

Work and Equalities Institute: The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on working women

Date: Tuesday 27 April 2021

Time: 13:00 – 14:30

Registration is via [Eventbrite](#).

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on work and working lives, and there is a recognised need to consider the issue of differential impacts across demographic groups. This event hosted by the Work and Equalities Institute will consider the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on working women looking at issues such as equality at work, flexible work, parental support, and pregnant workers.

Women, employment and parental support in Europe during the Covid-19 pandemic.



This presentation is based on comparative research undertaken during the first wave of Covid 19 that reviewed the potential impact of the pandemic from a gender perspective. In particular, the presentation focuses on the special arrangements that were put in place by European governments to assist parents who were unable to work due to school and nursery closures. These arrangements are examined in terms of the extent to which they support gender equality.

Isabel Tavora, Senior Lecturer in Human Resource Management at Alliance Manchester Business School and a member of the Work and Equalities Institute. Her research focuses on comparative employment policy, collective bargaining, gender equality and work-family reconciliation. Isabel chairs the School's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Unsafe and unsupported: pregnant workers in the pandemic.



Pregnant women were identified as a vulnerable group early in the pandemic, however, measures to protect and support this group of women at work were slow to materialise and inadequate. This includes health and safety protection, the operation of the furlough scheme and support for the self-employed, and protection against discrimination in the economic downturn.

Ros Bragg is Director of Maternity Action, the UK charity campaigning to promote, protect and strengthen maternity rights in the areas of employment, social security and healthcare. Ros has led the organisation since its inception in 2008, pursuing campaigns to challenge maternity discrimination in the workplace, to end charging vulnerable migrants for NHS maternity care and to reduce maternal health inequalities. She has worked in the voluntary sector and civil service in the UK and Australia.

Work after Lockdown: will the future of work be fair, inclusive and flexible?



This presentation presents the learnings about working-from-home under the first UK national lockdown from research undertaken by the ESRC funded Work After Lockdown project. Work After Lockdown is a longitudinal project exploring whether working-from-home under COVID-19 lockdown is changing how people want to work in the future, and how organisations respond. Individual experiences of the period of rapid adjustment from office-based to entirely home based working is examined using employee interviews and data from a new national worker well-being survey; and organisational case studies in commercial Law firms and Local Authorities offer insight into how effectively organisations managed the transition and supported diverse workforce needs. The implications for people-management skills, diversity and inclusion policy and practices, and flexible working are highlighted.

Zoe Young, Director of Half the Sky and Co-investigator, Work After Lockdown. Zoe combines academic work with consultancy and advises large, complex organisations on inclusive and flexible work design.

Discussant



Sian Elliott, Women's Equality Policy Officer at the TUC.