

Cities as Spaces of Structural Inequality

The Gender Wage Gap and Its Impact on Women's
Access to the Right to Adequate Housing



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Women's Access to the Right to Adequate
Housing

A Case Study of Women in Egypt and Tunisia



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Abstract

This paper examines the structural relationship between the gender wage gap and housing affordability in Arab cities, as one of the key mechanisms through which urban exclusion of women is produced and reproduced, undermining their effective enjoyment of the right to adequate housing and the right to the city. The paper is grounded in the international human rights legal framework, which recognizes adequate housing as a fundamental right without discrimination and an integral component of the right to an adequate standard of living, as articulated in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as Human Rights Council resolutions and the guidelines on the implementation of the right to adequate housing.

The paper emphasizes that the concept of adequate housing, from a human rights perspective, extends beyond the mere physical availability of shelter. It encompasses essential elements, foremost among them affordability, ensuring that housing costs do not compromise individuals' ability to enjoy their other fundamental rights. In this context, affordability acquires particular significance when analyzing the situation of women in urban settings, given the structural economic inequalities they face in the labor market, including wage disparities, limited participation in formal employment, and the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work.

The paper is guided by the following central research question: how does the wage gap between women and men affect women's access to adequate housing in Arab cities? To address this question, the paper adopts a comparative analytical approach, examining the cases of Egypt and Tunisia, with a focus on urban contexts, women's labor market participation, gender income gaps, the evolution of housing and related service costs, and the implications for housing stability and security of tenure.

The findings show that the wage gap between women and men is not merely a matter of income disparity, but a decisive factor in determining who can afford housing within cities. In Egypt, data indicate that the monthly income gap exceeds 20 percent in favor of men, while the "real" gap is even wider when accounting for women outside the labor market. This translates into a reduced relative capacity of women to access adequate housing, estimated at approximately 80 percent compared to men. In Tunisia, although the wage gap appears less pronounced, it remains structural and results in a relative reduction in women's capacity to afford housing to approximately

90.6 percent, within a context marked by steadily rising real estate prices and urban living costs.

The paper further highlights that housing costs extend beyond rent or the price of housing units to include additional burdens related to basic services such as electricity, water, energy, and maintenance, as well as transportation costs associated with residing in areas distant from employment opportunities and services. These costs represent a higher proportion of women's income compared to men, increasing the risks of energy poverty, housing instability, and eviction, particularly among women-headed households or single-income families.

The paper concludes that women's housing exclusion in Arab cities cannot be understood or addressed through ostensibly gender-neutral housing policies. Rather, it requires an integrated approach that links wage and labor policies, housing market regulation, social protection, and gender-responsive urban planning. Addressing the wage gap is a necessary condition for ensuring housing affordability and realizing women's right to adequate housing as an indivisible economic and social right, and as a core component of the right to the city.

Introduction

Adequate housing is not merely a material need, but a fundamental human right. Article 11(1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights affirms the obligation of States parties to ensure the right to adequate housing as part of the right to an adequate standard of living. Article 3 of the Covenant further guarantees the equal enjoyment of all rights enshrined therein by women and men, and obliges States to ensure the realization of these rights without discrimination, including on the basis of sex. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights clarified in General Comment No. 16 (2005) that the right to equality and non discrimination imposes immediate obligations on States and is not subject to progressive realization, requiring both formal and substantive equality.

In the same vein, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women emphasizes the obligation of States parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the enjoyment of adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing and access to basic services, as stipulated in Article 14(2). Human Rights Council resolutions, notably resolution 43/14, further stress the need to ensure equality between women and men in the enjoyment of the right to adequate housing as part of the right to an adequate standard of living. This includes equal access to credit, mortgages, housing ownership, and rental markets, as well as the adoption of measures to protect women from loss of housing, particularly in situations of gender based violence, and to guarantee equality in property and inheritance rights.

This rights based approach is further reinforced by the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Right to Adequate Housing (2020), issued by the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing. Guiding Principle 9 affirms the obligation of States to ensure equality between women and men in access to credit, support, housing ownership, and rental markets, as well as immediate access to emergency shelters in cases of domestic violence. It also emphasizes the protection of women's right to remain in their homes regardless of ownership or tenancy status, and the need to ensure their effective participation in all aspects of policymaking related to housing, urban planning, transport, and infrastructure.

Despite this clear legal and human rights framework, urban experiences in many countries of the Global South reveal a significant gap between legal commitments and lived realities. Cities, as central spaces for economic and

social development, do not distribute opportunities equitably. Rather, they often reproduce and intensify existing inequalities, particularly those related to gender. Women, in particular, face structural forms of urban exclusion, reflected in housing precarity, insecurity of tenure, and limited housing affordability, even in the absence of explicitly discriminatory housing policies.

These forms of housing exclusion intersect with economic inequalities in the labor market. The gender wage gap, combined with the unequal burden of unpaid care work, reduces women's effective capacity to access adequate housing in urban areas. In the context of continuously rising housing costs and related services, income disparities become a direct barrier to the enjoyment of the right to housing, placing women in a position of compounded vulnerability within urban spaces.

The concept of affordability thus becomes central to analyzing the right to adequate housing from a gender perspective. This right cannot be measured solely by the availability of housing or the uniformity of rental and housing prices, but by individuals' ability to afford housing without compromising their enjoyment of other fundamental rights. For women, income disparities resulting from the gender wage gap reduce their actual capacity to afford housing, even in contexts where there is no direct discrimination in housing markets. Affordability therefore operates as a key mechanism through which gendered housing exclusion is produced within cities.

This paper is based on the premise that wage inequality, rising urban housing costs, and structural gender based discrimination collectively constitute a central mechanism for producing women's housing exclusion and undermining their enjoyment of the right to adequate housing and the right to the city. It seeks to answer the following research question: how does the wage gap between women and men affect women's access to adequate housing in Arab cities?

To address this question, the paper adopts a comparative analysis of the cases of Egypt and Tunisia, focusing on urban contexts, women's position in the labor market, gender income gaps, and their implications for housing affordability and housing stability, from a feminist perspective that links economic and social rights with urban justice.

The Gender Wage Gap

The Wage Gap Between Women and Men in Egypt

Although women constitute approximately half of Egypt's population, a clear income gap persists between women and men. According to the World Bank's 2024 report¹, women's participation in the labor force does not exceed 18 percent, compared to approximately 73 percent for men. Despite this disparity, World Bank analysis indicates that reducing the gap in employment rates between women and men could boost the Egyptian economy by approximately 56 percent.

This gap is rooted in a combination of entrenched structural, legal, and social barriers. Studies indicate that a significant proportion of society continues to hold reservations about women's employment, with 24 percent of men opposing women's participation in the labor market. Unpaid care responsibilities also constitute a major constraint, particularly in the context of limited childcare services and their traditional reliance on women. Research shows that 45 percent of men and 33 percent of women do not support the use of childcare services outside the family, which further restricts women's ability to integrate into the formal labor market.

¹ Breaking Barriers :Boosting Women's Labor Force Participation in Egypt ,World Bank ,March.2025 ,12 Available [here](#).

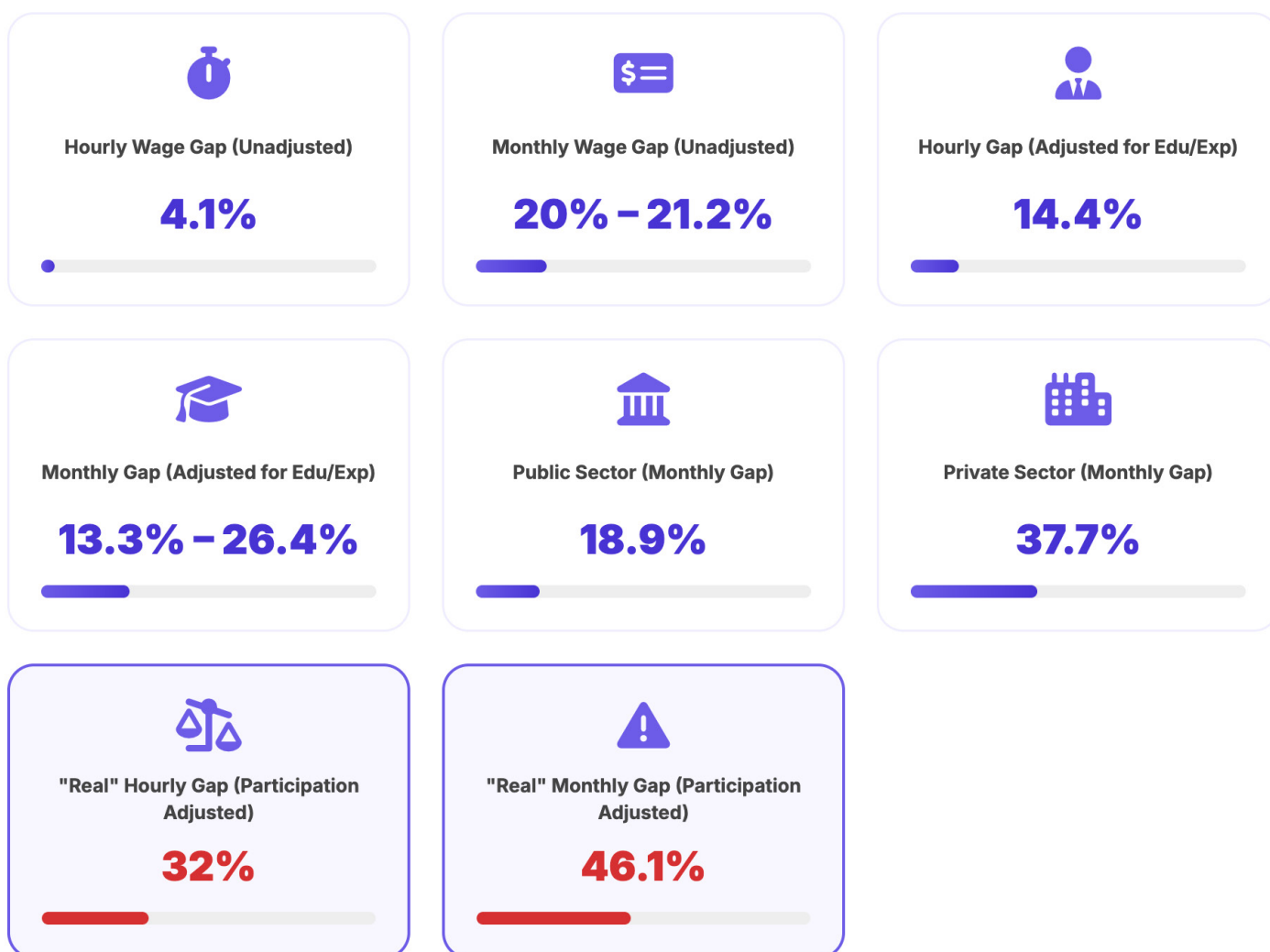


Table 1: Gender Wage Gap Indicators in Egypt

Source: Based on data from the Egypt Gender Gap Report 2024

Data on the gender wage gap in Egypt² reveal a clear disparity between women's and men's incomes, particularly when examining monthly earnings rather than hourly wages. While the hourly wage gap appears relatively limited (around 4 percent), it widens significantly when calculated on a monthly basis, exceeding 20 percent. This reflects the reality that women often work fewer hours due to care responsibilities and family obligations. The data further show that this gap does not disappear even after accounting for education and experience, but persists at rates ranging between 13 percent and 26 percent, indicating the presence of structural discrimination in the labor market.

² The Gender Wage Gap in Egypt, (Ministry of Planning and Economic Development) MPED -(representing the Egyptian government -and the ILO Cairo office 4, April, 2024 Available [here](#).

Women's Wages vs. Men's (100%) Comparison

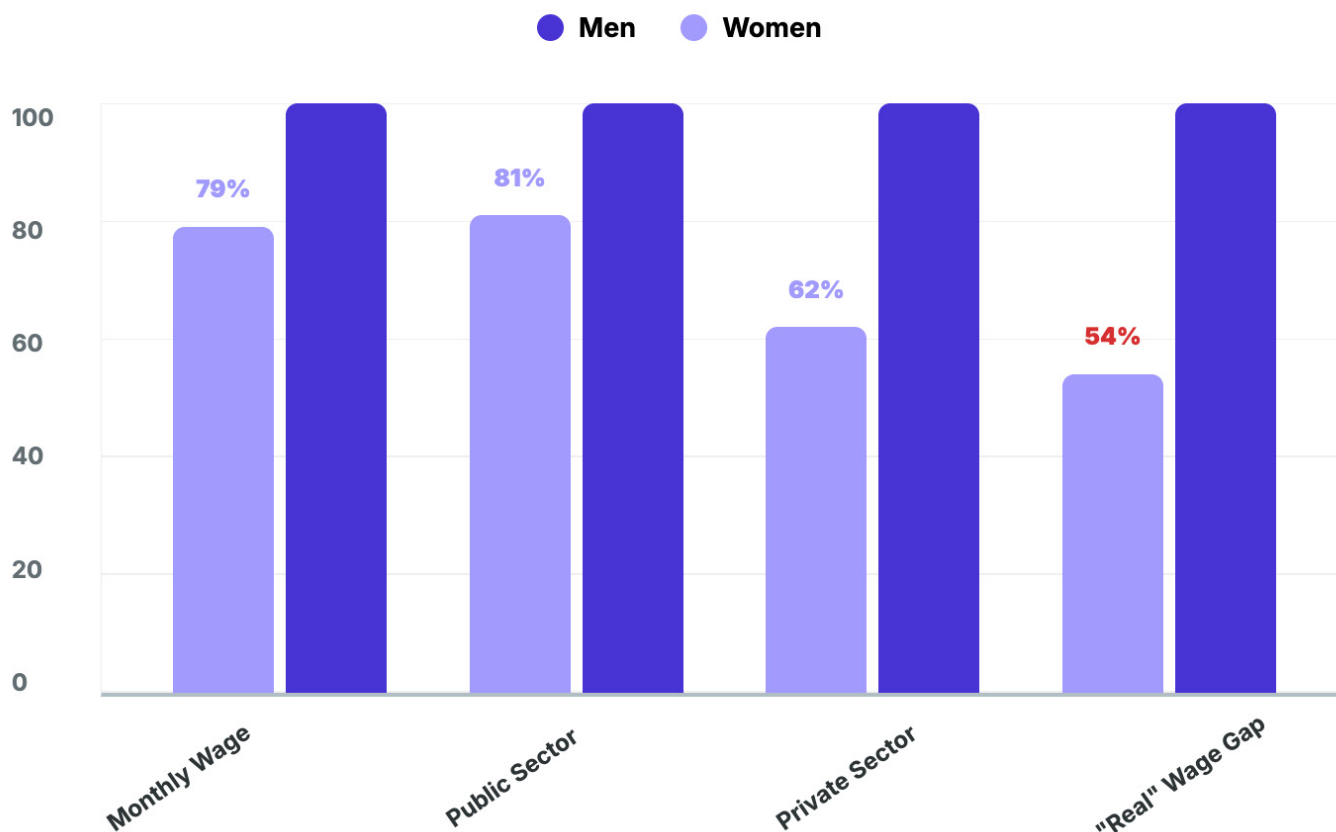


Figure 1: Women's Income Compared to Men in Egypt (Men's Income = 100)

Source: Based on data from the Egypt Gender Gap Report 2024

The gap becomes more pronounced in the private sector, where women earn approximately 38 percent less than men, compared to around 19 percent in the public sector. This reflects weaker protections and oversight of wage policies in the private sector. More importantly, when accounting for women who are not participating in the labor market, the actual income gap rises to approximately 46 percent on a monthly basis, indicating that official figures underestimate the true scale of inequality. This income disparity confirms that women face significant economic constraints that directly affect their ability to access adequate housing and achieve stability in urban settings.

The Wage Gap Between Women and Men in Tunisia

The labor force participation rate of Tunisian women stands at approximately 55.48 percent, compared to 72.87 percent for men, representing a gap of around 17.39 percentage points in favor of men.³

³ Empowering Arab women through wage equality :A comprehensive analysis of wage disparities and strategies for promoting equal pay in the Arab region ,ESCWA ,January .2025 [Available here.](#)



Table 2: Gender Wage Gap in Tunisia

Based on EU Neighbours data, econometric analysis of the Tunisian labor market⁴ shows that the wage gap between women and men remains both persistent and structural. According to the findings, the overall wage gap is estimated at approximately 10.4 percent in favor of men. The geometric mean of men’s monthly wages stands at around 643.3 Tunisian dinars, compared to 582.7 Tunisian dinars for women, reflecting a tangible disparity in income levels within the labor market.

This gap takes on greater significance when its components are analyzed. The study indicates that a substantial portion of the wage gap cannot be explained by objective characteristics of workers. Although the observed gap stands at 10.4 percent, the analysis reveals that approximately 13.9 percent of the wage gap is statistically unexplained and cannot be attributed to factors such as education, experience, or occupational characteristics. This portion is likely linked to gender based discrimination within the Tunisian labor market, indicating that women do not receive equal pay even when they possess comparable qualifications to men.

Further decomposition analysis shows that a number of structural factors contribute, to varying degrees, to widening the wage gap. Age emerges as one of the most significant determinants, with men benefiting more from aging and the accumulation of experience compared to women. The economic sector also plays a central role, as women are disproportionately concentrated in lower paying sectors, which limits their average income levels. In addition, the type of employment contract is a key factor, as women are more likely to be engaged in precarious work or less protected contractual arrangements. The level of education, while important, does not necessarily translate into improved wages for women to the same extent as for men.

4 Ben Braham ,M & .Abid ,A .(2023) .Gender Wage Gap in the Tunisian Labour Market :An Econometric Analysis. EU Neighbours .[Available here.](#)

The study also highlights notable paradoxes within the structure of the Tunisian labor market. Among the most striking is that women with higher education do not enjoy a wage advantage compared to men; rather, they experience a negative wage gap, suggesting discrimination linked not only to the level of education but also to the type of degree. The findings further indicate that wage discrimination against women is not limited to the private sector, but appears more pronounced in the public sector. Women employed in mixed private companies tend to earn higher wages than their counterparts in public institutions. Despite relatively high levels of educational attainment among women, their concentration in low value added sectors, such as textiles and community services, contributes to the persistence of lower wages.

Housing Costs

Housing Costs in Egypt

Egyptian cities have witnessed a steady increase in housing costs over the past decade, both in terms of rents and the cost of homeownership, within a context marked by slow growth in real incomes and a widening gap between wages and the cost of living. Housing burdens are not limited to rent or the purchase price of housing units, but extend to include the costs of basic services such as electricity, water, gas, and maintenance, in addition to transportation costs associated with living in areas distant from employment opportunities and services. As a result, housing has become a compounded financial burden that consumes a significant share of monthly income and undermines households' ability, particularly those with low and middle incomes, to meet their other basic needs.

According to data from the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics⁵, the consumer price index for housing and utilities in Egypt recorded a notable increase between 2014 and 2024, reflecting the continuous rise in housing costs and related services and their direct impact on living conditions. Data indicate that the average price per square meter increased by approximately 102 percent between 2014 and 2022, rising from around 3,134 Egyptian pounds per square meter to approximately 5,380 pounds in 2020, and reaching around 6,326 pounds by 2022.

5 Ezz El-Din ,Ibrahim ,2025) .September .(1 Forced eviction as an instrument for the restructuring of the Egyptian city .Diwan Alomran .[Available here](#).

At the aggregate level, the housing and utilities price index rose gradually⁶ to 195.90 points in December 2025, compared to 192.40 points in November of the same year. The average index value over the period from 2009 to 2025 stood at approximately 122.39 points, indicating a sustained long term upward trend in housing and related service costs. The index reached its highest recorded level in December 2025 at 195.90 points, compared to its lowest recorded level of 98.70 points in September 2009, reflecting the significant increase in housing burdens on Egyptian households over the past decade and a half.

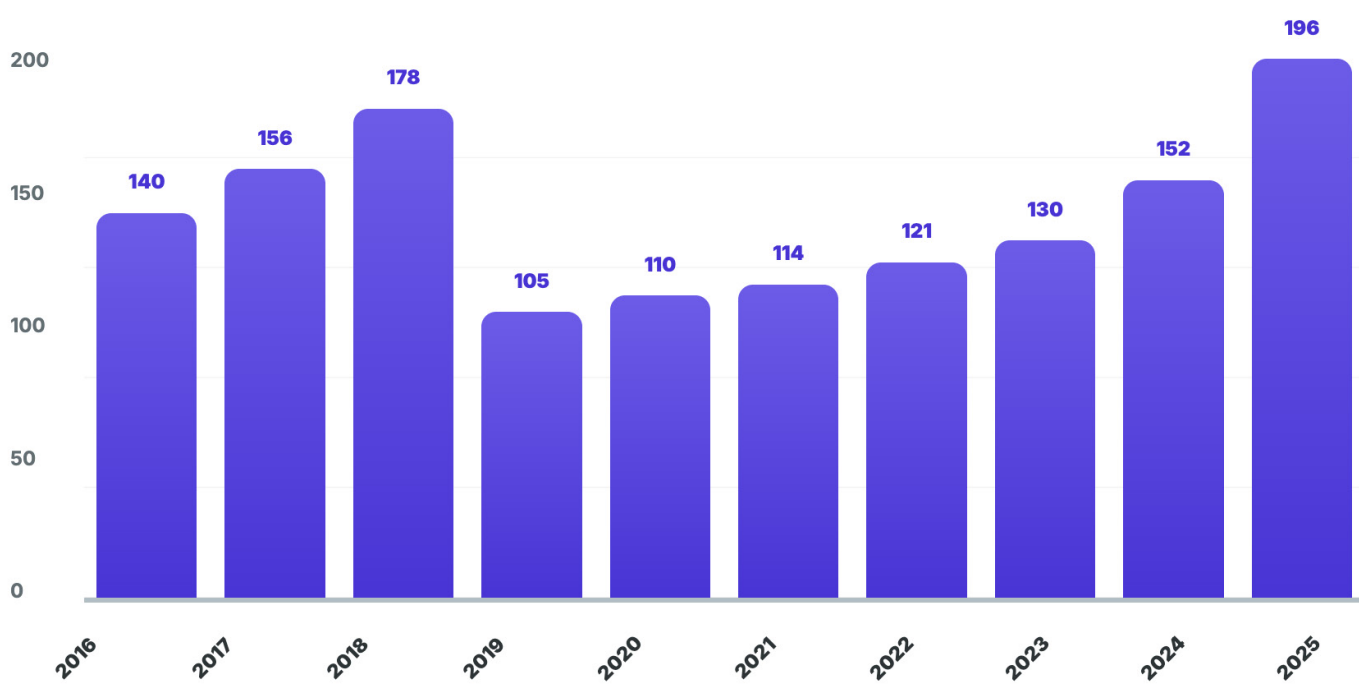


Figure 2: Housing and Utilities Price Index in Egypt

This upward trend is not limited to the private housing market, but also extends to social housing, which is intended to serve low income groups. Since the launch of the social housing project in 2014, the price of a 90 square meter housing unit has increased from approximately 135,000 Egyptian pounds to nearly 700,000 pounds in 2024. This increase is attributed to a combination of factors, including inflation, currency devaluation, rising interest rates, reduced government subsidies, and shifts in financing policies. Data indicate that the increase was gradual until 2021, after which it accelerated significantly through 2024, reflecting rising housing costs and the growing difficulty for target groups to access these units.

6 Trading Economics) .n.d .(Egypt – CPI Housing & Utilities .Retrieved January .2026 ,23 Available here.

Housing Costs in Tunisia

Data from the consumer price index for housing and public services in Tunisia indicate a sustained increase in housing costs and related services in recent years, reflecting growing pressure on the living conditions of urban households. The index reached 163.90 points in December 2025, its highest recorded level, compared to 97.70 points in January 2015, indicating a significant rise in housing and public service costs over a single decade. The average index value for the period from 2010 to 2025 stood at approximately 122.38 points, confirming that the current increase is not temporary, but reflects a long term structural trend in rising housing costs.

This upward trajectory points to a widening gap between housing costs and income levels, particularly in the context of slow wage growth, which weakens the effective capacity of households, especially low income groups, to afford adequate housing in Tunisian cities.

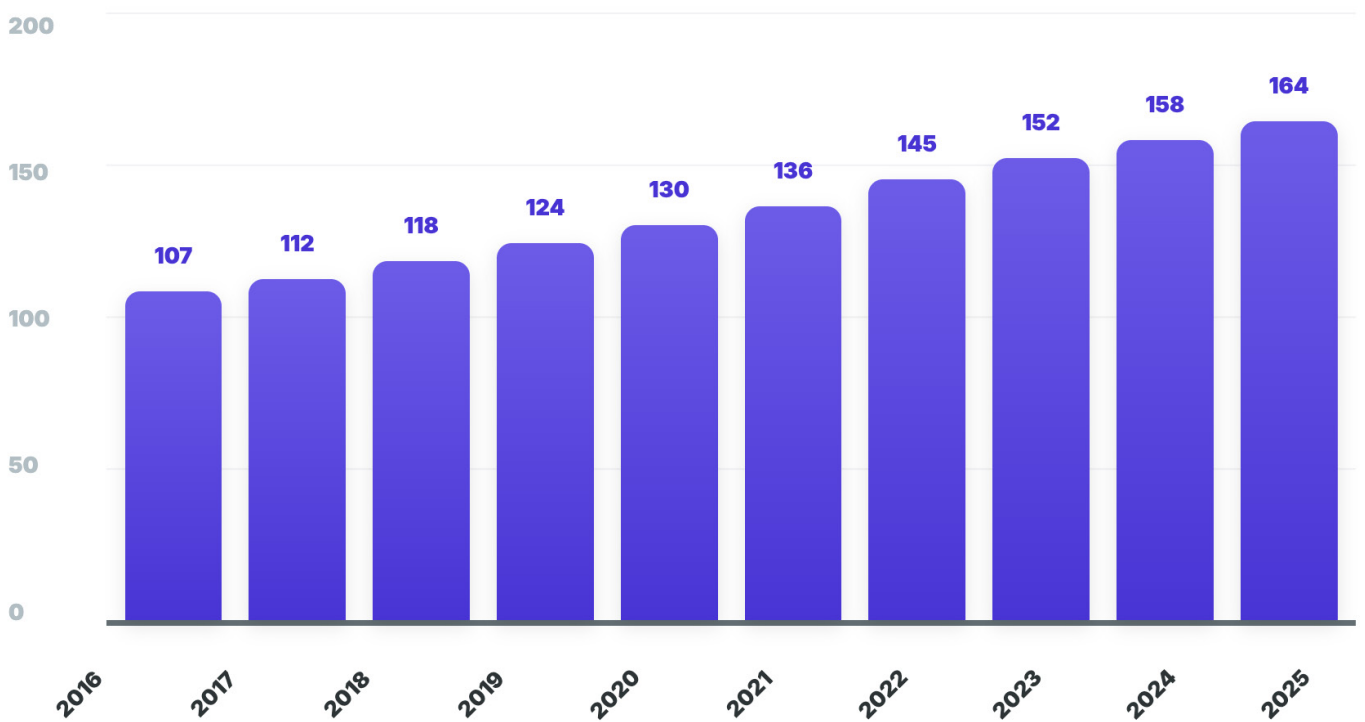


Figure 3: Housing and Utilities Price Index in Tunisia

Data on the real estate price index⁷ in Tunisia show a clear upward trend in housing costs between 2022 and early 2024, reflecting increasing pressure on housing affordability in urban areas. Prices of apartments, the most common form of urban housing, rose significantly from 160.7 points in the second quarter of 2022 to 178.5 points in the first quarter of 2024, indicating a real increase in ownership costs over a relatively short period. Houses followed a similar upward trajectory, with the index rising from 151.7 points to 175.1 points over the same period. Land prices also reached high levels, exceeding 180 points in the fourth quarter of 2023, reflecting the growing commodification of land and housing.

This increase takes on particular significance when situated within the context of income and wages in Tunisia. The rise in real estate prices is not matched by parallel wage growth, particularly for women. In the presence of a persistent gender wage gap, rising housing prices for apartments and houses become a structural barrier to women's access to adequate housing, whether through ownership or rental. Women's ability to save is reduced, while the share of income allocated to housing and related services increases. These indicators therefore do not merely reflect changes in the real estate market, but reveal a widening gap between housing costs and income levels, undermining the effective enjoyment of the right to adequate housing, particularly for women in Tunisian cities.

⁷ National Institute of Statistics) INS ,(Tunisia ,(2024) .Real Estate Price Index by Property Type) Base Year= 2010 ,(100Updated September ,2024 ,16 Retrieved January ,2026 ,24 [Available here](#).

Housing Affordability

Research literature confirms that low wages are directly linked to difficulties in housing affordability, as low income households face housing cost burdens that exceed recommended thresholds, limiting their ability to access adequate and secure housing. In several countries, more than 40 percent of the income of low income households is spent on housing, reflecting an affordability crisis driven by rising costs and low incomes. Systematic reviews of housing inequality research further show that economic disparities and income levels are key determinants of housing inequality. This intersects with the right to adequate housing as a fundamental right under international law, which is inherently linked to the availability of sufficient income to enable individuals to secure housing.⁸

Affordability is one of the essential elements required to qualify housing as adequate, as outlined in General Comment No. 4 on the right to adequate housing⁹, issued by the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in its interpretation of Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.¹⁰ The General Comment affirms that housing costs must be at a level that does not threaten or undermine the enjoyment by individuals and families of their other fundamental rights, and must not result in deprivation of essential needs such as food, health, education, and other components of an adequate standard of living. It further clarifies that housing which consumes a disproportionate share of income, or imposes excessive financial burdens, cannot be considered adequate from a human rights perspective, even if it is physically available. States are therefore obligated to adopt appropriate measures to protect low income groups and regulate the housing market in a manner that ensures the realization of this right without discrimination.

⁸ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2024). Affordable housing in Society at a Glance. 2024. Available here.

⁹ Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. (1991). General Comment No. 4: The Right to Adequate Housing) Article (1) 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. (United Nations, E. 1992/23/Available here.

¹⁰ United Nations General Assembly. (1966). International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. United Nations Treaty Series, Vol. 993, p. 3. Available here.

The concept of housing affordability is not limited to rent levels or the price of housing units, but relates to the ability of individuals and households to secure adequate housing without compromising their other basic needs or undermining their standard of living and dignity. Affordability is more accurately assessed by examining the income remaining after housing costs are paid, and whether it is sufficient to cover food, healthcare, education, transport, and essential services. It also encompasses the full range of housing related costs, including utilities, energy, and maintenance, as well as the impact of location, transportation costs, security of tenure, and legal stability. Accordingly, housing that consumes the majority of income or imposes significant additional and often hidden costs cannot be considered affordable or adequate from a human rights perspective.¹¹

11 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights .(2023) .A place to live in dignity for all: Make housing affordable) Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing .(United Nations .Available here.

The Impact of the Wage Gap on Women's Enjoyment of the Right to Adequate Housing

In the context of the wage gap between women and men, women enter the housing market with systematically lower incomes, which directly affects their ability to afford housing costs. Even in cases where rent levels or housing prices appear formally equal, women's residual income after paying for housing is often lower, and in some cases insufficient to cover other basic needs. This reality compels many women to accept lower quality or unsafe housing, or to engage in forced housing arrangements, such as shared accommodation, as a strategy to reduce financial burdens, thereby undermining long term housing stability.

Based on the data presented above, it becomes clear that economic constraints remain the primary barrier to women's enjoyment of the right to adequate housing, even where certain forms of direct discrimination in access to housing have declined, such as the refusal to rent to independent women, including divorced women, women heads of households, or students. In such cases, housing exclusion does not disappear but instead takes the form of indirect economic exclusion, whereby wage disparities and income inequality reduce women's housing options and increase the cost of securing adequate and stable housing, ultimately limiting the effective enjoyment of this right.

A comparison between Egypt and Tunisia shows that the wage gap affects women's relative ability to access adequate housing in different ways. In Egypt, this capacity drops to approximately 80 percent compared to men,

reflecting greater vulnerability in the enjoyment of the right to housing, particularly in light of the wider monthly income gap. In Tunisia, although women’s relative capacity appears higher (around 90.6 percent), it still reflects structural income inequality that affects housing stability, especially in a context of rising living and housing costs in urban areas.

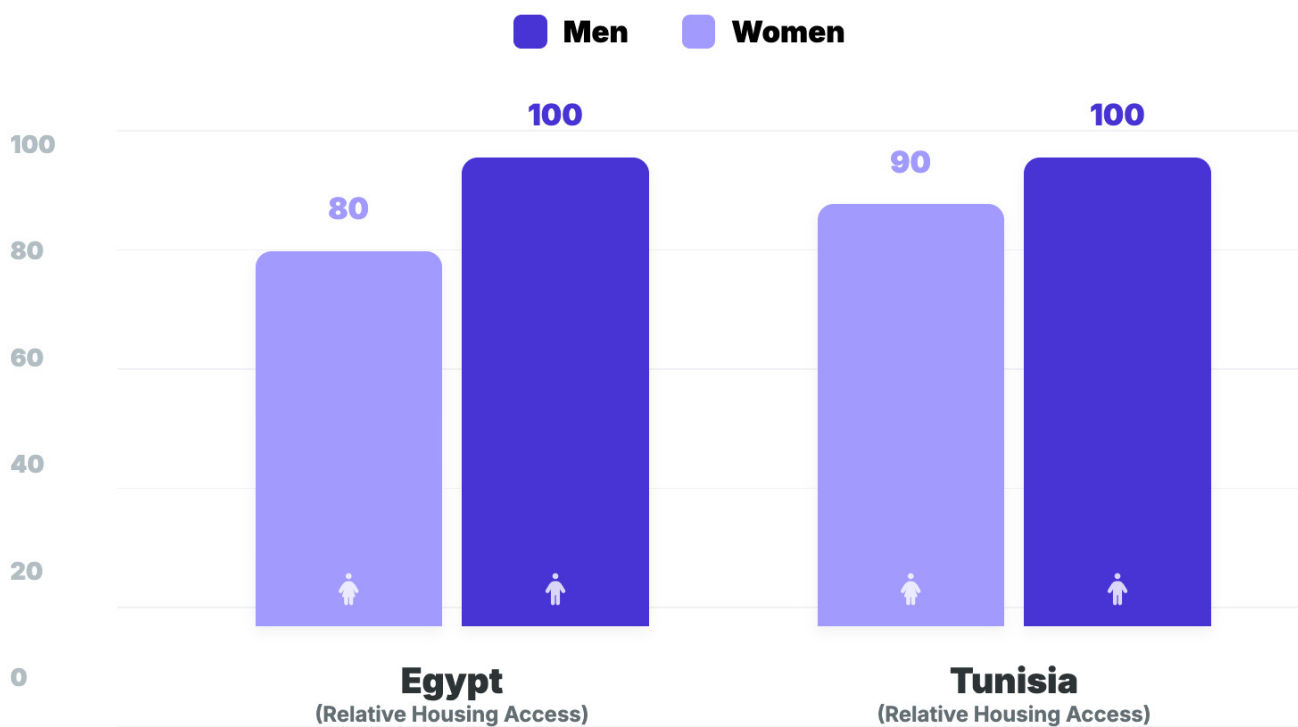


Figure 4: Women’s Capacity to Access Housing Compared to Men in Egypt and Tunisia.

The effects of the wage gap are also reflected in the disproportionately higher burden of housing related basic service costs. Expenses for electricity, water, energy, and maintenance represent a larger share of women’s income compared to men, increasing the risk of energy poverty and affecting both housing quality and public health. These burdens are particularly acute for women headed households or single income families, where the impact of low wages extends beyond paying rent to the ability to maintain a safe and healthy home over the medium and long term.

Income constraints resulting from the wage gap also limit the spatial options available to women within cities. Lower cost housing is often located in areas distant from employment opportunities and essential services, creating additional burdens related to transportation costs and time. For women, who typically bear responsibility for caring for children and elderly family members, these burdens become practical constraints that limit employment opportunities and economic stability, and deepen patterns of urban exclusion and spatial inequality.

The wage gap is also linked to housing instability and insecurity of tenure, as women are more likely to fall behind on rent payments or accumulate housing related debt in the event of economic shocks, such as job loss or illness. This increases the risk of eviction, both formal and informal, and places many women in a constant state of housing insecurity, negatively affecting their mental health and their ability to plan for the long term.

Overall, the relationship between the wage gap and housing affordability demonstrates that inequality in the labor market is not confined to income levels, but extends to directly affect women's enjoyment of the right to adequate housing. The persistence of the wage gap therefore sustains multiple forms of housing vulnerability for women, even in the absence of explicitly discriminatory housing policies. This underscores the need for an integrated approach that links wage and labor policies with housing policies from a gender responsive perspective.

General Analysis and Recommendations

The findings of this study demonstrate that challenges related to the right to adequate housing cannot be addressed as a separate sectoral issue, nor as merely a reflection of imbalances within the housing market alone. Rather, they are the result of a complex interaction between labor policies, patterns of income distribution, and frameworks of urban planning. The lack of equitable distribution of resources within cities, combined with persistent gender inequality in the labor market, produces systematic forms of housing exclusion, even in contexts that do not adopt explicitly discriminatory housing policies. This highlights that improving access to adequate housing requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the underlying economic and social drivers of vulnerability, rather than relying on partial or short term interventions.

Within this framework, there is a clear need to rethink urban and social policies from a gender responsive, rights based perspective that recognizes that women do not start from an equal position within cities. Existing disparities in income, social protection, and job security directly affect women's effective capacity to afford housing and their long term housing stability. Accordingly, any recommendations aimed at advancing the right to adequate housing must be developed within an integrated framework that links wage and labor policies, housing market regulation, and the provision of effective social protection systems. Such an approach is essential to ensure that women, particularly women heads of households and those in situations of heightened vulnerability, are not excluded from the enjoyment of this fundamental right.

Recommendations

1. Integrating a Gender Perspective into Wage and Labor Market Policies

Addressing women's housing exclusion in Arab cities requires tackling its economic roots, foremost among them the gender wage gap. In this context, mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value should be strengthened, particularly in sectors where women are concentrated, alongside the adoption of wage transparency measures in both the public and private sectors. Efforts should also be made to improve women's job stability by reducing precarious forms of employment and enhancing opportunities for career progression, thereby increasing actual income levels and reducing disparities that directly affect housing affordability.

2. Designing Housing Policies Responsive to Gender Income Inequalities

Housing policies in Arab cities should move beyond a formally neutral approach toward one that takes into account gender disparities in income in order to achieve substantive equality. This includes revising eligibility criteria for social housing programs and housing finance schemes so that they are not based exclusively on nominal income levels or traditional household models, but instead reflect the realities of women with low wages, women heads of households, and those engaged in insecure employment. It is also recommended to introduce targeted rental support mechanisms for women in situations of heightened vulnerability in urban areas.

3. Improving Equitable Access to Housing Finance and Credit

Limited access to housing finance constitutes an indirect mechanism of women's exclusion from the housing market. It is therefore recommended to develop housing finance tools that take into account women's income levels and employment conditions, while reducing reliance on property based or familial guarantees. Financial institutions should also be encouraged to adopt alternative credit assessment criteria and to ensure that disparities in property ownership or inheritance do not become structural barriers to women's right to adequate housing.

4. Strengthening Security of Tenure and Housing Stability for Women in Cities

In the context of wage disparities and rising living costs, women are more vulnerable to housing instability. Legal and regulatory frameworks should therefore be strengthened to protect women tenants from arbitrary eviction and to ensure more secure rental arrangements, particularly for women heads of households. It is also recommended to integrate a gender perspective into rental market regulation policies in order to mitigate the disproportionate impact of rising rents on women.

5. Linking Housing Policies with Urban Planning and Transport

The effective enjoyment of the right to adequate housing cannot be ensured without considering urban location and mobility costs. Housing policies in Arab cities should therefore be integrated with transport and urban planning policies in order to reduce the concentration of low income women in peripheral or unplanned areas that are distant from employment opportunities and essential services. Such integration would help reduce the time and financial burdens disproportionately borne by women and enhance their equitable access to urban space.

6. Strengthening Gender Disaggregated Data on Housing and Labor

The development of effective policies is hindered by the lack of sex-disaggregated data on housing and affordability, particularly within government systems. It is therefore recommended to strengthen data collection on housing ownership, rental conditions, housing expenditure, and security of tenure, disaggregated by sex and household status. This constitutes a key prerequisite for evidence based policymaking and for monitoring the impact of interventions on women's enjoyment of the right to adequate housing in Tunisian cities.

7. Adopting a Comprehensive Rights Based Approach to Housing

Finally, housing and labor policies in Arab cities should be framed within a comprehensive rights based approach that recognizes that formal legal equality alone is insufficient to ensure the effective enjoyment of the right to adequate housing. This requires aligning national policies with international obligations, particularly the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and addressing the wage gap as a structural determinant of housing inequality.

