

## Impact case study (REF3b)

<b>Institution: University of Manchester</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 19 (Business and Management Studies)</b>
<b>Title of case study: Impacting on European employment policy</b>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>European employment research at Manchester Business School's European Work and Employment Research Centre (EWERC) has had a significant impact on international policymaking bodies, specifically the European Commission (EC), the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Demonstrated policy impact includes: the defining and strengthening of a gender mainstreaming and gender pay policy in Europe; technical improvements in the European Commission's approach to the European Employment Strategy (EES) (which all EU member states are required to report on and implement); and greater precision (regarding up-to-date data and the functioning of labour market institutions) in EC and ILO policy recommendations on low wage work, minimum wages and regulation for decent work.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>The impacts relate to cumulative research undertaken during 1993-2012 at the University of Manchester. The key researchers were:</p> <p>Professor Jill Rubery (Professor 1993-date)  Professor Damian Grimshaw (Research associate, Senior Lecturer, Professor 1994-date)  Dr Mark Smith ( Research associate, Lecturer 1993-2007)  Professor Colette Fagan (Research associate 1993-1995, Reader, Professor, Deputy Dean 1998-date)</p> <p>Three specific dimensions of European Work and Employment Research Centre (EWERC) research have contributed findings relevant to the development of European employment policy.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Through the coordination of the European Commission's Expert Group on Gender and Employment (1993-2007), the research contributed original evidence to support the argument that gender equality is fundamental for the effective and sustainable development of European Union (EU) employment and social policy. Drawing on original institutional and data analyses for all EU member states, the research produced a series of rich comparative assessments that established an important evidence base for policy. Key research outputs were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That patterns of female employment rates shape country performance in reaching EU employment rate targets.</li> <li>• Differences in wage-setting institutions help explain gender pay gaps.</li> <li>• Differences in working time regimes shape work life balance options and gender equality</li> <li>• Countries vary in their use of gender mainstreaming in employment and social policy.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. A range of funded projects on comparative European employment arrangements and trends have consolidated the above research findings, reinforcing the importance of institutional arrangements in shaping gender relations and also identifying the scope for and diversity of the path-specific patterns of change within European labour markets. These projects include two EU Framework projects: NESY explored the implications of service sector developments for working time; and Dynamo the dynamic development of national employment and social models. Research commissioned by the World Bank has also provided the basis for an influential critique of the labour market flexibility and insider-outsider debates and gender.</li> <li>3. A further set of EWERC projects (funded by the Department of Health, the ILO, the EC and the Russell Sage Foundation) have illuminated the development of wage systems across Europe, both in relation to low-wage labour markets across Europe and to public sector pay and procurement systems. These have provided original evidence on the distinctive</li> </ol>

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character of the sector and country-level wage systems and have generated policy implications for the development and maintenance of decent pay through protecting against wage exploitation, improving engagement with social partners and strengthening mechanisms for pay progression. The findings from five inter-related projects have identified:

- The influence of minimum wages on pay equity.
- The critical role of diverse institutional conditions in shaping the causes and consequences of low-wage work.
- Evidence of falling youth wages relative to adults and a need for youth minimum wages to recognise competencies.
- Best practice evidence whereby social partners build constructively on minimum wage policy to revitalise collective agreements.

The important role of wage structures and legal systems of employment protection in procurement decisions and practices

### 3. References to the research

1. Rubery, J., Smith, M. and Fagan, C. (1999) *Women's Employment in Europe: Trends and Prospects*, London: Routledge. - Copy available on request
2. Rubery, J. (2002) 'Gender mainstreaming and gender equality in the EU: the impact of the EU employment strategy', *Industrial Relations Journal*, 33: 500-522. DOI: 10.1111/1468-2338.00250
3. Rubery, J., Grimshaw, D. and Figueiredo, H. (2005) 'How to close the gender pay gap in Europe: towards the gender mainstreaming of pay policy', *Industrial Relations Journal*, 36 (3): 184-213. DOI: 10.1111/j.1468-2338.2005.00353.x
4. Grimshaw, D. (ed.) (2013) *Minimum Wages, Pay Equity and Comparative Industrial Relations*, London: Routledge – Copy available on request
5. Rubery, J. (2011) 'Towards a gendering of the labour market regulation debate', *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 35 (6): 1103-1126. DOI: 10.1093/cje/ber001

[1] Google scholar citation 373; [2] Widely cited among EU policy documents, associated with numerous invitations by European Commission for Rubery to present evidence at EC meetings/conferences and Google scholar citation of 113; [3] Google scholar citation 65, publication followed by a debate in the journal including an invited reply by the authors, [4] Covers research funded by the European Commission, associated with high profile Brussels conference, invitations by the ILO and EuroFound for Grimshaw to present findings/advise on policy work [5] High quality peer reviewed journal cited as an authoritative paper by the ILO in an official memo to the World Bank's independent panel of experts on the 'Ease of Doing Business Index'.

### 4. Details of the impact

#### Context

From the mid 1990s into the 2000s EWERC's research reports and publications arising out of its coordination of the EC Experts Group on Gender and Employment (EGGE) and the national and international comparative research programme across EU member states and EFTA countries that EWERC designed and executed were very influential in developing a gender dimension to European employment policy particularly with respect to gender mainstreaming and gender pay policy.

#### Pathways to impact

In all funded research projects Professors Grimshaw and Rubery enjoyed strong collaborations with personnel from the funding partners at the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the EC. All projects were accompanied by reports, supplementary policy briefings and various forms of individual presentations, such as keynote talks at EC meetings, policy workshops and training sessions for EC and ILO high level staff.

#### Reach and Significance

There are 220 million workers within the European Union who are affected by EU employment, gender and wage policy set by the European Commission. The ILO is a United Nations agency dealing with labour issues, particularly international labour standards and decent work for all, and comprises 185 UN member countries.

**Impact on gender employment policy**

Advances in the EC's gender mainstreaming policy draw extensively on EWERC research. In 2008 the Commission produced a widely used resource, the '*Manual for Gender Mainstreaming*' [F], which was designed as a user-friendly guide for policy-makers and social partners across the EU to incorporate gender issues in employment and social policy. References to EWERC research are made throughout the manual. Furthermore, the EC's recommended resources for gender impact assessments listed on its Europa website include two EWERC research reports. The 2008 interim report on the 2006-10 Roadmap to Gender equality notes that the '*publication of a "Manual for gender mainstreaming of employment policies" was welcomed by the Member States*' [G]. The head of the EC's Equal Opportunities Unit [A] from 1992-1996 has described in a published book chapter the impact of the EWERC research in the following terms: '*this... network, over the years, produced unique comparative analysis to guide policy making at EU and national level, contributing to the 'Europeanization' of gender employment policy*' (Hubert 2011). Similarly, the current Head of Unit states '*Their research has provided the basis for systematic gender impact and gender mainstreaming assessments of EU and national level employment policy*' [C]. The *European Community of Practice on Gender Mainstreaming (an EU body)* in its position paper [H] on the preparation of the Structural Funds programming period 2014+ makes reference to listed published papers 2 and 3. Further downstream policy impact is demonstrated by reference to EWERC research on gender indicators by the ad hoc Working Group of Member States representatives for the EQUAL programme set up to address effective ways of integrating the principles of gender equality and gender mainstreaming into European Structural Funds Operational Programmes for 2007-2013.

In 2008 Rubery joined an advisory group for the ETUC's general secretary and in 2010 the advisory board for the linked European Trade Union Institute to advise on European employment policy and particularly gender aspects. In 2013 she was asked to introduce a panel on equality at the ETUC's mid-term conference, as corroborated in the letter by the Director of the ETUI Research Department [D]. In 2012, she joined an EU high-level expert group chaired by the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion to advise on the development of a social investment package for the EU on the basis of her research on gender and social models. And in 2013 she was invited to join the Scientific Board of the European Parliament Socialists and Democrats group's 'Progressive Economy Initiative'. Her work on gender mainstreaming in the EES also led to an invitation from the ILO in 2005 to provide a report on gender mainstreaming of the global employment agenda. This report is referenced in the 2009 report on *Gender equality at the heart of decent work* item V1 to the International Conference of the ILO (main policymaking body) and the 2011 ILO report to the conference on gender equality refers to the 2007 EC report that underpinned the manual on gender mainstreaming. The Research and Policy Coordinator of the Conditions of Work and Equality Department at the ILO, refers to Rubery's work as a '*powerful piece of evidence in the ILO's ongoing agenda to strengthen policymakers' awareness of gender equality issues in employment*' [B].

**Impact on wage policy**

Policy reports and briefings issued by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and European Commission exert a strong influence on European wage policy and EWERC research can claim a significant impact since 2008.

The ILO *Global Wage Report* (2008) cites EWERC research demonstrating evidence that the level of collective bargaining coverage among women in Europe is dampened by non-standard employment contracts and that in order for minimum wages to reduce the gender pay gap they ought to be set at levels above pay rates found in female-dominated sectors and occupations. The 2010 ILO *Global Wage Report* [I] cites and takes long text excerpts from a specially commissioned EWERC report by Grimshaw. This covered the clarification of operational definitions of low-wage employment, the collation of international data on low pay, analyses of inter-relationships with other pay equity indicators, the identification of reasons for women's over-representation in low-wage jobs, the interaction between minimum wage and collective bargaining mechanisms and policy measures to improve low pay. As the Research and Policy Coordinator states in his letter of support, '*The fact that Damian Grimshaw's paper was the most frequently cited paper in the Global*

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*Wage Report (fifteen times) testifies to the critical contribution of his paper* [B].

Grimshaw and Rubery's minimum wage research was disseminated at an international conference, hosted by EWERC, at which the Commissioner for DG Employment (EC) made a keynote talk. The Deputy Head of the Unit [E] at the EC states that this research: *'has had an especially significant impact on our understanding of the pay equity effects of minimum wage policy in diverse industrial relations contexts'*. Further impact on the ILO's minimum wage policy recommendations includes Grimshaw's hosting of a symposium on minimum wage policy and pay equity at its 2011 *Regulating for Decent Work* conference and an ILO commissioned technical report on youth minimum wages by Grimshaw in 2012, which formed the basis for the ILO's 2012 G20 Employment Brief on 'Decent Pay and Minimum Wages for Young People' [J] and was also adapted for inclusion in a high profile ILO book, *Labour Market Institutions and Inequality* (forthcoming). Research by Rubery and Grimshaw on gender and minimum wages was also cited by and used by ILO staff in successfully preparing a new regulation on domestic work, as attested to by the Research and Policy Coordinator in his letter of support [B]. Most recently, EWERC research on public sector pay was included in the EC DG Employment flagship publication, *Industrial Relations in Europe* (2012).

### Impact on the International Labour Organisation

There are more than 500 references to work by Rubery and Grimshaw on the ILO website which reflects the depth of their relationship with the organisation. Rubery has contributed to the annual ILO 'World Employment' reports, published commissioned Working Papers, participated in ILO policy discussions and workshops and in a recent study of gender implications of public sector adjustment. Grimshaw has acted as a UK expert in six ILO projects since 2005 covering vulnerable work, decent work, minimum wages, recession and inequalities, public sector and social models. He has also produced two specially commissioned state-of-the-art reports on low wage work and decent pay for youth and has delivered workshops to ILO staff on gender pay equity and on public sector pay.

Rubery and Grimshaw, along with other MBS colleagues, were instrumental in developing the collaboration of the University of Manchester in the ILO's high profile international conference called 'Regulating for Decent Work' from the second conference in 2011 onwards. It is held in Geneva in alternate years and Rubery sits on its steering committee. The Research and Policy Coordinator [B] describes it as *'a high profile ILO activity designed to maximise the impact of leading academic research on employment policy and practice.'* For 2013, Rubery was invited by ILO staff to provide a plenary presentation and Grimshaw hosted a symposium on public sector pay. It attracts strong interest from European policy-makers and its importance in the ILO's work has been underlined by the opening/closing of the conference by the DG of the ILO.

### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

All sources are cross-referenced in section 4.

- A. Letter from Policy Adviser at the EC confirming gender/employment impacts
- B. Letter from Research and Policy Coordinator, ILO, confirming ILO and wage policy impacts
- C. Letter from Head of Gender Equality Unit, Directorate-General JUSTICE/Unit D2, European Commission confirming gender/employment impacts
- D. Letter from Director Research Department, ETUI confirming Professor Rubery advisory role and impact
- E. Letter from Deputy Head of Unit, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, EC
- F. EC (2008) *Manual for Gender Mainstreaming: Employment, social inclusion and social protection policies*, DGV, Unit G1. European Commission.
- G. EC (2008) Mid-term progress report on the roadmap for equality between women and men (2006-2010) COM760
- H. *European Community of Practice on Gender Mainstreaming (2011)* Position paper on the preparation of the Structural Funds programming period 2014+
- I. ILO (2010) *Global Wage Report*, Geneva: ILO.
- J. ILO (2012) *G20 Youth Employment Brief: Decent Pay and Minimum Wages for Young People*, Geneva: ILO.