European Commission

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The gender pay gap
in Belgium

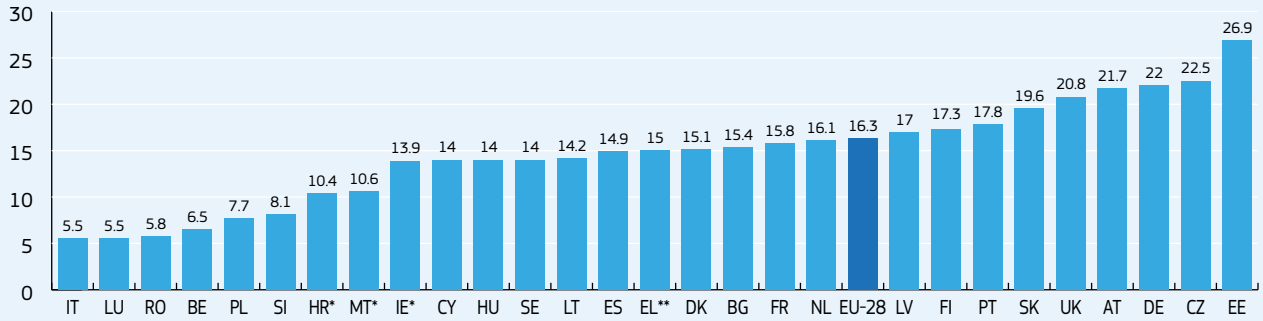
The gender pay gap is the difference in average gross hourly wage between men and women across the economy. **In Belgium, the gender pay gap stands at 6.5%** (the average gender pay gap in the EU is 16.3%).[1]

The gender overall earnings gap is the difference between the average annual earnings between women and men. It takes into account three types of disadvantages women face:

- lower hourly earnings;
- working fewer hours in paid jobs; and
- lower employment rates (for example when interrupting a career to take care of children or relatives).

The gender overall earnings gap in Belgium stands at 31.1% (the average gender overall earnings gap in the EU is 39.6%).[2]

(1) Eurostat, 2015
(2) Eurostat, 2014



Gender pay gap in unadjusted form in the EU and Member States (%). *Source:* Eurostat (2015). * 2014 data. ** 2010 data.

Some of the factors that contribute to the gender pay gap are:

- **Management and supervisory positions** are overwhelmingly held by men. Within each sector men are more often promoted than women, and paid better as a consequence. This trend culminates at the very top, where amongst CEOs less than 6% are women.
- Women take charge of **important unpaid tasks**, such as household work and caring for children or relatives on a far larger scale than men do. Working men spend on average 9 hours per week on unpaid care and household activities, while working women spend 22 hours – that's almost 4 hours every day. In the labour market this is reflected by the fact that more than 1 in 3 women reduce their paid hours to part-time, while only 1 in 10 men do the same.
- Women tend to spend **periods off the labour market** more often than men. These career interruptions not only influence hourly pay, but also impact future earnings and pensions.
- **Segregation in education and in the labour market**; this means that in some sectors and occupations, women tend to be overrepresented, while in others men are overrepresented. In some countries, occupations predominantly carried out by women, such as teaching or sales, offer lower wages than occupations predominantly carried out by men, even when the same level of experience and education is needed.
- **Pay discrimination**, while illegal, continues to contribute to the gender pay gap.

For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_en.htm

Justice and Consumers