



Ms Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Brussels
BELGIUM

27 February 2026

Dear President,

On behalf of the European business community, we are writing to express our unwavering support for the principle of equal pay for equal work, a cornerstone of the European project since the 1957 Treaty of Rome. While our members are fully committed to closing the gender pay gap and fostering labour market equality, we are deeply concerned that the current trajectory of the Pay Transparency Directive risks undermining these very goals through unworkable administrative complexity.

With less than four months remaining before the transposition deadline, a majority of Member States have not made sufficient progress to date in order to meet the deadline. This delay is not due to a lack of will, but rather the unprecedented complexity of the Directive and the significant cultural and systemic shifts it demands.

To ensure this legislation is operational, effective, and efficient, we urge the European Commission and Member States to launch a two-year "stop-the-clock" process. This pause is essential to:

- Simplify requirements to ensure they are proportionate for SMEs and large enterprises alike.
- Respect national industrial relations, allowing for better integration with existing national systems.
- Empower social partners, ensuring that employers and trade unions can lead the implementation in a way that reflects labour market realities.

Rushed implementation threatens to produce fragmented, low-quality legislation that increases the administrative burden on companies without delivering meaningful progress for women. Legislation is only successful if it is implementable in a clear, proportionate and legally certain manner. By allowing for this adjustment, we can avoid legal uncertainty and focus on achieving concrete results rather than mere procedural compliance.

Based on our extensive engagement at both EU and national levels, we have enclosed a targeted set of urgent amendments designed to make the Directive more workable while maintaining its core objectives.



We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these proposals with you at your earliest convenience to ensure that the Directive becomes a success for both workers and the businesses that employ them.

We thank you for your attention and trust in your constructive consideration of our request.

Yours sincerely,

Markus J. Beyrer

Enclosure: 1