

The gendered nature of employment, job quality & job insecurity in Northern Ireland: A story of continuity and change

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Research for new economic policies

Outline

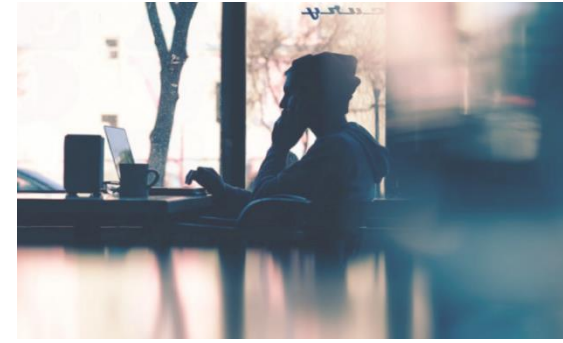
1. Rationale.
2. Conceptual basis/Literature
3. Aims of the study & Methods.
4. Findings.
5. Discussion & implications.

Rationale

- Increased attention being given to the decline of the traditional ‘standard’ employment arrangements & increase in ‘non-standard’ forms of employment - & in turn more insecure & poorer quality jobs.
- Relatively little attention being given to the gendered nature of these changes.
- Questioning of whether the spread of ‘non-standard’ employment and the growth of poor quality jobs mark a ‘feminisation of employment norms’.



Insecure employment as a male problem



Aims of the study

- (a) To examine changes and continuities in terms of gendered patterns in the nature of paid employment and job security.
- (b) To examine trends towards a ‘feminisation of employment norms’ - marked through changes in the nature of employment and an overall harmonising down of employment security and quality.
- (c) To consider the extent to which ‘traditional’ gender inequalities continue to exist & the extent of change over time.
- (d) To consider the overall implications of findings for broader issues including: precarious employment; job quality; women in work; & future of work.



The traditional 'standard' employment arrangement & the gender contract

- Broadly refers to employment which is full-time, regular, direct with a single employer, with a contract of permanent duration, reasonably stable hours, access to social benefits & entitlements.
- Came to dominate post-World War II.
 - Normative model of (male) employment with employment regulation & legislation based on assumption that employment would be 'standard' in nature.
- But never fully replaced all other forms of employment....yet their inferiority was unquestioned, invisible, unproblematic.
 - Many of these were filled by women – 'pink collar' jobs.
 - Gendered assumptions about the role of men and women in the labour market.

The rise of the 'non-standard' employment arrangement...

- Increased participation of women in the labour market.
- Globalisation & technological change.
- Deindustrialisation & the shift from manufacturing to services.
- Deregulation & overall weakening of collective bargaining rights.

A 'feminisation of employment norms'?

Coined by Vosko & Fudge (2003) to denote the erosion of the traditional 'standard' employment relationship & the spread of non-standard forms of employment *that exhibit qualities of employment traditionally associated with women.*

'men experience downward pressure...much like that typically associated with 'women's work', while women continue to endure economic pressure.'

'patterns and processes amounting to convergence at the bottom of the labour market.'

•

A 'feminisation of employment norms'?

Fudge & Vosko (2003: 458)
maintain that changing labour
market trends are:

*'both shaped by, and in turn shape
enduring gender inequalities both
inside and outside of the labour
market'*



A 'feminisation of employment' norms?

An overall convergence or 'harmonising down' in nature of employment and security of employment in a way that reflects that traditionally associated with women.....

in the data we will see the most significant changes for men.....

(Is this why we're all talking about it?)....

...what does this mean for traditional gender inequalities?

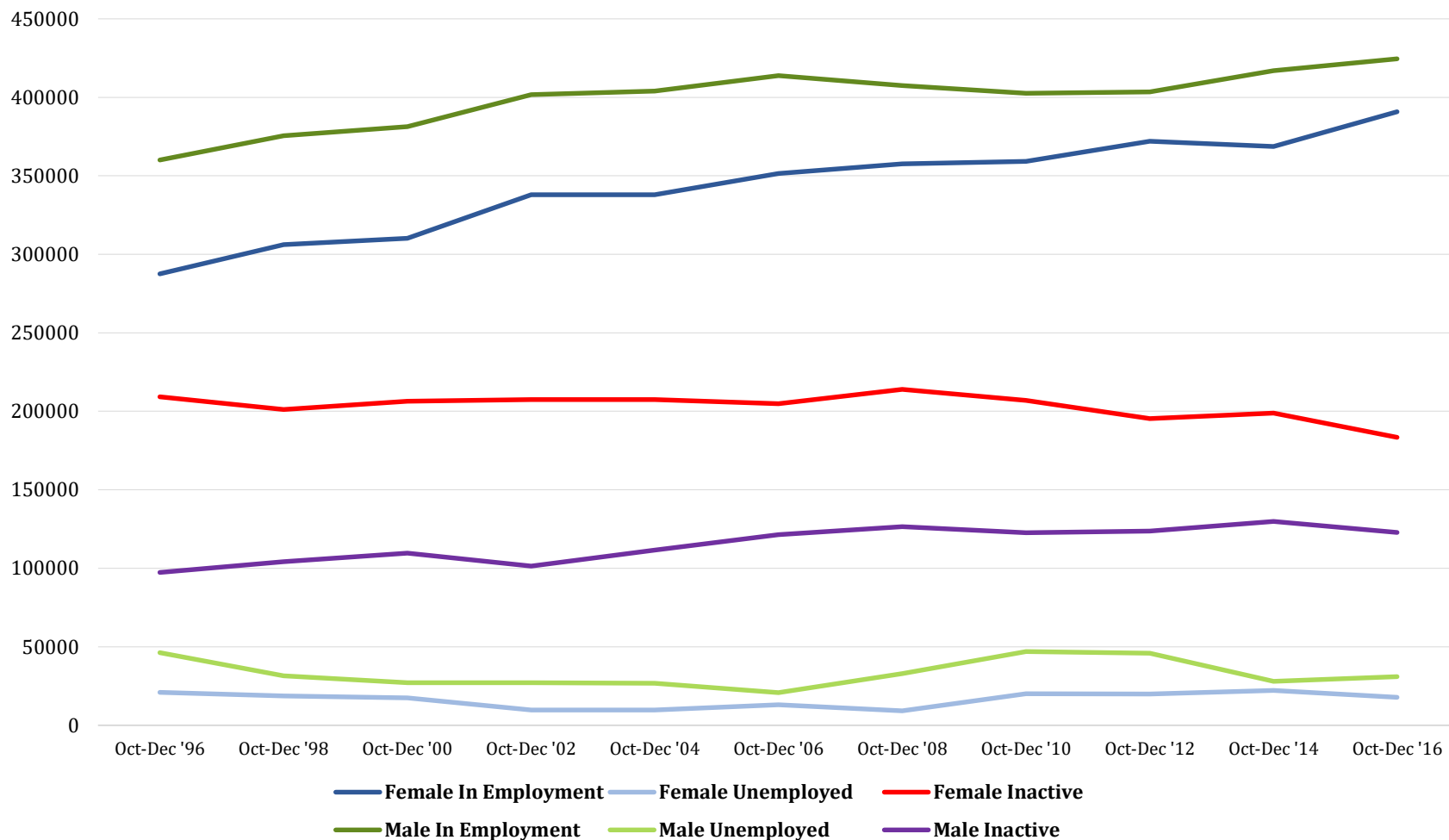


Method & analysis

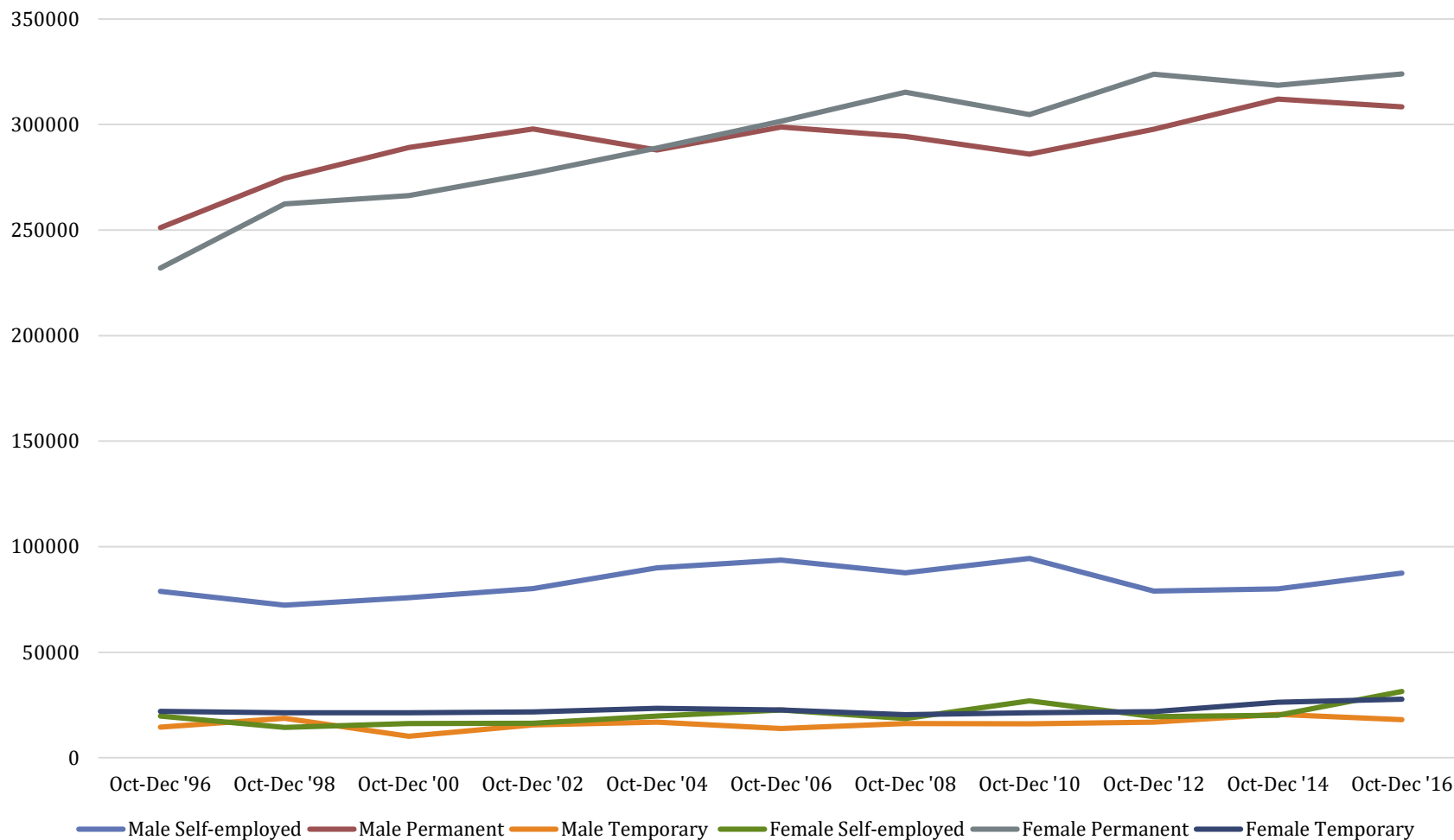
To assess research aims the paper examined trends over 20 year period 1996 to 2016:

- Participation in labour market.
- Rates of employment/unemployment.
- Working arrangements: Security of employment, full-time/part-time, working hours, job quality.
- Where do workers work & what jobs do they do: Sectoral & occupational patterns.
- Pay: low pay/high pay & gender pay gap.
 - Using both the:
 - Northern Ireland element of Quarterly Labour Force survey.
 - Northern Ireland element of Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.

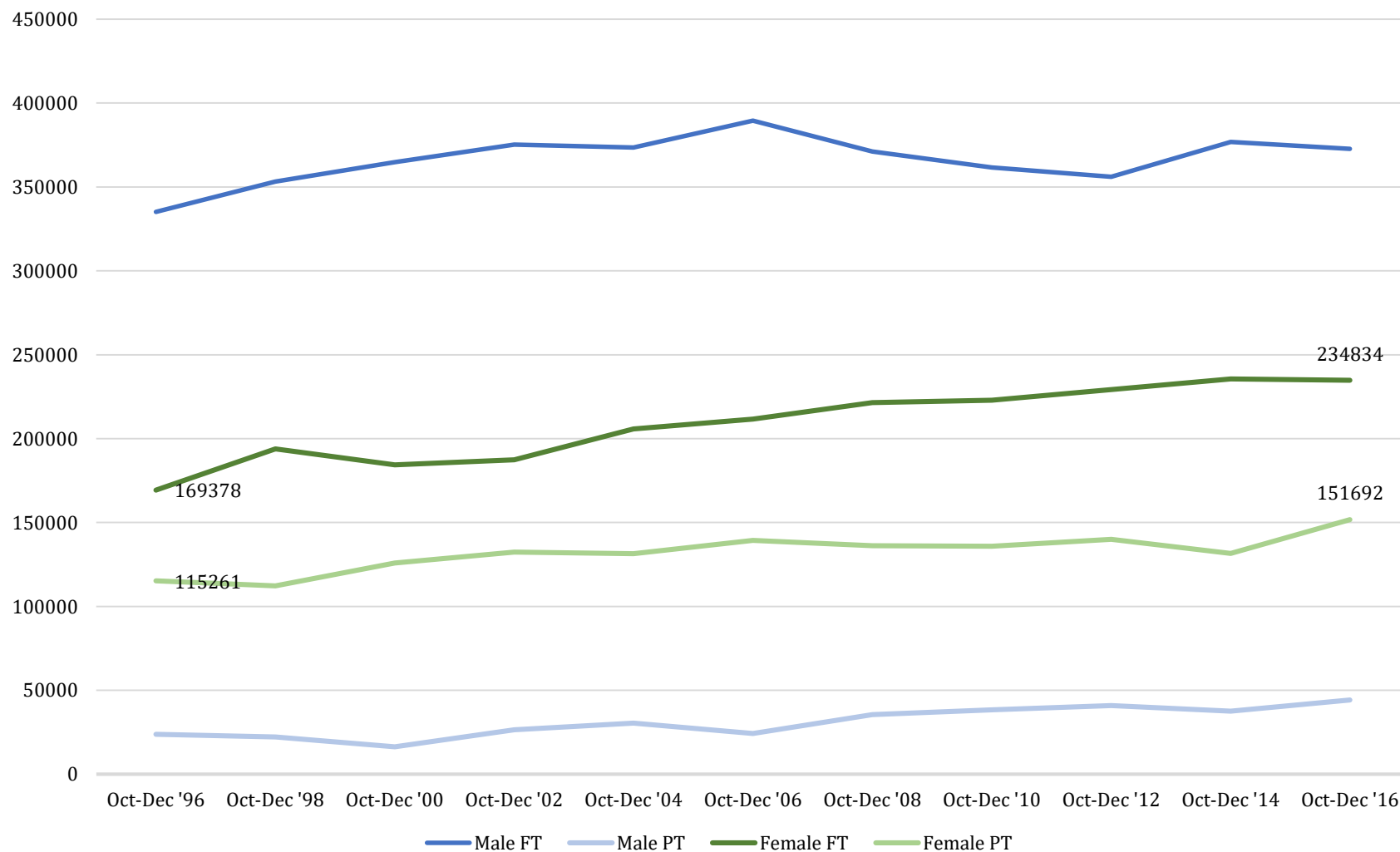
Participation in labour market



Working Arrangements



Working Arrangements



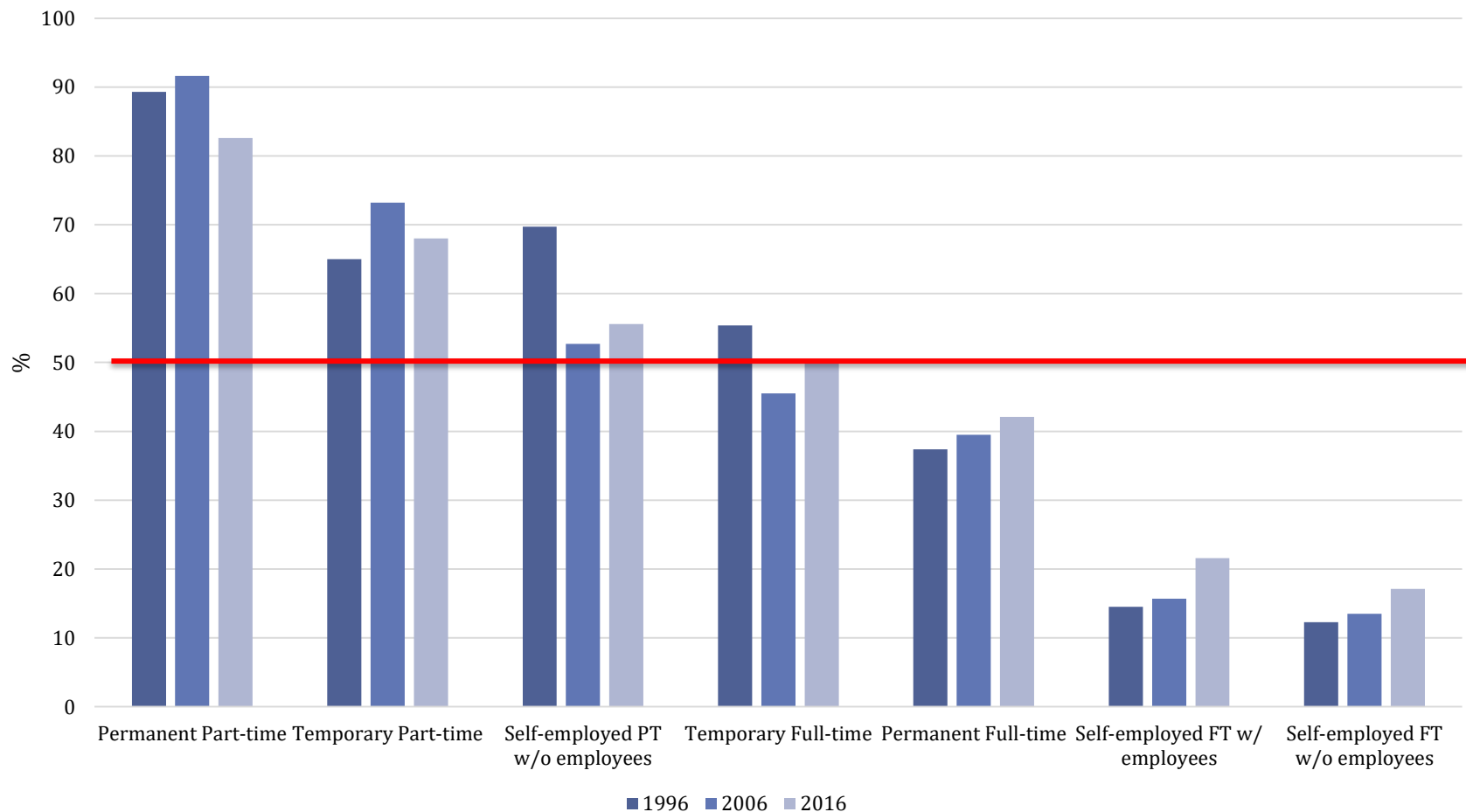
The gendered nature of working hours

% workers working different hours ***	Male			Female		
	1996	2006	2016	1996	2006	2016
0-8 hours	4.4	3.7	9.7	14.1	11.6	14.7
9 - 16 hours	2.1	2.1	4	11	10.8	10
17-40 hours	46.2	55.4	50	60.5	64	63.4
41-47 hours	17.9	14.7	13.3	8.1	7.8	6.9
48+	29.4	24.1	21.1	6.3	5.7	5.1

Involuntary temporary and part-time employment

- 43% increase in the numbers in involuntary temporary employment (2008-2016)
 - Males & females at equal risk.
- 35% increase in the numbers that are involuntary part-time employed (2008-2016).
 - Men face higher risk of being involuntary p-t employed (2017: 24% vs 10%).

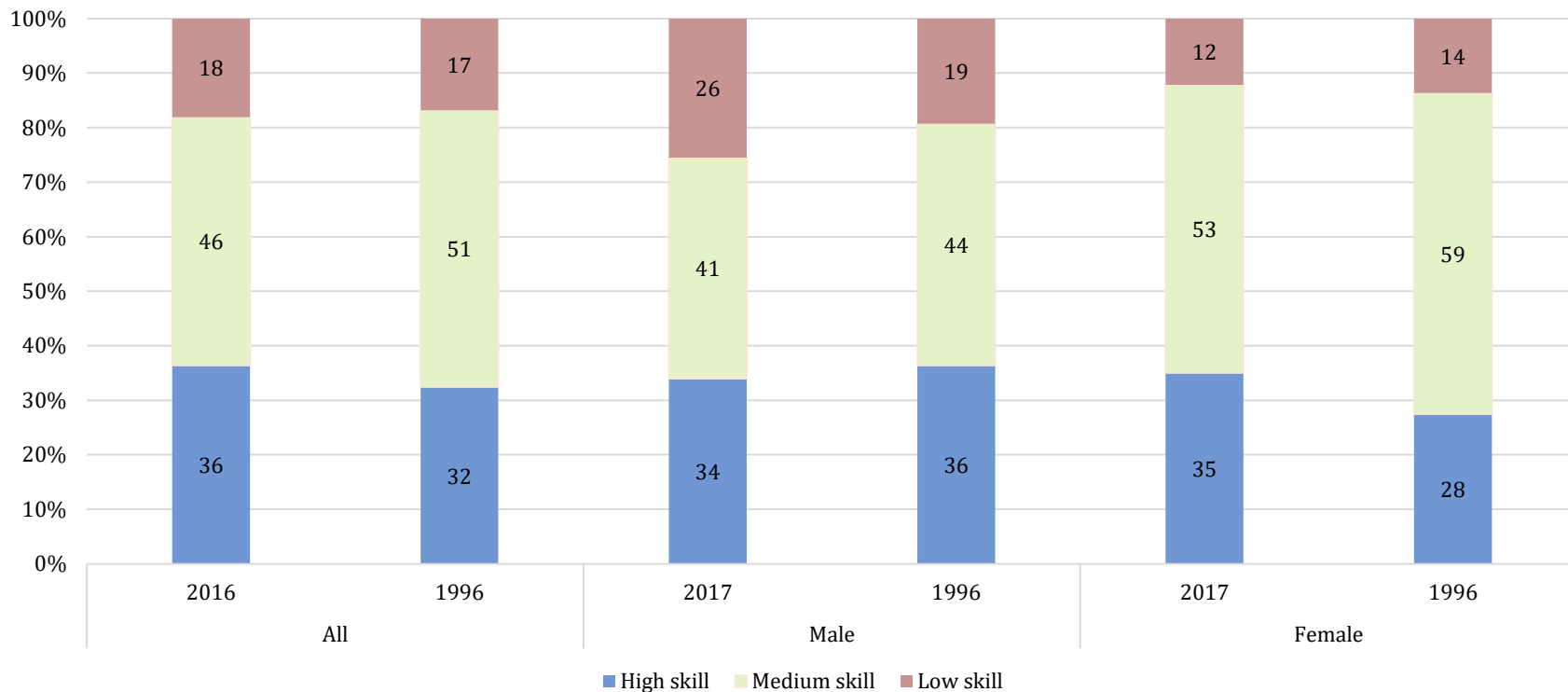
Working Arrangements: Percentage in each employment arrangement who are female



The gendered nature of working hours

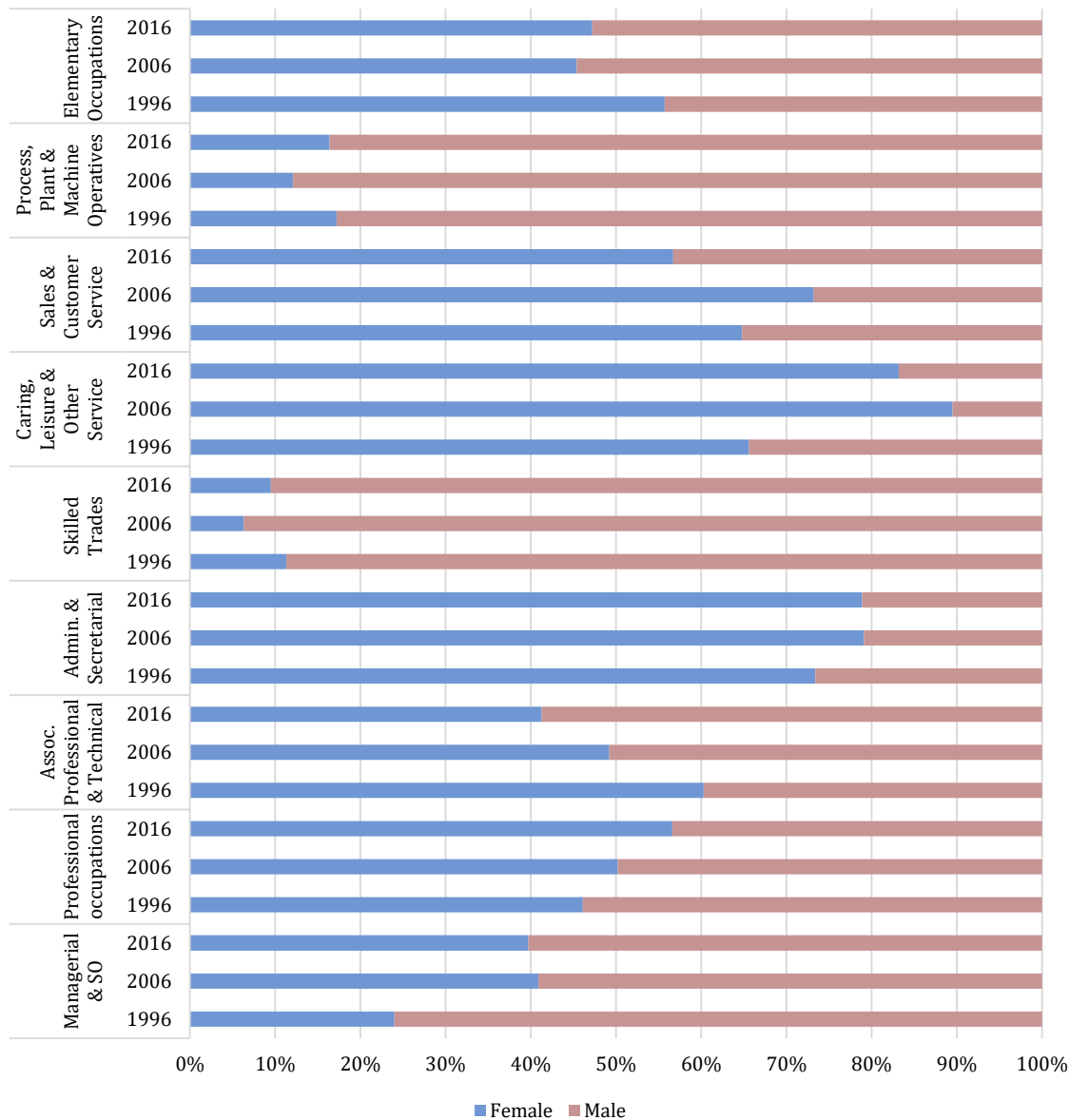
	Male		Female	
	2006	2016	2006	2016
Hours vary: Yes	16.6	25.7	13.4	29

Gendered share of labour market comprised of different occupational skill levels, 1996-2017



High skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managerial, Directors, Senior officials • Professional occupations
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate Professional & Technical • Administrative & Secretarial occupations • Skilled Trades occupations
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring, Leisure & other service occupations • Sales & Customer service occupations • Process, plant and machine operators
Low skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary occupations

Type of work: Percent in each occupation



"A ceiling? All this time I thought it was a floor."

The double pay penalty of being female

Low paid to High Paid occupations	Gender pay gap	Proportion Female
Sales occupations	3.2	0.6
Elementary administration and service occupations	3.0	0.2
Elementary trades and related occupations	6.9	-
Customer service occupations	-9.1	0.5
Leisure, travel and related personal service occupations	31.7	0.8
Textiles, printing and other skilled trades	2.4	0.4
Caring personal service occupations	7.6	0.9
Process, plant and machine operatives	19.9	0.2
Secretarial and related occupations	-9.3	-
Transport and mobile machine drivers and operatives	-	-
Administrative occupations	-5.1	0.7
Skilled construction and building trades	-	-
Health and social care associate professionals	-10.9	0.7
Science, engineering and technology associate professionals	4.7	0.2
Skilled metal, electrical and electronic trades	-	-
Other managers and proprietors	13.8	0.5
Culture, media and sports occupations	-	-
Business and public service associate professionals	6.2	0.5
Science, research, engineering and technology professionals	4.7	0.2
Health professionals	16.5	0.8
Business, media and public service professionals	6.9	0.4
Protective service occupations	-2.0	0.2
Corporate managers and directors	9.6	0.3
Teaching and educational professionals	4.5	0.7

Based on data from Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings, 2016

The feminisation of employment

norms

- In last 20 years we have seen overall harmonising down towards more insecure, poorer quality employment.
- Men's work.... starting to look like what women's work has long looked like.
- But that doesn't mean we need to concentrate on men.
- ... Policy can learn a lot from the experience of women & will need to.



Gender inequalities in employment

a story of *continuity and change*

- **Most significant changes appear in relation to men.....but we need not forget about women!!**
- Women continue to be more likely to be in insecure, part-time, low-hour, variable hour employment.
- Women & men continue to dominate in traditionally male or female dominated sectors & occupations.
- Women continue to face a double pay penalty....low pay & gender pay gap.

Future of work

Focus has been on:

- Technology, Artificial Intelligence, Robots & Automation of work.

But the following will also be key:

- Trend towards employment being insecure/poorer quality.
- Continued growth of services sector.
- Ageing population and increased care needs.
- Value of care work.
- Value of unpaid work.

Policy implications

- Need to focus on growth of insecure employment & its implications.
 - Will not correct this without recognising relative positions of both male and females.
- Time for a new 'social contract' that recognises the economic & social value of decent, well-paid employment?
- Need to recognise that inequality in the home has significant implications for inequality in the labour market - and vice versa.
 - Recent discussion of actions to lower/end gender inequalities in work not going to be enough.
- We need a new employment strategy.

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