



Women Invest

July 2025

www.arion.is/women

INTRODUCTION

What's the problem?



Equality

Nowadays there is formal gender equality in Iceland, which means that women and men are equal by law. In recent decades great progress has been made in the fight for equality, but there are still many challenges to be faced. Economic inequality is one of the issues we need to correct.

ON THE RIGHT TRACK

The gender pay gap is getting narrower and savings are fairly evenly split between men and women. The responsibility for financial matters is also quite evenly split between men and women in the home.

So what's the problem then?

THE PROBLEM

At the beginning of 2024

70 YEARS

If things don't change, it will be **70 years** until the number of securities owned by men and women are equal.

MANAGING DIRECTORS

24% of managing directors in Icelandic business sector are women.

INCOME

Men's income and wages are higher than women's.

CEOs

4 women are CEOs on Nasdaq Iceland, compared with **29** men.

INCOME DISTRIBUTION

Income distribution remains very uneven between genders.

SPLIT

Financial gender gap is immediately evident among infants.

LET'S LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD

Campaign

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Being an active participant in the financial market is an important way of having an influence on society, while laying the foundations for one's own future. By investing money people contribute to the development and growth of society and the more people involved, the more equal this growth will be. However, there is no gender equality when it comes to savings, pension assets and participation in the financial market. That's why we at Arion Bank have launched an initiative with the aim of empowering women when it comes to investment. By doing this we want to help bridge the gender gap on the financial market.

“Understanding your finances is a basic skill that gives you more control over your life and enhances your independence.”

- Iðna Brá Benediktsdóttir, Deputy CEO and Managing Director of Retail Banking



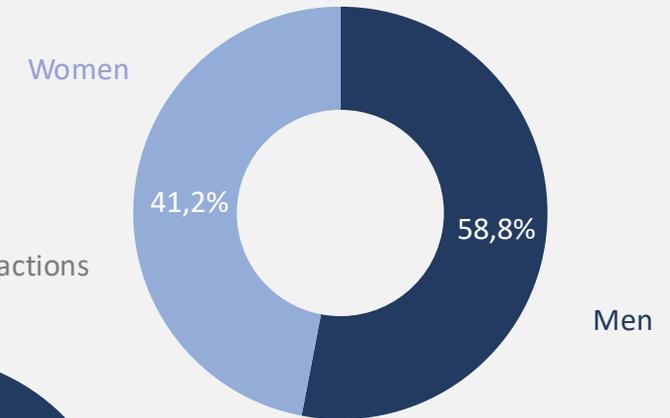
FUND TRANSACTIONS BY WOMEN INCREASING YOY

Since launching Women Invest, the number of women investing in funds at Arion Bank has grown by 19%. During the same period, the number of men investing in funds has increased by 11%. Women now represent approximately 41% of the people investing in funds at Arion.

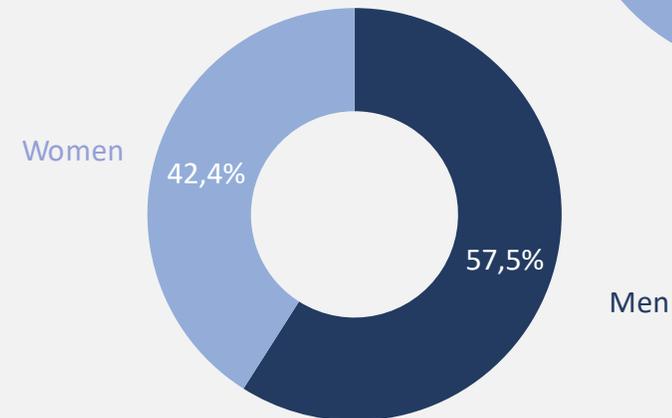
In 2024, fund transactions by women increased by 11% over the previous year. In the same period, trading by men increased by 6%. Fund transactions by women represented 42% of all trading in funds in 2024.

The number of women with fund subscriptions increased by 19% between 2023 and 2024. In the same period, the number of subscriptions by men increased by 7%. The share of women subscribers increased by almost 6% between years.

Fund transactions by gender, number of people



Number of fund transactions by gender

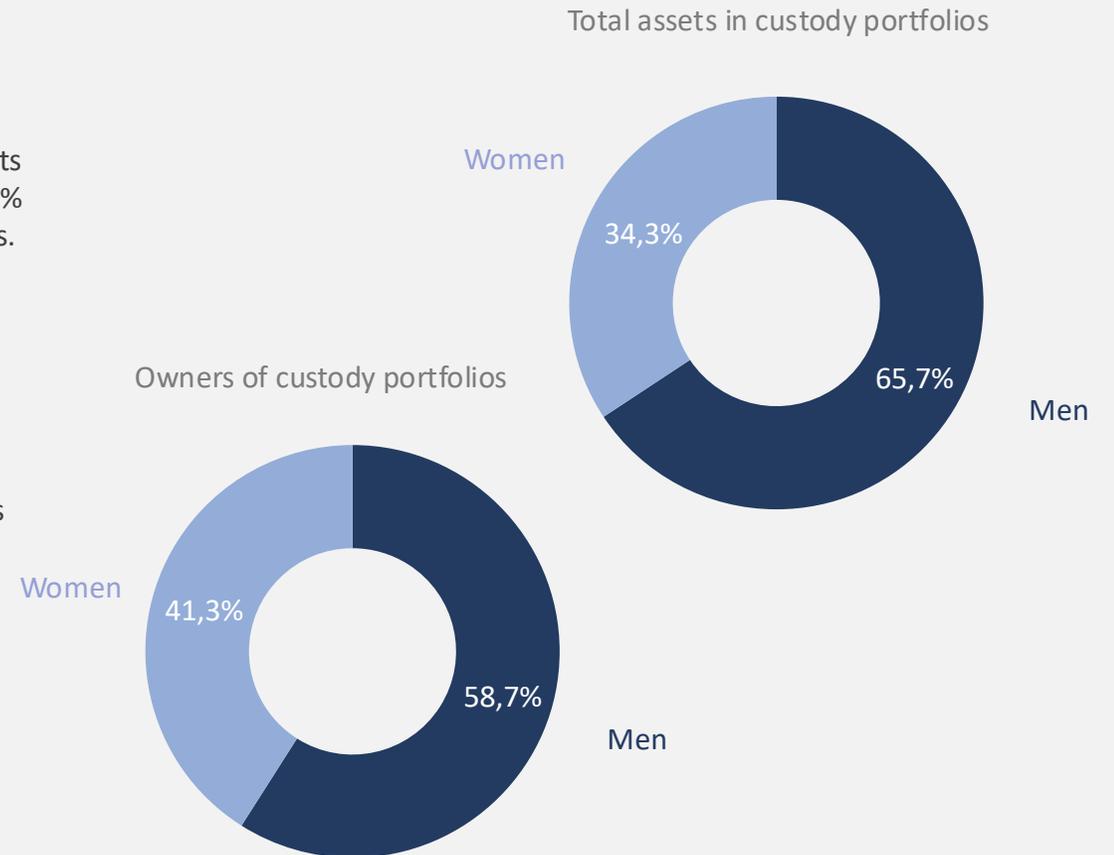


WOMEN'S TOTAL ASSETS

Women's total assets in custody portfolios increased by 8.5%

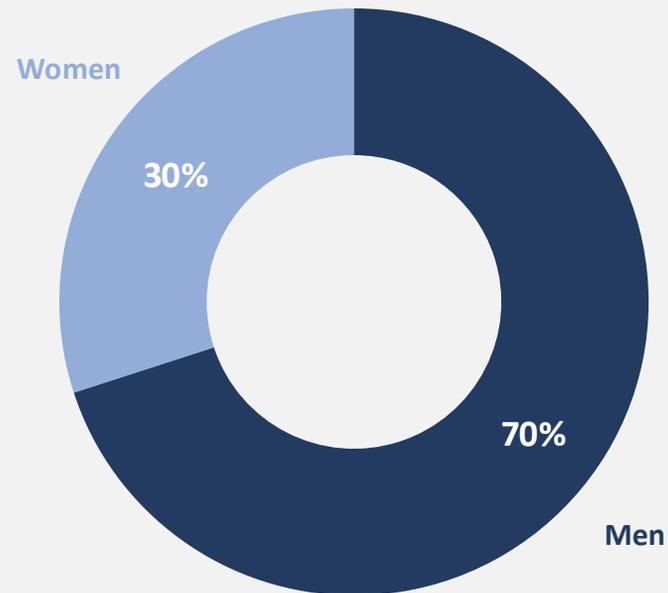
Women's total assets in custody portfolios now represent 34% of total assets in custody portfolios at Arion Bank. Women's total assets increased by 8.5% between 2023 and 2024, compared with approximately 3% for men's assets.

The total number of women owning custody portfolios also increased during this period, but only by 0.5%. The number of men owning custody portfolios has decreased by more than 1%. Ownership of custody portfolios at Arion Bank is split at 41% women and 59% men.



SECURITIES HOLDINGS

Participation in stock market



When it comes to participation in the stock market, the gender split on the Iceland Stock Exchange is about 70/30 in favour of men. This figure has been virtually unchanged in recent years.

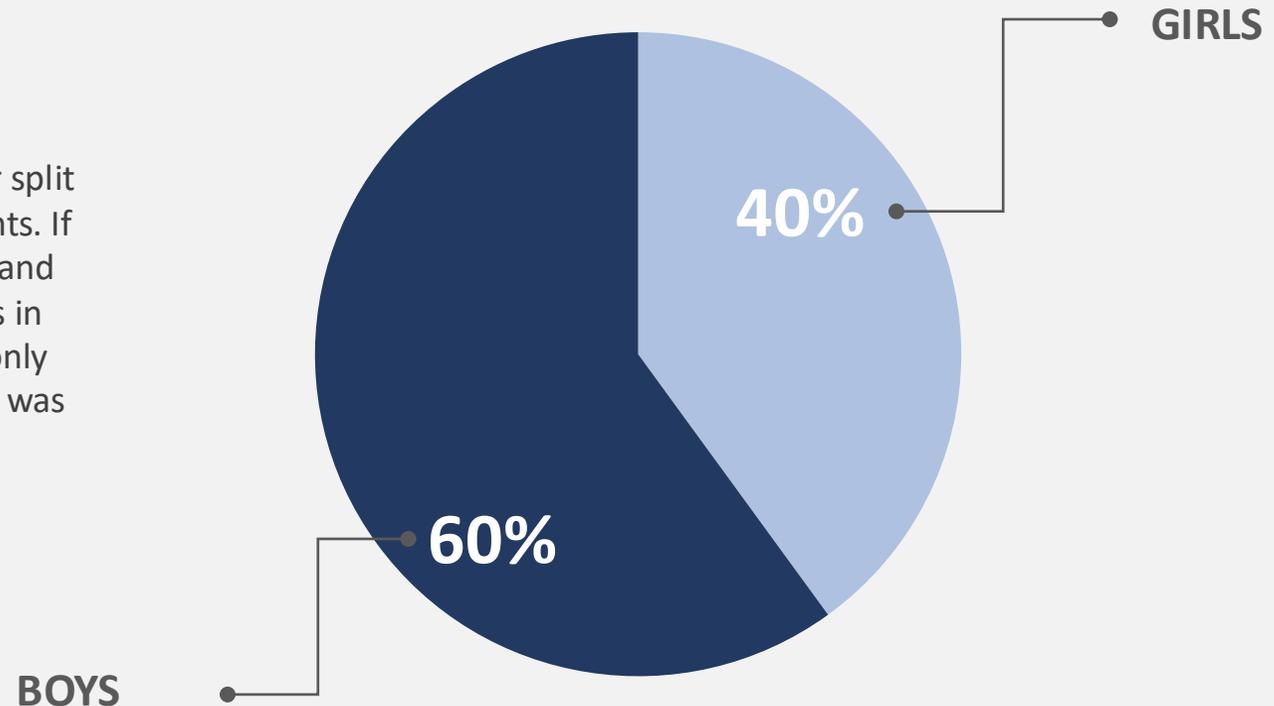
The number of women owning securities portfolios at Arion has increased by 45% in three years, and now 41% of people with securities portfolios at the Bank are women.

Women have been increasing their holdings in securities at Arion Bank in recent years which is a pleasing development. Yet at the current rate, it will be another 50 years before women and men have equal holdings in securities. However, this figure was 70 years when we set out at the beginning of 2024.

WE NEED TO CONSIDER THE FUTURE

Gender-based split

When it comes to money, the gender split is immediately apparent among infants. If you look at children aged under two and their securities holdings and deposits in their name at Arion Bank, girls own only 40% while boys own 60%. This figure was still applicable at the end of 2024.



FUNDS

We're on the right track

Average age of women investing in Stefnir funds is decreasing

45% of people saving in Stefnir funds are women

Women under 30 have higher average assets in Stefnir funds than men

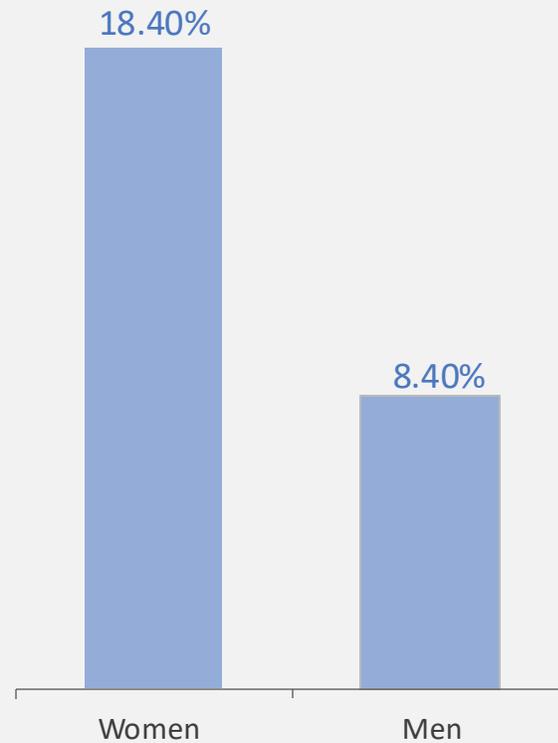


CAMPAIGN "WOMEN INVEST" IN FUNDS

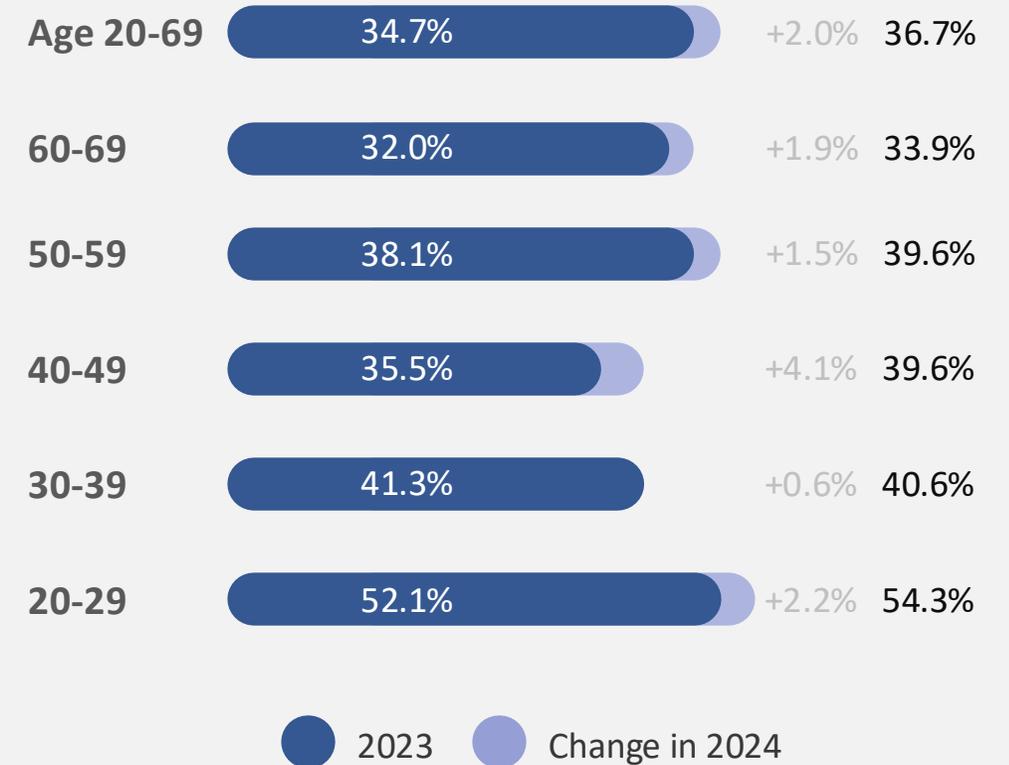
STATUS OF WOMEN IN FUNDS



Annual growth of women's assets, aged 20–69, in funds



% of women's assets of total by age





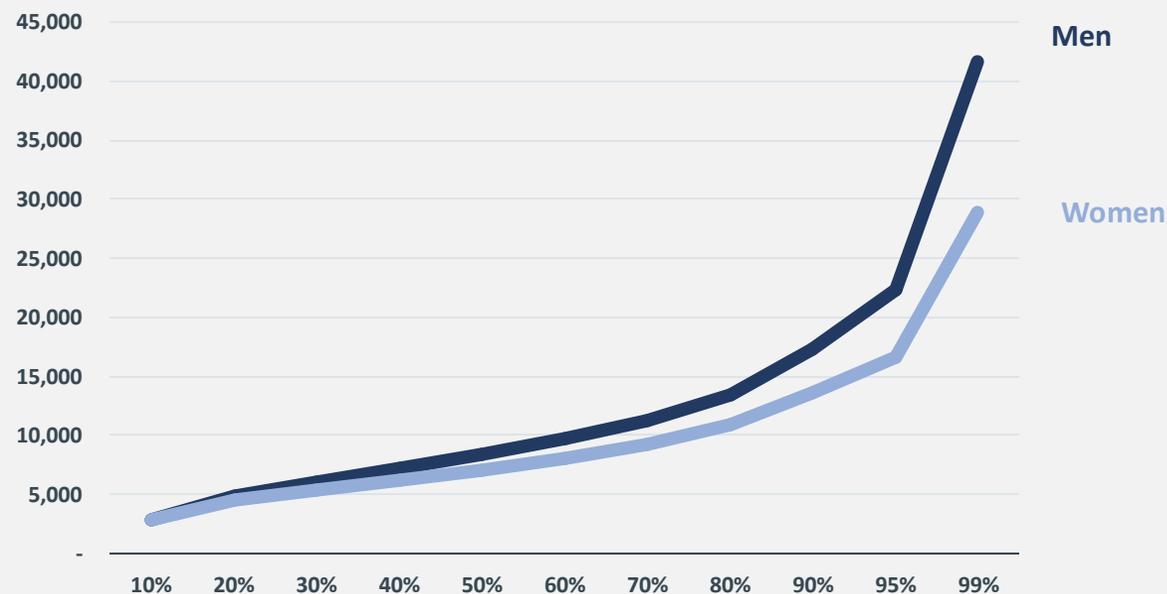
Income & wages

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INCOME DISTRIBUTION BY GENDER

Income distribution by gender is still unequal but this is largely due to the highest income groups.

Income distribution by genders by income deciles – annual income 2023



INCOME DECILE

When the income distribution of genders is examined by income deciles, it can be seen that incomes are relatively equal between men and women in the lowest income deciles, but then the gap begins to widen.

RELATIVELY WIDE GAP

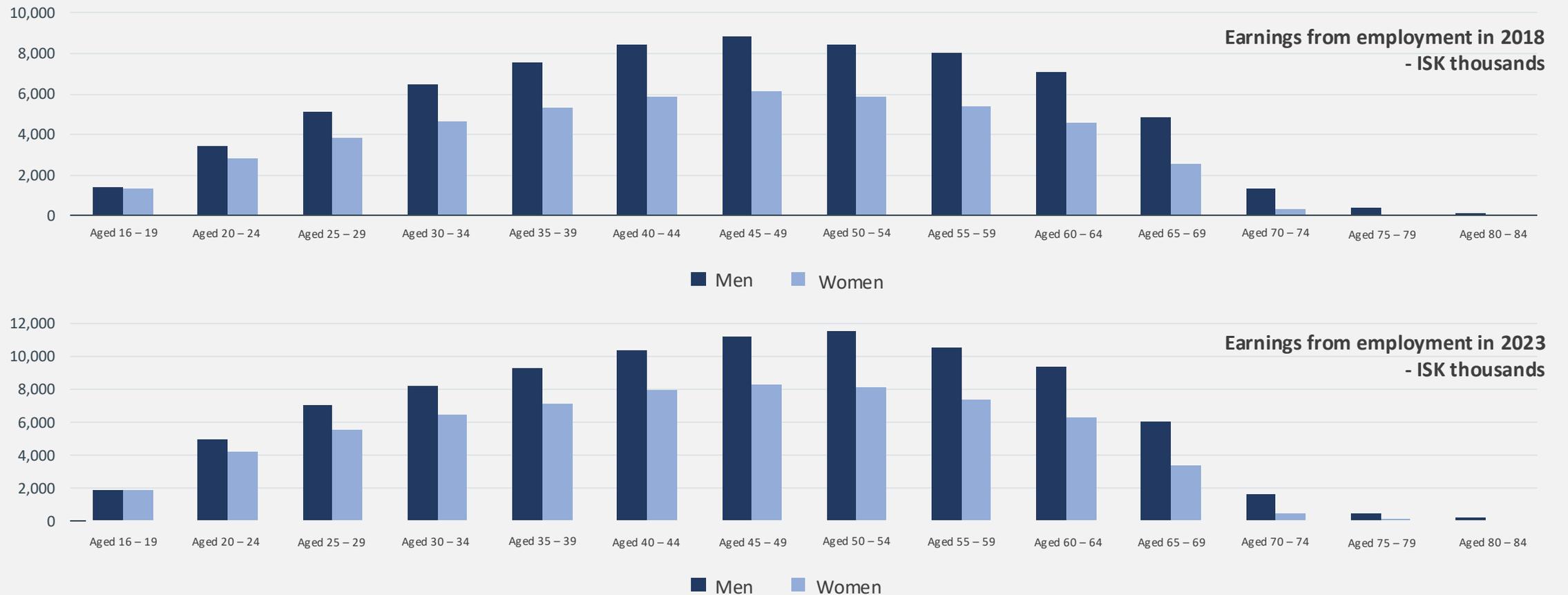
When the highest income deciles are examined, the gap is quite wide. In the ninth income decile, the difference between the incomes of men and women is 28%.

MEN HAVE HIGHER FINANCIAL INCOME

When looking at the top income decile, the gap between the incomes of women and men is 44%. This difference can largely be attributed to the fact that men's financial income is significantly higher than that of women.

GENDER PAY GAP IS DECREASING

The unadjusted gender pay gap has dropped by five percentage points in five years; from 14% in 2018 to 9% in 2023.



WOMEN'S FINANCIAL INCOME

Women's financial income has been increasing alongside growing interest in investments among women

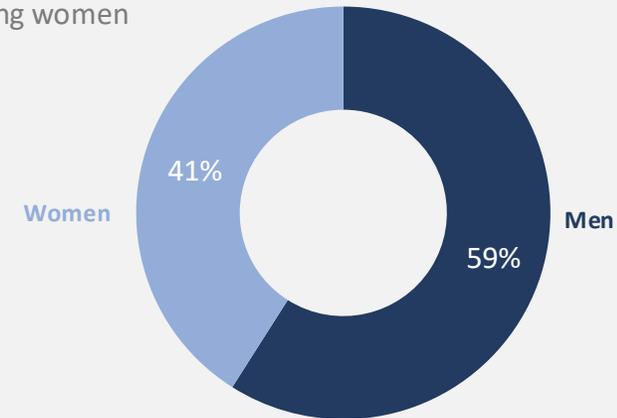
In 2022, the increase in financial income was particularly striking, rising by 23% from the previous year. The highest increase was among women aged 16–19, whose financial income rose by 103%.

In 2023, women's financial income increased by 22% from the previous year, with the largest increase among women aged 75 and older, at around 62%.

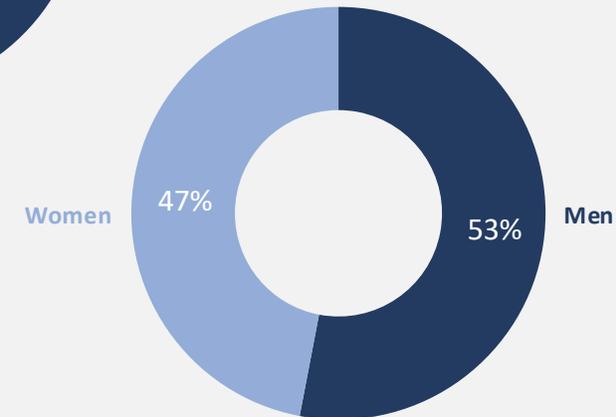
In three years, the number of women with a custody portfolio has grown by 45%, and women now represent 41% of people owning custody portfolios at Arion.

In the last 10 years women have owned approximately 47% of the value of deposits at Arion.

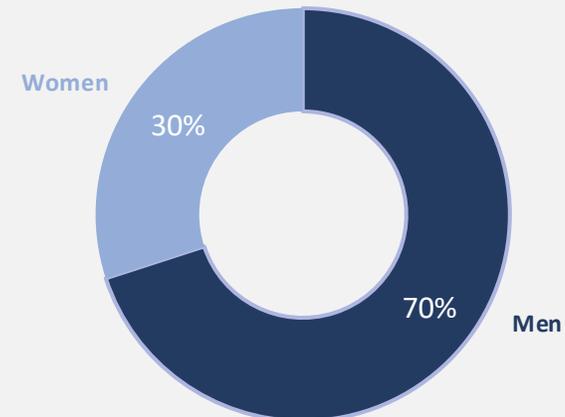
Number of custody portfolios



Value of deposits



Securities holdings





Pensions

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CONTRIBUTIONS INTO PENSION FUNDS

48% of people paying contributions into pension funds in Iceland are women

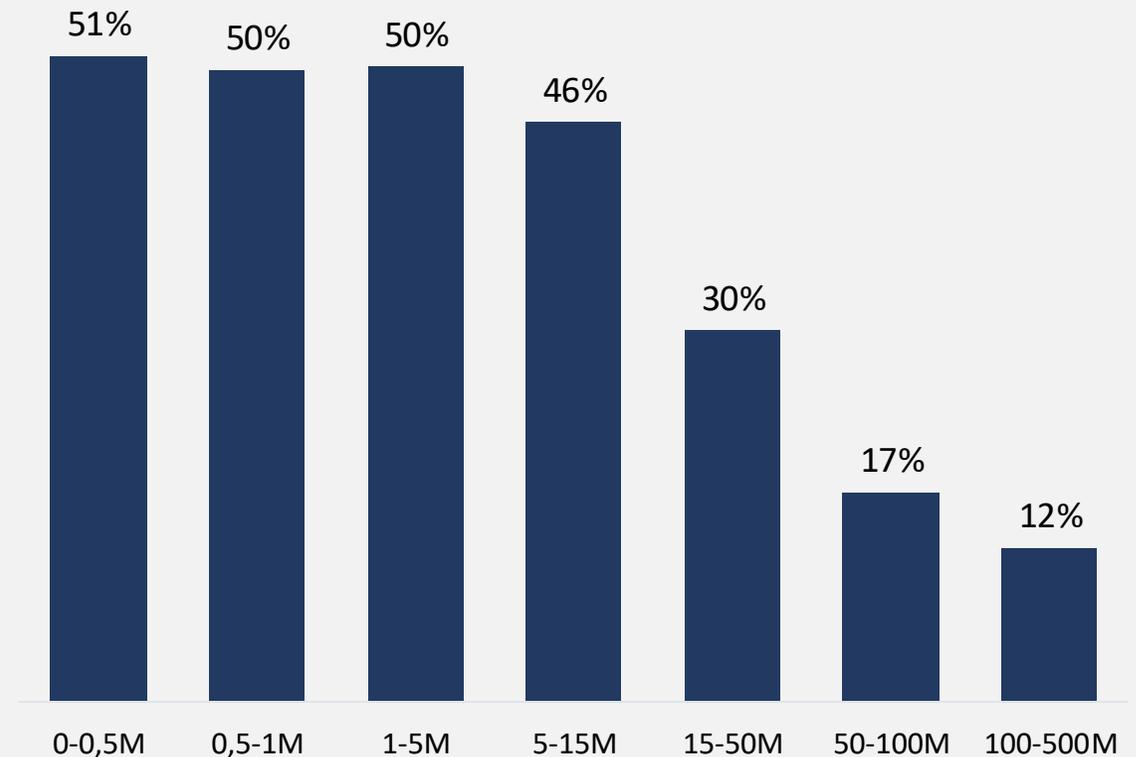
Total contributions into pensions funds in Iceland in 2023 amounted to ISK 254 billion. Of this total, 57% was paid by men and 43% by women.

52% of people receiving a pension in 2023 were women. Men received 56% of the total amount paid and women 44%.

Women's share of total assets in Lífeyrisauki is around 42% and has increased little in recent years. The share of women aged 19–30 has increased the most, by about 3% since 2019

There is little difference in payments into Lífeyrisauki by gender. However, the difference in the amount people own is substantial. In the ISK 0-15 million bracket, the numbers are very similar between genders, but the proportion of women decreases as assets increase. There is only one woman in the ISK 100-500 million category.

The share owned by women in the total assets of Lífeyrisauki in 2023



ASSET MGMT AT PENSION FUNDS

Asset management at Iceland's ten largest pension funds

Management positions today



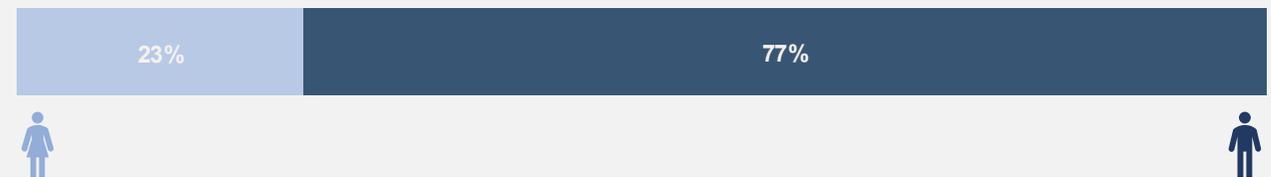
Management positions 10 years ago



% of pension fund assets under management today by gender



% of pension fund assets under management 10 years ago by gender



RESEARCH INTO PENSIONS



2023

A survey conducted by Gallup in 2023 on pensions revealed that women generally consider themselves to have poorer knowledge of their own pension affairs than men. According to the results, 44% of women believe they have limited knowledge of their pensions, compared to 34% of men.



24%

Research shows a clear difference in pension rights by gender. On average, men receive 24% higher pensions than women. The difference is roughly the same across all age groups.

According to a study by Talnakönnun, there is an entire generation between the genders when examining the point at which a significant portion of each group has sufficient pension income to no longer rely on payments from the Social Insurance Administration upon retirement.

**The first generation of men to reach this milestone was born in 1958.
The first generation of women to reach the same milestone was born in 1984**



Insurance

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VÖRÐUR

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Positive to see that the proportion of women and men is more or less equal when it comes to personal insurance from Vörður.

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However, women generally receive lower benefits from personal insurance policies on average, although the difference is less than 10%.

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Men in cohabiting relationships are generally more likely to have insurance policies registered in their name. However, women in cohabiting relationships are more likely to have child insurance registered in their name.

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It's interesting to compare single women with single men; single women are more likely to buy better insurance for the home than single men.



Survey by SSF



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SURVEY BY FINANCE ICELAND

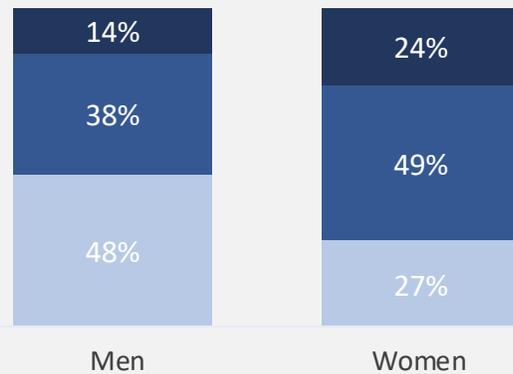
Survey by Finance Iceland (SFF) on financial literacy in Iceland

At the end of 2023, Finance Iceland in partnership with Gallup carried out a survey on financial literacy in Iceland. Respondents were split fairly equally between men and women. Respondents were asked to answer five questions of financial terms.

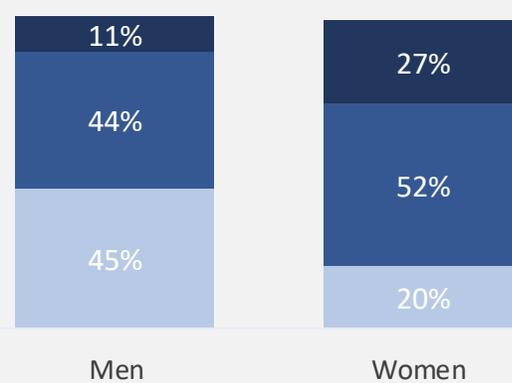
The survey revealed a significant difference between the genders in terms of their knowledge of financial terms.

Total financial score by gender and age

Aged 40 or above



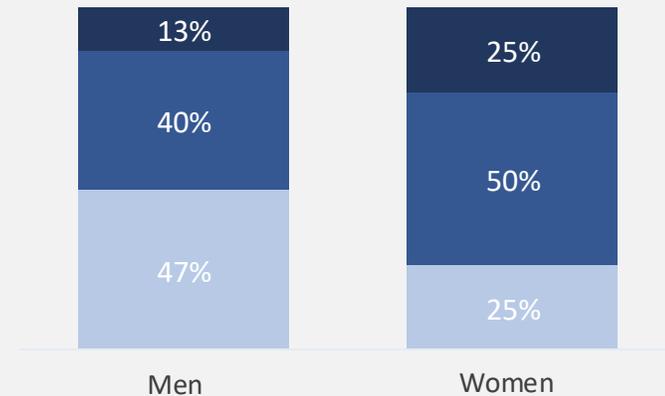
Aged 39 or below



■ High (4 or 5 right answers)
■ Average (2 or 3 right answers)
■ Low (0 or 1 right answer)

■ High (4 or 5 right answers)
■ Average (2 or 3 right answers)
■ Low (0 or 1 right answer)

Total financial score by gender



■ High (4 or 5 right answers)
■ Average (2 or 3 right answers)
■ Low (0 or 1 right answer)

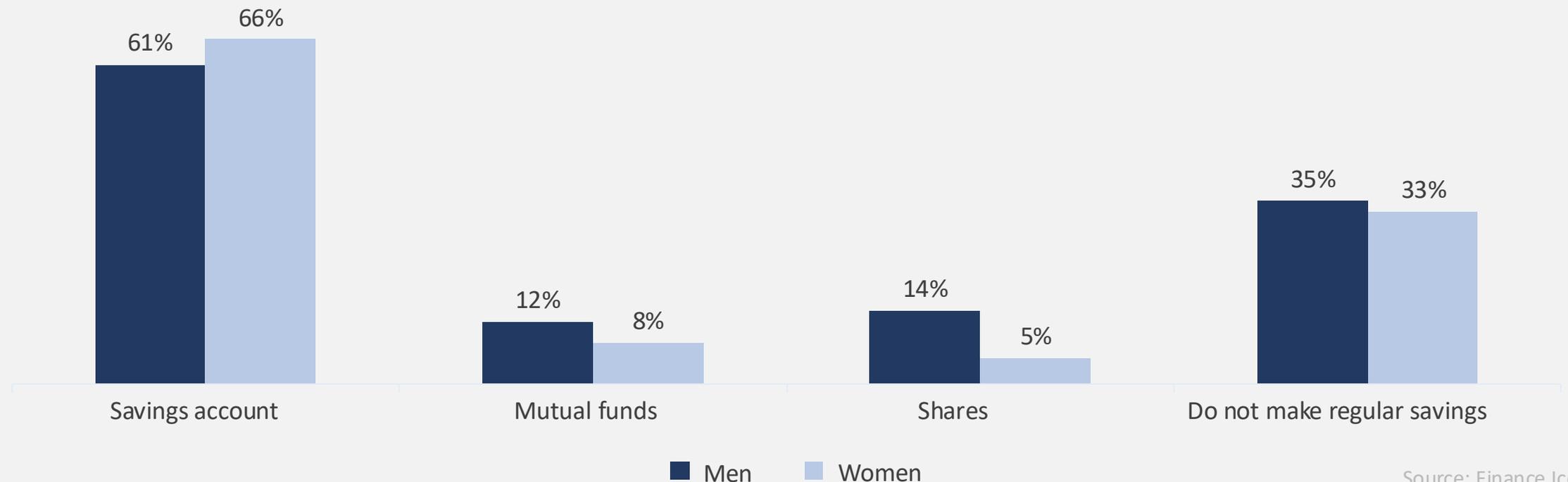
Source: Finance Iceland

SAVINGS

Survey by Finance Iceland (SFF) on financial literacy in Iceland

According to a survey by Finance Iceland, the proportion of people who save monthly is similar between men and women. Notably, women are more likely to save in a savings account. Women are less likely than men to save in mutual funds or by investing in shares.

People who are considered to have a high financial score in the Finance Iceland survey are more likely to regularly save in mutual funds or by purchasing stocks than individuals with a low financial score.





Companies



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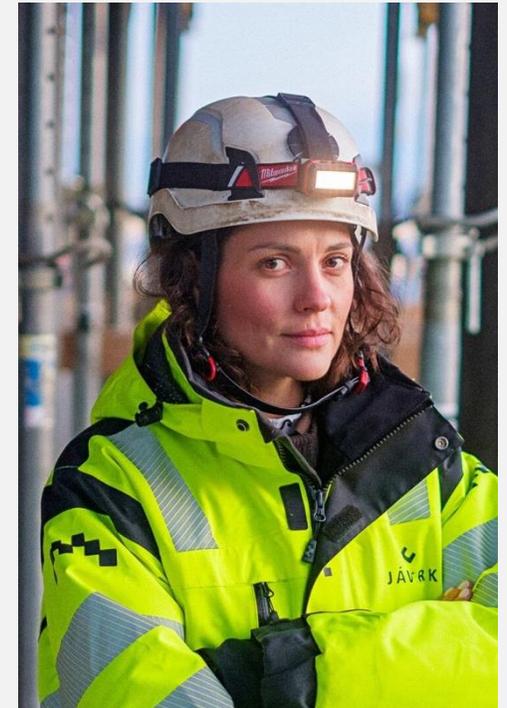
GENDER RATIO OF FOUNDERS OF COMPANIES

Between 2010-2024, approximately 31,300 companies were founded by private individuals (excluding holding companies). Almost 59% of these companies were solely started by men, while 18% were solely set up by women. 23% of companies were founded by men and women.

Men represent 69% of all founders of companies, or 38,200 of 55,600 founders during the period.

The percentage of women has been 30-33% since 2010.

The highest proportion of companies with at least one women founder is in retail and service companies, approx. 55%. The figure is below 50% in other sectors, lowest in building and construction, or around 21%.



BANKRUPTICES OF NEWLY ESTABLISHED COMPANIES

Of a total of 31,300 newly established companies during the period 2010-2024, 4,050 have gone bankrupt.

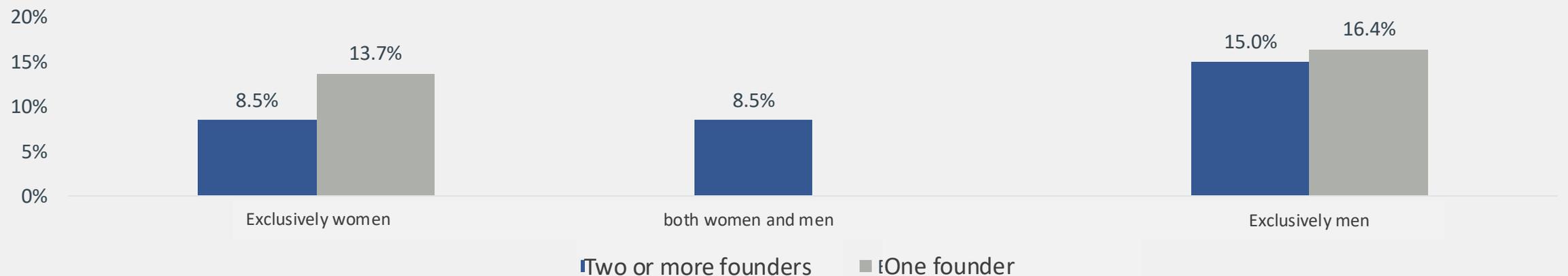
Gender of founders appears to be significant when it comes to bankruptcy. The proportion of companies that have gone bankrupt by the gender of the founders is as follows:

- 15% of companies founded exclusively by men
- 8.5% of companies founded exclusively by women
- 8.5% of companies founded by both women and men

Companies founded by one woman are less likely to go bankrupt than companies founded by one man:

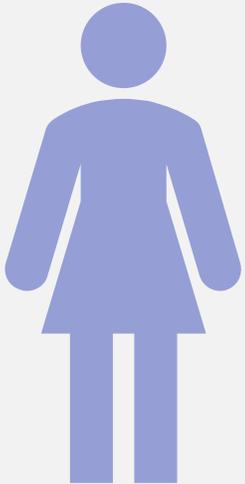
13.7% versus 16.4%

Percentage of companies that have gone bankrupt by gender composition of the founders

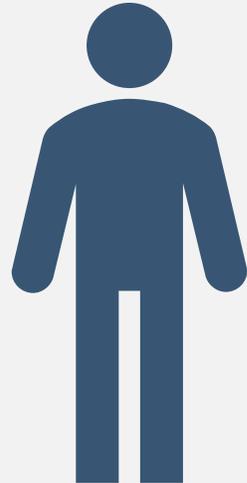


24% OF MANAGING DIRECTORS ARE WOMEN

24% MANAGING DIRECTORS IN ICELAND ARE WOMEN



24%



76%

POSITIVE TREND

There has been a positive development in the proportion of women holding the position of managing director in Icelandic business. In 2010, women represented 20% of company managing directors in Iceland according to the corporate registry, but today the proportion is 24%. However, the changes are slow, as the proportion of women has only increased by 4 percentage points since 2010

AGE OF MDs

Men are, on average, slightly older than women when they become managing directors. Men are on average 44.6 years old when they take on the role of managing director, while women are on average 43.4 years old.

Female managing directors are, on average, older in more sectors despite the average age of men being higher when looking at all companies regardless of industry.

The average age is generally highest in the fisheries sector (48.3 years) and lowest in specialist work (41.4 years).

CEOs OF LISTED COMPANIES IN ICELAND

Four CEOs of Nasdaq Iceland listed companies are women



4 FEMALE CEOs

Four women are CEOs of Nasdaq Iceland listed companies. Between 2016 and 2021 not a single woman managed a listed company in Iceland. Today four women manage listed companies, compared with 29 men.

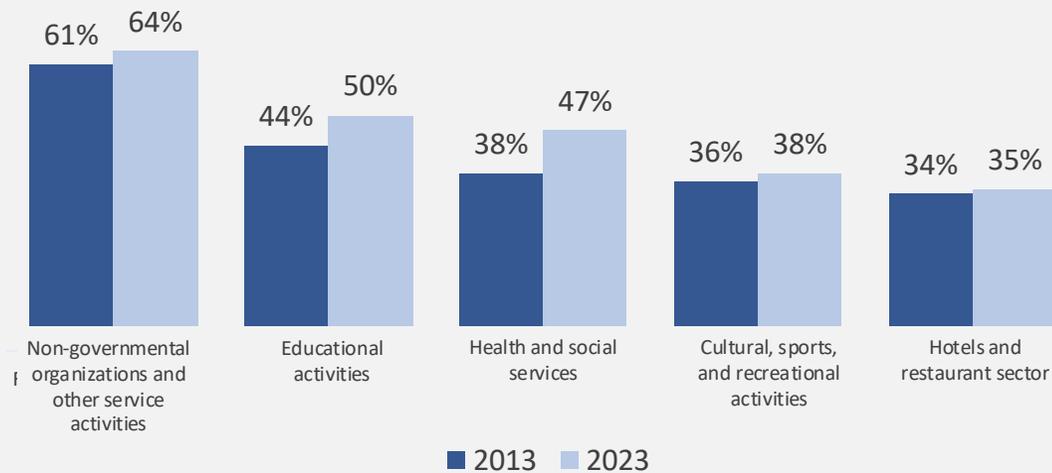
MANAGING DIRECTORS

The proportion of working men and women is currently fairly equal (47% women and 53% men). Among day-to-day managers in the business sector, however, the gender ratios are much more unequal.

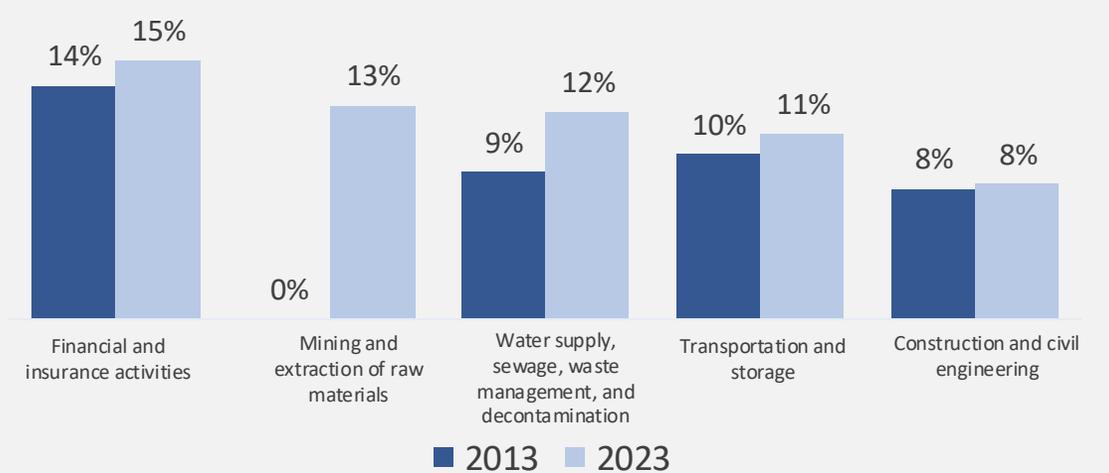
The highest ratio of female managing directors is in sectors where women make up a large part of the workforce. These sectors tend to require a high number of workers.

In capital intensive sectors, the vast majority of managing directors are men.

Industries with the highest proportion of women in position of managing director



Industries with the highest proportion of women in position of managing director

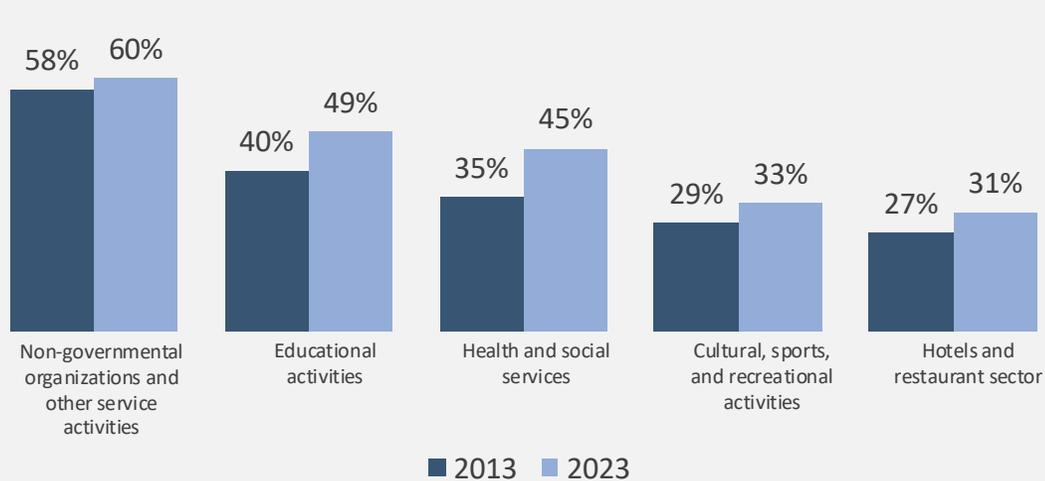


BOARD MEMBERS

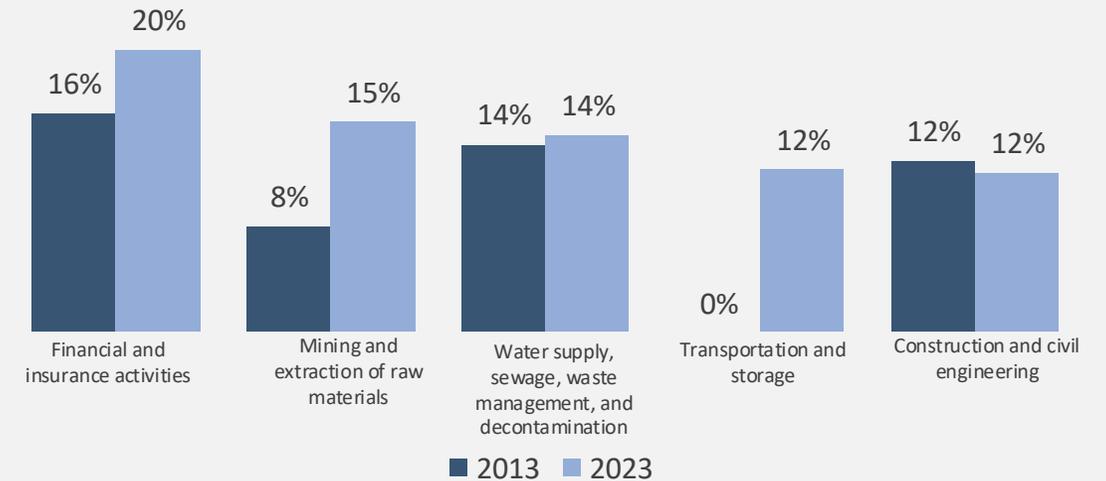
In 2023, there was a total of 17,691 board members. One in four chairpersons are women. This ratio has remained fairly constant in the last ten years.

The percentage of women chairpersons has been broadly similar to that of women managing directors. The ratio increased by just two percentage points between 2010 and 2023.

Industries with the highest proportion of women in position of board chairperson



Industries with the lowest proportion of women in position of board chairperson



27% CHAIRPERSONS ARE WOMEN

27% of corporate chairpersons are women

GENDER QUOTA ACT

In 2010, legislation was passed in Iceland introducing gender quotas for company boards with more than 50 employees. The law states that in boards with three members, both genders must be represented, and in boards with more than three members, the proportion of each gender must not be lower than 40%

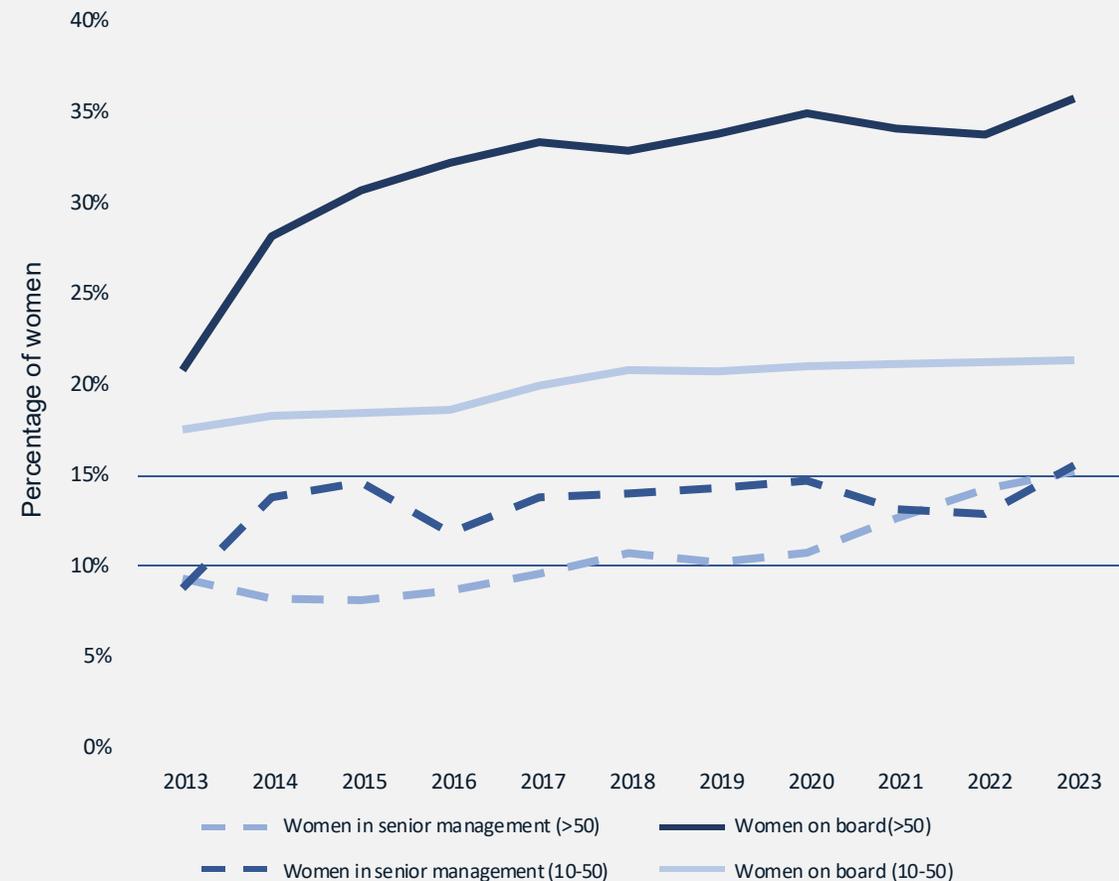
35% OF BOARD DIRECTORS ARE WOMEN

Since this law was enacted, the proportion of women on the boards of companies covered by the legislation has increased by 15%, and women now make up 35% of board members in these companies. The reason the proportion is not 40%, as the law stipulates, is that many boards have either one or three members.

INCREASE IN WOMEN BOARD MEMBERS

It is interesting to see that as the number of female board members has increased, the number of female managing directors has grown from 10% to 15% in the same period.

Change in proportion of women



Source: Creditinfo



Women Invest

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2024

Women Invest

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Excellent progress has been made since we launched the initiative a year ago, and the response has exceeded our brightest expectations. In 2024, we held 45 events across the country – in Reykjavík, Mosfellsbær, Borgarnes, Vestmannaeyjar, Hafnarfjörður, Ísafjörður, Akureyri, Egilsstaðir, and Selfoss. Around 4,000 women attended these events.

At the beginning of the year, we focused on the basics of investing, but as the year progressed, we added more events, such as lectures on how to start a business and further learning on investing, where pension funds were among the topics highlighted.

REGIONS AND TOPICS

Women Invest

Finance and investment – foundation course

Finance and investment - continuation

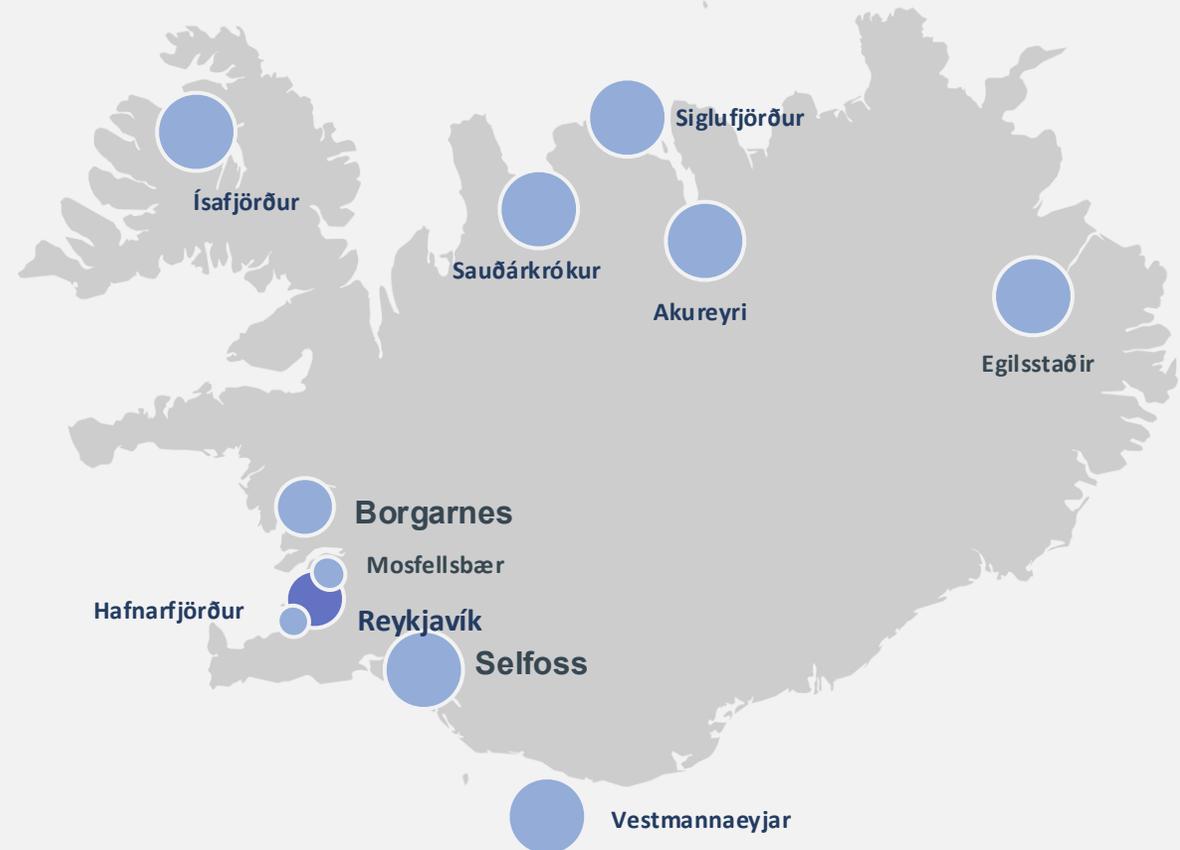
Shares, bonds and the economy

How do I start a company?

Tax return

Pension funds

Insurance



“I don’t think we’ve ever held a series of events that has been this well attended. The results are already starting to show in our statistics – we’re seeing a proportionally greater increase in the use of diverse investment services among women than men. Things are beginning to change.”

- Benedikt Gíslason, CEO of Arion Bank



LITTLE THINGS MAKE BIG THINGS HAPPEN

As discussed above, we have seen tangible progress in investment by women since the initiative was launched.

- Number of fund transactions by women has increased by 11%, compared with 6% for men.
- Number of individual women trading in funds has increased by 19%, compared with 11% for men.
- Number of individual women with fund subscriptions has increased by 19%, compared with 7% for men.
- Women's total assets in custody portfolios has increased by 8.5%, compared with 2.9% for men.
- Number of women owning custody portfolio has increased by 0.5% and is now 41%.

But there is still room for improvement. For example, women's share of listed shares Nasdaq Iceland remains unchanged, or 30%, compared with 70% for men.

WE ARE JUST GETTING STARTED

We thank you for the wonderful response during the first year of the initiative and look forward to continuing to meet you, share our experience and knowledge, and thereby contribute to greater gender equality in the financial market.



Women Invest
Be part of it!

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