Equal Pay?
Time to close the gap!

WHAT IS THE GENDER PAY GAP?
It is the difference between the average hourly earnings of working men and working women.
Women earn 14.1% less than men per hour in the EU.

IN OTHER WORDS
Women earn 86 euro cents for every €1 men earn
Women work almost 2 months for FREE each year, compared to men

The Coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the urgency of addressing the gender pay gap as women are overrepresented in frontline, low-paid, and precarious jobs such as carers for the elderly and children, nurses, cleaning staff, shop assistants and teachers. A gender-sensitive recovery must address the gender pay gap by promoting equal share of care responsibilities, breaking the glass ceiling, and better valorising women’s skills, efforts and responsibilities.
Even though the situation is improving, progress is extremely slow in the European Union with the gap only decreasing by 1% over the last 7 years.

The gender pay gap is not an indicator of the overall labour inequalities between women and men. In countries where the female employment rate is low, the pay gap tends to be lower than average. A high pay gap is usually characteristic of a labour market in which women are more concentrated in a restricted number of sectors and/or professions, or in which a significant proportion of women work part-time.

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FACT CHECK

“More women work part-time, so they should earn less.”

WRONG
Working fewer hours a week means you should take home less pay per month, NOT less pay per hour.

“Women earn less because they choose lower earning jobs.”

WRONG
Women tend to earn less per hour than men for the same job whether it is a highly-skilled profession like a doctor or nurse, or a lower-skilled job such as a salesperson. The gender pay gap exists across our economy and in all sectors and occupations.

“Men are better educated, so they should earn more”.

WRONG
Today almost 60% of graduates in the EU are women.

Because equality is at the root of our values as Europeans and women have the right to be treated as equal to men in all areas of society.

Less than 6.9% of top companies’ CEOs are women.

Women do more unpaid work and men more paid work.

Because being valued fairly regardless of gender can improve motivation, efficiency, and ultimately our overall productivity.

More career breaks

Fewer paid hours worked

Extra unpaid work

TAKING CAREER BREAKS

Women take more time off from work to care for others. This is why the EU has adopted the Work-Life Balance Directive. In this Directive we introduced 10 days of non-transferable parental leave for each paid paternity leave and 2 months paid, 2 months for FREE after returning from maternity leave,

Know your rights, ask for pay transparency, and demand fairness.

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More unpaid work

More career breaks

Solving the gender pay gap is also good business. Businesses with gender-balanced workforces are more innovative, and ultimately our overall productivity.

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FACING THE GLASS CEILING

Today almost 60% of graduates in the EU are women.

Women: 17.2%

Men: 15.8%

At-risk-of-poverty rates

EU average

Pension gap between men and women

WHY SHOULD WE FIX IT?

Women earn 14.1% less than men per hour in the EU.

Gender pay gap

WHAT IS THE GENDER PAY GAP?

FACT CHECK

2014 EU28 data

Time to close the gap!

IN OTHER WORDS

86 euro cents

Women earn carried out by men, even when the same level of experience for every €1 or sales, offer lower wages than occupations predominantly better educated, so they are overrepresented. Women tend to earn less, and are more likely to occupy less well paid roles and with otherwise the same observable characteristics. In some countries, occupations predominantly carried out by women, such as teaching, are overrepresented, while in others men.

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WHAT IS THE GENDER PAY GAP?
SO, WHAT’S REALLY BEHIND THE GENDER PAY GAP?

Fewer promotions,
Fewer opportunities

EXTRA UNPAID WORK
Women do more unpaid work and men more paid work.

- Paid work: 33 hours per week for women, 39 for men.
- Hours caring for adults: 6 hours per week for women, 5 for men.
- Hours doing housework: 17 hours per week for women, 11 for men.

TAKING CAREER BREAKS TO CARE FOR OTHERS
Women take more time off from work to care for others. This is why the EU has adopted the Work-Life Balance Directive.

In this Directive we introduced 10 days paid paternity leave and 2 months paid, non-transferable parental leave for each of the parents, promoting a more equal sharing of childcare responsibilities.

FACING THE GLASS CEILING AND WORKING IN A SEGREGATED LABOUR MARKET
Women don’t make it to the top. Less than 6.9% of top companies’ CEDs are women.

Also, in some sectors, women tend to be overrepresented, while in others men are overrepresented. Women tend to earn less, and are more likely to occupy less well paid roles than men, even if working in the same sector and with otherwise the same observable characteristics. In some countries, occupations predominantly carried out by women, such as teaching or sales, offer lower wages than occupations predominantly carried out by men, even when the same level of experience and education is needed.

DISCRIMINATION
Discrimination at work is illegal across the EU.

Being paid less than male colleagues just because you are a woman, or being demoted after returning from maternity leave, are forms of discrimination.

European law protects you against them.

Know your rights, ask for pay transparency, and demand fairness.

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WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN FOR WOMEN?

Less money now

-39.6% annual earnings
2014 EU28 data

Gender pay gap

Fewer paid hours worked
More career breaks

Less money later

Less money to save and invest

EU average pension gap between men and women.

At-risk-of-poverty rates
Men: 15.8%
Women: 17.2%
2019 EU27 data

WHY SHOULD WE FIX IT?

1. Because equality is at the root of our values as Europeans and women have the right to be treated as equal to men in all areas of society.

2. Because ensuring equal pay also makes sure that, we attract the best talents, whatever their gender, in our organisations and companies.

3. Because being valued fairly regardless of gender can improve motivation, efficiency, and ultimately our overall productivity.

4. Because women are part of our economy. Paying them fairly will have a positive economic impact.

Visuals: Marie Jacobi, Gabrielle Schlipf, Gabriele Heinzel

Helena Dalli,
Commissioner for Equality

Justice and Consumers
Directorate-General