

WOMEN IN LONDON'S ECONOMY

Post-conference report 2006

**‘By 2016 seven out of ten new jobs
in London will be filled by women.’**

GLA Economics 2006

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Introduction to the Women in London's Economy conference

London's economy is critically dependent on the contribution of women. Women are projected to take seven out of ten of the new jobs in London through to 2016.

A conference looking at the role of women in London's economy was held at the Victoria Park Plaza on 19 January 2006, attended by around 400 businesswomen, policy makers, and opinion informers. Opened by the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, the event launched a new Greater London Authority (GLA) report with research from GLA Economics revealing the true picture of inequality affecting women in London's economy.

The conference welcomed speakers from across the private and public sectors. They spoke on the key issues detailed in the *Women in London's Economy* report and some of the steps which could be taken to improve the role of women in London's economy.

Key report findings

The second *Women in London's Economy* report was published in January 2006 by the GLA, incorporating new research from GLA Economics. Key findings include:

- the gender pay gap is greater in London than at UK level
- the part-time pay gap is greater in London than in the rest of the UK
- there has been an increase in wage inequality for women in London over the last six years that has not been seen in the UK as a whole
- in 2004 the highest paid ten per cent of male full-time workers in London earned £36.66 an hour, while the lowest paid ten per cent of female full-time workers earned £6.78 an hour
- women's employment rates are lower in London than in the rest of the UK: nearly 70 per cent of women in Britain are in work, but only 62 per cent in London
- direct and indirect discrimination contribute to women's inequality; women face discrimination in pregnancy and pressure to downshift in their jobs to combine work and family demands
- subject choice in schools and colleges and gender segregation in employment are intrinsically linked
- in the period researched (through to 2016) an additional 558,000 new jobs are expected in London, more than two-thirds of which are projected to be filled by women
- job growth in London is concentrated in five key sectors
- employers believe the GLA could play a stronger role in promoting awareness about employment opportunities and appropriate training
- retaining skilled women workers with caring demands requires meeting employees' needs – for example, through an improved combination of flexible working practices and affordable flexible childcare.

Session 1: Women in London's Economic Future

In this session speakers discussed the business case for diversity and equality, trends in employment and opportunities for women in London's key growth sectors, family responsibilities, part-time work, skills shortages, and the pay gap faced by women in London.

Session 2: Breaking Down the Barriers

In this session speakers focused on the realities of occupational segregation and the gender pay gap, action to widen women's training options – particularly in atypical areas, and the experiences of women entrepreneurs.

Session 3: Women in London's Economy: the remedies?

In this session, speakers discussed the possible solutions to some of the issues raised in the 2006 *Women in London's Economy* report including issues around pay parity, procurement, workplace discrimination, the law, and flexible working policies.

Words from our sponsors



UBS

The essence of the UBS brand is client focus. We have an increasingly diverse pool of clients around the globe. Their success and ours depends upon our ability to understand and meet their needs. So we work to create an open, inclusive culture, attracting the best talent from all backgrounds. We encourage everyone to express their different ideas and viewpoints, so that we can develop the best and most innovative solutions, differentiating us from our competitors.

We have systematically integrated diversity into our key management processes throughout the employee lifecycle:

- Diversity is an integral part of our recruiting efforts. We expect our hiring managers and our partner executive search firms to ensure that candidates from diverse backgrounds are considered and that we hire the very best talent in the market.

- Diversity is embedded in our talent development programs – from graduate to senior management level. In addition, we have implemented actor-based training for senior managers worldwide to address issues that can arise in managing diverse, global teams.
- Diversity has been integrated into our annual performance management, promotion and succession planning processes. Diversity is a core competency against which all our managers are evaluated.

UBS recognises the importance of women's contribution to business and the economy in London and is proud to sponsor the *Women in London's Economy* conference.



London Development Agency

The London Development Agency (LDA) is delighted to have been a key sponsor of the *Women in London's Economy* Conference for 2006. At the LDA we work to increase equality of opportunity for all and to make London an inclusive city where everyone can benefit from economic prosperity.

Women make a significant and vital contribution to London's economy – but they still face barriers to economic participation. Discrimination, lack of access to affordable childcare, and the limited availability of part-time and flexible working can prevent women from playing a full role in London's workforce.

At the LDA we are committed to challenging discrimination and promoting equality, and we fully support the ideas and values of the *Women in London's Economy* conference.

For more information on the work of the LDA visit www.lda.gov.uk

Welcome



Nicky Gavron
Deputy Mayor

Nicky Gavron opened her speech by thanking the main conference sponsors, UBS and the LDA, and the session sponsors Shell and Bank of Scotland. Nicky then

thanked the speakers and audience for attending the conference where she said that she anticipated a meaningful discussion which would inform the Mayor's programme of work on the role of women in London's economy.

Nicky then explained that the issues highlighted and discussed at the conference were the result of detailed research on a range of issues relating to the role of women in London's economy including childcare issues, part-time work, gender segregation and education/skills.

She said London's future as a world city depended on women

playing a full and equal part in London's economy. The barriers experienced by women mean a great waste of human capital, a waste of women's potential and opportunities, and a waste of their talents.

Nicky closed her speech by raising the issue of child poverty and said that in her view there was no better way to tackle child poverty than to close the gender pay gap.

Finally Nicky said that she was proud to introduce the Mayor of London '... a great champion of equalities in our city'.

Opening plenary



Ken Livingstone
Mayor of London

In opening the conference, Ken Livingstone highlighted some of the achievements made by his administration since the first Women in London's Economy Conference in 2005. He said the GLA had met with global legal

businesses to discuss the issues raised by the conference, had lobbied government about the role procurement could play in the equality agenda, had made a submission to the government's Women and Work Commission and had made the case for women's representations in the Commission for Equality and Human Rights. In addition, he said there had been work to ramp up the London childcare programme, which now had a level of subsidy that is able to support lower income families to access affordable quality childcare.

Looking at the research done for the *Women In London's Economy 2006* report, he said it

showed that inequality was getting worse. There had been an increase in wage inequality between women's and men's wages in London over the last six years that hadn't happened nationally. Occupational segregation as well as direct discrimination was at the heart of the gender pay gap, which stood at 24 per cent in London, compared to 18 per cent throughout the UK.

The part-time pay gap was greater in London than the rest of the UK: women working part-time were earning just 51 per cent of the full-time rate for men, compared with 57 per cent across the UK economy as a whole. Women's employment rates were also lower in London

than in the rest of the UK – particularly in part-time employment – indicating a need for more affordable childcare.

Qualitative research for the report showed women were a minority of entrants to A-Levels and degrees in many of the subjects that employers in London's growth sectors were looking for – indicating that women suffered from poor career advice and entrenched stereotypes.

It also identified the difficulty of retaining skilled women workers due to the caring responsibilities that fell unequally to women, indicating a need for more flexible working policies.

He said that such inequality demanded action.

The Mayor said he remembered the jubilation that greeted the Sex Discrimination Act when it was passed 30 years ago, and noted that no one would have believed then that 30 years later, here in the richest city in Britain and in the fourth richest nation in the world, we would be seeing the inequality gap widen.

He noted that newspapers seemed to report almost weekly on big discrimination cases in the City, with the individual women often winning very big pay-outs. The implication of these reports was that such cases were an aberration. But, he said that the GLA research showed that the cases were not an aberration, they were merely the tip of the inequality iceberg.

On the positive side, he said the report predicted 558,000 new

jobs in London by 2016, in business services, hotels and restaurants, retail, health and education and other services. Women were projected to fill 70 per cent of these new jobs.

The Olympic and Paralympic Games would also bring thousands of jobs, adding £6 billion to the London economy between now and 2012. With each stage of this growth, the general inequalities should be reduced.

He went on to highlight the fact that the GLA group, which had a budget of £9 billion a year and employed 105,000 people directly and indirectly, was starting to break down inequality internally. By the time of the conference, 43 per cent of the people earning over £50,000 in the organisation were women – a 14 per cent increase over the previous year. In London's fire authority, 39 per cent of top management positions were held by women. In the police, which had started from a longer backlog of historic discrimination, this figure had risen to 8.8 per cent. The LDA had achieved a 22 per cent increase and stood at 35 per cent.

Looking at the action that needed to be taken, the Mayor said there was a need for a national economic policy to tackle the underlying causes of gender inequality.

Greater co-ordination of education and training aimed at women to give them the best chance possible for the most rewarding jobs was also necessary. To this end the Mayor said he was in discussion with

the government to get control of the five Learning and Skills Councils in London to address that issue.

London also needed much more affordable and flexible childcare, and work was underway at the LDA to bring about a big increase in childcare places.

He also observed that more rights to flexible working would also be needed and there had to be a more consistent implementation of flexible working and other rights. To ensure these rights were respected, statistical evidence was needed to demonstrate that companies were being flexible. Without the statistics, no one would know if a company was under-achieving or not.

Finally, the Women and Work Commission and the Discrimination Law Review needed to take the opportunity of the legal review to repair the gaping holes in inequality and employment law.

The Mayor ended by promising that the views heard at the conference would be taken on board and would contribute to the policies carried forward both within the GLA group and by working with the private sector through various business representation organisations.



Mayor of London
January 2006

Women in London's Economic Future

Session 1

Mary Reilly - Session Chair Chair, London Development Agency Board; Chair, CBI London; Partner, Deloitte and Touche LLP

Mary Reilly introduced the first session, covering the role of women in London's economic future, with some statistics on women in London and entrepreneurship. She said:

- there were three million women aged 16 and over in London, making up over 52 per cent of the adult population
- twenty-nine per cent of these women came from black and minority ethnic groups, according to the 2001 census
- women constituted an estimated 27 per cent of self-employed people in the UK
- over half of women chose to start their own businesses on a part-time basis
- only nine per cent of directors in FTSE 100 companies were women
- around eight per cent of women have expressed an interest in starting an enterprise compared to 13 per cent of men.

Comparing this with the US, where more women operate businesses of their own, she said that the UK would gain an extra 750,000 businesses if the UK achieved the same level of female entrepreneurship, many of which would be in London.

Such competitiveness needed to be encouraged to maintain London's position as a world-class city, Mary argued. With competition from new economies around the world, encouraging women to start and grow their own businesses was a priority for the LDA, the Mayor and the government.



The LDA was addressing that issue through its Women's Enterprise Programme, she said. The programme covered a range of activities at various levels. At a strategic level, it brought together partners and stakeholders to develop a co-ordinated action plan to promote women's enterprise across London.

Further activities were being developed on six key themes:

- business support and advice
- access to finance
- public and private sector procurement
- affordable premises
- international partnerships and trade development
- data and research coordination.

She said diversity in the workforce was a critical factor in commercial success, and that the LDA was working towards greater diversity through the programme *Diversity Works for London*, the Mayor's £10 million campaign to tackle barriers to employment.

In conclusion, she said the conference would provide an opportunity for people to work together to make sure women's role in London's economy was recognised.

Bridget Rosewell
Consultant Chief Economist
GLA

Bridget Rosewell began by presenting the audience with projections of job growth for London, to show what the future might hold for London's women.

Taking historical data going back to the 1980s, the GLA Economics unit had looked at the projected job trends for both men and women. The indications were that current trends would lead to a situation where seven out of ten new jobs would go to women.

Around 400,000 additional jobs were likely to be created in a number of different sectors:

- business services - by far the biggest sector in terms of job growth and one in which women were relatively well represented
- hotels, restaurants and other services – a sector where women were taking an increasing share of the employment
- financial services – although this sector was showing growth, the growth was much slower than commonly imagined and it was a sector in which women's share of employment was falling
- health and education – these sectors were also expected to continue growing and were areas that had always been dominated by women's employment.

Bridget then examined some of the sectors where there were likely to be fewer opportunities:

- utilities, transport, construction – there were signs that these sectors were



showing very little growth or declining and were areas in which women had traditionally had low levels of representation

- public sector work and clerical work – there was little to indicate much growth in the public sector, traditionally a big sector for women.

She then went on to examine issues around part-time working, which was a big factor in women's employment.

She said there were more full-time workers and more full-time women workers in London than in the rest of the country and fewer part-time. This situation was partly explained by commuting time, as spending perhaps three to four hours travelling for work made it unattractive to work part-time hours.

The part-time pay gap was also higher in London, indicating that fewer well-paid jobs were available on a part-time basis; with part-time jobs generally being less well-paid than full-time ones. She said the challenge was to consider how very responsible jobs could be done on a part-time basis.

She added that women tended to have more transitions in their working lives, inevitably, than men did. They went through periods of not working as a result of having children or dealing with other responsibilities, and then could find it difficult to go back into employment at the level they left. Instead, whether through expectations or opportunities, they tended to move downwards in their career when they returned to work.

Bridget then outlined the two biggest challenges she saw ahead. The first was the question of occupational segregation – how important it was and what it meant. While there was very obvious and well-recognised segregation in some areas – such as in nursing and secretarial sectors – the occupational segregation in other sectors was much less well understood.

The second challenge was the incompatibility between the dedication and long hours that were apparently a requirement to reach the top, and the more flexible, family-friendly and diverse working life that people, not just women, were increasingly demanding.

'I think it's a challenge to both sides actually. It's a challenge both for women and employers. I'm not sure that women themselves have come to terms with how they want to make those choices,' she said.

Jenny Watson Chair, Equal Opportunities Commission

Jenny Watson said she would look at the national context of women in the economy and the solutions that might be appropriate.

She said that women's family responsibilities clearly had a big impact on their role in the economy. Despite accounting for almost half the national work force, almost half the women working, were working part-time. This was generally because they wanted to balance work and home lives, whether this was to do with children or looking after older relatives.

This meant that women were being forced into jobs they did not particularly want to do because the jobs they would have liked to do were not available on a flexible basis. Few women working flexibly were managers or senior officials. The Commission's research had found that four out of five people working part-time were working below their potential, which was a huge loss to the economy.

She said that her research for the Commission had also made it clear that occupational segregation had produced areas where there were skills shortages. 'If you have an under-representation of one sex in any organisational area, you have a skills shortage,' she said. 'If you only recruit from one half of the population, it is inevitable that you will miss out on some very talented people.'

She said that the problem was starting with young women, at apprenticeship level. Apprenticeships favoured by women, such as childcare, were



much more poorly paid than those favoured by men, such as engineering. Jenny said that she was glad that the government had recently taken on the recommendation to make young people aware of the pay rates in different sectors when they received careers advice.

Young people were willing to consider non-traditional jobs, she said. When asked, 80 per cent of girls and 55 per cent of boys said they would be interested in trying out a non-traditional job. One solution would be to offer young people two work experience placements – one to do what they think they are expected to do, the other to try something they think they'd like, but haven't the confidence to ask for.

She then turned to the Commission's ongoing research into black and minority ethnic women's ambitions in the workplace. Looking at women under 35:

- almost half said that they were aiming for promotion
- ninety per cent said they thought about the opportunity for promotion when applying for a job
- black and Asian women were three to four times more likely

than white women to be working at a level under that which their qualifications would suggest

- Bangladeshi and Pakistani women graduates are five times more likely than white women to be unemployed.

On the pay gap, Jenny said that the Commission has been pushing strongly for employer responsibility to review causes of the pay gap in the private sector, to match the compulsory pay reviews that the public sector would be obliged to undertake from 2007. The voluntary approach, she said, wasn't working.

The Commission, Jenny said, saw the Olympic and Paralympic Games as a real opportunity for change. 'So many of the jobs that are going to be created give us the opportunity to do it differently and to open up more opportunities for women.' The Commission would be watching to see how many of those jobs would be created for women and how many of them would enable women to move into the areas where they say they'd like to work, but currently find it difficult. For example, there was only one apprenticeship place per 100 workers in London compared to six or seven in the north of England.

Jenny ended on a positive note, saying that improved retention rates after maternity leave had resulted in a reported £3 billion worth of savings to employers. One employer in particular, the RAC, had said they saw productivity increase by eight per cent once they introduced flexible working. It was proof, she said, that if employers made the working environment a fair one, they would reap the benefits.

Mona Lau
Head of Global Diversity,
UBS

Mona Lau said that her presentation would cover both the business case for diversity and how diversity in the UK compared to the situation in the US.

There were several reasons why organisations worked on diversity and embarked on a process of culture change, she said, including that there was a moral and ethical case, and that it helped to avoid litigation. However, most importantly, it concerned a single word: talent. When a new generation of young talent graduated from universities all over the world – usually about half men, half women – it was the job of the financial services industry to attract that talent, not alienate it. Talent was what was needed to service financial clients.

Similarly, research had shown that diverse teams of people, with a good mix of men and women and a mix of ages and cultures, tended to produce more creative solutions. And finally, she asked people to consider why CEOs with grown daughters tended to understand diversity better than others? ‘Because whenever they meet with their daughters, they understand the glass ceiling. Suddenly it matters to them.’

Valid as those reasons were, she said, there was another one: the bottom line. Companies needed to survive, to make a profit and to understand who their clients were. UBS had noticed the following:

- More and more of their clients were women; women who managed wealth.



- The real financial decision makers in a family were the women.
- One of their fastest growing client sectors was women entrepreneurs.
- Many more women had become asset managers and fund managers.
- There are more women CEOs in big corporations and many more treasurers.

Mona observed that it's the bottom line that dictates that companies learn to sell and communicate to both men and women. That's the main business case for diversity.

Mona then turned to the American experience, and compared diversity work to the marathon.

She explained that there is nothing fast or easy about achieving diversity. The process of culture change had started in the US 30 to 40 years ago, and she felt the country was around two-thirds of the way through running a marathon.

She then explained what diversity had achieved in the United States.

- It was now totally accepted that women work, and that they stay in the workforce.

- There is now a much better infrastructure in terms of childcare and after-school programmes.
- There is a broader pipeline of talent coming out of schools and universities.
- The whole focus on work/life balance has really benefited both men and women and influenced the career choices of new graduates.

By comparison, she thought the UK was between a third and half way through the marathon, and a little behind the States in terms of society's focus on the subject. She reflected that perhaps the UK was in better shape, because there were fewer entrenched views to overcome.

Corporations were learning to deal with gender issues, learning to be more flexible and learning to identify talent in slightly different ways. Government could play a role in these changes, but, in her experience, new laws work a little, whereas incentive programmes actually work a lot better. She urged the conference to work creatively and try to showcase companies that have done well and come up with programmes that encourage employers to be more flexible.

Finally Mona made the point that unless senior people in corporations are held personally accountable for changing the culture, it wouldn't happen. She observed that it was important for everyone, regardless of company allegiances, to share information and their experiences. This could only hasten progress.

Questions and Answers from Session 1

Following the speeches made by the speakers in this session, conference delegates were free to ask questions from the floor. Some points raised in the discussion are summarised below.

Age discrimination

- Age discrimination affects women more than men because they may be returning to work after a longer period of time, and may not have recent experience.
- Lack of recent experience has been used to try to justify age discrimination in some cases.
- Older employees can be important: as clients are living longer, people who can identify with clients are needed.

Caring

- We need to press for carer leave in general, not just maternity and childcare leave.
- Childcare has to be more flexible: finding childcare for school-aged children in the school holidays and childcare for mothers who work shift and flexible hours are both very difficult.
- We need to think about men's role in childcare and ensure mothers and fathers have more choice over which parent is to stay at home and care for the child.
- Some surveys show that eight in ten fathers would like to be at home to look after their children but there is no leave that allows them to do so.
- A change in this legislation would help change stereotypical attitudes towards parenting and make a work/life balance more realistic.

Flexible working

- Employers should be aware that people in an older age group may need to work more flexibly or for fewer hours, and suitable work opportunities are needed to allow this.
- There should be a distinction between full-time and part-time work or job-sharing.
- Businesses are applying flexible working practices to existing employees but not to new ones or returning ones.
- There are not enough part-time jobs available, and those seeking part-time work or job-sharing often face discrimination, either directly or indirectly.

Career aspirations for our children

- Although boys and girls are often equal in aspirations and confidence in early years, by about 12 inequalities begin to set in. By the age of 13 girls and boys have already taken critical decisions about their career aspirations and this shows that good careers advice before GCSE age is essential.
- Encouraging self-confidence in children of both sexes is very important in helping them make the right career decisions.
- The education system should challenge stereotypes of traditional men's and women's roles so that children aspire to potential careers that may be 'non-traditional'. Parents should be involved in this too. Children can start to think in terms of stereotypes as early as five years old.
- Initiatives such as 'take your daughter to work' day should be encouraged so that girls can see examples of women in the workplace.
- More examples of flexible working would give children and young people a wider range of possible career options.
- Rising tuition costs may have a more discriminatory impact on young women, given their likelihood of facing lower pay than men later on, and may lead to women choosing shorter courses to lower costs, thereby missing out on higher skills and the knock-on positive effects for their futures.

Session 2

Breaking Down the Barriers

Diane Abbott - Session Chair Member of Parliament for Hackney North and Stoke Newington

Diane Abbott started the session on breaking down barriers by outlining the main areas it would cover. These included how to encourage and support women going into non-traditional areas, and the role of education and training in helping women break down barriers.

Diane spoke of her ten years' experience of running a network for black businesswomen, and her resulting awareness of the barriers they face. She mentioned her own experience of breaking down barriers: 'I've always worked in an area where it was unusual to find a woman, let alone a black woman'.

She added that the main issue wasn't to do with women's skills or abilities, but about fighting people's preconceptions, even in the 21st Century.



Rebecca George, Director of UK Government Business at IBM

Rebecca George began by describing the current situation of women in IT as 'parlous', saying that the numbers of women in IT at IBM had dropped to 26 per cent.

She said that it was worthwhile talking about IT, as it was often an early indicator for the wider business environment. However, she pointed out that the sector does have some serious issues replicated in most other industries.

She revealed that despite employers working hard to recruit female graduates, under a fifth of the workforce is female. In addition, she suspected that women stayed in IT jobs for a shorter period than men – representing a lower return on investment for employers.

The dearth of interesting role models for girls is one of the main reasons Rebecca thinks there is a lack of women joining the IT industry: 'Very few girls and indeed boys see female senior executive women on a regular basis in their lives.' She commented that the type of role model put forward was also important, and that 'testosterone women' – women who are more masculine than



men – are not necessarily the role models needed.

Addressing the question of why women are leaving IT, Rebecca highlighted a research project sponsored through the Women in IT Forum and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), which showed that more experienced women leave the industry because of lack of flexible working, feeling undervalued, the long hours culture, unsupportive management and a lack of inclusion.

Rebecca went on to express her view that the business environment is changing rapidly. She argued that in future, successful companies would be more flexible, and able to react quickly to external influences. She said that this would require diversity, and that organisations

Session sponsor

would need to change their culture to be more attractive to women.

She went on to mention the Axios A Star Awards, presented to outstanding female students of IT at GCSE and A Level. Accenture, IBM and Microsoft support the awards – which are an excellent example of employers working with the education sector to promote IT and reward potential recruits.

She described another venture supported by IBM: after-school computer clubs for girls between 11 and 13. The girls have fun and work on enjoyable projects – designing magazine covers or websites for their favourite bands – while using and improving their IT skills.

Rebecca said it was difficult for employers – or anyone – to make the link between diversity policy and more women entering the IT industry, given that results might take a while to show. However, she finished by observing that that conferences such as Women in London's Economy are helping. 'I think conferences like this that bring together the private and public sector, schools and universities are absolutely key to getting everyone talking together about the issues and working together on a common purpose.'

Annette Williams **Director of the UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology**

Annette Williams began by pointing out that the term 'occupational segregation', which had been used previously in the conference, was mainly being used to refer to 'vertical occupational segregation' – ie the lack of women in senior positions.

She explained that the remit of the UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology is also to look at horizontal segregation in the sectors in which women work. Science, engineering and technology are some of the most highly segregated sectors within the UK economy.

Annette acknowledged that, in terms of growth areas for the London economy, business has a huge number of IT professionals, and that women should be encouraged within that sector. Similarly, she acknowledged that there are many women working in the health sciences.

However, she said we should also consider areas that are not high growth. Annette used as an example the forthcoming Olympic and Paralympic Games. The resulting developments in infrastructure and transport will



offer opportunities for engineers, technologists and scientists.

Annette then warned that while promoting the growth areas we should not inadvertently perpetuate stereotypes of women's occupations. She added that, while there is a pay gap for women within science, engineering and technology, 'those women are earning more than women that work in areas which are dominated by women.'

She outlined the work of the UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology. The Centre:

- delivers the government Strategy for women in science, engineering and technology, as taken forward by Patricia Hewitt when Trade and Industry Secretary

- suggests ways to improve that strategy. It focuses on post-16 professions, but occupational segregation also affects women in vocational work. The Equal Opportunities Commission's investigations into engineering, construction, information, communication and technology (ICT), and plumbing have highlighted the importance of women having access to apprenticeships in those areas
- focuses on both the supply of women and the demand by the industry
- addresses the issue that 50,000 women qualified in science, engineering and technology do not pursue careers in those areas. This accounts for 75 per cent of female graduates as opposed to 65 per cent of male graduates.

Annette followed this by talking about culture. She said that women do not always pursue careers in science and technology because they do not think they will have a viable, successful career.

While she acknowledged the progress made in encouraging girls to choose science, engineering and technology at school, she pointed out that we need to look at what happens once women reach the relevant industries:

- They can feel excluded and marginalised because they are in a minority.
- Some find it hard to stay in those careers.
- Some choose not to have children in order to stay in their careers.

Annette then outlined solutions such as positive action in education and training. She said that non-mainstream organisations have often piloted the most developmental work in this area. An example was the Stratford-based Women's Education in Building – which, unfortunately, went into liquidation in 2002 in light of the London 2012 Games development in Stratford. It would have been well placed to train women in vocational skills.

She went on to say that the UK Resource Centre works with the Learning and Skills Council, Further and Higher Education and work-based learning providers, and wants to ensure that women in education are encouraged. Their partner project, JIVE, trains lecturers to overcome gender stereotyping when teaching classes that are predominantly male.

Annette then spoke about the UK Resource Centre's work in the workplace. They promote a strategy whereby there is a trained careers professional within every company who specialises in overcoming occupational segregation.

Annette concluded by summing up the UK Resource Centre's hopes. They would like to see an integrated government strategy that includes: science, engineering and technology (SET) professions, vocational routeways and promotion and support of SET careers to pre 16s. The current strategy focuses on SET professions.

Gita Patel **Founder of Trapezia, an investment fund dedicated to women-focused businesses**

Gita introduced her speech by comparing the findings on women's economic status in London with recent actions taken by the equalities minister in Norway. From January 2006, she said, Norway introduced robust legislation to ensure women have greater equality and representation in business, rather than waiting for the situation to change voluntarily. The minister is quoted as saying: 'I do not want to wait for another 20 or 30 years for men with enough intelligence to finally appoint women.'

She made two further observations on the research:

- Women with a lack of career prospects may move to companies more aligned to their needs. They may also set up their own businesses – which Gita feels will become a growing trend.
- While there is a general disparity in the workplace, this is more severe for women in business.

Gita summarised the background to creating Trapezia (the first UK-based investment fund dedicated to women-focused businesses). Three years ago she acted as mentor and investor in a company with a female Chair. She witnessed how hard it was for women to get access to the City. She also told of poor advice and lack of support.

Gita spent 12 months researching how women's businesses fared. She found her skills as a chartered accountant



and business investor, with 25 years in the financial services sector, very useful. She said that the challenge was that, while women in the UK had reached parity in education and in key professions, they struggled in business.

She went on to list the problems:

- financial and business networks are male-dominated
- very few women have the skill set to advance the business agenda for women
- no voice of influence exists to encourage change or challenge the status quo
- the system penalises failure to the extent that it discourages the spirit of enterprise.

Gita examined some examples of other countries, mentioning the US, Canada, India and Africa. She said that women like Susan Mubarak (the Egyptian first lady) had an important role, and mentioned a course on 'Introduction to Capital' in Jeddah as an example.

She explained that Trapezia was set up to provide a financial partner who understood both business concepts and women's specific business needs in a non-intimidating environment. The aim was to fill the equity gap for women.

Gita then explored some of the issues behind lack of equality in business. She stated that women currently only get 2.5 per cent of venture capital for their businesses. While she said that women may find it hard to borrow from banks, she applauded the Bank of Scotland for their work with women.

She also raised the subject of Business Angels, who invest a lot of money in young businesses, and asked why 95 per cent of them in the UK are men. She also asked why, out of 30,000 independent financial advisers in the UK, only ten per cent are women.

Gita's next point concerned the established venture capital houses: while they have a great deal of money, she said they tended to focus on the bigger transactions and less risky deals. This demonstrated to her that there are blockages and barriers in the system that need to be addressed head on.

Looking to the future, Gita said that when the markets fail women, intervention is necessary to accelerate and empower their economic advantage. This would have major benefits to London's economy. She advised that women should have access to:

- capital
- business networks
- markets
- monitoring and nurturing.

In summary, Gita stated that London needs to invest in women and diversity. She concluded with a quote from a woman engineer: 'When you meet the expectations of women you will exceed the expectations of men.'

Questions and answers from Session 2

Following the speeches made by the speakers in this session, conference delegates were free to ask questions from the floor. Some points raised in the discussion are summarised below.

How do we encourage women to work in sectors where they are in a minority?

- Many women leave industries where women are under-represented, such as architecture and IT. The reasons are similar across professions and need to be tackled in a coordinated way.
- More women working in these industries can increase the market share of women. An example was given of a company who asked women engineers to design a car for women, with the aim of increasing the market share of women.
- More women in leadership positions can both be role models and help create cultural change within organisations and inspire more women to progress in their careers and to senior roles.

Getting rid of preconceptions

- There is a lot of unconscious bias and lack of awareness among men in the workplace, particularly in sectors where women are a minority.
- Men should have aspirations for their daughters' careers and respect their partners professionally.
- Men should be more widely represented at this conference in order for them to get a better awareness of the issues at stake.
- An example was given of IBM's 'Mind-set' workshops, which aim to explore hidden discrimination tendencies and what needs to be addressed in terms of diversity issues.
- If executives are encouraged to address these problems it will filter down through the company.
- Raising the awareness of an issue, allowing networks to talk, encouraging good role models to mentor up-and-coming people of diverse backgrounds are all good ways of breaking down preconceptions.
- People in positions of influence need to be able to take a risk and provide more opportunities for women.

Equalities and experts

- It is important to be wary of the idea of 'men as experts' in the field of equalities.
- We have to work with the women who share our goals and challenge those who don't: women can't wait for male prejudice to disappear.

Women working in the media

- Bias against women working in the media is less prevalent than it was in the past but it is still present.
- There is still stereotyping in the broadcasting sector.

Representation of women in the media

- If women make up more than half of society they should be represented accordingly on television, but this is not currently the case.
- Women should challenge the way in which they are represented in the media.
- TV drama could represent more women who have careers in which there are not many women – for example TV drama could show more women scientists. An example was given of the TV drama 'Silent Witness', about a female forensic scientist, which encouraged young women to take up forensic science courses at university.

Women in London's Economy: the remedies?

Session 3

Karon Monaghan Barrister, Matrix Chambers

Karon Monaghan began by saying that although her speech was to cover the legal context of the government's manifesto commitment to a single equality act, she could equally talk about discrimination *within* the legal profession.

She said that one of the concerns that campaigners had was that any new anti-discrimination scheme would be enforced primarily by men, and men who had little understanding of the disadvantages that women or minority groups endured in public life.

She said the findings of the *Women in London's Economy* report were no surprise to her. She said they reflected the fact that disadvantage in the economy for women had become structural and entrenched. One of the reasons for that, she said, was that current anti-discrimination legislation didn't work in addressing entrenched patterns of disadvantage. Instead, it focused on securing likeness of treatment for women. If women wanted to live and work like men, then our anti-discrimination legislation might have something to say, otherwise it didn't.



She said the legislation assumed that everyone started from the same position. They didn't. It also carried with it the real danger of entrenching stereotyping and disadvantage, because it would only afford any protection against discrimination where women were regarded as in the same situation as men. This disregarded the fact that women are often not in the same situation as men and it entrenched job segregation, amongst other things.

Instead of addressing pay and occupational segregation, she said, it focused on individual women and workplaces. Where those workplaces reflected broader patterns of job segregation, the legislation had nothing to say about that.

Its remedies were also individually focused, with no possibility for collective remedial action. So even where

Murziline Parchment - Session Chair Director - Major Projects and Service Delivery

Murziline Parchment opened the third and final session by stressing the importance the Mayor placed on the findings of the report and the views expressed by the delegates at the conference. The final session, therefore, would concentrate on what action the Mayor and also the government could take on the issues under discussion.



Session sponsor



discrimination was proved, the law would provide only an individual remedy for the particular person wronged; it wouldn't secure structural change or broader collective change.

Karon raised the point that recent legislation, such as the Race Relations Act and the Disability Discrimination Act, imposed duties which were designed to require public sector institutions to take proactive measures to secure equality, but these were bureaucratic and process-driven duties, and in some cases, had become little more than tick-box exercises.

She said that it was her view that there should be a single equality act that would provide for a coherent and consistent series of measures protecting against discrimination across a broad range of grounds. There should be a move away from minimum compliance, in which an employer need only ensure that it treated everybody the same for it to pass any legal audit. Instead there should be a move toward the imposition of broad duties in the public and private sector.

She said there were lessons to learn from other jurisdictions, such as South Africa, where there had been significant structural discrimination to address. South Africa had chosen to impose duties in the public and private sector and oblige them to adopt special measures and take proactive remedial action where required.

Where a breach of the law was found, firm action was available to the South African courts. And this action was not merely compensation, as in the UK, where she said it was often cheaper to pay compensation than to affect organisational change.

In making the case for a single equality act, she said the legislation needed to meet a number of key requirements.

Firstly, it should respect individual dignity; arbitrary differences in treatment should not be tolerated by the law. It needed to focus on disadvantage, as merely treating everybody alike would not tackle entrenched patterns of discrimination.

It also needed to include measures to tackle collective, or group disadvantage. A reliance upon individuals to effect change had proven to be inadequate for securing widespread change.

There also needed to be a commitment to share responsibility across the public and private sector for securing remedial action, which could only happen by imposing outcome-focused duties.

And there needed to be, as well as individual remedies, compensation, and the right to a job when one has been lost, measures to secure remedial action that would target where the fault lay.

Frances O'Grady Deputy General Secretary of the TUC

Frances started by announcing that for the first time in the trade union movement's history, its membership is 50:50 men and women.

She then introduced the idea of the 'hourglass economy', in which there is a growing number of high-skill, well-paid jobs at the top but at the same time a growing number of low-paid, low-skill jobs at the bottom, and disappearing jobs in the middle.

In terms of relevance to women, Frances said that women were often at the bottom of the hourglass, whether professional or in jobs like catering, caring or cleaning. She stated that this should be especially asserted now, at a time when a very small group (mainly men) in the City of London have just shared a £7.5 billion bonus.

Frances then went on to discuss the issue of occupational segregation in more detail. She made the point that a pilot scheme or sharing best practice was not enough. While acknowledging a need for better careers advice, training and support, she stated that a cultural change will not come about unless it is led by the law.

She gave some examples of how this could be done:

- ending the UK opt-out from the Working Time Directive, which allows one in four men



in London to work more than 48 hours a week

- changing the law to ensure that part-time work and flexible working are available to all workers from receptionists to chief executives.

Frances then looked at the role of trade unions. She spoke of their history of fighting for many rights that are now taken for granted. She said that more work should be done to increase the value that women get in workplaces by joint organisation in terms of pay, health and safety learning, and skills opportunities. She suggested that in a unionised workplace women are more likely to get a better deal.

She applied this suggestion to women from all kinds of jobs: from cleaners at Canary Wharf to women in the creative industries, professionals, teachers and local government officials.

Frances then raised the issue of childcare. This is especially important in London because it is a very expensive city for

women to work in, and childcare is also costly.

She felt that childcare is not sufficiently prioritised: 'Sometimes, when listening to senior politicians talking about childcare, you'd think that it was just another kind of bus service – a way of getting women to work. But I think it has to be much more than that.'

She said that childcare should be about:

- a high quality, positive experience for children
- showing children respect as well as their parents.

As a reflection of that, she recommended that the many childcare workers, whose pay and conditions are below standard, should be a priority.

To conclude, Frances said that women must be 'bold and imaginative', as legal rights will not be won overnight.

She finished by making the point that the Olympic and Paralympic Games would provide a huge opportunity in that billions of pounds of services and goods would be contracted by government for the London 2012 Games. This, she said, was an opportunity to ensure that 'we build in decent, fair-standard opportunities for women, so that women and men – black and white – have an equal chance of not only enjoying and celebrating that success, but also building the stadiums, managing the projects at all levels and fairly sharing the rewards.'

Lucy Adams Director of Human Resources, SERCO

Lucy Adams began by talking about her employer, the international company SERCO, which works primarily on behalf of government to deliver public services. SERCO employs over 600 women in London, mainly in the Docklands Light Railway (which it operates) but also in its national physics laboratory and head office.

Lucy said she would focus on two key issues: equal pay, and the role of procurement in delivering the diversity agenda in public services.

On the issue of pay equality, she said many employers wholeheartedly agreed to the principle, but didn't know how to address an issue that could potentially lose them business by making them less competitive.

Lucy went on to say how SERCO – the largest employer of TUPE-transferred* public sector employees – was tackling pay inequalities it had inherited from the public sector by taking part in the equal pay pilots sponsored by DTI and TUC. She described how SERCO found a best practice model that was beginning to be rolled out more widely across the business.

The model was:

- done with customer engagement and buy-in, and open discussions of what it might mean to both sides



- developed, implemented and evaluated in consultation with the trade union, Prospect
- set in a wider context, looking not just at pay, but at what was it like to work for SERCO in a particular area, as a woman. This yielded key learning points to be taken on board.

Lucy identified a number of equal pay agenda requirements:

- clear direction from the government on whether equal pay was a policy imperative or not
- a level playing field to ensure that employers pursuing equal pay were not penalised by being more expensive and losing business
- sensible discussions with stakeholders, employees, government and the customer

- about how equal pay would be phased and funded
- support and guidance from experts in the field on how to start tackling pay inequalities
- the flexibility to look at different models of equality of pay systems and find the right one to fit the business.

Lucy then moved on to talk about the role of procurement of public services in addressing the equal pay agenda. 'There is huge potential for the government to address the equality or inequality agenda through the procurement of their public services.'

She specifically mentioned:

- the need for the government to set targets and ask its sub-contractors to demonstrate year-on-year progression in tackling pay inequality
- the need to make gender segregation matter by establishing it as a key part of evaluation criteria – nothing else would bring about change
- the need for the government to stimulate innovation by rewarding good employers in the private sector, and the necessity of having a level playing field so that good,

innovative employers weren't at a disadvantage

- the need for the government to use its power to weed out bad employers.

Lucy recounted how SERCO recently lost a contract to a company who offered more competitive rates at the expense of its lower-paid staff. The company did not make pension contributions to workers on salaries below £22,000 – the vast majority of female employees. She contrasted this with TfL, who were making this agenda matter. 'We were left in no doubt that the work we did in this area with the DLR was valued and – more importantly – would count in the evaluation of our tender.'

She finished by saying that local government was leading the field in terms of making diversity issues part of the procurement process and putting their money where their mouth was. She urged central government to look at the good they could do, emphasising that responsibility lay with them, as they had the power to make change happen.

* Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)

Questions and answers from Session 3

Following the speeches made by the speakers in this session, conference delegates were free to ask questions from the floor. Some points raised in the discussion are summarised below.

Flexible working for women and the whole work force

- This is an issue that affects not only parents but also women who wish to work flexibly for other reasons – caring for other relatives, for example.
- Flexible working should be a legal requirement of all employers, with a duty to offer it to anyone in the workforce.
- Currently flexible working is very focused on individuals, and women have to ‘make a case’ for their request. This does not encourage employers to be proactive about change, to see the positive case in their business, and can also discourage women from asking.
- Equal standards in flexible working are important in addressing the pay gap and action is needed across the board.

Changing the culture

- Equality is now becoming part of mainstream guidelines, and is no longer confined to the appendix of contracts.
- There is a war for talent in business and sensible employers respond to this in their recruitment and employee policies.
- Equality should be seen not as a cost, but as a benefit.
- Employers should be encouraged and trained to deal with demands for flexible working (from both men and women) in order to stay competitive and make the most of employee talents. They should be clear on what they can offer to staff.
- We should be wary of companies recruiting female staff just to build the numbers: there should be output-related targets, showing what has happened to women employees in the workforce.

Procurement

- Procurement can be used creatively as a lever to promote equality: there should be incentives or ‘carrots’ with businesses told: ‘If you fulfil ‘X’ equality criteria, you can bid for the contract’.
- The Mayor’s current Procurement Development Programme aims to create opportunities for SMEs to access the contracts offered by major public sector bodies. Those contracts should include clauses that benefit women, as well as other disadvantaged groups.
- It is important to be bold when setting long-term agendas: long-term contracts can have benefits that last over a whole generation.
- The best performing and most productive companies are ones that treat equality and employment rights seriously.
- The South African model shows a good example for large and small companies. By law businesses have to include previously economically or historically disadvantaged people, and there are charters for various sectors. This has led to an increase of women working in mining, which was previously very rare.

SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises)

- Small companies as well as larger ones are responsible for issues of diversity and equality.
- SMEs have to be part of a broader programme for promoting equality. They are too big a part of the economy to ignore.

The Olympic and Paralympic Games

- The regeneration of London that comes with the London 2012 Games is an exciting opportunity for employment of women and other groups.
- As many new jobs are created this offers a chance to make contracts with clauses that will be beneficial to women.

Closing plenary

Anni Marjoram **Mayor's Policy Adviser,** **Women's Issues, GLA**

Anni Marjoram began by thanking those involved in the Women in London's Economy conference: the audience, the speakers, GLA colleagues, and event sponsors – Shell, the Bank of Scotland, UBS and the LDA.

She read a statement from Tessa Jowell, who could not attend the conference. It assured delegates that the government was hard at work, addressing issues around the minimum wage, flexible working and childcare, but admitted that there was no room for complacency.

Anni stressed the importance of women thinking boldly and continuing the debate on women in London's economy. She highlighted an opportunity to continue the debate at the capitalwoman conference at Westminster Central Hall on 4 March 2006, where there would be two seminars on *Women in London's Economy*.



Anni commented that the morning had progressed dialogue on what was needed to ensure women played their full part in London's economic future. She went on to mention the Mayor's contributions to measures to close the gender pay gap and smash the glass ceiling – for example the Mayor's contribution to shaping the single equality act.

She remarked on the outstanding quality of the contributions from both the platform and the floor, and made assurances that points

made at the conference would be taken forward – specifically:

- the ways private sector companies are implementing diversity and business policies
- how diversity and business policies could be applied across the economy
- the institutions best suited to help deliver equality.

The day's discussions would inform the Mayor's existing work in support of women's equality and the economy, specifically:

- creating thousands of affordable childcare places
- supporting flexible working arrangements and employers that supported family friendly policies
- supporting pay audits, setting up the living wage unit to analyse what level of pay should be an acceptable minimum.

Anni then thanked the delegates for attending.

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Greek

Αν θέλετε να αποκτήσετε αντίγραφο του παρόντος εγγράφου στη δική σας γλώσσα, παρακαλείστε να επικοινωνήσετε τηλεφωνικά στον αριθμό αυτό ή ταχυδρομικά στην παρακάτω διεύθυνση.

Turkish

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Punjabi

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Hindi

यदि आप इस दस्तावेज की प्रति अपनी भाषा में चाहते हैं, तो कृपया निम्नलिखित नंबर पर फोन करें अथवा नीचे दिये गये पते पर संपर्क करें

Bengali

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Urdu

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Arabic

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