

MOMentum. Helping mothers gain MOMentum in entrepreneurship

Project Result 1: Gamified role-model education methodology
2021-1-CZ01-KA220-VET-000033084



challedu
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Institute for Regional Development (IRR) is an NGO from the Czech Republic promoting the development of European regions. It does so through international exchange of good practices and by educating key players in areas critical for regional and sustainable development. IRR seeks to bring together institutions from different spheres (public, private, non-profit, academia and exchange of good practices.

IRR creates, manages, and implements projects within Erasmus+, CERV, European Social Fund, Visegrad Grants, etc. IRR fields of action count: education, training, European values, life-long learning, environment. The primary target group of the activities conducted by IRR are young people.



Citizens In Power (CIP) is an NGO from Cyprus that addresses the needs and demands of people through their involvement in social and civic life. It also provides them with innovative materials and free trainings in education (including online), inclusion, entrepreneurship and business, culture, labour market, and lifelong learning.

Its main focus is the development of education, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning in Cyprus and abroad. For these, CIP has an ongoing collaboration with leading universities, schools, NGOs and research organisations in Cyprus. CIP retains a valuable network of professional trainers and educational experts experienced in both formal and non-formal education.



Challedu is an NGO from Greece pioneering new models of learning and engagement. In collaboration with educators, teachers, experts, game designers, institutions and organisations, Challedu designs playful experiences and games rooted in the educational principles of playing.

Challedu aims to transform every educational activity in order to unlock the transformative power of people as seekers and solvers of complex

problems, risk takers, inventors and visionaries. Its work empowers creativity, fantasy, and empathy.

Project partners



Inpla Innovation Platform is a micro SME from Estonia. The team of Inpla has experience in international exchanges of experience, organising transnational events and managing international projects in diverse funding programmes. Inpla promotes innovation and quality in education, information and communication technologies and social inclusion.

Inpla supports young people, schools and enterprises from the SME sector, organizing training courses and workshops on entrepreneurship, integration, social awareness, and applies for EU-funded programs, providing advisory services in the mentioned areas. Inpla is supported by network of schools and training institutions.



Sustainable Development Agency ASSO is an NGO founded in Italy to promote sustainable development at European level. Its values include sustainable cities and communities; valorisation of heritage and landscape; environmental protection; transversal human rights, such as gender equality and education.

ASSO carries out research activities, implement projects, and provides technical consultancy services on sustainable development, with the support of universities, research centres, and experts. Since 2007, over 30 projects funded by EU funds were written by ASSO on behalf of Lead Partners and implemented over 50 projects for Lead Partners and Project Partners.

1. Project overview

Despite living in a rapidly digitising society, within a dynamic economy, and greatly integrated European polity, not everyone moves at the same pace. Mothers, especially young women with unfavourable socioeconomic conditions, have multiple obstacles on their journey to financial stability. Equipping these mothers with the tools to explore more financial possibilities can empower these women to be more independent. At the same time, stronger, financially stable women can help European societies become more inclusive, equitable, and progressive.

MOMentum: Helping mothers gain MOMentum in entrepreneurship – hereinafter referred to as “MOMentum” – is an Erasmus-funded collaboration for advancing the participation of mothers in entrepreneurial activities. The organisations carrying out MOMentum strongly believe that mothers should be encouraged and adequately assisted to develop their entrepreneurial mindsets and skills. Reuniting research and best practices from across the countries participating in the project, MOMentum implementers desire to create a relevant, rapidly-deployable, and immediately effective toolbox to help mothers gain MOMentum in entrepreneurship.

The main objectives of MOMentum are to:

- Promote entrepreneurship education and social entrepreneurship for mothers, especially the disadvantaged ones;
- Inspire mothers through role-model education to found their own enterprise;
- Fight stereotypes against women who want to work again after their childbirth, who are migrant, who are single or with social needs;
- Bring out the importance of working and innovating for the mother's psychological, emotional, cultural, and social balance;
- Motivate and helping the mothers, especially the disadvantaged ones, creating their own work in the new economy;
- Enhance acquisition of key skills and competences to mothers;
- Strengthen the skills and competences of trainers/educators/relevant professionals regarding mumpreneurship;
- Promote economic, social, and gender equality.

The project is focused on vocational education and training VET in the niche of entrepreneurship. Hereby MOMentum seeks to assist mothers in acknowledging and fulfilling their economic potential by:

1. Identifying mothers' learning needs concerning VET on entrepreneurship;
2. Devising educational methodologies pursuant to the prior identified learning needs;
3. Creating learning tools which are relevant, outcome-oriented, replicable, and scalable.

To attain the aforementioned results, MOMentum will execute the following activities:

- **Transnational Project Meetings** – partners assemble to administer the project in line with management and financial guidelines set by Erasmus+ and the National Agency
- **PR1 Gamified Role-model education methodology** – partners conduct national research to determine the status of mothers' employment and VET on entrepreneurship; data collected feeds into a methodology the MOMentum toolkit and app will be based on
- **PR2 Role model education toolkit** – partners collect best practices and written and multimedia materials showcasing national role models of women in entrepreneurship; materials created will make up a toolkit for enhancing the social inclusion of mothers
- **PR3 Entrepreneurship education toolkit** – partners conduct research to determine the status of entrepreneurship activities; data collected herein feeds into a guide for the implementation of specific entrepreneurship and leadership activities for mothers
- **PR4 Gamified educational application** – partners develop a gamified application as an educational tool for mothers; app will allow mothers and more to learn about role-models, mumpreneurs, and entrepreneurial tools and concepts in a relaxed, yet effective manner
- **Learning/Teaching/Training Activity** – partners organise an international workshop to improve their skills towards gamified role-model methods and entrepreneurial mindset
- **Multiplier Events** – partners organise local events to present to relevant stakeholders the Project Results and their expected outcomes; events contribute to project scalability and sustainability.

2. Research methodology

2.1. Research process

Project Result 1 is led by the Institute for Regional Development IRR, from the Czech Republic. The remaining partners are proportionately involved in the co-creation of Project Result 1 output: MOMentum gamified role-model education methodology. Based on the task distribution detailed in the Application Form submitted to the Czech National Agency, the partners commenced the co-development of the methodology under the guidance of IRR. Inasmuch as, IRR provided in December 2021 all partners with a clear, detailed guide on how the country desk research ought to be conducted. Complementary to the guide, IRR supplied the rest of the partners with a desk research template. The template ensured all partners gather information in a structured fashion, ultimately yielding reliable and comparable data.

The items covered by the country desk research seek to provide a representative, topical, and up-to-date overview of the societal set-up and policy framework in the partners' countries. MOMentum gamified role-model education methodology is intended to be a cross-country, individually-sensible, yet collectively representative material. The selection of the research topics and sub-topics is pursuant to the scope, objectives, and envisaged outcomes of this project. Thus, the research underpinning MOMentum gamified role-model education methodology was based on comparable indicators. Moreover, to cover a similar time horizon, the partners investigated societal and policy developments for the past 10-20 years.

Nonetheless, the scope and depth of the research were conditional on the available data in the partners' countries. Each partner had the discretion to research the items to their preferred/possible extent. When a research item was not of relevance and/or sufficiently documented, then the respective item was excluded. However, if a major topic was not covered, the partner indicated so in the desk research template. This helped in singling out any ensuing gap/s based on incomplete/insufficient data. In accordance with the commonly set timeline, all partners executed the national desk research and compiled the findings within the desk research template supplied by IRR by the end of February 2022. IRR archived on Google Drive the completed desk research documents of all partners, including that of IRR, in March 2022.

Lastly, the partners collectively discussed the desk research findings in an online call led by IRR at the beginning of April 2022. The partners settled any research discrepancies and determined how to aggregate and interpret the data so as to yield meaningful analysis. All partners provided feedback and referred to best practices from which MOMentum gamified role-model education methodology could draw inspiration. Such resources were shared within the partnership, IRR saving them for future reference. The partners decided on an internal deadline by which IRR provided the first draft of the methodology: mid-April 2022. Finally, by mid-May, all partners provide input in order to co-create the final version of the methodology. This version will be translated by all partners in their respective languages by the end of May 2022.

To obtain comparable data, the desk research focused on three areas of interest:

I. Motherhood & Employment

- National unemployment trends, special focus on status of mothers in employment/unemployment;
- Programmes/services currently in use for increasing employability, special focus on their scope of action and impact on mothers;
- National policies on maternity leave and implicit impact on mothers' employability, focus on job security, job retention, job return rate, impact on wages while on return from leave;
- Maternity financial status: maternity state allowance, average earning figures for mothers on leave, payable wage while on maternity leave, additional sources of revenues, etc.;
- Maternity v. paternity leave: trends across years, status quo, future developments;
- Mainstream attitudes/approaches towards employment/self-employment of mothers;
- Single-parent family socio-political framework: statistics on current number of single-parent families, preponderance of mono-parental families structured mother-child/children, general support policies for single-parent households, financial allowances, recurrent issues for single-parent families, etc.

II. VET national context

- VET definition and general characteristics;
- National VET overview: status quo, frequency of training, common fields of training, popularity of educational approach among diverse target groups, special focus on mothers;
- National VET current trends/ methods targeting mothers, irrespective of field of training;
- National VET current trends/ methods in relation to teaching entrepreneurial skills, focus on good practices and transferable trends/current methods;
- National use of gamification tools/techniques within VET.

III. Entrepreneurial education

- Entrepreneurial education definition and main characteristics;
- National entrepreneurial education overview: status quo, relevance of entrepreneurial skills in relation to labour market needs, common topics of entrepreneurial education, popularity among of entrepreneurial education diverse target groups, special focus on mothers;
- National entrepreneurial education current trends/ methods in relation to teaching entrepreneurship, focus on good practices and transferable trends/current methods;
- National use of gamification tools/techniques within entrepreneurial education.

2.2. Research interpretation guidelines

Pursuant to the methodology statement and the research process, all partners proceeded to conduct the desk research in their respective countries. The findings are presented in thematic blocks in accordance with the three main areas of research:

- I. Motherhood and Employment
- II. VET national context
- III. Entrepreneurial education

It is to be mentioned that the research findings are not as vast, detailed for all the countries covered in the project. Such discrepancies are caused by the varying realities of these countries. For instance, some of the partners' countries have been advancing more female-fair economies, while others are lagging behind in adopting measures to equalise the role of men and women within the labour market and beyond. Nonetheless, the partners strived to collect representative data for all highly relevant topics and signal out accordingly when critical data is missing.

Thus, the next subsections of this document will present the desk research findings country by country. In order for the readers of the final methodology to easily comprehend the content and be able to retain and reuse the data herein, each thematic block starts with an explanatory part covering:

- A. Definitions of researched concepts** – explanatory statements to help the reader become familiar with the research concepts and items; definitions are kept simplistic, yet built on reliable sources;
- B. Relevance of research to the entire project** – descriptive part detailing why researching these specific concepts and items aligns with the project's scope, objectives, and expected results;
- C. Expected research contributions to the methodology** – descriptive part detailing how the research findings build on MOMentum methodology and help the creation of the next Project Results.

3. Country desk research findings

3.1. Motherhood and Employment

The following pages contain the data gathered during the country desk research within the first thematic block: Motherhood and Employment. This is the amplest section of the methodology due the nature of data collected herein, especially concerning the high relevance of employment within a society. The partners resorted to trustworthy national sources (ie. governmental reports, statistical offices, etc.) and/or European sources (Eurostat). The majority of the data is secondary data gathered from reports, statistics, analyses, statements, etc. Based on research guidelines provided by IRR, all partners selected the most relevant data related to their respective country desk research.

Explanatory overview:

A. Definitions of researched concepts

Due to diversity and amplitude of the information herein, the data on Motherhood and Employment was grouped under the following datasets:

- **Societal status: equality, employment, and payment** – dataset covering general employment status for women, with a special focus on mothers; employment trends concerning both men and women; gender equality, actions that advance/hinder it; gender pay gap, actions that advance/hinder it;
- **National measures for gender equality and employment** – dataset covering local/regional/national measures within a country that advance/address gender equality with respects to employment;
- **Maternity leave: employment and financial implications** – dataset covering local/regional/national measures concerning parental leave, ie. duration, contractual conditions, payments, effects on one's employability; effects on one's financial status;
- **Family trends** – dataset covering local/regional/national developments concerning the structure and functionality of a family, ie. maternal v. paternal leave, single-parent families.

The main concepts referred to in this section are defined as follows:

Employment = Employment is an agreement between an employer and an employee that the employee will provide certain services. In return, the employee is paid a salary or hourly wage. An employment agreement for an individual employee can be a verbal exchange, written email, or job offer letter. The offer of employment can be implied in an interview or written in a formal, official employment contract ([The Balance Career](#), 2022)

Gender equality = Equality between women and men (gender equality): refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men ([United Nations Women](#), 2011)

Gender pay gap = The difference between median earnings of men and women relative to median earnings of men ([OECD](#), 2021)

Parental leave = employment-protected leave of absence for employed parents, which is often supplementary to specific maternity and paternity leave periods, and frequently, but not in all countries, follows the period of maternity leave

- maternity leave = employment-protected leave of absence for employed women directly around the time of childbirth
- paternity leave = employment-protected leave of absence for employed fathers at or in the first few months after childbirth ([OECD](#), 2021)

Child allowance = A sum of money paid periodically to a single parent of a child until he/she will have attained a certain age ([OECD](#), 2001).

B. Relevance of research to the project

Research on Motherhood and Employment is essential to the MOMentum project in its entirety as it allows the partners to determine the baseline scenario of women on the labour market in their respective countries. Inasmuch as, both creators and users of this methodology became aware of the societal setting, institutional framework, and legislative conditions advancing or hindering employment equality.

C. Expected contributions to the methodology

Research findings within this thematic block contribute to MOMentum methodology by identifying the employment status quo for women, respectively mothers. The research findings serve the partners in singling out which employment aspects need immediate action, namely what type of solutions this project can bring hereby.

3.1.1. Czech Republic

Societal status: equality, employment, and payment

Unemployment rate in Czech Republic has overall been relatively low over the years. There were spikes during the pandemic, but the situation started to get more stable. The general unemployment rate of the aged 15–64 years (the share of the unemployed in the labour force, that is in the total number of the employed and the unemployed (that means economically active persons), as percentage, seasonally adjusted, reached 3.3% in January 2021 and increased by 1.3 p.p., year-on-year. The male unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted, attained 2.5%; female unemployment rate reached 4.4%. The Czech Employment Policy Strategy for 2020 identifies four main priorities:

- 1) Supporting the access to employment, mainly for groups at risk in the labour market;
- 2) Promoting gender equality in the labour market (important regarding discrimination of mothers);
- 3) Promoting the adaptation of companies and employees to changing labour market needs;
- 4) Development of public employment services.

In 2014, the unemployment rate for women was 2.3 percentage points higher than for men (7.4 versus 5.1). Based on the available data, women are generally at higher risk of unemployment than men. Throughout research – while focusing specifically on individuals with at least one child – it was revealed that the main reason for the higher unemployment rate of women compared to men is the family. Returning to the labour market can be difficult, especially for mothers. A study by A. Bičáková and K. Kalíšková shows that women in the Czech Republic very often become unemployed after parental leave. The vast majority of women return to the labour market after 3 years of leave. Unemployment most often occurs immediately after parental leave. In this period, the unemployment rate for women with a high school diploma or higher is 12%, while for women without a high school diploma it reaches 28%. Thus, almost 60% of women without a high school diploma returning to the labour market upon 3 years of parental leave transition directly to unemployment. A significant proportion of these women do not return to the labour market until the child is four years old. At that point, women face a very elevated risk of unemployment.

Czech Republic: Unemployment rate from 1993 to 2020

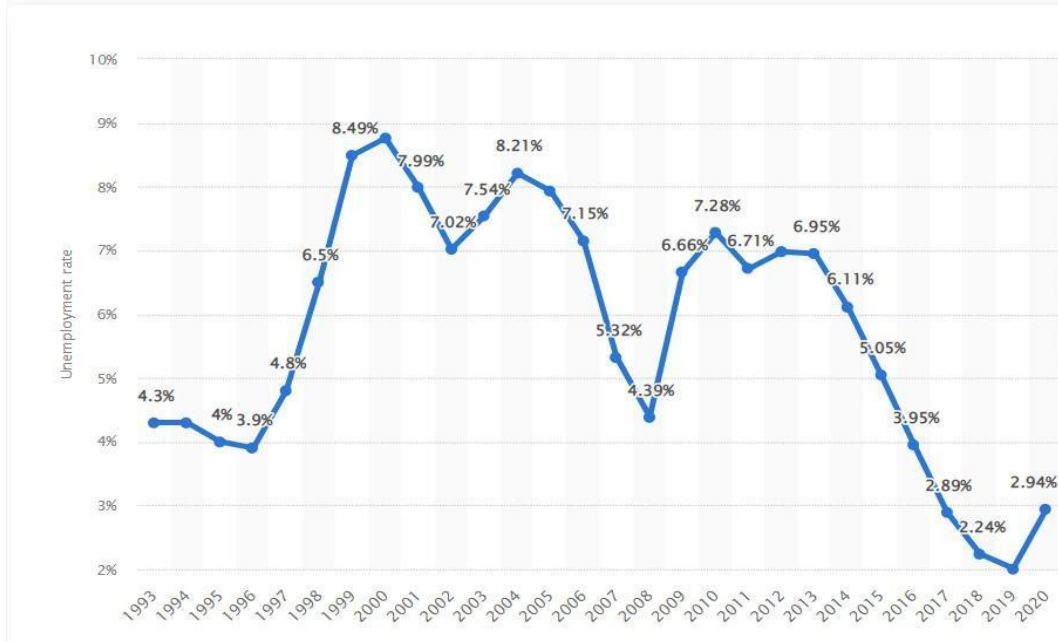


Fig. 1. Unemployment from year 1999 to 2020, source: statista.com

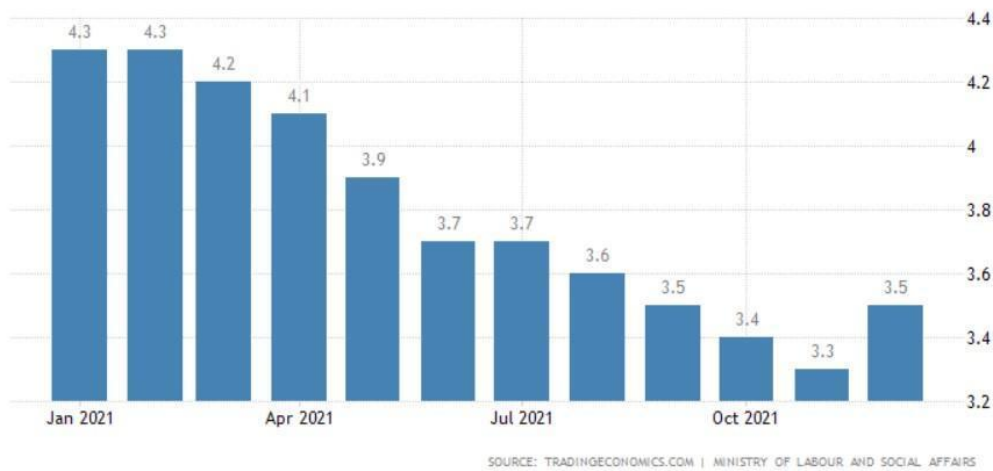


Fig. 2. 2021 fluctuation in unemployment, source: tradingeconomics.com

National measures for gender equality and employment

At national level, the Czech Republic follows several strategic documents that determine the direction of employment policy. One of the most important is the “Strategic Framework for Employment Policy until 2030”. There are also many European projects that address the issue or non-profit organisations that run their own programmes to support mothers in unemployment. Among them, for example, was the project operating in the Olomouc Region “[Women, Mothers - START YOURSELF!](#)” which focuses on involving mothers in the labour market. Another project was “[Successful Return to Work - Support for Mothers](#)”, which also sought to engage disadvantaged mothers back into the labour market through a comprehensive system of active employment policy measures. This project resulted in increasing the motivation and strengthening the labour integration of these women. One of the programmes currently operating is Aperio’s “[Alone but Strong: Eliminating discrimination against solo mothers in the labour market](#)”, which focuses on helping disadvantaged mothers in the labour market.

Maternity leave: employment and financial implications

Entitlement to maternity leave is regulated by Labour Code § 195. Under this Code, a woman (employee) is entitled to maternity leave for 28 weeks if she has given birth to one child. However, if a woman gives birth to two or more children, she is entitled to maternity leave for 37 weeks. The employee normally takes maternity leave from the beginning of the 6th week before the expected date of childbirth – which can also be taken at an earlier date, per needs – from the beginning of the 8th week before the expected date of childbirth. Several problems arise for women returning from maternity leave. For instance, there are not many part-time jobs available in the Czech Republic. Thus, women have to choose between working full-time and taking care of the child. At the same time, mothers struggle to reconcile their potential job with childcare. For this reason, employers may perceive mothers as having higher absenteeism than men. For single mothers, there is the added challenge of part-time work as this is only a hypothetical option. Thus, finding suitable full-time employment is often very difficult given the current labour market conditions.

The Czech state helps mothers in maternity as follows: the first benefit is “maternity cash assistance” (PPM), a financial benefit from the health insurance system. It is provided in principle for the first six months of caring for the child. PPM is received during maternity leave. This is followed by parental leave, during which the “parental allowance” (RP) is received. Employees are automatically covered by sickness insurance by law. To qualify for the PPM,

these conditions apply: sickness insurance for at least 270 calendar days in the two years preceding the date of entitlement to maternity allowance and at the time of entitlement. If a woman is insured (employed) at the time of commencement of PPM, but does not meet the specific condition of having been insured for 270 calendar days in the two years prior to the commencement of PPM, then her attending physician will decide on the occurrence of temporary incapacity for work from the beginning of the sixth week prior to the expected date of childbirth. This temporary incapacity for work will then be terminated by the doctor at the end of the sixth week after the birth. This does not apply to entrepreneurs as self-employed people are only entitled to PPM if they voluntarily pay sickness insurance for a mandated period of time.

There are also ways one can work for additional revenue during maternity/parental leave. For maternity leave, a woman is explicitly not allowed to work for 6 weeks before and 6 weeks after giving birth, but she can earn extra money afterwards. Yet, she is obliged to provide childcare. In the case of parental leave, the parent can stay with the child until the child is 4 years old and can earn extra income and receive parental allowance. The earnings are again conditional on the child being cared for. Furthermore, Many mothers work in different work arrangements (contracts/part-time). Working in these precarious work arrangements can affect their economic situation and the family's standard of living. Mothers working on fixed-term contracts, agreements or without a contract rate register household standard of living statistically significantly worse than mothers working with an open-ended contract. These women are also more likely to work part-time, more likely to work as regular employees, and earn less.

NGO "Single Mothers Club" made a survey about the financial status of single mothers. It reports that the average monthly income of a single mother is between 450 EUR AND 810 EUR (55% of respondents), while less than a third reported the lowest income, up to 450 EUR. More than a tenth of single mothers have monthly incomes exceeding 810 EUR and less than 4% report incomes exceeding 1200 EUR. The level of monthly expenditure is similar, with more than 60% of single mothers having monthly expenditure between 450-810 EUR, and less than a quarter having monthly expenditure below 450 EUR. More than half (56%) of single mothers reported receiving alimony. On the other hand, 31% do not receive maintenance, and the remainder (13%) receive maintenance irregularly. 1 154 respondents participated in the questionnaire.

Family trends

Women still predominantly go on maternity leave. However, motherhood is fundamentally changing and the fathers' role is becoming more and more noticeable, especially among the younger generations. In the modern family, however, there is a move away from the traditional model. There is a change in the value orientation in society. There is greater emphasis on the role of the father (it is becoming more common for the father to be on parental leave) and there are also two-career families. Although this trend is growing, the Czech Republic is still very conservative and traditional compared to the rest of Europe.

3.1.2. Cyprus

Societal status: equality, employment, and payment

According to the latest report by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), the [Gender Equality Index 2020: Cyprus](#), “with 56.9 out of 100 points, Cyprus ranks 21st [out of 27] in the EU on the Gender Equality Index. Its score is 11 points lower than the EU’s score”. However, “since 2010, Cyprus’s score has increased by 7.9 points (+ 0.6 points since 2017), making slightly faster progress towards gender equality than other Member States, Cyprus has improved its position by six places”. The [Gender employment gap](#) graph below examines the difference between rates of employment between the two sexes, between 20-64 years old. According to Eurostat the EU average in 2020 was 68.75% (11 percentage points). Gender employment gap in Cyprus for 2020 was 75% (12 percentage points), which was above the EU average”.

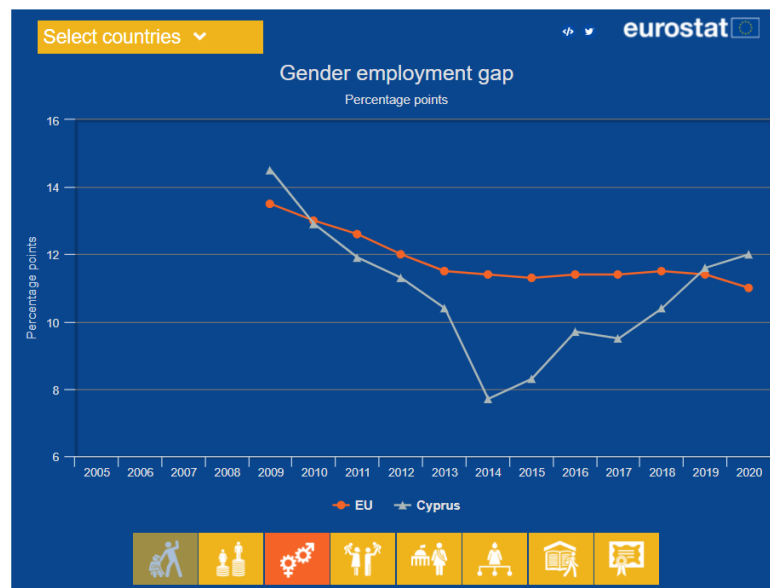


Fig 3. Gender employment gap in Cyprus; source: Eurostat, 2020

According to Gender Equality Commissioner, Iosifina Antoniou, the [gender pay gap in Cyprus](#) is 10.4%, which means that a woman has to work more days a year than a man for equal work value, in order to earn the same wage as a man ([Politis, 9 November 2021](#)). Moreover, based on Eurostat, in 2020, 3.9% of men in the EU are inactive due to caring responsibilities, while for females the percentage is as high as 27.3%. In Cyprus, the situation is much more than the EU average, with 13.5% of males and 57.6% of females.

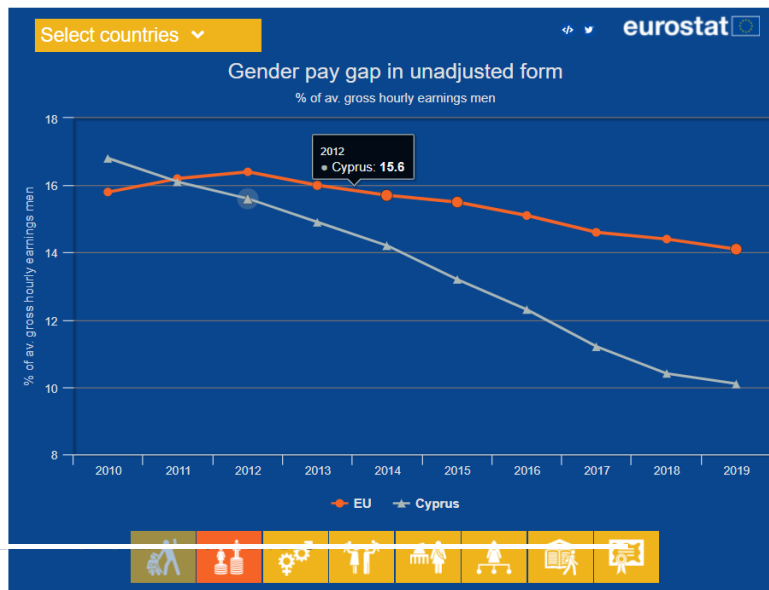


Fig 4. Gender pay gap in Cyprus; source: Eurostat, 2020

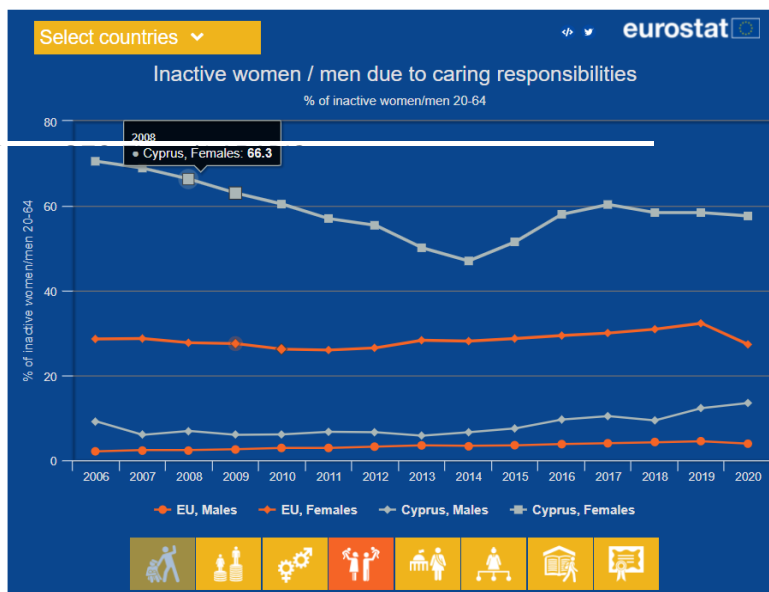


Fig.5. Inactive women/ men due to caring responsibilities; source: Eurostat, 2020

National measures for gender equality and employment

In 2008, the University of Cyprus established the [UNESCO Chair in Gender Equality and Empowerment](#) “with the aim to provide a new paradigm on how common problems faced by the populations of the region can be addressed through the gender perspective”. Also, Cyprus has an official legislation called [“The Equal Treatment of men and women in employment and vocational training Law”](#) which aims to combat gender-based discrimination and regulates the right to equal treatment in employment. Concomitantly, “Cyprus has a Commissioner for Gender Equality and is under the direct jurisdiction of the President of the Republic. This Commissioner is also the president of a Mechanism for Women’s Rights. The Ministry of Justice and Public Order of the Republic of Cyprus periodically issues a “Strategic Action Plan for Gender Equality”. The main aims of the ongoing plan for 2019-2023 are *inter alia*: combating gender-based violence; balanced representation in decision-making positions; improvement of related legislation; women empowerment and conciliation between personal and working life; empowerment of vulnerable groups of women; elimination of social stereotypes and prejudices” (p. 6).

The Ministry of Energy, Commerce, Industry and Tourism of the Republic of Cyprus in an attempt to promote and encourage entrepreneurship among women, introduced the [“Scheme for the Enhancement of Women’s Entrepreneurship”](#). Inasmuch as, “[...] the promotion of women’s entrepreneurship in Cyprus is mostly achieved through governmental funding to other organisations and institutions. For example, [the Hub for Cypriot Women’s Leadership Network](#) aims to provide opportunities for networking, engagement and advancement, introduce innovation and successfully tackle gender bias. With the aim of promoting gender equality, the Hub aspires to provide a supporting mechanism for boosting Cypriot women leaders to actively participate in decision making at all levels in all sectors. “The Hub” is a structure through which women leaders are able to support and help each other achieve their professional goals, by fostering leadership and entrepreneurship through networking, coordination and collaboration. This project addresses the second pillar of the UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security (Akti, 2020; OECD Inclusive Entrepreneurship Policies, Country Assessment Notes, 2020, p. 28).

Lastly, the Cypriot government has developed a plan to promote women's entrepreneurship during the period 2014-2020. This is part of the General Operational Programme "Competitiveness & Sustainable Competitiveness" that is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund and the Republic of Cyprus" (OECD, 2020, p. 28). Subsequent to the aforementioned plan, the Ministry of Labour issued the [Social Policy Strategy 2022-2027](#) (p. 28 for policies specifically on women). It refers to the priorities of the Republic of Cyprus regarding the Social Policy for the period 2022-2027, outlining the course of alignment of the policies and the objectives of the Strategy, with the developments in the field of social policy both domestically and in Europe. These include: A) Investing in Skills, Training and Rehabilitation, B) Investing in Employment and Creating New Jobs, C) Support for the Child, the Woman and the Family, D) Protection of workers' rights - social protection, E) Social Cohesion and Social Welfare.

3.1.3. Greece

Societal status: equality, employment, and payment

In Greece, in the period 2002-2018, although the gender gap in employment has decreased, it continues to exist with women aged 20-64 being employed less than 50% where men reach a percentage around 70%, according to [Eurostat](#). According to [data](#) published in 2021 by the public employment office, OAED, the total number of unemployed people in Greece registered by gender is more than a million, 403,720 of whom are men (36.39%) and 705,646 are women (63.61%). In the total registered for a period of more than or equal to 12 months, men amount to 185,306 persons while women amount to 403,359. In the total registered for a period of less than 12 months, men amount to 218,414 people while women amount to 302,287. Regarding [mothers](#), 65% of them are employed.



Fig.6. Female employment in Greece;
source: Eurostat 2019

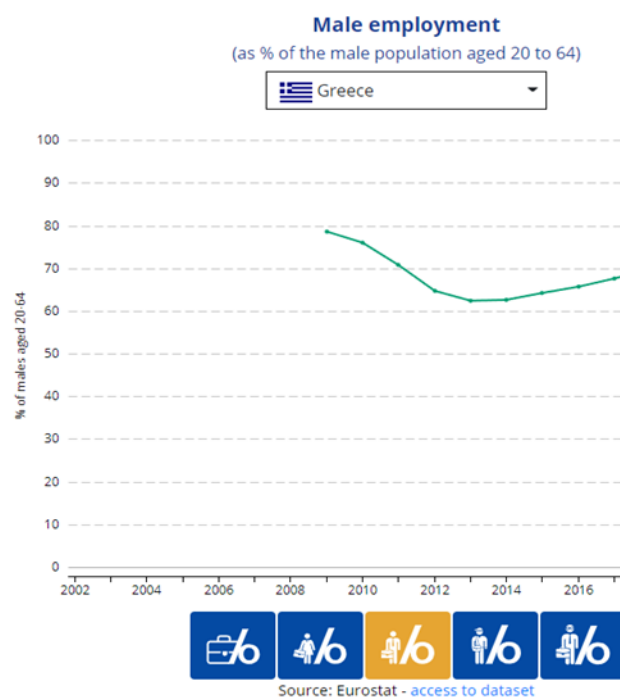


Fig.7. Male employment in Greece; source: Eurostat 2019

The public employment office, OAED, offers services that promote employment of the Greek population, such as a [database](#) of job postings where unemployed people can search for an opportunity based on their skills. However, this is not a specialised tool for mothers or women specifically. Apart from the aforementioned interconnections, there are also projects led by OAED that aim at promoting employability by funding businesses in order to hire unemployed people, with a special emphasis on women. In 2021 and 2022, two [projects](#) promoting women's employability were initiated. Moreover, both employed and unemployed mothers can apply for inclusion of their children in [kindergartens](#) free of charge, which constitutes a supportive factor in the search for employment for an unemployed mother.

Maternity leave: employment and financial implications

The total duration of maternity leave for women employed by any employer in the whole country, under a private law employment relationship, is seventeen weeks. In detail, the [benefits](#) for pregnant women are the following:

- Maternity leave - 119 days (56 days before delivery and 63 days following delivery) - By the employer: earnings of 15 days (if employed from 10 days to 1 year) or earnings up to 1 month (if employed more than a year);
- Maternity benefit - during maternity leave - By the National Social Security Entity: 50% of the standard wage of the insured person, plus the child benefit at a rate of 10% of the above amount for each child;
- Special maternity leave - Follows the maternity leave and up to 6 months - Amount equal to the special maternity protection benefit;
- Special maternity protection benefit - During special maternity leave - Amount equal to the statutory minimum pay;
- Supplementary maternity allowance - For as long the maternity benefit is paid (119 days) - Amount equal to the difference between the wage paid by the employer and the Maternity benefit;
- Maternity benefit for uninsured mothers - EUR 220.10 before giving birth and EUR 220.10 after delivery;
- Child Care Leave - 30 months after birth or adoption (reduced working hours by 1 hour) or 18 months (2 less working hours in the first 12 months and 1 less working hour in the remaining 6 months) or equal paid leave taken all at once in agreement with the employer (approximately 3.5 months) - Full wage by the employer;

- [Self-employed women](#) are entitled to a monthly maternity allowance of 150 euros for 4 months;
- Moreover there is a labour allowance in case that labour takes place in a private institution which is around 1.000 euros;
- Apart from the above, from 2020 for each child born there is an [allowance](#) of 2.000 euros received in two instalments.

Family trends

Pregnant workers and new mothers are protected from layoffs. The [law](#) requires that a working woman may not be dismissed from service during her pregnancy and for eighteen months after the birth of her child or during her absence for a longer period due to an illness due to pregnancy or childbirth. Moreover, employees are entitled to return to the same position after using maternity leave. As of 2021, every working [father](#) is entitled to paternity leave of fourteen (14) working days with pay, which must be obtained at the birth of the child. Until 2020 though, paternity leave was 2 days. This is indicative that Greek women still face many [prejudices](#) in their workplaces which still appear, even though they have been pointed out for a long time. Some of these prejudices claim that career success is more important for men, women are quirky/strange, women have to take care of home and children and men have to make money, women have difficulty making decisions, men should not have women bosses, entrepreneurship is a purely male affair, and that women are less fit for business compared to men.

The most common type of [single parent family](#) in Greece is the family consisting of the mother and her biological children. The number of families consisting of fathers and children has been growing in recent years, but remains clearly smaller. Today, single-parent families represent 28.46% of families in Greece. According to the data of the Registries and courts as well as relevant surveys from 2013 to the 1st month of 2020, it appears that 1 in 5 families is single-parent. A total of 463,775 single-parent families are registered, of which 84% consist of a mother with a child and 16% consist of a father with a child). The unmarried mother is legally equated with the married mother in terms of rights and obligations. However, in the context of supporting the integration of women-heads of single-parent families in the labour market, there are special [programs](#) for subsidising new job openings, young freelancers of vulnerable social groups and employers who wish to recruit people belonging to vulnerable social groups.

3.1.4. Estonia

Societal status: equality, employment, and payment

According to [Eurostat](#), in the period 2005-2020 in Estonia around 70% of women aged 20-64 were employed, whereas men employment reached a percentage of 75%. According to the latest [data](#) on registered unemployed published by the national public employment service, Töötukassa, the unemployment rate in Estonia in 2021 was 6.2% with a total of less than 45,000 people from which 6.8% of men and 5.6% of women were unemployed. As for the maternal employment rate, according to the [OECD](#), in 2019 around 60% of mothers were employed in full-time jobs and around 70%, with no distinction between part-time/full-time. The Employment Contracts [Act](#) prohibits the employer terminating an employment contract with a pregnant woman or a person raising a child under 3 years of age. Working overtime cannot be demanded of a pregnant woman or an employee who has the right to pregnancy and maternity leave. According to the [research](#), the attitude towards employment of mothers of pre-school children in Estonia is exceptionally low, with around 66-69% level of disagreement.

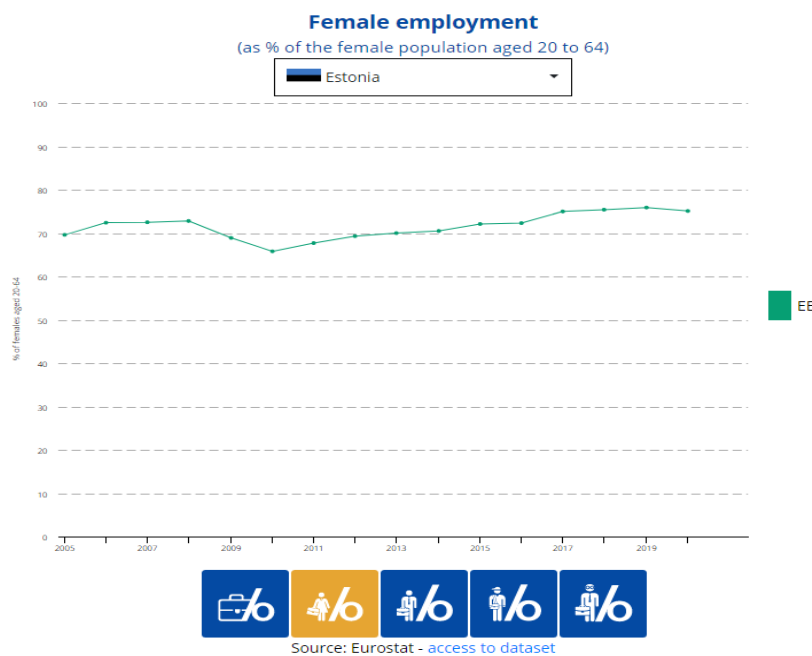


Fig. 8. Female employment in Estonia: Eurostat, 2019

National measures for gender equality and employment

The public employment service, Töötukassa, offers services that promote employment of the Estonian population such as a [database](#) of job postings, assessment of work ability or the [temporary](#) employment during the period of registration as unemployed. However, there are no specific benefits for mothers or women in general. Apart from the aforementioned interconnections, Töötukassa offers special subsidies to employers in order to facilitate employment opportunities. Moreover, the International Labour Office, [ILO](#), offers a Gender Promotion Programme that aims to promote employment of older women workers in Estonia. Analysis of OECD data by [AppJobs](#) suggests that Estonia is the only country where self-employed women earn more than men with a gender pay gap of -16 in favour of women. Furthermore, unemployed mothers can apply for inclusion of their children in [kindergartens](#) free of charge since the fees differ based on families' economic status. This may constitute a supportive factor in the search for a job for an unemployed mother.

Maternity leave: employment and financial implications

A woman in Estonia has the right to receive 140 calendar days of pregnancy and maternity leave. In detail, the parental [benefits](#) are the following:

- Maternity leave amounts to 140 days (may be taken in the 30th to 36th week of pregnancy; if taken 30 days or more before the expected due date, women are paid the benefit for all 140 calendar days, if later - those days are deducted from the 140 calendar days);
- Maternity benefit is paid starting from the first day of exemption from work, calculated at a rate of 100% of the average income per calendar day. The right to receive parental benefit starts on the day following the final day of the leave certificate that provides the basis for the pregnancy and maternity or adoption leave, and the benefit is awarded for 435 days;
- If the mother is not entitled to maternity benefit, the parental benefit is paid until the child reaches the age of 18 months;
- If a mother has the right to pregnancy and maternity leave or to receive maternity benefits, but does not exercise it, then the benefit is calculated separately for the first 70

days, and is paid within a single calendar month and at a rate not higher than the minimum wage for the first 70 days;

- Parental benefit is calculated on the basis of the income subject to social tax earned over the calendar year preceding the beginning of the pregnancy (9 months). The upper limit of the amount of the parental benefit is three times the average salary from the year before last, which in 2021 was EUR 3821,55;
- Maternity leave for a new pregnancy during parental leave - A woman who is on parental leave and wants to take a further period of pregnancy and maternity leave and receive maternity benefit for the new pregnancy and maternity leave must discontinue her parental leave;
- [Child Care Leave](#) can be taken each year for the three working days by the parent of one or two children under 14 years of age or six working days by the parent of at least three children under 14 years of age or at least one child under three years of age. The leave is compensated based on minimum wage;

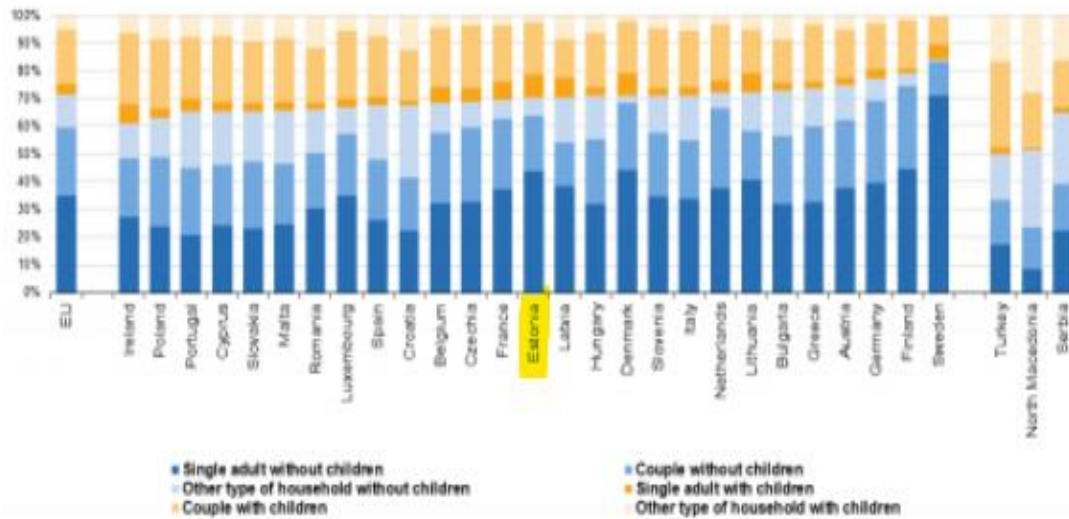
The mother or father of a disabled child has the right to take one additional working day of child care leave per month until the child turns 18. This additional day is also compensated based on the minimum wage established by the Government of the Republic. A mother or father raising an up to 14-year old child or an up to 18-year old disabled child has the right to receive up to ten working days of unpaid child care leave per calendar year;

- [Self-employed women](#) qualify for the maternity benefit on the same conditions as workers, even though they are not eligible for taking up the maternity leave;
- Moreover, there is a one-time childbirth [allowance](#) in the amount of 320 euros paid when a child is born. In the case of triplets (or more siblings), the allowance is 1,000 euros per child (which totals to 3,000 euros in the case of triplets).

Family trends

Though, the gender stereotyping of careers is still a hidden issue and one of the key contributing factors to ongoing overall inequality in the labour market. The [project](#) was initiated in Estonia to encourage open-mindedness regarding gender role stereotypes and to empower people and help them to overcome stereotype-based barriers concerning occupational pathways. Single-parent families are increasingly common among Estonians. The number of families consisting of mothers and children rather than fathers and children is relatively high. In the 2015 [study](#), one in five Estonian families was made up of a single mother and her children. The 2019 [research](#) shows that in Estonia there were 173,697 single-mother families and 16,971 single-father families. In total, in 2020 single parents represented more than 28% of households with children at EU level ([Eurostat](#)).

Households by type, presence of children and country, 2020
(% of total households)



Note: Break in series and provisional data in Germany in 2020; Swedish data should be interpreted cautiously, as household data is not yet calibrated for non-response against administrative data
Source: Eurostat (online data code: fst_hhntych)

Fig. 9. Household types across Europe; source: Eurostat, 2020

[Statistics](#) show that single parenting is related to the risk of poverty. In 2020, compared to 2019, the at-risk-of-poverty and absolute poverty rates rose among single parents in Estonia. In 2019 the at-risk-of-poverty rate of the single parent families was around 30%, while in 2020 it increased up to almost 40%. There are different [mechanisms](#) supporting single parents in Estonia, such as reform of the child maintenance support system due to which approximately a quarter of single parents did not pay child maintenance as ordered by the court in 2014. Moreover, In January 2017, a new Family Benefits Act entered into force to extend maintenance support to single parents when the other parent does not fulfil their legal obligation to provide financial support. The maintenance support is guaranteed by the state, which claims back maintenance costs from the debtor parent through various measures. Furthermore, the single parent’s child [allowance](#) is a monthly allowance that is paid if there is no information on the father in the child’s birth registration or among the information entered into the population register, or if a parent has been declared a fugitive.

At-risk-of-poverty rate and absolute poverty rate by type of household (%), 2019–2020

Source: Statistics Estonia

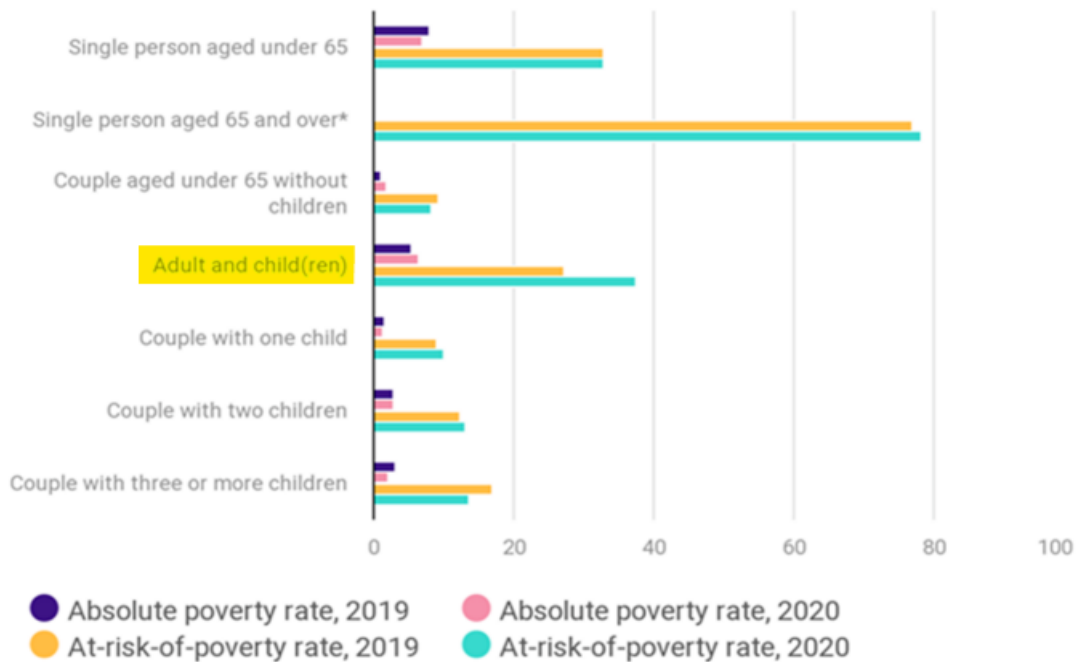


Fig. 10. Household risk of poverty in Estonia; source: Statistics Estonia, 2020

As far as paternity leave is concerned, fathers have the [right](#) to receive a total of 30 calendar days of paternal leave until the child reaches the age of three. The right to receive paternal leave and additional parental benefit for fathers arises for a father 30 days before the estimated date of birth of the child determined by a doctor or midwife. Paternal leave is [compensated](#) based on average wage, up to a maximum of three-time Estonian mean gross wages. The father of a child has the [right](#) to the parental benefit once the child has reached the age of 70 days. If one of the parents is on parental leave, the benefit is paid to that parent. Only one parent in a family may be on parental leave at any one time.

3.1.5. Italy

Societal status: equality, employment, and payment

Italy's unemployment rate stood at 9.2% in 2020, one of the lowest rates of the last years (European Commission). Within this context, Italian mothers have the primacy of unemployment in Europe: more than 4 out of 10 mothers with minor children do not have a job, while more than 40% of mothers with at least one child choose part-time in order not to lose their job. This proportion has persisted over the last decade (2011-2020) and is accentuated during 2020 based on the increase in the number of children: with 1 child, 57.9% of Italian women are employed, with 2 children it drops to 57.1%, but with 3 children this notoriously drops to 43.1% of employed Italian women.

The data indicated a curious paradox: if women are relatively harmed by the birth of children, men seem to benefit. Working mothers are 72.2% against 76.8% of those who have no children, while 90% of men with children are employed against 80.9% of those who do not. The trend also affects mothers within a couple: in this portion of the female population, in Italy, the decline reaches 54.3%, while in 2015 it was 56.5%. Italian single mothers are the most affected. The difficulties of working and maintaining a family alone have influenced the Italian scenario, which sees single mothers employed down by almost 2 percentage points, reaching 70.7% (2020) compared to 72.6% recorded in 2015. The only improvement (however below the European average) comes from single women and without children, which rose to 69.4% (2020) against 66% recorded in 2015.

Among the most interesting information is the gender gap both with and without children: Italy is still among the countries with the most critical issues with 28.9 points for men and 12.5 for women compared to the difference in height recorded in countries such as Portugal (0.1 points), Belgium (0.8 points) and Germany (1.0). The disparity widens, in particular, in the cases of women where the level of education is lower in relation to the number of children. The greater the number of children, the greater the employment gap between women with a low level of education and those with a higher education degree. This gap ranges from 32 points for women with one child and up to 48.4 for those with three or more children. For men, the picture is

different: those without children have a lower average employment rate (80.9 per cent), but a higher rate, up to 92.4 per cent, if the father of two or more children.

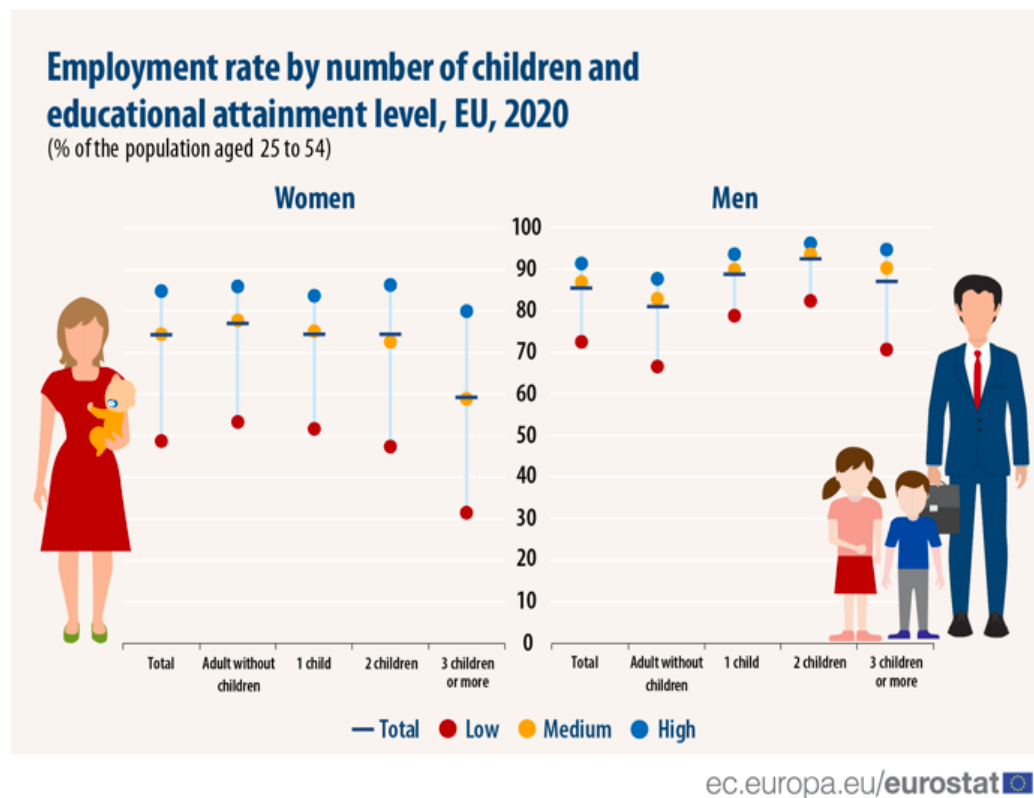


Fig. 11. Employment rate across EU; source: Eurostat, 2020

National measures for gender equality and employment

The 2021 Budget Law recently approved the GOL Program - Guarantee of accountability of workers to encourage the inclusion in the world of work of beneficiaries of Citizenship Income, of unemployed recipients of NASpl (New Social Insurance for Employment), of redundant workers in transition through active policies based on specific needs during the five-year period 2021-25. The goal agreed with Europe is to have at least 3 million “beneficiaries” by 2025, of which 75% must be women, long-term unemployed, people with disabilities, young people under 30 and over 55 workshops. At least 800 thousand of these beneficiaries will have to be involved in training activities, of which 300 thousand for the strengthening of digital skills.

Maternity leave: employment and financial implications

In Italy, maternity leave is provided during the period of pregnancy and postnatal period, which gives a period of compulsory leave from work for the employed mother with the right to an economic allowance that replaces the salary. For the self-employed or freelance worker, the allowance is unrelated to the obligation to abstain from work. Another option for new parents returning to work may be parental leave that can be used within 12 months of their child's life, consisting of another six months of leave, in addition to the mandatory one, paid at 30%. The permit can be extended to 10 months for both fathers and single mothers. Finally, they can be requested by mothers and fathers, in case of illness, between three and five days a year of leave, between three and eight years of their child. However, it should be emphasised that, in Italy, 46% of mothers and 27% of fathers cannot take parental leave, mainly due to the fact that they are unemployed or inactive mothers, but also due to the types of temporary and temporary contracts they work with (Gender Equality Index, 2019).

For a greater involvement of fathers in the care of children and a rebalancing of the levels of participation in working life by mothers and fathers, it is essential that new fathers also take advantage of fully paid paternity leave. For this purpose, the European Directive of 2019, in art. 4, indicates a minimum period of 10 working days of paid leave that Member States should guarantee to each working father (regardless of whether they are on temporary or precarious contracts) to be paid at the level of sick leave. In Italy, with the 2020 budget law, the compulsory paid paternity leave has increased from 5 to 7 days, to be used within five months from the date of birth of the child and not necessarily on a continuous basis, paid at the same time as maternity leave. In the presence of serious conditions that prevent the mother from providing for the child, the right to abstain from work and the related allowance rests with the father. The father is also entitled to an additional day of unpaid leave (which can be paid if the mother agrees to transfer him from her maternity leave).

There is the right to such benefits even in the event of the adoption or fostering of minors. Optional parental leave: up to the age of 8 of the child or within the 8 years of entry into the family of the adopted/fostered minor, parents can also choose to take advantage of parental leave with the right to the allowance provided for the periods of optional parental leave. Moreover, among the benefits for parenting, the 2015 budget law introduced the birth allowance or Baby Bonus, a measure that aims to encourage births by contributing to the expenses of

families in which a child arrives (born, adopted or in pre-adoption foster care). This is a monthly contribution paid by INPS (National Social Security Institute) for the first 12 months of the child's life or adoption, which until 2019 was intended for families with an ISEE of less than 25 thousand euros but with the 2020 budget law it has been extended to all without income limits, with differentiated amounts between 80 and 192 euros per month.

Single and universal allowance for dependent children is an economic support to families awarded for each dependent child up to the age of 21 and with no age limit for disabled children. The amount due varies according to the economic condition of the family unit on the basis of the ISEE (Equivalent Economic Situation Indicator) valid at the time of the application, taking into account the age and number of children as well as any situations of disability of the children. The allowance is defined as single, since it is aimed at simplifying and simultaneously strengthening interventions aimed at supporting parenthood and birth, and universal as it is guaranteed to a minimum extent to all families with dependent children, even in the absence of ISEE. or with an ISEE higher than the 40.000 EUR threshold.

Family trends

Over the past few decades, the number of single-parent families has more than doubled. Currently there are about one million: this means that 1.4 million children and young people (14% of minors) live in single-parent households. In Italy, the percentage of single-parent households out of households is 16%, which has been growing steadily since 2014. 82% of single-parent households are made up of single mothers with children and the remaining 18% of single fathers with children. These percentages have been constant since 2014. Since poverty in Italy is closely linked both to young age and to the number of children in the family, these data indicate a possible fragility for single-parent families.

3.2. VET national context

The following pages contain the data gathered during the country desk research within the second thematic block: Vocational Education and Training VET national context. This is the most concise section of the methodology due the nature of data collected herein, as the VET characteristics vary greatly across the partners' countries. The partners resorted to trustworthy national sources (ie. state curricula, VET certified institutions, etc.) and/or European sources (CEDEFOP European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training). The majority of the data is secondary data gathered from reports, statistics, syllabi, etc. Based on research guidelines provided by IRR, all partners selected the most relevant data related to their respective country desk research.

Explanatory overview:

A. Definitions of researched concepts

The main concepts referred to in this research section are defined as follows:

VET = Vocational education and training, abbreviated as VET, sometimes simply called vocational training, is the training in skills and teaching of knowledge related to a specific trade, occupation or vocation in which the student or employee wishes to participate. VET may be undertaken at an educational institution, as part of secondary or tertiary education, or may be part of initial training during employment, for example as an apprentice, or as a combination of formal education and workplace learning ([Eurostat](#), 2022)

IVET = Initial vocational education and training is general or vocational education carried out in the initial education system, usually before entering working life ([UNESCO-UNEVOC](#), 2009)

CVET = Continuing vocational education and training can be defined as intended and structured learning of direct relevance to a worker's current or future tasks and taking place in simulated or real working conditions. It is in other words CVET in work conditions and targeted at work tasks ([CEDEFOP](#), 2015)

Primary education = provides learning and educational activities typically designed to provide students with fundamental skills in reading, writing and mathematics (ie. literacy and numeracy) and establish a solid foundation for learning and understanding core areas of knowledge and

personal development, preparing for lower secondary education. It focuses on learning at a basic level of complexity with little, if any, specialization ([UNESCO-IBE](#), 2013)

Secondary education = Secondary education provides learning and educational activities building on primary education and preparing for labour market entry, post-secondary non-tertiary education and tertiary education. Broadly speaking, secondary education aims at learning at an intermediate level of complexity ([UNESCO-IBE](#), 2013)

Tertiary education = Tertiary education builds on secondary education, providing learning activities in specialised fields of education. It aims at learning at a high level of complexity and specialisation. Tertiary education includes what is commonly understood as academic education but also includes advanced vocational or professional education ([UNESCO-IBE](#), 2013)

European qualifications framework = European qualifications framework (EQF), with its eight levels, serves as a translation grid between qualifications acquired in different European countries. Its main objective is to improve transparency and comparability of qualifications within and across countries participating in EQF implementation ([CEDEFOP](#), 2020)

Lifelong learning = Ongoing access to the renewing of skills and the acquisition of knowledge; a broad concept concerning an individual's education that is viewed as flexible, diverse and available at different times and places throughout life ([European Commission](#), 1995)

B. Relevance of research to the project

Research on VET national context is essential to the MOMentum project in its entirety as it allows the partners to determine the type and complexity of VET provided in the partners' countries. By doing so, the partners gain a better understanding of the training gaps this project can most effectively target. At the same time, the partners can observe which best practices their respective countries use and if any of these can be replicated/adapted throughout the project.

C. Expected contributions to the methodology

Research findings within this thematic block contribute to MOMentum methodology by identifying the VET set-up in the partners' countries, with a special focus on VET tailored for mothers. The research findings serve the partners in singling out which VET practices and complementary certifications are available for women, more specifically mothers. Lastly, the research looks into how, if it all, VET caters for developing and improving entrepreneurial skills.

3.2.1. Czech Republic

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) is the main body responsible for initial vocational training. Vocational schools are mostly public, established by the regions. Initial vocational training takes place in schools and includes a high proportion of practical training (in schools, workshops, school farms or establishments, vocational training centres and companies). Employers' representatives are members of sectoral councils and industry groups which are involved in the development and definition of qualifications in the Czech Republic.

Adults can study in any vocational programme within the formal school system. Many programmes allow a combination with employment. In addition, there is a wide range of educational opportunities provided outside the formal school system. This segment is generally not regulated and is mainly influenced by the free market. Since 2007, a system of validation and recognition of non-formal and informal learning has been gradually developed. In the context of demographic changes (decline in the number of pupils), schools are gradually transforming into lifelong learning centres, providing both initial vocational and further education. The focus on mothers is not dominant within the VET sector, as vocational training at the tertiary level generally focuses on adult education in a particular field.

3.2.2. Cyprus

“The vocational education and training (VET) system of Cyprus is playing a significant role in dealing with the adverse effects of the economic crisis on the labour market and in laying the foundations for future development. To continue to fulfil the expectations of the Cypriot economy and society, VET is undergoing essential reforms. The structure of VET is being transformed by the introduction of a new modern apprenticeship, an alternative pathway for young people between 14 and 20, and the establishment of post-secondary institutes for technical and vocational education and training, which will offer students an intermediate level of education.

The implementation of the new modern apprenticeship has begun and it will become fully operational by 2015. Secondary technical and vocational education provides a broad range of initial training programs in Cyprus. Its new curricula, expected to be developed by 2015, will enhance the attractiveness of VET and match specialisations with the current needs of the labour market. VET is an important part of and features prominently in the Cyprus lifelong learning strategy. Its main actions include the enhancement of lifelong guidance and counselling services, and the development of a national qualifications framework (NQF)” (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2012).

3.2.3. Greece

Greece has relatively low figures on many of the indicators in this group compared to the EU average. The share of upper secondary students enrolled in IVET is low (29.9% compared to 47.3% for the EU in 2015). Female enrolment figures differ even more: 20.1% of females in upper secondary education are enrolled in IVET compared to 42.0% in the EU. In contrast, the share of upper secondary IVET with direct access to tertiary education (87.1%) is well above the EU average (66.7%). The percentage of adults involved in lifelong learning in 2016 (4.0%) is lower than the EU average (10.8%), and far below the average target (15%) set by the strategic framework Education and training 2020. Participation in lifelong learning by adults with low-level education (0.7%), unemployed adults (3.3%) and older adults (1.3%) is also lower in Greece than the EU. Based on 2010 CVTS data, employee participation in CVT courses (especially in small firms) and on-the-job training suggest that employer-sponsored training is less frequent than in the EU in general. The proportion of individuals who wanted to train but did not (17.3%) is higher than the EU average (9.5%) (based on 2011 data).

Indicator label	2010		Last available year		Recent change				
	EL	EU	Yr	EL	EU	Range	EL	EU	
Access, attractiveness and flexibility									
IVET students as % of all upper secondary students	A	A	'15	29.9 ^b	47.3 ^{bE1}	'13-'15	↘	-3.8	↘
IVET work-based students as % of all upper secondary IVET	A	A	'15	29.9 ^b	28.4 ^{bE2}	'13-'14	↗	1.3	↗
IVET students with direct access to tertiary education as % of all upper secondary IVET			'15	87.1	66.7 ^{E3}	'13-'15	↗	13.0	↘
Employees participating in CVT courses (%)	16.0	38.0 ^e	'10	16.0	38.0 ^e				
Employees participating in on-the-job training (%)	6.0	20.0 ^e	'10	6.0	20.0 ^e				
Adults in lifelong learning (%)	3.3		'16	4.0	10.8 ^b	'13-'16	↗	0.8	↗
Enterprises providing training (%)	28.0	66.0 ^e	'10	28.0	66.0 ^e				
Female IVET students as % of all female upper secondary students	A	A	'15	20.1 ^b	42.0 ^{bE1}	'13-'15	↘	-7.1	↘
Employees of small firms participating in CVT courses (%)	7.0	25.0 ^e	'10	7.0	25.0 ^e				
Young VET graduates in further education and training (%)			'16	15.5 ^b	32.8 ^b	'14-'16	↗	0.9	↘
Older adults in lifelong learning (%)	0.8		'16	1.3	7.0	'13-'16	↗	0.5	↗
Low-educated adults in lifelong learning (%)	0.5		'16	0.7 ^c	4.2 ^{bC}	'13-'16	↗	0.3	↘
Unemployed adults in lifelong learning (%)	3.7		'16	3.3	9.6 ^b	'13-'16	↗	0.2	↘
Individuals who wanted to participate in training but did not (%)	17.3 ^B	9.5 ^{eB}	'11	17.3	9.5 ^e				
Job-related non-formal education and training (%)	71.2 ^B	80.2 ^{eB}	'11	71.2	80.2 ^e				

Fig. 12. Statistical overviews on VET – Greece; source: CEDEFOP, 2011

Despite the importance of VET for economic growth, the [current performance](#) of the system in Greece lags significantly behind the EU, both in terms of participation in IVET and CVET for skills development and in terms of matching education with needs of the labor market. In particular, Greece is at the bottom of the participation rate of employees and companies in training programs, taking the last place in the EU, with 18.5% and 21.7% respectively. The country ranks third lowest in terms of expenditure on ECSC programs as a percentage of labor costs (1.1%), while the cost of training the unemployed is relatively low, especially compared to other countries facing high unemployment rates. In terms of gender, the participation of both men and women in (formal and non-formal) education and training lags far behind other European countries, at 3.7% and 4.2% respectively. The country ranks fifth (5th) lowest in the EU, with the European average at 9.8% for men and 11.9% for women.

It can be observed that even though Greece has been [funded](#) by the EU in order to create VET programs, those resources have not been deployed in the most efficient ways, since the main purpose for participants to VET (either unemployed people or businesses) is the economic benefit of it. Moreover, there is a lack of evidence regarding the impact of VET in women's job search and professional life in general. The research does not show that there are specialised VET programs for mothers. As of current trends in VET about entrepreneurship, a turn towards the combination of entrepreneurship with [digitalization](#) has been observed and programs on this topic have been introduced. There is no evidence on the use of gamification tools / techniques within VET in Greece.

3.2.4. Estonia

Vocational [education](#) serves the purpose of fostering the knowledge, skills and attitudes, occupational know-how and the social readiness required for working, participating in social life and participating in the lifelong learning process. Vocational education system in Estonia is regulated by the Vocational Educational Institutions Act. The Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education ([EKKA](#)) is responsible for quality assurance in VET and higher education. Almost 80% of VET schools are owned by the State. There are private and municipal VET schools. Most VET is provided at upper secondary and post-secondary levels. VET programmes are available for learners without completed basic education. However, participation at lower levels is marginal. There are no age restrictions for enrolment in post-secondary and higher education as long as the learner has a qualification giving access to a selected programme. There is a trend for more adult learners to participate in initial and continuing VET.

According to a 2017 [overview](#), compared to the EU average (47.3% in 2015), IVET students in Estonia comprise a lower share of the student population at upper secondary level (35.7%). Only a small proportion of these IVET students are in combined work- and school-based programmes (1.4% compared to 28.4% in the EU in 2015). In contrast, the share of upper secondary IVET students enrolled in programmes giving direct access to tertiary education (94.6%) is high and also well above the EU average (66.7%). Levels of early leaving from education and training in Estonia are just above the EU average (10.9% in Estonia, 10.7% in the EU as a whole). The share of 30- to 34-year-olds with tertiary-level education is higher than in the EU (45.4% compared with 39.1%). Estonia has a relatively small percentage of adults with lower-level educational attainment (10.9% compared with the EU average of 23.0%). The NEET rate in Estonia is lower than the EU average (11.4% versus 15.2%) as is the unemployment rate for 20- to 34-year-olds (7.9% versus 11.8%). Both indicators have improved (decreased) between 2010 and 2016 in Estonia. The employment rate of recent graduates fell between 2014 and 2016 to 77.1%, somewhat below the EU average (78.2%).

Also, there are gender and regional (including linguistic) differences in the education choices of basic school graduates. While only 10% of females in cities, having studied in Estonian, choose VET, the share increases to 60% for males in the north-eastern part of the country whose language of instruction is Russian. Traditionally, there are more males in VET (53%), except at postsecondary level. Males prefer engineering (the most popular option), manufacturing and construction, science, and services programmes, while females more often enrol in services (the most popular option), social sciences, business and law, and engineering, manufacturing and construction.

Promoting participation in vocational education and training is a political priority in Estonia. The labour market and education cooperation programme aims at making VET more attractive for young people by improving its image and raising awareness. The programme offers VET providers counselling and support from professional public relations companies on how to develop communication strategies. Regular seminars and in-service training are organised for VET school communication and marketing specialists. National skills competitions, held in 32 professions, are organised in cooperation with enterprises, training providers and professional associations to raise VET awareness. The winners of national competitions participate in international competitions. Furthermore, there are incentives for learners who can apply for basic and special study allowances and also, for the enterprises to encourage VET employment.

The research does not show that there are any specialised VET programs for mothers. Nonetheless, there is data on the use of gamification tools/techniques can be found in the [course](#) Game – Based Learning and Gamification organised in Estonia in 2022-2023 which target groups include teachers, experts and staff working in VET. The course is practice-based which offers techniques and tools to introduce game-based learning and gamification in lessons. Lastly, in Estonia, since 2006, [entrepreneurship](#) is included in the national curricula for vocational education, where participation is compulsory. Reports show that between 90% and 100% of vocational education students participate in entrepreneurship programmes at some point during their vocational education path.

3.2.5. Italy

Vocational education and training (VET) in Italy is characterised by multilevel governance with broad involvement of national, regional and local stakeholders. Ministries of Education and Labour lay down general rules and common principles for the education and training system. Regions and autonomous provinces are in charge of VET programs and most apprenticeship-type schemes. Compulsory education lasts 10 years, up to age 16. At age 14 learners make a choice between general education and VET. They have the 'right/duty' (diritto/dovere) to stay in education until age 18 to accomplish 12 years of education and/or vocational qualification. All upper secondary education programs are school based, but could be also delivered as apprenticeships (type 1). There is permeability across VET programs and also with the general education system.

At upper secondary level, the following VET programs are offered:

- (a) five-year programmes (EQF level 4) at technical schools (istituti tecnici) lead to technical education diplomas; at vocational schools (istituti professionali) they lead to professional education diplomas. Programs combine general education and VET, and can also be delivered in the form of alternans training. Graduates have access to higher education;
- (b) three-year programmes (istruzione e formazione professionale, leFP) lead to a vocational qualification (attestato di qualifica di operatore professionale; EQF level 3);
- (c) four-year programs lead to a technician professional diploma (diploma professionale di tecnico; EQF level 4).

On completion of a three-year vocational qualification, it is possible to attend one additional year leading to a four-year vocational diploma; this allows enrolling in the fifth year of the State education system and sitting the State exam for a general, technical or professional education diploma. At post-secondary level VET is offered as higher technical education for graduates of five-year upper secondary programs or four-year leFP programmes who passed entrance exams:

- (a) higher technical education and training courses (istruzione e formazione tecnica superiore, IFTS): one-year post-secondary non-academic programmes which lead to a high technical specialisation certificate (certificato di specializzazione tecnica superiore, EQF level 4);

(b) higher technical institute programmes (istituti tecnici superiori; ITS): two- to three-year postsecondary non-academic programmes which lead to a high-level technical diploma (diploma di tecnico superiore, EQF level 5).

Apprenticeship is available at all levels and programs and is always defined as an open-ended employment contract. Type 1 apprenticeship is offered for all programs at upper secondary level and the IFTS program. Type 3 apprenticeship (higher training/education apprenticeship) is offered in ITS programs and all tertiary education level programs leading to university degrees, HTI diplomas, and doctoral degrees corresponding to the tertiary level. Type 2 apprenticeship does not correspond to any education level, diploma or qualification, but leads to occupational qualifications recognised by the relevant national sectoral collective agreement applied in the hiring company. Type 1 and Type 3 apprenticeships are associated with a formal education and training program, while Type 2 is not.

VET for adults is offered by a range of different public and private providers. It includes programs leading to upper secondary VET qualifications to ensure progression opportunities for the low-skilled; these are provided by provincial centres for adult education (centri provinciali per l'istruzione degli adulti, CPIA) under the remit of the education ministry. Continuing vocational training (CVT) to meet enterprise, sectoral and regional needs is supported by joint interprofessional funds managed by the social partners.

3.3. Entrepreneurial education

The following pages contain the data gathered during the country desk research within the third and last thematic block: Entrepreneurial education. This is a sizable section of the methodology due the nature of data collected herein, as the entrepreneurship status quos vary greatly across the partners' countries. Also, this section contains numerous concrete examples of how entrepreneurial skills are fostered, especially in relation to mothers as learners. The partners tried to find instances of gamification in praxis. The partners resorted to trustworthy national sources (ie. publications, business incubators, investment and development trends, etc.) and/or European sources (Eurostat). The majority of the data is secondary data gathered from reports, statistics, articles, etc. Based on research guidelines provided by IRR, all partners selected the most relevant data related to their respective country desk research.

Explanatory overview:

A. Definitions of researched concepts

The main concepts referred to in this research section are defined as follows:

Entrepreneur = Persons (business owners) who seek to generate value through the creation or expansion of economic activity, by identifying and exploiting new products, processes or markets ([OECD](#), 2007)

Entrepreneurial activity = Enterprising human action in pursuit of the generation of value, through the creation or expansion of economic activity, by identifying and exploiting new products, processes or markets ([OECD](#), 2007)

Entrepreneurship = Phenomenon associated with entrepreneurial activity ([OECD](#), 2007)

Entrepreneurial skills = ie. inner discipline; ability to take risk; innovative; change-orientated; persistence ([OECD](#), 2012)

Serious game = Computer application, which aims to combine aspects of both serious as, but not limited to, teaching, learning, communication, or further information with entertainment from the spring game. Such an association has intended to depart from mere entertainment ([Alvarez](#), 2007)

Gamification = Process of transforming typical academic components into gaming themes. Gamification endeavors to literally create a game out of learning by theming all components of your classroom in a game metaphor; make your class like one big first-person game. Remember that the goal is to enhance learning by increasing student engagement ([Study.com](#), 2022)

Start-up = Company in the first stages of operations. Startups are founded by one or more entrepreneurs who want to develop a product or service for which they believe there is demand. These companies generally start with high costs and limited revenue, which is why they look for capital from a variety of sources such as venture capitalists ([Investopedia](#), 2022)

Social enterprise = Social business is defined as a business with specific social objectives that serve its primary purpose. Social enterprises seek to maximise profits while maximising benefits to society and the environment, and the profits are principally used to fund social programs ([Investopedia](#), 2022).

B. Relevance of research to the project

Research on Entrepreneurial education is essential to the MOMentum project in its entirety as it allows the partners to determine the attitude towards, developmental trends, and long-term potential of entrepreneurial skill sets in the partners' countries. Hereby the partners determine how advanced entrepreneurial education is, respectively how much of the available materials and practices cater specifically for the needs of women, namely mothers. Being cognizant of the accessibility and suitability of this type of education to the main target group enables the partners to decide which entrepreneurial skills this project should address and to what extent.

C. Expected contributions to the methodology

Research findings within this thematic block contribute to MOMentum methodology by identifying the topics and skills addressed by entrepreneurial education in the partners' countries, with a special focus on education tailored for mothers. The research findings serve the partners in singling out which entrepreneurial education materials and practices are available for women, more specifically mothers. Lastly, the partners try to discover if gamification is resorted to for creating and honing entrepreneurial skillsets. Inasmuch as, any good practices identified within the partners' countries will be investigated for replicability and scalability within this project.

3.3.1. Czech Republic

There are a lot of projects/courses in the Czech environment that are in the field of adult education, specifically in the field of entrepreneurship. Examples include the “Regional Centre of Assistance for Start-up Entrepreneurs” implemented in the Olomouc Region by the educational and advisory association EDUKOL for people at risk of unemployment. Or the project called “Education for prosperity and competitiveness”. Among other examples of entrepreneurship projects is Creative Entrepreneurship in Schools (CENTRES) which is an international initiative implemented in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, Poland, Slovenia and the UK. The main aim of this initiative is to establish an online forum for sharing good practice in entrepreneurship education. Another good practice is Entrepreneurship.cz, an online education portal offering materials, teaching and learning resources which are free and accessible to all. The ultimate objective of the portal is to promote entrepreneurship education and the development of entrepreneurial mindsets in the Czech education system.

In the Czech education system, there is a need for common elements of entrepreneurship in the curricula at secondary education. This includes the recognition of skills and competences for young people to successfully enter the labour market. The Long-term Education Plan 2015-2020 emphasises, in particular, the importance for education to contribute to sustainable development, highlighting economic aspects, the needs of the labour market, and the role of active citizenship. Entrepreneurship education is recognised as a cross-curricular objective at primary and secondary schools.

Entrepreneurial skills are in the curricula as part of compulsory key competences, like working and entrepreneurial competences at secondary education. These competences are translated into compulsory subjects such as Man and Society: Civics, The World of Work and Basics of Civics and Social Sciences in secondary education. Schools have autonomy in implementing these cross-curricular objectives into their education plans. In secondary education, entrepreneurial teaching and learning is less well-embedded, in part due to the existing demands placed on schools in terms of the main subjects covered. Entrepreneurship education is available at public schools with an economic/managerial focus (College of Economics), but there are also many private schools/courses available to replace public schools.

3.3.2. Cyprus

According to a report by OECD on [Inclusive Entrepreneurship Policies in Cyprus \(2020\)](#), from 2010 to 2019 “There was a substantial gender gap in early-stage entrepreneurship activities over this period. Men were about one and-a-half times more likely than women to be involved in early-stage entrepreneurship activities over this period (8.4% vs. 6.3%)” (OECD, 2020). [Cyprus has seen a significant shift in its focus on entrepreneurship](#) in the last few years, including:

- [University of Cyprus, Centre for Entrepreneurship](#);
 - [Junior Achievement Cyprus](#), a non-profit organisation dedicated to educating students on entrepreneurship, work readiness, financial literacy skills through hands-on programmes;
 - AIPFE The Cyprus Institute of Marketing – Cyprus Business [Scholarships for women](#)
- Gamified activities for entrepreneurial education usually happen in the context of EU-funded projects, such as [Green Steam Incubator](#) and [INSPIRE](#).

Policies promoting Social Entrepreneurship in Cyprus include the establishment of laws for social entrepreneurship: ‘the Administrative Reform Unit prepared a relevant bill for the creation of a "Register for the Creation and Preservation of Social Enterprises", which was approved by the Council of Ministers in January 2018. The Cypriot state, considering the manifold aids that both the society in general and a country’s economy can reap from the development of social businesses, has prepared a draft bill entitled “Law for the creation and keeping of a Registry for Social Enterprises”’, which was adopted in 2020.

Within the newly established law in Cyprus, a business can be defined as social if it falls into one of the following two categories: (a) a general purpose social enterprise: the main characteristics of such an enterprise are, inter alia, that its primary purpose is social mission through the promotion of positive social and/or environmental actions in the interest of society, and it invests at least 70% of its profits to promote its social mission, (b) social integration enterprise: the main characteristics of such an enterprise are, inter alia, that its primary purpose is social mission, through the employment of persons belonging to vulnerable groups of the population, who constitute at least 40% of the working-class potential of this business. Beyond the aforementioned, law, an authority was established for the functioning and keeping of the Registry for Social Enterprises entitled ‘Directorate General for European Programmes,

Coordination and Development ([DG EPCD - Social Entrepreneurship, 2020](#))' ([INSPIRE GUIDE IO1 PART A](#), p.48).

3.3.3. Greece

[Business Education](#) is an innovative, complex, educational process, which includes a wide range of learning objectives, pedagogical methods and individual approaches. According to some scholars, Business Education aims exclusively at encouraging the creation of new businesses, while according to others it includes a wider range of activities that contribute to the strengthening of business skills, attitudes and behaviours. [Community programs](#) provide an opportunity to achieve the strategic goal of strengthening entrepreneurship and promoting entrepreneurship through education. Examples of such programs are the following:

- Operational Program “Education and Initial Vocational Training”, a co-funded project by the EU which includes measures and actions, aimed at improving the education system and its services, so it can meet new needs and create communication conditions and connection to the labour market;
- “Youth Entrepreneurship at the University of Macedonia”, with actions related to raising awareness, informing and guiding students and graduates in matters of entrepreneurship;
- Operational Program “Employment and Vocational Training” 2000-2006 whose goal was to promote employment, address the major problem of unemployment, while increasing the participation of women and disadvantaged groups in the labour market.

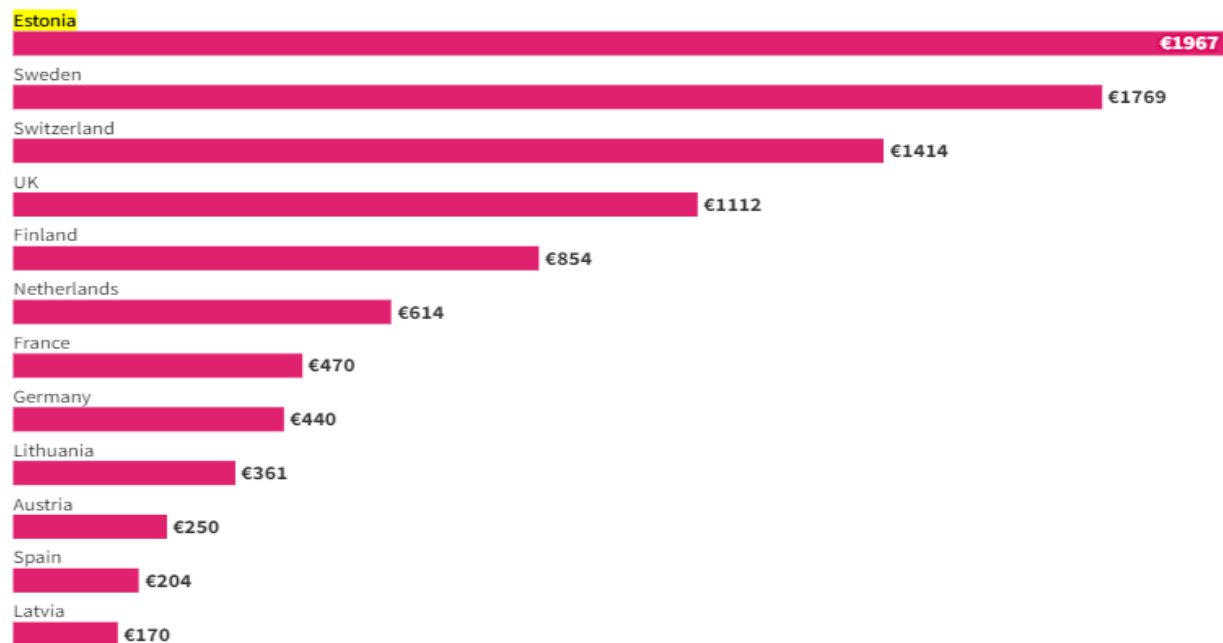
Moreover, opportunities to develop methods and material that promote entrepreneurial education for women and more specifically mothers are supported by Erasmus+. There are Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships in which Greek organisations and bodies participate which aim at empowering mothers and women in general in order to follow an entrepreneurial path. Those projects present an alternative and gamified learning approach as well, through gamified tools, applications and serious games.

3.3.4. Estonia

Estonia is regarded as one of the most entrepreneurial nations on earth. A recent [report](#) showed that Estonia is number one in the world in terms of start-ups per million inhabitants and also has the most unicorns per capita in Europe.

Party in Estonia

Estonia has raised the most investment per capita of any country in Europe



Source: [Dealroom](#)

A Flourish chart

Fig. 13. Investment per capita attracted; source: Sifted, 2022

At the [national](#) level, several Ministries and the Estonian Chamber of Commerce have adopted a policy document on the promotion of entrepreneurship education entitled “I am an entrepreneur”. Entrepreneurship education is recognised as a cross-curricular objective at all levels of schooling. Entrepreneurial competencies are among the essential competencies that ought to be acquired at all school levels. There are several policy documents combining the policy framework for entrepreneurship competence and its development:

- [Estonian](#) Science and Developmental Activities, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Plan 2021-2035. The strategy is being implemented by the Ministry of Economics and Communication and Enterprise Estonia and partner institutions. The plan seeks to reach the goal where Estonian entrepreneurs earn greater income through products and services with a higher value added.
- The Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020, with a follow-up for the years 2021-2035, where one measure is specifically targeted to encouraging youth entrepreneurship, creativity and ideas.
- Educational and Entrepreneurial Co-operation in Future City is a 2021-2023 [project](#) led by the Estonian Entrepreneurship University of Applied Science. The purpose of the project is to create a strong link between the modern educational system and future businesses, so that studies can directly relate to the expectations of employers.

While the [formal](#) entrepreneurship environment is considered to be very developed in Estonia, women are under-represented among the population of entrepreneurs, and there is gender-based sectoral segregation of female entrepreneurs. Women entrepreneurs constituted 5% of the women in the active labour force in 2012, which is surprisingly low considering the country's favourable entrepreneurial framework and high education level of women. Gender equality is guaranteed in Estonian female entrepreneurship, and women's rights are legally protected by the constitution.

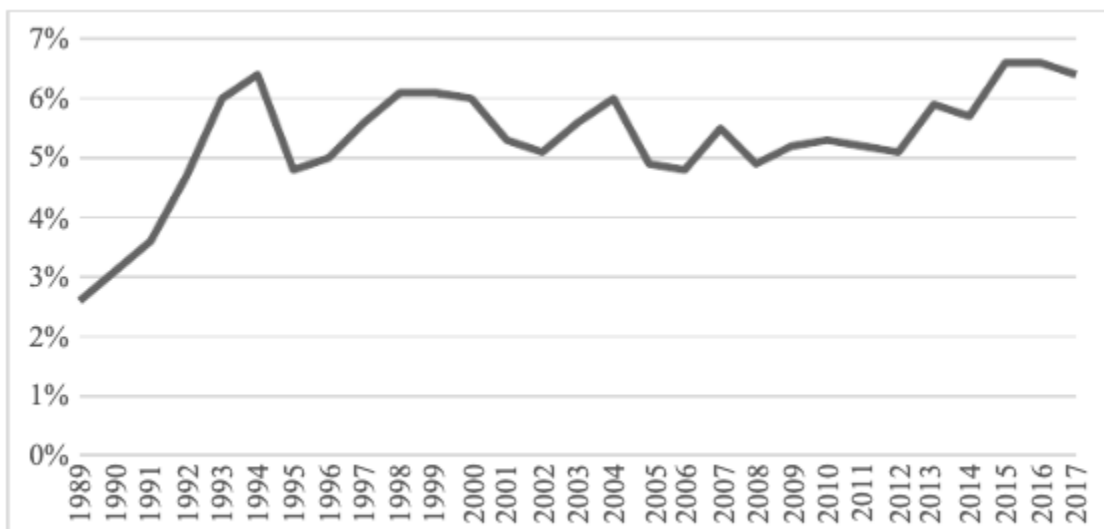


Fig. 14. Female entrepreneurship rate within Estonian active labour force; source: Statistics Estonia, 2018

3.3.5. Italy

In Italy, the Ministry of Education, University and Research, Department for the education and training system, has further specified what is meant by entrepreneurship education (Entrepreneurship Education): “Ability to transform ideas into actions. Creativity, innovation and risk taking, project planning and management, knowing how to seize opportunities that can lead to creating or contributing to social or commercial activities. Realisation of independent entrepreneurial activity. The Total early-stage Entrepreneurship Activity (TEA) represents the main indicator of entrepreneurial activation: it measures the level of entrepreneurial activity in the adult population considering both nascent entrepreneurship (nascent entrepreneur), i.e. people actively involved in starting a new business, and people who have started a business less than 42 months ago (new business owner). The weighted average of 15 EU countries is equal to 6.8%; therefore more than double the value recorded in Italy (2.8%).

The highest number of entrepreneurs is concentrated in the central age groups, from 25 to 45 years; those in which individuals are in the early stages of their career and show greater propensity to change their status. In the Italian case, there is a reduced entrepreneurial propensity in the older age groups and in that of young people between 18 and 24 years of age. This diversity of trends could be partly attributed to the strengthening of income support measures for the weaker sections of the population, such as young and old, which may have had a discouraging effect on the intention to pursue an entrepreneurial activity. At the same time, entrepreneurial activation rates are significantly higher for men than for women, in line with 9 other countries in Europe that have the same situation of gender inequality and where women activate about half of businesses than men: Cyprus, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland. An interesting statistic concerns education: female entrepreneurs are on average more educated than male entrepreneurs, even if they attend fewer courses on entrepreneurship than men.

An example of best practice was the use of “Serious Games” for entrepreneurship education as part of the “eSG - stimulating entrepreneurship attraverso Serious Games”. The use of serious games allowed the students to touch and experience first-hand some aspects (strategic-decisional, managerial and more directly operational) of the entrepreneur’s work through business management simulation games. The effectiveness of the activities conducted through

the Serious Games cannot be taken for granted but is directly linked to the functionality of the games chosen and their appropriateness not only in terms of content but also structural and methodological; this requires making an extremely detailed choice of games, not generic but suitably targeted.

In the framework of eSG, in Italy, five different games have been developed, courses and tools remaining available [online](#):

- Hot Shot Business is a game designed by Disney for children between 9 and 12 years old, simple but suitable as an introductory game to the theme of “entrepreneurship” and has also been favourably received by university students;
- Sim Venture is a strategy game about “business / market adventures”. It is a single-player. The player is called upon to make decisions to organise a virtual venture and make it work. The game is supported by a video tutorial and can be played at multiple levels of complexity, from simple to advanced. Each game session lasts for a virtual month. At the end of each month a report is delivered to the player that helps him understand his mistakes and improve, making decisions with more awareness for the next month. The areas in which the player can operate are 4: Organization, Sales & Marketing, Operations and Finance;
- Enterprise Game (EG) is a game, developed by PixeLearning, usable online and based on role-playing games and business simulations. The game is a single player but the player, who plays the role of the CEO, can invite 4 friends who will respectively cover the role of: general manager, financial director and two direct collaborators with whom the CEO exchanges e-mails and information. The life of the company lasts 3 virtual years. Players can always check reports on the progress of their enterprise. They manage all company departments and the simulation is realistic
- GoVenture - Any Business is a highly customisable business simulation where players manage companies on their own or as a team. In this game you can define the product, sector and market, or choose from various present scenarios / simulations. The goal of the game is to run a successful business in competition with other businesses run by other players or against virtual opponents.

Another project using transferable gamification tools/techniques is the “EN.GA.GE - ENTrepreneurial GAMES for Growing Europeans”. The EN.GA.GE project has selected three digital games for Entrepreneurship Education (EI):

- a) [GEM Game](#)
- b) [AGROPOLY](#)
- c) [VARIANT LIMITS](#)

4. Expected outcomes of methodology

4.1. Country desk research general findings

Czech Republic

- Mothers face higher unemployment rates when they return to the labour market after maternity/parental leave. Long parental leaves of Czech women mean a significant loss of human capital and interruption of professional development. This also leads to a high risk of unemployment after returning to the labour market.
- The unemployment rate is 12% for women with a high school diploma and it goes as high as 28% for women without a high school diploma.
- Women often become unemployed as soon as they return to the labour market. Almost 30% of women with two-year-olds and 60% of women with three-year-olds become unemployed immediately after parental leave.
- VET is functional in the Czech Republic, but does not have a specific/direct focus on mothers (except for some projects) but rather on the adult population in general. There are a number of courses/educational projects that focus on entrepreneurship education for adults.

Cyprus

- Gender pay gap in Cyprus in 2021 is 10.4%.
- Gender employment gap (referring to the difference between the employment rates of men and women aged 20-64) in Cyprus for 2020 was 75% (12 percentage points).
- 57.6% of females in Cyprus are inactive due to caring responsibilities.
- There is much entrepreneurial activity going on in Cyprus.
- Female entrepreneurship should be promoted more.
- According to a report by OECD, from 2010 to 2019, “Men were about one and-a-half times more likely than women to be involved in early-stage entrepreneurship activities over this period (8.4% vs. 6.3%)”.

Greece

- As of 2021 in Greece, 403,720 were registered as unemployed, of whom men account for 36.39% whereas women for 63.61%.
- 65% of mothers are employed in Greece.
- Basic maternity leave for women employees of the private sector is 119 days and are entitled to a full salary whereas self-employed women are entitled to 150 euros/month for 4 months.
- In the last 2 years, paternity leave has increased from 2 to 14 days.
- Today, single-parent families represent 28.46% of families in Greece and the most common type consists of mother and biological children.
- Greece lags significantly behind the EU, both in terms of participation in IVET and CVET for skills development.
- As of current trends in VET about entrepreneurship, a turn towards the combination of entrepreneurship with digitalisation.
- There has been an increase of programs related to entrepreneurial education in the last years.
- There are not sufficient sources regarding VET and entrepreneurial education specifically for mothers in Greece.
- Erasmus+ provides opportunities for inclusion of mothers in entrepreneurial education

Estonia

- In the interval 2005-2020, in Estonia, around 70% of women aged 20-64 were employed, whereas men employment reached a percentage 75%.
- As of 2022, in Estonia, the unemployment rate was 6.2% with a total of less than 45,000 people from which 6.8% of men and 5.6% of women were unemployed.
- 70% of mothers are employed in Estonia.
- Estonia is the only country where self-employed women earn more than men with a gender pay gap of -16 in favour of women.
- Basic maternity leave for women amounts to 140 days. Maternity benefit is calculated at a rate of 100% of the average income per calendar day.
- Fathers in Estonia have the right to receive a total of 30 calendar days of paternal leave until the child reaches the age of three.
- In 2020, single parents represented more than 28% of households with children at EU level.
- Only a small proportion of IVET students are in combined work- and school-based programmes (1.4% compared to 28.4% in the EU in 2015). In contrast, the share of upper secondary VET students enrolled in programmes giving direct access to tertiary education (94.6%) is high and also well above the EU average (66.7%).
- While only 10% of females in cities, having studied in Estonian, choose VET, the share increases to 60% for males in the north-eastern part of the country whose language of instruction is Russian.
- The use of gamification tools/techniques in VET can be found in some courses in Estonia.
- Between 90% and 100% of vocational education students participate in entrepreneurship programmes at some point during their vocational education path.
- Estonia is regarded as one of the most entrepreneurial nations on earth.
- There are not sufficient sources regarding VET and entrepreneurial education specifically for mothers in Estonia.

Italy

- Italy's unemployment rate stood at 9.2% in 2020.
- Italian mothers have the highest unemployment rate in Europe: more than 4 out of 10 mothers with minor children do not have a job. The employment of Italian moms with 1 child is 57.9%, with 2 children 57% and with 3 children is 43.1%. The lowest employment rates are recorded among mothers of preschool children: 53% of women with 0-2 year old children and 55.7% for those with 3-5 years old children.
- More than 40% of Italian mothers with at least one child choose part-time in order not to lose their job.
- Italy is still among the European countries with the most critical issues on gender gap both with and without children.
- If Italian women are relatively harmed by the birth of children, Italian men seem to benefit.
- The disparity of gender widens in the cases of women where the level of education is lower in relation to the number of children.
- Italian single mothers are the most affected: single mothers employed down by almost 2 percentage points (reaching 70.7% in 2020 compared to 72.6% recorded in 2015).
- Maternity leave for Italian moms is compulsory for the period of pregnancy and post-natal recovery and women must take up to two months off from work before her due date and three months off after the baby's birth.
- The compulsory paid paternity leave for Italian fathers increased from 5 to 7 days (to be used within 5 months from the date of birth) in 2020.
- Vocational education and training (VET) in Italy is characterised by multilevel governance where regions and autonomous provinces are in charge of VET programs and most apprenticeship-type schemes.
- In the Italian case, there is a reduced entrepreneurial propensity in the older age groups and in that of young people between 18 and 24 years of age.
- The gender gap can be also seen in Italian entrepreneurship with the entrepreneurial activation rates significantly higher for men than for women.

4.2. Methodological guidance for creation of MOMentum toolkit and app

It is evident that different realities coexist for European mothers according to their country. However, there seem to be some common, persistent characteristics across European Union. Based on the research findings in each of the partners' countries – while also accounting for EU averages and trends – the following outcomes ensued:

I. Motherhood and Employment

The findings concerning the issue of motherhood and employment allowed the partners to determine the baseline scenario for women, with a focus on mothers, in the partners' countries. The data collected and interpreted hereby constructed an updated status quo with respects to societal setting, institutional framework, and legislative conditions advancing or hindering employment equality. The most **critical findings** are as follows:

Higher unemployment rates for mothers are pervasive when compared to individuals without children, be them women or men.

Inasmuch as, the 2020 national unemployment rates observed herein reach:

- 16.5% in Greece
- 10% in Cyprus
- 9.2% in Italy
- 6.2% in Estonia
- 3.42% in the Czech Republic

Gender pay gap is evident across all herein studied countries. The gap widens when women have children.

Gender gap seems to be constant for all partner countries:

- Cyprus showcased a difference between the employment rates of men and women (aged 20-64) of 12 percentage points for 2020
- Italy is still among the European countries with the most critical issues on gender gap, both with and without children, with 28.9 points for men and 12.5 for women

Yet, among the researched countries, as well as in whole of the European Union, Estonia is the sole place where there is an inverted gap: here, self-employed women earn more than men with a gender pay gap of -16 in favour of women.

II. VET national context

The findings on VET national contexts permitted the partners to assess the tools and training opportunities individuals seeking VET avail in the researched countries. The research points out that how VET is regulated, applied, and certified differs greatly across the European Union. There were no universal best practices that were specifically identified for transferability and replicability within MOMentum project. Ultimately, the need for VET tailored for mothers is evident across all partners' countries.

III. Entrepreneurial education

The findings on Entrepreneurial education revealed to varying extents the attitude towards, developmental trends, and long-term potential of entrepreneurial skill sets in the partners' countries. The partners determined that the currently available materials and practices for entrepreneurial education cater tenuously for the needs of mothers as learners. Lastly, it was shown that gamification hereby is marginally used, mostly in projects funded by European schemes rather than strongly embedded in national curricula or governmental programmes.

VET training for building and/or improving entrepreneurial skills exists in all researched countries, with entrepreneurship and digitalisation becoming increasingly more popular.

Yet, little if any of the VET entrepreneurial training is designed and delivered specifically to meet the needs of mothers as learners.

These critical findings indicate that the project results of MOMentum ought to:

Overall project objectives	Resolution means via MOMentum Project Results
1. Target the reduction of unemployment	Creation and further consolidation of entrepreneurial mindset and skills to allow women, especially mothers to have a better standing on the labour market via self-employment
2. Boost the participation of mothers in entrepreneurship	Raising awareness about obstacles and opportunities for women, especially mothers in entrepreneurship; combating stereotypes and destigmatising the mothers as entrepreneurs
3. Support the sustainable participation of mothers in entrepreneurship	Showcasing reputable role models of women, especially mother entrepreneurs to increase confidence and chances of women becoming and growing as entrepreneurs
4. Ensure fairer outcomes of employment	Cognizance of gender pay gap and other unfair gender-based policies and practices
5. Reduce the gender pay gap	Mitigation of unfair employment outcomes by openly informing women, especially mothers of payment differences and rights hereby
6. Increase the overall employment welfare of mothers	Integration in a fairer, sustainable manner of women, especially mothers into the labour market by openly informing on maternity leave payments and rights, paternal leave
7. Diversify VET tools and training resources	Creation, distribution, and replication of novel, needs-informed learning and training materials
8. Tailor VET tools and training resources for mothers' needs as learners	Customization of learning and training materials to cater for the needs of mothers as learners, ie. limited time, reduced in-person availability, child-conditioned schedule, etc.
9. Encourage women to take up VET entrepreneurial education	Organisation of training and dissemination actions to popularize and offer free, unlimited access to the learning and training materials to as many mothers as possible
10. Use more gamification for VET entrepreneurial education	Creation and wide-scale use of gamified mobile and table app reuniting the learning and training materials; provision of user-friendly, rapid learning experience.

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