

Reconciling work and family life in the EU25 in 2003

Employment rates lower and part-time rates higher for women with children

Higher employment rates for men with children

When they have children, how do women and men reconcile work and family life? Do they stop working or do they begin to work part-time? What are the differences between women and men? Answers to these questions can be found in a report¹ released by **Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities**, on the gender gaps in the reconciliation between work and family life.

In 2003, the employment rate² for women aged 20 to 49³ without children under 12 in the **EU25** was 75%, compared with 60% for those with children under 12. The opposite effect was observed for men: the employment rate increased from 86% for those without children to 91% for those with children under 12.

Amongst women in employment, a higher proportion work part-time when they have children. In the **EU25**, more than one woman out of three, with children and in employment, worked part-time⁴ in 2003, while only one out of five of those without children worked part-time.

This report also contains a number of other indicators, such as employment rates by the age of the youngest child, part-time work by the number of children, employment rates by level of education and number of children and the organisation of work of couples with or without children.

Highest employment rates for mothers in Slovenia, Denmark, Lithuania and Portugal

In 2003 the total employment rate for women without children under 12 was lower than for men in all Member States, except **Estonia** and **Finland**, where it was slightly higher. The employment rates for women without children were highest in the **Czech Republic** (86%), **Estonia** (84%), and **Austria**, the **United Kingdom** and **Slovenia** (all 83%). They were lowest in **Malta** (38%), **Greece** (57%), **Italy** (60%) and **Spain** (62%).

The total employment rate for women with children under 12 was lower than for those without children in all Member States, except for **Slovenia** and **Denmark**. The highest employment rates for women with children were in **Slovenia** (85%), **Denmark** (80%), **Lithuania** (79%) and **Portugal** (76%). The rates were lowest in **Malta** (27%), **Italy** and **Hungary** (both 50%), **Spain** (51%), **Greece** (53%) and the **Czech Republic** (54%). The differences between the rates for women with and without children were particularly significant in the **Czech Republic**, **Hungary**, **Slovakia**, **Estonia**, the **United Kingdom** and **Germany**.

For men, the pattern was quite different. In all Member States, the total employment rates were higher for those with children than for those without.

Part-time employment rates for mothers highest in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Germany

In the **EU25**, the part-time employment rate for women without children under 12 was 15% in 2003, compared to 23% for those with children. The highest part-time employment rates for mothers were found in the **Netherlands** (55%), followed by the **United Kingdom** (36%), **Germany** (35%), **Austria** (32%), **Belgium** (27%) and **Luxembourg** (26%). The lowest rates were found among the new Member States, in particular in **Slovakia** and **Slovenia** (2%).

The part-time employment rate for men in the **EU25** was low, for those with and without children, at around 3% in both cases.

Total and part-time employment rates for women and men in 2003

	Women aged 20 to 49				Men aged 20 to 49			
	Without children under 12		With children under 12		Without children under 12		With children under 12	
	Total	Part-time	Total	Part-time	Total	Part-time	Total	Part-time
EU25	75.1	15.2	60.4	22.7	85.7	3.5	91.3	2.6
Belgium	74.6	21.8	67.5	27.2	87.2	4.2	91.7	4.3
Czech Republic	85.7	2.4	54.1	3.9	90.6	0.6	94.4	0.5
Denmark	77.1	:	79.9	:	82.8	:	93.2	:
Germany	79.5	21.3	60.0	35.1	83.1	4.3	89.7	3.0
Estonia	83.8	4.5	62.4	4.9	82.7	4.0	91.2	(1.8)
Greece	56.5	4.9	52.7	6.7	86.8	2.1	96.5	2.4
Spain	61.7	8.7	51.2	9.7	90.0	1.4	93.0	0.9
France	76.6	14.1	66.3	17.6	85.4	3.3	91.4	2.5
Ireland	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Italy	60.4	12.3	49.7	15.2	91.6	3.3	94.0	3.3
Cyprus	74.9	8.8	69.7	8.3	93.4	(2.2)	95.8	(1.5)
Latvia	78.4	5.1	66.3	7.6	81.2	3.1	90.0	3.5
Lithuania	79.5	9.9	78.7	12.7	82.0	4.2	88.1	4.7
Luxembourg	74.8	15.5	59.3	26.1	90.7	:	96.6	(1.6)
Hungary	78.2	2.3	50.3	3.7	82.3	1.2	86.4	0.9
Malta	37.5	(8.6)	26.7	(8.4)	87.0	:	90.6	:
Netherlands	81.9	33.0	69.6	54.7	88.6	7.8	93.6	4.2
Austria	83.4	16.8	72.1	32.3	91.5	2.3	95.6	1.5
Poland	70.4	8.6	59.2	10.1	77.5	3.0	84.9	2.3
Portugal	76.6	7.7	76.4	7.2	90.8	2.0	94.6	(1.0)
Slovenia	83.1	2.6	85.3	(1.8)	87.0	(1.7)	94.2	(0.8)
Slovakia	81.4	2.0	59.1	1.6	83.2	(0.8)	86.5	:
Finland	77.9	10.2	72.0	7.8	76.6	5.0	92.4	(2.4)
Sweden	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
United Kingdom	83.2	18.5	61.8	36.2	87.1	3.4	90.9	3.3

: Data not available or not reliable due to a small sample size

() Data less reliable due to a small sample size

The more children, the lower the female employment rate

When analysing employment rates by the number of children there is a clear pattern, with employment rates for women decreasing when the number of children increases. In the **EU25** in 2003, the employment rates for women aged 20 to 49 fell from 65% with one child under 12, to 58% with two, and to 41% with three children or more. For men in the **EU25** the employment rates were 91%, 92% and 86% respectively.

The rates for women with three or more children were lower than those for women with one or two children in all Member States. The largest differences between the employment rates for mothers having one child and those having three children or more were observed in **Hungary** (59% compared to 13%), **Slovakia** (68% compared to 27%) and the **Czech Republic** (61% compared to 22%), the three Member States where the employment rates for women having three children or more were the lowest. The highest employment rates for women having three children or more were observed in **Slovenia** (82%), **Denmark** (67%) and **Portugal** (60%).

Employment rates in 2003 by the number of children under 12

	Women aged 20 to 49			Men aged 20 to 49		
	One child	Two children	Three children or more	One child	Two children	Three children or more
EU25	64.8	57.8	41.2	91.4	92.3	86.1
Belgium	70.4	69.5	49.2	91.5	93.4	87.1
Czech Republic	61.4	45.4	22.0	95.0	94.8	84.5
Denmark	80.3	82.2	67.2	93.6	93.7	89.1
Germany	66.0	55.2	37.9	89.8	90.7	85.0
Estonia	66.1	59.8	(39.1)	91.5	90.9	89.4
Greece	54.2	52.8	39.6	96.3	96.9	95.2
Spain	53.8	47.5	41.3	92.8	93.9	88.2
France	73.3	63.8	39.8	91.7	92.0	87.3
Ireland	:	:	:	:	:	:
Italy	52.7	45.8	35.0	94.1	94.1	91.4
Cyprus	72.9	71.5	51.6	94.7	98.1	93.4
Latvia	69.5	61.6	(50.6)	89.3	91.8	89.1
Lithuania	81.3	76.8	(58.9)	87.8	90.5	79.7
Luxembourg	68.8	53.0	(34.7)	96.7	96.8	96.0
Hungary	59.4	43.8	12.6	87.7	87.7	73.8
Malta	29.9	(23.8)	:	90.4	95.3	(93.6)
Netherlands	71.6	70.3	58.5	92.3	94.8	93.4
Austria	77.8	66.1	57.4	95.9	96.1	91.2
Poland	63.5	55.1	44.7	85.1	86.4	78.4
Portugal	77.7	75.0	60.2	94.4	95.1	94.2
Slovenia	85.6	85.4	(81.8)	94.0	94.8	93.8
Slovakia	67.7	51.0	27.4	88.2	87.9	72.1
Finland	75.0	74.4	56.2	91.5	93.1	93.2
Sweden	:	:	:	:	:	:
United Kingdom	67.8	60.9	37.9	91.5	92.3	84.3

: Data not available or not reliable due to a small sample size

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1. Eurostat, *Statistics in Focus*, Theme 3, Population and Social conditions, 4/2005, **Gender gaps in the reconciliation between work and family life**. The publication is available free of charge in PDF format on the Eurostat website.
2. The employment rate is calculated as the number of persons in employment in relation to the total population of the same gender and age. The employment rates are calculated here for reference persons and partners, which may explain the differences with regard to the rates normally calculated for the whole population.
3. The analysis is limited to reference persons and partners aged 20-49, in order to exclude households less affected by the need to reconcile work and family life. The children considered are below the age of 12. Members of the household other than the children under 12 of the reference person or his/her partner are not considered for the purpose of analysis.
4. Full time: 30 hours or more usually worked per week, part-time: less than 30 hours usually worked per week.

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