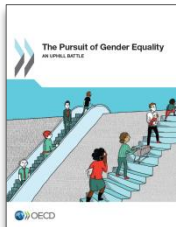


How does the NETHERLANDS compare?



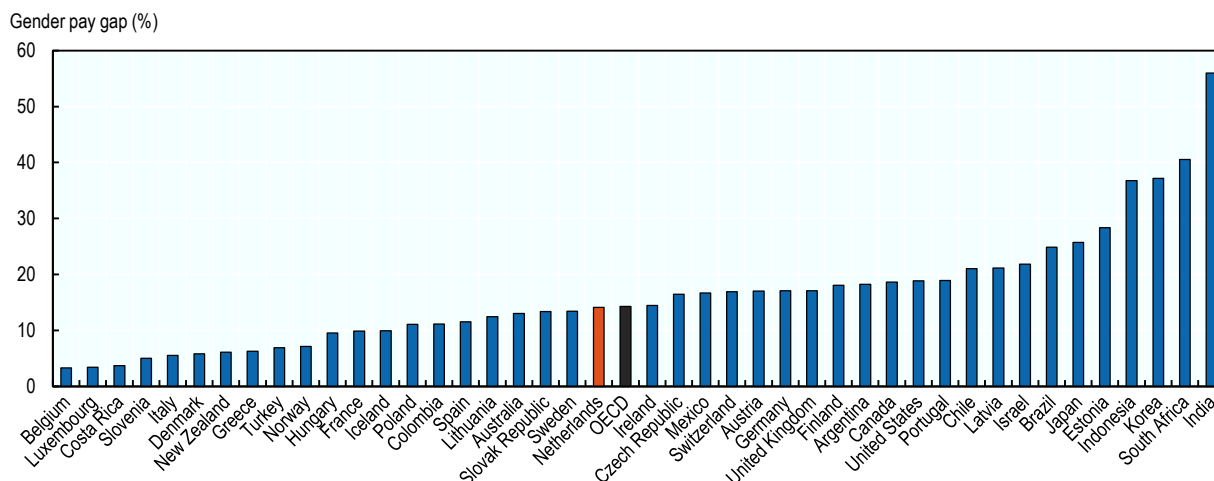
The 2017 OECD report *The Pursuit of Gender Equality: An Uphill Battle* explores how gender inequalities persist in social and economic life around the world. Young women in OECD countries have more years of schooling than young men, on average, but women are still less likely to engage in paid work. Gaps widen with age, as motherhood typically has negative effects on women's pay and career advancement. Women are also less likely to be entrepreneurs, and are under-represented in private and public leadership. In the face of these challenges, this report assesses whether (and how) countries are closing gender gaps in education, employment, entrepreneurship, and public life. The report presents a range of statistics on gender gaps, reviews public policies targeting gender inequality, and offers key policy recommendations.

Overview/summary

Female employment in the Netherlands has doubled from 35% in the early 1980s to 70% in 2016. However, much of the increase has been in part-time employment, as almost 60% of the employed women in the Netherlands are in paid employment for fewer than 30 hours per week. Working part-time can add to job satisfaction of workers, freeing up time for childcare or leisure activities, but it also means that women's education and skills are not applied to their full potential in the Dutch labour market. Furthermore, while part-time work may not directly affect hourly gender pay gaps (Chapter 12), it does affect long-term career and earnings progression of women (Chapter 13).

At the median, the gender pay gap for full-time workers in the Netherlands is 14%, just below the OECD average. As they are often better educated than young men, young women (age 25-29) in full-time employment often earn more than men of the same age. However, gender gaps reverse in favour of men when children enter the household – when Dutch women often start to work part-time. Gender gaps are largest among high earners, indicating that many employed Dutch women find it hard to make career progression and break through glass ceilings (Chapter 14). Gender pay gaps require a comprehensive policy response, including encouraging companies to report on gender pay differences within the enterprise, and also building a policy structure that facilitates greater female labour force participation.

Gender pay gap, 2015 or latest available year



Notes: Gender gap in median earnings for full-time employees. The gender gap is defined as the difference between male and female median monthly earnings divided by male median monthly earnings for full-time employees. Data for the Netherlands refer to 2014. See [\[Figure 1.3\]](#)

Summary indicators of gender equality

	Female share (%) of bachelor's graduates	Female share (%) of graduates in science, maths and computing	Gender gap (p.p.) in the labour force participation rate	Female share (%) of managers	Gender pay gap (median earnings, full-time employees, %)	Gender gap (p.p.) in the share of workers who are employers	Female share (%) of seats in parliament
Netherlands	56.5	27.4	9.9	26.0	14.1	3.3	37.3
OECD average	58.2	39.2	12.2	31.2	14.3	3.3	28.7
Top performer	69.1 (SWE)	56.9 (PRT)	3.0 (FIN)	44.3 (LVA)	3.3 (BEL)	1.7 (NOR)	47.6 (ISL)
Bottom performer	45.4 (JPN)	21.3 (CHL)	42.0 (TUR)	10.5 (KOR)	37.2 (KOR)	4.6 (ISR)	9.5 (JPN)

Notes: BEL = Belgium, CHL = Chile, FIN = Finland, ISL = Iceland, ISR = Israel, JPN = Japan, KOR = Korea, LVA = Latvia, NOR = Norway, PRT = Portugal, SWE = Sweden, TUR = Turkey

In a survey carried out for *The Pursuit of Gender Equality*, governments identified the three most important gender inequality issues in their country as violence against women, the gender wage gap, and the unequal sharing of unpaid work. Many OECD countries are now prioritizing these issues in policy, and many are also pushing to get more women into public and private sector leadership.

Dutch women lag in STEM and men are under-represented in health care and teaching

Women in the Netherlands have higher levels of educational attainment than men, but there are lower proportions of women in relatively lucrative STEM fields (Table above). In addition to encouraging more young women into STEM careers, through awareness campaigns the Netherlands is also trying to bring more men into primary and secondary education teaching, where they are under-represented. Chapter 9 shows that there are now more boys (age 15) who expect to work as teachers by the age of 30 than a decade ago (Chapter 9). However, attracting men to fields like teaching requires competitive salaries and financial support during training.

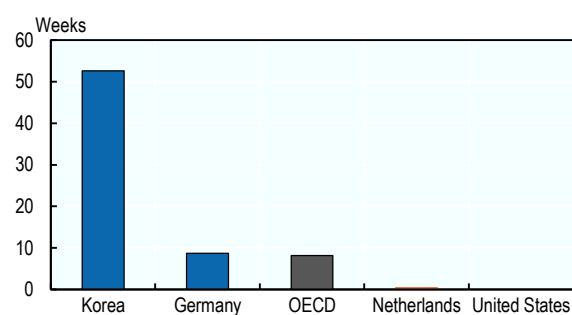
Paid fathers' leave is short

When children are born, fathers' leave-taking (as part of paternity or shared parental leave) is important for ensuring that both mothers and fathers take an equal stake in caregiving. Several countries now offer strong financial incentives to fathers to take parental leave for at least two months (Chapter 16). For example, Korea provides fathers and mothers with around one year of non-transferable paid parental leave each (see below), while in Germany, when both parents use parental leave for 2 months, they are granted a bonus of 2 extra months of paid leave. By comparison, fathers' paid leave arrangements (2 days) in the Netherlands are short.

Children from low-income families are more likely to miss out on formal childcare

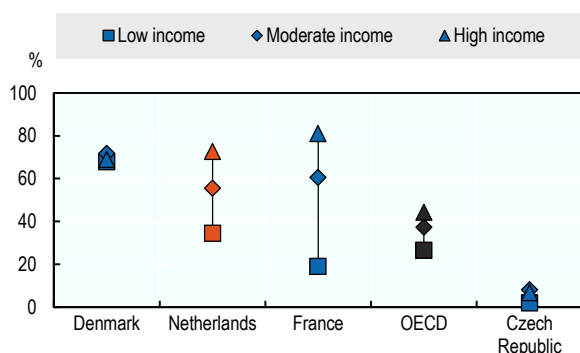
Over half (56%) of the children age 0-2 participate in formal childcare in the Netherlands (this is 38% across the OECD), but use per week is short at 18 versus 30 hrs on average across the OECD. The cost of childcare plays a role (Chapter 17), especially for low-income families: participation by children from these families, including many migrant families, is relatively low (see below). Closing this participation gap in formal childcare should be a policy priority as it could strengthen earnings of low-income families, increase female labour force participation, and support the cognitive development of the children concerned.

Fathers-only paid leave, 2016



Notes: Data refer to paid paternity leave and fathers-only paid parental leave. See [Figure 16.1](#).

Participation in formal childcare by income level, 2014



Notes: Participation rates for 0-2 year-olds. See [Figure 17.2](#).

Career interruptions expose women to financial risks

The unequal division of paid and unpaid work also means that women are more exposed to financial risks. For example, women in the Netherlands are almost three times more likely than men to experience an income decrease of 20% or more in the case of divorce (Chapter 4). Shorter working lives and constrained careers also help explain why women's pensions are relatively small. Gender pension gaps in the Netherlands are the second largest in the OECD, with women's pension income on average about 45% lower than men's (Chapter 13). Current pension payments reflect historical employment choices and underscore the importance of closing gender gaps in labour market participation and hours worked.