

WOMEN'S SITUATION ON THE LABOUR MARKET – "YOU ARE WOMAN – BE DOMINANT!"

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У Угорщині ділова активність жінок показує найсильнішу кореляцію. Займаючи провідні позиції, для жінки потребують набагато більших інвестицій часу й енергії. Число бездітних і незаміжніх жінок досить високе серед менеджерів-жінок. Дійсно, єдина проблема – в гармонізації співвідношення роботи і сім'ї.

***Ключові слова:** рівність жінок, лідер, відмінності між полами, регіональні дослідження, жіноча роль на ринку праці, кар'єра, сім'я.*

ABSTRACT

In Hungary the economic activity of women shows the strongest correlation associating the number of children. Holding managerial positions for women requires much more investment of time and energy and resignations: the number of childless and single women is quite high among women managers. Indeed the only problem is not the harmonization of work and family, but also society has negative opinion about independent, successful, and "career-orientated" women. My main aim is to pay attention for the importance of this theme in an Eastern European country, Hungary and present the most significant problems and my proposals as solutions in

almost the most handicapped region of the European Union, North-Hungary.

In my essay I compare my research which I made in 2008 and in 2010 as well. The Reader will see clearly the changes and the effects of the economic crisis in the North-Hungarian part of Hungary. The most important difficulty of women's progress is the hierarchic world of labour and the not realized gender stereo typographies. The process of socialization has significant role in the fact that shows what kind of role the work has in a woman's life and that has effect on profession choosing, career planning and self-imagine of women from the beginning. As a result women are often less aware in connection with their own career planning; motivation is missed and the obtained negative experiences throughout different socialization channels strongly restrict their self-confidence and proactivity.

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In the career plan of women often before having baby the first thing is that what will be the best for children and family in the future and their own dreams and real goals are just on the second place. Starting a business claims constant presence and serious time consumed. So: the enterprises are usually not “family friendly” institutes. Not surprisingly in Hungary the most percent of entrepreneurs is men and the heads of large-scale business ventures are almost exclusively men. We need easing of labour market’s structure and spreading of alternative career models, because without it women cannot plan their career consciously.

I hope that I can show a comprehensive composition about women’s present social situation in the workplace and its solutions, its imaginable future.

1 WOMEN AND MEN – GENERAL OVERVIEW ABOUT HUNGARY

Hungary has relatively low employment rates for women, well-below EU and OECD averages, and even low compared to other central and eastern European countries. Insufficient child care places in rural Hungary and traditional beliefs, shared by both sexes, that women belong in the home rather than the workplace, help explain the low participation rate in the labour market. However, women are beginning to outnumber their male peers in terms of educational attainment at almost every level; even at doctorate level, women are almost on equal footing.

Family code

In a poll undertaken in 2000, 76% of men and 70% of women agreed that 'the husband should earn a living and the wife should do the household chores.' 68% of men and 67% agreed that 'the full time employment strains the life of the family.' (UNRISD). The continuity of these traditional perceptions explain why women face difficulties in entering the labour market and in re-entering after leave periods. Moreover, the responsibility for raising children is also seen in Hungary as a woman's job. Hungary stands out in international comparison as a country that offers relatively generous options for taking time off to raise children on a full-time basis. As a result, the gap between the employment rates for women with children and those without is relatively wide. Hungary also has the lowest female participation rate in comparison with other central and eastern European countries. Women’s inactivity rates reach over 80% for households with at least one child aged below three years. At the same time, the proportion of children under the age of three attending childcare institutions is comparatively low.

Employment

The female employment rate in Hungary remained significantly below the EU and OECD average and the employment level of Roma women, in particular, has not increased since 1993, staying at 15%. Women remain in low-management (and consequently less well-paid) positions, and are less likely to enter management: in 2004, the proportion of women in managing positions stood at 35% compared with 65% of men (Eurostat Labour Force Survey). With regard to high-level

management of top companies in Hungary, the proportion of women was around 13% in 2004 and they earned up to 40% less in the same position than men did. 50 leading companies in Hungary employ three times more men than women.

Education

In general, the level of schooling attainment is somewhat higher among women than in men in Hungary. Girls are over-represented in secondary education, favouring grammar to vocational schools. In contrast surveys have shown that some 35-40 % of Roma women have not completed primary school. The proportion of women in higher education as well as among those holding degrees from tertiary education exceeds that of men. Some 58 % of students in higher education are women. 55% of students at university level are women. Men make up a higher proportion only at the highest (PhD) level of education; in 2005/6, 47 % of the PhD students are women. Some 70 % of students in tertiary teacher training in Hungary are women, while they make up less than 10 % of engineer students. Women make up some 60 % of those studying law and economics, 67 % and 54 % of those studying management and medical sciences, respectively.

2 IT IS WORTH WORKING WITH WOMEN

In 2003 the ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN’S CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN HUNGARY (AWCDH) was founded. The Founders of AWCDH identified the need for a non-governmental organization for promoting women's equality focusing on the harmonization of

the interest representation of women and organizations dealing with women's issues, undertaking an active role in forming the common positions, endorsing a more characteristic representation of women's interests, paying special attention to promoting equal opportunities to women active in the strategic sectors by drawing attention to the need of implementation of the recommendations and directives both of the European Union and the United Nations and the furthering the realization of the objectives set out in the European Employment Strategy.

In 2010 I was in a conference in Budapest organized by Ferenczi Andrea, Chair, and President of the AWCDH where Dr Zita Gurmai, MEP, Vice Chairwoman of the Committee of Women’s Rights and Gender Equality held her speech. She paid my attention the present facts about women with the next words:

“Women are necessary if we are to make Hungarian society successful” – began. Mainly the financial problems of those industries – the car industry, the building industry – caused the present economic crisis where mostly men work, so women have an outstanding role in cooperation and peace, she continued. Emphasizing the best practices of the Scandinavian states, Dr Zita Gurmai said that as in the Northern states, everyone is needed to make a welfare state operate, and in decision making the proportion of women should be 25% everywhere. If women are well represented, we also have to pay attention to the fact that we should not just work silently, but make ourselves visible, emphasized the MEP,

which is also the main purpose of the *Best Workplace for Women* award. As a first step, the aim is to increase women's representation with a 10% increase as part of the Lisbon Strategy between 2000 and 2010, and also the higher representation of the disabled at the labour market.

The voice of women politician is very weak in the media presently, while in the West women over 40 appear more on the screen, said Dr. Zita Gurmai. "Let us cooperate to make the slogan Gender Equality a reality!"- the politician said in closing.

HUNGARY - LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT; FEMALE (% OF FEMALE UNEMPLOYMENT)



1992 19.8	1996 50.4	2000 45.7	2003 42.1	2006 45.1
1993 34.5	1997 49.2	2001 44.1	2004 42.9	2007 47.9
1994 37.6	1998 49.6	2002 41.7	2005 44.1	2008 46.3
1995 48.3	1999 47.9			

Figure 1 Hungary long term female unemployment rate 1992-2008 (%)

Source: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/hungary/long-term-unemployment-female-percent-of-female-unemployment-wb-data.html>

Regarding the EU target for the female employment rate, progress has been better. In 2009, 58.6% of working-age women were employed - a shortfall of only 1.4 percentage points compared to the Lisbon target. Since 2000, considerable progress has been made in expanding female employment rate, with the employment rate for women increasing by almost 5 percentage points, although the rate decreased by 0.5 percentage points in 2009 compared with 2008. In 2009, 14 Member States had a female employment rate at, or above, the Lisbon target of 60% (Chart 65). However, most of the remaining Member States were still a long way from reaching the target, with four more than 10 percentage points short, namely Malta (37.7%), Italy (46.4%), Greece (48.9%) and **Hungary (49.9)**. In four Member States (Estonia, Ireland, Spain and Latvia) the labour market situation deteriorated significantly in 2009, with a decrease in their female employment rates of more than 2 percentage points compared to the previous year. In a longer-term perspective, and against the general trend of expanding female employment in the EU, Romania, Hungary and the Czech Republic have registered virtually no progress at all since 2000.

3 MY OWN RESEARCH

In the last chapter I would like to show the main elements of my own research work which I did twice in the North-Hungarian region in 2008 and in 2010. I had a questionnaire which title was: Women's balance between family and career. It was filled by 300 women employees,

entrepreneurs, middle –leaders and CEOs. The sampling units were the next: workers of House of Arts of Miskolc, workers and leaders of Tax- and Financing Controlling Office of North-Hungarian Region, participants of Conferences organized by MINŐIES – Chance to Women of Miskolc too – Foundation, participants of Young Entrepreneurs Week- Women Entrepreneurs Day. Data were analyzed by Microsoft Office Excel 2007.

3.1. My main hypotheses were:

1. Large percentage of women works as an employee
2. Less than 10% of them are CEOs
3. The majority of women think that men don't have to get higher wages than women just because they are the householders
4. The majority of women think that there hasn't been equality between the sexes yet
5. Women try to create balance between family and career

The interviewed person majority are employees as we can see in the Figure 2; it means 57% in 2008 and 41% in 2010. This result is positive because it reduces 15% during two years. The number of women entrepreneurs increased 10% surprisingly and the ratio of CEO women is higher than it was two years ago so it's forward.

From the responses I can see that the majority of women rather live in partnerships than in marriages. This result is that I expected. The marriage age is getting higher and higher and the divorced women ratio increased unfortunately by 8%.

Surprisingly in 2010 big percentage of women know their rights and they deal with rules and laws of equal opportunities. In 2008 they don't know the

conferences, campaigns, rules of the European Union and Hungary about the equality.

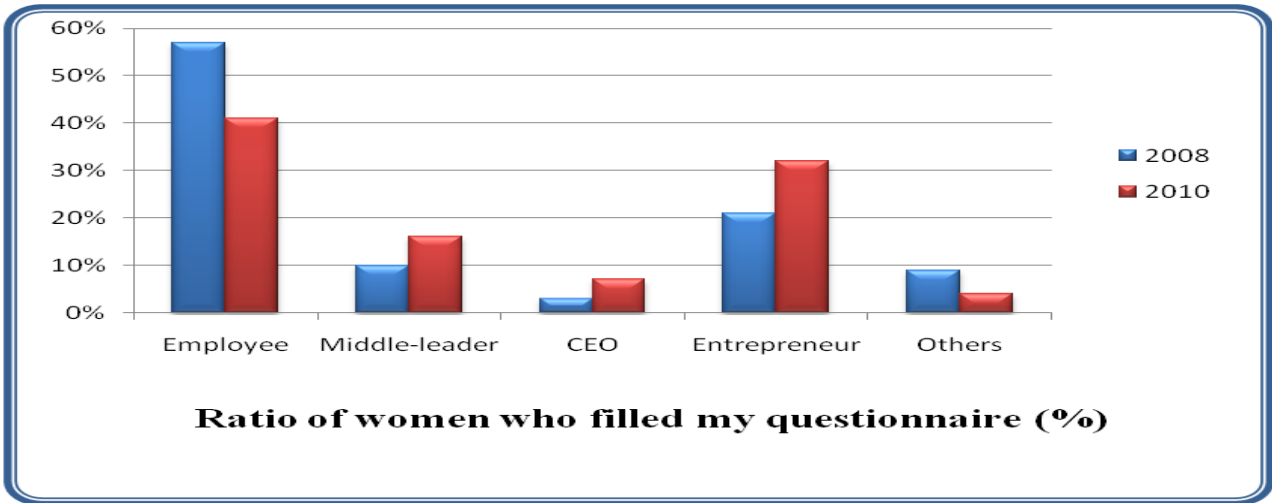


Figure 2 Ratio of women who filled my questionnaire (%)

Source: My own editing

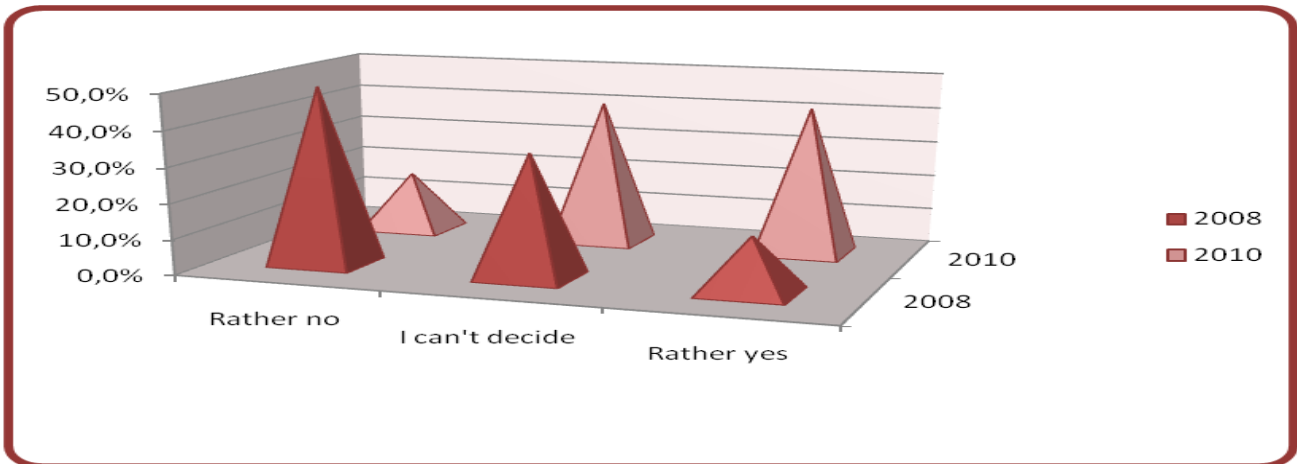


Figure 3: Men are householder that's why they have to earn more money (%)

Source: My own editing

My experiences show other results in 2008 than in 2010 because only 17% of women don't agree with this statement in 2010, 41% hesitate, and 42% agree with this question. I think we can feel the effect of the economic crisis in this question because so many women workplace became uncertain and their wages reduced. The crisis favours for men only. Women would like to know themselves in safe by men.

In my research I can realize that women would like to share the daily routine household tasks with their partners because without it they cannot solve so many important things. Nowadays not only the women task is to do the household work because women work 8 and more hours as well as men.

My next question was about creating balance between family and work. About the answers I can see that 2 years ago women can solve this important problem easier. The main reason is the not suitable kindergartens' and crèche's numbers and its open time because it's not

flexible. In spite this fact the 13% of the interviewed women can solve everything very easily.

In the North-Hungarian the unemployment rate is the highest in the country that's why women are satisfied with their workplace, but they are not so satisfied in all cases with their position. The 45% of the interviewed think that there is no equal opportunity, but this number is less than it was in 2008. 28% don't have any problem with the question of equality and 8% think that we reached equality but we cannot use it. 18% said that there will never be equality, this number is higher than it was in 2008 so today women are more pessimistic than they were. And there is 1% who thinks that we reached equality and we can use it.

I had so my positive thought when I see this result because it was good feeling to realize that 57% of women think that the family is the most important thing in their life and just for 6% is the career. By the way I have to emphasize that less than 40% can create balance between family and career and it shows reduction in this case.

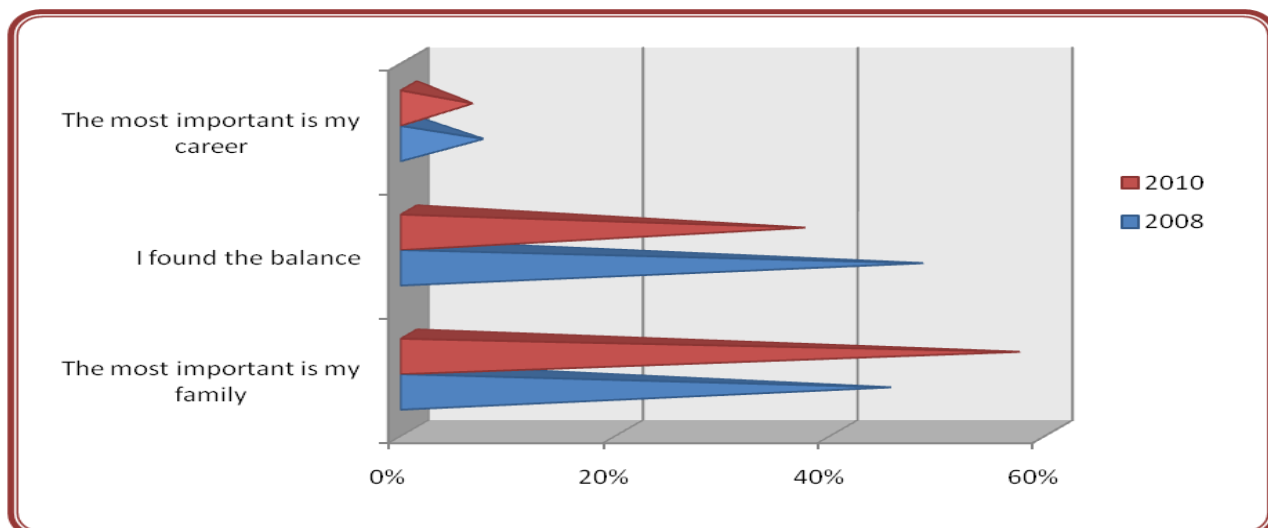


Figure 4: Family or career? (%)

Source: My own editing

SUMMARY

During writing my article I would have been liked if the Reader had not felt this topic boring which has no new approaches and it is superfluous to talk about it. Equality is a huge and comprehensive theme that's why I tried to show it as an attractive and interesting topic. Several men read my work and after reading they phoned me because they wanted to know how they can get more information about women's situation and what my sources were for that. This meant for me that they are open for the theme so our only task is to convince them and introduce them the facts.

My favourite chapter is the third one. Why? Because this is my own work and based on my own research. Most percentage of my hypothesis was right based on my questionnaire. Equality show developing tendency because at different sectors the employment rate of women increased and hopefully in decision making there will be more women time by time. Women's opinion is significant too that's why two genders exist. We have different way of thinking and different ideas so it is worth being a woman.

I hope that the Reader can realize my enthusiasm and I can serve useful information about Hungary, about the women's situation in the north region of Hungary and about my own opinion and actions in this topic.

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