



Welcome to the first edition of the PSI Newsletter **Pay Equity Now!**

Pay Equity NOW! is an electronic newsletter produced by Public Services International as part of its pay equity campaign. It will be produced every two months in English and Spanish. You can subscribe on-line at the PSI web-site or by writing to us at equality@world-psi.org.

The newsletter will focus on pay equity concerns and achievements, including union action to advance pay equity, collective bargaining and equality issues, job evaluation schemes and training and capacity building, new research and publications. It will also cover legislative developments and government and employer initiatives. We hope you find it useful in your own pay equity work. Please send us your contributions and comments.

PAY EQUITY

ACTION WEEK

4-8 October 2004

What can your union do?
Plan NOW!

Pay Equity - Focusing on Collective Bargaining

New Zealand: Thirty years after the Equal Pay Act made pay discrimination illegal, women's pay still lags well behind, with the average earnings only 84% of men's. For Maori and Pacific women, the pay gap is even larger.

The PSA has adopted a pay equity strategy that emphasises the critical role of collective bargaining in achieving fairer rates of pay to address unfair pay scales and ensuring transparency in pay setting. There is ample research illustrative of what happens outside collective agreements that disadvantages

both women and ethnic minorities, in particular individual agreements and performance-related pay.

The PSA launched their "**It's Time! The PSA Pay and Employment Equity Agenda**" and plans to incorporate pay and employment equity policy into their strategic plan and bargaining strategy. It was therefore great news when the government announced a taskforce to progress pay equity.

The work of the task force will involve the examination of existing

research and trends as well as factors contributing to pay and employment inequity.

An important aspect of the taskforce's work is to demonstrate the value of policies to address pay and employment equity and to provide a model for the implementation into the private sector.

The PSA has been actively participating in the taskforce activities. The taskforce is expected to release the plan to achieve pay equity by 2008 in March 2004. For more information

www.psa.nz.org

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Court decision brings pay equity to Quebec

Canada: Thousands of Quebec public sector workers should benefit from a court decision to close a loophole that allows some major employers to duck their obligation

on pay equity. Previously, Quebec's pay equity law allowed employers to avoid its provisions if they could show a pay equity program in place prior to the adoption of the law in 1996.

CUPE, who fought the faulty legislation for eight years welcomed the Court's ruling that the law was unconstitutional and discriminatory. For more information www.cupe.ca

“Mainstream pay equity into union structures”

“Integrate pay equity into collective bargaining”

PSI - Pay Equity Capacity-Building

PSI has been conducting Pay Equity workshops around the world using the PSI's Pay Equity Resource Package as a background resource.

In this edition we feature East Africa and Romania.

East Africa: Representatives came from Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. They used their experiences to identify issues that may be impediments in achieving pay equity.

The following strategies are a selection of those identified by the workshop

participants to achieve pay equity:

- Raising awareness of pay equity through seminars and meetings with employers
- Mainstream pay equity in union structures
- Lobby for gender friendly legislation and policies
- Collection of pay equity data through workplace surveys
- Leadership development for women.

Romania: The transition to a market and liberalised

economy has resulted in fundamental changes to the public services and women.

In a workshop attended by 11 public sector unions, members identified the barriers to pay equity and developed actions to remedy the situation. The actions for change included:

- Information and publicity activities
- Establish pay equity groups within the union
- Develop links with non government organizations
- Integrate pay equity into collective bargaining.

Pay Equity Forum, Quito, Ecuador 25-11-03

PSI worked in cooperation with the University of the Andes to organise an Andean Forum on Pay Equity in Quito, Ecuador, on the occasion of 25 November, which is the Day against Violence against Women. The forum was sponsored by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. The University auditorium was filled to over-flowing with over 150

participants from the University and labour movement. The event received wide coverage on TV, radio and in the press. Uncovering pay inequalities in the public sector, PSI affiliates women's committees in Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela and Aruba had carried out workplace research, which revealed wide disparities in average

earning of men and women. Their findings were presented in a panel discussion and caused considerable debate. PSI is conducting on-going capacity building in the sub-region and is expecting to engage governments and employers in tripartite meetings to detect and eliminate inequalities in pay.

PSI/ILO Discussion Forum on Pay Equity 27-11-03

At the meeting of the joint PSI-Global Unions-ILO, Constance Thomas, an ILO specialist, reported on the ILO's activities regarding Convention No. 100. The ILO's emphasis will now be on the implementation of the Convention in national law. Application of the convention has been important for

those countries seeking entry into the EU. One example is the Czech Republic where the legislation is broad and includes guidance on job evaluation free from gender bias. Other work has been taking place in Finland, New Zealand, the UK, Norway, Sweden, Belgium and Canada. These countries are

re-evaluating the progress of implementing equal pay for work of equal value and are devising new approaches to tackle the remaining gender wage gap. At the time of the March edition of Pay Equity NOW! 161 countries had ratified the Convention.

emphasis will now be on the implementation of the Equal Remuneration Convention

Reduction in working hours - a move towards Pay Equity

Australia: The full bench of the New South Wales Industrial Relations Commission approved a reduction of working hours from 38 to 35 hours per week for professional and specialist workers in local government community services. The workers will be paid the same wage/salary for three hours less per week effectively resulting in a higher hourly rate.

The reduction of working hours represents a huge win in the fight for pay equity on behalf of the female dominated community services workers. The disparity in working hours for community services professionals in local government has been a continual grievance within the industry. Male dominated professions such as Engineers, Health and Building Sur-

veyors and Town Planners have enjoyed the 35-hour week for many years. The improved working conditions will also flow on to an hourly rate increase in pay for those employees working on a part-time basis. More information is available on the union's website www.meu.org.au

“The disparity in working hours for community service professionals in local government has been a continuing grievance”

Average Wage Gap of 80% revealed in Pay Equity Survey

Caribbean: Women trade unionists in PSI's Caribbean affiliates have commenced Pay Equity Surveys in a number of countries.

Preliminary information suggests an average gender pay gap of between 80% to 85%. These figures

were a shock to many conducting the survey. One interviewer said, “It was only when I started to do these interviews that I realised what was going on. I always thought that women and men earned the same in the public service.”

While increasing numbers

of women hold top positions within the public service, there are still many more at the lower levels in either short-term or contract posts. Future editions of Pay Equity NOW will report about the plan of action to be taken as a result of the survey.

Pay Struggle in the Commonwealth of Independent States

CIS: Unions in the CIS which includes Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine are also developing strategies to achieve pay equity in the

region. Equality between women and men is constitutionally guaranteed in all CIS countries and both ILO Conventions 100 and 111 are ratified by all CIS countries. However, in reality a large gap exists between theory and practice. De-

pending upon country and sector, women are paid between 30% and 50% less than men. In Russia, women's salaries make 63% of men's. “Unequal pay is a top priority issue in all the CIS countries.” said Olga Lavrova

The European Trade Union Council embarks on Framework of Agreement

Negotiations between the ETUC and employers on a new FoA commenced in December 2003. Although not legally binding, the agreement provides a monitoring and implementation process for the social partners. Four priority areas were identified for action, viz. reducing sex seg-

regation; women's representation in decision-making and promotion of female entrepreneurship; work/life balance; and equal pay. The ETUC identified undervaluing of women's jobs and access to career development for part-timers as key issues. Each of the identified

themes will be separately addressed including their impact on the public sector. The 2003 EU joint Employment Report 2003 can be found at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment>

“The Employment Report shows that the pay gap is either increasing or stagnating in EU Member States”

For further information regarding issues contained in this newsletter contact PSI .

We welcome your contributions and views.

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Pay Equity Study in Denmark

Denmark: In 2000 the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) and Confederation of Danish Employers (DA) entered into an agreement to develop a strategy for investigating and monitoring the

equality and non-discrimination issues. In August 2003 an investigative report was released. The major findings revealed a gender difference in earnings of 15% amongst blue-collar work-

ers and 20% in white-collar workers. The main reasons for the differences was gender segregation in the labour market, e.g. women and men work in different occupations and sectors.

Job Evaluation and Pay Equity

The Canadian Human Rights Commission has produced a guide to provide practical direction in pay equity.

The guide focuses on the job evaluation aspect of pay equity and how gender bias can be eliminated in this process.

The guide covers several volumes and includes:

A Summary of Experience and Lessons Learned

- A detailed overview of the job evaluation process as it applies to pay equity extracted from experiences and lessons learnt.

The steps within the process are sequentially described with the various options and gender neutrality issues discussed at each stage.

The volume focuses on the "how to" aspects of job evaluation and the avoidance of gender bias. It provides raw materials to minimise gender bias and maximise awareness of potential problems

The Makings of a System

- A collection of job evaluation factors that may be used to either design a customised evaluation system, or to examine an exist-

ing system for comprehensiveness and gender neutrality.

This volume focuses on the "what" elements of a job evaluation system i.e. the content.

The guide is a practical tool to assist with achieving pay equity. It can be used to help unions implement a pay system that is gender neutral and eliminates gender bias.

Unions can adapt and mould the content to fit their specific needs.

For access to the guide www.chrc-ccdp.ca/pe-ps/menu.asp

On-line Pay Equity discussion group in the Philippines

Philippines: Public Sector unions have adopted an innovative approach to gather and exchange information with members and other interested parties on pay equity.

They have established an on-line pay equity discussion group to enable people with internet access to view current information about pay equity, add their own material and ask

questions. It's a great initiative which will enable a broad group of people to participate in the pay equity debate. Group address

Payequity-owner@yahoo.com