



The Romanian paradox: small gender pay gap, big inequalities

Marinela Istrate

Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania

ABSTRACT

Based on the data provided by Eurostat and the reports prepared by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), we have analyzed gender inequalities in the Romanian labor market, taking into account several indicators such as wage disparity, female employment rate, unpaid work, the share of women in economic sectors and management positions, etc. The gender pay gap in Romania is one of the lowest in Europe (4.5%), but the employment rate among women (45.4%) is the lowest in the EU27. In correlation with a low female employment rate, the data reinforces the hypothesis of the traditional gender division that places the woman in the position of the main caretaker of the family and the man in the position of the income earner, which is also expressed by a higher risk of poverty in retirement. Analyzing the Gender Equality Index, although Romania's overall score has increased from 2013 to 2024, gender inequality has still deepened in the sub-domains of political (- 4.3 points) and economic (- 2.1 points) decision-making. Overall, despite a trend of convergence, progress towards gender equality in Romania has been slower than the EU average, so we can say that, at the pace at which Romanian society is working to eliminate gender gaps, women in Romania would still have to face a long period of inequality, at least in the economic aspects.

Keywords: economic activities, employment rate, strategy, unpaid work, wage disparities