THE FUTURE OF WORK: NEW CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC EQUALITY

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DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING POLICIES FOR A BETTER FUTURE AT WORK:
4TH CONFERENCE OF THE REGULATING FOR DECENT WORK NETWORK
INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE
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We agree to the goal of reducing the gap in participation rates between men and women in our countries by 25% by 2025, taking into account national circumstances, to bring more than 100 million women into the labour force, significantly increase global growth and reduce poverty and inequality.

Gender disparity indicators (OECD)

- Labour force participation rates –
  - 15 and over: 54% women, 69% men
  - 15-64: 66.8% women, 79.4% men

- Gender pay gap – 15.5%*


*The gender wage gap is unadjusted and defined as the difference between male and female median wages divided by the male median wages (OECD definition)
Gender disparity indicators (OECD)

- retirement pension differentials (65 and over) – 28% lower for women in OECD Europe and USA

- under-employment (5%/2%) and casualisation higher for women than men (large country differentials on this indicator)

To consider re G20 commitment:

- Current state of play on women’s employment
  - international perspectives
  - Australia as a case study

- Challenges for the achievement of G20 goals
  - emerging trends and the future of work

- Implications for public policy – what needs to happen
Core challenges

- The way old patterns of gender segregation in labour market merge with new forms of labour market polarisation and segmentation
- Implications for women’s advancement
- Implications for reducing inequality and improving economic growth
Australia as a case study of gender inequality

- Advanced post-industrial democracy
- Highly globalised economy
- High levels of education
- Flexible labour market but with high minimum wage
- Good history of gender equality legislation and public policy
- Leading country on UNHD index but 19th for gender inequality index
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core industry sectors of female employment (6/17)</th>
<th>Female employment %</th>
<th>Male employment %</th>
<th>Gender pay gap*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Training</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and Food Services</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Scientific and Technical Services</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration and Safety</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
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*Average full time weekly ordinary time earnings
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core industry sectors of female employment</th>
<th>Informalisation – employees % without paid leave entitlem’ts</th>
<th>Female under-employment%</th>
<th>Male under-Employment%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>11.3% (av)</td>
<td>6.9% (av)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Other Australian gender indicators

Participation rate (15 and over)
- 58.7% women
- 71% men

Full time unemployment rate
- 6.5% women
- 5.5% men

Informalisation – employees without paid leave entitlements
- 26.4% women
- 21.2% men
- 46% employed women part time
- 17.6% employed men part time

Observations*

- Women’s employment advancement stalled even going backward eg gender pay gap getting wider
- Women locked into lower paid, insecure employment – limited mobility to SER employment
- High levels of labour market segmentation – limited cross sectoral mobility
- Polarization – hollowing out of the middle “good” jobs

Refer to full presentation for all the references for this section
Three core factors identified*

1. Public sector financing retrenchments – austerity measures

2. Ascendancy of demand driven employment arrangements

3. Changes to the labour process: monitoring and surveillance, work intensification


Effects of austerity

1. Long terms effects of public sector financing reduction – austerity measures*

Cuts into core feminised industry sectors esp. health care and social assistance, education and training and public administration.

Short term funding and competitive tendering the norm in these areas
Effects of austerity

Particularly affects women because of lack of ongoing SER employment opportunities

Reductions in ongoing public service employment (gov’t policy of no expansion of employment)

e.g. tertiary, primary and secondary teaching workforces increasingly casual/short term contract – 50% of higher ed. teaching undertaken by casual staff
2. Demand driven business models and employment arrangements

Major effects on jobs in retail sales, accommodation/food services closely linked to peaks of demand for services

But also in areas like education depending on student numbers and funding

Again reduction in opportunities for SER jobs in feminised employment sectors
Changes to the labour process

3. Changes to the labour process – monitoring and surveillance, work intensification

Use of technologies to drive performance, measure outputs and reduce workforces
Changes to the labour process

Longer term implications for labour replacing technologies in areas such as

- Administration: document processing
- Retail trade: online: automated service points
- Education: MOOCs
Effects on the working lives of women

- Entrapment in insecure jobs – no upward mobility
- Limited efficacy of further education and qualifications in improving opportunities
- Movement into unemployment and out of the workforce, under-employment
Effects on the working lives of women (cont)

- Reduced job quality
- Mental and physical health effects, poverty risks
- Reduced capacity to meet later pension eligibility ages

Core findings of Australian longitudinal studies:
Household Income and Labour Dynamics Australia Survey, Workplace Research Centre Survey
Consequences of austerity

- Austerity measures having far reaching effects into driving women into lower paid insecure jobs

- Also implicated in vigorous welfare to work regime – low benefit levels and strict work take up requirements driving welfare recipients into insecure jobs
• Compounding effects of other factors – demand driven employment arrangements and use of technologies to drive performance
Implications for G20 gender equity goals

- Current trends not very auspicious for their achievement in medium term
- How can goals of improving women’s participation be achieved on current trends
- Meet ‘decent work’ criteria and reduce poverty and inequality
Priority areas for public policy

1. Public financing - austerity
2. Social policies
3. Labour laws
Action on public financing - austerity

- Governments accountability for employment conditions in the public sector and the services they fund
Action on social policy

- ‘Activation’ of welfare to work social policy on the SER jobs front for unemployed people along the lines of Employment Retention and Advancement programs
- Focus on getting people into decent sustainable employment
Conversion requirements from informal to SER employment arrangements after a specified period of time

the application to casual and dependent contract workers of the full suite of labour standards including leave entitlements and protections against dismissal.
We are strongly committed to reducing youth unemployment, which is unacceptably high, by acting to ensure young people are in education, training or employment. Our EmploymentPlans include investments in apprenticeships, education and training, and incentives for hiring young people and encouraging entrepreneurship. We remain focussed on addressing informality, as well as structural and long-term unemployment, by strengthening labour markets and having appropriate social protection systems. Improving workplace safety and health is a priority. We ask our labour and employment ministers, supported by an Employment Working Group, to report to us in 2015 (G20, 2014).