

4 Gender pay gap

Key findings

- In 2021, considering all employees regardless of working pattern, females earned 5.7% less than males in NI i.e. for every £1 earned by men, women earned 94p
- In the UK females earned 15% less than males when all employees are considered
- The gender pay gap in NI is due to the higher proportion of female part-time employees than male part-time employees and the higher proportion of part-time jobs that are low paid

Various methods can be used to measure the earnings of females relative to males. This year's Gender Pay Gap section leads with the Gender Pay Gap for **all employees regardless of working pattern** before disaggregating by sector, working pattern, age of employee and occupation.

The majority of the analysis is based on the median hourly earnings excluding overtime; including overtime can distort the picture as males work relatively more overtime than females, and using hourly earnings better accounts for the fact that males work, on average, more hours per week than females (see figure 23).

It should be noted that although median hourly pay excluding overtime provides a useful comparison of male and female earnings, it is a measure across all jobs and a not a measure of the difference in pay between men and women doing the same job.

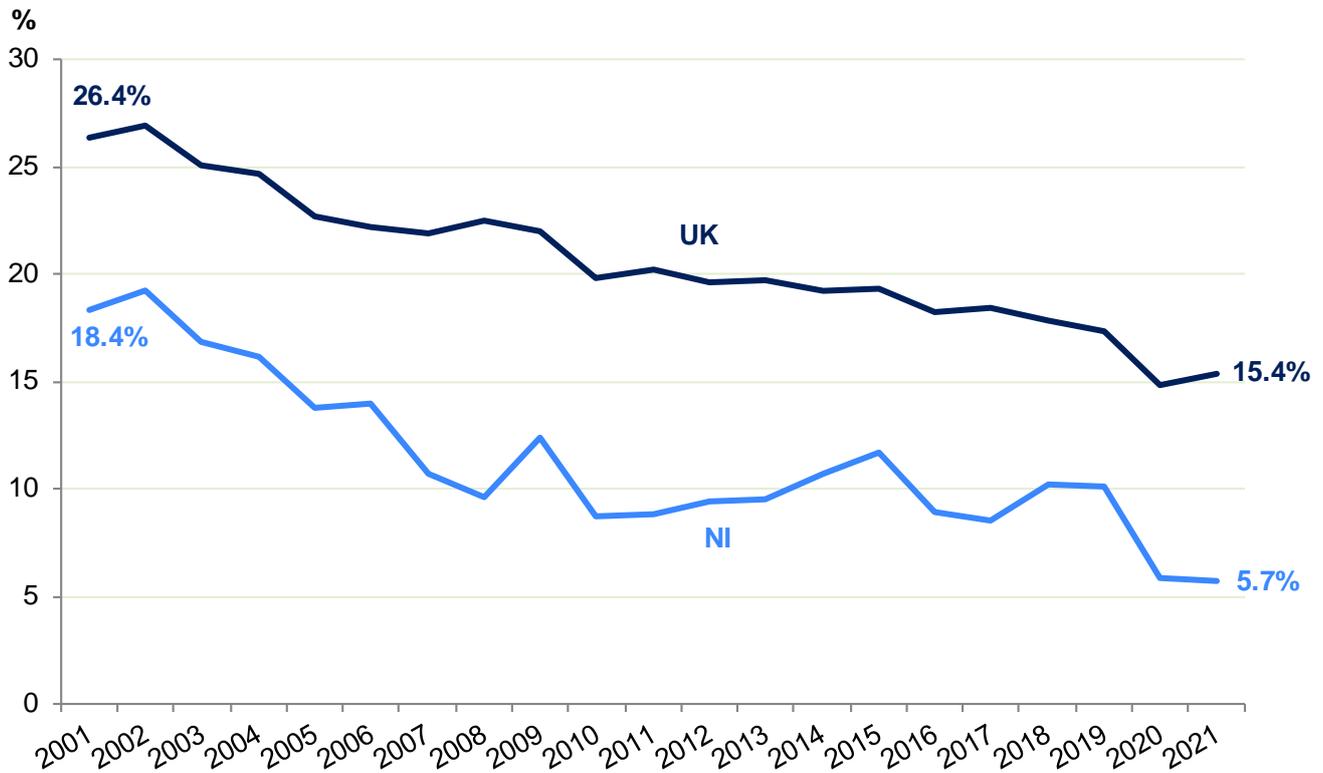
Gross hourly earnings (excluding overtime) includes basic pay, commissions, shift premium pay, bonus or incentive pay and allowances, and is before deductions for PAYE, National Insurance, pension schemes, student loan repayments and voluntary deductions

Gender pay gap: calculated as the difference between the median hourly earnings (excluding overtime) of males and females, as a proportion of median hourly earnings (excluding overtime) of males earnings.

$$\frac{\text{male earnings} - \text{female earnings}}{\text{male earnings}}$$

Gender pay gap for all employees has decreased over the last twenty years

Figure 17: Gender Pay Gap for all employees in NI and the UK, April 2001 to April 2021



Note: there were a number of methodological changes during the series in 2004, 2006 and 2011. See Section 5 Further information for full details

[Download figure 17 data](#)

Figure 17 shows that the UK and NI gender pay gaps for all employees (regardless of working pattern) have narrowed over time although they have both consistently been in favour of males.

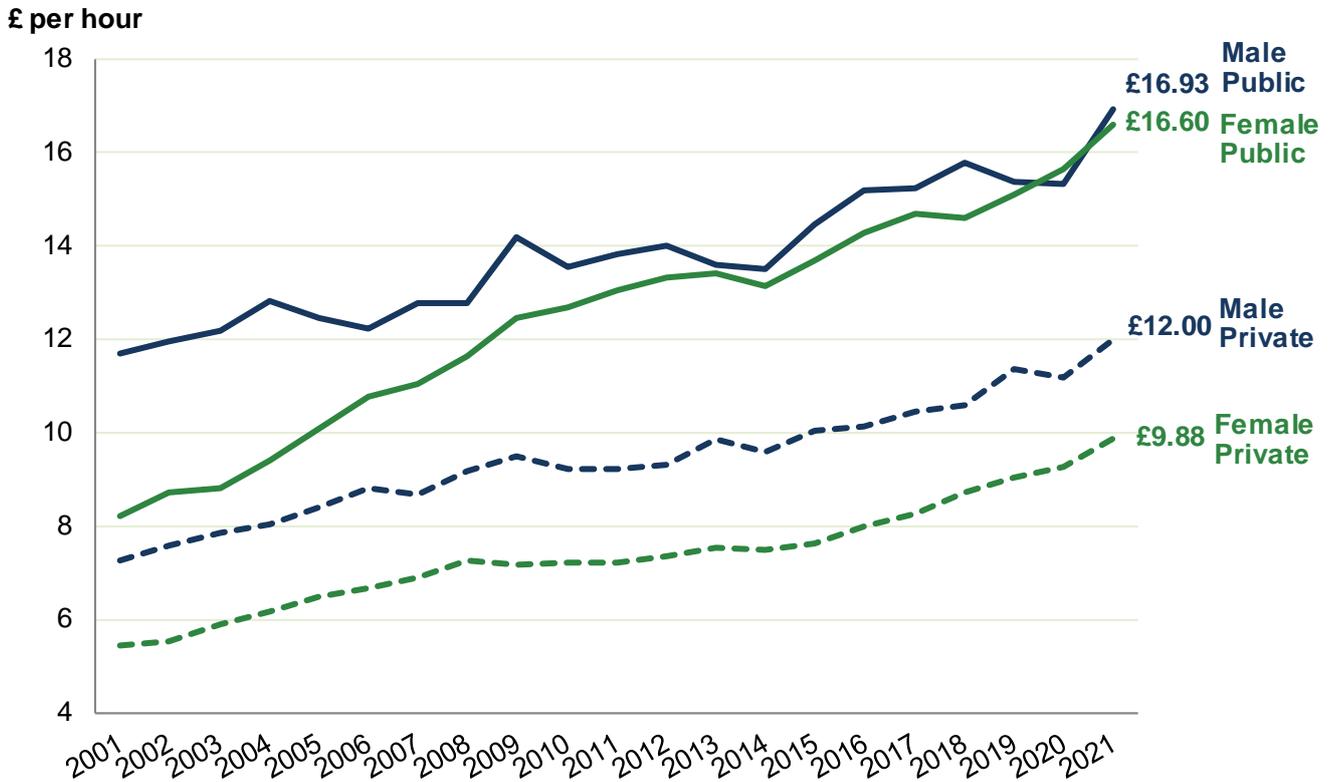
The results from the 2021 ASHE show that the gender pay gap for all employees in NI, regardless of working pattern, is in favour of males, who earn 75p per hour more on average than females (£13.11 per hour compared to £12.36 per hour for females). This is equivalent to a 5.7% gender pay gap in favour of males; similar to the 5.9% gender pay gap in favour of males recorded in 2020 and below the 2019 rate (10%). This is the smallest gender pay gap on record for all employees and means that for every £1 earned by men, women earned 94p on average.

In the UK, males (£15.27) also earned more on average than females (£12.92) in 2021. However, the UK gender pay gap was 15.4% in favour of males, more than two and a half times the gap recorded in NI.

It is the relatively lower pay of the private sector in NI and the notably smaller gender pay gap in the NI public sector (compared to those in NI and UK private sector, and UK public sector) that drives the difference between the NI and UK gender pay gap.

Males have higher earnings in both the public and private sectors

Figure 18: Median gross hourly earnings excluding overtime for all employees in NI by sector and gender, April 2001 to April 2021



Note: there were a number of methodological changes during the series in 2004, 2006 and 2011.

See Section 5 Further information for full details

Non-zero axis

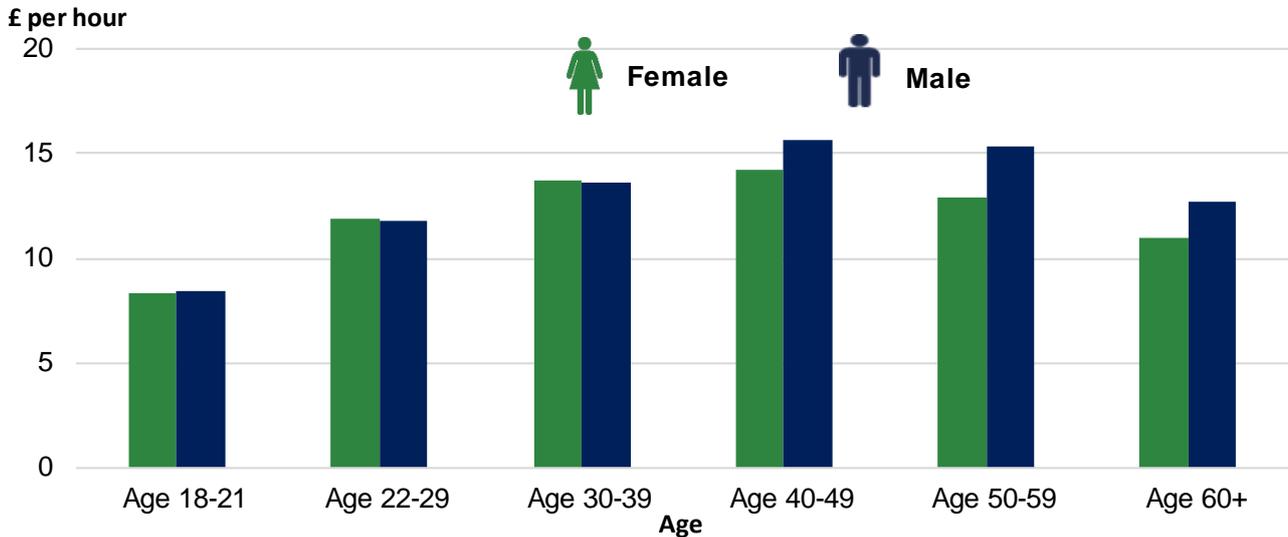
[Download figure 18 data](#)

Overall, public sector employees earned more on average than private sector employees. Within this, males earned more in both the public and private sector on average than females. This has been the broad trend since 2001; however, there has been a notable closing of the gap between males and females in the public sector, whilst male earnings have remained consistently higher than female earnings in the private sector.

In 2001, male earnings in the public sector were around £3.50 more per hour than female earnings. This gap is now just 33p. In comparison, in the private sector, where average earnings are lower than in the public sector, males have consistently earned around £2 per hour more than females since 2001.

Largest gender pay gap in the 40+ age groups

Figure 19: Median gross hourly earnings excluding overtime for all employees in NI by age and gender, April 2021

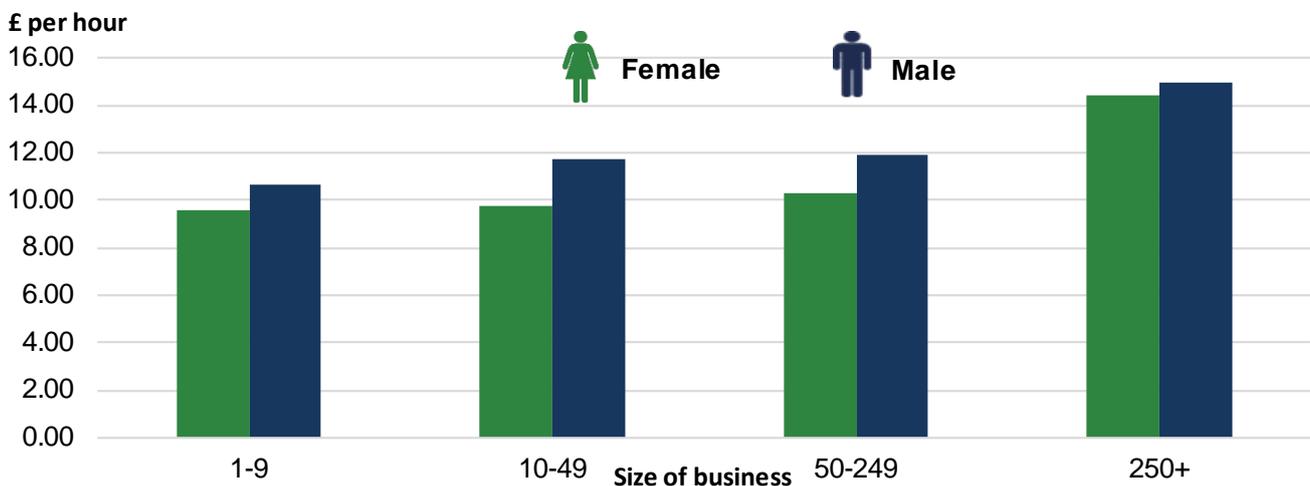


[Download figure 19 data](#)

Male and female employees have similar median hourly earnings (excluding overtime) for all age groups under 40. Both male and female earnings peaked in the 40-49 age group, however males earned around £1.50 per hour more (£15.65 compared to £14.27). While male earnings remained similar in the 50-59 age group (£15.33), female earnings were 10% lower for 50-59 year olds than 40-49 year olds (£12.87), creating a gender pay gap of almost £2.50 per hour in the 50-59 age group.

Smallest gender pay gap in businesses with 250 or more employees

Figure 20: Median gross hourly earnings excluding overtime for all employees in NI by size of business and gender, April 2021



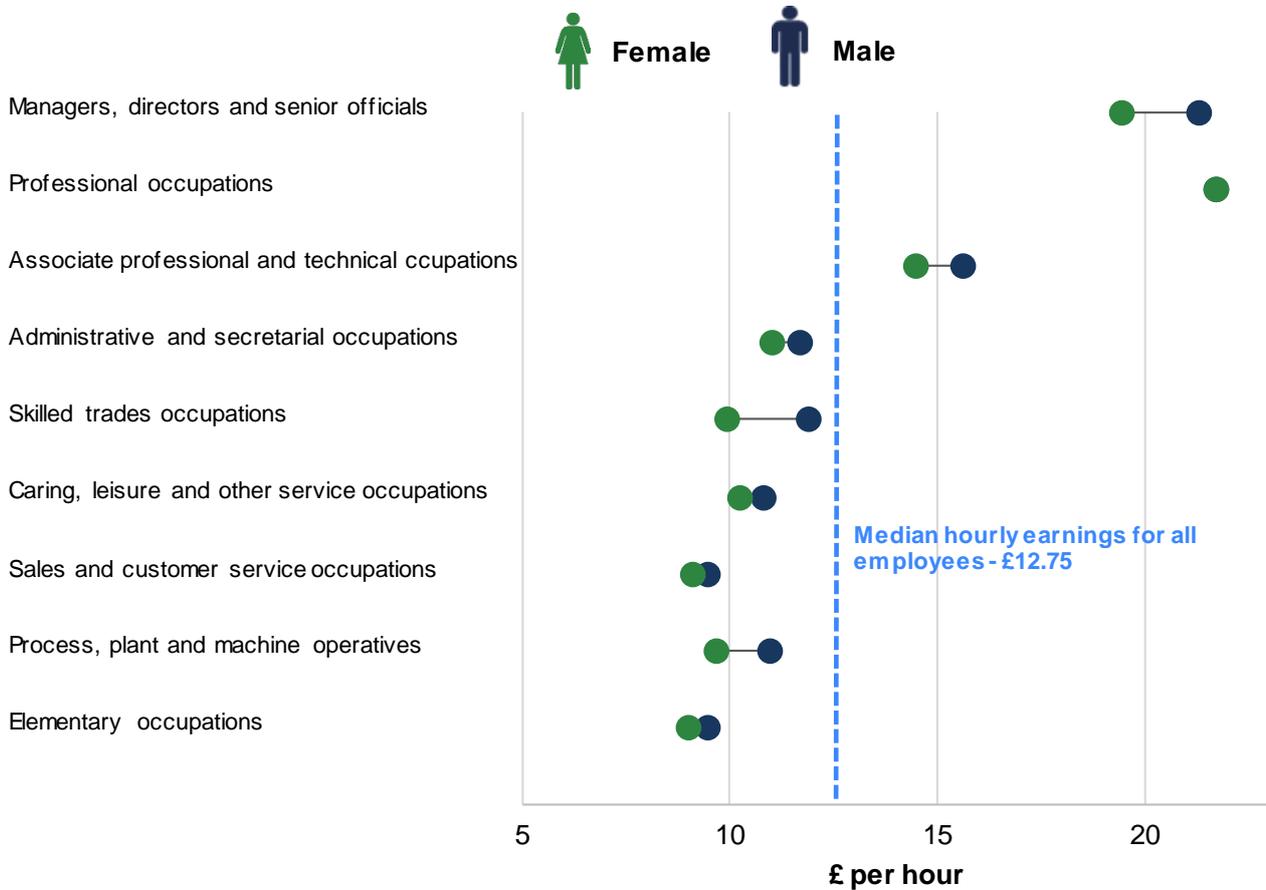
[Download figure 20 data](#)

On average, males earn more than females across all business size groups. The smallest gender pay gap in 2021 was recorded for those employed in businesses with 250 or more employees, where both male and female earnings were highest. Females (£14.40 per hour) earned 56p less per hour than males (£14.96 per hour) on average. This is reflective of the relatively high number of public sector organisations with more than 250 employees. In contrast, the pay gap was largest in businesses with between 10 and 49 employees. Females earned 17% less than males on average, meaning for every £1 earned by a man, a woman earned 83p.

Females earned less on average than males in eight of the nine occupation groups

Occupation: Results are collated using the 2010 Standard Occupation Classification (SOC10).

Figure 21: Median gross hourly earnings excluding overtime for all employees in NI by occupation and gender, April 2021



Note: Non-zero axis

[Download figure 21 data](#)

The gender pay gap is in favour of males when considering all employees. Disaggregating the data into occupation groups shows that this holds in eight out of nine occupation groups. The occupation group in which females earned more on average was ‘Professional occupations’ and there was only a small difference of 1p per hour. Around three-fifths of those employed in ‘Professional occupations’ are females (58%).

The largest difference between male and female average pay was in the ‘Skilled trades occupations’ group, where, on average, for every pound earned by males, females earned 83p (£11.89 compared to £9.92 per hour). Almost 90% of employees within this occupation group were male.

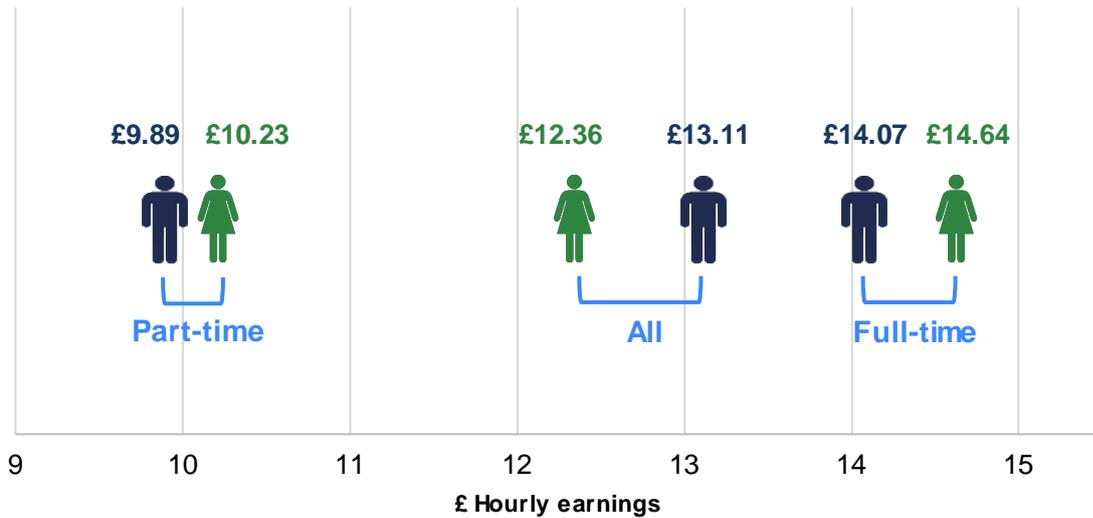
The second largest difference between male and female average pay was in the ‘Managers, directors and senior officials’ group, where, on average, for every pound earned by males, females earned 91p (£21.29 compared to £19.42 per hour). Around two thirds of employees within this occupation group were male.

Full-time and part-time females earn more than males

Full-time employee is defined as anyone aged 16 years or over that is directly paid from a business's payroll for carrying out more than 30 paid hours per week (or 25 or more for the teaching professions).

Part-time employee is defined as anyone aged 16 years or over working 30 or less paid hours a week (or less than 25 for the teaching professions).

Figure 22: Median gross hourly earnings excluding overtime by gender in NI, April 2021



Note: Non-zero axis

[Download figure 22 data](#)

Figure 22 presents hourly earnings for males and females disaggregated by working pattern. It shows that part-time earnings for females (£10.23) were greater than part-time earnings for males (£9.89), and full-time earnings for females (£14.64) were greater than full-time earnings for males (£14.07). This is in contrast to earnings for all employees (full and part-time combined), where hourly earnings for males (£13.11), were 75p higher than for females (£12.36).

These higher earnings for 'all' males is primarily due to a larger proportion of males (84% compared with 58% of females) in full-time work, which has higher hourly rates of pay on average than part-time employment and proportionately fewer low-paid jobs. (The higher earnings for 'all' males, despite the reverse for each working pattern is an example of Simpson's paradox and is illustrated in the [Gender Pay Gap explanation](#) on the NISRA website.)

The chart also highlights the difference in full and part-time earnings, with part-time workers earning less per hour than full-time workers.

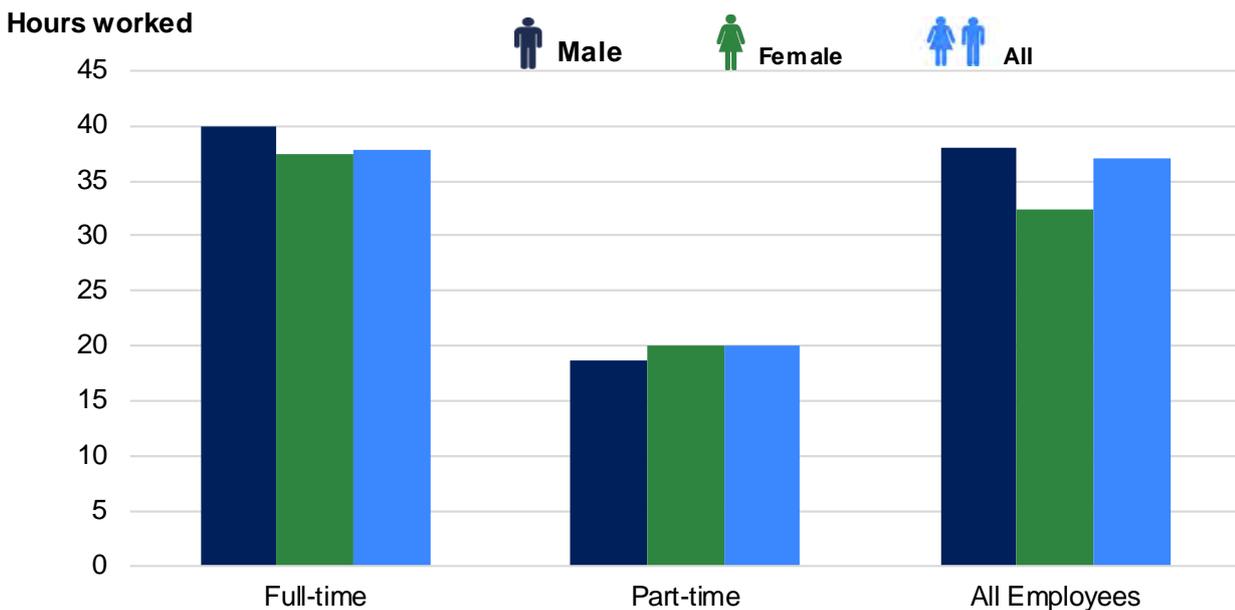
Median annual pay higher for all males due to longer working hours

Total paid hours worked is made up of paid basic hours and paid overtime hours. It is calculated using employees on adult rates whose pay was unaffected by absence.

Median full-time gross annual earnings in NI in 2021 was £29,109 for all employees, £27,396 for female employees, and £30,130 for males. This was an increase of 1.8% for females over the year, and a 1.4% increase for males.

The gender pay gap reverses for full-time employees when calculated on annual earnings (in favour of men, whereas it is in favour of women when calculated on hourly pay), however, the gap remains in favour of women when considering part-time annual earnings. The difference between the annual and hourly earnings pay gap measure can be attributed to males working more hours on average and receiving higher bonuses than females.

Figure 23: Median weekly paid hours worked by working pattern and gender, NI, April 2021



[Download figure 23 data](#)

In April 2021, males in full-time employment worked 2.4 more paid hours per week than females (39.9 hours compared with 37.5 hours), whilst for those in part-time employment, males worked 1.3 hours less than females (18.7 hours compared with 20 hours).

Overall, males (38 hours) worked 5.6 hours more than females (32.4 hours), and a greater proportion of males (84%) worked full-time compared with females (58%).