

Inequality from the first to last day of work



(8 March 2023) On International Women's Day – 8 March – women across Europe are standing up for equality and economic independence.

Workers in France took to the streets on 7 March in protest against the proposed pension reform that even the government itself admits unfairly penalises women. Despite numerous laws, women's salaries are still 25% lower on average than men's in 2023. Involuntary part-time work, professional segregation, the glass ceiling, career breaks and unequal compensation policies act as barriers to any policies which aim to increase salaries for women.

The discrimination and professional inequalities suffered by working women throughout their careers don't just continue into retirement – they get worse. In France, women receive direct pensions that are 40% lower than those of men, twice as many work until the age of 67, and 40% of them retire with an incomplete pension.

Women are overrepresented in sectors where workers are underpaid. Women dominated sectors - like health, care, and cleaning – continue to face chronic staff shortages. Even if these sectors are low paid, undervalued and often with poor working conditions, they are the ones that keep our societies going, as the pandemic has shown. The importance of these jobs must be recognised.

The gender pay gap must be closed. Women workers must be appreciated and celebrated for the value they bring to society through their work. Women deserve equal pay for work of equal value.

EPSU will fight for equality not only on International Women's Day, but every day until the fight is won.

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