



# Closing the gender pay gap in public services in the context of austerity

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# Partners of the project

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- European Public Services Union (EPSU)
- Centre for Research on Employment and Work (CREW)  
University of Greenwich
- The Association for International and Comparative  
Studies in Labour and Industrial Relations ( ADAPT)
- Central European Labour Studies Institute (CELSI)

EPSU evidence that austerity-induced measures in the public sector, pay freezes, investments cuts have impacted upon the gender pay gap (GPG).

In 12 of 25 countries, the public sector pay gap had increased between 2007 and 2011 (EPSU, 2013).

Questions:

- How and why austerity has or has not disproportionately affected women's pay within and between EU countries?
- How the trade unions have addressed the pay gap in the aftermath of the austerity measures?
- What was/is the efficacy of the collective bargaining and the use of equality and pay transparency legislation to reduce the GPG?

EPSU (2013). Cuts in public sector pay and employment: the impact on women in the public sector. Brussels

To **update EU data** on the gender pay gap in the public services using Eurostat and national data

Explore the **statistical association** between increase in the pay gap and austerity measures in public services

**Detailed insights** into the public services gender pay gap in the context of austerity across the EU

To **analyse social partners' policies** and collective bargaining and legal strategies on the gender pay gap



Locate 24 organisational case studies where the trade unions addressed the uneven pay and spread the initiatives across the EU

**The difference in average gross hourly wage between men and women across the economy**  
**Unadjusted GPG** = not controlled of other parameters (Eurostat)

**GPG ILO definition:** complementary **"factor weighted gender pay gap"**. It removes some of the major "composition effects" (e.g. women tend to work in the public sector). This methodology groups women and men into more homogeneous subgroups, and estimates the GPG in each subgroup - a weighted average of all the subgroups' estimated gender pay gaps, with weights reflecting the size of each subgroup in the total population of wage employees (higher GPG 16% to 19%.)

## Statistical decomposition – factors contributing/explaining the GPG

**CZ** - company characteristics , such as the **sector, collective agreement at the company level, the share of women at the workplace**, type of property are explaining continually higher part of the GPG (Křížková et. Al. 2010)

**CZ** - the GPG is nearly non-existent thanks to the **centrally set salary tariffs** – set salaries; Once the remuneration is determined by several **components** and a different mechanism – the GPG increase (Kyzliková, 2016)

**AT** - **The merits of men in leadership positions were more elevated than those of women in the leading position**; the merits of the men increased more strongly per year of life as those of women (Geisberger, Glaser, 2017).

**SK** - **Longer careers and better education do not bring women higher income as is the case for men. While maternity is associated with lower wages, fathers are better off.** In overall, the women's salaries are pushed down due to their more frequent work in worse-earning industries, both in public or private sectors (Rizman, 2017)

# Austerity measures

Country	Pay policies	Other measures affecting the public sector
Bulgaria	Severe austerity measures in place already since 1997. Pay freezes were introduced in the public sector for four years (2009-2012).	15% to 20% reduction in administrative staff Frozen minimum wage.
Czech Republic	The public sector wage bill against expanding.	Personnel cuts in administration. Introduction of a flat personal income tax of 19% of gross wage
Hungary	Cuts in public sector salaries began; rapid increase in low-paid. Pay cuts have lowered the value of salaries of some of the lowest paid women workers.	Introduction of a 16% flat-tax, generous child tax credit for high-income families.
Austria	Pay freezes at the federal level - moderated by trade union. Health care €1.4 billion of cuts through 2016.	Hiring freeze, reduction of recruitment; increased tax for high earners - closure of tax loopholes.
Poland	Pay freezes and seniority and other bonuses were cancelled.	Increased retirement age. Dismissal of employees with open-term contracts.
Romania	Severe anti-crisis measures, resulting in 25% pay cuts for government employees and a cut of 15% in social security benefits, cancelling of overtime pay and imposed longer hours.	Restriction to re-hiring, abolishing of housing and meals benefits; a new tax on meal vouchers and gift tickets;
Slovakia	Wages freeze at their 2009 level, and a reduction in public sector investment; structural reforms of the welfare system; decrease in personnel expenditure.	Employment regulation included a provision to dismiss open term employees when the government seeks to restructure.

Statistical profiles of AT, SK, PL, HU, RO, BG (based on comparative Eurostat data)

7 cases

- Based upon documentary evidence
- Face-to-face interviews, using standardised topic guides,
- With trade union officers, bargaining counterparts and insiders/researchers in the field of industrial action

Examples from Western, Northern and Southern countries – overview of the findings

# To be continued.....

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