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WOMEN AT WORK IN CROATIA

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Summary

This paper analysis the evolution of employment and unemployment gender gaps in Croatia since 1996, and compares them with those in other transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe. It also provides the examination of female employment characteristics, distinguishing by age group, level of educational attainment, working times, and family situation. Our main findings are as follows: (i) taking into account gender employment gap in Croatia and other transition countries, women's relative position in employment is not worse than in the EU 15 countries, on the contrary the data suggest that it is even better (however, employment rates for both men and women are lower than in the EU 15 countries), (ii) the gap in employment rates in Croatia is mainly the result of differences that exist in older age group, over 50, where the gap is higher than the gap for „prime age“ group, (iii) the educational gender gap in Croatia is narrowing for all levels of educational attainment and the gap in employment rates is significantly lower for the higher educated categories, (iv) only 11% of all employed women in Croatia work part-time, which is significantly lower than in the EU 15 countries, but it is similar with other transition countries, (v) gender gaps in employment rates between mothers and fathers in Croatia are higher as the number of children rises, (vi) gender unemployment gap in Croatia is higher than in the most other transition countries (unemployment rates are higher for less educated women), and (vii) labour market adjustment for females during the mid- transition period was mainly through lower female participation rates rather than by higher unemployment.

Key words: employment gender gap, unemployment gender gap, female employment characteristics

1. INTRODUCTION

Before 1991 Croatia was the part of Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, which was a centrally planned economy. Ideologically in command economies women were considered equal to their male counterparts and that led into a range of measures that were aimed at retaining women in employment; although these measures did not necessary include equal treatment in the labour market. Since women were also the main providers of care for their households, they were often unable to commit themselves fully to the jobs and careers. The early nineties were characterized by the beginning of the transition process in Croatia and other ex-centrally planned economies, and this process had a strong influence on labour markets. Croatia was a special case among other transition countries, since the beginning of transition process coincided with war and occupation of one third of Croatian territory.

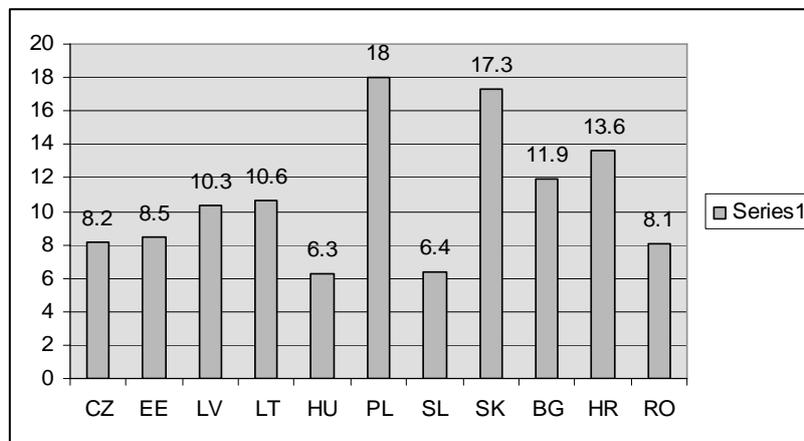
There is little literature about gender inequalities in the labour market in Croatia. This paper is primarily concerned to examine the current position of women in the Croatian labour market and to compare it with that in previous years and other transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Unfortunately, there is a lack of data related to labour market in Croatia for years before 1996, and therefore we are unable to assess the impact of early transition period on gender relations in the labour market. One explanation for this lack of data is the war (1/3 of Croatia was occupied) that officially ended in 1995. The Labour Force Survey, which is in compliance with ILO recommendations, has been conducted since 1996. Therefore, our analysis will be focus on the current women's position in the Croatian labour market. The years of mid-transition will be examined too, and where it is possible we will analyse data for years before 1996. This paper analyses the evolution of employment and unemployment gender gaps in Croatia since 1996, and compares them with those in other transition countries. We compute new indicators that show whether labour adjustment during the mid transition period was mainly through lower participation rates or unemployment in Croatia and compare our findings with those for other transition countries. We also examine characteristics of female employment distinguishing by age group, level of educational attainment, working times and family situation.

The rest of this paper will be structured as follows. Section 2 analyses evolution of employment and unemployment by gender. In Section 3, we examine gender employment gaps distinguishing by age. Following section 4 examines educational attainment and female employment. Section 5 analyses female employment distinguishing by working times, while in Section 6, we examine gender gaps in employment distinguishing by family situation. Lastly, Section 7 concludes with some recommendations for further actions.

2. EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT BY GENDER

In the labour market transition process is employment reallocation from the structures that were characteristics of centrally planned economies into structures that are compatible with market economies. All transition countries recorded a significant reallocation of employed persons from industry, public sector and big enterprises towards new, small and private, mainly service-oriented enterprises. The share of employed persons in manufacture in transition countries had been reduced, on average, by 10 percentage points, while the share of employed persons in services had been increased for approximately same amount (Biondić et.al., 2002).

This process of employment reallocation did not proceed without frictions in transition countries. After the beginning of transition, in most countries unemployment rates reached two digit amounts, and their reduction were slow. Even after fourteen years of the beginning of transition this rates remain high in most countries. This can be seen in Figure 1.



Source: EUROSTAT

Figure 1. Unemployment rates for fourth quarter of 2004 (age group: 15 and more years)

The transition process resulted in decline of GDP in all transition countries and had strong influence on labour markets. The total decline in employment in countries of Central and Eastern Europe was higher than increase in unemployment, because one part of employed persons went to inactive population. Often the reason for this was the possibility of earlier retirement or more liberalized approach to disability pensions (Biondić et. al, 2002). During the process of transition the employment rates for both, men and women were declining. This decline was accompanied by structural changes in production

structure: decline in industrial activities, which are male-dominated and a relative increase in the service sectors, which are female-dominated. These changes caused a relative improvement of women's position in employment.

In Croatia, transition resulted in a smaller relative deterioration in female employment, i.e. a smaller decline of female than male employment. The share of women in total employment has risen from 43.1% in 1990 to 45.5% in 2000. This can be explained by the fact that women are more represented in the service sector relative to men, and in that time service sector was relatively less affected by recession. The decline in the share of women in employment in 2001 and 2002 can be explained by the start of infrastructural investments and increase of employment in civil engineering, which primary affected male employment (Table 1). The impact of transition is more emphasized by the decline in total employment: from 1990 to 1995 total employment declined for 47%. This was a reaction to recession and sharp decrease in GDP that was stronger than in most other transition countries. This can be attributed to the fact that transition in Croatia coincided with a war, and the occupation of Croatian territory (Vujčić, 1998).

Table 1.

Total employment/unemployment in Croatia and share of women in total employment/unemployment according to labour related establishment survey

| | Total employment (thousands) | Share of women in total employment (%) | Total unemployment (thousands) | Share of women in total unemployment (%) |
|------|------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|
| 1990 | 1513.58 | 43.13 | 161 | 56 |
| 1991 | 1314.66 | 43.37 | 254 | 52 |
| 1992 | 1159.00 | 44.81 | 267 | 53 |
| 1993 | 1108.40 | 45.72 | 251 | 55 |
| 1994 | 1061.52 | 46.31 | 243 | 53 |
| 1995 | 1026.80 | 46.53 | 241 | 51 |
| 1996 | 1027.72 | 46.81 | 261 | 50 |
| 1997 | 1003.91 | 47.04 | 278 | 49 |
| 1998 | 1274.99 | 45.01 | 288 | 52 |
| 1999 | 1269.41 | 45.15 | 322 | 52 |
| 2000 | 1256.36 | 45.44 | 358 | 53 |
| 2001 | 1256.80 | 45.36 | 380 | 53 |
| 2002 | 1272.38 | 45.08 | 390 | 55 |

Source: ILO

The gender gap in employment in Croatia from 1996 to 2003 is shown in the Table 2. The data shows that the gender gap in employment rates had been narrowing from 1996 till 1999, when it was the smallest, and since than this gap

has started to rise. In 2000 both, male and female, rates were falling, but female rate fell more. The higher gap in 2001 is consequence of almost unchanged male employment rate, and lower female rate in comparison with the previous year.

Table 2.

Gender gap in employment rates in Croatia

| | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
|---------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Gap (%) | 15.2 | 14.2 | 14 | 12.5 | 13.1 | 14.5 | 14.6 | 14.3 |

Source: LFS (CBS, different years)

Table 3 shows the employment gap in Croatia and countries of Central and Eastern Europe in 2004. The average employment gap in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe is 13.2%. In 15 countries of the European Union this amount in 2004 was 15.7% (Eurostat). According to this we can conclude that relative women's position in employment in transition countries is not worse than that in the EU 15 countries, on the contrary, the data suggest that it is better. Croatia is not an exception among countries of Central and Eastern Europe. In 2004 the gender employment gap in Croatia was 14.4%, which is less than EU 15 average. The gap in employment rates in Croatia is higher than in countries of Northern Europe, but on the other hand it is approximately equal to the gap in Netherlands, Austria and Belgium (Eurostat).

Table 3.

Employment gap in Croatia and transition countries for fourth quarter of 2004 (for age group over 15)

| | Male employment rate | Female employment rate | Gap in employment rate |
|----------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Croatia | 50.8 | 36.4 | 14.4 |
| Czech republic | 63.9 | 45.6 | 18.3 |
| Estonia | 60.5 | 47.8 | 12.7 |
| Latvia | 58.7 | 46.3 | 12.4 |
| Lithuania | 57 | 45.8 | 11.2 |
| Hungary | 54.5 | 40 | 14.5 |
| Poland | 52.2 | 38.5 | 13.7 |
| Slovenia | 62.1 | 48.1 | 14 |
| Slovakia | 57.2 | 42.7 | 14.5 |
| Bulgaria | 48.2 | 39.3 | 8.9 |
| Romania | 56.1 | 44 | 12.1 |

Source: EUROSTAT

The evolution of unemployment rates by gender in Croatia is given in Table 4. The unemployment gap was the highest in 2001. This can be explained by the recession period in 1999, when female unemployment rates were increasing faster than male unemployment rates. However, since the beginning of economic recovery in 2001, female employment was rising faster, and unemployment rates were declining faster.

Table 4.

Unemployment rates by gender and gap between them for Croatia (LFS)

| | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 |
|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Total | 10 | 9.9 | 11.4 | 13.5 | 16.1 | 15.8 | 14.8 | 14.3 |
| Men | 9.5 | 9.5 | 11.9 | 12.8 | 15.0 | 14.2 | 13.4 | 13.1 |
| Women | 10.5 | 10.4 | 12.1 | 14.5 | 17.3 | 17.9 | 16.6 | 15.7 |
| Gap | -1 | -0.9 | -0.2 | -1.7 | -2.3 | -3.7 | -3.2 | -2.6 |

Source: ILO

According to Croatian employment service data, 55.6% of all unemployed persons were long-term unemployed in 2004 (persons that are looking for a job for more than one year), and among them 61% were women. The share of women in short-term unemployment was 55%. This might indicate that it is more difficult for women to find a job once when they are unemployed and the chances to become long-term unemployed are greater than those for men. But this also might indicate that number of inactive women continued to register at Croatian Employment Service as unemployed without real attention to find a job in order to get social benefits that are available for registered unemployed women.

If we compare gender unemployment gap in Croatia in 2003 with other transition countries (for age class 15 and over), it is evident that after Czech Republic that has gap of -3.6%, Croatia (-2.5%) has the highest unemployment gap among these countries. However, in comparison with EU 15 countries unemployment gap in Croatia is higher for 0.3 percentage points. There is no gap in Estonia and Lithuania at all, i.e. male and female unemployment rates are the same (Figure 2). The unemployment rates are higher for less educated women in all transition countries, including Croatia (Eurostat).

Figure 2.

Unemployment gap among transition countries for age class 15 and over
(fourth quarter of 2003)



Source: EUROSTAT

In Croatia female participation rates are lower than those of men. In 2003 female participation rate was 43.4%, which is for 14.9 percentage points lower than male participation rate. Comparisons with previous years indicate that there is no tendency for female participation rate to increase (LFS, CBS). In order to explore if the labour adjustment for females during mid-transition period in Croatia was mainly through participation or unemployment we will use the formula for labour adjustment during transition (Blanchard, 1997):

$$\Delta P = \Delta N + \Delta U + \Delta O$$

Where P is the female population of working age, N is female employment, U is female unemployment, O is non-participation and Δ is the difference between the variable in years that are chosen. The value of 1 for the ratio $\chi = \Delta U / (\Delta P - \Delta N)$ indicates that entire adjustment was through unemployment rather than participation and the value of 0 indicates the other extreme. According to Labour Force Survey Results (CBS) a decrease in female employment in Croatia was noted in 1999 and 2001. The ratio χ for 1999 of 0.45 suggests that the falling in female employment was mainly adjusted by lower participation rate rather than by higher unemployment. The same explanation is valid for the ratio χ (0.33) for the 2001. In other transition countries we noted the fall in female employment in different years (ILO) and for those years we also calculate the ratio χ . The results are shown in Table 5, and they suggest that

Croatia is an exception among these countries, since in all the other countries the fall in female employment in observed years was mainly adjusted by higher unemployment rate according to this estimate (it is closer to 1). This finding is one possible explanation of low female participation rate in Croatia.

Table 5.

Labour market adjustment in mid-transition period

| | Czech R. 1996-2001 | Estonia 1997-2000 | Poland 2000-2003 | Romania 2001-2003 | Slovakia 1997-2003 | Slovenia 1998-1999 | Croatia 1998-1999 | Croatia 2000-2001 |
|--------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| χ | 1.05 | 0.66 | 0.80 | 1.00 | 0.79 | 0.50 | 0.45 | 0.33 |

3. GENDER EMPLOYMENT GAPS DISTINGUISHING BY AGE GROUP

In Croatia the gap between male and female employment rates is mainly the result of differences that exist in older age group, over 50, where the gap is higher than the gap for the "prime age" group (between 25 and 49 years). Female employment rate in middle age is relatively high. Young women have low chance to find a job, but this is also the case for young men, which is the reason for the smaller gap in this age group. Even though, it is not easy for young people, both men and women, to find a job, it is even more difficult for older women. This trend is common to Czech Republic, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Poland and Bulgaria. For the other transition countries, gap in employment is higher for prime-age than for older age group (Table 6).

Table 6.

Employment rates for different age groups in fourth quarter of 2004

| | Between 25 and 49 years | | | Between 50 and 64 years | | |
|-----------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| | Male employment rate | Female employment rate | Gap | Male employment rate | Female employment rate | Gap |
| CZ | 90.5 | 71.9 | 18.6 | 67.8 | 46.8 | 21 |
| EE | 84 | 75.7 | 8.3 | 66.4 | 58.8 | 7.6 |
| LV | 83 | 75 | 8 | 56.2 | 49.4 | 6.8 |
| LT | 80.6 | 78.2 | 2.4 | 63.1 | 49.6 | 13.5 |
| HU | 83.1 | 68 | 15.1 | 51.3 | 39.9 | 11.4 |
| PL | 78 | 65.7 | 12.3 | 47.2 | 32.9 | 14.3 |
| SI | 87.6 | 83.3 | 4.3 | 53.8 | 31.9 | 21.9 |
| SK | 81.4 | 71.8 | 9.6 | 56.6 | 34.5 | 22.1 |
| BG | 72.6 | 67.6 | 5 | 51 | 36.4 | 14.6 |
| HR | 78.7 | 66.7 | 12 | 50.1 | 31.4 | 18.7 |
| RO | 81.8 | 66.9 | 14.9 | 54.4 | 41.1 | 13.3 |

Source: EUROSTAT

4. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND FEMALE EMPLOYMENT RATES

According to the last Census (2001) in Croatia, 7.4% of total population over 15 has no or at most three years of primary education and among them there are three times more women than men. The statistics on gender structure of population that was in education at the time of the Census shows that relatively larger number of young men than women continue their education following the compulsory eight year primary school. However, women are more successful in completing university education. On the other hand, if we look at the highest level of education (PhD), this is not the case any more. 870 women and 1 067 men are completing this degree, in spite of the fact that more women than men are continuing masters degree. The reason for this may be due to family obligations that women are faced with (dilemma whether to continue education or have a family). According to Statistical Yearbook 2004 (CBS), among all students enrolled at institutions of higher education in school year 2003/2004, 55% were females. The same data indicate that the educational choices of women are directed towards the fields of health and humanities, arts and education. Among all enrolled students at four faculties of medicine in Croatia 65% were

women and at three faculties of philosophy 79% were women. 93% of all enrolled at seven teacher's schools of professional higher education were women, and at four academies of art 58% of all enrolled students were women. On the other hand, only 13% of all enrolled students at faculties of engineering and electrical engineering were women. This indicates that educational choices differ between young men and women, and these differences in education appear to be important in explaining the different status of men and women in the labour market, including some part of female-male gender gap (OECD, 2002).

Indicators about population aged 25 to 59, by age group and educational attainment level from the Croatian LFS for 2003 are shown in the Table 7. Educational gender gap is narrowing for all levels of educational attainment. In the oldest age group 46.3% of all women have less than upper secondary education, which is much higher than the share of all men with the same educational attainment. For the youngest age group the share of women with less than upper secondary education is lower than share of all men with this level of education. In the oldest age group the share of all women with upper secondary level is lower by 17.4% than the share of all men with the same educational level. This gap is narrowing, and for the youngest age group it amounts to just 6.6%. The closing of the gender educational gap is most visible for population with tertiary level of education. In the oldest age group the share of all men with tertiary education is for 3.4% higher than the same share for women, while in the age group 25 to 34 this share for women is higher for 7.3% than the share for men.

Table 7.

Population aged 25 to 59, by age group and educational attainment level in Croatia for 2003. (The share of male/female in total male/female population)

| | 25-34 years | | 35-49 years | | 50-59 years | |
|---------------------------|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Males | Females | Males | Females | Males | Females |
| Less than upper secondary | 18 | 17.4 | 21.2 | 31.6 | 25.5 | 46.3 |
| Upper secondary level | 68 | 61.4 | 63.6 | 52.6 | 56.6 | 39.2 |
| Tertiary level | 14 | 21.3 | 15.2 | 15.8 | 17.9 | 14.5 |

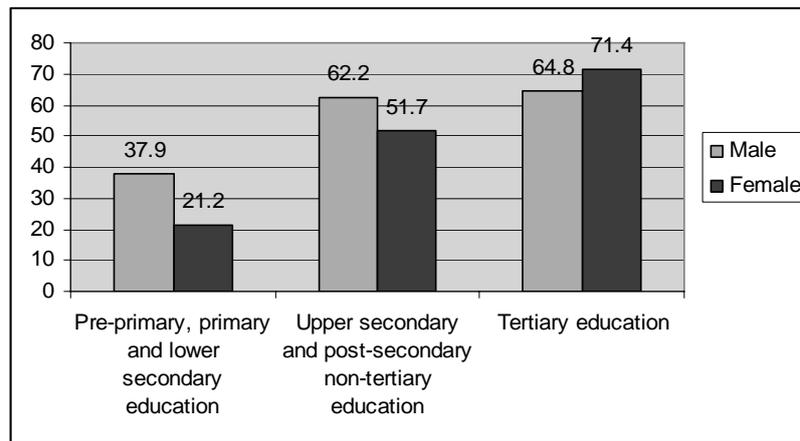
Source: LFS (CBS, different years)

The gap in employment rates is significantly lower for the higher educated categories of population and this can be attributed to the fact that higher education is more likely to give women access to more interesting and better paid

occupations. Furthermore, women with higher education will be more willingly to work, than to choose not to work in order to care for children, because in this case opportunity cost of not working is higher. Therefore, it seems that improvement of the population educational structure can reduce differences that exist in the labour market between women and men. In Croatia the gender gap in employment rates is even negative for the group with tertiary education, i.e. the female employment rate is higher than rate for males (Figure 3)

Figure 3.

Employment rates by educational attainment for age group over 25 for Croatia (fourth quarter of 2003)

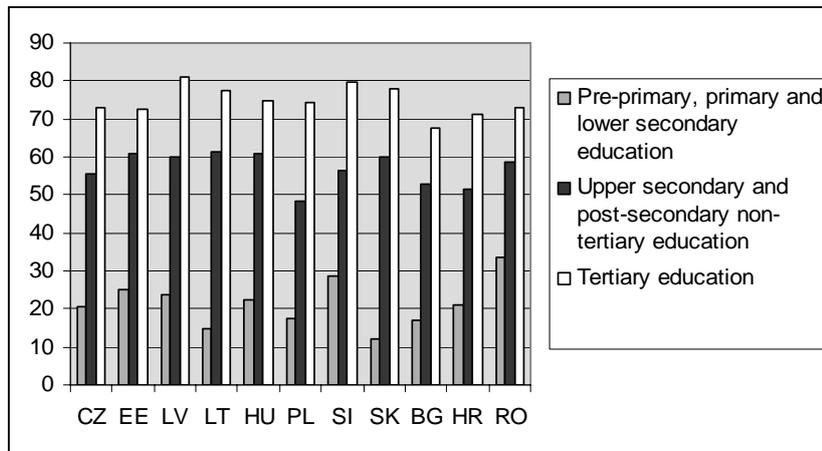


Source: EUROSTAT

If we compare female employment rates by educational attainment with the same in other transition countries, we can conclude that in all transition countries female employment rates are higher for higher educated categories (Figure 4).

Figure 4.

Female employment rates by educational attainment for age group over 25 (fourth quarter of 2003)



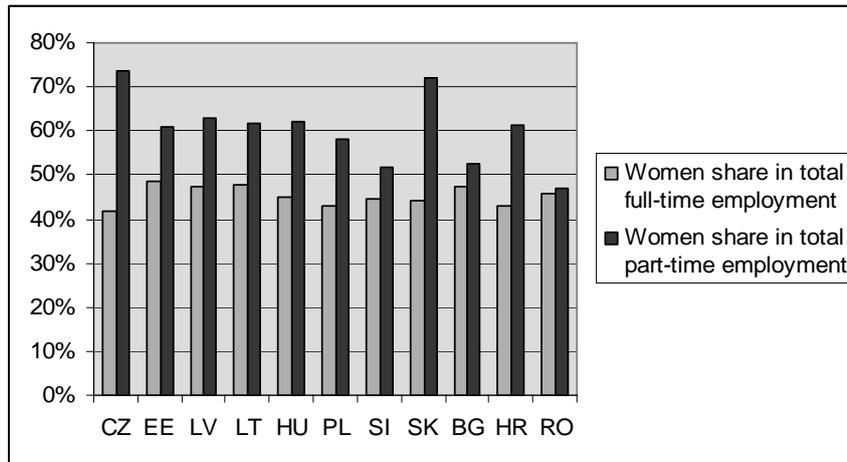
Source: EUROSTAT

5. FEMALE EMPLOYMENT DISTINGUISHING BY WORKING TIMES

In Croatia 6% of men in employment have part-time job, while 11% of women are working part-time, which is significantly lower than in EU15 countries. 43% of all employed full-time are women and 61% of all part-time employed. This trend is similar in all other transition countries as it can be seen on the Figure 5. In Czech Republic the share of women in total part-time employment is highest, and it amounts 74% for fourth quarter of 2004, followed by Slovakia with 72%. In all other countries, this amount is around 60%, except for Bulgaria 53%, Slovenia 52% and Romania 47%.

Figure 5.

Women share in total full-time/part-time employment (fourth quarter of 2004)

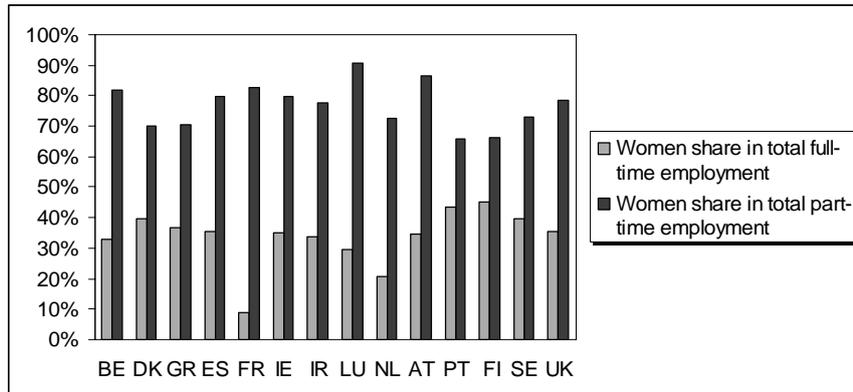


Source: EUROSTAT

If we compare transition countries with EU 15 countries we can see that the share of women employed part-time in EU 15 countries significantly higher than those in transition countries. This percentage is the highest in Luxembourg 91%, followed by Austria 87%. In Spain, France and Ireland this amount is above 80%, while it is the lowest in Portugal and Finland 66% (Figure 6).

Figure 6.

Women (age group 15 and over years) in part time employment in fourth quarter of 2004 (EU 15)



Source: EUROSTAT

One explanation for these differences in the share of women working part-time between transition and EU 15 countries can be found in the fact that in the command economies part-time work was almost unknown, and that it is relatively new feature in transition economies. However, part-time work has its advantages and disadvantages. Part-time work may offer workers the opportunity to find a balance between the time they want to devote to work and the time they wish to devote to other activities. In the absence of adequate and affordable childcare institutions, part-time employment allows workers to combine employment with the needs of family life. On the other hand, there are several disadvantages of part-time work. Firstly, the part-time work appears to be found in lower paid occupations that offer more limited opportunities for career advancement than full-time jobs. This results that women that want to have part-time work have to accept less remunerative and less qualified jobs (OECD, 2002).

6. GENDER GAPS IN EMPLOYMENT DISTINGUISHING BY FAMILY SITUATION

Next we are going to consider the differences in employment between men and women related to their family situation in Croatia. From the Table 8 it is evident that the gender gap in employment is significantly lower for people (aged between 25 and 49 years) without children. This gap is higher as the number of children (between 0 and 14 years) is rising. Female employment rates are almost equal for women without, with one and with two children, but the gap is rising with the number of children, due to higher male employment rates for men with more children. The gap is highest for persons with three and more children.

Table 8.

Male and female employment rates for age group between 25 and 49 years without or with children aged between 0 and 14 years for Croatia (fourth quarter of 2004)

| | Male employment rate | Female employment rate | Gap |
|--------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|------|
| Without children | 75.4 | 67.8 | 7.6 |
| With 1 child | 82.0 | 68.1 | 13.9 |
| With 2 children | 83.8 | 68.2 | 15.6 |
| With 3 and more children | 86.7 | 53.5 | 33.2 |

Source: EUROSTAT

In most of the transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the gap in employment is larger, as the number of children rise. For the group without children only Romania has higher gender gap in employment than Croatia and it amounts 9%. Estonia and Latvia have negative value of the gap, while in other transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe this gap is not so high, and it varies between 0.2 and 4.8 percentage points. On the other hand, Croatia is among countries that have lowest gap for the group with one and two children, while the gap for the group with three and more children in Croatia 33.2% is close to the average of ten transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe 31.4% (Eurostat).

7. CONCLUSIONS

By analysing available data and making our own calculations we have investigated women's position in the labour market in Croatia. We are able to document that the:

- Analyses of the evolution of gender employment and unemployment gap in Croatia show that these gaps varied over time, but both gaps have narrowed since 2001. Taking into account gender employment gap in Croatia and other transition countries, women's relative position in employment is not worse than in the EU15 countries, on the contrary the data suggest that it is better. However, employment rates for both men and women are lower than in EU15 countries. The gap in employment rates in Croatia is mainly the result of differences that exist in older age group, over 50, where the gap is higher than the gap for 'prime age' group.
- The educational gender gap in Croatia is narrowing for all levels of educational attainment and the gap in employment rates is significantly lower for the higher educated categories. However, data suggest that the

educational choices of young women are still biased towards the fields of health and welfare, humanities, arts and education. These differences appear to be important in explaining the different status of men and women in the labour market.

- Only 11% of all employed women in Croatia work part-time, which is significantly lower than in EU15 countries, but it is similar with other transition countries.
- Gender gaps in employment rates between mothers and fathers in Croatia are higher as the number of children rises. Employment rates do not differ significantly between women without children and mothers with one and even two children. Male employment rates are higher as the number of children rises.
- Gender unemployment gap in Croatia is higher than in the most other transition countries. Among long-term unemployed persons the female share is higher by 22 percentage points than that of males. The unemployment rates are higher for less educated women.
- Female participation rate in Croatia is lower than male participation rate, and comparisons with previous years suggest that there is no tendency for female participation rates to increase. We show that the labour market adjustment for females during the mid-transition period was mainly through lower female participation rates rather than by higher unemployment.

Our findings suggest that in Croatia there is relatively low gender gap in employment in comparison to the gap in EU15 countries. However, in Croatia both the male and female employment rates are lower than those in EU. Policies intended to retain employed new mothers in the labour market (maternity and parental leave) are partly successful, since we have documented that employment rates of women without children and those with one and two children do not differ significantly. On the other hand, our findings suggest that the primary concern of policy makers should be to create policies that are intended to increase female participation rates, such as flexible working time arrangements and increasing care facilities for children and other dependants. We documented that the big problem in Croatia is female unemployment, particularly amongst less educated women. The primary concern of policy makers should be job creation and most of the jobs created should be intended for females. This can be achieved if greater part of governmental budget expenditure is intended for creating new jobs in services that are traditionally 'female' occupations. Since high job creation often goes together with high job destruction, resulting in high job turnover (Rutkowski, 2003), incentives for professional and occupational retraining should be provided so that structural unemployment can be mitigated.

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ŽENE NA TRŽIŠTU RADA U HRVATSKOJ**Sažetak**

Ovaj rad se bavi analizom evolucije razlika u zaposlenosti i nezaposlenosti u Hrvatskoj od 1996., i njihovom usporedbom sa razlikama u drugim tranzicijskim zemljama Centralne i Istočne Europe. Nadalje, pruža pregled značajki zaposlenja žena, uzimajući u obzir razlike između dobnih skupina, stupnja obrazovanja, radnog vremena i obiteljske situacije. Naša najvažnija zapažanja su: (i) uzimajući u obzir razliku u zaposlenosti po spolu u Hrvatskoj i drugim tranzicijskim zemljama, relativan položaj zaposlenih žena nije lošiji nego u EU15 zemljama, naprotiv podaci pokazuju da je čak i bolji (međutim, rate zaposlenosti za muškarce i žene su niže nego u EU15 zemljama), (ii) razlika u stopama zaposlenosti u Hrvatskoj je većim dijelom posljedica razlika koje postoje u starijim dobnim skupinama (preko 50 godina starosti), gdje je razlika veća nego za dobnu skupinu „prime age“ (između 29 i 45 godina starosti), (iii) razlike u obrazovanju po spolu u Hrvatskoj se smanjuju za sve razine obrazovanja pa je razlika u stopama zaposlenosti značajno niža za više obrazovane kategorije, (iv) samo 11% svih zaposlenih žena u Hrvatskoj radi skraćeno radno vrijeme, što je značajno manje nego u EU15 zemljama, ali je slično s ostalim tranzicijskim zemljama, (v) razlike u stopama zaposlenosti po spolu između majki i očeva u Hrvatskoj rastu s brojem djece, (vi) razlike u nezaposlenosti po spolu u Hrvatskoj su veće nego u većini drugih tranzicijskih zemalja (stope nezaposlenosti su veće za manje obrazovane žene), i (vii) tržište rada za žene u tranzicijskom razdoblju se većinom usklađivalo kroz niže stope participacije za žene nego kroz veću nezaposlenost.

Ključne riječi: *razlike u zaposlenosti po spolu, razlike u nezaposlenosti po spolu, značajke zaposlenosti žena*

JEL classification: *J31*