

Women and labour market equality in Southern Europe. The impact of austerity measures and recent gains in closing the gender pay gap

***“Closing the gender pay gap in public services
in the context of austerity” Project***

Final Conference

Online Event, 14 January 2021



Case studies presentation

- Countries covered: **CY-ES-FR-GR-IT-M**
- **Sectors:** Public Administration & Defence [Penitentiary Police Sub-Sector]; Education; health (hospital) public sector and private for-profit/non for profit health, social and medico-social sector; Public Sector.
- Case study implementation: **documentary evidence** and **interviews**.



Case studies overview

Country	Cyprus	France	Greece	Italy/1	Italy/2	Malta	Spain
Organization- Trade Union- Organization	PASYDY	CFDT Santé Sociaux / CGT	ADEDY	UIL SCUOLA RUA	FP CGIL	UHM	FeSP-UGT Cataluña
Sector	Public sector (Educational Sector not included)	Health sector / Financial sector	Public sector	School, University and Research	Penitentiary Police	Public sector	Health sector



Main common features of the sectors

- General female **occupational segregation** phenomena ongoing (with the exception of the Penitentiary Police sector).
- Heavy **austerity measures** introduced during the financial crisis affecting the overall public sector, imposing wage cuts, pay freezes and reductions in public sector employment and career progression chances.
- **GPG: issue difficult to be operationalized** also because of a lack of official and updated statistical data about GPG at national and sectoral level.
- **GPG: a “fuzzy” concept, often not perceived and/or taken into account/tackled/addressed as self-standing problem.**





General GPG explanatory factors

Stereotypes,
workplace culture and
(low) social
recognition f

Lack of family-
friendly welfare
measures / care
duties

Sectoral labour market
female segregation (both
horizontal and vertical)

No access to paid overtime
work/Part-time and/or
fixed-term jobs mostly
held by women (both
voluntary and involuntary)

Barriers to labour market entry
and negative trade off between
educational
credentials/wages/female
occupational profiles/Glass
ceiling, preventing women's
access to positions of
responsibility, mostly held by
men (vertical segregation)

Low
effectiveness in
law/regulations
application

2008 - 2018 unadjusted gender pay gap in the public sector in southern Europe

Country (southern Europe)	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Countries with declining Gender Pay Gap											
Cyprus	0	0.1	0.3	-0.9	-2.1	-3.3	-4.7	-5.2	-3.4	-1.8	-0.3
Greece	:	:	16.4	:	:	:	13	:	:	:	1.4
Italy	6.7	6.5	4.5	3.4	5.6	6.3	3.7	2.9	4.4	4.1	3.2
Countries with recovering Gender Pay Gap											
France	:	:	13.2	:	:	:	20.1	:	:	:	17
Spain	11.6	11.4	12.3	13	14.3	13.6	13.3	12.4	14.3	10.7	10.3
Countries with an increasing Gender Pay Gap											
Malta	-3.6	-1.6	-1.3	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	8.8
Portugal	10	12.1	10.1	11.4	13.3	12	13.6	14.7	15.6	16.4	17.8
Slovenia	4.8	1.7	2.3	8.2	8.9	11.4	12.7	11.6	12.3	12.5	13.9

Source of Data: Eurostat custom dataset used: Gender pay gap in unadjusted form by type of ownership of the economic activity - NACE Rev. 2 activity (B-S except O), structure of earnings survey methodology [EARN_GR_GPGR2CT]. Public type of ownership.

GPG & Trade Unions

Examples of good and less successful practices

- **No specific initiatives at national level, few European initiatives (mainly consisting in participating in EU-funded projects), general initiatives devoted at reducing gender inequalities (ITA/1 & 2; CY).**
- **GPG issue ends up losing importance if compared to an issue perceived as more urgent: the very low overall level of wages within the sectors (ITA/1; CY; FR) and ...**
- ... focussing the attention on **wage disparities between sectors** rather than between genders (ITA/1; CY; FR).



GPG & Trade Unions

Examples of good and less successful practices

- Very important -and recent- **pieces of legislation** approved which affect the equal pay issue and take into account the role of a correct information about the GPG issue and an active social partners involvement. Implementation and outcomes to be evaluated in the longer term (ES; FR).
- One **collective action** taken on the GPG (FR): while this is not a public sector organisation the action is instructive in suggesting how unions can challenge pay transparency legally, with implications for the public sector and services.
- Only 2 examples of replicable mechanisms (**envisaging incentives and penalties**) to **encourage and engage employers to support and sustain gender equality**. (ES; FR).
- Interesting introduction of new equal opportunity platform to remove organisational and cultural barriers perpetrating direct and indirect types of discrimination and engage both female and male employees in staff development initiatives for their constant personal and professional growth. . Implementation, outcomes and repeatability to be evaluated in the longer term. (ITA/2)



GPG and Covid pandemic

- **Regressive effects of the pandemic on female occupation and working conditions.**
- Occupational risks are higher for women than for men, namely in Countries where female employment rates are lower (e.g. Greece, Italy, Malta, Spain).
- Among **precarious and essential workers**, who are particularly vulnerable to economic shocks, and are therefore the most affected by the crisis, **women are the majority.**
- The **closure of schools and workplaces**, as well **care duties** for older relatives are increasing **unpaid and domestic workload**, are having a particularly negative impact on women.



The different impact of the pandemic on women and men should be assessed → this will enable the design, even though the Recovery Plan (i.e. in Italy), of gender-fair bailouts, measures to promote and strengthen female employability and work continuity and subsidies.



Thank you!

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