

FEMINISM

Feminism is the pursuit of equality between men and women. Feminists seek economic, political, social, legal and personal rights for women that are equal to those of men.

Feminist campaigns have campaigned for major societal changes such as voting rights, reproductive rights, greater political representation and fairer pay. But there is still a long way to go until men and women lead truly equal lives.



ECONOMICS

The word 'economics' comes from the Greek word 'oikonomia' meaning 'household management'. But nowadays the meaning of 'economics' has expanded to mean the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.

When we analyse the economy we investigate the psychology of human behaviour and decision-making.



What is FEMINIST ECONOMICS?

FEMINIST ECONOMICS

Values the role of unpaid work carried out by men & women, in the home & through care work

Acknowledges that the economy depends not just on the production & distribution of goods and services, but on *co-operation & care*

Recognises that *relationships* influence how our economy functions

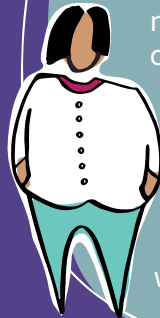
Recognises that the interests of members of the same household may differ and that resources are not necessarily *shared equally*

Acknowledges that the *complexity* of human lives cannot always be quantified

FEMINIST ECONOMICS

Feminist economics promotes economic equality between women and men. The activities, behaviour and decisions of men and women have a major impact on our economy. But mainstream economics has a tendency to be based on men's lives and recognises only work that is done for money.

A feminist economics perspective recognises the paid and unpaid work of both men and women.



MAINSTREAM ECONOMICS

Has a tendency to prize *money, machines & men*

Measures paid work in *Gross Domestic Product* (GDP), but fails to count the contribution of unpaid work

Fails to recognise *non-market activities* as important to the economy

Builds its picture of the economy as consisting of people motivated by *self-interest & material goods*

Assumes that the influences on people's decisions can be objectively quantified & tends to build economic theories that depend on *mathematical models*

THE ECONOMY IS WRAPPED UP IN OUR VALUES. WHICH VALUES ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Thoughtfulness Respect Trustworthiness Honesty
 Compassion Self-interest Greed Co-operation Empathy Growth
 Materialism Risk Care Discipline Trust
 Instability **Which values** Competitiveness
 Self-discipline SHOULD OUR Rationality
 Autonomy ECONOMY Fairness
 Integrity BE BUILT ON? Tenderness
 Wealth Kindness



Our economy should seek to reduce inequality for everyone – men & women alike

Despite advances in women's equality in recent years, many women still experience discrimination and disadvantage in their lives. Often this is because our economic system fails to recognise women's lives, experiences and needs.

We can choose how our economy works and we should choose an economy that works for everyone rather than the few.



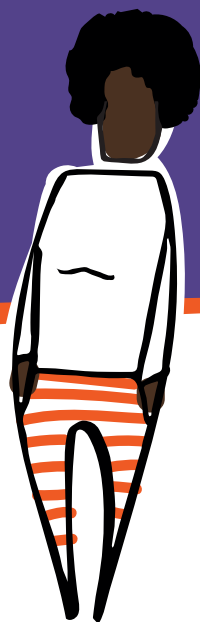
Our economy should recognise the value of care and unpaid work – carried out by women & men

Carers are fundamental to our human existence. Children, the elderly and disabled people need to be cared for and nurtured. A good society is one where people are well cared for across the life course, and where we take pride in our caring roles.

We need to view vulnerability as a fact of life; it affects men and women alike. We need to recognise the contribution that carers make to our society and our economy. An economy that recognises the importance of care would benefit all of society.



HOW DOES THE ECONOMY AFFECT ME?



I RECEIVE **Benefits**

By 2020, some groups of women will have lost more than £2000 annually due to changes in taxes and benefits since 2010.

If you receive benefits, it is likely that you will have been affected by the benefit freezes and cutbacks. A greater proportion of women's incomes is made up of benefits. This means that women, especially those on low incomes, have shouldered the greatest burden from austerity.

The Women's Budget Group advocates for a fair and just social security system that enables women, men and children to live free from poverty.

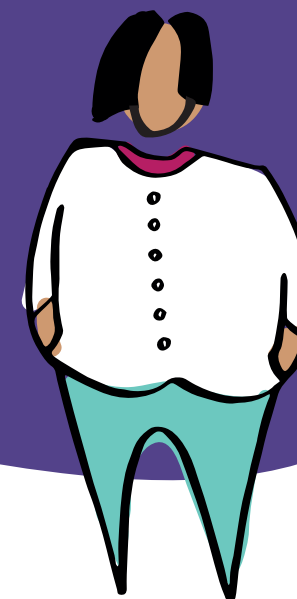


I AM A **Parent**

A family with one child under two in part-time childcare and one child aged five at an after-school club can now expect to pay £7,933 per year for childcare, over 28 per cent of median household income.

The economic policy choices made by the government have a huge impact on the options that are available to parents. In many cases women bear the brunt of the responsibilities for childcare due to poor working rights, maternity and paternity policies.

The Women's Budget Group recognises the importance of affordable childcare and support for all child carers.



I AM AN **Unpaid carer**

There are now over 1 million people who do not get the care they need from any public source.

The lack of publically financed care provision has put a disproportionate burden on unpaid carers. Lots of men provide unpaid care, but the majority of unpaid carers are women.

The Women's Budget Group champions the rights and needs of carers who provide support to vulnerable members of society.

HOW DOES THE ECONOMY AFFECT ME?

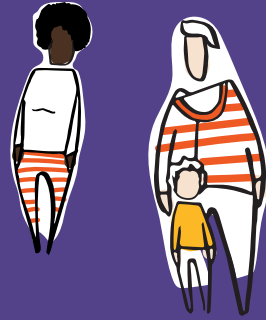


I AM A **Young person**

In 2016, 843,000 young people were not in education, employment or training.

Young people today face countless challenges such as finding jobs and training, competing in the work place and finding affordable housing. Girls and young women, particularly in deprived areas, experience particular challenges in securing work and gender segregation of the workforce means they are more likely to enter lower paid jobs.

The Women's Budget Group believes that we need to invest in our economy to create sustainable jobs and a brighter future for young people.



I NEED **Regular care**

Over 4 million people over the age of 65 in England are in need of regular care.

As well as making up a large proportion of carers, women also make up the majority of those receiving care. With social care funding in crisis, the number of people with unmet care needs is on the rise.

The Women's Budget Group calls for a National Care Service to ensure that care is provided when needed and with dignity.



I AM AN **Employee**

Women working full-time earn 84 pence for every pound earned by a man working full-time.

In recent years there have been huge steps forward in ushering in greater equality between men and women's pay. But, despite these advances we know that women often receive less pay for the same work as men. This has knock on effect for women, including reduced pension contributions.

The Women's Budget Group campaigns for equal pay and earning rights for men and women.



HOW DOES THE ECONOMY AFFECT ME?



I AM A **Single parent**

Single parent families are nearly twice as likely to be in poverty as those in couple parent families.

Single parents make up around a quarter of families with dependent children. Around 90% of single parents are women. For single parents, juggling the need to earn an income and look after the children is often a struggle.

Single parent households have seen the largest cut to their income of all types of households as a result of changes to taxes and benefits since 2010.

The Women's Budget Group advocates for the rights and needs of single parents, the majority of whom are women.

Find more resources at wbg.org.uk



I LIVE **In a community**

In a recent survey, over a third of women said they felt more cut off from their community because of cuts to local services and facilities.

Communities are strengthened by friendships, neighbourhood groups and family networks. Strong community connections reduce isolation and help us to lead happier lives. Cuts to public services and community settings threaten these valuable connections.

The Women's Budget Group recognises the importance of local public services and facilities to building strong communities.



It's free to join the Women's Budget Group if you agree with our aims and our mission go to

wbg.org.uk/join-us

The Women's Budget Group brings together feminist economists, researchers, policy experts and activists to work towards our vision of a gender equal society in which women's financial independence gives them greater autonomy at work, home, and in civil society.

Join us

Connect & share

Facebook

facebook.com/womensbudgetgroup

Twitter

twitter.com/WomensBudgetGrp

What action CAN I TAKE?

Ask questions

We need to keep asking questions about our economy in order to understand it better and to change it for the better:

Is our economy fair? Who does the majority of unpaid care?

What should be the priorities for government spending?

How, and from whom, should government raise its money?

Who benefits from the unpaid care that women do?

How do we ensure fairness between generations?

Find out more

WBG briefings on key social & economic policy issues

wbg.org.uk/category/analysis

WBG analysis of Government budgets

wbg.org.uk/analysis/assessments



Find more resources at wbg.org.uk

wbg WOMEN'S BUDGET GROUP