Population and Workforce

Women currently comprise 52.1%, men 47.9% of the population, but in terms of labor force participation the opposite is reflected. Men made up 56% of the labor force and women the remaining 44%. In 2018, the total labor force participation rate was 40.4%; for women it was 33.2% and 48.9% for men. There was a decrease since the highs of 2006 of 5.7 and 11.2 percentage points respectively, as shown in the graph below.

Education by gender

The female population in Puerto Rico is more educated than their male counterparts. Almost 30% of women have completed a bachelor’s or graduate degrees compared to around 20% of men.

Gender Wage Gap in Puerto Rico

Source: Departamento de Trabajo y Recursos Humanos (2018)

Educational Attainment by Gender

When assessing the estimates for median earnings by sex and education, however, men earn more than women in all categories, including higher education levels where women outnumber men. The salary difference between both genders for those with “graduate or professional degrees” is $12,809 and $5,954 for those with a “bachelor’s degree”.

**Assessment by Industry and Occupation**

**Estimates for Median Earnings**

*by Sex and Educational Attainment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school graduate</td>
<td>$11,383</td>
<td>$9,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate (includes equivalency)</td>
<td>$15,574</td>
<td>$13,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college or associate's degree</td>
<td>$18,789</td>
<td>$16,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>$29,707</td>
<td>$23,753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate or professional degree</td>
<td>$45,826</td>
<td>$33,017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The activities where pay gaps are wider are professional, scientific and technical services ($12,684), finance and insurance ($6,036), and health care and social assistance ($4,146).

Most of the occupations held by women are in the health services area while men prevail in occupations having to do with construction.

Within the top occupations that are mostly held by women, 4 out of 5 have wage discrepancies that favor men. On average, women make $2,350 less than men in jobs where women predominate, compared to $2,193 when considering all occupations.

The jobs with the highest pay gaps are the following: health diagnosing and treating practitioners and other technical occupations ($15,182), legal occupations ($10,241), sales and related occupations ($7,131), architecture and engineering occupations ($6,148) and healthcare practitioners and technical occupations ($5,942).

In a forthcoming Occasional Paper, we will be expanding on this subject, one we consider of major importance.

**Occupations by Gender**

*by Sex and Educational Attainment*

**Occupations with the Highest Percentage of Women**

- Healthcare support occupations: 77.7%
- Education, training, and library occupations: 75.8%
- Community and social services occupations: 73.1%
- Health technologists and technicians: 72.0%
- Healthcare practitioner and technical occupation: 71.1%

**Occupations with the Highest Percentage of Men**

- Construction and extraction occupations: 98.3%
- Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations: 97.3%
- Natural resources, construction, and maintenance: 96.8%
- Transportation occupations: 93.1%
- Material moving occupations: 89.7%