

April 8, 2011

«Moving towards equality in the composition of company boards and supervisory committees»



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The law on equal representation of women and men on company boards and supervisory committees was passed by Parliament on January 27 2011.

Pointing out the inequality at the heart of the executive bodies of large French companies, the legislator has imposed the obligation, where either gender is not represented on the board or supervisory committee of a company with shares admitted for negotiation on a regulated market, that at least one representative of that missing gender must be appointed at the next ordinary general meeting at which appointments of board or supervisory committee members is on the agenda.

Moreover, and as far as listed companies are concerned, by 2014 each gender must account for no less than 20% of board or supervisory committee members, this proportion rising to 40% by 2017.

This 40% proportion will also be effective from 2020 for large companies counting at least 500 employees and achieving turnover or a balance sheet total of at least 50 million Euros.

In order to ensure that this legislation is applied, apart from rendering null and void nominations made in violation of the equality principle, the legislator has shown ingenuity in “hitting” attendance allowances, which will be suspended until the position has been adjusted.

More symbolic than revolutionary, this text has the merit of showing the path to be followed on the road to equality.

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