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Union wins help narrow the gender pay gap

Working women in Australia are seeing the gender pay gap narrow thanks to new work rights, pay rises in undervalued sectors, and strong increases in award and collective agreement wages.

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency's latest data reveals that the overall gender pay gap fell to 21.1 per cent, compared to 21.8 per cent in 2023-24. The 0.7 per cent decrease means that for every \$1 men earn, women earn, on average, 78.9 cents - equivalent to \$28,356 a year.

Workers are exercising their new rights to collectively bargain with their employers, improving pay for undervalued female-dominated sectors like aged care and early childhood education and care.

Increases in minimum and award wages, the ability to request flexible working arrangements, and changes to fix our broken equal pay laws, are also delivering better pay and supporting women to remain connected to work.

Notably, the reduction in the gender pay gap over the last 12 months is greater than the trend of the previous five years, underlining the continued impact of the Albanese Government's strengthening of workplace laws .

The share of all parental leave taken by men rose to 20 per cent in 2024-25, up three percentage points from the year before.

Quotes attributable to ACTU Secretary, Sally McManus:

"The continued narrowing of the gender pay gap shows that a wide range of reforms campaigned for by unions and recently implemented by the Albanese Government are working.

"Key equal pay wins for workers in undervalued and female-dominated sectors, especially in health care and early childhood education and care, are already having a positive impact, with more significant lifts in pay expected in 2026.

"Workers on lower wages, who are disproportionately women, have seen their pay rise faster than workers in the top half, thanks to strong recent increases in award and collective agreement wages, won by unions.

"Women have also been able to more easily secure the work and the hours that they need, supported by easier access to flexible work arrangements, and more men taking parental leave than ever before.

"Unions will not rest until a gender pay gap is a thing of the past"

ENDS

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