



ICTU Joint Women's Committee Seminar

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The Gender Pay Gap

- Women outperform males in education
- Women take up more places at third level
- Women have taken up three out of every five jobs created in the Irish economy since 1998

and yet

- there is both a gender gap in term of pay and employment as women progress through the world of work.



The Gender Pay Gap – Reasons

- Inequalities and discreet discrimination relating to parenthood status
- Ageism faced by those returning to work after a period out of the labour force,
- Domestic responsibilities in caring for children,
- Older persons and work in the home
- Difficult transitions from social welfare to work,
- Weak bargaining power for workers in particular sectors
- High concentrations of women in particular sectors
- Wide wage dispersion across workers in the Irish labour market.



The Gender Pay Gap Costs

- Reduces returns to government investment into initial education
- Higher welfare costs
- Reduced productivity and skills in the economy.
- For women themselves,
 - lower earnings,
 - little recognition of home based work
 - insufficient state supports to take up paid work erodes self-confidence and reduces wellbeing.



Structural Obstacles

- ▶ 50% of the wage gap is attributable to the occupation and the sector that women work in.
- ▶ Other reasons
 - ▶ labour force experience
 - ▶ difference due to union recognition.

However most studies of the gender pay gap find that 40% of the gap is due to unexplained factors.

Equality doesn't mean Justice



This is Equality



This is Justice



The UK House of Commons Select Committee on Women and Equalities

- Flexibility by default
- The introduction of dedicated paternity leave (or second parent) of 3 months at replacement rate of 90% normal earnings.
- The importance of moving towards gender neutral parental policies
- Move away from so – called “mommy” focused policies
 - Such as the offer of part time work (which typically institutionalizes low pay)
 - Such as prolonged periods of leave (which after a period of roughly two years, will negatively affect future lifetime earnings potential).



Activist Audit

- 33% Participation Rule (40% by 2020)
- Sectors 77% Compliant
- Divisions 80% Compliant
- NEC – exceeds the rule – 36% participation

Training/Development plans and special measures



Staff Audit

- Establish the facts on gaps in the organisation
- To create a gender equity plan

Trade Union to lead by example for other employers



SIPTU Proposals

- Strengthen Collective bargaining provisions and ensure compliance
- Continued and gradual increase of the NMW to a real living income
- “Flexibility by default”
- Gender neutral parental policies
- Childcare supports
- Apprenticeships for older workers re-entering the workforce



SIPTU Proposals

- Recognition of prior learning and acquired experience
- Smoothen transitions from welfare to full time work
- Targets- Government needs to lead by example with middle and senior management target. EU Commission have 40% target for middle and senior management by 2019.
- Mandatory gender pay reporting by companies of all sizes (following on from EU Commission recommendations in 2014).
- Gender proofing the budget.

Thank you for listening

