



Gender Pay Report

2024



Introduction

Our company values of Safe, Trust, Respect, Challenge & Deliver are a defining part of the Designer Group identity.

This is our third year of reporting under the Gender Pay Information Act, 2021. The passing of time allows us to build a clearer picture of the challenge internally in respect of achieving improvements in the gender pay gap and in understanding the overall picture by industry sector nationally and the international position. The snapshot date taken for this report is 18th June 2024.

The gender pay gap measures the disparity in the average hourly earnings between men and women in an organisation.

It is important to be clear that any such gap does not indicate a lack of equal pay for both women and men performing the same job role. Designer Group operates a consistent and inclusive salary review process annually.

This report sets out how we are performing against a national and industry backdrop.



The Gender Pay Gap Landscape

Deloitte has highlighted that the mean hourly pay gap reported across all companies in Ireland, with an obligation to report in 2023, was 11.2% (a reduction from 12.6% in 2022). 86% of companies disclosed a pay gap in favour of males. (Ref: "Gender Pay Reporting: Spotlight on Year Two")

It is worth noting that the largest pay gaps reported in 2023 were present in sectors such as the legal profession, aviation and, of particular relevance to Designer Group, the construction sector, at 21%.

- **Female Participation in Employment in the EU**

It is widely acknowledged that there are a range of factors that contribute to the gender pay gap such as overall female participation in the workplace, access to opportunity, availability and affordability of care provision, recruitment practices and the criteria and the value placed on certain attributes and experience and unconscious bias.

According to OECD data, only 68% of women aged between 20 and 64, within the EU, are in employment, which is 10 percentage points lower than the proportion of men in the same age bracket. Naturally, there can be a number of contributory factors influencing this situation but this level of employment participation should be viewed within a context of a shrinking working age population in Europe overall.

- **Female Participation in Employment in Ireland**

The number of people in employment across all sectors in Ireland is at a record high with the Central Statistics Office (CSO) reporting 2.7M people between the ages of 15-65 years in employment in the period April-June 2024, an increase of 71,000 people from the same period in 2023. With respect to women in the workplace, 61.4% female participation, marks the highest figure since the CSO commenced this measurement in 1998.

In construction the current skills gap is recognised across Europe and is a real feature of our industry in Ireland. Within this context, attracting more women to the industry and developing and retaining these women is imperative to the future success.

Our Gender Figures & Pay Gap

These figures are provided in accordance with the Gender Pay Information Act 2021:

On 18th June 2024, Designer group in Ireland comprised of the following employee breakdown:

Male %	Female %
89.7%	10.3%

This illustrates a slight reduction (0.7%) in female employees as a percentage of the overall workforce, from our 2023 figures and is set against a backdrop of 9.1% of women in construction nationally. *(Ref: CSO Q3 204 figures)*

However, in terms of total recruitment in the Irish business, we have hired 6% more women in 2024 than in the previous year and have seen a 60% rise in the number of women hired to operations roles (Project Engineer, Graduate Engineer) and those site based and directly supporting operations (e.g. Environmental Health & Safety) in 2024, from 2023. This is a positive trend which needs to continue.

By far, the majority of women in our employment remain in support team roles (Document Control, Finance, People team and office support roles). This is a widely recognised industry position.

Hourly Pay Quartiles by Gender:

	Male %	Female %
Lower Quartile	85.05% <i>(2023: 89.25%)</i>	14.95% <i>(2023: 10.75%)</i>
Lower-Middle Quartile	92.45% <i>(2023: 85.87%)</i>	7.55% <i>(2023: 14.13%)</i>
Upper-Middle Quartile	86.79% <i>(2023: 89.25%)</i>	13.21% <i>(2023: 10.75%)</i>
Upper Quartile	94.34% <i>(2023: 93.48%)</i>	5.66% <i>(2023: 6.52%)</i>

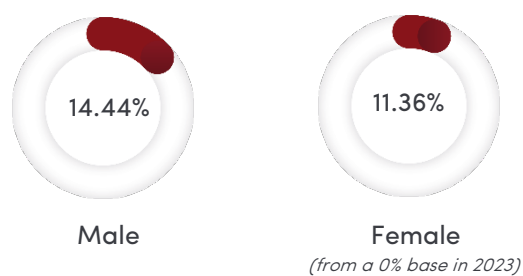
The 12 months between 18th June 2023 and 18th June 2024 saw an increase of women in the lower pay quartile of just over 3%. This can be explained by an expansion in our numbers of entry level support roles which traditionally attract a higher number of female applicants. These roles do not involve project or KPI incentive bonus structures.

As can be seen from the figures above, there has been a reduction in the number of women in the lower-middle quartile of over 6.5% which explains the resulting increase in the number of women in the upper middle quartile, as women have secured promoted roles or roles that involved a higher level of responsibility including line management. We have also seen an increase in the number of women in Project Engineering roles which is a welcome positive as these are the potential operational leaders of the future.

The last 12 months has seen a slight reduction (0.8%) in women in the upper pay quartile, primarily due to attrition.

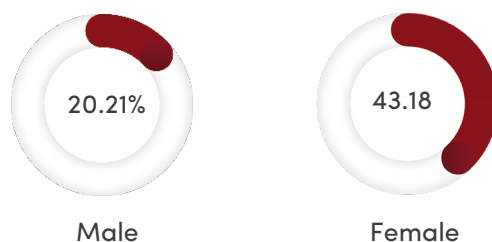


Percentage of employees who received a paid bonus:



As has been acknowledged in previous years, the majority of bonused roles are those involved in commercial project delivery and management, where the highest proportion of men are employed. However, the figures above represent an increase in women receiving a performance bonus in team lead or line management roles, which corresponds to the increase of women in the upper middle quartile referenced earlier.

Percentage of employees who received benefit-in-kind:



These figures are very similar to 2023 and reflective of the higher uptake of benefits such as healthcare cover which incurs BIK taxation.

Mean bonus remuneration pay gap:	14.65%
Median bonus remuneration pay gap:	42.0%

These figures are impacted by the prevalence of men in operational roles where incentive/KPI bonuses are part of an industry standard package and are based on a percentage of base pay.

Mean hourly pay gap (all employees):	14.03%
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Last year's report highlighted a mean pay gap of 10.85% and 19% in 2022. This 3.18% increase in pay gap is disappointing but it can be explained by the loss of a small number of higher paid female employees, which in itself, raises the importance of retention of women particularly in companies with a low female to male ratio and the need to be conscious of any contributory factors that can lead to women leaving the business.

Mean hourly pay gap (part-time employees):	0% (Unchanged from 2023)
Mean hourly pay gap (temporary employees):	0% (Unchanged from 2023)
Median hourly remuneration pay gap (all employees):	6.45%

Last year's report highlighted a median pay gap of 5.87%, from 21% the previous year.

Median hourly pay gap (part-time employees):	0.0%
Median hourly pay gap (temporary employees):	0.0%

What Are We Committed to Doing to Address Our Pay Gap

Education & Opportunity

Undoubtedly, in more recent times, there is greater dialogue surrounding gender inequality in the construction industry. However despite this, the percentage of women in the industry has not significantly increased over the last number of years. It is clear that attraction and retention of women in our industry should be an imperative. However, this objective has to be viewed within a backdrop of challenges in the talent pipeline from education. Specifically, far fewer female students opt for construction-related post-Leaving Certificate courses. Female students account for more than half of third-level students, but make up only 35% of STEM students (Ref: Higher Education Authority, 2023b).

Until the systemic gender gap in opportunity in construction-related education is addressed, the under representation of women will continue, for example, in Engineering courses nationally, only 26% of students enrolling are female students (Ref: Higher Education Authority, 2023b). In the academic year 2022/23, only 12% of students enrolled in Technical University Dublin, on the BSc Construction Management were women (Ref: An Exploratory Study in the Reasons Why Women Students Are Not Choosing Construction-related Degrees in Ireland, White & Meekel, TUD).

Engagement with second level schools and transition year students remains a focus for us in Designer Group. We continued to provide student placements in 2024 with our partnering schools, 43% of the students who took up a placement were female.

As one step in addressing the reported drop-off in interest by young women in STEM subjects in second level education, we have also recently committed to be a corporate donor of the Passport to Inclusion programme 2025-27 which aims to address the disparities in STEM education that affects girls and young women from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds in Ireland. The programme builds on the findings of the pilot programme 2021-2024 which was supported through a partnership led by Dr Katriona O'Sullivan and supported by major stakeholders such as Maynooth University, Research Ireland and the Department of Education, together with major employers such as Microsoft Ireland. The Impact Report for the pilot programme was launched in late November 2024. (Ref: Stem Passport for Inclusion Impact Report 2021-2024)

As a donor for the 2025-27 programme Designer Group will act as an industry partner in the programme working with DEI schools (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) with three central priorities;

- Ensuring equal access to STEM skills to provide the opportunity to engage in meaningful employment,
- Ensuring that STEM skills support equal participation in society and,
- Building STEM knowledge and capabilities to support a meaningful life

It is envisaged that this programme will open up a range of career options to young women to consider our industry as a real career choice and tackle outdated perspectives.

Tackling Barriers

Our International Women's Day 2024 event allowed women in Designer Group to discuss and present a range of real-life challenges experienced in respect of working in construction. This exercise provided a catalyst for site audits to address issues raised such as a lack of project site facilities and infrastructure for women, badly designed personal protective equipment (PPE), designed exclusively for the male frame, gender bias and working patterns. This exercise has allowed us to identify areas for improvement in our site operations.

Designer Group has recently become a Champion of Women in Construction (WICI) reaffirming our commitment to driving gender diversity and inclusion in our industry. We see this partnership as providing key networking and mentoring opportunities for women in our workforce and assisting us to examine what additional proactive actions we can take to creating the correct organisational culture where women can thrive and we can continue to make inroads to further reduce our gender pay gap.



Supporting Inclusiveness

Finally, it is our belief that the issue of tackling the gender pay gap is best served in a truly inclusive organisational culture and 2025 will see Designer Group conduct an extensive exercise to better understand our people and what is important to them and, provide the groundwork for data-driven transformation by facilitating a self-declaration Diversity, Equality and Inclusion survey and feedback mechanism on DG culture. This will address areas such as sense of belonging, psychological safety and inclusive leadership.

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View all Designer Group policies and reports at: <https://designergrp.com/privacy-policy/>

We confirm that our data has been calculated in accordance with the requirements of the Equality Act 1998 (Section 20A) 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2022.

