

# Gender Pay Gap Report 2025

Gender Pay Gap Report of the  
East of England Co-operative Society  
25 September 2025

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 funerals, 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.

At our co-op, fairness is central to who we are. Our Gender Pay Report is one of the ways we hold ourselves accountable — by openly sharing where we are making progress and where more work is needed.

This year's results give us reasons to be encouraged. We are proud that women make up almost two-thirds of our workforce, and it is positive to see the median pay gap among our Top 100 earners close. This tells us that steps we've taken to support women's progression into senior roles are beginning to have an impact.

At the same time, the data makes clear that challenges remain. Women are still underrepresented in our senior, specialist, and Central Support roles, which contributes to the higher mean pay gap we continue to see. Addressing this requires not only fair pay structures, but also strong pathways for career progression and development across all levels of our co-op.

As a member-owned business, we take our responsibility to act with transparency seriously. We are committed to using these insights to focus our efforts where they will make the biggest difference — ensuring colleagues can grow, progress, and be rewarded fairly, wherever they work in our co-op.

I confirm the information and data reported is accurate as at the snapshot date of 13 April 2025.

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

# Our 2025 Gender Pay Gap Report



## Our approach to pay and benefits

We believe pay should be fair, ethical, and equal. At our co-op, colleagues are rewarded consistently for the work they do, with equal pay for equivalent roles.

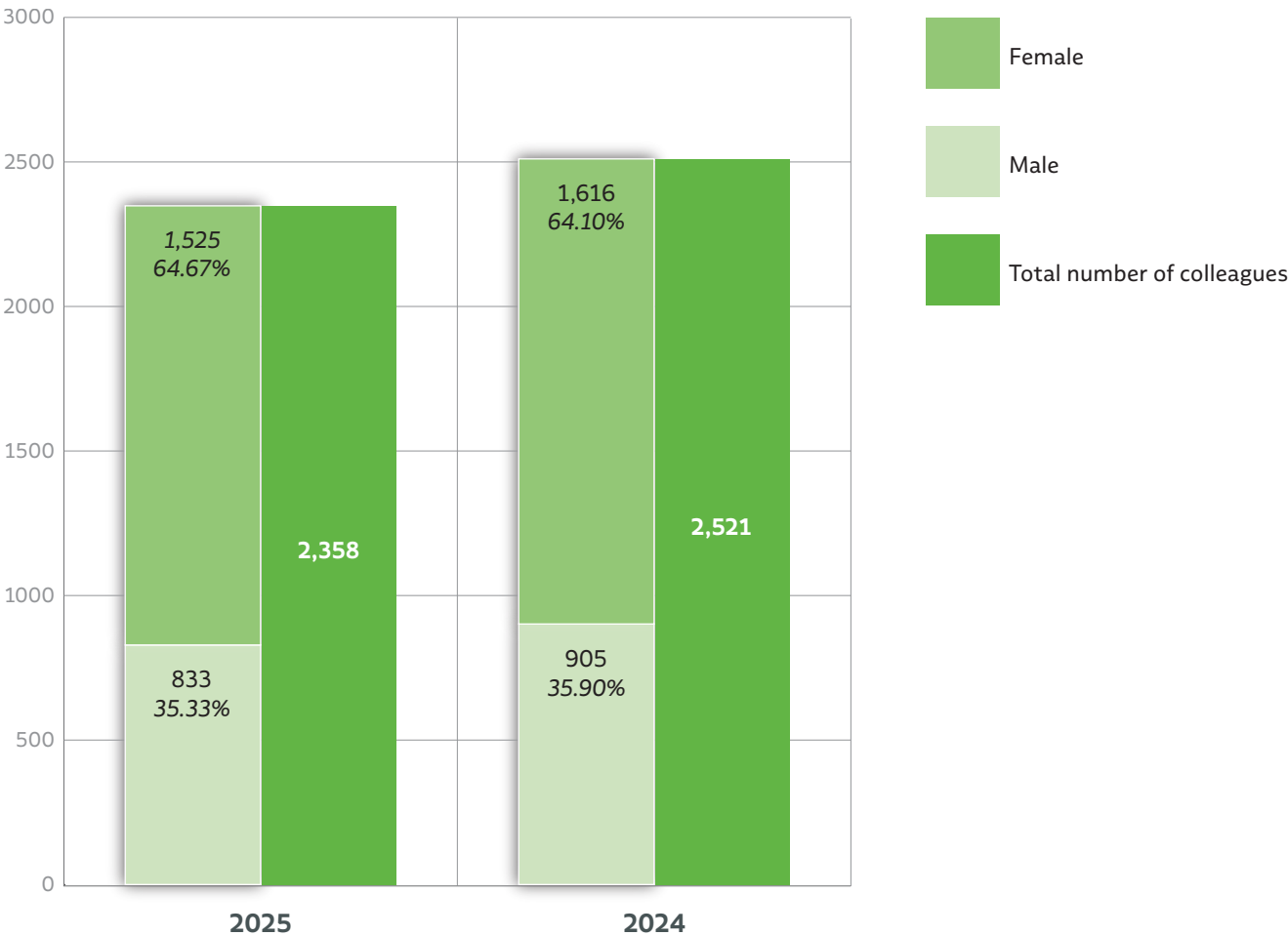
- All colleagues under the age of 23 receive our full adult pay rate, rather than the lower rates permitted under national minimum wage regulations.
- Hourly-paid retail colleagues are paid the full rate for their role from day one, without any reduced “starter rate.”
- Most roles have a clear fixed rate of pay, ensuring fairness and transparency.
- The hourly rate of our highest paid colleague is 14 times that of our lowest paid colleague—well within the 1:20 ratio recommended by The Work Foundation.
- Our sick pay, holiday, and family leave benefits go beyond statutory requirements, and we also provide life assurance.
- Colleagues can access a range of additional benefits, including our cycle-to-work scheme, salary advance options, financial wellbeing support, and payroll-giving.
- We also provide meaningful support for colleagues through menopause and carer policies, alongside a generous pension contribution.

# Our Gender Pay Gap

We employed 3,244 colleagues as at the reporting date of 12/04/2025, across a diverse range of business and roles within the East of England Co-operative. For the purpose of the Gender Pay Gap reporting, 2,358 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 commitment to diversity, equity & 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
120	82



Our Gender Pay Gap Report continued.

Board Members

We have maintained 10 of our 16 Board Members are female.

Mean – overall

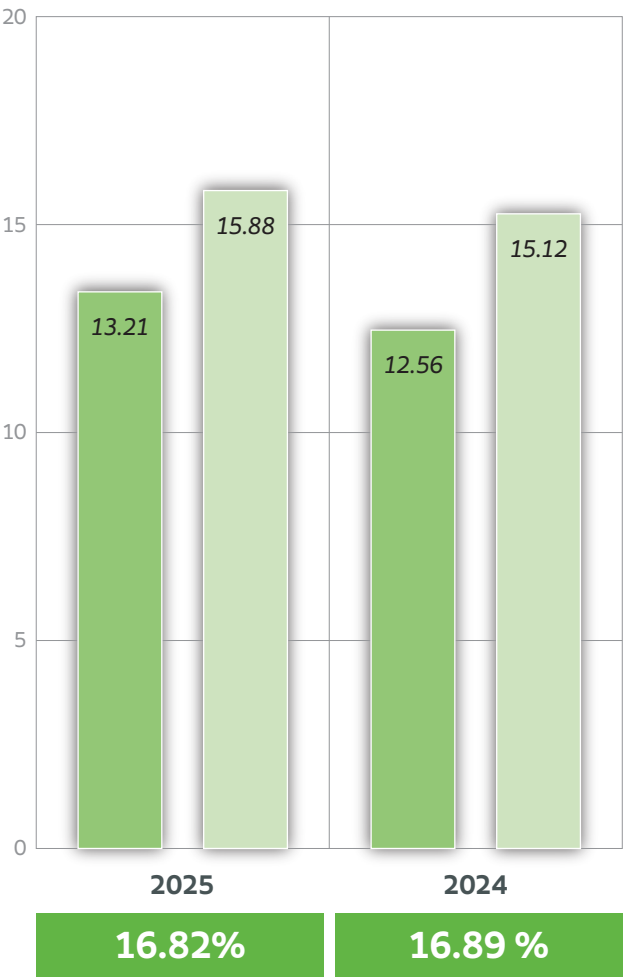
The mean is calculated by adding up all the data separately for our male and female colleagues and dividing by the number of males and females respectively.

Our mean average pay gap has seen a decrease of 0.41%, to 16.89%. An improvement on the previous years of 16.89%.

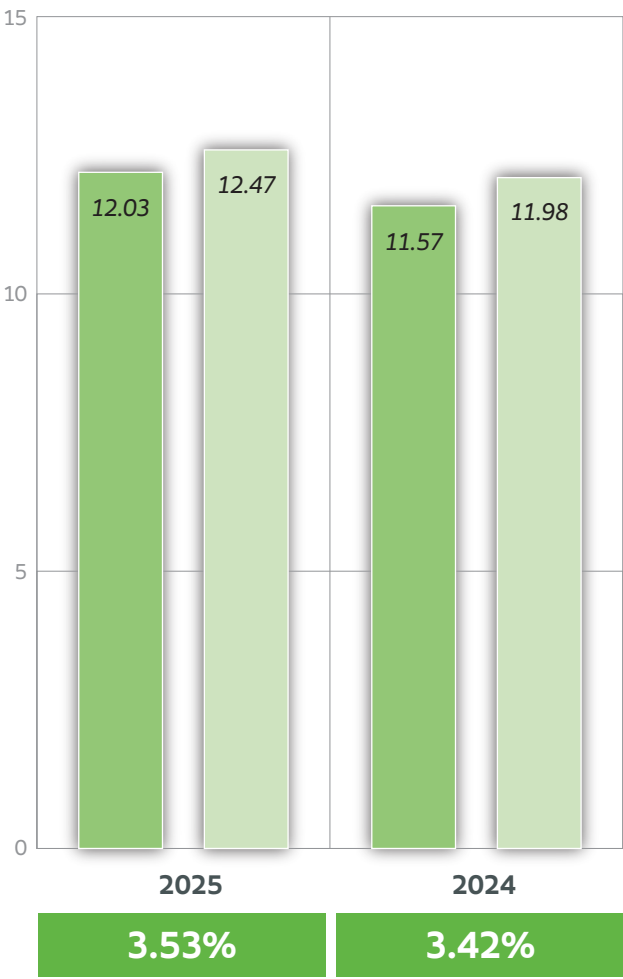
Median – overall

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

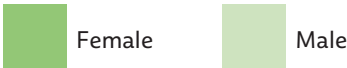
Our Median pay gap has increased slightly to 3.53% on the previous year of 3.42%.



Mean average pay %



Median average pay %



Our Gender Pay Gap Report continued.

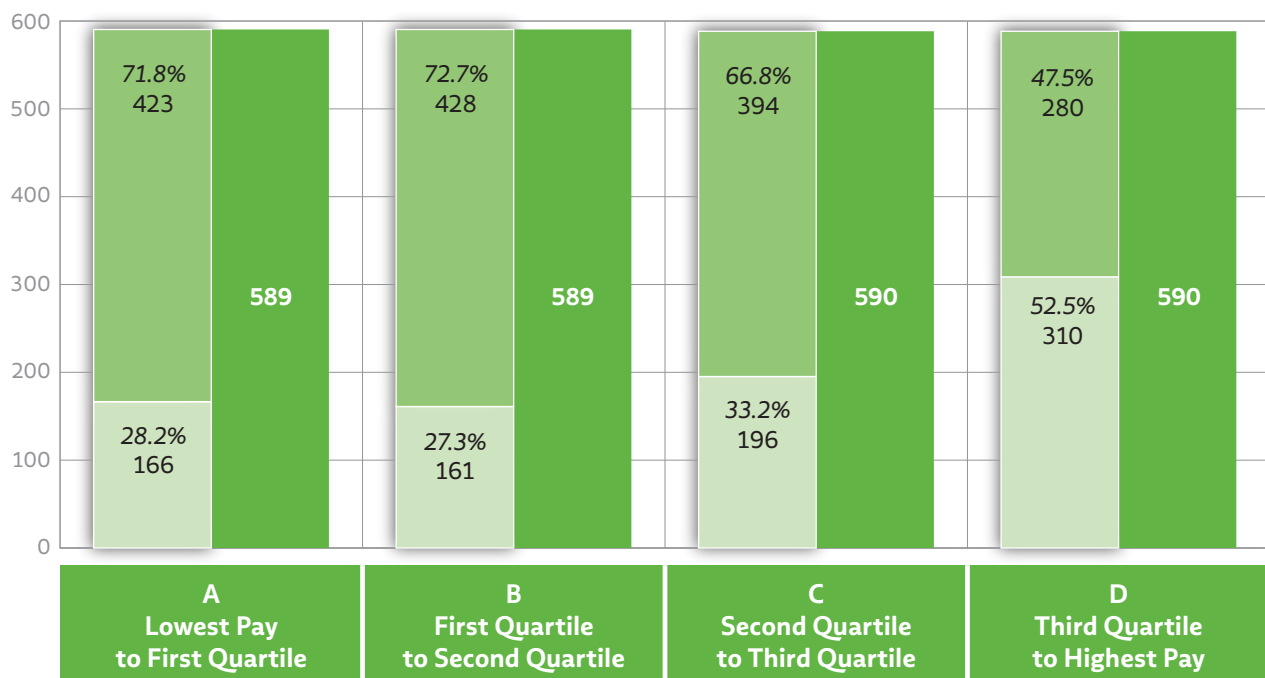
## Pay Quartiles - overall

Women represent a significant majority (approx. 70%) in the lower three quartiles, reflecting the gender balance in frontline roles.

In the top quartile (Quartile D), female representation drops to 47.5%, and there is a notable pay gap within the quartile itself, with men earning 24% more than women on average.

This underrepresentation of women and higher male pay in the top quartile is a key contributor to our overall mean gender pay gap.

Quartiles A/B/C are made up of operations / supervisory roles (Customer Service Assistants and Team Managers etc), quartile D is made up of first line manager / professionals upwards.



## Average Hourly Rate £

	Male	Female
A Lowest Pay to First Quartile	12.03	12.03
B First Quartile to Second Quartile	12.03	12.03
C Second Quartile to Third Quartile	12.77	12.59
D Third Quartile to Highest Pay	21.97	17.74



## Observations

This year's report shows both progress and ongoing challenges. Women make up nearly two-thirds of our workforce, but this representation is not yet reflected in senior, specialist, and management roles.

We are encouraged by the removal of the median pay gap among our Top 100 earners, a sign that our actions are having an impact. However, the higher mean gap highlights that men remain more concentrated in the very highest-paid positions.

Central Support stands out as a priority, with the largest pay gaps, pointing to the need for clearer pathways into professional and specialist roles. More broadly, women remain overrepresented in lower-paid frontline roles, reinforcing the importance of strengthening career progression opportunities.

Compared to the wider sector, our median gap is lower than most, but our mean gap remains higher — showing that the challenge lies at the top. We also recognise the importance of being open about pay fairness, including the 14.6x ratio between our lowest and highest earners.

Overall, progress is being made, but we know it is uneven. Our focus now is on building fair progression, development, and reward, particularly within Central Support and senior leadership roles.

Colleagues under the age of 23 are paid our full 'adult' pay rate rather than the lower 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 2025.

To resolve this, we will be focusing on strengthening our pathways and support to women and all groups in our organisation, so colleagues can take the next step in their career with our co-op. This also extends to our recruitment practices to acquire external talent, and we are seen as an employer of choice for those who want to have a thriving career with our co-op.

## Leadership Programmes

This year, our Co-op has committed to making its largest investment in developing colleagues in its history by launching our leadership programme. Over 200 colleagues will be part of a phased roll out of leadership programmes to develop our co-op into a high-performing organisation.

## Community Carers Fund

Through our Community Cares Fund, we have supported several female charities in our region and will continue to support groups across the region and other vulnerable groups.

- **Future Female Society** exists to close the gap in inequality for women and girls in Suffolk. To help to raise self-esteem and confidence levels, broaden personal and career aspirations and help women and girls in our community reach their full potential. They support and cultivate creative women who will develop themselves to be the best they can be and help each other to instigate social change.
- **Women of Grace** is a UK-based survivor led organisation. They advocate against the practice of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) and all forms of Gender-Based Violence, educating about their lasting consequences and harms. The grassroots organisation engages with the community through workshops, talks, and activities to raise awareness and provide support services for those affected by FGM/C and abuse. They have no restrictions when it comes to supporting women and girls dealing with trauma from FGM and are committed to empowering them to recognise signs of abuse and where to get help to protect them from harm, regardless of their background, religion, or race.

## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

This year we welcomed a new Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Lead into our business. This senior role has been created to strengthen our commitment to fairness and opportunity, ensuring our policies and practices support all colleagues. While the appointment has a limited impact on this year's figures, it marks an important step in building long-term progress on pay equity and inclusion across our Co-op.

## Recruitment

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

## Data

We will continue to utilise the data available internally to further understand our gaps and bring solutions to some of the challenges we face.

Our teams continually analyse our diversity data to ensure it is an accurate reflection of our business population and bring about change to positively influence our workforce and recruitment strategies.

## 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.

## Early Careers & Apprenticeships

This year we have appointed a Talent Partner with a dedicated focus on early careers and apprenticeships. This role will help us attract, develop and retain future talent, creating clear pathways for young people and those starting out in their careers. Their work will play a vital role in supporting colleagues' growth, strengthening our skills pipeline, and ensuring we continue to provide opportunities that benefit both our Co-op and the communities we serve.



*What we are doing about our gender pay gap continued.*

## Menopause policy

Our menopause policy supports women in our co-op through this natural hormone transition and promotes awareness and understanding amongst line managers and colleagues.

We have seen an 86% retention of females in the business aged between 47-51 as a result.

## Family leave

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

Our policies are:

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

## IVF

We recognise that undergoing IVF treatment can be both physically and emotionally challenging enough for our colleagues, without financial worries. Therefore, we offer women receiving IVF treatment paid time off to attend up to eight appointments where these fall within their normal working hours. We also offer paid leave in the sad event that the fertility treatment is unsuccessful.

## Carers policy

In addition to our continued support of carers within our co-op, we continue to support '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.

We are also aware via ONS that 'women are 400% more likely to reduce their hours due to care responsibilities'. We see this as a positive step to supporting our large population of colleagues with caring responsibilities.

## Governance:


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

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