

GENDER TYPOLOGIES ON EUROPEAN LABOUR MARKET

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Abstract

Women and men often have very different labor market experiences. Women are often assigned disadvantageous roles/positions compared to men, being paid less per hour, working fewer hours outside the home, and entering different occupations than men. These labor-related gender discrepancies may lead to a perpetuation of inequalities in other areas: general welfare, pension security and health, etc. Starting from this aspect, the present paper aims to analyze the particularities of women's role, position and behavior in the labor market at European level and to identify the factors that lead to the persistence of labor gender differences. A clustering of European countries is carried out in order to identify the main typologies of countries regarding women's participation profile in the labor market, under the impact of drivers related to the life style, cultural-religious values, legal practices and gender role-sharing. The research was carried out on statistical data provided by Eurostat, covering 29 European countries. The first typology is characterized by approximately the same contribution of both sexes to the economy, but they differ in their involvement on labour market. Women often work on short-term and/or part-time contracts and in large companies. The second one is characterized by similarly involvement of both sexes on the labour market: women work in small and medium sized companies and many women are entrepreneurs. The third one is characterized by a higher contribution of men to the economy: men are employed with unlimited employment contracts and are better educated than women, and most entrepreneurs are men.

Keywords

Gender inequalities, labour market, European countries, multivariate methods.

JEL Classification

J16, J21, J31

Introduction

After the Second World War, there was an increasing participation of women in the labor market, explained by many factors: reversing the roles of the two genders ("*quiet revolution of gender roles*" - Goldin, 2006); the facilities created by technology enhancing the flexibility of labor relations (Greenwood, Seshadri and Yorukoglu, 2005); access to birth control services (Bailey, 2006; Bloom, Canning, Fink and Finlay, 2009) and economic development level (Pampel and Tanaka, 1986). The participation of women to a greater extent in the workforce has had consequences both in society and in the labor market. In terms of work, the consequences were increased employment, flexible working hours, new patterns in industrial relations (Daly and Rake, 2003). Initially, there was a negative correlation between the fertility rate and women's participation rate in the labor force, but this was reversed, becoming positive (at least in the European Union) (Amaral et al., 2013). All this led to women's financial independence, accompanied by a greater independence in the workplace (especially in the case of women with tertiary education) and a reduction in the gender pay gap.

The women's role in family and society is also influenced by the existing prejudices, largely generated by the cultural-religious ideology. Religion promotes respect for the classic, traditional roles of women and men. Studies have shown a decline in the religion-influence on women's role in family and society, more pronounced in Scandinavian countries than in Central-European countries. Southern European countries (Italy, Greece) have remained more coupled with old traditions, here being noted a lower participation of women in the labor market (Inglehart and Norris, 2003).

Some specialized studies have revealed the existence of significant differences between the two genders, regarding the typology of the contractual labor relations. Women are more inclined to part-time work, to a flexible program ensuring a balance between career, work and family life. Petit and Ewert (2009) and Mc Call (2001) have shown in their research that lower quality jobs, more vulnerable, often informal (lower paid, which require lower professional skills and knowledge, as well as an inferior educational background, sometimes with no written labor contract, with non-compliance of the labor law) have a predominantly female addressability. The explanation of this situation lies in the employers' expectations regarding the temporality of women's presence and involvement in the labor market, as a result of assuming their obligations of raising and caring for the children or of taking over the household chores, situations accompanied by wage reductions and career stagnation, in the case of young women (Black et al., 2008).

It is a well-known truth that certain occupational areas are addressed especially to men, due to some characteristics of the work (Ibanez, 2017). Boushey and Cherry (2003) show that in the US in the 1960s only one in seven jobs in engineering sector were employed by women. In terms of education, women are better placed than men, more women being enrolled in tertiary education (Schofer and Meyer, 2005), and female graduation rates outpacing those of men. This does not mean that women outperform men in any area of tertiary education, there is also gender segregation in some fields of study. Women are underrepresented in engineering, mathematics and computer science, while education, humanities, social sciences, law and health are favorite areas of women (Vincent-Lancrin, 2008). This behavioral pattern of women in choosing the field of study may have consequences on the potential earnings in the labor market (Manchin and Puhani, 2003).

In many cases, the existence of invisible barriers to women's career promotion has been reported (the "*glass-ceiling*" phenomenon - Rath, Mohanty and Pradhan, 2019), with women being restricted to access to well-paid jobs, which keeps them at the lower part of wage distribution, and the womanly dominated domains offering lower wages than those dominated by men. This phenomenon has been reported in Europe and Australia (Kee, 2006). In some industries, there is a lower presence of women in leadership, top-management positions,

including in academia or in law, the share of women decreasing with the ascension on the hierarchical professional scale (Blau and Kahn, 2016; Blau et al., 2014).

The involvement of women in labor-related activities also carries the imprint of the particularities of feminine life cycle. Thus, in the years of youth, women are the first to manifest their independence by detaching themselves from the parental home (EUROSTAT, 2017) and also those who hold a higher share of tertiary education graduates. They therefore enter with some strength points in the work process. Marriage, however, also comes with assuming the role of childbirth and parenting, household maintenance, all acting as a brake on professional promotion and remaining behind men in the career plan, as a professional position and income. As children grow, women return to the labor market with greater involvement, trying to reconcile family and professional life, but they can no longer recover the men's advance, remaining behind them.

The present paper aims to identify the main typologies of countries regarding women's participation profile in the labor market, under the impact of factors related to the lifestyle, cultural-religious values, legal practices and gender role-sharing.

Are there gender employment typologies among European countries?

In order to analyse the differences between European Countries in female employment compared to male employment, the research was carried out on statistical data provided by Eurostat, covering 29 European countries, for 2014 (the last year with all available data).

Data and methodology

The variables included in this analysis cover all areas where there were observed gender differences in previous studies. There were constructed new variables as gender differences for the following indicators: employed population and wage by the form of employment - full time (FTD, FTWD) or part time (PTD, PTWD); employed population and wage by the type of employment contract - limited (LCED, LCWD) or unlimited employment (UCED, UCWD); employed population and wages by age - less 30 (YOUNGD, YOUNGWD), between 30-49 (MATURD, MATURWD) or more than 50 years old (OLDD, OLDWD); employed population and wage by company size - small (SED, SWD), medium (MED, MWD) or large enterprises (LED, LWD); employed population and wage by education level - without tertiary education (HED, HWD) or with tertiary education (TED, TWD); employed population and wage by seniority in the company - less than 15 years (ENTRYED, ENTRYWD) and more than 15 years (SENIORED, SENIORWD), the number of days off (DAYSOFFD), the number of hours worked per week (HOURS D), the share of self-employed in employed population (SELFED). We have included in analysis the employed to total population ratio (ER). In order to define patterns of female participation on the labor market there are applied the methods of multidimensional statistical analysis: principal component analysis and hierarchical and non-hierarchical cluster methods. For computations and graphical representations, we have used EXCEL and IBM SPSS.

Results

By applying principal component analysis three new variables are constructed, explaining about 70% of the total inertia (Fig. no. 1):

- **Wage differentiation component** (explaining about 42.3% from inertia) is positively determined by the differences in wages between males and females such as: the difference between the two sexes in terms of salary for Full Time employees, salary for age groups 30+ years, salary for employees for an unlimited period, salary according to education level and seniority in the company, the difference between the two sexes in terms of number of vacation days per year and the number of hours worked per week.

- **Employment differentiation component** (explaining about 19.3% from inertia) determined by the difference between males and females in employment such as: in a positive sense by the difference between the two sexes in terms of the number of employees under the age of 30, the number of employees in small companies (under 50 employees), the number of employees with lower education, the number of employees with small seniority in the company (under 15 years) and in the negative sense by the difference between the two sexes in terms of the ratio between the employed population and the total population, the number of employees over 50, the number of employees with higher education (from ISCED level 5 upwards) and the number of senior employees in the company (over 15 years).

- **Other features differentiation component** (explaining about 7.9% from inertia) determined mainly by the difference between males and females in other features of employment such as: in a positive sense by the difference between the two sexes in terms of the number of part-time employees, the salary for part-time employees, the salary for young employees under the age of 30, the number of employees in large companies (with over 500 employees), the number of employees with an unlimited employment contract and in a negative sense by the difference between the two sexes in terms of the number of full time employees, the number of employees with a limited work contract, the number of vacation days per year and number of hours worked per week.



Fig. no. 1 Results from Principal components analysis and Cluster analysis

Source: authors computations in SAS Studio

By applying hierarchical and non-hierarchical clustering methods there are identified three models among European Union countries:

- **Model 1** is specific mostly to Northern countries (Sweden, Austria, United Kingdom, Ireland, Iceland, Holland, Germany, France, Finland and Denmark). Genders has about the same contribution to the economy (in terms of employed population), but they differ in their involvement on labour market:

- men work mostly full-time, in medium-sized companies, take more days off, but they also have many more hours worked than women, and their salaries are significantly higher than those of women in all the analysed segments. Men have a higher share of mature people who are employed (over 30 years old).

- women are usually found working part-time, with limited employment contracts, in large companies (over 500 employees) usually more permissive with the hectic schedule of new mothers).

- **Model 2** is specific mostly to Eastern European Countries (Latvia, Lithuania, Cyprus, Slovakia, Estonia, Slovenia, Portugal, Poland, Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary), men and women are being similarly involved on the labour market with the following differences:

- women, up to 30 years old are employed in small and medium-sized companies, with larger seniority in companies and better educated than men. Women entrepreneurs are more numerous than men.

- men are employed mainly in large companies.

- **Model 3** is specific mainly to southern European countries (Czech Republic, Italy, Belgium, Spain, Malta, Greece, Luxembourg), where contribution of men to the economy is higher than for women and employed men are much more numerous than women for the age segment “over 50 years”. Men are employed with unlimited employment contracts, are more stable in the company and better educated than women. Most entrepreneurs are men.

Synthesizing the characteristics of the three models and calculating the number of variables with low, medium and high intensity for each cluster, as well as its predominant characteristic (Table no.1), it is observed that in the first model the vast majority of the variables show a big difference between the performance of men versus women, the countries being considered masculine, men having a much greater contribution to the economy than women and higher wages. The second model is characteristic of countries with the smallest differences between men and women, with both sexes making about the same effort in the economy and wages becoming about equal. The third model is specific to the countries situated in performance between the two groups mentioned above, with differences between men and women in employment type.

In terms of contract types there are some subgroups of countries:

- Czech Republic, France and Finland where men are in higher proportion with unlimited employment contracts and the number of hours worked per week is much higher than for females.

- Netherlands, Iceland and Luxembourg where women are in higher proportions in jobs with permanent contracts, while men are more numerous with limited employment contracts.

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Table no. 1 Synthesizing the characteristics of the models

Model	Number of countries	High differences	Medium differences	Small differences	Predominant feature
1	10	17	8	4	Masculine
2	12	6	5	18	Feminine
3	7	6	16	7	Neutral

Source: authors computations

Conclusions

The income gap between the genders at the macroeconomic level has been debated and is still a major topic addressed by many researchers. Many analyzes aimed to explain this phenomenon, trying to reduce confusion and eliminate the wrong conclusions that women continue to be paid less than men in the 21st century due to sexism and discrimination. Although the discriminatory factor is very difficult to analyze, this paper wanted to show that there are many phenomena that occur on the labor market that lead to differences between the two genders by defining some typologies of countries regarding women's participation on the labor market.

In Western and Northern developed countries (Sweden, Austria, United Kingdom, Ireland, Iceland, Holland, Germany, France, Finland and Denmark), both men and women are involved on the labour market but women tend to prefer jobs that allow them to devote more time to raising children. In these countries, women prefer part time jobs and/or limited employment contracts, on large companies, known as being more permissive in connection with a more flexible program. Women tend also to have on average more vacation days and fewer hours worked per week than men. All these factors lead to large income differences between the two sexes.

Central European and Baltic countries (Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Romania, Poland, Croatia and Bulgaria) have the smallest gender pay gap. Women are better educated than men and female entrepreneurs are more numerous than men. While women prefer small and medium enterprises, men prefer large enterprises.

In Southern and some Western European countries (Italy, Spain, Malta, Greece, Luxembourg, Czech Republic, Belgium) men have higher contribution to the economy than women. They are better educated than women, they prefer large enterprises and male entrepreneurs are more numerous than women.

Although we are in the 21st century and the opportunities of women in the labor market have changed and they could work in government and other big corporations in management positions, being lawyers, doctors, teachers, engineers or soldiers, women tend to participate in jobs feminine predominant. Women are more involved in jobs that are more communicative and networking, in positions such as teachers or educators, assistants, civil servants or in departments such as Human Resources, Marketing and Public Relations. This difference in preferences is reflected at the macroeconomic level in the gender income gap, not necessarily meaning that women are discriminated against men, but only that their functions usually have lower pay. Moreover, the common and traditional belief that the woman is the one who looks after the child and the household persisted this century too.

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