



EQUAL PAY DAY 2018

- **THE ELIMINATION OF WAGE GAP**
- **GOES THROUGH**
- **THE GENDER PARITY**



EPD – EQUAL PAY DAY 2018

- It is already known that the Nordic Countries lead the majority of the other Nations in matters of gender equality policy that includes gender quotas in the Boards of Directors and generous parental leave.
- Today I want to bring to your attention Iceland, the small island with only 330.00 inhabitants, that is a precursor and appears consistently in the international ranking. WAY ICELAND? Because in this small, still **big** country has entered in force since January a **law on EQUAL PAY that will go down in history.**
- For the Icelandic population it is a source of pride to be the favorite in the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index 2018, for the ninth consecutive year: The classification at the top is a confirmation of the success achieved in the last decades and inspire to continue working to achieve the total equality of status, influence and power of men and women.
- What is the secret to success in Iceland? What are the lessons we can learn? In summary, it is that gender equity does not occur by itself. It requires collective action, solidarity, political will and tools such as legislation, gender budget and quotas.. **Here 3 main points:**



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- **First:** solidarity with human right defenders who challenge and protest against the monopoly of power in the hands of men and the power of men over the women.
- **Second:** success is attributable to women taking the power and creating alternatives to dominant masculine “truths” and making visible the invisible realities of women, especially in discriminatory practices, including sexual harassment and abuse.
- **Finally,** in Iceland, men and women share power among themselves as decision makers and gradually there are more men who support the give and take of gender equality.
- Although the Icelandic Parliament is the oldest in the world(dating from 930) women were not considered “good enough”: Women did not have the right to vote or be represented in parliament
- Women started fighting for the right “to be good “enough” and 1915/16 they got the right to vote and to stand as political candidates.
- In the 60’s and 70’s, feminism became a mass movement uniting women in their struggle for equal right and political influence.
- Subsequently, in 1983 there was, for the first time, a strong increase in the number of women who went from 5 to 15 deputies out of a total of 60 and in a single election. **The male domain in Iceland was only interrupted by the collective and solidly action of women**



INTRODUCTION OF THE LAW ON EQUAL REMUNERATION CERTIFICATION

- However , there are still challenges to be solved: assumptions and notions based on gender continue to cause problems as, for example in the field of nursing, where women predominate, they are valued less in terms of men employed in the construction. There is a gender wage gap (in Iceland around 16%)for work of equal value, despite the existence of a law on equal remuneration since 1961.
- **Islandic women have been protesting against this imbalance through a general strike since 1975.**
- Now, more than 40 years later, equality of law is backed by political will as evidenced by the introduction of the law on equal remuneration certification that is based on a tool called **EQUAL PAY STANDARD**. Thus in accordance with the principle of equal remuneration of equal work and work of equal value, all in compliance with International Treaties (Convention of the International Labour Organization), The Beijing Platform and the Convention to Eliminate All Form of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)



EQUAL PAY FOR MEN AND WOMEN – ICELAND WANTS EMPLOYERS TO PROVE IT

- As for January 2018, companies in Iceland must demonstrate that they are paying employers fairly, without gender discrimination. If not they will face daily fines.
- The law that was approved in 2017 and entered in force in January, is believed to be the first of its kind in the world, and encompasses both the private sector and the public as well
- Despite the controversies, it must be emphasized that it was illegal to pay a man more than a women, differently depending on their gender and Camila Domonoske adds *“to be clear, it was and is legal to pay a man more than a women or vice versa, as long as there is a valid reason”*
- The remarkable thing about the new law in Iceland is how it imposes equal remuneration standards. *It does not depend on an employer to prove that she/ he was discriminated. Instead, the burden falls on the companies that have to prove that their practices are fair.*
- The wage gap is around 16% and is present in all occupational groups. According to the Nordic Labour Journal, 2010 figures showed that about 8 percent of the gap that year remained “unexplainable” after taking in account any possible justification



THE NEW NEW EPS LAW IN ICELAND

- The new Icelandic law apply to Companies with 25 or more employers. Every three years, companies must confirm that they are paying men and women for equal work of equal value. If they are not certified, a daily fine will accrue.
- How the process works: The employer must determine which job task each job involves and then assign a value. However there is a margin for an upward adjustment, but they are still exceptions and must be justified.
- To note that the standard make the setting of salaries more clear and transparent, which benefits both employers and employee
- It must said that the standard of equal remuneration had been suggested to companies since 2012, but this is the first time that is mandatory.
- The Icelandic Welfare Office underlines that the standard can also be used to prevent and eradicate all types of discrimination. Functionally the law will block wage discrimination because of race, religion occupational disability, age and sexual orientation
- The new law was approved, perhaps not coincidentally, a year after the candidates won almost half of the seats in Parliament.



THE EPS - EQUAL PAY STANDARD LAW – WHAT THE FUTURE SCENARIO

- Iceland, as leading country in gender issues, **is pushing other European countries to close the wage gap.**
- The Minister of Social Affairs and Equality of the country Thorsteinn Vinglundsson, during a round table on the subject in Brussels, **called the wage equity a matter of necessity**
- **The Canada Prime Minister Justine Trudeau** in his extensive and close intervention at the recent World Economic Forum in Davos, focused on gender equality, highlighted:
- *When we talk about getting more women in the workforce, the question of equal pay appears and must be of vital importance.*
- *In Canada we will move forward this year with legislation to ensure equal pay for work of equal value at federal level. Efforts regarding the equality of our government , while important, are only the first step because equal pay for women does not mean equal opportunities, equal treatment or equal sacrifice.*
- *Paying a feminine employee the same as a man employee does not even begin to touch the problems around family planning, promotion or job security. Women do more part time work and more unpaid work than man*



JUSTINE TRUDEAU CONCLUSION AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION' ACTION PLAN

- *When we dig a little deeper, when we peel his outer layer, we see that there is a whole host of barriers that confront women in the work place. Eliminating these barriers would require effort, leadership and willingness to change the method of working as know it by now,*
- *In short, we have to fundamentally change the culture of the companies so that women feel welcomed, support and valued*
- ***EQUAL PAY – DREAM OR REALITY IN 2018?*** The European Commission's recently launched *Action Plan 2017-2019 Tackling the Gender Gap*, spells out the persistent barriers and proposes eight areas of action: Among the barriers, gender segregated labour-markets in which only 18% of women and 15% of men work in mixed occupations, women's work in sectors where they are concentrated, is valued at a lower rate than those where men are concentrated, gender stereotypes, lack of work-life balance options and expectations towards women to be the prime care givers which leads to part-time and increasingly precarious working pay and conditions, a staggering gender pension gap and higher rates of poverty as they age.



EQUAL PAY – DREAM OR REALITY IN 2018

- **EWL - The Equal Pay Standard law of Iceland is badly needed in EU.** An extraordinary reality as we broach a new year. But we need to move a step further. In a highly segregated labour-market, the issue of “work of equal value” must be addressed across different sectors (cross industry) so that a broader interpretation can be applied to cover differences in pay for work which may not appear comparable from the outset but is performed in sectors that are highly gendered in practice.
- **EWL – European Women Lobby** says: *We welcome therefore the Commission’s proposal to clarify the notion of “work of equal value”, as part of its Action Plan. We also welcome the initiative of the University Women of Europe – a member of EWL – to file a collective complain to the Council of Europe on equal pay and are very pleased that their complain has been received positively*



**ACCORDING TO THE EXPERTS IT COULD TAKE 100
YEARS TO ACHIEVE EQUAL PAY IF THE PACE OF
CHANGE CONTINUES AT ITS CURRENT SPEED**

- **FOLLOW YOUR PATH AND LET
LOOSE THE CHATTER**
- *is the motto of Magnea Marinosdottir*

- Autor: Enrichetta Bellini Fornera - February 2018
BPWI PILOT Team member and Projects Leader

- Sources: Camila Domonoska NPR, opb.org – Magnea Marinosdottir / Equity Unit Iceland – Press Release WEF Davos 2018 – LEF Press Release January 2018

