

JACS Submission for Gender Pay Gap Review Panel

Key questions

The Panel would like to invite you to make a written submission with your thoughts on the gender pay gap in Jersey. In order to inform your response, below is a list of questions which might assist you in formulating your submission:

1. Do you think statutory measures should be introduced in Jersey for gender pay gap reporting?
2. What are your views on other types of mandatory reporting such as the ethnicity pay gap?
3. Do you think there has been any change in the cultural influences which affect the gender pay gap in Jersey?
4. Do you think the Government took a gender-sensitive approach to its Covid-19 policies?
5. What impact do you think Covid-19 has had on men and women in the home and workplace?

Responses to Key Questions

1. Gender pay reporting is undertaken by some businesses in Jersey and made available to employees and some release to the public as well. However, it is acknowledged that it is not widely done and/across all business sectors. As at 2 September 2021 of the 5892 queries, JACS have received 4 are on 'equal pay' and 2 of these are not linked to gender. During 2020 JACS received 12,680 queries, or these 18 related to equal pay (with 10 of these linked to gender). Whilst the number of queries JACS have received in relation to equal pay is very low, the 2019 Review found there was a gender pay gap in Jersey, therefore it may well be that a statutory requirement to publish figures would show the full picture.

2. Ethnicity pay gaps are possibly on a par with gender when it comes to JACS queries – for this year to date we have received 2 queries in relation to race and in 2020, 7 of the queries were linked to ethnicity*. Therefore, my comments in relation to showing a full picture as above for gender above would be the same for ethnicity.

*the final equal pay query in 2020 was linked to age.

3 & 5. The impact of Covid-19 on women has been much reported albeit not at a local level. According to a study by McKinsey & Company (July 2020):

...'women's jobs and livelihoods are more vulnerable to the COVID19 pandemic with female job loss rates are 1.8 times higher than male job loss globally'
(<https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/covid-19-and-gender-equality-counteracting-the-regressive-effects>)

The report goes on to discuss the increased demands placed on women during this period due to increased childcare responsibilities and home-schooling, along with other caring duties for say elderly/vulnerable people, whilst undertaking remote working. A report in the Independent (<https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/housework>) discussed the survey undertaken by The Boston Consulting Group which found that mothers in the UK were undertaking an additional 31 hours more housework per week, the equivalent of a second job. Further-more the report saw that girls undertook more of the household chores including cleaning and the care of siblings when compared to boys. Whether a longer-term impact of this will be reflected in future academic results which in turn impact on employment opportunities, and/or economic instability/insecurities will remain to be seen.

A further study by the London School of Economic:

... 'First, the increasing gender gap is explained by the disproportionate impact COVID had on jobs and occupations that tend to employ more women. Many women work in sectors such as restaurants, tourism and office space maintenance, which were severely affected by the crisis. US employment losses through September were the largest in occupations requiring personal contact (e.g., retail), where women account for nearly three-quarters of employment. (<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/businessreview/2020/11/02/covid-19-hurt-womens-employment-the-hardest>).

Whilst all the above are studies based on data outside of Jersey, at JACS we recognize that during the lockdowns we received more contacts from women than men with many of them concerned about working at home, childcare, vulnerable others. Such calls continued as the re-opening of workplaces started with a lack of additional childcare provisions being available e.g. nurseries, after-school and holiday clubs, and indeed the phasing of school returns by year groups etc.

4. There are gendered implications in times of crises, whether this be the pandemic, or other crises such as war zones or famines etc, it is the efforts any government put into the recovery that shapes the outcomes. The gender pay-gap can be widened by recent events with an increase in lowered incomes, or progressive action can be taken to narrow the gap with increased flexibility of the way work is undertaken as well as where it is done.

Patricia Rowan
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