

Australia's Gender Pay Gap Statistics

February 2021



Australia's full-time gender pay gap

Gender pay gap by state and territory

Lowest	Highest
ACT 6.3%	Western Australia 22.9%

Gender pay gap by industry

Lowest	Highest
6.3% Public Administration and Safety	24.4% Health Care and Social Services

13.4%

Women earn on average
\$242.20 per week less
than men

Full-time average
weekly earnings of
women ► **\$1,562.00**

\$1,804.20 ◀ Full-time average
weekly earnings of
men



About the gender pay gap

The gender pay gap (GPG) is the difference between women's and men's average weekly full-time equivalent earnings, expressed as a percentage of men's earnings. It is a measure of women's overall position in the paid workforce and does not compare like roles.

The gender pay gap is influenced by a number of factors, including:

- discrimination and bias in hiring and pay decisions
- women and men working in different industries and different jobs, with female-dominated industries and jobs attracting lower wages
- women's disproportionate share of unpaid caring and domestic work
- lack of workplace flexibility to accommodate caring and other responsibilities, especially in senior roles
- women's greater time out of the workforce impacting career progression and opportunities.

Gender pay gaps are an internationally established measure of women's position in economy. Directly comparing international gender pay gaps is problematic due to differences in sources, definitions and methods used to calculate the gender pay gap in different countries.

However, it is clear that gender pay gaps in favour of men are a common feature of economies worldwide.

Calculating the gender pay gap

Australian gender pay gaps are calculated by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA, the Agency). The GPG is derived as the difference between women's and men's average weekly full-time equivalent earnings, expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.

$$\text{GPG} = 100\% * \frac{\text{Male Average Earnings} - \text{Female Average Earnings}}{\text{Male Average Earnings}}$$

The data used by WGEA for calculating the national gender pay gap is the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Full-Time Adult Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings Trend series from the Australian Weekly Earnings (AWE) survey.ⁱ The survey estimates the full-time adult average weekly ordinary time earnings (trend) before tax, excluding factors such as overtime, pay that is salary sacrificed and junior and part-time employees.

Data is also sourced from the ABS Employee Earnings and Hours employer surveyⁱⁱ (age group and method of setting pay) and from the Agency's own gender pay gap data (occupation and overall).ⁱⁱⁱ Gender pay gap calculations derived from each of these data sources vary due to differences in timing and scope, and reflect different gender equality issues.

ABS and WGEA data both show a gender pay gap favouring full-time working men over full-time working women in every industry and occupational category in Australia.

i ABS (2021), Average Weekly Earnings, November 2020, viewed 25 February 2021, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/latest-release#data-download>

ii ABS (2020), Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, August 2020, viewed 26 February 2020, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/employee-earnings/aug-2020>

iii WGEA (2020), WGEA Data Explorer: <http://data.wgea.gov.au/>

Changes to the data in 2021

Traditionally, the data used by WGEA for calculating the national gender pay gap is the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Full-Time Adult Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings Trend series from the Australian Weekly Earnings survey.ⁱ

However, given the impact of COVID-19 on the labour market and that it is currently not known whether this impact will be short, medium or long-term, the ABS have suspended the use of trend data.ⁱⁱ

Instead, seasonally adjusted data has been used to calculate average weekly earnings during the COVID-19 period. Given the extent of change in the labour market and the impact of COVID-19 is ongoing, it will be important to continue monitoring the data to further understand the impact of COVID-19 on Australia's workforce.



The national gender pay gap

The national gender pay gap is calculated by WGEA using data from the ABS.

Currently, Australia's national gender pay gap is **13.4%**.

At November 2020, women's average weekly ordinary full-time earnings across all industries and occupations was **\$1,562.00** compared to men's average weekly ordinary full-time earnings of **\$1,804.20**.

i ABS (2021), Average Weekly Earnings, November 2020, viewed 25 February 2021, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/latest-release#data-download>

ii ABS (2020) Methods changes during the COVID-19 period, June 2020, cat. no. 1359.0, viewed August 2020, <https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/methods-changes-during-covid-19-period>

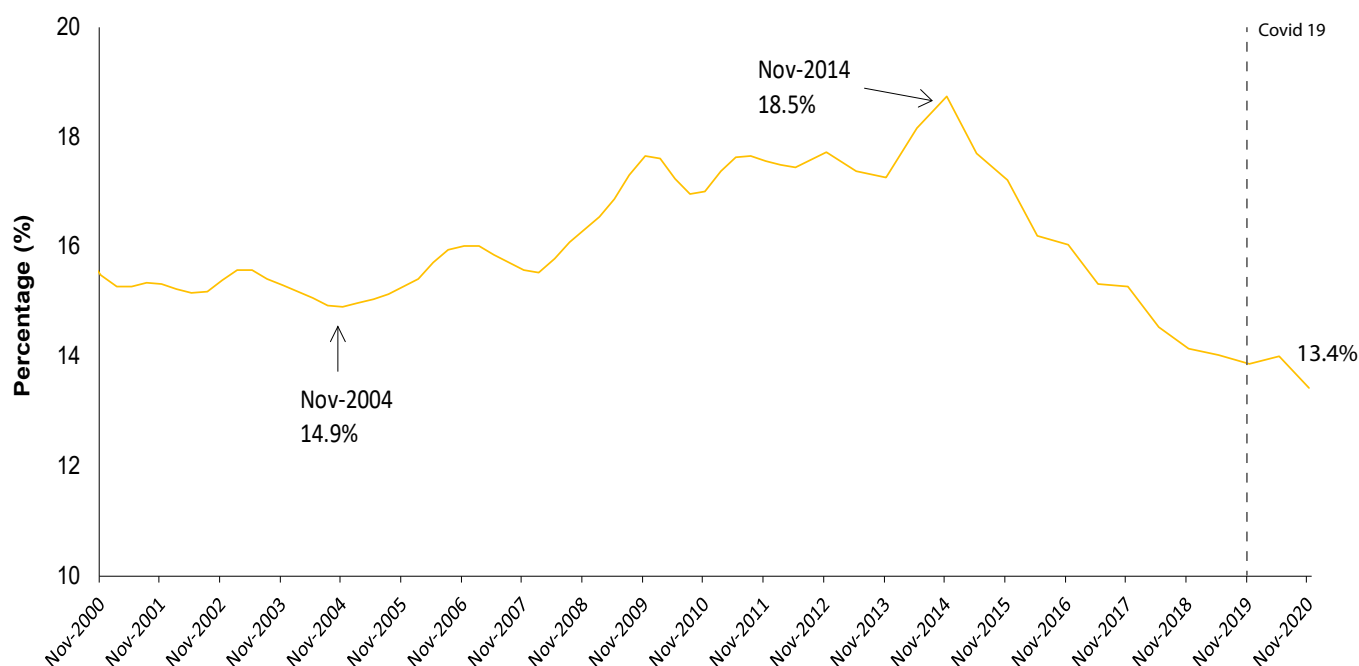
The national gender pay gap over time

Australia's national gender pay gap has hovered between 13.4% and 19% for the past two decades.ⁱ There has been a decrease of 0.58 percentage points in the gender pay gap since November 2019 (14.0%).ⁱⁱ

Between 1999 and 2020 the gender pay gap was:

- lowest in November 2020, at 13.4%
- highest in November 2014, at 18.5%.

Figure 1: The Australian gender pay gap, Nov 1999 - Nov 2020.ⁱⁱⁱ



Data: ABS (2021), Average Weekly Earnings, November 2020, cat. no. 6302.0, viewed 25 February 2021, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/latest-release#data-download>

Note: Between November 2000 and November 2019 the national gender pay gap calculations were based on trend data. Due to Covid-19, seasonal data has been used in Figure 1 for all figures after November 2019.

i Unless otherwise stated, all measures of the gender pay gap are expressed as a percentage (%) based on average weekly ordinary time earnings for full-time employees (trend data), with changes over time provided as the percentage point (pp) difference.

ii The difference between the November 2018 and November 2019 Gender Pay Gap figures of 0.27 p.p. is rounded to 0.3 p.p.

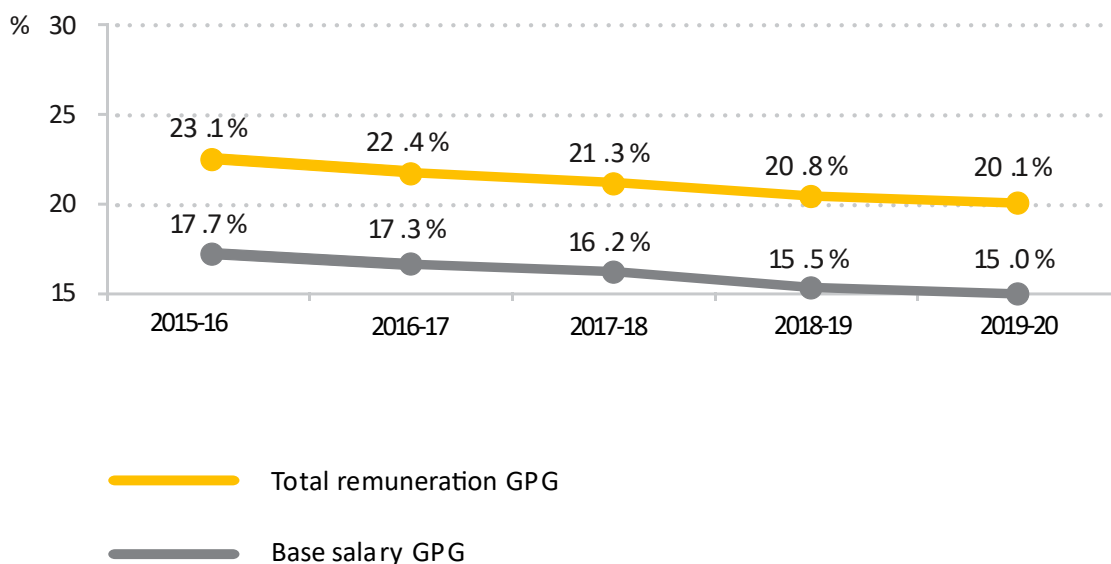
iii The release frequency changed from quarterly to bi-annual between May and November 2012. May 2012 represents the start of the new bi-annual series.

WGEA data

WGEA collects pay data annually from non-public sector organisations with 100 or more employees, covering more than 4 million employees in Australia. This data includes superannuation, bonuses and other additional payments.

The full-time total remuneration gender pay gap based on WGEA data is 20.1%, meaning men working full-time earn nearly \$25,534 a year more than women working full-time.

Figure 2: Full-time base salary and total remuneration, 2015-16 - 2019-20



Source: WGEA (2020), Australia's gender equality scorecard, https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2019-20%20Gender%20Equality%20Scorecard_FINAL.pdf

Note: Based on total remuneration of full-time employees, which includes full-time base salary plus any additional benefits payable directly or indirectly, whether in cash or in a form other than cash. Includes: bonus payments (including performance pay), superannuation, discretionary pay, overtime, other allowances and other benefits (for example share allocations).

The gender pay gap by state and territory

The full-time average weekly base salary gender pay gap differs across Australian states and territories. The differences in the gender pay gap can be partly explained by industry profiles of each state and territory. For example, the full-time workforce in Western Australia is concentrated in Mining and Construction sectors, industries with relatively high earnings and low representation of women. In contrast, the majority of the full-time workforce in the Australian Capital Territory is employed in the Public Administration and Safety sector, which traditionally has a lower gender pay gap and balanced gender representation. As of November 2020:

- Western Australia has the widest gender pay gap at 22.9%.
- The Australian Capital Territory has the smallest gender pay gap at 6.3%.

Between November 2019 and 2020 the gender pay gap has decreased in the Australian Capital Territory by 2.5 pp, followed by Queensland with a decrease of 2.4 pp. Victoria and the Northern Territory recorded higher gender pay gaps, with increases of 1.5 and 0.8 pp respectively.

Table 1: Full-Time Adult Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings gender pay gap by state and territory, November 2019 - November 2020

State/Territory	Nov-2019	Nov-2020	Difference (pp)
Western Australia	22.4%	22.9%	-0.5
Northern Territory	13.0%	13.9%	0.8
New South Wales	14.1%	13.4%	-0.7
Queensland	15.8%	13.4%	-0.7
Victoria	9.4%	10.9%	1.5
South Australia	10.4%	8.3%	-2.2
Tasmania	8.9%	7.0%	-1.9
Australian Capital Territory	8.8%	6.3%	-2.5

Data source: ABS (2021), Average Weekly Earnings, November 2020, cat. no. 6302.0, viewed 25 February 2021, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/latest-release#data-download>

Note: Based on Full-Time Adult Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings with November as the reference period. States and territories are ranked from highest gender pay gap to lowest gender pay gap in November 2020.

The gender pay gap by industry

The differences between women's and men's average weekly full-time earnings across all industries, including the private and public sectors, shows that across Australia the gender pay gap is:

- highest in Professional, Scientific and Technical Services at 24.4%, followed by Financial and Insurance Services at 23.6% and Health Care and Social Assistance at 21.2%. This is a change from previous years.
- lowest in Public Administration and Safety with 6.3% and Retail at 8.7%.

Between November 2019 and 2020:

- the largest gender pay gap increase was in Accommodation and Food Services (+3.2 pp)
- the most substantial gender pay gap reductions were in Arts and Recreation Services (-5.1 pp), Wholesale Trade (-3.1 pp) and Transport, Postal and Warehousing (-2.1 pp).

Table 2: Full-time Adult Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings gender pay gap by industry, Nov 2019- Nov 2020ⁱ

Industry	Nov-2019 (%)	Nov-2020 (%)	Difference (pp)
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	22.1	24.4	2.3
Financial and Insurance Services	22.2	23.6	1.4
Health Care and Social Assistance	22.3	21.2	-1.1
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	18.2	19.7	1.5
Construction	17.5	16.4	-1.1
Information Media and Telecommunications	17.2	16.0	-1.1
Administrative and Support Services	16.4	15.0	-1.3
Mining	13.7	14.8	1.1
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	15.9	13.8	-2.1
Wholesale Trade	16.2	13.0	-3.1
Manufacturing	10.3	12.6	2.3
Education and Training	12.0	11.8	-0.2
Accommodation and Food Services	8.2	11.4	3.2
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	10.7	9.9	-0.8
Arts and Recreation Services	14.5	9.4	-5.1
Retail	8.5	8.7	0.2
Public Administration and Safety	5.7	6.3	0.6
Other Services	4.1	-1.9	-6.0

ABS (2021), Average Weekly Earnings, November 2020, viewed 25 February 2021,

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/latest-release#data-download>

Note: Based on Full-Time Adult Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings with November as the reference period. Industries are ranked from highest gender pay gap to lowest gender pay gap in November 2020.

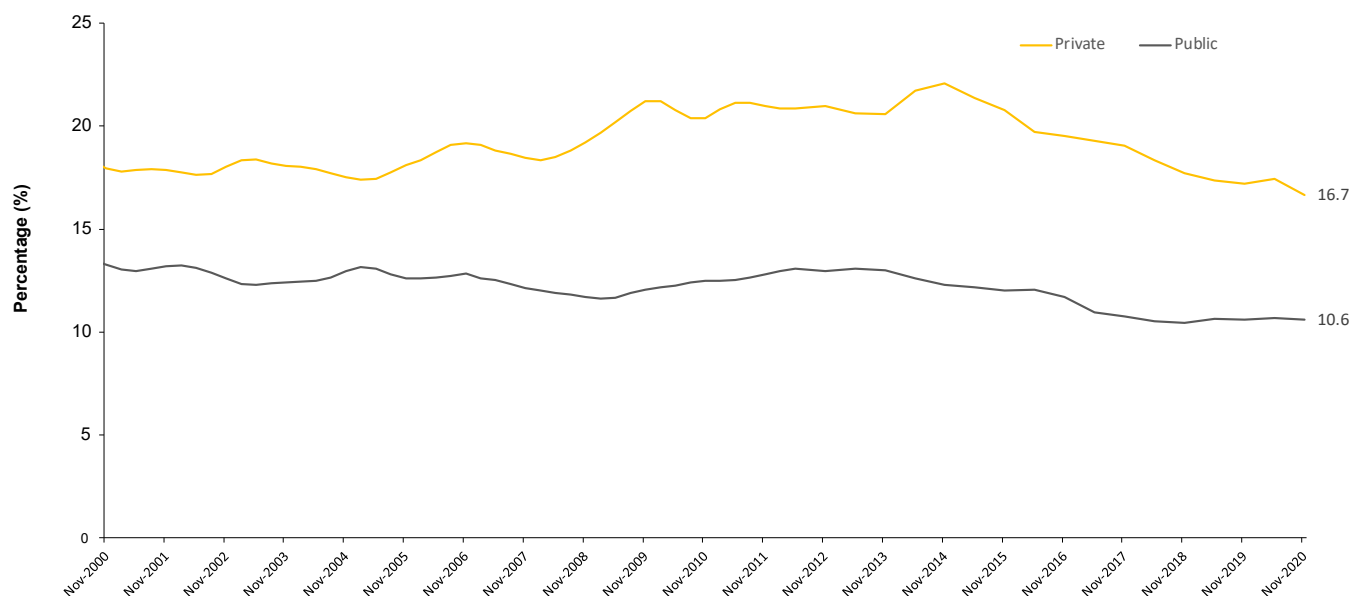
ⁱ A minus sign indicates that the gender pay gap has decreased from the previous period.

Gender pay gaps in the private sector

In November 2020, the gender pay gap was 16.7% in the private sector and 10.6% in the public sector. Figure 3 shows that since 1999 the gender pay gap in the public sector has been considerably lower than in the private sector.

During that time, the gender pay gap has hovered between 16.7% and 22.1% in the private sector and between 10.5% and 13.5% in the public sector.

Figure 3: Gender pay gaps over time in the private and public sectors, Nov 1999 - Nov 2020



Data Source: ABS (2021), Average Weekly Earnings, November 2020, viewed 25 February 2021, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/latest-release#data-download>

Note: Based on full-time adult average weekly ordinary time earnings. Between November 2000 and November 2019 the national gender pay gap calculations were based on trend data. Due to Covid 19, seasonal data has been used in Figure 3 for all figures after November 2019.

Method of setting pay and the gender pay gap

The method of setting pay describes how salaries are established, usually by award, collective or individual agreement. Table 3 shows that the gender pay gap was higher when pay was set by individual arrangement, compared to when pay was set by award or collective agreement.

The data shows that, on average, men have higher weekly total cash earnings than women regardless of the method by which pay is set.

Table 3: Average weekly total cash earnings (full-time) by gender and gender pay gap by method of setting pay (2020)

Method of setting pay	Women	Men	Gender pay gap
Award or collective agreement	\$1,492.80	\$1,732.80	13.9
Individual arrangement	\$1,549.60	\$1,898.40	18.4
Overall	\$1,515.60	\$1,810.90	16.3

Data source: ABS (2020), Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, August 2020, viewed 26 February 2020, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/employee-earnings/aug-2020>

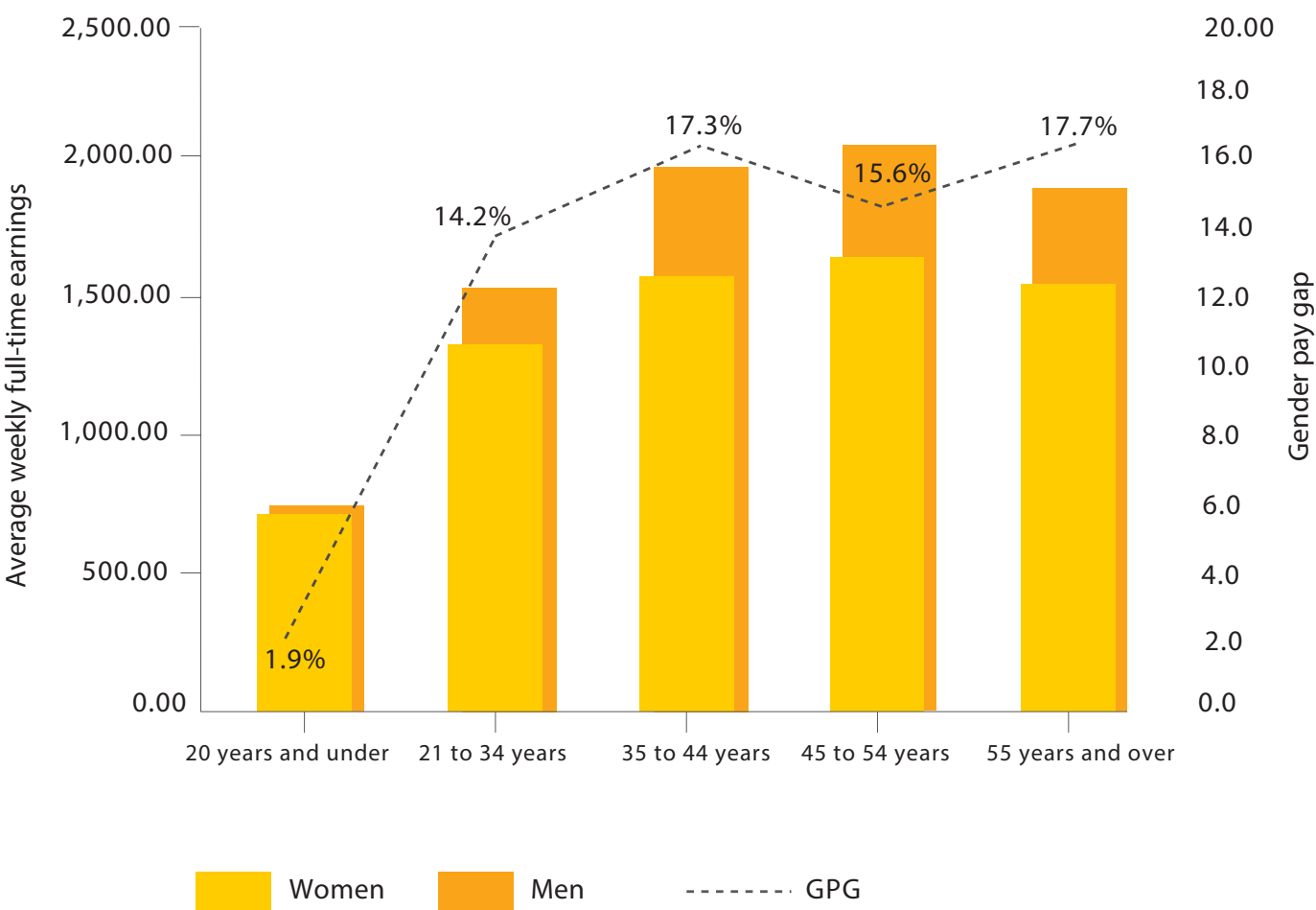
The gender pay gap by age group

The average gender pay gap between women and men working full-time increases with age up to the mid-30s before decreasing slightly to 15.6% in favour of men. The average gender pay gap then increases again to 17.7% for the 55 years and over age group.

The average gender pay gap is smallest for employees aged 20 years and under and sharply increases for those aged between 21 and 34 years. The gender pay gap is at its widest for the 35 to 44 years age group and for those over 55 years.

The average gender pay gap increases to its highest point at 17.7% for the over 55 years and over age group. Women in this age group are more likely than men to have spent time out of the workforce to care for children. As a result of the extra time women spend in unpaid care work, they have fewer promotion opportunities and are less likely than men to hold highly compensated jobs.

Figure 4: Average weekly full-time earnings and gender pay gap by age, August 2020



Data source: ABS (2020), Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia, August 2020, viewed 26 February 2020, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/employee-earnings/aug-2020>

Note: Based on full-time average weekly total cash earnings and inclusive of ordinary and overtime earnings.

The gender pay gap by occupation

Occupational full-time gender pay gaps are calculated across the WGEA dataset by management and non-management occupational categories. The calculations are based on the annualised base salary and total remuneration of employees in non-public sector organisations.

Overall, WGEA data shows that in 2019-20 the gender pay gap was higher among managers compared to non-managers. The smaller gender pay gap is largely due to less discretionary pay and greater reliance on awards and collective agreements among non-managers. In 2019-20:

- the gender pay gap for managers was 23.2% with an average total remuneration dollar difference of \$46,578
- the gender pay gap for non-managers was 19.2% with an average total remuneration dollar difference of 20,458.

The gender pay gap by manager category

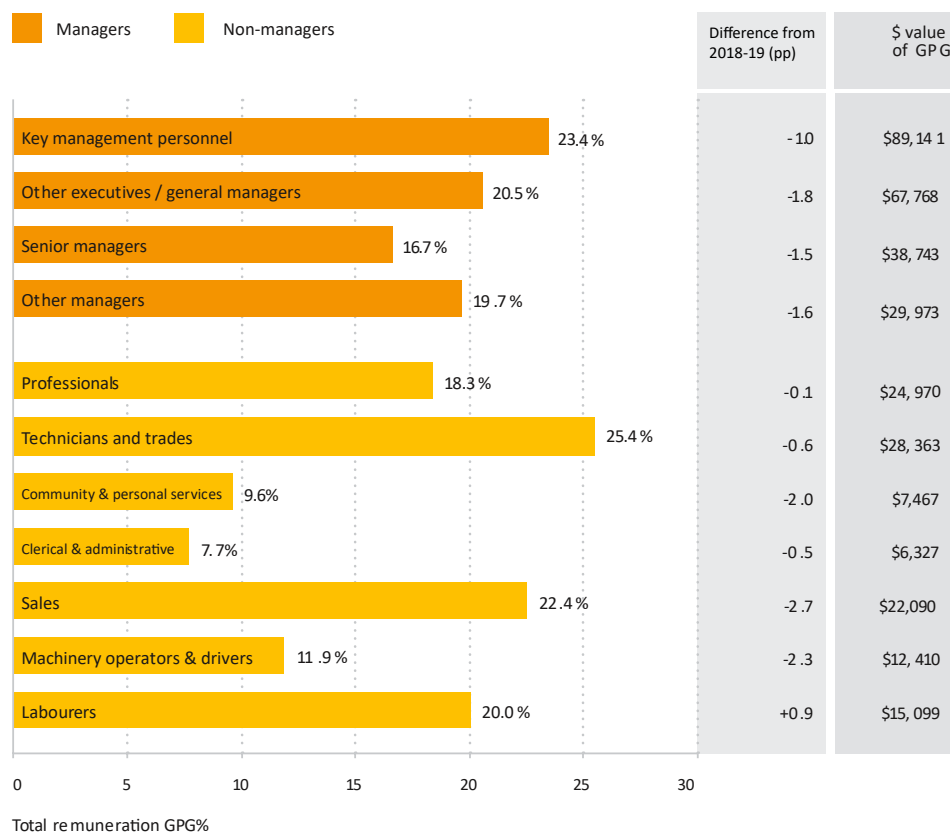
WGEA data across manager categories shows that gender pay gaps increase at higher levels of management. The gender pay gap in total remuneration in part reflects the role of non-salary benefits in management, including bonuses. In 2019-20:

- the highest average full-time total remuneration gender pay gap was for key management personnel at 23.4%. This means that, on average, women earn \$89,141 less than men.

The gender pay gap by occupational category

- WGEA data for non-manager occupations shows a gender pay gap in favour of men across all occupational categories. The gender pay gap in total remuneration partly reflects the role of non-salary benefits, including bonuses across specific occupations. For example, Technicians, which includes engineers, are likely to receive bonuses upon completion of projects. In 2019-20:
- the highest gender pay gap by occupation was for Technicians and trade, at 25.4% full-time total remuneration
- the lowest gender pay gap by occupation was for Clerical and administrative, at 7.7% full-time remuneration.

Figure 5: Gender pay gaps by manager category and non-manager category (full-time employees, base salary and total remuneration), 2019-20



Source: WGEA (2020), Australia's gender equality scorecard, https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2019-20%20Gender%20Equality%20Scorecard_FINAL.pdf

Note: Based on total remuneration of full-time employees, which includes full-time base salary plus any additional benefits payable directly or indirectly, whether in cash or in a form other than cash. Includes bonus payments (for example, performance pay), superannuation, discretionary pay, overtime, other allowances and other benefits (for example, share allocations).

The gendered impact of Covid 19

Since April 2020, the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) has been monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on the Australian workforce. To date, both women and men have been affected by job losses and underemployment. Emerging data has also shown that the global health pandemic is impacting women and men differently:

- Both women and men have experienced fluctuations in payroll jobs and total wages paid to them since the onset of the pandemic.ⁱ
- Women experienced a greater reduction in hours worked at the beginning of the pandemic, but also experienced a greater increase in hours worked between May and August 2020.ⁱⁱ
- While many Australians balanced caring for children and working from home, more women than men reported spending more time caring for children and adults and doing household chores.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Women have reported the onset or escalation of domestic violence by a current or former cohabiting partner.^{iv}
- A predominantly female healthcare workforce^v has placed women on the frontlines of the crisis.

Emerging research highlights the importance of continued action on gender equality. Existing issues relevant to women's labour force participation and pay are also likely to be exacerbated by Covid-19.

The last survey of Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) was conducted just as most states and territories were re-opening their borders and easing Covid-19 restrictions:

- All industries have experienced some level of economic recovery, with lower-paid jobs and industries still being disproportionately impacted by the global pandemic.
- The loss of lower-paid jobs in the economy has continued to produce a higher average weekly earnings figure at a total-economy level, despite very modest national wage growth.^{vi}

WGEA Resources

[WGEA Data Explorer](#): displays gender pay gap data (based on a census of non-public sector organisations with 100 or more employees that are required to report to the Agency and representing over 40% of Australian employees)

[Australia's gender equality scorecard](#): released in November 2019

[Gender Equity Insights Reports](#): Inside Australia's Gender Pay Gap: released March 2017 for a more detailed analysis of the Agency's gender pay gap data (such as by governing boards' gender composition and by whether organisations are more female-dominated, male-dominated or mixed).

i ABS (2020), Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia, Experimental weekly estimates on the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on payroll jobs and wages, sourced from Single Touch Payroll data, reference period week ending 28 November 2020, viewed 23 February 2021, available:

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia/week-ending-28-november-2020>

ii ABS (2020), Insights into hours worked, November 2020, viewed 23 February 2020, available:

<https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/insights-hours-worked-november-2020>

iii ABS (2020), Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey, 10-15 June 2020, viewed 30 June 2020, available:

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/household-impacts-covid-19-survey/latest-release>

ABS (2020), Household Impact of COVID-19 Survey, reference period December 2020, viewed 23 February 2021, available:

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/household-impacts-covid-19-survey/latest-release>

iv Boxall, H, Morgan, A & Brown, R (2020), The prevalence of domestic violence among women during the COVID-19 pandemic, Statistical bulletin 28, Australian Institute of Criminology, viewed 29 July 2020, available:

https://www.aic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-07/sb28_prevalence_of_domestic_violence_among_women_during_covid-19_pandemic.pdf

v Calculated using ABS (2020), 6291.0.55.003 - Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly, Feb 2020, EQ08 - Employed persons by Occupation unit group of main job (ANZSCO), Sex, State and Territory, August 1986 onwards (Pivot Table), viewed 21 April 2020, available:

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia-detailed-quarterly/latest-release>

vi ABS (2021), Survey Impacts, Average Weekly Earnings Australia, reference period ending November 2020, viewed February 26 2021, available:

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/average-weekly-earnings-australia/latest-release#survey-impacts>



Advice and assistance

For further advice and assistance,
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