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From the fight for pay raise without gender to open articulation of women's demands in Central European countries

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Project „Closing the gender pay gap in public services in the context of austerity”
Final Conference, 14 January 2021

**CENTRAL
EUROPEAN
LABOUR
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INSTITUTE**

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GPG and austerity measures

PL, BG, HU, CZ, SK, RO, AT



Unadjusted Gender Pay Gap in public sector variations between Eastern countries (% , 2009 – 2018)

Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Countries with declining Gender Pay Gap											
Czechia	23.3	22.1	20	21.4	21.5	21.3	20.7	20.8	20.3	20	19.3
Poland	7	3.6	0.1	1.9	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.4	2.8	2.8	3.8
Romania	11.3	12.8	21	21.3	16.5	12.8	12.3	11.6	8.7	3.6	-1.4
Slovakia	16.1	15.8	14.9	16.4	15	13.7	12.9	13.2	12.3	12.9	14.1
Countries with recovering Gender Pay Gap											
Austria	:	:	19.6	:	:	:	20.1	:	:	:	18.1
Bulgaria	20.3	22.4	21.5	20.5	22.1	19.2	21.7	23.7	22.9	21.4	20
Hungary	17.5	17.9	20	20.5	24.4	22.4	11	13.5	11.8	13.3	12.2

Rev. 2 activity (B-S except O), structure of earnings survey methodology [EARN_GR_GPGR2CT]. Public type of ownership.

Public Sector Austerity measures in Eastern countries

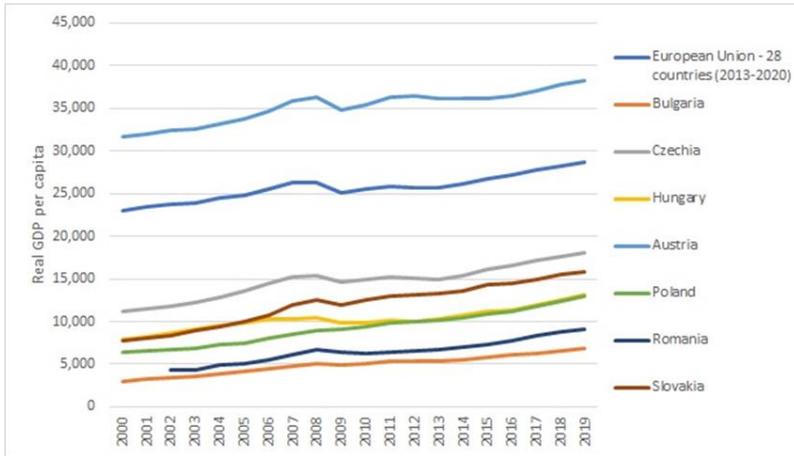
Pay Cuts	Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania,
Pay Freezes	Austria, Poland, Slovakia
Recruitment freeze	Austria, Romania, Slovakia
Job Cuts	Czech Republic, Poland,
Changes to Hours	Poland
Changes to other benefits (holidays, redundancy, maternity and paternity leave and pay)	Hungary
Pension reform (postponing retirement and/or bringing the age for women in linewith that for men or freezes)	Austria, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania
Cuts and restrictions on social security benefits	Austria, Hungary, Romania
Suspension or contraction of collective bargaining	Poland, Romania

Relevant circumstances

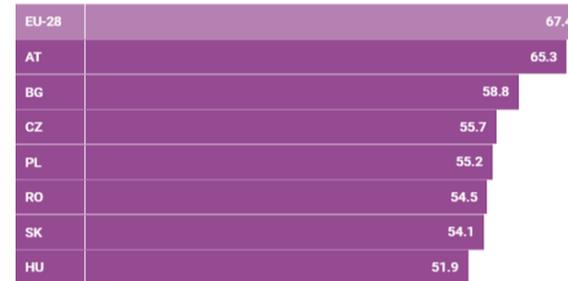
PL, BG, HU, CZ, SK, RO, AT



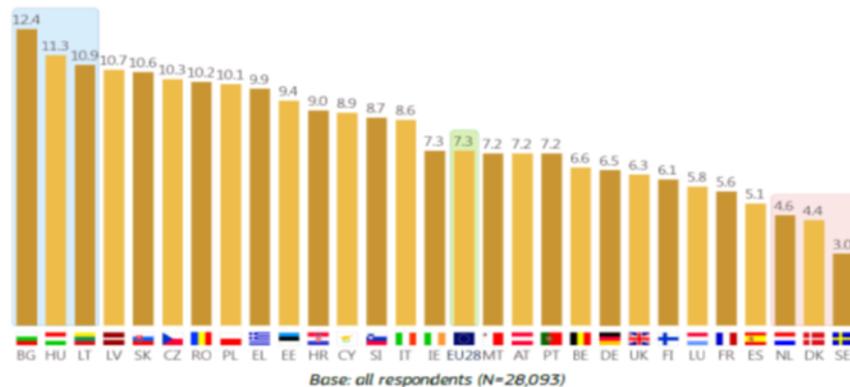
Real GDP per capita (Eurostat)



Gender Equality Index 2019 (EIGE)

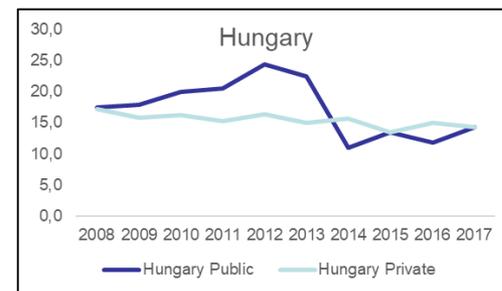
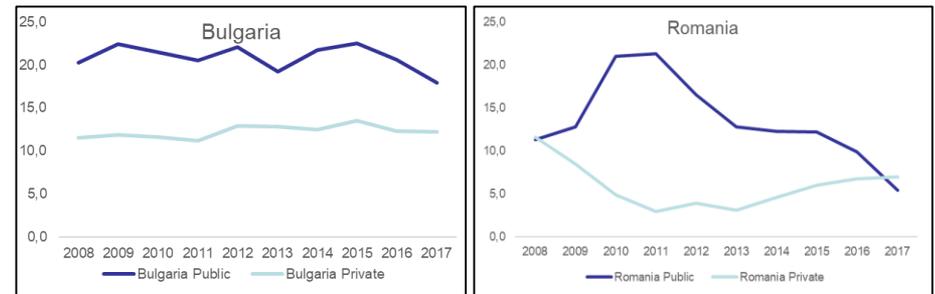


Gender stereotypes index (Eurobarometer)



Source: Special Eurobarometer, Gender Equality 2017

GPG higher in public sector than in private (Eurostat)



ROMANIA

The empowerment of women

GAZ-ROMANIA (Fedraica
Sindicatelor Gaz Romania, GAZ)

Representatives of the Romanian
Trade Unions Confederation 'GAZ-
ROMANIA:

“Young women were more willing to come. They attended the first course, then the second and more and more,(...). I think, it was some kind of the awakening. They started talking to each other and they changed the mind on lot of things. They were like really happy to have this chance.”

- *The Gender Pay Gap is not recognised as a problem in Romania, rather the pay inequalities between Eastern and Western Europe are perceived as more profound and unjust.*
- *Ingrained gender stereotyping leaves gender discrimination unacknowledged.*
- *Despite this, the two-year project run by the trade unions accomplished the “awakening” of the women attending, resulted in tangible changes in some women’s lives and increased recognition of trade unions as organisations caring about women.*
- *One of the lessons learnt is that women need to be empowered to address GPG.*

SLOVAKIA I.

The Higher-Level collective agreement for public sector workers

KOZ SR (Konfederácia odborových zväzov Slovenskej)

- *The Higher-level Collective Agreement for Slovakian civil and public employees was agreed, following lengthy negotiations in 2018, leading to a total pay increase of 21% at the sectoral level.*
- *This is the highest pay increase for employees in civil and public administration in the history of Slovakia and followed a pay freeze that resulted in half of public sector pay scales falling below the statutory minimum wage.*
- *The increase, over two years, was expected to affect more than 300,000 civil servants in public administration, all female-dominated sectors.*
- *Union demands were not articulated in terms of the Gender Pay Gap and the impact of the agreement is not yet clear, but achieved an improvement at the bottom end of the pay structure where women are concentrated.*



KONFEDERÁCIA ODBOROVÝCH ZVÄZOV
SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY



POLAND I.

National Teachers Strike

The Polish Teachers' Union (ZNP)



- *The education sector in Poland is female-dominated, with wages below the national average.*
- *Education reforms and a pay freeze driven by austerity lowered teachers' status leading to widespread dissatisfaction. After the failure of negotiations, a massive strike involving two-thirds of teachers was organised by the Polish Teachers' Union in 2019.*
- *The government's antagonistic response eventually turned the public against teachers and their unions.*
- *Polish stakeholder – expert on Polands' trade unions:*
'Usually, when you have strikes like that, government would sit and discuss, but that time, there were no real negotiations. So this strike was strangled by the government. The idea of social dialog between government and trade unions seems not to exist. I think, that trade union of teachers were surprised as well, because you would think, what kind of government let pupils be out of school for three weeks. During this strike, teachers published how much they earned and basically it would be better to work in Lidl than as a teacher.'
- *Inadequate resources in local government meant that a minor pay increase could not be funded.*
- *The failure of the action meant that many teachers left the sector and trade unions.*

POLAND II.

Nurses coordinated action

All-Poland Trade Union of Nurses and Midwives (OZZPiP)
National Chamber of Nurses and Midwives



- *Austerity measures in the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis brought further deterioration in the working conditions of nurses in the decentralised Polish healthcare system.*
- *To better protect nurses' interests and achieve their agenda, the nursing trade unions organised outside the trade unions mainstream and its confederation – a more autonomous organisation of women workers.*
- *Long-term experience of organising protests – pattern of protest femininity (white marches, blockades of streets, border crossing, state buildings, camp villages, strikes in hospital and hunger strikes)*
- *The decentralisation of healthcare hindered nurses' action until 2015 when the unions coordinated simultaneous nation-wide mass protests and the threat of a general strike.*
- *The action resulted in a centrally funded four year pay deal for all nurses.*

HUNGARY

Women trade unionists raising awareness in a hostile environment

Hungarian Trade Union Confederation (MASZSZ)

Representative of Women Committee of Hungarian Trade Union Confederation:

'It was biggest success of my life, because every day somebody asked me for a leaflet. This campaign was unique, because there had not been anything similar in the history of trade unions. When female committee decided to go to the streets to demonstrate, everybody was afraid'.

- *The principle of equal pay has been removed from the Labour Code with the trade unions fighting for its restoration.*
- *The Gender Pay Gap has not been accepted as an issue while and the Labour Code allows for differential wage setting by region.*
- *The Women's Committee of the Trade Union Confederation, bringing together women across trade unions, has adopted a strategy of gradually raising awareness of the GPG, including an online wage barometer allowing workers to compare occupational rates by gender and region.*
- *It has organised, over a three year period, a number of campaigns on the GPG establishing a network of "allies" from public and political life and becoming the focal point for the GPG and putting the GPG on the political agenda.*



AUSTRIA

Real Pay Transparency

ÖGB (Österreichische
Gewerkschaftbund)

„Viele Frauen wissen gar nicht,
dass ihre Kollegen für gleichwertige
Arbeit mehr verdienen“

- *Austria is the only country in Central and Eastern Europe that is implementing the EU Pay Transparency Recommendations with regard to the Gender Pay Gap. Private companies with at least 150 employees are obliged to prepare an income report every other year.*
- *The Austrian Trade Unions Confederation, Österreichische Gewerkschaftbund, ÖGB, and its Women's section (ÖGB - Frauen) have produced a critique of the current reporting guidelines and an online checklist of how to analyse an income report, but also the elements that should be included to produce real transparency.*
 1. Are women and men equally classified?
Check for qualification and working years
Are **previous years of service equally recognised?**
Do the classifications also correspond to the differences in those actually carried out activities?
Do men and women have **equal access to in-company further training** for higher ratings can also be decisive?
 2. Earn women and men in the same classification the same amount?
All the components of pay must be granted on a non-discrimination basis
Overpayments in basic wages and all-in contracts: are made on the basis of transparent and alike criteria for women and men?
Allowances and supplements: are based on the actual activities and requirements?
Overtime and surplus labour: are they paid for all employees?
- *Austrian trade unions and especially their women's sections have long been lobbying for the implementation of pay transparency policies.*
- *Moreover, they are pushing for the expansion of the duty to the public sector and all organisations employing 100 or more workers.*

Conclusions

- Fight for pay raise **for all, without addressing gender differences** and broader gender disadvantages or structural settings (SK, PL)
- **Competing social and economic inequalities** hamper targeted actions to decrease GPG
 - East – West differences (RO)
 - Low wages in general (SK)
- **Women organised separately** and push for their interest (healthcare), outside the mainstream trade unions (SK, PL)
- Crucial roles of **women's committees** in the mainstream trade unions (HU, AT)
- Challenging the current value of women's work and demanding **re-valuation + pay transparency** revealing the mechanisms of GPG reproduction

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION!**

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