

Fortnightly Report Minister for Women

21 June 2024

Current priority outcome areas

New Zealand ranks 4th in the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report 2024

The World Economic Forum released its annual Global Gender Gap report on 11 June with New Zealand ranking fourth across 146 different economies. This is the fifth year in a row that New Zealand has made the top five ranking.

The Global Gender Gap Index was first introduced by the World Economic Forum in 2006 to benchmark progress towards gender parity across four areas – economic opportunities, education, health and political leadership. It is the longest-standing index tracking the progress of numerous countries' efforts towards closing these gender gaps.

The Global Gender Gap Index measures scores on a 0-100 scale and scores can be interpreted as the distance covered towards parity (i.e. the percentage of the gender gap that has been closed). Since its launch, New Zealand has been in the top ten highest countries for gender parity, and has maintained its fourth position since 2021, with a score of 83.5%.

The report notes that New Zealand excels in educational attainment, with a perfect parity score for the past six years across all indicators. New Zealand also made gains in the economic participation dimension and opportunity from 42nd to 36th place, with strong labour force participation being a significant contributor to this increase

The top five nations for gender parity were Iceland, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, and Sweden. Australia was ranked 24th.

The report revealed that, globally, 68.5% of the gender pay gap has closed, and that parity in labour-force participation rates for women have rebounded to 65.7%, from a low of 62.3% in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also found that women's representation in the political sphere has increased, but that top-level positions remain largely inaccessible for women.

According to the report, with the global gender gap closing by just 0.1 percentage points since last year, it could take another 134 years to achieve full gender parity.

Release of 2023 stocktake of gender and ethnic diversity on public sector boards and committees

Following your announcement of the 2023 stocktake of gender and ethnic diversity on public sector boards and committees at the Women in Leadership Summit on Thursday 20 June, the Ministry has published the full report on its website: [2023 stocktake of gender and ethnic diversity on public sector boards](#), as well as sharing information about the results on our LinkedIn and Instagram accounts. We also supplied the report to the agencies involved in the stocktake, as well as key stakeholders such as the National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women, the Institute of Directors, Women on Boards and Global Women.

Upcoming webinar from Ministry's Nominations Service on cover letters

The Nominations teams from the Ministries for Women and Ethnic Communities and the Manager, Crown Entity Monitoring and Appointments from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, are hosting a webinar on Wednesday 26 June, 12 – 1pm, to support those interested in governance roles learn how to craft a strong governance cover letter. We are promoting the webinar on social media and through other available communications channels and to key stakeholders.

This webinar will cover the difference between cover letters and CVs, how to tailor a cover letter for each governance role, and what appointing agencies are looking for in good cover letters when reviewing applications for vacant public sector board roles. To date, 84 people have registered for the webinar.

The webinar will be recorded and become a video resource on the Leadership Learning Hub to ensure people can get this information after the session.

This webinar follows on from a previous webinar held in February 2024 with Katy Anquetil (Executive Director, Sheffield) and the Ministry for Women and other population agencies to share information on how to craft a great governance CV. The Ministry will be hosting further webinars to support the Nominations Service and other topics of interest for women and girls throughout the rest of 2024.

Supporting the development and promotion of resources to support Honours nominations

The Ministry for Women has worked with the Ministry of Ethnic Communities (MEC) to produce a step-by-step guide on how to write a nomination for a New Zealand Royal Honour. The guide and accompanying flyer have been published on the MEC website, and last week we promoted the resources on a social media post to mark National Volunteer Week, encouraging people to nominate someone they feel has made a difference to their community. We will continue to work with MEC on promoting these resources via our communication and stakeholder channels. We will be developing a webpage for our website to support the nomination of women for a New Zealand Royal Honour. This will be available in early-July.

Discussion paper released recommending improvements to KiwiSaver

On 13 June, the Retirement Commission released *KiwiSaver Opportunities for Improvement*. This paper is intended to inform public discussion and provide an independent framework for assessing the issues.

The paper makes 15 recommendations for improvements to existing KiwiSaver settings and includes a specific recommendation to address gender inequities in KiwiSaver by extending Government contributions to those on paid parental leave to include those who cannot continue to make their own contributions.

The report notes the recent changes made by the Government to support those on paid parental leave by making matching contributions, but this currently only applies to those who continue to make their employee contribution.

Five organisations to receive additional funding through the Physical Activity and Wellbeing Fund

The \$1 million Manatū Wāhine Physical Activity and Wellbeing Fund was launched on 1 May 2023 as part of the government's leverage and legacy programme for the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023™. It saw a total of 122 not-for-profit organisations approved for financial support for community-led initiatives to improve women and girls' access to sport and active recreation activities to support their wider wellbeing. All approved organisations received less than the \$25,000 maximum grant and only around half of the applications were funded, due to high demand.

As reported in December 2023, following payment completion, \$7,500 remained in the fund. This was because one approved organisation no longer needed their funding, and another invoiced for less than

they had been granted. We reallocated those funds to three approved organisations that were an excellent fit for the fund.

A further eight organisations have since returned underspent or unspent funds, totalling around \$23,946.64. We analysed the funded applicants to select organisations to which to reallocate this remaining funding. We looked for organisations that:

- had received significantly less than the \$25,000 upper limit for grants
- had demonstrated effective use of previous funds, and
- confirmed they could use additional funds to address barriers to women and girls' participation in sports and active recreation.

We selected the following five organisations to each receive \$5,000:

- Far North Safer Communities in Northland to assist women and girls with low income and/or isolated communities with travel costs, sports fees, uniforms, and gear.
- Ignite Sport Trust in Wellington to deliver physical activity programmes to young wāhine disengaging from education, whānau or community; teen parents; disabled girls; and former refugee girls.
- The TYLA (Turn Your Life Around) Trust in Auckland to deliver a boxing programme for at-risk Māori and Pacific teenage girls from Ōtara and surrounding areas.
- Respect Trust in Auckland to provide support for women and girls affected by family violence to access sport and active recreation through sports fees, clothing, shoes, and equipment.
- Whakatu Te Korowai Manaakitanga Trust in Nelson to provide women from lower socioeconomic populations with walking and hiking shoes, gym and local pool passes, and learn to swim classes.

The Ministry is in the process of analysing final reports from funded applicants and will provide a summary report of the fund's impact for ministerial review in the coming weeks.

Meeting with the Digital Policy Lab

Officials from the Ministry met with members of the Digital Policy Lab (DPL) of the Institute for Strategic Dialogue on Monday 17 June to discuss online harm and emerging challenges in the digital policy space.

DPL is a global non-profit organisation and operates as an intergovernmental working group focused on regulation and policy to prevent and counter disinformation, hate speech, extremism and terrorism online. They have undertaken work on online gender-based violence and pathways to radicalisation for the Christchurch Call and Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse and have existing relationships with regulators and agencies in New Zealand.

We identified areas of further interest for the Ministry as part of our ongoing work in responding to gender-based, online violence in New Zealand, including non-regulatory initiatives and DPL's research on the impact of online abuse on women in politics and leadership in the run up to elections.

CEDAW examination discussed at International Human Rights Governance Group meeting

The Ministry attended the regular quarterly meeting of the International Human Rights Governance Group on Wednesday 12 June. The Group is made up of agencies with responsibility for reporting

against New Zealand's human rights convention obligations, including the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

The Ministry provided the Group with an update on the submission of New Zealand's national-level review of its implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and how we intend to build on that process to prepare for New Zealand's CEDAW examination in October. We have indicated to the United Nations, via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), a preferred date for the examination of 10 October. Advice from MFAT is that we will not receive confirmation of this date until August. We will keep you and your office informed of any further updates.

Collective Employment Agreement Bargaining concluded

The Ministry concluded its Collective Employment negotiations on 13 June, settling with a new three-year term. Following approval from the Public Service Commission Te Kawa Mataaho on its bargaining strategy, a constructive process was followed over a period of 6 weeks from mid-March reaching agreement in early May. The main claim was around pay movement.

Ministerial Servicing

| Ministerial letters and responses | | |
|--|---------------|----------|
| Subject | Log number | Due date |
| 9(2)(a) New Zealand's National Action Plan | MW 23-24 0170 | 25/06 |

| Official Information Act requests in progress | | |
|---|--------------------|------------------|
| Subject | Log number | Due to requester |
| Ministry OIA requests | | |
| Budget 2024 Initiatives and correspondence | MW DOIA 23-24 0042 | 01/07 |
| Staff reduction and redundancies | MW DOIA 23-24 0041 | 01/07 |

Proactive release

This Fortnightly Report will be considered for release within three months of publication, under the Ministry's 'proactive release of documents' policy.



Kellie Coombes
Secretary for Women

19 June 2024



Hon Louise Upston
Acting Minister for Women

Date: 20240623