

THE SURVEY

Female writers in Armenia often face significant societal pressures that impact their ability to pursue literary careers. Many women juggle multiple responsibilities, including full-time jobs and household duties, which limits their time for writing. This is compounded by socio-cultural norms that discourage women's active participation in literature (Sargsyan, 2024). Although there are more women entering the field, many tend to leave due to these pressures, suggesting a cycle of underrepresentation (NewMag, 2024).

The financial landscape for female writers is particularly challenging. The small population of Armenia limits the market for book sales, making it difficult for writers in general to achieve financial sustainability through their work. Additionally, publishing houses that support contemporary Armenian writers are scarce, further restricting opportunities for all writers (Sargsyan, 2024) (NewMag, 2024). While these issues are, of course, resulting from the literary market and industry, they do not, as many believe, affect male and female writers to the same degrees. Indeed, in an industry which, according to a number of critics, tends to marginalize female writers, such limitations serve only to make it more difficult for their voices to be heard. The lack of substantial financial backing and resources also contributes to a literary environment where male writers dominate visibility and recognition (Sargsyan, 2024).

Demographically, the number of female writers has increased due to improved access to education. However, their representation in literary events remains low. For instance, recent festivals have shown a marked absence of contemporary female authors among presented authors. (Sargsyan, 2024). This disparity highlights ongoing issues within the literary culture that marginalize women's voices.

As for the survey we have been asking female writers to fill in:

Female writers in Armenia frequently find themselves grappling with underrepresentation, significant socio-cultural pressures, oppressive gender stereotypes, as well as, quite frequently, the weight of full-time jobs and household duties, all of which can hinder their literary activities. For more precise figures, further research is needed to quantify these aspects accurately, which is the goal the survey pursues. The survey has been designed with the purpose of investigating the socio-economic conditions of female writers in Armenia, as well as their overall living conditions, their grapplings with writing, their experiences with gender stereotypes and discrimination, their hopes and dreams, and finally, the improvements they would like to see in their society and/or community. The survey has been made available in both English and Armenian, and sent out to numerous female writers. We are currently actively engaged in

gathering and classifying as much information as possible, as a means of forming a clearer picture of how socio-economic and cultural conditions can be improved for female writers in Armenia.

Hovnanyan, M. (2017), 'Where Have The Women Gone?'. Available at: <https://evnreport.com/raw-unfiltered/where-have-the-women-gone/> (Accessed: 15 October 2024).

New Mag Publishing (2024), '**The challenges of women writers in times of war and peace**'. Available at: <https://newmag.am/en/post/the-problems-of-women-writers> (Accessed: 15 October 2024).

Sargsyan, Y. (2024), '**The Yerevan BookFest: A mirror of Armenian literary culture**'. Available at: <https://armenianweekly.com/2024/10/01/the-yerevan-bookfest-a-mirror-of-armenian-literary-culture/> (Accessed: 15 October 2024).

In Cyprus, as in many parts of the world, gender pay equality remains a significant issue, although progress has been made in recent years. Women in Cyprus still face a gender pay gap, meaning they tend to earn less than men for similar work or roles. Women are more likely to take breaks from their careers for family or childcare reasons, which can affect their long-term earning potential and career progression.

According to the latest data, the gender pay gap in Cyprus was approximately 10.1% in 2021, which means that women, on average, earned about 10% less than men. The pay gap is wider in certain sectors, particularly in high-level managerial roles and traditionally male-dominated industries such as construction, finance, and technology. Women are often overrepresented in lower-paid jobs, such as administrative roles or in sectors like education and healthcare.

Writing tends to be a 'second', unpaid job for both male and female writers, as they cannot earn enough to make a living as writers. Cyprus is a small country, publishers are few and sales of books alone cannot ensure making a livelihood.

The annual State Literature Prizes are prestigious and winning the prize ensures that the winner will receive media attention and take home a considerable amount of money. They are divided into several categories, and women have been well-represented in recent years, winning in the poetry, short story, as well as novel categories.

The common themes in Cypriot women's writing are

- Identity and History: Many Cypriot women writers explore issues of national and personal identity, particularly in the context of Cyprus's colonial past, independence, and the ongoing political division.
- Gender and Feminism: A focus on the role of women in Cypriot society is prominent, with many writers addressing traditional gender roles, patriarchy, and women's rights.
- War and Division: The 1974 division of Cyprus and its emotional, psychological, and political repercussions often feature in their works, portraying the effects of displacement, trauma, and memory.
- Cultural Heritage: Cyprus's rich cultural mix, including Greek, Turkish, and Armenian influences, is often reflected in the themes and settings of their works.