

LABOR AND GENDER

OVERVIEW

INDICATORS	Labor force participation rate for ages 15-24		Labor force participation rate for ages 15-64		Employment to population ratio ages 15-24		Employment to population ratio, 15+		Unemployment, 15+		Contributing family workers		Self-employed		Wage and salaried workers		Employers		Employment in agriculture		Employment in industry		Employment in services		
	2023 (a)		2022		2023 (a)		2023 (a)		2023 (a)		2022		2022		2022		2022		2022		2022		2022		
	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (% of female employ.)	M (% of male employ.)	F (% of female employ.)	M (% of male employ.)	F (% of female employ.)	M (% of male employ.)	F (% of female employ.)	M (% of male employ.)	F (% of female employ.)	M (% of male employ.)	F (% of female employ.)	M (% of male employ.)	F (% of female employ.)	M (% of male employ.)	
EUROPEAN UNION	Portugal	33,6	37,2	74,4	78,5	27,3	30,3	51,5	59,8	6,9	6,1	0,6	0,7	11,5	18,7	88,5	81,3	2,9	7,3	3,2	6,8	15,5	32,3	81,3	60,8
	Spain	30,9	34,8	69,9	78,3	21,7	25,3	45,3	56,2	13,9	10,6	0,4	0,3	11,7	18,4	88,3	81,6	3,3	6,1	1,9	5,4	9,4	29,1	88,7	65,4
	France	40,9	44,6	71,8	76,9	35,1	37,0	49,2	55,7	7,2	7,5	0,4	0,3	10,0	16,0	90,0	84,0	3,0	7,0	1,6	3,6	9,8	28,3	88,6	68,1
	Italy	21,6	30,8	56,4	74,6	16,2	24,3	37,9	54,8	8,8	6,8	1,2	0,7	16,1	25,5	83,9	74,5	3,8	8,0	2,3	4,8	14,0	36,2	83,6	58,9
	Slovenia	32,2	40,2	74,0	79,0	29,6	36,5	51,9	61,0	3,7	3,6	2,3	1,7	9,8	17,5	90,2	82,5	1,7	4,6	3,9	4,7	17,1	41,2	79,0	54,1
	Croatia	24,2	36,4	65,4	73,1	18,5	30,3	44,5	54,5	6,6	5,6	1,4	1,0	9,4	16,9	90,6	83,1	3,5	7,2	4,0	7,5	15,7	39,1	80,3	53,4
	Greece	22,9	26,6	61,2	76,3	16,1	20,8	38,8	54,2	14,2	8,4	3,7	1,8	31,0	41,7	69,0	58,3	4,8	8,8	9,8	12,2	7,8	21,3	82,4	66,5
	Malta	53,1	55,2	72,7	85,9	59,9	48,3	55,5	70,9	3,0	3,2	0,1	0,0	9,0	19,4	91,0	80,6	2,0	5,6	0,3	1,2	7,6	24,0	92,1	74,8
	Cyprus	42,0	45,2	72,1	81,3	35,8	36,5	56,3	66,0	5,9	6,0	0,5	0,8	8,1	12,4	90,9	87,6	1,2	2,2	0,9	3,6	7,2	25,4	91,9	71,0
	Serbia	24,8	38,5	66,9	79,6	20,3	29,4	47,0	62,5	9,0	8,4	8,4	2,9	23,4	29,9	76,6	70,1	2,0	4,1	11,5	15,3	19,3	37,3	69,2	47,4
WESTERN BALKANS	Kosovo	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	20,4	36,8	50,4	72,5	13,0	27,1	34,7	53,9	12,5	9,0	5,0	1,3	25,7	24,2	74,3	75,8	4,2	7,0	19,3	15,3	17,7	43,9	63,0	40,8
	Montenegro	26,3	36,2	61,5	74,9	19,6	26,0	42,5	54,7	14,7	15,7	3,2	1,6	15,3	25,9	84,7	74,1	2,6	5,1	5,8	8,3	7,5	27,8	86,7	63,9
	North Macedonia	20,4	36,6	52,2	75,0	14,0	26,7	37,3	54,3	11,7	14,0	4,8	1,9	12,3	19,5	87,7	80,5	2,4	5,2	8,0	10,9	25,5	33,8	66,5	55,3
MIDDLE EAST	Albania	27,5	40,0	63,4	79,3	20,4	28,9	47,0	60,1	11,4	11,7	27,1	15,6	50,4	54,7	49,6	45,3	1,2	4,5	39,8	31,0	16,8	25,1	43,4	43,9
	Turkey	31,3	56,1	39,4	76,6	23,9	47,8	30,9	65,7	12,1	8,1	19,4	4,2	30,3	29,4	69,7	70,6	1,9	5,8	21,8	14,2	17,6	32,5	60,6	53,2
	Syrian Arab Republic	7,9	39,1	14,9	65,7	3,7	27,6	10,6	56,7	25,3	10,9	2,2	0,7	8,7	41,9	91,3	58,1	0,4	1,5	10,0	16,5	6,0	25,8	84,0	57,7
	Lebanon	25,7	44,6	31,3	71,1	19,9	33,6	23,4	58,8	14,7	10,1	1,7	0,5	17,1	35,4	82,9	64,6	3,8	10,8	1,4	4,4	6,4	26,6	92,2	69,0
	Jordan	10,1	41,5	14,5	65,8	5,0	25,1	10,4	51,7	26,6	16,2	0,2	0,4	3,6	13,1	96,4	86,9	0,9	3,5	0,6	3,6	7,2	20,2	92,2	76,1
	Israel	47,3	47,9	71,2	75,5	44,6	45,1	58,9	66,4	3,3	3,4	0,0	0,0	8,6	14,0	91,4	86,0	1,3	4,7	0,4	1,1	7,4	23,4	92,2	75,5
	West Bank and Gaza	10,8	50,7	--	--	4,7	34,7	11,3	57,4	40,0	20,2	7,7	2,9	22,9	24,0	77,1	76,0	2,0	6,1	6,3	6,2	9,6	37,3	84,2	56,5
NORTH AFRICA	Egypt, Arab republic	9,6	38,8	17,5	74,4	5,4	34,5	14,2	68,0	17,9	4,9	17,7	2,4	29,0	27,1	71,0	72,9	1,2	4,0	18,1	18,8	8,0	32,6	73,9	48,7
	Libya	10,8	23,2	37,0	64,3	3,5	13,8	26,2	52,1	24,7	15,4	1,4	0,8	10,0	17,2	90,0	82,8	1,2	2,1	5,4	11,1	11,3	28,4	83,2	60,5
	Tunisia	18,4	38,2	29,9	75,6	10,9	22,8	19,8	59,2	20,5	12,9	2,1	1,4	14,0	29,3	86,0	70,7	2,1	5,6	8,8	18,8	31,7	34,0	59,5	50,2
	Algeria	8,6	37,3	18,0	72,0	4,6	26,9	13,2	60,3	20,7	9,6	2,0	1,6	26,0	32,1	74,0	67,9	1,8	4,4	3,4	11,0	23,6	32,4	73,0	56,6
Morocco	12,6	40,0	21,2	73,8	9,6	30,7	17,6	61,9	10,7	8,6	35,0	8,7	54,7	46,3	45,3	53,7	0,8	2,6	48,2	25,9	13,8	26,8	38,0	47,3	

(..) Data not available

(a) Data 2022 for West Bank and Gaza

Source: International Labour Organization (ILO) and Istat.

SOME HIGHLIGHTED TOPICS

Gender issues in the labour market are a key challenge for equality and sustainable growth in the Mediterranean countries. Despite inclusive legislation and policies, inequalities between men and women persist in terms of participation, wages, career advancement and working conditions.

Labour Market Participation

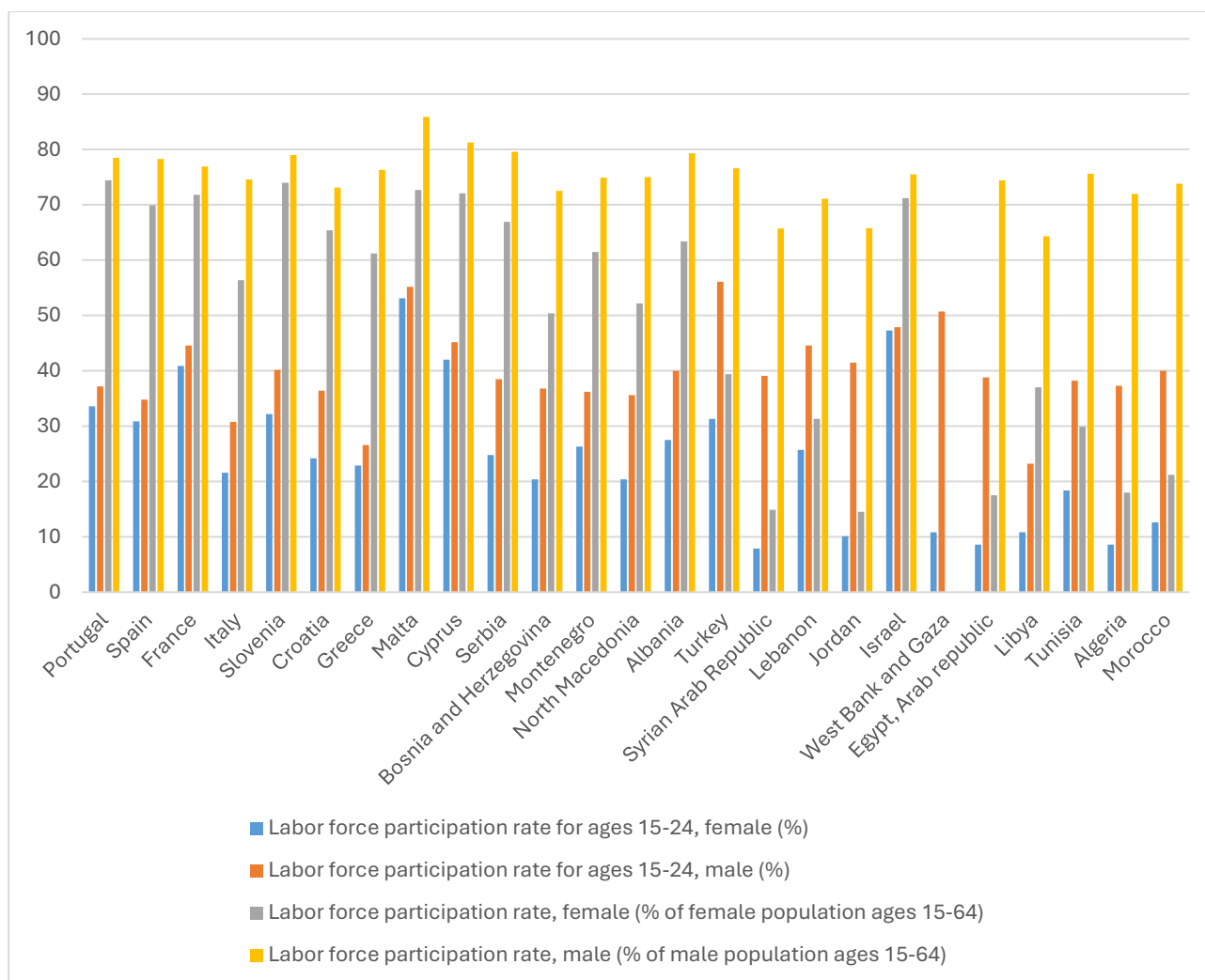
In the Mediterranean countries, gender differences in female activity rates are marked and vary significantly. In the European Union, female participation is relatively high but remains lower than that of men. In Spain, for example, the activity rate for adult women is 69.9%, compared to 78.3% for men, while in Italy the gap is more pronounced, with 56.4% of women active compared to 74.6% of men.

In the Western Balkans, the gaps are also evident. In Serbia, only 24.8 per cent of young women (15-24 years) are active compared to 38.5 per cent of men, and in the entire working-age population (15-64 years), the female rate is 66.9 per cent compared to 79.6 per cent for men. In Montenegro and Albania, the rates show a similar situation, with women less represented in the labour market.

In the Middle East, the gaps are among the widest: in Jordan and Lebanon, the female activity rate is drastically low compared to the male rate, with 14.5% of active adult women in Jordan compared to 65.8% of men. Israel is an exception, with female participation closer to that of men.

In North Africa, female activity rates are the lowest in the region. In Algeria and Tunisia, adult women show rates of around 18-30%, compared to over 70% for men. These gaps, strongly linked to cultural barriers and the lack of structural supports, limit women's access to the labour market.

Figure 1 - Activity rates in ages 15-24 and 15-64 by gender. Year 2023* (%)



*2022: West Bank and Gaza

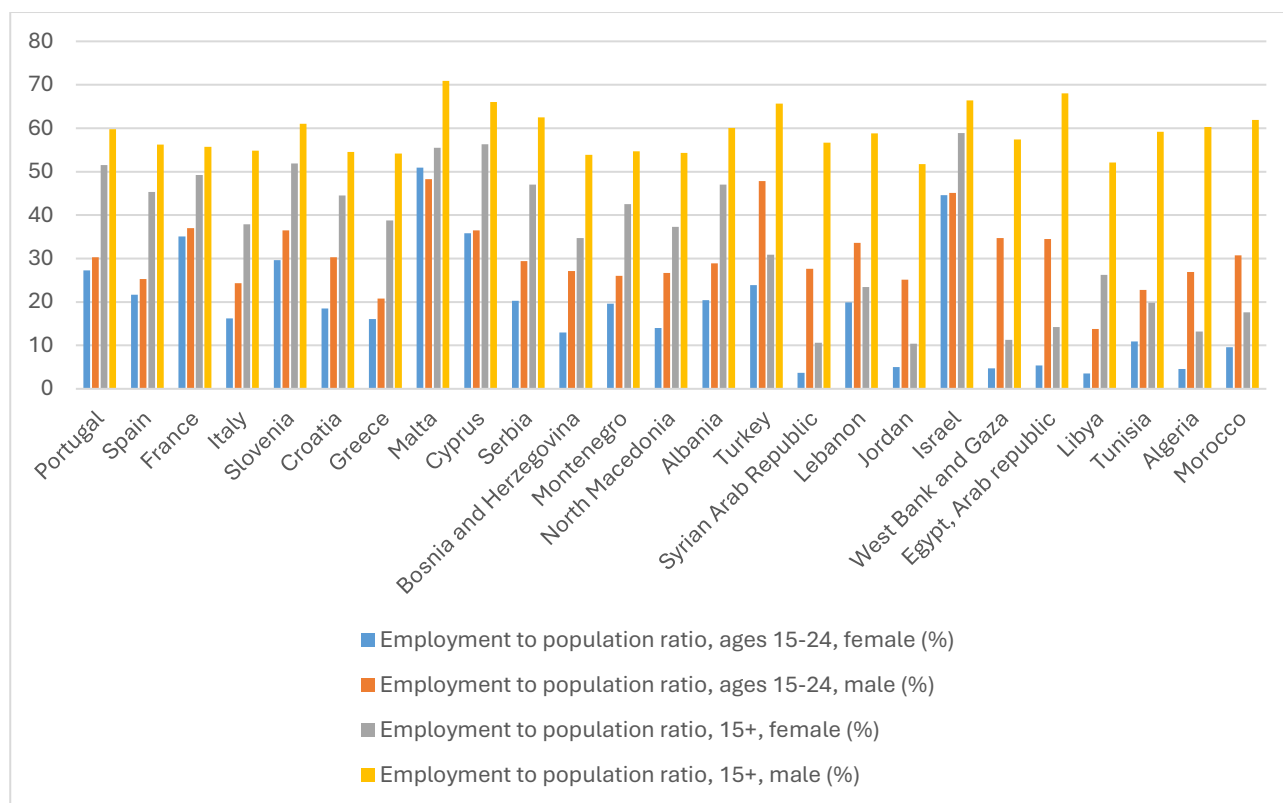
Source: International Labour Organization (ILO) and Istat.

The 2023 data also show significant gender disparities in employment rates, with the gaps most marked in North Africa and the Middle East. In Algeria and Egypt, for example, the employment rate among young women is extremely low, at 4.6 per cent and 5.4 per cent respectively, compared to 26.9 per cent and 34.5 per cent for men. Across all working age groups, only 13.2% of Algerian women and 14.2% of Egyptian women are employed, compared to over 60% of men in both countries.

In Jordan, the employment rate of young women is just 5%, compared to 25.1% of young men, while overall the is 10.4% compared to 51.7% of men. In Palestine and Lebanon, employed women also remain significantly less than men. In the Western Balkans, the situation is similar but less extreme: in Serbia, the female employment rate is 47% in the 15-64 age group, against 62.5% for men.

In EU countries, the gaps are less pronounced but still present. In Italy, for example, only 37.9 per cent of adult women are employed compared to 54.8 per cent of men, while in Spain the rates are closer, with 21.7 per cent of young women employed compared to 25.3 per cent of men. These figures reflect cultural barriers and a lack of support structures for female employment, particularly in the North African and Middle Eastern regions.

Figure 2 - Employment rates in age 15-24 and 15 years and over by gender. Year 2023* (%)



* 2022: West Bank and Gaza

Fonti: International Labour Organization (ILO) e Istat.

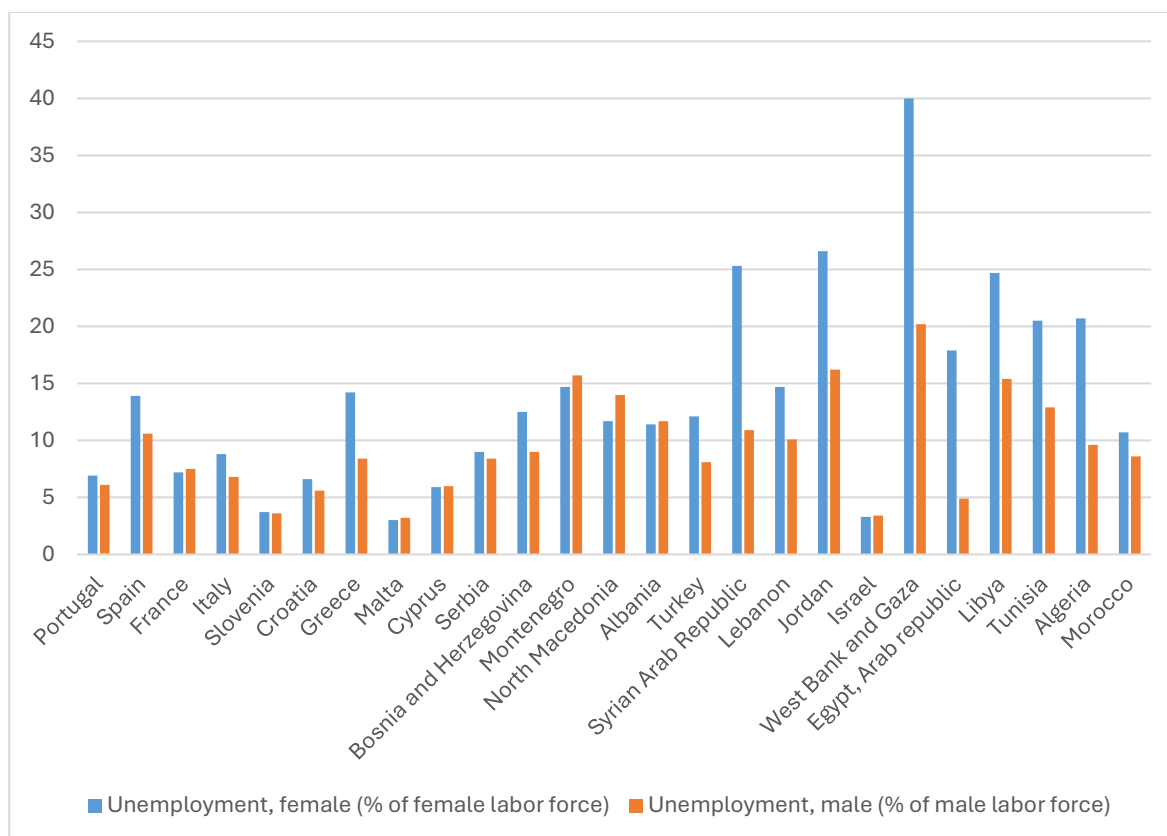
The analysis of 2023 unemployment rates in the Mediterranean countries reveals marked gender differences, with female unemployment levels generally higher than male unemployment levels. In Middle Eastern and North African countries, these inequalities are particularly pronounced due to socio-cultural barriers and limited job opportunities for women. In Jordan, for example, the unemployment rate for women is 26.6 per cent compared to 16.2 per cent for men, while in Palestine the gap is even wider: 40 per cent of women are unemployed, compared to 20.2 per cent of men.

In North Africa, women face very high unemployment rates. In Egypt, the unemployment rate for women is 17.9%, compared to only 4.9% for men. In Algeria and Tunisia, female unemployment exceeds 20%, while male unemployment remains below 13%.

In European countries, the gaps are less extreme but still present. In Spain, the female unemployment rate is 13.9 per cent compared to 10.6 per cent for men, while in Italy, women record a rate of 8.8 per cent compared to 6.8 per cent for men. France is an exception, with male unemployment (7.5%) slightly higher than female unemployment (7.2%).

In the Western Balkans, disparities vary. In Montenegro, the male unemployment rate (15.7 per cent) exceeds that of women (14.7 per cent), while in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, women have higher unemployment rates. These figures reflect the gender segmentation in the labour market and women's difficulties in gaining access to stable, well-paid positions.

Figure 3 - Unemployment rate by gender. Year 2023* (%)



* 2022: West Bank and Gaza

Source: International Labour Organization (ILO) and Istat.

Occupational segmentation and occupational segregation

Men and women often concentrate in different sectors and occupations. Women tend to be more present in low-paid sectors (e.g. social and care services), while men are over-represented in areas such as technology, engineering and finance.

The 2022 analysis shows a gender gap between salaried and self-employed workers in the Mediterranean. Women are predominantly employed in salaried jobs, especially in Southern Europe. In Italy, 83.9 per cent of women are wage-earners compared to 74.5 per cent of men, while in Spain and Portugal more than 88 per cent of women work as employees, compared to about 81 per cent of men.

In the Western Balkans, the difference is less pronounced: in Bosnia and Herzegovina, self-employment is almost equal between the genders, while in Serbia and Montenegro, self-employment rates are higher among men.

In the Middle East, the disparity is more pronounced. In Lebanon, 35.4 per cent of men are self-employed compared to 17.1 per cent of women, while in Jordan, 96.4 per cent of women are salaried, underlining the concentration of women in salaried work.

In North Africa, the differences are pronounced in Tunisia and Algeria. In Morocco, however, 54.7% of women are self-employed, one of the highest percentages in the region, indicating their role in the informal sector. These data reflect cultural and structural barriers that hinder women's access to self-employment, underlining the need for inclusive policies to foster female entrepreneurship.

Figure 4a - Self-employed and wage-earners by gender. Year 2022 (% of female employment)

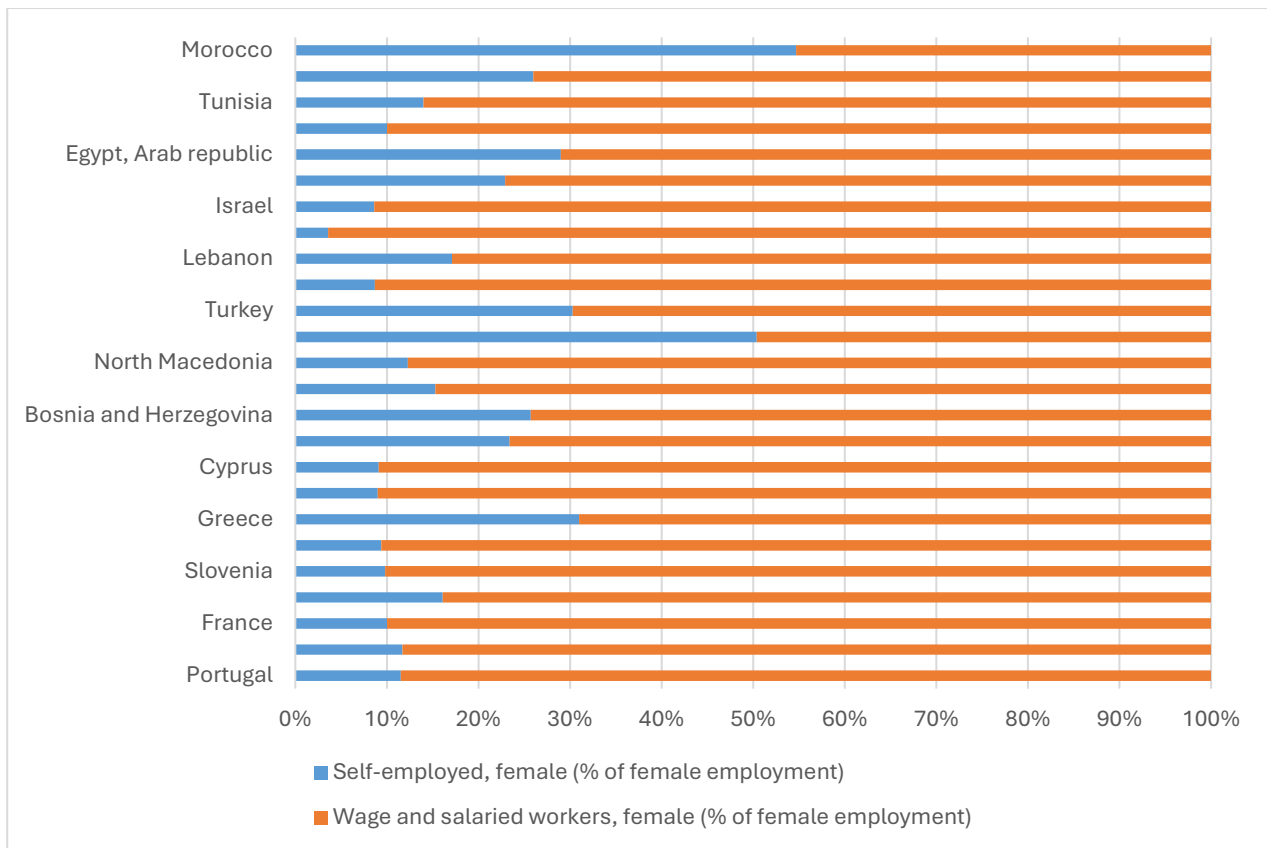
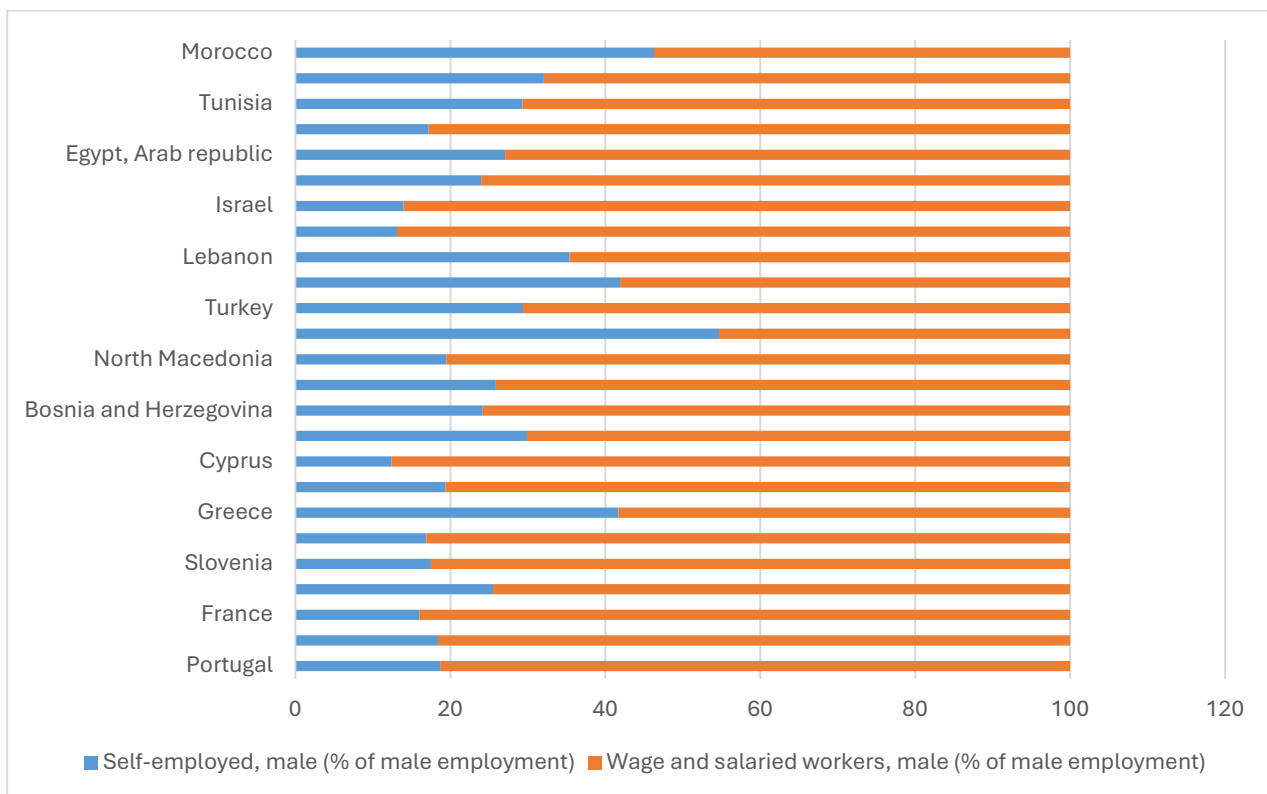


Figure 4b - Self-employed and wage-earners by gender. Year 2022 (% of male employment)



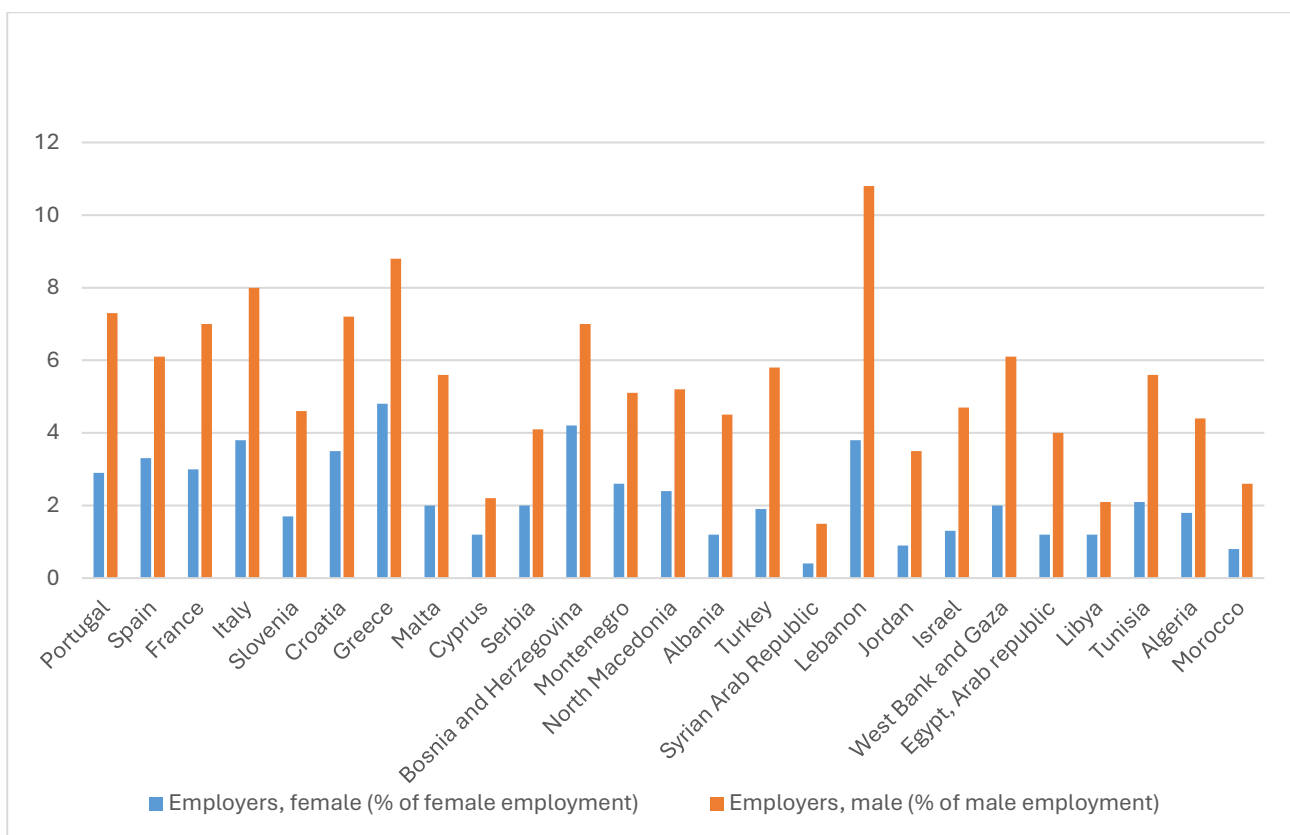
Source: International Labour Organization (ILO).

The analysis of 2022 data on employers in the Mediterranean countries reveals strong gender disparities in entrepreneurial positions, with a marked male dominance. In EU countries, such as Italy and Greece, women occupy a significantly lower percentage of leadership roles than men: in Italy, 3.8% of employed women are entrepreneurs compared to 8% of men, while in Greece the disparity is similar (4.8% versus 8.8%).

In the Western Balkans, women account for less than half as many employers as men. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example, only 4.2% of women are entrepreneurs compared to 7% of men.

The disparity is even greater in the Middle East and North Africa: in Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine, women entrepreneurs are under 4%, while in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia they are a small minority (up to 0.8% in Morocco). These figures highlight deep-seated cultural and social barriers that limit women's access to leadership and entrepreneurship roles in the region.

Figure 5 - Employers by gender. Year 2022 (% of female and male employment)



Source: International Labour Organization (ILO).

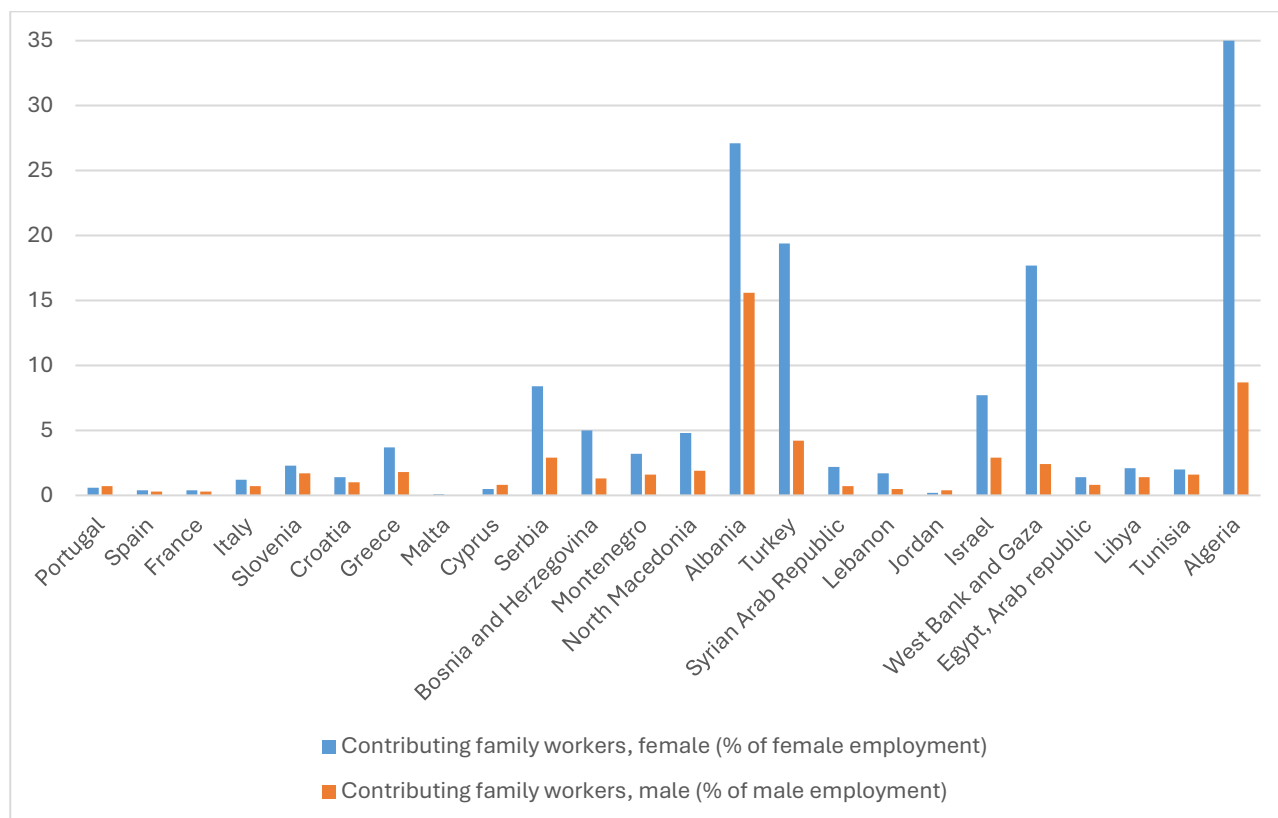
The analysis of data on family workers in the Mediterranean confirms a marked gender segregation, with women more present in less remunerative and subordinate roles. In European countries, such as Spain and France, there are few family workers for both sexes. In Italy and Greece, the gap widens: in Italy, 1.2% of women hold this role, compared to 0.7% of men, and in Greece, 3.7% compared to 1.8% respectively.

In the Western Balkans, the disparities are more pronounced. In Serbia, 8.4% of women are family workers, compared to 2.9% of men. Similar percentages are observed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and North Macedonia.

In the Middle East and North Africa, the percentages of women in these roles are even higher. In Palestine and Egypt, women family workers account for 7.7 per cent and 17.7 per cent respectively,

while in Morocco, the percentage reaches 35 per cent, compared to 8.7 per cent for men. These figures reflect socio-cultural barriers that limit women's access to better paid and secure positions, highlighting the need for policies that promote gender equity in employment.

Figure 6 - Family workers by gender. Year 2022 (% of female and male employment)



Source: International Labour Organization (ILO).

Gender distribution in sectoral employment

The 2022 analysis of employment distribution in the agriculture, industry and services sectors in the Mediterranean countries shows strong gender disparities, with women predominating in services and men more in agriculture and industry. This gap reflects gender stereotypes and socio-cultural constraints that influence women's access to certain sectors.

In services, women make up the majority of employment in almost all Mediterranean countries. In France, 88.6% of women work in services, compared to 68.1% of men, while in Israel and Jordan more than 92% of women are employed in the sector. A similar concentration of women can also be observed in Lebanon and Cyprus, where women are often relegated to traditional roles with fewer opportunities for growth.

In agriculture, employment is predominantly male, but in some countries such as Morocco, Albania and Turkey, a significant percentage of women are employed in this sector (48.2%, 39.8% and 21.8% respectively). This reflects the weight of informal and rural work, where women often work without social protection.

Furthermore, the industrial sector shows a strong male predominance. In Italy, 36.2% of men are employed in industry, while only 14% of women work there. Similar situations are observed in Serbia and Tunisia, where men employed in industry represent 37.3% and 34%, respectively, while women are 19.3% and 31.7%. The under-representation of women in industry is linked to barriers in access to

technical roles and male dominance in these areas. These data underline the importance of policies that facilitate women's equal access to all areas of work.

Figure 7a - Distribution of employment in sectors by gender and macro-region. Year 2022 (% of female employment)

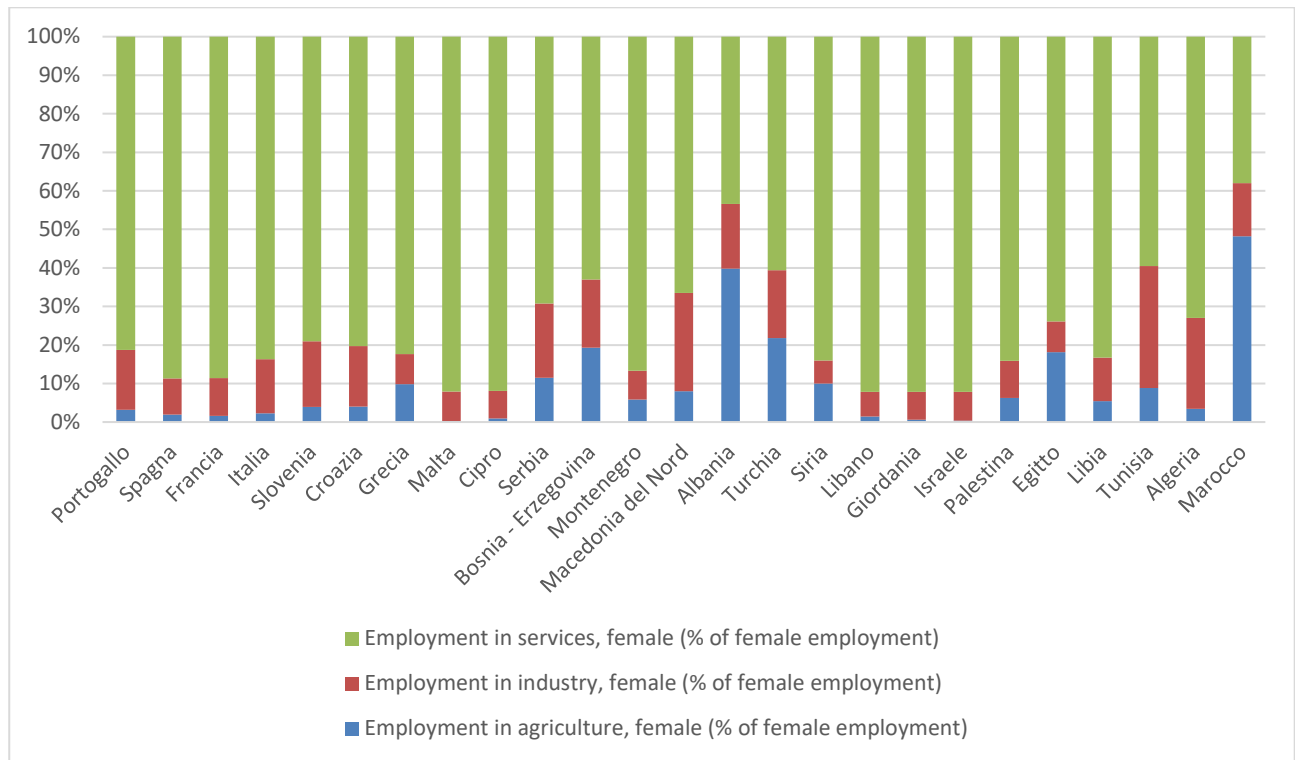
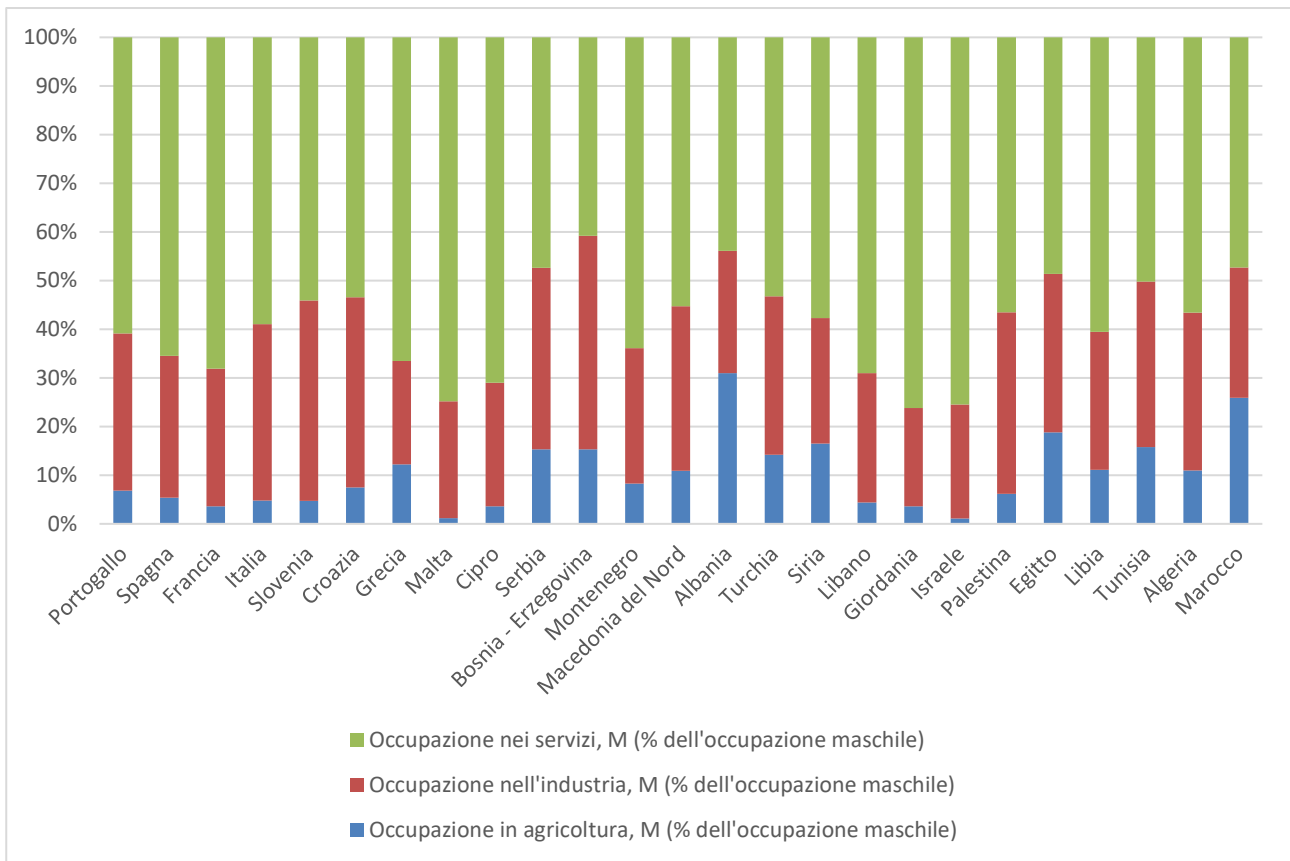


Figure 7b - Distribution of employment in sectors by gender and macro-region. Year 2022 (% of male employment)



Source: International Labour Organization (ILO) and Istat.