



„UWE in action for equal pay women and men”

PRESS RELEASE

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The University Women of Europe (UWE) has filed collective complaints for application of the Social Charter in the 47 countries members of the Council of Europe stating women are not treated equal as they earn structurally less than men for equal work. As an international INGO, UWE is allowed to submit a collective complaint of violation of the European Social Charter.

The complaints against the violation of the European Social Charter focussing on equal pay for equal work between women and men were filed against the following states accepting the collective complaints: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Norway, Slovenia and Sweden can be found on the website of COE. Only 15 countries in 47 states members of the Council of Europe accept collective complaints.

"It is a first in many ways: 15 complaints at the same time! Once they have been 7 complaints on the same subject, never 15 collective complaints. Never any complaint on Equal pay for Equal work" stated Anne Negre, our lawyer. She added that a majority of women in Europe are now working for free in private or public sectors until the end of the year, and in all the countries of the world where women are not paid equally for a same job with men.

President of University Women of Europe, Edith Lommerse about the collective complaints: *"This is as a necessary step. So far discussion has been on the mechanisms and the reasons behind the pay gap, but the outcome is still the same. Women's work is valued less and in a lot of cases women need to have more qualifications and or more knowledge to be paid equally. It is good to know that some universities have started to pay women the difference like the University of Waterloo. We aim to make governments more aware of the need to make reparations for women. It is not enough anymore to say the intentions are good but the practice makes it difficult. We need to get this obstacle for equality out of the way. "*

The European Social Charter is a Council of Europe treaty that guarantees fundamental social and economic rights as a counterpart to the European Convention on Human Rights, which refers to civil and political rights. It guarantees a broad range of everyday human rights related to employment, housing, health, education, social protection and welfare.

We recommend the following links for tools to help you in your activities, as well as the following additional resources:

<http://wageindicator-gender-pay-gap.silk.co>

http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/national-action/raise-awareness/index_en.htm

https://www.equineteurope.org/IMG/pdf/equal_pay_report_publication_.pdf

<http://www.chatelaine.com/news/university-waterloo-salaries-female-faculty-systemic-discrepancy/>

<http://kvenrettindafelag.is/2016/income-equality-now-lets-walk-out-on-monday-october-24th-at-238-p-m/>

<http://www.msn.com/fr-fr/actualite/france/les-françaises-appelées-à-cesser-le-travail-lundi-7-novembre-à-16h34/ar-AAjHDX8?li=BB0Jji>

More about collective complaints procedure here:

<http://www.coe.int/en/web/turin-european-social-charter/collective-complaints-procedure>

<http://www.annenegre.com/anne-nègre/>

The University Women of Europe (UWE) was founded in 1981 in order to enable UWE to participate in the progressive development of European society. Its aim is to work towards an achievement of the goals of the Council of Europe but also to cooperate with all other European governmental and non-governmental organisations dealing with European matters and in particular questions affecting the lives of women. The University Women of Europe is a network of graduate women associations and federations from 20 countries working in partnership with the Council of Europe and the European Women's Lobby to address issues impacting the lives of women throughout the European community. <https://uweboard.wordpress.com>. It is a regional group of Graduate Women International founded in 1919.

Today, the University Women of Europe enjoys participative status with the Council of Europe (www.coe.int) and is also currently a Member of the Executive Board of the European Women's Lobby (EWL). The European Women's Lobby represents more than 4.000 women's associations and is the largest coalition of women's associations in Europe (www.womenlobby.org).

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