

ASPECTS OF GENDER EQUALITY IN ROMANIA

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Abstract

The article aims to highlight the discrepancies in the education, employment and income of men and women in Romania during the period between 2008-2016. We analyzed the main indicators of gender equality provided by statistical surveys such as schooling levels, employment rates of the working age population, unemployment rate, wage income by gender, age, residence. The study of the evolution of these indicators showcases the accentuation of structural differences that maintain and perpetuate gender inequality

Key words: gender equality, structural differences, Romania

INTRODUCTION

Gender equality based on reducing gender gaps is a necessary condition for the economic and social development of a country. [2] The effects of gender inequality are shown in both the social and the economic status of women but they also indirectly affect the entire population, regardless of age or gender, by restricting overall access to necessary resources (sanitary, economic, education, etc.). [3]

In the European Union, according to the latest report on gender equality (2017), the gap in income, employment and hours of work has been capped. As a result, women's greater responsibilities when it comes to family life will continue to affect their career, income and eventual retirement. In this context, some member states are going to great lengths to speed up the achievement of gender equality and women's economic independence, while other states have a much slower progress. [1]

In Romania gender policies aim at promoting equal opportunities between women and men in order to eliminate any forms of discrimination in both their public and private lives. [6] Society offers social and cultural patterns through which it promotes social values and norms concerning the division of labor and of the roles and attitudes of both men and women based on gender.[4]

Effective equality between women and men occurs when they enjoy equal and fair opportunities in reaching their full individual potential. [5]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

We analyzed the discrepancies in the education, employment and income between men and women in Romania based on the statistical data provided by the labor force in the household inquiry for the 2008-2015 timeframe, following the evolution of the subsequent statistical indicators: the level of education, the occupancy rate of the population of working age, unemployment rate, wages in regards to gender, age and residence. In analyzing the employment rate of women and men in the European Union, we used the data provided by the Labor Force Survey (Eurostat).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Gender and education

Gender equality in education aims at making the most of an individual's potential through equal access to all forms of education that will lead to educational improvement, regardless of gender, religion, residence, etc.

The schooling level of the population is balanced from the stance of gender, especially

on the primary, gymnasium and high school levels. However, the percentage of males that follow a professional form of education is extremely high (71.2% in 2016) and keeps rising (Fig. 1).

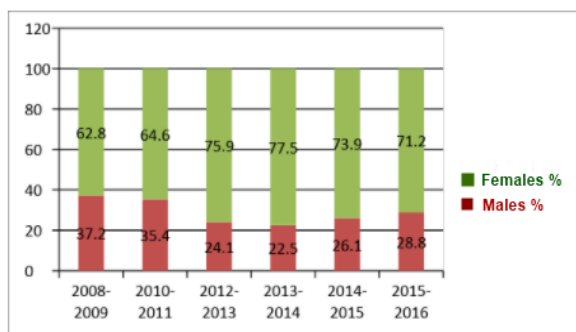


Fig. 1. Structure of professional training between 2008-2016, in regards to gender
 Source: NSI, Tempo online series

The rate of females that follow a form of higher education is above that of the males. In 2016, they reached a 53.9 % percentage compared to the 46.3% of higher educated males (Fig. 2).

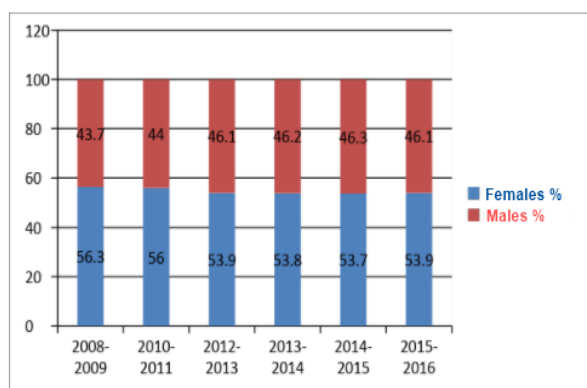


Fig. 2. Structure of higher education, between 2008-2016, in regards to gender
 Source: NSI, Tempo online series.

The number of students, between 2008-2016, has constantly dropped, to 53.5218 students in 2016, so a decrease rate of 51.26% compared to 2008 (Table 1).

Table 1. The number of students evolution, between 2008-2016

Higher education	2008-2009	2010-2011	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Total	1,098,188	871,842	618,157	578,705	541,653	535,218
Females (%)	56.3	56	53.9	53.8	53.7	53.9
Males (%)	43.7	44	46.1	46.2	46.3	46.1

Source: NSI, Tempo online series.

The education level of a population is an important premise for social and economic development within any country. Even with the slight increase (17.2% in 2016) of higher educated population, the vast majority still has a medium education level (57.8%). Lesser educated women outnumber the men of equal footing (27.6% to 22.4% respectively), while the men tend to follow the medium education level the most (61.2%) (Table 2).

Table 2. Structure of adults (25-64 years old) in regards to the level of education, between 2008-2015 (%)

Level of education	2008	2010	2012	2013	2014	2015
TOTAL						
low	25.5	26.2	24.6	24.3	27.2	25.0
medium	61.5	60.2	60.1	60.1	56.9	57.8
high	13.0	13.6	15.3	15.6	15.9	17.2
MALES						
low	20.6	21.6	20.7	20.7	24.5	22.4
medium	66.0	64.7	64.3	64.3	60.2	61.2
high	13.4	13.7	15.0	15.0	15.3	16.4
FEMALES						
low	30.3	30.6	28.5	27.9	30.0	27.6
medium	57.2	55.9	55.9	56.0	53.6	54.5
high	12.5	13.5	15.6	16.1	16.4	17.9

Source: NSI, labor force in the household inquiry

Occupancy rate

The occupancy rate of the population aged between 15 and 24 years old is in a constant descent, with the exception of 2015, when it reached a value of 24.5% (Fig. 3).

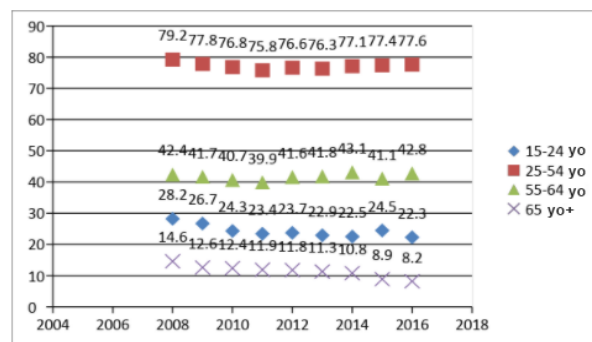


Fig. 3. Evolution of the occupancy rate, on a population between 15 years old and beyond, on age groups, between 2008-2016

Source: NSI, Labor Force in the Household Inquiry

The occupancy rate of the population fit to work (15-64 years old), between 2008-2016, kept slowly decreasing until 2014, point from which it continuously grew up to the present. In 2016, the occupancy rate of the population fit to work was 61.6%, derived in 69.7% for males and 53.3% for females (Table 3).

Table 3. Occupancy rate of the population aged between (15 - 64 years old)(%)

Gender	2008	2010	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
TOTAL	62.6	60.2	60.2	60.1	61	61.4	61.6
MALES	70.9	67.9	67.6	67.6	68.7	69.5	69.7
FEMALES	54.3	52.5	52.8	52.6	53.3	53.2	53.3

Source: NSI, Labor Force in the Household Inquiry

The lowest disparities between the two can be found in Sweden (-4.1%) and Finland (-3.1%), as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Women and men’s employment rate (20-64 years old), 2010, 2015 and 2016 (%)

Country	Males			Females		
	2010	2015	2016	2010	2015	2016
EU 28	75.1	75.8	77.4	62.1	64.2	65.5
Austria	79	78.4	80	68.8	70.2	71.1
Belgium	73.5	71.3	72.3	61.6	63	62.6
Bulgaria	68.6	70.4	72	60.8	63.8	65
Croatia	67.9	65.2	68.5	56.4	55.8	57.5
Cyprus	81.7	72.3	74.3	68.8	64	64.5
Czech Republic	79.6	83	85	60.9	66.4	68.7
Denmark	78.6	80.2	81.5	73	72.6	73.8
Estonia	67.8	80.5	83	65.9	72.6	71.9
Finland	74.5	73.9	76.4	71.5	71.8	72.5
France	74	73.2	74.3	64.9	66	66.4
Germany	80.4	82.3	82.9	69.7	73.6	74.7
Greece	76	64	66.8	51.8	46	47.7
Hungary	65.5	75.8	79.3	54.6	62.1	65.2
Ireland	69.1	75.1	77.3	60.2	62.6	64.3
Italy	72.7	70.6	72.2	49.5	50.6	51.7
Latvia	64	74.6	74.6	64.5	70.5	71.7
Lithuania	63.5	74.6	77.1	65	72.2	74.5
Luxembourg	79.2	76.7	74.9	62	65	64.9
Malta	78.2	81.4	83.4	41.6	53.6	56.4
Netherlands	82.8	81.9	82.9	70.8	70.8	72
Poland	71.3	74.7	77	57.3	60.9	62.5
Portugal	75.4	72.6	75.2	65.6	65.9	67.8
Romania	73.1	74.7	76.8	56.5	57.2	58.5
Slovakia	71.9	75	77.2	57.4	60.3	62.9
Slovenia	74	73.3	74.3	66.5	64.7	66.4
Spain	69.2	67.6	70.3	56.3	56.4	58.6
Sweden	81.1	82.5	84.1	75	78.3	80
United Kingdom	79.3	82.5	83.3	67.9	71.3	72.2

Source: Eurostat, Labor Force Survey.

The highest occupancy rate, in 2016, among males, is noted in the Czech Republic (85%), Sweden (84.1%), Great Britain (83.3%), The Netherlands (82.9%) and Germany (82.9%).

When it comes to females, Germany ranks highest, with 74.7%, followed by Lithuania (74.5%) and Denmark (73.8%). The biggest discrepancies between male and female occupancy rates are in Italy (-20.5%), Greece (-19.1%), Romania (-18.3%) and the Czech Republic (-16.3%).

From a location (residence) point of view, in 2016 we witnessed a higher occupancy rate in the urban areas (62.6%) compared to the rural ones (60.2%). On age groups, the occupation rate is higher in the rural environments when it comes to the 15-24 years old (28.9%) and 55-64 years old age groups (49.2%) (Table 5).

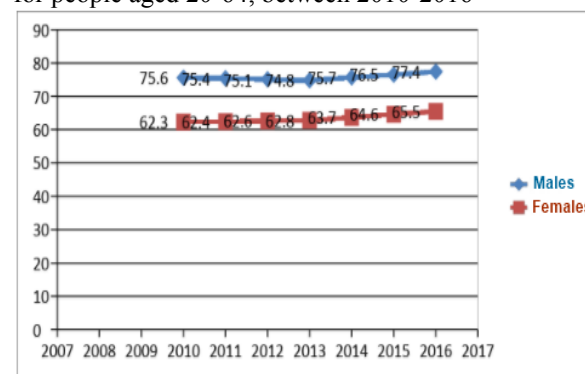
Table 5. Occupancy rate, on age groups and residential environments, in 2016 (%)

Total	Urban	Rural
	62.6	60.2
20-64 years old	66.9	65.6
15-24 years old	15.2	28.9
25-54 years old	80.7	73.3
55-64 years old	38.3	49.2

Source: NSI, Labor Force in the Household Inquiry

The occupancy rate encompassing all 28 states of the European Union when it comes to males has reached 77.4%, while that of women is at 65.5%, in a steady increase. Despite this progress, there is a stable difference between the two rates based on gender, spanning 12 percentage points (Fig. 4).

Fig. 4. EU-28 trends in the employment rate by gender, for people aged 20-64, between 2010-2016



Source: Eurostat, Labor Force Survey

Unemployment rate

The unemployment rate in 2015 was higher by 6.8 % when it came to males (7.5%) than

that of females(5.8%). Unemployment among the youth (15-24 years old) is high (21.7%) and affects females the most, with 23.4%, compared to the 20.6% in the case of males. For the 25 years old and over age group, the number of males affected by unemployment is significantly higher than that of females (6% compared to 4.9% respectively)(Table 6).

Table 6. BIM* unemployment rate, on gender and age groups, between 2008-2015 (%)

	Total			15-24 years old			25 years old and over		
	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
2008	5.6	6.5	4.4	17.6	17.7	17.3	4.3	5.2	3.2
2010	7.0	7.6	6.2	22.1	22.1	22.1	5.6	6.1	4.9
2012	6.8	7.4	6.1	22.6	22.2	23.0	5.4	6.0	4.7
2013	7.1	7.7	6.3	23.7	23.2	24.6	5.7	6.3	4.9
2014	6.8	7.3	6.1	24.0	23.6	24.7	5.5	6.0	4.8
2015	6.8	7.5	5.8	21.7	20.6	23.4	5.6	6.4	4.6

Source: NSI, Labor Force in the Household Inquiry.

Incomes

Gender equality between women and men also means income equality for the same type of work. The differences in income, especially due to work done, have several causes:

- Females tend to work to a higher degree in sectors with lower salaries, such as: education, health, administration;
- A weak representation of women in leadership positions;
- Women's working time is lower than that of men (various causes including child-raising leave up to 2 years of age);
- Professional status leading to income segregation;
- Involvement of men predominantly in areas with higher pay levels.

The professional status of the Romanian population has the following characteristics:

- A higher percentage of men are employed (56.05% in 2015);
- The amount of people with the status of business owner or self-employed is very high among males (75% and 71.22% respectively);
- A high percentage of women have the status of unpaid family worker (67.32%)(Table7).

Table 7. Working population on genders and professional status

	2008	2010	2012	2013	2014	2015
MALES (%)						
Employee	55.97%	55.48%	55.81%	55.95%	56.02%	56.05%
Business owner	77.95%	76.52%	71.96%	73.15%	72.73%	75.00%
Self-employed	71.66%	72.28%	70.70%	70.79%	71.20%	71.22%
Unpaid family worker	28.87%	29.13%	29.51%	29.92%	30.75%	32.68%
FEMALES (%)						
Employee	44.03%	44.52%	44.19%	44.03%	43.98%	43.95%
Business owner	22.05%	23.48%	28.04%	27.78%	27.27%	25.00%
Self-employed	28.34%	27.72%	29.30%	29.21%	28.80%	28.78%
Unpaid family worker	71.13%	70.87%	70.49%	70.08%	69.25%	67.32%

Source: NSI, Labor Force in the Household Inquiry.

When it comes to the gender structure in regards to national economic fields of work, we can highlight the following aspects:

- An increase noted in male employment in the agricultural sector (from 53.64% in 2008 to 56.82% in 2015);
- The industry and construction sector is also occupied by men to a large proportion (69.66% in 2015);
- The service sector is dominated by women (rising from 50.70% in 2008 to 51.17% in 2015) (Table 8).

Table 8. Working population on genders and fields of work within the national economy

Genders	2008	2010	2012	2013	2014	2015
Fields of work¹⁾						
MALES						
Agriculture	53.64%	54.11%	53.85%	54.42%	54.79%	56.82%
Industry and construction	67.14%	69.11%	68.69%	68.82%	68.74%	69.66%
Services	49.30%	48.36%	48.49%	48.65%	48.72%	48.83%
FEMALES						
Agriculture	46.36%	45.89%	46.15%	45.58%	45.21%	43.18%
Industry and construction	32.86%	30.89%	31.31%	31.18%	31.26%	30.34%
Services	50.70%	51.64%	51.51%	51.35%	51.28%	51.17%

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Source: NSI, Labor Force in the Household Inquiry.

The average gross monthly wages in 2015 were 2,550 lei and the net 1,856 lei, with a constant growth, during 2008-2015, both for men and for women.

The wage gap is maintained in favor of men, when it comes to both the gross salary (193

lei) as well as the net salary (145 lei) (Table 9).

Table 9. Monthly earnings, averaged, both gross and net, on genders (lei)

2012		2013		2014		2015	
Gross	Net	Gross	Net	Gross	Net	Gross	Net
MALES							
2,163	1,581	2,246	1,640	2,412	1,761	2,646	1,928
FEMALES							
1,948	1,424	2,070	1,509	2,234	1,627	2,453	1,783

Source: NSI, Labor Force in the Household Inquiry.

CONCLUSIONS

The school population is balanced from the gender perspective, especially at the primary, gymnasium and high school level. However, the percentage of boys following a vocational education is extremely high and rising while the proportion of girls getting a higher education is greater than that of boys taking the same path.

Although the proportion of the population with a higher education is increasing slightly, most of the population has an medium level of education. Women with a low level of education are more numerous than men, while the medium level of education is mostly followed by men.

The occupancy rate of the working-age population (15-64 years) in 2008-2016 declined slightly until 2014, gaining a steady increase from then on up to present times. The gap between male and female occupancy rates consists of 16, 4 percentage points.

From the point of view of residence, in 2016, the occupancy rate was higher in urban areas than in rural ones. By age groups, the occupancy rate is higher in rural areas for people between 15 and 24 years old and 55 to 64 years old respectively.

The highest occupancy rate in 2016 among males is seen in the Czech Republic, Sweden, the UK, the Netherlands and Germany, while among women we find it in Germany, Lithuania and Denmark. The largest disparities between female and male employment rates are recorded in Italy, Greece, Romania and in the Czech Republic. The lowest disparities between women's

employment rate compared to men's rates are registered in Sweden and Finland. The employment rate of the 28 EU countries for women is steadily increasing. Nevertheless, there is a constant difference between the employment levels of males and females of about 12 percentage points.

The unemployment rate in 2015 was higher for males than for women. Unemployment among young people (15-24 years) is high, affecting girls in particular. For the age group of 25 years and over, the percentage of males who are affected by unemployment is significantly higher than in the case of females.

The professional status of the Romanian population has the following characteristics:

- A higher percentage of men are employees;
- The amount of people with the status of business owner or self-employed is very high among males;
- A high percentage of women have the status of unpaid family worker.

Average gross earnings per month recorded an ascending trend for both men and women. The pay gap remains in favor of men, both in gross salary and in net wages.

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