

## Gender Pay Equity

**Whereas:** The World Economic Forum estimates the gender pay gap costs the economy 1.2 trillion dollars annually. The *median* income for women working full time in the United States is 80 percent of that of their male counterparts. This disparity can equal nearly half a million dollars over a career. The gap for African American and Latina women is 60 percent and 55 percent. At the current rate, women will not reach pay parity until 2059.

United States companies have begun reporting statistically adjusted equal pay for equal work numbers, assessing the pay of men and women performing similar jobs, but mostly ignore *median* pay gaps. Regulation in the United Kingdom now mandates disclosure of median gender pay gaps. And while Microsoft reported an eight percent median hourly pay gap and 13 percent bonus pay gap for its United Kingdom operations, it has not published median information for its global operations.

Microsoft reports women earn 99.7 percent of the compensation received by men on a statistically adjusted equal pay basis. Yet, that statistically adjusted number alone fails to consider how discrimination affects differences in opportunity. In contrast, median pay gap disclosures address the structural bias that affects the jobs women hold, particularly when men hold most higher paying jobs.

Women account for nearly 28 percent of Microsoft's employees, but only 22 percent of leadership. *Mercer* finds actively managing pay equity "is associated with higher current female representation at the professional through executive levels and a faster trajectory to improved representation."

Research from *Morgan Stanley*, *McKinsey*, and *Robeco Sam* suggests gender diverse leadership leads to superior stock price performance and return on equity. *McKinsey* states, "the business case for the advancement and promotion of women is compelling." Best practices include "tracking and eliminating gender pay gaps."

Public policy risk is of concern, not only in the United Kingdom, but in the United States as well. The Paycheck Fairness Act pends before Senate. California, Massachusetts, New York, and Maryland have strengthened equal pay legislation. The Congressional Joint Economic Committee reports 40 percent of the wage gap may be attributed to discrimination.

**Resolved:** Shareholders request Microsoft report on the company's *global median* gender pay gap, including associated policy, reputational, competitive, and operational risks, and risks related to recruiting and retaining female talent. The report should be prepared at reasonable cost, omitting proprietary information, litigation strategy and legal compliance information.

The gender pay gap is defined as the difference between male and female *median* earnings expressed as a percentage of male earnings (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development).

**Supporting Statement:** A report adequate for investors to assess company strategy and performance would include the percentage *global median* pay gap between male and female employees across race and ethnicity, including base, bonus and equity compensation.