

6.1.2. External Resolution: Action on Pay Discrimination

Title of proposed resolution	Action on Pay Discrimination
Proposed by	BPW New Zealand
Seconded by	BPW Australia
Supported by	
Financial Impact	None

MOTION:

Aware of the persistent gender pay gap globally, which is typically much worse for indigenous, ethnic and disabled women and that no country has yet achieved gender pay parity.

Recognising that the gender pay gap has numerous impacts:

1. Women have lower retirement savings, and may receive lower pension benefits and because of reduced savings, women's earning potential and long-term financial stability is impacted, such as ability to own her own home and have secure housing or be resilient during health crises;
2. Women are more likely to spend their lives working and caring for the home and loved ones - they are more likely to retire in poverty;
3. Societal expectations and family decisions about who takes the burden of unpaid care, exacerbating a women's lower lifetime earnings;
4. When women increasingly enter a field, the average pay in that field tends to decline, relative to other fields; and
5. Possible national level disparities in healthcare, education and other resources. Poorer economic outcomes for countries such as unrealised economic productivity, higher income inequality, higher rates of poverty and lower labour market participation for women.

Acknowledging the significant body of BPW International policy on pay discrimination, such as the value of women's work, economic participation of women, equal pay for equal work, equality of opportunity, from 1936 onwards.

Recognising international mechanisms calling for state parties to address pay discrimination, including:

- The Commission on the Status of Women Agreed Conclusions 2024
- The 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), in particular: SDG 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls and SDG 10 Reduce inequality within and among countries
- The Women's Empowerment Principles which specifically aims to support signatories in prioritizing, establishing and implementing equal pay policies and practices to ensure that all women and men are treated fairly at work (Principle 2).

Be it Resolved:

That BPW International and its Affiliates advocate that governments:

- a) establish legislation to prevent gender pay discrimination with an intersectional lens;
- b) improve reporting on the gender pay gap with an intersectional lens; and
- c) collaborate with private companies to develop meaningful and measurable gender pay gap metrics with an intersectional lens, which are publicly reported.

RATIONALE FOR THE RESOLUTION:

An intersectional lens in policy making recognises that people should not be defined by one characteristic - we all have our own unique, interconnected, set of circumstances. The advantages and disadvantages we each face are different - they are made up by a totality of factors. Five years ago, a Forbes article called out the lack of inclusion in this space, saying "As more corporates are mandated to disclose their gender pay gap, discussions on the topic have become mainstream. But other identities such as race are largely invisible in such discussions."

Now, in 2024, there is very little reporting on the global gender pay gap with an intersectional lens. Pay parity issues link to poverty and impact strongly on the ability of women to support themselves and their families.

Around 470 million of the world's working age population have some form of disability. For disabled women, the wage gap for those with disabilities is not well reported. A 2023 longitudinal study from Norway found that gender is a defining predictor for income and that disabled women are particularly disadvantaged.

Pay transparency and wage mapping policies attempt to shine a bright light on gender wage gaps within organisations. The goal of such measures is to encourage employers to prevent, and address pay inequity, to give workers and their representatives more information to combat pay discrimination, and to help governments identify when, where and how to target gender wage gaps. Earlier this year, the World Bank reported that "only 35 economies have adopted pay transparency measures or enforced mechanisms to address the pay gap". We would like to see this improved.

IMPLEMENTATION:

BPW International and its Affiliates:

1. Increase awareness of the impact of pay discrimination on women through all levels of political engagement, with an intersectional lens.
2. Support and lobby governments to pass legislation.
3. Collaborate with other organisations and NGOs with expertise in pay discrimination to support their work.