

THE GENDER GAP COULD TAKE 170 YEARS TO CLOSE

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The disparity in wages and employment opportunities between women and men has widened in the last four years, according to the [Global Gender Gap Report 2016](#) from the World Economic Forum, which underlines the need to integrate the talent of half the population for sustainable economic growth. Specifically, the wage gap currently stands at 59%, at the same level as in 2008, and only 4 points below 11 years ago. Given the steps backwards in economic

equality, the Report estimates that, at the current rate, it will take 170 years to reach parity, when in the previous year it estimated that it would take 118 years.

Economic inequality is caused by several factors, including women being paid almost half as much as men, working an average of 50 minutes more each day, and being much less likely to reach management positions. Looking to the future, the report warns that the fourth industrial revolution, and the disruption of automation technologies or artificial intelligence, can especially affect job losses in sectors with a greater relative presence of women, for which the authors call to take bold steps to speed up parity at a crucial time.

The report measures the [equality indicators](#) of 144 countries in different areas: education, health, economic opportunity and political empowerment. The imbalances in wages and job opportunities occur despite the fact that in 95 of these countries women attend the university in equal or greater numbers than men. The Scandinavian countries continue to dominate the equality ranking, although developing countries such as Rwanda – ranked 5 – appear in the Top 20. Spain ranks more than discreetly 29th.

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