

Policy Context

Education and training are instrumental in shaping the opportunities and aspirations of girls and women. Ensuring equal treatment in education is an important mechanism in achieving the realisation of women's full potential, as well as respecting their freedom of thought and eliminating discrimination against women.

The Europe 2020 Strategy

- Aims at delivering smart, sustainable and inclusive growth through job creation and poverty reduction in the EU.
- The target of reaching 75 % employment of women and men aged 20-64 requires Member States to reinforce the education and training of women, particularly in sectors where they are under-represented.
- Sets the headline target of reducing the early school leaving rates below 10 %, and of having at least 40 % of the 30 to 34 year olds to complete third-level education.
- Innovation Union - one of seven flagship initiatives of Europe 2020, which supports investment in research and development and actions improving the capacity to turn research into new services and products.
- Horizon 2020 - the financial instrument to implement the Innovation Union, which promotes gender balance in research teams by making this a ranking factor in selecting proposals with the same scores and in decision-making with aim to meet the target of 40 % of the under-represented women or men in each group (e.g. expert groups) and panels (e.g. evaluation panels).

European Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020)

- Reaffirms the Council's commitment to fulfil EU ambitions on gender equality, especially in three areas of great relevance, namely employment, education and promoting social inclusions in particular through reduction of poverty.

The strategic objectives of the BPfA and the EU indicators

- B.1.** Ensure equal access to education.
- B.2.** Eradicate illiteracy among women.
- B.3.** Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology and continuing education.
- B.4.** Develop non-discriminatory education and training.
- B.5.** Allocate sufficient resources for, and monitor the implementation of, educational reforms.
- B.6.** Promote lifelong education and training for girls and women.

In 2007, the Council agreed on three EU-wide indicators, including two sub-indicators to measure the progress in the implementation of the BPfA objectives in this area. They capture gender segregation in education, both horizontally (i.e. in the field of study) and vertically (i.e. in the level of the degree), and the relative returns from education for women and men by looking at the employment rate of women and men by level of education attained.

The database, Women and men in the EU - facts and figures, developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality provides the latest data and information on these indicators, available at:

<http://eige.europa.eu/content/women-and-men-in-the-eu-facts-and-figures>

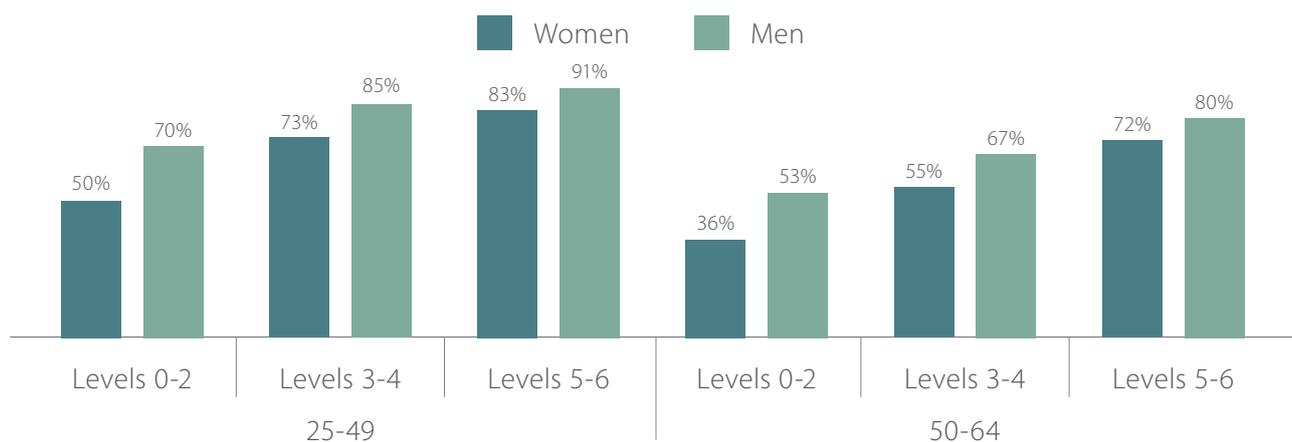
Findings from EU-wide data

Women represent a majority of university graduates in the EU

Women's participation in education is above the rate of men at graduate level in the EU in 2012 (59 %), the trend being unchanged since 2007. At postgraduate level, men PhD graduates still outnumber women (53 % in 2012; 54 % in 2007) with a small and decreasing gender gap. Changes are more visible at the



EMPLOYMENT RATE FOR WOMEN AND MEN BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND AGE GROUP, EU-28, 2012



Source: Eurostat, EU-LFS

Member States' level. In 2012, women outnumbered men among PhD graduates in 12 Member States compared to nine Member States in 2007.

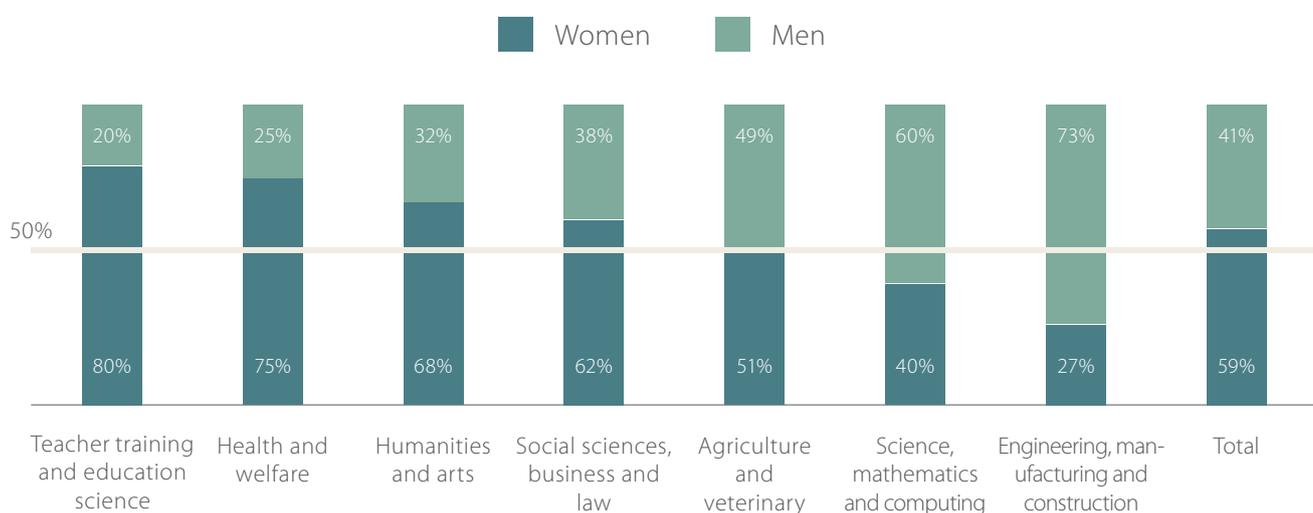
Higher levels of education are linked to a lower gender employment gap

In 2012, the EU-28 average employment rate for women aged 20-64 was 62 % compared to 74 % for men. The average employment rate of women rises in line with their educational level, particularly for those aged 25-49. In 2012, women with pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education (levels 0-2) had the lowest employment rates (50 % for women aged 25-49 and 36 % for women aged 50-64). This is well below the employment rates of women with upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education (levels 3-4), which are 73 % for women aged 25-49 and 55 % for women aged 50-64. Women with

first and second stage of tertiary education (levels 5 and 6 ISCED 1997) were more likely to be employed (with an employment rate of 83 % for women aged 25-49 and 72 % for those aged 50-64) and their employment rate was well above the target rate of 75 % in the Europe 2020 Strategy.

In 2012, the EU-28 employment gap between women and men with education level 0-2 was 20 p.p. for those aged 25-49, and 17 p.p. for those aged 50-64. The employment gap between women and men reduced with education level 3-4: in 2012 the EU-28 employment gap for women and men with education level 3-4 was 13 p.p. and 12 p.p. for the 25-49 and 50-64 age groups respectively. At education level 5-6, the employment gap between women and men reduced even further, to 8 p.p. for both age groups.

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AND MEN OF ALL ISCED 5 AND 6 GRADUATES, EU-28, 2012



Source: Eurostat, Education statistics



Gender segregation is entrenched in subject choices

Despite changes in the educational attainment of women and men, segregation patterns remain deeply entrenched throughout the Member States. They tend to operate in line with gendered expectations, as women are over-represented in sectors attached to the traditional roles of women, such as health and

welfare, humanities and arts or teacher training and education science.

Men outnumbered women in engineering, manufacturing and construction at both level 5 and 6 (ISCED 1997) in all Member States in 2012. The participation of women and men is most balanced in agriculture and veterinary.

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN AND MEN AMONGST ACADEMIC STAFF AT ALL GRADES IN HIGHER ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS IN 2007 AND 2010, EU



Source: European Commission, She Figures, 2012

Women are under-represented in senior positions in academia across most of Member States

Men outnumbered women amongst academic staff at all grades in higher academic institutions, and accounted for 60 % of staff in academic institutions in 2010 (a slight reduction from 62 % in 2007). The predominance of men amongst academic staff holds true for most Member States. There are significant differences in levels of vertical segregation within the three grades of academic staff. In 2010, across the EU-27 women accounted for 44 % on average of Grade C posts (the first grade/post which a newly qualified PhD (ISCED 6) graduate would normally hold), 37 % of Grade B posts (researchers working in positions less senior than top positions but more senior than newly qualified PhD holders), and only 20 % of

Grade A posts (the single highest grade/post at which research is normally conducted). The picture is not much different than in 2007 (when women held 44 % of Grade C posts, 36 % of Grade B posts and 19 % of Grade A posts).

Women continue to increase their participation in higher education and outnumber men in many fields at the tertiary level of education. Still, gender segregation, both horizontal and vertical, has not changed at the same pace. Due to this, women's and men's career choices in non-traditional sectors do not progress within different professions to the same extent and they may not be able to access the same career opportunities.

In academia, women's presence and access to a higher level still needs improvement and support and is an issue to be tackled in the majority of Member States.

Useful initiatives:

Gender stereotyping is recognised as a causal factor for gender segregation and gender inequality in the field of education and training and is tackled by various measures implemented by the Member States, Particular attention is given to the curriculum, discussing gender roles, stereotypes and equality in social studies or history subjects (Danish: *Folkeskole*). The Cypriot Action Plan on Gender Equality in Education (2014–17) includes measures to address gender roles and stereotypes in the family and in society. The Czech, Gender Equality Situation under the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport and Proposal of Mid-Term Strategic Plan for Gender Equality, defines eliminating the consequences of gender stereotypes as one of the aims of education policy. In Croatia, the standards for textbooks prescribe that 'textbooks must prepare both sexes for effective and equal participation in all areas of life' and 'promote gender equality'. The Pedagogical Institute, the Greek authority for the school materials, has taken steps to remove offensive stereotypes of women through the Inter-thematic Integrated Curriculum Frameworks (2004). The Hungarian National Curriculum includes human rights, awareness of, and attitudes towards, equality between women and men as part of the teaching programme.



Gender equality capacity building in education systems and provision of support materials to school personnel are part of measures implemented by some Member States for gender equality policies in education. The Cypriot Pedagogical Institute has a web page for teachers dedicated to gender equality with information and material on equal opportunities for boys and girls at school. In Lithuania, a teaching aid, Possibilities to Foster Gender Equality in School, for teachers and social pedagogues informs on gender equality goals in schools and offers tools on gender equality education at school and in the wider school community. In the framework of collaboration between the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport and the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, the Intercambia Portal was created, to facilitate access to and exchange of information (ICT resources, a database and statistics) and knowledge on educational practices that promote equal opportunities and prevent gender-based violence.

ADVANCEMENTS AND OBSTACLES IN AREA B: EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN

ADVANCEMENTS

- The gender gap in several male-dominated educational sectors has been slowly reducing.
- There are more women among university graduates, in general, in all Member States.
- The gender employment gap is lower among those with high education levels (5-6) and women in this category have been less affected by the economic crisis.

OBSTACLES

- The pace of change of gender segregation in education, both horizontal and vertical, is slow.
- Women are poorly represented at higher levels of academia.
- A gender employment gap remains for all levels of education.

The way forward for the EU

- Continue to address and break gender-based stereotypes and segregation in education and training by supporting gender-sensitive curricula in education, career counselling, media campaigns that encourage boys and girls, women and men to follow career paths according to their skills and abilities.
- Address gender segregation in education as it translates into further inequalities in the labour market and contributes to differences in the economic opportunities of women and men.
- Ensure career opportunities and developments for both women and men who choose non-traditional sectors usually associated with the opposite gender.
- Create opportunities for women to capitalise on their higher education achievements as much as for men, and address the existing glass ceiling for women in academia.

European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is the EU knowledge centre on gender equality. EIGE supports policy-makers and all relevant institutions in their efforts to make equality between women and men a reality for all Europeans and beyond by providing them with specific expertise and comparable and reliable data on gender equality in Europe.

More information: <http://eige.europa.eu>

The Resource and Documentation Centre (RDC) of the European Institute for Gender Equality is an innovative and practical tool developed to assist in locating key resources on gender equality, to facilitate the exchange of knowledge among those with an interest in gender equality policies and practices and to offer an online space for discussion and debate.

More information: <http://eige.europa.eu/content/rdc>



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