



**FORUM:** Commission on the Status of Women

**QUESTION OF:** Addressing the ongoing discrimination women have to face in their workplace

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**INTRODUCTION:**

Discrimination in the workplace is an issue that comes in many different forms, ranging from finding a job to having to downgrade accomplishments. Around the world women face more challenges finding a job than men. When employed they often work lower quality jobs and face more vulnerable working conditions. There are different causes to these problems. In many countries women don't have the same access to education or higher education as their male counterparts and can therefore not provide the qualifications needed to find secure high-quality jobs. Oftentimes there is also the issue of disproportionate care responsibilities and discouragement from seeking a job. Because women are often seen as the caretakers of the children, they tend to quit their jobs in order to do so. In countries that offer maternity leave, the time off often interferes with careers and leads to a standstill in the women's work lives. Women are also less likely to be picked for promotions than males, even if they have the same qualifications. Studies of the ILO have also found that four out of five jobs created for women are in the informal economy. This means that many of the jobs women get employed in, don't offer social security, legal protection or decent working

conditions. These kinds of jobs are often a last resort, taken because of the lack of suitable job opportunities and other 'formal' work. Many women also face harassment, sexual assault and violence in their places of employment. It is present in all jobs, occupations, sectors of the economy and countries around the world.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION:**

Women have a harder time finding employment than men and are therefore more likely to end up in the informal sector or in jobs with very critical working conditions. Vulnerable employment is a present problem for both men and women, yet studies have shown that women are overrepresented in certain vulnerable jobs, while men are more likely to be in own-account employment. Women often take up the responsibilities of childcare and household or work in their partner's business. Oftentimes, when parental leave is offered, the women are expected to take it up. This is due to the larger issue of gender-based biases and norms and the socialization of young women and girls. Old stereotypes and role models are still present in present-day minds. While women are expected to care for their children and handle the household, men are made up to be the providers. Another part of this issue is, that women are pushed away from certain jobs, such as employment in STEM, because it is thought to have jobs for men. Frequently such view are already projected onto young girls, pushing them further away from such sectors of employment, because they were taught, they should be and are better at other things. IN addition to that it is very disconcerting for a young woman to enter a field, dominated by males, when even in female-dominated fields, women in leadership positions have to fight for respect from other male employees, even if they are technically their superior. Women have reported in multiple studies, that they have to be careful when expressing authority and even diminish their accomplishment. Furthermore, they

reported lack of acknowledgement for their contributions and that even in female-dominated fields, decisions are often made by men. Reducing the gender gap in workforce participation is likely to lead to a boost in global GDP. Especially the countries with a big gender gap like Northern Africa and Arab States will benefit from economic growth. Even industrialized countries could see a rise in their annually reported GDP.

Women face discrimination in their workplace in every country, though in some it may be more severe. Countries with the biggest gender gap in labour force participation are Northern African and Arab States. The country with the largest pay gap as of 2021 was the Korean Republic, but also countries like Japan, the United States of America, Canada and Germany were pretty high up. The forms of discrimination women face differs from country to country, but women face it in every country, whether it be less pay, no job offers or no formal education, it is present all over the world.

### **DEFINITION OF KEYTERMS:**

Discrimination -- any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women)

Workplace -- A workplace is a location where someone works, for their employer or themselves, a place of employment. Such a place can range from a home office to a large office building or factory.

Gender Pay Gap – (GPG) The gender pay gap or gender wage gap is the average difference between the remuneration for men and women who are working. Women are generally found to be paid less than men.

Gender Gap -- A gender gap, a relative disparity between people of different genders, is reflected in a variety of sectors in many societies. There exist

differences between men and women as reflected in social, political, intellectual, cultural, scientific or economic attainments or attitudes.

### **HELPFUL SOURCES:**

UN-Women

Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women

ILO

World Economic Forum

### **SOURCES:**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender\\_pay\\_gap](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender_pay_gap)

<https://www.unwomen.org/en>

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw>

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation>

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women>

<https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/economy.htm>

<https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2023/in-full/gender-gaps-in-the-workforce>

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/report-womens-human-rights-changing-world-work>

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/03/handbook-addressing-violence-and-harassment-against-women-in-the-world-of-work>

<https://www.ilo.org/infostories/en-GB/Stories/Employment/barriers-women#what-women>

<https://hbr.org/2022/03/research-how-bias-against-women-persists-in-female-dominated-workplaces>

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/hrdq.21389>

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11577-020-00671-6>

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/934039/gender-pay-gap-select-countries/>