

Beat: Business

ITALY-CELEBRATION OF WOMENS DAY AMID GENDER GAP

ITALIAN WOMEN EARN 30%-58% LESS THAN MEN

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USPA NEWS - Italians prepared to mark International Women's Day Sunday amid new reports showing the wide gap between salaries of females and males performing work of equal value.

Traditionally, Italians mark the day with bouquets of yellow mimosa flowers in a show of respect, but that gesture has been offset by studies released Friday that revealed a continuing gap in women's working conditions.

This, despite the fact that women consistently perform better than men in university and are establishing a growing presence in the professions.

Professional women in Italy earned 41% less on average than their male peers in 2013, according to a study by the Italian association for private pension funds Associazione degli Enti Previdenziali Privati (ADEPP).

The gender pay gap was highest among lawyers and notaries, where the women's paychecks averaged 53.8% less than their male peers.

For healthcare professionals - doctors, dentists, veterinarians, and nurses - women's salaries were 46% of their male counterparts. For female engineers, architects, industrial auditors and other technical professionals, their gender cost women 42.1% of their compensation.

Meanwhile, female professionals enrolled in private pension systems has risen from 33.9% of their member total to 38.7% from 2007 to 2013.

The gender gap in pay and job security is also glaring for recent university graduates, despite the fact that women graduate better and in greater numbers than men, according to 2013 figures reported in the XVII Rapporto sulla condizione occupazionale dei laureati (XVII Report on the Employment Condition of University Graduates).

Females with university degrees in Italy earned 30% less than their male peers one year after graduation, although women represented 60% of the graduating class and received better grades on average: 103.3 out of 110 points compared to 101 for the men.

Employed male neo-graduates in Italy earned an average of 1,217 euros per month compared to the 936 euros for new female graduates. The gap widens as time goes on.

Five years on, male graduates see a paycheck of 1,556 euros per month versus 1,192 euros for women - a difference that actually increased to 30.5%. Men also saw higher employment rates as well as more stable working positions.

For those who completed a five-year undergraduate and specialization programme, 52.5% of women had found work one year after graduation compared to 60% of their male peers.

Meanwhile, 38% of the employed men landed stable jobs versus just 31% of the women. The difference was more acute five years after graduation, when 78% of the women compared to 85% of men had found employment of some kind.

At that point, just 64% of the employed women have garnered stable jobs compared to 77% of the men - a difference of 13%. Italy is not alone in having a gender gap when it came to company hierarchies. A total of 97.6% of chief executive officers in Europe are male, while 2.4% are female.

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