



Terminating the Income Inequality between Women and Men

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Agenda Item:

Terminating the income inequality between women and men

Committee Name:

UN Women

Message from Committee Directors

Dear delegates of the UN Women Committee,

I am honored to serve as the president chair of this committee and welcome each and every one of you to the ITUMUN 2023 conference. As the UN Women Committee, we have the important task of advocating for the rights and empowerment of women and girls around the world. It is a privilege to work towards such a meaningful and impactful cause, and I have no doubt that with your passion and dedication, we will be able to reach substantial solutions for the issues that we will be taking into hand during the sessions.

I look forward to engaging in thought-provoking discussions and coming up with innovative solutions to the challenges facing women and girls today. I encourage you to fully engage in the discussions and to be respectful and open-minded towards the perspectives of others. Remember that MUN is a place for respectful dialogue and the exchange of ideas, and try to use this opportunity to acquire more knowledge regarding the issue and discuss it with your peers.

Sincerely,

Shukria Malek Zada

Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to deliver with honor that I will be serving as the vice president chair of the UNWOMEN Committee. It is my deepest desire that each and every delegate will feel welcomed and comfortable throughout the whole ITUMUN'23 experience, especially in our committee.

We will be discussing an everyday life issue that shouldn't be an everyday life issue, However; I am confident that our committee will achieve to pace forward in a world that, sadly, struggles to do so.

I appreciate all the effort you put in and thank you in advance!

Tutku Çivi

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1.0 Introduction

Income inequality refers to the unequal distribution of income or wealth among individuals or groups. In many societies, women face significant income inequality compared to men. This can be due to a variety of factors, such as discrimination in the workplace, unequal access to education and job training, and societal expectations about gender roles. It is important to address income inequality between women and men in order to create a more equitable society and to ensure that all individuals have the opportunity to reach their full potential. This issue is caused by a number of economic, social and cultural factors and these factors can be examined in order to find concrete and substantial solutions. We must examine the root causes of gender-based income inequality and take a comprehensive approach to tackling this issue.

Income inequality between women and men can be seen as a crisis because it can have significant negative impacts on individuals, families, and societies. Women who face income inequality may struggle to provide for themselves and their families, which can lead to poverty and other negative outcomes. Income inequality can also perpetuate gender-based discrimination and reinforce societal expectations about gender roles, which can limit individuals' opportunities and autonomy. Addressing income inequality between women and men can be seen as a crucial part of addressing larger global crises such as poverty, social and economic inequality, and discrimination. By promoting gender equality and reducing income inequality, it is possible to create a more equitable and just society for all individuals.

1.1 UN Women:

UN Women is a United Nations organization that works to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. The organization was established in 2010 to accelerate progress on meeting the needs of women and girls around the world. UN Women works to support countries in achieving gender equality through a variety of means, including advocating for women's rights, supporting the development of national laws and policies that promote gender equality, and providing technical assistance to governments and civil society organizations.

UN Women focuses on a wide range of issues related to gender equality and the empowerment of women, including:

- Women's economic empowerment
- Women's political participation and leadership
- Women's rights
- Violence against women
- Women's health
- Education

2.0 Key Vocabulary:

WEF: The World Economic Forum

ILO: The International Labour Organization

EPIC: The Equal Pay International Coalition

NCPE: The National Committee on Pay Equity

IWRAW: The International Women's Rights Action Watch

HRW: The Women's Rights Division of Human Rights Watch

GNWF: The Global Network of Women's Funds

Gender Wage Gap: The difference in pay between men and women for doing the same job. It is often expressed as a percentage of men's earnings, with a higher percentage indicating a larger wage gap.

Pay transparency: The practice of making information about pay and compensation available to all employees within an organization.

Fair compensation: Refers to the idea that employees should be paid fairly for their work, based on the value of their contributions to the organization and the market rates for similar positions.

Gender pay gap by country: The difference in pay between men and women in different countries for doing the same job.

Gender pay gap by industry: The difference in pay between men and women in different industries for doing the same job.

3.0 Overview

On a global level, women earn 77 cents for every dollar earned by men, leading to a significant income gap over the course of a lifetime. Labor policies play a significant role in this gap, as women often face more difficulties in balancing paid work and family responsibilities. Inflexible work hours and limited parental leave can make it difficult for women to advance in their careers and may force them into part-time employment, which can result in limited access to social protections, particularly in old age. Moreover, many women find themselves in low-paid or informal jobs with few legal protections, while gendered occupational segregation reinforces the concentration of women in lower paid sectors and occupations. These structural inequalities are further perpetuated by gender stereotypes and discriminatory practices that serve to exclude women from certain jobs or prevent them from gaining promotions.

3.1 Historical Context

Income inequality between men and women has a long history and is a persistent issue in many societies around the world. In many cultures, women have traditionally been relegated to roles as homemakers and caregivers, while men have been the primary breadwinners. This has resulted in a gender-based division of labor that has often translated into unequal pay and economic opportunities for women. The wage gap between men and women has narrowed over time, but it persists in many countries. In the United States, for example, the gender pay gap has been a persistent issue for decades. In 2021, women working full-time, year-round in the US earned 82 cents for every dollar earned by men. The wage gap is even wider for women of color. For example, Black women in the US earned just 62 cents for every dollar earned by White men.

Efforts to address income inequality between men and women have a long history as well. The women's suffrage movement, which fought for women's right to vote, was a key step towards gender equality. More recently, the women's liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s helped to bring issues of gender equality and income inequality to the forefront of public discourse. Today, there are many organizations and advocacy groups working to address income inequality between men and women and promote gender equality.

3.2 Economic context

The Global Gender Gap Index is an annual report published by the World Economic Forum that measures gender equality across 146 countries. It analyzes four dimensions: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment. The report shows that in 2022, the global gender gap has been closed by 68.1%. At the current rate of progress, it will take 132 years to reach full parity, though this is an improvement from the 136 years estimated in 2021. The report also shows that the gender gap in the dimension of economic

participation and opportunity will take 151 years to close, while the gap in political empowerment will take 155 years to close. The gap in educational attainment will take 22 years to close, and the gap in health and survival is undefined as progress has stalled. The report also ranks countries based on their progress towards gender equality, with Iceland leading the rankings, followed by Finland, Norway, New Zealand, and Sweden (WEF).

This indicates that Nordic countries are leading the way in gender equality, and highlights the need for greater investment and attention in other countries to close this persistent gender gap. In addition, the report found that closing the gender gap has economic benefits for all countries, with the McKinsey Global Institute estimating that \$12 trillion would be added to the global GDP by 2025 if gender parity is achieved (McKinsey).

3.3 Causes of Income Inequality

- At the most basic level, no other reason other than gender.
- Working women often face a "pregnancy penalty". The pregnancy penalty refers to the negative impact that pregnancy and motherhood can have on women's employment and income. Many women face discrimination in the workplace due to their pregnancy or because they are perceived as being less committed to their work because they have caregiving responsibilities. This can result in women being passed over for promotions, receiving lower pay, or even being fired due to their pregnancy or motherhood status. The pregnancy penalty can also take the form of a lack of workplace accommodations for pregnant women or mothers. For example, women may not have access to suitable breaks for breastfeeding or pumping milk, or they may be denied requests for flexible work arrangements to allow them to care for their children. These types of barriers can make it difficult for women to balance work and family responsibilities, which can in turn impact their income and career advancement.
- Discrimination: Discrimination in the workplace, both intentional and unconscious, can lead to women being paid less than men for the same work. Discrimination in the workplace can occur in many ways and can be based on a variety of factors, including gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, age, and disability.
- Occupational segregation: Women and men often work in different industries and occupations, with women being concentrated in lower-paying jobs.
- Lack of negotiation skills: Research has shown that women are less likely to negotiate for higher pay than men, which can contribute to the wage gap. Women may not be able to negotiate for higher salaries as men can, or that there may be a "glass ceiling" preventing them from climbing up in their organizations

- **Workplace policies:** Policies such as inflexible work hours and limited parental leave can make it more difficult for women to advance in their careers and may result in lower pay.
- **Education and training:** Women may have less access to education and training opportunities, which can limit their advancement in the workforce and result in lower pay.
- **Societal attitudes:** Stereotypes and societal attitudes about the roles of men and women can also contribute to the wage gap.

3.4 Gender Pay Gap by Reference Period, Country and Year

	<i>Country</i>	<i>Data from the latest year available</i>
<i>Gender pay gap as difference in hourly wage rates</i>	Albania	6.9 (2018)
	Armenia	21.6 (2019)
	Austria	18.9 (2020)
	Azerbaijan	38.8 (2019)
	Belarus	24.6 (2019)
	Belgium	5.3 (2020)
	Bulgaria	12.7 (2020)
	Canada	12.1 (2019)
	Czechia	16.4 (2020)
	Denmark	13.9 (2020)
	Estonia	21.1 (2020)

	Finland	16.7 (2020)
	France	15.8 (2020)
	Germany	18.3 (2020)
	Greece	10.4 (2018)
	Hungary	17.2 (2020)
	Iceland	13.0 (2020)
	Israel	15.9 (2018)
	Italy	4.2 (2020)

<i>Gender pay gap as difference in hourly wage rates</i>	Latvia	22.3 (2020)
	Lithuania	13.0 (2020)
	Luxembourg	11.3 (2018)
	Malta	10.0 (2020)
	Netherlands	14.2 (2020)
	Norway	13.4 (2020)
	Poland	4.5 (2020)
	Portugal	11.4 (2020)
	Romania	2.4 (2020)

	Russian Federation	23.1 (2013)
	Slovakia	15.8 (2020)
	Slovenia	3.1 (2020)
	Spain	9.4 (2020)
	Sweden	11.2 (2020)
	Switzerland	18.4 (2020)
	Turkiye	2.8 (2018)
	United Kingdom	19.8 (2018)
	United States	10.6 (2012)

**For source, please check Bibliography*

4.0 Organizations Involved

The International Labor Organization (ILO):

The ILO is a United Nations agency that works to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, and enhance social protection. It has a number of initiatives and programs focused on gender equality in the workplace, including efforts to close the gender wage gap.

The World Economic Forum (WEF):

The WEF is a nonprofit organization that focuses on global issues, including gender equality in the workplace. It has a number of initiatives and programs related to the gender wage gap, including the Global Gender Gap Report, which measures and ranks countries on their progress towards gender equality.

The Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC):

EPIC is a global network of organizations working to close the gender pay gap and promote gender equality in the workplace. It brings together governments, employers, and workers to share knowledge and best practices, and to advocate for policies and practices that support gender equality.

The International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAP):

IWRAP is a global network of organizations and individuals working to promote women's human rights. It has a number of programs and initiatives related to gender equality in the workplace, including efforts to close the gender wage gap.

The Global Network of Women's Funds (GNWF):

The GNWF is a network of women's funds and organizations that work to advance gender equality and the rights of women and girls. It serves as a global advocate for gender equality and the rights of women and girls, and works to raise awareness of issues affecting women and girls around the world.

5.0 Timeline of Events

Date of Event	Description of Event
June 10, 1963	In the United States, The federal <u>Equal Pay Act of 1963</u> made it illegal to pay women less simply based on gender.
2010-2020	Several measures have been introduced in the last decade with a positive effect on the gender pay gap in Chile. These include the expansion of childcare coverage to facilitate female employment, a reform to maternity leave extending it to 24 weeks and introducing the possibility to transfer part of this entitlement to fathers, the adoption of a Law on Gender Equality and the set-up of a Gender Equality Service

May 26, 2003	Rwanda's constitution of 2003 set out the principles of gender equality and elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and set out a policy of gender mainstreaming in all sectors. It also established that at least 30% of positions in decision-making bodies at national, regional, and local levels are held by women. To date, there are 53 policies and other enabling frameworks to support gender equality in access to resources, education, health, social and economic matters, and women's agency.
January 1, 2015	In 2015, Germany introduced a national minimum wage, which had a significant effect on boosting the wages of female workers who were disproportionately concentrated in low-paid jobs. This policy followed recent reforms to make paid parental leave more accessible to men and introduced a bonus if both parents made use of their leave entitlements, as well as reforms to enhance access to formal childcare services.
2017	Establishment of the Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC). Steering Committee members today include Canada, Egypt, Iceland, Jordan, New Zealand, Panama, South Africa, Switzerland, the International Organisation of Employers (IOE), and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)
January 1, 2018	In Iceland, As of January 2018, companies with 25 employees or more are now required to demonstrate that they pay male and female employees fairly without gender discrimination, or risk facing daily fines. Iceland became the first country in the world to introduce legislation requiring companies to prove that they pay men and women equally.

March 1. 2018	The French government announced plans to require companies with more than 50 employees to install software that checks their payroll systems for unjustified pay gaps. Companies would be required to publish information about their pay gaps online and if they fail to close these gaps within three years, they would face fines of up to 1 percent of the firm's wage bill.
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Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Although the previous 10 years proved significant improvement in the field, progress seems to be gradual and unfair. At the current rate of change, the global gender pay gap will not close for another 100 years. Secretary-General António Guterres warns, “change is coming at a pace that is too slow for the women and girls whose lives depend on it”

Over the next decade, we must act with urgency and determination to hasten progress and terminate the income inequality between women and men as well as achieve gender equality for all women and girls around the globe.

Despite the fact that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was adopted 40 years ago, discrimination is still widely accepted in both law and practice. On the one hand, 274 gender-related revisions to laws and regulations have been added by 131 countries over the previous ten years, yet it is estimated that over 2.5 billion women and girls live in nations with at least one discriminatory law in place. These laws limit the options that women can make about matters such as marriage, divorce, and child custody, as well as decisions regarding, among other things, getting employment or establishing a business.

Progress and prosperity for all have not been produced by current economic structures. Following a general stagnation from 2006 to 2020, the economic opportunity gap worsened this year in comparison to last year. The majority of women around the world are therefore still waiting for the promise of economic empowerment to materialize. Over the past 20 years, the gender disparity in the adult population (ages 25 to 54) who are in the labor force has remained constant worldwide. Compared to 93% of men, only 62% of women are employed.

6.0 Possible Solutions

1. In advanced economies and some developing countries, some of the policies that may help reduce wage gaps include:

- *Offering publicly financed parental leave schemes.* Long absences from the workforce to take care of children could lead to lower earnings upon return to work, as well as a reduced skill set.
- *Removing the tax burden for secondary earners (mostly female).* Replace family taxation with individual taxation.
- *Use tax credits or benefits for low wage earners.* These tax credits would reduce the net tax liability and increase the net income gain from accepting a job. (IMF)

2. Increasing access to education and job training: Education and job training can provide individuals with the skills and knowledge they need to secure well-paying jobs. Women may face barriers to education and job training due to societal expectations about their roles or because of financial constraints. It is important to ensure that all individuals, including women, have access to the education and job training they need to succeed in the workforce.

3. Addressing societal expectations: Societal expectations about gender roles can also contribute to income inequality between women and men. It is important to challenge and change these expectations so that individuals are free to pursue their goals and aspirations without being limited by their gender.

4. Endorsement and/or encouragement of legislation requiring employers to document the elimination of the existing wage gap between men and women. Deterrent penalties and supervisory are to be practiced by the governments of the Member States.

7.0 Further Reading

- **Focusing On Equal Pay Between Women And Men For Work Of Equal Value**
(https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/---ro-abidjan/---ilo-pretoria/documents/genericdocument/wcms_638707.pdf)
- **Progress On the Sustainable Development Goals**
(https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/Progress-on-the-sustainable-development-goals-the-gender-snapshot-2022-en_0.pdf)
- **Pursuing Women's Economic Empowerment**
(<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/Policy-Papers/Issues/2018/05/31/pp053118pursuing-womens-economic-empowerment>)
- **The Power of Parity**
(https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/mckinsey/industries/public%20and%20social%20sector/our%20insights/how%20advancing%20womens%20equality%20can%20add%2012%20trillion%20to%20global%20growth/mgi%20power%20of%20parity_full%20report_september%202015.pdf)
- **How Iceland Is Closing the Gender Wage Gap**
(<https://hbr.org/2021/01/how-iceland-is-closing-the-gender-wage-gap>)
- **Factsheet on the gender pay gap in EU**
https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2022-11/equal_pay_day_factsheet_2022_en_1_0.pdf

- **Report on gender pay gap in European Countries**
https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2018-10/report-gender-pay-gap-eu-countries_october2018_en_0.pdf
- **United States' Federal Law Attempt**
<https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/equal-pay-act-1963>

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