



Equal Pay? Time to close the gap!



Factsheet | October 2021

WHAT IS THE GENDER PAY GAP?



It is the difference between the average gross hourly earnings of working men and women working.

The principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value has been enshrined in the Treaties since 1957 and translated into EU law.

Even though the situation is improving, progress is very slow in the European Union with the gap only decreasing by just under 2 percentage points over the last 9 years.

IN OTHER WORDS

Women earn
86 euro cents for
every 1 euro
men earn



The gender
pay gap
in the EU is
14.1



Women would
need to work
**2 extra
months** to
make up for
the difference

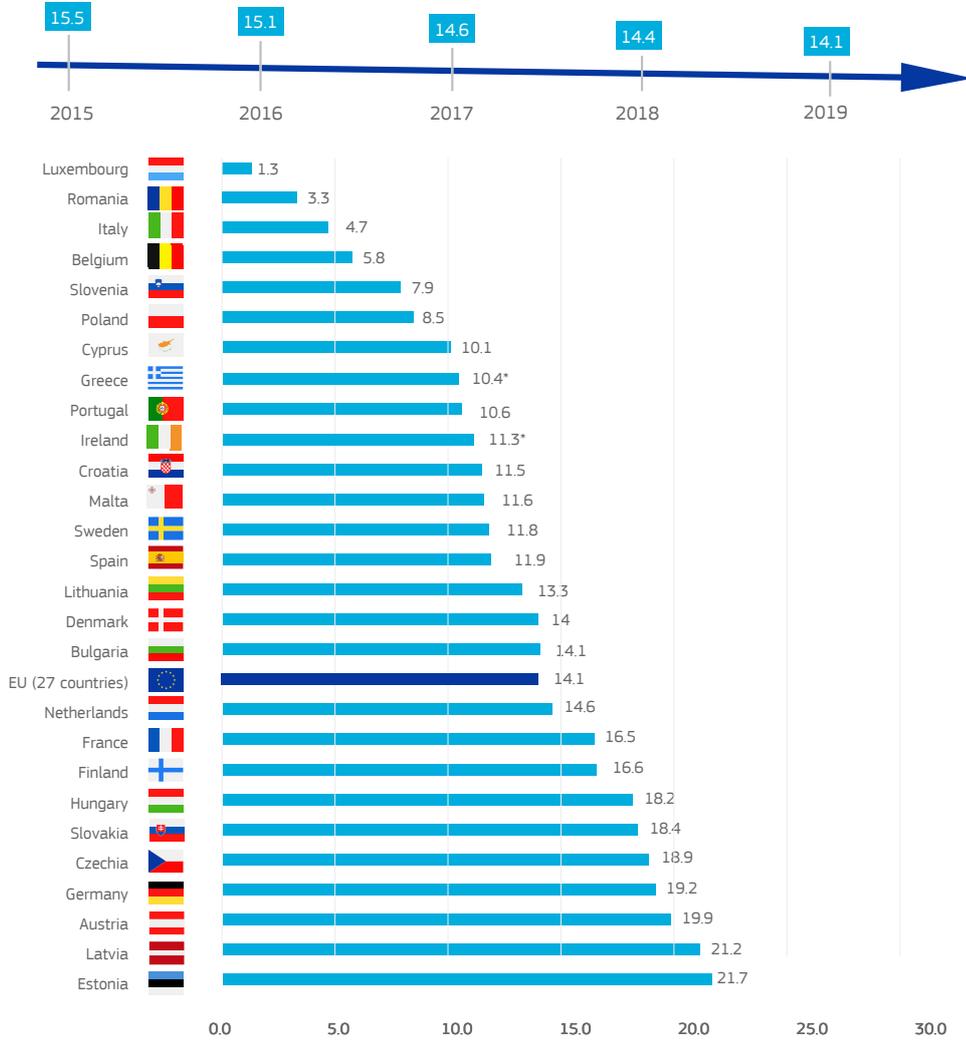
Addressing the gender pay gap is one of the key objectives of the [Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#).

After the Coronavirus pandemic, a gender-sensitive recovery must address the gender pay gap by implementing pay transparency, promoting equal share of care responsibilities, breaking the glass ceiling, and better valorising women's skills, efforts and responsibilities.





THE GENDER PAY GAP PER EU COUNTRY



*data for all countries refers to 2019 except for Greece and Ireland which refers to 2018



WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN FOR WOMEN?

Less money now

- Fewer paid hours
- More career breaks
- Gender pay gap

-37%
overall gap of earnings between genders
2018 EU 27 data

Less money later

Less money to save and invest

30.1%

EU average pension gap between men and women

at-risk of poverty rates
Men: 15.8%
Women: 17.2%
2019 EU 27 data



WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF GENDER PAY GAP?

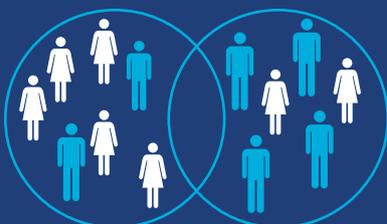
LACK OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS



Management and supervisory positions are overwhelmingly held by men. Within each sector men are often promoted more than women, and therefore paid better. This trend culminates at CEO level, where only 7.9% are women.

SEGREGATION IN EDUCATION AND IN THE LABOUR MARKET

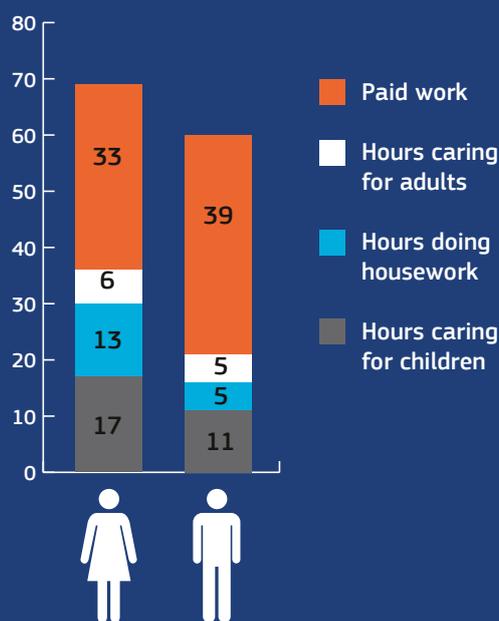
Women tend to be overrepresented in some sectors and occupations. In some countries, occupations predominantly carried out by women, such as teaching, sales and care offer lower wages than occupations predominantly carried out by men, even when the same level of experience and education is needed.



UNEQUAL SHARING OF CARE AND UNPAID WORK



Women take charge of important unpaid tasks, such as household work and caring for children or relatives on a far larger scale than men do. Working men spend on average 9 hours per week on unpaid care and household activities, while working women spend 22 hours – that’s every day almost 4 hours more. In the labour market this is reflected by the fact that more than 1 in 3 women reduce their paid hours to part-time, while only 1 in 10 men do the same. Moreover, women tend to spend periods off the labour market more often than men. These career interruptions not only influence hourly pay, but also impact future earnings and pensions.





WHAT IS THE EU DOING TO TACKLE THE GENDER PAY GAP?

BARCELONA TARGETS

The upcoming [European care strategy](#) will address care over the life course, from childcare to long-term care. It will consider the needs of both carers and care receivers. The strategy will set a framework for policy reforms to guide the development of sustainable long-term care that ensures better and more affordable access to quality services for all. It will also address early childhood education and care. Attention will be paid to children with disabilities. The Strategy will in particular provide a revision of new targets for participation of children in childcare to foster further upward convergence among Member States, with a view to enhancing women's labour market participation.



WOMEN ON BOARDS PROPOSAL

To help break the glass ceiling, the Commission will push for the adoption of the 2012 proposal for a [Directive on improving the gender balance on corporate boards](#) which set the aim of a minimum of 40% of non-executive members of the under-represented sex on company boards.



WORK LIFE BALANCE DIRECTIVE

Women take more time off from work to care for others. This is why the EU has adopted the [Work-Life Balance Directive](#) that entered into force in 2019. Member States have until August 2022 to adopt national rules necessary to comply with the Directive.

Measures under the Directive include:

- 10 days of paid paternity leave,
- 2 months paid, non-transferable parental leave for each of the parents,
- the introduction of carer's leave and
- extending the right to request flexible working arrangements to carers and working parents of children up to eight years old.



PAY TRANSPARENCY PROPOSAL

Discrimination at work is illegal across the EU.

Being paid less than male colleagues just because you are a woman, or being demoted after returning from maternity leave, are forms of discrimination.

The [Pay Transparency Proposal](#) includes measures and a mechanism to enforce the right to equal pay better. The proposed measures will increase awareness about pay conditions within the company and give more tools to employers and workers to tackle pay discrimination at work.

