

# female labour force participation in Greece

by

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## 1. introduction

Since World War II the world upward trend in the employment of women is generally recognized as one of the most significant social developments not only in industrialized countries, but also in developing countries.

The penetration of women into the national labour force of a country has most certainly brought structural socioeconomic changes and consequently shifted the center of gravity from certain occupations traditionally held by men.

Greece presents a fairly unique example compared to other geographical areas particularly Europe, which is mainly considered to be fully industrialized.

Major social and economic factors are greatly responsible for this phenomenon for which, however, unfortunately there is almost non existing pertinent data or research. Some attempt has been made to introduce awareness through the initiative of some social scientists or other individuals, on this vital subject of the working woman in Greece; there is, however, a need to study the facts and gain deeper insight in the area of female labour force.

Hence, in this article, an attempt is being made to examine the changing role of the working woman in Greece, her contribution to the social and economic development, together with the existing problems of the growth of women's employment in Greece.

## 2. historical background

After 400 years of Ottoman Empire occupation of Greece, and during the War of Independence, there is pertinent evidence about the pronounced role of the greek woman who participated actively in this War. Her assistance to her fellow men in every field of work, either by taking up work responsibilities unknown to her until then, or performing other manual work in the armed forces, is considered to be the first sign of her emancipation.

The creation of the modern greek state in 1826, was a good opportunity for her social standing, innovation, which however one must admit developed at a very slow process.

The population census of 1870<sup>1</sup> indicates that out of 28,400 total industrial labour force in Greece 5,375 were women (20.2%). All other active participation is within the agricultural sector and that of housemaid for which there is no available data.

In 1912, new legislation, forbids active participation of women in business dealings, without the prior consent of her husband.

The most significant period in Greece for the social development of women can be considered to be the period from 1922 onwards. The effects of the inflow of

1. National Statistical Service of Greece (NSSG), *Population Census 1870*.

greek refugees from Asia Minor can be analysed as follows: greek women from Asia Minor, in general, particularly from urban centers, were more advanced socially and they were of a better social standing due mainly to better educational and social background. A high percentage of them were also highly skilled in various technical jobs: textile, retail services, teaching, etc. The 1928 population census<sup>2</sup> indicates a total female labour force of 633,435 out of which 99,712 are industrial workers, 434,623 agricultural and the rest in services.

Just before World War II, the National Social Security claims the registration of nearly 142,000 women which were actively occupied in industry and services.<sup>3</sup>

Immediately after the Second World War the tremendous loss of manpower and other economic factors (such as great emigration flow, particularly of men), led to increased participation of women in industrial work.

There is however one factor which definitely impedes woman of further development in her work and that is childbirth. One must here consider the very few social security facilities concerning working mothers, eg. there are only 654 national and 47 private day-care centers to cover the needs of 937,500 pre-school age children (population census 1971).

The industrial development of the 1950's resulted in greater demand for women particularly unskilled workers, mainly because of the factors which we have already referred to and because they were a comparatively cheaper labour force.

In the 1951 population census<sup>4</sup> out of 3,226,072 women aged 10 years and over, 510,580 (15.8%) was the active registered working population, whereas 1961 census indicates that out of 3,562,832 women aged 10 years and over, 1,193,823 (33.5%) were actively occupied, which confirms the tremendous increase of women participation at work.

The inevitable improvement in the standard of living in Greece of the 1960's has had a definitely negative effect upon fertility (1950:20.00‰, 1960:18.9‰, 1970:16.5‰, 1977:15.5‰,<sup>5</sup> which together with the introduction of better amenities into the average greek household has created better chances for women, particularly in the urban centers, to take up employment in various jobs, for which demand by now had considerably increased.

Whilst this is happening in the urban centers, in rural areas the average working woman involved in agriculture is mostly still considered as an unpaid family worker. In the 1971 population census, out of 478,176 women

working in agriculture, the 384,500 were unpaid family workers, i.e. (80 %).<sup>6</sup>

Finally, the increase of the participation of women in the labour force is highly related to a complex set of fast social and economic changes, which have made paid work for women a challenging incentive outside her home and naturally a more profitable alternative than before. Other factors associated with the change in women's participation are due mainly to the kind of family responsibilities. As a result, it becomes apparent, that it is rather important to identify and examine further various factors and characteristics according to which women's participation can be clarified across a diverse spectrum of circumstances, both on individual and national basis.

### 3. general remarks

Of the total greek female population aged 10 years and over as per 1971 population census, which is 3,753,460, 24% (905,408) are actively occupied (Table 1).<sup>7</sup> The breakdown of this number gives us the following results of work participation: rural areas 35%, semi-urban areas 21%, urban areas 18% (Table 2).

TABLE 1. Economically active female population aged 10 years and over by age group on a national basis  
Absolute numbers. Percentages, 1971

Age groups	Economically active female population		
	Female Population	Absolute numbers	Percentages (%)
10-14	353,284	24,956	7.06
15-19	327,552	90,952	27.76
20-24	307,368	112,132	36.48
25-29	259,264	86,684	33.43
30-34	320,540	102,380	31.93
35-44	677,268	215,884	31.87
45-54	493,660	141,944	28.75
55-64	476,064	94,516	19.85
65+	538,460	35,960	6.67
Total	3,753,460	905,408	24.12

Source: National Statistical Service of Greece (NSSG), *Statistical Yearbook Greece 1976*, Athens 1976.

The main part of the working women in Greece is constituted by the 20-45 year age group. However, the relative peak age group is 20-24 years of age. This is representative on the national basis.

6. NSSG, *Population Census 1971*.

7. The reduction in the percentage of economically active female population which took part between 1961 and 1971, can be partly explained by the differences in the definition of economically active population between these two censuses (in 1971 there was a reluctant statistical attitude to include unpaid family workers into the labour force), by the strong emigration flow and the further decline in the fertility rates.

2. NSSG, *Population Census 1928*.

3. Iris Avdi Kalkani, *The Working Woman in Greece*, Athens 1978, p. 37.

4. NSSG, *Population Census 1951*.

5. Haris Symeonidou-Alatopoulou, «An account on factors affecting fertility in Greece (1930-1975)», *The Greek Review of Social Research*, No 35, Athens 1979.

TABLE 2. Economically active female population aged 10 years and over by age group and by geographical area (urban, semi-urban, rural). Absolute numbers, Percentages, 1971.

Age groups	Urban areas			Semi-urban areas			Rural areas		
	Female Population	Economically active female population Absolute numbers	Percentages (%)	Female Population	Economically active female population Absolute numbers	Percentages (%)	Female Population	Economically active female population Absolute numbers	Percentages (%)
10-14	166,460	6,924	4.15	46,208	2,648	5.73	140,616	15,384	10.94
15-19	179,994	40,384	22.43	38,400	9,428	24.55	109,208	41,140	37.67
20-24	191,924	65,432	34.09	31,108	9,840	31.63	84,336	36,860	43.70
25-29	155,728	46,908	30.12	28,452	7,676	26.97	75,084	32,100	42.75
30-34	183,616	46,024	25.06	36,496	10,360	28.38	100,428	45,996	45.79
35-44	377,656	83,100	22.00	75,892	22,608	29.78	223,720	110,176	49.24
45-54	275,812	49,644	17.99	51,780	14,956	28.88	166,068	77,344	46.57
55-64	244,280	20,888	8.55	51,416	9,788	19.03	180,368	63,840	35.39
65+	250,784	3,860	1.53	62,472	3,276	5.24	225,204	28,824	12.79
Total	2,026,204	3,63,164	17.92	422,224	90,580	21.45	1,305,032	451,664	34.60

Source: NSSG, *Statistical Yearbook of Greece 1976*, Athens 1976.

Furthermore, when examining rural areas, this relative peak falls within 35-45 years age group. Hence, we draw the following initial conclusions:

a. It is generally believed that in urban and semi-urban areas marriage has a negative effect on the active occupational work of women in Greece (1971: medium age of marriage 23.1<sup>8</sup> years of age), whereas in rural areas marriage has little effect on the active occupational pattern of women (Table 2).

b. Out of total 905,408 working women population, 514,332 (57%) are married and 309,644 (36%) are single. The rest 9% are the widowed, divorced or non-declared, which at this stage will not be examined, for the initial evidence indicates that this segment has a very low work participation (Table 3).

TABLE 3. Economically active female population aged 10 years and over by marital status on a national basis. Absolute numbers, Percentages, 1971

Marital status	Female Population	Economically active female population	Economic activity (%)
Single	1,069,456	309,644	28.95
Married	2,167,896	514,332	23.72
Widowed-Divorced	514,332	81,064	15.76
Non-declared	1,692	368	21.74
Total	3,753,460	905,408	24.12

Source: NSSG, *Statistical Yearbook of Greece 1976*, Athens 1976.

If we isolate the population factor, percentage wise etc, we find that there is a greater tendency of work commitment among single women than married. This is

8. NSSG, *Vital Statistics of Greece 1971*, Athens 1974.

not only a general trend but it also applies to all age groups (Table 4, Diagram I).

c. Single women show a max percentage of work commitment within 25-30 age group (59%), whereas married women within 35-45 age group (29%). The max percentage of single women is explained if one takes into consideration the following factors:

1. completion of higher educational studies
2. non occurrence of marriage until 25 years of age
3. entrance in the labour force.

TABLE 4. Percentages (%) of economically active female population married and single aged 10 years and over by age group, on a national basis, 1971

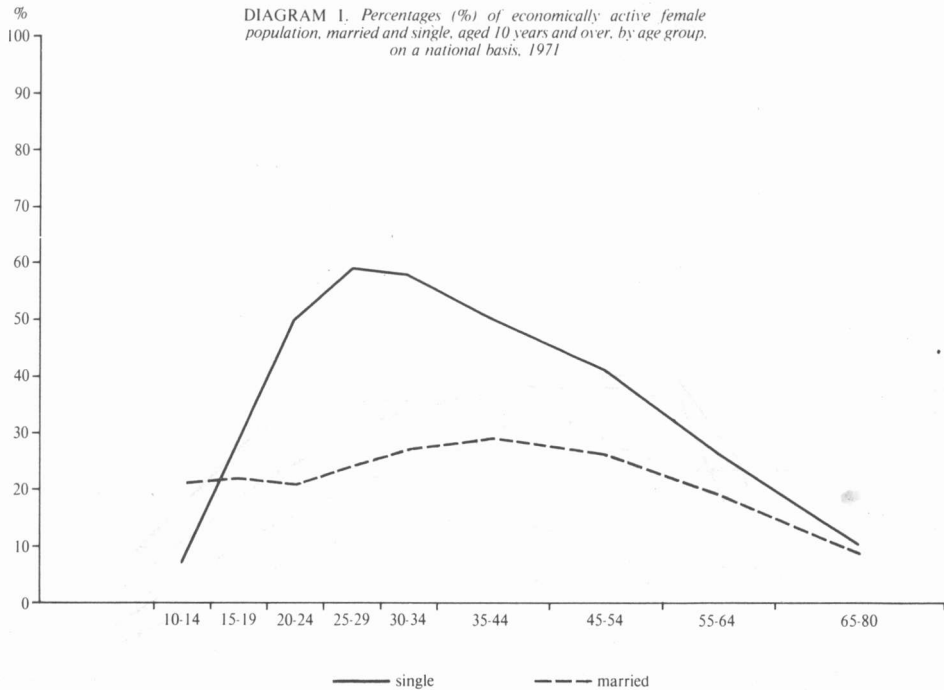
Age groups	Single	Married
10-14	7.03	20.97
15-19	28.46	21.86
20-24	49.95	21.20
25-29	59.21	23.93
30-34	57.53	26.97
35-44	50.13	28.88
45-54	41.00	26.37
55-64	26.28	29.44
65+	10.27	8.69

Source: NSSG, *Population Census 1971*.

As for the married working women 35-45 age group, one may take into consideration the factor of completed family size (live births which take place annually come by 80% of women up to 35 years of age).<sup>9</sup>

These same trends apply for urban, semi-urban and rural areas (Table 5, Diagram II).

9. NSSG, *Vital Statistics of Greece 1956-1971*.



Source: Table 4.

TABLE 5. Percentages (%) of economically active female population married and single 10 years and over by age group and by geographical area, 1971

Age groups	Urban areas		Semi-urban areas		Rural areas	
	Single	Married	Single	Married	Single	Married
10-14	4.14	8.73	5.69	25.00	10.87	36.17
15-19	23.53	12.49	25.31	18.89	37.81	36.42
20-24	49.38	14.01	48.58	17.95	51.96	36.07
25-29	62.47	16.28	51.15	19.94	53.44	39.69
30-34	59.96	16.90	51.50	24.80	53.28	44.65
35-44	51.41	16.44	41.67	27.91	48.63	50.09
45-54	39.20	13.68	34.92	26.50	48.67	45.37
55-64	19.55	6.66	25.27	17.86	43.51	34.21
65+	5.11	1.51	9.72	6.06	19.09	15.21

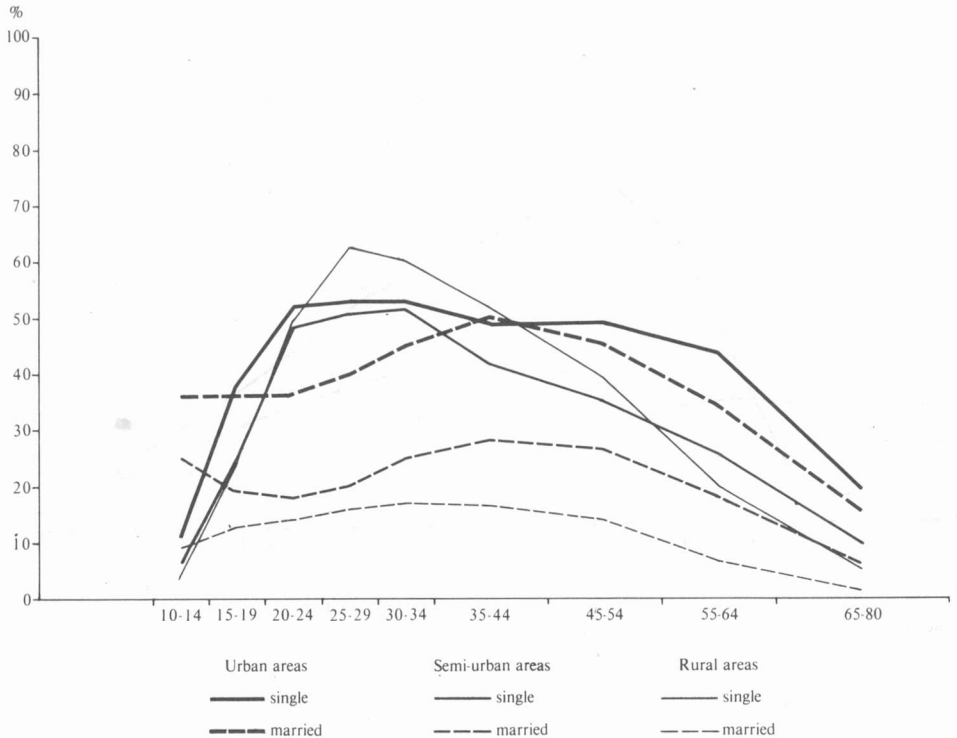
Source: NSSG, Population Census 1971.

#### 4. economic activity of women by major groups of individual occupation

The distribution of married and single women by major groups of individual occupations indicates the different tendencies of marital status, within the various occupational groups, on a national basis and on an urban, semi-urban and rural areas (Tables 6, 7 and Diagrams III, IV).

The application of  $\chi^2$  test indicates that marital status has a strong association with the tendency of women to work, in the different branches of economic activity. The greatest percentages of working women, both married and single, come under the category of «farmers lodgers and related workers». However, in analysing this phenomenon further we arrive at the following result: out of every 100 married women 66 fall under

DIAGRAM II. Percentages (%) of economically active female population, married and single, aged 10 years and over, by age group and by geographical area, 1971



Source: Table 5.

the above group, whereas every 100 single women 31 are «farmers and lodgers».

Furthermore, the occupational group which follows is that of «craftswomen and labourers», in which single women constitute the greatest part.

Extremely low, almost non-existent, appears to be the percentage for «professional, technical and related workers». Equally for «administrative, executive and management personnel» both for married and single women.

The occupational category of women is largely determined by the fact that Greece still remains an agricultural country (1977: agricultural contribution to

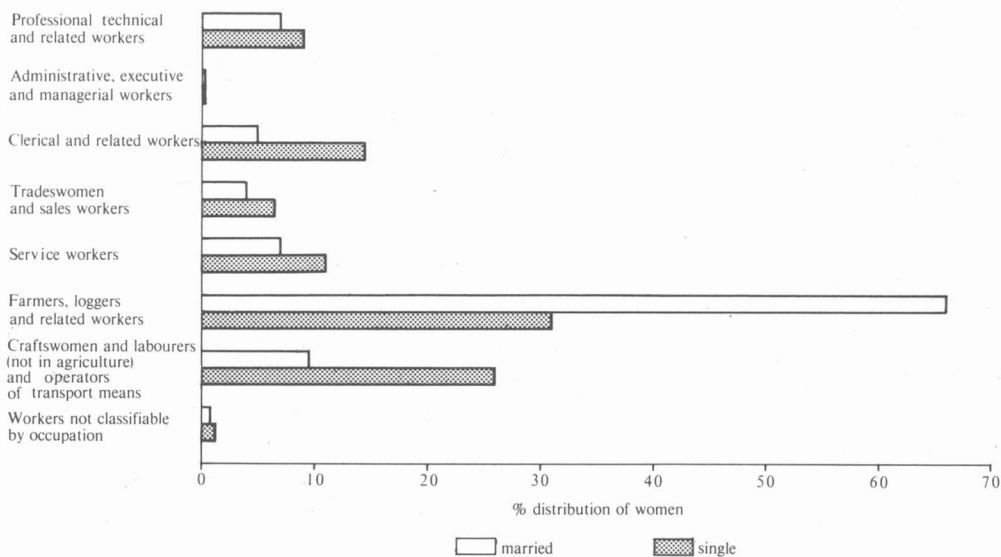
GNP 17%, 1971: agricultural labour force 1,313,336 people, i.e. 40.6% of the total labour force.<sup>10</sup>

Another factor is the low educational level of women (1971: 16% of women were graduates of higher education and 99% had completed secondary education),<sup>11</sup> especially for those over 35 years of age (see also Table 8).

Another prevailing social factor is that women are not considered professionally efficient, which is assimilated with acceptance of responsibility in certain pro-

10-11. NSSG, *Statistical Yearbook of Greece 1978*, Athens 1979.

DIAGRAM III Percentage (%) distribution of economically active female population, married and single, aged 10 years and over, by major groups of individual occupations, 1971



Source: Table 6.

TABLE 6. Percentage distribution (%) of economically active married and single female population aged 10 years and over, by major groups of individual occupations, 1971

Groups of occupation	Single	Married
Professional technical and related workers	9.28	6.09
Administrative executive and managerial workers	0.16	0.17
Clerical and related workers	14.76	5.28
Tradeswomen and sales workers	6.49	4.11
Service workers	10.94	7.04
Farmers loggers and related workers	30.93	65.87
Craftswomen and labourers (not in agriculture) and operators of transport means	26.10	9.61
Workers not classifiable by occupation	1.35	0.84
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: NSSG, Population Census 1971.

professional categories particularly supervisory and management positions.

Finally, since women themselves do not anticipate a life-long career in the labour force, do not make extensive investments in vocationally oriented education or in advanced training. The differences in role identification which start in infancy, result in women following a course, whereby raising children and managing a home are primary activities and work is secondary.

In examining further the distribution by occupational groups by area (Diagram IV), we observe the following:

a. In urban centers working women are mainly either craftswomen or labourers. This applies particularly to the single ones. Again, in the same geographical area, the percentage of professional, technical and related workers, is above the national, especially among married women, which consequently indicates a clear tendency of the qualified women to continue working after marriage. In the case of clerical and administrative workers, we observe an inverse situation, whereby the frequency of single women is much higher than the frequency of married.

TABLE 7. Percentage distribution (%) of economically active married and single female population aged 10 years and over by major groups of individual occupations, and geographical area, 1971

Groups of occupation	Areas					
	Urban		Semi-urban		Rural	
	Married	Single	Married	Single	Married	Single
Professional technical and related workers	15.99	12.70	5.75	8.13	1.35	3.70
Administrative executive and managerial workers	0.55	0.24	0.04	0.09	0.01	0.03
Clerical and related workers	19.92	23.48	2.89	7.49	0.28	1.69
Tradeswomen and sales workers	10.09	9.88	4.08	4.59	1.22	1.15
Service workers	18.71	15.90	6.33	9.05	1.51	2.90
Farmers lodgers and related workers	8.40	2.45	70.71	42.25	92.83	76.96
Craftswomen and labourers (not in agriculture) and operators of transport means	24.46	33.60	9.42	27.05	2.44	12.91
Workers not classifiable by occupation	1.88	1.75	0.72	1.34	0.36	0.66
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: NSSG, *Population Census, 1971*.

TABLE 8. Percentages (%) of economically active female population by educational level and by sector of economic activity

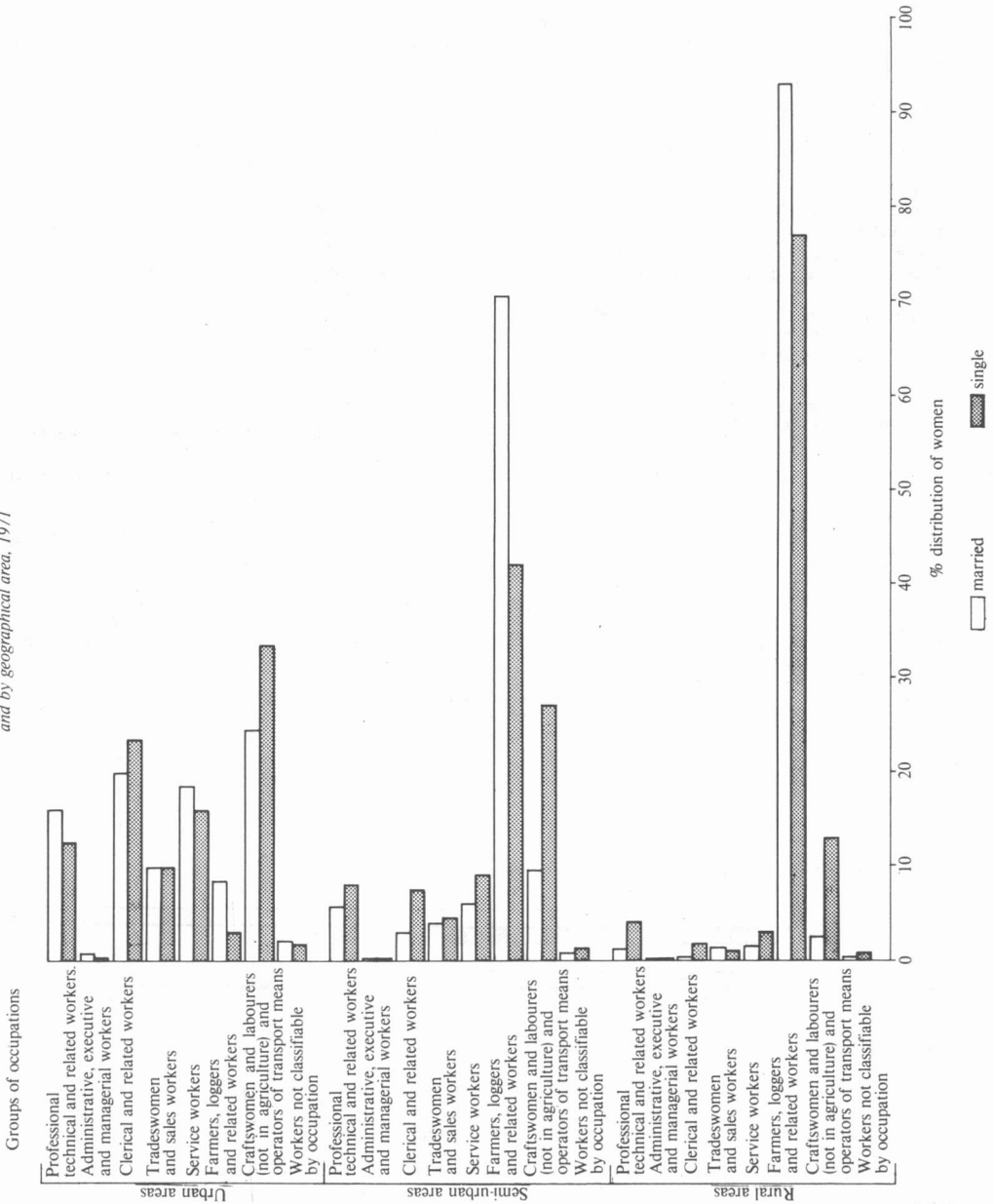
Sectors of activity	Percentage distribution (%) by educational level						Total	Illite- rates <sup>1</sup>	Completed technical or vocational education (graduated higher education are not included <sup>2</sup> )
	Economically active (total)	Graduated higher education	Completed secondary education	Completed primary education	Have not finished primary school	Have not declared educational level			
Economically active (total)	100.0	4.4	11.8	41.8	37.6	4.4	100.0	19.8	1.5
Primary sector	53.2	—	0.4	40.0	53.2	6.4	100.0	30.9	—
Secondary sector	15.8	0.6	9.7	65.5	22.6	1.6	100.0	7.5	0.8
Tertiary sector	31.0	13.7	32.6	32.8	18.3	2.5	100.0	7.3	4.2

1. They are included in those who have finished primary school.

2. The number of those who have completed technical or vocational education is independent to the distribution by educational level.

Source: Angelos Zisimopoulos, *The determinants of female employment. Policy measures and incentives for a greater participation of females in the labour force* Center of Planning and Economic Research, Athens 1975, p.62.

DIAGRAM IV. Percentage (%) distribution of economically active female population, married and single, aged 10 years and over, by major groups of individual occupations, and by geographical area, 1971



Source: Table 7.



b. In the semi-urban and rural areas, the distribution is fairly similar of that to the national level, i.e. women are mainly occupied in agricultural jobs, for opportunities of education, technical training and other industrial experience are very small.

**5. economic activity of women by occupational status**

Marked differences exist between married and single women on a national basis and by geographical area in their occupational status.

The application of  $\chi^2$  test indicates that the occupational status of a woman is highly influenced by her marital status.

Married women are mostly «unpaid family workers», whereas the single ones tend to be «salaried and wage earners» (Table 9, Diagram V).

TABLE 9. Percentage distribution (%) of economically active married and single female population aged 10 years and over by occupational status, 1971

Occupational status	Marital status	
	Married	Single
Employers	1.23	0.75
Own-account workers	11.49	11.54
Unpaid family workers	61.39	27.97
Salaried and wage earners	25.22	58.87
Not declared status	0.67	0.85
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: NSSG, Population Census 1971.

Taking into consideration the living area (Table 10, Diagram VI), we find that in the urban centers all women, and especially the single ones, are in their greatest part «salaried and wage earners». In the semi-urban and rural areas, they are mainly «unpaid family workers» with greater percentages met among the married women (84% of married women in rural areas are working as «unpaid family workers», whereas the percentage for the single is 68%).

Therefore, we can draw the conclusion, that in rural areas, where family ties still remain very strong, women before marriage are working on their father's land as «unpaid family workers» and after marriage, they continue being in the same working status.

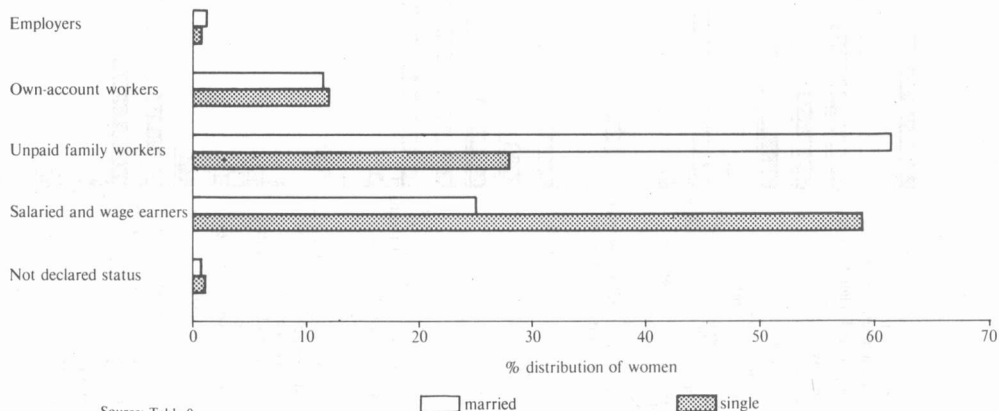
It is worthwhile noting that the category of «employers» is almost nonexistent among women, married and single, and this coincides with the non existing branch of «administrative, executive and managerial workers», discussed above.

**6. economic activity of women by working hours**

The percentage distribution of married and single working women by working hours (0-9, 10-19, 20-29, ..., 70-79 hours worked in the last week before the 1971 census), can be better illustrated, if one differentiates the following two sectors: 1) agricultural, 2) non-agricultural.

The  $\chi^2$  test application has shown that there is a strong association between women's working hours and their marital status, both in agricultural and non-agricultural sectors.

DIAGRAM V. Percentage (%) distribution of economically active female population, married and single, aged 10 years and over, by occupational status, 1971



Source: Table 9.

TABLE 10. *Percentage distribution (%) of economically active married and single female population aged 10 years and over by occupational status and geographical area (urban, semi-urban, rural), 1971*

Occupational status	Urban areas		Semi-urban areas		Rural areas	
	Married	Single	Married	Single	Married	Single
Employers	3.47	1.00	0.65	0.70	0.25	0.34
Own account workers	13.64	9.55	12.87	18.13	10.20	13.20
Unpaid family workers	12.86	3.37	65.81	36.82	84.11	68.00
Salaried and wage earners	69.05	85.15	20.17	43.45	4.90	17.72
Not declared status	0.98	0.93	0.50	0.90	0.55	0.74
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: NSSG, *Population Census 1971*.

In the first one the average percentage distribution of women by working hours, reveals that single as well as married women, tend to work up to 9 hours per week, which can be considered as active part-time occupation (see Table 11, Diagram VII).

TABLE 11. *Percentage distribution (%) of economically active female population in the agricultural sector, married and single aged 10 years and over, by hours worked during the last week before the census of 1971*

Number of hours worked	Marital status	
	Married	Single
0-9	29.91	34.94
10-19	12.01	12.23
20-29	16.99	15.71
30-39	17.86	15.95
40-49	17.92	16.17
50-59	3.04	3.04
60-69	1.62	1.34
70-79	0.65	0.62
	100.00	100.00

Source: NSSG, *Population Census 1971*.

This result may be due to the following facts:

- 1) most of the women are unpaid family workers
- 2) they have the additional burden of domestic responsibilities
- 3) seasonal occupational activity

If one examines further the working hours of women within agricultural sectors by geographical areas, it is clear that there is no significant difference amongst them.

In the non-agricultural sector most of the female population, both married and single, are actively occupied on the average 40-49 hours per week (see Table 12, Diagram VIII). In this case, the work is generally paid and the seasonal fluctuations far more restricted. In the group of single women the percentage working 40-49 hours per week it is higher (68%), compared to the married group (48%).

TABLE 12. *Percentage distribution (%) of economically active female population in the non-agricultural sector, married and single aged 10 years and over, by hours worked during the last week before the census of 1971*

Number of hours worked	Marital status	
	Married	Single
0-9	12.21	5.57
10-19	4.30	2.67
20-29	8.11	4.56
30-39	18.78	12.16
40-49	47.80	67.75
50-59	3.68	4.10
60-69	3.17	2.35
70-79	1.95	0.84
	100.00	100.00

Source: NSSG, *Population Census 1971*.

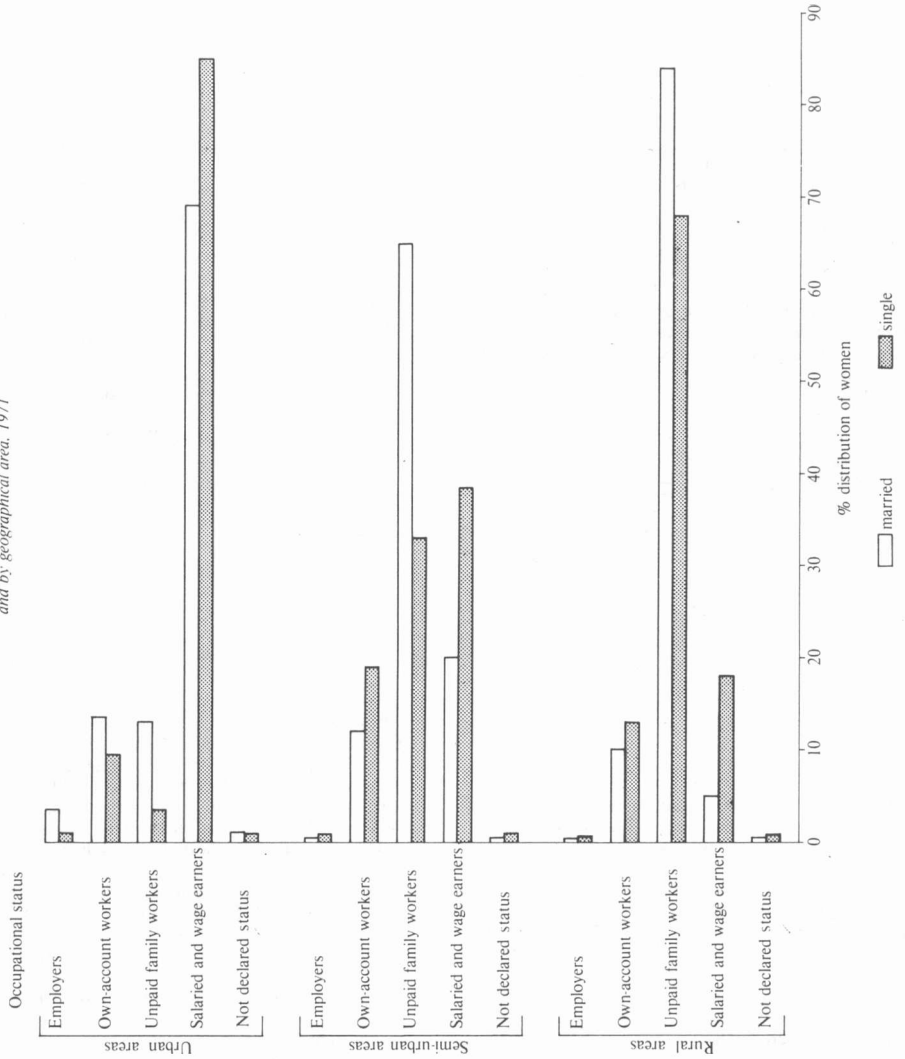
Finally, it is apparent, that Greece's female working population is mainly actively employed in full-time occupation, particularly in the non-agricultural sector, because this sector has been mostly affected by industrialization, as it stands in its first phase, allowing little areas of flexibility in the working hours.

Hence, projected shortage of skilled labour, non-existing social amenities, particularly for working mothers will probably force this sector to introduce, within a foreseeable future, flexibility and probably part-time occupation as an incentive, with the view of attracting more skilled female labour force in this sector.

## 7. some comparisons with other European countries

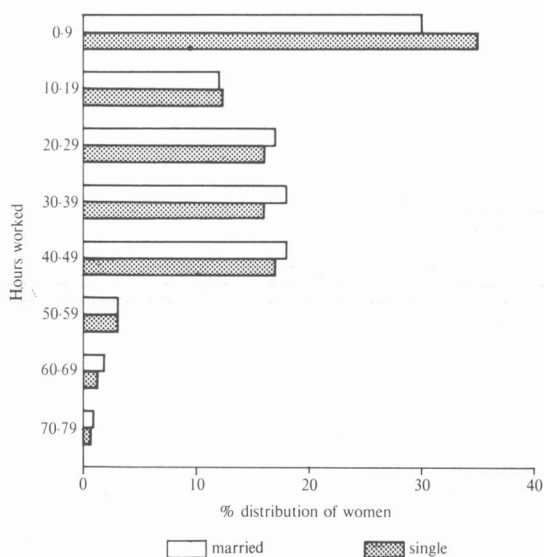
The female labour force participation in Greece is shown to be among the lowest in Europe (see Table 13). Equally, women working in the agricultural sector, cannot really be compared to other European countries' women, because there is a large proportion of work which is unpaid (Table 14).

DIAGRAM VI. Percentage (%) distribution of economically active female population, married and single, aged 10 years and over, by occupational status, and by geographical area, 1971



Source: Table III.

DIAGRAM VII. Economically active female population in the agricultural sector, married and single, aged 10 years and over, by hours worked during the last week before the 1971 population census



Source: Table 11.

TABLE 13. Female labour force as a percentage (%) of total labour force, 1950-1978 in selected European countries

Country	Year				
	1950	1960	1970	1975	1978
Austria	38.5	40.3	38.9	38.6	38.9
Belgium	27.9	29.4	32.0	34.3	36.2
Denmark	33.6	30.8	38.5	41.1	41.8
Finland	40.6	43.9	43.8	45.9	45.8
France	35.9	33.4	35.4	37.0	38.0
Germany	35.1	37.3	35.9	37.2	37.6
Greece	32.1	32.7	28.0	28.0	—
Ireland	25.5	25.9	25.7	27.6	28.5
Italy	25.4	29.5	26.8	27.5	31.9
Luxembourg	29.2	26.9	26.3	25.8	26.8
Netherlands	23.4	22.1	25.5	27.7	29.2
Norway	27.1	28.2	30.0	37.8	40.1
Portugal	22.4	17.7	25.2	37.9	—
Spain	15.8	20.1	24.3	27.2	28.6
Sweden	26.3	36.9	39.5	42.5	44.3
Switzerland	29.7	30.0	34.0	36.6	—
United Kingdom	30.7	32.7	35.3	37.7	38.6

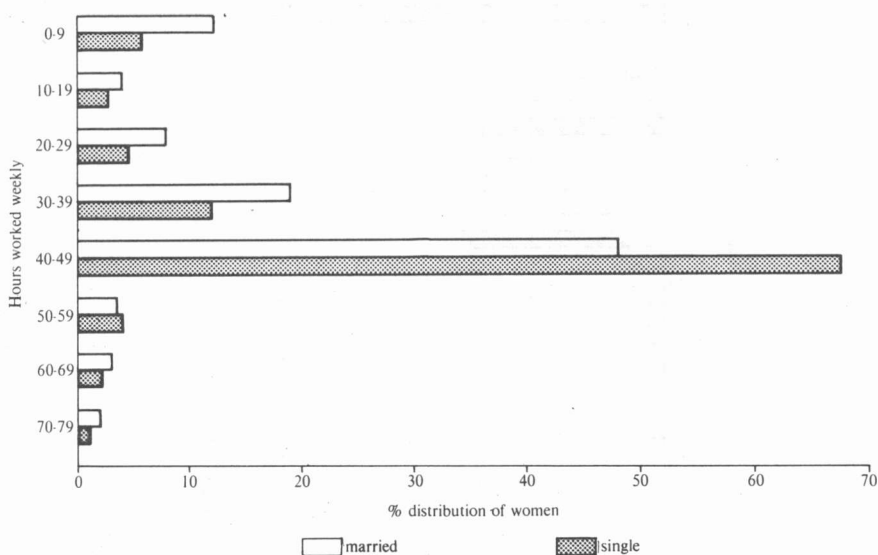
Source: OECD, «High Level Conference on the Employment of Women Items 5 and 6. Women in the Labour Market: Analytical report», Statistical Annex, Paris Febr. 1980.

TABLE 14. Percentage distribution (%) of economically active female population by occupational status in selected European countries

Country	Year	Occupational Status		
		Employers and own account workers	Salaried	Unpaid family workers
Austria	1971	10.3	75.3	14.4
Belgium	1977	9.3	82.6	8.1
Denmark	1977	3.0	87.5	9.5
Finland	1976	5.7	85.2	9.1
France	1975	9.3	83.2	7.5
W. Germany	1977	5.0	83.5	11.5
Greece	1971	16.1	38.2	45.7
Ireland	1975	8.9	85.7	5.4
Italy	1971	16.4	73.3	10.3
Luxembourg	1970	13.2	78.5	8.3
Netherlands	1971	3.7	88.4	7.9
Norway	1977	4.3	88.8	6.9
Portugal	1970	11.7	81.4	6.9
Spain	1970	10.9	78.8	10.3
Sweden	1977	3.7	94.7	1.6
Switzerland	1970	4.0	87.1	8.9
United Kingdom				

Source: Bureau International du Travail, «La participation des femmes à l'activité économique, dans les pays d'Europe à économie de Marché», Analyse Statistique, Genève mai 1979.

DIAGRAM VIII. Economically active female population, in the non-agricultural sector, married and single, aged 10 years and over, by hours worked during the last week before the 1971 population census



Source: Table 12.

TABLE 15. Percentages (%) of economically active female population by age groups in selected European countries, 1975

Country	Age groups					
	15-19 years	20-24 years	25-44 years	45-54 years	55-64 years	65 years and over
Austria	59.9	70.4	59.6	53.9	25.4	3.3
Belgium	33.5	61.1	40.5	30.7	14.3	2.2
Denmark	47.5	69.1	59.0	55.2	34.6	5.1
Finland	33.9	63.9	68.6	63.0	40.1	3.8
France	34.1	63.9	46.8	48.0	38.9	5.7
W. Germany	63.3	69.0	49.8	48.5	27.6	5.6
Greece	42.1	55.9	42.7	36.4	23.2	7.2
Ireland	45.0	67.8	24.8	21.5	21.7	10.4
Italy	36.7	45.9	32.9	29.2	14.0	3.2
Luxembourg	52.4	53.9	27.6	24.5	16.0	4.1
Netherlands	48.7	55.7	24.6	22.6	15.2	2.9
Norway	23.8	49.8	31.1	36.4	29.2	5.3
Portugal	42.9	46.1	25.9	19.1	13.7	7.2
Spain	36.8	42.8	16.6	15.4	13.4	3.9
Sweden	35.1	59.3	54.5	57.4	36.4	3.8
Switzerland	57.0	72.6	47.7	46.3	35.9	9.5
United Kingdom	54.6	60.9	51.7	61.4	39.9	6.1
Europe	43.7	62.5	50.6	49.4	31.5	7.6
World	39.6	51.3	50.9	51.6	33.3	11.8

Source: Bureau International du Travail, «La participation des femmes à l'activité économique dans les pays d'Europe à économie du Marché», *Analyse Statistique*, Genève mai 1979.

TABLE 16. Coverage, qualifying conditions, leave provisions and cash benefits under maternity protection schemes in selected European countries

Country	Coverage	Qualifying conditions	Duration of maternity leave	Paid	Additional leave	Unpaid	Amount of cash benefit
Belgium	All working women	Contributions paid for 6 months	14 weeks (of which 6 before confinement)				100% of net earnings
	Benefit in kind: members of the family All working women	None	4 months for 1st child; 5 months for 2nd; 6 months for 3rd (of which 45 days before confinement)	6-8 months depending on number of children	Until child reaches age of 3		100% of earnings from social security fund. During additional leave 80 leva a month (national minimum)
Czechoslovakia	Benefit in kind: all women	wage rate 270 days of insurance in last 2 years	26 weeks; (48 weeks before confinement and 22 weeks after confinement) 35 weeks if multiple births and for single mothers				90% of earnings
	All working women	Eligibility continuous for 6 months after employment ceases					
	Benefit in kind: all women	Income during last 4 weeks before confinement or during last 6 months must at least give entitlement to equivalent minimum cash benefit	14 weeks (of which 8 before confinement)				90% of average weekly earnings
France	All working women	200 hours of employment during the year. Registration under insurance scheme for at least 10 months at the expected date of confinement	14 weeks (of which 6 before confinement) 16 weeks in official cases	Until child reaches age of 2			90% of earnings
	Benefit in kind: wives and daughters of insured persons.	6 months of insurance during last year and 10 months during last 2 years	26 weeks, including 6 weeks before confinement (extended up to 2 more weeks if multiple birth or complications)	For the 2nd and each subsequent child benefit paid at rate of sickness benefit less			Average net wage plus 10 marks a month to convalescent mothers for 6 months

(continued)

TABLE 16. Coverage, qualifying conditions, leave provisions and cash benefits under maternity protection schemes in selected European countries

Country	Coverage	Qualifying conditions	Duration of maternity leave	Additional leave		Amount of cash benefit
				Paid	Unpaid	
Federal Republic of Germany	All working women	12 weeks insurance between the 10th and 4th month preceding confinement	14-18 weeks (of which 6 before confinement)	than 300 marks to mothers with children and not less than 350 marks a month if mother has 3 or more children. Benefit is paid until eligible child reaches age of 1		
	Benefit in kind: wives and daughters of insured persons	month preceding confinement				100% of insured earnings
Greece	All working women Benefit in kind: all working women	200 days of employment during the year None	6-8 weeks before and 6-8 weeks after confinement			50% of the wages of the last year 100% of the wage
Hungary	All working women Benefit in kind: all women.	180 days of insurance	20 weeks (of which 45 days before confinement) extended for 4 weeks in case of multiple births	Until child reaches age of 3		65% wages if 180 days of insurance; 100% wages if 270 days of insurance during the 2 years preceding childbirth. During additional leave 1,000 forints a month depending on number of children
Italy	All working women Benefit in kind: wives, daughters and sisters of insured persons	None	18 weeks before and 13 weeks after confinement	6 months		80% of earnings 30% for the supplementary period

(continued)

Netherlands	All working women. Benefit in kind: wives and daughters of insured persons	None	6 weeks before and 6 weeks after confinement	100% of earnings
Poland	All working women Benefit in kind: all working women.	None	16 weeks for 1st child (2 weeks before and 12 after confinement). 18 weeks for 2nd, including 14 weeks after confinement. 26 weeks if multiple birth, including 22 after confinement.	Up to 3 years if child is under 4
Romania	All working women Benefit in kind: all women	None	112 days including 52 days after confinement. For 3rd and sequent child 60 days after confinement.	50% of earnings if less than 6 months worked. 65% of earnings if 6-12 months worked. 85% of earnings if more than 12 months worked. In case of 3rd birth: 34% of earnings.
Sweden	Working persons earning 4,500 Kronor or more	Each parent if insured at least 180 days before confinement	7 months' parental leave	90% of income up to 7 1/2 times base amount
USSR	Benefit in kind: all women All working women. Benefit in kind: all women	None	56 days before and 56 days after confinement, extended to 70 days if multiple births or complications	100% of earnings Until the child reaches the age of 1

(1) In Greece, because of the present status of divided national insurance, there exist fairly large differentiations on maternity protection schemes, corresponding to each insurance-institution.  
Sources: S.A. Smirnov, I.O. *Maternity Protection National Law and Practice in Selected European Countries*, Geneva, December 1978.  
E. Dimitrakopoulos, *Labour Law*, Athens 1967.



On the other hand, the percentage of own account workers (self employed workers), can be considered comparatively as one of the highest. One logical explanation to this is the comparatively small structure of the average business unit in Greece.

The percentage distribution of the female labour force by major age groups, in the same countries, indicates that the highest frequency of female economic activity belongs to the age group 20-24 years of age for all these countries including Greece (Table 15).

The law about the maternity protection of the working woman (Table 16), shows that Greece, as a nation with low fertility (see footnote 5), compared to other European countries with similar problem, offers very poor maternity protection. It appears that there has been very little done in this field, and there is no overall legislation, which would offer total maternity protection, similar to other European countries, which could help considerably the low fertility problem.

This article has attempted an initial introduction of an overall analysis of the existing present situation of the working woman in Greece, based mainly on very limited statistical data available through the last popula-

tion census. Furthermore, the available data is not considered to be sufficient to attempt correlation analysis amongst various groups and sectors discussed above.<sup>12</sup> However, there is now under development, in the National Center of Social Research of Greece, a national survey about «Marriage and the working women in Greece» by a research team headed by the writer, whereby for the first time, an actual probability sample of female population will be investigated, in all major areas of interest, which will reveal further and analytically the present status of affairs, and it will create the basis to estimate trends and projections.

12. The analysis of data concerning the participation of greek female population into the labour force, clearly indicates that increased participation is highly correlated to the frequency of dowry. As applied multiregression analysis has shown, amongst other socioeconomic factors affecting the evolution of the institution of dowry in Greece such as, level of education, urbanization, emigration flow, ageing of population, the work participation of female population had had a great impact: in geographical areas where the female labour force participation had increased, the number of dowries (conducted per hundred marriages) has declined (for further information on the subject see: Haris Symeonidou Alatopoulou, «The evolution of the institution of dowry in Greece, 1956-1975» (in Greek), *The Greek Review of Social Research* No 36-37, Athens 1979.

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