Fighting the gender pay gap in Switzerland: policies, practice tools and experiences

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Art. 8 Equality before the law

3 Men and women shall have equal rights. The law shall ensure their equality, both in law and in practice, most particularly in the family, in education, and in the workplace. Men and women shall have the right to equal pay for work of equal value.
Gender pay gap in Switzerland

Private and Public sector (median)

Private sector

Public sector

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Men  |  Women

Unexplained - Unjustified

Explained by objective and non discriminatory factors:

- Level of education
- Years of service
- Professional experience
- Professional position
- Skill level
- Night work, shift work, etc.
Multi-factor issue, different answers

- **Public authorities** shall adopt gender equality policies and implement them.
- **Society** shall fight against stereotypes in the public space, at schools; organise and finance good and affordable day care facilities for children.
- **Companies** shall hire and promote women in all sectors and at all levels, *pay equal wages for work of equal value*, develop family friendly policies.
- **Individuals**
  - Women shall know their rights and fight for them;
  - Men shall engage for women’s rights, take their share in the housework, etc.
The effective application of gender equality legislation remains one of the biggest challenges.

Bern – 7 March 2015
12’000 men and women asking for gender pay eqality

Zurich – 18 March 2017
10’000 people by the Women’s March
Some tools and measures to eliminate gender pay discrimination

- **LOGIB (Lohngleichheitsinstrument Bund)**
  - Self-analysis tool for companies with 50 and more employees, which has arisen considerable interest in other countries (www.equal-pace.eu)

- **Charter for equal pay in the public sector**
  - Regular monitoring in accordance with accepted standards to ensure the respect of equal pay within the public administration, corporations close to the public administration, public procurement or subsidies.

- **Controls in relation with public procurements**
  - Controls can be made to verify that companies which receive mandates from public authorities comply with the requirement of equal pay.
1) **Autonomy**: Logib can be downloaded anonymously and free of charge - employers themselves can check their wage practice and see whether they comply with the requirement of equal pay for women and men (online tutorials, detailed instructions and a helpline are available);

2) **Cost-efficiency**: no need of any sophisticated statistics programme or specialised know-how – Logib is based on Excel and thus directly applicable on a lot of workplaces without extra training for the personnel;

3) **Feasibility**: only standard data needed (those required in official payroll statistics) no need of women and men in every position with exactly the same qualifications to evaluate wage equality – suitable for all businesses with at least 50 employees;

4) **Reliability**: Logib relies on a solid scientific method accepted by the Swiss Federal Supreme Court in 2003 (OLS regression analysis);

5) **Transparency**: the Logib tool and all technical details about the method used as well as instructions are publicly available in German, French, Italian and English;

6) **Established international practice**: Germany, France, United Kingdom, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxemburg, Finland, Poland and Portugal made available a similar tool ([www.equal-pace.eu](http://www.equal-pace.eu))
Equal pay and public procurement

• Art. 8, para 1, c, Federal Act on Public Procurement (FAPP)
The following principles shall be respected in awarding public contracts:
c. Contracts shall only be awarded to suppliers that guarantee equal treatment of men and women in respect of pay for workers performing services in Switzerland.

• Art. 6, para 4, Ordinance on Public Procurement
The awarding authority may call for checks in respect of equal treatment of women and men. The task of conducting such checks may be assigned to federal, cantonal or local authority gender equality offices.
Need of strong political will
Charter for equal pay in the public sector

- Charter was launched by Minister Berset September 2016
- Signatories agree to carry out regular checks to ensure the respect of equal pay within the public administration, within corporations close to the public administration and within companies receiving public procurement or subsidies.
- The Confederation, 13 cantons and 29 cities have signed the agreement (state March 2018)
To summarize…

«Closing the gender pay gap in Switzerland - Charter for equal pay in the public sector»:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QkxTYniubEI
New legislative proposal to fight wage discrimination

- **2015** – Business representative survey in link with a project of law:
  - **strong interest** in the topic: 1’305 answers / response rate of 48%
  - around 65% of companies think new measures aimed at the enforcement of pay equality **make sense**
  - the effort for a self-test with Logib is considered **proportionate**
  - Self-tests are **effective**: 50% of companies that carried out a self-test made adjustments, usually raising women’s wages

- **2017** - New legislative proposal by the government: All companies with 50 and more employees should be obliged to carry out a self-test every 4 years under the supervision of a third party. The method used should be compliant with scientific and legal norms. The company should communicate the results to the employees.

- **2018** - Bill under discussion in parliament
ILO – OECD – UN Women: EPIC

A multi-stakeholder Coalition to achieve equal pay between women and men for work of equal value by 2030

#EqualPay

“Today, young women in OECD countries leave school with better qualifications than young men, but before they turn 30 they already earn 7% less.”

Axel Curria, OECD, Secretary-General
Thank you very much!

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