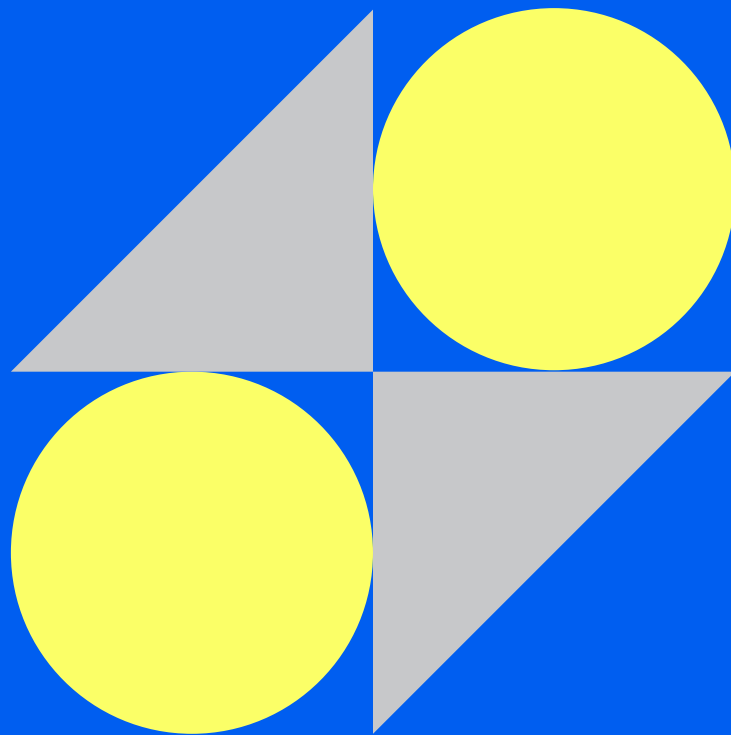




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Gender and migration background at their intersection

An analysis of labour market data in Europe

Livia Elisa Ortensi & Francesca Tosi



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Abbreviations

EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
EU	European Union
EU-LFS	EU Labour Force Survey
EU-SILC	EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions
EWCS	European Working Conditions Survey
FTE	Full-time equivalent
GEI	Gender Equality Index
ILO	International Labour Organization
PPS	Purchase Parity Standard
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

Glossary

Ability to take an hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters

Percentage of persons who answered 'very easy' out of total possible answers to question Q47 from Eurofound's European Working Condition Survey (EWCS). The exact formulation of the question is "Would you say that, for you, arranging to take an hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters is...?" The respondent is then asked to choose among the following options: 1) Very easy; 2) Fairly easy; 3) Fairly difficult; and 4) Very difficult.

Active recent immigrants

Percentage of active recent immigrants in relation to total recent immigrants. Recent immigrants are foreign born persons or persons with a citizenship different to the country of residence who have been resident five years or less in the reporting country.

See also *Activity rate*

Activity rate

The activity rate is the percentage of active persons in relation to the comparable total population. The active population, also shortened to labour force, comprises employed and unemployed persons, but not the economically inactive, such as pre-school children, school children, students and pensioners.

Career Prospects Index

The Career Prospects Index combines the indicators of employment status (self-employed or employee), type of contract, the prospects for career advancement as perceived by the worker, perceived likelihood of losing one's job within the next six months, and experience of downsizing in the organisation. It is measured on a scale of 0-100, where the higher the score, the higher the job quality. Both the data used for constructing the index (the European Working Condition Survey) and the calculation are provided by Eurofound.

Employment rate

The employment rate is the percentage of employed persons in relation to the comparable total population. Persons in employment are defined as all those of working age who, during a short reference period, were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit. They comprise employed persons "at work", i.e. who worked in a job for at least one hour; and employed persons "not at work" due to temporary absence from a job, or to working-time arrangements (such as shift work, flexitime and compensatory leave for overtime).

Employed people in education, human health and social work activities

Percentage of people employed in education, human health, and social work activities out of the total employed. Economic activities are defined and categorised according to the statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community (NACE Rev 2). For the considered economic fields, the following NACE activities are included: P. Education + Q. Human health and social work.

See also *Employment rate*

Expected duration of working life

The duration of working life indicator is an estimation of the number of years a person, at the current age of 15 years, is expected to be active in the labour force (i.e., employed or unemployed) throughout their life. It is measured by adjusting today's 15 year-olds' life expectancy by the current activity rate, under the hypothesis that the latter will remain constant throughout their life cycle.

See also *Activity rate*

Full-time equivalent employment rate

The full-time equivalent employment rate (FTE) is calculated to obtain a comparable measure of employed persons even when they work a different number of hours per week. The FTE rate is obtained by comparing an employee's average number of hours worked to the average number of hours worked by a full-time worker. A full-time worker is therefore counted as one FTE, while a part-time worker gets a score in proportion to the hours they work. For example, a part-time worker employed for 20 hours a week where full-time work consists of 40 hours, is counted as 0.5 FTE.

See also *Employment rate*

Long-term unemployment rate

The long-term unemployment rate is the number of people unemployed for more than 12 months as a percentage of the labour force.

See also *Unemployment rate*

Mean monthly earnings in PPS

Mean monthly earnings in PPS (Purchasing Power Standard) in the sectors of industry, construction and services (except public administration, defence, compulsory social security). The Purchasing Power Standard represents a common currency that eliminates the differences in price levels between countries.

Temporary employees

The share of employees with a fixed-term contract.

Unemployment rate

The unemployment rate is the number of people unemployed as a percentage of the labour force. The labour force (or the active population) is the sum of the number of persons employed and the number of persons unemployed. An unemployed person is defined as someone of working age (usually between 15 and 74 years old; in Italy, Spain, the UK, Iceland, and Norway between 16 and 74 years old) who was: a) without work during the reference period, i.e. was not in paid employment or self-employment; b) currently available for work, i.e. was available for paid employment or self-employment during the reference period; and c) actively seeking work, i.e. had taken specific steps in a specified recent period to seek paid employment or self-employment.

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Executive Summary

Gender equality is crucial to attain economic growth and sustainable development, as acknowledged by the United Nations General Assembly within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, international research has repeatedly shown that in every country of the world, including in the EU, women encounter more hurdles to access employment than men. Once in employment, women face additional discrimination and struggle to access decision-making positions and jobs in specific sectors or with certain characteristics. Moreover, the unequal distribution of housekeeping and unpaid care activities results in sharp differences in men's and women's working conditions.

Today's gender mainstreaming strategies call for the adoption of an intersectional perspective in the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies for gender equality, which translates into overcoming the standard "men vs women" analytical approach to focus on the multiple types of discrimination that gender, ethnicity, social class, and other personal characteristics determine in people's lives, including in the employment dimension. To that aim, the availability of high quality and representative data is of crucial importance.

The European Institute for Gender Equality has calculated the Gender Equality Index (GEI) since 2013 to measure the progress of gender equality in the EU. Among the six domains encompassed by the index, the Work domain aims to measure the extent to which women and men can benefit from equal access to employment and good working conditions. More recently, EIGE introduced the additional domain *Intersecting inequalities* to extend its reflection to the impact of intersectionality between gender and other dimensions known to affect equality, including the place of birth.

Starting from the most recent edition of the Gender Equality Index (2020) and using all the relevant, available data from the European

Commission's EU Labour Force Survey and Eurofound's European Working Conditions Survey, this report examines what is currently known on working conditions in Europe and GRASE¹ target countries – Italy, Portugal, and Spain – focusing on the intersection between gender and migrant status.

The analysis of several indicators of gender equality and participation in the labour market indicates an overall systematic penalisation of women compared with men in the EU. According to the statistics, improvements in GEI's Work domain happen very slowly and are mainly driven by the reducing gap in women's participation in the labour market. Female labourers, on the other hand, remain segregated in less rewarding sectors and more insecure jobs. This trend will indeed be worsened by the *sherecession* triggered by the Covid-19 crisis, which already sees women's labour market outcomes and prospects having deteriorated disproportionately compared with men's.

Securing migrant women's participation in the job market is crucial to provide them with equal opportunities and empowerment and to prevent economic dependence from their partners in cases of gender-based violence. However, the intersection between gender and migration background translates into weaker participation almost everywhere in Europe, although to a different extent depending on having a EU citizenship or not.

Even if comparing many indicators does not allow drawing univocal conclusions on different countries' relative position in terms of working conditions at the intersection between gender and migrant status, the available data points at two main results: first, in most European countries, a person's gender still causes the greatest deal of discrimination (in terms of, e.g., pay gap and activity rates). Second, migrant women are made up of two very different sub-groups in terms of employment opportunities: EU citizens and non-EU citizens. While the former group often

¹ GRASE (Gender and Race Stereotypes Eradication in labour market) is a 2-year EU funded project under the EU's rights, equality & citizenship programme, focusing on facilitating the access of women with a migratory background to the labour market by reducing barriers in the career services system.

performs better than native women in most of the considered indicators – signalling possible positive self-selection into economic migration towards a different Member State than that of birth – the latter group is invariably the most disadvantaged and discriminated against in the labour market.

Finally, considering the three GRASE target countries, Spain is the closest country to the achievement of full gender equality, reporting an overall higher GEI score than the EU28 average. Restricting the analysis to the Work dimension, Portugal scores better in such domain than in other ones, ranking above the European Union average and Spain. Italy, on the other hand, registers the lowest score of the whole EU27 plus the UK cluster. In general, in all GRASE countries, migrant women – both from within and outside the EU – are more economically active than native ones, although non-EU migrant women report weaker employment rates and more unstable contracts (in Spain and Portugal especially) than do others, and get considerably lower earnings as well.

To depict a comprehensive picture of gender equality in the European labour market, it appears necessary to collect data with an intersectional approach so that statistics represent both the society as a whole and its multiple social strata. Social class or gender alone are not sufficient to explain why some groups suffer from more significant disadvantages in terms of working conditions than others. Ethnicity, place of birth, disability, sexual orientation and many other personal characteristics intersect each other, shaping employment opportunities and, ultimately, the capability to lead a decent life. Migrant labourers are the backbone of today's Europe, although the available data on migrant men and women does not allow to evaluate their employment and living conditions properly.

Current sampling strategies, for instance, do not ensure that migrant lives are statistically represented in harmonised surveys. The very choice of collecting data on migrant labour as *ad hoc* investigations within Eurostat's EU Labour Force Survey shows how the domains of migrant well-being and labour market studies are not considered inherently interconnected to the extent that they deserve in the European institutional framework. Besides, policymakers and scientists at all levels should make a special effort in the construction of sensible indicators for both the native and the foreign population. In fact, adopting an intersectional approach in quantitative social sciences cannot only translate in breaking down the existing data by social groups or better designing survey samples; most of all, it means rethinking how we conceptualise categories and indicators in the first place, so that aspects and issues that are relevant to minorities and specific groups of interest are taken into account and embedded in the data even before that very data is collected.

1. Introduction

There is a global consensus today that gender equality is crucial to attain economic growth and sustainable development. In the list of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) designed by the United Nations General Assembly (2015) within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls appears both as a goal in its own right (Goal 5) and as a cross-cutting issue throughout all other goals. Among these, Goal 8 targets decent work and economic growth, aiming to “achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value” (target 8.5), and to “protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular, women migrants, and those in precarious employment” (target 8.8). Notwithstanding, international research has repeatedly shown that in every country of the world, including the EU, women encounter more hurdles to access employment than men. Once in employment, women face additional discrimination, including horizontal and vertical gender segregation, and struggle to access decision-making positions and jobs in specific sectors or with certain characteristics. Moreover, the unequal distribution of housekeeping and unpaid care activities results in sharp differences in men’s and women’s working conditions, laying the groundwork for the gender pay gap and the overrepresentation of women in part-time jobs (ILO, 2021).

Gender mainstreaming – that is, the integration of a gender perspective in the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures and spending programmes – has been embraced internationally as a strategy towards realising the gender equality agenda. To implement such a strategy, promote equality between women and men and fight against discrimination, including in the work domain, the availability of high-quality data is of key importance.

Intersectionality has been acknowledged as a fruitful analytical approach for understanding the different and complex mechanisms that shape labour market participation of women in EU countries (Grubanov-Boskovic et al., 2020), mainly when focusing on the intersection between gender and migrant status. One of the first seminal works on the intersection between the so-called gender gap and migration gap dates back to the mid-Eighties, when Boyd (1984) first defined the concept of a double disadvantage as a “combined negative impact of sex and birthplace” (p. 1093). A few years later, Kimberle Crenshaw coined the term *intersectionality* to denounce the double discrimination suffered from black women and driven by the combined effects of practises which discriminate on the basis of race and sex (Crenshaw, 1989). Ever since, the concept of intersectionality has been subsumed under the most prominent global agendas for gender mainstreaming, starting with the Conference for Women of the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995, and, more recently, the European Commission’s Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025.

The factors driving the construction of the double disadvantage dictated by gender and migrant status are complex. They involve aspects related to both the migration process and the job market structure in the country of settlement. In many of these, the shortage of workers is concentrated in low-skilled jobs, while high-skilled ones still see an excess offer in the native population (Colombo and Dalla Zuanna, 2019), implying greater competition for better-remunerated jobs. Besides, the transferability of migrants’ human capital is limited, especially for individuals coming from different school systems and speaking other languages. That is particularly evident for foreign women, who are heavily concentrated in low-paid jobs in the domestic and care sector even when they own educational titles and degrees issued from home country institutions. Moreover, due to the persistence of the gender pay gap in EU countries, even for couples of highly skilled migrants it may appear rational to prioritise men’s career prospects over women’s. As a consequence, the latter may observe a downgrading of

their career prospects and become tied movers, pushed in less favourable economic positions or out of the labour market (Adsera and Chiswick, 2007). Policies prioritising the admission of family migrants over labour migrants may reinforce such mechanisms of selection that strongly affect women (Bonjour and Kraler, 2014). Many female migrants move as main caregivers for their children. For women of certain nationalities, the transition to work rarely occurs even when their children grow up, as cultural norms and values tend to prevent them from being involved in paid employment. In such communities, participation in the job market is discouraged based on the belief – which may be held by the women themselves and their husbands and families – that the male partner should be the breadwinner (Aston et al., 2007).

If measuring gender equality is not a simple task *per se*, measuring gender equality across vulnerable sub-groups is even more difficult. The most relevant problem is the lack of data broken down by gender and place of birth, especially for countries where survey samples are not drawn in such a way that is possible to construct reliable sub-samples based on such characteristics. The elaboration of a standard metric is also a relevant problem. In fact, embracing an intersectional approach means overcoming the classic “men vs women” analytical approach while dealing with multiple gaps and benchmarks. One way quantitative researchers on gender equality have implemented to cope with that is to analyse relevant indicators systematically – e.g., in job market participation – and to break them down by gender and place of birth, migrant status, or citizenship, whenever such information is available.

Since 2013, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) has calculated the Gender Equality Index (GEI), a tool to measure the progress of gender equality in the EU and support policymakers in designing more effective gender equality policies. Acknowledged as a reliable measurement tool in an audit carried out by the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre (Papadimitriou et al., 2020), the Gender Equality Index is a composite indicator obtained by putting individual indicators together based on an underlying multidimensional concept of gender equality. The index is composed of six core domains (Work, Money, Knowledge, Time, Power, and Health) built on 31 indicators calculated for the 27 EU Member States plus the United Kingdom (former EU28) and across six years (2005, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2020) (see Box 1).

Recently, EIGE introduced the additional domain *Intersecting inequalities* to extend its reflection to the impact of intersectionality between gender and other dimensions known to affect equality, including the place of birth. Unfortunately, due to restricted data availability, it is currently not possible to provide a composite measure of gender equality that also encompasses equality for migrant women. However, using the most recent edition of the GEI (2020), which relies on data that mainly refer to 2018, it is possible to assess the differences for each indicator contributing to the composition of the Work domain and to analyse them from an intersectional standpoint for Europe and GRASE target countries.

registered companies and national central banks. The sub-domain of social power includes data on decision-making in research funding organisations, the media and sport.

The **domain of Health** explores three health-related aspects of gender equality: health status, health behaviour, and access to health services. Health status looks at gender

inequalities in life expectancy, disability-free life expectancy, and self-perceived health, complemented by a set of health behaviour factors based on WHO recommendations: fruit and vegetable consumption, engagement in physical activity, smoking and excessive alcohol consumption. Access to health services looks at the percentages of people who report unmet medical and/or dental needs.

Gender Equality Index - Intersecting Inequalities



Source: EIGE, 2020

2. Gender and migration background in European labour data

2.1 Intersecting inequalities in the EU labour market using EIGE's Gender Equality Index

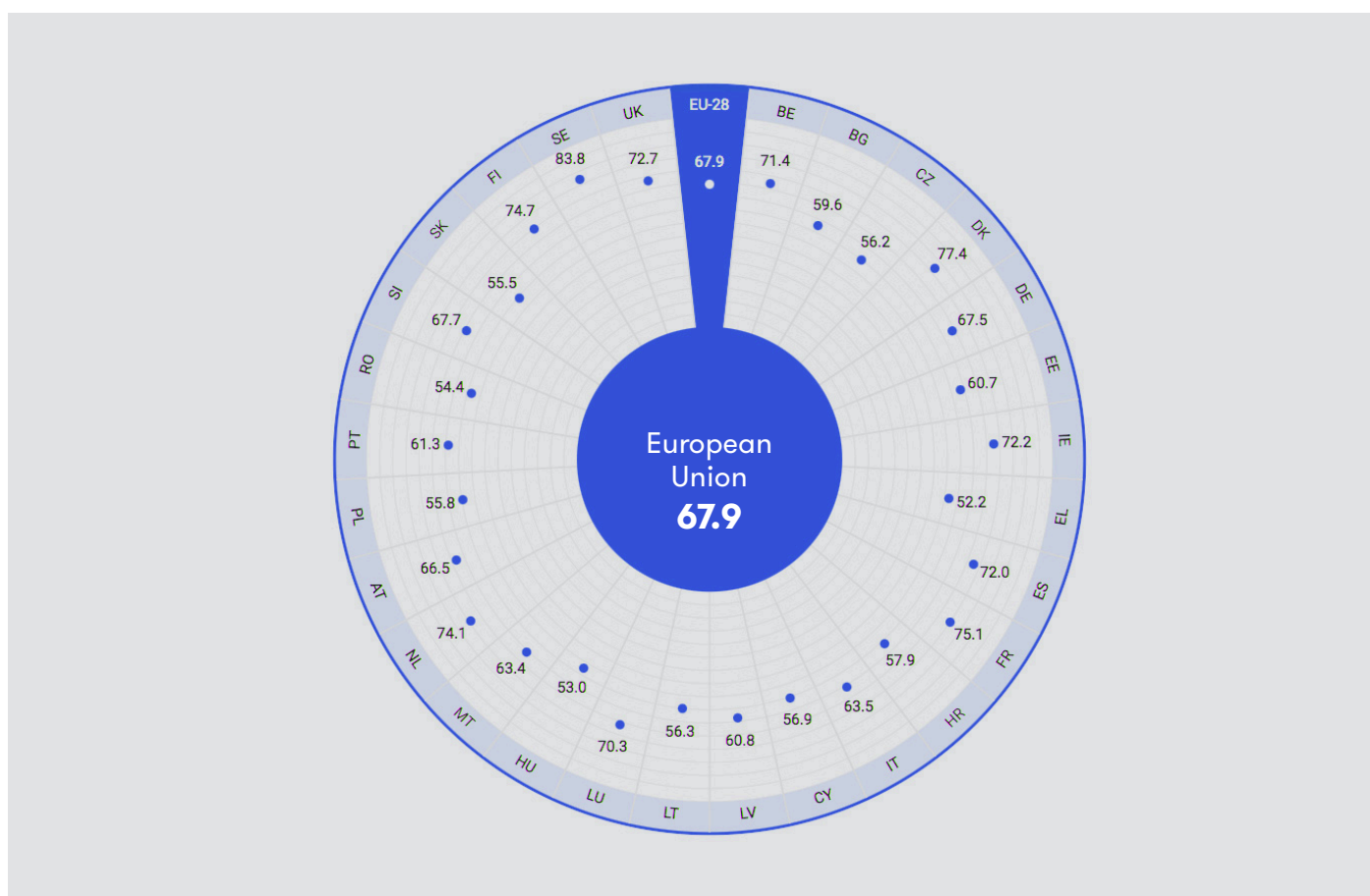
2.1.1 The Gender Equality Index

EIGE's most recent elaborations assign to the EU27 plus the UK an overall Gender Equality Index score of 67.9 out of 100 (**Figure 1**). The score is substantially stable compared with the 2019 GEI edition. Sweden, Denmark, and France report the highest scores, while Greece, Hungary, and Romania lag behind the rest. Italy, Luxembourg, and Malta show the most substantial improvements during the last decades. It is essential to underline that the index and its indicators rely entirely on data collected before the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, they are crucial to understand the progress in

terms of gender equality in Europe before the current health and socioeconomic crisis began, although there is broad consensus on the expectation that the coronavirus pandemic will hinder the achievement of gender equality.

According to EIGE's researchers, most progress in the last decade has been made in the domain of Power, which measures women's and men's engagement in decision-making in politics, economics, media, research, and sports (**Figure 2**). While accounting for 65% of all progress in the index since 2010, the

Figure 1. Gender Equality Index scores by country, 2020 edition



Source: EIGE, 2020

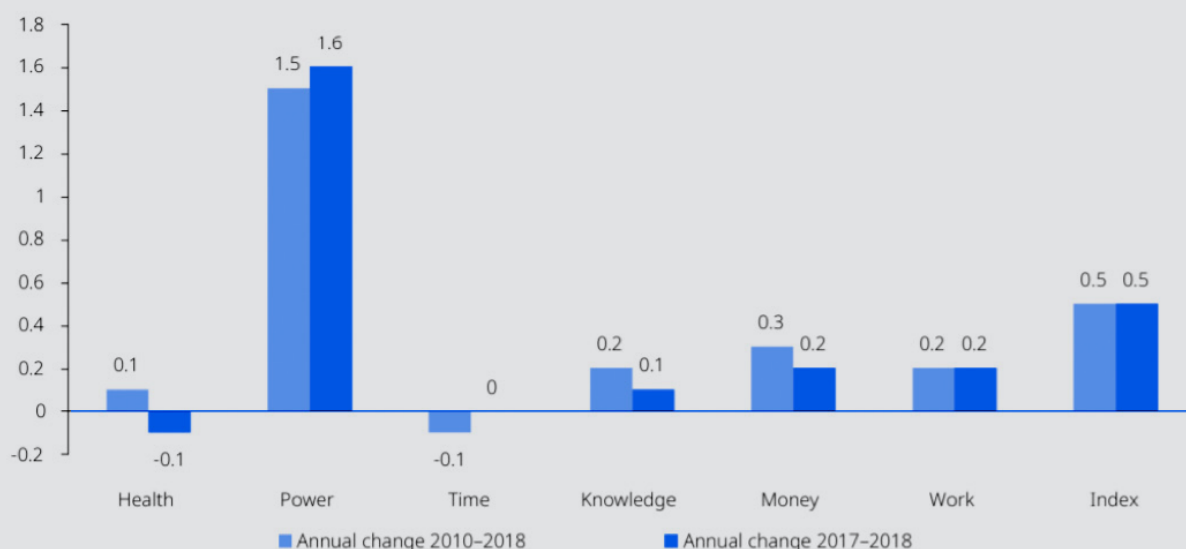
Power domain still remains the lowest-scoring one (53.5 out of 100) (EIGE, 2020).

In the Work domain, improvements happen at a very slow pace and are mainly driven by the reducing gap in women’s participation in the labour market. However, the Covid-19 crisis may seriously challenge these achievements: preliminary data collected by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) shows that the Covid-19 crisis is likely to lead to a sharp decline in employment in the EU. Unlike previous recessions, however, current employment losses have been more significant for women rather than for men. Many recent studies have argued that the Covid-19 crisis is causing

a *shecession* in which women’s labour market outcomes and prospects have deteriorated disproportionately (see Box 2). In general, the European labour market remains heavily gender-segregated. Women tend to be found more often in temporary, part-time, or precarious employment. Inequalities are also rooted in the unequal distribution of care and other responsibilities between men and women within the household. These aspects contribute to significant gender gaps that are also evident according to the most recent available data (see following sections).

GEI’s Work domain measures the extent to which women and men can benefit from equal access to employment (participation sub-domain) and good

Figure 2. Long term (2010–2018) and short term (2017–2018) annual change by GEI domain in the European Union



Source: EIGE, 2020

Box 2. The *shecession*: women's employment during the Covid-19 pandemic

Shecession is a term first coined in May 2020 by C Nicole Manson, President and Chief Executive of the Institute for Women's Policy Research, to indicate that the recent pandemic crisis has hit women's employment and living conditions disproportionately compared with men. Researchers have linked the more significant female economic disadvantage to two leading causes. The first one is that **sectors with a high concentration of female workers were the most affected by lockdown measures** due to fear of contagion and the enforcement of severe social distancing measures. Women are employed mainly by industries and in jobs that require direct contact with people – accommodation, food services, tourism, retail, entertainment, domestic work – and where teleworking is not an option. In Europe, women account for 61% of workers in these sectors and also make up the majority in part-time, precarious and informal work, all of which are more at risk of being laid off as social protection measures are gradually coming to an end. The overrepresentation of female labour in vital services has also served to place emphasis on women's paradoxical conditions in the economy. Even when female work had not been made redundant during the Covid-19 crisis, **women have been at the frontline of the pandemic**, constituting 76% of healthcare workers, 82% of food-store cashiers, 86% of personal care workers, 93% of childcare workers and teachers, and 95% of domestic cleaners and helpers (EIGE, 2021). That has increased their workload in generally

undervalued – including underpaid – jobs and exposed them to health risks and emotional demands disproportionately compared with any other category of worker.

The second cause is rooted in the **closure of schools and daycare centres** and in the concurrent implementation of remotely learning, which forced many parents – particularly mothers – to choose between keeping their jobs or taking care of their children. Even in normal times, the burden of care towards dependent family members like children, the elderly, and the disabled is unequally placed on women. Across the world, women do most of the unpaid care work: on average 76.2 per cent of the total number of hours devoted to such tasks (ILO, 2018). Unpaid care work is widely acknowledged as a severe barrier to women's labour force participation and one of the main obstacles to women moving into better-quality jobs. In addition, when the needs for childcare suddenly increase, like during the recent health and sanitary crisis, women are more likely to give up their jobs to take care of children or to carry a heavier load than men in the provision of childcare, even while still working from home. Since the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis, there has been a generalisation of teleworking worldwide. Simultaneously, with the closure of schools and childcare because of the lockdown, care needs have multiplied within households and this heavier burden has not been equally shared between men and women (Eurofound, 2020).

working conditions (segregation and quality of work sub-domain). The sub-domain of participation combines two indicators: the percentage of full-time equivalent employment and the duration of working life. The full-time equivalent employment rate is intended to measure the higher incidence of part-time employment among women.²

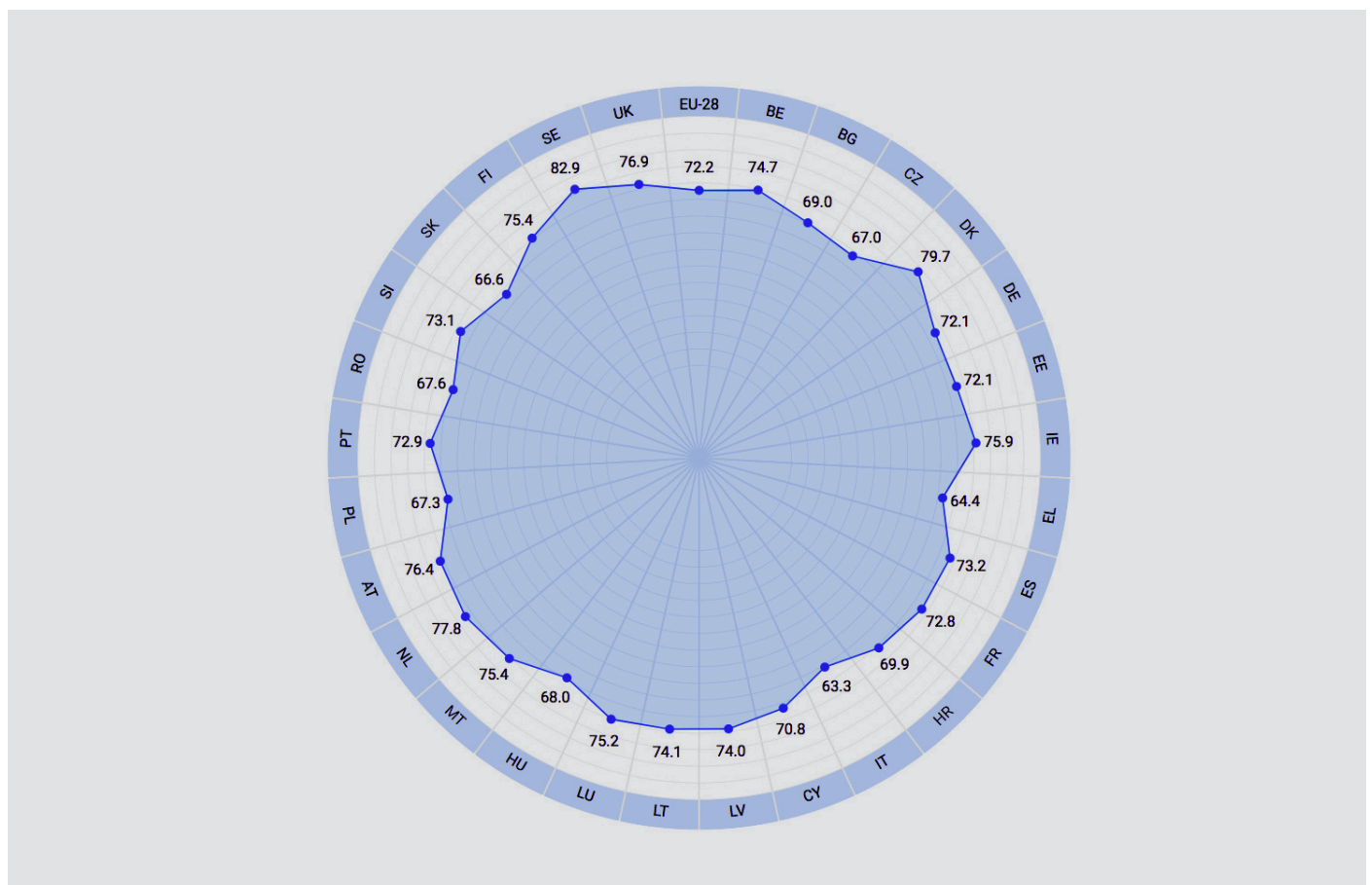
Gender segregation and quality of work are included in the second sub-domain. Sectoral segregation is measured by analysing differences in the proportion of women and men employed in education, human health, and social work activities. The quality of work is measured by flexible working time arrangements and job prospects. The first aspect is captured by considering the ability of women and men to take an hour or two off during their working time to take care of personal or

family matters. The latter is measured using Eurofound’s Career Prospects Index, which combines employment status indicators, type of contract, perceived job security, and experience of downsizing in the organisation.

The countries reporting the highest scores in GEI’s Work domain are Sweden, Denmark, and the Netherlands, while those showing the most unequal conditions between genders are Italy, Greece, and Slovakia (Figure 3). The pattern of slow progress in the domain of Work has been relatively consistent across countries since 2010. Only Malta and Luxembourg have progressed at a substantially faster pace than average. Three countries recorded virtually no improvement in gender equality in Work during this period: Denmark, Romania, and Cyprus (Figure 4).

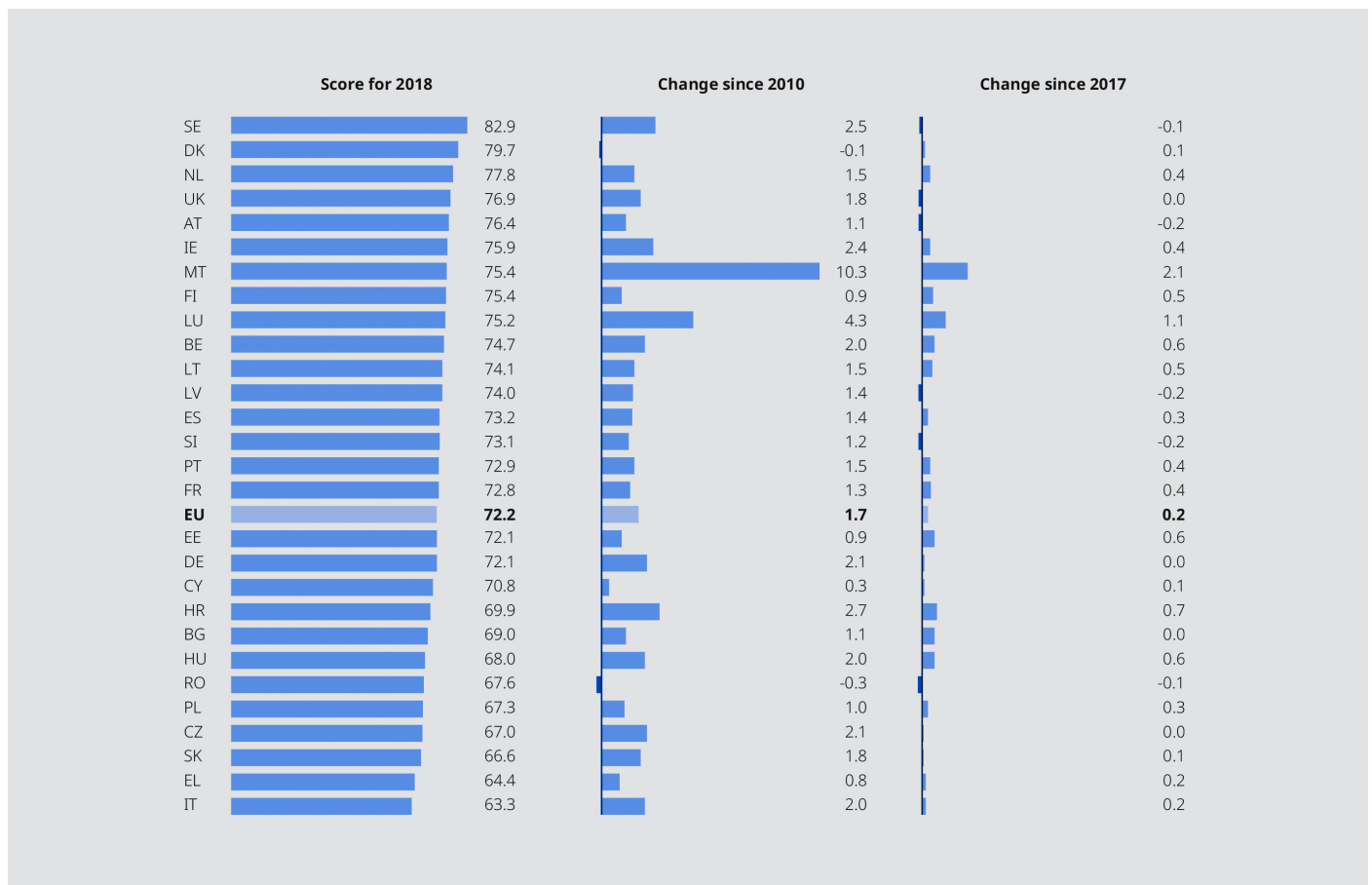
²For a detailed description of how each indicator mentioned in the present report is calculated, we refer the reader to the Glossary.

Figure 3. Gender Equality Index scores by country in the Work domain, 2020 edition



Source: EIGE, 2020

Figure 4. Scores for the Work domain and relative changes since 2010 and 2017 in European Union’s Member States



Source: EIGE, 2020

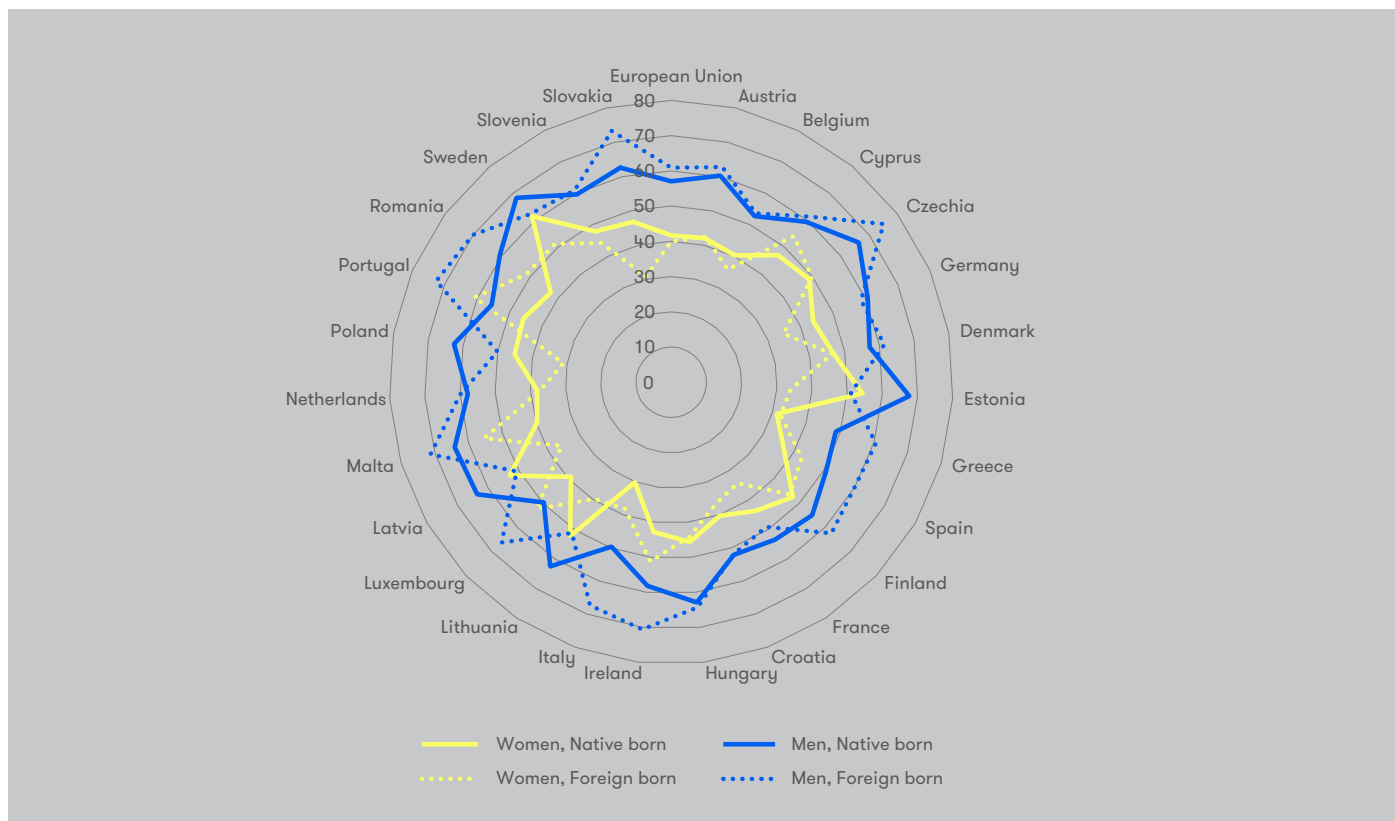
2.1.2 Gender equality in the Work domain

The Gender Equality Index Work domain comprises two indicators of participation and three indicators of sectoral segregation and quality of work. Overall, the percentage of full-time equivalent employment rate (**Figure 5**) and the expected duration of working life (**Figure 6**) indicators show a systematic penalisation of women (40.9% and 32.6 years, respectively) compared with men (59% and 36.3 years) in the EU.³

A further penalisation for women with a migrant status is a recurrent finding in countries where data are available regarding the expected duration of working life. As for the percentage of full-time equivalent employment rate, results are mixed. In fact, in some countries, notably in Portugal, this indicator is higher for migrant women (60.8%) than for native ones (45.7%).

³For the Duration of working life indicator, data are only available for a subset of countries including Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Germany, Denmark, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, and Sweden. Source: EIGE, 2020.

Figure 5. Indicators of Gender Equality: Full-time equivalent employment rate, 2018 (%)



Notes: Several countries not included due to lack of data, EU data includes the UK
 Source: ISMU elaboration on EIGE’s calculation of Eurostat microdata, EU-LFS 2018

Figure 6. Indicators of Gender Equality: Duration of working life, 2019 (years)

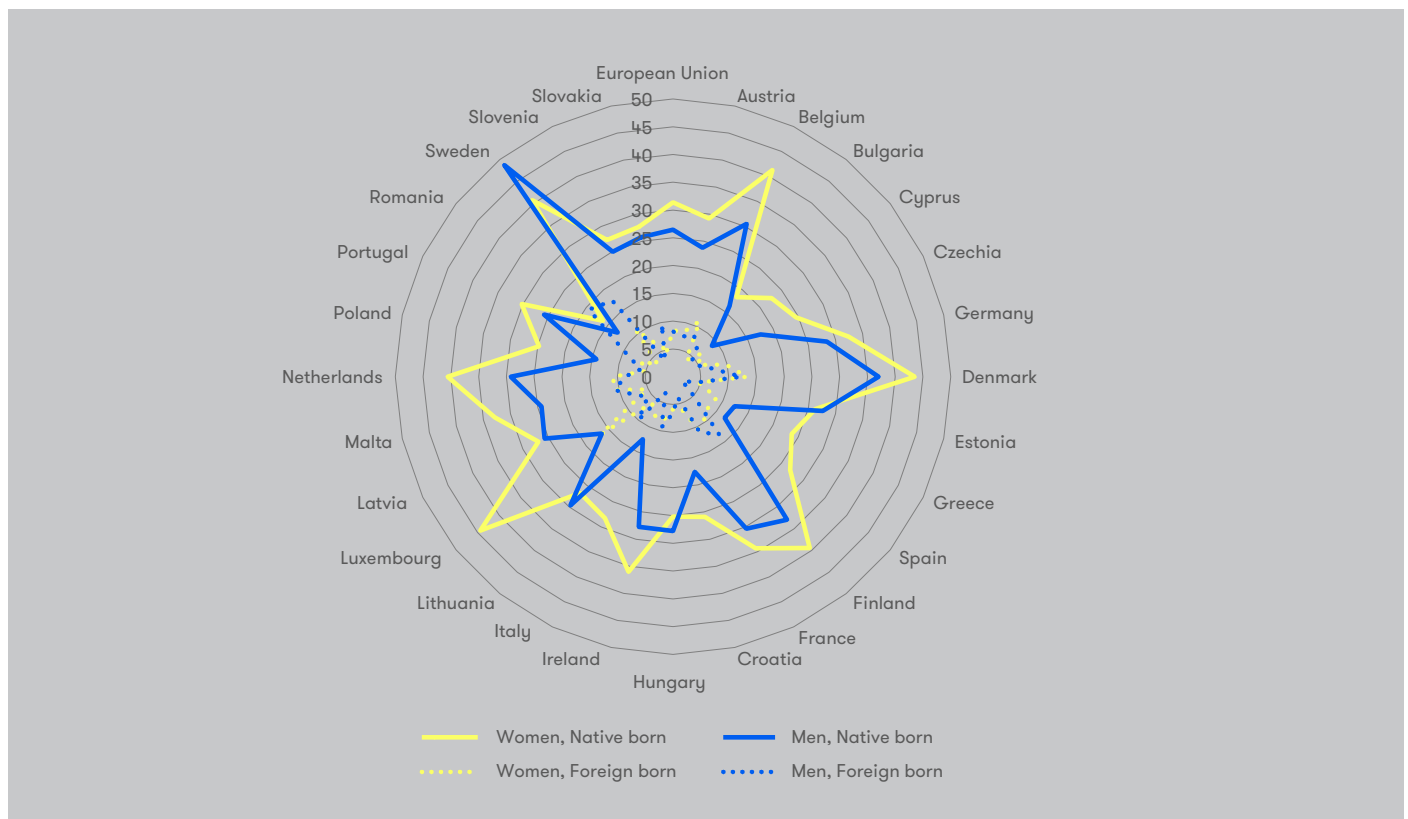


Note: Several countries not included due to lack of data
 Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [demo_mlifetable] and [ifsa_argacob]

Indicators of sectoral segregation (Figure 7) and quality of work (Figures 8 and 9) also suggest that being a migrant woman implies a more significant penalisation compared with a native woman. In the EU, on average, women with a native status are highly segregated in education, human health and social work activities (31.4%, compared with 26.5% of men). However, it is worth noticing that while such an indicator of segregation is appropriate for the native population, it may not fully

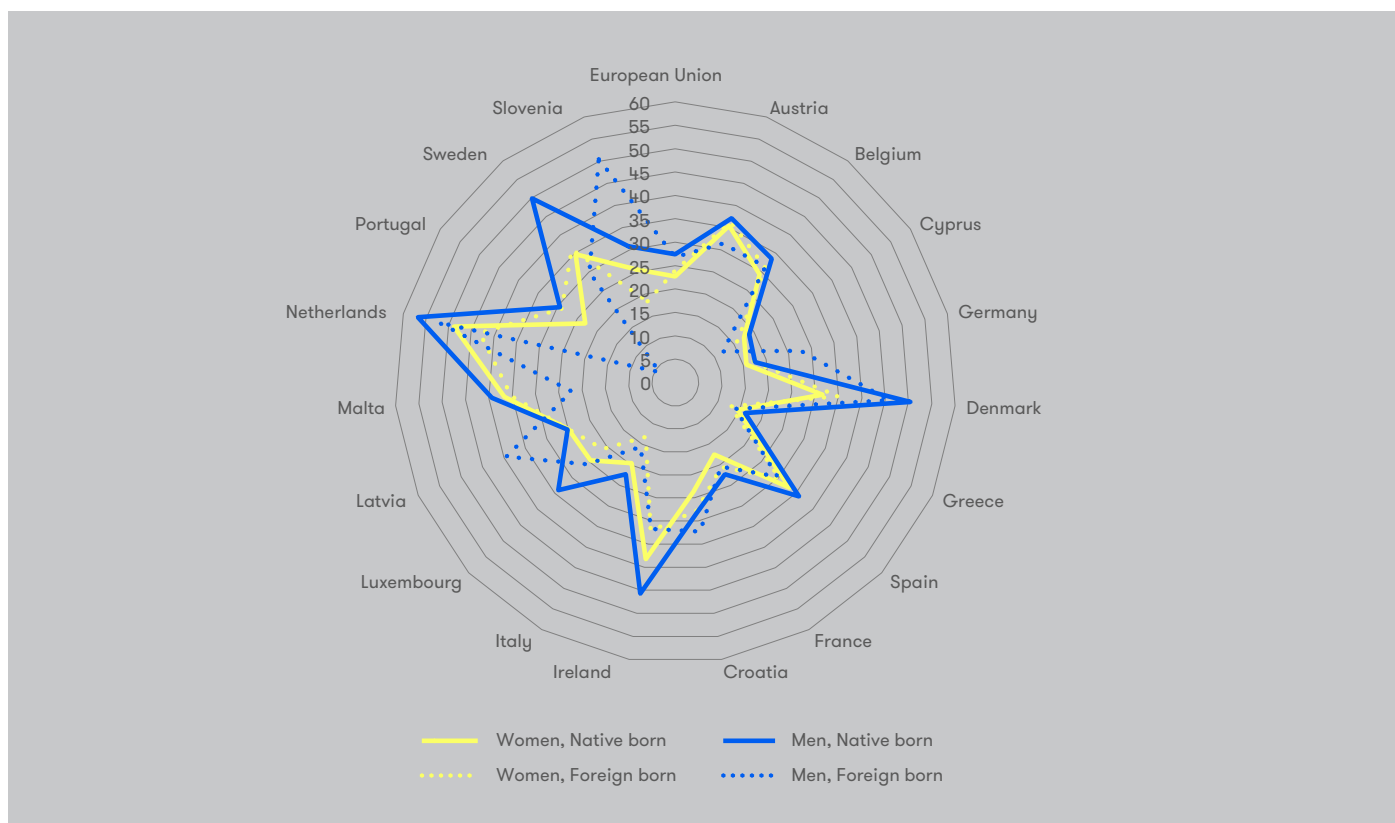
capture segregation among migrants in general and especially migrant women, who are heavily concentrated in the domestic care sector and, contrarily to native women, have scarce access to jobs in education. Foreign-born women in several countries also have greater difficulty taking one hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters and lower career prospects in most countries compared with native women and foreign men.

Figure 7. Indicators of Gender Equality: Employed people in education, human health and social work activities, 2018 (%)



Note: Several countries not included due to lack of data, EU data includes the UK.
 Source: ISMU elaboration on EIGE's calculation of Eurostat microdata, EU-LFS 2018.

Figure 8. Indicators of Gender Equality: Ability to take one hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters, 2018 (%)



Note: Several countries not included due to the lack of data, EU data includes the UK
 Source: ISMU elaboration on EIGE's calculation with microdata, EU-LFS, 2018

Figure 9. Indicators of Gender Equality: Career Prospects Index, 2018 (range 0-100)



Note: Several countries not included due to lack of data, EU data includes the UK
 Source: ISMU elaboration on EIGE's calculation of Eurostat microdata, EU-LFS 2018

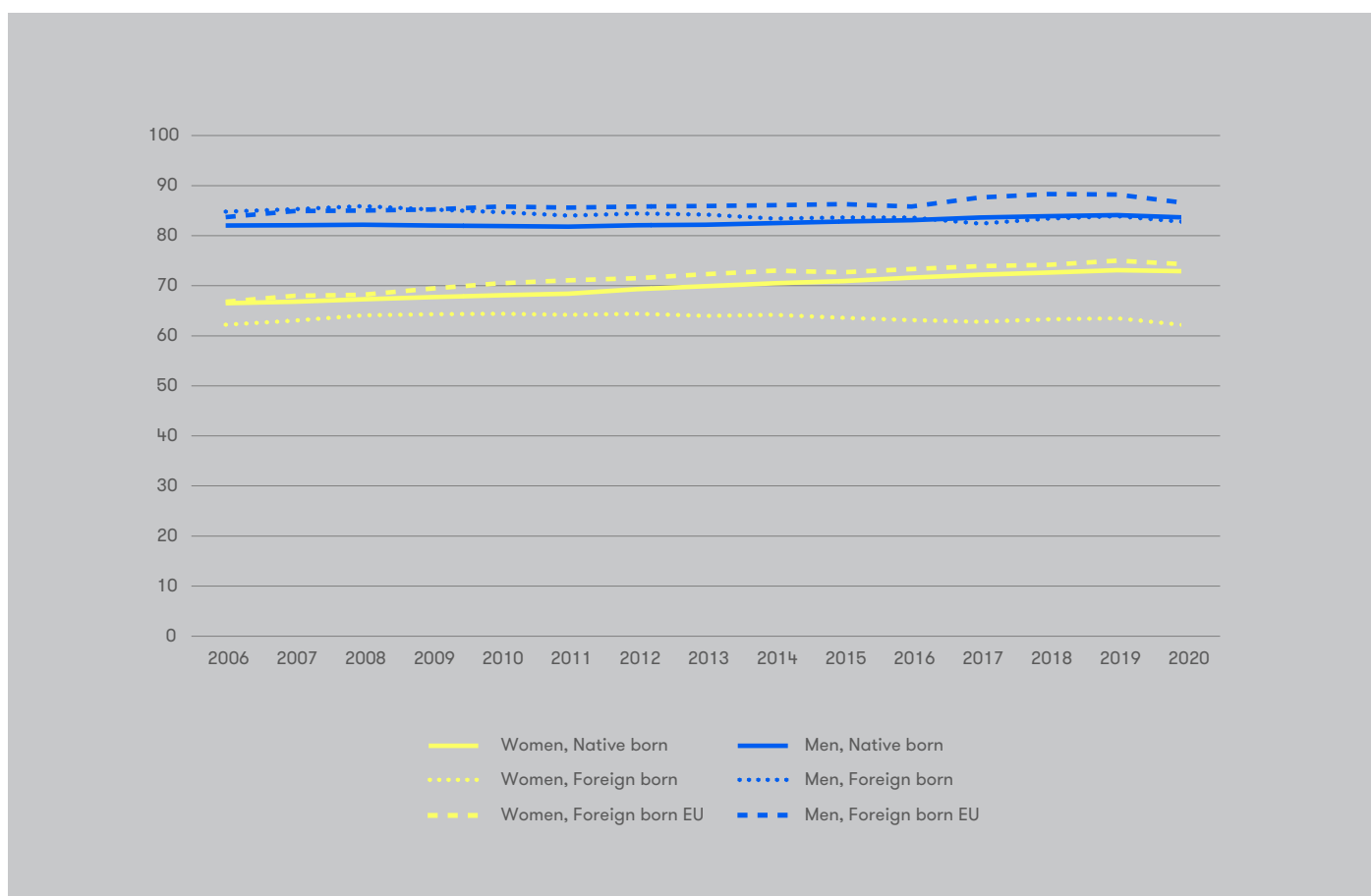
2.2 Reconstructing intersectionality in official labour market data for the EU

2.1.1 Participation indicators

Securing migrant women's participation in the job market is crucial to provide them with equal opportunities and empowerment and prevent economic dependence from their partners in cases of gender-based violence. Data for the EU27 shows that migrant men and women from within the Union have higher activity rates than natives (**Figure 10**). Moreover, the still wide gender gap regarding labour market participation is closing over time for native and migrant women born in the EU. On the other hand, such improvements do not concern non-EU migrant women, whose labour market involvement remains

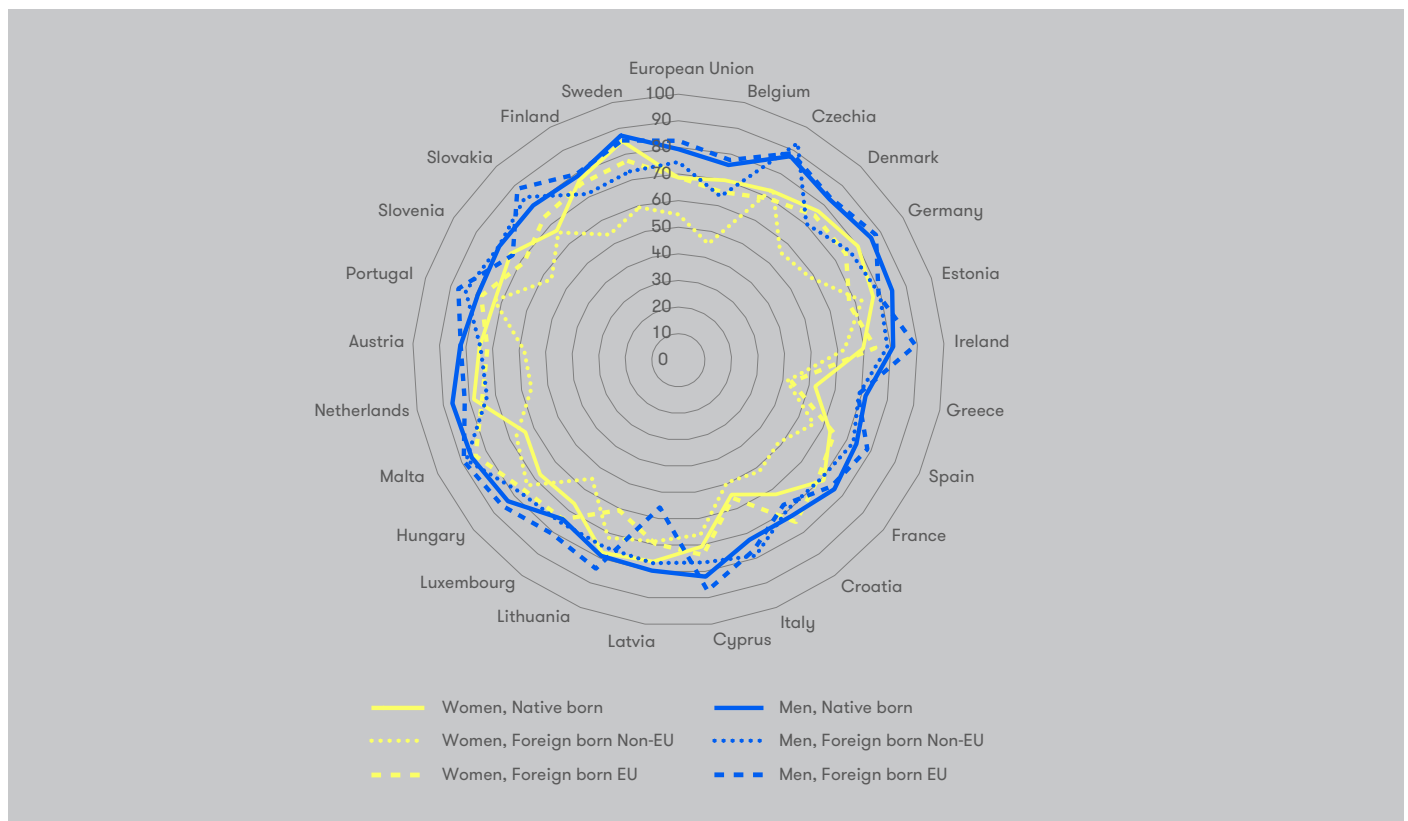
low and has decreased in recent years. Country-level data reveal that the gap in women's labour market participation is of concern for all 27 countries of the EU (**Figure 11**). The intersection between gender and migration background is relevant almost everywhere, although to a different extent depending on having a EU citizenship or not. As for men, EU-born migrant women show a higher participation rate compared with the native female population. On the contrary, the gap in labour market participation is evident and systematic for non-EU migrant women, suggesting the existence

Figure 10. Activity rates of people aged 20-64 by gender and place of birth. EU27, years 2006-2020 (%)



Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [Ifsa_argacob]. Last update: 02/06/2021

Figure 11. Activity rates of people aged 20-64 by gender, country and place of birth, 2020 (%)



Note: Romania and Bulgaria not included due to lack of data
 Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [Ifsa_argacob]. Last update: 02/06/2021

Figure 12. Active recent immigrants aged 20-64 by gender, country and place of birth, 2020 (%)



Note: Several countries, including Portugal, not included due to lack of data
 Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [Ifst_rimgacga]. Last update: 02/06/2021

of different cultural attitudes regarding the appropriateness of female labour market participation. Another point of interest is the participation in the labour market of recent immigrants, which is crucial to assure their economic integration. Data

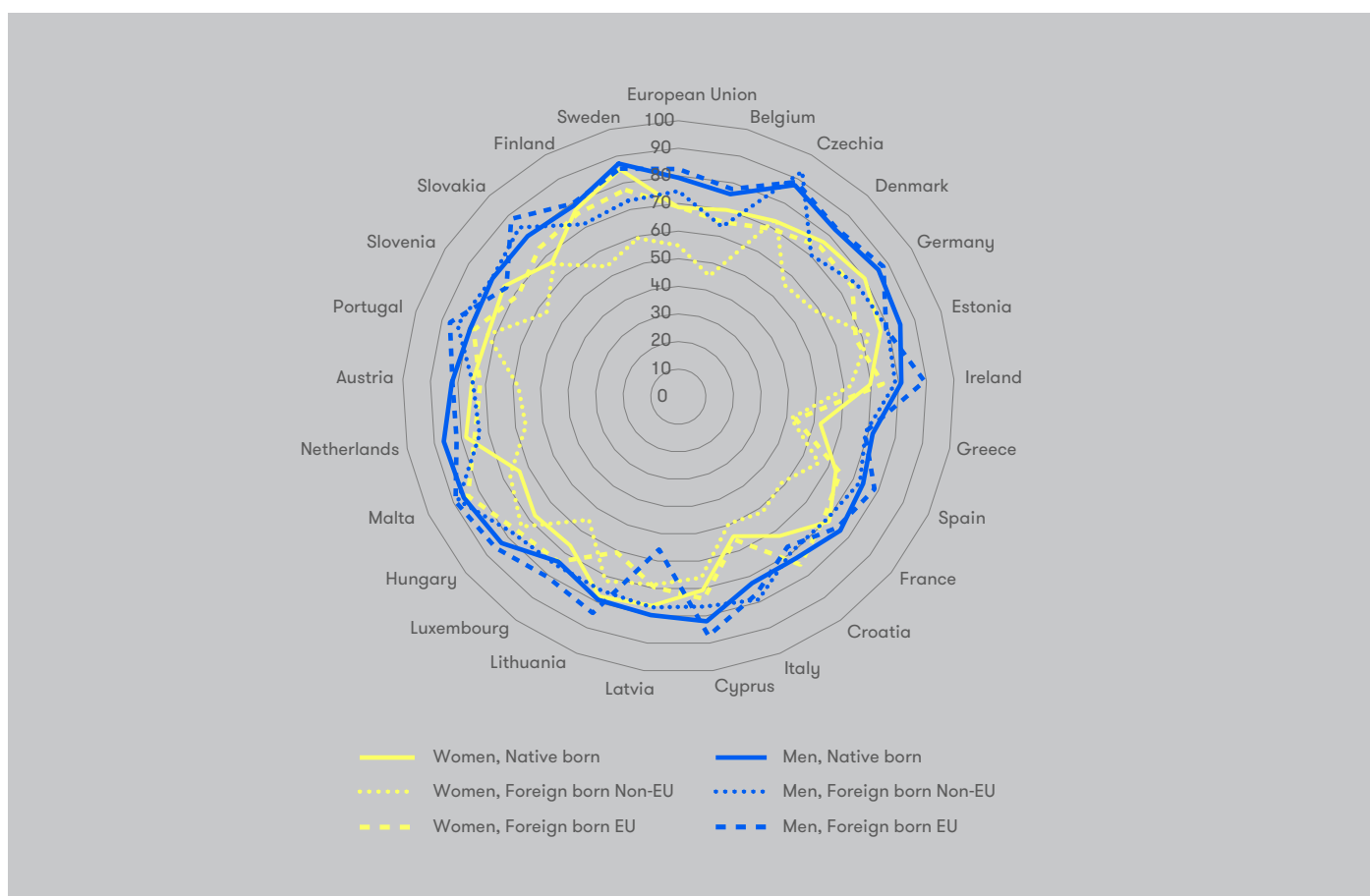
broken down by migration background and EU citizenship are hardly available for all Member States; however, **Figure 12** shows a systematic gap of participation for recent migrant women compared with native women (except for Hungary) and men.

2.2.2 Employment and unemployment

A similar pattern emerges from the analysis of employment rates. While migrant women from within the EU share similar – sometimes higher – employment rates than native women, non-EU migrant women are systematically less employed than non-EU migrant men and native women (**Figure 13**). Moreover, non-EU migrant women and men are

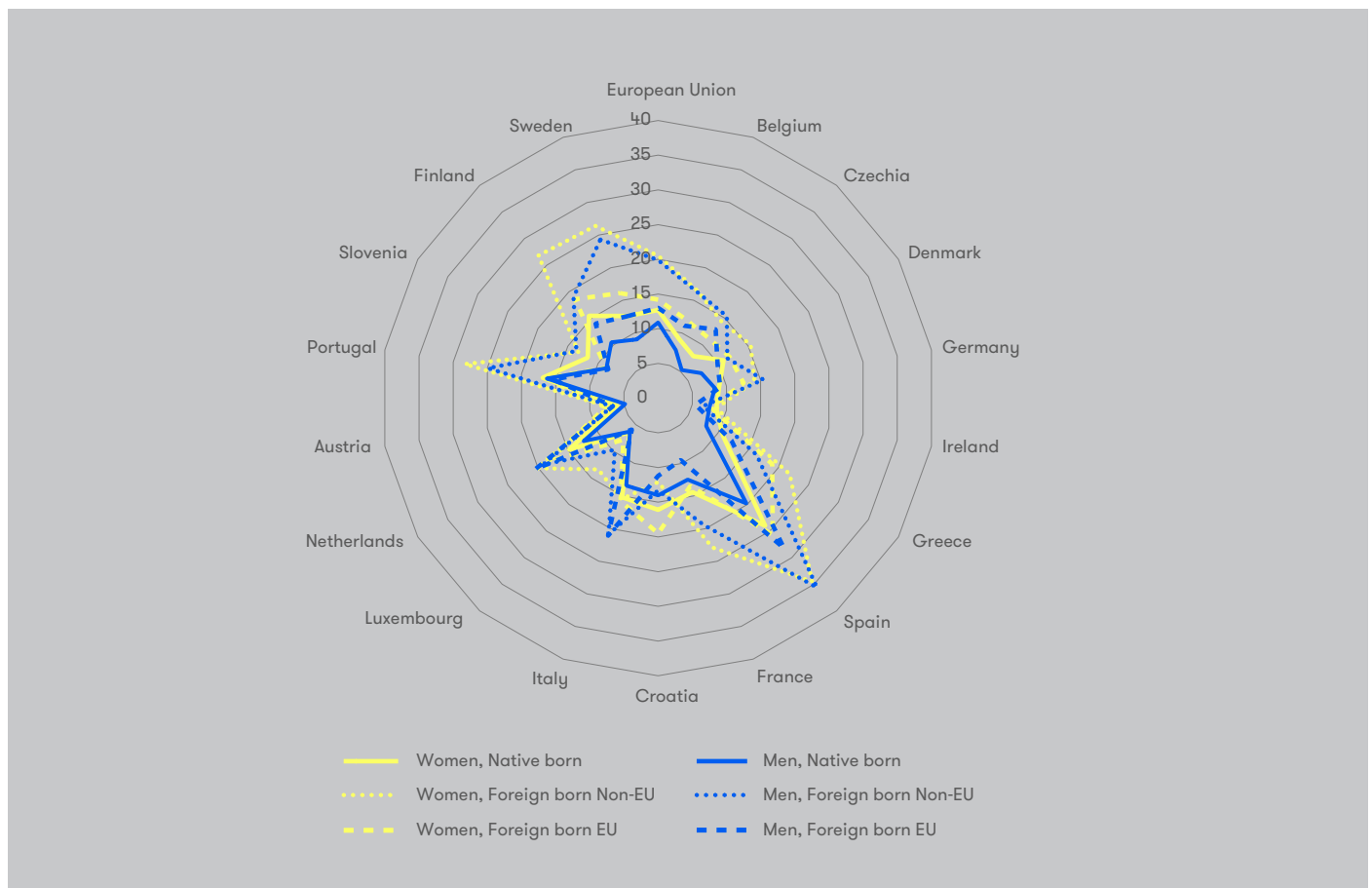
overrepresented in temporary employment compared with both EU migrant men and women, at least in countries where detailed such data are available (**Figure 14**). Again, the intersection of gender and the place of birth act as a multiplier of inequality, making non-EU migrant women the most disadvantaged group in terms of job stability.

Figure 13. Employment rates of people aged 20-64 by gender, country and place of birth, 2020 (%)



Note: Romania, Polonia, and Bulgaria are not included due to lack of data
 Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [Ifsa_ergacob]. Last update: 02/06/2021

Figure 14. Temporary employees as percentage of the total number of employees aged 20-64 by gender, country and place of birth, 2020 (%)

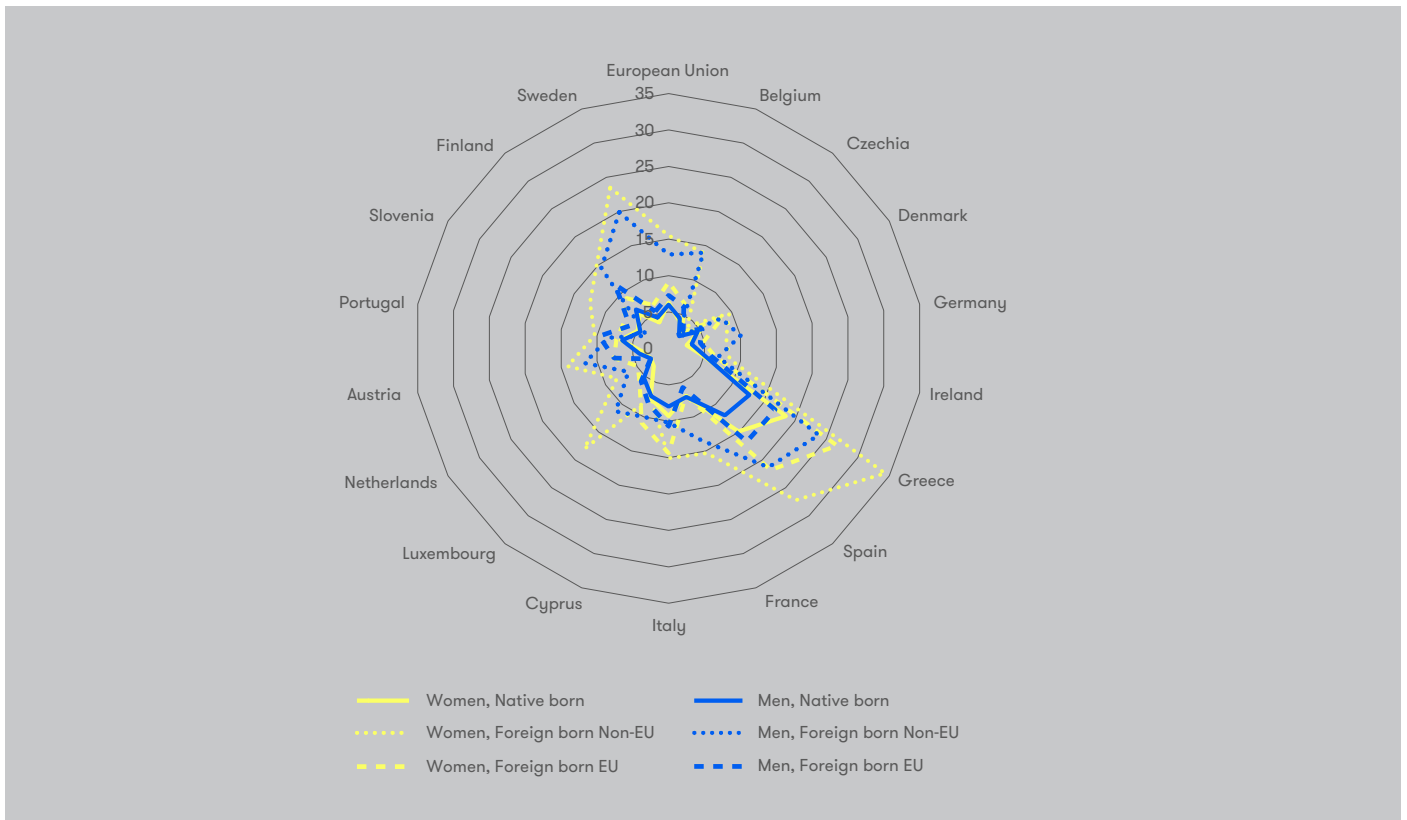


Note: Romania, Polonia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Slovakia, and Bulgaria are not included due to lack of data
 Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [Ifsa_etpgacob]. Last update: 02/06/2021

The pattern is again evident when it comes to unemployment rates: migrants and women are the most affected by unemployment, migrant women - especially those who were born outside the EU - being the most disadvantaged group (Figures 15-17). However, the gap in unemployment rates between natives and migrants differ widely across the Union: countries like Finland, Sweden, Greece, and Spain show more significant penalties for migrants while smaller gaps characterise countries like Italy, Germany, and Austria. For many countries, the available data on unemployment is not broken down by the citizenship of foreign-born workers. Still, given the importance of this indicator, we provide the information broken down by gender and migrant status only.

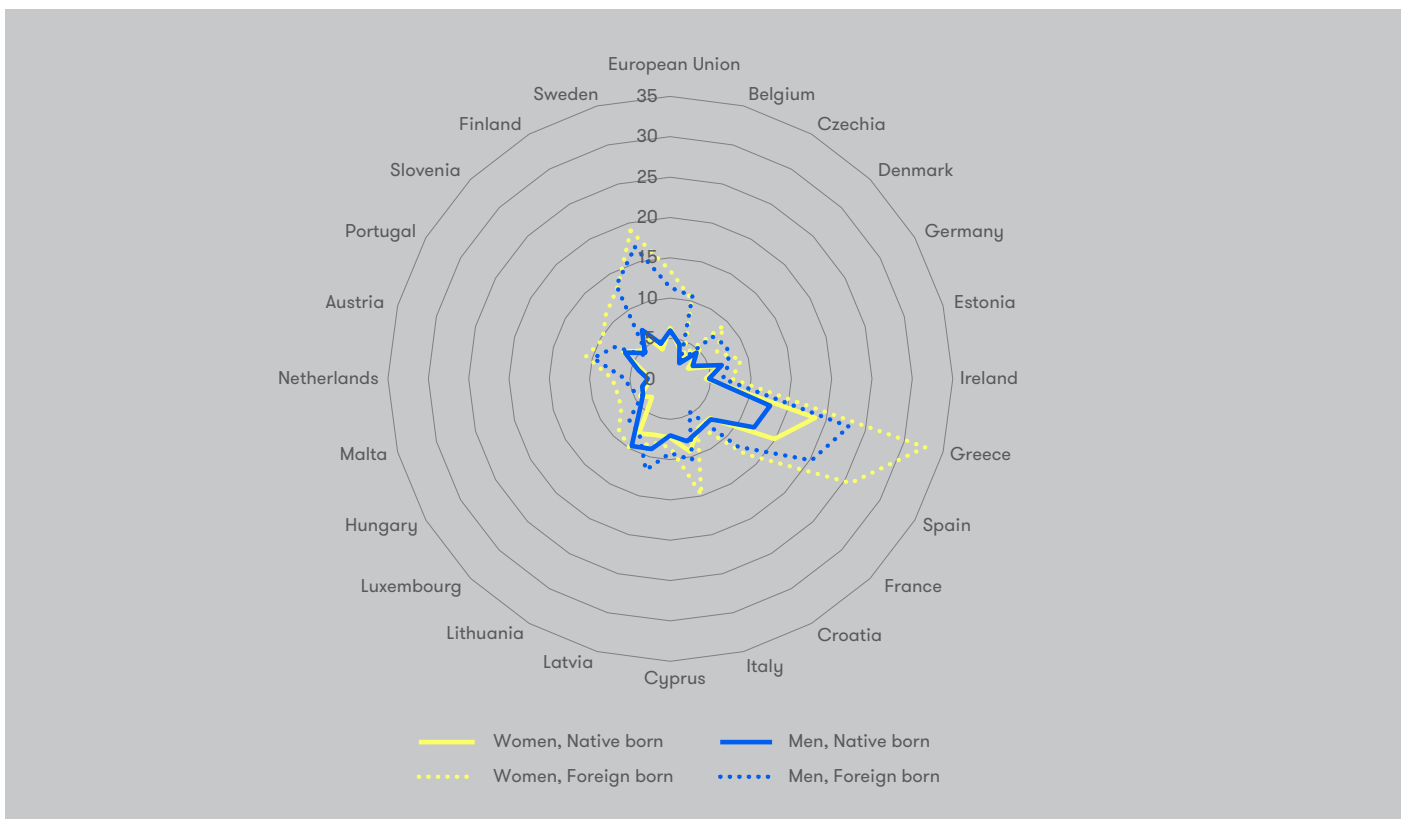
The examination of wage differences is also crucial when analysing social inequalities. The reasons behind the existence of gendered pay gaps are manifold and depend on inequalities women face on several levels: sectoral segregation, lower job intensity (hours spent in paid work) compared with men, discrimination in career progression and rewards are among the most critical aspects (European Commission, 2021). When considering the intersection with the country of birth, elements like segregation in low-paid jobs and discrimination are expected to enlarge the gaps among sub-groups: consistently with findings from other indicators, migrant women are often penalised compared with native ones, and especially with men (Figure 18).

Figure 15. Unemployment rate of people aged 20-64 by gender, country and place of birth, 2020 (%)



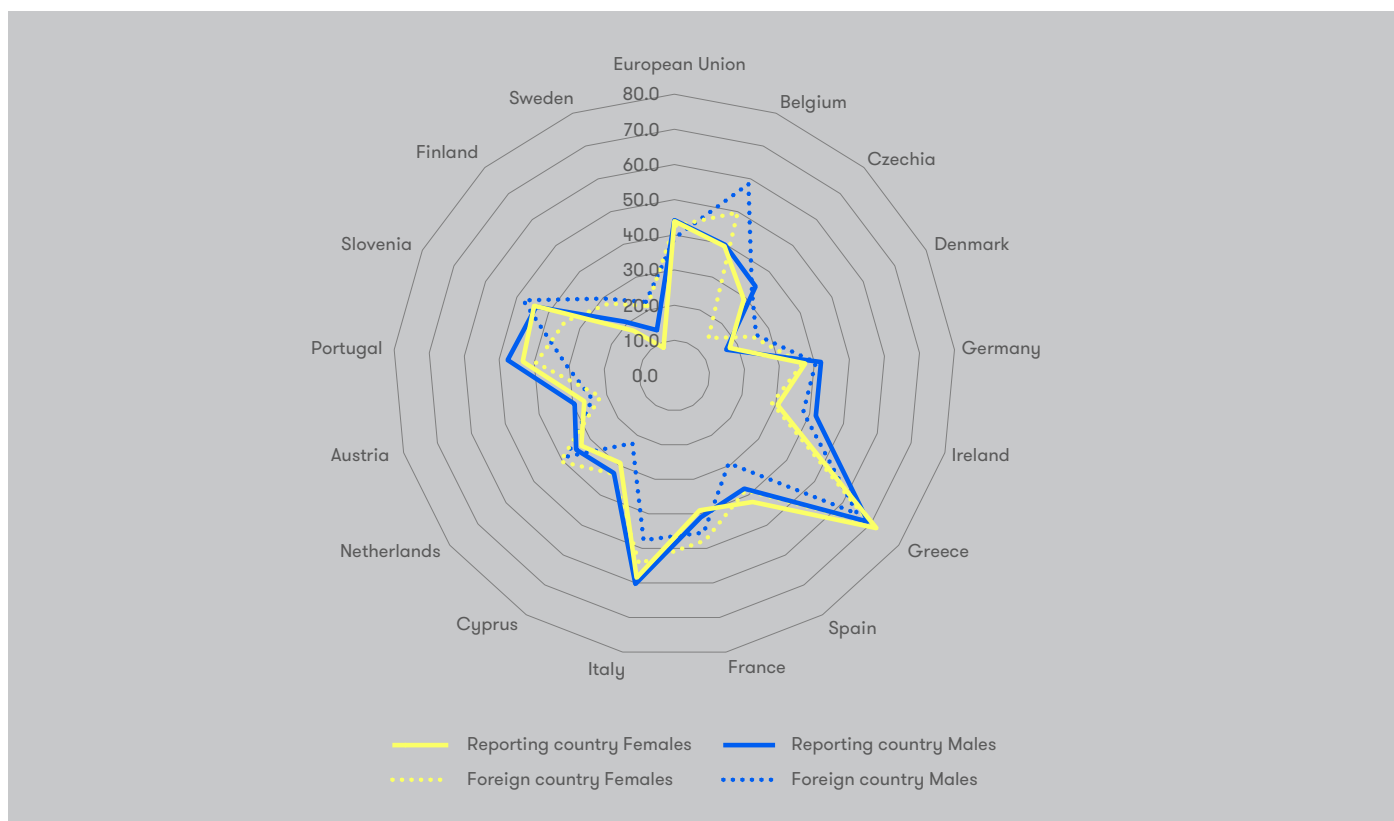
Note: Several countries not included due to lack of data by country and EU citizenship of foreign-born workers
 Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [Ifsa_urgacob]. Last update: 02/06/2021

Figure 16. Unemployment rate of people aged 20-64 by country and place of birth not detailed by EU citizenship status, 2020 (%)



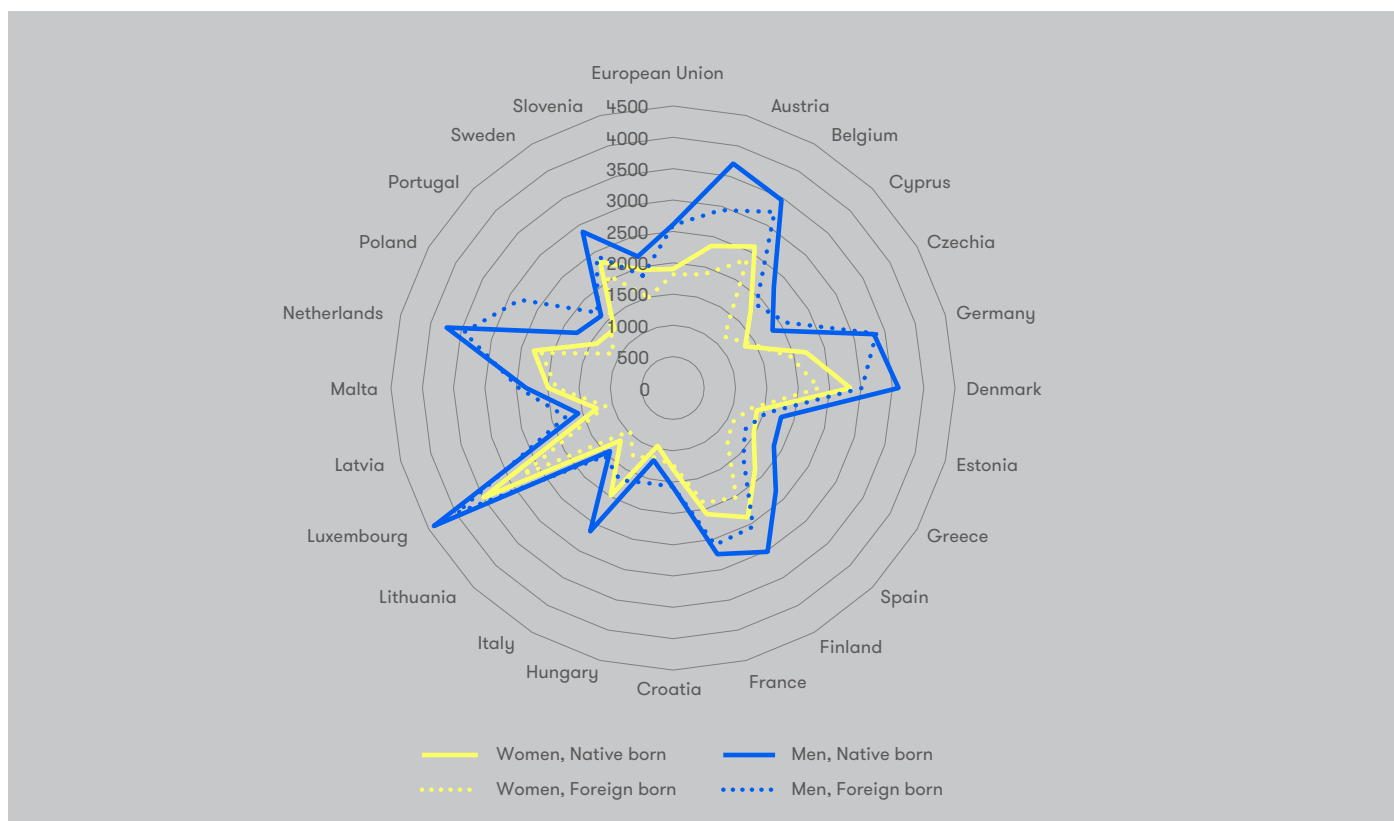
Note: Several countries not included due to lack of data by country and EU citizenship of foreign-born workers
 Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [Ifsa_urgacob]. Last update: 02/06/2021

Figure 17. Long-term unemployment (12 months or more) as a percentage of the total unemployment among people aged 20-64 by country and place of birth not detailed by EU citizenship status, 2020 (%)



Note: Several countries not included due to lack of data
 Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [Ifsa_upgacob]. Last update: 02/06/2021

Figure 18. Mean monthly earnings in Purchasing Power Standard (PPS) among people aged 15-64 by country and place of birth not detailed by EU citizenship status, 2018 (Euros)



Note: Several countries not included due to lack of data. European Union's figures include the UK
 Source: ISMU elaboration on EIGE's calculation of Eurostat microdata, EU-SILC 2018

3. An assessment of gender and migration data for GRASE target countries

3.1 Intersecting inequalities in the labour market using EIGE's Gender Equality Index for Italy, Portugal, and Spain

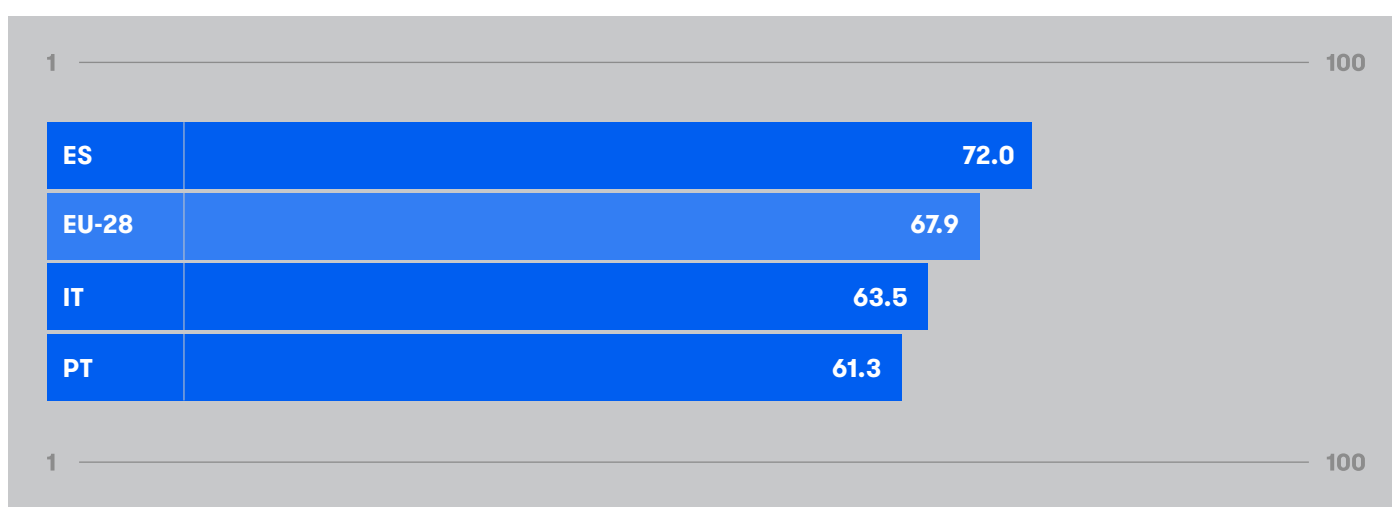
3.1.1 The Gender Equality Index

EIGE's Gender Equality Index provides an overall view of gender equality in general and in the domain of work, in particular for Spain, Italy, and Portugal.

Considering the overall GEI score (**Figure 19**), among the three GRASE

as shown by the increase by 5.6 points of its overall GEI score since 2010. According to EIGE's country analysis, essential milestones in this path are represented by the reduction of the gender gap in time spent on unpaid care work and an increase of the share of women in the

Figure 19. Gender Equality Index 2020, scores for EU27 plus the UK, Spain, Italy, and Portugal



Source: EIGE, 2020

target countries, Spain is the closest country to the achievement of the goal of full gender equality. It ranks 8th in the EU27 plus the UK group. Both Italy and Portugal have lower scores that place them just above most Eastern European countries and Greece.

Spain's score is driven by very high performances in the domains of Health (90.1) and Money (77.8), while the most pronounced gender inequalities are in the dimensions of Time (64.0) and Knowledge (67.6). Nonetheless, the country shows one of the best performances comparatively, ranking 6th among all EU countries. In fact, Spain has made many improvements in gender equality during the last decade,

board of the central bank, the largest publicly listed companies, and the national parliament. At the same time, women continue to earn less than men, despite an overall rise in earnings for both women and men in the same period.

With 63.5 out of 100 total points, Italy ranks 14th among all European countries according to the Gender Equality Index, with a score 4.4 points lower than the average EU's score. Since 2010, Italy's score has increased by 10.2 points – though by only 0.5 points since 2017 – progressing towards gender equality faster than other EU Member States. Italy's highest scores are in the domains of Health (88.4) and Money (79.0), while

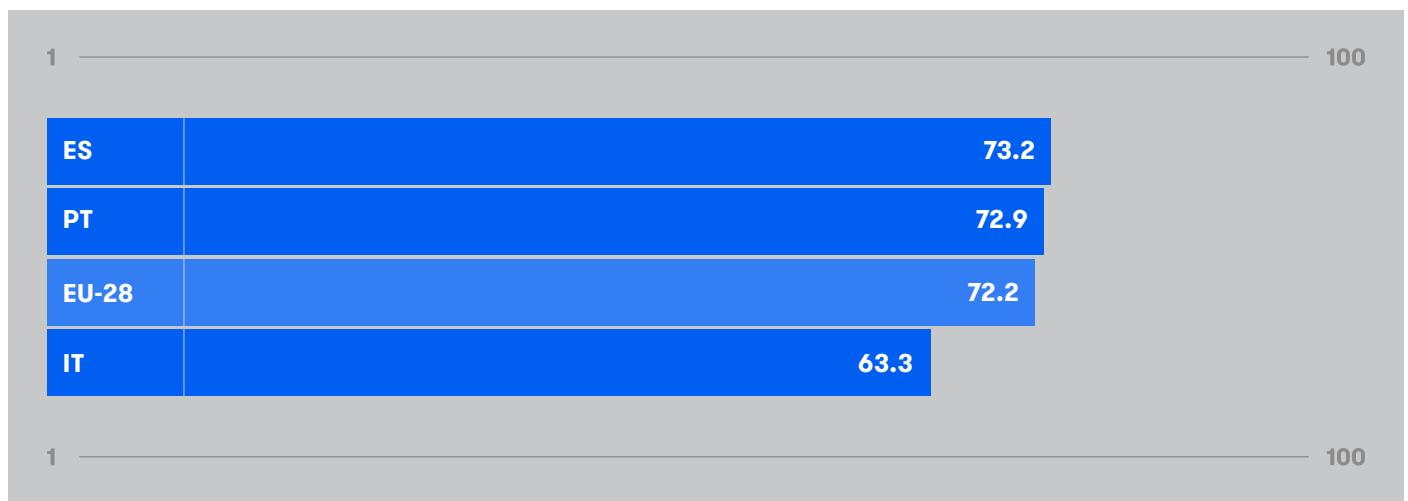
the ones that have been improving the most since 2010 are in the domains of Power and Knowledge. Recent significant achievements have been registered in the share of women on company boards and in the national parliament. Contrarily, the widest gaps in gender equality are found in earnings, housework division, and the job market participation rate.

Like Italy, Portugal is progressing towards gender equality faster than the average pace compared with the rest of the Union. Portugal currently ranks 16th according to the Gender Equality Index, 6.6 points below the EU's score. The country has its highest evaluations in the domains of Health (84.6) and Work (72.9). In contrast, the most

recent improvements have been observed in gender balance in political decision-making and the share of women sitting in central banks and company boards. On the other hand, the most blatant gender inequalities are found in unpaid housework and care work and pay gap.

Restricting the analysis to the Work dimension of the Gender Equality Index, Portugal scores better in such domain compared with other ones, as described above, ranking above the European Union average (**Figure 20**). In particular, Spain has the 13th best score, Portugal scores 15th, and Italy holds the last place in the EU after Greece and Slovakia.

Figure 20. Gender Equality Index 2020, scores for the Work domain for the EU27 plus the UK, Spain, Italy, and Portugal



Source: EIGE, 2020

3.1.2 Gender equality in the Work domain

Gender equality indicators for GRASE target countries (**Figures 21-25**) show that, contrary to what happens in many EU countries, there is no evident penalisation for foreign-born women compared with native women in full-time participation in the labour market and in the expected duration of working life (for the latter indicator, no data is available for Portugal). The main observed difference is between men and women. As for other Southern European countries, the gap due to the migration background does not imply lower full-time participation or fewer years spent as workers compared with natives of the same gender.

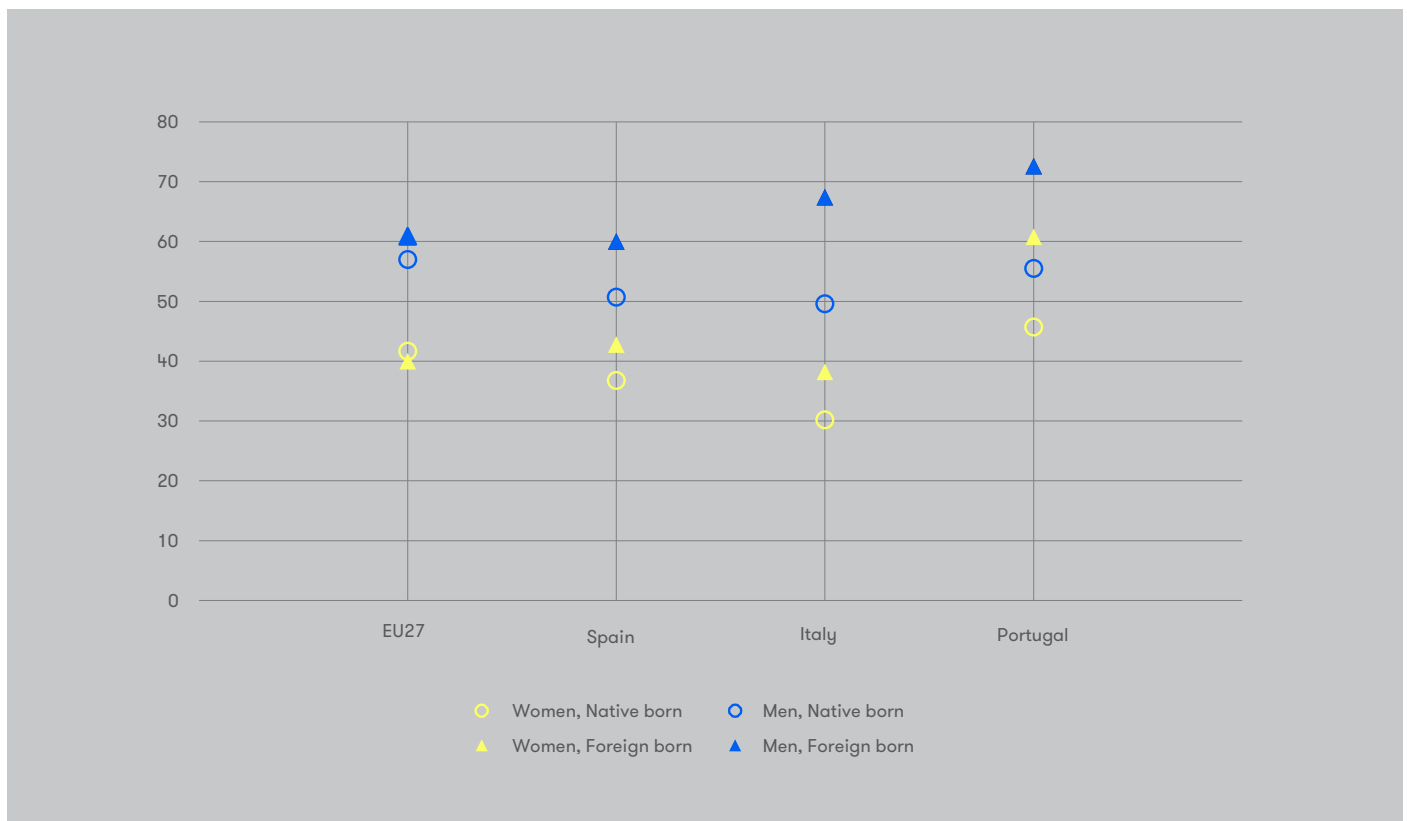
As already pointed out, assessing gaps in sectoral segregation and quality of work is more complex and underlines the need for better migration sensitive indicators. Indeed the Gender Equality Index indicator for segregation shows that migrants are less segregated in education, human health, and social work activities. As said above, migrants may struggle

to access work in education while being segregated in other sectors.

Work flexibility, measured in terms of ability to take one hour off to take care of personal or family matters, appears lower for migrants compared with natives, with Portugal emerging as a partial outlier, even if we have to consider that Eurofound's EWCS samples by migration background and gender are relatively small for Portugal. Finally, the Career Prospects Index confirms better overall prospects for men compared with women. In Spain, foreign-born men and women share the same score, which is lower than natives'; in Italy, the penalisation is higher for migrant men, while migrant women are more penalised in Portugal.

Anyhow, results from more recent survey data and based on broader samples allowing for differentiating between EU migrants and non-EU migrants are needed to provide a more detailed description of the situation in the three countries.

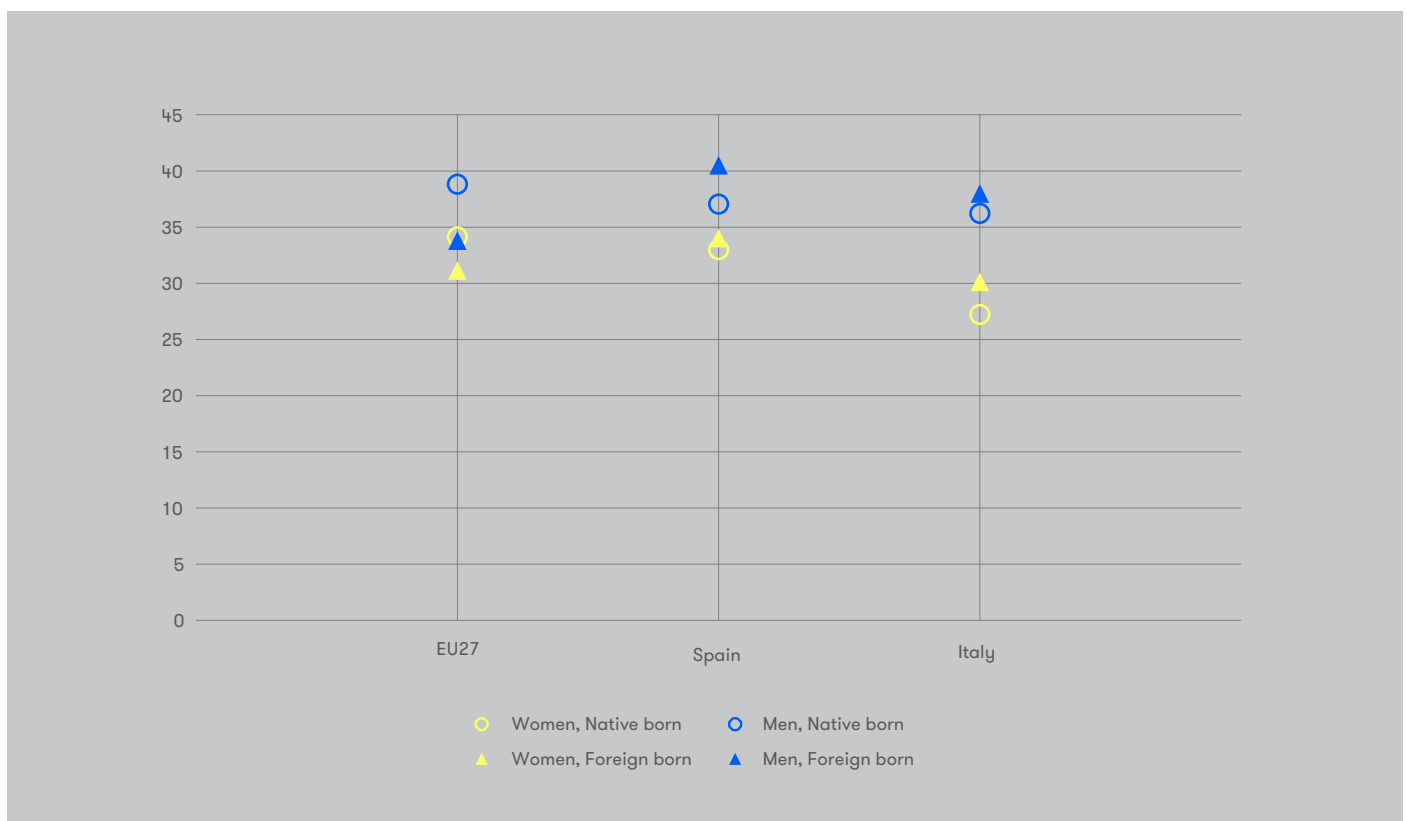
Figure 21. Indicators of Gender Equality: Full-time equivalent employment rate, 2018 [%]



Note: EU data includes the UK

Source: ISMU elaboration on EIGE's calculation of Eurostat microdata, EU-LFS 2018

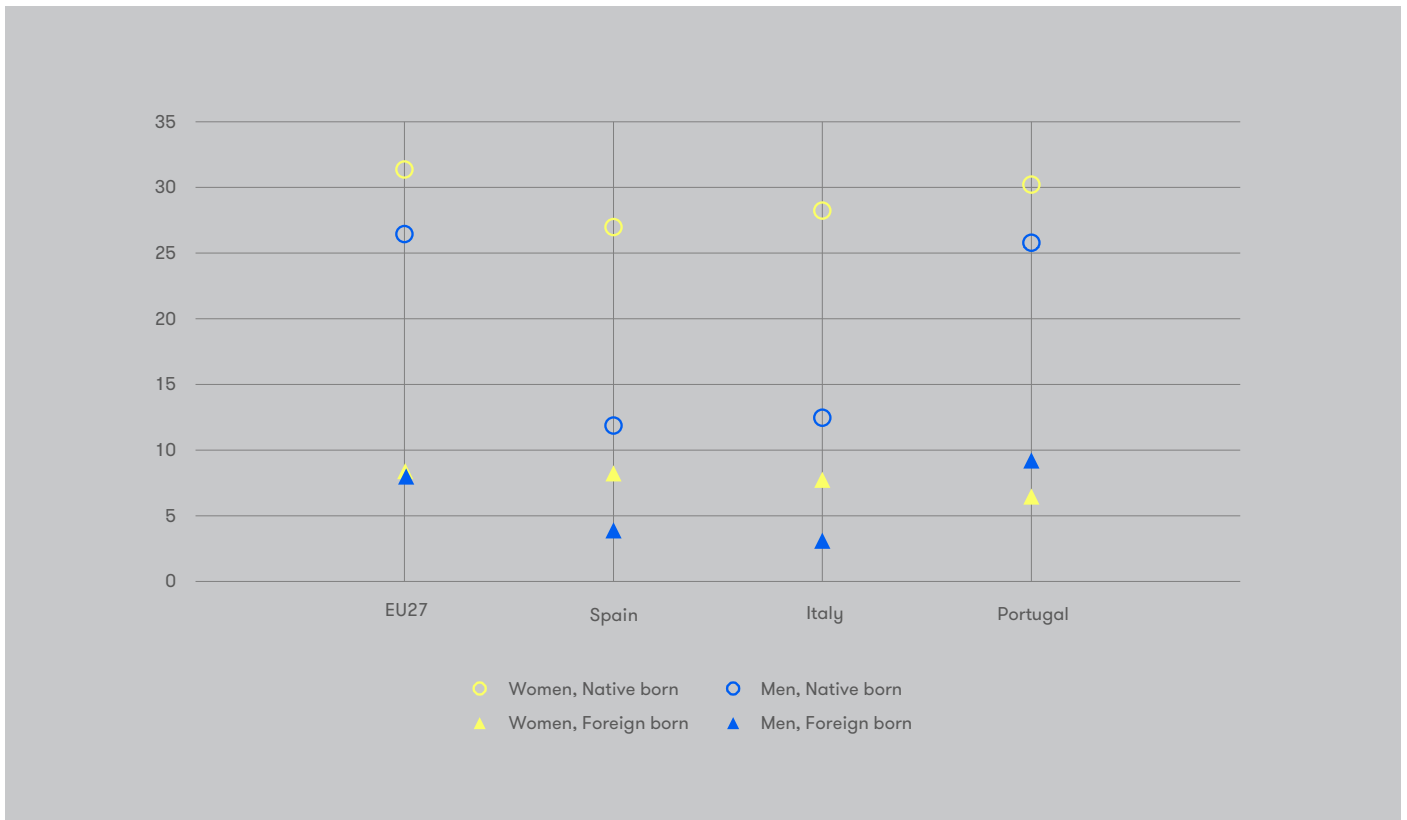
Figure 22. Indicators of Gender Equality: Duration of working life, 2019 (years)



Note: Portugal not included due to lack of data

Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [demo_mlifetable] and [Ifsa_argacob]

Figure 23. Indicators of Gender Equality: Employed people in education, human health, and social work activities, 2018 (%)



Note: EU data includes the UK.

Source: ISMU elaboration on EIGE's calculation of Eurostat microdata, EU-LFS 2018.

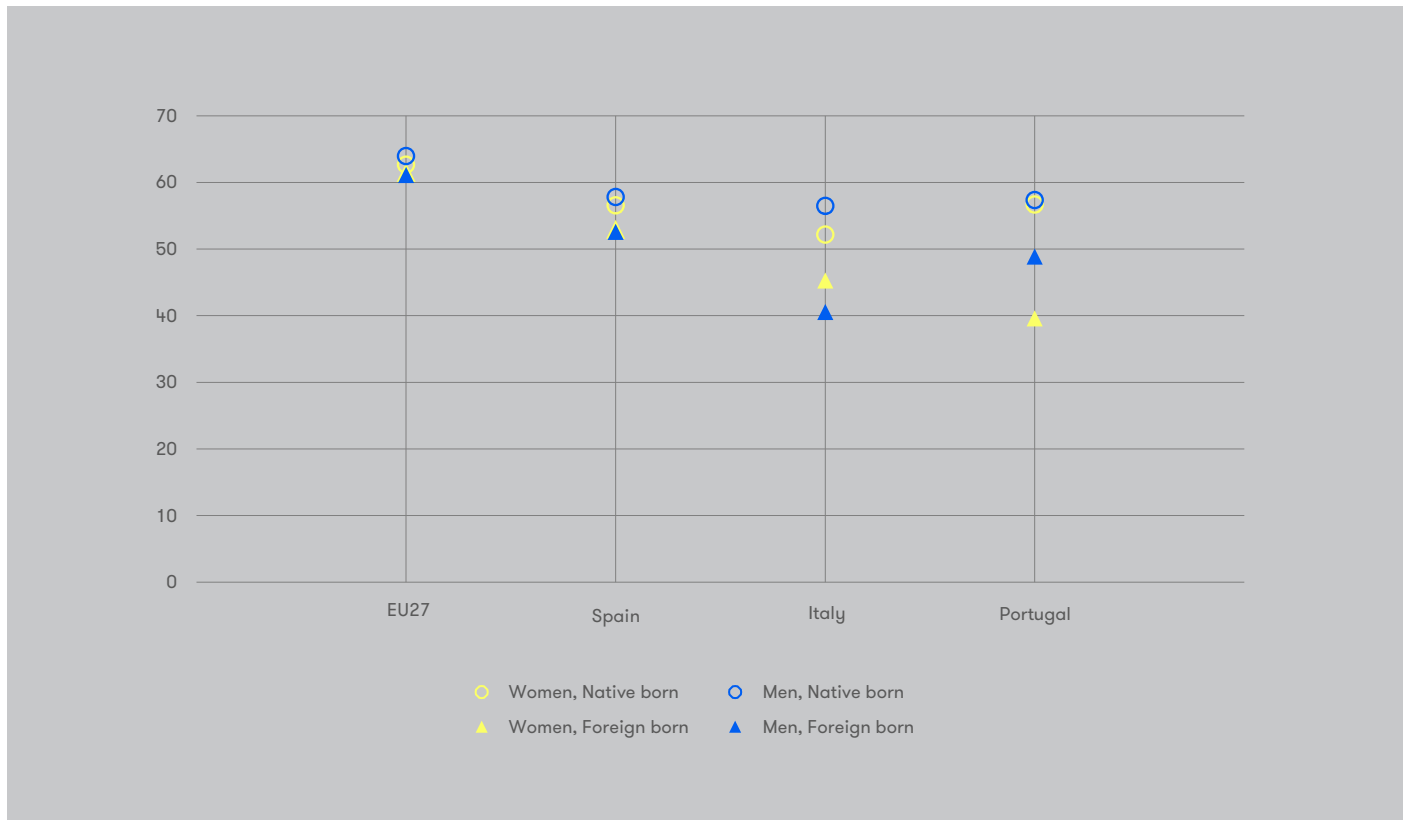
Figure 24. Indicators of Gender Equality: Ability to take one hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters, 2018 (%)



Note: EU data includes the UK

Source: ISMU elaboration on EIGE's calculation of Eurostat microdata, EU-LFS 2018

Figure 25. Indicators of Gender Equality: Career Prospects Index, 2015 (range 0-100)



Note: EU data includes the UK

Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurofound EWCS 2015 data provided by EIGE

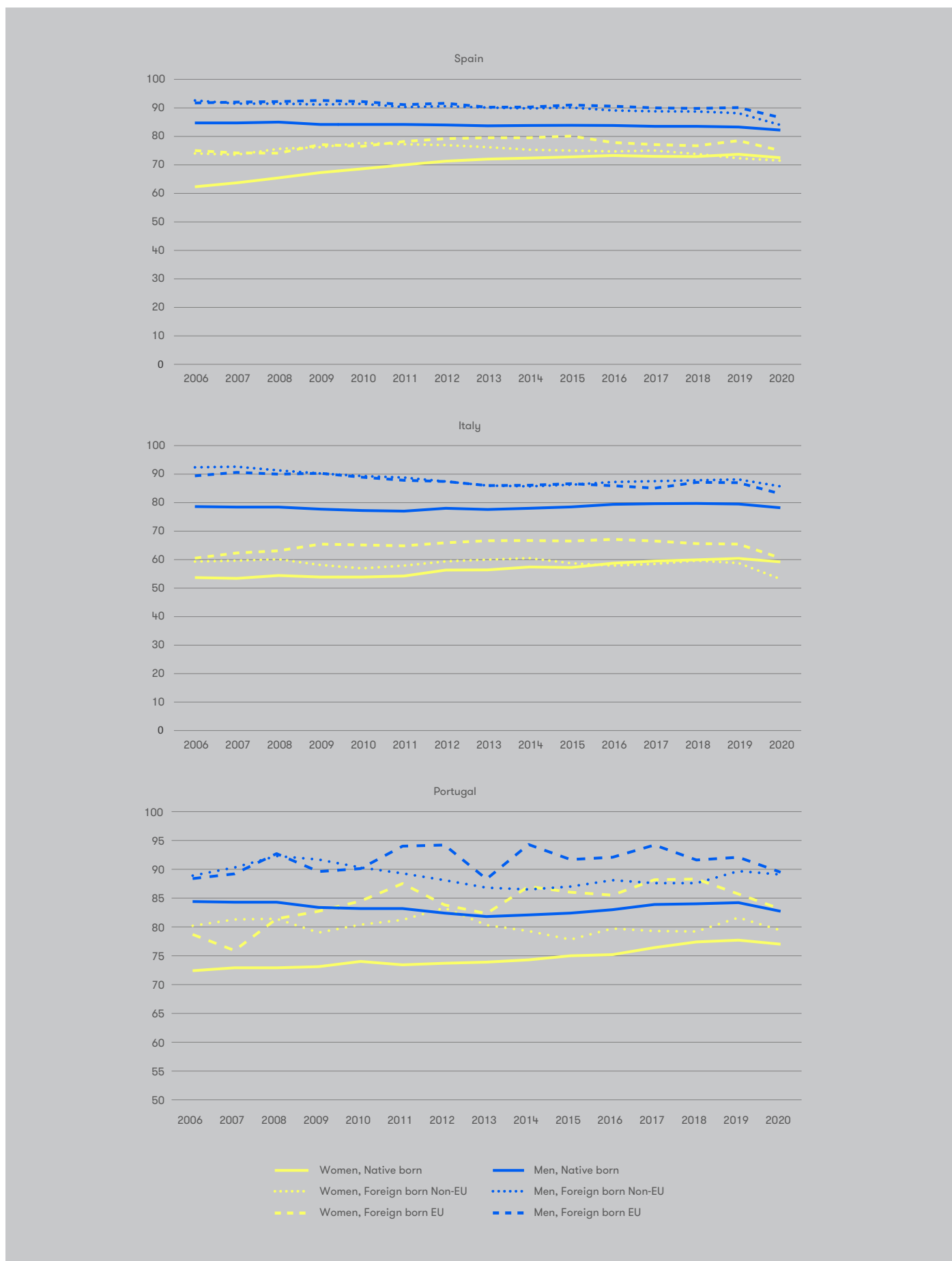
3.2 Reconstructing intersectionality in official labour market data for Italy, Portugal, and Spain

3.1.2 Participation indicators

The data on participation rates in the labour market (**Figures 26 and 27**) suggests that in the three GRASE target countries the situation is differentiated compared with the EU27 average. This comes as no surprise due to the marked differences in the models of migrant incorporation between southern European countries of the original EU15 cluster and other immigration countries. In fact, the former countries are characterised by high activity rates and low levels of unemployment. However, labour demand is heavily oriented towards low-skilled jobs, which makes immigrants suffer from a severe penalty in terms of occupational qualification (Fullin and Reyneri 2011). Evidence on Eastern Europe, on the other hand, is still limited in this regard.

We observe some differences when considering the intersection of gender and migration background in Spain, Italy, and Portugal. In Spain and Italy, the activity rate is higher for migrant women than for natives; however, the overall gender gap in Italy is more significant and further widened in 2020 due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. The data for Portugal shows a similar pattern, with a progressively closing gap between native men and women and overall stronger participation of women in the labour market. Moreover, migrant women show higher participation rates in the labour market compared with native ones. Notably, in Portugal, participation rates of migrant women from within the EU match those of non-EU migrant men.

Figure 26. Activity rate of people aged 20-64 by gender, country of residence and place of birth for Spain, Italy and Portugal, 2006-2020 [%]



Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [Ifsa_argacob]. Last update: 02/06/2021

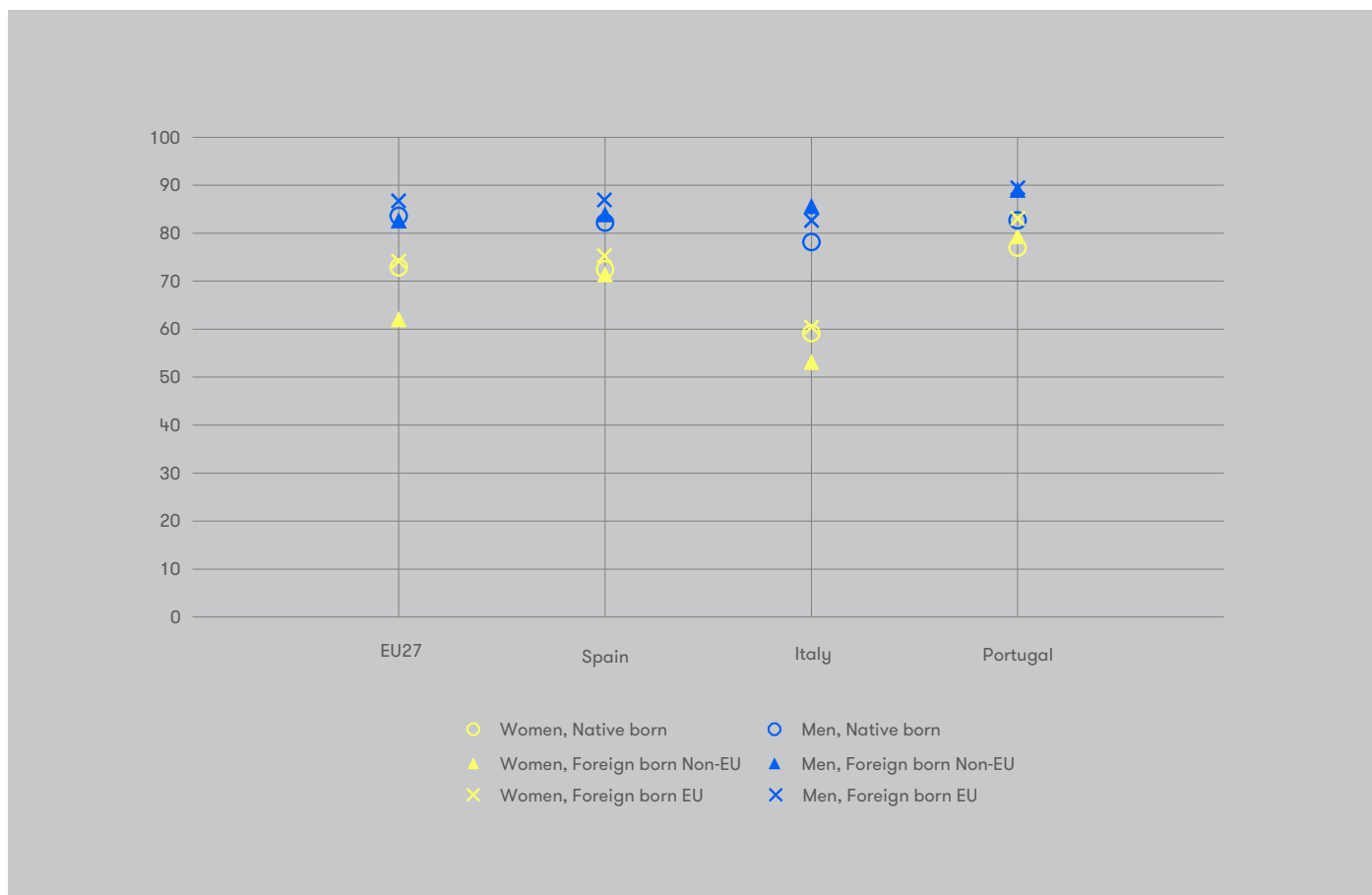
3.2.2 Employment and unemployment

The analysis of employment and unemployment indicators for GRASE target countries confirms the overall better performance of Portugal compared with both Italy and Spain, as well as the EU average. In terms of employment rates, there are no gaps between non-EU migrant women and native ones in Portugal (Figure 28). Employment rates are exceptionally low for non-EU migrant women in Italy, but the gender gap is vast also for natives and EU migrants. In Spain, on the other hand, we found the most

significant gap between the employment rates of non-EU migrants and native women.

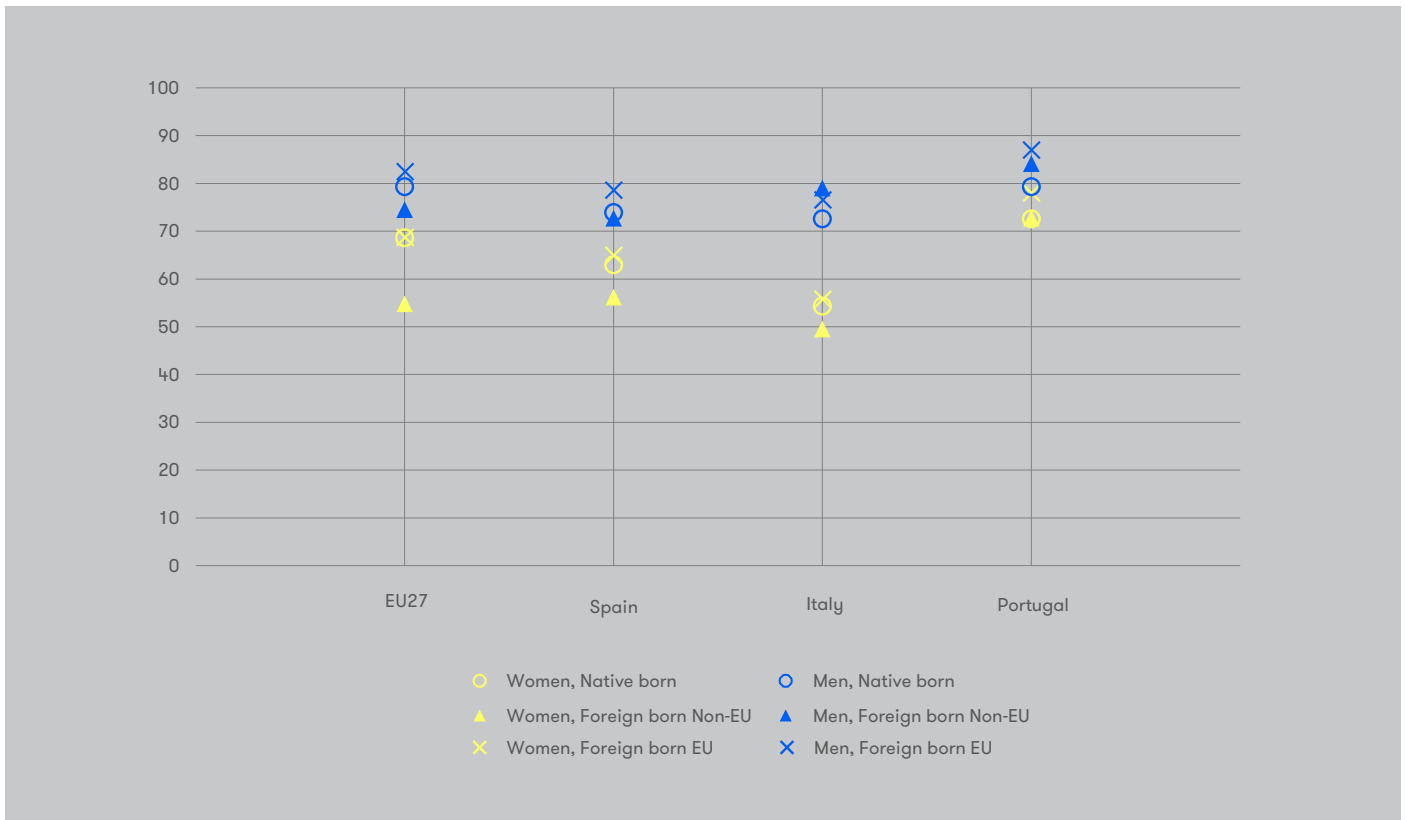
The available data on employment instability (i.e., the proportion of temporary employees as a proportion of total employees) shows that non-EU migrants are significantly overrepresented in Spain and Portugal among temporarily employed workers (Figure 29). Moreover, in Portugal, migrant women from outside the EU are employed in less stable

Figure 27. Activity rate of people aged 20-64 by gender, country of residence and place of birth for the EU27, Spain, Italy, and Portugal, 2020 (%)



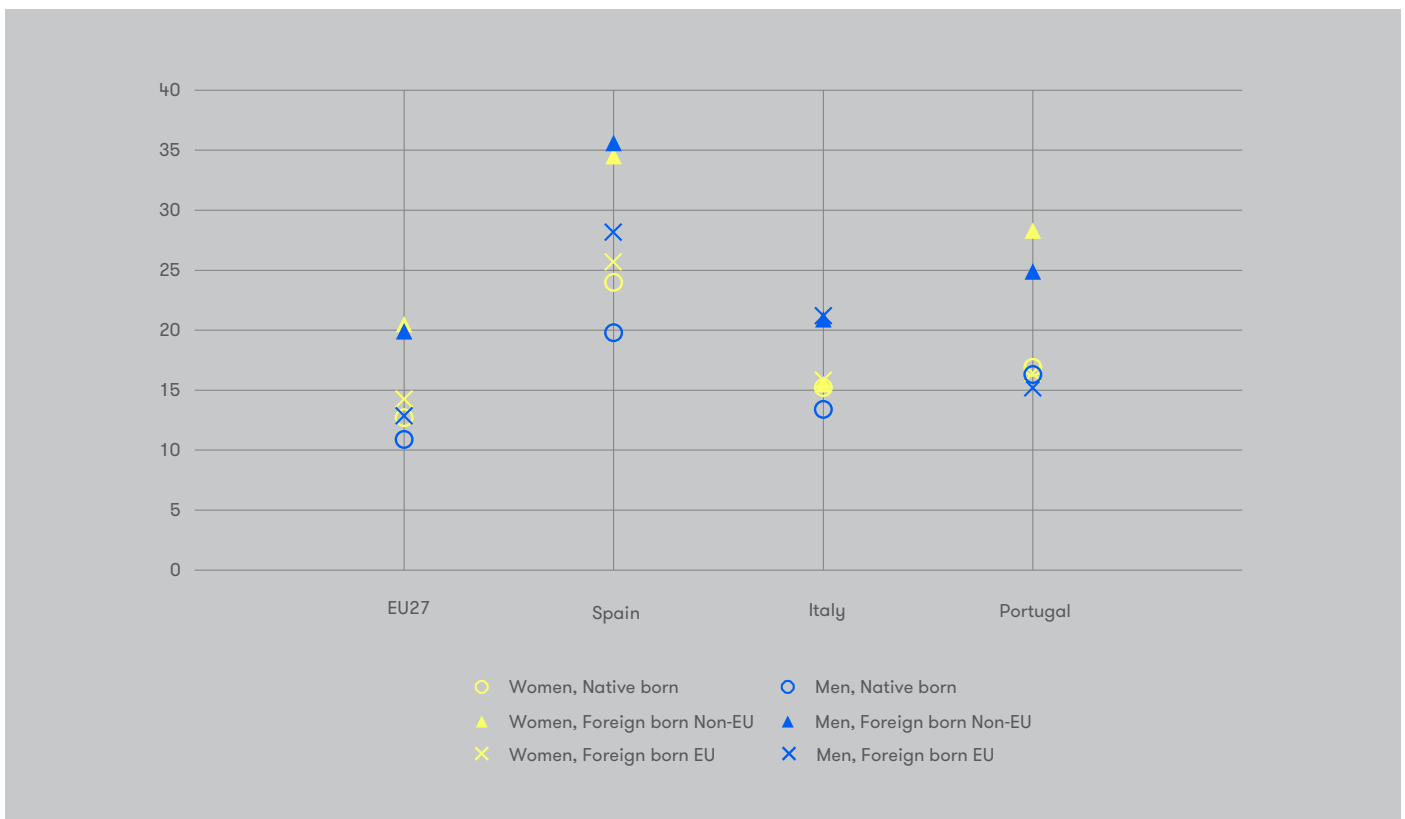
Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [Ifsa_argacob]. Last update: 02/06/2021.

Figure 28. Employment rates of people aged 20-64 by country and place of birth. EU27, Spain, Italy, and Portugal, 2020 (%)



Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [Ifsa_urgacob]. Last update: 02/06/2021.

Figure 29. Temporary employees as a percentage of the total number of employees aged 20-64 by gender, country and place of birth for the EU27, Spain, Italy, and Portugal, 2020 (%)



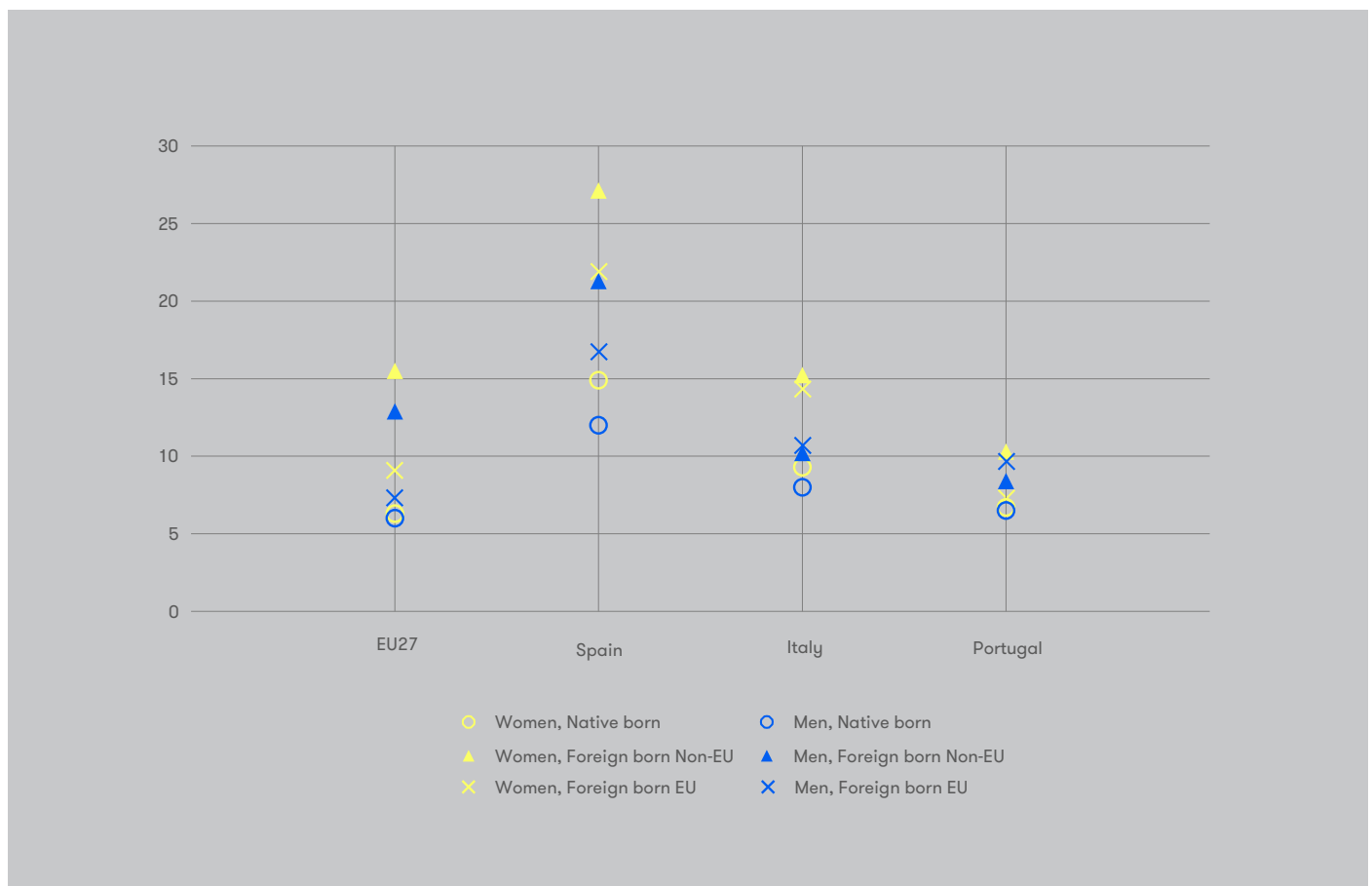
Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [Ifsa_etpgacob]. Last update: 02/06/2021.

jobs in greater proportions compared with non-EU migrant men. In Italy, the situation is different: foreign-born men are overrepresented in temporary employment compared with natives irrespective of their citizenship. On the contrary, women stand in an intermediate position with no significant difference based on their migrant or citizenship status. Hence, the gender divide seems more relevant in Italy than the migrant status, and the intersection between the two affects only men.

The analysis of unemployment rates shown in **Figure 30** allows to draw a very different picture for Spain, Italy, and Portugal regarding the spread of unemployment in general, and the effect of the cumulative gender and migrant status disadvantage in particular.

In Spain, unemployment is more widespread than in Italy and Portugal, and gaps by gender and place of birth are wider. Portuguese native women are more affected than men, and migrant women are more affected by unemployment than native ones. Migrant women in Spain suffer from the recurrent disadvantage of migrants without EU citizenship seen for previous indicators: the proportion of unemployed workers is as twice as much among non-EU migrant women compared with native men. Italy shows a similar pattern, though with a lower overall incidence of unemployment and a less pronounced gap affecting migrants and women. On the other side, Portugal shows lower unemployment rates and the smallest gaps by gender and migrant status.

Figure 30. Unemployment rates of people aged 20-64 by gender, country and place of birth for the EU27, Spain, Italy, and Portugal, 2020 (%)

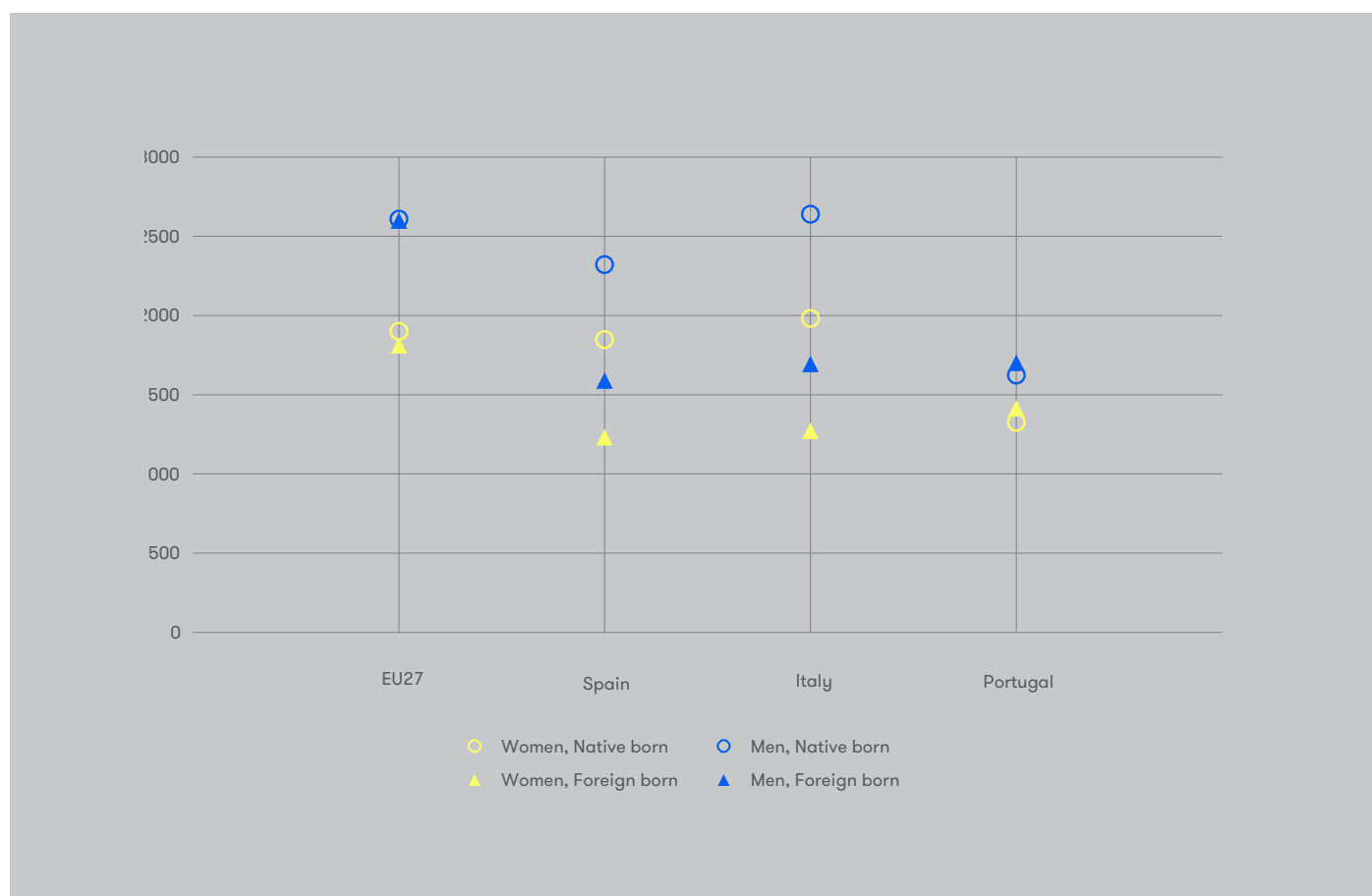


Note: Data for EU-born men in Portugal is missing

Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [Ifsa_urgacob]. Last update: 02/06/2021

Finally, both the gender pay gap and its intersection with the migrant status (Figure 31) are wide in Italy and Spain, where, unfortunately, the data broken down by EU and non-EU citizenship is not available. In Portugal, instead, we can see clear differences by gender but much less by migrant status, a trend very similar to the rest of the EU.

Figure 31. Unemployment rates of people aged 20-64 by gender, country and place of birth for the EU27, Spain, Italy, and Portugal, 2020 (%)



Note: Data for EU-born men in Portugal is missing

Source: ISMU elaboration on Eurostat data [Ifsa_urgacob]. Last update: 02/06/2021

4. Assessing intersectionality in migration and gender data: What we need to know

To have a comprehensive picture of gender equality in the European labour market, it appears necessary to collect data with an intersectional approach so that statistics represent both the society as a whole and its multiple social strata. Social class or gender alone are not sufficient to explain why some groups suffer from more significant disadvantages in terms of working conditions than do others. Ethnicity, place of birth, disability, sexual orientation and many other personal characteristics intersect, shaping employment opportunities and, ultimately, the capability to lead a decent life. Migrant labourers are the backbone of today's Europe, although the available data on migrant men and women does not allow to evaluate their employment and living conditions properly. Based on the analysis of the primary sources of statistical information on the labour market in the EU, we identified three main issues that, if addressed, could considerably improve the ability to produce sensible indicators of working conditions of migrant people.

The first one has to do with sampling strategies that, as of now, do not ensure that migrant lives are statistically represented in harmonised surveys. For example, Eurostat's EU Labour Force Survey is the largest European household sample survey, designed to obtain timely information on the labour market and related issues for as many as 35 countries through a series of personal interviews. Despite its broad scope, the EU-LFS has the drawback of only including a small sample of foreign-born individuals for each country, which is not always sufficient to infer statistically representative results when that sub-population is broken down by gender. In fact, within the EU-LFS, the

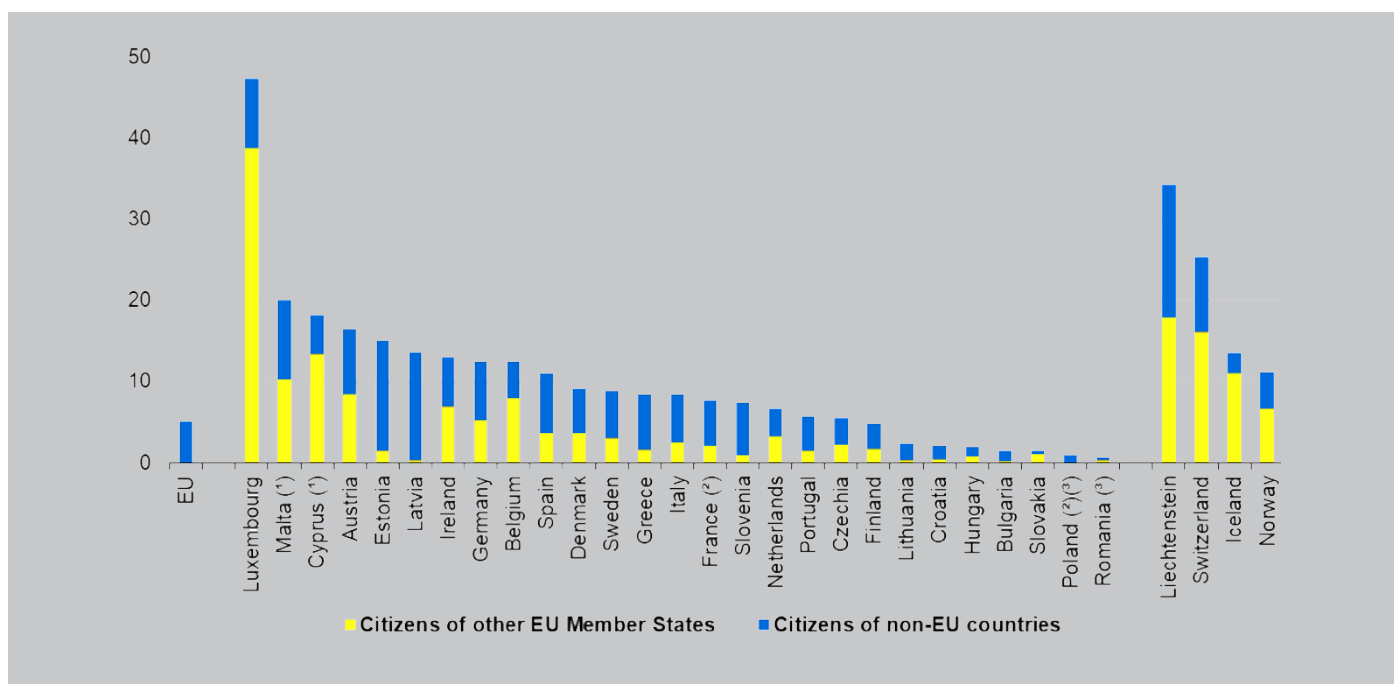
only specific inquiry on immigrants and their descendants in the labour market is carried out through an *ad hoc* module administered every 6-8 years according to a multiannual rolling planning listing a number of subjects not included in the standard data sets. Clearly, the very choice of collecting data on migrant labour as an *ad hoc* investigation shows how the domains of migrant well-being and labour market studies are not considered inherently interconnected to the extent that they deserve in the European institutional framework. Another primary source of labour market statistics is Eurofound's European Working Conditions Survey, in which, however, evidence on foreign-born workers is based on an even smaller sample than the EU-LFS. In this case too, the survey has limited statistical representativeness when it comes to producing reliable statistics on the quality of life of migrant labourers, let alone using an intersectional approach.

The second concern is about the lack of data on migrants residing in Central and Eastern European countries. Once net exporters of migrant labour, today these countries see immigration as an increasingly relevant domestic phenomenon, with a presence of an average non-national residents stock of nearly 6% of the total population (**see Figure 32**). There is no sufficient, publicly available statistical information for many of these countries, even those belonging to the EU27 cluster, to construct labour market indicators intersecting migrant status with gender. Since, from a gender equality perspective, Eastern European countries still rank among the less equal ones according to the Gender Equality Index, it would be even more essential to gather timely and comparable data at the intersection of these two dimensions.

Finally, breaking down existing indicators by gender and migration status is not sufficient *per se* to draw a genuinely intersectional picture of the plural society under study, if such indicators are not designed so that they can represent diversity in terms of experiences and living conditions. As already highlighted in this report, an example of possible inconsistencies stemming from a lack of intersectional perspective is given by EIGE’s indicator of gender segregation in the labour market, designed to monitor sectoral segregation of men’s and women’s participation in the education, human health and social work sectors. While such an indicator appropriately captures sectoral segregation for the native population, it will unlikely serve the same purpose among migrants in general

and migrant women in particular, who – contrarily to native ones – have scarce access to jobs in education. We find it necessary for policymakers and scientists at all levels to make a special effort in the construction of sensible indicators for both the native and the migrant population. Adopting an intersectional approach in quantitative social sciences cannot only translate in breaking down the existing data by social group or better designing survey samples; most of all, it means rethinking how we conceptualise categories and indicators in the first place, so that aspects and issues that are relevant to minorities and specific groups of interest are taken into account and embedded in the data even before that very data is collected.

Figure 32. Share of non-nationals in the resident population as of 1st January 2020, (%)



Notes: (1) indicates that the yellow bar shows citizens of other EU Member States including the UK, while the blue bar shows citizens of non-EU Member States excluding the UK. (2) indicates that the data is provisional. (3) indicates that the data is an estimate. Source: Eurostat (online data code: migr_pop1ctz).

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To know more

EIGE Gender Statistics Database

https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/browse/ta/ta_wrklab

OECD Gender and Employment Data

https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=GENDER_EMP

ILO Labour Statistics on Women

<https://ilostat.ilo.org/topics/women/>

