

HEIDRICK & STRUGGLES

CEO Appointments Reach Record Levels, Surpassing Pre-Pandemic Highs According to Heidrick & Struggles' 2021 Route to The Top Report

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- More new CEOs have C-suite experience beyond traditional CFO and COO roles, with Chief Risk Officers, Chief Strategy Officers and Chief Technology Officers making inroads to the top job

- Share of women CEOs appointed globally doubled to 13% in first half of 2021

- Ethnic and racial diversity among CEOs in Fortune 100 companies still low

CHICAGO, Nov. 18, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Companies in the first half of 2021 appointed a record number of CEOs, making up for a significant slowdown in the second half of 2020, according to the [2021 Route to the Top](#) report from [Heidrick & Struggles](#) (NASDAQ: HSII), a premier provider of executive search, leadership assessment and development, organization and team effectiveness, and culture shaping services globally. The global report also shows that compared to their predecessors, new CEOs are more likely to be women (11%), to be from countries other than where the company is headquartered (30%) and to have cross-border experience (46%).

"The appointments in early 2021 provide a first-look at the CEOs that will lead in a post-pandemic era," said Jeff Sanders, vice chairman and co-managing Partner of the global CEO & Board of Directors Practice, Heidrick & Struggles. "The top job, like so many others, has been altered by the rapid changes that have taken place over the last 18 months. We are seeing companies start to look beyond the traditional ranks of CFO and COO when looking for their next CEO. In fact, we saw the proportion of new CEOs who held other C-suite roles more than double in the first half of this year compared to the same period last year, revealing that boards and organizations are taking a more expansive view in their CEO succession planning."

The annual study of CEO placements provides an analysis of the profiles of the 1,095 CEOs at the largest publicly listed companies in 24 markets as of July 5, 2021. Included in the report's data are companies from Australia and New Zealand, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Portugal, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States. For the first time, the report also analyzed the race and ethnicity of Fortune 100 CEOs in the United States and found: 4% are Asian, 4% are Hispanic/Latinx, 3% are Black and 1% are Middle Eastern or North African.

Additional findings from the global *Route to the Top 2021* report include:

- **Nearly one-third of CEOs with previous C-suite experience appointed globally in the first half of 2021 (32%) came from a role other than CEO, CFO, COO**
 - 12% of the CEOs appointed were formerly risk, strategy or technology chiefs, up from 3% during the first half of 2020
 - Only 18% had previous CFO experience, down from 24% during the same time in 2020
- **Progress toward gender equity surged forward after last year's pause**
 - The share of women appointed to CEO roles had dipped to 6% in the second half of 2020, and rose to 13% – more than double – in the first half of 2021
 - Despite the increase in women appointed to the corner office, women make up only 6% of CEOs globally today
- **62% of appointments were internal during the first half of 2021, up from 53% of appointments during the same period in 2020**
 - When looking at appointments from the start of 2020 through the middle of 2021, women accounted for 11% of new CEOs hired internally, but made up only 7% of external hires
- **Globally, the profile of CEOs in 2021 show**
 - They were 49 years old at the time of appointment, and 25% were appointed before age 45
 - Average tenure of 6.6 years
 - Ireland has the greatest share of women CEOs (14%), followed by the U.S. (12%) and Singapore (11%); Canada, Italy and Mexico tied for the lowest share (0%)
 - Companies in Hong Kong have the greatest preference for non-national CEOs (76%) while China has the lowest (2%)
 - Switzerland CEOs have the greatest share of cross-border experience (74%) while China has the lowest (10%)
 - Sweden has the highest percentage of CEOs with cross-sector experience (45%) while CEOs in the United Arab Emirates have the lowest share (12%)

"As the global corporate environment continues to evolve to a greater stakeholder view, a change is also happening for the CEO," said Bonnie Gwin, vice chairman and co-managing Partner of the global CEO & Board of Directors Practice, Heidrick & Struggles. "CEOs are quickly becoming the standard-bearer for a wide-range of issues from cybersecurity, sustainability, social justice and diversity, equity and inclusion, to inspiring employees and navigating rapid digital and societal transformation. These changes are requiring a new CEO profile that brings a wide and differing range of experiences in life and business to the role."

About the Route to the Top 2021 report

The annual Route to the Top 2021 report provides an analysis of the profiles of the 1,095 CEOs at the largest publicly listed companies in the following 24 markets: Australia and New Zealand, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Italy, Mexico,

Netherlands, Portugal, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The analysis has been conducted as of July 5, 2021.

About Heidrick & Struggles

Heidrick & Struggles (Nasdaq: HSII) is a premier provider of global leadership advisory and on-demand talent solutions, serving the senior-level talent and consulting needs of the world's top organizations. In our role as trusted leadership advisors, we partner with our clients to develop future-ready leaders and organizations, bringing together our services and offerings in executive search, diversity and inclusion, leadership assessment and development, organization and team acceleration, culture shaping and on-demand, independent talent solutions. Heidrick & Struggles pioneered the profession of executive search more than 65 years ago. Today, the firm provides integrated talent and human capital solutions to help our clients change the world, one leadership team at a time. © www.heidrick.com

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