

The Gender Equality Index 2017 examines the progress and challenges in achieving gender equality across the European Union from 2005 to 2015. Using a scale from 1 (full inequality) to 100 (full equality), it measures the differences between women and men in key domains of the EU policy framework (work, money, knowledge, time, power and health). The Index also measures violence against women and intersecting inequalities. These are satellite domains and are part of the framework of the Gender Equality Index, but do not have an impact on the overall score. Intersecting inequalities show how gender intersects with age, education, family composition, country of birth and disability. The Gender Equality Index provides results for each domain and sub-domain for the EU and its 28 Member States <sup>(1)</sup>.

## Progress in gender equality in Bulgaria, 2005-2015

In the Gender Equality Index 2017, Bulgaria achieved a score of **58.0 out of 100**. This score is lower than the EU-28 average and puts Bulgaria in 16th position. Progress towards gender equality has been slower than in other Member States, with Bulgaria's score increasing by 2.0 points. Challenges persist in all areas, especially in knowledge and time.

The domain of **health** has the highest score in Bulgaria. Gender equality in this field has slightly progressed, but Bulgaria remains in 27th position in the EU-28. Access to medical and dental services has improved significantly.

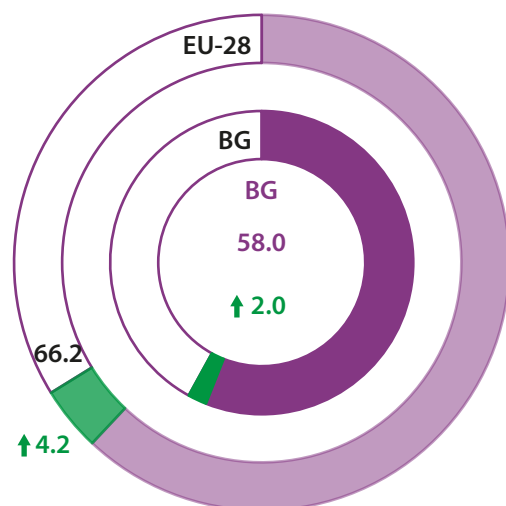
In the domain of **work** Bulgaria has slightly progressed, mostly due to women's and men's increased participation in the labour market. On the other hand, the uneven concentration of women and men in certain fields has increased.

The biggest improvements took place in the domains of **money** and **power**. Gender equality has improved in terms of earnings and incomes, but poverty and wealth distribution have become more unequal.

Bulgaria has progressed in power and obtained the seventh-highest score in the EU-28. The improvement has been driven by more gender equality in the sphere of economic power.

Gender equality in **knowledge** has stalled. Women and men have become more segregated in study fields. On the other hand, attainment and participation in education has slightly improved for women and men.

The allocation of **time** in care activities and social activities has become more gender unequal. It is the domain with the lowest score in Bulgaria, and is the lowest in the EU-28.



↑↓ Change in score from 2005 to 2015

<sup>(1)</sup> The Gender Equality Index 2017 is based on the data of Eurostat (Education statistics, EU Labour Force Survey, European Health Interview Survey, EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions, Structure of Earnings Survey), of Eurofound (European Quality of Life Survey, European Working Conditions Survey), of EIGE's Gender Statistics Database (Women and Men in Decision-Making) and of the Fundamental Rights Agency's Violence Against Women survey. The year of reference is 2015 (2014 for data on intersecting inequalities). The age of the reference population for the indicators is either 15+, 16+ or 18+, depending on the source.

## Work

In the domain of work, the increased participation of women and men in employment and the decreasing gender gap in the duration of working life contributed to the small improvement in gender equality.

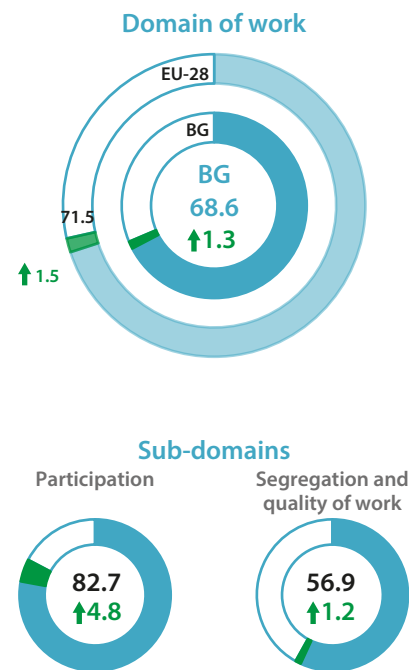
The employment rate (20-64) is 64% for women versus 70% for men. The total employment rate is 67%. Bulgaria has not yet reached its national Europe 2020 strategy (EU2020) target to have more than 76% of people employed.

When the number of hours worked is taken into account, the full-time equivalent (FTE) employment rate of women is around 44%, compared to 54% for men.

Among couples with children, the FTE employment rate for women is 68% compared to 76% for men. In the age group 25-49, the difference between women and men in the FTE employment rate is only 2%, which is much lower than in other Member States. The FTE employment rate increases and the gender gap shrinks as education levels rise.

3% of women work part-time, compared to 2% of men, which are the lowest figures in the EU-28. On average, women work 40 hours per week, compared to 41 hours for men. 5% of working-age women versus 0.3% of working-age men are either inactive or work part-time due to care responsibilities.

Gender segregation in the labour market is a reality for both women and men. Nearly 20% of women compared to 4% of men work in education, human health and social work activities (EHW). Three times more men (28%) than women (11%) work in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) occupations.



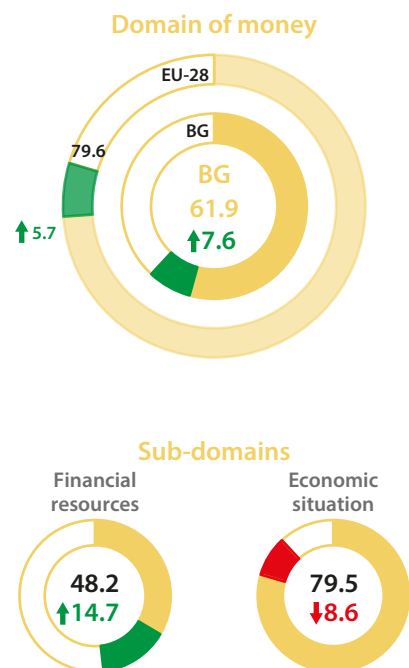
## Money

The situation in the domain of money has improved. Gender equality has progressed in earnings and incomes but has regressed in poverty and distribution of wealth.

Mean monthly earnings of women and men have increased, but women continue to earn less than men (14% less than men per month). The gender gap has increased. The gap between women and men is bigger among foreign-born people, people with a low level of education, single people, couples with children and people aged 25-49.

The population of women and men at risk of poverty has increased. 23% of women and 19% of men are at risk of poverty, compared to 18% and 16%, respectively, in 2005. The risk of poverty is higher for older people, especially older women. The risk of poverty lowers as education levels rise.

Inequalities in income distribution have increased among women and among men. The gender pay gap is 15% to the detriment of women. In 2012, women had lower pensions than men and the gender gap was 35%. Both values are in line with the EU-28 average (16% and 38%, respectively).



## Knowledge

The score in the domain of knowledge has hardly changed. Gender equality in attainment and participation has slightly improved, whereas the uneven concentration of women and men in certain study fields has increased.

The number of tertiary graduates increased, especially for women. 26% of women have a tertiary degree, compared to 18% of men. There are more women than men with a tertiary degree across all age groups, except for those aged 65+. Bulgaria has not yet met its EU2020 target to have 36% of people aged 30-34 obtain tertiary education. The rate stands at 32%.

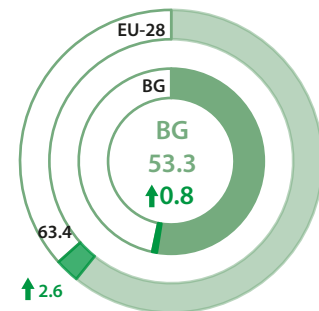
Among lone parents, couples without children and people aged 25-49 the gender gap is higher, with women outnumbering men.

15% of women with disabilities and 11% of men with disabilities have attained tertiary education, compared to 27% of women without disabilities and 19% of men without disabilities.

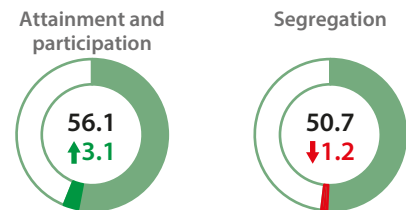
Participation in lifelong learning has slightly decreased for both women and men. It is lower in Bulgaria (9% for both genders) than in many other Member States.

Gender segregation in study fields remains a challenge, though to a lesser extent than in many other Member States. The gender gap in tertiary education in education, health and welfare, humanities and arts has increased. 30% of women students, compared to 17% of men, are concentrated in these fields, which are traditionally seen as 'feminine'.

Domain of knowledge



Sub-domains



## Time

In the domain of time, the score has gone down.

Women are more likely to spend time caring for their family. Around 39% of women versus 26% of men spend at least 1 hour per day on care and educational activities. This gender gap has narrowed.

93% of women in a couple with children take care of their family on a daily basis, compared to 72% of men.

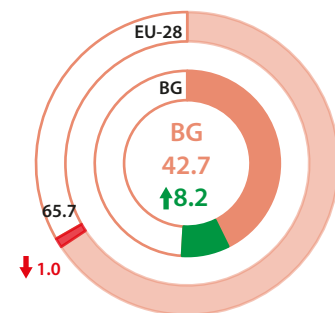
Women outnumber men four to one in cooking and housework and the gap has widened. 73% of women compared to 13% of men do cooking and housework every day for at least 1 hour.

Among couples with children, women do cooking much more than men (92% versus 10%, respectively). This gender gap is also wide in couples without children (83% of women versus 13% of men) and among people aged 25-49 (84% versus 8%, respectively).

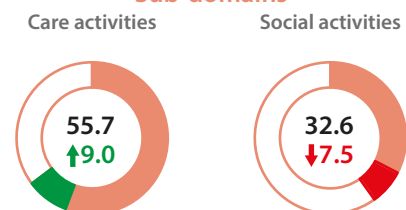
Inequalities in time-sharing at home also extend to social activities. Men are more likely than women to participate in sporting, cultural, and leisure activities, whereas women are slightly more involved in voluntary or charitable activities.

Bulgaria has not yet met either of the two 'Barcelona targets', which are to have at least 33% of children below the age of three and 90% of children between the age of three and school age in childcare. In Bulgaria, the enrolment rates are 9% and 72%, respectively.

Domain of time



Sub-domains



## Power

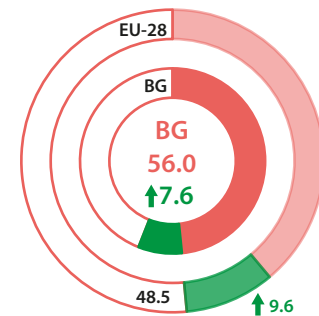
The score in the domain of power has increased, due to improved gender equality in the economic sphere.

The presence of women on the board of the central bank has doubled from 17% to 38%. On the other hand, the share of women on the corporate boards of publicly listed companies has stagnated and is around 18%.

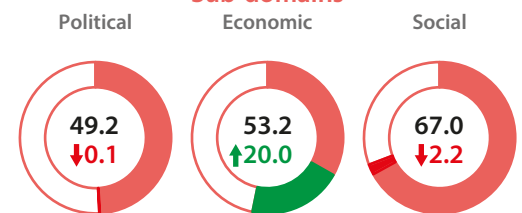
In the sub-domain of political power, the situation is stable. There are slightly more women ministers (31%) than in 2005 (28%). In the parliament, the gender balance has slipped from 25% to 21%.

44% of board members of research-funding organisations and 63% of board members of publicly owned broadcasting organisations (the highest share in the EU) are women. Both values are in the gender balance zone. However, only 20% of members of the highest decision-making bodies of national Olympic sport organisations are women. This figure is higher than the EU average of 14%.

### Domain of power



### Sub-domains



## Health

Progress in the health domain has been mostly driven by improved access to health services for both women and men.

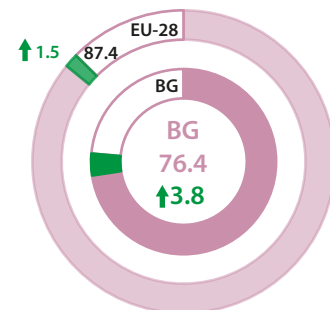
94% of women and men are able to meet their medical and dental needs. This situation has improved and become more gender equal.

Life expectancy has increased for both women and men. Women live 7 years longer than men on average. However, the number of healthy life years has decreased for both (7 years less for women and 5 years less for men).

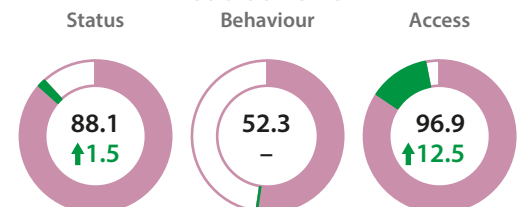
62% of men and 70% of women rate their health as 'good' or 'very good'. This gender gap increases with age, with men becoming less satisfied with their health. The level of health satisfaction tends to increase with a person's level of education. Single women, older people and people with disabilities have the lowest levels of health satisfaction.

53% of men smoke and/or drink excessively compared to around 32% of women. More men (18%) than women (9%) engage in healthy behaviour (physical activities and/or consuming fruit and vegetables).

### Domain of health



### Sub-domains

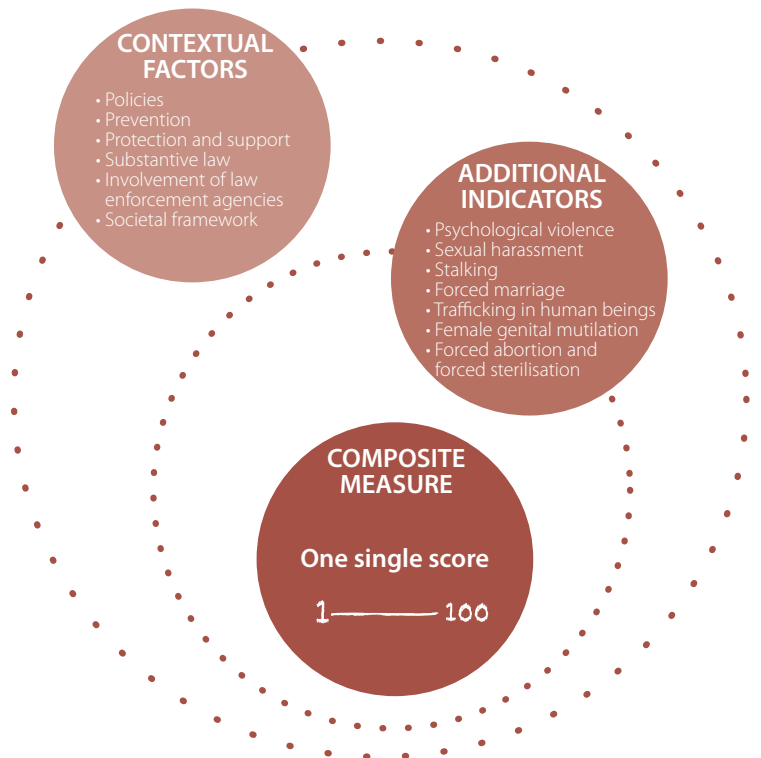


# Violence

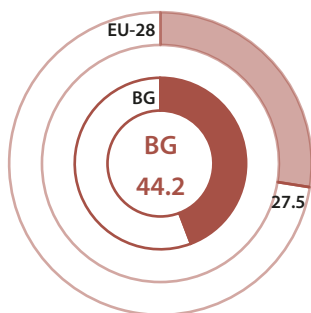
Violence against women is included in the Gender Equality Index as a satellite domain. This means that the scores of the domain of violence do not have an impact on the final score of the Gender Equality Index. From a statistical perspective, the domain of violence does not measure gaps between women and men as core domains do. Rather, it measures and analyses women's experiences of violence. Unlike other domains, the overall objective is not to reduce the gaps of violence between women and men, but to eradicate violence completely.

A high score in the Gender Equality Index means a country is close to achieving a gender-equal society. However, in the domain of violence, the higher the score, the more serious the phenomenon of violence against women in the country is. On a scale of 1 to 100, 1 represents a situation where violence is non-existent and 100 represents a situation where violence against women is extremely common, highly severe and not disclosed. The best-performing country is therefore the one with the lowest score.

## Measurement framework of the domain of violence



### Domain of violence



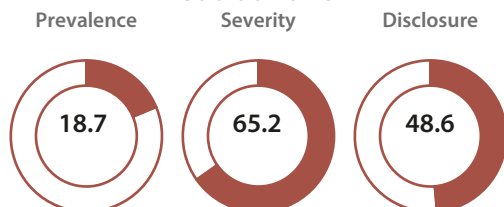
Bulgaria's score for the domain of violence is 44.2, which is much higher than the EU average.

In Bulgaria, 28% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15. This is 5 percentage points lower than the EU-28 average (33%).

48% of women who have experienced physical or sexual violence by any perpetrator in the past 12 months have not told anyone. This rate is the highest in the EU-28.

At the societal level, violence against women costs Bulgaria an estimated EUR 3.2 billion per year through lost economic output, service utilisation and personal costs <sup>(2)</sup>.

### Sub-domains

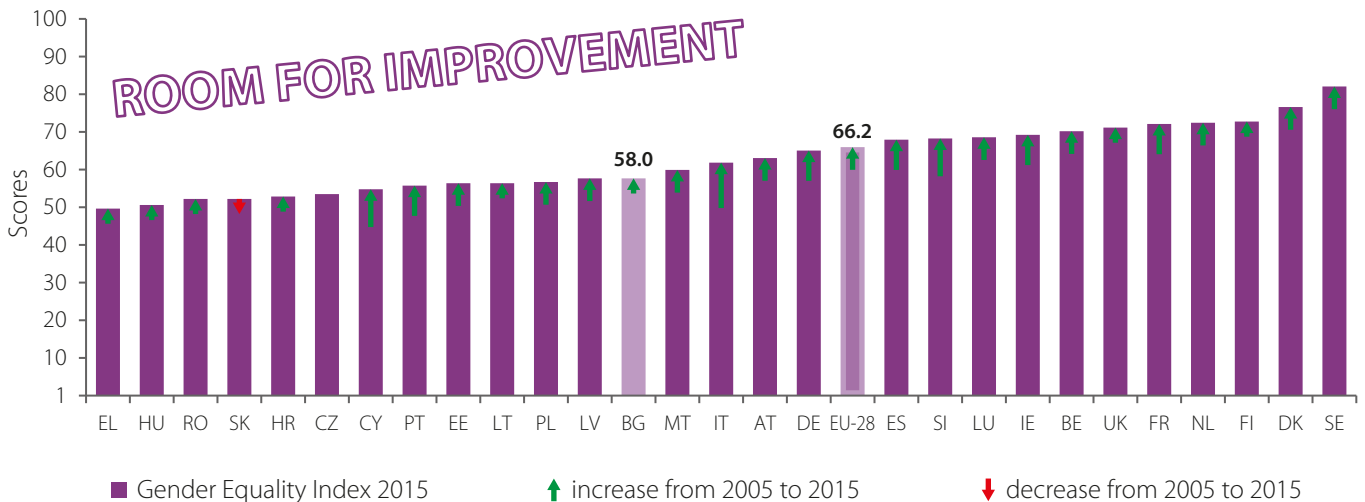


The domain of violence is made up of three sub-domains: **prevalence**, which measures how often violence against women occurs; **severity**, which measures the health consequences of violence; and **disclosure**, which measures the reporting of violence.

<sup>(2)</sup> This is an exercise done at EU level to estimate the costs of the three major dimensions: services, lost economic output and pain and suffering of the victims. The estimates were extrapolated to the EU from a United Kingdom case study, based on population size. EIGE, *Estimating the costs of gender-based violence in the European Union*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2014, p. 142 (available at: <http://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/MH0414745EN2.pdf>).

## Unique features and benefits of the Gender Equality Index 2017

Results show that Bulgaria's Gender Equality Index score is below the EU-28 average, with room for improvement. In order to reach full gender equality, a more targeted and holistic approach is needed.



The Gender Equality Index:

- monitors progress in gender equality across the EU and over time;
- supports decision-makers in assessing how far Member States are from reaching gender equality;
- shows the different outcomes of EU and national policies for women and men;
- allows for meaningful gender analysis and comparison between different policy areas;
- supports the development and implementation of gender equality policies and legislation;
- increases awareness among decision-makers and the public of progress and challenges in implementing gender equality policies;
- highlights data gaps and calls for harmonised and comparable data that are sex disaggregated and available for all Member States.

### Read more about the Gender Equality Index 2017

- Main report (2017)
- Main findings (2017)
- A snail's pace towards gender equality: fact sheet (2017)
- Methodological report (2017)
- Measurement framework of violence against women (2017)
- Intersecting inequalities (forthcoming)

Explore the Gender Equality Index and the full data for Bulgaria at <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index>

#### European Institute for Gender Equality

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is the EU knowledge centre on gender equality. EIGE supports policymakers and all relevant institutions in their efforts to make equality between women and men a reality for all Europeans by providing them with specific expertise and comparable and reliable data on gender equality in Europe.

© European Institute for Gender Equality, 2018  
Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.



European Institute for Gender Equality  
Gedimino pr. 16  
LT-01103 Vilnius  
LITHUANIA

#### Contact details

<http://eige.europa.eu/>

[facebook.com/eige.europa.eu](https://facebook.com/eige.europa.eu)

[twitter.com/eurogender](https://twitter.com/eurogender)

[youtube.com/user/eurogender](https://youtube.com/user/eurogender)

[eige.sec@eige.europa.eu](mailto:eige.sec@eige.europa.eu)

+370 52157444

Paper: MH-02-18-177-EN-C 978-92-9470-492-4 10.2839/307671  
PDF: MH-02-18-177-EN-N 978-92-9470-494-8 10.2839/472290