

France: Metal industry adopts agreement on gender equality

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The metalworking industry in France has adopted an agreement on gender equality in the workplace, the first in ten years. The agreement aims to make companies in the sector more attractive to women and is supported by most unions. CGT did not sign it.

A previous agreement of 2014 was signed for an unlimited period. Then the Covid pandemic slowed down discussions, and the social partners spent seven years renegotiating. The agreement is a guide for action. It does not impose anything, but it makes suggestions, for example to:

- ✓ Increase the number of women in the sector
- ✓ Promote women's professional development and career paths
- ✓ Continue to reduce the gender pay gap

The metallurgy sector currently employs around 1.6 million people in France. By signing this agreement, the social partners took advantage of new opportunities offered by the general collective agreement for the sector which came into force at the beginning of this year.

As far as fair pay is concerned, the metalworking sector is already a good performer, with a gender pay gap of just 3% compared with an average of 13.9% in France as an average. In manufacturing, the gap is narrowing, but still too slowly, so companies still need to make an effort. The same applies to recruitment, since women are still under-represented (23% in 2023 compared with 22% in 2016) in the metalworking professions.

The agreement also contains guidelines for companies and encourages partnerships with other organisations than the social partners.

Edited by industriAll Europe.