MEDIA RELEASE

**The gender diversity divide: “I don’t see what the problem is” say the men**

* 18 per cent of men compared to 45 per cent of women think that equally capable male and female colleagues are not paid or rewarded in an equal manner
* 21 per cent of men compared to 48 per cent of women do not believe that the same career opportunities are available to all, regardless of gender
* Just 9 per cent of respondents believe gender quotas can have a big impact; instead flexible working and cultural change are key

Women are less likely than their male co-workers to believe that pay equality and equal opportunities exist for both genders in the workplace, according to a new survey by recruiting experts Hays.

Hays, an organisation known for supporting the advancement of women in the workplace, says that although progress is being made, gender diversity remains a business critical issue.

In the Hays global survey of almost 6,000 people, released for International Women’s Day on Sunday 8th March, 18 per cent of men think that equally capable male and female workers are *not* paid or rewarded equally, compared to 45 per cent of women.

The survey also found that almost one in two women (48 per cent) compared to one in five men (21 per cent) say that the same career opportunities are not open to equally capable colleagues of both genders.

What did people think would improve gender diversity?

‘Make It Happen’ is the International Women’s Day 2015 theme, which calls for greater gender equality. To do that, almost one in two (44 per cent) of the survey respondents say that more flexible working practices would have the biggest impact on improving gender diversity in their workplace. This was equal to changes to workplace culture through education across the business (44 per cent), highlighting female role models (32 per cent), changes to organisational policy (32 per cent), changes to government policy (27 per cent) and better board backing for diversity issues (26 per cent).

Just 9 per cent of respondents said implementing quotas would have a big impact, showing the vast majority believe that cultural change and practical measures, rather than formal quotas, are the answer.

"Our survey shows there is a major disparity between the views of men and women when it comes to equal pay and equal opportunities,” says Alistair Cox, CEO of Hays.

“We found that more women than men think the sexes aren’t paid or rewarded equally, while more than double the number of women to men say the same career options are not open to both genders.

“This suggests that most people in executive and senior management roles –the majority of which are men – still fail to see any inequality when it comes to pay and career opportunities between the sexes. This makes it difficult to see how we will see any significant advancement in this area while the majority of people in senior roles do not recognise it as an issue.

“Given all the research espousing the benefits of a gender-diverse workforce, it is a paradox therefore that we still see such a gap in representation and a disproportionately low number of women in leadership positions, supported and encouraged to reach their career goals, and paid equally. Many organisations now have specific programmes in place to address this issue, yet it has to be asked how successful these might be given that the majority of our survey respondents felt as though no imbalance existed in terms of pay or opportunities. Maybe this lack of recognition of the issue is the real obstacle to change."

For more, please see social.hays.com/diversity

**Hays surveyed 5,949 people across 31 countries during December 2014 and January 2015.**

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**About Hays**

Hays is the leading global specialist recruiting group. We are the expert at recruiting qualified, professional and skilled people worldwide, being the market leader in Asia Pacific and the UK and one of the market leaders in Continental Europe and Latin America. We operate across the private and public sectors, dealing in permanent positions, contract roles and temporary assignments.

As at 31 December 2014 the Group employed 8,748 staff operating from 244 offices in 33 countries across 20 specialisms. For the year ended 30 June 2014, Hays reported net fees of £724.9 million and operating profit (pre-exceptional items) of £140.3 million. Hays placed around 57,000 candidates into permanent jobs and around 212,000 people into temporary assignments. 24% of Group net fees were generated in Asia Pacific.

Hays operates in the following countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Chile, China, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UAE, the UK and the USA.