

**Women Highlight Affirmative Action, Seats in Parliament as Required Policies to Advance Their Role in Society; New Zealand a Stand Out in Advancing Role of Women**

*TWEET: #MasterCard survey finds that #women are still missing from top jobs in business & government in #AsiaPacific <http://bit.ly/VyX0uq>*

**Singapore, 6 March 2013** - Women are still facing barriers to leadership positions in the government and private sector across the Asia/Pacific region, according to [MasterCard](#)'s latest Index of Women's Advancement.

The MasterCard Worldwide Index of Women's Advancement measures the socioeconomic standing of women across Asia/Pacific, Middle East and Africa. The Index is comprised of three main indicators which are derived from additional sub-indicators: Employment (Workforce Participation, Regular Employment), Education (Secondary Education, Tertiary Education) and Leadership (Business Owners, Business Leaders, Political leaders). Each indicator measures the ratio of women to every 100 men in each of the 14 [Asia/Pacific](#) markets covered by the research.

Scores are indexed to 100 to indicate how close or how far women in each market are to achieving socio-economic parity with men. A score under 100 indicates gender inequality in favor of males while a score above 100 indicates inequality in favor of females. A score of 100 indicates equality between the sexes. *The Index and its accompanying reports do not represent MasterCard financial performance.*

Overall, amongst the 14 Asia/Pacific markets, New Zealand ranked first (77.8 Index Score), followed by Australia (76.0), the Philippines (70.5), Singapore (67.5) and Taiwan (64.7). At the other end of spectrum, India (38.0), Japan (48.1) and Korea (49.7) had Index scores indicating that much more can be done to achieve gender parity.

MasterCard's research on women's advancement shows that while more women have access to job opportunities and tertiary education in Asia/Pacific, there are still barriers preventing them from taking top positions in the government or private sector.

At 91.2, New Zealand tops the region for workforce participation and regular employment with over 90 women for every 100 men in the regular workforce. New Zealand women also lead the region for top jobs in the private sector and government with an overall leadership score of 51.6.

In 7 Asia/Pacific markets – China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam – women are on par or better represented in secondary and tertiary institutions than their male counterparts.

However, their representation in leadership roles in business and government is still low across the region. All but one market – New Zealand – had fewer than 50 women business/government leaders for every 100 male business/government leaders, according to the scores of the latest index. Across the 14 Asia/Pacific markets, only Australia (49.7) and the Philippines (45.6) came close to gender parity. Markets that scored especially low in this category include India (15.9) Japan (14.8), Korea (17.5) and Thailand (18.6).

[Georgette Tan, group head, Communications, Asia/Pacific, Middle East & Africa](#), said: "There is still a lot to be done in our region to enhance the role of women across all aspects of society; there are still too few women leaders in government and business, and not enough women-owned and run businesses. There are standout markets which have repeatedly improved in terms of advancing opportunities and access for women, but more needs to be done."

When asked what would help [mailto:Subrahmanian,%20Vasundhara\(SIN-WSW\)@mastercard.com](mailto:Subrahmanian,%20Vasundhara(SIN-WSW)@mastercard.com) improve women's societal standing, MasterCard's latest survey on Consumer Purchasing Priorities – Education found that women in Asia/Pacific view affirmative action (17.1%) and more seats in parliament (13.7%) as policies that would advance women's role in society. Parental childcare entitlement tops the list of key policy areas Australian, Japanese and South Korean women see as crucial for advancing women's role in society.

In China, Malaysia and Taiwan, however, women see SME opportunities-as the most pressing need to achieve gender parity in their societies.

MasterCard will also be supporting the [Women in Leadership Asia \(WIL\) Forum 2013](#) which is being held in Kuala Lumpur on 28-29 March 2013.

MasterCard Worldwide Index of Women's Advancement														
Market	NZ	AU	PH	SG	TW	VN	HK	CN	TH	ID	MY	KR	JP	IN
<b>Overall Score</b>	<b>77.8</b>	<b>76.0</b>	<b>70.5</b>	<b>67.5</b>	<b>64.7</b>	<b>64.4</b>	<b>63.3</b>	<b>61.5</b>	<b>61.3</b>	<b>56.5</b>	<b>54.3</b>	<b>49.7</b>	<b>48.1</b>	<b>38.0</b>
<b>Employment</b>	<b>91.2</b>	<b>90.5</b>	<b>76.7</b>	<b>86.1</b>	<b>89.3</b>	<b>79.8</b>	<b>86.8</b>	<b>83.8</b>	<b>85.6</b>	<b>74.4</b>	<b>75.7</b>	<b>83.1</b>	<b>83.1</b>	<b>43.6</b>
Workforce Participation	83.2	81.9	63.0	74.1	79.7	90.1	75.3	84.1	80.1	61.1	57.2	69	69.1	35.8
Regular Employment	104.9	105.1	93.4	113.0	107.0	70.7	109.6	83.5	91.5	90.6	108.9	101.7	101.0	53.0
<b>Education</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>97.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>97.8</b>	<b>98.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>91.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>84.5</b>	<b>94.5</b>	<b>79.3</b>
Secondary Education	104.6	95.1	107.5	99.5	97.8	104.4	101.2	102.6	108.9	97.7	107.9	100.6	100.1	92.0
Tertiary Education	140.5	133.3	128.4	96.1	107.1	101.4	108.5	112.9	128.0	86.1	129.9	71.4	89.3	68.3
<b>Leadership</b>	<b>51.6</b>	<b>49.7</b>	<b>45.6</b>	<b>36.5</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>33.5</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>26.4</b>	<b>21.1</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>15.9</b>
Business Owners	42.0	50.9	33.3	32.7	25.2	40.9	24.9	40.9	34.8	29.8	18.1	27.5	21.2	13.2
Business Leaders	68.6	58.4	114.3	46.4	26.3	28.4	44.3	19.4	30.2	27.2	34.3	10.5	10.5	25.0
Political Leaders	47.6	41.3	28.5	32.0	43.4	32.3	22.7	27.1	18.6	22.8	15.3	18.6	12.8	12.2

The scores above show the proportion of women to every 100 men for each category. Scores of over 100 are truncated to 100 when the overall Index score is derived, so as to ensure one component does not skew the overall Index score.

For the full report go to: [www.masterintelligence.com](http://www.masterintelligence.com)

### MasterCard and its Suite of Research Properties

The MasterCard Worldwide Index suite in Asia/Pacific, Middle East and Africa includes the long-running MasterCard Worldwide Index of Consumer Confidence, as well as the [MasterCard Worldwide Index of Women's Advancement](#), [Online Shopping](#), Index of Financial Literacy, and the [Index of Global Destination Cities](#). In addition to the Indices, MasterCard's research properties also include a range of consumer surveys including [Ethical Spending](#) and a series on [Consumer Purchasing Priorities](#) (covering Travel, Dining & Entertainment, Education, Money Management, Luxury and General Shopping).

MasterCard also regularly releases Insights reports providing analysis of business dynamics, financial policies and regulatory activities in the Asia/Pacific, Middle East and Africa region. Over 80 Insights reports have been produced since 2004.

MasterCard has also released a series of four books on Asian consumer insights, authored by [Dr. Yuwa Hedrick-Wong](#), Global Economic Advisor for MasterCard Worldwide and published by John Wiley & Sons.

### About MasterCard

[MasterCard](#) (NYSE: MA), [www.mastercard.com](http://www.mastercard.com), is a technology company in the global payments industry. We operate the world's fastest payments processing network, connecting consumers, financial institutions, merchants, governments and businesses in more than 210 countries and territories. MasterCard's products and solutions make everyday commerce activities – such as shopping, traveling, running a business and managing finances – easier, more secure and more efficient for everyone. Follow us on Twitter [@MasterCardNews](#), join the discussion on the [Cashless Conversations Blog](#) and [subscribe](#) for the latest news.

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[1] Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

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