

ECONOMIC & SOCIAL COUNCIL



2019 TOPICS

Global Wage Gap
International Arms Trade and the World Economy

2019 TOPIC: GLOBAL WAGE GAP

Why this is important?

The gender pay gap is an issue as is the lower wages across the board for all individuals in certain countries. The wage gap encompasses all genders and races and has a negative impact on the global economy. The pay gap is the difference in men's and women's median earnings, usually reported as either the earnings ratio between men and women or as an actual pay gap. The median value is the middle value, with equal numbers of full-time workers earning more and earning less. In 2016, median annual earnings in the United States for women was: \$41,554 and for men: \$51,640. Although these wages differ in the United States at 20%, there are plenty of other countries that include gaps of similar size, including Uganda at 17%.

Topic Summary and Background:

In 2016, women working full time in the United States typically were paid only 80% of what men were being paid. The wage gap has an extensive history and has narrowed since 1960, largely due to women's progress in education and workforce participation. At the rate of change currently, women are expected to have pay equity by 2059. If change continues at the slower rate that has been seen since 2001, women will not reach pay equity until 2119. The gender pay gap has lifelong financial effects including contributing to women's poverty as well as affecting the poverty level of entire families where the sole earner or breadwinner in the household is female. This poverty would span outside of the working years due to smaller Social Security earnings and pensions come retirement. In 2017, 42% of mothers with children under the age of 18 are their families' primary or sole breadwinners. Due to this fact, men and children are also directly affected by the gender pay gap. Beyond the United States, the entire world has pay gaps for their women and men. The gender pay gap in weekly earnings tends to be slightly smaller than the pay gap in terms of annual earnings. In 2016, the pay gap in median weekly earnings was 18%. The World Economic Forum reported worldwide gender equality will not happen until approximately year 2095. In 2017, Donald Trump rescinded equal pay protections, including rolling back requirements for federal contractors to comply with labor and civil rights laws and halting implementation of a data collection tool to increase wage transparency.

Issues to be addressed in a Resolution:

1. How can the United Nations incentivize corporations and national governments to promote pro-worker policies, increasing employment and wages at the same time?
2. How can the UN partner with non-profit organizations to keep the human rights of laborers intact as well as decrease workplace discrimination?
3. What measures can the UN take to counteract the social harms of wage inequality in the short term? Will these solutions be viable in a larger implementation of wage-equalizing policies?
4. How can the United Nations create an education base and use it as a means for economic growth, increase social progress and stop the vicious cycle of low education that is creating further pay inequality?

Resources

Countries with the Biggest Gender Pay Gaps

<https://www.businessinsider.com/countries-with-the-biggest-gender-pay-gaps-2017-10>

Global Wage Gap Continues to Widen

<http://www.worldwatch.org/global-wage-gap-continues-widen-0>

Global Wage Gap will take 202 years to close says World Economic Forum

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/18/global-gender-pay-gap-will-take-202-years-to-close-says-world-economic-forum>

2019 TOPIC: INTERNATIONAL ARMS TRADE AND THE WORLD ECONOMY

Why this is important?

While all states have an inherent right to self-defense and may use arms as a means of security in compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and International Humanitarian Law, weapons often cause more problems than they mitigate. Weapons are force multipliers, assisting armed forces and police to generate order and security. But these same weapons may instead bring havoc on a massive scale when government forces start misusing the arsenals at their disposal, arms from legal stocks are diverted into illicit use, or already existing illicit arms arrive in crisis areas. UNODA—United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs holds an international conference and makes annual reports regarding the findings of small arms status in multiple nations. The illicit flow of small arms and light weapons undermine security and the rule of law.

Topic Summary and Background:

Illegal Arms are often a factor behind the forced displacement of civilians and massive human rights violations. The international community, especially the United Nations General Assembly, has shown efforts in innumerable ways and angles to stop the flow of illicit trade within the context of black markets, armed-conflict regions and post-conflict nations. Because the trade is often made between unscrupulous officials and terrorist groups, it often leads the way to armed conflicts and general unrest in given regions, and causing unstoppable violations of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights; it is essential for the United Nations to propose a solid solution for the illicit trade of conventional arms. The United Nations previously created a resolution in regards to the trading of Small Arms and Light Weapons in 2013. In this resolution the member states of the United Nations reiterated their primary responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations to maintain peace and security. This resolution must address this concerns as well as maintain individual rights to possess and use weapons under appropriate circumstances.

Issues to be addressed in a Resolution:

1. What tools can the United Nations utilize to create greater transparency and better tracking methods of large arms trades or weapons movements?
2. Could sections of the resolution created in 2013 regarding Small Arms be utilized in larger weapon sales and mass production/sale?
3. What incentive programs can the United Nations launch for States to closely watch the sales of arms in their country?
4. Can the United Nations recognize certain scale trades to be recognized as a threat and go through a more thorough sales process? If so, how is this implemented? If not, why?

Resources

Asia and Middle East Lead Rising Trend Arms Imports, U.S Exports Grow Significantly

<https://www.sipri.org/news/press-release/2018/asia-and-middle-east-lead-rising-trend-arms-imports-us-exports-grow-significantly-says-sipri>

Security Council Adopts First Ever Resolution Dedicated to Small Arms

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2013/sc11131.doc.htm>

Mozambique becomes 100th State to Ratify U.N. Arms Trade Treaty

<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20181215/p2q/00m/0in/053000c>

New Arms Trade Treaty in Canada

<https://lfpres.com/opinion/columnists/simpson-new-arms-trade-treaty-will-change-the-way-canada-does-business>