

Contact information:

Name: Dena Rashed

Office phone: 26152383

Cell phone: 01280009078

E-mail: dena.rashed@aucegypt.edu

Web site: <http://www.aucegypt.edu/media>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 23, 2021

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AUC'S WOMEN ON BOARDS OBSERVATORY
AND THE EGYPTIAN EXCHANGE, THEBOARDROOM AFRICA RELEASES**

THE BOARD DIVERSITY INDEX EGYPT 2020 EDITION

January 23, 2021, Cairo – More than half of the listed companies have at least one woman on board as of July 31, 2020, compared to 47% in 2019, indicating that more effort is needed by EGX listed companies to increase the representation of women on their boards of directors, according to the Board Diversity Index, a new report released by [TheBoardroom Africa](#) in partnership with the [Women on Boards Observatory](#) at The American University in Cairo (AUC) and The [Egyptian Exchange](#) (EGX).

The index tracks the number of listed companies' boards by country and identifies all board seats filled by women, while also monitoring the number of women in chair and other executive positions. Research to date covers publicly listed boards across 11 African countries including Egypt.

As of July 2020, among the 242 companies listed on the Egyptian Exchange, women hold only 10.8% of board seats. Although this figure represents a 0.7% increase in board seats held by women from 2019, the Board Diversity Index shows that women are rarely included in the governance and management of some of Egypt's most notable companies.

Key sectors assessed in the 2020 Board Diversity Index include, but are not limited to, banks, energy, industrial goods, shipping, textiles, travel and leisure, and utilities. Amongst these sectors, the textile and

durables sectors have the highest percentage of women board directors, with 2 out of 8 companies having more than 30% female directors. However, in terms of the aggregate number of women, the energy and support services sector outperforms all sectors: 23% of all directors in the energy sector are female.

Highlights from the report:

- Women hold 10.8% of the board seats of EGX listed companies, an increase of 0.7% from 2019.
- 53% of companies have at least one woman on their boards, compared to 47% in 2019.
- 10.3% of EGX listed companies ranked as “top performers” with respect to gender diversity with 30% or more of their board seats held by women. The top three performers include First Investment Company and Real Estate Development, Marine & Oil Services (SAE), and El Orouba Securities Brokerage, each of which has a board that is 60% women.
- Women make up 3.9% of CEOs/MDs, 8.7% of COOs and 2.1% of CFOs on Egypt’s listed boards.

Commenting on the methodology, Marcia Ashong, Founder and CEO of TheBoardroom Africa said, “TheBoardroom Africa has undertaken a robust analysis of boardroom gender diversity in Egypt and 11 other African states over the past three years by analyzing board composition through public declarations of executives and officers. This year, we’re delighted to count the Women on Boards Observatory and the Egyptian Exchange as partners who understand the strong link between gender diversity and good corporate governance.”

Over the last decade, Egyptian women have made significant strides in access to rights, education, and the labor market. While Egyptian universities turn out more female than male graduates, those gains have failed to translate to equitable representation in the workforce and at the highest level of leadership, the boardroom.

Commenting on the significance of the 2020 Board Diversity Index, Ghada Howaidy, Founder of the Women on Boards Observatory and Associate Dean for Executive Education and External Relations at AUC’s School of Business, said, “Good corporate governance helps firms improve performance, drive growth and manage risk. To be truly effective, a board requires a diversity of skills and perspectives. The Board Diversity Index shows that many EGX listed companies are true gender diversity champions, but that there is still much work to be done.”

Commenting on the role of stock exchanges in promoting gender diversity, Dr. Mohamed Farid, Chairman of the Egyptian Exchange, said "EGX is fully committed and aware of the impact that greater inclusivity could have in building competitive, value-creating companies and therefore resilient and inclusive economies. To that end, we have collaborated with the AUC’s Women on Board Observatory to promote stronger board governance for listed companies, build a Board Ready Women database, offering board placement services to listed companies, developing an annual monitoring report for women on boards as well as providing corporate governance awareness and training programs with an embedded gender component to highlight the benefits of board diversity. Moving on to close the gender gap, all listed companies are now required to put at least one woman on their boards.”

Access the 2020 Board Diversity Index: Egypt Edition at bit.ly/EGXDiversityChampions.

For regular updates from the University during coronavirus visit www.aucegypt.edu/coronavirus

For more information about the university news and events follow us on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/aucegypt>

And Twitter @AUC

The American University in Cairo (AUC) was founded in 1919 and is major contributor to the social, intellectual and cultural life of the Arab Region. It is a vital bridge between East and West, linking Egypt and the region to the world through scholarly research, partnerships with academic and research institutions, and study abroad programs. An independent, nonprofit, politically non-partisan, non-sectarian and equal opportunity institution, AUC is fully accredited in Egypt and the United States.