

### III. Employment-to-population ratios

#### A. Higher employment-to-population ratios for men

At the global level, employment-to-population ratios are higher for men than for women and the gender gap remains stable (figure 2). Thus, in 2015, the female employment-to-population ratio was 46 per cent, while the corresponding male ratio was almost 72 per cent. In 2015 nearly 1.3 billion women were employed compared to close to 2 billion men.

These trends are much more marked in Northern Africa, in the Arab States and in Southern Asia, where the male employment-to-population ratio is more than three times higher than that for women. Large employment gaps are also observed in Latin America and the Caribbean and Central and Western Asia, although of much smaller size. While, however, at the global level employment-to-population rates have remained quite stable, in these two regions female employment has been on the rise since early 2000s.

Gender employment gaps are narrower both in Northern America and in Northern, Southern and Western Europe. While in Northern America the crisis has reduced both female and male employment, the Northern, Southern and Western Europe region has witnessed a slight increase in female employment and a drop in male unemployment, which has ultimately narrowed gender employment gaps.

Eastern Asia, South-Eastern Asia and the Pacific and Eastern Europe are characterized by stable employment gaps.

#### B. Increased share of women employees

In 2015, more than half of the world's working women and men were wage and salaried workers. More precisely, 52.1 per cent of women and 51.2 per cent of men in the labour market are wage and salaried workers. That said, more wage employment for women does not necessarily mean good quality employment, as many women might find themselves in informal or insecure jobs.

Figure 3 shows that, since 1995, there has been an increase in the share of wage and salaried workers for both women (12.0 percentage points) and men (7.9 percentage points). The share of contributing family workers has decreased by 8.1 percentage points for men and 17.0 percentage points for women. These data indicate that the last 20 years have witnessed a reduction of contributing family work. This trend is largely due to the decline in the share of workers engaged in agriculture, which is traditionally a sector with a high concentration of contributing family workers. The number of own-account workers is not yet on the decline, however, the share of own-account workers has increased by 0.8 percentage points for men and 5.0 percentage points for women. Although women are still overrepresented as contributing family workers, both men and women have shifted from contributing family work into wage employment or own-account work. These trends are more remarkable for women than men (except in sub-Saharan Africa and Northern Africa).

The reduction in contributing family work in favour of wage and salaried employment has been particularly remarkable in Eastern Asia and in South-Eastern Asia and the Pacific. In Eastern Asia, women have shifted from contributing family work to wage and salaried employment. The share of women in wage and salaried work more than doubled, from 26.3 per cent in 1995 to 55.3 per cent in 2015. In contrast, the share of women as contributing family workers decreased dramatically (from 53.4 to 11.6 per cent). Similarly, in South-Eastern Asia and the Pacific, the share of women in wage and salaried work increased from 30.4 per cent in 1995 to 40.9 per cent in 2015, while contributing family work decreased from 42.4 to 25.9 per cent.

In the Arab States, the share of women contributing to unpaid family work has also decreased, by 9.7 percentage points. This, however, has favoured not only female wage employment, which has increased by 5.7 percentage points, but also own-account employment, which has increased by 3.7 percentage points.

The second most widespread employment status, at the global level, is that of own-account workers (38.9 per cent for men and 29.1 per cent for women). The share of women and men as employers has remained stagnant (3.2 per cent for men and 1.4 per cent for women). This distribution varies widely from region to region, however. Whereas the proportion of women in wage and salaried work is above the world average in Northern America (89.4 per cent), Northern, Southern and Western Europe (88.4 per cent), Eastern Europe (88.4 per cent), the Arab States (75.0 per cent) and, to a lesser extent, Latin America and the Caribbean (66.6 per cent), Central and Western Asia (63.2 per cent) and Eastern Asia (55.3 per cent), in all the other regions it remains below the average. The share of women in wage employment is particularly low in sub-Saharan Africa (21.4 per cent) and Southern Asia (20.0 per cent).