

Legally, the women in Bulgaria are fully equal with the men. There aren't any obstacles that they hold the highest public positions. So for example nowadays the vice president and the chairman of Parliament are women. Women are also 8 out of 19 ministers in the government, and 2 out of 4 vice prime minister; the mayor of the state capital, the euro commissioner and the candidate for UN general secretary. There are women in high positions in the administration and in business. However, according to official data the women in the public sector are getting 10% lower wages, and in the private sector - 20% lower than the men. This is due to the fact that in low-paying industries such as garment industry, women predominate.

In case of maternity there are up to 2 years leave, credited as social insurance in the face of retirement. In the first year, the mother gets the full wages, but in the second year - a reduced sum (170 euro per month), which is lower than the minimum wage (210 euro). That's why many of the mothers are using only 1 year maternity leave. On the other hand this leave is a reason for discrimination against women: some employers refuse to hire women who are likely to be in the future mothers so he doesn't have to pay wages during the maternity leave.

In the private life, women are worse off. They are charged with the larger part of the work in the household and with the cares for the children. There are data that one of every four women is a victim of domestic violence. The situation is much worse among low educated classes, and especially among the gypsies. The girls are very early (forcedly) married. It is not uncommon that they get their first child at the age of 14 years. Many of them are forced into criminal activities such as theft, begging, prostitution and are victims of human trafficking.