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Decade

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“The lack of significant progress during the past decade for U.S. women in senior management is disappointing. Companies have been talking the talk on gender equality for decades, but still too few are walking the walk,” said Erica O’Malley, Grant Thornton LLP’s national managing partner of Diversity & Inclusion. “U.S. businesses must take steps now to eradicate gender bias and shift expectations around the role of women, which have contributed to success in other economies when it comes to advancing women.”

Globally, 22 percent of senior roles are held by women — a 3 percent increase from 2004 (19 percent), but down from 24 percent last year, indicating broad stagnation. Japan remains at the bottom of the list with just 8 percent of senior roles held by women, followed by Germany (14 percent) and India and Brazil (15 percent). There have been pockets of improvement, however, with 26 percent of senior roles in the European Union now occupied by women — an all-time high. At the same time, the number in Latin America has fallen to 18 percent — an all-time low.

Interestingly, Russia has the highest percentage of women in senior business roles in the world at 40 percent. The next top five countries on the list are all in Eastern Europe: Georgia (38 percent), Poland (37 percent), Latvia (36 percent), Estonia (35 percent) and Lithuania (33 percent).

Grant Thornton’s research also reveals increasing support among business leaders for the introduction of gender quotas. In the United States, more than half (56 percent) of both male and female senior managers now support quotas to get women on the boards of large listed companies, a significant increase from 30 percent in 2014. Globally, 47 percent of business leaders support implementing quotas.

Across industries, the number of women in senior management roles worldwide has decreased or stagnated since 2013. Notably, the clean technology sector saw a 13 percent drop in the number of female senior leaders in just two years, from 33 percent

in 2013 to 20 percent in 2015. In the manufacturing sector, the percentage of women

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