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**Equal Pay Act at 40**  
**Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2011**

**Fawcett**  
closing the inequality gap  
wo since 1866 men

# The road to equal pay: a new approach

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# About Fawcett

- the UK's leading campaign for equality between women and men
- Trace our roots back to 1866, to Millicent Fawcett's peaceful struggle for women's votes
- Our vision is of a society in which women and men enjoy equality at work, at home, and in public life

# About this presentation

- The gender pay gap...
- ... in context
- Equality Act 2010: a missed opportunity
- Where next for equal pay?

# The gender pay gap...

# Gender pay gap

- 40 years since the Equal Pay Act
- Gender pay gap is 16%
- 45000 women taking equal pay cases
- 12.2% of FTSE 100 board members are women
- Onus on women to challenge discrimination
- Legislation has not done enough

## Why?

- **Women's worth undervalued in the workplace**
- **Motherhood penalty**
- **More women in part-time work**
- **Direct discrimination**
- **Lack of pressure to implement change**

## **The broader picture**

- **64% of low paid workers are women**
- **40% of ethnic minority women live in poverty**
- **Retired women earn on average just over half the income of retired men**
- **Women are more likely to depend on state support to boost their income**



**...in context**

# Women face a 'triple Jeopardy' of cuts

1. Cuts to jobs
2. Cuts to services and benefits
3. Women to 'fill the gaps'

# What will this mean for women?

- **Rising female unemployment – where will the women go?**
- **Growing, not decreasing, gender pay gap**
- **Reduction in women's incomes**
- **Reduction in women's financial independence**
- **Increase in domestic and volunteering responsibilities**

## **Equal Pay Act at 40...**

- **We can no longer assume a steady move forwards**
- **In fact, we anticipate a roll back on women's equality**

# Equality Act 2010: a missed opportunity

# Section 78

- **Gender pay audits (section 78)**
  - Focus on large companies
  - Only if voluntary action fails
  - 3 year lead-in time
- **Puts responsibility on employer to tackle pay gap**
- **Voluntary action has failed**
- **What gets measured gets done**

# **No action on equal pay**

- **Government “will not commence, enact or repeal section 78”**
- **kicked into long grass**
- **Non-implementation is a step backwards**
- **But the clause is not gone for good**

# Where next for equal pay?



# Tackling the motherhood penalty

- Extending the right to request flexible working
- Parental leave proposals
- Organising work to suit modern families
- Challenging workplace assumptions
- For every month a father takes off in the first year of a baby's life, the mother's future earnings rise by 7%

# **The budget challenge**

- **The greatest threat to women's economic equality is the cuts**
- **Women's employment opportunities are threatened**
- **Public sector pay freeze, support for women on low incomes and lone parents**
- **Fawcett launched judicial review: HM Treasury did not do a gender equality impact assessment of emergency budget**

## **Outcomes...**

- **The case was not successful in court, BUT**
- **Government conceded in court it had failed in its duties**
- **CSR equalities statement**
- **EHRC section 31 investigation**
- **Raised awareness of the law and the risk to women's equality**
- **Slowly changing processes within government**

# **Cutting Women Out? campaign**

- **Working in Whitehall and Westminster to improve processes for considering gender impact**
- **Working with economists to produce better data**
- **Working with journalists to improve debate on economy**
- **Supporting women to campaign against the cuts**

**Find out more...**

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closing the inequality gap  
wo**since**men  
1866

**To join Fawcett, and for more on our  
campaigns...**

**[www.fawcettsociety.org.uk](http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk)**

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