



Reducing the gender pay gap – implementing the equal pay resolutions from the 2009 EPSU Congress

The gender pay gap was discussed at each of the last meetings of the Local and Regional Government (LRG), National and European Administration (NEA) and Health and Social Services (HSS) Committees. At the LRG and NEA meetings the discussion was in the context of developing a Pay Checklist that focuses on the various elements that make up a fair pay system. In the HSS meeting the debate was partly a follow-up to the Committee's response to the report on the gender pay gap in the care sector by Jane Pillinger.

The issue of pay equality is also a priority in EPSU's work plan over the next five years following the two resolutions agreed at the Congress last June. The resolutions not only committed EPSU and its affiliates to work towards closing the gender pay gap by five percentage points (<http://www.epsu.org/a/5534>) but also to investigate how they could deal with the fact that sectors and occupations dominated by women tend to have lower pay (for both men and women) than those where men form the majority of workers (<http://www.epsu.org/a/5543>).

The three standing committee meetings agreed that it is important to monitor progress on equal pay and in particular to establish the extent of the pay gap that each affiliate is facing in its relevant sector, occupation or workplace – whichever of these is most relevant.

We need affiliates to answer the following questions in order to establish the current state of affairs and enable us to evaluate progress towards pay equality by the end of this year and then annually up to the next EPSU Congress in 2014.

A report on the responses will be made to each standing committee at their meetings in October 2010 and an overview of all responses will be discussed at EPSU's collective bargaining conference in Brussels on 7-8 December 2010.

Note on the gender pay gap

Pay equality means more than ensuring men and women are on the same pay rates for doing the same job (although it is still very important!). The gender pay gap is normally measured by comparing the average pay of men and women taking account of hours worked. The figures can be taken across a sector or in a particular workplace. The relevant figures may depend upon the extent to which affiliates negotiate at sectoral and/or local level.

The gender pay gap is a general indicator of the scale of inequality between men and women. The question then is to analyse more precisely the reasons for pay inequality between men and women. For example, age, seniority, length of service and levels of education and training can all contribute to the fact that on women's average pay is less than men's average pay. The response can include a range of measures such as improving training and promotion opportunities for women and dealing with the impact of time off for maternity leave and child care on women's pay and prospects for advancement.



Gender pay gap questions for affiliates

Do you have data on women's and men's pay for your sector, workplace, occupation or relevant bargaining group?

If you don't have these figures, can you explain why not?
(For example, has the employer refused to provide them?)

What is the gender pay gap in your sector/workplace now and do you have figures to show the trend over the last five years?
(The gender pay gap is the difference between the average earnings of men and women)

Have you had negotiations with the employer to address any of the factors that contribute to the gender pay gap, for example:

- Concentration of women in low-paid jobs
- Extent to which women are stuck in part-time jobs but want full-time employment / an increase in hours
- Transparency of pay systems and elements of the pay structure (bonuses and performance-related pay, for example) that might lead to discrimination against women
- Higher pay increases for the lowest paid and/or occupations that are female-dominated
- Training and promotion opportunities for women
- Impact of maternity and parental leave on women's pay and prospects
- Availability of childcare or help with costs of caring for children or dependant adults
- Impact of outsourcing
- Flexibility of working hours

What have been the results?

Please send your responses to nsalson@epsu.org and rpond@epsu.org

Please reply by 1 September 2010 so that we can prepare reports to the standing committee meetings in October.

Many thanks