

# The life of women and men in Europe

A STATISTICAL PORTRAIT

2020 edition



# At home, at work, at school...

... there are large differences between the lives of women and men in Europe, but there are also similarities. This digital publication **The life of women and men in Europe – a statistical portrait** aims at comparing women and men in their daily lives. It also shows how similar or different the everyday life of women and men is in European countries.

The publication includes three chapters:

**Living, growing, ageing...** : This chapter focuses on demography and health, including for example data on life expectancy, single mothers and fathers and how we perceive our health. This chapter also shows that, despite our differences, both women and men in Europe are similarly satisfied with their lives.

**Learning, working, earning...** : This chapter includes data on education levels, reconciliation of work and family life, full-time and part-time work, the gender pay gap, female and male managers, etc. It highlights not only structural differences but also inequalities between women and men.

**Eating, shopping, surfing, socialising...** : This part focuses on nutrition and social habits, leisure activities and online practices, including for example data on smoking and alcohol consumption, body mass index, cinema attendance, use of social networks and online shopping. A final part is dedicated to childcare, housework and cooking.

This digital publication containing short texts, interactive visualisation tools, infographics, photos, etc. has been developed by Eurostat in collaboration with the National Statistical Institutes of the EU Member States, the United Kingdom and the EFTA countries and is available in most of their official languages.

# Menu

1. LIVING, GROWING, AGEING...	4
1. Important milestones in life	4
2. Living together	5
3. Health perception	7
4. Life satisfaction	9
2. LEARNING, WORKING, EARNING...	10
1. Education	10
2. Employment patterns	11
2. Careers	12
4. Earnings	16
3. EATING, SHOPPING, SURFING, SOCIALISING...	19
1. Nutrition habits and sports practice	19
2. Cultural habits and social relations	21
3. Internet habits	22
4. Childcare and housework	24
FURTHER INFORMATION	26



# 1. LIVING, GROWING, AGEING...

## 1.1 Important milestones in life

**In almost all Member States, women leave their parental home and get married earlier than men...**

Our life is filled with different milestones, such as starting school, entering adulthood by leaving the parental home and starting work, getting married, having children, retiring... and there are large differences between women and men.

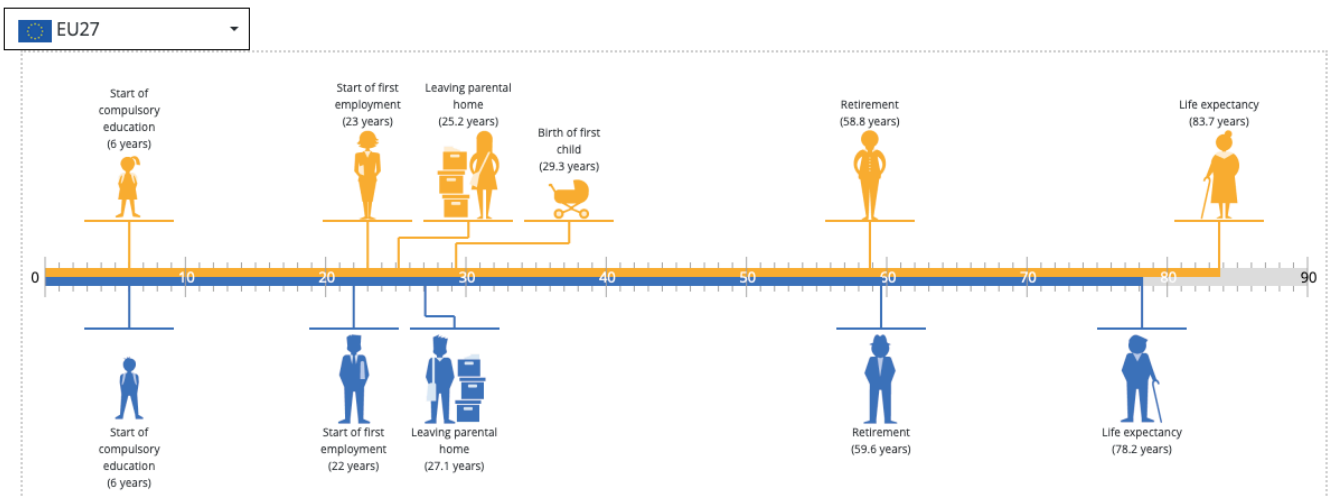
The analyses of these milestones in life show, for example, that on average in the EU in 2019, women left their parental home two years earlier than men (at the age of 25 for women and 27 for men). Women also married earlier in all Member States, with an age difference at first marriage of 3 years and over in Romania, Bulgaria and Greece in 2018, while it was less than 2 years in Ireland (2016) and Portugal. Regarding birth of first child, women in the EU gave birth on average at the age of 29 in 2018, ranging from around 26 years in Bulgaria to 31 years in Italy, Spain and Luxembourg.

**... and live longer than men**

Another significant difference between women and men is life expectancy. In all Member States, women lived longer than men – the average in the EU was 83.7 years for women and 78.2 years for men in 2018, a difference of 5.5 years. Among the Member States, the difference between women and men ranged from almost 10 years in Lithuania and Latvia to below 4 years in the Netherlands, Sweden, Ireland, Denmark and Cyprus.

### Lifeline of women and men in EU27

eurostat



## 1.2 Living together

### 5 % more women than men in the EU

As a result of a longer life expectancy, there are more women than men in the EU, with 105 women per 100 men (5 % more) in 2019. There were more women than men in nearly all Member States, with the largest differences in Latvia (17 % more), Lithuania (16 % more), Portugal and Estonia (12 % more), while Malta, Luxembourg and Sweden had slightly more men than women.

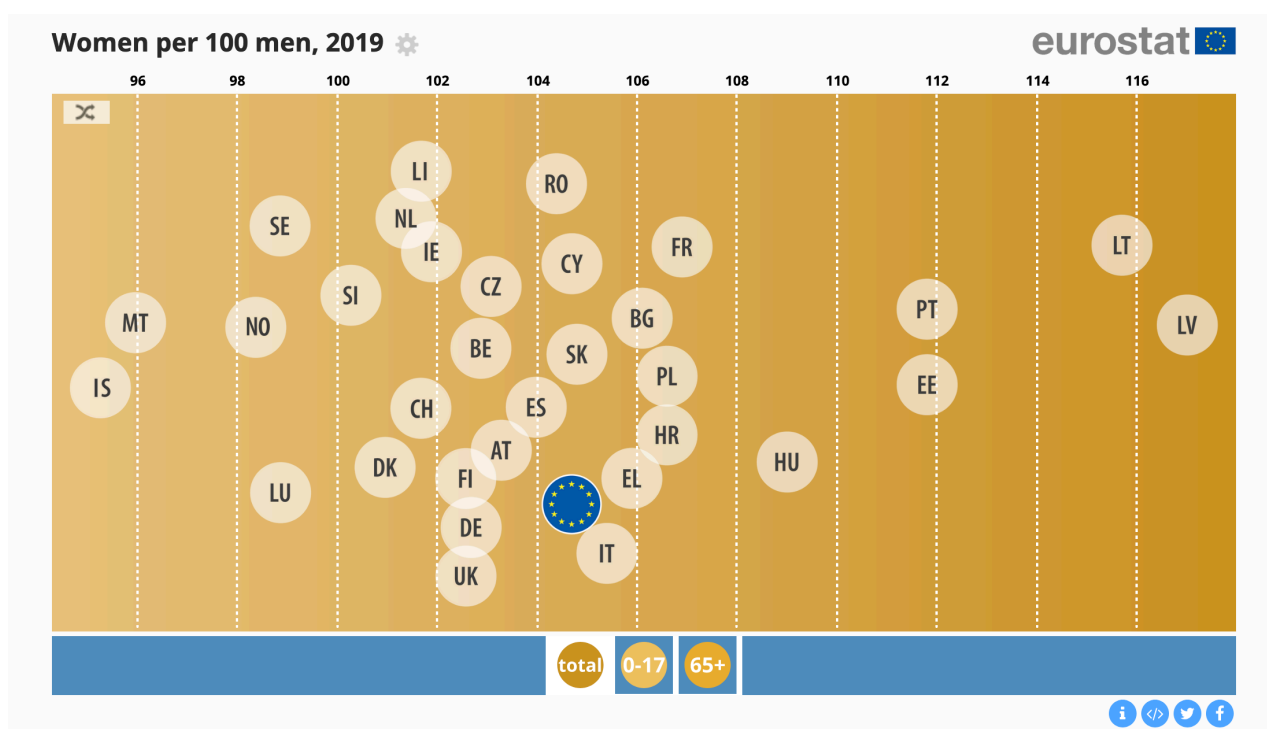
Looking at young people aged up to 18, the opposite pattern applies with 5 % more young men than young women of this age. On the other hand, among the older age group aged 65 and over, there were 33 % more women.

### Almost six times more women than men live alone with children

When looking at the way women and men live – in a couple, single, with or without children – quite some differences can be seen. In the EU in 2019, 7.1 % of women aged 25-49 lived alone with children, compared with 1.2 % of men of the same age. For singles without children in this age group, the share was 10.1 % for women and 17.3 % for men.

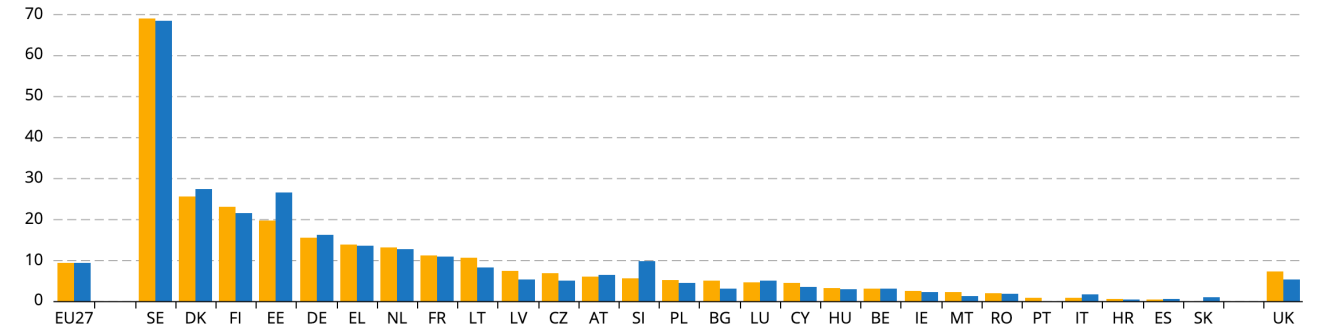
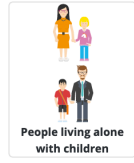
Another group where there are large differences between women and men is for singles aged 65 and over: the share of elderly women living alone (40.1 %) was twice the share for men (19.4 %).

For other groups, there are smaller differences. Among young people aged 15 to 24, 9.4 % of women and 9.5 % of young men lived alone. The same applies for those living in a couple: 45.0 % of women and 48.1 % of men aged 15 or over in the EU lived in a couple.



# Household types, 2019

(Single adults aged 15 to 24, in % of population same age)



Data for Slovakia for women and for Portugal for men are not published due to small sample size.

Women  Men



## 1.3 Health perception

### Men are more likely than women to perceive their health as good

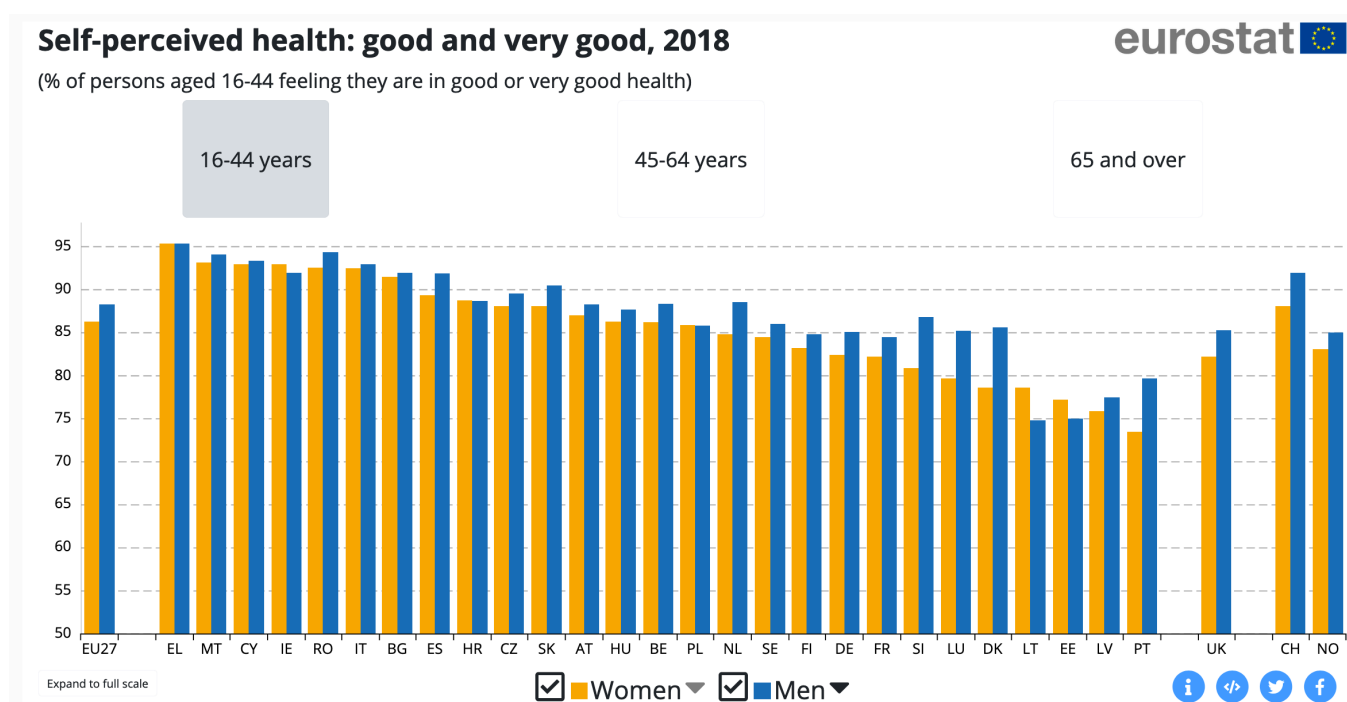
The way people perceive their health is influenced by a complex set of factors, among others environmental, cultural and socioeconomic conditions. Not surprisingly, the older you get, the lower is the perception of being in good health — this is the same for both women and men.

Looking at different age groups, it can be seen that for those aged 16 to 44, 86.3 % of women in the EU in 2018 felt they were in good health and 88.3 % of men. This decreased to 64.5 % of women and 67.3 % of men for those aged 45 to 64, and for those aged 65 and over to 36.5 % and 43.1 % respectively. In almost all Member States, a larger share of men than women had a perception of being in good health and the difference increased with age. It is also interesting to note that the difference between Member States also increased with age.

### Causes of death

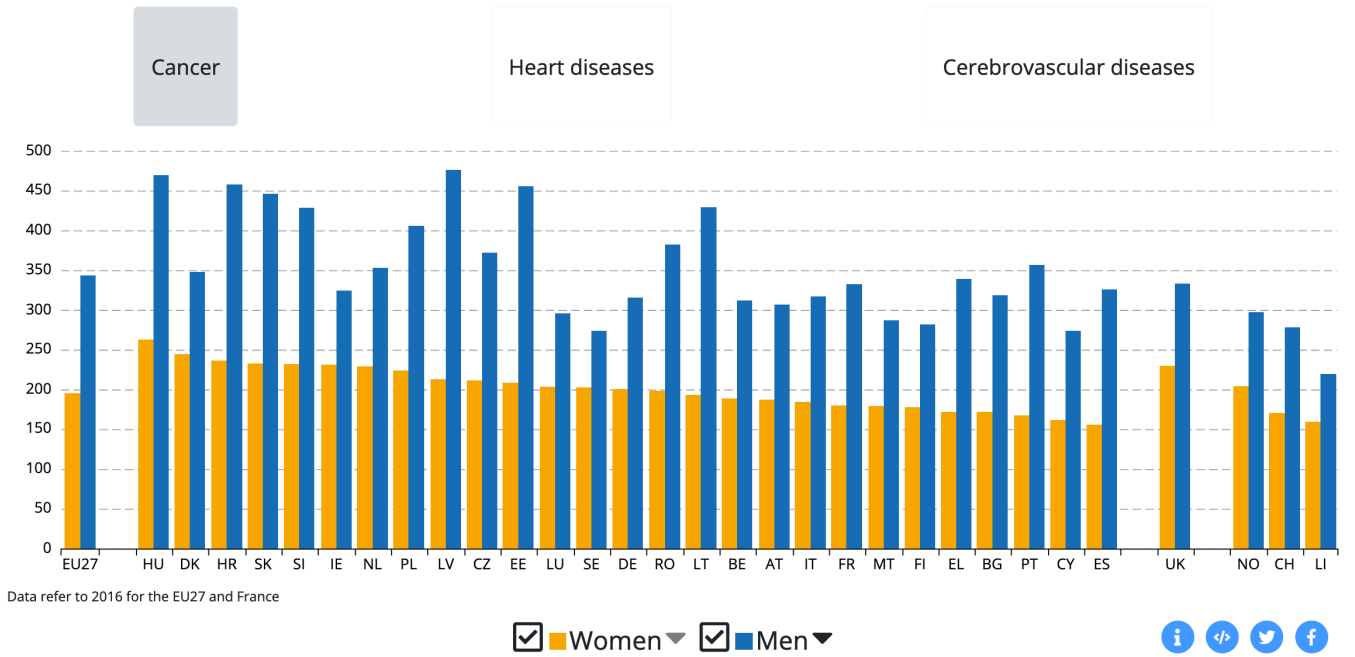
Cancer, ischaemic heart diseases (for example heart attack) and cerebrovascular diseases (for example stroke) are among the three most common causes of death for both women and men in the EU.

For all three, deaths among men are more common than among women: in the EU in 2016, 344 men per 100 000 died of cancer compared with 196 for women, 162 men per 100 000 died of heart diseases compared with 88 for women and 90 men per 100 000 died of cerebrovascular diseases, compared with 74 for women.



### Causes of death (3 main causes), 2017

(Standardised death rate by 100 000 inhabitants)

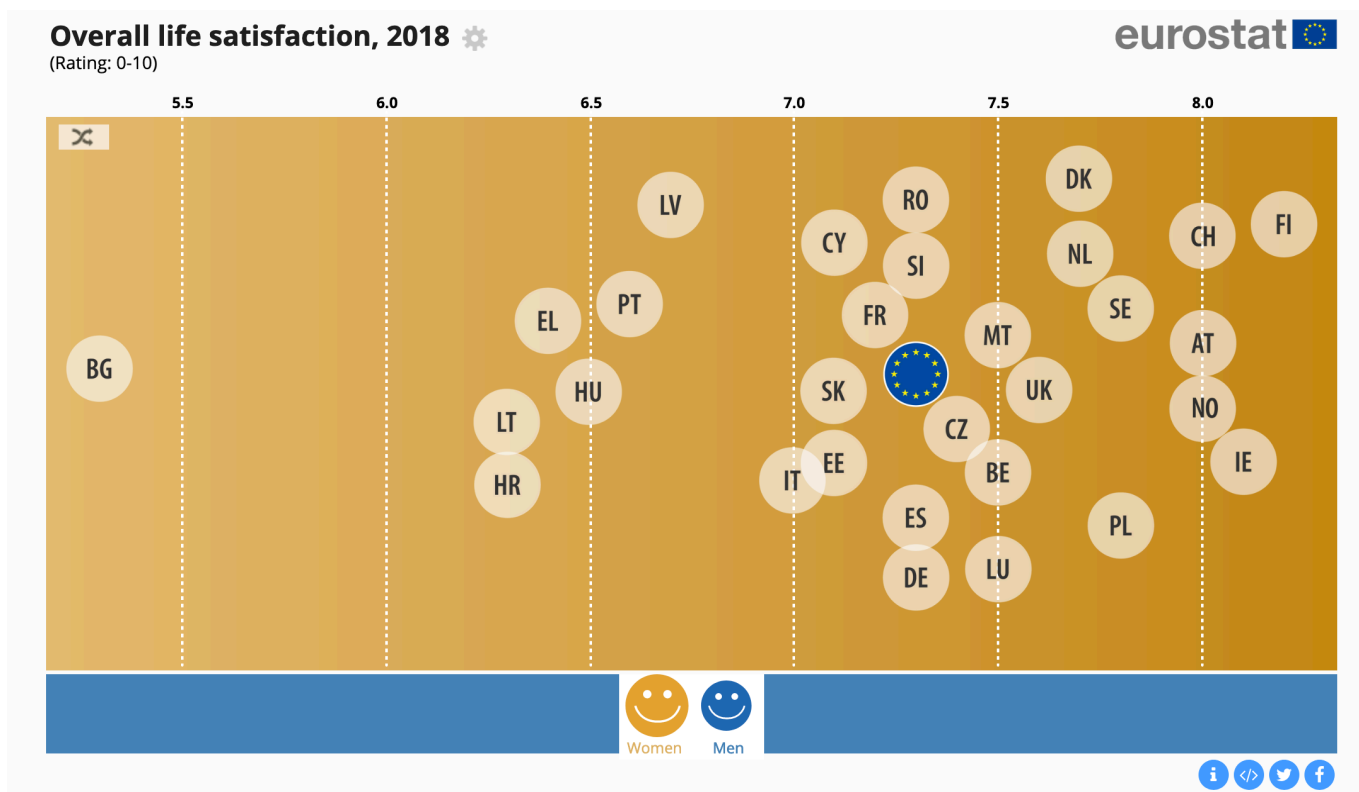




# 1.4 Life satisfaction

## Women and men are almost equally happy with their lives

As mentioned in this chapter, there are large differences in the lives of women and men, however, when measuring life satisfaction, the perception is almost equal. On average in the EU, women aged 16 and over rated their life satisfaction as 7.3 on a scale from 0 to 10 and men 7.4 in 2018. In most of the Member States, the ratings were either equal or there was a difference of 0.1.





## 2. LEARNING, WORKING, EARNING...

### 2.1 Education

#### Higher proportion of women than men with a high education level

When looking at the level of education completed, there are hardly any differences between women and men in the EU at lower education level. However, for the higher levels different patterns can be seen.

Almost equal shares of women and men aged 25 to 64 in the EU (21 % of women and 22 % of men) had at most completed the low education level (lower secondary education) in 2019.

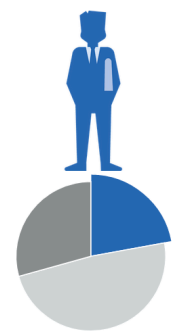
A smaller share of women (45 %) than men (49 %) in the EU had successfully completed at most the medium level of education (upper secondary education or post-secondary non-tertiary education). This pattern could be observed in almost all Member States.

When it comes to tertiary education, 34 % of women in the EU had completed this level, compared with 29 % of men. There was a majority of women with this education level in almost all Member States, with the largest differences between women and men observed in the Baltic Member States as well as Finland, Sweden and Slovenia.

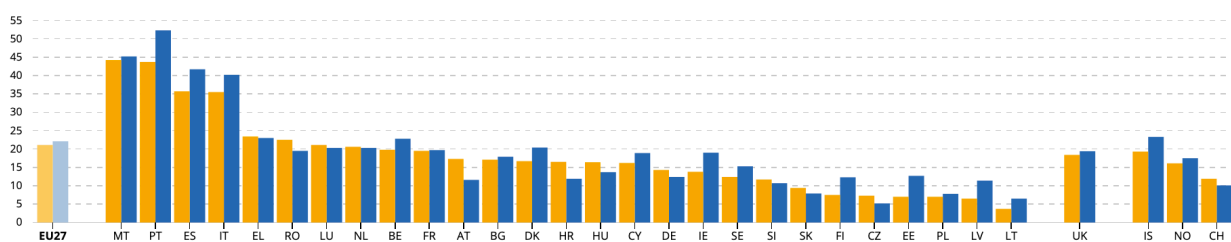
#### Education levels, 2019



EU27			
21.1 %	Primary and lower secondary education *	22.1 %	
45.1 %	Upper secondary education **	48.5 %	
33.8 %	Tertiary education	29.3 %	



Primary and lower secondary education  
% of population aged 25 to 64



\* Primary and lower secondary education also includes less than primary (no education).

\*\* Upper secondary education also includes post-secondary non-tertiary education.

Data based on the ISCED 2011 classification

☑ Women ☑ Men

## 2.2 Employment patterns

### **The more children, the larger the difference between the employment rates of women and men**

On average, the employment rate of men is higher than that of women (74 % compared with 63 % in the EU in 2019). However, it is interesting to note that the difference between employment rates of women and men increases with the number of children. In the EU in 2019, the employment rate for women without children was 67 %, while it was 75 % for men. For women with one child, the rates increased and were 72 % for women and 87 % for men. For women with two children, the rate remained almost the same at 73 %, while the one for men increased to 91 %. For those with three or more children, the employment rate decreased and was 58 % for women, compared with 85 % for men. This pattern is observed in a large majority of Member States.

### **Almost a third of women in employment work part-time**

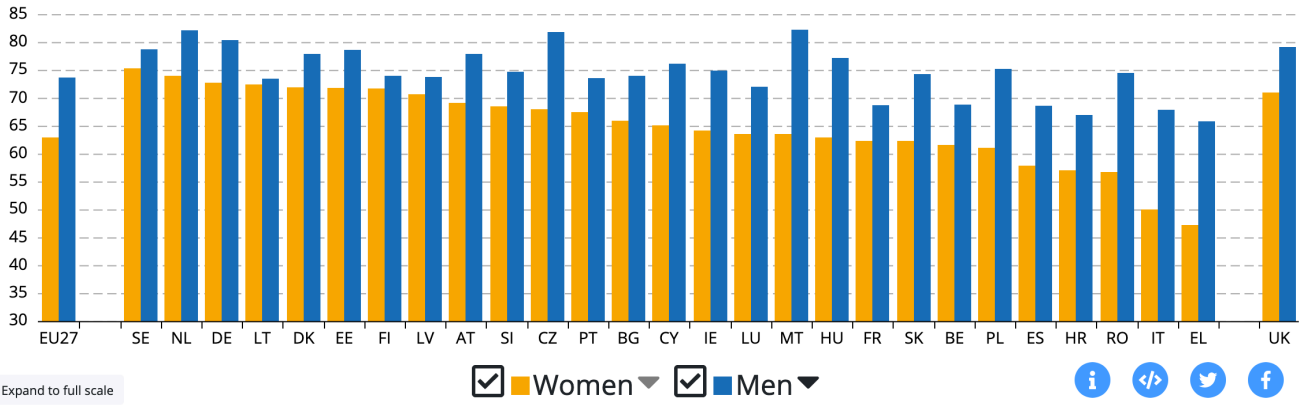
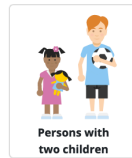
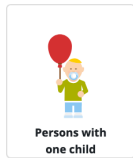
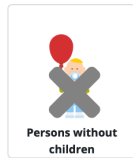
An important aspect of the reconciliation between work and family life is part-time work. This is, however, not equally spread between women and men: in the EU in 2019, 30 % of women in employment worked part-time, compared with 8 % of men. This differed among the Member States, with the highest shares of women working part-time in the Netherlands (75 %), Austria and Germany (both 47 %) and Belgium (41 %), and of men in the Netherlands (28 %), Denmark (15 %) and Sweden (13 %). The lowest share of both women and men working part-time was observed in Bulgaria (2 % for both women and men).

### **Larger share of women than men are unemployed**

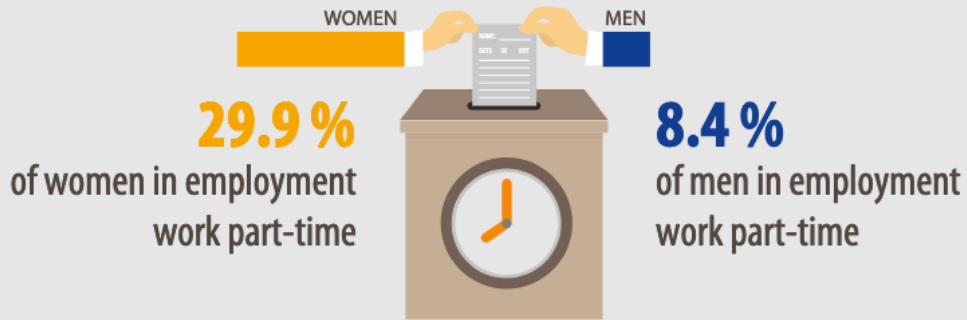
In the EU in 2019, the unemployment rate was 7.0 % for women and 6.4 % for men. In fifteen Member States, the unemployment rate was higher for women, in eleven it was higher for men and in the Netherlands it was even. The largest differences between female and male unemployment rates, where the rate was higher for women than for men, were observed in Greece (21.5 % for women and 14.0 % for men) and Spain (16.0 % and 12.5 %). The largest differences for the opposite pattern, lower rates for women than for men, were observed in Latvia (5.4 % and 7.2 %) and Lithuania (5.5 % for women and 7.1 % for men).

# Employment rate for working age population, 2019

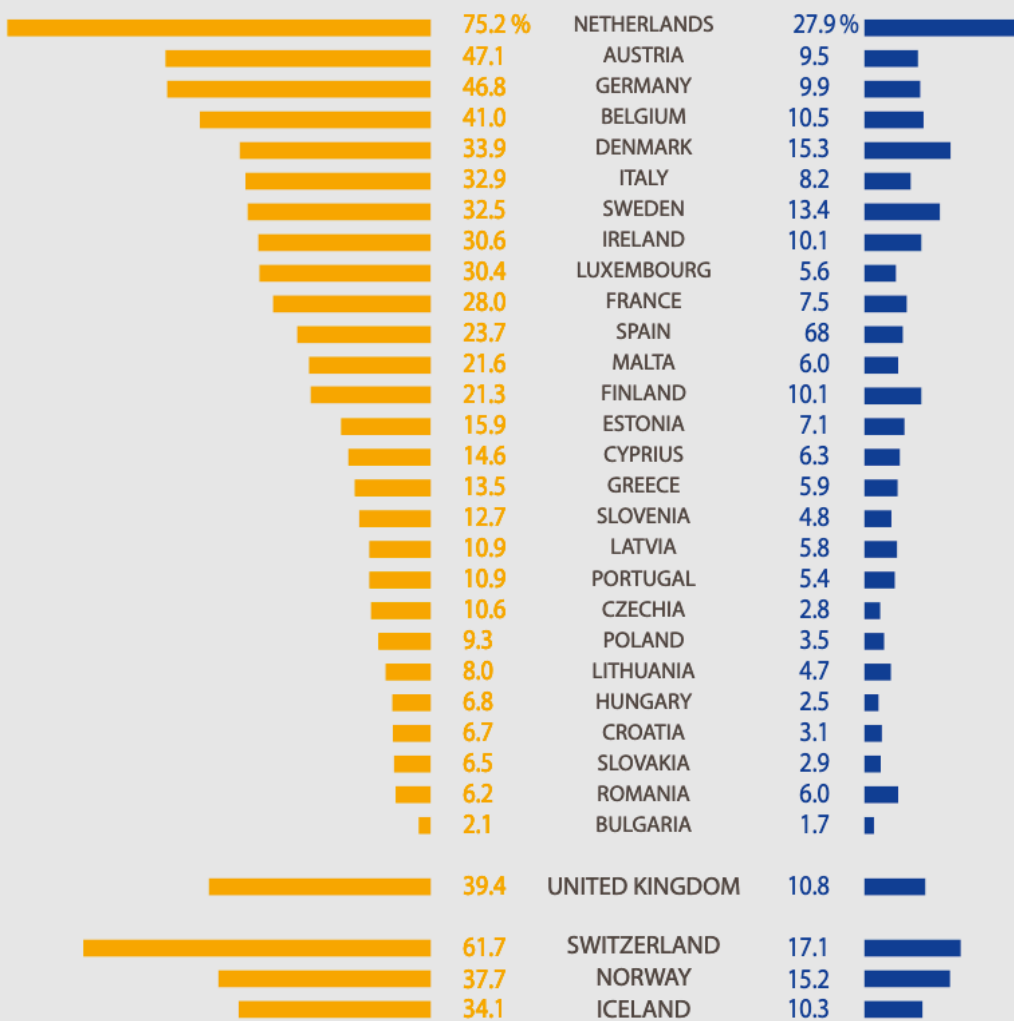
(Employment rate of women/men aged 15 to 64, total)



# Part-time workers



## EU27



Data refer to 2019.  
Source: Eurostat



# Unemployment

## Who has a higher rate?

7.0%  
EU27

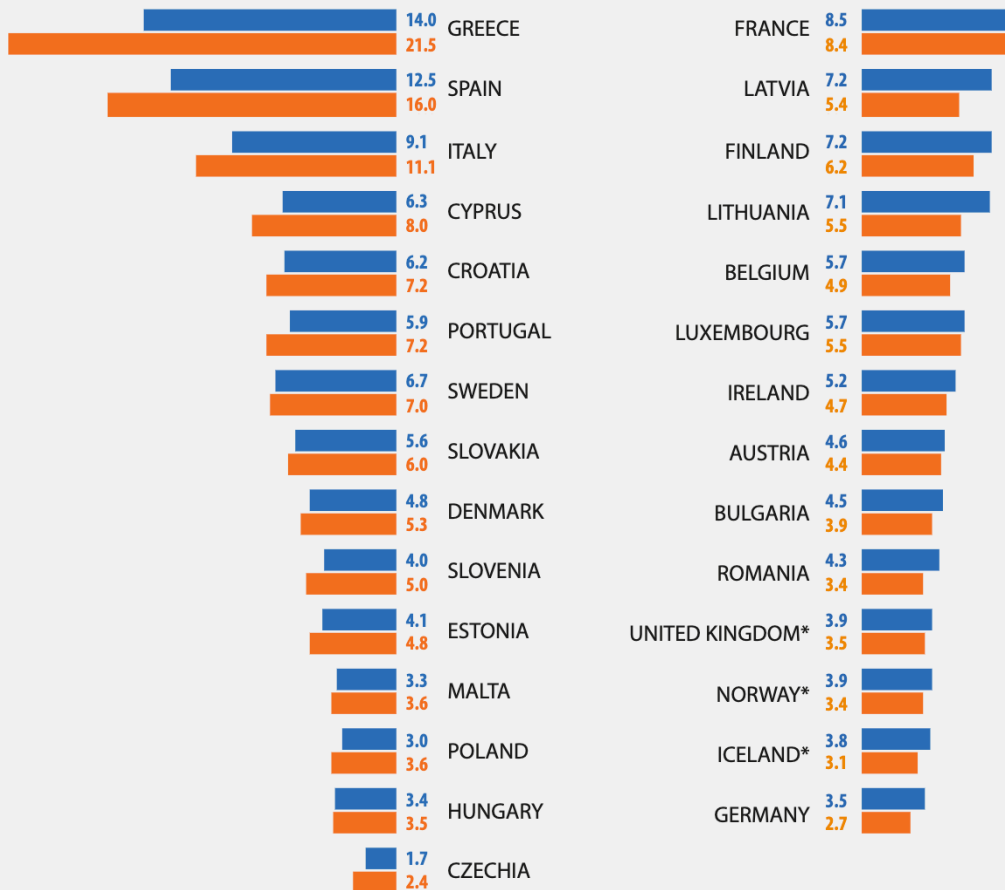


Member States in which  
**women**  
have a higher unemployment rate

% of active population

Member States in which  
**men**  
have a higher unemployment rate

6.4%  
EU27



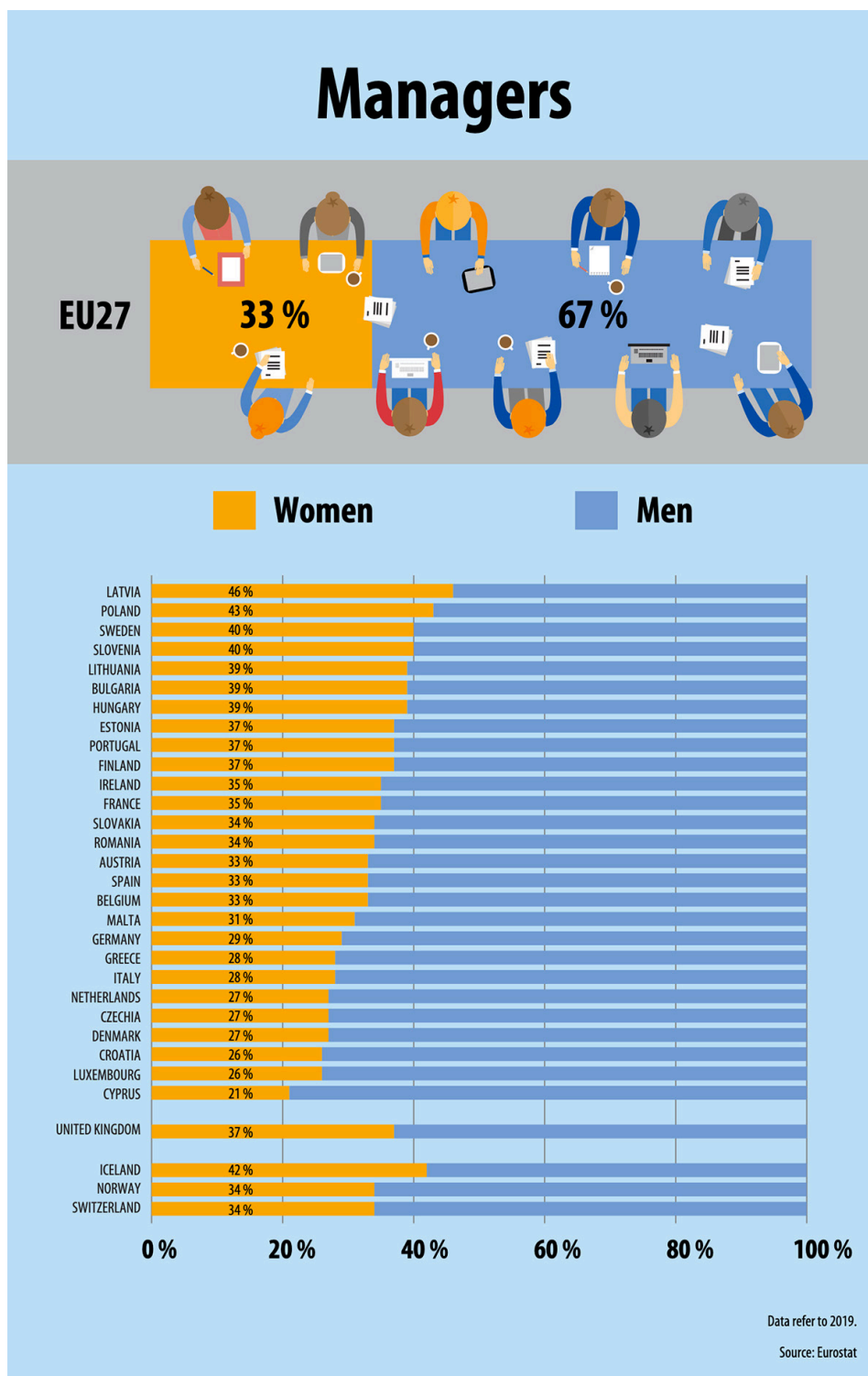
3.4 3.4 NETHERLANDS

\*Non-EU country.  
Data refer to 2019.  
Source: Eurostat

## 2.3 Careers

### Around a third of managers in the EU are women

When working, men generally occupy higher positions than women. For example, one can see that a third (33 %) of managers in the EU in 2019 were women. The share of women in this position was not over 50 % in any of the Member States: the largest proportions were observed in Latvia (46 %), Poland (43 %), Sweden and Slovenia (both 40 %), Lithuania, Bulgaria and Hungary (all 39 %). On the other hand, the smallest shares were found in Cyprus (21 %), Luxembourg and Croatia (both 26 %), Denmark, Czechia and the Netherlands (all 27 %).



## 2.4 Earnings

### Women earn on average 15 % less than men

In the EU in 2018, women earned 14.8 % less than men when comparing their average gross hourly earnings. On average, women earned less than men in all Member States, however this gender pay gap varies. The largest differences were observed in Estonia (22.7 %), Germany (20.9 %), Czechia (20.1 %), Austria (19.6 %) and Slovakia (19.4 %). On the other hand, the smallest differences in earnings between women and men were found in Romania (3.0 %), Luxembourg (4.6 %), Italy (5.0 % in 2017) and Belgium (6.0 %).

As an unadjusted indicator, the gender pay gap gives an overall picture of gender inequalities in terms of hourly pay. Part of the earnings difference can be explained by individual characteristics of employed men and women (e.g. experience and education) and by sectoral and occupational gender segregations (e.g., there are more men than women in certain sectors/occupations with, on average, higher earnings compared to other sectors/occupations). Consequently, the pay gap is linked to a number of cultural, legal, social and economic factors which go far beyond the single issue of equal pay for equal work.

### Largest differences in hourly earnings for managers

When comparing hourly earnings for different professions, in all nine groups of professions listed women earned less than men on average in the EU in 2014. This was also the case in all Member States, with very few exceptions. The profession with the largest differences in hourly earnings (23 % lower earnings for women than for men) were managers. The smallest differences were observed for clerical support workers (office clerks, secretaries etc.) and service and sales workers (both 8 % lower), two of the professions with the lowest salaries.



# Gender pay gap:

*How much less do women earn than men?*

Difference between average gross hourly earnings of male and female employees (as % of male gross earnings)\*

ESTONIA	22.7
GERMANY	20.9
CZECHIA	20.1
UNITED KINGDOM*	19.9
AUSTRIA	19.6
SLOVAKIA	19.4
SWITZERLAND*	17.0
FINLAND	16.3
PORTUGAL	16.2
FRANCE	15.5
<b>EU27</b>	<b>14.8</b>
NETHERLANDS	14.8
DENMARK	14.5
IRELAND	14.4
LATVIA	14.1
SPAIN	14.0
LITHUANIA	14.0
NORWAY*	14.0
CYPRUS	13.7
ICELAND*	13.7
BULGARIA	13.5
GREECE	12.5
SWEDEN	12.2
MALTA	11.7
HUNGARY	11.2
CROATIA	10.5
POLAND	8.8
SLOVENIA	8.7
BELGIUM	6.0
ITALY	5.0
LUXEMBOURG	4.6
ROMANIA	3.0

Data refer to 2018.

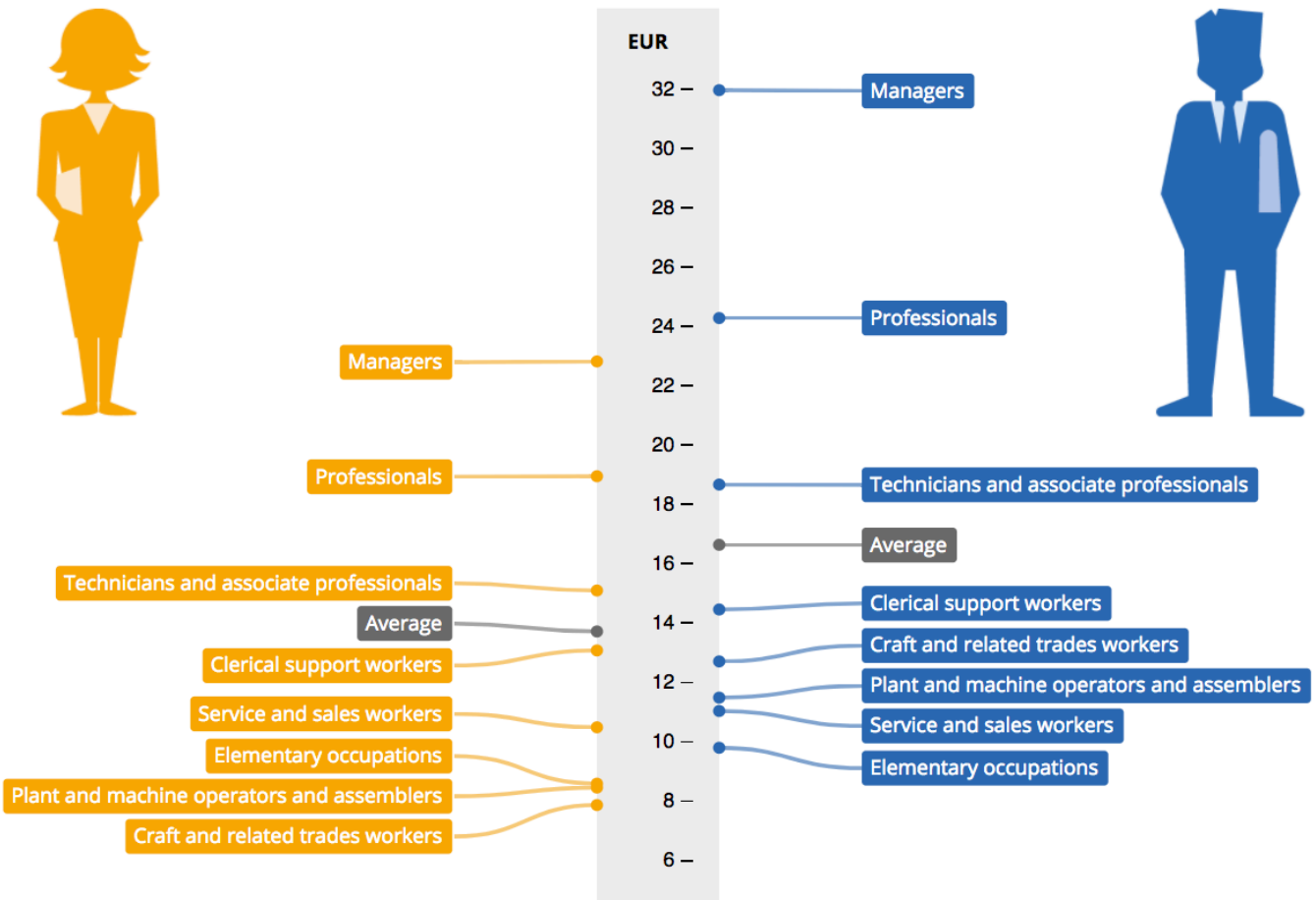
\*Non-EU countries  
Ireland, Italy, Switzerland: data from 2017.  
Greece: data from 2014.

\*Whole economy: industry, construction and services except public administration and defence and compulsory social security. For all the countries except the Czech Republic: data for enterprises employing 10 or more employees. Czech Republic: data for enterprises employing 1 or more employees.

Source: Eurostat

# Mean hourly wages by profession, 2014

European Union





## 3. EATING, SHOPPING, SURFING, SOCIALISING...

### 3.1 Nutrition habits and sports practice

#### **Larger share of men than women in the EU drink alcohol and smoke...**

When looking at consumption of alcohol, cigarettes or fruit and vegetables, there are large differences between women and men and also between Member States.

A larger share of men than women in the EU drink alcohol on a weekly basis (36 % of men aged 18 and over, compared with 20 % of women in 2014). Among the Member States, the shares for men ranged from 21 % in Latvia to 48 % in Luxembourg, Germany and Ireland, and for women from 5 % in Romania and Lithuania to 38 % in Ireland.

A larger share of men than women in the EU are smokers (25 % of men aged 18 and over are daily smokers, compared with 16 % of women). The proportions varied for men from 10 % in Sweden to 40 % in Cyprus and for women from 9 % in Romania to 23 % in Austria.

Unlike alcohol consumption and smoking, regular consumption of fruit and vegetables is considered an important element of a healthy and balanced diet. In the EU in 2014, 49 % of men ate one to four portions of fruits and vegetables on a daily basis, compared with 55 % of women. The shares for men varied from 26 % in the Netherlands to 70 % in Belgium and for women from 32 % in the Netherlands to 73 % in Belgium.

#### **... and even though they do sports more regularly...**

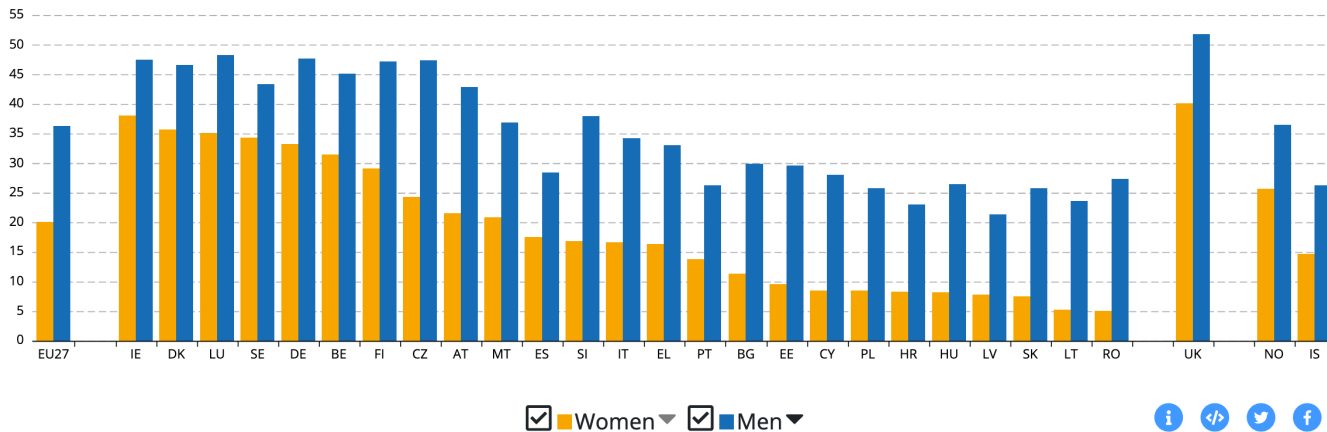
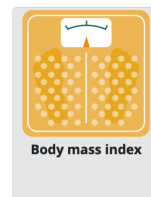
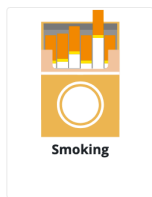
Another component of a healthy life is regular physical activity. In the EU in 2014, 35 % of men spent 150 minutes or more per week on sports and non-work-related physical activities, compared with 25 % of women. The proportions ranged for men from 14 % in Romania to 55 % in Finland and for women from 4 % in Romania to 57 % in Denmark.

#### **... a larger share are still overweight**

All the factors mentioned above have an impact on weight. In the EU in 2014, 57 % of men were considered to be overweight (having a body mass index of 25 or over), compared with 43 % of women. The proportions among the Member States varied for men from 52 % in the Netherlands and France to 66 % in Croatia, and for women from 35 % in Italy to 54 % in Malta.

# Nutrition habits and sports practice, 2014

(% of women/men aged 18 and over consuming alcohol every week (but not daily))



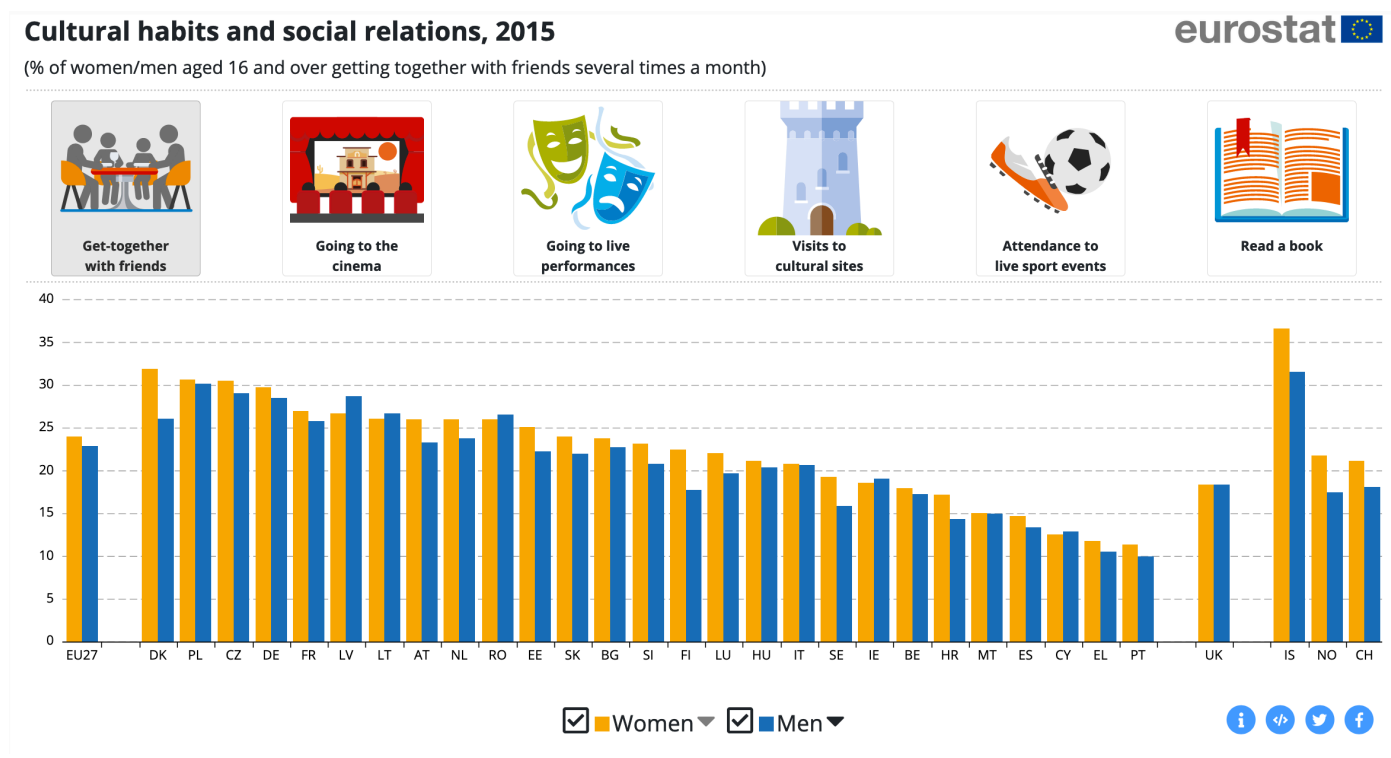
## 3.2 Cultural habits and social relations

### Reading books more common among women

Social activities, like seeing friends, and cultural habits, such as going to concerts, also differ between women and men.

Reading books was more common among women than among men in the EU (42 % of women and 31 % of men in 2013), as well as going to live performances, such as concerts (30 % of women and 28 % of men in 2015). Cultural habits, such as going to the cinema (29 % of women and 27 % of men) and visiting cultural sites (28 % of women and 27 % of men) or getting together with friends (24 % of women and 23 % of men), were very similar among women and men.

However, going to live sports events was more common among men than among women (21 % of men and 13 % of women) in the EU.



## 3.3 Internet habits

### **Women use the internet more for social networks and men more for reading the news**

Women in the EU use the internet somewhat less than men (83 % of women aged 16 to 74 used the internet at least once a week in 2019, compared with 85 % of men — see table for all Member States).

When looking at what the internet is used for, there was a smaller share of women than men in the EU reading the news online (70 % of women and 74 % of men who used the internet in the last three months) and who used internet banking (62 % of women and 65 % of men). There was a higher share of women than men using the internet for telephone calls (62 % of women and 59 % of men), while for sending and receiving e-mails (85 % of women and 86 % of men) and job search (19 % of women and 18 % of men) there was hardly no difference.

On the other hand, a higher share of women used the internet for participating in social networks (65 % women and 61 % of men).

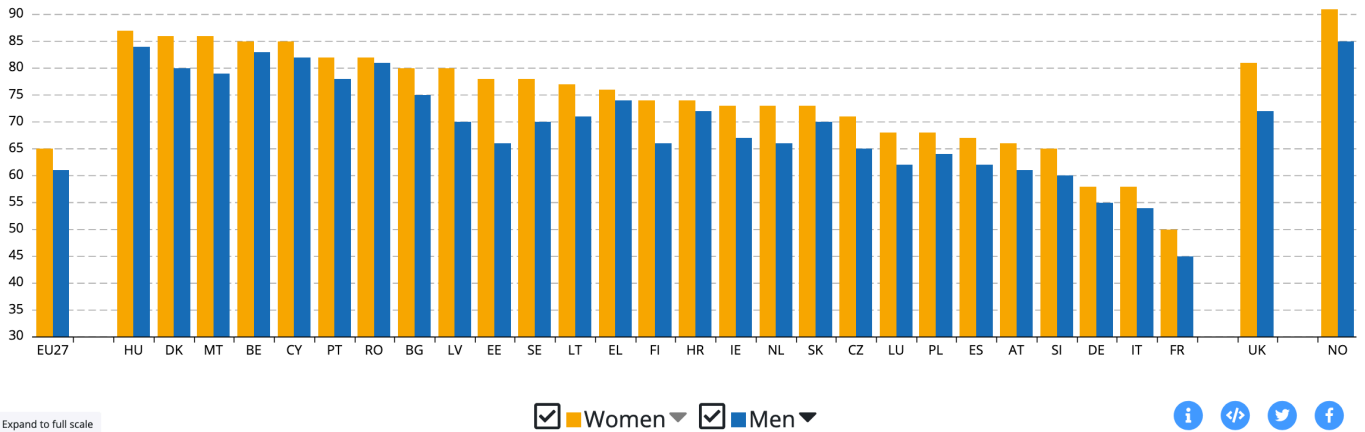
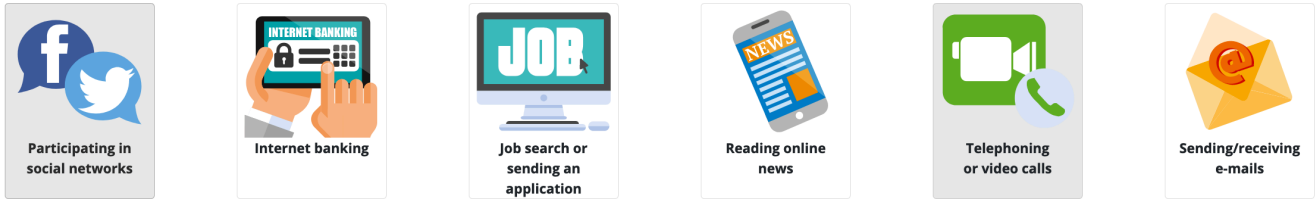
### **Larger share of women buying clothes online and men buying electronic goods online**

Using the internet to shop online is just slightly less frequent among women than among men (68 % of female internet users shopped online during the last twelve months in 2019, compared with 69 % of male — see table for all Member States). However, what is being bought differs between women and men. A much larger share of women than men bought clothes over the internet (69 % of female e-shoppers, compared with 57 % of male), while a much larger share of men bought electronic equipment (16 % of female e-shoppers and 32 % of male) and films (21 % of female e-shoppers and 28 % of male).

There were smaller differences for buying household goods online (42 % and 44 %) and for purchasing tickets for events online (39 % and 38 %) while for booking travel and holiday accommodation (52 % of both women and men) there was no difference.

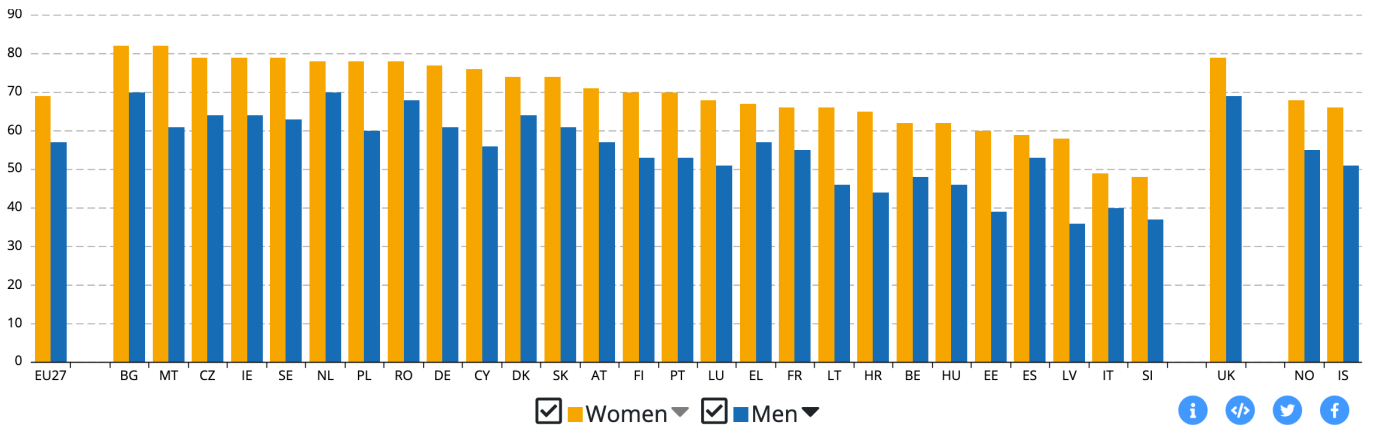
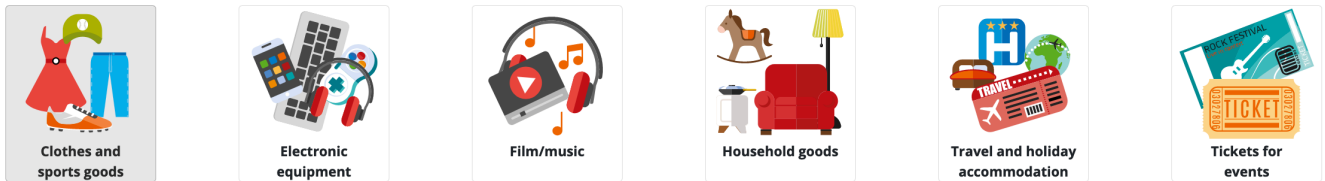
### Internet activities, 2019

(Share of women/men aged 16 to 74 who used the internet for participating in social networks, in % of all women/men the same age who used the internet within the last three months)



### Online shopping, 2019

(Share of women/men aged 16 to 74 who ordered clothes and sports goods online within the last year, in % of all woman/men the same age who ordered goods or services online within the last year)

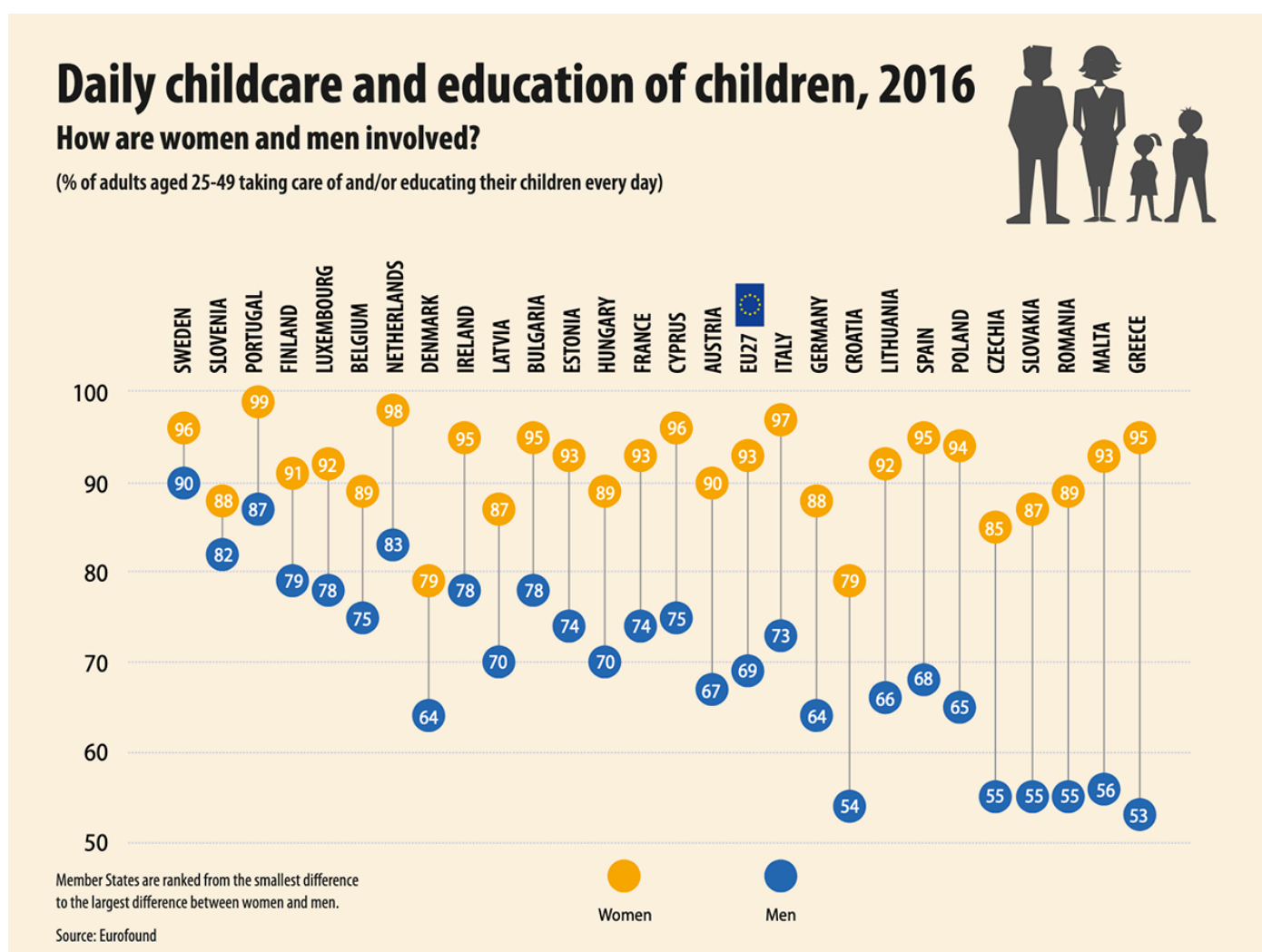


## 3.4 Childcare and housework

### A much larger share of women than men do child care, housework and cooking

For all Member States, there is a much larger share of women doing child care, housework and cooking than men. In the EU in 2016, 93 % of women aged 25 to 49 (with children under 18) took care of their children on a daily basis, compared with 69 % of men. Among the Member States, the largest differences between women and men were observed in Greece (95 % of women and 53 % of men) and Malta (93 % and 56 %), while the smallest were found in Sweden (96 % of women and 90 % of men) and Slovenia (88 % and 82 %).

For housework and cooking, the differences are even larger. In the EU in 2016, 78 % of women cooked and/or did housework on a daily basis, compared with 32 % of men. The largest differences between women and men were found in Greece (85 % of women and 16 % of men) and Italy (81 % and 20 %), and the smallest in Sweden (74 % women and 56 % of men) and Latvia (82 % and 57 %).

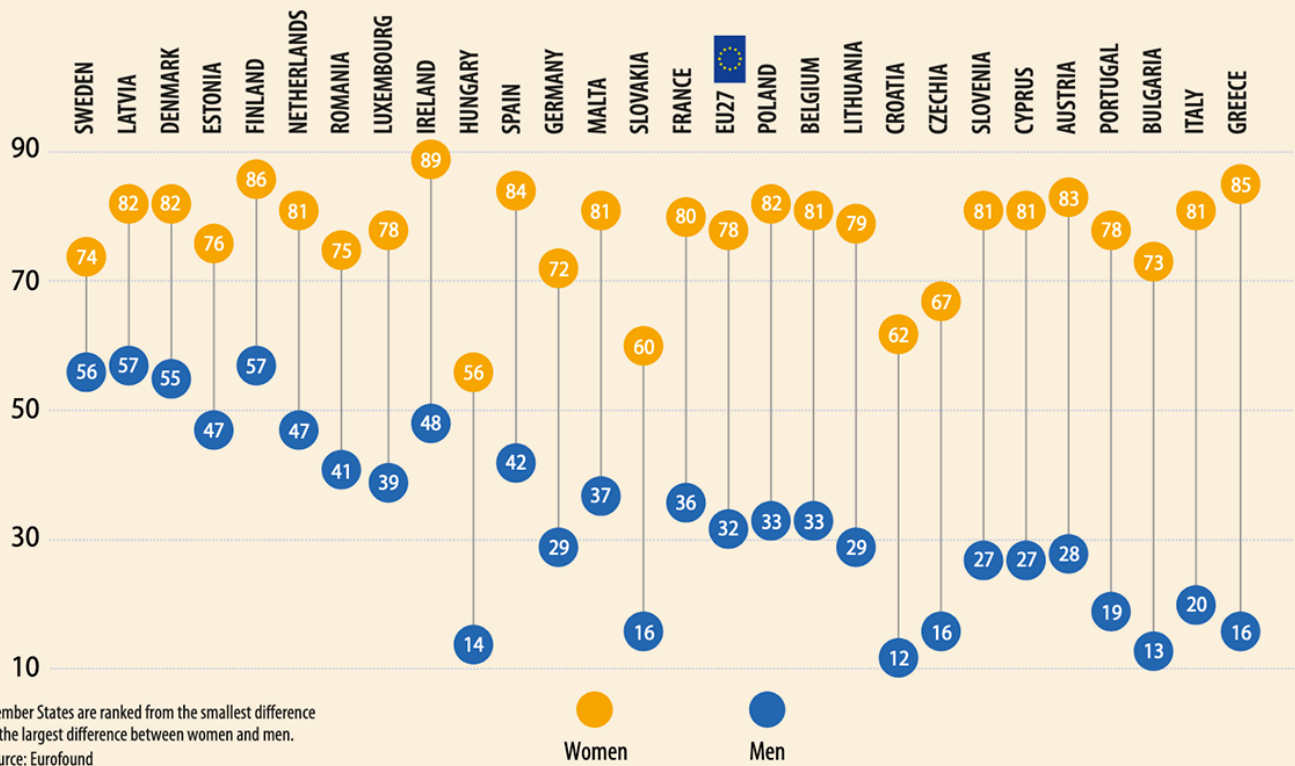




# Daily cooking and housework, 2016

## How are women and men involved?

(% of adults aged 18 and over cooking and/or doing housework every day)



## FURTHER INFORMATION

**The life of women and men in Europe – a statistical portrait** is a digital publication released by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union, in collaboration with the National Statistical Institutes of the EU Member States, the United Kingdom and the EFTA countries.

### Information on data

The European Union (EU) includes 27 EU Member States.  
Date of data extraction: July 2020.

### Contact

If you have questions on the data, please contact the Eurostat User Support.

### Identifiers of the digital publication

Catalogue number: KS-04-20-395-EN-Q  
ISBN: 978-92-76-19421-7  
Doi: 10.2785/484358

The European Commission is not liable for any consequence stemming from the reuse of this publication.



© European Union, 2020

The reuse policy of European Commission documents is implemented based on Commission Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents (OJ L 330, 14.12.2011, p. 39).

Except otherwise noted, the reuse of this document is authorised under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC-BY 4.0) licence. This means that reuse is allowed provided appropriate credit is given and any changes are indicated.

For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the European Union, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective rightholders. The European Union does not own the copyright of the following elements:

Cover picture: © Shutterstock - copyright Rawpixel.com - Image number: 174222101

Life satisfaction picture: © Shutterstock - copyright realpeople - Image number: 184712996

Menu icons: © Fontawesome

For more information, please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/about/policies/copyright>