

# Lectura 4



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## **Women at Work: Trends 2016**

### **Executive summary**

**International Labour Organization**

Resum

# International Labour Organization



Organización  
Internacional  
Del Trabajo

- Pamflet ([link](#))
- Vídeo: our world today ([link](#))
- Exemple de campanya ([link](#))

# Preface

As the world undergoes changes and challenges, action is needed to translate commitments into reality. There can be no excuse for discrimination and other violations of fundamental human rights.

Ambitious policies are required. More jobs – and quality jobs – for women, universal social protection and measures to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care and household work are indispensable to achieving the substantive equality called for in a number of the Sustainable Development Goals.

This report gives a picture of where women stand today and how they have progressed in the world of work over the last 20 years, and of the root causes of inequalities and how they should be tackled.

# Executive summary

**The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an opportunity to address gender inequalities at work**

Throughout their working lives, women face obstacles in gaining access to decent work. Only marginal improvements have been achieved since the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, leaving large gaps to be covered in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the UN in 2015. Inequality between women and men persists in global labour markets, in respect of opportunities, treatment and outcomes.

Over the last two decades, women's significant progress in educational achievements has not translated into a comparable improvement in their position at work. In many regions in the world, in comparison to men, women are more likely to become and remain unemployed, have fewer chances to participate in the labour force and – when they do – often have to accept lower quality jobs.

Progress has been slow and is limited to a few regions. The unequal distribution of unpaid care and household work is an important determinant of gender inequalities at work.

# Executive summary

## Gender gaps in labour force participation and employment rates declined marginally

Between 1995 and 2015, the global female labour force participation rate decreased from 52.4 to 49.6 per cent. The corresponding figures for men are 79.9 and 76.1 per cent, respectively.



# Executive summary

## **Young women face the highest risk of unemployment**

Women are more likely to be unemployed than men, with global unemployment rates of 5.5 per cent for men and 6.2 per cent for women. The highest gender unemployment gaps are found in Northern Africa and the Arab States. In Northern, Southern and Western Europe, and in Northern America, the gender unemployment gaps have narrowed as a result of the financial crisis, largely under the impact of the economic downturn on the male-dominated sectors and the rising employment rates for married women, who are entering employment to compensate for losses in family income caused by male unemployment.

Globally, youth unemployment remains an issue of concern. Unemployment is affecting young women more than young men. In Northern Africa and the Arab States, the female youth unemployment rate is almost double that of young men. In contrast, youth unemployment is higher for young men Northern America, Eastern Asia and Northern, Southern and Western Europe.

# Executive summary

## **The quality of women's jobs remains a challenge**

Women remain overrepresented as contributing family workers. Some progress has been made. Globally, the share of contributing family workers has decreased significantly among women and to a lesser extent among men, resulting in a decrease in the gender gap. This trend is part of an economic restructuring shift away from agricultural work, which largely consisted of subsistence and small-scale activities. However, many working women remain in employment statuses and in occupations that are more likely to consist of informal work arrangements.

Globally, nearly 40 per cent of women in wage employment do not contribute to social protection.



# Executive summary

The services sector has overtaken agriculture as the sector that employs the highest number of women and men. While 42.6 per cent of all men work in services, more than half of the women are employed in that sector: since 1995, women's employment in services has increased from 41.1 per cent to 61.5 per cent.

Sectoral and occupational segregation contributes to gender gaps both in terms of the number and the quality of jobs. Women in employment are overrepresented in a narrow range of sectors and occupations. In upper-middle-income countries, more than one third are employed in wholesale and retail trade services and in the manufacturing sector. In high-income countries, the major source of employment for women is the health and education sector, which employs almost one third of all women in the labour market. Agriculture remains the most important source of employment for women in low-income countries.

Women remain overrepresented as “Clerical, service and sales workers” and in “Elementary occupations”. This is particularly the case in developed economies. There is also a slight relative overrepresentation of women in the highest paid occupational group “Managers, professionals and technicians”.

# Executive summary

**Gender gaps in the distribution of unpaid household and care work mean that women are more likely to work shorter hours for pay or profit**

Women work fewer hours in paid employment, while performing the vast majority of unpaid household and care work. On average, women carry out at least two and a half times more unpaid household and care work.

However, this gap has decreased over time, mostly because of some reduction in the time spent by women on housework, while there have been no significant reductions in the time that they spend on childcare. Women continue to work longer hours per day. Even when women are employed, they still carry out the larger share of unpaid household and care work, which limits their capacity to increase their hours of salaried work.

Women are more likely than men to work short hours, whether voluntarily or against their choice.

More than one third of men and more than one fourth of women work more than 48 hours a week. Excessive hours are most common in Asia.

# Executive summary

## **At current trends, it will take 70 years to close the gender wage gap**

The gender wage gap is estimated to be 23 per cent; in other words, women earn 77 per cent of what men earn. Even when considering hourly wage rates (given the fact that women are working shorter hours than men), women continue to face a persistent gender gap, amounting to 10 per cent. These gaps cannot be explained solely by differences in education or age, but are also linked to the undervaluation of the work that women undertake and of the skills required in female-dominated sectors or occupations, the practice of discrimination, and the need for women to take career breaks to attend to additional care responsibilities, for instance after the birth of a child.

Some progress has been made in reducing these gaps, but improvements are small and, if current trends prevail, it will take more than 70 years before gender wage gaps are closed. Reductions in the gender wage gap are mostly attributable to explicit policy actions to address gender imbalances.

The gender wage gap is unrelated to a country's level of economic development, as some of the countries with high per-capita levels are among those with the highest gender wage gaps.

# Executive summary

## **Gender inequalities at work result in gender gaps in access to social protection, in particular maternity and old-age benefits**

The gender gap in employment and job quality means that women have limited access to employment-related social protection, where such schemes exist. Lower rates of formal wage and salaried employment, together with fewer hours and fewer years in insured employment for women, have adverse consequences for seniority premiums in pay and for coverage by employment-related contributory schemes.

## **An integrated policy framework is needed to promote women's access to more and better quality jobs**

Despite their recent advancement in educational achievement, women face multiple barriers to their equal access, participation and progress in the labour market. Institutions and policies are established based on traditional gender roles, including on the expectation that men should be the sole or the main earner in a household and the continued undervaluation of care work. This continues to shape and inhibit labour market opportunities and incentives for women.

# Executive summary

## **Efforts must be made to tackle sectoral and occupational segregation**

Gender stereotypes of women and expectations by society that they will shoulder larger care responsibilities, lack of role models, a work culture that expects long working hours, the undervaluation of traditionally “feminine” skills and inadequate work-family measures limit the possibilities for women to overcome segregation and participate on an equal footing in political, social and economic life and decision-making and reach top-level positions.

Affirmative action policies, including the setting of targets, goals or quotas, represent an important measure. Moreover, education, outreach and training programmes must be designed to encourage and enable girls, boys and young women and men to venture more into non-stereotypical fields of study and work.

# Executive summary

**Unpaid care work must be recognized, reduced and redistributed and harmonization achieved between work and family life**

Inadequate social protection and measures to balance work and family, including good quality jobs, services and infrastructure in public care, are a key concern for workers and businesses. The lack of such protection and measures impedes women's access to decent jobs. In many countries, inadequate access to water supply, sanitation, electricity, roads, safe transport and health-care services is a crucial factor behind the time spent by women on unpaid work and their disadvantaged position in the labour force. The inadequacy or total lack of childcare, disability and long-term care services, and services which do not meet the needs of workers, care recipients and providers in terms of availability, cost and quality, are also important factors.

Economic crises and the related cuts in public spending on social benefits, services, jobs and working conditions in the public sector have also exacerbated the care deficits. Consequently, the responsibility to fill care gaps is taken up by women. The undervaluation of care work, both paid and unpaid, perpetuates poor working conditions for women.

Governments should increase their social investment in basic infrastructure and measures to balance work and family commitments.

# Executive summary

Governments should guarantee maternity protection, increase the provision of well-paid leave benefits for fathers, and promote their take-up rates. This should be further supported by implementing family-friendly flexible working arrangements which help families to share care responsibilities more equitably between parents, and also work reintegration measures, with a view to enabling workers with family responsibilities to reintegrate into the workforce following care-related interruptions.

Joint income taxation, primarily in advanced economies, may create barriers and disincentives for women to participate in the labour market, in particular when it is accompanied by wage and income gaps, high childcare costs and unequal sharing of care responsibilities.

# Annex: Espanya

- Mujeres y hombres en España 2015, INE.
- Noticias: ([link](#))