
Employment Outcomes for Women in London's Economy

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The logo for 'ies' consists of the lowercase letters 'ies' in a bold, dark blue sans-serif font. A small yellow dot is positioned above the letter 'i'.

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Executive Summary

In September 2007 the Greater London Authority (GLA) commissioned the Institute for Employment Studies (IES) to investigate patterns of difference in the outcomes for women working in the private and public sector in London and to compare these with the picture across the UK more widely. The work consisted of four broad strands: identification and analysis of relevant datasets; identification of areas of inequality; employer case studies to identify good practice relating to the employment of women; and formulating policy recommendations based on the outcomes of this work. The findings from the research are summarised below.

Qualifications

- A higher proportion of females in London gain qualifications than males at ages 16, 19 and 23. By the time they enter the workforce, a larger proportion of women in London have high-level qualifications (qualifications at level 4, equating to degree level or equivalent). Despite this, women remain less likely than men to attain supervisory or managerial posts. Women in managerial posts are more likely to have level 4 qualifications than are men in equivalent posts.
- Higher proportions of women and men with high-level qualifications are found in the public sector than in the private sector. This is largely due to the high representation of women in the professional and associate professional occupations in this sector (primarily health, education and local government administration).
- More than half of all women and men report being offered training at work. Nationally, more women than men report being offered training, reversing a historic trend, and more women are offered training in London than across the UK as a whole. Further questions may be needed regarding the duration and type of training offered and whether or not it leads to accredited awards, but nonetheless this seems a trend that is positive for women.
- For both women and men, training (on or off the job) was more likely to be offered in the public sector than the private sector: around 74 per cent, compared to 54 per cent.

Employment patterns

- A slightly lower proportion of women in London are in employment compared with figures for the wider UK economy. A higher proportion of those who are in employment in London are employed in the financial services sector. The majority of women continue to be employed in female-dominated sectors – most notably in public administration, education and health – but in London, the financial services sector is now one of the largest employers of women and the single largest employer of men.
- While women constitute nearly one in eight employees in managerial and senior official posts in London, nearly twice as many of these posts are in the private sector as in the public sector. More women and men work long hours in London than in the UK as a whole.
- A greater proportion of women managers and foremen/supervisors hold qualifications at level 4 and above than is the case with men. The difference is greater in London than for the UK as a whole.
- A larger proportion of women in London report having been promoted at work in the last year than is the case nationally; furthermore, more women than men in the London region report receiving promotion. However, slightly more women than men in London also report ‘downshifting’ their job, which typically means moving to a job with fewer responsibilities or lower pay.
- A far greater proportion of women than men work part-time, but a lower proportion of women work part-time in London than within the UK as a whole. A quarter of women working part-time in London say that they do not work full-time because of domestic commitments.
- Working part-time carries a penalty in terms of opportunities for advancement as well as reduced pay. A far smaller proportion of women in part-time jobs have supervisory responsibilities than those in full-time jobs. This appears to be particularly acute in the private sector, where more than twice as many women in full-time jobs report having supervisory responsibilities than do those in part-time jobs.
- In London, of women working full-time, 6.3 per cent work more than 46 hours compared with 4.0 per cent more widely; for men the figures are 14.0 per cent in London compared with 11.7 per cent across the UK. A slightly higher proportion of women, and twice as many men, work these very long hours in the private sector than in the public sector.

Pay

- In London, fewer employees are found in the lowest pay bands than elsewhere in the UK. However, there remain striking differences between the pay of women and

men. Looking at weekly pay, women who work full-time are under-represented in the top pay bands and over-represented at lower pay levels. Just 14.5 per cent of men working full-time in London receive £325 a week or less compared with 22.2 per cent of women. Conversely, while 43.9 per cent of men working full-time in London earn £651 or more a week, just 26.1 per cent of women working full-time earn this amount or more per week.

- Conversely, women who work part-time in London tend to receive better pay than do men working part-time in the capital. Over one-third of women working part-time in London – 34.8 per cent – earn more than £226 a week; only 26.9 per cent of men working part-time in the capital earn that amount or more. While 29.6 per cent of women who work part-time earn less than £100 a week, some 36.7 per cent of men working part-time earn £100 or less.
- A far higher proportion of women working full-time in the private sector than the public sector is employed at low rates of pay: for example, 14.5 per cent of women in the private sector are paid less than £250 a week compared to 6.5 per cent in the public sector. Similarly, more men working full-time on low rates of pay are found in the private sector than the public sector; however, far smaller proportions of men than women are found in these low-paying jobs: just 8.0 per cent of men in the private sector earn less than £250 a week, and 3.4 per cent in the public sector.

Work-life balance

- Analyses suggest that nearly a quarter of women in the private sector and one-fifth of women in the public sector have made a request to their employer to change some aspect of their working arrangements to help them achieve work-life balance (within the framework of the statutory right for employees with children under six, disabled children under the age of 18, or who are the carers of adults, to request flexible working). However, the numbers of respondents is too small to allow any further analysis of the changes requested and employers' responses. The majority of women said that they had not requested any change because they were content with their current working arrangements.

Elder care responsibilities

- Considerably more women than men in London report having responsibilities for caring for adults who are sick, disabled or elderly. One-fifth of working women reported having such a responsibility. This is higher than across the UK as a whole, where 12 per cent of women say they have caring responsibilities.

Ethnicity and employment

- A slightly higher proportion of women from ethnic minority backgrounds work in the public sector than in the private sector.

- Nearly 29 per cent of women from ethnic minorities working full-time in London earn less than £325 a week compared with 18.2 per cent of white women who work full-time. Only 9.7 per cent of white males in London earn less than £325 a week, but 25.8 per cent of ethnic minority men.

Disability and employment

- A total of 11.5 per cent of women who work in London have a disability according to the current legal definition, compared to 13 per cent at UK level. Ten per cent of men in employment in London report having a disability. Women with disabilities have a significantly lower likelihood of being employed than those without a disability. Nationally the proportion of disabled women in employment is 43.8 per cent; in London it is 39.4 per cent. A slightly higher proportion of women working in the public sector has a disability than in the private sector.
- In addition, just over a quarter of women working in London report having a disability that affects the amount of work that they can do. This is slightly higher than the proportion of men who say this.
- Just under one-third of women who work in London say that they have a health problem that limits the type of work they can undertake.

Disability and pay

- Women in London who have a disability are more likely to be in the lowest pay bands – 27.2 per cent of women with disabilities earn less than £325 a week compared with 20.3 per cent of women in London who do not have a disability.
- Women in London who have a disability are also less likely to be in the highest pay bands: 23.2 per cent of women with disabilities earn more than £651 a week compared with 27.9 per cent of women without disabilities.

Recommendations

- **Flexible working.** At present there is only limited data available regarding the extent to which parents and carers are requesting changes to their working arrangements under the statutory right to request flexible working. More research would be valuable in this area to support decisions regarding whether any strengthening of the existing law is required.
- **Remote working, hotdesking and satellite offices.** Remote working has become increasingly common across the financial services sector. Many of the employers interviewed for the research felt that remote working should be allowed in all cases except where a person's physical presence was required in work for a specific reason. Some had allowed staff to work from more than one site in order to enable them to cut down on commuting time, with technology allowing them to access all

of the information they needed from an office other than their main base. However, the companies we spoke to were all large, globally successful companies with the technical resources to support such developments. For smaller companies, some support in moving to remote working might be appreciated.

- **Increasing access to employment for those with disabilities.** The analyses showed that women with disabilities in London have a very low chance of gaining employment and, if they do, it is more likely to be low-paid. Increasing use of remote working technology – and perhaps of satellite centres – would, in principle, make some of the more well-rewarded jobs potentially more accessible to this group of workers. The GLA may wish to consider whether it would be of value to host seminars for businesses considering moving towards remote working options.
- **Providing opportunities to try out atypical areas of work.** Recruitment continues to prove challenging in some strongly-segregated areas. We recommend that employers review their recruitment materials to ensure that they do not inadvertently reinforce stereotypes. Short ‘taster’ sessions, had been arranged by one organisation; these enable women to try out the various activities involved in a job and can be particularly valuable in encouraging women to make sideways moves into atypical areas of work within the organisation.
- **Flexible development options.** The majority of organisations were now focusing on policies to improve retention rather than recruitment. Providing development and progression opportunities assist with retention. Putting in place e-learning arrangements or repeating training programmes (rather than arranging one-off events) can enable organisations to provide development in more flexible ways that are accessible to part-time staff.
- **Customised training for women.** Examples were provided of ways in which training that is based on men’s requirements can be ineffective for women. Therefore employers should review training currently offered and consider whether a ‘one size fits all’ approach is, in fact, optimal. A small amount of customisation can lead to a significant impact on women’s opportunities to progress.
- **Pay audits.** It was notable that, irrespective of the amount of excellent work being undertaken elsewhere in their organisations, we heard no accounts of pay audits having been undertaken. This appears to be the last great sticking point in the move towards more equitable working practices. Fear may be one factor inhibiting action; publicity about legal cases brought on grounds of equal pay for work of equal value may have made employers reluctant to start investigating pay arrangements for fear of the extent of consequences. Seminars to explore the requirements of, and guidance available on the conduct of, pay audits might be of use to employers.

- **Friendly organisational cultures.** The last point to make is that a focus on policies can only go so far. Many of the women we spoke to emphasised the fact that it was the perceived friendliness of the organisation that made the most difference. Where an employer seeks to accommodate the needs of its employees, this is likely to result in improved employee engagement and a perception that this is an employer that cares for its employees. Under such circumstances it appears counterproductive to business for organisations to oppose moves to provide more accessible workplaces.

1 Introduction

In the 2006 *Women in London's Economy* report the GLA indicated that, based on current projections, seven out of ten new jobs in London will be filled by women by 2016. The priority from now on, therefore, needs to be on policy changes to facilitate women's access to high quality, high reward jobs; and on removing the barriers that serve to keep women employed in a minority of (generally less well-remunerated) sectors. In addition, irrespective of the sectors and levels in which women are employed, there is a need for further work to ensure that women receive equal reward packages to those offered to men, with 'reward' being interpreted in its broadest sense, that is, not just in terms of pay but also opportunities to develop and progress in work without compromising on work-life balance.

Therefore, in September 2007 the GLA commissioned the research reported in this chapter. The aim of the work was to identify patterns of difference in equality outcomes between women working in the public and in the private sector in London, to help inform the subsequent development of policies for women in London's economy. The work consisted of three strands:

- analysis of existing datasets to provide evidence of the relative positions of women and men in London's economy
- identification of areas of inequality
- identification of examples of employer policies and practice in addressing these areas of inequality.

The GLA also required the research to: consider whether there were any significant differences between the positions of women and men employed within the public and private sectors; examine, wherever possible, any differences in employment outcomes for women from black and ethnic minority backgrounds and white women; and also to explore the situation of women with disabilities within the workforce.

1.1 Selecting data sets

Early on in the research, the range of datasets within the public domain was examined to see which would provide the best sources of data on the employment experience of women and an overview of the options was presented to the GLA. It was agreed that the Labour Force Survey would be the most useful dataset to use as the basis for the majority of the analyses. Data from the most recent four quarters of the Labour Force Survey (July to September 2006, October to December 2006, January to March 2007 and April to June 2007) were compiled to give data for 2006-07. Other datasets used in the work were: the Third Work-Life Balance survey (Hooker et al. 2007); the WERS datasets from managers and employees; and the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2007.

1.2 Analyses

In the chapters that follow, data are presented for the UK as a whole followed by those for the London region. Where the data allow, the tables show the information separately for females and for males in the private and public sectors. Supplementary tables showing further, more detailed, breakdowns than those described within the report are provided in a technical appendix, available as a separate document at www.employment-studies.co.uk/pdflibrary/449tech.pdf.

1.3 Structure of the report

Chapter 2 presents an analysis of the qualifications gained by women and men at ages 16, 19 and 23. It also considers current patterns of training and development at work. Chapter 3 describes current patterns of employment, looking at the sectors and jobs in which women and men are employed and considering their proportional take-up of full- and part-time employment. Current hours of work and weekly wages are also considered and emerging data on work-life balance are reported. Chapter 4 considers the position of women and men with additional disadvantages: those with elder care responsibilities, women and men with disabilities, and those from ethnic minority backgrounds. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the findings arising from the analyses. Chapter 6 is based on interviews with good practice employers and provides examples of actions that employers can take to improve the representation of women within their workforce. Lastly, Chapter 7 sets out policy recommendations arising from the findings.

Case studies based on the employer interviews can be downloaded from www.employment-studies.co.uk/pdflibrary/449cases.pdf

2 Education and Training

One of the factors that is often raised to explain the different positions of women and men in work is that of 'human capital', a term which refers to the value of an individual's own knowledge, skills and experience. If women and men have very different qualifications, then (the argument runs) it is unsurprising that they should subsequently gain entry to different jobs and (depending on sector and level of job in which they are employed) different pay.

However, Walby and Olsen (2002) have reported that although the *average* woman is less well-qualified than the average man. In general any differences are found to be concentrated in those who are aged over 40, and amongst those who are employed part-time or not at all.

We start, therefore, with an examination of the human capital of the average female and male in London at ages 16, 19 and 23, by examining the profile of qualifications typically gained at those ages.

2.1 Education and training prior to work

2.1.1 Qualifications gained at school

The majority of young people in school sit GCSE examinations at the age of 16; in addition, some undertake vocational awards at an equivalent level (such as Young Apprenticeships). These awards sit within level 2 of the National Qualifications Framework. Table 2.1 shows the proportion of young people in the UK and in London who have attained level 2 qualifications by the time they reach the age of 17.

Table 2.1: Proportion of females and males holding GCSEs or equivalent at age 17 (percentage)

	Females aged 17	Males aged 17
Proportion with level 2 qualifications, UK	56.9	49.6
Proportions with level 2 qualifications, London	53.5	50.6

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

The statistics show that, by age 17, females are outperforming boys. However, a slightly smaller proportion of girls in London have attained level 2 qualifications by age 17 compared with the UK overall; amongst boys, attainment is one percentage point higher in London compared to the whole of the UK.

2.1.2 Qualifications gained in post-compulsory education and training

At present, after age 16 young people are able to leave education and training. A large proportion remain in school or sixth form college; some attend further education while others opt to enter work-based training (largely apprenticeships at this age). At age 18 young people in education and training are largely attempting to gain level 3 qualifications: these are mainly A levels or advanced apprenticeships¹. Some of the young people who leave school at age 16 may be registered for apprenticeships at level 2 rather than advanced apprenticeships, if they are not considered of sufficient ability to enter the advanced award.

Table 2.2 shows the proportions of females and males who had attained level 3 awards in the UK and in London by age 19 in the past year.

Table 2.2: Proportion of females and males holding A levels or equivalent at age 19 (percentage)

	Females aged 19	Males aged 19
Proportion with level 3 qualifications, UK	47.4	40.6
Base, UK	379,810	387,261
Proportions with level 3 qualifications, London	48.7	40.9
Base, London	39,814	47,953

UK data includes Scotland; data based on equivalents

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

Table 2.2 shows that by age 19, females in London and the rest of the UK are outperforming boys in terms of level 3 attainment. In contrast to the position at age 17 with level 2 awards, a slightly higher proportion of girls in London attains level 3 qualifications by this age than is the case in the wider UK population.

2.1.3 Higher education

At present, the split between vocational and academic educational routes tends to become more entrenched from level 3 onwards. Those who attain A levels tend to go into higher education while those on the vocational route may still be completing – or even just starting – advanced apprenticeships. Funding for apprenticeships can continue (at present) until the age of 25. For those in the vocational stream, the opportunity to work towards a level 4 qualification may only become available once

¹ Diplomas were just being introduced at the time that this report was being written.

they have moved into a relatively senior post at work. Therefore, in considering level 4 qualifications, it is largely degree programmes that fall into this category when looking at the qualifications held by young people¹. Here, then, we consider the performance of young women and men at age 23.

Table 2.3: Proportion of females and males holding level 4 qualifications or equivalent at age 23 (percentage)

	Females aged 23	Males aged 23
Proportion with level 4 qualifications, UK	35.1	29.8
Base, UK	372,527	360,002
Proportions with level 4 qualifications, London	47.6	39.2
Base, London	59,081	54,616

UK data includes Scotland; data based on equivalents

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

Table 2.3 shows that females in the London area are far more likely to have gained a degree-level qualification by the time they are 23 than are males and are more likely to do so than females elsewhere in the UK.

2.1.4 Skills in the workforce

The above section reported the qualifications gained by those young people who are presently moving through the education and training system. We now move on to consider the qualifications that are held by women and men who are employed in London and in the wider economy². The Labour Force Survey reports the highest qualification level of a representative sample of individuals in the workforce. This provides an indication of the total human capital of employees, irrespective of how or at what stage in their life the individual gained the qualification.

Tables 2.4 and 2.5 show the proportions of women and men in the UK and London workforces who hold qualifications at the various levels.

These tables show that a far higher proportion of females working in London hold qualifications at level 4 and above than is the case for women in the wider UK working population – 46.0 per cent compared with 33.9 per cent. The picture is similar for men: 41.7 per cent of employed men in London hold higher level qualifications compared with 30.7 per cent of those in the wider economy. The figures for men are, however, lower than the equivalent figures for women.

¹ Rather than the population of women and men as a whole who hold level 4 qualifications.

² Self-employed individuals are excluded from this analysis.

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Table 2.4: The level of qualification held by women and men in the UK workforce (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Level 4 and above	25.5	26.9	50.0	49.2	33.9	30.4
Level 3	16.1	17.3	12.5	14.4	14.9	16.9
Level 2	21.6	13.2	14.8	11.2	19.4	12.9
Below level 2	16.5	12.4	11.3	8.6	14.7	11.8
No qualifications	10.1	9.6	5.4	5.3	8.5	8.9
Number	8,468,015	1,284,694	4,385,080	2,343,998	12,851,095	14,728,692

Trade apprenticeships and 'other qualifications' omitted

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

Table 2.5: The level of qualification held by women and men in the London workforce (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Level 4 and above	40.8	39.7	57.1	51.6	46.0	41.7
Level 3	13.0	13.0	10.3	14.5	12.2	13.3
Level 2	12.9	9.6	10.4	10.2	12.1	9.7
Below level 2	10.7	8.7	8.9	9.0	10.1	8.8
No qualifications	6.9	8.3	4.8	4.8	6.2	7.7
Base number	1,119,591	1,813,664	528,278	381,599	1,647,869	2,195,263

Trade apprenticeships and 'other qualifications' omitted

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

In both London and the wider UK population, a larger proportion of women and men working in the public sector are highly-qualified than in the private sector. However, when those working in the private sector in London and elsewhere in the UK are compared, it becomes clear that a much larger proportion of women and men with higher-level qualifications are employed in the private sector in London than in the rest of the UK. It is also worth noting that the proportion of highly qualified women in the public sector in London is much higher than the proportion of highly qualified men – 57.1 per cent compared with 51.6 per cent, a difference of 5.5 percentage points.

Very few of the employed workforce hold no qualifications whatsoever – less than one in ten workers. The proportions of women and men in London without qualifications are far lower (6.2 and 7.7 per cent, respectively) than in the wider UK workforce (8.5 and 8.9 per cent, respectively). Fewer unqualified workers overall are employed within the public sector than in the private sector, both in the wider UK workforce and in London.

2.2 Training and career development

In this section we report the outcomes of analyses of access to training within the workplace.

2.2.1 Access to training and development

Analysis of the Labour Force Survey reveals that, across the UK, 59.3 per cent of females and 56.5 per cent of males are offered training (whether on- or off-the-job) at any time while in their current job. Table 2.6 shows the breakdown across the public and private sectors in the UK and in London.

Table 2.6: Training offered to women and men working in London and the UK (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Offered training, UK	51.3	53.1	76.8	74.4	59.3	56.5
Offered training, London	54.5	53.5	74.7	73.5	60.4	57.2

Source: *Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)*

While both women and men working in the private sector are more likely to be offered training in London than elsewhere in the UK, in the public sector women and men in London are somewhat less likely to be offered training in London than elsewhere in the UK. In both London and the UK as a whole, employees are more likely to be offered training in the public than the private sector.

However, no details are given of the type and extent of training that is offered to women and to men and 'training' can refer to anything from an hour's on-the-job training to an accredited external training programme potentially lasting several years. There have been anecdotal reports that women are more likely than men to receive training in 'soft skills' (Thewlis, Miller and Neathey, 2004). Further research may be needed regarding the duration and type of training offered to women and men and whether or not it leads to accredited awards.

3 Employment

In this section we consider the patterns of employment for women and men in the London area, and compare these with the patterns seen across England as a whole.

3.1 Working in London

In this section we provide an estimate of the numbers of individuals working in London, compared to the picture in the UK as a whole. In doing so we have drawn on data from the Labour Force Survey. However, in looking at these data, it should be borne in mind that the data drawn on for these analyses is based on place of residence; this is because part of the sample is not in employment. Therefore, this gives an indicative, rather than definitive, picture of the proportions of women and men working in London, because some of these individuals will work outside the London region, while some people living outside of London will commute into London for work. In contrast, for the UK as a whole, the figures are a more accurate representation of the numbers in employment, since they cover all individuals irrespective of where they live or work.

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 give an overview of the proportions of individuals who are working, unemployed or inactive across the UK as a whole and in the London region.

Table 3.1: Economic activity, UK (percentage)

	Women	Men	Total
In employment	66.5	78.7	72.5
ILO unemployed*	3.6	4.9	4.2
Inactive	29.9	16.4	23.3
Total	19,503,838	18,870,770	38,374,608

*the ILO definition of unemployment can be obtained from:
<http://laborsta.ilo.org/applv8/data/c3e.html>

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

Table 3.2: Economic activity, London (percentage)

	Women	Men	Total
In employment	60.8	76.1	68.4
ILO unemployed	5.1	6.3	5.7
Inactive	34.1	17.7	25.9
Total	2,537,854	2,514,154	5,052,008

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

As previous WiLE analyses have shown, a smaller proportion of women is in employment in the London region than that in the population as a whole and a slightly higher proportion is unemployed or inactive.

3.1.1 The sectors in which men and women work

The fourth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) confirmed that the great majority of Europeans continue to work in strongly-segregated occupations (Jurczak and Hurley, 2007), in keeping with previous reports (eg Thewlis, Miller and Neathey, 2004). The survey also reported that half of all working women in Europe work in only two industrial sectors: a total of 34 per cent are employed in public administration, education and health and 17 per cent in wholesale and retail. Tables 3.3 and 3.4 show the proportions of women who work in the nine main industrial categories in the UK and in London.

Table 3.3: Proportion of women and men in the major industrial sectors, UK (percentage)

	Women	Men	Total
Agriculture and fishing	0.6	1.8	1.2
Energy and water	0.6	1.5	1.1
Manufacturing	7.1	17.9	12.9
Construction	1.7	13.8	8.2
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	20.8	17.4	19.0
Transport and communication	3.7	9.5	6.8
Banking, finance and insurance etc	15.3	16.8	16.1
Public admin, education and health	43.3	15.8	28.6
Other services	6.9	5.5	6.1
Total	12,863,795	14,744,406	27,608,201

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

Table 3.4: Proportion of women and men in the major industrial sectors, London (percentage)

	Women	Men	Total
Agriculture and fishing	0.1	0.4	0.2
Energy and water	0.4	0.5	0.5
Manufacturing	5.2	8.0	6.8
Construction	1.4	10.7	6.7
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	14.7	15.3	15.1
Transport and communication	4.6	10.2	7.8
Banking, finance and insurance etc	25.1	30.2	28.0
Public admin, education and health	38.9	16.8	26.2
Other services	9.5	8.0	8.7
Total	1,646,263	2,193,478	3,839,741

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

For the UK, nearly two-thirds of women work in public administration, education and health and in distribution, hotels and restaurants (the industrial grouping that includes retail and wholesale). In the London region the figure is more in line with that for Europe as a whole: altogether, 53.6 per cent of women are employed in those two industrial groupings.

It is also noteworthy that more than a quarter of all women in London (25.1 per cent) work in the financial and business services sector, compared to 15.3 per cent in the UK as a whole. For men, the difference is even greater: 16.8 per cent of men work in this sector across the UK as a whole compared to 30.2 per cent in London. In total, over a quarter of the London workforce is concentrated in this sector.

One of the factors that some commentators have suggested is linked to employer attempts to recruit women is the existence of a skills gap within the current workforce (EOC, 2004). Construction and Engineering are both areas in which there have been skills gaps for many years; however, the tables show that despite this, only small numbers of women are found in these sectors in London and more widely across the UK.

3.2 The types of jobs held by men and women

Previous analyses have revealed that fewer women than men attain managerial positions at work (Thewlis, Miller and Neathey, 2004). The recent EWCS confirms that this continues to be the case (Jurczak and Hurley, 2007). As well as showing the extent to which women are confined to a limited sub-set of occupational sectors, the EWCS also reveals continuing strong, vertical, segregation in the jobs performed by women across Europe: the 'glass ceiling'. Women are largely concentrated in lower-level, non-managerial posts, although this is slowly declining (Jurczak and Hurley, *ibid.*).

3.2.1 Managerial roles

Our analyses of the Labour Force Survey indicate that, across the UK as a whole, just over one in ten women (11.5 per cent) are employed in managerial roles, compared to just under one in five men (18.5 per cent). More managerial positions are held by women in the private sector (14.1 per cent) than in the public sector (5.8 per cent). In London, relatively more women and men are employed in managerial posts (14.4 per cent and 23.8 per cent respectively) but again the proportion of women is far lower than the proportion of men. As is the case across the UK more widely, in London a higher proportion of women and men are employed in managerial positions within the private sector than in the public sector. Nearly twice as many women are in managerial and senior official positions in the private sector in London as in the public sector (17 per cent compared with 8.9 per cent, respectively).

Table 3.5: Distribution of women and men amongst occupations in the UK (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Managers and Senior Officials	14.1	19.9	5.8	11.6	11.2	18.5
Professional occupations	6.5	11.4	23.5	26.9	12.3	13.8
Associate Professional and Technical	12.5	10.7	21.6	25.3	15.6	13.0
Administrative and Secretarial	20.2	3.7	20.3	10.4	20.2	4.8
Skilled Trades Occupations	2.3	21.9	0.6	4.8	1.8	19.2
Personal Service Occupations	12.6	1.6	18.2	6.4	14.5	2.3
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	16.5	5.5	1.0	0.6	11.3	4.8
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	3.1	13.5	3.8	0.3	2.1	11.9
Elementary Occupations	12.2	11.9	10.1	8.7	11.1	11.6
Total	8,465,648	12,379,769	4,382,180	2,342,675	12,847,828	14,722,444

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 2007)

Table 3.6: Distribution of women and men amongst occupations in London (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Managers and Senior Officials	17.0	25.4	8.9	16.0	14.4	23.8
Professional occupations	11.2	15.0	26.2	25.8	16.0	16.9
Associate Professional and Technical	19.0	16.5	23.0	24.4	20.3	17.8
Administrative and Secretarial	22.4	4.8	19.8	11.5	21.6	6.0
Skilled Trades Occupations	1.4	14.8	*	*	1.1	12.6
Personal Service Occupations	10.0	2.0	14.9	5.9	11.6	2.7
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	9.7	5.3	*	*	6.8	4.6
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	1.5	7.1	*	3.8	1.1	6.5
Elementary Occupations	7.8	9.0	5.8	9.3	7.2	9.1
Total	1,119,293	1,812,855	528,146	381,059	1,647,439	2,193,914

* Indicates fewer than 10,000 respondents

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 2007)

In contrast to the figures for managerial posts, more women are employed in professional and associate professional posts in the public sector than the private sector. This is probably explained by the large numbers of women employed in health and education, sectors that both employ large numbers of professionals and associate professionals. In the public sector in London, professional roles account for similar proportions of the employment of women than men (around 26 per cent), and it is perhaps worth noting that fewer men in the London region are employed in public sector professional roles than in the UK more widely (25.8 cf 26.9 per cent). Administrative and secretarial roles account for one in five jobs undertaken by women in the UK (20.6 per cent) and just slightly more (21.6 per cent) in London.

3.2.2 Supervisory responsibilities

The section above reported the numbers of women and men employed in managerial positions. However, jobs that are not labelled as 'managerial' posts may involve some supervisory or managerial responsibilities. Table 3.7 shows the extent to which employees in the UK and the London region have supervisory and managerial responsibilities in their work.

Table 3.7: Proportion of staff with supervisory responsibilities, UK and London (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Supervisory responsibilities, UK	30.8	41.3	39.0	48.9	33.8	42.7
Supervisory responsibilities, London	36.8	50.9	42.2	49.6	38.7	50.5

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 2007)

Fewer women than men report having any supervisory or managerial responsibilities, but the proportion of women who do report having supervisory responsibilities is higher in the public sector than in the private sector. In the UK some 33.8 per cent of women have supervisory responsibilities compared to 42.0 per cent of men, while in London 38.7 per cent of women hold supervisory responsibilities compared to 50 per cent of men. A larger proportion of women in London report having supervisory responsibilities than in the wider UK economy (38.7 per cent compared with 33.8 per cent).

3.3 The qualifications of female and male managers

Table 3.8 shows the qualifications of female and male managers in the UK; Table 3.9 presents the same information for managers in the London region. Note that total figures for women and men are not presented here as they were reported earlier in the chapter.

Table 3.8: Level of highest qualification held by managers, UK (percentage)

	Manager		Foreman or supervisor		Not manager or supervisor	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
NVQ Level 4 and above	56.2	51.9	40.9	28.1	24.9	21.1
NVQ Level 3	13.5	16.0	15.0	20.2	15.4	16.7
NVQ Level 2	13.3	10.5	17.4	12.2	22.0	15.3
Below NVQ Level 2	8.6	7.3	12.6	11.8	17.3	14.5
No qualification	2.6	2.5	6.0	6.4	10.9	11.6
Total	2,431,016	3,621,763	1,503,851	1,577,388	7,962,447	7,020,452

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 2007)

Table 3.9: Level of highest qualification held by managers, London (percentage)

	Manager		Foreman or supervisor		Not manager or supervisor	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
NVQ Level 4 and above	64.0	57.5	47.5	38.8	36.4	31.6
NVQ Level 3	11.3	13.8	12.2	14.3	12.8	13.2
NVQ Level 2	8.1	8.6	11.9	9.6	14.6	11.9
Below NVQ Level 2	5.6	5.6	9.6	11.6	12.8	11.2
No qualification	1.9	2.4	4.7	6.6	8.6	10.4
Total	395,498	701,657	180,800	213,064	917,569	875,283

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 2007)

Across the UK and in London, a greater proportion of women managers and foremen/supervisors hold qualifications at level 4 and above than do male managers. The difference is much more pronounced in the London region than elsewhere in the UK, for each category of employee. A greater proportion of male than female managers hold level 3 qualifications; here, though, the difference is less in the London region than elsewhere in the UK.

Turning next to look at the qualifications of those with supervisory responsibilities, Tables 3.10 and 3.11 show data for the UK and for the London region. Again, total proportions of women and men holding the various qualifications are not reported in these tables as those data have been reported earlier in the chapter.

Table 3.10: Level of highest qualification held by those with supervisory responsibilities, UK (percentage)

	Supervisory responsibility		No supervisory responsibility	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
NVQ Level 4 and above	50.0	43.4	24.8	22.0
NVQ Level 3	14.0	17.3	15.5	16.7
NVQ Level 2	14.9	11.1	22.0	15.3
Below NVQ Level 2	10.2	8.9	17.4	14.3
No qualification	4.1	4.0	10.9	11.3
Total	4,024,421	5,219,494	7,878,784	7,004,024

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

Table 3.11: Level of highest qualification held by those with supervisory responsibilities, London (percentage)

	Supervisory responsibility		No supervisory responsibility	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
NVQ Level 4 and above	58.3	52.7	36.6	32.4
NVQ Level 3	11.4	13.8	13.0	13.4
NVQ Level 2	9.4	8.9	14.6	11.8
Below NVQ Level 2	6.8	7.2	12.8	11.0
No qualification	2.9	3.9	8.5	9.7
Total	578,361	903,088	915,849	885,317

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

A higher proportion of women than men with supervisory responsibilities hold level 4 and above qualifications in the UK and in London. A higher proportion of women with supervisory responsibilities hold level 4 and above qualifications than do men with supervisory responsibilities. As with the figures for managers, amongst employees with supervisory responsibilities more of the male managers hold level 3 awards than do female managers and slightly fewer of the London-based supervisors hold this level qualification than elsewhere in the UK.

3.4 Career progression and downshifting

Tables 3.12 and 3.13 show the proportions of people in the UK and in London whose role at work had changed in the past year. Note that this set of questions is asked in only one quarter (April to June) of every annual cycle of the LFS; for this reason the base numbers of respondents are much smaller than for other analyses.

Table 3.12 shows that, across the UK, just under four per cent of all individuals downshifted their job: this means that they moved into a lower status position. A slightly larger proportion, just under five per cent, gained promotion into a higher status position.

Table 3.12: Women and men's career shifts, UK (percentage)

	Women	Men	Total
Downshift	3.8	4.0	3.9
Upshift	4.9	4.8	4.9
No change	91.3	91.2	91.2
Total	2,525,485	2,589,142	5,114,627

Source: Labour Force Survey (April - June 07)

Table 3.13: Women and men's career shifts, London (percentage)

	Women	Men	Total
Downshift	4.6	4.3	4.4
Upshift	5.8	5.3	5.5
No change	89.6	90.4	90.0
Total	282,956	362,825	645,781

Source: Labour Force Survey (April - June 07)

In London, the proportions for both downshifting and upshifting of employment were slightly higher: 4.4 per cent of employees downshifted, while 5.5 per cent upshifted. Whilst across the UK a slightly smaller proportion of women downshifted and slightly more upshifted than men, in London slightly larger proportions of women than men were involved in both downshifts and upshifts.

3.5 Full-time or part-time work?

Women are more likely than men to be found in part-time employment (Thewlis, Miller and Neathey, 2003; Jones and Dickerson, 2007). Jones and Dickerson (ibid.) report that, nationally, part-time workers are only half as likely as full-time workers to have a high-level job and three times more likely to have a low-level job.

Tables 3.14 and 3.15 show the proportions of women and men in full- or part-time employment across the UK and in London. They reveal that a higher proportion of both women and men work full-time in London than across the UK as a whole and, conversely, that fewer are in part-time work in the capital. While the difference is just a few percentage points for men, a far larger proportion of women work full-time in London than across the UK as a whole: 69.4 per cent compared to 58.2 per cent. These patterns do not differ very much across the public and private sectors.

Table 3.14: Proportions of full-time and part-time employment in the UK (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Full-time	57.4	90.6	59.9	91.6	58.2	90.7
Part-time	42.6	9.4	40.1	8.4	41.8	9.3
Total	8,466,391	12,384,317	4,383,191	2,344,258	12,882,197	14,771,373

Self-employed individuals excluded

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 2007)

Table 3.15: Proportions of full-time and part-time employment in London (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Full-time	69.0	91.4	70.3	94.0	69.4	91.8
Part-time	31.0	8.6	29.7	6.0	30.6	8.2
Total	1,119,621	1,813,582	528,309	381,650	1,649,523	2,199,552

Self-employed individuals excluded

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 2007)

3.5.1 Reasons for not working full-time

The LFS asks those who work part-time the reason why they do so. The most often-cited reason given by both women and men is that they do not want to work full-time, and typically around twice as many women say this as men. Fewer women in London give this as a reason than in the UK as a whole: 74.4 per cent compared with 78.7 per cent. As a corollary to this, more women (and men) in London than elsewhere say that they are working part-time because they have been unable to find full-time work: 8.4 per cent of women in London compared with 7.0 per cent of the wider population; and 26.2 per cent of men in London compared with 19.0 per cent elsewhere.

The LFS also asks those who say that they are working part-time because they did not wish to work full-time their reasons for not wishing to work full-time. For women, the most frequently-cited reason for part-time work is that they want to spend more time with their family. Around two-fifths of women working part-time across the UK said this (40.3 per cent); slightly more women in London cited this as their main reason (42.4 per cent). Across the UK and in London, rather more of the women working in the public sector than in the private sector say that their main reason for working part-time is that they want to spend more time with their family.

In addition to those who choose to spend more time with their families there is a significant proportion of women who are restricted to part-time work by their domestic commitments. Some 26.3 per cent of women in the UK, and 25.0 per cent of women in London say that they do not work full-time because of domestic commitments. Across the UK less than ten per cent of men cite domestic commitments as a reason for working part-time. In addition, nationally, a small group of women (2.0 per cent) say that insufficient childcare provision limits their ability to work full-time; unfortunately, small numbers mean that comparable figures are not available for the London region.

In London, there are too few men working part-time to analyse their reasons for doing so; in the UK as a whole the reason that is cited by the largest proportion of men (apart from those grouped under 'other responses') is because they are financially secure; three times as many men say this as do women. Across the London region, just 6.8 per cent of women give this as a reason. This is a slightly lower figure than the

number of women across the UK as a whole, amongst whom some 7.7 per cent elect to work part-time because they are financially secure.

The nature of part-time work

Electing to work part-time appears to lead to poorer employment options. Looking at the extent to which part-time workers are given supervisory responsibilities, a clear picture emerges: those in part-time work are far less likely to have any supervisory responsibilities. This is the case both across the UK as a whole and within the London region. Table 3.16 reveals that women in the private sector in London are twice as likely to have supervisory responsibilities if they work full-time than if they work part-time; however, in the public sector, the gap is not quite so great – 28.1 per cent compared with 48.2 per cent, which is just under twice as likely. It is noteworthy that, in this respect, men fare worse than women: men in the public sector in London are three and a half times more likely to have supervisory responsibilities if they work full-time rather than part-time, while in the private sector they are nearly two and a half times more likely to have supervisory responsibilities if they work full-time than if they work part-time.

Table 3.16: Proportion of full-time and part-time staff with supervisory responsibilities, UK and London (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
% full-time with supervisory responsibilities, UK	41.0	44.2	48.0	51.8	43.6	45.7
% part-time with supervisory responsibilities, UK	16.7	12.1	25.6	15.9	12.7	19.8
Base (UK)	7,495,909	9,846,704	4,378,725	2,339,744	11,874,634	12,186,448
% full-time with supervisory responsibilities, London	43.9	53.3	48.2	51.9	45.4	52.9
% part-time with supervisory responsibilities, London	19.7	22.2	28.1	14.7	22.7	20.7
Base (London)	967,360	1,405,186	526,647	379,580	1,494,007	1,784,766

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 2007)

3.6 Hours of work

The TUC has recently undertaken an analysis of Labour Force Survey data and reported that, after a slow but steady decline over the past ten years, long hours working is again on the rise (TUC, 2007). Their analysis shows London to be the region that has the second greatest number of individuals working more than 48 hours a week: 481,000. It also indicates that some 25,000 individuals have been working more than 48 hours a week since 2006. Crail (2007) also reports that, while most groups work around 37 hours, for a minority it can be as high as 48 hours.

Tables 3.17 and 3.18 show our analyses of the numbers of hours worked by women and men in the UK and in London. Hours worked have been grouped into three bands: up to 35 hours; 36 to 45 hours; and more 46 hours a week. We selected the two upper bands of 36-45 hours and above 46 hours as these indicate the proportions of the population that are regularly working either up to or over ten hours extra a week (assuming a basic 35-hour week) and up to or over five hours extra (assuming a basic 40-hour week).

Table 3.17: Usual hours worked by full-time employees, UK (percentage)

Hours worked	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
21-35	26.9	10.9	29.3	14.9	27.8	11.7
36-45	68.3	76.2	66.3	76.9	67.6	76.3
>46	4.1	12.6	3.9	7.9	4.0	11.7
Total	4,327,871	8,844,294	2,606,079	2,108,457	6,933,950	10,952,751

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

Table 3.17 reveals that, in the UK as a whole, the majority of women and men work over 35 hours a week. Three-quarters of men and two-thirds of women work in excess of 35 hours a week. More than one in ten men, but a lower proportion of women, regularly work more than 46 hours a week. Table 3.18 shows the figures for women and men working in London. Here, a lower proportion of women and men work in excess of 35 hours a week. However, somewhat more people in London than elsewhere in the UK work more than 46 hours – for women, the figure for London is 6.3 per cent compared with 4.0 per cent more widely; for men the figures are 14.0 per cent compared with 11.7 per cent. A slightly higher proportion of women, and twice as many men, work these very long hours in the private sector than in the public sector.

Table 3.18: Usual hours worked by full-time employees, London (percentage)

Hours worked	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
21-35	29.1	17.8	33.1	22.0	30.5	18.7
36-45	63.9	66.0	60.5	70.6	62.7	67.0
>46	6.5	15.8	5.9	7.3	6.3	14.0
Total	677,944	1,277,332	366,524	349,680	1,044,468	1,627,012

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

3.7 Pay

The latest information to emerge from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) on pay reveals a 17.2 per cent gap nationally between the pay of women and

men in full-time employment. Manning has suggested that the pace of improvement (that is, the rate at which the extent of the gender pay gap has been reducing) has declined in recent years (Manning, 2006; Manning and Swaffield, 2005). Even for graduates, the pay gap increases quite soon after starting work (Breitenbach, 2006). The 2007 *Directors' Rewards* survey undertaken by the Institute of Directors (www.iod.com) suggests that nationally, on average, female directors earn 22 per cent less than male directors.

In part, this gap is attributable to the fact that women tend to be employed in sectors and jobs that have lower pay rates than those sectors and jobs in which men are concentrated (EOC, 2006). However, even taking this into account, there remains a gap in the earnings of women and men that some researchers, such as John Forth and his colleagues, have suggested remain attributable solely to the individual's gender (Forth, 2002; Forth, McNabb and Whitfield, 2003).

In this section, we present statistics relating to women's and men's pay. We have used the Labour Force Survey for these analyses (rather than ASHE) as this data set allows for detailed exploration of patterns of work and pay. Weekly pay has some potential for distortion due to differences in: the number of hours women and men work (both basic and overtime), incentive pay¹, the sectors in which women and men work and the positions they occupy. However, for the same reasons, weekly pay also provides a better indicator of an individual's economic position as an outcome of their usual work pattern.

Tables 3.19 and 3.20 show the distribution of average weekly pay for women and men working full-time in the UK and in London.

Table 3.19: Weekly pay of women and men working full-time in the UK (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
£ <250	29.6	14.1	12.3	5.9	23.1	12.5
£ 251-325	21.9	14.8	17.3	11.3	20.2	14.1
£ 326-450	21.6	23.4	25.1	21.2	22.9	23.0
£ 451-650	16.2	24.0	29.0	31.2	21.0	25.4
£ 651-900	6.6	13.3	12.5	20.7	8.8	14.7
£ >901	4.1	10.4	3.9	9.6	4.0	10.3
Number of respondents	4,367,712	8,984,400	2,629,334	2,140,983	6,997,046	11,125,383

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

¹ It should also be noted that the impact of incentive pay is top-censored (capped) in the weightings applied to LFS data. This means that if the gross salary is greater than £3,500 a week, (or, for manual workers, greater than £1,000), then the case is not given an income weight. Non-responses to this question are also zero-weighted.

Table 3.19 shows that, across the UK, far more women than men are in the very lowest pay band, nearly 30 per cent of women working full-time in the private sector receive less than £250 a week, compared with 14.1 per cent of men. In the public sector 12.3 per cent of women receive the lowest levels of pay compared with 5.9 per cent of men. Similar patterns can be seen for the next lowest pay band, £251 to £325 per week. In contrast, nearly twice as many men as women are represented in the top two pay bands (£651-900 and more than £900 a week).

In London, fewer people fall into the lowest pay bands in comparison with the proportions in the wider UK economy. Nonetheless, there are still proportionally far more women than men in the lower pay brackets. While more employees in London receive the highest levels of remuneration, compared to the UK as a whole, far smaller proportions of women fall into these pay bands.

Table 3.20: Pay of women and men working full-time in London (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
£ <250	14.5	8.0	6.5	3.4	11.8	7.0
£ 251-325	10.8	8.1	9.8	5.4	10.4	7.5
£ 326-450	20.6	15.4	19.9	18.9	20.3	16.2
£ 451-650	29.2	24.4	35.5	29.1	31.4	25.4
£ 651-900	13.9	18.9	19.4	26.9	15.8	20.7
£ >901	11.1	25.1	8.8	16.3	10.3	23.2
Base	701,058	1,249,982	364,176	355,544	1,065,234	1,605,526

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

Tables 3.21 and 3.22 show similar pay data for those who work part-time in the UK and in the London region. Nationally, proportionally more men in part-time work than women fall into the two lowest pay bands while higher proportions of women part-time workers than men are in the two highest pay bands (with the exception to this being part-time employees receiving over £351 per week in the public sector).

Table 3.21: Pay of women and men working part-time in the UK (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
<£50	13.5	18.3	8.6	10.3	11.7	16.9
£51-100	28.9	34.6	14.9	17.6	23.9	31.7
£101-150	25.0	24.0	18.3	19.5	22.6	23.3
£151-225	18.4	12.1	23.4	18.9	20.2	13.3
£226-350	9.4	6.6	22.7	20.9	14.2	9.0
>£351	4.9	4.4	12.2	12.8	7.5	5.8
Base	3,135,378	911,982	1,763,956	185,989	4,899,334	1,097,971

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

In London, however, there is a more mixed picture. A higher proportion of women than men are in the very lowest and very highest pay bands. Women who work part-time in London tend to receive better pay than do men working part-time. While 29.6 per cent of women who work part-time earn less than £100 a week, some 36.7 per cent of men working part-time earn £100 or less. Conversely, over one-third of women working part-time in London – 34.8 per cent – earn more than £226 a week; only 26.9 per cent of men working part-time in the capital earn that amount or more.

A higher proportion of the low-paid part-time women workers in the private sector are found in the lowest two pay bands (up to £100) than in the public sector (34.9 per cent compared with 19.4 per cent) while nearly twice the proportion of part-time women workers in the public sector than in the private sector are in the two highest pay bands (50.2 per cent compared with 26.8 per cent).

Table 3.22: Pay of women and men working part-time in London (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
<£50	10.4	8.1	6.8	0.0	9.2	6.8
£51-100	24.5	33.5	12.6	11.0	20.4	29.9
£101-150	19.6	28.7	13.5	13.8	17.5	26.3
£151-225	18.7	9.4	16.9	15.0	18.1	10.3
£226-350	14.0	9.7	26.5	39.1	18.3	14.5
>£351	12.8	10.7	23.7	21.1	16.5	12.4
Base	282,288	105,576	149,143	20,362	431,431	125,938

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

In general the data show that while women's pay continues to trail behind that of men, in London a higher proportion of women receive larger salaries than is the case in the wider economy.

3.8 Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance relates to several employment dimensions: numbers of hours worked, patterns of working time, availability of part-time work, location of work and extent of overtime. Work-life balance has become a central issue of concern recently for employers, employees and policymakers, for several reasons. One concern is regarding the impact of long hours on employees' physical and mental well-being. Another concern is that excessive hours spent at work can impact negatively on retention. A third is that failing to offer work-life balance solutions to employees will reduce an organisation's ability to recruit female employees, given that women still shoulder the lion's share of domestic responsibilities.

Our analyses of the LFS confirmed this last point: the data reported in section 1.3.5 revealed that 25 per cent of women in London who were working part-time reported

doing so because of domestic commitments and across the UK as a whole another 2.0 per cent did so because of inadequate childcare provision. Furthermore, the data we reported on working hours in section 1.3 show that significant numbers of women and men work more than 35 hours a week and a significant proportion works more than 45 hours a week. In this section we therefore consider the extent to which women in London are able to ensure that they attain work-life balance by taking actions such as changing their hours of work.

In 2006 the then Department for Trade and Industry (now Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, DBERR) commissioned the third national work-life balance survey. Hooker et al. (2007) reported the outcomes of this survey in 2007. As part of the WiLE analyses we examined the subset of data obtained from London. Some 2,081 individuals were interviewed as part of the full survey; 12 per cent of respondents were based in the London region (this amounts to 253 individuals). We examined what these individuals said about requesting changes to work arrangements, types of change requested and the reasons for not requesting changes and these are reported below. However, it should be noted that this is a relatively small pool of individuals, especially once any further subdivision into groups working in the public and private sectors are considered, and so these analyses should be taken as indicative rather than robust.

First we considered the proportions of individuals who have approached their employer to request changing some aspect of how they work in the past two years, in line with their statutory right to request flexible working if they have children under the age of 6, disabled children under the age of 18 or are carers of adults. Table 3.23 shows the figures from the national survey and the responses for the London region.

Table 3.23: Requested to change aspect of work, London and UK (percentage)

	Private sector		Public sector	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Had requested to change some aspect of their work, responses from London region	23.2	15.4	18.8	18.8
Had requested to change some aspect of their work, whole UK survey	24.0	12.0	20.0	14.0

Source: *Third Work-Life Balance Survey (2007)*

The figures for both women and men in the London region are not very different from those for the UK as a whole. Slightly more women than men had requested a change to some aspect of their working arrangements. In looking at the actual changes that had been requested, the numbers become extremely small. The two types of change that the largest number of individuals had requested were to reduce the number of hours worked (nine individuals: five women, four men) and to change when they worked (six men, three women).

Those who had not requested a change to their work arrangements were asked the reason for this. The reason that was cited by the largest number of people was that

they were content with their current arrangements. Slightly more women in the public sector in London said this, but it should be remembered that these are very small sample sizes and so little weight should be attributed to this. Table 3.24 shows the responses for London. Those in the private sector were more likely to say that they were concerned about the potential impact on their work colleagues and that they were happy with their current work-life balance.

Table 3.24: Reason why did not request to change aspect of work, London (percentage)

	Private sector		Public sector	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Content with current work arrangements	38.6	43.3	44.7	43.8
Job does not allow it	*	9.6	17.0	*
Too much work to do	*	*	0	0
Concerned about the extra workload for my colleagues	23.2	15.4	0	0
Concerned about my career	*	*	0	0
Concerned about my job security	*	*	0	0
Not convinced my employer would allow it	*	*	0	0
Do not feel confident enough to ask my employer	*	*	*	*
Could not afford any reduction in my income	*	*	0	0
Doesn't suit domestic/ household arrangements	*	*	0	0
Not aware of the new right	*	*	0	0
Already working flexibly	0	5.8	*	*
Not eligible to request flexible working	*	*	0	0
Happy with current Work-Life balance	17.1	14.4	*	*
Other	22.6	13.6	15.4	*

Note: * indicates cells with fewer than five responses

Source: *Third Work-Life Balance Survey (2007)*

The TUC has recently called for strengthening of the law relating to the right to request flexible working (TUC, 2007b). The analyses presented here suggest that further research is needed before any action is taken.

4 The Impact of Disadvantage

In the previous chapters we have considered the overall position of women within London's economy and across the UK more widely. In this chapter we consider the situation of women who have additional disadvantages that may serve as barriers to employment.

4.1 Elder care

The Third Work-Life Balance survey (Hooker et al., 2007) reported that 12 per cent of women and 7 per cent of men reported having caring responsibilities for an adult who was sick, disabled or elderly. In the London region, 20.5 per cent of women and 8.8 per cent of men reported having adult caring responsibilities. It should be noted though that the sample size is very small (253 people in total) and so these results should be taken as indicative only rather than as robust findings. However, they do appear to indicate that a larger proportion of women in London have adult caring responsibilities than elsewhere across the UK.

4.2 Ethnicity and employment

Here, we provide an overview of the different employment outcomes for individuals drawn from minority ethnic backgrounds.

4.2.1 Gender, ethnicity and employment

Table 4.1 shows the distribution of people from the various ethnic backgrounds¹ across jobs in the public and private sector.

¹ Categories as used within the Labour Force Survey; 'All BAME' (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) category formed by summation of all ethnic categories except 'White'.

Table 4.1: Ethnicity and employment in London (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
White	74.0	75.3	71.3	76.3	73.1	75.4
Mixed-race	1.6	1.3	1.9	*	1.7	1.3
Asian or Asian British	9.5	11.8	7.4	7.3	8.8	11.0
Black or Black British	8.6	5.9	14.4	11.3	10.5	6.9
Chinese	1.2	0.7	*	*	1.1	0.8
Other ethnic group	5.1	4.9	4.0	3.1	4.7	4.6
All BAME	26.0	24.7	18.7	23.7	26.9	24.6
Number of respondents	1,120,480	1,814,104	528,105	381,007	1,648,585	2,195,111

* indicates less than 10,000 responses in a cell

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

The data reveal that ethnic minority women comprise 26.0 per cent of the private sector workforce in London compared with 28.7 per cent of the public sector; and ethnic minority men constitute 24.7 per cent of the private sector workforce in London compared with 23.7 per cent of the public sector.

Overall, some 58 per cent of women from ethnic minority backgrounds who are working in London are working in the private sector, as are 64.3 per cent of ethnic minority males. These figures have changed somewhat since 2000, when the Time Use Survey found that some 68 per cent of women and 74.5 per cent of men from ethnic minorities were working in the private sector in London at that time.

4.2.2 Gender, ethnicity and wages

Tables 4.2 provides a breakdown of pay by gender and ethnicity for full-time employees. Although the LFS provides a breakdown into different ethnic groups, in the table we show these as one, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic ('all BAME') category in order to overcome the problem of small numbers. It should be noted that the numbers in some cells are too small to support a further analysis by public/private sector.

The table shows that whereas only 9.7 per cent of white males in full-time employment in London, and 18.5 per cent of white females, earn less than £325 a week, 25.8 per cent of ethnic minority men and 28.7 per cent of ethnic minority women full-time workers in London are in the lowest two earnings brackets.

Conversely, whereas 13.1 per cent of white women in London earn over £901 per week, just 3.9 per cent of women from ethnic minority backgrounds in London are in the top earnings bracket. Twelve per cent of ethnic minority males in London earn over £901 a week compared to 28.1 per cent of white males.

Table 4.2: Gross pay bands for full-time employees by ethnic group, London (percentage)

	White		All BAME		White	All BAME
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Total	Total
< £250	9.6	4.4	14.7	13.1	6.4	13.8
£251-325	8.9	5.3	14.0	12.7	6.7	13.3
£326-450	19.3	13.9	22.0	23.0	16.0	22.5
£451-650	31.2	25.2	32.4	25.3	27.5	28.4
£651-900	17.9	23.0	12.9	14.0	21.0	13.5
£901	13.1	28.1	3.9	12.0	22.3	8.4
Base	225,376	358,168	76,713	95,092	583,544	171,805

Note: 'All BAME' group consists of mixed race, Asian/Asian British, black/black British, Chinese and other

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

In comparing figures for the UK (see technical appendix for these data¹), when the bottom two earnings bands are considered together, it emerges that a higher proportion of white women than ethnic minority women earn less than £325 a week: 42.6 per cent of white women compared with 37.0 per cent of ethnic minority women.

4.3 Disability and employment

We start this section by considering the proportions of people in London and the UK who have a current disability and their economic status.

While the GLA has adopted the social model of disability, the standard definitions used by official surveys tend to focus on medically derived definitions and terminology. Questions asked in such surveys typically aggregate both impairment and long-term health needs. However, while limited, the data do allow a quantitative analysis of the association between impairment and disadvantage in the labour market and are able, to some extent, to distinguish between the labour market experience of people with different types of impairments. In this sense, they remain valuable data. Tables 4.3 and 4.4 show the proportions of women and men who do and do not have a disability and whether they are currently employed, unemployed or inactive, across the UK and in the London region.

¹ Available at www.employment-studies.co.uk/pdflibrary/449tech.pdf.

Table 4.3: Disability and economic status in the UK (percentage)

	Women		Men		All	
	with disability	without disability	with disability	without disability	with disability	without disability
In employment	43.8	72.5	51.8	85.0	47.6	78.6
ILO unemployed	3.6	3.6	5.5	4.7	4.5	4.2
Inactive	52.5	24.0	42.7	10.3	47.9	17.2
Total	3,980,527	15,523,310	3,590,501	15,280,268	24,221,723	30,803,578

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

Table 4.4: Disability and economic status in London (percentage)

	Women		Men		All	
	with disability	without disability	with disability	without disability	with disability	without disability
In employment	39.4	65.4	45.6	82.0	42.3	73.8
ILO unemployed	4.4	5.3	8.3	5.9	6.3	5.6
Inactive	56.2	29.3	46.1	12.1	51.4	20.7
Total	453,671	2,084,184	411,558	2,102,596	865,229	4,186,780

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

The tables show that people with disabilities are far less likely than those without a disability to be in employment. In the UK, 47.6 per cent of those with disabilities are employed compared with 78.6 per cent of those without a disability; in London the equivalent figures are 42.3 per cent and 73.8 per cent. Just 39.4 per cent of women in London who have a disability are employed compared to 65.4 per cent of those without a disability. This is four percentage points below the national figure for the employment of women with disabilities.

The Labour Force Survey asks individuals if they consider themselves to have a current disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act¹ and whether this limits their ability to work. Distributions of responses for the UK and for London are shown in Tables 4.5 and 4.6.

¹ The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Table 4.5: Proportion of employees with disabilities, UK (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
DDA disabled and work-limiting disabled	5.5	4.8	5.2	5.3	5.4	4.9
DDA disabled	5.0	4.5	6.4	5.4	5.5	4.7
Work-limiting disabled	2.5	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.5	2.9
Not disabled	87.0	87.7	85.8	86.4	86.6	87.5
Total	8,470,440	12,388,170	4,384,128	2,344,673	12,854,568	14,732,843

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

Table 4.6: Proportion of employees with disabilities, London

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
DDA disabled and work-limiting disabled	4.5	3.9	5.4	3.9	4.8	3.9
DDA disabled	4.0	3.7	6.0	4.4	4.6	3.9
Work-limiting disabled	2.0	2.1	2.4	2.6	2.1	2.2
Not disabled	89.6	90.2	86.1	89.0	88.5	90.0
Total	1,120,987	1,814,531	528,583	381,783	1,649,570	2,196,314

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

Table 4.6 shows that a higher proportion of women than men in London have a disability; a total of 11.5 per cent compared with 10 per cent of men. However, a lower proportion of both women and men have disabilities in London than in general across the UK, where 13.4 per cent of women and 12.5 per cent of men have a disability. In total, 6.9 per cent of women and 6.1 per cent of men in London report that they have a work-limiting disability. A slightly higher proportion of women with a work-limiting disability works in the public sector.

In addition to the question regarding work-limiting disabilities, the Labour Force Survey contains two questions that ask whether any health problems affect the amount or type of work that people can do. Tables 4.7 and 4.8 show the responses for these two questions.

Table 4.7: Whether health problem affects the amount of work employee can do, UK and London (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Health problem affects amount of work, UK	27.0	23.4	22.0	21.1	25.2	23.0
Health problem affects amount of work, London	27.1	23.5	24.7	19.1	26.2	22.7

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

Table 4.7 shows that around a quarter of women and men believe that they have a health problem that affects the amount of work that they do, far more than those who declare a work-restricting disability. In general, a slightly higher proportion of women than men consider themselves to have a health problem that affects the amount of work that they do. This difference is slightly larger in London than elsewhere in the UK.

Table 4.8 shows that around one-third of the population believe that they have a health problem that affects the kind of work they undertake. While in the wider UK population a slightly larger proportion of men than women consider themselves to have a health problem which affects the type of work that they do, in London slightly more women than men say that this is the case.

Table 4.8: Whether health problem affects the kind of work employee can do, UK and London (percentage)

	Private		Public		All	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Health problem affects the kind of work, UK	33.9	34.4	29.7	33.0	32.4	34.2
Health problem affects the kind of work, London	34.5	31.8	30.6	30.5	32.9	31.6

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

4.3.1 Disability and pay

Table 4.9 shows a comparison of weekly earnings for employees with a disability and those without. Small numbers means that it is not possible to provide a breakdown into all of the pay bands used in earlier analyses. For the same reason it is also not possible to provide a breakdown between the public and private sectors.

Table 4.9: Pay of women and men in the London region who have, or do not have, a disability (percentage)

	Women		Men	
	with disability	without disability	with disability	without disability
< £325	27.2	20.3	17.4	12.6
£326 - 650	49.7	51.9	45.3	40.5
> £651	23.2	27.9	27.2	46.9
Base	34,423	267,531	46,332	406,732

Source: Labour Force Survey (2006 - 07)

The figures show that a slightly higher proportion of the women with disabilities are in the lowest pay banding. The largest difference is amongst men, where those with a disability are far less likely to be in the highest pay band than men who do not have a disability.

5 Discussion of Outcomes of Analyses

The analyses revealed that women experience a range of inequitable employment outcomes: whilst women are more likely to be highly qualified when they enter the workforce, they are less likely than men to attain supervisory or managerial posts; those women who do hold high-level qualifications are more likely to be found in the public sector, despite the fact that twice as many women work in the private sector than in the public sector. The prevalence of higher-qualified women in the public sector may perhaps be due to the greater numbers of professionals and associate professionals found in health and education.

In addition, women are under-represented in the top pay-bands and over-represented at lower pay levels. Women are more likely to be in the lowest paid band if they work in the private sector and especially if they work part-time. A larger proportion of women than men works part-time; however more of the women than the men who work part-time are in higher-paying jobs. Despite the statistics on pay, we came across little evidence that pay audits were being carried out.

Despite the efforts of the Government and the EOC to encourage actions to address occupational gender segregation within the workplace, women continue to be segregated into a relatively small group of industrial sectors. In London the vibrant financial services sector accounts for a far larger proportion of the employment opportunities of women than elsewhere in the UK. More than one-fifth of women in London work in secretarial or administrative positions and more than one in ten works in personal services. The picture with regard to the segregation of the workforce along lines of gender remains entrenched.

Overlaid on this, women continue to take responsibility for the majority of domestic responsibilities. This is a major factor in their decisions regarding whether to work full- or part-time. At present, working part-time carries a penalty in terms of the opportunities for advancement as well as reduced pay. For example, women who work part-time are far less likely to be in jobs with supervisory responsibilities. However, to be fair, there is an even more severe impact of working part-time on men's opportunities for advancement.

It is perhaps worth noting that one respect in which women appear to have an advantage over men in the workplace is in terms of hours worked. Rather fewer women than men work more than 45 hours a week. Although the majority of both women and men in London tend to work more than 35 hours a week, three-quarters of men compared to two-thirds of women do so. Therefore, the long-hours culture seems to affect fewer women than men. Looking at work-life balance issues in general, women are more likely to have requested some change to working arrangements than had men, but unfortunately data relating to this topic is at present limited. The data also indicate that far more women in London than elsewhere are now taking on responsibilities for elder care, but again the data is limited at present. These are possibly issues that the GLA may wish to explore in more detail in future years.

For the past three or four years the Labour Force Survey data has indicated that more women now are receiving training at work, reversing a historic trend that favoured men. There are questions to be asked regarding the nature of such training and whether or not it leads to accredited awards. Nonetheless this seems to be a beneficial trend that is starting to redress years of inequity for women in terms of access to training. Moreover, the data on job shifts indicates that this is paying off in terms of improved career progression opportunities for women: more women in London than men reported an 'upshift' in their position at work in the past year.

The employment opportunities of women from ethnic minorities continue to be particularly inequitable. Far more ethnic minority than white women are found in the lowest pay bands, with more of these lowest-paying jobs found in the private sector; far fewer ethnic minority than white women are in highest pay bands, with more of the higher-paying jobs found in the public sector.

A slightly greater proportion of women in London's economy have a disability. Women with disabilities have less favourable employment outcomes than do women without disabilities in London. Women with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed and, if employed, to be on a low salary and less likely to be in the higher earning brackets. However, it should be noted that the differences at both ends of the pay spectrum are not so great as seen for other comparisons (as for the women from ethnic minorities, for example).

6 Employer Good Practice

As part of this work we undertook a series of interviews with employers in organisations in the private and public sectors in London and a selection of interviews with their women employees. This section is based on comments taken from those interviews. More information on the actions these employers have taken is available in the case studies presented in Appendix 3, available at www.employment-studies.co.uk/pdflibrary/449cases.pdf

6.1 The actions taken by employers

Recruitment and retention

Many of our case study employers emphasised the fact that business success will increasingly depend on being able to recruit a more diverse group of employees.

'In the war for talent it will be important to ensure we recruit our people from every area of society.' Susie Mullan, HR Director for Human Capital and Diversity, Accenture

'It is a business imperative. As we go forward the talent gap will get bigger, we will need to attract and retain across all groups in society. We will need to appeal to Generation Y and to men and women as they age and start to have to care for elders. It will mean a change from where we are. We have looked at the statistics regarding the ageing population profile, what will happen is that the proportion of 35-44 year olds will decrease as the population ages. That means that it is not just childcare issues that people will have to deal with but also ageing parents. We need to put policies in place that will appeal to those with kids but also help us appeal to people with elder care responsibilities....to continue to be successful we need to be constantly innovating and the best way to get innovation is to have a truly motivated workforce. The way to get that is through inclusion.' Nikki Walker, Director of Strategic Planning and Executive for Emerging Markets, Cisco

'We are a very diverse company and from a personal point of view, as a person of non-British origin I am benefiting from that diversity and inclusion as well. And this diversity brings more benefits to the company in terms of ideas, innovation and creativity, and I

encourage that in my area as I myself have benefited from it.' Natasha Davydova, Group Head, Technology Production Services, Standard Chartered Bank

At present, some employers appear to view family-friendly or flexible working arrangements as an inconvenience to the company rather than a benefit. Increasingly however it is likely to become the case that offering such working arrangements will be essential if the organisation is to be seen as an attractive employer. Once in place, such policies are then invaluable in helping an organisation to retain staff.

'The Guardian has identified us as one of the top organisations where parents want to work. We face little challenge with recruiting staff so over the last five years our policies have been more focused on retention. Some of the many areas where we have taken action include parenting and progression. We recognise that there is a huge talent pool out there and if we are not in a position to offer such effective policies and practices then we will not hold onto these populations. But if we can help balance career opportunities and growth with effective policies in practice our employees and our business will benefit hugely.' Susie Mullan, HR Director for Human Capital and Diversity, Accenture

In strongly-segregated sectors such as engineering it can be particularly difficult to attract women into areas perceived as 'tough' or 'masculine' areas of work. Some companies have been taking steps to attract more women. Dave Cox and Carole Willsher of British Gas's Engineering Academy suggested two ways in which organisations can increase the numbers of women. The first is relatively simple: take a more proactive role at recruitment fairs. Dave said:

'It's important to encourage women to apply for roles in areas that have traditionally been male-dominated. Whenever we hold any recruitment events, we challenge the perception that engineering jobs are just for men. Those women who do apply and are successful enjoy the role very much.' Dave Cox, Resourcing Manager, British Gas Engineering Academy

They have found that, at recruitment fairs, women tend to be attracted to the more 'traditionally female' occupational stands, such as fashion, and consequently might overlook the British Gas stand. Carole commented:

'Women tend to congregate around the more traditionally female occupational stands, and unless approached they often pass by the British Gas stand – the organisation is trying to change this. We have small gifts that we hand out – lip gloss and nail files, and we use these as a way of starting a conversation with them about the sector.' Carole Willsher, Recruitment and Diversity Specialist, British Gas Engineering Academy

Companies may find, therefore, that if a member of their recruitment team circulates amongst attendees rather than waiting for women to come to their company's stand this may well pay off, especially if they have clearly-designed leaflets to hand out. Publicity that challenges stereotypes of the sector and emphasises the benefits of working for the company can help maximise the company's opportunities to catch the

attention of potential women recruits¹. However, recruiting externally through graduate fairs and other routes aimed at young people may bring only limited benefits. Dave Cox described some further action that British Gas is taking to widen the development opportunities for women within the company:

'There has been an increase in the level of interest from women in applying for engineering apprenticeships, and the number of females in engineering trainee roles has increased from 9 per cent in 2006 to 13 per cent in 2007. Some of these are internal applicants, who have moved over from other functions within the organisation. British Gas Services finds it particularly difficult to recruit engineers around the M4 corridor, London and the South-East, so making the role more appealing to women increases the number of applications, and helps our drive to increase female representation.' Dave Cox, Resourcing Manager, British Gas Engineering Academy

Offering women the opportunity to change their role within the organisation is one way that employers can take action to change the profile. This point is returned to in the later section on company cultures, where Nikki Walker of Cisco makes a similar point. If organisations offer women in the organisation the opportunity to move into atypical areas, some of which (as Dave Cox notes above) are often also 'hard to recruit to' areas, and then recruit to the posts vacated by those women who have moved sideways, then this can have several benefits: first, it may serve to reduce the recruitment challenge, as often such posts in more traditional female areas of work are easier to recruit to than for example, engineering; second, it increases women's progression opportunities; and third, potentially the organisation will gain a reputation as one that is prepared to take risks, trust in its employees and which offers real choice to its employees in the development pathways available to them.

One way of encouraging women in traditional areas to consider moving into atypical areas such as engineering might be to offer 'taster days' in which potential applicants try out some of the activities a newly-recruited engineering trainee might be trained to undertake. Taster days have been successfully used to attract atypical learners to Young Apprenticeship programmes (Newton et al., 2006; Newton et al., 2007) and may well be of use with older women as well. Carol Willsher of British Gas had run four open day/taster events around the country for women in the past year, including one in London. These events allow women to ask questions about what the training is like and what is involved and have a go at different activities. These have resulted in an increase in applications from women. British Gas has also started running workshops in schools: after these, 52 per cent of girls say they would consider a job in engineering.

¹ Examples of leaflets that IES helped Sector Skill Councils to design to attract atypical learners to young apprenticeship programmes in strongly-segregated sectors can be downloaded at:
www.employment-studies.co.uk/pdflibrary/444_mechanics.pdf
www.employment-studies.co.uk/pdflibrary/444_health.pdf
www.employment-studies.co.uk/pdflibrary/444_construction.pdf

Flexible and remote working

Several of the employers we spoke to made flexible and remote working available to all employees. Although the technology to enable flexible and remote working has been available for several years, it is arguably the employer's attitude that has most impact on its uptake and use to support more family-friendly ways of working.

'We do not look at flexible working arrangements as being for 'just women'. We have looked at flexible working arrangements for each type of job, whether they are involved in care or based in the office to see what is the best arrangement for that individual and that job. For example we offer compressed working, where a person will work a nine-day fortnight or a four-day week, and this works really well. I know from my own team that you get real benefits back from offering such working options. If you are willing to offer flexibility, then the employees too are willing to be flexible in return and come in if necessary on a day they might otherwise not be in work. One of my team works a nine-day fortnight and to be honest, if I did not know she worked such an arrangement I don't think I would notice. It takes the pressure off the individual and from the business point of view I cannot see any downside whatsoever.' Beverley Ashby, BUPA

Echoing the point made by Nikki Walker at Cisco, Beverley added:

'We tend to think about flexible working in terms of younger people with childcare responsibilities, but with the change in the profile of the population it will soon be needed to help people to cope with the demands of elder care, as well as enabling them to have time with their grandchildren when they want to.'

In talking about flexible and remote working, many of the interviewees spoke of the technology that has made remote working so much easier nowadays. However, the message that comes through most strongly is the employer attitude: remote and flexible working is simply not viewed as a problem by these organisations. One example is Ernst & Young, where there has been a large programme to ensure that people can work where and when they need to. If an employee needs to work outside normal office hours, or from a place other than the main office, then this is possible with the technology provided by the company, provided of course that this fits with their co-workers and client commitments.

'For many years the majority of my work has been carried out in the London office but I have lived in Solihull. I have been able to carry on with my senior management post by taking advantage of the remote working opportunities available within the organisation. Remote and flexible working has been available for many years but it is just in recent years that people have really started to take up this option. When it first started it was viewed as something quite bizarre. Now it is pretty much the norm. All of my team now works at home at least one day a week.' Pearl Cash, Senior Account Manager and head of the Business Relationships team, Ernst & Young

Pearl also commented that people with disabilities or ill-health can also benefit from employers who adopt this approach to working arrangements.

'I myself had to wear a cast on my leg for six weeks following recent surgery and the technology, using conference calls and remote working instead of going into the office to meet up, allowed me to continue with my job during that time'.

This point is particularly interesting from the point of view of assisting people with disabilities into work. Companies who adopted such an approach would potentially be more accessible to people with disabilities. Where companies are experiencing recruitment challenges they may wish to consider the opportunity this would present to positively promote their company to potential applicants with disabilities, stressing the fact that existing technology can be used to make their company fully accessible to those with mobility limitations.

Beverley Ashby of BUPA provided an interesting example of an approach to flexible working that had been successfully used to help one woman return to work after maternity leave. It is effectively a version of hotdesking:

'One young woman who was based at our London office before she went on maternity leave now works two days in London and a couple of days from one of our offices just outside London. We can use the technology to allow her to work from more than one site, and being able to work closer to home on a couple of days a week allows her to take turns with her husband to pick up their child from school.'

We observed in this section that often it is attitudes rather than technology that provide the real brake on developments. In the next section we consider what employers and employees said about organisational attitudes to changing work arrangements.

Helpful and unhelpful organisational cultures

In thinking about the actions that employers can take to increase the representation of women, it is important not to overlook some of the 'softer' factors that influence gender equity in the workplace. Many of the women and the employers we interviewed said that a key factor in making their organisation attractive to women was the simple fact that it was perceived as a friendly and welcoming place for women to work.

'The main thing is to make the work good. Our approach is not to have a 'scheme for women'. Our approach is from the point of view of being a welcoming place for all people in the community. And since women are the largest part of our community, that necessarily means that it will be a welcoming place for them...but rather than this relating to specific policies or actions I think that it relates to what you might call the 'softer' things at work here. Around four or five years ago we surveyed all of the second tier women managers about what it is like to work here. The most common response was that when they came to work here they found it was immediately, visibly, welcoming to women in senior management positions and they had access to a network of other women senior managers.'

Andreas Ghosh, Head of Personnel and Development at London Borough of Lewisham

One of the senior women working within Lewisham, Lesley Lee, Head of Strategy and Performance in the Regeneration Directorate, said:

'It is a very human place to work. It benefits men as well as women, but as women continue to carry the lion's share of domestic responsibilities it particularly benefits them.'

One of her colleagues added that there are other benefits in having more women in senior roles:

'What makes it an encouraging environment is having a wide range of senior women managers in the borough. This [probably means] that they are more likely to recognise the sorts of skills that women have, although not all women – or men – have the same skills. But they probably recognise and attribute more value to those skills.'

Middlesex University had recently introduced some new senior manager posts as part of a restructuring and these had proved attractive to women. More women than men had applied for the posts, and Michael Howard, Equalities and Diversity Manager at Middlesex University, was looking into the reasons for this. However, he felt that one of the likely reasons was the culture of the organisation. He commented:

'It seems to be partly to do with the nature of the posts but also that people feel that they do want to stay with the university. This is the first exercise that's had a disproportionate gender effect of this type and I am still trying to analyse the reasons – it seems to be less about the policies as such and more about the softer issues that make people feel that they have an affinity with the organisation. You need to have the basic policies in place but once you do, it becomes more about the relations between the organisation and the staff, issues around loyalty.'

The importance of the attitude that an employer adopts is also portrayed in the following example from Standard Chartered Bank. Natasha Davydova is Group Head, Technology Production Services at Standard Chartered and in this role is responsible for areas such as global networks, data centres, desktop application support and information security across the 58 countries in which Standard Chartered operates. Natasha spoke of the changes that were being made to the company's policy on flexible working. Around a hundred employees work with Natasha in the technical hub in London, providing technical support services to the bank along with other hubs in Asia. Standard Chartered has had a flexible working policy (in terms of hours) in place for several years. They are now expanding the policy to provide opportunities for home-working as well. Natasha said:

'For the financial services sector home-working is still a relatively new phenomenon. But we are making good advances from the technology perspective and are working closely with HR to ensure people have the technology needed to support home-working. In some areas people do have to be in work, for example to provide technical support; other than that, where they can work from home we will allow it.' Natasha Davydova, Group Head, Technology Production Services, Standard Chartered Bank

As with the employers in the earlier section on remote and flexible working, Natasha pointed to the technology needed to support remote working. However, what is also clear is the positive attitude taken by Standard Chartered. Aside from those whose duties require them to be physically on-site, the bank will allow working from home as part of their normal working conditions.

Even where work requires employees to be physically on-site there are actions that employers can take to make it easier for employees to work around family commitments. In 2006 McDonald's Restaurants had launched a 'family' contract for hourly paid employees.

'Where two members of the same family work in the same job in the same restaurant, they can swap their shifts without needing to inform their manager. This allows them much more flexibility, it is particularly useful if they have caring responsibilities.' Nicky Ivory, Reputation and Resourcing Consultant, McDonald's Restaurants

Nicky added that this had been so popular that McDonald's had recently extended this to a 'Family and friends' contract, allowing friends as well as family members to swap shifts. Nicky commented:

'It helps restaurant managers also as they do not need to worry about rearranging people's shifts.'

The previous examples show how organisations can implement policies to enable women to balance home and work commitments. However, this is not the case everywhere. Two employees commented that

'Lots of public sector organisations have the right policies in place, until you come to actually need them.'

'This organisation is "policy rich, implementation poor".'

Therefore, it is not sufficient just to have a policy – it is important that all managers and employees understand the policy and that managers are committed to implementing it. One way in which organisations can ensure that all managers understand the various policies on flexible or remote working arrangements is to produce guidance for managers and employees. Heather Court of the Metropolitan Police's Diversity and Citizenship Focus Directorate said:

'HR have developed a fabulous policy on flexible working and to support it they have produced two guidance booklets – one for the employee who wants to work flexibly and the other for managers of people who wish to take advantage of the policy. In addition HR has a work/life balance & flexible working advisor who can provide guidance on everything from flexible rosters to emergency childcare.'

Although much of the focus nowadays is on the use of technology to facilitate remote working, it should not be forgotten that adoption of quite simple policies relating to flexible working arrangements will help, and often are of use to the wider group of

employees. Akua Agyepong, HR Advisor for Diversity, London Borough of Camden said:

'We have been experimenting with splitting some jobs into smaller, more family-friendly, work hours, perhaps 2 – 3 hours a day, with individuals choosing whether they work those hours in the morning, over lunchtime or in the afternoon. When a person applies for a job they are asked if they would like to work part-time. Two of our senior strategy officers job-share and another works part-time. Around 30 per cent of our employees work part-time – 35 per cent of women and 15 per cent of men. So it is not just the women who work flexible hours, it is everyone.'

Akua emphasised the business case for taking such measures:

'It is very much a case of this being 'just good working practice' rather than something introduced 'just for women'. We have reviewed our approach to flexible working and it is more about 'working smartly' – it just makes good business sense. And it affects people's work – they will get more done if they are working at home without the two-hour commute.'

It is important to ensure that these types of policies are open to all employees, and are not seen as being 'just for women', as this will promote a more flexible culture in general, which will hopefully mean that all employees who work flexibly will benefit and be able to advance if they want to. However, such policies are most likely to be of benefit to women, as their share of domestic responsibilities makes them more likely to need to work flexibly.

Nikki Walker at Cisco commented that in Cisco people do not have set hours – the important thing is for each individual to do their job, rather than work to a particular timetable.

'...you are empowered to do a job. We will give you the tools to do the job – Blackberries, laptops etc. You have to deliver but providing you do deliver you can do it on your own terms.'

Next we consider some of the actions that employers in London have taken to broaden the development opportunities for women in work.

Development opportunities

Several of the employers who spoke to us told us of special actions they were taking to improve the development opportunities – and hence the opportunities for progression – available to women.

Our first employer in this section is the Metropolitan Police Service ('the MPS'). The MPS is required by the Public Sector Duty on Gender Equality (Gender Duty) to take action to positively promote equality. Their remit externally is to focus on women's safety and inclusion, which is driven by the Mayor of London. Heather Court spoke of a range of actions 'the MPS' had taken internally to improve the position of women

within the organisation. Here we focus on two particular development initiatives the Met has put in place to help women advance in the organisation. The first concerns recruitment to the development programme for the CO19 Specialist Firearms Unit:

'The MPS has been trying to attract women into areas in which they are currently under-represented. One of these is the CO19 Specialist Firearms unit. When CO19 began their initiative 18 months ago, there were around 500 officers, 490 of whom were men. They wanted to attract and recruit more women and minority ethnic officers. They set up 'Insight' days for women to attend during which they could try on the kit, ask questions and have a go on the firing range. All the female firearms officers volunteered to train as mentors to support and guide the women throughout the long application process. We found that many of the women fell at the 'papersift' part of the application which requires applicants to provide evidence of their skills against national competencies, and identified that this was in part due to inadequate descriptions/detailing of their abilities. Many of them saw expressing their abilities as boasting, or didn't recognise and credit themselves appropriately with what they saw as normal professional standards rather than specific skills. We therefore devised a coaching programme to help women identify and express their abilities, maintain focus on their personal development in order to pass the various role requirements and complete the rigorous application process.' Heather Court, Metropolitan Police Service

However, once women had been recruited to the programme, the MPS discovered that the fitness training available at that time did not suit women and men equally. Their next step was to address this:

'We also identified the job-related fitness test as a barrier for women being accepted into this type of post, even amongst otherwise very fit women, and explored why this might be. Working with our occupational health department, we recognised that women's and men's physiology is different and therefore what works for men in training doesn't necessarily work for women. Occupational Health therefore devised bespoke training programmes for the women, with physical training instructors to coach and encourage them. It is still early days, but we are beginning to see an increase in the numbers of women successfully applying.'

These are examples of types of training that have been devised that acknowledge that differences between women and men may sometimes need training to be designed to take such differences into account in order to ensure fair access. In the next example, we consider how designing development opportunities to be more flexible can make them more accessible to all individuals. Here, we look at Lewisham and Camden borough councils, which have introduced e-learning arrangements.

'We have good support for progression – it is not specifically targeted on women, but the framework for development for middle managers is very flexible and designed to let people pick up learning when it suits them, the learning opportunities are offered periodically rather than being just 'one-off' events.' Akua Agyepong, HR Advisor for Diversity, London Borough of Camden

'We have quite a lot of e-learning tools developed as alternatives to going on a course, this can be helpful for part-time people in particular, as for them, taking a whole day out of the office may be quite a challenge.' Lesley Lee, Head of Strategy and Performance in the regeneration Directorate, London Borough of Lewisham

The final example in this section is an innovative initiative introduced at Clifford Chance the global law firm, focusing on providing support to female employees taking maternity leave.

'We undertook some research which revealed that some of our pregnant employees would appreciate support regarding their arrangements for maternity leave. In particular, dealing with issues of handover prior to going on maternity leave; adjusting to their new role as a mother and the time away from the Firm; and finally, preparation for their return to work, re-building their confidence and, for lawyers, their client contacts.' Sarah Twite, Diversity Manager, Clifford Chance

Developing policy in the light of legislative changes

Our last example of good practice comes from Middlesex University. It is only tangentially related to the employment of women, for it deals with the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations which recently came into force. Michael Howard, Equalities and Diversity Manager, explains how the legislation made the university review all of their policies within this area and led them to make changes that benefited them as employers as well as leading to a better approach to development for all the workforce:

'The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 made us review our retirement provision. We wanted to make it more equitable for individual employees. The legislation was the main driver for this change, and to be fair without that push we would most probably not have introduced it. However, once that push was there, we went beyond what the legislation required. The law only requires employers to introduce planned retirement, but once we looked at the issue, we realised that it was more beneficial for us as an organisation to move towards a flexible retirement regime than have an arbitrary cut-off. So we have moved the focus towards a working life approach that focuses less on people leaving the organisation at 65 and more on the managerial processes such as career planning than on retirement. We are the only university to date to remove compulsory age retirement. It has had little impact to date, as it is very recent, but we believe it will impact on how we are perceived as an employer. I have a feeling that this will become more important over time. Women historically have tended to benefit less from pensions which can mean they need to continue working because their pensions are insufficient; this change in policy means that they have the choice of whether to continue in employment or not. And part of the package is that they can negotiate more flexible working patterns.' Michael Howard, Equalities and Diversity Manager, Middlesex University

This concluding comment illustrates how actions taken by employers to make their working arrangements more equitable for all employees can lead to direct benefits for the organisation as an employer.

6.2 Policy recommendations

It is clear from the previous section on employer good practice that these enlightened employers are taking action because it makes good business sense. It is tempting, therefore, to suggest that nothing more need be done to encourage employers, for those employers who are taking action will be more successful, and the remainder will either follow suit in time or simply fail to compete. However, that approach would ignore the fact that, in the interim, many women would be working in sub-optimal jobs that do not draw on all their skills or allow them to progress. It would also not be in the best interests of London's economy to see employers acting in a less than optimal way, as this impedes competitiveness.

The majority of employers interviewed were moving towards increasingly flexible working arrangements and remote working. No employer reported any downside of making available flexible or remote working arrangements. There is at present only limited evidence of parents (or others) requesting changes to their working arrangements. This is an area that will require further investigation in future. At present, certain employees have a statutory right to request flexible working and the employer has a statutory duty to consider the request seriously and to refuse it only if there are clear business grounds for doing so. At the moment it is too early to suggest, for instance, that there is a need for the 'right to request' legislation to be made any stronger than at present. However, if evidence for this were to emerge in the next few years, it is likely that, were there to be a requirement imposed upon employers to offer flexible working arrangements except where a strong business case exists to the contrary, businesses would in fact probably not find this too difficult to incorporate, based on the experiences of the employers' comments reported here. As the example cited from Middlesex University indicates, where legislation compels an employer to consider specific areas of employment policy, there can be root and branch benefits for the employer as a result.

There could be particular advantages for employers in London who introduce remote working arrangements, particularly for those who have satellite offices around the perimeter. We have seen one example where hotdesking between two office bases allowed the individual to cut down on travel times and work around childcare arrangements. When remote working was first mooted in the 1980s, it was suggested that neighbourhood 'electronic cottages' might be established, that local people would be able to use as ways to interface with their employing organisation. With the fall in prices of ICT equipment, this rapidly fell out of favour. However, it might be appropriate to re-visit this issue. It is worth mentioning that although the companies we spoke to were perfectly comfortable with this technology, they were all large, globally successful companies with the technical resources to support such developments. For smaller companies, some support in moving to remote working might be appreciated. It is also possible that exploration of the use of shared satellite

office sites around London would reveal some potential demand for such services to enable employees to cut down on commuting time into the capital¹.

The analyses showed that women with disabilities in London have a very low chance of gaining employment and, if they do, it is more likely to be low-paid. Increasing use of remote working technology – and perhaps of satellite centres – would, in principle, make some of the more well-rewarded jobs potentially more accessible to this group of workers.

The GLA may also wish to consider whether it would be of value to host seminars for businesses considering moving towards remote working options. Further research would be needed to determine whether there was a demand for such support, but it seems likely that many of the smaller businesses would appreciate finding out about the types of technology available to support remote/distance working.

One employer had effectively abandoned the idea of ‘working hours’, preferring instead to allow employees to undertake their work where and when they preferred, providing the work was accomplished. This approach – performance rather than ‘presenteeism’ – could potentially make it easier for parents to hold full-time jobs but work around childcare arrangements. However, care would also be needed to ensure that this did not result in employees working unlimited hours.

Most of the employers viewed the main challenge now to be retention rather than recruitment. They also believed that the policies they put in place to help them retain staff also made them look much more attractive to new recruits. In some strongly-segregated sectors, though, employers were trying to take action to recruit more females. We recommend that employers review their recruitment materials to ensure that they do not inadvertently reinforce stereotypes. Short ‘taster’ sessions, similar to those arranged by the Metropolitan Police, would enable women to try out the various activities. These can be particularly valuable in encouraging women to make sideways moves into atypical areas of work within the employing organisation. We would also remind employers of the recommendation we made in the 2006 WiLE report, that providing work placement opportunities for school children can potentially be a much more effective recruitment tool than attendance at graduate fairs, by which time many young people have already made up their minds regarding their career preferences.

¹ It should be noted that as this chapter was being finalised the Department for Work and Pensions commenced a consultation on ‘Helping people achieve their full potential: Improving Specialist Disability Employment Services’. Although access is being considered as part of the consultation, the access section of the consultation document focuses on four aspects of support for employment: Specialist Aids and Equipment; Adaptations to Premises and Equipment; Support Workers/Communication Support at Interview; and Travel to Work (including help with taxi fares). Remote working and hotdesking/use of satellite premises (shared or otherwise) do not appear to have been considered as ways of increasing access to work.

Training and development provision for women appears to be increasing, and this is a welcome development. However, arranging access to training for part-time employees can be a challenge. Several of the employers we spoke to were using e-learning arrangements to provide development in a more flexible way. Clearly this is one option; however, companies that do not have the resources to offer such a facility would be advised to consider factors such as timing and location when arranging development opportunities, to ensure that they are accessible to as wide a group of employees as possible. Repeating training programmes (rather than arranging one-off events) will also maximise part-time workers' chances of participating. Since the analyses indicated that more women are employed as managers in the private sector than in the public sector in London, this suggests there may be more of a need to focus efforts around public sector equality practices, in particular those aimed at progression to higher positions.

While training 'for women' can lead to a perception of women as having some particular deficit in comparison to men, it should nonetheless be noted that in some circumstances women have very different training needs to those of men. The examples from the Metropolitan Police provided two examples of the ways in which women may need different types of training from men. Therefore employers should consider whether a 'one size fits all' approach to training is, in fact, the best approach. A small amount of customisation can lead to a significant impact on the profile of recruits to and/or progressions within the organisation.

The one area in which we received no accounts of activity was that of pay. None of our interviewees reported undertaking pay audits. It would appear that this is the last great sticking point in the move towards more equitable working practices. Fear may be one factor that is inhibiting action; the publicity about legal cases brought on grounds of equal pay for work of equal value may have made employers reluctant to start investigating pay arrangements for fear of the extent of consequences, in particular, costs. However, as with the example cited of good practice arising from the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations, if pay audits were to become compulsory for employers it may be that they would not find them so onerous as expected. One of the project team who worked on producing this report was involved in helping one of the London boroughs (not one of those interviewed in the present research) to undertake a pay audit. She observes that bringing together their pay data with information from the job analysis is often the main hurdle for companies in undertaking pay reviews, but the borough had used the EOC guidelines on equal pay reviews along with the definitions used by the EOC for 'Equal Work'. This made it easier for them to present the data. In general, once the data is sorted out and any inconsistencies within the data are addressed, the actual review is not difficult to undertake. And after going through the process the council found that there were in fact only a very small number of inconsistencies in their pay arrangements.

The last point to make is that a focus on policies can only go so far. Many of the women we spoke to emphasised the fact that it was the perceived friendliness of the

organisation that made the most difference. Where an employer seeks to accommodate the needs of its employees, this is likely to result in improved employee engagement and a perception that this is an employer that cares for its employees. Under such circumstances it appears counterproductive to business for organisations to oppose moves to provide more accessible workplaces.

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