

The narrowing education gap between women and men

Statistics in focus

POPULATION AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

130/2007

Author

Marta BECK-DOMZALSKA

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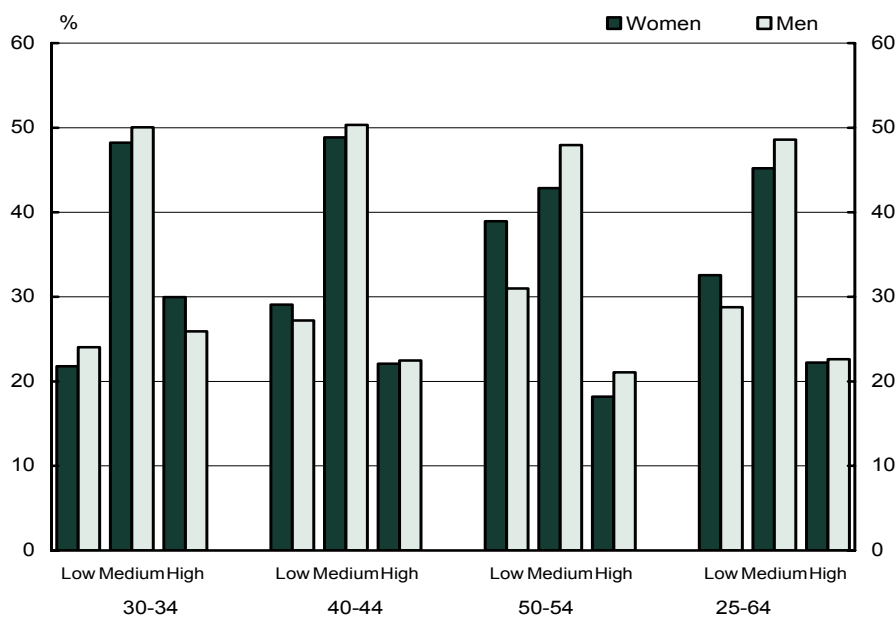
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Educational attainment levels in the EU have tended to increase almost continuously over the last decades as a growing proportion of young people have gone on from compulsory schooling to upper secondary programmes and from there to tertiary education. This is especially true for women. Whereas the number of women of working age who had completed tertiary education used to be significantly smaller than the number of men, it is now only marginally less. At present, more women than men in younger age groups have university degrees or the equivalent and fewer have no qualifications beyond basic schooling in all but a few countries. In the EU-25 as a whole, 30% of women aged 30-34 had tertiary level qualifications in 2005 as opposed to 27% of men, whereas among those aged 50-54, the share of women with this level of qualifications was some 3 percentage points smaller than for men – 19% and 22%, respectively (Fig. 1).

Figure 1: Educational attainment by gender and age group in the EU-25, 2005 (% of women/men in each age group)

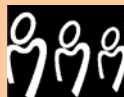


Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey

Note: Levels of educational attainment are usually defined as low, medium and high (see Methodological notes)

This is one of the main conclusions which emerge from examining the data in the EU Labour Force Survey relating to the educational attainment of women and men in different age groups. Other conclusions are that:

- there continue to be large differences in the fields of study of women and men at tertiary level, with a much smaller proportion of women than men completing science and engineering programmes;
- employment rates of women with tertiary education are still lower than for men, though they are significantly higher than for women with lower education levels;
- women with tertiary qualifications are far more likely than men to work in the generally non-market service sectors of education and health;
- among the employed, a larger proportion of women than men participate in continuing training, especially those with tertiary education.



Educational levels of women have risen more than those of men

Harmonised data on education attainment levels are regularly available from the EU Labour Force Survey. Comparison of the education levels of successive age cohorts provides a means of examining changes in levels over the long-term. In particular, comparing the relative proportions of women and men who have successfully completed a given educational level in different age groups provides an indication of how these proportions have changed – such as, for example, in the 20 years which separate those aged 50-54 from those aged 30-34. This is only an approximate indication since, due to migration as well as people attaining a higher level of education after their mid-30s, the education level of those aged 50-54 is not necessarily the same as it was for those aged 30-34 twenty years earlier. However, because the numbers involved tend to be small, both factors are likely to affect the comparison only slightly.

The comparison of these two age groups in 2005 indicates, first, that education levels have risen significantly in most Member States and, secondly, that

those of women have risen much more than men (Table 1). For women, the share of those aged 30-34 with tertiary education is larger than for those aged 50-54 in all countries. Moreover, in 15 of the 27 EU Member States, the difference is more than 10 percentage points and in Belgium, France, Cyprus, Luxembourg and Finland, around 20 percentage points or more. By contrast, for men, there are only five countries – Denmark, Ireland, Spain, France and Lithuania – where the difference is over 10 percentage points and none where it is as much as 20 percentage points.

In every country apart from Estonia and Sweden, the difference between the share of women aged 30-34 with tertiary education and those aged 50-54 was larger than in the case of men and in most countries, considerably larger. In other words, the increase in the relative number of women with this level of education over the 20 years separating the two age groups was much bigger than for men.

Table 1: Education attainment level of men and women by age group, 2005 (%)

		EU-25	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	
Women																		
30-34	Low	22.0	19.3	19.7	5.6	11.1	16.9	9.1	17.8	21.6	33.9	19.5	32.2	19.3	10.0	7.5	25.2	
	Medium	47.1	37.4	48.9	81.4	41.7	59.0	55.5	39.4	50.9	23.1	39.9	47.9	38.2	64.9	51.1	36.4	
	High	30.9	43.4	31.5	13.0	47.3	24.1	35.4	42.9	27.5	43.0	40.6	19.9	42.5	25.1	41.5	38.5	
40-44	Low	29.6	30.1	19.0	9.8	17.6	17.0	3.1	29.3	36.5	49.1	33.4	45.4	29.6	5.3	2.4	37.7	
	Medium	48.0	36.5	53.9	76.9	46.5	61.0	51.0	42.4	42.4	23.4	44.5	42.6	46.0	70.1	67.9	40.2	
	High	22.4	33.4	27.1	13.2	35.9	22.0	45.9	28.3	21.1	27.5	22.1	11.9	24.4	24.5	29.6	22.1	
50-54	Low	38.9	44.7	28.2	19.4	23.4	22.1	9.0	44.7	54.0	66.2	46.1	60.2	53.0	10.1	8.4	47.0	
	Medium	42.6	31.6	46.7	71.0	41.9	57.6	52.5	34.1	32.3	17.0	35.2	28.9	29.2	68.8	66.3	35.2	
	High	18.5	23.8	25.1	9.6	34.7	20.3	38.5	21.1	13.7	16.8	18.7	10.9	17.8	21.1	25.3	17.8	
25-64	Low	32.7	34.1	27.1	13.7	20.4	20.3	9.1	31.9	41.1	51.5	35.6	49.4	35.4	12.6	11.4	38.3	
	Medium	44.6	33.7	46.8	74.6	43.5	59.4	52.1	36.8	39.1	20.1	38.4	37.8	36.6	63.0	58.8	37.5	
	High	22.7	32.2	26.1	11.6	36.2	20.3	38.8	31.3	19.8	28.3	26.0	12.8	28.0	24.4	29.8	24.1	
Men																		
30-34	Low	24.6	23.4	22.5	5.0	11.3	14.0	12.2	24.9	28.9	43.8	21.3	40.8	19.6	19.4	11.6	26.0	
	Medium	48.6	41.7	59.1	81.9	49.7	58.1	62.1	39.6	47.9	21.7	44.2	45.1	41.5	68.6	54.2	37.3	
	High	26.8	34.9	18.3	13.1	39.0	27.9	25.7	35.5	23.3	34.5	34.4	14.1	38.9	12.1	34.2	36.7	
40-44	Low	27.8	32.8	20.3	5.4	20.4	13.1	5.5	36.8	33.9	50.2	29.6	49.7	23.2	9.2	5.5	26.4	
	Medium	49.3	37.5	61.5	78.5	49.9	57.3	70.5	35.0	42.2	22.9	49.5	39.2	48.2	72.5	75.9	45.4	
	High	22.9	29.6	18.2	16.0	29.6	29.6	24.0	28.2	23.9	26.9	20.9	11.1	28.6	18.3	18.6	28.2	
50-54	Low	31.4	40.8	31.7	7.3	17.3	12.3	12.3	50.2	47.3	60.1	38.1	53.8	41.4	17.5	10.7	34.8	
	Medium	47.1	32.9	51.0	78.2	54.2	56.7	63.0	29.3	31.8	16.6	44.4	34.4	27.9	67.5	68.2	38.3	
	High	21.5	26.2	17.3	14.4	28.5	31.1	24.7	20.5	21.0	23.3	17.4	11.8	30.6	15.0	21.1	26.9	
25-64	Low	29.1	33.7	28.0	6.4	17.6	13.4	12.9	37.8	39.0	51.6	31.6	49.8	31.2	18.7	13.5	30.0	
	Medium	47.6	36.4	55.0	79.1	51.4	57.8	60.0	34.3	39.7	20.3	44.7	38.5	39.2	65.1	64.0	41.0	
	High	23.2	29.9	17.0	14.5	30.9	28.8	27.1	27.9	21.3	28.1	23.7	11.6	29.5	16.2	22.5	28.9	

Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey

Figures in italics: uncertain reliability due to reduced sample size, ".": unreliable data

Comparison of the share of those aged 40-44 with tertiary education with those aged 30-34 shows that in most countries the increase in education levels was greater in the 10 years separating these two age groups than the 10 years before this, especially for women. Accordingly, the evidence suggests that the rate of increase in participation in tertiary education has tended to rise over recent years and that this is particular true for women.

The increase means that in the great majority of Member States, the proportion of women aged 30-34 who have completed tertiary education is larger than

that of men. In Bulgaria, Latvia, Slovenia and Finland, as well as Iceland, the share of women with tertiary education was more than 10 percentage points larger than for men and in another 9 Member States, together with Croatia and Norway, the difference was over 7 percentage points.

This contrasts markedly with the situation among those aged 50-54, for which there are only 8 Member States—the three Nordic countries plus five of the new Member States – where the relative number of women with tertiary education exceeded that of men.

Employment rates lower for women than men at all levels of educational attainment

As is well known, the likelihood of being in employment increases significantly with educational levels. This is particularly the case for women, for whom the employment rate of those aged 25-64 with tertiary education averaged just over 80% in the EU in 2005 as against a rate for women with only basic schooling of only around 44% (Table 2). While the difference is also

observed for men, the extent of this gap is lower, just over 87% of those with tertiary education compared with 70% of those with only basic schooling. The gap in employment rates between men and women, therefore, tends to narrow as education levels increase.

Table 1: Education attainment level of men and women by age group, 2005 (%)

HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SL	SK	FI	SE	UK	HR	IS	NO	CH		
15.9	67.9	19.4	16.4	7.9	57.9	17.6	11.7	6.9	7.8	7.9	25.2	18.0	26.3	7.0	11.2	Low	Women 30-34
63.4	.	45.9	63.2	65.7	20.4	70.3	58.2	78.5	40.1	49.9	40.1	60.6	24.5	48.6	63.3	Medium	
20.7	.	34.7	20.4	26.4	21.7	12.1	30.1	14.6	52.1	42.2	34.7	21.3	49.2	44.4	25.5	High	
22.4	80.3	27.4	21.4	10.3	73.4	18.1	16.8	9.1	9.7	9.8	33.1	25.4	39.8	7.5	14.4	Low	40-44
58.0	.	45.4	62.8	72.4	13.3	71.8	60.5	79.2	44.4	57.6	37.5	58.6	23.3	56.0	64.3	Medium	
19.6	.	27.3	15.8	17.3	13.3	10.1	22.8	11.7	45.9	32.6	29.3	16.0	36.9	36.5	21.3	High	
32.2	88.2	39.9	32.0	19.3	84.2	43.2	32.4	21.8	23.7	15.0	37.5	39.5	46.1	14.5	19.0	Low	50-54
51.7	.	36.2	54.6	68.1	5.7	47.9	48.9	65.8	43.8	51.0	35.8	43.6	22.7	54.6	63.5	Medium	
16.1	.	23.9	13.4	12.6	10.1	8.9	18.7	12.4	32.5	34.0	26.8	16.9	31.2	30.9	17.5	High	
27.3	80.5	31.6	24.6	16.1	71.4	32.3	22.6	15.3	19.0	14.3	32.5	33.7	41.8	12.0	16.2	Low	25-64
54.5	9.6	40.8	60.3	65.1	13.6	57.1	54.6	71.3	41.6	51.3	37.8	50.1	24.3	53.1	63.7	Medium	
18.2	9.9	27.5	15.2	18.7	15.0	10.7	22.8	13.4	39.4	34.4	29.7	16.1	33.9	34.9	20.1	High	
15.6	55.1	19.9	11.0	8.7	67.8	14.3	10.8	6.3	14.7	9.1	22.3	.	31.5	5.5	8.2	Low	Men 30-34
69.2	25.6	45.0	68.2	72.3	18.6	74.9	69.8	79.7	49.9	57.6	43.8	71.7	35.6	59.9	49.8	Medium	
15.2	19.3	35.1	20.7	19.1	13.7	10.8	19.4	14.0	35.4	33.3	34.0	.	32.9	34.6	42.1	High	
16.8	68.7	25.1	11.1	10.0	78.5	14.5	16.7	6.6	15.8	14.0	25.4	.	25.4	9.6	10.6	Low	40-44
68.2	20.6	43.0	68.1	78.3	11.7	74.1	65.8	79.1	52.2	64.2	44.7	66.4	45.0	62.5	49.5	Medium	
15.1	10.7	31.8	20.8	11.7	9.8	11.4	17.5	14.3	32.0	21.8	29.9	.	29.6	27.8	40.0	High	
18.3	80.0	26.8	17.5	18.0	83.5	22.8	23.4	12.0	27.2	24.1	22.9	22.9	30.2	14.0	11.0	Low	50-54
66.2	.	39.6	62.8	70.7	7.4	65.0	62.0	73.2	43.3	52.5	48.6	59.6	44.9	55.5	51.5	Medium	
15.5	.	33.6	19.7	11.3	9.0	12.2	14.6	14.8	29.4	23.4	28.5	17.5	24.9	30.4	37.5	High	
19.7	68.9	24.8	14.2	14.2	75.8	21.5	16.9	8.9	23.3	18.5	24.1	20.3	32.5	11.6	10.1	Low	25-64
64.5	18.2	42.6	65.4	71.0	13.6	67.0	65.5	76.5	46.7	56.4	45.9	63.8	40.2	58.0	52.4	Medium	
15.9	12.9	32.7	20.4	14.8	10.6	11.5	17.6	14.6	29.9	25.1	29.9	15.9	27.2	30.4	37.5	High	

Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey

Figures in italics: uncertain reliability due to reduced sample size, ".": unreliable data

Nevertheless, there remains a gap in employment rates between men and women even among those with tertiary education, although much smaller than for those with only basic schooling. In 2005, this gap amounted to 7 percentage points in the EU as a whole among those aged 25-64 – as against 26 percentage points for those with only basic schooling – though it varied from almost 14 percentage points in the Czech Republic and 11 percentage points in Greece, Italy, Malta and Slovakia to 2 percentage points in Romania and Slovenia and only just over 1 percentage point in Sweden (Fig. 2). In the former group of countries less economic use is made than in other countries of the valuable human resource that women with this level of education represent.

The gap in employment rates between men and women with tertiary education is slightly wider in the EU for those aged 25-39 than the average for those aged 25-64, in part reflecting the greater need for women in this age group to take care of children. Over the EU as a whole the employment rate of women aged 25-39 with tertiary education was around 9 percentage points less

than for men. The variation between countries, moreover is a reflection of both the diverse attitudes of women with small children to work and, possibly, the different extent of childcare facilities available.

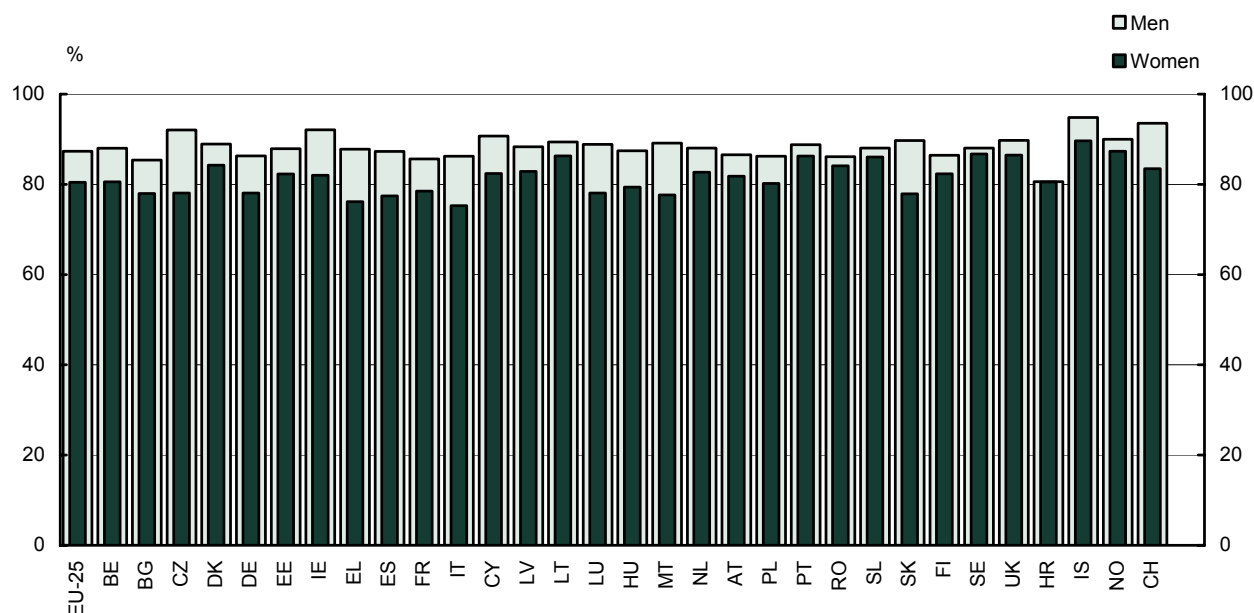
Whereas the difference in employment rates between men and women aged 25-39 with tertiary education was less than 2 percentage points in Romania in 2005 and only half a percentage point in Portugal; in Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, it was over 15 percentage points. In all the latter group of countries, however, the difference between men and women in this regard either disappears or is reduced to a very small gap among those aged 40-49, as the need for childcare diminishes. This is also the case in Bulgaria and Poland among the new Member States. The gap then widens substantially in all these countries apart from Hungary among men and women aged 50-64. There are two main reasons: women, on average, withdraw from the work force into retirement earlier than men or they were more often housewives (generational effect).

Table 2: Employment rates of women and men by educational attainment level and age group, 2005 (%)

	EU-25	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU
Women																
25-39	49.5	45.3	39.4	36.7	57.8	45.3	51.0	44.9	46.3	50.6	49.6	43.8	61.7	45.7	52.4	66.7
Low																
Medium	69.2	74.0	70.1	67.5	79.1	70.0	67.4	69.8	59.7	67.3	71.6	65.5	70.5	71.1	75.5	70.1
High	81.6	88.7	82.6	73.4	85.3	79.8	79.1	84.4	77.4	78.3	81.3	71.9	84.7	83.8	88.1	81.9
40-49	56.0	52.3	48.4	62.3	66.7	58.2	.	48.0	48.5	47.1	67.4	43.4	63.0	59.2	52.9	62.3
Low																
Medium	75.4	73.3	78.1	85.6	85.2	76.2	82.8	66.2	57.6	66.4	80.5	70.4	74.6	78.8	78.6	67.1
High	87.1	86.7	91.0	95.8	90.7	85.6	88.7	83.5	84.0	79.8	85.1	88.4	83.0	91.4	92.1	77.3
50-64	33.7	22.6	23.8	29.7	44.5	36.5	37.4	32.5	29.4	26.6	41.9	20.2	35.3	32.6	25.7	28.9
Low																
Medium	50.5	43.6	44.6	51.5	64.2	49.7	61.5	53.6	32.2	49.3	52.6	48.5	47.0	55.8	54.9	35.9
High	70.2	54.3	58.2	70.1	76.9	67.6	79.7	71.6	59.9	69.1	64.0	69.6	71.7	74.0	75.8	66.9
25-64	43.8	35.7	33.4	37.4	53.7	44.7	44.0	39.7	37.8	39.3	50.8	32.5	47.9	40.6	35.6	49.6
Low																
Medium	65.6	65.5	64.1	66.2	75.4	65.2	69.4	65.0	53.5	63.6	68.7	63.5	66.7	68.3	69.9	60.0
High	80.4	80.6	78.0	78.1	84.3	78.1	82.3	82.0	76.2	77.5	78.5	75.3	82.4	82.9	86.3	78.1
Men																
25-39	79.4	74.3	53.9	55.5	77.1	67.8	64.4	79.5	89.1	85.0	76.7	83.6	89.2	68.8	66.9	92.6
Low																
Medium	86.1	88.5	81.0	92.8	88.8	82.3	87.2	92.0	88.7	87.3	88.9	85.2	93.0	84.2	86.1	93.7
High	90.5	92.9	91.9	94.8	90.8	92.1	93.4	93.3	88.0	88.2	88.6	81.4	93.5	92.9	92.3	93.2
40-49	81.3	79.2	56.7	55.3	79.3	70.7	58.0	82.0	89.0	84.8	83.0	87.3	84.8	70.6	60.3	90.8
Low																
Medium	87.6	90.4	79.7	91.4	91.5	85.5	79.3	93.6	93.8	91.5	92.0	94.6	94.9	82.5	82.5	94.9
High	94.1	94.5	89.9	96.7	95.1	93.3	87.9	95.8	95.2	93.7	93.0	97.9	94.4	94.2	91.9	94.8
50-64	53.8	43.8	40.3	41.9	57.3	48.5	43.8	66.6	66.2	65.4	49.3	48.9	78.1	46.6	44.4	49.7
Low																
Medium	63.4	61.6	60.0	69.0	73.2	60.6	63.1	78.2	68.6	71.9	59.6	66.7	75.6	65.7	68.6	54.6
High	76.7	73.5	73.6	85.1	81.7	74.9	80.9	84.1	79.2	77.5	72.5	83.7	81.7	77.5	81.4	75.7
25-64	69.7	62.2	48.2	49.4	70.4	62.2	54.8	74.4	78.8	77.9	66.2	70.8	82.8	59.7	55.9	77.1
Low																
Medium	79.7	81.8	74.9	84.2	83.7	76.3	77.8	89.5	85.6	85.6	80.7	83.3	89.8	78.6	80.2	82.3
High	87.4	88.0	85.4	92.0	88.9	86.3	87.9	92.1	87.8	87.3	85.6	86.2	90.7	88.3	89.4	88.9

Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey
 ".": unreliable data

Figure 2: Employment rates of women and men aged 25-64 with high educational level, 2005



Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey

Table 2: Employment rates of women and men by educational attainment level and age group, 2005 (%)

HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SL	SK	FI	SE	UK	HR	IS	NO	CH		
38.1	30.0	57.6	56.0	36.6	72.3	49.7	74.1	18.9	56.7	54.8	53.1	50.2	74.0	47.4	59.2	Low	Women 25-39
64.6	75.1	79.2	78.4	60.7	78.6	69.7	81.8	65.3	70.3	79.3	73.3	68.2	75.9	75.3	76.4	Medium	
78.7	82.9	89.9	84.9	83.3	88.5	88.7	92.1	77.2	81.9	83.4	86.7	87.5	88.4	86.3	84.0	High	
.	23.4	62.4	67.4	46.3	70.4	53.5	69.2	44.1	69.9	67.1	65.6	56.2	77.8	63.0	70.0	Low	40-49
79.3	.	77.8	81.1	66.2	81.1	70.1	84.3	80.0	81.8	84.1	80.7	71.8	84.0	79.8	79.7	Medium	
91.1	81.5	85.4	89.4	92.5	94.7	93.8	96.2	92.7	88.9	91.6	89.2	92.5	93.1	90.7	87.6	High	
24.4	12.1	34.4	30.4	22.1	50.1	41.4	30.3	18.6	48.8	53.3	60.8	26.1	80.8	45.0	48.2	Low	50-64
49.2	.	52.3	39.0	31.8	55.7	39.5	36.6	41.9	64.7	71.0	76.8	32.0	82.9	67.5	64.7	Medium	
70.5	.	66.3	64.4	60.4	68.7	64.5	62.5	64.6	76.0	87.5	82.7	64.3	87.9	85.9	77.1	High	
33.2	21.0	47.1	46.9	29.8	62.9	45.8	49.0	24.3	53.6	56.6	59.8	37.2	77.9	49.3	57.0	Low	25-64
63.3	64.8	71.5	67.7	53.1	76.5	63.2	69.5	62.7	71.5	77.7	76.3	58.4	80.1	73.9	73.4	Medium	
79.4	77.6	82.7	81.8	80.2	86.3	84.1	86.1	77.9	82.4	86.7	86.5	80.5	89.7	87.3	83.5	High	
63.1	88.4	84.8	76.3	57.2	88.3	70.1	77.6	21.7	70.5	74.7	78.3	69.7	90.0	67.7	84.4	Low	Men 25-39
87.1	96.1	91.9	90.5	80.2	83.3	82.2	89.6	84.9	85.1	87.2	90.2	81.1	90.9	85.5	92.2	Medium	
94.3	94.3	93.9	93.5	91.1	88.9	91.5	93.6	94.5	93.4	88.3	94.1	89.4	96.0	89.9	95.4	High	
54.7	86.4	85.5	81.1	58.6	86.4	72.4	76.1	37.1	76.0	80.3	76.8	70.0	88.8	73.2	80.5	Low	40-49
82.3	95.7	91.0	90.7	76.7	92.9	81.6	89.5	83.9	84.4	89.0	89.7	77.1	96.5	88.2	92.8	Medium	
93.1	95.7	94.5	95.1	93.5	97.0	92.6	95.7	94.9	92.0	92.0	94.5	87.3	96.1	91.6	96.8	High	
27.8	63.0	60.6	46.1	35.2	65.5	57.4	49.9	31.7	52.6	69.5	59.1	47.0	89.0	56.5	67.7	Low	50-64
57.7	.	67.8	55.3	48.3	62.4	54.8	54.0	62.8	63.1	76.9	75.6	53.6	92.2	76.6	79.1	Medium	
75.6	.	75.5	69.7	71.7	80.3	72.2	73.7	77.9	74.9	85.0	79.2	70.3	91.6	89.0	87.9	High	
45.4	77.7	75.2	64.5	46.2	79.9	64.6	65.3	29.8	61.4	73.0	70.9	59.0	89.4	63.3	76.7	Low	25-64
76.9	92.6	84.1	80.4	69.8	82.2	75.1	78.8	78.5	78.4	84.4	84.8	70.6	93.0	83.4	87.9	Medium	
87.5	89.2	88.0	86.6	86.2	88.8	86.1	88.1	89.7	86.4	88.1	89.8	80.6	94.8	90.0	93.6	High	

Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey
 ".": unreliable data

Fields of higher studies of women and men differ markedly

Women and men tend to study different subjects at tertiary level and the differences show little sign of changing over time. In particular, as is well known, many more men with tertiary education have completed programmes in maths, science and engineering (including computing) than women, while many more women than men have completed programmes in arts, humanities and languages and health and welfare. In 2005, almost 44% of men aged 25-64 in the EU with university degrees or the equivalent had studied maths, science or engineering as against 13% of women, while 32% of women had completed programmes in arts, humanities and languages and another 20% in health and welfare, in each case, well over double the proportion of men (Table 3).

These relative proportions are similar in most countries. There are only two Member States – Italy and Romania

– where the difference between the share of men graduates from maths, science and engineering and this share of women was less than 20 percentage points and three – Germany, Austria and Finland – where it was over 35 percentage points. Equally, in all Member States, the share of women graduates from arts, humanities and languages was at least 10 percentage points larger than for men in all Member States (though it was only just over 7 percentage points in Norway).

On the other hand, the difference between the proportion of women graduates from health and welfare programmes and the proportion of men varied more widely, from over 30 percentage points in Denmark to under 4 percentage points in Poland, Portugal and Italy.

Table 3: Women and men with high educational level by age group and field of study, 2005 (%)

		EU-25	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	
Women																		
25-39	Arts, humanities, languages	28.0	28.2	26.6	:	28.7	28.8	28.2	27.7	32.9	:	18.3	30.8	31.9	31.9	31.3	33.2	
	Social sciences, business, law	36.3	33.3	36.5	:	24.4	29.4	33.9	28.0	29.1	:	49.0	37.1	35.4	42.4	32.7	40.7	
	Maths, science, engineering	13.6	12.8	17.5	:	11.7	13.4	18.3	18.8	13.6	:	12.4	15.9	12.1	13.3	15.5	12.2	
	Health and welfare	17.1	21.8	15.3	:	32.3	22.4	9.8	17.3	16.2	:	14.6	13.2	10.9	6.4	15.7	11.2	
	Services, agriculture, other	5.1	4.0	4.1	:	2.9	5.9	9.7	8.2	8.1	:	5.7	3.0	9.7	6.0	4.7	2.8	
40-64	Arts, humanities, languages	36.4	38.1	35.6	:	28.1	37.6	23.9	37.0	36.8	:	24.2	43.1	31.9	33.6	33.5	48.8	
	Social sciences, business, law	23.7	21.8	18.0	:	14.5	20.1	31.1	16.3	29.9	:	33.5	19.4	30.0	23.5	24.3	24.2	
	Maths, science, engineering	12.6	10.5	19.7	:	8.0	13.4	24.0	12.8	14.2	:	11.5	17.6	14.9	26.0	24.3	11.9	
	Health and welfare	23.3	27.1	22.9	:	47.5	22.5	10.7	28.6	14.4	:	28.1	16.6	13.2	9.9	10.8	13.9	
	Services, agriculture, other	3.9	2.5	3.8	:	2.0	6.5	10.3	5.3	4.6	:	2.7	3.2	10.1	7.1	7.1	1.2	
25-64	Arts, humanities, languages	32.2	33.1	31.8	:	28.4	34.0	25.6	31.3	34.5	:	20.9	36.2	31.9	32.9	32.4	39.8	
	Social sciences, business, law	29.9	27.6	25.8	:	18.9	23.8	32.2	23.5	29.5	:	42.3	29.2	33.2	31.6	28.5	33.7	
	Maths, science, engineering	13.1	11.7	18.8	:	9.6	13.4	21.8	16.5	13.9	:	12.0	16.7	13.2	20.5	20.0	12.1	
	Health and welfare	20.3	24.4	19.7	:	40.7	22.5	10.3	21.7	15.5	:	20.5	14.7	11.8	8.4	13.3	12.3	
	Services, agriculture, other	4.5	3.2	3.9	:	2.4	6.3	10.1	7.1	6.7	:	4.4	3.1	9.9	6.6	5.9	2.1	
Men																		
25-39	Arts, humanities, languages	12.7	13.8	9.1	:	15.3	12.9	9.8	14.9	9.3	:	8.9	10.8	10.7	11.6	10.9	12.9	
	Social sciences, business, law	30.5	30.4	32.8	:	33.6	25.0	23.3	23.4	27.1	:	32.9	41.0	35.3	35.8	16.6	44.8	
	Maths, science, engineering	43.8	43.4	38.2	:	33.1	49.4	47.2	48.5	34.2	:	45.1	36.5	30.6	32.5	53.7	34.2	
	Health and welfare	6.0	7.6	6.0	:	9.3	6.7	3.5	4.1	10.3	:	4.3	7.7	6.5	2.7	3.5	5.2	
	Services, agriculture, other	7.0	4.8	13.9	:	8.6	6.0	16.2	9.2	19.1	:	8.7	4.0	16.9	17.3	15.3	2.9	
40-64	Arts, humanities, languages	16.2	20.9	15.3	:	18.9	16.1	8.9	21.3	13.1	:	12.8	13.5	13.1	14.0	14.3	20.0	
	Social sciences, business, law	24.0	26.9	16.6	:	23.4	19.1	11.8	23.6	24.8	:	29.4	29.5	31.4	15.5	12.0	30.2	
	Maths, science, engineering	43.6	36.2	45.4	:	35.6	50.2	61.2	39.4	35.4	:	40.7	32.2	36.9	51.4	54.9	39.1	
	Health and welfare	9.1	12.4	7.3	:	11.1	7.1	2.5	6.7	11.4	:	12.1	19.2	7.4	3.4	4.5	7.7	
	Services, agriculture, other	7.1	3.6	15.5	:	11.0	7.6	15.6	8.9	15.3	:	5.0	5.6	11.2	15.8	14.3	3.0	
25-64	Arts, humanities, languages	14.7	17.7	13.0	:	17.3	15.0	9.3	17.7	11.4	:	10.7	12.2	11.9	13.1	12.6	16.7	
	Social sciences, business, law	26.8	28.5	22.7	:	27.8	21.0	16.6	23.5	25.9	:	31.3	34.8	33.3	23.5	14.2	36.9	
	Maths, science, engineering	43.7	39.4	42.7	:	34.5	49.9	55.4	44.6	34.8	:	43.1	34.2	33.8	44.0	54.3	36.9	
	Health and welfare	7.8	10.2	6.8	:	10.4	7.0	2.9	5.2	10.9	:	7.9	13.9	7.0	3.2	4.0	6.6	
	Services, agriculture, other	7.1	4.1	14.9	:	10.0	7.0	15.8	9.1	17.0	:	7.0	4.9	14.0	16.4	14.8	3.0	

Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey

Figures in italics: uncertain reliability due to reduced sample size

":": not available

In the EU as a whole, the relative shares of women and men who have completed tertiary education in the different broad subject areas is not so different for those aged 25-39 to those older than this, suggesting that there has not been much change over the years in the preferences of women and men concerning the fields of higher studies. An almost identical proportion of men aged 25-39 with tertiary education completed programmes in maths, science and engineering as

among those aged 40-64, while for women the difference was only 1 percentage point.

At the same time, the proportion of both women and men aged 25-39 with tertiary education who studied arts, humanities and languages and health and welfare was either smaller than for those aged 40-64 or much the same in nearly all countries.

Table 3: Women and men with high educational level by age group and field of study, 2005 (%)

HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SL	SK	FI	SE	UK	HR	IS	NO	CH		
																	Women
43.7	<i>41.2</i>	26.1	36.8	34.8	30.3	18.6	28.5	35.3	17.5	32.7	29.2	31.4	40.7	41.5	25.9	Arts, humanities, languages	25-39
31.1	<i>29.6</i>	37.7	29.5	42.0	33.0	40.9	44.4	28.7	35.3	25.7	31.8	34.9	30.0	26.4	36.3	Social sciences, business, law	
8.8	6.6	6.7	10.0	12.6	22.3	28.7	11.2	17.1	12.1	15.6	15.3	14.5	7.8	7.4	13.3	Maths, science, engineering	
9.6	<i>18.5</i>	24.5	14.1	6.6	10.3	8.7	9.8	10.1	26.7	23.0	19.7	13.1	17.7	22.1	17.8	Health and welfare	
6.8	<i>4.1</i>	5.1	9.6	4.1	4.2	3.1	6.1	8.8	8.3	3.0	4.0	6.1	3.8	2.6	6.7	Services, agriculture, other	
45.8	<i>64.3</i>	45.0	50.8	41.5	52.6	20.2	30.9	40.8	19.5	39.7	37.2	31.7	46.4	:	:	Arts, humanities, languages	40-64
23.2	<i>13.5</i>	20.9	15.5	24.3	17.2	24.5	36.7	21.4	42.3	18.0	22.8	36.2	18.8	:	:	Social sciences, business, law	
11.9	6.2	4.9	11.2	21.2	14.4	40.2	10.7	20.9	8.2	6.3	10.1	10.5	8.6	:	:	Maths, science, engineering	
13.8	<i>14.9</i>	27.2	14.5	7.9	13.5	9.8	16.4	12.0	25.8	34.6	27.7	16.8	21.4	:	:	Health and welfare	
5.3	1.2	2.1	8.0	5.1	2.3	5.4	5.3	4.9	4.2	1.4	2.2	4.9	4.9	:	:	Services, agriculture, other	
44.8	<i>51.5</i>	36.1	43.8	37.7	39.3	19.4	29.7	38.2	18.6	36.7	33.4	31.6	43.6	43.8	29.3	Arts, humanities, languages	25-64
26.8	<i>22.5</i>	28.8	22.5	34.1	26.6	33.3	40.6	24.8	39.4	21.3	27.1	35.7	24.3	23.4	31.4	Social sciences, business, law	
10.5	6.4	5.7	10.6	16.4	19.1	34.0	11.0	19.1	9.9	10.3	12.6	12.0	8.2	5.5	11.0	Maths, science, engineering	
11.9	<i>16.9</i>	25.9	14.3	7.2	11.6	9.2	13.0	11.1	26.2	29.6	23.8	15.4	19.5	25.4	21.8	Health and welfare	
6.0	2.8	3.5	8.8	4.5	3.4	4.2	5.7	6.7	5.9	2.1	3.1	5.4	4.3	2.0	6.4	Services, agriculture, other	
																	Men
17.0	<i>19.5</i>	11.9	12.6	14.3	14.8	9.1	6.5	14.0	7.7	13.8	16.4	9.5	21.0	31.9	10.3	Arts, humanities, languages	25-39
24.6	<i>25.5</i>	44.0	23.1	32.4	26.3	30.4	31.1	22.5	24.8	22.1	29.4	23.5	37.1	31.7	32.9	Social sciences, business, law	
40.8	<i>33.7</i>	30.4	49.6	42.7	48.6	45.0	44.3	42.7	51.4	48.6	44.2	39.7	35.2	20.3	43.7	Maths, science, engineering	
3.4	<i>12.7</i>	6.7	6.9	3.6	5.2	4.4	4.6	5.5	6.3	8.8	6.0	4.1	4.0	5.4	5.0	Health and welfare	
14.2	8.7	6.9	7.7	6.9	5.1	11.1	13.5	15.3	9.8	6.7	4.0	23.2	2.7	10.7	8.1	Services, agriculture, other	
17.2	<i>25.9</i>	22.4	17.6	14.3	16.8	9.5	10.1	15.7	8.1	20.6	17.6	12.2	19.3	:	:	Arts, humanities, languages	40-64
16.0	<i>36.7</i>	34.1	17.8	17.9	25.2	19.8	30.4	15.7	25.4	24.6	26.3	28.1	32.6	:	:	Social sciences, business, law	
44.8	<i>21.0</i>	24.5	46.6	52.2	42.1	52.1	43.3	49.7	51.0	28.0	46.0	35.7	35.8	:	:	Maths, science, engineering	
5.4	<i>12.1</i>	11.5	7.9	4.7	10.8	3.2	3.2	3.8	4.6	14.5	7.1	5.4	10.3	:	:	Health and welfare	
16.6	4.2	7.5	10.1	10.8	5.0	15.4	13.0	15.0	10.9	12.3	3.0	18.6	2.0	:	:	Services, agriculture, other	
17.1	<i>22.7</i>	18.3	15.6	14.3	15.7	9.3	8.6	14.9	8.0	17.6	17.1	11.4	20.0	36.5	11.6	Arts, humanities, languages	25-64
19.7	<i>31.1</i>	38.0	19.9	25.4	25.8	24.7	30.7	18.7	25.2	23.5	27.6	26.7	34.5	26.0	30.1	Social sciences, business, law	
43.1	<i>27.4</i>	26.8	47.8	47.3	45.6	48.8	43.7	46.6	51.1	37.0	45.3	36.9	35.5	22.1	44.1	Maths, science, engineering	
4.5	<i>12.4</i>	9.7	7.5	4.1	7.8	3.8	3.8	4.6	5.2	12.0	6.6	5.0	7.7	7.5	6.3	Health and welfare	
15.6	6.4	7.3	9.2	8.8	5.0	13.4	13.2	15.1	10.5	9.8	3.4	20.0	2.3	7.8	7.9	Services, agriculture, other	

Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey
 Figures in italics: uncertain reliability due to reduced sample size
 "·": not available

Women with tertiary education work in different activities than men

There are marked differences in the jobs in which men and women with tertiary education are employed. This is true both for the occupations which they perform, with many more men than women employed in managerial positions (see 'The entrepreneurial gap between women and men', *Statistics in Focus* 30/2007: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?_pageid=1073,46587259&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&p_pro duct_code=KS-SF-07-030), and for the sectors of activities in which they work. The latter is the focus here.

In the EU, a much larger proportion of men with tertiary qualifications than women are employed in "Industry and agriculture" as well as "Business and financial services", these two broad activities employing half of all men aged 25-64 with such qualifications as opposed to 25% of women (Fig. 3).

This difference is repeated in all Member States, if to varying degrees.

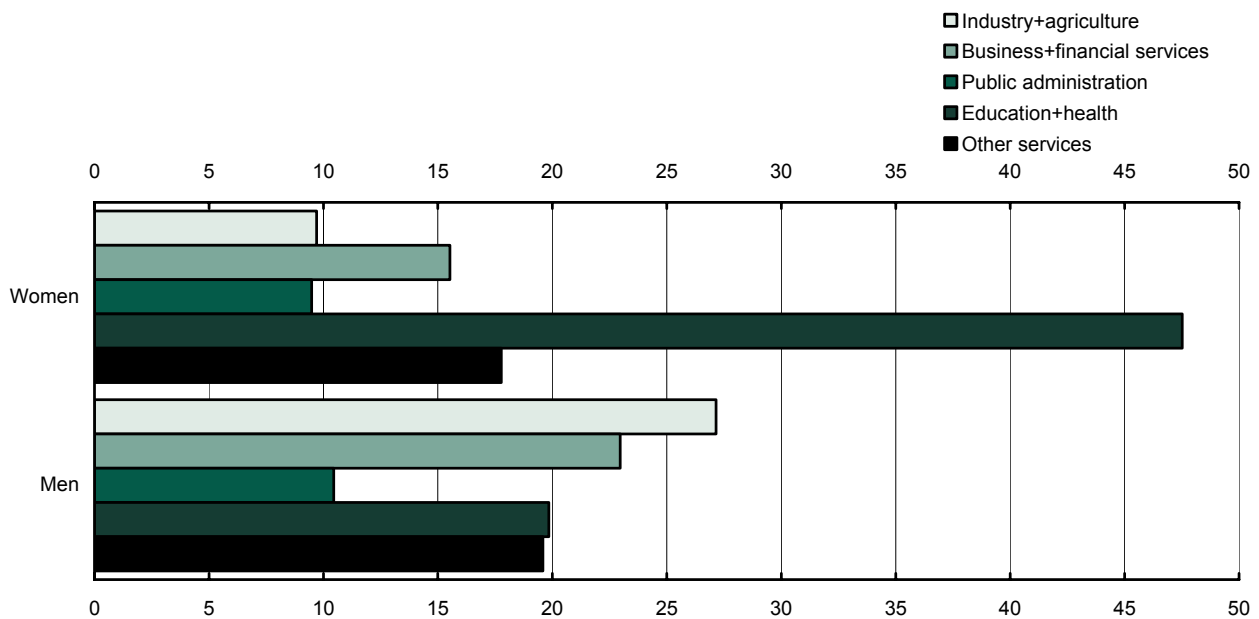
Similarly, the proportion of women with tertiary education employed in Education and health was under 40% in only 6 Member States – Estonia, Spain, Cyprus, Latvia, Romania and Luxembourg (the last reflecting the large number employed in financial services) – in each case still well above the proportion of men with this education level working in these activities. By contrast, the share of women graduates working in education and health was around two-thirds in Malta and around 60% or just below in Denmark and Sweden as well as Norway.

Table 4: Employed men and women with high educational level by sector of activity, 2005 (%)

		EU-25	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU
Women																	
25-39	Industry+agriculture	11.3	11.8	16.1	11.9	11.5	12.8	16.8	13.3	5.1	13.5	11.1	10.7	5.6	10.7	13.4	4.0
	Business+financial services	19.6	18.3	13.5	14.8	15.6	18.2	12.1	23.2	21.7	20.4	21.1	26.7	22.2	16.7	8.3	37.8
	Public administration	9.0	9.2	9.9	10.8	7.5	9.6	10.5	6.2	8.8	6.9	8.5	6.5	8.8	12.7	8.2	13.1
	Education+health	39.7	44.6	34.5	45.2	51.8	40.7	33.5	37.6	45.0	29.2	37.0	38.2	34.6	33.8	37.4	33.7
	Other services	20.6	16.1	25.9	17.3	13.6	18.8	27.2	19.7	19.5	29.9	22.5	17.9	28.8	26.1	32.6	11.4
40-64	Industry+agriculture	7.3	7.2	12.4	10.7	7.5	9.5	20.3	6.2	4.5	6.6	7.1	3.5	4.4	13.6	12.9	2.4
	Business+financial services	11.4	12.2	10.9	11.7	8.8	11.2	9.0	11.7	15.9	10.8	13.5	11.7	13.1	10.2	10.4	13.4
	Public administration	10.0	9.6	8.6	10.2	7.2	10.6	8.8	6.6	12.9	13.0	10.2	9.0	6.5	11.0	10.1	28.4
	Education+health	56.7	58.1	51.0	56.3	64.2	51.0	33.3	63.5	52.2	52.7	51.9	65.2	39.7	41.8	45.9	47.2
	Other services	14.6	12.9	17.1	11.0	12.2	17.6	28.6	12.1	14.5	16.8	17.3	10.7	36.3	23.3	20.7	8.6
25-64	Industry+agriculture	9.4	9.8	14.1	11.2	9.3	10.8	19.0	10.7	4.8	11.1	9.4	7.3	5.1	12.3	13.2	3.3
	Business+financial services	15.7	15.6	12.1	13.1	11.9	14.1	10.2	18.9	19.3	17.1	17.9	19.7	18.7	13.1	9.3	28.1
	Public administration	9.5	9.4	9.2	10.5	7.4	10.2	9.4	6.4	10.4	9.1	9.2	7.7	7.9	11.8	9.1	19.1
	Education+health	47.8	50.6	43.6	51.4	58.6	46.8	33.4	47.2	47.9	37.4	43.1	50.8	36.6	38.4	41.6	39.1
	Other services	17.7	14.7	21.0	13.8	12.9	18.1	28.1	16.8	17.5	25.3	20.3	14.5	31.7	24.5	26.7	10.3
Men																	
25-39	Industry+agriculture	28.2	24.5	23.7	27.2	25.9	36.7	22.5	32.0	14.7	33.6	27.0	20.6	17.2	19.0	26.7	8.3
	Business+financial services	26.4	27.9	16.3	23.4	27.0	22.9	17.6	29.4	23.8	21.6	27.1	40.8	25.3	16.6	11.2	46.7
	Public administration	9.1	9.4	17.2	12.0	6.8	8.3	10.9	5.5	17.9	7.0	8.8	7.4	17.8	21.8	16.2	17.4
	Education+health	15.0	18.2	10.5	18.1	21.1	13.9	8.5	10.6	21.6	12.1	14.3	15.4	12.2	9.2	9.8	15.5
	Other services	21.2	20.0	32.3	19.3	19.2	18.2	40.6	22.5	22.0	25.7	22.7	15.9	27.6	33.4	36.1	12.1
40-64	Industry+agriculture	26.1	19.3	26.1	32.1	23.4	35.7	40.4	25.1	13.6	26.7	21.2	12.7	18.6	32.8	30.9	10.3
	Business+financial services	20.7	23.4	13.0	19.5	20.9	17.0	11.9	23.7	20.4	17.1	24.2	26.6	21.2	15.2	9.8	29.0
	Public administration	11.2	12.7	13.2	12.2	11.4	11.0	10.2	9.4	15.9	12.7	9.1	10.8	8.9	11.3	10.0	23.7
	Education+health	24.2	28.1	19.7	19.3	28.5	17.5	10.3	23.2	33.3	22.7	28.5	38.2	18.2	14.1	21.1	23.3
	Other services	17.8	16.5	28.1	17.0	15.9	18.7	27.3	18.6	16.8	20.8	17.0	11.7	33.1	26.6	28.2	13.8
25-64	Industry+agriculture	27.1	21.7	25.1	30.0	24.5	36.1	32.6	29.1	14.1	30.5	24.4	16.1	17.9	27.1	28.8	9.3
	Business+financial services	23.3	25.5	14.3	21.1	23.6	19.1	14.4	27.0	21.9	19.6	25.8	32.7	23.3	15.8	10.5	37.5
	Public administration	10.3	11.2	14.9	12.1	9.4	10.1	10.5	7.2	16.8	9.5	8.9	9.3	13.4	15.6	13.1	20.6
	Education+health	20.0	23.5	16.0	18.8	25.2	16.2	9.5	16.0	28.0	16.8	20.7	28.3	15.1	12.0	15.4	19.5
	Other services	19.4	18.1	29.8	17.9	17.3	18.5	33.1	20.8	19.2	23.5	20.2	13.5	30.3	29.4	32.1	13.0

Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey
 ".": unreliable data

Figure 3: Employed women and men aged 25-64 with high educational level by sector of activity in the EU-25, 2005



% of men/women with high education in employment
Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey

Table 4: Employed men and women with high educational level by sector of activity, 2005 (%)

HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SL	SK	FI	SE	UK	HR	IS	NO	CH		
11.1	.	7.6	11.5	11.8	8.5	18.7	16.8	9.9	13.9	8.2	9.9	16.2	8.1	6.5	8.5	Industry+agriculture	Women 25-39
15.0	.	22.1	18.5	14.0	19.3	14.2	14.6	19.9	15.7	19.1	19.6	13.5	18.7	14.2	20.7	Business+financial services	
11.8	.	10.0	5.4	13.2	9.3	10.8	12.4	12.4	5.0	8.3	10.0	9.2	8.4	6.6	7.4	Public administration	
41.0	.	45.9	41.0	40.9	45.6	34.1	38.6	44.5	42.0	49.9	44.2	38.4	49.2	56.0	42.6	Education+health	
21.2	.	14.4	23.6	20.1	17.3	22.2	17.7	13.3	23.3	14.4	16.3	22.7	15.6	16.8	20.8	Other services	
7.7	.	5.0	8.1	9.7	5.0	22.5	13.0	9.8	10.5	4.8	5.6	12.0	6.3	5.3	6.3	Industry+agriculture	Women 40-64
12.1	.	9.6	10.8	10.8	5.7	10.6	10.6	15.3	15.3	9.4	11.0	11.8	17.3	7.9	12.5	Business+financial services	
10.1	.	8.7	6.3	11.5	10.2	10.6	16.7	11.1	9.6	8.5	8.7	10.3	6.9	8.3	7.9	Public administration	
55.0	.	64.8	58.0	55.9	68.9	42.1	46.9	53.3	47.4	67.3	62.9	49.5	57.1	70.7	55.6	Education+health	
15.0	.	12.0	16.9	12.2	10.1	14.3	12.8	10.5	17.3	10.0	11.7	16.3	12.4	7.8	17.8	Other services	
9.3	3.5	6.3	9.9	10.9	7.1	20.3	15.1	9.8	11.9	6.2	7.7	13.7	7.2	5.9	7.3	Industry+agriculture	Women 25-64
13.5	11.0	16.1	14.8	12.6	14.0	12.6	12.8	17.5	15.5	13.5	15.1	12.5	18.0	11.1	16.5	Business+financial services	
10.8	8.3	9.4	5.8	12.5	9.7	10.7	14.3	11.7	7.7	8.4	9.3	9.9	7.6	7.4	7.6	Public administration	
48.6	66.6	55.0	49.1	47.2	54.7	37.5	42.3	49.2	45.1	60.0	53.9	45.0	53.2	63.3	49.3	Education+health	
17.9	10.6	13.2	20.4	16.7	14.5	18.8	15.4	11.8	19.8	11.9	13.9	18.9	14.0	12.3	19.2	Other services	
22.1	15.1	21.4	34.6	28.9	23.2	27.5	33.0	29.2	33.6	19.4	23.8	24.2	10.2	18.1	26.5	Industry+agriculture	Women 25-39
25.7	20.9	36.5	21.6	18.4	29.2	14.7	23.2	22.3	21.2	33.9	29.8	18.7	43.0	25.7	31.2	Business+financial services	
13.6	12.7	9.0	5.0	15.1	8.0	15.9	13.4	13.3	6.6	7.7	9.2	15.0	8.9	11.1	6.6	Public administration	
14.4	33.9	14.7	18.7	13.7	23.0	13.1	13.2	16.0	15.0	20.8	16.6	12.0	13.1	24.2	15.6	Education+health	
24.2	17.4	18.3	20.1	23.9	16.6	28.8	17.1	19.1	23.6	18.2	20.6	30.0	24.7	20.9	20.1	Other services	
25.8	16.5	17.2	33.7	26.0	14.3	36.2	29.8	29.7	32.0	14.8	24.5	28.5	18.0	17.8	25.9	Industry+agriculture	Women 40-64
19.6	21.1	23.7	15.8	17.0	20.9	9.0	18.7	18.2	21.9	25.9	24.4	13.3	26.1	27.3	26.1	Business+financial services	
10.9	8.7	14.7	7.6	12.2	15.7	16.0	14.3	13.7	8.3	13.1	9.8	12.2	9.8	9.8	10.1	Public administration	
20.1	32.2	30.6	23.6	23.3	34.3	19.5	18.4	20.7	17.4	29.8	24.6	19.6	26.9	29.4	19.7	Education+health	
23.6	21.5	13.9	19.3	21.5	14.8	19.4	18.9	17.7	20.5	16.4	16.7	26.4	19.2	15.7	18.3	Other services	
24.1	15.8	18.9	34.1	27.5	19.1	31.9	31.2	29.4	32.6	16.8	24.2	27.1	14.7	18.0	26.2	Industry+agriculture	Women 25-64
22.4	21.0	29.0	18.2	17.7	25.3	11.8	20.7	20.1	21.6	29.4	26.8	15.1	33.3	26.6	28.2	Business+financial services	
12.2	10.8	12.3	6.5	13.8	11.6	15.9	13.9	13.5	7.6	10.8	9.5	13.1	9.4	10.4	8.6	Public administration	
17.5	33.1	24.0	21.6	18.1	28.3	16.3	16.1	18.5	16.4	25.8	21.0	17.1	21.0	27.1	18.0	Education+health	
23.9	19.3	15.7	19.6	22.8	15.8	24.1	18.1	18.4	21.7	17.2	18.4	27.6	21.6	18.0	19.0	Other services	

Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey
".": unreliable data

More women than men participate in continuing training

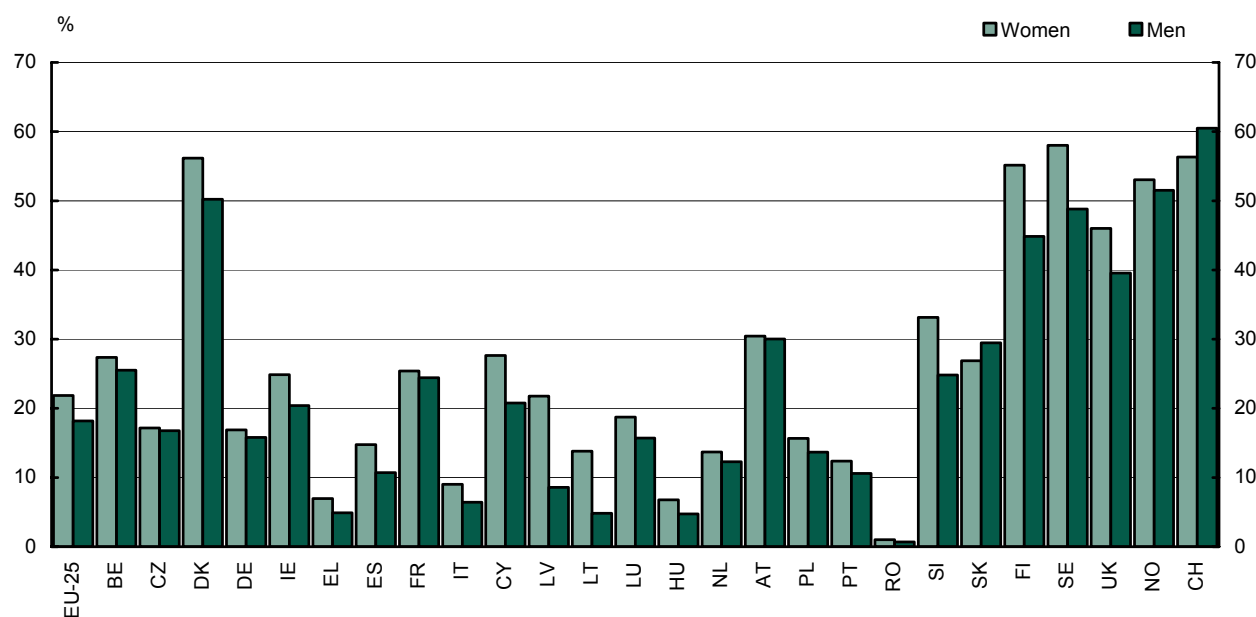
Data collected by the special *ad hoc* module of the Labour Force Survey conducted in 2003 provided more information on the participation of women and men in lifelong learning. Over the EU as a whole, slightly more employed women than men aged 25-64 participated in non-formal education (continuing training) over the year preceding the survey (some 23% of women and 19% of men).

The larger proportion of women than men in continuing training was true throughout the EU, though the extent of the difference varied between Member States, as did the overall scale of participation. The rate of participation in continuing training of employed women ranged from over 55% in Denmark, Finland and Sweden and just over 45% in the UK, to under 10% in Greece, Italy and Hungary and only around 1% in

Romania (Fig. 4). The rate of participation of men ranged from around 50% in Denmark to less than 1% in Romania.

The extent of participation in continuing training varies significantly with the level of educational attainment and with age, though much more for men than for women. At the same time, more women than men tend to participate in training at all levels of education and in all age groups. For women with tertiary education the rate of participation in continuing training averaged around 40% of those in employment as compared with just over 33% of men, while for those with upper secondary education, the proportions were some 21% for women and almost 19% for men, and for those with only basic schooling, just 9% and just over 8%, respectively (Table 5).

Figure 4: Participation of employed women and men (aged 25-64) in continuing training, 2003



BG: no data available; EE, MT: unreliable data

Source: Eurostat, LFS 2003 *ad hoc* module on Life-long learning (reference period: 12 months)

These differences are common to nearly all Member States, especially in respect of the much higher participation of those with tertiary education in non-formal education. Only in Belgium, as well as in Switzerland, was the proportion of women with this level of education participating in continuing training smaller than the proportion of men. In Sweden, over 70% of women graduates from tertiary education participated in continuing training and in Denmark and Finland, over two-thirds. On the other hand, in Hungary and Romania, the proportion was under 15%.

While the rate of participation in continuing training of men with this level of education tends to decline with age – in the EU as a whole, it was almost 8 percentage points less for those aged 55-64 than for those aged 25-34 – for

women, it was much the same in the older age groups as in the younger ones. Accordingly, whereas there is relatively little difference between the participation of young women aged 25-34 in continuing training and that of men, the proportion of women in older age groups participating in continuing training was significantly larger than for men (almost 13 percentage points larger among those aged 55-64). Even for women aged 55-64 the rate of participation was 75% in Finland and only just under in Sweden, while in both Denmark and the UK, it was well over 60%. For men, by contrast, the rate was over 60% only in Sweden and under 55% in both Finland and the UK.

Table 5: Women and men aged 25-64 and in employment participating in non-formal training, 2003 (% of women/men in each age group and category)

	EU-25	BE	BG	CZ	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE	UK	NO	CH	
All employed aged 25-64																															
Women	23.3	27.4	:	17.2	56.2	16.9	.	24.9	7.0	14.8	25.4	9.0	27.6	21.8	13.8	18.8	6.8	.	13.7	30.4	15.7	12.4	1.0	33.1	26.9	55.1	58.0	46.0	53.0	56.3	
Men	19.3	25.5	:	16.8	50.2	15.8	.	20.4	4.9	10.7	24.4	6.4	20.8	8.6	4.8	15.7	4.7	.	12.3	30.0	13.7	10.6	0.7	24.8	29.5	44.8	48.8	39.6	51.5	60.5	
Employed with low education																															
Women	8.6	13.5	:	6.0	37.3	4.9	.	10.8	0.0	6.3	13.8	3.3	.	.	.	.	.	.	7.3	11.3	0.0	6.0	0.2	.	10.2	38.3	35.0	17.0	27.8	20.8
Men	7.6	13.7	:	10.2	37.2	3.9	.	10.3	0.6	5.8	15.6	2.7	.	.	.	2.4	.	.	7.8	12.5	0.0	6.5	.	.	25.0	28.9	32.2	13.7	29.2	19.9	
Employed with medium education																															
Women	20.9	24.2	:	15.5	52.6	13.7	.	20.9	6.8	14.2	23.1	10.7	21.7	15.6	7.1	21.1	6.7	.	13.5	30.7	10.4	18.1	0.6	30.3	23.9	48.0	54.7	41.4	46.6	56.2	
Men	18.5	22.0	:	15.2	45.9	12.2	.	19.5	4.9	12.5	23.2	8.1	16.9	8.3	4.2	15.8	4.2	.	13.5	29.6	11.3	23.3	0.6	24.6	27.5	40.4	46.0	34.7	47.4	53.8	
Employed with high education																															
Women	40.1	38.6	:	35.9	67.2	31.9	.	37.3	16.2	24.6	40.4	16.2	54.5	45.0	30.1	44.4	12.2	.	19.2	53.0	39.1	39.9	5.0	60.9	48.6	68.8	71.6	64.5	66.9	79.5	
Men	33.4	41.1	:	27.2	63.9	25.9	.	32.9	13.5	19.2	37.6	15.6	42.3	18.5	9.2	35.0	8.6	.	14.1	43.8	33.7	37.1	2.8	45.1	42.2	61.2	68.0	56.3	64.6	80.2	
Employed with high education by age group																															
Women																															
25-34	37.3	39.9	:	34.9	62.6	30.7	.	32.4	18.1	23.1	40.8	14.7	47.6	37.1	20.3	40.0	13.3	.	17.1	49.4	36.9	39.5	3.9	57.1	46.8	61.0	67.7	60.5	60.9	76.0	
35-44	41.1	35.5	:	42.1	66.9	32.4	.	43.1	16.2	26.8	42.5	16.0	57.1	42.4	38.5	50.0	14.9	.	22.6	57.0	42.9	42.3	6.3	64.3	50.0	70.2	71.4	65.1	68.3	80.8	
45-54	43.0	43.2	:	35.9	73.2	33.2	.	46.7	15.8	24.9	39.7	19.3	66.7	53.6	30.0	.	12.4	.	19.3	53.6	39.7	37.3	6.3	63.6	50.0	72.1	74.4	69.6	72.1	83.8	
55-64	40.5	26.9	:	21.4	64.8	29.0	.	.	.	23.7	31.4	12.9	.	53.3	36.4	.	.	.	15.9	46.2	33.3	.	.	.	42.9	75.0	73.0	62.4	71.4	76.5	
Men																															
25-34	35.5	40.8	:	30.5	66.0	29.6	.	33.3	13.8	19.5	41.8	13.9	45.0	33.3	.	33.3	10.5	.	19.1	45.7	35.9	49.2	2.4	54.5	38.3	61.1	69.6	55.1	61.3	78.2	
35-44	34.4	42.8	:	31.7	66.7	26.4	.	34.0	14.6	21.2	38.8	16.0	50.0	28.6	16.2	42.9	11.9	.	13.6	47.9	35.7	38.3	2.5	47.4	42.5	64.2	71.1	58.6	68.5	81.4	
45-54	32.5	42.5	:	23.3	62.5	26.3	.	32.4	12.1	18.7	32.4	18.0	38.5	.	16.7	40.0	8.1	.	12.6	42.7	31.6	.	1.9	47.8	45.7	61.8	64.2	57.3	63.2	82.2	
55-64	27.8	32.3	:	19.6	58.7	20.1	.	29.4	12.0	11.9	29.0	12.9	.	.	.	.	.	.	7.2	30.0	26.4	.	6.8	.	42.9	54.5	67.0	51.6	66.7	77.9

Source: Eurostat, LFS 2003 ad hoc module on lifelong learning (reference period: 12 months)

": unreliable data

➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Data sources, definitions and coverage:

The analysis on women and men according to their highest educational level attained is based on the EU Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2005 (annual average). The survey was conducted in the 25 Member States of the European Union, the three candidate countries at the time and 3 countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). The EU-LFS is a large household sample survey providing annual and quarterly results on the employment circumstances of people aged 15 and over, with the sampling rates varying between 0.3% and 3.3% of the population covered. Those undertaking compulsory military service are not included.

The totals for the EU referred to in the text and presented in the figures and tables exclude Bulgaria and Romania since the data relate to a period before these two countries joined the EU.

A person is defined as employed if she or he has any work for pay or profit during the reference week of the survey, even for as little as one hour a week, or was not working but had a job or business from which she or he was absent during the reference week.

Three levels of educational attainment are distinguished in the present publication:

Low ("basic") - ISCED levels 0, 1, 2 and 3c short;

Medium (upper secondary) - ISCED levels 3 (without 3c short) and 4

High (tertiary) - ISCED levels 5 and 6.

According to the International Classification of Education (ISCED), revised in 1997, ISCED levels are defined as follows:

ISCED 0 – Pre-primary education

ISCED 1 – Primary education or first stage of basic education

ISCED 2 – Lower secondary education or second stage of basic education

ISCED 3 – Upper secondary education

ISCED 4 – Post-secondary non tertiary education

ISCED 5 – First stage of tertiary education

ISCED 6 – Second stage of tertiary education (leading to an advanced research qualification)

The sectors of economic activity aggregated in Fig.3 and Table 4 refer to the following NACE Rev. 1 Sections:

Industry+agriculture: A-F (Agriculture, Fishing, Mining and quarrying, Manufacturing, Electricity, gas and water supply and Construction)

Business and financial services: J+K (Financial intermediation and Real estate, renting and business activities)

Public administration: L+Q (Public administration, defence and compulsory social security and Extra-territorial organisations)

Education+health: M+N (Education and Health and social work)

Other services: G-I, O+P (Wholesale and retail distribution, Hotels and restaurants, Transport and communication, Other community, social and personal service activities and Private households with employed persons).

The analysis *of women and men in non-formal education* (continuing training) is based on the LFS *ad hoc* module 2003 on lifelong learning, which had a reference period of 12 months.

The module breaks down life-long learning into three categories: formal education, non-formal education and training and informal learning. The focus in this publication is on non-formal education, i.e. courses, seminars, conferences, private lessons or instructions received outside the regular education system. No data are available for Bulgaria from this special module.

Further information:

Data: [EUROSTAT Website/Theme: Population and social conditions/Data](#)

Population and social conditions



Labour market



Employment and unemployment (Labour Force Survey)



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For further information and methodology:

Marta Beck-Domzalska
Eurostat / L-2920 Luxembourg

Tel: +352 4301 33123

E-mail: Marta.BECK-DOMZALSKA@ec.europa.eu

Manuscript prepared in cooperation with Terry Ward and Loredana Sementini (Applica, Brussels)