

Gender pay gap in the rural tourism labour market in Spain: A comparative analysis with the urban tourism labour market

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Objectives | This paper aims to conduct a comparative analysis between men and women's wages in the Spanish tourism accommodation sector in rural and urban areas. Personal characteristics (age and education) and job characteristics (job seniority and job qualification) will be used as control variables. Consequently, the main objective is to evaluate and compare the gender pay gap in rural and urban areas, in the accommodation industry. The main conclusions of this study are that salaries are lower in rural areas than in urban areas, and that the gender pay gap is less wide in rural establishments.

Methodology | First, a differentiation of urban and rural areas through the usual indicators (population size, population density and type of economic activity) is carried out, based on Sancho and Reinoso (2012). This differentiation is based on a geographical delimitation, which in Spain is applied at a provincial level; this type of delimitation is supported by two international organizations: OECD and Eurostat.

The database used is the Longitudinal Sample of Working Lives (LSWL). The LSWL is based on information provided by the Social Security database with information on the individual careers of over 1.2 million Spanish residents (a 4% random sample of all individuals on its rosters in the year analysed). The analysis is performed for the year 2012. In order to analyse the gender pay gap in the accommodation industry, the reference group identification was made based on the economic sector listed as 'Industry.'

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551. Hotels and similar accommodation' including all those whose primary job are in this accommodation industry. The final sample includes 10,389 workers, of which 3,578 are based mostly in urban areas (34%), 691 mainly in rural areas (7%) and 6,118 in intermediate areas (59%). Gender differences in wages are studied through nonparametric mean differences, necessary in the case of non-normality distributed variables, as the variable 'salary'.

Main Results and Contributions | Overall, salaries are lower in rural areas than in urban ones (11,280.48 versus 16,429.07 euros, average values), and the gender pay gap is wider in urban areas (20.2%) than in rural areas (18.9%).

The Kernel's distribution show how female wage distribution, in comparison with men's, is shifted to the left, in both environments, rural and urban, reflecting the pay gap; although in rural areas, women seem to suffer lower salaries and therefore more precariousness. In fact, almost 80% of women in rural areas have an annual gross salary of less than 15,000 euros, while this percentage is reduced to 51.3% in urban areas.

Overall, the gender pay gap increases with salaries and consequently, the wider pay gap is found at the 95th percentile, and whereas in urban areas it reaches 30%, in rural areas the level is 28.9%. These results are confirmed by other studies that show how women are under-represented in higher skilled and better-paid positions, increasing the pay gap in the highest percentiles (Segovia-Pérez et al., 2014; Garcia-Pozo et al., 2012; Muñoz-Bullón, 2009; Mooney & Ryan, 2009).

Limitations | The usage of descriptive and inferential statistics to measure and to characterize the salaries is useful as a base of knowledge. Nevertheless, it is recommended to use further estimations using econometric techniques such as Oaxaca-Blinder and its subsequent extensions, quantile regressions or other techniques of wage decomposition as Fortin, Lemieux and Firpo. Moreover, the delimitation of rural and urban at a provincial level, although recognized by international organization and previous research, may be questionable.

Conclusions | Salaries in the tourist accommodation sector are higher in urban areas than in rural areas and gender salaries distribution is more equitable in rural areas. The characterization of the gender pay gap shows similarities and differences between both environments. Overall, as age increases pay gap raises, reaching the highest value in the age group between 45 and 55 years (35% gender pay gap in urban areas and 30% gender pay gap in rural areas). The results seem to be aligned with previous literature review that shows how women are negatively affected by family responsibilities, in comparison to men.

Taking educational level into account, the pay gap in rural areas is higher than in urban areas for all levels of education. In rural areas, the largest pay gap is identified in the occupational group of technical staff, while in urban areas, is presented in the primary school group.

Regarding the qualification required linked to each job position, the largest pay gap in urban areas is in the occupational group of technical personnel; however, in rural areas, pay gender differences are not significant.

Experience and seniority in job positions is a factor that promotes a rise in the gender pay gap. It is reasonable to think that workers that join a company with little experience have lower wages and gender differences can become irrelevant at a salary level. However, as experience rises and therefore seniority

in the company, salaries start including wage supplements, that have been traditional earned by men (De la Rica, Dolado & Vegas, 2011), increasing the differences between men and women's salaries.

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