

GENDER & PAY GAP

AUTUMN 2002



BRIDGE THAT GAP

Prepare your daughter for working life.

Give her less pocket money than your son.



After 30 years of equal pay law, women's wages are still 18% lower than men's. www.eoc.org.uk



EOC ADVERTISEMENT

PREPARE YOUR DAUGHTER FOR WORKING LIFE, GIVE HER LESS POCKET MONEY THAN YOUR SON

Despite the fact that women now make up 44% of the workforce: The average hourly earnings of industrial workers in 2001 was 12.76 euro for males and 7.22 euro for females (26% difference)

While rates of pay and figures for promotion vary across industries/professions, a gender pay gap exists virtually across the board.

Welcome to the first issue of the GAP newsletter from Congress. The purpose of this newsletter is to inform officials and activists of the aims of the GAP programme and of issues of relevance in your work. We hope that this newsletter, which will be published quarterly, will also act as a forum for your ideas or queries. Also please let us know of any notable successes that you have had on the equality agenda.

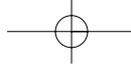
The GAP Programme runs to 2004 and its aims are: to reduce the gender pay gap, to develop tools for gender neutral job evaluation, equality audits, gender proofing and gender impact assessment. Further, to develop the capacity to strengthen equality policy development and service delivery in unions and to provide guidelines for upskilling and training women in the workplace.

Congress is also in a running a project on Family Friendly initiatives and is a partner in Workway, an initiative to promote employment of people with disabilities.

SO WHY?

There are four main reasons for the gender pay gap:

1. The undervaluing of the types of work that women do, especially 'caring' jobs. For instance a man who lifts boxes may be paid more than a woman who lifts people.
2. Women tend to be concentrated in occupations such as services, which are less well paid than male dominated jobs. Interestingly when jobs shift from being predominantly female to predominantly male, pay often improves. Further, even in mainly female occupations, men still hold more of the senior management posts.
3. The fact that usually women more than men bear most family responsibility, leading to shorter working hours or time out of the workforce.
4. Despite the existence of legislation, there is still discrimination in recruitment, training, pensions and pay systems. While this might not be immediately obvious, it may be that the classification of jobs gives rise to inequalities in pay systems, rather than overt discrimination.



LEGISLATION

The 1998 Employment Equality Act widened protection against discrimination to cover 9 grounds, however gender is still a significant cause of discrimination, despite over thirty years of equality legislation. Obviously as women make up a large percentage of the workforce, the potential for discrimination is higher than for other grounds. It should also be remembered that women might experience discrimination on more than one ground, for instance gender/family status and/or disability.

The 1998 legislation also widened the scope for comparing jobs and for positive action measures.

Remember, legislation also covers collective agreements!

Section 9 of the 1998 Act renders any provision of a collective agreement that is discriminatory null and void. Officials must therefore have regard to this when negotiating new agreements or reviewing existing ones.

In a recent survey on the labour force, the percentage of females at senior level was as follows:

Chief executives, less than	8%
Senior managers	21%
Middle managers less than	30%

What is the trade union movement doing about these issues?

Trade unions have been endeavouring to ensure equal treatment in the workplace, however there are a number of reasons why this issue is not fully resolved.

- ◆ Firstly, most of the more obvious cases of discrimination have been dealt with already; therefore cases are less clear-cut, more difficult to prove, and more time consuming.
- ◆ Further, as proportionately fewer women are involved in negotiating in the workplace, equality issues (which are still perceived as women's issues in many workplaces) are not to the forefront and often slip off the agenda.

Despite the difficulties experienced, equality has always been central to the trade union agenda and the Congress GAP Project aims to look at practical ways of ensuring that it continues to be pursued.

THE TOOLS

There will be a number of tools which will form a manual for representatives and give practical guidance on the issues that may affect equality in the work place, for example a tool on job evaluation:

Job evaluation: Many officials may have seen job evaluation systems used to determine pay rates, however these need to be scrutinized to ensure that there are no hidden biases in them. The first tool will address the issue of job evaluation free of gender bias. We hope to work closely with IBEC on this to ensure wide acceptance by employers of the methodology.

These tools, which are nearing completion, will be piloted in a number of employments in the autumn and then will be more widely circulated.

Future initiatives under the Project

A number of other initiatives aimed at building confidence amongst women to compete for promotions, and to avail of training and education will form part of the project, which will also look at ways of increasing women's participation locally and nationally within the trade union movement.

The GAP programme will also run a number of day courses on the Equal Pay Agenda; also for those who wish to study this as a certificate course, the following new programme has been developed.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY CERTIFICATE COURSE

The Education and Training Department of Congress, in partnership with Dublin City University has developed a one-year certificate course in equality studies. This is a modular course, with a mixture of distance education and attendance at DCU campus. The course is aimed at officials, tutors and activists who currently deal with equality issues at enterprise or union level. Further details can be obtained from

*Deirdre Keogh, ICTU.
Email deirdre.keogh@ictu.ie*

**Any queries/comments to:
Mags O' Brien, GAP Project Manager,
ICTU, 31-32 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.
Phone: 01 889 7707
Email: mags.obrien@ictu.ie**



GAP STEERING COMMITTEE:

Brendan Archbold MANDATE, Joan Carmichael ICTU, Rosheen Callender SIPTU, Annette Dolan TUI, Fiona Dunne ESOA, Marion Geoghegan IBOA, Rosaleen Glacken CPSU, Noirin Greene Amicus MSF, Ann Hope ICTU(NI), Clare Keane GPMU, Eamon Devoy TEEU, Paddy Keating IMPACT, Esther Lynch ICTU, Tom McKeivitt PSEU, Fiona Marshall ATGWU, Deirbhile Nic Craith INTO, Margaret Nolan ICTU, Valerie Sweeney NUJ, Carol Shaffer CWU, Clare Treacy INO, Frank Vaughan ICTU & Mags O'Brien (Project Manager)

