

JNCC Gender Pay Gap Report 2023 to 2024



For further information please contact:

JNCC, Quay House, 2 East Station Road, Fletton Quays, Peterborough PE2 8YY

<https://jncc.gov.uk/>

Communications@jncc.gov.uk

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Foreword

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) is the UK's statutory nature advisor. Our vision, set out in [Together for Nature](#), is thriving nature for a sustainable future. We know that a thriving natural world is essential for our national security, economic prosperity and societal wellbeing.

We work with partners throughout the UK, the UK Overseas Territories and the Crown Dependencies, and around the world. For over 30 years, our trusted expertise, dedication and skills have supported nature conservation and recovery. We are led and governed by the Joint Committee, which brings together board members from the country nature conservation bodies for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and independent members appointed by the UK Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs under an independent Chair. Within our Committee structure, we benefit from the guidance of our People Committee, who provide support, challenge and insight on people-related issues.

JNCC is led by the Executive Committee, supported by teams of scientific experts, data analysts and corporate services professionals. JNCC is a Non-Departmental Public Body and our employees are public rather than civil servants, however our pay grades are aligned to the Civil Service pay grade structure.

We are committed to embracing, respecting and celebrating difference - recognising that it is essential for a thriving culture and success in delivering *Together for Nature*. We recognise that being a diverse, equitable and inclusive organisation requires understanding and addressing the historical, social and economic drivers of inequality. We have zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, bullying and prejudice.

This report provides gender pay gap information for the year ending 31 March 2024. In our third year of reporting, I am pleased to see the continued progress in reducing our hourly gender pay gap, which is now lower than the Civil Service average, with a median gender pay gap of 0.6% and mean gender pay gap of 5.3%.

I am particularly pleased to see the median hourly pay gap has been almost entirely eliminated and that we have maintained the 0% median bonus pay gap we achieved in the year 2022 to 2023. However, I am conscious that, as a relatively small organisation, minor shifts in staffing can have a substantial impact, and so this improvement could swing in the opposite direction, as seen in the uplift experienced this year in our mean bonus pay gap.

I am confident that the measures we are continuing to take to support our people, combined with the commitments we have agreed with our People Committee to address the remaining gender pay gap, should result in the pay gap continuing to narrow in future years.

Dr Gemma Harper OBE
Chief Executive

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Gender Pay Gap legislation, introduced in April 2017, requires all public sector employers of 250 or more employees to publish their gender pay gap annually for workers in scope as of 31 March. JNCC reached this size for the first time in March 2022, and therefore this is the third year we are reporting our gender pay gap.

1.2. Definitions

1.2.1. The Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap is the difference in the average pay between all men and women in an organisation, expressed as a percentage. It is different to equal pay, which is about the difference in the actual earnings of men and women doing equal work (or work of equal value).

The gender pay gap is measured in a number of ways, including the hourly pay gap (mean and median) and the bonus pay gap.

1.2.2. Full-Pay Relevant Employees

Full-pay relevant employees are those who were not paid at a reduced rate (e.g. as a result of unpaid leave) during the 'relevant pay period', which for JNCC is the payroll month ending on the snapshot date of 31 March 2024.

1.2.3. The Mean Gender Pay Gap

The mean gender pay gap is the difference between the mean (average) hourly rate of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees.

1.2.4. The Median Gender Pay Gap

The median gender pay gap is the difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees. The median hourly rate is found by listing the hourly rates in order of value and selecting the middle value.

1.2.5. The Bonus Pay Gap

The bonus pay gap measures payments to reward performance, either as part of the annual pay award or throughout the year as either cash or gift vouchers. The mean bonus value is found by adding all bonus values together and dividing the total by how many people were paid bonuses. The median is the middle value if all bonuses were ordered from lowest to highest.

2. Scope

For the purposes of this report, and in accordance with the guidance, we have included all employees who were employed on the snapshot date of 31 March 2024. As a result, not all employees who were active on our March payroll are included, as some had left employment prior to the snapshot date. We have included employees who are on secondments to other organisations, even though their pay is determined by the partner organisation, and therefore outside of our control, as they remain our employees and on our payroll.

We note that, whilst our Committee Members are included in our payroll, they do not fall under the definition of an “employee,” so are excluded from the analysis.

JNCC recognises that gender is not a binary concept. However, in order to meet HMRC’s requirements for payroll, our HR software records employees’ legally recognised gender and it is therefore upon this basis that the analysis in this report has been conducted.

3. JNCC’s Gender Profile

On the snapshot date of 31 March 2024, 71% of JNCC staff were female and 29% were male. Despite significant changes to our workforce since we first reported our gender pay gap in 2022, our overall gender profile has remained surprisingly constant at 71% female 29% male for each of the 3 years that we have reported.

Our percentage of female employees is substantially higher than the Civil Service average of 54.5% female (see [Civil Service Statistics 2024](#)). In 2023, 64% of our senior leadership roles (Grade 7 and above) were filled by women. This has increased slightly to 65.3% in March 2024.

A breakdown of male and female staff by grade is provided in Figure 1 and Table 1.

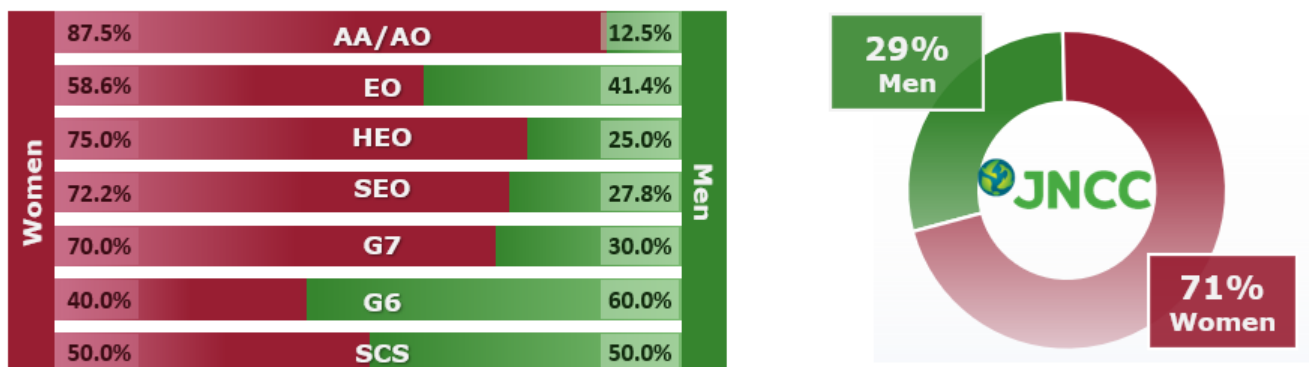


Figure 1. Proportions/percentages of male and female staff in JNCC at different pay grades, accompanied by the overall/total percentage of male and female staff. Values (in percent) are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Percentages of female and male staff at each grade within JNCC. Note: the sample sizes for our G6 and SCS grades are very small, at just five and four employees respectively; due to the small sample size, our two grades of SCS 1 and SCS 2 have been combined in these figures.

Grade	Percentage of female staff (women)	Percentage of male staff (men)
AA/AO	87.5%	12.5%
EO	58.6%	41.4%
HEO	75.0%	25.0%
SEO	72.2%	27.8%
G7	70.0%	30.0%
G6	40.0%	60.0%
SCS (combines SCS1 and 2)	50.0%	50.0%
All grades	71%	29%

Overall, there are more women than men at all grades in JNCC, with the exception of G6 and SCS.

4. Analysis of Gender Pay Gap Data

Out of 317 employees, 313 were defined under the guidance as “full-pay relevant” (see Section 1.2.2)

4.1. Hourly Pay

4.1.1. Hourly Pay Quartiles

Pay quartiles show the distribution of earnings when looking at pay. The workforce is divided into four equal groups, ranging from the lowest to the highest paid individuals. Figure 2 and Table 2 show the proportion of male and female employees in each quartile.

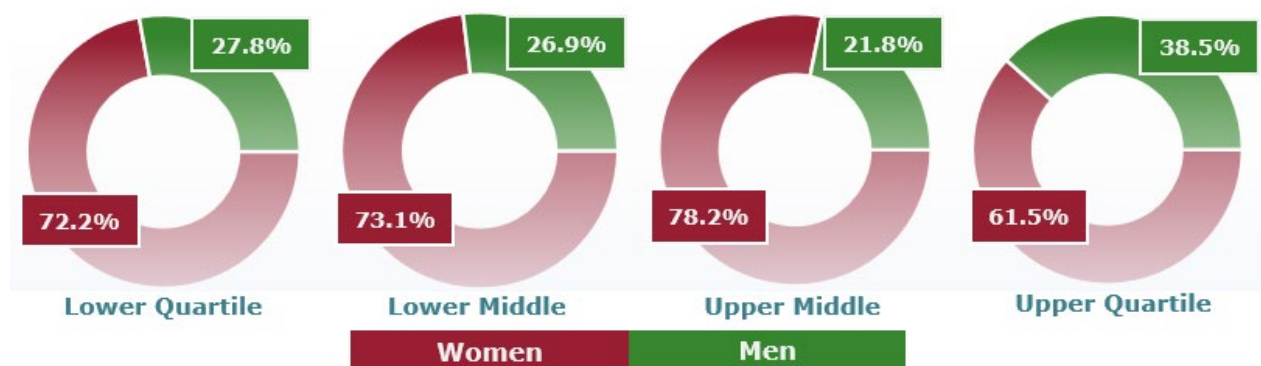


Figure 2. Percentages of male and female staff in each hourly pay quartile within JNCC. Values (in percent) are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Percentages of male and female staff in each hourly pay quartile within JNCC, with a comparison to the previous year.

Quartile	Percentage of female staff (women)			Percentage of male staff (men)		
	2023	2024	Direction of change (2023 to 2024)	2023	2024	Direction of change (2023 to 2024)
Lower	75.8%	72.2%	decrease	24.2%	27.8%	increase
Lower middle	76.1%	73.1%	decrease	23.9%	26.9%	increase
Upper middle	74.6%	78.2%	increase	25.4%	21.8%	decrease
Upper	57.6%	61.5%	increase	42.4%	38.5%	decrease

In our [2022 to 2023 Gender Pay Gap report](#), we concluded that, in order to reduce the gender pay gap, we would need to increase female representation in the more senior roles that have salaries in the upper pay quartile and also achieve greater male representation in our lower pay grades. The hourly pay quartiles shown in Figure 2 and Table 2 demonstrate that we have made progress in both of these areas, which has been a contributing factor in the reduction in our gender pay gap.

However, the representation of men in our most senior grades remains disproportionate to our overall organisational gender profile and this is reflected in our upper hourly pay quartile, where women represent just 61.5% of the upper pay quartile, compared to their overall proportion in the organisation of 71% female. This shows us that, whilst progress has been made since last year, achieving further female representation in our more senior roles will be key to continuing to address the remaining gender pay gap.

4.1.2. Hourly Pay Gender Pay Gap



Our mean hourly pay gender pay gap on 31 March 2024 is **5.3%** and the median is **0.6%**. This demonstrates that, on average, our male employees are still earning more than our female employees. However, this represents a significant improvement (narrowing of the pay gap) compared to 2023, when our mean hourly pay gap was 7.5% and our median was 10.6%.

This improvement is also evident when viewing our results in comparison with the Civil Service average, as our gender pay gap is now lower than the Civil Service average for both measurements. The Civil Service has reported an overall gender pay gap of 7.4% mean and 8.5% median for 2024 (see [Civil Service Statistics 2024](#)).

4.1.3. Year-on-Year Comparison

The year-on-year comparison shows that the median hourly pay gap has decreased significantly over the three years that we have been reporting our gender pay figures, from 17.1% in 2022 to 0.6% in 2024. Our mean gender pay gap has also decreased compared to the previous two years, although to a lesser extent (from 5.8% in 2022 to 5.3% in 2024).

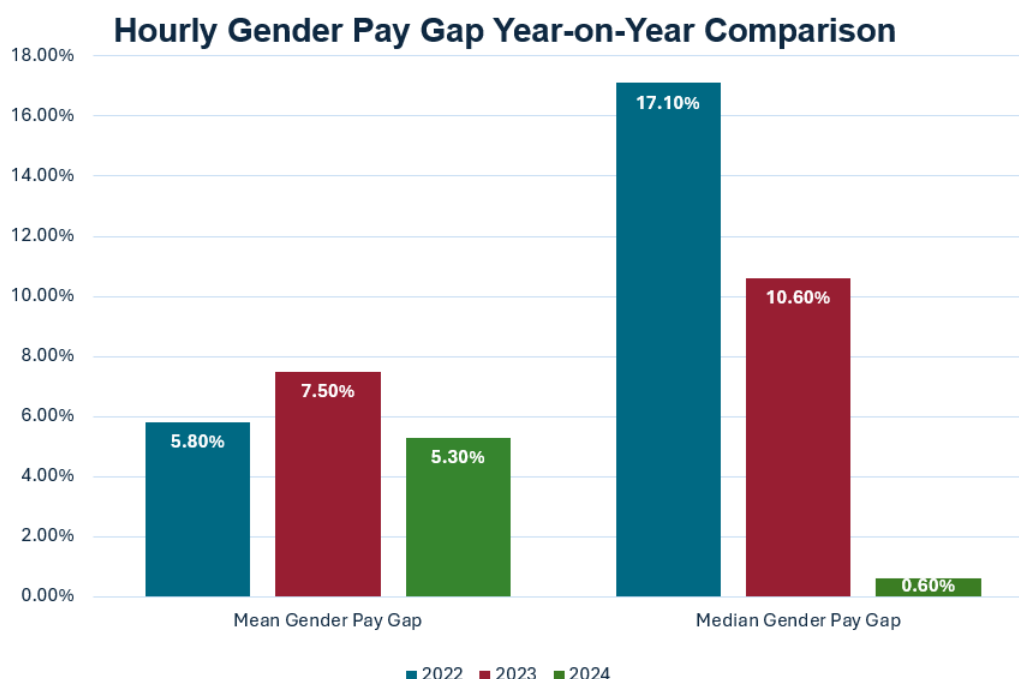


Figure 3. Graph showing our mean and median hourly gender pay gap values for the years 2022 to 2024.

4.1.4. Analysis of Mean Hourly Gender Pay Gap

Our analysis shows us that the mean Gender Pay Gap at JNCC is mainly determined by the gender distribution of individuals within each grade. The gender profile shown in Section 3 demonstrates that women are under-represented in our highest grades of G6 and SCS, relative to their proportion in the organisation as a whole, and men are under-represented in our lowest grades of AA/AO.

In the 12 months prior to the 2024 snapshot date, we made progress in increasing the number of women in our senior leadership roles, which has resulted in the narrowing of our mean hourly gender pay gap by 2.2 percentage points from 7.5% in 2023 to 5.3% in 2024. Subsequent changes that have taken place within our senior leadership team since March 2024 mean that we anticipate that this pay gap will decrease further in next year's report.

However, the small number of male employees in our organisation overall (29%) means that relatively small changes in male staffing, particularly at either end of the pay structure, can result in significant shifts to the mean gender pay gap, due to the mean measurement's vulnerability to skewing by data extremes. Comparison with other organisations of similar sizes and gender profiles to JNCC has shown that this is a commonly reported finding, and that we should anticipate that our gender pay gap may increase in some years as a result of the impact a small number of staff can have on the overall figures.

Our analysis showed that there were two secondary factors contributing to our mean gender pay gap. The first is our Recruitment and Retention Allowance (RRA), which is payable to eligible roles, where justified by the market rate and hiring challenges. In 2024, 57% of our RRAs were paid to men and 43% to women. This is disproportionate to our overall gender balance and is largely as a result of allowances being awarded to a number of roles in our Digital and Data Solutions and Information Technology teams, in which the majority of post holders are male.

The second aspect which has contributed to our mean gender pay gap is the salaries of employees who have been seconded to other organisations. Their salary rates are set by the host organisation, and therefore out of our control. However, they remain on our payroll and so we have included them in our analysis. We had five outward secondees in the snapshot period, of whom four were male.

4.1.5. Analysis of Median Hourly Gender Pay Gap

We consider the reduction of our median hourly gender pay gap from 10.6% in 2023 to 0.6% in 2024 to be a significant achievement, especially considering that the median figure is generally thought to be the most representative measure, as it ignores any extremes in the data. We have therefore focused our analysis on understanding the contributors to this success, to ensure that we can build upon these in future years.

Our male median salary has increased only marginally between 2023 and 2024, from £19.62 to £20.53 per hour, and remains at the lower end of our S grade salary range. Our female median salary, however, has increased significantly from the lower end of our H grade salary at £16.88 per hour in 2023, to the S grade minima at £20.40 per hour in 2024.

This means that the median paid woman in JNCC is earning 21% more in 2024 than in 2023.

This increase in the female median salary has occurred as a result of a number of factors, which together have contributed to a shift in the balance of women employed at H grade and below versus those at S grade and above. These contributing factors include:

- 76% of all promotions were of female employees, and 75% of promotions from H to S grade were of women.
- External recruits joining JNCC at grades S and above were proportionate to the overall organisational gender balance, which had a positive impact on the starting point where women were underrepresented in the senior grades in 2023.

- Space was made for the promotions and new hires, as proportionally more men than women left the organisation from grades S and above
- Slightly more men, proportionate to their proportion in the organisation as a whole, joined at grades H and below.

Whilst our median hourly pay gap has seen a significant and rapid improvement from last year; our analysis shows that, due to our small size, it would only require a very small change in our staffing (eight employees) for the median pay gap to either increase back to 10% or reduce to -2.5%. It is therefore important that we are not complacent or consider ‘the job done’.

4.2. Bonus Pay

4.2.1. Percentage of Men and Women Receiving Bonus Pay

In the twelve months ending on our snapshot date of 31 March 2024, 91.2% of female staff and 83.3% of male staff received a bonus (see Figure 4).



Figure 4. Illustration showing the percentages of male and female staff receiving a bonus in the twelve months ending on 31 March 2024.

4.2.2. Bonus Pay Gender Pay Gap



The mean bonus gender pay gap for 2024 was 10% (increasing from -0.1% in 2023) and the median bonus gender pay gap was 0% (unchanged compared to 2023).

As detailed above, the median figure is thought to be the most representative measure as it is not affected by outlying data points. Having taken steps to reduce the median bonus gap from the 17.1% that we identified in our first gender pay gap report in 2022 to 0% in 2023, we are very pleased to see that we have been able to maintain this into 2024.

The mean bonus gap has increased substantially in 2024 as a result of a very small number of SCS performance bonuses which, combined with the small overall number of male employees in our workforce, have had a large skewing effect on the mean bonus figure for male employees.

5. Taking Action to Close the Gender Pay Gap

In the past twelve months, we have continued to build on our existing strengths and to take action to ensure that JNCC is a fully inclusive organisation, and through these steps to reduce our gender pay gap.

We provide a very supportive environment for flexible working arrangements and are proud that several of our senior roles are carried out on a flexible basis. All employees are also able to access a hybrid working arrangement, enabling staff to work from home for at least some of their working week, if they wish to do so, to support a healthy work-life balance. Research shows that the provision of well-designed flexible working has the potential to reduce the gender gap, as it enables women to reconcile work and caring responsibilities, thereby enabling them to remain in work and stay in roles that reflect their skills (see '[A guide to flexible working for senior leaders & managers](#)' by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and the Government Equalities Office (GEO)).

Our recruitment and selection process is determined on merit and on the basis of fair and open competition. We provide interview training, use a structured interview process, utilise anonymised applications, and ensure diversity within our interview panels to help achieve greater diversity throughout our workforce.

We have a highly active Diversity, Equity and Inclusion working group and have been awarded TIDE (Talent Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation) bronze status for two years in a row. Our ambition is to achieve gold status within three years. We made good progress in 2024 in establishing White Ribbon within JNCC, to prevent violence against women and girls and challenge attitudes that perpetuate inequality. We ran five successful sessions covering more than 100 members of staff and provided an all-staff update at the staff conference. The plan for this coming year (2025 to 2026) is to see White Ribbon objectives and actions integrated into JNCC values, management priorities and processes.

A new template for employment policies has been introduced in 2024, which includes an equality analysis which must be completed for any new policy, and a programme of work has been started to review and complete an equality analysis of all existing policies.

Looking ahead to the year April 2025 to March 2026, we have agreed specific actions with our People Committee to address some of the causes of the remaining gender pay gap, including ensuring that any future review of our Recruitment and Retention Allowance includes an equality analysis; seeking to attract more female candidates to our digital, data and information technology roles and ensuring that secondment opportunities are equally accessible to any gender of employee.

We will also continue to support the development of our existing staff members, through established programmes such as our S grade leadership programme, and newer initiatives such as our CoMeSh (Coaching, Mentoring and Shadowing) scheme and a G7 leadership programme, to support all internal candidates to have the best possible

chance of success in promotion. We will continue to ensure there are no barriers to prevent participants with family commitments from participating in our development programmes, for example by offering options to attend virtually where possible.

6. Declaration

We confirm that data reported by JNCC are accurate and have been calculated according to the requirements and methodology set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

David Collins

Director of Finance and Resources

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