



A Toolkit for Gender Equality in Practice - Initiative

European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)

Various initiatives on gender equality

Summary of the initiative

EPSU is the European Federation of Public Service Unions, representing more than 265 unions and 8 million public service workers. Over 65% of public service workers in the European Union are women who deserve recognition, in terms of the role they play, and in terms of the pay they receive.

Closing the gender pay gap and improving women's pay is a key issue to EPSU.

Specifically, EPSU calls for better EU legislation on equal pay and maternity protection and a right to paid parental leave and paid paternity leave. EPSU also seeks a compulsory equality clause in all public contracts to avoid deterioration of women's working conditions when services are outsourced. EPSU highlights the importance of introducing or increasing minimum wage levels and specific rises for low paid jobs/grades and campaign for part-timers' right to access/return to a full-time job. For the public sector, to earmark funds dedicated to closing the pay gap is also essential. The effectiveness of these measures have been analysed in a series of projects undertaken by EPSU to analyse the causes of gender pay gap. In 2013 a study "The gender pay gap in public services" was published and includes successful initiatives that have been put in place, often through collective bargaining, to eradicate pay discriminations between men and women in the public sector. EPSU also closely analysed, with the help of national members, the pervasive effects that austerity measures have had on the gender pay gap. A report was compiled by the Labour Research Department "Promoting trade union solutions to help close the gender pay gap in the public sector in Europe".

Women in decision making: in 2009 EPSU, with the support of the Swedish affiliate Vision (then SKTF), carried out a survey of women's representation in affiliates' decision-making bodies and other structures. This compared data from 2008 and 2000 to see to what extent the position of women had changed over that period. The survey findings were published in a report that was presented to the EPSU Executive Committee in November 2009, Women's representation in EPSU and affiliates. The organisation also introduced statutory changes which led to gender parity in most of EPSU decision-making bodies.

EPSU commitment on gender equality is ongoing. EPSU adopted two resolutions on gender equality at its last Congress 2009, and the unions is working towards an equal commitment for the upcoming Congress 2014. The General Work Plan 2010-2014 specifically tackles three areas of action:

1. Ensure gender balance in EPSU bodies and develop an action plan to improve women's representation, reaching targets defined in the EPSU Constitution in the Congress period;
2. Constitute a European Women's and Gender Equality Committee;
3. Develop a work programme (EU legislation, mainstreaming equality into EPSU policies and structures, gender pay gap).



Gender equality is also one of several issues planned for the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee. Training courses on equal pay e.g. gender-neutral job evaluation and equality plans were implemented by EPSU and its members. In 2007 CEMR and EPSU adopted joint guidelines to drawing gender equality action plans in local and regional government.

Priorities

Addressing gender roles, Promoting women in decision-making, Supporting work-life balance, Tackling the gender pay gap

Sector(s)

Public administration

Type

Social Partners

Country

EU Level

Model of social partnership

Unilateral (Trade Unions)

Launch date

2009 - 2013

Number of employees

>250

References

<http://eige.europa.eu/content/carola-fischbach-pyttel>

<http://www.epsu.org/a/3541>

This initiative was submitted by:

EPSU (ETUC)

Website

<http://www.epsu.org/>