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Gender Pay Gap Persists in New Study

August 8, 2025

– Categories: *Economics*



Recent research from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) reveals that Australia continues to face a significant gender pay gap, with women earning on average 18% less than men. The analysis, covering 5,000 companies nationwide, shows women make approximately 82 cents for every dollar earned by men. The disparity grows wider at senior levels, where the gap reaches 32% in executive roles. Although the gap narrowed slightly from 19% the previous year, progress remains slow.

despite increased efforts around pay transparency and corporate reporting.

Breaking down the figures by industry, the finance and construction sectors report the largest pay differences, with gaps of 26% and 24% respectively. The technology sector stands out with notable improvement, having reduced its pay gap to 14% through targeted recruitment and promotion policies. Researchers attribute about 62% of the pay disparity to structural factors such as occupational segregation where women and men tend to work in different roles—and career interruptions, rather than direct discrimination. This insight suggests that systemic workplace practices and choices contribute heavily to ongoing inequalities.

Corporate initiatives that focus on merit-based promotion and flexible work arrangements appear to be more effective than government mandates in addressing pay gaps. Companies actively implementing these policies experienced 40% faster progress in closing the wage gap compared to those simply complying with reporting requirements. However, critics caution that cultural attitudes continue to influence salary negotiations, with data showing women negotiate pay rises 25% less often than men. This dynamic indicates that workplace culture and confidence may also play important roles in maintaining disparities.

As Australia faces a tightening skills shortage, businesses prioritizing pay equity may gain advantages in attracting and retaining talent. The data suggests that market-driven solutions, such as transparent pay structures and performance-based evaluations, are more successful than regulatory measures alone. While challenges remain, the slight narrowing of the gap reflects growing recognition that gender equity contributes not only to

fairness but also to stronger economic productivity. Policymakers and corporate leaders alike will need to continue exploring effective strategies to ensure sustained progress in closing Australia's gender pay gap.

