

## GENDER EQUITY IN ROMANIAN COMPANIES

**CRISTEA NICOLETA-ELENA**

PHD. STUD., BUCHAREST UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMIC STUDIES, ROMANIA  
email: cristeanicoleta19@stud.ase.ro

**PĂNESCU ION**

PHD. STUD., BUCHAREST UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMIC STUDIES, ROMANIA  
email: ion\_panescu@yahoo.com

**GEBREMESKEL ALULA NEREA**

PHD. STUD., BUCHAREST UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMIC STUDIES, ROMANIA  
email: gebremeskelalula20@stud.ase.ro

### **Abstract**

Romania is a country where during the communism, more precisely until 1989, the equality between men and women was promoted. The first research questions is „How is the level of unemployment in Romania for men and women?” For answering to this question, we used data between 2009 and 2022 extracted from Eurostat. The second question is: „How is the level of employment in Romania for men and women?” For answering to this question, we analyzed the sustainability reports of 6 important companies from the medical field: Antibiotice Iasi, Biofarm, Farmacia Remedia, MedLife, Regina Maria and Zentiva. From the sustainability reports of all the entities analyzed we found that 70% are women and 30% of the employees are men. This research may help to enhance sustainability reporting by focusing on gender distribution.

**Keywords:** Sustainability reporting, Gender Equity, Romania, Gender distribution, Gender issue, Non-financial reporting, Unemployment.

**JEL Classification:** M41, J16, J71, J64

### **1.Introduction and context of study**

Gender equity refers to the principle of fairness in the treatment of individuals, regardless of their gender identity. There shouldn't be any bias or discrimination based on gender; all genders should have equal access to the same opportunities, rights, and resources. Since gender-based inequality and discrimination still exist in numerous domains of life, including education, employment, healthcare, and politics, gender equity is an important subject in today's society. Historically, women have experienced institutional impediments that have limited their chances and rights, resulting in a gender imbalance in income, representation, and access to resources.

The societal and cultural roles, expectations, and customs linked with being male or female are referred to as gender issues. In every aspect of life, women bring a special perspective and energy that makes the world a better place. They are mothers, daughters, sisters, wives, friends, mentors and leaders who make a positive impact on the lives of those around them. Women contribute enormously to society in many ways. They possess qualities such as resilience, empathy, creativity and intelligence that make them exceptional. Women have the ability to educate, inspire and lead with grace and dignity. They are able to juggle multiple tasks and overcome obstacles with grace and determination. Throughout history, women have made significant contributions to fields such as science, technology, medicine art, literature, politics and more. Women have broken down barriers and overcome stereotypes, paving the way for future generations to realize their dreams and reach their full potential, and contribute enormously to the society in multiple ways. They have broken down barriers and overcome stereotypes, paving the way for future generations to realize their dreams and reach their full potential.

During the communism, in Romania equality between women and men was promoted. The long and difficult route from communism to an autonomous market-led economy resulted in significant rises in inequality and poverty in Romania, and the country went from being one of the lowest inequality in 1990 (comparable to Sweden) to one of the most unequal by 2007 (Precupetu & Precupetu, 2014). In a national analysis of female employees between 2004 and 2013, the lowest value was recorded in 2008, which was the year when the financial crisis started, with subsequent national and international emphasis emphasizing the growing number of labor resources for women during the crisis, 2009-2012 (Romanescu, 2016).

Most Romanian businesses don't release social or environmental reports (Jindrichovska & Purcarea, 2011). According to the available literature, obligatory CSR reporting may improve the information provided to investors and other stakeholders (Christensen, et al., 2021). Overall, the information presented by Romanian entities is quite generic and ignores information about environmental risk, costs, and obligations (Jindrichovska & Purcarea, 2011). This speaks to the quality of the reporting (Jindrichovska & Purcarea, 2011). In Romania, there are divergent views toward the institutionalization of CSR reporting practices: on the one hand, there is active engagement in global discussions of the subject; on the other, there is a lack of involvement in the training of professionals with a CSR reporting specialty (Gușe, et al., 2016). Reviewing the CSR literature reveals that many of the factors that determine voluntary CSR reporting are comparable to those that have been identified for financial reporting (Christensen, et al., 2021). Despite the fact that corporate social responsibility has been widely used and championed for decades by organizations all over the world, there is still debate among academia, business, and society at large over how CSR should be described and applied (Dobre, 2022).

Male and female users typically utilize technology differently, i.e., exploratory and developmental versus practical and instrumental, and gender-based access and computer literacy levels among school groups are disappearing problems (Gunn, et al., 2003). In terms of splitting of domestic labor, academic families act much like other families, with women bearing a disproportionate amount of both housework and child care (Suitor, et al., 2001). Financial crises particularly hurt women because they bear a disproportionate amount of the risk of economic downturns and the consequences of market volatility (United Nations International Research and Training, 2004).

In a world that is becoming more globalized, the demand to establish global medical ethics norms has never been greater (Williams, 2005). Romania ranked last in the European Health Consumer Index in a study for 35 countries – more precisely at the end, 35, for 2014 (Health Consumer Powerhouse, 2014), on 32 for 2015 (Health Consumer Powerhouse, 2015), on 35 for 2016 (Health Consumer Powerhouse, 2016), on 34 for 2017 (Health Consume Powerhouse, 2017) and on 34 for 2018 (Health Consumer Powerhouse, 2018).

#### **Some of the famous Romanian women**

Elena Ghica, a member of the affluent Ghica family who spoke nine other languages by the age of 10, and who at the age of 14 translated Homer's "Iliad" into German, was the first mountaineer to climb the Swiss Alps (Gândul, 2017). Elisa Leonida Zamfirescu (b. November 10, 1887 - d. November 25, 1973), sister of the engineer Dimitrie Leonida, was the first woman engineer from Europe in 1912 and oversaw the laboratories at the Romanian Geological Institute (EnciclopediaRomâniei.ro, 2010). Ecaterina Teodoroiu (born Cătălina Toderiu on January 14, 1894), a volunteer in the First World War promoted and personally congratulated by King Ferdinand, died heroically on August 22, 1917, at the head of the platoon she commanded as a second lieutenant, in the battle with the German-Austro-Hungarian army (Vasile, 2022). The first woman aviator in Romania, Elena Caragiani-Stoenescu (b. May 13, 1887, d. March 29, 1929), was prohibited from flying in her own country, she left for France in 1914 and became the first war correspondent in history to write "airplane reports.", and as a result, the World Record Academy recognizes her as the First Female World War Correspondent and the First War Correspondent to Write "Airplane Reports"

(World Record Academy, 2019). Sarmiza Bilcescu Alimănișteanu (b. April 27, 1867, d August 26, 1935), a Romanian lawyer, was the first woman in Europe to ever get a law license and a PhD from the University of Paris, and according to the World Record Academy, she was also the first woman in the world to earn a law doctorate in the contemporary era (World Record Academy, 2019).

## 2. Research questions

Starting from the subject of the gender equity, the main research questions for this research are:

- i. How is the level of unemployment in Romania for men and women?
- ii. How is the level of employment in Romania for men versus women?

## 3. Methodology

Secondary Data Analysis was employed. Descriptive research was employed. For the first question „How is the level of unemployment in Romania for men and women?” we used information from Eurostat between 2009 and 2022. The second question is „How is the level of employment in Romania for men and women?” For answering to the second question, we examined the sustainability reports for six important Romanian medical enterprises for the year 2021: Antibiotice, Biofarm, Farmacia Remedia, MedLife, Regina Maria and Zentiva. We used percentages, ratios, average, min and max, to analyse the research questions.

## 4. Findings

### Companies analyzed

For this part we used information from the companies’s websites and from the Bucharest Stock Exchange.

#### Antibiotice Iasi

Antibiotice SA, Romania's top generic medication company, was formed in December 1955. In April 1977, the firm was launched on the Bucharest Stock Exchange, and it has since established itself as one of the most important companies with essential Romanian capital. Since the year 2000, the company has invested more than EUR 30 million at the Iasi manufacturing plant. Antibiotice now has eight US FDA and GMP-approved manufacturing lines, as well as international standards in place. The firm's primary operation is the manufacture of anti-infectives in solid oral dosage forms, and it is also the only pharmaceutical company in Romania that fills anti-infective sterile powders for injectable therapy. Antibiotice SA from Iasi is the leading manufacturer of drugs for Romanian hospitals, with the largest market share in Romania for topical products (ointments, creams, gels), while also developing a significant segment of products for the cardiovascular system, central nervous system, and oncology. The main shareholder is Ministry of Health with 53%. (Antibiotice, 2023) (Antibiotice, 2023)

#### Biofarm

Biofarm corporation was formed in 1921 by the amalgamation of many companies that created medications and utilised medicinal plants, various animal glands, organs, and byproducts as raw materials. The company began to be traded on the RASDAQ market in 1996. In 2005 the firm was launched on the Bucharest Stock Exchange, and starting from 2015, the company's shares are included in the Premium Category. They have over 200 products in their portfolio and they cover over 60 therapeutic areas. The company is present in 12 other countries - Azerbaijan, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Georgia, Iraq, Lithuania, Malta, Moldova, Russia, Hungary, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. (Biofarm, 2023) (Biofarm, 2023)

#### Farmaceutica Remedia SA

Farmaceutica Remedia SA, a member of the group of companies, was founded in 1991 and specializes in pharmaceutical product sales and distribution, as well as promotion and marketing operations in the healthcare sector. During 2019-2020, Farmaceutica REMEDIA transferred 63

pharmacies to Help Net, a subsidiary of the German group Phoenix, ensuring investors' expectations of increased profitability, as well as resources for consolidating and expanding profitable business lines and innovative projects in the area of health services. It is one of the TOP 10 distributors on the pharmaceutical market. The company currently operates 24 own units in 5 counties, primarily in Hunedoara, Alba, and Sibiu, and develops the online platform [www.farmacileremedia.ro](http://www.farmacileremedia.ro), which offers a diverse range of para-pharmaceutical products, medical devices, food supplements, dermatocosmetics, and over-the-counter (OTC) products in accordance with legal regulations. (Farmaceutica Remedia, 2023) (Farmaceutica Remedia, 2023)

#### **MedLife**

The first MedLife clinic, which provides young couples with family planning services and medical support, opened its doors in 1996. Pediatrics, Obstetrics-Gynecology, Ophthalmology, and Internal Medicine were the clinic's four medical specializations. The first own laboratory for analyses and paraclinical research was created in 1999. The company has many clinics, one of the largest networks of medical laboratories, general and specialized hospitals, and the country's largest client database for Healthcare Prevention Packages. Furthermore, according to publicly accessible information, it is one of the largest private healthcare companies in Central and Eastern Europe in terms of sales. (MedLife, 2023) (MedLife, 2023)

#### **Regina Maria**

Initially named „Centrul Unirea” was founded in 1995, in 1996 it became the first provider of private medical services to introduce the concept of medical subscriptions. The first customers are Tetra Pak in 1998, and Ursus, GSK și ING BANK in 2002.

#### **Zentiva**

Zentiva SA is a subsidiary of the Zentiva Group, which develops, manufactures, and markets modern, high-quality, and reasonably priced pharmaceutical goods. With over 60 years of experience on the Romanian market, Zentiva is one of the largest medication makers in terms of volume, performing its industrial activities inside the site in Bucharest, industrial unit equipped with cutting-edge technology. The Bucharest factory has been running continuously since its inception in 1962, and has benefited from sustained and persistent investments since privatization in the 2000s. At the present, the site is powered entirely by renewable energy. (Zentiva SA, 2023)

**Table 1 - Men and women distribution Year 2021**

<b>Companies Name</b>	<b>Men - Number of employees</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Women - Number of employees</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number of employees - Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Antibiotice	626	46%	744	54%	1,370	100%
Biofarm	108	29%	265	71%	373	100%
Farmaceutica Remedia	74	32%	156	68%	230	100%
MedLife	977	19%	4,116	81%	5,093	100%
Regina Maria	842	16%	4,386	84%	5,228	100%
Zentiva	335	39%	524	61%	859	100%

*Source:* Author's research, (Antibiotice, 2022) (Biofarm, 2022) (Farmaceutica Remedia, 2022) (MedLife, 2022) (Regina Maria, 2022) (Zentiva, 2022)

Table 2 - Indicators

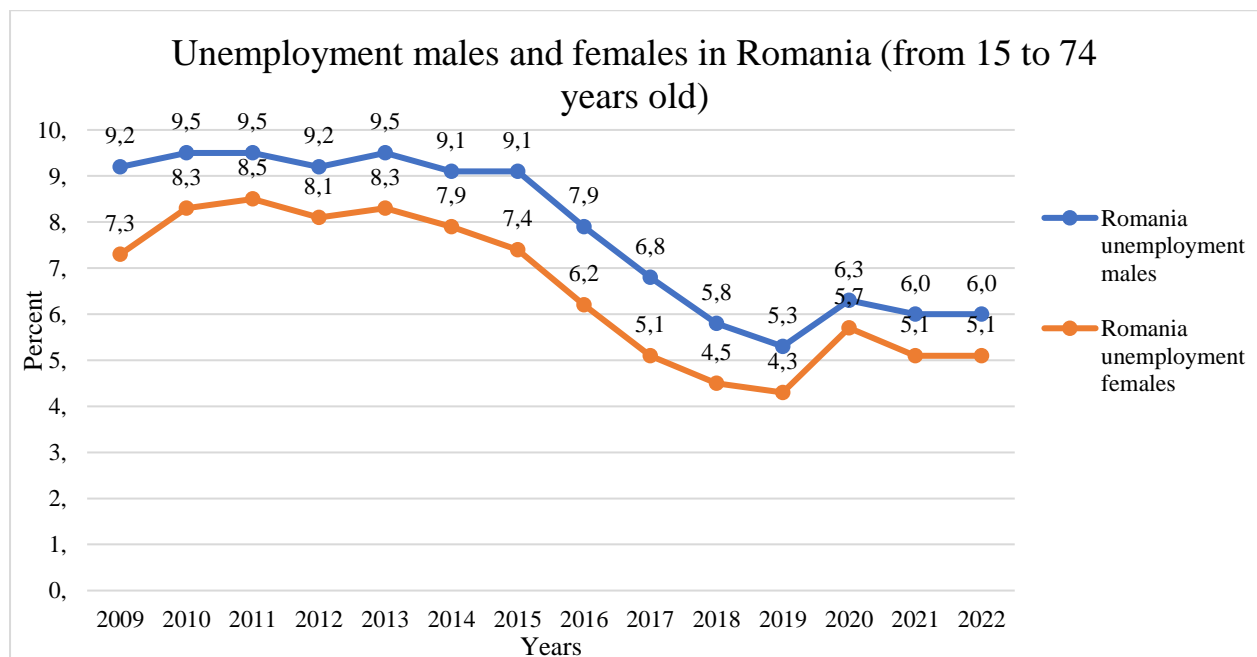
Antibiotice, Biofarm, MedLife, Regina Maria and Zentiva					
Indicators	Men - Number of employees	%	Women - Number of employees	%	Total Number of employees
Average	494	30%	1,699	70%	2,192
Min	74		156		230
Max	977		4,386		5,228

Source: Author's research

The total of employees in Antibiotice is 1370 and from it 626 are men (46% ) and 744 are women 54%. Biofarm has a total of 373 employees with 108 men (29%) and 265 women (71%). Farmaceutica Remedia has 230 employees with 74 men (32%) and 156 women (68%). MedLife has 5093 employees and 977 are men (19%) and 4116 are women (81%). Regina Maria has the total of employees 5228, with 842 men (16%) and 4386 women (84%). Zentiva has 859 employees with 335 mwn (39%) and 524 women (61%).

For all the companies analized the average number of men is 494, meaning 30% from the total and the average number of employees that are women is 1699, meaning 70% from the total. The Minimum number of employees that are men is 74 and the minimum number of women is 156 both for Farmaceutica Remedia. The maximum number of employees that are men is 977 from MedLife and the maximum number of employees that are women is 4386 from Regina Maria.

If in 2009 the unemployment of males was at the level of 9.2% in 2022 it was at 6%. For Romanian women the unemployment was at 7.3% in 2009, and in 2022 decreased to 5.1%. For the period between 2009 to 2022 the maximum level of unemployment was in 2011 with 9.5% for men and 8.5% for women, and the minimum level of unemployment was in 2019 with 5.3% for men and 4.3% for women. For the period between 2009 to 2022 the average level of unemployment was 7.8% for men and 6.6% for women. Overall the unemployment decreased for the period mentioned above.



Source: author's calculation based on Eurostat, (Eurostat, 2022), last update 03.16.2023, extracted on 04.10.2023.

Fig. 1. Unemployment of males and females in Romania (from 15 to 74 years old)

## **5. Conclusion**

In all the organizations analyzed, the average employee count for men is 494, or 30% of the total, while the average employee count for women is 1699, or 70% of the total. For Farmaceutica Remedia, the minimum number of male employees is 74, and the minimum number of female employees is 156. The greatest number of men employed by MedLife is 977, whereas the maximum number of women employed by Regina Maria is 4386. In 2009, male unemployment was 9.2%; by 2022, it had dropped to 6%. Unemployment among Romanian women was 7.3% in 2009, and for 2022 fall to 5.1%. Between 2009 and 2022, the highest level of unemployment was 9.5% for men and 8.5% for women in 2011, while the lowest level of unemployment was 5.3% for men and 4.3% for women in 2019. Between 2009 and 2022, the average rate of unemployment for males was 7.8% and 6.6% for women.

The the study may help to enhance sustainability reporting by focusing on gender distribution. The study's weakness is that we could not generalize because it's based on 6 Romanian enterprises in the medical area and we may not exclude the human mistakes that might have occurred due to manual work. Future research could involve a larger number of organizations or other industries.

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