

SOCIAL POLICY ANALYSIS WITH DR HELEN KOWALEWSKA

TALKING POINTS

KNOWLEDGE

1. Who was the first woman to head a FTSE 100 company and when did this happen?
2. What percentage of women were on company boards in the UK in 2018?

COMPREHENSION

3. What do people in board positions do?
4. How do countries differ in the way that they respond to female underrepresentation in the boardroom?

APPLICATION

5. What questions would you ask women in business to find out why they think they are not advancing to executive positions?

ANALYSIS

6. What could be the reasons for women being underrepresented on company boards?
7. How and why does a country's welfare state impact female board representation?

EVALUATION

8. Helen's research focuses specifically on underrepresentation on company boards. In what other situations could gender diversity be important? What about at your school?
9. Do you agree with Helen that the government should take an active role in increasing female representation in leadership positions in the business world? Explain your reasoning.

CREATIVITY

10. Can you think of other ways to get more women into leadership positions? Come up with your own approach to support gender diversity.

ACTIVITIES YOU CAN DO AT HOME OR IN THE CLASSROOM

- Imagine you are trying to convince a politician to vote for mandatory boardroom gender quotas. How would you present your argument? What evidence would you cite? What counter-arguments do you think might come up and how would you respond to them? Write a policy brief of maximum one page in length summarising your policy position and why it is important.
- Can you think of a social policy reform you would like to introduce in your school? What would be the advantages, disadvantages, and consequences of your reform? How difficult would it be to implement? What data would you need to collect? Design a research plan to help you develop the most effective policy to achieve your goal.

MORE RESOURCES

- Helen has a YouTube video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=OS93EiM5Lpg) and a blog post (<https://socialpolicyblog.com/2019/12/16/bringing-women-on-boards-to-create-women-friendly-workplaces/>) with more information about her research on women in the workplace.
- To discover another interesting social policy project, check out this article in *The Independent* on Helen's research about female breadwinners in different countries: www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/household-earnings-sole-women-men-gender-us-west-europe-salary-a8894426.html
- Helen's first experience of data collection was with the 'Caught in the Act of Protest' project, which studied and compared political protests in 7 different European countries. You can read about the project here: <https://protestsurvey.eu/index.php?page=index>
- Watch economic policy analyst Amy Hanauer's TED Talk about the difference even small changes in public policy can have on a community: www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBRxI3Klhj0
- Recruitment agency Monster has devised a fascinating infographic to show the history of women in the workplace: https://www.monster.co.uk/career-advice/article/History_Women_Workplace