

## What changes has the Act made to the law?

Large employers (those with 250 or more employees) will be required to detail the evidence-based actions they are taking to improve gender equality amongst their employees, including addressing the gender pay gap and supporting women during the menopause. This will motivate employers to take meaningful steps that will help all employees to thrive. We know that women in particular often face barriers in the workplace which impact their pay, progression and economic participation. Ensuring women can remain and progress in work is crucial to economic growth.

The Act introduces a new power to make regulations to require employers to publish “Equality Action Plans.” These plans will build on existing gender pay gap reporting by requiring employers to set out how they will address the gender pay gap in their organisation and support employees affected by menopause.

The aim is to make pay transparency more meaningful and link reporting with practical steps for equality improvement.

## Outsourcing

In addition, we are aware that the success of an organisation is down to everyone who contributes, not just direct employees. Requiring organisations to state which companies they outsource to means they can be held accountable for gaps that exist in those organisations and motivate them to support efforts to improve gender equality in organisations they are linked to.

A gender pay gap outsourcing measure extends pay gap transparency rules to cover outsourced workers, ensuring employers can’t hide inequality by contracting out services.

This change is connected to wider reforms in the draft Equality (Race and Disability) Bill, meaning it’s part of a broader equality agenda across government.

So, in simple terms:

The law expands equality and pay transparency duties, introducing Equality Action Plans and extending pay gap reporting to outsourced workforces.

## How is this different from the previous legislation?

Since 2017, under the Equality Act 2010, employers with 250 or more employees are required to publish specific Gender Pay Gap data annually on a publicly available government website.

Enforcement for non-compliance is the responsibility of the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

The details on how both measures will work in practice will be provided within subsequent regulations and guidance.

For action plans, the intention is that we will provide employers with information and guidance about effective actions which are backed up by evidence, as well as support to help them select actions. Employers will publish plans on the gender pay gap reporting service.

For outsourcing, the intention is that we will ask employers to name who they received outsourced work from, and we will ensure the gender pay gap reporting service visually reflects this.

## When will these changes come into force?

### Measure

Equality Action Plans

### Implementation Timing

Voluntary from Spring 2026;  
mandatory in Spring 2027

Gender Pay Gap Outsourcing Measure

Implementation is dependent on  
broader pay gap reforms

## What further detail will be consulted on and when?

We will provide more detail on these policies and our timelines for implementation following consultation, with a clear commitment that we aim to work at pace to deliver these tangible benefits to millions of working people.

Implementation of the gender pay gap outsourcing measure will be dependent on timelines for broader changes to pay gap reporting, including related measures in the draft Equality (Race & Disability) Bill.

## Key Stats

When workplaces fail to support gender equality, they lose out on talent and skills. The national gender pay gap for all employees stands at 12.8%<sup>1</sup>, and 8 out of 10 menopausal women who are in work say that their workplace has no basic support in place for them.<sup>2</sup>

Around 10,000 employers are currently required to publish Gender Pay Gap data annually<sup>3</sup>, and would therefore be in scope of the new requirements.

Research has found 1 in 10 women who worked during the menopause left their job due to their symptoms.<sup>4</sup> Increasing female labour force participation has been a key driver of economic growth in the 21st century. Around 40% of UK economic growth between 2000-2022 can be attributed to increases in female employment and working hours.<sup>5</sup> Continuing these trends will be critical for economic growth in the coming years. A 5% increase in female employment (equivalent to halving the gender employment gap) could boost UK GDP by up to £125bn every year.

## Common questions

### *What about smaller organisations?*

Smaller organisations are not required to report on the Gender pay gap reporting service, or to develop an action plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Office for National Statistics (2025) [Gender pay gap in the UK: 2025](#).

<sup>2</sup> Fawcett Society (2022) [Menopause and the Workplace](#).

<sup>3</sup> Office for Equality and Opportunity (formerly Government Equalities Office) (2020) [Employers' Understanding of the Gender Pay Gap & Actions to Tackle it: Research Report on the 2019 Survey](#).

<sup>4</sup> Fawcett Society (2022) [Menopause and the Workplace](#).

<sup>5</sup> OECD (2024) [Gender equality and economic growth](#).

We will ensure that all practical guidance we produce on the development and implementation of action plans is made available to all employers, so that organisations of all sizes can benefit from the evidence on the most effective steps they can take.

*What actions will you get employers to take?*

We are ensuring that the actions proposed are backed up by research and best practice, and have been shown to be effective. Previous work by the Office for Equality and Opportunity has outlined the evidence-based actions that employers can take. We will be drawing on recent developments and findings to update our understanding, so that employers are prompted to act in line with the latest evidence.