



Milan Chamber honours Pledge with gender diversity stats

Lacey Yong
27 July 2017



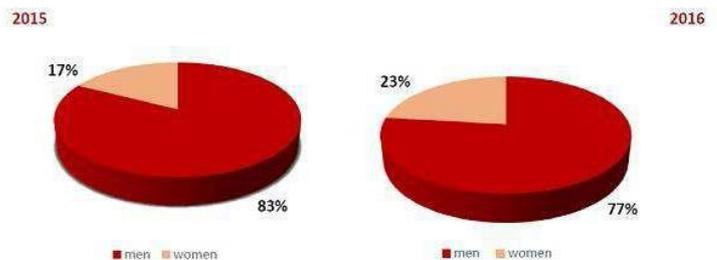
Milan Cathedral, istock.com/CarloRestuccia

The Milan Chamber of Arbitration has released gender diversity statistics for 2015 and 2016, honouring its commitment on signing the Equal Representation in Arbitration Pledge.

A report sent to the Pledge steering committee and GAR reveals that 34 (13%) of the 256 arbitrators appointed to hear disputes at the chamber in 2015 were women, including two tribunal chairs. Last year, the same number were appointed out of 254 arbitrators, pushing the percentage of appointments of female arbitrators up to 14%. Of those appointments, seven women chaired the tribunal and 13 served as sole arbitrators.

According to the chamber, the slight increase in the appointment of women arbitrators one year after it signed the Pledge is "the first improvement" in gender diversity at the institution, though it acknowledges that more can be done.

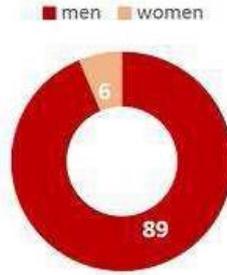
The chamber says that the number of women it appoints is higher than the number appointed by parties, a trend observed by arbitration institutions internationally. Of the 121 appointments it made in 2015, 17% (21) were women. The following year it was behind 109 appointments, 23% (25) of which were women.



2015



2016



In contrast, parties appointed a mere 11 women (10%) out of 113 appointments they made in 2015. The following year, they appointed just six out of 95 (6%).

The chamber says that parties should play a more active role in increasing gender diversity on tribunals by shortlisting women.

However, the data suggests that parties aren't the worst offenders when it comes to appointing. In 2015, co-arbitrators were called on to appoint chairs 19 times - all were men. The two women who did serve as chair in proceedings administered by the chamber were selected by an appointing authority.

The results for 2016 were similar. Co-arbitrators appointed 16 men to serve as chair, while appointing authorities chose three women.

In the report, the chamber says it has several initiatives to promote gender diversity, including increasing the number of women arbitrators and women on its staff and governing bodies.

It adds it is examining women's attitudes to gender diversity and considering whether to release data regarding the arbitrators that women appoint when they act as in-house counsel, party's counsel and co-arbitrators.

The Milan chamber's attention to its commitments in the Pledge is to be expected given that Stefano Azzali, secretary-general of the chamber, is one of four Italians on the steering committee, along with Maria Beatrice Deli, secretary-general of the Italian Arbitration Association; Cecilia Carrara, partner at Legance in Rome, and Lluís Paradell Trius, counsel at Freshfields in Rome.

It also fits with a general drive by the Milan chamber to modernise and to increase transparency surrounding the appointment of arbitrators - including by disclosing the composition of arbitral tribunals from early 2016. The chamber has also decided to publish anonymised decisions on arbitrator challenges, which are made by the same council that makes arbitrator appointments.

Azzali tells GAR that the percentage of female arbitrators at the chamber is "still too low". This is unsurprising as it reflects the "universe of arbitration practitioners and experts," which mostly consists of men, he says.

Azzali adds that arbitral institutions are not to blame for the limited numbers of women. Institutions "do more than the parties in considering female arbitrators" for appointment and the "missing contribution" comes from party counsel, he says.

The Pledge and ArbitralWomen have played an important role in increasing awareness of the issue, he says.

The Pledge was launched in May 2016 at GAR Live London and celebrated its first anniversary earlier this year.

As of 26 June, it has attracted 1,890 signatories worldwide/ These include law firms, arbitral institutions and organisations and individuals.

Several other institutions have released gender diversity data this year in line with their commitment under the Pledge. In June, the ICC International Court of Arbitration released its data for the second year in a row, showing a nearly 5% growth in the number of women arbitrators appointed in 2016. Improvements were also recorded by the Swiss Chambers Arbitration Institution and Arbitral Institute of the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce.

According to research conducted by Lucy Greenwood, Houston-based arbitrator and member of the Pledge steering committee, the percentage of women appointed as arbitrators by institutions in 2016 rose some 12% to 17%, which she called an "encouraging sign."

The Milan chamber will host its annual conference in November, this year focusing on IP disputes.

The article is provided by the courtesy of Global Arbitration Review

Former Freshfields lawyer switches chambers in London

Another award in Finnish nuclear power plant dispute

Burford lands big win in airlines case

PCA opens in Singapore

US appeal court upholds award "de-enforcement"

Philippines held liable in water tariff case

More

-

Swiss Chambers releases gender diversity stats

-

A year of the Pledge

-

ICC reports progress on gender diversity on tribunals

-

Milan gathering looks at emergency arbitration and diversity

-

A bella notte in Milan

