

The Gender Equality Index is a unique measurement tool that synthesises the complexity of gender equality into a user-friendly and easy-to-understand measure. Based on the European Union policy framework, it assists the monitoring of progress in gender equality over time across the EU.

The Gender Equality Index consists of six core domains (work, money, knowledge, time, power and health) and two satellite domains (intersecting inequalities and violence). It is calculated by combining gender indicators into a single summary measure. The index assigns scores for Member States between 1 for total inequality and 100 for full equality. It measures not only gender gaps between women and men, but also takes into account the country context and the different levels of achievement of Member States in various areas. A high overall score reflects both small (or absent) gender gaps and a good situation for all (e.g. high involvement of both women and men in employment).

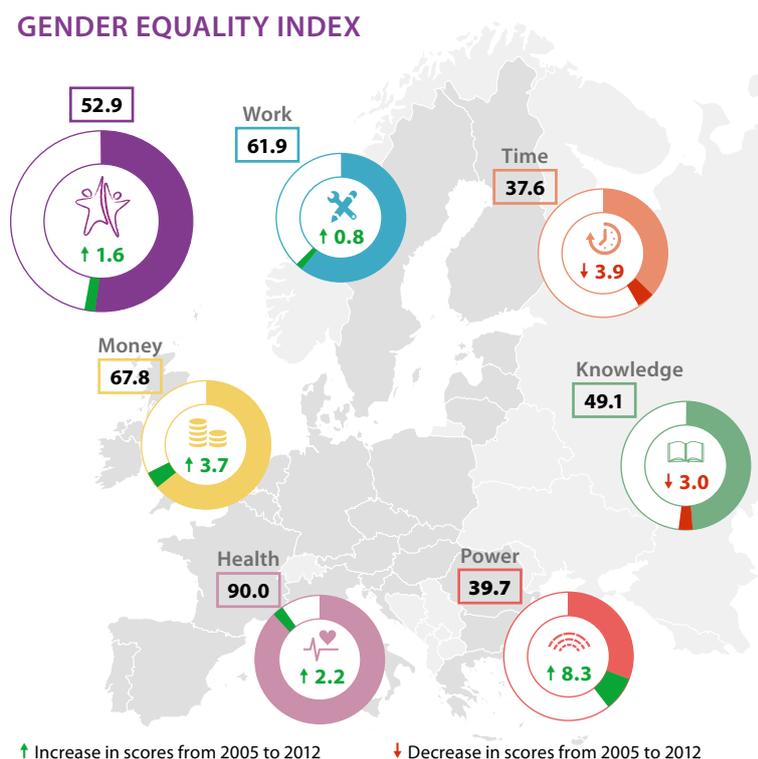
The Gender Equality Index 2015 measures how far (or close) the EU and its Member States were from achieving gender equality in 2005, 2010 and 2012 ⁽¹⁾. It provides results for each domain and subdomain. It also presents the first attempt to calculate a composite measure for violence against women.

Progress in gender equality since 2005

The Gender Equality Index shows some marginal progress, with a slight increase of 1.6 between 2005 and 2012. With an average score of **52.9 out of 100** in 2012, the EU is halfway towards achieving full gender equality.

The two areas which face the greatest challenges are the unequal division of time for childcare, domestic and leisure activities between women and men (inequality increased since 2005) as well as representation of women in power and decision-making positions. Although more women have been appointed to top-level positions since 2005, progress has been insufficient to break the vast over-representation of men.

Despite progress in educational attainment, segregation in education remains widespread and there has been a drop in lifelong learning. The overall score in the domain of knowledge decreased between 2005 and 2012. Gender equality in the domains of work and money shows signs of improvement, although significant gender gaps in employment, income and earnings remain. The average gender gap of 38 % in pensions in the EU in 2012 reflects a cumulative effect of inequalities between women and men over a life course ⁽²⁾. The gender equality score in the domain of health is high. Important differences in health-related behaviours of women and men can be added in the future to provide more information on gender inequalities in health.



⁽¹⁾ The Gender Equality Index is based on the data of Eurostat (EU labour force survey, structure of earnings survey, EU statistics on income and living conditions, demographic statistics), of Unesco/OECD/Eurostat questionnaires on educational statistics, of Eurofound's European working conditions survey, of the European Commission's WMID database and of FRA's violence against women survey.

⁽²⁾ EIGE (2015), *Gender gap in pensions in the EU. Research note to the Latvian Presidency*. Retrieved from http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/MH0415087ENN_Web.pdf

Work

Domain of work



Subdomains

Participation



Segregation and quality of work



Scores in the domain of work and its subdomains have increased only marginally since 2005. The gender gap in employment, measured by the full-time equivalent (FTE) employment rates, has narrowed slightly at EU level, largely driven by decreased levels of men's participation in the labour market.

The general employment rate of women (62 % in 2012) is still far below the Europe 2020 target which aims to have 75 % of the adult population (aged 20-64) in employment. Women's propensity to work on a part-time basis makes the target even more difficult to reach when the employment rate counts the number of hours worked, rather than the number of people with a job.

The subdomain of segregation and quality of work shows slight progress brought mainly by the improvement of working conditions. The ability of workers to take an hour or two off during working hours has almost doubled (from 18 % in 2005 to 33 % in 2012) and the gender gap has shrunk. However, the gender-segregated labour market remains a reality for both women and men in Europe today. Almost four times more women than men (30 % compared to 8 %) worked in education, human health and social work activities in the EU on average in 2012.

Money

Domain of money

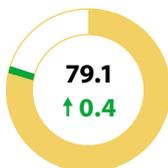


Subdomains

Financial resources



Economic situation



Scores in the domain of money have increased by 3.7 points from 2005 to 2012. Progress in this domain is largely driven by the overall improvement in access to financial resources for both women and men (by 5.8 points), although the gender gap remains significant and largely unchanged.

Although scores are slightly higher than those in other domains, women throughout the EU face bigger challenges in accessing financial resources. Women earn less than men and have a lower income, including pensions. Progress in closing the gender gaps in earnings and income has been remarkably slow.

This domain aims to grasp the inequalities in the distribution of financial resources. This remains challenging since the income and poverty indicators are calculated at the household level: the economic situation of women and men living in the same household is presumed to be equal and therefore gender differences in poverty and household income levels are barely visible. Measurement of the availability of resources at the individual level would thus provide more gender-sensitive information and depict a more realistic situation of income sharing between family members.

Knowledge

Domain of knowledge

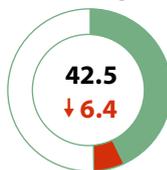


Subdomains

Attainment and Segregation



Lifelong learning



The decline in the overall score in the domain of knowledge (by 3 points) is the result of decreased adult participation (aged 15-74) in lifelong learning — both formal and non-formal education and training.

The educational attainment of women and men is steadily increasing and women are now outnumbering men at graduate level. However, women are still concentrated in the fields of study traditionally seen as 'feminine'. In 2012, women in the EU-28 were overrepresented among tertiary students in the fields of education (77 %), health and welfare (73 %) and humanities and arts (65 %). Gender segregation at all levels in education leads to occupational segregation and subsequently impacts future career options of both women and men.

In the context of rapid technological change and transformation of the labour market, lifelong learning is an area of crucial importance for both women and men. However, the majority of Member States are far from achieving the 15 % target for adults aged 25 to 64 to be involved in lifelong learning, as set out in the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET2020).

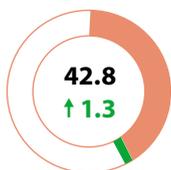
Time

Domain of time



Subdomains

Care



Social



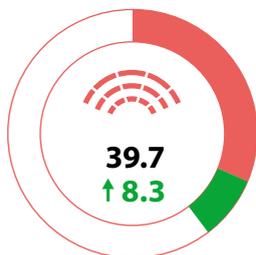
The domain of time has the lowest score of all the index domains (37.6) and shows the greatest challenge, which is in the division of time between women and men. The 3.9 decrease from 2005 to 2010 was mainly caused by a decrease in time that both women and men were able to devote to social activities.

On average in the EU, 77 % of women, compared to only 24 % of men, do cooking and housework every day for at least 1 hour or more. Women continue to take a far greater responsibility in taking care of a family. Inequality in time-sharing at home also extends to other social activities. In the majority of Member States, men are more likely than women to participate in sporting, cultural or leisure activities outside the home.

Personal time spent on caring responsibilities has a major impact on women's employment opportunities and economic independence. The findings reaffirm the importance of better work-life balance measures for women and men, such as an adequate supply of affordable and high-quality care services for children and other dependants and flexible working arrangements.

Power

Domain of power



The domain of power shows the second lowest score, despite the most pronounced increase in the score by 8.3 points since 2005.

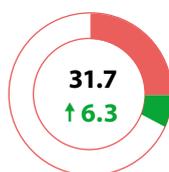
Results show notable progress in the representation of women on corporate boards of publicly listed companies. However, in the finance sector, women are nearly absent in decision-making. Only one of the 28 central bank governors in 2014 was a woman — from Cyprus; and in the same year, there were only two women finance ministers in the EU — from Romania and Sweden.

Subdomains

Political



Economic



In the last few years, measures applied by Member States and tailored EU-level initiatives — such as the proposed directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive board directors — contributed to a marked improvement in women’s access to leadership positions in the corporate sector. However, broader public debate and awareness-raising are needed to change the corporate culture. Long working hours and physical presence at work, combined with traditional masculine leadership styles and a lack of transparency in recruitment and promotion practices, advantage men and reinforce gender inequalities.

Health

Domain of health

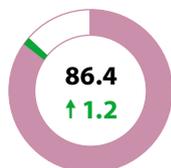


The domain of health is an important area of gender equality. Health is directly linked not only to personal, social and economic well-being, but also to human dignity and physical integrity. The score in the domain of health has risen slightly by 2.2 points since 2005 as a result of a small advance in health status and, to a greater extent, an improved access to health structures. This is reflected in an increased number of people whose medical or dental needs are being met.

Due to an unavailability of suitable indicators, the current measurement framework does not include differences in health-related behaviours of women and men. The behaviours and lifestyles of women and men differ according to pre-defined characteristics of masculinity and femininity; therefore, it is very important to capture the gender-related behavioural differences behind inequalities in health.

Subdomains

Status



Access



The European health interview survey (EHIS), conducted in 2014, will provide important data on health determinants, which will be considered for the next edition of the Gender Equality Index.

Gender Equality Index 2015: satellite domains

Violence



The domain of violence was identified as the biggest gap of all in 2013 because of a lack of comparable and harmonised data at EU level. Building on FRA's violence against women survey and Eurobarometer data, the Gender Equality Index 2015 proposes a possible composite measure of violence against women. It also analyses attitudes towards violence against women and awareness levels, as well as trust in police and justice institutions in a given society. The analysis shows that in countries where levels of gender equality are higher, as measured by the index, violence against women is seen as less acceptable and women are more likely to report violence. The lower levels of reported violence do not necessarily reflect lower levels of violence, but rather mean that attitudes towards violence against women, awareness about it and trust in police and justice institutions prevent the disclosure.

The commitment of the EU and its Member States to eradicate violence against women needs to be supported by evidence in the form of systematic, comparable and harmonised data. EIGE will continue to develop a comprehensive measurement framework of violence against women, combining data from surveys and administrative sources.

Intersecting inequalities

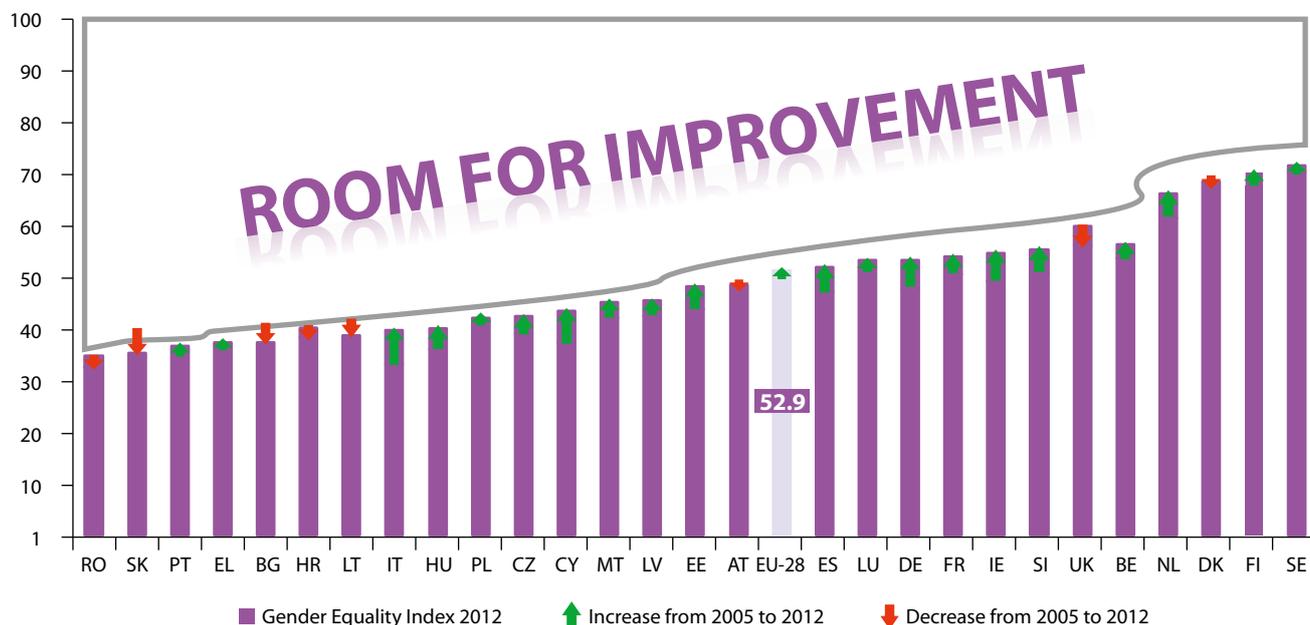


The domain of intersecting inequalities considers how gender intersects with other aspects that may influence women's and men's life experiences. For example, the gender gaps in employment are larger for foreign-born workers than country nationals, showing a need for further analysis of gendered patterns of migration. This becomes particularly relevant in the context of the refugee trends that the EU is facing today. Older workers are also vulnerable and experience both lower access to employment and higher levels of gender inequality in all Member States. Understanding the factors involved in the linkage between gender and age-based discrimination is crucial, especially when addressing poverty among older women. In lone-parent, predominately lone-mother households, poverty levels are higher than those of the whole population, which shows that tackling poverty and social exclusion needs to incorporate a gender dimension.

It is imperative to discuss and further analyse the ways in which inequalities intersect, in full recognition that women and men are not homogeneous groups. The next update of the Gender Equality Index will focus on this in more detail.

The Gender Equality Index 2015

For the first time in the European Union, the Gender Equality Index builds a time series to monitor gender equality across several years. Results show the European Union is **halfway towards gender equality**, with very marginal progress from 2005 to 2012.



Unique features and benefits of the Gender Equality Index

The Gender Equality Index:

- allows for monitoring of progress in gender equality across the EU and over time;
- supports decision-makers in assessing how far a given Member State is from reaching gender equality;
- shows the different outcomes of the EU and national policies for women and men;
- allows for meaningful gender analysis and comparisons between different policy areas;
- supports the development and implementation of gender equality policies and legislation;
- increases awareness among decision-makers and the public of progress and challenges in implementing gender equality policies;
- highlights data gaps and calls for harmonised, comparable and reliable data that are both sex-disaggregated and available for all Member States.

European Institute for Gender Equality

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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