

The gender pay gap in local government 2019

The Government introduced a mandatory requirement for all organisations with 250 or more employees to submit certain data on their gender pay gap with a commitment to make the data available publicly.

Organisations were required to publish the following data:

- the difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees;
- the difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees;
- the difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees;
- the difference between the median bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees;
- the proportions of male and female relevant employees who were paid bonus pay;
- the proportions of male and female full-pay relevant employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands

This paper summarises the data submitted by English local authorities relating to 2018/19^{1 2}. The data has been analysed as submitted to the Government's gender pay gap service³ and hence has not been verified or quality-checked. Variations in pay gap between authorities are likely to be due at least in part to differences in structures, types of services provided and the extent of outsourcing. In the analyses below, councils have not been weighted by workforce size.

A total of 322⁴ local authority submissions were found (which includes 11 councils with fewer than 250 employees who submitted data voluntarily).

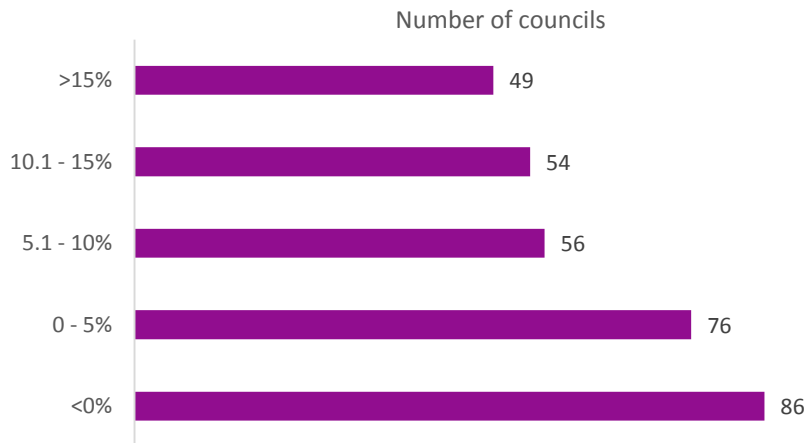
Mean gender pay gap⁵

- On average, women were paid 6.1 per cent less than men. This compares to 6.8 per cent in 2017/18
- The values varied between -18.0 per cent (women were paid more than men) and 23.9 per cent.
- Women were, on average, paid less than men in 262 authorities; in 58 the reverse was true.

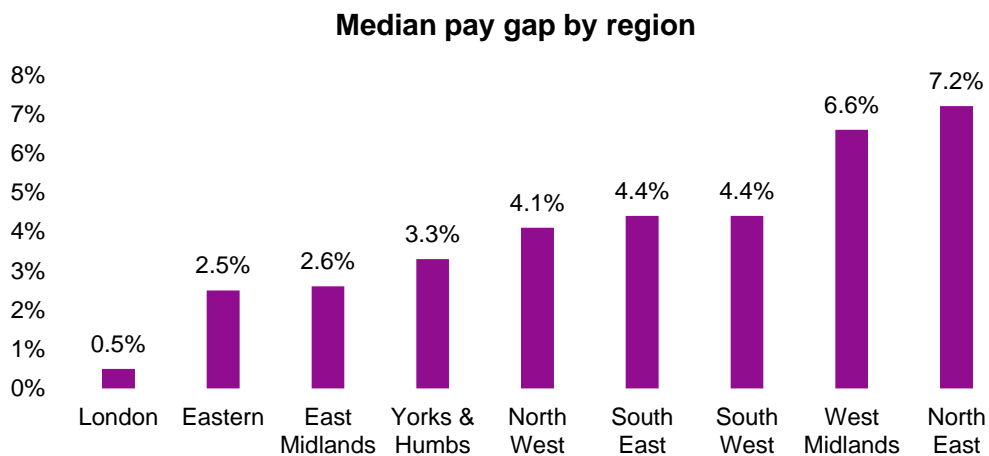
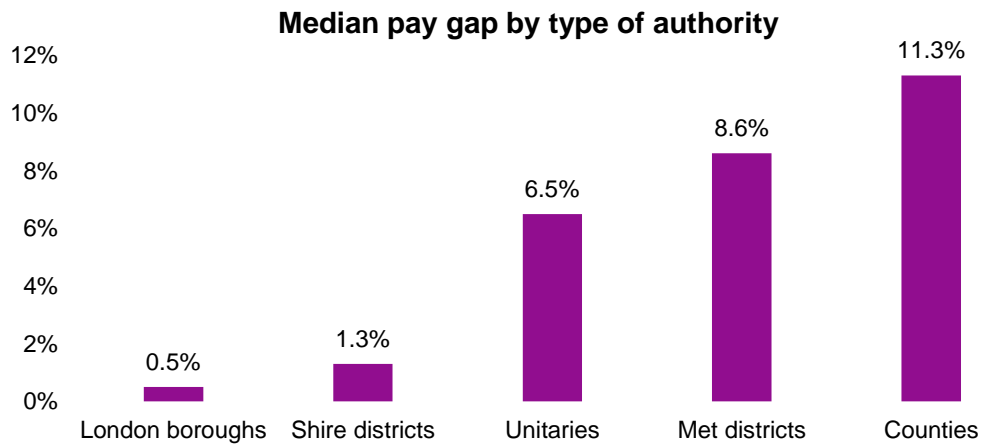
Median gender pay gap⁶

- On average, women were paid 4.0 per cent less than men. This compares to 5.0 per cent in 2017/18
- The values varied between -50.0 per cent (women were paid more than men) and 32.7 per cent.
- Women were, on average, paid less than men in 209 authorities, in 26 the pay gap was zero, and in 86 women were paid more than men.

Distribution of median pay gap



The following charts show the variation in median pay gap by type of authority and region.



A note on use of the mean and median

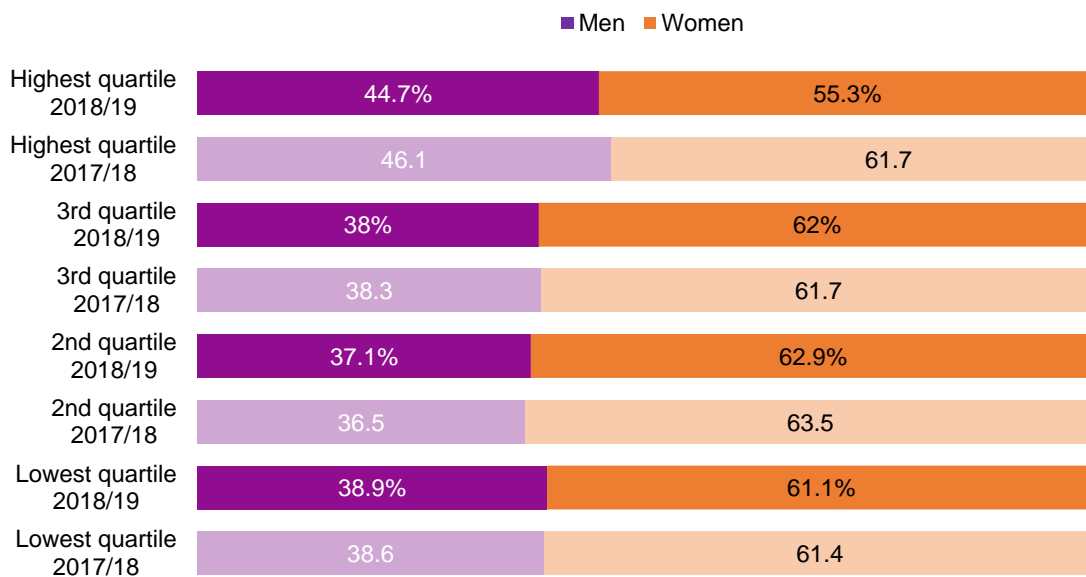
ACAS explains that mean averages are useful because they place the same value on every number they use, giving a good overall indication of the gender pay gap, but very large or small pay rates or bonuses can 'dominate' and distort the answer. For example, mean averages can be useful where most employees in an organisation receive a bonus but could be less useful in an organisation where the vast majority of bonus pay is received by a small number of board members.

Median averages are useful to indicate what the 'typical' situation is i.e. in the middle of an organisation and are not distorted by very large or small pay rates or bonuses. However, this means that not all gender pay gap issues will be picked up. For example, a median average might show a better indication of the 'middle of the road' pay gap in a sports club with a mean average distorted by very highly paid players and board members, but it could also fail to pick up as effectively where the pay gap issues are most pronounced in the lowest paid or highest paid employees.

Proportion of men/women in each quartile pay band

The male/female composition of each pay quartile is summarised in the chart below.

- Women comprised the majority in each band, but were least common in the highest pay quartile (55.3 per cent). This is broadly in line with the proportions in each quartile in 2017/18.



Comparisons with other sectors⁷

- The mean gender pay gap in all organisations was 14.2 per cent, compared to 6.1 per cent in local authorities⁸.
- Women comprised 39.7 per cent of the top pay quartile in compared with 44.7 per cent in local authorities⁹.
- Median pay gaps in the civil service range from 3.1 per cent in the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to 15.6 per cent in the Department for transport¹⁰.
- The NHS mean gender pay gap was around 16.1 per cent, compared with 6.1 per cent in local authorities¹¹.

Local Government Association April 2019

¹ The mean is used to summarise the average across authorities in this document.

² Local authorities were instructed to exclude all schools staff except pupil referral units.

³ <https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/>. The data relate to 2018/19.

⁴ These cover 325 authorities as three submissions covered two authorities each.

⁵ The difference between men's mean pay and women's mean pay expressed as a percentage of men's mean pay.

⁶ The difference between men's median pay and women's median pay expressed as a percentage of men's median pay.

⁷ These should be treated with a degree of caution as it is difficult to accurately identify employment sectors from the data, and workforces can vary in their composition.

⁸ Based on data submitted as at 6 April 2018.

⁹ Based on data submitted as at 6 April 2018.

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-diversity-inclusion-dashboard/civil-service-diversity-and-inclusion-dashboard#gender-pay-gap> (accessed 17/4/19).

¹¹ <https://digital.nhs.uk/about-nhs-digital/corporate-information-and-documents/how-we-support-diversity-and-inclusion/our-workforce-demographics-2017/gender-pay> (accessed 17/4/19).