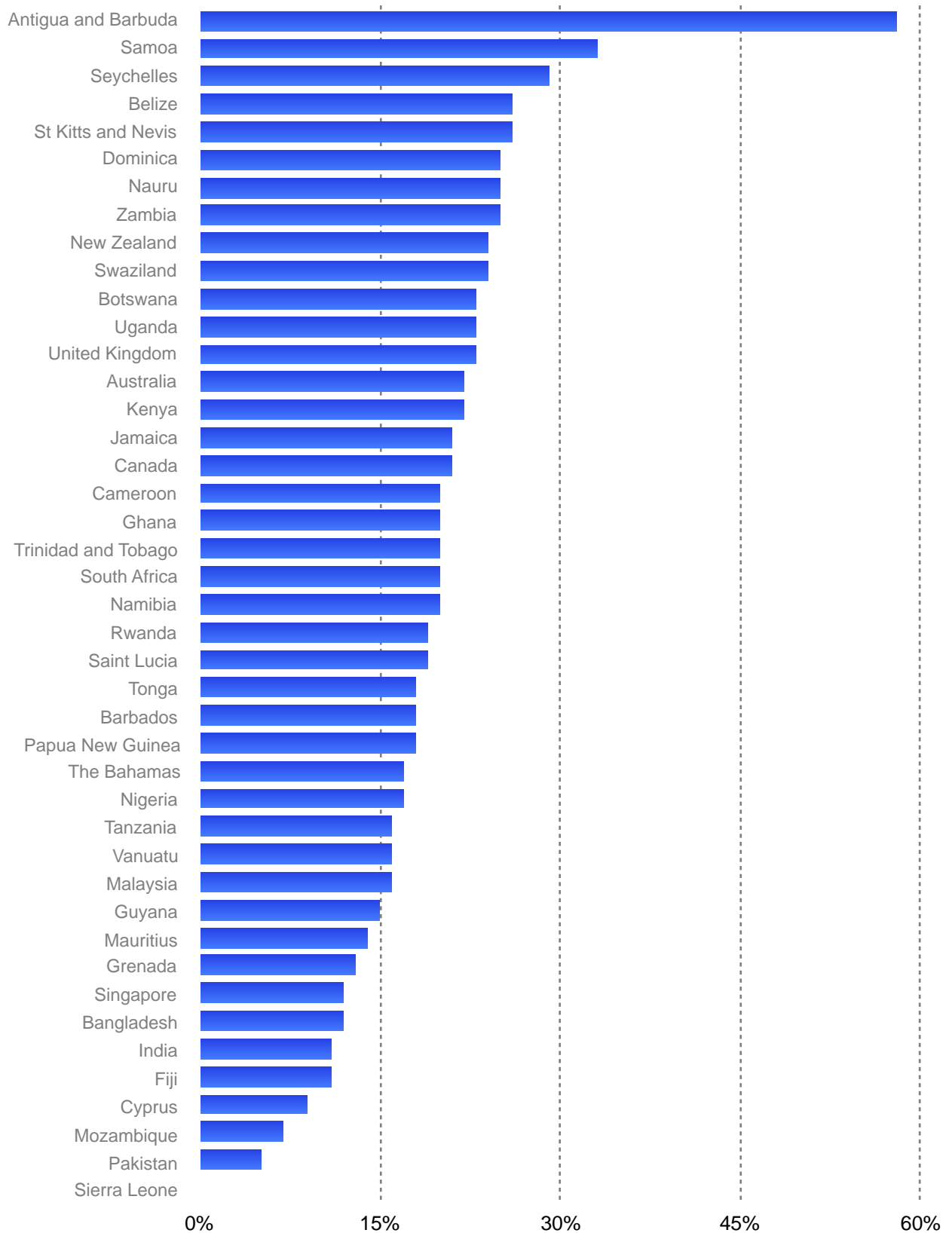
The five top performing countries in the public sector are noticeable for their broad diversity; Kiribati, Namibia, Australia, South Africa and Dominica are distinct from each other not only in terms of region but population size, government structure and opportunities for leadership

positions. The public sector shows a steady rate of growth across the Commonwealth and a strong base for further progress. This foundation provides stability to ensure the pipeline of women becomes more robust and provides sustainable approach to gender balance.



Private Sector

Ranking of countries for % of Private Sector Leadership Positions held by Women





The data for women in the private sector measures women holding Board positions (NED) and Executive leadership roles (C-suite). Amongst the countries with more than 100 board positions no country has reached the 30% benchmark for women holding board positions; although four hover around the mid-twenties; Zambia at 25%, UK at 23%, Australia at 22% and Canada 21%.

Countries with less than 100 board positions have a higher number of board positions held by women, with Antigua & Barbuda and Papua New Guinea achieving more than 50% women on boards.

C-suite positions shadow the patterns of Board roles, with countries with less than 100 C-suite

positions have a higher proportion of women holding these roles. African countries hold the strongest position of women holding C-suite roles in the band of 101 – 500 C-suite positions. Countries with over 500 roles have the lowest numbers, with Singapore ranked at the top with 19% of C-suite roles held by women.

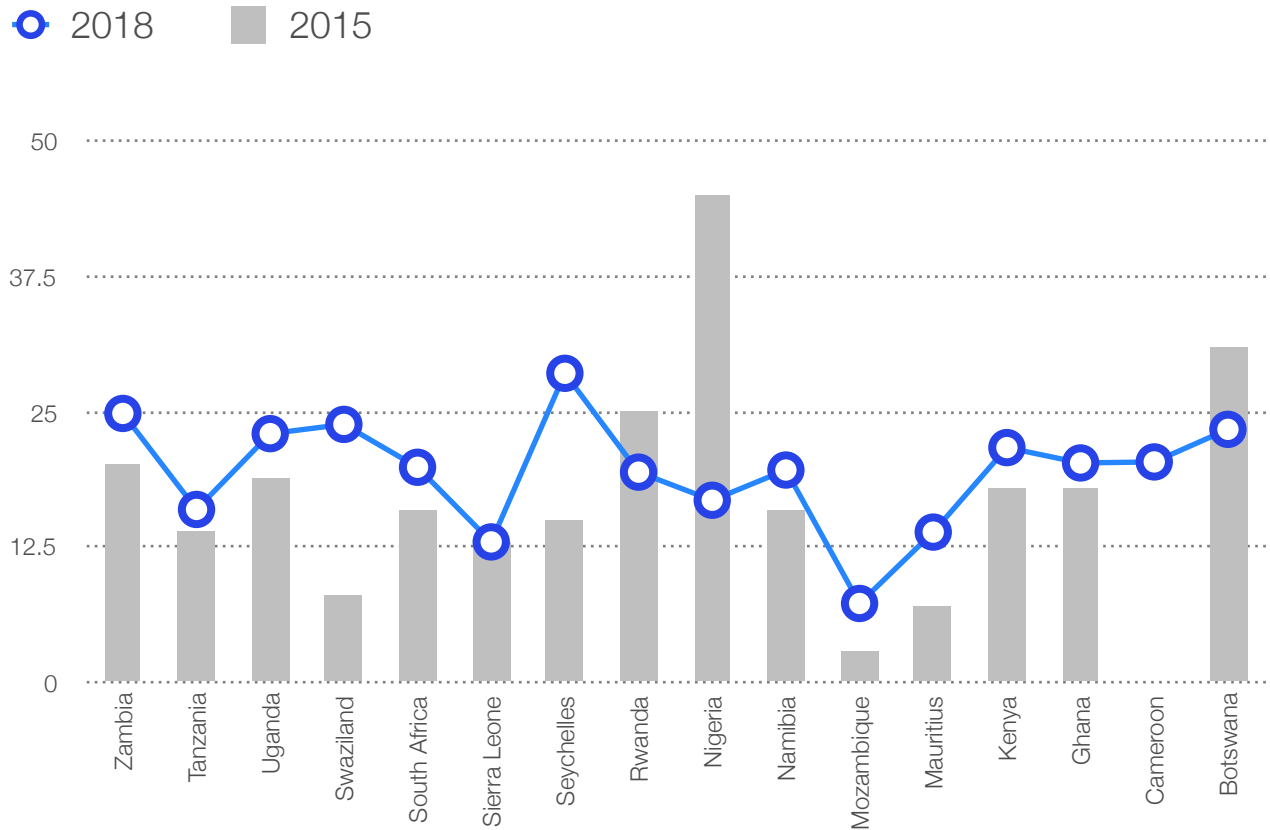
***St Lucia includes St Vincent and the Grenadines*

**** Data for Lesotho and Zambia was not available. Brunei, Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu do not have stock exchange and listed companies.*



Africa

% of Private sector leadership positions (Board and C-suite) held by women in Commonwealth African Countries



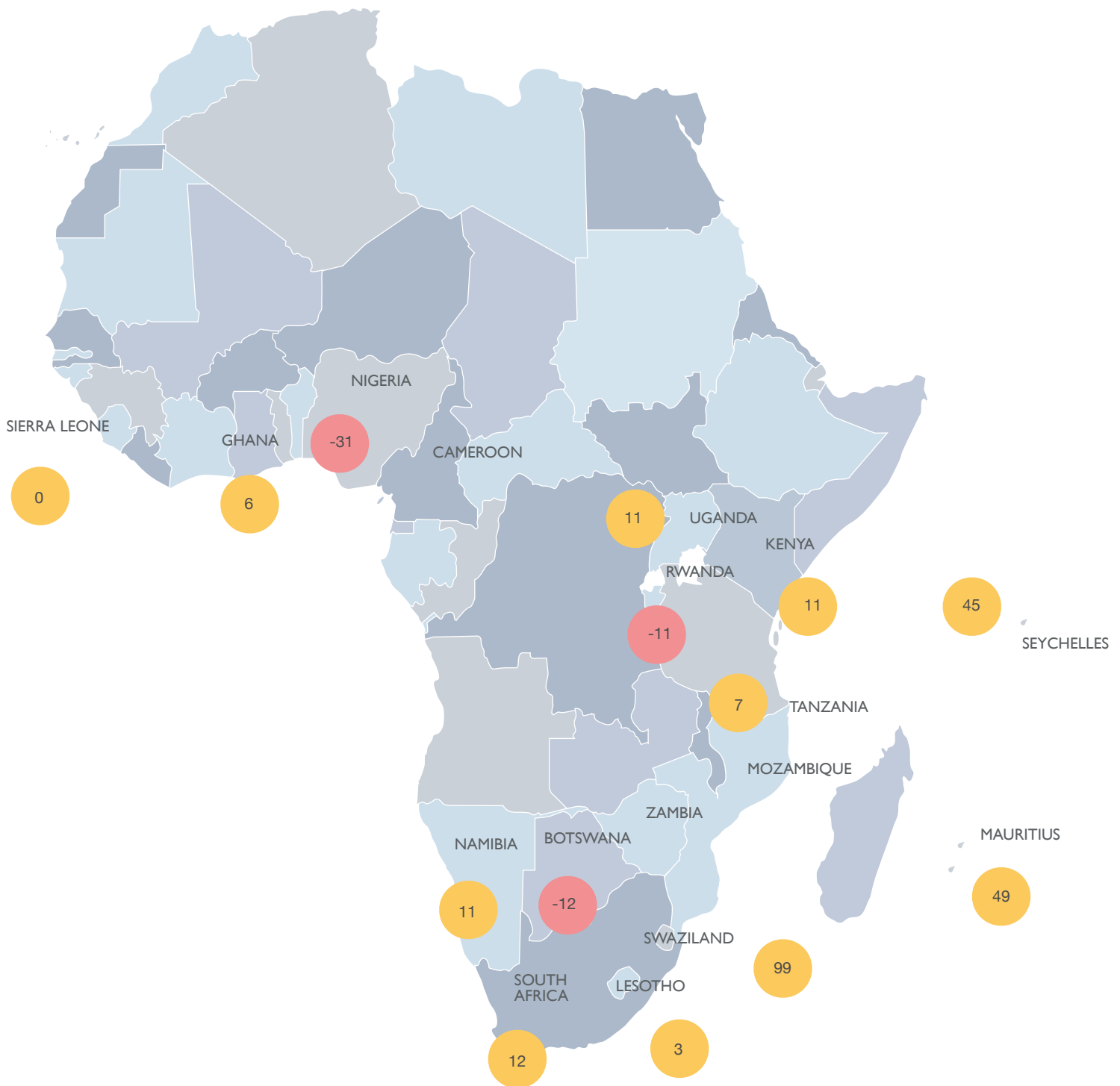
In 2015 four countries had achieved the 30% by Figures for the private sector demonstrate mixed trends amongst African Commonwealth countries. Nigeria has experienced the greatest decline of women in private sector leadership from 45% to 17%. The Seychelles has experienced the greatest progression of women in private sector leadership positions at 29%, none of the African states have reached the 30% benchmark.

Whilst the overall number of board positions is small in Mozambique it has achieved a growth rate of 96% and a similar trend can be seen with Swaziland (91% rate of growth). Mauritius and the

Seychelles have experienced significant growth at 49% and 45% respectively since 2015. In countries with a smaller private sector the increases for women in leadership will have a great impact on the percentage growth. Countries with a larger private sector have made slower progress or in some cases lost traction with women in leadership roles. Countries with quotas demonstrate mixed results, whilst some of the strongest performing countries (in terms of progress) have quotas others have experienced a decline of women in leadership roles.

**Data for Lesotho and Zambia was not available.*

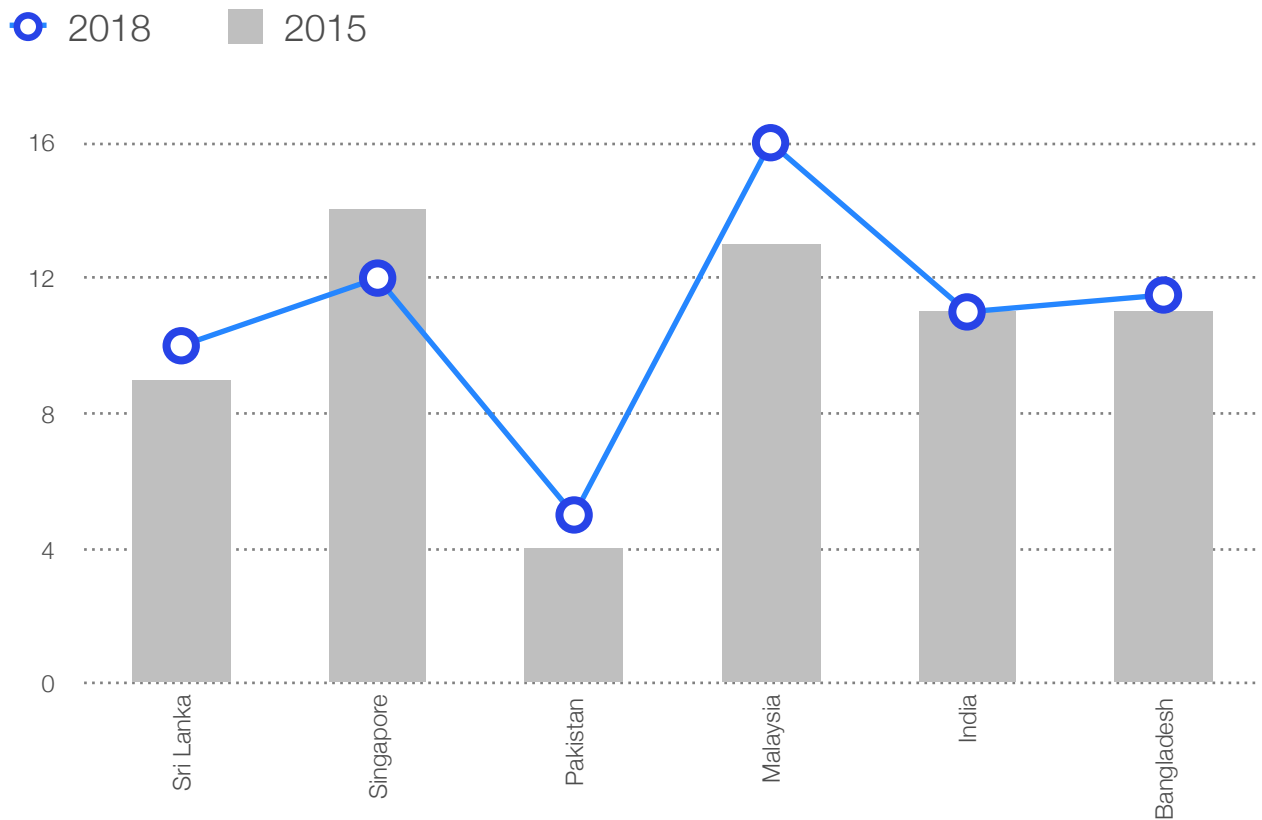
Africa - public sector growth rate in %



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% of private sector leadership positions held by women in Commonwealth Asian Countries



Movement in the Asian Commonwealth countries amongst private sector companies has been relatively uniform in the region. Singapore is noticeable for the decline of women in leadership positions in the private sector dropping by 2% to 12%. In India, despite recently introducing quotas

for women in the private sector there has been no movement at all.

**Brunei does not have stock exchange and listed companies.*

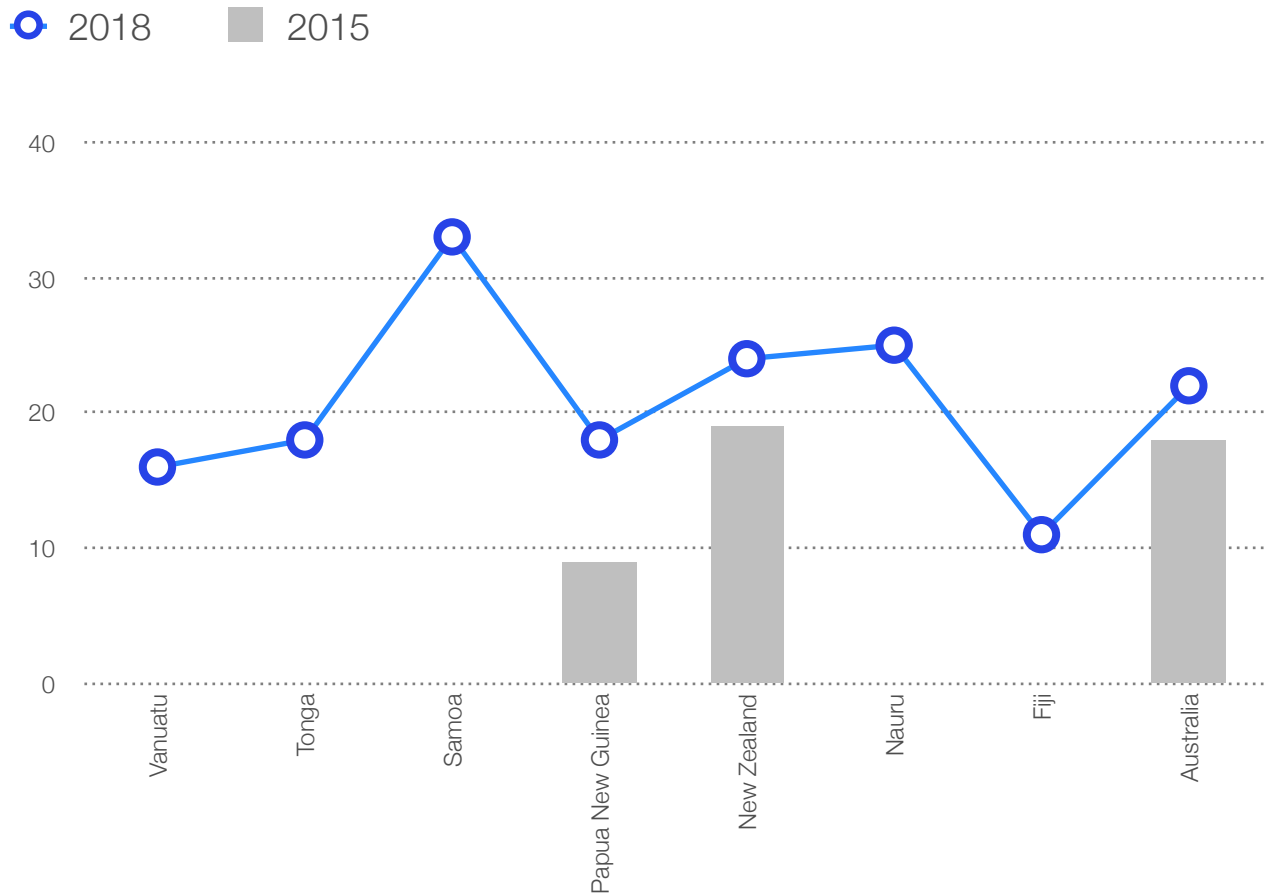
Map showing the change in % of private sector leadership positions held by women in Commonwealth Asian countries



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Pacific Region

% of private sector leadership positions held by women in the Pacific Region in the Commonwealth



Samoa has reached the 30% benchmark in 2018. Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea provide data from 2015 and 2018 and demonstrate progress over this period. Australia and New

Zealand have experienced fairly similar levels of growth at 11% and 13% respectively. Papua New Guinea has achieved a growth rate of 50%.

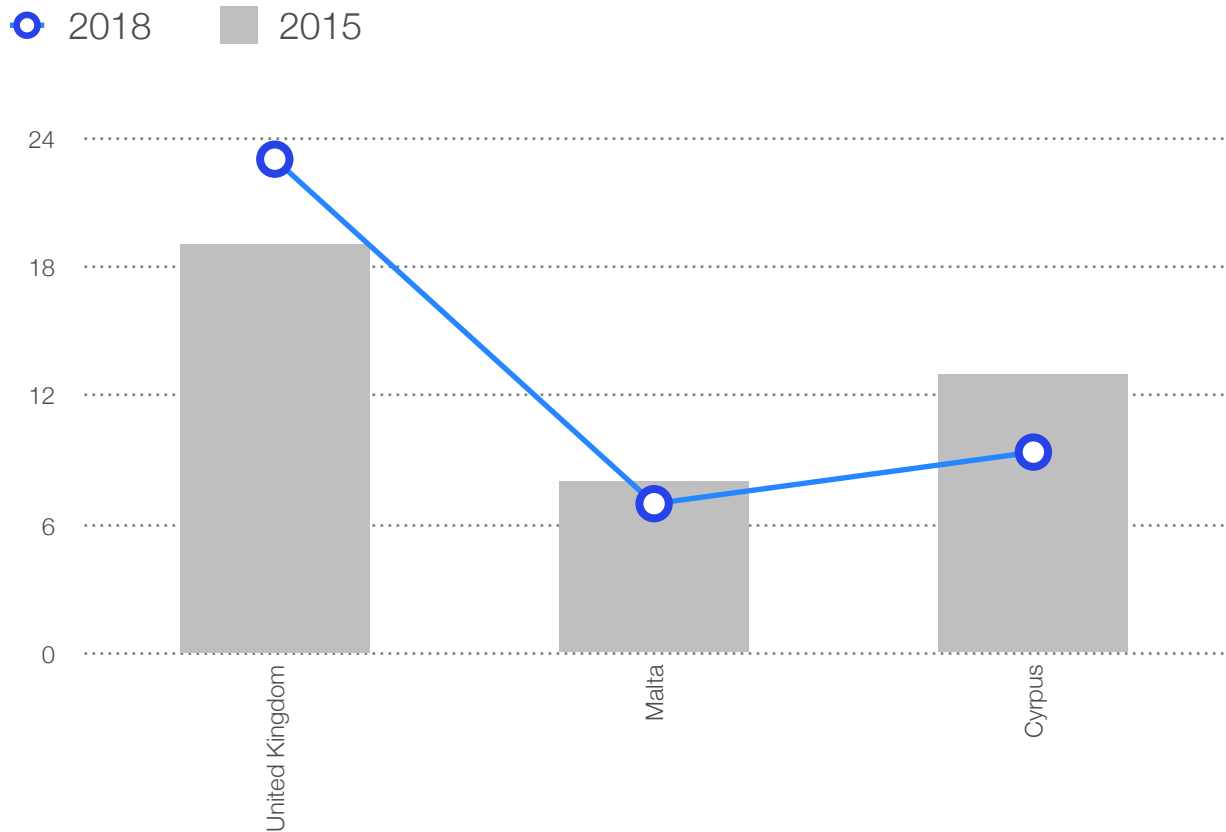
% of private sector leadership positions held by women in the Pacific Region in the Commonwealth



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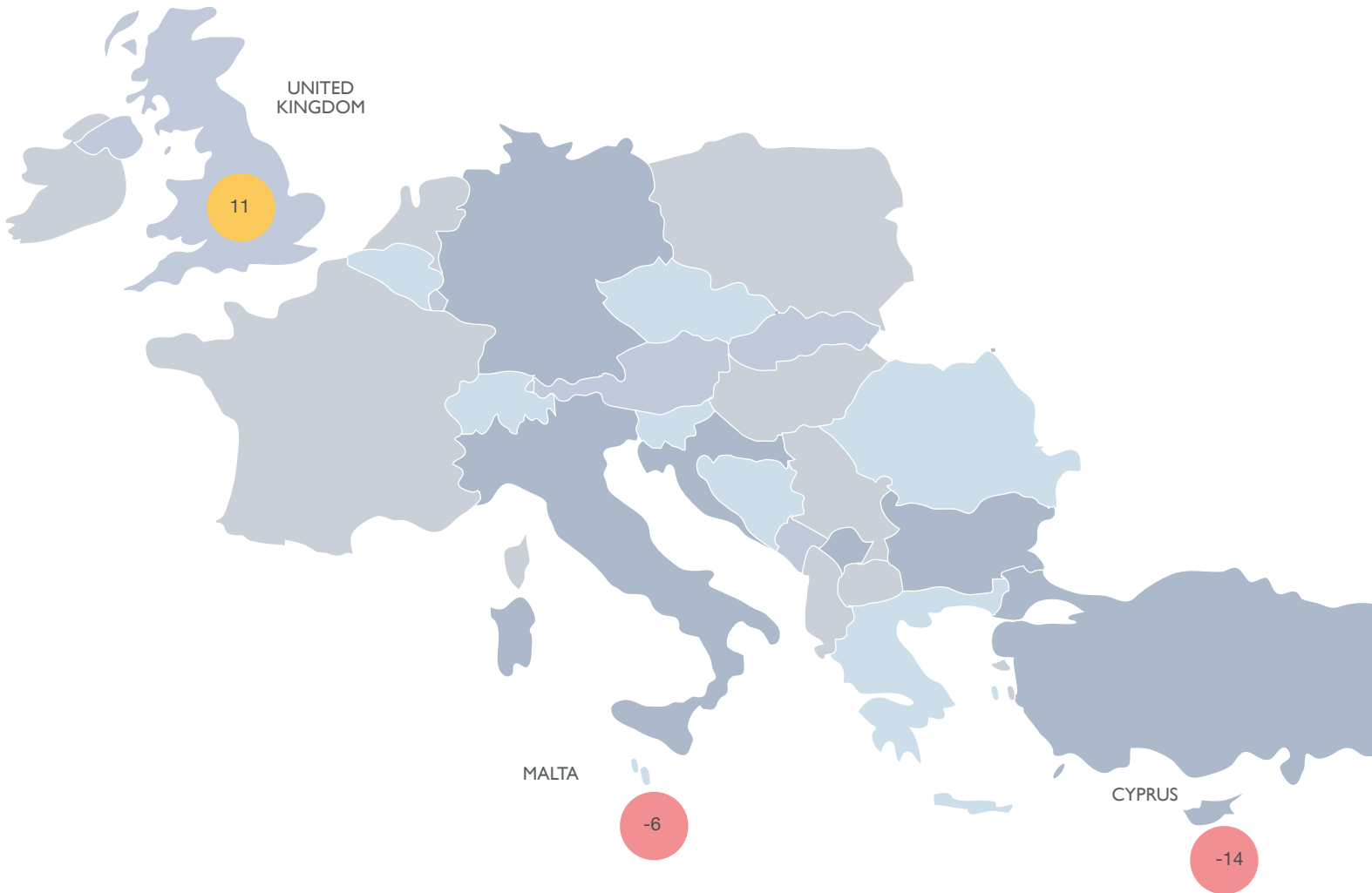
% of private sector leadership positions held by women in the European Commonwealth Countries



In Europe the United Kingdom is the only country to have achieved growth, with 23% of private sector leadership positions held by women. Malta

and Cyprus have both experienced a decline with current levels at 7% and 9% respectively.

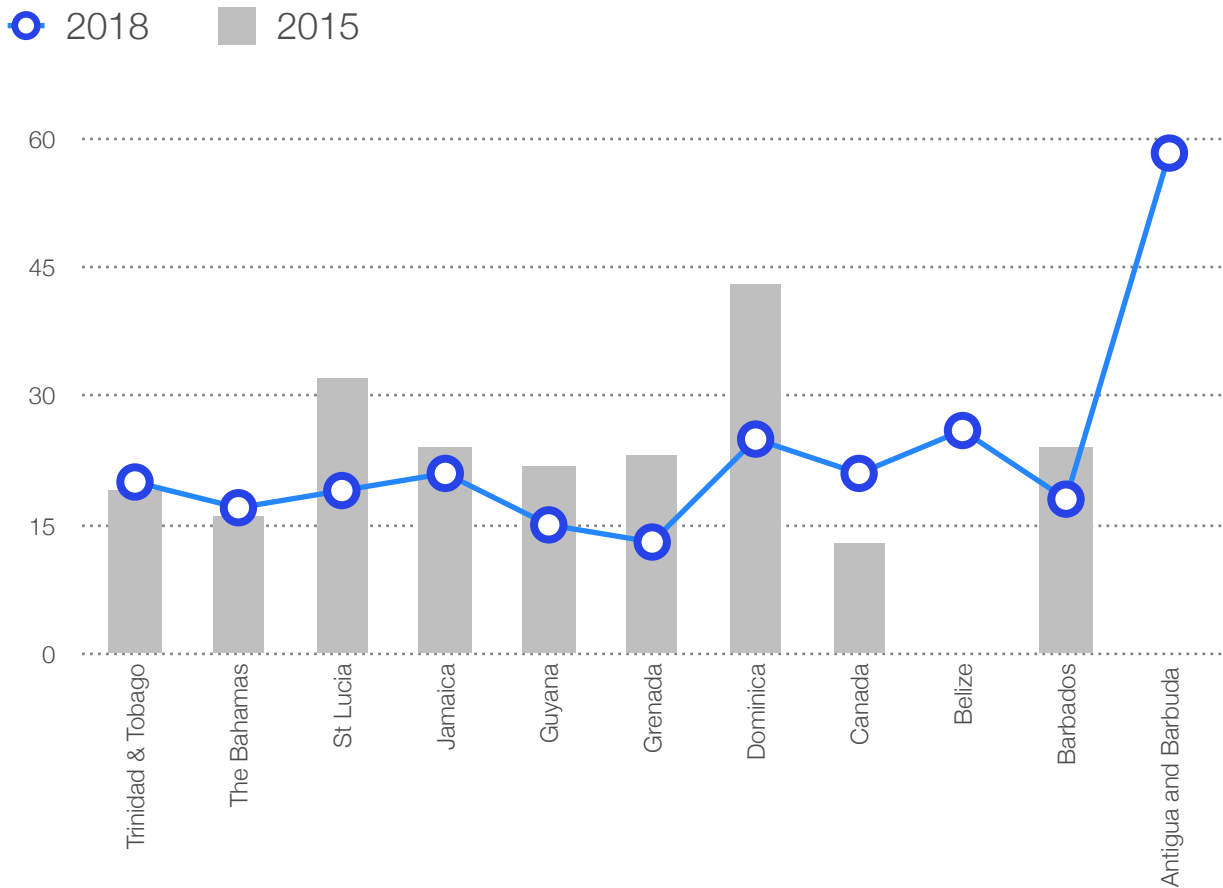
Europe - private sector growth rate in %



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Canada & the Caribbean

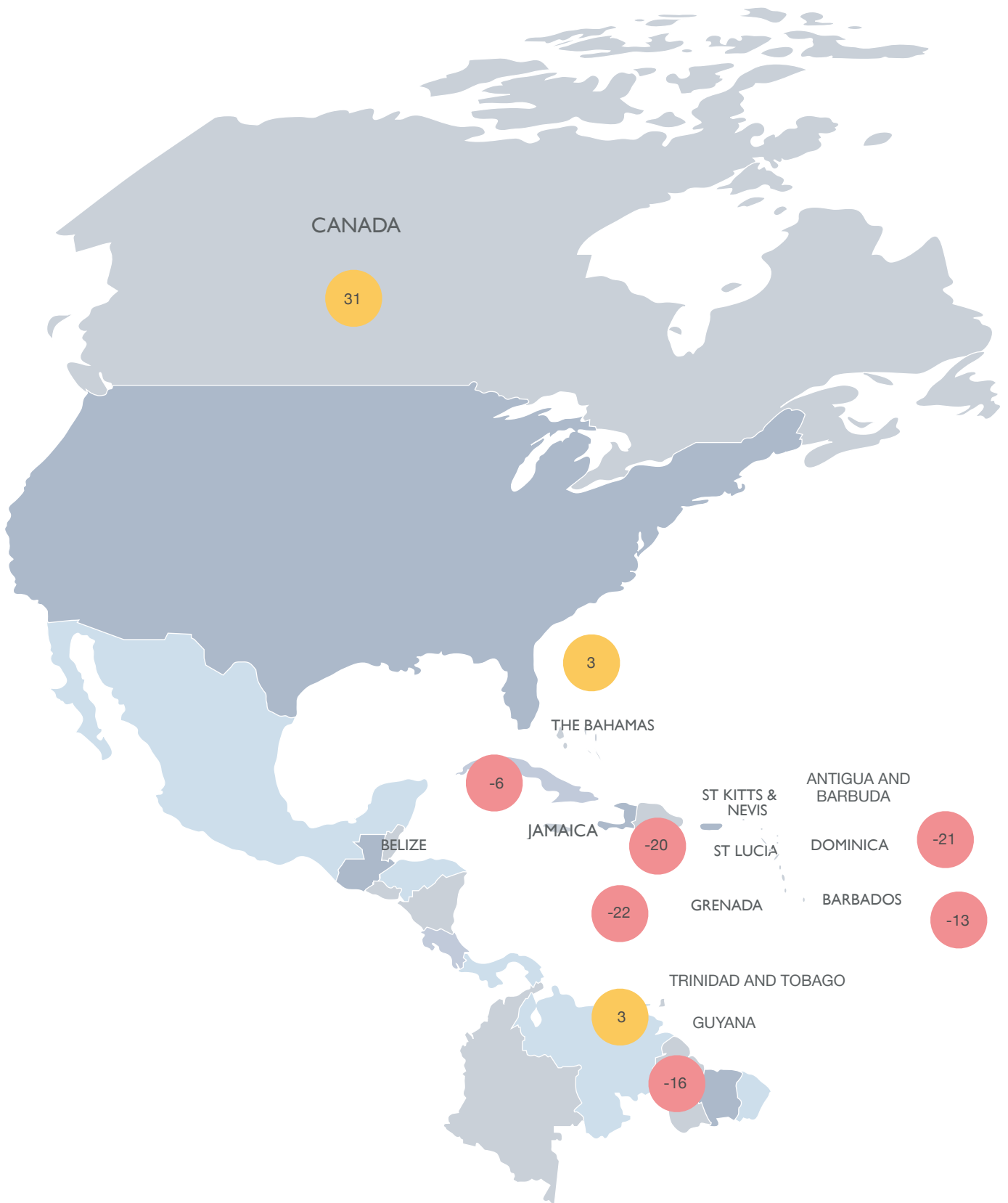
% of private sector leadership positions held by women in Canada and the Caribbean Islands in the Commonwealth



Antigua and Barbuda have surpassed the 50% benchmark to achieve 58% of leadership positions being held by women. Canada and the Caribbean have the greatest turbulence in terms of positive and negative movement across the private sector.

Six of the eleven countries have experienced negative movement, ranging from -21% for Dominica and Grenada to -6% for Jamaica. Canada has experienced a growth rate of 33%.

Map showing the change in % of private sector leadership positions held by women in Canada and the Caribbean Islands in the Commonwealth



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Summary of private sector leadership

The top performing countries in the private sector are notable for their relative small size compared to other member states of the Commonwealth. Countries with larger stock exchanges and multiple exchanges do not have such a high proportion of positions held by women. Trends in the private

sector indicate there is no correlation between the proportion of women on boards and in the c-suite, a pattern that has been identified in individual countries. Therefore progress requires a targeted effort at both board positions and for executive leadership positions as well.



What do our findings mean for gender equality in leadership?

Over the last three years there has been a great deal of activity in the area of promoting more gender equality in leadership. At governmental level this ranged from formal legislation imposing quotas and penalties for failure to comply, to a lighter approach around awareness raising. The greatest level of activity was seen in organisations, predominantly in the private sector where, specific initiatives were targeted towards encouraging greater recruitment and retention of women throughout the organisation and creating a stronger pipeline for women to move into leadership roles.

Although the data shows overall progress, with more women in leadership roles in two of the three sectors: public and private sector, an in-depth review of the data demonstrates significant variances. As highlighted in this report, some countries have seen substantial decline for women in leadership roles. Previously quotas have been promoted as an effective means to achieve progress for women in leadership, however our findings show they have had mixed results (with both progress and declines) and so it is difficult to attribute progress to quotas alone. Elections

correlate with change in direction, so it may be that further research is needed into the impact of political will and the effect this might have.

The size and complexity of a country has an impact on promoting women into leadership roles and in most cases we have seen the greatest improvements in the smaller Commonwealth states. This is to be expected as the slightest shifts in the smallest populations will have a greater impact. The challenge is for the larger countries to have a clear plan and firm commitments to achieving targets. To achieve significant and sustainable change and increase the number of women into leadership requires a co-ordinated effort, working at different levels from governmental, sectoral to organisational with strong direction from leaders and a clear focus on achieving goals set.

This report contains a number of case studies that demonstrate how progress has been achieved. We have selected examples of good practice and practical interventions that can work across different sectors and types of organisations. These case studies build upon those shared in the 2015 report.

Sharing good practice: by specific themes of focus

There is no 'silver bullet' approach to building stronger pipelines for women into leadership roles. Achieving sustainable change requires specific and varied interventions at governmental, sectoral and organisational levels.

Governmental interventions:

1. Gender equality legislation ensuring equal rights to access work opportunities and equal pay for men and women in the workplace.
2. Setting voluntary government targets, working with advocacy groups, for women into senior leadership roles.
3. Collating and sharing data on women in leadership across public and private sector as well as political sector.
4. Monitoring progress through regulatory bodies.
5. Gender pay gap reporting identifying inequalities in organisations.

Sectoral and advocacy interventions:

1. Commitment to sectoral gender targets within a specific timeframe.
2. Working with advocacy groups and key stakeholders to build strong campaigns.
3. Creating voluntary charters for organisations aligned with strong media peer-pressure.
4. Supply chain working with advocacy groups to encourage stakeholders, such as investors, major customers and supply chain organisations, to demand evidence of efforts towards gender equality
5. Working with all stakeholders to share data and best practices transparently.

Organisational interventions:

1. Set specific targets across different leadership levels within specific time frames.
2. Use audits to identify specific areas to focus on – with clear measurable targets.
3. Develop a plan with named leader/s and budget to achieve milestones in specific time frames..
4. CEO and senior leaders take on diversity champion roles in publicly committing to targets.
5. Report on targets, review progress and share with key stakeholders.

The case studies below demonstrate interventions that are pioneering and achieving progress for gender diversity in leadership. The examples come from sectors with the greatest progress and demonstrate changes that can be applied to any sector and different regions.



Case Studies



Organisational



One size does not fit all women, recognising the value of a segmented approach to build a strong pipeline of talented women - Vodafone

Vodafone has implemented innovative interventions globally to support the pipeline of women. Recognising women have different needs across their working life the organisation has taken a pragmatic approach in segmenting the working life-cycle of its female employees. This has enabled specific solutions that address women at pinch points, for example graduate recruitment targets for any region are set at 50:50. This is not usual, however policy is clear if they do not recruit enough women in any region then the number of male recruits must match female recruits and occasionally this means reducing numbers of recruits. The first company to introduce a Global maternity policy in 2015, supporting mothers in 26 countries with 16 weeks leave and providing a

transition back to boost retention by offering mothers be paid for 5 days whilst working for 4 days for the first 6 months. Reconnect, described as the world's largest recruitment programme for women on career breaks, was launched by Vodafone in 2017, in its first five days received 2,400 applications globally, confirming this talent pool exists. The segmented approach also applies to countries creating initiatives that address local cultural and social challenges that present barriers to women working. In India for example, women in sales are encouraged to bring their mother-in laws and mothers to the workplace to encourage greater openness and gain more support from them through their working lives.



At Vodafone we take a holistic approach towards gender diversity and that means never stopping, we are constantly reinventing our approaches and learning from what we have done in order to move further forward.

Karina Govindji, Global Head of D&I, Vodafone



There is no silver bullet when addressing the breadth and depth of diversity - IBM Canada

IBM Canada exemplifies the quality and breadth of effective interventions. Late in 2017, IBM Canada embarked on a disruptive journey to expedite women's advancement, with the "Ready Me" programme. This accelerates the move from ad hoc mentoring to purposeful sponsorship. The founding hypothesis is that a strategic program which provides women with the right development opportunities, career guidance, and support to grow qualifications for board positions would help raise the number of women who are ready to be considered for career advancement.

A number of women were nominated to participate in the **Building Relationships & Influence (BRI)** global leadership development course for high potential women leaders, two to four years away from promotion to an executive role. Participants engage in experiential and action-centred learning that helps them develop business relationship and influencing capabilities, growing their internal confidence and inner competence. Participants also become part of an online community.

IBM Canada hosted three **Multi-Cultural Women's Forums**, in Halifax, Markham, and most recently, Vancouver. Designed to bring leadership development and networking opportunities to multicultural women and executives across IBM, these attracted thirty women each.

IBM STEM 4 Girls empowers girls with STEM knowledge to unleash their unlimited potential and open more doors for their future. Since its launch in 2016, 8,200 girls have participated in the program in more than 18 different cities, with 750 IBM Canada volunteers giving 7,500 volunteer hours. The IBM STEM 4 Girls story can be viewed on Twitter ([#IBMSTEM4Girls](#)).

The **IBM Tech Re-Entry program**, developed with the [Society of Women Engineers \(SWE\)](#) and [iRelaunch](#), offers a 12 week paid internship, to help experienced technologists jump start their career re-entry through orientation, training, and work assignments.

The **IBM Networking Group (WING)**, established in 2009, has 370 members, supported by seven location leaders. The program promotes the professional and personal growth of women with the goal of enhancing the development and advancement of IBM women through regular networking, mentoring and learning opportunities, skills transfer, and knowledge sharing.



To successful build a gender balanced workforce you need a clear plan of action creating targets and a roadmap - Sky

Sky has set itself an ambitious target for achieving a gender balanced workforce: a 50:50 split across the entire business – from entry level right through to senior leadership. This target forces attention on the pipeline of talent in their middle management layer, ensuring there is a robust population of female talent available to step up into leadership roles.

Building a plan for gender diversity meant that Sky needed to understand its strengths and weaknesses in relationship to female talent. The resulting Women in Leadership programme established in 2015 is built on four pillars:

- Supercharging female talent through a Sponsorship and Development programme, including mentoring
- Levelling the playing field for women to progress through 50:50 shortlist targets
- Building a strong reputation for gender leadership
- Attracting great external talent through recruitment

Reputation management is one of the most powerful forces to keep momentum on gender

diversity. Setting targets, championed from a leadership level, creates a clear commitment of intention and resources that are being invested in creating a gender balanced organisation.

Sky seized the opportunity to strengthen its brand through inclusion in various awards (including Times Top 50 best place to work) to help attract external talent.

A little over two years ago Sky launched its Women in Leadership initiative, since which it has increased the mix of women in its leadership layer from 30% to 40%. That's an increase of one third – however, Sky wants to move that to a half.

Levelling the playing field has enabled Sky to address some of the cultural aspects to create greater opportunities for women, in particular leadership setting an example in terms of flexible working, and creating the expectation that it's okay for others to do so as well.

Networking events create the platform to show diverse role models both within and beyond the organisation, enhancing opportunities for women to build networks that help their career development.



As Europe's leading entertainment and communications company, it's essential that Sky sets a leading example when it comes to achieving gender parity. We understand the importance of female role models both on and off screen, for example increased coverage of women's sport, with record breaking viewing figures for women's cricket.

Anna Cook, Director of Women@Sky



Make it personal to get results - Barclays Botswana

Identifying and pulling talent through is more than a numbers game, leaders have a specific responsibility to achieve gender diversity targets by really caring about the talent they nurture in their organisations. In Barclays Botswana the success of women in leadership roles is testament not only to taking forward gender targets but a female Managing Director who cares about the talent she pulls through. Recognising a number of barriers that create challenges for women to step into leadership roles, the Managing Director, Reinette van der Merwe, has been focused on building a strong pipeline of female talent. She acknowledges women can be more hesitant to push themselves forward and men still benefit more from their networks. But her own experience of being stretched by a champion is an opportunity she

aims to create for other talented individuals -men and women - and provide opportunities for them to demonstrate their talent. Whilst this can be considered a risky approach, her track record is one of success. She has personally placed 30 women into stretch roles in the last five years, has strengthened gender presence in both the leadership and pipeline for Barclays Botswana.

External profile is an important element to Reinette's brand and she welcomes the opportunity to engage with the press and attend a range of national events. Building a strong role model presence is also something she encourages, so that her senior female executives have high external profiles nationally.

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Find the woman with potential and give her the opportunity to shine. Women do need a bit more sponsorship than men. When it comes to putting themselves forward for a promotion, women are reluctant unless they fulfil all the criteria and more, whereas men will go with 70% or less.

Reinette van der Merwe, CEO Barclays Botswana



If you can measure it you can achieve it - Mott MacDonald

Setting goals is one half of the equation, having clear data is crucial to monitoring and tracking progress as well evaluating trends. Mott MacDonald set goals for gender diversity within an initial two year period. Based in the engineering and wider construction industry the organisation was acutely aware of the sensitivities of ‘targets’ and the associated pushback across several sectors. Successful achievement of goals required close monitoring of progress and delivery of key positive actions. The goals set were based on wider census data, industry norms and what was realistic for ambitious longer-term objectives.

Integrating diversity plans with Human Resources has created a stronger platform to monitor progress, for example recruitment has a specific focus on diversity. Any individual involved in recruitment has to undertake unconscious bias training to understand what they can do to modify their decisions. Diversity monitoring is embedded in the recruitment process, and 80% of data is complete. The data helps pinpoint where the organisation is at risk of losing a diversity of candidates, providing opportunities to flex and adapt to improve recruitment success.



All staff are able to access formal, flexible working and adoption of informal, agile working varies across the business. We have our SMART working initiative which considers the office space, identifies how we will measure performance, we review which flexible/agile working option is appropriate and take steps to create a culture of respect for variable work patterns whilst being mindful of current and new technology capabilities to support SMARTer working for our staff and the business. We do recruit specifically for people who may not be in the office and who wish to work a diversity of patterns.

Richard Chapman-Harris, EDI Manager, Mott MacDonald



If you can see it you can measure it - National Health Service, UK

The National Health Service (NHS) is one of the world's largest employers. It has ambitious plans to achieve a 50:50 gender split on all NHS boards by 2020. In 2017, on average 41% of board positions were held by women, but within each board there were substantial variances from 8.3 to 80%. In other words, to reach their target an additional 500 seats would need to be held by women.

Medical schools in the UK have more female than male students, but these numbers do not translate into medical leadership positions. However, there are a significant number of women elected into Chief Executive roles within various professional bodies, such as the Royal Colleges.

NHS Employers commissioned an in-depth analysis of the trends for women holding board positions in the NHS. The findings have enabled

the NHS to target interventions more precisely such as a board apprenticeship scheme to create a pipeline of female talent for non-executive roles. The NHS is taking this work beyond gender to examine how social mobility can be supported through development opportunities at work. For example, building career development for nursing associates.

The scale and complexity of the NHS means moving ahead with diversity campaigns can be slow, primarily because of the increased pressure and demand on the service and fragmented systems and practices such as training. An area of significant focus will be supporting management to develop stronger skills in building an inclusive approach to leading teams.



The pace of change in an organisation the size of the NHS is inevitably slow. The key thing is to remember to stay true to your organisation's values – and make sure these are embedded into every working life and behaviour. As a significant employer of women in the UK, the NHS takes the 50:50 2020 pledge very seriously and is determined to see it to fruition.

Paul Deemer, Head of Diversity and Inclusion at NHS Employers



Find carrots not sticks to motivate change - Virgin Money

Virgin Money has made achieving gender balance at all levels of the business a strategic priority - setting a target of 50:50 gender balance by 2020.

Linking bonuses to achieving greater gender balance is based upon the belief that well-structured incentives to promote good outcomes can make a real difference to the gender agenda. At Virgin Money this is done through a balanced scorecard mechanism and linked to performance management and objectives to improve gender balance through recruitment, promotion and development. The aim is to create a genuinely level playing field where both men and women succeed on merit.

The approach has started to move the dial and gender balance improved at all levels of the company in 2017. Female representation within

senior management grades increased to 29 per cent, an improvement of 32 per cent; and male representation in our entry level roles increased to 27 per cent, an improvement of 8 per cent. Further progress will be achieved by identifying and removing barriers to fairness, equality and inclusion. Such steps include: insisting on diverse hiring short-lists when recruiting, investing in supportive people managers, creating the right culture, providing technology that supports flexible working and increasing the number of female role models.

Both men and women want to do a good job in a supportive environment and it is proven that inclusive and diverse workforces achieve superior returns. It delivers benefits to firms, society and the wider economy and is simply just the right thing to do.



Achieving a balanced workforce at all levels and offering fairness and equality of opportunity for both men and women will not only close the gender pay gap over time, it is an economic necessity if we are to drive innovation, power productivity and continue to compete on a global stage.

Jayne-Anne Ghadia, CEO, Virgin Money and Founder, Women in Finance Charter



Equal parental leave: building an inclusive culture - Aviva

Aviva has two main areas of focus to drive its diversity and inclusion policies forward, supporting staff who have responsibilities for caring and encouraging more women to return to the work place. Spotlighting the caring responsibilities has enabled Aviva to consider what policies need to be developed to create a more inclusive working environment with a view to reducing attrition of talented individuals. The most dynamic policy has been the introduction of equal parental leave for fathers. Parents employed by Aviva will be eligible to the same amount of paid and unpaid time off, regardless of gender, sexual orientation or how they became a parent (birth, adoption or surrogacy). Are all included. This initiative was rolled out at the end of 2017 in 5 markets; UK, France, Ireland, Canada and Singapore. Whilst it's too early to monitor the results, Jan Gooding, D&I lead has noticed a difference in the culture as colleagues view the innovation in a positive way,

by providing equal opportunities for both genders to have an extended leave of absence, finding ways to accommodate this in teams shifts from being a challenge about mothers to a wider focus for everyone to address. This is one of the most powerful ways to proactively create an inclusive culture. This initiative had a strong internal communications plans, with great visibility and very positive reactions.

Aviva recognises caring has different forms, and other initiatives are in place to support carers who require flexibility to support older family members or have other commitments. The notion of caring has different contexts and this is something Aviva is adapting in how caring support is rolled out in various markets.

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The role of fathers is as important as the role of mothers for better health and well-being of the family, this plays an important role in changing the mind set towards parental leave. Our approach also makes it everyone's problem to find ways to make it work, forcing a more inclusive environment.

Jan Gooding, Global Inclusion Director, Aviva



Public Sector

Building momentum and transparency with public sector appointments - CPE

Equal parental leave: building an inclusive culture

The Centre for Public Appointments (CPA) located in the Cabinet office has responsibility for promoting appointments, developing policy (including the Governance code) and identifying and supporting talented diverse candidates. The 2017 action plan sets clear targets by 2022, 50% of all public appointees are female, an increase of 7%. Communicating the targets with clear rationale (why) and a roadmap (how) as well as a breakdown by department creates a strong foundation to develop specific interventions that can propel departments forward and build on success. Unlike the listed boards there is no compulsion to collate and share disaggregated gender data on board appointments, by taking this approach the CPA is clearly setting out plans to

build a more diverse pipeline of appointments. The roadmap set out includes a 10-point plan and commitment to gather and report on diversity data annually. Building on good practice from the private sector the CPA will be rolling out a series of new initiatives in 2018; Ministerial Champions to oversee the delivery of the plan and report on progress in their annual department plans, mentors for high potential candidates, implementing an Inclusive Boards Charter (setting the standards for inclusivity), ensuring executive search firms operated under the Enhanced Code of Conduct.



Sectoral



Build a vision that enables all partners to take ownership of the targets - Women in Finance Charter

As part of the UK government's drive to improve economic productivity, Virgin Money's CEO Jayne-Anne Gadhia was asked to undertake a review into why women make less progress in financial services than in other industries. The subsequent report: 'Empowering Productivity: Harnessing the Talents of Women in Financial Services', was published in 2016. The report unearthed significant barriers to the progress of women and noted that breaking down such barriers would improve performance, productivity and profitability for individual businesses and the financial services sector as a whole.

The Women in Finance Charter

Overall, the review made four recommendations – one of which links Executive bonuses to improving

gender diversity in the sector – and became the commitments that firms adhere to when they sign-up to the Women in Finance Charter. The other recommendations were: making one member of the executive team responsible and accountable for gender diversity and inclusion; setting internal targets for gender diversity in senior management; and publishing progress against these targets. Media and parliamentary interest has shone a light on those firms which are yet to sign up. This has created a strong association between gender diversity and brand reputation. As a result, the Charter now covers over 650,000 financial services employees in the UK and is playing an important role in driving a more representative and more inclusive financial services industry.

“

The Women in Finance Charter now covers over 650,000 of those employed in financial services and I am delighted that the initiative is gathering real momentum.

Estimates suggest that increased female participation in the labour market and women moving into higher-paid and skilled jobs could increase UK GDP by around 10% and the financial services sector needs to play its part.

Jayne-Anne Ghadia, CEO, Virgin Money and Founder, Women in Finance Charter



Strengthening the pipeline for board positions - Women on Boards (UK)

Women on Boards (WoB) in the UK emerged from the Australian initiative to address the common criticism around the lack of talented women who are ready for board positions. WoB maintains a list of board vacancies, updated weekly and advertised to its database of 25,000 women who are actively seeking board appointments. WoB also recognises that the career paths of many women may not naturally lend themselves to board appointments and so spend time working with potential candidates before they apply for a role. Support is mainly through workshops, and also helping individuals to reposition their experience and prepare a CV and application and interview support geared towards board appointments.

Intensive mentoring support is offered from a list of advisors who have board experience and are willing to share their knowledge. Part of the process is also preparing participants for the intensely competitive process of board appointments and the high rejection rate. The volume of successful cases, 1,000 board appointments since 2012, demonstrates significant appetite amongst women for board opportunities and the value of the process. WoB has presence in Australia and the UK and has run workshops in Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia and will continue to grow its presence in other countries.



Creating and sharing a box of tools - The 30% Club: UK, Australia, Canada, Malaysia, South Africa, Singapore

The 30% Club has a clear mandate, to build a campaign enabling 30% of board positions to be held by women, working closely with CEOs and Chairs of boards. Over the last eight years the 30% club has grown into an international organisation that retains a laser-like focus on its goals in each region. Whilst the goals of achieving 30% remain constant, each franchise has adapted to the culture locally. Specific interventions have been successful in different countries; in Australia and Canada, building strong relationships through the investor groups has seen improvements in numbers. The starting point is building a strong relationship with individuals who are influencers to share the purpose of the 30% Club with their networks. The investor group takes a more proactive approach in co-ordinating for more diverse boards and exercising ownership rights

(including voting and engagement) to bring about change and encouraging all investors to engage on the issue of diversity with chairs and senior management teams. The result has been great traction in moving towards targets. In the UK a specific media approach has been successful, CEOs from FTSE 350 firms were invited to sign up to 30% targets for gender diversity. Initially take-up was slow, however the promise of identifying which companies had not signed up in the Financial Times created a catalyst for action, resulting in rapid recruitment of FTSE 350. The 30% Club provides a space for CEOs and Chairs to openly discuss the challenges around gender diversity in a safe and confidential manner. Other initiatives include a cross-company mentoring scheme and a board apprentice scheme.

“

It is critical the CEOs commit to gender diversity because it is good for business. Shareholders and leaders want their organisations to take every opportunity to maximise value, and this is an obvious one. However, we first have to understand where the challenges lie and establish a baseline. Then set targets and regularly report on progress. Transparency is critical. As they say, sunlight is the best disinfectant.

J Brenda D.H. Trenowden CFA Co-Chair 30% Club and Head of FIG Europe, Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited (ANZ)



Creating pathways for crucial Board experience - Board Apprentice

The lack of Board experience is often cited as a reason for not recruiting women onto boards. Board Apprentice was established to address this challenge. Based in the UK with a growing international presence Board Apprentice provides opportunities for women to gain invaluable Board experience as an apprentice. The apprentice participates in board discussions but does not have voting rights and with strict confidentiality agreements in place the outcome can be hugely beneficial for individuals and boards. The host board also benefits from the experience of interacting with someone who provides a fresh perspective, encouraging the Chair to consider the value of building a more diverse and inclusive approach to their board composition. JP Morgan US Smaller Companies Investment Trust has hosted an apprentice and shared their

experiences and initial concern around security and confidentiality. “We were reassured by the agreement Board Apprentice has with the apprentice, our own side letter with the apprentice and by the recognition that no apprentice will want to risk their future directorial prospects by breaching confidences. We always have the option to ask them to leave the room in the event of anything we feel really sensitive about.” Board Apprentice has created fantastic opportunities and one such example is with JP Morgan who hosted an apprentice creating a springboard for her appointment onto other boards. The full case study is available from Board Apprentice link in the references.



It's been a really positive and enjoyable experience for the board and has not inconvenienced us in any way. I think what we feel most positive about is that the scheme has uncovered a real gem. There is no way she would have cropped up on a head-hunter's list and discovering and helping talent that would be overlooked by the conventional methods is what it's all about.

Davina Walter, Chairman JP Morgan US Smaller Companies Investment Trust



Government

The most common Government initiatives to support more women into leadership rely on the legislation for quotas, mandatory shortlists for public sector roles and restrictions around procurement for Government contracts.

The UK government has adopted an additional approach that comes into force in 2018, legally requiring organisations (public and private sector) with more than 250 employees to report on their gender pay. Gender pay gap reporting requires organisations to report on the following areas:

- 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

The reporting mechanism does not impose penalties on companies that demonstrate substantial gaps, however the media spotlight on organisations that have submitted their results has been intense. The resulting attention has already generated action in many organisations to identify ways to close the gap and this means focusing on building a stronger pipeline of women across the organisation. The deadline for Gender Pay Gap report is 4th April 2018, details of the Gender Pay Gap website and links to the results can be found in the reference section.



Recommendations

Since 2015 there has been an incredible rise in awareness and initiatives targeting gender diversity across the Commonwealth. In most cases these have had a specific focus on getting more women into leadership positions. The findings in this report bear little correlation to the huge amount of activity and investment in this area. The catalyst for change comes from the leadership, and, in particular, the CEO or the Chair's commitment to change the composition of their leadership teams. The factors underpinning these decisions depend on two key areas: their awareness of gender diversity on performance and their commitment to implement changes in their organisation. The power of leaders is in creating a strong voice, clear commitment and a willingness to make sustainable organisational and cultural shifts.

The findings in this report demonstrate changes needed across all levels:



Policy

Governments setting agenda, targets, regulations & legal framework: working with policy groups to broaden awareness.

Organisational

Goal setting, working with advocacy groups on how to move forward, sharing best practice across sectors, working with the media on normalising visibility of women leaders as influencers.

Individual

Individual commitment to step into the leadership pipeline, recognition that diverse teams improve performance, acceptance of responsibility for bringing about gender equality at all levels.

To benefit from resources invested in these areas and make an impactful and sustainable change any action needs three key recommendations as part of the gender leadership roadmap:

MEASUREMENT

Incorporate measures and ways of tracking progress aligned with a plan, with opportunities to collate and review data on a regular basis.

01

ACCOUNTABILITY

Identify key individuals who are accountable for gender leadership progress – both within governments and within organisations.

02

VISIBILITY

Building strong relationships with key business media to provide a platform for gender leadership in each country and region.

03

01

Measures: Incorporating measures and ways of tracking progress aligned with a plan: with opportunities to collate and review data on a regular basis

Phase 1:

Government commitment to clear targets and penalties create a national voice with commitment to building more women into leadership roles. Reporting on gender pay gap in the UK has been a powerful catalyst for organisations to consider the reputation challenges when disclosing their figures. Government targets build more awareness and remove the ‘why does this matter?’ – question. To be truly effective these targets need to be reported and shared publicly. Each sector has specific reporting structures:

Private sector:

Mandatory reporting in annual reports for listed companies.

Data shared on index website – publicly available. Government or national business body to hold and collate the data on the private sector and regularly update progress.

Political sector:

Data available on Government website – office for national statistics or equivalent: demonstrating progress alongside targets. Publicly available and easily accessible.

Public sector:

Data available on Government website – public appointments or office for national statistics. Publicly available and easily accessible.

Each of these areas require a strong relationship with the business media to spotlight organisations that are doing exceptionally well or failing to make progress. Using a media approach integrates reputation management and creates a stronger business imperative to take effective action.

Phase 2:

Regular data collection and transparency of findings provide a strong foundation to build further momentum through Government procurement policies (with minimum 40% of balance of each gender in leadership roles). Investment bodies can apply equal pressure in the private sector (seen to powerful effect in the 30% Club case study).

02

Accountability: Identifying key individuals who are accountable for gender leadership progress – both within governments and within organisations

At Government level, the Prime Minister and ministers from business and public sector appointments have power to influence their stakeholders. For this issue to be taken seriously by businesses a cluster of ministers beyond the minister for women / gender / families need to publicly champion this agenda.

Within organisations as well the most senior person advocates change by becoming a gender champion. In most cases this will be the CEO / Chair of the board, Minister or Chair of Public sector board. The strong voice and commitment of a leader ensures there are clear goals and resources invested into achieving these goals. Gender leadership targets are successful when senior men and women put their weight behind activity and keep their colleagues accountable.

03

Visibility: Building strong relationships with key business media to provide a platform for gender leadership in each country and region

Media presence, brand alignment and reputation are amongst the most important assets for any organisation. Groups working with governments need a single clear message targeting business media, 30% is the baseline but the target needs to be 50%. There is a great deal of attention on women in leadership amongst global business media channels and this creates the opportunity to drip-feed further into national press.

The role of the business media provides a platform for governments to constantly share their message on targets and success stories. The power of the media and visibility cannot be under-estimated as the gender leadership presence becomes even more integrated in business reputation impacting the profile of organisations in the war for talent and opportunities along the supply chain. Governmental bodies working with stakeholders have the potential to shift attitudes and behaviour through the media and showcase proactive approaches for achieving gender balance.

Shining a spotlight on good practice helps to remove another barrier – the silo approach to addressing gender diversity. There is a common misperception that gender diverse solutions are industry specific. There is no basis to this view. As this report shows this attitude is one of the greatest impediments to faster progress on gender diversity in leadership roles. Initiatives such as publicly recording the Gender Pay Gap for organisations with more than 250 employees is a powerful way of demonstrating success and exerting pressure on companies to close the gap.



Acknowledgements and Resources

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In particular we would like to thank the members of the Advisory Board for the time, experience and wisdom they put into shaping the report and their feedback on the data and recommendations. Members of the Advisory Board:

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Tamara Box is a leading finance lawyer, Managing Partner for EME of Reed Smith LLP. She was ranked 9th in the Financial Times & HERoes 50 Champions of Women in Business List in 2017, awarded Mentor of the Year by Women of the Future in 2016 and named a top 30 Inspirational Woman and Champion of Diversity by Brummel Magazine in 2015. She is a founding member and Co-Chair of the 30% Club. She chairs the “Women of Influence” advisory board and campaign for the charity Cancer Research UK, sits on the Advisory Board of Theirworld, and is on the Court of Governors of the LSE.

Paul Deemer

Paul has been a HR professional for over 30 years, working in local government, the voluntary sector and the health service – in recruitment, employee relations, employment law and diversity. Whilst at Barnardo’s he became national equality and diversity manager, utilising the experience gained in this role when, seconded into the Department of Health’s equality and diversity team in 2000, he helped develop their national strategy. Paul currently works for NHS Employers – representing NHS trusts across England – helping NHS organisations to embed diversity and inclusion good practice across the NHS.

Cecilia Dosu

Cecilia Dosu has been working in the Commonwealth Summit Unit programmes team in the Cabinet Office since August 2017. Prior to that she was a Programme Manager in the Department for International Development. She is Prince2 certified and a graduate of University College London and the School of Oriental and African Studies with an interest in international development and public policy.

Stéphane Dubois

Stéphane Dubois is managing the Gender and Growth Initiative in the Global Economy and Finance Department at Chatham House. She worked in communications in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors in Canada and the UK, including The Canada Council for the Arts, Canning House (the home of Latin America in the UK) and Chatham House (The Royal Institute of International Affairs). She was also Chief of Communications at the International Civil Aviation Organisation (the Montreal-based UN agency responsible for civil aviation).

Karina Govindji

Karina is Global Head of Diversity and Inclusion at Vodafone, creating the diversity initiatives for over 100,000 people. Central to her role is creating an inclusive culture, driving Vodafone’s ambition to be the best company for women by 2025, and maintain a focus on other areas such as LGBT+ inclusion, with Vodafone being recognised as a Top global employer for LGBT in 2017. Previously Karina spent 10 years at Gallup, advising organisations and facilitating thought provoking sessions to executive teams. In 2014, Karina was the winner of the Asian Woman of Achievement Award for Business.

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Olivia Jensen is a Policy Advisor in the Cabinet Office, responsible for the UK Government's Commonwealth women and girls' empowerment agenda. Olivia has worked on Commonwealth issues since April 2017 and is the UK Government lead for the second Commonwealth Women's Forum taking place in London, April 2018. Previously Olivia worked in the Prime Minister's Press Office in Downing Street and is a graduate of Sheffield University and interested in foreign policy.

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Helen King is a development professional leading the Commonwealth work in the UK Department for International Development (DFID). Prior to this Helen was the Head of Gender Equality and worked in Bangladesh including overseeing programmes supporting women's enterprise, skills and girls education. Helen has also worked on prosperity and women's enterprise in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the HM Treasury.

Harriet Matthews

Harriet Matthews CMG OBE is a career diplomat and Africa specialist. She has been Policy Director for the Commonwealth Summit Unit in the Cabinet Office since February 2017. Prior to that she was posted in Mogadishu as Her Majesty's Ambassador to Somalia. She joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 1997.

Tunde Ogungbesan

Tunde joined the BBC in June 2015 as the Head of Diversity and Inclusion. He leads the BBC's diversity and inclusion strategy, focusing on representing and reflecting the UK on and off screen, building an inclusive culture that drives engagement across the organisation and its content. Tunde spent 15 years at Shell in a variety of finance and HR positions, and led the delivery of the Shell D&I strategy globally.

Cassandra Pagan-Araujo

Cassandra Pagan-Araujo is the Data Technical Expert consulting for the Global Women's Leadership Initiative Index at the Woodrow Wilson Center. She previously has worked in women's leadership and education at the School of Leadership-Afghanistan in Kabul and served as Program Director for the Boston Teacher Residency in the US. She holds a Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy in International Business Relations from the Fletcher School and a degree in Economics and Political Science from the Colorado College.

Katherine Purser

Katharine heads up the Centre for Public Appointments in the Cabinet Office which provides leadership and guidance on UK Government public appointments with a focus on improving diversity. She spent 10 years as a management consultant offering strategy advice to government before spearheading government's social enterprise policy from the Cabinet Office. She has also spent time in local government advising on welfare reform and skills strategies and as a vice-chair for a VCS support organisation.

Deborah Richards

Deborah is IBM's inspirational Diversity & Inclusion Leader for UK and Ireland. Having worked as a speech therapist, in management development and management consultancy, Deborah moved to Pricewaterhouse Coopers as a Strategy and Change Consultant. She joined IBM when they acquired PwCC holding many different roles within the Corporation. Deborah returned to work in D&I, passionate about creating an inclusive workplace where every IBM'er can bring their true self to work. She is responsible for the attraction, retention and development of diverse talent as well as IBM's reputation for inclusion.

Joanna Roper

Joanna is the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Special Envoy for Gender Equality. As Chair of FCO Women, the FCO's staff association supporting women throughout their career, she ensures that FCO policy and practice enable every woman to reach the peak of her potential.

Previously, Joanna was acting DG for the Department for International Trade at the Embassy in Beijing. She also served as Director for Consular Services in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, was formerly the Head of the FCO's China Department, and worked on national security issues in London.

Brenda Trenowden CFA CCMI

Brenda is Global Chair of the 30% Club and Head of FIG Europe, ANZ. Brenda was twice recognised by Financial News as one of the 100 most influential women in finance. She has worked for some of the world's largest banks, including Citi, BNP Paribas, Lloyds and BNY Mellon. A strong advocate for women's economic empowerment, Brenda was recognised with several awards for her global campaigning for greater gender balance across organisations as a voluntary, business-led imperative. She is also an advisor to UK Government's Hampton-Alexander Review for increasing the representation of women in the executive level of the FTSE 350.

Baroness Sandip Verma

Baroness Verma served as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for International Development. She has been a Conservative member of the House of Lords since 2006, is a Member of the European Union Committee and of the EU External Affairs Sub-Committee, and is Ministerial Champion for tackling violence against women and girls overseas. Baroness Verma previously served as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for DECC.

Gwen Young, JD

Gwen K. Young is Director of the Global Women's Leadership Initiative and Women in Public Service Project at the Wilson Center. She has advocated for and published on the role girls and women play in political, social and economic development and worked "on the ground" on issues of women's entrepreneurship and access to finance. Gwen has worked as a professional advocate for women and human rights in corporate law settings, with the ICTY and the Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice. She has worked with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Medecins Sans Frontieres, International Rescue Committee, and the Harvard Institute for International Development.

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Dr Shaheena Janjuha-Jivraj, Research lead

Boardwalk Leadership Research team

Mary Tunze Auta

Currently a research analyst at Boardwalk Leadership, Mary contributes her research prowess to the global agenda on increasing gender parity in leadership spheres across the political, public and private sectors. An aspiring business leader she supports the Boardwalk team to push the dial on women's increased participation in high level decision making. She was recently awarded Best Student 2017 for her Masters in Entrepreneurship and Management at Henley Business School, University of Reading, UK. Prior to pursuing a Masters' degree, she utilised her numerical acumen in an Assistant Finance Officer role with the World Bank's Group, Rural Access and Mobility Project (RAMP). In the past seven years, she has served in various leadership positions as Fundraising Chairperson, Editor-in-chief: The Rational Mind magazine and Project Team Lead: Real Time Consultancy. Launching a creative Start-up at the age of 18, she is best described as a multi-talented entrepreneur skilled at combining her strengths in theoretical knowledge and practical experience.

Kitty Chisholm

Kitty is COO of Boardwalk Leadership, a qualified coach, experienced facilitator of boards and senior management teams and well-known public speaker on leadership and behaviour change. Kitty co-founded the OU's Knowledge Media Institute. She was on the Boards of the BT Corporate University and VTES. Kitty served as Trustee of the Science Museum Group and is now on the Advisory Board of the School of Management of RHUL. She is a fellow of Brunel University. Kitty's book, Neuroscience for Leadership, was awarded the CMI Practical Manager Category Prize for 2016.

Medeia Cohan

Medeia is an innovative creative thinker with an arsenal of skills in planning and programme design. Medeia's diverse and colourful 20-year career includes a range of leadership roles spanning the sports, education, communications, entrepreneurship and fine art sectors. She has a reputation for developing unique programmes, driving new business and building and managing high performing teams. In 2013 Medeia was recognised as a Women of Achievement by Director Magazine. In 2017 Medeia published her first book, Hats of Faith which introduces diversity and inclusion topics to young children.

Dr Shaheena Janjuha-Jivraj. FRSA

Shaheena is CEO of Boardwalk Leadership and Associate Professor in Entrepreneurship and Leadership at Henley Business School, University of Reading. Shaheena uses her expertise in research and experience of working with organisations to develop new thinking towards building more inclusive cultures across the private and public sectors in different countries. Her work has influenced gender diversity policy in over fifty countries. Shaheena develops and delivers leadership training programmes and teaches on the MBA and Masters programmes at Henley Business School. Shaheena is a thought-leadership in the diversity arena, a regular media commentator and speaker. She frequently publishes work to further field of leadership and diversity and is co-author of Championing Women Leaders, beyond Sponsorship with Kitty Chisholm. In her voluntary capacity Shaheena is Chairperson of the Aga Khan Education Board for the UK jurisdiction.

Palash Nagori

Palash has a Master's degree in Entrepreneurship from Henley Business School and is a Mechanical engineer from University of Pune. He has worked with Boardwalk Leadership as a Research associate and is currently working as a Sales account manager in Dell. Coming from a family business background he has plans for expanding the existing business. He loves watching cricket in his spare time. He cares deeply about the environment and would like to launch a start up in the green energy sector.

Nida Rashid

Nida is a passionate business professional with a decade of experience in supporting information technology, media and advertising functions for a range of big and small organisations. An entrepreneur at heart, she particularly enjoys helping start-up ventures grow and has consulted organisations in Pakistan and the UK. She has a variety of interests, and follows the latest developments in technology, social media and data science. A strong advocate of women's empowerment in business, Nida paved the way for women in her hometown through her all-female wedding photography business. She supported and inspired many women to make their name in a traditionally male dominated industry. Nida also makes time to support not-for-profit projects that aim to create awareness of women's health issues, especially amongst the underprivileged sections of the society. She actively looks for opportunities to mentor young girls and inspire them to explore careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. In her free time, Nida expresses herself through drawing and poetry. She has published her work online and is currently compiling the second volume of her series of illustrated poetry books.

Sonal Thakrar

Sonal works on all aspects of communications, working across the team to deliver effective messaging. She has over 20 years experienced in communications, through her roles at Cisco, Camelot, The Carphone Warehouse Vodafone and British Airways. She was recognised as Communicate of the Year by CEB and has led several award-winning campaigns in the people, inclusion and diversity space. Some of her proudest achievements include creating employee programmes for the London 2012 and Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Sonal also works in mental health services, with extensive experience gained through volunteering for the Samaritans and as a qualified counsellor in the charity sector.

Useful Resources

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