

Gender differences in self-employment rates

Key findings

- In OECD economies, one in ten employed women is self-employed, almost half the rate of self-employed men (17%). During the past ten years, however, the gap between male and female self-employment rates has closed in almost every country, and particularly so in Iceland, New Zealand and Turkey.
- In a majority of countries, women self-employed work predominantly in the services sector (70% or more), and mostly as own-account workers rather than employers. The patterns for men are different, with a large share of self-employed men working in manufacturing and, generally, two and a half times more likely to employ others than self-employed women.
- A gender gap is observed in all countries also among young self-employed, i.e. individuals less than 30 years old. In 2016, only in Chile and Mexico the self-employment rate of women was slightly higher than that of men.
- The share of employees having a second job as self-employed increased in 2016 compared to 2007 in most countries, to around 2% and 1% respectively for men and women employees.

Relevance

Entrepreneurship is an important source of employment creation and innovation. It is also a vehicle for addressing inequalities, particularly across genders where significant differences remain, despite the scope that self-employment provides to manage work-home balances.

Definitions

The *self-employed* are defined as those who own and work in their own business, including unincorporated businesses and own-account workers, and declare themselves as “self-employed” in population or labour force surveys. Self-employed category consists therefore of the sum of employers and own-account workers.

The number of women (men) employers is given by the number of women (men) who report their status as “self-employed with employees” in population surveys. The number of women (men) own-account workers is given by the number of women (men) who report their status as “self-employed without employees”. The share of women (men) employers (own-account workers) is given in relation to the total number of women (men) in employment.

The gender gap in self-employment rate for the year t corresponds to the difference between male and female self-employment rates in t . Contribution of female (male) self-employment rate change is calculated as the difference between t and $t-n$ female (male) self-employment rates.

The share of self-employed in the population of young employed is calculated by dividing the number of self-employed women (men) between 15 and 29 years old by the number of all employed women (men) between 15 and 29 years old.

The share of self-employed in the population of employed with foreign citizenship is calculated by dividing the number of self-employed women (men) with foreign citizenship by the number of all employed women (men) with foreign citizenship.

The share of women (men) employees having a second job as self-employed is calculated by dividing the number of women (men) employees who declare that they have a second job as self-employed by the total number of women (men) employees.

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

Comparability

The main comparability issue relates to the classification of “self-employed” owners of incorporated businesses. Some countries, notably Japan, New Zealand and Norway include only the self-employed owners of unincorporated businesses, following the 2008 SNA, which is likely to create a downward bias in the contribution of self-employed owners with employees in these countries.

In Figure 6.6, services include sectors 45-96 of ISIC Rev. 4. In Figure 6.7, data refer to self-employed with foreign citizenship for all countries with exception of the United States, where data refer to foreign-born.

Not all the self-employed are necessarily entrepreneurs in the purest sense, as defined in the OECD Entrepreneurship Indicators Programme. Self-employment statistics include, for example, craft-workers engaging in low level activity, often for leisure purposes. Care is thus needed in interpreting the data in analyses of entrepreneurship.

Source

Canada: Labour Force Survey, www.statcan.gc.ca/imdb-bmdi/3701-eng.htm.

Chile: Encuesta Nacional del Empleo, <http://www.ine.cl/estadisticas/laborales/ene>.

Eurostat: EU Labour Force Survey, <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/microdata/european-union-labour-force-survey>.

Israel: Labour Force Survey, http://www.cbs.gov.il/ts/databank/databank_main_func_e.html?i=21&ti=11&r=0&f=3&o=0.

Japan: Labour Force Survey, <http://www.e-stat.go.jp/SG1/estat/eStatTopPortalE.do>.

Mexico: Encuesta Nacional de Empleo, <http://www.inegi.org.mx/est/contenidos/proyectos/encuestas/hogares/default.aspx>.

United States: Current Population Survey, www.census.gov/cps/.

Brazil: National Household Sample Survey, <http://www.ibge.gov.br/english/estatistica/populacao/trabalhoerendimento/pnad2008/default.shtm#brasil>.

South Africa: Labour Force Survey, http://www.statssa.gov.za/?page_id=1854&PPN=P0211.

Further reading

OECD (2017), Report on the implementation of the OECD Gender Recommendations, Meeting of the OECD Council at Ministerial Level Paris, 7-8 June 2017, <http://www.oecd.org/mcm/documents/C-MIN-2017-7-EN.pdf>.

Figure 6.1. Trends in self-employment rate, OECD average, by category and gender

2007 = 100

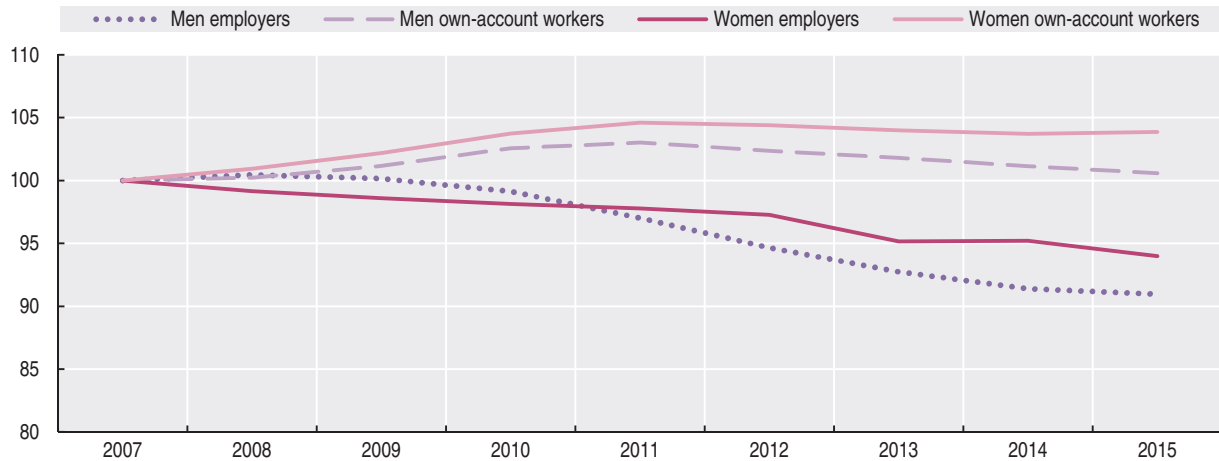
StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933564481>

Table 6.1. Number of self employed by category and gender

Thousands of persons, 2016 or latest available year

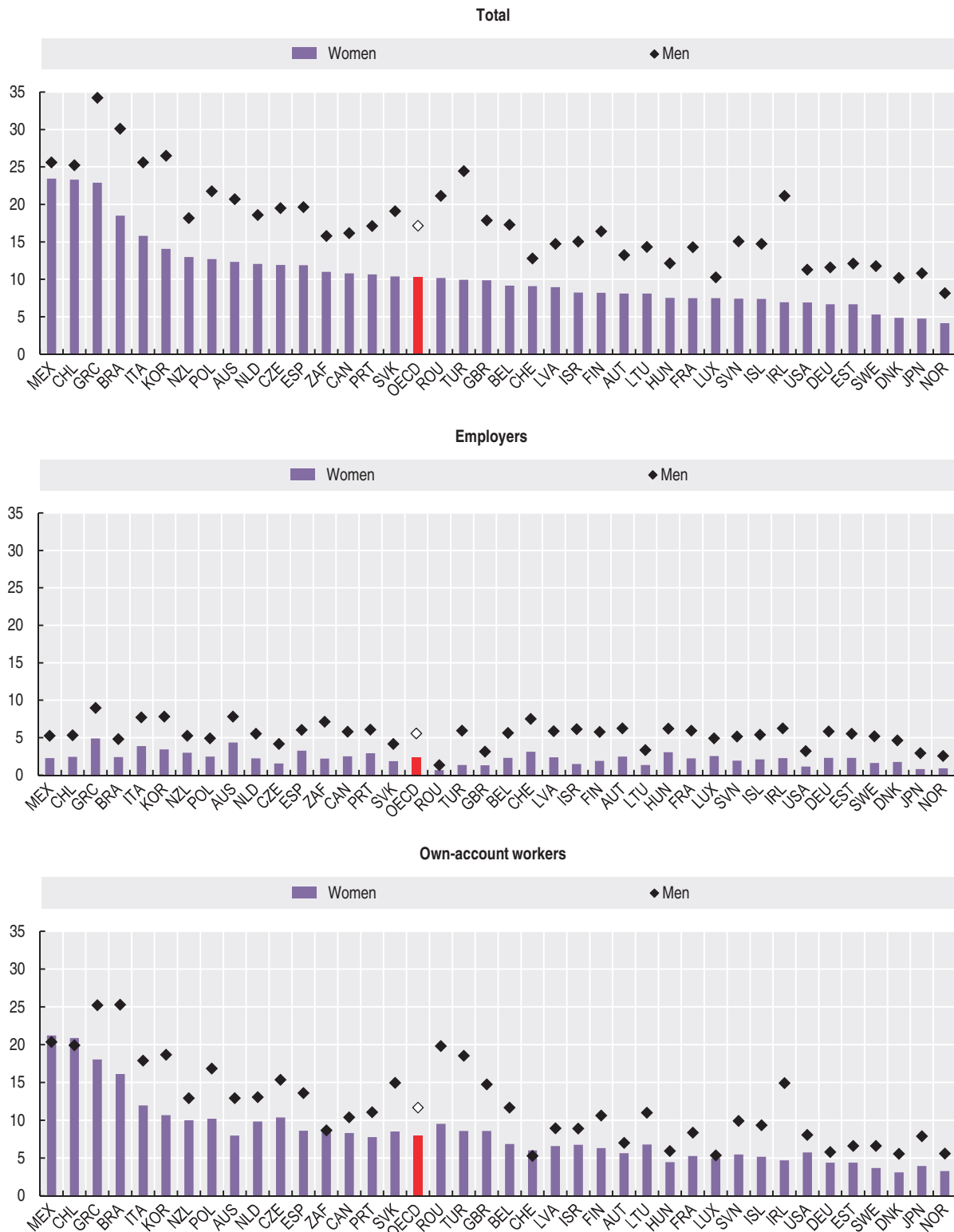
| Country | Age | Employers | | Own account workers | |
|-----------------|-------|-----------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| | | Men | Women | Men | Women |
| Australia | 15+ | 494 | 236 | 818 | 431 |
| Austria | 15-64 | 137 | 49 | 153 | 110 |
| Belgium | 15-64 | 137 | 49 | 284 | 144 |
| Canada | 15-64 | 559 | 220 | 1,001 | 729 |
| Chile | 15+ | 253 | 80 | 946 | 684 |
| Czech Republic | 15-64 | 117 | 34 | 431 | 229 |
| Denmark | 15-64 | 67 | 23 | 80 | 40 |
| Estonia | 15-64 | 18 | 7 | 21 | 13 |
| Finland | 15-64 | 71 | 22 | 130 | 73 |
| France | 15-64 | 807 | 285 | 1,132 | 666 |
| Germany | 15-64 | 1,246 | 436 | 1,237 | 824 |
| Greece | 15-64 | 188 | 74 | 528 | 274 |
| Hungary | 15-64 | 146 | 61 | 138 | 88 |
| Iceland | 15-64 | 5 | 2 | 9 | 4 |
| Ireland | 15-64 | 66 | 21 | 156 | 43 |
| Israel | 15+ | 119 | 26 | 172 | 116 |
| Italy | 15-64 | 992 | 362 | 2,299 | 1,121 |
| Japan | 15-64 | 107 | 23 | 287 | 110 |
| Korea | 15+ | 1,203 | 378 | 2,771 | 1,211 |
| Latvia | 15-64 | 25 | 10 | 38 | 29 |
| Lithuania | 15-64 | 22 | 9 | 71 | 46 |
| Luxembourg | 15-64 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 6 |
| Mexico | 15-64 | 1,536 | 408 | 5,948 | 3,829 |
| Netherlands | 15-64 | 243 | 86 | 572 | 377 |
| New Zealand | 15-64 | 25 | 13 | 66 | 44 |
| Norway | 15-64 | 34 | 11 | 74 | 40 |
| Poland | 15-64 | 429 | 179 | 1,471 | 731 |
| Portugal | 15-64 | 134 | 63 | 244 | 167 |
| Romania | 15-64 | 63 | 24 | 925 | 333 |
| Slovak Republic | 15-64 | 57 | 21 | 204 | 94 |
| Slovenia | 15-64 | 25 | 8 | 48 | 23 |
| South Africa | 15-64 | 631 | 152 | 786 | 626 |
| Spain | 15-64 | 600 | 270 | 1,348 | 712 |
| Sweden | 15-64 | 127 | 37 | 162 | 84 |
| Switzerland | 15-64 | 179 | 66 | 126 | 126 |
| Turkey | 15-64 | 1,087 | 109 | 3,403 | 697 |
| United Kingdom | 15-64 | 505 | 188 | 2,376 | 1,227 |
| United States | 16-64 | 2,408 | 766 | 6,026 | 3,798 |

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933565051>

6. FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Gender differences in self-employment rates

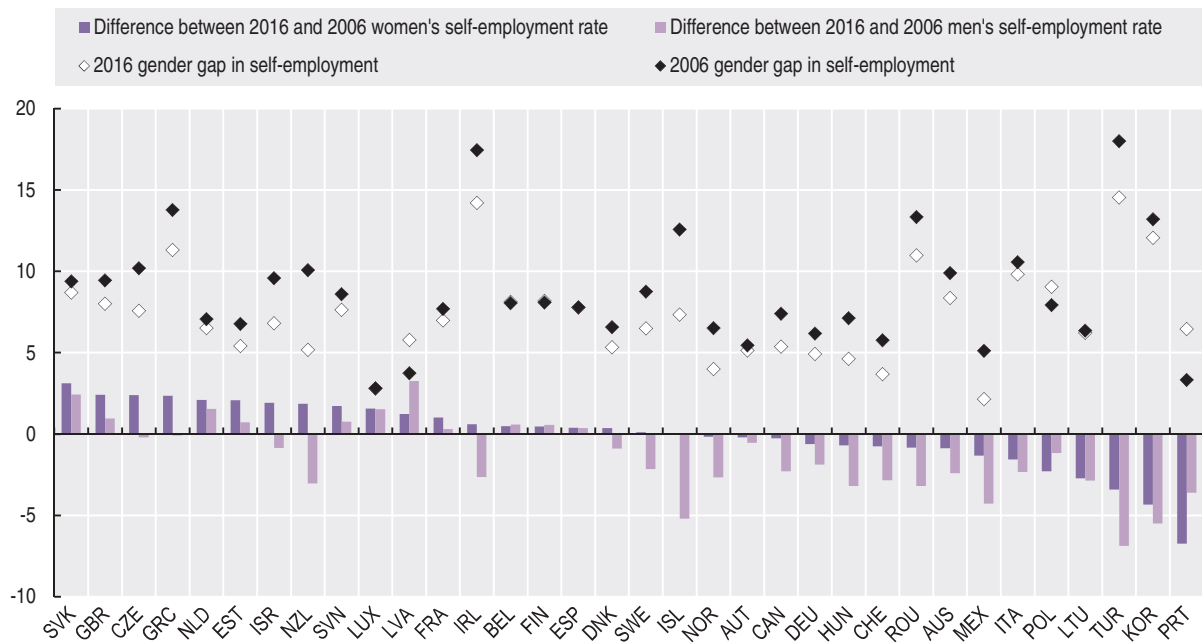
Figure 6.2. **Share of self-employed by category and gender**
Percentage of total employment, 2016 or latest available year



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Figure 6.3. Gender gap in self-employment rates

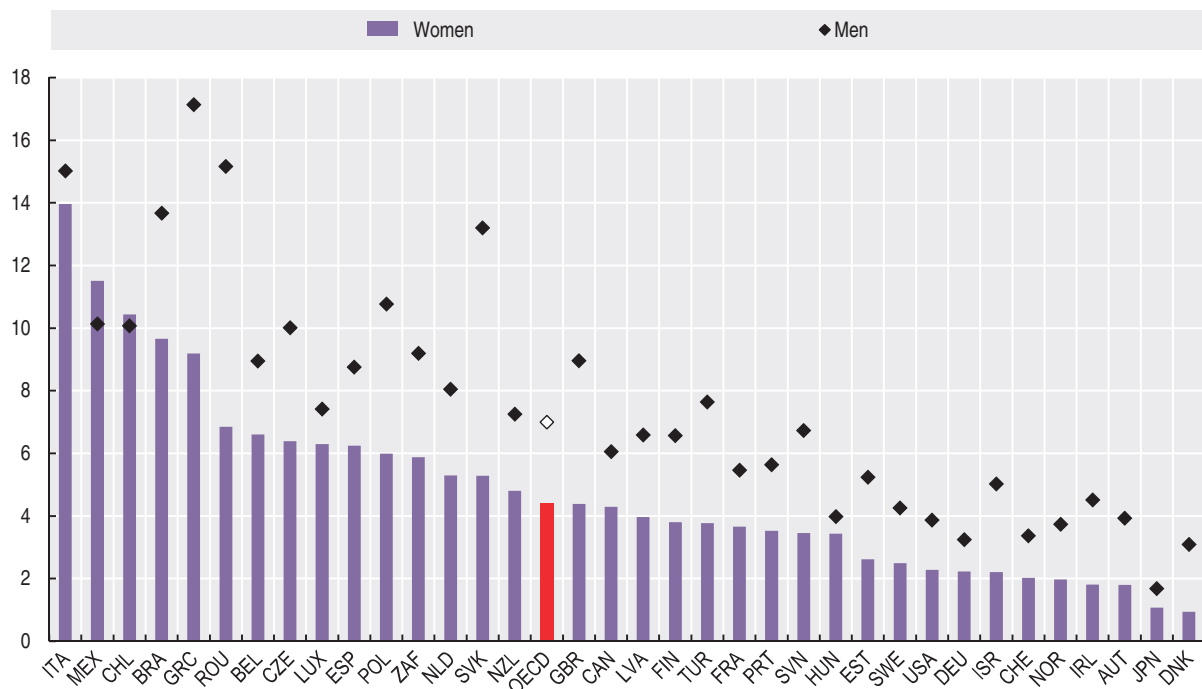
Percentage point difference



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933564519>

Figure 6.4. Share of self-employed in the population of young employed, by gender

Percentage of total employment less than 30 years old, average 2015- 2016 or latest available year

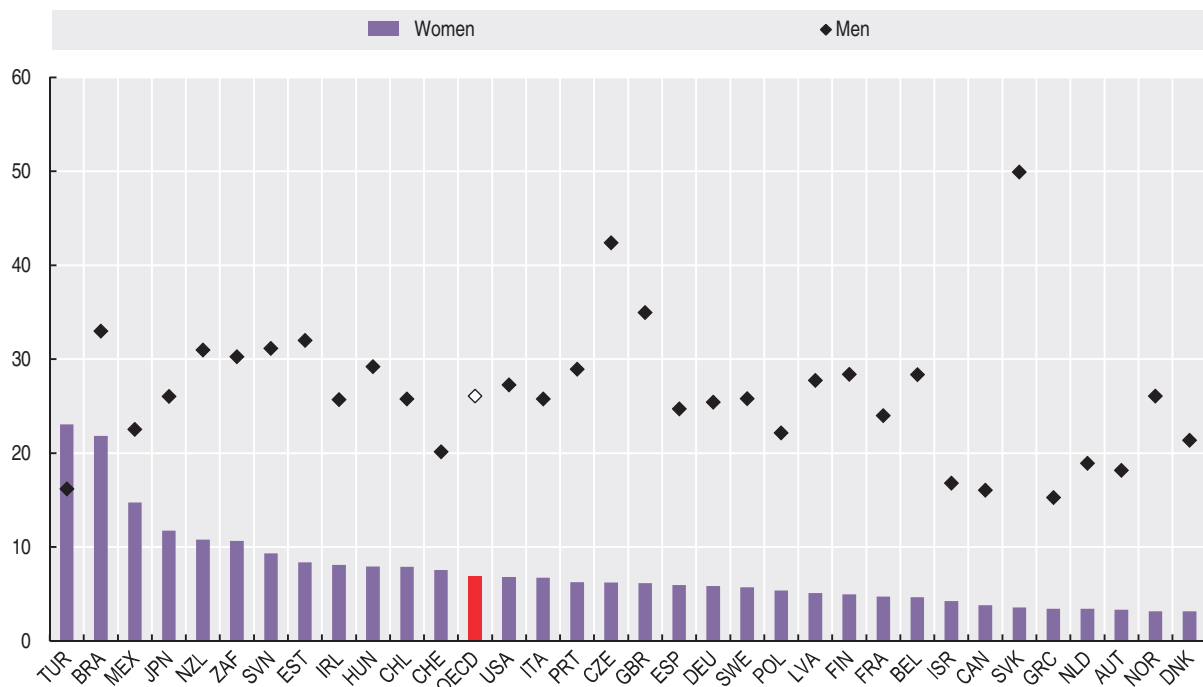


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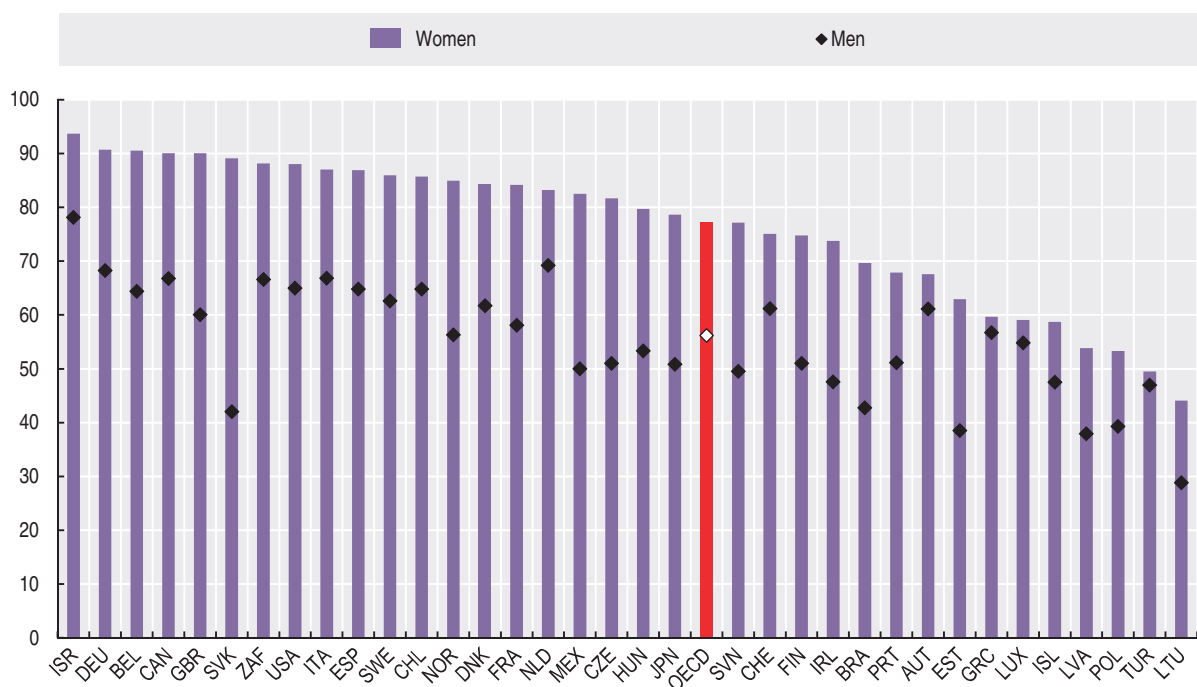
Gender differences in self-employment rates

Figure 6.5. **Self-employed whose activity is in manufacturing and construction**
Percentage of total self-employed by gender, 2016 or latest available year



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933564557>

Figure 6.6. **Self-employed whose activity is in services**
Percentage of total self-employed by gender, 2016 or latest available year



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933564576>

Figure 6.7. **Share of self-employed in the population of employed with foreign citizenship**
 Percentage of total employment with foreign citizenship, 2016 or latest available year

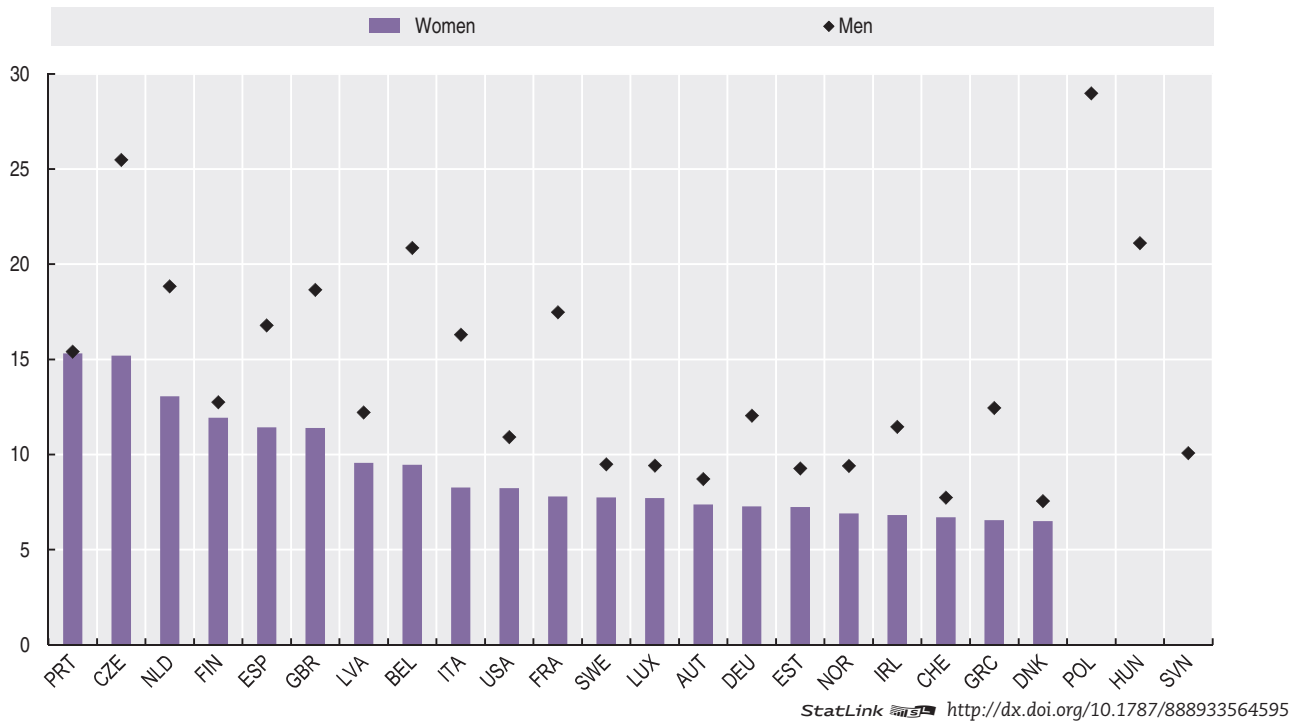
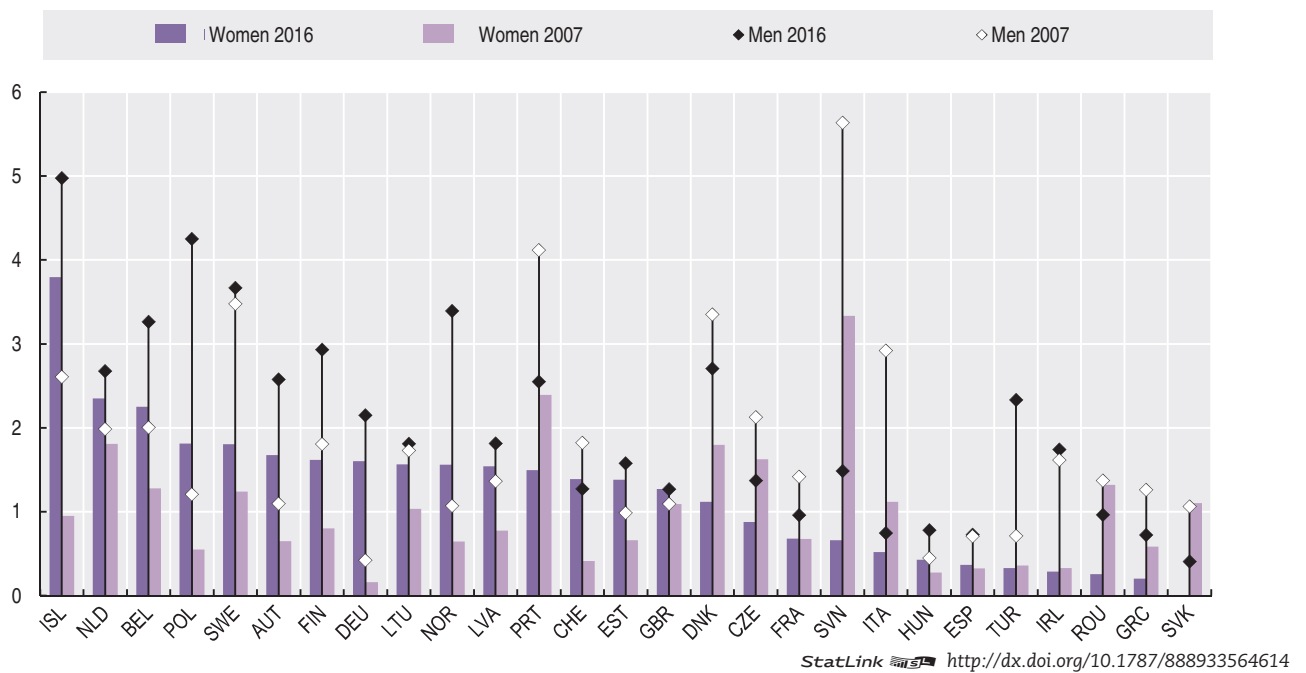


Figure 6.8. **Share of employees having a second job as self-employed, by gender**
 Percentage of all employees by gender





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