

Online

Gender Pay Gap Stuck at 16% Worldwide: New ITUC Report



Brussels, 6 March 2008: On the eve of International Women's Day, a new ITUC [report, the Global Gender Pay Gap](#) reveals that on average, women are paid 16% less than their male counterparts. The report includes detailed analysis of statistics from official sources in 63 countries around the world*. Data from an online salary survey covering more than 400,000 workers in 12 countries is also included in the new study**. "Despite decades of anti-discrimination legislation and changes in company rhetoric, the pay packets of women, whether they are in New York or Shanghai, are still significantly thinner than those of men. The positive news for workers around the world is that trade unions are succeeding in bridging the pay divide, as the data in this report confirms. Through collective bargaining, women and men get a better and more equal deal," said ITUC President Sharan Burrow.

Some of the more disturbing features of the report include:

more educated women often find themselves on the wrong side of an even bigger pay gap compared to men with similar education; international competition due to globalisation appears in some cases to be narrowing the gap, but this is due more to downward pressure on men's wages than to increased income for women; while the gap is slowly narrowing in some countries, it is not changing or even increasing in others; and, information on incomes is not available for hundreds of millions of people in informal and unprotected work, mainly in developing countries, leaving a massive deficit in the global knowledge base.

Trade unions in a number of countries are also calling into question the basis for national pay statistics, pointing to larger real pay gaps between men and women than the official figures show. Differences in the criteria for collecting and analysing data, or the absence of jobs such as domestic work in the statistics, can lead to under-estimation of the real gap.

“Through our campaigns for equality and other workers rights, unions are playing a vital role in educating and informing workers about gender pay issues, in the face of strong resistance from some governments and employers. We are resolved to continue and strengthen this work, to ensure that women in all corners of the world, employed across different industries and performing hundreds of different jobs, can achieve equal pay”, said Burrow.

The ITUC’s new worldwide [“Decent Work, Decent Life for Women”](#) campaign, is being launched on International Women’s Day, 8 March, with events being organised by 67 national trade union centres from 52 countries across the globe. Gender equality will also be a major feature of the World Day for Decent Work, a global trade union initiative taking place on 7 October 2008.

*The report was prepared for the ITUC by the UK-based pay specialists [Incomes Data Services](#).

**The online survey results are from the [WageIndicator Foundation](#), which works together with trade unions, universities and media partners. WageIndicator currently operates in 35 countries and has recently launched a programme to expand to 75 countries.

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6/03/2008

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