

Gender Pay Gap Report 2024

Gender Pay Gap Report of the
East of England Co-operative Society
13 April 2024

East of
England
CCOP

Introduction



We're proud to be the largest independent retailer operating in the East of England. We provide Food stores and specialist services, such as Funeral Services, Security, Travel Agents and Petrol Filling Stations to communities across Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire.

With a significant property portfolio and other businesses, we are a diverse and modern business.

As a co-operative business, we're run differently to other big organisations, putting our members first. Our focus has always been, and always will be, the local communities in our region.

Our co-op remains committed to achieving gender pay parity, with our latest report revealing we still have work to do. Whilst both our median and mean pay gap has increased since 2023, we are pleased to recognise that our median pay gap does consistently remain small. Compared with last year, both of our median and mean pay gap has increased.

We acknowledge that achieving a balanced workforce across all pay quartiles remains a challenge, particularly within senior positions. This underrepresentation of women at higher levels contributes to the gap significantly.

Our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion remains unwavering. We're actively reviewing internal procedures to ensure equal opportunities for promotion and professional development for all colleagues, regardless of gender.

We recognise the need to address this issue with renewed focus. We're confident that by taking concrete steps, we can reverse this trend and achieve true gender pay equality. We know this is not an overnight change, however we are committed to making decisions for the long term.

I confirm the information and data reported is accurate as at the snapshot date of 13 April 2024.

Esme Cole, Chair Remuneration & Search Committee
East of England Co-operative Society

Our 2024 Gender Pay Report



Our approach to pay and benefits

We believe in a fair and ethical approach to pay and that our colleagues should be paid equally for performing equivalent jobs within our co-op.

- Colleagues under the age of 23 are paid our full 'adult' pay rate rather than the lower rates permitted under national minimum wage regulations.
- Hourly-paid colleagues in retail are immediately paid at the full pay rate for the role, rather than at a reduced 'starter rate'.
- Most of our roles attract a fixed rate of pay as opposed to being linked to other individual factors.
- The hourly rate of our highest paid colleague is 14 times that of our lowest paid colleague. This is within the maximum ratio of 1:20 recommended by The Work Foundation.
- We provide sick, holiday and family leave benefits which exceed statutory requirements, as well as a life assurance scheme. Additional benefits include cycle to work scheme, salary advance and financial wellbeing product and payroll-giving scheme.
- We also have a variety of support available including policies on menopause, support for carers and a generous pension contribution.

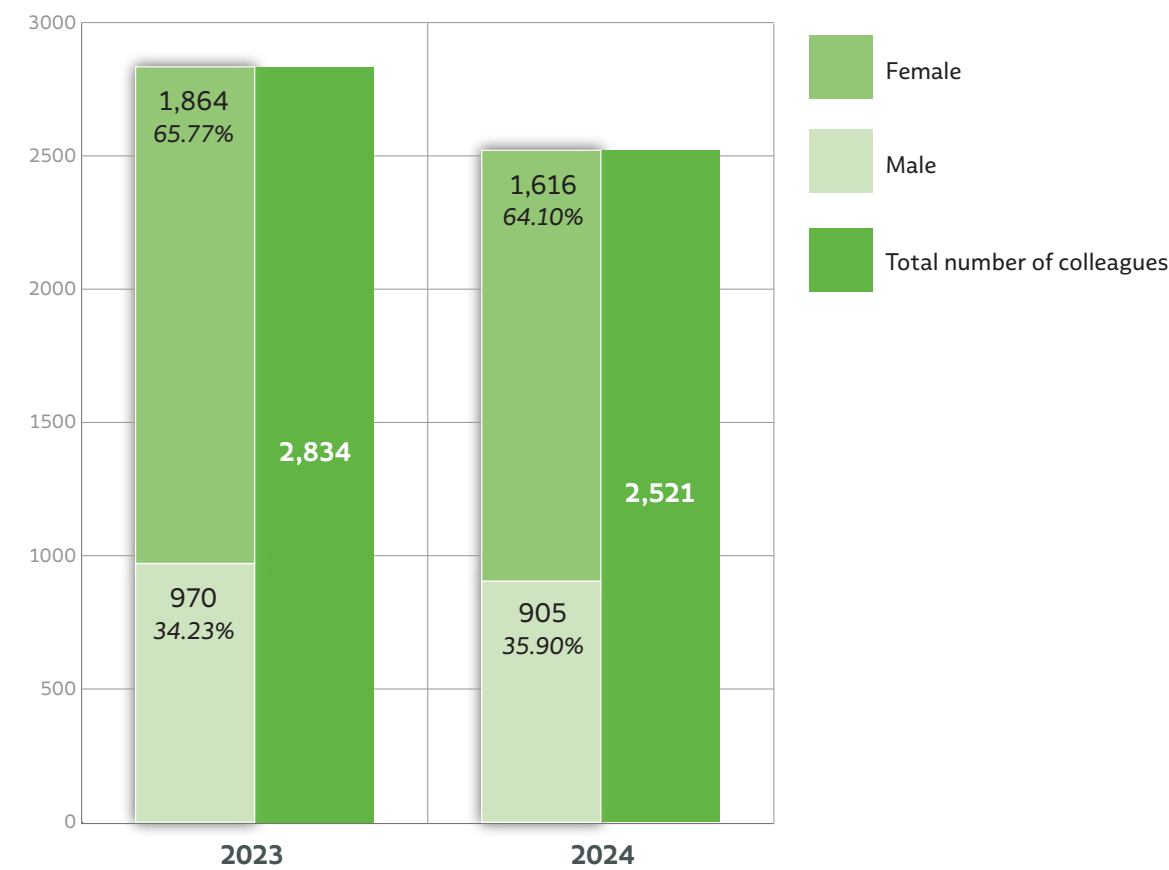


Our Gender Pay Gap

We employed 3,435 colleagues as at the reporting date of 13 April 2024, across a diverse range of businesses and roles within the East of England Co-operative. For the purpose of the Gender Pay Gap reporting, 2,521 of those colleagues were deemed to be relevant colleagues.

Note: Gender pay reporting requirements mean that gender must be reported in a binary way, recognising only men and women. Therefore, we base our reporting on recorded sex. However, it is worth highlighting that as part of our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, our internal diversity data collection allows colleagues to select/and/or self-describe their gender.

Colleagues in analysis



People Managers in our co-op

Male	Female
127	79

Our Gender Pay Gap Report continued.



Board Members

13 out of 16 Board members are female.

Mean – overall

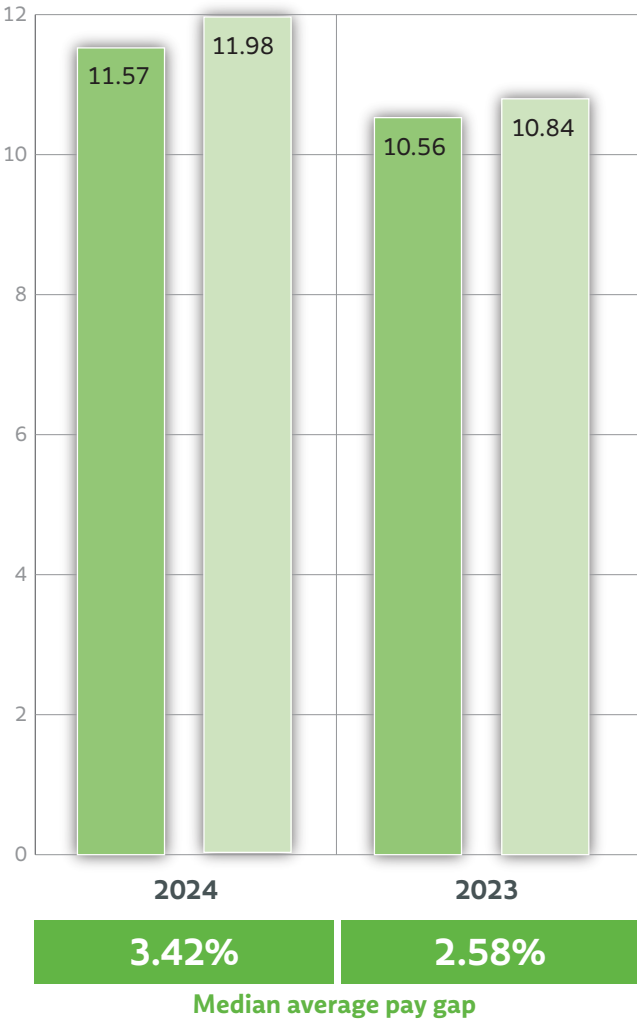
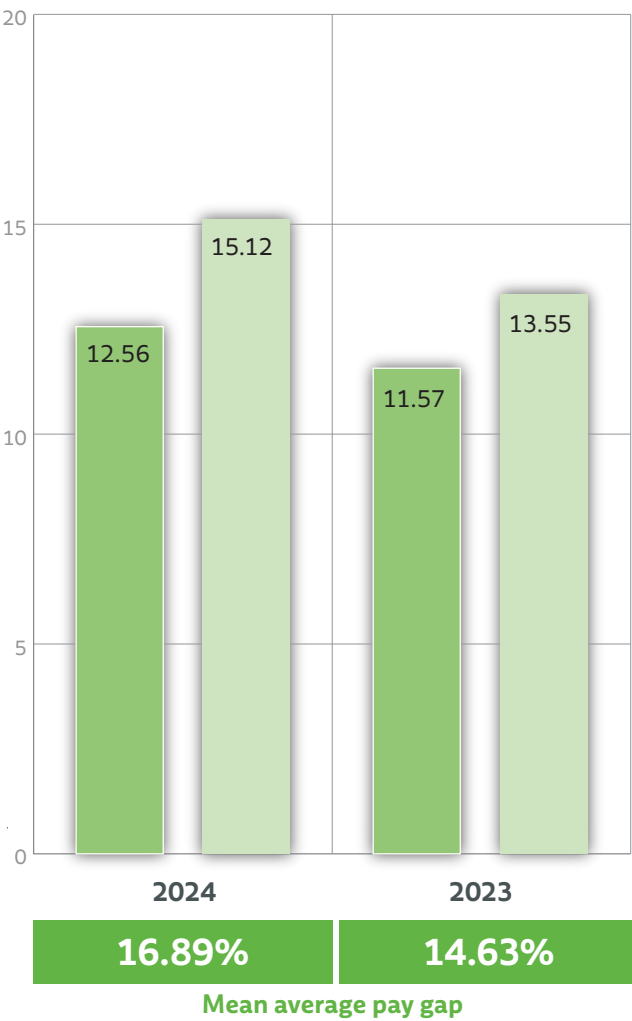
The mean is calculated by adding up all the data separately for our male and female colleagues and dividing by the number of males and females respectively.

Our mean average pay gap in 2024 is 16.89%. This is an increase of 2.26% when compared to the previous year (2023).

Median – overall

The median is calculated by (separately) putting the male and female data in order of the lowest to highest then selecting the middle value.

Our Median pay gap is 3.42%. This is an increase of 0.84% when compared to the previous year (2023).



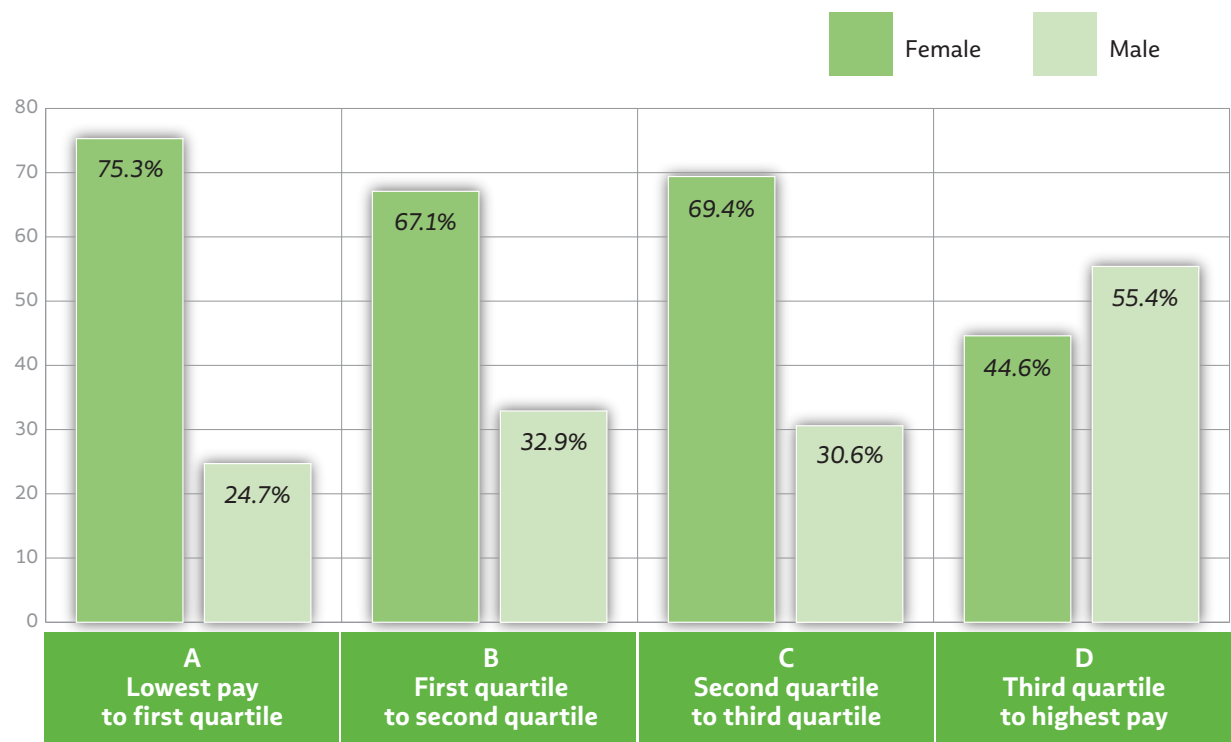
Female Male



Our Gender Pay Gap Report continued.

Pay Quartiles – overall

Our pay quartiles are balanced, so much as they are reflective of our overall colleague population. However, there is a relative imbalance in our upper pay quartile. This represents that we have more men in the most senior and higher paying roles within our co-op and this is the main contributory factor to our mean gender pay gap.



Observations

Overall Colleagues

There has been a slight decrease in the percentage of female colleagues from 2023 to 2024. The mean and median average pay percentages show an increase, indicating a widening gender pay gap.

Top 100 Colleagues

There is a notable shift towards a higher proportion of male colleagues in 2024. The mean average pay percentage gap has increased, while the median pay percentage gap slightly decreased.

Median gender pay gap

Our median gender pay gap would be 0% if based on basic pay only. The difference of 3.4% is the result of other pay items captured by Gender Pay Gap reporting, including stand-by and call-out payments which are more prevalent in roles with a high proportion of male colleagues, such as Funeral, Security and IT Operations. We have continued to see growth in the number of women in our Funeral Operative and Director roles (which typically attract most ancillary payments).

Our colleagues under 23 are also paid our full 'adult' pay rather than exercising the right to pay the lowest rates permitted under national minimum wage regulations.

What we are doing about our gender pay gap

A key reason our Gender Pay gap has widened is due to a larger proportion of men in our senior and higher paying roles in 2024. In 2023 the total number of females in our top 100 paying roles was 42. This has reduced to 33 in 2024.

In order to resolve our widening gap, it is important for us to properly understand what is causing the reduction in female appointments to leadership roles across the business. We will need to undertake a number of data gathering exercises over the coming months in order to inform our approach.

DEI Group

Our Co-op has a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Group that is led by two colleagues from our Leadership Group and is made up of a diverse range of colleagues from our family of businesses.

The group's purpose is to:

- Support the development of our co-op's DEI policy and strategic plan
- consider, inform and influence our co-ops future strategy, making recommendations on initiatives, activities and actions which will help our co-op achieve it's DEI aims and objectives.

Recruitment

During 2023 we launched a new recruitment campaign to increase the diversity of colleagues in our funeral business. Our funeral business is filled with highly professional, experienced and supportive colleagues and we wanted to ensure that we highlighted some of our talented workforce. Our campaign highlighted our diverse workforce and encouraged others to join us.

We will continue to flex our recruitment approach to ensure we are fair and transparent with our hiring including support to candidates when applying and other approaches for unbiased recruitment.

Data

We are in the process of completing our 2024 engagement survey, in which we have chosen to make diversity questions mandatory. This will go a long way to enabling us to better understand where we might have gaps and what we can do about them.

Partnerships

We continue to partner with a variety of external organisations to help shape our recruitment including the Department for Work & Pensions, HM Prison Services, Local Authorities and more.

Pathways to Employment

Our award-winning programme offers paid work placements in our co-op, aimed at individuals from diverse backgrounds who require support to gain work experience and meaningful employment. This initiative aligns with our co-op's commitment to social responsibility, community engagement and fostering inclusivity.

Menopause policy

Our menopause policy supports women in our co-op and promotes awareness and understanding amongst line managers and colleagues.

Family leave

Our Co-op has a range of policies supporting colleagues who are trying to have a baby, whether that be adoption, surrogacy or naturally conceiving to ensure everyone has the fair right to start a family.

Our policies are:

- Paternity
- Surrogacy
- Maternity
- Adoption
- Shared parental leave

Carers policy

In addition to our continued support of carers within our co-op, we have launched 'Seniorcare' by Lottie to provide our colleagues with free unlimited access to their industry-leading service.

Many of our colleagues are carers for elderly family members such as parents and grandparents. Seniorcare by Lottie is designed to support unpaid carers while also helping to find the best care solutions for loved ones when the time comes.

Governance

We continue to strictly govern any 'out of cycle' pay increases to ensure fairness and consistency.

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