



Gender Pay  
Gap Report  
**2024**

Organising  
for Fairness at  
Work and Justice  
in Society



SIPTU General  
Secretary  
Joe Cunningham

SIPTU, the Services, Industrial, Professional and Technical Union, is Ireland's largest trade union.

We represent over 180,000 workers from virtually every category of employment across almost every sector of the Irish economy. We provide unparalleled expertise and support services to assist workers in their dealings with employers, government and industrial relations institutions. SIPTU is an organising union. Our focus is on building power, growing our union and recruiting and engaging new members.

Workers are strongest when we are united - that's why we believe in 'One Big Union' that brings people together regardless of their trade or grade to build power in the workplace.

We are supporters of the domestic gender pay gap disclosure legislation, which we campaigned for over many years. SIPTU also is a supporter of EU Directive 2023/970 to strengthen the application of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value between men and women through pay transparency and enforcement mechanisms. We intend to campaign to ensure a strong transposition of the Directive in Ireland. We see a constructive role for trade unions in negotiating and agreeing remedial action plans with employers, some of whom have collaborated productively with us on this issue in the period since the first gender pay gap reports were published.

We are an employer in our own right - and we too, in this document, are reporting on our own gender pay gap for the third year. We continue to aim for a more even spread of men and women across the organisation, reflecting the society that we serve. We remain aware of the challenges that women can encounter with certain roles, such as the need for travel at short notice or for night work. Together with the representatives of the our staff, the Union is actively tackling these issues.

Long-term progress has been made towards inclusion and advancement of women within the trade union movement in general and SIPTU in particular. However, that progress will not be linear. The gap that we have (which, on a mean basis, has continued to reduce) does not arise from unequal pay in particular roles. Our wage bands and increments are applied on the same basis to men and women. Rather our gender pay gap arises from different representation of men and women within different roles in SIPTU.

Our union continues to work hard for a more equitable society now and in the future. Current campaigns include:

- Respect at Work, committing politicians from across the political spectrum to legislate to strengthen workers' rights and promote collective bargaining
- Our advocacy and campaigning for the needs of particular sectors - including Section 39 Organisation workers, care workers and early years educators struggling for fair pay treatment
- The TransFormWork 2 campaign, in tandem with social partners from 7 EU countries, to find solutions for managing the effects of artificial intelligence on the future of work

We know that our role as an advocate for equitable treatment makes it incumbent on us to act equitably towards our own employees. We will always do that.

**Joe Cunningham**  
**SIPTU General Secretary**  
**December 2024**

## Our gender pay gap metrics

Our snapshot date was 30 June 2024, so we measured our gender pay gap over the period 1 July 2023 - 30 June 2024. The calculations covered our 250 employees at the snapshot date, of whom 139 were women and 111 were men. We do not include separate figures for temporary workers (as we do not have any) or part-time workers (all of whom are women and working part-time by choice with the option to revert to full-time).

It is important to note that the Irish legislative requirements are binary with regard to gender (specifying female compared to male). Whilst we are reporting our statistics in the manner set out by law, at SIPTU, we recognise and support all gender identities.

SIPTU 2024 - All employees

Hourly Remuneration	
Mean	Median
<b>11.3%</b>	<b>10.8%</b>
Voucher Recipients	
M%	F%
<b>75.7%</b>	<b>38.8%</b>
Voucher Gap	
Mean	Median
<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
Lower Quartile	
M%	F%
<b>42.9%</b>	<b>57.1%</b>
Lower Middle Quartile	
M%	F%
<b>21.0%</b>	<b>79.0%</b>
Upper Middle Quartile	
M%	F%
<b>42.9%</b>	<b>57.1%</b>
Upper Quartile	
M%	F%
<b>71.0%</b>	<b>29.0%</b>
Benefits in Kind	
M%	F%
<b>82.9%</b>	<b>38.1%</b>

## The figures explained

**Hourly Remuneration** refers to the difference in total earnings between men and women on a mean (average) and median (middle ranking) basis.

**Voucher Recipients** sets out the proportion of men and of women who received a voucher. The legislation, regulations and government guidance refer to bonuses and state that vouchers should be regarded as such. SIPTU does not pay bonuses as commonly understood and does not regard the vouchers it awards as bonuses. The figures given here for voucher recipients and the voucher gap are intended to satisfy the legal disclosure requirement relating to bonuses. Usually, staff receive a voucher to mark the travel obligations that affect certain roles.

**Voucher Gap** refers to the gap between men and women on the value of all vouchers taken together. All vouchers awarded were of the same amount in the relevant period, so there was no gap.

**The lower quartile** sets out, in respect of the lowest paid quarter of our people by hourly remuneration, what percentage are men and what percentage are women.

**The upper quartile** sets out, in respect of the highest paid quarter of our people by hourly remuneration, what percentage are men and what percentage are women. The same logic applies to the **lower middle quartile** and the **upper middle quartile**.

**Benefits in kind** sets out the percentage of our people who are in receipt of non-cash benefits of monetary value. In SIPTU's case, since pensions are not technically a benefit in kind, this primarily concerns car insurance, which is received by a number of colleagues whose roles with the union require considerable amounts of travel.

## The reason why we have a gender pay gap at SIPTU

There is a gender pay gap at SIPTU because the gender split within different roles in the Union is not identical. More union organisers are men than women. Women predominate in our administration staff grades. We are, by encouraging applications from those under-represented, actively encouraging more even gender representation in roles where the imbalance between men and women is pronounced.

The imbalance is affected by wider societal conditions, such as the continued tendency for women to shoulder the bulk of caring and household responsibilities. Though at times change can appear slow, it is happening, in SIPTU and in wider society.



## The Arise Programme

SIPTU's ARISE Women's Leadership Development Programme was founded in 2022, in recognition of the fact that the trade union movement in Ireland and internationally has been (and at this moment remains) male dominated. A key objective of the ARISE Programme is to equip women among our staff and activists with tools and techniques that build confidence and encourage them to take advantage of opportunities for promotion.

By creating a collaborative and supportive network, ARISE provides an outcomes-focused opportunity for women to discuss the challenges and barriers they face in their personal and professional journey, in an environment where they are supported by other women. This high degree of support has encouraged many of our women activists to participate at a higher level within the union, including presiding over conference proceedings and participating in media events.

Since its first year, 34 women staff and 30 women activists have successfully participated in the programme, which is now embedded in the Education and Training Department, SIPTU College's training calendar.

The ARISE programme provided a pivotal opportunity for the organisation to pilot a mentoring programme amongst staff, where colleagues at Sector Organiser grade engaged in a mentor training module to facilitate a mentor/mentee relationship with Arise participants. This pilot programme was a success, providing the template for a formal mentoring initiative that will involve all grades across the organisation.





Photo below: Mary O'Sullivan, SIPTU Honorary President (right) with Alan Lindley, SIPTU Honorary Vice-President (left) with SIPTU National Equality Committee launching a new SIPTU Gender Inclusive Language Toolkit in Liberty Hall, June 2024.

Photo above: Arise Strand II participants (staff) at a session in the SIPTU Tullamore office in 2024.



Poster (right) advertising an event which was held in May 2024 to celebrate the life of Sheila Conroy, women's rights campaigner and the first woman elected to the National Executive Council of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU) in 1976. SIPTU Deputy General Secretary Ethel Buckley spoke at the event in Liberty Hall.

THE PEOPLE'S COLLEGE CHOR  
presents

# "AN EXTRA-ORDINARY LIFE"

A celebratory event marking the trail-blazing life and work of Sheila Conroy (1917-2012), tireless campaigner for the rights of women in the workplace and in society. A woman of many 'firsts' Sheila Conroy was the:

- First woman elected to the National Executive of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union
- First woman Chair of the RTE Authority
- First woman to chair any State board
- First woman President of the People's College Adult Education Association

**TUESDAY 21ST MAY, 2024**  
Liberty Hall Theatre at 7.30 pm  
(doors open 6.30 pm)  
Duration – 1 hour 20 minutes approx.

Tickets: €10  
(available at the door or on [www.eventbrite.ie](http://www.eventbrite.ie))

Concert featuring the Choir with Fiannuala Richardson (President, The People's College) and Ethel Buckley (Deputy General Secretary SIPTU) speakers with special guests Mick O'Brien, Zoë Conway and John McIntyre

Photograph of Sheila Conroy used with kind permission of the RTE Archive

PEOPLE'S COLLEGE  
www.peoplescollege.ie



Alison Regan

## Just go for it

**Don't be thinking  
"I can't do that".  
Just go for it.  
Be positive about  
what you can do.**

I stayed home for 4 years after I had my eldest son.

I wanted some sort of

independence though, so I took an electronics course, worked in electronics for 10 years, then became an engineering operative in Dublin Bus. That was probably the busiest period of my life. I worked nights and I raised a family by day. It was during this period that I got active in the union movement. I became a union rep and got involved with the Dublin Council of Trade Unions of which I am now the vice president, the SIPTU Equality Committee, the SIPTU Global Solidarity Committee, the ICTU Women's Committee. Three years ago, I went for a full-time job in SIPTU as an Assistant Industrial Organiser, and got it.

Some roles still have a lot more men than women in them, in the union movement and in the wider world. Before my SIPTU days, when I was an engineering operative, at one point it was just me and one other girl: we had to help each other, we're still friends. Gender equality is making strides, but there's still further to go. In SIPTU, there are some really impressive women with a wealth of experience that anyone new could learn from.

I think SIPTU is a great organisation to work for. I took part recently in the Arise Women's Development Programme. It's all women, you talk about what you want to talk about, you give each other confidence to go for more senior roles. There's also mentoring available to help you develop in the direction you want to.

I think women are sometimes self-critical to their detriment about their own abilities: "I don't think I'd be able to do that, I don't think that's possible". Most of the time, it is possible, you just have to go for it. I am absolutely clear that the Union is supporting women who want to rise up through the ranks.

***Alison Regan - SIPTU Organiser***

## Looking at Working Conditions

Certain roles within SIPTU, such as that of Union Organiser, may be perceived as more appealing to men than to women due to factors such as travel requirements and unsociable hours. Sometimes the perception can be worse than the reality. Efforts are being made, in the ARISE programme and elsewhere, to give a clear picture of what senior roles in our Union involve.

It is true however that some of our roles do involve travel at short notice and night and weekend working. It is important to us to maintain a high standard of responsiveness to our members; however, we also need to be fair to our Organiser grades.

Recommendations have been made by Arise programme participants to Union leadership around travel requirements in particular, and these will be the subject of discussion with staff representatives.

## Equitable Hiring Practice

We continue to take care that our job advertisements should be phrased in a gender-neutral manner and that gender bias training has been provided to all of our interview boards. We try, consistently with fair treatment of all applicants, to look for balance in the gender of our interviewees. This year a majority of applicants for Sector Organiser roles (52%) in the Union were women.

## Supporting our Employees

Just as we look for best practice for our union members in terms of employer support, we aim to apply the same ourselves through our own internal collective bargaining process.

Our policies on menopause in the workplace and on domestic violence and coercive control are now in place. We have gone beyond the minimum levels required by government. For instance, in cases of domestic violence, we allow for 10 days leave rather than the legally required 5, and we will provide help in sourcing emergency accommodation.

Our term time policy which gives our people the ability to take periods of school holiday off work, with the reduction in pay evened out over the course of the year, is a popular option in SIPTU, with typically over 10% of our people availing of it each year.



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