



**core**<sup>™</sup>

Gender  
Pay Gap  
Report  
2023



core™

This is the 2023 Gender Pay Gap Report for Core, Ireland's largest communications company. This is the second year we have reported on our Gender Pay Gap, a positive requirement for all large businesses in Ireland. This year I am encouraged to see our gap is closing, but we have more work to do.

We always aim to make Core a great place to work where people feel included, supported, and treated equally. We want our entire team show up to work as themselves.

It is important to highlight that, while we are required to report on 'male' and 'female', we believe that gender identity is much broader than this, and we recognise and celebrate our colleagues of all identities.

In Core, we have gone to great lengths to ensure that there is equal pay for similar roles regardless of gender. However, there is an imbalance in certain parts of the organisation (particularly in the upper quartile) which has resulted in a mean gender pay gap of 12.11% and a median of 6.83%. While both figures have improved over the last report, more is needed to eliminate the pay gap.

Over the last decade, we have introduced many new benefits and improved others. These include family supports, work/life initiatives, unconscious bias training and many more.

This year we have introduced policies, supports and training in areas like Menopause, Medical Support Leave and Working with Cancer. These supports, and the awareness they bring, are crucial elements in encouraging our talent to remain in Core throughout many of life's challenges. They ensure and safeguard our long-term succession planning goals and our aim for a more balanced upper quartile in the near future.

We acknowledge that it will take time, but we remain committed to eradicating the pay gap as an urgent priority for our business.

Aidan Greene  
Chief Executive Officer

# What is the gender pay gap and how is it reported?

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*The Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021 requires organisations to report on their hourly gender pay gap across a range of metrics. In 2022, organisations with over 250 employees were asked to report on their Gender Pay Gap for the first time. 2023 is the second year of reporting.*

## **What is the gender pay gap?**

The gender pay gap is the difference in the average hourly wage of men and women across a workforce. It compares the pay of all working men and women; not just those in similar jobs, or with similar competencies, qualifications or experience.

A gender pay gap does not indicate discrimination or an absence of equal pay for equal value work – it reports a gender representation gap. If more men occupy higher paid positions in a company, the gender pay gap is usually wider.

## **What must companies report on?**

The mean pay gap, the median pay gap, mean bonus remuneration, median bonus remuneration, the mean and median differences for part-time employees, Benefit In Kind (BIK) differences and pay quartiles.

## **What is the mean pay gap?**

The mean gender pay gap is the difference between women's mean hourly wage and men's mean hourly wage. The mean hourly wage is the average hourly wage for employees across the entire organisation.

## **What is the median pay gap?**

The median gender pay gap is the difference between women's median hourly wage (the middle paid female employee) and men's median hourly wage (the middle paid male employee). The median hourly wage is calculated by ranking all employees – from the highest paid to the lowest paid – and taking the hourly wage of the employee in the middle.

## **What are the pay quartiles?**

Pay quartiles are calculated by splitting all employees in an organisation into four even groups according to their level of pay. Looking at the proportion of men and women in each quartile gives an indication of the gender representation at different levels of the organisation.

# 2023 gender pay gap analysis

# 12.11%

Mean Gender Pay Gap

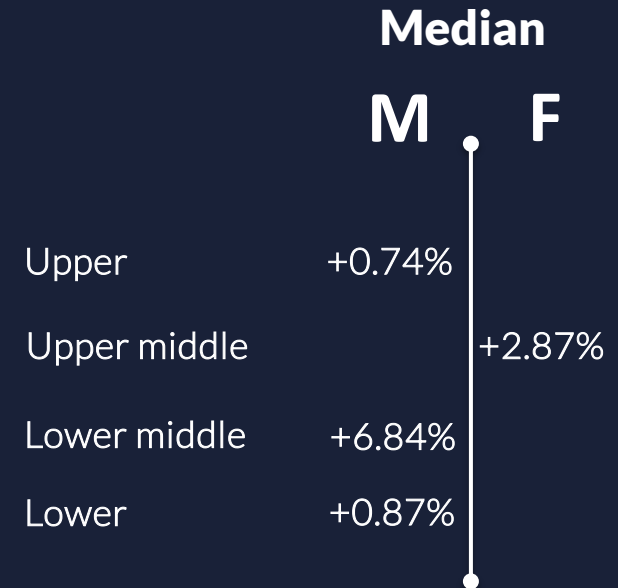
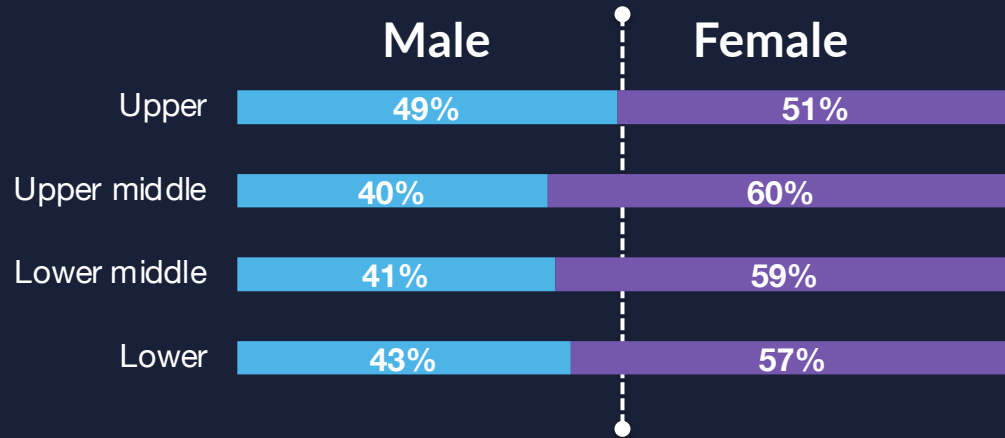
# 6.83%

Median Gender Pay Gap

Hourly rate pay gap  
€4.31

Hourly rate pay gap  
€1.94

Total 355  
Male 43%  
Female 57%



The upper quartile is a key factor in driving the gap for the organisation.

# Core's gender pay gap analysis: Further details

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## **Part-time workers' pay gap**

There is no gender pay gap for part-time workers as we have no male workers on part-time contracts. We encourage our male colleagues to consider all of our flexible working contracts now and in the future.

## **Benefit in Kind**

BIK is applicable to our bike to work scheme and health insurance. Both are optional benefits available to all employees from day one of employment. For the snapshot period, 75% of employees have availed of health insurance, with the payment of BIK tax leaning 4% towards our male employees.

## **Bonuses**

Other benefits of monetary value include Christmas One4All vouchers to the value of 250 euro and these have been paid at 100% to both male and female employees.

## **Timing of the analysis**

The gender pay analysis is based on annualised base pay effective 1st of July 2022 - 30th June 2023. The report is an annualised gap analysis over a full 12-month period.

It is important to note that the gender pay analysis can be impacted by the timing, and hiring of new recruits, people exiting the business and promotion activity. In total 355 people were included in this year's figures.

All employees across Core are aligned to salary bands which provide for equal pay for equal work irrespective of gender.

## Key areas and actions

Gender representation continues to be a significant part of Core's Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) strategy. This is the second time Core has reported on our gender gap analysis. We are delighted to see progress and see reporting as a key step in continued improvement.

The report indicates a 2.61 percentage point (pp) reduction or 17.8% improvement in the mean gap, and a reduction of 6.51 pp or a 49% improvement in the median gap.

The analysis shows the upper middle quartile has a 1.15% difference in favour of females. While the upper quartile has a 13.71% difference in favour of males. If we remove our company shareholders, this reduces to 4.24%.

For many years, we have operated salary bands which delivers transparency for employees around potential and expected earnings up to Board Director and MD levels.

Although we are seeing some reduction in key areas, there is still more to be done. Over two years ago, Core attained the prestigious *Investors in Diversity* Gold accreditation mark from the Irish Centre for Diversity (ICFD). This year Core has also been recognised as the tenth best large workplace by Great Place to Work Ireland.

We are delighted to be recognised as a Menopause friendly workplace by the Menopause Hub and GPTW.

The following section outlines some of the key actions we will take to help eliminate the gender pay gap over the next five years.



Jill Downey

Chief Sustainability Officer

# Key areas and actions

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**Our analysis of the gender pay gap within the organisation, reveals five key areas influencing the gender pay profile. These contributing factors are specific areas which Core is committed to addressing to reduce the gender pay gap.**

## **Recruitment**

Recruitment will be an ongoing action area for us. Pre 2000 recruitment in the advertising and communication industry was heavily male dominated at senior levels and the impact of this again reflected in our upper quartile. Core has made conscious efforts to overhaul our recruitment model, enhancing diversity and inclusion in all areas with a real focus on selection.

Last year we introduced unconscious bias training for all hiring managers. This year we made further efforts to focus on bias as well as neurodiversity. We also introduced competency profiling and the use of competency-based questions in interviews, ensuring that the right candidate is hired for the right role, regardless of gender. We will continue to develop our policies in to 2024 as well as look at solutions that encourage women to return to the workforce.

## **Employee supports**

Core has introduced many initiatives that support all employees throughout all life stages. In the last number of years, we have increased our family supports to include; increased time off, maternity coaching, increased paternity or co-parent leave up to 3 months. We have also introduced life leave, as well as fertility supports and assistance.

This year alone, we introduced our Menopause policy and inclusive supports, as well as training for senior managers. We also introduced supports in working and living with cancer and caring for someone who has long term illness such as cancer. Both are reflective of our commitment to working with our employees to create real change.

We will continue to work with our employee groups in 2024 to address other key areas like returning to work after long leave or absences. We know that it is imperative we support women throughout all life stages, creating the opportunity to stay, return and progress to senior positions in our industry.

## Key areas and actions continued

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### **Succession planning and coaching**

Succession planning will be a focus for us in the years to come, we have made huge strides in this area, but we have much more to do. In December 2022 we introduced a new 50/50 representative board and continue to increase coaching and supports for female employees to ensure succession planning in the upper quartile is robust enough to achieve parity over time.

This is exemplified across our Managing Director level whereby six out of our ten roles are held by women. We will continue to focus on coaching, mentoring and supports to ensure our succession planning will move to greater gender balance in our upper quartile in the years to come.

### **Executive management**

The analysis shows that we have more males in executive roles as well as more male shareholders. In particular, the influence of shareholders on Core's overall gap is significant. If we remove shareholders from the analysis, the overall mean pay gap reduces to 6.35%, with the median of 3.06%

Following on from changes made at our board levels, we are also committed to introducing our first gender balanced Executive Team which we will happen in 2024.

For 2024 our Practice leaders will also be tasked with a gender balanced target annually to ensure we give gender parity the time and commitment that is needed to continue to affect change for the future.

### **Shareholders' ownership and legacy**

Core is privately owned, and the majority of shares are owned by some members of our senior executive team. This team is predominately male due to legacy reasons.

All shareholders employed by Core are placed in the upper quartile of this report.



## Conclusion

In 2024, our commitment remains steadfast; to persistently challenge all areas and commit to making real change. We will continue to create initiatives that support, mentor and invest in women as they progress through their careers in Core. We will constantly challenge and scrutinise our recruitment process and will encourage and support women who return to our industry.

Despite the positive changes we have introduced over the last number of years, there is still more work to do. We have been successful in making improvements in areas like; life stage support, education, inclusivity, recruitment strategies, communication, as well as career progression opportunities, but we will not stop there.

We will sustain our efforts by introducing new policies, reinforcing support structures, initiatives, enhanced training for all employees, mentoring and further improving recruitment in key areas.

Diversity and Inclusion remains a priority for next year and beyond. We will continue to work with our employee groups, to listen to their feedback and to make measurable positive change.

For anyone who would like to find out more, for those who would like a deeper understanding of the analysis, or for anyone with any questions big or small, please don't hesitate to contact me or any member of Core's HR team.

I would like to thank the teams for their help in running this detailed analysis and compiling the report.

Catherine Fitzgibbon  
HR Director



# About **Core**

Core is Ireland's largest marketing communications company, collaborating across multiple practices, providing services in sponsorship, strategy, performance, research, investment, media, creative, learning, and data.



[onecore.ie](http://onecore.ie)