



Union for the Mediterranean
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DATA HIGHLIGHTS

UfM Regional Dialogue on Women Empowerment in the Euro-Mediterranean region



Social and Civil
Affairs



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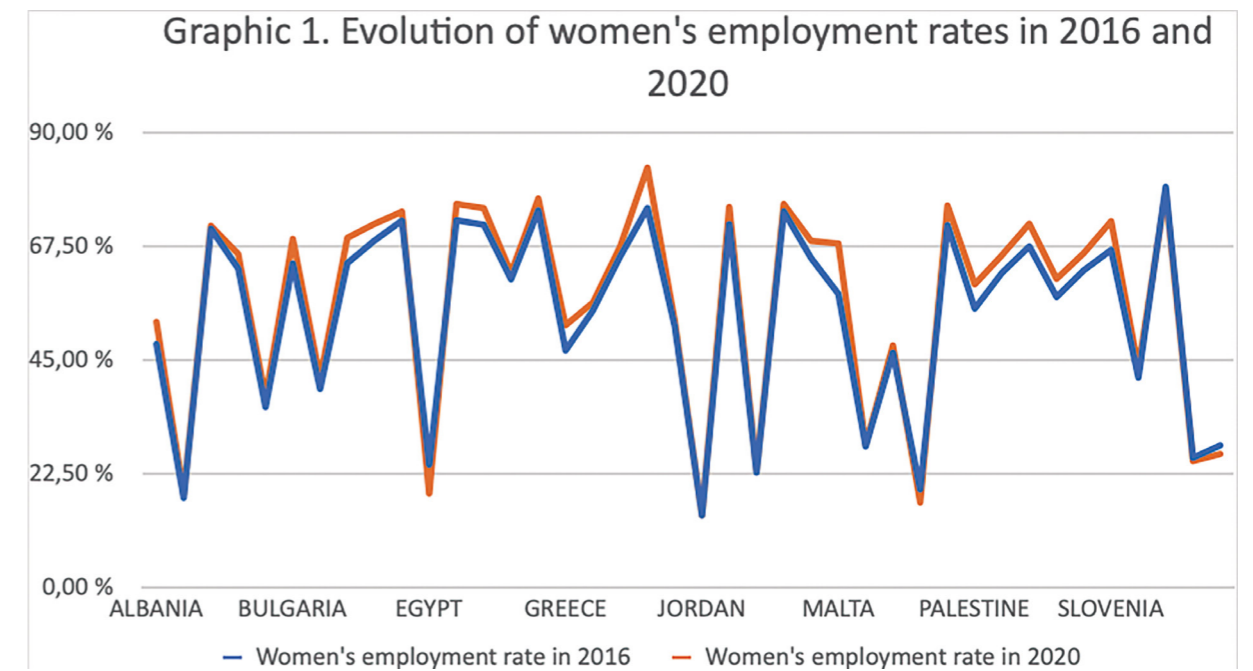
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Legal Framework

- All the UfM Member States embed gender equality provisions in their respective constitutions and supreme laws.
- Consistent efforts have been made into developing gender sensitive budgets and/or budget strategies. In recent years, nineteen (19) countries from the Euro-Mediterranean region have developed gender budgeting tools, thus registering an important progress.

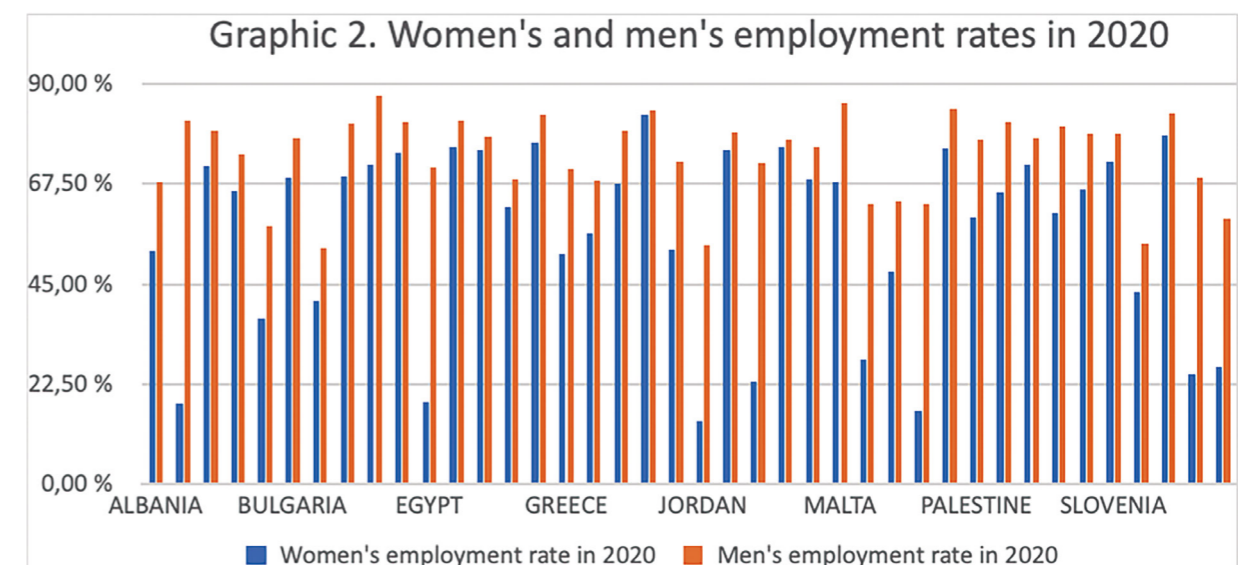
Women's economic participation

- Women's economic participation continues to represent an important challenge for gender equality. Employment rates among the UfM member states remain rather uneven, ranging from 16.7% in Morocco to 78.3% in Sweden. A general trend in the past five (5) years reflected an overall increase of women's participation in the workplace (Malta is the country with the strongest showing, corresponding to 10 percentage points). Although Egypt, Morocco, Sweden, Tunisia and Turkey noted a decrease in women's participation, especially in rural areas, it should be noted, nonetheless, that such decrease in women's employment rate was also accompanied by a decrease in men's employment rate.
- In the past five (5) years, many countries identified a 'work-life balance' as an essential element to enhance gender equality in the workplace. Consequently, many of them pursued efforts to ensure the best conditions with a view that maternity would not constitute a significant cost for women's professional development.

Graphic 1. ⁷

6. Ministère de la Solidarité, du Développement Social, de l'Égalité et de la Famille (2020), Maroc-Attamkine, Programme national intégré de l'Autonomisation Economique des Femmes et des Filles, à l'horizon 2030.

7. For data sources refer to the Annex 2.

Graphic 2. ⁸

8. For data source please refer to the Annex 2.

- During the COVID-19 crisis, the widespread adoption of telework coincided with an increase in women's unpaid work, largely because of the closure of schools and migration to online schooling. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, women employed within the EU spent about 3.9 hours per day on unpaid care, whereas employed men spent 2.6 hours" (EIGE, 2021). In July 2020, these numbers rose for employed women with children under 12 to 54 hours per week (7.7 hours per day) and for employed men with children to 32 hours (4.5 hours per day) (Eurofound, 2020). With respect to the MENA region, already before the crisis, women spent six (6) times more on domestic work and unpaid care (OECD; 2020c; OECD, 2019b). The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic further amplified women's unpaid work burden (UN Women, 2020p).



Women's entrepreneurship

- By way of international comparison, Europe and the MENA region are below the global percentage of 6.2% of women entrepreneurs who own established businesses (5.3% and 4.5%, respectively). These regions also have the lowest percentages of nascent women-owned enterprises (3.4% and 4.1% respectively, compared to the global percentage of 5.5%), representing the largest gender gaps worldwide, respectively at 37% and 35% (GEM, 2019).
- Despite strong variations amongst countries, entrepreneurship in the Euro-Mediterranean region continues to bear a male face. While in Morocco women represent only 12.8% of entrepreneurs and their number lowered in recent years, Portugal and Croatia lead the ranking nowadays with 37.2% and 31.5% of female entrepreneurs, respectively.

Women's leadership

- Since 2016, eleven (11) new countries (Algeria, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Egypt, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Portugal and Tunisia) approved legislation to balance gender representation in national parliaments and/or regional structures.
- In sixteen (16) UfM Member States, women occupy at least 30% of seats in National Parliaments **(for more information please refer to the box 11 of the Final Report)**
- Eighteen (18) UfM Member States count with at least 30% of women occupy a position in their national governments **(for more information please refer to the box 12 of the final report)**
- In 2020, only three (3) UfM countries had women in a governing position (Denmark, Germany and Finland) and in 2021 Tunisia became the first Arab country with a woman as a head of government.
- Since 2016, eleven (11) new countries (Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Portugal and Tunisia) approved legislation to balance gender representation in national parliaments and/or regional structures. Additionally, in 2021 the Maltese Parliament unanimously approved a Constitutional amendment to introduce a gender redress mechanism in order to ensure that at least 40% of Members of Parliament are women. In total, twenty one (21) UfM Member States apply gender quotas in politics (box 13 of the final report). Regarding modalities applied, while the tendency among the European countries remains that of applying quotas to electoral lists, the most widespread policy among the Southern Mediterranean countries is to reserve a minimum number of seats in Parliaments for women.
- Figures relative to women's leadership in managerial positions show that women still encounter difficulties in gaining a foothold in the business world. In the EU, between 2012 and 2020, the number of women board chairpersons doubled, while the number of women CEO, tripled. Nonetheless, still fewer than one in ten of the said positions is occupied by a woman and women's share in boards in listed companies, is still less than 30% (EIGE, 2020a). In 2019, in the MENA region, the average representation of women on the boards of the largest public companies remained at 4.8% of total available board seats (OECD, 2019a)
- Seven (7) UfM Member States apply gender quotas in companies' boards (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal).



COVID-19 impact on women

- Women around the world have been deeply affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has highlighted persisting inequalities and has dealt a major setback across all areas, especially with respect to intimate partner violence and women's economic participation.



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