European Institute for Gender Equality

Gender Equality Index 2026

Bulgaria

58.4

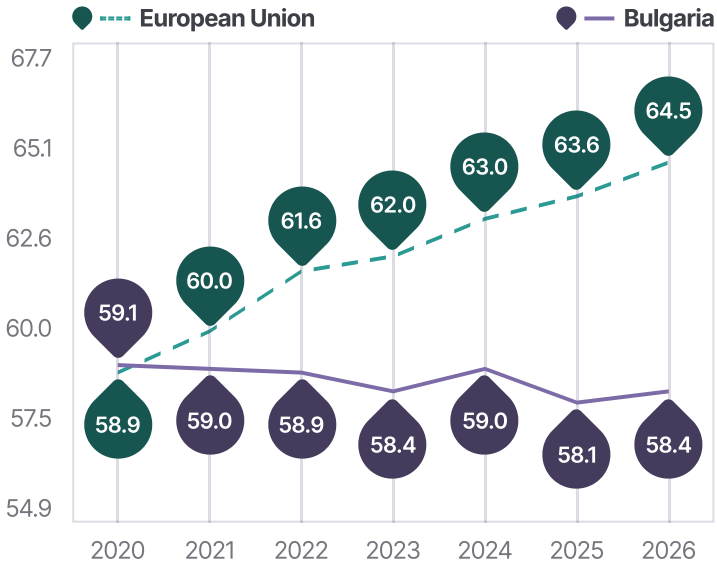
Bulgaria scores 58.4 points out of 100 in the Gender Equality Index, ranking 22nd in the EU. The score has increased by 0.3 points since 2025, but remains 0.7 points below the 2020 level. The recent improvement is mainly driven by progress in the domain of knowledge.

The Gender Equality Index in Bulgaria has increased, but more slowly than the EU average.

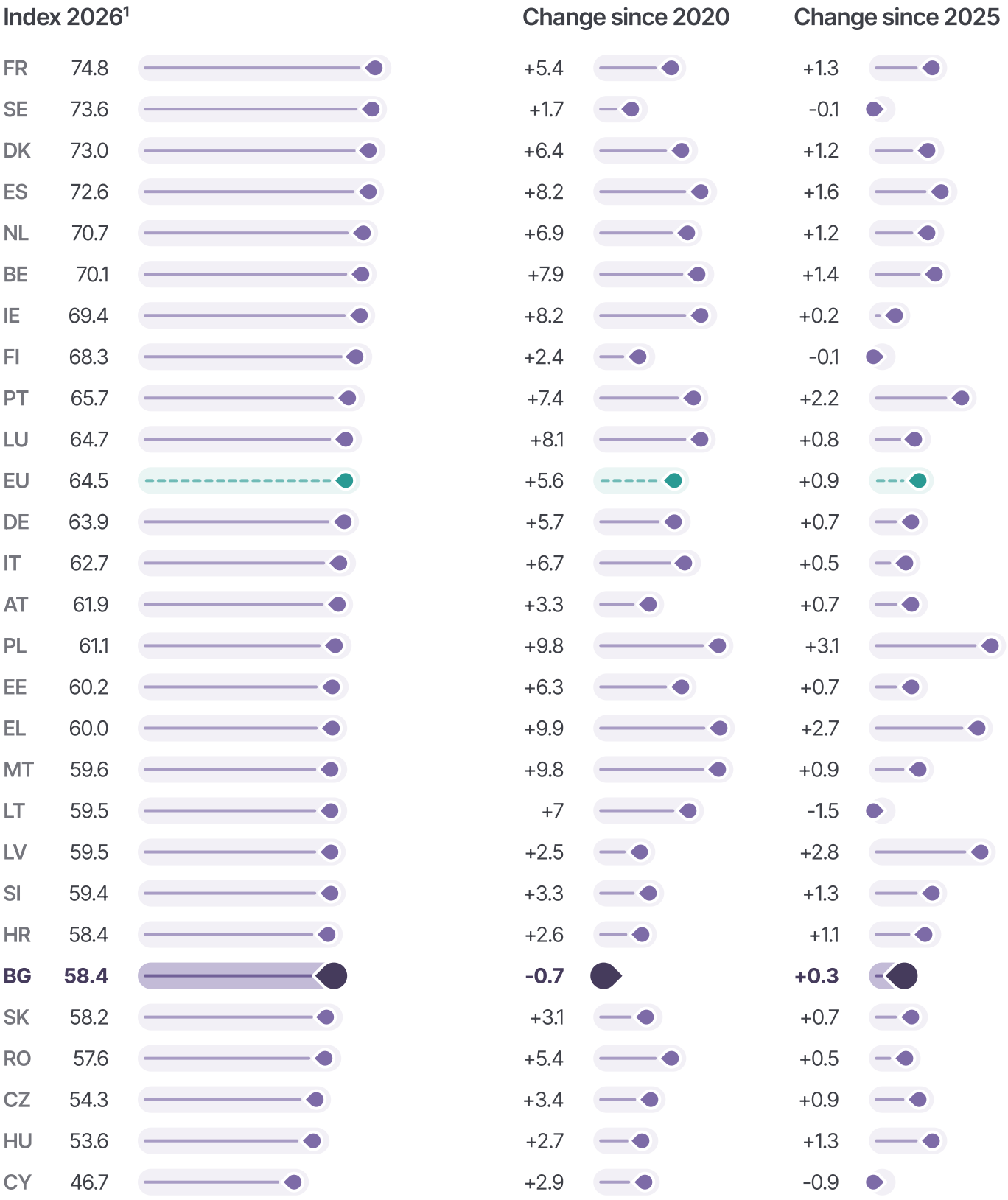
Scores (0-100)

Index	58.4
Work	78.8
Money	84.4
Knowledge	50.3
Time	65.2
Power	25.0
Health	74.8

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

Bulgaria has its **best performance** in the domain of work, ranking 2nd in the EU with a score of 78.8 points. This is mainly due to the subdomain of segregation and quality of work, which also ranks 2nd with 72.0 points. This reflects one of the highest shares in the EU of women among managers and ICT specialists.

Most room for improvement

Bulgaria has the **most room for improvement** in the domain of health, ranking 26th in the EU with a score of 74.8 points. This is mainly due to the subdomain of health behaviour, which ranks 26th with 62.5 points, with very low levels of healthy lifestyle for both women and men. The lowest score for Bulgaria overall is in the domain of power at 25.0 points, where it ranks 22nd.

Biggest improvement

Bulgaria's **biggest improvement** is in the domain of knowledge, which has gained 3.0 points since 2025. This reflects progress in both the subdomain of attainment and participation (+ 3.7 points), and segregation (+ 2.4 points).

A step backwards

Bulgaria shows **a step backwards** in two domains. The domain of power has decreased by 0.6 points since 2025, mainly due to a drop in the subdomain of political power (– 5.2 points). The domain of work has slightly decreased by 0.1 points, which can be attributed to both subdomains – participation (– 0.1 points), and segregation and quality of work (– 0.2 points).

Explore Bulgaria's Index results

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Change since 2020	Change since 2025
Index	**59.1**	**59.0**	**58.9**	**58.4**	**59.0**	**58.1**	**58.4**	**-0.7**	**0.3**
Work	**78.8**	**80.1**	**78.3**	**79.1**	**80.5**	**78.9**	**78.8**	**0.0**	**-0.1**
Participation	86.0	85.4	85.8	85.3	86.3	86.3	86.2	0.2	-0.1
Segregation and quality of work	72.1	75.1	71.6	73.3	75.1	72.2	72.0	-0.1	-0.2
Money	**85.1**	**82.4**	**80.7**	**82.8**	**85.5**	**83.9**	**84.4**	**-0.7**	**0.5**
Financial resources	84.5	83.8	83.0	81.6	86.0	84.1	85.0	0.5	0.9
Economic situation	85.7	81.1	78.5	84.1	85.0	83.6	83.8	-1.9	0.2
Knowledge	**50.7**	**50.1**	**50.1**	**51.0**	**49.4**	**47.3**	**50.3**	**-0.4**	**3.0**
Attainment and participation	57.0	56.7	58.2	60.1	58.5	54.9	58.6	1.6	3.7
Segregation	45.1	44.2	43.2	43.4	41.7	40.8	43.2	-1.9	2.4
Time	**65.2**	**65.2**	**65.2**	**65.2**	**65.2**	**65.2**	**65.2**	**0.0**	**0.0**
Care activities	55.6	55.6	55.6	55.6	55.6	55.6	55.6	0.0	0.0
Social activities	76.4	76.4	76.4	76.4	76.4	76.4	76.4	0.0	0.0
Power	**26.4**	**26.8**	**27.7**	**25.3**	**25.7**	**25.6**	**25.0**	**-1.4**	**-0.6**
Political	40.9	42.7	39.4	39.0	38.2	38.9	33.7	-7.2	-5.2
Economic	18.8	16.2	19.3	17.0	20.9	19.8	19.1	0.3	-0.7
Social	23.9	27.8	27.9	24.4	21.4	21.8	24.2	0.3	2.4
Health	**74.1**	**74.4**	**74.2**	**74.2**	**75.0**	**74.7**	**74.8**	**0.7**	**0.1**
Status	87.8	88.5	88.1	88.1	90.0	89.2	89.7	1.9	0.5
Behaviour	62.5	62.5	62.5	62.5	62.5	62.5	62.5	0.0	0.0

Explore Bulgaria's performance by indicator

Work		Bulgaria Women	Bulgaria Men	EU Women	EU Men
Participation	Full-time equivalent employment rate (%, 15-89, 2024)[2]	48	60	44	59
	Duration of working life (years, 15+ population, 2025)	33	36	35	40
Segregation and quality of work	ICT specialists (%, 15-74, 2025)	25	75	20	81
	Managerial positions (%, 15-74, 2025)	42	58	36	64
	Low paid workers (%, 16+, 2025)	36	37	37	29
Money					
Financial resources	Median earnings (PPS, 18-64 employed population, 2025)	15981	18277	25525	32079
	Gender pension gap (65+, %, 2025)	18		24	
Economic situation	Median partner earnings ratio (18-64,%, 2025)[3]	86	122	73	147
	In-work poverty of adults in single or single-parent households (%, 16+ employed population, 2025)	17	20	16	13
Knowledge					
Attainment and participation	Graduates of tertiary education (%, 30-34, 2025)	50	35	51	40
	Graduates in IVET (Initial vocational education and training) (%, 25-34, 2025)	13	29	27	34
Segregation	Graduated in tertiary education in EHW (Education, Health and Welfare, Humanities and Art (tertiary students) (%, 2024)	77	23	75	25
	Graduated in tertiary education in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) (%, 2024)	38	62	34	66
Time					
Care activities	Informal childcare (0-11) for more than 35 weekly hours (%, 16-74, 2024)	41	19	41	20
	Informal long-term care for more than 20 hours per week (%, 45-64, 2019)	27	18	20	13
	Housework chores every day (%, 16-74, 2024)	61	31	59	33
Social activities	Hours spent on leisure activities per week (%, 16-74, 2024)	31	38	30	43
	Voluntary, charitable or political activities at least once per week (%, 16-74, 2024)	17	12	13	17
Power					
Political	Share of ministers (%, 2025)	29	71	32	68
	Share of members of parliament (%, 2025)	25	75	33	67
	Share of members of regional assemblies/local municipalities (%, 2025)[4]	28	72	32	68
Economic	Share of members of boards in largest quoted companies (%, 2025)	18	82	35	65
Social	Share of members of highest decision making body of the national Olympic most popular sport organisations (%, 2025)	21	79	26	74
Health					
Status	Self-perceived health, good or very good (%, 16+, 2025)	61	68	65	71
	Healthy life years at 65 in percentage of the total life expectancy (%, 65+, 2024)	67	75	48	54
Behaviour	People who don't smoke and are not involved in harmful drinking (%, 16+ population, 2019)	70	47	73	56
	People doing physical activities and/or consuming fruits and vegetables (%, 16+ population, 2019)	11	20	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

Women have lower employment rates, with wider gaps among parents and some education groups

In Bulgaria, the full-time equivalent (FTE) employment rate[5] is 48 % for women and 60 % for men. These figures have not changed since last edition of the Index. The gender gap is particularly wide among couples with children and people with medium levels of education. The gap is also pronounced among people with low levels of education, whose overall FTE employment rates are particularly low.

High representation of women in managerial positions

Women account for 25 % of ICT (information and communications technology) specialists in Bulgaria, down 2 pp since the previous year. By contrast, the share of women among managers has increased to 42 % (+ 2 pp since the previous year). This is one of the highest percentages in the EU.

Bulgaria has some of the lowest median earnings in the EU

In Bulgaria, median annual earnings[6] are 15,981 PPS (purchasing power standards) for women and 18,277 PPS for men. While earnings are among the lowest in the EU for both women and men, the gender gap is one of the lowest in the EU.

Employed women living alone or as single parents are at lower risk of poverty than men

In Bulgaria, 17 % of employed women living alone or as single mothers are at risk of poverty, compared with 20 % of employed men. These figures are unchanged since the previous year. Bulgaria is one of the EU countries where the rate is higher for men than for women. The gender gap is wider among people aged 50–64 at 14 pp, with men at higher risk.

The gender gap among IVET graduates is higher than the EU average

In Bulgaria, 50 % of women aged 30–34 have completed tertiary education, compared with 35 % of men. Both percentages have increased by 1 pp for women and 4 pp for men over the previous year. For IVET (initial vocational education and training) the pattern is reversed; 13 % of women have completed IVET studies, compared with 29 % of men. Both percentages have decreased by 1 pp each over the previous year. The figure for women is among the lowest in the EU, and the gender gap is one of the widest.

5. The FTE employment rate measures working hours comparatively, even though people may work different numbers of hours per week.
6. Median annual earnings of the 18–64 population in employment, computed as the median of gross employee cash or near cash income, gross non-cash employee income and cash benefits from self-employment.

Women in Bulgaria remain concentrated in EHW fields, but STEM shares are comparatively high

More than three out of four graduates in the fields of EHW (education, health and welfare, humanities and the arts) are women in Bulgaria, at 77 % (– 1 pp since the previous year). In the STEM field (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), women account for 38 % of graduates (+ 2 pp since the previous year) – one of the higher shares among the EU.

Care and housework remain areas for improvement

In Bulgaria, 41 % of women provide informal childcare for children aged 0–11 for more than 35 hours a week, compared with 19 % of men.

Housework chores (cooking, cleaning and laundry) are also unequally shared: 61 % of women do these tasks every day, compared with 31 % of men. The gender gap is higher than the EU average of 26 pp.

One of the smallest gender gaps is observed in leisure time

In Bulgaria, 31 % of women and 38 % of men spend more than 8 hours a week on leisure activities. The percentage for men is higher than for women but among the lowest in the EU. As a result, Bulgaria has one of the smallest gender gaps in leisure time in the EU.

Moreover, 17 % of women take part in voluntary, charitable or political activities at least once a week – one of the highest percentages in the EU. For men, the figure is 12 %, one of the lowest in the EU. The gender gap is therefore in favour of women.

Women's representation in political power remains low in Bulgaria

The share of women in ministerial positions is 29 %, a decrease of 7 pp since the previous year. Women hold 25 % of parliamentary seats, one of the lowest shares in the EU. In local municipalities, women hold 28 % of seats. Both figures remain unchanged since the previous year.

> Bulgaria does not have gender quotas for parliament.

Bulgaria has one of the lowest shares of women on company boards in the EU, despite gains in sport governance

The percentage of women on the boards of the largest listed companies stands at 18 %, one of the lowest shares in the EU, with no change over the previous year. Some improvement has been recorded in the highest decision-making body of the national Olympic most popular sport organisations where women hold 21 % of the seats, an increase of 2 pp since the previous year.

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

Self-perceived health is declining while healthy life years at 65 is improving

In Bulgaria, 61 % of women and 68 % of men rate their health as 'good' or 'very good', following a decline over the previous year (– 1 pp for women, 2 pp for men). The level for women is among the lowest in the EU, and the gender gap is among the widest.

At age 65 or over, women and men in Bulgaria can expect to spend 67 % and 75 % respectively of their remaining life in good health. Both figures have risen since the previous year (+ 3 pp for women, + 4 pp for men) and are among the highest in the EU. However, the gender gap remains among the widest in the EU.

Healthy lifestyle habits also remain poor: 11 % of women and 20 % of men engage in physical activity and/or consume fruit and vegetables regularly, both among the lowest in the EU.

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	45	46	-1	1	🟠
	Couple with children	82	96	-14	-16	🟢
Level of education	Low educated	15	29	-14	-15	🟢
	Medium educated	47	63	-16	-15	🔴
	High educated	72	78	-6	-6	🟠
Country of birth	Native born	48	60	-12	-12	🟠
	Foreign born	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
In-work poverty of adults in single or single-parent households (%, 16+ employed population, 2025)						
Household composition	Single-adult household	12	19	-7	-7	🟠
	Single-parent household	30	24	6	n/a	n/a
Age groups	15/16-24	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	25-49	23	17	6	7	🟢
	50-64	12	26	-14	-11	🔴
	65+	10	3	7	-8	🟢
Country of birth	Native born	17	20	-3	-1	🔴
	Foreign born	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Graduates in IVET (Initial vocational education and training) (%, 25-34, 2024)						
Country of birth	Native born	15	30	-15	-18	🟢
	Foreign born	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Disability	With disabilities	n/a	2	n/a	3	n/a
	Without disabilities	13	27	-14	-15	🟢
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	49	24	25	n/a	n/a
Age groups	15/16-24	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	25-49	42	18	24	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	34	57	-23	-21	🔴
	Single-parent household	84	80	4	5	🟢
	Couple without children	52	46	6	3	🔴
	Couple with children	87	87	0	-1	🟢
Age groups	15/16-24	96	96	0	0	🟠
	25-49	86	87	-1	-1	🟠
	50-64	63	62	1	-4	🟢
	65+	25	33	-8	-8	🟠
Disability	With disabilities	9	9	0	-4	🟢
	Without disabilities	70	76	-6	-6	🟠

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 based on the EU-GBV survey on violence against women[8].

Bulgaria's score for the domain of violence is 29.8 points, which is lower than the EU average[9]. The score for the subdomain of prevalence is 8.3 points, the subdomain of severity is 49.3 points and for the subdomain of disclosure it is 31.8 points.

- In Bulgaria, 12 % of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15. This is the lowest rate in the EU-27, at 19 pp lower than the EU-27 average (31 %).
- In Bulgaria, 59 % of women have experienced health consequences of physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15.
- In Bulgaria, 31 % of women who have experienced physical or sexual violence by any perpetrator in the past 12 months have not told anyone.
- Cyberbullying affects girls and boys almost equally at age 13 in Bulgaria, but the gap reverses by age 15. Among 13-year-olds, 22 % of girls and 21 % of boys reported cyberbullying. By age 15, boys reported it more often than girls, at 26 % and 18 % respectively[10].
- In Bulgaria, 2 % 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.

Bulgaria signed the Istanbul Convention in April 2016 but has not yet ratified it. The Convention has not yet entered into force in Bulgaria.

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	Bulgaria Women	EU Women
Women having experienced physical and/or sexual violence by any perpetrator since age 15 (%, 18-74, 2021)	**12**	**31 e**
18-29	22 u	35 e
30-44	12	35 e
45-64	10	31 e
65-74	8	24 e
severe limitations	48	46 e
limited but not severely or not limited at all	10	30 e
some	14	40 e
some or severe	24	41 e
no limitations	10	28 e
intimate partner violence	9	18 e
non-partner violence	6	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	Bulgaria 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	Bulgaria Women	EU Women
Women having experienced health consequences of physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15 (%, 18-74, 2021)	**59**	**57 e**
intimate partner violence	72	72 e
non-partner violence	42	37 e
Women having experienced health consequences of physical and/or sexual violence in the past 12 months (%, 18-74, 2021)	**60**	**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)	**27**	**31 e**

Disclosure of violence to institutions or to anyone else	Bulgaria Women	EU Women
Women having experienced physical and/or sexual violence in the past 12 months and have not told anyone (%, 18-74, 2021)	**31**	**31 e**
intimate partner violence	28	31 e
non-partner violence	40	38 e

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

Cyberviolence	Bulgaria Women	Bulgaria 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]	22	21	19 e	16 e
15-year-olds who have been cyberbullied at least once or twice in the past couple of months (%, 2022) [14]	18	26	15 e	14 e
	Women		Women	
Ever-working women who have experienced sexual harassment at work via social network and messages (%, 18-74, 2022)	2		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 excluded from statutory parental leave and its related benefits

Among employed people in Bulgaria, 7 % of women and 11 % of men are not eligible for parental leave. In all cases, the reason is the self-employment condition. Similarly, 13 % of employed women are excluded from statutory parental leave benefits, compared with 17 % of employed men.

Women and men in the overall population show a narrow gap in exclusion from parental leave benefits

Looking at the overall population, 36 % of women and 33 % of men are not eligible for parental leave benefits.

Women and men in Bulgaria are excluded from benefits for the same reasons, but in different proportions

Among women in Bulgaria who are not eligible for parental leave benefits, unemployment or inactivity accounts for 74 % of exclusions, self-employment for 14 % and unmet employment conditions for 12 %. Among men, these reasons account for 58 %, 29 % and 13 % respectively.

Parental leave benefits in Bulgaria are used almost exclusively by women

Among recipients of publicly administered parental leave benefits, 99 % are women.

A three-year gap separates well-paid leave from guaranteed childcare in Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, there is a three-year gap between the end of well-paid parental leave and guaranteed access to childcare. During this period, families have neither well-paid leave nor guaranteed formal childcare.

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	Bulgaria Women	Bulgaria Men	EU Women	EU Men
1. Employed women and men not eligible for statutory parental leave (%, 20-49, 2024) [16]	**7**	**11**	**8**	**11**
2. Employed women and men not eligible for statutory parental leave by reason for ineligibility (%, 20-49, 2024)				
Self-employment	100	100	71	76
Unmet employment conditions	0	0	20	16
Unmet residency requirement	0	0	8	8
3. Employed women and men not eligible for statutory parental leave benefits (%, 20-49, 2024)	**13**	**17**	**4**	**4**
4. Women and men not eligible for statutory parental leave benefits (%, 20-49, 2024) [17]	**36**	**33**	**18**	**13**
5. Women and men not eligible for statutory parental leave benefits by reason for ineligibility, (%, 20-49, 2024) [18]				
Unemployement or inactivity	74	58	:	:
Self-employment	14	29	:	:
Unmet employment conditions	12	13	:	:
Unmet residency requirement	0	0	:	:
6. Recipients/users of publicly-administered parental leave benefits or publicly-administered paid parental leave (%, 2023) [19]	**99**	**1**	**:**	**:**
	Gap		**Gap**	
7. Gap between well-paid childcare leave and ECEC place guarantee (years, 2024/2025) [20]	**3**		**:**	

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.

European Institute for Gender Equality
Gedimino pr. 16,
LT-01103 Vilnius,
Lithuania

eige.europa.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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Publications Office
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