

Closing the Gender Wage Gap: Rise up and Speak up!



Ontario's Ministry of Labour and the Minister Responsible for Women's Issues have been directed to develop a strategy to close the gender wage gap: They are looking for feedback about your experiences before February 29th: [Take the survey!](#)

The Gender Wage Gap:

- Current gap for all women: **31.5%**
- For Racialized women: **36.7%**
- For Aboriginal women : **44.0%**
- For women with disabilities: **25.0%**

Why does the gap remain?

Women are disproportionately employed in low-paid, insecure employment and there is a systemic undervaluing of women's work and economic contributions in the paid labour force and beyond. The current gap cannot be explained by lower rates of education for women (women are now equally or more educated than men, as a whole). **There is a strong association between unionization and a lower wage gap! The wage gap closes to about 5% for unionized women compared to unionized men, when looking at hourly wages**

What can we do about it?

USW recommendations to close the gender wage gap:

- Organize new members into unions and change the rules to make it easier to organize
- Improve statutory protections for all workers, including leaves related to domestic violence, care and family leaves
- Treat the gender wage gap as a human rights issue
- Restore and improve funding for the Pay Equity Commission
- Restore and amend the Employment Equity Act
- Provide subsidized accessible, professional child care, with living wages for child care workers!
- Use a gender and equity lens in policy making and in bargaining
- Ensure transparent pay, hiring and promotion practices (through collective bargaining and beyond)
- Ensure job evaluation accurately reflects women's work

Steps you can take:

- Get involved in the union! Strengthen women's voices in organizing, bargaining, job evaluation and in leadership positions
- Join USW's [Women of Steel](#)
- Speak up about your experiences at work, and in balancing family responsibilities; or about trying to organize a union; in job evaluation and bargaining; in trying to find affordable, high-quality child care)
- [Complete the online survey by February 29th](#)