

Workplace equality:

Lip service on equality as working conditions worsen



One of the few social accords that AFP's management didn't renounce in 2015 was the agreement on workplace equality, which was signed in 2012 by all unions. **SUD won't sign the 2016 accord.** Here's why.

Male-female equality: we've still got a long way to go

We have compared the latest figures available, measuring French permanent contracts at the end of 2015 with those in 2001, the year of the first workplace equality report at AFP¹:

Percentage of women

	Journalists	Adm cadres	Employees	Tech Cadres	Workers	AFP Siege
2001	34.5%	49.5%	67.3%	6.9%	2.4%	33.4%
2015	42.4%	63%	74.3%	5.5%	2.3%	39.6%

The results are mixed. Certainly, considerable progress has been made among **journalists** and AFP personnel with HQ status overall. But these positive points shouldn't hide the **major and growing imbalances among non-journalists.**

- In the administrative categories, which were already balanced or dominated by women, the percentage of men dropped. In the lowest paid category, that of employees, **women now account for nearly 75 percent.**
- On the contrary, the percentage of **women in technical jobs**, already marginal in 2001, has dipped further. *SUD* has criticized for years the lack of effective efforts to attract women into the DSI (apparently, appointing a woman as head of the department hasn't helped).

Women journalists: end of discrimination?

The percentage of women journalists has increased considerably, but **there still remain problems regarding salary and career paths.**

We have prepared the following table. It shows the **real parity** among journalists in categories RED0 to RED4 (where promotion is automatic under the career plan).

2015 figures	Women	Men	Total	% women
<RED5	167	159	326	51.2
RED5/5+	131	167	298	44.0
>RED5+	50	146	196	25.5
Total	348	472	820	42.4

The percentage of women among journalists at RED5 and RED5+ (44%) is above their percentage among HQ status journalists with CDI contracts (42.4%).

However, at 25.5%, **they are considerably underrepresented among journalists >RED5+ (=RED6 to RED8).**

If women manage to get promoted above RED5+, often by their appointment to management posts, it is clear that **the careers of many women end at RED5** (the final echelon under the

¹ See Intranet (Aurore) : <http://u.afp.com/Zb7M>

automatic promotion provisions, at the latest at 20 years of service at AFP) **or at RED5+** (management currently has to promote a minimum percentage of RED5 journalists each year, but it has free choice).

Management argues that the under-representation of women in high categories is due to their low percentage among seniors. False! Among journalists with more than 30 years service at AFP, **32.4%** are women. **Compare that with the 25.5% of women at RED6 or more.**

Conclusion: to combat discrimination there is nothing more effective than a career plan guaranteeing automatic promotion based on seniority.

Extending automatic promotion to **include RED6** would not only benefit women, but men whose careers have stagnated as well.

While the negotiations on the 2012 workplace equality agreement resulted in extending the automatic career plan to RED5 for all, **the negotiations in 2016 resulted in no advances.**

Inequality in career mobility

SUD analyzed the data provided by management. Our conclusion: **the further one moves from Paris, less posts are occupied by women:**

- > **Percentage of women** among journalists appointed in 2014 to posts **abroad = 30.6%**
- > **Percentage of women** among journalists appointed in 2014 to posts in **French regional bureaus = 33.3%**
- > **Percentage of women** among **journalists appointed in 2014 = 43%**

(Percentage of women among journalists in 2014 = 42.2%)

These ratios indicate that women are preponderantly appointed to posts in Paris or its environs.

The only explanation provided by management: for posts outside of Paris, the percentage of women applicants is less than their percentage overall among journalists. Yes, but **why?**

Management has rejected any link between specific conditions women face, the benefits offered along with posts outside of Paris, and work conditions in regional and foreign bureaus. Yet it provides no data to back up that position and refused to commission a study.

SUD sees postings abroad or in French regional bureaus are a key for building a rewarding and successful career as a journalist. A gap in applications and appointments to these posts will not fail to result in a difference in career outcomes. Management's refusal to acknowledge and address this gap is unacceptable. But to ensure equality in opportunities for geographical mobility would most certainly require improving benefits. That would be in the interest of all, except management, which has made clear in negotiations on the Grand Accord that its interest is in cutting wages and benefits.

Work - life balance ???

The workplace equality agreement contains a section titled "Balance between professional and personal life". Its main points: management pledges to try to reduce the number of meetings before 9 am and after 6 pm; educate us on email best practices; provide days off to take care of sick children and parents; maintain maternity leave conditions above the legal minimum; provide mobility assistance for AFP couples.

In brief: a few advantages when our personal lives will be strongly affected by the **increased length and intensity of our professional lives under the "work more for less" philosophy of Plan Hoog and the El Khomri labour law:** reduction/elimination of RTTs and vacation days; longer working hours; further degradations of working conditions...

Against a background of benefit cuts, the 2016 workplace equality agreement doesn't deliver anything substantial.

NO to discrimination, YES to equality and social progress!

Paris, le 24 May 2016

SUD-AFP (Solidarity-Unity-Democracy)

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