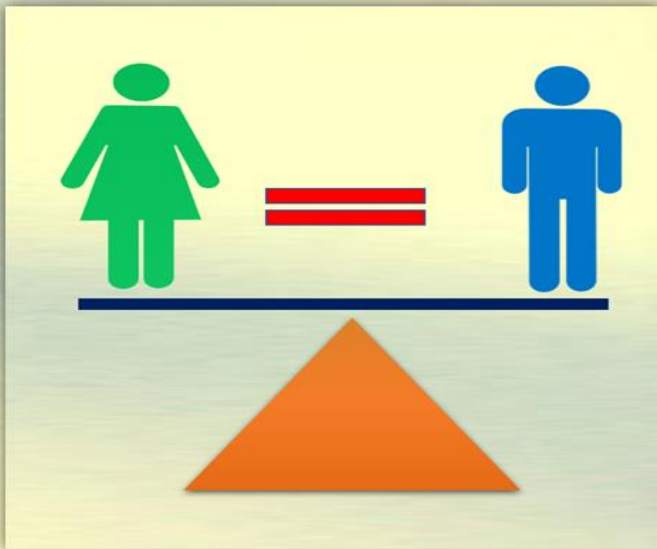




TCFLI - Textile, Clothing, Footwear and Leather Industries

Contributions to the elimination of discriminatory practices
between **Women** and **Men** in employment relationships

GENDER EQUALITY



WAGE EQUALITY

I. GENDER DISCRIMINATION

To tackle the issue of gender discrimination, one must first set out the definition of the concept of “discrimination” as defined by the [ILO](#) (International Labour Organisation) in [Convention no. 111](#) of 1958, [ratified](#) by Portugal in 1959, by Hungary in 1961 and by Turkey in 1967, as “any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation”.

Discrimination can take place in two forms. It can be [direct discrimination](#) when an explicit guideline or rule establishes different treatment for men and women, or [indirect discrimination](#) when it is enacted in social practices “whenever an apparently neutral provision, criterion or practice is liable to put people (...) in a disadvantageous position compared to others” ([ILO, 2007](#)).

The stereotypes and prejudices about the inherent characteristics of each of the sexes underpin gender discrimination, which manifests itself in the sex segregation practised in the job market. This segregation affects particularly women, with a concentration of women in certain sectors of activity which are not as highly valued socially, [horizontal segregation](#), and in the lower hierarchical levels occupied by women, even in sectors that are mostly occupied by female labour, [vertical segregation](#) ([ILO, 2007](#)).

KEY IDEAS:

DIRECT DISCRIMINATION: WHEN A GUIDELINE OR RULE ESTABLISHES DIFFERENT TREATMENT;

INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION: DISCRIMINATION MANIFESTED IN SOCIAL PRACTICES.

KEY IDEAS:

HORIZONTAL SEGREGATION: CONCENTRATION OF A GENDER IN A GIVEN SECTOR OR JOB;

VERTICAL SEGREGATION: WHEN OBSTACLES ARE IN PLACE BARRING PROGRESS TO HIGHER HIERARCHICAL LEVELS.

II. EQUAL REMUNERATION FOR WORK OF EQUAL VALUE

[Convention no. 100](#) of the [ILO](#), dated 1951 and [ratified](#) by Hungary in 1956, Portugal in 1966 and Turkey in 1967 regarding equal remuneration for men and women for work of equal value, talks about **indirect discrimination which translates into lower pay for jobs occupied mostly by women and which is underpinned by social representations and stereotypes that accentuate the devaluation of female labour.**

Given that this Convention aims to ensure that men and women earn equal remuneration not only for similar work, but also for work of equal value, **it is essential that jobs are assessed without gender bias and to guarantee equal remuneration for work of equal value, regardless of the sex of the person doing it.**

Article 2 of [Convention no. 100](#) states that “each Member shall (..) promote and (...) ensure the application to all workers of the principle of equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value. **This principle may be applied by means of: national laws or regulations;** legally established or recognised machinery for wage determination; **collective agreements between employers and workers;** a combination of these various means”.

KEY IDEAS:

THE COUNTRIES THAT RATIFIED [CONVENTION No. 100](#) SHOULD SEEK TO APPLY THE PRINCIPLE OF “EQUAL REMUNERATION FOR WORK OF EQUAL VALUE” THROUGH REGULATORY SYSTEMS, NAMELY THROUGH COLLECTIVE CONVENTIONS

III. DEVALUATION OF PROFESSIONS CARRIED OUT BY WOMEN

The social status of certain professions is devalued by the fact they are mostly carried out by women and this devaluation extends to the professional qualifications themselves. The approach to tackling wage inequality is not restricted to redressing the difference in remuneration for men and women who occupy the same professional category. It is also necessary to consider the factors that lead to the position of the professional categories traditionally occupied by females in the pay scale.

The European Parliament Resolution of 24 May 2012, with recommendations made to the Commission about applying the principle of equal remuneration for men and women for work of equal value ([2011/2285\(INI\)](#)) takes into account that “**the capacities and skills of women are often devalued, as are the professions where they predominate**, with no justification based on objective criteria; that the statistics available indicate that the qualifications and experience acquired by women are less rewarded, in salary terms, than those acquired by men; (...)”.

KEY IDEAS:

SEVERAL AUTHORS JUSTIFY THE DISCRIMINATION BY POINTING AT THE QUALIFICATIONS NEEDED TO DO THE JOB, INSOFAR AS IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT WOMEN ARE LESS WELL PAID BECAUSE THEY OCCUPY POSITIONS THAT REQUIRE FEWER QUALIFICATIONS. HOWEVER, OTHER AUTHORS QUESTION THIS ARGUMENT GIVEN THAT ONE HAS TO “KNOW TO WHAT EXTENT THE JOBS OCCUPIED BY WOMEN ARE CONSIDERED UNQUALIFIED SIMPLY OWING TO THE FACT THEY ARE OCCUPIED BY WOMEN” (PHILLIPS AND TAYLOR, 1980 IN FERREIRA, 1999:45).

The resolution also points out the importance of having objective and transparent criteria that are not influenced by social stereotypes “(...) **the traditional division of the social**

functions must end, which hitherto have significantly influenced education and employment paths, and that education can and should contribute to eradicating gender stereotypes from society; (...) in accordance with legislation and European jurisprudence, **employers have to apply the same assessment criteria to all male and female workers**, the remuneration provisions have to be understandable and transparent and **the criteria applied has to take into consideration the nature and type of work, and must be free from discriminatory elements**".

KEY IDEAS:

EMPLOYERS MUST BE ENCOURAGED TO ADOPT TRANSPARENT POLICIES REGARDING THEIR SALARIES AND PAY STRUCTURES, AND WAGE TRANSPARENCY SHOULD BE DEBATED WITHIN THE SCOPE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN LINE WITH THE COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION OF 7 MARCH 2014, [2014/124/UE](#)

In effect, the scope of the principle of wage equality demands a new perspective regarding the characteristics of occupations that modifies the perceived wisdom of women's work compared to men's, which reviews the remuneration structures in place in organisations, and finally which dignifies the salaries of predominantly female occupations ([ILO, 2011](#)).

IV. WORK-LIFE BALANCE

According to the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament of 26 April 2017 ([COM\(2017\)252](#)) "Although women are increasingly well qualified and more women than men graduate from universities in Europe, **many disappear from the labour market due to their responsibilities as a parent or a carer of family relatives.**"

"Women who work spend on average 22 hours a week doing non-remunerated activities (...)"

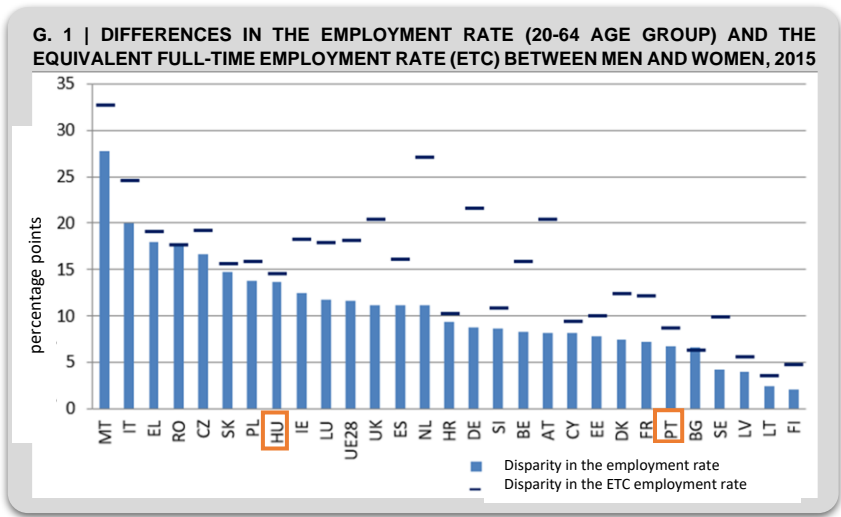
The communication also points out that "One of the main drivers for the employment gap is the unequal distribution of caring responsibilities between women and men. The gender employment gap widens substantially once families have children, reflecting the difficulty for women to reconcile child-raising and care responsibilities with their work (...) **Women who work spend on average 22 hours a week doing non-remunerated activities**, whereas men who work dedicate fewer than 10 hours a week on the same activities." [Eurofound](#) (2015).

KEY IDEAS:

DATA SHOWS THAT ON AVERAGE THERE IS A HIGHER PREVALENCE OF MEN IN FULL-TIME WORK THAN WOMEN, WITH A DIFFERENCE OF 18.1%;

THERE IS A HIGHER PROBABILITY (AROUND 31.3%) THAT WOMEN OPT FOR PART-TIME WORK TO CONCILIATE THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES OF CARING FOR THEIR FAMILY;

According to the data contained in the report (graph 1) the percentage of employed men between 20 and 64 years old in all countries is higher than the percentage of women employed in the same age bracket.



This difference increases if we consider only Full-time Employment (ETC). According to the report, the average difference in ETC reaches 18.1%. In Hungary the difference is almost 15% and in Portugal the difference reaches nearly 10%. This reveals that women also have a higher prevalence of part-time jobs.

“(...) the probability of women opting for part-time work to achieve a work-life balance is 31.3%, while for men the probability is much lower, at only 8.3%.”

The inequality generated between men and women owing to the aforementioned situations of non-valuation of women’s work and qualifications, the imbalanced division of family responsibilities between men and women, overloading women more and/or forcing them to choose to reduce the time they can dedicate to their work (part-time work) or to leave the job market, puts women in a position of financial dependence and also greater fragility and in a situation of near or actual social exclusion.

The same report pointed out that the pay gap between men and women in the European Union (EU) was 16% on average in 2017, and the disparity in pensions between men and women was 40% on average. The data tells us that on average **the probability of women opting for a part-time job to conciliate their family and work life was 31.3% while for men this probability is much lower, at only 8.3%.**

V. THE TEXTILES, CLOTHING, FOOTWEAR AND LEATHER INDUSTRIES

According to Eurostat data **the Textiles, Clothing, Footwear and Leather Industries** in 2018 in the 27 member states of the European Union accounted for over **221,000 companies**, mostly micro and small-sized companies, and employed more than **two million employees** (2020 data). In Portugal there were approximately 189,000 workers in these industries, Hungary had around 33,000 and Turkey, which places a significant share of its production in the European Union thanks to customs agreements, had approximately 66,000 companies and over 1.2 million workers in 2020 in these sectors.

These industries predominantly comprise female workers. The female employment rate in these sectors in the **European Union is approximately 67%**. In Portugal it is 68% and it is 80% in Hungary. In Turkey women account for 41% of employment in these industries. This situation can be explained by the weight of the textile and leather industries in Turkey, which usually have a higher percentage of male workers.

In the European Union (**EU**) the **pay gap** over the last few years has been diminishing, but even so there was a difference of **13%** in remuneration between men and women **in 2020**, on average. In **Portugal** (EU data) the pay gap was **11.4%** (below the EU average) and in **Hungary** the difference was **17.2%** (above the EU average). In the case of **Turkey**, a recent ILO study ([ILO, 2020](#)) based on 2018 data found that the pay gap in Turkey was **15.6%**.

If we delve deeper and analyse the data relative to remunerations in the Textiles, Clothing, Footwear and Leather industries in Portugal, Hungary and Turkey, we see that women continue to be at a disadvantage in relation to men and continue to earn less than men. In Portugal's case, the pay gap is substantially higher than the national average and the EU average. According to statistical data from 2019, the pay gap in **Portugal**, on average, was **19.9%**. If we narrow our analysis on senior staff positions, the difference increases to **26.3%**. In **Hungary** it was **16%** on average (2020 data) and in **Turkey 8%** (2020 data).

The predominantly female occupations and the role of the woman in the family and work context continues to be devalued. The indirect discrimination of women is crystallised in the way things are organised in the workplaces, in the dominant cultural and social values and rules. We have to change the way we look at predominantly female occupations and the work that women do, assess it and value it without any bias.

LINKS FOR CONSULTATION

- Project Page: <https://fesete.pt/elimination-of-discrimination/>
 - EU – Gender Equality: https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality_en
 - ILO: <http://www.ilo.org> (International Labour Organisation website);
 - FESETE: www.fesete.pt
 - Disk-Tekstil: <https://disktekstil.org/en/>
 - BDSZ: <https://www.banyasz.hu/>
 - IndustriAll – Europe: <https://news.industrialall-europe.eu/>
 - Eurostat: [Eurostat](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat)
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 - Chicha, Marie-Thérèse (2008), [Promoting Equity: gender-neutral job evaluation for equal pay. A step-by-step guide](#). Geneva, International Labour Office
 - International Labour Organisation (2022) – [ILO Conventions](#), available at www.ilo.org
 - FERREIRA, Virgínia (1999) – Sex segregation of the job market – theoretical and political perspectives in MINISTRY OF EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL SOLIDARITY, Society and Employment – Equal Opportunities, no. 6, Lisbon
 - International Labour Organisation (2020), [Report - Measuring the Gender Pay Gap \(Turkey Case\)](#)
 - [European Parliament resolution of 24 May 2012 with recommendations to the Commission on application of the principle of equal pay for male and female workers for equal work or work of equal value \(2011/2285\(INI\)\)](#), available in <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html>
 - [Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions an initiative to support work-life balance for working parents and carers \(COM/2017/0252\)](#), available in <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html>
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