



Gender Pay Gap Report 2024



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This report looks at the gender pay gap for Coillte Cuideachta Gníomhaíochta Ainmnithe (“Coillte” or “Company”) and excludes Coillte’s subsidiaries, non-controlling interests, and joint ventures.

In 2024 for the first time, the requirements of the Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021 apply to Medite Europe DAC and SmartPly Europe DAC, who form part of the Coillte group. Their combined report is available on www.mdfosb.com.



About Coillte

Coillte was established as a commercial semi-state company in 1989, and today manages 440,000 ha of primarily forested land, equivalent to 7% of the total land area of the country.

Coillte is the nation's largest forester and producer of certified wood, a natural, renewable and sustainable resource. It is the largest provider of outdoor recreation spaces in Ireland, it facilitates renewable energy generation on the estate and manufactures panel board wood products. Coillte also enhances and restores biodiversity and delivers nature rehabilitation projects of scale.

The Coillte estate accounts for approximately half of Ireland's forests and is made up of a variety of different habitats. These range from conifer and mixed or broadleaf forests, and open upland bogs and heathlands, to lakes and rivers.

Coillte has a key role to play in the achievement of Ireland's climate action targets and its strategic vision for its future forest estate aims to balance and deliver the multiple benefits of forests, for climate, nature, wood and people. This strategic vision aims to bring more focus to climate action biodiversity and recreation while continuing to deliver for the forest and wood products industry.

The Irish forestry industry underpins a thriving export-led forest products sector which supports circa €2.3 billion of economic activity annually. The sector is forecast to double in size over the next ten years, as the forests planted in recent times reach maturity and Ireland delivers on its target of increasing forest cover. The sector employs about 9,000 people directly, mostly in rural Ireland.

As the largest forestry company in Ireland, Coillte plays an important role, contributing to the economy, providing rural jobs and producing sustainably grown wood and wood products as well as protecting and enhancing nature and biodiversity, tackling climate change, contributing to a climate resilient economy and providing outdoor recreation spaces for everyone to enjoy.



A message from Imelda Hurley

CEO, Coillte



Forests have never been more relevant than they are today. They help tackle climate change, supply sustainable wood products to help build our homes, provide valuable habitats for our wildlife, and places for people to visit and enjoy enhancing our health and wellbeing.

Coillte's vision is to deliver a sustainable future for all by managing the multiple benefits of our forests for climate, nature, wood, and people. Balancing these multiple benefits will support the delivery of solutions to some of the challenges of our time, the climate emergency, biodiversity loss and the delivery of sustainable homes.

What is certain is that the delivery of our vision cannot be accomplished without the commitment, energy, engagement and in no small part, hard work of all our employees.

As we publish our third gender pay gap report, it is important to highlight that historically, the forestry sector has drawn a largely male workforce. This is reflected in the gender balance of our organisation. In recent years, however, we have made a concerted effort to change this and to support the diversification of our workforce.

Attracting more females into roles that have typically been held by men benefits everyone and as a leadership team we are committed to continually working to deliver a diverse, equitable and inclusive organisation.



We are proud to report that in 2024, female representation at Coillte is at 30% showing an increase on last year, (27% in 2023), with 50% female representation on our board of directors.

While this demonstrates ongoing progress, there continues to be a general under-representation of women studying forestry and joining our sector. This is a challenge not just for Coillte but for the industry more broadly.

The forestry sector is forecast to expand over the coming years, with an anticipated 1,700 new roles coming on stream. Our ongoing challenge as an industry is to attract new talent, to ensure we can deliver on the many opportunities to enable climate solutions, including increased afforestation and an increased level of timber use in the delivery of sustainable homes.

Building on these challenges, we recognise that Coillte has a negative gender pay gap, reflective of the very broad range of activities undertaken by our colleagues, with manual forest work currently almost exclusively undertaken by male colleagues, while much of our more administrative and specialist work attracts a somewhat more gender diverse talent pool.

With our first ever forestry scholarship launched this year, our ongoing Coillte awareness campaigns, our gender recruitment plans, and the commitment and leadership of our senior management team, we are confident we have an effective roadmap to make our organisation a more attractive workplace for everyone while simultaneously focusing on our gender pay gap and working to narrow this over-time.

Coillte's vision will be best delivered by ensuring we have a truly diverse, inclusive, and equitable workforce, and by creating a culture where everyone feels welcome, valued and empowered to contribute fully.

30%

Female representation within Coillte

50%

Female representation on the Coillte board of directors



Gender Pay Gap 2024

Executive Summary

A gender pay gap refers to the disparity between the average hourly pay and bonuses earned by men and those earned by women across an organisation. It differs from equal pay, which ensures that men and women receive the same salary for performing identical, similar, or equivalent work. In this report, we examine the factors contributing to our current gender pay gap and outline the steps we are taking to close the gap.

This year, our mean gender pay gap is -13.33% in favour of women. Our median gender pay gap is -8.65%. This represents a narrowing in comparison to last year when our mean gender pay gap was -14.34% in favour of women and our median gender pay gap was -11.77%.

In 2024, a change in reporting requirements has led to payments from the Department of Social Protection being included in our gender pay gap analysis. When we examine 2024 vs 2023 (calculated on a like-for-like basis) our gender pay gap is -12.56% in favour of women, however the inclusion of Department of Social Protection payments has led to an increase on this number in favour of women, shifting from -12.56% to -13.33% due to a higher proportion of these benefits being paid to women in the organisation.

The pay gap in favour of women is primarily due to men occupying the majority of roles in the lower paid job grades. These positions tend to be lower-paid due to the nature of the work involved. However, when forest workers are excluded, the gender pay gap is 0.54% in 2024.

The pay gap has narrowed due to an increase in the average hourly rate for both males and females in 2024 compared to 2023 although, the average hourly pay rate for men increased slightly more than that of women. This is primarily due to internal factors such as retirements, post-retirement contracts, role changes, and the recruitment of both men and women into the organisation.



Gender Pay Gap Results for 2024

Context

The gender pay gap at Coillte is influenced by several factors, including the distribution of men and women across job levels, and the fact that men occupy most of the lower-paid positions. This reduces the average pay for our male employees.

In 2023, Coillte's mean gender pay gap was -14.34% in favour of women. Our data indicated that the gender pay gap in favour of women in 2023 was due to an ongoing increase in the number of male retirees who transitioned to one-year post-retirement contracts, as well as a rise in the number of women holding higher-paid positions in 2023.

Our 2024 results

In 2024, Coillte's mean gender pay gap is -13.33% in favour of women. This represents a 1% reduction when compared to the 2023 pay gap of -14.34%.

Compared to last year's report, we have seen an increase in the number of female hires into the organisation. Since new employees generally start at the lower end of the pay scale, the higher number of female joiners on the snapshot date led to a slight decrease in the average female pay rate, narrowing the overall pay gap.

More generally however, between the 2023/2024 snapshot dates, several employees have retired. Many of these retirees have chosen to avail of one-year post-retirement fixed-term contracts, which come with reduced hours which directly affect their pay levels.



All retirees who opted for these contracts were male, which had a direct impact on our gender pay gap. While we recognise that offering these contracts may cause fluctuations in the gender pay gap, they are highly valued by our retiring colleagues.

Over the past year, we have seen an increase in women advancing in their careers at Coillte, as reflected in their higher representation in the top remuneration quartile which is our upper quartile. This is evidenced by an increase from 29% in 2023 to 32% in 2024. Our data also shows further career progression for women in the organisation when you combine the top two income quartiles, with women representing 33.9% of these in 2024, up from 33.2% in 2023 and 30.7% in 2022.



Gender Representation

Balance / Representation of Women

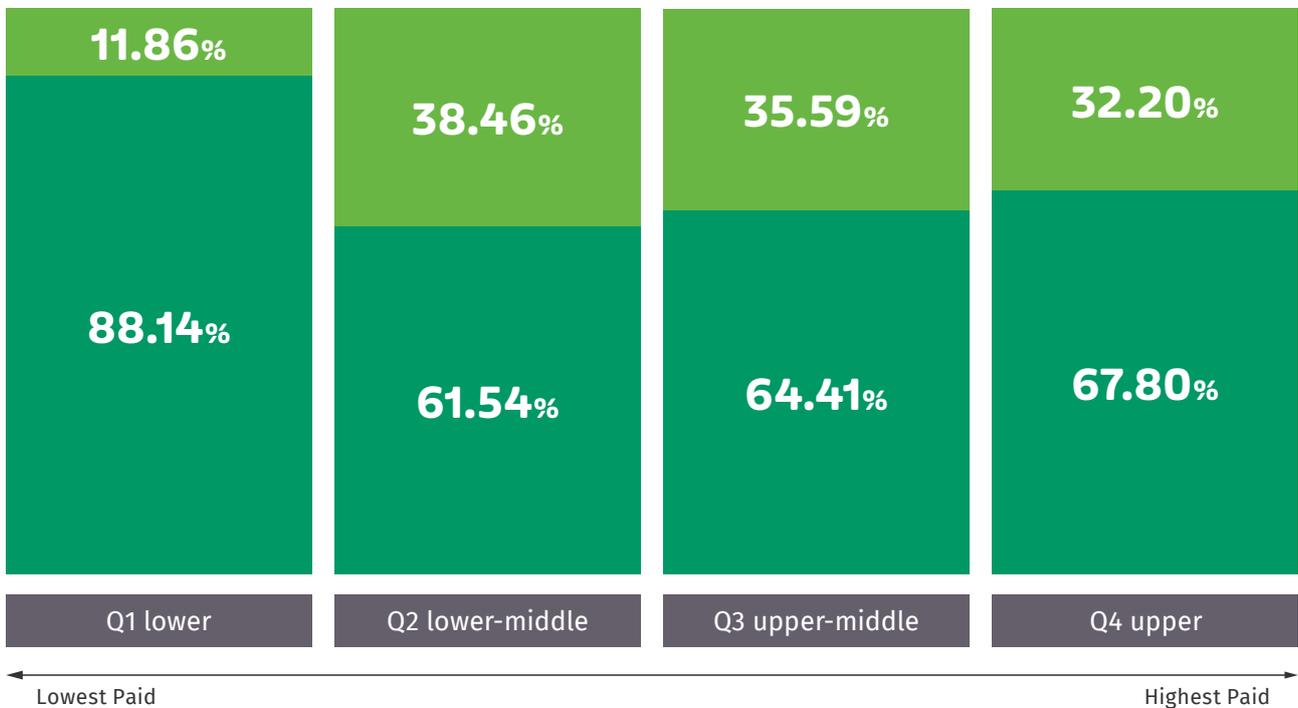
The percentage of women and men in the company



Quartiles

● Women ● Men

All employees hourly remuneration is ranked from lowest to highest. The range of remuneration is then divided into quartiles; lower, lower middle, upper middle, upper. Then the percentage of men and women in each quartile is calculated.





The Action We are Taking

Our aim is to continue to narrow the gender pay gap in Coillte. Our structure and age demographic are naturally evolving with many of our forest workers reaching retirement over the next decade, with this change in structure, narrowing our gender pay gap over time.

Against this backdrop, we want to increase the diversity of our workforce, diversity of age, background, nationality and experience, as well as diversity of gender. We have been actively working to achieve this goal and plan to continue this work into 2025 and beyond.

In last year’s Gender Pay Gap report, we outlined our ambitions in three key areas. Below is an update of our progress on each.

Ambition

Actions taken in 2024

1

To progress our Strategic Workforce Capacity Review

- The inclusion of Professional forestry on the national Critical Skills Occupations List is a crucial step towards attracting more diverse talent to the forestry sector which will help address gender imbalances and contribute to narrowing the gender pay gap.
- A National Forest Training and Education Forum was established, involving educators, professional bodies and industry groups, providing a platform for the development of an education and training strategy for the forestry sector.
- A new digital schools’ experience was developed aimed at highlighting careers in forestry to students in second-level education.



Ambition

Actions taken in 2024

2

To increase awareness of our organisation as an employer of choice

- Launched Coillte’s first national forestry scholarship aimed at Leaving Certificate students and mature students interested in studying forestry at third level. Three students were awarded scholarships of €5,000 per year for the duration of their course in 2024, all of whom are women.
- Broadened our use of digital recruitment technologies to promote gender diversity in our applicant pool, to ensure a more balanced representation of men and women throughout the hiring process.
- Increased the range of educational disciplines within our graduate programme, aiming to attract a more diverse pool of talent, with a specific focus on improving gender balance. As a result, the number of applications increased, with an even gender distribution among applicants. Fifty five percent of graduates hired were women, compared to 33% in 2023.
- Our transition year programme continued, which allows students to gain insight into working for Coillte and to explore potential career paths in the forestry sector. Fifteen students participated in 2024.

3

To explore the career development and support needs of all colleagues in the business

- Developed a leadership development programme designed to include a substantial proportion of female participants, ensuring equal opportunities for women to build leadership skills.
- Enhanced our participation in career guidance conferences as well as careers fairs, highlighting the pathways for women to enter the industry.



In 2025 we will continue to focus on four key themes:

1. Continue to increase awareness of **Coillte as an employer of choice**. Our priority will be to attract a broader range of candidates to Coillte. We remain committed to fostering diversity through ongoing initiatives, including our scholarship programme, which will continue in 2025 and expand access to education and career opportunities in forestry.
2. We will maintain a strong **focus on career development**, supporting our team members' growth and progression within the organisation. Specifically, in 2025 we will launch our leadership development programme which promotes the advancement of women into leadership roles. By equipping women with the necessary skills and confidence, we aim to create a more balanced representation in senior management positions.
3. We will develop an enhanced **Diversity and Inclusion strategy** in 2025. Our 2025 strategy will outline specific actions and measurable goals to support equitable opportunities, ensure inclusive practices, and foster a supportive environment for all employees. We will endeavour to ensure we have diverse interview panels for recruitment.
4. Progress has been made in **implementing the key recommendations of the Forestry Sector Workforce Capacity Strategy**, and we will continue to collaborate with industry and educators to promote forestry careers to a broader, more diverse range of applicants.



Appendix

2024 Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021 Reporting Requirements

(Snapshot date 24 June 2024)

Reporting Criteria

	Mean	Median
Hourly remuneration gap	-13.33%	-8.65%
Hourly remuneration gap of part-time employees	-26.61%	-51.83%
Hourly remuneration gap of temporary contract employees	-49.49%	-27.51%

Many of our forest workers, the majority of whom are male, remain on after the normal retirement age to work on a post-retirement fixed-term basis. This is why there is a significant remuneration gap in our part-time and temporary pay gaps between men and women.

Bonus

Bonus gap / Total bonus pay in the reporting period



Percentage of employees who received bonus remuneration



Why we have a Bonus Gap

Our bonus pay gap in 2024 is 9.68%. The percentage of women currently employed by Coillte increased from 27% in 2023 to 30% in 2024. Women now make up 33.9% of the top two quartiles of income earned in the company which illustrates that women are progressing well in Coillte.

With 45% of our senior leadership team now made up of female employees, there is still a higher portion of men in other senior roles at Coillte. Higher pay is associated with these senior positions, and although bonus awards

are given as a percentage, they are reflected in the bonus pay gap in monetary terms. This disparity in gender representation in senior roles contributes to the bonus gap.

As noted in last year’s report, Coillte has seen an increase in women joining the organisation in recent years, resulting in an average tenure for men that is seven years longer than that of women. This longer length of service for men affects pay levels and consequently contributes to the bonus gap.

Percentage of employees who received benefits-in-kind

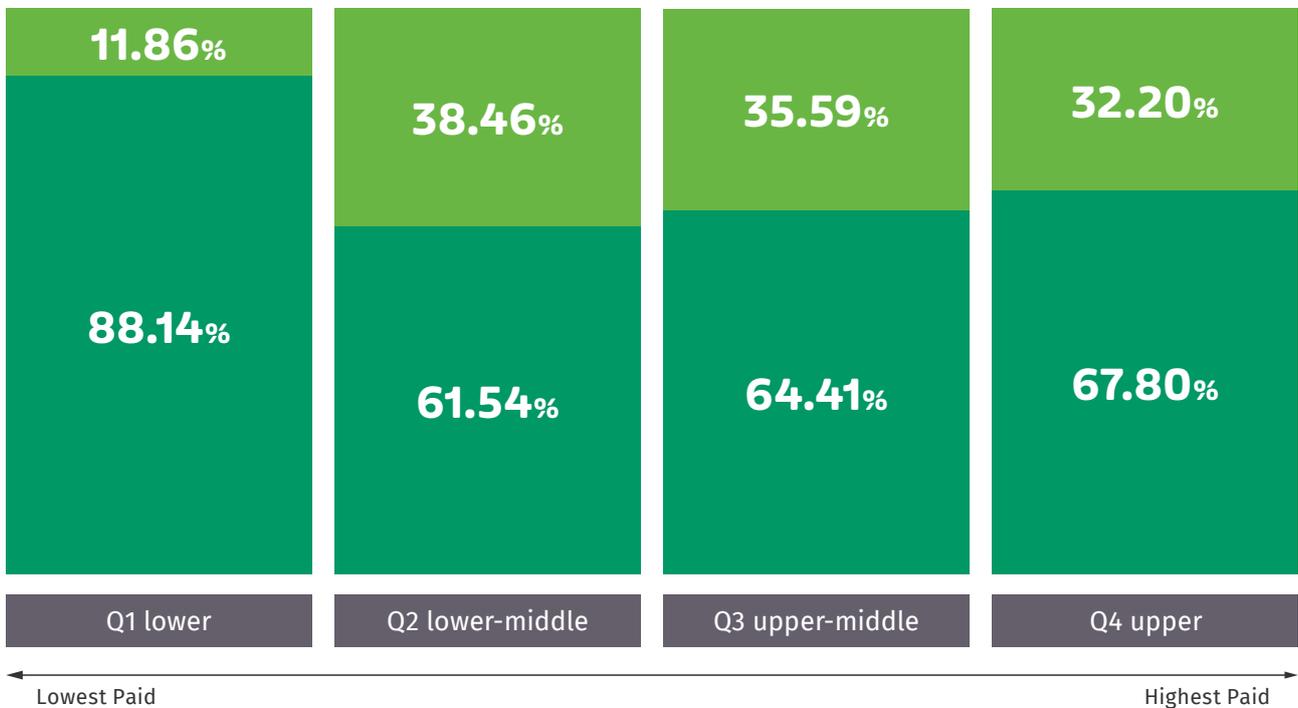


All our employees, regardless of grade or tenure, receive benefit in kind. Examples include the availability of our employ assistance programme and health checks.

Quartiles

● Women ● Men

All employees hourly remuneration is ranked from lowest to highest. The range of remuneration is then divided into quartiles; lower, lower middle, upper middle, upper. Then the percentage of men and women in each quartile is calculated.



This report has been developed in conjunction with MakoData and People XD. The findings are based on pay over the requisite 12-month period.

