



Young women have higher educational attainment than young men, but gender gaps in labour market outcomes persist.

In contrast to 20 years ago, more young women (25-34) in the Netherlands complete tertiary education than young men: 44% vs. 38%. However, gender segregation in subject choice persists: in 2009, only 10% of [tertiary qualifications in computer science](#) went to young women while 75% of Dutch tertiary degrees in health and welfare studies went to females. Attitudes rather than ability explain this pattern. It is important to get more girls to undertake such studies by, for example, raising awareness on the consequences of educational choices on career and earnings prospects or by better addressing the role of stereotypes in shaping preferences and self-perception.

From 1860 to 1960 female labour force participation in the Netherlands hardly changed but the female employment rates increased from 30% in 1975 to almost 70% in 2011 (and is now above the OECD average of 60%). But many women, especially mothers, work part-time: 75% of women (age 25-54) with dependent children work part-time compared with only 26% in France. Women spend on average two hours more per day on [household work](#) than men.

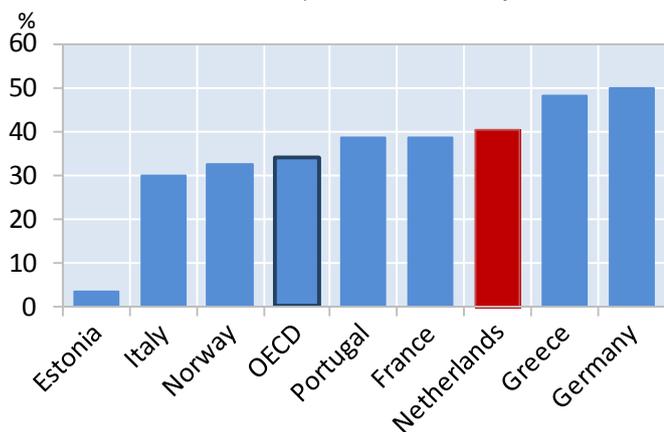
The prevalence of part-time work has its effect on earnings and career profiles. At median earnings, the gender [pay gap](#) is 17% (the OECD average is 16%); and more than half of this pay gap is related to gender differences in working hours. Widespread part-time employment limits the number of women in management functions: only 28% of staff with a supervisory role is female, and less than 5% of board-members of listed companies.

Shorter careers, fewer working hours and lower earnings also contribute to relatively low pensions for women. The average pension payment to women is about half of what is paid to men on average in the Netherlands and this "pension gap" is among the largest in the OECD.

Percentage of men and women in part-time employment,

2010

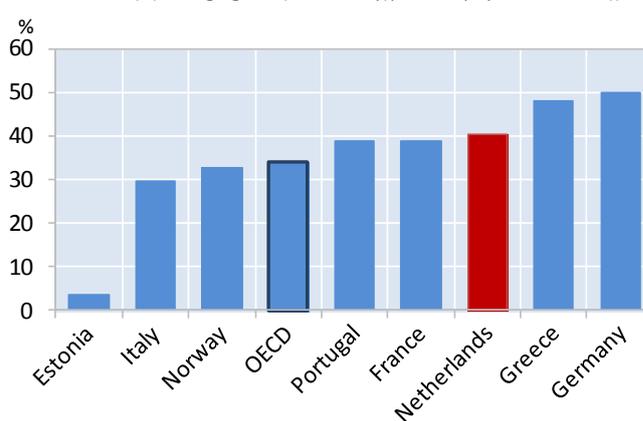
Part-time employment refers to persons who usually work less than 30 hours per week in their main job



Gender pension gap in mandatory schemes,

2009

Gender pension gap = (1 - (average gross (mandatory) pension payment to women) / (average gross (mandatory) pension payment to men))



Female employment has held up well during the crisis, as they work in sectors that are less sensitive to economic fluctuations (e.g. teachers). However, to avoid long-term labour supply issues and reduce poverty risks, Dutch women will have to increase their hours in paid work. To help make this happen, public childcare supports may have to increase, while men should take on more unpaid work in and around the house.