

Proposals by the Women in Leadership network to strengthen support for the gender strategy over the next three years

- The ECB's Women in Leadership Network (WiL) is a staff initiative whose core objective is to enhance the representation of women in management and decision-making at the ECB, thereby supporting the objective of creating a more diverse and inclusive working environment. The Women organise Women (WoW) Network shares similar objectives and several of its representatives have contributed to WiL's analysis of progress on the 2020-2026 gender strategy and end-2022 interim targets
- The WiL Steering Board welcomes the success of the gender strategy for 2020-2026 in achieving the intake and share targets for management and senior management to end-2022, as well as entry-level professionals. This suggests that more ambitious targets (share target of 50:50) are justified going forward as realistic and achievable, taking into account the number of vacant positions.
- But it submits that the ECB needs to do more to ensure it reaches its targets for experts and team leads (F/G/H levels) and to stay on track to reach all targets by 2026. Some business areas have a low share of female staff and fall behind on all share targets.
- The WiL Steering Board recommends three main areas for action to strengthen support for the gender strategy over the next three years:
 - First, WiL proposes to **enhance and strengthen the accountability measures** that were introduced in 2020, in particular, (i) by ensuring all levels of management and staff are assessed and rewarded for their contribution to the gender strategy and diversity and inclusion objectives; (ii) that there is a focus in the next three years on measures being taken to address the pipeline (expert and team lead level) and (iii) to address specific business areas where there is the most significant deviation from the gender targets, by engaging all levels of management in developing the long-term and medium-term strategy for that area, with a strong top-down steering at Board Member level, as this has produced positive results to date.
 - Secondly, WiL proposes to work together with DG-HR and DG-C to **develop a dedicated communications strategy** to counter the backlash and promote further the acceptance of gender mainstreaming, which should be supported at regular intervals by the high-level engagement of our Executive Board members and D&I Sponsors.
 - Thirdly, WiL proposes to **obtain further support from HR for the development of the pipeline** at the ECB. WiL organises and hosts initiatives aimed at encouraging women to apply for promotion (e.g. panel discussions on 'get to the next level' and group coaching sessions), but would like to promote more events and training with external speakers for which support should be prioritised.