

Written evidence submitted by the Women's Budget Group

Questionnaire on 'Women's Human Rights in the Changing World of Work'
August 2019

The Women's Budget Group (WBG) is an independent network of leading academic researchers, policy experts and campaigners evaluating the impact of economics on women and men. We produce robust analysis and aim to influence the people making policy. We also work to build the knowledge and confidence of others to talk about feminist economics by offering training and creating accessible resources. The Women's Budget Group is independent and not-for-profit.

In this submission we focus on the questions where the Women's Budget Group has expertise. Our evidence draws on papers commissioned for our Commission for a Gender-Equal Economy from Dr Eva Neitzart and Professor Tracey Warren. The original papers, by Dr Eva Neitzart and Professor Tracey Warren, on gender inequalities in the world of work and problems facing low income women in labour market respectively, accompany this submission.

Core questions

What are the main trends influencing women's human rights in the world of work in your national context and their impact:

- **On, the types of and quantity work available to women, and the quality and conditions of work (including access to social protection and equal pay)?**

Gender inequalities in the distribution of paid and unpaid work have been remarkably resistant to change, even against the backdrop of a sharp increase in women's participation in the paid labour force in the UK over the last four decades. Further, while experiences are shaped by the intersection of class, ethnicity, age, migration status and gender,¹ across the board women continue to undertake the vast majority of unpaid work, whether this is childcare, housework, caring for other adults, or voluntary work.²

¹ Goldin, C (1990) *Understanding the Gender Gap*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

² Esping-Anderson, G (2009) *The Incomplete Revolution: Adapting tow Women's New Roles*. Polity: Cambridge.

Paid work is defined as any productive work for which an income is received, whether in the formal or informal economy.³ Unpaid work, on the other hand, is productive work for which there is no financial compensation. In economic terms, the 'third person criterion' is used to delimit what constitutes "productive" unpaid activity from "non-productive" activity, with the former constituting unpaid work (sometimes also referred to as the 'production boundary'). Credited to Margaret Reid, the third person criterion states that 'If an activity is of such character that it might be delegated to a paid worker, then that activity shall be deemed productive'.⁴ This means, for instance, that preparing a meal is considered productive as it could be outsourced to restaurant/catering workers, while eating the meal is not. Following the third person criterion, a wide range of activities fall under the umbrella term of unpaid work. Housework, childcare and caring for other adults are the most common and for these there is the best available data. Other forms of unpaid work include volunteering, gardening, and DIY jobs.

Even as women were earning an increasing share of the household income, women continued – and continue – to undertake the lion's share of unpaid caring and household work, suggesting that other factors, such as gender norms and discrimination, play a role in maintaining these inequalities.⁵

Increased participation in the paid labour market by women is a defining trend of the last fifty years. In 1971, the gap was nearly 40 percentage points whereas by 2018 this had narrowed to just under nine percentage points. Interestingly, this narrowing of the gap is due in part to a drop of ten percentage points in the male employment rate and there are marked differences in employment rates by ethnicity. The percentage of women described as 'economically inactive'⁶ in 2018 was 24.4% for White British women, 38.5% for Chinese women, 54.5% for Pakistani women and 57.8% for Bangladeshi women.⁷ Note, of course, that the description of these women as economically inactive is itself an example of the devaluing of women's unpaid work (for instance, 38.1% of Bangladeshi women stated that they are responsible for looking after the household).

³ Swiebel, J (1999) 'Unpaid Work and Policy-Making Towards a Broader Perspective of Work and Employment,' DESA Discussion Paper No. 4, available at: <https://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/1999/esa99dp4.pdf>

⁴ Reid, M (1934) *Economics of Household Production*. Wiley & Sons: New York, p.11.

⁵ Grunow et al. (2012)

⁶ The ONS defines an individual as 'economically inactive' if they are not in work and have not sought work in the last four weeks. This contrasts with 'unemployed' individuals who are also not working but looking for work. See here for ONS labour market definitions: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/methodologies/aguidetolabourmarketstatistics#economic-inactivity>

⁷ ONS (2019a) 'Ethnic pay gaps in the UK: 2019', available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/articles/ethnicitypaygapsingreatbritain/2018>

Failing to acknowledge the economic value of women's unpaid work contributes to inequalities in the paid labour market.⁸ Many of the occupations where women are overrepresented in the paid labour force - such as teaching, social care, nursing – are paid less than occupations dominated by men that are of similar skill level. Feminists have argued that the lack of recognition for women's work in the home creates a bias that sees work primarily undertaken by women as having a lesser economic value.

The headline employment rates are problematic not just because they mask this variation by ethnicity, but also because they mask some persistent gender inequalities with regards to paid and unpaid work; specifically, the continued unequal distribution of paid/unpaid work and gender inequalities in the paid labour force. For this reason, it is important for policymakers to look beyond the headline rate and also consider trends in earnings and types of work (part-time, tenure, paid/unpaid), as we do now.

Women continue to undertake the lion's share of unpaid work

Despite their increasing participation in the paid labour force, women continue to undertake the majority of unpaid work. Time use data shows that women in the UK, on average, carry out 60% more unpaid work than men,⁹ with transport (driving self and others) being the only area where men exceed the time spent by women. The gender disparity is most marked in childcare, cooking, laundry and housework. Breaking this down further, it is women aged 26 to 35 who undertake the most unpaid work (34.6 hours on average per week (67%) compared with 17.4 hours (33%) for men in the same age group). The data also shows that those on low incomes carry out a fifth more unpaid work, on average, than those on high incomes.

In respect of adult care, the proportion of care undertaken by women increased between 2000 and 2015. The gender disparity is most marked among those aged under 50, suggesting that the responsibility for caring for ageing parents falls primarily on women. Among those 50 and over, care is more likely to be for a partner and so more evenly shared, although 62.6% is undertaken by women. Overall, in the period from 2000 to 2015, the amount of unpaid adult care has increased.¹⁰

⁸ Cohen, N. and L Huffman (2003) Individuals, jobs, and labor markets: The devaluation of women's work. *American Sociological Review*, 68(3): 443-463.

⁹ ONS (2016a) 'Women shoulder the responsibility of "unpaid work",' available at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/articles/womenshouldtheresponsibilityofunpaidwork/2016-11-10>

¹⁰ ONS (2016b)

Similar trends in the continued gendered division of unpaid work are in evidence in other advanced economies, with only some of the Nordic and Scandinavian countries showing more marked trends towards gender parity.¹¹ Longitudinal research by Grunow et al in Germany points to the strong role played by gender norms in maintaining these persistent inequalities.¹² Tracking the division of unpaid household labour over the first 14 years of marriage among heterosexual couples, Grunow et al find that even though nearly half of newly-wed couples share household tasks evenly, the husband's share declines over marriage, particularly at the birth of the first child. Moreover, they find that husbands' increasing their share of housework is uncommon, even when women's earnings and hours increase.

Women are more likely to be in part-time and insecure employment, and to be paid less than men

The second inequality masked by the narrowing employment gap is that women are far more likely to be in part-time and insecure employment and also to be paid less than men, despite parity in respect of educational qualifications. Table 2.2 shows that:

- 40.5% of all female employees work part-time compared with 12.8% of all male employees.
- The percentage of women in temporary forms of employment at 8.8% is nearly double the male rate of 4.5%
- Women make up a greater proportion of those on zero hours contracts, accounting for 54.7% of all employees on these types of contracts.

	Full-time	Part-time	Temporary
Male	86.8	12.8	4.5
Female	59.1	40.5	8.8

Table 2.2: Percentage of men and women in full-time, part-time and temporary employment, Feb-Apr 2019 (Source: EMP01)

Further, the hourly gender pay gap in 2018 was 17.9% for all employees and 8.6% for full-time employees.¹³ There is a marked age profile to the gender pay gap, with the gender pay gap close to zero for full-time employees up to age 40 but rising to 12.8% for those aged 40 to 49 and just above 15% for full-time employees over 50 (see Figure 4). The gender pay gap for all employees peaks at 25.9% in the 50 to 59 age range.

¹¹ Esping-Anderson (2009)

¹² Grunow et al. (2012)

¹³ ONS (2018a) 'Gender pay gap in the UK, 2018', available at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2018>

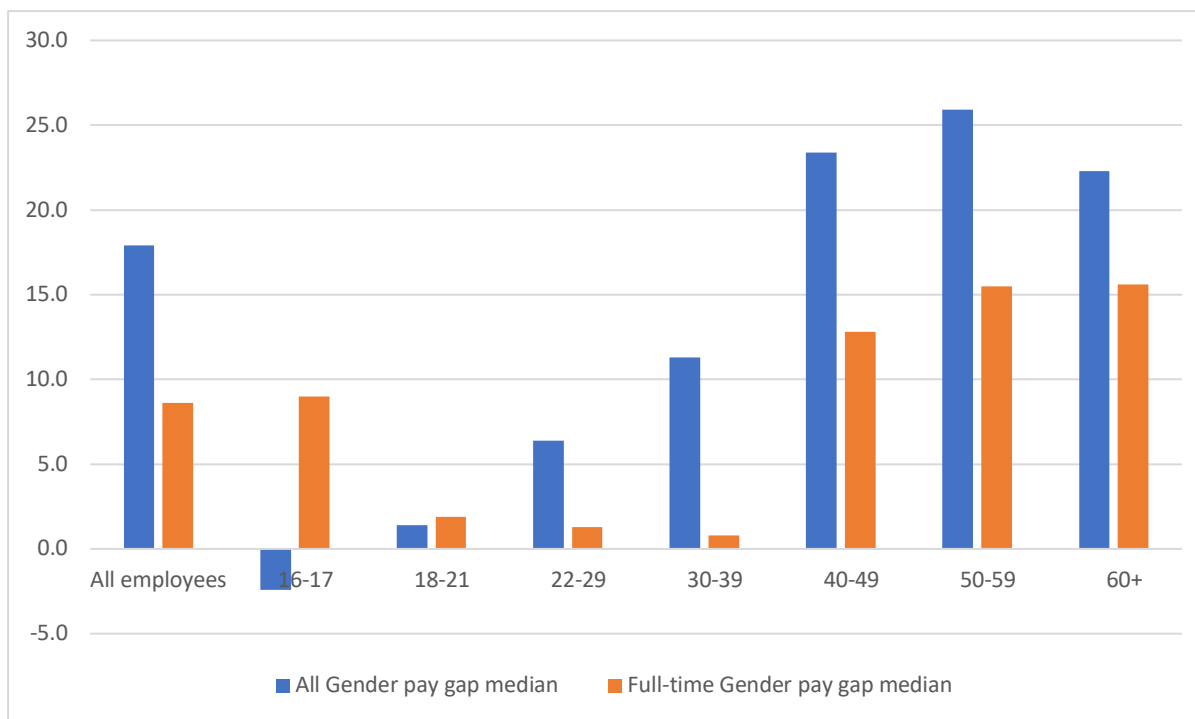


Figure 4: Gender pay gap for all employees and full-time employees by age, 2018 (Source: ONS 2018)

Research by the Fawcett Society examined how the gender pay gap intersects with ethnicity.¹⁴ This found that – relative to white British men – Pakistani and Bangladeshi and Black African women have the biggest gender pay gap at around 25% for all employees. Chinese women have the smallest ethnic gender pay gap at around 3% and the gap for white British women relative to white British men is 19%. The research also found that the pace at which the ethnic gender pay gap is narrowing varies considerably, with Black African, White British and African Caribbean women having seen the smallest reduction in the period from 1990 to 2010. For Black African women there has been only a two-percentage point reduction over this period.

¹⁴ Fawcett Society (2017) *Gender Pay by Ethnicity in Britain*, available at: <https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/gender-pay-by-ethnicity-britain>

Olsen et al. have sought to identify the key contributors to the persistent gender pay gap and also factors that are associated with a lower gender pay gap (so-called 'protective factors').¹⁵ Their research suggests that the biggest driver by far of the gender pay gap is labour market histories, specifically the fact that women tend to have fewer years of full-time work in their history and more unpaid caring time.¹⁶ The second biggest contributor is 'unobserved factors', such as labour market discrimination and gendered choices (i.e. choices influenced by social norms). These are followed by industrial sector and occupational segregation, namely that women remain over-represented in low-paid industries and occupations. The main industries driving the gender pay gap are manufacturing, construction, and banking and financial services. In terms of factors associated with a lower gender pay gap, these include working in the public sector, union membership and higher levels of education.

The gender pay gap has implications over the life-course. The lower, on average, life-time earnings of women relative to men makes a significant contribution to the gender gap in pensions and retirement income as they are able to save less. In 2012-14, around three quarters of men but only half of women aged 65+ had some private pension.¹⁷ The median amount held in such funds was £162,400 for men and £73,900 for women above 65+. There seems little sign that this disparity is likely to reduce, with the average funds in private pensions across all ages at £24,000 for men and £12,400 for women.

Job quality: the poorest quality jobs are held by female part-timers in lower-level occupations.

Whether a job is good quality, bad or somewhere in between can have real impact on the wellbeing of a worker. Job quality can be measured in many ways, ranging from a single indicator (e.g. what a job pays) to more refined approaches that adopt multi-dimensional analyses. Warren and Lyonette (2015) examine whether women fare well (or poorly) on various dimensions of the quality of their jobs including wage rates, the opportunity to use one's skills at work, training, career prospects, job security and 'quality work-time' (including avoiding the extremes of very many/very few hours in work, and having some control over one's work schedules).

The article rates the quality of women's jobs compared with men's and identifies diversity among women both by the number of hours worked and occupational class. It finds that there have been some improvements in women's job quality over time in the UK, amid an upward trend

¹⁵ Olsen, W. et. Al. (2018) 'The gender pay gap in the UK: Evidence from the UKHLS,' available at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706030/Gender_pay_gap_in_the_UK_evidence_from_the_UKHLS.pdf

¹⁶ Using BHPS and UKHLS data, Olsen et al. (2018) find that full-time working men have, on average, 17.8 years of full-time work compared with 13.2 years for full-time working women.

¹⁷ WBG (2018) 'Pensions: Briefing from the UK Women's Budget Group on the impact on women of recent policy trends in pensions,' available at: <https://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Pensions-October-2018.pdf>

for all workers, and an increase in the proportion of female part-timers in senior positions, implying that the demand for better-quality part-time jobs is being met to some extent. Yet part-time occupational disadvantage persists among women, with the worst of the 'bad' jobs held by female part-timers in lower-level jobs who face severe, enduring disadvantage.

Work-life balance: money is more important than time, but time dominates WLB policies

WLB, how work is reconciled with the rest of life, is core to policies that seek to improve workplaces, but Warren (2015a)¹⁸ argues that the needs of middle-class workers too heavily dominate the WLB agenda, drowning out working-class concerns. Policy debates and formulation are founded on a particular and very narrow interpretation of WLB in which too much time in paid work (instead of, for example, underemployment) is seen to be the major cause of difficulty. Middle-class workers are more likely to report that they work 'too many' hours and would like to reduce them than are the working-class, while working-class workers, men especially, are more likely than the middle classes to report work-time underemployment: wanting to work extra hours to boost low take-home wages.

There are known negative outcomes of spending too long in a job, for workers, families, friends and communities, but WLB is also about having enough paid hours, having good work-time schedules, some autonomy over work-time and predictable schedules that can synchronise with family. Middle-class workers fare far better on these latter measures than do working-class. The article finds that money, not time, is more important for achieving a satisfactory life. Money trumps time yet time dominates WLB policies.

Financial hardship: working-class workers are most likely to report financial hardship

Working-class women earn much less in their day-to-day jobs than do men and middle-class women. The women's low incomes come with heavy financial dependence, on men and/or state. Low-income women build up weaker security nets over their lives in their own right¹⁹, in financial savings, housing equity or pensions, and they have fewer opportunities for secure, low-cost borrowing, either from financial organisations or informally from relatives and friends.

Warren (2015b)²⁰ shows strong links between class inequalities and financial hardship, in a post-recessionary context of classed growth in work-time underemployment characterised by deeper underemployment for working class workers. The experience of financial hardship, and the fear of it, have long impacted working-class women's everyday lives, deepening post-recession. One telling example of financially-strained

¹⁸ Warren, T. (2015). Work-life balance/imbalance: the dominance of the middle class and the neglect of the working-class. *The British Journal of Sociology*. 66(4) 691–717.

¹⁹ On the difficulties in measuring gender wage and assets gaps see Warren, T. et al. (2001) 'Female finances: gender wage gaps, gender assets gaps', *Work, Employment and Society* 15(3): 465-488.

²⁰ Warren, T. (2015). Work-time underemployment and financial hardship: class inequalities and recession in the UK. *Work, Employment and Society*, 29(2) 191–212.

lives is whether workers can afford a holiday away from home (for at least one week a year, not staying with relatives at their home). Those workers most likely to be financially-excluded from having just this one break were working-class, especially work-time underemployed women.

What are the promising practices emerging from your country to ensure the realization of women's rights to work and women's rights at work, in the context of technological and demographic change, as well as continuing globalization and the shift towards sustainability? (laws; economic, labour market and social policies; programmes).

Automation and climate change are the two factors that are likely to have the biggest impact on the shape of work over the next several decades. We address these questions and emerging policy/policy recommendations in more detail in the specific questions below but initially give some examples of other policies working to close these inequalities around the globe as well as specific policy recommendations to the UK government.

Work, as we have seen, continues to be subject to persistent inequalities, whether that relates to the distribution of paid and unpaid work or inequalities within the paid labour market. In this section, we consider policy proposals that can promote greater gender equality in the work sphere. There are four areas in which policy can promote greater equality in the world of work:

- 1) Promoting a more equal sharing of paid and unpaid work
- 2) Introducing changes in the organisation of paid employment, in order to facilitate the combination of paid and unpaid work both by women and by men
- 3) Provision of public services, such as child care, and an enabling institutional environment
- 4) Addressing inequalities within the paid labour force

1. *Promoting a more equal sharing of paid and unpaid work*

The gendered distribution of paid and unpaid work has been stubbornly resistant to change, even as women have increased their working hours and earnings. This suggests that more active policy levers are required to encourage men to undertake a greater share of the unpaid work that sustains our families, communities, economy and society. Table 3.1 sets out policies that have been suggested for achieving such a redistribution.

Policy	How would this work?	Where has it been piloted or implemented?	Risks/Challenges	Likelihood of implementation in UK
Integrating unpaid work into mainstream economic indicators	This is based on Waring’s call to increase the visibility and status of unpaid work. By integrating into mainstream indicators, the hope is that unpaid work would be taken into consideration in setting economic and social policy. Ultimately, it is argued that the higher visibility and status of unpaid work would also encourage men to do a greater share.	Not fully implemented in any advanced economy. In the UK, the ONS publishes ‘Satellite Household Accounts’ that quantify and value unpaid work. ²¹ However, existing separately from mainstream economic indicators, they are not taken into consideration in the setting of economic and social policy. New Zealand has come closest with its reframing of the 2019 Budget as a ‘Wellbeing Budget’, with progress measured against a comprehensive set of indicators, including unpaid work in its Living Standards Framework (LSF). ²²	Challenges are primarily around technical aspects of integrating non-monetary measures (e.g. how to value unpaid work). No significant negative risks.	Low
Universal Basic Income (UBI) (sometimes also referred to as Citizens Income)	UBI is a tax-free, unconditional and non-contributory basic weekly income to every individual as a right. In its full- form, it	No large-scale scales/implementation examples available. Trials of more limited versions of UBI, usually targeted at	General consensus that full implementation of a UBI that tackles poverty would cost a substantial proportion of GDP (ILO estimates 20-30%	Full UBI: Low Limited version: Low/moderate

²¹ ONS (2018) Household satellite accounts: 2015 and 2016, available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/householdsatelliteaccounts2015and2016>

²² NZ Treasury (2019) ‘The Wellbeing Budget 2019,’ available at: <https://treasury.govt.nz/publications/wellbeing-budget/wellbeing-budget-2019>

	would replace current means-tested benefits, with advocates arguing that UBI would significantly reduce administrative burden and is a better fit for the modern, flexible workforce than the existing benefit system. In guaranteeing a basic income, advocates argue it would support unpaid work by removing financial pressure to engage in paid work where this competes with caring or other responsibilities/needs.	disadvantaged groups, have been conducted in Finland and by charities/development agencies in developing countries. Findings are at best inconclusive. ²³ The Finland trial gave monthly payments of 560 Euros to 2,000 unemployed people, but the government has refused to fund expansion.	of GDP) and so is unlikely to be feasible. ²⁴ Some critics also argue that it would reinforce traditional gender roles by reducing the need/incentive for women to work.	
Shorter working week	Advocates argue that a shorter working week for all would encourage a more equal sharing of paid and unpaid work. ²⁵ Suggestions for the length of the working week vary, but there is growing momentum in the UK	Trials have been conducted by individual companies/public bodies and some have also implemented this as a permanent change. ²⁷ One of the most high-profile was Perpetual Guardian, a New Zealand insurance company with 240	One of the challenges can be the upfront cost of putting in place the shorter working week as more staff may be required in the short term in certain sectors. Further, critics have cautioned that freeing up	Low/moderate

²³ Coote, A. and E. Yazici (2019) 'Universal Basic Income: A union perspective,' available at: <https://neweconomics.org/2019/04/universal-basic-income-new-study-finds-little-evidence-that-it-can-live-up-to-its-promise>

²⁴ For simulations of UBI in the UK see also Reed, H. and S. Lansley (2016) 'Universal Basic Income: An idea whose time has come?,' available at: <https://www.compassonline.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/UniversalBasicIncomeByCompass-Spreads.pdf>

²⁵ See for example Autonomy (2019)

²⁷ Congregalli (2018); See also Booth, R. (2019) 'Is this the age of the four-day week?,' available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/13/age-of-four-day-week-workers-productivity>

	<p>behind calls for a 4-day working week. In Sweden, there were a number of trials of a 6-hour working day.²⁶</p>	<p>staff. Perpetual Guardian trialled a 4-day week (with same pay) for 6 months and made the switch permanent after finding staff had increased well-being, reduced stress and there was no cost to productivity.</p>	<p>time will not by itself encourage more equal sharing of paid and unpaid work. They suggest that policy levers are needed at critical stages, such as around the birth of the first child (see Table 5 below for maternity/paternity policies).</p>	
<p>Wages for unpaid work</p>	<p>An iconic campaign of the second wave feminist movement was ‘Wages for Housework’ (founded in Padua in 1972, but soon spread internationally). Key figures, such as Sylvia Federici, adopted a Marxist-feminist lens and argued that, unless unpaid housework was compensated with a wage, it will not be seen as work. Women’s strikes took place in a number of countries during the 1970s, but the movement is no longer active. However, the key tenet that paying for</p>	<p>No trials. While there are benefits for single parents and out-of-work parents, these are not framed as compensation for unpaid caring work and also require work-related activities once the youngest child is over the age 1. Child benefit, while not subjected to work-related activity requirements, is set at such a low level that it cannot be considered compensation for unpaid caring.²⁸</p>	<p>Critics argue it would disadvantage those who are working and faced with high childcare costs and, further, that it could lead to a reinforcement of traditional gender roles (akin to UBI).</p>	<p>Low</p>

²⁶ Congregalli, M (2018) ‘Swedish researchers examined whether a six-hour workday is the way forward; here’s what they found,’ *Equal Times*, available at: <https://www.equaltimes.org/swedish-researchers-examined?lang=en#.XUwXN6eZOu5>

²⁸ Child benefit is currently £20.70 per week for the first child and £13.70 for any further children

	unpaid work would encourage greater recognition of its value has merit and could also encourage more men to undertake a larger share of unpaid work. A modern version of this could be benefits paid to those undertaking unpaid care work, whether for a child or an adult (i.e. different from the UBI concept in that it is specifically targeted at those undertaking work).			
Paid caring leave (maternity, paternity, parental, caring)	A more limited form of the ‘wages for unpaid work’ proposal, these are policies that incentivise and financially reward breaks from paid work to facilitate caring work. They are likely to be key to encouraging more equal sharing, particularly when used around critical life-course events to disrupt gendered norms around caring work. They are discussed in the next section concerned with measures to enable paid and unpaid work to be combined more easily.			

Table 3.1: Potential policies for promoting a more equal sharing of paid and unpaid work

2. Introducing changes in the organisation of paid employment, in order to facilitate the combination of paid and unpaid work both by women and by men

While there have been advances in flexible working practices and leave provisions, many still find it difficult to combine paid and unpaid work. Table 3.2 sets out proposals aimed at making flexible working the default, encouraging men to take leave in order to care for children and adults, and increased protections for those with caring responsibilities.

Policy	How would this work?	Where has it been piloted or implemented?	Risks/Challenges	Likelihood of implementation in UK
Flexible working as the default in the public and private sector	Implement legislation to require all jobs to be advertised as available with flexible working, unless there is a sound business reason for why a job cannot be offered on a flexible basis. The objective is to make flexible working the norm rather than something that has to be requested. Such a bill was the subject of a 10-minute rule motion by the MP Helen Whateley in July 2019. ²⁹ This should be accompanied by measures to protect those that choose flexible working from being penalised (see below the recommendations around 'Protections for workers on caring leave/working flexibly). (Note also that the flexible working as default could be introduced in the	Increasing numbers of employers, particularly large employers, are making flexible working options available to staff within increasing recognition that this is key to retaining talent. However, there is also evidence that those taking up flexible working options, particularly working part-time, continue to be penalised, for example by slowed career progression (TUC 2017).	Some have argued that this would incur costs to businesses and organisations with more complex working arrangements. While there may be an upfront cost, others argue that it outweighed by the benefits of improved employee well-being and the reduced absenteeism, turnover etc. this could translate into.	Moderate

²⁹ Westbrook, I (2019) 'Flexible working should be default, says MP Helen Whately,' BBC News, available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-49003413>

	public sector without legislation; legislation is required to compel the private sector).			
Maternity, paternity, and parental leave that is fairly remunerated and incentivises fathers to undertake a greater share	Introduce individual, earmarked and non-transferable rights to leave that are well-remunerated. Shared Parental Leave (SPL), which was introduced in 2015, has had a dismal uptake rate of around 1% of all eligible parents. ³⁰ Encouraging greater uptake, by men, will require a dedicated period of fathers' leave on a 'use it or lose it' basis. Ensuring that fathers' care for children from an early age is key to disrupting the gendered division of childcaring. Note that such leave should be a right from the first day of employment and the level of	Evidence from other countries shows that dedicated fathers' leave increases uptake. ³¹ In Sweden, equal rights to parental leave were introduced in 1974. However, uptake remained low until 1995 when a dedicated 1-month of fathers' leave was introduced. At that point, uptake went from 9% to 47% over a period of 8 years. Similarly in Quebec, introduction of dedicated 5 weeks of fathers' leave at a replacement rate ³² of 70% saw fathers' uptake increase from 21.3% to 74.9% (over the same period, fathers' uptake in the rest of Canada fell from 11% to 9% under an SPL system with a 55% replacement rate). ³³ It is also	As with the recommendations around flexible working, the main criticism of such policy recommendations is the impact on employers, in terms of increased costs and administrative burden associated with covering the leave.	Moderate

³⁰ Creagh, M. (2019) 'Shared Parental Leave isn't working – new parents need stronger rights,' available at: <https://www.tuc.org.uk/blogs/shared-parental-leave-isnt-working-new-parents-need-stronger-rights>

³¹ Fawcett Society (2018) 'Written submission on Shared Parental Leave and Pay,' available at: <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/women-and-equalities-committee/fathers-and-the-workplace/written/48173.pdf>

³² Replacement rate refers to the amount of lost income that will be replaced by the paternity/maternity leave payment

³³ Fawcett Society (2018)

	financial support must be increased (currently £145.18/week for SPL) for both mothers and fathers to make going on leave affordable to all workers.	worth noting that time-use data from Quebec shows that fathers taking up their quota of leave spend more time in unpaid care work and their partners spend more time in paid work.		
Caring leave	Carers UK has called on the government to give all employers 5 to 10 days of paid caring leave annually. As with parental leave, it is hoped that by remunerating the leave, this both removes financial pressure from the carer and encourages a more equal sharing of such leave between men and women.	In Sweden, the Care for Related Persons Act (1988) provides a right to leave to care for seriously ill relatives. Up to 100 days are available per cared individual and this is compensated for through the National Insurance System. In Italy, unpaid carers are entitled to 3 days leave per month that is paid for through the national social security agency.	As above for maternity/paternity leave recommendations	Low/moderate
Protections for workers on leave/working flexibly	To ensure that those taking up flexible working or parental/caring leave are not penalised, adequate protections need to be in place. In March 2019, Maria Miller MP introduced a private members bill to protect pregnant and new mothers from redundancy in the six months after the end of pregnancy and maternity leave. It is not clear yet	Germany provides similar protections, preventing redundancy from the start of pregnancy until 4 months after childbirth.	No significant downsides, although some business groups have argued it would reduce their ability to make genuine decisions around staffing levels.	Low/moderate

	whether this Bill will pass the House. However, such measures, as well as stronger protections for those taking up flexible working, are urgently required.			
Support with childcare costs	See Table 3.3 for discussion of policies around childcare provision.			

Table 3.2: Potential policies for changing the organisation of paid work

3. Policies to promote the provision of quality public services, such as universal childcare, and an enabling institutional environment

The provision of quality public services can reduce the amount of unpaid care that is needed, whether that relates to adults or children. As the majority of unpaid carers are women, this has the potential to reduce gender inequalities. For this reason, Table 3.3 sets out proposals for universal early childcare and the establishment of a National Care Service that is free at the point of delivery. The table also sets out additional policy levers around second earner incentives within the social security system.

Policy	How would this work?	Where has it been piloted or implemented?	Risks/Challenges	Likelihood of implementation in UK
Provision of free, high-quality, universal childcare	The provision of a universal system of free, high-quality childcare would increase labour force participation rates of women, thereby reducing the gender employment and earnings gap further. Currently, it is women with a	International evidence suggests that extending quality universal childcare improves child cognitive outcomes and reduces socio-economic inequalities. ³⁵ Countries where there is a significant universal pre-	While universal childcare has been shown to improve cognitive outcomes and reduce inequality, some studies point to negative impacts on non-cognitive abilities if long hours are spent in childcare. ³⁶ For this	Low (though subsidised hours may increase)

³⁵ Gupta, N. D. (2018) 'Maternity leave versus early childcare—What are the long-term consequences for children?', available at: <https://wol.iza.org/articles/maternity-leave-versus-early-childcare-what-are-the-long-term-consequences-for-children/long>

³⁶ Ibid.

	pre-school aged child that are least likely to be in employment (either part- or full-time) with childcare costs for under 3s prohibitively high for many. Modelling by the WBG finds that such a system for children aged 6 months to 5 years would cost between 1.8% and 3% of GDP (depending on wage levels of childcare staff). ³⁴	school offer include Denmark, Norway and Sweden.	reason, some argue that childcare policy should not be concerned solely with enabling parents to work. Rather work requirements should be reformed (e.g. through shorter working weeks) to enable paid and unpaid work to be combined more easily. The cost of implementing free, universal childcare is the most significant barrier.	
Establishment of a National Care Service	The National Care Service would provide social care free at the point of delivery in the same way that the NHS provides health care. This would benefit the recipients of care services as well as reduce the burden on unpaid carers, the majority of whom are women. It is likely that this would enable a narrowing of	There is variation in social care provision in the UK. In Scotland, personal care is free for those over 65 and, in Northern Ireland, home care is free for those over 75. Across Europe, there is also considerable variation. ³⁸ Germany provides basic, non-means tested care support funded by mandatory social	The most significant barrier to the implementation of a National Care Service that is free at the point of delivery is cost, particularly in the context of an ageing population.	Low

³⁴ WBG (2016) 'Investing in the caring economy – the case of free universal childcare in the UK,' available at: https://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/WBG_childcarebriefing_Feb16.pdf

³⁸ Age UK (2018) 'An international comparison of long-term care funding and outcomes: insights for the social care green paper,' available at: https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/care--support/rb_aug18_-_international_comparison_of_social_care_funding_and_outcomes.pdf

	<p>the gender employment gap with research by Carers UK recently finding that some 468,000 individuals had left their job in the past two years to care for a relative who is older, disabled or seriously ill.³⁷ With most social care currently privately funded, the establishment of a National Care Service would have significant cost implications.</p>	<p>care insurance. However, this is not sufficient to cover the cost of residential care. France also has a mandatory social care insurance, but financial support is primarily received by poorer recipients.</p>		
<p>Reduction in 2nd earner disincentives for those receiving social security, such as Universal Credit</p>	<p>Commentators have noted that the design of Universal Credit (UC) reinforces a single earner family model.³⁹ This is principally because there is no separate work allowance for the 2nd earner (i.e. the primary earner will have used up the work allowance, meaning the 2nd earner will usually lose benefits from the first pound earned). As such, the very design of the system discourages sharing of paid</p>	<p>Changes to UC to reduce the 2nd earner disincentive have been advanced by a large number of organisations in the UK, including WBG, Resolution Foundation, and CPAG.</p>	<p>Opposition to this centres primarily around the upfront cost of introducing such a change.</p>	<p>Low/moderate</p>

³⁷ Carers UK (2019) 'Research: More than 600 people quit work to look after older and disabled relatives every day,' available at: <https://www.carersuk.org/news-and-campaigns/news/research-more-than-600-people-quit-work-to-look-after-older-and-disabled-relatives-every-day>

³⁹ See for example WBG (2017) 'Universal credit: A briefing from the Women's Budget Group,' available at: <https://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Universal-credit-briefing-Nov-2017-FINAL.pdf>

	and unpaid work. UC could work to promote gender equality by having dedicated work allowances for the 1 st and 2 nd earner.			
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Table 3.3: Policies to promote the provision of adequate public services, such as universal child care, and an enabling institutional environment

4. Policies for addressing inequalities within the paid labour force

Inequalities within the labour force continue, despite increasing educational parity. Table 3.4 sets out four proposals for reducing gender inequality in the paid labour market.

Policy	How would this work?	Where has it been piloted or implemented?	Risks/Challenges	Likelihood of implementation in UK
Tackling occupational segregation by encouraging girls into STEM roles and other male-dominated industries	STEM and other male-dominated industries, such as building and trades, are more highly paid than female-dominated industries. Initiatives to encourage more girls to study these subjects and enter the industry are needed. In addition, more needs to be done to ensure that women stay in those industries, with a recent	The Wise Campaign (www.wisecampaign.org.uk) for gender balance in science, technology and engineering published a call for action in 2019 advocating for an outreach programme for girls, retraining programmes for women, and calling on organisations to sign up to increasing the percentage of women they employ.	European data found a negative correlation between countries with targets or quotas for women in science and the actual number of women employed as researchers in this field, suggesting that they might negatively affect perceptions of women in the field. ⁴¹	Quotas: Low Other measures: Moderate

⁴¹ Roberts, K (2014) 'Engaging more women and girls in mathematics and STEM fields: The international evidence,' AMSI, available at: <https://amsi.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/RobertsGenderSTEMreport2014.pdf>

	survey finding that 56% of women leave tech industries at mid-career point (10 to 20 years in). ⁴⁰	Some Scandinavian countries (e.g. Finland, Sweden) have set quotas and/or targets for women's participation in STEM and in institutional appointments. However, results of these have been mixed.		
Raising the incomes of those in caring work to achieve parity with male-dominated occupations of similar skill level	Many of the female-dominated sectors of the economy, particularly those related to caring, are paid less than male-dominated sectors. Initiatives to raise incomes in those would positively impact more women than men.	Childcare workers in a number of other advanced countries receive higher remuneration than in the UK. In some contexts, early childcare workers have much smaller pay differentials with primary school teachers, or even parity. ⁴²	The main challenge is the cost, which childcare costs already high and the social care system under significant financial pressure.	Low
Raising the minimum wage	Women are the majority of those on low incomes. As a result, lifting the incomes of the lowest earners through an increase in the National Living Wage would reduce the gender pay gap.	Research published by the Fawcett Society in 2014 gives an indication of the gender equality benefits of raising the minimum wage. ⁴³ It showed that raising the minimum wage to the level of the Living Wage (as set by the Living Wage Foundation rather than National Living Wage set by government)	Opposition to raising the minimum wage is primarily from employer groups who argue that it would put pressure on their businesses.	Moderate

⁴⁰ Turing (n.d.)

⁴² Lloyd, E (2018) 'Underpaid and undervalued: the reality of childcare work in the UK,' available at: <https://theconversation.com/underpaid-and-undervalued-the-reality-of-childcare-work-in-the-uk-87413>

⁴³ Fawcett Society (2014) 'The time to act is now: Equal Pay Day Briefing 2014,' available at: <https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=3cacb2e0-08e3-4538-bd01-3b2007b64bcc>

		would benefit nearly 1 million more women than men, thereby reducing the overall gender pay gap by nearly 1 percentage point.		
High wage cap and other measures to reduce high wages	This is the inverse of raising the minimum wage: As the majority of high earners are men, capping the maximum wage would reduce the gender pay gap. There have been a number of calls for this, including Jeremy Corbyn's maximum wage law that would cap the maximum income that could be earned and proposals by the French Socialist Melenchon to impose a 100% marginal tax on high income earners.	No modelling available on reducing high wages. However, a recent study found that 79% of those earning more than £100,000 are male suggesting that reducing high wages would have a gender equalising effect. ⁴⁴ Similarly, research by the IFS found that women account for 17% of the top 1% of income earners. ⁴⁵ New requirements for companies to report on the ratio of their CEOs pay relative to the median pay of their UK employees will come into force in January 2019. ⁴⁶	There would be significant opposition to imposing a wage cap. In relation to pay ratio reporting, critics have warned that simply reporting on the pay ratio will not in itself reduce it.	Wage cap: Low

Table 3.4: Policies for addressing inequalities within paid labour force

⁴⁴ Milne, A (2019) 'Money, money, money: It's a rich man's world among UK high earners,' available at: <https://uk.reuters.com/article/britain-economy-paygap/money-money-money-its-a-rich-mans-world-among-uks-high-earners-idUKL5N20K3BU>

⁴⁵ Joyce, R., Pope, T., and B Roantree (2019) 'The characteristics and incomes of the top 1%,' IFS, available at: <https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/BN254-Characteristics-and-Incomes-Of-The-Top-1%25.pdf>

⁴⁶ High Pay Centre (2018) 'New pay ratio reporting rules: success for High Pay Centre campaign,' available at: <http://highpaycentre.org/blog/new-pay-ratio-reporting-rules-success-for-high-pay-centre-campaign>

Learning from international best practice

A. Time-based policies to better support low-income working women

Long hours: policies to curtail extremes in hours are critical for **battling wide gender gaps in paid work-time**. The *European Working Time Directive* set maximum weekly work hours, including overtime, of forty-eight. Certain societies, like Denmark, have enacted a shorter full-time week than this (of 37 hours) via strong collective agreements. Men's very long hours in a job are challenged in such a 'work-time regime' while full-time working becomes a more realistic option for women. In the UK, however, the reasons for working long hours in a job often differ for low- and high-income workers. **Shorter paid hours can bring financial hardship to working-class families** if hourly wages are set too low.

Promotion of quality flexible options: In the UK, all employees have the legal right to request flexible working (not just parents and carers) once they have worked for the same employer for 26 weeks⁴⁷. Women who work part-time or in other flexible working arrangements can face a '**flexibility stigma**': the assumption that they are weakly committed to their jobs. The Netherlands leads the world in the promotion of better-quality part-time working, with an aim to also encourage men and not just women to spend shorter hours in the labour market. Male part-time employment is higher in the Netherlands than the UK (19% of employed men, compared to 11% in the UK), though a substantial gender gap persists. The impact of the **UK decision to leave the EU** is likely to affect the availability of quality flexible work options: wider and better flexible working policies are largely as a consequence of EU regulations.

Time-based policies specifically for carers

EU WLB Directive adopted 13 June 2019: recommends Paternity leave (at least 10 working days, compensated at least at the level of sick pay); Strengthening the existing right to 4 months of parental leave, by making 2 out of the 4 months non-transferable (to ensure that at least two months is available to each parent exclusively); Carers' leave for workers (5 days per year); Extension of the right to request flexible working arrangements to all working parents of children up to at least 8 years old, and all carers.

Parental leave: fathers in the Nordic countries take more parental leave than in any other country, albeit with intra-Nordic diversity in the design of policies. For example, Iceland's scheme is split into 3 parts: three months for mothers, three months' 'daddy leave;' and three months to be divided between the parents (and with a potential increase to 12 months: 5+5+2 system). Norway and Denmark offer the **highest level of compensation for parents**. Compensation is important: in 2015, 81% of fathers in Iceland took a period of leave (paternity and/or parental) yet the number of days used by men fell after the economic crisis, linked to cuts in compensation rates⁴⁸.

⁴⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/flexible-working>

⁴⁸ Eydal, G.B. and Gíslason, I.V. (2018) 'Iceland' in S. Blum et al. (eds.) *International Review of Leave Policies and Research*. http://www.leavenetwork.org/lp_and_r_reports/

Childcare places: Again, a **Nordic model of universal childcare** stands in marked contrast to the UK system. Denmark, for example, has free public provision for low-income families: nurseries, day-care and kindergarten up to the start of school at age 6.

Recent UK Government initiatives have invested in early education and childcare with explicit motives to enable low-income parents (mothers) to work, help with poverty reduction and narrow the class gap in attainment between children. From 2017, low-income working parents of children aged 3-4 became eligible to apply for 30 hours of funded, tax-free childcare per week for 38 weeks a year (double the 15 hours available to all parents in England) in approved childcare places. This scheme targets parents earning or expecting to earn ‘the equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum or living wage over the coming three months’. However, rather than favouring working-class families, trials of the free places scheme saw more uptake among middle-class families. A problem with the scheme in general was capacity: **insufficient approved child-care places in suitable locations that offer hours at requisite times**. Low-income women have to **patchwork funded part-time hours with informal arrangements**, rushing children between care settings. Government statistics show that many Sure Start centres, set up by the Labour government to support working-class pre-school children, closed (350 in England in 2010–16, while just eight new ones opened). More than 500 children’s centres closed between 2010 and 2018⁴⁹.

B. Money-based policies to better support low-income working women

Effective floor for wage rates: The introduction of a National Minimum Wage improved the wages of women in lower-level occupations⁵⁰. The National Living Wage from 2016 set the obligatory wage rate for workers aged 25 plus at £8.21 per hour (2019-20 rate. Only the National Minimum Wage rates, £7.70 and £6.15, apply to those aged 21-24 and 18-20). The ‘Minimum Income Standard 2019’ for the UK, which reports on how much income households need to afford an acceptable minimum standard of living, concluded that ‘many households with **low incomes both in and out of work are unable to reach a minimum acceptable standard of living**’ after a decade of austerity⁵¹. Even workers with full-time (low) wages may struggle because **in-work benefits have been cut** and **costs are rising** for child-care, energy bills, transport and so on.

⁴⁹ CPAG *ibid.*

⁵⁰ Low Pay Commission (2016) *National Minimum Wage*. Low Pay Commission Report Autumn 2016. Cm 9272.

⁵¹ Hirsch (2019: 19) *ibid.*

The majority of those officially classified as ‘in poverty’ live in a household⁵² where someone is in (low) paid work⁵³. A Real Living Wage campaign led by the *Living Wage Foundation* seeks to persuade employers to voluntarily pay workers (aged 18+) a minimum of £9.00 an hour (£10.55 in London⁵⁴). The Real Living Wage is based on actual living costs. Because it is a voluntary and non-statutory approach, only a minority of employers have signed up.

Basic income: there is ongoing debate over the pros and cons of establishing an unconditional universal basic income (UBI). Various models are discussed⁵⁵ but broadly it is a minimum income paid to every individual (adult and children), not dependent on the income of other household members, and not means-tested. UBI is proposed as a **measure to battle poverty** including among those in-work.

Advocates for UBI claim it can provide a safety net for all classes and **empower workers to refuse low-income and precarious work**. There is also some feminist optimism for its potential to support women with caring responsibilities, and **recognise women’s unpaid work within the home**⁵⁶. Conversely, it might have the **unintended consequence** of pulling low-income women out of jobs and back into the home, reinforcing or intensifying the gendered division of labour⁵⁷. Critics argue too that a basic income can be abused by unscrupulous employers who feel enabled to further casualise work and/or reduce pay⁵⁸. Trialled in Finland⁵⁹, and with pilots proposed in Scotland (as the ‘Citizen’s Basic Income’), the debate continues.

From these examples, we provide the following recommendations. The UK government must:

A. Time-based policies to better support low-income working women

1. Ensure the **48-hour maximum working week** is maintained in law post-Brexit, and pursue strategies to further reduce the UK’s long full-time working week.

⁵² Household Income is not necessarily shared equally between household members. See e.g. Bennett, F. (2013) ‘Researching within-household distribution: overview, developments, debates, and methodological challenges’, *Journal of Marriage and Family* 75(3): 582-597.

⁵³ CPAG *ibid*.

⁵⁴ <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/what-real-living-wage>

⁵⁵ <https://www.thersa.org/action-and-research/rsa-projects/economy-enterprise-manufacturing-folder/basic-income>

⁵⁶ Standing G (2017) *Basic Income: And How We Can Make It Happen*. London: Pelican.

⁵⁷ Smith, M and Shanahan, G. (2018) ‘Is a basic income the solution to persistent inequalities faced by women?’ <http://theconversation.com/is-a-basic-income-the-solution-to-persistent-inequalities-faced-by-women-92939>

⁵⁸ Rubery et al. (2018) Challenges and Contradictions in the ‘Normalising’ of Precarious Work’, *Work, Employment and Society*, 32(3): 509-527.

⁵⁹ Kangas, O. et al. (2019)(eds) *The Basic Income Experiment 2017–2018 in Finland. Preliminary Results*, Helsinki: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

2. Introduce a new **Living Hours guarantee** to set a minimum work-time floor⁶⁰. The *Living Wage Foundation* recommends at least 16 hours a week (with an opt out clause for those wishing to work fewer)⁶¹. This threshold was chosen because carers and parents with children over the age of 3 have to be working or looking for part-time work that is at least 16 hours a week or else face sanctions. Parents also need to be working at least 16 hours a week to be entitled to vouchers for free childcare.
3. Introduce legislation to guarantee **suitable work schedules** that includes a 4-week notice period for shifts, and payment for their cancellation, as part of the Living Hours guarantee⁶². This will support WLB and financial planning for low-income women. The Irish ‘Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2018’ established minimum payments to low paid employees who are called into work and then not given the expected hours, among other key changes.
4. Promote part-time jobs and flexible working beyond working carers. **Flexibility to be the default workplace option**⁶³ to challenge the ‘flexibility stigma’ and ‘flexibility-scarring’ effects on women’s working lives.
5. **Adopt and improve the remit of the EU WLB directive**. Ensure that the WLB narrative is not only framed around time and nor is it just about parents and carers: WLB to be mainstreamed for all workers. The raft of measures badged under the WLB-umbrella should also include money-based policies.

B. Money-based policies to better support low-income working women

1. Establish an **effective wage floor** by making the (real) Living Wage obligatory not optional.
2. Lift the benefit freeze and **upgrade benefit levels** to reach a Minimum Income Standard.
3. Legislate for a **progressive system of taxation** (with a levy on wealth) to counteract huge gaps in income and wealth levels.

C. Class must become the 10th protected characteristic

Class upbringing lies outside the list of ‘protected characteristics’ that are covered by the Equality Act 2010. Current equality legislation does not prevent employers and government departments discriminating, harassing or victimising someone on the basis of their social class. Class intersects with the other characteristics, such as sex and race, to shape the inequalities women experience in their working lives.

⁶⁰ Ilsøe, A. (2016) ‘From living wage to living hours’, *Labour and Industry*, 26(1): 40-57.

⁶¹ <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/sites/default/files/Living%20Hours%20Final%20Report%20110619.pdf>

⁶² <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/good-work-plan-one-sided-flexibility-addressing-unfair-flexible-working-practices>

⁶³ See the *Flexible Working Bill 2017-19*. <https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/flexibleworking.html>.

Specific questions – Technology

- How is technological change impacting on women's experiences of work in your national context? (e.g. increasing access to ICTs, robotics, machine learning, automation)

Automation refers to the replacing of tasks undertaken by workers with technology and machines. Self-checkouts are a now common example of automation; others include the use of algorithms or robots. It is widely accepted that automation is going to rapidly transform the nature of work over the next several decades, and emerging research suggests there may be a gendered impact. In the UK, analysis by the ONS suggests that 70.2% of the jobs at high risk of automation are held by women⁶⁴ and a recent estimate by IPPR found that 9% of women and 4% of men are in jobs at high risk of automation.⁶⁵ Jobs at high-risk of automation include administrative and customer service jobs, where women predominate. This concurs with research in other advanced economies, such as the in-depth study by the Institute for Women's Policy Research in the US which found that 58% of jobs at high risk of automation are held by women.⁶⁶ The concern over greater job losses for women from automation are heightened by the fact that men predominate in artificial intelligence and technology more generally. In the UK, only 17% of tech jobs are held by women, and boys are far more likely to express an intention to work in technology than girls.⁶⁷

Ensuring that technological advances, such as automation, reduce gender inequalities will require concerted action to promote technology careers to women and ensure transition plans are in place for those whose jobs are likely to be affected by automation. Some feminist writers, such as Howcroft and Rubery, have suggested that the productivity gains from automation could lead to shorter working weeks and a more equal distribution of paid and unpaid work.⁶⁸ However, this would require a considerable shift in gender norms, given how resistant the gender disparity in unpaid work has been to change even in the face of women's increased participation in the paid labour force.

⁶⁴ ONS (2019b) 'Which jobs are at risk of automation,' available at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/whichoccupationsareathighestriskofbeingautomated/2019-03-25>

⁶⁵ IPPR (2019) 'The future is ours: Women, automation and equality in the digital age,' available at: <https://www.ippr.org/files/2019-07/the-future-is-ours-women-automation-equality-july19.pdf>

⁶⁶ IWPR (2019) 'Women, automation and the future of work,' available at <https://iwpr.org/publications/women-automation-future-of-work/>; see also World Economic Forum (2018a) 'Towards a reskilling revolution,' available at: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_FOW_Reskilling_Revolution.pdf

⁶⁷ Turing Institute (n.d.) 'Women in data science and AI,' available at: <https://www.turing.ac.uk/research/research-projects/women-data-science-and-ai>

⁶⁸ Howcroft, D and Rubery, J (2018) 'Automation has the potential to improve gender equality at work,' available at: <https://theconversation.com/automation-has-the-potential-to-improve-gender-equality-at-work-96807>

- What are some of the good practices for supporting women to benefit equally from technological advances? (*laws, economic and social policies, institutional measures, regulation, actions by employers*)

The Women's Budget Group's [Commission for a Gender-Equal Economy](#) will explore good practices to promote an egalitarian response to technological advances in its final report – expected in summer 2020. In the meantime, we refer the Committee to the recommendations made by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) in their new report on [Women, Automation and Equality in the Digital Age](#)⁶⁹ – the recommendations are made on pages 3-5.

Transition to sustainability

- What measures are necessary to ensure that women benefit equally from the transition to sustainability in your national context? What are some of the promising practices to ensure that green jobs do not replicate existing gender inequalities in other sectors (e.g. occupational segregation, gender pay gap)?

Alongside automation, climate change is expected to have a significant impact on the future of work. It has been suggested that both the types of job and the hours of paid work we all do will need to change. There are projected to be cuts to jobs in unsustainable industries, such as livestock agriculture, tourism and those reliant upon fossil fuels, and growth in sustainable industries, such as renewable energy.⁷⁰ As yet, there has not been a comprehensive gender impact analysis of likely job changes and this is urgently needed in order for policymakers to be able to make gender-sensitive responses to climate change.

Some authors also argue that total output will need to be cut in order for emissions to be reduced to a sustainable level. There is growing momentum behind a 4-day work week, but others have argued that working hours may need to be cut to as low as 9 hours per week in advanced economies.⁷¹ For some, this represents an opportunity to share paid and unpaid work more evenly. As with automation, however, this is unlikely to happen without policies that actively incentivise a more gender-equal distribution of paid and unpaid work, for instance more generous paternity and caring leave.

⁶⁹ IPPR (2019) The future is ours: women, automation and equality in the digital age <https://www.ippr.org/files/2019-07/the-future-is-ours-women-automation-equality-july19.pdf>

⁷⁰ Fankhauser, S., Sehlleier, F., and N. Stern (2008) 'Climate change, innovation, and jobs,' available at: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/GranthamInstitute/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/climate-change-innovation-jobs.pdf>

⁷¹ Autonomy (2019) 'The Shorter Working Week,' available at: <http://autonomy.work/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Shorter-working-week-docV5.pdf>

