

# more than just a job.

recruiting women in the  
manufacturing,  
production and  
warehouse industries



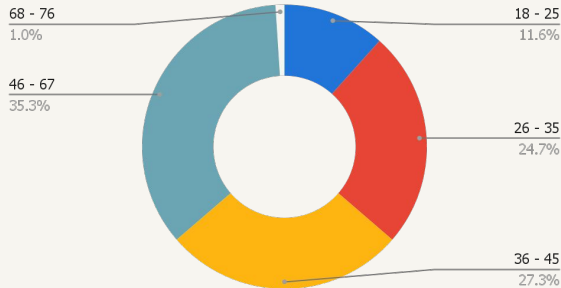
# our research.

As recruitment shortages in the manufacturing sector continue to hit the headlines, Randstad has surveyed over 6,000 workers from across the UK to find out what's really important to them in the workplace. Almost 700 of these respondents worked in manufacturing, warehousing or production roles.

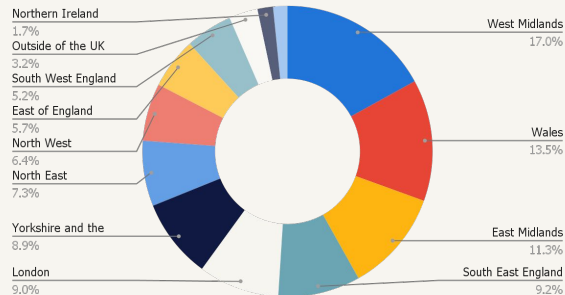
With the demand for talent at an all time high, business leaders in the manufacturing, production and warehouse industries are looking to drive change and enable a more inclusive, diverse and gender equal workforce. **Women currently make up just a quarter (26%) of the manufacturing workforce** (ONS, 2021) and there remains a pressing need for a commitment to gender diversity to attract more women into the industry, in turn combatting worker shortages. In this report we examine what it will take for businesses to both attract and retain workers over the coming years.

## demographics.

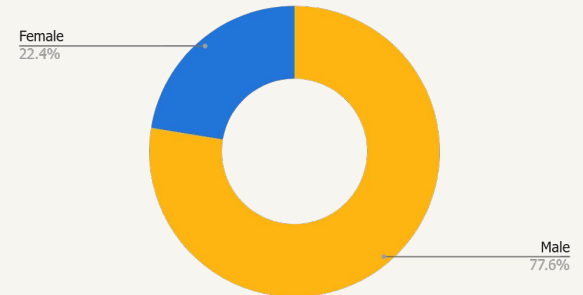
Age Breakdown



Location Breakdown



Gender Breakdown\*



\*we also offered non binary and prefer not to say as options but no respondents selected these.



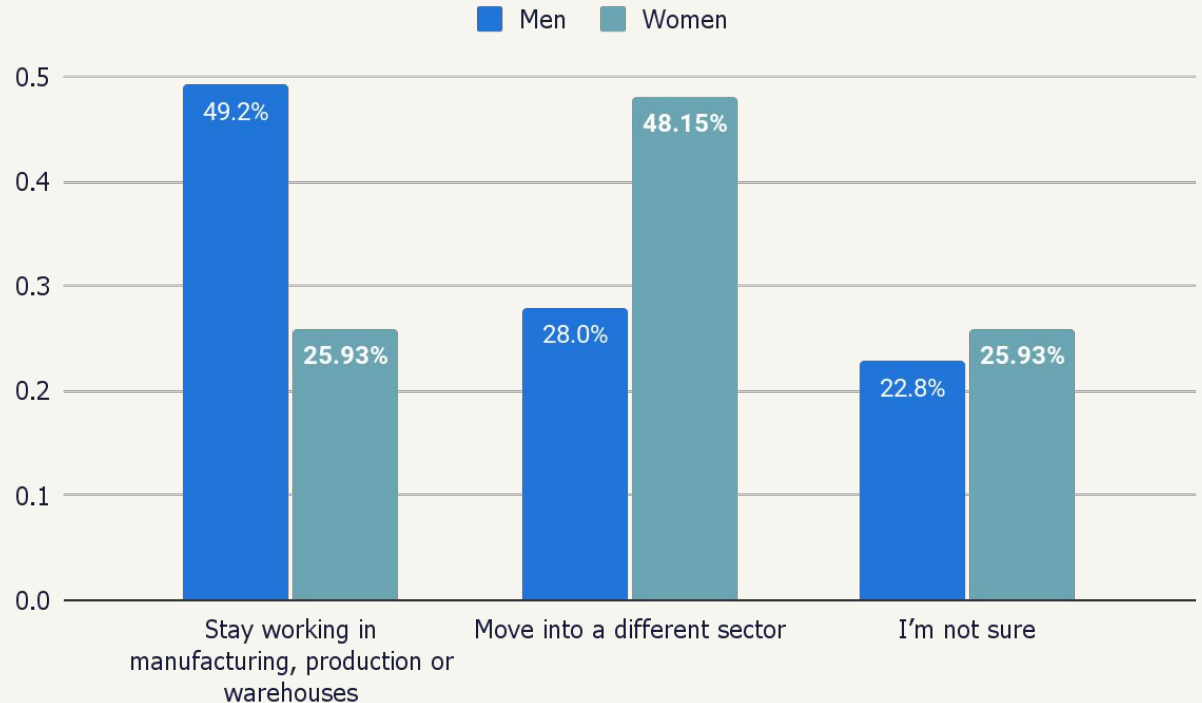
# only a quarter of women want to stay working in the manufacturing, production or warehouse industries.

We asked respondents about their intention to leave their current industry in the next five years.

Almost half of women working in manufacturing, production or warehouse industries are looking to move into a different sector in the next five years with only a quarter being sure they want to stay.

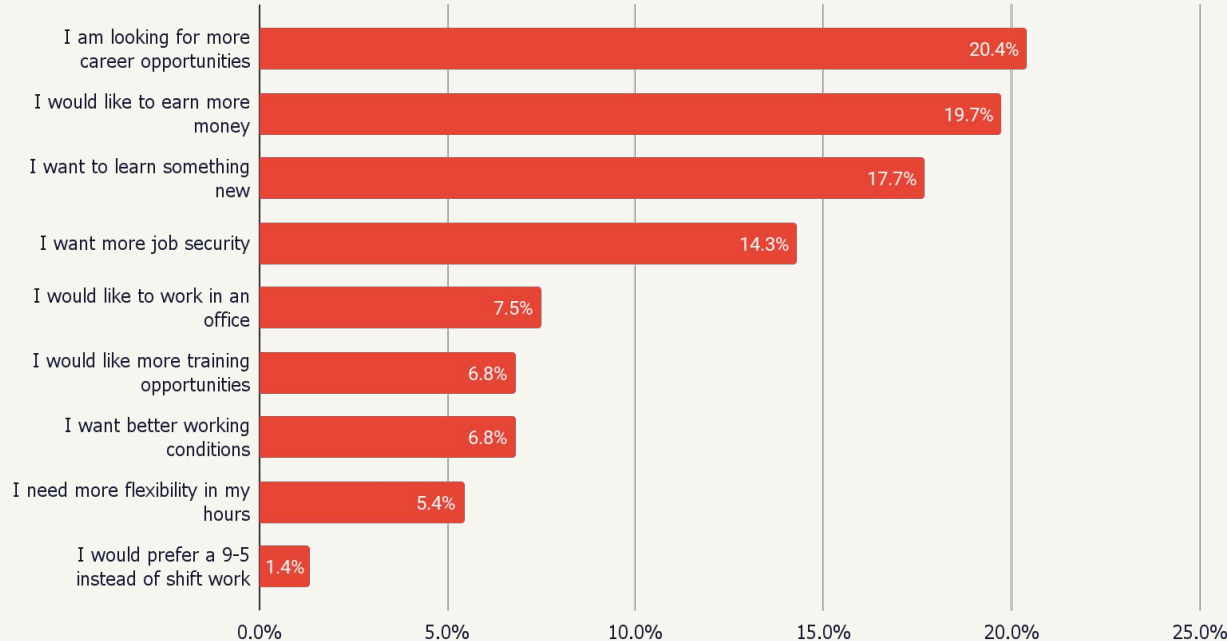
It is evident that companies in these sectors are not currently providing an environment that is attractive to women.

We'll examine these needs and what companies can do to address them in greater detail in the rest of this report.



# why are women exiting this workforce?

What are the top three reasons that make you want to move sector?



To tackle these retention issues, we need to understand why women want to leave the manufacturing, production and warehouse industries.

The top three reasons throw progression, earning potential and fulfilment into the spotlight. It is evident that women are far less likely than men to believe that the manufacturing sectors can offer them these benefits and workplaces should consider how they could address this gap.

Women were also found to be more likely than men to value job security and flexible working hours. This could go some way to explain why a sector that offers temporary and shift work is finding it so difficult to attract and retain women.



# a question of pay.

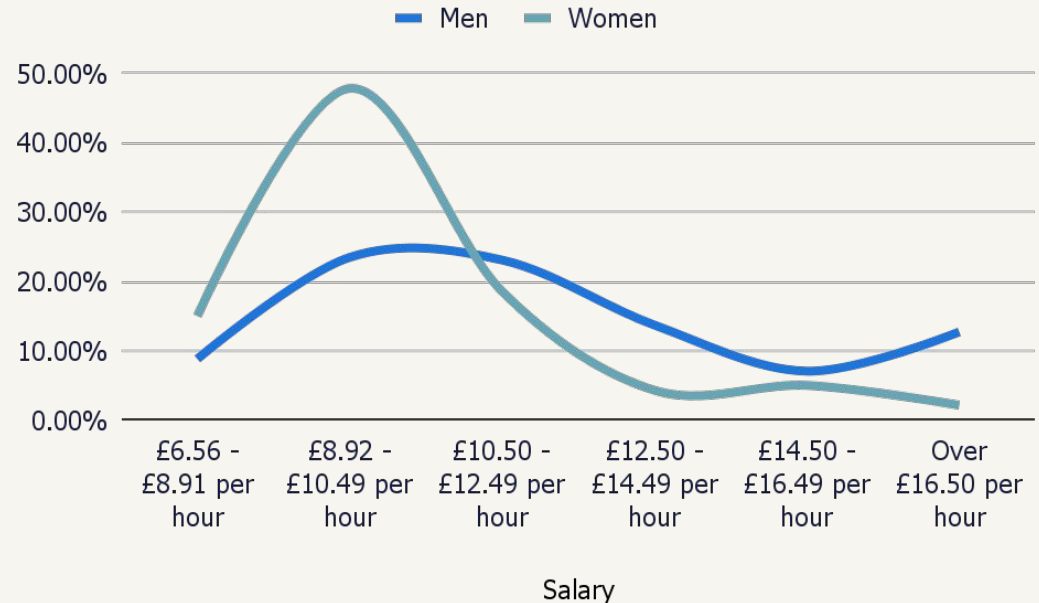
The Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported a 16.3% pay gap for the manufacturing sector in 2020-21.

Our own research found that women's pay rates are most likely to land between £8.91 and £10.49 an hour, whilst men are more likely to earn higher salary bands.\*

Our findings on the previous page revealed earning more money to be the second most important reason that would encourage women to look for a new job.

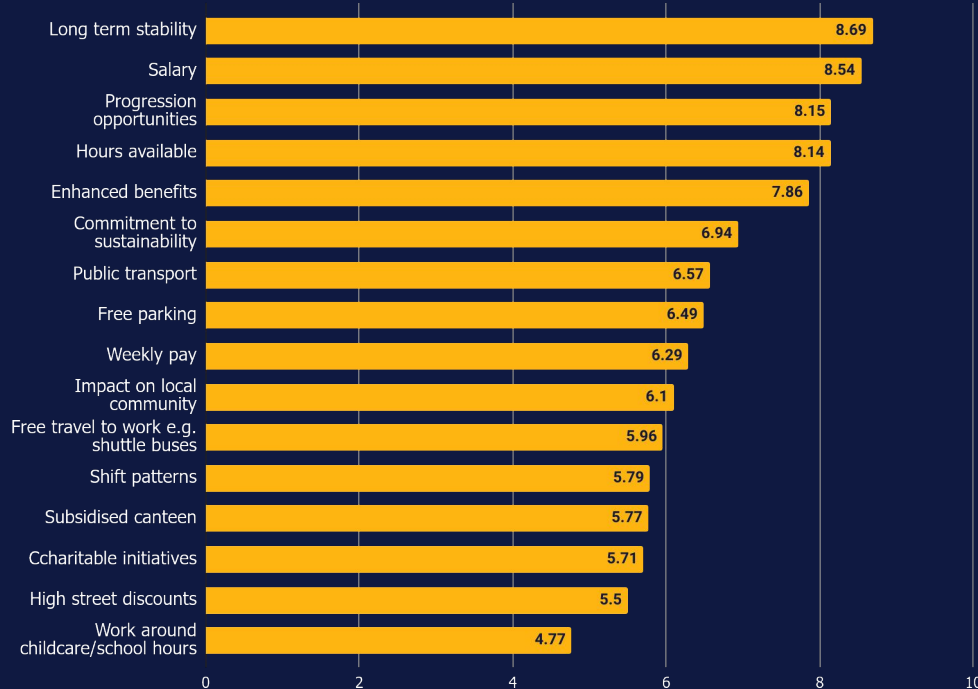
Companies must ensure their workers are paid fairly for women to be able to see manufacturing as a long term and sustainable career option that can support them and their families through rising living costs.

\*These findings are reflective of a cross-section of responses from women working in manufacturing in 2021, as opposed to women being paid for roles managed by Randstad.



# long term stability tops the charts.

If you were looking for a new job, how important are the following factors in influencing your decision to apply?



Progression opportunities were found to be more important to women than men, demonstrating that work really is “more than just a job.” A sense of growth and achievement will have far reaching benefits.

The graph to the left shows how women rated a range of factors on a scale from one to ten, identifying what is most important to them when they apply for jobs.

Long term stability was consistently rated higher than salary across all genders and ages, highlighting that permanent opportunities are important to candidates and must be mentioned in job descriptions if they are available. The importance of salary in influencing application decisions is particularly relevant when considering the gender pay gap that exists in the manufacturing sector.

Whilst men and women rated many of these factors similarly, there were some key differences which will be explored in further detail on the next page.

# travel to work is identified as a pressing concern for women in manufacturing.

We examined the factors with the largest importance rating disparity between men and women. Travel appears to be a key issue for women, with public transport and shuttle bus services rated as much more important than they were by men, perhaps reflective of the [Department for Transport's 2020 Vehicle Licensing Statistics report](#) which revealed that **only 35% of registered car owners are female.**

Women rated sustainability and the organisation's impact on the local community as a more important job application influence than men, and an organisation's charitable initiatives also saw a significant difference between the genders. These findings are supported by Randstad's recent [Belonging Book](#) research which found 65% of women would turn down a job if the company's values didn't reflect their own personal principles.

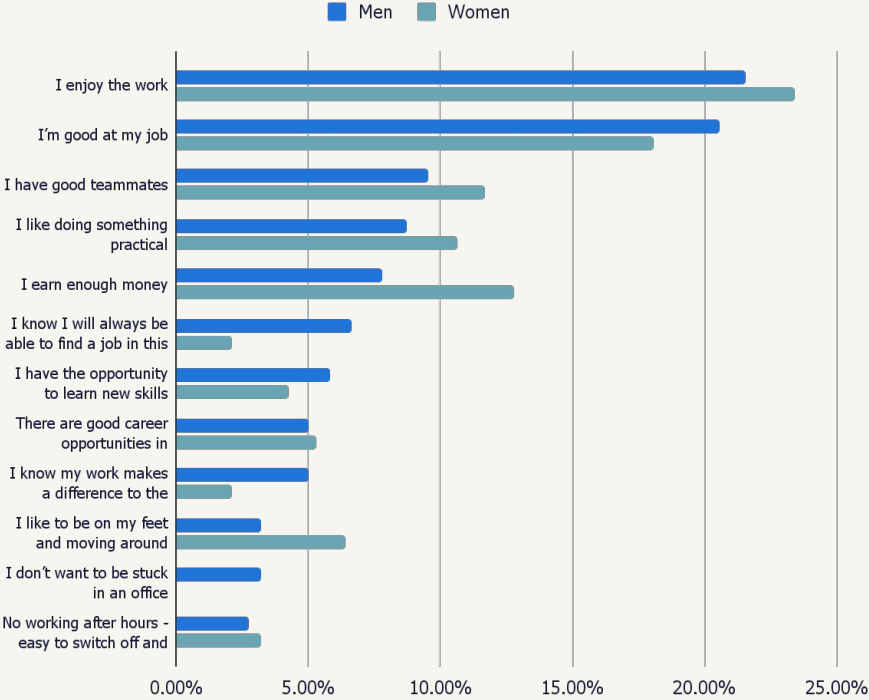


The 5 factors that men and women rated most differently.



# what makes women choose to stay in manufacturing workplaces?

What are your top three reasons for staying in this sector?



Respondents who said they wanted to stay in their current sector were asked to select their top three reasons for doing so.

Although "I earn enough money" looks high and therefore controversial to what we've already seen in this report, when the data is filtered by women earning under £10.49, this choice drops from over 20% to just 6%. This further highlights the need to ensure women are getting the pay they need to live comfortably.

Research by CV library in 2019 showed that 64% of men would ask for a pay rise, compared to just 43% of women. Companies who want to welcome women to their workforce should not wait for retention to cause problems before they ensure women are paid the same as the men in similar positions.

Employers should also note key differences around having good team mates, the benefit of being on your feet and moving around, and enjoying doing something practical.



# in conclusion.

Randstad's research highlights that women in the manufacturing, production and warehouse sectors are far more likely to be looking to move industry than their male colleagues. As companies struggle to recruit in the wake of Covid-19 and Brexit, they must make sure they are focusing their attraction and retention efforts where they will make the most impact, and this means understanding the needs of a diverse workforce.

Alleviating concerns around career advancement, progression, earning potential and long term stability will be critical for organisations who want to improve the inclusivity of their workforce.

Threatening retention challenges emphasise the need for a change in culture and preventive recruitment strategies. Randstad's research helps employers make data led decisions with a human touch.

# takeaway actions.

- ❑ Highlight progression opportunities in job descriptions.
- ❑ Ensure both men and women are promoted equally and recognise their potential to increase their salary.
- ❑ Highlight your organisation's sustainable initiatives, community impact and charitable giving.
- ❑ Host social and team building events so your colleagues get to know each other.
- ❑ If your company is difficult to get to using public transport, consider a shuttle bus or car pooling schemes.
- ❑ Ensure current employees are first in line for learning new skills when it is needed and share success stories.
- ❑ Offer flexible working options such as childcare hours.
- ❑ Consider offering more stability through temp to perm opportunities, longer contracts or guaranteed hours.

# working with randstad.

In this fast moving and rapidly changing environment, organisations will need a flexible workforce that can scale up fast. For this they need to consider how attractive they are to a generation that will continue to shape the UK workforce for years to come. This further emphasises the need for HR managers to collect, manage and analyse data on their workforce, the labour market and new HR tech. These are subjects that Randstad will be exploring more on our Workforce Insights blog in the coming months.



To discuss any of this research with the Randstad Inhouse Services team please get in touch using the details below:

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## references.

[Pinsent Masons - The Gender Pay Gap in Manufacturing](#)

[gov.uk - Vehicle Licensing Statistics 2020](#)

[CV Library - Women are less likely to negotiate pay than men](#)

[ONS - workforce jobs by industry 2021](#)

## further reading.

[Randstad - The Belonging Book 2021](#)

[More than just a job - spotlight on generation Z in the manufacturing industry](#)



# randstad

# human forward

Randstad is the global leader in the HR services industry. We support people and organisations in realising their true potential by combining the power of today's technology with our passion for people. We call it Human Forward. In 2020, we helped nearly two million candidates find a meaningful job with more than 236,000 clients.

Randstad is active in 38 markets around the world and has a top-three position in almost half of these. Randstad was founded in 1960 and is headquartered in Diemen, the Netherlands. Randstad N.V. is listed on the NYSE Euronext.

