

Gender wage gap narrows in The Netherlands

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Credit: University of Twente

Whilst the gap may have narrowed over the last few decades, in 2012 male workers still appeared to earn more than their female counterparts in the Netherlands. Significantly more. Given that discrimination according to gender is in breach of EU principles of equality, and that it can be disadvantageous to the labour market and the economy, policymakers and labour market institutions would do well to 'acquire a

better understanding of the existence, trend, and explanation of the pay gap between male and female workers'. So asserts Florianne Verkroost in her bachelor's degree dissertation 'The Gender Wage Gap in the Netherlands from 1986 to 2012: a Multilevel Analysis'. On Saturday, 25 June Verkroost graduates from the University of Twente in the honours research degree course ATLAS.

Using the data supplied every two years by the Dutch labour supply panel (Arbeidsaanbodpanel) from 1986 to 2012 and hierarchical growth models, Florianne Verkroost examined movements in wage disparity between male and female workers in the Netherlands over those decades. She looked at four existing theories to discover whether one theory was better than another in explaining this [wage gap](#) and how it has changed over those years: human capital, industrial/professional factors, individual and household characteristics, and national contextual factors.

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The fact that in 2012 - corrected for factors such as part-time work and fewer years' work experience Bachelor's dissertation on the Gender Wage Gap in the Netherlands between 1986 and 2012 - male workers earn approximately 9% more than women can be traced back in part, according to Verkroost, to the said factors of human capital and industrial/professional factors. She has also found statistical evidence to support a 'significant reduction in the wage gap' between males and females from approximately 19% in 1986 to around 9% in 2012.

The fact that at a certain point in time there is a gender wage gap is something the theories are able to explain. At the same time, however, they fall short of the mark, because what they fail to explain is the narrowing of that gender [pay gap](#) over three decades in the Netherlands. It was anticipated, for example, that this gender pay gap would narrow given that these days women are better educated compared to 30 years

ago. Curiously enough, this better education of women is actually not the reason for the narrowing gender pay gap, according to the findings of this ATLAS student, who has since presented her dissertation at Sociology Day in Tilburg.

More information: The Gender Wage Gap in the Netherlands from 1986 to 2012: a Multilevel Analysis, by F.C.J. (Florianne) Verkroost (supervised by prof. dr. A. Need)

Provided by University of Twente

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