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**Gender discrimination improves but lack of respect still a challenge for women working in wholesale**

**Wholesale is shaping up to be a great place to work but a lack of respect for women is still a key challenge, according to the latest Lumina Intelligence research.**

The annual study commissioned, by Women in Wholesale, looks at trend analysis over recent years to identify areas of support. Key improvements include a drop in gender discrimination in the workplace, with women who said they had experienced issues decreasing from 57% in 2019 to 36% in 2021.

Support for the diversity agenda has become more important since COVID, according to 20% of respondents, with 65% said it was as important as it was before.

More than half of respondents (54%) agree that their company is doing enough to achieve gender balance at the top – painting a positive picture for the diversity agenda. Meanwhile, wellbeing support in the sector is also looking positive with 44% of companies having mental health first aiders and a third offering meditation or mindfulness seminars.

However, women are still facing some of the same personal challenges as in previous years. When asked about barriers to progress, 28% of respondents cited a ‘lack of respect’ as the biggest challenge for women working in the sector, with no improvements since 2019, followed by lack or opportunities (20%). 44% said that career development is the main area of their job that they need support with, followed by time management (27%) and managing people (24%).

75% of respondents said they were offered more flexibility in terms of working hours during COVID and 78% had more flexibility with location – much of this will continue into the longer term.

“Overall, it’s a really positive picture for careers in our sector,” said WiW Founder, Elit Rowland. “The majority of businesses are offering flexible and remote working, and mental health support. But the issue of respect for women and career progress cannot be ignored and will play an important role in our agenda moving forward,” she added.

“The study reveals continued progress in gender discrimination and a positive response to improvements in diversity. WiW has clearly been a driving force for change and providing support. It was encouraging to see more flexible support continuing for employees who are carers and have children. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to complete this important study,” Jill Livesey, Managing Director Lumina Intelligence.

**ENDS**

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Lumina Intelligence inspires the global food and drink sector with deep, actionable insights powered by the world’s best analytics technology. Our products and services are used by the major brands and organisations in these fast moving and growing markets to support business planning, strategic marketing and new product development.

With offices in London, Chicago, Montpellier, and Singapore, and local on the ground analysts across our businesses, you can trust our market knowledge. We are committed to providing all our customers with up to date accurate information to support critical decision making.

Combining the expertise and experience of HIM, MCA Insight and Lumina Intelligence, we are the experts in market and consumer insight across the food & drink and nutrition markets.

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