

**FOR RELEASE: 29 January 2026**

## **She's Price(d)less: New report names drivers of Australia's gender pay gap**

- *The gender pay gap is estimated to be costing \$1.26 billion a week in lost earnings.*
- *More than 25 years to close the gender pay gap, if current trends continue.*
- *The types of jobs women and men do, plus unequal distribution of hours spent on care, family and workforce participation between women and men found to be major contributing factors*

Australia's gender pay gap is costing the economy an estimated \$1.26 billion a week in equivalent earnings, based on new analysis of HILDA data.

The 5<sup>th</sup> edition of KPMG Australia's *She's Price(d)less* report, prepared with Diversity Council Australia (DCA) and the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA), offers fresh insights for employers, employees and policy makers on what is driving the persistent and pervasive gender pay gap.

It identifies key drivers as unequal distribution of hours spent on care, family and workforce participation, as well as the types of jobs women and men engage in (workforce gender segregation).

The report found that women in Australia earned an average of \$42.26 an hour, while men earned \$45.57. That represented an hourly pay gap of 7.3%, up from 6.5% in 2020<sup>1</sup>. It predicts that committed action is needed for Australia's gender pay gap to close before 2054.

The analysis also found that as women's level of responsibility in the workforce increased, they experienced a higher gender pay gap. Women experienced an 18% pay gap at higher income levels compared to little or no gender pay gap at the lower income levels.

Lower rates of pay in the occupations and industries where women were more likely to be employed accounted for 37% of the gender pay gap, according to the analysis. Gendered assumptions around workforce participation, for things like who should take parental leave and provide care for family members, was also a significant factor, accounting for 26% of the gap.

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<sup>1</sup> The hourly gender pay gap is different to the national gender pay gaps that are calculated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and by WGEA. The ABS and WGEA use different datasets to calculate the gender pay gap. This means these results are different to the hourly gender pay gap.

The ABS result uses base salary for full-time employees, while WGEA's national gender pay gap result uses data from the Agency's annual Employer Census of employers with 100 or more employees. WGEA's result includes total remuneration (like bonuses and superannuation).

The remaining 55% of the gap was attributed to additional gender influences which include discrimination and other factors that are hard to control for statistically.

The HILDA data also shows that in Australia, women were more likely to be employed on a casual basis or to be working reduced weekly hours, compared to men. Forty-eight per cent of all employed persons nationally were women, up slightly from 47.7% in August 2023. Women represented 66.5% of our part-time workforce, but just 39.8% of the full-time workforce.

**Comment attributable to Dorothy Hisgrove, Head of People and Inclusion at KPMG:**

“KPMG’s report is unique because it looks beyond the numbers to identify underlying factors driving inequality between women and men at work. This information is crucial to accelerate change by enabling more meaningful decision-making by employers and policy makers.

“The gender pay gap in this country remains persistent and pervasive, with the types of jobs women were employed in and the higher proportion of unpaid hours spent on household and caring responsibilities, the main contributing factors.

“While this analysis does not capture the impact of recent and welcome government reforms to put gender pay gaps for individual employers on the public record, we hope to see insights on this in the future.”

**Comment attributable to DCA Chief Executive Catherine Hunter:**

“These findings illustrate stark disparities in economic outcomes, and pave the way toward understanding how closing the gender pay gap for all women will require us to recognise and respond to the intersecting drivers of inequality.

“For culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) women in particular, the barriers they face in the workplace are not shaped by gender alone. They are compounded and layered in ways that traditional frameworks have often failed to capture.

“This necessary work is not just up to policymakers or advocacy groups – it’s a responsibility that belongs to every employer, across every sector.”

**Comment attributable to WGEA CEO Mary Wooldridge:**

“These findings send a message about the need to accelerate progress to close the gender pay gap.

“Employers have an opportunity to drive productivity and meet employees’ expectations of a fair, safe and equal workplace by examining their own workforce data, finding areas of inequality, and taking evidence-informed action to address them.

“We know what works to improve fairness at work. Taking action to make that a reality can unlock significant economic growth for our nation, foster innovation and ensure we value all people at work.”

**ENDS**

## Quick Stats

### Hourly Wage Gap by Selected Industries

Industry	2023
Healthcare and Social Assistance	\$3.07
Education and Training	\$4.82
Retail Trade	\$2.31
Manufacturing	\$4.44
Accommodation and Food Services	-\$0.98
All Industries	\$3.31

Source: KPMG She's Price(d)less: The economics of the gender pay gap

### Hourly Wage Rate and Gender Gap

Year	Men	Women	Gap (\$)	Gap (%)
2020	\$47.05	\$44.00	\$3.05	6.5%
2023	\$45.57	\$42.26	\$3.31	7.3%

Source: KPMG She's Price(d)less: The economics of the gender pay gap

### Relative contribution of selected factors to the 2020 and 2023 Australian gender pay gap

Factor	2020	2023	Change
Years not working to interruptions	\$0.98	\$0.87	-\$0.11
Men-dominated industries	\$0.69	\$0.62	-\$0.07
Women-dominated industries	\$0.46	\$0.59	+\$0.13
Level of education	-\$0.46	-\$0.33	+\$0.13
Age (years)	\$0.40	\$0.26	-\$0.14
Working in Government or NGO	-\$0.61	-\$0.51	+\$0.10
Additional gender influences	\$1.60	\$1.81	+\$0.21
Total	\$3.05	\$3.31	+\$0.26

Note: Results may add to more than 100% of the total due to rounding

Source: KPMG She's Price(d)less: The economics of the gender pay gap

### Australia's Global Ranking in Women's Economic Participation and Opportunity

2021	70 <sup>th</sup>
2025	32 <sup>nd</sup>

Source: World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report

## Notes

The analysis in this report is based on the HILDA dataset.

WGEA and ABS data have previously reported that the total remuneration and base salary gender pay gap is slowly decreasing. Using the 2023 HILDA data gives policymakers and the community a different understanding of the gender pay gap trends across Australian businesses.

In this report, the gender pay gap is calculated based on average hourly earnings calculated from HILDA Survey Wave 23. In drawing on this wave of HILDA data, the hourly gender pay gap estimated in this report captures a cross-section of work roles and employment types, with reporting on total remuneration across all jobs to achieve a fulsome picture of earnings.

### **About She's Price(d)less**

This report is the 5th edition of the *She's Price(d)less* series in Australia that analyses the contributing drivers of the gender pay gap on an ongoing basis, to explain why the gender pay gap exists and where it needs to be addressed the most.

It provides policymakers and business leaders with evidence-based insight to better understand and take more informed action to reduce the gender pay gap in Australia.

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### **About Diversity Council Australia**

[Diversity Council Australia](https://diversitycouncilaustralia.org/) is the leading peak body for diversity and inclusion. As an independent not-for-profit and charitable organisation, we provide expert guidance to workplaces, policymakers and the broader community through research, tools, events, advocacy and education. Together, with our network of nearly 1,300 [member organisations](https://diversitycouncilaustralia.org/membership/), we shape more equitable workplaces for a stronger economy and fairer society.

### **About WGEA**

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) is an Australian Government statutory agency charged with promoting and improving gender equality in Australian workplaces. Explore the gender equality data for your industry or employer on WGEA's Data Explorer at [WGEA Data Explorer | National, Industry and Employer results](https://wgea.gov.au/data-explorer/).