

**9th Biennial International Interdisciplinary conference, 29th June-1st July, 2016
Keele University, UK**

Call for Abstracts

**Mind the Gender Pay Gap:
New Research Findings**

Stream convenors:

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In many countries the issue of unequal pay is on political agendas and has gained relevance in public, media and research discourses. Though the two principles “equal pay for equal work” and “equal pay for work of equal value” have been legally fixed with the European Treaty of Rome 1957 as well as with the subsequent Equal Pay Directive 1975, the EU shows currently an average gender pay gap of 16% which provides evidence that closing the gender pay gap is still a challenge. In the USA, Canada and Australia it is around 18%, though equal pay principles and pay equity acts were established decades ago. Many studies identify a multidimensional problem requiring interventions at multiple, inter-related levels: legislative and judicial (anti-discrimination or labour laws), policy (support measures for working parents, and public support for childcare, policies on part-time employment) and administrative (monitoring); educational (tackling gender stereotypes and supporting girls’ educational and career choices); cultural and societal (confronting gender stereotypes and negative images of women); within the labour market (access to employment, structure of employment, structure and design of earnings, impact of employment relations institutions such as collective bargaining); and in the workplace, where occupational, career, and job characteristics combine to place women in situations of cumulative disadvantage and where outright gender discrimination may also occur.

Closing the gender pay gap through legislative and non-legislative measures is a core objective of the European Commission’s strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015). European countries show different forms of wage-setting mechanisms such as wage indexation, sectoral collective bargaining, company level bargaining, regional bargaining or a combination of different forms. Despite these differences some common trends are occurring: the decentralisation and individualisation of wage-setting mechanisms and an increase in flexible working forms leading to variable pay, all-in-contracts, unpaid overtime, etc. In many sectors and countries, the capacity of trade unions to promote equal pay has also reduced due to the shrinkage of collective bargaining coverage, and private employers have resisted regulation and mandatory provision. The push for decentralisation of collective bargaining, aimed at anchoring wages to productivity, fostered by the EU’s governance reforms responding to the crisis, produces also contradictions in EU equal pay policy. Yet despite innovative et constraining public policies in many developed countries, and various models of workplace-level pay equity approaches, many organisations tend to display foot-dragging and lip service responses to gender reporting and equality measures. Pay equity laws in both Ontario and Quebec have had limited impact in the non-unionised and private sector because of employer non-compliance. In Australia, a new workplace-based mechanism under the Workplace Gender Equality

Act 2012 may prove relatively ineffective in both diagnosing and remedying pay inequality, as there are limitations to what can be achieved through targeting within-organisation inequities.

Against this background, our stream brings together current research on the gender pay gap in a comparative perspective. Papers should not only provide new research findings on the causes of the gender pay gap, but also reflect on the effect of current economic crisis on wage inequalities. In this context, intersectional approaches are welcome. In addition, papers which analyze existing or planned strategies to tackle the gender pay gap are especially relevant. Of interest are government strategies (e.g. legal framework such as in Belgium or in Quebec ; the introduction of a statutory minimum wage such as in Germany or in the UK) as well as of trade unions, employers associations or gender equality units. Further, submissions to this stream may address measures to combat wage inequalities and policies which, directly or indirectly, influence the gender pay gap. The stream will also focus on how relationships, policies, practices and cultures within the workplace contribute to pay inequalities; and how workplaces initiatives in different socio-legal contexts can induce change, highlighting both levers for change as well as barriers, and the role of internal and external actors. We welcome cross-national comparative papers as well as theoretically informed case studies of specific companies or on specific strategies. Possible topics for papers may include, but are not limited to:

- analysis of the gender pay gap in selected occupational groups and/or industries and/or at workplace level which give new insights in the causes of the gender pay gap.
- strategies to tackle the Gender Pay Gap: Which strategies influence the reduction of wage inequalities between women and men? Which strategies seem to be less effective?
- in what way does economic crisis or globalization change the perception of and the awareness of the Gender Pay Gap? Do we need new strategies, drawing on intersectional and transnational perspectives?

Abstracts of approximately 500 words (ONE page, Word document NOT PDF, single spaced, excluding references, no header, footers or track changes) are invited by 1st November 2015 with decisions on acceptance to be made by stream leaders within one month. All abstracts will be peer reviewed. New and young scholars with 'work in progress' papers are welcomed. Papers can be theoretical or theoretically informed empirical work. In the case of co-authored papers, ONE person should be identified as the corresponding author. Due to restrictions of space on the conference schedule, multiple submissions by the same author will not be timetabled. Abstracts should be emailed to: S.E.Milner@bath.ac.uk . Abstracts should include FULL contact details, including your name, department, institutional affiliation, mailing address, and e-mail address. State the title of the stream to which you are submitting your abstract. *Note that no funding, fee waiver, travel or other bursaries are offered for attendance at GWO2016.*