

10 years of progress. Be inspired to take

# ACTION

Over the past 10 years, gender equality in the workplace has come a long way.

**BUT THERE IS PLENTY MORE TO DO**

THE  TIMES

**TOP 50**  
EMPLOYERS FOR  
WOMEN  
**2020**

In partnership with



The Prince's  
Responsible  
Business Network



## MEET THE TIMES TOP 50

Being named as one of the best employers in the country for women to work at has been an honour for ten years. The next step is to bring every company up to the same level

The companies listed over the following pages have been selected by gender equality experts at Business in the Community, part of the Prince's Responsible Business Network, as The Times Top 50 Employers for Women in the UK. The companies are

all committed to gender equality in the workplace and have each taken action to make this happen. They appear unranked and in alphabetical order. Any employer with a UK presence can apply to be on the list by supplying details of how they are working towards

gender equality. The assessment focuses on transparency, the causes behind gaps, what companies are doing to identify and address structural issues and the impact of their actions. The evaluation includes roles of leaders; actions to increase women

represented in senior positions and gender balance at all levels; recruitment; supporting parents and carers; bullying and harassment; pay processes and action to promote gender equality outside their own organisation. Here, in their own words, are the Top 50...▶



### WELCOME

By Dame Helena Morrissey

# Lockdown was an opportunity for reflection and change

Top City fund manager Dame Helena Morrissey has long been leading from the front on gender equality. She founded the 30 Per Cent Club – a cross-business initiative that campaigns for more women on UK corporate boards – and is chair of Business in the Community's Gender Equality Leadership Team. Here she explains how the coronavirus crisis has created a chance to maintain the momentum gained over the past decade in bridging the gender divide

After a decade of The Times Top 50 Employers for Women it is a natural moment to reflect on the progress – and remaining obstacles – along the long road to workplace gender equality. We've seen many encouraging developments over the past ten years; the introduction of shared parental leave, mandatory gender pay gap reporting (along with a narrowing of the full-time pay gap to its lowest point yet), a sharp rise in the number of women on corporate boards and in parliament and many more firsts for women (even the first female president of cricket's 233-year-old MCC). Crucially, we've seen a welcome shift towards fixing the system rather than fixing the women, enabling men and women to have more equal lives through family-friendly policies and more flexible working practices. Before the pandemic, around 75 per cent of British women were employed. All of these are reasons to celebrate – and to thank those organisations that have proven they are good places for women to build their careers. A special congratulations to the 24 firms who have featured in The Times Top 50 at least six times.

However, it's clear that this is unfinished business. The strides forward have been restricted to relatively few, mainly white, affluent, highly educated women (yes, like me). Too many others remain unfulfilled in their careers and conflicted or overwhelmed as they combine paid work with childcare. The Covid-19 lockdown has exacerbated this; men may have been helping out more, but women



are still doing two-thirds of childcare and the majority of household chores. They face greater job insecurity at a difficult time for the economy, too, given the higher proportion of women working in those sectors who bore the brunt of the lockdown, such as hospitality, leisure and retail.

So how can we achieve faster progress for more women? There's a growing discussion around the idea that businesses should "build back better", learning from the Covid-19 experiences and addressing long-running issues that haven't necessarily been a high priority in more normal times. Working practices have been modernised at a stroke for many, with enforced remote working proving that working from home really can work. This is a potential gamechanger, provided that we don't try to pick up where we left off. We've also seen a greater focus on employee wellbeing through the crisis, with mental health issues being recognised as a natural reaction to the dramatic upheavals of 2020. Many business leaders have shown a genuinely compassionate

### 47%

More likely for mothers than fathers to have permanently lost their job or quit amid Covid crisis\*

### 2%

Median pay for full-time female employees is only slightly higher now than it was in 2008\*\*

### 11%

Of women directors from FTSE 100 companies are from black or ethnic minority backgrounds\*\*\*

human side in their approach to colleagues during lockdown and, perhaps ironically, we've learned more about each other's lives through glimpses on video calls than we ever did sitting next to them in an office. The qualities of effective leadership – already in a state of flux – have been changing more rapidly and obviously than before: being inclusive, connected, able to create a network of teams and to empower colleagues have all been necessary in a situation where no one could claim to know all the answers.

In ten years' time, to be honest, I'm hoping we no longer feel the need to recognise the top 50 organisations for women – instead, women will be able to forge ahead in their own style wherever they work. The shake-up caused by the lockdown has created challenges, but also the opportunity to really take a quantum leap so that in a decade's time, this list will no longer be needed. But for now, let's congratulate 50 organisations – and their leaders – for a well-deserved place on the 2020 list of top employers for women. Thank you.

COVER: BEN FEARNLEY; OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS: MARIA CORTE; BOTH FOR BRIDGE STUDIO. SOURCES: \*IFS-JULY, 2020; \*\*HOUSE OF COMMONS LIBRARY, 2020; \*\*\*CRANFIELD SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, 2019

## GENDER CHAMPION

### GIVE ME FIVE

Each year BITC presents a senior executive with an award for their contribution to levelling the playing field. Last year's champion, Emma Codd, tells us how she shaped Deloitte UK into a Top 50 Employer

When Emma Codd was appointed as partner at the professional services firm Deloitte in 2002, she found herself in a minority. Deloitte UK was struggling not only to recruit female graduates and apprentices, but also to retain women in senior roles.

**CODD KNEW SHE** had to do something about it. Soon after becoming managing partner for talent, in 2013, she held discussions with more than 500 women and "others in minority" who worked at the firm. At the time, only 13 per cent of the business's partners were female.

**A "WIDER BUCKET"** of cultural issues was highlighted, Codd explains. These ranged from tiresome banter on a day-to-day level to how people felt they were being treated in meetings and the work/life balance. This gave Codd a framework to work with.

**"THE FOUNDATION FOR** the change that we brought about was really focusing on inclusive leadership, on culture and on everyday behaviours that I think are in many workplaces," she explains.

**CODD INTRODUCED A RESPECT** and inclusion agenda – "for any aspect of diversity to flourish, inclusion is absolutely essential," she says – along with a raft of initiatives. These included respect and inclusion advisers, mandatory inclusive leadership sessions and, crucially, making the current flexible working policy gender neutral, so that everyone felt they were able to use it without prejudice.

**THE CHANGE THAT FOLLOWED** has been substantial. Indeed, for the past five years Deloitte has been included on The Times Top 50 Employers for Women. And as of last year, 21 per cent of the business's partners were female – and women accounted for 41 per cent of the employees being promoted to partner level internally. **BUT CODD ASSERTS** that this progress wouldn't have been possible without "buy-in from the top". She adds that unlike the countless companies that "say gender parity is a business priority, yet the responsibility then falls on someone below the leadership level", Deloitte UK's then chief

executive, David Sproul, stepped up to the plate. **THERE'S A BUSINESS** case for this too, she explains. Organisations that reflect the world in which they operate, in terms of the makeup of its workforce – from recruitment right through to the boardroom – tend to outperform in their sector. **IN HER NEW** role as global inclusion leader, and as a member of the lead the change board, a new government-backed committee

▼ **MAKING A STAND**  
Emma Codd has been rewarded for making Deloitte UK a Top 50 Employer for Women

to increase diversity and inclusion at the top of the UK's leading organisations, she's now looking at how the wider business can learn from the UK firm's experience. **MODERNISING THE WORKPLACE**, fostering an inclusive culture and addressing mental health issues at work are at the top of her agenda. But Codd is clear that it's not always about big changes: "A small action in one area of the business can have a large impact elsewhere."



NICK WILSON FOR BRIDGE STUDIO



**ACCENTURE**

Our goal for 2025 is a gender balanced workforce. We have 40 per cent female new hires, have promoted our largest percentage of women to managing director and grown our number of female MDs.

**ALLEN & OVERY**

Gender balance is a strategic priority. There is determination and focus at the top of the firm, and enthusiasm from our global community for change through initiatives that address real issues.

**ATOS IT SERVICES UK LTD**

We have invested in programmes to embed a strong culture of diversity and inclusivity to ensure all employees have an opportunity to thrive. Gender balance is our strategic priority.

**AVIVA PLC**

We promote the progression and retention of talented women with organisational support, and an inclusive culture. We address the barriers and societal benefits of gender balance.

**BARCLAYS**

Our focus on equality covers women's working lives from thinking about joining the bank to progression and promotion, supporting women at every stage, personally and professionally.

**CAPGEMINI UK**

Our strong leadership commitment is driving our inclusive culture with respect at the very heart of it, empowering and mobilising all team members to play a part in creating an actively inclusive workplace.

**CENTRICA**

Supporting women into Stem roles is key. We help employees through maternity, fertility and menopause support programmes, manager upskilling, mentoring and buddying programmes.

**CMS**

With 45 per cent of the board and 32 per cent of partners women, we are passionate about having gender equality in our business and communities. We have implemented a robust strategy to deliver this.

**COSTAIN GROUP PLC**

Through committed leadership we are challenging gender stereotypes at all levels, creating an inclusive working environment where everyone can be at their best, every day.

**CREDIT SUISSE**

Our multifaceted approach, fulfilling our commitment to the Women in Finance Charter, embeds diversity initiatives so female talent is attracted, developed and retained.

**DELOITTE**

Gender balance remains a crucial priority for us. We are proud of the progress we are making, not least the threefold increase in the number of women promoted to partner this year.

**DEPARTMENT FOR WORK AND PENSIONS**

The largest government employer of women, we are proud of our work to bring about a cultural change in our organisation, with more women in senior roles.

**DEUTSCHE BANK**

We have a long-standing commitment to being an employer of choice for women and improving gender balance with inclusive practices, encouraging girls and women to choose banking.

**DWF LAW LLP**

Gender equality is at the forefront of the way we do business. We've introduced gender and BAME targets and developed a programme that has engaged men to support balance.

**ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR**

We are proud to have been in The Times Top 50 Employers for Women since its inception. This helps us benchmark and drive our workplace forward for women to progress.

**EVERSHEDS SUTHERLAND (INTERNATIONAL) LLP**

We are committed to achieving 30 per cent female representation at partner level and greater gender equality at all levels.

# An equal future for women at work?



**BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY** The Prince's Responsible Business Network

**NATIONAL BUSINESS RESPONSE NETWORK**

**FOUNDING PARTNERS**

**AXA** **Covid-19 support fund** **London Stock Exchange Group**

## BUSINESS SUPPORT AT THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITIES DURING COVID-19

Business in the Community's support hub enables organisations who are in need of support to be matched with a business who is offering help. We have regional leads across the UK ready to help process requests and match them to support offered.

### COULD YOUR BUSINESS HELP?

[WWW.BUSINESSRESPONSECOVID.ORG.UK/ASKS](http://WWW.BUSINESSRESPONSECOVID.ORG.UK/ASKS)



The pandemic has made us scrutinise the ways we live and work. We must make sure the lessons from it aren't wasted

The Covid-19 crisis changed not only the lifestyles, but also the value system of our nation. In many ways, we have had a wake-up call about the things that really matter in life. While many women (and men) were getting used to working from home, an army of "key workers" were on the front line, battling the disease in hospitals and keeping the bare bones of our fragile economy moving – according to the Office for National Statistics nearly three-fifths (58 per cent) of these were women. "Now we definitely know who our 'key workers' are," says business coach and author Sheryl Miller. "People in offices who previously saw themselves as key have had a lesson in humility."

Could this forced realisation bring a greater equality for the women in often low-paid caring professions? Not without meaningful action. Neila is a pediatric nurse who transferred to the intensive care unit of her hospital when Covid-19 hit. She says she would like to see lasting change in attitudes once the crisis is over: "It felt good to see the change in support from the public. The clapping and food donations made a big difference but I'm worried it will go back to the way it was."

Nicola Inge, employment and skills director with Business in the Community (BITC), believes if we are to capitalise on the shift in attitudes towards key workers, we need to see some of the benefits from professional industries filter down to these traditionally lower-paid roles: "When we think about how to reward



▲ **JUGGLING RESPONSIBILITIES** Women bore the domestic brunt of Covid-19

our key workers, understanding how they can benefit from the increased flexibility is one piece, but we should also think about fair pay, benefits, job security and progression in these predominantly female roles."

While some women faced dangers on the Covid-19 front line, others were finding themselves at risk at home. Cautions and charges relating to domestic abuse rose by 24 per cent in the first month of lockdown. "This crisis gave partners with controlling tendencies an excuse to exert more control over where someone goes and who they see," says Miller.

Companies have a part to play in safeguarding those who could fall foul of abuse, says Louise Aston, BITC's wellbeing director: "Employers have a duty of care, even though people aren't working in the physical workspace. There has to be a tailored approach to support women who want to come to work because they are trapped with a perpetrator or they don't have a suitable environment to work in."

But even when working at home carried no risk, it often brought its own challenges for women. "At times the lockdown has felt like a gift; at other times it has completely broken me," says mum of two Claire, who works in the charity sector. She's describing emotions that may be familiar to many working mums across the country.

"We spend more time together as a family," she explains. "But there was an implicit assumption that my husband's work hours were more important than mine because he earns more. We had to have some challenging conversations."

Women across the country have suffered as they have watched their support from grandparents, hired help, nursery and school eroded, and their responsibilities in the home increase. The Institute for Fiscal Studies found mothers who were in paid work were 47 per cent more likely than fathers to have lost their jobs or quit during lockdown.

But the changes to working practices we have embraced during this crisis may offer a beacon of hope. Flex Appeal founder Anna Whitehouse (aka Mother Pukka), has been campaigning for flexible working for years. "Stats show that women bore the domestic brunt of Covid-19. But it's also a chance to rethink all jobs, from the factory floor to the trading floor. The traditional 9 to 5 excludes thousands from work and means thousands more suffer unnecessarily."

Given that there is evidence to suggest Covid-19 disproportionately affects BAME communities we must also be mindful of the role intersectionality plays in the conversation. If women across



## A NEW WORLD MAY COME OUT OF THIS, ONE IN WHICH EVERYONE CAN REACH THEIR POTENTIAL

the board are finding themselves bearing the brunt, those from minority groups could find it even harder to be heard. "There is something around intersectionality with race and gender and not wanting to speak up as much," says Miller. "You don't share stories of discrimination or agitate to get better treatment or fairness."

There is no doubt that this crisis will be followed by a period of reflection. Never before have we transformed our way of life quite so dramatically. Let's hope we can use the negative impacts of Covid-19 to shine a light on where we need further work and capitalise on the good bits. "It is a chance to say,

"Look at how we adapted. Imagine what more we can do," says Whitehouse. "Perhaps one progressive step from this vast human tragedy will be a new world of work that allows everyone to reach their potential."

### ▶▶▶ TAKE ACTION



**BITC's employment and skills director Nicola Inge says:**

- ▶ **Tailor your approach** to flexible working – one size doesn't fit all.
- ▶ **Ensure fair pay**, job security and benefits for key workers – the same rights as afforded to professional industries.
- ▶ **Listen to diverse voices** across the business – employers must seek to understand the needs and concerns of all.

## WORK/LIFE

# MAKE CARING PART OF THE NEW NORMAL

Flexible working during lockdown has allowed carers to share responsibility for their dependants. Employers must recognise the importance of this

### ▶ BY MANDY APPLEYARD

Balancing responsibility for ailing parents with the busy demands of office life was always a challenge for Lucy and Adam. But with lockdown triggering flexible working, life is much easier for this London couple now – they've got more hours in the day to juggle work and family commitments.

"My mum has Alzheimer's, so I was relieved that we were able to take her in to live with us during lockdown," says Lucy, 42, who works in banking. Project manager Adam's frail parents – both in their 80s – have also benefited from him having more time in the working day to devote to their care and welfare. "I've called in on them at least once a day, which has been so much easier for us all than when I've had to put in 14-hour days in the office and get to see them once a week if I'm lucky," he says.

While one of the unanticipated bonuses of lockdown is that our working lives have become far more flexible, the Covid-19 crisis has turned many people's caring arrangements upside down. For some, there are notable positives, such as families splitting the workload more equally and non-carers having their eyes opened to the realities of full-time responsibility.

This shift may, in time, be felt all the way up to the C-suite, with long-term implications for more positive attitudes to caring responsibilities – whether they're for children or, as in the case of Lucy and Adam, for adult dependants.

The introduction of Shared Parental Leave in 2015 was heralded as true progress towards equality in the workplace. Yet take-up has

### ▶▶▶ TAKE ACTION



**Clare Knox, founder of See Her Thrive, says lockdown has exposed inflexible and outdated workplace policies and practices**

▶ **Parents need enhanced rights** that are accessible to all, including parents who are agency workers, on zero-hours contracts or self-employed.

▶ **Employees with caring responsibilities** should be legally entitled to paid time off to care for any family member, not just children and not just in an emergency.

▶ **Employers need to play an active role** in normalising family-friendly ways of working. They also need to make sure flexible working is taken up by their staff.

## 45%

The proportion of mothers responsible for 90 to 100 per cent of childcare increased from 27 to 45 per cent during lockdown\*

been poor. Clare Knox, founder of See Her Thrive, an organisation championing women's health in the workplace, is in no doubt as to why: "Parents get £145 a week – not many families can afford to live on that."

While take-up of the state scheme has fallen short of some people's expectations, some private firms – including drinks giant Diageo and asset managers Investec – are looking to give equal rights to both parents. In April, Diageo announced a policy to offer men and women an equal 52 weeks parental leave with the first 26 weeks fully paid.

But joint research by BITC and Santander reveals that even in companies with family-friendly policies, men worry about the impact that shared parental leave will have on their career prospects, progression and earnings.

Laura Butcher, the chair of Parents@sky, a 3,000-strong employee network run by volunteers aiming to achieve a good work-life balance at Sky, argues: "The societal norm is for women to be caretakers and men to have careers. Men need to see other men taking longer periods off to be with their families to feel that it's OK." Anne Willmot, age campaign director at BITC, says that it's crucial "to have senior role models who champion the role of carers, talking authentically about how they combine their work and their caring" because "while attitudes are changing, behaviours are not".

To make workplaces more accommodating, she recommends that businesses provide a minimum of five days' paid leave for carers a year, as well as flexible working from day one.

As our population ages (by 2030, it's estimated that half of UK adults will be over 50), caring for dependant relatives will be a fact of life for a majority of workers.

In fact, 60 per cent of working carers in the UK already have to take annual leave to carry out caring duties, taking on average six days of annual leave, while 30 per cent of workers say they may have to give up work because of an unsupportive employer.

Along with caring responsibilities, female health-related issues – from endometriosis and menopause – also affect the working lives of millions of women.

Damien Shieber, head of culture and inclusion at Santander, says flexible working is the answer. "More flexible working will help close the gender pay gap and support parents and carers in balancing their responsibilities, both at work and at home."



# WE'VE COME A LONG WAY...

Women have broken barriers and pushed for change in the past decade, as this timeline of events shows

## 2010



A new Equality Act comes into force on October 1, providing Britain with a cohesive discrimination law protecting individuals from unfair treatment. The act merges more than 116 separate pieces of equality legislation dating from the 1970s to the 2000s, and covers employment, sex, race, disability, age and religious belief discrimination.

- Kathryn Bigelow, far left, becomes the first woman to win the Best Director Oscar, for *The Hurt Locker*.
- Sayeeda Warsi, left, becomes

the first Muslim woman in the cabinet. She was appointed to the Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition in 2010.

- UN Women is formed to empower and advocate for gender equality.

**THEN** Women's employment rate: 65.5 per cent.  
**NOW** A record high: 72.4 per cent.

"To be born as the daughter of an immigrant in Yorkshire, to have the privilege of serving in cabinet at such an important time in Britain's history, I think is terribly humbling."  
**Baroness Warsi**

**THE LAW WAS MADE BY MEN AND IS DOMINATED BY MEN. IT'S NO SURPRISE IT DOESN'T WORK FOR WOMEN**

## 2011

An independent government-backed review recommends UK FTSE 100 firms aim for a minimum 25 per cent women board members by 2015 and tasks FTSE 350 firms with setting their own targets to ensure more talented women can get to the top.

- March 8 is the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, right.
- The first SlutWalk takes place in Toronto in response to police officer Michael Sanguinetti's statement that "women should avoid dressing like sluts in order not to be victimised".



**THEN** Women on FTSE 100 boards: 12 per cent.  
**NOW** There's still a way to go: 30 per cent.

"You don't have to believe in patriarchy to realise the law was made by men and is dominated by men, and that the same goes for parliament. It is not surprising that the law doesn't work for women."  
**Dame Helena Kennedy, QC**

## 2012

**EVERYDAY SEXISM'S 60,000-PLUS REAL STORIES OF SEXISM SIT THERE ONLINE, HARD TO IGNORE OR DISMISS**

Journalist Laura Bates, below right with Katie Price, founds the Everyday Sexism Project after being sexually harassed on public transport. The site recounts sexism experienced by contributors from around the world.

- In December, the UN passes a resolution calling for the outlawing of female genital mutilation.
- Fourth-wave feminism emerges, sparked by social media. Key issues include a focus on intersectionality (a concept attributed to Kimberlé Crenshaw, right), the fight against street and work harassment, campus sexual assault and rape culture.

**THEN** Women professors in higher education (2012-13): 22 per cent.  
**NOW** 27 per cent (2018-19).

"For the first time since the 1970s, I find myself cross on behalf of women. What has swayed me are real stories of sexism. The Everyday Sexism Project has collected 60,000-plus of them, which sit there online, hard to ignore or dismiss."  
**Lucy Kellaway, journalist and co-founder of charity Now Teach**



## 2016



Receptionist Nicola Thorpe, 27, is sent home on her first day of work at a London accountancy firm after refusing to wear high heels. She launches a petition calling for the law to be changed so women cannot be forced to wear high heels to work, which is debated but rejected by parliament.

- Democrat Hillary Clinton, bottom right, becomes the first woman to receive a US presidential nomination from a major political party.
- Kathryn Smith, top right, makes history as the NFL's first full-time

female coach. Her appointment broke down a major barrier for women aspiring for careers in the NFL.

**THEN** Women cabinet positions: eight.  
**NOW** There are just six.

"Leadership is about making others better as a result your presence and making sure that impact lasts in your absence."  
**Sheryl Sandberg**



## 2015

This year's election sees more female MPs enter parliament than ever before - 29 per cent, compared with 22 per cent in 2010.

- Libby Lane, left, becomes the Church of England's first female bishop; Bobbie Cheema-Grubb QC, right, is appointed the first Asian woman High Court judge; Major General Susan Ridge is the first female senior officer in the British Army and Laura Kuenssberg becomes the BBC's first female political editor.
- Sport England's ThisGirlCan campaign wins the Gold Lion Award for encouraging girls into sport.



**THEN** 191 women MPs.  
**NOW** 220 women MPs.

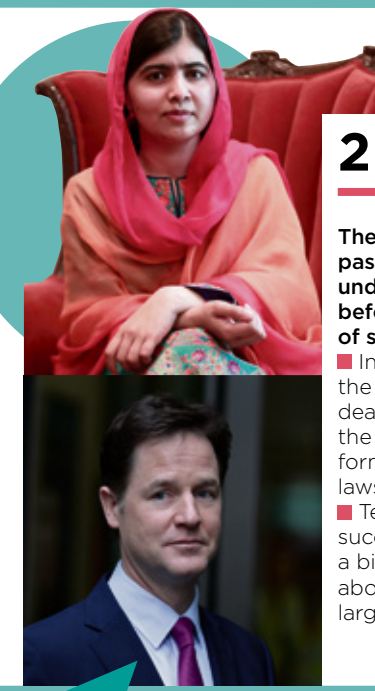
"We know it is not easy to step forward as a woman MP. Many women resigned prior to the election due to the horrendous sexism."  
**Vivienne Hayes, chief executive of the Women's Resource Centre**

## 2014

Shared Parental Leave (SPL) is introduced, meaning parents can take up to 50 weeks off - split between them - and receive statutory pay.

- The government tackles forced marriage in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act, which makes compelling someone to marry (including abroad) a criminal offence.
- Malala Yousafzai, top right, becomes the youngest person to be awarded a Nobel Peace Prize, for her work in supporting girls' right to an education.

**THEN** The government predicted that just 2-8 per cent of those



eligible would take up SPL.  
**NOW** Only one per cent of those eligible - 10,700 parents - took up SPL in 2018-19 (analysis from the University of Birmingham).

"For too long, mums have been told their place is at home with their child, while dads return to work. I want parents to choose for themselves how to balance work and family."  
**Nick Clegg, right, deputy prime minister**

## 2013

The Succession to the Crown Act is passed, ending the age-old system under which a younger son came before an elder daughter in the line of succession to the British throne.

- In New Delhi, India, following the brutal gang rape and subsequent death of a 23-year-old woman, the Justice Verma Committee is formed to strengthen anti-rape laws in the nation.
- Texas senator Wendy Davis successfully delays the passage of a bill that would close almost all abortion clinics in America's second-largest state by talking non-stop for

13 hours to prevent the senate from making a vote.

**THEN** Britain has had just one female prime minister - Margaret Thatcher, who dies this year.  
**NOW** We have had only one more - Theresa May (2016 to 2019).

"The idea that a female first-born heir should be passed over in favour of a younger brother is surely offensive to the vast majority of Britons."  
**Campaigner and former minister Lord Dubs**



## 2017



#MeToo takes off as a social movement against sexual harassment and assault. It is sparked by the reaction to allegations of sexual misconduct against film industry executive Harvey Weinstein.

- On April 6 it becomes compulsory for British companies with more than 250 employees to report their gender pay gap figures every financial year.
- The first Women's March is held in 673 locations around the globe after Donald Trump's inauguration, becoming the largest

single-day protest event in history. It was driven by the threat that the new US president represented to reproductive, civil and human rights.

**THEN** 11 per cent of the engineering workforce is women, a survey finds.  
**NOW** 12.3 per cent of all engineers in the UK are women.

"It's revolutionary. I can't see women agreeing to return to the days of isolation and shame."  
**New York attorney Roberta Kaplan, co-founder of the Time's Up Legal Defence Fund, on #MeToo**

**PEOPLE TALK ABOUT MY APPEARANCE IN A WAY THEY WOULDN'T A MAN. I'M ABUSED AS A FEMALE**

## 2018

Time's Up, a global movement calling on all women to stand in solidarity against sexual harassment in the workplace, is launched on January 1 by Hollywood celebrities in response to the Weinstein case.

- Digital activism is on the rise, and the hashtags tell the story: #BringBackOurGirls #YesAllWomen #EverydaySexism #WomenShould.
- A record-breaking 117 women are elected or appointed to Congress in the midterm elections, bringing the total number of women currently serving to 127, including many LGBTQIA+ candidates.

**THEN** 31 per cent of civil service permanent secretaries are women.  
**NOW** 34 per cent are women.

"It's highly racialised and it's also gendered because people talk about rape and they talk about my appearance in a way they wouldn't talk about a man. I'm abused as a female politician and I'm abused as a black politician."  
**Diane Abbott MP, right**



## 2019

The UK slipped six places down the World Economic Forum (WEF) global rankings for gender equality from 15th to 21st position. The report attributes that low levels of women in managerial or leadership positions, wage stagnation, labour force participation and income are all contributing factors towards widening the economic gap.

- Swedish schoolgirl Greta Thunberg, bottom right, sparks a global movement for #ClimateAction.
- Nasa astronauts Christina Koch and Jessica Meir make history with the first all-female spacewalk.

**THEN** Of the world's top 200 universities, 34 were run by women.  
**NOW** Women run 39 of the top 200.

"There's growing urgency for action. At the present rate of change, it will take nearly a century to achieve parity, a timeline we simply cannot accept in today's globalised world, especially among younger generations who hold increasingly progressive views of gender equality."  
**Klaus Schwab, top right, founder of the WEF**





**EY**  
We continue to press for progress on gender parity with a focus on partner targets, delivery of our inclusive leadership programme, our growing women's network and women in technology group.

**FINANCIAL CONDUCT AUTHORITY**  
We lead the way on gender equality in our industry: 44 per cent of our executive committee is female, as is 41 per cent of our senior leadership team.

**FUJITSU**  
In 2019, we set out a big vision to eradicate our gender pay gap. We have a holistic action plan to attract, retain and enable the best people – regardless of their seniority or gender.

**GLAXOSMITHKLINE**  
We have made real progress towards gender parity in the workplace. We strive to maximise the skills of our staff at all levels, to better meet the needs of our patients and consumers.

**HACHETTE UK**  
We equalised shared parental leave in 2019. Both parents are entitled to 20 weeks of leave, fully paid. We also waived the waiting period for flexible working to make it the default from day one.

**HOGAN LOVELLS**  
We are a family-friendly employer with a range of support for working families, including maternity mentoring, transition coaching, and a partnership to support those returning from a career break.

**IRWIN MITCHELL**  
By investing in our people, we have one of the lowest gender pay gaps in the legal profession. Women represent 65 per cent of our qualified lawyer cohort and 42 per cent of our partners.

**ITV PLC**  
We are the only media company to be recognised by the Hampton-Alexander strongest performers for women on boards report – women make up 47 per cent of our senior leadership team.

**KPMG**  
In 2019, we increased our leadership capabilities by highlighting behaviours that help create a more inclusive culture and support our colleagues to maximise their potential.

**LINKLATERS**  
We're committed to achieving greater gender balance at all levels. Our focus on inclusivity, sponsorship and agile working will support the retention and progression of our talented women.

**LLOYDS BANKING GROUP**  
We are proud that 670 women have taken part in our programmes: Women in Leadership, Executive Sponsorship and Returners. The promotion rate from these is 25 per cent.

**MARKS AND SPENCER**  
Women make up over 70 per cent of our workforce. We are developing our future female leaders through mentorship and inclusive leadership training for managers.

**McKINSEY & COMPANY**  
We support the growth and advancement of women. Our research deepens our understanding and we will continue to promote diversity in our firm and our clients.

**MERCER LIMITED**  
Our deep analytics demonstrate the case for gender equality. We are proud to promote gender balance, champion inclusive behaviour and remove barriers. We see no limits for our people.

**MICHAEL PAGE GROUP**  
Our relentless focus on gender balance continues. This year all our senior leaders worldwide have gender diversity improvement targets linked to their bonus.

**MORGAN STANLEY INTERNATIONAL**  
Our inclusive culture sets us apart. A woman leads our firm and 42 per cent of our board is female; a vital step in our journey to achieve gender balance at all levels.

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES**  
Our positive, inclusive culture is reflected in the passion, pride and respect shown by our people. We aspire to be an exemplar employer in gender equality.

# Women are on the front line in 2020

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Global events have taken a sledgehammer to the economy, but there are still some positive signs for women's employment rights

BY MELISSA KATSOU LIS

The past ten years have been a mixed bag for women in work. Austerity hit the lowest paid hardest, and women, particularly BAME women, still account for 69 per cent of low earners. Cuts to local government services were doubly impactful for women, as they were not only the primary users of many of them, but they were also more likely to work in them.

Yet at the same time, women's rights have gained increased visibility across the board, with significant moves made for equality in the workplace.

And then came lockdown. The impact of Covid-19 will be debated for years but we already know that women – and, once again, BAME women in particular – have been affected disproportionately.

Female workers suffer most in any recession, but this one feels peculiarly targeted, as the retail and hospitality sectors have seen the most closures. Women are a third more likely to work in these jobs than men, according to the Living Wage Foundation.

The picture for those still in work is not much brighter: about 1.3 million key workers, who are

also more likely to be female and BAME, are in low paid or insecure jobs and earn less than £9.30 per hour (or £10.75 in London). In fact, eight out of ten of the lowest-paid professions are female-dominated, according to accountants KPMG.

Frances O'Grady, general secretary of the TUC, says: "The disproportionate impact that Covid-19 has had on BAME people, women and disabled workers is deeply rooted in the structural inequalities and discrimination that impact what they earn, where they work and what happens when they catch the virus."

"They are working long hours to keep shelves stocked, hospitals clean and to care for those who can't leave their homes, but are at higher risk of discrimination and are forced to work without many of the most basic employment protections."

Factor in the increased cost of children being off school and it's clear the situation is critical for millions across the UK. As we face the true impact of the pandemic, we can only guess how far-reaching it will be. So what can be done to help us get to the next level of government and corporate responsibility?

The good news is that we are building on a level of recent success. Gender pay gap reporting has become enshrined in law and a culture of speaking out against discrimination is growing ever stronger. Last year the government's roadmap for change was launched by former women's minister Penny Mordaunt, and a planned

## GENDER PAY GAP

### NEED FOR CLARITY AS INEQUALITY GROWS

Equal pay is still far from a reality – now more than ever. Women are bearing the brunt of the current crisis and thanks to changes to their income and employment, the average pay gap is widening, not closing

While this past decade has been marked by progress – we now have mandatory gender pay gap reporting and public awareness of gender pay inequality has never been higher – the gender pay gap still exists. And as Covid-19 and its aftermath ravages the global economy, aggravating existing inequalities, the gender disparity in pay is set to increase further.

Two weeks before this year's annual April deadline, the



## TAKE ACTION



**Mary-Ann Stephenson of the Women's Budget Group on what the government should do now**

► **Introduce protection** against redundancy as a result of furlough or for taking time off due to caring responsibilities, sickness or shielding.

► **Reinstate gender pay gap reporting** immediately.

► **Give financial support** to childcare and social care providers at risk of closure.

► **Do not turn back to austerity** to pay for the crisis as this will have a further unfair effect on women, especially BAME and disabled women.

► **Introduce policies to promote sharing** of care and unpaid work between women and men.

employment bill aims to make it easier for women to juggle unpaid domestic work with their jobs. It is critical that we keep this momentum going as we deal with the economic fallout from Covid-19.

O'Grady says: "A limited form of the government's job retention scheme should remain in place beyond October to support parents who are unable to return to work because of childcare responsibilities and employers should embed flexible working across their organisations."

The Living Wage Foundation's Katherine Chapman has some positive actions for employers. "There is a real opportunity to build back better from this crisis," she says. "For businesses that can afford it, paying the real Living Wage and signing up to our new living hours standard is a good place to start. Businesses that value their people will emerge stronger from this crisis with a more motivated and committed workforce."

Sandra Kerr, the director of Business in the Community's race equality campaign, says: "Employers should check in with their employees and ensure there is adequate access to mental health support, and to find out how they are dealing with the impact of the pandemic and the ripple effects of the Black Lives Matter protests."

She adds: "Employers should be mindful of occupational segregation and ensure that opportunities to pivot into developmental roles are shared equitably. Our Race at Work 2018 survey shows that there is a strong desire for opportunities to progress among BAME women."

Mary-Ann Stephenson, director of the Women's Budget Group, points out that even before Covid-19, issues around family life needed tweaking. "Government policies on shared parental leave are very limited," she

## BUSINESSES THAT VALUE THEIR PEOPLE WILL EMERGE STRONGER FROM THIS

explains. "Many men don't qualify and the rate of pay is so low that many heterosexual couples can't afford for the man to take it."

"We have proposed a more comprehensive policy to actively encourage men to take more leave when they become fathers."

But while the virus has thrown a mighty curveball into the debate about women's working lives, there is some good news on the horizon: social activism is alive and well nationwide and across social media; we have become a nation of Zoom natives, enabling increased home working everywhere. And increasing numbers of women are signing up for events such as Vestpod's digital workshops, aimed at empowering women to take control of their money.

With politicians at Westminster moving in the right direction – and in step with a sea change in working habits across the corporate world – 2020 could, despite immense difficulties, still be seen as the year in which women's empowerment moved from worthy policy papers to real-life action.

In fact, running the bottling division of Unilever from your study next to the playroom no longer seems quite such a fantasy.

government announced it was suspending gender pay gap reporting due to the "unprecedented uncertainty and pressure" faced by companies amid the coronavirus pandemic. Since 2017, businesses in the UK with more than 250 staff have been required to submit gender pay gap figures every year.

And although reporting is no longer mandatory this year, it is vital that employers do not lose sight of the significance of pay inequality – especially now. Women are more likely to be disproportionately affected by the economic fallout of the crisis, either because of their role as the primary carer for their children or because they dominate in low-paid sectors that are being hit by furloughs and mass redundancies.

According to the Office for National Statistics, the gender pay gap for full-time employees sits at 8.9 per cent – a fall of just 0.6 per cent since 2012. Worse still, among all workers (ie including part-time),

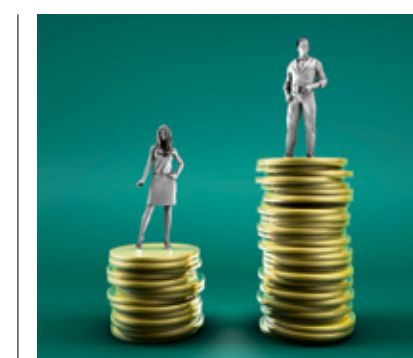
it stands at 17.3 per cent. The disparity between these two figures reflects the fact that women are more likely to work part-time.

Some of the issues behind inequality are fairly straightforward. "We still don't have proper pay transparency," says Sam Smethers, chief executive of the Fawcett Society, which campaigns for gender equality and women's rights. "Reporting on the gender pay gap is good but we need pay transparency so you know what colleagues in similar roles are earning. This is something that could be very easily fixed with legislation."

There are other factors to consider, too. Olly Cummings, COO of Nurole, an executive recruitment platform, says creating mandatory equal paternity leave and making childcare costs tax deductible could make an enormous difference. "Because childcare isn't tax deductible, you often wind up with mothers who want to work but find

## IT IS VITAL THAT EMPLOYERS DO NOT LOSE SIGHT OF PAY INEQUALITY – ESPECIALLY NOW

► **NOT COINING IT**  
The gender pay gap stands at a whopping 17 per cent



it isn't worth their while," he says.

He adds that one of the biggest things organisations can do is have "gender-balanced senior leadership teams. If an entire board is male, they'll only see what men see."

Although some of the drivers behind inequality are easy to understand, others are complicated. Smethers points to issues such as vertical segregation, women doing traditionally undervalued work and

a lack of career progression. She adds that there is inequality even within gender inequality: "The gap is bigger for BAME women."

Because pay inequality is often multifaceted, progressive companies are taking a sophisticated, tech-enabled approach to the problem. Through data modelling, Fujitsu, a two-time BITC Top 50 employer, has found that increasing the representation of women in middle management from 21.7 per cent to 23.3 per cent would close the pay gap by 10 per cent.

Acting on this, the Japanese technology giant drew up and has implemented a holistic action plan, which aims to "eradicate the gender pay gap in the next three years", says Fujitsu's Karen Thomson.

Businesses have a real opportunity to make a difference and prove that gender equality and ending the pay gap are not just nice-to-haves, they are a business imperative – even during the most testing of times.



**NATWEST GROUP**  
As well as improving the proportion of women in our pipeline to 44 per cent and in our senior roles to 36 per cent, our workforce engagement scores are the highest they have ever been.

**OFCOM**  
Striving for gender equality is embedded into our company. From apprentices to senior management, women not only feel supported but also know they are vital to our success.

**PEPSICO**  
We are driving programmes to accelerate women's careers. We're focused on inclusion, education and role modelling to achieve gender parity in management roles by 2025.

**PINSENT MASONS LLP**  
Our long term goal is to retain talent, ensure recruitment and promotion are bias-free, and achieve gender balance across all parts of our business.

**PWC LLP**  
To progress gender equality we have a five point plan to drive real change. Everyone in our firm has a diversity goal but our partners are specifically accountable for taking action.

**ROYAL MAIL GROUP**  
We focus on inclusivity at work. Building on gender-targeted initiatives, we concentrate on increasing our managers' inclusive leadership capabilities and allies programmes.

**ROYAL NAVY**  
Since 1993, all of our roles have been open to women. We have maternity support and initiatives to recruit and retain more women, and a rigorous process ensures the fairness of our promotions system.

**SANTANDER UK**  
At Santander, gender balance is at the heart of our inclusion strategy. We have an ambitious target to reach: to have 50 per cent women in senior management by the end of 2021.

**SCS RAILWAYS**  
Our objective, through structural changes, is to remove barriers for women and establish new standards for the engineering sector. We aim to attract more women and create inclusive workplaces.

**SHELL**  
We are pleased to have 42 per cent female board representation, 30.2 per cent senior female representation and 54 per cent female graduate recruits. We continue to foster an inclusive culture.

**SIMMONS & SIMMONS**  
We have made progress and increased the representation of women. We have engaged men as agents of change to accelerate the journey to gender parity.

**SKY UK LTD**  
Our commitment to gender equality is at every level. The evolution of "try before you apply" has inspired more women to enter areas of the business where they are underrepresented.

**SODEXO UK & IRELAND**  
We are committed to closing the gender pay gap across our legal entities by 10 per cent by 2025. We have initiatives to increase the representation of women at all levels.

**SURREY POLICE AND SUSSEX POLICE**  
As part of our efforts to address gender imbalance, 34 per cent of our workforce are now women officers even at senior levels – an increase of 7 per cent over 2 years.

**THE BRITISH ARMY**  
People are the heart of our organisation; their quality is our strength. We are free from gender constraints on employability, with total commitment to harnessing the nation's very best talent.

**VODAFONE**  
We intend to become the best employer for women in the world by 2025. We seek to connect 50 million women in emerging markets to improve their lives and get women back into work.

**WILLMOTT DIXON**  
We are committed to achieving gender parity at every job grade by 2030. While women make up 12.9 per cent of our industry, the number of women we hire is up 27 per cent.

# Rooting out gender inequality in the workplace

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**"Equality is not only a women's issue – it is a world, education and business issue affecting everyone."**

**Penelope Warne,  
The Senior Partner, CMS**

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While there has been plenty of publicity and discussion on the inequalities women face at work, there is still a lot to be done to close the gender gap

BY POORNA BELL



The landscape in which we discuss gender inequality has changed irrevocably over the last decade.

Seismic movements such as #MeToo, the mandatory publication of the gender pay gap and the shared parental leave law have helped to empower women and give them agency when it comes to dismantling rigid gender roles.

However, has enough progress been made in the workplace? According to Barbara Hervey, managing director at Accenture Research, change has been phenomenally slow.

"When I started work many years ago we were talking about this – and we are still talking about it," says Hervey. "For every 100 male managers there are 34 women, and that's not changing fast. The number of women in senior leadership roles has gone up maybe 10 per cent since 2004."

In the latest Mental Health At Work report from Business in the Community (BITC), it's evident how women are being affected: 66 per cent of women reported that they experience poor mental health due to work, as opposed to 58 per cent of men. Tackling the problem is not just an ethical issue, but a health issue too.

Mandu Reid, leader of the Women's Equality party, says that part of the reason for slow progress in the workplace is that equality simply hasn't been a priority for many organisations. "The gap widens drastically when women have children," she says. "Partly because employers expect that women will be less committed to their jobs and also because a lack of flexible working and truly shared parental leave does push many women to work less or go part time. Addressing these would have a huge impact."

Changing work culture and expectations is pivotal to advancing gender equality, otherwise we are merely attempting to drive change through ill-fitting structures, so new ideas will never fully take root.

The publication of the gender pay gap is a good example. While it was a groundbreaking piece of



legislation, little has actually changed. "The big gap is between what you say and what you do as a company," says Hervey. "If you ask employers if their workplaces are diverse, 88 per cent will say yes. If you ask employees, 44 per cent will say yes. It's got to be a business imperative and you've got to do it when times are tough, even when the financials are hard. That means leaders are accountable."

When we consider marginalised groups such as women in the Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities, who are paid less than their white female counterparts, the disparity grows wider. A key finding from the BITC report showed that a third of people from BAME backgrounds had negative outcomes – such as poorer mental health – when it came to work.

Otegha Uwagba, writer and founder of Women Who, a network that connects creative working women, says: "In a lot of diversity initiatives that I've observed, when companies look at addressing the gender balance they think they have

achieved their goal if they have more white women. Most fail to address the fact that race and also class play a big role in how women get ahead.

"Unfortunately people are biased and they recruit and promote those who are in their image," continues Uwagba. "I think it will take a lot for people from minorities to be elevated to positions of leadership. You can do unconscious bias training which is useful, but a helpful approach might be looking at how your recruitment might penalise or promote people from certain communities. For instance, do you need to have a degree to work there?"

Eduardo Ustaran is a partner at law firm Hogan Lovells LLP and is passionate about eliminating bullying and harassment in the workplace. He says a guideline for companies should be to allow anyone, irrespective of gender, to achieve all that they can. "On a practical level that can include logistical things – like allowing flexible working so people can handle work and life matters."

Gender equality hasn't moved as quickly as we'd like, but that doesn't mean we can't speed it up. If we know the areas that need urgent attention such as mental health, pay equality, family support, flexible working, diversity and leadership roles, then it shouldn't be a matter of "if" change will happen, but "when" it will happen.

## TAKE ACTION

**Author and editor Poorna Bell recommends businesses to:**

► **Make equality** a business imperative – it should never be an add-on.

► **Promote flexible working** practices – women thrive on them.

► **Encourage men** to take shared parental leave because this will help to equalise parenthood in the workplace.

## TECH FOR GOOD

### WHY NOW IS THE TIME FOR WOMEN TO BYTE BACK

The pandemic reinforced the importance of technology – presenting opportunities for girls and women to enter the industry

BY SUE LEONARD

While technology fitted seamlessly into our lives before the coronavirus outbreak, now more than ever it has become a vital lifeline for us all.

From Zoom meetings and online classes to streaming services, tech has been invaluable in helping us adapt to the "new normal".

As well as keeping us sane and entertained, technology can also "help girls and young women feel empowered, heard and valued", says Dr Anne-Marie Imafidon, co-founder and chief executive of Stemettes, an award-winning social enterprise set up in 2013, which encourages girls and young women to explore careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (Stem).

As one of just three women in a class of 70 who studied maths and computer science at Oxford, Imafidon says: "I hope that Stemettes helps women feel more comfortable to skill themselves up." Currently, women make up just 24 per cent of the Stem workforce while the proportion of tech roles filled by women has flattened at 16 per cent since 2009.

Bytes may be neutral, but these figures highlight the continuing lack of diversity in the sector, resulting in what Caroline Criado Perez, author of *Invisible Women*, calls the "one size fits men" approach, with products from seat belts to smartphones designed by men, for men. "We are going to end up being second-class citizens and being harmed by technology if we as women aren't contributing to those technological decisions," adds Imafidon.

Awareness and access are key, says Sheridan Ash, Women in Technology leader at the professional services firm, PwC. Through initiatives such as female-friendly recruitment, reverse mentoring, part-time working and

the introduction of a female-focused technology degree apprenticeship, the proportion of women in the firm's 3,000-plus tech workforce has risen from 14 per cent to 27 per cent in the last five years.

But still, "Getting girls interested in tech at school is essential to building the pipeline," says Ash, founder of the Tech She Can Charter, a cross-industry initiative involving organisations working together and with schools to provide, among other things, free digital lessons. "They don't understand the connection between a technology career and solving key problems in society, yet there are so many examples of that," she adds.

Dame Sue Black, a leading forensic anthropologist, agrees.

"I think the tech world is viewed as not terribly attractive, but that is so not true. Getting good case studies that showcase the things you could be working on would help a lot in attracting more women to the field," says Black, pro-vice-chancellor for engagement at Lancaster University.

Take her own story, for example. Better known for identifying human remains in the aftermath of wars and natural disasters, Black turned her attention from the dead to the living after a failed conviction (of a father whose daughter had accused him of abuse) drove her to develop a hand-recognition technique that identifies child sexual abusers.

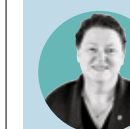
She is now working with computer scientists and data analysts to create the world's first searchable hand recognition database.

She argues that "the opportunities for males and females should be no different because the expertise that people carry isn't gender specific".

With a reputation for long hours, a rigid work culture and being male-dominated, "meaningful shared parental leave is another key hurdle towards bridging the technology industry's gender gap", says Margherita Zorzetto, equality, diversity and inclusion adviser at SCS Railways. But "there is no one silver bullet to shake up the industry", Zorzetto explains. "You are always going to have a range of things you need to be doing in parallel." In the case of SCS Railways, this took the form of simultaneously creating initiatives to promote flexible working while tackling the "banter culture" on site.

"The pandemic has brought about a decade's worth of change in how we work, in just 12 weeks," says Nathan Marsh, left, the chief digital officer at construction and engineering company Costain. "I hope that this accidental sprint to digitisation can help us bridge the equality gap more quickly."

## TAKE ACTION



**Dame Sue Black shares her tips for attracting women to the field of tech**

► **When providing guidance** to young people, view them as opportunities and not just as boys or girls.

► **Be brave, give people** who are different and not in your own image a chance.

► **Be prepared to tolerate inequality** in numbers as long as there is genuine equality in opportunity and actions.

**5%**

The proportion of leadership positions in the technology industry held by women\*

