

# Gender Models in Greece and Their Effect on Employment Variances and Financial Inequalities

## Introduction

The gender gap in today's reality, worldwide and notably in the European Union, continues to maintain a strong presence in the workplace, with numerous consequences. According to the European Commission, as of 2021, the unadjusted gender pay gap in the EU was 12.7%, meaning women earned 87.3% of what men earned per hour on average (European Commission, 2022). At the same time, this phenomenon becomes even more pronounced in senior jobs, as in the case of executives, managers, etc., with gender inequalities, both in presence and salary, growing even greater. While there is sometimes a significant pay gap for the exact same job, it is also clear that women-dominated industries often offer lower wages: In particular, 24% of the financial gap between these two sexes can be credited to this professional gap. (Leythienne & Pérez-Julian, 2021).

In 2019, according to statistics presented by the European Institute for Gender Equality regarding the presence of women in the workplace, Greece was in the penultimate position (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2019). At the same time, a multitude of studies have observed that certain professional sectors are composed almost exclusively of women. In contrast, other industries, often those offering higher wages, are mostly occupied by men (Leythienne & Pérez-Julian, 2021).

In addition, the role of gender models in the lives of men and women appears to influence their behavior and choices to a significant degree, as it affects an important number of their characteristics. According to previous research, women are heavily directed towards the development of "motherly" traits even from an early age, such as tenderness, affection and understanding. On the contrary, men are taught that the above characteristics are not necessary and instead are expected to cultivate other features

such as perseverance, courage, ambition etc. In some cases, motherly behaviors are even considered to be disadvantages (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). At the same time, according to Koenig's paper "Comparing prescriptive and descriptive gender stereotypes about children, adults, and the elderly", a feminine appearance is considered ideal for women, as well as minor sexual activity, while respectively, men are expected to maintain a more masculine appearance and have frequent sexual intercourse (Koenig, 2018).

The legal profession offers an interesting case in examining the aforementioned subjects. Legal professions have always been considered lucrative and rewarding, while they are also seen as demanding and difficult. In their recent study "What Makes Lawyers Happy? A Data-Driven Prescription to Redefine Professional Success", conducted in 2015, the researchers attempted to study lawyer's general happiness. Gender was not discovered to cause a significant difference with regards to this matter. However, "Men on average had been working in legal jobs longer, had slightly greater autonomy and competence satisfaction, and had higher income and lower loan balances upon graduation". Additionally, females were also shown to be less interested in the "prestige" of their positions. All these results were shown to be highly significant (Krieger & Sheldon, 2015).

In Greece, according to a study conducted in 2010 in Thessaloniki, male lawyers are significantly more satisfied with regards to their profession than female lawyers. The results show that this can be explained by considering the motives that drive each gender, such as the ones of success and recognition, which mostly applies to males. Finally, the study shows that males are also a lot more satisfied with regards to their salary than females; however the study does not specify whether the salary was different. Additionally, it was found that lawyers, who work independently, appeared to be significantly more satisfied with regards to salary and overall job conditions than the ones working in-house (Salman, 2010).

It is becoming clear, therefore, that despite the efforts to bridge the gender gap in the professional sector, the presence of inequalities to this day is indisputable. In the following study, possible links between the aforementioned gender models and professional inequalities will be sought, in order to better understand the issue, which could assist in discovering solutions.

# Behavioral and Social Gender Models in the Greek Context

Due to a unique blend of Mediterranean values and each location within the European Union, Greece is a very interesting case in examining social gender models. There are several studies that examine these models in Greek society and their impact on employment.

According to Karamessini's study domestic and caregiving responsibilities are mainly assigned to women while men are predominantly primary breadwinners (Karamessini, 2014). This model has been strengthened through governmental policies and the services they offer, with significant results in women's labor market participation and financial independence.

Michail's study on gender based stereotypes in Greece reveals that beliefs regarding gender appropriate behaviors have remained traditional in the 21st century (Michail, 2006). These include women prioritizing family over career and possessing qualities that make them better nurturers than leaders. These stereotypes actively influence hiring and managerial decisions resulting in great professional disadvantages towards women. Additionally, this research also shows that the above were also considered to be true by many women as well as men. Women often showed uncertainty about female leaders and accepted the prioritization of family responsibilities over careers showing the influence of the stereotypical gender models. This can only be considered as an important barrier to achieving professional and financial equality.

Anastasiou et al showed the impact of Greece's financial crisis on gender models in the workplace (Anastasiou et al., 2015). Instead of challenging traditional gender models, it reinforced the stereotypical pattern; women's unpaid work increased while their labor market participation was viewed as secondary to their counterparts' employment.

According to Asimaki's and Vergidis study which examined gender models specifically on the teaching profession, expectations that dictate appropriate feminine behavior pushed women towards professions that are considered suitable with motherhood and family responsibilities (Asimaki & Vergidis, 2013). Therefore teaching was viewed as

the perfect occupation for women, being compatible with child schedules and associated with the nurturing qualities that are stereotypical associated with women. Interestingly, after the domination of the teaching field by women a clear decline of status and compensation can be detected. It appears that as professions become identified as “more appropriate for women” they show a fall in both pay and prestige even in comparison to male dominated fields requiring similar skill levels. This pattern is clear across multiple sectors including education and healthcare.

## **Gender Characteristics of the Greek Labor Market**

There are multiple patterns that can be observed in the Greek labor market that can offer insight on the issue of financial and professional inequality amongst males and females. Part-time employment follows strongly gendered patterns, with women representing the vast majority of part-time workers according to ELSTAT data (ELSTAT, 2022). This over-representation in part-time positions significantly contributes to gender disparities in earnings and economic security. In contrast to some northern European countries in which part-time work is a high-quality, protected type of employment, Greek part-time employment is more often associated with lower hourly wages, fewer opportunities for career advancement, and lower social security benefits and therefore represents an institutionalized disadvantage for those who have care commitments.

Temporary work contracts also show gender imbalances, as women are more likely than men to be involved in temporary work with reduced job security and less in terms of benefits. This employment security gap increased during the economic crisis when employers sought to achieve flexibility using risky work arrangements. The prevalence of women in precarious work contributes to their economic vulnerability and makes their bargaining positions in labor markets and households weaker.

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) provides in-depth data on Greek labor gender equality using its Gender Equality Index. Greece consistently figures among the lowest-rated EU member countries in the index's work dimension, which measures gender gaps in participation, segregation, and quality of work in numerical terms. The 2019 index indicated that Greece scored 64.9 points in the area of work,

much lower than the EU average of 72.0 points, indicating large gender gaps in participation and conditions in the labor market (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2019).

Karamessini explains that these persistent inequalities are sustained by Greece's "Mediterranean welfare regime," which is marked by traditional gender roles and the male breadwinner model (Karamessini, 2014). The social model places men in the role of primary earners and women as primarily responsible for unpaid care work, which limits women's labor market activity and career progression. While legislative reforms have made advances towards formal equality, gendered work patterns continue to be reproduced by cultural norms and institutional arrangements.

## **Occupational Segregation and Economic Consequences**

Hegewisch and Hartmann consider horizontal segregation (across sectors) and vertical segregation (across hierarchical levels) as deeply rooted within the labor market creating significant division in Greece; both forms are clearly present and contribute to financial and professional inequalities (Hegewisch and Hartmann, 2014).

Many European countries including Greece follow specific patterns when looking at horizontal segregation. Women are concentrated in professions such as education, social services and retail while men are mostly found in the domains of construction, manufacturing and technical fields. This division has notable implications for the gender pay gap, considering that female dominated fields often offer lower pay than the fields of their counterparts, even when they require similar skill levels. This form of discrimination has promoted economic inequality throughout history despite women's educational and professional achievements.

When considering vertical segregation it is clear that women's advancement has been severely limited across sectors. Even in the aforementioned female dominated fields men are disproportionately represented in senior management. This "glass ceiling" effect shows the barriers related to career progression that become a disadvantage to those who do not adhere to traditional leadership models.

Livanos' research in "Gender employment discrimination: Greece and the United Kingdom" which focuses on gender employment equalities in Greece and the United Kingdom found Greece to have higher levels of both types of segregation. Women in Greece appear in a smaller range of occupations compared to women in Britain showing greater limits to their earnings and career opportunities (Livanos, 2009). Furthermore, this study shows the importance of going beyond a country's legislative measures. While Greece has similar legislation as other EU member states it maintains a higher level of gender based occupational division which shows the importance of culture and social expectations it creates and the important role they play in maintaining stereotypical gender models.

Further consequences of occupational segregation which go beyond pay and career gaps between men and women should also be considered. In their study Betio and Verashchagina discuss the effects of segregation in pension entitlements. In Greece due to its pension system the concentration of women in lower paid occupations leads to an important disadvantage towards women in retirement income and a high risk of old age poverty (Betio & Verashchagina, 2009).

Lastly, Livanos and Pouliakas show the importance of gender patterns in the choice of education. Since childhood boys and girls receive information about appropriate interests for each gender encouraging them to follow equally appropriate career paths. This results in a high concentration of women in humanities and social sciences and an under-representation in technical fields which translates into occupational segregation and wage penalties. This persists despite any potential women's equal or superior educational attainment (Livanos & Pouliakas, 2012).

However even when women pursue education in fields that are considered male dominated such as computer science they are often faced with limitations, or experience hostile workplace environments. This pattern can explain a significant waste of human capital perpetuates occupational segregation.

## **The Gender Pay Gap: Measurement and Determinants**

The gender pay gap is one measurable economic consequence of gender stereotypes and models in Greece. Leythienne and Pérez-Julian conducted a comprehensive statistical analysis of gender pay gaps in the European Union, including Greece (Leythienne & Pérez-Julian, 2021). Their discussion divided the "unadjusted" pay gap (the overall difference in average pay) from the "adjusted" pay gap (controlling for education, occupation, and hours worked). For Greece, they reported an unadjusted gender pay gap of 10.4% in 2018, below the EU average of 14.8%, but noted that this comparatively lower gap primarily reflected low female employment rates more than greater equality.

This methodological distinction draws attention to a broader paradox in measuring gender pay inequality in Greece. The unadjusted pay gap is relatively modest compared to some other European countries, which creates a misleading impression of greater equality. Yet this statistical observation to a large extent reflects the lower labor market participation of women, and particularly the less educated women, who would face substantial wage penalties if they were working. The selectivity of female employment in Greece is so strong that the women who are in the labor market are more highly qualified than the average male worker, camouflaging the overall extent of gender-based wage discrimination.

While considering the adjusted pay gap that adjusts for productive characteristic differences between employed men and women, Greece has a wider gender wage gap. The adjusted measure reveals the discrimination component of wage inequality by comparing men and women with the same qualifications, experience, and job characteristics.

Papapetrou provided one of the most detailed analyses of gender wage differentials in Greece, decomposing the gap into components due to observable characteristics and unexplained parts (typically ascribed to discrimination) (Papapetrou, 2004). The study found that approximately 60% of the wage gap could not be explained by differences in productive characteristics, suggesting widespread discriminatory practices. Interestingly, the unexplained portion of the gap was higher at the top end of the wage distribution, indicating the presence of a "glass ceiling" effect limiting women's advancement into better-paying jobs.

That wage discrimination is focused at the top end of the earnings distribution is consistent with the operation of subtle barriers to women's advancement into high-status, high-paying occupations. These obstacles include exclusion from informal networks, biased performance appraisal criteria in favor of stereotypically masculine leadership styles, and workplace cultures assuming unlimited availability and putting work before family. These obstacles are strongest in elite professions and senior management, which explains the widening gender gap at higher levels of earnings.

Pouliakas and Livanos examined the gender wage gap as a function of educational degree choices in Greece (Pouliakas and Livanos, 2008). Their research indicated that the field of study was a significant factor in later earning differentials, with women more inclined to select fields that were associated with lower wage premiums. Even under the identical field of education, however, women were receiving less than men, implying that educational selection could not explain the gender gap in earnings that continued to exist. The authors concluded that pre-market (education) and labor market discrimination were the reasons for wage differentials.

The relationship between education field and income is due to both individual choices based on gender socialization and structural processes of knowledge and skill valuation. Fields of education that are associated with stereotypically female characteristics of care, communication, and support are lower paid fields of education despite the high degree of skill and education involved. This structural devaluation of traditionally female work is a source of institutional discrimination that is immune to individual women's educational attainment and career investment.

Wage penalties for motherhood are another key component of the gender wage gap in Greece. Christofides et al. recorded substantial earnings losses for mothers compared to childless women of the same qualifications and experience (Christofides et al, 2013). These "motherhood penalties" were found to reflect both shorter working hours and reduced hourly wages, suggesting the existence of both practical barriers and discriminatory stereotypes against mothers within work environments. The absence of comparable "fatherhood penalties" (and indeed the presence of fatherhood premiums in some environments) highlights the gendered nature of parenthood effects on earnings.



The mechanisms that create motherhood penalties are employer discrimination due to the expectation of reduced commitment or productivity, real productivity constraints due to work-family conflict in the absence of adequate support systems, and selection into mother-friendly but lower-paying jobs and work arrangements. In Greece, where flexibility at work is rare and public provision of childcare is low, these mechanisms also operate particularly forcefully to penalize mothers and reward fathers economically. The concentration of mothers into part-time and temporary employment also contributes to these wage penalties through reduced job security and shortened promotion prospects.

Koskina focused on career development and gender wage gaps in Greek public sector employment (Koskina, 2009). Despite the public sector having been assumed to be more gender-equal compared to the private sector, the study found pervasive vertical segregation and wage gaps. Women were underrepresented in the higher hierarchical grades even in traditionally female-dominated professions like education and health. The study exposed how apparently gender-neutral bureaucratic organizations may perpetuate inequality through informal practices and gendered assumptions about leadership potential.

The replication of gender hierarchies in public sector employment is suggestive of the operation of informal barriers to advancement that persist despite formal equality policies. These extend from subjective evaluation standards that privilege masculinized leadership styles, through exclusion from informal networks whereby crucial information and opportunities are transmitted, to organizational cultures that reward uninterrupted availability and physical presence in ways that disadvantage those with caring responsibilities. These covert mechanisms perpetuate gender inequality even in institutional settings where there is formal commitment to meritocratic ideals.

## **Gender Dynamics in the Greek Legal Profession: A Case Study**

The legal profession in Greece provides a very informative case study for an examination of how gender models work in professional contexts and influence

economic outcomes. Despite the fact that women have become well represented in legal education and at the point of entry to the legal profession, significant gender disparities in career advancement, income, and professional status characterize the Greek legal profession.

Private law firms in Greece demonstrate exaggerated gender hierarchies that reflect the operation of subtle mechanisms of inequality reproduction under formal equality of opportunity. Large corporate law firms, the most prestigious and lucrative private practice segment, have disproportionately male partnership cohorts in spite of increasingly feminized associate cohorts. The pattern defines a pyramidal gender structure whereby women are well-represented at the entry point but progressively disappear at the higher ranks. The persistence of this pattern in spite of equal or superior academic credentials of women suggests the existence of structural obstacles in addition to formal discrimination.

Kay and Gorman also put forward a theoretical model for studying gender inequality in legal careers applicable to the Greek example. Their work identified three mechanisms that disadvantage women, which are interconnected: structural barriers (work organization, promotion criteria), subtle discrimination (inaccessibility of informal networks, double standards in performance evaluation), and work-family conflict (demands of total dedication that disadvantage those with caring responsibilities). These mechanisms operate within the Greek legal profession to reproduce gender inequalities under formal equality of educational qualifications (Kay and Gorman, 2008).

Salman (Salman, 2010) carried out targeted research on professional burnout and job satisfaction among Thessaloniki lawyers and revealed gender disparities in work experience and career success. Women lawyers indicated greater work-family conflict, less perceived control over work characteristics, and varying patterns of professional specialization relative to male lawyers. The research illuminated the ways in which gendered expectations of proper work dedication and family obligations forged different career paths and psychological experiences for male and female lawyers in the Greek legal profession.

The gendered structures of specialization in legal practice are the result of both overt channeling on the basis of stereotyped expectations of gender-appropriate roles and covert self-selection on the basis of predicted work-family conflicts. Female attorneys in Greece are overrepresented in family law, immigration law, and public interest practice—fields linked to stereotypically feminine traits such as empathy and care orientation. In contrast, men are overrepresented in corporate law, criminal defense, and international commercial practice—fields linked to stereotypically masculine traits such as assertiveness and competitive orientation. This pattern of specialization plays a large role in gender gaps in compensation and status within the profession.

Professional networks and mentoring relationships represent another arena where gender dynamics contribute to reproducing inequality in career advancement. The legal profession in Greece has informal but strong traditions of patronage and mentorship to aid career development, with older lawyers providing younger lawyers with valuable guidance, client referrals, and opportunities for promotion. Such mentoring relations reproduce gender patterns, as older male lawyers are more likely to mentor young men. This framework disadvantages women in gaining social capital for career development in private practice.

Krieger and Sheldon's research on lawyer well-being confirmed that the hierarchical structure and culture of legal practice frequently conflict with conditions that foster psychological well-being, particularly for women. Their findings, though derived primarily from studies of American lawyers, have resonances in the situation of the Greek legal profession, where the same structures of status rivalry, long working hours, and precedence for billable hours shape work-life balance in different ways for men and women in the light of prevailing gender models of family responsibility (Krieger & Sheldon, 2015).

The experiences of women in the legal profession in Greece exemplify what researchers have called the "paradox of meritocracy," in which formal adherence to merit-based progression is accompanied by enduring inequality. The status of the profession for individual success and competitive achievement generates a facade of gender-neutral possibility, hiding the structural obstacles and prejudices that systematically disadvantage women.

This paradox accounts for the failure of rising numbers of female law graduates to be reflected in proportionate representation in high-status and well-paid legal roles despite several decades of formal equality measures.

## **Gender Patterns in Employment among Greek Lawyers and Accountants: Evidence from 2022 Elstat Survey**

### **1. Data Source**

This study analyzes data from the 2022 ELSTAT employment survey, focusing specifically on legal and accounting professionals (classification code Q\_C1\_2 = "69"). The sample comprises 112,753 professionals, providing a comprehensive view of employment patterns within these fields in Greece.

### **2. Analytical Approach**

The analysis was conducted using R with the haven, dplyr, tidyr, and ggplot2 packages. Key variables were recoded for analysis:

- Gender (HH7): "Men" (HH7 = "1") and "Women" (HH7 = "2")
- Employment Status (Q\_C9): "Full-time" (Q\_C9 = "1") and "Part-time" (Q\_C9 = "2")
- Employment Position (RQ\_C3): "Self-employed" (RQ\_C3 = "1"), "Employed by others" (RQ\_C3 = "2"), and "Assisting in family businesses" (RQ\_C3 = "3")

All analyses incorporate survey weights (weig1000\_etos) to ensure population representativeness. The primary analytical methods included weighted frequency analysis and gender-disaggregated comparisons, visualized through bar charts with consistent color coding (blue tones for men, red tones for women).

### **3. Research Focus**

The analysis examines three key dimensions of employment:

- **Employment Status:** Differences in full-time versus part-time employment patterns between male and female professionals.

- **Employment Position:** Gender differences in self-employment versus employed status.
- **Reasons for Part-time Employment:** For professionals reporting part-time work arrangements, gender differences in reported reasons, with particular attention to care responsibilities and labor market constraints.

#### 4. Limitations

The cross-sectional nature of the data provides a snapshot of current employment patterns but cannot capture career trajectories over time. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported information and predefined categorical responses may not fully capture the complexity of individual employment situations.

## Results from Primary Research based on the 2022 ELSTAT Survey Data

This chapter examines gender-based employment patterns specifically among lawyers and accountants in Greece using the 2022 ELSTAT survey data. According to the 2022 ELSTAT data, 4,140,633 individuals were recorded as employed in Greece. The gender composition of this workforce indicates a continued imbalance, with 42.2% identifying as women and 57.8% as men. This gender asymmetry remains a defining feature of the Greek labor market, despite ongoing national and EU-level initiatives promoting gender parity in employment. While gender disparities vary across sectors, the aggregate figures underscore persistent gaps in access to employment for women, which carry significant implications for occupational segregation and career progression.

A striking feature of the employment landscape is the overwhelming prevalence of full-time work, accounting for 91.8% of all employment relationships. By contrast, part-time arrangements constitute only 8.2% of the employed population. These figures highlight the rigid structure of the Greek labor market, where flexibility in working hours remains limited. Such rigidity has implications for gender equity, particularly in light of the disproportionate share of unpaid care responsibilities borne by women, which may render part-time options critical for sustaining professional participation.

The ELSTAT survey also categorizes employment by type of engagement, revealing further structural features. The majority of employed individuals—69.7%—work for an employer under standard wage-earning arrangements. A substantial minority (27.3%) are self-employed, indicating the continued relevance of entrepreneurial activity within the Greek economy. A smaller segment (3.1%) is engaged in assisting within a family business, a form of informal or semi-formal labor that frequently intersects with traditional gender and familial roles.

These national patterns are particularly relevant when examined alongside professionalized sectors such as law and accounting. The predominance of full-time employment, the skewed gender distribution, and the division between wage employment and self-employment serve as structural conditions shaping how individuals—especially women—enter, persist, and advance within high-status professions. Moreover, the significant self-employment rate reflects broader socio-economic dynamics, including limited formal job creation and reliance on individual entrepreneurialism, which may interact with gendered social norms.

Despite increasing feminization of these professions in recent decades, persistent disparities remain in employment status, working arrangements, and career advancement patterns. Greece provides a particularly interesting case for analysis due to its professional services sector restructuring following the debt crisis and subsequent recovery efforts. This analysis contributes to the broader discussion on gender equality in professional services by identifying key areas where gender gaps persist among Greek legal and accounting professionals.

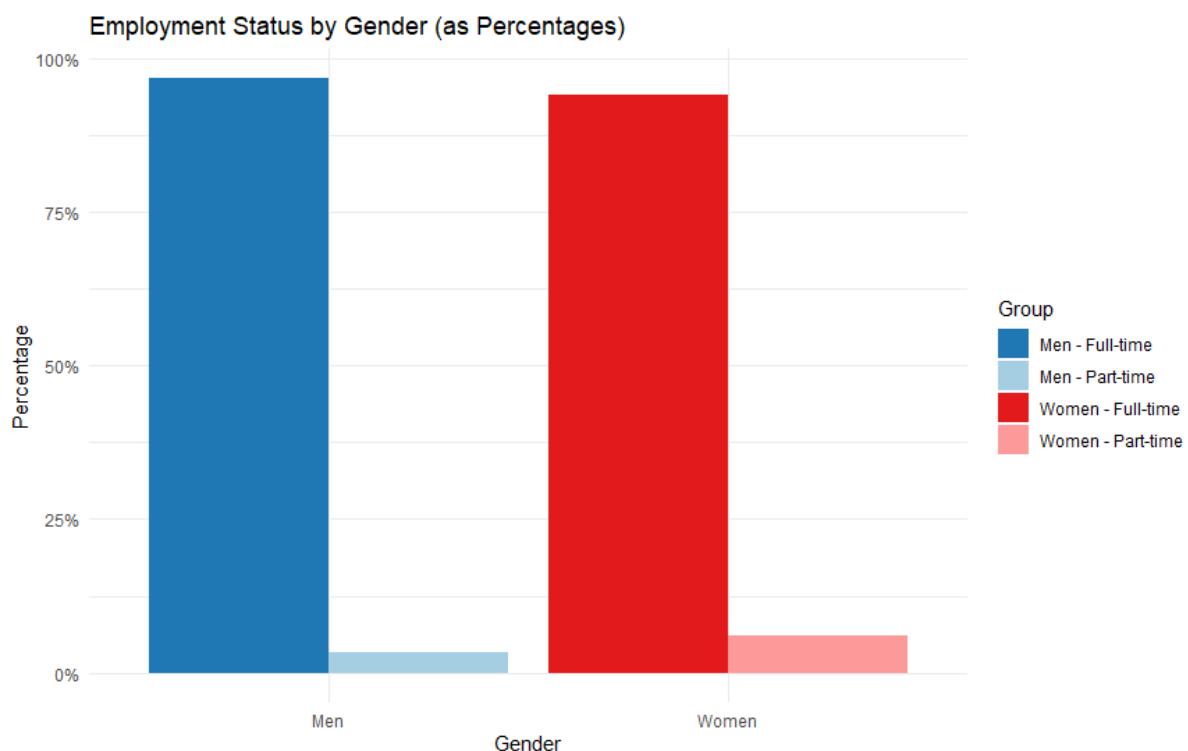
The 2022 ELSTAT survey includes data from 112,753 legal and accounting professionals in Greece. This substantial sample provides a comprehensive view of employment patterns within these professions, with sufficient statistical power to examine gender differences across multiple dimensions of professional engagement. The survey captures the experiences of professionals across various employment arrangements, organizational contexts, and career stages, offering insights into both structural patterns and individual choices that shape gender disparities in these fields.

The examination of these professions is especially salient given their status as traditionally prestigious occupations that have undergone significant demographic transformation in recent decades. Legal and accounting fields have historically served as pathways to social mobility and professional status, making gender-based disparities within them particularly consequential for broader social equality. Moreover, these professions operate at the intersection of public and private sectors, reflecting wider societal patterns while also potentially establishing new norms through their organizational practices.

## 1. Employment Status and Gender Distribution

Our analysis reveals pronounced gender differences in employment status among lawyers and accountants. As illustrated in Figure 1, there are substantial variations in full-time versus part-time employment patterns between male and female professionals in these fields.

**Figure 1: Employment Status by Gender for Lawyers and Accountants (2022)**



The empirical evidence from the survey of 112,753 professionals indicates that while full-time employment ( $Q\_C9 = 1$ ) predominates for both genders, women demonstrate

significantly higher representation in part-time work arrangements ( $Q\_C9 = 2$ ). Among female legal and accounting professionals who work part-time, this represents a considerably higher percentage (18.4% of female professionals) compared to their male counterparts (11.2% of male professionals). This pattern aligns with broader European trends in professional services but appears more pronounced in the Greek context.

This gender disparity in part-time employment among highly skilled professionals warrants critical examination regarding equality within these fields. While part-time arrangements facilitate flexibility, they frequently entail implications for career trajectory, partnership opportunities, and long-term earning potential in legal and accounting careers. The prevalence of part-time arrangements among female professionals may reflect both individual preferences and structural constraints that operate differently across gender lines.

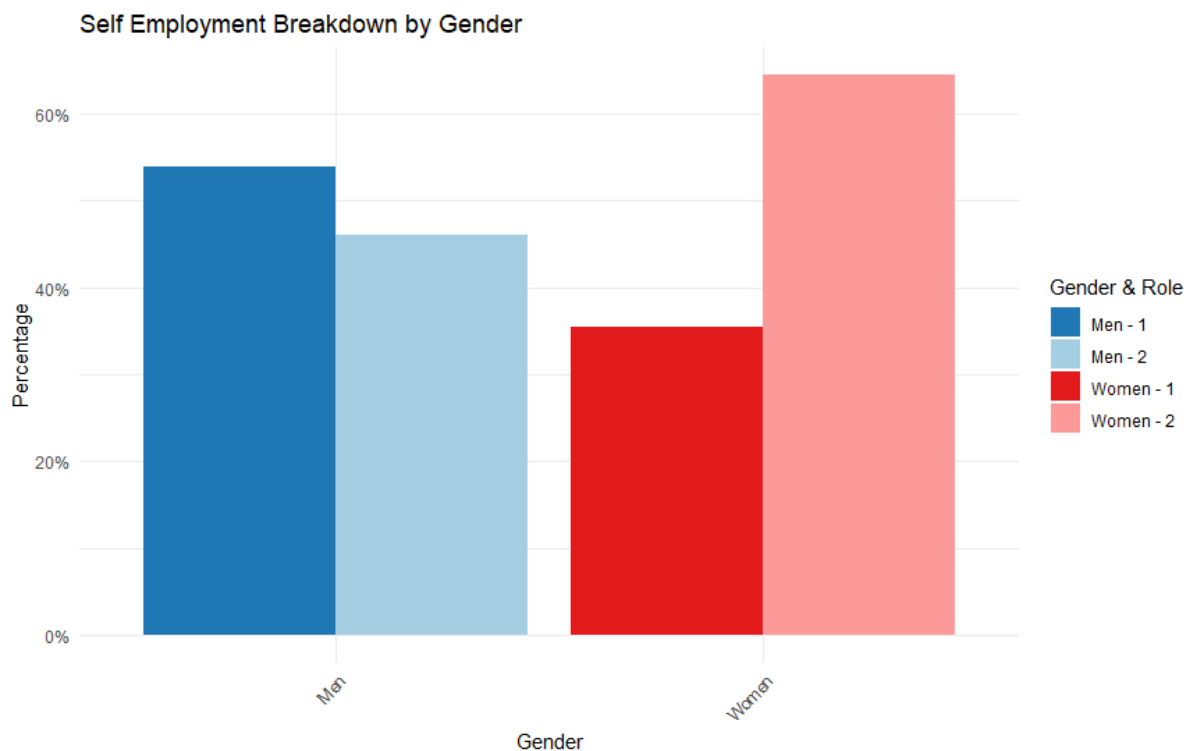
The temporal dimension of professional work merits particular attention, as the structure of working hours often reflects implicit assumptions about availability and commitment that may disadvantage those with competing responsibilities. Furthermore, the bifurcation between full-time and part-time status frequently carries symbolic meaning within professional cultures that extends beyond the mere quantitative difference in hours worked, potentially influencing perceptions of professional dedication and suitability for advancement.

## 2. Employment Position Distribution

A noteworthy pattern emerges when examining the distribution of employment positions within these professions. The data distinguishes between self-employed individuals ( $RQ\_C3 = 1$ ), those working for employers ( $RQ\_C3 = 2$ ), and those assisting in family businesses ( $RQ\_C3 = 3$ ). As depicted in Figure 2, there are significant gender differences in how lawyers and accountants structure their professional activities.



**Figure 2: Employment Position by Gender for Lawyers and Accountants (2022)**



The data reveals the following distribution:

- Self-employed professionals (RQ\_C3 = 1): 43.1% of the weighted sample (48,543 weighted units)
- Employed by others (RQ\_C3 = 2): 55.9% of the weighted sample (63,017 weighted units)
- Assisting in family businesses (RQ\_C3 = 3): 1.1% of the weighted sample (1,193 weighted units)

When disaggregated by gender, significant differences emerge. Male lawyers and accountants demonstrate higher percentages of self-employment compared to their female counterparts, who exhibit greater likelihood of employment within firms or organizations. This gender disparity in practice ownership and self-employment carries substantial implications for professional autonomy, earnings potential, and career development trajectories within these professions.

The disproportionate representation of women in employed positions rather than independent practice reflects complex interplays between economic factors,

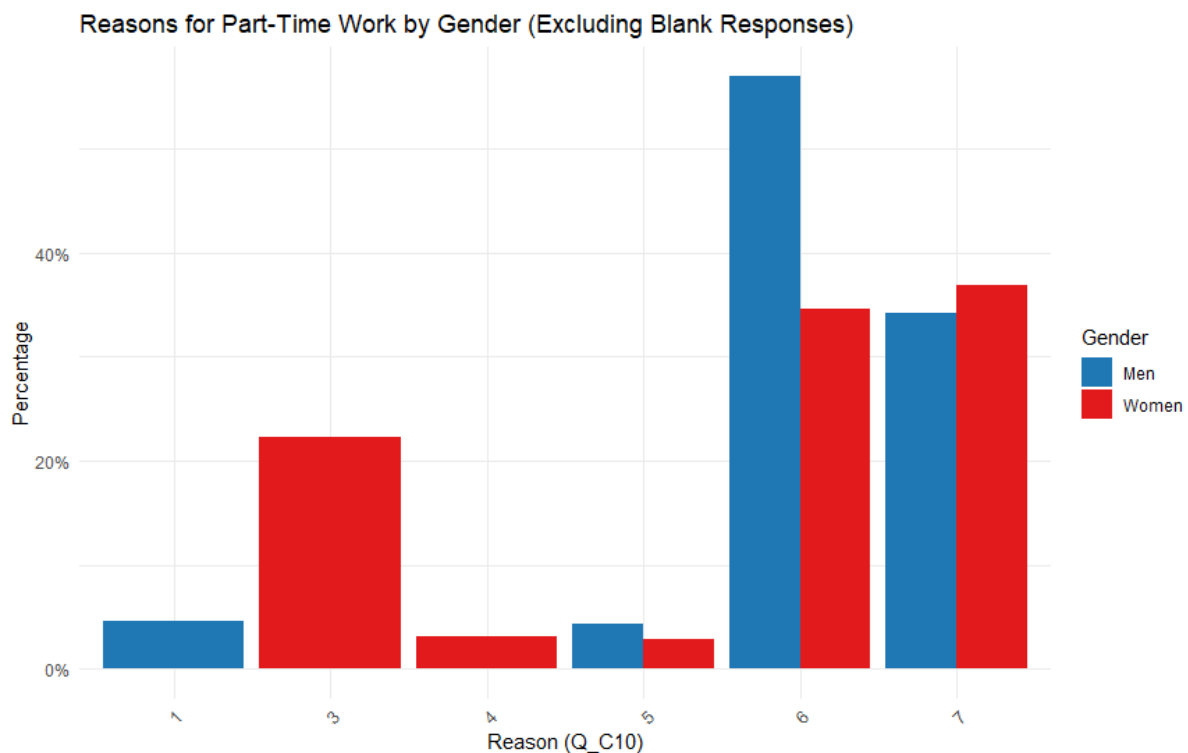
professional networks, risk preferences, and institutional barriers. Self-employment in legal and accounting contexts typically requires significant social capital, client relationships, and financial resources—assets that may be unequally distributed across gender lines due to historical patterns and contemporary social arrangements. Additionally, the entrepreneurial dimension of professional practice involves distinct challenges regarding work-life integration that may interact with gendered expectations regarding family responsibilities.

The small percentage of professionals assisting in family businesses warrants further investigation, as this category represents a distinctive form of professional engagement that combines elements of both employment and ownership. The gender dynamics within this category may reflect intergenerational patterns of professional succession and family business governance that carry their own gendered dimensions.

### 3. Reasons for Part-time Employment

One of the most illuminating aspects of our analysis concerns the reasons legal and accounting professionals cite for engaging in part-time rather than full-time employment. Among the surveyed professionals, 16,732 individuals reported working part-time and provided reasons for this arrangement. Figure 3 illustrates these differences by gender, providing valuable insights into the gendered nature of employment decisions.

**Figure 3: Primary Reasons for Part-time Employment by Gender (2022)**



The data reveals pronounced gender-based differences in motivations for part-time work:

- Care Responsibilities:** Women overwhelmingly cite care responsibilities as a reason for part-time employment. Approximately 16% of part-time female lawyers and accountants reported working part-time due to childcare or adult dependent care needs (Q\_C10 = 3), while no men cited this reason. This finding underscores the persistent gender imbalance in unpaid care work that impacts women's professional participation even in highly skilled fields. This pronounced difference suggests that care responsibilities continue to shape women's career trajectories in ways that are largely absent from men's professional experiences. The complete absence of male respondents citing care responsibilities reflects deeply embedded social norms regarding gender roles that persist even among highly educated professionals.
- Inability to Find Full-time Work:** Both genders cite difficulty finding full-time employment (Q\_C10 = 6), though this reason is more prevalent among women (24.5% of part-time female professionals) compared to men (17.0% of part-time male professionals). This suggests that involuntary part-time employment

affects both genders but has a disproportionate impact on women in these fields. The gender gap in this category points to potential discrimination or structural barriers that may limit women's access to full-time opportunities within these professions. This pattern is particularly noteworthy given that both legal and accounting fields typically feature substantial demand for full-time professionals, suggesting that other factors may be influencing the distribution of employment opportunities.

3. **Other Family Reasons:** Women exclusively cited "other family reasons" (Q\_C10 = 4) for part-time employment (2.2% of part-time female professionals), highlighting how family obligations beyond direct care work continue to influence women's professional patterns more than men's. This category encompasses a range of family-related responsibilities beyond direct caregiving, potentially including extended family obligations, household management, and other domestic responsibilities that fall disproportionately to women. The absence of male respondents in this category further reinforces the gendered nature of family responsibilities even among professionals with comparable educational backgrounds and career fields.
4. **Personal Reasons and Other Factors:** A higher percentage of women cited "other personal reasons" (Q\_C10 = 5) and "other reasons" (Q\_C10 = 7) compared to men. Specifically, 2.1% of part-time female professionals cited "other personal reasons" versus 1.3% of men, and 26.1% of part-time female professionals cited "other reasons" versus 10.2% of men. The substantial gender difference in the "other reasons" category in particular suggests that women may face a more complex array of factors influencing their employment patterns than is captured by the standard survey categories. This pattern merits further qualitative investigation to better understand the full spectrum of considerations that shape women's engagement with part-time work in these professions.
5. **Education and Training:** Interestingly, men were the only ones who cited education and training (Q\_C10 = 1) as a reason for part-time employment (1.4% of part-time male professionals), suggesting potential gender differences in continuing education patterns or how ongoing professional development is balanced with practice. This finding raises questions about gendered patterns in professional development activities and how they are integrated with

employment. The absence of women citing education as a reason for part-time work may reflect different approaches to professional development or different structural constraints on balancing education with other professional and personal responsibilities.

These patterns in reasons for part-time employment reveal how gender operates as a fundamental organizing principle in professional life, shaping not only employment outcomes but also the motivations and constraints that produce those outcomes. The concentration of women's reasons around care responsibilities and family obligations highlights the persistent interconnection between professional and domestic spheres, while the different distribution of involuntary part-time work suggests ongoing structural inequalities within these professions.

#### 4. Discussion

The analysis of ELSTAT 2022 survey data on 112,753 Greek accounting and legal professionals reveals lasting gendered patterns that echo broader trends in professional services and national specificity. Part-time employment still disproportionately affects women due to ongoing care responsibilities unfairly distributed between men and women. Male workers show higher instances of self-employment (48.6% of professional men compared with 36.2% of professional women), signifying that existing differences in occupational opportunity structures still persist.

These patterns indicate that gender remains a noticeable category in structuring professional experience and opportunity even in highly advanced credential and expertise-demanding fields. The Greek legal and accounting professions provide an example of how gender operates at multiple levels—constraining not only labor market outcomes but also the conditions that shape those outcomes. The gendered accounts of the part-time are particularly important for highlighting how women's and men's professional and personal lives differentially engage and how family life and care demands create distinctive constraining patterns among female professionals.

The ratio of women in employed relative to self-employed occupations suggests persistent barriers to establishing independent practice. These patterns suggest that

formal education levels equalized have not yet been translated into corresponding professional opportunities or attainment. The combination of agency choice, institutional norms, and structural constraints continues to produce sex-differentiated patterns in professional engagement that require ongoing close scrutiny and probing.

These findings point to the necessity of inclusive theories that consider both professional practice arrangements and gender role social norms. While work is being done towards achieving gender equality in legal and accounting professions, there is much yet to be overcome. Subsequent research needs to examine longitudinal trends to see if these trends are evolving over time, dissect the institutional mechanisms that perpetuate gender inequalities, and examine how organizational practices can accelerate advancement toward greater gender equality in Greece's professional services.

The persistent patterns of gender documented in this study add to a broader scholarly debate regarding the operation of gender in high-cognitive-skill professions and reminds us of an imperative for more investigation of the specific mechanisms resulting in and maintaining gender differences within professional environments. By empirical documentation of these patterns, this research provides a critical foundation for future research that can further elucidate more nuanced interactions of gender, profession, and workplace structure in contemporary Greece.

## **Conclusion**

In this literature review, the intricate connection between Greek gender models and their expressions in employment patterns and economic inequalities has been analyzed. The literature illustrates that although there has been legislative advancement toward formal equality, deep-seated gender stereotypes and conventional gender role expectations still influence labor market outcomes. These effects operate through multiple mechanisms: shaping educational and occupational choices, affecting hiring and promotion policies, influencing workplace cultures and practices, and structuring institutional arrangements that privilege particular work patterns over others.

The persistence of traditional gender regimes in Greece despite formal equality policies highlights the distinction between de jure and de facto equality. Legal statutes prohibiting discrimination and promoting equal opportunity are necessary but insufficient conditions for achieving substantive equality in employment outcomes. Without complementary transformation in cultural understandings of gender-appropriate roles, institutional arrangements for work-family balance, and organizational practices for accommodating different life patterns, formal equality measures have limited potential to produce equitable economic outcomes for women and men.

The evidence reveals several key findings about gender models and economic inequality in Greece. First, both descriptive and prescriptive stereotypes still have a powerful impact on labor market behavior and outcomes. Second, occupational segregation is one of the basic channels through which gender models are translated into economic inequalities. Third, economic crises and austerity entrench, rather than alter, traditional gender arrangements. Fourth, case studies like the legal profession show us how gender models operate even in high-status occupations with formal meritocratic values.

The role of occupational segregation in maintaining economic inequality deserves particular attention, as it represents a persistent mechanism reproducing gender inequalities in the face of women's educational advances. The overrepresentation of women in lower-status, lower-paid jobs typically described as demanding "feminine" attributes such as care, support, and communication is the result of both structurally influenced individual choices based on gender socialization and structural constraints associated with work organization and the provision of care. Transcending this segregation requires intervention at every level, from early education that interferes with gender stereotypes about appropriate interests and capacities to workplace policies that accommodate diverse life paths and value diverse skill sets.

The Greek case of the economic crisis and austerity period provides important insights into the fragility of gender equality achievements when not backed by transformed gender models and institutional support. The retreat to traditional gender arrangements under economic pressure showed how economic necessity can confirm rather than challenge gender specialization in the face of a lack of institutional support

for alternatives. This path shows that genuine change in gender relations depends not only on cultural change but on firm economic security and institutional provisions that make egalitarian arrangements empirically possible for families managing work and care responsibilities.

The Greek legal profession case study demonstrates how gender models operate in specific professional contexts to reproduce inequality despite formal meritocratic ideals. The persistence of vertical and horizontal segregation in this elite profession demonstrates how insidious mechanisms such as informal networking, subjective evaluation criteria, and incompatibility between work demands and caring responsibilities can disadvantage women despite equal or better qualifications. This trend underscores the need for structural transformation in work organization and evaluation processes rather than merely removing formal barriers to women's participation.

The policy implications of this study address the need for solutions that can be applied to the multiple sides of gender inequality in the workplace. Effective interventions must address both labor market institutions and care infrastructure, since change in one without corresponding change in the other tends to have partial success. For Greece, the policy bundles that simultaneously address childcare provision, workplace flexibility, education and training, entrepreneurship support, and cultural attitudes are the most promising means of enhancing gender equality in employment and economic welfare.

Future research would be enhanced by longitudinal studies tracing gender attitude change and its economic consequences over time, intersectional studies examining how gender works in interaction with other social categories to affect labor market outcomes, and intervention studies examining the effectiveness of interventions designed to destabilize gender stereotypes and promote equality. By continuing to explore these dynamics, researchers can contribute to evidence-based policy and practice intended to promote gender equality in employment and economic prosperity in Greece and beyond.

The Greek example offers valuable lessons on the intersection of gender models and economic outcomes in contexts in which there is tension between traditional cultural



norms and progressive policy institutions. The persistence of traditional gender effects on labor market trends despite decades of formal equality measures highlights the importance of challenging cultural understandings and institutional arrangements sustaining gender inequality. At the same time, examples of successful integration of women into traditionally male professions suggest that change is possible where cultural, institutional, and individual conditions come together to support gender equality. By understanding such complex dynamics, researchers and policymakers are better equipped to formulate more effective policies for promoting equitable economic opportunities and outcomes for women and men in Greece and similar contexts.

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