

# Gender pay gap has halved in the last 20 years

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The current gender pay gap is only half of what it was 20 years ago. That is according to an analysis of salary data by the Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo (<https://www.apsco.org/>)), which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

According to a 1999 study (<https://www.theguardian.com/uk/1999/oct/15/charlottedenny.lucyward>) by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the gender pay gap for that year was 19%. Although this figure sounds high compared to today's standards, at the time it was celebrated as a major improvement, as women's pay was just 63% of men's in 1970, when the national minimum wage was introduced.

Two decades later, however, the current gender pay gap is still a major issue and has decreased just less than 50%. The data collected from this year's reporting, which is mandatory for companies with more than 250 employees, revealed that the current gender pay gap is 9.6%. ONS, however, found that almost a third of companies are still way below the national average, with a gap more akin to the figure recorded in 1999 (17.9%)

(<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/04/gender-pay-gap-figures-show-eight-in-10-uk-firms-pay-men-more-than-women>)

Commenting on the analysis, Ann Swain, Chief Executive of APSCo, said:

"Since the introduction of gender pay reporting, the gap is continuing to close, which is fantastic. However, we still have a long way to go until there is true parity. To begin seeing significant change, businesses must prioritise creating diversity in their teams and promote opportunities for women at all levels, so that their talent pipelines do not leak female talent."

"Over the past 20 years I have witnessed growing discourse on the subject, and have seen companies from traditionally male-dominated sectors boost initiatives to encourage female participation, such as returnships. However, this alone is not enough to create equal pay."

"The recruitment profession has not only a social responsibility, but also a real opportunity, to create an even playing field through encouraging firms to boost diversity and inclusion, and to help create solutions for an equal workplace for all. We must be advocates for fair recruitment practices to achieve workforce diversity across all sectors, and ensure female professionals have every opportunity to fulfil their full potential."

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