

# Report on Progress on Equality between Women and Men in 2010

The gender balance in business leadership

Justitia  
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Правосъдие  
Δικαιοσύνη  
Giustizia  
Ceartas  
Justice  
Gustizzia  
Pravosodje  
Öigusküsimused  
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Oikeusasiat  
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Spravodlivost  
Sprawiedliwość  
Rättsliga frågor  
Teisingumas  
Retslige anliggender  
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Cataloguing data can be found at the end of this publication.

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2011

ISBN 978-92-79-17789-7

doi:10.2767/99441

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*Printed in Belgium*

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# Foreword

This eighth report on equality between men and women describes developments towards gender equality in the European Union in 2010. Last year was a significant year for the European Commission's work of advancing gender equality. We adopted a Women's Charter on 5 March 2010 and by doing so, committed to strengthening gender equality in all our policies. We also adopted the Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010-2015) on 21 September which is an action plan to promote gender equality that will guide our actions for the period 2010-2015. These actions represent a political commitment by each member of the European Commission to advance equality between women and men in their own portfolios.

The European Union was hit by the financial crisis in 2010, and this is why all EU policies now need to focus on making a stronger contribution to economic recovery, sound management practices and higher growth potential. For me, this brings the issue of enhancing female participation in the decision making of companies to the forefront of the political agenda in the coming years. I firmly believe that having more women in boardrooms will enhance economic productivity. I am also convinced that the global financial crisis would not have happened with "Lehman Sisters".

We need further progress in 2011, and I look forward to our first high-level dialogue on gender equality involving the European Parliament, the Council presidencies and key stakeholders such as the European social partners and civil society. This report will be the basis of this dialogue aimed at discussing the implementation of our strategy and further action. Gender equality is more than just a slogan; it is our social and economic responsibility. I am confident that together, we can make it happen.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Viviane Reding**

Vice-President of the European Commission,  
responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights  
and Citizenship



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# 1. Introduction

Gender equality is a fundamental right guaranteed by Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. In addition, Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union states: 'In all its activities, the Union shall aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality, between men and women'. The Commission has reaffirmed its commitment to gender equality by adopting the Women's Charter<sup>(1)</sup> and adopting a Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010-2015)<sup>(2)</sup>.

Achieving gender equality is also vital for the EU's growth, employment and social cohesion objectives. The Europe 2020 Strategy — the EU's key document for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth — has a headline target to raise the employment rate for women and men aged 20-64 to 75 % by 2020. With the employment rate for women currently at 62.5 %<sup>(3)</sup>, female

employment should increase in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

This report is the first annual report presented after the adoption of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Commission's new Strategy for Equality between Women and Men. It describes recent developments in gender equality in the EU and presents statistics on all areas covered as well as recent new developments in the Member States. It establishes a state of play for the five priority areas of the Women's Charter and the Strategy, namely: equal economic independence; equal pay for equal work and work of equal value; equality in decision-making; dignity, integrity and an end to gender-based violence; and gender equality outside the Union. The report will be presented to the EPSCO Council in March 2011 and will be the basis of the discussions at the Gender Equality Dialogue.

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(1) COM(2010) 78.

(2) COM(2010) 491.

(3) 20-64 age group, 2009. Data in the report are provided by Eurostat if no other source is mentioned.

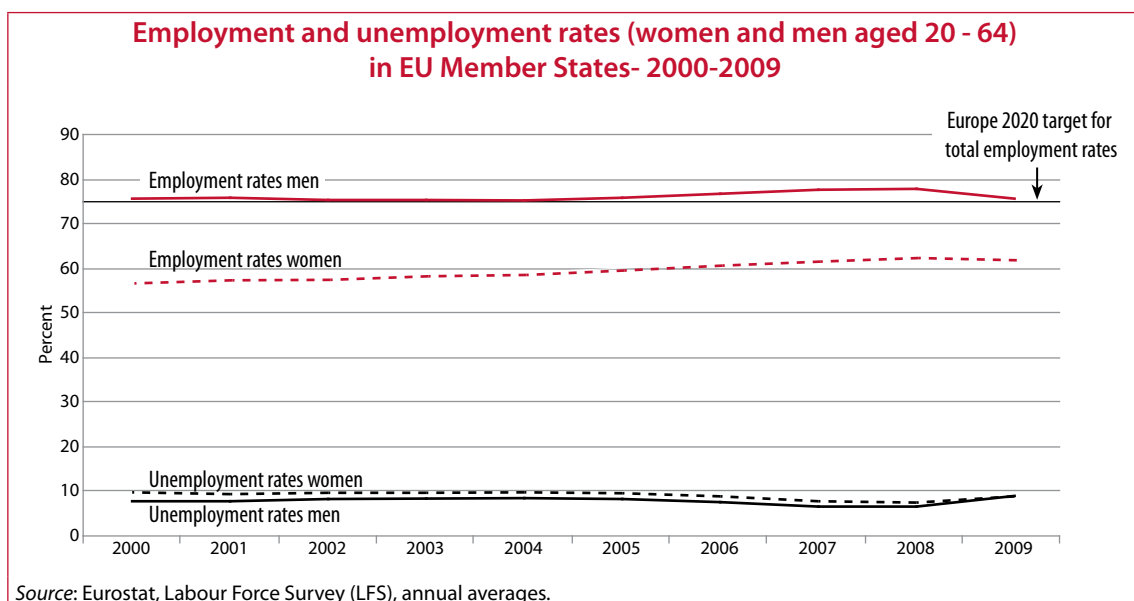
## 2. Equal economic independence

Sustained employment participation will strengthen women's lifelong economic independence and enable them to have adequate pensions. Between 2009 and 2010<sup>(4)</sup> the difference between female and male **employment rates** narrowed by 0.4 percentage points (p.p.) from 13.3 to 12.9. At national level, significant differences exist throughout the EU. Malta, Italy and Greece have the lowest rates for women while Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia have the lowest rates for men. Unemployment rates for men and women have increased since 2009 owing to the crisis and are now<sup>(5)</sup> equal (9.6% for both women and men).

Still, any positive assessment of the trend in women's employment is offset by the fact that so many work part-time. In 2009, 31.4 % of European women and 8.1 % of men worked **part-time**. Significantly, the countries where

nearly 75 % of women are working (Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden) have among the highest part-time rates.

The Europe 2020 Strategy proposed by the Commission in March 2010 presents a vision for the EU in 10 years time: a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy that delivers high employment, productivity and social cohesion. The current **gap between male and female employment rates** shows clearly the need to foster women's greater involvement if the EU is to meet the Europe 2020 target of a 75% employment rate. Indeed, the overall employment rate of women in Europe is at 62.5% and some specific groups of women are particularly far from the Europe 2020 targets. The rates for women from non-EU countries, for instance, are below 50%, while Roma women are four times more often unemployed than the general female population<sup>(6)</sup>.



(4) Figures for second quarter 2009 and 2010.

(5) October 2010.

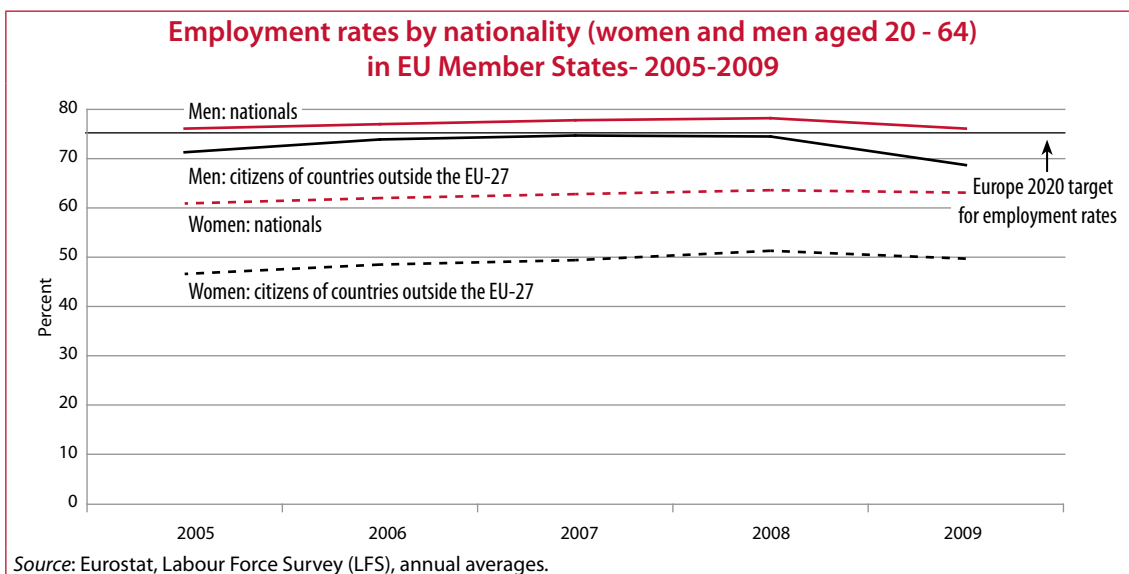
(6) Ethnic minority and Roma women in Europe: A case for gender equality? Synthesis report by the expert group on gender equality, social inclusion, health and long-term care, 2010.

A major reason for women's low employment rates is the challenge of **reconciling work, family and private life**. The labour market participation of mothers is 11.5 p.p. lower than that of women without children, while the rate for fathers is 8.5 p.p. higher than that for men without children. In addition, poorly designed tax and benefit systems, in particular joint taxation, can - in combination with a lack of affordable and high quality childcare facilities - create strong disincentives for second earners to take up work.

The impact of parenthood on the female employment rate is limited in Portugal and Slovenia but is high in Estonia, Hungary, Slovakia and Czech Republic. For men's employment, the consequence of having children is positive, ranging from 1.9 p.p. in Denmark to 13.3 p.p. in Lithuania.

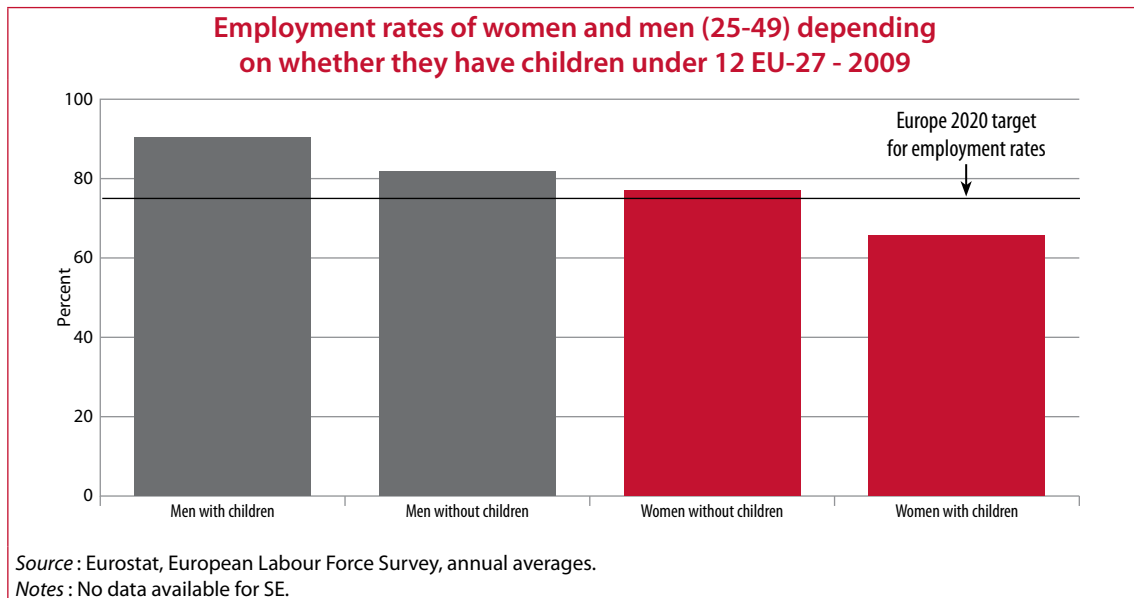
Some Member States are taking legislative measures to facilitate reconciliation. In Germany, new legislation offers parents flexibility in training assistance: they are free to decide when they wish to raise children, undergo training or work. In Sweden, equality bonuses are paid to encourage mothers and fathers to share their parental leave more equally.

Providing a sufficient number of **high-quality, affordable and accessible childcare** is a vital step in offering parents, and especially women, a genuine choice to work. In Poland, for instance, a draft law on day care is now in the Parliament. However, the 'Barcelona targets', which were set in 2002 and sought to achieve greater childcare provision by 2010, have not been met in most Member States<sup>(7)</sup>.



(7) The 2002 European Council in Barcelona agreed to aim to provide childcare for at least 90% of children between three years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33% of children under three years of age by 2010.





Moreover, **care for the elderly** and disabled is becoming a significant challenge with the ageing of the population, for society as a whole and for women in particular. Mothers often take care of both children and older relatives, sometimes at the same time. In the EU, around 30% of women with care responsibilities say they are inactive or work part-time because of the lack of care services for children and other dependent persons. The figures are below 10% in the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden but are higher than 80% in Latvia and Romania.

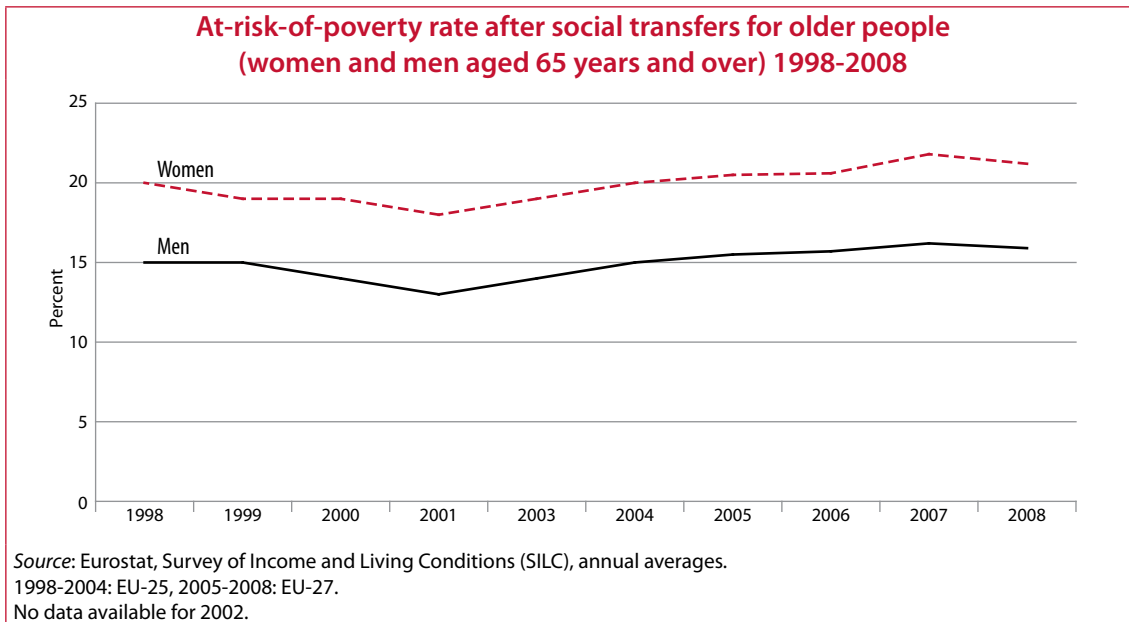
Implementing an agreement of the European social partners, the revised **Parental Leave Directive**<sup>(8)</sup> increases the leave entitlement of each working parent from three months to four months, at least one of which cannot be transferred to the other parent. This means that any month not taken is forfeited, providing a strong incentive for fathers to take their leave entitlement. The year 2010 saw the adoption of the Directive on the application of the principle of **equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed**

**capacity**<sup>(9)</sup>. This was the first provision at EU level for a maternity allowance for self-employed workers and their spouses or life partners.

Women and poverty is one of the key areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and the Europe 2020 Strategy sets a headline target of lifting at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty or exclusion. Reaching this target will change the life of many men and women: in general men suffer the most from severe housing deprivation but in persons over 65, the at-risk-of-poverty rate is significantly higher for women than for men (21% vs. 16% in 2008). The gap is over 10 p.p. in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland and Sweden and 15 p.p. in Estonia and Lithuania and Slovenia. In relation to ageing, the Commission is developing the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing. Improving the health and quality of life of older people and developing innovative products, devices and services, helps to bring women back to the labour market and generates opportunities for business expansion which leads to enhanced competitiveness and growth.

(8) Directive 2010/18/EU.

(9) Directive 2010/41/EU.



2010 was the **European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion** and several activities focused on this topic, including a **Green Paper on Pensions<sup>(10)</sup>** underlining the importance of addressing gender gaps.

Women belonging to **ethnic minorities and Roma women**, in particular, are more vulnerable to the risk of poverty than other women. The Communication 'The social and economic integration of Roma in Europe'<sup>(11)</sup> underlines the joint responsibility of the EU and the Member States for the social inclusion of Roma and stresses the importance of gender mainstreaming.

(10) COM(2010) 365.

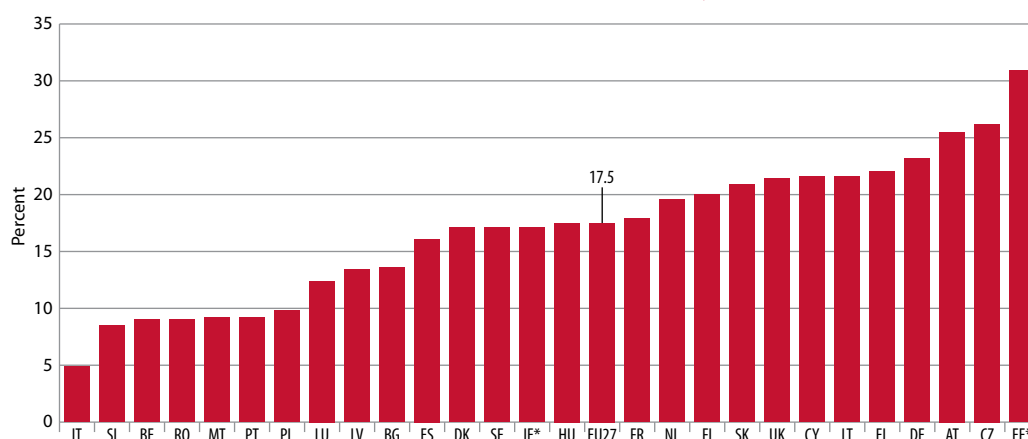
(11) COM(2010) 133.

### 3. Equal pay for equal work and work of equal value

More than 50 years after the signing of the Treaty of Rome, which affirmed the principle of **equal pay for men and women** for the same work or work of equal value, women across the EU earn 17.5 % less on average than men and there has been no reduction of the gender pay gap in the last few years. It varies from nearly 31 % in Estonia to below 5 % in Italy. In the scientific research area, it stands in average<sup>(12)</sup> at 25% in the EU. A narrow gender pay gap may be explained by the fact that the female employment rate is low, and that those who are working earn higher salaries (level of education, profession)<sup>(13)</sup>. Member States have fully transposed the **EU legislation**

on equal pay but the pay gap is unlikely to be solved by legal means alone. The underlying causes remain numerous and complex, not only reflecting discrimination on the grounds of sex but also inequalities linked to education, the horizontal and vertical segregation of the labour market, the difficulty of reconciling work, family and private life, the unequal distribution of family and domestic responsibilities, the lack of pay transparency and the impact of gender roles influencing the choice of education and vocational training courses. The Council conclusions adopted under the Belgian Council Presidency on the gender pay gap are thus an important step<sup>(14)</sup>.

**Pay gap between women and men in unadjusted form in EU Member States - 2008**  
(Difference between men's and women's average gross hourly earnings as a percentage of men's average gross hourly earnings)



Source: Eurostat. The unadjusted Gender Pay Gap (GPG) represents the difference between average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees and of female paid employees as a percentage of average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees. \*: data for 2007.

(12) European Commission, Directorate-General for Research, 'She Figures 2009. Statistics and Indicators on Gender Equality in Science'.

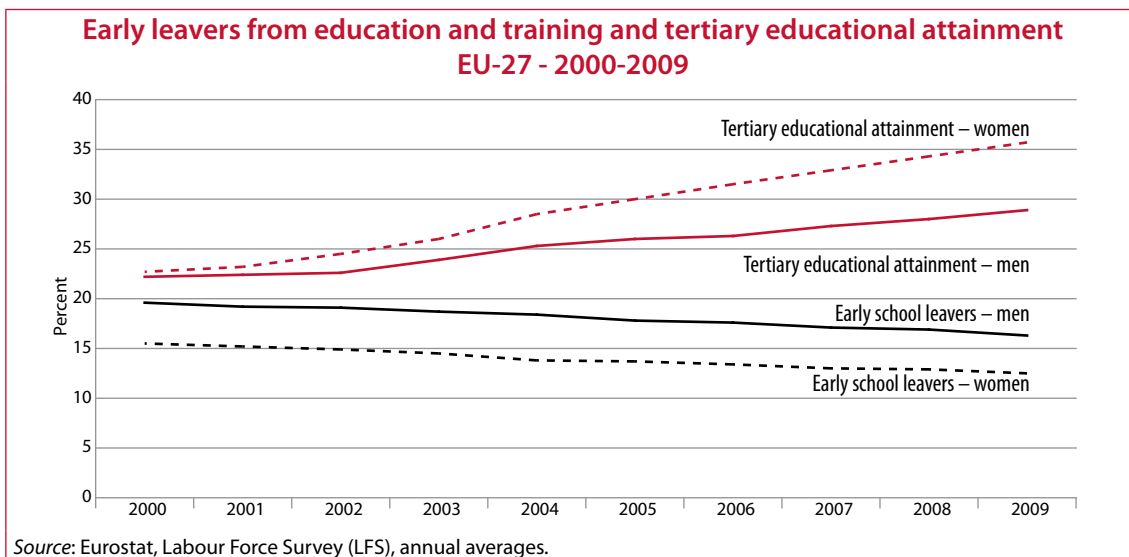
(13) The gender pay gap in the Member States of the European Union: quantitative and qualitative indicators, Belgian Presidency report 2010.

(14) In its conclusions, the Council invites Member States to adopt or pursue a comprehensive set of measures to tackle the full range of causes of the gender pay gap linked to the labour market inequalities between women and men.

The Commission wants to develop **awareness** of the causes of the persisting gender pay gap and of ways of tackling it. The EU's 2010 gender pay gap campaign was advertised in public transport systems in the EU's 27 capitals and in local and national newspapers. Nearly 300 contacts<sup>(15)</sup> in the 27 Member States act as multipliers for the campaign. A gender pay gap calculator has also been designed. Building on the campaign, and inspired by many Member States which have successfully established days to increase awareness of how much longer women need to work than men to earn the same, the Commission will hold the first European **Equal Pay Day** in spring 2011.

One of the main reasons for unequal pay is women's and men's educational and professional choices<sup>(16)</sup>. The Europe 2020 Strategy sets targets of at least 40% of the younger generation

having a tertiary degree, and of cutting the share of early school leavers to under 10%. Currently, more boys leave school early while young women record higher educational attainment than men in almost all Member States. In 2009, 35.7% of women and 28.9% men aged 30-34 had successfully completed tertiary-level education. 60% of new university graduates are women. Nevertheless, women are concentrated in often lower-paid sectors (health and care services, education, etc.) while more than 64% of graduates in computing and engineering are men. Consequently, the segregation in professional occupations is still high. Some Member States have implemented policies to fight gender segregation but only a few are focusing on the study choices of boys and men. In Germany, for instance a programme aims at increasing the number of qualified male personnel in child day-care facilities<sup>(17)</sup>.



(15) These include social partners, Employment/Social Affairs/Equality Ministries, NGOs in the field of gender equality and both private and public recruitment agencies.

(16) See footnote 13.

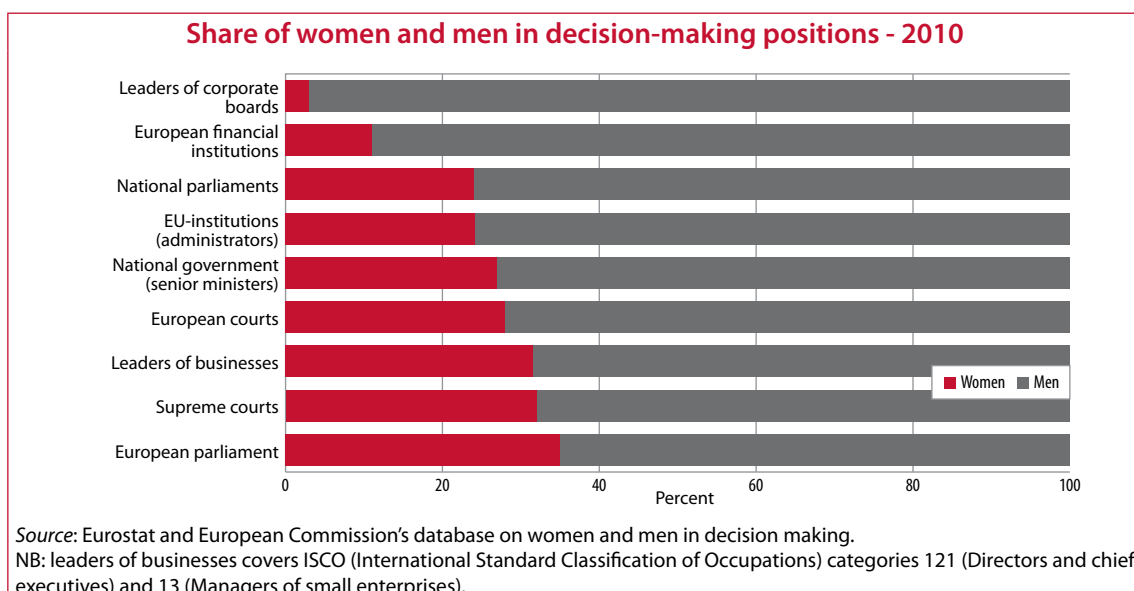
(17) See other measures in 'Gender Differences in Education Outcomes' ([www.eurydice.org](http://www.eurydice.org)).

## 4. Equality in decision-making

The higher up the hierarchy, the fewer women there are. The percentage of women in key political and economic positions is roughly unchanged from last year. In 2010, the governments of three EU Member States (Germany, Finland and Slovakia) were led by women, while the average number of female members of national parliaments (single/lower houses) was 24 %, one p.p. higher than in 2005. The percentage is above 40% in the Netherlands and Sweden and below 10% in Malta and Hungary. Among senior ministers of national governments<sup>(18)</sup>, the share of women increased from 22% in 2005 to 27% in 2010. As it is still low, countries are starting to act. For example, the Oireachtas (Irish Houses of Parliament) Joint Committee on the Constitution has recently recommended that political parties pursue positive measures to promote gender equality in its membership, including in the selection of candidates for election. Greece organised an information and

awareness campaign on women in politics before recent regional and municipal elections. Poland and Spain have compulsory balanced representation on electoral lists.

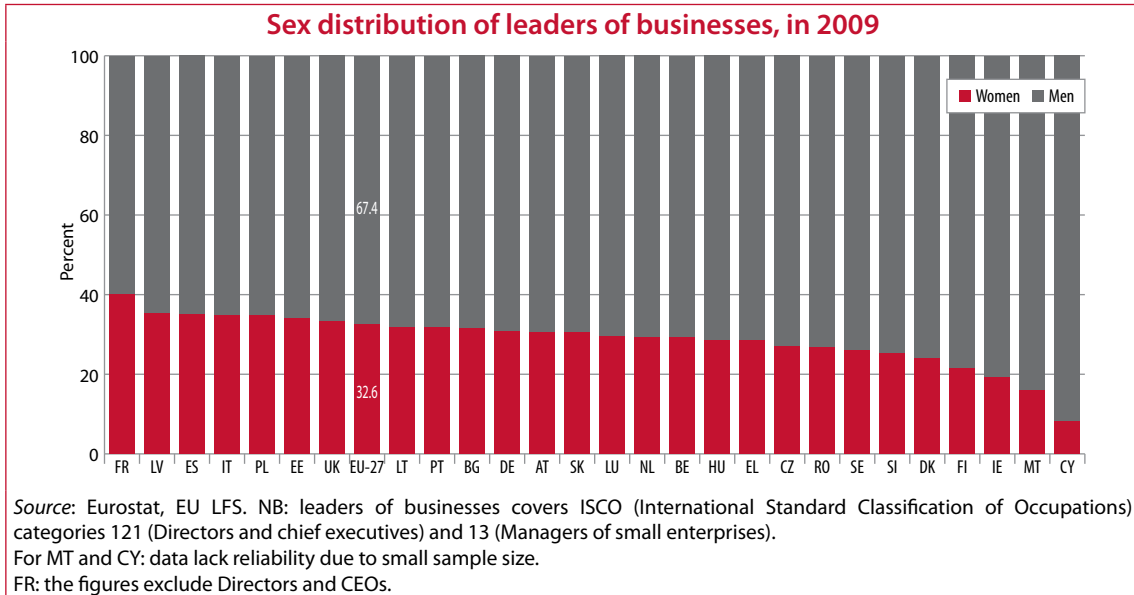
In the economic field too, gender equality is still lacking. With greater participation of women in the labour market and in education, one would expect a corresponding improvement in terms of using women's talents effectively. But still only 3% of the largest publicly quoted companies<sup>(19)</sup> have a woman chairing the highest decision-making body. There are also considerable variations across Europe: in Sweden and Finland, more than 25% of board members are female, while in Luxembourg, Cyprus, Italy and Malta, this share is under 5%. In terms of companies not listed on the stock market, women still represent only one-third of leaders of EU businesses<sup>(20)</sup>, and the share is much lower in many countries.



(18) Ministers with a seat in the cabinet.

(19) Data collected in summer 2010 concerning companies that are the domestic constituents (nationally registered according to ISIN code) of the blue-chip index maintained by the stock exchange in each country.

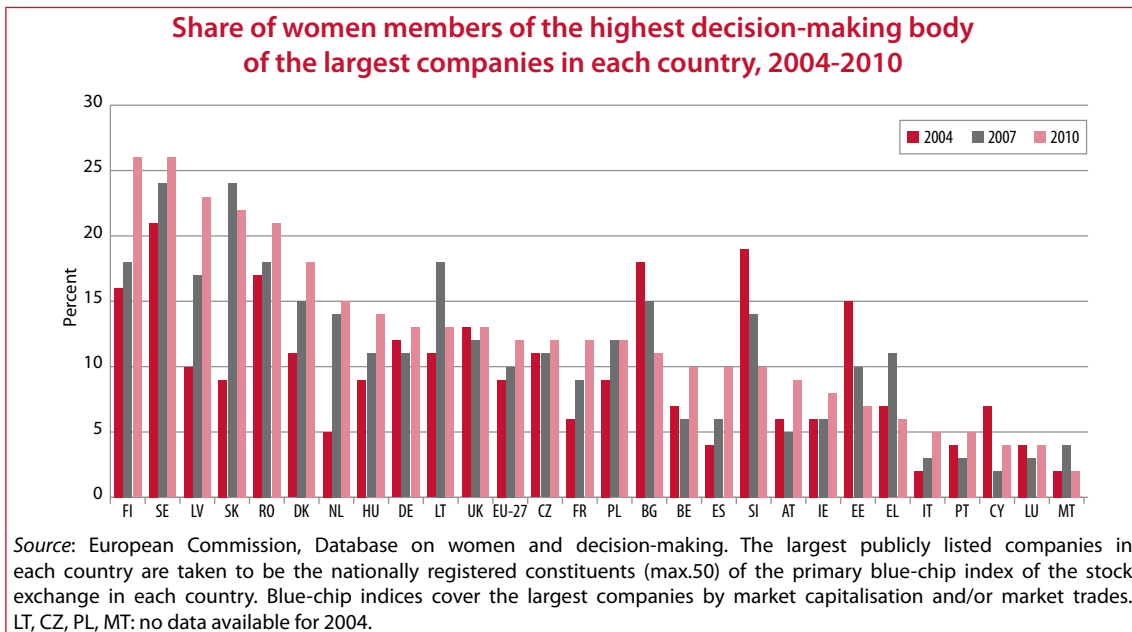
(20) Directors and chief executives and managers of small enterprises.



Yet the majority of the population are women and their participation in decision-making can make for more targeted policies and stronger and more prosperous democracies. The business case for having women in senior positions has been boosted by independent research<sup>(21)</sup> suggesting a correlation

between companies with women in decision-making positions and good performance. It also seems that gender diversity brings a number of vital benefits to boardrooms, such as higher returns, better overall performance, better risk management and greater employment of female talents.

(21) 'Does Female Leadership Boost Firm Profitability?' Kotiranta, Kovalainen and Rouvinen, 2007; 'The Bottom Line: Corporate Performance and Women's Representation on Boards', Catalyst, 2007; 'Why Women Mean Business, Understanding the Emergence of our next economic revolution', Wittenberg-Cox and Maitland, 2007; 'The Business Case for Diversity: How Companies Benefit from Reevaluating the Male Competitive Model', Sylvia Ann Hewlett, 2007.



As many companies have been slow to redress gender imbalances, some governments in Europe have legislated to force change. The first quota for gender parity in the boardroom was introduced in Norway in 2006. As a direct consequence of the quota legislation, the representation of women on the boards of Norwegian large companies has risen from 22% in 2004 to 42% in 2009. Recently, Spain has followed suit and introduced legislation on the balanced presence of women and men in corporate boards and a law is under discussion in France. These two countries have already seen improvements in their gender ratios since 2004, showing that discussion around gender balanced boards has an effect in itself. Some countries also have corporate governance codes stressing the importance of diversity and gender

equality. Corporate codes sometimes contain special transparency rules on the composition of the board. Generally speaking, countries that have introduced these types of codes also have a higher proportion of women at board level — for instance Sweden and Finland.

Other measures to improve gender balance include voluntary commitments. Denmark and the Netherlands have charters to promote women in management. The United Kingdom is undertaking a review on how obstacles can be removed to allow women to make it to the boards. The Commission will establish a direct dialogue with industry and urges private companies to make special efforts to address persistent imbalances in decision-making positions.

## 5. Dignity, integrity and an end to gender-based violence

Life expectancy has increased over the past 20 years and European children born in 2007 can expect to live almost 80 years. Nonetheless, gender-based **health inequalities** are widespread in the EU. 40% of inactive men between 25 and 49 give their own illness or disability as the main reason for not seeking employment. The share is up to 63% in Estonia and Slovakia and less than 20% in the Czech Republic, Italy and Romania. Only 13% of inactive women in the EU give the same reason for not seeking employment. However, in the great majority of Member States, more women than men consider that they have health problems. Women also use health services more than men. Still, life expectancy is six years shorter for men than for women. Women can expect to live more than ten years longer than men in Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia, and four years in Sweden, United Kingdom, Cyprus, Denmark and the Netherlands.

Sex-specific information on health is insufficient at EU level. A report published by the Commission<sup>(22)</sup> recommends 'to implement standardised gendered data collection and to improve data quality in areas where current data is either non-existent or non-sex-specific, including access to health care, health care expenditures and costs, specific eating disorders, pain and migraine, alcohol use, smoking habits, and abuse and misuse of legal medications.'

Fighting against all forms of **violence against women** is one of the top priorities of the current

Trio of presidencies (Spain, Belgium, Hungary) and of the European Commission but there is still a **lack of timely, reliable, accurate and comparable data** at both national and EU level. There are several reasons why data are scarce. First, the phenomena are, by definition, hidden; second, only a few Member States collect these data; and lastly, there are disparities in data collection methodology across the EU.

A recent Eurobarometer survey<sup>(23)</sup> appears to reveal the widespread nature of domestic violence across the EU: one out of every four respondents claims to know a woman among friends or in the family circle who has been a victim of domestic violence, and one in five knows of someone among friends or in the family circle who commits domestic violence. In 2010, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Lithuania, Sweden, Portugal and Cyprus have launched new strategies or plans of action on violence while Poland amended its domestic violence law.

During the 'Women Ministers Summit on violence against women' organised by the Belgian Presidency, a declaration was signed in order to encourage and support further appropriate action at EU level. The Commission will in 2011 propose an ambitious but realistic package of legislative and practical measures aimed at changing attitudes towards victims and bringing them into the heart of the criminal justice system. This 'victims' package' will also include measures to combat gender-based violence more effectively.

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(22) European Commission, 'Data and information on women's health in the EU'.

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(23) Special Eurobarometer 344 / Wave 73.2 Domestic Violence against Women (2010).



## 6. Gender equality beyond the Union

The European Union's commitment to gender equality extends beyond its borders thanks to the inclusion of gender equality in the EU's external policies and to Member States' targeted actions. For instance, taking Chairmanship to the Community of Democracies, Lithuania initiated in April 2010 the establishment of a permanent Gender equality working group, co-chaired by the USA and Lithuania. The main goal is to facilitate bilateral and multilateral projects for developing countries as well as for countries in post conflict situations.

As part of the enlargement process the Commission will continue to monitor the transposition, implementation and enforcement of EU legislation in the gender equality area in the candidate countries and potential candidates in 2011. Gender equality is also addressed in the accession negotiations on social policy and employment with Turkey and Iceland.

In March 2010, the EU and the Member States celebrated the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) during the Commission of the Status of women of the UN. 2010 marked also the 10th anniversary of the Millennium Declaration and of UN Security Council **Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security**. The EU and Belgium organised events in Geneva, New York and Brussels to identify proposals to be put to the Security Council to commemorate Resolution 1325, and 17 indicators were adopted to help monitor the implementation of the 'EU Comprehensive Approach on Women, Peace and Security'. Cooperation with, and the support of, civil society organisations and women's networks working in this area remains a key objective of EU policy. Several Member States also have action plans to implement Resolution 1325.

In 2010, more than 130 EU delegations in non-EU countries were actively involved in the implementation of the 2008 EU Guidelines on violence against women and girls and the combating of all forms of discrimination against them. Gender equality issues were also discussed in several human rights dialogues and consultations.

**UN WOMEN**, the new UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, became operational in January 2011 when several bodies merged to form a new, stronger gender entity, marking a milestone in UN reform. UN WOMEN amalgamates the UN's policies and practical work in this area and will improve the promotion of effective system-wide gender mainstreaming in the UN. Cooperation between the EU and UN WOMEN boosts the promotion of gender equality outside the Union.

As part of the Commission strategy to meet the **Millennium Development Goals** (MDG), it adopted a Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development for the period up to 2015. The Action Plan's overarching objective is to meet the MDG more quickly and in particular MDG 3 ('Promoting gender equality and empowering women') and MDG 5 ('Improving maternal health'). It also aims to meet the goals set in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the BPfA and the Cairo Program of Action. With its operational framework of specific actions, indicators and timetables for each objective, the Action Plan calls for the EU Member States to put more effort into improving their action and making it more effective.

## 7. Governance

The new Strategy for Equality between Men and Women sets out the Commission's work programme for incorporating gender equality into all its work and taking specific action to promote equality between women and men. It lays the foundations for cooperation with the EU institutions and the Member States. Partnership with all stakeholders at EU level has proved to be the key to progress in achieving gender equality. In line with the European Parliament's proposal, the Strategy seeks to strengthen the partnership by holding an annual top-level **Gender Equality Dialogue**<sup>(24)</sup>. Council conclusions on the new Strategy were adopted under the Belgian Presidency<sup>(25)</sup>.

The official opening of the **European Institute for Gender Equality** (EIGE) in Vilnius in June 2010 was a big step forward. Its task is to support the EU institutions and the Member States in their efforts to promote gender equality. It will do this by providing objective, reliable, comparable information and data on equality between women and men. By collecting, analysing and disseminating such information, the Institute will help the EU institutions and the Member States to take evidence-based policy decisions. It will also help to improve the visibility of gender equality issues by setting up a documentation centre where policy-makers and citizens can consult and research publications and best practice.

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(24) The Gender Equality Dialogue will each year take stock of progress made in implementing the Strategy for Equality between Women and Men. It will involve the European Parliament, the Council Presidencies and key stakeholders such as the European social partners and civil society.

(25) In its conclusion, the Council welcomes the adoption of the new Strategy and reaffirms the importance of maintaining a close link between the gender equality Strategy and the Europe 2020 Strategy. It also invites Member States to improve the follow-up of the European Pact for Gender Equality.

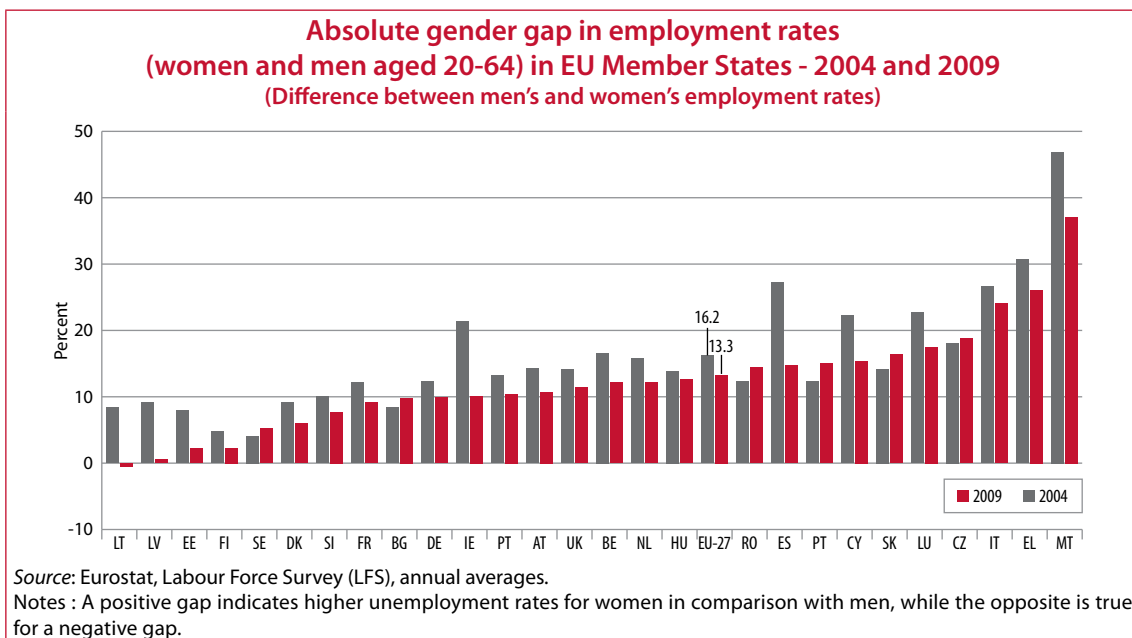
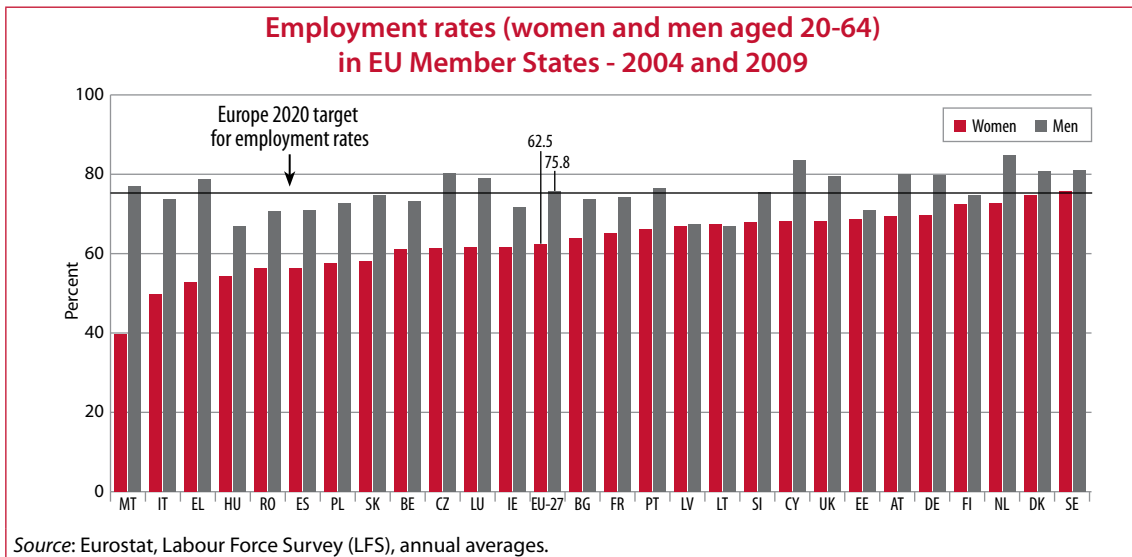
## 8. Conclusions

This report takes stock of the situation for gender equality in the European Union in five significant areas in the first year of the Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010-2015). It points out that despite a general trend towards more equality in society and on the labour market, progress in eliminating gender inequalities remains slow. Meeting the employment targets in the Europe 2020 Strategy will be a challenge, and this report highlights the importance of gender equality for reaching those targets.

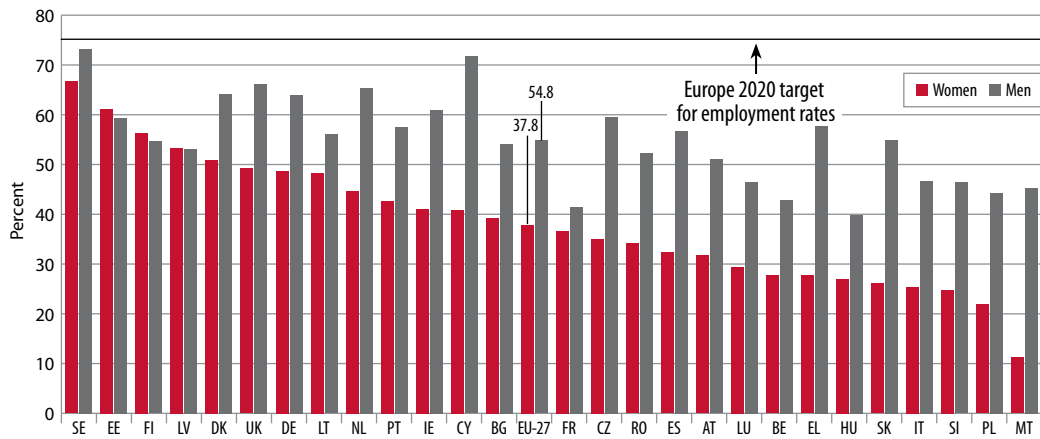
Most Member States do have ongoing gender equality plans or strategies, which both

support gender mainstreaming and initiate specific actions. In previous years, gender equality policies everywhere in the EU have not only improved the situation and rights of women, but have significantly contributed to economic growth and social welfare. By launching its new Strategy, the European Commission reiterates its commitment to promoting gender equality in all its policies. Each year, this report will describe the state of gender equality in Europe and highlight good practices in Member States. Starting from next year, each report will focus on a particular theme. Equality will also be addressed in the Annual Report on the application of the Charter on Fundamental Rights of the EU.

# Graphs and tables

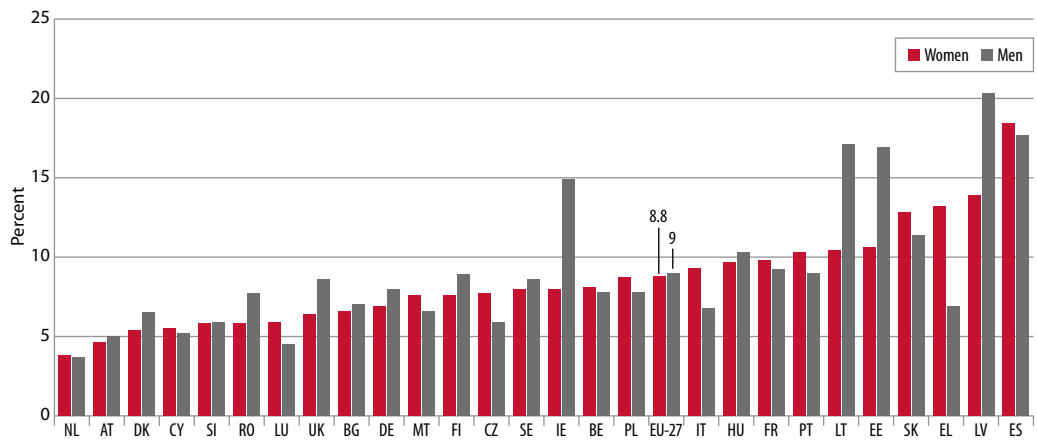


### Employment rates of older workers (women and men aged 55 - 64) in EU Member States- 2009

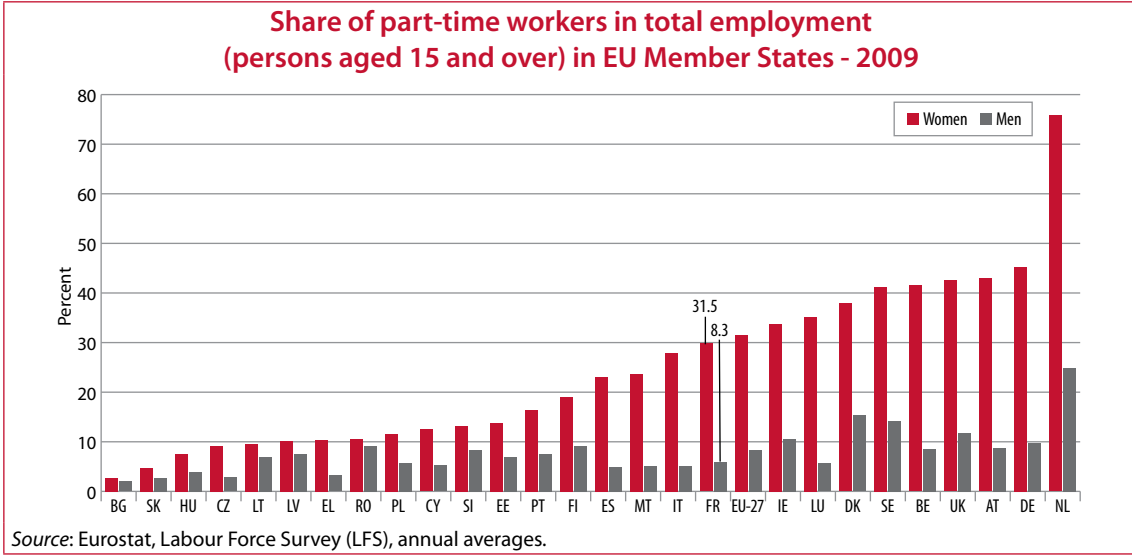
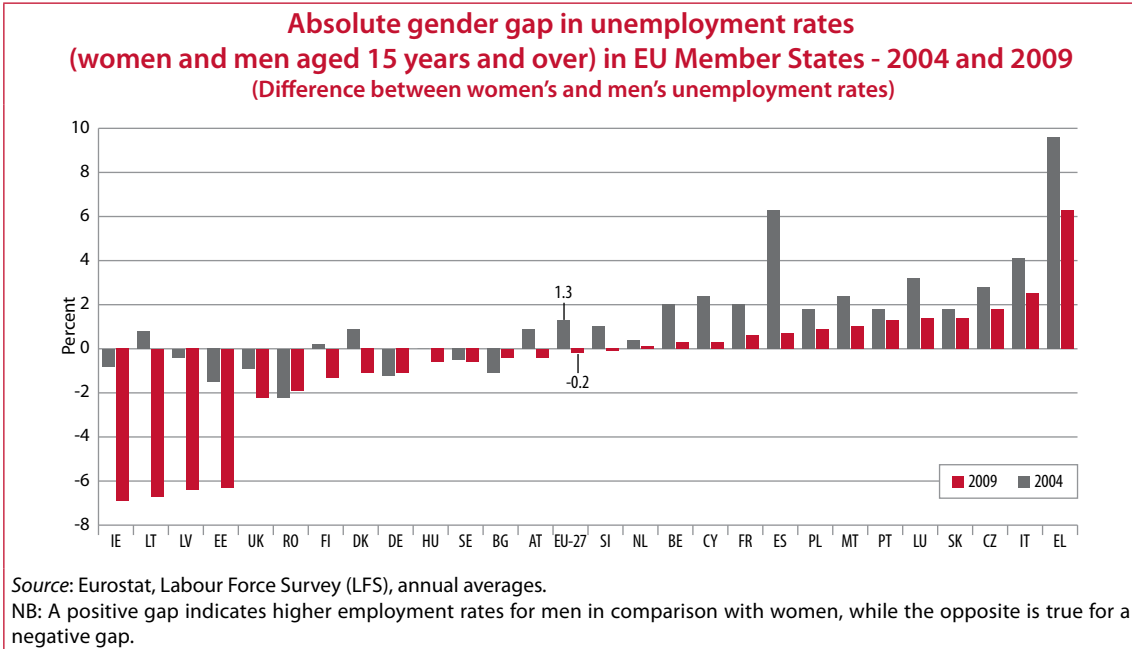


Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages.

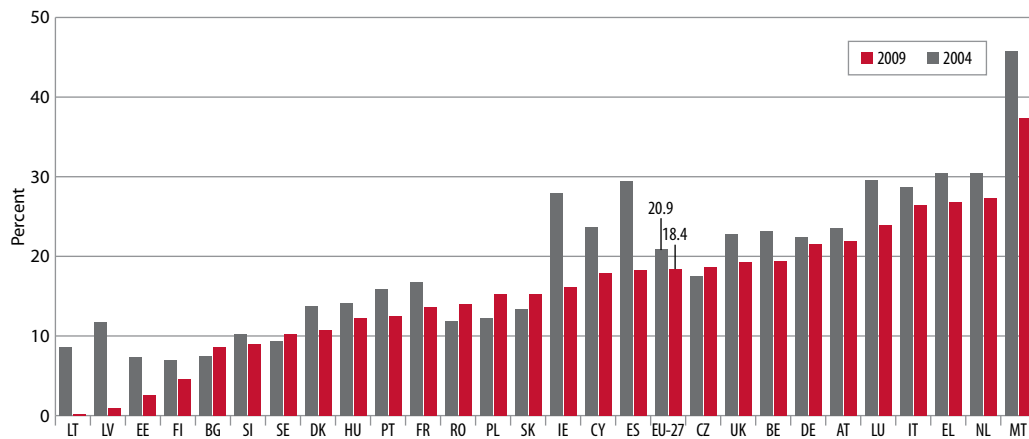
### Unemployment rates (women and men aged 15 and over) in EU Member States - 2009



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages



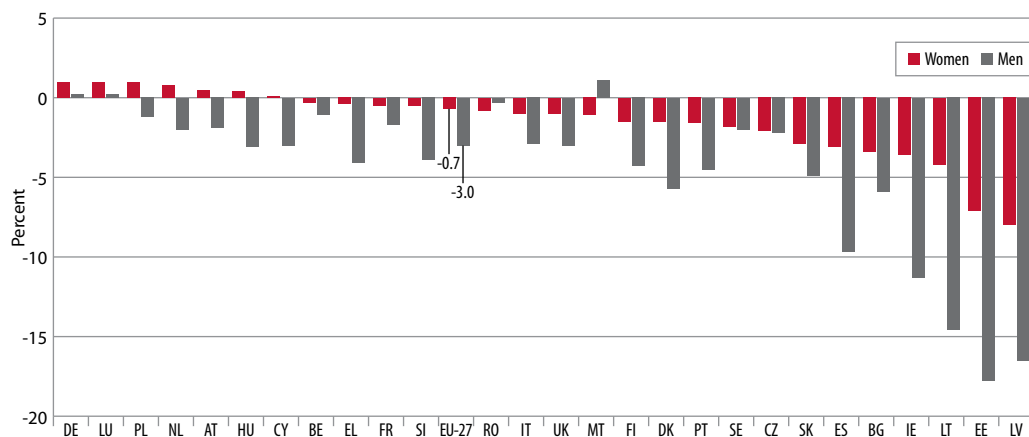
**Absolute gender gap in employment rates, measured in full time equivalent (women and men aged 15-64) in EU Member States - 2004 and 2009**  
(Difference between men's and women's employment rates)



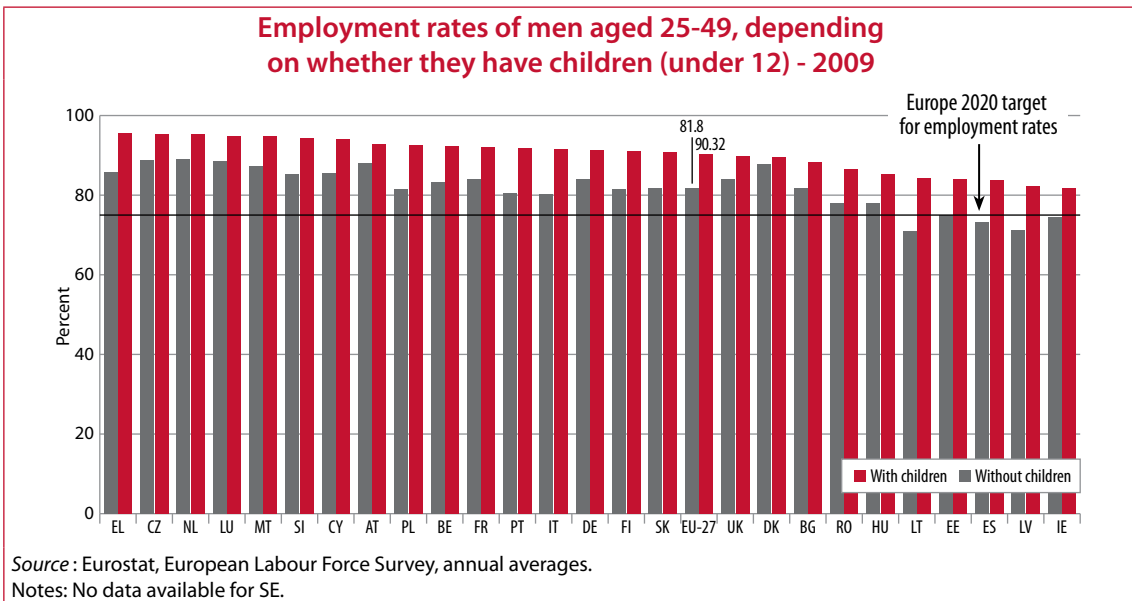
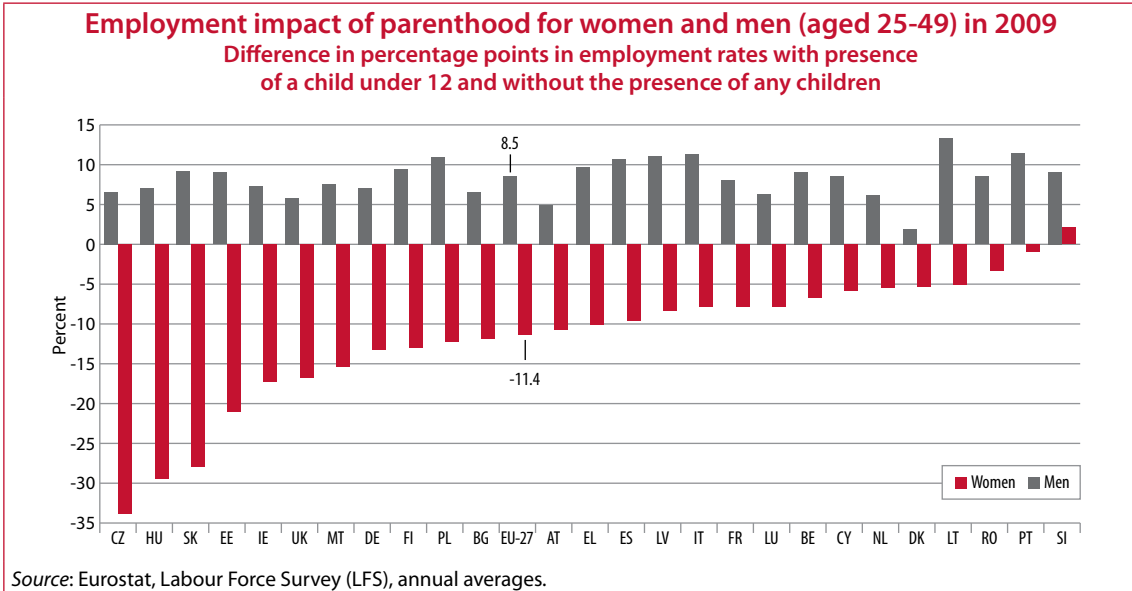
Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages.

NB: A positive gap indicates higher employment rates for men in comparison with women, while the opposite is true for a negative gap.

**Evolution of employment rates between 2008 and 2010 (second quarter) for women and men (aged 20-64) in EU Member States**

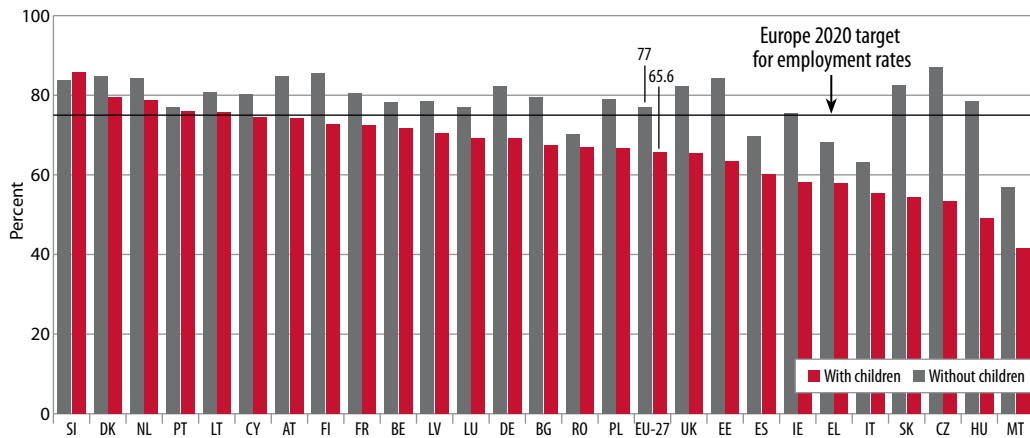


Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), quarterly data.



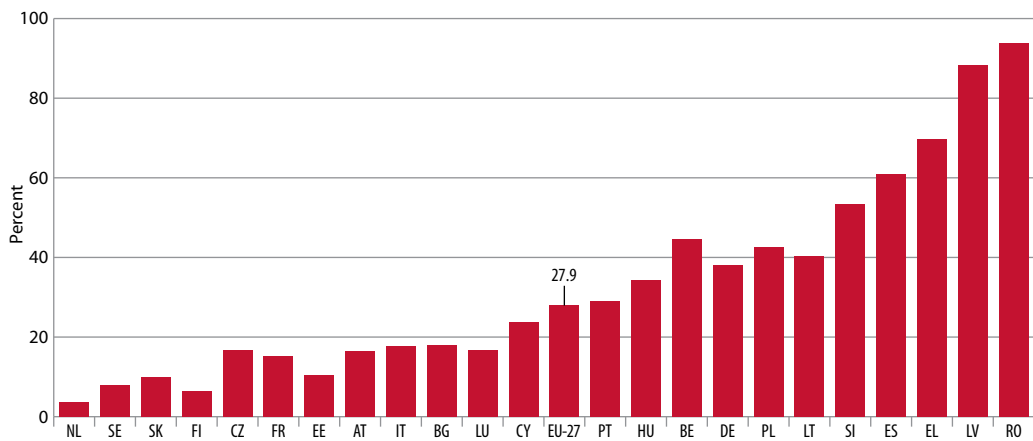


### Employment rates of women aged 25-49, depending on whether they have children (under 12) - 2009

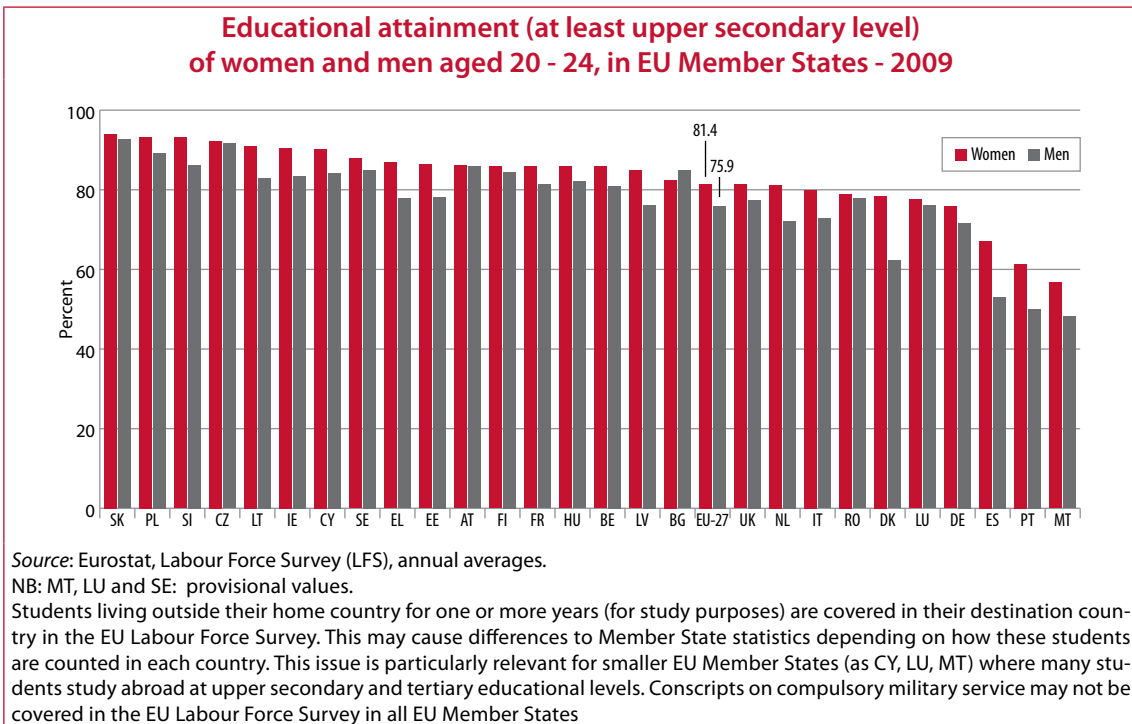
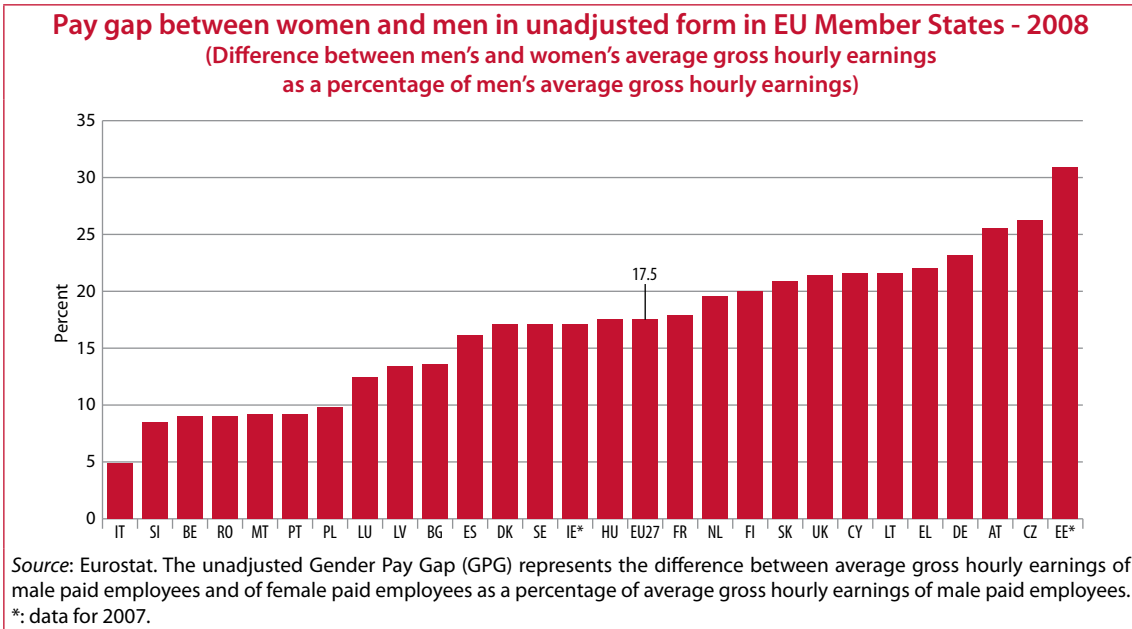


Source : Eurostat, European Labour Force Survey, annual averages.  
Notes : No data available for SE.

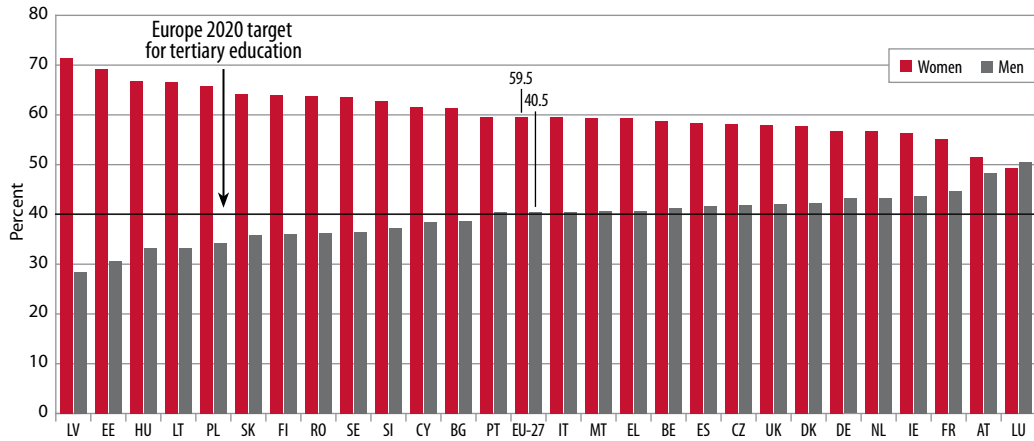
### Inactivity and part-time work among women due to the lack of care services for children and other dependent persons (% of total female population having care responsibilities) - 2009



Source: Eurostat - Labour Force Survey. IE, MT, UK: data not available, DK: no reliable data.

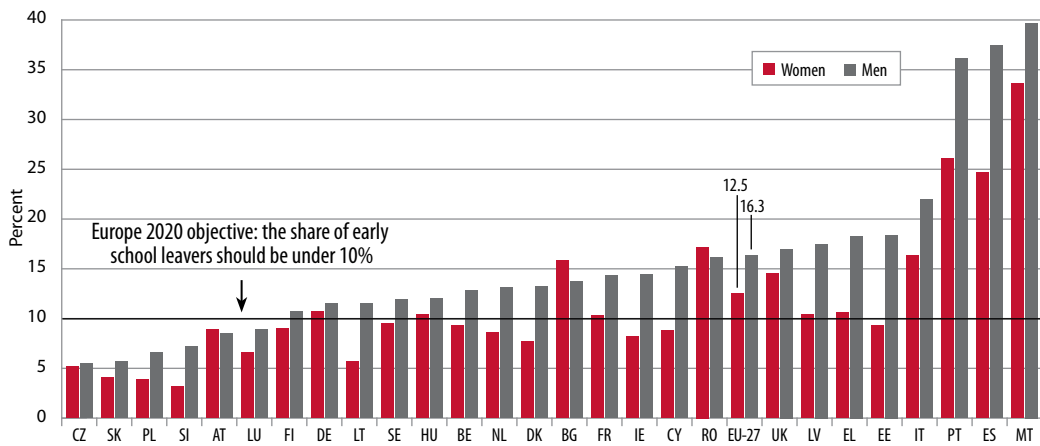


### Sex distribution of tertiary education graduates, for EU Member States, in 2008



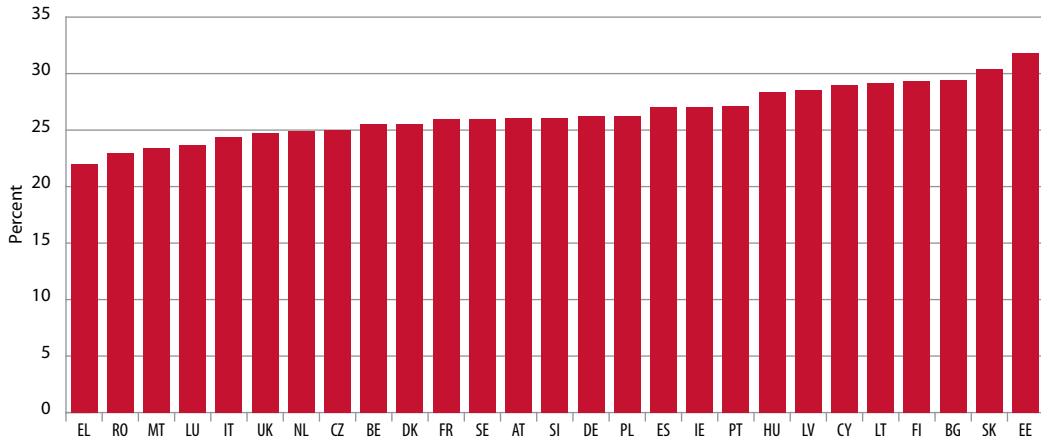
Source: Eurostat, Education statistics.

### Early leavers from education and training in EU Member States - 2009 (Percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training)



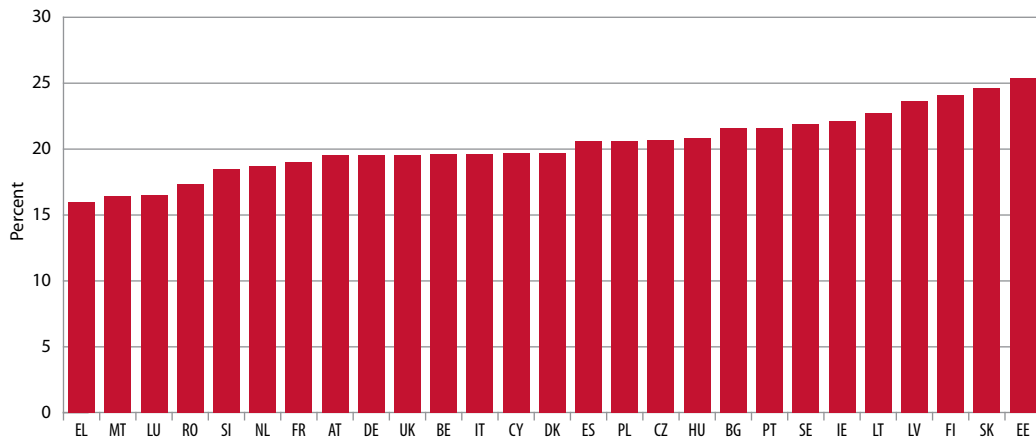
Source: Eurostat.

**Gender segregation in occupations in EU Member States, in 2009**



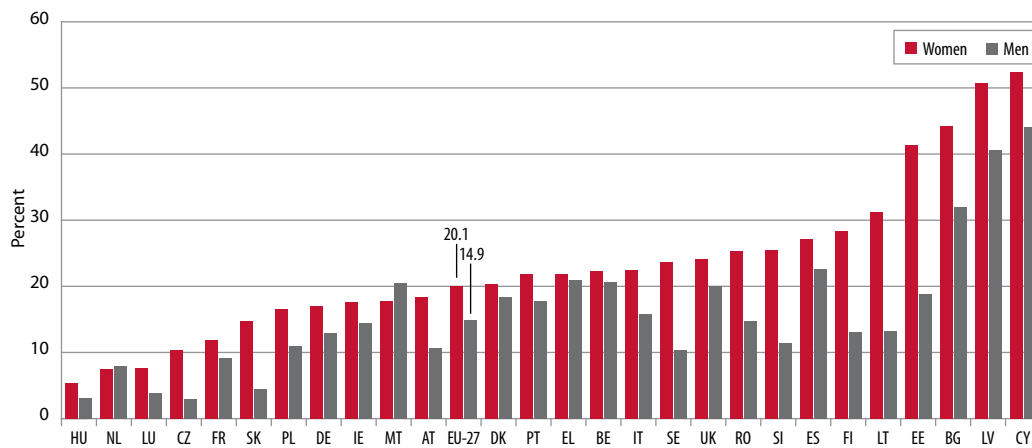
Source: Eurostat, EU LFS. Gender segregation in occupations is calculated as the average national share of employment for women and men applied to each occupation; differences are added up to produce the total amount of gender imbalance expressed as a proportion of total employment (ISCO classification).

**Gender segregation in economic sectors in EU Member States, in 2009**



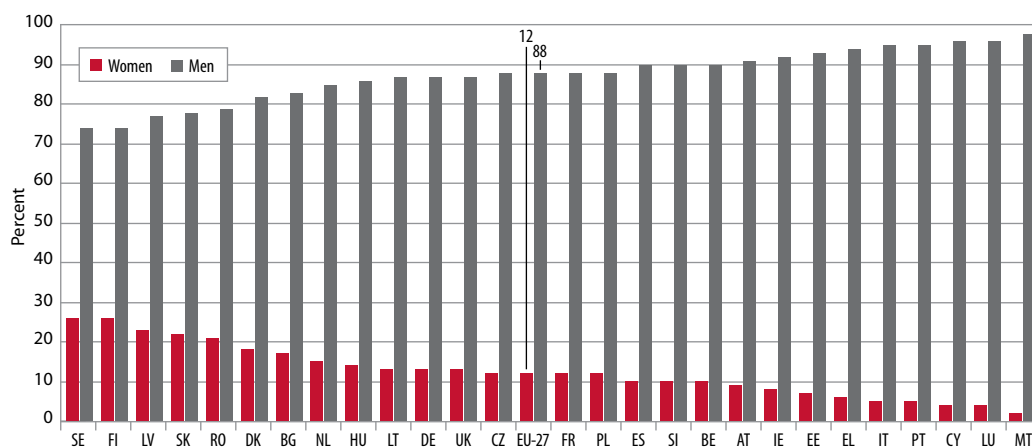
Source: Eurostat, EU LFS. Gender segregation in sectors is calculated as the average national share of employment for women and men applied to each sector; differences are added up to produce the total amount of gender imbalance expressed as a proportion of total employment (NACE classification).

### At-risk-of-poverty rate after social transfers for older people (women and men aged 65 years and over), in EU Member States, 2009



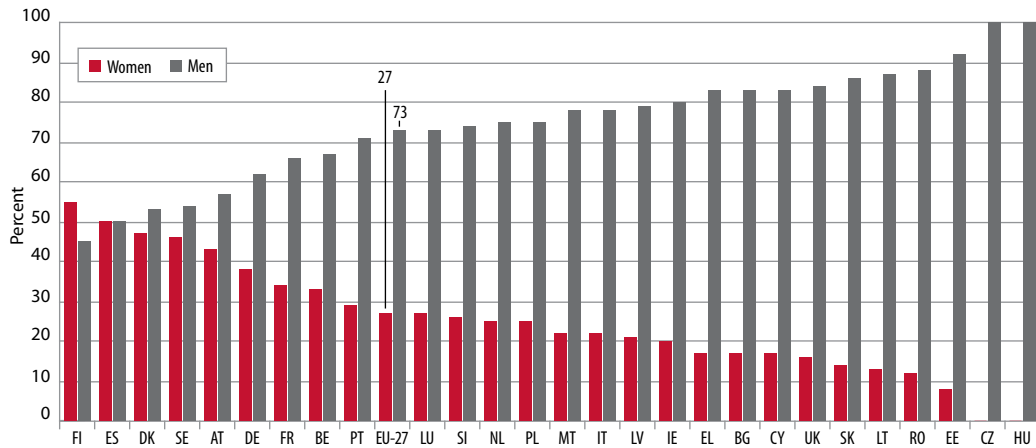
Source: EU-27: SILC 2008. EU aggregates are Eurostat estimates and computed as population weighted averages of national values.  
 NB: 1) At-risk-of-poverty rate for elderly persons: The share of persons aged 65+ with an income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60% of the national median income. Income must be understood as equivalised disposable income (sum from all sources, adjusted for household size and composition). It should be noted that the risk-of-poverty indicator is computed using an income definition which does not yet include imputed rent of owner-occupiers. Comparisons between sexes are based on the assumption of equal sharing of resources within households.

### Sex distribution of members of the highest decision making body of largest publicly quoted companies in 2010



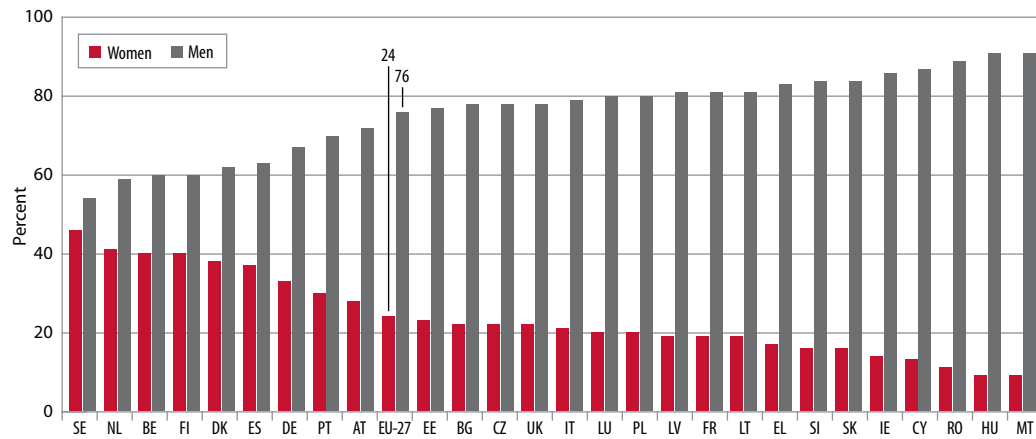
Source: European Commission, Database on women and decision-making.  
 Data were collected in October 2010. The list of the largest publicly quoted companies is based for each country on current membership of blue-chip index. In countries for which the blue-chip index includes a small number of companies (for instance LU, SK), at least the 10 largest companies were covered.

### Sex distribution of senior ministers in national governments in EU Member States in 2010



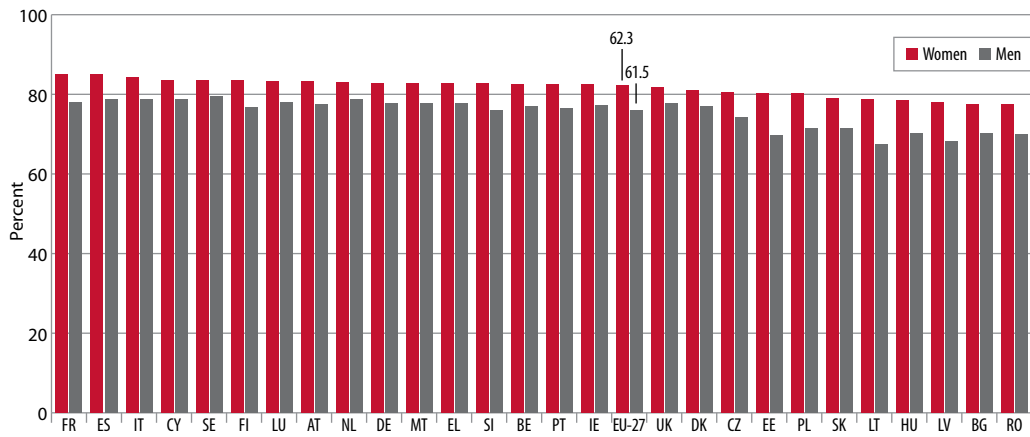
Source: European Commission, Database on women and men in decision-making. Data were collected in September 2010. The indicator has been developed as part of the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Council of Ministers. A senior minister is a minister in the national government who has a seat in the cabinet.

### Sex distribution of members of single/lower houses of national parliaments in EU Member States in 2010



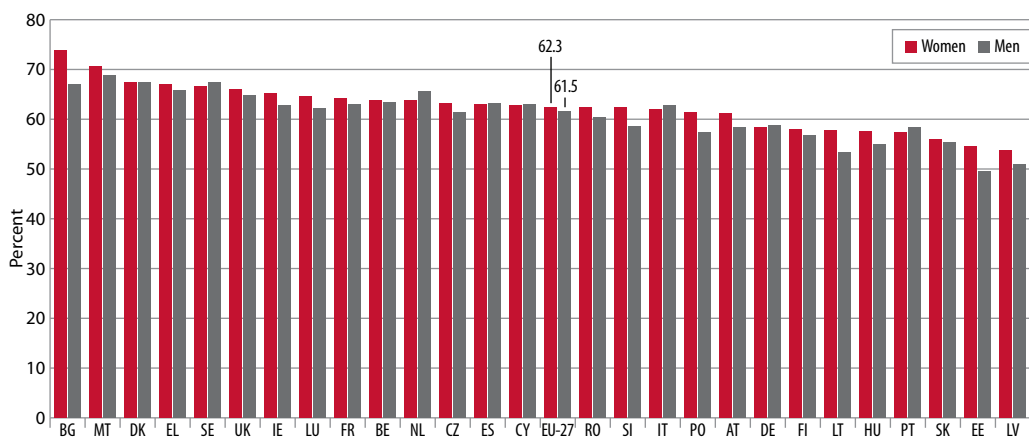
Source: European Commission, Database on women and decision-making. Data were collected in October 2010. The indicator has been developed as part of the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Council of Ministers. A senior minister is a minister in the national government who has a seat in the cabinet.

Life expectancy at birth in EU Member States - 2009



Source: Eurostat. EU-27, BE, IT: 2007; UK: 2008

Healthy life years in EU Member States - 2007



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages.

<b>Employment rates (women and men aged 20-64) in EU Member States - 2004 and 2009</b>						
	Women		Men		Gender Gap	
	2004	2009	2004	2009	2004	2009
EU-27	59.4	62.5	75.6	75.8	16.2	13.3
Austria	63.7	69.4	78.0	80.1	14.3	10.7
Belgium	57.2	61.0	73.8	73.2	16.6	12.2
Bulgaria	56.0	64.0	64.4	73.8	8.4	9.8
Cyprus	64.1	68.1	86.3	83.5	22.2	15.4
Czech Republic	61.1	61.4	79.2	80.2	18.1	18.8
Denmark	73.0	74.8	82.1	80.8	9.1	6.0
Estonia	66.8	68.8	74.7	71.0	7.9	2.2
Finland	69.7	72.4	74.5	74.7	4.8	2.3
France	63.6	65.1	75.8	74.2	12.2	9.1
Germany	62.6	69.8	74.9	79.7	12.3	9.9
Greece	48.8	52.7	79.5	78.8	30.7	26.1
Hungary	55.3	54.4	69.2	67.0	13.9	12.6
Ireland	60.8	61.7	82.1	71.8	21.3	10.1
Italy	48.3	49.7	74.9	73.8	26.6	24.1
Latvia	65.0	66.8	74.1	67.4	9.1	0.6
Lithuania	65.0	67.5	73.4	66.9	8.4	-0.6
Luxembourg	56.2	61.5	78.9	79.0	22.7	17.5
Malta	34.3	39.8	81.2	76.9	46.9	37.1
Netherlands	66.9	72.7	82.7	84.9	15.8	12.2
Poland	51.2	57.6	63.5	72.6	12.3	15.0
Portugal	66.1	66.1	79.3	76.5	13.2	10.4
Romania	57.4	56.3	69.7	70.7	12.3	14.4
Slovakia	56.7	58.2	70.9	74.6	14.2	16.4
Slovenia	65.4	67.9	75.4	75.6	10	7.7
Spain	51.5	56.3	78.7	71.0	27.2	14.7
Sweden	75.3	75.7	79.4	80.9	4.1	5.2
United Kingdom	68.0	68.2	82.1	79.6	14.1	11.4

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages.  
 Notes : A positive gap indicates higher unemployment rates for women in comparison with men, while the opposite is true for a negative gap.



<b>Employment rates of older workers (women and men aged 55 - 64) in EU Member States- 2009</b>						
	Women		Men		Gender Gap	
	2004	2009	2004	2009	2004	2009
EU-27	32.9	37.8	52.0	54.8	19.1	17
Austria	18.5	31.7	36.8	51	18.3	19.3
Belgium	21.2	27.7	39.3	42.9	18.1	15.2
Bulgaria	25.3	39.2	42.5	54.1	17.2	14.9
Cyprus	32.6	40.8	70.9	71.7	38.3	30.9
Czech Republic	29.6	35	56.7	59.6	27.1	24.6
Denmark	54.2	50.9	69.3	64.1	15.1	13.2
Estonia	50	61.2	53.5	59.4	3.5	-1.8
Finland	50.1	56.3	52.0	54.6	1.9	-1.7
France	32.7	36.6	42.4	41.4	9.7	4.8
Germany	33.1	48.7	49.8	63.9	16.7	15.2
Greece	24	27.7	56.4	57.7	32.4	30
Hungary	24.5	27	37.8	39.9	13.3	12.9
Ireland	34	41	64.7	60.9	30.7	19.9
Italy	18.9	25.4	42.2	46.7	23.3	21.3
Latvia	40.5	53.3	53.1	53.1	12.6	-0.2
Lithuania	38.8	48.3	55.7	56	16.9	7.7
Luxembourg	22.2	29.4	38.3	46.5	16.1	17.1
Malta	11	11.2	53.1	45.3	42.1	34.1
Netherlands	32.5	44.7	56.4	65.4	23.9	20.7
Poland	19.1	21.9	34.3	44.3	15.2	22.4
Portugal	42.4	42.7	58.9	57.5	16.5	14.8
Romania	32.1	34.1	42.7	52.3	10.6	18.2
Slovakia	12.2	26.1	42.8	54.9	30.6	28.8
Slovenia	19.6	24.8	41.2	46.4	21.6	21.6
Spain	24.5	32.3	58.5	56.7	34	24.4
Sweden	66.8	66.7	71.1	73.2	4.3	6.5
United Kingdom	47.3	49.2	65.3	66.2	18	17

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages.

<b>Unemployment rates (women and men aged 15 years and over) in EU Member States - 2004 and 2009</b> (Difference between women's and men's unemployment rates)						
	Women		Men		Gender Gap	
	2004	2009	2004	2009	2004	2009
EU-27	9.8	8.8	8.5	9.0	1.3	-0.2
Austria	5.4	4.6	4.5	5.0	0.9	-0.4
Belgium	9.5	8.1	7.5	7.8	2.0	0.3
Bulgaria	11.5	6.6	12.6	7.0	-1.1	-0.4
Cyprus	6.0	5.5	3.6	5.2	2.4	0.3
Czech Republic	9.9	7.7	7.1	5.9	2.8	1.8
Denmark	6.0	5.4	5.1	6.5	0.9	-1.1
Estonia	8.9	10.6	10.4	16.9	-1.5	-6.3
Finland	8.9	7.6	8.7	8.9	0.2	-1.3
France	10.3	9.8	8.3	9.2	2.0	0.6
Germany	9.1	6.9	10.3	8.0	-1.2	-1.1
Greece	16.2	13.2	6.6	6.9	9.6	6.3
Hungary	6.1	9.7	6.1	10.3	0.0	-0.6
Ireland	4.0	8.0	4.8	14.9	-0.8	-6.9
Italy	10.5	9.3	6.4	6.8	4.1	2.5
Latvia	10.2	13.9	10.6	20.3	-0.4	-6.4
Lithuania	11.8	10.4	11.0	17.1	0.8	-6.7
Luxembourg	6.8	5.9	3.6	4.5	3.2	1.4
Malta	9.0	7.6	6.6	6.6	2.4	1.0
Netherlands	5.3	3.8	4.9	3.7	0.4	0.1
Poland	20.0	8.7	18.2	7.8	1.8	0.9
Portugal	7.7	10.3	5.9	9.0	1.8	1.3
Romania	6.9	5.8	9.1	7.7	-2.2	-1.9
Slovakia	19.2	12.8	17.4	11.4	1.8	1.4
Slovenia	6.9	5.8	5.9	5.9	1.0	-0.1
Spain	14.3	18.4	8.0	17.7	6.3	0.7
Sweden	7.1	8.0	7.6	8.6	-0.5	-0.6
United Kingdom	4.2	6.4	5.1	8.6	-0.9	-2.2

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages.  
Notes : A positive gap indicates higher employment rates for men in comparison with women, while the opposite is true for a negative gap.

Share of part-time workers in total employment (persons aged 15 and over) in EU Member States - 2009		
	Women	Men
	2009	2009
EU-27	31.5	8.3
Austria	42.9	8.7
Belgium	41.5	8.6
Bulgaria	2.7	2.0
Cyprus	12.5	5.2
Czech Republic	9.2	2.8
Denmark	37.9	15.3
Estonia	13.8	7.0
Finland	19.0	9.2
France	29.8	6.0
Germany	45.3	9.7
Greece	10.4	3.2
Hungary	7.5	3.9
Ireland	33.8	10.5
Italy	27.9	5.1
Latvia	10.2	7.5
Lithuania	9.5	7.0
Luxembourg	35.1	5.6
Malta	23.6	5.1
Netherlands	75.8	24.9
Poland	11.6	5.8
Portugal	16.4	7.5
Romania	10.6	9.1
Slovakia	4.7	2.7
Slovenia	13.2	8.4
Spain	23.0	4.9
Sweden	41.2	14.2
United Kingdom	42.5	11.8

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages.

<b>Employment rates (women and men aged 15-64) measured in full-time equivalent rates, in EU Member States - 2004 and 2009</b>						
	Women		Men		Gender gap	
	2004	2009	2004	2009	2004	2009
EU-27	47.6	50.1	68.6	68.5	20.9	18.4
Austria	49	52.8	72.6	74.7	23.6	21.9
Belgium	44.4	47.4	67.6	66.7	23.2	19.4
Bulgaria	50.8	57.7	58.3	66.3	7.5	8.6
Cyprus	56.6	59.2	80.3	77.1	23.7	17.9
Czech Republic	54.6	54.8	72.1	73.5	17.5	18.7
Denmark	61.9	62.4	75.7	73.1	13.7	10.7
Estonia	58.3	60.3	65.7	62.9	7.4	2.6
Finland	61.3	62.5	68.3	67.1	7	4.6
France	51.3	53.4	68.1	67	16.8	13.6
Germany	45.5	50.7	67.8	72.2	22.4	21.5
Greece	43.8	46.7	74.1	73.5	30.4	26.8
Hungary	49.5	48.6	63.7	60.9	14.1	12.3
Ireland	47.1	48	74.9	64.2	27.9	16.2
Italy	40.2	40.9	68.9	67.3	28.7	26.4
Latvia	55.2	59.2	66.8	60.2	11.7	1
Lithuania	56.1	58.9	64.8	59.1	8.6	0.2
Luxembourg	43.3	47.8	72.9	71.7	29.6	23.9
Malta	29.7	34.1	75.5	71.5	45.8	37.4
Netherlands	41.5	45.9	72	73.2	30.5	27.3
Poland	44.2	50.9	56.4	66.2	12.2	15.3
Portugal	58.6	58.3	74.4	70.8	15.9	12.5
Romania	52.4	50.4	64.3	64.4	11.9	14
Slovakia	49.1	51.4	62.5	66.7	13.4	15.3
Slovenia	58.1	60.5	68.3	69.5	10.2	9
Spain	43.5	46.7	73	65	29.5	18.3
Sweden	61.6	60.7	70.9	70.9	9.4	10.2
United Kingdom	50.8	51.3	73.7	70.6	22.8	19.3

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages.  
 NB: A positive gap indicates higher employment rates for men in comparison with women, while the opposite is true for a negative gap.

<b>Employment impact of parenthood for women and men (aged 25-49) in 2009</b>		
Difference in percentage points in employment rates with presence of a child under 12 and without the presence of any children		
	Women	Men
EU-27	-11.4	8.5
Austria	-10.8	4.9
Belgium	-6.7	9.1
Bulgaria	-11.9	6.6
Cyprus	-5.8	8.6
Czech Republic	-33.8	6.6
Denmark	-5.3	1.9
Estonia	-21.0	9.0
Finland	-13.0	9.5
France	-7.9	8.0
Germany	-13.3	7.1
Greece	-10.1	9.7
Hungary	-29.4	7.1
Ireland	-17.3	7.3
Italy	-7.9	11.3
Latvia	-8.3	11.1
Lithuania	-5.1	13.3
Luxembourg	-7.9	6.3
Malta	-15.4	7.6
Netherlands	-5.5	6.2
Poland	-12.3	11.0
Portugal	-1.0	11.4
Romania	-3.3	8.5
Slovakia	-28.0	9.2
Slovenia	2.1	9.1
Spain	-9.6	10.7
United Kingdom	-16.8	5.8

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages.  
Notes: no data available for SE.

Employment rates of men aged 25-49, depending on whether they have children (under 12) - 2009		
	Men	
	Without children	With children
EU-27	81.8	90.3
Austria	88.0	92.9
Belgium	83.2	92.3
Bulgaria	81.8	88.3
Cyprus	85.4	94.0
Czech Republic	88.7	95.3
Germany	84.1	91.2
Denmark	87.7	89.6
Estonia	75.1	84.1
Greece	85.7	95.5
Spain	73.1	83.9
Finland	81.4	91.0
France	84.0	91.9
Hungary	78.1	85.2
Ireland	74.4	81.7
Italy	80.2	91.6
Lithuania	70.9	84.2
Luxembourg	88.6	94.9
Latvia	71.2	82.2
Malta	87.2	94.8
Netherlands	89.0	95.2
Poland	81.5	92.5
Portugal	80.4	91.9
Romania	78.1	86.6
Slovenia	85.2	94.3
Slovakia	81.7	90.9
United Kingdom	84.0	89.9

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages.  
Notes : No data available for SE.

Employment rates of women aged 25-49, depending on whether they have children (under 12) - 2009		
	Women	
	Without children	With children
EU-27	77.0	65.6
Austria	84.8	74.1
Belgium	78.3	71.7
Bulgaria	79.5	67.5
Cyprus	80.3	74.5
Czech Republic	87.1	53.3
Germany	82.3	69.1
Denmark	84.8	79.5
Estonia	84.3	63.4
Greece	68.1	58.0
Spain	69.8	60.1
Finland	85.6	72.6
France	80.4	72.5
Hungary	78.4	49.1
Ireland	75.5	58.2
Italy	63.2	55.3
Lithuania	80.8	75.7
Luxembourg	77.0	69.1
Latvia	78.6	70.4
Malta	56.9	41.5
Netherlands	84.2	78.7
Poland	79.0	66.7
Portugal	77.1	76.1
Romania	70.3	67.0
Slovenia	83.7	85.9
Slovakia	82.4	54.3
United Kingdom	82.2	65.4

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages.  
Notes : No data available for SE.

<b>Inactivity and part-time work among women due to the lack of care services for children and other dependent persons (% of total female population having care responsibilities) – 2009</b>	
EU-27	27.9
Austria	16.4
Belgium	44.7
Bulgaria	17.9
Cyprus	23.8
Czech Republic	16.7
Estonia	10.5
Finland	6.4
France	15.1
Germany	38
Greece	69.7
Hungary	34.2
Italy	17.7
Latvia	88.4
Lithuania	40.2
Luxembourg	16.8
Netherlands	3.7
Poland	42.6
Portugal	29.1
Romania	93.7
Slovakia	10
Slovenia	53.4
Spain	61
Sweden	7.8

Source: Eurostat - Labour Force Survey.  
 Notes : IE, MT, UK: data not available. DK: no reliable data.



<b>Pay gap between women and men in unadjusted form in EU Member States - 2008</b> (Difference between men's and women's average gross hourly earnings as a percentage of men's average gross hourly earnings)	
EU-27	17.5
Austria	25.5
Belgium	9.0
Bulgaria	13.6
Cyprus	21.6
Czech Republic	26.2
Denmark	17.1
Estonia	30.9
Finland	20.0
France	17.9
Germany	23.2
Greece	22.0
Hungary	17.5
Ireland	17.1
Italy	4.9
Latvia	13.4
Lithuania	21.6
Luxembourg	12.4
Malta	9.2
Netherlands	19.6
Poland	9.8
Portugal	9.2
Romania	9.0
Slovakia	20.9
Slovenia	8.5
Spain	16.1
Sweden	17.1
United Kingdom	21.4

*Source:* Eurostat. The unadjusted Gender Pay Gap (GPG) represents the difference between average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees and of female paid employees as a percentage of average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees.  
*Notes :* EE and IE: data for 2007.

<b>Evolution of employment rates for women and men (aged 20-64) in EU Member States, between 2008 and 2010 (second quarter)</b>				
	Women		Men	
	2008Q2	2010Q2	2008Q2	2010Q2
EU-27	63.1	62.4	78.3	75.3
Austria	68.8	69.3	82.6	80.7
Belgium	60.9	60.6	74.5	73.4
Bulgaria	65.3	61.9	75.9	70.0
Cyprus	68.8	68.9	85.7	82.7
Czech Republic	62.9	60.8	81.9	79.7
Denmark	75.9	74.4	84.6	78.9
Estonia	72.6	65.5	82.2	64.4
Finland	73.6	72.1	79.5	75.2
France	65.8	65.3	75.7	74.0
Germany	68.6	69.6	80.1	80.3
Greece	52.8	52.4	80.9	76.8
Hungary	54.6	55.0	69.1	66.0
Ireland	64.6	61.0	81.3	70.0
Italy	50.9	49.9	76.0	73.1
Latvia	72.9	64.9	80.9	64.4
Lithuania	68.4	64.2	76.7	62.1
Luxembourg	60.7	61.7	78.2	78.4
Malta	40.6	39.5	77.7	78.8
Netherlands	72.1	72.9	85.6	83.6
Poland	57.0	58.0	72.7	71.5
Portugal	67.6	66.0	79.7	75.2
Romania	58.1	57.3	72.6	72.3
Slovakia	60.0	57.1	76.8	71.9
Slovenia	68.2	67.7	77.4	73.5
Spain	58.7	55.6	79.1	69.4
Sweden	77.7	75.9	83.8	81.8
United Kingdom	68.8	67.8	82.1	79.1

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), quarterly data.

<b>Educational attainment (at least upper secondary level) of women and men aged 20 - 24, in EU Member States - 2009</b>		
	Women	Men
EU-27	81.4	75.9
Austria	86.1	85.8
Belgium	85.8	80.9
Bulgaria	82.5	84.8
Cyprus	90.2	84.2
Czech Republic	92.3	91.6
Germany	75.8	71.7
Denmark	78.4	62.2
Estonia	86.4	78.2
Spain	67.1	53.1
Finland	85.9	84.4
France	85.9	81.3
Greece	86.9	77.8
Hungary	85.8	82.1
Ireland	90.5	83.4
Italy	79.9	72.8
Lithuania	91.0	83.0
Luxembourg	77.6	76.1
Latvia	84.8	76.2
Malta	56.7	48.2
Netherlands	81.2	72.1
Poland	93.2	89.3
Portugal	61.3	50.0
Romania	78.9	77.8
Sweden	87.9	84.9
Slovenia	93.1	86.2
Slovakia	94.0	92.6
United Kingdom	81.3	77.4

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages.

NB: MT, LU and SE: provisional values.

Students living outside their home country for one or more years (for study purposes) are covered in their destination country in the EU Labour Force Survey. This may cause differences to Member State statistics depending on how these students are counted in each country. This issue is particularly relevant for smaller EU Member States (as CY, LU, MT) where many students study abroad at upper secondary and tertiary educational levels. Conscripts on compulsory military service may not be covered in the EU Labour Force Survey in all EU Member States.

<b>Sex distribution of tertiary education graduates, for EU Member States, in 2008</b>		
	Women	Men
EU-27	59.5	40.5
Austria	51.6	48.4
Belgium	58.7	41.3
Bulgaria	61.4	38.6
Cyprus	61.6	38.4
Czech Republic	58.1	41.9
Denmark	56.8	43.2
Germany	57.8	42.2
Estonia	69.3	30.7
Greece	59.3	40.7
Spain	58.4	41.6
Finland	64.0	36.0
France	55.2	44.8
Hungary	66.8	33.2
Ireland	56.3	43.7
Italy	59.5	40.5
Lithuania	66.7	33.3
Luxembourg	49.4	50.6
Latvia	71.5	28.5
Malta	59.4	40.6
Netherlands	56.7	43.3
Poland	65.8	34.2
Portugal	59.6	40.4
Romania	63.7	36.3
Sweden	63.5	36.5
Slovenia	62.8	37.2
Slovakia	64.2	35.8
United Kingdom	57.9	42.1

Source: Eurostat, Education statistics.

<b>Early leavers from education and training in EU Member States – 2009</b>		
Percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training		
	Women	Men
EU-27	12.5	16.3
Austria	8.9	8.5
Belgium	9.3	12.8
Bulgaria	15.8	13.7
Cyprus	8.8	15.2
Czech Republic	5.2	5.5
Denmark	7.7	13.2
Estonia	9.3	18.4
Finland	9	10.7
France	10.3	14.3
Germany	10.7	11.5
Greece	10.6	18.3
Hungary	10.4	12
Ireland	8.2	14.4
Italy	16.3	22
Latvia	10.4	17.5
Lithuania	5.7	11.5
Luxembourg	6.6	8.9
Malta	33.6	39.7
Netherlands	8.6	13.1
Poland	3.9	6.6
Portugal	26.1	36.1
Romania	17.2	16.1
Slovakia	4.1	5.7
Slovenia	3.2	7.2
Spain	24.7	37.4
Sweden	9.5	11.9
United Kingdom	14.5	17

Source: Eurostat.

<b>Gender segregation in occupations and in economic sectors in EU Member States, in 2009</b>		
	Gender segregation in occupations	Gender segregation in economic sectors
Austria	26.1	19.5
Belgium	25.5	19.6
Bulgaria	29.4	21.6
Cyprus	29	19.7
Czech Republic	25	20.7
Denmark	25.5	19.7
Estonia	31.8	25.4
Finland	29.3	24.1
France	26	19
Germany	26.2	19.5
Greece	22	16
Hungary	28.4	20.8
Ireland	27	22.1
Italy	24.4	19.6
Latvia	28.5	23.6
Lithuania	29.2	22.7
Luxembourg	23.7	16.5
Malta	23.4	16.4
Netherlands	24.9	18.7
Poland	26.2	20.6
Portugal	27.1	21.6
Romania	23	17.3
Slovakia	26	24.6
Slovenia	30.4	18.5
Spain	26.1	20.6
Sweden	27	21.9
United Kingdom	24.7	19.5

Source: Eurostat, EU LFS. Gender segregation in occupations is calculated as the average national share of employment for women and men applied to each occupation; differences are added up to produce the total amount of gender imbalance expressed as a proportion of total employment (ISCO classification).

Gender segregation in sectors is calculated as the average national share of employment for women and men applied to each sector; differences are added up to produce the total amount of gender imbalance expressed as a proportion of total employment (NACE classification).

<b>At-risk-of-poverty rate after social transfers for older people (women and men aged 65 years and over), in EU Member States, 2009</b>		
	Women	Men
EU-27	20.1	14.9
Austria	18.4	10.7
Belgium	22.3	20.6
Bulgaria	44.2	32.0
Cyprus	52.4	44.1
Czech Republic	10.3	3.0
Denmark	20.3	18.3
Estonia	41.3	18.9
Finland	28.4	13.1
France	11.9	9.1
Germany	17.0	12.9
Greece	21.9	20.9
Hungary	5.4	3.1
Ireland (2007)	17.6	14.4
Italy	22.4	15.8
Latvia	50.7	40.6
Lithuania	31.3	13.2
Luxembourg	7.7	3.9
Malta	17.8	20.5
Netherlands	7.5	8.0
Poland	16.5	10.9
Portugal	21.8	17.7
Romania	25.3	14.7
Slovakia	14.8	4.5
Slovenia	25.5	11.4
Spain	27.1	22.6
Sweden	23.6	10.4
United Kingdom	24.1	20.1

Source: EU-27: SILC 2008. EU aggregates are Eurostat estimates and computed as population weighted averages of national values.

NB: At-risk-of-poverty rate for elderly persons: The share of persons aged 65+ with an income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60% of the national median income. Income must be understood as equivalised disposable income (sum from all sources, adjusted for household size and composition). It should be noted that the risk-of-poverty indicator is computed using an income definition which does not yet include imputed rent of owner-occupiers. Comparisons between sexes are based on the assumption of equal sharing of resources within households.

Sex distribution of members of single/lower houses of national parliaments in EU Member States in 2010		
	Women	Men
EU-27	24	76
Austria	28	72
Belgium	40	60
Bulgaria	22	78
Cyprus	13	87
Czech Republic	22	78
Denmark	38	62
Estonia	23	77
Finland	40	60
France	19	81
Germany	33	67
Greece	17	83
Hungary	9	91
Ireland	14	86
Italy	21	79
Latvia	19	81
Lithuania	19	81
Luxembourg	20	80
Malta	9	91
Netherlands	41	59
Poland	20	80
Portugal	30	70
Romania	11	89
Slovakia	16	84
Slovenia	16	84
Spain	37	63
Sweden	46	54
United Kingdom	22	78

*Source:* European Commission, Database on women and decision-making.  
 Data were collected in October 2010. The indicator has been developed as part of the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Council of Ministers. A senior minister is a minister in the national government who has a seat in the cabinet.



<b>Sex distribution of members of the highest decision making body of largest publicly quoted companies in 2010</b>		
	Women	Men
EU-27	12	88
Austria	9	91
Belgium	10	90
Bulgaria	11	89
Cyprus	4	96
Czech Republic	12	88
Denmark	18	82
Estonia	7	93
Finland	26	74
France	12	88
Germany	13	87
Greece	6	94
Hungary	14	86
Ireland	8	92
Italy	5	95
Latvia	23	77
Lithuania	13	87
Luxembourg	4	96
Malta	2	98
Poland	12	88
Portugal	5	95
Romania	21	79
Slovakia	22	78
Slovenia	10	90
Spain	10	90
Sweden	26	74
The Netherlands	15	85
United Kingdom	13	87

*Source:* European Commission, Database on women and decision-making.  
 Data were collected in October 2010. The list of the largest publicly quoted companies is based for each country on current membership of blue-chip index. In countries for which the blue-chip index includes a small number of companies (for instance LU, SK), at least the 10 largest companies were covered.

Sex distribution of senior ministers in national governments in EU Member States in 2010		
	Women	Men
EU-27	27	73
Austria	43	57
Belgium	33	67
Bulgaria	17	83
Cyprus	17	83
Czech Republic	0	100
Denmark	47	53
Estonia	8	92
Finland	55	45
France	34	66
Germany	38	62
Greece	17	83
Hungary	0	100
Ireland	20	80
Italy	22	78
Latvia	21	79
Lithuania	13	87
Luxembourg	27	73
Malta	22	78
Netherlands	25	75
Poland	25	75
Portugal	29	71
Romania	12	88
Slovakia	14	86
Slovenia	26	74
Spain	50	50
Sweden	46	54
United Kingdom	16	84

*Source:* European Commission, Database on women and decision-making.  
 Data were collected in September 2010. The indicator has been developed as part of the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Council of Ministers. A senior minister is a minister in the national government who has a seat in the cabinet.

Life expectancy at birth in EU Member States - 2008		
	Women	Men
EU-27	82.21	76.07
Austria	83.21	77.58
Belgium	82.60	77.06
Bulgaria	77.40	70.09
Cyprus	83.62	78.63
Czech Republic	80.52	74.25
Denmark	81.10	76.89
Estonia	80.24	69.80
Finland	83.46	76.62
France	85.03	77.98
Germany	82.80	77.77
Greece	82.68	77.82
Hungary	78.40	70.26
Ireland	82.49	77.36
Italy	84.22	78.71
Latvia	78.05	68.14
Lithuania	78.68	67.51
Luxembourg	83.34	78.10
Malta	82.72	77.84
Netherlands	82.90	78.68
Poland	80.14	71.54
Portugal	82.56	76.50
Romania	77.39	69.83
Slovakia	79.10	71.40
Slovenia	82.67	75.90
Spain	84.94	78.69
Sweden	83.51	79.43
United Kingdom	81.88	77.80

Source: Eurostat.  
EU-27, Belgium, Italy: data from 2007; UK: data from 2008.

Healthy life years in EU Member States - 2007		
	women	men
EU-27	62.3	61.5
Austria	61.1	58.4
Belgium	63.7	63.3
Bulgaria	73.8	67.0
Cyprus	62.7	63.0
Czech Republic	63.2	61.3
Denmark	67.4	67.4
Estonia	54.6	49.5
Finland	58.0	56.7
France	64.2	63.0
Germany	58.3	58.8
Greece	67.1	65.9
Hungary	57.6	55.0
Ireland	65.3	62.7
Italy	61.9	62.8
Latvia	53.7	50.9
Lithuania	57.7	53.4
Luxembourg	64.6	62.2
Malta	70.6	68.9
Netherlands	63.7	65.7
Poland	61.3	57.4
Portugal	57.3	58.3
Romania	62.3	60.4
Slovakia	55.9	55.4
Slovenia	62.3	58.6
Spain	62.9	63.2
Sweden	66.6	67.5
United Kingdom	66.1	64.9

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (LFS), annual averages.

# The gender balance in business leadership

## Introduction

Equality between women and men is enshrined in the Treaties and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights as a fundamental principle of the European Union (EU). Equality between women and men is one of the EU's main objectives and tasks<sup>(1)</sup>. Article 157(4) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU) allows the Member States to take positive action to achieve full equality in practice between men and women in working life.

Despite making up nearly half of the workforce and accounting for 60% of new university graduates in the EU, women continue to be under-represented in economic decision-making positions, in particular at the top. Women's untapped talent, which, properly exploited, could benefit businesses and society at large, represents a wasted investment in human capital. Women represent on average almost one-third of business leaders in the EU, but the situation varies between countries. On average, the company boards of the largest companies listed on the EU stock exchanges include barely one woman in every ten board members and progress in changing this has been slow in recent years.

Equality in decision-making is one of five priority areas<sup>(2)</sup> in both the Women's Charter<sup>(3)</sup> and the European Commission's Strategy for Equality between Women and Men (2010-2015)<sup>(4)</sup>. In both

documents, the Commission has reaffirmed its commitment to working to increase the percentage of women in positions of responsibility.

Slow progress towards gender balance in economic decision-making has put pressure on governments and companies in many Member States to redress the situation. There is discussion across the Union on the best way to increase the presence of women, in particular in corporate boardrooms.

The 'business case' for gender equality is another important issue. It is widely argued that women's advancement in the world of work brings benefits for businesses, while the under-utilisation of women's skills is a loss for the economy, particularly in the light of anticipated skill shortages.

This document has been drafted against that background with the aim of highlighting the gender gaps in selected high-level economic decision-making positions<sup>(5)</sup>, the main barriers women face, and the economic and business case for better representation of women in top positions. It also outlines some examples of action taken by governments, the social partners and the corporate sector to increase women's participation in management.

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(1) Article 2 and Article 3(3) TEU and Article 8 TFEU.

(2) The other priority areas are: equal economic independence, equal pay for equal work and work of equal value, dignity, integrity and an end to gender-based violence, and gender equality in external action.

(3) COM(2010) 78 final.

(4) COM(2010) 491 final.

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(5) This means positions where comparable EU-level data exist.

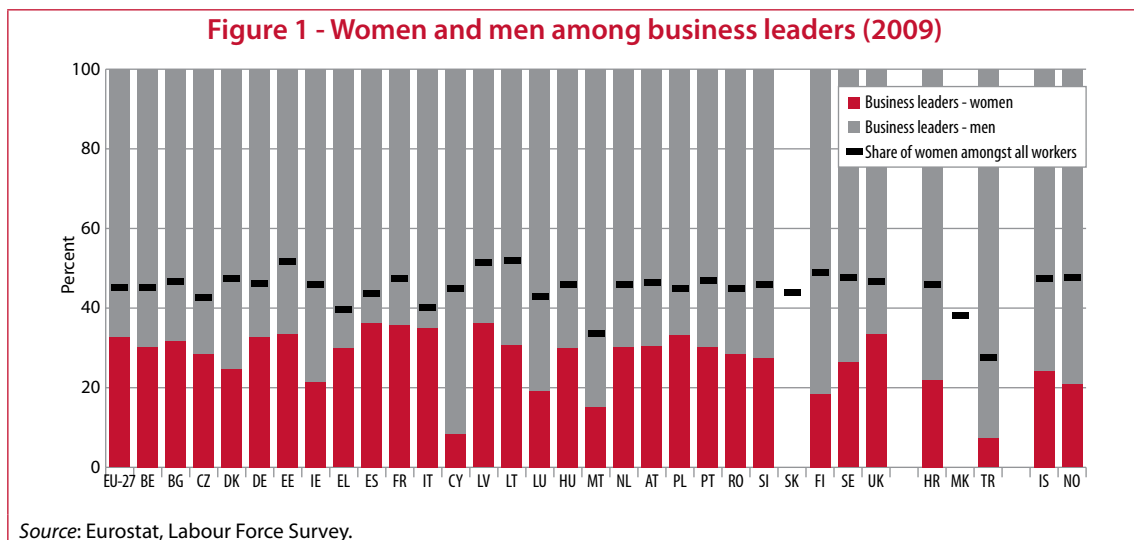
## 1. The gender balance in business leadership — facts and figures

### 1.1. Women’s under-representation among business leaders and in boardrooms

The gender imbalance among decision-makers in businesses across Europe is an indication of the lack of equality in women’s career advancement. Although women account for nine in every 20 workers (45.4% in 2009), they make up less

than a third (32.8%) of business leaders<sup>(6)</sup>. This disparity exists to varying degrees in all European countries (Figure 1).

The difference between the percentage of women business leaders and the share of women in the total workforce is greatest in Cyprus and Finland (both over 30 percentage points) and lowest in Greece, Spain and Italy (all below 10 pp).



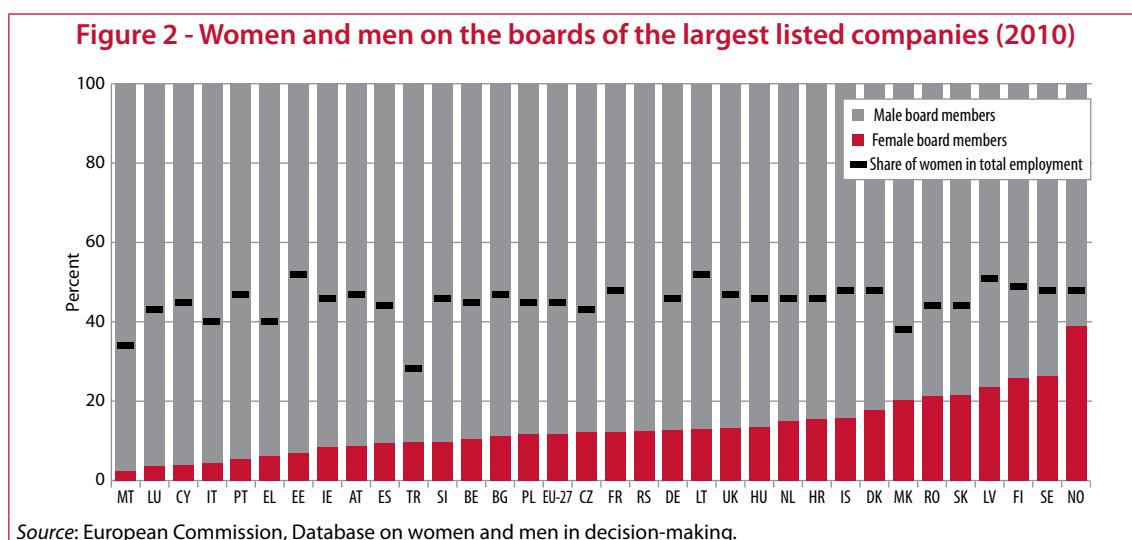
(6) Business leaders comprise people who work as directors or chief executives of a corporation or as the managers of small enterprises (categories 121 and 131 of the ISCO-88 classification of occupations). Note that these “business leaders” include some self-employed people who work through a company with no employees rather than as an independent and a few family workers in similar circumstances. These groups account for around 37% and 3% respectively of all women counted as business leaders and contribute to some of the country differences.

This disparity has not narrowed significantly over time: the percentage of female business leaders rose from 30.7% in 2000 to 32.8% in 2009.

The latest statistics on the gender balance in the boards of top-listed companies across Europe<sup>(7)</sup> show that a typical board of ten has just one female member and that in 97% of cases the board is chaired by a man. In 2010, women accounted for just below 12% of board members in the largest publicly listed companies in the EU and for only just over 3% of board chairs<sup>(8)</sup>.

The percentage of women on boards also varies considerably by country (Figure 2). In Norway, where there is a legal requirement for balanced representation, women make up nearly 40% of the board members of the largest companies. There is one woman member for every three men in Sweden and Finland (26% women), while figures for Latvia, Slovakia and Romania are only slightly lower (all between 21% and 23%). In Malta, Luxembourg, Cyprus and Italy, fewer than 5% of board members are women.

The situation is not very different in the USA, where women hold around 15% of board seats in the Fortune 500 companies and chair 2% of boards<sup>(9)</sup>.



(7) Source: European Commission database on women and men in decision-making, which covers 33 countries (EU-27, plus HR, MK, TR, RS, IS and NO). The data on companies cover the largest (by market capitalisation) nationally registered (according to ISIN code) constituents of the blue-chip index maintained by the stock exchange in each country. The total sample covers 598 companies with a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 50 from each country.

(8) The Commission database covers 34 countries, which are listed elsewhere, but there are no data on companies in Liechtenstein. In countries with unitary (one-tier) systems, the board of directors is counted (including executive and non-executive members). In countries with two-tier systems, only the supervisory board is counted.

(9) 2009 Catalyst Census: Fortune 500 women board directors. The data are not fully comparable with those from the Commission's database.

**1.1.1. Many large companies still have no women on their boards**

Women’s access to boardroom seats also varies with the company. In most Member States, a number of companies support equality throughout their organisations and have taken deliberate steps to further the promotion of women in senior positions. Nonetheless, such companies remain in the minority: one in three (34%) large companies in the EU had no woman on their boards in 2010, and at least half of the companies surveyed in ten countries, plus Turkey, had men-only boards (Figure 3).

Another third (32%) of companies surveyed had just one female representative. Indeed, only in Denmark, Finland and Sweden did the companies surveyed have at least one female board member, and only in Norway did all companies have more than one woman.

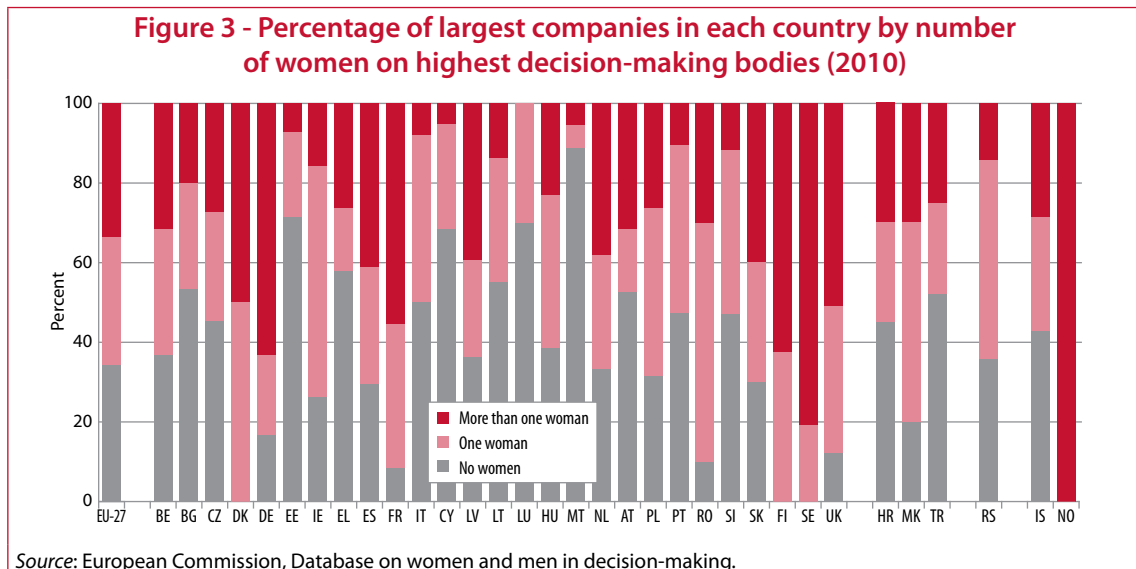
At this rate, unless action is taken to increase the number of women on boards, it will take another

50 years before there is a reasonable balance (at least 40% of each sex) on company boards.

**1.1.2. Female executives are few and far between**

In 2010 fewer than 3 % of CEOs of the largest companies in the EU were women. Because CEOs represent the main source of further boardroom recruitment, it is important to increase the number of women in this function. A good way to facilitate the access of qualified women into management positions is to strengthen the leadership pipeline, as many women are highly qualified but lack the skills and experience necessary to enter senior management and board positions.

Getting more women into senior positions requires a bottom-up approach that ensures women have the same chance as men at every stage of the executive promotion process.





## 1.2. Barriers to gender balance in decision-making positions

The reasons for the current over-representation of men in power and decision-making are not only structural and multifaceted, but are also grounded in traditional gender roles.

While many structural barriers that may impede women's attempts to climb the corporate ladder have been removed through legislation, other significant structural factors limit women's career opportunities. The traditional division of labour, which defines women's responsibility as caring for the family and that of men as providing for it, also acts as a barrier to women's advancement. Examples of structural barriers that affect women's opportunity to participate in the labour market on an equal footing with men are tax policies that do not encourage two-earner families and a lack of access to care

services for dependent persons (children, disabled and the elderly) or of adequate leave schemes and flexible working arrangements.

Other barriers to women's advancement are found in many business cultures where traditional gender roles prevail. These underpin the view that women should take primary responsibility for raising the family and engender doubts about their capacity to fulfil this role together with a professional career, particularly at senior level. This contributes to vertical segregation: women are under-represented in line management positions that lead to the top positions and where recruitments for CEO posts are made. Women are consequently less highly trained and are less often offered middle-level line management positions that would prepare them for the highest positions. A lack of role models may also discourage some women from looking for management positions.

## 2. The economic and business case for gender equality

From a **macroeconomic perspective**, the increase in women's participation in the labour market has accounted for a quarter of annual economic growth since 1995<sup>(10)</sup>. This positive development has contributed to greater recognition of the 'economic case' for gender equality. Some research suggests that closing the male-female employment gap would have positive economic results for developed economies and could play a role in addressing the problems posed by population ageing and the burden of pensions<sup>(11)</sup>. One headline target set under the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, endorsed by the June 2010 European Council aims to raise the employment rate for women and men aged 20 to 64 to 75%. In line with Europe 2020, the guidelines for

the employment policies of the Member States state that 'increased female labour force participation is a precondition for boosting growth and for tackling the demographic challenges' in Europe<sup>(12)</sup>.

While women have a higher level of tertiary educational attainment than men in the EU, their professional careers do not fully reflect their skill levels, which is a waste of human resources and competences at a time when human capital is the key to competitiveness in the global economy.

The 'economic case' for gender equality acknowledges the vast untapped economic potential of qualified women who are not using all of their skills and talents.

(10) OECD (2008) Gender and sustainable development. Maximising the economic, social and environmental role of women.

(11) For example, the Corporate Gender Gap Report 2010, World Economic Forum, quotes a possible increase of 13% in euro-area GDP.

(12) Employment guidelines, recital 12.



From a **microeconomic perspective**, the ‘business case’ for gender equality emphasises the benefits companies can derive from mirroring the diversity of their employees and customers. Several studies<sup>(13)</sup> suggest there is a positive correlation between the percentage of women in senior positions and company performance. Although these studies do not prove any causality, the correlations highlight the business case for women’s greater involvement in management and corporate decision-making. Female members of company boards and audit committees and female chief financial officers and auditors may also have a positive impact on financial reporting, auditing and the organisation of internal controls<sup>(14)</sup>.

Diversity among employees and board members boosts creativity and innovation by harnessing complementary knowledge, skills and experience. Companies will also gain added value by creating a women-friendly culture and will be considered employers of choice by ambitious women and men eager for a better balance between work and private or family life. Companies that succeed in attracting and retaining larger talent pools are also considered capable of delivering competitive advantages, and this is not only good for the company’s reputation and image but also crucial for understanding its customers. Women represent a growing proportion of the consumer market, and a leadership team that includes women will find it easier to understand female customers<sup>(15)</sup>.

(13) ‘Female leadership and firm profitability’, Finnish Business and Policy Forum (EVA), 2007; McKinsey Women Matter report (2007); ‘The contribution of women on boards of directors: going beyond the surface’, Nielsen, Sabina og Morten Huse (2010); Catalyst studies, [www.catalyst.org](http://www.catalyst.org); Cranfield School of Management (UK), ‘Why women mean business’, A. Wittenberg-Cox and A. Maitland, Deutsche Bank Research (2010), [www.dbresearch.com](http://www.dbresearch.com), etc.

(14) Study project led by Prof. Sami Vähämaa, Vaasa University, Helsinki.

(15) Fröse and Szebel-Habig (2009).

### 3. Strategies to promote gender balance in business leadership

Council Recommendation 96/694/EC<sup>(16)</sup> invites the Member States to adopt a comprehensive, integrated strategy to promote the balanced participation of women and men in decision-making. It also calls on the Member States to encourage the private sector to increase the number of women at all levels of decision-making, in particular through the adoption of equality plans and positive action programmes.

The Commission has subsequently supported the Member States' through, for example, its financial programmes for gender equality.

International commitments such as the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA)<sup>(17)</sup> have been important in raising awareness and monitoring progress on the issue. To that end, the Commission has established a database on decision-making. It reports on the situation annually on the basis of common indicators<sup>(18)</sup> developed at EU level by the Council in 2003.

In 2010 most respondents to the Commission's public consultation on corporate governance in financial institutions agreed that greater diversity on boards avoided the 'group think' phenomenon and stepped up the challenge within boards. While some were in favour of quotas for female board members, many stressed that diversity should not come at the cost of knowledge and expertise<sup>(19)</sup>.

#### 3.1. Action promoted by governments

Governments have developed and supported various initiatives to raise awareness and persuade the corporate sector to improve women's career opportunities and do away with 'glass ceilings'. These include campaigns, monitoring, mentoring schemes, networks, voluntary charters, the use of corporate governance codes and even legislation.

The slow progress made has fuelled debate across Europe and brought about social and media pressure to redress the situation more quickly, in particular to improve the gender balance in corporate boardrooms.

##### 3.1.1. Soft measures: corporate governance codes and charters

**Corporate governance codes** that encourage companies to take action are increasingly used to promote gender equality on company boards. They utilise peer pressure to influence organisations from within and pressure from stakeholders and the media from outside.

As from 2010, the **Finnish** Corporate Governance Code includes a 'comply or explain' rule, which makes it a duty to explain why there is not at least one woman on the board of each publicly listed

(16) OJ L 319, 10.12.1996.

(17) The Platform for Action, adopted in 1995 by 189 states, outlines 12 critical areas of concern where gender inequality persists and proposes strategic objectives and actions for each area. One of these was the under-representation of women in the decision-making process.

(18) The proportion of women among the presidents/chairpersons of the highest decision-making body of the largest publicly quoted firms on the national stock exchange and the proportion of women among the members of the highest decision-making body of the largest publicly quoted firms on the national stock exchange.

(19) See the Green Paper and the summary of the responses at: [http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/company/modern/corporate\\_governance\\_in\\_financial\\_institutions\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/company/modern/corporate_governance_in_financial_institutions_en.htm).

company. As a consequence, the number of listed companies with at least one woman on the board rose from 51% to 74% from 2008 to spring 2010<sup>(20)</sup>.

In **Sweden**, a recommendation on gender-equal boards in the 2004 Corporate Governance Code has led to a significant increase in female board members in listed companies<sup>(21)</sup>. Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Luxembourg, Germany, France, Denmark and the United Kingdom have also included clauses in their corporate governance codes concerning gender equality on company boards.

In **Poland**, the 'Code of Best Practice for Warsaw Stock Exchange Listed Companies' recommends to public companies and their shareholders that they ensure a balanced proportion of women and men in management and supervisory functions in companies, thus reinforcing the creativity and innovation of the companies' economic business.

The **Netherlands** and **Denmark** have also introduced charters that companies can sign voluntarily.

The Dutch charter requires participating companies to set quantitative goals, measure their achievements and report to a monitoring committee, which reports annually to the Minister for Emancipation and announces the results of the participating companies in the media ('naming and shaming').

The Danish charter for more women in management aims to launch specific, measurable initiatives in companies and organisations to increase the proportion of women at all levels of management. It requires enterprises to develop and set goals and/or targets for the number of women in management, the percentage of women at selected executive levels to be achieved within a set time, or the proportion of women in talent pools or in the management pipeline. Companies must submit progress reports every two years. Moreover, the Minister for Gender Equality has prepared recommendations for

more women on supervisory boards (Operation Chain Reaction). The co-signatories of these recommendations undertake to raise the percentage of female managers and female candidates for supervisory board membership and increase the pool of potential female supervisory board member candidates by working consistently to increase the number of female corporate executives in general.

### 3.1.2. Gender quotas set by legislation for corporate boardrooms

**Norway** passed a quota law<sup>(22)</sup> in 2006 requiring a minimum of 40% of each sex on the boards of all public limited companies. In 2006, it applied to the newly established public limited companies and from 2008 to all public limited companies. A failure to meet the quota may result in penalties or, as a last resort, in the company's dissolution. As a consequence, the number of women on the boards of large companies in Norway has risen sharply.

In sum, following the quota law, women have more equal access to economic decision-making positions, there are more women role models, and more women are eligible for top management positions<sup>(23)</sup>.

However, the figures indicate that the law has not improved the gender balance in other high-level positions in companies or in companies that are not subject to quotas.

In **Spain**, an equality law adopted in 2007 encourages large companies to alter the membership of their boards gradually until each sex makes up at least 40% by 2015. There is no penalty for failing to comply, but this is taken into account when public subsidies or state administration contracts are awarded. There are already signs of progress: the percentage of women on the boards of Spain's largest listed companies has more than doubled, rising from 4% in 2006 to 10% in 2010<sup>(24)</sup>.

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(20) <http://www.ewla.org/News/12995>.

(21) From 18% in 2003 to 28.6% in 2009.

(22) December 2003.

(23) Institute for Social Research, Oslo, Norway.

(24) Commission database: women and men in decision-making.

In **Iceland**, legislation adopted in 2010 and applicable to publicly owned and publicly limited companies with more than 50 employees aims to ensure that each sex will make up at least 40% of boards by 2013.

In **France**, legislation was adopted in January 2011. It gives businesses six years to ensure that 40 % of boardroom positions are taken by women. Within three years French firms must ensure that a figure of 20 % is reached. The legislation will apply to companies in France that are listed, have more than 500 employees or have revenues over 50 million euros. There are indications that some companies are already taking positive steps to pre-empt the requirement.

In the **Netherlands**, the Dutch House of Representatives has discussed a bill on the management and supervision of listed companies, which includes provisions for the balanced participation of women and men on boards. The bill requires at least 30% of seats to be held by each gender.

Quota legislation is also being discussed in **Italy** and **Belgium**.

Gender quotas for **state-owned companies** have been in place in Denmark, Norway, Finland and Iceland since early 2000. All of these countries have met their targets for gender balance on the boards of state-owned companies, which suggests that legislation on quotas can be effective.

However, if quota legislation is to achieve sustainable results, it should both provide for disuasive penalties and be backed up by additional measures (training of talented women for senior management jobs, databases of qualified women ready for such positions, etc.).

Moreover, in most cases<sup>(25)</sup> where quota legislation for publicly listed companies has recently been adopted, it is too early to evaluate the results.

## 3.2. The contribution of the social partners and businesses

### 3.2.1. Action by the social partners

Promoting women in decision-making was a priority area in the 'Framework of actions on gender equality' adopted in 2005 by the four cross-industry European social partners BusinessEurope, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC. An evaluation<sup>(26)</sup> has shown that a growing number of organisations are implementing diversity and equality programmes. There is also growing recognition of the value of women's skills and competence at all levels and many companies see encouraging gender balance at management level as a way of achieving better economic performance and creating a better working environment. The evaluation lists five crucial factors in reaching a gender balance at all levels within enterprises:

- Utilising a gender-neutral and competence-based recruitment process;
- Reconciling professional and private life;
- Encouraging career development for both women and men;
- Promoting female entrepreneurship;
- Increasing women's participation and role in social dialogue.

### 3.2.2. Action by businesses

More and more businesses are aware that greater participation by women in management, including at the highest levels, makes good economic sense and they are taking measures to foster women's leadership potential. A study<sup>(27)</sup> has identified four stages within which such measures can be grouped:

(26) Framework of actions on gender equality — Evaluation report 2009. <http://etuc.org/a/6709>.

(27) Inspiring women: Corporate Best Practice in Europe, The Lehman Brothers Centre for Women in Business, London Business School, 2007.

(25) Except Norway.

- Be aware of the situation within the company by introducing continuous monitoring of all human resource issues from a gender perspective, including the setting of targets against which progress can be measured.

*Deutsche Telekom plans to fill 30% of its middle and upper management jobs with women by the end of 2015 under **voluntary targets**. Tools to be used include recruitment policy and executive development programmes. By doing this, the company seeks to achieve a competitive edge by tapping into talent.*

- Ensure that the company implements policies that facilitate a good work-life balance and allow all employees, both female and male, to have an active family life without sacrificing their careers.
- Introduce measures to provide the type of support needed to develop one's career,

particularly that currently lacking for many women: this includes developing networks, coaching and mentoring.

One successful **mentoring** programme to help senior female managers advance to board membership is the *FTSE 100 Cross-Company Mentoring Scheme*, under which CEOs and chairpersons of some of the UK's largest companies mentor senior female managers. The scheme has received support from such bodies as the Bank of England.

- Introduce specific action to help prepare women for leadership positions through suitable training and hands-on experience.

The report concluded that many companies take steps that fall within the first three stages, but do little to facilitate the crucial final stage, which involves actively preparing women for leadership.

## 4. Conclusion

Women continue to be significantly under-represented in leadership and decision-making positions in the corporate sector. Except for a few countries, progress is very slow.

Although there are successes to applaud and positive trends are emerging, many of the largest employers in the EU still do not seem to provide a suitable working environment for female talent to flourish, in particular in top positions.

The various approaches promoted by governments, the social partners and companies to increase the percentage of women in decision-making positions and the results they have achieved, reflect Europe's diverse cultures and the lack of a 'one-size-fits-all' solution. The most effective, albeit controversial, strategy to achieve gender-balanced boards seems to be quota legislation, as Norway's experience shows. But encouraging

results are also produced by voluntary strategies, such as the implementation of recommendations on the percentage of women and men in national corporate governance codes and practical measures taken by the social partners and committed businesses.

Other management posts, such as executive positions, are just as important as board membership, not least because they constitute the recruitment base for the latter.

Increasingly, companies acknowledge that having more women in management roles is a crucial asset for their development and competitiveness, and that they have to adapt their corporate culture to accommodate the experience and leadership styles of both women and men.

The public and private sectors need to work in partnership to design and implement

comprehensive strategies to make further, sustainable progress. This calls for political will on the part of governments and the support of corporate top management.

The Commission will consider targeted initiatives to improve the gender balance in decision-making positions. It will continue to support action by the Member States, in particular by collecting, analysing and disseminating comparable

data and analyses on persistent gender gaps, and by promoting networking between all stakeholders and exchanges of experience and good practice at European level.

In 2011 the Commission will initiate a high-level dialogue with European business leaders and European social partners to discuss how to make faster progress towards gender balance in corporate boardrooms.









**European Commission**

Report on Progress on Equality between Women and Men in 2010  
The Gender Balance in Business Leadership

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

2011 – 61 pp. – 21x29.7cm

ISBN 978-92-79-17789-7

doi:10.2767/99441

The European Union has enshrined gender equality as a fundamental right. The European Commission Report on Progress on Equality between Women and Men in 2010 presents recent developments in gender equality and statistics in all fields covered by the Strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015): equal economic independence; equal pay for equal work and work of equal value; equality in decision-making; dignity, integrity and an end to gender-based violence; and gender equality in external actions.

The report on The Gender Balance in Business Leadership highlights the extent of the gender imbalance in corporate boardrooms. It presents examples of measures taken to redress the situation. It also emphasises both the economic and the business case for a better gender balance in company boardrooms.

