

# Recommendations towards closing the gender pay gap

Adopted on 30 September 2014

**TUNED** (Trade Union's National and European Delegation) - **EUPAE** (European Public Administration Employers)

## **Background**

In 2011, the Social Dialogue Committee for Central Government Administrations (SDC CGA)<sup>1</sup> adopted a statement Towards equal pay that calls for, amongst others, wage transparency as a prerequisite for closing the gender pay gap.

At European level, a first obstacle to pay transparency is the absence of comparative gendered pay data for Central Government Administrations (CGA). Whilst Eurostat provides data on the gender pay gap based on average gross hourly earnings, these do not automatically cover public administrations and exclude the sector of CGA. Until this shortcoming has been rectified by the Commission, as a first step, the SDC CGA endeavoured to collect gendered pay data to try and assess the size of the pay gap with a view to identify the causes and remedies in a sector where women account for at least 40% of the workforce.

Data collection started in the course of 2012 on the basis of a commonly agreed set of indicators such as age, grade, education, department/ ministry. It was assumed that the data would be available from the government's statistics offices, in line with national and EU legislation and collective agreements (e.g. the 2002 revised directive encourages the drawing up of equality plans through social dialogue).

However, the exercise of data collection has proven to be more difficult than planned, is yet to be completed and contains a number of inconsistencies. The difficulties stem partly from mismatches between the agreed indicators and available statistics at national level, and, as stated in one case, the impact of budgetary austerity on national statistics regarding equal

pay.

Despite its limitations, the information collected provides a first baseline against which to seek and measure improvements and develop policy accordingly that best suits the sector; it is also timely in view of the Commission Recommendation of 7 March last that seeks to strengthen the principle of equal pay between men and women through transparency<sup>2</sup>. The information received by the SDC CGA was analysed by the Labour Research Department (UK research institute), whose initial findings were presented and discussed at the SDC CGA 8 October 2013 meeting. A more general presentation on gender equality in the public sector and the crisis by UK expert, Jill Rubbery, also fed into the discussions of the Committee in the course of 2012.

Accordingly, the following recommendations are agreed for implementation by national social partners within their respective social dialogue structures in the next 15 months:

for the full paper (EN/FR):

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