

# Market overview - France

*In France, workforce participation by women is low, sitting at 50.5% compared with 60.3% of the male population (although participation overall is lower in France compared with other Western countries)<sup>1</sup>. The section below explores how women in France are experiencing the Second Glass Ceiling, and looks at which factors are more influential.*

## Women encounter barriers to staying in work

Despite just under 10% difference in workforce participation between men and women in France, 76% of part-time jobs are held by women, with 29% of women working part-time compared to only 8% of men<sup>2</sup>. This could be due to co-occurring stressors and the multiple roles a woman has, leading to a different way of working. This is supported by women in France spending 1.7 times as much time on unpaid domestic and care work than men<sup>3</sup>.

## Menopause and formal policies

There are no formal policies in place for menopause and the workplace, nor is it included in French employment law. However, unlike the UK, menopause has not been raised in French employment tribunals in unfair or discrimination cases<sup>4</sup>, nor is it highlighted as having a particularly negative impact in the workplace. This could be influenced by the embracing of hormone replacement therapy<sup>5</sup>.

France is making a determined effort to improve their gender equality regulations, which could pave the way to enable women to remain, and thrive in the workplace longer. Whilst women only hold 35% of senior and managerial positions, lower than the US and UK, France is leading, worldwide, in the percentage of women on boards (43%)<sup>6</sup> and taking steps to bridge the gender gap, by implementing new gender equality requirements for employers. These include regulations from salaries of employees being paid into accounts of their own name, to strengthen the financial independence of women, as well as large companies being required to disclose both the gender composition of their senior executive staff, and board members, alongside the values of the mandated gender-related pay equality elements<sup>7</sup>. Currently, men earn 29% more than women, with the wage gap for the same position and skills being 9%, so there is the potential for these regulations to begin to pave the way to a more equal workplace long-term.

<sup>1</sup> [Gender Statistics](#), The World Bank, accessed June 2023

<sup>2</sup> [The French Brief - The Road to Gender Equality in France's Labor Market](#), Institute Montaigne, April 2021

<sup>3</sup> [Gender Data Portal / France](#), The World Bank, accessed June 2023

<sup>4</sup> <https://ellint.net/news/sector/general/menopause-and-workplace-what-are-the-implications-under-french-employment-law/>

<sup>5</sup> [How France Views And Treats Menopause](#), Vergo, accessed June 2023

<sup>6</sup> [The French Brief](#), Institute Montaigne, April 2021

<sup>7</sup> [France: New gender equality requirements for employers](#), WTW, January 2022

