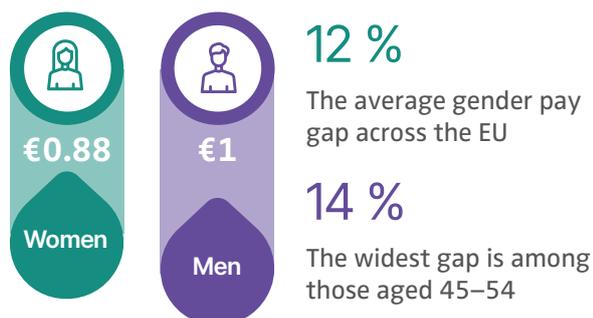


EU-wide guidelines on gender-neutral job evaluation and classification: step-by-step toolkit

Gender-neutral job evaluation reveals the value of every job in an organisation

In recent decades, legal and policy efforts have aimed to close the gender pay gap across the EU. Yet the gender pay gap remains a reality in nearly all Member States and progress towards closing it has been slow (Eurostat, 2023). On average, women earn about 12 % less per hour than men, the equivalent of working around six extra weeks a year to take home the same annual pay (European Commission, 2022).

Key EU gender pay gap statistics



Source: Eurostat, 2023.

Gender-based pay discrimination and the undervaluation of skills and attributes more commonly associated with women or women's roles (such as care, emotional effort, multitasking) contribute to the persistent gender pay gap.

Ensuring equal pay for the same work or work of equal value between women and men means providing fair remuneration for work involving the same or equivalent skills, effort, responsibility and working conditions, regardless of who the worker is. This principle has been written into the EU's founding legal framework (Article 157 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) and secondary legislation (Directive 2006/54/EC) and reaffirmed in the Pay Transparency Directive (Directive (EU) 2023/970), which requires employers to have pay structures enabling 'the assessment of whether workers are in a comparable situation in regard to the value of work on the basis of objective, gender-neutral criteria'.

Gender-neutral job evaluation and classification is a helpful tool for employers to uphold the **principle of equal pay for the same work or work of equal value between women and men**. In cooperation with the European Commission, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) has developed a practical toolkit with clear steps, templates and examples to help organisations (and others) implement gender-neutral job evaluation and classification.

The step-by-step toolkit turns the principle of equal pay into action

Focusing on the job itself, not the person in it, gender-neutral job evaluation and classification systems help create a clear and transparent basis for an organisation’s pay structure. The gender-neutral approach also helps:

- avoid gender bias;
- shed light on skills or job demands that may have been unaccounted for or undervalued;
- keep up with the evolution of labour market demands and technological change.

The **step-by-step toolkit** is a practical resource for organisations of all sizes to conduct a gender-neutral job evaluation and classification.

The step-by-step toolkit on gender-neutral job evaluation and classification at a glance

WHO is the toolkit for?	WHAT is gender-neutral job evaluation and classification?	WHY is it important?
 Employers  Trade unions and workers' representatives  Workers	<p>A process for determining the relative value of jobs in an organisation using gender-neutral, objective criteria such as skills, responsibility, effort and working conditions.</p> <p>The results support the creation of transparent and fair pay structures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Helps organisations uphold the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value between women and men. ✓ Fosters fair and productive workplaces through credible pay decisions. ✓ Supports attracting and retaining talent. ✓ Protects against costly legal claims. ✓ Contributes to closing gender pay gaps.

HOW to conduct gender-neutral job evaluation?				For trade unions
Pre-job evaluation	Preparation	Three pathways	Follow-up	
 <p>TOOL 0</p> <p>Understanding and preventing gender bias</p>	 <p>TOOLS 1–2</p> <p>Getting started and gathering job information</p>	 <p>TOOLS 3–5</p> <p>Different pathways for different organisations (micro, SMEs, standard)</p>	 <p>TOOLS 6–7</p> <p>Adjusting job descriptions and tracking progress</p>	 <p>TOOL 8</p> <p>Negotiating aid</p>
				<p>For workers</p>  <p>TOOL 9</p> <p>Help with engaging in equal pay conversations</p>

 **Factor and subfactor plan:** defines and breaks down the job evaluation criteria (skills, responsibility, effort and working conditions) to consistently and fairly evaluate and compare jobs.

 **Supporting materials:** case studies, templates and key terms.

The step-by-step toolkit is available in **two user-friendly formats**: a [publication](#) offering detailed guidance, and an interactive [web version](#) on EIGE's Gender Mainstreaming platform designed for easy, accessible use.

Explore the brief '[Building successful and inclusive organisations: Why gender-neutral job evaluation and classification pays off](#)', produced by EIGE and Eurofound, to learn more about the benefits of adopting a gender-neutral job evaluation and classification systems.

References

European Commission (2025), '[EU action for equal pay](#)', European Commission website.

Eurostat (2023), '[Gender pay gap in unadjusted form](#)', 25 February 2025.

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The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) produces independent research and shares best practice to promote gender equality and eliminate discrimination based on gender. As the EU agency for gender equality, we help people achieve equal opportunities so everyone can thrive, independent of their gender and background.

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