

# 'Is Britain Fairer?': Key facts and findings on women and men

'Is Britain Fairer?' (2015) is the Equality and Human Rights Commission's five-yearly review of equality and human rights in Britain. This factsheet captures some of our key findings for men and women.

Sex is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. The Act prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; protects individuals from unfair treatment; and promotes a fair and more equal society. It protects men and women in a variety of fields, including employment, education, the exercise of public functions and the provision of services. Figures from the Office of National Statistics indicate that there were **32.4 million** women and girls, and **31.4 million** men and boys living in Britain in 2013.

## Girls are doing better than boys in education

**In schools across Britain**, a gender gap persists, with girls continuing to perform better than boys in GCSEs and achieving at least five awards at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Level 5 or better.

**In Britain** a higher percentage of men (**11%**) than women (**9%**) were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) in 2008. This decreased to **8.9%** for men and **7.5%** for women in 2013.



**In 2008**, men in Britain were more likely than women to have a degree-level qualification (**22.3%** compared with **20.5%**). However, this situation reversed over time. By 2013, **27.7%** of men had a degree-level qualification, compared with **28.4%** of women.

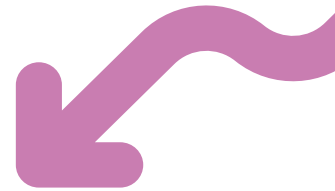
## However, employment prospects are still better for men

**Across Britain**, men are almost twice as likely to be a manager, director or senior official than women.

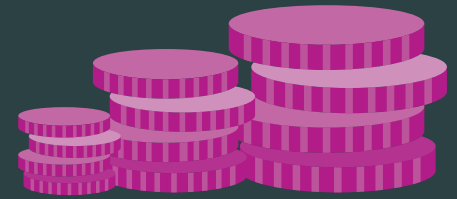
In 2011, the Government set a voluntary target for the UK's largest public companies (FTSE 100) to increase the percentage of board positions held by women to 25% by 2015. In July 2015 this target was met. However, women on boards are still under-represented in both non-executive and especially executive directorships.



The employment rate for women in Britain (**69.7%**) was lower than for men (**75.9%**), in 2013. The gap decreased between 2008 and 2013 by 1.3 percentage points, but mainly due to a significant drop in employment rates among men (a decrease of 1.6 percentage points from **77.6%** in 2008).



The gender pay gap in hourly earnings for all employees is narrowing. It decreased from **22.5%** in 2008 to **20%** in 2013, due to men's average pay declining more than women's. More women than men work part-time.



**Work in Britain is still clearly gendered.** In 2013, a much higher proportion of men than women worked in skilled trades and were process, plant and machine operatives, whereas women still dominated work in administrative and secretarial roles and caring, leisure and other services.

Though progress has been made involving women in politics

**Women** are increasingly represented in the UK Parliament and now represent **29.4%** of all MPs, compared with **22%** in 2010.



There has been little change in female representation at local government level in recent years. **Around 32% of councillors in England were women in 2013. In Scotland** in 2007, **21.8%** of councillors were women, rising slightly to **24.3%** in 2012.

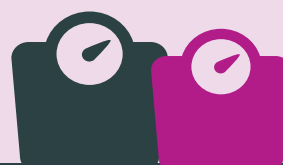
Women live longer than men and are less likely to be obese and/or drink excessively

**In Britain**, life expectancy at birth rose by **1.2 years** for boys, compared with **0.9 years** for girls, to reach **78.9** and **82.7** years respectively in 2011/13. The gap between girls' and boys' life expectancy at birth narrowed by **0.4 years** between 2007/09 and 2011/13.

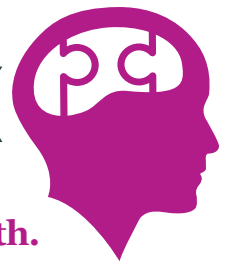


**Across Britain**, lower proportions of women exceeded the guidelines for alcohol consumption, compared with men.

**In each of the three countries**, higher proportions of men aged 16 and over were overweight or obese in 2012, compared with women.



## Men and women across Britain are increasingly at risk of poor mental health



**Between 2008 and 2013 (2009 and 2012 in Wales), men and women have become increasingly at risk of poor mental health.**

In Wales, the risk was markedly higher for both men and women than in the rest of Britain.



This is a sharp contrast to England in 2013, where percentages of people at risk were markedly lower.



**35.8%** (an increase from **34.1%** in 2009)



**18%** (an increase from **15.5%** in 2008)



**11.9%** (an increase from **11.2%** in 2009)



**26.8%** (an increase from **26.7%** in 2009)

In Scotland during 2012, the percentages by gender were:



**17.5%** (**17.1%** in 2008)



**12.7%** (**12.4%** in 2009)

**Women are more likely to be the victim of rape or domestic violence, while men are more likely to be the victim of violent crime and homicide**



**Across the UK**, there has been a higher proportion of male than female homicide victims. In England and Wales, while higher numbers of men were killed by friends/acquaintances or a stranger, higher numbers of women were killed by a current or ex-partner.



**Women were much more likely to be victims of rape than men**, and more likely to experience domestic violence or partner abuse. In 2012/13, in England and Wales, a higher percentage of female respondents to the Crime Survey for England and Wales reported being a victim of domestic violence (**3.7%**) compared with male respondents (**2.0%**). The picture in Scotland was different: **2.1%** of both men and women reported being a victim of domestic violence.

**Across Britain**, an estimated 330,000 women were sexually assaulted between 2012 and 2013. Issues around systematic under-reporting of sexual violence and unsatisfactory official recording of reports by the police remain relevant according to the UK Statistics Authority.

**In England**, more men reported being the victim of violent crime (**3.2%**) than women (**2.1%**) in 2012/13. This was also the case in Wales where more men (**3.8%**) reported being the victim of violent crime, compared with women (**1.5%**) in 2012/13. In Scotland, **4.2%** of men reported being the victim of violent crime, compared with **2.2%** of women.

