

Equality between women and men represents a fundamental right and an essential value for democracy: the promotion of talents, skills and creativity, as much for men as for women, is essential to build a society with a higher quality of life for all. Promoting gender equality is also vital for economic growth, cohesion and competitiveness and can be an effective response to the current economic crisis.

However, despite the numerous expressions of recognition and the progress made over the years, there is still a lingering gender disadvantage in many aspects of contemporary societies. Featuring a higher education on average compared to men, women still cope with many obstacles when dealing with the world of employment: although the employment gap between genders has decreased over time, women are less employed than men, they still earn less and their covering the most important positions is still relatively low. At the same time, the increased engagement of women at work outside the home does not correspond to a more balanced sharing of the domestic duties and family care with the male partner.

Conciliating work and family life means being able to deal with career choices without compromising the family and vice versa. In fact, the presence of children in the family is often in contrast with the lack of labour market flexibility and with the lack of adequate family support services; the woman is almost always asked to come down to accepting the compromises needed to adapt her career to the needs of the family.



**Equal opportunities
to promote talents**





10. Equal opportunities to promote talents

10.1 Gender balance: the progress made

Equality between women and men represents a fundamental right and an essential value for democracy: the promotion of talents, skills and creativity, as much in men as in women, is essential to build a society with a higher quality of life for all. To achieve this, it will require recognising it legally, but also making it effective in all aspects of life: political, economic, social and cultural.

Among its core values, the European Union includes the recognition of gender equality and promotes gender mainstreaming in all governance policies and guidelines. Promoting gender equality is vital for economic growth, cohesion and competitiveness and can also be an effective response to the current economic crisis. In particular, there are five European priorities in this regard, enshrined in the Women's Charter adopted in 2010 by the European Commission: economic independence, equal wages for equal work, equality in decision making, dignity, integrity and an end to violence against women, gender equality¹ in external actions. This commitment is also promised for the years to come, in the European Pact for gender equality 2011-2020 the European Council, and is an integral part of the Europe 2020 Strategy.

In fact, despite the numerous expressions of acknowledgment and despite the progress made over the years, there is still a lingering gender disadvantage in many aspects of contemporary European societies; in other words, women and men do not benefit from the same rights and social, political, economic and cultural divergences still exist, in the same way as wage differences and inadequate political representation. These disparities are the result of social foundations based on stereotypes existing within the family, in education, in culture and in the media, in employment and in the organisation of society.

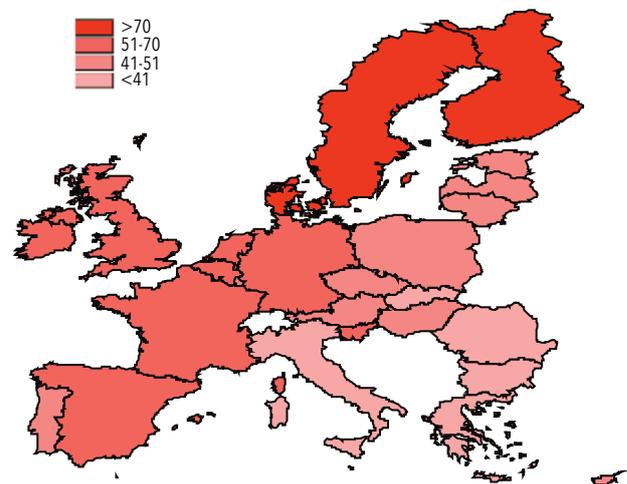
Even the Gender Equality Index, developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality, notes that, in Europe, the objective of

Gender balance is still a long way off

gender equality is still a long way from being reached: the indicator marks an average of 54 points on a scale of 1 to 100, where 1 stands for total gender inequality and 100 the perfect condition of equality between men and women.

North European countries are the most egalitarian, with an indicator value higher than 70; Romania, with only 35 points, stands at the bottom of the list. Italy, with a value of 40.9 is confined to the lower part of the ranking, at 24th place, ahead of Greece, Bulgaria and Romania only.

Fig. 10.1.1 - Gender Equality Index: score of the gender equality synthetic indicator. EU27 – year 2010 (*)



(*) The Gender Equality Index is a composite indicator that marks values between 1 (highest gender inequality) to 100 (full gender equality) Source: Veneto Region Data Processing-Regional Statistical System on European Institute for Gender Equality data

The Gender Equality Index is a summary of inequality between men and women in different areas of life: participation in employment, economic opportunities, schooling and education, leisure activities, health and political representation.

A fair performance was recorded for Italy in the health sector (90.8), where women reach their highest level of equality with the male universe; but even in this very important field, 6 points separate Italy from the top value in the ranking.

In the other fields, Italy suffers from poor attention to gender policies, highlighting a more obvious im-

¹ The European Institute for Gender Equality is an autonomous body of the European Union set up to promote gender equality and fight discrimination between European citizens based on genre.



Tab. 10.1.1 – Gender Equality Index: Index score and the six dimensions that compose it. EU27, Italy Year 2010 (*)

	Gender Equality Index	Dimensions					
		Work	Economic opportunities	Schooling and education	Leisure time	Representation and power	Health
UE27	54.0	69.0	68.9	48.9	38.8	38.0	90.1
Italy	40.9	60.6	68.2	32.1	33.0	18.6	90.8
First ranking country	Svezia (74.3)	Finlandia (82.0)	Lussemburgo (90.9)	Danimarca (75.1)	Paesi Bassi (71.3)	Svezia (74.3)	Irlanda (96.4)
Ultimo Paese (Last ranking country)	Romania (35.3)	Bulgaria (49.9)	Romania (39.0)	Romania (28.8)	Bulgaria (17.3)	Cipro (12.2)	Lettonia (77.1)

(*) Both the synthetic indicator of gender equality and its component dimensions mark values from 1 to 100, where 1 stands for absolute gender inequality and 100 the perfect condition of equality between men and women.
Source: Veneto Region Data Processing-Regional Statistical System on European Institute for Gender Equality data

balance between men and women. In particular, in political representation and women's access to the highest professional, managerial and executive positions, Italy marks the lowest score (18.6). This situation is a reflection of many gender inequalities, such as occupational and sectoral segregation, differences in training and compensation mechanisms, as well as the objective difficulty of women to creating a career without having to give up on having a family.

The "power" dimension is one of particular importance as it has a great impact on all other domains: gaining positions in this area inevitably leads to making progress in all other domains.

10.2 The portrait of women

The demographic picture

In 2013, women in Veneto number 2,524,783, 51.2% of the population, and 11% have foreign citizenship; one in five is Romanian, followed by Moroccan (10%) and Moldavian (9.8%).

The level of education of women has gradually increased over the years; however, among adult women between 30-34 years of age in Veneto, the percentage of women that achieved at least a degree is 21.7%,

less than the national average and half that of Europe. Although, on average, they are more educated than men, women still suffer many obstacles when it comes to the working world: the employment rate of women stops at 54.5%, while for men it reaches 73%. Employment difficulties are often reflected in family choices: the precariousness of the working universe, combined with that of the family situation, leads women to postpone starting a family. The average age of giving birth rose to 31.7 years old, one of the highest in Europe (EU28 average is 30.1 years of age), with a difference of more than a year and half compared to 1991. At the same time, the number of births has reduced to less than the slight recovery in fertility rates that was recorded in the previous decade: whereas, in 2010, women in Veneto had on average 1.5 children, in 2013 the fertility rate dropped to 1.42, far from the European average (1.58). Among the countries of the EU, the situation in France is particularly positive, where, following effective family policies, for years the value stood at 2 children per woman, ensuring the generational change and thus slowing down the ageing of the population.

The repeated decrease in the birth rate in recent years in Italy is partly due to a structural effect, as the baby-boomers (women born in the mid-1960s, more numerous than the generations that reach the child-bearing today) are gradually surpassing childbearing



Tab. 10.2.1 – Women: a summary of the picture. Veneto, Italy and the EU28 - Year 2013

	Veneto	Italy	EU28
Number of women	2,524,783	31,298,104	259,550,176 (a)
% of women in the total population	51.2	51.5	51.2 (a)
% of the foreign female population	10.6	8.3	-
% women 30-34 year olds with a degree	21.7	27.2	41.2
Female employment rate 15-64 yrs old (%) (b)	54.5	46.8	58.8
Average no. Of children per woman	1.42	1.39	1.58 (a)
Average age at childbirth (in yrs. old)	31.7	31.5	30.1 (a)
% of elder women living alone (a)	80.7	76.5	-
% widows	12.1	12.1	-
% of children given exclusively to the mother in custody in case of separation (a)	8.2	8.8	-
% of children given exclusively to the mother in custody in case of divorce (a)	16.2	22.4	-

(a) Year 2012. (b) Employment rate = (Employed 15-64 years old/Reference population) x 100. For Veneto and Italy, data refers to 2014. Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on ISTAT and EUROSTAT data

age. While maintaining a higher propensity to have children, the fertility rate in foreign women is also reducing, failing to compensate, as it did before, for the low birth rate attributed to Italian women (now foreign women have on average 2.14 children per woman, but the rate was 3.09 in 2002). This phenomenon is actually a response strategy to the difficulties of the current economic crisis, but also a progressive adaptation of women's reproductive behaviour.

Families that are changing

The result is that families are getting smaller, with an average of 2.4 components per family. Of the nearly 2 million families recorded at the time of the last population census in 2011, the numerous ones, with 5 or more components each, this figure dropped by 6%; even couples with children are falling (42% vs. 47.3% in 2001), while the number of singles is increasing, especially the elderly.

The thinning of the family size is also a result of the breaking up of extended families, once rather widespread in Italy, especially in Veneto, where the agricultural and establishment structure was the backdrop for families that were larger than those from other regions, including southern regions. Living in a multi-generational household was also a strategy to maxi-

mise the economic and material resources. Today, despite the fact that the lengthening of the average lifespan has contributed to an increase in the number of generations living together, the presence of multiple

generations within the same family is a rare phenomenon; married children choose not to live at home with their parents, preferring to live near parents or at a short distance, a feature typical of the Italian family and culture that can be seen as an evolution of the extended family, which in 2011 in Veneto was only 8.5% of the total number of families. Therefore, the model of the nuclear family, that is, a single nucleus, usually a couple with or without children, sometimes with the presence of another family member, usually a widowed parent, is increasingly dominant.

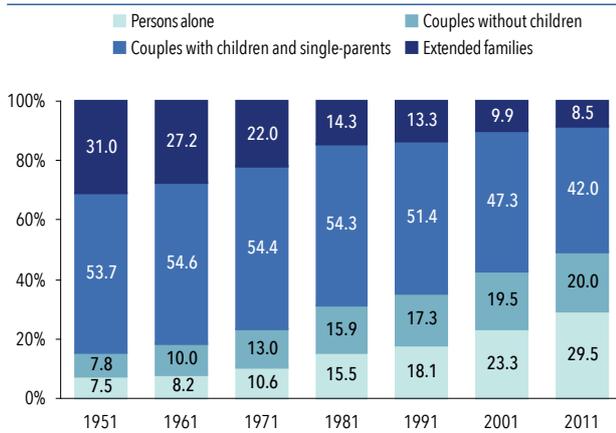
The number of single-parent families rose to 196 thousand (+20% compared to 2001), mostly single mothers with children (83%); among them, about 62 thousand were mothers with at least one child still a minor, mostly divorced or separated women who live with their children with exclusive or shared custody. Due to the fact that, on average, women live longer than men, they remain widowed and left alone in the last period of their lives, although very old and with



various difficulties (more than 80% of the over 65 who live alone).

Precisely those families of single-parent households and the elderly are among the most fragile and vulnerable types of family, including from an economic point of view, especially at a time of crisis like the one we are going through.

Fig. 10.2.1 - Family per type (% of the total). Veneto – Years 1951:2011

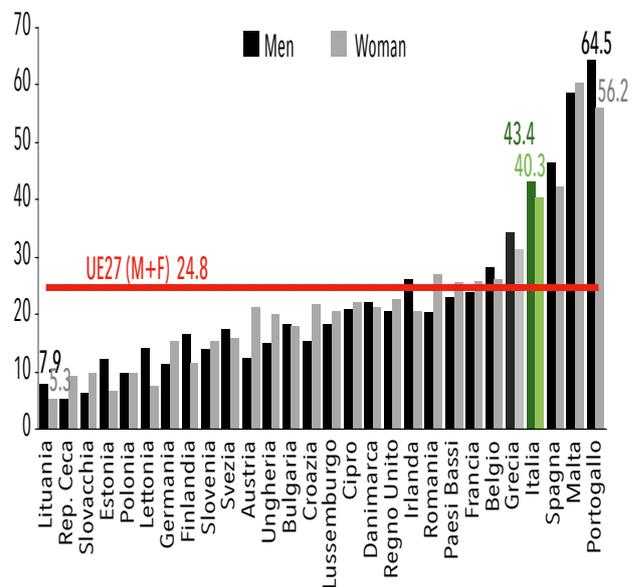


Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on ISTAT data

Women have recovered the disadvantage in terms of schooling, given that 40.3% dropped out after middle school, compared with the bit higher figure of 43.4% of men.

In Veneto, people 25 to 64 years old who stopped at middle school in 2013 are almost equal in numbers among males and females (respectively 40.2% and 40.8%). This is the result both of the progress in the education system, and of the natural generational turnover, as the latest generations have a higher education than the older ones which are gradually disappearing. Whilst, for example, between those that are 60-64 years old, 24.6% of women holds a diploma or degree, compared with the 37% of males, today, there are more women than men with an education among people aged 20-24 years (84.6% versus 76.8% of men). The recovery achieved by women in terms of education surpassed that of men; this occurred with the generations of people who now are between 40 and 50 years old.

Fig. 10.2.2 - Population of people aged 24-64 yrs old (%) that has achieved at most a middle school education based on gender. EU28 – Year 2013



Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on EUROSTAT data Source

Running for a higher level of education

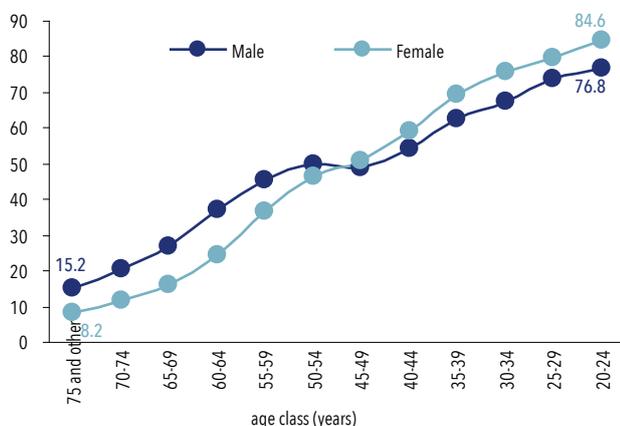
The comparison of the levels of education of the adult population gives useful indications on the degree of knowledge and skills associated with the human capital of each country. Low education exposes people to a lower labour market inclusion and reduces the likelihood of access to programmes of ongoing training throughout life.

The last decades of Italian history are characterised by a general rise in educational levels of the population, a phenomenon which also involved women. However, in the European comparison, the gap with most other countries remains evident, where the population has, on average, a higher level of education. In Italy, in 2013, 41.8% of the population between 25 and 64 years of age did not continue studying after middle school, a value that instead stands at 24.8% if you observe the average EU28.

Women are more educated than men



Fig. 10.2.3 - Population aged 20 and over (%) that has achieved a diploma higher than a middle school education based on gender and age. Veneto – Census 2011



Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on ISTAT data

These gender differences can be observed, with different peculiarities, in all the principal stages of training of an individual. The choice of the school is a first indi-

cator of the attitudes and skills that the child chooses to put into practice during a lifetime. The training choice differs again between girls and boys in a considerable manner, especially in secondary schools and in technical schools; less so in professional and artistic schools. Boys prefer technical schools (44.7% versus 29% of girls), girls are primarily oriented towards secondary schools focusing on humanities or sciences (46.3% versus 29.1%), preferring an educational path with prospects for long-term study. This trend is also observed at national level, even in a more evident manner.

Differences in gender are also reflected in school results. According to the Rilevazione Pisa survey, sponsored by the OECD, to verify the key skills acquired by 15-year olds, most students from Veneto far exceed 'sufficient' in assessments both for reading skills, as well as in maths and science, achieving an average score of 510.5, exceeding the OECD average (499) and Italy as a whole (485.9). Compared to boys of the same age, girls stand out for better results in reading (+54 points than boys), surpassing the Italian average (+46) and OECD average (+39). In science, achievements are equal, while in maths girls have lower

Tab. 10.2.2 – Enrolment of Veneto students based on academic field and gender – Academic year 2011/2012

	absolute values			%		
	Females	Males	Total	Females	Males	Total
Engineering	461	2.217	2.678	17,2	82,8	100,0
Economics and Statistics	1.329	1.345	2.674	49,7	50,3	100,0
Languages	1.575	325	1.900	82,9	17,1	100,0
Medicine	1.114	580	1.694	65,8	34,2	100,0
Law	968	633	1.601	60,5	39,5	100,0
Political-social	872	445	1.317	66,2	33,8	100,0
Literature	878	397	1.275	68,9	31,1	100,0
Educational sciences	907	56	963	94,2	5,8	100,0
Architecture	425	464	889	47,8	52,2	100,0
Agronomy	434	424	858	50,6	49,4	100,0
Geo-biology	472	349	821	57,5	42,5	100,0
Sciences	226	525	751	30,1	69,9	100,0
Chemical-pharmaceutical	459	248	707	64,9	35,1	100,0
Psychology	456	122	578	78,9	21,1	100,0
Physical education	102	177	279	36,6	63,4	100,0
Total	10.678	8.307	18.985	56,2	43,8	100,0

Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on MIUR data Source



results than boys (-15 points), in line with the Italian and OECD average.

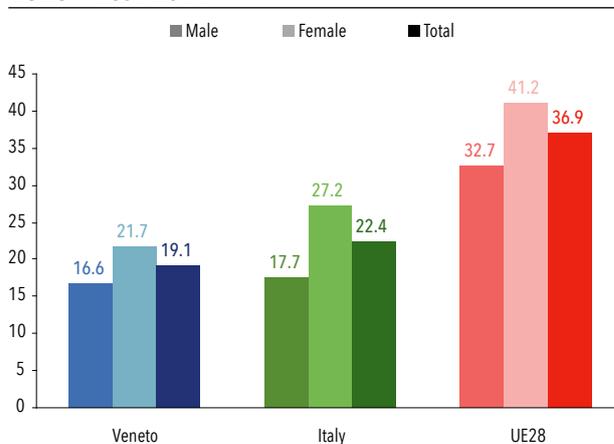
There are also those who fail to complete the course of study, not achieving the qualification planned at the time of registration. The phenomenon of dropping out of school early affects the male and female student population in different ways. For example, in secondary school in Italy, the proportion of male students at risk of dropping out is equal to 1.47%, versus the 1% of female students; this disparity persists even in Veneto, where boys at risk are 1.22% and girls 0.78%.

In choosing post-diploma studies, we can observe that, among university students, women are in a majority: among the 2011/2012 academic year students enrolled in Veneto, 56.2% are girls. If we consider their preferred choice of studies, female students are more present in humanities, much less so in sciences. The number of female students who choose scientific studies is still increasing, and this helps to reduce the gap between genders in this field.

Among other things, in Italy, the presence of female students in scientific, mathematical and computing fields is higher than that of other European countries, even compared to those countries where the rate of University attendance is generally higher. Italy, in fact, ranks 4th place in Europe, with 16.2% of female science students, surpassed by Romania, Portugal and Germany.

A part from registering, it is important that students complete their university studies. One of the objectives of the 2020 Europe Strategy is that at least 40% of 30-34 year olds manage to graduate in 2020. If more than half of European countries have already reached this goal in 2013, for Italy, this target is still so far off as to rank it among the worst countries, despite the improvements achieved in recent years. For women, the goal is closer than for men (21.7% versus 16.6%), although performance is still below the national average, third to last place on the list of regions. (The worst ranking regions are Calabria and Campania).

Fig. 10.2.4 - Percentage of 30-34 year olds with a degree based on gender and total. Veneto, Italy and EU28 – Year 2011



Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on EUROSTAT data Source

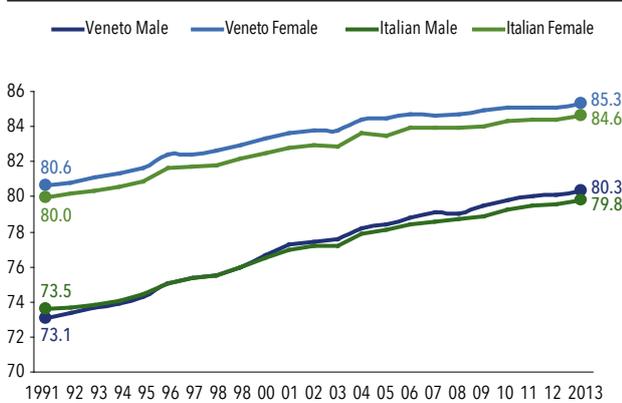
Levels of health

Biological, social and economic factors give rise to differences between men and women in terms of health risks, health conditions and access to health services. A gender approach to health begins with the recognition of these differences and promotes the gender perspective as a determining factor in the development of strategies aimed at achieving greater appropriateness of care, proper allocation of resources and greater protection of individual well-being.

Medicine and health based on gender appear to be strategic goals to ensure everyone gets the best treatment possible and to implement truly fair, innovative and quality health systems. The long-term goal is to reduce inequalities in this area, starting from shared principles and guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO), approved by the World Health Assembly in 2007. The 2020 Health Program, shared by all EU countries, also aims at improving health for all and reducing inequalities through a better governance for health. The program is based on the values enshrined in the Constitution of the WHO: "The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being", which also refers to gender equity in health promotion and in access to healthcare.



Fig. 10.2.5 - Life expectancy at birth by gender (values expressed in years). Veneto and Italy – Years 1991:2013(*)



(*) The data for 2013 is a provisional estimate. Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on ISTAT data

A first important indicator to assess the state of health is life expectancy at birth.

Women live longer...

The continuous increase in years of life recorded over the years is the result of improved living conditions, hygiene and public health, as well as constant progress in medicine. In the past 15 years, the increase in average life expectancy at birth, both for the Veneto region and for Italy, is about four years. Women of the Veneto region can expect to live on average up to 85.3 years old, an age that is greater than men who live an average of 80.3 years, however the gender gap is progressively reducing.

...but are in worse shape

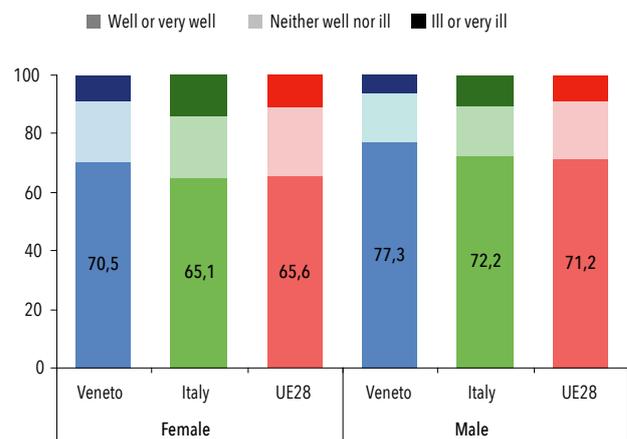
Besides considering how much we live, it is important to understand how much we live in good health and what makes our quality of life optimal. This is one of the points of the Community strategy, namely fostering good health in an ageing Europe, aiming to add two years of life expectancy lived in good health by 2020 in order to help people stay active and productive for as long as possible.

In Veneto, from 2000 to 2005, life expectancy in good health has improved by about 4 years, much more than the overall life expectancy. However, of the more than 85 years of life expected to live, women live on average their first 51.3 years of age in good health, then the remaining 34 in difficult conditions; in particular the last 5 years in a disabled state. Men can

enjoy 53.7 years in good health, more than two years longer than women, and the years of disability (3 years) are fewer. Such a comparison reveals that, while confirming a female advantage in terms of greater longevity, women spend a proportionately longer part of their lives afflicted by diseases than men. The WHO defines health not only as the absence of illnesses or infirmity, but as a state of physical, mental and social-relational well-being of the person. In this perspective, the dimensions concerning subjective perceptions regarding one's own state of psychophysical balance in the context of life and work also appears quite relevant.

In 2012, the women in Veneto who claim to feel well or very well are about 71%, while only 9% claim not to feel well. The judgment is altogether more positive than what is averagely expressed by women on national and European levels; however, this differs from the "feeling good" declared by men. This is due to a different perception of their state of health but also to greater objective difficulties for women in terms of health, such as the presence of chronic disease or disabilities, particularly in older age groups.

Fig. 10.2.6 - Percentage of persons aged at least 16 by gender and declared in a state of good health. Veneto, Italy and EU28 – Year 2012



Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on ISTAT and EUROSTAT data

"Mens sana in corpore sano" (A healthy mind in a healthy body) was stated by our Latin ancestors. In fact, besides just the body, a person feels to be in

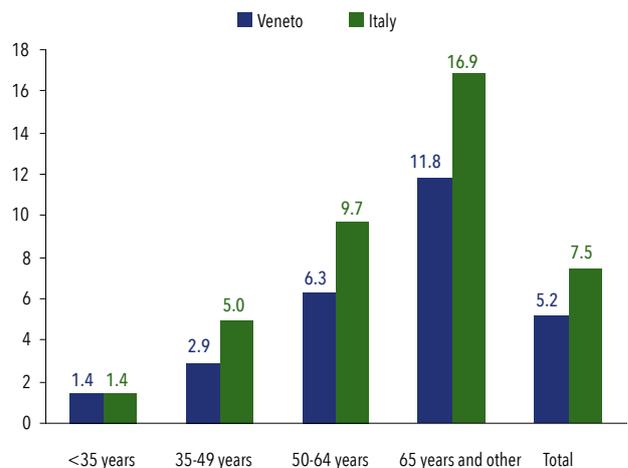


good health even when a psychological balance is reached which allows him/her to live in harmony with not only him/herself but also in his/her relationships with others.

To this end, we propose two synthetic indexes, one regarding the physical state and the other the psychological one, set up and standardised internationally and expressed on a scoring system from 0 to 100. Very low values of the physical state index correspond to substantial limitations in self-care and in social, personal and physical activities, serious physical pain and frequent tiredness, while very high values reflect excellent health status. Very low index values concerning the psychological state reflect frequent psychological distress, serious social and personal disabilities due to emotional problems; in contrast, very high values indicate the lack of these psychological issues. Women of the Veneto region declare they fare averagely in both physical and psychological terms, with an average of 49.8 and 48 respectively, in line with the national picture. Compared to 2005,

eight out of ten cases, the condition of depression is certified by a doctor and, in 75% of cases, the women involved are on medication.

Fig. 10.2.7 - Women who declare they suffer from chronic anxiety disorders or depression by age group (x 100 women of the age group of reference). Veneto and Italy – Years 2012-13



Tab. 10.2.3 – Physical and psychological status index by gender – Veneto and Italy - Year 2012 – 2013 (*)

	Physical status index		Psychological status index	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Veneto	52.1	49.8	50.4	48.0
Italia	51.9	49.6	50.1	47.9

(*) The physical and psychological status indexes are expressed with a scoring system from 0 to 100. High index values correspond to good health conditions, lower index values correspond to worse conditions of health. Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on ISTAT data

Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on ISTAT data

there was an improvement of the physical condition which, however, was accompanied by a worsening of the psychological one.

International and national statistics refer an escalating diffusion of psychological disorders, such as of depression and anxiety disorders. These disorders, more frequent among women than in men, are suffered by 5.2% of Veneto women and are manifested to a greater extent with increasing age, enough so as to create a percentage rise to almost 12% among women over the age of 65. The regional picture shows, however, a more favourable situation than the Italian average. In

The recent economic crisis has had an impact on the right to health in our country. Almost 7 million Italians (over half a million in Veneto) claim to go without purchasing medicine or health services, including medical exams, specialist exams and surgeries despite them being necessary, primarily due to economic reasons. For some people, such services become a luxury or a privilege that cannot be afforded or are postponed. Women mainly do without these services: in Veneto, 13.1% of women do without check-ups or treatment, in line with the national trend, while for men, this rate decreases to 8.6%. The picture is similar with regard to dental treatment, although the number of people going without this particular health care in Veneto is lower than that on the national average.



Tab. 10.2.4 – Percentage of people who have gone without health care despite requiring it in the last 12 months – Veneto and Italy - Year 2012

	Males	Females	Total
Health services or purchase of medicine			
Veneto	8.6	13.1	10.9
Italy	9.0	13.2	11.1
Dentist			
Veneto	4.1	5.2	4.7
Italy	9.8	10.5	10.1

Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on ISTAT data

Women satisfied with life?

Satisfaction with life refers to many different areas, concerning not only the basic needs that allow leading a decent life, but also superior needs of immaterial type. Health firstly, but also employment, economic conditions and family relationships and friendships are considered aspects of life that contribute significantly to a positive quality of life.

On a scale of 1 to 10, Veneto women consider themselves satisfied with their own lives with an average score of 6.7, slightly lower than that of men (6.9). Going into more detail on the various aspects of quality of life, women are generally less happy than men. It is not known whether this is due to objective conditions that determine lower satisfaction or whether this is also influenced by a female view of life that seems to be more pessimistic: 54% of women imagine that over the next five years, their personal situation will improve or remain stable, to a lesser extent than men (55.5%). Furthermore, women generally show to have a greater distrust even in people: 78.5% think you cannot trust most people, coming down to 75.8% in men, in line with the national trend.

The wider gender gap to the disadvantage of women concerns the level of satisfaction with their own health, while for other aspects, contentment levels are not much different from those declared by men. Surprisingly, however, women prove to be equally satisfied as to men in terms of their jobs and economic status, although this rate does not reach very high levels given that not even half the women in Veneto claim to be sufficiently satisfied in economic terms.

The judgment on the economic status is due mainly by the effects of the current economic crisis and is confirmed as the most critical aspect not only for women but for all citizens.

Tab. 10.2.5 – Percentage of people aged 14 yrs. old and over who are very or sufficiently satisfied with some aspects of their own lives based on gender. Veneto and Italy - Year 2013

	Veneto		Italy	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Economic status	43.6	44.5	40.6	39.7
Health status	84.1	80.3	83.0	77.6
Family relationships	90.8	91.5	90.4	90.0
Friendships	82.7	83.3	83.7	80.0
Leisure time	64.0	66.7	65.1	61.1
Profession (a)	74.3	74.9	72.4	74.3

(a) Among those employed at least 15 yrs. old Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on ISTAT data

10.3 The boost of initiative

Female entrepreneurship

The legislative definition² of female entrepreneurship refers to legal subjects such as “cooperative companies and partnerships, constituted not less than 60% by women, corporate enterprises whose shares accrue to women for an amount no less than two-thirds and whose Boards of Directors are made by at least two-thirds of women as well as individual enterprises run by women, who operate in the industrial, crafts, agricultural, trade, tourism and services sectors. Female consortiums are considered those made up by at least 51% of female cooperatives”.

The statistical data published by the Female Entrepreneurship Observatory instead follows a slightly different, less selective definition, when considering female enterprises: sole proprietorships where the holder is a woman; partnerships or cooperatives, the majority of whose members are women or the majority of the equity is held by women; partnerships or cooperative companies where the majority of members of the Board of Directors are women or the majority of

² Art. 53 paragraph a (pursuant to ex. article 2 paragraph 1 of (Italian) Law 215/92) of Chapter I of the (Italian) Legislative Decree of 11 April 2006, no.198 - Code of Equal Opportunities between men and women, in accordance with article 6 of the (Italian) Law no. 246 of 28 November 28 2005.



the equity is held by women; consortia composed by 51% or more of female enterprises as defined above. According to data of the Observatory, the impact of female-owned companies in the productive system is higher in the South and on the Islands; in particular; we can observe quotas of female-owned companies exceeding 25% in the regions of Molise, Basilicata and Abruzzo. The lowest rates of female entrepreneurship³ are recorded in the regions of North eastern Italy – Trentino (17.3%), Veneto (19.3%), Emilia Romagna (20.0%) and Lombardy (18.2%). In Veneto female enterprises number almost 95,000, as recorded in December 2014.

These territorial differences are related to different sector arrangements among the regions: Veneto, as with other regions with a similar profile, has a strong manufacturing sector, in which female entrepreneurs are traditionally less prominent, while the southern regions have more or a tertiary inclination. Similar to Veneto, the provinces of Rovigo, Belluno and Venice, featuring a lower manufacturing tendency, show an above-average share of regional enterprises owned by women.

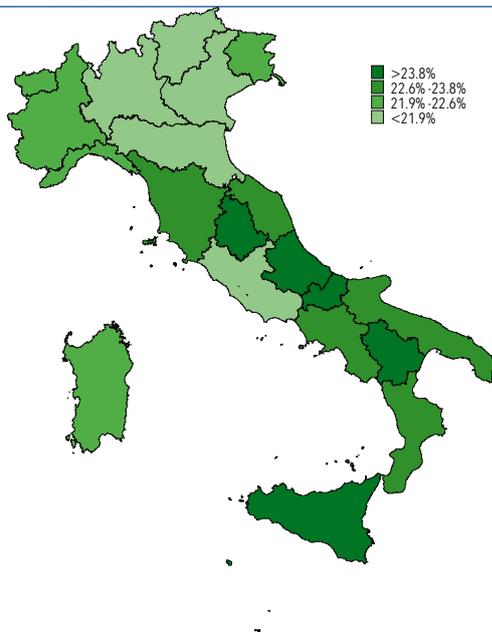
Female-owned enterprises are increasing...

The female schooling opportunities implemented over the past century, with the consequent increase in the level of education, has gradually led women to be able to hold positions that were once considered exclusively male roles. Subsequently, the impact of women’s enterprises in the productive sector in the Veneto grew strong starting from the second half of the twentieth century and, in recent years, has brought the share of female enterprises from just above 10% to almost 25% for the companies registered at the Chambers of Commerce from the year 2010 onwards.

This generation of female entrepreneurs, that has been part of the production system since the middle of the last century, is now a large proportion of the total number, with nearly 50% of women Veneto entrepreneurs over

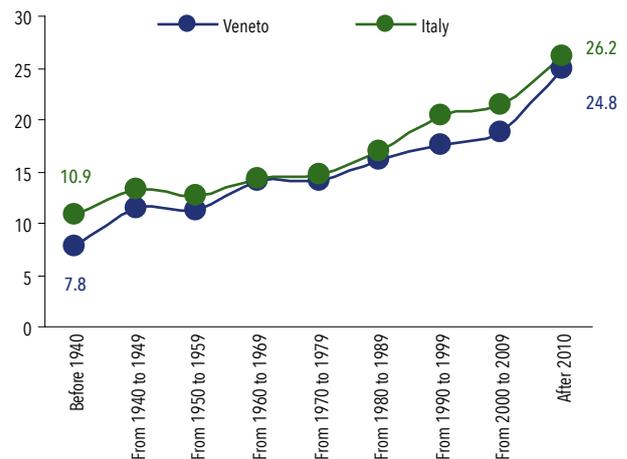
50 years of age. It is also important to keep an eye on the progress of the young entrepreneurs whose numbers, in Veneto, are steady around the average national levels, with more than 5% of young women entrepreneurs under 30⁴.

Fig. 10.3.1 - Incidence of female-owned enterprises by region – Year 2014



(*) Incidence: the ratio between female-owned enterprises and the total number of enterprises. Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on Female Entrepreneurship Observatory, Unioncamere-Infocamere data Source

Fig. 10.3.2 - Percentage incidence of female-owned enterprises by period of company registration. Veneto and Italy – Year 2014 (*)



(*) Incidence: the ratio between female-owned enterprises and the total number of enterprises. Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on Female Entrepreneurship Observatory, Unioncamere-Infocamere data Source

³ The rate of female entrepreneurship is equal to the percentage of companies registered as “female”.
⁴ Data updated as of the III Q. 2013.



The incidence of female enterprises is higher in micro-enterprises, particularly those of up to 5 employees, with a 20% share of female-owned enterprises. From companies with 6-9 employees up to larger firms, one can observe a continuous decrease in the proportion of female enterprises, down to the minimum 2% for companies with over 500 employees.

At the end of 2014, female enterprises are made up mainly by Veneto individual companies (64.7%) which, over the years, are leaving more and more space to companies with better legal structures, such as partnerships (16.2%) and corporate companies (17.7%).

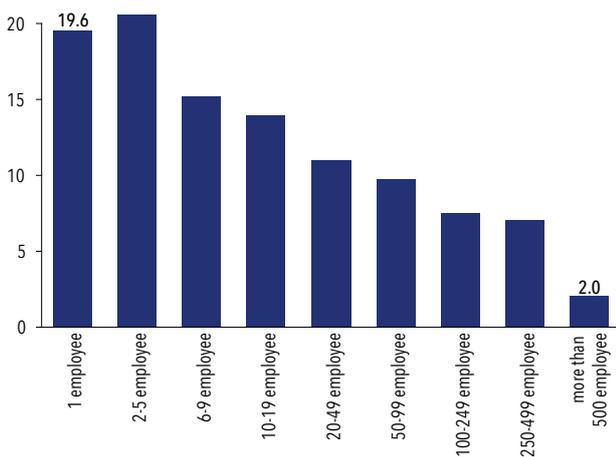
... present especially in the services field

In the last year, in Veneto, female-owned enterprises were more concentrated in the services sector compared to other companies: 35.2% of female enterprises operate in the trade and hospitality fields, compared to 28.2% of other companies; similarly, 34.2% of female enterprises carry out other service activities compared to the 27.2% of non-female ones. The spread of female enterprises shifted towards services to the detriment of the industry sector: the number of

female manufacturing enterprises and construction companies as a ratio of the total number of female enterprises is equal to 9.8% and 3.4% respectively, while the corresponding shares for the non-female ones are respectively 13.5% and 17.6%.

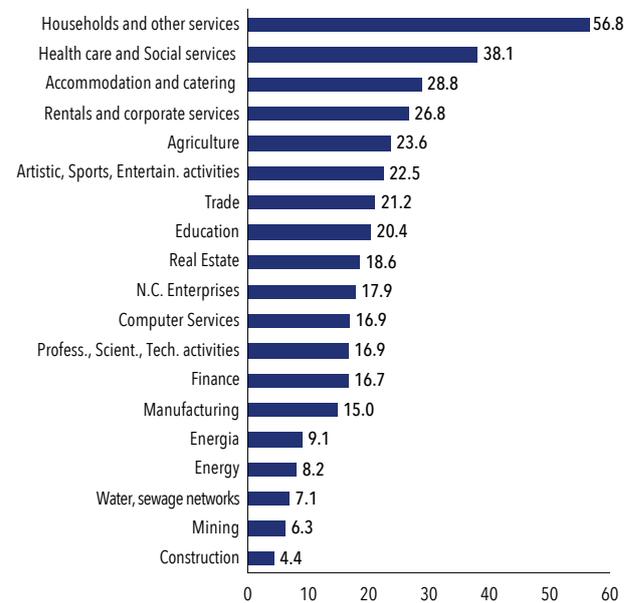
The economic sectors with the highest incidence of female enterprises in Veneto are all service industries: live-in family care and other service activities (56.8%), healthcare and social work (38.1%), accommodation and catering (28.8%). These data confirm the strong female presence in the social field, in those occupations related to care, or more generally to personal services, those sectors that are still considered of labour intensive type. In fact, the main activity concerns family care, followed by other service activities including personal care, such as beautician services, hairdressing, laundry services, repair of personal and household goods and accessories, plus all the activities linked to professional, cultural and trade unions associations.

Fig. 10.3.3 - Percentage incidence of female-owned enterprises by number of employees. Veneto - Year 2014



(* Incidence: the ratio between female-owned enterprises and the total number of enterprises. Companies that did not have an open social security position with the (Italian) National Social Welfare Institution were not taken into account in the statistics in the reference period. Source: Veneto Region Data Processing-Regional Statistical System on Female Entrepreneurship Observatory, Unioncamere-Infocamere data Source

Fig. 10.3.4 - Percentage incidence of female-owned enterprises by economic activity field. Veneto - Year 2014 (*)



(* Incidence: the ratio between female-owned enterprises and the total number of enterprises. Source: Veneto Region Data Processing-Regional Statistical System on Female Entrepreneurship Observatory, Unioncamere-Infocamere data Source



Few women in agriculture

In Italy, the farms run by women in 2010 number almost one in three, with a regional distribution that shows Liguria and the southern regions with the highest numbers above the average national level: Veneto (25.3%) ranks decidedly below the average and among the five regions with the lowest rate.

Particularly interesting is the situation of Trentino Alto Adige with the lowest rate in Italy (13.3%): this is due to the traditional maso chiuso that is still in practice, namely that agricultural properties pass down undivided to the following generation, only from father to the eldest son.

Female-owned enterprises: smaller and less profitable

As for our region, companies with a female boss have distinctive characteristics: smaller on average

(the average farmed agricultural area is 4.5 hectares versus the 7.6 hectares of the companies led by men), less modernised, less multifunctional and therefore less profitable than those run by men. The needs and difficulties of the farms in Veneto (generational change, company fragmentation, low profitability) are therefore intensified in agricultural activities managed by women.

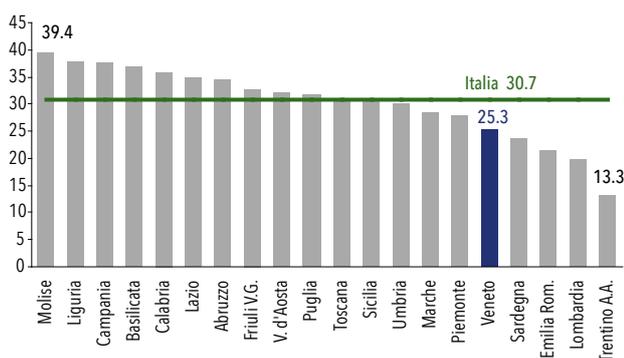
Despite the fact that the need for generational change is usually very important and, given the average age of a manager is rather high (around 61 years old), women who lead a company are generally older than their male colleagues: they have an average age of 63 years old and almost one entrepreneur in four is older than 75 years of age. The direct consequence is that even the level of education is lower than in males, so much so that more than half of the women at the head of a farm do not have an academic qualification that goes beyond primary school and 82% do not get past middle school.

As far as concerns the technical and economic orientation⁵ of farms, those led by women are mainly specialised in arable crops (63%). It is the most widespread specialisation for male-run farms as well (50.4%) and also the least profitable, with an average 13,000 Euro Standard Output⁶ per company: for women, this value drops below 8,000 Euros. More generally, the average profitability of a company run by a woman is less than that of her male counterparts, amounting to nearly 24,000 Euros (54,000 Euros for males).

In a picture that surely does not show a great tendency by Veneto farms towards profitable agricultural diversification, given that less than 5% declare to have implemented at least one such activity, women show an even lower tendency to initiate alternative farming activities: in fact they are only 2.7% of total (for men, this value is almost double and equal to 5.2%). The activity favoured by women is rural tourism, while for males it is contract work. Higher numbers of women are seen in educational farms, social and recreational activities and holiday cottage activities.

Finally, female-run farms are less computerised. The overall picture shows poor computerisation, and companies led by women feature a computerisation rate that is below average and equal to 3.1% versus the 6.2% of those run by men. However, female-owned companies show a higher propensity to use the internet and have their own website: 23% of computerised companies led by women use the internet versus the 19% of men and half of the female-owned companies have a website as compared to 42% of males.

Fig. 10.3.5 - Percentage incidence of female company leaders by region. Year 2010 (*)



(*) Incidence: the ratio between farm companies with female leaders over the total number of farm companies. Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on ISTAT data

⁵ The classification of agricultural companies based on technical-economic orientation (OTE) meets the need to provide info concerning the production type and the degree of company specialisation based on the percentage incidence of the corporate economic dimension (in terms of Standard Gross Margin or Standard Output) of the various production activities over the company's overall economic size. The OTE is therefore the company's production type, which will be considered, for example, as "arable crops" if most of the company's total income comes from the growing of arable crops

⁶ The Standard Output is the monetary value of production, which includes sales, redeployments, internal consumption and changes in product stock, at farm-gate prices (to this general rule that considers prices without transportation and marketing costs, the only



10.4 Between work, family and political commitments

Being female workers

The employment gap between men and women, always quite evidently in the favour of men in part due to poor or non-existent family support policies, has gradually decreased over recent years and women are taking on increasingly active roles in the labour market.

The employment gap between men and women is decreasing...

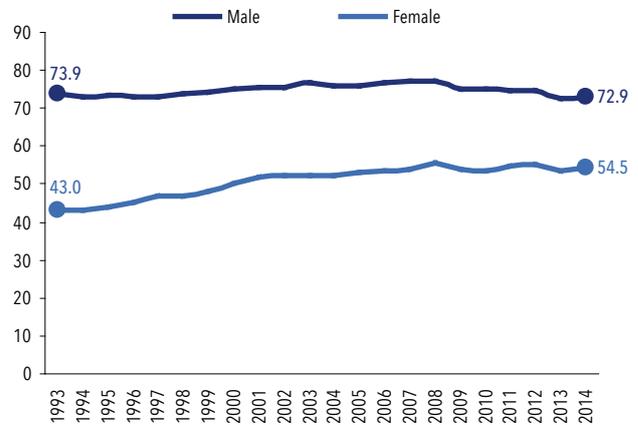
Although still far off the target set by the Lisbon Strategy to achieve a female employment rate of 60%

by 2010, important progress has been made: in 1993 only 43% of women were employed, while female participation in 2014 is 54.5%, against a more stable male employment, now standing at 73%.

Employment in Veneto is higher than the Italian average (with rates of 46.8% for women and 64.7% for men), and for men, the rate is even higher than the European average (69.4%). Not so for women, given that the employment rate of women in the countries of the EU28 is 58.8%, 4 % above that for Veneto women. The employment gender gap is decreasing in part due to the economic crisis that hit mostly men, lowering their employment rate by 4.1 % from 2008 to 2014 (-1.2% for women). Whilst, in 1993, the male employment rate exceeded that of women by 31 % in Veneto, in 2014, the gap narrowed to its lowest record at 18.4 %.

Gender differences become more evident if you look at academic qualifications. Among university graduates, men and women have similar employment levels: in Veneto, in 2014, 84% of men are employed, 76% of women. As the educational level attained decreases, the employment gender gap significantly increases: the employment rate among secondary school graduates is 64% for women and more than 79% for men; among those with a middle school qualification and an even lower title, the gap increases with a difference of respectively 25 and 29 % in favour of men. In this regard, however, the lower qualifications of the elderly and how the culture of women, mothers and housewives has changed over time must be taken into account.

Fig. 10.4.1 - Employment rate by gender. Veneto -



Years 1993 - 2014 (*)

(*) $Employment\ rate = (Employed\ 15-64\ yrs.\ old / Reference\ population) \times 100$ Source: Veneto Region Data Processing-Regional Statistical System on ISTAT data

In 2013⁸, 84% of women of the Veneto region were employed 86% had a permanent contract (almost 89% for men), both among the highest values in Italy.

...however differences in profession careers persist and...

However, the presence of women in leading roles is still low: among the management positions, women number 31%, 39 % with framework contracts while representing 41% of the employed.

There are few independent professionals, barely 3.1%, over 2 % less than the data for men. In parallel, atypical jobs are more prevalent among women: contracts for freelance work coordinated by an employer and occasional work contracts account for 2.3% of female employment and only 1% for men.

The economic sectors feature different gender ratios: women are employed mainly in the fields of education, health and social services (24%), followed by industry (20%) and trade (15%). The biggest male sector is manufacturing which employs one-third of men (15%), followed by the trade (15%) and constructions (11%). In some areas, the presence of women is definitely predominant: in education, health and social services, for every 100 men, there are over 300 women and, in other collective and personal services, there are 211 female employees. Conversely, other

exception is represented by products that cannot be sold if not packaged: in this case, the price considered is the boxed product).⁷ Ultimo anno disponibile per le elaborazioni più dettagliate che seguono in questo paragrafo.

⁸ Last year available for more detailed data processing that follow in this section



sectors employ mostly men, such as construction, where there are only 6 women every 100 men, transportation and warehousing (19 women per 100 men) and industry (41).

The differences between men and women are also observed in the professions: there are professions more distinctly female, such as executive jobs in office work, where for every 100 men employed, there are 178 females, or professions related to trade and services, where for every 100 men there are 148 women. In parallel, some jobs are reserved almost exclusively for men, such as the professions of craftsman, skilled workers and farmers, in which there are only 14 women for every 100 men.

All this is inevitably reflected in terms of wages. On average, women receive lower salaries for work compared to men; according to the Gender Pay Gap⁹ published by Openpolis, in Italy, women earn about 7% less than men, which is however better than the overall European average, where the difference reaches peaks of 16.4%; but there are

...in wages

realties that are greatly varied. In Veneto a full-time female employee earns 1,200 Euros per month on average in 2013, i.e. 140 Euros less than a man, and the gap is greater than the national average (130 Euros).

The greatest differences in salary are observed in Emilia Romagna, Liguria, Piedmont and Valle d'Aosta, the lowest in Sicily and Calabria.

The difference is greater with age, as proof of how much more difficult it is for a woman to undertake the same career as men and achieve the same results. Among workers aged 15-24 years, wages are just over 1,000 Euros, regardless of gender and, up to 34 years old, the wage gap does not exceed 100 Euros. Beyond 40 years of age, men earn significantly more than women: about 159 Euros for men of 40 to 44 years of age and 237 Euros for men over 60 years old. However, the most obvious gaps are recorded amongst those with academic qualifications: a woman with a university degree earns 1,400 Euros per month against the 1,750 of men with the same qualifications.

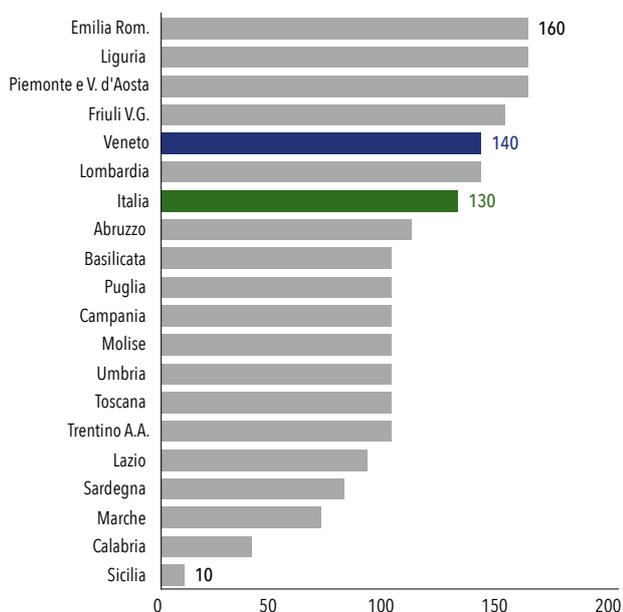
Equality in companies with over 100 hundred employees

Article 9 of (Italian) Law no. 125 of 10 April 1991 ("Positive actions for the achievement of equality between women and men at work") introduces the obligation of preparing a biennial report on the situation of male and female employees in public and private companies employing more than 100 people; obligation governed by article 46 of the "Code of equal opportunities between men and women", (Italian) Legis.ve Decree no. 198 of 11 April 2006.

The purpose of this provision is to implement a continuous monitoring system in each region that records information related to distinctions of gender and business situations in the various economic sectors, from which to gather that which is necessary to evaluate the actual creation of equal opportunities between women and men in employment and professional activities. This system is used to define and implement policies and measures aimed at the prevention of discrimination and the promotion of affirmative action in the workplace so that the principles of equal opportunities become a daily practice.

In Spring 2014, data was collected on the companies operating in the Veneto region for the drafting of the 2012/2013 biennium Report by the Office of the Regional Councillor of Equality who, in the role of a public official, has the responsibility of promoting

Fig. 10.4.2 - Male/female difference in monthly pay (in Euros) of full-time employees. Year 2013



Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on ISTAT data

⁹ Openpolis. Gender Equality fra Politica, Imprese e Lavoro - La ripartizione delle posizioni di responsabilità fra uomini e donne. Minidossier, no. 3, March 2015.



and monitoring the implementation of the principles of equality, opportunity and non-discrimination for women and men at work, according to that entrusted to him by the same Law no. 125/1991. More specifically, the survey aims to provide a clear picture of the condition of the staff by gender of companies with over 100 employees with regard to: the status of recruitment, training, professional promotion, levels, category or qualification upgrading, redundancy, and even layoffs, early retirement and standard retirement and the wages actually paid.

For the 2012/2013 biennium, Veneto companies called to respond were over 1,250, of which 1,104 were those actually considered in terms of the completeness of the data submitted, for a total of more than 549,000 employees at the end of 2013, of which 49% female workers. First of all, the survey showed an overall increased resilience of the female labour market facing the burdensome economic crisis - which mostly involved sectors more typically "male" - along with a greater degree of "mobility".

The female labour market is more mobile

Compared to their male colleagues, women require a greater demand for changing work shifts, the use of part time contracts, leave of absence and voluntary

redundancy, a sign that the traditional model of the division of roles in the family is still in force, which heavily affects women's careers and therefore their incomes and future pension expectations as well. Faced with increased female recruitment (nearly 60% of newcomers), the data show that they are mostly employees and workers (respectively 52.4% and 40.3% of the women hired), and there are fewer promotions for women and more the fixed-term and overall atypical contracts (9.9% versus the 8.3% of men).

Women get lower wages than men and...

Salaries remain a very significant indicator: the inequalities in wages are observed in all areas of production and in all tasks, differences that remain strong even at higher role levels.

...very few hold key senior positions

And it is precisely in the senior management levels that the under-representation of women is still quite apparent, even in those areas with a greater female presence, as in catering, hotels and trade: among the persons holding a leadership role, on average only 19% are women, 31% among executives. In short, even in Veneto today women access upper management positions with more difficulty than

Tab. 10,4,1 – Summary table of the results of the survey on the conditions of staff by gender in companies with over 100 employees, Veneto Biennium 2012/2013

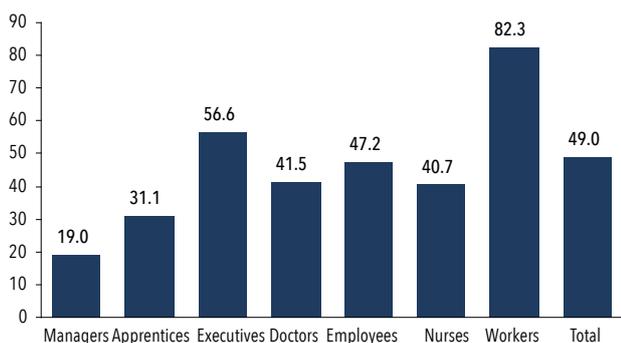
	Anno	Male	Female
Number of employed	2013	280,316	268,992
Distribution % of employed	2013	51.0	49.0
Variation % of the employed	2013/12	1.5	4.0
Percentage of the hired over the total number of contracted persons	2013	40.2	59.8
Percentage of promotion over the total number of promotions	2013	57.5	42.5
Percentage of persons under open-ended contracts	31/12/13	91.7	90.1
Percentage of part-time employees	31/12/13	5.6	36.9
Percentage of terminations of employment due to voluntary resignation	2013	19.3	27.7
Distribution % of managers	2013	81.0	19.0
Percentage of employees on leave out of the total number of applicants	31/12/13	18.5	81.5
Average gross annual earnings (in Euros)	2013	35,936	24,641
Average gross annual earnings for managers (in Euros)	2013	127,911	105,091

Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on Regional Councilor for Equality Office data Source



their male colleagues of equal skills and experience and even when they achieve top management levels, in most cases, they get lower salaries anyway.

Fig. 10.4.3 - Rate of feminisation by main employment categories. Veneto - Year 2013 (*)



(*) Percentage of women in total Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on Regional Councilor for Equality Office data Source

It is clear that, alongside the promotion of positive action and of a new stronger and effective culture of equal opportunities, it is also necessary to plan and build a different work organisation.

Greater opportunities for women to cover top management positions, less job insecurity and an increase of expected salary would better promote the entrance of women into the labour market, a key element to en-

sure the development of employment and to achieve the economic objectives of Europe and of our country. Reducing economic inequality, promoting education by investing in human capital, encouraging women's participation in the labour market, also through active policies for work-family conciliation, are all paths to achieve full social cohesion and thus improve the quality life for everyone.

Unshared work and the difficulties of conciliation

Nonetheless the participation of women in the labour market is growing, in most Western countries the burden of domestic work continues to weigh heavily on their shoulders.

Family work is still the burden of women

The average European Gender Equality Index computed as part of only the domestic tasks and family care is in fact still far from parity (100), totalling just 45.5 points, and this value is even lower in Italy (42.5). In Veneto, if on an average a man carries out 1 hour and 46 minutes of family work on a normal week day, a woman carries out 4 hrs and 46 minutes.

Contrary to what one would expect, which is that a women's engagement out of the house for work should correspond to a greater sharing of the household tasks with the partner, women are still bearing most of the workload in terms of domestic activities and the care of children and family. This appears to be a fact that emerges from the index of asymmetry of domestic work: in the case of couples in which only

Tab. 10.4.2 – Index of asymmetry of the couple in family work by working condition and couple type. Veneto and Italy – 2008 (*)

Working condition of the couple	Type of couple	Veneto	Italy
Both partners employed	couples without children	66.1	71.9
	couples with children	72.0	73.4
	total	70.5	73.1
Men employed and woman unemployed	couples without children	80.1	82.8
	couples with children	80.5	84.3
	total	80.4	84.0

(*)Index of asymmetry of the couple in family work = time dedicated to family work by the woman on the total amount of time spent on family work by both partners times 100. In case of equal distribution of workloads the indicator is equal to 50%, higher values indicate an imbalance to the detriment of women. Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on ISTAT data



the man is working, woman carry out 80% of the family work¹⁰; if both partners are working, the imbalance will decrease but not by much given that the woman continues to take charge of 70% of family duties. For this type of couple, paradoxically, the presence of children increases still further the disparities to the disadvantage of women (the index value passes from 66.1% to 72%).

It seems that the important cultural and social change that took place over the years, with the increasing domestic responsibilities taken on by women, did not generate a fair result within the family household featuring the man's greater responsibility in family work. For the woman, this meant adopting a particular and strenuous task of managing time, for which the sociologist Laura Balbo invented the expression "double presence": "keeping together the various ethical issues that dominate the world of work and family tasks implies an overload of physical and mental effort, which is considered the cause of the sensation of inadequacy that is more experienced in the lives of women".

The difficulty in reconciling work and personal-family life is mainly consequence of cultural factors such as the traditional family roles that exempt male partners and children from fulfilling household tasks, but we must not forget the effects that other factors have such as a certain rigidity in the labour market or the lack of availability of services and care for children. Reconciling work and family life means allowing all people to deal with career choices without compro-

mising family ones and vice versa to manage family choices without compromising professional opportunities. In 2013, the employment rate for women in Veneto aged 15-54 years living as a couple passes from 72.1%, if the couple has no children, to 62.4% with the presence of children. The presence of children in the family often collides with the lack of flexibility of the labour market in terms of timetables and presence: just consider, for example, parental leaves that are paid only 30% and to the fact that more and more workers, mostly young people at childbearing age, are employed with contractual arrangements that are hardly compatible with needs. Among workers who have a child of less than 13 years, in the past 12 months, only 17% of women and just 4.5% of men benefitted from parental benefits.

The difficulties of families increase when parents are forced to work during problematic hours, such as in the evening, at night or on weekends, exactly when children are free from school or sports. On the one hand, this complicates family organisation, on the other, it ends up being a real loss of opportunity for parents and children to spend time together.

In 2013 in Veneto, considering couples with children in which both men and women are employed, in one family out of three, at least one parent works at night, percentage that drops down to 17 for night shifts. These particular time shifts mostly involve fathers who work in the evening and at night respectively in 19% and 12% of households (compared to the 8% and 4% of mothers). However, the opportunity that families

	Veneto	Italy
Part-time	34.2	31.9
Did not find full-time work	16.8	18.5
Does not want to work full-time	17.3	13.3
<i>Why don't you want to work full-time?</i>		
Personal reasons (a)	23.7	30.8
Family reasons (other than family care)	16.2	13.5
To take care of children or other family members	57.8	51.9
<i>Why are support services not available or inadequate (b)</i>	21.0	15.9
<small>(a) Studies or attends training courses, personal health problems, second job, to have more free time. (b) Over 100 women who do not want to work full-time in order to take care of children or other family members. Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on ISTAT data</small>		

¹⁰ Index of asymmetry of the couple in family work = time dedicated to family work by the woman on the total amount of time spent on family work by both partners times 100. In case of equal distribution of workloads the indicator is equal to 50%, higher values indicate an imbalance to the detriment of women.



have to spend more time together occurs on weekends and especially Sundays. These moments are slowly disappearing due to an increasing propensity to open shops on Sundays. In nearly two families out of three, at least one parent works on Saturdays and in one out of three, one works on Sundays; the processing of these data shows that in 5% of families with children, both parents work both on Saturday and Sunday, only the mother is busy throughout the entire weekend in 7% of cases and in 9% of families, only the father. Sometimes, to cope with strict work situations, the choice falls on part-time work arrangements; an option adopted more by women than by men. In these cases, the commitment of women in family care is even more evident. In 2013, 34.2% of Veneto women (31.9% in Italy) worked on a reduced hour contract, the fourth highest number among the Italian regions, compared with 5.7% of men, the second lowest value in Italy.

Not always, however, work with a part-time contract is a choice. Most men and women, especially in the South, work part-time because they cannot find a full-time job. In Veneto, unlike most other regions, women working reduced hours voluntarily reach 17.3%, versus those who work part-time because they have no alternative (16.8%).

The choice of part-time is mainly due to take care of children or of other family members (57.8%), partly to make up for the inadequacy of the welfare system due to poor or overly expensive services, as reported in complaints by 21%, more than the national average (15.9%).

Therefore it is the woman who is almost always asked to accept the compromises required to adapt her work to the needs of the family. The situation proves different for men. The European working conditions survey issued by the Dublin Foundation highlighted that there is no difference between full-time workers and part-time workers as regards the time dedicated to family and personal care¹¹.

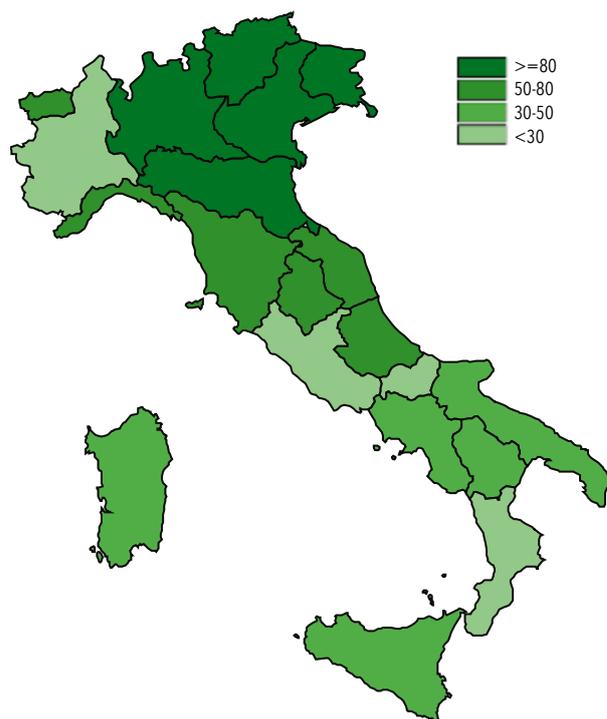
One factor that surely helps improve conciliation is the availability of support services for disabled and elderly people and for children. The reduction in number of family members, and the different structure of the family itself, under the light of single-parent or recomposed families, highlights the need for such services, because "staff" family members, who can dedicate

Few tools for conciliation

time and care to support children, disabled and elderly, are not as numerous as in the past. Nonetheless, public spending on families has not adapted to these changing needs and in 2011, in Italy, it amounted only to 2.01% of GDP while the OECD average is 2.55%, in Denmark and in the United Kingdom it exceeds 4% and stands between 4% and 3.6% in France, Ireland, Sweden, Hungary and Luxembourg.

With respect to early childhood services, Italy manages to ensure access only to 13% of children under three years of age, versus 60% of Denmark, 36% of Portugal and 26% of France. Also, due to reduced funding¹², the availability of services before and after school is still poor, attended only by 6% of children between 6 and 11 years of age.

Fig. 10.4.4 - Percentage of municipalities running early childhood services by region - Year 2012 (*)



(*) Percentages of municipalities managing municipal facilities or that contribute economically so as to reduce the burden of the fees of the private facilities available in the territory. Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on ISTAT data

¹¹ See in regard D. GOTTARDI's Lo stato di avanzamento dei lavori a livello di situazioni europee sulla parità di genere, in L. CALAFÀ, D. GOTTARDI (eds) Il diritto antidiscriminatorio tra teoria e prassi applicativa, Ediesse, Rome, 2009, pag. 32.

¹² OECD, Doing better for families Italy, 2011.

¹³ Council of the European communities, Barcelona, 2002.



In Veneto in 2012, more than 80% of municipalities arranged municipal facilities for early childhood or contributed economically so as to reduce the burden of fees for private facilities for the region (it was 41% in 2004), compared to the national average of 54.6%. More specifically, the overall offer involves 785 early childhood services that are currently operating in Veneto and can accommodate 24,335 children, 18.6% of the children under three years old. Such offer places the Veneto among the top regions at a national level in the field of early childhood services, although still far from the goal of 33% hoped by the Europe¹⁴.

Playing politics

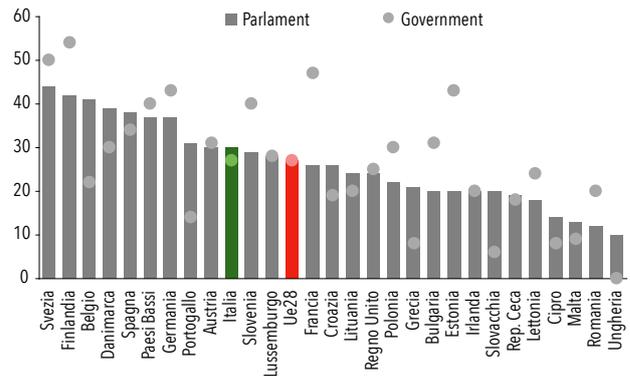
In Italy, as well as in most European countries, women continue to be under-represented in decision-making processes, particularly at the highest levels. Despite the progress made to achieve a certain balance between men and women, much remains to be done, especially in the political arena. According to the latest data from the European Commission, women sitting in the European Parliament reach only 37%, 32% in the European Commission and 22% on average divided between the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee; in all these bodies, however, the President is always a man. Based on the current progress of women's active participation in the political life, it will take another 50 years to achieve full gender equality.

Even on the national level, the highest political offices are almost all covered only by men: in Europe, there are only 2 women as head of State (Lithuania and Malta) and 4 as Prime Minister (Denmark, Germany, Latvia and Poland). Slightly greater is the female presence as Speaker: around 11, including Italy.

In national parliaments and governments, the proportion of women varies among the different countries, although the situation remains generally more favourable in Northern Europe, where the presence of women reach parity with males or even exceeds it, as in the Finnish Government, where 54% of the members are women. In the ranking of the countries for female presence in national legislative and executive bodies, Italy has been improving compared to a few years ago: in the current legislature, the represen-

tation of women in Parliament stood at 30%, while in the Government, including Deputy Ministers and undersecretaries, the percentage of women is 27%.

Fig. 10.4.5 - Percentage of women in national Parliaments and Governments. EU28 - Year 2014 (*)



(*) The President and members of both Houses, when present, are intended for Parliament. All components of the Executive, also Deputy Ministers and undersecretaries are considered for the Government. Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on European Commission data Source

Strong imbalance in political participation

At a regional level, the picture does not change and the gap in equality between men and women gets wider as the roles become more prestigious. Whereas in Italy the total share of women in regional councils is 30%, the percentage drops and does not go beyond 9% for the role of President of the Region: there are currently only 2 women elected to govern a region. Even in regional councils, women do not have much space. In particular, Veneto has one of the lowest percentages in Italy in this regard: the current composition only provides for two seats for women out of a total of 60 Councillors (there were 10 women in 2004). The first laws aimed at encouraging greater participation of women in elective assemblies date back to the early 1990s. Although later declared unconstitutional¹⁴ such provisions proved from the beginning a real and long-lasting effectiveness on a local basis. In 1985, the share of female municipal and provincial administrators in Veneto did not go beyond 7%. This percentage rose up to 17% in 1995 and 29% in 2014, with a leap forward recorded just last year. In Veneto, at the municipal level, and not taking into account offices of receivership, women stand at

¹⁴ Corte Costituzionale, sentenza n. 422 del 1995.



Tab. 10.4.4 – Percentage of women in political bodies on regional level. Veneto, Italy and EU28 – Years 2004 and 2014

	Veneto		Italy		UE28	
	2004	2014	2004	2014	2004	2014
Executive body						
% president	0	0	5	9	7	11
% councillors	8	17	14	30	21	34
Legislative body						
% president	0	0	10	5	13	14
% councillors	17	3	10	16	30	32
Source: Veneto Region Data Processing- Regional Statistical System on European Commission, Veneto Region and Veneto Region Council data Source						

29.4%, covering mainly lesser responsibilities (alderman and councillor). They struggle to reach top positions for the vast majority are still reserved for men: female Mayors in Veneto number only 106, 18.5% of the total, and there are no women governing a big city with more than 60,000 inhabitants.