European Institute for Gender Equality

Gender Equality Index 2026

Belgium



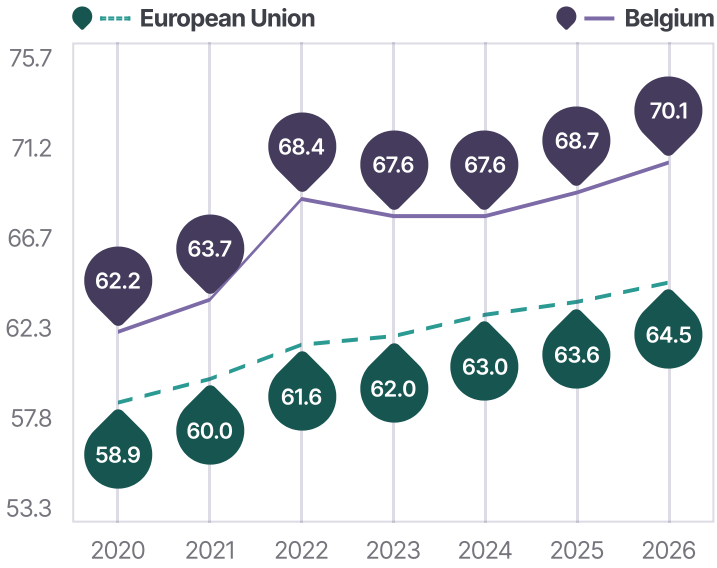
Belgium scores 70.1 points out of 100 in the Gender Equality Index, ranking 6th in the EU. Its score has increased by 7.9 points since 2020 and by 1.4 points since 2025. The recent increase is mainly driven by progress in the domain of power, with further gains in money.

Belgium's Gender Equality Index score has increased faster than the EU average, and the score is above the EU.

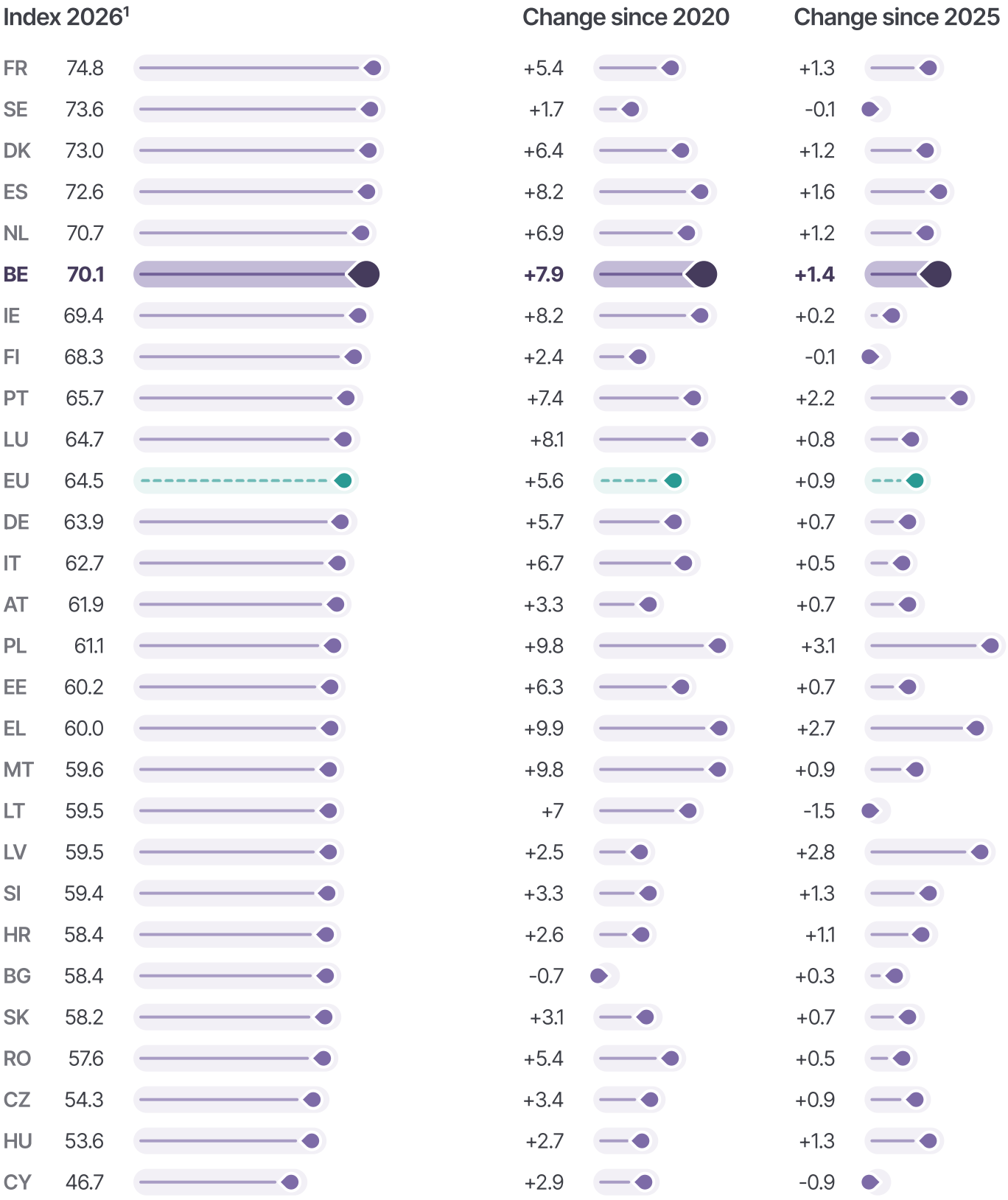
Scores (0-100)

Index	70.1
Work	71.5
Money	81.2
Knowledge	54.5
Time	76.3
Power	54.6
Health	86.1

Trend (2020 - 2026)



Compare countries



1. The Gender Equality Index has been reviewed in 2025 (see About the Index). For the Index 2026, data corrections and updates to the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) microdata carried out by several National Statistical Institutes affected a number of indicators included in the Index. As a result, the previous editions of the Gender Equality Index have been recalculated, and scores might be slightly different compared to the scores presented in the Index 2025. The Index is calculated every year by using N-1 data, for the overall time series. The Index 2026 is mostly based on 2025 data and traces progress from a short-term (2024–2025) and longer-term (2019–2025) perspective. The domain of time is calculated with the 2024 EIGE CARE survey. Lithuania/Latvia, and Croatia/Bulgaria have the same scores. Their position in the ranking is determined statistically based on the second decimal place of the Index score.

Progress in gender equality

Best performance

Belgium has its **best performance** in the domain of time, ranking 2nd in the EU with 76.3 points. It also ranks 2nd in both care activities (70.5 points) and social activities (82.6 points). This reflects small gender gaps in leisure time and voluntary, charitable or political activities. Belgium is also the only country across the EU with gender balance in long-term care.

Most room for improvement

The **most room for improvement** for Belgium lies in the domain of work, where it ranks 17th in the EU with 71.5 points. Its ranking is mainly affected by work participation (83.4 points, 18th position). The domain of knowledge, however, has the lowest score across all domains, at 54.5 points (15th ranking).

Biggest improvement

Belgium's **biggest improvement** since 2025 is in the domain of power, with a gain of 4.7 points. This is mainly driven by social power, which has increased by 14.0 points.

A step backwards

A step backwards is recorded in the domain of knowledge, down by 1.8 points since 2025, mainly due to a 6.1 point decline in attainment and participation. The subdomain of political power recorded an even larger fall, down by 13.9 points, following a decrease in the percentage of women among ministers.

Explore Belgium's Index results

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Change since 2020	Change since 2025
Index	**62.2**	**63.7**	**68.4**	**67.6**	**67.6**	**68.7**	**70.1**	**7.9**	**1.4**
Work	**66.7**	**68.3**	**70.6**	**70.7**	**70.3**	**70.2**	**71.5**	**4.8**	**1.3**
Participation	81.9	81.9	83.2	83.0	83.5	83.6	83.4	1.5	-0.2
Segregation and quality of work	54.4	56.9	59.9	60.2	59.2	59.1	61.3	6.9	2.2
Money	**74.2**	**75.6**	**79.4**	**79.6**	**80.0**	**79.0**	**81.2**	**7.0**	**2.2**
Financial resources	74.0	74.1	79.1	78.8	78.7	76.8	79.9	5.9	3.1
Economic situation	74.4	77.3	79.7	80.3	81.3	81.2	82.6	8.2	1.4
Knowledge	**52.7**	**52.6**	**54.0**	**53.2**	**53.0**	**56.3**	**54.5**	**1.8**	**-1.8**
Attainment and participation	70.4	69.4	72.4	70.3	69.9	75.7	69.6	-0.8	-6.1
Segregation	39.4	39.9	40.4	40.3	40.2	41.9	42.7	3.3	0.8
Time	**76.3**	**76.3**	**76.3**	**76.3**	**76.3**	**76.3**	**76.3**	**0.0**	**0.0**
Care activities	70.5	70.5	70.5	70.5	70.5	70.5	70.5	0.0	0.0
Social activities	82.6	82.6	82.6	82.6	82.6	82.6	82.6	0.0	0.0
Power	**33.9**	**37.0**	**49.5**	**47.7**	**47.6**	**49.9**	**54.6**	**20.7**	**4.7**
Political	56.3	66.0	80.6	80.4	76.2	79.6	65.7	9.4	-13.9
Economic	51.6	57.2	58.8	59.2	61.3	58.0	60.5	8.9	2.5
Social	13.5	13.5	25.6	22.8	23.1	26.9	40.9	27.4	14.0
Health	**85.9**	**85.7**	**85.8**	**84.8**	**84.7**	**86.2**	**86.1**	**0.2**	**-0.1**
Status	91.7	91.2	91.4	89.4	89.2	92.3	92.1	0.4	-0.2
Behaviour	80.5	80.5	80.5	80.5	80.5	80.5	80.5	0.0	0.0

Explore Belgium's performance by indicator

Work		Belgium Women	Belgium Men	EU Women	EU Men
Participation	Full-time equivalent employment rate (%, 15-89, 2024)[2]	42	54	44	59
	Duration of working life (years, 15+ population, 2025)	34	38	35	40
Segregation and quality of work	ICT specialists (%, 15-74, 2025)	18	82	20	81
	Managerial positions (%, 15-74, 2025)	37	63	36	64
	Low paid workers (%, 16+, 2025)	35	31	37	29
Money					
Financial resources	Median earnings (PPS, 18-64 employed population, 2025)	37239	43122	25525	32079
	Gender pension gap (65+, %, 2025)	27		24	
Economic situation	Median partner earnings ratio (18-64,%, 2025)[3]	84	124	73	147
	In-work poverty of adults in single or single-parent households (%, 16+ employed population, 2025)	10	7	16	13
Knowledge					
Attainment and participation	Graduates of tertiary education (%, 30-34, 2025)	60	46	51	40
	Graduates in IVET (Initial vocational education and training) (%, 25-34, 2025)	19	30	27	34
Segregation	Graduated in tertiary education in EHW (Education, Health and Welfare, Humanities and Art (tertiary students) (%, 2024)	71	29	75	25
	Graduated in tertiary education in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) (%, 2024)	28	72	34	66
Time					
Care activities	Informal childcare (0-11) for more than 35 weekly hours (%, 16-74, 2024)	30	20	41	20
	Informal long-term care for more than 20 hours per week (%, 45-64, 2019)	10	10	20	13
	Housework chores every day (%, 16-74, 2024)	50	27	59	33
Social activities	Hours spent on leisure activities per week (%, 16-74, 2024)	34	43	30	43
	Voluntary, charitable or political activities at least once per week (%, 16-74, 2024)	17	19	13	17
Power					
Political	Share of ministers (%, 2025)	27	73	32	68
	Share of members of parliament (%, 2025)	44	56	33	67
	Share of members of regional assemblies/local municipalities (%, 2025)[4]	47	53	32	68
Economic	Share of members of boards in largest quoted companies (%, 2025)	39	61	35	65
Social	Share of members of highest decision making body of the national Olympic most popular sport organisations (%, 2025)	30	70	26	74
Health					
Status	Self-perceived health, good or very good (%, 16+, 2025)	71	77	65	71
	Healthy life years at 65 in percentage of the total life expectancy (%, 65+, 2024)	55	60	48	54
Behaviour	People who don't smoke and are not involved in harmful drinking (%, 16+ population, 2019)	72	51	73	56
	People doing physical activities and/or consuming fruits and vegetables (%, 16+ population, 2019)	37	41	38	43

Source: EU-LFS, EU-SILC, European Health Interview Survey (EHIS), Eurostat health statistics, EIGE's CARE survey, EIGE, Gender Statistics Database, WMID.

2. FTE employment rate measures employed persons in a comparable way, even though they may work a different number of hours per week
3. Median of the annual earnings expressed as a percentage of a partner's earnings for coupled women and men in employment and in working age
4. Share of members in local municipalities for BG, EE, IE, CY, LT, LU, MT, SI

Key highlights

Low employment levels for both women and men

The full-time equivalent (FTE) employment rate[5] is 42 % for women and 54 % for men, unchanged since the previous year. Both rates are among the lowest in the EU. The gender gap is particularly wide among couples with children (20 pp), people with medium levels of education (20 pp) and people born abroad (19 pp).

Women are gaining ground in management, but not in ICT

Women account for 18 % of ICT (information and communications technology) specialists, down 1 pp since the previous year. By contrast, they account for 37 % of managers, up 3 pp over the same period.

The gender pension gap is closing steadily, but remains above the EU average

Belgium's gender pension gap has fallen by 4 pp in a single year, to 27 %. Despite this progress, it remains above the EU average of 24 %.

One of the smallest earnings differences between partners

Women in couples earn 84 % of their partner's income, up 3 pp since the previous year. This is one of the highest percentages for women in the EU. Men in couples earn 24 % more than their partner, down 4 pp over the same period. This is one of the smallest gender differences in the EU.

In-work poverty is among the lowest in the EU for single women and single mothers

In Belgium, 10 % of employed women and 7 % of employed men living alone or as single parents are at risk of poverty. The rate for women is unchanged since the previous year and remains among the lowest in the EU. For men, it has fallen by 4 pp.

Among single parents in employment, 7 % of women are at risk of poverty, compared with 13 % of men. Among single-adult households in employment, the difference is reversed: 12 % of women are at risk, compared with 7 % of men.

5. The FTE employment rate measures working hours comparatively, even though people may work different numbers of hours per week.

Tertiary education is rising for women, while IVET is falling

In Belgium, 60 % of women aged 30–34 have completed tertiary education, compared with 46 % of men. The figure for women is among the highest in the EU and has increased by 4 pp since the previous year, widening the gender gap.

In addition, 19 % of women aged 25–34 have completed IVET (initial vocational education and training) studies, compared with 30 % of men. The figure for women has fallen by 2 pp since the previous year, while the figure for men is unchanged.

Study fields remain sharply divided by gender

Women account for 71 % of EHW (education, health and welfare, humanities and the arts) graduates. Despite the high percentage, this is among the lowest levels for women in the EU. In STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields, women account for 28 % of graduates. Both figures have fallen by 1 pp since the previous year.

Women and men spend equal time on long-term care

In Belgium, 30 % of women spend more than 35 hours a week caring for children aged 0–11, compared with 20 % of men. The figure for women is among the lowest in the EU, and the gender gap is relatively narrow. The type of couple reveals further differences. Among women, the figure is higher for those in heterosexual couples with children (33 %) than for those in same-sex couples with children (27 %). For men, the opposite is true: the figure rises from 16 % in heterosexual couples to 24 % in same-sex couples. As a result, the gender gap is 17 pp among people in heterosexual couples, compared with just 3 pp among those in same-sex couples[6].

Long-term care is equally divided between women and men. Among people aged 45–64, 10 % of both women and men spend more than 20 hours a week providing long-term care.

Gender differences remain wider in daily housework. Half of women (50 %) do tasks such as cooking, cleaning and laundry every day, compared with 27 % of men. The figure for women is relatively low compared with other EU countries.

Small gender disparities in time spent in leisure and voluntary activities

Belgium has narrow gender gaps in leisure and civic activities. Some 34 % of women spend more than 8 hours a week on leisure activities, compared with 43 % of men. The figure for women is among the highest in the EU.

For voluntary, charitable or political activities, 17 % of women and 19 % of men take part at least once a week. The figure for women is again among the highest in the EU.

6. EIGE's estimation based on the variable gender identity. The sample size allowed reliable estimations only for a few countries and the EU.

Women’s presence has sharply reduced among ministers

The share of women among ministers in Belgium fell from 55 % to 27 % over the past year (– 28 pp). By contrast, women's representation is growing in the national parliament (44 %, + 1 pp since the previous year) and is near parity in regional assemblies (47 %, + 1 pp since the previous year) – among the highest levels for women in both.

> Belgium has introduced legal quotas for parliamentary candidates, requiring at least 50 % representation of the under-represented gender in each election.

Women's representation on company boards and in sport leadership continues to grow

Women account for 39 % of board members in Belgium’s largest listed companies, up 1 pp since the previous year.

The increase has been stronger in sport. Women account for 30 % of members of the highest decision-making bodies of national Olympic sport organisations, up 8 pp in a single year.

> As of December 2025, in Belgium the legislation for the transposition of the Directive (EU) 2022/2381 (Gender Balance on Boards Directive) remains in draft form.

Slight improvements in healthy years after 65

In Belgium, 71 % of women and 77 % of men reported their health as ‘good’ or ‘very good’, after a slight fall of 2 pp for women over the previous year.

Women and men aged 65 and above are expected to live 55 % (+ 2 pp since the previous year) and 60 % (+ 1 pp over the same period) of their remaining life in good health, respectively.

Explore intersecting inequalities

Full-time equivalent employment rate (%, 15-89, 2024)[7]		Women	Men	Gender gap	Gender gap in 2019	Gap change
Household composition	Couple without children	33	38	-5	-6	🟢
	Couple with children	71	91	-20	-23	🟢
Level of education	Low educated	14	28	-14	-17	🟢
	Medium educated	38	58	-20	-20	🟠
	High educated	66	72	-6	-6	🟠
Country of birth	Native born	43	53	-10	-12	🟢
	Foreign born	39	58	-19	-21	🟢

In-work poverty of adults in single or single-parent households (%, 16+ employed population, 2025)						
Household composition	Single-adult household	12	7	5	1	🔴
	Single-parent household	7	13	-6	4	🔴
Age groups	15/16-24	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	25-49	10	7	3	7	🟢
	50-64	9	6	3	-3	🟠
	65+	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Country of birth	Native born	9	7	2	5	🟢
	Foreign born	13	10	3	-5	🟢

Graduates in IVET (Initial vocational education and training) (%, 25-34, 2024)						
Country of birth	Native born	24	35	-11	-11	🟠
	Foreign born	16	18	-2	-6	🟢
Disability	With disabilities	17	23	-6	6	🟠
	Without disabilities	13	28	-15	-13	🔴

Informal childcare (0-11) for more than 35 weekly hours (%, 16-74, 2024)						
Household composition	Single-parent household	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Couple with children	35	18	17	n/a	n/a
Age groups	15/16-24	n/a	35	n/a	n/a	n/a
	25-49	33	18	15	n/a	n/a
	50-64	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Self-perceived health, good or very good (%, 16+, 2025)						
Household composition	Single-adult household	53	64	-11	-10	🔴
	Single-parent household	66	71	-5	-12	🟢
	Couple without children	68	71	-3	1	🔴
	Couple with children	83	85	-2	-2	🟠
Age groups	15/16-24	92	95	-3	-2	🔴
	25-49	79	85	-6	-3	🔴
	50-64	63	69	-6	-4	🔴
	65+	55	61	-6	-6	🟠
Disability	With disabilities	23	24	-1	-4	🟢
	Without disabilities	90	92	-2	-1	🔴

Source: Eurostat (European Union Labour Force Survey, European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions), EIGE CARE survey.

🟢 gender gap decreased (<= -1 p.p.) 🟠 no change (gender gap increases/decreases between -1 and 1 p.p.) 🔴 gender gap increased (>= 1 p.p.)

7. FTE employment rate measures employed persons in a comparable way, even though they may work a different number of hours per week. Family type is based on the relationships between the members of households. Children are only those economically dependent household members (i.e. aged below 18).

Violence against women

Violence against women is one of the additional domains of the Gender Equality Index. The composite indicator on violence against women was calculated on the basis of the EU-GBV survey on violence against women[8].

Belgium's score for the domain of violence is 25.9 points, which is lower than the EU average.

The score for the subdomain of prevalence is 16.7 points, the subdomain of severity is 40.9 points and for the subdomain of disclosure 20.2 points[9].

- In Belgium, 29 % of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by any perpetrator since the age of 15. This is 2 pp lower than the EU-27 average (31 %).
- In Belgium, 60 % of women have experienced health consequences of physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15.
- In Belgium, 19 % of women who have experienced physical or sexual violence by any perpetrator in the past 12 months have not told anyone.
- Girls report cyberbullying more often than boys at both ages, with the gap narrowing by 3 pp. Among 13-year-olds, 15 % of girls reported cyberbullying, compared with 9 % of boys. At age 15, the levels were 12 % and 9 %, respectively[10].
- In Belgium, 8 % of women who have ever worked have experienced sexual harassment at work via social networks or messaging apps[11].

The **Istanbul Convention** is the most comprehensive international human rights treaty on preventing and combatting violence against women and domestic violence.

Belgium signed the Istanbul Convention in September 2012 and ratified it in March 2016. The treaty entered into force in Belgium in July 2016.

The European Council approved the EU's accession to the Istanbul Convention on 1 June 2023.

8. The calculations of the composite measure in 2024 differ in several ways from the calculations carried out in 2017 due to slight differences in methodologies between the FRA EU wide survey on violence against women of 2012 and the EU-GBV survey (wave 2021). For more details, see EIGE (2025). Gender Equality Index 2024: Tackling violence against women, tackling gender inequalities. Publications Office.
9. More information can be found in the report 'Gender Equality Index 2024, Tackling violence against women, tackling gender inequalities'.
10. Based on HBSC study data browser (findings from the 2021–2022 HBSC Survey)
11. Based on EU-GBV Survey (2021 wave)

Violence against women

Physical and/or sexual violence	Belgium Women	EU Women
Women having experienced physical and/or sexual violence by any perpetrator since age 15 (%, 18-74, 2021)	**29**	**31 e**
18-29	36	35 e
30-44	32	35 e
45-64	30	31 e
65-74	14	24 e
severe limitations	47	46 e
limited but not severely or not limited at all	28	30 e
some	45	40 e
some or severe	46	41 e
no limitations	24	28 e
intimate partner violence	17	18 e
non-partner violence	19	20 e
Women having experienced physical and/or sexual violence by any perpetrator in the past 12 months (%, 18-74, 2021)	**3**	**3 e**

Femicide	Belgium Women	EU Women
Women victims of intentional homicide by current or former partner or family member, rate per 100 000 inhabitants (2024) [12]	**:**	**0.4**
family member	:	0.4
current or former partner	:	:

Health consequences of violence and multiple victimisation	Belgium Women	EU Women
Women having experienced health consequences of physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15 (%, 18-74, 2021)	**60**	**57 e**
intimate partner violence	74	72 e
non-partner violence	40	37 e
Women having experienced health consequences of physical and/or sexual violence in the past 12 months (%, 18-74, 2021)	**30 u**	**37 e**
Women having experienced physical and/or sexual violence from one or several types of perpetrators (non-partner, current partner or former partner) (%, 18-74, 2021)	**31**	**31 e**

Disclosure of violence to institutions or to anyone else	Belgium Women	EU Women
Women having experienced physical and/or sexual violence in the past 12 months and have not told anyone (%, 18-74, 2021)	**19**	**31 e**
intimate partner violence	19	31 e
non-partner violence	27	38 e

12. Data for the EU and for RO not disagregated by perpetrators. Data for Finland from 2023.

Cyberviolence	Belgium Women	Belgium Men	EU Women	EU Men
13-year-olds who have been cyberbullied at least once or twice in the past couple of months (%, 2022) [13]	15	9	19 e	16 e
15-year-olds who have been cyberbullied at least once or twice in the past couple of months (%, 2022) [14]	12	9	15 e	14 e
	Women		Women	
Ever-working women who have experienced sexual harassment at work via social network and messages (%, 18-74, 2022)	8		7 e	

Source:
- EU-GBV survey on violence against women (Statistics | Eurostat (europa.eu))
- Italy, the data based on Victimisation survey 2022-2023 (Le molestie: vittime e contesto – Anno 2022-2023 – Istat); women aged 18-70.
- Femicide, Eurostat (crim_hom_vrel) • HBSC study data browser (findings from the 2021–2022 HBSC Survey)

Legend:
- EU: EIGE's estimation
- u: low reliability (estimate is based on 20 to 49 sample observations or if non-response for the item concerned exceeds 20% and is lower or equal to 50%)
- d: definition differs
- e: estimated
- : not available

13. EU: EIGE estimation, unweighted average of the 27 Member States BE: unweighted average of Flemish Belgium and French Belgium data.
14. EU: EIGE estimation, unweighted average of the 27 Member States BE: unweighted average of Flemish Belgium and French Belgium data.

Parental leave

The Gender Equality Index 2026 focuses on parental leave as a key policy tool for promoting gender equality, supporting families and promoting children's well-being. Well-designed parental leave can help parents reconcile work and family life, support a more equal division of care responsibilities and strengthen participation in the labour market. It also supports children's early development by enabling parents to spend time with them during the first years of life. Although parental leave is available in all EU Member States, rules on access and benefits vary considerably[15].

The analysis looks at who is eligible for parental leave and its related benefits.

Employed women are less likely than employed men to be ineligible for parental leave and related benefits

Among employed people in Belgium, 16 % of women and 18 % of men are not eligible for statutory parental leave or for the related benefits. For women, unmet employment conditions are the main reason (52 %), followed by self-employment (48 %). For men, the order is reversed, with self-employment at 68 % and unmet employment conditions at 32 %.

Women are slightly more likely than men to be excluded from parental leave benefits in the overall population

Looking at the overall population, 41 % of women and 37 % of men are not eligible for parental leave benefits. Unemployment or inactivity is the main reason, for 71 % of women and 63 % of men, followed by unmet employment conditions (15 % and 12 %, respectively) and self-employment (14 % and 25 %, respectively).

Parental leave or its related benefits in Belgium are claimed more by women than men

Among recipients of publicly administered parental leave benefits, 64 % are women.

A two-year gap separates well-paid leave from guaranteed childcare in Belgium

In Belgium, two years separate the end of well-paid parental leave and the point at which a childcare place is guaranteed, leaving families without either well-paid leave or assured access to formal childcare during this period.

15. The analysis uses a static microsimulation to estimate how many potential parents would be eligible for parental leave across the EU. Country-specific eligibility rules are applied to representative survey data. The analysis covers people aged 20–49 and focuses on formal eligibility rather than actual take-up. It distinguishes between eligibility for job-protected parental leave (the statutory right to take time away from work while keeping a job) and eligibility for parental leave benefits (the financial compensation received during that leave). In countries where the eligibility conditions for leave and benefits are identical, the two measures produce the same results. However, where eligibility criteria differ, benefit eligibility is often broader than leave eligibility, as entitlement to financial support may extend to individuals who are not in employment. To reflect these differences, eligibility rates were simulated separately for the employed population (leave entitlement) and for the overall population (benefit entitlement). It uses 2024 data from the European Union Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) and the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). For more details, see Gender Equality Index 2026: Making parental leave work (EIGE, 2026).

Parental leave

Parental leave	Belgium Women	Belgium Men	EU Women	EU Men
1. Employed women and men not eligible for statutory parental leave (%, 20-49, 2024) [16]	**16**	**18**	**8**	**11**
2. Employed women and men not eligible for statutory parental leave by reason for ineligibility (%, 20-49, 2024)				
Self-employment	48	68	71	76
Unmet employment conditions	52	32	20	16
Unmet residency requirement	0	0	8	8
3. Employed women and men not eligible for statutory parental leave benefits (%, 20-49, 2024)	**16**	**18**	**4**	**4**
4. Women and men not eligible for statutory parental leave benefits (%, 20-49, 2024) [17]	**41**	**37**	**18**	**13**
5. Women and men not eligible for statutory parental leave benefits by reason for ineligibility, (%, 20-49, 2024) [18]				
Unemployement or inactivity	71	63	:	:
Self-employment	14	25	:	:
Unmet employment conditions	15	12	:	:
Unmet residency requirement	0	0	:	:
6. Recipients/users of publicly-administered parental leave benefits or publicly-administered paid parental leave (%, 2023) [19]	**64**	**36**	**:**	**:**
	Gap		**Gap**	
7. Gap between well-paid childcare leave and ECEC place guarantee (years, 2024/2025) [20]	**2**		**:**	

Source: • EU-LFS, EU-SILC • OECD Family Database • Eurydice

Legend:
- Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 5: the analysis uses a static microsimulation to estimate how many potential parents would be eligible for job-protected parental leave (the statutory right to take time away from work while keeping one's job) and eligibility for parental leave benefits (the financial compensation received during that leave).
- Indicators 2, 5, 6: figures rounded to whole numbers, sum may not add up to 100 %
- : not available

16. Sweden applies a one-year residency requirement for EU/EEA and non-EU/EEA nationals, which was simulated but resulted in extremely small numbers, rounded to zero (0).

17. Sweden applies a one-year residency requirement for EU/EEA and non-EU/EEA nationals, which was simulated but resulted in extremely small numbers, rounded to zero (0).

18. 'EU-27' average excluded due to the results being unrepresentative as the figure covers only the subset of Member States with a non-negligible ineligible population to decompose by reason, excluding countries with near-full eligibility and unmet employment conditions and unmet residency requirements will be conflated.

19. DK, SE and PT do not make a distinction between the different leaves, therefore their numbers also include users of maternity and paternity leave. For BE and CZ, data is an average of users/recipients in each month of the given year. For LU, data refer to recipients of the first (right after birth) and second parental leave (before 6th birthday). For EE, data refer to recipients of shared parental benefits (jagatav vanemahüvitis). For FI, data refer to recipients of the sharable parental allowance plus the paternity allowance after the parental allowance period. For DE, data include both recipients of 'Elterngeld' and 'ElterngeldPlus'. PL and FI latest data for 2021; DK latest data for 2022. Data is not available for other countries.

20. Well-paid leave' is defined as leave compensated with an earnings-related payment equivalent to 66 % of earnings or above. The measure combines maternity, paternity, and parental leave, and reflects the continuous well-paid period achievable from birth if leave is taken full-time, in one uninterrupted period, by one or both parents in sequence.

About the Index

The Gender Equality Index, first launched in 2013, has become a cornerstone of gender monitoring in the European Union. In 2025, the Index underwent a comprehensive review to strengthen its alignment with current EU policy priorities, integrate new data and update its methodology.

The Gender Equality Index measures gender gaps between women and men in six core domains – work, money, knowledge, time, power and health – and is composed of 27 indicators. Scores range from 0 to 100, where 0 reflects complete gender inequality and 100 represents full equality.

Two additional domains are included in the Index, but do not impact a country's final score. The domain of intersecting inequalities highlights how gender inequalities manifest in combination with age, disability, education, family type and migrant background (based on the country of birth). The domain of violence against women measures, monitors and analyses the most common and widely criminalised forms of violence against women across the EU.

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

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