

MEDIA RELEASE

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Gender pay gap falls 1.1 percentage points to new low of 21.7%

— More women in management drives decline in gender pay gap, but every industry and almost 3 in 4 employers still have gender pay gap larger than 5% in favour of men —

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) has released its annual update on the state of workplace gender equality today, revealing the average total remuneration gender pay gap has dropped to 21.7% in 2023.

It's a **decrease of 1.1 percentage points** (from 22.8% in 2022) – the second largest single year drop since WGEA started collecting employer data in 2014.

It means **on average, for every \$1 men earn in Australia, women earn 78 cents.**

The average annual pay difference between men and women has **narrowed by \$1,322**, but a **gap of \$26,393 remains.**

The *Gender Equality Scorecard 2022-23* is based on the results of WGEA's largest ever Employer Census, covering 4.82 million Australian employees.

The key driver of the lower gender pay gap is an increase in the proportion of women in management and in the upper pay quartiles. The proportion of women managers is now at 42% (up from 41% last year).

WGEA Chief Executive Officer Mary Wooldridge said the results show that while slow, there is momentum for change in Australian workplaces.

“Increased discussion and debate around gender equality, a tight labour market and impending legislative reform have helped drive action on workplace gender equality over the last year,” Ms Wooldridge said.

“We see an increase in the proportion of women in management and at the upper pay quartiles, and we also see the proportion of women being promoted and appointed at manager level is higher than the proportion of women managers overall. As this trend continues, we can expect to see the gender pay gap continue to fall.

“This is promising as it signals that employers are increasingly prioritising gender equality as a core business measure and taking action to tackle workforce composition at the manager level.

“However, what we are seeing is that woman working in full-time roles have opportunities to progress into higher-paying management roles and contribute to reducing the gender pay gap, but deviations from the norm are not being supported in the same way.



“The management opportunities for part-time employees are negligible; the number of men taking paid primary carer parental leave has barely shifted; and the number of women in CEO roles and on boards has stagnated.

“If we want real change, we need employers to take bold action. We need employers to look across the drivers of gender inequality and be imaginative in their solutions.

“Publishing gender pay gaps requires employers to understand their unique challenges, develop a purpose-built approach to gender equality and then take intentional and sustained action.

“This Scorecard is a starting point for employers to assess their performance on the national scale and relative to their industry peers and identify where there is room for improvement.”

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About the Agency The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) is an Australian Government statutory agency charged with promoting and improving gender equality in Australian workplaces. Read more and explore the full dataset for your industry at www.wgea.gov.au

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THE FINDINGS: Results from WGEA’s 2023 Gender Equality Scorecard

In 2023, employers made strong progress in the following key areas:

- **Gender Pay Gap:** The average total remuneration gender pay gap decreased by 1.1 percentage points.
- **Workforce composition:** The proportion of employees working in non-highly gender segregated industries reached 50% for the first time.
- **Flexible work:** 84% of employers have a flexible work policy and for the first time more than 50% also hold leaders to account for improving flexibility.
- **Parental leave policies:** 63% offer some form of employer-funded paid parental leave. Of those employers, 33% offer it equally to women and men without using labels that define a carer’s role in the family unit as ‘primary’ or ‘secondary’ (up 9pp from 2022) and 86% pay superannuation on that leave (up 3pp).

More marginal improvements were made on:

- **Gender pay gap analysis:** 70% employers have a policy or strategy to achieve equal remuneration, but only 55% conducted an analysis to understand what is driving their gender pay gaps.
- **Uptake of parental leave:** Women still account for the majority of primary carer’s leave taken and men account for the majority of secondary carer’s leave taken. The proportion of men who make up all paid primary carer’s leave taken increased just 0.6pp to 14%.

- **Empowering a workplace culture that promotes flexible work:** While most employers now have a flexible work policy, only 43% provide managers with specific training on flexible work and the proportion offering team training has dropped to 35%.

Further attention is required for:

- **Women's representation on boards:** The proportion of women members on boards stayed the same as the previous year at 34%.
- **Flexibility in management:** While 57% of women work part-time or casually, just 7% of all manager roles are part-time.
- **Industry segregation:** Compared to male-dominated industries, female-dominated industries are three times less likely to analyse their payroll for gender pay gaps and take action as a result.
- **Consultation:** 47% of employers reported they consult employees on gender equality, only 3 in 10 employers have a formal policy or strategy to do so. This figure has not changed from 2021-22.

WGEA Data Explorer

WGEA will launch an updated [Data Explorer](#) on 28 November to accompany the Scorecard release.

The Data Explorer allows users to explore the gender equality outcomes for industries, industry sub-divisions, groups of employers by size, and individual employers. It's been redesigned to improve functionality and streamline the comparison tool, to give employers, employees, policy-makers and researchers deeper insights into gender equality performance and outcomes. For the first time, it will also allow users to compare results across employers and industries.

We highly encourage you to explore the wealth of information available in the tool. It's also where WGEA will publish employer gender pay gaps early next year.