

Monday 27 June 2022

Years of inaction widens gender pay gap

Almost a decade of inaction on the gender pay gap under the previous Government has resulted in women continuing to earn less than men in every age bracket, according to data released today by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency.

On average, women earn \$483.30 less per week than men, largely due to women shouldering the majority of care responsibilities and making up 61 per cent of workers reliant on Award and minimum wages.

WGEA attribute 20 per cent of the pay gap problem to women-dominated industries in care and education being undervalued and underpaid.

Women have lost nearly a decade under the previous Government, and action is urgently needed to restart the work of closing the gender pay gap. The union movement welcomes the action already taken by the Albanese Government in committing to providing 10 days of Paid Family and Domestic Violence leave through the NES, but more work is required, including the Government's commitments to include Gender Equity in the FWA, full implementation of the Respect@Work report recommendations, prohibiting pay secrecy and enforcing public reporting of pay gaps by employers.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

"Women will continue to earn \$483.30 per week less than men until we address the undervaluation and underpayment of women-dominated industries, including teaching, nursing, and care.

"Without accessible and affordable early childhood education and care, women are forced into insecure and low paid jobs. The fact that we have some of the most expensive early childhood education and care in the developed world is a huge contributing factor to the pay gap.

"It is simply not good enough that women continue to be paid less than men in this country. We should have made progress in the last decade under Coalition Governments, but instead we went backwards from 14th to 70th place on the global gender pay gap index.

"We welcome the action that the Albanese Government has already committed to on Paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave but much more work is required to close the gap. We look forward to working with the Government to include Gender Equity in the FWA, implement all of the Respect@Work report recommendations, prohibit pay secrecy and roll out public reporting of pay gaps by employers."

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