



The gender pay gap situation in the EU

Women in the EU earned on average 13% less per hour than men in 2020. Still, there are huge differences between the EU countries.

Facts and figures

The gender pay gap in the EU stands at 12.7 % in 2021 and has only changed minimally over the last decade. It means that women earn 13.0 % on average less per hour than men.

The [gender overall earnings gap](#), that measures the combined impact of the average hourly earnings, the monthly average of the number of hours paid (before any adjustment for part-time work) and the employment rate, stood at 36.7% in 2018.

The gender employment gap stood at 10.8% in 2021, with 67.7 % of women across the EU being employed compared to 78.5% of men (EU27 data).

Why do women earn less?

The gender pay gap measures a broader concept than pay discrimination and comprehends a large number of inequalities women face in access to work, progression and rewards. They are:

- Sectoral segregation: Around 24% of the gender pay gap is related to the overrepresentation of women in relatively low-paying sectors, such as care, health and education. Highly feminised jobs tend to be systematically undervalued.
- Unequal share of paid and unpaid work: Women have more work hours per week than men but they spend more hours on unpaid work, a fact that might also affect their career choices. This is why the EU promotes equal sharing of parental leaves, an adequate public provision of childcare services and adequate company policies on flexible working time arrangements.
- The glass ceiling: The position in the hierarchy influences the level of pay: less than 8% of top companies' CEOs are women. Nevertheless, the profession with the largest differences in hourly earnings in the EU were managers: 23 % lower earnings for women than for men.
- Pay discrimination: In some cases, women earn less than men for doing equal work or work of equal value even if the principle of equal pay is enshrined in the European Treaties (article 157 TFEU) since 1957.

The far largest part of the gender pay gap remains unexplained in the EU and cannot be linked to worker or workplace characteristics such as education, occupation, working time or economic activity the person works for. More transparency in pay would help uncover unjustified gender-based pay differences for equal work or work of equal value and help victims of pay discrimination to seek redress and enforce their equal pay right.

Differences between the EU countries

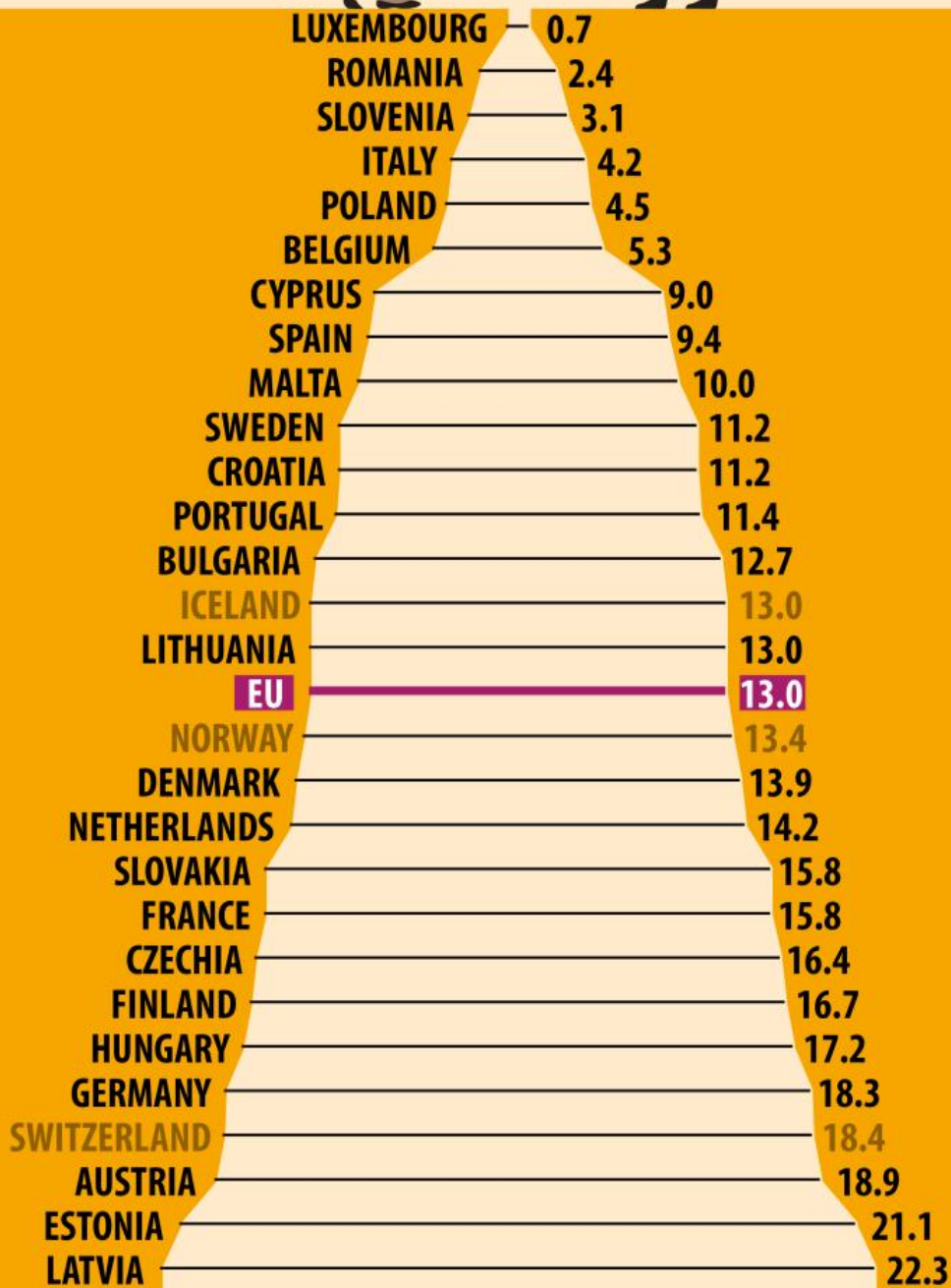
There are considerable differences between EU countries. The gender pay gap ranges from less than 5% in Luxembourg, Romania, Slovenia, Italy and Poland to more than 18% in Germany, Austria, Estonia and Latvia. In most countries, the gender pay gap has [decreased over the last ten years](#).

Gender pay gap:

How much less do women earn than men?



Difference between average gross hourly earnings of male and female employees as % of male gross earnings, 2020



For all countries except Czechia and Iceland: data for enterprises employing 10 or more employees. Czechia and Iceland: data for enterprises employing 1 or more employees.

Iceland, Norway, Switzerland: non-EU countries

Ireland, Greece: data not available