

Gender pay gap means women work first 48 days of the year unpaid

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New [TUC](#) analysis reveals that the average woman effectively works for free for nearly seven weeks compared to the average man.

This is because the gender pay gap for all employees currently stands at 13.1%. This pay gap means that this year Women's Pay Day – the day women stop working for free compared to the average man – was Sunday 16 February 2025.

The union body says this is partly because women tend to be employed in lower-paid roles than men.

Additionally, women are more likely to work part-time to accommodate for extended caring responsibilities throughout their lives, therefore taking a significant pay cut.

The gender pay gap has remained stubbornly high over the years.

Industrial Gender Pay Gaps

Gender pay gap reporting was introduced back in 2017. However, the TUC analysis shows that – some eight years later – there are still significant gender pay gaps in many industries.

This gap persists even in jobs dominated by female workers, such as care:

- In health care and social work, where the gender pay gap is 11.2%, the average woman works for free for 41 days until 9 February 2025.

- In information and communication roles, the gender pay gap is 16.7%, so the average woman effectively works for free for 61 days until 3 March 2025.
- The longest wait for Women's Pay Day comes in finance and insurance. The gender pay gap (29.8%) is the equivalent of a whopping 109 days, meaning women work for free until 19 April 2025.

Gender Pay Gap by Age

The TUC analysis shows that the gender pay gap affects women throughout their careers, from their first step on the ladder until they take retirement.

The gender pay gap is widest for middle-aged and older women:

- Women aged 40 to 49 have a gender pay gap of 16.5%, so work 60 days for free until 2 March 2025.
- Women aged between 50 and 59 have the highest pay gap (18.9%) and work the equivalent of 69 days for free, until 11 March 2025.
- Women aged 60 and over have a gender pay gap of 17.5%. They work 64 days of the year for free and they start earning from 6 March 2025.

The TUC says the gender pay gap widens as women get older, due to women being more likely to take on unpaid caring responsibilities.

Older women take a bigger financial hit for balancing work alongside unpaid caring responsibilities throughout their lives – often looking after children, older relatives, and/or grandchildren.

Regional Gender Pay Gaps

The analysis shows that in some parts of the country, gender pay gaps are even bigger, so their Women's Pay Day is later in the year.

- The gender pay gap is largest in the South East of England (17.8%). Women in this region work 65 days for free and they work for free until 7 March 2025.
- Women in London (14.9% pay gap) also work for free until 23 February 2025.

TUC General Secretary Paul Nowak said:

“Everyone should be paid fairly for the job that they do.

“But working women are still waiting for pay parity.

“The Employment Rights Bill can help to close the gender pay gap by banning exploitative practices like zero-hours contracts that hit women the hardest.

“And introducing fair pay agreements will boost pay and conditions in social care which has a female-dominated workforce.

“Government policy to make employers publish action plans for tackling their gender pay gaps can also make a real difference.

“Women contribute so much to our economy. They don’t deserve to be treated like second-class workers.”