

To Commissioner Helena Dalli
European Commission

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[Letter sent by e-mail]

Re: legislative initiative on gender pay transparency

Dear Commissioner Dalli,

I am contacting you about the important legislative initiative on gender pay transparency and especially on the importance of including provisions to guarantee that the information requirements support trade unions to bargain for 'work of equal value'.

Research undertaken by ETUC affiliates has shown that women doing jobs of equal value, based on the same levels of skills, education and physical effort to the jobs done by men are still being paid less despite over 45 years of EU equal pay legislation.

A comparison of wages in the manufacturing sector found that women producing white goods (a sector where the manufacturing workforce is predominantly women) are paid significantly less than men making cars even though both jobs require the same competencies.

The examples – provided by ETUC affiliate industriAll Europe - highlight how deep-seated bias about the value of jobs predominantly done by women continues to be the root cause of unfair and low pay for millions of workers, including the essential workers, cleaners and carers on the Covid frontline.

As you know, the ETUC is calling for the 'binding measures on gender pay transparency' to enable workers and trade unions to access information on criteria for deciding pay levels to help them negotiate equal pay for work of equal value and to provide for work of equal value comparator.

In doing so, the EU would be following in the footsteps of New Zealand's government who in November passed an amendment to the country's Equal Pay Act which ensures wages for women are "determined by reference to what men would be paid to do the same work abstracting from skills, responsibility, conditions and degrees of effort."

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Potential clauses were included in our 3,000-word model directive, published by the ETUC to provide inspiration to the European Commission on how the provisions can be achieved in practice.

Commissioner, we are urging you to deliver on the promise of a pay transparency directive that will ensure that men and women finally receive equal remuneration for work of equal value. This is a clear commitment guaranteed in the EU Treaties and explicitly stated in the European Pillar of Social Rights.

I look forward to your early and positive reply.

Yours sincerely,

A large rectangular grey box redacting the signature of the sender.Two lines of grey boxes redacting contact information, likely an email address and a phone number.

Annex: Model Directive