



The Commission must not delay action to address gender equality in the EU – the right time for equal pay is NOW!

The EESC Workers' Group is extremely concerned by the contents of a leaked document that shows that the European Commission may postpone the long awaited proposal for binding pay transparency measures on the basis that this may not "be the right time" in the context of the COVID-19 crisis.

Pay transparency is a key element for ending the gender pay gap and this proposal was intended to be one of the first measures taken by the Commission under its Gender Equality Strategy 2020 – 2025. Women have waited long enough for equal pay, which is a requirement of the EU Treaty and there can be no justification to delay concrete measures to accelerate the closing of the gender pay gap.

Indeed, women have been at the frontline of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Across the EU, the majority of our health and social care workers are women, who have been putting their own health and that of their families at risk, to continue to save lives and care for the vulnerable. These women and others working in other key sectors are often underpaid and undervalued.

We know from previous experience that the deepest impact of the crisis will be on women, particularly those who face multiple forms of discrimination. Postponement of a key EU proposal to address persistent gender inequality in the form of the gender pay gap would send the wrong signal to European citizens, women and men. Rather than postponing the proposal, the Commission should ensure that the proposal on pay transparency is a catalyst to guaranteeing equal and fair pay for millions of women. The Workers' Group calls on the European Commission to reconsider its position and to proceed with the publication of the proposal before the end of 2020 as initially foreseen.