

# COMHAIRLE CONTAE MHUINEACHÁIN MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL

## GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2024



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

I welcome the opportunity to introduce Monaghan County Council's Gender Pay Gap Report for 2024, the third such report to be issued by this Council.

The gender pay gap is the pay gap between what women earn as a group and what men earn as a group. The issue of gender pay differences is an important one, not only to the workplace but to wider society. Our staff are the most important resource we have in our organisation and we continue to strive to promote and sustain an inclusive organisational culture which provides equality of opportunity and where every employee feels valued.

Historically, although women account for approximately half the population, women's participation in the workplace, women's roles and women's pay have not been on par with those of the male population. There are many social, cultural and policy reasons for this imbalance. A lack of women in the workplace, and especially in senior roles, has far-reaching consequences for women personally as well as for the social and economic wellbeing of our society.

Measuring and reporting on the Gender pay gap is an important element in a wider strategy to address female participation and equality in the workplace. It brings a focus on important questions such as the lack of women in senior positions in organisations, the over-representation of women in lower paid roles, and the disproportionate share of caring responsibilities in the home that typically fall to women to fulfil.

Reporting on the gender pay gap is not an end in itself and, while it represents just a snapshot in time during the year, it is nevertheless a critical and important element as measurement and reporting provide an opportunity to review what is working, where obstacles or challenges exist and what actions are needed for change. In this way, the reporting process has the potential to support constructive debate and be a driver for change.

Comparing our Gender Pay Gap reports for 2023 and 2024 the data shows that the mean gender pay gap, where women on average were paid more than men, has narrowed during this period. In 2023 women earned 3.01% more than men and in 2024 women earned 1.03% more than men. This represents a reduction in the gender pay gap of 1.98% in favour of women. While women are still, on average paid more than men, the margin has decreased in 2024.

Historically, a number of sectors and jobs have been dominated by one gender, e.g. women dominating education, health and caring professions, and men dominating management, technology, construction and engineering. Local authorities, including Monaghan County Council, are at the forefront of delivering services to our citizens and we believe our organisation is a place where all employees have the same opportunities for recognition and career development and are treated fairly and equitably at work. I am pleased to say for the period of this report that Monaghan County Council’s Senior Management team has a balanced representation with a 50:50 breakdown of male and female, reflecting our commitment to gender equity at management level. Additionally, there is a growing proportion of women in senior roles and professions previously dominated by men, such as engineering, planning, information technology and in the County’s Fire Service.

While we have many equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives already in place, we are committed to monitoring trends over time and ongoing improvement to address workplace barriers to equality, to support diversity and to create an equitable, diverse and inclusive workplace community.



*Robert Burns - Chief Executive*

## 2. ABOUT US

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN IRELAND

There are 31 local authorities and 3 regional assemblies in Ireland. Local authorities are the closest and most accessible form of government to citizens. They have responsibility for the delivery of a wide range of services in their local area, with a focus on making cities, towns, villages and the countryside attractive places in which to live, work and invest. Local authority services make a significant contribution to the physical, cultural, social and environmental development of communities and include housing, planning, infrastructure, environmental protection and the provision of amenities and recreation and community infrastructure.

Local authorities play a key role in promoting social inclusion and quality of life and supporting economic development and enterprise at a local level. Local authorities take the lead role in shaping the strategic vision of the county or city. They also work in partnership with other state, public and private bodies in the delivery of critical infrastructure and shared services. Local authorities deliver hundreds of services and implement policy across a range of areas including:

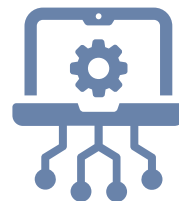
- Arts and culture
- Climate action
- Community services
- Economic development
- Environment
- Housing
- Libraries
- Parks and open spaces
- Planning
- Roads and transport
- Tourism



Local authority employees come from a wide range of backgrounds with diverse skill sets, qualifications and experience. Roles in the sector include:

- Accountants
- Administrators
- Apprenticeships
- Archaeologists
- Architects
- Archivists
- Conservation officers
- Engineers
- Fire services
- General service and tradespeople
- Graduates
- Health and Safety
- Information technology
- Library services
- Planners
- Senior management roles
- Technicians

Working for Monaghan Council gives our employees the opportunity to gain experience at the heart of local government and to make a real difference for County Monaghan. Everything we do in Monaghan County Council is geared towards making County Monaghan a great place to live and work and our employees play a vital role in that ambition.



# 2. ABOUT US

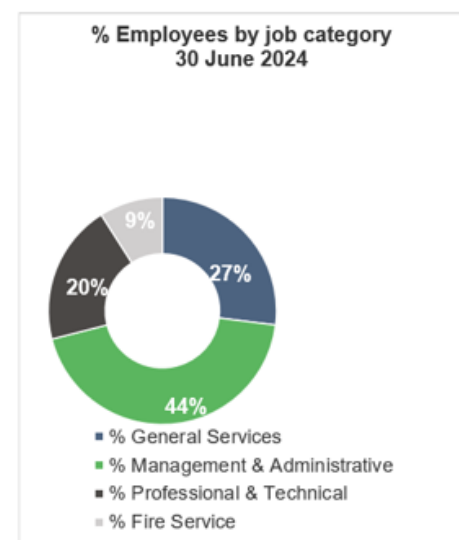
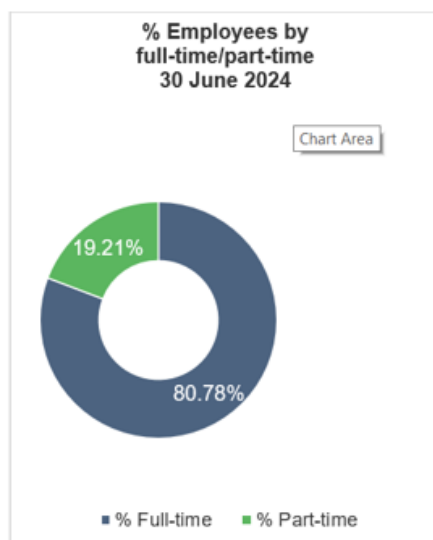
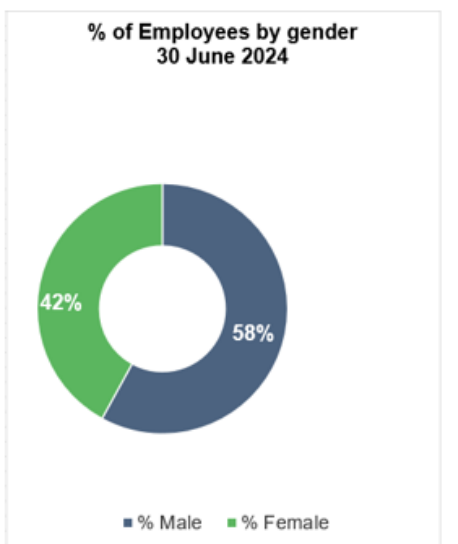
## MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL

The county of Monaghan is the most northerly inland county in the country. The County's population is largely rural, with a significant proportion, over 70% living outside urban areas. The County offers outstanding amenities from parklands to lakes, vibrant heritage, arts and culture hubs, active rural communities and market towns.

Monaghan County Council employs a workforce at the snapshot date of the 30th June 2024 of approximately 510 employees, providing high quality, sustainable public services to enhance the economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of our people and county. We have a strong, well resourced, energised and committed workforce. We place great pride in our staff, placing our people at the centre of what we do.

With a history and spirit of entrepreneurship in the county, Monaghan County Council's goals are based on a strategic vision that strives to make Monaghan a better place to live, work and visit. We provide a diverse, multi-layered and evolving range of services to both citizens and visitors to County Monaghan, which include the provision of Housing, Planning and Development, Environmental, Roads and Transportation, Community and Enterprise services.

Our employees work in a dynamic and progressive local authority which promotes training and development of our employees who are our most valuable resource.



# 3. GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING

## **GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING 2023**

The Gender Pay Gap Information Act, 2021 initially required organisations with over 250 employees to report their Gender Pay Gap data. In 2024, the scope of the legislation was expanded to include organisations with 150 or more employees. Organisations are asked to select a 'snapshot' date in the month of June. The reporting period is the 12-month period immediately preceding and including the snapshot date. For local authorities, the snapshot date is 30 June 2024. Organisations have six months to prepare their calculations, before reporting six months later during December 2024. The information must be published on the employer's website or in some other way that is accessible to all its employees and to the public.

## **WHO IS INCLUDED?**

All persons employed by the employer on the snapshot date, including employees not rostered to work on that date and employees on leave. The mean and median figures must also be given separately for part-time and temporary employees.

## **WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THE GENDER PAY GAP?**

The Gender Pay Gap calculates the percentage difference between the average earnings of males and females irrespective of their role. The Gender Pay Gap is not the same as equal pay. Employment Equality legislation provides for equal pay for like work. All male and female employees in the local government sector are paid equally for work that is the same or similar or for work of equal value, therefore this report does not examine equal pay. Rates of pay within the sector are agreed through national wage agreements negotiated regularly between employers and staff representatives. Most employees are paid according to an incremental salary scale and the salary ranges for various roles are available on the local government jobs website at [www.localgovernmentjobs.ie](http://www.localgovernmentjobs.ie)

## **MEAN AND MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP**

The Gender Pay Gap calculates the percentage difference between the average earnings of males and females irrespective of their role, using the following measures:



# 3. GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING

## MEAN GENDER PAY GAP

This shows the % difference between the average hourly rate of pay for males and average hourly rate of pay for females

$$\frac{(\text{average male hourly rate}) - (\text{average female hourly rate})}{\text{average male hourly rate}} \times 100$$

## MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP

This shows the % difference between the median hourly rate of pay for males and median hourly rate of pay for females

$$\frac{(\text{median of male hourly rates}) - (\text{median of female hourly rates})}{\text{median of male hourly rates}} \times 100$$

The **mean** is the average. It is calculated by getting the difference between the average hourly rate of pay for males and the average hourly rate of pay for females (male hourly rate minus female hourly rate), expressed as a percentage of the male hourly rate. If this figure is negative, the average hourly rate of females is higher than the average hourly rate of males on the snapshot date. If this figure is positive, the average hourly rate of males is higher than the average hourly rate of females on the snapshot date.

The **median** is the figure that falls in the middle of a range where the salary of all relevant employees is listed, from the lowest to the highest. This can provide a more accurate representation of the 'typical' differences in pay.

It is useful to look at both the mean and median figures, as each one can tell us something different about the underlying factors affecting the pay gap. For example, a small number of higher paid employees can impact the mean figure and if this is the case, the median figure may be more representative of difference between what a male and a female is paid. If there is a significant difference between an organisation's mean and median pay gap, this may indicate that the data is impacted either by the presence of very low earners (making the mean lower than the median) or by a group of higher earners (making the mean higher than the median). It is also important to remember that this report uses data on a snapshot date in June. Gender pay gaps can fluctuate from month to month and across quartile pay bands, depending on changes to headcount. However, headline figures will give a good indication of the differences between average earning between males and females.

# 3. GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING

## QUARTILE PAY BANDS

Dividing employees into four more-or-less equal groups (or quartiles) with pay graded from lowest to highest helps us to examine pay across different levels of the organisation. Organisations must report on the percentage of employees who fall within the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile hourly pay bands. In order to group employees into these Quartile Pay Bands, the organisation lists all employees from lowest to highest, based on their hourly rates. The employees are then divided into four equal groups or Quartiles based on this - lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper. The employer then shows the proportion of male and female employees in each quartile as a percentage e.g. percentage of male employees in the lower quartile and percentage of female employees in the lower quartile (and so on).

## BONUS AND BENEFIT-IN-KIND

Figures must also be provided for bonus payments or benefit-in-kind if these apply. Bonus payments do not apply within the local government sector.

Benefit in Kind may arise in certain circumstances, such as where some professional fees are paid by the employer.

## FACTORS THAT CAN HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE GENDER PAY GAP

As mentioned, this report does not look at equal pay. Every employee, regardless of gender is paid equally for work that is the same or similar or for work of equal value. However, differences between what employees are paid can be impacted by a number of complex factors including:

- Occupational segregation – some job categories or occupations may have traditionally attracted more females than males or vice versa.
- Working patterns – full-time and part-time work. It may be that more females than males seek part-time work or career breaks and although this does not impact on their hourly rate of pay, it may impact on choices around career progression.
- Length of service – incremental pay increases may mean that new joiners are paid less than more experienced employees.
- Time of year – temporary or seasonal workers may be recruited for different roles which may attract a different rate of pay.
- Gender breakdown of senior roles at higher salaries – a small number of higher paid employees can affect the average figures.
- Gender breakdown of lower paid roles – a large number of lower paid employees can affect the average figures.

If an organisation reports a **positive gender pay gap**, it does not mean that females are paid less than males for doing the same job, but it does show that, on average, males occupy higher paid roles than females.

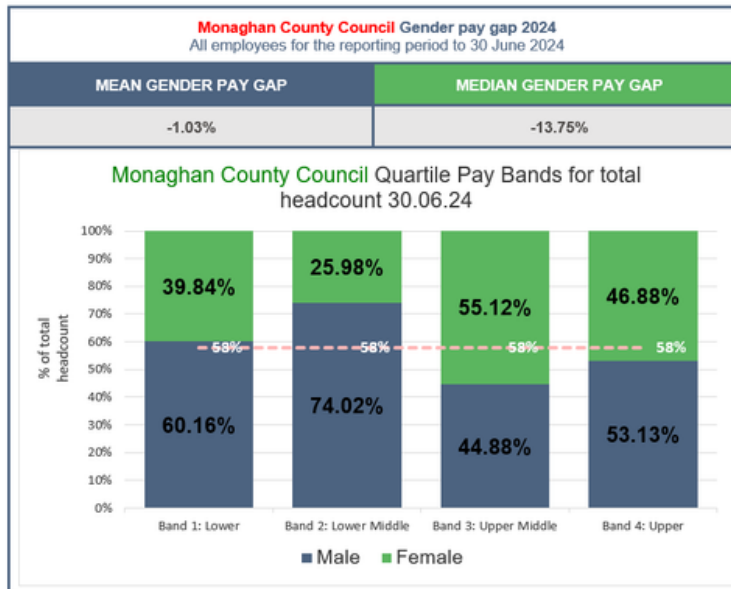
### 3. GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING

If an organisation reports a **negative gender pay gap**, it does not mean that males are paid less than females for doing the same job, but it does indicate that, on average, females occupy higher paid roles than males.

The larger the positive or negative pay gap is, the more marked the differences in hourly rates of pay will be and the more males or females proportionally working in either higher or lower paid roles within the organisation.

# 4. OUR FIGURES

## Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap - All employees



Note: 58%:42% (male:female) is the gender breakdown of all employees on 30 June 2024. This is shown in the dotted line above.

The Mean Gender Pay Gap shows that on average, females are paid 1.03% more than males. The Median Gender Pay Gap shows that the median rate of pay for females is 13.75% higher than the median rate of pay for males.

Looking at the distribution of employees across the four Quartile Pay Bands helps us examine pay at different levels of the organisation. These Quartile Pay Bands show the distribution of male and female employees by Pay Band across the organisation (we have listed all employees from lowest to highest, based on their hourly rates, then divided this into four equal Pay Bands or Quartiles - lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper. We then show the proportion of male and female employees in each quartile). The split for each of the 4 quartiles shown above is broadly in line with our workforce demographics of 58% male and 42% female. For there to be no Gender Pay Gap you would expect to see the workforce demographics reflected more closely in each quartile.

The gender distribution of our figures across different bands shows that there is a higher proportion of males in Band 1 and Band 2, reflecting that there are proportionately more males at lower grades. There is a higher proportion of females in Band 3, indicating that there are proportionally more females at the upper/middle grades. Band 4 shows that there is a slightly higher proportion of males in senior grades, however a 53% : 47% gender breakdown in senior grades is a positive development, signalling progress towards achieving a more balanced gender representation in senior positions. This shift is a welcomed sign of ongoing efforts to promote gender equality in the workplace.

# 4. OUR FIGURES

## Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap – Part-time employees

Monaghan County Council Gender pay gap 2024 Part-time employees for the reporting period to 30 June 2024	
MEAN GENDER PAY GAP	MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP
-9.78%	-6.63%

19% of all our employees on 30 June 2024 were working part-time. Of these, 59% are male and 41% are female. Factors influencing the pattern of part-time employees across the organisation include a range of flexible work options for part-time work, which, while available to all employees, have a greater take-up of in administrative and clerical job categories. Another factor is job categories where part-time work is an occupational feature of the role, including the fire service, library service, school wardens and cleaning/canteen staff.

## Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap – Temporary employees

Monaghan County Council Gender pay gap 2023 Temporary employees for the reporting period to 30 June 2023	
MEAN GENDER PAY GAP	MEDIAN GENDER PAY GAP
-0.17%	-1.05%

On 30 June 2024, 3.73% of our employees were employed on temporary contracts. Of these, the majority, 63%, are male and 37% are female. These contracts include temporary/seasonal employees such as General Operatives, Technical and Specialist posts.

### Benefit-in-Kind

On 30 June 2024, 3.5% of male employees received a Benefit in Kind payment and 0.8% of female employees received a Benefit in Kind payment.

### Bonus payment

Bonus payments do not feature as part of pay in the local government sector.

# 5. HOW WE ARE SUPPORTING GENDER EQUALITY

## **FAIR AND TRANSPARENT RECRUITMENT PRACTICES**

As an equal opportunities employer, we work to promote a culture of equality and we strive to embrace genuine equality of opportunity through our recruitment and selection process which are open to all.

We provide appropriate assistance and accommodation throughout our recruitment and selection process, including providing easily accessible interview facilities, agreeing an appropriately timed interview, and supplying or arranging appropriate equipment.

All our Interview Boards are gender balanced and all Interview Boards receive training, including unconscious bias training.

Recruitment websites highlight family friendly and flexible working options. All our job descriptions and job advertisements are gender neutral.

We provide training and support, open to all employees to help them prepare for job applications and interviews.

Employees are paid according to an incremental salary scale, and we offer strong career progression opportunities which are open to all employees.

Monaghan County Council was awarded the AHEAD WAM (Willing Able Mentoring) leader award for participation in the AHEAD WAM Programme 2024.

## **WORK LIFE BALANCE**

We offer a wide range of flexible working and leave options which are available to all employees, including carer's leave, career breaks, paid maternity and adoptive leave, paid paternity leave, parent's leave, parental leave, shorter working year schemes, work-sharing.

## **BLENDED WORKING**

Blended working is now a part of our flexible working policies with flexible options to combine office and home/hub working.

We provide access to the Cycle to Work Scheme to reduce commuting costs.

## **LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

We are committed to providing ongoing learning and development opportunities so that all employees can develop to their full potential. All employees are actively encouraged to pursue education opportunities through the Education Assistance Scheme, with study and examination leave also available.

# 5. HOW WE ARE SUPPORTING GENDER EQUALITY

## **HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

The health and wellbeing of all employees is paramount and a healthy work-life balance is important to us. We offer a comprehensive employee occupational health and wellbeing programmes including an Employee Assistance Programme, health screening, health and nutrition advice and wellbeing webinars etc.

We have developed an inclusive all-employee app to ensure that all our employees can be communicated with regularly and to promote wellbeing initiatives.

## **DIGNITY AT WORK**

We promote and support a culture of dignity, respect and equality. We have a Dignity at Work Policy and all employees and managers have received training and support in the implementation of the policy.

## **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

Monaghan County Council is continually developing as an employer of choice to attract, develop and promote an inclusive and diverse employee population.

Monaghan County Council continues to design and provide responsive services and customer care that meet the needs of an increasingly diverse customer base. We continue to provide training that ensures that our staff have the skills to respond to the diverse needs of our customers.

An assessment has been conducted of equality and human rights across all Council functions and services and the Council has developed an Action Plan on equality and human rights. The Council's Public Sector Duty Committee are responsible for ensuring that the Action Plan is updated.

A Human Rights and Equality Statement has been incorporated into the Council's Corporate Plans and Strategic Plans.

# 5. HOW WE ARE SUPPORTING GENDER EQUALITY

## **PUBLIC SECTOR DUTY**

Monaghan County Council progressively embeds the Public Sector Duty in its current management, policy development and service delivery processes.

The Public Sector Duty is set out in Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act, 2014. Section 42 requires a public body, in the performance of its functions, to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and treatment of its staff and the persons to whom it provides services and protect human rights of its members, staff and the persons to whom it provides services.

Public bodies are required to set out in a manner that is accessible to the public in its strategic plan an assessment of the human rights and equality issues it believes to be relevant to its functions and purpose and the existing or proposed policies, plans and actions to address those issues. Furthermore, public bodies are required to report annually on developments and achievements in that regard in its annual report in a manner that is accessible to the public.

Monaghan County Council acknowledges the commonality of purpose stated in both the "Duty" and Gender Pay Gap reporting requirements and the publication of this report serves to underline and support the three-step approach advocated by the IHREC i.e., Assess, Address and Report.

## **WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP**

Our Senior Management Team comprises of the following gender balance 50% Female and 50% Male for the period of this report. Monaghan County Council continues to offer Women in Leadership programmes to its female staff.



# 5. HOW WE ARE SUPPORTING GENDER EQUALITY

## APPRENTICESHIPS

As part of our inclusive approach to recruitment, Monaghan County Council offer a number of Apprenticeship programmes and participates as part of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Innovation and Science's Action Plan for Apprenticeship 2021 – 2025 which aims to increase the number of apprenticeships within the Public Service. This includes new Apprenticeship Programmes linked to areas of work within local authorities, including finance as well as more traditional apprenticeship areas.

## DATA COLLECTION AND EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- We welcome the opportunity to report on our gender pay gap and have worked collaboratively across the sector to provide a standard and consistent approach to reporting. We will work with the LGMA and our colleagues in other local authorities to share learnings and best practice.

