

Whakatū wāhine Women stand up!

VOTES AND EQUALITY

125 years ago women in New Zealand won their right to vote. It was a long struggle, but one that New Zealand women and their supporters did not shy away from.

When success came in 1893, suffragists continued the campaign for equality for women. They wanted equal pay and equal opportunities; so women could stand for parliament, own land, earn their own income and choose how they wanted to live.

125 years on and we're still working on some of those things!

One thing we have yet to achieve is to **removing the difference in pay between men and women.**

Women are paid less than men, right across the workforce and, apart from being utterly unfair, it is also illegal. The gender pay gap reduces women's ability to provide for themselves, their families and whānau, and to save for retirement.

There are many reasons for this gender pay gap, and unions are working on eliminating every excuse.

One of the main reasons for the gender pay gap is the biases we have as a society about men and women. For example, we tend to value 'masculine' traits more highly than 'feminine' traits.

We pay more for what's seen as 'men's work', like engineering, than we do for 'women's' work, like nursing. That's why jobs that have mostly women in them are undervalued and underpaid.

Men also get paid more even when they do the same job as women; they get faster promotions, better workplace conditions and opportunities, and take less time out of paid work to do childcare.

The imbalance between women's and men's pay add up over a working life. Women end up with less financial freedom, fewer choices for themselves and their families, right into retirement.

Belonging to your union is key to creating a gender equal Aotearoa.

Unions are negotiating equal pay with employers, and taking cases of unequal pay to Court when we have to. The Government is now on board with gender equality and is working to eliminate the gender pay imbalance with us.

You can support the cause by joining your union.

