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European Parliament votes in favour of closing the gender pay gap

Today, the European Parliament voted in favour of the mandate for the Pay Transparency Directive. This directive is a crucial tool in the fight against the gender pay gap, currently at 13% EU-wide. The Parliament's vote was brought on by members of the EPP and ECR who challenged the directive last month. With today's vote, the Parliament has given its go ahead for inter-institutional negotiations to start. The Greens/EFA Group applaud the progress for women's rights taken today, and have long pushed for action to be taken to close the gender pay gap.

Kira Marie Peter-Hansen, Greens/EFA MEP and European Parliament rapporteur for the Pay Transparency directive in the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, comments:

“Today, the European Parliament has shown that we can be a parliament for progress and women's rights. Pay transparency is the best tool we have to close the gender pay gap and I am very happy to start trilogue negotiations with such an ambitious and strong mandate from this chamber. This legislation has the potential to eradicate unjust gender differences at workplaces across the EU.”

“However, we are extremely disappointed that the EPP recommended their members to vote against the best tool we have to close the gender pay gap. This attempt to block progress on women's rights is especially upsetting because we left the negotiations in the committees with a balanced text and a broad support for the compromises.”

Terry Reintke MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur for the Pay Transparency directive in the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, comments:

“In the EU, women still earn 13 percent less per hour than men. This shows that the gender pay gap will not just disappear by miracle. If we are to tackle this problem, we need joint action.”

“Our position at committee level was agreed upon by the negotiating teams of all democratic groups in the European Parliament, including the EPP. That's why it is particularly disappointing that so many EPP Members changed their position and voted against the Parliament's negotiation mandate with the Council. It's time that conservative MEPs finally match their words with actions and stand with women.”

“This text is ambitious, far-reaching and has the potential to make a real difference. We will defend this mandate in the negotiations with the Council to finally close the gender pay gap in the near future.”

More:

The adopted European Parliament position on the Pay Transparency directive wants to lower the number of workers a company must employ in order to be required to publish its pay gap. The Commission proposed companies with +250 employees, but the Parliament says +50 employees with the option to lower it further after a few years. With the Parliament's tightening, this would cover about 60% of all employees in the EU. Moreover, the Parliament states that workers representatives should be democratically elected by employees and not cherry picked by management.

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