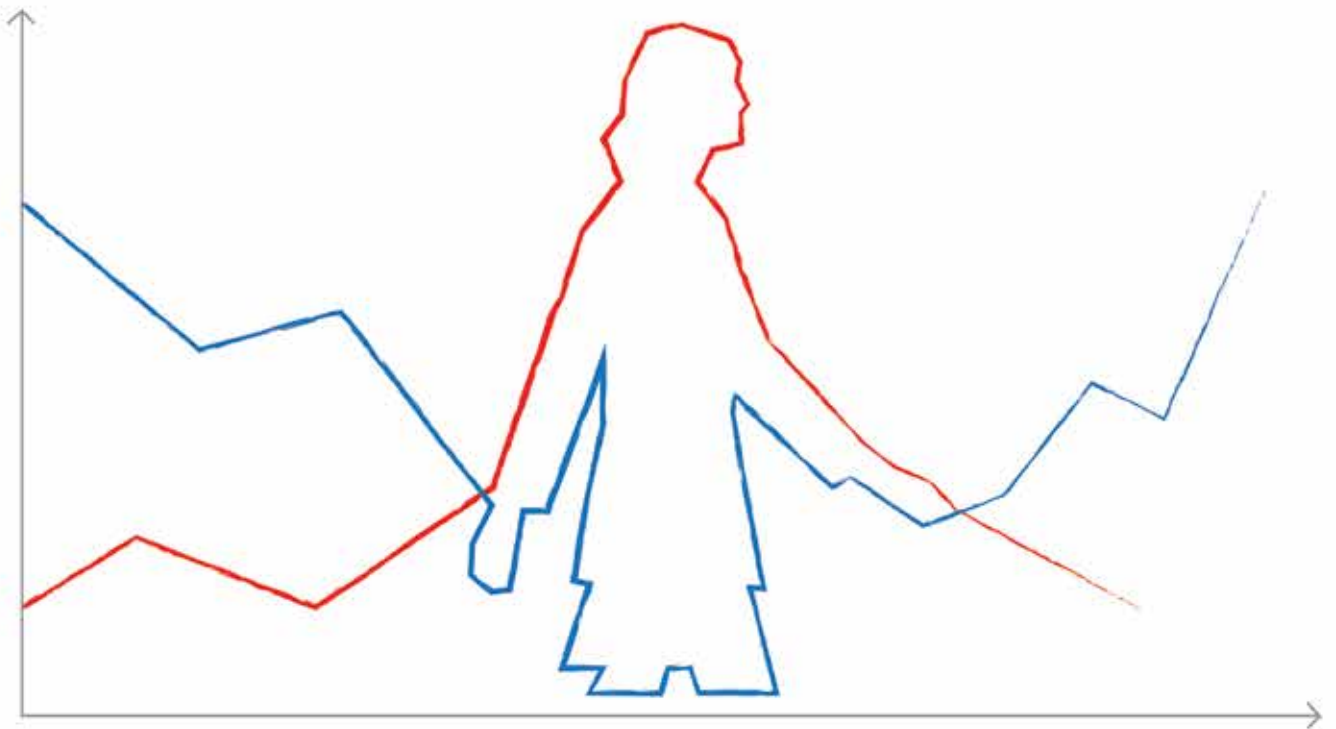


# The Impacts of the Crisis on Gender Equality and Women's Wellbeing

in EU Mediterranean countries



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## Preface

The current global financial crisis has heavily affected economies and markets around the world, but the burden of the crisis has clearly produced different impacts on men and women's lives. Due to their specific characteristics in economic performance and political, social and cultural contexts, countries have handled the crisis and attended to the relevant gender dimensions in different ways. The approach to gender through an economic lens is relatively new,<sup>1</sup> while studies exploring the impact of the economic downturn and macroeconomic policies across gender are small in number, although extremely important.

Revealing the gendered dimension of macro-economic policies adopted in different countries is paramount to evaluate the impact of adopted measures and progress in the achievement of development. Many countries, due to financial pressure, left gender mainstreaming aside, while past experience clearly shows that the gender dimension should be acknowledged all the more in times of recession.<sup>2</sup> Historically, economic as well as socio-political recessions have placed a disproportionate burden on women.<sup>3</sup> The reduction of markets where women are largely employed exposes women to job losses and wage cuts and increases their vulnerability to inequality, abuse, exploitation and violence. A lack of access to credit, home foreclosures and loss of savings due to bank failures are other negative impacts that hit women disproportionately hard during times of crisis. Many countries have also contracted their public expenditures in areas that were critical to women, including removing social subsidies and reducing the salaries of public sector workers, such as teachers and health-sector workers. Women are generally also overrepresented in informal and vulnerable employment areas, with limited or no access to formal social security arrangements, as they perform the bulk of unpaid care work, which prevents them from joining the labour force.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, downward economic trends function as boosting factors for the perpetration of crimes against vulnerable actors, thus increasing the risk of violence against women, human trafficking, social conflict and gender disparities.

It is widely recognized that gender equality, development and violence against women are strongly interconnected. No aspect of development can be envisaged and implemented without gender equality as its foundation, while, on the other hand, the phenomenon of violence against women constitutes a major obstacle in its achievement.<sup>5</sup> Violence against women is recognized as a major threat to social and economic development. This was solemnly acknowledged in the Millennium Declaration of September 2000, in which the General Assembly of the United Nations resolved "to combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the

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1 UNECE (2009), "Gender Gap and Economic Policy. Trends and Good Practices from ECE Region", United Nations: Geneva. Available online at: <http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/publications/gender/GenderGapAndEconomicPolicy.FINAL.pdf>

2 United Nations Department of Information (2014), "Gender Lens' Sharpens Focus of Economic and Social Council Reforms, Shapes Global Policy, Speakers Say in Women's Commission", United Nations: New York. Available online at: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2014/wom1982.doc.htm>

3 This concept was acknowledged on the occasion of the High-level round table on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls, Fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, 4-15 March 2013. Available online at: [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw57/panels/HLRT\\_chairs\\_summary.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw57/panels/HLRT_chairs_summary.pdf)

4 Ortiz I. (2014), "Women's access to decent work and social protection during the global recession", 58<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Commission on Status of Women, Panel 1 "Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the MDGs for women and girls", Geneva. Available online at: <http://www.unwomen.org/~media/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/58/CSW58-panel1-ortiz%20pdf.pdf>

5 WHO, "Addressing violence against women and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The role of gender equality in the MDGs". Available online at: [http://www.who.int/gender/documents/women\\_MDGs\\_report/en/index2.html](http://www.who.int/gender/documents/women_MDGs_report/en/index2.html)

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women". Such violence is intimately associated with complex social conditions, such as poverty, lack of education, gender inequality, child mortality and maternal ill-health, addressed by the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The 2008 financial crisis is considered by many economists to be the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. A deep recession, high unemployment rates, precariousness and instability are just few of the several seriously damaging effects caused by the breakdown of the global economic, as well as institutional, system. Greece, Italy and Spain have been among the countries most affected by the negative consequences brought about by the financial collapse. The French economy and society have also been hit by the crisis.

Regrettably, political and economical reforms now run the risk of weakening women's rights. Several cuts to EU welfare systems, particularly education, health care and community services, are conducive to negative consequences for women in the medium and long term. Indeed, spending cuts may increase inequality between women and men and seriously damage the rights of women within a number of areas, such as employment, housing, tax and benefit changes, education, violence against women, health, social care, other support services and access to legal advice. Services for women facing violence, including emergency accommodation, counseling, crisis support and outreach work, are at risk of downsizing. Many entities and organizations providing key support services have already lost significant funding. Cuts to legal aid reduce the ability of women suffering violence to get the legal help and support they need. Moreover, reductions and other changes to welfare benefits will make it harder for women to leave violent relationships, and the cuts to housing benefits will make it harder for some women to get away from their attackers.

Against this background, a platform for discussion and comparison of women's experiences in times of social, political and financial crisis within the EU Mediterranean region - among the regions most affected by the crisis - is needed.

UNICRI has carried out an analysis on the well-being and experiences of women hit by the consequences of the present deep social and financial crisis in four EU Mediterranean countries, namely France, Greece, Italy, and Spain. The results of this analysis aim at providing a practical platform for international experts, practitioners, civil society, and academia to discuss the gendered impact of the economic downturn and effective ways to improve current gender-blind policies.

## **Gender equality, sustainable development and the well-being of women in times of crisis: where do we stand?**

With being just a few months from the 2015 target date for the attainment of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), it is of paramount importance to assess where we stand on issues related to gender equality, development and well-being in the identified geographic region and to provide a strong push to keep the process moving in the right direction. The main goals pursued by the MDGs are crucial pillars in this analysis. Despite progress being made towards the achievement of the MDGs, men continue to outnumber women in paid employment, and women are often relegated to vulnerable jobs. Women are slowly gaining political power, mainly thanks to quotas and special measures.

Gender equality lies at the center of the development agenda. In the year 2000, all countries

committed to gender equality by adopting the MDGs. Gender equality is an objective in itself (MDG n.3), but it also represents a strategy to achieve all of the development goals. When the MDGs were proclaimed, only two of them explicitly mentioned women's rights and empowerment as an objective. But as women are the disadvantaged half of humanity, addressing their well-being and equality will automatically give a boost to the realization of the development objectives.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, the report of the 58<sup>th</sup> United Nations Commission on the Status of Women<sup>7</sup> recognizes that progress on all of the MDGs for women and girls has been held back due to the persistence of unequal power relations between women and men and discriminatory laws, social norms, practices and stereotypes.

Violence against women is also persistent around the world. The relationship between sustainable development and violence against women is not explicit. Although some of the associated conditions of violence are targeted in the goals set up to guide the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, violence against women is not highlighted in neither the targets nor the indicators. However, a closer examination reveals that violence against women – both as an extreme manifestation of gender inequality and a means of perpetuating it – is highly relevant to all of the MDGs. In addition, the achievement of the Goals provides powerful arguments and entry points for a variety of approaches to eradicating violence against women.

The rate of violence against women is still extremely high across the globe. A 2013 WHO report<sup>8</sup> estimates that 35% of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence.

In Europe - according to the EU-wide survey on Violence Against Women,<sup>9</sup> commissioned by EU Fundamental Rights Agency to UNICRI in consortium with Ipsos MORI and the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (HEUNI) -, an estimated 13 million women had experienced physical violence in the course of the 12 months before the survey interviews (7% of women aged 18–74 years in the EU), while 3.7 million women experienced sexual violence in the same period (2% of women aged 18–74 years in the EU).<sup>10</sup> Two out of five women (43 %) have experienced some form of psychological violence by either a current or previous partner.<sup>11</sup>

Violence against women also causes tremendous costs for communities and countries for public well-being, health and safety, school achievement, productivity, law enforcement, and public programmes and budgets. According to UN Women, domestic violence alone costs approximately US\$ 1.16 billion in Canada, US\$ 5.8 billion in the United States, and in US\$11.38 billion Australia, per year.<sup>12</sup> It is only by lowering the incidence of violence against women, preventing recurrence, and responding effectively to existing violence to minimize

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6 UNESCO (2010), *Proceedings of the UNESCO Future Forum, Gender Equality: The Missing Link? Rethinking the Internationally Agreed Development Goals beyond 2015*, page 10. Available online at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001894/189403E.pdf>

7 UN Commission on the Status of Women (2014), "Agreed Conclusions" (Advance Unedited Version), New York, 10-21 March, p.11 Available online at: <http://www.unwomen.org/~media/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/58/CSW58-agreedconclusions-advanceduneditedversion.pdf>

8 WHO (2013), "Global and regional estimates of violence against women. Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence", Geneva. Available at: <http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564625/en/>

9 European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) (2014), "Violence against Women: an EU-wide Survey". Available online at: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-gender-based-violence-against-women>

10 European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) (2014), "Violence against Women: an EU-wide Survey. Results at a glance", p.9-14. Available online at: [http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-at-a-glance-apr14\\_en.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-at-a-glance-apr14_en.pdf)

11 Ibid.

12 Refer to: <http://saynotoviolence.org/issue/facts-and-figures>

ongoing impacts, that the overall costs of such violence to any economy will be reduced.<sup>13</sup> If left unaddressed, these human rights violations pose serious consequences for current and future generations and for efforts to ensure security and development, to reduce poverty and to achieve the MDGs and the next generation of development goals.

All of the above considerations call for a critical look at how society and the state respond to this phenomenon, especially in times of economic turmoil that have a negative impact on the most vulnerable sectors of society, particularly women.

Experiences from different countries, as highlighted in the present report, underline the need to address the economic and socio-cultural factors that foster a culture of violence against women. This not only includes challenging social norms that support male authority and control over women and condone violence against women. Reforming discriminatory family law, strengthening women's economic and legal rights, and eliminating gender inequalities in accessing formal wage employment and secondary education are vital to supporting gender equality and reducing the vulnerabilities that may be prompted by this deplorable phenomenon.

Experts noted that violence against women and girls is intensified and exacerbated in situations of socio-economic stress. Evidence shows that where the "gender gap" is greater—in the status of women's health, participation in the economy, education levels, and representation in politics—women are more likely to be subjected to violence. In the effort to create a prevention strategy, economic and social empowerment are paramount.

Thus, in view of the attainment of the MDGs in 2015 and planning for the post-development agenda, the assessment on the impact of the financial crisis on women's conditions and rights becomes crucial. This study attempts to contribute to the knowledge and understanding of whether and how the financial downturn affected women and what were the coping responses from governments.

This research complements several initiatives undertaken by UNICRI towards the prevention of violence against women, encompassing research, awareness raising, capacity building of law enforcement, and the protection of victims through women's empowerment programmes and cooperation with civil society.

## **Violence against women and gender issues: the contribution of UNICRI**

In the past, UNICRI carried out International Crime Victimization Surveys (ICVS) to provide an analysis of crime, security and safety and to compare levels of victimisation across several countries. The Institute also participated in the development of the first United Nations training program for law enforcement on combating domestic violence. Several projects on the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation have been carried out in a number of countries, including Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Nigeria, Poland, Thailand, Ukraine, and in peace keeping operations in South-east Europe.

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<sup>13</sup> An Australian study, for example, calculated that for every woman whose experience of violence can be prevented, AUD\$ 20,766 in costs can be avoided: National Council to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children (2009) *The Costs of Violence against Women and their Children*, Commonwealth of Australia. See also UN Women (2013), Commission on the Status of Women. *Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls*, page 5. Available at: <http://www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Report-of-the-EGM-on-Prevention-of-Violence-against-Women-and-Girls.pdf>



In 2010, UNICRI in consortium with five European partners, carried out the Pre-testing survey on violence against women, funded by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). In December 2011, on the basis of the results from the pre-test study, the FRA launched the above-mentioned first EU-wide survey on violence against women, involving face to face interviews with 1500 women from each country for a total of 42,000 women. The survey was conducted by Ipsos Mori, UNICRI, and HEUNI. For the first time, comparable data on women's experiences of violence is available for use by policy makers and practitioners in all 28 EU Member States. The first survey results were released in March 2014.<sup>14</sup>

The present analysis of the gendered impacts of the current social and financial crisis in France, Greece, Italy and Spain was carried out by five international experts selected to assess the situation in their respective countries. The results of the four country studies, and recommendations, – included in the conclusions of this report - were discussed by the experts during a workshop organized by and held at UNICRI Headquarters in Turin, in April 2014. The study will be officially released at the Palais de Nations in Geneva, in September 2014.

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<sup>14</sup> European Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) (2014), *Violence against Women: an EU-wide survey*. Available at: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/vaw-survey-main-results>

# **Gendered dimensions of the impact of the economic crisis in France**

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The stock market crash of 2007 and the economic crisis that followed have contributed to the rise of reflection and analyses related to their differential impact on the situation of the most vulnerable groups regarding employment and risk of poverty. Therefore the condition of women, who represent half of the population but 70 per cent of the world's poor<sup>15</sup>, deserves a particular attention. Indeed, since 1979, the elimination of all forms of discriminations against women has been raised as a priority field of intervention for a growing number of development policies. Third objective of the *Millennium Development Goals*, Promotion of Gender Equality has been reaffirmed through the *Second Pact* (2011-2020) by the Council of Ministers of the European Union: program aims to fill the gender gap in the labor market – especially to raise a 75 per cent cross-gender employment rate in 2020, to promote a better work-life balance and to fight all forms of violence against women. However, the Gender Paradigm does not only embody an Ethical Commitment: “Ignoring gender disparities comes at great cost – to people's well-being and to countries' abilities to grow sustainably, to govern effectively and thus to reduce poverty” (UN 2001:xi). Accordingly, during difficult economic times, empowering women will also contribute toward the development of their families and communities welfare.

Although economic crisis had different repercussions on both sexes, it can nevertheless appear intricate to analyze the effects on women of the economic crisis of 2008, as the concrete situation existing before is not entirely reflected, while changes haven't yet been all integrated. It is also a delicate matter to predict how long the downturn will last, whether it is finished yet or not, if the recovery is lasting or provisional. Moreover, if discrimination, poverty, and violence are undeniably aggravated by the current slowdown, they result from a complex of causes existing prior to it. Thus the distinction between the pursuit of unequal position of women, notably in labor markets, and the effects of the current depression cannot easily be accurately distinguished.

Above those limits, new interest related to the gendered impact of the financial and economic crisis reflects the fact that women gained visibility in public debate. However, history teaches us that crisis often becomes a mere pretext for sex discrimination, notably for excluding women from the labor market. In France, during the 1930s depression, Laval's government prohibited the employment of married women in the public service, “with a view to combating unemployment” (*Law relative to female employment*, 11 October 1940). More recently, it is paradoxically on behalf of equality between genders, that the Court of Auditors suggested removing some of the retirement compensation arrangements targeting working mothers in Public Sector (Law Nr. 2010-1330, November 9<sup>th</sup> 2010). There is consequently a strong need for studies on the gendered effects of the current economic crisis.

In a foreword to this report, as a first step, we shall briefly introduce the main indicators of the economic downturn in France, between 2007 and today. The first part provides a statistical analysis of the gender dimensions of the impact of the economic crisis. The first section evaluates some differentiated effects of the current economic and social context on employment and earnings, given the gender differences in occupational structure. The second section examines various effects of public sector downsizing, while the third one focuses on the social consequences of growing unemployment and public spending cuts, causing rise in poverty and social marginalization. Special attention is dedicated to the impact of the current economic downturn, as a factor related to increased risk of violence against women. Throughout this report, the anti-crisis measures implemented are analyzed, regarding their potential for contributing to address gender issues adequately. The second part aims of

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15 Available at: [HTTP://www.globalpovertyproject.com/infobank/women](http://www.globalpovertyproject.com/infobank/women) (accessed 4 December 2013)

analyzing the interactions between the economic downturn and gender-related violence. The report concludes on policy recommendations and proposals arising from the evaluation.

## Introduction: Some Indicators of Economic and Social Crisis in France (2007-2013)

### A. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Industrial Production Index

In 2009, France saw worst performance since the end of World War II. While its economy entered recession later and left it earlier than comparable economies, it fell back into recession – defined as two consecutive quarters of negative growth – in the first quarter of 2013, while unemployment reached around 10 per cent (Table 1 & Table 2).

Table 1: GDP, percentage change from previous period

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
2.4	0.2	-2.9	2	2.1	0.3	0.3

Source: Insee, national accounts, base year 2010 (ref\_id=NATTEF08112)

Table 2: Unemployment rate in Metropolitan France

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
8	7.4	9.1	9.4	9.2	9.8	9.9

Source: INSEE, A picture of the labor market n° 1206, 1272, 1331,1391,1415,1466 & Informations rapides n°203

In Quarter two 2013, GDP in volume rose by 0.6 per cent. Although the Ministry of Economics claimed that “The Economic recovery is here. It is indisputable”<sup>16</sup>, at the end of August 2013, 62000 firms, mostly micro-enterprises, had applied for bankruptcy over the last 12 rolling months, an increase of 4.2 per cent<sup>17</sup>. If industrial output contracted (Table 3), a high number of insolvencies have also concerned the services sector (catering, beauty...). Thus, even though the economic recovery has started, it remains fragile, as many other key variables suggest.

Table 3: Manufacturing Industrial Production Index

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
118.6	113.6	95.5	99.8	103.5	100.0	99.0

Source : INSEE, Eurostat, 2010 based - Available at:  
[HTTP://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/indicateur.asp?id=10](http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/indicateur.asp?id=10) (monthly data)

<sup>16</sup> *Journal du dimanche* (2013). October 13<sup>th</sup>. Paris.

<sup>17</sup> France. Banque de France, Stat Info. (2013) ‘Corporate Insolvencies’, Paris.

## B. Employment and unemployment rates

In 2006, in order to facilitate international comparisons, the French National Statistics Office (INSEE) has adopted the unemployment measurement techniques used in International Labor Organization (ILO). To be officially classified as “unemployed”, a person must meet three criteria: not having worked during the last week, being available to start work within the next two weeks, and being able to prove that she/he has been actively looking for a job. The administrative renewal of a registration at the public employment service is no longer considered evidence of active job search; to achieve it, one must for instance make an appointment with an adviser or a potential employer. Following changes to methodology, the average unemployment rate dropped from 0.7 points<sup>18</sup>.

Another bias lies in the difference between “unemployment” and economic “inactivity”. Among the “inactive” population wishing to work, a significant number is not accounted among “unemployed” within the meaning of the ILO. This unemployment “halation” can be divided into two main categories: “inactive” persons who are not looking for jobs according to ILO definition and those who are discouraged or not capable of being available quickly enough - about 770 000 out of 11.9 “unemployed” in 2007<sup>19</sup>. So the actual number of unemployed people – fully or partially – would be much higher, considering the five types of “unemployed” identified by the French Agency for Employment, *Pôle Emploi* - to be discussed later. Thus the last results (March 2014) revealed a particularly high discrepancy between the evaluations of INSEE (2.8 million unemployed) and *Pôle Emploi* (3.3 million).

## C. Sovereign Debt

France’s sovereign debt has increased sharply since 2008 (Table 4) and should break all previous records in 2014, standing at 95 per cent of GDP, according to official data<sup>20</sup>, far from the maximum (60 per cent) set by the European Union. Failing to fulfill its European obligations, France is neither able to meet the 3 per cent deficit target required, and should make all efforts to reduce spending and find savings.

Table 4 : The Debt of the General government (in per cent GDP)

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 (p)
65.2	65.7	71.6	81.3	84.5	89	91.8

Source: National Accounts - INSEE, DGFIP, Banque de France (p) provisional results

Thus government cuts and fiscal consolidation measures could threaten gender equality, as women are doubly affected by austerity plans: as main employees in public sector and users of the services. They also have to cover services from which the state is withdrawing, and must ensure extra work burden, at the expense of their jobs and future pensions.

18 France. INSEE Première. (2007) ‘Unemployment has been declining since the beginning of 2006’, n° 1164. Paris.

19 France. INSEE Première. (2009) ‘The « halation » of unemployment: between ILO unemployment and inactivity’, n° 1260. Paris.

20 France. Ministry of Economy and Finance Draft budget bill for 2014: 18. (2013). Paris.

## D. Household's Consumption Expenditure and Purchasing Power

Since 2007, final consumption of French households has declined. The historic fall of 2012 is mainly due to the slowdown and fall in the household's purchasing power, which stepped back (-0.4 per cent, Table 5). A second component constitutes the background of high and rising unemployment inducing households to build up precautionary savings. Thus the household saving ratio, which averaged 14.9 per cent at the beginning of the 2000s, has reached 16.3 per cent between 2008 and 2011<sup>21</sup>.

Table 5: Household's purchasing power (PP) and consumption expenditure (CE volume)  
(% from previous period)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
PP	2,8	0,6	1,4	1,1	0,9	-0,4
CE	2,3	0,3	0,1	1,5	0,5	-0,4

2005 based, Source: National Accounts & *INSEE Première*, n° 1450, June 2013.

## E. Poverty rate rises

In a statistical perspective, a person is considered as poor if her or his disposable income is below the poverty line. In Europe, the main poverty line used is based on a level set at 60 per cent of the median household income. In France, in 2011, the poverty rate is the proportion of people earning less than EUR 977 per month, that is approximately 8.7 million persons and 14.3 per cent of the population (Table 6).

Table 6: Poverty rates at 60 and 50 per cent lines (per cent)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
60 per cent	13.4	13	13.5	14.1	14.3
50 per cent	7.2	7.1	7.5	7.8	7.9

Poverty declined between 1970 and the mid 1990s and then remained stable until 2000. Current financial and economic crisis marks a turning point in the history of poverty.

In addition, indicators show an increase in inequality. Trend towards more equal income distribution, that was started in the 1960s, stabilizing at a low level during the early 2000s, reversed: the Gini coefficient, which measures income inequality, records a notable augment (Table 7).

Table 7: Gini Index Evolution

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
0.289	0.289	0.290	0.303	0.306

Source : INSEE-DGFIP-Cnaf-Cnav-CCMSA, surveys fiscal and social incomes 2005 to 2011.

<sup>21</sup> France. INSEE, Note on Economic Situation. (2012) 'Household consumption during the crisis'. Paris.

Thus the number of recipients of social benefits increased 2.4 per cent in 2011, after 2.5 per cent in 2010: at the end of 2011, 3.7 million people were receiving income assistance, notably Active Solidarity Income (RSA)<sup>22</sup>.

## I. The gendered differentiated impacts of the Economic and Social Crisis: a statistical approach

### 1. Patterns of Employment and unemployment

In France, over the last 25 years, female and male unemployment rates have converged (Graph 1). Despite the financial and economic crisis, this trend continued up to 2009<sup>23</sup> : as their jobs were overrepresented in cyclical sectors, employment losses affected men more than women.



During a second period, women's employment was affected in its turn by the challenges facing the services sector, and the loss of public sector jobs. However, it occurs that women, notably among younger generations, have reaped some benefits from the effects of increased educational attainment on employability: in 2008, unemployment rate of women who completed their educational training less than six years ago, was about 14 per cent, a fewer rate than their male counterparts (16 per cent)<sup>24</sup>. Notwithstanding these significant improvements, the labor market remains strongly structured by horizontal and vertical sex segregation (1-1).

In Milkman's opinion (1976), the fact that women were less affected by unemployment is the corollary of the rigidity of the gendered occupational distribution. Studying the effects of the *Great Depression* on women's situation, Milkman aims to highlight that, contrary to what the "Reserve Army" theory argued (Mitchell 1971), women are not being used as an adjustment variable for the labor market during economic contractions – this "buffering" role would rather be played by women's domestic work. Understanding the relationship of women to the mechanisms of adjustment to other economic slowdowns can contribute towards an analysis

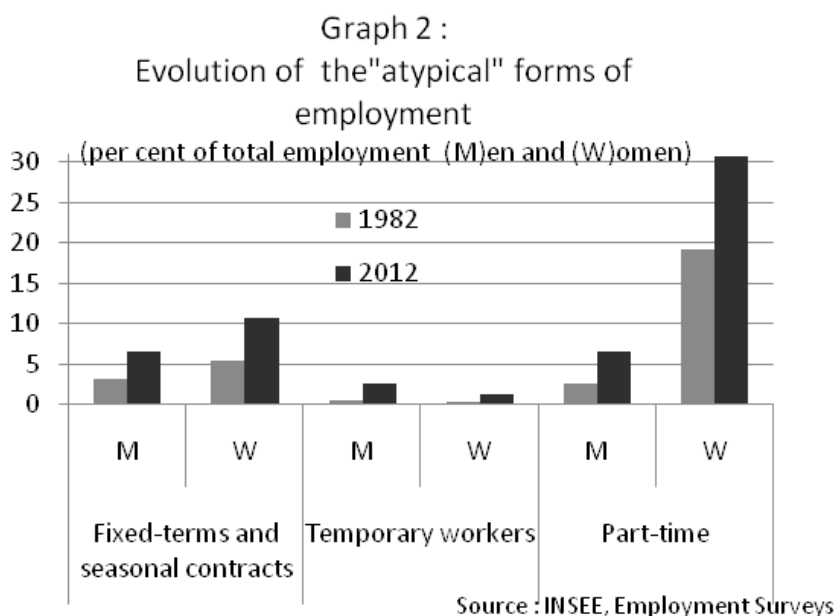
22 France. Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Studies and Results. (2013) 'The increase in the number of beneficiaries of social minima is continuing in 2011', n°. 844. Paris.

23 France. INSEE, Informations Rapides. (2013) n° 203. Paris.

24 France. INSEE Première. (2010) n°1284. Paris.

of the current economic situation and its meaning for women. However, the context is very different, even though the economic downturn has not radically changed the structure of gender relations on the labor market.

A major change is in the growth of flexible working that occurred since the 1980s. The typical form of employment such as permanent and full employment contract lost ground to more flexible work organization – for example through the use of fixed-terms and temporary, state-helped or part-time contracts (Graph 2).



In this context, traditional indicators of employment and unemployment are no longer adequate to evaluate changes affecting women's employment in times of crisis, as its deterioration takes henceforth the form of the under-employment and involuntary part-time work (1-2) as well as the persistence or widening of the gender wage gap (1-3). Thus, greater resilience of women's employment to the economic cycle does not mean that its conditions are structurally improving, and apparent evolutions mask an underlying trend (1-4). Finally, as women are concentrated in the public sector, it deserves a special attention, inasmuch as cuts in public budgets have a greater effect on women, more dependent on social benefits. In addition, the impact of public spending cuts is also likely to reduce public employment associated to children's care, security, health and welfare, and threaten funding for the voluntary care sector (2).

### 1.1 Vertical and horizontal gender segregation on the labor market

Often considered to be an extension of the domestic work, women's employment is concentrated in the Services sector (horizontal segregation, Table 8), especially among poorly skilled occupations as childcare assistant, home care provider or office secretary - the percentage of women in these jobs exceeds 95 per cent<sup>25</sup>. The representation of women in public service is high: in 2010, they accounted for 60 per cent of the three civil services<sup>26</sup> (State, Territorial and Hospital).

25 France. INSEE. Employment Survey, DARES 2008-2010.

26 France. SIASP, INSEE. Traitement DGAFP-DES.



Table 8 : Share of female employment in various sectors (2012)

Sector of activity	Female share (per cent)
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	30.3
Industry	28.8
Construction	10.4
Services	55.1

Source : INSEE, Employment Survey 2012.

In addition, women are overrepresented in the lower levels of occupational hierarchy (vertical segregation, Table 9) in private and public sectors alike (Table 10). However, overall, the proportion of women among executives has increased from 20 per cent in 1982 to about 40 per cent in 2012<sup>27</sup>.

Table 9 : Share of female employment per CS (2012)

Socio-professional category (CS)	Female share (per cent)
Higher managerial and professional positions	40
Intermediate positions	51
Office workers	77
Manual workers	19

Source : INSEE, Employment survey, 2012, Field paid employment

Table 10: Managerial positions in the public sector (2010)

Public bodies	Female share (per cent)
State Civil Service	25
Territorial Civil Service	34
Hospital Public Service	45

## 1.2 Atypical forms of Employment

### 1.2.1 Part-time employment

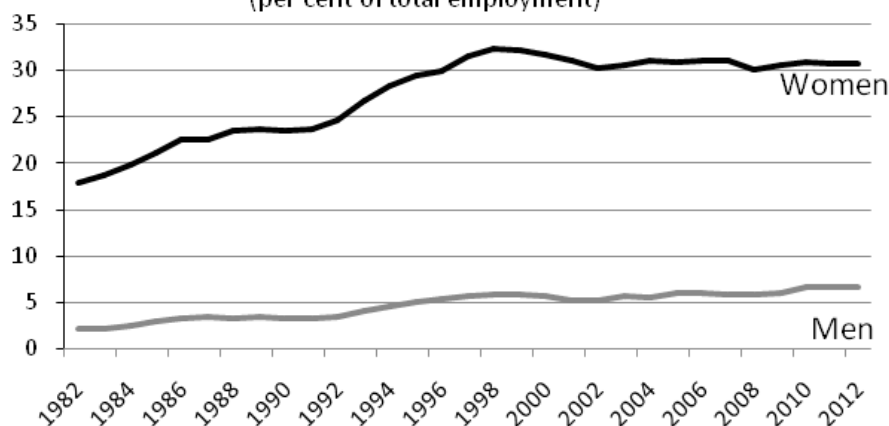
The impact of the economic crisis on female employment is affected by the extent of their atypical forms of employment, particularly in regard to part-time working arrangements, emblematic of gendered work relations.

Since 1980, the number of part-time jobs increased from 1.8 million to 4.2 million (2011): the rate has more than doubled over the last thirty years from 8.4 per cent to almost 19 per cent of all jobs. The highest growth took place between 1980 and the early 1990s, following fiscal incentives. Between 1999 and 2002, the French politics of reduction in working hours contributed to slowing down the progression.

Practiced mainly by women (Graph 3), part-time work has developed in the most feminized segments of the service sector, like catering, cleaning or distribution industry. Great differences appear between “voluntary” and “involuntary” part-time workers, that is, those who work part-time only because they could not find full-time work.

<sup>27</sup> France. INSEE. Employment Survey.1982-2012.

Graph 3 : Part-time time employment by gender  
(per cent of total employment)



Source: Employment Surveys, INSEE

Thus 64 per cent of involuntary and 45 per cent of voluntary part-time workers have either qualifications below baccalaureate level or no qualifications at all<sup>28</sup>. A majority (65 per cent) of involuntary part-timers work as office employees or unskilled manual workers (11 per cent). While average earnings for all part-time workers are EUR 996, 50 per cent of involuntary part-timers earn less than EUR 719.

This makes it clear that part-time work can represent a variety of situations. Even if in 2012, slightly more men (37 per cent) than women (31 per cent) report that they had rather worked longer, in absolute terms, given their weight in the category, women constitute one million out of involuntary part-time workers and men only 300 000<sup>29</sup>. In this regard, women's part-time work is not an alternative to full-time work but to unemployment, and it plays the role of an adjustment variable during the current slowdown. Thus during Quarter ssssssss2 2012, the rate of women in their first job who wish to work more, increased more (12 per cent) than among men (3 per cent).

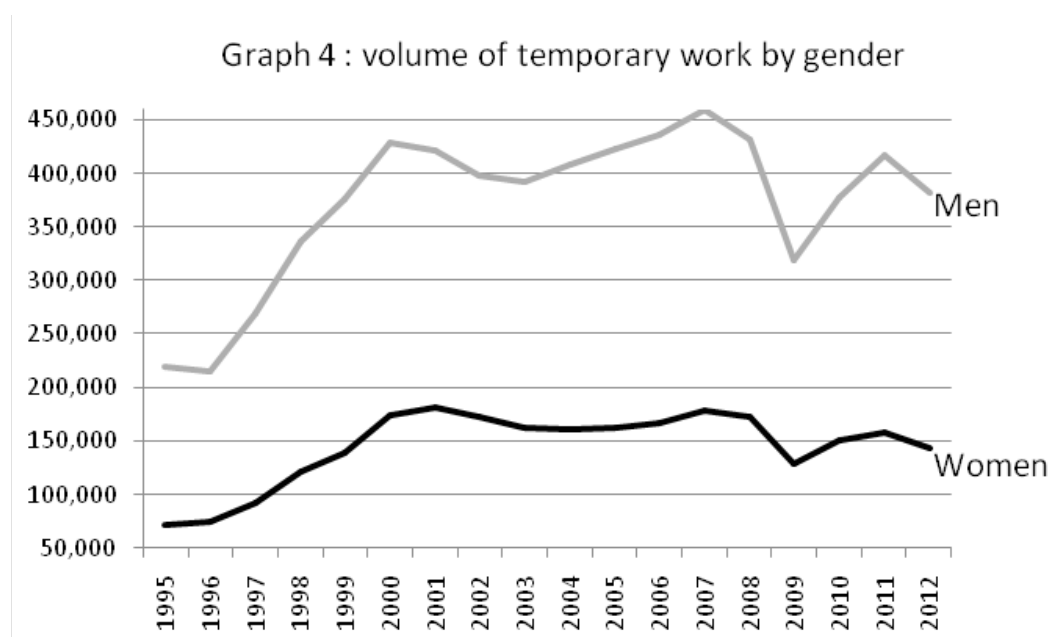
### 1.2.2 Temporary work

Temporary work is a form of employment which has experienced a high growth in the 1990s. Mostly practiced by men – two in three workers (Graph 4) – temporary industrial contracts fell sharply in 2009, principally in the industrial sector. Thus in absolute terms, in 2012, female temporary employment decreased less than male (15 700 compared with 35 000), women were more affected than men by the reduction in this type of employment (9.9 per cent compared with 8.4 per cent). Most of lost jobs in the service sector were related to finance, insurance and property, and, to a lesser extent, to scientific and technical activities<sup>30</sup>. However, unqualified and young manual workers remain the socio-professional group most likely to be affected by the downswing.

28 France. Directorate for Research, Studies, and Statistics (DARES) *Analyses* (2013) 'Part-time work in 2011: high contrasted conditions of employment whether part-time work is voluntary or not' n° 005. Paris.

29 Available at: [HTTP://www.observationsociete.fr/levolution-du-temps-partiel](http://www.observationsociete.fr/levolution-du-temps-partiel) (accessed 31 January 2013).

30 France. DARES *Analyses* (2013) 'Temporary employment in 2012', n° 049. Paris.



Even though the media rarely talk about the loss of temporary jobs, it is very damaging in social and human terms. Indeed, as the firm is not directly the employer, the non-renewal of a contract is not considered as a dismissal and is not routed through the worker's committee. In addition, temporary workers have little or no exposure to trade unions, and no official support is provided when a contract ends.

Temporary work can be understood as a central employment adjustment during the economic crisis and recovery: therefore the reduction in the number of contracts has been significant; in the end of 2009, temporary workload was brought back to its 1998 level<sup>31</sup>.

### 1.3 Gender gap in earnings

Since 1995, the gender gap in earnings has slightly decreased. This is firstly the result of a structural effect: the proportion of women among executives nearly doubled in the space of thirty years, rising from 20 to 40 per cent between 1982 and 2012<sup>32</sup>. However, women still account for at least 70 per cent of office workers, whose average wage is very low. Indeed, over the last decade, sharp increase in female employment rate has not been matched with a corresponding reduction in occupational segregation index by gender<sup>33</sup>. For example, among some poorly skilled and paid occupations as childcare assistant, home care provider or office secretary, the proportion of women is superior to 95 per cent.

In 2010, in the private sector, the average earning of women is on average about 28 per cent lower<sup>34</sup> than that of men. The gap has not decreased significantly between 1995 and 2008 (34 per cent to 32 per cent). It was only as from 2008 that the gap started to shrink (Graph 5). This is the result of a decrease in the average number of hours worked by men, while rising for women: in 2008, the average number of worked hours by women was 16 per cent under men's,

31 France. DARES *Analyses* (2010) 'Jobs in 2009 : only a few jobs resist the deterioration of the labor market'. n° 069. Paris.

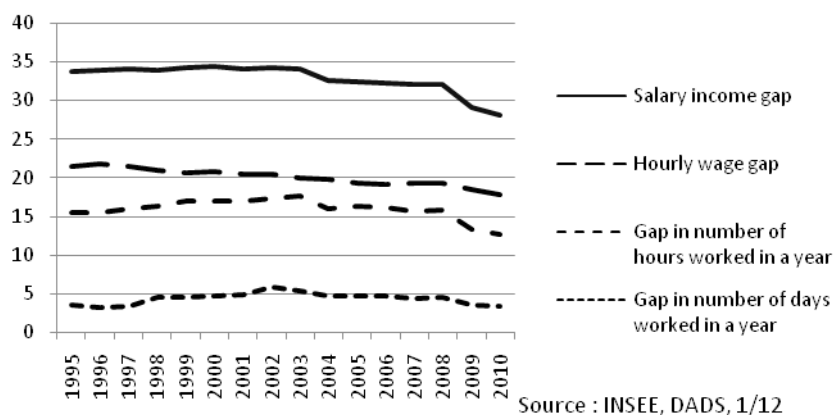
32 France. INSEE, Employment surveys.

33 Maclachlan Gender Segregation index by sector remains unchanged between 1995 and 2010 (28 per cent).

34 France. INSEE *Première* (2013). 'Women's income remains below than men's'. n° 1436. Paris.

in 2010, it had decreased to 13 per cent. In addition, the average hourly wage gap reduced slowly between 1995 and 2008 (21 per cent to 19 per cent). Since 2008, it has decreased faster, achieving 18 per cent in 2010, because a number of financial benefits - variable components of remuneration as premiums, performance incentives - which concern more men than women, continued to grow at a slower pace.

Graph 5 : Evolution of the gender wage gap  
(private sector, per cent)



Within the services sector, the largest gaps can be found in the sectors of finance and insurance, where women receive an average income 44 per cent below that of men. Within industrial and construction sectors, the gender earning gap is as much as 20 per cent for graduates with 5 years of third-level education: for example, in 2009, for a woman who has either qualification below baccalaureate level or no qualification at all, the median monthly salary<sup>35</sup> reaches EUR 1200, compared to EUR 1400 for a man.

In the Public Service, despite the high ratio of female employees (61 per cent in 2011), and even though remunerations are based on a salary scale which ensures – at least in theory – equal pay for equal work, the wage gap persists, with women’s earnings that are on average 18 per cent below those for men in 2010. The gender wage gap has remained nearly unchanged since the early 2000s and is higher in hospital public services. Three main sets of explanatory factors can be identified: job structure and prevalence of part-time work amongst women<sup>36</sup> - which tends to affect career development - higher average amount of bonuses received by men<sup>37</sup>, and a residual gap of about 7 per cent, which constitutes evidence for the existence of discriminatory practices.

Even though the economic slowdown has eroded State revenues, with damaging consequences for public employment, the gender gap in public sector has remained more or less steady for about ten years. Thus reduction in Public employment is not only the result of the current economic and financial crisis. It was connected with the *General Review of Public Policies* (RGPP), initiated by the *Fillon* Government, in July 2007, with the aim of reducing public spending, through measures including the replacement of only one of two retiring civil servants.

35 All job durations, Ibid.

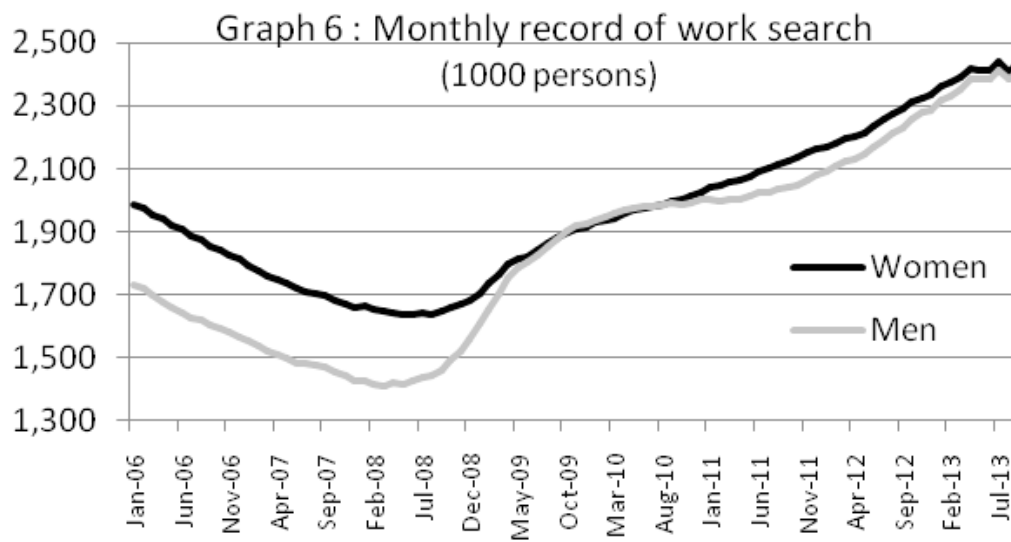
36 For example, in 2010, in the State Public Service, 16.8 per cent of women are working part-time compared with 2.5 per cent of men (INSEE 2013).

37 In 2006, respectively 31 per cent and 16 per cent of average earnings of men and women.

## 1.4 An improvement in women's employment patterns?

As the statistics make it clear, since 2007, in France, women have been less affected by unemployment than by under-employment regarding their overrepresentation in part-time work, especially for non-graduates. However, in terms of employment, upon thus far, women have proven to be more resilient in this downturn than in previous ones. This may arise as a result of a better educational achievement performance: in 2008, 51 per cent of girls and 37 per cent of boys who had been working for at least six years have successfully completed tertiary-level education, while 19 per cent of boys and 12 per cent of girls have no school diploma at the start of their working lives. Thus women have easier access to qualified jobs: in 2008, 48 per cent of them are employed as an executive or in a middle-level profession, for only 43 per cent of men<sup>38</sup>.

In terms of unemployment, the gender gap started to ease in the early 1990s (Graph 1), turning negative in October 2009, and remaining in negative territory until October 2010. Since then, it has increased slightly (Graph 6).

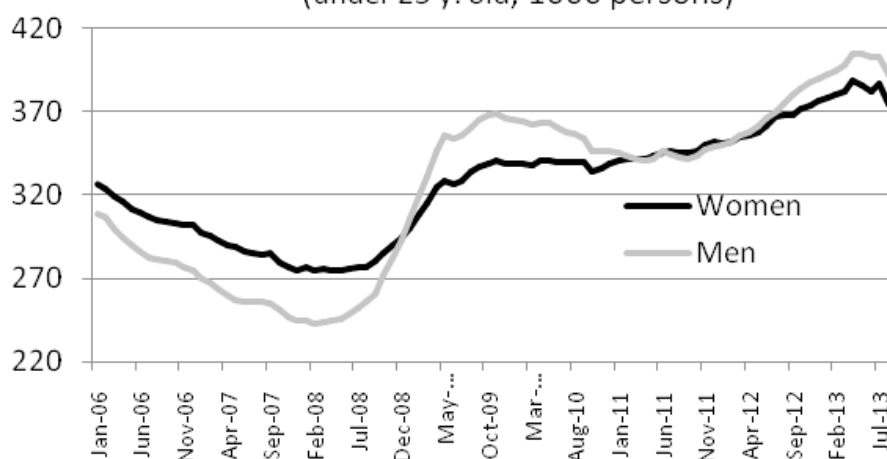


Source: National data, CVS-SJO, STMT, Pôle Emploi and DRES

Additional breakdown by age and gender provides valuable information. It shows that in 1984, at the start of their working lives, young women were more exposed (29 per cent) to unemployment than young men (20 per cent): gender unemployment gap then started to decrease before nearly disappearing in 2002. Since January 2009, the gap has turned negative (Graph 7).

<sup>38</sup> In 1984, 33 per cent of men and 30 per cent of women. FRANCE. *INSEE Première* (2010) 'Girls begin to take advantage of their better school performance'. n°1284. Paris.

Graph 7 : Monthly record of work search  
(under 25 y. old, 1000 persons)



Source: National data, CVS-SJO, STMT, Pôle Emploi and DRES

Nonetheless, if during their first six years of carrier, because of their higher average level of educational attainment, women are less likely to be unemployed than men, they are more often under-employed and stating they would wish to work longer, than men (11 per cent among female beginners, 4 per cent among male)<sup>39</sup>. Thus women's higher part-time work rate explains to a large extent why, during their first six years of carrier, they earn up to 10 per cent less than men.

Economic slowdown has amplified preexisting heavy trends rather than creating new ones. Therefore behind women's employment apparent resilience, there is evidence that, five years after leaving the school system, they are more often in precarious jobs than men - fixed-terms contracts, part-time jobs, assisted jobs. At the same level of education, men take advantage of an improved integration into the labor market, because of their training characteristics and gender bias in recruitment. Above all, during the current economic downturn, the situation of women with less than high school diploma got particularly vulnerable: in 2009, more than a quarter of holders of a vocational CAP / BEP worked in part-time jobs, for only 10 per cent among men and women with a higher diploma<sup>40</sup>.

Furthermore, unemployed women receive unemployment benefits at lower rates than men, as they are calculated with reference to their previous salary, and average women's reference salary is lower than men's<sup>41</sup>. In the event that you are not entitled for unemployment benefit, it is possible to apply for other benefits, such as the Active Solidarity Income (RSA), as well as housing benefits. In 2012, all benefits taken together, according to the French Employment Agency *Pôle Emploi*, 55.6 per cent of men and 50.8 per cent of women received a benefit.

In addition, even if in Metropolitan France, in September 2013, the official number of persons registered as unemployed topped around 3 300 000, more than two million of unemployed workers, among whom women predominate, have not been recorded. Indeed, French employment agency *Pôle Emploi* identifies five different types of unemployment. The three major ones – A, B and C – all include unemployed actively looking for work, without any

39 Ibid.

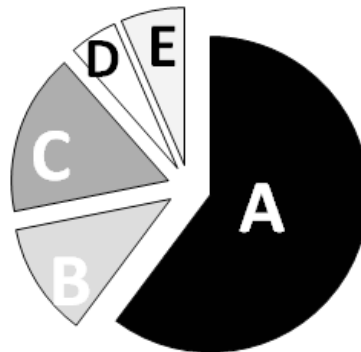
40 France. *Centre for studies and research on qualifications (Céreq)*, *Bref* (2011) 'Women on the verge of crisis'. n° 288. Paris.

41 47.7 per cent of men compared to 27.1 per cent of women have a reference salary higher than EUR 1800 (gross) per month, Source: FRANCE. *Pôle Emploi*, *Statistics and Surveys Direction* (2013) 'Compensated and uncompensated unemployment'. Paris.

employment (A), who have worked for less than 78 hours during the current month (B), who have worked more than 78 hours during the current month (C). Categories D and E consist of people not actively looking for a job, as they are entitled to an internship, a helped contract or on sick leave.

Based solely on the unemployed of category A, official unemployment figures tend, therefore, to underestimate substantially real unemployment (Graph 8).

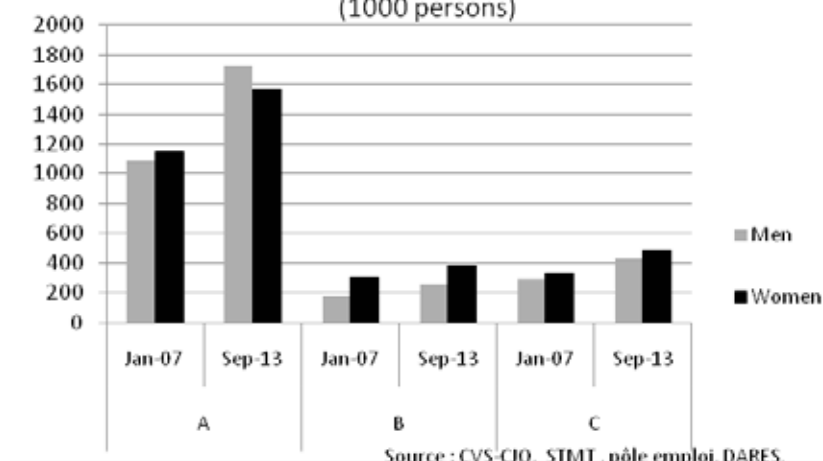
Graph 8 : Distribution of unemployed workers according to their category



Source : CVS-CJO, STMT, pôle emploi, DARES, Sept 2013.

As they are overrepresented among part-timers, more women belong to categories B and C (Graph 9). While in 2012, nearly six unemployed workers out of ten perceived a benefit in category A, it was only the case of one unemployed out of four in Category C. Thus unemployed women perceive less jobless benefits than men, while the effects of female unemployment are less visible and heterogeneous. In light of this situation, governments should ensure that women, in particular less educated ones, are targeted as part of policy, notably through training schemes and job search assistance programs.

Graph 9 : Job Application by category and gender (1000 persons)



Source : CVS-CJO, STMT, pôle emploi, DARES.

## 2. Employment and Public Policies

The analysis of the impact of the economic crisis on women's employment and situation requires that particular attention should be paid to public employment and policies, as the public sector has been one of the main targets of fiscal consolidation policies, notably in response to the sovereign debt crisis.

Although since 2008, austerity measures have affected terms and conditions of employment, in France, several reforms predated the economic turmoil. This applies in particular to a key measure, the replacement of only one out of every two retiring civil servants, implemented from July 2007 within the framework of *General Review of Public Policies* (RGPP). Thus, from a methodological point of view, it is difficult to determine which part of the deficit-debt adjustment is exclusively the consequence of the economic crisis or rather the effect of previous reforms.

Since 2007, adjustment policies have been taking several forms and shapes, from quantitative regulations to structural reforms. Without aiming to give an exhaustive list, the gender-differentiated impact of some of the leading measures will be assessed.

### 2.1 Reforms and budget cutting measures

The concept of public employment deserves to be defined accurately, as it may differ from one country to another, but also between different studies. In a broad sense, public employment includes the state civil service, as well as workers in regional and local authorities and public health care institutions, i.e. nearly 5.5 millions of employees and roughly 21 per cent of total French employment, non permanent staff included<sup>42</sup>.

#### 2.1.1 The reduction of public employment

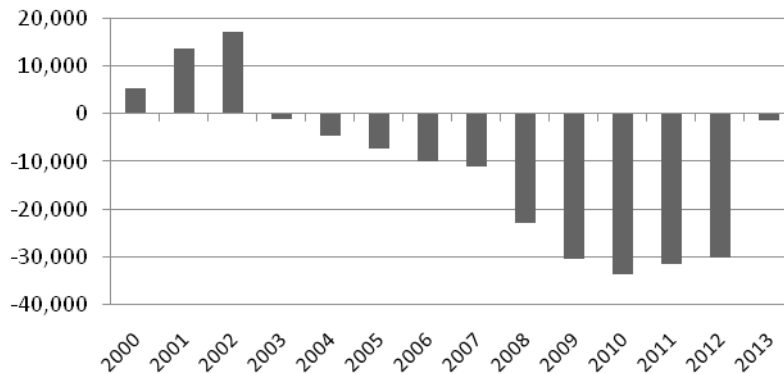
Public service downsizing started before the financial and economic downturn, in the context of the RGPP, launched by the *Fillon* government in July 2007. The aim was to reduce public deficit while enhancing the effectiveness of public action. In this purpose, 374 "modernization decisions" have been made, applicable between 2009 and 2011 and aiming at promoting reorganization of tax administrations and reduction and simplification of administrative procedures. A new rule was also implemented: the non replacement of one out of two retiring civil servants within the State civil service. As a result of these reforms, around 11 000 jobs were cut in 2007, nearly 23 000 in 2008, more than 30 000 between 2009 and 2012 (Graph 10). In theory, half of the reduction in public sector staff should have been used in deficit decrease, and half to improve public services efficiency through the introduction of new management procedures, notably the increase in starting pay for some teachers and nurses, transferred from B to A occupational group, or the introduction in 2008 of a duty and performance-based reward (PFR, *Prime de Fonctions et de Résultats*).

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<sup>42</sup> France. DGAPP, Report on the state of the Public services and wages (2013).



Graph 10 : Annual balance between Public job creations and losses in the State budget (2000-2011)

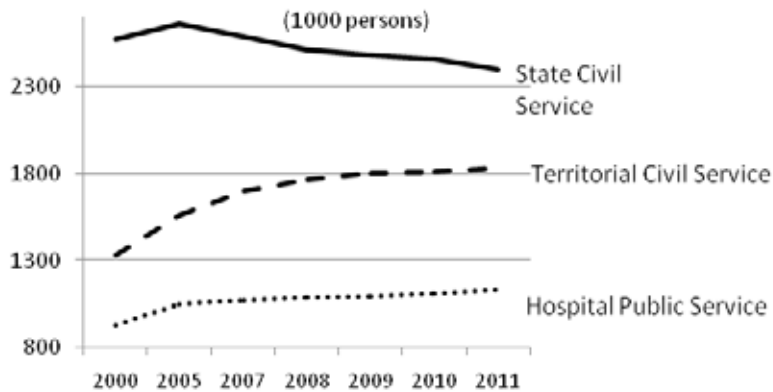


Source : Report on the state of the public service and wages, DGAFP, The French Documentation, 2013.

From year 2006, a change in procedure only allows the comparison with full-time jobs

Showing a decrease limited to the number of State civil servants, global official data only captures a part of job losses (Graph 11). Therefore, in 2009 the French Hospital Federation (FHF) stressed official regret over “the publication of wrong data on hospital staff”<sup>43</sup>, expressing serious concern that these statistical discrepancies would override the downsizing of many hospitals. Thus, under increasing pressure of new methods of financing and progressive transition to procedure-based invoicing system (T2A)<sup>44</sup>, public hospital debt exploded: it tripled from 2003 and 2011. As the wage share represents 70 per cent of hospitals expenditures, it is the main way of reducing costs. According to F. Valletoux, president of the FHF, the lower rates announced by the Ministry in 2013 could mechanically result in the layoff of 35 000 employees<sup>45</sup>.

Graph 11 : Number of government employees by sector (1000 persons)



Source : Report on the state of the public services and wages, DGAPP, 2013.

43 Available at: [HTTP://www.fhf.fr/](http://www.fhf.fr/) (accessed December 4<sup>th</sup> 2013).

44 Notably the 2007 and 2012 Hospital Plans and the 2009 Hospitals, Patients, Health and Territories (HPST) Act.

45 Online. Ibid.

## 2.1.2 Wage Policy

In order to meet budget reduction targets, another way consists of wage moderation: in 2014, for the fourth consecutive year, the index point value, used for calculating civil servants pay, has been frozen.

From 2010, the loss in purchasing power was aggravated by the gradual increase in pension contribution rate, from 7.85 per cent of earnings to 10.55 per cent by 2020, with a view to align the requirements of public and private sectors. The minimum age for retirement rose to 62 by 2018, and the numbers of qualifying years of work required for a full pension was extended.

In addition, some subsidies, personal income tax allowance and State fiscal aids have also been reduced or removed, like the flat-rate contribution system for employees in the human-service sector (2012). Employment adjustment may take a number of different forms, some of a more structural nature, for instance the significant changes over time in the distribution between permanent and temporary jobs.

## 2.1.3 The increase in the number of non-permanent workers

Since the beginning of the 2000s, the proportion of non permanent staff has significantly increased: in the end of 2010, 25 per cent of public-sector employees have temporary or state-aided contracts – i.e. 1.4 million of persons<sup>46</sup>.

## 2.2 The Gender Differentiated impacts of Budget cuts

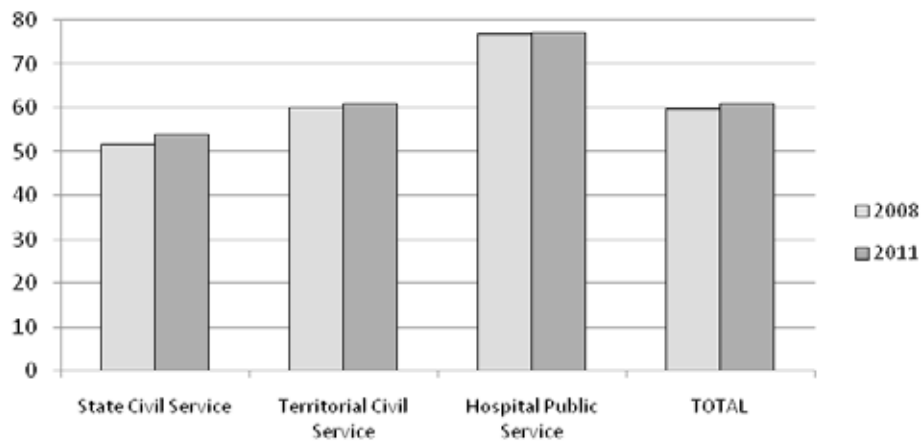
As women are more dependent on social benefits whereas their employment is concentrated in the public sector, austerity plans and cuts in public budgets might have a greater effect on them.

**2.2.1** Even if the reduction of public jobs has primarily affected women in terms of absolute value, their share in public sector employment remained more or less stable since 2008 – it slightly increased from 2007 to 2010, evolving from 60.5 to 61.9 per cent, depending on the body of civil servants considered (Graph 12).

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<sup>46</sup> France. *INSEE Première* (2013). n°1442. Paris.

Graph 12 : Part of women's employment in the public service  
(per cent)



Source: The state of the public sector annual report, DGAFP, 2013

In 2011, the share of women in total recruitment rose to 59.7 per cent<sup>47</sup>, considering that they have, in a competition, a higher rate of success than men, especially for qualified jobs.

The consequences of non-replacement of every one of two retiring civil servants are, for their part, mainly borne by new entrants, i.e. young people and women, whose number also decreases because traditional forms of recruitment face competition from the substantial increase in the use of temporary and outsourced workers. Thus a French overview realized in December 2012 by the National Federation of Nursing Students (FNESI) revealed an emergent and growing pattern: unemployment among newly graduating nurses<sup>48</sup>.

**2.2.2** Decrease in purchasing power induced by the index point freeze affected mostly new entrants' earnings, frequently women and young people, who may experience a loss of income of about 10 per cent in terms of starting wages (Vaughan-Whitehead 2013). However, the freeze of the index point didn't affect the lowest wages, as the public service has set a minimum basis wage indexed to the national minimum wage, which increased by more than 30 per cent during the period, as a consequence of the introduction since 2008 of the "Individual Guarantee of Purchasing Power" (GIPA). On the other hand, the policy of individualizing remuneration, for example through the introduction in 2007 of the duty and performance-based reward (PFR), is more beneficial to managers and senior workers, more likely to be male.

### 2.2.3 The deterioration of working conditions

Budget-cutting impacts have both quantitative and qualitative dimensions, which are likely to affect working conditions and high-priority missions in a negative way. Thus, the rise of temporary labor results in increased segmentation within the public sector. On the one hand, permanent contracts consist of more gender-friendly jobs regarding working time arrangements or rights to leaves from work, enabling workers to balance their working lives with their parental

47 France. DGAFP (2013). The state of the public sector, Annual Report. Paris.

48 Press release, FNESI (2013) February 18<sup>th</sup>.

commitments. In addition, public permanent jobs are entitled to special programs to promote gender equality, for instance regarding selection committee composition<sup>49</sup>. Thus shrinking the size of the public sector and the number of permanent jobs contributes to reduce the benefits for women.

Restructuring and downsizing may also have an adverse impact on working conditions. Such is the case, for example, of a new structure, the Employment Pole (*Pôle Emploi*), where women make up 74 per cent of the staff. Resulting from the merger, in 2007, of two entities, the French National Agency for Employment (ANPE) and the Association for Employment in Industry and Trade (ASSEDIC), many indicators have recently pointed to serious deficiencies in workers well-being: for instance, between 2009 and 2010, short-term sick leaves of Parisian employees have surged by more than 40 per cent. Most importantly, in a context of high increase of unemployment and declining enrolment, three senior managers committed suicide in 2013, while numerous testimonies from workers reveal a high rise in the number of people suffering at the workplace. This deterioration goes hand-in-hand with the worsening of re-employment services.

#### 2.2.4 Reductions in the quality of public services

Employment reduction and increasing dualism may have negative impact on the delivery of public services: usually less paid, contractual employees may also be less trained and skilled than permanent ones and are not always sufficiently numerous to guarantee the proper functioning of Public service.

For example, in terms of Public Safety, about fourteen thousand posts have been abolished since 2008<sup>50</sup>. Given the increase of the population, the issue of security on the ground is being raised, in particular in some sensitive urban districts which would “have been abandoned by the Police”<sup>51</sup>. Against this background, increased overtime is requested<sup>52</sup>, but also the call back to retirees and voluntary constables. Another compensatory strategy consists in outsourcing Security Services to Private agencies. In these circumstances<sup>53</sup>, women are among the first victims of the lack of insecurity, which is not only limited to physical abuse endured, but includes the perception of insecurity. Thus the last “Victimization and Insecurity Perception Survey” (2011) shows that women living in Paris and its suburbs (*Île-de-France*) are twice as likely as men to feel unsafe in public spaces, though they are not statistically at a higher statistical risk of assault<sup>54</sup>. However, much more women than men say that they are too afraid of getting out alone at night, leading a majority of them to self-censor and stay at home more often than men. In addition, statistics do not properly account for the effects of sexual harassment as experienced by women in the street on a daily basis.

Another example of gender differentiated impact of structural adjustment on public services

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49 For instance, the law of March 12nd 2012 provides the implementation of measures designed to increase women's participation to selection committees and among public senior managers.

50 Valls, Manuel (2013) 'We have stopped the bleeding of police and gendarmerie forces', *RTL*, September 8<sup>th</sup>.

51 Politi, Caroline (2012) 'Marseilles: some districts have been abandoned by the Police', *L'Express*, August 31<sup>st</sup>.

52 Between 2008 and 2011, overtime in French police and gendarmerie Work has gone up by 4.5 per cent Source: Public Thematic Report, State Audit Office, March 2013.

53 France. Institute for Urban Planning and Development (IAU), Note rapide (2012). 'The feminine experience of every day insecurity'. n° 608. Paris.

54 58.7 per cent of women compared with 30.7 of men, *Ibid*.

quality relates to the Pensions Act of November 9<sup>th</sup> 2010. With a view to reducing the growing deficit as recommended by the State Audit Office, the law removed some of the previous retirement compensation arrangements targeting working mothers within the public sector. For instance, women having three or more children lost their right to take early retirement. Thus a wave of early retirement occurred prior to the implementation of the new legal framework, in all public sector bodies. Within the territorial civil service, in 2011, a quarter of retirements were claimed by mothers of three children of an average age of 53 years old, compared to 15 per cent one year before<sup>55</sup>. These massive departures also severely disrupted the functioning of some hospital services and also deeply affected the national education sector: in June 2011, “30 000 departures are expected, twice as much as a normal year”<sup>56</sup>. This reform has precipitated the departure of thousands of women from French public sector service, among the most highly qualified, forced to choose between leaving their jobs overnight or losing their retirement rights. In addition, this premature eviction of the labor market may have contributed to the degradation of their financial situation and to the reactivation of their unpaid role in the home.

### **2.2.5 Domestic work as an adjustment variable**

According to Milkman’s analysis of the *Great Depression*, economic contractions would not always contribute to women’s foreclosure from the labor market, as the “reserve army” theory suggests, but it would exacerbate the contradiction between the need for women’s unpaid family work and their increasing participation to paid production. Thus women develop adaptation strategies to cut back family expenses, inter alia, by substituting their own labor for goods and services that previously had been bought, or resorting to unofficial work. Within the context of an economic downturn, this occurs notably when the State reduces its contribution to the financing of the *Care* and children’s Sector.

#### ***The growth of underground activities***

For about two years, the promise of a substantial source of employment in the personal services sector, where nine out of ten employees are women, has dried up. Many associations are facing significant cuts in state and local subsidies and are on the verge of closing down. Thus employment in personal care and service occupations has decreased by 11 per cent between 2010 and 2012. The new regulation which came into effect on January, 2013, and in particular the removal of the possibility of declaring employees on the basis of gross minimum wages, increased pressure on the sector: the total number of paid hours has been reduced by 10 per cent in 2012 (Wyman 2013), reflecting the rise in illegal work, principally within educational support services.

#### ***The decline in preschool education***

Even if the school enrolment rate of 2-year-olds has began to decrease at the beginning of the 2000s, well in advance of the economic slowdown, the downward trend has accelerated

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55 Available at: [HTTP://www.lagazettedescommunes.com](http://www.lagazettedescommunes.com) (accessed December 9<sup>th</sup> 2013).

56 (2011) *Le Monde*, June 22<sup>nd</sup>.

since 2008 (Table 11): the number of children fell from 218 000 in 2000 to 72 000 in 2011. The consequences of the decline in preschool education are emblematic of the close link between professional and domestic spheres, especially for women, who do most of the domestic work<sup>57</sup>. In this regard, preschool helps mothers to reconcile work and family responsibilities (Moschion 2012). Preschool would also improve the academic performance of children living in underprivileged areas (Ben Ali 2012). Thus since 2001, and even more obviously from 2008, preschool education has been used as an adjustment variable – its jobs were the first to be removed – regardless of the consequences such a policy might have on women.

Table 11 : Enrolment rate in preschools (for 2 to 3 year olds)

Years	Per cent	Years	Per cent
2000	34.5	2006	22.9
2001	34.0	2007	20.9
2002	31.7	2008	18.1
2003	29.2	2009	15.2
2004	25.8	2010	13.6
2005	24.5	2011	11.6

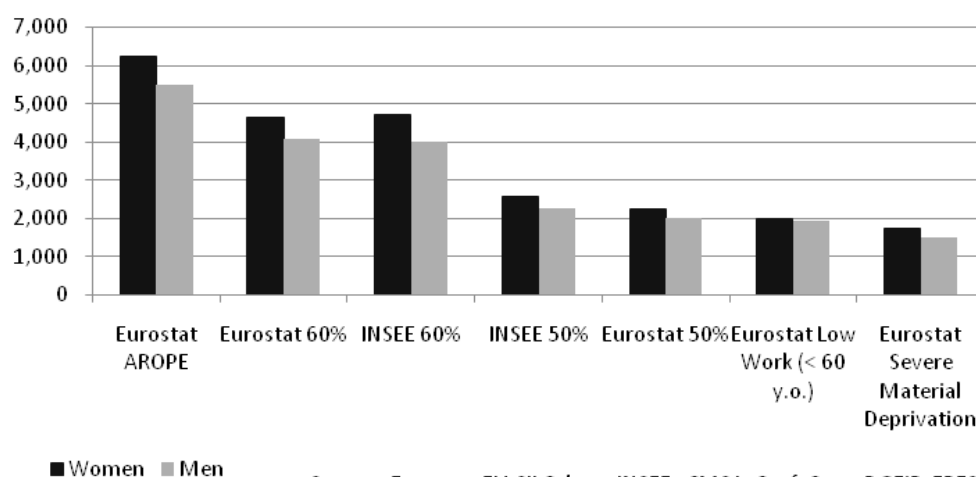
### 3. Women's poverty on the rise: the different indicators

One of the primary aims of *Horizon 2020*, the EU's growth strategy, is to lift at least 20 million people out of the risk of poverty or social exclusion by 2020. In order to reflect the multidimensional dimensions of poverty, three indicators are used by Eurostat to monitor progress towards this target. AROPE (3-1) designates the share of the population living with at least one of these three conditions: at-risk-of-poverty rate (3-1-1), severe material deprivation (3-1-2), very low work intensity (3-1-3).

According to the indicator used, the count of the number of poor people differs considerably. For instance, depending on the Eurostat definition, in 2012, the at-risk-of-poverty rate rises to 14.6 per cent of women and 13.6 per cent of men. However, this assessment is based on the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILK) data, which has the benefit of allowing a straightforward comparison between countries. The INSEE poverty assessment differs slightly, as the Institute utilizes the *Fiscal and Social Income Survey* (ERFS) – while a lower threshold of 50 per cent of median income was used to measure poverty until 2008: the adoption of the European standard (60 per cent) has determined a great increase in the number of the poor (Graph 13).

<sup>57</sup> 64 per cent on average, i.e. 33 per cent of global GDP in 2010. INSEE Première (2012) n°1423.

Graph 13: Number of Poor according to different indicators  
(1000 persons, 2011-12)



However, whichever tool we choose, women's poverty rate is higher than men's (graph 14).

The structure of the population experiencing poverty has been changing over the last decade (3-2): vulnerability increased among families – mainly single-parents women-led (3-2-1) – younger than 25 (3-2-2) and women over 75 years of age (3-2-3). The economic downturn has also made matters worse for people, especially women, members of ethnic minorities (3-2-4). Amongst the faces of poverty, two main dimensions – housing (3-3) and health (3-4)-will be further explored.

### 3.1 People at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion (AROPE)

#### 3.1.1 The at-risk-of-poverty rate

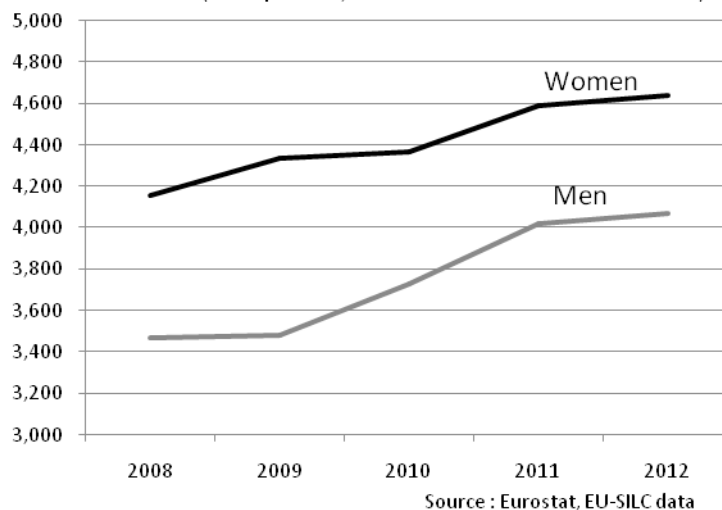
Although it is multidimensional, a monetary concept is generally adopted by economists in measuring poverty. In the case of the member states of the European Union, the poverty line is set at 60 per cent of median equivalised income after social transfers. In this sense, the poor are those with an income below this threshold<sup>58</sup>, that is approximately 8.7 million people and 14 per cent of the population earning less than EUR 977 per month in 2012, among which 4.6 millions are women<sup>59</sup>.

In France, poverty declined between 1970 and the mid 1990s and then remained stable until 2000. Current financial and economic crisis marks a turning point in the history of poverty post-1960: over a period of only three years, from 2009 to 2012, the number of poor increased by nearly 900 000 persons, while the poverty gender gap remained relatively steady (Graph 14).

<sup>58</sup> The rate shows the percentage of the population whose income is below the threshold for the current year but also at least two of the preceding three years, and requires a longitudinal instrument.

<sup>59</sup> Eurostat, EU-SILC data.

Graph 14: Evolution of the at risk-of poverty rate, by gender  
(1000 persons, threshold at 60% of median income)



### 3.1.2 People with severe material deprivation

Severe material deprivation is defined as the inability to pay for at least four of a list of nine items<sup>60</sup>. In 2012, nearly 3 300 000 persons or 5.3 per cent of the population and 5.5 per cent of women were facing severe material deprivation, a figure which seems to be more or less in the same state as it was in 2008.

### 3.1.3 Households with low work intensity

The extent of atypical forms of employment, in particular the growth in part-time employment has led to a growing phenomenon: the working poor. Thus, while access to a job was traditionally considered as a key route out of poverty, in 2012, around four million people, about half of whom are women, live in a household having a work intensity lower than a threshold set at 0.20<sup>61</sup>. Since 2008, the number of working poor has remained relatively stable. It will be seen below that seniors, in particular women over 55 years, are particularly affected by this form of poverty.

## 3.2 Different categories of Poor and at-risk populations

Since 2008, the increase in poverty reflects deteriorating labor-market conditions and rising unemployment. Though, even if the poverty rate of unemployed workers increased sharply in 2009, its contribution has slowed in 2010, in favor of child poverty growth<sup>62</sup> and more generally poverty of inactive people, in particular among single-parent families, headed in most cases by women. Thus the vulnerability to the current economic crisis is mediated by different factors, some of which are linked to socio-demographic variables.

### 3.2.1 Single-parent families

<sup>60</sup> For example, to pay the rent, to face unexpected expenses, to eat meat or proteins regularly, to owe a car, to go on holiday.

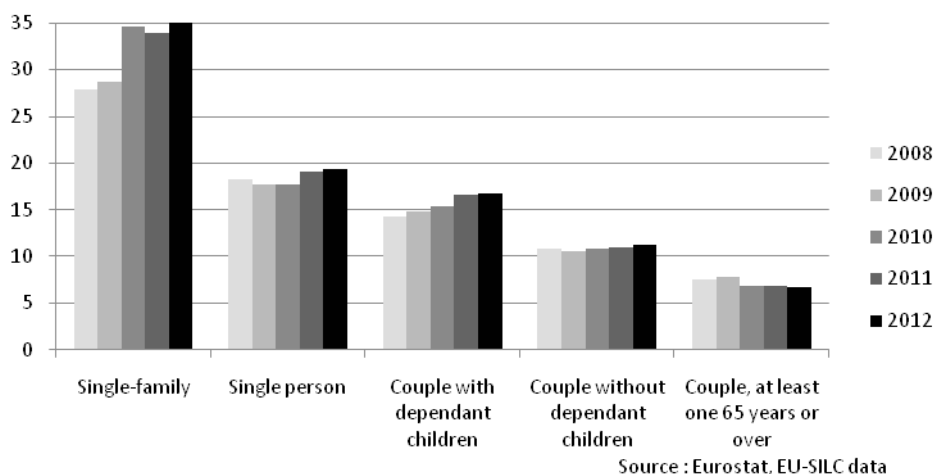
<sup>61</sup> Eurostat, EU-SILK Data (under sixty).

<sup>62</sup> 63 per cent of the poverty increase, according to INSEE, in Minister of Health & Social Affairs (2012).



From a socio-demographic point of view, a major evolution has been taking place since the 1980s: the growing number of single-parent families, which expanded from 1 million in 1982 to 2.2 million in 2010<sup>63</sup>. This increase reflects successive phenomena such as the sharp fall of the proportion of widowed head of household – more than one family out of two in the 1960s, less than 9 per cent nowadays – which have gradually been replaced by divorced head of household – 44 per cent in 1999 – and finally by parents – mostly mothers – of children born outside of marriage. Thus, as a result of the unequal share of housework and of gender segregation on the labor market, and because women are more likely to be under-employed, separation or divorce causes the impoverishment of the majority of them. In consequence, as an example, single-father families own their home nearly twice as often as single-mother ones, while 38 per cent of these live in low-rent housing, compared to 24 per cent of men<sup>64</sup>. In this way, the current economic crisis has more severely affected single-parent households than couples – 85 per cent of single-parent families are headed by women<sup>65</sup> (Graph 15).

Graph 15 : Evolution of the a-risk-at-poverty rate, by type of household (per cent, threshold at 60 per cent of median income)



However, by absolute numbers, the larger families still make up more than 3 million of the poor<sup>66</sup>, although their share has tended to tail off. Vulnerability to poverty also varies between areas of residence, where two categories are particularly exposed: isolated communities and “Sensitive Urban Areas” (ZUS). This is due to a higher exposure to unemployment, and also to the socio-demographic structure of the poorest populations – for example, Corsica, Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur and Languedoc-Roussillon are the three regions where single-parent families predominate<sup>67</sup>.

According to the annual report made by the French branch of the Catholic Charity Caritas, the *Secours Catholique*, poverty has “rooted”, evolving from a cyclical to a structural dimension: before the current downturn, it was associated with life crisis events, such as a loss of employment, a couple’s separation or a health issue. Nowadays, in most cases, poverty results from the chronic shortage of resources of families, regarding to their growing expenses. Women’s poverty follows the same path: in 2012, single-mother families, whose numbers have

63 INSEE, Census data 1982 and 2010.

64 INSEE, Census data from 2004 to 2007.

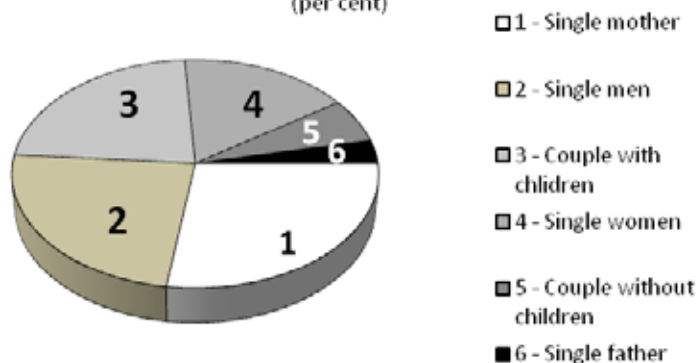
65 France. *INSEE Première* (2008), n° 1195. Paris.

66 INSEE-DGFIP-Cnaf-Cnav-CCMSA, Fiscal and Social Income Survey, 2011, threshold at 60% of median income.

67 INSEE, Census Data.

been continuously increasing for ten years, and even more since 2009, represented the main share of households welcomed by the association and more than 27 per cent of all situations encountered (Graph 16).

Graph 16 : Distribution of types of households welcomed by the *Secours Catholique* (per cent)



Source : Welcoming statistics 2012

Number of these women have dropped out of the labor market with a view to raising their children, and were unable to find another job later. Therefore, since 2001, the association noted the significant decrease of the share of single mothers in paid work, despite a recent law<sup>68</sup> stating that day nurseries should allocate a quota of places for children of families living on benefit, while the share of single mothers in uncompensated unemployment rose from 16 to 28 per cent<sup>69</sup>. The economic slowdown led to a feminization of poverty – in 2012, 56 per cent of the cases referring to adults encountered by the *Secours Catholique* concerned women.

The deterioration in their material situation led a growing number of women to pessimistic forecasts. According to a survey realized by the *Ipsos* Social Research Institute for the *Secours Populaire*<sup>70</sup>, one of the main French non-profit organizations fighting poverty and exclusion, the leading feeling experienced by 38 per cent of the French, but 44 per cent of women and 60 per cent of single-mothers, is that of anxiety about the future, while 74 per cent of French – but 95 of single-mothers declare feeling “very worried or worried” about their expected standard of living during retirement.

### 3.2.2 Young people

Poverty rate of people under 18 years of age – children and youth – increased sharply in 2010. Thus, in 2009 and 2010, two new poor out of three are under 18 years of age (Health & Social Affairs 2012). This concerns, first of all, the increase of single-parent families: poor children live in poor families.

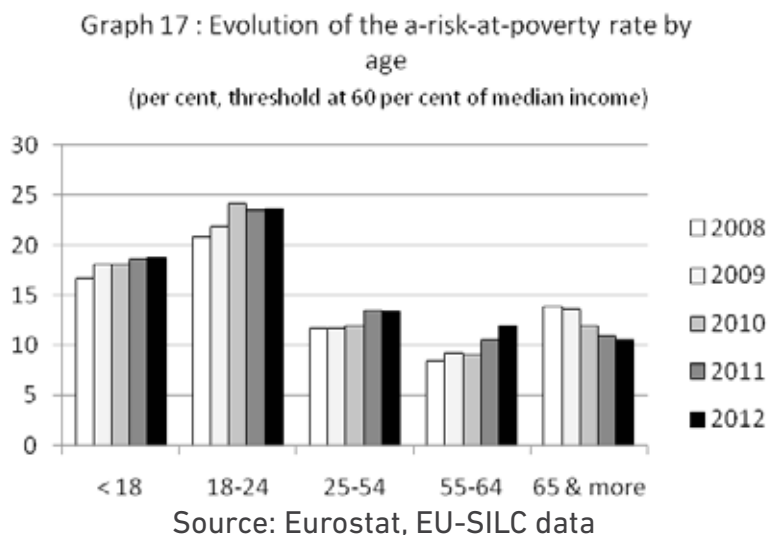
The poverty rate of the 18-24 age group has also risen since 2008 (Graph 17) and their standard of living is the lowest of all adults. This is related to different factors: a low employment

68 Law n° 2006-339 of March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2006.

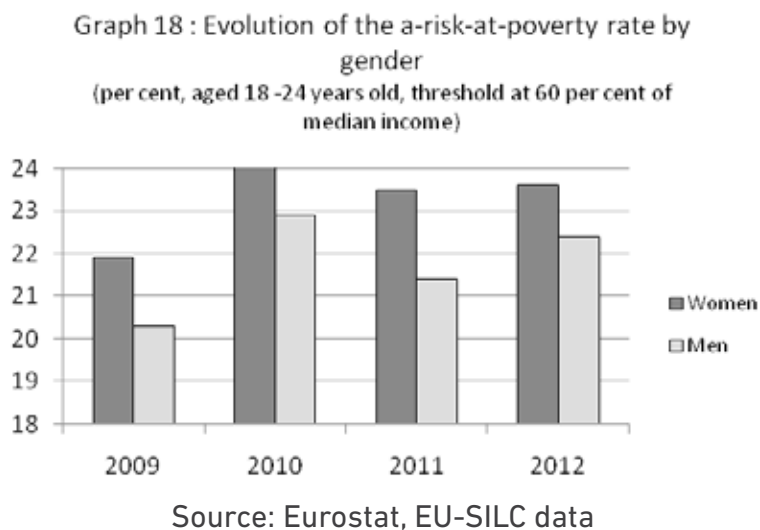
69 Ibid.

70 September 5<sup>th</sup> 2013.

rate among students<sup>71</sup>, integration difficulties affecting the less qualified, and a high risk of unemployment, while compensatory schemes remain insufficient. Furthermore, the quality of young people jobs is weak: for example, in 2010, more than one third of 15-29-year-olds in employment were in precarious or contingent jobs, compared to 12 per cent of all employees (Cereq 2011).



In 2012, among the 1.2 million people aged 18-24 at-risk-of-poverty, 23.6 per cent were women, compared to 22.4 of men (Graph 18).



With the group of people aged 75 years and over, the 18-24 year age group is one of the two groups where the gender gap is the highest. First, this can be explained by a structural effect: on average, girls leave their parent's home before boys : thus, between 18-21 years of age, one in four women no longer lives with her parents, compared to only one men out of ten<sup>72</sup>. However, the poverty gap is not only due to a gender differentiated transition to adulthood. The *Youth Observatory*<sup>73</sup> points out the fact that about a quarter of unskilled young people in the

71 According to the Student Living Conditions Survey conducted by the *Observatory on Student Life* (2013), only 46 per cent of students are in gainful employment during the academic year.

72 France. *INSEE Première* (2007), n° 1156. Paris. This is due, in part, by the fact that they are more likely to live earlier as a couple and have children, but not only : amongst people aged 26-29 in employment, 91 per cent of women and 79 per cent of men have left their parent's home.

73 Available at: [HTTP://www.injep.fr](http://www.injep.fr) (accessed 12 January 2014).

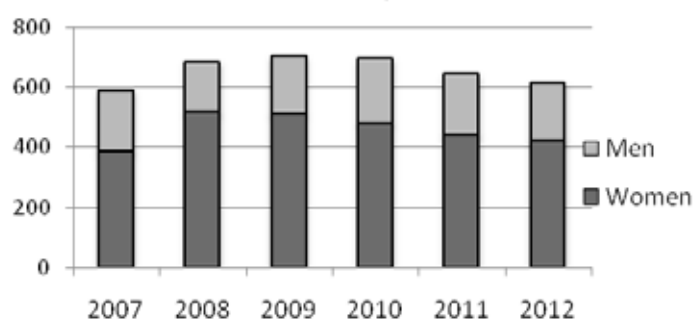
16-25 age group are out of school and inactive. The gender gap increased amongst the 20-24, and above all between 25 and 29 years: 15 per cent of men are neither in employment nor in education or training, compared to 24 per cent of women, who are also more likely to quit their job (INJEP 2012).

### 3.2.3 Senior women

Overall, in France, the poverty rate decreases with age (Graph 17), and the situation of adults of 65 years of age and above has been improving through the development of solidarity mechanisms within pension systems. Indeed, since 2007, the minimum old-age pension has been revalued several times as part of the recovery plan of 25 per cent in five years<sup>74</sup>. Furthermore, women of the 65-74 age group have been through less discontinuous career paths than women over 75 years of age. Thus seniors are not a homogeneous group regarding their experience of poverty.

The situation of women 75 and over worsened between 2007 and 2009, and notwithstanding small improvements, they are part of the age span with the gender gap the most significant in terms of poverty (Graph 19).

Graph 19 : Evolution of the number of persons at-risk-at-poverty by gender  
(1000 persons, aged 75 or over, threshold at 60 per cent of median income)



Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC data

Indeed, aging is a gendered process deepening inequalities and widening the poverty gap between women and men. Primarily this has to do with socio-demographic factors: the superior longevity of women<sup>75</sup> increases their exposure to widowhood, whereas men are more likely to pair off again after divorce or widowhood. Thus, over age 65, living in a relationship is a masculine privilege, and in the age group over 85, one man out of two lives in a relationship, compared to only 9 per cent of women (INSEE References 2005). In addition, above all, many women from these generations have accumulated low pension credits, as a result of incomplete careers. Therefore, in 2012, the two-thirds of the recipients of the solidarity allowance for the elderly (ASPA), designed to guarantee a minimum standard of living - close to the poverty threshold - are senior women (DPS 2013). In this respect, the economic downturn has significantly contributed to increase the poverty rate, rising from 14.2 per cent in 2008 to 17.1 per cent in 2010 among the elderly living within sensitive urban zones (Min. of Health & Social Affairs 2012:62).

<sup>74</sup> Government Report on Poverty in France, Op. cit.

<sup>75</sup> In 2012, the life expectancy at birth for women was estimated to be 84.9 and 78.5 for men, according to INSEE, Demographic balance and Demographic situation.

### 3.2.4 The situation of the minority ethnic communities

According to the last *Government Report on Poverty in France*, “the poverty rate of immigrants has grown to 40.3 per cent in 2010, that is about 29 points higher than the rest of the population” (Ibid. 2012:10). This refers primarily to structural factors – on average, immigrants are older, less educated and tend to be more often employed in lower skilled and paid occupations, while they live in larger households than non-immigrants. Due to a precarious position and an increased exposure to the risk of unemployment, the economic downturn has worsened their situation regarding poverty. Before examining this aspect of the matter, a methodological precision is required about “who” is an immigrant statistically, notably for the French National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE), which definition is more restrictive than Eurostat’s: an immigrant is a foreign-born from foreign parents person living in France, representing 8 per cent of the French population – 11 per cent for Eurostat. The demographic profile of immigrants has changed over the last forty years: more than half of them are women, compared to 44 per cent in 1968<sup>76</sup>. However, the criteria used to determine whether a person is statistically an immigrant or not are open to different interpretations: the notions of foreign and immigrant are separate issues, and the topic of discriminations suffered by the members of the “second generation” with migrant backgrounds, the majority of whom have French nationality, is also difficult to take into account statistically. Indeed, hostile for a long time to the idea of collecting “ethnic” data, France finally authorized it in 2010, but only under certain restrictive scientific conditions. In addition, there is a social structural effect as more than half of the 4.5 millions of persons living in the 751 ZUS and more than 60 per cent of those in the Paris region, are either immigrants or descendant of immigrants, Maghrebians being the most numerous (ONZUS 2012 :20). Thus the majority of immigrants occupy low-paid and unskilled employee positions – concerning one third of immigrants, compared to one fifth of French-born, and in particular in the personal services sector (Ministère de l’intérieur 2013). It must also be pointed out a very high gender division of immigrant employment.

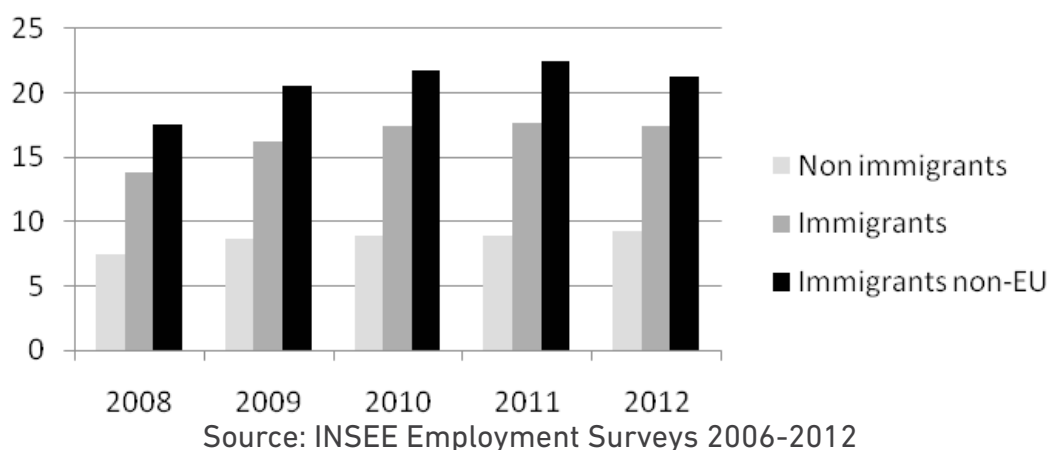
The labor force participation rate among immigrant women is lower than that of French-born women (66 per cent), especially non-EU immigrant women (54 per cent), whereas conversely the non-EU immigrant men’s rate is higher than that of all men (Centre d’analyse stratégique 2012). However, over the long term, one may observe a slow but continuous improving integration of the immigrant women on the labor market, which refers to ageing population, and the need for labor in sectors such as services to individuals. The economic crisis has contributed to a slight fall in the participation of immigrant women, which may express a discouraged-worker effect leading many women to withdraw from the labor force or to move towards informal employment.

In the same direction, the unemployment rate of non-EU immigrant women, already significantly higher than that of French-born women, increased from 20.5 to 22.5 per cent between 2009 and 2011 (Graph 20).

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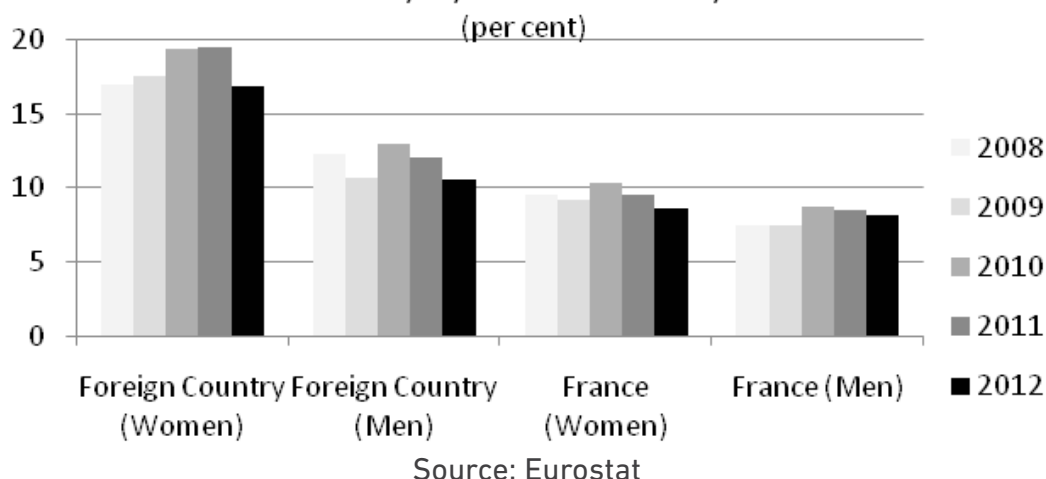
76 France. INSEE Références (2012), Fiches thématiques : Population immigrée

Graph 20 : Women's Unemployment rate by ethnic status  
(per cent)



Thus statistical data reveals the negative impact of the economic recession on the 'origin gap' associated with the 'gender gap', as migrant women suffer the most from rising unemployment and are at greater risk of poverty and social exclusion, notably among poor workers (Graph 21).

Graph 21 : People living in households with very low work intensity by sex and country of birth  
(per cent)



Periods of recession and economic uncertainty fuel discriminations, notably because fight against discriminations is rarely considered as a priority by the governments, which contributes to the spread of xenophobic attitudes among the population. This is inter alia the case of the emergence of the rumor of the « 9-3 », in reference to the department of Seine-St-Denis, in North-East Paris, where *Saint-Denis*, the town which holds the very dubious record of the highest rate of violence in France and in Europe, is located. The rumor, which was born in 2010, has already been disseminated in a dozen of small French cities such as Poitiers, Limoges or Tulle. It asserts that financial agreements have been made between the mayors of these towns and the St-Denis department, about the reception of immigrants in municipal premises: "Either West Africans, either Romas, either Bulgars"<sup>77</sup>. Several mayors have been forced to take the issue before the courts, in order to combat false accusations.

<sup>77</sup> (2013) *Le Monde*, October 25<sup>th</sup>. Paris.

In addition, by worsening women's poverty in France but also in the entire world, the economic recession has contributed to increasing international migration flows, notably for women, as voluntary associations point out. Thus the 2012 *Secours Catholique* Caritas France report noted that their migrant share increased from 20 to 33 per cent between 2000 and 2011, given that foreigners represent 6 per cent of French global population (INSEE, Census data) – while the three top source countries or zones – were Sub-Saharan Africa, Maghreb and East Europe. In the same time, France is toughening up its laws relating to immigration: for example, the Legislative Decree of September 6<sup>th</sup> 2011 establishes a new obligation for foreign students in order to obtain a visa or a residency permit; they must be able to provide evidence of an annual income of at least EUR 7680, compared to only EUR 5400 in 2010. Thus there has been a substantial growth of the number of illegal immigrants, for instance welcomed by *Secours Catholique*, from 6.5 per cent in 2003 to 12 per cent in 2012. Furthermore, they are akin to the poorest households, as their average income is as low as € 290 per month. In addition, due to their irregular status, many immigrant women are being deprived of their fundamental rights, including access to justice. Conducted by *The Cimade*, one of the leading French associations willing to help undocumented migrants, a survey of 75 police stations faced with undocumented women wishing to lodge a complaint of spousal abuse, revealed that 38 per cent would in the first place interrogate them about their illegal status. In practice, a majority of women in this situation are reluctant to report out of fear<sup>78</sup>.

Among the manifestations of poverty is limited access to housing and to health care. Thus, rising unemployment and poverty associated with the current economic downturn have contributed to increased number of homeless and poorly-housed people, including many women, heads of households or victims of domestic violence.

### 3.3 Issues of housing and homelessness

Despite the law n° 2007-290, which established an enforceable right to a decent housing, at least 10 million people (Foundation Abbé Pierre 2013) would be poorly housed or homeless in France, compared to 9 million in 2008. This refers back to the doubling up of the average real estate price since 2000, while since the 1980s the annual average increase in rent has been around 3.6 per cent<sup>79</sup>. These evolutions take place in a context of growing demand for housing, due to an ageing population and an increasing fragility of families. This results in an amplified sensitivity of housing to poverty and insecurity.

Among the most vulnerable persons in terms of housing are women. Indeed, other things being equal, households with numerous consumption units are at higher risk of not paying rent – hence women, notably headed households, are on the front lines (CNIS 2011). According to the 13<sup>th</sup> report of the Foundation *Abbé Pierre*, part of *Emmaüs* Network, whose mission is to help poor and homeless people, in 2013, the French housing situation and the housing deficit continued to be negatively impacted by the economic and social crisis which followed the financial crisis of 2007. The situation is compounded by a growing gap between the updating of the benefit scale, and the actual housing expenditures (2013:119). Therefore the procedures related to rental eviction have increased by 20 per cent between 2007 and 2011 – when 12 759 expulsions by the police force were registered (Ibid: 89). The growing activity of the

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78 K. Husson, president of Cimade Île-de-France (2010), 'Undocumented Women Strategies to end impunity'. Brussels: PIWA Workshop.

79 Available at: [HTTP://www.anil.org/publications-et-etudes/etudes-et-eclairages/etudes-et-eclairages-2013/encadrement-des-loyers-leffet-du-decret-du-20-juillet-2012/](http://www.anil.org/publications-et-etudes/etudes-et-eclairages/etudes-et-eclairages-2013/encadrement-des-loyers-leffet-du-decret-du-20-juillet-2012/) (accessed 16 January 2013).

Foundation *Abbé Pierre Solidarity Boutiques* network, day shelters for homeless, constitutes another indicator of the rising housing needs. In 2012, a consequent increase of specific populations as women alone with children, destitute street young people under 25, and illegal immigrants, could be observed (Ibid: 18). For instance, in Paris, the share of families among social emergency services increased by 400 per cent, while the average length of stay grew from 18 to 130 days (Ibid: 138).

It was nevertheless in the context of a growing need for emergency shelters that budget outlays for the program 177, aimed at preventing exclusion of vulnerable people, were reduced. In fact, since 2009, the Secretary of State for housing has attempted to rebuild the assistance scheme by stressing the principle of a more integrated consideration of both housing and homelessness. Consequently, between 2010 and 2012, state financial grants designed to support emergency overnight shelter decreased by 14.4 per cent<sup>80</sup>. Feeling that the situation had become impractical, the president and founder of the SAMU Social<sup>81</sup>, Xavier Emmanuelli, resigned in July 2011.

In addition, the global economic crisis has encouraged the growth of migration flows and request of emergency shelters. Housing accommodations intended for asylum seekers being saturated, they carried over to the SAMU Social, while its budget was cut by more than EUR 40 million between 2010 and 2011. Furthermore, for the first time, the number of families exceeded those of individuals: for instance, in 2010, in Paris, homeless families were estimated at about 3700 – meaning around 11 200 persons – of whom 55 per cent single-parented, and most of which were women-headed<sup>82</sup>. Moreover, while big accommodations would be needed, in the best case they will get hotel nights, subject to availability. Thus the annual report of the “1-1-5” (FNARS 2012), the 24-hour management emergency telephone number of SAMU Social<sup>83</sup> reveals the growing lack of emergency accommodation: in 2012, for saturation reasons, about 64 per cent of requests did not provide any emergency housing, compared to 40 per cent in 2010 (FNARS 2012:5). The report also insists on the fact that emergency overnight shelter is mainly designed to address men’s particular needs – some shelters even refusing to accept women (Ibid: 15).

However, according to INSEE, in 2010, women account for about 40 per cent of homeless persons, totaling 141 500 – up 50 per cent from 2001 – half of whom are of foreign citizenship<sup>84</sup>. About a quarter of homeless people have a regular “small job”. Nevertheless, by definition, homelessness makes it difficult to account as estimates vary greatly from one study to another. The anthropologist Patrick Declerck (2005) widens the invisibility of homeless people to a willful blindness: they would symbolize the negative reflection and embody the fear of what happens when we do not stay on track.

The invisibility of women’s homelessness is even more acute, as the street can be viewed as an extension of global violence and a place of physical or sexual abuse. Thus, with a view to protect themselves from aggressions, women sought out places which offer the most invisibility. Trying to erase every sign of femininity to avoid becoming a prey, women launch a

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80 Available at: [HTTP://www.senat.fr/commission/fin/pjlf2012/np/np31/np312.html](http://www.senat.fr/commission/fin/pjlf2012/np/np31/np312.html)<http://www.senat.fr/commission/fin/pjlf2012/np/np31/np312.html> (accessed 18 January 2014).

81 The SAMU Social is an emergency service whose purpose is to provide care and medical aid to homeless people.

82 (2011) *La Croix*, July 26<sup>th</sup>. Paris.

83 The SAMU Social, created in Paris in 1993 by the medical doctor Xavier Emmanuelli, is an emergency service whose purpose is to provide care and medical aid to homeless people.

84 FRANCE. INSEE Première (2013), ‘Accommodation of homeless people in 2012’. n°1455. Paris.



whole series of strategies to hide themselves: “their day is spent in waiting areas of railway stations. But you must know that these places are open until 3 a.m. So, as from this moment, they seek refuge in hospitals waiting rooms. And in the morning, they leave. It means that they spend sleepless nights. During the day, they try to scrape a few hours of sleep by moving into secure places, near police stations”<sup>85</sup>.

Among the diverse pathways leading to homelessness, domestic violence against women plays a central role. That is why the law n° 2010-769 of July 9<sup>th</sup> 2010 is intended to improve the situation of victims in terms of housing, at two different levels. On one hand, it authorizes the judge to issue a protection order, which, in most cases, gives the enjoyment of conjugal accommodation to the person who is not the perpetrator. On another hand (Article 19), it provides specific measures of relocation in social housing for victims of domestic violence.

### 3.4 Health

The gender health effects of the current economic crisis are especially difficult to determine because health is a special good. First, being in good health has also collective repercussions, as health is a public good. On another hand, the ultimate consumer is not the one who pays directly the cost of the medical service. Its funding flows through intermediate bodies and public administrations: France is one of the OECD countries where the portion of health costs covered by the community is the highest (OECD 2013). Moreover, there is not yet enough health data available, as the economic crisis health impact is not confined to the short term. In addition, statistical data is rarely gender-disaggregated. Crisis impact on health may follow different paths: three main linkages will be addressed.

#### 3.4.1 The health impact of economic recession

The most direct link between the present recession and health lies in the increased poverty rate associated to the economic downturn, which has a restraining impact on healthcare spending. The age group most affected concerning access to health care is the 15-24 year old – nearly one in four women of this group is living below the poverty threshold – while 19 per cent of students lack of complementary health coverage, compared to 6 per cent for the general population (LMDE 2012).

The decrease in purchasing power takes place under conditions of growing constraints on public budgets, which determine the implementation of cutting measures, and lead to an increased average remaining amount to be paid by the patient. Indeed, since 2009, several measures have been implemented in order to reduce public medical spending, for example, the introduction of a flat-rate contribution of EUR 1 at every consultation or medical analysis<sup>86</sup>, the modulation of reimbursement in accordance with respect for a “care pathway”, the repayment cuts and personal contributions to medicine costs. During the government *Fillon*, another way of reducing state health costs was to vote the law n° 2011-1977, which decreed that sickness benefits were not due for the first day of a sick leave in the public service. This law was abolished by the government *Ayrault* with effect from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2014. All of these measures have resulted in a noticeable increase in the share health expenditure borne by households,

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85 (2013) *Libération*. A. Lecordier, president of the Foundation Lecordier, aiming to help homelessness women. 25 December. Paris.

86 The amount of the compulsory excess is, however, limited to EUR 50 a year (January 2014).

in particular the poorest: at a moment when health needs increase because of poverty, the policies of tax consolidation have an added impact on population health (Case Study n°1).

In addition, the economic crisis and its harmful consequences as unemployment, under-employment and deterioration of working conditions, which particularly affect women, have a direct impact on physical and mental health. Thus relationships have been documented between mental health, increase in suicide rates, and unemployment: working-age men are the most concerned by this phenomenon. Interactions have also been highlighted between rising poverty and increase in risky behaviors, as regards drinking and smoking habits (CESE, 2013:7). However, these impacts are difficult to quantify rapidly, and more time is needed to collect and produce relevant data. As data on violence-at-work against women also remains very poor, a specific study on this type of violence has been launched under the inter-ministerial plan 2011-2013 to combat violence against women (Ibid:43).

In the professional sphere, the rising incidence of women's precariousness plays a part in creating a sense of insecurity that may lead to a deterioration of their health – that in turn generates increased insecurity. Thus 65 per cent of women believe themselves to be in good health, compared to 71 per cent of men (Ibid: 34). For instance, the 2010 SUMER<sup>87</sup> survey has shown that women had a risk of exposure 22 percentage points higher than for men to musculoskeletal disorders, particularly among domestic workers (Ibid:41), while between 2002 and 2010, their frequency rate of work-related injuries increased by 40 per cent, compared to 24 per cent for men. Likewise, in 2010, for the first time in ten years, occupational diseases involved more often women than men, while their rate of increase rose steadily between 2009 and 2010 (ANACT 2012). Beyond the impact of the current economic crisis, it has also been shown that in many areas, tools and workstations had been designed on the basis of masculine anthropometric data, creating an increased burden for women (CESE 2013:41). The erosion of working conditions, notably with regard to the growth of women's night work, also negatively affects their health: in 2012, a study carried out by INSERM, the French Institute for Health and Medical Research, highlighted an increased risk of breast cancer of about 30 per cent among night working women. On the whole, women are much more affected than men by anxiety (14 compared to 7 per cent) and twice as much as men regarding depressive disorders (CESE 2013:37). Thus women on fixed-term or atypical employment contracts or subjected to involuntary part-time work would tend to face more depressive disorders than men in the same situation (INVS 2010).

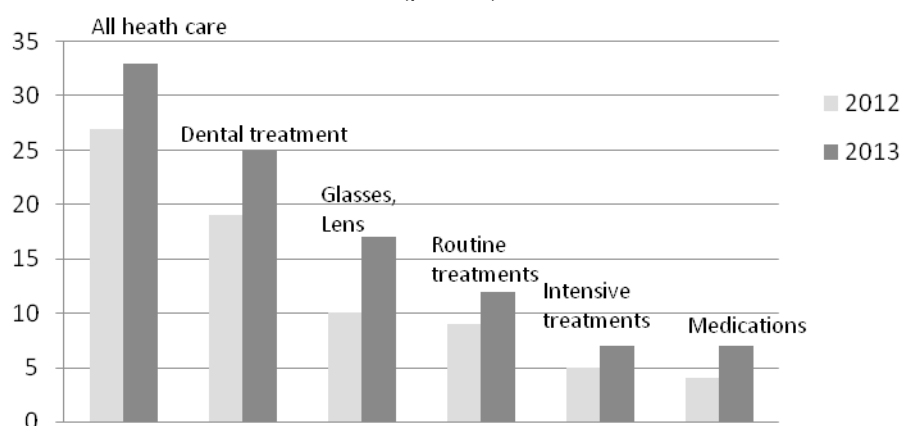
### 3.4.2 The effects of the rising costs of health care

At least three key implications can be drawn from the increase in the costs of medical care linked with the economic crisis. First, different strategies are implemented by the population with a view to offsetting the rising cost. The most common lies in healthcare renouncement, which has significantly increased between 2008, when 18.5 per cent of women and 12.3 per cent of men reported having not sought health care for financial reasons (CESE 2013:35), and 2013 – when 39 per cent report of cancellation of a treatment on account of financial difficulties, most of whom are women (CSA 2013). Dental treatments are the most often cancelled (Graph 22).

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<sup>87</sup> SUMER Survey (Medical monitoring of exposure to occupational risks).

Graph 22 : The cancellation of treatments by type of care (per cent)



Source : Health & Society Barometer - Europ Assistance / CSA

A second strategy consists in searching low cost fares, for instance moving towards online shopping, or through medical tourism: imports of health care services reached 20 per cent of health expenditure in 2011, compared to 14 per cent in 2009 (OECD 2013). The latter option lies in borrowing money. In Paris, since 2010, the Municipal Credit Bank launched micro-loans with fast reimbursements. According to an active volunteer, customers are predominantly women, alone with children, not engaged in active employment<sup>88</sup>. As a result of the growing number of people foregoing medical treatment for financial reasons, in 2013, a new maximum loan health of EUR 3000 has been implemented by the bank, not subject to any condition of income, at a fixed interest rate of 2.95 per cent, and repayable over a period varying from 6 to 36 months<sup>89</sup>.

As the higher share of private health expenditure affects primarily the poor, it results in the rise of health inequities. The most vulnerable people are foreigners or ethnic minorities. According to *Médecins du Monde*, a voluntary health charity, who welcomed more than 30 000 persons in 2012, among pregnant women, 9 per cent are homeless and 50 per cent with late prenatal care, while 70 per cent require urgent care (2013).

The growing cost of health care might also have negative consequences on the country's general state of health. Thus in the last report of the Court of Auditors (2012), has been highlighted the negative French situation regarding child mortality, which increased slightly between 2008 and 2009, from 3.6 to 3.7 deaths (for 1000 live births)<sup>90</sup>, and especially mortality during the first week of life – which rose from 1.6 in 2005 to 1.8 in 2009, while mortality during the first month of life augmented from 2.5 to 2.6 deaths for 1000 live births (Cour des Comptes 2012:397-398). Even if the downward trend has resumed, some questions remain unanswered about the French stillbirth rate, the highest in Europe. However, France is the only country in Europe where very little systematic information is available regarding births, notably concerning gestational age and weight of newborns, but a first wave of data should shortly be issued. Indeed, these high rates are not only due to the increase in the average age of mothers and in the share of children of a foreign mother, as the high rates also concern mothers of French nationality aged 25-35, while the decline in alcohol and tobacco consumption should have contributed to a drop

88 Available at : [HTTP://rue89.nouvelobs.com/2011/08/17/credit-municipal-de-paris-du-mont-de-piete-au-microcredit-218023](http://rue89.nouvelobs.com/2011/08/17/credit-municipal-de-paris-du-mont-de-piete-au-microcredit-218023) (accessed 23 January 2014)

89 (2013) *Le Monde*, 8 January. Paris.

90 FRANCE. INSEE (2013), *Population & Sociétés* (498). Paris : Institut national d'études démographiques.

in the rates. Thus among the explanatory factors are mentioned the growing prevalence of overweight and obesity, but also the rise in the ratio of late pregnancy registration. In addition, there would not be enough staff on the ground. For instance, 19 per cent of intensive care and neonatal units do not have a permanent access to a pediatrician (MEF 2013).

### 3.4.3 Measures taken to counter the effects of the crisis

Set up in 1999 under the *Jospin* government, and implemented in 2000, the CMU (Universal Health Cover) aims to provide assistance for medical care : 55 per cent of the beneficiaries are women. A total contribution exemption is granted to persons with low income<sup>91</sup>. This aid scheme is accompanied by a complementary coverage (CMUC) granted to persons whose monthly income is below EUR 716. Beyond these limits, those with little resources - under EUR 967 per month - are entitled to the ACS (Aid to the Purchase of complementary health coverage). In a context of increasing poverty, a five-year plan to fight poverty was adopted on January 21<sup>st</sup> 2013: within the health field, it has mainly aimed at the promotion of voluntary health insurance by raising the current ceilings.

The analysis of the impact on women's health of 2008 economic downturn cannot do without addressing the issue of violence against women, even if many of them, especially sexual abuse, remain hidden (Jaspard 2005).

#### Case n°1: The deterioration of access in health-care services

Janet Stevens<sup>92</sup> is a 56 year old woman who has been working for 14 years as an administrative secretary in a big French public organization. She holds a law certification of two years higher education (Bac+2). Prior to working in this administration, she has worked in many insecure and low paid jobs, and suffered from unemployment. She lives alone and has no children. Her mother is her only family around, as her father died one year ago. Her parents got divorced when she was fifteen. She has an older brother, but he doesn't live in France, and they almost never see each other.

As she didn't pass any competitive examination, she was first recruited in 1998 on a fixed-term contract for only three months, which has been replenished several times. She is now working full-time, but has experienced many periods of involuntary part-time work. In 1999, she had thyroid cancer and her thyroid was removed. Noting the difficult situation faced by Janet, and also her high-quality work, the person who was the director at the time (now retired), somehow managed to obtain for Janet more favorable full-time contracts of a minimum duration of three years. However, despite many efforts, she couldn't obtain her establishment, so Janet retained a status of non permanent worker. Between 2002 and nowadays, Janet has experienced several other cancers, including breast cancer, which could be rapidly detected and managed, so she did not stop working for periods longer than two weeks. However, as she was regularly experiencing musculoskeletal disorders, she undertook surgery during summer 2013 when she spent one month in the hospital during her vacation. As Janet is receiving several medical treatments, and attends many medical appointments and analyses, she sometimes needs to take leave from work – usually for short breaks of two or three hours.

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<sup>91</sup> In 2013-2014, below EUR 9534 per year.

<sup>92</sup> Names and other characteristics have been changed.

Janet currently has to deal with a serious deterioration in her living conditions. As she was recruited as a member of the temporary staff and classified in Grade C (the lowest), she is not given any premium, unlike her colleagues that do the same work but as permanent contract holders. So her monthly salary barely reaches EUR 1100. Rent and charges amount to EUR 650. Janet must also maintain her car and cover its insurance, and pay for a complementary health coverage.

As she faces increasing financial and material difficulties, she decided to relocate to a smaller and nearer flat, which would allow her to walk to work instead of driving. But she doesn't have the money needed for the move, while she must avoid lifting heavy things, considering her health condition. Janet visited several charities, to ask for help. But her salary level (EUR 1100) is above the limit which would enable her to qualify for a relocation free assistance (around EUR 700). And Janet has little hope that things will change for the better: despite her complementary health coverage, since 2009, she has been disbursing EUR 1 at every consultation or medical analysis, while medicine costs have been rising. And when she had to miss work for medical reasons, the first day of the leave has been unpaid. Janet doesn't see any solution as she is not eligible for any aid.

As I ask whether her mother could be able to help her in this difficult period, Janet bursts into tears. She answers in the negative and adds: "My father died and only left debts behind. But he used to help me. It is he who paid for my first wig after chemotherapy. The social security only reimbursed EUR 80, at this price you can only buy something that looks like horsehair. To buy a correct wig, I needed about EUR 400".

## **II. Cases and patterns of violence against women**

The question of violence will be addressed as defined by the World Health Organization, namely: "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation"<sup>93</sup>.

Gender-based violence includes physical, sexual and psychological violence, but also deprivation and neglect. Furthermore, violence may show an "administrative" profile, notably when it takes the form of the confiscation of personal documents. Violence can also be addressed depending on its perpetrator. It may be self-directed, interpersonal – inter alia through intimate partner – or collective, when it is committed by larger groups. Thus violence against women may take a variety of forms, from domestic violence to societal cultural practices as forced marriages or female genital mutilations, but also prostitution and sex trade, as forms of institutionalized violence.

It is very intricate to uncover the possible statistical impact of economic recession on violence, first as statistics only record a tiny fraction of gender-based violence, which remains largely invisible. Thus, even assuming the case of an increasing violence rate in times of economic crisis, it could only reflect the changes in the complaint rate, or in the modes of inquiry – in which important innovations have been taking place in France since 2007 – rather than an evolution in the level of violence itself. In a first section, we will focus on the statistical methods used by official French organizations in order to assess the evolution of gender-based violence.

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93 Available at: [HTTP://www.who.int/topics/violence/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/violence/en/) (accessed February 1<sup>st</sup> 2014).

Indeed, even if some surveys have demonstrated a significant statistical correlation between the level of domestic violence and the economic situation of abused women (ONDRP Repères:2012) – findings that would support the hypothesis of a close link between violence rates and poverty or unemployment – other investigations stress that domestic violence cuts across all social groups (Jaspard 2005) while, in statistical terms, the rate of spousal violence against women has not undergone significant change between 2007 and 2012. However, these two perspectives are not incompatible, but require the use of several theoretical approaches to the study of mechanisms underlying gender-based violence. Indeed, factors influencing violence against women are manifold and need to be considered at different levels of the process.

Thus if the economic and social conditions as unemployment or poverty have an undeniable effect on the violence rate, their criminogenic nature may operate on different levels, more or less distant from the individual behavior that results in violence.

At a macroscopic level, for a long time, levels of poverty or wealth have been found to be significant predictors of homicide rates in cross national studies. In this light, recent statistical tests have shown that in European countries, a rise in GDP of 1 per cent would result in a decrease of the homicide rate of 0.539 per cent – varying according to the youthfulness of the population and the inequality rate (ONDRP 2011:343). This may be due to various processes. At an international level, a direct gendered impact of the economic downturn lies in the increased migratory flows and human trafficking activity, especially for the purposes of prostitution.

Other determinants, more directly placed within the criminogenic sphere, play a role at a “proximal” level; for example poverty and inequality may induce effects such as a higher rate of alcohol or drug consumption - which contributes to criminality.

Beyond these proximal mechanisms, unemployment and economic hardships, which increase during times of recession, reduce women’s ability to get away from violent situations, particularly in terms of domestic abuse, while couple conflicts and interpersonal stress tend to increase. These dimensions, which will be explored using concrete examples from a more qualitative perspective (2), may be regarded as indirect effects of the economic downturn.

However, economic factors have no direct effect and are always mediated by socio-cultural norms related to age, gender, femininity and masculinity – notably in the case of forced marriages or sexual relations between girls and boys, a major part of which flows from non-consent, and remains undetected.

## **1. A statistical approach of gender-related violence in France (2007-2012)**

Without any claim to be exhaustive, and following some methodological clarifications (1.1), this first section consists of presenting two main categories of gender-based violence, in a context of economic downturn, without prejudging in advance of a link:

- Violence outside the home and violence in the home, inflicted on women by their husband, intimate partner or ex-partner, or family member;
- institutionalized violence, for instance with regard to prostitution.

## 1.1 Measuring violence against women

Commissioned by the Women's Rights Unit, following the commitment made by the French State in the Beijing Conference (1995), one of the first and most significant French study, the ENVEFF<sup>94</sup> survey, was conducted by the socio-demographer Maryse Jaspard in 1999. About 7000 women aged 20 to 59 were surveyed by phone, in order to represent the 16 million women of that age group. The survey focused on four types of violence: verbal, psychological, physical and sexual. Even if most of the acts of violence recorded took place in the private sphere, the ENVEFF survey aimed to address the multi-faceted nature of gender-based violence going on in the public or at the work place. The results revealed that nearly one woman out of ten reported having experienced verbal, psychological, physical or sexual violence from their current husband, and three out of ten from their ex-husband, while being young appeared as a factor of risk. A central concept was identified: the notion of *situation* of domestic violence, which underscores its repetitive and cumulative dimension. Although violence appeared to afflict women of all social conditions, insecurity and unemployment notably increased the risk, unemployed women not eligible for benefit proving to be particularly vulnerable.

Beyond a few specific surveys, in formal terms, two main sources provide the possibility to uncover the shape of violence in France: the number of "recorded events" provided by the police and gendarmerie, and, since 2007, the *Living environment and security* (CVS)<sup>95</sup> victimization surveys carried out by the French National Monitoring Center on Crime and Penal Answers (ONDRP), together with the French INSEE.

The first database, called the "Annual Account 4001", was created in 1972 and collects all complaints lodged by victims of robberies or of deliberate attempts on the physical integrity. Although these data are regularly subject to challenge, they have been put right at the centre of the media debate and became a key political issue.

Nevertheless, all the violence does not result in complaints, far from it, especially when the perpetrator and the victim know each other and form a couple. In some cases, the victim who does not wish to launch a lawsuit against the perpetrator may choose to deposit a simple declaration in the register of offences<sup>96</sup>, or only contact a victim support association.

There is not a good match between the results of the "Annual Account 4001" and the victimization survey, as a high number of offences, especially verbal and sexual, determine a very low complaint rate, while repeated changes took place in the way of producing statistics.

## 1.2 Violence at home and outside the home

In a long-term perspective, the "recorded events" report a drop in property crime for the past 25 years - a slight rise has been observed since 2008 - and a structural increase in violent offences against individuals, beginning in 1996 (Graph 23).

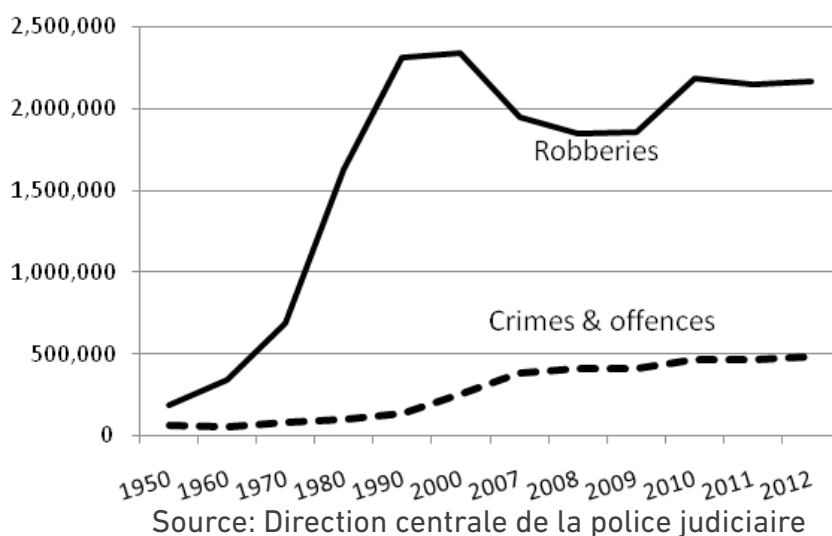
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94 Enquête nationale sur les violences envers les femmes en France (National survey on violence against women in France).

95 "Cadre de vie et sécurité".

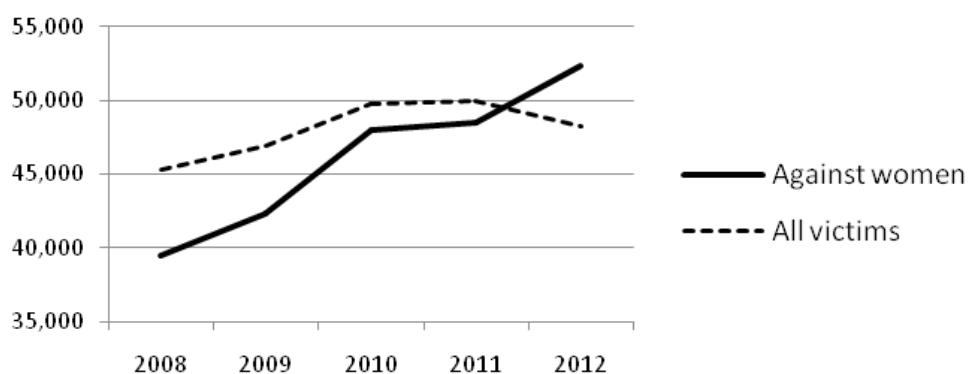
96 Called a 'main courante' in French.

Graph 23: Crime and delinquency in France (1950-2012)



Beyond these long-term trends, some recent changes have been identified by the police authorities, notably the rapid increase of violent robberies against women in public spaces (Graph 24).

Graph 24: Cases of violent thefts in public areas or places  
(without weapons)



This growth of 33 per cent between 2008 and 2009 would be linked to an increase of street robberies that target women wearing gold jewelry. Thus the French minister of Home affairs has raised the need to take action, for instance gold resale channels have been better regulated and controlled (Press release, January 18<sup>th</sup> 2013).

Another worrying development connected with the world economic downturn, lies in the changing profile of persons suspected of robbery (ONDRP Repères 23). Thus from 2008 to 2012, the share of foreign national women increased sharply: in 2012, among the 5300 persons accused by the police of pick pocketing, 30 per cent were young girls under 16 years of age coming from Rumania and former Yugoslavia. According to the ONDRP, they would work under the constraint of organized criminal networks, and their situation could be regarded as human trafficking (Ibid:22).



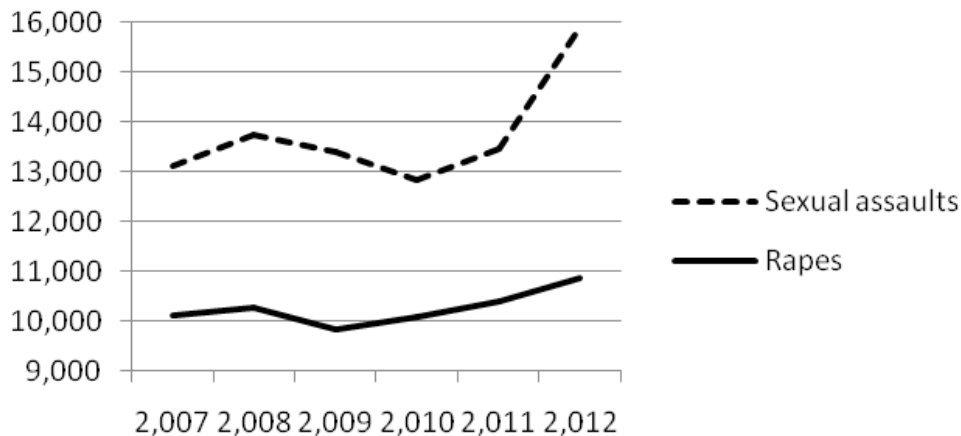
### 1.2.1 The French victimization survey

In 2007, for the first time, like number of its European neighbors, France has set up a dual statistical counting and monitoring of violence: complaints submitted to the police and gendarmerie and victim impact statements are brought together. The survey “Living environment and security”(CVS) is supported by two distinct ways of questioning: primarily, it consists of a face-to-face individual questionnaire regarding robberies with violence and physical and sexual violence outside the home. Secondly, the most sensitive issues, namely violence at home, are addressed through a self-administered questionnaire, as a more impersonal survey technique.

### 1.2.2 The complaint rate and the estimated number of victims

« Recorded events » are not meaningful on their own as they are based on the number of complaints recorded, which varies over the time and according to the type of violence and the characteristics of the victim. The highest level is reached for the robberies with violence (more than 50 per cent), while violence outside the home has a complaint rate of about 25 per cent. When the perpetrator is the spouse, less than ten per cent of women lodge a complaint (OND 2009:104). Thus, in rape cases, the number of complaints received by the authorities is of little significance regarding the effective number of victims. In addition, the sharp increase observed in sexual assaults would be due to a statistic break (ONDRP Bulletin 2013:3), arising from the deployment of a new recording of proceedings tools in gendarmeries (Graph 25).

Graph 25 : Crimes & assaults observed in France



Source : direction centrale de la police judiciaire

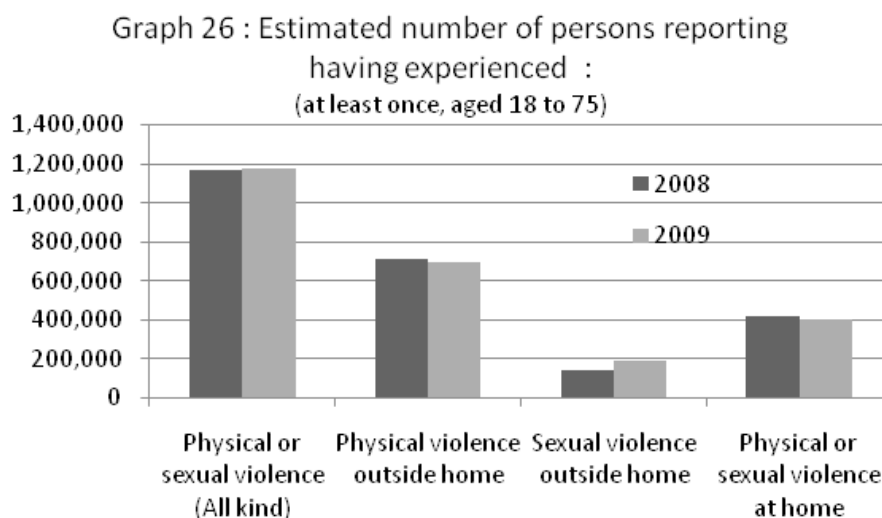
On the basis of the number of complaints and of a victimization rate of 0.7 per cent, considering that about 98 per cent of the victims of rape are women (Annual Account 4001, DCPJ 2011), the 2012 CVS survey evaluates at 154 000 the number of effective victims between 2009 and 2011, that is at least 77 000 rapes every year (ONDRP 2012:40).

The reporting rate is higher in cases of violence outside the home involving an ex-partner (50 per cent) (OND Repères 2008:2). Reasons given by non-reporting victims are various: because - “it was not serious”, “nothing could be achieved from doing so”, “to avoid additional confrontations”, “to keep the facts unknown”, “for fear of retaliation” (ONDRP Repères 2011:9). Thus non-reporting is also linked with the quality of the welcome: if the quality of the interaction and of the listening is positively assessed – taking all forms of violence together, but especially violence outside the home – the treatment of sexual violence, above all experienced at home

– and particularly regarding “confidentiality issues”, “lack of time”, “listening and advice” – results in greater dissatisfaction (OND 2007:57).

### 1.2.3 The evolution of patterns of violence

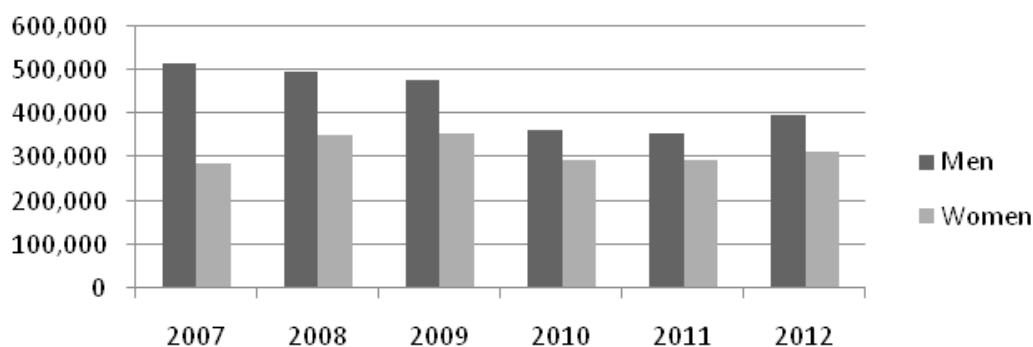
Since the first victimization survey (2007), the distribution of violence by location and type of perpetrator shows that roughly one third of it is experienced by victims at home (about 400 000 victims), while the two-thirds (710 000) take place outside the home (ONDRP 2013:5), and is inflicted by unknown offenders (Graph 26).



Source: Surveys CVS 2009 and 2010, INSEE

Between 2007 and 2012, the number of women reporting having experienced at least one situation of physical violence outside home remains almost unchanged, after a slight increase between 2006 and 2009, followed by a slim drop. In statistical terms, these changes are not really significant (ONDRP 2012:39), which is different from men’s victimization rate decrease between 2006 and 2009, much sharper (Graph 27).

Graph 27: estimated number of persons reporting having experienced physical violence outside home by sex  
(aged 14 and more, for one year)



Source: Surveys CVS 2007 and 2013, INSEE

The rate of spousal violence has experienced very moderate changes between 2007 and 2012, knowing that data is fraught with several limitations, in particular because it depends, in the first instance, on the complaint rate, as discussed above. In addition, from the methodological

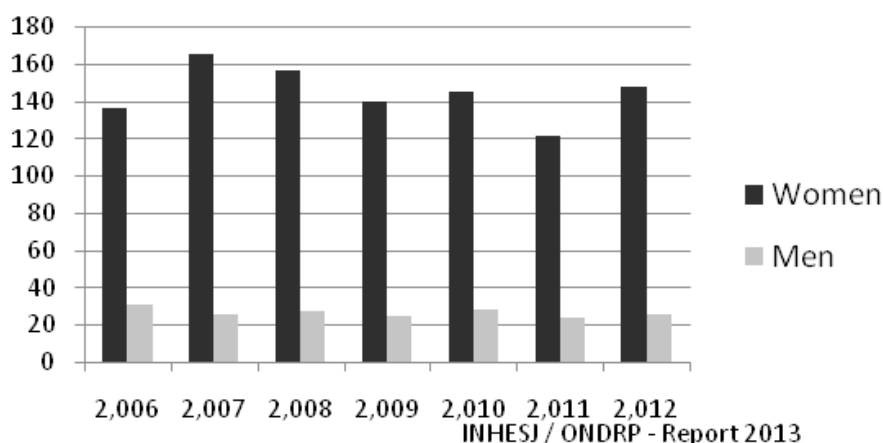
point of view, no temporal comparisons can be drawn, as the data was not collected on an annual basis, but through periods of varying durations. Furthermore, between 2006-2007 and 2009, the slight increase in physical and sexual violence rate experienced by the victims is only significant regarding physical domestic violence, as sexual violence remains almost unchanged and is rather moving towards a downward trend until 2010 (OND 2009:19), followed by a statistical break in 2011, especially regarding the number of “sexual assaults”(Graph 25).

### 1.2.4 Gendered patterns of violence

In France, statistically, perpetrators of physical violence are men in 85 per cent of cases, while this disproportionate share rises as much as 98 per cent regarding sexual violence – this distribution has been unchanged since 2007 for sexual abuse, although women’s share regarding other physical violence increased from 13 to 15 per cent between 2007 and 2011<sup>97</sup>. This does not mean that men identify solely with offenders: physical violence outside the home affects men more than women, although this difference is becoming shorter (Graph 27). Overall, victimization surveys uncover major gender differences in the patterns of violence.

While men are the majority of offenders and victims with regard to violence outside the home, women are overwhelmingly the victims of violence in the couple relationship. Sexual violence, as for it, is in its near entirety exerted by men on women. Spousal violence may have devastating consequences in terms of mental and physical health, and in certain cases lead to death. Lethal violence changes little from year to year and 85 per cent of victims are women (Graph 28). Half of women perpetrators also suffered spousal violence (OND 2007:122). The most frequent circumstances articulated with homicides between partners are related to separation, while one in four would have taken place under the influence of alcohol (ONDRP 2013:7).

Graph 28 : Number of annual deaths between partners and ex-partners (intentional homicides & acts of lethal violence)

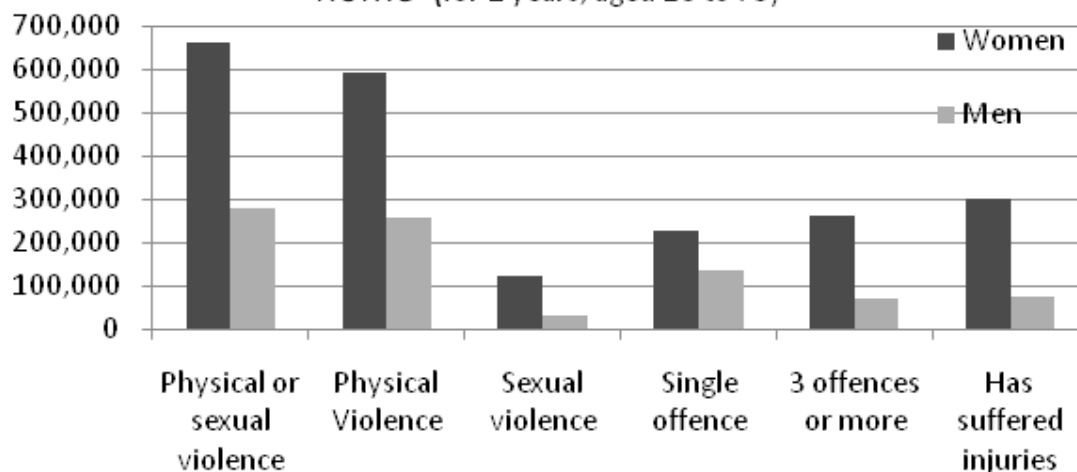


In terms of frequency, most of the male victims of violence outside of the home suffered a single assault, while around half of women reported three offences or more. In addition to the difference in terms of recurrence, the gravity of injuries sustained is also more severe for

97 Source : Annual Account 4001, DCPJ - Recensement de la population, INSEE.

women (Graph 29). Lastly, most women abuse cases are committed by men who were familiar to victims – husband, ex-husband (42 per cent of victims), other members of the family (21 per cent), or at least known by sight (16 per cent) (OND 2008:96).

Graph 29 : Estimated number of persons reporting having experience physical or sexual violence at home (for 2 years, aged 18 to 75)



Source : surveys CVS 2008 to 2010, INSEE

### 1.2.5 Predictor variables

Before 2008 as between 2008 and 2012, divorced and separated persons, mostly women, report having experienced physical violence from spouses more than married ones (7.6 compared to 5.3 per cent). The rate is the highest (8.6 per cent) among women-headed households. This is firstly due to the over representation of victims among separated and divorced women (OND 2008:16).

Gender and age are the most significant predictors of the victimization process, in particular regarding violence by a current spouse; women aged 18-24 are the main victims. However, while for both sexes, the rates of physical victimization outside the household decreases with age, especially for men, women's domestic rate remains relatively high throughout the aging, staying almost identical in the 25-34 and 45-60 age groups. Another female specificity lies in the high physical violence rate endured by 35-44 (3.1 per cent) (Ibid: 116).

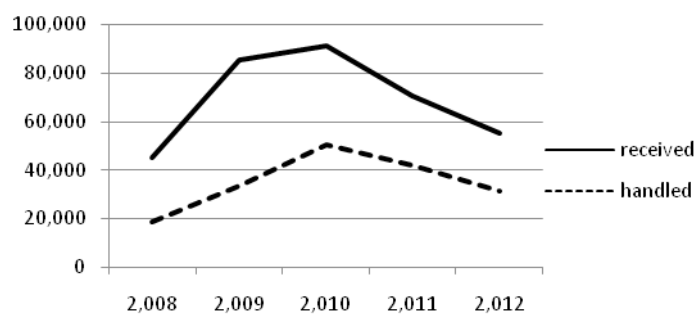
If no social group is exempt from domestic violence, underemployment and poverty are shown by several surveys to be driving forces. In 2006, 7 per cent of unemployed persons report having endured physical violence, that is 3 points more than those in employment, while people living in Sensitive urban areas are twice as frequently affected than those in rural areas (Ibid:17). Spouse's unemployment is also a risk factor for exposure to violence : when the two partners are in employment, 2 per cent of women report having experienced domestic violence, compared to 4.6 per cent for unemployed women whose partner is also unemployed (Ibid:18). While the economic status has only little influence over the victimization rate in the 2007 survey (Ibid: 124), the 2008-2012 survey underlines the key role of this determinant in domestic violence (ONDRP Repères 2012). Thus among the 400 000 women reporting having experienced their partner's physical violence, the victimization rate is four times higher among women in households where the average income per consumption unit is the lowest (Ibid:12).

The housing occupation status is also much significant: women homeowners have been nearly three times less subject to domestic violence than tenants (Ibid:13). Some explanatory mechanisms will be explored further through an example (Case n°2).

### 1.2.6 A conjunctural indicator: calls made to the telephone platform 3919

Created in 1992 by the National Federation for Women's Solidarity (FNSF), the phone platform 3919 aims to respond to the needs of abused women and manages a network of 59 associations. The number of calls received and handled has undergone important changes since the early 2000s (Graph 30). The first significant increase is due to two main reasons: the implementation of an important publicity campaign in July and November 2009, while from year 2010, the Federation was designated as the official operator of the national cause of domestic violence against women. Thus the listening service was reorganized and made it possible to increase the number of received and answered calls. Unfortunately, the 2012 budget cuts led to reduce call volume of about 1200 listening hours (FNSF 2012:10).

Graph 30 : The number of calls received and handled by the "3-9-1-9" (National Federation for Women's Solidarity)



Source: ONDRP Reports

Beyond these quantitative changes, features of received calls did not vary much during the period observed. Thus, about two thirds of calls came from victims themselves, the last third from their entourage. About half of the callers were in employment, around 65 per cent as office workers, while 7.3 per cent occupied a high managerial and professional position (ONRDP 2012:375).

Four categories of violence are distinguished by the Federation: verbal, physical, psychological and sexual. More than 80 per cent of the victims, experience psychological violence, while more than half (52 per cent) report enduring three types of violence (ONDRP 2011:325). On average, the situation of violence has been in place for between 1 and 5 years.

From 2009, the association has been recording new forms of violence, notably through the confiscation of administrative documents or the limitation of access to law. These new forms of abuse are linked with the increase of the number of foreigner calls – about 22 per cent in 2011 – who endure “double violence”, notably migrant women being subject to dual discrimination because of their status as foreigners and women.

### 1.3 The sense of insecurity

Between 2008 and 2013, the proportion of individuals aged 14 and over reporting having felt unsafe “from time to time” or “often” in their home increased from 6.8 to 9 per cent (ONDRP 2012:74). Women are more than twice more likely than men having said to feel unsafe – 12.2 per cent of them compared to 5.5 per cent of men (Ibid: 11). The number of persons reporting that they felt unsafe in their “district” or “village” also significantly increased over the period from 9.8 to 11.7 per cent (ONDRP 2012:78). Sense of insecurity grows with ageing and is higher among unemployed persons, those without qualifications and single parent families (ONDRP 2009:163). It also varies depending on habitat, twice higher among tenants, in particular those living in sensitive urban areas (Ibid: 165). Linked with the current recession, the exacerbation of the situations of vulnerability and emergency, have contributed to its growth. However, while during this period the global proportion of reported victims of violence has changed very little, the growing sense of insecurity might surprise. Over the long term, it supports the principle that “any decrease in the level of violence goes hand in hand with an increased sensibility to violence, namely a heightened sense of insecurity” (Chesnais 1981:398). As a result, the question of insecurity has moved to the centre of the political debate and receives wide media coverage.

Women’s sense of insecurity implies much various dynamics as it also deals, in some instances, with the internalization of gender stereotypes. For example, it is shaped by the misrepresentation of the street as the hotbed of dangers while home is perceived as a safe haven. It also refers to the high number of daily street intrusions endured by women, which leads them to systematically anticipate the slippery slope in every interaction, having internalized the principle of their vulnerability (Lieber 2008). Thus, the disempowering role of daily micro-aggressive situations leads to an interpretation of the street as a central ‘gender-regime’ informal institution (Connell 1990), a place where some key gender codes are reactivated on a daily basis.

### 1.4 The rise of global prostitution

As highlighted in several reports, violence is inextricably linked with the prostitution system, whether it is perpetrated by the clients themselves or by pimps and trafficking rings. It may take many forms – from sexual and physical violence to insults and humiliations or stigmatization – and has direct and indirect effects. According to an American longitudinal study, “Women engaged in prostitution face the most dangerous occupational environment in the United States” (Potterat et al. 2004:784). Realized on 1.969 prostitute women in Colorado Springs, the analysis revealed that their standardized mortality ratio, adjusted for age and race, was about twice higher than that of the general population (Ibid:778), while they were almost 18 times more likely to be murdered than women of similar age and race (Ibid:782). However, the association of female prostitution with premature mortality was primarily due to violence and drug use (Ibid: 782).

Prostitution is a multi-faceted phenomenon, hard to define and quantify, whose features have been radically changing since 25 years, notably regarding the rapid growth of criminal rings, transcending national boundaries and trafficking in women (1.4.1), or the emergence of the Internet as a new arena for prostitution (1.4.2), while the economic downturn of 2008 would have fuelled the development of a prostitution of “despair” (Fondation Scelles 2012) (1.4.3).

### 1.4.1 Street prostitution

Data for measuring prostitution come from diverse sources, notably on the basis of the:

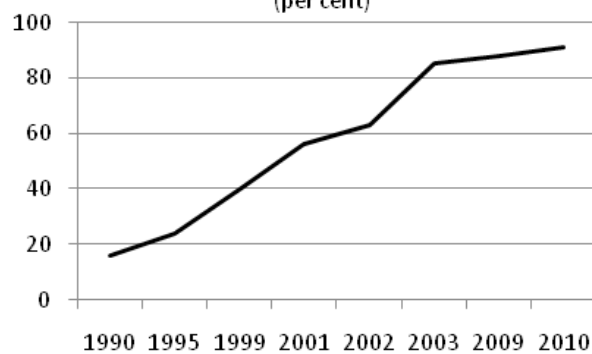
- number of persons “accused of soliciting sex” by the police;
- number of trafficking victims identified by legal proceedings;
- information provided by the Internet sites;
- information collected by associations.

However, as it remains prohibited and stigmatized in most countries, the world of prostitution is an unseen one within which it is hard to collect data. In addition, in France, over the last decade, the way in which official statistics were collected has changed, making comparisons in time more difficult. Indeed, the Sarkozy Law of March 18<sup>th</sup> 2003, suppressed in 2014, established an offence of soliciting for prostitution. The effect of this law was to move prostitute women from the town centers towards the suburbs, the industrial areas or the national roads. With regard to statistics, data were no longer collected through mere identity checks but through the charge of solicitation. Nevertheless, the possibility of comparison with other data, notably the number of accused for pimping, contributes to reduce the statistical bias. However, there are nearly no studies about clients: one of the few ones, which was achieved in 2004 by the “Mouvement du nid”, an “abolitionist” nonprofit organization, revealed that about 13 per cent of men had recourse to prostitution at least once in their life, compared to 0.6 per cent of women (Geoffroy, Jouanno 2013 :23).

According to the Central Office for the Suppression of Trafficking of Human Beings (OCRTEH 2010), there would be between 20 000 and 40 000 persons engaged in street prostitution in France, among which 85 per cent are women, while 99 per cent of the clients are men (Olivier 2013).

Since the 1990s, France has become a country of destination for international criminal and prostitution trafficking rings. Reasons include economic and wealth differences between countries, fueling the migratory desire, and also geopolitical changes – inter alia the collapse of the USSR and of Eastern regimes and the fall of the Berlin wall. In addition, the process of globalization of sex industry has been supported by the creation of Europe’s borderless Schengen Area (1995). While in the early 1990s, most prostitute women are of French nationality, the share of foreign prostitutes, among whom nearly 90 per cent are controlled by criminal groups, became increasingly prevalent, reaching around 90 per cent of the total street prostitution in 2012 (ONRDP rapport 2012: 226) (Graph 31).

Graph 31: Share of foreign women within street prostitution (per cent)



Source : OCRTEH reports

The increase of foreign prostitution passed through successive stages: in the early 1990s, the first significant increase, dealing with the former Yugoslavia countries, arises as the result of a first step of human trafficking targeting women in central and eastern Europe, beginning in 1989 (Geoffroy 2011:38). Since the mid-1990s, it has been followed by a second wave, of African origin, and a third wave, involving Chinese rings, from the 2000s. Thus in France, foreign prostitution, whose distribution by nationality varies significantly between Paris and the rest of the country, is mostly eastern European (40 per cent), Sub-Saharan African (38 per cent) and Asian - mostly Chinese. In Paris, the geography of prostitution is much more homogenous between the different origins, with very few Chinese women away from the capital, while the different nationalities are moreover concentrated in specific neighborhoods. In Bordeaux, the origins are divided equally between Eastern Europe and Africa migrants, while in Marseilles many Maghrebians, mostly Algerians, can be found (OCRTEH 2009).

Nowadays, 'classical' prostitution organized by independent women or under the control of small-scale pimps has only become relevant to a handful of middle-aged women who entered into sex work before the 1990s. Most of the market of prostitution has moved into the hands of mafia-like networks and international criminality. A first form of organization is community-based. In this case, pimps originate from the same country as their victims. Thus these micro networks prostitute women from their own community if not family, for subsistence purpose (ONDRP 2012:226). Among the 32 networks dismantled in 2012, the majority of perpetrators came from countries not requiring a visa for entering France: the five main origin countries for human trafficking are Romania, Bulgaria, Nigeria, Cameroon and China (Ibid: 227).

African prostitution, in particular Nigerian trafficking rings would revisit traditional cultural values in order to force the victims. They would be sold by their family to the network – between EUR 8000 to 14 000 – being, in some cases, convinced that the naming of their perpetrators would bring misfortune to the entire community and contravene to the principle of filial piety (Geoffroy, Jouanno 2013 :20). An important factor of the trafficking system stability would lie in opportunities for ageing women to become pimps in turn (Geoffroy 2011:45).

Eastern trafficking rings would use a much more violent training in order to impose their will: women would be sold like cattle before being tortured and transferred to France (Ibid: 44). Network constraint would also be achieved by means of threats of violence to family members left behind, or by withholding of identity documents. In the past, on a few occasions, migrant women from China would have succeeded to emancipate themselves from the organization power, maybe notably because of an older average age – 42 years old in 2012 (OCRTEH 2012). Indeed, according to the charity *L'amicale du Nid*, in 2010, 43 per cent of women in prostitution would be under the age of 30, 30 per cent between 30 and 39 and 17 per cent between 40 and 49. However, this privileged position would be changing rapidly, with an emerging generation of very violent Chinese pimps within the 11<sup>th</sup> district of Paris. Thus, in 2012, 7 procedures of the Police Homicide Division were related to Chinese pimping business (Geoffroy, Jouanno 2013 :20).

The distribution of prostitution by countries of origin is confirmed by the Associations statistics: the Toulouse-based charity Grisélidis reports being in contact with around 86 per cent of migrant women mainly coming from Sub-Saharan African (Ghana and Nigeria) and Eastern Europe (Bulgaria and Romania). A third of women are under 30 years old, 59 per cent between 30 and 60, and 5 per cent over 60 (2012:19).

A frequent scenario is that 80 per cent of the women willing to emigrate incur a "passage" debt, and have afterwards no other option to reimburse but prostitution. Debts would amount to EUR 65 000 for women from Sub-Saharan Africa and around EUR 5000 for the migrants



from the Balkans (OCRTEH 2010:26). Average Chinese debts would come to between EUR 7000 and EUR 15 000 according to the nonprofit Lotus Bus (Geoffroy 2011:41).

### 1.4.2 Internet prostitution

Another modality of human trafficking is carried out over the Internet. Different types of tariffs are charged – from moderate (EUR 100 to 200), notably over itinerant “city-tours”, during which women move from town to town and through different hotels every three days, most of the time in small or average sized towns with low levels of street prostitution. “Luxury” prostitution rings are also present in tourist centers and big towns, mostly through Eastern Europe networks who propose “high-class prostitutes” on the internet with extremely high rates (EUR 1000 per night, EUR 4000 per week-end) (ONDRP 2012 :227). It is very difficult to assess its scope, as all forms of prostitution transit via Internet. Its cost of access being very low, while its level of anonymity is very high, the Internet prostitution has grown sharply (Geoffroy 2011 : 49), bringing on a same platform trafficking networks and new forms of independent prostitution: although it is difficult to estimate how many persons are engaged in escorting, according to Grisélidis (2012), an important number of students under 30 would prostitute themselves occasionally in order to be able to finance their education as well as to follow the class.

### 1.4.3 The impact of the economic crisis

The links between the economic context, migrations and prostitution are old. As soon as during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in France and in the United Kingdom, return trips and mobility between domestic work, sales jobs and prostitution were common and occurred “in response to labor market conditions or economic interests” (Guillemaut 2007 :12). However, at that time, women were “leaving” rather than “entering” Europe (Corbin 1978). Increasingly being heads of family, women became individual migrants and fell easy preys to criminal networks. According to Grisélidis, 80 per cent of their public would consist of women migrating as independent migrants in their own right, willing to improve their economic situation and that of their families (2012:60).

More broadly, in the face of the global economic crisis and growing poverty, the flow of migrants and the actions of criminal gangs involved in trafficking in human beings are increasing, and leading to the growth of prostitution.

A first consequence of the economic downturn lies in the expansion of prostitution, as a principal or occasional activity, while the number of clients has started to decline (Grisélidis 2010 :25), leading to a growing competition and threatening the bargaining power of prostitutes. It is notably the case of a big Parisian park, the *Bois de Boulogne*, where prostitute persons of 180 nationalities are represented. Newcomers are much younger and their prices much lower than those of the elders: “Romanian and Bulgarian do not respect the codes”, rants a 50-year-old woman. Because they charge much lower prices, while pimp enforcers supervise them, ensuring that they will never mingle with other prostitutes, while in some cases, fathers or husbands prostitute their own daughters or wife, threatening to target children who stayed in the country in case of resistance (*Le Parisien* 2011).

The decline in the number of clients is more pronounced in the countries the most affected by the current crisis; this is notably the case in Spain and Italy, whence many prostitutes leave, for instance towards the border towns of France. For example, from the end of 2012, some

Bulgarian prostitutes have started leaving Italy for France, less affected by the economic downturn. Prostitution established notably on the roads and junctions of the town of Nimes. The charity *Arap Rubis*, carrying out prevention health programs, recorded a 40 per cent increase in the number of requests and estimated at 100 the number of additional prostitutes in the street. Women's arrival in Nimes followed their ousting by the Avignon city council, which decided to apply against them the 2003 law relating to solicitation. A volunteer member of *Arap Rubis* underlines the extreme youth and the precariousness of these new prostitutes, ready to lower their price to as little as EUR 10 and to accept unprotected sex (*Midi Libre* 2012).

In the Southwest of the country, many other towns such as Toulouse, Montauban, Tarbes, Nimes or Montpellier have also been affected. In addition to the economic downturn, the growing climate of insecurity in *La Jonquera*, a big Spanish Red Light District where the different mafias in competition are fighting for the control of the area, is leading to displacements to the French border towns. Beyond these migrations, new practices are emerging, for instance regarding prostitution during the day, notably in Toulouse. In Tarbes, a "house" which has just been closed was headed by a couple of pimps, who had "put to work" 12 Spanish women. Charities also note an increase in the number of women who offer sexual relations in non usual areas as supermarket and library washrooms, or even in the street – being mainly Roma willing to complement their begging income.

Prostitution also extends because women do not find work, while unemployment benefits remain insufficient, for instance to raise their children. The charity *Grisélidis* notes the growing annual number of seniors; most of them are French women, sometimes originating in Maghrebian countries, Cameroon or from Antilles, who have been working as prostitutes for a long time and cannot stop working, due to lack of resources for their retirement (rapport 2012 :19). The charity "Avec nos aînées" (*With our seniors*) has estimated 200 prostitutes aged from 65 to 80 years. Most of them cannot quit, while others have been forced to re-enter this activity after a financial failure. Their health condition is very bad, and the association especially points out three cases of tuberculosis detected in 2010 among them (Geoffroy 2011:68-69).

In a situation of increasing restrictions on extra European immigration, victims are increasingly made vulnerable when failing to legalize their status. In some cases, the deny of citizenship may fuel the feeling of impunity of clients, pimps or spouses, because they know they are taking little or no risk if they are preying on the most vulnerable, those without valid residence permit. Thus, during the year 2009, there was no official complaint of violence from undocumented women, according to the nonprofit *Grisélidis* (2010:26). Beyond physical and socio-economic aspects, these laws are an open field to a deeply xenophobic public discourse, which blames migrants and makes them the scapegoats for the world economic crisis. This trend may fuel hatred and violence against women: according to *Grisélidis* (2009:35), the data collected through face-to-face interviews reveal that the theme of violence has been quadrupling between 2009 and 2012 (2012:88).

The economic downturn amplifies the difficulty to escape the cycle of prostitution, as empowerment pathways set up by NGO and jobs are getting scarce, while the rising impoverishment of populations goes along with the decrease in dedicated budgets. At the national level, grant allocations to NGO, notably relating to prevention and rehabilitation, have sharply decreased during the five last years (Olivier 2013:78). Furthermore, the budget devoted by the State to NGO willing to help individuals in prostitution lacks of overall clarity, no government department being able to provide an overview about the global funding allocated (Geoffroy 2013 :161). In addition, although indirectly, reductions in housing and health subsidies also affect adversely women in prostitution.

## 2. A qualitative approach to gender-based violence

Although gender-based violence cuts across all social groups, several case studies show that gender-based violence increases in times of economic crisis, with job loss and impoverishment being leading factors (2-1). However, even if some violence processes interact with economical and social predictors, they also remain deeply linked with cultural values and expectations. In the light of this, many kinds of violence against women have not been directly significantly affected by the world economic crisis (2-2).

### 2.1 Some indirect effects of the economic downturn

#### Case n°2

“Information Centers for women’s and family rights” (CIDFF) are nonprofit French organizations members of a national network of 114 associations throughout the territory, whose purpose is the promotion of gender equality. For instance, in the department of Var, around 2600 persons were welcomed by the CIDFF in 2012. According to the person in charge of the structure, the economic downturn did not have a direct impact on their activity, as they already used to work with women encountering financial difficulties, notably entitled to social benefits, as part of their partnership with the General Council and the Family Allowances Fund. Her experience on the ground showed that for a woman, transition into poverty is linked to divorce or separation, while domestic violence often leads to divorce, and escalates at the time of separation.

Beyond the induced effect of poverty on alcohol or drug consumption, which may be considered as contributory factor in facilitating violence, three levels of interaction can be distinguished between the economic downturn and rise above domestic violence, regarding the examples reported.

1- The victim support counselor, lists several instances of women coming to visit her to obtain information and weigh the costs of staying together against those of separation. Coming from various social backgrounds, at one point, they are cut off from social ties, especially at a professional level: “Until recently, I could bring some hope to women enduring domestic violence. In the event of separation, I could sell “dreams” – beyond the separation, there was the possibility of the return to vocational training, the access to a job, access to adequate housing... And then the economic crisis became a handicap to the realization of these dreams, and I cannot go on with my positive speech... And these women, they know what all this means, so as they are already afraid when they arrive here, we go yet one step further. When a woman arrives in the office and applies for housing, it is awkward, I cannot dangle this hope before her, reality is to live in a shelter, but they can’t hear it. Women now remain longer in violent domestic situations because of the economic crisis”.

2- Unemployment may also contribute to generate violence, especially in couples where tensions already existed. Thus, professional inactivity may lead to more contacts between spouses while the situation was already unfavorable. Sometimes, the couple also faces financial problems, for instance when they have put themselves into debt to access to property ownership. Should they fail to sell their house, they will have to live in forced co-habitation. This new situation may facilitate the acting out, which did not happen up to this time, despite the context of domination.

3- Another issue is about a man who lost his job: “This man had a very strong character, such a charisma that he had total control of his job, perfect control of everybody, his mother, his father, his wife, his children...He had ascendancy over his suppliers, his clients...Now, he has lost his job, and placed the burden on his family. Over the last number of years, there has been

a domination relationship, as he can only function this way. But without physical abuse. The day he lost his job he became more likely to be physically aggressive. And the day his wife decided she could not put up any longer and took the initiative to leave, he couldn't stand it. Then there was a move towards physical violence".

## **2.2 Cultural forms of violence against women**

### **2.2.1 Forced marriages**

Extremely difficult to value accurately, forced marriages are more frequent among women from Turkey and the Maghreb – from 11 to 15 per cent among the generation aged 41-60 (2008), between 4 to 8 per cent among 26-40 year olds (Hamel 2011). Their number would be inversely correlated to the educational level of women. Some studies make a distinction between arranged and forced marriages, as the second ones are accompanied by physical and mental coercion, while arranged marriages may be linked with the full consent of parties. Forced marriages are a form of direct and indirect violence, as women having been married unwillingly would be four times more exposed to domestic violence than those who chose their husband (Hamel 2011:3). According to the ethnologist Germaine Tillion, "the Republic of Brothers-in-law" of exogamous societies contrasts with "the Republic of Cousins" of Mediterranean regions, which turns women into possessions which must remain the exclusive privilege of the family and the lineage.

### **Case n°3**

Amina was born in 1983 in Germany from a German mother and a Tunisian father, who almost always lived in Germany. They were both in employment and belonged to the middle class, enjoying a high standard of life. At the age of 12, Amina was sent back to Tunisia in order to be educated in keeping with tradition. From then, she has been only meeting her parents from time to time and did not pursue a post-secondary education.

However, as Amina grew up, her mother obeyed muslim rules even more strictly than her husband and became increasingly critical of her daughter's insufficient respect of tradition. Thus she was often critical of her daughter's clothing, in her opinion – "too short", "too skin-tight" – and insisted on her duty to wearing hijab.

Above the age of twenty, Amina was married with her first cousin, who lived in the south of France, and was welcomed into her husband's family. Very fast, Amina was kept as an unpaid housemaid and disempowered of all her rights – she might not go out alone, not phone alone, not do anything alone. In addition, Amina was subjected to severe intimate partner violence, and her aunt condoned her son's actions and justified them, considering that her niece deserved what she got.

Some years later, after having two children, Amina only wanted to leave home, but her husband threatened to kill her. One evening, he started beating her so hard that her screams and those of her children alerted the neighbors who called the police. The police came and her husband was caught red-handed and immediately arrested, while Amina and her children were driven to a family shelter, and could later find a small apartment with the help of the community network.

Amina filed a complaint. In 2012, her parents came from Tunisia, where they had retired, to

assist to the trial. When the aunt tried to patch things up with her brother, he refused to continue their relationship, regarding what her son and herself had done to his daughter. However, after the divorce was decreed, the parents found another husband for Amina, because a divorced woman brings shame to the entire family. Amina didn't give up despite the question of her material subsistence and chose to stay in France with very little money rather than to marry a second time with somebody she had not chosen. She has recently found a small job and hopes to be able to rebuild her life.

Mrs. T, a psychologist in charge of a support association for women victims of domestic violence, points out the frequency of this kind of situation – which would constitute a real typical scenario that she must manage on a regular basis: “when I listen to these women, they say one same thing: forced marriages, shame, women situation, impossibility to go back to their country where they are held in low regard, the problem of brothers”. In order to get the opportunities to change the dynamic, they need evidence and witnesses, and most of the time, only the neighbors accept to play this role by calling the police.

Mrs. T takes the view that the current economic crisis had no significant impact on her activity neither on the level of domestic violence: “of course, within urban sensitive areas, you will find much more women whose economical situation is precarious and experiencing violence. From my point of view, this deprives women to leave, but economic reasons don't aggravate domestic violence by themselves. In my opinion, a much significant predictor of the capacity of leaving an abusing husband is the age of the victim. Over fifty, it gets harder for women to go away. Younger women more often manage to leave a violent husband, and prefer being left with nothing than continuing to endure spousal abuse. The issue of children is complex. On one side, they promote courage and give new impetus to their mother. On the other hand, some women hesitate to leave because they do not want to be destitute, but above all because of the harassment they will endure after the separation, because they know that when you have children, there is that legal obligation for the husband to always be informed of the place where his wife stays”.

## 2.2.2 Sexual violence

### Case n° 4

I regularly meet young women who face relationship and communication problems, reports M.O., a psychologist. It was the case of Jennifer, a shy and withdrawn thirteen-year-old girl confronted to a serious depression. Jennifer fell in love with a fifteen-year-old boy in her secondary college. At the very beginning of their meeting, the boy proposed to bring her back home. On the road, he stopped and asked her to perform fellatio on him. In the face of her repeated refusal, he gave notice that if she did not accept, their relation would end. After several failed attempts, the young girl finally accepted, and also as we could have guessed, the boy broke their relationship. It was a fool's deal, the boy knew at once that she would never become her girlfriend.

In my current experience, this kind of “soft” violence becomes very common among teenagers and Jennifer was not alone in this situation. Another girl with whom I dealt with for a long time, maybe a year, was Laetitia, a 14-year-old girl with a slight intellectual handicap. Her parents had to move her from her secondary college because she had performed fellatio on two boys. They requested her to perform it, and she accepted. So Laetitia goes to another school, and within just a few days, it is happening again. So her parents come to see me with her. I asked: “What's going on?” – she answered : “I want to be the same as everybody else”; - “And what

does it mean to be the same as everybody else?"; - "I want to be like my friends, I want to have a boyfriend". So I said "Listen, it is natural for you to have a boyfriend. I know it is not so easy, but I think you make a mistake. Because when you accept, when a boy first comes to see you and asks you something and when you do it; you do it because you imagine that he will become your boyfriend, although this does not happen and he calls his friend who asks you the same thing. So you have to make the difference between boys who will all ask you the same thing but then who will call you – will call you – "yes, they called me a bitch"; - "So you see that this has nothing to do with your wishes".

M.O. emphasizes one more on that this kind of situation is not punishable from a pure legal viewpoint, as all protagonists are under 18, while Laetitia will be deemed to be consent. However, although this is not considered as an assault, her consent is not a true consent, she does not have other real option, and she is guided by psychological state that places her under strong social pressure.

### **III. Gender policy in France: evaluation and recommendations**

#### **3.1 "The bill for equality between women and men"**

Within a European context of regression in terms of women's rights, notably embodied in the recent Spanish abortion bill (December 2013) which rolls back current legislation by only allowing abortion in the case of rape, or when there is a serious mental or physical health risk to the mother, the most ambitious framework gender equality bill has been approved by the French National Assembly on January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2014.

The law of August 6<sup>th</sup> 2012, providing for imprisonment of up to two years and a fine of EUR 30 000 for a person convicted of sexual harassment, was already committed to close the legislative gap opened with the invalidation of the law on sexual harassment by the Constitutional Council, on the grounds of inaccuracy.

Within the new bill, the question of gender equality is addressed as a multi-layered phenomenon, declined in many fields including wage equality, poverty, gender based violence, media portrayal of women, beauty pageants for girls or gender parity issue.

At a professional level, parent-support measures are planned in order to make it easier for parents to reconcile work and family life. Six additional months of paid leave are offered if taken by the second parent.

Among several issues relating to parity, companies with more than 50 employees that do not adhere to equality measures will be excluded from bidding for public contracts.

Laws against domestic violence will be strengthened, notably by supplementing and specifying provisions calling for the eviction of the violent spouse from the conjugal home.

Regarding reproductive rights, the law eliminates the current requirement that women prove they are "in distress" within the first 12 weeks to terminate an unwanted pregnancy.

Sexist or demeaning images of women in the media will be tracked and prohibited, while pilot projects and schemes are already run in some primary schools in order to make teachers aware of the strength of sexist prejudices and stereotypes ("ABCD of equality").

Even though these measures represent a clear progress, especially considering that the

law was achieved in a difficult economic environment, but also because gender inequality is addressed, for the first time in the history of France, as a comprehensive and systemic phenomenon, these last legal developments carry a strong symbolic value rather than tangible and immediate change.

This is the case for instance for the six additional months of parental leave offered to the second parent – most of the time the father: in practice, the amount of the parental leave allowance is too low – less than EUR 600 per month – to really encourage fathers.

Another development concerns the creation of an unpaid family support guarantee, supposed to generate a public financial compensation for lone women who don't get a child support from the father. In practice, a public financial benefit already exists for lone women with children – the Family Support Allowance (ASF), amounting to EUR 90 per month and per child. The new bill's only effective proposal is to pay the difference, for cases where spousal support is less than the amount of the ASF.

In the field of gender-based violence, the 2014 bill for gender equality aims to strengthen the existing procedures implemented by the law of July 9<sup>th</sup> 2010 which authorizes the judge to issue protection orders for the benefit of any person suffering violence at the hands of her partner, or under threat of forced marriage. As well as being very difficult to enforce, it is hard to understand why this measure, is exclusively directed towards the partner and does not take into account violence carried out by the other members of the household. In a related matter, the scheme of remote protection through mobile phone for women victims of violence, which has been implemented experimentally for three years and should be generalized, remains only applicable in specific circumstances of "great danger" for the potential victims, namely those who experienced "reoffending violence from their ex-spouse or partner, or from authors of a rape"<sup>98</sup>: these significant limitations reduce the scope of the program and deserve another look.

### 3.2 Employment

In the area of employment, one priority is to combat abusive recourse to part-time contracts and atypical work, which tend to grow in a period of economic crisis. A new legislation related to the protection of employment was adopted on June 14<sup>th</sup> 2013. It sets at 24 hours a week the minimum part-time working time.

Nevertheless, numerous exceptions allowing a working time lower than 24 hours per week have been foreseen, notably if previous agreements exist at the branch or company level, or if the worker is a student under 26 years old. In addition, specific negotiations have to be initiated in industries where at least one third of the workforce works part-time.

The employment measures of the bill for Gender Equality also suffer from a high number of limitations. Thus in the private sector, the mandatory development of equality plans for companies employing more than 50 persons is not accompanied by significant control procedures.

It is therefore essential to implement external and independent evaluation procedures, for instance through a recognized and legitimate institution as the Labor Inspectorate and also

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<sup>98</sup> "The bill for equality between women and men", 20 January 2014. Paris : Minister for Women's Rights, p. 29.

through collective action. Furthermore, there is no planned procedure for firms under 50 employees.

A leading factor of women's vulnerability to unemployment and underemployment lies in the fact that female employment remains concentrated within a narrow range of sectors and trades: "ten of the 84 professional groups account for more than half of all female employment". By comparison, the 10 major professional groups of men only account for 30 per cent of male employment (DARES 2004). This is due to the significant impact of gender stereotypes on the student's choice of career path. Thus the fight against gender stereotypes must be intensified in order to diversify career guidance. Unfortunately, the pilot project "ABCD of equality", already run in some primary schools with the aim of combating discrimination on the grounds of gender education, became the scapegoat for trivial political calculations and strategies since the beginning of year 2014. More broadly, it is necessary to reduce the labor-market sex segmentation.

However, especially in times of economic crisis, a choice must be made between increasing the employment rate and supporting job desegregation: in order to reach a women employment rate of 75 per cent, closer to the target decided by the EU 2020 strategy, priority is to be given to the access to employment of the less educated, in connection with the fight against serious poverty.

Obviously, many other "classical" recommendations regarding female employment could also be proposed, inter alia to develop financial supports that encourage women's entrepreneurship, or to introduce the principle of mainstreaming in all the pillars of the employment politics.

### 3.3 The pension issue

Economic downturns tend to cause growing uncertainty for the future: the retirement theme is not an exception, especially regarding women. This is due to the high gender gap in relation to the pensions: all retirement plans combined, the average gross pension of women is EUR 932, compared to EUR 1603 for men (DREES 2011). In addition, poor pensioners are mostly women, over-represented among those receiving the old age security, close to the poverty threshold, as it only reaches EUR 787 per month. This, of course, refers back to the gender salary gap and to the atypical and discontinuous career among women workers. While the reasons related to the duration of the insurance should soon start to reduce their impact concerning the generations of women currently in employment, the same cannot be said for the effects of the gender salary gap and of involuntary part-time work, which are still significant. While the last retirement reform claimed being able to make the difference in significantly improving women's situation, the examination of the measures adopted do not permit evidence of progress to emerge. Indeed, the long-term decline in the number of marriages and the increase of the number of divorces, have contributed towards a deterioration of the living standards of women, who won't receive any widow survivor's pension if their husband dies. The 2013 retirement reform mainly relaxes the length of the contribution period necessary for its validation, which favors persons having worked part-time. Maternity periods are also better taken into account.

By 2020, the 10 per cent increase now awarded to parents of three children or more should be replaced by a fixed increase, so as not to privilege the most lucrative positions.

It therefore appears that these changes mostly target two main categories of mechanisms. The first one expands upon family rights, which primarily benefit to women, but also place an emphasis on maternity and thus increase their dependency on men, while it does not convey



the principle of gender equality. The second one takes the form of the “universal” benefits like the old age security allowance, and is in line with a supportive logic which does not suit with the dimensions of autonomy and citizenship.

Another direction could be to reinforce the relationship between the pension and the best salary of the career for all women, as it already currently exists in the public sector.

In order to secure women’s (or men’s) future pension rights when a couple voluntary chooses part-time work, missing contributions should be financed by both partners, as the arrangement benefits both sides.

Finally, regarding the growing instability of families and the emergence of new patterns of conjugal relationships, “paced”<sup>99</sup> couples should be afforded all the rights and privileges of married couples, particularly in the area of taxation on succession.

### **3.4 Poverty and Housing**

In order to fight against poverty and poor quality housing, many paths may be followed. First, these two issues are directly linked with the possibility of finding a job and combating unemployment. Support may also take the form of a direct assistance, including payment of grants to poorly-off families, or the provision of more accommodation, notably the number of emergency shelters. Though, these recommendations are not really realistic, in a context of budget cuts and difficult choices repeatedly denounced by charities and nonprofit organizations.

However, beyond these reservations, the OECD ranks France third in housing assistance as a percentage of GDP, while three to four million people, among whom women-headed families are over represented, are homeless or poorly housed. Housing policy therefore needs to be reconsidered. First, the emergency housing issue deserves to be first addressed, because until this matter is not settled, no long-term policy will be able to be efficiently implemented. Yet current policy would be too much “demand” focused, whereas it should also intend to make the market more attractive for owner-lessors, among whom a lot are currently choosing to leave their property unoccupied. The rules of access to social housing would also deserve to be revised, for instance if you already own your home (Foundation Concorde 2013:27).

Thus, due to many reasons such as high transaction costs, in comparison with surrounding countries, France has a very low rate of residential mobility. A recent law regulating rentals has reinforced this trend. This reduces the mobility of job seekers, deterred by the high cost of changing housing, who do not have the means to travel to take up jobs in regions with higher employment levels.

### **3.5 Violence against women**

#### **3.5.1 Law, housing and violence**

Among the ways of combating domestic violence against women, the field of housing is one of the most significant. This explains, amongst other things, why a 2010 law stipulates that the judge should give the enjoyment of conjugal accommodation to the person who is

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<sup>99</sup> The P.A.C.S (Civil Pact of Solidarity), kind of substitute for marriage, is a civil contract, established in 1999, signed between two persons, whether different-sex nor same-sex, and registered by a court.

not the perpetrator of violence, and also provides specific measures of relocation in social housing for victims of domestic violence. In practice, very few situations go this way. Indeed, among other examples, the French charity A.V.R.E, supporting women and children victims of violence, referred to many cases including in other districts, which illustrate the difficulties in the implementation of the law. In several recent cases encountered by the team, the husband was unemployed while the woman had a job.

For instance, one woman in employment, with a disabled little girl – had an unemployed husband, very aggressive, who used to depreciate her. She was the sole bread earner of the couple and the one who paid the rent. The police was called and enabled her to escape. She approached the community network, took a lawyer and lodged a complaint. Unfortunately, she had to wait six months before her application was processed and her husband convened by the police. This example would be widespread at the moment and shows that the 2010 law is not applied very often in practice. Indeed, several cases have been reported of women paying the rent, having young children, and leaving their home in order to stop enduring violence. Protection orders issued by the judge are not easy to obtain: you need a lawyer, there are long wait times, while legal aid institutions are overwhelmed. Furthermore, in severe abuse situations, women prefer to leave if they have any financial resources as it would be a lost cause to ask the police to drive off a violent husband without a protection order, even if he does not pay the rent. Sometimes, women are also turned away from charity-run shelters due to lack of space – knowing that some women refuse to go to a shelter, notably with their children.

In a context of fiscal consolidation, as we have seen above, politic speeches and formal reforms are not followed by growing material and financial resources, while women experiencing violence are increasingly reacting to media campaigns against gender-based violence. Therefore national emergency numbers are no longer able to respond to calls and when they do, they cannot offer any available emergency shelter to abused women. Support services and nonprofit organizations face an increasing gap between budget cuts, political commitments and the situation at the local level.

Thus a public web portal dedicated to the question of violence against woman should be created, likely to provide a set of legal, safety and social arrangements and services. Linked with the community network, these new features must be able to provide advice, counseling and legal aid to women unable to assert their rights because of several institutional dysfunctions.

### **3.5.2 Fight against the feeling of insecurity**

Beyond the need for an overall increase in police and staffing presence in the street and in public spaces, for instance in transportation, call on the expertise of women in order to improve the urban environment could help them feel safe and secure. First appeared in Canada in the 1990s, Women's "Safety Audits" could help identify the anxiety-provoking situation, in order to ensure a better targeting of improvement measures, such as lighting.

### **3.5.3 Prostitution**

On Wednesday, December 8<sup>th</sup> 2013, a bill "against the prostitution system" was approved by an overwhelming majority of members of the lower house of the French Parliament. It should go through the Senate during summer 2014, before being proclaimed into law in early 2015.

This bill, consistent with the abolitionist position on prostitution, is proposing to penalize any

person paying for sex – up to EUR 3750 and two months of imprisonment in the event of a repeated infringement (Art. 225-12-1)<sup>100</sup>. On the flip side, with the aim to treat prostitutes as exploited victims rather than as criminals, the offense of passive soliciting is being repealed.

With the aim to helping sexual workers willing to stop, a EUR 20 million fund is created, while a provisional residence should be issued to foreign prostitute victims of pimping, if they agree to enter a program to get out of prostitution. Alternative or complementary penalties may also include education and awareness-raising courses against the purchase of sex acts.

The evaluation of the impact of this new law will have to be carefully addressed. In addition, numerous reports have noted the almost total absence of studies on clients of prostitution. This vacuum needs to be filled in order to enhance the fight against human trafficking.

## Conclusion

Beyond its economic and social aspects, the 2008 downturn, which has less affected France than some of her neighboring Southern European countries, has nevertheless revealed the emergence of new rifts and divisions within the French society. Thus ominous trends of xenophobia, racial intolerance, but also homophobia and sexism have resurfaced visibly over the past few years.

This was true, for example, of the legalization of same-sex marriage (2013), which generated a bitter and violent opposition which has still not abated, while in many other European countries, the matter was settled in accordance with laws, without igniting thorny debates and inducing violent behavior.

Gender issues are not better addressed. Even though over the past several years, France has started catching up with the rest of the world, for instance in achieving parity between gender in political life, or by refusing to further neglect the issue of sexual harassment, in the name of the principle of gallantry and in respect of a French exception, the economic downturn gives us a glimpse of much major backlash symptoms detrimental to social ties and towards founding principles of citizenship and equal rights.

It is in this way that the rumor of “The Gender Theory” managed to perform a school boycott by parents convinced that their children were being taught masturbation and a mythic “gender theory” (January 2014). This reveals the worry and anxiety of various interest and heterogeneous groups, some of whom associated with right-wing extremism while others target Muslim families<sup>101</sup>. Building on the ground of outdated and blind beliefs, these groups feed the spiral of hatred, intolerance and violence, and must be tackled by means of targeted policies aiming of ensuring the fundamental human rights, if they were threatened by the potential impact of the global crisis.

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100 Available at: [HTTP://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/13/propositions/pion4057.asp](http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/13/propositions/pion4057.asp) (accessed February 12<sup>th</sup> 2014).

101 Available at : [HTTP://www.jre2014.fr/](http://www.jre2014.fr/) (accessed February 15<sup>th</sup> 2014).

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## **GREECE:**

### **Gender Equality, Development and Women's Rights in the EU Mediterranean basin in the years of financial, political and social crisis**

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Panteion University

## Introduction: Can the crisis reverse gender progress?

Greece is in a deep crisis – economic, social, political, which started in 2008 and which, six years later, still ongoing. Crises undoubtedly create problems to individuals and social structures; at the same time they may provide opportunities – by accelerating social change a prime example of which are gender roles and prospects for gender balance. In those situations the driver originally moving developments is *economic*. However, the ultimate long term impact in society will depend on social and psychological factors which arise as reactions to economic developments and are mediated by and seen through the lens of political developments. The longer the economic crisis lasts, the more profound, but at the same time less difficult to predict, will be the non-economic effects and the gender.

Violence against women acts as a kind of ‘thermometer’ for the overall climate and position of women, and possibly even as a leading indicator of problems on the horizon. Though it could be affected by the general level of violence in the society (including most notably political violence and violent protest) it may be expected to reflect indirectly women’s personal independence – economic, social and familial. This justifies careful tracking of the economic record in order to examine to what extent it is acting as driver for violence by limiting or enabling economic independence.

The current report comes at a time when much of the (macro) *economic* adjustment is nearing its end. The social impacts however are still not clear and could develop in multiple directions. The aim of the report, in addition to a role providing a narrative of developments which affected women to end 2013, is to convey an impression of the directions that matters *may* take in future and on the factors which will influence key turning points. We need to understand the *mechanism* through which such a crisis can have an impact on the position of women and on the dynamics driving developments.

Women as citizens are on the receiving end of major challenges – in some cases those challenges may be greater or more significant than those that men face. However, it is wrong to treat women as passively receiving challenges that happen *to* them. Women can also react to stimuli and play an active role as economic and social agents. In this way, if they are in a position to react, women may rise to challenges; the crisis may well provide an opportunity for advances and consolidating progress. Producing simply a catalogue of wrongs would be far too simplistic. A report such as this must give an idea of the issues at stake and shed light on what might happen.

Therefore the key mechanism is women’s independence. An economic crisis impacts on women’s economic independence and in so doing may generate social consequences. Conversely if women possess independence in acting and reacting, their possibility of reacting proactively and taking advantage of challenges would be greatly increased. In Greece women are predominantly found in those areas – in the family or in production- where greater flexibility is met. Thus, the field of gender balance is one where a greater part of the ultimate impact of the crisis will be decided by the ways in which flexibility is (allowed) to be exercised.

Independence is far more than a legal category, but is based on social and economic relations. We thus need to go behind legal appearances. Greece has been a member of the EU since 1981 and has had more than a generation to adapt its institutional framework to the European *acquis*. It has taken numerous steps in the direction of safeguarding gender balance – in the fields of employment, discrimination, family and violence. This consisted in both legal initiatives and institutional development. As a result, compared to historical situation, and in a number of indicators, the country has showed major progress in the last thirty years.



If these changes were successful, and women's position as a result is less vulnerable, the country should have been prepared to weather a social challenge in a way that does not discriminate between women and men – at least to an extent that threatens achievements.

However, there is a very real unease that this sanguine view is not warranted. Though progress relative to past trends is undeniable, it is less impressive if it is compared to peer countries in Southern Europe. Moreover, gender balance gains were heavily localized in the public sector and were far less important in the large small private sector. In this way there is an unease that gender balance has not permeated sufficiently deeply and in this sense it is vulnerable to being overturned. This unease can be illustrated by the persistence of outdated stereotypical views about the attitudes of women and men even in women's own attitudes and values.

Violence against women is in a sense, the acid test of whether economic independence is playing its role in truly liberating women. If gender progress is real and women's roles more integrated, this should be reflected in a lower prevalence of violence. Similarly violence against women may function as a bell-weather of developments during the crisis – filling gaps in statistical understanding and sounding as an early warning system.

To what extent is what is happening in Greece of interest to other countries rather than simply reflecting local idiosyncrasies and specific factors? A first answer has to do with Greece's central and very visible role in the European crisis: it may be thought to have acted as a trigger and opened the scene for other developments, while it stands out both for the length and depth of the recession. However, the Greek narrative may have deeper significance for European matters. Greece has been a member of the EU for a generation (since 1981) and had adopted the full panoply of the European *acquis* for gender balance. Thus it could provide a testing ground as to how these institutions affect the development of a deep crisis. Reversing causation, European institutions themselves have taken a lead in designing and supervising the memorandum accompanying the bailout package. It is thus a worthwhile question to ask whether European views on gender and on gender mainstreaming have left traces in the Greek policy record.

The macro economy provides the framework in which women's striving for economic independence takes effect. Section 2 attempts to understand the macroeconomic causes of the crisis and the mechanism which is attempting to deal with it. This is a first step, before focussing on the two areas where women's independence is decided: firstly in the labour market and the generation of incomes (section 3) and secondly in the mechanism correcting for imbalances – the system of social protection (section 4). This allows us to proceed to examine the evidence on violence and gender in chapter 5, illustrated by three case studies (Chapter 6). The last chapter outlines policies and policy suggestions to combat violence against women, including reflections on prospects and the wider European picture.

## **1. The MACRO Economy: the scene for women's independence**

This section starts by looking at the causes of the crisis in order to place the overall strategy of dealing with the crisis in context. Developments during the crisis are understood as resulting from the interplay between three factors: strategy, implementation and (non-economic) consequences. This provides the framework for giving a narrative and periodisation of developments to end 2013. This approach allows developments to be understood as outcomes of political economy processes which will be expected to operate in the years to come.

## 1.1 Causes of the Greek crisis

In macroeconomic terms Greece in 2009 was confronted by a 'triple deficiency': an acute public debt and public finance deficit, an equally pressing deficit on the current account of the Balance of Payments and a competitiveness deficiency. The latter, in a sense, was more important than the other two, inasmuch as it lay at the root of their causality.<sup>102</sup> As Greece since 2001 was part of the Eurozone, it could not devalue its currency to overcome the triple crisis (as other countries faced with this type of problem could).

Devaluations had been attempted in Greece with transient success in 1985/7, and again in 1990/2. The drachma was devalued once more in 1998, as a *final* exchange rate change, prior to joining the European Monetary Union. After the drachma was abandoned in 2001, exchange rates and the terms of trade between Greece and its Eurozone partners were irrevocably fixed. Entry into EMU and the lack of exchange rate adjustments were seen in a positive light, as avoiding repeated devaluations (Hardouvelis, 2008). Entry into EMU, by convincingly altering systemic parameters, was then thought as part of the answer of dealing with the underlying competitiveness problem.

So, Greece in 2001, was *already* facing structural problems. Given that devaluation was abandoned as a tool, what is now known as 'internal devaluation' was the sole means of correcting imbalances in future. This was to have happened by means of a 'virtuous circle' using the Eurozone lower interest rates and the regulatory stability, to lead to the desired internal restructuring. This process would have been facilitated by reform of the public sector which would have provided an answer to fiscal problems and would have 'created room' for a competitive private sector to take root.

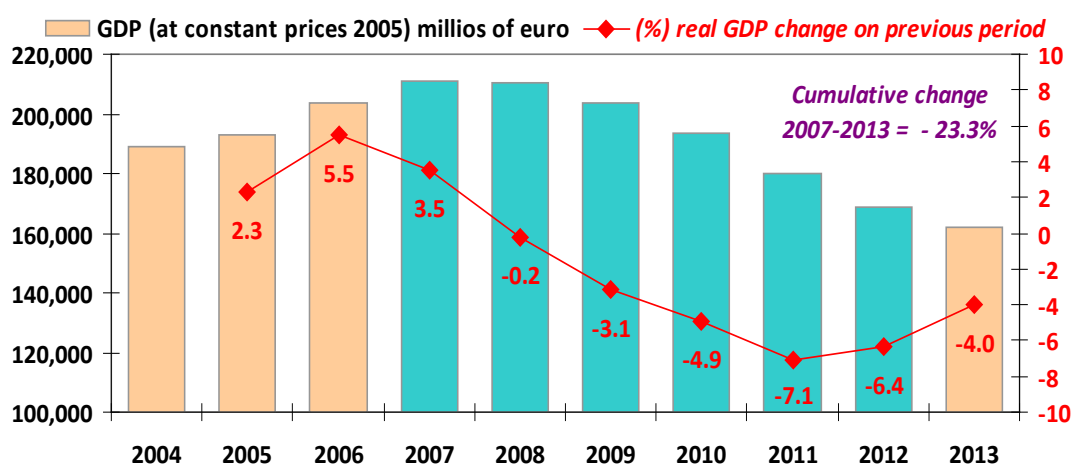
It is well documented that these hopes were ultimately dashed. Though Greece showed a run of years of high growth to 2008 (*Figure 1*), low interest rates were ultimately not used to promote competitiveness, but (largely) to buttress incomes (Hardouvelis, 2011) by expanding the entrenched public sector. This became particularly so after 2007: the then Government tried to 'spend itself' out of trouble just as growth rates were falling and interest rates rising. Given that these parameters determine the sustainability of debt, debt started spiralling out of control. The final straw came with the misreporting of the 2009 deficit: European reactions to this served as a correction to the misapprehension that sovereign bankruptcy was inconceivable. The inability to borrow in early 2010 led with mathematical certainty to the bailout in May 2010 (OECD 2011).

A striking reminder that austerity is *not* the main or even the chief driver of the deep Greek recession, was provided by a revision of the Greek National accounts figures during 2011 (Iordanoglou, 2012, p180). Under this revision, GDP is seen to be falling already in 2008, almost two years *before* the first plausible start of austerity in early 2010. Indeed, the stance of the public finances between 2007 and 2009 was expansionary. The State tried to spend its way out of short term political problems. A start was made with compensations for the summer 2007 forest fires, which influenced directly the September 2007 general election. This was followed by generous wage settlements for the military, civil service and pensions in 2008/9, leading to the explosion of the general government deficit to 15.8% in 2009. The chief driver for 2007-9 developments thus could not possibly be austerity; instead the spotlight must fall on competitiveness, liquidity effects and a developing catastrophic confidence climate for the private sector.

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<sup>102</sup>See also OECD, 2007; 2011, IMF, 2010, Hardouvelis, 2011.

**Figure 1: Real GDP in Greece, 2004-2013 (Levels and rates of change)**



Source: Eurostat & Hellenic Statistical Authority

In conclusion, while the Greek crisis manifested itself as a macroeconomic phenomenon (public sector deficits, unsustainable public debt and lack of competitiveness), its roots were structural in nature. The current Greek recession is thus in origin and in its primary mechanism a private sector production crisis. The necessity to resort to ‘internal devaluation’ and to reform the public sector was not something that had to be improvised as a result of the crisis in 2009; it was part of the policy *desiderata* from the very beginning of euro entry.<sup>103</sup> Yet in many (press) commentaries, the crisis is seen as something almost exclusively due to austerity and to the reduction of incomes controlled by the public sectors such as pensions. This contrast between perceptions and reality is a theme that will recur in the rest of this review.

## 1.2 The position of women at the outset of the crisis

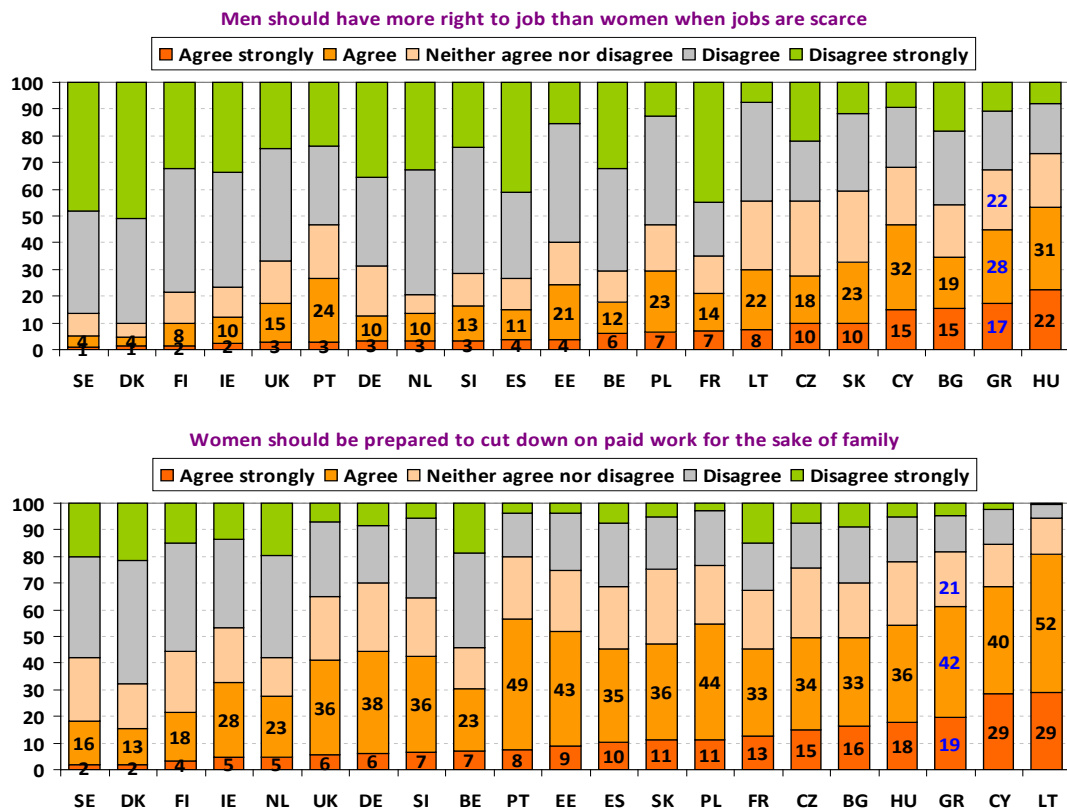
Greece had been part of the EU since 1981 and has been following the institutional lead of the EU in passing gender balance legislation. Legislation has been ubiquitous and has been passed in all areas thought to be central to safeguarding women’s position. In family and personal law, in motherhood protection, labour protection, civil and political rights, etc. The practice of what has been termed legalistic formalism involved a narrow legal reading which allowed the divorce of exercise of rights from conditions of their finance. This allowed rhetoric to dwell *in theory* on equity and universal rights, whilst *in practice* the system provided privileges to ‘insiders’. Legal activism thus produced impressions without attacking the underlying substance, leaving women’s position and gains vulnerable to being revised or even overturned. This vulnerable position is most evident in the persistence – even among women themselves – of outdated stereotypical views about gender roles in economy and the family and the primacy of men and breadwinners in times of stress. Thus gender balance was implicitly treated as a ‘luxury item’ appropriate for the good times but deserving the back seat in times of crisis when men could reclaim priority.

Figures 2 and 3 contrast data from the European Social survey collected when the crisis had just started on two statements: “Men should have more right to jobs when jobs are scarce” and “women should be prepared to cut down on paid work for the sake of the family”. In both questions Greece is at the extreme conservative end for the EU15, only being superseded by Cyprus and

<sup>103</sup>The triple deficit faced in dramatic terms in 2009 was not due to a faulty operation of the single currency; membership of the single currency was regarded as a means to overcome endemic structural problems.

one Eastern country.

Figure 2: Perceptions on gender roles in the labour market and within the family



Source: ESS data, 2010

The emerging picture for societal attitudes of the ESS 2010 data for Greece reveals noticeable stereotypical perceptions regarding the gender roles. For instance, 21% and a further 41% of men fully agree or agree respectively with the view that 'women have to be available to stop employment for family reasons'. Remarkably, an equal proportion of women (18%) and (41%) agree with this view. In a similar way one out of two men (53%) agrees with the view that 'men have to have a priority when jobs are scarce', while even among women the corresponding proportion is 38%.

The evidence on values could mean that women entered the crisis with a significant handicap. Society at large and they themselves believed that, *ceteris paribus*, their contribution would be secondary and their demands of secondary importance. This belief would be confronted by a situation where the best response to the crisis could possibly involve a more proactive and central role to be played by women. Should women, nonetheless, be able to rise to the challenge, and to overcome stereotypes that would have, for this reason, greater importance and could prove more lasting for having been achieved 'against the flow'.

The remainder of this section surveys the situation at the outset of the crisis in the two fields determining economic independence: employment and social protection.

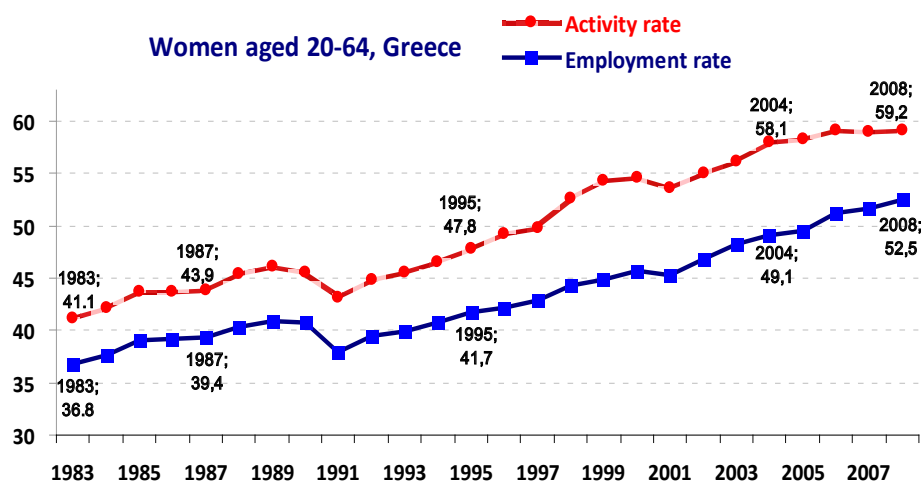
## 1.2.1 Women and Employment

### The statistical record

Women's employment witnessed sustained growth between 1980 and 2008. Although it

remains low by EU standards, nevertheless women's labour force participation increased by 50% cumulatively in three decades. These trends in women's labour force participation were consistent with rising women's employment rates (from 36% in 1983 to 52% in 2008).<sup>104</sup> As Figure 4 shows, most of the change in women's participation and employment rates occurred in the 12-year period from 1993 to 2004. At the same time, women's unpaid work in family businesses and farms also declined, making the shift to paid work even more impressive.<sup>105</sup>

Figure 4: Activity and Employment rate, women aged 20-64, Greece 1983-2008



Source: LFS series, Eurostat

Unquestionably, part of the story of Greek women's advancement in the labour market can be clearly documented, as presented above, in two 'stylised facts': first, in the rising labour force participation rates which are in line with rising employment rates reflecting thus 'gains' in terms of increasing employment outcomes; and second the outstanding shift away from unpaid status to independent (paid) employment, revealing 'within-employment-status' gains for women.

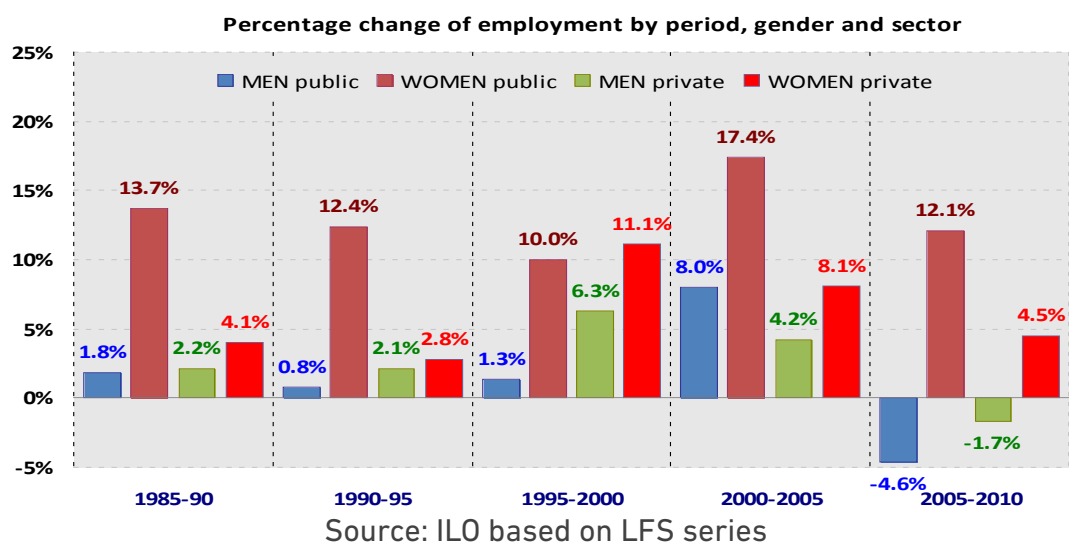
The flip side of the same story consists of a number of specificities and weaknesses; especially if one takes into account that most of the increase was absorbed by the Government sector (Figure 5)– central government, local authorities and public enterprises (Lyberaki 2010). The number of women in paid employment increased between 1985 and 2008 by almost 560 thousands. Since this increase was much higher than that noted for men (433 thousands), the percentage of women increased from 37% of all employees in 1985 to over 39% in 2008. But the increase was much stronger in the public sector, where the cumulative growth rate of women over the period 1985-2008 was 84% compared to 35% in the private sector (Figure 2a-b). If the data allowed us to take into account other firms owned or controlled wholly or partly by the government and banks, the preponderance of the 'protected sector' in female employment would be even larger.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Participation rates include those working and those looking for work (the unemployed) as a percent of the population. Unemployment rates are expressed as a proportion of the labour force – i.e. those participating in the labour market.

<sup>105</sup> It is worth mentioning that women's unpaid work declined both in absolute and in relative terms over the last three decades. For instance, in 1983 almost 385,000 women were in unpaid work (representing a share of 35% of total female employment), while in 2008 this number declined to less than 167,000 women representing about 9% of total female employment.

<sup>106</sup> Moreover, as this period coincided with the arrival of around 1 million immigrants (who were not employed in the public sector) the dominance of the public sector in female employment increase would be even more noteworthy.

Figure 5: Percentage Change of Employment by gender & sector, Greece 1985-2010



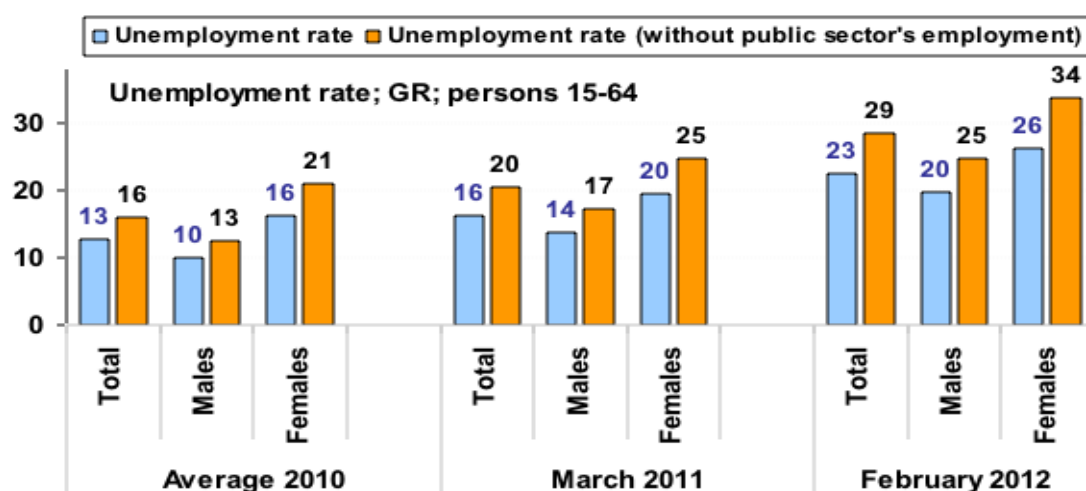
Moreover, *employment protection legislation and social protection* of workers was enforced in a way that in practice guaranteed the position of well-placed groups ('*insiders*') at the expense of the unprotected and residual groups of '*outsiders*'. It would come as no surprise that the insiders were chiefly in protected sectors. Outsiders, on the other hand were found in the private sector, or in areas where *internal* protection could not compensate for openness. In turn, *employment protection for insiders* implied large queues at the entrance of the labour market and a concentration of unemployment among the young (labour market entrants) but also among women. This gender dimension evidenced itself both in persistently higher unemployment risk for women, but also a very low participation rate, especially for mothers of small children. The most disadvantaged group among '*outsiders*' consists of immigrant women (who comprise slightly under half of the migrant population).

Similar findings become evident regarding the gender pay gap: again gender differentials in Greece were persistent and wide, indicating an overall gender pay gap at a level of 22% in 2008; the fifth higher among the 27MS in 2008.

These gender gaps strongly reinforce the other 'deficits', such as: i) the competitiveness problem of the formal economy nurtures a large informal sector characterised by insecurity of employment, low wages and tax evasion; ii) the welfare state provision deficit has necessitated the emergence of an 'informal' system where women shoulder most of the effort; and iii) the crystallisation of wide inequalities within the labour market.

Unemployment rates for women remained much higher than men's both at times of high and at times of low growth. The same holds in periods when unemployment rates were increasing as well as when they were going down: a sizable gender gap in unemployment rates has been one of the constant features of the Greek labour market. In view of the fact that one out of four women in employment in Greece holds a tenured position in the public sector, the risk of the '*other women*' not in the public sector becoming unemployed becomes much higher. Pooling the two sectors in estimating the unemployment risk results in underestimating the risk of unemployment faced in the private sector (Figure 6). This difference becomes higher as the economic downturn persists: for instance, while in March 2011 the difference between women's total unemployment rate (20%) and women's unemployment rate without public sector (25%) was 5 percentage points; in February 2012 the corresponding difference is 8 percentage points (women's total unemployment rate and women's unemployment rate without the public sector are estimated to be equal to 26% and 34% respectively).

Figure 6: Unemployment rate, by gender, with and without public sector's employment, Greece



Source: Author's calculations based on LFS data

This situation resulted in the presence of a number of 'gender gaps' (Table 1).

Regarding the gender gaps in employment, despite the significant increase in employment of women in Greece over the past decades,<sup>107</sup> women's employment rates continue to lag behind the corresponding figures for EU-27 in the first decade of the 21st century; being also lower compared to many European countries.<sup>108</sup> On the other hand, men's employment rates in Greece are quite close to the European average. The combination of these two facts might explain the significantly higher gender employment gap (27pp) difference between men's and women's employment rate in Greece in 2007 compared to the EU-27 average (14pp). Maternal employment rates in Greece also tend to be lower than for women in other countries.

Gender Gaps in Earnings: Similar findings become evident regarding the gender pay gap: again gender differentials in Greece appear to be persistent and wide, indicating an overall gender pay gap that exceeded 21% in 2007; being higher compared to the EU-27 average (17%).

Table 1: Gender Gaps in Labour Market Outcomes before the economic downturn

<b>Labour Market Outcomes: <i>The breadwinner model at a glance</i></b>	<b>Greece: 1983</b>		<b>Greece: 2008</b>		<b>EU-27: 2008</b>	
	<b>Rate (%)</b>	<b>Gender Gap</b>	<b>Rate (%)</b>	<b>Gender Gap</b>	<b>Rate (%)</b>	<b>Gender Gap</b>
Women's <b>Unemployment rate</b> , 20-64	10.5	5.0	11.3	6.3	7.2	1.0
Women's <b>Employment rate</b> , 20-64	36.8	-47.1	52.5	-27.9	62.8	-15.1
Women's <b>Activity rate</b> , 20-64	41.1	-47.7	59.2	-25.4	67.7	-15.4
Women's (20-49) <b>Employment rate, with child</b> aged <6 years			54.1	-43.1	65.2	-26.5
Women (25-54) <b>in single-person household without</b> children			77.6	-12.5	69.7	-13.9
Women (25-54) <b>in single-parent household with</b> children			79.0	-10.6	81.5	0.1

Source: Author's calculations based on LFS series.

107 See Lyberaki, 2011.

108 See Nicolitsas, 2006

These findings did not emerge 'in a vacuum'. Part of the influences causing them could be sought in policies pursued – *despite* the wide spread of gender balance discourse:

Labour and labour protection was a component of the underlying malaise. Greece in the period since 1974 took a very active interest in legislation protecting employment and incumbent workers. Greek legislation protecting employment was hence, on the OECD scale, one of the most activist (Nicoletti et al, 2000; Burtless, 2001).

A factor that played a key (and often unappreciated role) was the advent of immigrant labour. Globalisation meant that Greek production was increasingly subject to international competition, most evident in traditional sectors such as textiles. Whereas Greece since the War was a net labour exporter, the collapse of the socialist regimes to its North, brought in the 1990s a sudden influx of immigrants chiefly from Albania, but also from Bulgaria and Romania (Lyberaki, 2008; Triantafyllidou and Maroukis, 2012), amounting to more than a tenth of the labour force. This large and flexible labour force was added to 'outsiders' and was instrumental in keeping labour costs down and aiding competitiveness.<sup>109</sup> Immigrant women by providing a willing supply of care services, allowed female labour participation to increase in the late 1990s (Lyberaki, 2011). These developments terms did buy some time, but they were from the start unlikely to correct the underlying macroeconomic and structural problem. When the external beneficial stimuli started being reversed after 2005, the competitiveness problem reasserted itself (Hardouvelis, 2011).

## 1.3 Women and the welfare state

The Greek formal social protection system evolved gradually from a pre-existing situation where the functions of the social safety net and social protection were, as in many developing countries today, provided by the family, buttressed and financed by the large and resilient network of small family firms. 'Formal' social protection (with the possible exception of hospital health care) was 'layered on' to the pre-existing framework and largely took its continuing operation for granted. This section looks first at the formal system of social protection and proceeds to the informal, family based, system.

### 1.3.1 Formal social protection

Formal social protection, in common with other Southern European states, rests on a strong "*male bread-winner assumption*". Furthermore, it is centred round *old age protection and pensions*, which comprise the largest part. The Greek pension system is fragmented and costly and still largely built around the 'male breadwinner model' in which women are entitled to derived rights earned by the male breadwinner. The situation up to 2010 was marked by a persistent failure to reform the pension system, a fact which explains many of the other key features of the system: the *low emphasis placed on family expenditures and other benefits designed to help women* balance work and family obligations, the *non-existent social safety net* and the *very low effectiveness in combating poverty*. Thus despite considerable increases in expenditure in the 15 years to 2010, the social protection system remained essentially unreformed and focused on financing the pension system; hence it was unprepared to meet the challenge of the crisis.

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<sup>109</sup>Its influence was particularly marked in agriculture, construction and tourism.



The above can be summarised in five distinguishing characteristics (with important adverse implications on women):

**I. Overall expenditure trends.** Greece showed a fast rise of public expenditure in the share of GDP (from 20 to 24 percent) between 1995 and 2001.<sup>110</sup>

**II. Composition of expenditure- preponderance of pensions.** The Welfare State in Greece is mainly about high social expenditure on pensions - only partly fuelled by fast underlying ageing; most of the increase is due to expenditure per head. Pensions are provided by a multitude of providers and are exceptionally fragmented, a fact which explains the persistent inequalities among pension recipients. This inequality is evident in large minorities retiring early as well as large divergences in pensions per head. The largest pensions are concentrated in the public sector, while the lowest among farmers and the self employed. The strong growth trend of pensions was also affected by a failure to implement meaningful reform: Since 1992 there were three failed attempts at pension reform. This has two effects: it perpetuates the original characteristic of the pension system as built around 'male breadwinners' where women often enter as beneficiaries of derived rights rather than claimants on their own right. Secondly, the priority in financing pensions placed an effective block on developing new kinds of social protection – such as those directed to the family.

**Gender Gaps in Pensions:** Old-age pension coverage differs substantially between men and women resulting in an overall gap of 35pp.<sup>111</sup> Equally important are gender gaps in old-age pension entitlement. One might interpret these gaps in old-age pension entitlement as long-term outcomes (or reflections) of labour market participation gaps of the same cohorts earlier on in their lives.

**III. Underdevelopment of non-pension social protection.** Turning to how total social protection is distributed by function, we see that Greece kept the original structure by function almost constant – despite considerably increasing expenditure on a per capita basis. In IE, in contrast there is evidence of structural change by function. The areas where Greece especially lags behind are those of employment protection (low protection of unemployment; little active labour market) and chiefly those on the family (child care, long term care) and the social safety net.

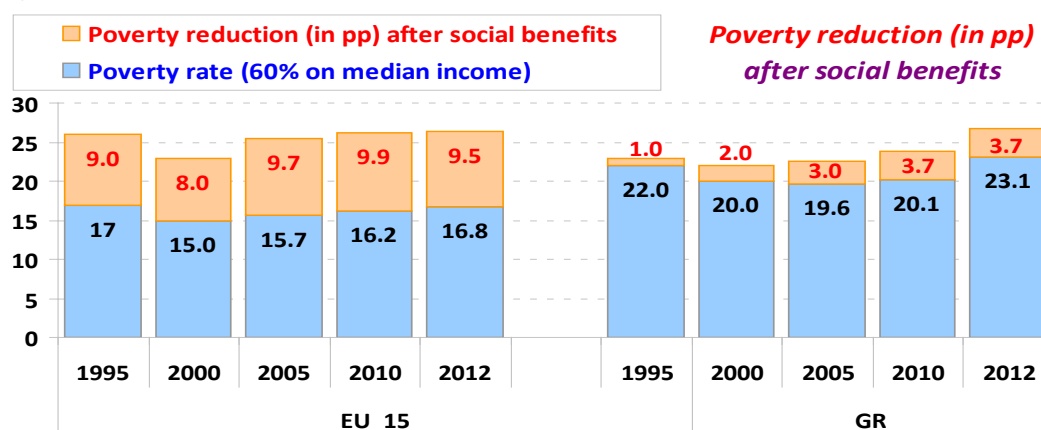
**IV. A non-existent social safety net.** Almost all social expenditures in Greece is categorical, in the sense that it is unrelated to income level and hence essentially unresponsive to needs as those ebb and flow with the economic cycle. Means tested expenditure doubles from a very low base to 1998 and stays stagnant since then. A means-tested pension supplement was introduced in 1996, but (despite rhetoric) this was not followed up by expanding the principle in the direction of providing a safety net.

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<sup>110</sup>Greek statistics seriously underestimated social protection until 1998, when a reexamination revised the reported 16,8% for 1998 23,8%. There remains a suspicion that undercounting may explain the stability in the mid2000s.

<sup>111</sup> See Tinios and Georgiadis, 2012.

Figure 7: Poverty rate and reduction in poverty risk (in pp), after social benefits



**V. Low social effectiveness of social expenditure.** Given the above it should come as no surprise that social expenditure is remarkably ineffective in alleviating poverty (Figure 7). Social transfers reduce poverty risk in Greece by 3pp, while in Ireland by 24pp. This impact is slightly higher than its very low levels in the mid-90s, but is still less than a third of the EU15 average. This testifies that social expenditure in Greece is motivated by reasons other than helping the needs of the poor.

Apart from being fragmented and unresponsive to specific needs, the Formal Welfare System was hostile to women, in the sense of perpetuating and even aggravating gender inequality and gender gaps. Table 2 testifies to this.

Table 2: Gender Differences in Pensions and Social Security before the crisis

<i>Gender Differences in Social Protection, 2010</i>	Greece	rank (#) 27MS	EU-27
<b>Gender Gap in Pension (%)</b> , pensioners 65+ years	<b>35.6%</b>	21	<b>38.8%</b>
Pensioners 65-80 years	<b>38.3%</b>	21	<b>40.7%</b>
Non-widowed persons 65-80	<b>40.6%</b>	19	<b>52.8%</b>
Non-widowed persons 80+	<b>32.2%</b>	10	<b>49.6%</b>
<b>Non-Coverage by the pension system: (%)</b> of women aged 65+	<b>16.8%</b>	23	<b>1.0%</b>
<b>Gender Gap (W-M) in Non-Coverage by the pension system (in pp):</b> persons aged 65+	<b>13.3pp</b>	23	<b>5.8pp</b>
<b>Intra-household Non-Coverage Gap (W-M in pp):</b> elderly couples (aged 65+)	<b>26.2pp</b>	22	<b>12.7pp</b>
<b>Women's mean pension</b> as (%) of GDP per capita	<b>39%</b>	17	<b>45%</b>
<b>Men's mean pension</b> as (%) of GDP per capita	<b>61%</b>	15	<b>74%</b>
<b>Women's pension</b> as (%) of national poverty line	<b>112%</b>	19	<b>120%</b>
<b>Men's pension</b> as (%) of national poverty line	<b>173%</b>	14	<b>196%</b>
<b>Poverty rate (%)</b> : Women aged 65+	<b>23.3%</b>	22	<b>18.2%</b>
<b>Poverty rate: Gender Gap (W-M in pp)</b> , aged 65+	<b>4.5pp</b>	12	<b>5.4pp</b>

Source: Calculations, based on EU-SILC 2010 data.

Greece is very definitely the outlier, even among Mediterranean countries. Immigrants helped to supply personal care services and supplied a needed dose of flexibility to the labour market. Reforms stalled repeatedly on pension issues and did not proceed further.

### 2.3.2. The informal side – the family and social protection

We have seen that Greece had an exceptionally fragmented formal social protection system, which combined high expenditure with low effectiveness - essentially because it had always been geared to financing privileges. The considerable greater funds assigned for social purposes since 1995 paid for more of the same, with little change in structure either to cover new risks or improve governance and delivery mechanisms. As a result it was prevented from operating a formal safety net. Any residual demands and increased needs were *ipso facto* met by the family and informal networks – by an informal welfare state.

The contribution of the family and more generally informal support networks is certainly not a Greek phenomenon. Data from the panel Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE<sup>112</sup>) of people aged 50+, can be used to examine how Greece and Southern Europe differ in the ways that the formal and informal systems coexist and interact. SHARE data allows us to define a particular social need affecting particular individuals and to see how that need was met across Europe.

We focus on three types of need, in all of which women play a crucial role: Help to people with disabilities, help during periods of unemployment and help available for working mothers after the birth of their child.

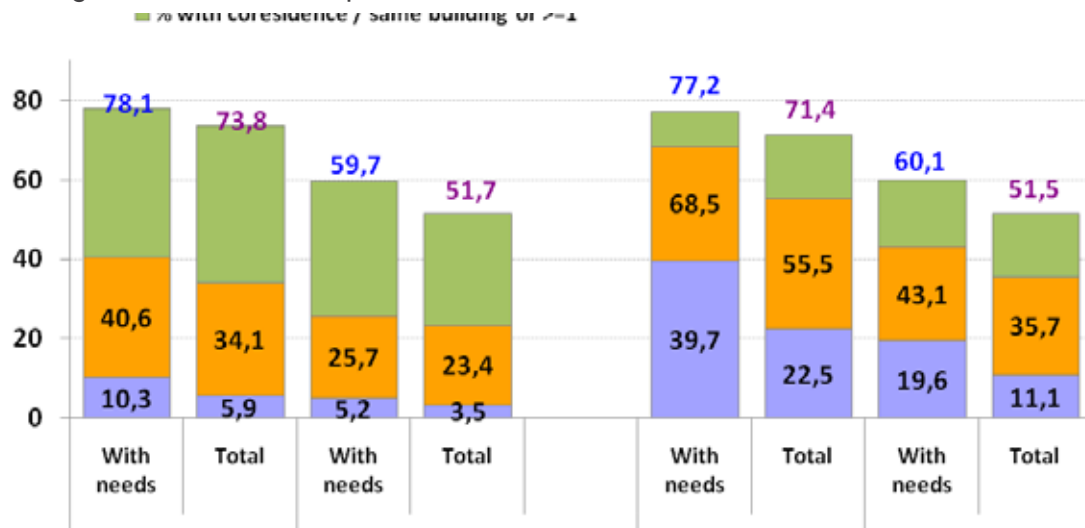
A. Who cares for the needy? Figure 8 gives an impression of the significance of informal care. It contrasts people with demonstrably greater needs<sup>113</sup> with others without such needs. It shows that informal help as a complement to social protection is not just a Greek phenomenon – great need elicits greater informal care in *all* countries. However, the informal system is larger and more responsive in Greece: 40% of needy people over 75 years old receive two or more kinds of informal help, as opposed to 22% if they do not. The corresponding figures in other countries are 20% and 11%.

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112 For SHARE see [www.share-project.org](http://www.share-project.org). In Börsch-Supan et al 2011 there are first findings of the third wave of SHARE data.

113 Interpreted widely as (a) >1 ADL problem, (b) being in the poorest 20% or (c) being unemployed. ADL=Activities of Daily Living, based on a standardised questionnaire designed and used extensively to gauge the extent of need for personal help in performing personal tasks such as dressing, bathing etc. and hence to judge the need for personal care services.

Figure 8: Informal responses to need: Greece and Other SHARE countries



Source: Author's calculation based on SHARE w2 data

B. Who provides last resort help? Table 3 codifies a question from the retrospective 3<sup>rd</sup> wave of SHARE, documenting experiences covering the entire working life of respondents. The question asks how periods out of the labour force in the life of respondents were financed. Given that respondents were aged 50+ in 2007, this essentially enquires into the situation from the 1950s on. Predictably, financial support from the spouse -or the family- predominate in all countries. However, one should not miss the stunning discrepancy between Greece and all other countries (even those of Southern Europe) in the case of 'Benefits from the State' (6% in Greece as opposed to 43%). In the past generation, covering the working life of today's 50+ population, the State had, essentially, been absent.

C. Who helps when a child is born? We focus on those women in SHARELFE who had been in employment before their *first* child was born and stopped working when their child was born. The question is similar to those for periods out of the force, but this time we also examine the intermediate cases – i.e. support only from the State, from both and only from the family. This allows us to delve into whether informal provision is substituting or complementing State provision. Table 4 reveals a definite North-South Gradient. In the South the family substitutes for the State. Greece stands out as the country, even in Southern Europe, where the state – on its own or along with the spouse – has the lowest proportion. Relying exclusively on the family probably came with the cost of greater pressure to depart from formal employment.

Table 3: Source of Income during past periods of out of work in respondents' lifetimes, SHARELIFE data on people aged 50+ in 2009, Selected Countries

	Sources of income during periods out of work (%)		
SHARELIFE W3	Financial support from spouse or partner	Financial support from family and friends	Benefits from state
'Nordics' (SE,DK,NL)	59,2	40,3	49,2
DE	72,2	29,2	50,1
BE	60,9	38,9	48,0
FR	67,7	36,5	41,5
'Continental'	66,9	37,6	43,0
IT	55,4	63,5	7,9
ES	42,0	70,5	23,7
<b>GR</b>	<b>56,4</b>	<b>45,6</b>	<b>5,8</b>
'Southern'	51,4	61,4	12,9
'Eastern'	75,5	31,0	44,7
All countries	63,4	41,3	41,3

Source: Author's calculations from SHARELIFE (SHARE W3) data.

Table 4: The substitutive and the complementary role of informal welfare state to the formal state in providing support during Maternity Leave, selected European countries.

<i>Sources of income during Maternity Leave</i>					
SHARELIFE W3	Only from State	State and Spouse	Only from spouse / family	Other	Total
<b>Nordics</b>	<b>15,8</b>	<b>34,8</b>	<b>39,1</b>	<b>10,2</b>	<b>100</b>
DE	8,0	36,8	44,2	11,0	100
BE	13,3	46,8	29,5	10,4	100
FR	6,7	40,9	44,1	8,4	100
<b>Continental</b>	<b>8,3</b>	<b>37,7</b>	<b>43,5</b>	<b>10,5</b>	<b>100</b>
IT	6,1	14,2	73,3	6,3	100
ES	3,3	6,7	88,6	1,4	100
GR	1,1	6,2	84,8	7,9	100
<b>Southern</b>	<b>2,6</b>	<b>6,5</b>	<b>87,4</b>	<b>3,4</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Eastern</b>	<b>11,7</b>	<b>35,7</b>	<b>47,5</b>	<b>5,1</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>All countries</b>	<b>9,7</b>	<b>34,8</b>	<b>47,0</b>	<b>8,5</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Author's calculations from SHARELIFE (SHARE W3) data.

Recapitulating: Greece is by no means unique in possessing an informal welfare state – family support exists throughout Europe. However, in the South of Europe this had to substitute for formal welfare provision. In more universalistic systems the family complemented State provision. Reliance exclusively on the family probably carried a cost in the sense of discouraging involvement in the formal labour market. Nevertheless even compared with Southern Europe, Greece stands out as a case where the State is least active and the family correspondingly more important. As the aggregate statistics showed, this state of affairs was not materially altered by initiatives and reforms in formal social protection. As a result, when the crisis struck

in 2009 it would have been expected that informal social protection mechanisms – in which women played a key role – would have borne the brunt of the impact.

The centrality of women in informal social protection mechanisms is nowhere clearly reflected in statistics. Social protection statistics and other administrative data ignore gender and are essentially gender blind. The presence of gender has to be inferred from sample surveys (such as SHARE or EU-SILC), and is seldom the focus of attention. This is matched by the absence of gender in the policy dialogues, except where this is mandated by the subject matter itself, as for example in EU-sponsored events explicitly on gender. Gender mainstreaming is thus honoured as lip service but not followed in practice in the sense that gender is ignored.

## 1.4 Women and vulnerability

Women confronted the crisis in 2009 from a relatively new socio-economic position because:

- They were *more integrated* in the world of work than in previous decades;
- However, their overall *participation lagged* those of other Southern European countries;
- There was a *sharp division between women in the public sector and those in the private sector*;
- Women in the public sector enjoyed greater protection as gender directives were implemented; however, the public sector was the sector at the heart of the crisis and for that reason more vulnerable;
- Women in the private sector were more exposed and were mostly in the ranks of outsiders;
- In this way, *women were more likely to be vulnerable to the crisis*; however, and for the same reason, they are also in categories of those who could respond more easily to any opportunities that might appear;
- *Social protection did little to correct* that picture. The inability to reform pensions acted as a block to social policy initiatives that would have helped the position of women;
- In contrast, women played a dominant role in the *informal social protection* mechanisms, which operated in the context of the family and would have been expected to be called to provide an answer to challenges brought on by the crisis.

## 2. Crisis and the Dynamics of the bailout period

Developments since 2010 have to be understood as resulting from the interplay of three factors: *Firstly*, the unfolding of an overall strategy designed to deal with the debt overhang problem, as well as its presumed root causes. This overall strategy – composed of both external and internal parts – was conceived in 2010, after the depth of the Greek public finance was uncovered in late 2009. It is, in essence, and after minor adjustments being pursued now. The second factor comes during the implementation process. Problems in implementing the strategy transpired both in its external dimension, but chiefly, in its internal parts. As a consequence, the original equilibrium of the strategy was in practice altered, leading to measures unforeseen at the

planning stage and a far greater than expected depth of the recession, especially in employment and on the private sector. The third factor which completes the mechanism were the social and political consequences of the perceived policy changes and their effects as mediated in the political discussion between the lenders, the Government, the political parties, the unions and civil society. Unrest and public anger (which can boil over into protest) may be explained by a disjuncture between the magnitude of changes and the insufficiency of engagement and explanations offered for the programme being pursued.

Women as we have seen, are over-represented among outsiders and also play key roles in the informal welfare state. Thus they are likely to be amongst those affected more directly by the crisis. Being more flexible though and being in less entrenched positions carries with it the benefit of being more supple in reactions.

## **2.1 Dynamics: Strategy, implementation and reactions place women centre stage**

### **A. The Overall Strategy.**

Greece had to deal with an eventuality, which had not been envisaged when the euro architecture had been decided. Thus responses were frequently delayed as the policy framework for dealing with them (in the context of the operation of the Eurozone) had to be decided and tried for the first time in Greece. Nevertheless the division of responsibility was *in principle* clear: Internal adjustment (for which the Greek Government would be chiefly responsible, aided by the 'troika) would look after the primary public sector deficit and External adjustment and debt sustainability would be the concern of the EU, IMF and ECB. *In practice*, however, this demarcation of responsibility was not applied and the two levels were confused.

The External dimension: Debt sustainability. The chief desideratum was to secure credibility by preventing an explosion of debt. This was pursued by actions on the capital account: (a) provision of finance to service the loans (b) direct reduction of debt ('haircut') on *two* separate occasions to a cumulative total of over 75 per cent (c) transfer of liabilities from private creditors to the ECB and governments (d) debt restructuring (prolongation of loans, interest reductions) (e) recapitalization of banks to deal with the consequences of the debt write-down. In end 2013 there were two outstanding issues: completion of the recapitalization of banks (causing problems in liquidity) and the issue of debt sustainability. The official position is that, once primary surplus achieved debt, sustainability will be examined again, implying action on officially-held debt.

Novel policy instruments and governance mechanisms had to be invented as the problem developed after 2010. The most obvious example is the supervision of the loan agreement by a 'troika' composed of the IMF, ECB and EU commissions. As a result, frequently discussions at EU level delay plan implementation. EU-level developments such as overall reflation at the Eurozone level could greatly aid domestic issues but were still under discussion. As a result external demand and a European-level recession added a further deflationary twist.

Internal strategy. The 'triple deficit' had to be convincingly addressed. Given the strategic decision to remain in the Eurozone, the provision of bailout finance enabled a three pronged strategy *for the internal economy*: (1) internal devaluation to restore competitiveness, i.e. reducing the cost of producing in Greece as opposed to in other countries (2) restructuring the public sector to answer the public sector deficit, by increasing revenue and/or cutting

expenditure and (3) structural changes to promote speed and flexibility in the operation of the economy.

The original idea, in theory, was that reducing the size of the public sector would 'make room' for the private sector to expand and fill the gap – provided it had managed to be competitive enough to gain market share in exports or to substitute for imports. The gain in flexibility will allow the realignment of resources to enable this strategy to bear fruit. In *practice*, though, both the timing and the policy mix were not as planned, with the consequence of programme slippages and a recession far deeper than originally forecast – which pushed all targets back. The controversy around this took place in very technical terms surrounding the 'fiscal multipliers' used in the original programme which subsequent analysis showed to be higher than thought. In other words, the outcome was worse than expected largely due to its implementation not conforming to expectations. However it may have been there were a number of revisions and extensions of the programme. Nevertheless, by 2013 there had been a massive fiscal adjustment leading to a small fiscal surplus in end 2013. The year 2014 thus ushers a new, and possibly qualitatively different, phase of the programme characterized by primary surpluses on the fiscal side and (it was hoped) the beginnings of recovery.

## **B. Implementation of the programme.**

The Greek bailout was characterised by uncommonly large differences between planned initiatives and actual outcomes. These implementation issues played a far greater role than is usually allowed for. In consequence, it is important to lay out the chief factors concerning governance and to understand that under the bailout the rules of the political economy game had changed. This was due to three influences:

First, the Memorandum added to the political economy game a new player with firm veto power – the Troika as the single creditor – as well as new rules. The presence of the Troika, provided an easy target and a focus for populist opposition. A further side-effect, was that domestic players in practice feel no need to propose alternatives, other than to comment on troika initiatives from the sidelines. The different and conflicting viewpoints and understanding of the issues were sure to add to friction. From the point of view of those international organisations the chief failing of the programme could be summarised as the lack of 'ownership' for the programme on the part of domestic players. The programme was treated essentially as a foreign import largely imposed by the creditors. With the passage of time, it was easy to blame austerity for all effects and to forget that austerity itself was dictated by the fiscal collapse of 2009. Greek politics was refashioned with the fault line being support for or opposition to the bailout and the troika.

Second, a hard budget constraint – is rigidly enforced in its hardest version. Unlike pre-crisis times, budget overruns have to be counterbalanced by new measures. The inability to borrow means that all initiatives cost as to their public finance impact – which is understood as the overarching objective. Thus, as the Troika is the only source of loan finance, shortfalls must be made up *in the same time period*. A retreat in one part of the programme has to be made good with extra measures in another.

These two developments *de facto* implied a new way to solve the annual budget constraint of the fiscal system. Overruns previously simply led to an increase in *ad hoc* grants and a rise in overall State borrowing. In the post MoU world, this is blocked by the effective budget constraint. If structural reform (for whatever reason) cannot lead to specific 'deep cuts', as budgeted, this has to be made up by across the board –generalised– cuts or by taxation hikes. The latter are essentially a systematic 'unforeseen consequence' of reform procrastination.



For example, in the case of pensions, this 'unforeseen consequence' was solved by cutting *existing* pensions across-the board on a total of *ten* different occasions between May 2010 and March 2012.

Third, governance shortcomings meant that there were effective limits to administrative capacity which acted independently as delaying factors or could be used by domestic actors in order to show their opposition to the troika and the bailout programme. An incomplete catalogue of governance issues could include: Multiple layers of responsibility where decisions could become bogged down. Insufficient statistical information. Time lags in implementation. Lack of discussion and debate implied that problems along the way were not identified early on necessitating enabling measures halfway along. Finally the complexity of the system of government meant that a large number of instruments and enabling actions had to be undertaken for a particular legislative initiative to have its desired effect. The absence of 'ownership' implied that even after issues were identified, there was a shortage of volunteers to correct them or to place them back on track. As social consequences cumulated over time, political obstacles became pervasive and more decisive over economic outcomes.

The overall result was that policy directions and decisions were not automatically implemented. There were widespread delays in particular in matters affecting controversial subjects, chiefly linked to labour matters and the status of the public sector. However, the political economy dynamics of operating under the bailout meant that delays or non implementation in one area had to be compensated by changes (and over-adjustment) in another. As a consequence of this the programme as actually implemented was considerably different from that planned. Similarly, outcomes were far from those originally envisaged.

### **C. Social and economic consequences - women as providing most of the needed flexibility**

- The mechanism of imperfect implementation implied that more change was concentrated in those areas where there was less resistance or where there was more flexibility to begin with. Those more vulnerable areas or groups were affected earlier than others and their adjustment had to be more deep.

This process altered the original strategy in a number of key respects:

- Balance between expenditure and tax adjustment;
- More had to be produced from taxes rather than from public expenditure. Given that the tax base was not broadened this meant a greater tax burden borne by the same tax payers;
- Balance between state public finance and liquidity;
- Banks were hit by shortages of liquidity. Loans to small scale firms suffered more and very early on (as what liquidity existed was channelled to fuel the public sector deficit) this left less for the private sector;
- After the debt haircut the balance sheet of the banks was severely affected;
- As a result, liquidity to the private sector was severely curtailed leading to unemployment and company closures;
- The timing of actions. As expenditure reductions were delayed and were substituted for by across the board tax rises this meant that the recession was deeper;
- Deeper than expected recession – fiscal multipliers;
- The implementation issues and their concentration in particular things meant that the recession was far deeper than expected;

- This had major effects on domestic demand, delayed fiscal adjustment and also meant that debt sustainability was more difficult to achieve;
- Balance between private and public – as the public sector adjustment was delayed due to reactions, more of the shift undertaken by private, especially those parts of it which were more flexible – commerce and small business;
- Public sector austerity was directed where cuts would provoke less resistance. New programmes and benefits and transfers directed to outsiders suffered more. In this way social infrastructure provided by municipalities was affected less than public pay;
- Both the depth and duration of the programme as well as the way it was portrayed in political commentary meant that the political consequences of the programme were magnified. A socio-psychological schema to track the political repercussions parallels the reaction to the crisis with the reaction of individuals following a death– the well-known ‘five stages of mourning’. Greek society’s reaction to what was happening all around it can be characterised as going through consecutively (1) denial October 2009-Autumn 2010, (2) anger 2010-2012, (3) negotiation 2012-2013, (4) depression 2013- present. The last stage (5) acceptance is yet to come but could be thought to lie somewhere in the not too distant future;
- Political violence. The individuals’ reaction to general political developments can be correlated to the frequency and intensity of political protest, a regrettable offshoot of which is political violence. Political violence and *anomie* saw a dramatic rise with widespread riots sparked by the shooting of a schoolboy by police in December 2008. The extremity of political rhetoric and the level of violence were ratcheted up by the events of 2008 and found fertile ground around the reactions to the bailout. Matters appeared to reach a climax with the protests of the ‘*indignados*’ in the summer of 2011. These occupations of central squares in many cities provided the focus of opposition uniting individuals from both the left and the (extreme) right in protests against the ‘Memorandum’ and the ‘political class’ of all parties. This had the effect of partly legitimating political movements of the extreme right (including notably the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn Group). Golden Dawn openly preached (and often openly exercised) violence against immigrants and gays. In the elections of 2012 hitherto marginal extreme groups like Golden Dawn gained considerable electoral support (around 8%) while mainstream parties suffered massive falls in electoral representation. After the elections of 2012 mass violent protests are rarer. However, racist violence linked to Golden Dawn rose while (after an absence of some years) Greece saw isolated terrorist murders instigated by both nominally extreme left wing and extreme right-wing perpetrators. Moves to limit Golden Dawn violent activity are underway from late 2013 as a move by the authorities to impose the rule of law;
- Increasing political violence in the streets could be significant in signalling and encouraging a more generalised tolerance of violence and violent behaviour in other domains. Though the link is certainly not automatic, political violence and violent political rhetoric could combine to form a framework where the resolution of personal differences or the venting of frustration and anxieties could be channelled towards violence more readily;
- Women would be caught up in the general malaise, would be directly affected by some of the austerity and structural reforms but would need to steer a course and react in order to pursue their own individual and family goals. Their chief reaction would be to take stock of the impact of the recession on their own and their family’s

finances and attempt to correct them in what way they can – e.g. by economising on family finances, making other savings or selling assets or perhaps searching for a job to compensate. In those areas women would play a dominant role. In their efforts they will be hampered by some of the vulnerabilities pinpointed in the previous section: lack of social protection, problems in job search, competing demands made by family and work.

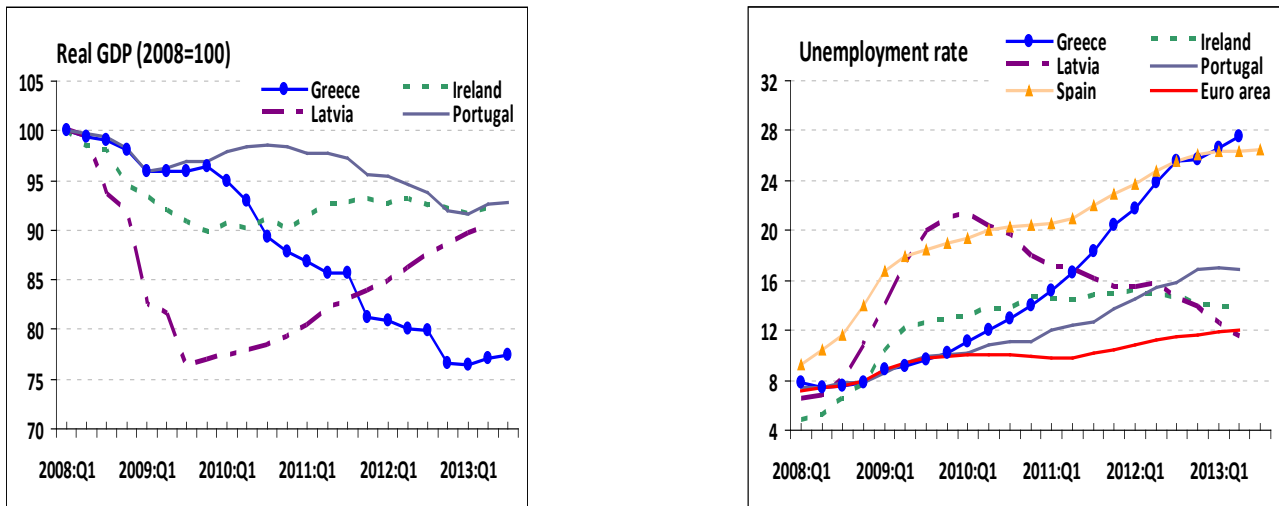
## 2.2 Chronology of events

- Skating close to the edge' -2007 Greece entered the Eurozone in 2001 with national debt exceeding 100%. For the years to 2007 this debt could be serviced thanks to a combination of low interest rates (largely due to euro membership) and high growth rates. It was thus 'skating close to the edge of the (fiscal) precipice', as a dashing of expectations for either magnitude could lead the national debt to explode;
- Derailment 2007-2009. Growth rates fell and interest rates rose. The government primary balance shifted strongly to deficit after 2007, partly disguised in the 2009 statistics. Thus the ideal situations for public debt explosion were all in place;
- Realisation 2009-2010. The realisation of the true size of the public sector deficit combined with the other parameters governing the trajectory of sustainability to raise serious doubts about whether Greek sovereign debt was viable. 2009 is conventionally treated as the entry point of the crisis – at least in the sense of the time when it became apparent to all;
- Successive bailouts and MoUs 2010-2012 in order to stave off Grexit. The programme in search of credibility as the danger of exit from the euro (Grexit) persists. The period can be further subdivided into three sub-period;
- May 2010 the first bailout of 2010, and the beginning of supervision by the 'troika' of the IMF, ECB and Commission supplementary measures taken in the mid-term programme of the summer of 2011;
- The second bailout and selective default on privately held debt of March 2012;
- Adjustment within the Eurozone. Aftermath of the two elections of June 2012 and an attempt to get the programme back on track in order to avoid a disorderly default on debt and a possible exit from the euro zone;
- June 2012- end 2013. The implementation deficit is made up – the crisis finally meets the public sector;
- End 2013- The first small primary surplus possibly signals that the economic adjustment is beginning to pay off;
- The post-bailout period is expected soon – possibly from Mid-2014 the bailout programme is formally due to end. The formal end of the programme (as in the case of Ireland) will come with the ability of the State to enter international borrowing once again. Even if that cannot take place in the case of Greece, it is certain that a new qualitatively different phase of the crisis is ahead.

## 2.3 The overall macroeconomic record of the bailout period

The unique characteristics of the Greek crisis are most evident when Greece is compared with other countries in crisis in the context of the EuroZone and implementing a similar strategy of internal devaluation. Portugal and Ireland both had bailouts. Spain faced severe banking problems. Latvia, while not part of the Eurozone, underwent severe adjustment under an IMF programme whose key feature was to keep its currency pegged to the Euro.

Figure 9: Real GDP and unemployment in Crisis-hit countries: Greece and other



Source: OECD, 2013: 14. Based on Bank of Greece; Eurostat; IMF, Financial Soundness Indicators database; OECD, OECD Economic Outlook database.

Looking at GDP developments, compared to other countries Greece's crisis is deeper and more protracted (Figure 9). Latvia underwent a steeper fall in the beginning of its crisis, but began recovering within two years. In contrast Greece annual GDP growth is still negative after 5 consecutive years. Real GDP per capita has lost almost a quarter of its value. Unemployment started rising well after GDP, but took off after mid-2010. Its rise coincided with labour flexibility legislation in 2011/2 whose passage may be thought to have brought to the surface hidden unemployment. This effect was combined with the devastating impact of liquidity in the operation of the private sector, aided by the collapse in demand. Despite the two debt haircuts, debt as a percent of GDP had still not stabilized; the OECD predicts it will be well above 130% of GDP even by 2022, which may be interpreted that further adjustments on the capital account to lighten the debt burden will be in order.

Table 5: Macroeconomic indicators and projections

	<b>Annual percentage change, volume (2005 prices)</b>				
	<b>2010 current prices EUR billions</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>GDP</b>	222.2	-7.1	-6.4	-3.5	-0.4
Private consumption	163.1	-7.7	-9.1	-6.4	-2.6
Government consumption	40.7	-5.2	-4.2	-4.9	-4.0
Gross fixed capital formation	39.2	-19.6	-19.2	-9.6	-1.2
Final domestic demand	243.0	-9.2	-9.7	-6.5	-2.7
Total domestic demand	242.8	-8.7	-9.4	-5.7	-2.8
Exports of goods and service	49.4	0.3	-2.4	2.3	6.6
Imports of goods and services	70.0	-7.3	-13.8	-7.9	-1.7
Net exports	-20.6	2.4	4.0	3.1	2.4
<b>Other indicators (growth rates, unless specified):</b>					
Potential GDP		-0.9	-1.1	-2.3	-1.1
Output gap		-7.6	-12.6	-13.6	-13.1
Employment		-6.8	-8.0	-4.7	-1.5
Unemployment		17.7	24.2	27.2	27.1
GDP deflator		1.0	-0.8	-2.2	-1.9
Harmonised consumer price index		3.1	1.0	-0.7	-1.6
Underlying consumer prices		1.1	-0.3	-2.1	-1.7
Current account balance		-9.9	-3.4	-0.4	1.3
General government primary balance (EC definition)		-2.4	-4.1	0.0	1.2
General government gross debt		170.3	157.0	176.6	181.3
General government net debt		142.5	102.5	123.0	129.5

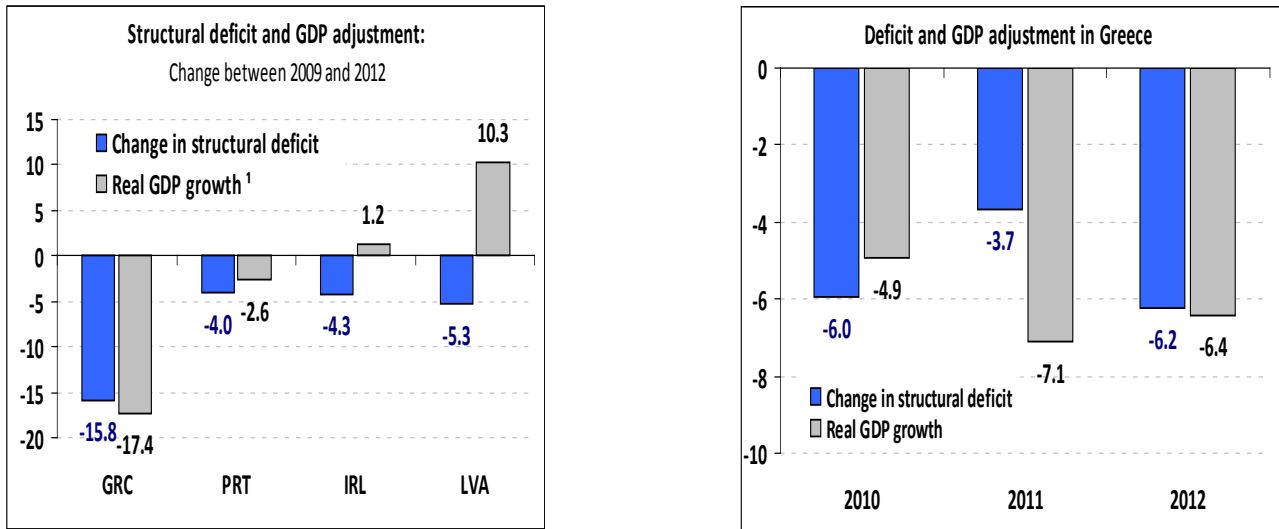
Source: OECD, 2013: Table 1 page 15

Macroeconomic developments in Greece were dominated by the fiscal adjustment which 'called the tune' for GDP growth (Table 5). The structural deficit between 2009 and 2012 was reduced by almost 16 points of GDP – three times that of Latvia. In contrast to that country the adjustment was significantly backloaded: the year with the largest deficit adjustment was 2012 and not 2009 (which presumably would have had the most 'fat' to burn). A striking contrast with the other countries was with the course of GDP – which was more negative than the structural deficit in the three-year period. This signals an important sluggishness of the economy to react (plus the backloading of the programme); in contrast within three years Latvia was already enjoying a return to growth, a feature shared by Ireland, though to a lesser extent.

A key driver of structural change in a recession is the changing trend in output between sectors, which often leads changes in employment. Different sectors are affected by demand changes to a different extent and at different stages of the economic cycle. At the same time, apart from cyclical changes, recessions are times when long-term changes take place: declining sectors will be affected more in the downswing and rising sectors will grow faster in the recovery. Thus, the narrative of the crisis now turns to sectoral changes in output. Figure 11 charts the

progress of broad national accounts aggregates for Greece in index form (2008=100). Two sectors that have been severely affected are wholesale trade and construction. In 2012 output for industry was 20% lower than 2008, wholesale by 32% and construction by 68%.

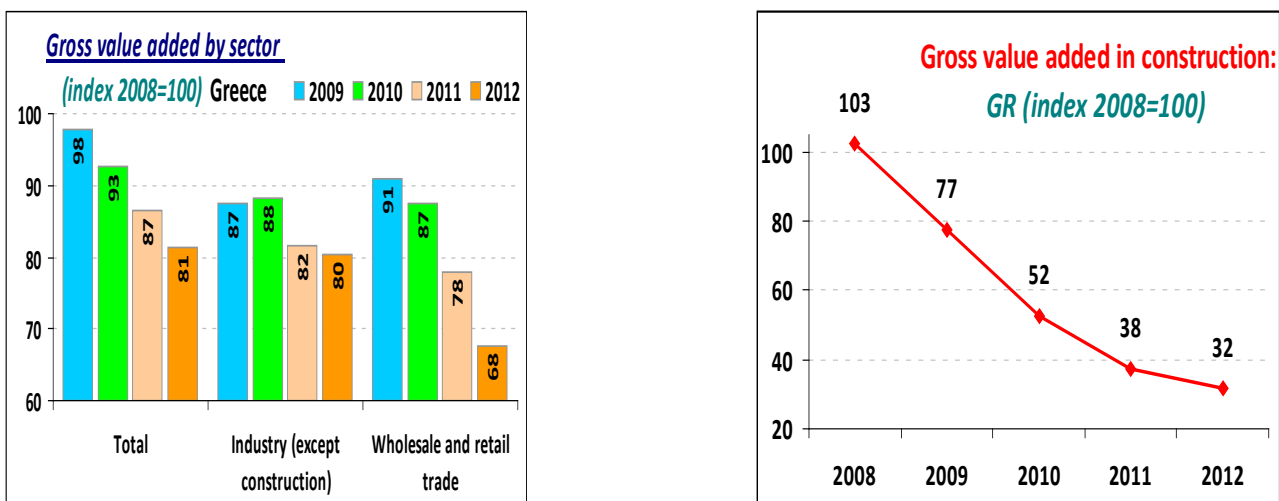
Figure 10: Fiscal tightening and macroeconomic developments



Source: OECD, 2013: 59.

The differential sectoral on production is important in gender terms, as it largely dictates the timing and extent of the gender balance of the crisis impact. Construction is a sector where male employment is concentrated; as it was the sector hardest hit, this had a very large impact on male unemployment (especially among male immigrants). Other sectors, and most notably those where female employment is concentrated (such as personal services or tourism) were affected to a lesser extent. Similarly, the delay in the effect on public employment meant that the influence came chiefly through the cessation of new hires on the part of the public sector – affecting disproportionately young well-educated women attempting to enter the labour force.

Figure 11: Gross value added by sector (index 2005=100), Greece



If we compare Greece with other European countries (Lyberaki, 2011b) we see that in Europe the especially the first stage of the crisis to 2010 was kinder to women rather than for men, leading to a closing of gender gaps in unemployment and also in the gender pay gap. Though

vestiges of this can be seen in Greece, they apply to a far lesser extent – most probably due to the fact that the crisis was more broadly based and hence affected men and women to a more comparable extent than it apparently did elsewhere.

## **2.4 The macro economy and women.**

The measures adopted or announced in Greece to counteract the effects of the economic crisis were selected without a gender perspective in mind.<sup>114</sup> They were chosen primarily to ensure fiscal consolidation, while the lessening of the impact of the crisis on specific groups was a secondary consideration. Given that no gender sensitive data has ever been collected, the gender implications of those initiatives can only be gleaned from sample surveys such as SILC, available only with a time lag. In consequence, gender implications are under-researched and poorly understood. The bailout also means that very little comment is generated from a gender perspective –neither in design nor in implementation of the planned policy measures. The latter happens despite the fact that third of the Troika, the European Commission, is supposed to have an active ongoing interest in gender balance. Finally, as many gender-based programmes are relatively new, if they are to be discontinued, they would generate a lower level of protest. In the absence of gendered data or a gender-aware policy community that fact implies that they are frequent (and un lamented) targets of retrenchment.

The review now turns to look at the two areas where economic independence of women is decided – the labour market which generates opportunities and social protection where correction of problems may be sought.

## **3. Women in the Labour Market: unemployment, employment and participation**

The crisis caused negative labour market effects on both men and women, but it arrested very different dynamics unfolding: as argued earlier, women's advancement in the labour market before the crisis presaged a closing of the employment gap in the years to come, while the jobs crisis set back this process. In an attempt to quantify the real setback caused by the recession, one should bear in mind not only the actual job losses, but also the potential employment levels which would have been attained by women.

We can do the following simple exercise to summarise the impact of the crisis. If we had projected past trends – i.e. if the average annual change of women's employment over the 12-year period before 2008 persisted, women's employment rate in 2020 (ie the 12-year period from 2008 on) could have reached the level of 63%. The crisis by 2012 had reversed the achievement of the ten years to 2010, as employment was lower than it was in 1999.

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<sup>114</sup> See Hellenic Parliament, 2012. For an assessment of these measures from a gender perspective see: Lyberaki, Gonzalez & Schmidt, 2012.

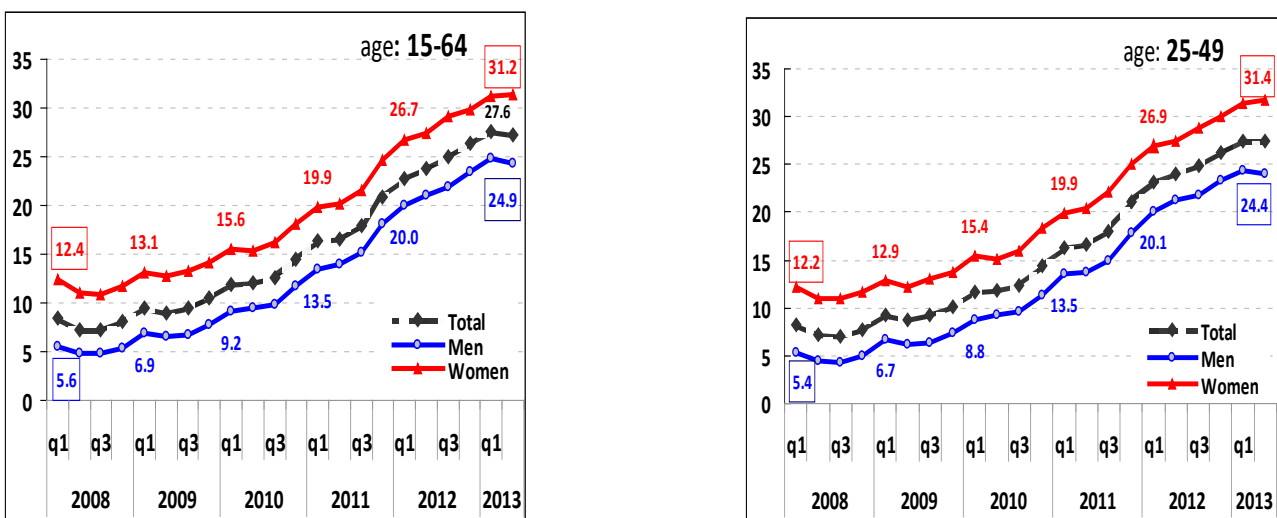
### 3.1 Unemployment: trends by gender during the crisis

The early signs of rising unemployment in Greece in 2008, originally due to the credit crunch were compounded by the recessionary ‘twist’ caused by public finance retrenchment, which accelerated in 2011 and 2012. This resulted in an overall 19pp increase in the unemployment rate of persons aged 15-64 between 2008q2 and 2013q2. More than the half of this increase occurred from 2011 on when the unemployment rate increased by 10.7pp. As a result of this steady increase, unemployment reached at a level of a quarter of the labour force at the end of 2012 and exceeded this level at the beginning of 2013 (Figure 12).

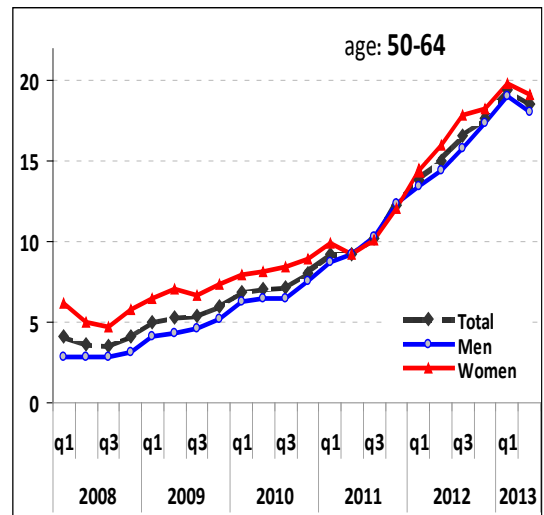
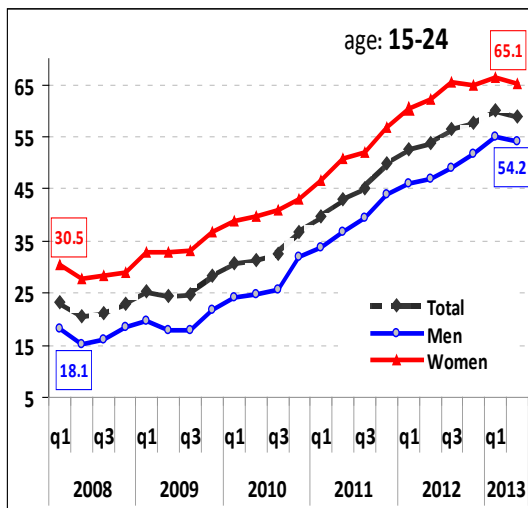
Focusing on the gender differences it seems that unemployment rates accelerated, by an almost equal rate, after the first quarter of 2009 both for men and for women. Before then men had substantially lower unemployment rates, implying that the same absolute change caused a greater percentage increase. Unemployment for women remained higher than men in Greece, both in absolute (number of unemployed) and in relative terms (as rate of unemployment). Unemployment trends of people aged 25-49 follow the pattern of the total 15-64 age group, documenting for both men and women an over 11pp increase in unemployment rate over the two-year period from the first quarter of 2011 up to the first quarter of 2013. In 2013q2, unemployment concerns one out of four men aged 25-59 (24.9%), while the corresponding figure for women is 31.4% (i.e. almost one out of three women of the same age group).

The increasing trend in unemployment became more marked for both young men and women (especially from the last quarter of 2009 onwards). This resulted in a sharp increase in unemployment over the three-year period from 2010q1 to 2013q1, which exceeded 30pp for young men and 27pp for young women. According to the most recent data (2013q2) the unemployment rate of young women is estimated to be over 65% (i.e. two-thirds of young women are unemployed) and for men almost 54% (half of young men are in unemployment) - proving the greater vulnerability of the youngest group. Finally, for people aged 50-64 there is the striking finding of the complete disappearance of an unemployment gap - a possible by-product of the pensions system changes of 2010 (see Tinios 2012; OECD 2011) as well as of a rush to enter retirement in order to escape the pressures of the labour market.

Figure 12: Trends in unemployment rate (%) by age group and gender, GR 2008q1-2013q2



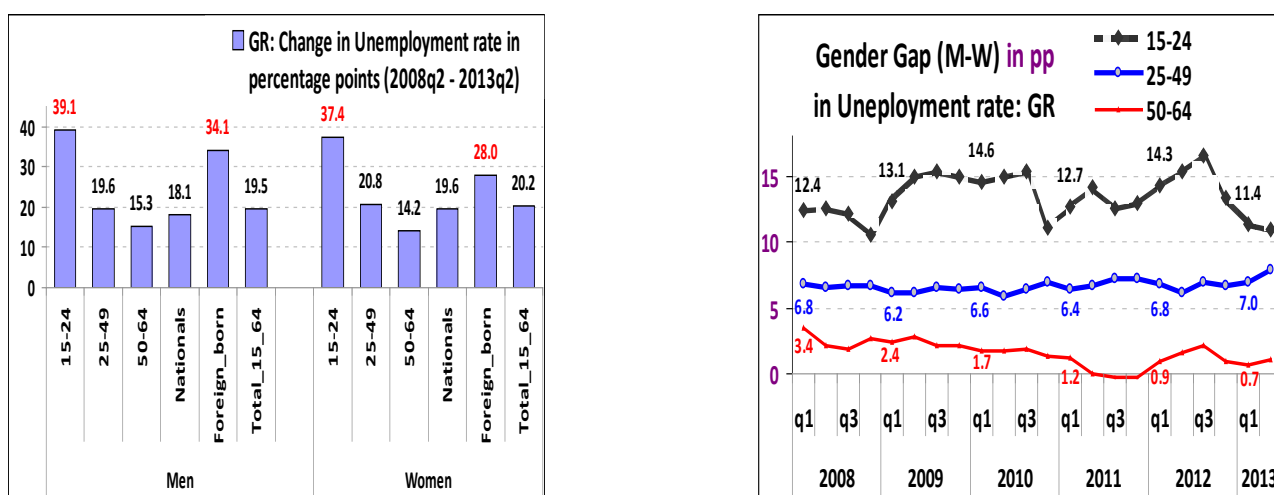




Disaggregating data by nationality/country of origin suggests that the main blow of joblessness accrued to foreign-born men and women (34 and 28 percentage points respectively increase in unemployment rate from 2008q2 to 2012q2). Whereas in the early years of the crisis construction explained a large part of the unemployment, the increase since has been more broad-based, which explains the continued prevalence of female unemployment. For instance, construction (a sector with high concentration of foreign-born men), in terms of output, has collapsed by 40% compared to 2007. On the other hand, in more gender balanced sectors (such as financial intermediation, real estate or public administration) changes in output and in employment were less pronounced and more spread out.

For the indigenous population aged between 25-49 unemployment rates increased symmetrically both for men and for women, resulting in a gender gap in unemployment at a level of almost 7 percentage points, which remained rather constant throughout the crisis. However, focusing on the change in unemployment across age groups (Figure 13) confirms that the youngest are most affected by the crisis both in the case of men (unemployment risk increased by 39pp between 2008q2 and 2013q2) and women (37pp increase over the same period). Moreover, looking at the way that gender interacts with age, the absolute increase in unemployment rate between 2008q2 and 2013q2 is almost twice as high for women aged 15-24 (37.4pp) as for to women aged 25-49 (20.8pp). The findings indicate the 'buffer role' that most young persons and women play in the current recession.

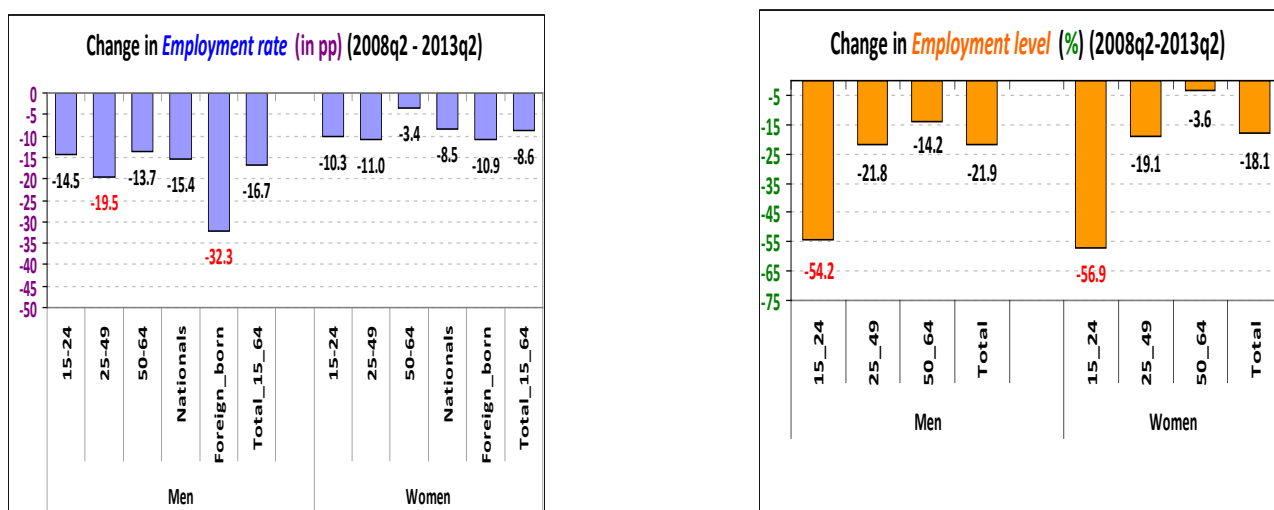
Figure 13: Change in unemployment rate in percentage points and trends in gender gap in unemployment in percentage points throughout the crisis in Greece



### 3.2 Employment trends by gender during the crisis

As concerns changes in the employment rate, the overall picture hides considerable variation, as is evident from looking at the changes by gender, as well as by age group and nationality. The highest fall in the employment rate is evident for foreign-born men (32pp between 2008q2 and 2013q2), who are affected two times more than the national average for men aged 15-64 (16pp decrease over the same period). Overall, the emerging picture suggests that the impact of the economic downturn on employment rates has been more pronounced for men (for all population groups) compared to women (Figure 14). This finding, however, has to be interpreted with caution, taking into account that as female employment was on a strong rising trend before the recession while the trend in male employment was rather weaker, before the crisis-to-up now variations in employment *de facto* underestimate the fall in *potential* employment for women (Bettio and Verashchagina, 2013). At any rate, a given loss of employment is more costly for the group that is still on the way to catch up (women). When looking at changes in employment level (that is the percentage change in the absolute number of persons in employment) the emerging picture portrays a rather symmetrical effect of the economic downturn across gender; suggesting also that for both men and women the losses have been more severe for the youngest persons as for those in prime-age or the older group (50-64).

Figure 14: Change in employment rate (in pp) and in employment level (%) throughout the crisis in Greece



Turning to the quarter-by-quarter picture, the employment response to the fall in output in Greece was delayed, as would have been expected due to labour protection legislation and other factors such as plummeting confidence. The employment rate first recorded a decrease at the end of 2009 for men and almost a year later (ie at the end of 2010) for women, again with age groups variations (Figure 15). In the case of the prime-aged women, the employment rate in the beginning of 2011 was less than 3pp lower compared to corresponding level of the beginning of 2008; while men's employment rate over this period witnessed a 9pp decrease. Throughout 2011 and 2012, men's and women's employment rate decline in parallel, resulting in a trough level of 71% in the case of men and 53% in the case of women in the first quarters of 2013. Young persons started by a rather low level; almost one out of four of young men (27%) a less than out of five young women (18%) was engaged in employment prior to the crisis and documented a sharp decline on these levels especially from the end of 2010 on.

How are employment trends across gender reflected in the gender gap in employment outcomes? Figure 16 shows a downward movement of gender gaps for all groups. This downward trend is more pronounced in the case of persons aged 50-64: gender gap in employment declined almost by one-third (from 34pp in 2008 to 22pp in the beginning of 2013). As regards prime-aged individuals, gender gap in employment declined by 9pp from 2008 (27pp) to 2013 (18pp). However, most of this decline occurred prior to 2011; that is throughout the period than men's employment declined faster compared to women's. Over the last two years, gender gap in employment fluctuates slightly below the level of 20pp. As shown in the right panel of Figure 16, Greece still lags significantly behind the corresponding level of gender employment gap of EU28.

Figure 15: Trends in employment rate (%) by age group and gender, GR 2008q1-2013q2

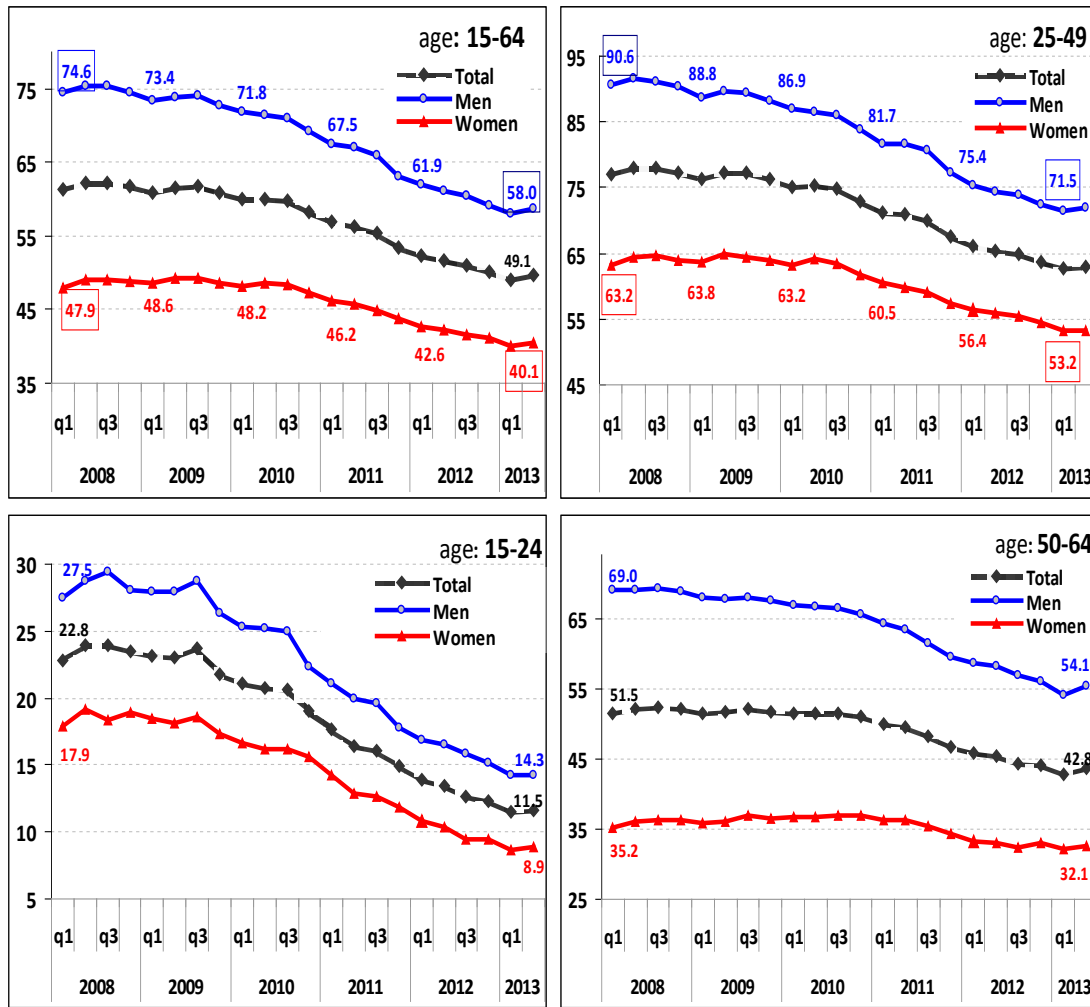
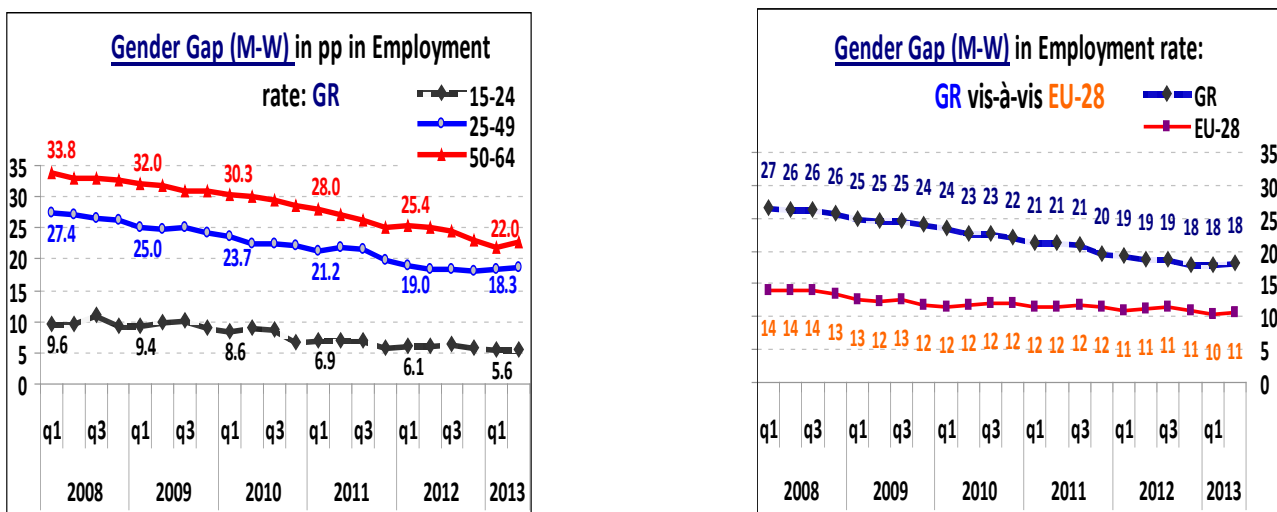


Figure 16: Trends in gender gap in employment in pp throughout the crisis in Greece



Turning to the effects of the crisis by type of employment, full-time employment suffered more, mainly for men, while there was an increase in part-time employment (again more pronounced for men). However, the most striking finding has to do with the severe joblessness in the type

of temporary employment (at an almost equal level across gender and most of all in the case of the youngest (Table 6). In general, change in the type of employment by age and gender provide evidence to favour the hypothesis that the young and women play a buffer role in the current economic downturn, on top of the impact of segmentation of the labour market played. In contrast, the 'marginality effect hypothesis' (ie the so-called LIFO: last in, first out) is not supported.

Table 6: Overall changes, by age, gender and type of employment

Greece	Males			Females			Gender gap (W-M)	
	2008Q2	2013Q2	(%) change	2008Q2	2013Q2	(%) change	2008Q2	2013Q2
Employment in thousands								
<b>Total</b>								
15-24	167.0	76.5	-54.2	109.8	47.3	-56.9	-57.2	-29.2
25-49	1883.1	1473.2	-21.8	1286.9	1041.6	-19.1	-596.2	-431.6
50-64	676.5	580.4	-14.2	374.3	360.8	-3.6	-302.2	-219.6
<b>Total 15-64</b>	<b>2726.6</b>	<b>2130.2</b>	<b>-21.9</b>	<b>1771.0</b>	<b>1449.8</b>	<b>-18.1</b>	<b>-955.6</b>	<b>-680.4</b>
<b>Full-time</b>								
15-24	152.1	61.5	-59.6	90.7	36.0	-60.3	-61.4	-25.5
25-49	1849.1	1404.7	-24.0	1173.7	912.5	-22.3	-675.4	-492.2
50-64	659.0	557.6	-15.4	337.2	320.4	-5.0	-321.8	-237.2
<b>Total 15-64</b>	<b>2660.2</b>	<b>2023.7</b>	<b>-23.9</b>	<b>1601.5</b>	<b>1268.8</b>	<b>-20.8</b>	<b>1058.7</b>	<b>-754.9</b>
<b>Part-time</b>								
15-24	14.9	15.0	0.7	19.1	11.3	-40.8	4.2	-3.7
25-49	34.0	68.6	101.8	113.2	129.2	14.1	79.2	60.6
50-64	17.5	22.9	30.9	37.2	40.5	8.9	19.7	17.6
<b>Total 15-64</b>	<b>66.4</b>	<b>106.5</b>	<b>60.4</b>	<b>169.5</b>	<b>181.0</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>103.1</b>	<b>74.5</b>
<b>Temporary</b>								
15-24	33.2	13.8	-58.4	29.4	9.5	-67.7	-3.8	-4.3
25-49	118.0	86.3	-26.9	125.3	83.9	-33.0	7.3	-2.4
50-64	20.9	15.5	-25.8	15.2	15.1	-0.7	-5.7	-0.4
<b>Total 15-64</b>	<b>172.2</b>	<b>115.6</b>	<b>-32.9</b>	<b>169.9</b>	<b>108.5</b>	<b>-36.1</b>	<b>-2.3</b>	<b>-7.1</b>

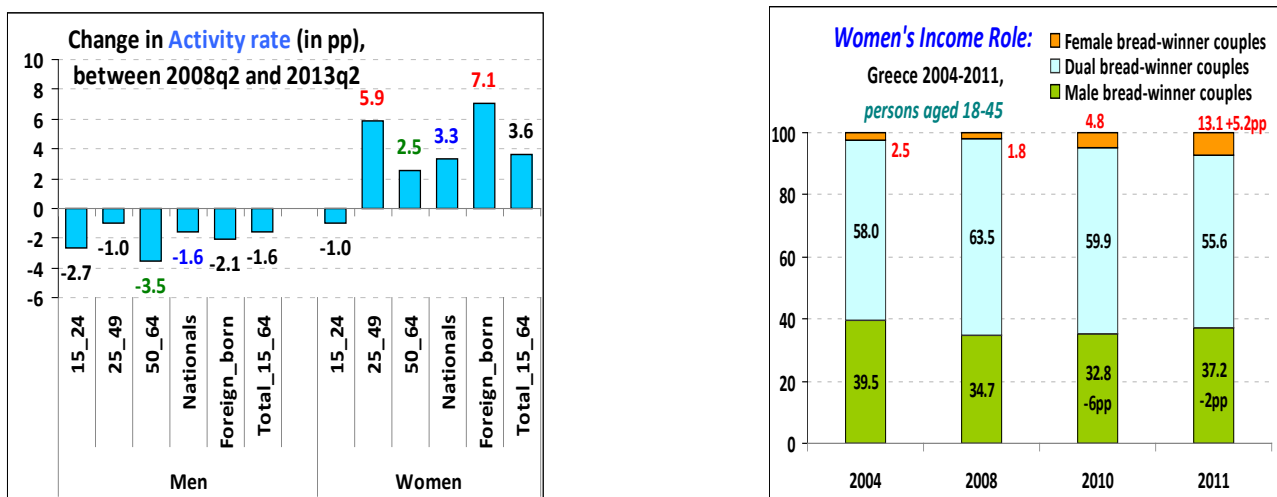
### 3.3. Trends in labour market participation throughout the crisis

Economic theory leads to expect the recession can have two opposing effects on women's participation in the labour market. They can *either* increase their labour supply (to compensate for unemployed spouse and deteriorating family finances) *or* become discouraged by the belief that no jobs are available. The former effect is called "*the added worker effect*", while the latter is the "*discouraged worker effect*". To test whether women's response to the adverse effects of the recession, we can look at changes in women's and men's activity rates -before and during- the economic downturn in Greece. Following the previous analysis, activity rates are further examined by age groups and by nationality.

Is there any evidence that supports the 'added worker' hypothesis? That is, did women's participation move counter-cyclically as an effort to compensate for the fall in household's income in Greece? The left panel of Figure 17 addresses this question by presenting changes in activity rates by gender and age between 2008 and 2013. Looking at the labour participation reaction of women and men through the crisis, two 'stylised facts' stand out: First, women are 'added workers': Labour market participation rose by 3.6pp among women aged 15-64 years between 2008q2 and 2013q2. The *opposite* appears to hold for men, who leave the labour market, obviously discouraged. Second, it seems that there is countercyclical effect: as the downturn deepens, women's participation moved in the opposite direction, in order to compensate for the fall in household's income. These effects are notable for women aged 25-49, for whom participation increased cumulatively between 2008q2 and 2013q2 by almost 6pp. In other words, women who were before the crisis out of the job market, decide in the midst of crisis to enter and to start looking for a job. This effect is found to a lesser extent in all age groups, enough to reject the discouraged worker hypothesis. Migrant women are the most prominent example of the added worker effect, exactly the opposite compared to migrant men.

A different way to investigate the added versus the discouraged worker hypotheses is to examine women's income role within the household. To do so, the right panel of Figure 17 presents findings based on microdata of EU-SILC survey from 2004 up to 2011. The analysis focuses on couples with at least one of the partners working, aiming to classify households into three mutually exclusive categories: i) male breadwinner couples ('he' earns couples); ii) dual-earner couples (both earn) and iii) female breadwinner couples ('she' earns couples). The picture supports the shift towards female breadwinner couples over the recent years (from 2.5% in 2004 to over 13% in 2011). The additional female breadwinners could be either added workers (new entries into employment of previously inactive women), or working women to managed to retain their job while their partner lost it. However, the first alternative (added worker effect) seems more plausible. However it may be, women are becoming more important for family finances.

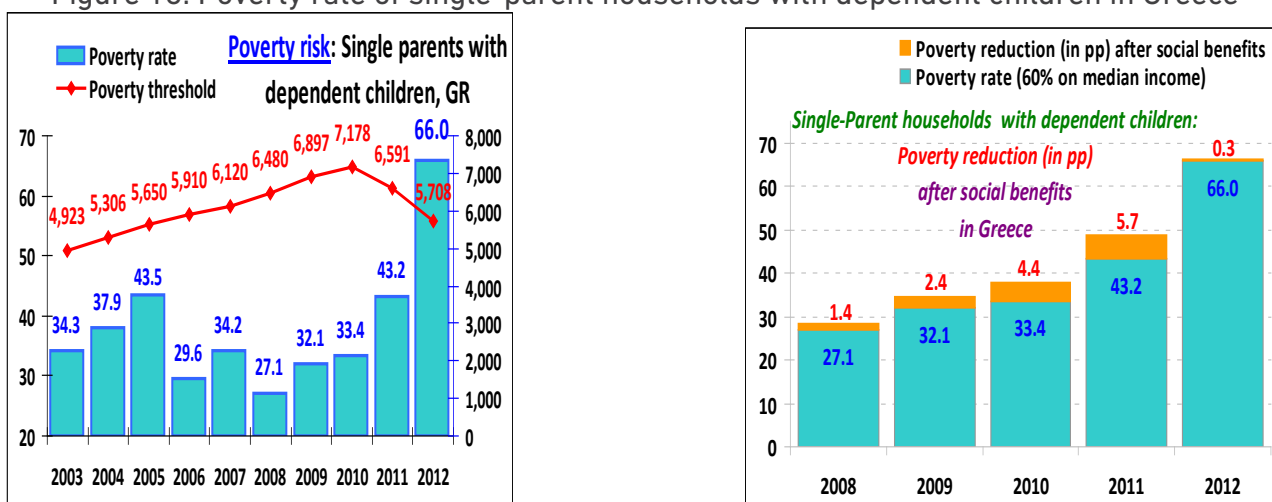
Figure 17: Trends in inactivity and women's income role: the added versus the discouraged worker effects in Greece



### 3.4. Trends in poverty outcomes throughout the crisis in Greece

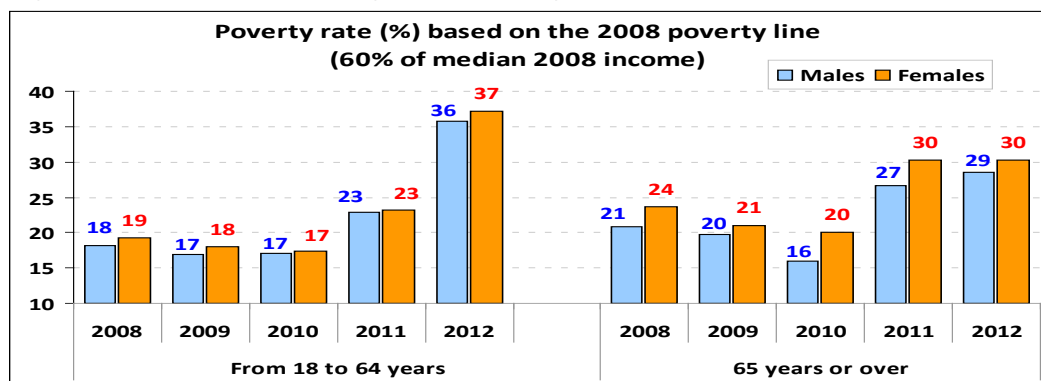
As for the gender implications of poverty developments, a note of caution is in order: In sample surveys (on which poverty statistics are based), the distribution of income *within* households is presumed equal – husbands and wives have the same income *by construction*. Thus any gender statistics on poverty are heavily balanced towards showing equality. Measured gender differences on poverty rely on situations where women and men are not living together as couples (overwhelmingly widows), or divorcees, and hence do not give a representative picture. For this reason, to derive gender implications, poverty statistics need to be supplemented by indicators such as at-risk-of-poverty rate of single-person or single-parent households) The left panel of Figure 18 shows that the group of single-parent households (the vast majority of whom are headed by women) is particularly vulnerable as far as the risk of poverty: their rate reached 66% in 2012 being by over 23 percentage points higher compared to the previous year. The generosity of the Greek Welfare state towards this group is strikingly small if not non-existent: the poverty risk of single-parent households is reduced only by 0.3 percentage point after social benefits. Interestingly the poverty reduction *falls* during the crisis. Stated otherwise, the operation of social protection system makes no difference in treating the poverty risk of this group (see the right panel of Figure 18).

Figure 18: Poverty rate of single-parent households with dependent children in Greece



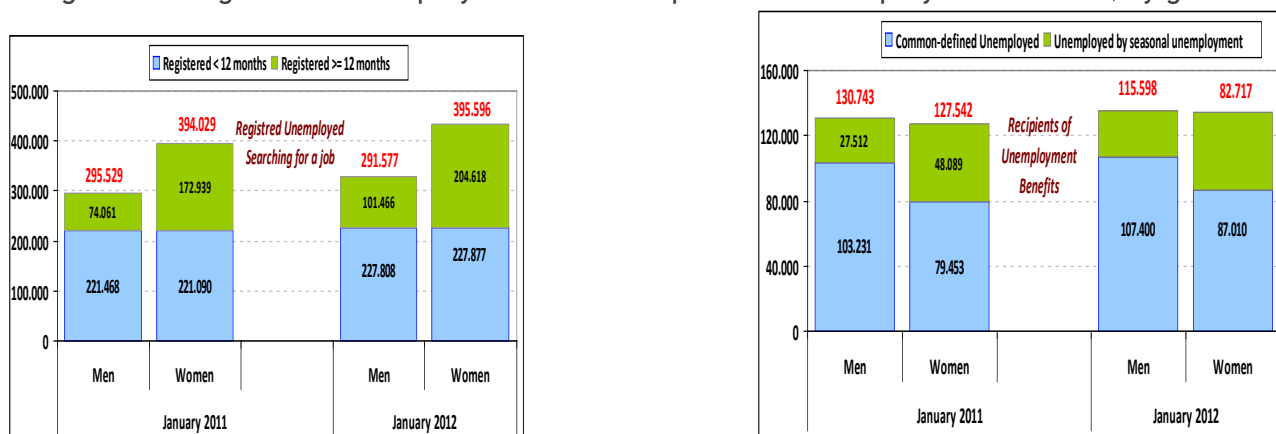
Another point of caution has to do with the fact in relative poverty rates are sensitive to displacements of the poverty line. The poverty line depends on the income of the middle individual (the median in a distribution). If all incomes are falling, a worsening of the income of the poor will not show up as an increase in (relative) poverty. This is the reason for which relative poverty rates indicate only a small rise in relative poverty over the recession, reflecting the lowering level of the poverty threshold (defined as 60% of median income). To correct this impression we may look at what poverty would be if the real value of the poverty line is anchored at what it was at the beginning of the crisis (i.e. in 2008). As we may expect, Figure 19 shows a dramatic deterioration for all groups in 2012, where for some groups (persons aged 18-64) the rate more than doubled in a single year.

Figure 19: Poverty rate by gender and age based on a contestant poverty line



Whereas before the crisis poverty was concentrated among the elderly, in the latest poverty statistics (based on 2011 incomes) age as a causal influences and unemployment becomes the dominant factor in poverty. As a result the rate of poverty of working age people and of children increase precipitously. However, the social protection system, geared as it is on pensions was unprepared for this development – most of the unemployed are not eligible for unemployment benefit (Figure 20).

Figure 20: Registered unemployment and Recipients of Unemployment benefit, by gender



Source: Author’s calculations based on data from Manpower Employment Organization, Greece

These developments in unemployment pose a challenge for poverty. The disadvantaged position of women is well-documented by the relatively high poverty risk they face. Their unemployment rate is higher and when they are unemployed are more likely to be poor; they are overrepresented in single-parent households; widows face greater poverty risk (for those aged over 65 years the gender gap in poverty risk is even higher (23.3% for women, 18.8% for men).

### 3.5 Austerity and Social Services for old-age and childcare: implications for women

Many benefits in cash or kind and social services have been decentralised to local authorities. Of greatest relevance to gender are childcare as well as long term care for the aged and infirm. Local authorities’ staffing has been severely curtailed and their finances limited. The authorities frequent reaction to this is to limit or cut services. As no information is collected



on local authority (LA) social spending<sup>115</sup>, the extent of these cuts and their gender impact can only be guessed at by anecdotal evidence.

For instance, as reported in an interview *“Since the beginning of the 2000’s, to a great extent thanks to EU funding, there was a significant increase in social services provided to the elderly who live in the community. More specifically, in addition to Open Care Centres for the Elderly, which started working in the 80’s (in 2009, 9 thousand centres were operated by the local authorities), a novel series of services was offered, providing social support and care for the elderly at home (the Help at Home programme) and in the community”*. These services are now at risk due to funding insecurity. Though LAs have been offering these services since 2000 under temporary EU structural fund finance (as essentially demonstration projects), very few authorities incorporated the new social services in their budgets or found permanent sources of finances for them. The cessation of finance was known from the start, so that it cannot qualify as an effect of austerity. What *does* appear to have happened is that Local government expected to be subsidised by central government grants. It is these grants that are now at risk. However it may be, current beneficiaries of these services may lose care services. Similar (though less dramatic) stories can be told about childcare, also largely under the remit of local government. On the other hand, Athens municipality managed to combine the curtailment of funds with an increase in the number of childcare places offered,<sup>116</sup> through more efficient management of their reduced budget. This can serve as a reminder that “austerity can also lead to efficiency gains”, so that the effect on beneficiaries may be less dramatic than appears through financial data alone. For example, regarding the kindergartens of the Public Childcare Service of Athens there is no difficulty in accepting all applications. For the school year 2012-2013:5,695 applications were submitted; 4,972 children were registered (initial applications and registration NSRF); 528 spots remaining and 524 runner-up applications.

However it may be, these trends in old-age care coverage will impact on women’s independence, both directly (elderly women and long-term care), as well as indirectly by placing at risk the reconciliation between family and work for men and women. It is likely that, as the volume of old-age services provided by the State decreases, this will shift the ‘care burden’ onto women (as informal care providers), keeping them out of the labour market. Progress in changing roles of women in the economy and within the family may be placed at risk.

Similarly for childcare, limited resources are placing services at risk. This issue is explicitly addressed in an interview (Dedrinis), stating that “there is a serious problem when it comes to structures and provision of childcare services. [...] The resources of the current period of the program have almost run out, and it is doubtful whether even smaller amounts will be provided for the next period (2014-2020).” If so, we must expect a negative impact on women’s labour market participation, as well as on reconciliation between family and work.

In consequence, the two most significant areas that tackle challenges faced by women in a direct fashion are under a continuing and direct threat. The extent of this threat is diffused through the labyrinth of local government finance. It is up to local authorities to wield the axe; yet, due to the fact that no statistics are collected it is not possible to know where that axe will fall and to what extent. Equally worrying is that no process appears to be in place to remedy this situation or even provide some rudimentary monitoring.

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115 The statistical coverage of LA spending *excludes* all services transferred to LA’s after the 1970s, i.e. child care, help at home, social exclusion expenses. This was noted in a report examining ESSPROS data – (NSSG 2000 – *Social Protection in Greece, Expenditure and Receipts*, Athens), but has apparently not been acted on.

116 Dendrinis reports that *“although fewer funds were available this year, more places were offered, 60.000, compared to 43.000 in 2011. We were able to achieve this through the reduction of childcare costs [...]. Nevertheless we were still unable to cater for the elevated demand of this year”*.

## 3.6 Open issues and problems

In assessing the implications of austerity on economic well-being and economic independence of women, two conceptual issues need to be faced:

*Firstly*, to what extent are policies temporary stop-gaps or are they framed with a long term strategy in mind. The welfare state changes appear to be the former; the labour market changes in contrast have a medium- or long-term objective as part of a competitiveness strategy. *Secondly*, it is an error to assess each change in isolation – assuming everything else is unaltered. The Greek programme affects many sectors simultaneously and should, in principle at any rate, be designed to transform the entire social protection system as well as its relation with the labour market and the macro economy. For example, the long term benefits of pensioners will benefit more from a changes promoting employment than through a short term cash raise in some pensions.

In the course of this survey a number of problems outstanding were noted.

On the functions the Welfare State and their implications on poverty outcomes: Means-testing criteria is introduced for almost all kinds of social benefits. This may be equitable as directed to those in higher-income brackets, leaving the adverse effect for working people to come from the increase in indirect taxes and the reduction of the income tax exemptions. The significance of tax increases the importance of widening the tax base and increasing tax compliance, progress on which has not been dramatic.

On the decentralised spending by local authorities: prospects are especially inauspicious: Greece addressed the issue of childcare and old-age care, almost as an afterthought: provision of such services was left almost entirely to EU funding. Greece never made an effort to address this issue in a permanent and systematic manner - whether as a policy priority funded by the central budget, or even to monitor the provision and finance of services decentralised to local authorities. As EU funding exists only until March 2013, no answer can be supplied as to how these services will continue after that date and if so in what form and through what kind of finance. Thus the two most critical areas for women's independence are essentially up in the air.

## 4. Violence

### 4.1 Gender Violence and Economic Crises – Introduction

As mentioned previously, the consequences of the global economic crisis are not merely financial in nature. Financial pressures cause psychological stress and impact interpersonal relationships, as well. Economic difficulties, changing gender roles in the household, and frustrated men who are unable live up to the traditional breadwinner ideal, all lead to increased household tensions, and in turn to greater incidence of domestic violence (AWID, 2013, Stavropoulou& Jones, 2012). Observations from past economic crises also support this argument: domestic violence increased in Mexico in the 1990s, in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe during the transition years, and in Asian countries during the 1997-1999 financial crisis (Stavropoulou and Jones, 2012).

As women are more likely to suffer from poverty, some groups of women—particularly poor immigrant women—are also more vulnerable to other forms of gender-based violence, such

as trafficking. Either through the force of traffickers, or by adopting 'desperation measures', women are more likely during periods of intense economic hardships to turn to sex-related work (Stavropoulou & Jones, 2012). Consequently, as prostitution rates go up, so does the women's exposure to physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.

Although evidence suggests that economic crises indeed increase gender-based violence, in practice it is difficult to distinguish the individual factors that cause violent men's behaviour towards women, and identify the ones attributed solely to the crisis. Violence against women is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, which combines societal and situational factors on the one hand (such as gender norms, economic factors and legal frameworks) and individual causes (alcoholism, decision making power, attitudes, economic resources, etc.) on the other. Power inequality is perhaps the main underlined cause of violence against women, either in relation to the economic sphere or in the socio-cultural and political spheres (Dekker, 2013).

In the sections below, gender violence in relation to the economic crisis in Greece is discussed in further detail, both in terms of attitudes towards it and in terms of actual incidence rates. After a quick overview of the issue at the level of the European Union (EU), follows a more detailed discussion for the case of Greece. The types of violence discussed in depth are *domestic violence*, *trafficking*, and *sexual assault* (particularly at the workplace) and *rape*. Although the official statistics available are very limited, important conclusions are drawn based on the analysis of existing studies and reports.

## 4.2 Crisis and Gender Violence in the European Union

At the EU level, there is a rising awareness of the issue of gender-based violence, and especially with regards to domestic violence. According to the 2010 Eurobarometer, 78% of Europeans recognise that domestic violence is a common problem. One respondent in four (25%) across the EU knows a woman among friends or in the family circle who is a victim of domestic violence, and one in five (21%) knows someone who commits domestic violence in their circle of friends and family.

Along with the rising awareness, the attitudes to domestic violence have also become tougher over the years. 86% of people now say that domestic violence is unacceptable and should always be punishable by law, compared to 63% in 1999. Among the different types of violence suffered by women, sexual and physical violence are seen as the most serious forms, 85% of the respondents said. With regard to the causes of domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse were considered the two most prominent ones (95% and 92%), followed by poverty or social exclusion (77%) and unemployment (75%).

In terms of actual incidents of gender-based violence, it is estimated that at least two in ten of all women across the EU have experienced physical violence at least once in their adult lives, and around one in ten have suffered forced sexual violence. The majority of these violent acts are carried out by men in their immediate social environment, most often by partners and ex-partner (European Commission 2009).

Acknowledging that gender-based violence increases in times of economic crises, the European Commission (2009) points out stress and job loss as the leading factors. The Commission (2014) also recognizes the negative consequences of the economic crisis on the root causes of sexual exploitation and trafficking in human beings, as well as the interplay between trafficking and prostitution. In order to combat gender-based violence as a side consequence of the crisis, it suggests tackling the issue by investing in women, and by fighting against poverty and social exclusion (EC 2009, 2014)

## 4.3 Economic Crisis and Gender Violence in Greece

Greece is among the countries most harshly hit by the ongoing global financial crisis. Along with poverty and unemployment, gender-based violence is also on the rise. The available data includes statistics provided by the Greek police, the General Secretariat for Gender Equality (GSGE), the Greek Ombudsman, and other national and international official organizations (see reference page). In addition, qualitative data from individual interviews with experts in the field are used, accompanied by related information from selected official reports and public documents (EC, 2009, 2014; ODI, 2012; AWID, 2010, 2013, US Dept. of State, 2012).

In terms of the mechanisms through which the crisis affects gender violence in Greece, the experts' views could be summarized in the following argument. Unemployment, underemployment, and poverty put a heavy psychological weight on the shoulders of men, who are unable to 'bring food to the table' and thus they cannot fulfill the social expectations of the traditional male breadwinner role. Due to the high levels of stress men experience in this context, they end up resorting to violent behaviour as a way to release their stress and simultaneously reclaim their dominant social position in relation to women. Moreover, the fact the state funds and social services are being reduced or entirely cut, helps neither the circumstances under which gender violence may arise, nor the victims who are seeking social and financial support.

## 4.4 Domestic Violence

### 4.4.1 The First Survey

The first and only prevalence of domestic violence survey was carried out in Greece in by the National Research Center for Issues of Gender Equality (KATHÉ), and it was published in 2003. The objective of this research was to record the domestic violence incidents where the woman was the victim and the male spouse/intimate partner was the perpetrator. The data were collected through interviews conducted with 1,200 women in urban, semi-urban, and rural regions, and the respondents were between the ages of 18 and 60. The forms of violence measured were verbal/psychological, physical and sexual abuse, and the rates identified for each category were 56%, 3.6%, and 3.5% respectively.







These rates however, were likely underestimated, since domestic violence was still being a taboo in the Greek society at the time, in addition to there being a relatively high level of tolerance towards domestic violence. Only 60.8% of all the interviewed women recognized all three types of domestic abuse mentioned above as 'violence', while many considered violent only the behaviours leading to severe physical injuries (37.6%), minor physical injuries (33.7%), and those involving sexual violence (30.8%).

Although nearly one in four (23.6%) of the interviewed women said they knew a woman from their related and/or friendly environment who has been a victim of domestic violence, less than one in ten (8.8%) of them characterized their spouse or intimate partner as violent. Whether domestic violence was seen as a 'crime' was dependent upon the region of the respondent (79.6% prevalence in big cities, 76.7% in small cities, and 68% in rural areas), while it also differed, depending on whether the respondent had been a victim herself (12.51%) or not (76.81%). Women who have been victims of domestic abuse tended to see it as 'wrong, but not a crime' (ÊETHI, 2003).










## 4.4.2 Change in Attitudes

The attitudes Greek people have on the issue of domestic violence are changing fast (faster than the average rates in the EU), indicating increasing public awareness, and potentially increasing actual levels of violence, too. According to the Eurobarometer, in 2010, 45% of Greeks were hearing about domestic violence through friends, compared to 35% in 1999. As Table 8 below illustrates, the rates have also increased for those who said they knew a victim in their immediate area or neighborhood (34%, up from 22% in 1999), as well as for those who said they knew a perpetrator (31%, up from 19%). Although even in 1999 Greece was slightly above the EU average, eleven years later the rate had almost doubled – differing significantly from other countries that had previously shown comparable levels. Interestingly, this trend is dissimilar to the other two bailout countries, Portugal and Ireland, which showed significantly *lower* rates in 2010 as compared to 1999.

Table 8: Public Views On the prevalence of Domestic Violence

Do you know of any women who have been a victim of any form of domestic violence...? In your immediate area/ neighbourhood - "Yes"				
		EB73.2 Feb. – Mar. 2010	EB51.0 Mar. – May 1999	Diff.
	EU15	18%	18%	=
	EL	34%	22%	+12
	NL	30%	20%	+10
	IT	17%	12%	+5
	BE	25%	21%	+4
	IE	23%	31%	-8
	PT	23%	32%	-9
	FR	12%	23%	-11

Do you know of anyone who has subjected a woman to any form of domestic violence...? In your immediate area/ neighbourhood - "Yes"				
		EB73.2 Feb. – Mar. 2010	EB51.0 Mar. – May 1999	Diff.
	EU15	16%	16%	=
	EL	31%	19%	+12
	NL	22%	16%	+6
	IT	14%	9%	+5
	BE	22%	19%	+3
	SE	23%	20%	+3
	FR	13%	19%	-6
	PT	21%	30%	-9
	IE	19%	29%	-10

Source: [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_344\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_344_en.pdf)

Even more remarkable is the change in attitudes related to the seriousness of the issue. 93% of people in Greece in 2010 regarded domestic violence as unacceptable and always punishable, up from 25% in 1999. The restriction of another person's freedom is also now increasingly seen as very serious (78%, up from 67%), and so are the threats of violence (80%, up from 66%).

Although making domestic violence punishable had particularly strong support in 2010 in Greece (100%), only 38% of Greeks believed that perpetrators of domestic violence are being rehabilitated by law, while the vast majority believed that family and friends have a responsibility to help women in this regard (99%), and that social services have an obligation to help these women (98%). Such attitudes reflect the prominent role of the family as a social institution in Greece, the high expectations from the state's services, as well as the public's distrust to the justice system.

## 4.4.3 The Numbers Today

The means for measuring domestic abuse today are inadequate for illustrating an accurate depiction of the phenomenon. However, the available numbers show that women are indeed the primary victims of violence as well as of murder in a domestic context. Despite that, the number of convictions of the perpetrators represents only a small fraction of the number of incidents recorded.

As the 2012 Women against Violence Europe (WAVE) report shows, 70 women were murdered in Greece between 2007 and 2011, by a male in a domestic context. Out of these 70, 46 were killed by their intimate partner (26 by their husband, 6 by their former husband and 14 by other intimate partner). Also, in 2011, the number of female victims of domestic violence was 1,652, and the number of male victims was 571. In both cases, the gender of the perpetrator is unspecified. With regard to the convictions in cases of domestic violence, only 45 male and 1 female perpetrators were convicted in 2009. Of the total number of perpetrators sentenced, 98% were male, and the majority was from the age group 35-59.

More recently, there have been some developments from the part of the state in measuring domestic violence incidents and understanding the profile of the victims. Two and a half years after the establishment of an abused women's hotline in Greece, the General Secretariat for Gender Equality (GSGE) had received 12,313 phone calls and 98 emails. 79% of these phone-calls were to report incidents of gender violence. Three out of four times it was the victim herself that made the phone call, and 77% of the time, it was to report a case of domestic violence.

Out of the victims that decided to share more information about themselves there was a wide range of backgrounds, without particular pattern in terms of employment status (28% employed, 31% unemployed, 13% inactive), education level (13% higher education, 10% secondary, 9% primary only) or socioeconomic status (20% describe their economic situation as bad, 19% as medium, 11% as good). In relation to age, about half of the victims ranged between 25 and 54 years old, and in terms of relationship status, 49% were married, 10% were single, and 12% were divorced or separated. Finally, 68% were Greek, and 8% were immigrants (GSGE, 2013).

Although the domestic violence victims that sought help from GSGE's hotline did not appear to be from a particular socioeconomic background, a 2013 study on domestic violence by the Andrology Institute of Greece and the Society for the study of Human Sexuality (SSHS) suggests otherwise. Based on 1000 interviews conducted with 600 men and 400 who used the SSHS helpline, the study reached the following findings. 39% of the couples that had incidents of domestic violence at home, were in a 'bad economic situation', 44% of them were unemployed, and only 17% of them were in a 'good economic situation'. The types of domestic violence this study identified ranged from verbal abuse (72% of the time), to financial blackmailing (59%), sexual humiliation (55%), battering (23%), rape (18%), and heavy injuries (8%).

#### **4.4.4 Methodological Limitations**

As previously noted, the statistics available do not represent a fully and accurately measured account of the phenomenon of domestic violence. In reality, recording the incidents of domestic violence with accuracy—or any other type of gender-related violence—is an overambitious goal. The most critical obstacle is that the majority of the incidents go unreported, which may happen due to various reasons, including psychological pressure (the victim is traumatized and prefers not to recall the incident), cultural pressures (the victim is afraid of the social stigma, meaning what others will say when they find out), lack of trust to the officials and the system (victims do not believe they can receive adequate help and support), or lack of alternative options of survival (financial dependence to offenders, or inadequate social services and structures available by the state).

In addition to the above, it is also difficult to record the changes in the numbers of incidents through time. The reasons for not reporting an incident might be unique for each victim in each

particular situation, but it might also be dependent upon the particular prevailing social beliefs at a given time-period. As the Eurobarometer discussed above indicates, social beliefs tend to change through time. Therefore, an increase in the levels of reported incidents does not necessarily reflect the increase of actual incidents. Rather, it might merely reflect an increasing public awareness on the issue of domestic violence. This could mean an enhanced ability from the part of the victims to recognize certain behaviours as 'domestic violence', or perhaps a greater amount of resources from where the victims can seek help and support.

Moreover, the fact that significant changes have occurred over the last decade in the laws and policies relating to gender equality in Greece, makes comparisons over time more difficult, also. For example, rape within marriage was only explicitly outlawed in 2006. This means that a potential increase in the average number of rapes reported to the police after 2006 might not reflect an actual increase of the raw number of rapes, but rather an increased likelihood to include types of rapes that were not previously considered illegal, or that were not reported because they did not qualify as 'criminal acts' in people's minds.

Finally, in relation to the crisis, the lack of public resources to be allocated for research purposes has held back the work of the Center of Research for Gender Equality Issues (KETHI). As a result, there are no related scientific reports produced after 2008, when the crisis started.

#### **4.4.5 Official Reports and Expert Opinions**

Despite the limited available official statistics, the argument that the crisis exacerbates domestic violence is also supported by official reports, as well as by the views of gender experts. As stated in AWID's 2010 report, "Intra-household tensions are rising as a result of the crisis. Men are now starting to feel their masculinity threatened by unemployment and the increasing problems faced in feeding their families. Many are beginning to express their frustrations verbally and, to a lesser degree, physically, by inflicting violence against the women they live with".

Here, the link between the crisis and gender violence is believed to be men's lost sense of masculinity, as well as their inability to handle the psychological pressure of their diminishing economic and social status, which leads them to turn violent towards their female partners.

However, although it may seem that men are losing the most, women are ones who are forced to 'take up the slack', not only financially, but also psychologically and physically.

"Many women in Greece are now reaching their breaking point, trying to make both ends meet by combining paid work with increasing unpaid work in the house, and dealing with abusive partners as well" (AWID, 2010).

In a similar vein, ODI's 2012 report suggests: "As poor Greek households see their income shrinking and fall deeper into poverty, domestic violence has increased and anxiety levels have heightened. This has detrimental effects on the psychological wellbeing of children, particularly adolescent girls."

The findings of these reports are also supported by individuals who are considered 'gender experts' in Greece. Most notably, Maria Stratigaki, the former Secretary General for the GSGE, suggests that there is "*more gender-based violence during the crisis*" (The Guardian, 2012) and that the "*incidents of [domestic] abuse are intensified during the crisis*" (interview by KG, 2012). Adding to Stratigaki's point, a psychologist and counselor at a women's shelter in Crete

explains that domestic abuse is more likely to become an issue in situations that were already problematic.

There is more violence in the cases that there would be violence anyway. There were some couples prior to the crisis that simply tolerated each other... Now, that there are difficulties because of the crisis, and there is also abuse, which come to top up the already existing abuse. (interview with KG, 2013)

The propensity towards violent outbursts is higher from the part of the perpetrators when they know that the victims find it difficult to leave an abusive relationship due to economic dependence on the offender and the lack of alternative financial options. A social worker at the same women's shelter notes:

It becomes more difficult to leave your [abusive] husband... It gets more difficult to take legal action. This was happening already, but with the crisis it's going to reach its peak..what you worry about is to get through the day: *'I go to work to earn the day's wage and manage to feed my children.... I will sit and take it because I have to. Because there are no jobs'* (Interview with KG, 2011).

#### 4.4.6 Law Enforcement

Law 3500/2006 is a specific law on combating domestic violence that was voted in Greece in 2006, and has been in effect since 24 January 2007. Several provisions on the Criminal Code are applicable for acts of violence in a domestic context, providing for punishment/sentences for the perpetrator (WAVE, 2012).

However, despite the modern and progressive legal arsenal for combating domestic violence, there is a significant gap between policy and practice. Indeed, the law provides for the prosecution of all domestic violence crimes without the need for a victim to press charges. Penalties range from two to 10 years' imprisonment, depending on the gravity of the crime (US Dept. of State, 2012). Nonetheless, the GSGE estimated that less than 10 percent of domestic violence victims contacted the police and only a small proportion of those complaints went to trial.

The fact that the law is not appropriately enforced happens due to various reasons. A critical one is that officials are often not properly trained to handle cases of domestic violence. The abovementioned social worker gives an example:

There are many policemen who would say to a [battered] woman who came from a nearby village, for instance, *'Oh come on now Maria, George loves you. We know him. He is a nice guy. You should go home, and you guys will figure things out. He won't do it again. We, too, will tell him not to do it again'* (Interview with KG, 2011).

In addition to poor judgment, there are also cases of corruption or favoritism among police officers. A women's shelter counselor describes:

*"We had an incident of a woman who came to us shackled. Her husband had shackled both her arms and legs...And the chief policeman called that guy to prevent him from getting arrested! He said 'Manoli', for example, 'your wife came and sued you, so we have to come and arrest you. You better hide!'"* (Interview with KG, 2011)

From the perspective of the victims, family pressures exacerbate the cultural pressures and



the fear of stigmatization, and act as a deterrent to reporting abuse and taking the case to the courts. Another account from a social worker states:

*I know cases where the woman says, 'ok, I don't care anymore. I've had enough. I don't care if I get stigmatized or if people gossip about me. And then, her mom doesn't let her... She might hither, too. She tells her 'we are not going to be embarrassed to the neighbour! Especially in villages, this happens for sure (Interview with KG, 2011).*

Adding to the above, some provisions of the law are not supported by the existing social structures. As the WAVE 2012 report points out, Law 3500 allows for the perpetrators to avoid entirely the penal procedure, by giving "a few promises" to the victim and to the prosecutor who, somehow, undertakes the role of the mediator. More specifically, upon initiation of the penal mediation, the prosecution is considered as 'pending' and if mediation is successfully completed (after 3 years that the perpetrator has not violated its terms), it ceases altogether. It is worth pointing out that there is no system in place responsible to check whether or not the penal mediation's terms are violated or not. Via this process the perpetrators are not held accountable, and the way its terms are enforced puts the victim back in a dangerous situation.

Overall, the conjunction of multiple interacting factors leads to the failure of law enforcement, to the impunity of the perpetrators, and consequently to the perpetuation of domestic violence. The following quote from the abovementioned counselor sums it up:

The police are obligated to file a lawsuit when they see an abused woman. They don't. They ask her... [but] she is in a state of shock. Sometimes [the victims] do [report] and later change their minds, or they don't, and say 'let me think about it'... [or] I don't want to harm my children's father... And, on the other hand, the prosecutors don't do what the law says. The law says the offender has to go through counseling. This does not happen. But, then, there are not even any experts that do this. The public sector services are too few and too busy... So, the whole thing doesn't work" (Interview with KG, 2011).

## **4.5 Trafficking**

### **4.5.1 Statistics**

Mainly due to its geographical position, Greece is known as a transit country for human trafficking. Greece is also a destination country, as well as a very limited source country for women and children subjected to sex trafficking and for men, women, and children in forced labour. Women from Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Romania, Ukraine, Georgia, Nigeria, and some countries in Asia are subjected to sex trafficking in Greece (US Dept. of State, 2013). Individuals from Eastern Europe and the Balkans have been the most frequent victims of trafficking over the last decade. According to official statistics by the Hellenic police, 29.2% of the victims between 2003 and 2012 were from Romania, 23% from Russia, and 14.2% from Bulgaria (see Table 9 below).

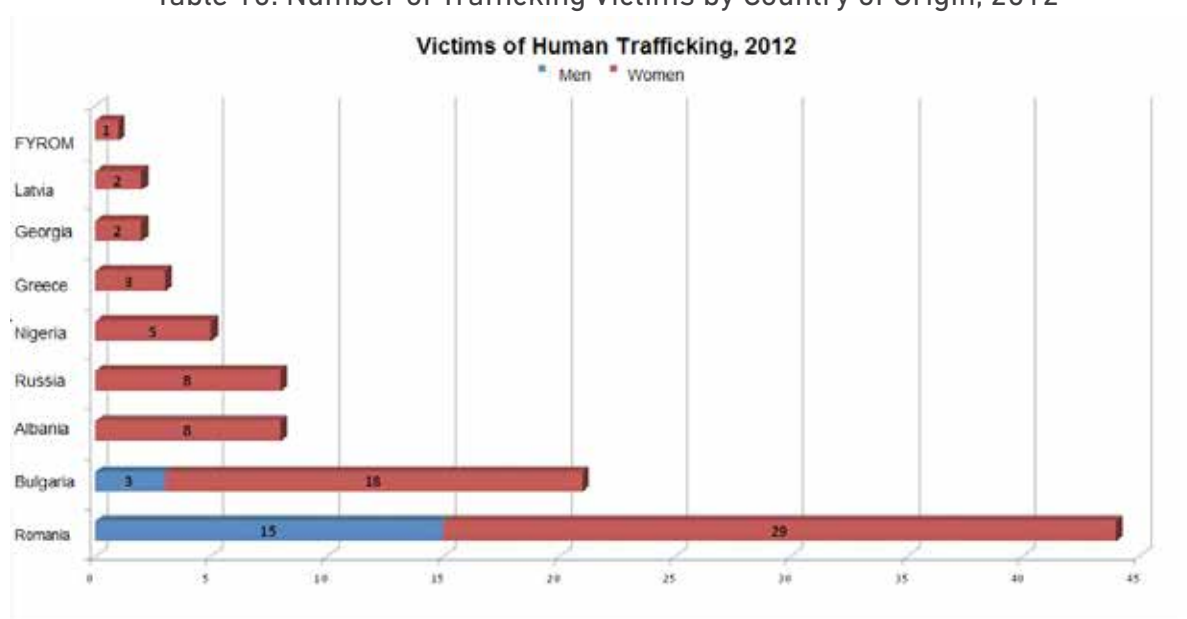
Table 9: Trafficking Victims, by Country of Origin, 2003-2012

Victims by country of origin	Frequency	(%) share to total trafficking victims
Romania	249	29,2%
Russia	196	23,0%
Bulgaria	121	14,2%
Ukraine	57	6,7%
Nigeria	42	4,9%
Moldova	37	4,3%
Albania	33	4,0%
Lithuania	20	2,3%
Belarus	19	2,2%
Uzbekistan	14	1,6%
Other	66	7,6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: <http://www.isotita.gr/index.php/statistics/1264>

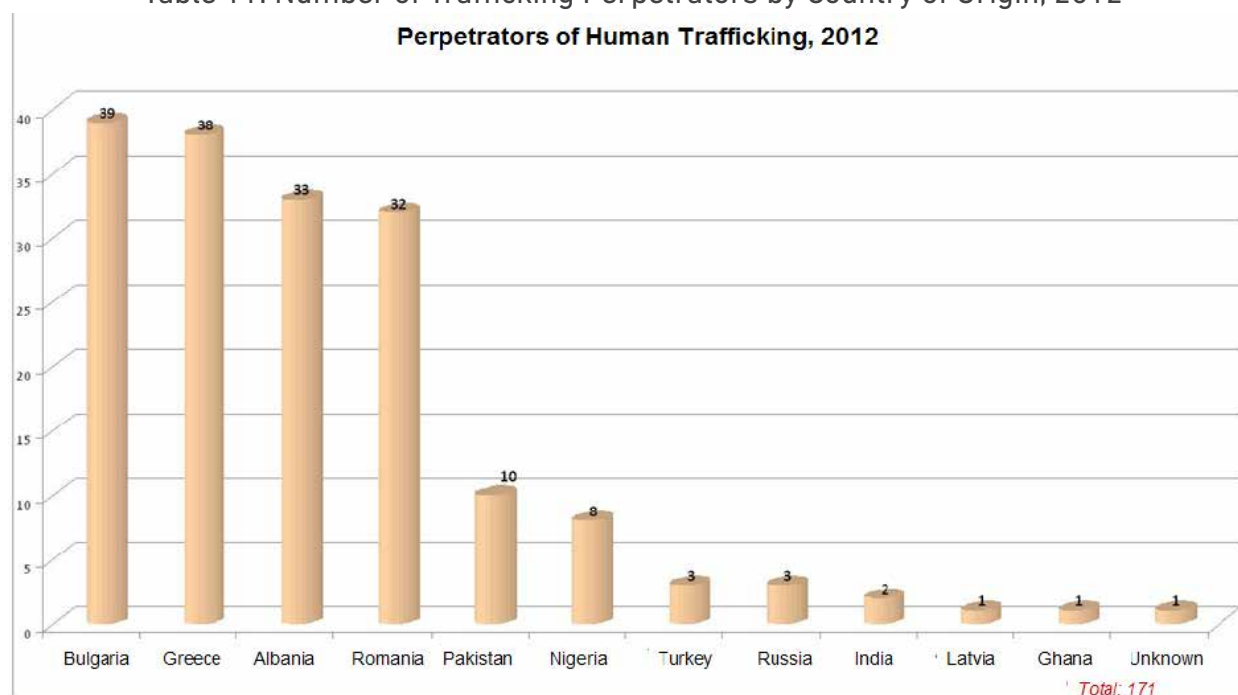
2012 is the most recent year with some specific data available. In 2012, the anti-trafficking police investigated 46 human trafficking cases. The government prosecuted 177 defendants for human trafficking, 27 traffickers were convicted and 16 were acquitted (US Dept. of State, 2013). Tables 10 and 11 below show the number and the country of origin of the victims and the perpetrators of trafficking, as reported by the Hellenic Police.

Table 10: Number of Trafficking Victims by Country of Origin, 2012



Source: [http://hellenicpolice.gr/index.php?option=ozo\\_content&perform=view&id=25382&Itemid=0&lang=](http://hellenicpolice.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&perform=view&id=25382&Itemid=0&lang=)

Table 11: Number of Trafficking Perpetrators by Country of Origin, 2012



Source: [http://hellenicpolice.gr/index.php?option=ozo\\_content&perform=view&id=25382&Itemid=0&lang=](http://hellenicpolice.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&perform=view&id=25382&Itemid=0&lang=)

As with domestic violence, the number of cases reported does not reflect the actual number of incidents. However, some key observations can be made based on the data available. First, table 10 indicates that the majority of trafficking victims are women. Although the numbers above do not specify what proportion of the victims are trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation, the fact that women are so vastly overrepresented among the victims, points towards that direction. It is also notable that only a very small proportion of them are Greek (3 out of 94), even though a great proportion of the traffickers arrested are Greeks (30 out of 171).

#### 4.5.2 Women from Nigeria: A Case Study

According to more recent reports, Nigerian women are transported through the Aegean islands and through the Greek-Turkish border in Evros for sexual exploitation. They are often instructed to file for asylum as Somalis, and they are then subjected to sex trafficking in Athens and other major cities. Traffickers use voodoo curses, spiritual traditions, and threats against family to coerce Nigerian women into exploitation. Traffickers transport victims through Greece for forced labor and sex trafficking in Italy and other EU countries, too (US. Dept of State, 2013).

In the chapter 'Gender, Migration, and Violence', Neli Kampouri (in Zavvou, Kampouri, & Stratigaki, 2013) describes the story of 'Efoua', a Nigerian woman who was trafficked in Greece and attempted to escape prostitution. Efoua was about 20 years old, and had a 3-year-old daughter that she needed to raise back home. When the author met Efoua, she had been in Greece for two months, but had very limited sense of orientation in the area where she lived, and the only Greek expressions she knew were 'come here', 'blowjob', 'bed', and '20 euro'. She had managed to leave 'the house' where she stayed, by lying to the 'Madam' that she was caught by the police. Her attempt to escape was a very brave act, considering she had been repeatedly threatened if she was to do so. "*The other girls were speaking about a girl who left her Madam last June, and they cut off her breasts*" she says (p.108).

Efoua was brought from Nigeria through Izmir and Lesvos, and then to Athens by boat. "A man

*put a gun against my head and told me that if I don't get in the inflatable boat he will shoot me. I was scared, but I obeyed" she describes (p.110). She had originally agreed to come to Greece and work as a prostitute in order to raise money and eventually return home and open a hair salon. She was hoping that the conditions would not be as bad, but in practice it was more difficult: "I thought I could do it, but then I couldn't" she says (p.109).*

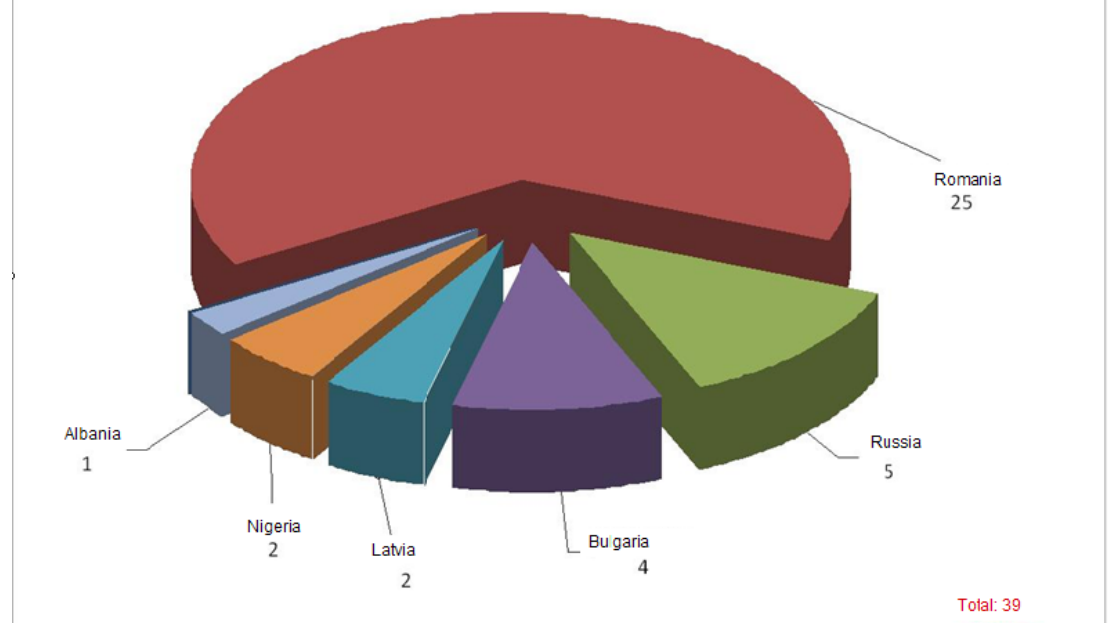
Apart from the difficulties she faced due to the nature of the job, Efoua realised that she was a victim of financial exploitation, too, as she was expected to pay back to her traffickers a very large amount of money, which was impossible to raise: *"It was a lot of money: 50,000 euro. I worked for two months and made 300 euro. Every time I returned to the house, the Madam was counting it and wrote things in a blue notebook. It was a lot of money, and they hadn't paid anything, only the flight tickets and the boat that brought me here" (p.109).* Efoua's case is now being handled by local NGO's and expert lawyers. Efoua will have to describe her traumatic experiences to the police and the court in great detail in order to find ways to escape the situation.

### **4.5.3 Law Enforcement**

As with domestic violence, there are progressive laws today in Greece for the protection of victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation. More specifically, Greek Law 3064/2002 and Presidential Decree 233/2003 prohibit both sex trafficking and forced labor and prescribe punishments of up to 10 years' imprisonment with fines the equivalent of approximately \$14,000 to \$70,000 (US Dept. of State, 2013).

Nonetheless, the anti-trafficking law is not always properly enforced. As mentioned earlier, only a small number of prosecuted defendants are convicted. The resulting sentences ranged from one to 15 years' imprisonment, but courts frequently reduced charges against trafficking offenders to pimping, imposing more lenient penalties of up to five years' imprisonment and enabling traffickers to avoid jail time through payment of fines (US. Dept of State, 2013). Moreover, the fact that prostitution has been legalized in Greece (Law 2734/1999), but there are no control mechanisms to ensure that the prostitution practices are indeed legal, complicates things further. When there are 20,000 estimated illegal prostitutes for every 1,000 legal (US Dept of State, 2009), it is naturally questioned what proportion of them are trafficked and forced into prostitution.

Table 12: Victims of Trafficking that Received Assistance, by Nationality (2012)  
**Nationality of Victims of Human Trafficking that Received Assistance and Protection in 2012**



Source: [http://hellenicpolice.gr/index.php?option=ozo\\_content&perform=view&id=25382&Itemid=0&lang=](http://hellenicpolice.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&perform=view&id=25382&Itemid=0&lang=)

One thing worse than ignorance perhaps, is corruption. As the US Dept of State (2013) observes, there were some reports of corruption among local police and vice officers, who accepted small bribes from traffickers or patronized establishments involved in human trafficking. Despite these reports, the Government of Greece did not investigate or prosecute any public officials for alleged complicity in human trafficking offenses.

Another lawyer and expert activist speaks about the corruption of officials and its detrimental effect to the combating of trafficking:

Trafficking of women for sexual exploitation is widespread here...There is a market... The difficulty is many times when there are some known individuals with networks to back them up inside the police or elsewhere in the system. There have been some reported cases, where it has been very hard to stop the traffickers because there are certain state officials or police officers involved... Let's say someone has a connection in the police, and the police are about to enter a particular hotel, or brothel. There will be a phone call, warning them about what is going to happen, in order to take the women out and prevent them from being caught. (Interview with KG, 2011)

Even when the victims of trafficking do receive the appropriate treatment by the police, however, there are other practical difficulties they have to face, the same person explains:

We have for example a victim of trafficking. She goes to the police, she speaks out, and the instance is confirmed. For a period of time, she is protected by the police. But if there is no place to keep her safe, she will soon have to face life on her own. Then she is a victim [again] because she has to work to ensure her survival, so she becomes a victim to the threats of the traffickers. (Interview with KG, 2011)

To conclude, trafficking, and especially sex trafficking, is highly complicated, and has multiple dimensions, causes, and consequences. A key idea that stems from the discussion above is that combating trafficking requires intense and prolonged action, both at the ideological and the practical realms, and both at the macro and the micro levels.

## 4.5 Sexual Assault & Rape

### 4.5.1 Sexual Harassment

A specific law addressing sexual harassment was adopted in 2006 for the first time, as a response to the EU Directives (Law 3488/2006). The law prohibits sexual harassment and provides penalties ranging from two months to five years in prison. However, the Center for Research on Gender Equality Issues reported that the vast majority of women who experience sexual harassment in the workplace do not file charges, and some quit their jobs. The center estimated in 2010 that 30 to 50 percent of working women and 10 percent of working men experienced sexual harassment at their workplaces each year. On the other hand, in 2010 there were only 13 cases submitted to the Greek Ombudsman, all by women (US Dept of State, 2013).

The Greek Ombudsman handles cases of sexual harassment at the workplace. The cases recorded are not a lot in terms of raw numbers, but they have been increasing from year to year. However, the increasing number of reported cases of sexual harassment does not correspond to actual number of sexual harassment incidents. As with the other cases of gender violence, sexual harassment at the workplace is particularly difficult to prove, and unless there is written evidence in the form of text messages or emails, the Ombudsman is unable to intervene (interview with KG, 2011).

Even out of the cases that do get reported, the majority does not reach the final level of investigation, either because the reports are anonymous, or because within a short period of time they being recalled, or even because the victims change their mind after the Ombudsman announces that there is going to be an in-depth investigation. As the Greek Ombudsman suggests (2013), the frequent phenomenon of retracting the petitions is happening due to five main reasons: (1) the mental anguish that the recollection of the event brings, (2) the social stigma associated with the harassment, (3) the financial cost of the legal procedures, (4) the practical difficulties of providing evidence, and (5) the perception that sexual harassment is not a worthy enough issue to raise.

The following example provided by an expert employee in the Greek Ombudsman (2013) illustrates the difficulties victims of sexual harassment face at the ideological, as well as at the practical level.

There was a sexual harassment report from a female patient against her male physician. The woman went to the police to file a report right after the incident. The officer urged her to "inform her husband first, and return to file a lawsuit, accompanied by her husband". The woman recalled the report because she had "neither the time nor the money to engage in legal procedures". The Greek Ombudsman went ahead and informed the medical center regarding the issue, and requested an additional person (a nurse) to work alongside that doctor while he is seeing patients. Their response was that such a measure is not feasible, due to the small number of nurses available and the high costs that this solution would require.

This example points at the different types of difficulties a victim of sexual harassment faces. First, not only did the police not respond in a supportive manner, but they asked her to return accompanied by her husband, implying that he is the one responsible for her. In addition to that, when the Ombudsman requested a compromising solution that would both save the doctor's reputation and prevent potential assaults in the future, the request was rejected on the grounds of practical infeasibility.

## 4.5.2 Rapes

There is an official statistical record of rapes and attempted rapes reported to the Hellenic police, from 1991 until 2011. Since 2008, the first year of the economic crisis, the raw number of rapes and attempted rapes recorded ranged from 292 to 304 each month, which was slightly higher than the previous years (see table 13 below).

Table 13: Raw numbers of rapes and attempted rapes by year

	<b>COMMITTED</b>	<b>ATTEMPTED</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>1991</b>	179	64	243
<b>1992</b>	190	86	276
<b>1993</b>	204	66	270
<b>1994</b>	188	70	258
<b>1995</b>	171	63	234
<b>1996</b>	144	39	183
<b>1997</b>	166	51	217
<b>1998</b>	140	54	194
<b>1999</b>	162	75	237
<b>2000</b>	168	77	245
<b>2001</b>	154	55	209
<b>2002</b>	166	56	222
<b>2003</b>	160	75	235
<b>2004</b>	191	64	255
<b>2005</b>	177	71	248
<b>2006</b>	182	89	271
<b>2007</b>	185	64	249
<b>2008</b>	232	72	304
<b>2009</b>	213	79	292
<b>2010</b>	215	77	292
<b>2011*</b>	146	52	198

\*first 10 months of the year only

Source: <http://www.isotita.gr/index.php/statistics/1262>

It is worth mentioning here that these numbers do not indicate whether the rape occurred within the family environment or not. If this was the case, the act would be classified under domestic violence. However, it was only in 2006 that rape within marriage was recognised as a crime, which complicates the matter.

Once again, the actual number of rapes is likely much higher than the one shown by the official statistics. As with the previously mentioned types of gender violence, the majority of rapes go unreported, and therefore the majority of the offenders go unpunished. Research conducted in 2002 estimated that out of 4,500 rapes committed per year, only 10 rapists are going to be sentenced for more than five years (GHM & OMCT 2002). At the same time, however, 60 percent of the victims of rape felt guilt, and 30 percent believed they could have avoided the incident if they had reacted differently, the same report suggests (GHM & OMCT 2002). More specifically, out of 551 young people aged 18-24 showed 27.6% agreeing that sometimes it is the woman that provokes the abuse, and 11.6% holding the woman completely responsible for provoking it. Although only 7.4% believed that women should never be held responsible for the violence they experience, 10% thought that women themselves are often the ones who provoke violence

against them (GHM & OMCT 2002).

Interestingly, more recent accounts from those who handle such cases at the legal level not only suggest that similar attitudes still prevail, but they also confirm their existence at the institutional level, meaning among the officials involved in the legal procedures. The segment of an interview with a lawyer that has defended rape victims in the past:

Lawyer: Regarding how cases of rape are handled in the court, they come down to very personal levels. It is such a sensitive topic, that it is by default embarrassing... degrading!

Researcher: Is it degrading to the women, you mean?

Lawyer: To the women, yes. Usually, you know, the questions asked by the lawyers of both sides have the problem of being insulting... Didn't you want it? Didn't you want the intercourse? (Interview with KG, 2011)

This dialogue shows that victim-blaming has been normalized as a thought-process, even within the justice system. According to this view, asking the victim whether she was the one provoking the abuse is simply expected in rape trials.

## **4.6 Violence, Gender, and Race/Ethnicity**

As mentioned earlier, many women are more vulnerable to certain forms of violence, not only due to their gender, but also due to their national or racial identity. In the case of trafficking in particular, 99.5% of women trafficked in Greece are not Greeks (see Table 3). In addition to that, as the crisis has re-ignited racist ideologies and hatred, women of minority groups are sometimes additionally victimized due to their national, racial, or cultural background. As the US Department of State (2012) reports, there have been cases of harassment and increasingly violent physical attacks against individuals perceived to be immigrants and refugees, many of whom Muslim. The Racist Violence Recording Network documented attacks against 190 victims from October 2011 to December 2012, but the total number was believed to be higher because migrants without legal status often feared reporting such incidents. Two of such cases involved women wearing the hijab.

### **The Muslim And Romani Minorities**

Apart from the recent increase in violence against immigrant men and women, there have been minority groups in Greece (particularly the Muslim and Romani communities) that are chronically subjected to certain forms of inequality and particular types of violence. Whether this situation is going to be influenced by the crisis remains unclear.

The Greek government recognizes Sharia as the law regulating the family and civic issues of the Muslim minority in Thrace, and Muslim women may choose to be subject to Sharia as interpreted by the muftis. However, according to the UN independent expert on minority issues, women's rights under family law, property law, and in the judicial system are inferior to those of men, and in some instances Sharia law subjects Muslim women to norms incompatible with the Greek constitution, legislation, as well as with the international standards (US Dept of State, 2013). Muslim, as well as Romani women in Greece, experience severe inequalities in access to education and consequently suffer disproportionately high levels of illiteracy and



unemployment. Although the legal age for marriage is 18 in Greece, child marriage is common within the Romani community and sometimes takes place in the Muslim communities, too. NGOs reported that Romani women typically married and had children at a very early age, reportedly as young as 13. Child marriages were more prevalent among the Romani families lacking education and economic opportunities.

## **Positive Steps Despite The Crisis**

On a positive note, there has been a considerable progress over the last few years when it comes to available structures and services. Despite the crisis, the GSGE has managed to secure funds for the creation of new shelters across the country. At the moment there are a total of 39 counseling centers for women, and 19 shelters for abused women and their children. Their work is supplemented by particular NGOs as well as by some women's organizations that help protect the women's rights and promote gender equality.

## **5. Case Studies**

### **5.1 Economic Castration and Intimate Partner Violence**

The Society for the Study of Human Sexuality (SSHS) and the Andrology Institute of Greece recently conducted a study investigating the phenomenon of intimate partner violence, alongside sexual behaviour. This study, entitled "Greece under the crisis and the Memorandum" received awards at the international scientific conference of Sexual Health PASSM in Dubai, 2013. One of its key findings is a 47% increase in domestic violence incidents over the last year. Negative protagonists are usually unemployed men in their early 40s, individuals with severe occupational stress, pressing financial obligations, and diminished sexual activity, as their partners confessed.

Through the use of 1000 anonymous telephone interviews, the study showed that domestic abuse has increased dramatically during 2013, while men's economic power, as well as their sexual potency, have decreased. The experts argue that the financial stress men experience due to the crisis affects their performance in the bedroom, and in turn leads them to express their frustration on their partners, through the exhibition of physical and sexual violence.

#### **5.1.1 Motivations and Methodology**

According to the press release, some of the motivations behind conducting this survey were the following. Men and women were calling the SSHS helpline for 'odd' sexual problems and 'suspicious' mishaps in their sex life. At the same time, incidents of rape and physical abuse in the family were not included in the samples of their 10 previous studies during the period of the Memorandum. In addition to the above, gender violence is a significant social problem across the world. In fact, at least one in three women around the world has been a victim of physical abuse, rape or other type of abuse in her life. As the UN High Commissioner points out, 40% to 70% of murders by women are committed by persons in their close environment, often in the context of relationships in which the offender has been abusing the victim.

Regarding the methodology, the source of the data used was the anonymous helpline of SSHS.

1000 interviews were conducted through the phone, 600 of which with men and 400 with women.

## **5.2 Domestic Violence and Law Enforcement in Crete**

This study was sponsored by the Institute of European Studies at the University of Berkeley. It was part of a larger research project, the goal of which was to measure the extent to which the policies for the protection of women's rights in Greece are being practiced. Here, emphasis is put on the part of the study pertaining to domestic violence. The researcher, Katerina Glyniadaki, conducted a series of face-to-face qualitative interviews with counselors in women's shelters, social workers, and lawyers who handle gender violence incidents in the courtroom. All of the interviews were conducted during the months of August and September, 2011, in different cities of the island of Crete.

In relation to the ways in which the crisis is affecting domestic violence, two main avenues were identified by this study. First, increased stress levels due to financial pressure intensify the incidents of domestic abuse. Second, the victims of domestic violence find it a lot more difficult to escape an abusive relationship, especially when they are financially dependent on their partners and have limited or no alternative survival options. When coupled with the inadequate existing mechanisms for the combat of gender violence, the cultural taboos, and the inefficient justice system, the crisis acts as a catalyst to the phenomenon of domestic violence.

### **5.2.1 Abusive Behaviours**

Regarding the stress factor, one of counselors interviewed suggests that frustration and anxiety stemming from financial problems lead to increased tensions in the couples' relationships, which in turn may lead to violence.

"People are now more stressed than before. They spend more time with each other, and have less energy when dealing with the consequences of the crisis, they get angry more easily. As a result, domestic violence increases". (Counselor at women's shelter)

### **5.2.2 Trapped Victims**

In addition to the increased frequency and intensity of the incidents, the crisis worsens the situation of the victims, especially when they are financially dependent on their abusers. Not only is it more difficult for them to find ways to gain their economic independence, but it is also more difficult to seek help from elsewhere, as there are fewer funds available from the state services and from related NGOs. A social worker at a women's shelter explains that an abusive relationship is not a priority issue when a woman has no ways to secure her own survival:

"What people worry about right now is making ends meet, and putting some food on their table. You don't sit there thinking whether your husband is beating you, or whether there is gender equality. You want to manage to feed yourself first. Everything else comes second.... It becomes more difficult to leave your abusive husband when your main concern is getting through the day". (Social worker at women's shelter)

On a similar vein, the fact the welfare state in Greece is struggling due to the crisis, affects

directly the lives of those in need. When the social services are shutting down, the victims of domestic abuse have nowhere to turn to for help. A social worker describes one such case, underlining the obstacles this crisis raises.

“At times, there are some European programmes that support unemployed women... As for the battered women, we had a shelter until last year that was hosting such women, and because the funding ended, the shelter closed. So we now have to seek help in other cities’ shelters, like the one in Heraklion, which is a private shelter, with some help from the state... We go through great difficulties, and we have to improvise in order to meet the needs of the citizens, especially of those who belong to weaker social groups”. (Social Worker at the Public Sector)

In the cases above, we see that it becomes practically more challenging for the victims of domestic violence to seek help, but it also becomes more difficult for the ones at key positions to provide it. In other words, economic hardships affect how domestic violence incidents are being handled, both in the individual households and at the state services.

### **5.2.3. Additional Troubles**

#### **Culture**

As mentioned earlier, the existing mechanisms for combating domestic violence prior to the crisis were far from perfect. One of the key factors that hindered the combat of domestic abuse was the cultural taboos associated with it. Not only is the issue treated as a strictly family matter unworthy of compromising a family’s reputation, but it is also widely believed that the victim is at least partially responsible for the abuse.

“People’s mentality is a huge obstacle...You can’t change this mentality. That it is the woman’s fault. That she must have done something to deserve it. Even women have this mentality... Some women believe that as long as they are married, it doesn’t matter if there is physical abuse. They take it as a given. So it could be a matter of ignorance”. (Counselor at women’s shelter)

In the island of Crete in particular, the notions of ‘masculinity’, ‘independence’ and ‘freedom’ are closely intertwined with the local cultural identity and history. However, these qualities interfere with the citizens’ obligation to adhere to the country’s laws and policies, including the ones pertaining to gender violence and domestic abuse.

“There is no respect towards the law... Some men in Crete are very unruly. They say ‘What law? I am the law! I could kill you if you do something’... They are not afraid of anything”. (Counselor at women’s shelter)

As it appears, when domestic violence is not considered a significant issue by women who experience it, and when men feel like they have the freedom to exert violence without fearing punishment, the problem is very likely to perpetuate.

#### **Lines of Combat**

When it comes to gender violence and law enforcement, neither the Greek police nor the Greek courts have been particularly helpful to combating gender violence, each one for different reasons. According to an involved lawyer, the Greek courts are fair and supporting to the victims

of domestic abuse, but they function through an extremely slow and inefficient bureaucracy, delaying justice up to 3 years. Needless to say, this period of time is practically too long for a battered woman seeking immediate relief.

“To a great extent, the women win the cases that reach the courts, especially the ones relating to domestic violence. The only problem is how slow the system is... It takes a very long time to announce a final court decision. This is not good, but it is not the judges’ fault. It is because there are not enough judges, and because there is too much workload... It may take up to 3 years to make a final court decision, and up to 4 for the case to close for good.” (Lawyer, experienced on gender violence cases)

Perhaps more concerning than the court procedures is the way the police treats incidents of domestic violence. Although not all police officers handle such cases the same way, there is a general lack of education and related training, most interviewees agreed.

“I do not trust is the Greek police... When a married woman goes to the police to report an incident of violence, that her husband beat her at home, they are more likely to laugh at her than take her seriously... The woman is facing ‘closed doors’ in addition to social stigmatisation.” (Lawyer, experienced on gender violence cases)

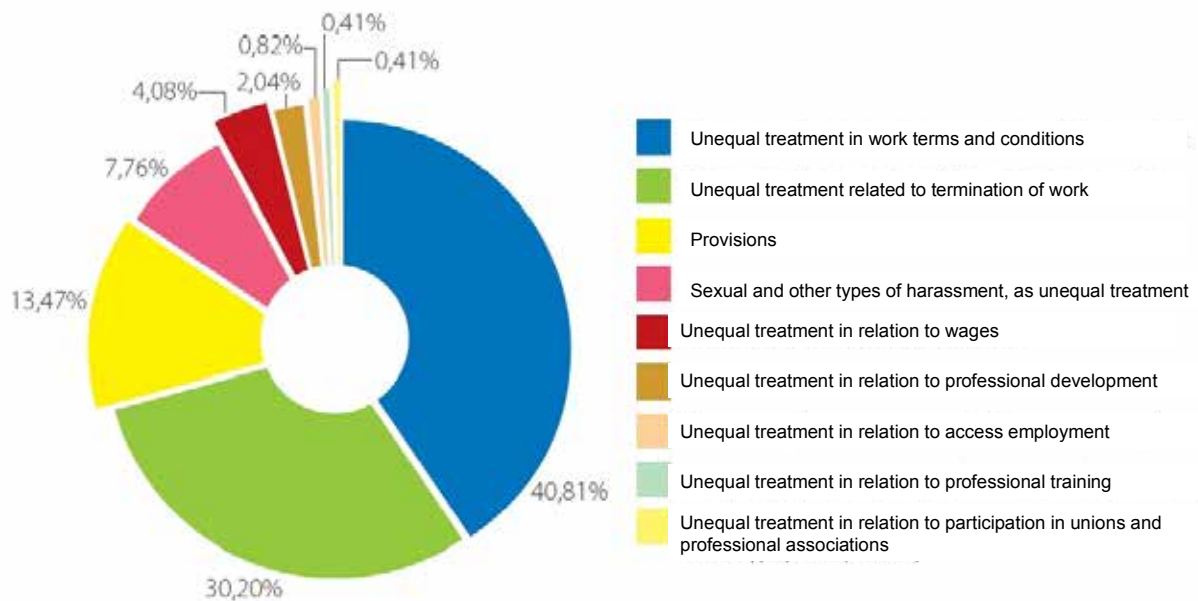
To sum up, the laws pertaining to domestic violence are not properly enforced in Greece due to multiple interacting factors. There are cultural taboos that hold the victim responsible for the abuse, there is lack of related training and law awareness by the police officers, there is a slow and inefficient bureaucratic machine that hinders the proper function of the social services and the justice system.

To a country that is already struggling to protect the victims of domestic abuse and their rights, an economic crisis can only make things worse, as monetary and material assistance becomes more difficult to acquire. Not only are the individuals more prone to exhibit violence due to increased stress, but also the system is less able to handle cases of violence due to the underfunded welfare system.

### **5.3 Sexual Harassment at the Workplace**

According to the Greek Ombudsman’s 2012 Special Report entitled ‘Equal Treatment of Men and Women in Employment and Labour Relations’, the crisis has adversely affected the labour rights of women at the workplace. The fourth most commonly reported area of gender-based discrimination at the workplace is sexual harassment. In fact, 7.76% of all cases reported were related to sexual harassment at the workplace.

## Gender Equality Issues reported at the Ombudsman



### 6.3.1 Executive Summary

Legislation on protection from sexual and moral harassment in the workplace is relatively recent and for this reason neither workers nor employers, nor control or judicial mechanisms, are familiar with it. The greatest difficulty in handling these cases lies in finding material evidence because these matters are inherently difficult to establish. The issues of sexual harassment in the workplace have additional inherent difficulties, as the victims are reluctant to report it to an independent authority. So it is important to gradually achieve social awareness that sexual harassment constitutes a violation of an individual's personality who is thus victimised. On this issue, the Ombudsman considers increasing awareness about existing legal framework essential in all workplaces, with the aid and support of social and professional organizations.

### 5.3.2 Sexual Harassment at the workplace or during the provision of goods and services

The Greek Ombudsman has received reports of sexual harassment and gender-based harassment at the workplace and at places providing goods and services, in both the private and public sectors. The number of reports is not large in absolute terms, but it is growing rapidly.

However, the Ombudsman's intervention is not at all proportional to the breadth and the depth of the reports in the field of gender-based discrimination. In fact, the majority of the submitted petitions do not even reach the stage of investigation by the Ombudsman. This happens because they are submitted anonymously, withdrawn shortly after their submission, or withdrawn when

the Ombudsman announces the initiation of the investigation process and invites the accused to say their opinions.

## 5.4 The Impact of the Financial Crisis on the Greek Households

This study was conducted on February 2013, by 'Kappa Research'. Its main objective was to investigate the effects of the current financial crisis on Greek households, and on the relationships between men and women. Some of the general questions posed were: How do household members manage the required 'fiscal adjustment'? How do the recession and the uncertainty affect people's lives? Could the cuts in public spending and in the welfare sector potentially reverse the progress achieved in the field of gender equality? Is the Greek society ready to respond to the need for solidarity and to the need for flexibility in incorporating new gender roles?

### 5.4.1 The Greek crisis in 360°

The data collected by Kappa Research illustrate the 'spiral' of the crisis in Greece, where decreasing employment, increasing unemployment, shrinking incomes, lower consumption, poverty, and degradation of human relationships, are interconnected and feed off each other.

As the research finds, 48.7% of the respondents currently have no occupations, and 26.1% of them say they are unemployed. 51.3% of the respondents do work, but over the last year they experienced an increase in their working hours and a simultaneous decrease in their earnings. 8 out of 10 respondents (79.7%), experienced loss of their income, resulting from extra taxation (81.3%), increase of their monthly bills (62.3%), and wage cuts (57.9%).

As the income lowers, so does the household's purchasing power: more than 6 out of 10 respondents (64.2 %) said they did not have enough money at the end of the month to meet their basic household needs in food and essential items, or for paying their bills. Thus, they see themselves as poor: 38.0% of respondents self-classified as 'poor', 57.0% positioned themselves in the middle- income category, and only 4.7% of respondents self-identified as 'rich'.

To manage financial hardships, individuals lend money to relatives and friends (34.4%) and borrow from them (41.2 %). Nonetheless, they are not very optimistic about the near future. 76.4% of respondents believe that the economic situation is going to get worse over the next year, while they do not expect the country to recover economically for the next decade.

### 5.4.2 Women and the Crisis

Kappa Research recorded a significant deterioration of the lives of both men and women in Greece due to crisis, with 61.9% of respondents saying this is true for men, and 55.3% saying this is true for women. However, when observing more closely some of the indicators of gender equality as suggested by the European Commission (i.e economic independence, equal pay for equal work, protection from violence, etc), women appeared to be more harshly hit by the crisis than men.

**Women's Employment:** In Greece, the employment levels had increased for both sexes

between 1998 and 2008, even though women's unemployment remained higher than that of men's. Since 2010 however, there has been an overall increase of unemployment, with women being affected more than men.

Interestingly, during 2009, women's employment continued to increase while men's employment decreased for the first time. This was because male-dominated professions such as construction work were hit first by the crisis. This observation ignited discussions regarding a potential reverse of the traditional gender roles as a result of the crisis. In fact, some studies showed that although 69.1% of women did not contribute more than 50% of the family income before the crisis, now 60% of women do contribute more than 50%.

During the following years, the public sector was affected more than the private, resulting to increasing unemployment among women. However, Kappa Research's survey shows that men's unemployment levels today continue to be higher than those of women's. The explanation for this lies in the duration of unemployment: men said they were unemployed for 6 months to 1 year (58.6% of them), whereas women said they were unemployed for 2-3 years (62.9%). Unemployed women are often not included in the official statistics because they tend to leave the labour market and to turn to unpaid or unofficial types of work. As empirical research shows, long-term unemployed women seem to define themselves spontaneously as housewives (18.2%), despite being in search of work, like the unemployed men.

**Women and Precarious work:** Although the crisis has worsened the working conditions for everyone, precarious work is higher among women than among men in Greece. Indeed, 50.2% of working women believe it is very difficult to maintain their jobs over the next year, while the percentage of working men who believe the same is 41.4%. Also, women find it more difficult to get access to the labour market, and they are more vulnerable to uninsured work, lower pay, and dismissal. They also face difficulties in balancing work and family life as well as in getting access to senior management positions. Overall, 4 in 10 women (40.1%) say they have been discriminated against in the workplace because of their sex.

**Income and the "fiscal adjustment" of women:** In the EU, women earn on average 18% less than men per work hour. They have fewer resources during their working lives and during their retirement, they face additional difficulties in accessing finance, and they are affected more by all forms of poverty, particularly in-work poverty. In a similar vein, this survey shows that women's earnings in Greece are concentrated in the lower income levels. 74.2% of women say they find it really difficult to get by with their current income, while the percentage of men who say the same is 67.8%. Moreover, the 29.4% of women are financially dependent on their husbands, compared to 15.8% of men who are financially dependent on their wives.

Nonetheless, women seem to handle more effectively the shrinking of their family income, playing a vital role to the household's financial adjustment during the crisis. In terms of lending money to those in one's close environment, women maintain a balance between lending money to others (37% of women respondents did so over the last year) and borrowing from them (37.4%). Men in contrast, appear to borrow more (45.1%) than lending to others (31.8%). Women have also made cuts in more products and services among the ones needed in a household, and they appear more flexible in the possibility of making further cuts, if need be.

**Decision-making:** The crisis seems to prevent women from entering the world of politics (49.5% of the respondents agree with this statement) exacerbating the existing gender inequalities in the top decision-making processes. At the same time, the stereotypes that associate women with the private sphere and men with the public sphere hold strong among the male population. Only 48.2% of male respondents said they *would like to see more women in higher positions in*

*business and politics by the end of the crisis*, compared to 70.2% of the female respondents.

### 5.4.3 Inside the Household

The aim of this part of the survey was to investigate the extent to which the crisis has affected the private sphere, and especially the interpersonal relationships among partners living in the same household. It refers only to the respondents who were married, in committed relationships, or in permanent co-habitations. A general conclusion drawn is that women face a 'silent crisis' related to the decision-making within the household, the caring for others, as well as their own mental health. Their thoughts pessimistic, sometimes reaching the level of depression.

**Who decides within the household?:** The Greek society is often characterized as 'traditional' or 'patriarchal'. The progress achieved over the last few decades in the overall social status of women in Greece is reflected by the findings of this research: handling the financial matters within the household is the responsibility of both partners (said 57.6% of respondents), and so are the household chores (53.7% of respondents agreed). To the question *who manages the finances in your household*, women said 'the woman' 22.1% of the time, and 'the man' 15.7% of the time. To the same question, men said 'the man' 32% of the time, and 'the woman' 14.1% of the time. The deviations of the responses between men and women reveal an underground competition over who will have the final say in matters of domestic economy, which is likely intensified by the pressures brought by the crisis. This is also shown through the frictions caused by the economic discussions, the majority of respondents suggests (75.5% of men said and 68.2% of women). A similar picture is also painted when it comes to housework, confirming that women indeed share a disproportionate weight of caring for the children, the elders, and the house (36.8% of women and 27.5% of men said 'the woman' is mostly responsible for the housework, and 6.1% of women and 21.5% of men said 'the man').

**Who takes on the cost of unpaid work?** Unpaid work includes the provision of products and services by family members, such as cooking, washing clothes, or caring for the children. It has been found that women spend on average 2.5 hours more than men in unpaid work within the household. Over the last few decades, the increase of female employment levels in Greece has led to the 'commodification' of caring services, and in turn to the change of mentalities and beliefs relating to gender roles. However, the economic crisis seems to be reversing this trend, as some of the services offered by the state (i.e. childcare) have been discontinued, putting the responsibility back on women's shoulders. Indeed, 4 out of 10 women had to stop using outside help for the household, which affected negatively their free time (92%) as well as their own ability to work (21.3%). Therefore, the women were doubly affected by the crisis, both by losing their own jobs and by losing the limited amount of welfare services offered to them by the state, due to the austerity measures. Thus, women now work less in the formal sector, and take on even more of care work in their households.

**Who takes on the mental health cost of the crisis?** A financial crisis affects negatively the factors that determine individuals' mental health. Poor education, material deprivation, and unemployment, are all risk factors for mental health issues like depression, which may even lead to suicide. Indeed, depression has become quite widespread in Greece, with women showing more intense symptoms than men. As this survey shows, 89% of citizens feel 'insecurity', a feeling that is common among 94.6% of women. Insecurity translates to the sense of unpredictability, meaning that anything could happen at any moment because there are practically no rules in force, and therefore there can be no control over what is going on.



The relationships among partners were also affected by this sense of unpredictability and inability to control one's own life. 6 out of 10 respondents said they were unhappy, and they often feel lonely within their marriage/relationship (67.6% of women and 52.4% of men). This general sense of vulnerability makes respondents—especially women—dissatisfied with most aspects of their lives<sup>117</sup>. In relation to the future, men appear more optimistic, with 54% of them saying they are hopeful. Women on the other hand have more divided views, with 48.5% appearing optimistic for the future, and 46% appearing pessimistic.

#### 5.4.4 Family and Gender Roles

**Family and Solidarity Networks:** Where do Greeks turn to for support? Comparing 2013 to 2007, the family as a social institution continues to represent a key support network for Greeks, despite the great difficulties rising at the economic, social, and psychological levels. The respondents seem to perceive financial hardships, material deprivation, etc. as 'outside threats' to their private sphere. Thus, the clustering of several family members in the same household is one method of dealing with economic and social difficulties, but it may also mirror the individuals' values. Interestingly women seem to perceive family from a more utilitarian perspective (source of support and solidarity), whereas men from a more emotional approach (source of love and happiness).

As for the meaning of 'solidarity', the respondents understand it as 'helping each other', having 'social support/safety', and 'social allowances'. In other words, the Welfare State that developed in western societies, in Greece came to symbolize, to be confused with, and to extend the idea of the 'family', beyond the private sphere and into the public sphere. What is now called 'the Mediterranean welfare state' is actually designed to serve this function, meaning to offer supplemental support and solidarity in the cases where the family fails to do so adequately. 'Solidarity' therefore has positive connotations for the respondents. Solidarity networks have actually been strengthened as a result of the crisis, and individualistic tendencies have weakened.

**Traditional and new gender roles:** The traditional roles of *women-mothers* and of *men-heads of households* appear to be deeply embedded in the respondents' consciousness, despite the simultaneous existence of more modern gender roles, formed by the entrance of women in the labour market and the acquisition of their economic independence. Therefore, although the archetypal stereotypes are being maintained, new concepts and meanings have been additionally adopted, reflecting a mix between tradition and modernity in the people's understandings of gender roles. Not surprisingly, women are more likely than men to challenge the traditional stereotypes, albeit not in the case of giving priority to their young children as opposed to their career. Overall, the specific ways in which the crisis is going to affect related views and behaviours remains to be seen.

In conclusion, today's Greek society is expected to function under the fear of 'the unpredictable'. People struggle to overcome the difficulties they face due to the cynicism of the current neoliberal economic model, meaning the unemployment and the poverty (both of which are female-dominated). There is also increase of political extremism, as well as a destabilisation and a challenging the current political status quo. As Robert Castel states, *the social issue is the fundamental question, based on which a society is experimenting with deepening its cohesion, and*

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<sup>117</sup> Family life and health were the only two exceptions, perhaps due to the strong family ties within the Greek society, and the relatively healthy lifestyle of Greeks compared to other Europeans.

*through which it is trying to clear the risk of being cracked.*

## 6. Policies

The following paragraphs describe the concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of Greece adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its fifty fourth session (11 February – 1 March 2013).

**Institutional framework and access to justice:** Despite the adoption of the Law No.4055/2012 abolishing certain fees for victims of domestic and sexual violence, there are remaining concerns that women generally do not benefit a sufficient and fair access to justice, due to police fees and litigation costs and due to ignorance of their rights and ways of claiming them.

National machinery for the advancement of women: There are concerns because the National Committee on Equality between Men and Women has been inactive since 2008.

**Temporary special measures:** Some temporary special measures adopted in the past have been abolished (the 10% quota for women's admission to the Firefighting Academy Schools of the Hellenic Fire Corps and the 15% quota on employment of women in the Municipal Police Force) and there is absence of new special measures as part of a necessary strategy to accelerate the achievement of substantive equality of women and men in areas in which women are underrepresented or disadvantaged.

**Violence against women:** The adoption of the National Programme for Preventing and Combating Violence against Women for 2009 – 2013 was a positive step, and so was the abolition of the use of mediation in cases of domestic violence. However, violence against women persists, while there is lack of information, studies and statistical data on the nature, forms, extent and causes of violence against women

**Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution:** The adoption of the National Action Plan to combat trafficking for 2010 – 2012 was a positive step. However, there is lack of information on its effective implementation and on whether it has been extended beyond 2012. There is lack of sufficient statistical data, and the state's efforts to address the exploitation of prostitution are very limited.

**Employment:** The unemployment rates of women are higher than those of men (31% vs. 24% respectively) while there is persistent vertical and horizontal segregation of occupations and wage gap between women and men.

The Committee is concerned about the potential negative impact on women of Act No.4024 of 27 October 2011, which introduced a new public service statute, a new job classification and a new harmonized wage scale resulting in wage cuts of up to 50% in certain cases.

The Committee is further concerned that the slashing of pensions has negatively impacted the pension for widows and some other groups of women.

The Committee is further concerned that Act No.3896/2010 and 3996/2011 against unfair dismissals and the extension of the period during which working mothers cannot be dismissed after their return from maternity leave to 18 months, has resulted them being offered part time and rotation work in many cases with reduced level of pay.

The Committee is concerned that the dismantling of the social fund (OEE) and the workers'

housing organization (OEK) as social dialogue organizations have had a negative impact on housing services and resulted in the significant interruptions of the operation and maintenance of nurseries and child-care facilities.

The Committee is also concerned at the absence of statistical data disaggregated by sex on complaints related to gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment at the workplace, as well as at the lack of data on the situation of employment among the Muslim minority of Thrace and Roma women.

**Health:** The Committee notes the National Action Plan 2008-2012 on HIV-AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases, but is concerned that since 2010 the rise in the number of HIV/AIDS cases is over 57%, and that there has been a stark increase in the number of people dying of HIV-AIDS from 2007-2009, figures unknown afterwards.

**Data collection:** The Committee is concerned at the general lack of available recent data provided by the State party. It notes that updated disaggregated data by sex, age, race, ethnicity, geographical location and socioeconomic background are necessary for an accurate assessment of the situation of women, to determine whether they suffer from discrimination, for informed and targeted policymaking, and for the systematic monitoring and evaluation of progress achieved towards the realization of women's substantive equality with regard to all areas covered by the Convention.

## 7. Summary And Concluding Remarks

Prior to the crisis, there was a trend towards gender equality, especially in terms of women's participation in the labour force, and consequently in their economic independence and overall social status. Despite the remaining gender gaps in employment rates and earnings, by 2008, women's position in the Greek society was considerably improved compared to previous decades. However, the crisis has brought numerous changes, both at the macro-structural level, and at the everyday lives of people.

Since the beginning of the crisis in 2008, women as well as men in Greece have been experiencing intense financial hardships, most notably increasing unemployment (especially for younger cohorts), lower wages, decreasing welfare state support, and higher taxes to pay. These material changes, have several non-material consequences: lower quality of life, higher stress, and poorer physical and mental health. At the social level, along with higher poverty, racist ideologies have come to the forefront, and crime and violence levels have increased, both in the political and interpersonal realms.

Although the inability to 'bring food to the table' has deep psychological consequences for men who seem unable to fill their traditional gender roles as 'breadwinners', women are the ones expected to 'pick up the slack' in several ways:

They need to find work, regardless of whether they were previously active in the labour force, in order to compensate for the lost family income.

They are forced to part-time, precarious and lower-paid types of work, because women's work is seen as secondary in importance compared to men, providing the leeway to employers to use them for their 'cheap labour'.

As the welfare state weakens, women not only receive less help, but they are also forced to

take on more (unpaid) care work on their shoulders, replacing the role of the welfare state and reinforcing the traditional 'housewife' role, as well as the 'double-shift' notion.

They are receivers of gender violence, particularly from male intimate partners (domestic violence), or employers (sexual harassment).

Immigrant women are additionally vulnerable to unequal treatment, not only due to their gender, but also due to their race/ethnicity, and lower SES. They are especially likely to enter the informal economy, and in some cases become targeted victims of racial violence or trafficking.

Whether the crisis will ultimately slow-down, reverse, or fast-forward the previously observed trend towards gender equality remains to be seen. Given what the indications above suggest, however, the near future is not particularly promising. As long as traditional gender roles continue to permeate the Greek society at multiple levels (ideological and structural), and as long as ongoing structural changes do not account for women's particular needs and issues, it is difficult to expect positive outcomes. Nonetheless, as writer William Arthur's notes, *great adversities cause some women break and others to break records*. Only the years following the end of the crisis will show which of the two will be the case for women in Greece today.

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# Appendix of the Greece Study

## FRA, Gender Violence Report 2014

This survey was conducted by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), between April and September 2012. In each EU Member State, a minimum of 1,500 women took part in the survey<sup>118</sup>. The survey targeted the general population of women aged 18–74 years who live in the EU and speak at least one of the official languages of their country of residence. The survey covered women’s personal experiences of physical and sexual violence, psychological partner violence, sexual harassment and stalking, and most questions referred to women’s experiences since the age of 15.

### Physical and Sexual Violence

One in three women in the EU (33%) has experienced physical and/or sexual violence since she was 15 years old. Also, 8% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence in the 12 months before the survey interview. Out of all women who have (or had) an intimate partner, 22% have experienced physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15. In total, 11% of women have experienced some form of sexual violence since they were 15 years old, either by a partner or some other person.

An estimated 13 million women in the EU have experienced physical violence in the course of 12 months before the survey interviews. This corresponds to 7% of women aged 18–74. Also, 31% of women have experienced one or more acts of physical violence since the age of 15. The most common forms of physical violence involve pushing or shoving, slapping or grabbing, or pulling a woman’s hair.

An estimated 3.7 million women in the EU have experienced sexual violence in the course of 12 months before the survey interviews – corresponding to 2% of women aged 18–74. While some women indicate they have experienced one form of sexual violence, other women indicate they have experienced multiple forms of sexual violence. The following describes the results of women’s experiences since the age of 15:

- 5% of women have been forced into sexual intercourse;
- 6% of women indicate that somebody has attempted to force them into sexual intercourse;
- 6% of women say that somebody has made them take part in sexual activity when they did not want to or when they were unable to refuse;
- 6% of women have agreed to sexual activity because they were afraid what would happen if they did not.

Of those women who indicate they have been victims of sexual violence by a non-partner, almost one in 10 women indicates that more than one perpetrator was involved in the incident when describing the details of the most serious incident of sexual violence they have experienced.

*Intimate partner violence:* One third of victims (34%) of physical violence by a previous partner experienced four or more different forms of physical violence. Whereas in most cases violence

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<sup>118</sup> With the exception of Luxembourg, where 908 women were interviewed.

by a previous partner occurred during the relationship, one in six women (16 %) who has been victimised by a previous partner experienced violence after the relationship had broken up.

*Non-partner violence:* One in five women (22%) has experienced physical violence by someone other than their partner since the age of 15. Out of those women who have experienced physical violence by someone other than their partner, 67 % say that the perpetrator was male and a further 7 % say they have experienced physical violence by both male and female perpetrators. In the case of sexual violence, 97 % of women say that the perpetrator was male.

## Other Forms of Violence

**Psychological partner violence:** One in three women (32%) has experienced psychologically abusive behaviour by an intimate partner, either by her current partner or a previous partner. This includes belittling or humiliating the victim in public or private; forbidding her to leave the house or locking her up; making her watch pornographic material against her wishes; scaring or intimidating her on purpose; and threatening her with violence or threatening to hurt someone else the respondent cares about. Overall, 43% of women have experienced some form of psychological violence by an intimate partner. This may include psychologically abusive behaviour and other forms of psychological violence such as controlling behaviour (i.e. trying to keep a woman from seeing her friends or visiting her family or relatives), economic violence (i.e. forbidding a woman to work outside the home) and blackmail. Out of all women currently in a relationship, 7% experience four or more different forms of psychological violence by their partner. When the partner engages in heavy alcohol use there are higher rates of psychological violence. Moreover, when multiple forms of psychological violence are present, there is also physical and/or sexual violence.

**Stalking:** In the EU-28, 18% of women have experienced stalking since the age of 15 and 5% of women have experienced it in the 12 months before the survey interview. This corresponds to about 9 million women in the EU-28 experiencing stalking within a period of 12 months. In addition, about 14% of women have received offensive or threatening messages or phone calls repeatedly from the same person, and 8% have been followed around or experienced somebody loitering outside their home or workplace. Out of all women surveyed, 3% have experienced stalking that involved the same person repeatedly damaging her property. Finally, one in 10 women (9%) has been stalked by their previous partner.

**Cyberstalking**<sup>119</sup>: 4% of all 18 to 29-year-old women, or 1.5 million, in the EU-28 have experienced cyberstalking in the 12 months before the interview, compared with 0.3% of women who are 60 years old or older. Out of all women victims of stalking, one in five (21%) has experienced stalking that has lasted over two years. Also, one in five victims of stalking (23%) has had to change her phone number or email address as a result of the most serious incident of stalking. Three quarters of stalking cases (74%) never came to the attention of the police, even though this involved the most serious case of stalking that the respondents referred to in the survey.

**Sexual harassment:** An estimated 24 million to 39 million women (13% to 21%) in the EU-28 have experienced sexual harassment in the 12 months before the interview alone. Based on all 11 items used in the survey to measure sexual harassment, every second woman (55%) in the EU has experienced sexual harassment at least once since the age of 15, and one in five

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<sup>119</sup> Stalking by means of email, text messages or the internet– affects young women in particular.



women (21%) in the 12 months before the survey interview.

Sexual harassment is multidimensional, ranging from physical forms through verbal acts to non-verbal forms such as cyberharassment. Some examples are: physical forms of harassment – 29% of women in the EU-28 have experienced unwelcome touching, hugging or kissing since they were 15 years old; verbal acts of harassment – 24% of women have been subjected to sexually suggestive comments or jokes that offended them; non-verbal forms including cyberharassment – 11% of women have received unwanted, offensive sexually explicit emails or SMS messages, or offending, inappropriate advances on social networking sites.

Generally, the risk of exposure to sexual harassment is above average for women aged between 18 and 29 years (38% over the last year), and between 30 and 39 years (24%). Also, sexual harassment is more commonly experienced by women with a university degree and by women in the highest occupational groups: 75% of women in the top management category and 74% of those in the professional occupational category have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime, compared with 44% of women in the occupational category 'skilled manual worker' or 41% of women who state that they have never done paid work. In most cases of sexual harassment since a woman was 15 years old (68%), the perpetrator was somebody she did not know. Other perpetrators of sexual harassment include people whom the woman knows (35%), someone related to a woman's employment such as a colleague, boss or customer (32%), or a friend or an acquaintance (31%).

Out of all women who described the most serious incident of sexual harassment that has happened to them, 35% kept the incident to themselves and did not speak about it to anyone, 28% talked to a friend, 24% spoke to a family member or a relative and 14% informed their partner. Only 4% reported the incident to the police, 4% talked to an employer or boss at their workplace, and less than 1% consulted a lawyer, a victim support organisation or a trade union representative.

## The Aftermath

**Effects of violence on the victim:** With respect to the long-term psychological consequences of violence, victimization by partners or other persons made victims suffer from a loss of self-confidence, and it left them feeling vulnerable and anxious. Victims of sexual violence indicate that they often suffer from a higher number of psychological consequences. Women are more likely to experience various long-term psychological consequences as a result of partner violence than those who experience violence by a perpetrator who was not a partner.

**Contact with police and other services:** One third of victims of partner violence (33%) and one quarter of victims of non-partner violence (26%) contacted either the police or some other organization, such as a victim support organization, following the most serious incident of violence. In total, victims reported the most serious incident of partner violence to the police in 14% of cases and the most serious incident of non-partner violence in 13% of cases. For about one quarter of victims, feeling ashamed or embarrassed about what has happened was the reason for not reporting the most serious incident of sexual violence by a partner or a non-partner to the police or any other organization.

**Overcoming violence:** When asked which type of help would have been useful, women indicate that first and foremost they wanted to have someone to talk to and support them (33%–54% depending on the type of violence and perpetrator), followed by protection (12%–25%) and other practical help (13%–21%). Indeed, most victims (57%–60% depending on the perpetrator

and type of violence) have shared their experiences with someone concerning the most serious incident that they have experienced. About one third of victims of partner violence (35%) credited the support of their family and friends in helping them to overcome the violence.

**Fear of victimisation:** Women who have heightened levels of fear of assault tend to have also experienced physical or sexual violence in their lives. 21% of all women worried sometimes in the 12 months about the possibility of being physically or sexually assaulted by someone, and 7% by a previous partner. In turn, 53% of all women avoid certain situations or places, at least sometimes, for fear of being physically or sexually assaulted. Across the 28 EU Member States, 8% of women (especially younger women) say that in the 12 months, at least sometimes, carried something for self-defense purposes.

**Attitudes and awareness:** In societies in which intimate partner violence is considered largely a private matter, incidents of violence against women are unlikely to be shared with family and friends, and are also rarely reported to the police. 78% of all women in the EU think that violence against women is very common or fairly common in their country. On average, 39% of women in the EU indicate that they know of other women who are victims of 'domestic violence' in their circle of friends and family, and 22% know someone at their current or previous place of work or studies who has been a victim of intimate partner violence.

## Summary & Concluding Remarks

What emerges from this survey is a picture of extensive abuse that affects many women's lives, but is systematically under-reported to the authorities. For example, one in 10 women has experienced some form of sexual violence since the age of 15, one in 20 has been raped, one in five has experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner, and one in 10 has experienced some form of sexual violence by an adult before they were 15. Yet, as an illustration, only 14% of women reported their most serious incident of intimate partner violence to the police, and 13% reported their most serious incident of non-partner violence to the police.

Future EU strategies on equality between women and men could build on the survey's findings to address key areas of concern about women's experiences of violence. The survey results provide ample support for EU Member States to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, and for the EU to explore the possibility of accession to the convention. The findings further reinforce the need to ensure implementation of existing EU measures for victims of crime, most notably through the EU Victims' Directive. They also serve to underline the importance of targeted EU legislation and policies addressing violence against women, such as the European Protection Order and the Regulation on Mutual Recognition of Protection Measures in Civil Matters, which need to be applied in practice if they are to be effective. Alongside responses to violence against women at the level of EU institutions and Member States, action to combat violence against women needs to come from different quarters, including employers, health professionals and internet service providers. In sum, this report presents the first results from the most comprehensive survey to date at the level of the EU (and worldwide) on women's diverse experiences of violence. It is hoped that the report's findings are taken up by those women and men who can advocate and initiate change to address violence against women.

**The gender impact of the financial, political and social crisis.  
The Case of Italy.**

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## **Introduction**

In Chapter 1 we reconstruct the Italian context before the crisis with regards to gender perspective by placing the focus on different dimensions of well-being in order to better assess the impact of the crisis and of the policies enacted to tackle it. Attention will also be paid to different groups of women characterized by their level of education, marital status, presence of children, country of origin and to the regional heterogeneity that characterizes the Italian labour market. We refer to 2007 (and 2006) data to reconstruct the situation before the impact of the financial crisis on the economy and discuss the effects of the public policies enacted during the crisis.

The first case study presented in this report concerns a system of coordination for public support on violence against women. This system includes Public Institutions, Authorities and NGOs active in this field in the district of Modena (located in the northeast of Italy), the first network to be established in Italy. The availability of more recent data and experiences at the local level will allow us to make some hypotheses on the impact of the crisis on violence against women.

The second case study is related to good practices enacted by the Italian National Department of Equal opportunities, who launched a mass media campaign addressing violence against women (Chapter 4).

Chapter 5 aims to provide policy suggestions after assessing the impact of the crisis on gender equality and violence against women. It is in this final chapter that the third case study concerning innovative social policy is brought to the forefront. The study deals with the example of 'Nidi di Mamme' (Mums' kindergarten) in Naples and involves different subjects with potentially multiple positive effects.

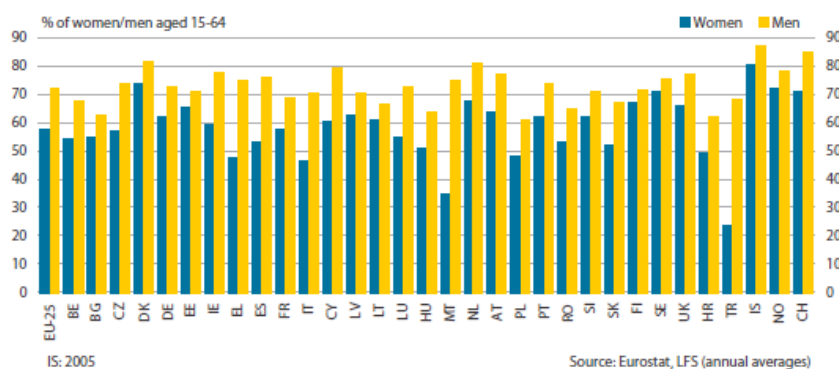
## **1. The Italian context before the crisis**

In this Chapter we analyse the Italian labour market before the crisis through the gender perspective, highlighting gender inequalities and disclosing the different roles played by men and women in social reproduction activities (Section 1.1). We will also tackle the issue of the low fertility rates and the low and heterogeneous presence of child care services in Italy (Section 1.2), while in Section 1.3 inequalities in political participation will be analysed. Health status by gender is analysed in Section 1.4, with special attention paid to violence against women in Italy. In Section 1.5, we analyse the results of the 2006 first National survey on Violence against women carried out by the National Statistical Office (Istat).

### **1.1 Gender inequalities in paid and unpaid work**

Italy is characterized by a very low employment rate for women and a higher employment differential by gender than in other European countries on average (Figure 1.1).

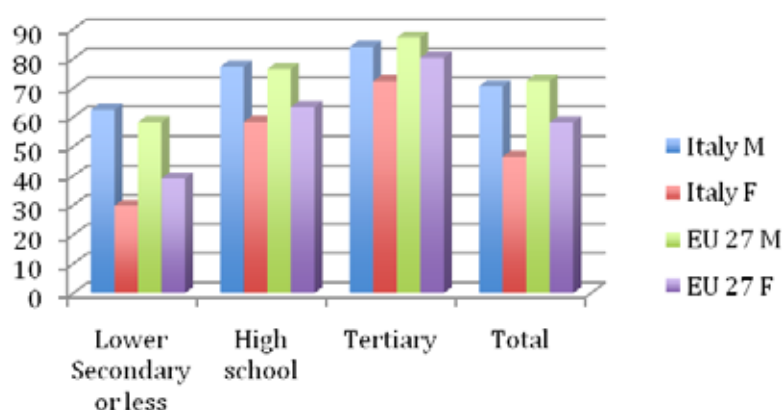
Figure 1.1 - Employment rates by gender 2006 - 15-64



Source: Eurostat (2008)

Employment rates are particularly low for less educated women, and the gender gap in employment increases as the level of education gets lower (Figure 1.2). Employment rates are higher for women coming from other countries, 53,1% (Istat, 2009) against 46% on average.

Figure 1.2 Employment rates by gender and levels of education in 2007 EU 27 vs Italy



Data Source: Eurostat Euro SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS), Labour Force Survey data.

Turning to unemployment in 2007, the women’s unemployment rate was 7.9% in Italy, and in the EU-27 countries. However, the gap between men and women’s unemployment was higher in Italy, where the men’s unemployment rate was 4.9% against 6.6% in the EU-27.<sup>120</sup> The long term unemployment rate was also higher amongst women: 3.8% of women in the labour force were unemployed for 12 months or more (Istat, 2012a, p.19), against 2.2% of men in 2007. Before the crisis, together decrease in the unemployment rates, an increase in inactivity and discouragement in labour supply occurred, particularly for women and youth. In 2007, about 26% of men and almost 50% for women were inactive. There was a higher number of women not in the labour force in the South of Italy, where about 6 out of 10 women were classified as inactive in 2007 (Istat, 2008). Employment rates are also very heterogeneous across the regions of Italy. The 2007 Istat Labour force survey data show that women’s employment rate ranged from 31.1% in the South (including the regions of Abruzzo, Molise, Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicilia, and Sardegna) of Italy to 57.5% in the northeast (including Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol, Bolzano/Bozen, Trento, Veneto Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Emilia-Romagna regions), with a widening gender gap corresponding with disadvantaged women in the South of Italy (Table 1.1).

<sup>120</sup> Eurostat Euro SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS), Labour Force Survey data

Table 1.1- Employment rates 15-64 years old by areas - Italy 2007

Area		Sesso	2007	Gender Gap	
Italy		M	70,7	24,1	
		F	46,6		
Italy	North	M	76,3	19,4	
		F	56,8		
	Northwest	M	75,4	19,0	
		F	56,4		
	Northeast	M	77,5	20,0	
		F	57,5		
	Centre	M	73,0	21,2	
		F	51,8		
	South	M	62,2	31,1	
		F	31,1		
	Source: Our Elaborations from Metadata I.Stat <a href="http://dati.istat.it">http://dati.istat.it</a>				

Northwest (North-western Italy): Piemonte, Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste, Lombardia, Liguria

Northeast (North-eastern Italy): Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol, Bolzano/Bozen, Trento, Veneto

Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Emilia-Romagna

Centre (Central Italy): Toscana, Umbria, Marche, Lazio;

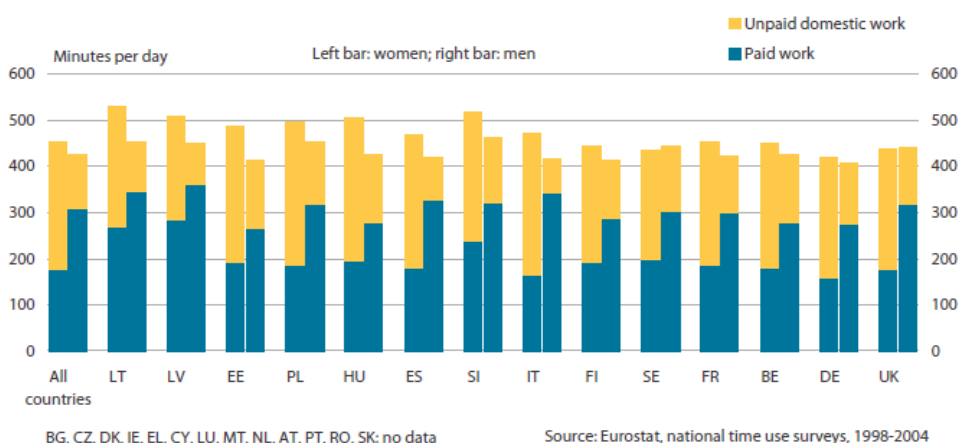
South (Southern Italy): Abruzzo, Molise, Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicilia, Sardegna

Turning to the type of employment, women were overrepresented in non-standard jobs (non-permanent or part-time contracts), with a larger probability than men to be involuntarily so (Eurostat, 2009,). They also suffered from the glass ceiling effect, preventing them from accessing high positions (Eurostat, 2009; Addabbo, Borghi & Favaro, 2006) and contributing to the disadvantageous gender wage gap. Given the different characteristics of employed women (on average more educated than the general female population), the gender wage gap is computed on a restricted sample of employed individuals, without taking into account the non-random selection of employed women from the population. This process has the potential to underestimate the disparity in wages. By applying econometric techniques that correct this non-random selection, the results detect a wage gap that is higher (Addabbo & Favaro, 2007; Olivetti & Petrongolo, 2008, Zizza, 2013) and increasing over time to the disadvantage of women (Zizza, 2013)<sup>121</sup>.

A critical point regarding the analysis of gender equality in Italy concerns the unequal time allocation of paid and unpaid work by gender. Work activities by gender appear to be more unequally distributed in Italy (Figure 1.3) than in other countries.

121 Zizza (2013) by correcting for the non random selection of the sample in employment and by using the Bank of Italy Survey of Household Income and Wealth data detects an increase in the wage gap at the disadvantage of women in Italy from 10% in 1995 to 13% in 2008.

Figure 1.3 - Time allocation by gender for 25-44 year old individuals.



Source: Eurostat (2009, Fig.121 p.111).

The unequal distribution of time, with a higher degree of unpaid family work for women in Italy, is not only related to women's lower participation to the labour market. In fact, even in households with double earning couples, as the descriptive statistics based on Istat Multipurpose daily activities survey (AVQ 2006) shows, women appear to bear the main charge of unpaid care and domestic work activities. Summing up paid and unpaid (domestic and care) work in Italy in 2006, women in double earner households with children ended up working 11.5 hours a week more than their partners, 8 hours more for households without children (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2 - The allocation of time by gender in double earner households with inhabitants ranging in age from 15 to 64

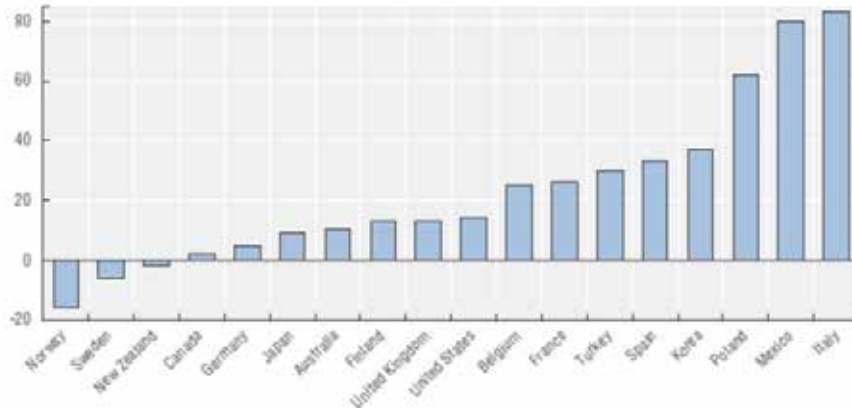
	Double earners 2006					
	With children			Without children		
	Paid	Unpaid	Total	Paid	Unpaid	Total
Men	43,4	6,3	49,7	42,8	5,6	48,4
Women	33	28,2	61,2	36,4	20	56,4
Men-Women	-10,4	21,9	11,5	-6,4	14,4	8
Obs.	6035			1580		

Source: Addabbo & Lodi (2013) from Istat AVQ

(Multipurpose Daily Activities) 2006 microdata.

Moreover, the high total workload leads to lower leisure time, and time to be devoted to other activities (including women's participation in community and social life). By looking at the gender differences in leisure time as they result from time budget surveys around 2006, Italy shows the highest difference concerning the advantage of men, who appear to have 80 minutes more of leisure time a day. This represents the sharpest gap with respect to the other countries analysed (Figure 1.4).

Figure 1.4- Gap in daily minutes in leisure time by gender

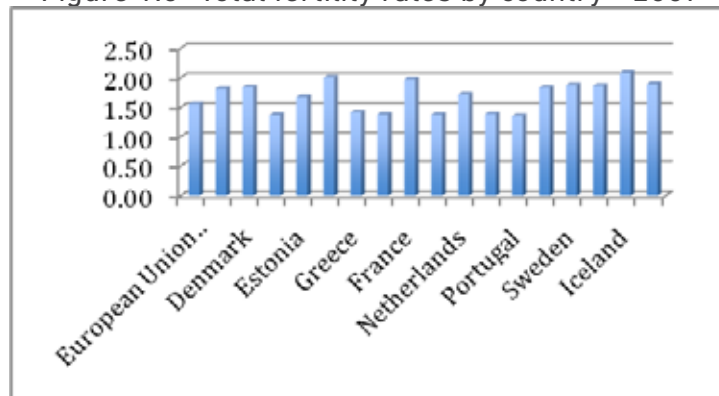


Source: OECD (2009, Figure 2.9, p.31)

## 1.2 Demographic trends and childcare services

The total fertility rate in Italy in 2007 (1.37) was significantly lower on average than the rest of Europe (1.56). This rate was particularly lower than in the countries where public policies provide better support in terms of childcare services.

Figure 1.5- Total fertility rates by country - 2007



Source: Data derived from Metadata in Euro SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS)

When turning to early childcare services in the year 2006-2007, on average 68% of children were enrolled in pre-primary education (Istat 2012a:15) and only 9.9% of children aged from 0 to 2 were attending nursery schools with a high regional heterogeneity of childcare provisions (Table 1.3). Among children aged from 0-2 years, the percentage of those who attended kindergarten ranged from 1.4 in Campania to 24 in the region of Emilia-Romagna.



Table 1.3 - Children aged 0-2 in kindergartens by region - Year 2007

Regions	2007
Piemonte	11,1
Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste	17,8
Lombardia	12,8
Liguria	12,6
Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol	8,8
<i>Bolzano/Bozen</i>	<i>3,5</i>
<i>Trento</i>	<i>14,4</i>
Veneto	9,5
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	12,2
Emilia-Romagna	24,0
Toscana	16,6
Umbria	11,9
Marche	13,1
Lazio	11,0
Abruzzo	7,0
Molise	4,3
Campania	1,3
Puglia	3,7
Basilicata	6,9
Calabria	1,9
Sicilia	5,3
Sardegna	6,2
North West	12,4
North East	15,0
Centre	13,0
Centre-North	13,3
South	3,6
Italy	9,9

Source: Selection from Istat Noitalia 2012

Data: Istat, Indagine sugli interventi e i servizi sociali dei comuni singoli o associati.

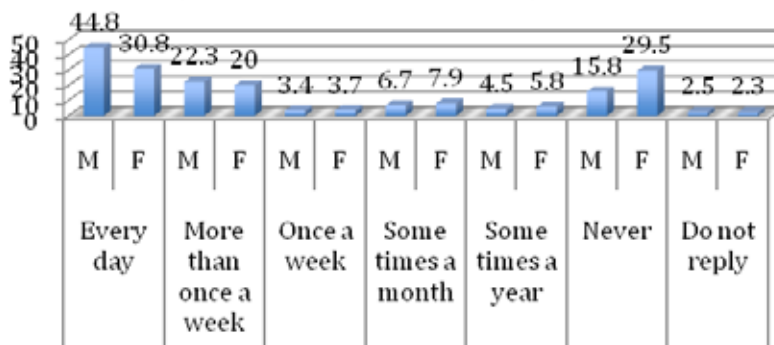
This high heterogeneity in the coverage of the service mirrors the high heterogeneity in women's employment rates by region. In addition, as shown by the Istat survey, there is a high likelihood of work interruptions for new Italian mothers who were working after childbirth.

Public policies have been enacted to increase the coverage of child care services. In 2007, a National Plan to improve the pre-school system (*Piano straordinario di intervento per lo sviluppo del sistema territoriale dei servizi socio-educativi per la prima infanzia*) was launched by the Italian Government, leading to an improvement in coverage during the following years (as shown also in Table 5.1 in this report). However, current coverage is still low, the supply of childcare services is limited by low public funds available to sustain services at the local level, and there is a lower demand for the service in this time of crisis (Istat, 2013).

### 1.3 Political participation by gender

A first indicator to consider when analysing political participation by gender is the extent of interest in political issues shown by the gathering of political information. As Figure 1.6 shows, on average women aged over 14 tend to be less politically informed than men. About 30% women never acquire political information compared with 16% of men. Whereas on average, 45% of men gather political information on a daily basis versus 31% women.

Figure 1.6 - Gathering political information by gender and frequency, 2007



Source: Istat multipurpose survey data in Istat metadata <http://dati.istat.it/?lang=it>

However, as Table 1.4 shows, the frequency of information on political issues is related to age: daily acquisition of political information increases with age though in each age group women appear on average less informed than men.

Table 1.4 - Gathering of political information by gender and age. 2007

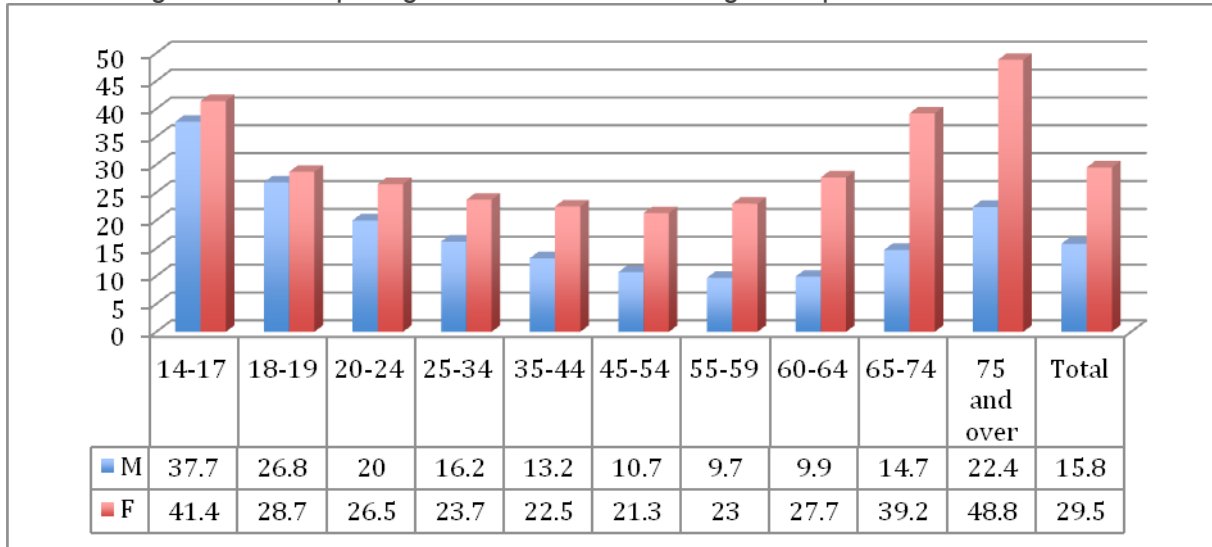
Age	Every day		More than once a week		Once a week		Some times a month		Some times a year		Never		Do not reply	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
14-17	13,5	9,7	21,4	18,8	4,6	6,4	11,6	12,1	8	8,4	37,7	41,4	3,1	3,3
18-19	24,3	16,5	26,4	25,5	6,2	7,2	8,8	15	5,4	5,6	26,8	28,7	2,1	1,5
20-24	25,8	22,3	28,5	26,1	5,7	5	10,5	10,6	6,1	7	20	26,5	3,4	2,6
25-34	35,7	27,5	27,7	25,4	3,7	5,1	8,1	9,4	5,4	6,8	16,2	23,7	3	2,1
35-44	45,5	32,3	24,8	23,9	3,3	4,3	6,8	8,9	4,4	6	13,2	22,5	1,9	2,1
45-54	53,1	38,5	21,6	22,2	3,1	3,2	5,4	7	3,5	5,3	10,7	21,3	2,6	2,4
55-59	60,7	40,4	17,3	18,9	2,6	3,2	4,9	7,7	2,7	5,1	9,7	23	2,1	1,7
60-64	57,4	39,3	19,4	17,2	2,9	2,6	4,3	5,7	3,3	5,1	9,9	27,7	2,7	2,4
65-74	55,1	32,8	16,7	13,1	2,6	2,4	4,8	5,5	3,6	4,6	14,7	39,2	2,4	2,5
75 and over	45,9	24,6	16	11	2,5	2,1	5,7	5,5	5,2	5,4	22,4	48,8	2,2	2,6
Total	44,8	30,8	22,3	20	3,4	3,7	6,7	7,9	4,5	5,8	15,8	29,5	2,5	2,3

Source: Istat multipurpose survey data in Istat metadata <http://dati.istat.it/?lang=it>

As the data from the Istat multipurpose survey 'Aspects of daily life' shows, in 2007 women tended to be on average less informed about political issues. On average, the gap between men and women who never gather political information is about 14%, the gap being higher as they age. As Figure 1.7 shows, 49% of elderly women aged over 75 tend to never be informed versus 22% of men in the same age group, showing, therefore, a gap of 26%. The level of the lack of political information by gender is similar at a younger age. Women aged from 45 to 54

appear to be the age group most likely to attain some political information. Note the U-shaped pattern with lack of information on political issues being higher in the youngest and oldest age groups.

Figure 1.7- People aged over 14 who never gather political information



Source: Istat multipurpose survey data in Istat metadata <http://dati.istat.it/?lang=it>

As the same data set shows, women are also less keen on talking about politics. In fact, in 2009 31% women talked about politics at least once a week versus 48% of men, while 40% of women never talk about politics at all (Istat 2010). A similar U-shaped pattern to the one detected for political information acquisition has also been found in relation to political conversation, with a much lower gap represented in the youngest age group (Istat 2010). The gender gap concerning the gathering of political information and political conversations decreases with the level of education and is lower with regard to high level employment positions. The latter appears to show a higher involvement in the acquisition of political information and in conversation on political issues (Istat 2010).

Women are also underrepresented in terms of seats in parliament. After the 2008 elections, there were on average 20.3% of women in the Italian Parliament, 18.4% in the Senate House and 21.2% in the Lower House (Istat 2013b). The highest number of women have been elected in the North of Italy (22.7%), compared with 19.7% in the Centre of Italy and 17.7% in the South. The regions showing the highest number of women elected in 2008 were Emilia Romagna (29.7%) in the North-East of Italy, followed by Calabria (in the South of Italy) and two other regions located in the northeastern part of Italy (Veneto and Trentino Alto Adige). Also, in Regional Councils women appeared to be underrepresented in 2008: on average (Istat 2013b), women's share of regional councils is 12.9%, with a higher share on average in the Centre of Italy (17.3%).

## 1.4 Gender inequalities in health

Women and men have a higher life expectancy<sup>122</sup> in Italy with respect to the European average (Table 1.5). Women's life expectancy at birth is 84.2 years in Italy compared with 82.2 in the EU-27 and 78.7 for men in Italy versus 76 in the EU-27. However, when one looks at the healthy life expectancy at birth (combining mortality and morbidity also known as disability-free life expectancy), the situation of Italian women is similar to the EU-27 average (almost 62.5 healthy life expectancy at birth) and less than the life expectancy for Italian men (63.3).

2007		
Life expectancy at birth		
	M	F
Italy	78,7	84,2
EU-27	76	82,2

Source: Eurostat metadata Healthy life years and life expectancy at birth, code: tsdph100. Available at: [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search\\_database](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database)

2007		
Healthy Life expectancy at birth		
	M	F
Italy	63,3	62,5
EU-27	61,7	62,6

Source: Eurostat metadata Healthy life years and life expectancy at birth, code: tsdph100. Available at: [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search\\_database](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database)

On average, by measuring the health conditions through means of a set of indicators that provide a measure of physical and psychological health conditions (taking the value of 100 as the best health condition), women show on average a lower achievement in health than men, with a gap that increases in correlation with a lower level of education (Table 1.7).

Education	Physical Health		Psychological Health	
	M	F	M	F
Tertiary Education	90,6	89,7	82,4	79,1
High School	89,7	88	81,9	77,4
Secondary School	85,5	82,4	80,5	74,7
Primary School	74,9	69,2	67,5	59,8
None	73,9	62,6	65,5	54

Source: Table 4.4 in Addabbo et al. (2012) based on fuzzy logic analysis of Istat health conditions and access to health services 2004/2005 survey.

<sup>122</sup> Life expectancy at birth measures the mean number of years to be lived by a person at birth (to the current mortality conditions).

Taking into account other relevant determinants and individual characteristics, multivariate analyses confirm that the health conditions of the Italian women (Addabbo, Facchinetti and Pirotti 2012) are worse than Italian men. Moreover, if one looks at the difficulties in access to health services, Italian women appear to face more issues than men. These difficulties are determined by the cost of accessing medical and dental clinics and undergoing treatments (Addabbo, García-Fernández, Llorca-Rodríguez and Maccagnan 2012).

## 1.5 Violence against women

A crucial factor affecting women's well-being, including their health status, is violence. In this Section we will analyse the data available before the crisis to measure violence against women and its costs in Italy. Violence against women can take different forms: physical, psychological or economic. The latter not only includes limited access to resources (such as money or bank accounts), but also exclusion from decisions or total women's responsibility for family maintenance. Economic violence can increase during times of financial crisis, leading to a further reduction in women's autonomy and also increasing in their poverty rates.

Serious concern regarding violence against women in Italy, its causes and consequences, was expressed by UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, Rashida Manjoo, (Manjoo, 2013: 17): 'Violence against women remains a significant problem in Italy. As the most pervasive form of violence, domestic violence continues to affect women across the country. The continuum of violence in the home is reflected in the increasing numbers of victims of femicide by partners, spouses or former partners. Most manifestations of violence are underreported in the context of a patriarchal society where domestic violence is not always perceived as a crime; where victims are largely economically dependent on the perpetrators of violence; and perceptions persist that the state responses will not be appropriate or helpful.'

In addressing the problem of violence against women it is relevant to take into account the culture of gender relationships in a country, and, in this regard, it is also relevant to analyse the links with legislation. As Arcidiacono and Ferrari Bravo (2013: 120) remind us: '... it is worth pointing out that the so-called "crime of honour", a motivation according to which it was justifiable to kill a flagrantly adulterous partner and receive only a minimum sentence, was excised from the Italian penal code only in 1981. Thirty years is still a short period for creating a new culture of social relationships, in particular when it comes to the relationship between the sexes.'

In 2006, the Italian National Statistics Institute, in collaboration with the Italian Ministry for Equal Opportunities and with European Social and Structural Funds funding, ran the first National survey on Violence against women. The survey design and tools were constructed to interact with anti-violence centres that operate locally to combat violence against women (Istat, 2007b, Muratore, 2007, Muratore & Sabbadini, 2005).

The survey was conducted on a sample of 25,000 women from 16 to 70 years old and was designed to represent the whole Italian population (Istat, 2007 a). The results show that about 32% of women aged from 16 to 70 years old reported to have been subjected to violence during their lives, 23.7% to sexual harassment and 18.8% to physical violence. About 1 million women<sup>123</sup> (4.8%) reported to have been subjected to rape or attempted rape. Amongst women

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<sup>123</sup> Sample data have been reported to the population by using proper statistical sample weight since the survey has been designed to be statistically significant and representative of the whole Italian population.

in the same age group who are or have been living with a partner, 14.3% reported to have been subjected to physical or sexual violence by their partner.

The survey showed the relevance of domestic violence with regard to violence against women: 'Now it is possible to acknowledge that violence can be present in intimate relationships and that the abuser is not a stranger attacking the victim at night in a dark alley, but could be a friend, a boyfriend, a colleague, or a relative, any way a trustworthy person, someone women trust. Most rapes and attempted rapes take place in a location considered "safe" (the home, the car, the work place).' (Muratore & Sabbadini, 2005: 267).

The survey of violence against women also analysed changes according to the region where women live. In particular the incidences of women who reported to have been subjected to physical or sexual violence during their lives is about 32% at the national level, and ranged from 38.2% in region Emilia Romagna (in the northeast of Italy) to 22.5% in region Calabria (in the south of Italy). The percentage of women who have been subjected to physical or sexual harassment in the last 12 months was on average 5.4% in Italy, with the minimum rate of incidence in the region of Calabria (3.1%) and the maximum in the region of Marche (7.5%), located in Central Italy (Istat, 2007a, Appendix 1). The youngest group of women showed the highest percentage of those who experienced this type of violence during the 12 months preceding the interview: 16.3% of those aged 16-24 versus 5.4% on average.

Table 1.8 - Incidence of physical and sexual violence against women aged 16 to 70 in Italy by type of violence.

	Year 2006					
	During one's life*			During the last 12 months		
	Any	Partner or ex partner	A man non partner	Any	Partner or ex partner	A man non partner
Physical or sexual violence	31,9	14,3	24,7	5,4	2,4	3,4
Physical Violence	18,8	12,0	9,8	2,7	1,7	1,1
Sexual violence	23,7	6,1	20,4	3,5	1,0	2,6
Rape or attempt	4,8	2,4	2,9	0,3	0,2	0,2
Rape	2,3	1,6	0,8	0,2	0,1	0,0
Attempted rape	3,3	1,3	2,3	0,2	0,1	0,2

\* Amongst violence by a person who is not a partner the experience considered are limited to the ones since the person was 16 years old.

Source: our translation from Istat (2007a) Table 1 p. 4.

The survey allows for the detection of violence against women that otherwise would have been invisible since, according to the results, about 96% of violence from a non partner and 93% from a partner are not reported to the police, even if this violence is rape (91.6%). Women not only tend not to report violence to the authorities, but they also do not talk about it (33.9% are silent about violence from partners and 24% about violence from non-partners). The literature shows that not speaking to someone else about the violence exposes women to the risk of being

subsequently victims of violence and also increases long term costs and risks transmission to future generations (Corazziari and Muratore, 2013; Arcidiacono and Ferrari Bravo, 2013).

Istat survey allows not only for the detection of forms of physical violence against women, but also stalking and psychological violence. According to Istat (2007a) 7,134,000 women were or are victims of psychological violence, such as isolation or attempted isolation (46.7%), control (40.7%), economic violence (30.7%), degradation (23.8%) or intimidation (7.8%). Women subjected to stalking by their partner at the moment of separation, or soon after, or those who have been particularly frightened were about 18.8%. Of those women who were victims of physical or sexual violence from their former partner, about 50% had previously been victims of stalking. Amongst women living with their partners, 43% are or were victims of psychological violence (Istat 2007a, Sabbadini, 2009).

The analysis of microdata reveals the possible increasing flux of violence from psychological to physical and sexual violence. This increase should be interrupted by dedicated policies (Sabbadini, 2009). In this regard one can positively judge Law 38/2009 against stalking.

The survey allows for the estimation of the socioeconomic costs of violence by providing information on the health assistance, medical treatment or psychological therapy needed, days in hospital, the working days lost, but also reduced mobility and health-related side effects.

The survey results have been used (together with other sources) to estimate the social and economic costs of violence against women in Italy (Intervita, 2013). Intervita applies the definition of the socioeconomic costs of violence in Buvinic and Morrison (1999), accounting for direct costs [amongst them the expenditures on police, judiciary systems, medical treatment, psychological counseling, housing (shelters and transitional housing), and social services], multiplier economic costs (like the costs connected to the reduced productivity at the workplace) and non-monetary costs, and estimates a total of € 16,719,540,330 of social and economic costs related to violence against women in Italy plus € 6,323,028 of expenditures for the programmes to prevent and contrast violence.

Though the survey led to a sensible increase in the knowledge of the extent and characteristics of violence against women in Italy, there are some drawbacks to be addressed concerning, for instance as noted by the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women Rashida Manjoo, a lack of focus on women with disabilities, women from the Sinti, Roma or other minority communities and possible bias on the estimation of the actual prevalence of violence against women (Manjoo, 2013). Another limit concerns the lack of data on income that could improve the evaluation of the socioeconomic costs of violence.

We agree with the UN Special Rapporteur on the need of better and prompt sharing of data: 'Updated disaggregated data and statistics on violence against women is crucial for designing, implementing and monitoring laws, policies and programmes. The sharing of such data among concerned bodies including relevant ministries, law enforcement bodies, the judiciary and CSOs is necessary to assess the impact of such measures.' (Manjoo, 2013: 21).

Data on women murdered by men (*femicides*) in Italy show a total of 145 women killed (68% by a relative) in 2007 (Eures, 2013). 96% of Italian women who have been killed within their family were killed by Italian men (Eures, 2013:165). Disaggregating the murderer's employment status, Eures' (2013) analysis supports the view that there is a wider diffusion by employment condition of the murderer.. By means of multivariate analysis, Eures detects a higher recurrence of crimes in couples eroded by continuous daily conflicts (49%), followed by crimes perpetrated by partners or former partners who did not accept the end of their relationship (31%).

## 2. The gender impact of the crisis

This Chapter analyses the impact of the timing of the financial crisis and the impact on the labour market by gender. The data on labour market indicators by gender show an initially higher negative impact on male employment and an extension to female employment later on, but having a higher impact on the duration of unemployment. In addition, discouragement of women to participate in the potential labour force is increasing (especially in the South), signalling an increase in the discouragement effect on women's labour supply in the crisis together with an increase (since 2011) of women (mainly less educated and older than 49, Istat 2013b) who enter the labour force and look for a job. Critical elements are connected to:

- An increase in the growth of female employment in less qualified jobs at a higher pace than for men;
- An increase in involuntary part time work;
- The duration of unstable contracts (women and workers in the South of Italy are more likely to face a longer duration of unstable contracts).

In the first Chapter of this report we have outlined the gender inequalities occurring in the Italian labour market at the disadvantage of women.

With respect to 2007, men's employment rates decreased more than women's, especially for those with the lower levels of education; however, the gender gap with regard to the disadvantage of women still appears to be relevant, especially for less educated individuals.

Table 2.1 - Employment rates by gender 15-64 by highest education level 2012 and rate of change [(2012-2007)/2007]

Education	2012			Rate of change wrt 2007	
	M	F	Gender Gap	M	F
<=lower					
secondary	56,7	29,4	27,3	-9%	-1%
High school	72,8	55,7	17,1	-6%	-5%
University	82,1	72,3	9,8	-2%	0%
Total	66,5	47,1	19,4	-6%	1%

Source: Eurostat Euro SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS), Labour Force Survey data

Regional variations in employment rates persist with the lowest employment rate in 2012 to be found for women in the South (31.6%), compared with the national average of 47.1%, and although though the gender gap in employment rates decreased from 2007 to 2012 in the South of Italy, in 2012 male employment rates exceeded female employment rates by 24.5 percentage points against 19.4 on average in Italy.



Table 2.2 - Employment rates by gender 15-64 and area from 2007 to 2012

Years		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Area	Gender						
Italy	M	70,7	70,3	68,6	67,7	67,5	66,5
	F	46,6	47,2	46,4	46,1	46,5	47,1
North	M	76,3	76,2	74,5	73,8	73,8	73,0
	F	56,8	57,5	56,5	56,1	56,6	57,0
Centre	M	73,0	73,0	72,1	71,4	70,7	69,8
	F	51,8	52,7	52,0	51,8	51,7	52,3
South	M	62,2	61,1	59,0	57,6	57,4	56,2
	F	31,1	31,3	30,6	30,5	30,8	31,6

Source: I.Stat metadata

Both men and women witnessed an increase in their unemployment rates from 2007 to 2012, with women's unemployment rates in Italy being still higher than men's, though the gender gap has been reduced with the crisis. Women's unemployment rates are higher than on average in Europe (Table 2.3). However, if in the first part of the crisis male dominated sectors were more severely hit, the spread of the crisis to more female dominated sectors (services and public sector) is more deeply affecting women's employment as the effect of the crisis widens, also interacting with the fiscal austerity measures undertaken (Chapter 4).

Table 2.3 - Unemployment rates by gender 15-64 years old Italy vs. EU. 2007-2012

	2007		2012	
	M	F	M	F
Italy	4,9	7,9	9,9	11,9
EU-27	6,6	7,9	10,4	10,5

Source: Eurostat Euro SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS), Labour Force Survey data.

Women, if unemployed, are also more likely than men to be unemployed for the long term (12 months and more), with an increase of 11% for women and 13% for men and a significantly higher percentage of increase with regards to the EU-27 average (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4 - Long-term unemployment as a percentage of unemployment by gender, 2007 and 2012 - Italy vs. EU-27

	2007		2012		rate of change	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Italy	45,5	49,1	51,6	54,6	13%	11%
EU-27	43,0	42,5	44,7	44,1	4%	4%

Source: Eurostat Euro SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS), Labour Force Survey data.[une\_ltu\_a]

Turning to those who are on the margins of the labour market, we should notice that Italy is characterized by a higher share, than the average in Europe, of jobless people that are available to work but are not actively looking for a job and are therefore considered inactive. According to Isfol (2013) data, in 2011 16.8% of women aged 15 to 74 years old in Italy are in this condition, versus 4.5% on average in the European Union. In addition, Italian men have a much higher share in this category than in the rest of Europe (11.6 Italian men are in this condition versus

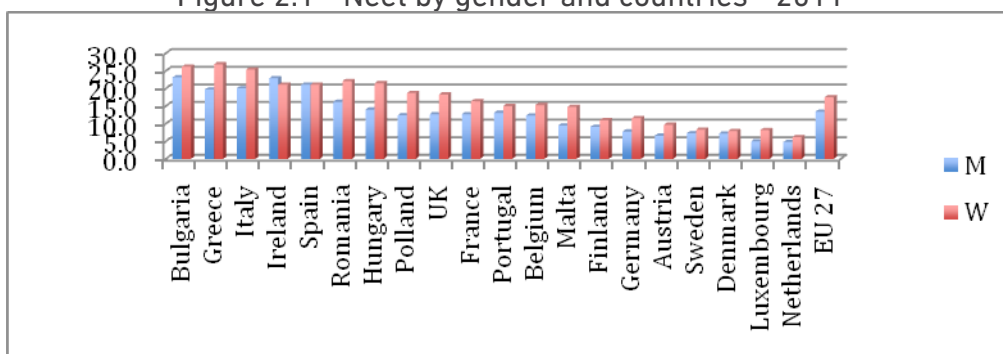
3.6 in the European Union). Concerning jobless individuals, a special focus should be put on those who are neither employed nor in training (NEET). According to Istat (2013d) data, in 2011 more than 2 million young people (from 15 to 29 years old) can be considered NEET, and women are more likely than men to be in this segment of the population. As the European comparison (Table 2.5 and Figure 2.1) shows, the share of NEET youth is higher in Italy than on average in Europe, and as Tables 2.6 and 2.7 show, NEET have been increasing during the crisis.

Table 2.5 - Neet by gender and countries - 2011

Countries	M	W
Bulgaria	23,2	26,2
Greece	19,7	26,9
<b>Italy</b>	<b>20,1</b>	<b>25,4</b>
Ireland	22,9	21,1
Spain	21,1	21,1
Romania	16,2	22,1
Hungary	14,0	21,5
Poland	12,4	18,7
UK	12,7	18,3
France	12,7	16,4
Portugal	13,1	15,0
Belgium	12,3	15,3
Malta	9,5	14,8
Finland	9,1	11,0
Germany	7,8	11,6
Austria	6,6	9,7
Sweden	7,3	8,3
Denmark	7,2	7,9
Luxembourg	5,0	8,2
Netherlands	4,8	6,2
EU 27	13,4	17,5

Source: Istat Noitalia 2013 metadata

Figure 2.1 - Neet by gender and countries - 2011



Source: Istat Noitalia 2013 metadata

Table 2.6 - Men aged 15-29 neither employed nor in training by years and region

Regions	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Piemonte	9,8	9,7	13,2	14,0	14,4
Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste	7,3	7,9	8,7	11,6	12,9
Liguria	12,9	11,4	11,5	13,0	13,7
Lombardia	7,6	9,0	11,6	12,9	11,7
Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol	5,5	6,2	7,2	8,3	9,0
<i>Bolzano/Bozen</i>	<i>6,0</i>	<i>6,4</i>	<i>6,5</i>	<i>6,6</i>	<i>6,8</i>
<i>Trento</i>	<i>4,9</i>	<i>6,0</i>	<i>8,0</i>	<i>10,1</i>	<i>11,3</i>
Veneto	6,4	6,9	8,7	11,8	12,6
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	7,3	7,5	9,3	10,4	10,9
Emilia-Romagna	6,7	6,2	8,8	11,9	11,9
Toscana	10,1	10,5	9,8	11,9	13,4
Umbria	8,1	9,6	11,0	12,6	11,5
Marche	7,4	9,3	14,3	11,3	11,9
Lazio	13,0	11,4	13,6	16,5	20,2
Abruzzo	11,4	12,6	15,7	16,9	16,6
Molise	17,3	17,6	16,5	20,0	21,4
Campania	27,7	28,9	30,2	31,1	33,2
Puglia	23,1	22,3	25,7	27,2	27,4
Basilicata	18,6	19,6	21,2	26,5	24,9
Calabria	25,9	25,6	26,1	29,2	30,6
Sicilia	26,6	27,1	28,7	30,9	31,5
Sardegna	17,7	22,1	25,0	25,8	28,4
Northwest	8,6	9,4	12,0	13,2	12,6
Northeast	6,5	6,6	8,6	11,4	11,8
Centre	11,0	10,7	12,4	14,2	16,5
Centre-North	8,8	9,0	11,2	13,0	13,6
South	24,3	25,0	26,9	28,6	29,7
Italy	15,2	15,6	17,6	19,3	20,1

North-west (Northwestern Italy): Piemonte, Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste, Lombardia, Liguria

North-east (Northeastern Italy): Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol, Bolzano/Bozen, Trento, Veneto

Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Emilia-Romagna

Centre (Central Italy): Toscana, Umbria, Marche, Lazio;

South (Southern Italy): Abruzzo, Molise, Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicilia, Sardegna

Source: Our elaborations on Istat Noitalia metadata

Table 2.7 - Women aged 15-29 neither employed nor in training by years and region

Regions	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Piemonte	14,8	15,3	18,5	19,5	18,5
Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste	14,9	15,3	20,2	16,6	17,6
Liguria	14,2	15,7	16,2	18,2	16,6
Lombardia	14,3	16,6	17,2	18,6	19,0
Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol	12,5	12,7	12,7	15,3	13,4
<i>Bolzano/Bozen</i>	<i>11,5</i>	<i>12,1</i>	<i>11,7</i>	<i>13,2</i>	<i>11,7</i>
<i>Trento</i>	<i>13,7</i>	<i>13,5</i>	<i>13,8</i>	<i>17,5</i>	<i>15,3</i>
Veneto	13,9	14,7	16,7	19,7	18,7
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	14,9	16,7	18,3	17,8	20,7
Emilia-Romagna	12,8	13,2	16,6	19,3	18,9
Toscana	16,1	15,1	16,2	19,3	19,4
Umbria	16,3	16,2	17,8	18,7	20,2
Marche	15,4	17,4	17,9	18,0	19,5
Lazio	17,9	18,8	19,6	21,3	23,1
Abruzzo	17,4	18,2	21,2	20,8	18,7
Molise	20,8	21,7	23,1	20,3	24,2
Campania	36,9	36,2	35,7	37,5	37,3
Puglia	33,5	31,6	30,4	30,3	31,2
Basilicata	27,8	26,6	26,3	30,5	29,0
Calabria	33,6	30,9	30,1	33,6	33,1
Sicilia	36,8	38,3	36,1	36,0	40,0
Sardegna	25,9	25,9	29,9	25,5	26,9
Northwest	14,5	16,2	17,5	18,8	18,6
Northeast	13,5	14,2	16,4	18,9	18,4
Centre	16,9	17,3	18,2	20,1	21,3
Centre-North	14,9	15,9	17,4	19,2	19,4
South	33,5	33,1	32,5	33,2	34,2
Italy	22,7	23,0	23,6	24,9	25,4

Source: Our elaborations on Istat Noitalia metadata

North-west (North-western Italy): Piemonte, Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste, Lombardia, Liguria; North-east (North-eastern Italy): Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol, Bolzano/Bozen, Trento, Veneto; Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Emilia-Romagna; Centre (Central Italy): Toscana, Umbria, Marche, Lazio; South (Southern Italy): Abruzzo, Abruzzo, Molise, Campania, Puglia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicilia, Sardegna

Within NEET the share of inactive persons who are not looking for a job is higher in Italy, with respect to other European countries, with a higher share amongst women of a young age claiming to be housewives (more likely to be Italian citizens with children in the South of Italy and migrants in the Centre-North) (Istat 2013c). The share of unemployed amongst NEET is higher for men, while inactivity is higher amongst women (Istat 2013c).

According to the labour force survey data (Istat 2013c), in 2012 the observed increase in women's employment rate can be connected to an increase of migrant women working as

house-helpers. Moreover, the reduction in employment has been matched with an increase in the share of temporary employment in Italy and still non-standard work is more spread amongst women (Istat 2013c). Since there is a wage gap at the disadvantage of non-standard (not permanent, or full-time) workers, women's overrepresentation, with respect to men, in non-standard jobs can also generate a wage gap at women's disadvantage (Istat 2013c).

Looking at the transitions between different types of contracts, Istat (2013c) shows that there is a lower share of part-timers who turn to full-time jobs (5.6% in 2011 versus 10.3% a year before) and lower chances of stabilization for non-standard workers. Amongst them, those characterized by the lowest chance to stabilize are women and workers living in the South.

In the first phase of the transmission of the financial crisis to the labour market, an increase in women's inactivity rates, probably connected to the occurrence of a discouraged worker effect, was shown in the Italian labour market. Evidence of the discouragement effect could also be observed before the crisis for women in the south of the country. Since 2011, an increase in female labour supply took place consistently with the occurrence of the added worker effect (with women entering the labour market when their partners become unemployed to compensate the income loss). However, the entry into the labour market was realized in sectors characterized by a higher share of female workers, thus leading to a further increase in horizontal employment segregation (Istat 2013c).

During the crisis both men and women have experienced an increase in involuntary part-time work. In Italy out of the total part-time workers in 2007, 54% of men and 36% of women were working part-time since they could not find full-time work. In 2012, involuntary part-time work affected 73% of men working part-time and 54.5% of women, with the highest increase (53%) (Table 2.8).

Table 2.8 - Involuntary part-time work by gender % of part-time workers - 15-64 2007 and 2012 - Italy vs EU-27

	2007		2012		Rate of change	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Italy	54,1	35,7	73	54,5	35%	53%
EU-27	30,3	20,2	38,5	24,3	27%	20%

Source: Eurostat Euro SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS), Labour Force Survey data. [lfsa\_epgar]

On the whole, the impact of the crisis on the gender inequalities in the labour market has seen an increase in horizontal and vertical gender segregation of employment, an increase of women in non-standard work and the entry of less educated women aged, on average over 49 into the workforce. This scenario has also led to the opening up of the wage gap by gender. If on the one hand employment decreased amongst women doing more qualified, technical and blue-collar work, there was an increase of employment of unskilled women, mostly employed in the cleaning sector or, if a migrant, as a caretaker or cleaning lady. More women than men are overqualified for their job position (Istat 2011).

A crucial point in the life cycle, when gender inequalities widen, is around childbirth. According to Istat (2011) data in 2008-2009, about 800,000 mothers stated that they had been fired or forced to leave their jobs when they were pregnant. Mothers' forced dismissals occurring on the occasion of childbirth are even more widespread in the south of Italy, where it is also more likely that interruption in their work profile is more prolonged or even permanent. Therefore, the already high regional inequalities are bound to increase.

### 3. Less Equal in face of the crisis?

The gender inequalities outlined in Chapter 1 in different dimensions must be taken into account in analysing to what extent women and men can differently face the crisis. Crucial questions concern the intrahousehold allocation of time and money resources and the new inequalities that can arise during the crisis. Particular attention will be given to violence against women, analysing recent administrative data made available at the national level and presenting a case study addressing policies enacted at the local level to fight violence against women, providing also new data on the trend observed during the crisis.

According to gender equality indicators, in 2010 the level of Gender equality, measured by the European Institute of Gender Equality index (EIGE), quite neatly shows that in 2010 Italy (40.9) fared below the EU 27 average (54). The domains of gender inequality showing the highest gaps at the disadvantage of Italy are: work (in terms of a higher gap in participation), knowledge and power. We should however take into account that the measure chosen for wages inequality (under the money domain) does not take into account non random selection into employment and, as discussed in Section 1.1 above, this is bound to underestimate the wage gap at the disadvantage of women in Italy.

Table 3.1 - EIGE Gender equality index and its components Italy vs. EU 27 - 2010

	Double earners 2012					
	With children			Without children		
	Paid	Unpaid	Total	Paid	Unpaid	Total
Men	42,2	7,1	49,3	41,7	5,5	47,2
Women	32,5	26,2	58,7	36	17,6	53,6
Men- Women	<b>-9,7</b>	<b>19,1</b>	<b>9,4</b>	<b>-5,7</b>	<b>12,1</b>	<b>6,4</b>
Obs.	5398			1464		

Source: EIGE (2013: 66)

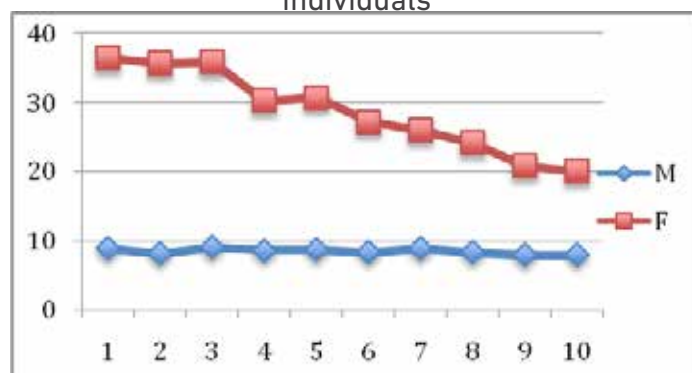
#### 3.1 Gender inequalities in paid and unpaid work distribution and gender inequalities in the access to resources during the crisis.

To what extent do gender inequalities in the paid and unpaid work distribution and the inequalities observed within the labour market result in a different impact of the crisis? In Chapter 2 we have seen how at the very beginning of the transmission of the financial crisis to the real sector women have been buffered by horizontal employment segregation, given that the first sectors to be hit by the crisis were male-dominated ones. However, as soon as the crisis extended to other real sectors and temporary contracts (where women and youth appear to be concentrated) came to an end, women were severely hit by the crisis and at a higher rate on average than in the rest of Europe. Moreover, the limited and discontinuous presence that Italian women show in the labour market exposes them to a lower sustainability of being jobless, since the system of unemployment benefits in Italy is imperfect and less able to sustain income of former inactive or non-standard workers. The lower sustainability of women's joblessness can be detected by analysing administrative unemployment benefits data from the National Institution of Social Security (INPS) they actually show that jobless women are more likely, if covered, to be under lower social protection benefits (as mobility benefit or the unemployment benefit) while they are less likely to be under the wage supplementation fund

scheme that provides income support for those under a short time working scheme (Cassa Integrazione Guadagni): in 2010, according to INPS data, almost 50% of the beneficiaries of ordinary unemployment benefits and of mobility benefits were women, versus 37.6% of those who were under the wage supplementation scheme, the latter being better paid (data from in.genere, 2013, <http://www.ingenere.it/articoli/ammortizzatori-sociali>). This can impact the income distribution and expose a higher probability of facing material deprivation. We will analyse the impact on material deprivation and on poverty and social exclusion in Section 3.2. In this section we will turn our attention to the possible effect related to gender inequality in the distribution of time.

By considering income and unpaid work together and exploiting the EU SILC (European survey on living and income conditions) *ad hoc module* in 2010 that records also unpaid work, we can actually stress how women's unpaid work in Italy appears to be not only always higher than men's at every decile level of equivalent household income, but also decreasing as income increases (Figure 3.1.1), with a gap of 28 unpaid hours a week at the lowest income level decile (Table 3.1.1).

Figure 3.1.1 - Unpaid work by equivalent household income deciles and gender 25-49 individuals



Source: IT SILC 2010 microdata *ad hoc module* on time allocation matched with income data

The data available at the local level (Survey on household income and social conditions in Modena, Icesmo), representative of the population living in Modena district in the northeastern part of Italy, allow us to analyse whether with the crisis the observed unequal distribution of unpaid working hours changed along with the equivalent household income distribution. As it is possible to see in Figure 3.1.2, by comparing a pre-crisis year (2006) with the distribution of unpaid working hours in 2012, women's unpaid hours of work increased sensibly at the lower end of the income distribution, to fall more sharply as income increases than in 2006. This will probably be connected to an increase in women's unpaid work to sustain household's standard of living when household income is very low. However this element of disparity by gender in trying to reach a sustainable standard of living can also generate tensions inside the poorest couples facing a very unequal distribution of unpaid working time.

Figure 3.1.2 - Unpaid weekly hours of work by gender and equivalent household income levels in Modena district - 2006 vs. 2012



Source: Icesmo2 and Icesmo3 microdata

This first evidence is consistent with Aguilar *et al.* (2011) and Bettio *et al.* (2013) whose analysis show an increase in houseworking time in the crisis with a fall in consumption of goods and services that can be substituted with unpaid work (Bettio *et al.*, 2013).

To further explore these gender inequalities, but relying only on time data, we try to analyse the average distribution of time by household type by using the 2012 Istat Multipurpose Survey and analysing partners' time allocation by household type. The lack of longitudinal data does not allow us to infer how the allocation of time changed with a change in employment status. However we use the availability of data on time allocation by gender across different households' type to detect what is on average the gender distribution of time across households characterized by a different employment composition of the partners.

Although in 2012 the amount of men's unpaid working hours was higher in one-(women) earner households than in double earner households, women appear to always bear the highest amount of unpaid domestic and care work. Actually both in double earner and in one-(women) earner households with children, women spend about 26 hours a week in unpaid domestic and care work, while men spend 7 hours a week on average in double-earners households with children and 11 hours a week in one-(women) earner households with children. Therefore there does not seem to have occurred a relevant change in the distribution of time in households with jobless fathers.

Table 3.1.1 - Partners' time allocation in double-earners households with and without children - Italy 2012

	Double earners 2012			Without children		
	With children			Without children		
	Paid	Unpaid	Total	Paid	Unpaid	Total
Men	42,2	7,1	49,3	41,7	5,5	47,2
Women	32,5	26,2	58,7	36	17,6	53,6
Men-Women	<b>-9,7</b>	<b>19,1</b>	<b>9,4</b>	<b>-5,7</b>	<b>12,1</b>	<b>6,4</b>
Obs.	5398			1464		

Source: Addabbo & Lodi (2013) from Istat AVQ (Multipurpose Daily Activities) 2012 microdata.



Table 3.1.2 - Partners' time allocation in one-(men) earners households with and without children - Italy 2012

	One Earner (Men) 2012					
	With children			Without children		
	Paid	Unpaid	Total	Paid	Unpaid	Total
Men	41,7	4,2	45,9	40,4	3,5	43,9
Women	0	41,2	41,2	0	30,6	30,6
Men- Women	<b>-41,7</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>-4,7</b>	<b>-40,4</b>	<b>27,1</b>	<b>-13,3</b>
Obs.	3851			717		

Source: Addabbo & Lodi (2013) from Istat AVQ (Multipurpose Daily Activities) 2012 microdata.

Table 3.1.3 - Partners' time allocation in one-(woman) earners households with and without children - Italy 2012

	One Earner (Women) 2012					
	With children			Without children		
	Paid	Unpaid	Total	Paid	Unpaid	Total
Men	0	11,4	11,4	0	10,8	10,8
Women	32,8	25,8	58,8	33,9	20,9	54,8
Men- Women	<b>32,8</b>	<b>14,4</b>	<b>47,2</b>	<b>33,9</b>	<b>10,1</b>	<b>44</b>
Obs.	877			440		

Source: Addabbo & Lodi (2013) from Istat AVQ (Multipurpose Daily Activities) 2012 microdata.

However the data shown above refer to average weekly unpaid working hours and do not allow for the analysis of different types of unpaid work or simultaneous time use. By using time budget data referring to three surveys (1988-89; 2002-2003; 2008-2009), Istat (2011) allows for the detection of the slow decrease in the asymmetry in the distribution of unpaid work by gender connected more to a redistribution of time between housework and child care carried out by employed mothers than to a higher involvement of men. Istat (2011) also highlights an increase in the gender asymmetry for 45-64 year old couples and for couples living in the south of Italy, and such increases rise as women's level of education is lower.

Differently from other countries, unpaid work remains relatively high for mothers when their children grow up (Giannelli 2010, Istat 2011). Given that, with the crisis, adult children are further delaying their leaving from parental households<sup>124</sup>, this will probably generate an increase in their mothers' unpaid working hours.

<sup>124</sup> Italy is characterized by a higher young adult age in leaving their parental house and, given the sharp increase in youth unemployment connected to the crisis this is bound to be further delayed.

## 3.2 Gender inequalities in the distribution of resources and well being

The gender inequalities in employment outlined above impact the distribution of resources by gender.

Women appear to be more likely to be exposed to the risk of poverty or social exclusion (measured by computing the share of the population that is at least in one of the following conditions: at risk of poverty, meaning below the poverty threshold, in a situation of severe material deprivation, living in a household with a very low work intensity) than men and with the crisis the share of poverty and social exclusion increased for both men and women (from 23.8% in 2007 to 28% in 2012 for men and from 28% in 2007 to 32% in 2012 for women) by almost four percentage points.

Table 3.2.1 - People at risk of poverty or social exclusion by sex total population

	2007		2012	
	M	F	M	F
European Union (27 countries)	22,9	25,9	23,7	25,7
Italy	23,8	28,1	28,0	31,7

Source: Eurostat metada code: [ilc\_peps01]

Turning to poverty and social exclusion by employment conditions, one can see how in the crisis the lack of employment is related to a higher percentage of poverty and social exclusion that arrive to almost 40% for unemployed women (Table 3.2.2). Women and men that are employed are experiencing a sharp increase in their poverty and exclusion share. And the increase has been the sharpest for employed women (rate of change of +68%). This finding is in line with the increase in women employed in lower positions (Chapter 2), facing lower wages and a more unstable employment situation, but who are also more likely to start working when their partner loses his job (added worker effect) and therefore being more exposed to the risk of living in a household with a higher density of unemployed persons.

Table 3.2.2 - People at risk of poverty or social exclusion by sex and most frequent activity status (population aged 18 and over)

	2007		2012		rate of change	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
	Employed	14,4	9,4	19,5	15,8	35%
Not employed	33,8	37,4	36,3	39,6	7%	6%

Source: Eurostat metada code: [ilc\_peps02]

To complement social exclusion we analyse the extent of material deprivation before the crisis and in 2012. Material deprivation occurs when people cannot afford at least 4 of the nine following items:

- 1) (arrears on) mortgage or rent payments, utility bills, hire purchase installments or other loan payments;
- 2) one week's annual holiday away from home;
- 3) a meal with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second

day;

- 4) unexpected financial expenses;
- 5) a telephone (including mobile phone);
- 6) a colour TV;
- 7) a washing machine;
- 8) a car;
- 9) heating to keep the home adequately warm.

As Table 3.2.3 shows, the increase in material deprivation has been more severe in Italy than on average in Europe, with almost 26% of women and 24.6% of men at risk of being materially deprived.

Table 3.2.3 - Material deprivation by gender, 2007-2012

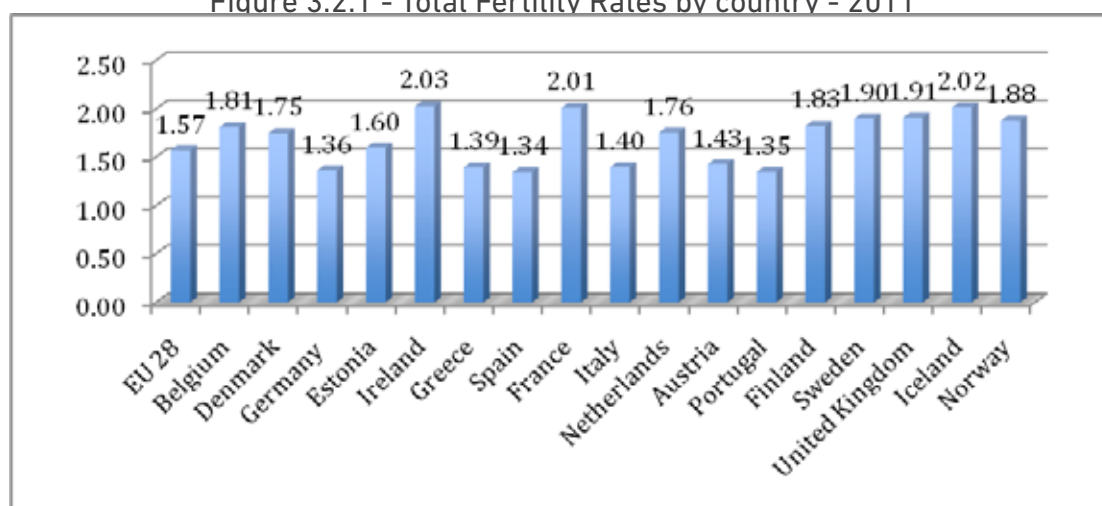
	2007		2012		rate of change	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
European Union (27 countries)	17,2	18,8	19,0	20,2	9%	7%
Italy	14,1	15,7	24,6	25,8	43%	39%

Source: Eurostat metadata code: [ilc\_sip8]

Multivariate analysis on the probability of being materially deprived allows for the analysis of the impact of the probability of being materially deprived of different variables (individual, labour market, household composition, current employment status). By estimating probit models on the probability of being materially deprived by gender and country, Addabbo, Fernandez, Llorca and Maccagnan (2012) detected a higher increasing effect on this probability in 2010 for women: being a lone parent (if so their probability of being materially deprived is found to increase by 35% versus 13% for men) and of being unemployed and never employed before (55% versus 49% for men). Both statuses appear to provide a higher increase in material deprivation in 2010 than before the crisis (Addabbo, Fernandez, Llorca and Maccagnan 2012).

In Chapter 1 we outlined the already low level of fertility rates in Italy. Do the adverse economic situation that we have analysed in this section and in Chapter 2 impact the fertility rates? A first impact can be seen in fertility rates of migrant women: it decreases from 2.24 in 2009 to 2.04 in 2011, whereas women with Italian citizenship show a stable low fertility rate (1.31 in both years) (Lanzieri 2013), leading to a decrease in the total fertility rate in Italy from 1.42 in 2008 to 1.40 in 2011 (Istat 2013c) (Figure 3.2.1).

Figure 3.2.1 - Total Fertility Rates by country - 2011



Source: Metadata in Euro SDMX Metadata Structure (ESMS) code: INDIC\_DE

According to Istat survey on new mothers, after 2 years from childbirth only 54% of mothers are employed and amongst them 56% resigned (a much lower percentage than in 2005 but still high) in 2012. Another important change that occurred in the last years was the increasing difficulties perceived by new mothers in attaining a work-life balance. According to Istat (2012b) data, amongst those mothers who kept the job they had while pregnant, 43% have work-life balance problems versus 36% in 2003 and the rigidity of the working hours is the main reason for the occurrence of these problems.

Table 3.2.4 - Mothers who interrupted their work profile and motivation provided - various years

	2002-2003	2005	2011-12
Firing	6,9	16	23,8
Shut down firm	24,1	15,6	19,6
Resignations	68,8	68,1	56,1
Do not know	0,2	0,3	0,5
	100	100	100

Source: Istat (2012b Tav.3 p.121).

### 3.3 Violence against women. Data and a case study to assess the gender impact of the crisis.

Istat (2006) survey on violence against women recorded important differences in the occurrence of violence against women and in the percentage of cases that become visible. A new survey on violence against women at national level was carried out in 2013 and can provide new insights in terms of the impact of crisis and different policies that have been enacted at the local level in Italy. It will also keep a special focus on migrant women (in line with the critics raised on the previous survey by Manjoo 2013).

The 2012 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) survey on gender based violence against women, though not strictly comparable with Istat 2006, provides useful insights on the extent of violence against women in Italy as compared to the EU countries (FRA 2014).

According to the FRA (2014) survey, 29% of women interviewed experienced physical and/or sexual violence or a threat by partner or a by non-partner since the age of 15, whereas according to Istat 2006 telephone survey 32% of women were in this group. The difference can be related to the different methodologies used by the two surveys that appear not to be strictly comparable, therefore, for the purpose of analysing the over time trend in gender-based violence against women in Italy, the new Istat microdata survey can be exploited in the future.

Turning to the most recent data on violence against women made available by FRA, there is a positive relationship between gender equality achievements and the extent of women's experiences of physical and/or sexual violence since the age of 15, by a partner and/or a non-partners detected by FRA (2014: 32). The incidence of physical and/or sexual violence is lower in Italy with regards to the EU average (Tables 3.3.1 & 3.3.2), and Italy has a lower than average index of gender equality (that measures achieved gender equality in terms of work, money, knowledge, time, power, health) as compared to the EU average (40.9 against 54 out of 100%) (EIGE 2013a). According to the incidence of reported cases of partner's violence to the police in Italy (19%), it is similar to the EU average (20%).

Turning to the degree of awareness of the legislation and measures on domestic violence against women, FRA survey results are comparable to the Special 2010 Eurobarometer survey (FRA 2014:160). In this regard, Italy has witnessed a 30% increase in the degree of awareness of the respondents (from 24% in 1999 to 58% in 2010), this, according to European Commission (2010: 93), can be related to government initiatives both in terms of the 2009 tightening of the laws on sexual violence and in terms of the diffusion of dedicated regional projects since 2007. In our opinion, the higher awareness connected to the diffusion of the results of the 2006 Istat Survey on violence against women can also have played a role on this increase.

Table 3.3.1 - Women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a current and/or previous partner, or by any other person since the age of 15, Italy vs. EU 28

Countries	Current partner	Previous non-partner	Any Partner or previous)	Non-partner	Any partner and/or non partner
Italy	9%	25%	19%	17%	27%
Europe	8%	26%	22%	22%	33%

Source: FRA (2014) Selection from Table 2.1: 28-29.

Table 3.3.2 - Women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a current and/or previous partner, or by any other person in the last 12 months, Italy and EU 28.

Countries	Current partner	Previous non-partner	Any Partner or previous)	Non-partner	Any partner and/or non partner
Italy	5%	(5%)	6%	4%	7%
Europe	3%	3%	4%	5%	8%

Source: FRA (2014) Selection from Table 2.3: 34.

Turning to psychological violence, the FRA (2014) survey shows that 38% of women report to have experienced psychological abuse from their current or previous partner in Italy during their relationship (43% on average in EU) (Table 3.3.3), which confirms the existence of a link between physical or sexual violence and psychological violence.

Table 3.3.3 - Women who have experienced psychological violence during their relationship, by type of perpetrator - Italy and EU 28 (%)

Countries	Current partner	Previous non-partner	Any Partner (current or previous)
Italy	25%	46%	38%
Europe	23%	48%	43%

Source: FRA (2014) Selection from Table 4.2: 73-4.

Distinguishing by type of psychological violence, FRA (2014) allows us to see how the most prevalent form of psychological violence consists of a controlling behaviour (31% in Italy vs. 35% in the EU) followed by abusive behaviour (28% in Italy against 32% in the EU) and economic violence (13% in Italy versus 12% in the EU) (Table 3.3.4). The analysis of this last type of violence by women's employment status (Table 3.3.5) shows that amongst employed women, 16% in Italy vs. 12% in the EU-28 have experienced economic violence by their partner (current or previous), 11% in Italy and 14% in the EU amongst home makers, 8% in Italy and 13% in the EU amongst unemployed women and 13% in Italy and 11% in the EU amongst retired women. A deeper assessment on the type of employment and the distribution of resources can be useful to better address policies on this type of violence.

Table 3.3.4 - Women who have experienced psychological violence during their relationship, by type of violence Italy and the EU 28 (%)

	Italy	EU-28
Controlling behaviour	31%	35%
Economic violence	13%	12%
Abusive behaviour	28%	32%
Blackmail with/abuse of children	7%	8%
<b>Any Psychological Abuse</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>43%</b>

Source: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights FRA gender-based violence against women survey dataset, 2012

Table 3.3.5 - Women who have experienced economic violence during their relationship, by their employment status Italy and EU 28 (%)

Economic violence by women's employment status	Italy	EU-28
Employed	16%	12%
home maker	11%	14%
in education	3%	4%
other	17%	23%
retired	13%	11%
unemployed	8%	13%

Source: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights FRA gender-based violence against women survey dataset, 2012

The FRA survey also provides insights on the risk factors more likely to expose women to the risk of experiencing violence. Amongst the factors that decrease the probability of experiencing violence there is the women’s statement of having an equal say in the household allocation of resources calling for an improvement in women’s economic condition and empowerment in household choices to reduce violence.

In order to progress in the assessment of the impact of the crisis and different policies on violence against women, in this section we will use administrative data made available by a national association of centres and shelters addressing violence against women at the local level complemented with a case study conducted on a local basis.

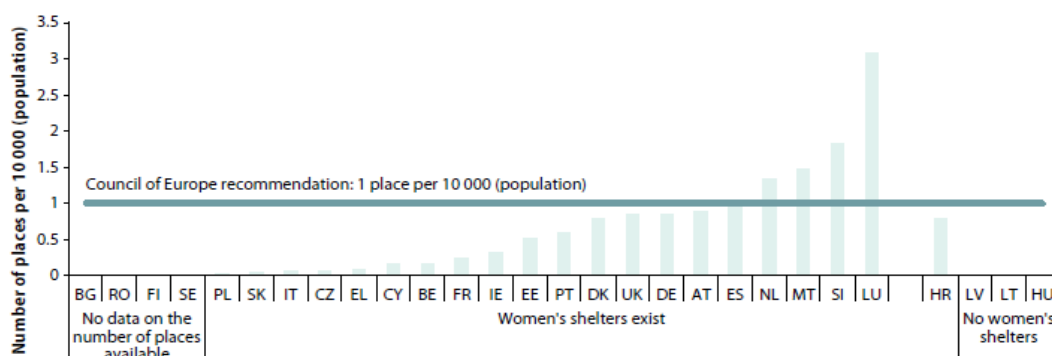
The National Association D.i.R.e (Women’s Network against violence) is the first national association coordinating independent women’s centres and shelters against violence (65 in 2013), and it was founded in September 2008. D.i.R.e data on the women who asked for assistance from the centres allows us to have an updated national analysis on the number of women, their characteristics, type of violence and needs. In 2012, 15,201 women, according to the survey conducted on 61 centres, asked for assistance (D.i.R.e2013). According to the D.i.R.e survey amongst women who asked for assistance to the centres, 69% are Italian citizens and amongst all the male perpetrators of violence, 72% are Italian citizens. The analysis confirms the higher relevance of domestic violence (92% of the cases) and an increasing trend of former partners’ violence.

When asking for assistance, women often report multiple types of violence and, according to D.i.R.e 2012 data, the most frequent type of violence reported by women is psychological violence (reported by 74% of the 10,230 women who replied to the question) followed by physical violence (64%) and economic violence (34%).

A concern linked to the crisis is connected to the higher likelihood of forced cohabitation: ‘Italy’s prolonged recession is likely to “aggravate the problem” of domestic violence,’ said Patrizia Romito, a professor of social psychology at the University of Trieste, by making it more difficult for women to find the money they need to leave an abusive situation. Moreover, for potentially abusive men, the loss of a job can remove those “social anchors that can restrain violent behavior,” Ms. Romito said.’ (Povoledo: 2013).

Another problem concerns the rationing of shelters for abuse victims. According to EIGE (2013b: 36), Italy does not satisfy the Council of Europe recommendation to have at least one place per 10 000 women in women’s shelters (Figure 3.3.1).

Figure 3.3.1 - Number of places available in women’s shelters in EU member states in 2012

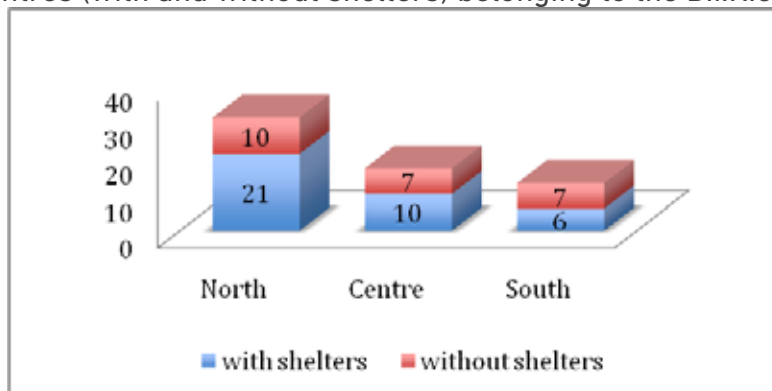


Source: data collected with survey in March–April 2012, reviewed in November 2012; Eurostat, population statistics (demo\_r\_d2jan).

Source: Figure 2.2.4 EIGE (2013b, p.21).

D.i.R.e data on the centres that they coordinate show a very unbalanced regional distribution to the disadvantage of the south of Italy, with a lower number of centres (13 in the South and 31 in the North) and a lower number of centres providing shelters (21 out of the 31 centres in the North provide shelters versus only 6 out of 13 in the South of Italy, Figure 3.3.2) and, turning to the number of available shelters, in the south there are only 8 shelters, 13 in the Centre and 50 in the North of Italy.

Figure 3.3.2 -Centres (with and without shelters) belonging to the D.i.R.e. network by area



Source: Our elaboration on D.i.R.e (2013) figures.

The observed regional disparities in the presence of centres and shelters pose serious concerns. Considering their average lower rates of structured employment (as outlined in Chapter 1) women in the south of Italy will need more assistance as they have a lower likelihood to be able to be self-dependent. On the whole, the figures shown are particularly critical in the crisis when access to dwelling and the sustainability of a standard of living is more difficult.

Moreover, considering the high share of public funding (public funding amounted to 74% of centres and shelters total resources to finance their activities in 2012, D.i.R.e 2013) and the increasing difficulties faced by local public institutions to keep funding the local social infrastructure with the crisis and fiscal austerity measures, the very sustainability of the system of centres and shelters can be at stake.

### 3.3.1 Violence against women. Policies and action at the local level. The case of Modena

In this Section of the report we will describe a case study on locally based policies and activities to fight violence against women. The experiences reported are located in Modena, a town in the northeast of Italy where a network of institutions and NGOs has been active in the fight against violence on women, establishing, in 2006, the first formal institutions and NGO network on violence against women in Italy. to the network also established the first public centre dedicated to male perpetrators of violence against women, which has been operational since 2011.

The case study proposed in this section draws upon the literature, administrative data collected by the associations, surveys and empirical evidence on the Emilia Romagna region and interviews with members of the NGOs involved in the network.

We will start by introducing the context (Section 3.3.1.1); then we will analyse the activities and the data on two associations belonging to the network, with special attention paid to the trend in the number of women asking for assistance and the type of violence they have experienced during the last years.



### The context

Modena is located in the Emilia Romagna region in the northeast of Italy, a city containing 186,040 inhabitants as of December 2012 (Servizio Statistica Comune di Modena 2013). Emilia Romagna (ER) is a region characterized by higher women's employment rates as compared to Italy and by a higher presence of childcare services. In 2012, female employment rates in ER were 61.3%, while in Italy it was 47.1% (Istat Labour Force Survey data). In 2011 the percentage of children covered by kindergarten in Italy was 11.8% and in ER it was 24.4% (Istat 2013 in <http://dati.istat.it/>).

The last available national survey on violence against women (Istat 2006) recorded a higher percentage of women who stated to have been subjected to physical or sexual violence in their lifetime in Emilia Romagna than on average in the rest of Italy. In fact, 32% of women in Italy aged from 16 to 70 reported to have been subjected to this type of violence in their life versus 38% in Emilia Romagna alone (Table 3.3.6).

Table 3.3.6 Women who have been subjected to violence in Emilia Romagna and in Italy by type of violence, 2006.

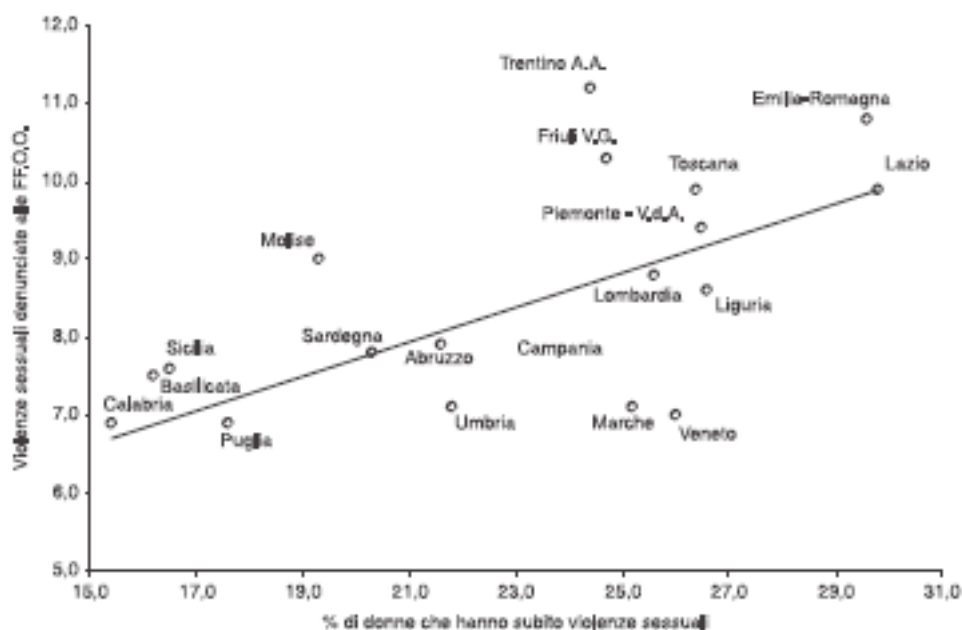
Type of violence	Emilia Romagna	Italy
Physical or sexual from any man	38,2	31,9
Physical from any man	23,1	18,8
Sexual from any man	29,6	23,7
Physical or sexual during the last 12 months by current or former partner, and by non partner	7	5,4
Sexual violence without harrassment by any man	10,9	8,8
Rape or attempted rape by any man	6,9	4,8

Data Source: I.Stat metadata.

[http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCCV\\_VIOLENZADONNE&Lang=it](http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCCV_VIOLENZADONNE&Lang=it)

More women in the Emilia Romagna region than on average in Italy report cases of violence to the authorities as shown in Figure 3.3.3.

Figure 3.3.3. Sexual violence reported to local authorities. Average every 100.000 women 1995-2006.



Source: Servizio Politiche per la sicurezza e la polizia locale (2010), Grafico 29 page 59.

According to the data collected by the regional coordination of shelters in Emilia Romagna (Coordinamento dei centri anti violenza dell'Emilia-Romagna 2013)<sup>125</sup> from January 2012 to October 2012, among the 2,045 women who asked for first time assistance from the ten shelters, 195 asked for assistance from Modena *Casa delle donne contro la violenza* shelter. Considering all of 2012, women who have been victims of violence in Emilia Romagna were 2,818, with an increasing trend from 1,422 in 1997, 1,119 in 2000, 1,271 in 2005 and 2,350 in 2010. Among them, 1,756 were victims of physical violence; 478 of sexual violence, 2,335 of psychological violence and 1,310 of economic violence. Amongst them in 2012, about 36% came from other countries, a percentage similar to what has been found in 2010 (Regione Emilia Romagna, 2013).

### Networking to fight violence against women

The relevance of the establishment of a network of different services (social, medical, police, judiciary) to provide effective help to female victims of violence has been shown in the literature (Arcidiacono and Di Napoli, 2013).

The project 'A network against violence: let's rebuild trust' (*In rete contro la violenza: ricostruiamo la fiducia*) involves different municipalities (Modena, Carpi), Health Services, Police, Prefecture, District of Modena, Education Institutions, training institutes and NGOs (Associazione Gruppo Donne e Giustizia, Associazione Casa delle donne contro la violenza, Associazione Marta e Maria). The network was the first one to be established in Italy and is based on a long experience in networking among the different actors involved. Since its constitution in 2006, its actions

<sup>125</sup> *Coordinamento dei centri anti violenza dell'Emilia-Romagna* includes ten shelters that are active in Emilia Romagna in fighting violence against women: Casa delle Donne per non subire violenza Onlus di Bologna, SOS Donna Onlus di Faenza, Centro Donna Giustizia di Ferrara, Demetra Donne in aiuto Onlus di Lugo, Casa delle Donne contro la violenza Onlus di Modena, Centro Anti violenza Onlus di Parma, La Città delle Donne di Piacenza, Linea Rosa Onlus di Ravenna, Nondasola - Donne insieme contro la violenza Onlus di Reggio Emilia, Rompi il Silenzio Onlus di Rimini.

have included training different operators in the institutions, meetings to coordinate action and making it more efficient in order to address multiple needs expressed by women who reached one of the points of the network. Within the network, each actor has a specific role and policies that are shared within the network. The Municipality of Modena has also been very active in promoting a regional Law on violence against women. In November 2013, the Mayor of Modena and the President of the Town Hall Council asked the Modena Prefecture, that coordinates the network, to reinforce and extend training of the operators in each node of the network, to improve the collection and availability of the data at the local level and to extend the participation of women's NGOs by also involving NGOs that, though not providing direct assistance to women who reported violence, are active in preventing violence against women.<sup>126</sup> Media campaigns and cultural activities have also been organized in the town of Modena to reach new targets and new environments (recently the campaign has been extended to reach men assisting important football matches in the town). Prefecture is also trying to enact organizational changes to improve women's first encounter with public authorities when addressing cases of violence.

Modena is part of the region of Emilia Romagna, that in November 2013 had promulgated a Directive on how to assist women subjected to violence (Regione Emilia Romagna, 2013). The guidelines aim at improving and extending assistance and care provided to women and children subjected to violence. This can be considered, according to the Region Emilia Romagna, as the first tool to develop active policies to identify and fight violence against women and support victims. In defining the guidelines Emilia Romagna has taken as examples of the best practices carried out in the region, including the use of networking in Modena.

#### *Casa delle donne contro la violenza and Associazione Donne e Giustizia*

There are different NGOs active on violence against women in Modena. In this case study we will analyse the activities and experience of *Casa delle donne contro la violenza* and *Associazione Donne e Giustizia*. The latter is located one floor above the *Casa delle donne contro la violenza* in the same building as *Casa delle Donne*, giving it an established significance in Modena as a place where different feminist NGOs meet and carry out their activities.

The aim of this Section is to describe their activities in relation to the networking that has characterized policies on violence against women in the area since the very beginning and to provide recent data on the impact of the crisis and the change in policies on violence against women based on our elaborations of the data collected and provided by NGOs and on the interviews and focus groups carried out with the two associations in the months of December 2013 and January 2014.<sup>127</sup>

*Casa delle donne contro la violenza* (House for women against violence, HWV thereafter) has been active since 1990 in Modena with the aim of creating a place for women who were subjected to different types of violence to enhance their freedom. The centre has been funded by the local municipality since 1991 and relies upon both volunteer and paid work.

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<sup>126</sup> Mayor of Modena (Giorgio Pighi) and President of the Town Hall Council (Caterina Liotti) letter to the Prefect of the District of Modena (Michele Bari) dated 27/11/2013. The requests have also been presented during public meetings on violence against women that took place in Modena.

<sup>127</sup> The focus groups with *Casa delle donne contro la violenza* have involved Barbara Bertolani (representative), Edith Bendicente (representative projects to work inclusion), Natalya Lyamkina (vicepresident) Paola Santoro (professional worker), the interviews with *Associazione Donne & Giustizia* have been conducted with Vanna Tori (vice president). Their involvement in the discussion and in the provision of data is gratefully acknowledged. The usual disclaimers apply.

The relevance of networking with different institutions has been evident since the very beginning of the life of the centre (Creazzo 2010).

HWV activities are developed within a centre to shelter and listen to women who have been subjected to violence and two shelters to provide temporary shelter to women and their children.

Women are sustained by a series of meetings having the aim of making them free from violence and addressing the problems connected with violence, including the possibility to receive legal advice from the nearby NGO *Associazione Donne e Giustizia* (Women and Justice). Women are also assisted in searching for a job or a new dwelling (including temporary shelter in the available secret flats) and also in accessing other institutions providing public services that can be useful.

The Centre is very active also in organizing training courses for teachers, social and health operators, police, other centre against violence operators (professionals and volunteers).

Together with these activities, since 1997 the HWV has participated in the project '*Oltre la strada*' (Beyond the street), a wider regional project dedicated to women who would like to free themselves from forced prostitution within a network of associations and institutions (including social services, the municipality, police). HWV collaborates with a listening centre and hosts the women in shelters (Creazzo 2010: 80-82). Four years after '*Oltre la strada*' HWV was involved in a new endeavor: '*Semira Adamu migrant women house*' (*Casa delle donne migranti Semira Adamu*) named after a Nigerian woman killed by Belgian police while she was going to be expelled not having a residency permit. The residence (two flats) is located outside the HWV and volunteers and professional operators work hosting migrant women in it for a maximum of 3 months. The project aims to offer a place where migrant women can have time to organize their own life programmes and build relationship with women coming from different countries. The house hosts Italian classes, cultural meetings, cooking schools, training courses for improving job search activities and to improve women's skills in collaborations with the other institutions in the district.

HWV witnessed an increase in the number of women asking for assistance (Table 3.3.7). According to the data recorded by HWV, women who ask for assistance reporting cases of violence increased from 271 in 2010 to 319 in 2013.<sup>128</sup> Turning to the type of violence, economic violence in 1997 was experienced by 39% of women who asked for assistance to HWV and by 73% of women in 2005. Part of the increase can be linked to the increase in the number of migrant women asking for assistance. Psychological violence was experienced by 75% of women in 1997 and by 86% in 2005. Physical violence passed from 60% in 1997 to 64% in 2005 and also the occurrence of sexual violence increased from 26% to 37%.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> The available administrative data present a structural break in 2010 due to a different and more accurate recording that have been shared by a network of associations to better compare different areas, therefore it is not possible to compare the whole series.

<sup>129</sup> Creazzo (2010). One should notice that the percentage do not sum up to 100% since women can report more than one form of violence.

Table 3.3.7 - Women who ask assistance to Casa delle donne contro la violenza

Years	Number of women
2010	271
2011	214
2012	263
2013	319

Source: Casa delle donne contro la violenza administrative data

Different cases of economic violence can be detected during the crisis according to the experience reported during interviews to HWV members. The first type of economic violence occurs when women report that their jobless partners insist on keeping the control on women's labour income; moreover, jobless partners appear not to search actively for a new job and do not share childcare work within the household. In this first type of economic violence, women report that when their partners happen to find a precarious or irregular job they refuse to share their earnings within the household and use them to satisfy their personal needs. The second type of economic violence that is found to increase with the crisis is related to fathers' refusal to pay child support to their former partner. In one-earner households, women increasingly report to be denied access to household income and use of money to satisfy their own or their children's needs.

Moreover HWV operators report a tendency for partners' conflictual relationships before the crisis to be exacerbated during unemployment spells, showing the occurrence of psychological and physical violence.

Another sign of the crisis can be found in the increasing difficulties in the job search faced by women who contact HWV and attend specific projects with the aim of developing their chances to find a (new) job. HWV, together with other non-profit organizations, is currently developing new projects to improve women's access to self-employment.

The *Associazione Donne e Giustizia* (Women & Law, hereafter WL) was created in 1996 as an NGO, though it has operated in Modena since 1982 as *Gruppo Donne & Giustizia*, a group of women within the Union of Italian Women (UDI). It aims at spreading legal and social culture of equal opportunity by gender. WL activities range from free legal assistance to women who are subjected to violence and uneasiness, and discrimination within their family or in the society. Since the *Casa delle donne contro la violenza* (HWV) has been active, WL collaborates by supplying advice to those women who turn to HWV and envisage the need of legal assistance. The physical proximity of the two NGOs makes it easier to provide assistance to women according to their needs (Creazzo 2010) and of hosting women's associations that show an overlapping of activities and aims in the same place can be considered a good practice to be extended.

The majority of WL association members are women volunteers, 30 in 2013, while only one woman is employed. The majority of WL resources come from local public institutions.

Amongst the activities enacted by WL to supply assistance to women's needs there are:

- 'Ascolto Donna' a telephone line that has been created in 1998 to provide professional first advice by phone together with face to face advice by volunteer women;
- free legal assistance by volunteer women lawyers (since 1982);

- psychological assistance since 1999 by volunteer women psychologists;
- counselling by a volunteer woman counsellor since 2013;
- self-help groups active since 2005 and dedicated to women who manifest particular discomfort in their relationship.

Moreover the NGO is very active in holding cultural and training activities on social and legal topics in high schools, in public sphere and at specific seminars devoted to volunteers and social workers. Special attention is devoted by the Association not only to women but also to the children who are involved in family problems and in violent situations.

WL has collected information on women's characteristics since 1982. Their data provides a 30 year perspective on the occurrence of legal assistance to women (not only those who have been subject to violence) who require WL assistance.

WL (Associazione Donne e Giustizia 2007, 2013) shows an increase in women who have required their assistance over the last decades, especially since the networking activities were formalized in 2006. Since 1982, women who asked WL for assistance number 7,500, with an average that increased from 127 women a year in the first 20 years to 480 women a year in the last ten years.

In the last years, the percentage of women coming from other countries who ask for assistance is around 30%, most of them come from Eastern European countries.

The percentage of women coming from other countries increased in the last decade from 9.5% on average in the first 20 years to 30% in the last decade.

WL statistics based on administrative data provided by the NGO and our elaboration of *Icesmo3* (a survey carried out by Centre Analysis of Public Policies in Modena in year 2012 on a sample of households that is representative of the local population) microdata allow us to compare the composition of the sample of women who ask for assistance from WL with the composition of Modena female population by country of origin, level of education and employment status.

By comparing the share of migrant women who ask for assistance from WL (30%) and the 12% share of migrant women of Modena's female population aged over 19 (as it can be inferred to by our analysis on the survey on the socioeconomic conditions of households in Modena *Icesmo3* microdata), we can see how migrants tend to be overrepresented with respect to the whole female population in Modena.

Turning to age, women aged from 31 to 40 tend to be overrepresented with respect to their share in Modena's female population (about 31% of WL women and 14% in the whole population). Among women who asked for assistance from WL, those aged from 41 to 50 represent 28% of users (20% of the female population). On the other hand, women older than 60 tend to be underrepresented amongst women asking for assistance from WL.

On average women who ask for assistance to WL show a relatively higher level of education than women asking for assistance to the *Casa delle Donne contro la violenza*. With respect to the population living in Modena and aged over 19 one can see that women with a high school education are overrepresented amongst those women who ask for assistance from WL (41% versus 36% in the population), whereas women with tertiary education are underrepresented (8% of those who ask WL assistance and 18% of women aged over 19 living in Modena). In recent years there has been a slight decrease in the share of university graduates in the total number of women who ask for assistance from WL.

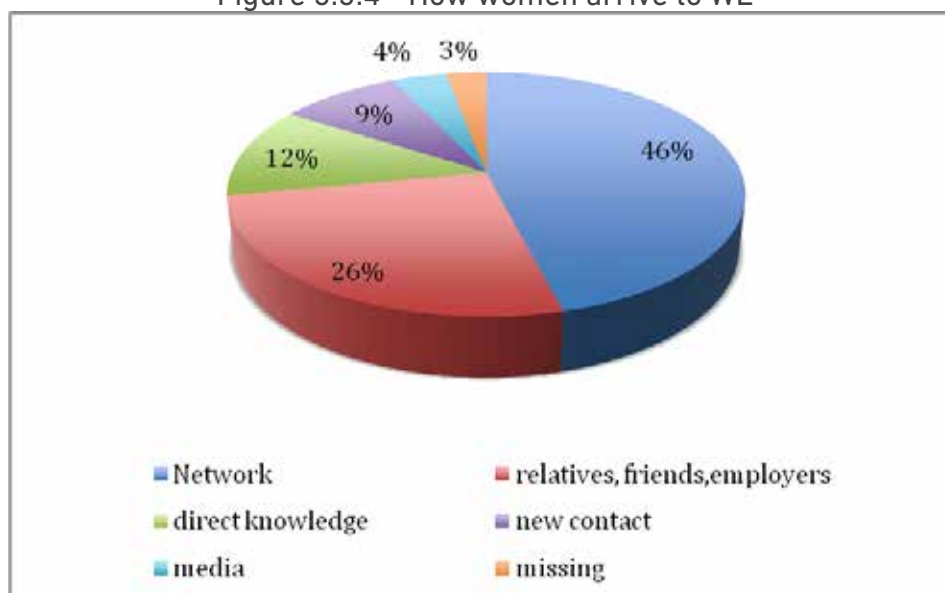
In 2012, unemployed women represented 27% of the women who asked for assistance from Women and Law and are overrepresented with respect to the whole population (being around 7% of those aged from 20 to 64 according to our elaborations of the *Icesmo3* data base). On the other hand, employed women are underrepresented among female WL users: 56% compared with 65% in the female population aged 20 to 64 living in Modena (Associazione Donne e Giustizia 2013 and our elaborations on *Icesmo3* microdata).

According to the data on the type of problems recorded by women, Associazione Donne e Giustizia (2013) found that amongst the 508 women stating to have been subjected to violence in 2012, 70% had been subject to psychological violence, 20% economic violence, 20% physical violence and 1% sexual harassment. The percentages do not add up to 100 since women often report to be subjected to multiple types of violence. With respect to the previous 20 years, in the last decade there has been a decrease in economic violence cases (-6%) and an increase (+4%) of psychological violence and of physical violence (+4%). The decrease in the number of women who ask for legal assistance to carry on divorce or separation according to WL can be related to the increasing difficulties in the crisis to afford divorces and separation legal procedures, as well as to the expected possible economic outcomes. This leads the partners to a forced life together, facing conflicts and with increasing difficulties in partners' relationships. Therefore the observed trend cannot be considered as a positive trend but can be related to increasing difficulties in forced couple relationships. The observed increase in the number of psychological and physical violence incidents is also in line with the observed increasing number of women who ask for assistance to *Casa delle Donne Contro la violenza*.

One should stress that women asking for assistance from WL are on average more educated than those who ask *Casa delle Donne contro la violenza* assistance. This difference is probably related to the higher possibility for more educated women to have, on average, a higher income and therefore to be able to afford more easily a divorce or separation.

During 2012, women asking for assistance to WL came from: other institutions and NGOs in the district (like the Municipality of Modena social services, family & migration departments, Health services, First Aid, Police, Prefecture, Courthouse, other NGOs, Church) (46%); relatives, employers, friends (26%); direct knowledge of WL (12%), after a first contact (9%), 4% media (Figure 3.3.4).

Figure 3.3.4 - How women arrive to WL



Source: WL administrative data.

Both NGOs state an increase in the number of women asking for assistance that come from other nodes of the 2006 network. WL (Associazione Donne e Giustizia 2013) shows an increase of women coming from the network: from 32% on average in the first two decades of the activity (1982 to 2002) to 39% on average from 2003 to 2011 and 46% in 2012.

Among the needs expressed by the associations contacted and interviewed, and from a wider survey carried out by means of qualitative analysis on women who attended the *Casa delle donne contro la violenza*, women ask for a longer listening time (preferably 24 hours a day). To reply to this need, the Coordination of the Institutions active against violence on women in Modena is carrying out a project connected to the national 1522 service and to all the institutions and NGOs active locally that will be activated to support women subjected to violence during the whole day (Prefettura di Modena 2014). The network is currently undertaking the mapping of all the institutions in the district of Modena providing assistance to women who have been subjected to violence, together with their schedule to improve their coordination and avoid a break in assistance.

Another activity that has been promoted by the local coordination of institutions is the first public health service devoted to perpetrators of violence against women named LDV *Liberiamoci dalla Violenza* (Let's free ourselves from violence).

LDV was launched in Modena in December 2011 by the Public Health Service with an agreement with the Emilia Romagna. LDV can also be considered an outcome of MUVI, the 'Developing strategies to work with men who use violence in intimate relationships' project<sup>130</sup>, a European Daphne 2006 Programme funded project coordinated by the municipality of Bologna and carried out with the Shelter for Women against Violence (Casa delle donne per non subire violenza), the Alternative to Violence Centre, ATV (Oslo), Innovation, Transfer and Development, ITD (Barcelona), the Greek training centre DIMITRA and AEDA, the municipality of Athens' Development Agency and later with the region of Emilia Romagna.

The Emilia Romagna Region and the District of Modena's Public Health Services include violence against women as the key aim in their activity programmes (Borsari and Martini 2012). Modena's public health service (MHS) is the leader within Emilia Romagna's project that addresses the problem from the side of male perpetrators of violence against women (Deriu 2012). MHS was one of the first institutions that joined the network established at the local level to fight violence against women. LDV activities are carried out in a dense collaboration, particularly amongst MHS, WL and HWV. The latter was one of the first shelters in Emilia Romagna to engage, at the beginning of 2000, in the discussion on actions to be undertaken to deal with male perpetrators of violence (Bozzoli et al. 2013). A peculiarity of LDV in the Italian context is that it is included in the Public Health Sector (Bozzoli et al. 2013) and is located in a public family counseling centre, an intense symbolic public place in terms of its social and cultural role with regards to women's struggles (Dotti and Penuti 2013). LDV personnel have been attending training courses based on the methodologies developed by the Norwegian Alternative to Violence Centre, ATV (Oslo) (Borsari and Martini 2012). Since 2011, 60 men have been treated, with the help of professionals, to deal with their aggressive behaviour (Bozzoli et al. 2013, Prefettura di Modena 2014).

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<sup>130</sup> The activities carried out within the project are described online at: [http://www.comune.bologna.it/iperbole/muvi/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=16&Itemid=30](http://www.comune.bologna.it/iperbole/muvi/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=16&Itemid=30)



## 4. Gender Impact of public policies in the crisis

Before turning to analyse in greater depth the gender impact of public policies undertaken in Italy in the last years and as a reaction to the crisis, we should stress the likely gender impact of policies at the European level. The deterioration in the labour market situation and the effect on gender inequalities have to be analysed in reaction not only to the economic crisis, but also to the austerity measures and fiscal consolidation programmes enacted in European countries, given the high degree of openness in European labour markets and the trade exchanges taking place among European Countries. Attempts of European macroeconomic policy coordination in reaction to the crisis, like the European Economic Recovery Plan, have been criticized for not being gender-mainstreamed, in spite of what is required by European guidelines for coordinated policies (Bettio *et al.* 2013).

The impact of public budget cuts carried out in Italy under the austerity plan (2011) and the 2012 'spending review' by the Monti government are bound to have a direct negative effect on women's employment (given their higher presence in public sector employment) and an indirect impact on their labour supply, due to the lower availability of public social services (Verashchagina and Capparucci 2014).

Although women's unemployment rate increased in the second phase of the crisis, women show a longer duration of unemployment as well as a lower degree of protection from unemployment benefits (Isfol 2013). The Labour Reform (Law 92/2012) introduced a new system of unemployment benefits to achieve a higher homogeneity in a highly segmented system. The new system of unemployment benefits includes workers formerly excluded (like apprentices) and employees with a shorter work experience, though at a lower coverage (they should have worked for at least 13 weeks) (Banca d'Italia, 2013). However, still being overrepresented amongst jobless individuals formerly inactive, women are also exposed to the risk of lower coverage under the new system.

The Labour Reform (art.4) introduced incentives for firms to hire women who were not working for at least 6 months and living in regions of Italy that are a target for European Structural Fund employment of youth and women, or without a job for at least 24 months in any region of Italy. The incentives are provided for a maximum of 12 months for hiring on a temporary basis and 18 if the contract has been transformed or originally permanent. Law 21/2011 has created a fund to finance policies devoted to increase youth or female employment (Isfol 2013). The Government Decree 5/10/2012 includes incentives to those firms hiring youth (up to 29 years old), women or that transform a temporary job in permanent job.

Together with the incentives in hiring and stabilization of women's employment, the Labour Reform has introduced, on an experimental basis, two measures that can have an effect on women's conditions. A means tested voucher (300 euro a month for a maximum of 6 months) has been introduced on an experimental basis from 2013 to 2015 for mothers who return to work after maternity leaves to access baby sitting or child care facilities, provided they give up a part of their parental leaves. Being focused on women, this measure does not provide an incentive for men to share unpaid work or to be considered as a carer (Cardinali in Isfol 2013).

The same law introduced on an experimental basis a one-day fully-paid compulsory paternity leave for fathers who are employees, which can be extended for another 2 days if the mother agrees not to use two days of her maternity leave. This can be regarded as a symbolic measure (Cardinali in Isfol 2013) given the duration of the leave introduced.

Forced dismissals have also been disincentivated by Law by extending to the 3 first years

of life of the child the period when it is compulsory that the Ministry of labour and social policies local inspectorate convalidates the worker's voluntary dismissal. However, the reform can be criticized since the burden of the proof still rests on the worker and the employer can be subjected only to an administrative sanction (Cardinali in Isfol 2013). A new law proposal was approved in March 2014 by the lower house of the Italian Parliament to reintroduce the electronic statement on dismissals to further protect workers from forced dismissals.<sup>131</sup>

During the crisis different policies have been enacted to address gender inequalities. Among them, Law 120/2011 (law Golfo-Mosca) 'Equal access to boards of directors and boards of statutory auditors of companies listed on regulated markets' and the implementing Decree DPR 251/2012 establish a share of 20% of the least represented gender in the board of directors and in supervisory boards of listed companies starting from the first renewal since August 2012 and by at least 33% of the total composition of the board starting from 2015.

This new law brought about, according to the available administrative data (Bianchi 2013; Del Boca and Profeta 2013 and Parrella 2013), an increase in the presence of women on the board of directors and supervisory boards: as of 30 June 2013 17% of members of the board of directors (more than double with respect to the end of 2011) were women, while boards of directors without a female presence range from 50% in 2011 to less than 20% in 2013 (Bianchi 2013). In the largest firms the percentage of women on boards passed from 10% in 2008 to 19% in 2013 (Bianchi 2013).

Recently, relevant steps forward have been undertaken to protect women against violence in Italy. The first National Plan against gender based violence and stalking was approved in 2010 by the Department of Equal Opportunities. The Council of Europe's Istanbul convention on preventing violence against women signed on September 2012 was ratified in 2013, and in November 2013 Italy was the first European and non-American country to sign the Organisation of American States' (OAS) Convention of Belém do Pará (the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women to prevent, punish and fight violence against women) promulgated in 1994.

New norms have been included in a wider Law tackling different issues (Law 119/2013 - 15 October 2013). The measures that have been introduced affect different points like simplifying the procedure to report domestic violence anonymously and to remove the abusers from home. They also grant a permit of stay for foreign victims for humanitarian reasons. Domestic abuse reports can no longer be revoked by the accuser. Increased penalties are established for men who attack pregnant women or minors. Another important measure is the establishment of free legal aid for women who decide to prosecute their abuser.

A new media campaign to address violence against women *Riconosci la violenza* ('Identifying violence') has been launched by the Department of Equal Opportunities of the Italian Government (2013) that will be discussed in this Chapter as a good practice in policies to fight violence against women.

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<sup>131</sup> Law proposal 'Disposizioni in materia di modalità per la risoluzione del contratto di lavoro per dimissioni volontarie del lavoratore e del prestatore d'opera' presented on the 15th of March 2013 and approved by the lower House of the Italian Parliament in March 2014.

## 4.1 Identifying Violence - a new mass media campaign to fight violence against women in Italy<sup>132</sup>

In Italy media are often playing a disruptive role in the representation of women in society, fostering gender stereotypes and objectifying a woman's body. The case presented in this section shows how, on the contrary, mass-media can play an important role in raising the awareness of violence against women, and it has also been recognized as a good practice by the United Nations,<sup>133</sup>

The new media campaign to address violence against women *Riconosci la violenza* ('Identify violence') has been launched by the Department of Equal Opportunities of the Italian Government (2013).

The idea was developed by Anna Paola Concia (member of the house of Parliament in 2010), Alessandra Bocchetti (feminist essayist) and Eliana Forsali (copywriter). The idea was then translated into imagery by Forsali and Maurizio Minerva (art director). This process of creation took six months.

Women appearing in the images are students of the Rome High School of Photography and media (<http://www.isfci.it/>), who were also actively involved in the photo session.

The campaign was initially adopted by media in 2010 (<http://www.riconoscilaviolenza.it>). The first two newspapers adopting it were of opposite political orientation: *L'Unità* (left wing) and *Il Secolo d'Italia* (right wing) having in common a female manager: Concita De Gregorio (former director of *L'Unità*) and Flavia Perina (former director of *Il secolo d'Italia*). The campaign has also been sustained by private institutions and firms (<http://www.riconoscilaviolenza.it>) and can be freely used by accessing its web page.

In November 2013, it was launched by the Italian Government's Department of Equal Opportunities to promote the direct telephone number (1522) women can call when being victims of violence (<http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/index.php/campagne-di-informazione/2408-qriconosci-la-violenzaq> and <http://www.riconoscilaviolenza.it/>).

Thereafter, the campaign was also adopted by Mexico, the Council of Europe and by the Equal opportunities departments of Germany, Poland and Greece.

The peculiarity of the images is that women do not appear beaten with signs of violence in their bodies or faces. On the contrary, they appear active and able to choose freedom by getting rid of a violent partner. The seven different images have a common thread (as shown in Figure 4.1): a woman embraces a man whose face is covered by a large black rectangle where it is written: *La violenza ha mille volti, impara a riconoscerli*. (Violence has thousands of faces, learn how to identify them).

The four images chosen for the National Equal Opportunity campaign are then completed by 4 different sentences:<sup>134</sup>

- *"Hai un solo modo per cambiare un fidanzato violento. Cambiare fidanzato"*. (You have just one way to change a violent boyfriend. Change the boyfriend);

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<sup>132</sup> We thank Anna Paola Concia for having provided further information on the process leading to the campaign creation and its donation to the public.

<sup>133</sup> Gibbini Ballista and Pinnock (2012) discuss many cases of the use of women's images in Italian media.

<sup>134</sup> Our translations from the original sentences reported in Italian.

- “*Non sposare un uomo violento. I bambini imparano in fretta*”. (Do not marry a violent man. Children learn quickly);
- “*Un violento non merita il tuo amore. Merita una denuncia*”. (A violent man does not deserve your love. He deserves a statement of claim);
- “*Gli schiaffi sono schiaffi. Scambiarli per amore può farti molto male*”. (Slaps are slaps. To confuse them with love can hurt you a lot).

The Authors of the campaign decided to make it public and free: it is possible to download and spread it as long as it is not modified or used for commercial aims.

Figure 4.1 - One of the images of Riconosci la violenza campaign



Source:

<http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/index.php/campagne-di-informazione/2408-qriconosci-la-violenzaq>

The National campaign is related to the diffusion of the 1522 public use telephone number that, since 2006, has been established by the Equal Opportunities Department to receive assistance requests from women subjected to violence. Since 2009, it has also been devoted to collecting claims by stalking victims. The service also interacts with the network of centres and shelters addressing violence against women at the local level (Attività Rete Nazionale Antiviolenza 2012). To improve the evaluation of the campaign’s impact, we suggest the collection by the national monitoring service of information on whether the women calling the service knew about the campaign. Similar information could be collected at the different levels of the national and local nodes acting to fight violence against women in Italy.

## **5. Policy suggestions to prevent and counter the gendered impact of the crisis on women in Italy**

On the basis of the situation highlighted in the previous chapters, this concluding chapter aims at providing policy suggestions to design new policies or to change the design of policies to take into account their gender impact within the crises.

Gender inequalities in the labour market and in the access to resources persist and in some cases have worsened with the crisis.

As shown in Chapter 2, gender inequality in the access to employment persists and keeps its regional heterogeneity. The increase witnessed in the female labour supply, and also in phases of the life cycle when they are more likely to have a high burden in unpaid care work, shows difficulties in translating to higher employment. Active labour market policies should take into account that different subjects, formerly inactive, are now looking for a job, and they should adapt to these subjects'needs .

During the crisis, increasing difficulties have been witnessed by women in trying to balance work and family needs as pointed out in Chapter 2.

The literature on the female labour supply shows clearly that the low female labour supply can be connected to the rationing in childcare services. Although there has been an increase in the availability of childcare services, on average Italy covered 11.8% of children aged from 0 to 2 in 2011 (versus 9.8% in year 2007), yet a wide regional heterogeneity in the coverage of kindergartens can be detected with a range of variation from 1.9% in Campania to 24.4% in Emilia Romagna (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 - Children aged 0-2 in kindergartens by regions in Italy years 2007-2011

		2007	2011	% change
Italy		9,9	11,8	19%
North-West		12,4	14,3	15%
North-West	Piedmont	11,1	12,5	13%
	Valle d'Aosta / Vallée d'Aoste	17,8	15,6	-12%
	Liguria	12,6	14,1	12%
	Lombardia	12,8	15,1	18%
North-East		15	17,1	14%
North-East	Trentino Alto Adige / Südtirol	8,8	11,8	34%
	Veneto	9,5	11,7	23%
	Friuli-Venezia Giulia	12,2	18,2	49%
	Emilia-Romagna	24	24,4	2%
Centre		13	16,4	26%
Centre	Toscana	16,6	17,6	6%
	Umbria	11,9	19,1	61%
	Marche	13,1	15,5	18%
	Lazio	11	15,5	41%
South		2,8	3,5	25%
South	Abruzzo	7	8,1	16%
	Molise	4,3	11	156%
	Campania	1,3	1,9	46%
	Puglia	3,7	4,1	11%
	Basilicata	6,9	7,1	3%
	Calabria	1,9	2,4	26%
Islands		5,5	6,1	11%
Islands	Sicily	5,3	5,1	-4%
	Sardinia	6,2	9,8	58%

Source: Stat metadata

Therefore a first policy suggestion would be to go in the direction of improving childcare provision and the social infrastructure sustaining carers' employment. This can also be realized with the aid of other actors at the local level that can sustain childcare infrastructure and have shown to positively contribute to its increase (Addabbo, Lanzi, Picchio 2010).

In this area, good practices such as *Nidi di mamme*, the one experimented in Naples, in a region characterized by the lowest coverage of kindergartens, on children aged 0 to 2 years old, should not be ended but relaunched since it has shown to positively contribute to the wellbeing of the different subjects involved, including the whole community where the experiences have taken place.

## Nidi di Mamme<sup>135</sup>

The experience of 'Nidi di mamme' started in 2000 in Naples at the request of a group of mothers who were beneficiaries of a public subsidy (minimum insertion income) from a non-profit territorial organization (*Associazione Quartieri Spagnoli*) to elaborate a new project that could involve them as workers and mothers. The project has been part of the supply of childcare services for almost ten years and it has been sustained by the University (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II, Dipartimento di Scienze Relazionali 'G.Iacono'), non-profit organizations and the Municipality of Naples, although it has suffered from difficulties in its funding. Women were trained and have been inserted into the educational system as 'auxiliary mothers,' together with educators in 8 new structures called 'Nidi di mamme', attended by more than 150 children a year. The positive effect of this project on the well-being of the women involved in it can be traced by their experiences in terms of different dimensions (being trained, working, caring) and it contributes to the increase of the childcare supply for children aged from 18 to 36 months in an area characterized by a very low diffusion of childcare services and with special reference to children belonging to poor families. Moreover, mothers' kindergarten can also be seen as an attempt to create a link between kindergarten, households and community. The importance of this link in the current experience of *Nidi di Mamme* is acknowledged by interviews with personnel involved in the project and can be traced by its very origin to the link between mothers and the *Associazione Quartieri Spagnoli* as being deeply involved in the community. According to a microsimulation analysis on the implications of minimum insertion income that includes the evaluation of unpaid work activity,<sup>136</sup> women who are in families eligible for minimum insertion income are on average more exposed to the risk of being excluded from the activation part of the policy. Women involved in the *Nidi di mamme* project have a very low level of education and are at a high risk of social exclusion. Therefore, this project is also in line with the policy proposals, based on the gender impact of this policy, of promoting women's participation in activation policies.

The Intervita (2013) report has recently provided a socioeconomic estimation of the cost of violence against women, showing the direct (such as health and social services, legal and police costs involved when violence against women occurs) and indirect economic and social costs together with the investment expenditures to prevent and contrast violence against women. The research allows for the detection of important points and has started a path in different regions of Italy to meet women's NGOs and institutions and to reflect upon the results of the research and start a debate concerning policies and measures on violence against women. The latter is in our opinion a good practice to tackle violence against women. However more data are needed to improve the evaluation analysis of the costs of violence.

At the local level, as the case of the network in the Modena district presented in Chapter 3 shows, training activities involving all professional operators as well as volunteers of different centres, authorities and services that provide assistance to women subjected to violence, should be provided on a stable basis to ensure that new entrants in the services are properly trained. It is necessary to increase the resources to be devoted to prevent and fight violence against women and also to tackle the problem of child custody reinforcing networking at local level. Education for the recognition and condemnation of violence has been found to be crucial to reduce and prevent the risk of being a victim of violence (Corazziari and Muratore, 2013; Arcidiacono and Ferrari Bravo, 2013).

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<sup>135</sup> We thank Professor Adele Nunziante Cesàro for the interview realized in January 2014. Deeper analysis on the design and activities carried out during the project can be found in Nunziante Cesàro (2005), Nunziante Cesàro and Boursier (2007, 2010).

<sup>136</sup> Addabbo and Baldini (2003).

According to the members of the associations who have been interviewed in the Modena case study (Chapter 3) and the administrative data analysed, the existence of the network amongst institutions and NGOs in the district of Modena had a positive effect in increasing the number of women who asked for assistance to the NGOs analysed and, at the same time, increased the possibilities to provide women with wider assistance to address the occurrence of multiple needs connected to violence.

Frequent communication amongst people working in the different nodes of the network speeds up the process leading to reporting violence to the authorities, or in finding the proper legal assistance or assistance in terms of health and dwelling.

Training activities have increased the abilities of the operators, that are usually the prime providers of assistance, in recognizing episodes of violence and in treating them, and the need to further extend and intensify this activity has been recently brought to the public's attention.

The case study shows that networking at the local level is a good practice to be extended to other contexts. The network itself is extending both in terms of areas, institutions and time covered and in terms of innovative services (like LDV) provided.

In comparing the activity of *Casa delle donne contro la violenza* with other Italian local experiences, a positive effect can be found in its proximity to the legal assistance association (Donne & Giustizia). These organizations have a long established relationship of collaboration and their being part of a wider feminist project that is hosted in the same physical place reinforces this cooperation. This relationship has led to a high percentage, of the women who asked for assistance from *Casa delle donne contro la violenza*, to also ask for legal assistance, and administrative data records an increase in this need over time (from 37% in 1997 to 64% of women who asked assistance in 2005).<sup>137</sup>

The proximity of the shelters appears to be very important, as the analyses by the Coordinamento dei centri antiviolenza dell'Emilia-Romagna (2013) and by the National Association D.i.R.e (Women's Network against violence) (D.i.R.e 2013) show, for the emergence of cases of violence. This calls for an increase of locally-based shelters and for coordination to increase in Italy.

The case study also stressed the peculiar effects of the economic crisis on violence against women. If, on the one hand, it is more difficult to start a change from a conflictual partnership to a legal separation or divorce - leading to a lower number of women undertaking these actions, - on the other hand operators and volunteers in the NGOs report an increasing number of women asking for assistance and reporting increasing tensions within households that can be related to the lack of resources and reduced standard of living. The cases reported show how an unbalanced intrahousehold allocation of time and income resources is a key factor in the deterioration of partnership relations. In the crisis, the high number of jobless men and their presence in the household's daily life is often not related to a redistribution of time (unpaid childcare and housework does not appear to be redistributed and the burden of it rests on women's shoulders even when they are the only breadwinners) or (as it is found in cases of economic violence reported to the NGOs) to a redistribution of control over resources. This tension can produce increasing conflicts and violent behaviour, and, as one volunteer in the NGO clearly states, the lack of perspectives and acceptance of a forced life together as a couple can result in increasing psychological difficulties.

Moreover, looking at women's needs that in the crisis appear more difficult to satisfy, the

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137 Creazzo (2010 170-1).



case study shows increasing difficulties in finding a new job or a first regular job. Although new solutions are being employed by NGOs attempting to assist women in finding a job in the non-profit sector and through self-employment, the access to economic resources appears to be a major problem exacerbated by the crisis. Related to the lack of resources, another major problem is connected to housing: when women leave their temporary shelters they face increasing difficulties in finding stable housing solutions, a problem related to the increasing difficulties in becoming independent.

To summarize, based on the gender inequalities shown before the crisis and on the effects of the crisis, together with a more extended adoption of gender budgeting analysis that allows for the evaluation of the gender impact of public policies and allocation of resources, public policies should be directed towards:

- Sustaining social infrastructure by promoting partnerships with other actors and innovative social services (like *Nidi di Mamme*);
- Promoting active labour market policies directed towards discouraged workers (to avoid their further estrangement from the labour force) and formerly inactive individuals (often women) entering into the labour force (with joint action in terms of provisions of child care services to ease their probability of attaining employment);
- Increasing the resources to be devoted to the prevention of and fight against violence against women, reinforcing networking at local level;
- Increasing the incentives in sharing unpaid working time by gender;
- Promoting the implementation of work-life balance policies within firms;

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# **Gendered impacts of the financial, social and political crisis and austerity measures in Spain**

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## **Introduction: Violence against women within the web of economic, social and political realms**

The economic crisis initiated in 2007-8 is producing gender-differentiated impacts, especially since the 2010 turn to austerity. Since the beginning of the “sovereign debt crisis” in late 2009, rising concerns over sovereign debt levels and fiscal deficits by the IMF, European Union institutions, and the OECD led most governments to abandon fiscal stimuli and to introduce austerity measures. Expenditures contraction became widespread in many European countries, marking the beginning of austerity policies and leading to a second deep recession. This recession hit all economic sectors as a consequence of the dramatic fall in internal demand and investment caused by a high level of private indebtedness, and an increased credit squeeze in the private sector (Addabbo et al. 2014). Political measures implemented to theoretically combat the economic crisis may have aggravated or modified gender imbalances and inequalities developed because of the crisis. As a matter of fact, gender inequality and risks associated to violence against women (VAW) may have increased during the recession period.

Gender violence is considered as any act of physical or psychological violence, including aggression to sexual freedom, threats, coercions or the arbitrary privation of freedom. However, as argued by True (2011), VAW must be considered within the web of economic, social and political realms, since the problem is embedded in structured inequalities of issues of production and reproduction. True de-compartmentalizes the approaches that reduce the problem to ‘victimization’ and ‘harm done’ and reveals how gendered social and economic inequalities increase the risks of VAW.

This report analyzes the gender implications of the current Great Recession and the political measures implemented to theoretically combat it. Both general gender inequality, especially economic inequality, and VAW will be considered in examining the Spanish case.

Applying a gender perspective to the analysis of the recession has two important implications. On one hand, it allows us to understand the nature and evolution of gender inequalities derived from the crisis and/or from the enactment of political measures, as women and men are differently affected by political and economic circumstances. This is because women and men occupy different positions and have an unbalanced and unequal access to economic resources, including employment, credit, land and other natural resources, time and work sharing, positions of power, exposure to violence, and it is also due to self-fulfilling prophecies regarding gender differentials (Benería & Feldman 1992; Elson 1995, 2010, 2014; Antonopoulos 2009; Gálvez & Torres 2010; Pearson & Sweetman 2011; Gálvez & Rodríguez-Modroño 2011, 2013). Economic crises either emphasize or modify previous gender imbalances, mainly depending on the political measures developed to combat them.

On the other hand, applying a gender perspective allows for a better understanding of the crisis and of its different phases, and for the evaluation of the implemented public policies, in particular austerity measures. This will be possible through the analysis of the interaction between paid and unpaid work; public services substitution; and the ideological reforms usually accompanying such measures that make citizens accept changes and reforms that they would not accept otherwise. Historically, in fact, such reforms have driven towards bigger inequality and towards a new welfare share favourable to economic, financial and political elites (Blyth 2013).

Although the Great Recession has been mainly considered a ‘he-cession’ in most advanced



countries (Karamessini & Rubery 2013), including Spain, as a consequence of men's greater occupation in the hard-hit industrial and construction sector, a gender analysis of the impacts of the current recession in Spain allows us to distinguish distinct phases with different outcomes for women and men.

As studied by Addabo et al. (2013, 2014), three stages can be identified: (i) from mid-2008 and during the first half of 2009, unemployment grew extraordinarily with entries of more than 500,000 persons in some quarters, mainly because of the intensity of male job losses; (ii) from mid-2009 to mid-2011 the growth of unemployment was moderated by a less intense net job decline, less entries into the workforce and similar increases in women and men's unemployment rates; (iii) since the third quarter of 2011, rising unemployment has rebounded to around 200,000 persons per quarter, and female unemployment has increased at a faster rate in many quarters. This evolution is very much related to the enactment of austerity measures.

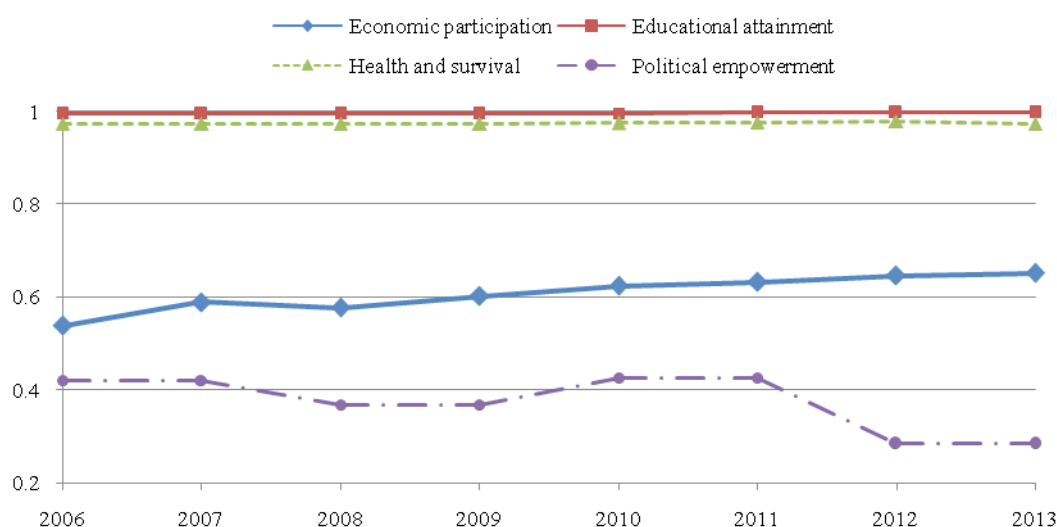
Although austerity measures, including cuts in services related to VAW (EWL 2012:10), have been implemented all over the world (Ortiz & Cummins 2013), they have been especially important in the European Union, and more specifically within the peripheral countries of the Euro-zone. Spain is not only one of the countries hit the most by the Great recession, but one of the countries in which the austerity policies have gone the furthest. The election of a Conservative party-led government in November 2011 did not only intensify the austerity route established by the European Commission, already started by the previous Socialist government, but it has also brought about other reforms with important gender implications in the short and the long run, and also on VAW evolution.

It was under the first Zapatero –Socialist Party Prime Minister- cabinet (2004-2008) that Organic Law 1/2004 on Comprehensive Protective Measures against Gender-based Violence and Organic Law 3/2007 for the effective equality between men and women were adopted. These constitute the major and more advanced legal instruments to combat gender inequality and VAW. Upon re-election of the Socialist-led government in 2008, an expansionary economic policy was begun, which later turned into austerity in May 2010. From that moment onwards, gender has decreased its centrality in the political agenda. In October 2010, the Ministry for Equality, created in 2008, disappeared; albeit its budget only amounted to 0.03% of the total public budget. However, a certain gender mainstreaming continued, except regarding economic policy issues as well as within the parity-based government. When in November 2011 the Conservative party won the elections, only four women out of 13 were appointed to the cabinet of ministers, in contrast with the prescriptions of the 2007 Equality law. That lack of political presence, coupled with budgetary cuts, was a sign that gender equality was no longer a political priority.

Figures from the 2013 Global Gender Gap Report show how the political commitment towards gender equality has decreased since 2011. While austerity usually causes more medium and long term consequences, such a sharp decrease in women's presence in politics may produce a more direct impact on the social and media perception of gender as a political priority.

Table 1 & Figure 1. Gender Gap Index Evolution 2006-2013 by its components. Spain

Gender Gap Index	Overall		Economic participation		Educational attainment		Health and survival		Political empowerment	
	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
2013	30	0.727	76	0.652	40	0.997	75	0.973	27	0.84
2012	26	0.727	75	0.646	38	0.997	34	0.979	27	0.28
2011	12	0.758	74	0.633	37	0.997	56	0.976	5	0.426
2010	11	0.755	78	0.624	40	0.996	63	0.975	5	0.426
2009	17	0.734	90	0.602	56	0.994	80	0.973	9	0.369
2008	17	0.728	89	0.577	58	0.994	76	0.973	7	0.369
2007	10	0.744	84	0.589	39	0.994	74	0.973	5	0.421
2006	11	0.732	85	0.539	38	0.994	71	0.973	5	0.421



Source: World Forum. Global Gender Gap Report, 2013.

Fiscal consolidation focused on education, health and social services, including prevention and support to VAW services. This recessionary and austerity period may be modifying both the preventive and risk factors for VAW. The adverse effect on women is related to the specialization of care in the public and private sphere, and women's major dependence on public services, public employment, and public transportation. Women are the majority of those providing unpaid care, so they are the most affected by cuts in social care services. They can also suffer knock-on financial impacts, as in some cases women will reduce their own employment and incomes to make additional work at home possible. In this respect, it is the combination of cuts that proves to be more damaging. While many women risk losing their jobs, they are also simultaneously suffering from a cut in benefits and several different services they rely on, especially if they live in rural areas. All these issues aggravate gender inequality and VAW risk factors.

The current crisis, through its different impacts on the economy, society, gender norms, institutions and policies, may be accelerating some of the transformations that were reducing gender violence, but may be partially reverting others, increasing risk factors related to violence against women. The crisis and consequent austerity measures are directly affecting both individual factors (such as unemployment, depression, economic dependency and income-earning options), and relationship factors (like family organization and structure, economic stress, divorces or separations, and changes in the control by one partner over the other).

Public programs against VAW, or for gender equality in general, have also suffered from budget cuts. The annual budget for gender-based violence has been reduced every year since 2010. In 2014, it amounted to 21.85 million euro (representing 0.005% of Spain's total budget), 1.5 percent less than in 2013, and 33.8% lower than the budget for 2010. Gender equality has also been seriously affected by austerity measures: not only was the Ministry for Equality suppressed, but the total budget for gender equality has been reduced by 56% from 2008 to 2014. Finally, gender norms in the society turn back to more traditional ones as a consequence of this crisis, increasing the risk for gender violence.

Violence against women is a complex social problem, strongly correlated to social and cultural norms prescribing gender roles in the society, and women's position of power within the household. Spanish society has undergone significant transformations during the last decades, including positive changes in gender roles and advancements in gender equality in society, the economy and politics. These transformations have been accompanied by a legal and institutional framework, among the most advanced in the world. Some of these transformations may have not changed the incidence of this phenomenon, but have increased visibility and social awareness of gender violence.

What seems clear is that an advanced legal and institutional framework is not enough to advance gender equality and fight VAW. A strong awareness and demand for political support to end gender inequalities and violence is needed, along with an economic and political framework promoting justice and equality. As mentioned, economic crises can either emphasize or modify previous gender imbalances, depending on the adopted political measures. There are sufficient data to reveal which measures "kill" and which "save lives". While the relation between austerity measures and VAW has not been studied and is quite complex, what seems clear is that austerity policies have negative effects on women's lives and opportunities as well as in gender equality, which constitute a substrate of VAW.

This report studies the way austerity policies and VAW are interrelated analyzing the Spanish case during the Great recession.

## **1. The importance of a gender analysis of the crisis and the austerity shift**

In this section we present the historical evidence and theoretical explanations, justifying the importance of a gender analysis of the crisis and its differentiated impacts. Special attention is paid to austerity policies and relevant gender implications. Women and men participate in different ways in socio-economic and political processes, and are differently affected by austerity. This is particularly true because public policies, especially macroeconomic policies in a neoliberal context as is the current situation, have a set of gender biases. According to Elson (2014), these biases are: the deflationary bias, the male-breadwinner bias, the privatization bias.

The deflationary bias refers to macroeconomic policies keeping paid employment and Gross National Product (GNP) growth below their potential. At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, full employment had ceased to be a goal of macroeconomic policies in many countries, concentrated on inflation targets. That was achieved through a huge sacrifice in public investment, economic growth and decent jobs. In this context, equal opportunity policies could imply a downgrading in the quality and quantity of jobs.

The male-breadwinner bias operates as if men deserve decent jobs more than women, because they are assumed to be the main source of economic support for families, while women's incomes are wrongly perceived to be merely supplementary and not essential to the family's well-being. Women are thus considered as secondary workers and excluded from many entitlements. Some public policies enacted to combat the crisis are privileging male labour and for this reason, often male labour recuperates earlier than female labour once the crisis finishes (Gálvez & Rodríguez Modroño 2011).

The commodification or privatization bias stems from the belief that the private sector is more effective than the public sector in delivering services, infrastructure and welfare benefits. Welfare benefits and public services are replaced by market-based services. The services are financed by the public budget, but provided by for-profit companies. This privatisation puts pressure on women to act as providers of last resort, substituting with unpaid domestic and care work the provision of those services they cannot afford.

Young et al. (2011) also include the risk bias and creditor bias. Women are perceived as more risky borrowers than men and are integrated into the credit markets in more disadvantageous terms than men, usually as debtors. The "financialization" and the increasing power of financial capital on a global scale have meant that the relationship between creditors and debtors has become highly asymmetrical. Finally, the knowledge bias highlighted by Gálvez & Torres (2010) is derived from the economic orthodox analysis, which rationalizes the sexual division of work and considers only those economic activities that have a monetary expression or economic agents as rational agents.

All these biases act against gender equality and have important consequences on women's freedom, autonomy and empowerment, and on the subordination of women directly linked to VAW. These appreciations are based on previous historical analysis and theoretical elaboration. In this framework, gender is both a relevant variable in assessing the outcomes of change, but also a factor that may shape the specific path of adjustment to recession and the sovereign debt crisis.

## 1.1 Historical evidences and theoretical explanations

It was not until very recently with the development of the feminist economics field that international literature started to analyze the effects of crises on the labour market by gender. As Gálvez & Rodríguez-Modroño (2011, 2013) point out, early debates on the gender effects of economic crises focused on the different impact of crises, such as the Great Depression or the oil crisis, on the labour supply and employment of women and men<sup>138</sup>. It was only in the 1970s when these studies flourished. Three theoretical explanations were in dispute: the reserve army theory, the added worker effect (AWE), and the occupational segregation theory. All three were dealing with the impact of business cycles on labour participation by gender and corroborated the historical evidence that women's decisions to enter the labour market have always been more sensitive to economic cycles than men's (Lundberg 1985; Tano 1993) because of the traditional secondary nature of female labour and lower women's activity rates linked to their historical specialization in unpaid domestic work (Sarasúa & Gálvez 2003). It is

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<sup>138</sup> One exception was the work by Milkman (1976) which focused on the Great Depression of the 30s in the U.S., and also included an analysis of the impact of the crisis not only in paid work but also on the unpaid domestic work performed by women, noticing that this work 'took up the slack' during the crisis and allowed for the survival of many families at the expense of the intensification of women's work.

indeed very difficult to grasp the complexity of how economic cycles affect the labour supply without taking into account gender differences (Rubery & Rafferty 2013).

The economically active population ratio can generally be decomposed into a trend and a cyclical component. The latter can be characteristically different in periods of economic slowdown and increases in unemployment rates: the added worker effect (AWE), when labour supply behaviour is counter-cyclical as it implies an increase in a person's labour supply (hours worked or participation) in response to transitory shocks in partners' earnings; or the pro-cyclical discouraged worker effect (DWE), when potential workers renounce finding a job and they leave the labour force because they estimate their chances of finding one as being too small. The DWE was previously developed under the concept of reserve army theory (Benston 1971; Mitchell 1971) assuming women, as secondary workers, are a potential labour reserve to be hired on expansionary periods and fired in recessionary periods.

Recent literature, based on more sophisticated econometric analysis, presents ambiguous results regarding AWE and DWE, and further supports the key role played by occupational segregation (Addabbo et al. 2013, 2014).

There is considerable heterogeneity in women's responses to the labour market: women may enter or withdraw from the labour force during a recession depending on factors such as the institutional setting, occupational segregation, the harder-hit sectors, the stage of the crisis, the extent of austerity policies and welfare cuts and women's relative position in the labour market (Rodríguez-Modroño 2012; Addabbo et al. 2013). Also, employers' beliefs about women's lower attachment to the labour market due to statistical discrimination might lead to wage differentials in favour of men, and since women will expect to face a lower expected return opportunity cost, they may end up devoting more time to housework, validating this scenario through self-fulfilling prophecies, firm's beliefs (Dolado et al. 2013).

The current recession seems to be characterized, at least so far, by an AWE for women, due to occupational segregation and the strong loss of male jobs, female educational gains, better positions of women in the labour market prior to the crisis, the shift to dual-earner couples and past equal opportunities policies. However, this trend is currently changing as the gender bias of austerity policies is making it more difficult for women to deal with labour market commitment due to the intensification of female work, especially through unpaid domestic and care work.

Taking into consideration both paid and unpaid work, the effects on gender inequality can be important not only in the short term, but especially in the long term. Aguiar et al. (2013) argue that the home production sector is a viable margin of substitution during business cycles: roughly 30% of the market working hours forgone due to the business cycle are reallocated to non-market production. Although there are important gender differences, as Giménez-Nadal & Molina (2013) have shown in effects of regional unemployment on time allocation, while men increase time devoted to study, women increase their time devoted to household work.

The specialization of women in unpaid household and care work is not challenged during periods of crisis as shown by Gálvez & Matus (2010a) in examining the Andalusian case. Other historical evidence supports that. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, not only did female employment increase, but also the household's provision of goods and services previously acquired in the market (Milkman 1976) also increased, with an intensification of women's work. This intensification affects future employment possibilities and working conditions, mainly related to less availability for the labour supply, human capital formation, flexibility or mobility.

Intensification of women's work and the more speedy recovery of male employment once

the recession is overcome, are the two constants identified by Gálvez & Rodríguez-Modroño (2011) in past economic crises. Both AWE and DWE may appear, depending on the effect of the economic crisis on the different economic sectors due to gender segregation, but also because implemented gender blind public policies, like the current austerity policies. Indeed, the intensification of women's work, recurrent in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century crises, is more related to policy responses than to the crisis itself, especially if the policies have a deflationary bias, as those austerity policies downsize social services and labour opportunities in the public sector, with a general negative impact on gender equality and female empowerment.

Although some authors argue that the present economic crisis may be altering the gendered behaviours common to previous crises as a result of the recent increase in women's attachment to the workforce, and the contraction of global demand (Sabarwal et al. 2011; Rubery 2013), it is still early to know what will be the situation at the end of this crisis. What seems clear from previous experiences is that austerity measures are increasing inequalities, decreasing people's well-being and undermining democratic and social rights, in particular for the most vulnerable categories of the population (Gálvez et al. 2013). Austerity is not only bringing some severe hardship to women, and deconstructing the established social model and gender regime, it is also calling into question some of the cornerstones of women's progress over recent decades and may bring us back to a traditional gender model. We are currently in a situation that could imply a process of reversal in improvements in women's labour market position and economic and social independence, associated with a revitalization of traditional gender ideologies (Karamessini & Rubery 2013).

## **1.2 Gender bias of austerity policies**

In a first phase of the global economic crisis (2008-09), most governments introduced fiscal stimulus programs; however, in spring 2010, austerity policies were introduced marking the start of a second deep recession. While stimulus programs had an important gender impact on job creation, as they were mainly linked to male sectors such as building and traditional manufacturing industries (more than 95% of all jobs created in Spain through stimulus packages were occupied by men), austerity measures are the ones showing the most important gendered effects in the long-run (Gálvez et al. 2013).

In Europe, austerity policies have been implemented instead of stimulus measures, which have proven to be successful in a crisis associated with credit crunch and insufficient demand.

Austerity has led to a deterioration and privatization of social services, including childcare and long term care services, that goes beyond the simple transfer of assets or services from the public sector to the private, through the transfer of public responsibilities to the private sphere.

Austerity measures are focusing on the public sector and on social services, not only reducing the quantity and quality of women's jobs but also hampering women's opportunities to supply their labour in the same terms as men (Addabo et al. 2013).

Though the specific impact of the recession cannot yet be gleaned from time use data, the fall in the expenditure in goods and services for household provision, care services and meals has been sufficiently pronounced to support the hypothesis that unpaid women's work has primarily contributed to offset lower purchases (Bettio et al. 2012). This increase in women's unpaid work, as in other crises throughout history (Harcourt 2009), may neutralise the fall and better the distribution of unpaid work between the sexes that was starting to take place in the last decades.

For these reasons, women are adversely affected in four different ways. Income declines affect them to a great extent, since female-headed households are concentrated at the lowest income levels. Also, because women are the main employees and beneficiaries of public services, a weakening of them increases the demand for female provision. In addition, this re-privatization of care may lead to an ideology pushing women back home. In addition, the decrease in women's economic autonomy may lead towards a bigger tolerance of gender violence within couples, and a decrease of public expenditure in combating and preventing VAW may have important consequences not only on violence itself, but also on its social perception and political and media treatment.

According to Ortiz & Cummins' (2013) analysis of 188 countries based on IMF country reports, the austerity measures introduced by many governments, are weighing various adjustment strategies that include: (i) prioritizing fiscal balances over employment; (ii) elimination or reduction of subsidies; (iii) wage bill cuts/caps, including the salaries of education, health and other public sector workers; (iv) increasing consumption taxes, such as value added taxes (VATs), on basic products that are disproportionately consumed by poor households; (v) pension and healthcare reform; (vi) rationalizing and further targeting of safety nets; and (vii) labour flexibilization. All such adjustment measures are implemented or at least discussed in Spain, in addition to the local administration reform which will be analysed further as a case study.

In conclusion, although evidence shows that austerity policies have not worked and indeed that the most important problems have not been adequately addressed, the current approach is still to call for more austerity and with more intensity. The management of the crisis by the EU is posing a serious challenge to the European institutions and their credibility among citizens. In addition, the increasing participation of women in the labour market due to the AWE effect, together with the difficulties that austerity measures pose for female employment greatly challenges the EU social model and gender regime, pushing women towards part-time work without guaranteeing that advances in gender equality are included in its principles and legislation. However, this time could be different because we have the analytical power to influence policy in a different way.

What must be clear is the message of Stucker & Basu's (2013) book title, "austerity kills". The choices governments do have affect not only in the economy, but also people's livelihoods. There is sufficient data to reveal which measures "kill" and which "save lives". While the relation and causation of austerity and VAW have not been studied and is a complex matter, what seems clear is that austerity policies have negative effects on women's lives and opportunities, as well as on gender equality, substrate of VAW.

## **2. Violence against women in Spain**

Spain is one of the EU countries which enacted the major institutional improvements in the fight against gender violence in the years prior to the economic crisis. However, the current financial, social, economic and political crisis might be undermining and reversing some of these improvements. This chapter describes the institutions and policies implemented in Spain to fight against gender-based violence and main data on gender violence before and during the crisis.

Though gender-based violence, defined as violence directed against a person on the basis of gender, usually includes domestic violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence and sexual trafficking, we shall focus on the scope of Spanish law, which mostly concerns domestic

violence and intimate partner violence<sup>139</sup>.

## 2.1 Legal and institutional framework on violence against women

The legal framework concerning VAW has been extensively developed in Spain since 2003. Before that year, Constitutional Act 8/1983 introduced important changes into Spanish law regarding sexual violence, deleting the previous references to 'marital authority'.

Constitutional Act 3/1989 updated the Penal Code, substituted the term 'offences against honesty' with 'offences against sexual freedom'; defined repeated abuse between spouses or persons united by a similar relationship as a personal injury offences; and introduced sexual harassment as an offence against sexual freedom.

Act 35/1995, for the provision of aid and assistance to victims of violent crimes and sexual offences envisaged public aid for direct or indirect victims/survivors of malicious or violent offenses resulting in death or a serious bodily injury. Organic Law 11/99 amended a number of articles in the Penal Code, which refer to prostitution and address trafficking for sexual exploitation.

The first legislative initiative on violence against women was Organic Law 11/2003, on *Concrete Measures in Citizen Security, Domestic Violence and Social Integration of Foreigners* that dealt with domestic violence and introduced into the Criminal Code the crime of genital mutilation. Organic Law 15/2003 changed some provisions of the Penal Code on domestic violence. Law 27/2003 *regulating the Protection Order for Victims of Domestic Violence* involved the adoption of a protection order within the 72 hours following the claim before the Courts. A Central Register was established to protect the domestic violence victims and all protection instruments for the victim foreseen in the legal system (penal, civil, and protection and social assistance) were unified in a unique request form.

Organic Law 1/2004 on *Comprehensive Protective Measures against Gender-based Violence* is the first and most important specific legal regulation for violence against women in Spain. This Law approaches gender violence from an integrated point of view, modifying several Spanish laws such as the Penal Law, the Employment Act, the Workers' Statute Act, the Organic Judiciary Act, the Civil Service Reform Act and the General Social Security Act.

The term gender-based violence was used for the first time in a legal regulation, recognizing that women, as a result of gender inequality, are victims of multiple forms of violence. The law refers to gender violence as any act of physical and psychological violence, including aggression to sexual freedom, threats, coercions or the arbitrary privation of freedom. However, the Spanish law on gender-based violence, although broad in semantic scope, mostly concerns domestic violence /intimate partner violence. Trafficking in persons and exploitation of prostitution are not covered by this law and therefore will not be analysed in this report.

Organic Law 1/2004 was identified as a promising practice in the UN Secretary-General's in-depth study on violence against women (2006) and is considered one of the most advanced

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139 In fact, the government answered a recent parliamentary question regarding a prostitute murder, saying that it is not the scope of the 2004 *Comprehensive Protective Measures against Gender-based Violence*. Available at: <http://www.20minutos.es/noticia/2094631/0/muerte-prostituta/violencia-genero/respuesta-gobierno/>. The full answer available at: <http://www.congreso.es/portal/page/portal/Congreso/PopUpCGI?CMD=VERLST&CONF=BRSPUB.cnf&BASE=PU10&PIECE=PUWC&DOCS=1-1&FMT=PUWTXDTT.fmt&OPDEF=Y&QUERY=BOCG-10-D-423.CODI>.



and successful regulations on VAW. The law deals with prevention, education, social, welfare, legislative and jurisdictional measures, including protection and assistance for victims and new sanctions against perpetrators. It also prescribes that all the legal procedures on violence against women must be judged in the same jurisdiction: for this reason, the “Courts on Violence against Women” with competences on criminal and civil matters at national level were created after this Law.

Organic Law 1/2004 grants victims of gender violence the right to full information, integral social work, legal assistance, labour and social benefits, etc. The right to integral social work comprises social services for emergency, support and reception. One of the areas is the support to training and labour insertion, and access to social housing and public residences. In addition, Article 27 of Organic Law 1/2004, guarantees financial aid to victims of gender-based violence whose income is below a specific threshold and who have particular difficulty finding a job. Finally, it includes numerous provisions on education and training. Prevention, awareness-raising and detection are also given significant attention through a clear focus on education, advertising and healthcare.

In 2005, Constitutional Act 3/2005 introduced extra-territorial jurisdiction to prosecute female genital mutilation; Royal Decree 237/2005 created the Special Delegation of Government on Violence against Women; and Royal Decree 513/2005 regulates the central registry for the protection of victims of domestic violence, so that all the competent institutions and agencies have access to the necessary information.

Article 2 of Royal Decree 1369/2006, regulating the labour-market-integration benefit scheme for unemployed persons with special economic needs and difficulty finding employment, created the RAI, (labour-market-integration benefit) including as beneficiaries under certain conditions, unemployed women under 65 who provide evidence, accredited by a competent authority, to be a victim of gender-based or domestic violence. The RAI benefit is equal to 80% of the value set by the monthly IPREM (Multiple-Effect Public Income Reference Index) and is granted up to 11 months.

The other central piece of legislation on gender equality is Organic Law 3/2007, which introduced new measures regarding gender violence, sexual harassment in the workplace, and the right to asylum and refugee status for foreign women fleeing their countries of origin due to justified fear of suffering persecution on the grounds of gender. It established the Effective Legal Tutelage, which establishes that the person who reports discrimination does not need to prove it. It is the legal or physical person being denounced who needs to demonstrate that no discrimination has taken place.

Royal Decree 660/2007 adopts measures to prevent access to the information contained in the central registry by the assailant, and making the assailant ineligible for benefits and assistance. Royal Decree 1917/2008, approving the social and labour-market integration program for female victims of gender-based violence, sets out active employment measures to make it easier for victims to find employment, including individual counselling on social and labour-market integration by specialized personnel; training programs; incentives to encourage self-employment; incentives to encourage companies to hire victims of gender-based violence; incentives to facilitate geographic mobility; incentives to compensate for salary differences.

Finally, in October 2013 the Spanish Council of Ministers approved the Organic Law on Victims Statute to transpose several EU Directives, among which were Directive 2011/99/EU on the European protection order and Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime.

## 2.1.1 Policies and Institutional framework on violence against women

The first policy on violence against women was developed in 1983, with the creation of the Women's Institute (Law 16/1983, 24 October). In 1984, the Women's Institute created the first shelter for female victims of male violence. The Women's Institute issues Equality Plans to boost measures for combating discrimination against women. In 1997, the *Third Equality Plan between Men and Women* was the first one to include a specific section dealing with violence. In 2003 the *Fourth Plan for Equality between Women and Men* establishes 8 priority areas, among which is the promotion of equality in civil life. In this area, one of the aims is to develop active policies to eradicate violence against women in all its forms (trafficking of women, domestic violence, genital mutilation, etc.).

With regards to specific Plans of Action to combat VAW, the *First Plan of Action against Domestic Violence* (1998-2000) established 57 measures articulated around 6 areas of action: awareness-building, education and training, health, welfare resources, legislation and legal practice, and research. The *Second Integral Plan against Domestic Violence* was approved in May 2001 for the period 2001-2004, covering: prevention and awareness-building measures, legislative and legal measures, welfare measures, and research.

In December 2006, the Council of Ministers adopted the *National Plan to Heighten Awareness and Prevent Gender-Based Violence: Conceptual Framework and Main Lines of Intervention* (2007-2008), while the most recent plans having been adopted are the *National Plan against trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation* (2009-2012) and the *National Strategy to Eliminate Violence against Women* (2013-16), envisaging 284 measures with a budget of 1,558 million euro.

The Special Government Delegation against violence against women was created by Organic law 1/2004. It depends on support from the General Secretary of Social Service and Equality from the Ministry of Health, Social Service and Equality. It is mandated to formulate the public policies on gender-based violence; to foster and develop awareness-building and prevention measures; to promote the knowledge on the phenomenon of gender violence; to coordinate and collaborate with other institutions; and to evaluate the situation of gender violence. The Special Government Delegation functionally depends upon Coordination Units on Violence against Women, organically integrated in the Delegations and Sub-delegations of the Government. The operation of these units is regulated by the *Joint Statement from the Ministries of Justice, Interior, Finance and Public Administration, Employment and Social Security and of Health, Social Services and Equality*, which establishes a national network of Units on Violence against Women and a Plan of Personalized Assistance to Gender-based Victims and minors.

In 2002, the government established the State Observatory against Domestic and Gender Violence. It is an inter-ministerial body reporting to the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality through the Special Delegation of Government on Violence against Women. It is composed of representatives of: the General Council of the Judiciary, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, the Office of the State Public Prosecutor, the autonomous regional governments with competence in justice affairs<sup>140</sup>, and the General Council of Spanish Lawyers. The Observatory is responsible for advice, evaluation, inter-agency collaboration, preparation of reports and studies, and proposals for dealing with gender violence. It gathers information from public and private institutions involved in the fight against gender violence to analyze the scope of the phenomenon and its evolution. The Observatory also evaluates the

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<sup>140</sup> Besides the Ministry of Justice, several autonomous regional governments have competence in justice affairs, including violence against women: Andalucía, Asturias, Canarias, Cataluña, Galicia, Madrid, Navarra, Valencia, País Vasco, Cantabria and Aragón.

impact of the policies and the effectiveness of the measures, and submits annual reports.

Since June 2005, specialized courts have been established to handle cases of domestic violence or gender-based violence. At present Violence against Women Courts operate in all judicial districts. There are 106 exclusive Violence against Women Courts in the largest towns and cities, hearing only domestic violence cases. They are aided by services such as Legal Medicine Institutes, psychological-social teams and Victim Support Offices. In the remaining judicial districts, there are 355 Violence against Women Courts, which also hear other civil or criminal cases. They are known as Compatible Courts and presently have to deal with operating problems, and they have less of an auxiliary staff.

A Protocol of coordination between the police and the courts was approved by the Observatory, aiming to prevent the victims from suffering additional harm as a result of their contact with the legal system, by avoiding, for example, reiterated and unnecessary statements or medical examinations. Other coordination measures are as follows:

- There is a Central Register of Judicial Measures for recording sentences and protective measures. It enables the existence of criminal records and terms of the measures adopted against a detainee to be known immediately by telematic means;
- There is a protocol for GPS based alarm systems to protect victims in cases of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)/stalking. Victims with a protection order receive an electronic monitoring device, allowing them to identify when perpetrator is approaching, in order to call the police for protection;
- There is a protocol for judges to access the computerized system of risk assessment, updated by the police when a woman reports gender-based violence,
- Up-to-date maintenance of the Coordination Points.

The Inter-territorial Council of the National Health Service Commission against Gender Violence, established in 2005, set up a Common protocol for a healthcare response to gender violence in 2012, including quality criteria in basic training for professionals, healthcare provision in cases of gender violence in the National Health System and common indicators of healthcare provision in cases of gender violence in the National Health System.

Finally, the 'System of Integral Monitoring for Gender-based Violence' (VdG or VIOGEN) from the Ministry of Interior was started in 2007, aiming at, among other things, connecting all competent institutions, monitoring and protecting victims across the country; predicting the risk of violence according to the "Protocol for Police Assessment of the Level of Risk of Violence against Women"; and preventing VAW through the 'Subsystem of Automatic Alerts'.

## **2.2 Statistical and administrative data**

There are different institutions collecting statistical data on VAW in Spain. The institution responsible for gathering data on gender violence in Spain has been the Ministry of Interior, which is represented by The Women's Institute. Since 1999, the Women's Institute started elaborating its own statistics on the basis of the information from the Ministry of Interior, the media, the Special Government Delegation against violence against women and judicial statistics. At present, data from 2009 to 2012 is available on gender-based violence prosecutions, protection orders, fatal victims, sexual abuse and harassment, victims from prostitution and

sex trafficking, and women suffering from gender-based violence.

Main data on gender-based violence is compiled by the Special Government Delegation against violence against women and the State Observatory against Domestic and Gender Violence. The State Observatory against Domestic and Gender Violence is responsible for annual reports on the evolution of violence against women. To date the State Observatory has issued 5 reports with data from different sources<sup>141</sup>. The first report was released in 2007. The last report, *V Annual Report by the State Observatory against Domestic and Gender Violence* (2012), compiles statistical data from:

- Formal complaints on gender-based violence;
- Female victims of gender-based violence receiving active police assistance;
- A number of offenders serving prison sentences;
- Electronic monitoring systems;
- Users of the 016 helpline providing information and legal advice on gender-based violence;
- Users of the ATENPRO helpline providing assistance and protection for victims of gender-based violence;
- Subsidized contracts to female victims of gender violence;
- Substitution contracts to female victims of gender violence;
- Female victims of gender violence receiving RAI labour-market-integration benefits;
- Those helping to change the addresses of female victims of gender violence;
- Financial aid to female victims of gender violence envisaged by Article 27 of Organic Law 1/2004;
- Temporary residence and work permits granted to foreign women;
- Fatal victims of gender-based violence.

The Special Government Delegation against violence against women has also published data on victim fatalities on a monthly basis since 2003, and annual data on violence against women. In addition, the Central registry for the protection of victims of domestic violence, a computerized database managed by the Ministry of Justice, contains the penalties and security measures imposed on those convicted of crimes or offences, as well as protection measures and precautionary actions agreed in criminal proceedings on the grounds of domestic violence.

The 'System of Integral Monitoring for Gender-based Violence' (VdG or VIOGEN) of the Ministry of Interior issues monthly statistics on cases of gender violence and their level of risk for all police departments. In addition, the Inter-territorial Council of the National Health Service Commission against Gender Violence has also published Gender Violence Reports from 2005 to 2011. Finally, the Spanish Statistical Institute (INE) has annually published, since 2011, *Statistics on Domestic Violence and Gender-based Violence*<sup>142</sup>, based on data from the Central registry for the protection of victims of domestic violence.

There have been a number of surveys on VAW in Spain. The first national survey aimed at

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<sup>141</sup> The reports are available at: <http://www.msssi.gob.es/ssi/violenciaGenero/publicaciones/colecciones/home2.htm>

<sup>142</sup> Available at: <http://www.ine.es/jaxi/menu.do?type=pcaxis&path=/t18/p468&file=inebase>

measuring the scope of violence against women was carried out by the Women’s Institute in 1999. The survey was later replicated in 2002 and in 2006. The last national macro-survey on gender violence was carried out in 2011 by the Spanish Sociological Research Centre (CIS), which also examined attitudes and opinions of the population on domestic violence and violence against women.

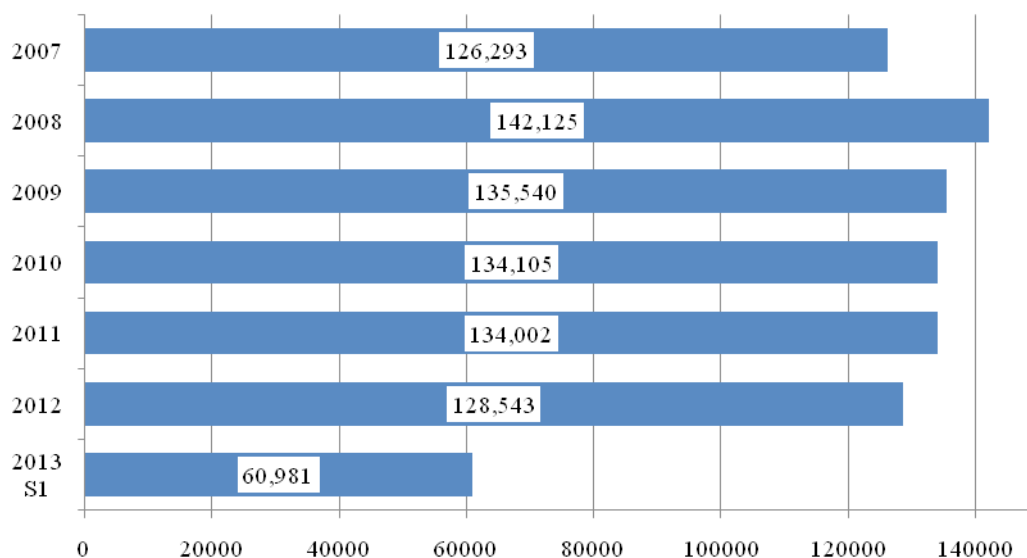
A number of other specific macro-surveys also exist, such as the Survey for the improvement of knowledge about equality and prevention of gender-based violence in Adolescence (2010), the Survey for the improvement of knowledge about equality and prevention of gender-based violence in University Students (2011), the Poll on attitudes towards gender-based violence (2009, 2010, 2011), the Survey on gender-based violence and migrants (2011, 2012), the Opinion Poll on media treatment of gender-based violence (2011, 2012), and the System of electronic monitoring of restraining orders on gender-based violence offenders (2011, 2012, 2013). In 2001 the Women’s Institute, together with the CIS, published its first research study on the field of sexual harassment, entitled ‘*Sexual harassment in the workplaces*’, and in 2006 the research study on ‘*Sexual harassment to women in labour sphere*’.

Finally, the survey on VAW carried by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) was issued in March 2014. This macro survey offers comparable data on VAW across 28 EU countries, with interviews of over 42,000 women living in the EU, i.e. 1,500 respondents per country, including Spain.

## 2.3 Violence against women

Between 1 January 2007 and 30 June 2013, Spain’s courts received a total of 861,589 formal complaints of gender-based violence. As shown in Figure 2, reports of gender-based violence have remained quite stable over the last years, rising only by 2%. While complaints increased by 13% in 2008 and they later decreased mainly in the years 2009 (-5%) and 2012 (-4%).

Figure 2. Formal complaints of gender-based violence. (1 January 2007 to 30 June 2013)



Source: Spanish General Council of the Judiciary.

The voluntary withdrawal of formal complaints has reduced over the last 4 years, though not at the same pace as complaints. Thus, the percentage of complaints withdrawn has increased, being at its maximum levels in 2009 and 2013.

Table 2. Complaints voluntarily withdrawn. (1 January 2007 to 30 June 2013)

	Withdrawn	Ratio withdrawn/complaints
2007	12,707	10.06%
2008	16,100	11.33%
2009	16,762	12.37%
2010	15,907	11.86%
2011	15,460	11.54%
2012	15,559	12.10%
2013 S1	7,679	12.59%

Source: Spanish General Council of the Judiciary.

The majority of formal complaints of gender-based violence filed since 2007 were submitted either as a police report (78.01% of the total) or as an injury report (11.3%). Most of the formal complaints received by the courts in the form of police reports had been filed by the victims themselves (64%). Direct complaints by victims and relatives of victims are not a large percentage, and have decreased over the last years, increasing only again in 2013. On the contrary, complaints through direct intervention of the police or support services and third parties in general have increased.

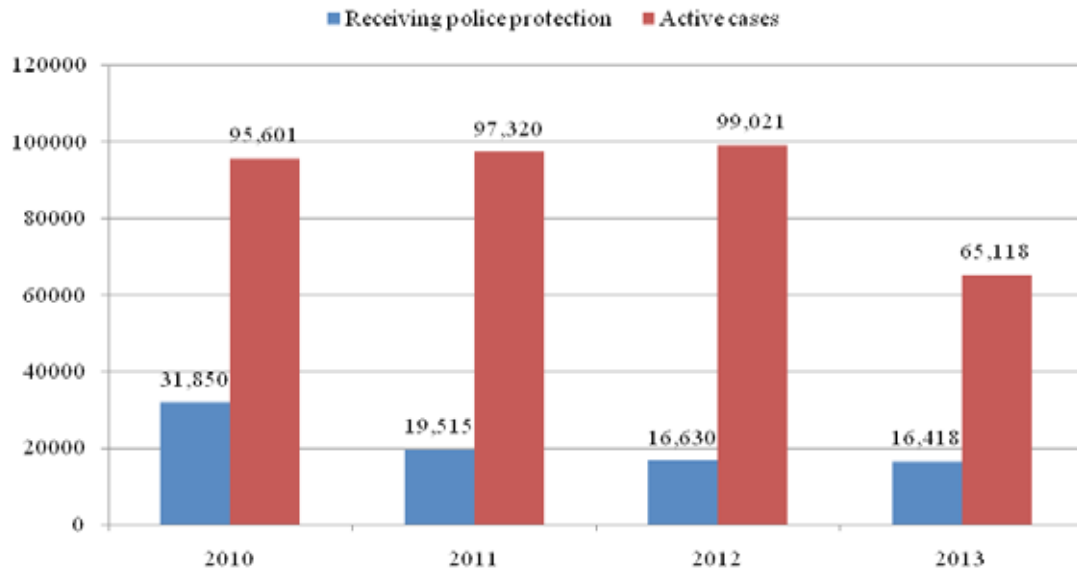
Table 3. Formal complaints of gender-based violence by complainant. (1 January 2007 to 30 June 2013)

		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 S1
Total Formal Complaints received		126,293	142,125	135,540	134,105	134,002	128,543	60,981
Victim		14,166	13,672	10,872	11,158	12,082	10,495	6328
		11.2%	9.6%	8.0%	8.3%	9.0%	8.2%	10.4%
Relatives of victims		463	869	451	487	450	435	295
		0.4%	0.6%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%
Police report	With formal complaint by victim	83,601	90,724	87,635	86,760	83,693	82,127	36,974
		66.2%	63.8%	64.7%	64.7%	62.5%	63.9%	60.6%
	With formal complaint by relatives	964	1,606	1,436	1,697	1,092	1,189	583
		0.8%	1.1%	1.1%	1.3%	0.8%	0.9%	1.0%
	Direct intervention	13,072	17,576	17,445	18,137	19,633	17,372	8,782
		10.4%	12.4%	12.9%	13.5%	14.7%	13.5%	14.4%
Injury report		13,321	16,528	16,138	14,640	15,290	14,743	6,825
		10.5%	11.6%	11.9%	10.9%	11.4%	11.5%	11.2%
Support services & third parties in general		706	1,150	1,563	1,226	1,762	2,182	1,194
		0.6%	0.8%	1.2%	0.9%	1.3%	1.7%	2.0%

Source: Spanish General Council of the Judiciary. Our elaboration.

According to the 'System of Integral Monitoring for Gender-based Violence' (VdG), as of 31 October 2013, a total of 65,118 female victims of gender-based violence receiving assistance from national law enforcement agencies were considered active cases, 34.24% less than in 2012. However, the most significant decrease since 2010 has been in the number of women receiving police protection. There has also been a decrease in the number of women considered at appreciable risk and an increase in the number of women not considered at appreciable risk.

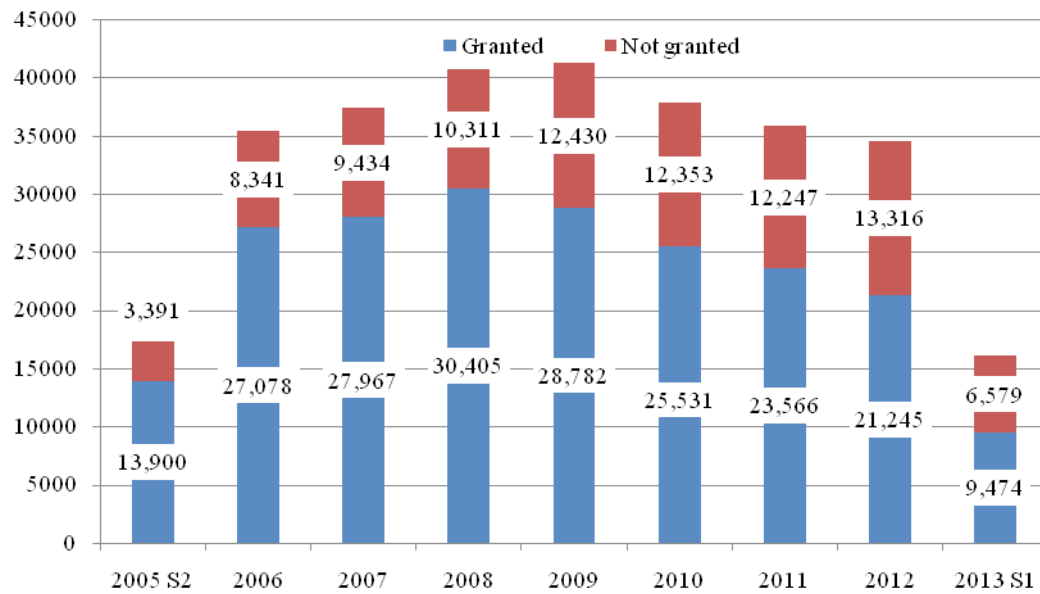
Figure 3. Female victims of gender-based violence receiving active police assistance. (2010 to 31 October 2013)



Source: Ministry of the Interior.

The number of women with protection orders went up until 2009, and started to decrease drastically from 2010.

Figure 4. Protection Orders. (1 July 2005 to 30 June 2013)

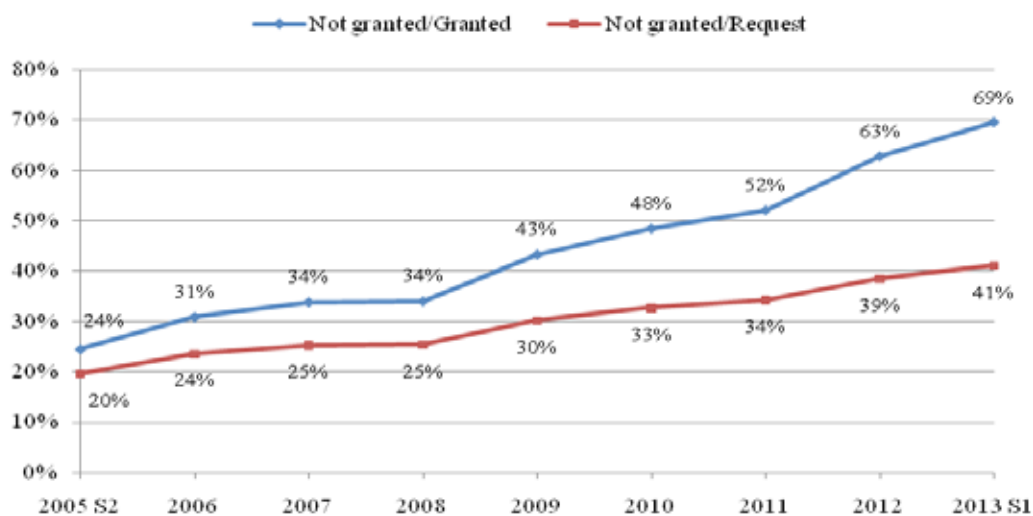


Source: Spanish General Council of the Judiciary. Our elaboration.



However, the most significant change during the crisis has been the increase in the number of protection orders not granted and the increase in relation to the amount of those requested and those granted.

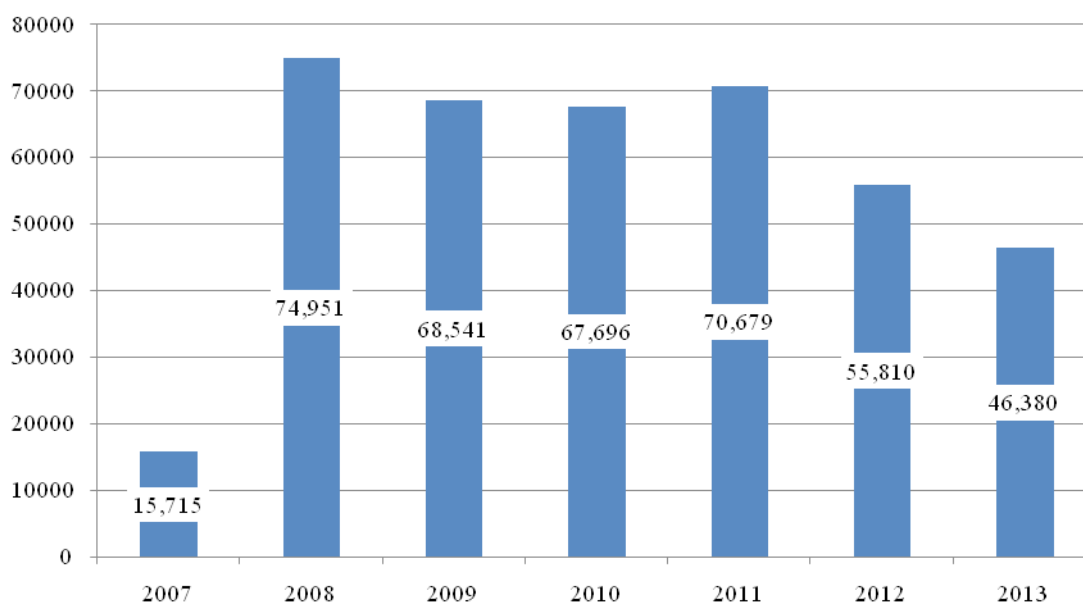
Figure 5. Ratio of non-granted protection orders/granted protection orders. (1 July 2005 to 30 June 2013)



Source: Spanish General Council of the Judiciary. Our elaboration.

Some interesting statistics are provided by the 016 hotline launched in September 2007 to provide information and legal advice on gender-based violence. 2008 was the year with the highest number of calls. The promotion of the 016 hotline is also related to mass media coverage of the issue, as discussed in section 4.1.

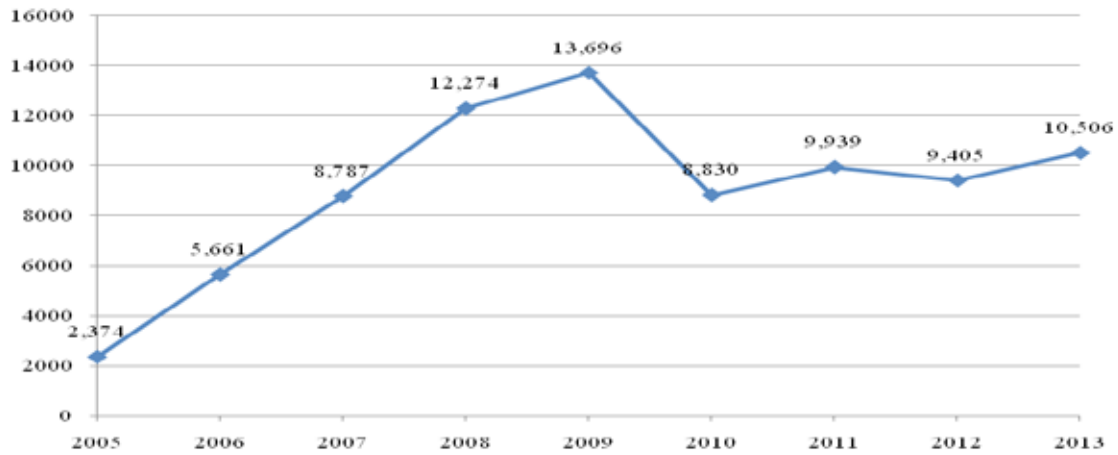
Figure 6. Calls to the 016 helpline. (3 September 2007 to 31 October 2013)



Source: Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality).

As of 31 October 2013, the number of women using the tele-assistance and protection service for gender-based violence (ATENPRO) was 10,506, 23.29% fewer than those recorded at the end of 2009 (13,696).

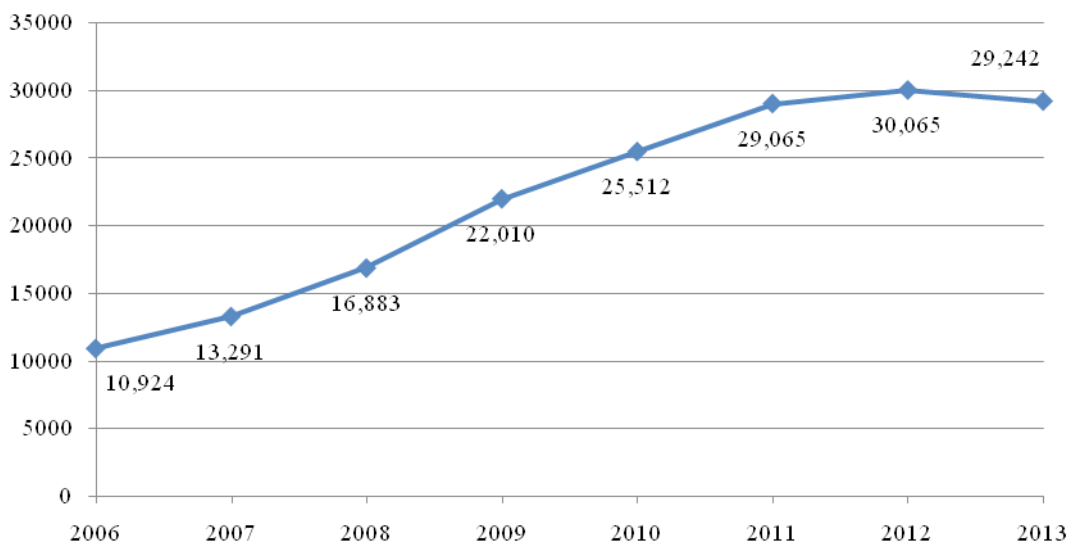
Figure 7. Current users of ATENPRO. (2005 to 31 October 2013)



Source: Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality).

In 2013 a total of 29,242 working victims of violence received the labour-market insertion benefit.

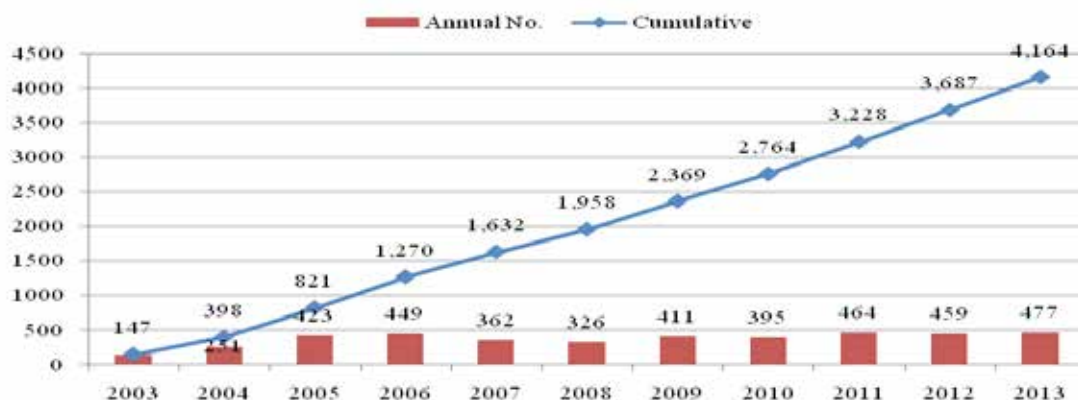
Figure 8. Victims of gender-based violence that received the labour-market insertion benefit. (1 January 2007 to 30 September 2013)



Source: Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality).

In 2013, a total of 4,164 women received subsidized employment contracts for female victims of violence. The increase in the number of subsidized employment contracts registered has been much smaller following the start of the crisis than in the years prior to the crisis. Moreover, the majority of the contracts awarded have been temporary.

Figure 9. Subsidized contracts for victims of gender-based violence. (2003 to 30 September 2013)



Source: Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality). Our elaboration.

Between 2005 and 2013, a total of 1,466 substitution contracts for employed female victims of gender-based violence were registered. This data shows a year by year increase.

Table 4. Substitution contracts for employed female victims of gender-based violence. (1 January 2005 to 30 September 2013)

	Cumulative	Annual No.	Variation
2005	38	38	
2006	95	57	50.00%
2007	181	86	50.88%
2008	268	87	1.16%
2009	364	96	10.34%
2010	490	126	31.25%
2011	637	147	16.67%
2012	1,015	378	157.14%
2013	1,466	451	19.31%

Source: Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality). Our elaboration.

By the end of October 2013, financial aid had been granted to 1,915 female victims of gender-based violence under Article 27 of Law 1/2004. The trend is uneven, dropping in 2010 and 2012 while increasing in other years.

Table 5. Claimants of the financial aid established in Article 27 of Law 1/2004. (1 January 2006 to 31 October 2013)

	Cumulative	Annual No.	Variation
2006	62	62	
2007	251	189	204.84%
2008	507	256	35.45%
2009	824	317	23.83%
2010	1,044	220	-30.60%
2011	1,335	291	32.27%
2012	1,560	225	-22.68%
2013	1,915	355	57.78%

Source: Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality). Our elaboration.

Between 2005 and September 2013, a total of 14,867 female victims of gender-based violence received help in changing their address. Between 2005 and 2009, there was a steady increase in the number of female victims of gender-based violence receiving this assistance. A slight drop was registered in 2010 before the figure rose again in 2011 and 2012.

Table 6. Female victims of violence receiving assistance for changing their address. (1 January 2005 to 30 September 2013)

	Cumulative	Annual No.	Variation
2005	761	761	
2006	1,537	776	1.97%
2007	2,722	1185	52.71%
2008	4,107	1385	16.88%
2009	6,011	1904	37.47%
2010	7,864	1853	-2.68%
2011	10,140	2276	22.83%
2012	12,628	2488	9.31%
2013	14,867	2239	-10.01%

Source: Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality). Our elaboration.

From 2005 until September 2013, a total of 3,392 foreign victims of gender-based violence aged 16 and over were granted temporary residence and work permits. The number of residence and work permits have decreased drastically since 2011.

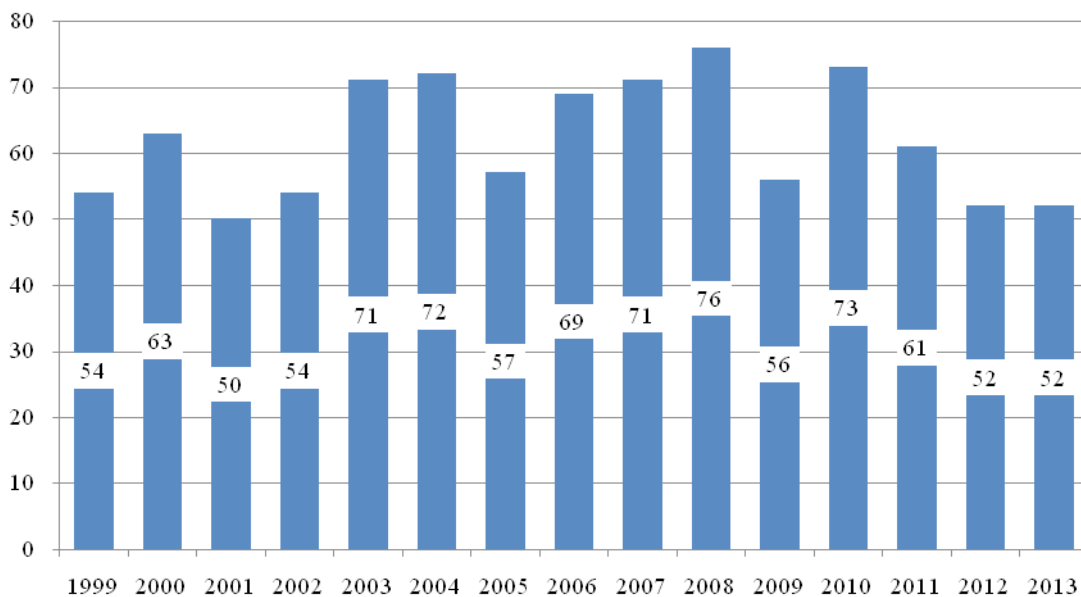
Table 7. Temporary residence and work permits granted to foreign victims of gender-based violence. (2005 to 30 September 2013)

	Cumulative	Annual No.	Variation
2005	2	2	
2006	138	136	6800%
2007	428	290	210%
2008	854	426	100%
2009	1,467	613	72%
2010	2,290	823	56%
2011	3,092	802	35%
2012	3,305	213	7%
2013	3,392	87	3%

Source: Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality). Our elaboration.

The Office for Gender-based Violence presents data from individual reports of fatalities of victims of gender-based violence (defined according to Law 1/2004 as women killed by their partners or ex-partners). The number of victims of gender-based homicide at the end of 2013 is 52, same as the previous year; and the total from 1999-2013 is 931. During the crisis: victim fatalities decreased in 2009, but rose again in 2010, then decreased for the last three years, though slowly.

Figure 10. Fatalities of victims of gender-based violence. (1 January 1999 to 31 December 2013)



Source: Data since 2003 from Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality). Data for 1999 to 2002 from Ministry of Interior.

With regards to legal action taken by either the victim or the victim’s family and friends prior to the crime that ended the victim’s life, full data are only available from January 2006 onwards. The number of formal complaints of fatal victims decreased when the crisis started, but rose up again by 57% in 2010. Since then, complaints dropped to the lowest levels known. In 2012 and 2013, only 19% of aggressors had been reported.

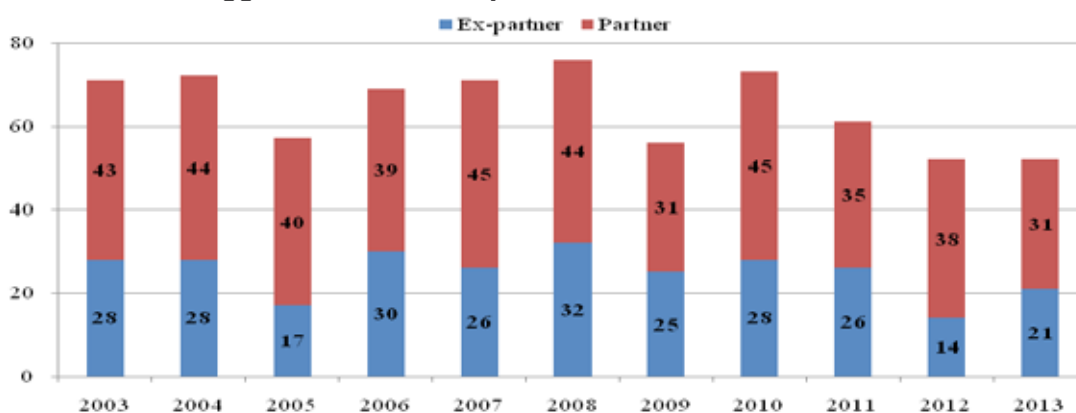
Table 8. Formal complaints filed by fatal victims of gender-based violence. (1 January 2003 to 31 December 2013)

	Formal complaint filed	No formal complaint filed	Total	Ratio Complaint/Total
2006	22	47	69	31.9%
2007	21	50	71	29.6%
2008	18	58	76	23.7%
2009	14	42	56	25.0%
2010	22	51	73	30.1%
2011	16	45	61	26.2%
2012	10	42	52	19.2%
2013	10	42	52	19.2%
Total	133	377	510	26.1%

Source: Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality).

With regards to analysis of the profiles of female victims of violence, of the total number of crimes of gender-based violence recorded in the period 2003-2013, 61.3% were perpetrated by the victim’s partner, and 38.7% by a former partner.

Figure 11. Fatal victims of gender-based violence by relationship between victim and aggressor. (1 January 2003 to 31 December 2013)



Source: Data since 2006 from Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality). Data for 2003-6 from Ministry of Interior.

Overall, 67.7% of the 710 women killed as the result of gender-based violence between 2003 and 2013 lived with their aggressors. Women not living with their aggressors show a higher likelihood of reporting them. From 2009 to 2012, the percentage of victims still living with their aggressors increased greatly, 15-22 percentage points higher than in previous years. However, in 2013 co-habitations have decreased to pre-crisis levels.

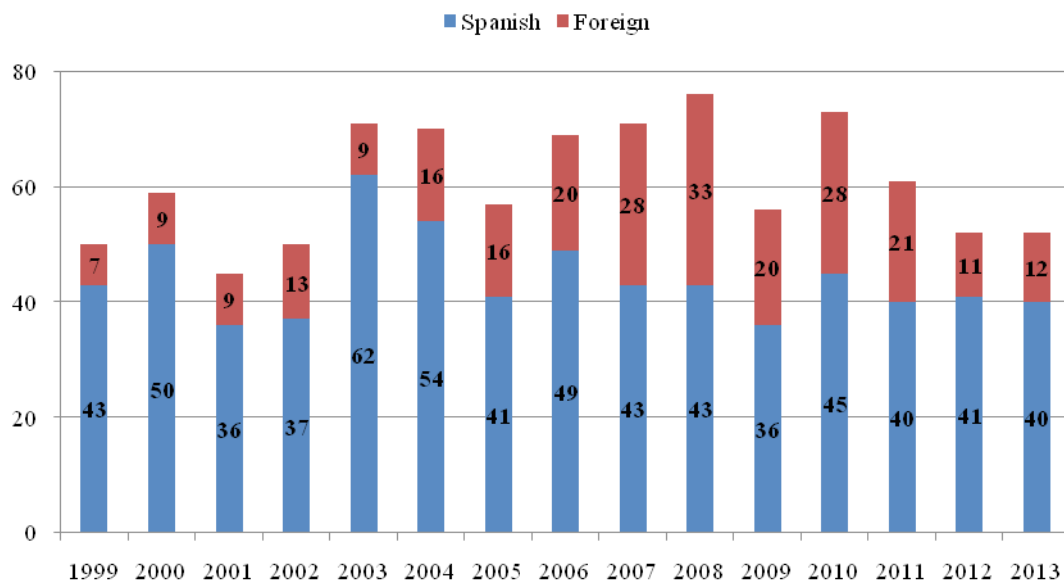
Table 9. Fatal victims of gender-based violence by cohabitation with aggressor. (1 January 2003 to 31 December 2013)

	COHABITATION			
	YES	NO	% YES	% NO
2003	55	16	77,5%	22,5%
2004	48	24	66,7%	33,3%
2005	36	21	63,2%	36,8%
2006	46	23	66,7%	33,3%
2007	47	24	66,2%	33,8%
2008	43	33	56,6%	43,4%
2009	40	16	71,4%	28,6%
2010	52	21	71,2%	28,8%
2011	48	13	78,7%	21,3%
2012	37	15	71,2%	28,8%
2013	29	23	55,8%	44,2%

Source: Data since 2006 from Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality). Data for 2003-05 from Women’s Institute and Ministry of Interior.

The proportions of immigrant women that are victims of gender-based violence and non-Spanish aggressors are overly represented in relation to the size of their population in Spain. The percentage of immigrant women victim of gender-based violence increased continuously until 2008, but has decreased since then.

Figure 12. Nationality of fatal victims of gender-based violence. (1 January 1999 to 31 December 2013)



Source: Data since 2006 from Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality). Data for 1999 to 2005 from Women’s Institute and Ministry of Interior.

Distribution of victims of gender-based violence by age is uneven. The largest group of victims has fallen into in the 31–40 age bracket (137, 26.9% of the total), except for the years 2008 and 2012. The second group is usually formed by victims ranging from 21-30 years old (23.3%), while victims under 21 account for just 4.5%.

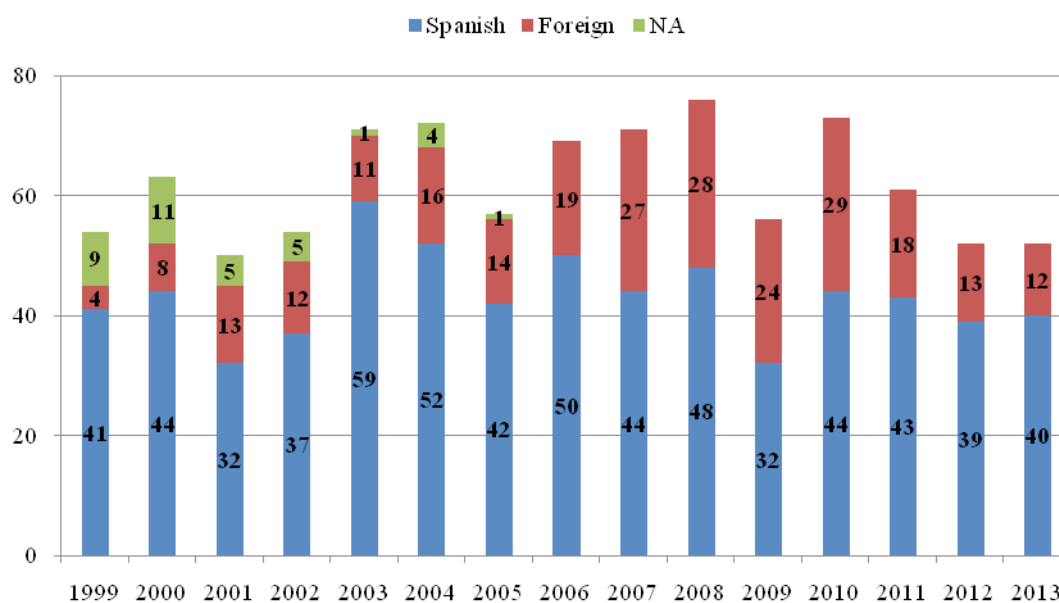
Table 10. Fatal victims of gender-based violence by age. (1 January 2006 to 31 December 2013)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Under 21 years-old	3	2	5	5	1	3	2	2	23
21-30	15	19	20	11	16	14	13	11	119
31-40	27	15	15	17	21	17	7	18	137
41-50	9	15	19	9	18	12	10	10	102
51-64	5	9	11	7	13	8	9	4	66
Over 64 years-old	10	11	6	7	4	7	11	7	63

Source: Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality).

With regards to the nationality of aggressors, there was an upward trend in the number and proportion of foreign aggressors until 2009, when it achieved its maximum of 42.9%. However, this trend is not linear and contains several fluctuations. Since 2009, the percentage of foreign aggressors has decreased by 19.8 percentage points.

Figure 13. Nationality of aggressors of female fatal victims. (1 January 1999 to 31 December 2013)



Source: Data since 2006 from Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality). Data for 1999 to 2005 from Ministry of Interior.



The age group including the highest number of aggressors was the 31–40 bracket (average of 29%) for every year, except for 2011 and 2013, where they were overtaken by aggressors between the ages of 41 and 50 years old. This group usually ranks second, making up 22.7% of the total number of aggressors on average. Only 1.6% of aggressors were under 21 years old.

Table 11. Aggressors of female fatal victims by age. (1 January 2006 to 31 December 2013)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Under 21 years-old	3	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	8
21-30	10	15	13	11	5	9	5	5	73
31-40	24	19	21	16	24	12	15	17	148
41-50	14	15	18	10	16	17	9	17	116
51-64	6	9	12	7	18	14	9	4	79
Over 64 years-old	12	13	11	11	9	9	13	8	86

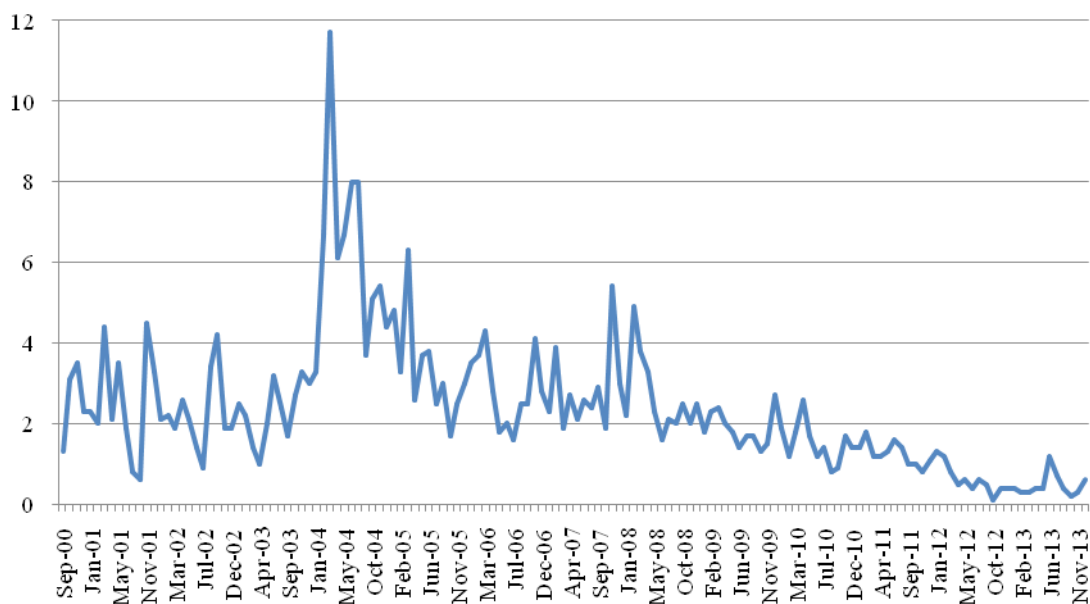
Source: Government Office for Gender-based Violence (Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality).

## 2.4 Awareness, perceptions and attitudes towards violence against women

Since the mid-eighties, the Sociological Research Centre has been presenting to the public on what the respondents feel are the major problems in Spain and which problems affect them personally the most. Questions posed by the CIS's monthly survey, with an open and unprompted response, are: "What, in your opinion, is currently the major problem in Spain? And the second? And the third?"; "And, what is the problem that is currently personally affecting you the most? And the second? And the third?"

In the September 2000 survey, "violence against women" came up for the first time as one of the most relevant problems mentioned by respondents. From that moment on, VAW has not failed to come up in all monthly surveys, showing that part of the population places this problem among the top three major problems in the country, and one of their main personal problems. However, since the highest percentages of respondents mentioning VAW as a major problem were found in 2004 and 2005 (the period in which Law 1/2004 was in the process of being approved and implemented), the percentage has altered to follow a downward trend. Since the beginning of the recession it has fallen below 1%.

Figure 14. Social perception of violence against women as one of the 3 major problems in Spain. (September 2000 to December 2013)



Source: Sociological Research Centre.

Such low levels of concern contrast with the results of the ‘Study on the state of public opinion on gender-based violence, conducted via internet’ by the Ministry of Equality in 2009, which highlights that a majority of respondents believe it is a widespread phenomenon in Spain (87.2% of the respondents) that shows no sign of decrease (74.1%). However, 65% of the respondents continue to see gender-based violence as something concerning women in particular, and it is more indicated by women, while men present a more condescending attitude towards this type of violence.

### 3. Risk factors related to the violence against women linked to the financial, political and social crisis and austerity measures in Spain

Violence against women is a complex social problem not linked to a single causal factor, but strongly correlated to social and cultural norms prescribing gender roles in society and concepts of masculinity affecting women’s position in society and at home. As mentioned, Spanish society has undergone significant transformations during the last decades, including positive advancements in gender roles and gender equality and in women’s positions in society, the economy and politics. Many transformations have helped in reducing VAW through a decrease in traditional gender roles, an increase in women’s independence and autonomy and a more equal distribution of power inside households and society. Some transformations may have not changed the incidence of this phenomenon, but have increased visibility and social awareness on the issue. In addition, it is worth noting that some transformations may decrease some types of gender violence while raising others. For example, separations and divorces decrease domestic violence, although they may lead to an increase in the number of women being murdered by their ex-partners.

The next sections describe major transformations in Spanish society and women’s positions before and during this recession. Firstly, evolution of the family model and household

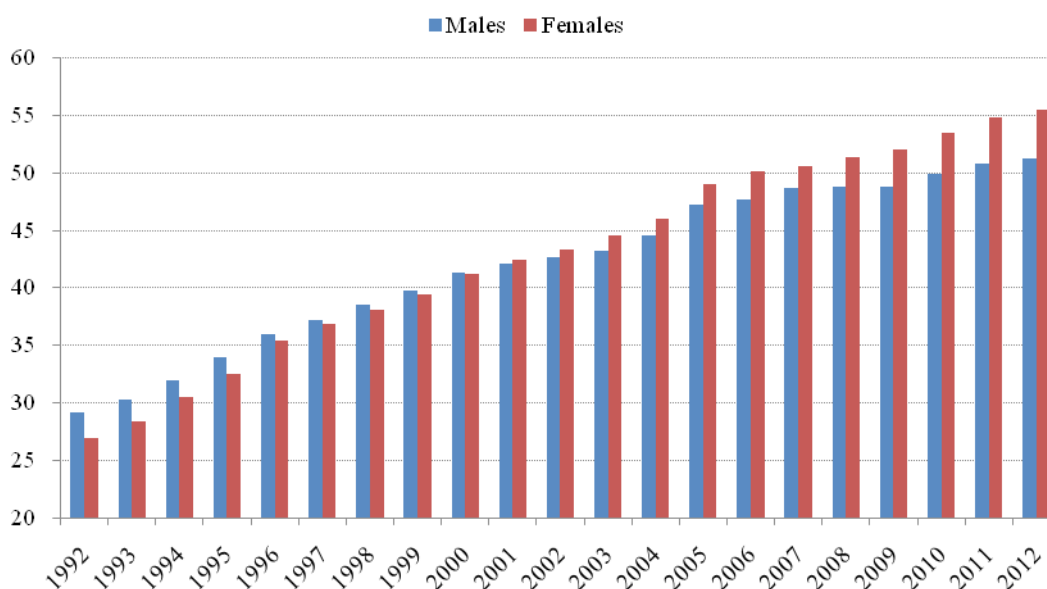
and demographic characteristics are presented. We then discuss the severe increase in unemployment and precariousness of the impact on poverty and social exclusion. Finally we present some data on cuts in programs for gender equality and VAW, dangerous steps backward for gender equality.

### 3.1 Changes in family models and the composition of households

Spanish society has evolved from a traditional male-breadwinner family model in the seventies to a predominantly dual-earner family model in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, this increase of women in the labour market has not been followed by a sufficient change in gender role attitudes. The domestic division of labour continues to be amongst the most unbalanced in Europe (Gálvez et al. 2011), even if some improvements have occurred over the last years.

Many factors facilitated the rise in the number of women in the labour market. On the demand side, such factors have been: the development of the welfare system with the beginning of democracy in 1977, the expansion of the economy and of the private service sector, the entry of Spain into the EU in 1986 and the promotion of gender equality and work–life reconciliation through European policies, and cultural changes. On the supply side, important factors were the increase in female education, the increasing importance of women’s wages for family budgets in a period of declining wages’ purchasing power, the reduction in domestic and care work with a decreasing household size, a less traditional family model and higher externalization of this work, and a change in women’s attitudes towards a higher importance for self-fulfilment and economic independence. One of the most important gender improvements has been in women’s education, as shown in Figure 15.

Figure 15. Population (15-64 years old) with secondary or tertiary education by gender. (1992-2012) (percentage)

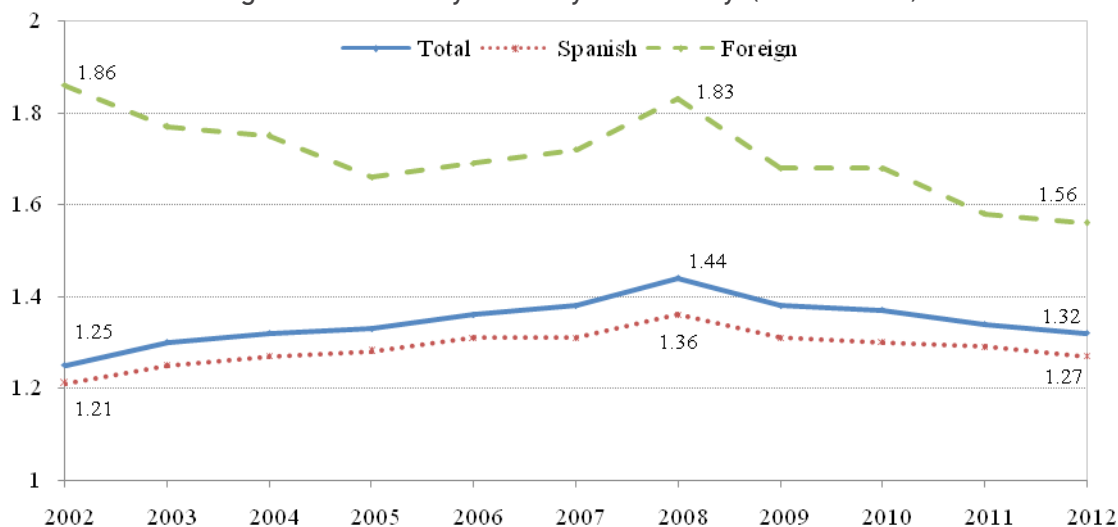


Source: Eurostat online database: European Labour Force Survey.

A significant demographic change that has facilitated women’s autonomy has been the fall of the birth rate, facilitating women’s labour supply and reflecting a change in gender norms. However, it also shows the persistence of strong gender inequalities and a lack of co-responsibility in care by men, the state and firms. From 1999 to 2008, the cyclical indicator of fertility (ICF) presented a positive trend helped by pro-natalist policies, the expansive economic

cycle of the Spanish economy and strong immigration with a higher ICF. But since the onset of the crisis in 2008, fertility has sharply declined, both in Spain and abroad, with the mean age of women at childbirth being 31.6 in 2012.

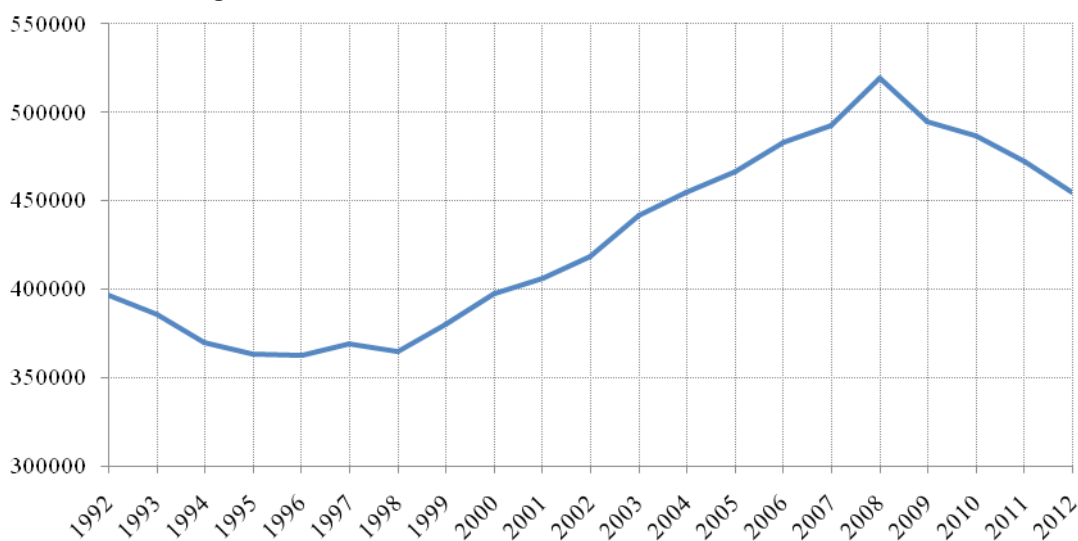
Figure 16. Fertility rates by nationality. (2002-2012)



Source: Demographic indicators. Spanish Statistical Institute.

The number of births has sharply decreased since 2008 as a consequence of the high levels of unemployment and youth unemployment (57.7% in 2013 Q4), household debt and poverty and low expectations for short-term economic improvement.

Figure 17. Births 12 months cumulative. (1992-2012)



Source: Demographic phenomena. Spanish Statistical Institute.

The evolution towards a less traditional family model is coupled by a decrease in marriages as co-habitation becomes widespread: The crisis has, however, accelerated the fall at least during the first years of the recession up until 2011, but it also reduced the number of separations and divorces, declining at the beginning of the crisis and more or less stable since 2009 (Table 12). According to data from the labour force survey, the number of households has also decreased by 67.6 thousand since 2012 Q3, due to emigration and the re-grouping of family units into a single household. These drops in separations and the number of households may increase domestic violence by exacerbating household conflicts and preventing women from leaving violent partners, while at the same time it might decrease the number of murders by ex-partners.

Table 12. Separations and divorces by person who requests it. (2007 & 2012)

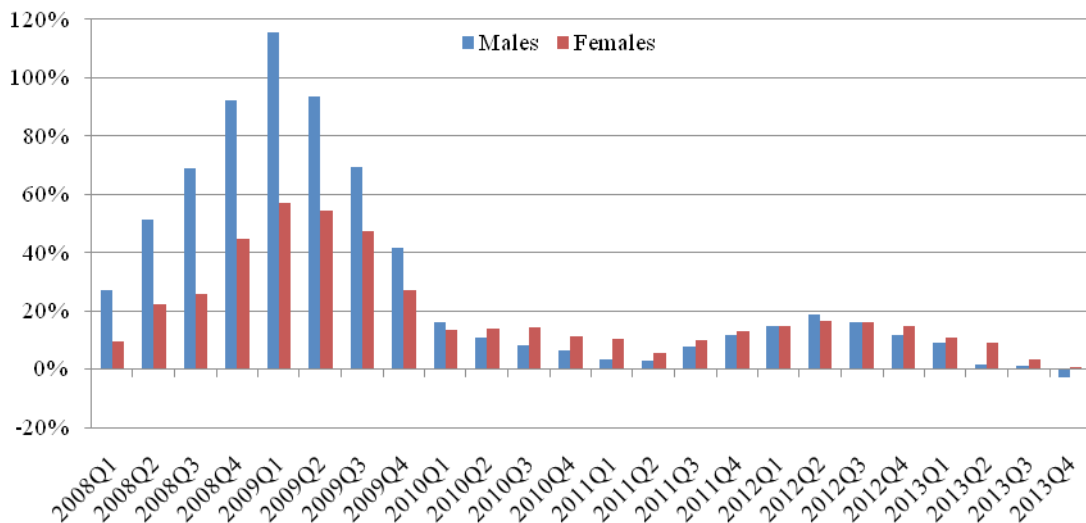
	Males	Females	Both	Total
2007	32,560	44,979	59,763	137,302
2012	24,695	32,739	52,785	110,219

Source: Statistics on separations and divorces. Spanish Statistical Institute.

### 3.2 Work and female economic independence

Women entered the labour force in Spain in force since the beginning of democracy in 1977. Although female activity and employment rates had not yet reached the EU average and the Lisbon Treaty target of 60% of working-age women, it did reach 56% in 2008. However, the devastating impact of the economic crisis on employment, coupled with subsequent austerity policies, has stopped this positive trend. In six years, the total unemployment rate has risen 18.08 percentage points (from 7.95 per cent in 2007 Q2 to 26.03 per cent in 2013 Q4). With the loss of 4 million jobs, unemployment rates have risen up to a maximum of 27.6% for women and 26.8% for men in 2013 Q1. High unemployment has become the main cause of social problems in Spain.

Figure 18. Inter-annual variation in unemployed population by gender. (2008 Q1-2013 Q4)



Source: Spanish Labour Force Survey. Our elaboration.

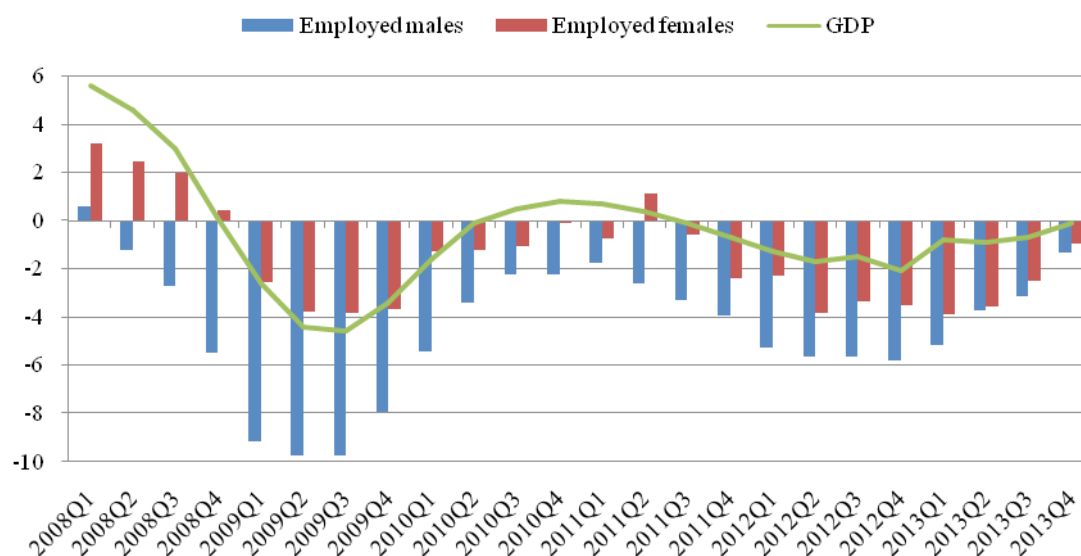
From mid-2009, outflows from employment to unemployment eased slightly, partially due to the Anti-crisis Stimulus Plan, which, however, was mainly focused on male employment<sup>143</sup>. Entries changing from inactivity to unemployment remained a growing trend for women.

Since late 2009, rising concerns over sovereign debt levels and fiscal deficits led most governments to abandon fiscal stimuli and to introduce austerity measures. Expenditure contraction became widespread in the spring of 2010, marking the beginning of austerity policies and leading to a second deep recession, from mid-2011. Unemployment reached higher levels than at the beginning of the crisis (Figure 18) and there was a decline in output

<sup>143</sup> Spain's stimulus package devoted three quarters of its total budget to construction, with a female employment share of 7.1 %.

rates from unemployment (Figure 19).

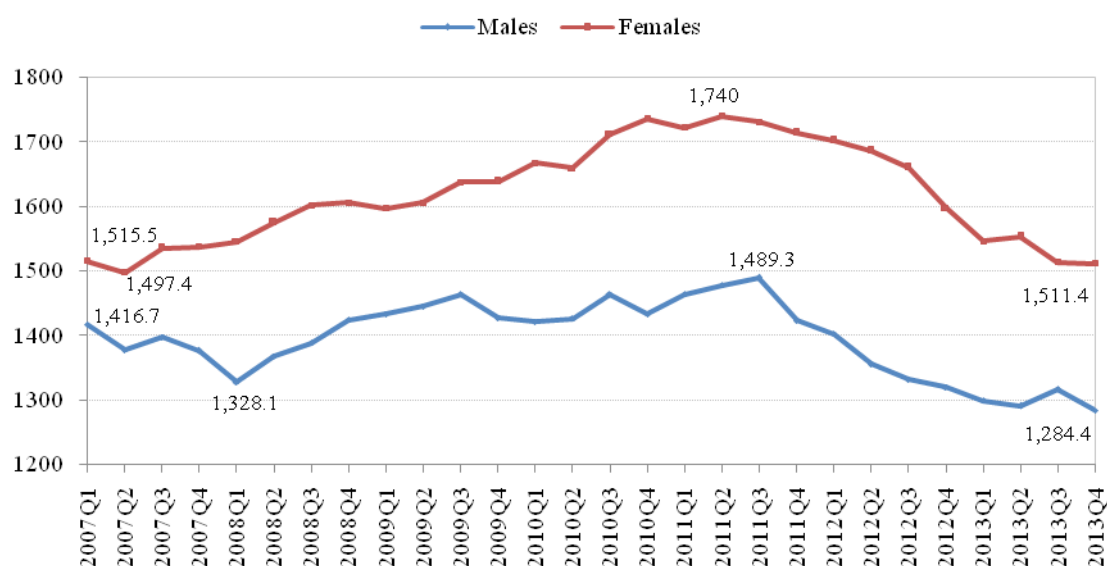
Figure 19. Inter-annual variation (%) in employment by gender and gross domestic product. (2008 Q1-2013 Q4)



Note: GDP at market prices (seasonally adjusted and adjusted data by working days). Source: Spanish Labour Force Survey and Quarterly National Accounts. Our elaboration.

Already from the middle of the second phase of the crisis, the added-worker effect for women started to decline, and female unemployment increased at similar or higher rates than men's due to the spread of the recession to all sectors, as well as due to cuts in public services and downsizing of public employment (Figure 20). From the start of the crisis the growth of public employment partially offset the impact on employment from the destruction of jobs in the private sector. Between 2008 Q1 and 2011 Q3, the number of salaried public sector workers increased by 347,000, partially offsetting the fall in private employment, but since 2011 Q3, a major adjustment reduced the number of public-sector workers by 424,000 jobs. Men suffered a loss of 193,100 public jobs, while women lost 228,600, decreasing the female share of public employment.

Figure 20. Employed population in the public sector by gender. (2007 Q1-2013 Q4) (thousands)



Source: Spanish Labour Force Survey. Our elaboration.

Fiscal consolidation in Spain has focused on education, health and social services, representing 13 percent of total jobs lost since 2011. These cuts not only reduce the quantity and quality of women's jobs, but also hamper women's opportunities to supply their labour in the same terms as men. Fiscal measures have reverted the level of childcare provision for children older than 3 years old in 2011 (European Commission 2013) and Spain's long-term care system has also suffered various budget cuts (more than 25% of the initial budget). Among them, the most significant are the 2012 pay cuts to family carers by 15% and the elimination of their social security contributions.

This overturn means that family care workers (93% of which are women) are being expelled from the labour market and driven to inactivity. As occurred in other regions and during other crises characterized by similar measures, the intensification of women's work has seriously limited their working opportunities and conditions. The increase in women's unpaid work, as in other crises throughout history (Harcourt 2009), may neutralise the better distribution of unpaid work reached in the last decade.

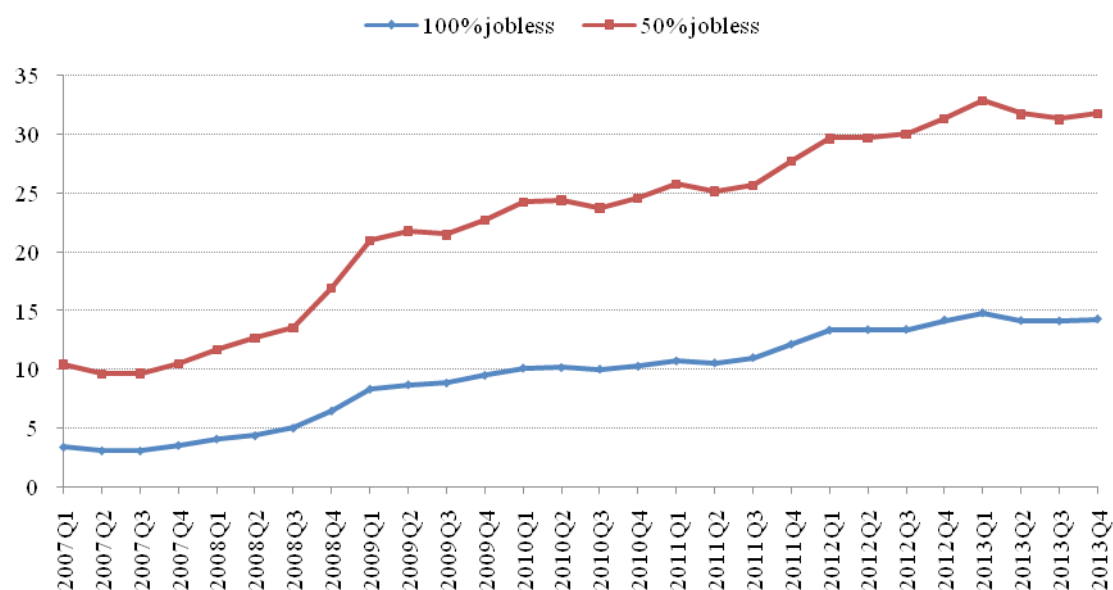
Since 2013 Q2, Spain has shown a very slight economic recovery, though most of the fall in unemployment is due to the discouraged-worker effect and migration out of Spain. Also, more than 70% of jobs created have been occupied by men, and the number of employed people has increased by 132,100 men (second and third quarters of 2013), while it has increased by only 56,400 women. The more speedy recovery of male employment as the recession ends (one of the constants identified by Gálvez & Rodríguez-Modroño (2011) in their historical analysis of economic crises) causes more women than men to move from activity to inactivity. Since the last quarter of 2012, the number of economically active women has been reduced by 106,500. In fact, in the third quarter of 2013 alone, 53 thousand women stopped looking for a job, while 20 thousand men entered the labour force.

Spanish women have always suffered from a significant gender wage gap and worse working conditions. These conditions are hardening with the current crisis. Labour reforms introduced in the crisis allow employers to unilaterally change working conditions for reasons of competitiveness or productivity, including working hours and location of work. Part-time jobs have increased during the recession by 136 thousand jobs. Women are much more likely to have part time jobs (24.4 percent of employed women were part-time workers in 2012, compared with just 6.5 percent of men) and underemployed part-time jobs (9.1 percent of the active population consists of underemployed part-time female workers, compared to 2.9 percent of men in Spain or 5.3 of women in EU27 in 2012). This severe unemployment crisis is increasing risk factors associated with VAW, such as stress, depression and economic dependence, and it is reducing women's opportunities for autonomy.

### **3.3 Poverty and living conditions**

Household incomes (measured by the growth rate of real gross household disposable income) declined in real terms after 2009. Declines were especially strong in Spain (above 5 percentage points between 2007 and 2010) due to higher unemployment and lower real wages (OECD 2013). After 2008, the share of jobless households increased sharply (Figure 21), and in 2013 Q3 the number amounted to 1,832,300 households. Wages have declined by 10% in the last two years, and since 2006-07, in-work poverty has increased to above 12 percent. According to the Living Conditions Survey, average net annual monetary income per household reached €23,123 in 2012, a 3.5% decrease from 2011.

Figure 21. Households according to share of active members that are unemployed. (2007 Q1-2013 Q4) (percentage of population)



Source: Spanish Labour Force Survey.

Spain is one of the EU countries where social transfers present a lower efficiency in stabilising household incomes and reducing relative poverty, and this stabilising impact has even lessened from 2010 onwards, as public spending on health care, education and unemployment has declined, thereby undermining private consumption and aggregated demand (European Commission 2014). As shown in Table 13, the average poverty rate for households substantially increased in Spain during the crisis, particularly for households with 2 adults with 1 or more children.

Table 13 Households at-risk-of-poverty by type of household. (2007-2012) (percentage of households)

	Total	1 adult	2 adults without children	1 adult with 1 or more children	2 adults with 1 or more children	Other households with children
2007	19.7	29.4	17.3	32.2	22.1	22.5
2008	20.8	29.4	18.5	34.8	23.5	24.7
2009	20.1	27.3	17.3	38.9	23.7	21.5
2010	21.4	24.2	16.9	44.7	24.6	25.1
2011	22.2	23.4	18.1	39.8	25.5	25.6
2012	22.2	19.9	15.9	36.9	26	30.9

Source: Spanish Statistics on Income and Living Conditions.

As income decreased, the at-risk-of-poverty threshold did so as well. The at-risk-of-poverty threshold decreased from to €7,040 per one-person households and from €14,784 for households with 2 adults and 2 children in 2013. Therefore, though the percentage of the population below the poverty threshold (the at-risk-of-poverty rate) was reduced in 2013, mainly due to the effect of those persons over 65 years of age, the Spanish population continues



its downward trend in terms of income levels. Thus, the combination of internal devaluation and the falling of social expenditure had serious adverse effects on poverty, inequality and social cohesion (del Pozo & Martín 2013).

Disposable income has decreased, poverty and material deprivation have dramatically risen and the number of households in economic difficulties has increased. The financial distress indicator has been on the rise since early 2000, and accelerated from 2007 onwards, possibly reflecting households' difficulties in facing high debt levels in a deteriorating economic context. This is particularly affecting the most vulnerable. In fact, Spain is the European country where inequality has increased the most during this recession. The Gini coefficient was 31 in 2004, 31.9 in 2007 and 35 in 2012. The reduction of the gap in access to healthcare between the poor and the rich has also been reverted during the crisis.

Women have always faced a higher risk of poverty or exclusion than men. The crisis has not aggravated this gap (Tables 14 & 15), since prime age men have been the most directly hit by the deterioration of the labour market. Still, women remain often more represented in groups facing higher risks of persistent poverty, notably linked to inactivity and care responsibilities, with long-term impacts on future pension entitlements. Cuts on social spending, such as on family and child benefits or childcare services, hamper female participation.

Also, the government has reduced unemployment benefits, affecting mostly those job seekers with lower salaries, which are mainly women. Therefore, the share of people with difficulties to making ends meet (Table 15) has also increased, both for women (+3.7 pps.) and men (+4 pps.).

Table 14. At-risk-of-poverty rate anchored at a fixed moment in time (2005) by gender (percentage of population)

	Total	Females	Males
2006	18.9	20.2	17.6
2007	17.7	18.6	16.8
2008	16.9	17.4	16.4
2009	16.1	16.6	15.6
2010	18.8	19.2	18.3
2011	22.3	22.8	21.8
2012	23.9	23.9	23.9

Note: Cut-off point: 60% of median equivalized income after social transfers. Source: Eurostat online database: Income and Living Conditions.

Table 15. People with difficulties making ends meet by gender. (2007-2012) (percentage of population)

	Men				Women			
	A great deal of difficulty	Some difficulty	Total		A great deal of difficulty	Some difficulty	Total	
2007	10.9	16.7	30.9	58.5	11.4	17.1	31.3	59.8
2008	13.5	18.1	30.9	62.5	13.9	18.3	31.1	63.3
2009	16.3	17.5	28.3	62.1	16.2	18.2	28.2	62.6
2010	15.2	18	28	61.2	15.7	18.6	28	62.3
2011	11	17.9	28.9	57.8	11.2	18	29.6	58.8
2012	15	19.5	28	62.5	14.4	20.4	28.7	63.5

Source: Spanish Statistics on Income and Living Conditions.

Gender inequalities in the labour market also lead to high gender differences in pensions and to a high risk of poverty for elderly women. Retired Spanish women earn on average a monthly pension of €652.07 compared to €1,057.36 for men, and women represent 81% of people that receive a non-contributory pension amounting only to €364.90 per month. A pension increase freeze was approved in 2010, and 2011's Law 27/2011 raised the retirement age from 65 to 67, while the entitlement to receive the full pension requires paying contributions for 38.5 years instead of the current 35 years. The pension calculation basis will now take into account the last 25 years of working life (10 more than previously). Additionally, retired people are now subject to a co-payment of 10% of their cost of medicines. The co-payment rate has also increased for active workers (from the current 40% to 50 or 60%, depending on income). These reforms may have serious effects, particularly on women, and increase older women's poverty rate since their labour market participation is shorter, a larger number of women than men have less disposable income, and future companies' private pension schemes will concentrate on male-dominated sectors and full-time workers.

Even though these deteriorating conditions apply to elderly people, the At-Risk-Of-Poverty or Social Exclusion Indicator<sup>144</sup> (AROPE), the aggregated indicator established by Europe 2020 to target poverty and social exclusion, shows how young people are the age cohort suffering most from the economic crisis and austerity measures due to high youth unemployment (Table 16). The dramatic unemployment crisis has also increased poverty and social exclusion for women and men in their thirties and forties. Thus, even if elderly people's incomes have declined, they have improved their condition relative to the rest of cohorts.

<sup>144</sup> AROPE is defined as that population that is in at least one of the following three situations: at risk of poverty (60% of the median income per consumption unit); in severe material deprivation (in at least four concepts from a list of nine); in households without work or with low work intensity (households in which the members of a working age did so for less than 20% of their total working potential during the reference year).

Table 16. People at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion by age and gender. (2007-2012)  
(percentage of population)

	Men				Women				&
	16 - 29	30 - 44	45 - 64	65 over	16 - 29	30 - 44	45 - 64	65 over	
2007	19.4	19.2	20.9	25.3	24.4	19.4	24.4	29.6	
2008	21.6	20.2	23.1	24.9	24.8	20.9	25	29.9	
2009	22.8	21.3	23.3	22.3	25.4	22	25.6	25.7	
2010	27	25.6	26.5	19.3	30.1	25	27.5	23.1	
2011	29.7	26	28.6	19.7	32.8	26.8	27.8	21.9	
2012	34.9	28.6	29.2	15.3	34.1	28.1	29.1	17.6	
Var.	+15.5	+9.4	+8.3	-10	+9.7	+8.7	+4.7	-12	

Source: Spanish Statistics on Income and Living Conditions.

### 3.4 Cuts in budgets and steps backwards in gender equality and programmes for violence against women

Spain has carried out a severe fiscal consolidation effort: in 2012 alone, despite the recession, the public deficit was reduced from 9.07% to 6.84% of GDP. The annual budget for gender-based violence has been reduced every year since 2010 (Table 17). In 2014, it amounts to €21.85 million (representing 0.005% of Spain's total budget), 1.5 percent less than in 2013, and 33.8% lower than the budget for 2010.

Table 17. Budget for gender-based violence. (2008-2014)

	Budget (€)	Annual Variation (%)
2008	28,193,548	
2009	28,321,180	0.45
2010	31,577,440	11.5
2011	30,363,120	-3.8
2012	23,828,940	-21.27
2013	22,197,340	-7.15
2014	21,850,000	-1.56

Source: Ministry of Finance and Public Administration. Our elaboration.

Gender equality is being seriously affected by austerity measures and appears to have fallen off the political agenda. Not only was the Ministry for Equality suppressed in October 2010, but the total budget for gender equality (Table 18) was reduced by 56% from 2008 to 2014.

Table 18. Budget for gender equality policy in Spain. (2005-2014)

	Budget (thousands euro)	Annual Variation (%)
2005	36,295.2	
2006	42,677.1	17.59
2007	42,235.4	-1.0
2008	43,240.9	2.3
2009	37,697.3	-12.82
2010	33,597	-10.88
2011	31,160.0	-7.25
2012	24,970.3	-19.86
2013	18,952.8	-24.10
2014	19,073.9	+0.64

Source: Ministry of Finance and Public Administration. Our elaboration.

Other public policies and services constituting significant steps forward in gender equality are currently being completely downsized. For example, the Autonomy and Dependency Care System established in 2007, providing for the universal coverage of individuals in dependent situations, was very important for women (as women represent 67% of dependent people and they represent the majority of carers, both formal and informal). However, budget cuts and reforms have brought down the number of beneficiaries from 771,049 in September 2012 to 736,249 in 2013. In 2014, 300,000 people will be pushed out of the dependency system, and the budget has again been cut down in 2014 by 46.7 percent or €1.029 million. Also, it is estimated that the new Local Administration Law, passed in December 2013, will cause the loss of 70,800 jobs in social services, including the elimination of women's local information centres. As a result, austerity measures are increasing inequality, decreasing people's well-being and undermining democratic and social rights, in particular those of the most vulnerable segments of the population.

Austerity is not only delivering some severe hardships to women and deconstructing the established social model and gender regime in many countries, but it is also calling into question some of the cornerstones of women's progress achieved in recent decades. Spain is currently in a situation that could imply a process of reversal in improvements to women's labour market positions and economic and social independence, associated with a revitalization of traditional gender ideologies (Karamessini & Rubery 2013).

## **4. Countermeasures adopted and recommended in preventing and countering the gendered impact of the crisis on women in Spain**

As mentioned, macroeconomic policies within the current neoliberal framework have different gender biases, which are damaging women's well-being and capabilities and damaging the goal of a future equality scenario free of violence. In addition, gender mainstreaming has disappeared through the stimulus packages period and, more explicitly, during the austerity period. The crisis and the policies developed to theoretically address it could be fertilizing a new gender order, although it is still too early to know its precise direction. On the one hand, precarization at work and cuts in public services is a stimulus for women to stay at home. On the other hand, however, female education rates and equal opportunity policies could preserve women's commitments to labour market participation, but mainly in a equalized, downward direction.

This section deals with countermeasures adopted and recommended to combat the crisis and its effects on gender equality. All policies and measures affecting gender equality are also affecting VAW, through the process of discrimination, inferiority and objectification of women. In order to combat VAW more, and not less, equality is needed.

### **4.1 Countermeasures adopted**

The economic recession initiated in 2007-2008 in the United States spread quickly across the world, especially to developed economies, thanks to the hyper-globalization of finance and the financialization of the world economy. Governments and international institutions first answered with stimulus packages, but since the "sovereign debt crisis" in late 2009, rising concerns over sovereign debt levels and fiscal deficits by the IMF, European Union institutions and the OECD led most governments to introduce austerity measures. In Spain expenditures contraction became widespread in the spring of 2010, marking the beginning of austerity policies and consequently a second deep recession.

Gender impacts of the fiscal stimuli and austerity plans are analyzed in this section, as well as the last labour reform linked to the precarization of labour opportunities and living conditions. While the complex relation and causation of austerity and VAW have not been studied, what seems clear is that austerity policies have negative effects on women's lives and opportunities, as well as on gender equality, all that being the substrate of VAW.

#### **4.1.1 Masculinization of economic stimulus packages**

As mentioned, in 2009 Spain started issuing economic stimulus packages. Apart from the funding of the financial system, the most important expenditure package was the Fondo Estatal de Inversión Local (FEIL) commonly known as Plan E, involving €8,000 million to be transferred to municipalities based on population criteria. Municipalities could invest the received funds in different areas (among which: improvement of urban public environments and industrial promotion; facilities and road infrastructures; education and sports; health and social services; culture; environment; pollution prevention and energy efficiency; and tourism).

The objective of was to revitalize the Spanish economy, especially through the creation of employment opportunities. This Plan did not abide by the prescription of the 2007 Equality law since it did not contain a Gender Impact Inform (GII). However, it produced two gender impacts, one on employment and another one concerning who actually benefited from the investments.

As for the gender impact on employment, the Plan did not contain a GII and therefore no official statistics are available on this point. However, as the nine possible areas of investment were related to the construction industry (a male dominated sector with a male employment rate of over 95%), it means that the most important investment plan during this crisis did not support female employment.

Official estimations record that 426,195 persons were employed as a result of the Plan<sup>145</sup>: 181,335 were newly hired and 244,860 already working for the companies in charge of those projects. In the official evaluation report no gender disaggregated data was presented.

Alarcón et al. (2011) evaluated the gender impact of Plan E following the capabilities approach and gender budgeting principles. The objective was to evaluate the impact of Plan E investments on women's life conditions. The survey was based on 93 interviews to gender equality agents across Spain. Table 19 shows the gender equality experts' evaluation and relevant weight of the total expenditure by type of expenditure. The survey refers to a Likert scale, with a rating of one representing no impact to a five representing the maximum positive impact.

The average mark for Plan E expenditure was 3.31. Social equipment (3.23) was slightly inferior to infrastructure (3.36), bearing in mind that the latter amounts to roughly two thirds of the total expenditure. Within social equipment, the highest mark was for education (3.98), although its share is reduced, representing 5.67% of the total investment. Culture infrastructure's mark is 3.78 and Sports infrastructure's mark is 2.24, mainly due to the cost of football fields, the setting for a predominantly male activity.

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145 Monitoring Report of Investment National Plan, 2010. Available at: [http://www.seap.minhap.gob.es/dms/es/publicaciones/centro\\_de\\_publicaciones\\_de\\_la\\_sgt/Monografias/parrafo/0/text\\_es\\_files/Informe-FEIL-INTERNET.pdf](http://www.seap.minhap.gob.es/dms/es/publicaciones/centro_de_publicaciones_de_la_sgt/Monografias/parrafo/0/text_es_files/Informe-FEIL-INTERNET.pdf)

Table 19. Main expenditure chapters in the Plan E 2009. Average mark and share of total expenditure

	Average score*	Ponderation %
EDUCATION	3,98	55,2
Schools and high schools	3,73	27,3
Kinder gardens	4,41	20,4
SPORTS	2,24	113,9
Soccer Fields	1,07	27,3
Sports complex	2,54	61,7
Tennis, Paddle and <i>Frontón</i> courts	2,27	6,5
Swimming pools	3,19	14,2
SOCIAL SERVICES	3,32	13,1
Old age centres	2,86	9,0
HEALTH	3,73	5,2
CULTURE	3,78	122,0
Cultural activities centres	3,77	115,8
PUBLIC URBANISM	3,75	380,8
Bike path	3,15	10,1
Removal of architectonical barriers	3,81	7,8
Cemeteries	3,34	13,8
Parishes, convents ...	3,52	6,1
Peatons improvements	3,80	60,2
Interventions in streets, neighbourhoods, squares...	3,77	243,0
Public lighting	3,92	29,6
Municipal markets and comercial urbanization	4,24	5,2
ROADS AND PARKINGS	2,15	98,3
Roads.	2,15	89,2

Source: Alarcón et al. (2011).

Overall, eligible expenditures in Plan E mostly had a positive gender impact, except in regards to employment creation. Three out of four euros were spent on items having a positive impact on women's living conditions. However, according to Alarcón et al. (2011), this positive impact, except for employment, was not the result of a serious reflection by the central government and municipalities in regard to gender budgeting.

#### 4.1.2 Precarization at work

The Spanish labour market has suffered three labour reforms during the crisis, in 2010, 2011, and in 2012. Royal Decree Law 3/2012 on urgent measures to reform the labour market advances the flexibility of the labour market pursued by the previous reforms, and it has also been considered by labour legislation experts as a turning point on Spanish labour relations and legislation (Guaman et al. 2013/ signatories of Valencia Statement). A detailed analysis of this new legal framework shows the potential gender-negative impact. Because of the existing gender inequalities in the labour markets, a lack of co-responsibility of care work, and precarious labour conditions could have a differentiated gender effect regarding the discouragement effect, expectations and education and training investments.

The main changes affecting gender equality included in the law are: (a) Lowering firing costs; (b) Diminished workers' bargaining power; (c) Removal or perverse modification of previous equal opportunity measures.

(a) Lowering firing costs. This law takes lowering firing costs a step further in regard to five different aspects:

- The enlargement of legal and fair reasons for dismissals (pay of 20 days per year with contribution to the social security system for a maximum of 12 months);
- The disappearance of the permanent contract with a firing cost of 45 days per year contributed for a maximum of 42 months;
- The removal of administrative authorisation for collective firings (EREs). Now the employer can develop one without any kind of bargaining period with workers;
- The cancellation of the wage procedure for unfair dismissals;
- A new Permanent Entrepreneur Support Contract for companies with less than 50 workers –which are the majority of Spanish firms– implying a one-year trial period, and once that year has passed, the company can fire the previously hired worker without explanation or monetary compensation, which actually means a free and gratuitous dismissal.

This has an impact on women's opportunities and gender equality in the labor market since women are concentrated in most precarious and less skilled sectors where substitution and rotation is higher and cheaper. In addition, there is no protection on the new practice of the one-year contract for pregnant women or for victims of VAW. This is partially in contradiction with Article 2 of Royal Decree 1369/2006, mentioned above, which regulated the labour-market-integration benefit scheme for unemployed women victims of gender-based or domestic violence and the Royal Decree 1917/2008, which approved the social and labour-market integration program for female victims of gender-based violence.

(b) Diminished bargaining power for workers.

Collective bargaining has been seriously damaged by the 2012 reform as company-based



collective agreements now have priority over the sectorial collective agreements. Since most Spanish firms are SMEs, that change is a serious threat to collective bargaining. The validity of the collective agreements is also modified, since they must end after two years, regardless if a new agreement has already been negotiated.

The changes affect three main features: employers' management decisions can effectively suspend collective agreements on economic grounds (defined as current or expected losses during two consecutive quarters); the collective agreements at firm level are given priority over other levels; the so-called ultra-activity is no longer valid, which specifically means that in case a collective agreement is denounced or social partners do not reach a new agreement, the prevailing agreement can no longer hold for more than one year.

Article 43 of the 2007 Equality law establishes that it is through collective bargaining that companies can establish actions for favouring women's access to employment and the effective application of the equal treatment and non-discrimination principle. Employers have the unilateral power to reduce wages, to increase, to decrease or to modify employees' working day. In case workers do not accept an employer's decision, they can be fired with pay of only 20 days per year, contributed for a maximum period of 12 months.

Employers may also go unilaterally ahead with an individual or collective firing process, as well as to decide labour condition changes without important penalizations, if its business has decreased its sales or incomes during three consecutive trimesters, even if having benefits. Even more important from a gender perspective, the public administration is allowed to do so on the basis of having an insufficient budget for three consecutive trimesters.

(c) The removal or perverse modification of previous equal opportunity measures.

The training and apprenticeship contract was also modified in 2012. It can last for three years, with the training time percentage decreasing from 25% in the first year to 15% in the second year.

The part-time contract has also been modified with important gender implications, as 80% of part time workers are women and most of them are under-employed. It is now possible to add extra hours to part-time employment, and this may lead to possible abuses from employers. This reform not only has consequences on wages and types of contracts, since female part-time hourly wages in Spain are lower than the full-time ones, but it will also have consequences on social security contributions and entitlements for the present and the future.

Part time contracts are promoted through reductions in employers' Social Security contributions, which allow greater savings when hiring women than when hiring men. These changes also constitute a way of encouraging the maintenance of women on low-wages and precarious contracts. In addition, the reform abolishes the incentive of up to €1,200, established in 2006, for the hiring of women after a two-year maternity or care leave for the following four years.

The breast feeding leave has also been modified. From the 2012 reform, only one parent (mother or father) can ask for it, not both. This is inconsistent with the jurisprudence of the EU Court of Justice, which established in its sentence of 30 September 2010 that the breast feeding leave was an individual right for both father and mother. Also, the leave for legal custody of a child under eight years old or a disabled person must be for asked daily, which makes it quite difficult to adapt to familiar or individual necessities.

To conclude, the labour reform eases firing and lay-offs, curbs severance pay and limits collective bargaining rights. In addition, in this law, there is no measure that explicitly expresses

the aim of fighting against wage discrimination, labour segregation or the feminization of the most precarious types of contracts, as it has been common place in recent labour reforms. In addition, much of this represents an informalization of the labour market, with those self-employed losing rights and benefits, pensions and paid holidays, and having a lower income on average.

### 4.1.3 Impacts of austericide on women

As mentioned, while the stimulus packages and the labour reform did have a negative gender effect, especially on employment conditions and opportunities, austerity policies are the ones having a deeper impact on gender equality and women's living conditions and opportunities (Gálvez & Rodríguez-Modroño 2013; Gálvez et al. 2013; Addabo et al. 2014).

Austerity has led to a deterioration and privatization of social services, including childcare and long-term care services, that goes beyond the simple transfer of assets or services from the public sector to the private. It is a much more relevant change, as it means the transfer of public responsibilities to the private sphere, the reduction of the public sector, and, therefore, the disappearance of collective spaces for negotiation and the loss in social control over political decisions (Michalitsch 2011).

While this process is unfinished, we can already observe that austerity is increasing inequalities in economies and decreasing people's well-being, due to the intensification of paid and unpaid work, particularly of women, precariousness of labour markets and reduction of transfers and services available to households. As happened with similar measures in the past, the intensification of women's work has seriously limited their working opportunities and conditions. On the one hand, income declines affect them to a great extent, since female-headed households are concentrated at the lowest income levels. On the other hand, it is because women are the main employees and beneficiaries of public services, and a weakening of these services increases the demand for female provisions. Finally, this re-privatization of care may lead to an ideology that pushes women back home, creating a key tool for social control and submission.

Austerity is thus calling into question some of the cornerstones of women's progress made in recent decades, reversing some of the improvements in women's labour market positions and economic and social independence associated with a revitalization of traditional gender ideologies (Karamessini & Rubery 2013). As studied by Ortiz & Cummins (2013), many governments, are considering various adjustment strategies including: (a) prioritizing fiscal balances over employment; (b) the elimination or reduction of subsidies; (c) wage bill cuts/caps, including the salaries of education, health and other public sector workers; (d) increasing consumption taxes, such as value added taxes (VATs), on basic products disproportionately consumed by poor households; (e) pension and healthcare reform; (f) rationalizing and further targeting of safety nets; and (g) labour flexibilization and (h) local administrative reform. All seven adjustment measures are being implemented, or at least discussed, by the Spanish government, along with the reform of local administration, which is developed further as a case study.

**(a) Prioritizing fiscal balances over employment.** Since the introduction of austerity measures, the prioritization of fiscal balances has taken place in Spain. According to IMF's *World Economic Outlook* (2012), total government expenditures in terms of percentage of GDP have been in Spain of - 0.5 in 2010, -1.2 in 2011 and -1.7 in 2012. However, historical evidence indicates

that fiscal consolidation is much more likely to contract economic activities, lower aggregated demand and ultimately lead to higher unemployment (Blyth 2013; Ortiz & Cummins 2013). These economic policies do not guarantee the access to labour, and particularly to decent labour, for all of the working age population. Spain, with the highest European unemployment rates, is a good example. Though unemployment has increased globally, more for men due to labour market segregation, women are the most adversely affected by austerity measures as public employment is declining very fast and the public provision of services is disappearing or deteriorating.

**(b) Eliminating or reducing subsidies** is the most widespread adjustment measure being considered by governments, often accompanied by discussions of developing targeted social safety nets to compensate the poor. The Spanish government has reduced unemployment benefits, affecting mostly job seekers with lower salaries, which are mainly women. Therefore, the share of people with difficulties in making ends meet has also increased both for women (+3.7 pps.) and men (+4 pps.). Women have always faced a higher risk of poverty or exclusion than men, albeit this gap has not been aggravated by the crisis. Still, women remain more often represented in groups facing higher risks of persistent poverty, notably linked to inactivity and care responsibilities, which have long-term impacts on future pension entitlements. As previously mentioned, retrenchments or freezes in social spending hamper female participation and aggravate the situation of the most vulnerable women.

**(c) Cuts in wages and jobs**, especially in the public sector, decreases quality of life and opportunities for the population in general, and for women in particular. In Spain, women represent a majority in public employment (55% in 2012): the public sector (mainly education, health and social services) constitutes 31% of total female employment. Public salary cuts were also implemented in Spain in 2010 and 2012, together with additional regional cuts and the extension of working hours, and Spain has become the OECD country with the lowest replacement rate in public employment.

Other public policies and services aimed at gender equality promoted in the previous years are being downsized. For example, the constitution of the Autonomy and Dependency Care System of January 2007, which guaranteed the universal coverage of individuals in dependent situations, was very important for the improvement of women's lives as women represent 67% of dependent people and are the majority of carers, both formal and informal.

The Spanish long-term care system is being fully revised, with budget cuts accounting for more than 25% of its initial budget. Among them, the 2012 pay cuts to family carers by 15% and the elimination of their social security contributions are the most significant. This overturn means that these workers (93% of which are women) are expelled from the labour market and driven to inactivity. Moreover, cuts of national government transfers to local governments that are responsible for social services are most likely to produce a lower provision of services. Women are likely to substitute the public provision of these services through unpaid work within the household.

**(d) Measures to raise government revenues through increases in regressive taxes** like VAT (raised from 16% to 18% in 2010 and to 21% in 2012, and up to 51 tax increases since November 2011), while other ways to increase taxation more progressively, such as to fight fiscal evasion or to restructure debt, have not been explored.

**(e) Pension & health care reforms.** A pension increase freeze was approved in 2010, while in 2011 Law 27/2011 raised the retirement age from 65 to 67, together with requiring contributions payments for 38.5 years and adjusting the pension calculation basis to take into account the

last 25 years of working life (10 more than before). These reforms may have serious effects on women, since their labour market participation is shorter, and a larger number of women have less disposable income than men and future companies' private pension schemes will concentrate on male sectors and full-time workers. Moreover, the increase in the retirement age without an increase in the provision of public child care services can penalize the younger generation who, with limited public child care supply, have relied on grandmothers' child care, leading to a discouraging effect on the labour supply of mothers. Recent data on employment shows a decrease in employment rates of women from 25 to 34 years old.

The Spanish public health system has also suffered from significant reform in order to reduce public spending, including reducing health personnel and closing or privatizing public hospitals and health centres. Many important services (e.g. non urgent ambulance transport) will be excluded from the basic service list, and a new co-payment for some services has been introduced. Primary care for illegal immigrants has been cancelled (except for emergencies, children and pregnancies). Additionally, retired persons are now subject to a co-payment of 10% of their costs of medicines, and the co-payment rate has also increased for active workers. Stuckler & Basu's (2013) recent study points out that it is austerity which increases mortality and suicide, and not recession.

Fiscal consolidation measures have reverted to the 2011 level of childcare provision for children older than 3 years (European Commission 2013), and the Spanish long-term care system – also feminised- has also suffered various budget cuts accounting for more than 25% of its initial budget, as previously explained.

**(f) Rationalization of social safety nets** to reconcile poverty reduction with fiscal austerity. However, these programs are costly, administratively complicated and generate perverse incentives, while it would be more advisable to develop universal programs, especially in countries such as Spain with an extended informal economy. Moreover, targeting may dismantle public service provisions for the middle class and create two-tier services, generally private services for the upper income groups and public services for low-income groups, which often leads middle-income groups to wish not to see their taxes go to the poor while they are required to pay for expensive private services; therefore, breaking the progressiveness of tax systems and social cohesion.

**(g) Labour reforms to increase flexibility** (which have already been analysed). The justification of these reforms is job creation; however, there is very little evidence that these reforms will help in creating jobs (Howell 2005; Rodgers 2007; Standing 2011), but instead will especially affect women and create insecurity and unemployment (Ghosh 2013).

**(h)** Finally, there is **local administration reform**, which will be analysed as a case study further on. It is estimated that 70,800 jobs in social services may be lost in Spain as a result of the new Local Administration Law approved in July 2013. In addition, a deterioration of wages and labour conditions on services externalised by local authorities is expected to be detrimental to women owned cooperatives. And last but not least, this reform will entail the disappearance of local women's information centres.

In conclusion, fiscal consolidation in Spain has focused on education, health and social services, all with negative impacts on women. These cuts in public services not only reduce the quantity and quality of women's jobs, but also hamper women's opportunities to supply their labour in the same terms as men. In particular, it is the combination of cuts that will be more damaging. Many women will not just be affected by one cut alone, but by several of them interacting together. While many women risk losing their jobs, they are also suffering from a

cut in benefits and have seen several different services that they rely on disappear at the same time, especially if they are living in rural areas. All of this aggravates gender inequality and VAW risk factors. The cumulative impact of these cuts is likely to be hardest for the poorest and most vulnerable women.

## **5. Case studies on the gendered impact of the financial, political and social crisis in Spain**

Two case studies have been chosen to analyze the gendered effect of the financial crisis and the austerity measures on gender equality and VAW in Spain. The first case study focuses on the evolution of VAW coverage by audiovisual media during the crisis. The second case study focuses on the potential effects of the recently approved law reforming local administration.

### **5.1 Mass media treatment of violence against women**

The coverage of gender violence on daily news programs on public television in Andalusia has been selected as one of the case studies. The focus is on Andalusia since it is the only Regional government, along with Catalonia, with an Audiovisual Council, which was established in 2005. The Catalan case has not been analysed in this study because the first and last report on VAW media coverage, released in 2008, related to the year 2007, which was before the crisis.

Andalusia is the biggest and most populated region of Spain, consisting of 17.94% of its population (as of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2013, data by the INE, National Statistical Institute). Studies developed by the Andalusian Audiovisual Council in 2010, 2011 and 2012 can be considered representative of the current changes affecting VAW and the economic crisis in audio-visual media coverage<sup>146</sup>. As the first report was issued in 2010, one can observe the evolution during the crisis and the changes that occurred to displace gender issues as a political priority.

Media priorities are sensitive to political priorities, and vice versa. However, changes in perceptions mirror shifts in political priorities at different levels. While the continuation of the media to report on the Media Treatment on Gender violence against women is in itself a sign that Andalusian institutions consider gender issues a political priority, the results of the report shows a decrease in the priority level assigned to the issue by Public television channels in Andalusia.

Andalusian Law 13/2007 on Preventive and Protective Measures against Gender-based Violence (following Spanish Organic Law 1/2004), establishes that public and private media should contribute to increasing the understanding of the population, as well as the prevention and eradication of violent abuse against women.

In a report released in 2013 by the Andalusian Audio-visual Council, 3,225 broadcast hours from 2012 were analysed and they were comprised of: RTVA (Andalusian public television) and its provincial affiliate, the Andalusian affiliate of RTVE (Spanish public television), and by ten local public television stations. The sample included in the report includes the news released by an important part of Andalusian public television, including the one dependent

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<sup>146</sup> The reports are available at: <http://www.consejoaudiovisualdeandalucia.es/>.

on the central government (right wing party), the Andalusian regional government (Left wing party), and some local governments of different political affiliations<sup>147</sup>. The sample of news covered in the period from 1 January to 31 December 2012 was different in comparison with reports from previous years which had focused on:

- The presence of the topic of “domestic violence” in the news (number of news pieces and the length of time covered by media);
- Ranked by four intervals (1st, 2nd, 3rd and the rest) by media;
- Distribution by topic regarding VAW news (% by media);
- Distribution of the speaking time devoted to the different kinds of persons involved in the news (by media);
- Distribution by sex and role of the people involved in news on VAW (by media).

It is important to highlight that the diffusion of the free hotline, 016, for the prevention of VAW has also been contemplated following the agreement signed by the Spanish Government and Commercial TV in November 2007<sup>148</sup>. However, it is only followed in 22% of cases.

The results show that news on VAW is relevant in Andalusian public television; although, there presence in the media is showing a decreasing trend. In fact, news on VAW was the seventh most covered issue among topics of current affairs (the 6<sup>th</sup> in 2011). In addition, news on VAW appeared as the first or second category of news in terms of percentage covered; however, its ranking has decreased every year. In 2012, there were 325 fewer news pieces on VAW than in 2010, and measuring 6 minutes less in duration.

Table 20. VAW news relevance 2010-12

Year	Number of news	%	Time duration	%
2010	1,348	1.17%	24:21:58	0.86%
2011	1,199	0.95%	21:02:30	0.75%
2012	1,023	0.73%	18:25:56	0.57%

Source: Andalusian Audiovisual Council Report on treatment of VAW by media (2013).

It is important to highlight that news on VAW are not only coincident with GBV events and murders, but they are also concurrent with the social and institutional effort to combat such violence, especially on significant calendar days such as the International Day against VAW, and International women’s day. In 2012, one out of three-VAW news reports was released in November, which also explains why almost half of the speaking time analysed belongs to institutional representatives. However, the most important group consists of occasional actors. Both institutional and occasional actors are feminized, while the rest of the current affairs news reporting is the opposite, with the masculinization of actors being clear. Some of the main results are displayed in the following tables:

147 Andalusia Spanish national Television switching off (RTVE Andalucía); Andalusian Television (RTVA), and local televisions (Fuengirola TV; Giralda TV –Seville–; Huelva TV; Interalmérica –Almería; Málaga Onda Azul; Onda Cádiz; Onda Jaén; Onda Jerez; Telemotril –Motril; Granada TG7.

148 All news regarding VAW should include the information of the 016 Hotline -free, 24 hours, 365 days per year, and showing no signs in the telephone bill.

Table 21. Number of VAW news reports by media

MEDIA	VAW NEWS		REST OF THE NEWS		TOTAL	
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
RTVA	489	0.8%	61,623	99.2%	62,112	100.0%
CANAL SUR TV	422	0.9%	48,755	99.1%	49,177	100.0%
CANAL SUR 2	67	0.5%	12,868	99.5%	12,935	100.0%
LA (ANDALUCÍA) RTVE	32	0.7%	4,460	99.3%	4,492	100.0%
PROVINCE SWITCHING OFF RTVA	310	0.9%	33,911	99.1%	34,221	100.0%
CANAL SUR TV (ALMERÍA)	54	1.2%	4,355	98.8%	4,409	100.0%
CANAL SUR TV (CÁDIZ)	17	0.4%	4,555	99.6%	4,572	100.0%
CANAL SUR TV (CÓRDOBA)	60	1.4%	4,198	98.6%	4,258	100.0%
CANAL SUR TV (GRANADA)	29	0.7%	4,076	99.3%	4,105	100.0%
CANAL SUR TV (HUELVA)	41	1.1%	3,805	98.9%	3,846	100.0%
CANAL SUR TV (JAÉN)	42	1.1%	3,844	98.9%	3,886	100.0%
CANAL SUR TV (MÁLAGA)	38	0.8%	4,907	99.2%	4,945	100.0%
CANAL SUR TV (SEVILLA)	29	0.7%	4,171	99.3%	4,200	100.0%
LOCAL TELEVISIONS	192	0.5%	39,193	99.5%	39,385	100.0%
FUENGIROLA TV	28	0.7%	4,218	99.3%	4,246	100.0%
GIRALDA TV	18	0.4%	4,312	99.6%	4,330	100.0%
HUELVA TV	19	0.6%	3,261	99.4%	3,280	100.0%
INTERALMERÍA	23	0.5%	4,296	99.5%	4,319	100.0%
ONDA AZUL	18	0.5%	3,819	99.5%	3,837	100.0%
ONDA CÁDIZ	11	0.4%	2,845	99.6%	2,856	100.0%
ONDA JAÉN	22	0.5%	4,016	99.5%	4,038	100.0%
ONDA JEREZ	11	0.3%	3,468	99.7%	3,479	100.0%
TELEMOTRIL	24	0.5%	4,600	99.5%	4,624	100.0%
TG7 GRANADA	18	0.4%	4,358	99.6%	4,376	100.0%
TOTAL	1,023	0.7%	139,187	99.3%	140,210	100.0%

Source: Andalusian Audiovisual Council Report on treatment of VAW by media (2013).

In 2012, 1,023 VAW news reports were released (0.7% of all news released). There was a decrease in comparison to 2011 in absolute terms and in relative terms (1% of the total news in 2011). In 2010, there were 1,348, 1.2% of the total. Andalusian Public television is the organization with the highest coverage of VAW issues.

The amount of time occupied by VAW news reports in 2012 was of 18:25:56 out of 3225:19:37, which equates to 0.6% (0.7% in 2011 and 0.9% in 2010) of the total broadcasting time. By media, only the provincial affiliate of Andalusian public television has increased both the time and the coverage percentage of news on gender violence. In general, VAW news reports are shorter than others, with an average time of 1 minute and 23 seconds (22% shorter than the rest). This data was similar in 2011. It is important to say that other news reports related to violent events are also on average shorter than the rest.

As previously mentioned, news on VAW ranks 7<sup>th</sup> in terms of importance of current affairs topics (see Table 22). It is worth noting that it was the third most addressed topic in 2010. Obviously, the worsening of the living and employment conditions of the population during the current economic crisis has displaced VAW as a trendy topic. Finally, the monthly coverage of VAW in the news is more determined by the institutional calendar rather than by violent events (as shown in Table 23 and Figure 21). November, hosting international violence against women day, is the month in which the largest number of VAW news reports is concentrated, followed by March, which contains international women's day.



Table 22. VAW news share by media in relation to other news in current affairs

CURRENT AFFAIRS TOPICS	RTVA	LA (AND.) RTVE <sup>1</sup>	PROV. RTVA	LOCAL TV.	TOTAL
REST OF THE NEWS	66.98%	71.14%	75.67%	84.67%	75.20%
ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRISIS	10.32%	6.88%	8.48%	6.20%	8.38%
ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT MEASURES	9.18%	6.07%	5.01%	3.40%	6.16%
REGIONAL ELECTIONS	1.85%	2.74%	3.92%	1.90%	2.34%
UNEMPLOYMENT	0.83%	1.15%	1.40%	1.13%	1.07%
ERE (ANDALUSIAN CORRUPTION CASE)	1.62%	4.50%	0.10%	0.57%	1.00%
TWO CHILDREN DISAPPEARED IN CORDOBA	1.26%	2.21%	1.28%	0.17%	0.91%
VAW	0.56%	0.64%	0.85%	0.41%	0.57%
INMIGRATION	0.59%	0.79%	0.49%	0.29%	0.47%
FORCED EVICTIONS	0.62%	0.19%	0.44%	0.19%	0.42%
ARAB SPRING	0.96%		0.01%		0.39%
POLITICAL CORRUPTION CASES	0.47%	0.40%	0.48%	0.16%	0.36%
GENERAL STRIKE	0.26%	0.21%	0.21%	0.22%	0.23%
MALAYA CASE (ANDALUSIAN CORRUPTION CASE)	0.31%	1.01%	0.32%	0.01%	0.23%
PRIMARY ELECTIONS. SOCIALIST PARTY	0.31%	0.22%	0.15%	0.11%	0.20%
ETA TERRORISM	0.43%	0.02%	0.04%	0.04%	0.20%
15M SOCIAL MOVEMENT	0.31%	0.17%	0.20%	0.03%	0.18%
BABIES STOLEN DURING FRANCO'S AND TRANSITION	0.25%	0.11%	0.20%	0.10%	0.18%
MARTA DEL CASTILLO (VIOLENT MURDERED)	0.24%	0.46%	0.16%	0.10%	0.18%
HISTORICAL MEMORY	0.24%	0.30%	0.20%	0.04%	0.16%
JUDGE BALTAZAR GARZÓN	0.31%		0.07%	0.01%	0.14%
MERCASEVILLA (ANDALUSIAN CORRUPTION CASE)	0.07%	0.35%	0.16%	0.07%	0.10%
NÓOS (SPANISH MONARCHY)	0.23%				0.09%

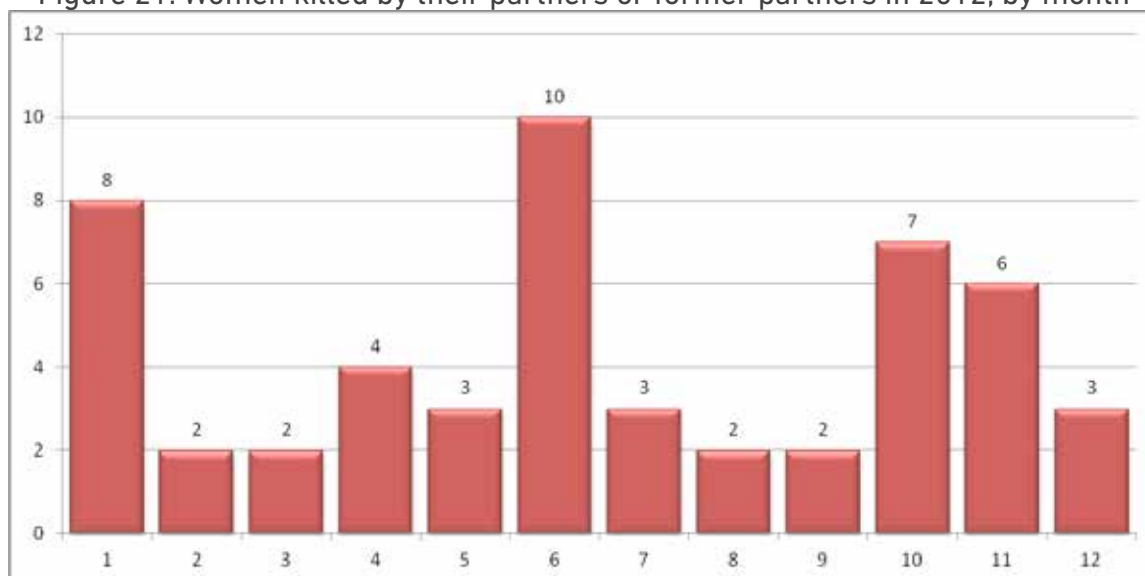
Source: Andalusian Audiovisual Council Report on treatment of VAW by media (2013).

Table 23. Monthly distribution of news (all media)

MONTH	VAW NEWS		REST OF THE NEWS		TOTAL	
	N°	%	N°	%	N°	%
1	85	8.3%	11,518	8.3%	11,603	8.3%
2	67	6.5%	11,846	8.5%	11,913	8.5%
3	61	6.0%	12,006	8.6%	12,067	8.6%
4	72	7.0%	10,410	7.5%	10,482	7.5%
5	43	4.2%	13,190	9.5%	13,233	9.4%
6	66	6.5%	12,877	9.2%	12,943	9.2%
7	24	2.3%	9,876	7.1%	9,900	7.1%
8	10	1.0%	7,086	5.1%	7,096	5.1%
9	80	7.8%	12,600	9.0%	12,680	9.0%
10	106	10.4%	14,530	10.4%	14,636	10.4%
11	347	33.9%	12,929	9.3%	13,276	9.5%
12	62	6.1%	10,441	7.5%	10,503	7.5%
TOTAL	1,023	100.0%	139,309	100.0%	140,332	100.0%

Source: Andalusian Audiovisual Council Report on treatment of VAW by media (2013).

Figure 21. Women killed by their partners or former partners in 2012, by month



Source: Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality.

VAW news reports are relevant for all media: they are the first news to be released in 9% of cases, compared with 6% in the rest of the news. It is the second news story in 8% of the cases, compared to 6% of other current affairs issues, and the third one in 10% of the cases, compared to 6% of other current affairs news. However, it is possible to see a decrease in reporting since 2011. In that year, VAW news reports were in the top news story in 15% of the cases, the second story in 12% of the cases, and the third in 8% of the cases. Gender violent events account for a third of all VAW news despite their ranking.

In conclusion, VAW news has been displaced by the economic crisis in two different ways. On the one hand, the crisis and the news directly related to the context of the crisis and its policies has displaced other news, including news on VAW. On the other hand, austerity considers equality and gender mainstreaming policies as luxury goods. Since austerity policies are generating

social and gender inequalities, it is normal that gender equality is not considered a political priority and VAW news are slowly displaced as a media trending topic.

## **5.2 Local administration reform and its potential impacts on gender equality and on violence against women**

In Spain, public spending cuts are decided by the Central Government at the national level, but the implementation of many such cuts concretely occurs at the local level. In the last decades, Spain has gone through a de-centralization process implying the devolution of power and financial resources to local areas having a huge impact on service provision and accountability. However, Law 27/2013 of rationalization and sustainability of the local administration reverses the pattern established in the 1980s and developed in the 1990s and 2000s.

This reform may have important gender effects, especially related to the following changes:

- Social services and gender equality and VAW services are no more a local competency, but a regional one;
- The establishment of the rule of effective costs and the risk of privatizing services;
- Reduction in local autonomy.

The most criticized aspect of this reform and the one most directly related to gender equality and prevention of VAW is that town councils have been deprived of their competency regarding social services and equality. Act 7/1985, allowed local governments to promote initiatives on gender equality and social services. This article was suspended by a recent local administration reform, in light of the Constitutional Reform of August 2011, when article 135 of the Spanish Constitution was reformed to establish the 'Budgetary stability' as a governing principle for all public administration actions. This principle was introduced by Organic Act 2/2012 on fiscal stability and financial sustainability and is the core argument for all austerity measures, including the local administration reform. In fact, this is based on principles considered necessary to reform local administrations, avoiding malfunctioning and overlapping jurisdictions of different administrations and local treasuries.

Social services and gender equality services have thus passed under regional jurisdiction. However, the regional government can delegate their provisions if the total cost of all administration will not be higher than the one established by the regional government. That could easily be the case in urban areas, but not in rural areas: meaning that some services may almost disappear in some places and not in others, increasing the differences among women especially on urban and rural areas.

The reform implies three important changes regarding gender equality and VAW prevention, especially in municipalities with under 20,000 inhabitants, where those responsibilities are going to be transferred to the provincial councils.

- The disappearance of social services' local networks;
- The disappearance of local gender equality plans;
- The disappearance of women's rights information centers, especially important for VAW and sexual reproduction matters, and consequent disappearance of other services provided by the centers:
  - Services for women's promotion and empowerment;

- Local centers for the prevention of violence against women;
- Local councils for women participation;

Other measures included in this Law are going to be implemented from the very beginning or in the first six months after its publication (27th December 2013). It is worth noting that the implementation of the changes on social services and equality have been postponed until December 2015, after local and national elections (May and November 2015, respectively).

Another important gender effect of this reform is related to the privatization of public services and the disappearance of female cooperative enterprises providing many social services in rural areas. The government justifies this reform on the basis of budget savings. The reform is in fact expected to reduce the cost of services by €8,024 million from 2014 to 2019. However, only 6% of total public debt corresponds to local governments, and it is mainly concentrated in big cities, such as Madrid with a 22% share of total local government debt.

One of the main tools to achieve this saving is the 'effective cost rule'. All entities will publish each year, before November the first, the effective costs of all the services they provide, keeping in mind direct and indirect costs. These costs will be published by the Treasury.

In theory, the unitary cost is expected to be higher for small municipalities in rural areas. In addition, privatized services are supposed to be more efficient than publicly provided ones. However, a recent report released by the Court of Auditors in November 2013, with 2011 data from 6,316 municipalities out of 8,100, shows some interesting findings. The basic services analysed in the report are: security, citizen mobility, housing and urbanism, common well-being and environment, including services such as water, cemeteries, litter, and public lighting.

According to the study, bigger councils provide more basic services than smaller councils, and councils with less than 1,000 inhabitants are the ones with a higher cost per inhabitant, €472.13 (except for Madrid and Barcelona with the cost per inhabitant being over €600 and €700, respectively). Moreover, the Court of Auditors report does not support privatization of municipal services as a saving measure, since its results show that the private provision of services is more expensive than the public one in the municipalities analyzed in the report.

This reform is especially important when applied to social services provided in many rural areas by women's cooperative enterprises. Through the effective cost rule it might happen that many of these services will be performed by big enterprises without territorial links, which will subcontract local women with low wages, displacing female cooperatives and SMEs linked to their territories. This process will challenge women empowerment and deteriorate women's living condition in rural areas.

Furthermore, local autonomy is also severely diminished. A State Council that worked on the law report warns that the reform law could violate Article 140 of the Spanish Constitution, transferring too many local competences and powers to Provincial Councils. Provincial Councils are not political or democratic entities of the first degree, since they are not chosen by direct vote, and therefore do not have the same level of political responsibility towards citizens than directly elected town councils. Finally, it is estimated that the new Local Administration Law will produce a loss of 70,800 jobs in social services. "Enlightened emigration" was reversing during the crisis since many women were going back to rural areas and were not migrating to urban areas, mitigating the main demographic problems of Spanish rural areas:

masculinization, ageing of the population and low fertility rates<sup>149</sup>. However, this law with the loss in female labour opportunities and specific services crucial for their professional and human development could again incentivize young women to leave rural areas.

## **6. Countermeasures recommended in preventing and countering the gendered impact of the crisis on women in Spain**

As stated by Elson (2014), the current crisis stems from the dominance of finance over production and reproduction. As a matter of fact, the focus should not be on finance or at least not solely on finance. For this author, securing a sustainable crisis-free gender-equitable global economy requires a fundamental reorganization of the relations between the three spheres, so that finance and production serve the needs of reproduction, the spheres in which the care essential to human well-being is provided.

Three types of countermeasures are recommended to prevent and counter the gendered impact of the crisis and to end gender macroeconomic bias, as inspired by Elson (2014). First, enactment of general and international measures to improve equality in general, and to guarantee a more stable economic system free from frequent crises, contrary to what has happened since 1970s when the end of the Bretton Woods system produced more than one hundred financial crises and episodes of financial stress worldwide. Second, general economic measures advancing gender equality are recommended, and thirdly, some measures are recommended, specifically related to the Spanish case.

### **Towards a more equitable and crisis-free economic system**

- Improving the regulation of the financial sphere in order to reduce risk and creditor biases, and other inequalities;
- Control and taxation over international capital movements through the introduction of a currency transaction tax is essential. Otherwise, the bargaining power of democratic governments and citizens will be null compared to those of financial and transnational capital, as has been the case –in crescendo– in the last decades. Governments should introduce capital controls / stop inflows and outflows of short-term speculative funds. In parallel, it is vital that international monetary institutions, such as the IMF, support such moves;
- The splitting of street banking that serves households and small businesses from the more risky activities that serve larger firms, including financial businesses;
- Create banks that operate to the mutual benefit of depositors and borrowers, and not have the objective of making profits for shareholders and executives;
- Public investment banks are needed for long term investment in public infrastructure and to develop new environmentally sustainable production;
- Central Banks should become promoters of employment creation, not simple guardians of low rates of inflation;

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<sup>149</sup> In rural Spain, more women have migrated to urban areas explaining why the sex ratio in rural areas is favorable to men especially on younger generations. Women are studying in bigger numbers than men and are returning to a lesser extent to their villages of origin, what is known as “enlightenment emigration”. See Gálvez & Matus (2010b).

- The fight against inequality should be central in macroeconomic policies;
- Equality is a prerequisite for macroeconomic stability: periods with higher inequality and asymmetries are the ones with larger instability;
- At the same time, equality policies are more effective when integrated into macroeconomic frameworks, and not just into an appendix to central economic policies, as has occurred in recent years;
- A new regulation and a new international order challenging international economic and financial institutions is needed;
- Different decision-making mechanisms, spaces and including actors from more impoverished countries and groups;
- Improve citizens' controls and monitoring of public policies and institutions;
- We need a fair taxation and equitable public expenditure –including gender budgeting.

A new social model for Europe. Europe has abandoned its social objective, partly explicitly –regarding changes from Lisbon Strategy to Europe 2020- and partly non-explicitly, since some policies especially the economic ones make it impossible to advance social equality and cohesion (Villa & Smith 2013).

### **Towards a gender-equitable economy**

- To end the macroeconomic policies gender bias, unpaid work and gender norms must be taken into account;
- Feminists must engage in financial governance, monetary and fiscal policy, and policies for structural change in production and consumption;
- To end deflationary and austerity policies, being the strongest barriers to equity and income generation for the majority of the population (Gálvez & Torres 2010). Wages need to be raised, while also guaranteeing access to a labour market free from gender discrimination;
- Gender budgeting is necessary to address gender equality and VAW measures;
- Gender mainstreaming and gender equality must become a key goal in the EU agenda;
- Gender mainstreaming has disappeared from the EU agenda, while it has never been present in economic policies and has ended up in disappearing from the rest of the policies (Villa & Smith 2012). Gender was substituted by the multidiscrimination principle: it is true that there are other inequalities, but gender is present in all of them, and gender discrimination has specificities that cannot be treated the same as other inequalities, since an important part of these inequalities are developed within the family and at home;
- To contrast the re-familialization of care: in countries and places where the family is the main care provider, gender inequalities are larger, as well as income differences;
- To invest in social infrastructure, especially care services, as the state needs to assume co-responsibility with citizens, particularly on care and guaranteeing decent working and living conditions;
- To increase social awareness on VAW as a general social problem, not only as a problem for women.

Legal measures and services for combating violence against women must be accompanied within gender mainstreaming policies designed for achieving greater gender equality and eliminating commodification of women, substrate of VAW.

### **Specific measures in Spain**

- To stop austerity and austericide;
- To effectively apply Comprehensive Law 1/2004 on VAW and the 2007 Integral Equality Law;
- To guarantee credit access for all, but especially for women;
- To accomplish a fiscal reform towards a more progressive system that guarantees public revenues in order to maintain welfare provisions;
- To guarantee a gender budgeting approach to public expenditure;
- To support public services instead of monetary transfers;
- To commit part of the public budget and integral policies to fight VAW;
- To revert labour reform and ongoing pension reform;
- To revert local administration reform;
- To guarantee gender parity in the government;
- To commit to gender equality and to abandon the steps towards a reconfiguration of traditional family models;
- To stop the reform of the abortion law which eliminates women's right to choose;
- To revert the recent educational reform that eliminates the previously compulsory subject of citizenship education where equality values were addressed, upgrades importance of religion as a subject, and guarantees public financing of sex-segregated schools;

It is impossible to develop gender equality policies, while continuing deflationary and austere economic policies. Without gender mainstreaming –including in economic policies–, it is not possible to advance the prevention and alleviation of violence against women. In order to have a crisis-free economy we need more gender equality (Gálvez & Torres 2010).

Two other final considerations are necessary. First, despite the centrality of gender equality measures, feminist scholars need to address gender inequality, but also other types of inequalities. For instance, following Seguino (2011), rather than campaigning for tax breaks for women's businesses, we need to raise voices in the campaigns for tax justice to raise more revenue at the national and international levels, including through a currency transaction tax. Second, in order to combat austerity policies it is not enough to call for more expansionary fiscal policies with a focus on restoring and increasing economic growth. As Elson (2014) points out, the growth we had in the last 30 years was grossly inequitable; it eroded social solidarity and led to environmental degradation. So Elson states that economic growth in itself is not the answer: "It matters what kinds of output grow (...) More broadly, we need to rethink what goods and services we want to produce and consume, and what criteria we are going to use to judge economic success. Measures to end crises will not be sustainable if they simply seek to restore growth and greed". For that, it is also important to remove the knowledge bias (Gálvez & Torres 2010), and to advance towards a new economic theory. In fact, as those authors state: "It has no sense, or it is just a chimera, to try to promote equality policies at the same time that wealth creation sources are being weakened; competitiveness is a simple mutual impoverishment strategy; when economic activity only depends on revenues and not

on wages, or at least of rent agreements more or less equilibrated; when natural resources are systematically dilapidated and our environment is destroyed; when a productive model based on the unequal allocation of property rights is developed" (Gálvez & Torres 2010: 174).

## 7. Conclusions

Violence against women is a complex social problem. It is embedded in structured inequalities in relations of production and reproduction, and gendered social and economic inequalities increase the risks of VAW. Public policies, especially macroeconomic policies in a neoliberal context present a set of gender biases acting against gender equality with important consequences for women's freedom, autonomy and empowerment directly linked to VAW. For these reasons, this report has approached the gendered implications of the crisis and of the political measures implemented to combat it from this omni-comprehensive framework, taking into account all factors that may directly or indirectly affect gender equality and gender roles.

We have analysed how the current financial, political and social crisis, through its various phases and different impacts on the economy, society, gender norms, institutions and policies is altering the preventive and risk factors related to violence against women.

Unemployment and individual and household poverty have increased in Spain since the crisis started. Not only were one in four labour force participants unemployed in 2013, but also more than half of all young labour force participants were jobless and almost 60 percent of the unemployed have been out of work for more than one year. This worsens the employment perspective of the increased pool of unemployed persons and raises concern about long-term unemployment and risks of labour market detachment, especially for women. Individuals and households are trying to cope with these adverse economic situations, for example by delaying the decision to live in a couple or marry, to have children, to separate or divorce. The number of households in Spain has decreased not only as a result of migration out of the country, but also because of the regrouping of different family units into a single household. The crisis, coupled by austerity policies, has therefore increased individual risk factors and relationship factors, for both men and women.

By downsizing social and care services and labour opportunities in the public sector, austerity policies produce a serious negative impact on gender equality and female autonomy and empowerment. Women are being adversely affected in four different ways. Firstly, income declines affect them to a greater extent, since female-headed households are concentrated at the lowest income levels. Second, women are both employees and beneficiaries of public services, and a weakening of these services increases the demand for female informal provision. Thirdly, this re-privatization of care may lead to an ideology pushing women back home. Lastly, the decrease in women's economic autonomy may lead towards a bigger tolerance of gender violence within couples, and a decrease in public expenditure on combating and preventing VAW has significant consequences not only on violence but also on social perception and political and media coverage.

With regards to institutional factors, Spain's legal and institutional framework for fighting VAW, mainly developed between 2003 and 2008, was considered to be among the most advanced in the world. However, programs for fighting violence against women have suffered severe public budget cuts. Cuts of 33.8% in the VAW budget since 2010 (although representing only 0.005% of Spanish total budget), eliminate many prevention and sensitization measures. Gender equality is also seriously affected by austerity measures and appears not to be a priority in the current



political agenda.

Budget cuts coupled with a low commitment from the government and a diminished perception of the importance of VAW in society are already affecting the fight against VAW. The number of women considered at risk of violence has significantly decreased since 2010, together with the number of women with court-ordered protection and receiving police protection. Also, the number of women using the 016 hotline or the tele-assistance and protection service for gender-based violence has decreased, as well as the number of residence and work permits given to foreign victims of gender-based violence.

Spanish society had also undergone significant transformations during the last decades, including positive changes in gender roles and advancements in gender equality and women's position in society, the economy and politics. Many of these transformations have helped to increase the visibility and social consciousness on gender violence and to reduce VAW through a decrease in traditional gender roles, an increase in women's independence, autonomy and agency and a more equal distribution of power inside households and society. The current crisis is a historical crossroads that is transforming the gender order.

The recent EU FRA report on VAW shows that one third of European women have suffered physical or sexual violence throughout their lives, compared with 22% in Spain. Spain is one of the countries where these figures are the lowest, due to a great extent by a higher presence of traditional gender roles, which limit the awareness of what may be considered VAW and to a lower access of women to the labour market and economic autonomy. These factors will worsen in this recession and under austerity ideology and its policies.

Austerity is not only bringing some severe hardship to women, deconstructing the established social model and gender regime, it is also calling into question some of the cornerstones of women's progress in recent decades, and may bring us back to a traditional gender model. The current situation could imply a process of reversal in improvements of women's labour market position and economic and social independence associated with a revitalization of traditional gender ideologies (Karamessini & Rubery 2013).

It is therefore necessary to end the austerity policies that act in two directions. It is impossible to implement gender equality policies if we continue applying a deflationary and austere economic policy. Without gender mainstreaming –including in economic policies –, it is not possible to advance the prevention of violence against women. In contrast, more gender equality is needed to have a crisis-free economy.

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## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

At the meeting convened by UNICRI in Turin on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of April 2014, experts from France, Greece, Italy, and Spain gathered to discuss the issues related to the gendered impact of the crisis. Specifically, the meeting focused on the repercussions that the economic and social downturn has produced on violence against women in the respective countries. As a result, the experts agreed upon a set of recommendations building also upon the *Agreed Conclusions of the 58<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women*, which took place in New York from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 2014.<sup>150</sup>

This concluding chapter is divided into two sections: the first summarizing the major findings and the common issues highlighted by the experts, and the second outlining a set of thematic recommendations.

## 1. Conclusions on the gendered impact of the crisis

The four case studies of the report, beyond discerning situations and problems specific to each country, highlighted a number of common issues. Specifically, similar problems have been observed in Greece, Italy and Spain, while France has generally been found to report distinct trends and matters of concern. What appears clear is that in all four cases the crisis and the resulting austerity policies have led to the **amplification** of some of the already existing social problems and the **modification** of some others, rather than the **creation** of new ones. The problems discussed by the experts, and outlined below, referred to how the crisis has been reflected: on the economic well-being of women and, more broadly, on gender equality and the issue of violence against women.

During the initial stage of the crisis, which began in 2008/ 2009, men were more affected than women, as the first sectors to be hit were mostly male-dominated (e.g. the construction sector) as a result of the preexisting **horizontal and vertical gender segregation** of the labor market. The available statistics and their mainstream interpretation do not seem to adequately grasp such dynamics: the employment gender gap is more likely to have decreased because of the worsening of the male employment rate rather than because of a presumed rise in the female one. The same logic should be applied to the poverty gap between men and women, which also appears to have been reduced due to the impoverishment of male workers and not thanks to an improvement in the female salary estimate.

These findings are also supported by the fact that the crisis, in a second phase, is observed to have produced harsher effects on women, as a result of the generally worse economic condition that women were in compared to men prior to the recession.

A pattern triggered by the crisis in all four countries appears to be the **intensification of women's workloads**, especially as a result of the upsurge of unpaid work necessary to compensate austerity-driven cuts in welfare and social services. This intensification causes major difficulties for women in reaching a sound work-life balance, unless men choose to be co-responsible for daily family and care duties.

Statistics also confirm another observation remarked on by the experts at the meeting: since the crisis began, and as it continues to develop, women tend to enter the labor market with,

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150 UN Commission on the Status of Women (2014), "Agreed Conclusions" (Advance Unedited Version), New York, 10-21 March, p.11, available at: <http://www.unwomen.org/~media/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/CSW/58/CSW58-agreedconclusions-advanceduneditedversion.pdf>

or more frequently hold **atypical contractual arrangements** such as non-permanent jobs, involuntary part-time jobs, or temporary work. Such atypical forms of work also tend to persist over a longer period of time for women than for men (with the exception of France, where temporary work is mostly practiced by men). These trends worryingly indicate a widespread deterioration in women's working conditions.

Another important aspect underlined by the experts at the meeting was that **equality policies** have been considered an **unaffordable "luxury"** in political agendas pledging to deal with the crisis. In several countries, actions and incentives enacted to combat the crisis have been gender-blind and thus shortsighted in dealing with the effects of the economic and social downturn.

One prominent example refers to the funding cuts for the public sector. Existing data and statistics show that women tend to be largely employed in the public sector. Yet, austerity measures adopted in the four countries during the recession involved serious **public budget cuts** and strongly affected public employment, thereby generating serious negative effects on women's employment. Clearly this will have negative repercussions on women's opportunities in terms of economic independence (e.g. pension remuneration), both in the medium and in the long term period, well after the end of the financial crisis. Experts also highlighted that **in-work poverty** has been an increasing trend.

Consequently, all of the above delineated trends have had and will continue to have a substantial impact on the **female poverty rate**. Available statistics confirm this data, especially in the case of female-headed families.

In terms of the categories most affected by the crisis, the experts noted that jobless women have been more at risk of material deprivation, with a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion. Furthermore, less-educated women have been particularly affected by the situation, and both young and elderly women appear to have been subjected to more severe consequences. A final and equally important observation referred to women belonging to minority groups, who are also among the most affected categories.

A comprehensive socio-economic data analysis of the effects of the crisis is a necessary starting point for the evaluation of the efficiency of the adopted actions and for the identification of alternative and more appropriate policies. However, comparable data and gender-oriented analysis of available statistics are missing. The different methodologies and variables used in the existing surveys further complicate the identification of accurate and common trends. As the recommendation will suggest, this is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Further observations underlined that **migration flows** are closely connected with the economic and social crisis. Official statistics confirm that the increased emigration from some of the countries analyzed in this report is a direct consequence of the economic recession. With regards to incoming migration flows, victims of human trafficking for labor and sexual exploitation appear to have been badly affected by the economic and social situation, with an increase in the level of exploitation and a parallel decrease in the prices offered for their labor and sexual services.

Moving onto the effects of the crisis on the issue of violence against women, which was also closely examined by the four country studies included in the report, the experts remarked on how the crisis and austerity measures, by affecting a large portion of the population and creating widespread discontent, have led to a rise in xenophobia, hate speech and hate crime. **Psychologically violent** and **discriminative discourses** have also been commonly adopted within political rhetoric. This has been accompanied by a higher degree of **tolerance**

**towards violence**, including violence against women, and an increased “acceptance” of it as an inevitable part of social relations. Discrimination and violence seem thus to have become somehow justified by the poorer economic conditions affecting the majority of the population.

Experts also noted that the impact of austerity measures on gender violence is a very complex issue, which so far has failed to be exhaustively studied. One of the major problems reported refers to the fact that the data necessary to evaluate the **socio-economic costs of gender-based violence**, including comparable data to facilitate prevention, are very scarce.

One of the most palpable remarks referred to the fact that the public budget cuts enacted to tackle the economic downturn have also affected those services dedicated to preventing and halting violence against women, together with a **reduction** in the number and quality of **VAW services** offered to victims. Nonetheless, other funding solutions, such as EU funds, could be obtained to mitigate this situation.

The economic and social crisis seems also to have led to an **aggravation of conflict dynamics within households**. Women are often forced to remain in violent relationships for a longer period of time because of the lack of a dwelling, financial independence and/or social services. As previously mentioned, there seems to be a direct and inevitable link between the economic and social crisis and the “acceptance” of violence. Violence by partners and former partners remains at its highest level, also in terms of fatal incidents.

Demonstrating that patriarchal cultures and prejudices still exist is a fundamental goal, if the situation is to be improved; for this purpose, measures enhancing education and raising awareness are urgently needed.

Additionally, a worrying situation emerges when considering the current **under-reporting** of cases of violence to law enforcement authorities, coupled by the **lack of trust** that victims feel towards them. Therefore, to address this situation, **tailored training** for law enforcement and judicial personnel in the four countries seems to be necessary.

Finally, the experts concluded the meeting and the discussion on a brighter note, reflecting on how the higher level of education currently reached by women might mitigate/change the consequences of the crisis for women’s positions in the mid and long term.

One year from the 2015 target date for the attainment of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), it is of paramount importance to assess where we stand on the issues related to gender equality and women’s empowerment. This report has been compiled within this light and with the overall goal of contributing to keep the process moving in the right direction for the development of the post 2015 agenda.

## 2. Recommendations

The recommendations discussed and agreed to by the experts during the meeting in Turin cover the following sectors: (a) macro-economic policies and austerity measures in times of crisis; (b) gender equality and women’s empowerment; (c) and violence against women.

### A) Macro-economic policies and austerity measures in times of crisis

It is paramount to ensure that macro-economic policies are responsive to the existing gender



bias issue and, accordingly, promote gender equality by: creating decent work for all; mobilizing resources to finance social protection, infrastructure and essential services; and reducing inequalities based on context-specific characteristics.

As noted by the Commission, the global economic crisis and the shifts to austerity measures adopted by some countries have negatively impacted women and girls, for example through a reduction of investments in the social sectors. For these reasons, Governments should “*Ensure that global and national policy responses to financial and economic crises and to volatile food and energy prices promote gender equality by creating decent work for all, redistributing resources and generating revenues to finance essential services, social protection and infrastructure*”.<sup>151</sup>

Experts have recommended that **gender mainstreaming** and **gender equality** need to be included as key goals in the EU and in the international **economic agenda** (including that of the IMF, OSCE, European Commission, etc.). Similarly and in parallel, national economic policies should ensure gender mainstreaming in funding and austerity measures. Experts have noted that the adoption of **Equality Plans** to advance the status of women has proven to be very effective in some countries in this regard.

The gendered impact should be also very carefully considered in the design and adoption of financial stimuli and labor reforms. To achieve better evidence-based policies, studies and data analysis should be implemented to evaluate the impact of **gender-oriented financial measures** in the medium and long term.

## **B) Gender equality and women’s empowerment**

The UN Commission also requests Member States to “*ensure women’s right to work and rights at work through policies that promote decent work for all, promote equal pay for work of equal value, prohibit sexual harassment and support the reconciliation of paid work with family/care responsibilities for both women and men*”.<sup>152</sup>

Experts have recommended, for instance, establishing **parent supporting measures** in order to allow a reconciliation of work and personal, leisure, and family life. Additionally, the introduction of policies allowing and appropriately regulating paternity leave periods would allow men to equally share the household and parental burden. The rights of female part-time workers should be equally protected.

Welfare services are paramount in enabling concrete gender equality. The Commission calls upon Member States to “*Provide gender-responsive, universally accessible, available affordable, sustainable, and high quality services and infrastructure, including health, water and sanitation, transport, energy, housing, financial services, and information and communication technologies*”.<sup>153</sup> Experts noted that it is necessary to ensure that the allocation of funds dedicated to such services incorporates a gender-based perspective. Public-private partnerships should be encouraged in order to ensure the provision of services, especially in times of crisis.

Besides the promotion of gender equality, financial support measures to encourage **women’s entrepreneurship** should be considered, together with policies to reduce the gender

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151 Ibid., p. 16.

152 UN Commission on the Status of Women (2014), cited, p. 14.

153 Ibid.

segmentation of the labor-market and guarantee equal, non discriminatory access to it. In view of encouraging women's economic independence, measures should be adopted to ensure an **equal access to credit**.

**Gender parity in governmental and decisional bodies** should also be pursued.

Concrete measures should be taken in parallel to address discriminatory attitudes and norms. In particular, the UN Commission requests the implementation of "*concrete and long-term measures to transform discriminatory social norms, stereotypes and harmful practices to promote gender equality and women's empowerment*".<sup>154</sup> To reach these objectives, experts call for the promotion of **education and awareness-raising campaigns** on violence against women and for the monitoring of their impact over a period of time.

Experts agree that the **image of women in the media** should be improved, also including the reduction of the presence of sexist tropes in videogames. In parallel, models replicating **patriarchal stereotypes** in formal education and in the media should be strongly discouraged.

### C) Violence against women

The U.N. Commission on the Status of Women urges Governments at all levels to "*eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, in private and public spaces, through multisectoral and coordinated approaches to prevent and respond to violence...*".<sup>155</sup> According to the experts who have contributed to this study, the adoption of **National Programmes for preventing and combating violence against women** encompassing coordinated approaches and measures at different levels has proven to be an effective tool in this regard. Preventive measures should be designed and implemented, along with effective responses.

Experts underline the importance of promoting periodical studies and data analysis to **evaluate the costs of violence prevention measures** in comparison to costs caused by violence against women. It is also extremely important to carry out periodical comparable **data collections on factors conducive** to violence to implement evidence-based policies and measures. Regular **collection of comparable data on violence against women**, such as the recent FRA EU-wide survey on violence against women,<sup>156</sup> is highly recommended. This objective can also be achieved through a prompt **sharing of data** among concerned institutions (relevant ministries, law enforcement bodies, the judiciary and civil society organizations) in order to better assess the impact of laws, policies and programmes, and to monitor trends. Experts emphasize that data collection needs to take into consideration migrant communities to ensure a comprehensive analysis of these phenomena.

The UN Commission calls for the elimination of "*all forms of discrimination against women and girls through: the adoption and accelerated and effective implementation of laws and comprehensive policy measures; the removal of discriminatory provisions in legal frameworks; and comprehensive measures to ensure women's access to justice*". Experts recommend *in primis* the strengthening of laws against domestic violence and to ensure their effective implementation. The Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic

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154 UN Commission on the Status of Women (2014), cited, p. 10.

155 UN Commission on the Status of Women (2014), cited, p.11.

156 European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) (2014), "Violence against Women: an EU-wide Survey", available online at: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/fra-survey-gender-based-violence-against-women>

violence should be ratified and implemented by countries of the Council of Europe.

Special attention should be paid to the capacity building of national law enforcement agencies and administrations through **specialized training** courses aimed at enhancing a positive and effective culture of prevention and reporting of VAW. Experts also recommend the establishment of specialized courts on violence against women, which have proved to be very effective in some countries.

With regard to responding to **violence**, it is crucial that countries support **community networks dedicated to violence against women** in order to streamline and enhance human and financial resources and avoid duplications, thus allowing for a better use of the funds. It is also necessary that such networks receive appropriate and timely resources.

Finally, the establishment of mechanisms allowing **free legal advice** for female victims of violence, as well as the introduction of **National Help Centres** where violent/abusive men can find help and advice on how to deal with their aggressiveness, are highly recommended.

In conclusion, through the analysis of the gendered impact of the economic and social crisis undertaken by this study and the suggested recommendations, UNICRI aims to contribute to the design of evidence-based policies and actions and the strengthening of the post 2015 development agenda. In this regard, a thorough gender mainstreaming approach must be adopted so as to reduce the current impact of the economic and social crisis on women's equality and well-being and to avoid these issues recurring in the case of future economic downturn.