



BANKWEST CURTIN ECONOMICS CENTRE | WORKPLACE GENDER EQUALITY AGENCY

# GENDER EQUITY INSIGHTS 2025

## THE POWER OF BALANCE

# Workplace gender equality in Australia

- Workplace gender equality is being prioritised in policy discussions at both state and federal level
- We've seen improvement within Australian businesses on gender equality metrics but at a **very gradual rate.**
- Big differences between the best and worst performing businesses on workplace gender equality
- **What should businesses do to accelerate the pace of change?**

# Women managers are excluded from reaching the top...

Gender earnings gaps over the earnings  
distribution: managers

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- We've seen improvement within Australian businesses on gender equality metrics but at a **very gradual rate**.
- Big differences between the best and worst performing businesses on workplace gender equality
- **What should businesses do to accelerate the pace of change?**



**Towards workforce gender  
balance in Australia**

IS PROGRESS BEING MADE?

# Female employment shares and gender balance

All workers, by industry sector: 2023-24

2024 - all workers	Heavily male-dominated	Male-dominated	40:40:20	Female-dominated	Heavily female-dominated	Average female share	Rank
	<20% female	20%-40% female		40%-60% female	60%-80% female		
Accommodation and Food Services	-	3.7	78.9	16.1	1.2	51.9	6
Financial and Insurance Services	1.6	12.6	62.1	23.6	-	53.1	5
Arts and Recreation Services	1.4	18.3	62.0	18.3	-	50.8	7
Information Media and Telecommunications	5.0	26.3	52.5	15.0	1.3	44.4	9
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	18.4	14.3	49.0	18.4	-	42.0	11
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	8.0	48.0	44.0	-	-	37.6	12
Administrative and Support Services	8.2	22.0	36.5	30.8	2.5	47.8	8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	9.3	36.6	30.3	23.3	0.5	43.7	10
Other Services	6.5	8.9	29.8	37.9	16.9	61.1	3
Wholesale Trade	15.2	44.2	27.3	10.0	3.5	37.5	13
Retail Trade	9.8	22.1	23.9	22.7	21.5	57.6	4
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	38.8	37.9	21.6	1.7	-	26.6	15
Manufacturing	37.6	40.9	18.3	3.0	0.3	27.6	14
Education and Training	0.9	4.2	17.3	64.0	13.6	64.8	2
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	25.7	65.7	8.6	-	-	26.4	16
Construction	60.2	30.5	7.8	0.8	0.8	22.0	18
Health Care and Social Assistance	-	0.8	7.4	48.0	43.7	78.2	1
Mining	55.7	41.4	2.9	-	-	23.6	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>26.5</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>53.1</b>	



# Female employment shares and gender balance

All workers, by industry sector: 2023-24

Industry	Change in share of 40:40:20 organisations			Change in female share (2021-24)	Change in 40:40:20 (2021-24)	Rank
	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024			
Arts and Recreation Services	1.7	4.3	6.9	-2.1	+13.0	1
Information Media and Telecommunications	-2.7	3.6	7.9	+3.4	+8.8	2
Accommodation and Food Services	4.8	7.9	-5.4	-0.8	+7.3	3
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	2.5	2.5	2.3	+0.4	+7.3	4
Financial and Insurance Services	-3.0	4.5	3.6	+1.2	+5.1	5
Manufacturing	2.6	-0.7	1.6	+0.2	+3.4	6
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	1.7	-2.8	3.0	+4.7	+1.9	7
Other Services	-2.1	0.9	3.0	+4.3	+1.8	8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	-0.1	-0.3	1.1	-4.2	+0.7	9
Wholesale Trade	1.3	-0.4	-0.2	+3.0	+0.7	10
Health Care and Social Assistance	0.6	0.5	-0.6	-1.6	+0.5	11
Construction	1.5	-0.7	-0.8	-6.8	-0.1	12
Mining	-2.2	0.0	1.4	+2.4	-0.8	13
Retail Trade	-5.8	2.9	1.2	+1.0	-1.7	14
Education and Training	-2.3	0.0	-0.2	+1.3	-2.6	15
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	-12.1	5.9	3.1	+1.3	-3.1	16
Administrative and Support Services	-3.6	-1.5	0.4	-0.7	-4.7	17
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	1.5	-9.7	2.0	+1.0	-6.1	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>+1.1</b>	<b>+0.2</b>	



# Change in shares of organisations with gender balance

By industry division and managerial status, 2021-22 and 2023-24

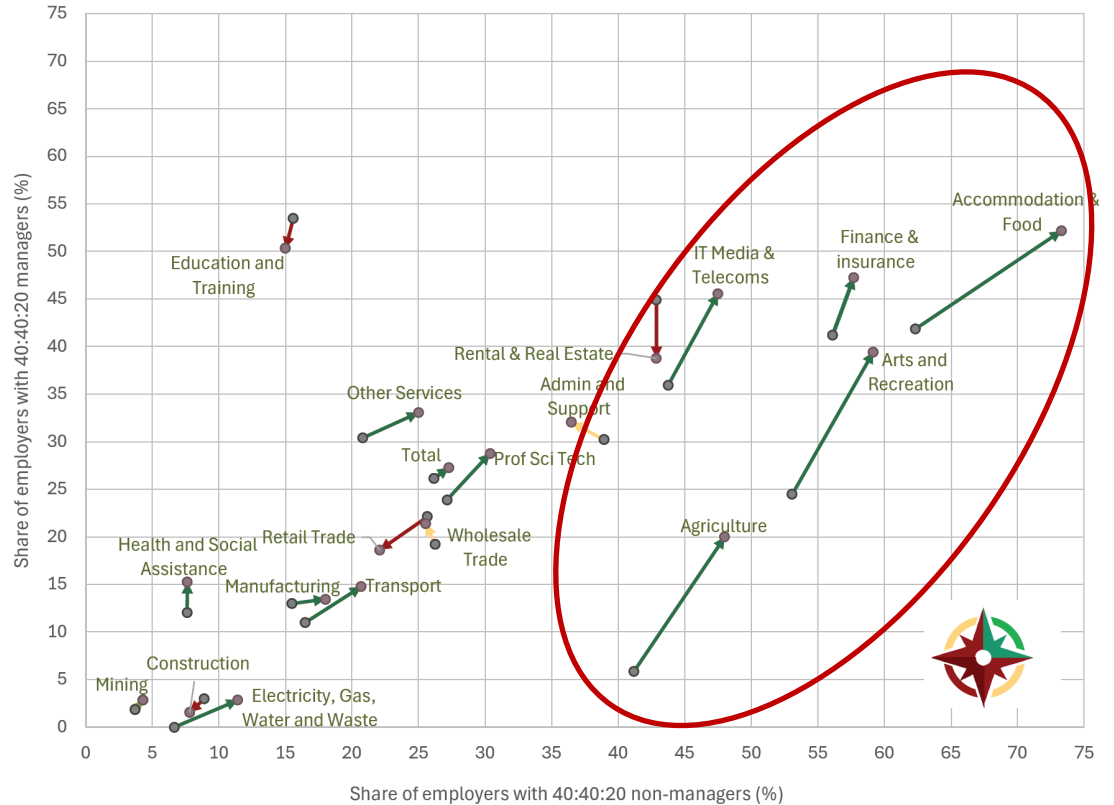
North-east means  
progress to balance...

accommodation and food

arts and recreation

finance and insurance

IT media and telecoms

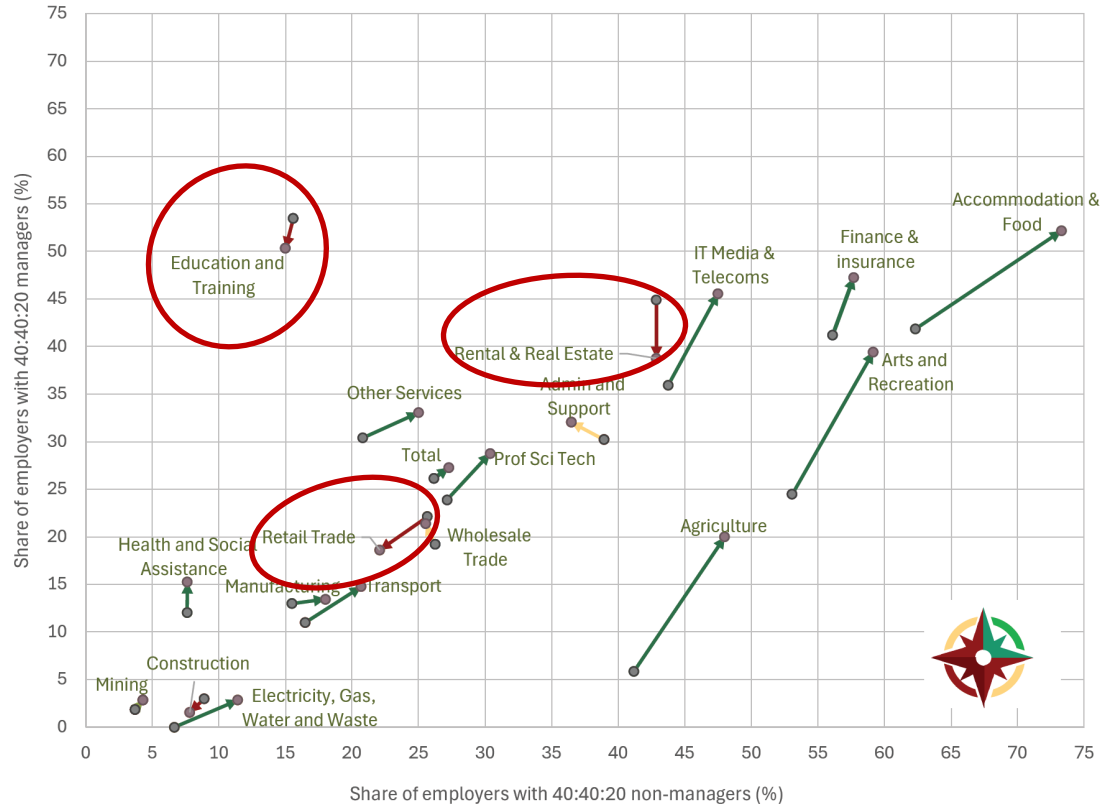


# Change in shares of organisations with gender balance

By industry division and managerial status, 2021-22 and 2023-24

**But South-west shows  
retreat from balance...**

education and training  
rental hiring and real estate  
retail trade

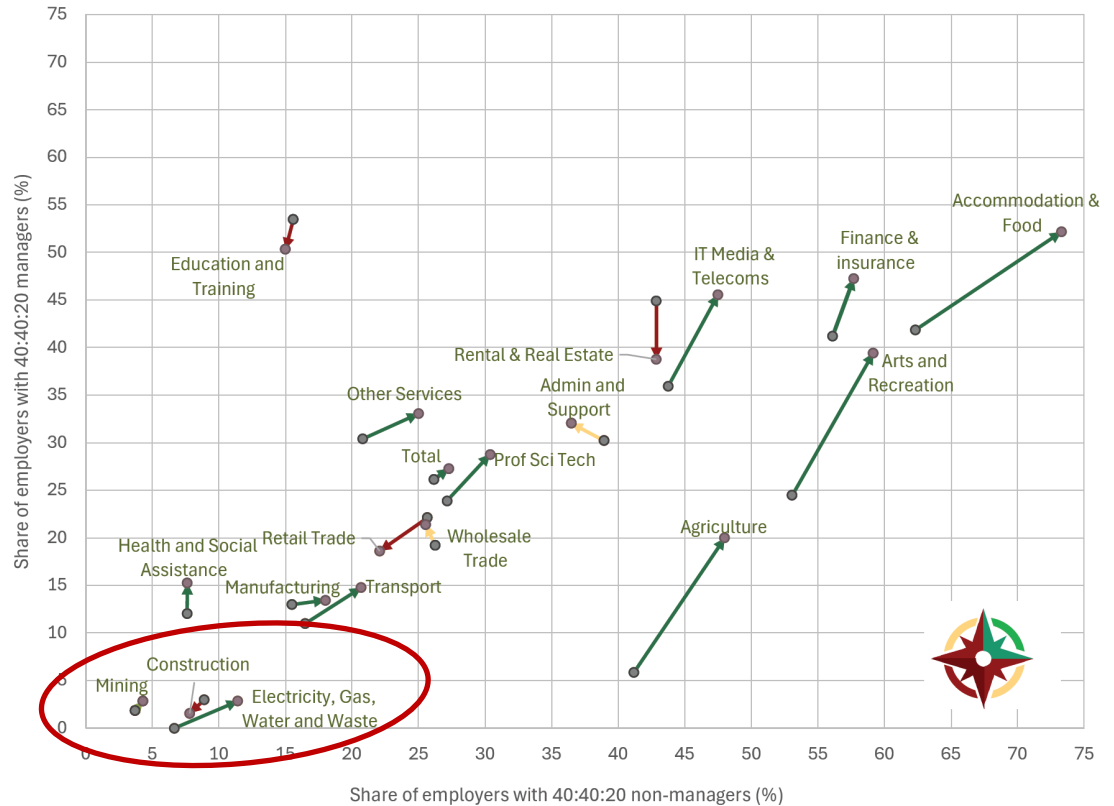


# Change in shares of organisations with gender balance

By industry division and managerial status, 2021-22 and 2023-24

And some sectors just struggle to shift the dial on balance

- mining
- construction
- electricity, gas, water & waste



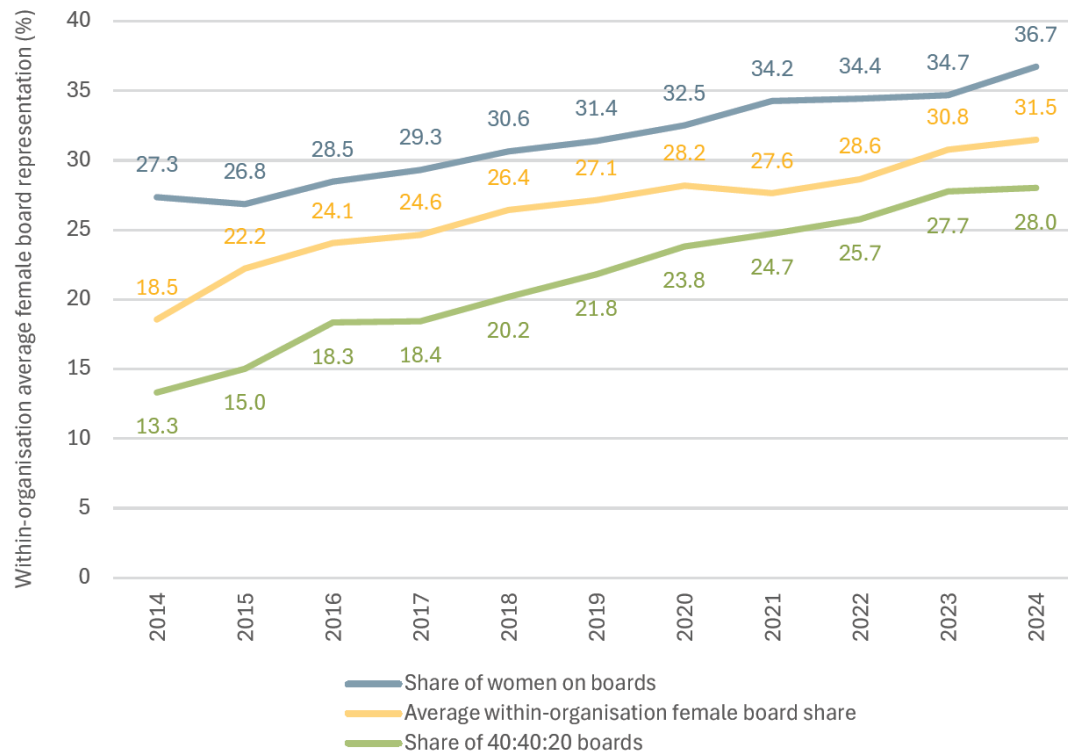


# Gender balance in leadership

IS PROGRESS STALLING?

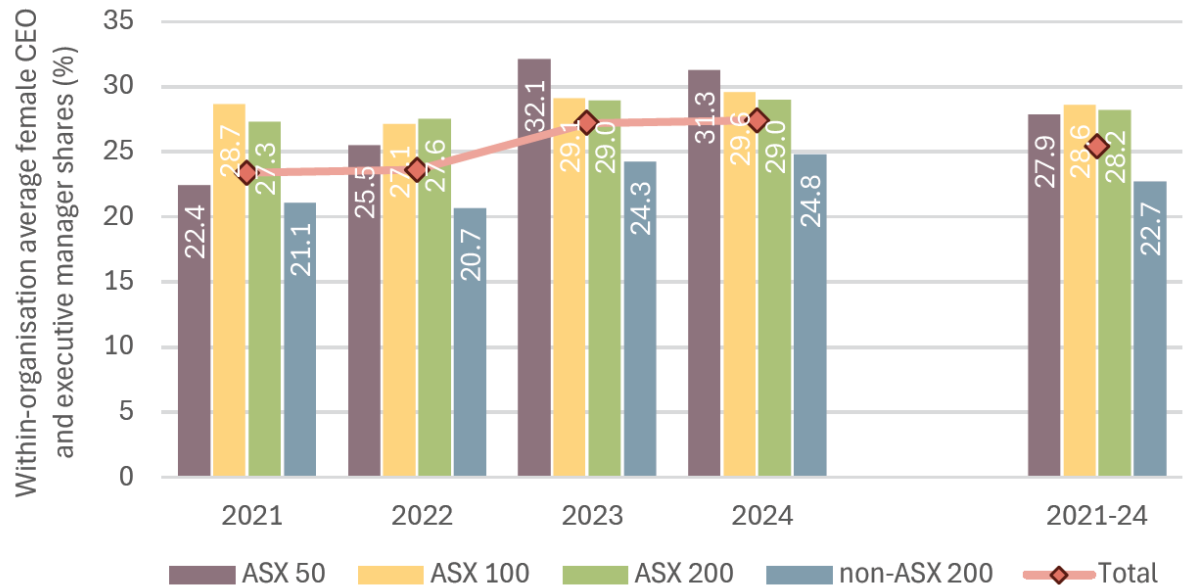
# Average female board representation & gender-balanced board shares

2014 to 2024



# Organisational gender balance for key (KMP) management

By industry division, 2023-24



**Gender balance in leadership has generally improved for ASX-listed companies..**

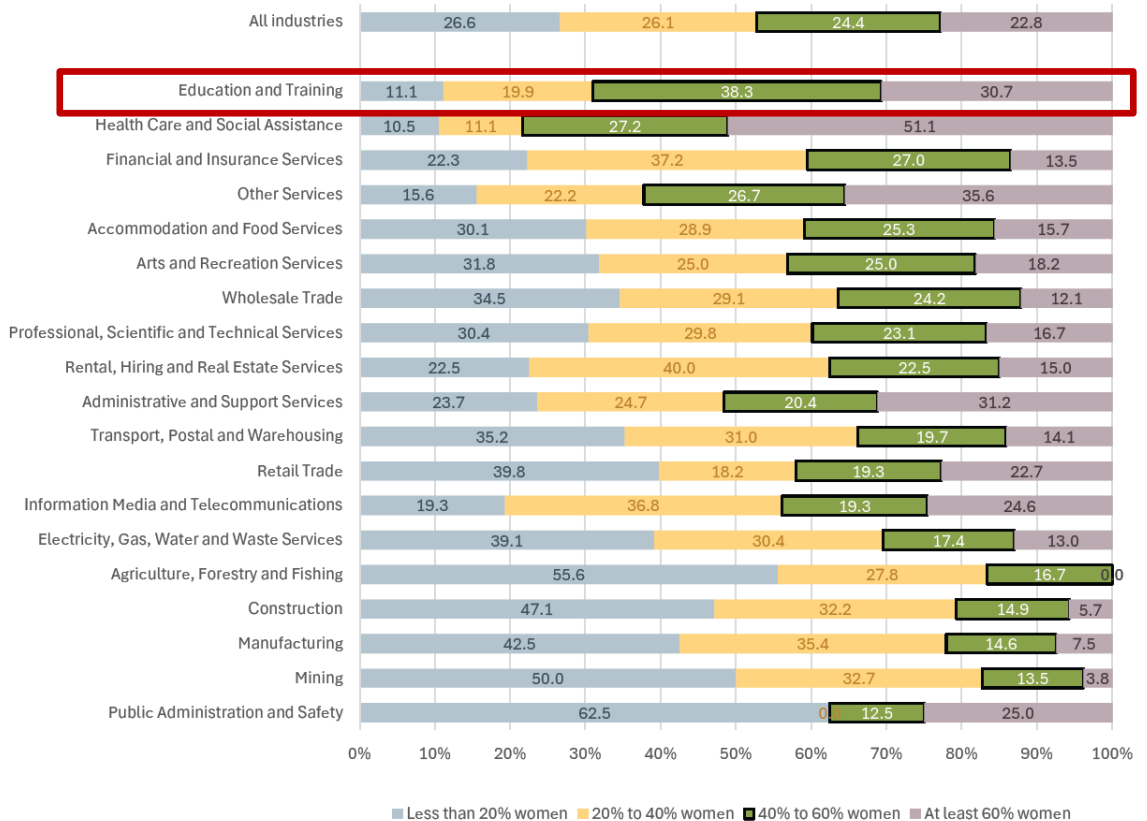
- 22% of ASX 50 executives were women in 2021-22
- women now account for nearly a third (31.3%) of executives in 2023-24

# Organisational gender balance for key management (KMPs)

By industry division, 2023-24

Education & training is the most successful for KMP gender balance

- 38 per cent of organisations hold gender-balanced leadership teams

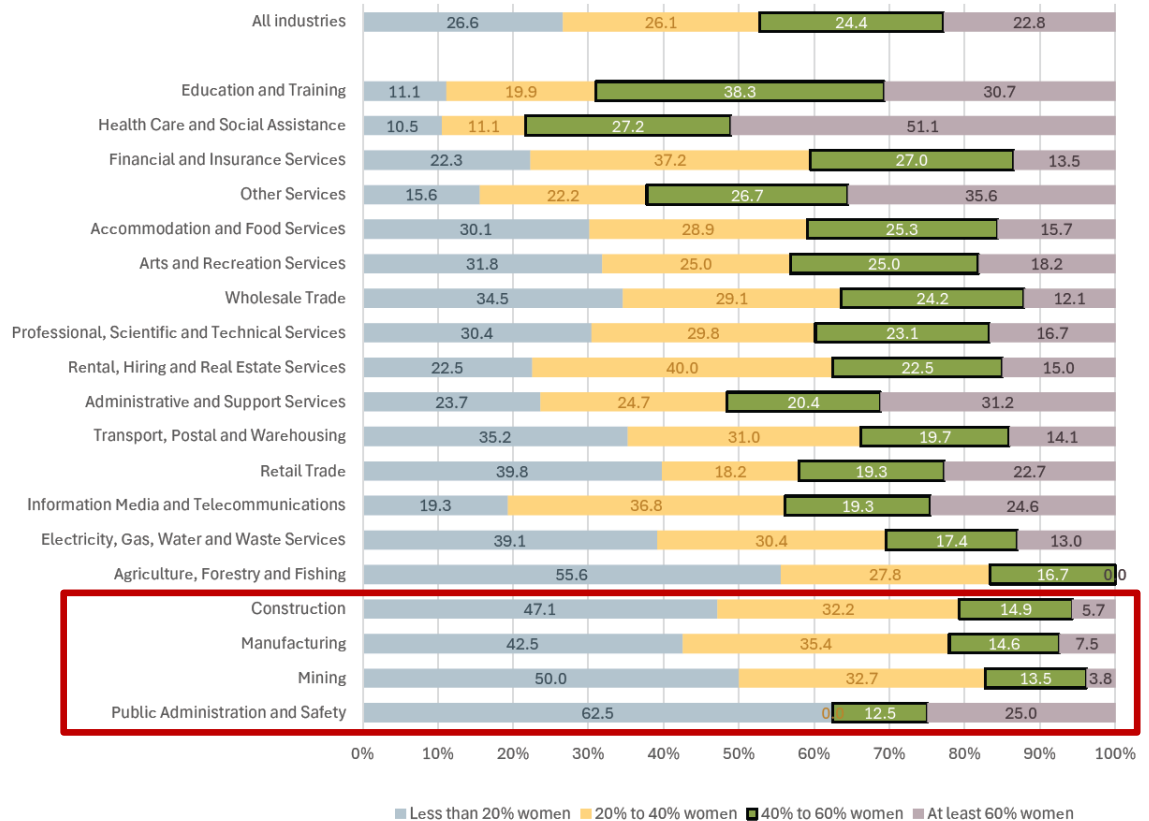


# Organisational gender balance for key management (KMPs)

By industry division, 2023-24

But heavier industry sectors continue to lag in KMP balance...

- public administration
- mining
- Manufacturing
- construction





# Progression pathways

WHAT POLICIES WORK?

# Average within-organisation appointment rates

Managers and non-managers, 2020-21 to 2023-24

## Appointments drive balance...

- Appointment rates for men and women rose sharply through 2022 and 2023 before easing in 2024.
- Women are more likely than men to be appointed into management positions.



# Average within-organisation resignation rates

Managers and non-managers, 2020-21 to 2023-24

## Retention is critical

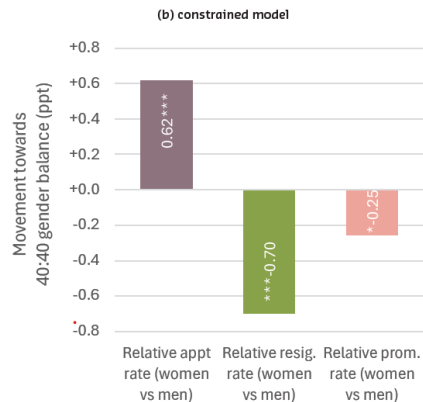
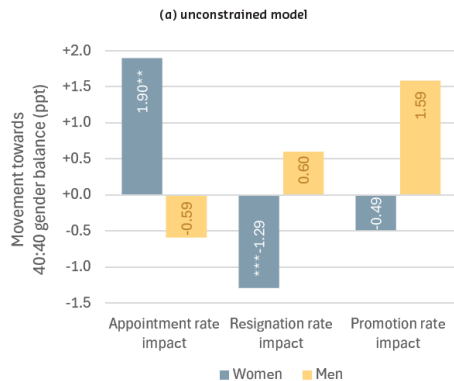
- Women managers resign at higher rates than men.
- The gap widened in 2022-23 but narrowed slightly in 2024.
- Managerial resignations remain lower than for non-managers.
- But higher exit rates for women erode progress made through recruitment and promotion.



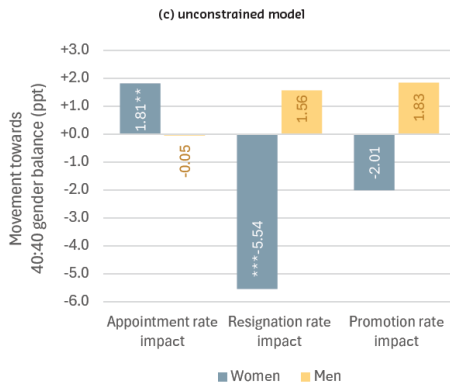
# Drivers of movement towards gender balance

## Regression estimates

Managers



Non-managers



The most effective route to gender balance lies in raising female appointment rates and reducing female resignation rates.

Promotions matter for gender balance, but their role is complementary

# Pathways to leadership

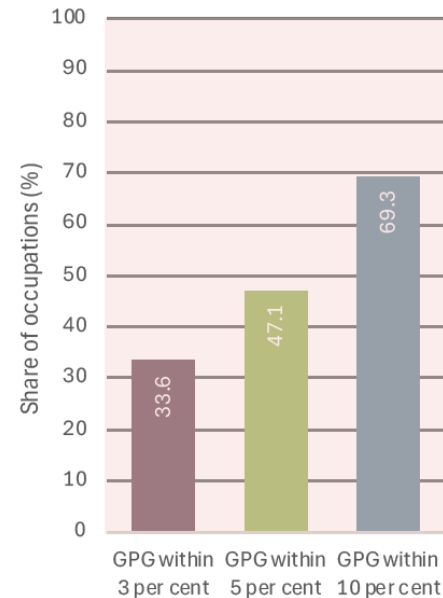
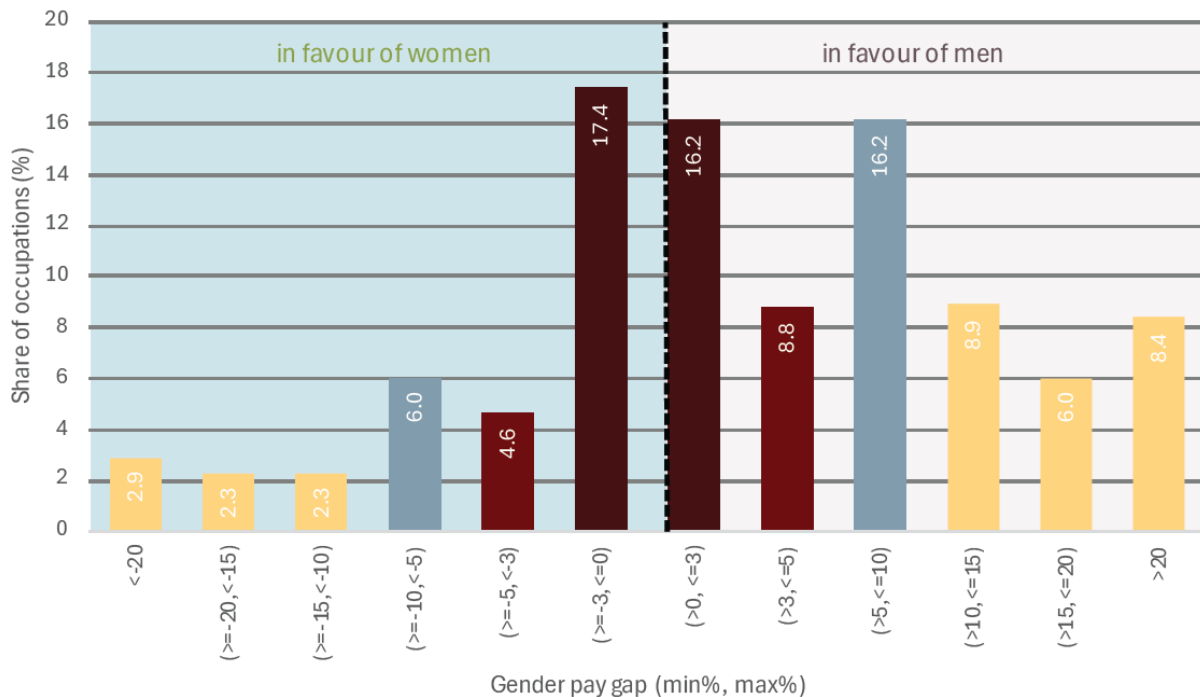
- **Appointments drive balance.** Appointment rates for female managers drive progress towards gender balance.
- **Retention is critical.** Higher resignation rates among women quickly erode progress towards gender balance
- **This is especially the case for non-managers** where women are leaving at rates 30ppt+ above men in some sectors.
- **Policy and practice must align.** Recruitment and retention strategies must work hand in hand.
- **Appointments without retention** fail to sustain balance, while retention without appointments fails to drive change.
- Both are needed for durable progress



Do companies pay equal salaries to women and men in the same occupation?

# Distribution of occupational-level gender pay gaps

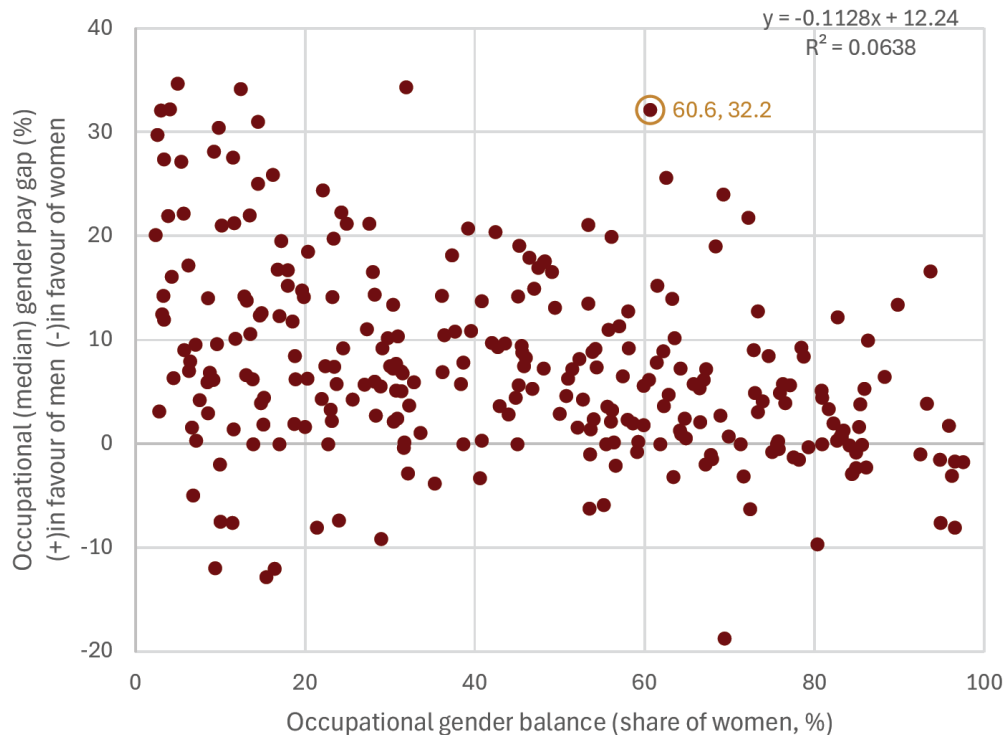
All employment categories, 2023-24



# Occupational gender balance and occupational pay gaps by employment status and contract type: 2023-24

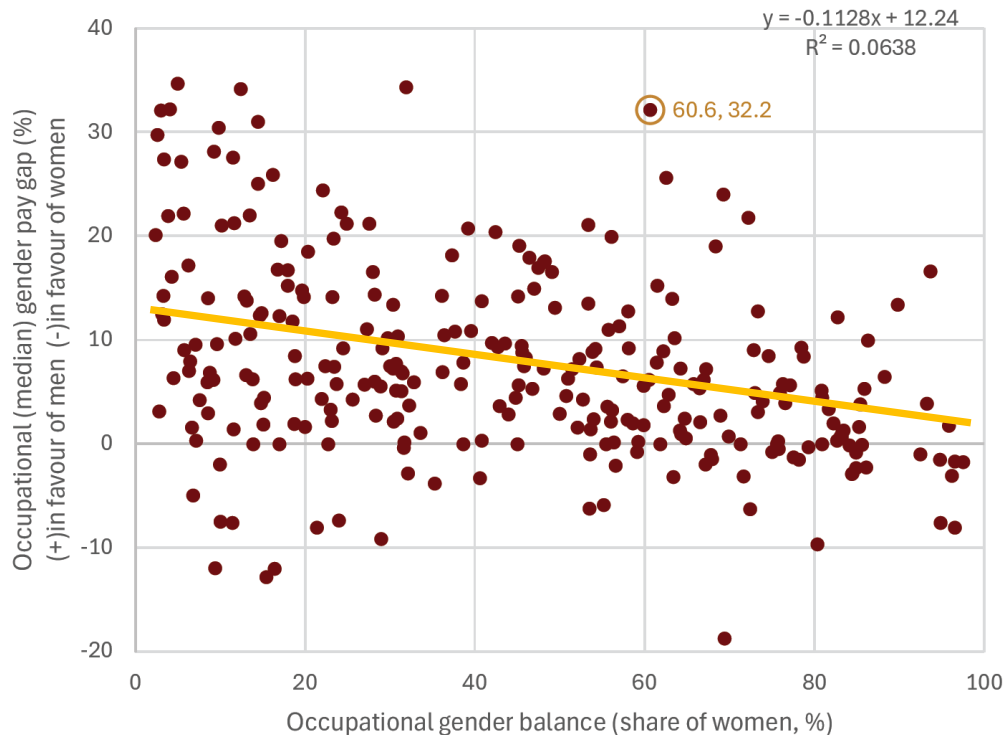
Occupational classes can  
be measured by their  
gender balance and raw  
gender pay gaps...

eg. dental practitioners on full-  
time contracts (60.6% of whom  
are women) face an occupation  
level gender pay gap of 32.2%



# Occupational gender balance and occupational pay gaps by employment status and contract type: 2023-24

We find that occupations dominated by women are generally less likely to show large pay gaps in favour of men...



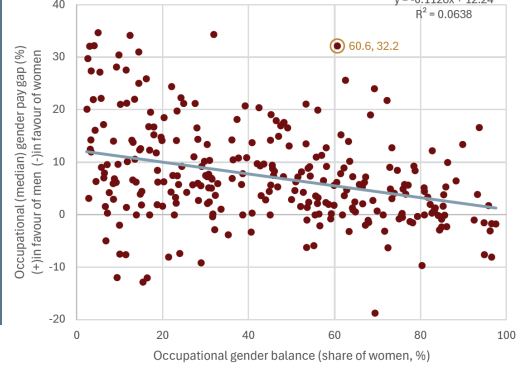
# Occupational gender balance and occupational pay gaps

by employment status and contract type: 2023-24

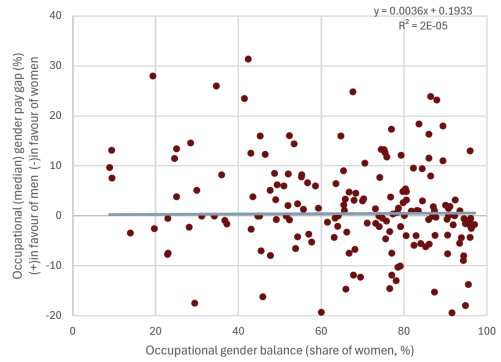
Full-time permanent



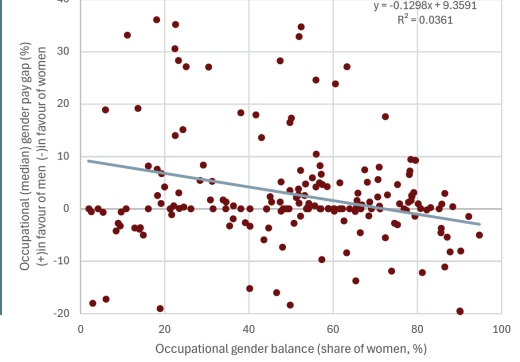
Full-time contract



Part-time permanent



Casual employment



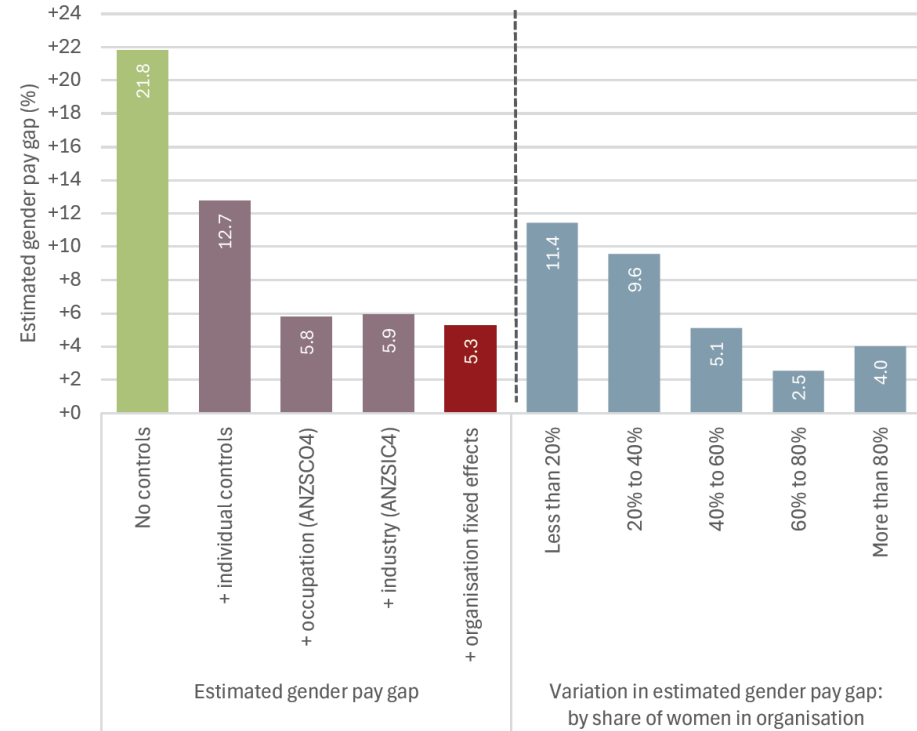
We find that occupations dominated by women are generally less likely to show large pay gaps in favour of men...

Part-time permanent is an exception

# The spread of gender pay gaps in total remuneration

## Controlling for occupation, industry & organisation composition

Around 70% of the overall gender pay gap can be explained by individual and compositional factors – both influenced by gender – rather than pay differences between women and men within a given occupational class...





# Pushing back on the pushback

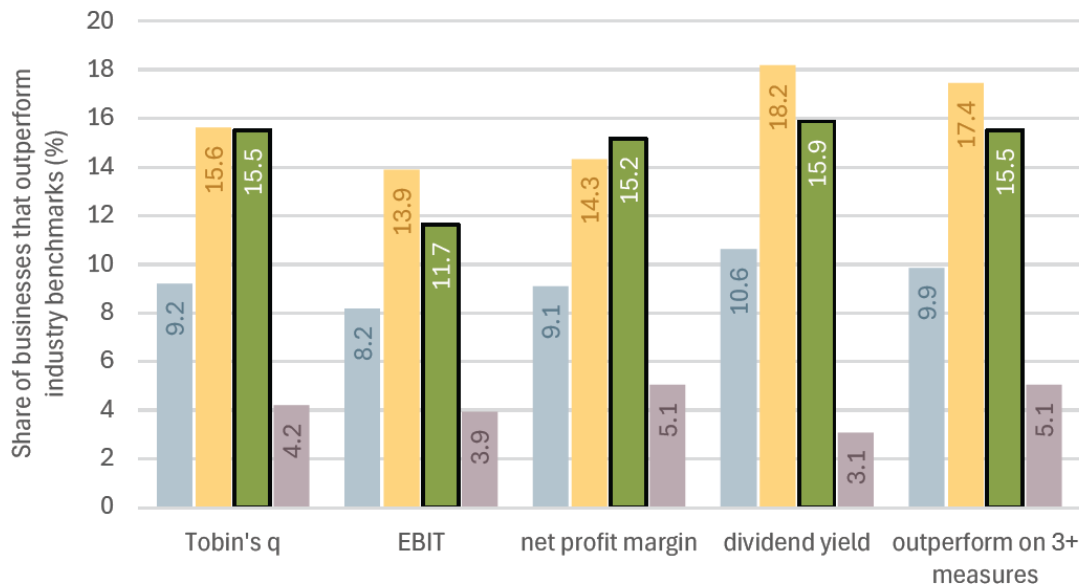
DIVERSITY IN LEADERSHIP DOES BENEFIT BUSINESS

# Share of businesses that outperform industry benchmarks

by existing gender balance of CEOs & senior executives, 2021-22 to 2023-24

Balance  
outperforms  
extremes.

Gender balanced  
leadership teams achieve  
better outcomes on  
average than heavily  
female- or male-  
dominated teams



- Share of female CEOs and executives Less than 20%
- Share of female CEOs and executives 20% to 40%
- Share of female CEOs and executives 40% to 60%
- Share of female CEOs and executives More than 60%

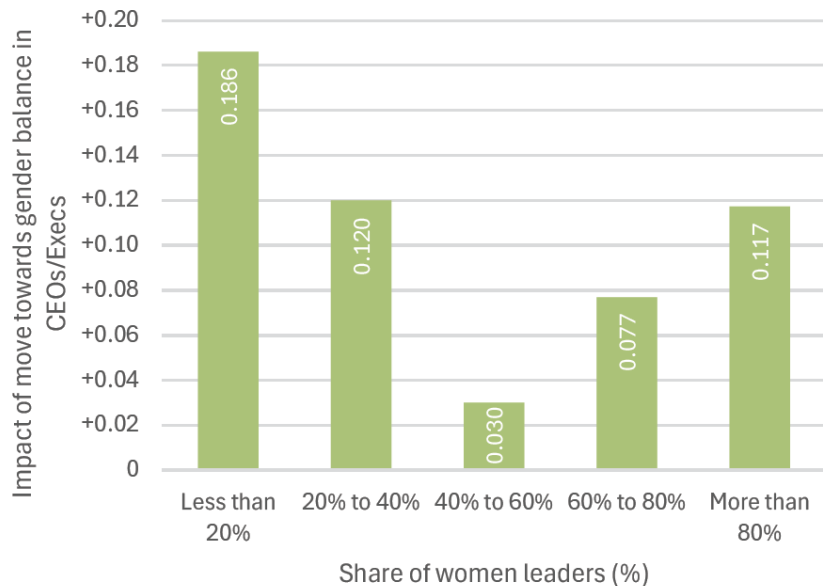
# The impacts of gender balance on company value

- For a company valued at **\$500 million**, a move towards gender balance in leadership would drive an **uplift in shareholder value of around \$47.5 million.**
- For a company valued at **\$1 billion**, the increase would be closer to **\$93 million.**

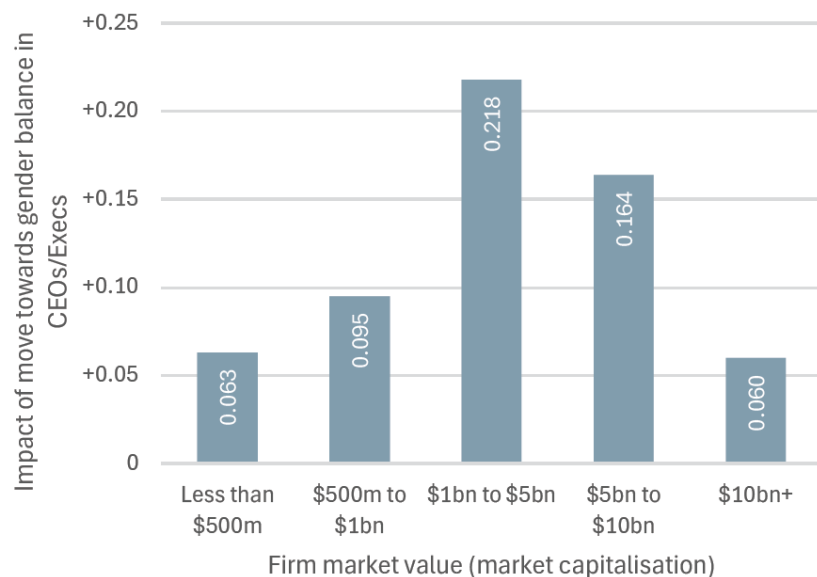
# The impact of greater gender balance on companies' market value

## Marginal effects

(a) gender balance impacts varying by existing gender concentration



(b) gender balance impacts varying by company size



# Insights and take-homes

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