

Labour Market Information for Gender Analysis in the Italian Context

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1. Frame of reference

In democratic and more socially advanced countries the goal of complete gender equality, at least from a legal stand point can be considered achieved. However they are still numerous economic and social obstacles that prevent the achievement of concrete and substantive equality between the sexes. Over time, the situation has improved but due to social conventions that hamper development, evolution of this is slow. Although women have attained great and important goals, the social, economic and political power they hold is inadequate. While in many countries (including Italy) the number of female graduates exceeds that of male s, women still do not hold top positions at work, and even less women are elected in representative assemblies.

The triple role of wife-mother-worker that women have to reconcile is a particularly incisive factor regarding female participation in the labor market. The obstacles to achieving "equal opportunities" are attributed not only to cultural factors but also to the delay our country increases its welfare state function with respect to all citizens and in adherence to gender equality. Economic data show that in Italy only 1,4% of GDP is spent on family and motherhood, compared with the EU average of 2.1% and 3.7% in Denmark. The latest report of the World Economic Forum "The Global Gender Gap Report 2010" has through 14 indicators of social, economic and demographic trends monitored the status of women in 134 countries representing 90% of the world population. In this particular ranking, Italy was placed 74th, according to the summary the gender inequality indicator fell (it was the 72th place in 2009 and at 67th in 2008). Reviewing the various components of the synthetic indicator of the gender gap, we find Italy at 95th for the disparities in economic status, at 91st for labor income, on the 88th position for participation in the workplace, at the 46th level of schooling and 45th for political participation. Only 13% of Italian executives are women and of those on boards of directors of listed companies 5.9% are female. Furthermore, 20% of women leave their jobs after they have their first child. So, the road that Italy needs to travel along to achieve targets that would have it ranked alongside the top countries (Sweden, Denmark, and Finland) is still very long.

One particular problem is the abandonment of work to raise a family, and this according to an internal source at CNEL has been the organization's focus.

In February 2012, at the conference on "The General Status of women's work", it was stated that, *"The Italian system does not provide services to the family, and consequently this poses as a difficulty for women accessing the labour market and they leave work after the birth of their first child or to assist elderly relatives. Among women aged between 25 and 45 years after the birth of their firstchild, the employment rate abruptly jumps from 63% to 50%, to fall further after the birth*

of their second child, pointing out the role of women in the world work as expendable for childcare and domestic activities". The result is that our country records an employment rate of women among the lowest in Europe. Just within the EU, the European Commission in 2010 adopted a strategy called Europe 2020, which aims to reduce the gender gap by promoting, among other things, women's entrepreneurship, equal pay for equal work and other important initiatives to achieve the target set for the 2020 (an employment rate for people between 20 to 64 years equal to 75% for both men and women). At present, the EU average for 2010 was 68.6%, 6.4 percentage points lower than targeted. However, this is a result that summarizes large disparities between Member States: four countries (Sweden, Netherlands, Denmark and Cyprus) have already reached the target of 75% , but there are 15 countries with indicators less than 70% and Italy is amongst those.

2. Context

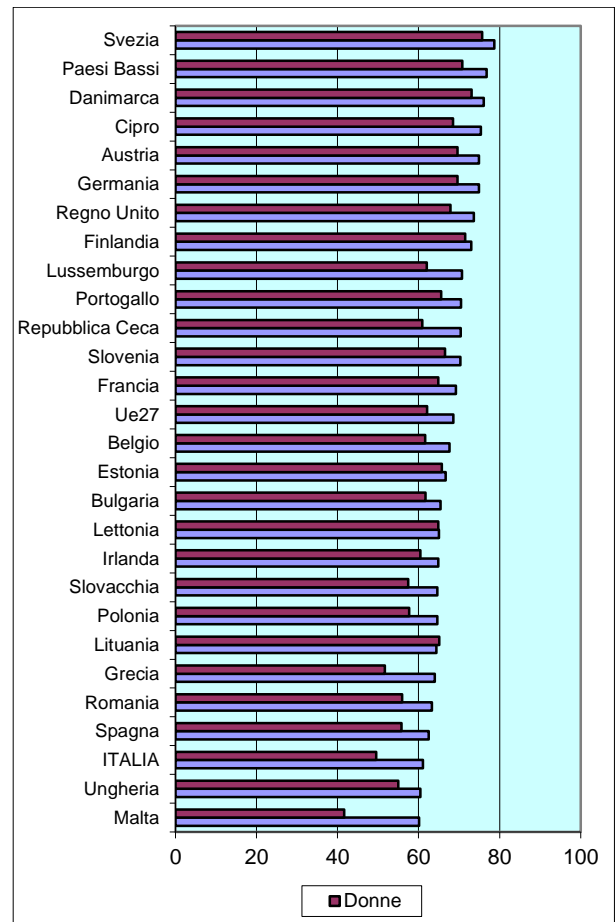
In Italy with reference to the year 2010, the value of the indicator discussed above is equal to 61.1%, 13.9 percentage points away from the European target, placing it as part of the last three in the EU 27 (followed in ranking only by Malta and Hungary). Following from this there is a large gender imbalance of employees, of whom 72.8% are men and 49.5% are women. This marks a distance of 12.6 percentage points between the female employment rate and male employment in Italy compared to the EU 2.3 points. The female employment rate of 49, 5% in Italy is in the penultimate place in the European rankings, followed only by Malta at 41.6%. Those ranked at the top are the usual Nordic countries: Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Netherlands, all with higher values, and approaching the 70% target of Europe 2020. (Table No.1)

Table1: Employment rate (20 to 64 years)EU 27.Year 2010

COUNTRY	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
SWEDEN	78,7	81,7	75,7
NETHERLAND	76,8	82,8	70,8
DENMARK	76,1	79,0	73,1
CYPRUS	75,4	82,5	68,5
GERMANY	74,9	80,1	69,6
AUSTRIA	74,9	80,2	69,6
UNITED KINGDOM	73,6	79,3	67,9
FINLAND	73,0	74,5	71,5
LUXEMBURG	70,7	79,2	62,0
PORTUGAL	70,5	75,4	65,6
CZECH REPUBLIC	70,4	79,6	60,9
SLOVENIA	70,3	74,0	66,5
FRANCE	69,2	73,8	64,9
BELGIUM	67,6	73,5	61,6
ESTONIA	66,7	67,7	65,7
BULGARIA	65,4	69,1	61,7
LATVIA	65,0	65,1	64,9
IRELAND	64,9	69,4	60,4
POLAND	64,6	71,6	57,7
SLOVAKIA	64,6	71,9	57,4
LITHUANIA	64,4	63,6	65,1
GREECE	64,0	76,2	51,7
Romania	63,3	70,8	55,9
SPAIN	62,5	69,1	55,8
ITALY	61,1	72,8	49,5
HUNGARY	60,4	66,0	55,0
MALTA	60,1	77,8	41,6
Ue27	68,6	75,1	62,1

SOURCE: EUROSTAT

Figure 1: Female employment rates, EU 27. Year 2010

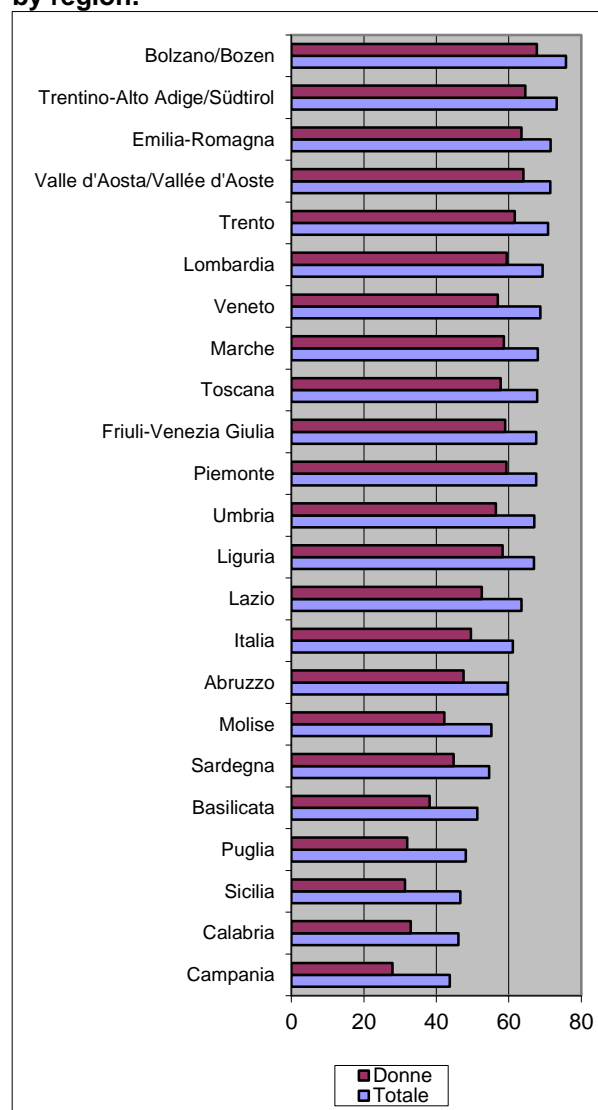


SOURCE: EUROSTAT

Table 2: Employment rates 20-64 years by sex in the Italian regions. Year 2010

<i>Regions and Autonomus provinces</i>	Total	Male	Female
<i>Bolzano/Bozen</i>	75,8	83,7	67,7
Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol	73,3	81,8	64,6
Emilia-Romagna	71,5	79,6	63,5
Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste	71,4	78,7	64,0
<i>Trento</i>	70,8	79,9	61,6
Lombardia	69,4	79,1	59,4
Veneto	68,7	80,2	56,9
Marche	68,0	77,4	58,7
Toscana	67,8	78,1	57,8
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	67,6	76,0	59,0
Piemonte	67,5	75,8	59,3
Umbria	67,1	77,9	56,4
Liguria	67,0	75,9	58,3
Lazio	63,5	74,9	52,5
Abruzzo	59,7	72,1	47,5
Molise	55,2	68,1	42,2
Sardegna	54,6	64,4	44,8
Basilicata	51,3	64,5	38,1
Puglia	48,2	64,9	32,0
Sicilia	46,6	62,6	31,3
Calabria	46,1	59,5	32,9
Campania	43,7	59,9	27,9
Geographical Areas			
North West	68,6	77,9	59,3
North East	70,1	79,7	60,3
Center	65,7	76,5	55,2
Central North	68,2	78,0	58,4
South	47,8	62,9	33,1
Italy	61,1	72,8	49,5

Figure 2: Female employment rates in the Italy by region.



SOURCE: ISTAT, Rilevazione sulle forze di lavoro

2. Key indicators of the Italian labour market

Between 2010 and 2011 the Italian occupation index decreased by 75,000 units. This was due to only a decline in the male component. The overall employment rate stands at 56.9%, just one-tenth of a point above that of 2010. At the territorial level, the reduction of the indicator in the Center is accompanied by the modest increase in the North and in the South (Table 3, 4 and 5).

Table 3: Employment by sex and geographical distribution- Media 2011

Geographical distribution	Absolute values (in thousands)			Variations in percentage points on 2010		
	Male and Female	Male	Female	Male and Female	Male	Female
Total	22.967	13.619	9.349	0,4	-0,1	1,2
North	11.925	6.818	5.107	0,7	0,2	1,5
Center	4.826	2.774	2.052	-0,1	-0,6	0,6
South	6.216	4.026	2.189	0,2	-0,2	1,1

Table 4: Employment rate 15-64 years by gender and geographical distribution- Media 2011

Geographical distribution	Percentage values			Variations in percentage points on 2010		
	Male and Female	Male	Female	Male and Female	Male	Female
Total	56,9	67,5	46,5	0,1	-0,2	0,4
North	65,0	73,8	56,6	0,2	-0,1	-0,5
Center	61,1	70,7	51,7	-0,4	-0,7	-0,0
South	44,0	57,4	30,8	0,1	-0,2	-0,3

Table 5: Employment rate 15-24 years old by gender and geographical distribution - Media 2011

Geographical distribution	Percentage values			Variations in percentage points on 2010		
	Male and female	Male	Female	Male and female	Male	Female
Total	19,4	23,1	15,5	-1,1	-1,2	-0,9
North	25,3	29,2	21,1	-1,0	-1,1	-0,9
Center	19,9	23,8	15,8	-1,6	-1,7	-1,6
South	13,4	16,7	10,0	-1,0	-1,2	-0,8

Source: Istat *Rcfl*- Media Annual 2011

In 2011, the number of those unemployed remained stable, as the downturn in the early part of the year was compensated by a subsequent increase, although there was a decrease for men from 10.4% to 10.2%, and an increase for women from 13.3% to 14.5% (Table 6).

Table 6: Unemployed persons by sex and geographical area – Media 2011

Geographical distribution	Absolute values (in thousands)			Variations in percentage points on 2010		
	Male and female	Male	Female	Male and female	Male	Female
Total	2.108	1.114	993	0,3	0,1	0,5
North	731	360	371	-2,0	-1,4	-2,5
Center	399	198	201	0,1	0,4	-0,1
South	978	556	422	2,0	0,9	3,6

Source: Istat; RcfI – Media 2011

The number of those inactive between 15 and 64 years has essentially remained stable year-on-year but there has been an increase in downtime due to family reasons and waiting for the results of previous research activities, alongside a reduction of those totally uninterested at work. In this area, the rate of inactivity reaches average 34.5% for 2011 for men and 63.2% for women (Table 7).

Table 7: Inactive 15-64 years by gender and geographical distribution-Media 2011

Geographical distribution	Absolute values (in thousands)			Variations in percentage points on 2010		
	Male and female	Male	Female	Male and Female	Male	Female
Total	14.972	5.316	9.656	0,1	1,0	-0,3
North	5.5514	2.010	3.504	0,1	0,8	-0,3
Center	2.617	925	1.692	1,6	3,3	0,7
South	6.841	2.381	4.460	-0,4	0,3	-0,7

Source: Istat; RcfI – Media 2011

In Italy becoming a mother is associated with a lower proportion of women in the labour market. In the 25-54 age group mothers of children and young people at home less than 15 years old the labour market participation rate is 60.6% and 55.5%, significantly lower than those of the other women of the same age group. This is in contrast to fathers who account for a male labour participation rate of 90.6% and higher than that of 79.8% in other countries, confirming the traditional role of the breadwinner in households being male. There is also an inverse relationship between women's participation in the labour market and the number of children they have who are younger than 15 years. The percentage of those working is equal to 58.5% for women with one child, falls to 54% for those with two children falling further to 33.3% for mothers with three or more children. In the South, where women's participation in the labour market is restrained, the responsibilities of caring for children has a greater effect on female employment compared to the North-Central. Only 34.6% of mothers who live in the South or in the Islands are in the labour market, against a value nearly double (68.8%) detected for those residing in the North (Table 8).

Table 8: Employment rate of persons 25-54 years by sex, age group, geographic distribution, educational qualification and child care responsibilities of those younger than 15 years old

Features	Male		Female		Male and Female	
	Parents with children under the age of 15		Parents with children under the age of 15		Parents with children under the age of 15	
	SI	NO	SI	NO	SI	NO
AGE GROUP						
25-34	87,0	73,1	45,0	63,2	59,5	68,9
35-44	91,7	82,6	59,1	69,0	74,5	76,4
45-54	90,5	84,8	61,5	57,6	79,4	69,8
GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION						
North	95,0	87,9	68,8	74,8	81,3	81,7
Center	95,5	83,8	62,4	69,3	78,0	76,7
South	82,4	65,3	34,6	40,8	57,5	53,1
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT						
High School or Lower	85,0	75,2	36,5	45,9	62,0	61,5
High School	94,6	83,7	62,1	70,4	76,8	77,4
University Degree or Post-Doc	97,3	80,7	79,7	76,0	86,9	78,1
TOTAL	90,6	79,8	55,5	62,0	72,2	71,2

Source: Istat in "La conciliazione tra lavoro e famiglia", Report 28 dicembre 2010.

As regards employment arrangements, the data refers to female workers in an employment relationship. These women make up 75.1% of the female labour force, while 24.9% are self-employed (Table 9).

Table 9: Employment by type of schedule, location and employment status – Media 2011

Occupational status, type of occupation, working hours	Absolute values (in thousands)	Variations on 2010		Incidence %	
		Absolute (in thousands)	Percentages	2010	2011
Total	22.967	95	0,4	100,0	100,0
Full time	19.416	-19	-0,1	85,7	84,5
Part time	3.551	114	3,3	15,0	15,5
Salaried Employment	17.240	130	0,8	74,8	75,1
Open-Ended Employment contracts	14.937	10	0,1	65,3	65,0
Full time	12.707	-61	-0,5	55,8	55,3
Part time	2.230	70	3,3	9,4	9,7
Limited-term employment contracts	2.303	121	5,5	9,5	10,0
Full time	1.708	80	4,9	7,1	7,4
Part time	595	40	7,3	2,4	2,6
Self-Employment	5.727	-36	-0,6	25,2	24,9
Full time	5.001	-39	-0,8	22,0	21,8
Part time	726	4	0,5	3,2	3,2
of which					
Collaborators	416	16	3,9	1,7	1,8

Source: Istat; RcfI – Media 2011

From the perspective of the history of women's employment in Italy, one can say that albeit slow and with difficulty, from the late 1990s and, later, with the introduction of the Biagi Law, there has been a steady increase in female employment, until the advent of the recent economic and financial crisis (2008), which resulted in a decrease of female participation rates. In fact, if you take into account the time series from 2001 to 2010, you may notice that the percentage of female employment, compared to the total number of employed has gone from 38.8% to 46.1%. Analyzing the numerical data that reveals an increase from 8,526,000 to 9,238,000 women employed, you can extrapolate a further and important element, which in addition to attesting to the increased presence of women in the workforce, for the period 2001-2010 shows that the peak of 2008-when they were 9,341,000 women working initially experienced a slight decline, and in 2010 began to slowly rise. ISTAT data for 2011 seems to confirm this trend. Being aware of the slow and gradual progress, we must continue on a path that would appear to be long and winding.

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