What are the causes of the gender pay gap?

**Differences in:**

- **Education and training:** Men usually have more years of schooling than women and narrower range of education and training opportunities. This translates into fewer job opportunities.
- **Level of unionization of enterprises and sectors:** Enterprises employing mainly women tend to be small, and smaller enterprises are less likely to have unions representing their workers. In these enterprises where there is little or no unionization or collective bargaining, pay levels tend to be lower for women than for men.
- **Hours worked:** Men work longer hours (in paid work) than women as related to an unequal share of family responsibilities.
- **Occupational category:** Men predominate in better paying and high status jobs, whereas women are concentrated in relatively low paid, lower status jobs with little decision-making power.
- **Work experience:** Family responsibilities often result in women having more intermittent work patterns than men over their lifetime.
- **Salary and remuneration:** Pay rates are specific to the sex of the worker (direct discrimination).
- **Unfair assessment and evaluation:** Paying lower wages in sectors traditionally associated with women.
- **Gender biases in job evaluation, classification and remuneration systems:** Women are paid less than men for the same or similar job (direct discrimination).
- **Undervaluation of the skills, capabilities and responsibilities associated with ‘female’ jobs (indirect discrimination).**
- **Traditional stereotypes and prejudices:** Women are still being paid less than men. On average women are paid around 20% less than men across the world per month. No country has achieved gender parity in pay yet.

**What are the causes of the gender pay gap?**

**Discrimination:**

Pay discrimination can take many forms, both direct and indirect:

- In some instances, pay rates are specifically based on whether the worker is a man or a woman, this is direct discrimination.
- More often, discrimination is subtle and indirect, such as paying lower wages in sectors traditionally associated with women.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Sustainable Development Goal 8: target 8.5

By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

**EPIC** is a multi-stakeholder coalition to reduce the gender pay gap and build an inclusive world of work.
The Equal Pay International Coalition (EPIC) is an initiative driven by stakeholders committed to reduce the gender pay gap and make equal pay for work of equal value a reality across all countries and sectors.

What is EPIC?

Equal pay for work of equal value is a fundamental right enshrined in the:
- ILO’s Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100)
- UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- OECD’s Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Education, Employment, and Entrepreneurship
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
- UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Why is it important?

More equal and fairly paid jobs for women translate into:
- Healthier and more educated children
- Less women in poverty, including in older age
- More equal distribution of domestic chores and care work between women and men in the family
- More equal and fairly paid jobs for women translate into:

What is the international overarching framework on pay equity?

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The EPIC Secretariat comprises the ILO, UN Women and the OECD. Key stakeholders today include Australia, Canada, Germany, Iceland, Jordan, New Zealand, Panama, Republic of Korea, South Africa, Switzerland, the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

EPIC includes Equal Pay Champions who are influential individuals who advocate for equal pay in their personal capacity.

What is Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value?

Equally qualified women and men, who perform the same or similar job in equivalent conditions, receive equal pay.

Women and men who perform jobs, which differ in content but, based on objective criteria (qualifications, effort, responsibility and working conditions) are of equal value, are paid equally.

For example: a female secondary school teacher, earns $135 less than her male counterpart per week. In a year, she will have earned $7,020 less than him.

For example: a female caretaker of the elderly, sick or persons with disability, earns $2,535 a basic monthly salary.

All of these instruments call on governments to enact and enforce legislation, and adopt policies and measures to ensure that women and men are paid equally.

Who is involved?

1. EPIC and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development Goal 8, Target 8.5 is bold and ambitious and requires an equally bold and ambitious partnership to achieve it. EPIC will also contribute to the achievement of the following goals in particular:
- More equal and fairly paid jobs for women translate into:

For more information about how to join:
www.equalpayinternationalcoalition.org
epic@ilo.org

For example: a female financial manager earns $497 less than her male counterpart per week. In a year, she will have earned $25,844 less than him.

While the two jobs are entirely different, when evaluated according to the objective criteria, the caretaker job scores higher yet it is paid less.