The impacts of the on-going crisis on women’s employment: ILO data and analysis

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Summary

I. Global and regional employment trends

II. ILO and its approach to gender equality

III. Some tools and resources
I. “Global Employment Trends 2012”

• Narrowing of gender employment gap “particularly noteworthy” in Latin America and Caribbean (employment-to-population ratio among women rose between 2002-11 by 5 percentage points)

• “Vulnerable employment” in 2011: women’s share was 50.5% and men’s 48.2%

• Fiscal austerity measures include:
  – revision of maternity leave allowances (such as in Lithuania)
  – scrapping of newborn benefits (Spain)
  – social security reforms such as tighter eligibility criteria for childcare allowance and disability benefits (Netherlands)
In most regions, during the global crisis there was an increase in the gap between female and male youth unemployment as young women became even more likely to be unemployed than young men.

Youth unemployment rate (per cent), by sex and region, preliminary estimates for 2011

North Africa

• Three unemployment rates in 2011 highest among all regions: for young people (27.1%), women (19%) and young women (41%).

• Young females’ labour participation rates in 2010 as low as 8.9% (in Algeria)

• Women’s low labour force participation rate and both sexes’ high unemployment rates resulted in North Africa’s employment-to-population ratio in 2011 at 43.6% (compared to global average of 60.3%)

• “Too many people are economically dependent on those few who have secured a job”
Middle East

- Ratio of female-to-male unemployment rates in most regions exceeds 1.0 – in 2011 in Middle East as high as 2.3
- Women’s labour force participation, lowest globally, estimated for 2011 at 18.4% (compared to 74% for men)
- Women’s share of vulnerable employment in 2010 was 42.7% (compared to men’s 27.3%)
- “The compounding of cultural, social and economic gender divisions represents a substantial loss of economic potential”
Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia (*Global Wage Report 2010-11*)

- Suffered “largest impact” on wages by the global economic and financial crisis
- During crisis, annual real wage progression in some countries dropped from double digit growth to nearly zero or even negative growth
- In south-east Europe several countries affected by wage arrears, wage freezes, informal wage payments (vouchers, undeclared envelopes etc.) with an increasing number of low-paid workers
Gender pay gap in South-East Europe

No comparative data but some estimates for period 2000-2008 include:

– Highest wage gap between women and men (35%) was in Albania, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.
– In Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, men’s average net wages were 27.4% higher than women’s.
– Since beginning of economic crisis, women in some countries have withdrawn from the labour market on a larger scale.
Examples of ILO research on gender equality & Decent Work in the sub-region

Employed population in Bosnia and Herzegovina
(source: Labour Force Survey 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>19.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
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- Some 4% of working women and 10% of men are self-employed
- Women and men entrepreneurs tend to lack information, and BiH “does not provide a ‘friendly’ environment for small enterprise”
II. ILO and its approach to gender equality

Promoting rights and equality between women and men in the world of work including tackling sex discrimination and underlying inequalities.

Promoting equitable access for women and men to education and training and full and productive employment in conditions of equity and dignity.

Equitable representation and voice for all workers (both in/formal) and fair and equitable globalization.

Promoting adequate and equitable social protection for all women and men.

Aim: Decent work for all women and men under 2009 ILC Conclusions.
II. ILO and its approach to gender equality (cont.)

Some policies have aggravated the impact of economic crisis e.g. on wage trends generally:

• Freezing minimum wage
• Tax reforms
• Budgetary cuts

Social dialogue could help reach a better policy mix and more balanced employment and wage outcomes
Rights-based approach & good business sense: Within the ILO supervisory machinery, 2012 Report of the CEACR highlights cases of progress, but also checks on laws’ impact during crisis

1. **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** (under C111, ratified 1991): CEACR notes with interest the adoption of the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination (8/4/2010, in force 1/1/2011) which applies to both the public and the private sectors; covers work, labour relations and education; & prohibits direct and indirect discrimination based on, *inter alia*, sex,… gender, belonging to a marginalized group…

2. **Greece** High Level Mission in Feb.(under C100, ratified 1975): CEACR notes various 2010 Acts (e.g. Protection of the national economy – Emergency measures to tackle the crisis Law) & asks for full data, disaggregated by sex, with a view to assessing the impact of the measures taken on the application of equal pay for work of equal value in the public sector, allowing an overview of the **evolution of the gender pay gap since 2009**, as well as statistics of the number of male and female employees who have been dismissed or put in the “labour reserve”. (under C111, ratified 1984): CEACR monitors the **impact of the austerity measures** on gender equality in the private sector…
Gender equality at the heart of decent work

• Vision: “To eliminate sex discrimination in work and to promote gender equality” (para 1, 2009 ILC Conclusions)

• Policy: Mutually-reinforcing action on three priorities: staffing, substance and structure (1999 ILO Policy on gender equality)

• Strategy: two-pronged approach of gender mainstreaming and targeted interventions
ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010-15

• Operationalizes gender equality policy
• Uses results-based management
• Aligned with Strategic Policy Framework 2010-15 and three biennial programme and budgets
• Reflects interface of *2009 ILC Conclusions*, and gender-related strategic outcomes and targets
• Sets indicators on staffing, substance and structure
• Stocktaking report to Governing Body
• Independent final evaluation
III. Gender equality and employment-
ILO’s mandate gives rise to many excellent tools


3. Gender mainstreaming strategies in decent work promotion: Programming tools; GEMS toolkit

4. Gender Mainstreaming in Local Economic Development Strategies : A guide

5. ILO Promoting Equity: Gender - neutral job evaluation for equal pay: a step-by-step guide
Participatory gender audits

• Two-week+ facilitated self-assessment of success and challenges in promoting gender equality, with a final report of recommendations
• Audits [or facilitator trainings] for 34 ILO field & HQ offices since 2001, 15 UN agencies or teams and 17 constituents
research, campaigns, advocacy materials...

Please contacts us!

www.ilo.org/gender