

## Cheaper rail tickets for Germany's women

20th March, 2019



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via Gregoire Fossemalle on flickr.com

Women in Germany will be able to enjoy cheaper rail travel on Monday. They will be given a 21 per cent reduction in fares as part of Germany's Equal Pay Day commemoration.

Equal Pay Day is dedicated to raising awareness of the gender pay gap. It symbolizes the number of additional days a woman must work in a year to earn what men earn. The exact day differs in each country, depending on pay disparity. It is enthusiastically celebrated in Germany, where women are paid 21 per cent less compared to men in terms of average gross hourly earnings. Berlin's public transport company is reducing the cost of its day travel ticket by 21 per cent, charging €5.50 instead of the usual €7.00.

Berlin's metro system was wholeheartedly backing its Equal Pay Day initiative. It is advertising it with an online ad that vows to actually close the gender pay gap. It says: "Gender-specific wage gap. Sounds stupid. Is stupid. We'll close it." Critics of the cheaper day pass say it won't necessarily help women as most workers in the city buy monthly travel passes. The day passes are largely purchased by tourists. Men could find themselves in trouble if they try to buy the cheaper day pass. The Metro said men found using the discounted tickets would be treated like regular fare evaders. Any man caught with the day pass will be deemed a fare dodger and receive a €60 fine.

Sources: [dw.com](http://dw.com) / [thelocal.de](http://thelocal.de) / [nytimes.com](http://nytimes.com)

## Writing

Everyone should get the same pay, whatever job they do. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

women / Germany / rail travel / awareness / disparity / celebrated / cost / ticket / metro / initiative / advertising / vows / tourists / be in trouble / pass / fare dodger

## True / False

- a) Women in Germany will get cheaper rail travel for a week. T / F
- b) Men in Germany earn an average of 21% more than women. T / F
- c) Equal Pay Day isn't so popular in Germany. T / F
- d) Berlin's subway system has reduced a rail pass by €5.50. T / F
- e) Berlin's Metro said the gender pay gap was stupid. T / F
- f) Most workers buy a monthly travel pass. T / F
- g) Men are also eligible to buy the cheaper travel pass. T / F
- h) Men could get a €60 fine for buying the discounted travel pass. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                      |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. <b>reduction</b>  | a. bother     |
| 2. <b>dedicated</b>  | b. precise    |
| 3. <b>additional</b> | c. total      |
| 4. <b>exact</b>      | d. scheme     |
| 5. <b>gross</b>      | e. devoted    |
| 6. <b>backing</b>    | f. mainly     |
| 7. <b>initiative</b> | g. considered |
| 8. <b>largely</b>    | h. cut        |
| 9. <b>trouble</b>    | i. supporting |
| 10. <b>deemed</b>    | j. extra      |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you think of men earning more than women?
- c) Should other companies offer discounts to women?
- d) What do you think of the online ad?
- e) How much will the discounted travel pass help women?
- f) What do you think of men getting fined for buying the travel pass?
- g) Should Equal Pay Day be every day?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the leaders of Equal Pay Day?

## Phrase Match

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Women in Germany will be able          | a. men earn                     |
| 2. dedicated to raising                   | b. Equal Pay Day initiative     |
| 3. to earn what                           | c. purchased by tourists        |
| 4. pay                                    | d. be deemed a fare dodger      |
| 5. average gross hourly                   | e. awareness                    |
| 6. wholeheartedly backing its             | f. to enjoy cheaper rail travel |
| 7. it won't necessarily                   | g. evaders                      |
| 8. The day passes are largely             | h. disparity                    |
| 9. regular fare                           | i. help women                   |
| 10. Any man caught with the day pass will | j. earnings                     |

## Discussion – Student B

- Should the women get cheaper rail tickets?
- Why do men get paid more?
- How difficult is it to achieve equal pay?
- How happy would you be with cheaper rail fares?
- What should we do on Equal Pay Day?
- Should male workers insist on equal pay for female colleagues?
- Are men or women better workers?
- How do you think men feel about the pay disparity?

## Spelling

- a 21 per cent decnutrio
- Equal Pay Day esetnv
- dedicated to raising sreneasaw
- The eatxc day differs
- depending on pay tasiyipdr
- average gross hourly earnings
- hheteweoldylar backing its Equal Pay Day
- Gender-iefsicpc wage gap
- it won't caseinylser help women
- largely psduhrcae by tourists
- treated like regular fare vsdreea
- deemed a fare rogedd

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. e	3. j	4. b	5. c
6. i	7. d	8. f	9. a	10. g

## Role Play

### Role A – Pay

You think pay is the area in greatest need of gender equality. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their areas aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): housework, political leadership or corporate management.

### Role B – Housework

You think housework is the area in greatest need of gender equality. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their areas aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): pay, political leadership or corporate management.

### Role C – Political Leadership

You think political leadership is the area in greatest need of gender equality. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their areas aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): housework, pay or corporate management.

### Role D – Corporate Management

You think corporate management is the area in greatest need of gender equality. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their areas aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): housework, political leadership or pay.

## Speaking – Equality

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important things for gender equality at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| • corporate management | • pay             |
| • political leadership | • housework       |
| • armed forces         | • property rights |
| • sporting idols       | • childcare       |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.