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Equal Pay Press Digest

July 2019

WORKFORCE

Government plan aims to address causes of financial inequality

The Government plans to tackle the causes of financial inequality in later life, by forcing companies to review their equal pay procedures. The eight point plan, published by the Government Equalities Office, will seek to address unfairness that can limit a woman's opportunity to generate wealth in her lifetime. The aim of the "roadmap" is to make women better off in retirement by challenging stereotypes that begin at school and lead women to take on the majority of caring responsibilities, potentially preventing them being auto-enrolled into a workplace pension, and building up private pensions while at work. Penny Mordaunt, minister for women and equalities, said: "We know women work very hard but they earn less and save less and this piece of work has looked at a woman throughout the whole course of her life, from the choices she makes in the classroom through to what happens when she heads into the world of work". She added the government was finally "getting a grip" on the issues affecting women, including maternity discrimination, employment rights for carers, including leave, and ensuring pension pots were taken into account during divorce settlements.

[The Daily Telegraph](#)    [People Management](#)   

Half of employers predict pay rises of between 2% and 3% for 2019

Forty-eight per cent of respondents to a survey conducted by management consultancy Paydata said they expect to deliver pay rises of between 2% and 3% for 2019, while 32% anticipate they will have a pay review budget of between 1% and 2%. Additionally, 5% said they plan to implement an equal pay audit, while 58% are looking at figures around ethnicity for their employee population. Around 44% are exploring their demographic in terms of disabled employees, while 42% are studying employees' age.

[Employee Benefits](#)   

PUBLIC SECTOR

Glasgow leader confirms equal payments on way

Glasgow City Council leader Susan Aitken has told the City Administration Committee that the first settlements to the workers who called for equal pay were paid on Wednesday. The move comes after the council agreed a £285m property-backed funding deal with Legal & General. The firm will invest the sum over 30 years in return for security for 473 council-owned commercial property assets. Through its subsidiary City Property Glasgow, the council will retain ownership of the assets. Cllr Aitken said: "This deal not only means we can meet our responsibilities on equal pay – but do so while safeguarding the future of the city's

property assets in public use". The local authority agreed to pay out at least £500m earlier this year, more than a decade on from the start of the dispute.

[Glasgow Evening Times](#) [The Scotsman](#) [The Herald](#)    [The Times](#)   

Firefighters' pension win could cost government £4bn

The government has lost the right to appeal against a court ruling that said pension reforms that closed off existing defined benefit schemes to younger firefighters constituted discrimination on the basis of age, race and equal pay. At least a dozen doctors are taking legal action on a similar pensions matter, in a case which has now entered the Employment Tribunal. In 2015, two sections of the NHS Pension Scheme were closed, moving many NHS staff onto a newer 2015 scheme with less valuable retirement benefits, the BMA stated. However, it also allowed some older doctors to stay on the previous schemes. Were the firefighters' ruling to be extended to all relevant public sector pension schemes, it could cost the government £4bn a year, according to Treasury chief secretary Liz Truss.

[The Times](#)    [FT Adviser](#)   

HEALTHCARE

Ireland's doctors call for equal pay to address consultant shortage

Several of Ireland's most prominent doctors have called for equal pay for hospital consultants to address a waiting list of more than half a million people. The Irish Hospital Consultants' Association (IHCA) says public hospital consultants recruited after 2012 are paid 30% less than consultants recruited before that date, causing a significant shortage of qualified consultants. A spokesman for the IHCA said that the difference in pay would be about €40,000 for consultants, who are paid more than €100,000 a year. The #CareCantWait campaign is backed by doctors including Rhona Mahony and Peter Boylan; Dr Mahony, a consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist and former master of the National Maternity Hospital in Holles Street, Dublin, said: "There are so many simple procedures that can radically improve a patient's quality of life, and to not be able to offer that to patients in a country like Ireland is really quite distressing. Mainly for patients, but also for those charged with giving care."

[The Times](#)   

ENTERTAINMENT

BBC pay: Claudia Winkleman, Zoe Ball and Vanessa Feltz among top earners

Claudia Winkleman, Zoe Ball and Vanessa Feltz have all moved up the BBC's star salaries list, to eighth, ninth and tenth respectively, after the corporation's efforts to tackle an equal pay problem. Match of the Day's Gary Lineker is still at the top of the list, on an unchanged £1.75m per year. Damian Collins, the chair of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport select committee, said: "It is welcome to see more women named on the high earners' list. However, this masks the wider issue of equal pay across all levels of the BBC workforce. The rising talent bill is concerning in light of plans to remove free TV licences from all but the poorest of those over 75. We'll be raising this with BBC executives when they appear before the committee later this month".

[BBC News](#)    [Financial Times](#)   

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Belfast solicitor awarded £270k in equal pay claim

The Industrial Tribunal has awarded over £270,000 to a Belfast solicitor, after finding that she had not been paid the same as her colleagues. It found that several of the claimant's colleagues were promoted to new roles with higher salaries but that the work they carried out in these new roles was comparable to the work she undertook and, therefore, did not merit more pay. The firm at the centre of the case has stated its intention to appeal the finding. John Kelly is a solicitor specialising in employment law at Worthingtons, said companies should take the Tribunal's decision as a spur to carry out an equal pay audit to identify and eliminate pay inequalities.

[Belfast Telegraph](#)   

ARMED FORCES

Irish ministers briefed on €10m remuneration package for Defence Forces personnel

Paschal Donohoe, Ireland's Minister for Finance, and the Minister of State at the Department of Defence have briefed the Cabinet on pay restoration for the Defence Forces. A report compiled by the Public Service Pay Commission has recommended an increase in the Military Service Allowance of 10%, boosting pay for the vast majority of personnel by €602-€675 per annum. The Government is to carry out a review into pay structures in the organisation, including a review of technical pay which will affect 2,500 specialists in the organisation such as mechanics, chefs, engineers and technicians.

[RTE](#)   

INTERNATIONAL

Congress joins U.S. Soccer equal pay fight

The U.S. House Democratic Women's Caucus wants U.S. Soccer to come up with a plan to "address institutionalized gender discrimination", and send them official documents detailing the salary, bonuses and prize money for the women's and men's national teams. The request came the day after the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team (USWNT) made it to the 2019 Women's World Cup Final. "The inequities that these women champions have faced as members of the USWNT are indefensible," the members wrote Wednesday in a letter to President Carlos Cordeiro. "The U.S. Soccer Federation should work to correct course and close the wage gap so that the only thing women athletes are fighting for is the world title or a gold medal." The letter also stated it is "overwhelmingly clear" that the woman's team has generated more revenue for U.S. Soccer than the men over the past three years, noting the relatively large television ratings during the current World Cup. The USWNT players are paid around 38% less than their male counterparts.

[Washington Post](#)    [Florida Phoenix](#)    [Roll Call](#)   

Spotlight turns to Philadelphia pay-equity case

There are presently 16 statewide bans in the U.S. on using salary history in the hiring process, and 13 local bans, one of which was instituted by the city of Philadelphia. The ban is being challenged by the city's Chamber of Commerce, and the case has progressed to the Third Circuit Court of Appeals. Thea A. Paolini is an attorney in the business and employment practice group of Nauman Smith, says the time is approaching for either a Supreme Court decision or Congressional action to clarify the loophole in the Equal Pay Act which allows salary history to be used by employers as a factor in setting pay.

[LVB](#)   

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