

Submission - Diversity Network

1. Do you think statutory measures should be introduced in Jersey for gender pay gap reporting?

Despite greater diversity being evidenced and widely recognised as a business and economic imperative (see PWC's Women in Work Index 2020 as just one well respected source), tangible, positive change has been negligible in most organisations as far as we can perceive over the last 2 years - and, in fact, it is very likely that women will have been disproportionately impacted by the Covid19 pandemic.

A few larger corporates appear to be moving closer to voluntarily sharing their data - it will only take a few to do so to create real momentum in the Finance and Law industries - however, many other industries (especially those who arguably need to engage in cultural change the most) are unlikely to unless incentivised (eg with accessible, free resources to help them carry out their reviews) or forced to do so. As such, if we are serious about ensuring that Jersey PLC is able to compete in a fast changing, increasingly diverse international business landscape - and unless we see MUCH stronger leadership on equality issues from our political leaders - mandating gender pay gap reporting for employers of a certain size is, in my view, necessary to ignite real change.

That said, I would only want to see mandatory reporting implemented if the learning is taken from the UK's statutory measures in this regard. In particular:

- Employers should be required to publish their gender pay gap data AND a 5 year action plan for improvement/cultural change

- Employers should be strongly encouraged and given the support* to publish other diversity pay gap stats too (such as ethnicity and social mobility).

- *Producing stats and a meaningful plan should be supported and help/advice should be made easily available to employers, eg through the IOD D&I Charter and Jersey Employer Group's D&I toolkit, free workshops and D&I mentors. The Diversity Network would be more than happy to support this (in terms of advice, coaching, workshops and mentoring), as I'm sure would other similar, local support/action groups.

- It is important that we avoid tokenism - as perceived in some employers in the U.K. - where board diversity targets are fulfilled through the engagement of female Non Executives. Success should be measured through the number of women in senior Board roles (CEO, CFO, COO) and also through the talent pipeline (ie women across and coming up through the business). This is achieved through meaningful, long term succession planning, innovative and inclusive recruitment practices and genuine cultural change. Government, in partnership with organisations like The Diversity Network, Jersey Employer Group and the IoD, will need to provide leadership, examples of good practice and practical help to support this.

2. What are your views on other types of mandatory reporting such as the ethnicity pay gap?

Please see above.

It's incredibly important that we view the seniority gap in the context of intersectionality. We are seeing more women from particular backgrounds progress to the top of business in some sectors - but they tend to be predominantly women of certain backgrounds (ie white, middle

class, able bodied and university educated). This progress is positive - but not reflective of all girls and women in our society, and a truly inclusive society enables all women to fulfil their potential, not just a few.

In my view, more research, data and a focus on social mobility will help to facilitate this inclusivity and, therefore, greater diversity across our work places.

I'm hopeful that GOJ's new disability campaign will help in this regard too.

3. Do you think there has been any change in the cultural influences which affect the gender pay gap in Jersey? (see contributing factors above)

If anything, anecdotal evidence in Jersey (and research in the UK, assuming Jersey follows a similar pattern), suggests that women have been forced to take on more domestic and caring responsibilities over the course of the pandemic - even when both partners are working. It has very much been the case that mothers, rather than fathers, have been forced to 'juggle' work and home-schooling/childcare during periods of lockdown or quarantine. As well as likely forcing some women to reduce their working hours or take additional unpaid leave to accommodate childcare (or even leave their jobs), it will have had a detrimental impact on the mental health of many mothers.

With the severe impact on the retail and hospitality industries in particular, again it will be women (and particularly women from some ethnic minority groups) who will have been most impacted in terms of unemployment and financial insecurity.

Anecdotal feedback from women in ethnic minority and lower socio-economic groups suggests that many feel that our Government do not understand or perhaps really care about their lives and experiences of inclusion and opportunity on the island. They often do not see themselves as having access to the same opportunities as white, middle class, able-bodied Jersey-born or British people (men in particular). Greater diversity within the States Assembly, therefore, is a major part of the solution to improving the lives of women and under-represented groups on the island.

The JCRT's research into social mobility and education suggests that there are barriers and inequalities in place within our education system for some children - in particular for children who do not have English as a first language or those with special needs - to achieving their potential or receiving the same opportunities to progress careers within our major industries as other children. Educational barriers are compounded - particularly for girls in these groups - by the stereotypes and discrimination still found in many Jersey employers (you only have to remember, for example, some of the recent arguments put forward on social media about local businesses choosing not to recruit women of children-bearing age when the new family-friendly legislation was being publicly debated).

The lack of high quality, affordable childcare remains a barrier to employment for many women (TDN's research in 2019 suggested that having caring responsibilities was almost as big a barrier to finding employment for those actively seeking work as a criminal record. This suggests that our aging population will only compound this barrier for women over the coming years, unless solutions are found, and action is urgently taken).

As advocated in PwC's Women in Work report, we would also like to see greater access and financial support for women wishing to return to education or re-train in 'future skills' - especially single mothers.

There have undoubtedly been some 'upsides' to the pandemic - namely the acceptance that flexible/home-working is entirely feasible - and this may be of benefit to many working parents.

Employers will need to be careful, however, to mitigate the risk of a two-tier system of career progression - with promotion more likely for employees able to work regularly in the office compared to those working more hours from home. Hybrid working seems to be the 'new normal' trend in the finance and law sectors, but this will only avoid having a detrimental effect on the seniority gap/glass ceiling for women if men are equally taking advantage of greater flexibility. To achieve this, employers must take care to ensure that flexible/homeworking is not perceived as a policy only for working mothers (or, more accurately, more affluent working mothers with the resources and space to work effectively from home) - it must be open to, supported and encouraged amongst all employees regardless of gender and parental responsibilities.

The BLM movement has undoubtedly had a positive effect in raising awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion issues in the workplace and I have noticed an increased momentum for change and requests from employers for help and support.

In addition, the IOD has introduced its D&I Charter and the Jersey Employer Group has recently published its D&I toolkit for employers. These two high profile tools will undoubtedly encourage and support more corporates, particularly in the finance and law sectors, to work harder to reduce their seniority gaps. I am concerned that smaller businesses and the retail and hospitality industries, in my experience, have generally not yet engaged around cultural change in the same positive way, however.

4. Do you think the Government took a gender-sensitive approach to its Covid-19 policies?

I am not personally aware of a 'gender-sensitive' approach.

The Government has certainly not taken an 'ethnicity-sensitive' approach - despite much evidence from the UK that ethnic minority groups will have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic (and there are at least two examples of this lack of awareness/interest/engagement being played out in Jersey to potentially negative effect - 1) the government's decision not to collect ethnicity-related data throughout the pandemic, and 2) arguably its approach to deciding when families could mingle over Christmas. I would personally be most concerned about the impact on women from ethnic minority groups in Jersey - see comment above about workers in the retail and hospitality industries.

5. What impact do you think Covid-19 has had on men and women in the home and workplace?

Please see previous comments.