Gender Disparities in Hiring & Political Influence (U.S. and Global, 2024–2025)

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Table of contents

1 Abstract

We analyze gender disparities in hiring, AI participation, and wages across U.S. industries and states, and situate these patterns in a global context. Drawing on recent federal statis-

tics (Labor Statistics ((2025))), U.S. pay-gap trackers (University Women ((2025a)); Women's Policy Research ((2024))), and international reports (Economic Co-operation and Development ((2024)); Organization ((2023)); Organization ((2025)); Forum ((2025))), we find persistent occupational segregation, widening U.S. annual earnings gaps since 2022, and continued underrepresentation of women in AI-intensive roles. State-level disparities correlate with policy environments such as pay-transparency and salary-history bans (University Women ((2025b))), though industry composition and family structure are important confounders. Conservative/market-based perspectives emphasize occupational choice, hours, and career continuity as key mechanisms and warn that some transparency policies may compress wages (Institute ((2021)); Foundation ((2024)); Cullen and Pakzad-Hurson ((2021)); Cullen ((2023)); Mas ((2014))). We integrate both views and outline implications for job seekers selecting sectors, geographies, and employers.

2 Executive Summary

- U.S. employment remains gender-segregated: women 47% of workers but overrepresented in health/education and underrepresented in construction, engineering, and many tech roles (Labor Statistics ((2025))).
- Every U.S. state has a pay gap; gaps tend to be smaller where transparency and equal-pay policies are stronger, though composition matters (University Women ((2025b))).
- U.S. annual earnings gap widened after 2022 (82.7¢ in 2023; 80.9¢ in 2024 among full-time year-round), while hourly measures show ~85% in 2024 (Women's Policy Research ((2024)); (**pew2025gap?**)).
- Women remain 22–30% of the global AI workforce and are more exposed to AI-driven task change in clerical/admin roles (Economic Co-operation and Development ((2024)); Organization ((2023)); Organization ((2025))).
- Globally, parity stands at 68.8% and may take ~123 years at current pace (Forum ((2025))).
- Market-oriented analyses attribute much of the unadjusted gap to hours, occupation, and career continuity and note possible wage compression from transparency (Institute ((2021)); Foundation ((2024)); Cullen and Pakzad-Hurson ((2021)); Cullen ((2023)); Mas ((2014))).
- Implications: build AI-complementary skills, target transparent employers and supportive states/metros, and use posted pay bands as inputs to evidence-based negotiation.

3 Introduction

Gender continues to shape labor-market outcomes in the United States and worldwide. In 2024–2025, women's representation varies sharply across industries, wage gaps persist, and AI both creates opportunities and raises exposure risks. We examine four questions: (1)

how hiring patterns differ for men and women across industries; (2) whether disparities vary between red and blue states; (3) whether women are more underrepresented in AI fields; and (4) how wage gaps compare by gender and political affiliations. We synthesize high-quality, recent statistics and research to inform job-seeker strategy.

4 Qualitative Research Method

We triangulate multiple sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey (CPS) 2024 annual averages for occupational distributions (Labor Statistics ((2025))); AAUW 2025 national and state pay-gap indicators (University Women ((2025a)); University Women ((2025b))); IWPR 2024 fact sheets on annual earnings gaps (Women's Policy Research ((2024))); Pew Research Center 2025 hourly pay-gap analysis ((**pew2025gap?**)); OECD 2024 policy brief on AI and women (Economic Co-operation and Development ((2024))); International Labour Organization reports on generative-AI exposure (2023; 2025 update) (Organization ((2023)); Organization ((2025))); and the WEF 2025 Global Gender Gap Report (Forum ((2025))). To incorporate conservative/market perspectives, we review AEI and Heritage commentary (Institute ((2021)); Foundation ((2024))) and research on equilibrium effects of pay transparency (Cullen and Pakzad-Hurson ((2021)); Cullen ((2023)); Mas ((2014))).

5 Hiring Patterns Across Industries (U.S. and Global)

U.S. employment remains gender-segregated. CPS 2024 annual averages indicate women comprise roughly 47% of total employment but are more concentrated in health care, education, and service roles, with lower shares in construction, engineering, and portions of tech (Labor Statistics ((2025))). Internationally, the World Economic Forum (2025) estimates overall global gender parity at 68.8%, with economic participation parity at about 60–61%, implying persistent cross-country segmentation (Forum ((2025))). Market-oriented analyses argue that part of observed differences in outcomes reflect hours worked, occupation mix, and career continuity rather than like-for-like pay differences (Institute ((2021)); Foundation ((2024))).

6 State Politics and Gender Disparities (Red vs. Blue)

AAUW's 2025 analysis shows that every U.S. state has a gender pay gap, with substantial dispersion across states (University Women ((2025b))). Cross-state differences correlate with policy adoption such as salary-history bans and pay-transparency requirements, which are more prevalent in many blue states (University Women ((2025b))). However, composition matters: industry mix (e.g., energy and construction), unionization, urbanization, and childcare access vary across states and can generate red–blue patterns without ideology being the sole driver.

Earlier peer-reviewed work associates state liberalism with narrower gaps, but causality remains difficult to establish (Maume ((2015))). Recent reporting suggests that post-pandemic return-to-office mandates have reduced flexibility and may contribute to widening national gaps, though these effects likely differ by state and sector ((**washingtonpost2025rto?**)).

6.1 Embedded visualization: AAUW live state map

> **Note**
>
> **Tip:** The live embed is perfect for your qualitative section. For PDF exports, also include a static image below as fallback.

Source: University Women ((2025b)).

7 Women in AI Fields (U.S. & Global) and Political Context

Women remain underrepresented in AI and tech roles. The OECD documents lower female representation in AI-exposed professional occupations and constrained access to AI tools (Economic Co-operation and Development ((2024))). The ILO shows that clerical and administrative tasks—female-heavy—are highly exposed to generative-AI transformation in high-income countries; a 2025 refinement confirms the asymmetric exposure (Organization ((2023)); Organization ((2025))). Direct state-by-state measures of female AI participation are limited. It is therefore premature to assert causality from political ideology to AI underrepresentation without merging employer-level AI job postings and hires with state policy and industry controls. Nonetheless, differences in STEM pipelines, childcare, higher education, and transparency regimes plausibly contribute to cross-state variation (Organization ((2023)); Organization ((2025)); Economic Co-operation and Development ((2024))).

8 Wage Gaps and Political Affiliation

On annual full-time, year-round earnings, IWPR reports a deterioration from 2022 to 2023 (82.7¢) and news coverage indicates about 80.9¢ in 2024—the lowest since 2016 (Women's Policy Research ((2024)); (**newsweek2025gap?**)). By contrast, Pew Research Center's hourly series shows women earned about 85% of men's hourly pay in 2024 when combining full- and part-time workers ((**pew2025gap?**)). Adjusted gaps shrink after controlling for occupation, hours, and experience but do not disappear (Institute ((2021)); (**pew2025gap?**)). Policy can narrow gaps: pay-transparency laws are associated with smaller within-firm gaps but may compress overall wages or slow wage growth according to equilibrium analyses (Cullen and Pakzad-Hurson ((2021)); Cullen ((2023)); Mas ((2014))).

9 Implications for Job Seekers (2025)

- **Sector choice:** Target underrepresented, higher-growth fields such as data, AI, and engineering while building verifiable skills, certifications, and portfolios (Labor Statistics ((2025)); Economic Co-operation and Development ((2024))).
- **Geography:** Favor states and metros with pay-transparency requirements and supportive care infrastructure while benchmarking offers with state snapshots (University Women ((2025b))).
- **AI resilience:** Develop AI-complementary skills to hedge exposure in clerical/admin roles and to compete for AI-adjacent, higher-pay tracks (Organization ((2023)); Economic Co-operation and Development ((2024))).
- **Employer screening:** Prefer organizations with posted pay bands, career-progression transparency, and flexible/hybrid policies as RTO mandates may widen disparities ((**washingtonpost2025rto?**)).
- **Negotiation:** Use posted ranges as inputs, not anchors, and negotiate based on documented contributions; be aware of transparency's potential compression effects (Cullen and Pakzad-Hurson ((2021)); Cullen ((2023)); Mas ((2014))).

10 Limitations

Causal attribution of political ideology to gender disparities is challenging due to confounding by industry mix, demographics, and local cost structures. AI participation statistics with state-gender granularity remain sparse. International comparisons depend on differing definitions of occupations, pay, and employment. Transparency policy effects vary by market and occupation; equilibrium responses may offset some intended benefits.

11 Conclusion

Gender disparities in hiring, AI participation, and pay persist across the U.S. and globally. State policies and employer practices shape observed gaps, but composition and choice also matter. A pragmatic job-search strategy in 2025 combines sector targeting, AI-adjacent upskilling, careful geography selection, and screening for transparent, flexible employers. Continuous measurement using CPS updates, AAUW/IWPR dashboards, and international benchmarks will be essential for tracking progress.

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