

Women leaders: how to achieve gender parity in public and civil services around the world

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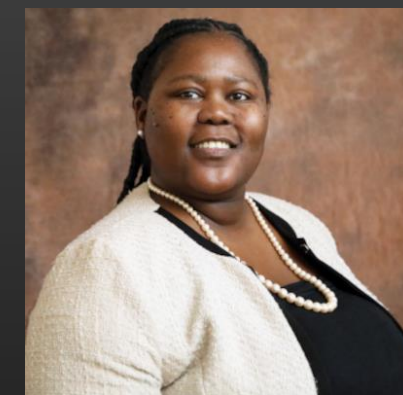
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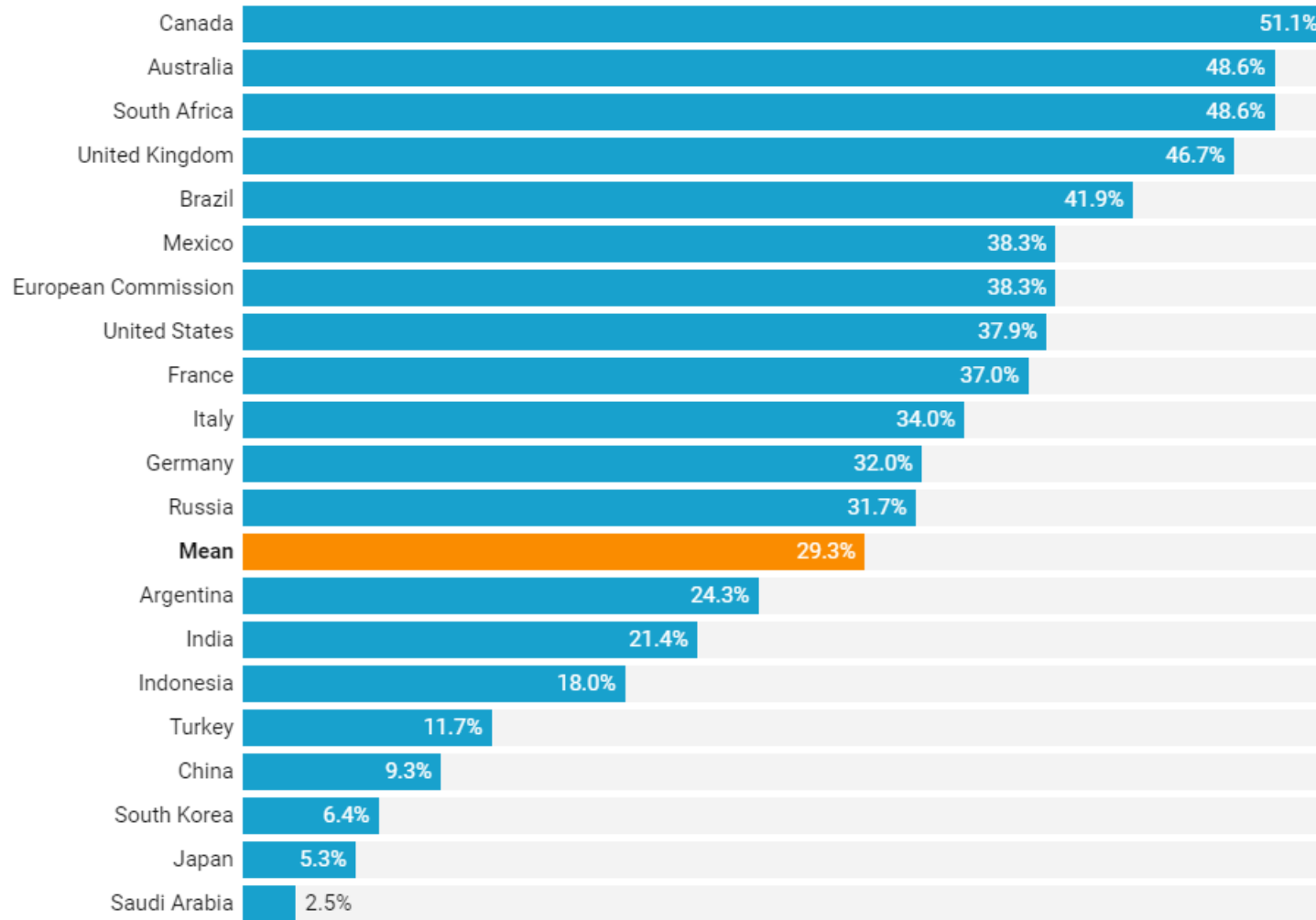
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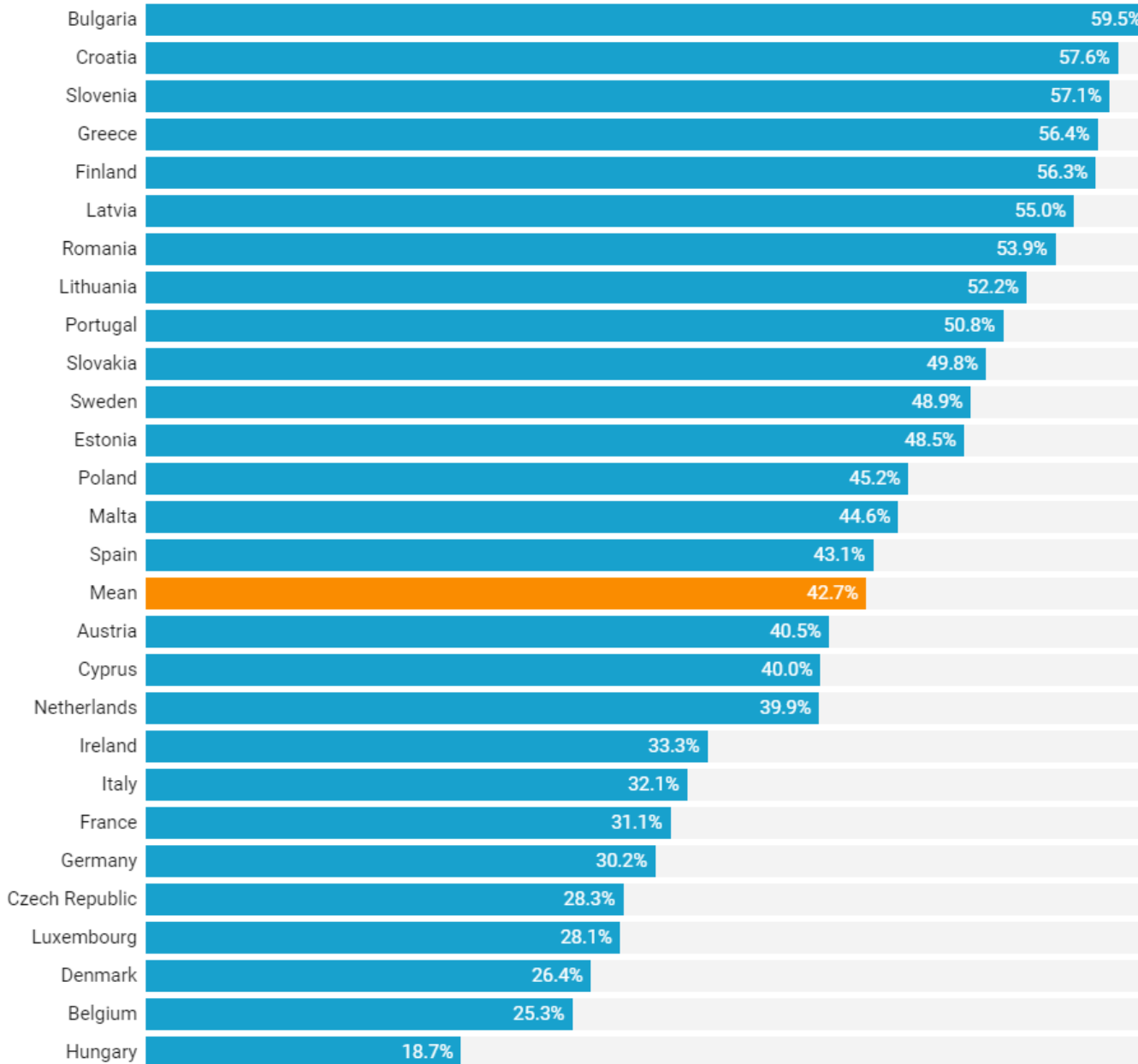
Women in the senior civil service, G20 countries



Note: The data covers the top five tiers of the civil service in all countries, except for Italy and Germany, which have a slightly narrower definition of the senior civil service.

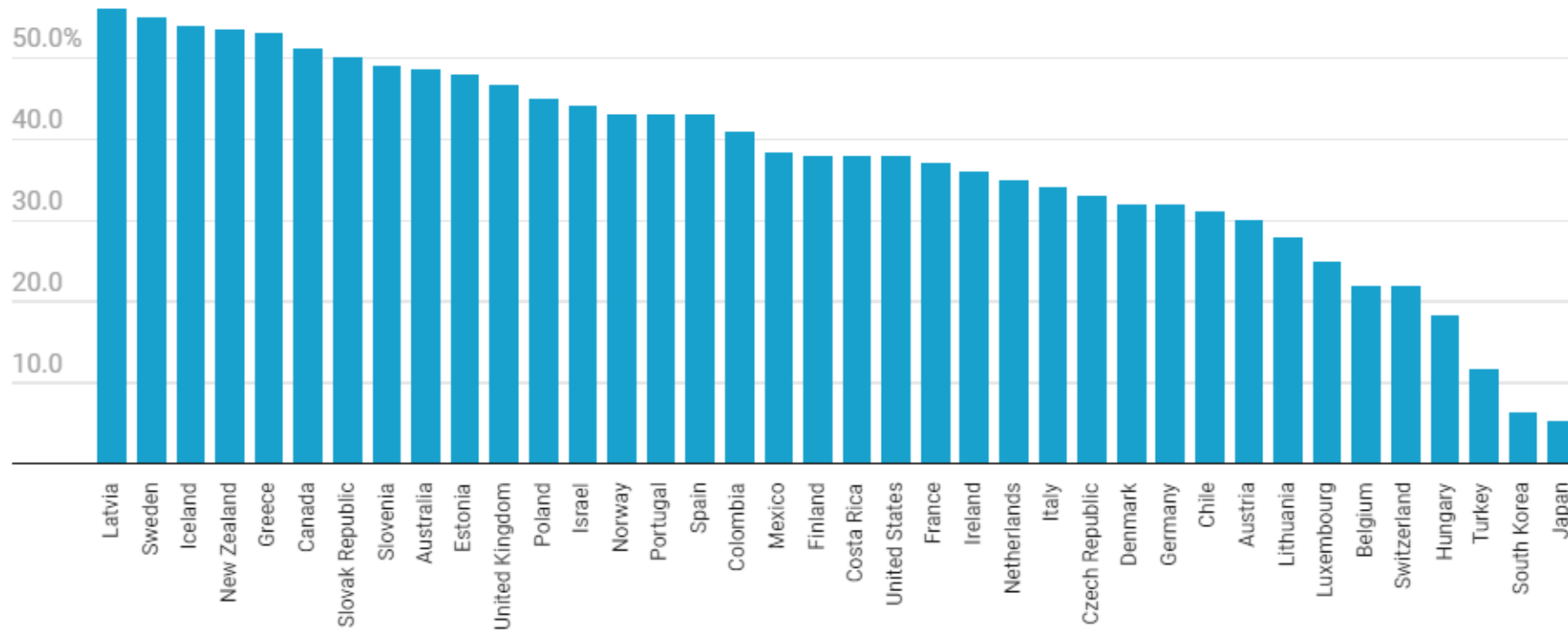
- Canada is the only G20 country to have reached gender parity in the top five grades of its public service.
- The mean proportion of women leaders in the civil services of G20 countries is 29.3% – a 1.6 percentage point improvement in the two years since our last Index and a 9.6 point improvement over 10 years.

Women in the top two civil service grades, EU countries



- Bulgaria, where women account for 59.5% of the top two tiers of its civil service, tops the EU ranking. Eight other EU countries – Croatia, Slovenia, Greece, Finland, Latvia, Romania, Lithuania and Portugal – have reached or exceeded gender parity.
- The mean proportion of women in the top two tiers of EU countries' civil services is 42.7%. This is a 0.8 percentage point improvement since the last Index was published in 2020, and a 7.5 point improvement since 2013.

Women in the senior civil service, OECD countries



- Latvia tops the OECD ranking, with women accounting for 56% of the top tiers of its civil service. Six other countries have reached or exceeded gender parity – Sweden, Iceland, New Zealand, Greece, Canada, and Slovakia.
- The mean proportion of women in the upper echelons of civil services in the 38 OECD countries is 36.2%.

Steps countries that are serious about making change have taken:

- Reappraising how women enter the civil service – promoting gender balance on selection panels and candidate pools, for example
- Working to root out unconscious bias
- Establishing mentoring and career development programmes
- Creating teams and networks dedicated to championing women
- Taking concrete steps to address the gender pay gap
- Promoting flexible working and introducing supportive workforce policies around issues such as pregnancy, childcare and the menopause
- Establishing safe and effective channels through which any civil servant, female or otherwise, can report instances of workplace harassment and similar
- Requiring departments and agencies to reach and report on targets
- Using data to track progress and identify where action may be required to drive improvements

Gender parity in civil service leadership positions should be the norm around the world. When women equal men around the decision-making table, there are positive knock-on effects not only for women themselves but for men, for communities, and for society at large too.

A lot of good work has been done but there is much more to do!