

Gender inequalities in tourism employment: The Portuguese case

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Abstract | Tourism is a very important sector for the Portuguese economy and it is responsible for the creation of many workplaces. But what is the nature of the employment generated by this industry? More specifically, which gender inequalities emerge? This article is about gender inequalities in tourism employment in Portugal. Disparities are analysed using data on employment from *Statistics Portugal* (INE). Data for men and women are compared, as well as data for the tourism sector and the economy as a whole.

The data suggest that the tourism sector is vertically segregated and, despite being a feminised sector, men occupy most top-level positions. Moreover, tourism workers, particularly female workers, are in general subject to poorer conditions of employment, such as low-pay, long working hours and more precarious contracts. The data hint at a very wide gender pay gap in the tourism industry.

Keywords | Gender; Employment; Tourism; Gender Gap.

Resumo | O turismo é um setor de grande importância para a economia portuguesa e é responsável pela criação de um grande número de postos de trabalho. Mas qual a natureza do emprego criado por esta indústria? Mais especificamente, que desigualdades de género emergem? Este artigo analisa as desigualdades de género existentes no emprego em Turismo em Portugal. Estas disparidades são analisadas com base em dados do Inquérito ao Emprego (INE). São comparados dados relativos aos homens e às mulheres, bem como dados para o setor do turismo e para a economia em geral.

Os dados sugerem que há uma forte segregação vertical no setor do turismo uma vez que, apesar de este ter uma mão-de-obra predominantemente feminina, são os homens que tendem a ocupar as posições de topo. Para além disso, os trabalhadores e particularmente as trabalhadoras deste setor têm condições de emprego piores, auferindo salários mais baixos, estando sujeitos a jornadas de trabalho mais longas e a contratos mais precários. Os dados apontam ainda para uma elevada disparidade salarial entre homens e mulheres neste setor.

Palavras-chave | Género; Emprego; Turismo; Disparidade de Género.

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1. Introduction

Even though gender equality has been recognised by law in several countries, inequalities between men and women persist, particularly in the employment field. Men and women tend to be concentrated in gendered jobs, considered to be 'appropriate' for their gender (horizontal segregation). In addition, it can be observed that men are more represented at the top of occupational hierarchies, while women are at lower hierarchical levels (vertical segregation) (Anker, 1998; Guerreiro and Pereira, 2006; Gustafson, 2006).

This pattern is also identified by some authors in the tourism field (Hemmati, 2000; Jordan, 1997; Parrett, n.d.; Purcell, 1997). Tourism employment is markedly feminised, underpaid, precarious and requires working in 'unsocial hours', such as nights and weekends (Parrett, n.d.).

In Portugal, tourism has a very significant contribution to the economy and is a very important job provider. However, these jobs are to a great extent dead-end (Parrett, n.d.; Purcell, 1997), mainly for lower qualified professionals who are the majority of workers in this sector.

This article aims at analysing gender inequalities in the Portuguese tourism sector. Official statistical data on employment provided by *Statistics Portugal* (INE) are used to study the situation of Portuguese tourism workers. Data collected in studies from several different contexts are used to establish comparisons between different realities.

The purpose of the first section of the article is to provide a background for the existing gender inequalities in employment, comparing the situation in Portugal and in the European Union (EU). The main indicators used to compare the situation of men and women are employment and unemployment rates, fixed-term contracts, part and full-time employment, as well as payment.

In the following section, information about the tourism sector is introduced. The importance of the tourism sector in the Portuguese context is also analysed.

The INE database is used to analyse the tourism sector in terms of gender differences in the regional distribution of tourism workers, as well as in their education, occupation, occupational status, working hours, hierarchical positions and pay. For all these variables, the situation of female and male workers is compared, as well as the tourism sector and the economy as a whole.

2. Gender inequalities in employment

Traditionally, men were more linked to the public sphere and women to the private sphere (Ferreira, 2007). However, in the last decades, this situation has undergone some changes. Women are increasingly better educated than men, particularly concerning tertiary education (Eurostat, 2010a). There is also a growing entry of women into the labour market, especially since the 1980s (European Commission, 2004).

However, even though barriers to equality in education have been removed in developed countries, inequalities in employment persist (European Commission, 2004; Hemmati, 2000). One of the reasons is the fact that women still have more responsibilities than men at home, which leave them with less time for professional development (Hemmati, 2000; Rêgo, 2008; Torres, 1998).

Other causes for the persistence of gender inequalities in employment are gender stereotypes that conform men and women to specific gender roles, as well as practices embedded within corporate culture, which create obstacles to women's career progression (Guerreiro and Pereira, 2006; Jordan, 1997; Parrett, n.d.; Purcell, 1997).

The inequalities resulting from these constraints are vertical and horizontal segregation of employment, lower employment rates for women, particularly in full-time employment, as well as more precarious employment situations and lower salaries, partly as a result of vertical and horizontal

segregation (European Commission, 2004). It is thus important to analyse these indicators in order to understand the situation of men and women concerning paid employment.

Firstly, the gender gap in employment and unemployment rates needs to be analysed. In the EU, in 2009, women's employment rate was 12.1% lower than men's (58.6% and 70.7%, respectively) and for the same year, in Portugal it was 9.5% lower (61.6% and 71.1% respectively) (Eurostat, 2010b).

As shown in Figure 1, there is a slight upward tendency in female employment rates, except for men in Portugal (Eurostat, 2010c) (Figure 2). In the EU the situation changed in 2009: for the first time, men's unemployment rate was higher than women's. However, these changes do not reflect better employment opportunities for women, but a sharp increase in the number of unemployed men.

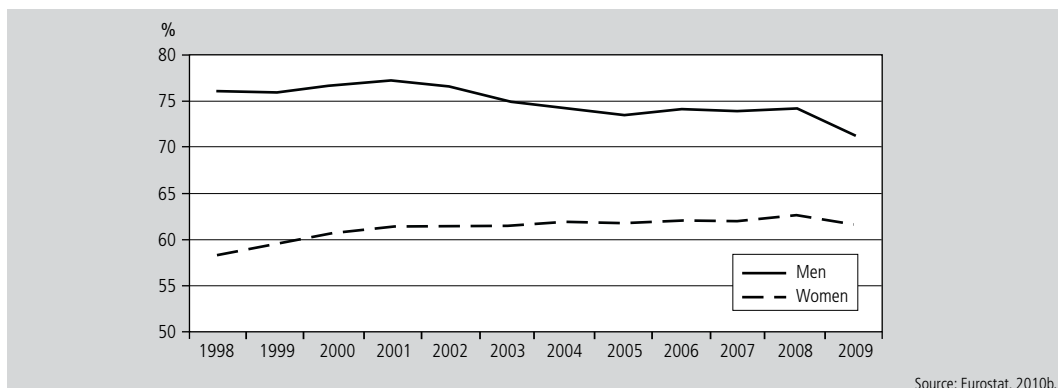
Particularly remarkable in the Portuguese case is the fact that it has one of EU's highest full-time employment rates for mothers of young children. Torres *et al.* (2005) stated that 63% of Portuguese mothers of children under ten were employed full-time in 1993. According to Eurostat (2002), Portugal had the highest share of double-earner couples with children in 2000: 66.5% of these couples were made up of two full-time workers. Torres *et al.* (2005) reveal that these high female full-time employment rates are achieved at the expenses of high stress levels and dif-

ficulties in balancing work and family lives, since child-care facilities do not abound in Portugal and family solidarity networks are less extensive than expected.

Still, the majority of part-time workers in Portugal are women (66.2%) (GEP, 2009). Remuneration in part-time work is not only lower, but the conditions of the work itself tend to be worse and there are more obstacles to career progression (European Commission, 2004).

Regarding gender differences in unemployment rates, they were 1.3% higher for women than for men in Portugal (Eurostat, 2010c) (Figure 2). In the EU the situation changed in 2009: for the first time, men's unemployment rate was higher than women's. However, these changes do not reflect better employment opportunities for women, but a sharp increase in the number of unemployed men.

The pay gap in the EU, measured as the relative difference in the average gross hourly earnings of women and men within the economy as a whole, was estimated at 18% in 2009 (European Commission, 2010). In addition to salary, several studies reveal that men are more likely than women to receive prizes and fringe benefits (Theunissen, 2005, cited in Zij-kant, 2006). According to Theunissen (2005, cited in Zij-kant, 2006), men in Belgium are three times more likely to drive a car paid for or leased by the employer, to have a petrol card, a company mobile phone or a computer for personal use, among other benefits.



Source: Eurostat, 2010b.

Figure 1 | Employment rate in Portugal by gender (1998-2009).

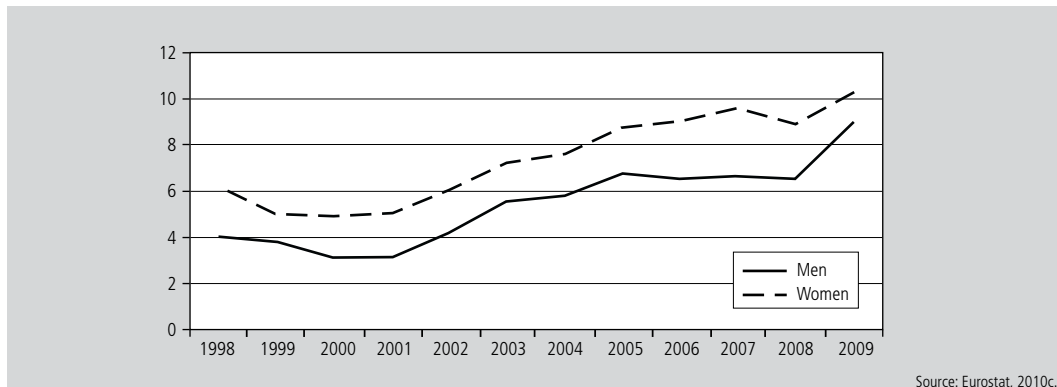


Figure 2 | Unemployment rate in Portugal by gender (1998-2009).

3. Importance of the tourism sector for the Portuguese economy

As far as the tourism sector is concerned, it seems to be a particularly important sector for women, since their participation in tourism employment is higher than in the workforce in general (Hemmati, 2000). In 2005, in the EU, the accommodation and food and beverage (F&B) sector employed 5.1% of the female workforce and, in Portugal, it employed 6.9% (Franco, 2007). Given the relevance of this sector for women, specifically in the Portuguese context, its importance for the Portuguese economy is analysed.

Tourism is a very important sector for the Portuguese economy. For instance, in 2007 it contributed to 5.1% of the Portuguese Gross Added Value (GVA) (INE, 2009). According to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), 14.4% of the Portuguese Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 18.8% of the Portuguese employment are due to tourism¹ (WTTC, 2010).

However, to fully analyse the contribution of tourism to the employment generation, particularly among women, it is necessary not to overlook the nature and conditions of the employment generated, since it often reinforces inequalities and reproduces social stratification (Jordan, 1997). In fact, tourism

tends to provide low pay, low status and low skill jobs in typically female occupations, offering little opportunities for vertical mobility (Hemmati, 2000; Parrett, n.d.), being vertically and horizontally gender segregated. According to Santos and Varejão (2006), the Portuguese tourism industry is characterised by the predominance of female employment, low levels of education and short average tenure.

It is thus necessary to evaluate the quality of the employment generated in the sector, as well as to analyse the gender differences that arise in tourism employment in Portugal.

4. Methodology

This article is based on the analysis of official statistics from the Employment Survey (*Inquérito ao Emprego*) carried out by Statistics Portugal (INE). The Employment Survey is a quarterly sample survey that covers all the national territory and aims at collecting data that allow the characterisation of the labour market. The database contains micro-data concerning all the trimesters from 1998 to 2009.

¹ The measure of employment used is the broadest, including direct and indirect effects via the supply chain of travel and tourism spending.

The data were analysed using the software PASW statistics. The aim of this analysis was to identify differences in the situation of female and male workers, particularly in the tourism sector, as well as to characterise employment in tourism, by comparing it to employment in the economy as a whole.

Since most variables are categorical (e.g. occupation, economic activity, part-time vs. full-time work, *etc.*), cross tabulation was the most used technique. However, for continuous variables (pay, working hours, *etc.*) other statistics were used, such as the t-test and ANOVA.

A number of limitations need to be considered. Tourism characteristic products are: accommodation services; food and beverage serving services (F&B); travel agency, tour operator and tourist guide services; passenger transportation services; cultural services; recreation and other entertainment services; and miscellaneous tourism services (OECD *et al.*, 2001). However, in this study, only the first three are analysed. The reason for this is that the micro-data available from INE are aggregated in a way that it is not possible, for instance, to distinguish between passenger transportation and freight transportation. For this reason, it was decided not to analyse the transportation sector, since most of the employment generated by this sector would not be due to tourism.

Regarding cultural services and recreation and other entertainment services, they were also not analysed, since only a relatively small percentage of the GVA and employment generated in these services is due to tourism (Turismo de Portugal, 2007).

Furthermore, only with the introduction of a new classification of economic activities (CAE Rev. 3, substituting CAE Rev. 2.1) was it possible to analyse data for travel agencies and tour operators. Nonetheless, it is difficult to derive conclusions from this sample, since it only comprises a small number of individuals (49 for the fourth trimester of 2009).

Moreover, the employment statistics only disaggregate F&B data from the data for the

accommodation sector in the years 2008 and 2009, with the introduction of CAE Rev. 3. Hence, when the evolution of employment throughout the years is under analysis, the data analysed exclude travel agencies and the accommodation and F&B sectors are analysed as a whole, since they cannot be disaggregated.

5. Gender inequalities in tourism employment in Portugal

5.1. Characteristics of the tourism sample

As already stated in the methodology section, in this study the tourism sample is considered to be an aggregate of three economic activities, namely accommodation, F&B and travel agencies, tour operators and other reservation services.

For the fourth trimester of 2009, the accommodation sample comprises 319 individuals (58.6% women, 41.4% men); the F&B sector comprises 863 individuals (60.7% women, 39.3% men) and travel agencies and tour operators include 49 individuals (59.2% women, 40.8% men). On the whole, 1,231 individuals are considered tourism workers, 39.9% of whom are men and 60.1% are women. The proportion of female workers in the tourism sector is thus higher than in the economy as a whole (60.1% vs. 47.2%).

The most significant age group is 45 and above, both for men and women. Concerning marital status, the majority of the respondents is married (67.7%). There is a higher percentage of divorced people in the tourism sector (7.3%), particularly in travel agencies and tour operators (14.3%), than in all the sectors of the economy together (4.7%).

There is a greater proportion of non-Portuguese workers employed in the tourism sector (7.3%) than in the whole economy (3.3%), particularly noticeable among the female tourism workers (8.4%) than among male tourism workers (5.7%).

5.1.1. Regional distribution of tourism workers

The main regions of residence of tourism workers are Algarve (22.5%), North (17.5%), Lisbon (16.4%) and Madeira (14.1%). Whereas the Northern region concentrates the majority of the employed in all the economic sectors, Algarve is the region that concentrates the majority of tourism workers. This is due to the fact that Algarve is the most important tourism region in Portugal.

There is a statistically significant relation between gender and the region of residence (NUT II) ($\chi^2 = .05$). Even though women are the majority of tourism workers in all the regions, they are particularly concentrated in the Centre, Lisbon, Alentejo and Azores, while men are more concentrated in the North, Algarve and Madeira. Thus, men tend to be concentrated in the best paid regions, Algarve and Madeira. This could be either related with the fact that men are better-paid than women and, since they are more concentrated in certain regions, the average salary in these regions tends to rise; or with the fact that men are more prone to change their place of residence in order to get a better-paid job. As Escária (2006) stated, those who change jobs more often tend to earn more than those who remain in the same companies.

The author also noted that women change jobs less frequently than men.

5.1.2. Education of tourism workers

Regarding education, tourism workers are less represented in higher levels of education than workers in general (Figure 3).

While men prevail among those with the third cycle of basic education, post graduations, master degrees and doctorates, women predominate among those without any formal education or the first two stages of basic education, as well as among those with bachelor degrees and *licenciaturas* (Figure 4).

There are 77% of female and 79% of male tourism workers that have levels of education equal or lower than compulsory education, in comparison to 65.3% of female and 75.9% of male workers in the economy as a whole. Hence, tourism workers are on average more concentrated in lower education categories.

Regarding high-skilled individuals, there are a low percentage of workers with at least post-secondary education in the tourism sector. In the economy as a whole 10.4% of men and 18.2% of women have this level of education, as compared to 4% of men and 6% of women in the tourism sector (Table 1).

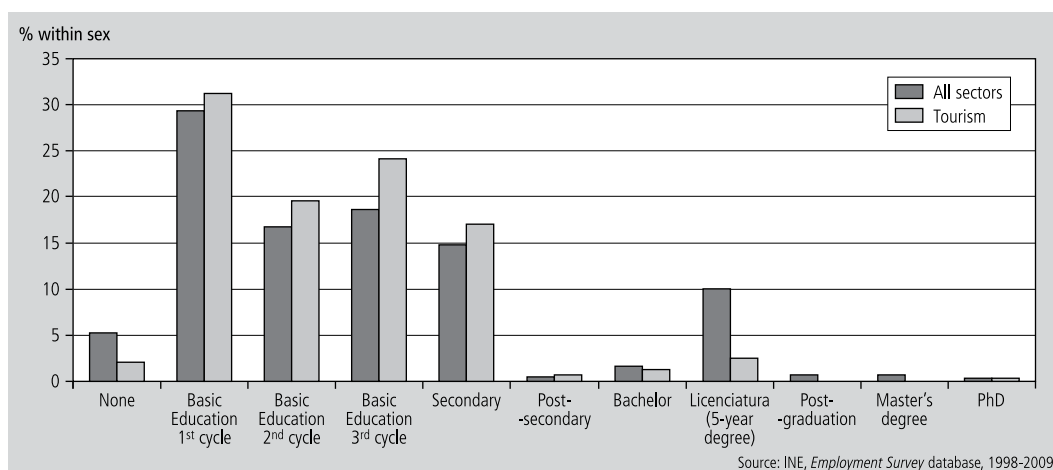


Figure 3 | Employed individuals by level of education and economic activity (4th trimester 2009).

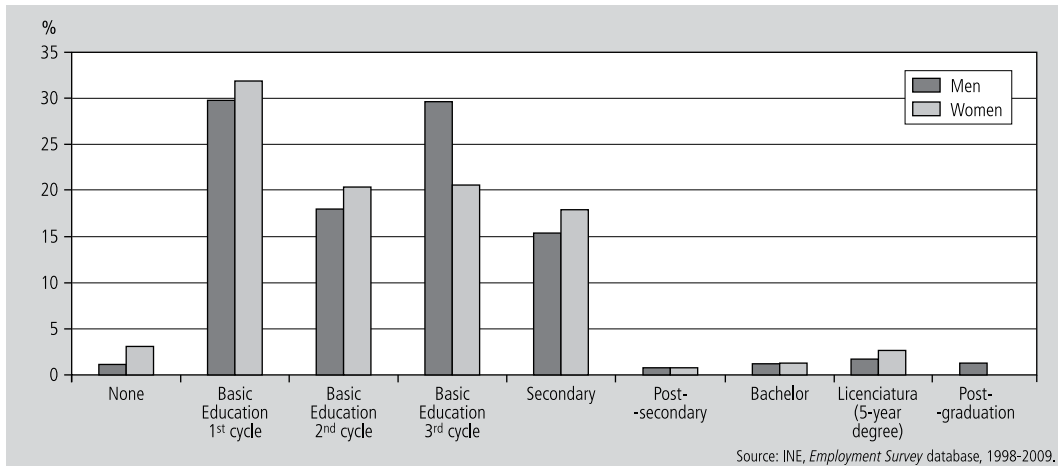


Figure 4 | Employed individuals by level of education and gender in the tourism sector (4th trimester 2009).

Table 1 | Percentage of men and women with at least post-secondary education by economic activity (4th trimester 2009)

	Men	Women
All sectors	10.4%	18.2%
Tourism	4%	6%
– Accommodation	7.6%	10.2%
– Food and beverage	4.5%	1.6%
– Travel agencies, tour operators and other reservation services	10%	48.2%

Source: INE, Employment Survey database, 1998-2009.

Only in the F&B sector does the proportion of high-skilled men surpass that of high-skilled women. This sector is characterised by a very low level of high-skilled personnel, particularly regarding female workers who, despite being the majority of the workforce in the sector, have a very low share of high levels of education.

On the other hand, the travel agency sector includes a much higher proportion of high-skilled individuals than the economy as a whole. The data suggest that there is a great education gap in this field in favour of women. However, it must be taken into account that the sample size is very reduced, which can skew any conclusions.

Still concerning higher education degrees, the percentage of employees with a *licenciatura* in the tourism sector is particularly low, as can be seen in Figures 6 and 7: while 6.8% of men and 13.8% of women in the overall economy have this level of education, only 2% of men and 3% of women in the tourism sector hold it.

5.1.3. Occupation of tourism workers

The most significant occupations in tourism are service and sale workers (59.1% of workers), executive civil servants, industrial directors and executives (16.8%) and unskilled workers (11.6%).

It is noticeable that, even though men only account for 39.9% of the sample, they hold 58.9% of all management and executive positions in the tourism sector.

Another important aspect is that unskilled workers seem to be less represented in the tourism sample (11.6%) than in the sample for all the economic sectors (13.7%). However, women are 81.8% of all these workers in this sector, whereas in the overall economy women account for 66.7% of all the unskilled workers.

5.1.4. Occupational status

Regarding occupational status, the pattern is similar for the tourism sector and for all the sectors in the economy: men prevail as own-account workers and employers, while women predominate as employees and unpaid family workers. According to Adkins (cited in Purcell, 1997), some companies search for couples and managers 'with spouse to assist', but the contracts are only operated between the husbands and the companies, which is a situation that does not favour gender equality.

The higher number of employers in the tourism sector, comparing to the economy in general, seems to be related to the fact that there is a high number of small-sized and family businesses in this sector. In fact, 90.2% of the accommodation and F&B establishments have less than ten employees (GEP, 2007).

5.1.5. Type of work contract

There are clear differences between the situation of tourism employees and employees in general. In the economy as a whole, 77.7% of employees have permanent contracts, against only 70.9% of tourism workers. Even though women account for all seasonal workers surveyed in the tourism sector, no conclusion can be drawn, since only five individuals fall into this category of contracts. Gender differences are not statistically significant.

This higher precariousness of contracts is especially due to the F&B sector, where only 68.9% of the employees have permanent contracts, compared to 74% of the employees in the accommodation sector and 75% of the employees in the travel agencies and tour operators.

Concerning the main reasons for not being on a permanent contract, 85.3% of the respondents in all the sectors and 87% in the tourism sector referred that they did not have the possibility to get a permanent one.

There are slight differences between genders, not significant, regarding the answer to this question.

Among women, there is a slightly higher proportion of employees who could not get a permanent contract (88.7% of women against 83.5% of men), whereas there is a higher proportion of men among those who did not get a permanent contract because they did not want to (4.7% of men against 1.1% of women).

5.1.6. Part-time vs. full-time

Contrary to the literature review, according to which there is plenty of part-time employment in the tourism sector, the analysed data suggest there is a higher proportion of full-time workers in the tourism sector (93.1%) than in the economy as a whole (86.8%).

The chi-square value indicates that there are significant differences between genders regarding part-time vs. full-time employment for all the economic sectors (Sig.=.000), but not specifically for tourism. Whereas only 9.3% of the men surveyed work part-time in the overall sample, 17.5% of the employed women do so. There is not such a significant difference between genders in the tourism sector (7.4% of women and 6.1% of men).

In the economic sectors as a whole, the main reasons for working part-time are personal reasons. However, for those working in the tourism field, the reasons pointed out are different. The majority of male part-timers work this way because they are engaged in studying or training (Figure 5), which may suggest that better job opportunities await them once they finish their studies. However, most women working part-time would rather work full-time if they could find such a job.

According to Jordan (1997), some employers argue that women prefer part-time jobs because these allow them to balance work and family life in a better way. Some women choose part-time jobs indeed because they allow for a better conciliation between paid and unpaid domestic labour. In fact, almost all the respondents who mentioned personal or familiar reasons as the main reason for having a part-time job

were women (1% of male and 6% of female workers in general; 0% of male and 9% of female tourism workers). However, the analysis of this dataset reveals that working part-time is not a “real” choice for most women. On the contrary, it mostly reflects a lack of better job opportunities, since almost half of the surveyed female tourism workers state that they would rather work full-time if they found a full-time job. This is also pointed out by Adkins (1995, cited by Purcell, 1997), Hemmati (2000) and Jordan (1997). Smith (2009) also mentions that women are very often “part-time unemployed”, since they want to work full-time but cannot for labour market reasons.

5.1.7. Working at ‘unsocial’ hours

Tourism workers labour much more at ‘unsocial hours’, i.e. in shifts, at night, on Saturdays and Sundays, than workers in all the other sectors (Figure 6). Men also tend to work more during these periods than women, particularly in the tourism sector. The night period is the one with the greatest gender disproportion.

The cross tabulation between gender and period of work revealed significant gender differences ($\chi^2=0.001$), except for shift work in the tourism sector ($\chi^2=0.056$).

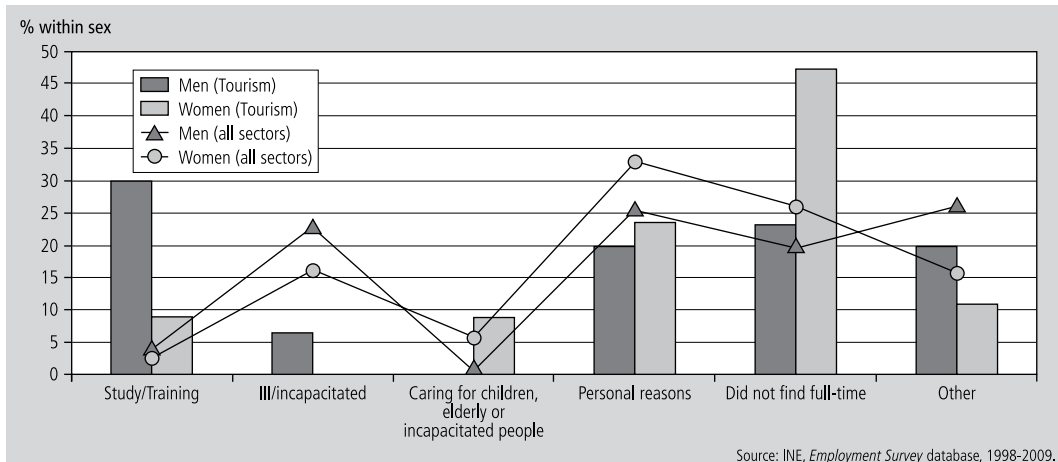


Figure 5 | Reasons for working part-time, by gender (4th trimester 2009).

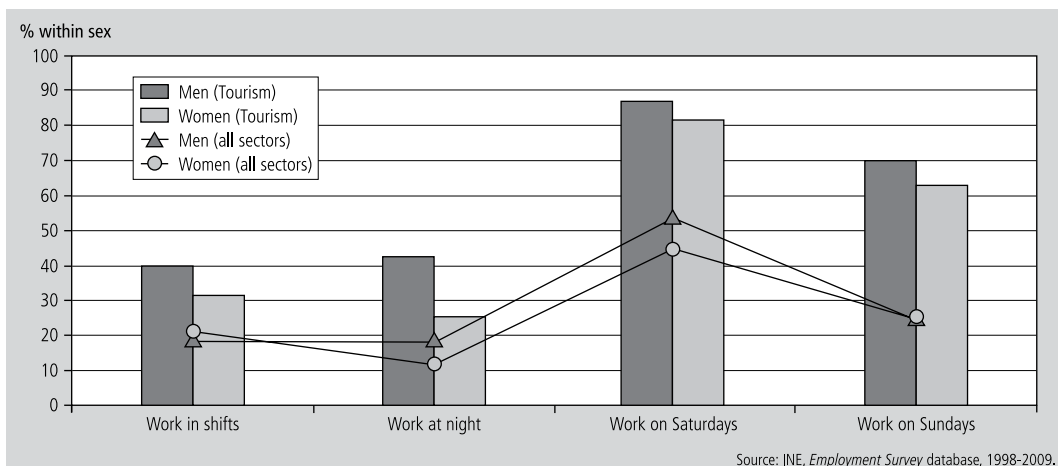


Figure 6 | Working in shifts, at night, on Saturdays and Sundays, by gender and economic activity (4th trimester 2009).

5.1.8. Number of weekly working hours

On average, the number of weekly working hours in Portugal is 40. The t-test revealed significant differences (Sig.=.000) regarding the amount of working hours of men (42 hours) and women (38 hours) working in all the sectors. The tourism sector is the economic activity where most hours are worked, both for men (49) and women (44).

Within the tourism sector, gender differences regarding the amount of working hours are only significant in the F&B sector (Sig. = .000), where men work more than 52 hours, while women work 45 hours.

5.1.9. Coordination and supervision functions

In the whole economy, 22% of men and 16.9% of women have coordination and supervision functions. In the tourism sector, 26.4% of men and 14.1% of women have these functions. These differences are statistically significant (chi-sq= .000).

Even in absolute terms, and taking into account that there are more women than men in the tourism field, there are more male than female workers with coordination functions both in accommodation (55.3% vs. 44.7%, respectively) and travel agencies

and tour operators (58.3% vs. 41.7%), but not in F&B (43.6% vs. 56.4%). It is also in this subsector that there are globally less workers in these functions (Figure 7).

5.1.10. Leadership, management and executive positions

Regarding the distribution of leadership positions across tourism subsectors, there is an apparent balance between men and women, since both in accommodation services and travel agencies each gender has a share of 50% of these positions. However, it must be taken into account that, for instance, whereas men occupy 50% of these positions, they only represent 41.4% of accommodation workers.

In the F&B subsector, the gender unbalance regarding this occupation is remarkable. Although men only account for 39.9% of F&B workers, they hold 60.3% of all management and executive positions.

It is noticeable that women directors and executives tend to be better skilled than their male counterparts, both in the tourism sector and in the economy as a whole. This confirms the common sense idea that women have to be better skilled than men to reach the same positions.

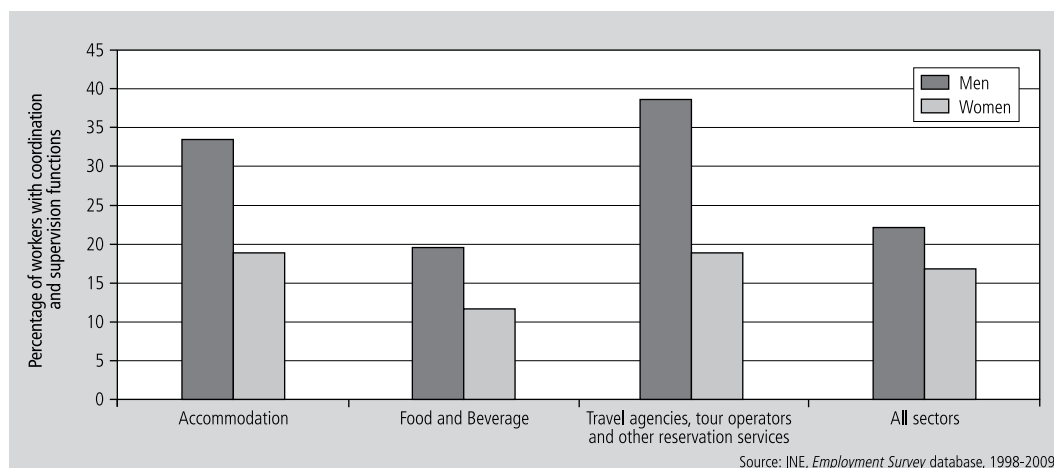


Figure 7 | Workers with coordination and supervision functions by economic activity and gender (4th trimester 2009).

The majority of people in executive positions, particularly in the tourism sector, are directors and managers of small businesses (e.g. 96.6% of the directing and executive positions in the F&B sector are in small enterprises). Hence, the image of the highly paid and high skilled executive does not apply here. On the contrary, 43.4% of men and 35.5% of women holding these positions only have four years of formal education, i.e. the first cycle of basic education (Figure 8) and earn about €600-€999 monthly. On the contrary, the majority of company directors of bigger companies in the tourism sector earn about €200-€799 monthly. However, it is important to mention that the great majority of directors of small enterprises (92.4%) did not answer the remuneration question, thus results may be distorted.

is the third worst paid economic activity². Whereas the average salary in the whole economy is €752.9, in the tourism sector it is €594.6.

While in the fourth semester 1998 men earned on average €534.8 and women €446.4 (a 16.5% gap), in the fourth trimester 2009, men earned on average €809.7, whereas women earned €699.2 (a 13.6% gap). In the tourism sector, the difference in salaries is greater and is increasing. In the fourth semester 1998 men earned €454.5 and women €348.5 (a 23.3% gap), while in the fourth semester 2009 men earned €723.2 and women €533.9 (a 26.2% gap). The difference between salaries of tourism workers and workers in general has also widened 2% from 1998 to 2009.

5.2. Gender differences in the remuneration of tourism workers

5.2.1. Gender gap in monthly wages

Comparing net monthly wage gains between economic activities, one can conclude that tourism

5.2.2. Gender gap in hourly pay

Since men work on average more hours than women, it is necessary to analyse whether these wage differences are related to a higher amount of working hours. Hence, it is important to measure the gender pay gap on the basis of hourly pay.

As seen before, in the EU, the gender pay gap is based on gross hourly earnings. Since INE does not provide information on gross earnings, net earnings are used instead.

² Travel agencies are excluded from this analysis, since disaggregated data for this sector is only available since 2008.

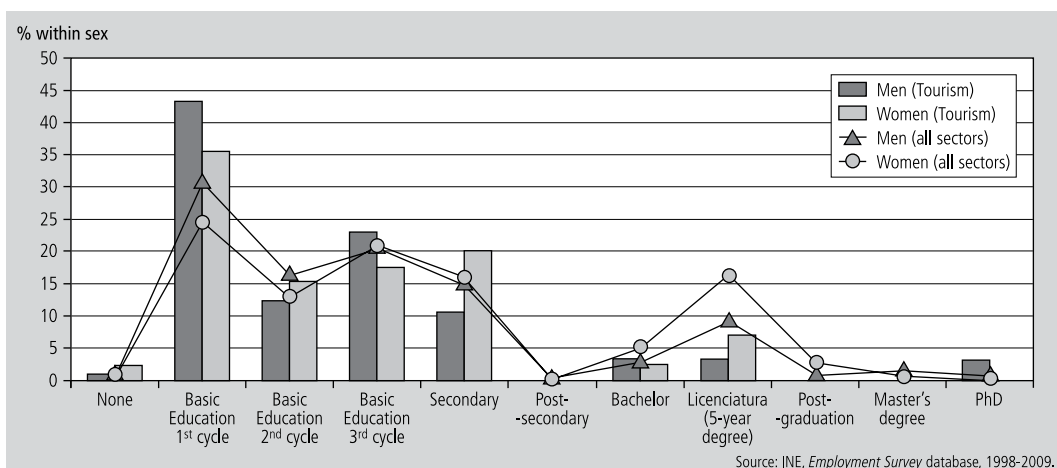


Figure 8 | Qualifications of managers and directors in the tourism sector and in the economy as a whole, by gender (4th trimester 2009).

The gender difference is lower, particularly for the economy as a whole, if salary comparisons are based on hourly remuneration. Yet, gender disparity is still very significant, particularly in the tourism sector. The gender pay gap in the EU was at 18%, but in Portugal it is much lower. While there are no reductions in the gender pay gap for the economy as whole across years it has even increased in the tourism sector from 19.9% in 1998 to 26.3% in 2009 (Figure 9).

This was mostly due to an increase in male salaries, since female salaries stagnated in the last three years (Figure 10). This tendency for an

increase in the gender pay gap is also mentioned by other authors (González *et al.*, 2005; European Commission, 2010), according to whom there are no signals of its reduction. On the contrary, there are even signs of an upward tendency of the indicator.

Concerning salary differences in tourism subsectors, the best paid one is travel agencies and tour operators. It is also the sector in which the gender difference is lower (Figure 11), but it must be taken into account that there are only 28 valid responses. The F&B sector has the lowest pay. The accommodation sector is better paid but has the highest gender pay gap (27.3%).

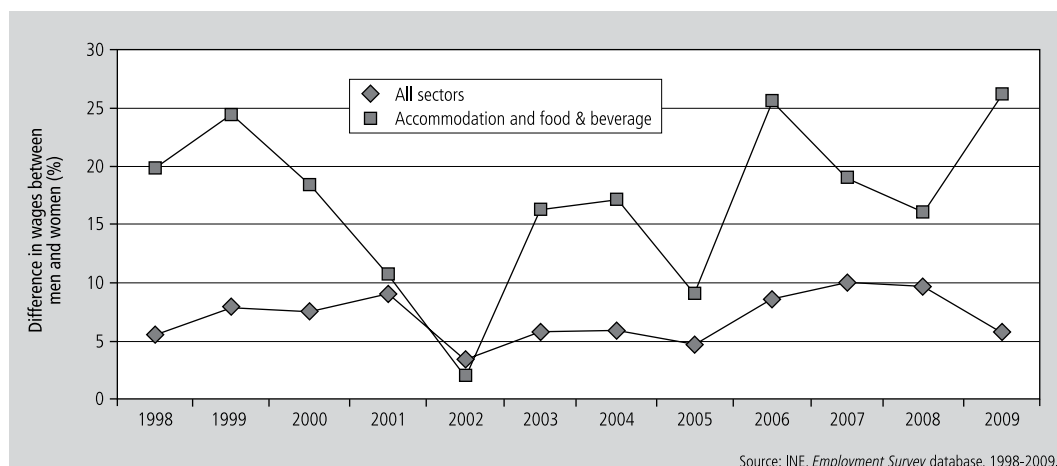


Figure 9 | Gender pay gap in the economy as a whole and in the tourism sector (1998-2009).

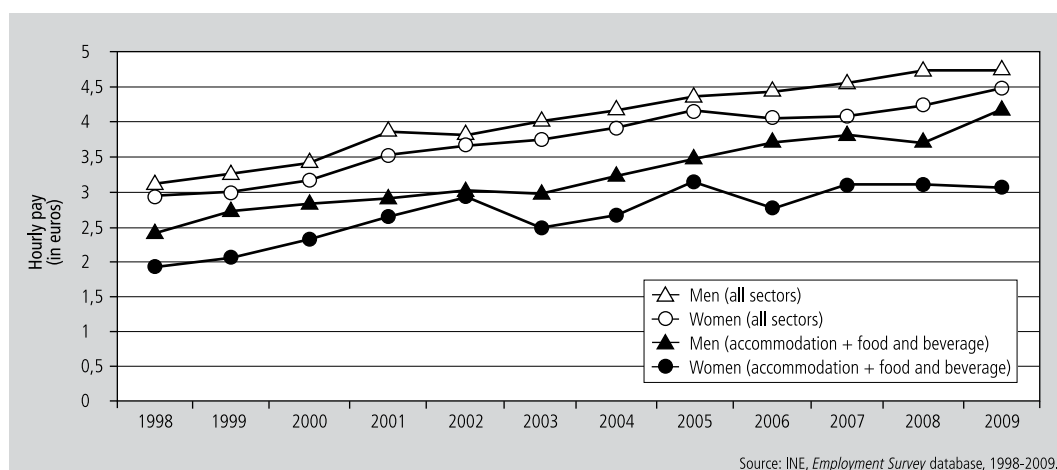


Figure 10 | Average hourly pay by gender and economic activity (1998-2009).

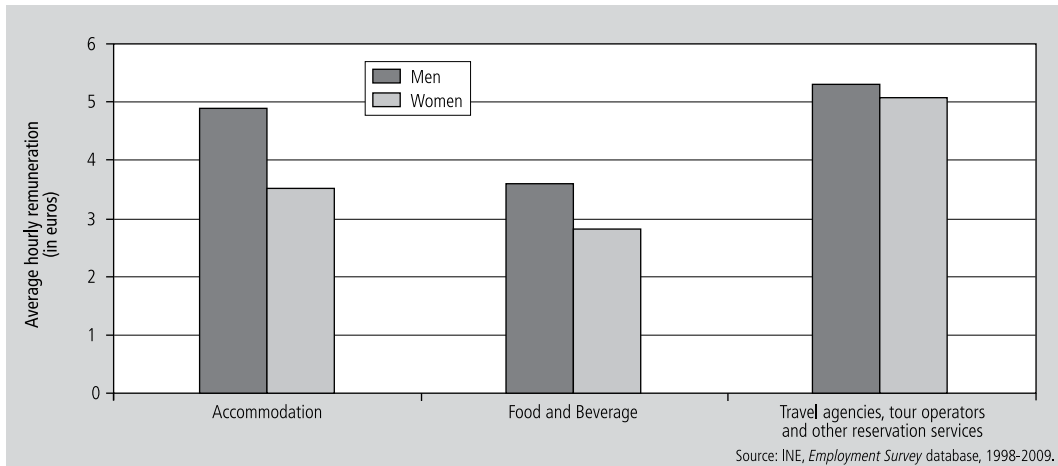


Figure 11 | Average hourly remuneration by tourism subsector and gender (4th trimester 2009).

5.2.3. Education and pay

It was concluded in the previous section that women’s salaries are lower than men’s; that the tourism sector is low paid and that women in this sector are particularly underpaid. Since tourism workers tend to be low-skilled, it is important to evaluate whether the gender pay gap is due to differences in education between men and women.

From Figure 12 it can be concluded that when pay is analysed by levels of education, women’s salaries are still lower than men’s. Salaries for the

tourism sector also tend to be lower compared to the salaries in the economy as a whole. However, the difference between sectors is less clear than the difference between genders.

The greatest gap both between genders and between sectors can be found among the most educated workers. Having a higher education degree boosts men’s average salary, particularly in the tourism sector. This increase is not as marked for women’s salary in the overall economy. However, for female tourism workers, this salary increase is much more moderate and not comparable to that of the other workers.

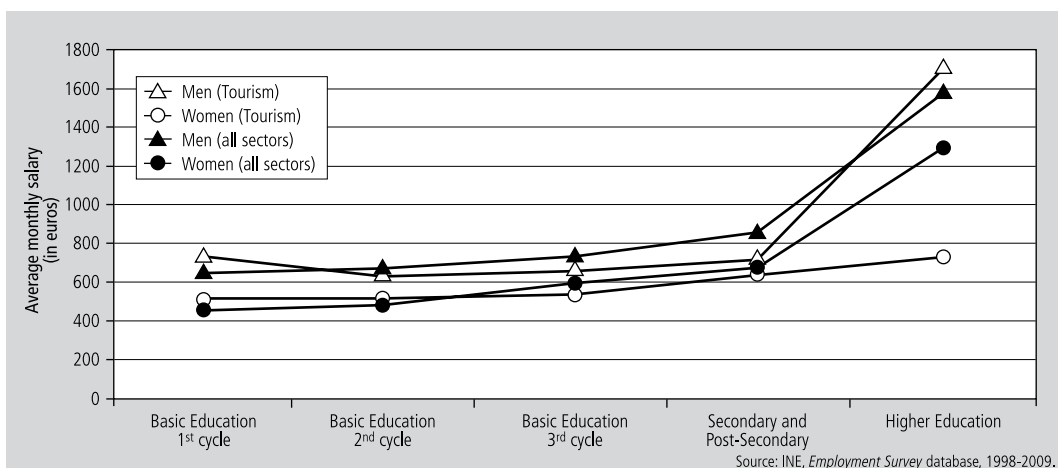


Figure 12 | Salaries according to education, by gender and sector (4th trimester 2009).

Nonetheless, the low number of respondents in some education categories (e.g. there are 10 men and 16 women with higher education in the tourism sector) makes it harder to draw conclusions. Yet it seems that gender pay differences cannot be explained by differences in education. On the contrary, the analysis suggests that the higher the level of education, the higher the gender pay gap.

In a study that used the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition (Santos and Varejão, 2006), it was found that 45% of the gender pay gap in the tourism sector was related with differences in characteristics of male and female workers, while 55% of the pay gap remained unexplained and was thus attributed to discrimination. Even though this technique was not used in the present study, the analysed data also suggest that differences in, for instance, education, do not justify the pay gap observed.

6. Conclusion

The purpose of this article is to analyse gender inequalities in tourism employment in Portugal.

It was concluded that the gender gap in employment and unemployment rates is narrowing, partly because of an increase in female employment rates, but mostly due to an increase in male unemployment rates. Within the EU, Portugal is one of the countries with the highest full-time employment rates for mothers of young children, despite the scarcity of childcare services.

Concerning tourism employment, it is very important for the Portuguese economy. Although its growth rhythm is slowing down, tourism is still an expanding sector. In order to analyse gender differences in tourism employment in Portugal, micro-data from INE's Employment Survey were used.

The Portuguese tourism sector is highly feminised and average levels of education are low. Male workers are concentrated in the regions where

tourism is more developed and tourism workers are best paid, i.e. Algarve and Madeira.

It is also a sector with a marked vertical segregation:

- there is a high number of women that are unskilled workers;
- even though tourism is female-dominated, there are more male than female directors and executives, which denotes vertical segregation;
- vertical segregation is particularly marked in the F&B subsector.

Directors and executives have low levels of education, but female directors and executives are better educated than their male counterparts.

In addition, there are more employers in the tourism field, which is due to the higher proportion of small businesses in the tourism field.

Tourism jobs are more precarious, since there is a higher proportion of non-permanent contracts than in the overall economy. However, contrarily to what is affirmed in some studies (Purcell, 1997), part-time work seems to be less common in tourism than in the other economic activities. Most male part-time workers in the tourism field chose to work this way because they are studying or training, but female part-time work is mostly the result of a lack of opportunities for working full-time.

Concerning working hours, tourism employees work more in shifts, at night, on Saturdays and Sundays, particularly men. These work schedules can complicate work-life balance. In addition, tourism workers have the highest amount of weekly working hours in the whole economy.

Despite the heavy amount of working hours, tourism workers, particularly in the F&B subsector, are low paid. However, those who work in travel agencies and tour operators are paid above the national average. Concerning the gender pay gap, it has stagnated in the overall economy, but has increased in the tourism sector. One could think that it is due to women having lower levels of education. However, the gender pay gap tends to

increase with the level of education: while holding a degree influences very positively male workers' salaries, it seems not to influence the earnings of female tourism workers as much. The existing pay gap seems thus not to be justifiable by differences in levels of education. Hence, further studies are necessary to determine the causes of the gender pay gap.

In the future an integrated approach towards gender equality should be adopted, particularly in the tourism field, so that the observed disparities can be tackled.

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