

News from the EHRC

Jackie Beer from the EHRC gives an update on their current work

Equality Bill and the Gender Pay Gap

As part of the Commission's drive to increase gender equality in the workplace, we support the Gender Pay Gap Information clause (clause 78) in the Equality Bill which encourages voluntary reporting of gender pay gap in organisations with more than 250 employees. The clause would enable the Government at some future date – but not before 2013– to oblige employers to publish information on any gender pay gap in their organisation if they find that voluntary reporting is not satisfactory.

The Bill also contains an important new clause that would make it unlawful for an employer to penalise someone for discussing their pay with colleagues. This is designed to promote greater transparency in pay arrangements, which helps reduce the gender pay gap.

Commission outlines new gender pay reporting proposals

Employers that choose to analyse and report publicly their gender pay gaps will receive limited immunity from investigation.

As part of the Commission's drive to increase gender equality in the workplace, this unprecedented step aims to encourage businesses to adopt voluntary measures to analyse and make public their gender pay gaps.

The Commission has released proposals outlining the voluntary measures organisations with more than 250 employees can use to publish information on pay differentials between men and women.

[For more information](#)

Financial Services Inquiry

In 2009, the Commission began a timely inquiry into sex discrimination and the gender pay gap in the finance sector. This ongoing inquiry has found that the gap between male and female full-time earnings is twice as large as the average gap in the economy. Women in some of the UK's leading finance companies receive around 80 per cent less in performance related pay than male colleagues. This disparity is a major factor behind the massive gender pay gap in this sector, with far fewer

women in senior roles than in other sectors. The Inquiry is now working with key stakeholders to develop practical solutions to the problems identified.

[For more information](#)

Guidance on managing new and expectant parents at work

This new Commission guide is designed to help employers successfully manage, support and retain employees who are new or expectant parents. These employees may be pregnant themselves, the partner of a mum to be, or about to adopt. The guide covers a range of subjects, including health and safety, maternity and paternity leave and pay, adoption and other types of leave, and arrangements for return to work.

[For more information](#)

Working Better

There have been huge changes in women's participation in employment over the last 30 years; however men's contribution to childcare has not increased at the same rate. In most cases, women continue to shoulder the responsibility for childcare, even in households where both parents work full-time.

The Commissions flagship Working Better project is about setting a new agenda to meet the changing needs of families, workers and employers in the 21st century. The project was launched in 2008 and examines the limitations of current legislation, work organisation and culture.

[For more information](#)

Violence against women

Each year, 3 million women in Britain experience rape, domestic violence, stalking or other violence.

The Commissions Map of Gaps project is a unique campaign in partnership with the [End Violence against Women coalition](#) which maps the availability of services for women who have experienced violence.

Whilst men and boys may also experience some of these forms of violence, they are disproportionately experienced by women. The scale of violence in women's lives, the contexts it takes place in, its meaning and consequences, all make violence against women part of the continued inequality between women and men.

[For more information](#)

Commission issues gender equality duty compliance notices to three local authorities

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has issued compliance notices to three local authorities warning that they need to take steps immediately to address gender inequality in their community or face legal action for failing to comply with the Sex Discrimination Act.

[For more information](#)

Female refugees health at risk

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has published a report, ahead of International Women's Day, that looks at the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in Britain.

The report warns that female refugees and asylum seekers are failing to access appropriate antenatal and cancer prevention care after arriving in Britain.

[For more information](#)