

# The gendered nature of employment & insecure employment in Northern Ireland: A story of continuity and change

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**Lisa Wilson**  
NERI (Nevin Economic Research Institute)  
Belfast  
[lisa.wilson@NERInstitute.net](mailto:lisa.wilson@NERInstitute.net)  
[www.NERInstitute.net](http://www.NERInstitute.net)



*Research for new economic policies*

# Outline

1. Introduction & Aims of the study.
2. Rationale.
3. Methods.
4. Findings.
5. Discussion & implications.

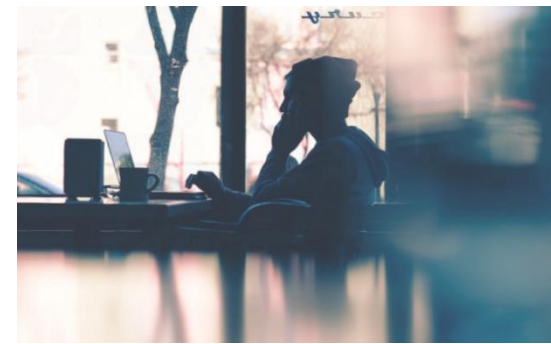
# Aims of the study

- (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 gendered impact of education and children on likelihood of being in insecure employment.
- (e) To consider the overall implications of findings for broader issues including: precarious employment; job quality; women in work; & future of work.

# 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.
- 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





# Insecure employment as a male problem



GETTY - CONTRIBUTOR

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The rising popularity of gig economy has impacted the wages of poorer male workers as they are working fewer hours

# 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?)....*

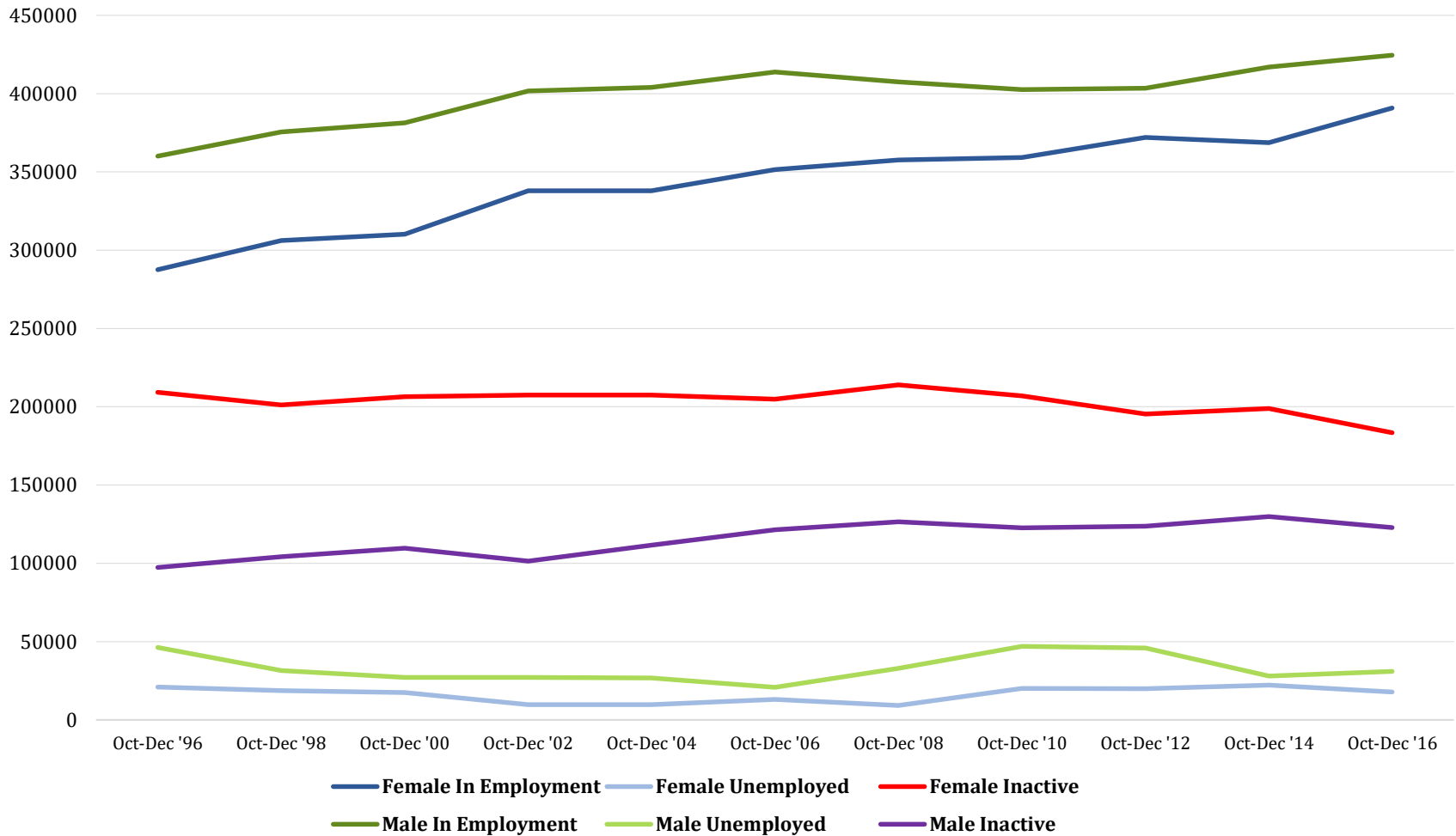
...what does this mean for traditional gender inequalities?

# Method & analysis

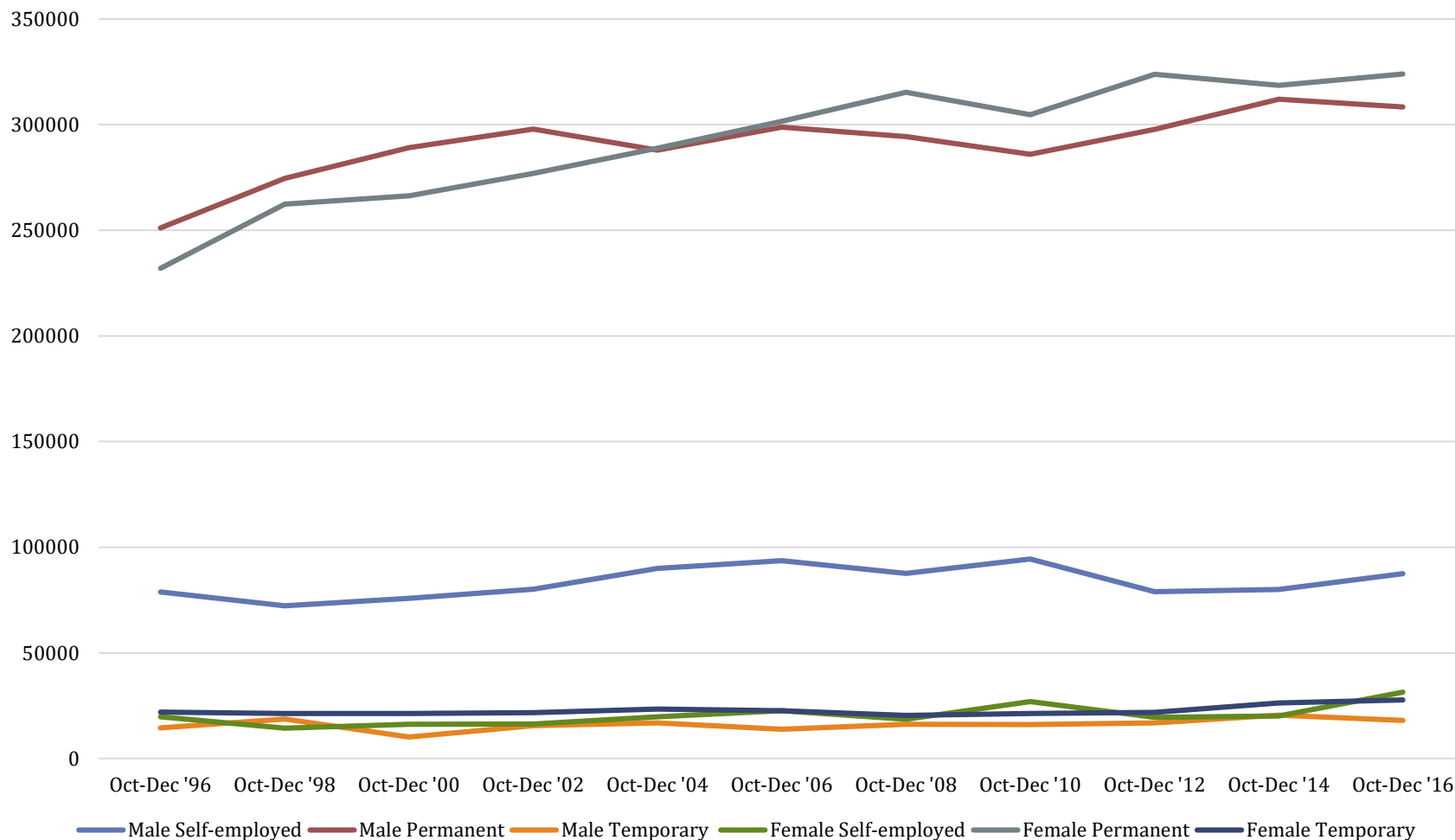
To assess research aims the paper examined trends over 20 year period 1996 to 2016:

- Participation in labour market.
- Rates of employment/unemployment.
- Working arrangements: Security of employment, full-time/part-time, working hours.
- 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

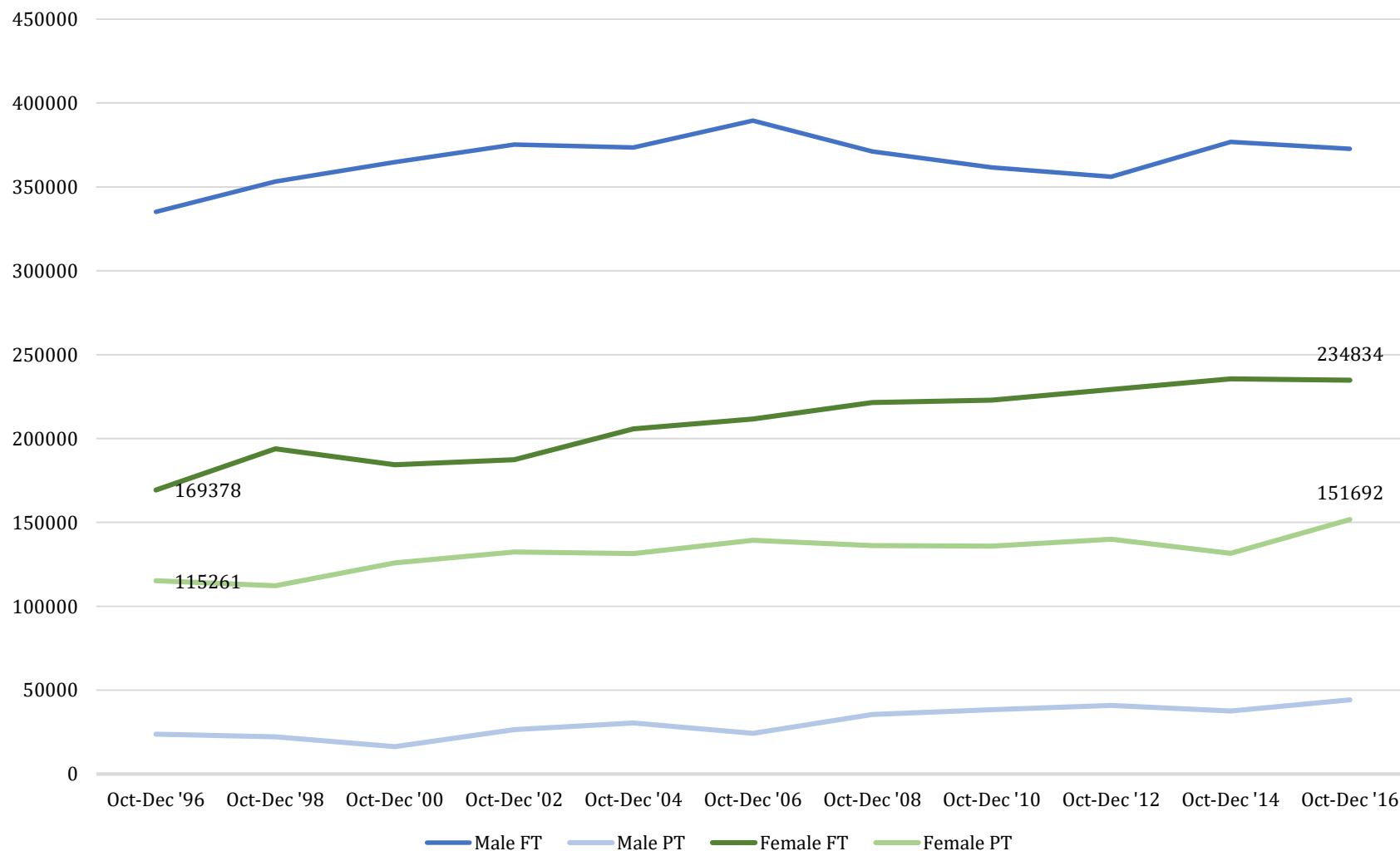


# Working Arrangements

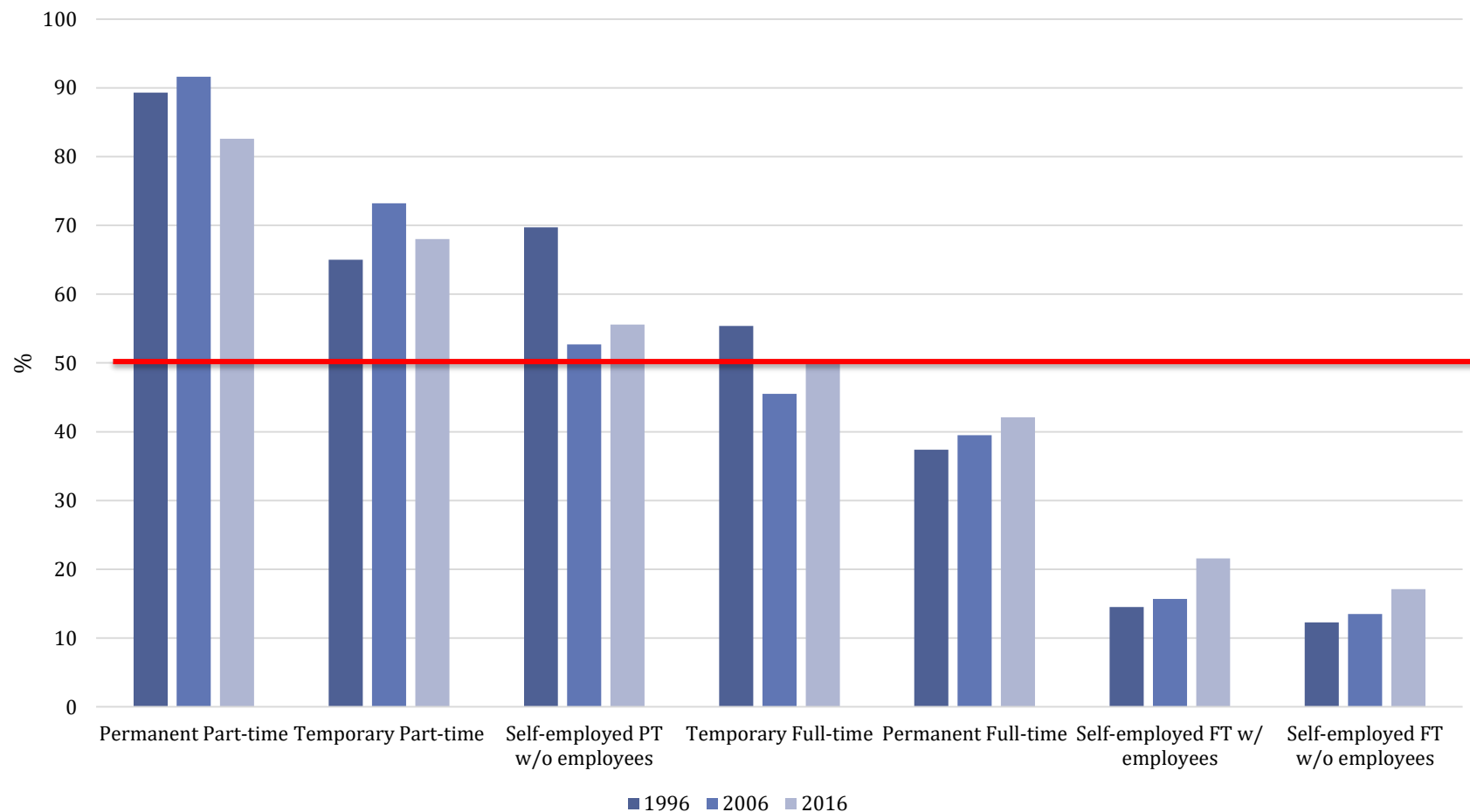




# Working Arrangements



# Working Arrangements: Percentage in each employment arrangement who are female



# The gendered impact of education on insecure employment

|                                       |        | Self-<br>employed<br>Full-time | Self-<br>employed<br>Part-time | Permanent<br>Full-time | Permanent<br>Part-time | Temp<br>Full-<br>time | Temp<br>Part-<br>time |
|---------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|                                       |        | %                              | %                              | %                      | %                      | %                     | %                     |
| <b>Educational qualifications ***</b> |        |                                |                                |                        |                        |                       |                       |
| <b>Degree or above</b>                | Male   | 10.5                           | 1.5                            | 79.6                   | 3.5                    | 3.6                   | 1.3                   |
|                                       | Female | 4.0                            | 2.9                            | <b>64.6</b>            | 18.2                   | 4.8                   | 5.6                   |
| <b>Below degree</b>                   | Male   | 21.1                           | 2.1                            | 65.3                   | 7.4                    | 1.9                   | 2.2                   |
|                                       | Female | 5.2                            | 3.6                            | <b>50.2</b>            | 34.8                   | 1.7                   | 4.5                   |
| <b>No qualifications</b>              | Male   | 26.6                           | 3.7                            | 60.0                   | 5.2                    | 1.6                   | 2.7                   |
|                                       | Female | 1.1                            | 6.0                            | <b>34.7</b>            | 58.2                   | -                     | -                     |

# The gendered impact of education on insecure employment

|                                       |        | Self-<br>employed<br>Full-time | Self-<br>employed<br>Part-time | Permanent<br>Full-time | Permanent<br>Part-time | Temp<br>Full-<br>time | Temp<br>Part-<br>time |
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|                                       |        | %                              | %                              | %                      | %                      | %                     | %                     |
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| <b>Degree or above</b>                | Male   | 10.5                           | 1.5                            | <b>79.6</b>            | 3.5                    | 3.6                   | 1.3                   |
|                                       | Female | 4.0                            | 2.9                            | 64.6                   | 18.2                   | 4.8                   | 5.6                   |
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|                                       |        | Self-employed Full-time | Self-employed Part-time | Permanent Full-time | Permanent Part-time | Temp Full-time | Temp Part-time |
|---------------------------------------|--------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                                       |        | %                       | %                       | %                   | %                   | %              | %              |
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| <b>Degree or above</b>                | Male   | 10.5                    | 1.5                     | 79.6                | 3.5                 | 3.6            | 1.3            |
|                                       | Female | 4.0                     | 2.9                     | 64.6                | <b>18.2</b>         | 4.8            | 5.6            |
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# The gendered impact of children on insecure employment

|                               |        | Self-employed Full-time | Self-employed Part-time | Permanent Full-time | Permanent Part-time | Temp Full-time | Temp Part-time |
|-------------------------------|--------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                               |        | %                       | %                       | %                   | %                   | %              | %              |
| <b>Number of children ***</b> |        |                         |                         |                     |                     |                |                |
| <b>0 children</b>             | Male   | 19.2                    | 2.4                     | <b>68.2</b>         | 5.1                 | 3.5            | 1.6            |
|                               | Female | 4.5                     | 3.1                     | <b>63.0</b>         | 21.5                | 2.8            | 5.2            |
| <b>1 + children</b>           | Male   | 18.7                    | 1.8                     | <b>69.0</b>         | 7.1                 | 0.8            | 2.6            |
|                               | Female | 4.7                     | 4.2                     | <b>44.0</b>         | 40.8                | 2.3            | 4.1            |

# The gendered impact of children on insecure employment

|                               |        | Self-employed Full-time | Self-employed Part-time | Permanent Full-time | Permanent Part-time | Temp Full-time | Temp Part-time |
|-------------------------------|--------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                               |        | %                       | %                       | %                   | %                   | %              | %              |
| <b>Number of children ***</b> |        |                         |                         |                     |                     |                |                |
| <b>0 children</b>             | Male   | 19.2                    | 2.4                     | 68.2                | 5.1                 | 3.5            | 1.6            |
|                               | Female | 4.5                     | 3.1                     | 63.0                | 21.5                | 2.8            | 5.2            |
| <b>1 + children</b>           | Male   | 18.7                    | 1.8                     | 69.0                | 7.1                 | 0.8            | 2.6            |
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# The gendered nature of working hours

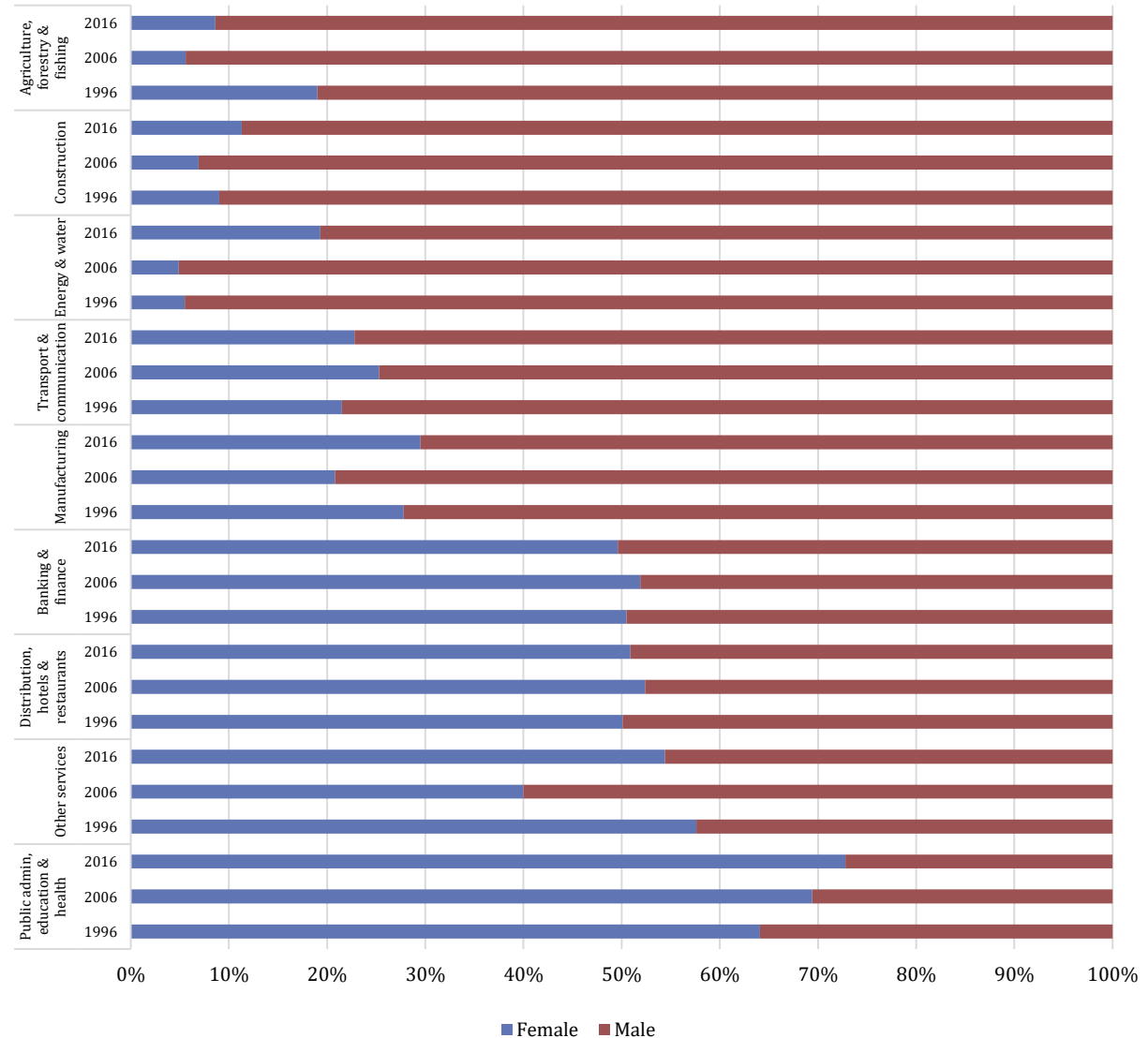
| % workers working different hours *** | Male |      |      | Female |      |      |
|---------------------------------------|------|------|------|--------|------|------|
|                                       | 1996 | 2006 | 2016 | 1996   | 2006 | 2016 |
| 0-8 hours                             | 4.4  | 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  |

# The gendered nature of working hours

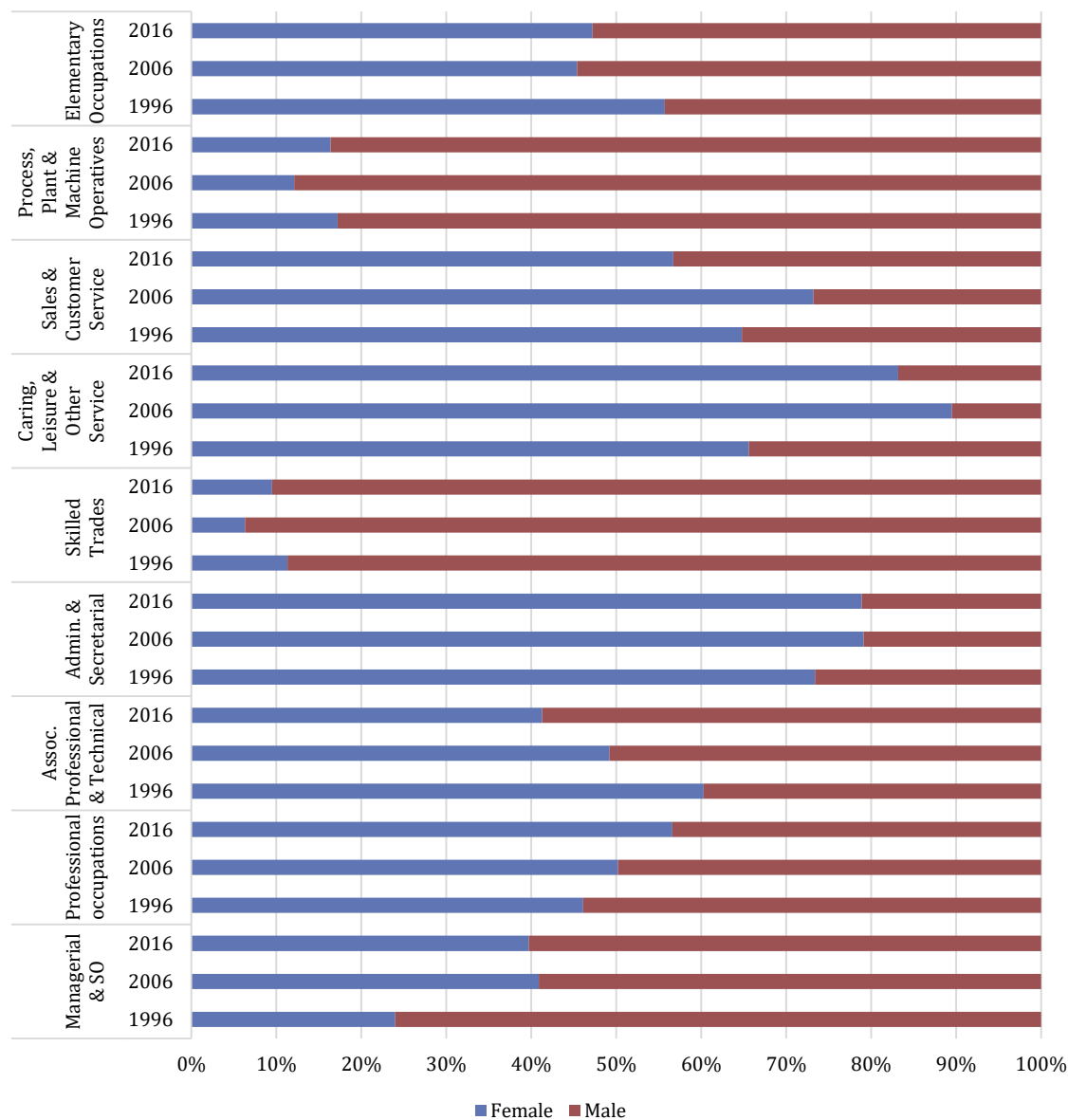
|                 | Male |      | Female |      |
|-----------------|------|------|--------|------|
|                 | 2006 | 2016 | 2006   | 2016 |
| Hours vary: Yes | 16.6 | 25.7 | 13.4   | 29   |

# Type of work:

## Percent in each industrial sector

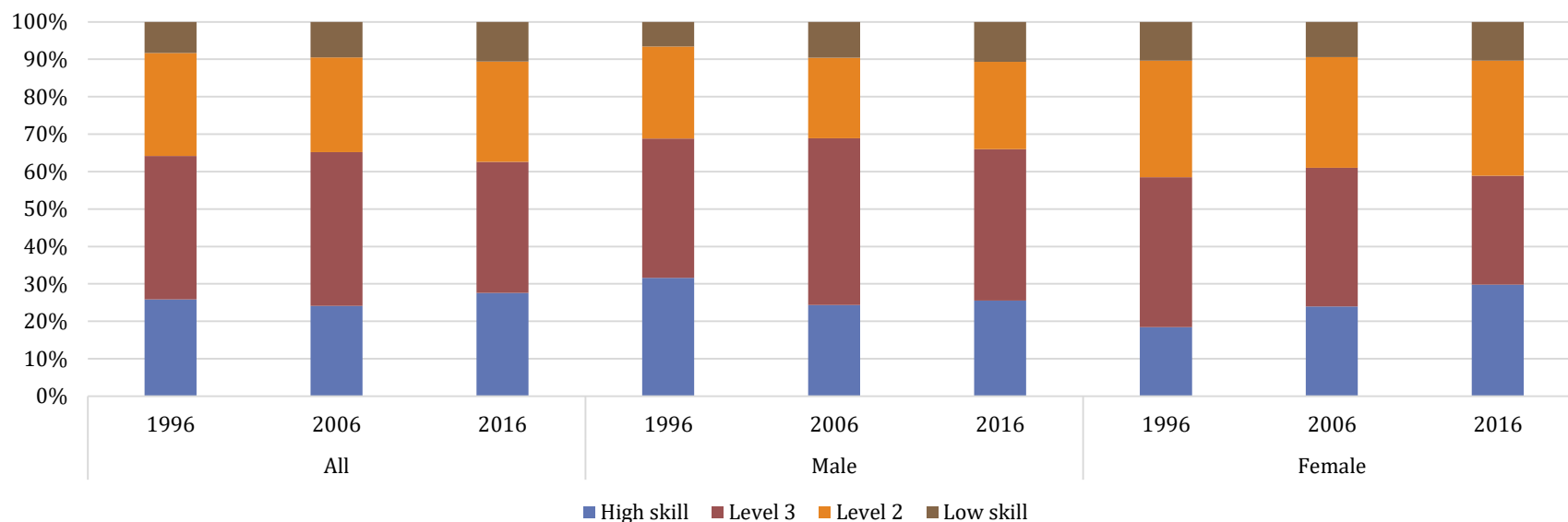


# Type of work: Percent in each occupation



# Type of work: Gendered changes in occupation

## Gendered share of labour market comprised of different occupational skill levels, 1996-2016



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

# 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 (HINT: !!).
- But that doesn't mean we need to concentrate on men.
- ... Policy can learn a lot from the experience of women & will need to.



## *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.
  - Higher levels of education narrow the gap in terms of likelihood of being in insecure employment.
  - Having children further amplifies gap.
- 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.

No serious recognition of how labour market inequality is affected by inequality in home....& vice versa...



# Lack of value given to unpaid

## family/caring work

Economists long used term work as synonymous with paid work.

- *'everyone 'knows' that pay and work imply each other'*

- **Unpaid work**

- Traditionally/Continues to be ignored/undervalued.
- Lack of value given to unpaid work clear in 2 fundamental ways:
  - Unpaid work excluded from official measures of production & economic activity such as GDP/GVA.
  - Those who do not combine unpaid work such as looking after the family or home with paid work are categorised as 'economically inactive'.

# Lack of value given to unpaid family/caring work

Department for Employment and Learning, 2015  
***“Enabling Success”: A Strategy to tackle economic inactivity in Northern Ireland***

***‘some forms of economic inactivity are not problematic. Northern Ireland, for example, has a higher proportion of students contributing to our inactive total than any other region of the United Kingdom. This can be viewed as a benign form of inactivity where the investment in education and skills is highly likely to repay dividends to the individuals and wider economy in the future.’***

It goes on to say that by engaging in paid work those who are currently looking after their family or home will be able to ***‘better provide for [their] families and make a fuller contribution to society.’***

# 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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*Research for new economic policies*