

Gender mainstreaming in social protection and European social dialogue

PAOLA PROFETA

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Introduction

Gender mainstreaming: Set the *principle*. Integrating a gender perspective in all stages of policy design, budgeting, implementation and evaluation

- Apply ex ante and Ex post-evaluations

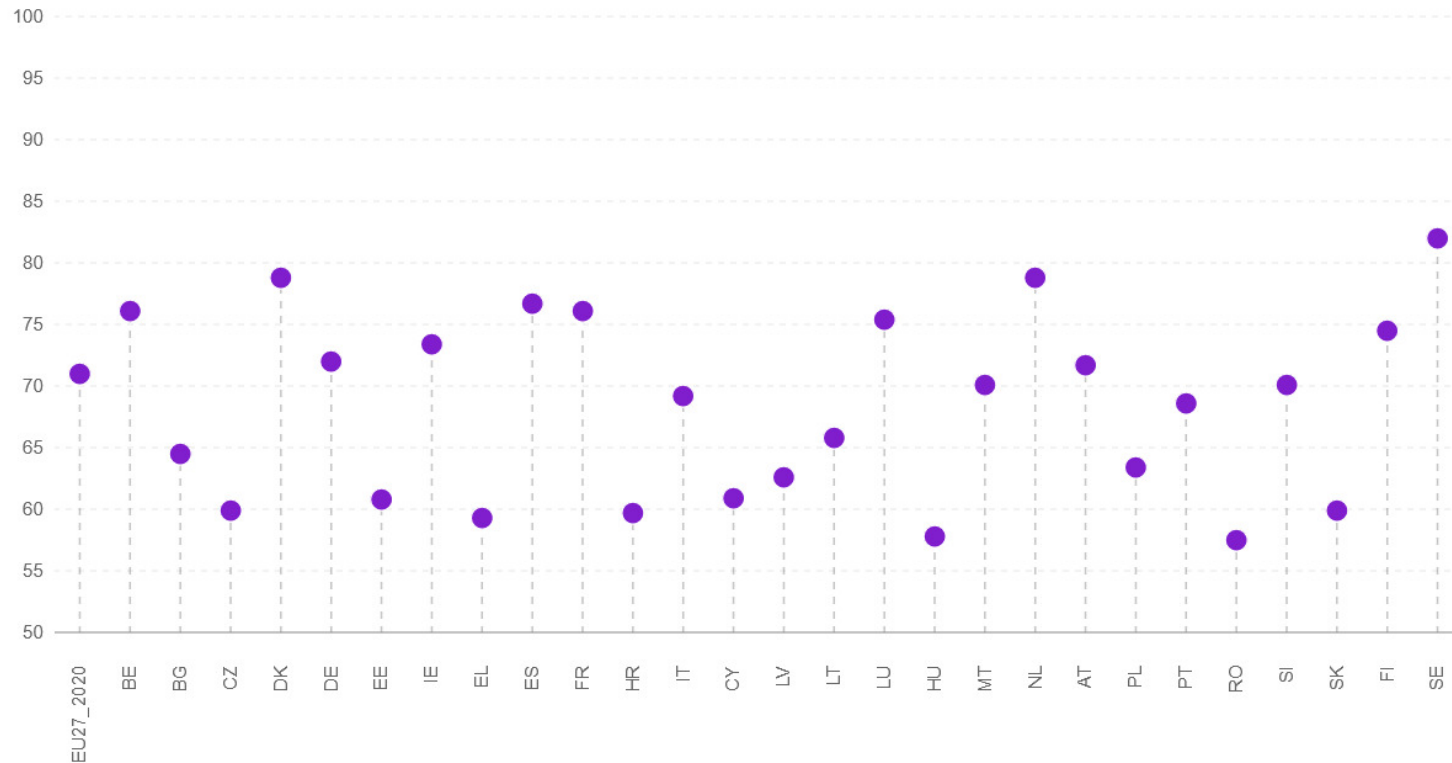
Social protection: Address the *needs*. Women face unpaid care burdens, interrupted careers, high poverty risks which demand for gender-responsive social protection.

- Requires disaggregated data, analysis and policy evaluations by gender

Social dialogue

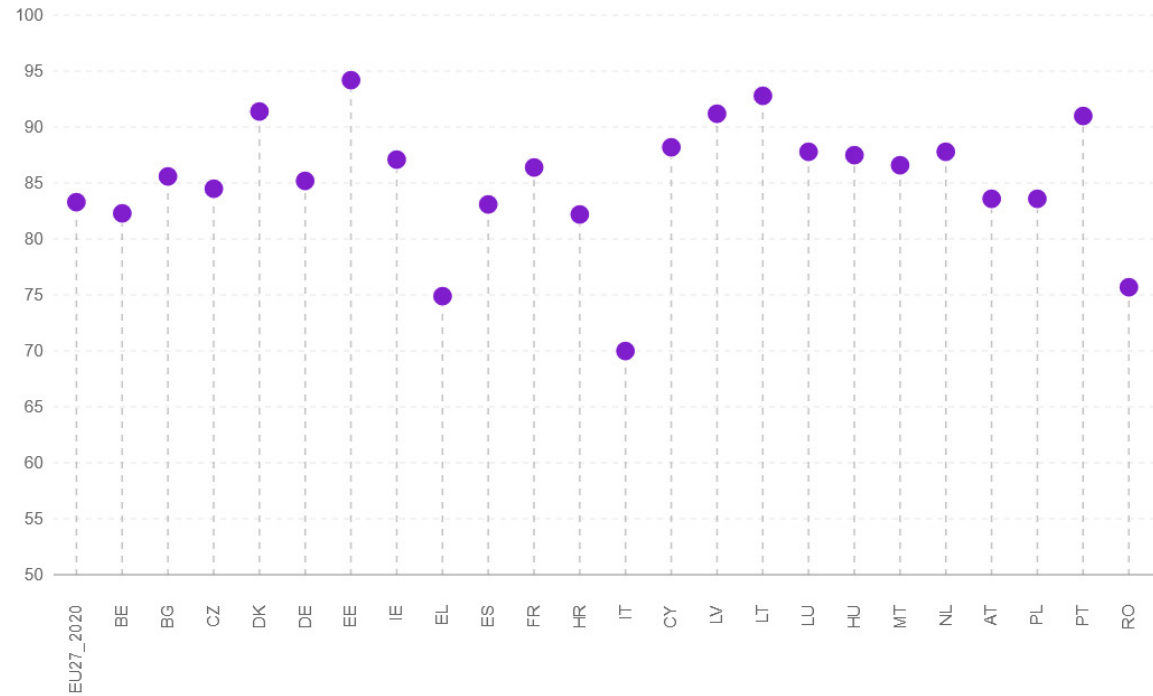
Gender Equality Index (EIGE) (0-100)

EIGE's Gender Statistics Database - Indicator: Gender Equality Index scores, domain scores and sub-domain scores
Source: European Institute for Gender Equality.
LAST UPLOAD ON: 09.12.2024

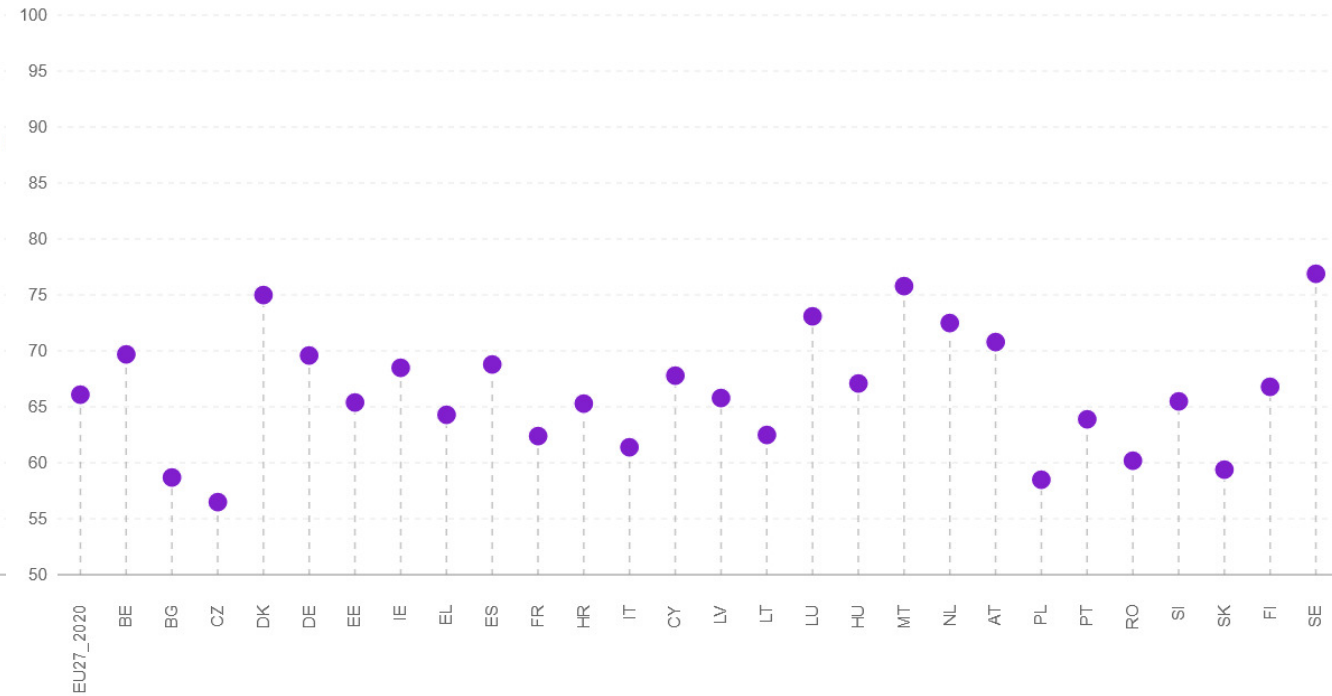


Work: Participation and Quality Gender Gap Index (0-100)

EIGE's Gender Statistics Database - Indicator: Gender Equality Index scores, domain scores and sub-domain scores
 Source: European Institute for Gender Equality.
 LAST UPLOAD ON: 09.12.2024

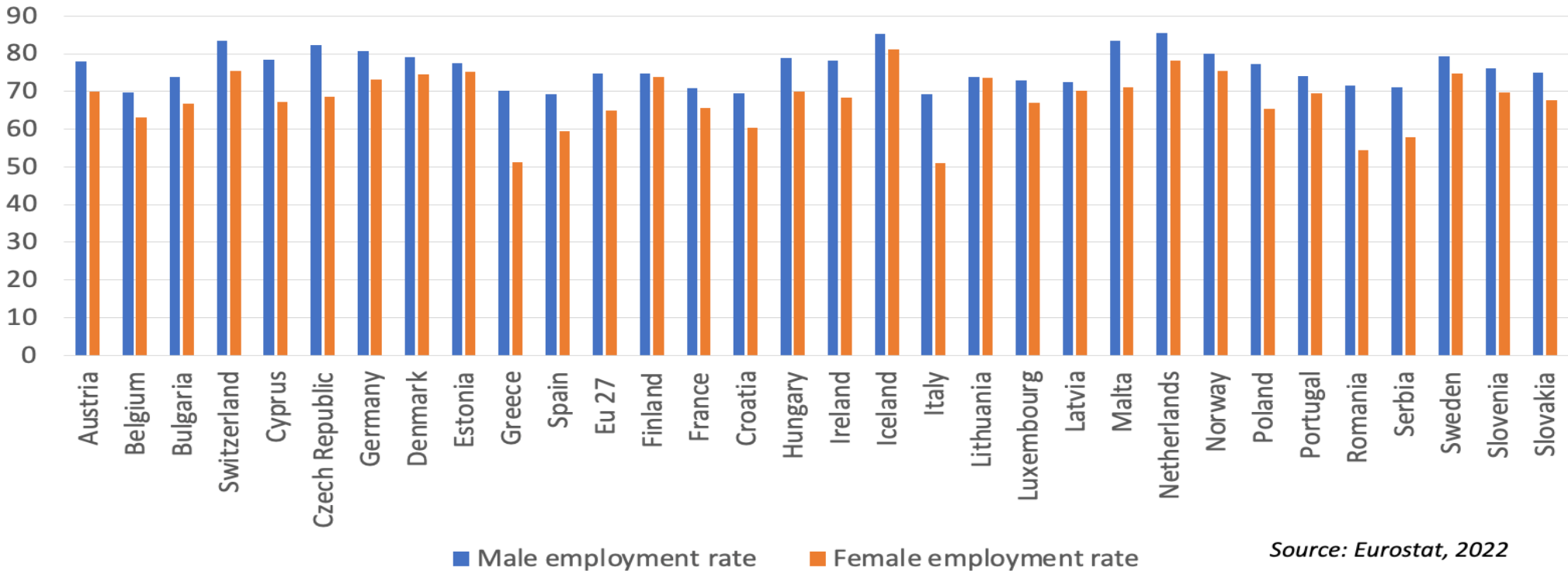


EIGE's Gender Statistics Database - Indicator: Gender Equality Index scores, domain scores and sub-domain scores
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Employment by gender

Male and Female employment rates (aged 15-64) in Europe (2022)

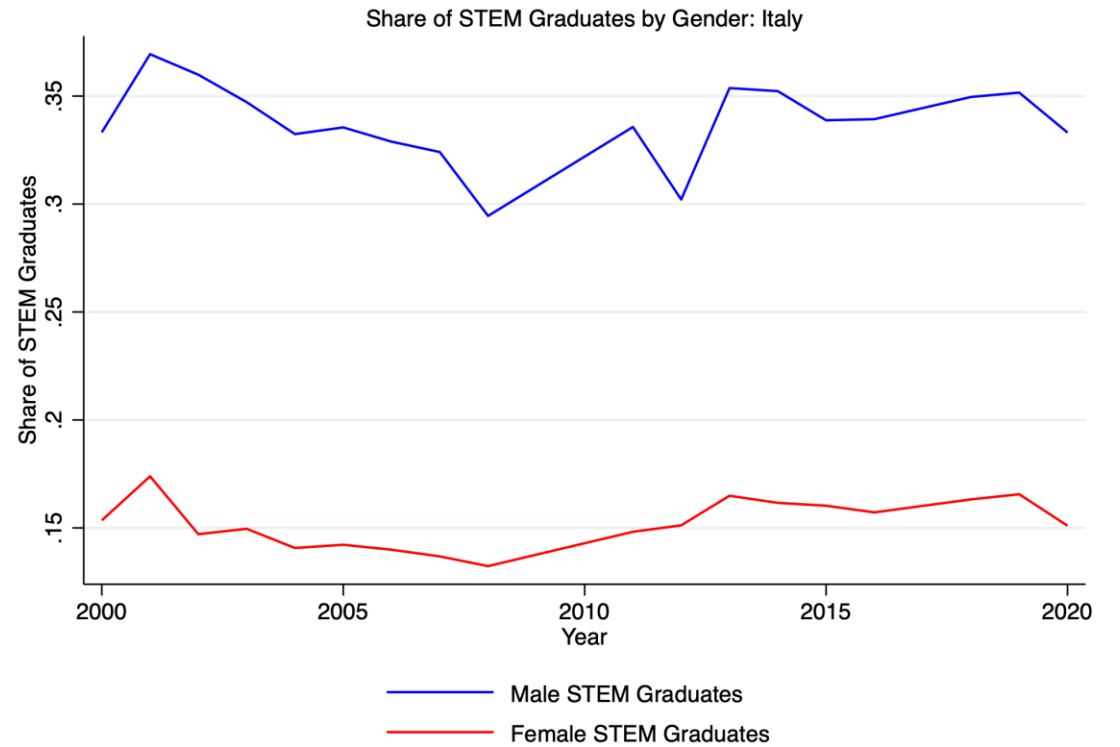
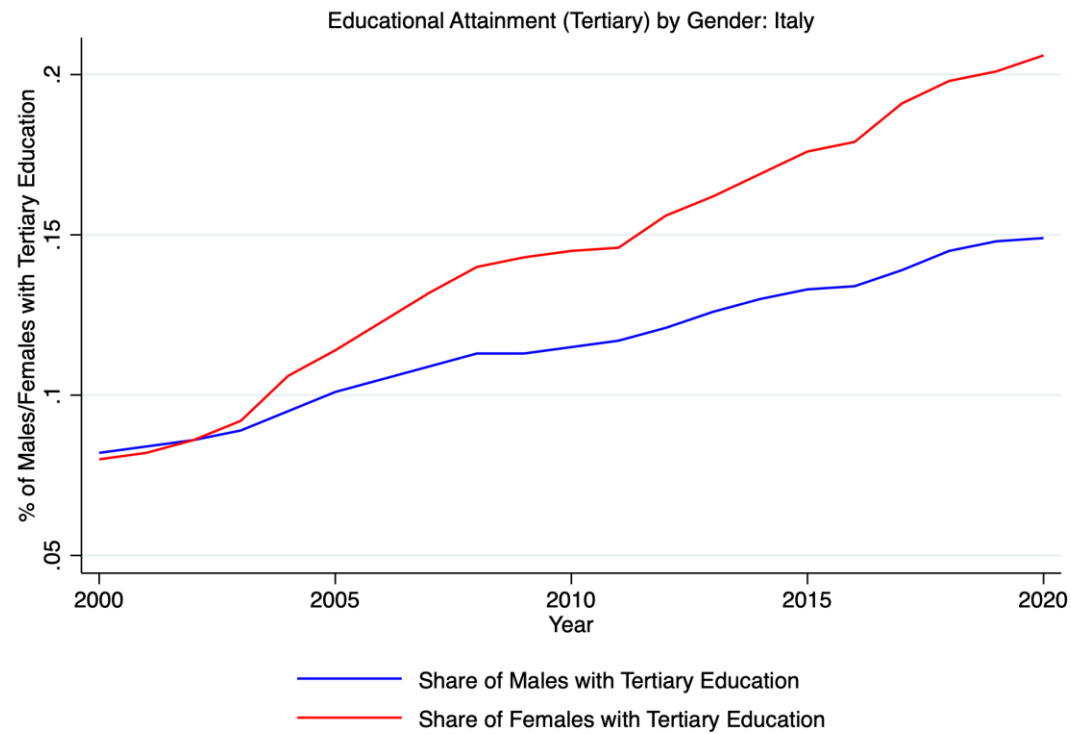


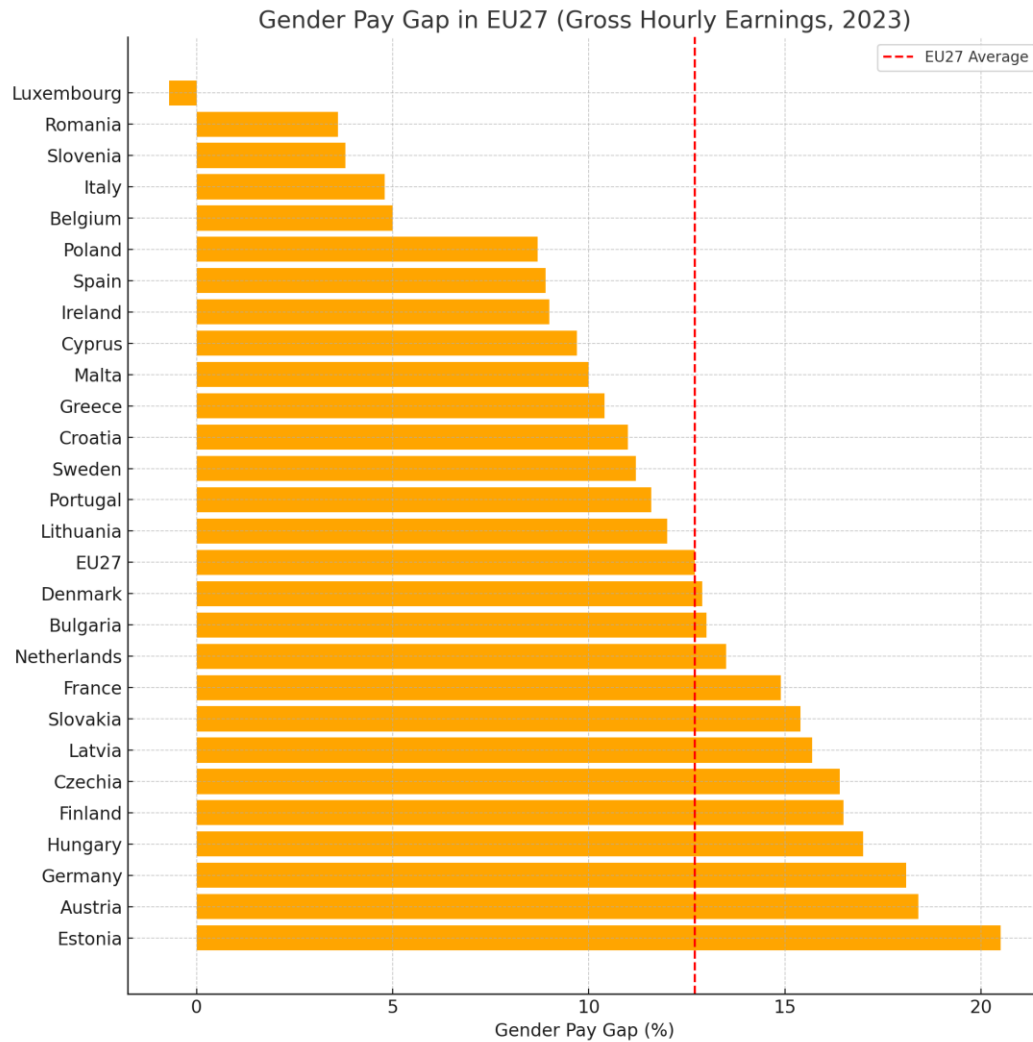
Source: Eurostat, 2022

Education by gender



Focus on Italy



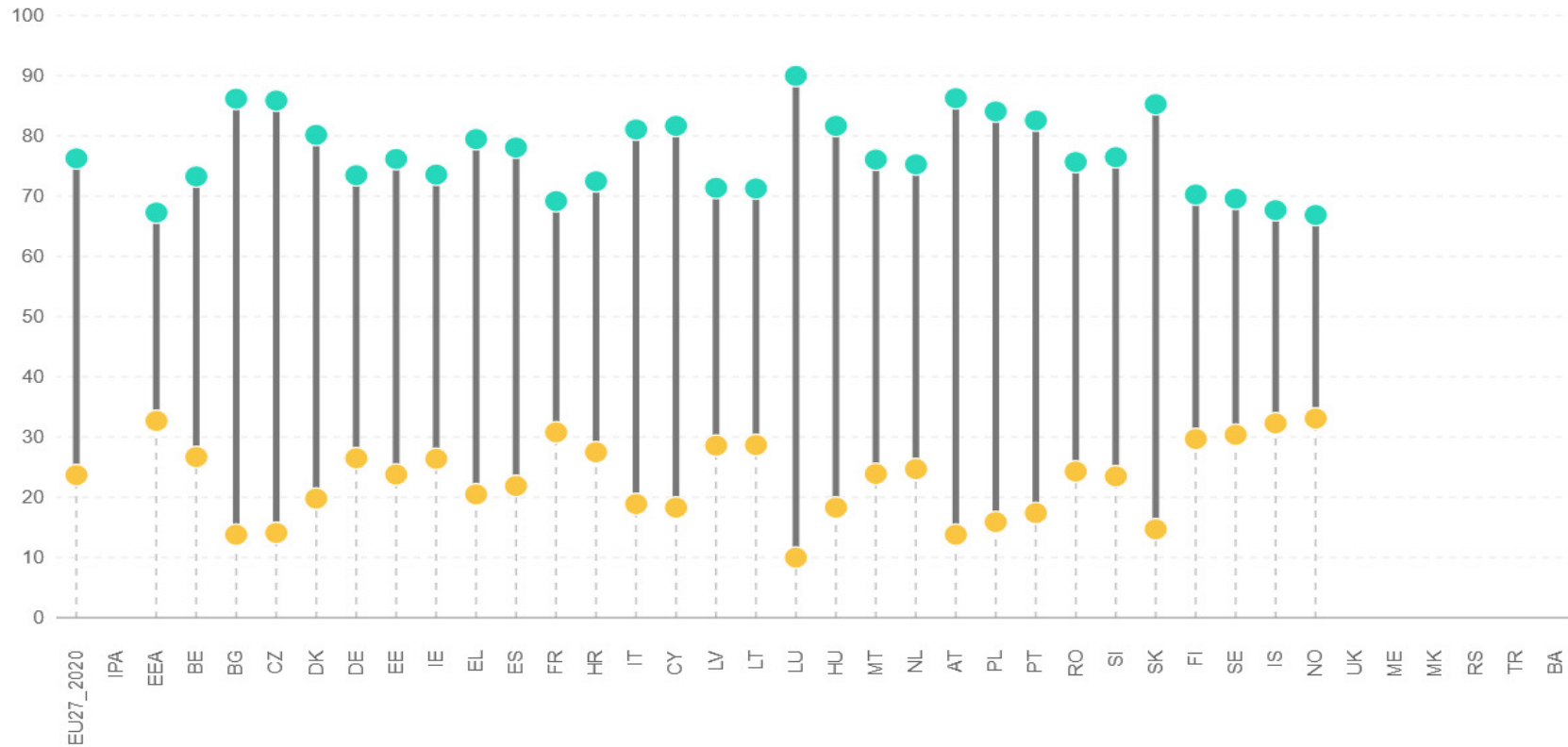


Gender pay gaps

Eurostat, 2023

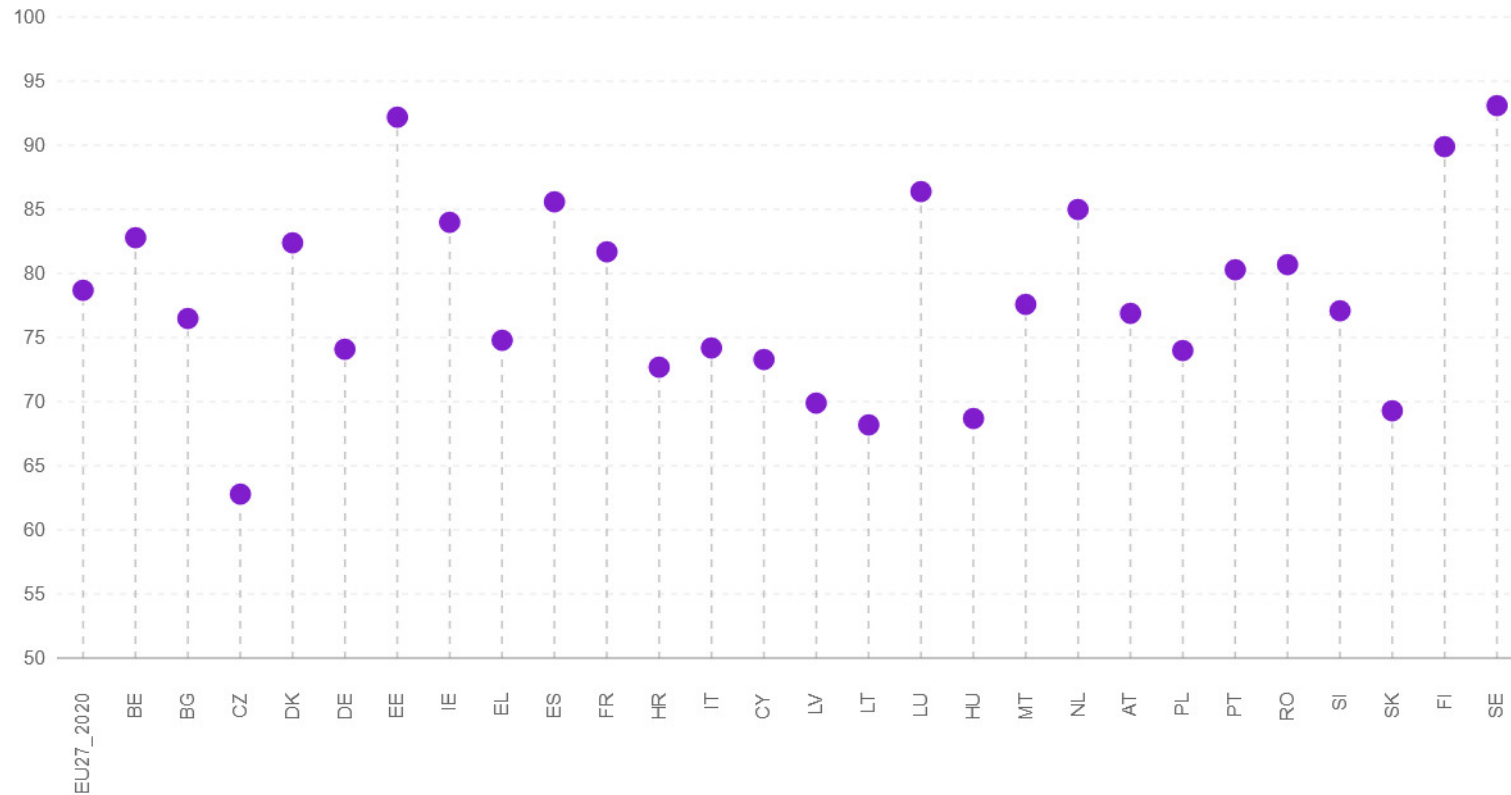
Careers: male and female CEOs

EIGE's Gender Statistics Database - Indicator: Largest listed companies: CEOs, executives and non-executives
Source: European Institute for Gender Equality.
LAST UPLOAD ON: 22.05.2025



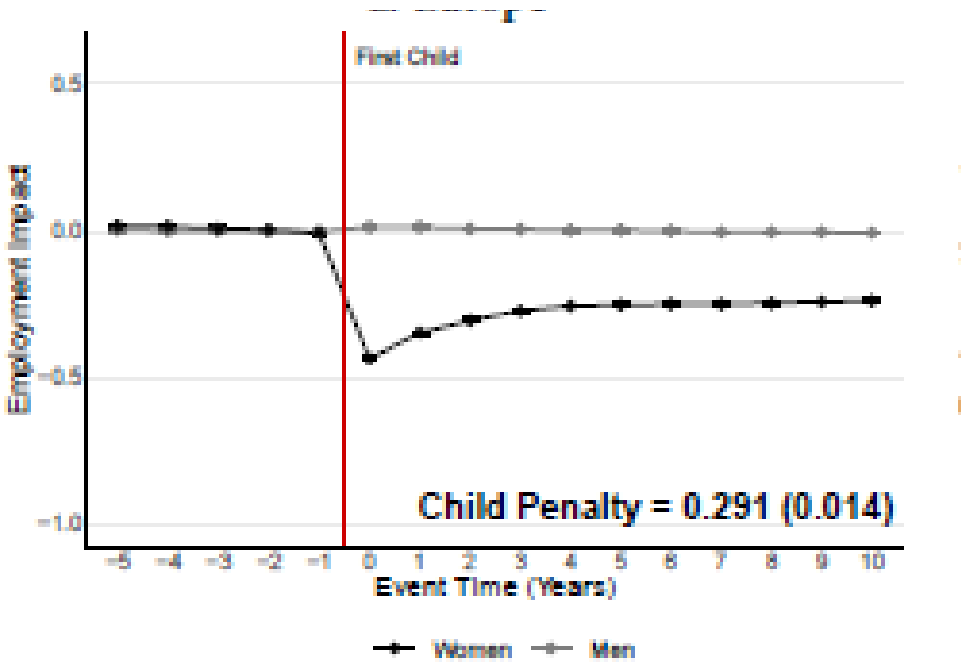
Time care Gender Gap Index (0-100)

EIGE's Gender Statistics Database - Indicator: Gender Equality Index scores, domain scores and sub-domain scores
Source: European Institute for Gender Equality.
LAST UPLOAD ON: 09.12.2024



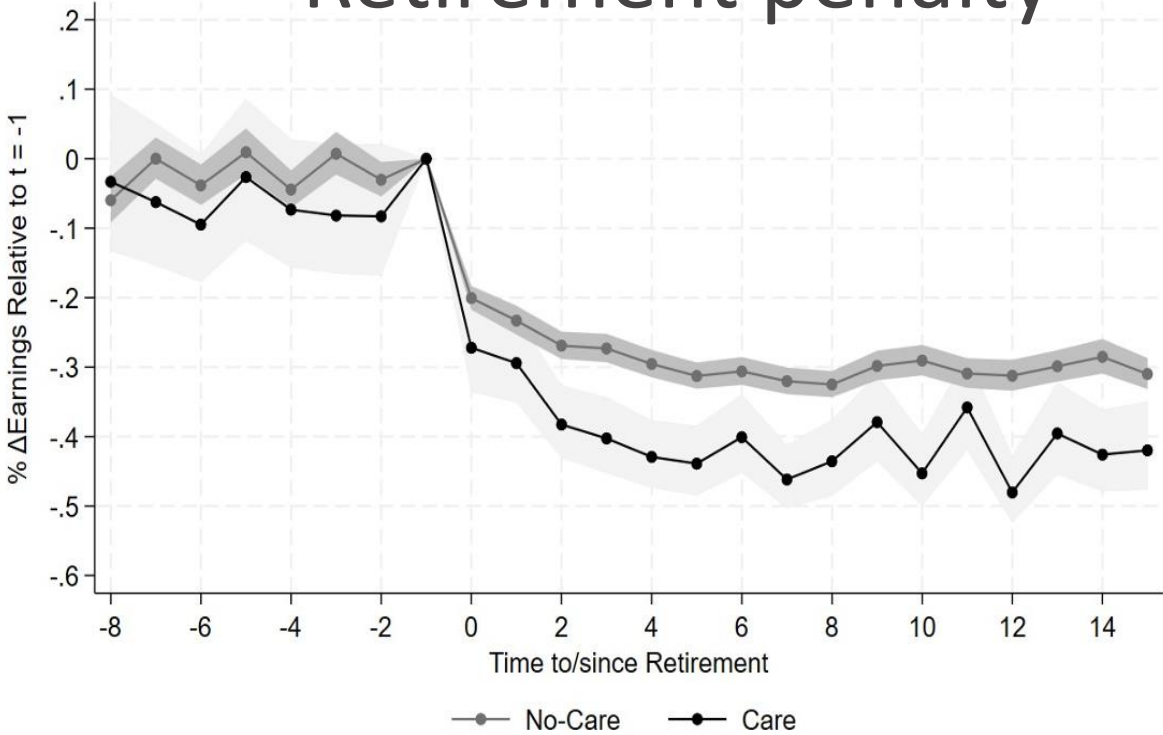
Care Penalties (EU)

Child penalty



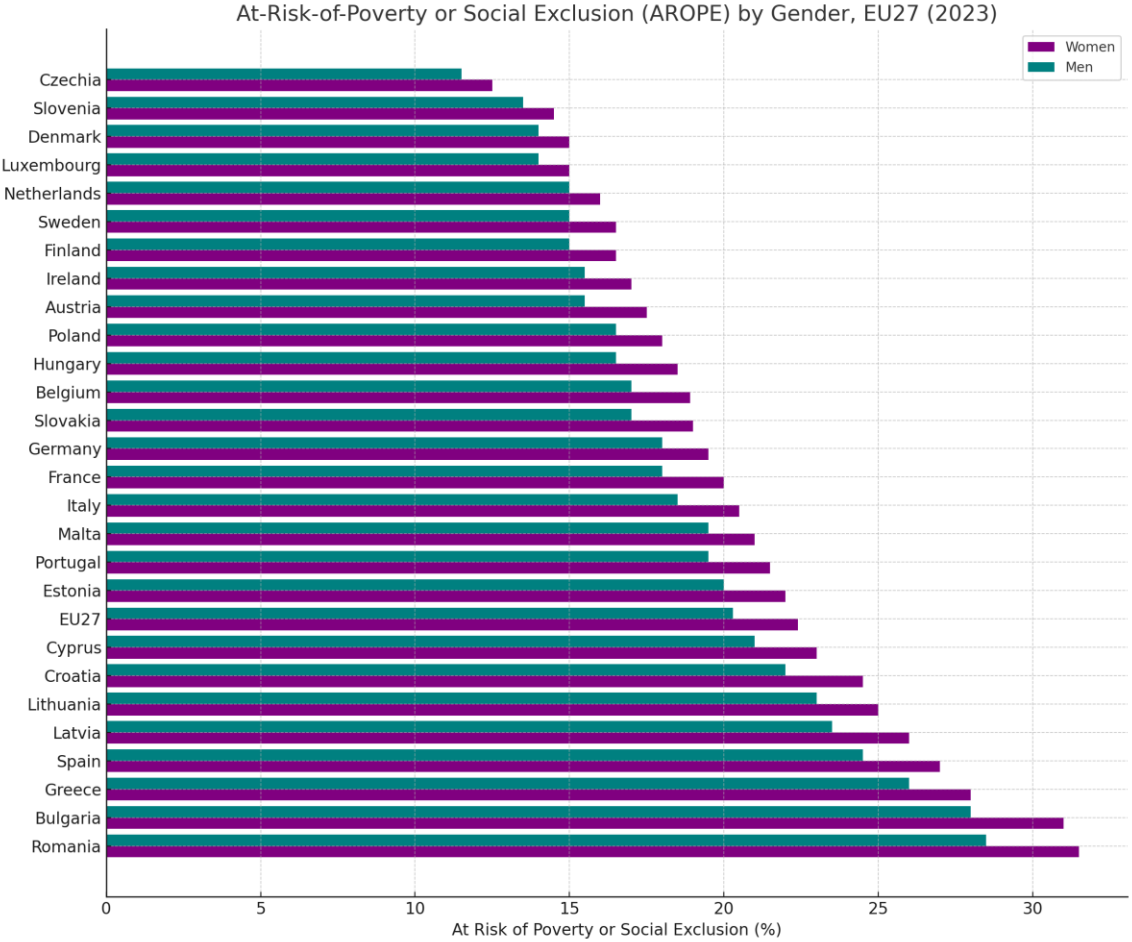
Kleven et al., (2025)

Retirement penalty



Maura and Profeta (2025)

Poverty and social exclusion by gender



Eurostat, 2023

Social
protection and
social dialogue:
Key issues

Childcare and elderly care

Paternity leaves

Work flexibility

Pensions

Childcare

Lack of childcare services is an obstacle for gender equality. **CAUSAL** evidence that childcare:

- ❑ Reduces gender gaps at work (Magnes and Mogstad, 2011 for Norway- The same result is obtained in Germany, Spain, Austria. The review paper by Olivetti and Petrongolo (2017) finds that finds childcare expansions consistently reduce gender inequality in employment, unlike long maternity leave extensions, which can increase gaps.
- ❑ Promotes a more equal sharing within the household
- ❑ Promote child development and social mobility

Challenges

- ❑ Time at school. Calendar.
- ❑ Cost of daycare (0-2)

Elderly care

Similar causal evidence. Formal eldercare services (nursing homes, home care, long-term care insurance) consistently lead to (Olivetti and Petrongolo, 2017):

- Higher female labor force participation (esp. adult daughters)
- Less unequal caregiving burden between sons and daughters
- Reduced gender gaps in time allocation and earnings.

Effects are strongest in countries where families are the default caregivers (Italy, Spain, Germany), so policy shifts reallocate unpaid work from women to formal systems

Challenges

- Norms
- Eldercare demand is unpredictable (different from children)
- Heterogeneity in needs: caring for children is universal, for elderly varies in intensity, duration, type

Paternity leaves

Fully paid and non-transferable paternity leaves (of at least one month):

- Equal share of household and childcare (Patnaik, 2019 - the case of Quebec)
- Better maternal labor outcomes (Farré and Gonzalez, 2019 – the case of Spain)
- More equal gender norms (Ekberg et al., 2013 – the case of Sweden)

Note: Spain equalized the length of male and female leaves

Challenges

Take-up rates by fathers are low

- Cultural norms, stigma
- Men are afraid of career barriers

Action to remove these obstacles is required. Research in this direction is still scarce (we have an on-going project)

Work flexibility

Flexible work (remote work) in time and space (Angelici and Profeta, 2020)

- Increase well-being
- Better work-life balance. Men increase participation to housework and childcare
- Promotes retention and return to work after leaves
- Reduces “greedy jobs” (male-dominated)
- Evidence from Covid (Del Boca et al., 2020)

Challenges

- Preventing flexibility to be only for mothers (segregation)
- Commitment

Pension

Designing a pension system which adapt to longer working lives and does not penalize women reduces gender gaps:

- Equal retirement age
- Minimum pension/ credits for childcare years protect women with interrupted careers and reduce poverty

Challenges

- Earning-related schemes may increase gender gaps / minimum pension and credits reduces incentive to re-enter the labor market
- Survivor benefits reduce immediate gender gaps but reinforce specialization

Conclusions

- ❑ To make policies effective and equitable gender mainstreaming must remain a central principle.
- ❑ Gender equality is not only a matter of rights but a crucial investment for growth, competitiveness, sustainability
- ❑ This requires systematic data collection and gender-disaggregated analysis so that programs are evaluated not only on average outcomes but also on their impact across women and men.
- ❑ This approach should guide work on the key issues in social protection identified, strengthening European social dialogue and actively promoting gender equality.

Thank you!

QUESTIONS?

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