Willingness to Negotiate Pay: Gender Differences in the Czech Republic

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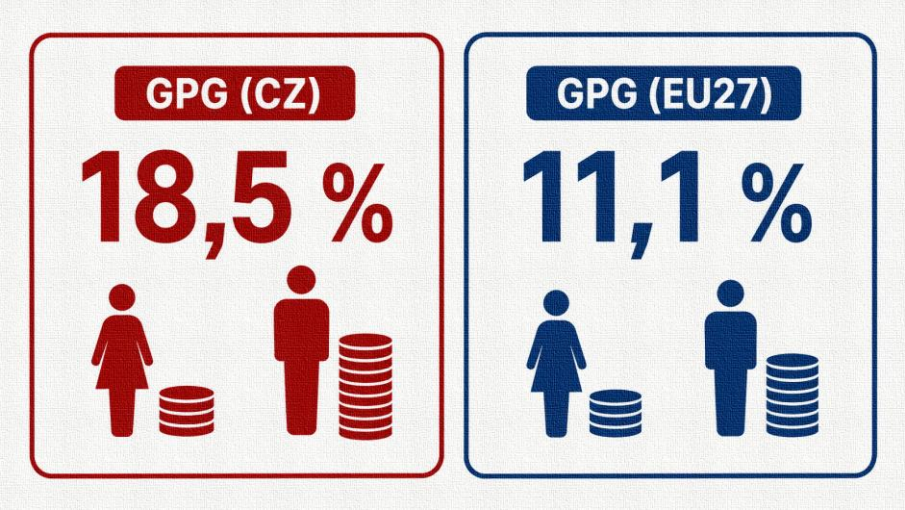
Backgroud



Source: Eurostat, 2024

Legislation – changes

- Act No. 120/2025 Coll., amending Act No. 262/2006 Coll., which entered into force in 2025.

Among other provisions, the amendment strengthens pay transparency by restricting the use of pay confidentiality clauses

Legislation – changes

- Directive (EU) 2023/970 on pay transparency.

The Directive introduces new obligations for employers regarding pay transparency, employees' access to pay information, and the monitoring of gender pay gaps. It also establishes new requirements for recruitment processes.

Theoretical background: gender differences in negotiations

„*Doing gender*“ *(West & Zimmerman, 1987)*

- Pay negotiation is not only an economic decision, but also a **gendered social interaction**.
- Assertiveness, competitiveness and self-promotion are more strongly associated with masculinity, while women may face stronger **social penalties for negotiating**.
- This may reduce women’s willingness to initiate pay negotiations.
  (Bowles et al., 2007; Babcock & Laschever, 2003)

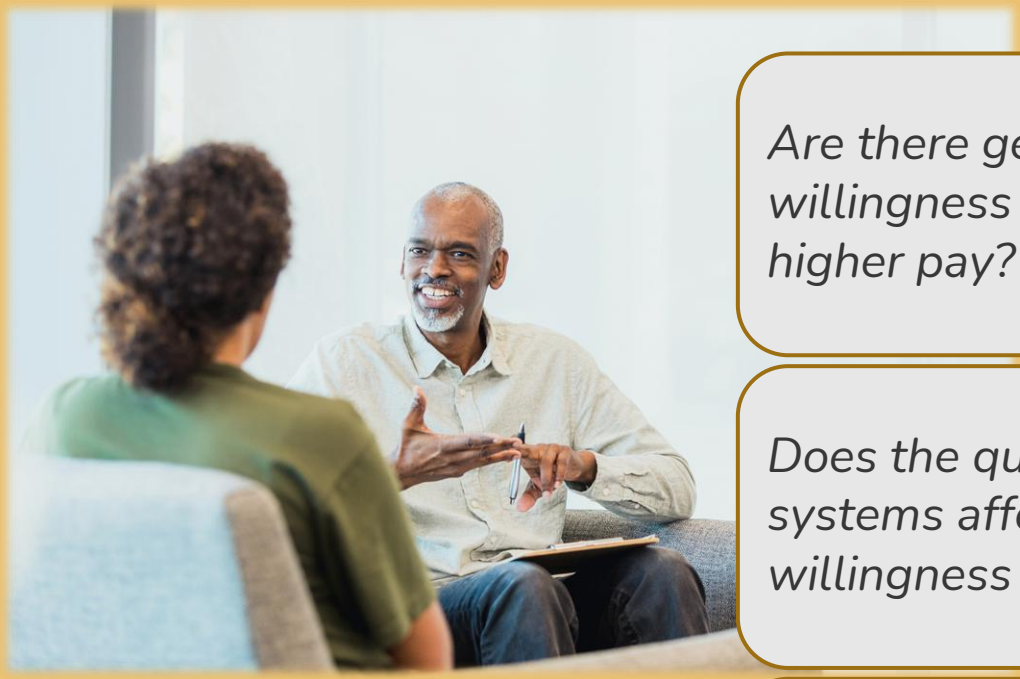
„Social role theory“ *(Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Wood, 2012)*

- Gendered socialization and the division of paid work and care shape **work-related preferences and priorities**.
- Women may place greater value on **flexibility, job security and work–family compatibility**, while men tend to place greater emphasis on **pay and career advancement**.
  (Valet et al., 2021)

„Institutional context matters“

- Individualized pay-setting increases the role of negotiation and managerial discretion and may widen gender pay gaps.
- Transparent or collectively regulated pay systems can limit these effects.
  (Acker, 1990; Castilla, 2015; Biasi & Sarsons, 2022)

Research Questions



Are there gender differences in the willingness to initiate negotiations for higher pay?

Does the quality of organisational pay systems affect men's and women's willingness to negotiate for higher pay?

Does willingness to negotiate for higher pay differ according to the work-related priorities individuals hold? Are there gender differences in this regard?

Data and methods

- Data from the Quality of Working Life survey (2025/2026) – KPŽ
- Large-scale representative survey of the working population in the Czech Republic.
- For the purposes of this study, the analysis focuses exclusively on employees (N = 2,158).
- The employee sample is representative of the Czech employee population with respect to gender, age, education, region, and sector of employment.

To answer the research questions, binary logistic regression was used. The dependent variable is ASK [0,1], based on the question:

"If you felt that your pay did not adequately reflect the demands of your job, would you ask for an increase?"

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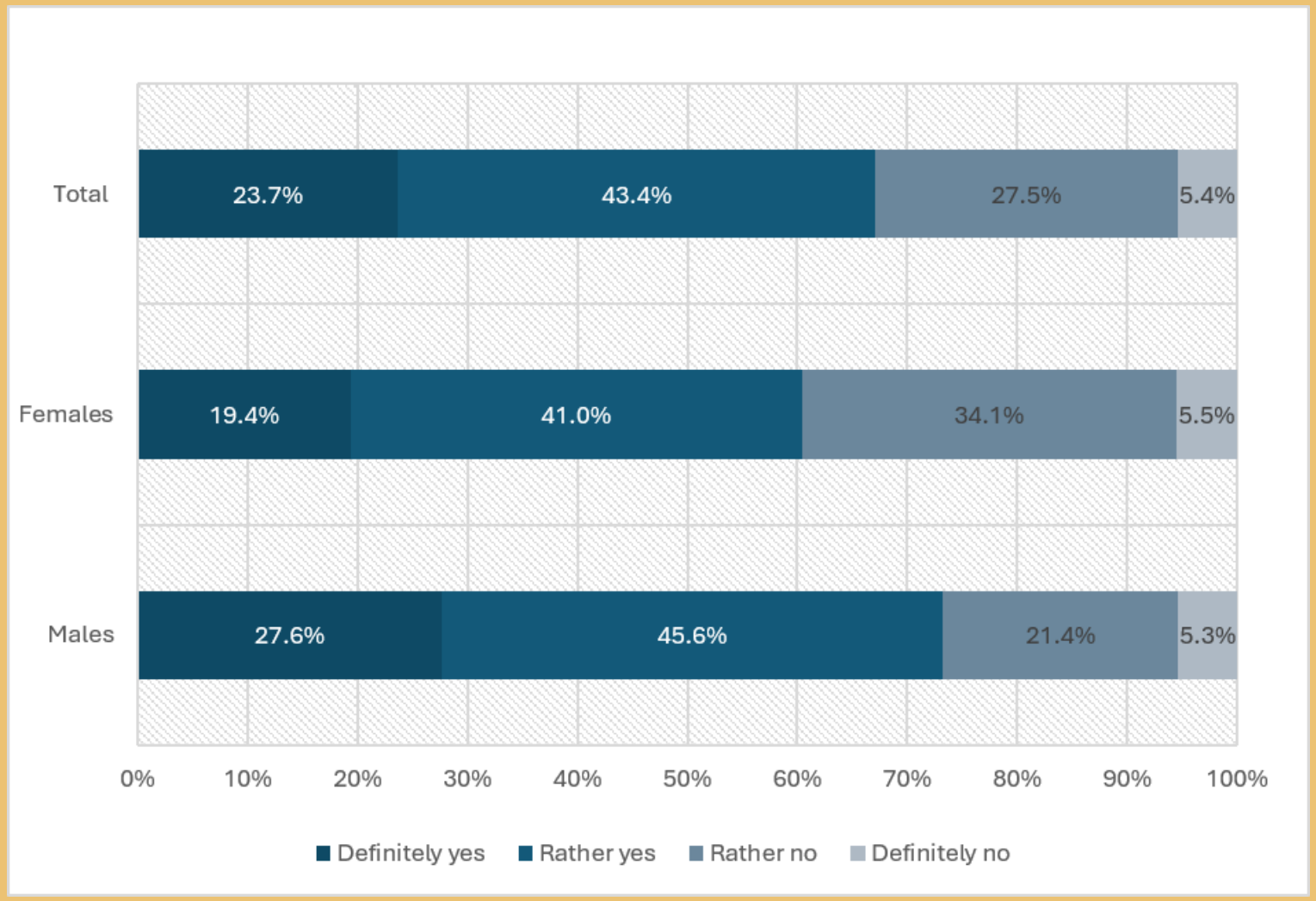

Source: KPŽ2026

Overview of variables included in the estimated models (a–d)

The dependent variable is ASK [0 = no,1=yes] "If you felt that your pay did not adequately reflect the demands of your job, would you ask for an increase?"		
Basic **model a** with control variables	Separate models for males (**model b**) and females (**model c**)	Final **model d** with interactions
- *Age* (AGE : 18-29; 30-44; 45-59; 60 and more) - *Sector* (SEC: primary, secondary, terciary) - *Gender* (SEX: m,f) - *Education* (EDU: basic, sec. without „sle", sec with „sle", m. tertiary)	IMP_TIME [0–10] IMP_REM [0–10] IMP_FLEX [-1,0,1] SAT_REM [0–10] JUST_REM [0–10] TRANSP_REM [1,2,3] PAY_DISCUSS [1,2,3] + AGE; SEC; EDU	IMP_REM_c IMP_FLEX [-1,0,1] SAT_REM_c PAY_DISCUSS [1,2,3] IMP_REM_c*SEX IMP_FLEX *SEX SAT_REM_c*SEX PAY_DISCUSS*SEX + AGE; SEC; EDU; SEX

Key results – Final logistic regression model

Women are substantially less likely to initiate pay negotiations

- Female vs. Male: **OR = 0.557, p < .01**
  → women have approximately **44% lower odds** of being willing to initiate pay negotiations.

Organizational openness to pay discussion matters strongly

- No pay discussion vs. Yes: **OR = 0.420, p < .001**
- Don't know vs. Yes: **OR = 0.324, p < .001**
  → willingness to negotiate is substantially lower where pay is not discussed or employees do not know whether such discussions are possible.

Pay satisfaction matters /SAT_REM/

- Satisfaction with pay: **OR = 1.103, p < .001**
  → higher pay satisfaction is associated with greater willingness to negotiate.

Importance of pay /IMP_REM/

- Importance attached to pay: **OR = 1.080, p < .05;**
- Sector: Secondary vs. Tertiary: **OR = 1.260, p < .05**

Gender interactions

Only one significant interaction:

- **Pay satisfaction × Gender: OR = 0.921, p < .05**

→ The positive relationship between pay satisfaction and willingness to negotiate is **weaker for women than for men**.

All other gender interactions are **not statistically significant**:

- Importance of pay × Gender — n.s.
- WLB/pay priority × Gender — n.s.
- Pay discussion × Gender — n.s.

Women are less willing to initiate pay negotiations overall, but most predictors icluded in the model operate similarly for men and women.

Model: N = 2,158; Nagelkerke R^2 = .115; Hosmer–Lemeshow p = .375.

Conclusions and discussion

Gender matters – but not in the expected way

- **Women are significantly less willing to initiate pay negotiations than men**, even after controlling for age, education and sector.
- However, the gender gap **cannot be explained by different work priorities**:
  - preference for **work–life balance vs. pay** → no significant gender interaction
  - **importance of pay** → no significant gender interaction
- Thus, the results provide **only limited support for Social Role Theory** as an explanation of gender differences in pay negotiation.

Organizational context matters

- **Previous pay discussion with the employer/HR is the strongest predictor** of willingness to negotiate – for both women and men.
- This points to the importance of an **organizational environment in which pay can be openly discussed**, rather than negotiation being left entirely to individual initiative.
- This finding is consistent with the *gendered organizations* perspective: organizational rules and practices may either **reinforce or reduce gender inequalities**.

- **An unexpected finding**

- Higher **pay satisfaction** is associated with greater willingness to negotiate.
- The association is **significantly stronger among men**.
- Possible explanation: satisfaction may reflect a stronger bargaining position or positive previous negotiation experience **(selection effect)**.

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Thank you for your attention

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