

The “Places and Non-places” Held by Women in Social Economy Organizations

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Abstract Scientific literature and facts have highlighted the perpetuation of gender inequality in the labour market in spite of the ongoing endeavours of political bodies and legal norms to eliminate the vertical and horizontal segregation of women. Portuguese Social Economy Act stresses “the respect for the values [...] of equality and non-discrimination [...], justice and equity [...]”. In this paper, we offer a reflection on indicators that uncover vertical and horizontal segregation in the labour market. Based on a mixed methodological approach, we found very high rates of employment feminization in social economy organizations. Women are mainly allocated to technical and operational activities, being ultimately underrepresented in statutory boards and as such excluded from deliberation and strategic decision. The sector is moving away from the ideals of justice and social equity and may preserve women’s “non-place” in the definition of the public and strategic direction and in the most invisible/private organizational “places”.

Keywords Equality · Gender · Segregation · Social economy

Introduction

The Feminization of the Social and Solidarity Economy

The sector of social and solidarity economy is in broad expansion with regard to its current recognition even though in Portugal its existence dates back to the emergence of the “Irmandades da Misericórdia” in the fifteenth century, which worked as welfare associations (Ferreira 2000). The fourteen “Works of Mercy” include feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and attending to the sick and the needy. Such measures to support the disadvantaged have thus characterized the unpaid work of women for centuries.

Currently, multiple references to women’s paid work in the social and solidarity economy persist since they tend to be overrepresented in this sector regardless of spatial context: whether it is handicraft production or agricultural groups, local exchange, solidarity finance, community associations or paid employment in cooperatives, mutualities and associations, women are usually overrepresented (Hillenkamp et al. 2015: 16).

The high feminization of paid work contrasts with the low participation of women in the decision-making statutory bodies. In fact, international literature reveals that except for female organizations, as is the case of feminist or female advocacy activism—e.g. the “Labour with no pain” movement in France (Vuille 2005)—the large majority of organizations is led by men. In their international approach to female initiatives in the social and solidarity economy, Hersente and Guérin (2014: 67) claim that the current inequalities in the sector with regard to the presence of women in decision-making bodies are similar to those of other activity sectors, even though social economy is perceived as naturally virtuous in this domain.

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According to the authors, “the charming appeal of respect towards universal values masks many unequal practices” (2014: 67). In Portugal, a recent survey to non-governmental organizations also reveals a clear gender inequality, with 75% of them these being chaired by men (Franco 2015).

In Portugal, the Social Economy Act (Act no. 30/2013, of 8th of May) states in article 5, paragraph 2, “the respect for the values [...] of equality and non-discrimination [...], justice and equity [...]”. Equality, in general, and gender equality, in particular, are thus stated core objectives of the social and solidarity economy. We work under an ideological backdrop that assumes that these organizations represent an alternative in terms of management models and stakeholder relationships and are distinctive in terms of the ideals they stand for (Santos 2004; Robert 2007; Azevedo et al. 2010 in Martinho 2011). As such, we attend to both the socio-economic and the sociocultural and sociopolitical conditions mentioned by Defourny (1998).

Our purpose was to understand how the social and solidarity economy deals specifically with gender matters within a clearly unequal national context.

In Portugal, achieving formal equality was a slow process. Even though the I Republic improved the rights of women, the “Estado Novo” dictatorship that followed represented a setback for women’s emancipation due to a legislation that curbed recently won liberties, particularly by preventing their access to a wide range of professions (Martinho 2016). Only with the II Republic and the consequent amendment of the Constitution, in 1976, formal equality became a reality.

The constitutional ratification of the principle of equality between men and women is the basis of all subsequent legal changes (Carmo and Amâncio 2004). The reasons underlying the legal endorsement of equality rights are diverse and can be grouped in three interdependent categories: first, international pressures both to produce data about the women’s situation in Portugal and to expedite legal equality; second, changes in mentalities since the 1960s as a consequence of macro-social transformation; finally, such changes led to the growing feminization of the labour market and to substantial transformations in the composition of the active population. Since the early 1960s, the colonial war and massive immigration led to a scarcity of male workers and reconfigured the gender profile of the labour market.

Changes were quick and substantial, at least in legal terms. In fact, between 1970 and 1980, a politically agitated period, there were three important achievements: (1) the elimination of gender discriminating legislation and the passing of the Equality Act in 1979; (2) the international commitment to the equality agenda; and (3) the creation of official mechanisms to support gender equality: the Female

Condition Commission (*Comissão da Condição Feminina*—C.C.F.) and the Commission for Equality in Work and Employment (*Comissão para a Igualdade no Trabalho e no Emprego*—C.I.T.E.).

Presently, the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic, which recognized the principle of gender equality and non-discrimination in 1976, and the Labour Code are the cornerstones of formal equality. Subsequent constitutional amendments have clearly improved the law, as in the case of the 1982 amendment, which equates fatherhood with motherhood. Additional amendments brought significant and important improvements such as the introduction of *Positive Action*,¹ in 1997, and the Parenthood Act, in 2000.

Legal equality, however, does not mean de facto equality as we will see throughout this article by exploring the topic in the social and solidarity sector against the general backdrop of the Portuguese economy.

Methodological Approach to the Role of Women in Social Economy

We draw on Augé’s (1992) notion of *Non-Places* to approach the role of women in the Portuguese social economy in terms of their invisibility. Originally, the notion designates “spaces formed in relation to certain ends (transport, transit, commerce, leisure)” (Augé 1992, p. 79). For the purpose of this article, we use the notion merely in symbolic terms to highlight the absence of a woman’s own place (Augé 1992) in several domains, including government bodies where gender equality is formally accepted as a priority agenda. In fact, when we attempted to answer our research question based on official data we were faced with the lack of available information on gender issues. The “Contas Satélite para a Economia Social” (“Satellite Accounts for Social Economy”), first published by the National Statistics Institute in 2013, is the most recent evidence of the official entities’ disregard for gender issues, even though women are an important part of the active population in the social economy sector. We know nothing about women in leadership positions, or working in the social and solidarity economy. Information about their political role as associates and board members is also scarce. On a European level, recent studies about the social economy also omit this information and despite concerns stated in the Europe 2020 strategy with regard to “policies to promote gender equality [...] to increase

¹ By *Positive Action* we mean the “measures aimed at a specific group, which aim to eliminate and prevent discrimination or compensate for the disadvantages arising from attitudes, behaviour and structures (sometimes called ‘positive discrimination’)” (European Commission 1998, p. 11).

labour force participation thus adding to growth and social cohesion”, there seems to be very little interest on the topic of gender in the social and solidarity economy sector (Hillenkamp et al. 2015; Alvarez and Parini 2005). According to the above-stated principles, this should be a field of priority intervention.

Adding to this situation, when focusing on previous empirical work (Martinho 2011), we come to the conclusion that there are many other cases of diversion between the sector’s ideals and the paid human resources management practices, namely those concerning internal social responsibility and decent work.

In 2011, aware of such limitations, the design of the data collection instruments of the project “Social Entrepreneurship in Portugal”² included gender in the analysis. The purpose was to understand both the gender division of labour and wage labour in social economy organizations.

Considering the lack of national and European data, we seek to question some indicators of gender segregation using a mix-methods strategy.

Triangulation was accomplished through a survey, website analysis and in-depth case studies within an overall strategy that combined qualitative and quantitative analysis called “convergent parallel design” by Creswell (2013). Since several techniques were combined for data collection, their use was not always coincidental and covers an extended period of time (2011–2015). In this article, we favour a reflection based on quantitative logics and we discuss data of an exclusively quantitative nature.

We begin by a survey and website analysis of a sample of social economy organizations selected according to their legal form and status. The 89 organizations were selected through a non-proportional quota plan based on databases provided by representative organizations of the social economy subsectors.³ The website analysis carried out in

² The Project “Social Entrepreneurship in Portugal: the policies, organisations and practices of education/training” (PTDCCS-SOC1001862008) was funded by the ERDF through COMPETE—operational programme through the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology.

³ The sampling plan of 1853 social economy organizations was defined according to the databases of two major national organizations—CASES and the *Plataforma de Organizações Não Governamentais para o Desenvolvimento* (Platform of Non-Governmental Organizations for Development) (NGOD)—as well as of major institutions of the social sector in December 2011. As such, we were able to access the different juridical forms (associations, in general; local development associations; mutualities; social solidarity and multi-sector cooperatives; social solidarity foundations; charities and other religious organizations) and statuses (NGOD and Private Social Solidarity Institutions—IPSSs). Whenever information was unavailable from the sector representatives, we resorted to the databases available on their websites. Original sources were the Social Security database for mutualities (national level); IPSSs’ databases; charities’

two different moments in time consisted on the gender distribution of the members of statutory boards. Since data from 2011 to 2015 are not significantly different, we draw our conclusions from the latter.

Information collected in 2011 through a survey to the leaders of the social economy organizations included in the sample allowed us to typify the latter according to their degree of social entrepreneurship. The six case studies that were subject to in-depth⁴ analysis in 2012 refer to organizations with a strong or moderate profile of social entrepreneurship. This classification was based on the previously mentioned data collection and on a multivariate statistical analysis. These organizations are characterized by initiatives directly or indirectly related to financial sustainability (moderate profile) or combine the sustainability goal with participative, democratic, developmental, and enriching management models and/or labour organization (strong profile). For this approach, we worked under the assumption that since these six organizations displayed social entrepreneurship profiles they would be more progressive in terms of management and organizational models and would honour the principle of gender equality.

Based on this mix-methods approach, we offer a reflection on the quantitative indicators of gender segregation in social economy organizations.

The Male Place of Leadership

Ever since the shift away from the dominant classical tradition view of the labour market as a balanced meeting point between supply and demand theories have uncovered the existence of peculiar inequalities and segregation (Marques 2000). More specifically, the so-called segregation theory developed by Doeringer and Piore (1971) work, *Internal Markets and Manpower Analysis*, claims that the labour market consists of a series of segments whose interaction is imperfect. This departure from a homogenous and unified view of the labour market highlights the latter’s imperfection. The labour market is marked by

Footnote 3 continued

database; database of the Portuguese Foundations Centre; database of the Local Development Associations provided by the Portuguese Federation of Local Development Associations *Minha Terra* and by ANIMAR; cooperative database of CONFECOOP and FENACERCI; database of the NGOD Platform registered in the *Instituto Português de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento* (Portuguese Institute for Local Development) (IPAD), currently *Instituto Camões*. The major problem in defining the overall database was to gather reliable information about the juridical statuses (IPSS and NGOD) and forms given their legal overlapping, which leads to inaccurate classification on the part of the organizations themselves. For a discussion about this subject, see Parente and Quintão (2014: 70–72).

⁴ See Parente and Quintão (2014: 73).

Table 1 Board members of the sector's representative organizations according to gender. *Source:* authors, based on the official websites of the organizations (The analysis was a result of a search conducted on 11.05.2015 in the following websites: Cases, available at: <http://www.cases.pt/sobre-nos/quem-somos/orgaos>; CPCCRD, available at: <http://www.confederacaodascolectividades.com/>; UMP website: <http://www.ump.pt/ump/>; UMP, available at: <http://www.pedromartinho.com/portal/portal.htm>;

“Plataforma Portuguesa das ONGD” website, available at: <http://www.plataformaongd.pt/>; CONFAGRI website, available at: <http://www.confagri.pt/Pages/WelcomePage.aspx>; Confecoop website, available at: <http://www.confecoop/>; “Centro Português de Fundações” website, available at: <http://www.cpf.org.pt/PT/index.htm>; ANIMAR website, available at: <http://www.animar-dl.pt/>; CNIS website, available at: <http://novo.cnis.pt/>)

	Women		Men		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cooperativa António Sérgio para a Economia Social—Cases	1	33.3	2	66.7	3	100
Associação Portuguesa para o Desenvolvimento Local—ANIMAR	2	25.0	6	75.0	8	100
Confederação Cooperativa Portuguesa, CCRL—CONFECOOP	0	0	3	100	3	100
Confederação Nacional das Cooperativas Agrícolas e do Crédito Agrícola de Portugal, CCRL—CONFAGRI	0	0	10	100	10	100
União das Misericórdias Portuguesas	0	0	6	100	6	100
União das Mutualidades Portuguesas	1	14.3	6	85.7	7	100
Confederação Nacional das Instituições de Solidariedade—CNIS	3	33.3	6	66.7	9	100
Plataforma das Organizações Não-Governamentais de Desenvolvimento ONGD	3	42.9	4	57.1	7	100
Confederação Portuguesa das Colectividades de Cultura, Recreio e Desporto (CPCCRD)	3	27.3	8	72.7	11	100
Federação Nacional de Cooperativas de Solidariedade Social—FENACERCI	3	60.0	2	40.0	5	100
Centro Português de Fundações—CPF	3	60.0	2	40.0	5	100
Total	19	25.7%	55	74.3%	74	100

discontinuities with regard to the discrimination of workers, as well as by different employment opportunities. Rodrigues (1992) refers to this comprehensive version of the companies' internal labour markets within which people are divided into two large categories: primary labour market and secondary labour market. In the primary labour market, we find the better paid, more attractive jobs, which offer better conditions, additional stability, as well as better career and personal development prospects. People from disadvantaged groups such as the least qualified, youngsters, the handicapped, immigrants and women are confined to the secondary sector.

Inspired by the theories of segregation of the internal labour market of social economy organizations, and using a gender lens, we ask who leads these organizations and eventually determines their orientation.

We analysed board positions and top management bodies that compose the elected/designated statutory social bodies. We propose two complementary perspectives: (1) one referring to the representative organizations of the sector in Portugal; (2) another one focusing on the grassroots organizations. We combined a descriptive and quantitative characterization with an emphasis on the boards of the 89 surveyed organizations and a comprehensive focus on the 6 case studies.

Table 1 presents the distribution of the board members of the sector's representative organizations according to gender.

Except for FENACERCI, in all the remaining organizations the person in charge—i.e. the president—is a man. Only this organization and the “Centro Português de Fundações” have more women than men in their decision boards. In most organizations, these are formed mainly by men (74.3%), and in three organizations there are no women at all in the boards.

Considering now the grassroots organizations, the quantitative analysis shows that the narratives concerning the leadership boards included are marked by ambiguity. Only 63 of the 89 organizations offered reliable and complete information with regard to gender. This represents a loss of information of about 30%.⁵ This limitation proved to be a challenge when conducting a deeper analysis of organizational leadership in the case studies.

Among the organizations with a formally established statutory board, 54% of the boards are formed by 5 members; 11% by 7 members; and another 11% by 3 members.

To analyse the board composition according to gender, we calculated the feminization rate. In 55.6% of the

⁵ The reasons for the lack of reliability of the information are that 15 organizations maintain that there is no statutory direction, in some cases because it coincides with the Executive Management, other because they are composed of other collective institutions and not individuals. In 11 organizations, the respondent did not have information about the statutory direction, which immediately can indicate the absence of an effective role in the organizations.

organizations women are a minority in the board and 15.9% of the organizations (10 organizations) have no female members in their boards at all.

This is particularly relevant when compared to the high feminization rate of paid labour. The strong feminization of paid labour in social economy organizations is not paralleled by women's presence in the strategic top of the organizations, and consequently in the decisions that affect the latter's position and future course of action. Despite the fact that it is women who run the everyday life of these organizations they are not responsible for the latter's strategic choices. There is thus a reproduction of the male leading role (Morrison and Von Glinow 1990).

A gender analysis of the case studies systematized in Table 2 confirms the dichotomy between feminized employment rates and masculinized governing boards. The organization DEC is an exception with its exclusively female board and president. AVI is also chaired by a woman, but women are underrepresented in its board. In AVI, there is gender parity between workers since labour positions are equally distributed between men and women, which shows a potential concern with gender issues. The same does not occur in DEC where the overrepresentation of women in the board does not ensure gender equality among workers, therefore maintaining the tendency for feminization that is characteristic of the social economy labour market.

As such, we conclude that although these six organizations present rather progressive organizational and management models the same does not apply to gender equality even if there are good practice cases.

According to the European Council (2015), the persistent underrepresentation of women in political and economical decision is a current and important challenge for the EU and its Member States. The Gender Equality Index developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) in 2013 measures the gender gap in six domains, one of which concerns «power». In 2013, in the EU, one out of each five members of the governing bodies of the national central banks was a female and in five Member States these were exclusively composed by men. In 2008, 13 out of 28 Member States had no women among the CEOs of the major companies on stock exchange lists. Although women in the EU are somewhat present in both the executive and non-executive boards of the major companies on stock exchange lists, they are still underrepresented among them with 12 and 19%, respectively. In 2014, women represented, on average, 19% of those boards and only 9% in Portugal, one of the lowest figures in the EU. If we focus on data regarding CEOs, figures are even more disturbing with a EU average of 5% and a 0% figure for Portugal. It is in this domain of political and economical decision that we find the lowest score in terms of

gender equality with 38 points out of 100 in the EU. This shows that the underrepresentation of women in power positions continues to be a pressing matter.

Explanations for these inequalities vary. In fact, the so-called glass ceiling, which hinders women's access to management positions, has been recurrently reported and adds to initial difficulties in entering the labour market (Isaac et al. 2009). Regarding this matter, several advantages of gender diversity in organizations have been highlighted. According to a research by McKinsey and Company entitled *Women Matter, Gender Diversity, a Corporate Performance Driver* (2007), gender parity in organizations contributes to improvements in creativity and innovation (Casaca 2009).

The Women's Place in the Labour Market

The non-place of women in leadership corresponds to a place in the remaining positions and functions. We now turn to a detailed analysis of some of the overall labour force composition in 71 organizations,⁶ which is mainly female and try to uncover their underlying labour dynamics.

Considering the total number of contract workers, as well as of freelancers, there are 2325 workers in these organizations. The contingent is clearly feminized with a ratio of 1 man for every 3 women. These data confirm the claim of Teasdale et al. (2011) for whom social economy organizations are more accessible to women than traditional businesses. The feminization rate is higher than the national average. As a matter of fact, according to data from INE, in 2014, the employment rate of the population aged 15 or more was estimated in 49.6% (4499.5 individuals). Of these, 54.6% were men and 45.3% were women (Pordata/INE, accessed 19.02.2015). Even though the feminization of the labour market is a little bit below the European average, compared to 2013 the decrease of lower employment was higher for men. The analysis of the active population by gender since 1974 shows that the feminization rate has steadily increased and drew near to the masculinization rate in 2014 (51.3%—male and 48.7%—female). In the organizations analysed here, the feminization rate is around 77%, therefore much higher than the national average.

This is a contingent of workers mostly integrated in a full-time regime (a little over 86%) (see Table 3). The intersection of these two characteristics—working time arrangements and gender—allows for some additional

⁶ In a total of 89 respondents, only 79 answered this question because they did not have, at the time of the survey, exact information.

Table 2 Employment and occupation of organizational governing boards by gender. *Source:* authors, based on the case studies

Organizations	LAD	DEC	VEP	AVI	TOC	ECO
Gender of the top member of the board	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Male
Gender of board members	All male	All female	All male	Mainly male	All male	Mainly male
Employment rate female (%)	76.5	66.3	81.3	50.0	58.8	60.0
Employment rate male (%)	23.5	33.7	18.8	50.0	41.2	40.0

Table 3 Working time arrangements. *Source:* authors, based on the survey

	Men	Women	Total
Full time	0.78	0.89	0.86
Part time	0.22	0.11	0.14
Total	1	1	1

considerations with some interest, particularly if compared with the overall trends of the Portuguese labour market.

Attention must be paid to the fact that there are more men in a part-time regime (around 14%) (see Table 3). This contrasts with the dominating trend of the OECD labour market as a whole where part-time work is carried out mostly by women (estimated part-time employment among Portuguese men represented around 6.5% of total male employment in 2009).⁷

The reason behind this particularity may be the strong feminization of employment in social economy where the daily and operational tasks of the organizations are performed by women. Generically speaking, we seem to be dealing with rather simple structures within which the part-time regime may be linked to functions that require a shorter period of permanence in the organizations. This could be the case of activities related to the techno-structure and/or support tasks as coined by Mintzberg (1979), e.g. accounting, legal support or other activities that allow for worker turnover such as sports, cultural and leisure activities, language classes, music or theatre, among others.

The analysis of the contractual links, which involved an evaluation of its quality, turned out to be favourable to women. The classification of contractual links was accomplished in its simpler form in terms of their precariousness.⁸ We avoided the oversimplification that could

⁷ Source: OCDE (2011). OECD Family database www.oecd.org/els/social/family/database OECD—Social Policy Division—Directorate of Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Last update 15/04/2011 1. LMF1.6: Gender differences in employment outcomes.

⁸ Due to their specificity, we excluded internships and employment insertion contracts from the analysis.

result from a dichotomization of the situations of precariousness. Instead, we decided to take into account situations of “intermediate precariousness”. Hence, job stability refers to situations where individuals are bound to the organization via open-ended employment contracts; semi-stability refers to the situation of individuals who have fixed-term contracts; finally, precariousness refers to situations where individuals carry on their activities independently and deliver a service to the organization.

We consider that fixed-term work contracts correspond to a situation of semi-stability because the mere existence of a labour—and not a service delivery—contract confers legal rights to the worker, and more specifically the right to social protection. By contrast, self-employed workers generally enjoy no rights or warranties with regard to the organizations they work for.

We have considered the gender distribution of the three degrees of stability/precariousness in relation to the total number of workers in each situation, full or part-time (%). Table 4 summarizes the descriptive statistics based on the relative weight of men and women in each of the three categories.

Broadly speaking, the following findings stand out: (1) job stability is relatively dominant among these organizations since it corresponds to the case of around 60% of the workers—both men (58.1%) and women (62.5%); (2) around 50% (median) of the organizations do not show situations of precariousness, being more frequent among men (20.8%) than women (14.1%).

We conclude that the stability of the work contracts is higher in the third sector than in the public sector, but lower than in the private sector. In fact, this was already the case in 2006, when we noticed that “the stability of work contracts in the private sector is higher, followed by the third sector and lastly by the public sector” (Parente 2011: 270).

Specifically regarding gender, we can see that women hold a position that is relatively more comfortable than that of men. Although difference is slight in both the stability and semi-stability categories, it increases in the situations of precariousness especially among men. This trend deviates from that of the labour market in general. In the latter,

Table 4 Descriptive statistics of the categories of precariousness/labour stability by gender (values in % of total workers). *Source:* authors, based on the survey

	Male workers			Female workers		
	Stability	Semi-stability	Precariousness	Stability	Semi-stability	Precariousness
<i>N</i>	53	53	53	68	68	68
No information	36	36	36	21	21	21
Mean	58.11	21.06	20.83	62.52	23.40	14.08
Median	70.00	4.00	,00	75.00	9.45	,00
SD	40.64	30.47	33.22	35.73	29.59	24.52

according to data from the “Quadros de Pessoal of 2013”,⁹ for example, there were 2,384,121 contracted employees more or less equally distributed by gender (women—47.9% and men—52.1%).

If the contractual situation is more favourable to women, salaries follow the reverse trend. They are an indicator of vertical segregation and follow the trend of the labour market, in general, as shown in Table 5.

In fact, remuneration is a recurrent indicator of gender (in)equity with men being usually better paid than women. In Portugal, according to data from the “Quadro de Pessoal of 2014”, the average monthly earnings of male workers employed full-time were higher than those of women: 1 233.47 Euros and 982.36, respectively, corresponding to a difference of 301.11 Euros. According to data provided by PorData, both average remunerations and average earnings¹⁰ are lower for women, which points to a wider form of inequality embedded in the whole compensation plans (CITE 2014).

In the case of social economy, these differences can be aggravated by the characteristics of some activities, particularly “human health and social support” ones. Among these, according to data from “Quadro de Pessoal”, in 2014, the percentage deviation from the average earnings in each activity was more pronounced for men, with a total of 35%.

Table 5 systematizes information from the analysed organizations that allowed us to calculate wage averages according to professional groups (excluding leaders since this is an unpaid function). As we can see, only a few organizations provided this information, varying between 19 and 49 organizations. The reasons for this vary from confidentiality clauses regarding compensation to differences in hierarchical ladders, or even to the fact that some respondents were not aware of wage values. In any case, given that this is a sensitive subject and that the data provided are merely indicative, our reading should be seen as exploratory rather than conclusive. In other words, it is

meant to raise questions and numeric data should be considered illustrative.

As a general rule, members of social economy statutory boards are not paid for their work.¹¹ In fact, only among 11 of the 89 surveyed organizations were some members of the statutory boards paid. Among them, 5 were men and 7 were women who were remunerated as a consequence of their accumulation of statutory and executive positions.

An overall evaluation of the economic sustainability of the organizations could consider this nonpaid work to be advantageous; however, from a gender lens it can be highly questionable. Gratuity may be yet another obstacle to women’s inclusion in these positions since national data¹² show that they accumulate paid and unpaid work, namely domestic work, childrearing and caring for the elderly or handicapped family members. This is often seen as a potential explanation for their low participation in the public sphere. Nonpaid work, calculated in more than 16 weekly hours,¹³ makes it difficult for women to have available time to spend on other chores, and namely to lead organizations.

Resuming the analysis of Table 5, considering the maximum and average wages the difference between men and women increases as we move towards higher positions. This is particularly true for statutory and executive leaders, as well as for high-level technicians with managerial functions in which men always earn more than women. As we go down, the professional hierarchy differences in average wages tend to decrease. CITE’s report on the progress of gender equality in the workplace, employment and training (2014) shows that wage inequality, which

⁹ Source: Quadros de Pessoal 2013 published by Gabinete de Estratégia e Estudos do Ministério da Economia (2014).

¹⁰ Earnings include more than wages. Other components include compensation for additional work, prizes and other benefits.

¹¹ According to article 18 of the Statute of IPSS, under the heading “Requirements for office”, any position in the governing bodies of the organizations is free, but can justify the payment of expenses inherent to its performance. As a rule, administrators are not remunerated (art. 18, no. 1) although “the volume of financial movement or the complexity of organizational administration (that) requires the prolonged presence of one or more managers” may lead to compensation. The statutes of both public utility organizations and NGOs are silent regarding the compensation of board members.

¹² Source: CITE, with Euroforce data, 4th European Working Conditions Survey of 2005). Available at <http://www.cite.gov.pt/pt/acite/mulheresehomens04.html>, accessed 25.05.2015.

¹³ Ibid.

Table 5 Wage average according to professional group. Source: authors, based on the survey

Professional group by gender	N	Maximum wage value	Wage average	Standard deviation
<i>Statutory and executive leaders</i>				
Men	5	5482	2738.45	1655.267
Woman	7	2805	1484.48	861.198
<i>High-level technicians with managerial functions</i>				
Men	32	5438	1836.77	1012.122
Women	49	4170	1521.07	727.483
<i>High-level technicians without managerial functions</i>				
Men	32	2000	1166.49	372.066
Women	48	2100	1157.43	313.581
<i>Qualified operational staff</i>				
Men	27	1528	798.30	315.344
Women	40	1603	733.89	251.992
<i>Qualified administrative staff</i>				
Men	19	1400	863.34	290.728
Women	41	1400	780.14	217.346
<i>Undifferentiated staff</i>				
Men	21	900	622.33	137.845
Women	33	1053	581.49	131.821

favours men, is directly proportional to qualification levels. In other words, it increases with the level of qualification and is particularly high in top positions. “In this level of qualification, the ratio between women’s and men’s wages is of 72.6% regarding the average basic remuneration and of 71.4% regarding the average of average earnings” (2014: 45).

Eurostat data (March 2015) show that Portugal is the EU country where wage inequality between men and women increased the most in the aftermath of the 2008 crisis. The wage difference between men and women increased by 3.8% between 2008 and 2013, which means women are paid less 13% than men, in total.

Cohen and Huffman (2007) present several studies about the positive relationship between the presence of women in management positions and the reduction of the wage gap. “These studies imply that there is less gender inequality under conditions of greater female representation (and higher status) in management” (p. 683).

Conclusion

Internal segmentation is a characteristic of the general dynamics of the labour market that social economy organizations reproduce. It contributes to reinforce gender inequality and, in part, pushes these organizations away from their ideals.

Both positions of power and higher wages tend to be assigned to men. Lower positions with lower incomes tend to be left to women, even in a sector dominated by women

who often hold technical positions with leadership functions. Therefore, women are granted a more invisible place that we can call a *non-place*.

Women are excluded from leadership positions in social economy organizations both because statutory boards are traditionally led by male presidents who often assumed the office just about their foundation (Parente et al. 2012) and because such positions are unpaid and this adds to their double working day. Nonetheless, it is women who ensure the everyday functioning of these organizations whose feminization rates are relatively higher than those of the labour market, in general.

Hence, we corroborate that “even if some women hold positions of responsibility, equality in terms of representation and wage equality has not yet been attained” (Hersente and Guérin 2014: 67).

Their central role as workers is recognized only in terms of work contracts since their situation is globally less precarious than that of men.

The reproduction of gender inequality in social economy organizations leads us to the conclusion that it signals a generic detour from the ideals of equality, non-discrimination, justice and equity. This is crystallized in the “non-place” women hold in the strategic direction and public visibility of social economy and in the most invisible and private “place” of organizational everyday tasks.

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