

Speech by the
Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth,
Ekin Deligöz,
virtually delivered, 12 April 2022
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Minister Bonetti,
(Elena Bonetti, Italian Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family, host)
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you very much, Minister Bonetti, for inviting me to this conference. Unfortunately my Minister, Anne Spiegel, had to cancel and has asked me to take her place. My name is Ekin Deligöz and I am the Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs. I have listened to the previous speakers with great interest. Let me say this: I would like to express my sincere respect to you in France and Italy for what you have achieved. I am happy to present the plans of the new German Federal Government for this legislative term to improve the situation of women in the labour market.

Although the principle of equal pay for equal work has applied for more than 60 years in Germany, women still earn less than men. The unadjusted gender pay gap amounts to 18 per cent. Even if all the other important pay-related conditions – such as qualifications, job performed, profession or hours worked – were the same, the adjusted gender pay gap would still be six per cent in Germany. In typical women's occupations, the average pay is twelve euros per hour, in typical men's occupations, it is 20 euros. Regarding pensions, the gender pay gap leads to an even larger gender pension gap, which stands at 53 per cent. Women's labour market

participation has increased strongly over time, but almost half of the women work part-time. In summary: in Germany, we are still far from achieving true gender equality and equal pay between women and men. That is why it takes targets and measures to support women's employment

We have made progress over the past few decades, for example, by introducing and further developing parental allowance, by massively expanding child day care, by introducing a minimum wage, by adopting the Pay Transparency Act and the Act for More Women in Leadership Positions. But we are still a long way from achieving our goal. To get there, it is worthwhile looking at the steps taken by other countries. There is still a lot we can learn from France, Minister Moreno, when it comes to providing reliable childcare services.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The new Federal Government has set itself ambitious goals in order to achieve gender equality in this decade. The Cabinet has already approved raising the minimum wage to 12 euros per hour. This increase will benefit mainly women who mostly work in low-paid sectors, such as retail or restaurants. We also strengthen women's paid employment by freeing up time for them. We aim to promote household-related services, for example. In this regard, we consider it important to encourage employment that is subject to social insurance. And finally, we want to work more decisively to close the gender pay gap. To do so, we aim to further develop the Pay Transparency Act. The EU Pay Transparency Directive will be crucial in this further development. In the ongoing negotiations, we support an ambitious design for the EU Pay Transparency Directive. These projects are vital and will make a major contribution to gender equality.

Our gender equality policy focuses on a gender–equal sharing of care responsibilities. Our aim is to achieve work–life balance for women and men. That is why in this legislative period, we will introduce paid parental leave after a child's birth and an additional non–transferable partner month of parental allowance. This will help to create incentives for fathers to take on more unpaid care work and thus reduce the burden on mothers.

We all have achieved a lot and can learn much from one another about good measures. But we are also facing challenges – some of them are similar in all our countries. That is why it is good that we are exchanging views today. Thank you very much.