

**SOCIETY MADE
HER QUIT**



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Society made her quit

Practices that systematically influence the career
path of women architects

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Introduction

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2 Galanti, G. M. (1969) Della descrizione geografica e politica delle Sicilie, Napoli, 286

3 Rizzo, E. (2018). Prime donne laureate. *Dol's magazine*

The participation of women in architecture has always been defined and determined by the basic constituent of all societies around the world: the patriarchy.

The barrier between women and the possibility of designing the built environment has been not only a systematic impediment, but also a physical one; in fact, even up until 1972 many schools did not admit women to pursue degrees in architecture¹ in the USA. In Italy, education was opened only to men until the XVIII century, until some changes were introduced to the national educational system; however the actual possibility of women to earn a degree was mainly symbolical and only achievable by extremely wealthy families. Furthermore, it was not possible for most of these lucky women to practice their profession, due to the common belief that “women are weak by nature and imbeciles by education” (“le donne sono deboli per natura ed imbecilli per educazione”²) and the various laws that established that women could not enjoy legal independence (Codice Civile del 1865). The first actual step towards equality was brought in 1919 through the Legge n. 1176 which abolished the institution of marital authorization and allowed women to formally practice all professions, except for legal and military ones. All of these small progresses were completely lost with the rise of fascism. Even though education has always had a sexist orientation, the faculties of architecture all around the world were predominant in this aspect. The first Italian woman to graduate in Architecture was Elena Luzzato, as late as the 1925³, more than 300 years after the first Italian

woman to graduate in a different faculty.

When the physical barrier was finally completely lifted, meaning that women could study architecture, as well as actually practice it once they earned their degree, other everyday obstacles presented in the way of women architects.

Just like in the past, architecture and architects never stopped being sexist, and a simple law was not going to stop a life long idea of prejudice and active discrimination.

What are the limitations that today stop equality in the architectural field? Why are the biggest firms almost completely man-only composed?

There have been numerous researches on the aggravating that influence women's career and this thesis aims at underlying what are the recurrent practices found in the different work places, especially in architecture, and specifically in Italy. It is finally time to recognize how underprivileged women have been in all different fields, and making firms, CEOs, bosses and employers accountable for a gender discrimination that should be long dead, if not ever existed.

01

Gender Rebalancing

The Gender Care Gap

“By gender balance, we refer to a situation where both males and females have equal opportunities and access to matters in all the institutions of the society, namely, religion, economy, education, culture, and politics.”¹

But how balanced is the working world today?

In low-income countries, girls are 2.5 times more likely to be out of school than boys².

On average, in Europe (and the data increases for third-world countries) women spend more than twice as many hours as men doing unpaid work. In India, women spend an average of six hours a day performing unpaid work, while men spend only one. There is no country where the gap is zero³.

What is meant by unpaid work? Unpaid work is all that work essential for the functioning of households and economies, but it is valued less than paid work, does not bring any direct monetary income, and is not recognized in any way as work.

Childcare, elderly care, cooking, cleaning, and farming, are all tasks and jobs predominantly undertaken by women. It is easy to understand that unless women’s days have more hours than men’s, those unpaid, ‘mandatory’, working hours will have to be subtracted from a full-time job, determining the eventual lower income. The amount of time that women devote to care work each day, determines how much time they have left to spend on other areas of life such as employment or paid work.

1 Omotosho, B.J. (2013). Gender Balance. In: Idowu, S.O., Capaldi, N., Zu, L., Gupta, A.D. (eds) Encyclopedia of Corporate Social Responsibility. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg

2 UNICEF (2019). Girls’ education. UNICEF.

3 ec.europa.eu. (n.d.). Women and unpaid work: recognise, reduce, redistribute! European commission.

“Around the world, finding a job is much tougher for women than it is for men. When women are employed, they tend to work in low-quality jobs in vulnerable conditions, and there is little improvement forecast in the near future. [...] This problem is particularly marked in Northern Africa and the Arab States, where unemployment rates for women exceed 20 percent”¹.

Unpaid work is a very representative feature of the social injustice behind many societies; the Asian country India carries the burden of having one of the highest rankings in this matter. India’s female labor force participation rate dropped from 32 percent in 2005 to 21 percent in 2019², and it was never high to begin with. Superficially, it might look like a lack of will on the women’s side, but by just slightly scratching the surface, it is easy to understand how India’s low female labor is much more complex, resulting from different factors such as patriarchal norms, rural-urban transitions, and a mismatch of supply and demand factors. Aside from all the housework, mainly shouldered by them, there are limiting factors that still heavy on them when they do decide (or are allowed) to work. In third-world countries there is a lack of transportation matters, and it is not always safe, especially for women, to move around alone, risking facing harassment and even sexual assault on their daily commute³.

We can now understand why there is a necessity for a radical change in all the societies around the world, as to achieve gender equity in the work sector. Inequality will perpetuate over time as long as all the caring work will be laid on women, even when discrimination and prejudice will be tackled.

The way in which women and men allocate their roles in caring activities is not only related to their own preferences. The distribution is also influenced by environmental conditions, such as the legal, occupational, and infrastructural circumstances, as well as by social values, religion, and images. When considering the activities that women have to undertake, they generally perform daily, less flexible activities, such as cleaning, cooking, and washing, that usually can not be postponed due to their high frequency and required systemic repetition, they are furthermore harder to reconcile with the constraints of employment. Instead, men perform less unpaid care work than women, which mostly has an un-occasional occurrence, with low frequency and that can be postponed, for example to the weekend or anyway work-free day (for example house or car repairs). Due to all these factors just listed, these kinds of tasks do not interfere with the normal work life and hours of most men. In 2012/13, the Gender Care Gap stood at 52.

1 International Labour Organization (2017). The gender gap in employment: What’s holding women back?

2 Chatterjee, D., Sircar, N., (2021). Urbanisation, gender, and social change: Why is female labour force participation so low in India?. International Growth Center.

3 International Labour Organization (2017). The gender gap in employment: What’s holding women back?

percent. Meaning that for every 4 hours and 13 minutes spent by women on unpaid work, men spent only 2 hours and 46 minutes, less than half [Figure 1.1].

However, it is important to highlight that this is not an issue only related to households with children or elderly figures, it is a behavioral issue that is perpetuated in all families composed of a man and a woman. Other tasks, such as housekeeping (including repair work, gardening, and care of animals/pets), are, but most usually have, to be undertaken by the woman of the house, to be left undone in the opposite case.

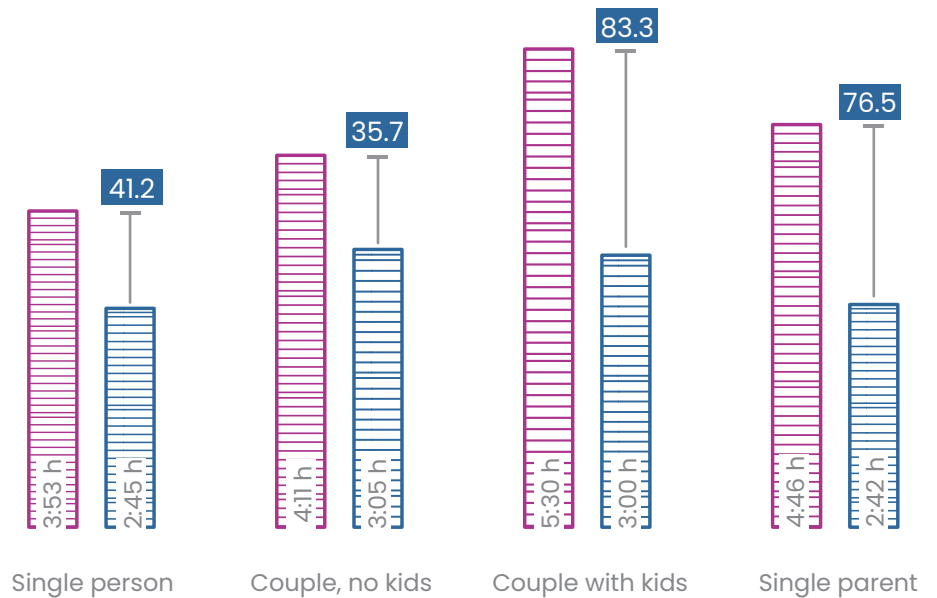


Figure 1.1: bmfsj, Gender Care Gap according to type of household

In the Figure 1.2, it is possible to see this systematic behavior which is a recurrent practice in all types of households. In the case of a father who works full-time, and a mother that is unemployed, the division of (unpaid) labor is extremely pronounced, with a Gender Care Gap at 154 percent.

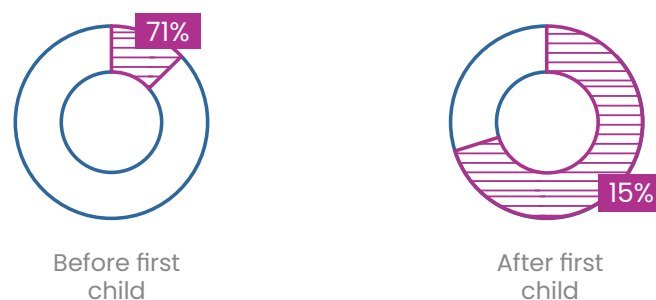


Figure 1.2: bmfsj, Gender Care Gap according to children

However, it is also possible to see that after the first child is born a “re-traditionalization” occurs; voluntarily or involuntarily, due to the usually limited parental leave given to men, the mothers are those who have to interrupt their own employment, frequently for even longer period of time, involuntarily

“It is easier to find a man named John than a woman in many of America’s top leadership roles”

however becoming in charge of all unpaid work around the house. This distress really highlights how the birth of children becomes a breakpoint between the development of the careers of parents. Furthermore there are still strong stereotypes that dictate the distribution of unpaid work, especially around families with children. It is very common to hear how “babies should be raised at home by their mother” or “women are responsible for unpaid care work, men for the family’s income”. These traditional role ascriptions also apply when the required care is aimed at elder or disabled people. Approximately two thirds of the care givers of people in need of long term care, whom are cared for at home, are female. Meaning that more than twice as often women will have to undertake unpaid work. Studies have shown how being a full-time/part time care giver, highly influences the work life: these people are more likely to be part time employed in a paying job, if employed at all. In the past, this work distribution was allocated following not only the already cited stereotypes (“women do it better”) but also considering the incomes of both partners, which were usually linked with their level of education; however, we have already highlighted how the level of education has changed in the last years, women being more and better educated. Unfortunately it does not reflect today society, as we will discuss in the next sub-chapter through the Gender Pay Gap.

It is also important to point out how the amount of time spent by men on unpaid care work is almost independent of how many hours their partner works: men whose companion works full-time spend almost the same amount of time on unpaid care work as men whose partner only works part-time.

The percentage of time spent on unpaid care work is also influenced by the geographical location: women in rural areas spend 34 minutes more time on care work than women in large cities and also 58.8 percent more care work than men, while the gap in urban areas is only at 43.8 percent. We can derive how sharing the care work on a partnership basis can be and is fundamental for the equal participation of women and men in the labor market.

1 Pan Macmillan (2019).
6 shocking facts about gender
inequality in 2019. Pan Macmillan.



Figure 1.3: bmfsj, Gender Care Gap according settlement structures

Cutting women’s unpaid work from five hours a day to three boosts women’s participation in the workforce by approximately 20 percent. Participating in paid work is hugely significant as it gives women the power, independence, and financial resources to achieve equality with their male counterparts¹.

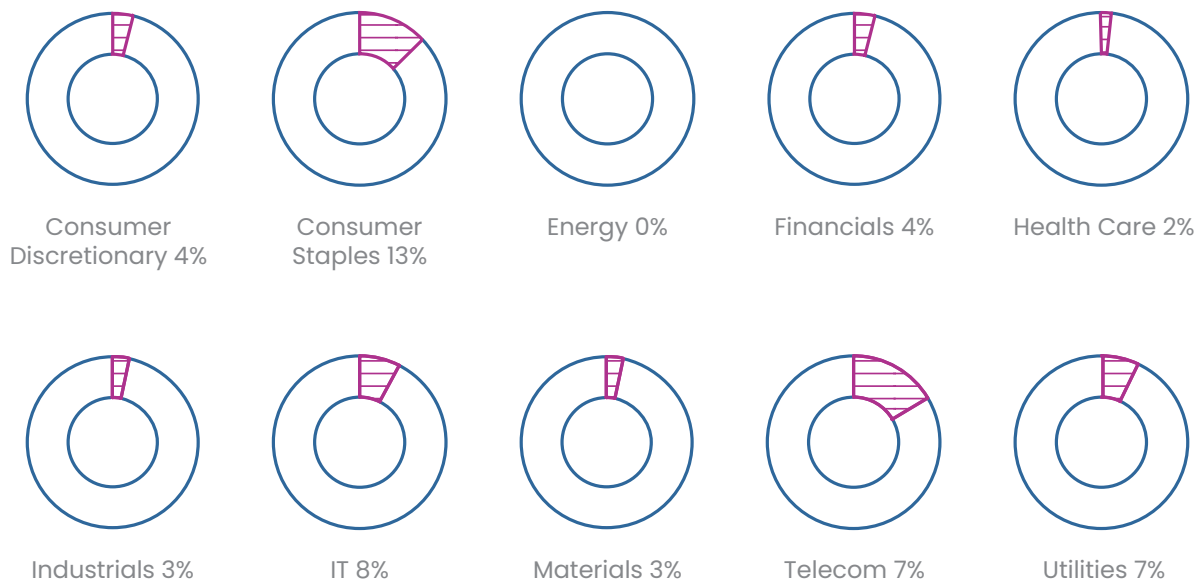


Figure 1.4: CNNMoney, CEOs in S&P 500 companies

The Gender Wage Gap

The Institute for Women’s Policy Research produced a research on Gender Wage Gap, where it was highlighted that on average women earn 77 cents on every dollar earned by men for each hour worked¹; and as mentioned before, this is a long-lasting issue that has not significantly changed in the last 15 years. If this trend does not change, the gender wage gap will be closed only in 2069². More than three-quarters of United Kingdom companies pay their male staff more than their female staff – and in nine out of seventeen sectors, men earn at least 10 percent more than women, on average³. In the United States of America, women are paid 20 percent less than their male colleagues; if we break down these numbers by ethnicity and race, the percentage goes up to 38 percent for black women, and 47 percent for Latina women.

A research carried out by CNNMoney proves that only 5percent of CEOs are women in most, if not all, working fields of S&P 500 companies⁴ (companies that publicly trade and are based in the United States). This number slightly improves for top executives, where women are the 16.5percent. The question at this point is: are women less educated? Do they they perform worse? There are more women with at least a bachelor’s degree at all ages, the only age group for which the traditional gender gap still exists for people born in 1954 or before, when women did not have the right to education, and the difference only lays at 9 percent. Today’s gender gap is at 8 percent, but with reversed genders⁵.

- 1 UN Women (2019). Equal pay for work of equal value. *UN Women*.
- 2 Marshall E. (n.d.). The Gender Pay Gap in Architecture. *Archinect*
- 3 Wisniewska, Ak., Ehrenberg-Shannon, B., Gordon, S. (2020). Gender pay gap: how women are short-changed in the UK. *Financial Times*.
- 4 Egan, M., Ordonez, S. (2015). How many women are in the C-Suite?. *CNN Business*.
- 2 Bryant, J. (2021). Women Continue to Outnumber Men in College Completion. *BestColleges.com*.

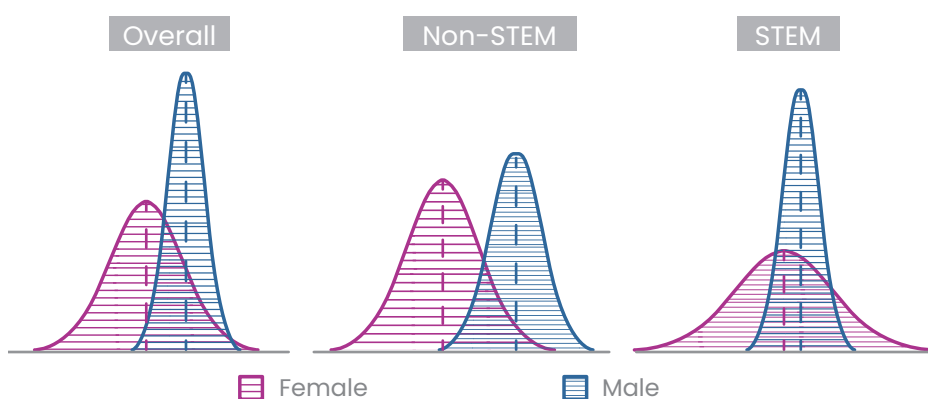


Figure 1.5: predicted distributions of school grades of girls and boys

So, not only do women graduate at a higher rate than men at every level, but they also get significantly higher grades than So why do men still get bigger positions? The problem can easily be defined systematic and happens along a gender line: they have found that men are more likely to promote men, especially of the same ethnicity, which enforces the perpetual lack of diversity in

the top positions. "In order for women to advance, other women must have the ability to promote them. But who is to promote those women?" (Georgene Huang, n.d.). In the previous sub-chapter, the Gender Care Gap was introduced. Is it possible to understand how this metric influences the Gender Pay Gap, or if it does at all? Which influences which? To what level? The correlations are manifold.

The influence of the Gender Pay Gap on the Gender Care Gap was investigated by the Fraunhofer Institute for Applied Information Technology (FIT)¹. The FIT analyzed what would happen to the way in which the care works would be distributed if the Gender Pay Gap were smaller, therefore how one would influence the other. The results were that by increasing the gross hourly wages of all women of a ten percent, it would be possible to reduce the gender care gap of a 2.2 percent. It would be a rather minor impact, however it is still an implementation. In the opposite way, the TIF was able to prove the great impact that a change in working hours would have on the Gender Care Gap:

- By aligning the weekly working hours of men and women, the Gender Care Gap would be reduced by 22 percent for a 35-hour week for women and men and by 14.3 percent for a 30-hour week.
- If more fathers were to engage in part-time work by a 20 percent factor, the Gender Care Gap among parents would decrease by 9.2 percent.
- There is also a clear statistical correlation between parental allowance and the Gender Care Gap: if fathers were to receive parental allowances at a level of 50 percent more, the Gender Care Gap among parents would decrease by 13.6 percent.

Overall, women and men spend similar amounts of time on work. But a much larger proportion of men spend this working time in paid jobs, and a much larger proportion of women on work that is unpaid. It is easy to understand how the Gender Care gap, the Gender Pay Gap and stereotypes in general create and promote a vicious cycle

"As a woman in architecture, you're always an outsider. It's okay, I like being on the edge."

- Zaha Hadid told the Financial Times in 2015

in which women, that even if are more educated, will not only be paid less as women, but also will have to more frequently put on hold their career due to general unpaid work, such as caring for others.

¹ Bmfsfj (2020). Who takes case of children, household and the elderly?. *bmfsfj*.

Architecture does not break the cycle

This general discourse is the perfect representation, if not a simplification, of the conditions in the architectural field. In 2017, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) released statistics that proved a 14 percent pay gap between women and men in architecture. Due to the illegitimacy of this practice, since it goes against the Equal Pay Act introduced in 1963, some acts have been issued as to stop this unbalance, but in the following years, there were only some slight changes in the statistics. The reason for this pay gap has been attributed to the lack of females in senior roles in most architecture firms. The RIBA (The Royal Institute of British Architects) condones this lack, highlighting that the percentage of female architecture students at university has increased from 18 percent to 49 percent in the time period between 1979 and 2015; they insist that architectural practices can not be sexist if there were only a few available female architects. However, the AIA released a document disputing the thesis of the RIBA:

“Wage gaps will not go away on their own. Looking at the gender wage gap for women as compared to men, in the United States it was nearly 60 percent in the 1960s; today it is 80 percent, with the most progress in closing the gap occurring between 1980–98 but slowing considerably since then. Closing education and experience gaps played a large role in that convergence but no longer accounts substantially for the gender wage gap. Currently, the gap is smallest at the start of careers and grows largest later in careers at top pay scales.”¹

Furthermore, we have already proven the higher and better education of women, however, the RIBA still seems not to notice, or says not to, the blatant sexism that not only defines most architectural offices but also the world. The RIBA recognizes two main reasons behind the Gender Pay Gap in architecture:

1. Men still dominate the higher positions in practices and therefore have higher paying jobs;
2. Women in the companies are more likely to be in the bottom half of the pay distribution as: (a) women usually cover administrative or support roles; and (b) the distribution of female professionals tends to be more junior than the distribution of male professionals.

The AIA again recognizes and highlights the sexism behind all these statements, where RIBA tries to blame the gender pay gap on women, that are more and more educated, and still try to succeed in a world that presents them with unequal treatment every day. The AIA, therefore, published a further document in response to these affirmations suggesting, and proving,

¹ Czapiga, K. (2020). What Architects must know about The Equal Pay Act. *RTF | Rethinking The Future*.

that it is a man-problem, perpetuated in time by companies of no matter size:

“Average salaries for men are higher than women’s at every year of experience, with average starting pay difference within a few thousand dollars, then increasingly diverging to approximately a 15 percent pay gap in late career. For both men and women, earnings are most commonly cited as integral to career success, and lack of compensation (in the form of pay, promotions, opportunities, professional development, and meaningful work) is the predominant reason why both men and women leave jobs in architecture or leave architecture altogether.”¹

1 Marshall E. (n.d.). The Gender Pay Gap in Architecture. *Architect*

2 Fairs M.(2017). Survey of leading architecture firms reveals ‘quite shocking’ lack of gender diversity at senior levels. *Dezeen*.

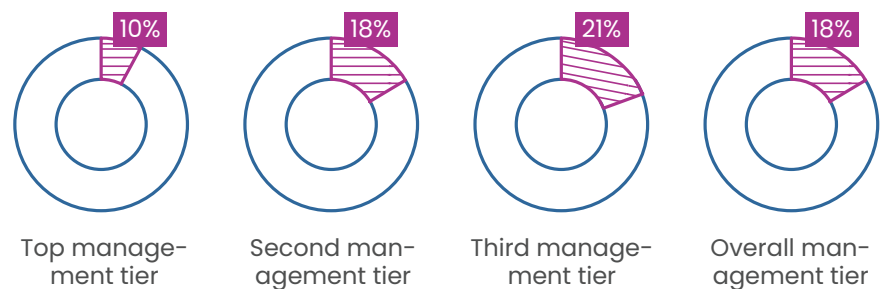


Figure 1.6: CNNMoney, overall figures across all 100 companies

Marcus Fairs, from Dezeen, conducted a research in 2017 on how well-balanced senior positions are in the world’s 100 biggest architecture firms (WA100), in terms of men and women. The report starts with a statement that perfectly describes the architectural field: “Just three of the world’s 100 biggest architecture firms are headed by women and only two have management teams that are more than 50 percent female.”²

The author of the research went through all of the one-hundred offices’ websites, and later on confirmed with every single one of them whether the pieces of information were reliable, to count and measure the extent of the gender inequality that characterizes most (we can statistically say 90percent) architectural offices. Going through these websites, Fairs could see hundreds of pictures of men and sporadically see some women [Figure 1.8], he then put these data into numbers [Figure 1.7], highlighting the extreme extent to which women are underrepresented.

The survey not only brought up the sexism of all these offices, but it also rocked the boat and scared some of their CEOs. Out of the 91 companies that Fairs was able to contact (9 of them do not provide contact information on their websites) only 27 answered and just a few of these twenty-seven were open enough to share addi-

tional information on their equality policies and initiatives to increase diversity. Weirdly enough, after these inquiries several of the companies interviewed (and especially does that did not allow any interview) made modifications to their websites: whether they ‘updated’ their information, changed their URLs (as not to be directly linked to the research) or even deleted their websites. Thanks to this research we can have a clear and down-to-earth snapshot of the, non-existing, gender balance in the profession’s larger firms as of today (2017). As said before, this systematic hoax is the product of a patriarchal society, which holds up women with a prejudice against their work competencies, and does not accept a possible thorough equality.

As said before by the AIA, the Wage Gaps will not go away on their own; it is a very complicated issue, perpetuated from the beginning of humanity, and strictly interlocked with the way in which our society works and thinks. Is it, therefore, possible to think of a solution to this?

Pay Transparency As Solution

Generally speaking, one of the easiest and most immediate solutions could be transparency, in terms of making public all employees’ salaries. Pay transparency is a relatively simple and basic tool that can help identify as well as address the occurrence of the gender wage gap and ultimately help close it. By identifying this discriminatory process and making it public, companies and offices will easily address it. The OECD countries produced a report as to improve pay transparency policies to close the gap:

- “– Legislate to ensure the foundational concept of equal pay for work of equal value and help correct for the historical undervaluation of jobs typically held by women.
- Allow individual workers to request pay information on comparable workers.
- Encourage the more widespread use of intentionally gender-neutral job classification systems.
- Generate buy-in from different actors – including social partners, workers, the government, and the public – to improve pay gap reporting compliance, take-up, and quality. This involves raising awareness widely.
- Identify the most important wage gap statistics that should be reported, and provide clear guidelines for reporting in order to simplify processes for employers.
- Improve the quality of reporting and follow-up action plans across firms, and work to ensure that reporting processes are followed by actionable, tailored, and enforceable plans to address wage gaps that are found.



[Figure 1.7]

UK firm Foster + Parters has 10 executive partners, all of which are men

PEOPLE



UK firm Scott Brownrigg has an all-male executive board

Senior Executive Partners Senior Partners Partners Associate Partners Associates



Haeahn of South Korea does not have a single woman in its senior team

-Enforce reporting with a dedicated government actor, such as a labor inspector, rights ombudsman, or a certified external auditor, to improve compliance and the quality of reporting.

- Dedicate resources to more and better impact evaluations, including research on both wage outcomes and policy process outcomes.

- Consider mandating the discussion of equal pay considerations during wage negotiations in collective bargaining.

- Embed pay transparency within a broader, systematic, life course approach to promoting gender equality in society, labor markets, governance, and public policy. This includes gender-equal access to all levels and subjects of schooling, family and work-life balance support like childcare and parental leave, efforts to improve the division of unpaid work, anti-discrimination legislation, improving women's access to leadership roles, and closing gender gaps in old age."¹

Equal pay laws and anti-discrimination laws are legislations widespread in the OECD countries but, unfortunately, these laws put the onus of equal pay on individual workers and do little to nothing to actually close gender wage gaps in a wider meaning. In fact, OECD countries still have a ranging pay gap from 4 percent to over 30 percent, demonstrating that legislating is not enough, since employers can still bypass these loose laws. However, by comparing the values from the *Figure 1.7* and the data from the Global Gender Gap Report, which highlights the Wage Gender Gap for each nation, we can see a correlation between stricter legislations and rules, and a smaller Gap.

Aside from pay transparency, there are other acts that us, a society, can work on to eventually improve the pay gap:

- Ascription of gender stereotypes;

Even if they are abstract concepts, stereotypes play a fundamental role in our society; starting from the way in which paid and unpaid work is allocated.

- Improve infrastructures;

By providing and implementing public matters of caring (kindergartens, hospices, etc.), the workload could be lifted from the shoulders of women, giving them the possibility of continuing their work and never having to put it on hold.

- Provide state benefits and improve the taxation system;

Learning that it is a societal problem, does not lift the burden on firms and companies: there are still hundreds of actions that employers can take up as to first of all evaluate the range of the Pay Gap within their

1 For, O. (2021). Pay Transparency Tools To Close The Gender Wage Gap. S.L.: Organization For Economic.

business, and eventually actually take action as to close it. A great example of this process is the case of the Studio Gang, a correlation between stricter legislations and rules, and a smaller Gap, an architectural firm Founded and led by Jeanne Gang. In 2018 architect Gang found that the male employees in her firm were paid slightly more than their female counterparts. It could have been much easier for her to suppress the matter and quietly fix it, however she decided to make an example out of it and be held accountable for this issue. She raised the wages of her female employee that year and started an initiative called Move the Needle, as to promote diversity, respect and pay equality in the design and building field. At a small scale it can be that easy to fix the pay gap, even if we have already assessed how it is a systematic and societal issue.

Distribution of countries by the presence of regulations requiring private sector pay reporting, pay auditing, or related measures, OECD countries, 2021

- a** Companies required to do regular gender pay audits, including reporting gender disaggregated pay: CAN, FIN, FRA, ISL, NOR, PER, ESP, CHE, SWE
- b** Companies required to report gender-disaggregated pay information, without broader audit: AUT, AUS, BEL, CHL, DNK, ISR, ITA, LTU, GBR
- c** Companies required to report non-pay gender-disaggregated information: DEU, JPN, KOR, LUX, USA
- d** Pay audits to assess gender wage gap are carried out ad-hoc within selected companies: CRI, GRC, TUR, IRL
- e** No reporting requirements in place

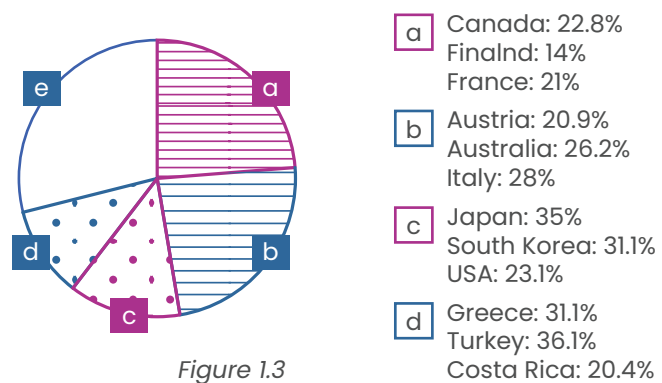


Figure 1.3

All data from: World Economic Forum. (2022). Global Gender Gap Report 2022. [online]

Figure 1.8: For, O. (2021). Pay Transparency Tools To Close The Gender Wage Gap. S.L: Organization For Economic.

The Global Gender Gap Index rankings by region, 2022

Central Asia

Country	Rank		Score
	Regional	Global	
Moldova	1	16	0.788
Belarus	2	36	0.75
Georgia	3	55	0.731
Kazakhstan	4	65	0.719
Ukraine	5	81	0.707
Kyrgyz Republic	6	86	0.7
Armenia	7	89	0.698
Azerbaijan	8	101	0.687
Tajikistan	9	114	0.663
Turkey	10	124	0.639

East Asia and Pacific

Country	Rank		Score
	Regional	Global	
New Zealand	1	4	0.841
Philippines	2	19	0.783
Australia	3	43	0.738
Singapore	4	49	0.734
Lao PDR	5	53	0.733
Timor-Leste	6	56	0.73
Mongolia	7	70	0.715
Thailand	8	79	0.709
Viet Nam	9	83	0.705
Indonesia	10	92	0.697
Combodia	11	98	0.69
South Korea	12	99	0.689
China	13	102	0.682
Malaysia	14	103	0.681
Brunei Darussalam	15	104	0.68

Figure 1.9
All data from: World Economic Forum. (2022). Global Gender Gap Report 2022. [online]

Myanmar	16	106	0.677
Fiji	17	107	0.676
Vanuatu	18	111	0.67
Japan	19	116	0.65

Middle East and North Africa

Country	Rank		Score
	Regional	Global	
Israel	1	60	0.727
United Arab Emirates	2	68	0.716
Lebanon	3	119	0.644
Tunisia	4	120	0.643
Jordan	5	122	0.639
Saudi Arabia	6	127	0.636
Egypt	7	129	0.635
Kuwait	8	130	0.632
Bahrain	9	131	0.632
Marocco	10	136	0.634
Qatar	11	137	0.617
Oman	12	139	0.609
Algeria	13	140	0.602

Europe

Country	Rank		Score
	Regional	Global	
Iceland	1	1	0.908
Finland	2	2	0.86
Norway	3	3	0.845
Sweden	4	5	0.822
Ireland	5	9	0.804
Germany	6	10	0.801
Lithuania	7	11	0.799
Switzerland	8	13	0.795

The Global Gender Gap Index rankings by region, 2022

Belgium	9	14	0.793
France	10	15	0.791
Spain	11	17	0.788
Albania	12	18	0.787
Austria	13	21	0.781
United Kingdom	14	22	0.78
Serbia	15	23	0.779
Latvia	16	26	0.771
Netherlands	17	28	0.767
Portugal	18	29	0.766
Denmark	19	32	0.764
Slovenia	20	39	0.744
Bulgaria	21	42	0.74
Luxembourg	22	46	0.736
Estonia	23	52	0.733
Montenegro	24	54	0.732
Italy	25	63	0.72
Slovak Republic	26	67	0.717
North Macedonia	27	69	0.716
Bosnia and Herzegovina	28	73	0.71
Czech Republic	29	76	0.71
Poland	30	77	0.709
Malta	31	85	0.703
Hungary	32	88	0.699
Romania	33	90	0.698
Cyprus	34	93	0.696
Greece	35	100	0.689

South Asia

Country	Rank		Score
	Regional	Global	
Bangladesh	1	71	0.714
Nepal	2	96	0.692

Figure 1.9
Alla data from: World Economic
Forum. (2022). Global Gender
Gap Report 2022. [online]

Sri Lanka	3	110	0.67
Maldives	4	117	0.648
Bhutan	5	126	0.637
India	6	135	0.629
Iran	7	143	0.576
Pakistan	8	145	0.564
Afghanistan	9	146	0.435

Latin America and the Caribbean

Country	Rank		Score
	Regional	Global	
Nicaragua	1	7	0.81
Costa Rica	2	12	0.796
Barbados	3	30	0.765
Mexico	4	31	0.764
Argentina	5	33	0.756
Guyana	6	35	0.752
Peru	7	37	0.749
Jamaica	8	38	0.749
Panama	9	40	0.743
Ecuador	10	41	0.743
Suriname	11	44	0.737
Chile	12	47	0.736
Bolivia	13	51	0.734
El Salvador	14	59	0.727
Uruguay	15	72	0.711
Colombia	16	75	0.71
Paraguay	17	80	0.707
Honduras	18	82	0.705
Dominican Republic	19	84	0.703
Brazil	20	94	0.696
Belize	21	95	0.695
Guatemala	22	113	0.664

The Global Gender Gap Index rankings by region, 2022

Europe

Country	Rank		Score
	Regional	Global	
Rwanda	1	6	0.811
Namibia	2	8	0.807
South Africa	3	20	0.782
Burundi	4	24	0.777
Mozambique	5	34	0.752
Cape Verde	6	45	0.736
Madagascar	7	48	0.735
Zimbabwe	8	50	0.734
Kenya	9	57	0.729
Eswatini	10	58	0.728
Uganda	11	61	0.724
Zambia	12	62	0.723
Tanzania	13	64	0.719
Botswana	14	66	0.719
Ethiopia	15	74	0.71
Liberia	16	78	0.709
Lesotho	17	87	0.7
Togo	18	91	0.697
Cameroon	19	97	0.692
Mauritius	20	105	0.679
Ghana	21	108	0.672
Sierra Leone	22	109	0.672
Senegal	23	112	0.668
Burkina Faso	24	115	0.659
Guinea	25	118	0.647
Gambia	26	121	0.641
Nigeria	27	123	0.639
Angola	28	125	0.638
Niger	29	128	0.635
Malawi	30	132	0.632

Figure 1.9
 Alla data from: World Economic
 Forum. (2022). Global Gender
 Gap Report 2022. [online]

Cote d'Ivoire	31	133	0.632
Comoros	32	134	0.631
Benin	33	138	0.612
Mali	34	141	0.601
Chad	35	142	0.579
Democratic Rep. of Congo	36	144	0.575

North America

	Country	Rank		Score
		Regional	Global	
Canada		1	25	0.772
United States		2	27	0.769

Why Do Women Leave Architecture?

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the only ‘fault’ directly attributed to women is that they leave their architecture job at a higher rate than men. But can we really blame women for leaving jobs where they are discriminated, underpaid, and mobbed?

In the UK, architecture studios are around 50/50 male to female in bottom positions, but senior roles are completely male dominated, so women are going somewhere along the line of promotions.

One of the most simple answers is motherhood. Maternity leave is not a global thing, let alone paternity leave.

Those countries that are legally bound to provide maternity leave, usually do not impart equivalent or transferable leave to the father. It is therefore easy to understand who will have to carry the majority of the

“One: Being an architect is horrible and poor job satisfaction.

Two: It’s very hard to balance a

Three: Architecture is sexist, stupid

when it comes to sexual discrimination

unequal pay and unequal oppo

burden of early childcare (and usually predominantly continue to ‘care’). It is implicit that women that choose to have children, will not even have the same opportunities of their partners, whom made the exact same choice. When mothers will eventually go back to work, existing projects have been delivered, and new unknown projects have entered the office. While male architects can follow a straight career path, their colleague, that happens to be a mum, has to be extremely flexible dividing

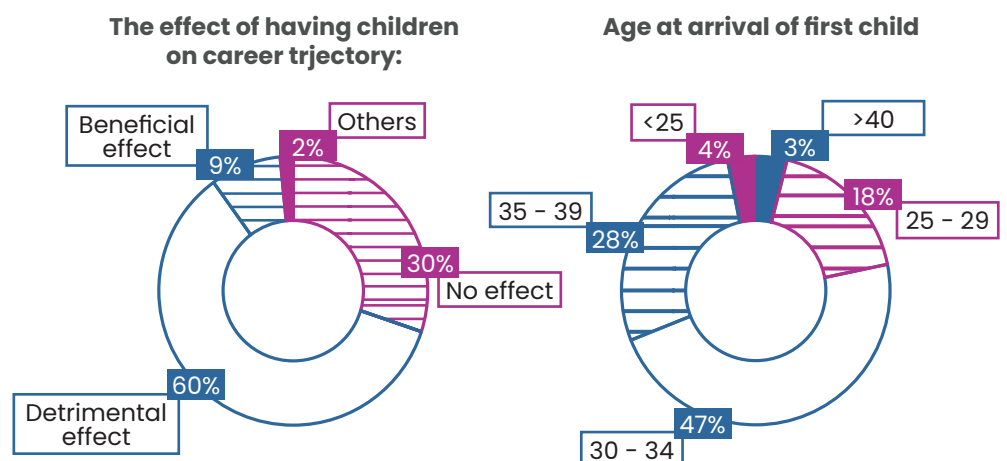


Figure 1.10 & Figure 1.11: Nayak A. (2020) Women architects who are balancing motherhood and planning. *Rethinking The Future*.

her time between the office and home and is usually not granted the same level and responsibilities as before of their leave². A less obvious answer, however understandable in the climate of our world, is sexual harassment. According to a study, conducted by Architectural Record and Engineering News-Record (ENR), in which 1200 architects were interviewed, around two-thirds of all architects have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace. 85 percent were women. Around 65 percent were harassed through inappropriate jokes, questions, or personal requests. Almost 30 percent described the harassment as sexual assault. Unfortunately, not all women reported the assault (only 65 percent), probably

ible – long hours, low pay, stress

rchitecture with motherhood.

uck in the wattle and daub ages

mination with a macho culture,

ortunities.”¹

fact fired. Only 1 percent of the victims filed a lawsuit or claim, meaning that the assaulters will be actually held accountable for their actions. Sexual harassment is far a more common practice than we think and it is just as common for the offenders to get away with it, especially the more powerful and recognized they are. Take the example of Richard Meier: in 2018 women started speaking up on his sexually inappropriate behavior. Four of these women were employees of Meier’s firm, and reported “incidents” over 10 years, in which Meier non-consensually exposed himself, asked them to undress, grabbed them by their underwear, pushed them into the bed and kept referencing pictures of genitalia. These women that in the course of time reported Meier to management, usually were laid off due to “downsizing”, meaning that the consequences of Meier’s actions had to once again be held by the victims, while they were being told that the firm would set up harassment policies. Even after the numerous accusations became public, Meier’s firm still did not take action, only blatantly tried to give a semblance of ‘punishment’ by making Meier step down from his leadership role after stating that he was embarrassed by the accusations and that he had different recollections of the incidents. Not even the prize’s administrators whom assigned him the Pritz

ably for safety reasons, or for fear of being fired or not be taken seriously. Fears that are well founded, since some of the interviewed architects whom reported their colleagues were in

- 1 Smith, M. (2014). Why do Women Really Leave Architecture? *Architectural Review*.
- 2 Nayak A. (2020) Women architects who are balancing motherhood and planning. *Re-thinking The Future*.

ker prize in 1984 held him accountable by revoking the prize, they instead issued a weak statement on how they distance themselves from the private lives of their winners, making them just as much accomplice of Meier's misconduct. To this day Richard Meier is a recognized and famous architect, only remembered for his works, while his victims will live with the burden of his actions, and the shame of being fired for speaking out on Meier's behavior.

Where Does Italy Stand?

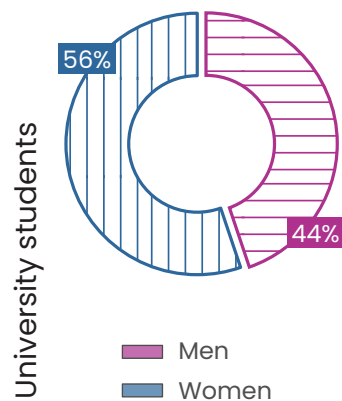


Figure 1.12 Istat (2022), *Iscritti all'università, Italia*

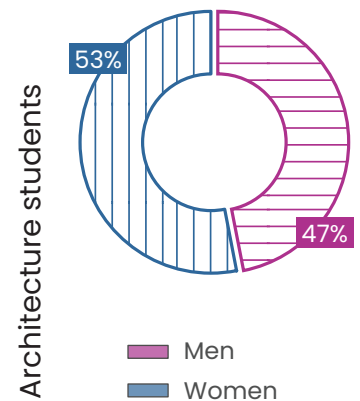


Figure 1.13 Istat (2022), *Iscritti all'università, Architettura, Italia*

In universities, Italy follows the trend of the United States of America, having more female students, than males (905.936 versus 721.844). Architecture confirms this trend, with women representing 53 percent of the overall enrolled students.

Once out of university, women represent the 42 percent of architects, however men are paid 57 percent more than women (2019), although it has risen from 2000, when the salary difference was at 85 percent¹. In the last 15 years the number of women architect listed in the Italian Architects Register (albo degli architetti) has risen by 141 percent. It is a promising number, especially considering that 43 percent of the listed women are younger than 40 years old, while for men the percentage is stuck at 25. Opposite is the trend for architects in their 50s and older: men represent the 41 percent, while women only the 20 percent.

This data is also influenced by the substantial career difference that women and men have to face. A major impact is due to the fact that women architect frequently have to put on hold their career (48 percent), while men do it at a much lower rate (24 percent). Women declare to do it in the 67 percent of cases as to take care of their

children, while men for health reasons (their own or relatives). These architects themselves recognized how these career breaks highly hindered their future work opportunities. But if these breaks happen at such a high rate, especially for women, it means that there is something at the base on which the child care is divided in households that is obviously not working. Why are always women the ones that have to waive their career in favor of their family? Men do not seem to recognize this lack of gender equality, probably since they obviously are the ones that privilege from it: 61 percent of male architects does not recognize a gender pay gap despite the evidence, while 44 percent of them affirms that women are not disadvantaged in their profession.



Figure 1.14
US Capitol (Public Domain Files)

02

Women who where (not) shut

¹ Statista. (n.d.). Height of individuals by gender in England 1998-2015. *Statistic*.

Hostile Cities

The fact that the architectural field, architectural artifacts, and architecture in general is based on the societal norms of the patriarchy has been assessed. But it is probably hard to understand to what extent, and actually create the mental link is even harder, especially for someone not directly inside of it. However, it is something that every single woman has experienced.

If you are a woman, and you feel like your city is hostile, it is because it probably is. Starting from the 1940s, when Le Corbusier developed the Modulor, an anthropometric scale of proportions, and the post war world started shaping around it, the world became even more belligerent towards those that were not taken into consideration in his proportional system. The Modulor was based on what Le Corbusier considered a handsome British policeman: a 6ft (1,82 m) tall man, with bulging calves, pinched waist, broad shoulders, and a huge lobster claw of a hand raised aloft, measurements that the architect believed to “suit the human scale, universally applicable to architecture and to mechanical things”. Although, it is easy to understand that these features do not apply universally, since, for example, the average height of British white women is 1,62 m¹ (Statista. (n.d.). Height of individuals by gender in England 1998-2015 *Statistic*), twenty centimeters less than Le Corbusier’s ideal man. Since the Modulor dictated everything in terms of constructions, from the height of a door handle to the scale of a staircase and the size of a sidewalk, it is intelligible how using these elements will be more

impact on the life of women. Women will more likely have to decline events, jobs or other activities happening in more dangerous neighborhoods, especially if in the late hours, will have to take longer routes as to avoid threatening streets, and even spend more money to live in safer areas.

The failure of male architects in addressing those problems not directly related to them, is not only linked to the safety of women, but also to the functionality of their designs. For example, the way in which public bathroom are designed: men bathroom usually have stalls and urinals, while women, for obvious reasons, only have as many stalls as men do, as if this was not already a problem, it does not take into consideration that women usually need more time: biologically (sitting, menstruation etc.), culturally (might have more clothing to remove) and socially (having to help a child). This lack of thinking results in usually much longer queues to the women bathroom. But if a design is not user friendly, it probably isn't the user's fault.

Gender mainstreaming designs and policies have been introduced as to actually consider women, disabled people, elderly and children when designing, especially public spaces. A basic but immediate example can be found all over South Korea: women-only parking spaces are reserved closer to entrances and right under direct light and surveillance systems, as to precisely tackle safety hazards.

Even if in still great minority, women have started taking over architecture, especially when social themes were questioned and had to be rethought. Often times, the stories of these women are underrepresented and not recognized.

in the city, according to research, is, dangerous, men. This fear, reasonable due to the high levels of street harassment and violence (a research conducted in 2016 by the California State University revealed that 94 percent of interviewed female were catcalled in their lifetime, and 75 percent were followed by a stranger).¹

1 Avondale, K. (2021). Catcalling kills: Defining the impacts of street harassment. *Garbo.io*.



"The head of a New York architecture school once reached me on the telephone because Bob was unavailable: 'Denise, I'm embarrassed to be speaking to you because we're giving a party for QP and we're asking Bob but not you. You see, you are a friend of QP and you are an architect, but you're also a wife, and we're not asking wives.'"

- Denise Scott Brown

Denise Scott Brown

Architect, planner, writer, and educator Denise Scott Brown has always felt how her life was determined and influenced by sexism.

Born on October 3rd, 1931, with the maiden name Lakofski, in Nkana, Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), Brown always had the vision of becoming an architect, and therefore worked since the summers of her teenage years in architecture firms in South Africa. After attending Kingsmead College, near Johannesburg, she graduated in 1952 from the University of the Witwatersrand in architecture. Right after her graduation, being fed up with her environment that lacked acceptance of women in the field, she moved to London in 1952 and continued her education at the Architectural Association School of Architecture, from which she graduated in 1955 with a degree in architecture. After getting married the same year, Brown started travelling and working around Europe for the three next following years. She eventually moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1958 to study at the planning department of the University of Pennsylvania. After completing her master's degree in 1960, Denise Scott Brown became a faculty member in the same university. While teaching there she met Robert Venturi, which will later become her husband and associate of their own firm: Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates in 1989.

Brown can boast a great career as a professor, teaching not only at University of Pennsylvania, but also at University of California, Berkeley, Yale University, lecturer at Harvard University, UCLA.

In 1989 Scott Brown publishes an essay called 'Room at the Top? Sexism and the Star System in Architecture', however she admitted to writing it in 1975, but avoided to publish it earlier as to avoid extreme criticism and preclude her firm from succeeding.

In this brilliant publication Architect Brown analyses how, after initiating a firm with her husband, she watched as "he was manufactured into an architectural guru before my eyes and, to some extent, on the basis of our joint work and the work of our firm." (Denise Scott Brown, Room at the Top? Sexism and the Star System in Architecture, 1989) while she had to work just as hard while receiving almost no recognition. While being respected and appreciated in the scholar environment, she saw all of it disappear as soon as she stepped in the architectural practicing world. After the two architects published their revolutionary essay 'Learning from Las Vegas' Brown started receiving comments such as insinuating that Venturi was the one doing all the work,

while using her name.

Due to these continuous misattributions, Bob Venturi had to include a note at the beginning of the book asking the readers to understand that the work not only had to be attributed to him, but to give the right credit to all of the authors. Furthermore, the office decided to provide an information sheet that described the preferred form of attribution, as to extend and fix the problem to all of their works including architectural designs, since the problem of lack of attribution to Denise Scott Brown extended to all of their works. However, some critics still took the long way to avoid this, and only made a pro forma attribution in an insignificant place, while only referring to Robert Venturi in the actual text. In the essay a specific example is provided when in the Japanese journal *Architecture and Urbanism*, the critic Hideki Shimizu wrote: "*A review of his plan for the Crosstown Community suggests that Venturi is not so much affording his theory new development as giving the source of his architectural approach clear form in a fundamental attitude toward city planning ...*

Venturi's position in relation to city planning is the thing that enables him to develop his basic posture in relation to architecture. The Crosstown Community reveals a profound mood of affectionate emotion"¹. However, as clearly cited in the sheet that provided the precise attribution, the Crosstown Community was completely a work by Denise Scott Brown, and as declared by her "*I doubt whether, over a period of two years, Bob spent two afternoons on it.*", so why would a critic purposefully attribute a female work to her husband? Architect Brown affirms to seeing this not-so-blatant sexism all the time in the architectural firm, which wants to remain a male dominated field, and maintains its deep roots in the patriarchy, according to which no woman could be capable of producing such a great work.

This is not the only example that Brown provides in her essay, but multiple cases in which critics and writer deliberately evade to mentioning her and would only partially do it when she complained and asked for the right recognition.

It is important to notice that these critics usually were men, probably closer to the idea of perpetuating gender stereotypes, while she gives a shout out to Ada Louise Huxtable, a woman architectural critic, whom never wronged her.

Numerous are then the micro aggression towards Brown, as she reports in her essay: "*The social trivia (what Africans call petty apartheid) continue too: 'wives' dinners' ('we'll just let the architects meet together, my dear'); job interviews where the presence of 'the architect's*

wife' distressed the board; dinners I must not attend because an influential member of the client group wants 'the architect' as her date; Italian journalists who ignore Bob's request that they address me because I understand more Italian than he does; the tunnel vision of students toward Bob; the 'so you're the architect!' to Bob, and the well-meant 'so you're an architect too?' to me. The head of a New York architecture school once reached me on the telephone because Bob was unavailable: 'Denise, I'm embarrassed to be speaking to you because we're giving a party for QP and we're asking Bob but not you. You see, you are a friend of QP and you are an architect, but you're also a wife, and we're not asking wives.' These might seem as simple comments, but this only eternalize the need of women to constantly prove themselves and having to work twice as much than their colleagues, just for the same recognition as them.

The question that architect Scott rises perfectly sums up how gender stereotypes influence women's work: if her ideas are so bad, why are them so praised once they are attributed to her husband Robert Venturi?

Architect Brown explains, thanks to her experience, how this veiled sexism not only continued for her whole career, instead exponentially increased as she reached higher positions. As she explains, school was the least discriminatory environment, as well as the early years of architectural practice, where interns and trainees are almost all treated equally. It is when architects start having real responsibilities that client start preferring men, due to their internalized (or not so much) misogyny.

At the same time, Denise Scott Brown, has gained the knowledge to understand that the continuous discrimination she had to face was not her fault, instead the product of a sick society, and that the people whom caused her those painful experiences were ignorant, especially about her work and knowledge.

The under recognition suffered by Architect Brown reached its peak in 1991, when her husband, coworker and associate Robert Venturi was assigned the Pritzker Prize, which is an annual architectural award for honorable architects. The prize was exclusively assigned to Robert, although the couple had been working together for twenty plus years and basically co-signed all their projects. As protest Brown did not attend the ceremony.

This generated the real scandal and an intense gender debate which still lasts today, more than thirty years later, on how inclusive the Pritzker organization is, also considering it an outdated prize, since architecture is rarely a singular activity.

1 Miranda A. C. (2013) Pritzker Prize Jurors Decline to Discuss Denise Scott Brown at Ceremony. *Architect Magazine*.

The story rose again in 2013, when Brown said in an interview “They owe me not a Pritzker prize, but a Pritzker inclusion ceremony. Let’s salute the notion of joint creativity” and reached Arielle Assouline-Lichten and Caroline James, two Harvard design students. The two students began a petition as to reach the Pritzker Prize committee and honor Brown of the right award. The petition reached more than 20.000 signs, including prominent Pritzker Prize winners, such as Rem Koolhaas, Rafael Moneo, Richard Meier, Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron. Also, Wang Shu, Zaha Hadid and Robert Venturi participated¹. It is interesting to notice how the aforementioned Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron (both men) did win the award jointly, while Wang Shu’s wife and design partner was also left out, just like Scott Brown. Initially the Pritzker committee declared they would investigate the question. But later announced that they could not change what was previously decided by a no-longer-standing jury.

A small win for a great career was awarded to architect Brown in 2018, when she won the 2018 Soane medal, an award given to architects who have majorly contributed to their field. The Soane jury immediately picked Denise Scott Brown as soon as she was mentioned, with the most unanimous decision, as to highlight the great career of the architect. Jointly with her husband she was assigned the 2016 American Institute of Architects Gold Medal, which was the first time being assigned to multiple people together. Other awards include Jane Drew Prize, the Benjamin Franklin Medal and the Vilcek Prize in Architecture. Unfortunately, Brown is not alone, is not the only woman hidden behind what to seem a bigger and better architect, that falls under the wife or partner category. It is a deeply institutionalised invisibility, were architects are only referred as wives.

"Architecture is a man's job but I've always ignored it"

- Gae Aulenti



Figure 2.2

Picture by Leonardo Cendamo/Getty Images



“We accepted all the bum-pinching and clumsy advances. There was this idea that men, poor things, have this urge, they just can’t help themselves”

- Madelon Vriesendorp

Madelon Vriesendorp

Madelon Vriesendorp, born in 1945 in Bilthoven (Netherlands), is a famous Dutch artist, painter, sculptor, and art collector. Vriesendorp attended the Rietveld Academy, a fine art school in Amsterdam, in 1964, and five years later enrolled in St. Martin's School of Art in London. In 1972 Vriesendorp moved to Ithaca and then to New York, together with her husband Rem Koolhaas.

In 1975 Madelon Vriesendorp, Rem Koolhaas, Elia Zenghelis and Zoe Zenghelis founded the OMA, the Office for Metropolitan Architecture. The Office is now an international designing studio led by eight partners, with offices in five cities all around the world.

In 1976 the artist moved back to London, to work on numerous competitions with OMA.

From the mid-1980s she started teaching art and design in numerous schools, such as the Architectural Association and the Edinburgh School of Art.

Vriesendorp says to be long accustomed to the under recognition that women architects and artists get, especially when they are married or partnered with such famous male architect, such as Rem Koolhaas.

The lack of credit towards her art started very soon in her career, with one of the most clamorous episodes linked with her famous painting *Flagrant Délit*. The painting portrays the Statue of Liberty undressed, the Empire State Building in with the Chrysler Building, caught through a door by the Rockefeller Center (as a sign of modernism), and the New York skyline being eaten by a monster. The painting became the cover of her husband controversial book *Delirious New York*, and from that point on it never was credited to her again. Other books started using it as their cover, but never asked for permission or gave credit, or was credited to the OMA. Vriesendorp commented “[...] *there have been a lot of historical misprints, which continue to be repeated.*”

In 2018 the artist was awarded the Ada Louise Huxtable Prize, an award given to people that work in the wider architectural history, and who highly contribute to the field. During her speech in the ceremony, she mentioned the *#Metoo* movement, making a parallelism with a similar situation, that even if it does not include physical violence, really impact on the psychology of women: how women are often ignored and “*written out of the script, and invisible to the nakedly ambitious self-promoting eyes*” (Madelon Vriesendorp, 2018), and prompted a new counter movement: the *#MeNether*. Far from wanting to diminish the aforementioned *#MeToo* movement, but to her it was the perfect launching pad to express her situation, common to many of her

colleagues.

Her activism in this sector, however, triggered those that still have a deeply institutionalized machismo, as far as the dean of an American Architecture School, who refused to shake her and because "I don't believe in that feminist crap" and turned away.

Vriedendorp was also well aware of how children and childcare tremendously impacted women's lives, more than their husbands. She claims how *"Everyone was having boyfriends and girlfriends,"* says Vriesendorp, *"but it was easier for men because they didn't have kids. They didn't have to go home and have no sleep for the night."* She was also conscious of how childcare was almost always in the hands of the mothers, and would eventually crush with women's full time jobs. Vriedendorp herself admits to losing lots of her involvement in her own firm due to the birth of her two children.



FLAGRANT DELIT, Madelon Vriesendorp, 1975-2008



Would they call me a diva if I were a guy?

- Zaha Hadid

Figure 2.4

Picture by Dmitry Ternovoy, 2013

Zaha Hadid

Zaha Mohammad Hadid is one of the most revolutionary architects today, not only thanks to her astonishing career, but also to the numerous gender-based barriers she was able to destroy.

Architect Hadid was born on the 31st of October 1950 in Baghdad, Iraq. She graduated at the University of Mathematics in Beirut, and later moved to London, in 1972, following her father steps. In London she attended the Architectural Association, where she was taught by two of the OMA founders: Rem Koolhaas and Elia Zenghelis. She then moved to Rotterdam, to work with her professors, and later became an associate in 1977. In 1979 she founded her own studio, Zaha Hadid Architects.

Hadid had also an incredible career as a professor, teaching in universities such as Columbia, Harvard, Yale, and the University of Applied Arts in Vienna.

Despite her great career, Zaha Hadid confirmed herself that being a woman, especially of middle eastern ethnicity, made her job much more complicated. She reports situations in which she was treated disgustingly and not even be looked in the eyes. Her design was always questioned and interpreted as a gender statement, such as the Al Wakrah Stadium, designed for the 2022 Qatar World Cup. Critics started calling it and comparing it to female genitalia, due to the organic shapes used (typical of Hadid style). Architect Hadid commented "It's really embarrassing that they come up with nonsense like this. What are they saying? Everything with a hole in it is a vagina? That's ridiculous. Honestly, if a guy had done this project, critics would not be making such lewd comparisons." (Zaha Hadid, 2013, time magazine).

Hadid also had to prove herself more than her male colleagues, and that was not just a feeling, but it is proven by the fact that even though she won the same competition twice, because she was accused of designing the Cardiff Bay Opera House as the Mecca the first time so the competition was held again, she still did not get to realize the final design.

Many of Hadid colleagues link her success with her toughness, they describe her as a powerful person that never asked permission for anything. However, her ruggedness was also used against her, usually by calling her a diva or similar, and judging more her persona than her actual design.

Even though Hadid did not want to be a role gender model but just an architect, she soon realized that her inspiring and life changing career was impacting millions of girls studying architecture.

Zaha Hadid will always be remembered as the first, and only so far, woman to win the Pritzker Prize in its 40 years of existence in 2004, as well as the Royal Gold Medal in its 168 years of history from the Royal Institute of British Architects. Architect received numerous other prizes, such as the Stirling Prize, the most prestigious one in the United Kingdom, in 2010 and 2011.



*Figure 2.5
Zaha Hadid, Picture by Virgile Simon Bertrand*



“In architecture, I had absolutely no role model. I am happy today to be a role model for others that follow”

- Norma Merrick Sklarek

Norma Merrick Sklarek

Norma Merrick Sklarek was born on April the 15th, 1926 in Harlem, New York City, from a doctor and a seamstress whom immigrated from Trinidad and Tobago.

After spending her childhood years in the Crown Heights neighborhood in Brooklyn, she attended high school in the Upper East Side at Hunter High School, an all-girl school predominantly white. Sklarek's father noticed her inclination towards visual arts and mathematics and therefore suggested she became an architect. After graduating in 1944 from high school, she attended Barnard College for a year, prerequisite to study architecture at Columbia University, from which she then earned her Bachelor's Degree in Architecture in 1950. Her path was already unique being her one of only two women in her class, and the only African American.

After getting her degree and taking the architecture license exam, passing it on her first try as the first African American woman architect in the state of New York in 1954., architect Sklarek briefly worked in New York City for the firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill in 1955, after having many difficulties finding a job (she got rejected by nineteen firms before finding job) due to her race and gender, however she claimed that she was not treated correctly by her white male colleagues and not given the same opportunities or given fawning tasks, such as only designing bathroom layouts. At the same time, the architect was teaching evening courses about architecture at the New York Community College.

In 1959 she became the first woman architect African American member of the AIA, the American Institute of Architects.

She then moved in 1960 to Los Angeles, where she worked until she passed away in 2012. In 1962 she became the first black woman licensed as an architect in California. In the many years spent working in Los Angeles, before founding her own firm in 1980, Norma Merrick Sklarek worked for numerous others, including Welton Becket Associates and Gruen Associates. In the latter one she became the firm's first female director in 1966. However, her career path in the firm was not easy. From the beginning she was subjected excessive judgment, being the only black woman in the office. She recounted how she would drive to work with one of her male colleagues, whom always made her late, however she was the only one scolded for being late, *"It took only one week before the boss came and spoke to me about being late. Yet he had not noticed that the young man had been late for two years. My solution was to buy a car since I, the highly visible employee, had to be punctual."*¹ As men

1 "Conversation: Norma Sklarek, FAIA." *Architecture California* 7, no. 1 (January 1985): 22–23.

tioned before, architect Sklarek co-founded her own firm together with two other woman architects, Margot Siegel and Katherine Diamond, creating the Siegel-Sklarek-Diamond firm.

Although her career was rich of astonishing accomplishments and groundbreaking attainments, it was just as filled with racism and sexism. She was mostly referred and treated as the the project manager rather than the design architect, or even a secretary or assistant. A former president of the AIA said talking about her that *"it was unheard of to have an African American female who was registered as an architect. You didn't trot that person out in front of your clients and say, 'This is the person designing your project.'"* She was also denied entry to her own project sites, as workers would not believe that a black woman could work in such field.

However, architect Sklarek was still able to win some well-deserved awards, such as the Whitney M. Young Jr. Award from the AIA in 2008 (not for her architectural work, but for her capacity of promoting diversity and inclusiveness in the architectural field). Instead, related to her architectural profession, she was awarded the Los Angeles Business Council Architectural Award in 1987, honoring her outstanding design work in terms of landscape for the city. She was also rewarded with a lifetime achievement for her contribution to the architectural field, as well as her advocacy and support towards diversity and representation, by the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA).

Jane Drew

Jane Drew was born on March 24th, 1911 in Thornton Heath, Croydon, where she received the first part of her education at Woodford School, she then attended Croydon High School, where she became head girl, already showing her strong and leading personality. Jane Drew came from a well educated family, which helped her approach high education, creativity, and the arts.

In 1929 Drew moved to London to attend the Architectural Association School of Architecture, the oldest private school of architecture in the United Kingdom, and only one of the few that accepted women at that time. After graduating in 1934, and becoming one of the first English architect, she was firstly employed by architect Joseph Hill. However, this was not easy. Drew applied for many firms before finding her first job, but most of them did not even consider employing her, due to her gender. This discriminatory experience, nevertheless, determined her character and her willingness to fight against gender discrimination.

eventually opened her own practice, together with her husband, called Alliston & Drew; also revolutionary at that time was for her to keep her own surname after getting married. When the couple split up in 1939, she continued with her own firm, and decided to only employ female architects, in response to the male domination in the field. Unfortunately, the firm's headquarters was bombarded during World War II, only a few years after its opening. However, her resilience showed up once again, and she opened a new practice in 1942, together with her second husband. The practice Fry, Drew and Partners mainly concentrated on public works in the West of Africa. Nonetheless, this did not stop the gender discrimination she had to face. When she was employed as Assistant Town Planning Adviser for the British colonies in Africa in the years between 1944 and 1964, she was openly paid £100 less than her male colleagues, purely due to her gender.

Architect Drew devoted her career not only to architecture, but also to advocate for women rights, inside and outside the field, as well as other social issues, such as affordable and/or free social housing in the countries of West Africa and Asia. Jane Drew always supported and defended women's rights, and helped her fellow colleagues succeed in this male dominated field.

She received numerous awards, highlighting not only her great career, but also her enlightenment towards human rights, such as the tenure received as a professor at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and Harvard University.



Marion Mahony Griffin

Marion Mahony Griffin was born on February 14th, 1871 in Chicago, Illinois. Her mother, Clara Perkins Mahony, was a teacher who fought and advocated her whole life for public education and a major leader in the advocacy for women's rights. Undoubtedly, this was a major influence in the character building of Marion Mahony Griffin. Her father's early death, in 1882, led her to being brought up in a gender equal household: no gender roles in the management of the household, progressive educational choices, political activism for women's right (universal suffrage and improved living condition for women). Inspired by her architect cousin, she decided to get a degree in architecture in 1890, and later graduated in 1894 at M.I.T. (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), being the second woman to graduate in architecture in the whole history of that institution. After her graduation, she started working for her cousin Dwight Perkins, and later became the first licensed woman in Illinois, in 1898, and probably the first one in the whole United States of America. Furthermore, it was the license examination held in the state of Illinois.

After two years of working for her cousin, Mahony was let go by him, and she was able to soon find a new job by the, now, famous architect Frank Lloyd Wright, with whom she worked on and off for around fourteen years, however, his name is rarely associated with Mahony's, even though she collaborated with him in numerous projects. Francis Barry Byrne (1883 - 1967), architect from Chicago, defined her as "the most talented member of Frank Lloyd Wright's staff, and I doubt that the studio, then or later, produced anyone superior¹.

In 1937, after the death of her husband, architect Mahony Griffin wrote 'The Magic of America', a biography of her late husband and an autobiography of herself, later made digitally public by The Art Institute of Chicago. In the manuscript she recounts how women architects were not accepted in her times, not only by employers, but by clients as well. In a field where apprenticeship is fundamental for a sparking career, the initial step was already interrupted by the gender discrimination limiting their professional future. However, Mahony always advocated for the right of women to overpass these barriers, and to keep fighting as to obtain the same rights as of their male colleagues, but without the expectation of special treatments (not that it was even considered at that time). She liked to believe that an architect is an architect, even so it is clear the major impact that her gender had on her life and career.

Reyner Banham (1922 - 1988), famous English architect-

¹ Barry Byrne, Review of The Drawings of Frank Lloyd Wright, by Arthur Drexler, Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 22, no. 2 (May 1963)

tural critic and writer, described architect Mahony Griffin as “America’s (and perhaps the world’s) first woman architect who needed no apology in a world of men”.

03

Case Study: Architects from Piedmont

Introduction

The final chapter of this dissertation wants to collect and highlight the data in a smaller scale, after analyzing what practices influence the way in which the career path of women develops in an international and national level in the first chapter.

It is interesting to understand at what level of gender equality and opportunity the city of Turin is, the fourth bigger city in Italy (841.600 inhabitants in 2023), and house of the Polytechnic of Turin, together with the nearby provinces of its region, Piedmont.

First of all a research goal was set, being the acquisition of data regarding three main categories:

1. General knowledge on the participants
2. Discrimination
3. Family and kids

The data, acquired through a carefully elaborated questionnaire, presented questions which were differentiated among men, women, and non-binary people, as to gather the responses according to the different experiences of these categories. However, some of the questions were still common to all of them, as to allow a comparison on certain topics. Most importantly it is to specify that the main focus of this survey remains the work and life experience of women, and men have been interviewed as to, possibly, provide a juxtaposition to them.

The questionnaire was thoroughly elaborated and eventually spread among the Architects Professional Registers (Albi degli Architetti) of all the provinces of Piedmont: Alessandria, Asti, Biella, Cuneo, Novara, Turin,

1 Omotosho, B.J. (2013). Gender Balance. In: Idowu, S.O., Capaldi, N., Zu, L., Gupta, A.D. (eds) Encyclopedia of Corporate Social Responsibility. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg

2 UNICEF (2019). Girls' education. UNICEF.

3 ec.europa.eu. (n.d.). Women and unpaid work: recognise, reduce, redistribute! European commission.

4 International Labour Organization (2017). The gender gap in employment: What's holding women back?

Questionario esperienza sul lavoro

Sono Marta Ottin Bocat, studentessa magistrale in Architettura per la Sostenibilità presso il **Politecnico di Torino**.

La compilazione di questo questionario mi aiuterà nella stesura della tesi, tesi sociologica che indaga le pratiche sistemiche che influenzano il corso della carriera degli architetti.

Questionnaire on work experience:

I am Marta Ottin Bocat, master student in Architecture for sustainability at Politecnico di Torino.

The filling of the following form will help me in the writing of my dissertation, sociological thesis which investigates the systematic practices that influence the career path of architects.

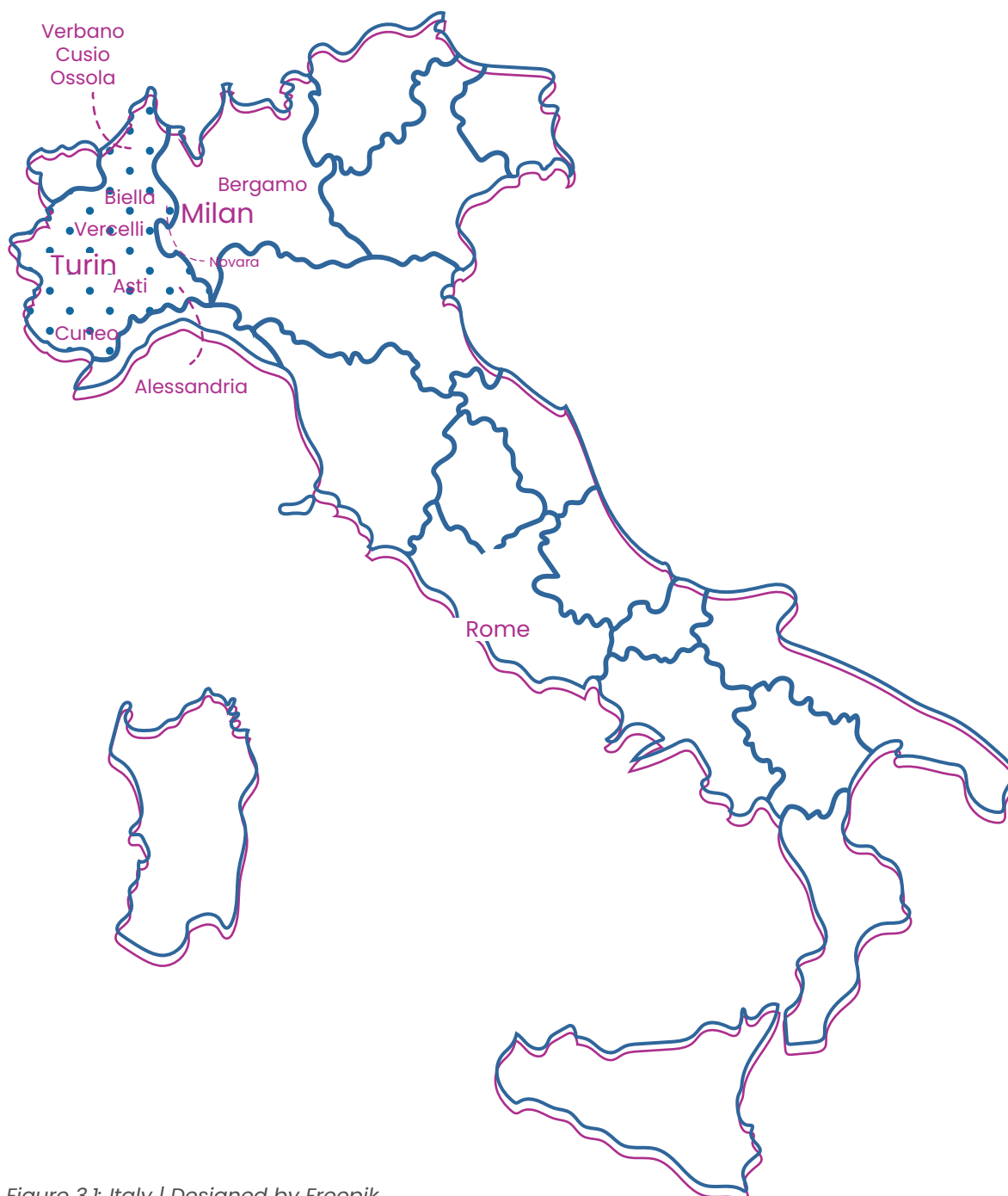


Figure 3.1: Italy | Designed by Freepik

Verbano-Cusio-Ossola (which falls under Novara) and Vercelli. Furthermore, three more cities were selected: Milan, Rome, and Bergamo. Milano was chosen as it is the economic hub of Italy and is considered the most futuristic and advanced city. Rome instead is the Capital of Italy and detains the record for the highest number of architects (18.390 registered in the Professional Register in 2022). Lastly, Bergamo, is famously known between the Architects Registers for promoting gender policies and is considered one of the most equitable in terms of opportunities.

Methodology

As introduced in the previous sub-chapter, the questionnaire was divided into three categories of surveyed people:

1. **Men**
2. **Women**
3. **Non-binary**

To each category different questions and a different number of them was asked, after eleven common ones which were about exploring the general information such as name, surname, age, profession and how long they have had worked for.

1. **Men:** 7 mandatory common questions and 6 more if they declared to having children. Among the first seven, men were asked whether they believe in gender discrimination, both outside and inside the workplace, their knowledge on it, known standing policies in their workplace and their feelings on all these topics. The last six questions, about kids, interrogated them about the way in which they shaped, if they had to, their career around their newborns, as well as whether they were as affected by it as their partner.

2. **Women:** 4 mandatory general questions on their career, 12 questions on discrimination in the workplace and outside, and 6 more if they declared to having children. The 12 questions on discrimination navigate around bad experiences such as physical and psychological violence, or even how simply being a women influences how they are treated and how much they are paid. The last six questions, about kids, interrogated them about the way in which they shaped, if they had to, their career around their newborns, as well as whether they were as affected by it as their partner.

3. **Non-binary:** 7 mandatory questions on their career and discrimination. Equally to women,

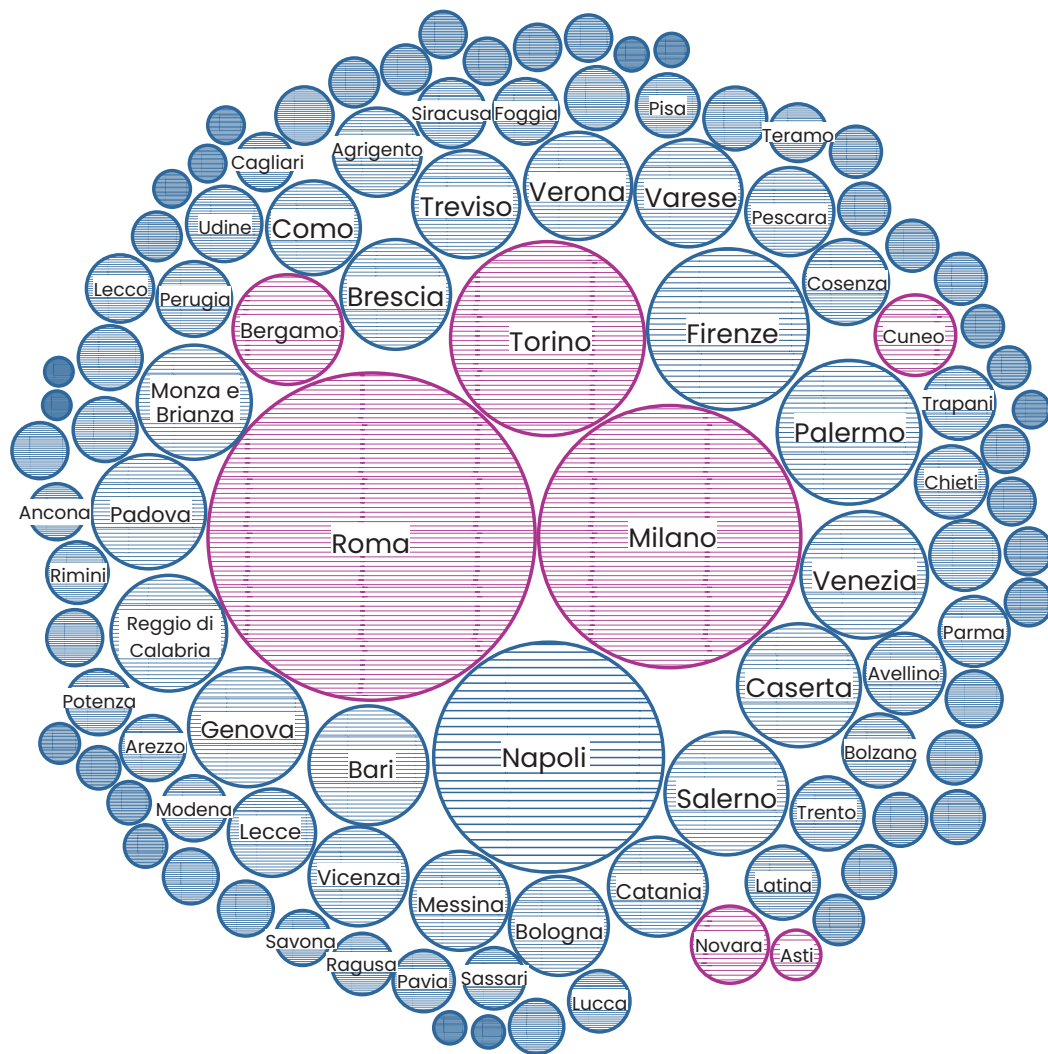


Figure 3.2: Rapporto CNAPPC 2021

discrimination extends to physical and psychological violence, as well as mistreatment and pay gaps.

Receivers

It is important to notice that the survey has been conducted in Italian, due to the sample surveyed.

As anticipated in the introduction, the questionnaire was initially proposed to all the provinces of the Piedmont Region, as well as Milan, Rome and Bergamo by a presentation email, to which some agreed to, and some did not answer. However, an analysis of all the Professional

Registers has been conducted, as to preventively understand the sample, as well as the territory in general. The following data has been found:

A) *Number of architects under the professional register.*

1. Biella: 308
2. Torino: 6674
3. Cuneo: 1286
4. Roma: 18390
5. Milano: 12139
6. Bergamo: 2241
7. Novara: 1157
8. Alessandria: 759
9. Asti: 465
10. Vercelli: 280

B) *Number of female architects under the professional register (2021) out of the 10 investigated:*

1. (10th) Asti: 50,8%
2. (13th) Biella: 49,7%
3. (16th) Alessandria: 49,4%
4. (17th) Roma: 49,3%
5. (19th) Milano: 48,8%
6. (23rd) Torino: 47,3 %
7. (25th) Vercelli: 47,1%
8. (29th) Novara: 46,2%
9. (43rd) Cuneo: 44,6%
10. (66th) Bergamo: 41,4%

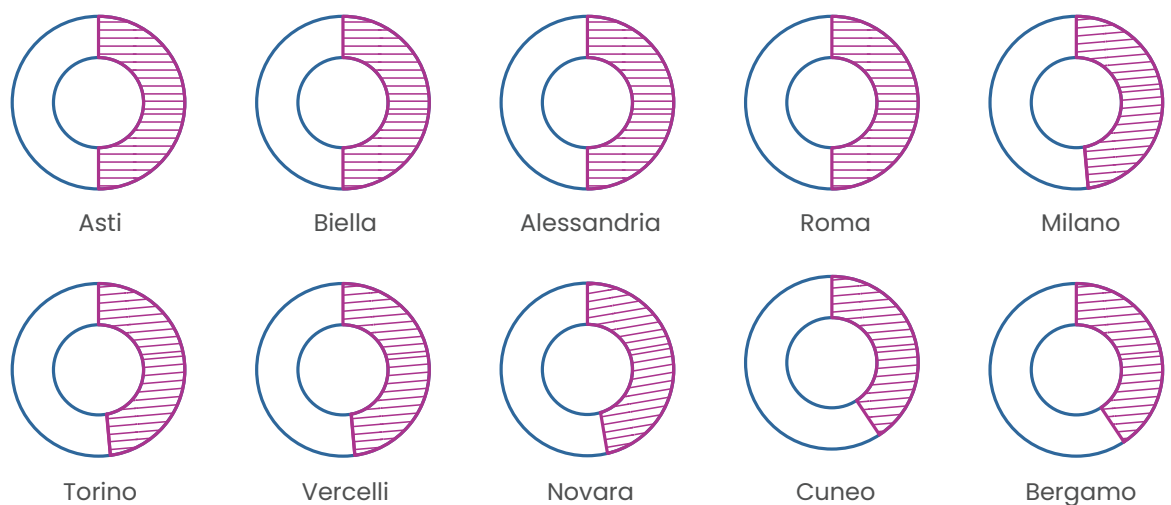


Figure 3.3: Rapporto CNAPPC 2021

C) *Number of youth architects (<41 years old) under the professional register (2021) out of the 10 investigated:*

1. (18th) Cuneo: 33,9%
2. (26th) Torino: 31,7%
3. (35th) Roma: 30,0%
4. (40th) Milano: 29,5%
5. (41st) Asti: 29,5%
6. (54th) Biella: 27,6%
7. (62nd) Bergamo: 26,4%
8. (87th) Vercelli: 22,5%
9. (94th) Novara: 21,3%
10. (104th) Alessandria: 16,9%

D) No specific data was found for the Gender pay gap specifically among the 10 investigated Registers, however we can find data at the national level as follows:

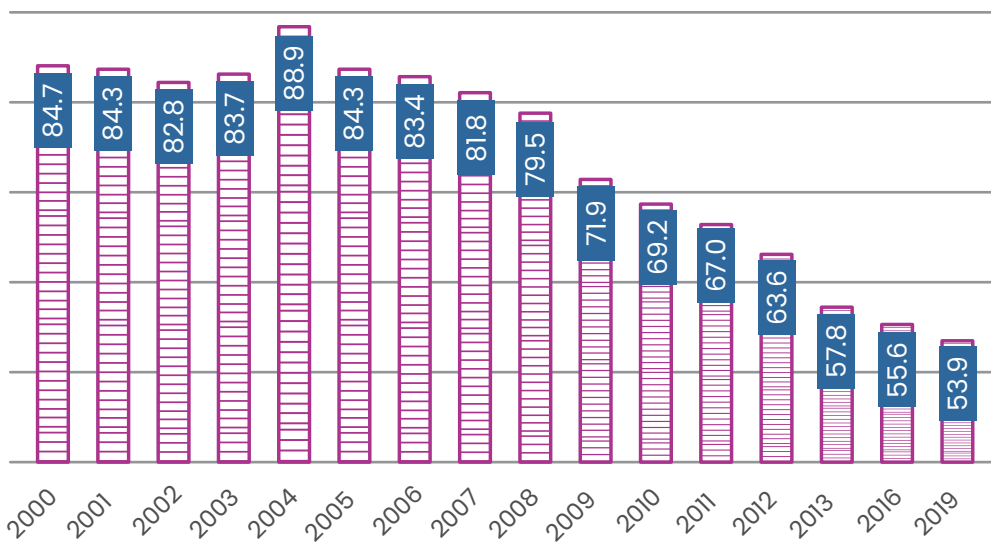


Figure 3.4: Rapporto CNAPPC 2021

The graph shows how the trend has definitely lowered compared to the beginning of the 2000s, however it is still extremely high.

E) Annual mean salary divided by age and gender (2019):

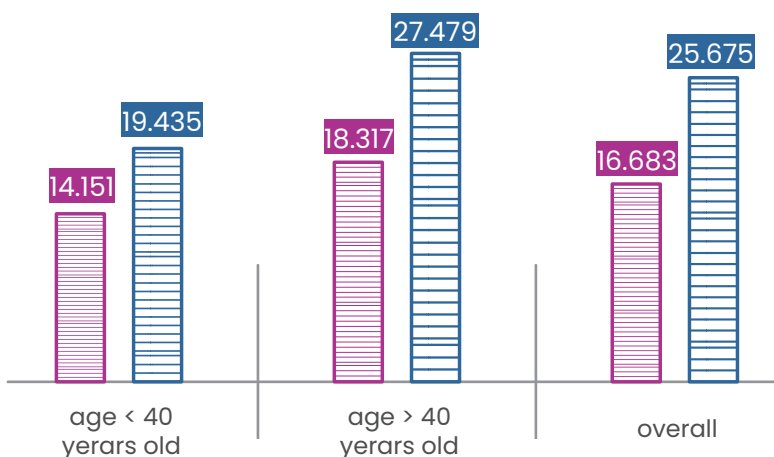


Figure 3.5: Rapporto CNAPPC 2021

Data Collection

The actual data collection, after the stipulation of the questionnaire, was more complicated than what was predicted. The introductory email was sent in the beginning of April to all of the eleven listed Registers, however, only three of them answered and provided feedbacks: Biella, Bergamo and Vercelli, the others did not reply. In my opinion, when treating such issues, a non-answer, it is an answer itself.

The three responding institutions explained how the eventual disclosure of the questionnaire had to first be approved by the committee, therefore foreseeing a long bureaucracy period. While Vercelli refused to share it, due to the fact that it is not “within their current priorities”, Bergamo and Biella approved to share it with their subscribers.

As anticipated in the introduction, Bergamo is renowned for its support towards gender equality policies, and it was confirmed when it was revealed that there is a specific group of people and architects dedicated to that. This work group suggested some modifications to the initial questionnaire, as to not exclusively direct it to employed people, but also to self-employed workers. This was due to the fact the questions initially did not leave enough space for those people that are affected by discriminations in different ways than from a boss or a colleague directly, or that cannot afford to be affected by maternity or paternity in the same way as someone which is employed (would otherwise mean no income and revenue for the entire period). After fixing these issues, the questionnaire was ‘tested’ by ten of the women who are members of the aforementioned group. It was eventually approved to be shared on the public newsletter, as to reach all of the subscribers of the Professional Registry of Bergamo.

The same method and bureaucratic steps were followed by the Professional Registry of Biella, and also shared in their newsletter. However, Biella cannot boast an Equal Rights group, maybe due to the fact that it is a much smaller Registry (308 vs. 2241), however, it still showed a great interest in such an important issue, that can sometimes make older and/or smaller institutions uncomfortable, due to the possible negative feedback and image that could come out of it.

As stated earlier, the queries were carefully selected and balanced, as to accommodate employees, employers, self-employed and less conventional workers. It could have been filled in in an anonymous or open way, and most questions allowed for the respondents to provide further explanation, or no answer at all, due to the

sensibility of some of the queries, which could have made the interviewee uncomfortable.

Here is a list and analysis of the questions:

SECTION A: General knowledge of the participant:

This group of questions was directed to all the genders (female, male and non-binary), mostly to gather demographic answers, but also to make the participant feel more comfortable and loosen up for the more specific and private ones:

1. Name and surname* – this could have been left blank, as to remain anonymous;
2. Age – dividing in age categories, could also help us determine to what age group we were more referring to;
3. In what year did you graduate?
4. In what did you graduate and specialized?
5. Are you licensed as an architect?
6. Are you inscribed in the Professional Registry?
7. To which Professional Registry are you subscribed to?
8. Are you self-employed?
9. What type of work do you do?
10. Are you satisfied with you work?
11. Gender – This question, aside from being fundamental for the data acquisition (since it is a gender based questionnaire), also allowed the diversification of the following questions;

* This question has eventually been eliminated during the spread of the questionnaire, as to facilitate problems linked with bureaucracy

SECTION B: The following questions were directed exclusively towards men, both to acquire data to compare to the women's one, but also to understand how these men feel about important topics such as Pay Gender Gap and Gender Discrimination in the workplace:

12. Are there Gender policies in your workplace?
13. How do you feel about issues such as discrimination towards women in the workplace?
14. Do you think there is a Gender Pay Gap at a global level?
15. Do you think there is a Gender Pay Gap in your workplace?
16. In general, what do you think about Gender issues?
17. Have you ever been asked (during your first job interview or during your career) whether you wanted children or not?
18. Do you have children?

SECTION C: The following questions were exclusively directed towards women, the main target of this whole questionnaire, since it is their experience we are

actually investigating.

19. Have you ever been asked (during your first job interview or during your career) whether you wanted children or not?
20. Have you ever had any type of negative repercussions in sight of a possible maternity, like mobbing, or any other reason?
21. If you answered yes, please provide further information if you want;
22. Do you have children?

SECTION D: The following questions were exclusively directed towards women, and asked more in detail whether they were ever subjected to any type of discrimination, not only in their workplace, but also in their private life, and how that affected them and their life.

23. Do you feel like a burden in your workplace simply because of your gender?
24. Are you assigned tasks not linked to your job, just because you are a woman?
25. If you answered yes, please provide further information if you want;
26. Do you feel like culturally, not directly, family members and/or colleagues expect from you further duties?
27. If you answered yes, please provide further information if you want;
28. Do you feel like your male colleagues have the same respect for you, compared to their male colleagues?
29. Have you experienced any type of abuse, physical and/or psychological, in your workplace?
30. Have you ever been in any other type of uncomfortable circumstance?
31. If you answered yes, please provide further information if you want;
32. Do you think there is a Gender Pay Gap?
33. Do you know or think you are compensated less than your male colleagues?
34. Would you like to add anything more?

SECTION E: The following section is directed to both men and women, which have previously answered 'yes' to the question whether they had children or not.

35. How many children do you have?
36. Did you have to pause your career for your children?
37. If you answered yes, please explain;
38. Did your career suffer from your maternity/paternity leave?
39. Have you ever had to pause your career for

any other reason? (e.g. Having to care for an elderly family member)

40. Did you have any problem after informing your workplace about your maternity/paternity?

SECTION F: The following questions were exclusively directed towards nonbinary people, acknowledging their lower level of privilege and the higher risk of discrimination.

41. Do you feel like your colleagues have the same respect for you?

42. Have you experienced any type of abuse, physical and/or psychological, your workplace?

43. Have you ever been in any other type of uncomfortable circumstance?

44. If you answered yes, please provide further information if you want;

45. Do you think there is a Gender Pay Gap?

46. Do you know or think you are compensated less than your male colleagues?

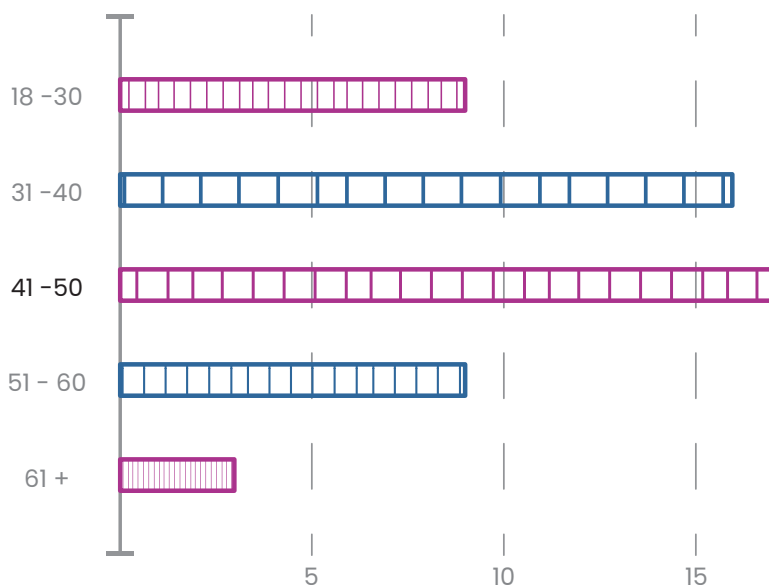
47. Would you like to add anything more?

Data Analysis

After a month from the release date, the questionnaire was closed, and the data collected analyzed, with a total of **100 answers** among the two Registers. Here follows the graphical representation of the data analysis through graphs, as well as some of the interesting comments left by the respondents, divided by men, women and non-binary people and by Professional Registry:

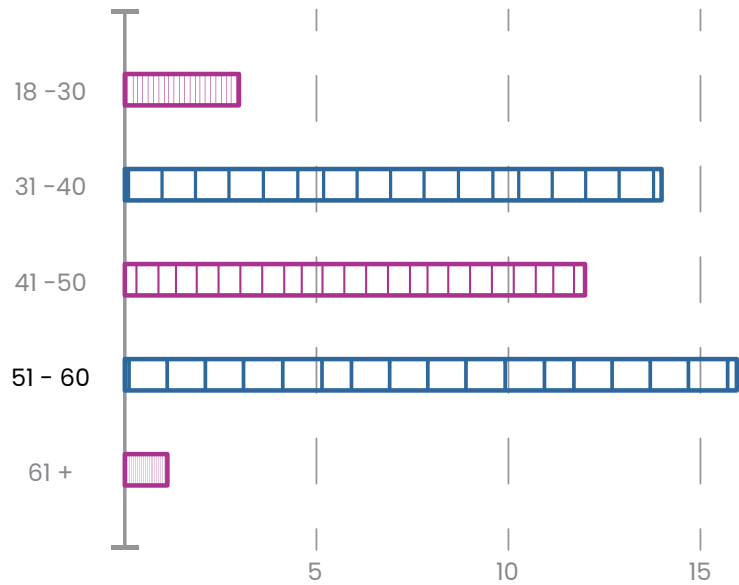
General Questions

Age (Biella):



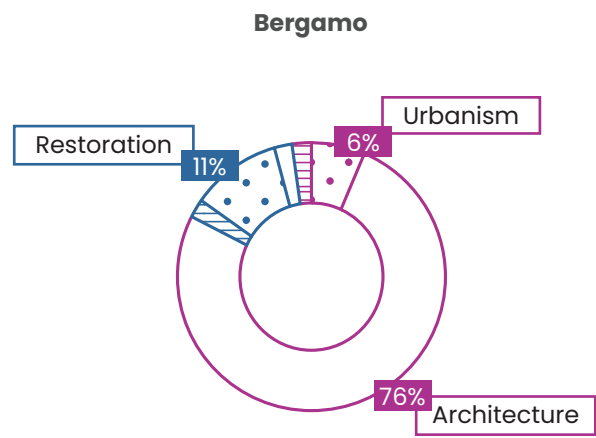
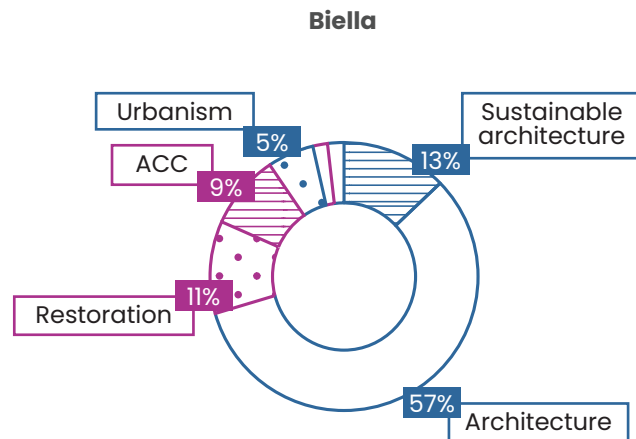
We can see from this graph that the age is well spread, having a quite equal number before and after the 40s, and the majority being between 41 and 50 years old.

Age (Bergamo):



We can see from this graph that the age is well spread, having a quite equal number before and after the 40s, and the majority being between 51 and 60 years old.

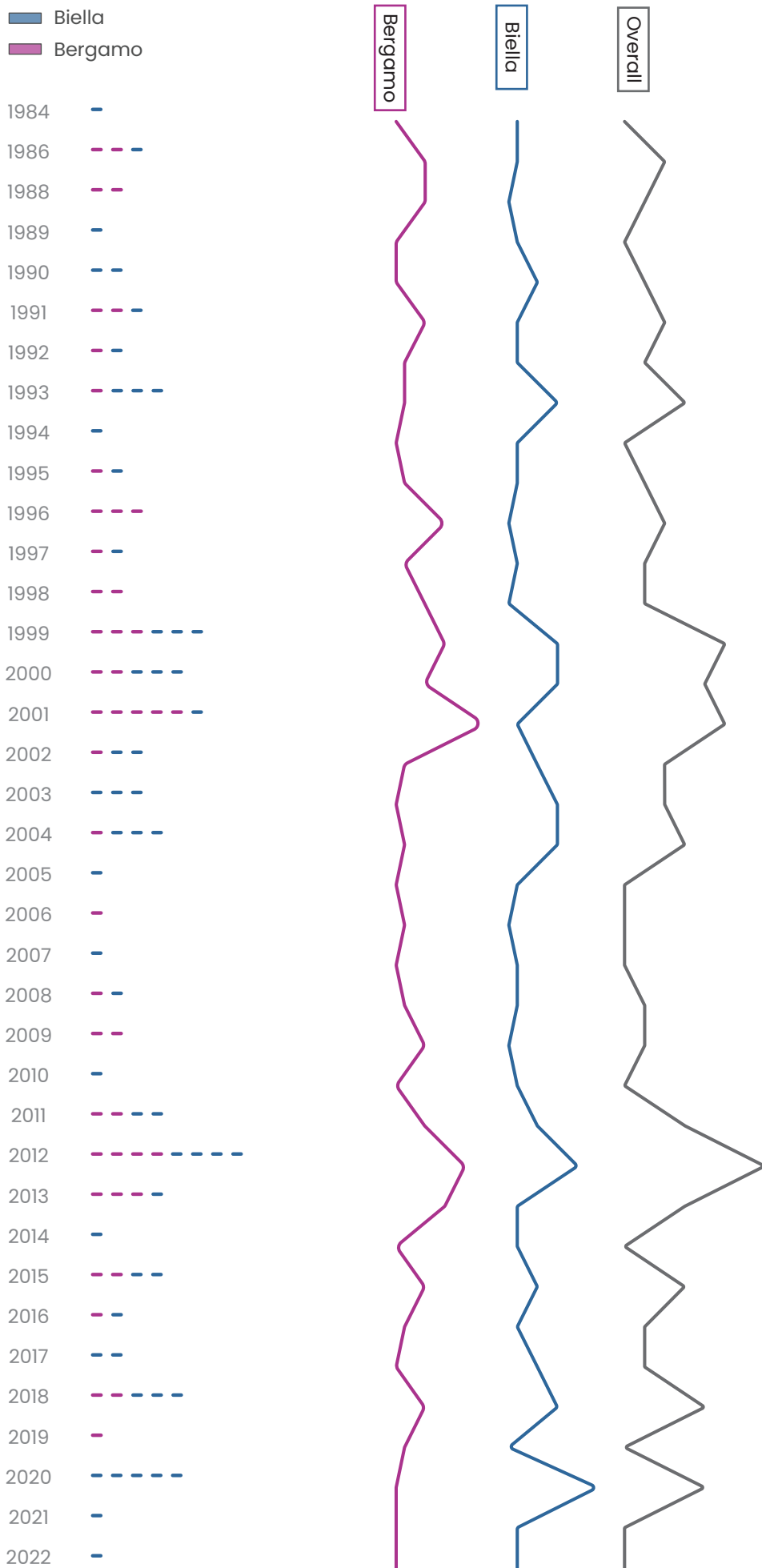
In what did you graduate and specialized?



This question is not particularly relevant for the aim of this questionnaire, however, it is still interesting for understanding the different fields in which these architects work in.

In what year did you graduate? (Biella & Bergamo)

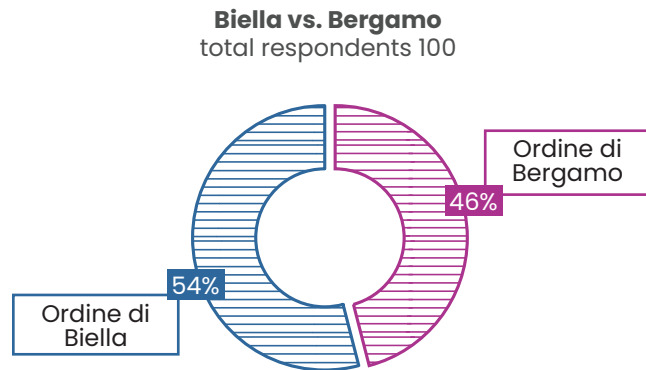
■ Biella
■ Bergamo



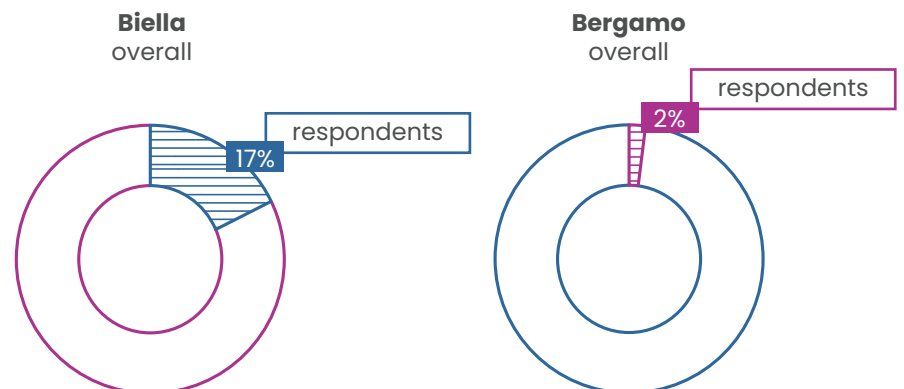
Are you licensed as an architect? Are you inscribed in the Professional Registry?

Obviously, everyone answered yes to these questions, since the method through which the questionnaire was shared was the newsletter of the two different Professional Registers, only sent to the current subscribers.

To which professional registry are you subscribed to?

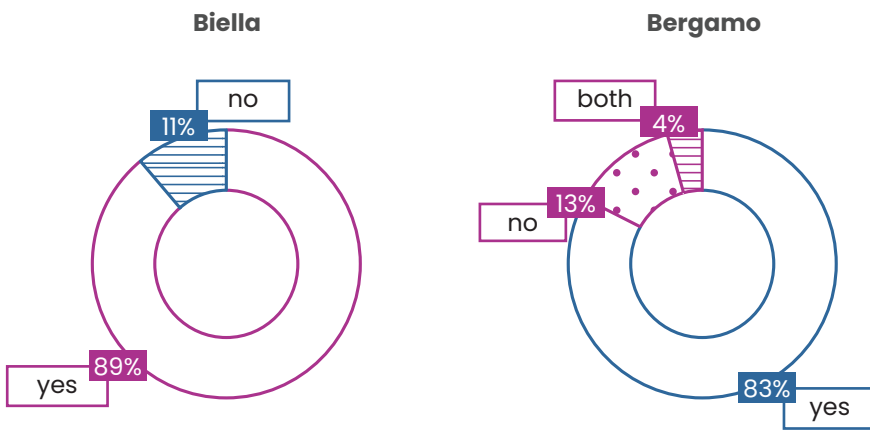


This data was not predictable, due to the large size difference among the two registries, as mentioned before. Even if Bergamo is more than seven times bigger than Biella, the latter still makes up more than half of all of the respondents, with a 54%.



It is therefore interesting to note the big participation received from Biella, the smaller registry, with a total of 54 architects responding to the questionnaire, out of the 308 total registered (17%). While Bergamo, with its 46 responding architects out of 2241 (2%), provided a smaller sample. However, I would like to note that the questionnaire circulated for less time in Bergamo, due to some bureaucratic issues which delayed the publication of it. I would also like to mention again the presence of a "Working Group on Equal Opportunities" (*Gruppo di Lavoro per le Pari Opportunità*), which, like the name suggests, works to promote and assure equal rights to their architects. It is a great initiative, which should be replicated also in the other Registers.

Are you self-employed?



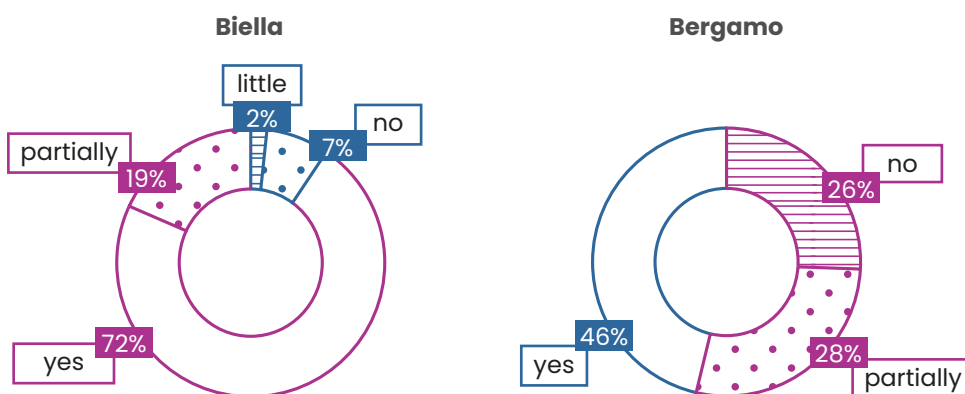
We notice how in both registers the majority of people are self-employed, meaning that it will influence the following questions, especially the ones about discrimination in the workplace.

What type of work do you do?

The answers are various but not particularly relevant for the aim of this questionnaire.

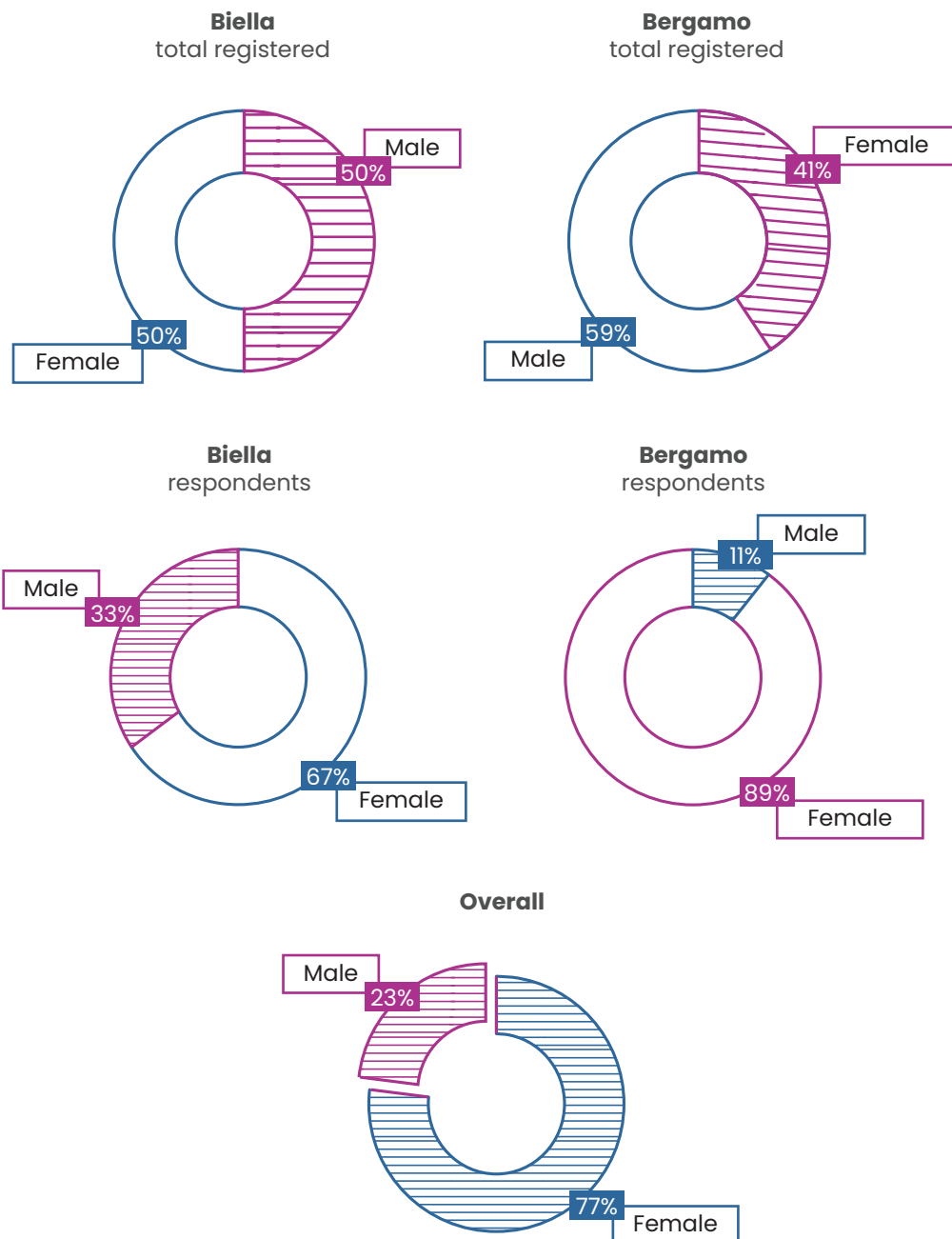
Among the most common we can find: architect, interior designer, project manager and supervisor, store designer, teacher, professor and public official. Most of the respondents did not specify their field of work, rather only 'self-employed architect' or specified how they are self-employed but work together with some colleagues as autonomous workers.

Are you satisfied with your job?



Those who answered 'partially' or 'little' mostly specified that their negative answer is mainly linked with the increasing required bureaucracy and inflation, as well as the low salary compared to the high working hours and stressed required by the job. Some respondents also mentioned how Covid and the current economic situation which derives from it still influence the lower number of commission received.

Gender



Biella is a small Registry (308 people) and has 157 women architects. Out of these 157 women, 36 answered the questionnaire, versus only 18 out of the 151 men, showing a higher interaction and/or interest from women.

The same "gender" interest can be seen in Bergamo, composed of 2241 architects, and that respectively has 928 women and 1313 men. Out of all males only 5 responded, while 42 women did. Also in this case we can observe a much higher participation from women.

We can therefore see how overall women showed an higher interest and participation in questionnaire, even thought for example in the Registry of Bergamo, man are in an higher percentage overall. We can only assume that women might have felt closer to the topic and decided to provide their personal experience to it.

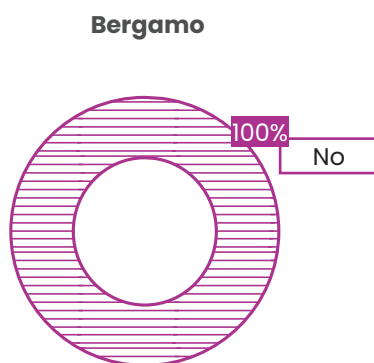
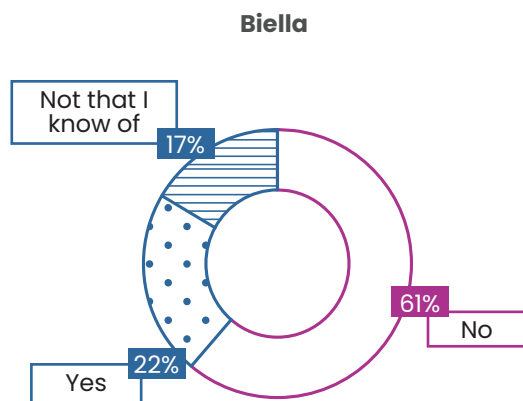
Male Section

Even if this dissertation aims at highlighting the customs that influence the career path of women, the questionnaire wanted to investigate how men see and live with gender problems, inside and outside their workplace.

I want to highlight that some of the following questions required for men to provide their personal feeling and experience, on facts that are scientifically proven to exist, such as the Pay Gender Gap, so some of their negative answers that I have reported do not aim at diminishing the real problems that affect women, but more at proving how gender problems mainly affect them (women) and how some men are completely oblivious to gender issues, even in a non problematic way, while other are active discriminators, even if they obviously do not admit to it.

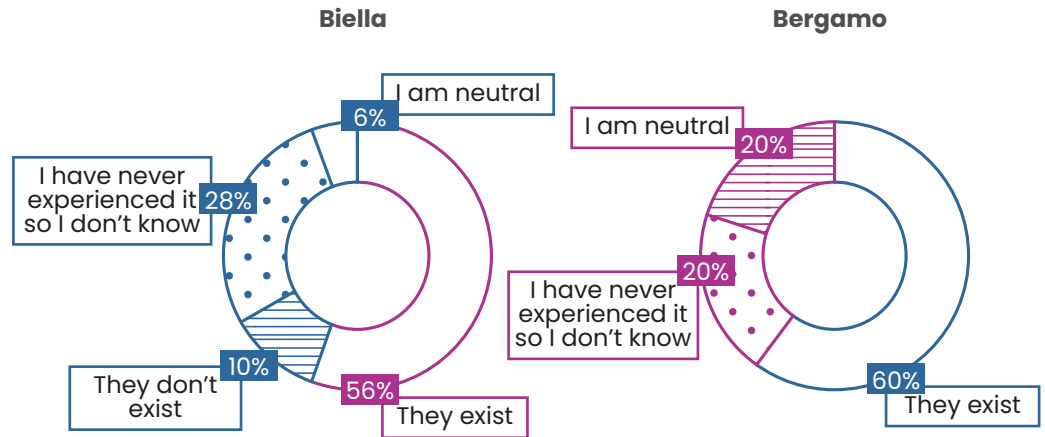
For this same reason, some questions are common to both men and women, as to use the data to compare how equal or similar situations affect them in different ways, such as having children.

Are there Gender policies in your workplace?



As highlighted in the previous sub-chapter, most interviewed are self-employed (>80% in both Registers), and sometimes specified that they worked alone or with one or two colleagues. Being smaller offices definitely influences this answer.

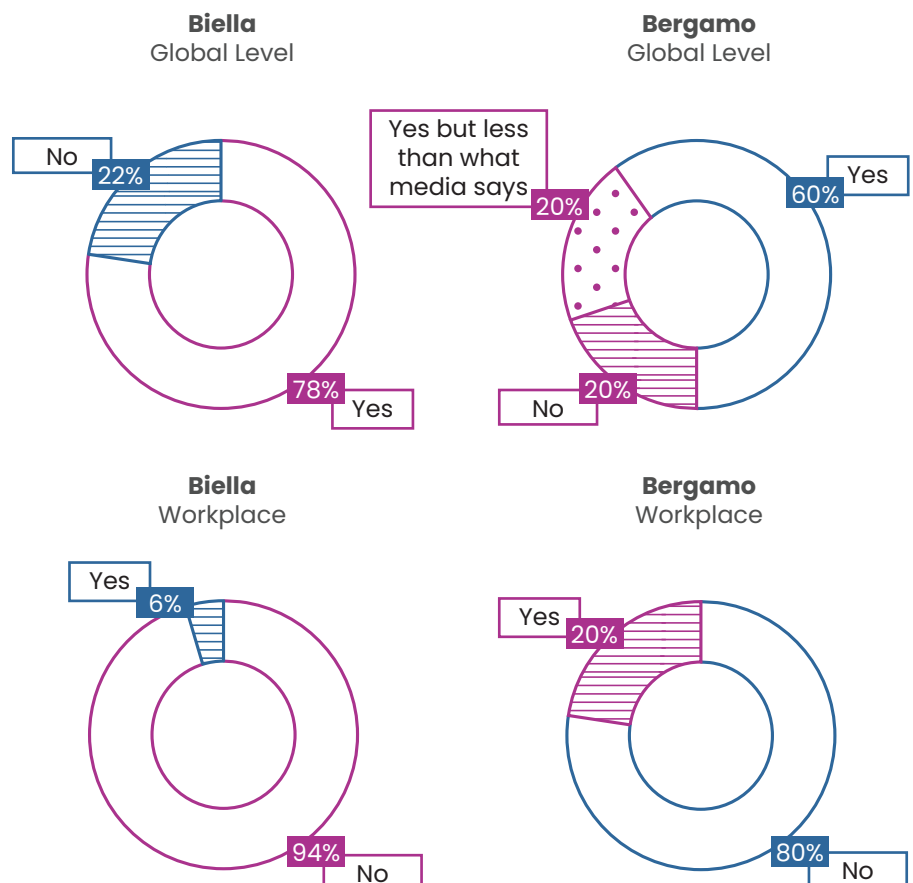
How do you feel about issues such as discrimination towards women in the workplace?



Luckily the vast majority recognizes gender discrimination towards women as a real issue (56% in the case of Biella and 60% in Bergamo). Nevertheless, almost half of both Registers still want to distance themselves or rather be neutral to the issue. Only few respondents (10%) in the Registry of Biella refuse to acknowledge gender discrimination.

Do you think there is a Gender Pay Gap at a global level?

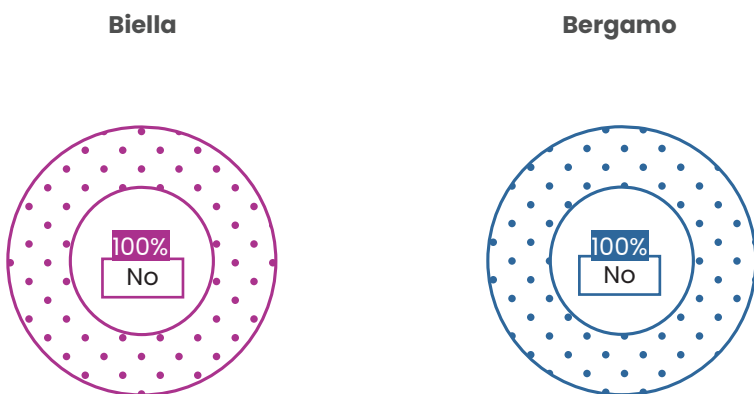
Do you think there is a Gender Pay Gap in your workplace?



By introducing the same question related to the Gender Pay Gap, but at two different levels (firstly the global one, and then one closer to the respondent itself - his workplace), we wanted to investigate how they firstly felt about the issue in general (reminding once again that GPG is a proven occurrence that affects all countries - see page 17) and then if they would recognize it once close to it: it is always easier to acknowledge something that is far from us, the real deal is then admitting and accepting it once we are in it or we even indirectly experience it.

However, as expected, most respondents do agree to the presence of a Gender Pay Gap at a global level, however, according to them, it stops there, and it does not occur in their workplace.

Have you ever been asked (during your first job interview or during your career) whether you wanted children or not?



This data by itself should not be surprising, since it is illegal in Italy to ask questions regarding the private life of the employee or the employee-to-be during interviews (Dlgs 198/2006). However, as we will see in the next sub-chapter, the responds of women are much different. This highlights once more how having children mainly, if not exclusively, influences women.

In general, what do you think about Gender issues?

The question was open, allowing them to provide a long explanation if wanted. Here follow the answers, divided by Professional Registry:

Biella

1. Gender equality should be achieved where tasks are equally possible for both genders.
2. Legitimate, personally I would give more weight to the person and his qualities/skills/ability rather than his gender.

3. *It exists and it's not right, it depends on the mentality of the employer.*
4. *It is not right.*
5. *We should all be equal.*
6. *It is not a parameter that can affect wages.*
7. *Real problem.*
8. *A somewhat vague and generalist question, difficult to give a concise and satisfactory answer. I believe it is a topic that is rightly discussed, in recent years I think it is being discussed with increasing knowledge of the facts and intelligence, even if, as always, there are exceptions and exaggerations. In the construction world, unlike other working areas, it is perhaps still a bit "hidden" and more difficult to manage, but with the passing of time and the rejuvenation of professionals, the situation is certainly slowly improving in our area too.*
9. *There are still large disparities.*
10. *Many words, not many facts in support of gender equality.*
11. *There may be gender discrimination, sometimes it is not justified.*
12. *Difficult for a woman to manage the construction site at times.*
13. *Global objective: equal rights.*
14. *These are issues that are sometimes excessively emphasized with the aim of stirring things up within the world of work.*
15. *I think there should be no discrimination of any kind.*
16. *I don't express myself.*
17. *I've been underpaid by a woman for years so I'm a bit biased...*
18. *Nothing specific.*

Bergamo

1. *in my opinion this term has taken on an ambiguous meaning, misrepresenting what the real goal is. The gender issue has included so many areas (G.'s equality, G's freedom, G.'s violence,*

etc.) that it has diluted the focus on each of the many problems that our society has to face individually. Dismissing many aspects by placing them under the umbrella of the "gender issue" means delegating the problem to others, such as specific professionals (sociologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, etc.). I believe that each person must take charge of knowing and deepening what the individual issues are in order to avoid falling into the trap of "... I'm not interested in G's problem." or "...it's not my place to deal with G's problem."

2. I think that women, in our profession, are still not really taken into consideration today, but it is not like it is better in other professions ... too many professionals on the market.
3. Illegal subordinate VAT number. (?)
4. I do not care
5. Which make no sense to exist.

From these answers it is possible to understand that luckily most men recognize that there actually are issues, even if they try and demean them for the most part.

It might be because it is more complicated to understand the length on which something undeterminable such as gender can actually affect your life when you are on the 'safe' side. Belittling gender gaps merely to merit proves how little gender discrimination affects them. Nonetheless, denying or diminishing an issue solely because it does not directly affect you, does not excuse or justify you. Acknowledging something that has been going on for hundreds of years and has been proven for decades is just the bare minimum.

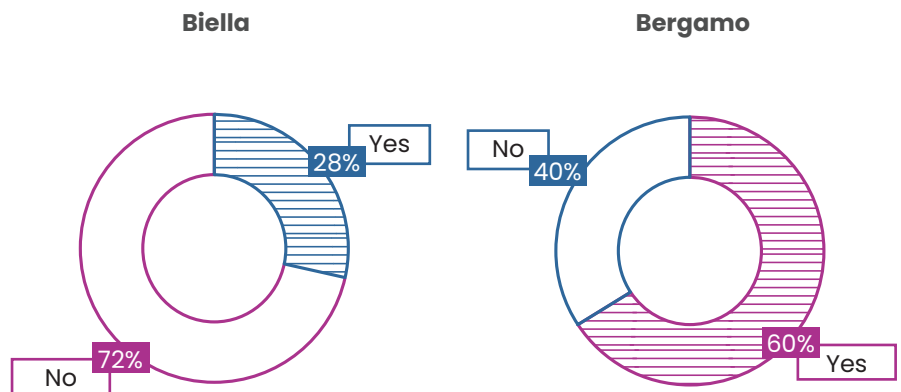
However, some respondents still attribute gender issues to women (as if it was a choice), such as answerer n.12, who claims that they are linked to the difficulty that women have – which is just an assumption and presupposition – to manage construction sites: first of all, not all women have to manage them, so why would the other female architects still be discriminated? Secondly, how it will be shown in the next section, the only problems that women have in construction sites are linked with the poor and disrespectful behavior of male workers, which has nothing to do with how a construction site is managed in terms of work.

Another interesting answer is n.17 which cites "I've been

underpaid by a woman for years so I'm a bit biased...". Reminding that the initial question was 'In general, what do you think about Gender issues?', does this mean the respondent condones Gender discrimination based on one of his personal experiences? Even if the answer is a bit superficial and ambiguous it leaves space for an interesting consideration: if one man whom was underpaid by a woman (*note: this is not a gender issue since it is not a **systematic** occurrence, however it still is an issue*) can recognize the problem and grow a plight towards women, why it does not happen when the tables are turned, and the experiences of women are belittled to problems of merely merit, or accused of overexaggerating and generalizing?

I would like to highlight how most answers which deny or demean gender issues come from the age group of men who are 50+ years old, and as mentioned by respondent n.8 "[...] with the passing of time and the rejuvenation of professionals, the situation is certainly slowly improving [...]" we hope the situation can only improve. And we can actually see it for ourselves (purely within this questionnaire) with the thirteen answers, among the two Registries, which clearly denounce the problems and stand against them.

Do you have children?

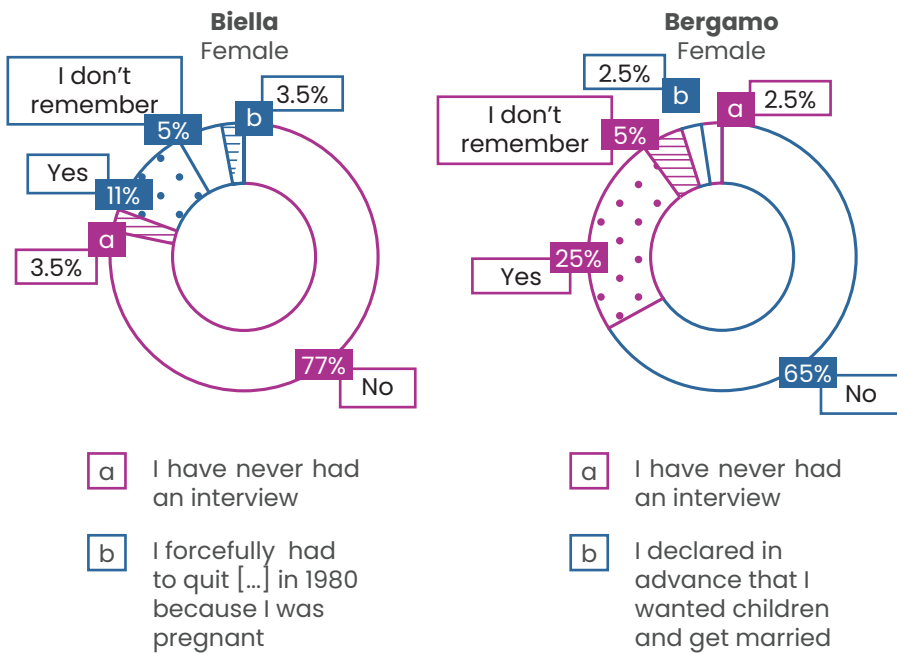


After this question, those who answered yes were sent to Section regarding children (see page n.91, sub-chapter 'Children'), the rest of the interviewed were dismissed.

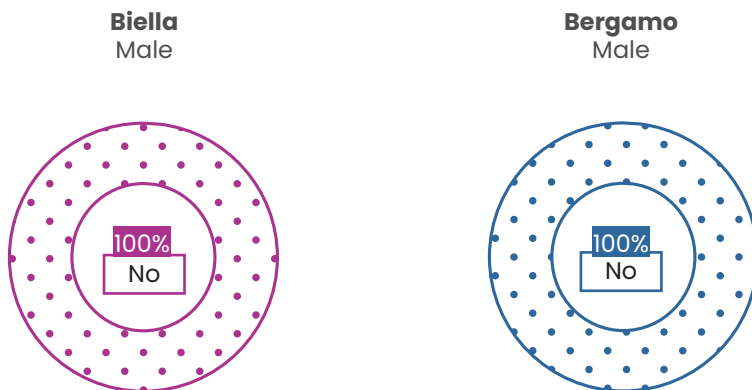
Female Section

This section starts with general questions regarding women and their experiences inside and outside their work life; it will then lead to a *Discrimination section* (see page n. 76) and eventually moves on to the *Children section* (see page n. 91) for those who have kids, which is shared with men and took answers from both.

Have you ever been asked (during your first job interview or during your career) whether you wanted children or not?



As mentioned in the previous sub-chapter, it is illegal in Italy to ask questions regarding the private life of the employee or the employee-to-be during interviews (Dlgs 198/2006). However, especially when it comes to women, interviewer seem to forget this law.



If we compare the different answers we see how much more common it is for women to be asked whether they want children or not in the future. Not only that, but even the forced innate need instilled in women to declare it, as if it is something owned to the employer (see answer b from Bergamo - Female).

The variety of answers received by women, compared to the univocal and single answers of men, shows how even the idea of having children can affect the career of women from the beginning, starting from the initial interview. We will never know how these questions and their following answers influenced the positive outcome of those interviews, but we for sure know they somehow did.

Have you ever had any type of negative repercussions in sight of a possible maternity, like mobbing, or for any other reason?

If you answered yes, please provide further information if you want;

Even if the first question was a closed one, with the possibility of giving a different answer from the ones provided, many women chose to add a personal comment or experience.

Biella

- The majority of women said that they did not have any type of repercussion
- Five women said they had some type of repercussion
- One said she was not hired
- One said she received subtle comments
- One said she did not have any type of leave and had to bring her child in the office from the beginning.

In the following question, those who answered yes were asked to provide further information's if wanted. Here follow the answers:

1. At a meeting with a municipal technician and the mayor. It was me, the architect for whom I follow various building practices and the client. I held the conversation because I had taken care of the practices.

In the end our interlocutors greeted the architect with a: "goodbye architect" and they greeted me with a: "goodbye ma'am" nothing too serious, of course but ... significant.

2. Upon returning from maternity leave I was automatically moved and demoted, without letting me know beforehand.

3. Motherhood is both a physical and mental condition: unquestionably bringing children into the world changes the life of the family, and especially of the mother. Being a freelancer complicates things a bit, when you decide to return from maternity leave your desk is waiting for you, but you have to win your clients back, and start from scratch...! Flexibility of working hours (and also of the workplace) however plays in favor in various situations.

4. With a young daughter, everything was foreclose to me in the 80s, including a university career.

Bergamo

- The majority of women said that they had some type of repercussion (21)
 - Fifteen said they did not have any type of repercussion
 - Two women said that their work influenced them into not having children.
 - One said *"No mobbing but mothers are not protected. It's important to dedicate time to family, but our job doesn't allow it and we have to adapt"*
 - Two said they decided not to have children
 - One said she decided to stay home with her daughter.
- In the following question, those who answered yes were asked to provide further informations if wanted. Here follow the answers:
- *I had children as a freelancer. The repercussions were not due to bullying suffered by others but due to problems in managing the profession and motherhood, given the commitment that both professional roles and mothers require. Especially if you don't want to give up, as it was for me, neither one nor the other role.*
 - *At the end of the leave agreed for the birth of my first child, my former employer (I was a fake "VAT number") told me (a week before the agreed date in which I should have gone back to work) that he would keep the boy who had replaced me with, subtly underlying that he was a man and would not be absent for months due to paternity leave in the future.*
 - *I was working 12 hours a day in a large architectural firm; when my son was born and I said that I no longer wanted to work the long hours I had worked before, they showed me the door.*
 - *Until recently I had continuous collaborations without ever having any type of contract, and where the working hours were very long and there was little flexibility. When I asked for more flexibility for family reasons, the straight answer was demotion. Even as a freelancer I find it hard to imagine the conciliation between professional activity and motherhood.*
 - *In the "fertile" years, professional growth was blocked.*
 - *My office is made up of me and another woman, both with small children, and obvious difficulties in reconciling all aspects.*
 - *Mobbing but never for reasons related to maternity.*

Toxic workplaces, they expect you to always have a fawning attitude towards them. The employment relationship is always one-way, I have always been subordinated in all respects (although I have never had an employment contract).

- With the first maternity leave I worked as freelancer at a studio and they never called me again. I also had to reconcile and reduce work time with family time, with a vertical part-time job. However, I would like to point out that my husband did the same for three years, allowing me to start my own business.

-It conditioned my hourly availability towards clients especially outside the usual office hours. It has not always been accepted and understood.

- I was paid less.

- Missing payments when I was not present in jobs outside the working hours. Oblayed to be present during office hours.

- As self-employed I had to decrease my workload.

- It influenced in interviews for recruitment.

- Another example, in a Project Manager assistant role the client did not want women because they 'would distract the workers'.

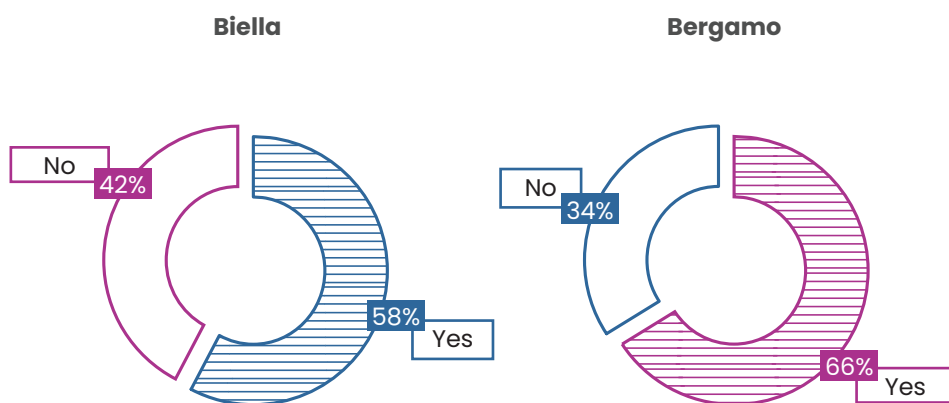
All of these just mentioned feedbacks are very personal experiences, which unfortunately are numerous.

These answers highlight how today, in Italy, it is very complicated to mix work life - as an architect in this case - with having children. There are numerous factors that in this case specifically work against the two: the long hours that this job requires, as well as the discriminatory behavior of numerous employers. I want to remind how having children is a basic right that has to be granted to both men and women that desire to become parents. Mobbing, firing, underpaying, demotion, are all practices which on paper are illegal (even if sometime some legal technicalities are used to overcome it).

It is important to note that, as of today, a female employee has a maternity leave of five months (to be spread before and after the delivery of the child), while a man only has 10 days. It clearly is a two-edged sword. On one side, the man will and can not be effected as much by the birth of its own child in terms of work life. On the other hand, however, not only he will not be able to spend time with its new born, but he will also indirectly

transfer most responsibilities, linked with the child, to the birthing person. The latter, will therefore be double affected: in its private life, as well as the working one. However, maternity and paternity leave are not only a law issue, but also a social one. Today, it is still believed by the vast majority, especially of men, that women have to carry the whole weight that parenthood brings. It is more socially acceptable to have a stay at home mom than dad. For this same reason employers discriminate against women, only seeing them as potential mothers.

Do you have children?

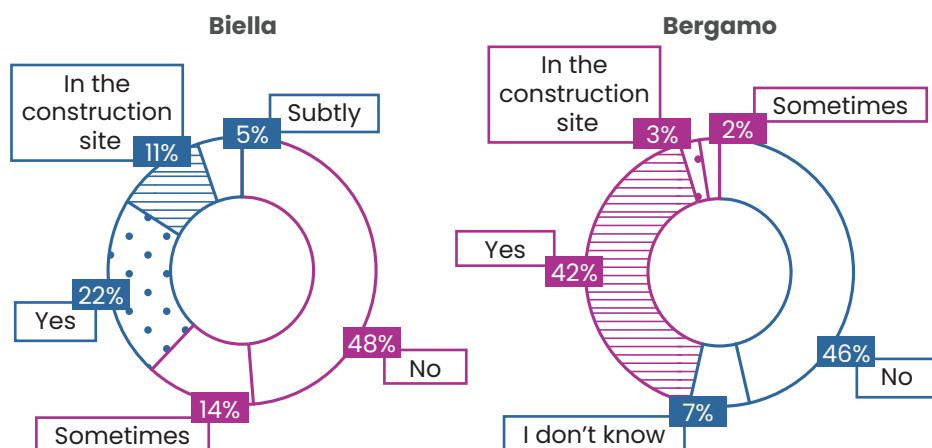


As of men, after this question those who answered yes were sent to Section regarding children (see page n.91, sub-chapter 'Children'), the rest of the interviewed to the discrimination Section.

Discrimination Section

This section goes more into detail, for whoever feels comfortable enough to talk about it, in experiences of discrimination, as well as other experiences that the interviewed women may have experienced. As aforementioned, this section was only open to women.

Do you feel like a burden in your work place, simply because of your gender?

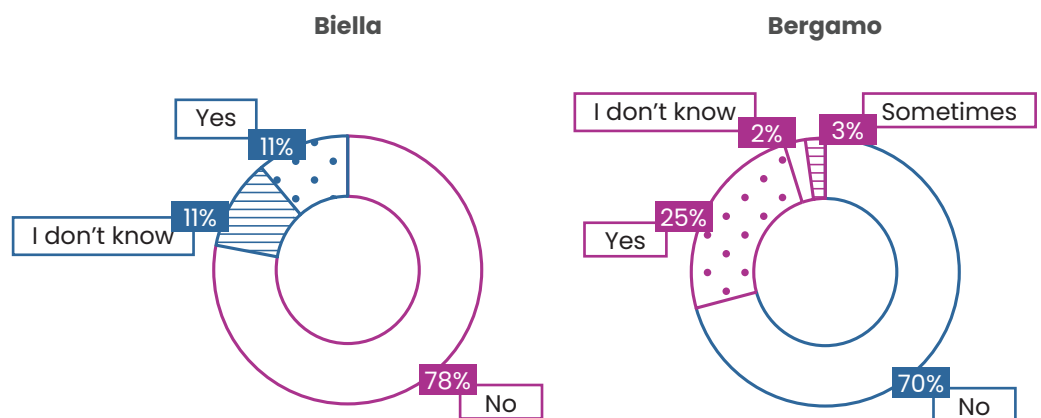


First of all, I would like to note that **30 out of the 36 responding women are self employed**, and most of them affirmed to be working alone at the beginning of the questionnaire. This leads to the fact that these cases are very different than employed (female) architects who work in close contact with male architects every day. This difference is already noticeable in this first question: most of the respondents that said yes to being downplayed because of their gender underlined that it happens in construction sites by construction workers, and not by their colleagues.

Some of the respondents provided further comments:

- *Sometimes in the construction site they don't consider you seriously as a male colleague.*
- *Sometimes. The attitude with some people is quite discriminatory.*
- *Yes, you are...Madam and not...Architect*
- *Difficult communication with businesses and sometimes even with customers (a man is listened to more).*
- *I am often mistaken for an employee and my professional title is not valued.*
- *30 years ago it was worse but that's no consolation.*

Are you assigned tasks not linked to you job, just because you are a woman?



Considering that 83% of the interviewed women are self-employed, these answers are very dramatic. A total of 30% is assigned, or thinks to be assigned, tasks not linked to their jobs. To further understand the extent to which this happens, or what they mean by it, here follow some further comments, left in this specific question in the questionnaire:

- *According to them "it is better for a woman to answer the telephone and the intercom".*

- Sometimes the wealthier clients take me for their secretary, others for their confidant and psychologist.

If you answered yes, please provide further information if you want.

The comments just listed were not the only one left by the respondents. This specific question required from those who answered yes to specify what they meant. Here follows their answers:

Biella

- As a young woman, working in collaboration with others, I was asked to take care of administrative aspects and not shipbuilding.

- Often, especially in small companies where it is quite common to do "a little bit of everything", I happen to carry out tasks that are not my responsibility, but my colleague does too. On some things I sometimes doubted that you were asked to me as a woman (example: "secretarial" tasks such as answering the phone, or acting as "assistant" to the owner's wife ...).

- The female figure of the architect is not always recognized, on site the workers tend to call you "Miss" and not according to the appropriate title. They often only recognize the role after demonstrating the skills. One single mistake makes us lose the hard-earned respect. Colleagues on site do not get the same treatment.

- Requested way of dressing to make presence; less bargaining; bullying at work.

- I also carry out secretarial or cable operator duties in the office where I have been collaborating for 20 years.

Bergamo

- Women are often underestimated for equal work with men.

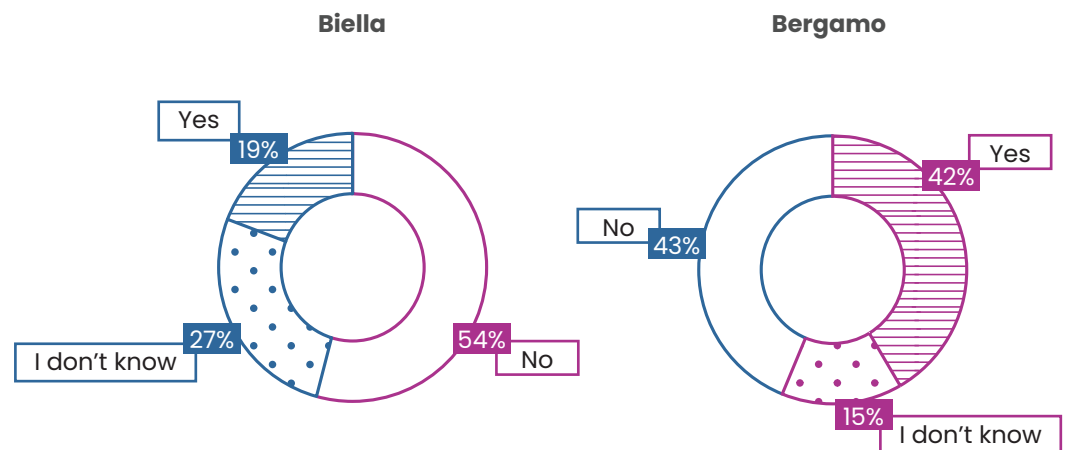
- I also do office work.

- I work in an office with other male and female colleagues of about the same age. I'm very lucky because it's a great environment. But when I think about it, when it comes to printing, scanning or secretarial work it seems to me that it is more natural to ask me than

male colleagues.

- I was repeatedly asked to make coffee, answer the phone, open the door, and other secretary duties. I was also told that the cleaning lady's job was more important than mine as an intern.

Do you feel like culturally, not directly, family members and/or colleagues expect from you further duties?



Here, again, follows a comment left by one respondent:
- Some family members would like me to stay at home more because I am a mother - professionally it would be useful for them [the government] to recognize something more about mothers.

If you answered yes, please provide further information if you want.

Again, some of the respondents decided to add further comments, that additionally highlight the gender stereotypes that today still exists, and that most men, and in many cases women as well (as a result of how strongly the patriarchy is engraved in us).

Biella

- A woman, mother, self-employed, who is also a housewife, psychologist and handyman. Having my office/studio at the home, everyone in the family asks me thinking that I have free time because I work from home. All enormously false.

- In the profession of construction site architect there is still the cultural legacy of the difficulty of relating to a woman, especially the older generations.

- Household chores and cooking. Now the husband takes care of it. The work takes up a lot of time.
- Home, work, daughter. I am separated and I take care of everything (my ex-husband is not present).
- In addition to work, taking care of the home and family by removing pieces of time from work, which takes place not always in the studio but around construction sites, even away from home.
- The family of origin believes that, despite the work commitment, I should still consider the idea of marriage and motherhood and that I should look for a man able to meet my needs.
- Taking care of family, and my parents, as a single woman.

Bergamo

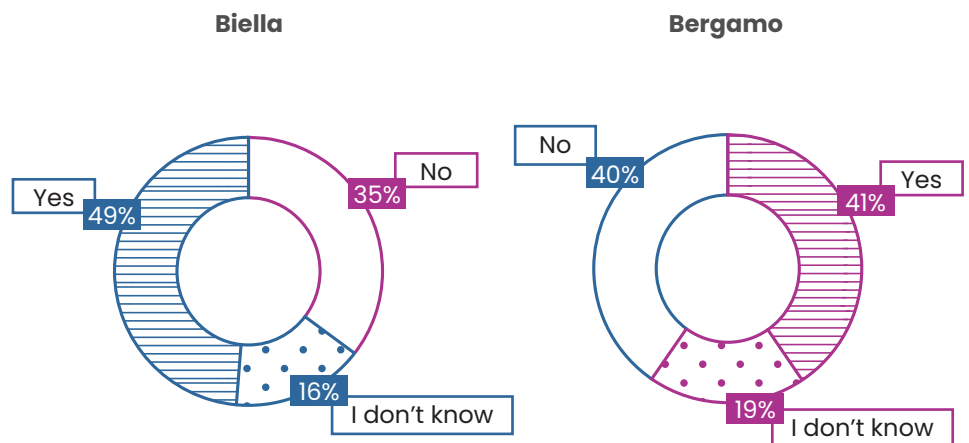
- Sometimes indirectly they make you act as a secretary. Often after a meeting with other professionals and male clients I am asked to write the minutes. Or I've had male colleagues expect me to remind them of appointments and/or deadlines.
- When I gave birth and returned to work shortly after, my colleague had assumed that I would return to work part-time to take care of the house / children.
- The mental load of family management, children and elderly parents.
- They expect a superwoman (always efficient, prompt, intuitive, cooperative and supportive).
- That we also take care of the house and family.
- The management of the house/family is entirely in my hands, the partner is collaborative but only on my explicit request.
- It may be assumed that a woman has more propensity to do some things, but in my experience I think it can happen more in the workplace, not from family members.
- In addition to carrying out the profession, they expect impeccability in the tasks relating to the house and my daughter, demands that are not expected from my partner.

- *Personal care [aesthetically], taking care of the family.*
- *Family care and work commitment.*
- *Child care.*
- *Especially in the south [of Italy], colleagues/clients expect an architect to be able to perform the tasks of a structural engineer, an installer, a surveyor, an engineer... in my opinion, everyone has their own task based on their own specialization*

From these answers we can really see how it is common for most working women with a family to be expected, directly or indirectly, to care for the children and the house, while still being a worker, ending up having two full-time jobs. Most of these women have to be, and are expected to be, the main carers of their children, which is sadly a societal norm that we have been carrying for ever as society.

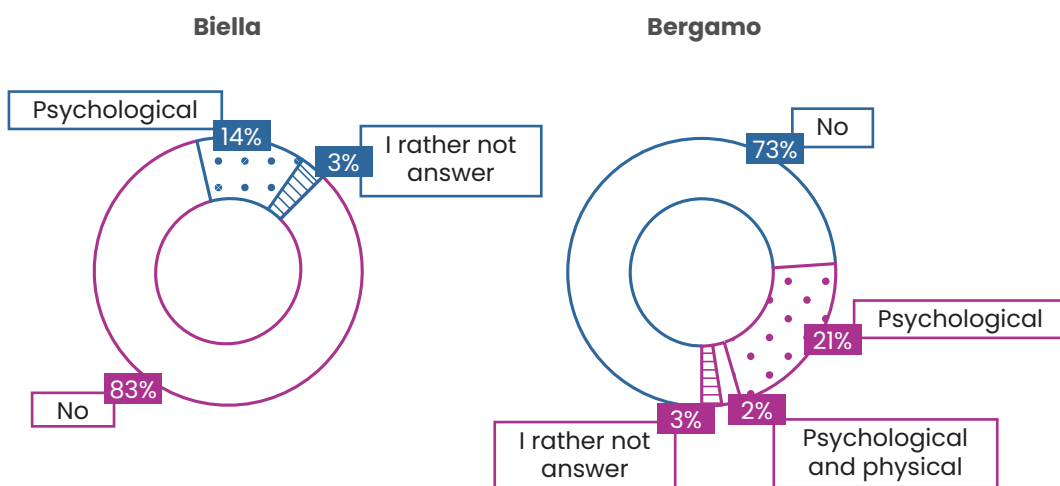
We can also notice, from some of the feedbacks, how these expectations are also carried in the work field: to cite one of the respondent, they expect a “superwoman”, that not only does her own assigned job (e.g. architect), but also secretarial tasks, such as being the one that answers the phone, opens the door, uses the printers etc.

Do you feel like your male colleagues have the same respect for you, compared to their male colleagues?



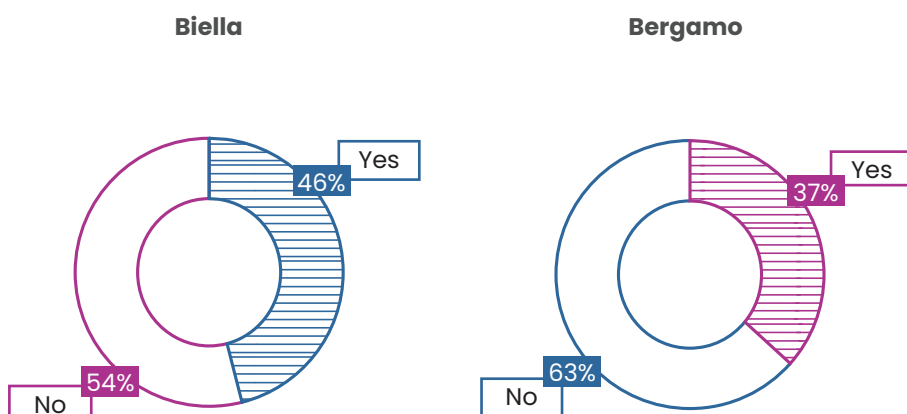
From these graphs we can really note how the data is extremely similar in the two cases of the two different registries, and that more than 50% of these women know or feel like they might not receive the same level of respect from their male colleagues, compared to how these latter treat their other male colleagues.

Have you experienced any type of abuse, physical and/or psychological, in your workplace?



Unfortunately, there still is a misconception around what abuse is, and sometimes it can be underestimated and for example downplayed to 'accidents', which is why the next two question try and deepen these aspects, to better understand this concept.

Have you ever been in any other type of uncomfortable circumstance?



If you answered yes, please provide further information if you want.

Biella

1. Not nice jokes.
2. Work relationships.
3. Inappropriate verbal language.
4. Sexual jokes and references are frequent.
5. Inappropriate attitudes, inappropriate jokes.
6. Non-violent but unwelcome sexual approaches.
7. I think it's a consequence of my character, of being empathic

8. An ended [romantic] relationship with a person within the workplace. Attitude of severe manipulation, with work revenge.

9. Lack of respect from a superior.

10. Abusive and male chauvinist attitudes.

11. My butt was touched several times by a colleague, he claimed by mistake.

12. As a newly graduated, work on the construction site was very difficult. I was young, inexperienced and also a woman. Also, I had to supervise the work of the men and that was a monstrous obstacle. I almost always made use of a male collaborator to accompany me on site. Over time, I have gained confidence and now I feel very appreciated by men too.

Bergamo

13. Unwelcomed attention from site personnel and a couple of clients when I was younger.

14. Numerous small ones, difficult to tell in one questionnaire.

15. When I worked in an architectural firm for two years the owner was a man and we were all women.... Very low pay especially for the youngest (despite being qualified), no kind of gratification for anyone, neither young nor the more mature. We were aware of the psychological games he played ("you are not yet autonomous", "it's not good .."... not to pay us better basically...). Two of the older colleagues, who had been there for many years, had zero self-esteem... I left for that too, as well as for winning a public competition. Now, in public employment, I don't notice problems of this type.

16. Mobbing/Bullying

17. Threats

18. I don't know at what point one can speak of "abuse" instead of "pressure", but certainly a lot of psychological pressure yes, already from university, and I never thought there was a gender distinction, it was like that for everyone. I always find toxic work environments, both on the part of the owners, for whom it is obvious to exploit people, and on the part of some colleagues, for whom it is more comfortable to have "bullet" attitudes,

not to collaborate or speak badly, probably even driven by their toxic environment and personal dissatisfaction.

19. Arrogance during technical work tables.

20. Being mistaken for the landlord lady.

21. Numerous.

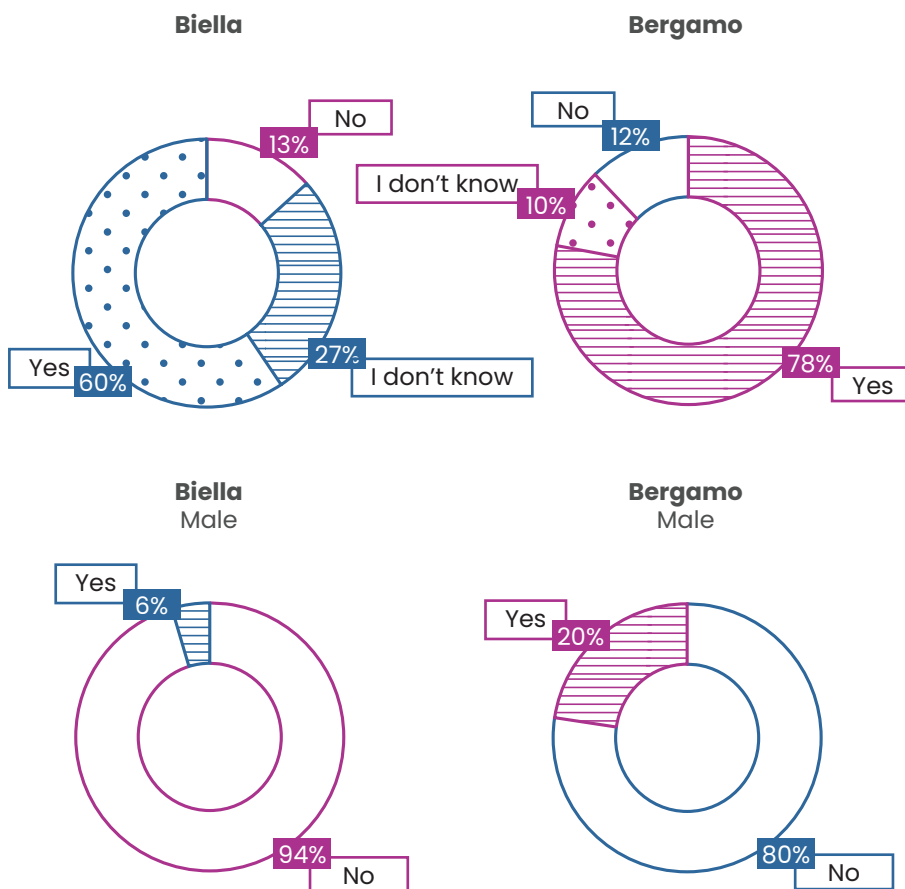
22. In the elevator; asked for kisses; work in exchange for romantic dinners.

23. Prevarication by colleagues.

24. Comments on my body, or because I look younger, while on construction sites.

We can see how the numbers exponentially grow when the question changes from 'abuse' to 'uncomfortable circumstances'. Women are socially taught to belittle these types of situations, make excuses for men, as well as being used to them, and there not always recognizing the seriousness of certain acts towards us.

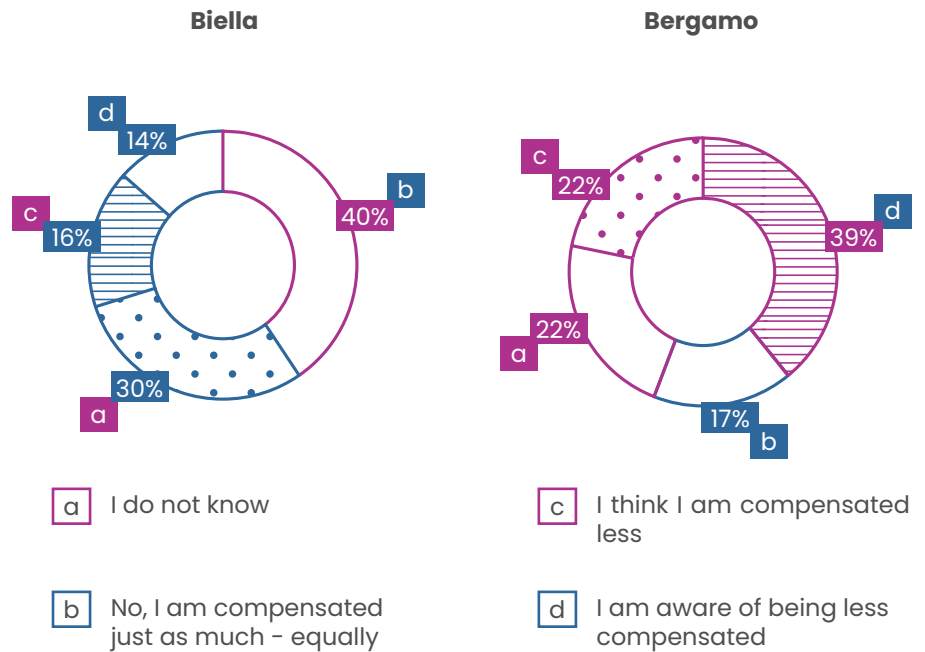
Do you think there is a Gender Pay Gap?



It is interesting to compare the answers from men and women. It is clearly visible how women are much more aware of the existence of a gender pay gap, than men. This might possibly be due to the fact that the affected gender is women, making them more aware of it.

From the graph, we can see how more than 80% of male architects interviewed, in both cases, do not believe in the existence of a Gender Pay Gap in their workplace, against almost a 90% of women that, in both Registries, are aware of it or at least doubt it.

Do you know or think you are compensated less than your male colleagues?



Again, some further interesting comments were provided:

1. Yes, as a woman and as a foreigner. In Italy I have never been paid.
2. I know I'm paid less and I also know that some clients expect fees with controlled values precisely because I am a woman.
3. I think the gap arises from having to devote more time to the family and family duties than a man.
4. I think I am paid less, but also because I think there is a certain difficulty for female professionals to ask for a fair salary.
5. I work less due to childcare, so I earn less.
6. In public employment no, but in private I think so.
7. I think I'm not capable of getting paid adequately.

I would like to highlight again how most women are self-employed (therefore their compensation is not decided by an employer), however, most respondents that added a further feedback, mentioned how their career,

and therefore their income, is influenced by how they have to be the prime caregiver to their children, and hence can work less, or have to combine the both.

Another recurrent element, is women blaming themselves for their lower salary, due to their incapability of asking for a fair pay (answers n.4 and n.7), when it is obviously a gender problem, which does not depend on women.

Would you like to add anything more?

Bergamo

1. I am and have been paid less than other colleagues for the same types of work, so I never thought there was a gender reasoning. I think the gender gap exists in all industries, but from my experience so far I can't say I have experienced it right away. The problem is the level of embarrassing exploitation and non-regularity with which you work! At 30, one cannot continue to suffer, and continue to see people who believe that this is acceptable and normal. The difference in treatment compared to other sectors is abysmal. Right now I can't say I'm penalized as a woman, I see it as a problem for everyone. Maybe over time the gap is created, I don't know. In this condition, surely thinking of having a child is a gamble, and I don't think that a woman with children can afford to keep a job like this, more than anything else it's just not worth it. However, I am quite convinced that over time these modalities cannot be managed even by men, especially if we want to talk about a balanced family where both have a role, there is not only the mother "who does the mother's thing"...

2. As a woman who works often and has to deal almost exclusively with men on the construction site, I always experience the need of putting an initial extra effort to receive the same level of respect and trust reserved for my male colleagues. But once I manage to demonstrate skills and knowledge of the subject, the road clears up and I must say that I am also highly appreciated and respected by the workers and colleagues.

3. Being a mother or caring for elderly family members should be considered time "taken off" the profession;

therefore as an added value, therefore finding a rate in the bills or in the pension. Thank you for these questions.

4. I would not advise my children to pursue the profession of architect, if they asked me.

5. The field of construction and architecture is still a purely male dominated environment, in a provincial and not very open system like that of Bergamo. But I myself haven't been able to deal with interlocutors often with many preconceptions and I didn't want to represent that kind of woman who works on the construction site .. that is, a resolute woman bordering on the masculine. I stopped working, which for me is still in second place compared to family and loved ones, to raise my little girl and this possibility is for me the greatest gift that life could give me. Unfortunately, many women cannot make this choice. Thank you.

6. Consider the difficulty of women's work for the entire duration of child rearing, not just the maternity leave part.

7. I encountered more difficulties outside the office, on site or in dealing with other professionals / technicians as a woman / young person I had little credibility. Furthermore, despite having a series of aids, I have given up more of my career than my partner.

8. Difficult application of equal opportunities in self-employed administrative environments (e.g. Inarcassa).

9. On the construction site I have always found respect from the other professional figures, with whom I interact, and from the Italian workers. On the other hand, some difficulties arose in getting foreign workers to accept me as project director, but only if they had recently arrived in our country, due to cultural differences. As a freelancer I did little maternity at home, almost nothing with the second pregnancy, but I was able to follow my children with more freedom, especially in time management, helped by my husband and grandparents. In recent years, it has been more difficult to take care of a seriously ill family member, especially an elderly one, because there is not the slightest form of protection. So every forced absence to assist someone has a heavy

impact on the profession, both in terms of time dedicated to work and economically, because it requires you to “pass” your client to other colleagues.

10. In hindsight, I fear that I didn't believe enough in myself, and that I endorsed a traditional scenario where the woman who has children is in fact forced by circumstances to put her job in the background. However, the world of architecture is rather chauvinist and if you don't have clear ideas, you succumb.

Further comments, not completely related with the aim of this questionnaire and dissertation, but that still provide an interesting point of view to the role of the architect:

11. The figure of the architect today is misinterpreted by clients: they expect you to see a well-designed and updated website to see how much you have done, they reward those who have the time to Instagram their work and not those who are perpetually thrown on the construction site. Not to mention the arrogance with which they negotiate the fee by cutting what they want to haggle for a reasonable price. Above all, we are often treated as “handling paperwork”, and this is unnerving as well as being a cause of considerable waste of time. And this insistence on rendering has now become a gap, because if they don't see everything rendered they don't trust what you offer them. It will be me who is “old-fashioned” but I believe that a good design, the ability to assemble a mood board of taste/style, knowing how to look for a valid alternative can always already be a parameter of quality, not reducing everything to a vision fake of reality that completely removes the surprise effect and leaves the power to the clients to be able to infinitely modify the character of the project. I vividly remember the best architects who designed without rendering.

12. The work of an architect has lost its creative component due to increasingly confusing bureaucracy and legislation.

13. 30 percent less; false “VAT number”; career opportunities offered to men; camaraderie.

Biella

1. *I have been a female architect, plus I have a motor disability and this has greatly hindered my work, but I have never given up, I have worked and I have left marks in the territory.*

2. *Let's keep believing in it!!!!!!*

3. *Being a self-employed architect is difficult when dealing with other workers, especially on site. Having trained both in the studio and in the field (working for a company) I am quite competent in the field and therefore I am not discouraged by the initial diffidence that there may be as a woman. I have to prove that I know, but in the end I'm always respected as a competent person beyond gender. This makes me very proud, above all because luckily in the field of "manual and construction site" work you don't have much time to waste and therefore the important thing is to know and be recognized as such for your professionalism. I didn't think so, but luckily it's a place of real merit.*

4. *I believe that we [women] generate the difference, in being still not very cohesive.*

5. *Yes. I believe that when a freelancer woman has a child, she is still obliged to go back to work, because motherhood is not enough to be able to keep the family going. Maternity pay is very low, as the initial income of a professional book is low, and it doesn't allow you to do too many months at home. Two months after I gave birth, I had to leave my son with my mother-in-law so as not to lose clients and jobs. I am thankful for having a husband who does everything at home, otherwise I don't know what I would do. Customers don't care if one has family problems or not, they come first. Thank you.*

6. *DON'T CALL US FEMALE ARCHITECTS [In italian 'Architette'], there's more to be done to achieve gender equality professionally than to look after this nonsense!*

7. *I think that gender bias is something culturally profound, so much so that I often realize that I myself have it on me. I often happen to think that I can't do something because I'm a woman, that a man would be more inclined than me to carry out a certain task and I think this is determined by the historical cultural background*

of our society.

8. *Regarding the salary, I notice that I find myself more embarrassed than my male colleagues when it comes to asking to be paid. It is certainly a legacy of when women always had to stay one step behind men and, although no one has ever openly tried to teach me this "law", it is still a message that has passed from older generations: it is an attitude that immediately puts us in a disadvantageous position because we tend to give in more easily (at least I do) in the face of requests for a discount.*

9. *I have always dealt with customers, suppliers or companies as a professional. He has never raised the issue of gender difference, and I've never raised it with others...*

10. *In general I don't think that women are discriminated against at work, if you are self-employed you should be aware that the economic situation depends solely on your own career choices and not on the work of others. As far as the psychological aspect is concerned, I wouldn't take it much into account since you must always, if you can, make choices between what you want to get from your personal life and what you want to get from your working life. By switching off, the results arrive regardless of one's gender, the results must then be mediated by the social, economic and political context in which one lives.*

Further comments, not completely related with the aim of this questionnaire and dissertation, but that still provide an interesting point of view to the role of the architect:

11. *I have had a professional studio for less than 20 years and the way of working has always gotten worse, it has become more complicated, responsibilities have increased, and the free and competitive market - with no minimum tariffs - has led everyone to lower wages. It is very difficult to make ends meet and often, if you are deprived of personal and economic gratification, one wonders whether it is not better to change jobs. Fortunately, it is not like this for everyone, but the stress that*

affects us is not - at least for me - compensated by just gratifications.

According to all of these answers, most women are affected by gender discrimination at some level, throughout their career, and unfortunately most times it is related with motherhood.

Another interesting aspect which is recurrent in numerous answers, is how most of these professionals had and almost always have the need of earning their colleagues respect, but even more the one from construction workers on construction sites, by proving them that they are capable in their work and that they are good practitioners. It was highlighted several times that men do not have to do the same, and are instead respected from the beginning as professionals.

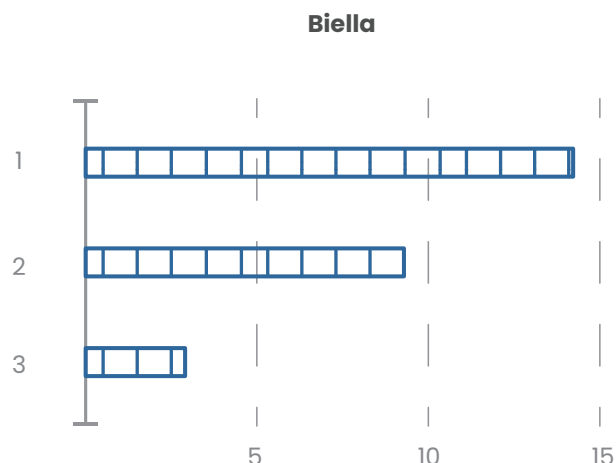
A further, not-so-curious, element that comes out of these answers, is that most experiences are shared among women of different regions and registers (Biella and Bergamo), and are therefore not exception which might be related to different factors (such as location), but unfortunately the reality that most working women have to go through.

Children Section

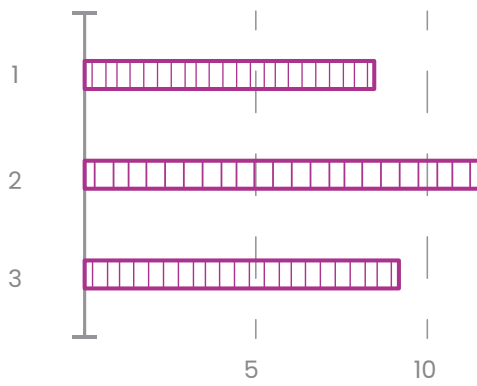
This section was open to both men and women, who claimed to have children in the previous sections.

The reason why this section is addressed to both genders, is due to the fact that, as we saw in the Discrimination Section (see page n.76), motherhood is one of the primary reasons that makes women be discriminated against to. So, what follows, is a sub-chapter that tries to investigate how having children affects a woman, compared to a man, both in terms of work life, and career in a wider point of view.

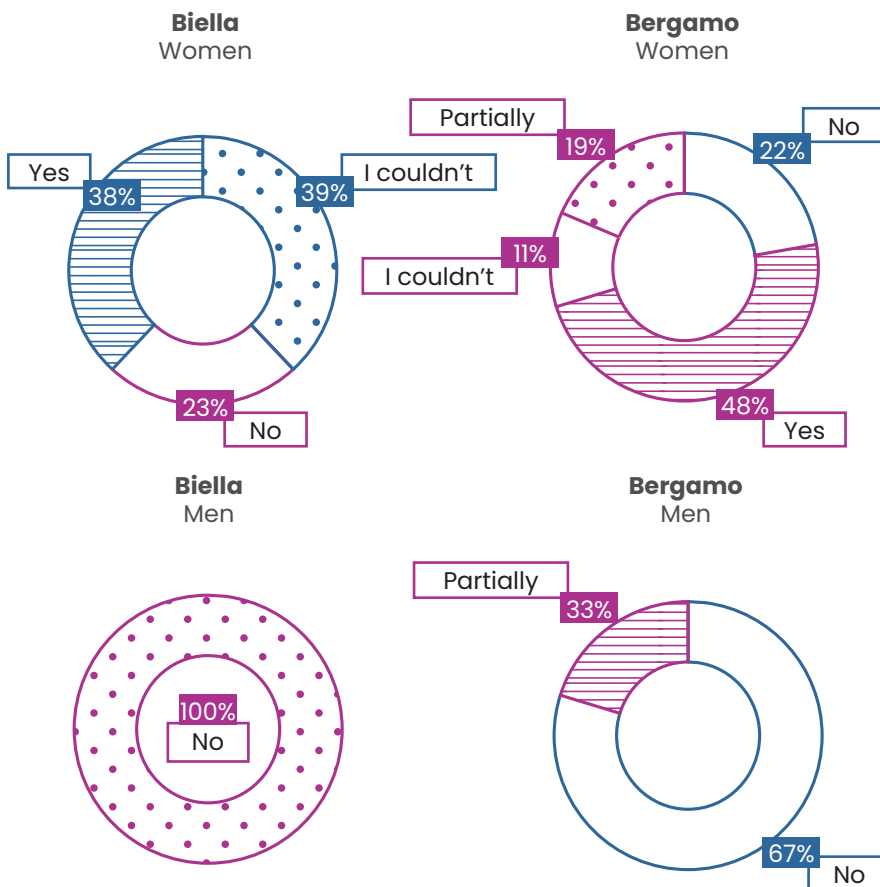
How many children do you have?



Bergamo



Did you have to pause your career for your children?



These first pie charts clearly show how in both cases - Biella and Bergamo - women were the ones to primarily be affected by the birth of their children, and had to pause (or chose to) their career.

If you answered yes, please explain;

Bergamo | Women

1. I didn't pause because pausing when self-employed causes you to lose clients and jobs. I tried to reconcile. With a huge effort. And I had to wait 5 years after my first child before "letting myself have" a second pregnancy.

2. *Partially, I had to reduce my work and not be exclusively self-employed.*
3. *After my second daughter was born (the first was two years old) I decided to start my own business because the studio where I worked didn't allow me a part-time job, albeit temporary. After the birth of my third daughter, I took a break for a year. But it was an opportunity to come into contact with another working reality, towards which I directed my professional activity which continues to this day.*
4. *A few months after the birth I understood that work and motherhood were irreconcilable. I quit for more than 4 years because nurseries were not available; difficulties in kindergarten and in finding part-time or flexible jobs.*
5. *When I decided to have my first child, I actually gave up on my career. I stayed at home with the baby for a year and then I looked for work for collaboration in architectural studios. With the second child I worked until the eighth month and I returned a couple of months after the birth.*
6. *I stopped working for a few months.*
7. *During the first pregnancy (all in bed), and all subsequent maternities (about 3 years in total).*
8. *I chose to stay at home and take care of my daughter rather than work.*
9. *I took advantage of the maternity leave and I was at home for each child up to 15 months and then I returned on a part-time job.*
10. *For a short time, to be able to raise my children.*
11. *I tried to stay at home as little as possible for my two daughters, by bringing home work to keep my role as an associate in the studio.*

Biella | Women

1. *I had to because of the kind of approach to motherhood I had chosen. I decided to take care of the children exclusively when they were very young (the very first months of their life) but as soon as I felt like it I started following some jobs again, taking care of them from home. Working in collaboration with a structured*

studio, I didn't have any particular problems.

2. Suspended work for the two months preceding the birth and for the following three months

3. I had to because of the kind of approach to motherhood I had chosen. I decided to take care of the children exclusively when they were very young (the very first months of their life) but as soon as I felt like it, I started following some jobs again, taking care of them from home. Working in collaboration with a structured studio, I didn't have any particular problems.

4. Short breaks.

5. Yes, for six months. Then I started again by reducing the hours a little. By choice and for necessity.

6. I was already a freelancer, so I tried to keep working so as not to lose client.

7. By choice I had two children within a short distance among each other, just to put my career on pause just once!

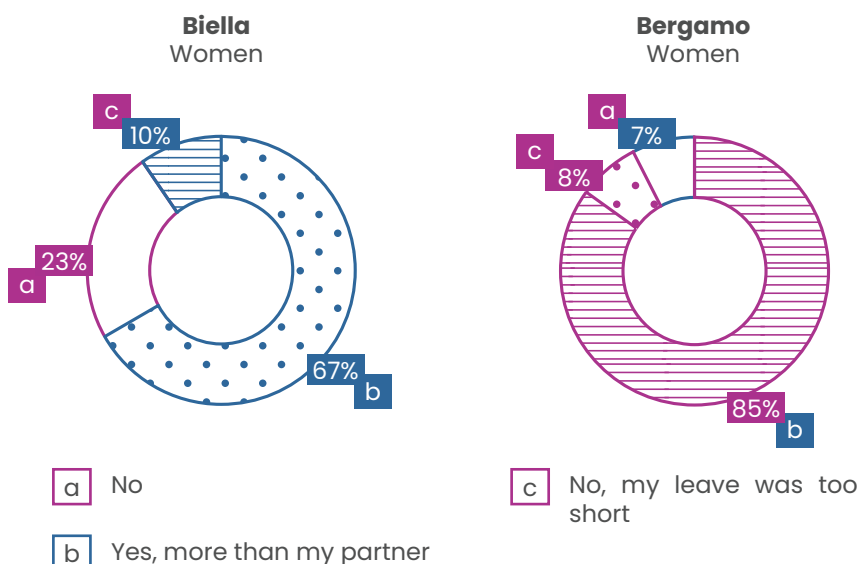
8. Just for a couple of months.

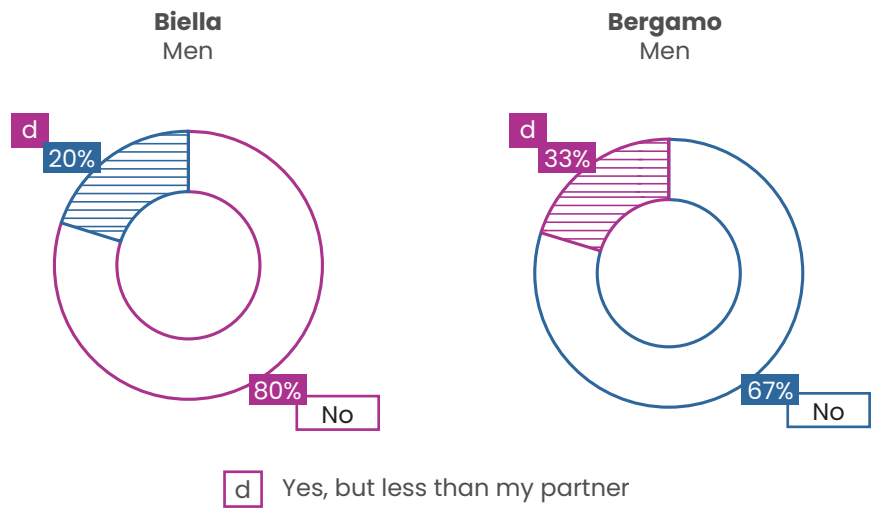
9. For almost two years I worked at a very slow pace, then gradually more, without being able to regain "full time" yet.

Bergamo | Men

1. We take turns raising the children since they were born, my wife and I.

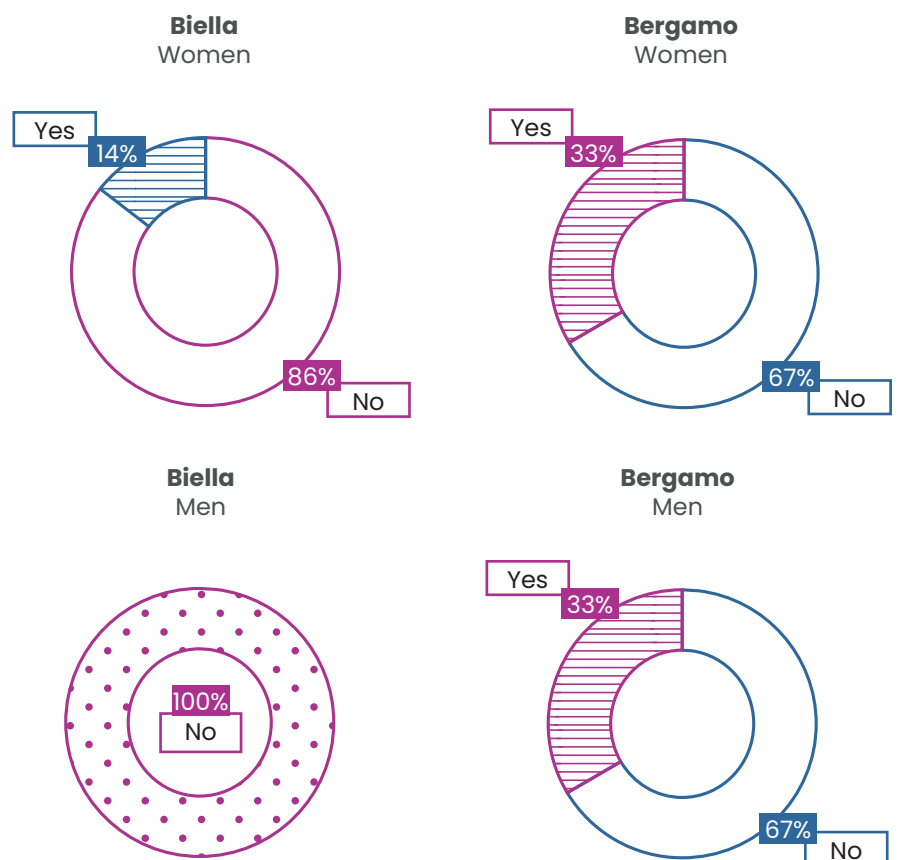
Did your career suffer from your maternity/paternity leave?





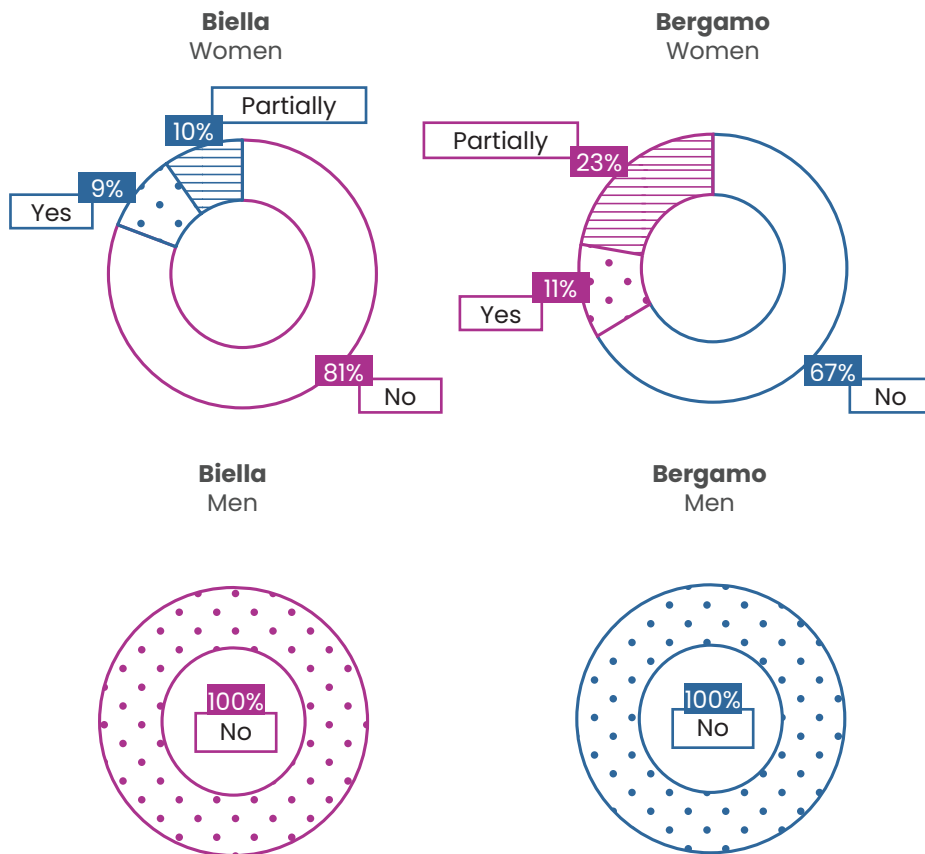
This data provides similar result as of the previous question. In both cities, women’s careers were exponentially more paused than the ones of men. Even in the few cases (1 in each city) in which the man had to temporarily pause his career, he admitted to being less affected than its partner.

Have you ever had to pause your career for any other reason? (e.g. Having to care for an elderly family member)



Some reasonings were provided, such as taking care of elderly fathers, personal health reasons, or an existential crisis.

Did you have any problem after informing your work-place about your maternity/paternity?



Some of the women who were affected gave a further explanation of their experience:

Biella | Women

1. It was pointed out to me that it was not the first time.
2. Yes, I received less jobs.
3. Yes, I was forced to resign!
4. Somehow, yes.

Bergamo | Women

1. Yes, with my first child.
2. I gave up the pay, being paid by the hour.
3. Yes, nasty comments on the second pregnancy since it was close to the first one.
4. Not real problems, but as mentioned before, after the 1st maternity leave I was no longer called by the studio where I worked. They assumed that I could no longer work full time for them.
5. Yes, a male partner hoped I got fired, the other two male partners were on my side.
6. I was on the construction site until the seventh month

and if I went back I would not do it again.

We can see how most of these experiences are common to the women of both registries, and not exceptional to one city. Unfortunately, only two registries accepted to participate in this investigation we would have seen how these are statistics that applies to most working women.

I decided to include every single detailed answer provided me by the respondents, as they are all very personal experiences that these women were kind enough to share with me, as to allow me to show the unfair current conditions of female working architects in the two territories I could investigate.

I want to add that i feel very honored that so many women felt like sharing these experiences, and I am very thankful to each single one of them.

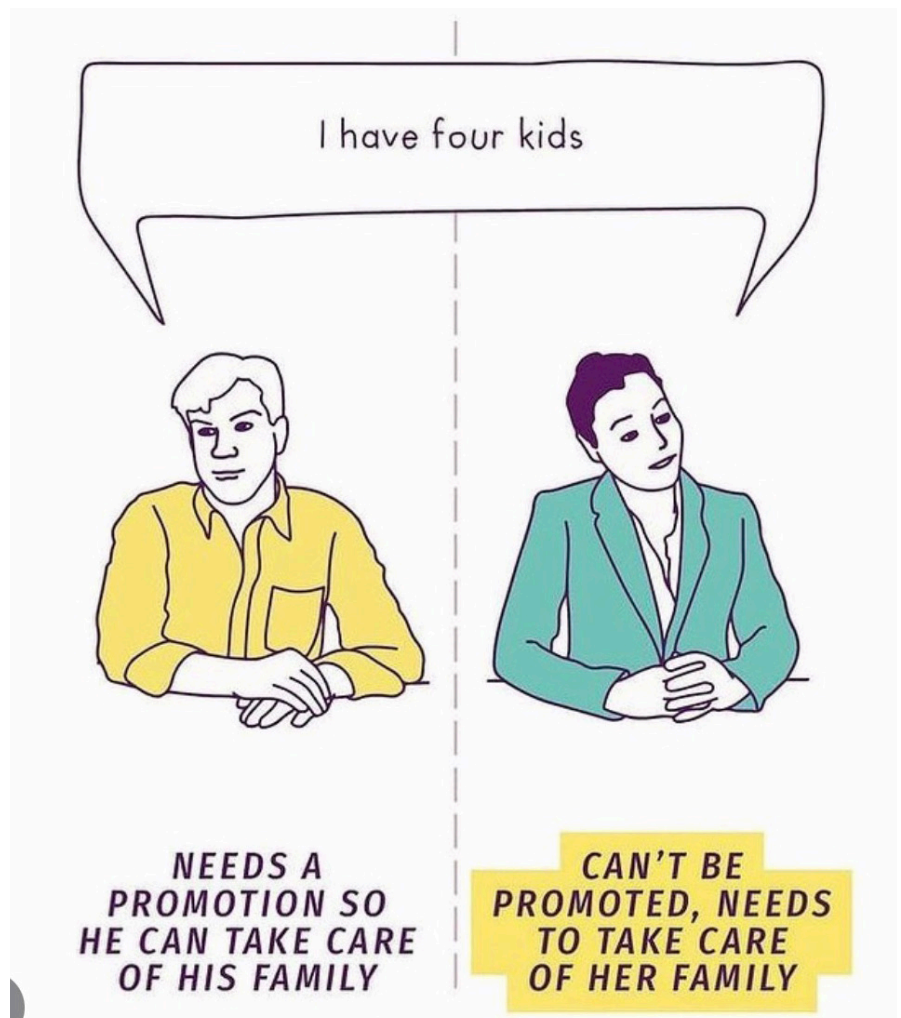


Figure 3.6: illustration by Sarah Cooper

Non-Binary Section

No non-binary person answered.

Final comment

In conclusion of this chapter, I would also like to share my personal experience. I have been working as an employee for a male architect for almost a year now, and much longer at my parents' firm (5+ years).

From the day I have started working, I have noticed how the respect I can expect from not only clients, but my colleagues as well, is never as much as what a male version of myself would receive. I have been called lady, baby, pretty, blondie, and much more, anything but Architect. And this low level of respect is not only bound to my young age, but primarily to my gender, since my female colleagues at the office have been experiencing the exact same treatment, even now in their late career. We are always diminished to secretaries or assistants, while my father (a Surveyor) and his colleagues earn from clients who are trying not to be disrespectful a new title everyday: lawyer, architect, engineer are just few of the examples I have heard for myself.

Clients rarely shake my hand or greet me formally, they usually wave and say 'hello', just like I would greet a child. I have been catcalled in construction sites, or commented on what I was wearing; the only time I have been respected as a woman and a professional was after the workers had learn that my father was the project manager, which rarely happens when they learn that my mother is also the project manager, meaning that for me to be respected I need to be linked to a man.

My experience and the experience of the **77 women** interviewed is clearly not an exception; psychological and physical abuses are not accidents, but our daily lives as female architects, and as it was proved in the first chapter it does not stop within the architectural profession field. The men in the questionnaire that are trying to downplay gender issues, even if they are not actively discriminating women, are just as problematic as those that do.

04

Conclusions

In conclusion, the findings of this thesis wanted to highlight the unfair condition of working women, that affect them on all aspects: psychological and physical.

This dissertation focused on the career path of women architect which, as explained in the first chapter through scientific research, are now composing more than 50% of architecture universities, and are academically better (in terms of results and time) than their male counterpart. The dissertation then moved on to analyzing and understanding when and how the gender gap, extremely high in this field, creates, and at what level it grows. Some solutions to these discriminatory characters, which are still researched and tested, were illustrated and defined.

Before eventually moving on with the field research carried by myself, an introduction to some of the greatest architects, who fought during their career for equal gender rights, was provided. These women were not investigated for their architectural artifacts, but more for their activism in the field, and the big and forever lasting impact they have made on all of us female architects. Looking into these women's lives, allowed us to see how not only institutions are actively discriminating against women, but also the way in which society and particularly men accepts it and participate to this day.

The final chapter, which provides the findings of an online questionnaire, is consistent with previous similar research, however carried out in different work field, as current detailed research is not available for the investigated territory.

The results display an existing investigated problem: the

motherhood penalty. Motherhood penalty is the systematic disadvantage that women encounter in the workplace when they become mothers, in terms of pay, perceived competence and benefits compared to other workers. Studies have shown the strict correlation between this and the Gender Wage Gap., in fact, the ‘motherhood penalty’ makes up 80% of the GPG¹.

A research in 2017, conducted by Census Bureau, found that the motherhood penalty is persistent in time, being that between the two years before the birth of a child and the year after, the wage gap among the two parents-to-be doubles (obviously being the male the one earning more). By saying that it is persistent in time, we also refer to the fact that the gap does not stop there, but it continues to grow up to ten years after the birth of the child. This data, in countries such as the USA where no type of paid parental leave is granted, is even higher compared to those that allocate some type of leave. This is due to the fact that it leads women to prolonged periods of time with zero income, and the incredibly high cost of childcare eventually pushes to a drastic decision between work and at home childcare, which is usually completely on the mother.

As investigated in the first chapter of this dissertation, we have seen how women do almost three times the amount of unpaid work that men do, and when motherhood hits, this number gets worse. It is a direct consequence that women will find it more complicated to get back to their job once their leave is finished, due to the physical and mental load that they must carry at home. This is also a major reason why a lot of mothers have to compromise by taking part-time jobs.

A report from the USA informs us that 41% of American households have a woman as the sole or primary breadwinner², nonetheless, they earn less than their male colleagues, and suffer the motherhood penalty (less likely to be hired when already mothers, lower salaries, etc.), while it is the exact opposite for men. They have found evidence of a ‘father bonus’, which is an increase in the salary as to ‘help support the growing family’. This new introduced concept, further highlights how parenthood unfairly affects women, to an extreme extent of disadvantage.

A notable example on how to combat this very deep societal problem can be found in Sweden, where mothers and fathers get a total of 480 days combined of parental leave for each child³. In these cases, they have observed how women subsequently had to take less unpaid housework, and their career did not suffer as much. Improving this factor is fundamental to reach equality for mothers and women. The ways of boosting this are

1 Whiting, K. (2022) The motherhood penalty: How childcare and paternity leave can reduce the gender pay gap. *World Economic Forum*

2 Glynn, S. J. (2019). Breadwinning Mothers Continue To Be the U.S. Norm. *CAP*.

3 Europa.eu (2022) Sweden – Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion

numerous and can be done in various levels. Some examples are, as aforementioned, better paternity leave (and mandatory up to a certain level), child tax credit, retirement benefits for mothers, etc. Other fundamental factors might be free nurseries, or even baby parking in the workplace (when the company has the possibilities obviously).

However, another immediate and required obligation should be job security during and after the maternity leave, and hypothetically a fair share of unpaid housework among partners within their household. These two factors, that do not require any legislation and/or regulation, can be and should be done autonomously by all men, those that are not affected by parenthood and are usually the primer "persecutor".

Nonetheless, it is important to underline that this study has limitations as it is. First of all, the sample is quite small (100 people), primarily due to the low collaboration of most Registries from Piedmont. Also, in terms of gender contribution, the parts are very unbalanced, providing a much bigger sample for women experiences compared to men (more than double).

Furthermore, this is primarily a sociological research conducted on a small sample size, it therefore comes with all of its bias: deception, advocacy, misconduct etc. Future researches might take this into account, and by reaching a wider sample it would be possible to achieve an higher level of accuracy in such research.

However, the small size of the sample gave us the possibility of reporting each single experience, almost giving us the structure of an interview, which reports personal and detailed experiences, which would have not been possible in this type of context, if the sample was bigger. The findings of this dissertation can be useful for firms and employers which want to improve themselves and their business, and learn how they might be passively discriminating against a certain category.

OA

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Figure 2.6 - Picture by Gruen Associates

Figure 2.7 - Architectural Press Archive / RIBA Collections

Figure 3.1 - Italy | Designed by Freepik

Figure 3.2 - Rapporto CNAPPC 2021

Figure 3.3 - Rapporto CNAPPC 2021

Figure 3.4 - Rapporto CNAPPC 2021

Figure 3.5 - Rapporto CNAPPC 2021

Figure 3.6 - Illustration by Sarah Cooper

