

### Gender differences in employment opportunities

Regional disparities in participation rates, measured here by the Gini index, have generally decreased from 1999 to 2011 due to an increase in labour force participation in less advantaged regions (Figure 4.23). The Gini index showed the greatest decline in Ireland, thanks to an increase in labour force among the regions with relatively lower participation rates, but also due to a steep reduction of the labour force participation in Dublin. Countries like Canada, Greece and Turkey also show a significant decline in the Gini index between these two points in time. Regional inequalities in participation rates increased the most in Italy, Poland, and the Slovak Republic.

Despite the decrease in regional disparities regarding participation rates in most OECD countries, important differences in the access to labour markets are still present between men and women. About 69% of women in OECD regions were in the labour force, compared to 88% of men in 2011.

Regional differences in female participation rates were above 20 percentage points in Turkey, Italy, Israel, Poland and France (Figure 4.24). The largest difference in participation rates by gender are found in regions with different

profiles. In countries like Mexico, Spain and Italy, the largest difference between male and female rates is found in Chiapas, Ceuta and Apulia, respectively, which are regions characterised by low GDP and income levels. However, in countries like the United Kingdom, Korea and Belgium, the capital regions are the regions where the participation rate of women is the lowest compared to that of men.

Broadening access to women in the labour market would require a mix of policies, including measures to reconcile family and work life. Regional differences in female participation rates suggest that the availability and use of services to reconcile family and work life are also quite diverse within countries.

The female employment rate has increased in OECD countries over the past decades, reaching 57% in 2011. However, in around 26% of OECD regions, less than one out of two women was employed in 2011. Regional disadvantages in female employment were the largest in Turkey, Italy, Spain, Israel, the United States and the Slovak Republic (Figure 4.25).

#### Source

OECD (2013), *OECD Regional Statistics* (database), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/region-data-en>.

See Annex B for data sources and country-related metadata.

#### Reference years and territorial level

1999-2011; TL3.

Australia, Canada, Chile, Israel, Mexico, Switzerland, and Turkey only at TL2.

Female participation rates and employment only at TL2.

#### Further information

OECD (2012), *Closing the Gender Gap: Act Now*, OECD Publishing, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264179370-en>.

Interactive graphs and maps: <http://rag.oecd.org>.

#### Figure notes

4.23: Countries with fewer than four regions are excluded: Belgium, Estonia, Iceland, Ireland, Luxemburg, New Zealand and Slovenia. Portugal: Due to changes in the LFS data collection methodology, values from 2011 are not directly comparable with those from previous years.

Information on data for Israel:  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.

#### Definition

The participation rate is the ratio of the labour force to the working age population. The labour force is defined as the sum of employed and unemployed people.

Employed people are all persons who, during the reference week, worked at least one hour for pay or profit or were temporarily absent from such work. Family workers are included.

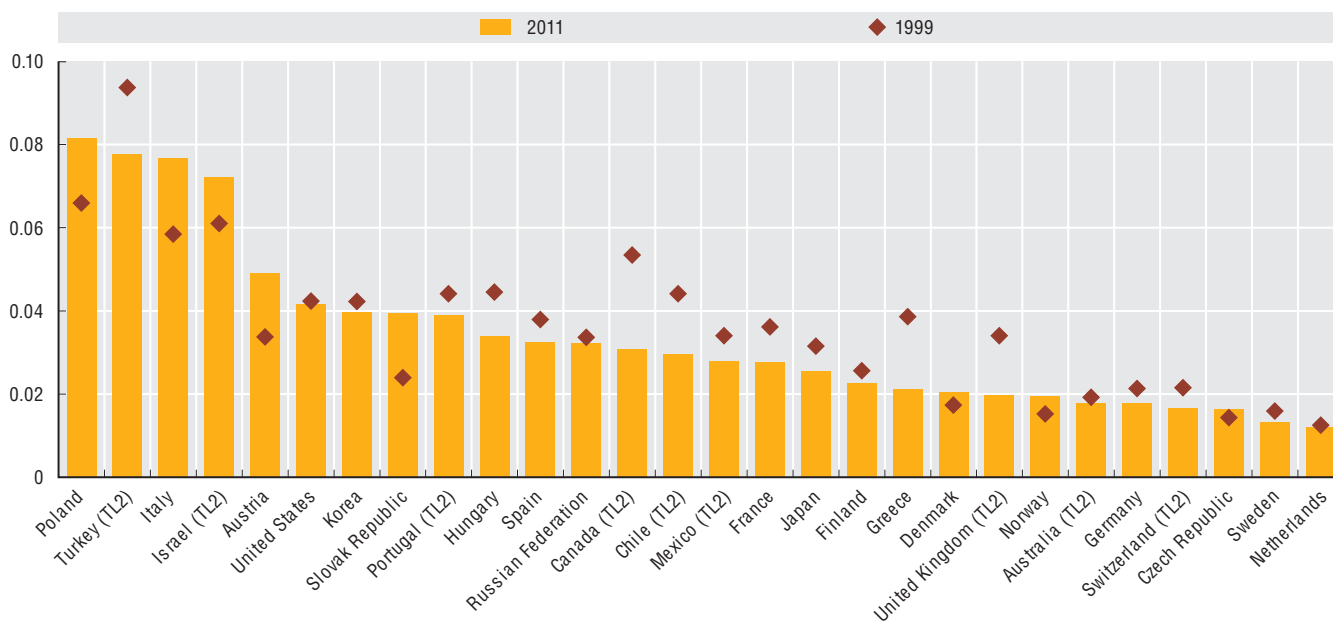
The female employment rate is calculated as the ratio between female employment and female working-age population (aged 15-64 years).

The Gini index is a measure of inequality among all regions of a given country (see Annex C for the formula). The index takes on values between 0 and 1, with zero interpreted as no disparity. It assigns equal weight to each region regardless of its size; therefore differences in the values of the index among countries may be partially due to differences in the average size of regions in each country.

## 4. INCLUSION AND EQUAL ACCESS TO QUALITY SERVICES IN REGIONS

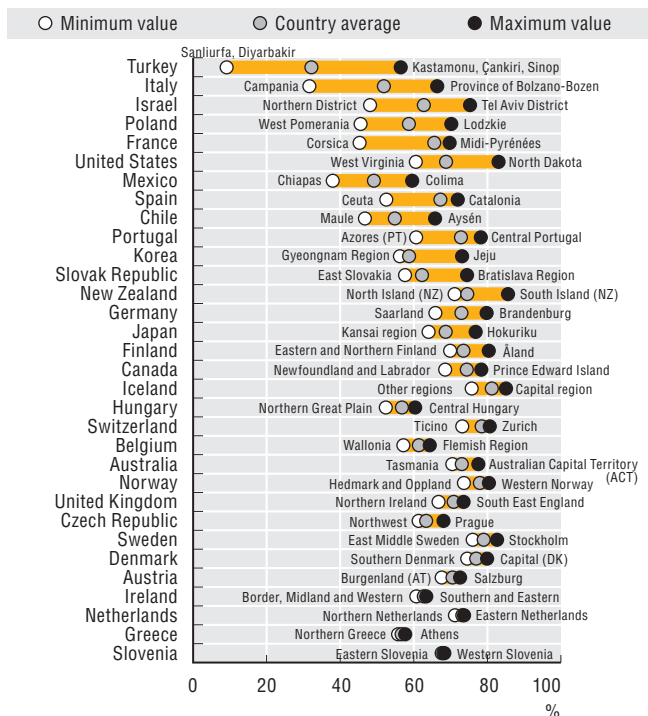
### Gender differences in employment opportunities

4.23. Gini index of TL3 regional participation rates, 1999 and 2011



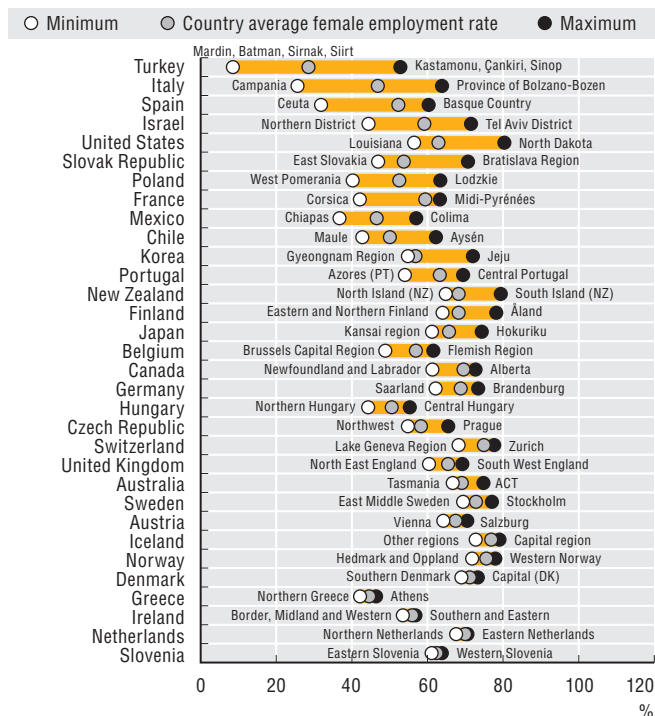
StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932914520>

4.24. Countries ranked by size of difference in TL2 regional female participation rates, 2011



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932914539>

4.25. Countries ranked by size of difference in TL2 regional female employment rate, 2011



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932914558>



**From:**  
**OECD Regions at a Glance 2013**

**Access the complete publication at:**  
[https://doi.org/10.1787/reg\\_glance-2013-en](https://doi.org/10.1787/reg_glance-2013-en)

**Please cite this chapter as:**

OECD (2013), "Gender differences in employment opportunities", in *OECD Regions at a Glance 2013*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1787/reg\\_glance-2013-36-en](https://doi.org/10.1787/reg_glance-2013-36-en)

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

You can copy, download or print OECD content for your own use, and you can include excerpts from OECD publications, databases and multimedia products in your own documents, presentations, blogs, websites and teaching materials, provided that suitable acknowledgment of OECD as source and copyright owner is given. All requests for public or commercial use and translation rights should be submitted to [rights@oecd.org](mailto:rights@oecd.org). Requests for permission to photocopy portions of this material for public or commercial use shall be addressed directly to the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) at [info@copyright.com](mailto:info@copyright.com) or the Centre français d'exploitation du droit de copie (CFC) at [contact@cfcopies.com](mailto:contact@cfcopies.com).