



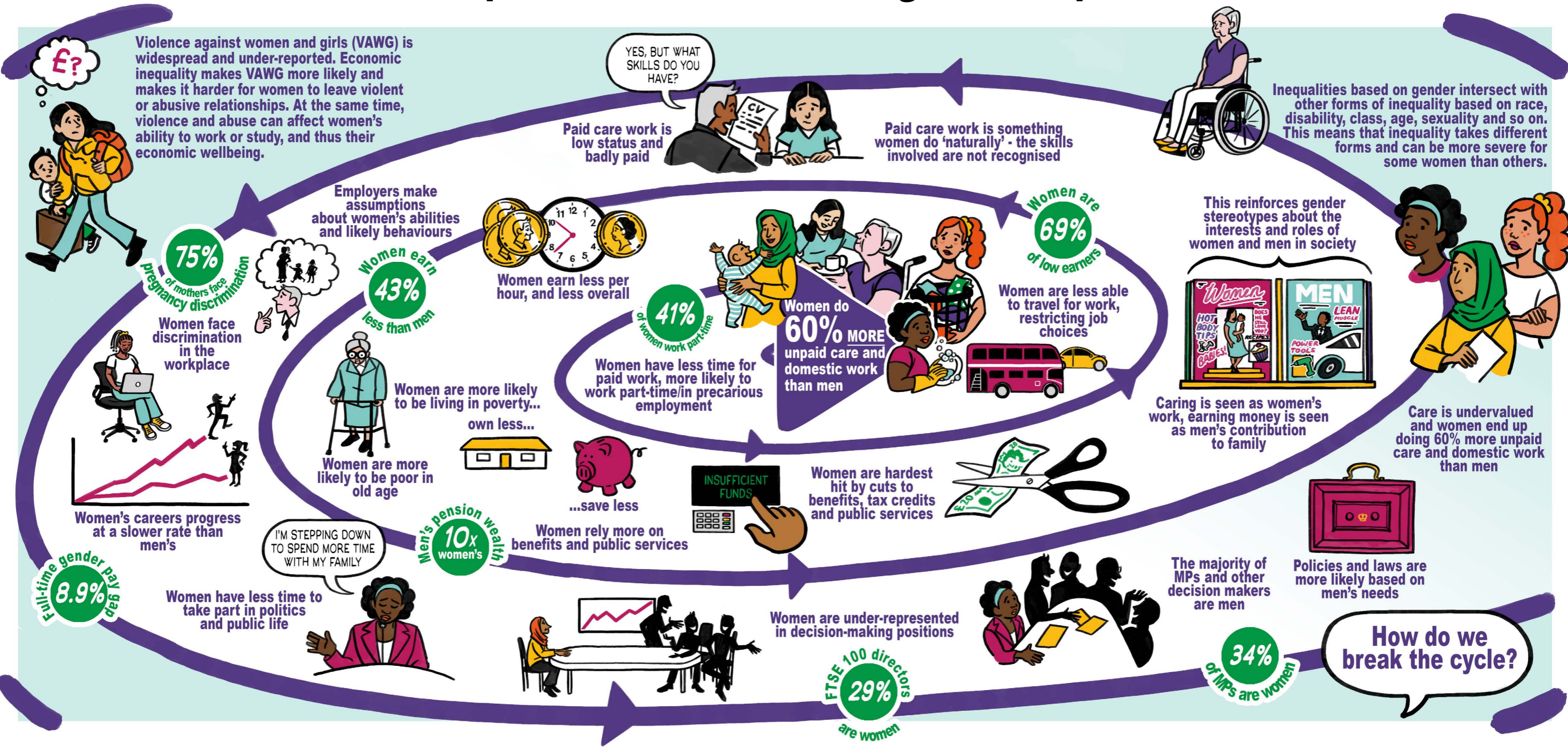
Spirals of inequality

How unpaid care is at the heart of gender inequalities



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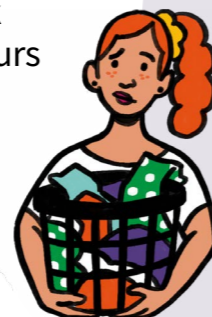


The statistics behind the spiral

The spiral image on the previous page demonstrates how the different elements of gender inequality are connected, and how unpaid care lies at the centre of this spiral. The facts below provide more information about the trends seen in the spiral.*

At the heart of gender inequality in the UK is the unequal division of unpaid work.

- On average, women carry out 60% more unpaid work than men.¹
- Women aged 26-35 do the most unpaid work (34.6 hours per week compared with 17.4 hours for men aged 26-35).²



Women have less time to do paid work.

- **Women are less likely to be in paid work:** Women's employment rate stands at 72.3%, compared to 80.4% for men.^{3,4}
- **Women are more likely to work part-time:** 41% of women in employment work part-time, compared to 13% of men.⁵
- **Women are more likely to be engaged in precarious forms of work:** 3.6% of all women in employment and 2.4% of all men in employment were on zero-hours contracts at the end of 2019, with the highest rate among black women (5.5% of all black women in employment).⁶
- Women aged 45-54 are more than twice as likely as men to have given up work to care and over four times more likely to have reduced working hours due to caring responsibilities.⁷
- 75% of mothers face pregnancy or maternity-related discrimination (GB).⁸



Women, on average, earn significantly less than men.

- Women make up 69% of workers on low pay.⁹
- The hourly gender pay gap, in 2019, was 8.9% among full-time employees and 17.3% for all employees.¹⁰
- In 2018, disabled women earned 24.8% less per hour than non-disabled men, on average.¹¹
- On average, women earn 43% less than men from paid work.¹²



Women are under-represented in senior leadership positions.

- Women make up just 21% of senior civil servants, 25% of senior judiciary members and 21% of national newspaper editors.¹³
- 29% of FTSE100 directors are women.¹⁴
- 34% of MPs are women.¹⁵
- Women from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background hold less than 1% of the 1000 most powerful jobs in the UK.¹⁶



Over their lifecourse, women are more likely to live in poverty, save less, and have lower retirement incomes.



- Almost half (48%) of single-parent households live in poverty, and the vast majority of those single parents (86%) are women.¹⁷
- Women save less than men, are less likely to save regularly than men, and less likely to hold investments, such as bonds and shares.¹⁸
- Among all 65-75 year olds, median pension wealth for men (£164,700) is almost ten times the median pension wealth for women (£17,300) (GB).¹⁹

Women are hardest hit by cuts to social security.

Because of their lower average earnings, social security makes up a larger proportion of women's incomes.

- Women lost more than men from direct tax and welfare reforms (2010-2017) at every income level, with Asian women in the poorest third of households losing the most.²⁰

Economic inequality also makes violence against women and girls more likely. It also makes it harder for women to leave abusive relationships.



1 in 4 women experience domestic abuse in their lifetime and 1 in 5 experience sexual abuse (England and Wales).²¹

*All statistics apply to the whole of the UK unless otherwise indicated

Gender inequality across the UK

There are many commonalities, but also differences, in the way gender inequality is experienced across the four nations of the UK – England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

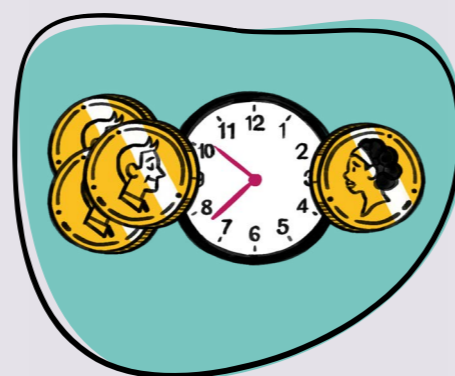
Each of these national contexts also provides unique political, economic and institutional challenges and opportunities for building a more gender-equal economy.

England and Wales share a legal system, while Scotland and Northern Ireland each have their own distinct legal system. The degree to which powers have been devolved to each of the four nations also varies. Women in Northern Ireland are disadvantaged as their rights and protections are lower than elsewhere in the UK.²² Northern Ireland is the only nation without a childcare strategy,

and those experiencing violence, and anyone they disclose to, risk criminalisation if they fail to report the offence to police.

The Welsh government has committed to becoming a feminist government, while Scotland, has been able to use its devolved powers around social security to mitigate some of the worst gender impacts of welfare reforms, including the bedroom tax and allowing split payments of UC for couples.

The Commission on a Gender-Equal Economy is committed to taking into account the unique contexts, challenges and opportunities across the four nations as it develops its recommendations.



The Commission on a Gender-Equal Economy

The Women's Budget Group's Commission on a Gender-Equal Economy is working to develop alternative economic policies to promote gender equality across the UK.

With a panel of **17 expert Commissioners** from business, trade unions, civil society and academia, the Commission is envisioning a fundamentally reshaped economy: **an economy which puts the care and well-being of people and planet at its centre.**

Travelling across the four nations of the UK, the Commission is gathering oral and written evidence, consulting with stakeholders and grassroots groups and developing a suite of policy recommendations intended to create a gender-equal economy.

We will launch our final report in autumn 2020.



Find out more:

wbg.org.uk/commission
#WBGCommission
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2 Ibid
3 ONS (2019) Female employment rate (aged 16-64, seasonally adjusted) (<https://bit.ly/2SmOujw>)
4 ONS (2019) Male employment rate (aged 16-64, seasonally adjusted) (<https://bit.ly/2UtUTvN>)
5 ONS (2019) EMP01 (<https://bit.ly/3bhpltF>)
6 ONS (2020) EMP17 (<https://bit.ly/2IA5XQP>); TUC (2017) Insecure work and ethnicity (<https://bit.ly/3cSAho2>)

7 Carers UK (2016) '10 facts about women and caring on International Women's Day - based on analysis from Valuing Carers 2015,' (<https://bit.ly/2lCyN5d>)
8 Equality and Human Rights Commission (2018) Is Britain Fairer? The State of Equality and Human Rights 2018 (<https://bit.ly/39QbhvL>)
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14 Ibid
15 Ibid
16 The Colour of Power Index (2017). <https://bit.ly/2UYGmqH>
17 Women's Budget Group (2018) The Female Face of Poverty (<https://bit.ly/398jz0w>)
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20 Women's Budget Group (2017) Intersecting Inequalities: the impact of austerity on Black and Minority Ethnic Women in the UK. (<https://bit.ly/2CM2AE0>)
21 The Office for National Statistics (2018) Domestic abuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2018. (<https://bit.ly/2Rbq1Mk>); ONS (2018) Sexual offences in England and Wales: year ending March 2017 (<https://bit.ly/2C0Y83y>)
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