

Count Us In!

In 2015, we celebrate International Women's Day as women around the world gather to march for women's social and economic autonomy. The 4th Global Action of the World March of Women will bring together women activists from every continent on the planet, united in their demands for a sustainable and caring economy and for social justice, peace and democracy.

Twenty years ago, governments adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action – a ground-breaking road map for governments, civil society, trade unions and private sector actors for the advancement of gender equality and women's rights.

Twenty years on, the challenges remain stark:

- Women's trade union membership stands on average at 40 per cent, yet women occupy only 15 per cent of the top decision-making positions in their organisations.
- Women's labour force participation rates are stagnating at 26 percentage points lower than those of men.
- Women continue to predominate in informal, low-quality, precarious and undervalued jobs.
- Women's average wages are between 4 and 36 per cent less than those of men.
- Gender-based violence remains an all-too-tolerated feature of the workplace, with no comprehensive international legal standard to outlaw it.

The long shadow of austerity continues to affect women heavily, cutting jobs where women have traditionally worked, slashing public services which women tend to rely on more than men and increasing their already disproportionate share of care responsibilities. Women living in poverty are particularly vulnerable to economic policies that redistribute wealth away from the 99% to the 1%, whilst their labour subsidises global and local economies by providing the care services that governments won't fund.

On 8th March 2015 the ITUC calls for unions, governments, policy makers and business to adopt an economic agenda for women. An agenda that includes a jobs and growth plan to increase women's access to decent work. An economic agenda that will tackle structural barriers to women's effective labour force participation, including through adequate investment in care provision, creating decent care jobs for women and men, family-friendly workplaces and workplaces free from violence. An economic agenda that will lift women and families out of poverty and provide a sustainable model of growth.

After centuries of counting on us, on this International Women's Day working women everywhere say, "It's time to Count Us In!"

- Count Us In to the economy
- Count Us In to the labour force
- Count Us In to decision-making
- Count Us In to leadership