

# CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Happy International Women's Day! Today is an opportunity for us to reflect on not only the progress women have made toward a more equitable future but also the many ways in which we can improve.

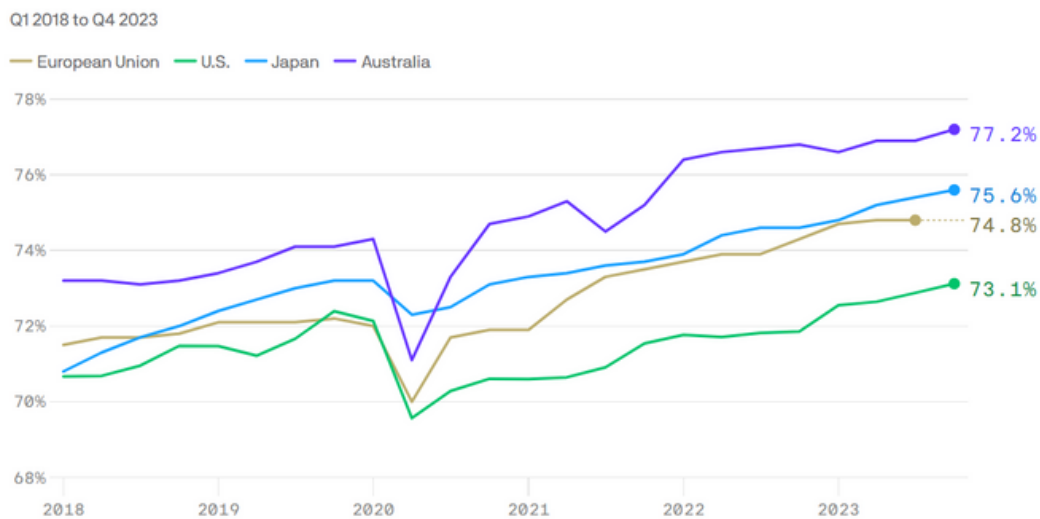
As if on cue, today's labor report contained more good news on how women are strengthening the US economy. After leaving the workforce during the pandemic lockdown and school closures, women are flocking back. The proportion of working-age women who are in the labor force rose to another high last month. The extraordinary strength of the US economy – with unemployment still below 4% even as inflation heads down – owes much to the flexibility of the American labor market. Americans, many of them women, came back to work as job vacancies soared after the pandemic.

## THE *BEST* TEAMS ARE *BIT* TEAMS

It has become fashionable to decry efforts to promote DEI – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Some even argue that such efforts work against successful investing. Maybe it is time to replace that acronym. But it is certainly not right to ignore what we know: balanced teams make better decisions. So let's start a movement to support balanced teams. Even those who have walked away from DEI should be able to support BIT: Balance, Innovation and Teamwork.

At RockCreek we know that while groupthink undermines success, bringing different viewpoints to a team supports good decisions. We believe that balanced, innovative teams– BIT– should be the new mantra. On International Women's Day it is appropriate to celebrate gender balance.

## Working-age Women Labor Force Participation Rate



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Eurostat and OECD via Moody's; Note: Japan and Australia covers women aged 15 - 64, EU is 20 - 64; U.S. is 20 - 64; Chart: Axios Visuals.

Our data and research show that gender balance leads to better decision-making, results, and performance. RockCreek co-authored a groundbreaking research paper with the IFC (the World Bank's private sector arm) entitled, "Moving Toward Gender Balance in Private Equity," which also found that the performance of gender-balanced investment teams is correlated with higher returns. As part of the study, RockCreek analyzed the performance data from 700 firms and surveyed over 500 funds, specifically in emerging markets, and identified new ways to increase the number of high-performing, talented men and women in private equity and venture firms as well as in underlying portfolio companies, and ways to foster recruitment and leadership training of balanced teams in these sectors. As of today, no such study of the US private equity industry looking at a 20 year history exists.

Since inception, RockCreek has invested close to \$3bn in woman-owned firms across energy transition, health, education, real estate, and technology, among others. And while recent data showed that woman and diverse-owned firms grew over 2023, they remain underrepresented in the market, seeking only 6% of funding targeted by private equity firms in 2023. Venture is not exactly better when it comes to the firms or founders. We're working to change that.

## HAPPY INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

We commend the balanced teams that include or are led by thoughtful women across the globe on International Women's Day. And we thank our partners, including the Equality Fund, for being allies in the cause for gender equity in 2024 and beyond.

## INVEST IN WOMEN: ACCELERATE PROGRESS

As a firm founded by a woman and led by a balanced team, RockCreek invests in companies and teams generating strong returns by harnessing the power of innovation to solve global challenges.

### Nearly \$3bn Invested...

BIOAGE

Harnessing the biology of human aging to develop novel targets and therapies for metabolic diseases



Connecting renovators with projects to the best local general contractors



Providing frontline workers with high-support asynchronous online training

HARBOURVIEW

BOND



MANNA TREE

MOXXIE VENTURES



LYNROCK LAKE