

# Croatia



Women in decision-making: **1.14/5**  
Socio-economic position of women: **1.92/5**  
Violence against women: **1.75/5**

## UNDERSTANDING CROATIA

Article 15 of the Gender Equality Act calls on political parties to respect a 40% quota for members of the least represented sex on their lists. However, 2/3 of the 313 party lists did not respect this requirement in the last elections in 2011.

Only 40.6% of women (and 53.3% of men) are active on the labour market in Croatia. Furthermore, women's work in Croatia is precarious. In 2011, only 8.5% of new female employees were given a contract unlimited in time, as compared to 19.5% of men. The official gender pay gap is only 10.2%. However the country's largest private employment agency, "Moj posao", estimates a gap closer to 20% due to widespread tax evasion and under declaration of income.

There continues to be a strongly gendered division of care work, which is in large measure considered a private burden in Croatia: in 2012, an extension of leave provisions for new parents was taken up by fathers in only 0.47% of cases. Parental leave is only claimed by 4.67% of fathers. Childcare facilities are sorely lacking, with only 58% of children between 3 and school-age in formal care. Elderly care services are rudimentary, with the first palliative centre in the country opening only in 2012.

Violence against women is pervasive, as in other countries. In 2011, the victims were women in 82% of the 20,247 reported cases of domestic violence. Thus far, women's associations have not been able to obtain funding for shelters for women victims of violence. Support for victims of war rape during the conflicts accompanying the break-up of the former Yugoslavia is still sorely lacking.

Women's reproductive rights are restricted by the strong influence of the Catholic Church, which effectively limits access to abortion.

## TRENDS:



There is increasing awareness in Croatia of the need to increase women's representation in political decision-making. Research conducted in 2012 found that more than 60% of women find women's under-representation problematic and 85.4% support legal measures to increase the representation of women in parliament. Currently, women are 24% of members of parliament and were 34.96% of candidates in the last elections in December 2011.

Paternity leave has been lengthened and there is consideration of making such leave compulsory for new fathers.



Austerity measures are threatening gains made by women in the labour market, notably with the closure of kindergartens. While the duration of parental leave has been increased, child benefits have been cut. Women's work is increasingly precarious, with 92% of women working part-time or with short-term (mostly monthly) contracts. Contracts are not renewed in cases of pregnancy. Poverty rates rose between 2010 and 2012 to reach 21.4% of all women, and 32% of women over 65.

Regarding violence against women, trade union surveys report increased rates of sexual harassment.

Draft legislation proposals aiming to decriminalise prostitution and pimping were introduced in 2012.

## Highlights

**25%**  
women members of  
parliament

**16%**  
women on  
corporate boards

**35.5%**  
of women in  
full-time  
employment

**32%**  
of women over 65 at  
risk of poverty

**15%**  
of infants under 3  
and 58% of those  
between 3 and  
school-age in  
formal childcare

**27**  
weeks maternity  
leave at 100% pay