



EPSU Resolution on ACHIEVING EQUAL PAY
As discussed at the Collective Bargaining Conference 13-14 May 2002

EPSU urges each of its affiliates to agree to set as a priority objective the aim of reducing the gender pay gap within the next five years. In discussions at national, sectoral or local level, on devising the most effective wage bargaining system to meet the objective of reducing the gender pay gap, affiliates should consider the following elements:

- adopt gender-mainstreaming policies;
- ensure that effective bargaining strategies give sufficient attention to employment conditions in female-dominated jobs;
- ensure proportional representation in collective bargaining committees and negotiating teams;
- identify and monitor the gender wage gap: reliable statistics on wage differentials by gender and sector, occupation, working time;
- review job evaluation/ work value schemes to identify and eliminate discriminating grading schemes;
- tackle occupational as well as sector segregation;
- bargain for rises in minimum wages/ low paid grades;
- promote family-friendly working time policies and promote improved child care facilities;
- ensure that part-time workers enjoy the same rights as full-time workers and not be discriminated against;
- review indirect discrimination due to in kind benefits as well as overtime benefits;
- improve training opportunities and career development for women;
- provide training in pay equity for collective bargaining negotiating teams;
- lobby for increased funding for public services.

Affiliates should strive to achieve a reduction of between 2% to 5% in the gender pay gap over the period.

A first evaluation of this resolution will be made at the next Collective Bargaining Conference in 2003. In preparation for this evaluation at the Conference, each EPSU affiliate will be invited to submit intermediary reports on the targets set and the methods adopted to achieve them.



Background information to the draft resolution on achieving equal pay

The labour market is highly gendered. This can be seen from the continuing gender pay gap that remains a major barrier to equality in working life. Women are regularly lower paid, they often have limited employment and career prospects, and their work is under-valued. Despite substantial revisions to European and Member States legislation, and the EU Directive on Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value, the gender wage gap remains wide. Furthermore, there is increasing evidence that wage discrimination is growing under the policies of decentralisation and deregulation.

A new emphasis on achieving pay equity has been given by some recent ETUC and EPSU resolutions and action plans:

- ETUC's guideline emphasises the following aspect of collective bargaining, in particular for the forthcoming period: "combating low pay and securing equal pay between men and women for equal work and work of equal value." (*ETUC Recommendation on the coordination of collective bargaining, December 2000*)

MULTI-ANNUAL PROGRAMME: KEY OBJECTIVES + IMPLEMENTATION & EVALUATION TIMETABLE

- ETUC's resolution on the coordination of collective bargaining (2001) states: "the ETUC invites all affiliated organisations, taking into account national and/or sectoral situations and paying particular attention to improving the quality of part-time work and employment conditions in low-paid sectors, to adopt in 2002 a multi-annual work programme setting out key objectives for collective bargaining initiatives aimed at reducing the pay gap between women and men, with a timetable for their implementation and evaluation."

SETTING A % TARGET + HOW TO ACHIEVE IT

- Achieving equal pay is one of the 3 strategic objectives of the ETUC Equality Plan 1999. This one has been reviewed in October 2001, and the following recommendation has been made: "The ETUC should adopt the goal of reducing the gender pay gap by 2 – 5% within a fixed number of years (but not by reducing men's pay). Each country and sector should state how this might be done."

SETTING NATIONAL TARGETS + FINDING NATIONAL/LOCAL SOLUTIONS

- Based on EPSU's Policy Statement on Gender Equality (adopted at the General Assembly in April 2000), the Executive Committee has adopted the EPSU Gender Equality Action Plan 2001-2004.

One of the priorities is:

- Mainstreaming of collective bargaining to achieve equal pay. This will primarily involve input to and participation in the ETUC and PSI campaigns on Equal pay for work of equal value.

An important objective of EPSU's Action Plan is to ensure that all affiliated unions adopt equal pay policies. The EPSU Gender Equality Committee has endorsed the Executive Committee's recommendation that affiliates set national targets of reducing the gender wage gap and find national or local solutions to achieve them.

Recommendations on how to achieve pay equity, examples of good practice and various tools are presented in the PSI 2002 report "Pay Equity in the Public Services" and in PSI resource package "Pay Equity Now! Pay Equity Resource Package".