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Gender pay gap remains above EU average in spite of slight decrease

Women earn 18.8% less gross per hour than men

Vienna, 2023-03-03 – On the occasion of the International Women’s Day on 8 March, Statistics Austria reports that the gender pay gap has decreased from 23.5% to 18.8% between 2011 and 2021. In an EU comparison, however, Austria is still among the countries with the highest gender-related wage differences and clearly above the European average of 12.7%.

Comparing the average gross hourly earnings of women and men in the private sector, the gender pay gap was 18.8% in Austria in 2021 (EU-27: 12.7%; see graph) according to the Eurostat definition. In 2011, the wage differences between women and men amounted to 23.5%. The decline was stronger in the first year of the COVID pandemic than in the long-term average (–1.0 percentage points in 2019/2020). Between 2020 and 2021, the gender pay gap decreased by only 0.1 percentage points (see table 1).

About one third of the large gender pay gap in Austria is due to gender-specific differences on the labour market. Part of this can be explained by the fact that women work more often in lower-paid service occupations and economic sectors with lower earning potential, while men are more often found in better-paid technical occupations and in management positions. Differences in working hours have already been taken into account by using hourly earnings. However, part-time is also paid less per hour on average, which affects women more than men. In addition, the average employment duration of women in the same company is shorter. According to the level of education, on the other hand, in purely arithmetical terms women should already earn more than men.

High labour force participation with simultaneously high part-time employment of women

With regard to labour force participation, Austria is one of the EU countries with both a high labour force participation rate and a high part-time rate among women. The employment rate of women between 15 and 64 years in Austria was 68.1% (men 76.7%) in 2021, and therefore higher than the EU average of 63.4% (men 73.3%; see table 2). On the other hand, 49.6% of the employed women in Austria were working part-time in 2021 (men 11.6%). In other words, 79.0% of all part-time workers were women. In the EU average, the part-time rate of women in 2021 was only 29.5% (men 9.3%; see table 3).

Mothers in particular face the challenge of reconciling work and family life. For women with children under 15 years, working part-time was the dominant form of gainful employment. In 2021, the part-time rate of women between 25 and 49 years with children under 15 was 72.8%. In contrast to women, the professional activity of men is often hardly influenced by the birth of a child. The part-time rate of men with children under 15 was significantly lower at 6.8% (see table 4).

Differences in working life are also reflected in pensions

In total, the lower earned incomes and insurance periods, which show gaps mainly due to child rearing, lead to a gender-specific pension gap of 41.6%. According to the data of the Federation of Social Insurances (Dachverband der Sozialversicherungsträger), the average old-age pension of women in 2021 was 1 264 euros. In contrast, the average pension of men amounted to 2 164 euros. In the same period, the average retirement age was 59.9 years for women and 61.9 years for men.

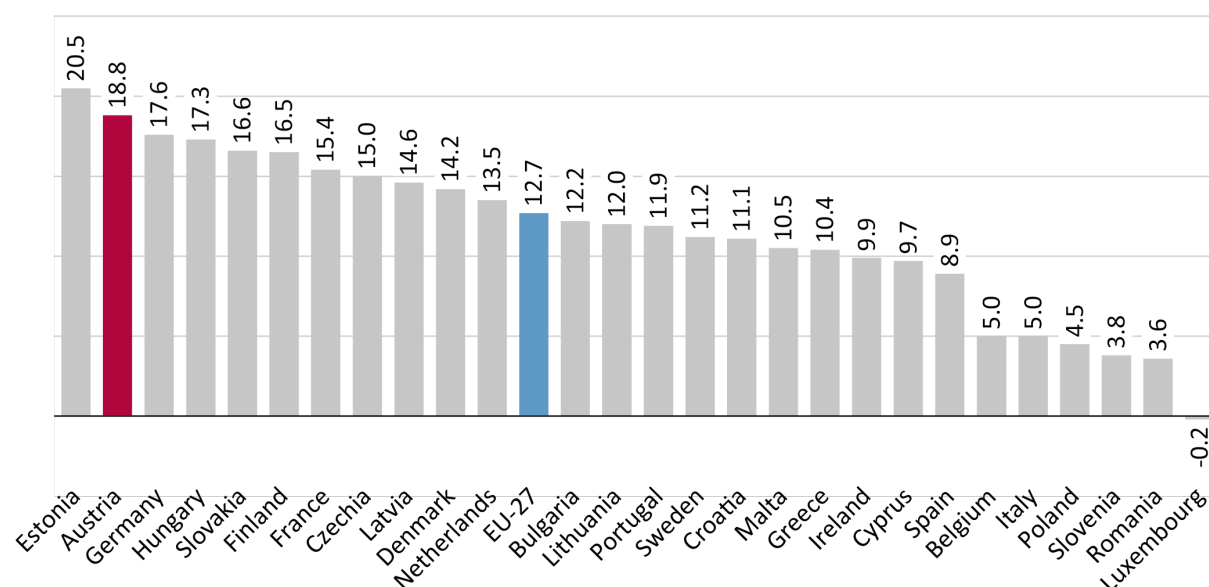
Social risks affect women living alone more

According to the Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) 2021 survey, 26% of the single female pensioners were at risk of poverty, but only 15% of the retired men living alone. Single parents – of whom the most are single mothers – had the highest risk of poverty of all household types at 36%.

Single parents are also one of the groups most affected by the current crisis. According to the survey on the social consequences of the crisis, in the fourth quarter of 2021, 18.3% of single parents said they have difficulty to make ends meet on household income. By the third quarter of 2022, this figure had risen to 34.0%. This is more than double the share for the total population aged 16 to 69 years (16.3%). Difficulty paying housing costs (such as rent, home loan, utility bills, and energy) was expected by 21.2% of single parents at the end of 2021. In the third quarter of 2022, 45.4% of single parents reported expecting payment difficulties in the next three months. In the overall population, the proportion also increased significantly from 12.0% to 30.4%, but the difference between single parents and the overall population has widened over time (see table 5).

For detailed results and further information on Gender statistics please refer to our [website](#).

Gender Pay Gap in EU comparison 2021 – in percent



S: Eurostat. – Gender pay gap (unadjusted). – Difference between the average gross hourly earnings of women and men in enterprises with ten or more employees in the private sector. – EU 27 (excluding UK). – Values for Greece 2018 and Ireland 2020. – Graphic: STATISTICS AUSTRIA.

Table 1: Gender pay gap 2011–2021 in %

Years	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
EU-27	16.2	16.4	16.0	15.7	15.5	15.1	14.6	14.4	13.7	12.9	12.7
Austria	23.5	22.9	22.3	22.2	21.8	20.8	20.7	20.4	19.9	18.9	18.8

S: Eurostat.

Gender pay gap (unadjusted). – Difference between the average gross hourly earnings of women and men in enterprises with ten or more employees in the private sector. International definition according to ILO concept. – EU-27 (excluding UK).

Table 2: Employment rates (ILO) in %

Years	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
EU-27	63.4	63.2	63.1	63.8	64.6	65.6	66.7	67.7	68.4	67.5	68.4
Men	69.3	68.8	68.5	69.1	69.9	70.9	72.1	73.0	73.7	72.8	73.3
Women	57.5	57.6	57.7	58.5	59.3	60.3	61.3	62.3	63.0	62.2	63.4
Austria	71.1	71.4	71.4	71.1	71.1	71.5	72.2	73.0	73.6	72.4	72.4
Men	76.2	76.2	76.0	75.2	75.1	75.4	76.2	77.4	78.0	76.5	76.7
Women	66.1	66.7	66.9	66.9	67.1	67.7	68.2	68.6	69.2	68.3	68.1

S: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (Microcensus).

International definition according to ILO concept. Employment rate: Employed persons in relation to the resident population aged 15 to 64 years in private households (excluding military and civilian servants). – From 2021 survey changeover (break in time series). – EU-27 (excluding UK).

Table 3: Part-time rates (ILO) in %

Years	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
EU-27	18.3	18.8	19.4	19.4	19.4	19.3	19.3	19.1	19.2	19.1	18.6
Men	8.4	8.8	9.2	9.4	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.4	9.5	9.5	9.3
Women	30.3	30.7	31.4	31.2	31.1	31.0	30.8	30.5	30.6	30.3	29.5
Austria	25.3	26.0	26.8	27.9	28.2	28.7	28.7	28.2	28.0	27.9	29.4
Men	8.9	9.2	10.3	10.9	11.2	11.8	11.9	11.2	10.7	10.7	11.6
Women	44.1	45.1	45.6	46.9	47.4	47.7	47.7	47.5	47.7	47.3	49.6

S: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey (Microcensus).

International definition according to ILO concept. Part-time rate: Part-time employed (self-assignment) as a percentage of employed persons aged 15 years and over. – From 2021 survey changeover (break in time series). – EU-27 (excluding UK).

Table 4: Active part-time rates (ILO) of persons between 25 and 49 years with children under 15 in %

Years	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Men	4.7	5.0	6.3	6.1	6.6	6.9	6.8	6.4	5.6	6.9	6.8
Women	71.7	70.9	70.5	74.3	74.5	75.1	73.4	73.0	74.3	72.8	72.8

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Labour Force Survey (Microcensus).

International definition according to ILO concept. Active part-time rate: without employed persons on parental leave. – From 2021 survey changeover (break in time series).

Table 5: Financial situation of single parents in %

Attribute	Q4 2021		Q3 2022		
	Total population	Single parents	Total population	Single parents	
Making ends meet on the household income	With (great) difficulty	14.9	18.3	16.3	34.0
	With slight difficulty	24.9	40.2	27.1	32.7
	With slight ease	32.2	29.5	35.3	19.8
	With (great) ease	28.0	12.0	21.2	13.5
Expected difficulties paying for housing cost (in the next 3months)	Yes	12.0	21.2	30.4	45.4
	No	88.0	78.8	69.6	54.6

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Survey 'How we are today'.

Data as of 6 December 2022. – Total population between 16 and 69 years.

Information on methodology, definitions:

Gender Pay Gap: According to Eurostat, the gender pay gap measures the difference between the average (arithmetic mean) gross hourly earnings of women and men in enterprises with ten or more employees in the private sector (excluding agriculture and forestry; public administration). The basis is company data, which is collected every four years in the entire European Union according to harmonised standards. In Austria, around 11 000 enterprises provided data on around 200 000 employees for the reference year 2018. The values for the years between the surveys are estimated.

Methodology: The EU gender pay gap indicator is calculated without adjustments, i.e. without taking into account gender differences in terms of employment structure.

Statistics Austria has analysed the influence of different factors on the basis of the data for 2018. Considering the characteristics of economic sector, occupation, education, age, length of service, extent of employment, type of employment contract, region and company size, a total of 6.4 percentage points can be explained on the basis of a gender pay gap of 20.4%; 14.0 percentage points remain unexplained. The most important factors in the model include: economic sector (2.9 percentage points), full-/part-time (2.6 percentage points), length of service (1.7 percentage points) and occupation (1.6 percentage points). The factor for the highest completed level of education is -1.2 percentage points, i.e. purely according to formal education, women should already earn more than men.

Employment rate: Employed persons aged 15–64 years in relation to the population of the same age.

Part-time rate: Share of part-time employed persons in all employed persons according to self-assignment. The European Labour Force Survey (LFS), which takes place in all EU member states, collects information on employment and job search from randomly selected private households in a standardised form. In Austria, the LFS is conducted within the framework of the Microcensus – a sample survey in which about 1 500 households are interviewed weekly. These data are extrapolated to the population.

Pensions: Old-age pensions (without intergovernmental partial benefits) based on the data of the Federation of Social Insurances (Dachverband der Sozialversicherungsträger; 14 times per year).

At-risk-of-poverty: In the EU, persons are considered at risk of poverty if their equivalised (= needs-weighted per capita) net household income is below 60% of the median of the country's equivalised net household income. In Austria, according to EU-SILC 2021, this corresponded to an amount of 1 371 euros for single people, plus 686 euros for each additional adult in the household and 411 euros for each child under 14 years (12 times a year).

Survey on the social consequences of the crisis: In order to monitor acute crisis developments in a timely manner, quarterly data on income development and personal well-being have been collected since the end of 2021. Around 3 000 people aged 16 to 69 years took part in each wave. The study is jointly funded by Eurostat and the Ministry of Social Affairs and published every quarter. Lone parents are defined as persons in a single-parent household with at least one child under the age of 25 years.

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