

## Topic Gender Pay Gap

600-800

**Deadline:** 48-72 hours

### Gender pay gap

Men continue to surpass women when it comes to wage levels, and this is not going to change any time soon. Defined as the difference in average hourly earnings between men and women, the current gender wage gap reveals that women across the globe are only earning [63%](#) of what men do. This gender pay gap continues to resist efforts to significantly diminish it and there seems little hope that this will be rectified any time soon.

Women still struggle across the developed and undeveloped world to close this gap even as they manage to make strides in education, and even politics in some locales, yet there have been little to no gains in closing the persistent economic disparity between men and women. According to the World Economic Forum as of December 2018, if progress continues to move at its current pace, the global gender pay gap will take [202 years](#) to close.

In the US, the gender pay gap has hovered around [20%](#) in recent years, which means that women are earning only approximately [85%](#) of what men do. So what does this mean in real terms? Naysayers should not ignore the significant effects the pay gap exerts over women throughout their lifetimes. The overall combination of economic disparity and lingering social inequality is not a pretty picture:

1. Disproportionately more women will fall below the [poverty line](#) due to the gender pay gap. With overall women's lifetime income so massively affected by other factors such as having children - and adding in that women in the US earn only 85% of what men earn - it is clear that both women and their children, suffer from the pay gap in ways beyond mere financial concerns.
2. Lifetime earnings - when women retire their lifetime earnings will be, in aggregate, lower than men's, especially if they took time off to have children, undertake flexible work positions or care for their elderly parents. According to one study of this "wealth gap", women are likely to earn [43%](#) less than men by the time they turn 85.

Why does the gap persist? There are complex forces at work, many having to do with basic inequalities in society, education, lack of career opportunities and work experience. Women are constantly struggling to overcome discrimination based on demographics, and education levels, as well as attitudes about women's roles in society. When laws and state policies do not support equal pay, women suffer greater disparity.

Inequality at work affects women at all levels, from lower opportunity roles all the way up to CEO positions. Notably, the [size](#) of the gender pay gap grows as a woman rises in a company. There are many women to be found in lower income jobs, and, partially due to the pressure of

the minimum wage, the effect of the gender pay gap is mitigated to a certain degree. Although the pressure on the wages of women of color should not be ignored. When surveyed in Houston, it was discovered that Hispanic women in the US earn only [53%](#) of what white men do. This pressure on minority women's pay is also seen in the African American population.

In the skilled labor field, there are numerous incidents of women being underrepresented and underpaid. A survey of 10,000 American tech employees found a wage disparity of ranging from [20-30%](#). Women also continue to be underrepresented in high management positions, and over represented in lower income ones, so the the gender pay gap grows in size at this level. Women who work at higher levels in a company can earn only [74 cents](#) on every dollar versus their male colleagues. At lower income levels, women earn [92 cents](#) per dollar.

As woman moves from middle management to upper management the process of attrition versus an equitable male salary continues. There are fewer and fewer women at high levels in a company, and they earn also earn less than their male colleagues. In 2018, [22%](#) of board seats in the US were held by women. C-suit level executives are only [5%](#) women, and female CEOs are a rare sight indeed.

The fields where women should stand out as singular examples of talent are the ones where women actually lose out the most when it comes to salary: financial managers, physicians and surgeons, and accountants and auditors top the list of professions whose pay gap is between [65-78%](#). Entrepreneurs also lose out, as women disproportionately lack funding for star ups or other business initiatives.

What is to being done to erase this inequality? On a general level, there are laws being put in place - although this is not across the board. In the UK, for example, equal pay is stipulated by law. And some gains were made as a result, although, sadly in some other [fields](#), such as finance and construction, the gender pay gap grew. It is difficult to shift such a monolithic social ill overnight.

Advocacy and outside pressure has had its affect on companies, but often, as soon as a gain is made in one place, something begins to slide backwards somewhere else. Corporate policies often make this disparity more easy to get away with as some [employers](#) take advantage of prior salary levels when setting new salaries, or some prohibit staff from discussing their wages. It has been noted that the smaller the company, less than [250](#) is the optimal size, the lower the gender pay gap. In companies with more than [20,000 employees](#), it has been discerned, the gender pay gap is usually at the higher end.

One bright spot stands out, when the gender pay gap figures, are adjusted by age it shows that in the US, women aged [25 to 34 earned 89% of what men earned, versus 84%](#) for women in high age brackets.