

TOP STORY:
**Comment on the
new inequity figures**

**Women's pay as %
of men's**
2005: 82%
2003: 87%
1997: 82%

Average pay rises
2005:
Men: 6.3%
Women: **3.2%**

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This newsletter is produced by the EEO Unit of the Human Rights Commission. The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the supporters of the National Equal Opportunities Network.

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Private sector needs to move on pay equity



It just got wider

Unions and equality advocates are calling on the Government to put more energy into pay equity and step up attention to the private sector. This follows the [latest Income Survey data revealing a widening gender-pay gap](#).

"The gender pay gap will not be resolved through ordinary market approaches and bargaining mechanisms", the EEO Commissioner Judy McGregor said, recommending the Government

accelerate and strengthen the work of the [Pay and Employment Equity Unit](#).

Minister of Labour Ruth Dyson said it was too early to tell whether the Pay and Employment Equity programme should be sped up. The Unit is just starting the roll-out of its Pay and Employment Equity Reviews to cover internal staff of ten government agencies. The second-phase rollouts to all workers in DHBs and the compulsory education sectors have yet to be scheduled.

Dyson said that the recent pay equity deal for DHB nurses should help even out the pay gap. But [New Zealand Nurses' Organisation](#) spokesperson Lyndy McIntyre said that the nurses' deal "only covered 20,000 mainly women health workers." This meant it was "pretty clear and simple" why the pay deal alone had not kept women's incomes up to speed with men in the last quarter, and would be unlikely to impact significantly on the

"Women did not get an equal share" - Helen Kelly, NZCTU.



Next page: Union views on why '05 pay-rises didn't close the gender-pay gap.

The economic slowdown may disproportionately affect Māori employment, although less so than in past economic slumps, according to the new Department of Labour report [Māori Labour Market Outcomes: Trends and Outlooks](#). The report says Māori labour has diversified and upskilled, but there are still higher levels of under-employment and semi-skilled labour among Māori. There is also a larger proportion of Māori in the working-age population, so they will be affected more by unemployment. However, the New Zealand labour market will become more reliant long-term on the relatively younger Māori population to fill skill-shortages.

Workshops for public sector agencies on how to conduct their own pay and employment equity reviews are scheduled to proceed this month and early next year. The workshops' popularity has led to extra workshop dates being planned. For more information, please contact Victoria.Gregory@dol.govt.nz at the Pay and Employment Equity Unit.

Nearly 50,000 [Icelandic women walked out of their jobs to demand equal pay](#) last week. The average female wage in Iceland is 64.1% of men's, and the demonstrators accordingly left work at 2:08 pm, having worked 64.1% of a working day.

gap in the future when the full effect of the nurses' pay-deal is felt.

"Over half of the settlement has come through already, and if anyone is hoping one settlement for one historically underpaid group in the public sector will close the whole gender pay gap, they're in for a big shock," said McIntyre.

To close the gap "there will need to be a lot of work done in the private sector," she said. For example, "in health there are thousands of so-called private sector jobs dependent on government funding. Women working in aged care, and in primary health, are grossly underpaid compared with their DHB counterparts." Nurses in primary health combined with the number of nurses and female carers in private-sector aged-care and home-care, far outnumber the 20,000 DHB nurses who have achieved a pay equity settlement by 2006.

McIntyre suggested that advancing pay equity for the lowest-paid women did not have to be restricted to the current programme or timetable of the Pay and Employment Equity Unit. For example, minimum wage movement could make an immediate difference to the pay of a large slice of care-workers.

"Women working in aged care, and in primary health, are grossly underpaid... There will need to be a lot of work done in the private sector."

- Lyndy McIntyre, NZNO

Did the '5% in '05' campaign leave women in '97?

Unforgettable not only for the advent of the Spice Girls or the death of Princess Diana, 1997 was also the last year that women in New Zealand earned [as little as 82% of men's average hourly income](#), down from 86% of men's income in 2004.



1997 retro: 'I really really really wanna be paid as much as the Backstreet Boys'

Good wage and salary increases may reflect the victories of the 'Fair Share: 5 in '05' campaign said Helen Kelly, Secretary of the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions. But she feared that "[women did not get an equal share](#)" of workers' gains, based on the new figures. Pay for men working full-time increased 6.3%, but women only managed 3.2%. EEO Commissioner Judy McGregor observed that [gender-segregation across occupations](#) has meant that the big pay increases in agriculture and fisheries,

A top international advertising executive [resigned after labelling female executives 'crap' and likely to 'wimp out'](#) when they had children. Neil French made the remarks at an industry meeting, while addressing the issue of why fewer women make it to the top. He later said that he meant it was difficult to be both a good mother and a top executive at once. French had been the worldwide creative director of WPP Group PLC.

New UK research shows [that men in female-dominated jobs such as nursing and teaching are given more respect](#), authority, and challenging work than women in the same job. This suggests that women in female-dominated jobs are undervalued just because they are women.

[Men are often as eager as their female colleagues to work flexibly](#), says the Seattle Times. The newspaper reports on Ernst & Young, a global audit and tax firm, which has a formal flexible work-arrangement policy that applies to all its US workers. 20% of those working flexibly with the company are men.

According to a new survey of potential US military recruits, [76% of the respondents](#) said that lifting the ban on openly gay service members would have "no effect" on their decision to enlist.

trades, and plant and machine operators and assemblers, have less impact on women.

Andrew Little, National Secretary of the [Engineers, Printers and Manufacturers Union](#), said of the 2005 Union campaigns for pay rises that "without detailed analysis, I'd find it difficult to draw the conclusion that it's a campaign that has predominantly benefitted men." He points to the Service and Food Workers and National Distribution Union's settlement with Progressive Enterprises, which covers supermarkets.



Andrew Little: still more to do for female-dominated workplaces

However, Little said some large workforces within EPMU like New Zealand Post were female-dominated, but the union had not been bargaining for them in the current round, and would not be until next year. "The campaign hasn't finished – it's a campaign to benefit all our members," he said.

The gender pay gap closed slowly from 1997-2000, but widened in 2001. Then women's income rose to a high of 86.9% of men's income in 2003, before falling for two consecutive years. This year's 3.8 percentage point increase in the gender pay gap is the largest in the Income Survey's nine year history.



NZ parents reach for flexible work



Flexibility in the office: harder to get than it should be.

and men) said that flexible start and finish times were important or very important in helping them undertake paid work.

Regardless of gender, age or ethnicity, New Zealand parents are crying out for flexible working hours. A total of 4,475 New Zealand parents (including over 1,000 men) answered the EEO Trust's recent [Parenting and Paid Work survey](#). This is nearly four times the usual response rate to the EEO Trust's on-line surveys. Over 90% of parents (both women

In a groundbreaking [quantitative Work Life Balance study](#), the Singapore government has calculated that the cost of turnover is up to 9.5 times an employee's basic wage, and that one day's absenteeism costs up to 2.3 times an employee's wages and benefits. Meanwhile, an extra day taken in leave in a month increased productivity by 23% and customer satisfaction by 14%. Singapore instituted a 5-day working week this year.

Niki Caro's newly released film *North Country*, starring Charlize Theron and set in a mining-town, portrays the first ever class-action sexual harassment suit launched in the US. The suit was only settled in 1998. Says Caro in [the Slate interview](#): "Every person in every industry I've talked to has heard of sexual harassment. And yet, in a cinematic culture that damages and demoralizes female characters with embarrassing regularity, making a film about sexual harassment seemed like a bold act."

Ethnic minorities' distrust of government security and intelligence authorities has been heightened by post-9/11 anti-terror crackdowns in North America, leading Canada's Deputy Minister of Public Safety to stress [ethnic diversification in recruitment into security agencies](#).

- Gradual return from parental leave was the most important way workplaces could help people return to the workforce after having children.
- Breastfeeding facilities were seen as important or very important to 60% of women and 51% of men in aiding return to work.
- Flexible start and finish times, and good childcare were the two most important enablers for people not in paid work to enter the workforce.

Similarly, 90% of men also considered the ability to occasionally change working hours, was important or very important to helping parents work – slightly less than women, but still clearly a substantial vote of confidence for flexible work. "This is not rocket science but the survey confirms what a huge difference flexibility can make to people's lives in dealing with parenting responsibilities and work," said EEO Trust CEO Dr Philippa Reed.

There were some marked gender differences however. Men were less likely than women to say that childcare played an important role in supporting participation in paid work. 69% of men compared with 88% of women thought good childcare was important or very important in helping parents undertake paid work.

More than half of fathers answering the survey had taken parental leave, mostly for less than three months, and had mainly returned to their same job after their leave. Women tended to take longer leave, returned to part-time rather than full-time work, and 20% of them returned to a lower level job. The EEO Trust highlighted this sample response: "I know of so many talented women with special skills to a particular job that are being denied the chance to go back to work part-time because the employer is forcing them to either come back full-time or quit."



EEO Brain-Gain

The Muldoonian wisdom was that New Zealand's brain-drain to Australia raised the IQ of both countries. But with the appointment of Australian Susan Biggs as Senior Advisor Crown Entities in the Human Rights Commission, New Zealand is upping its Equality Quotient with a reverse trans-Tasman brain-drain into the EEO Sector. The inverted flow looks like Australia's loss and New Zealand's brain-gain.

What the new rules say:

From the 2006/07 year Crown Entities are required to **'operate a personnel policy that complies with the principle of being a good employer; and make that policy (including the equal employment opportunities programme) available to its employees; and ensure its compliance with that policy (including its EEO programme) and report in its annual report on the extent of its compliance.'** [Crown Entities Act 2004 Part 3 s 118]

Crown Entities' Annual Reports must also contain **'information on compliance with its obligation to be a good employer (including its equal employment opportunities programme)'**. [Crown Entities Act 2004 Part 4 s 151 (g)]

In June 2004, Cabinet agreed that **'the EEO Commissioner, in consultation with the State Services Commission, Ministry of Education, other monitoring departments (and where relevant, the Pay and Employment Equity Unit in the Department of Labour) be invited to prepare guidance for departments and Crown Entities to help ensure State sector consistency and good practice on EEO'**.

Biggs will be advising Crown Entities on their good employer and EEO policies. Biggs has been poached from Australia's Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA) where she was Deputy Director for four years. In the New Zealand EEO Sector she joins Australian Philippa Hall, Director of the Department of Labour's Pay and Employment Equity Unit, who was formerly Deputy Director General of the New South Wales Department for Women.

During her years at EOWA, Biggs worked with up to 3,000 private, education and non-profit sector employers to develop workplace EEO Programmes for women, and has also had extensive experience in the same field as a private consultant. She owned and managed her own business of 50 staff and is a mother of two boys, giving her ample direct experience in managing many different types of flexible work arrangements and family friendly programmes. She has also co-authored a book *Time On, Time Out: Flexible Working Solutions to Keep Your Life in Balance*.



Interview: Susan Biggs

Taking the reins as HRC's Senior Advisor Crown Entities, Susan Biggs immediately started answering the tough EEO questions, such as how compliance with new statutory obligations can be streamlined and responsive - and most importantly...

Who's better, Australia or New Zealand?

Gee, that's a bit loaded. It's really different, so it's hard to say who's better or worse. Australia's doing some really good things in terms of the Equal Opportunities for Women in the Workplace Act. That legislation has been there since 1985, and by now companies are pretty used to the fact that they have to report about what they're doing in terms of EEO for women. They take it for granted - it's not a particularly big deal to them. There are some companies doing some fabulous leading-edge stuff. But if you look at who's in senior positions, although Australia is doing marginally better in the private sector for women, we're not doing

Check out the [winners of the Australian Diversity at Work Awards here](#):

categories included Diversity Champions, Employment and Inclusion of People with a Disability, Employment and Inclusion of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Australians, and Employment and Inclusion of Indigenous Australians.

Virgin Blue has unlawfully discriminated against eight female flight attendant job applicants [because they were considered too old](#), the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Tribunal found. The women, aged between 36 and 56, claimed they were not hired because they did not fit the company's youthful image, even though they had extensive experience working for Ansett.

An Australian study has found that one in three part-time Australian workers wants to increase their hours, [suggesting that an increase in part-time work is leading to under-employment](#). The Melbourne University's Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research says half of part-time working men and 33% of women who work part-time would like more work.

as well in the public sector as New Zealand. Four of your top people here are women, and that's pretty impressive.

The rest of the diversity area is not done so well in Australia, particularly in the private sector although there are some requirements in the public sector. Certainly in terms of the way you've gone ahead with indigenous people here, New Zealand is ahead of Australia. Our indigenous people are still waiting for the Prime Minister to say sorry.



But which rugby team will she support?

Won't this process just mean more bureaucracy and compliance costs?

If organisations streamlined HR systems to make sure they are complying with the good employer principle, then they'd have less bureaucracy and fewer costs, because they would be more likely to attract great people to the job and keep those people. Excellent workplaces are workplaces that have excellent relationships and these are the organisations that thrive. Recruitment costs reduce, legal costs reduce, occupational health and safety costs reduce. And far from being more bureaucratic, having a Good Employer programme and making it available to staff means everyone knows what to expect.

We will be giving employers a framework they can use and asking them to review their current HR strategies through an EEO perspective. We'll be asking them if their HR systems are helping them make the most of their workforce, and the diversity of their employees. If they have a good employer policy with an EEO programme in place, then this compliance process should make what they're doing easier, not more difficult. Of course the policy and programme in itself is not going to change workplaces significantly unless there is the leadership to truly advocate for, and demand that the organisation becomes a good employer.

What do you know? You're Australian.

I definitely don't want to be seen as some outsider breezing in and telling people what to do. I really want people to know that I'm listening, hearing what they're saying, and learning from them – and providing advice where appropriate. We're currently very focused on consulting Crown Entities and incorporating their needs into the process.

Why do we even need to do this anyway?

In the skill shortage environment that we're in, you have to make sure you've got great good-employer practices if you want to get the best person and keep them. Considering how diverse the population is becoming, if you want to service customers and clients in the best way it's often good to employ people they can relate to, and who have a good understanding of different communities.

Are you a know-it-all?

I'm always prepared for surprises. What we found in Australia is that some of the most male-dominated organisations - like mining companies - were doing some of the most innovative work. We also found that often the smaller companies, particularly family-owned type companies, were not doing terribly well, though you might think that being small enough and family-oriented, they could implement things quite easily.

I believe you don't need to treat people the same to get equal outcomes. The diversity of the population requires a diverse approach to their needs and requirements – one size does not fit all.



Forward (into equality)... MARCH!



Private Sarah MacAvoy integrating seamlessly into the Army - NZDF

The [New Zealand Defence Force](#) (NZDF) has earned praise for "significant and substantial progress in gender integration" through clear leadership, in its first comprehensive gender review since the groundbreaking Burton Report of 1998. The Burton Report followed a high-profile Navy sexual harassment case taken to the Human Rights Commission, and recommended comprehensive changes in institutional attitudes to women and gender.

Since then significant culture-change has occurred, says the independent Review of

The first workshop for Crown entities will be held on 8 December 05 at the Human Rights Commission, Level 8, Vogel Bldg, 8 Aitken St, Thorndon, Wellington, from 8.45am to 12.30pm. It will provide Crown Entities with guidance on **How to operate a personnel policy that complies with the principle of being a Good Employer.** If you are interested in attending RSVP to Susan Biggs on susanb@hrc.co.nz or (04) 474 0720

The New Zealand Sign Language Bill will adopt signing as [New Zealand's third official language](#), and make it mandatory for deaf New Zealanders to have access to interpreters in legal proceedings, and in education, health, employment and public broadcasting. A shortage of sign language interpreters is expected.

IBM in India has set up a [Women's Leadership Council, and is stepping up mentoring and networking for women](#) within the business. They are also actively promoting science and IT to girls at school in India. Janet Perna, the company's head for Women in Technology initiatives, said "the pool of skilled technology workers is shrinking, partially because fewer women are entering the industry."

Protection from discrimination on the grounds of [gender identity](#) is the subject of a referendum in the US State of Maine, to be voted on next week. The Legislature passed an anti-discrimination law protecting people on the basis of sexuality and gender identity earlier this year, but opponents collected enough signatures to force a referendum.

In Sri Lanka advocates are claiming that there is [ongoing discrimination against employing Tamils](#) in state enterprises such as banks, even when Tamil language skills are required in heavily Tamil areas.

US Restaurant chain 'Hooters' is soon to set up shop in New Zealand. Hooters is known in the US for requiring its buxom wait-staff to sign a [document acknowledging](#) that "the work environment is one in which joking and innuendo based on female sex appeal is commonplace", that they must "entertain" the customers, and that they do not find their "job duties, uniform requirements, or work environment to be offensive, intimidating, hostile or unwelcome."

Progress in Gender Integration in the New Zealand Defence Force, released last month. Harassment has decreased dramatically from 129 complaints in 1997 to 34 in the last financial year, and there are increasing numbers of women in all three branches – army, navy and air force.

More than ever, there is a high awareness and low tolerance of sexual harassment within the NZDF, and harassment is increasingly "seen as a fairness issue rather than a gender issue," according to the report. The new policies and support systems in place around harassment are generally seen as positive, although in need of better implementation, training-support and an overhaul of monitoring.



'This is ground control to Major Tanya...' - NZDF

EEO Commissioner Judy McGregor praised the NZDF for undertaking a publicly available EEO stocktake. "There's an old EEO saying that what gets counted and measured gets done. The Gender Integration review could be a blueprint for other major organisations who want to ensure they are being fair to all men and women at work. The NZDF deserves a pat on the back for examining how it's going," said McGregor.

The army, navy and air force did have some markedly different results, with the navy having outstripped the air force in increasing its numbers of women. The navy has gone from 12.3% to 20.9% female since 1990, while the air force started higher, on 15.4% in 1990, but has only increased to 16.9% over the same period. NZDF Human Resources Manager (Policy) Laura Gillan grants that "it is not always easy or successful to 'cut and paste' an idea that has been successful in one Service into another." Although there are overarching policies, "we are one organisation but we include three cultures."

A strategic EEO approach is still lacking, with the report finding that there is still "a resistance to considering the role of gender in HR processes." Many within the Defence Forces are still grappling with the difference between being 'gender-neutral' (e.g. correcting for the ways that an HR process might affect men and women differently and inequitably) and 'gender-blind' (i.e. an HR process that assumes people are 'the same'). "We are talking about cultural, systemic and attitudinal change," said Gillan, "we are committed to continuous improvement... We certainly don't want to rest on our laurels."

Modern Apprenticeship Statistics Update:

ITF responded to the story in [the last issue of NEON](#) on gender and ethnic under-representation in the Modern Apprenticeship scheme.

Darel Hall pointed out that Māori and Pacific people are **over-represented** in industry training compared to their **participation in the overall workforce**.

ITF's stats:

Māori in industry training 17%
Māori in paid workforce 9%
Māori in population 14%

NEON has focused specifically on Modern Apprenticeships. The high proportion of Māori and Pacific youth in the Modern Apprenticeship **target age group of 16-21 year olds** mean that Māori and Pacific youth are **under-represented** in the scheme.

NEON's stats:

Māori in MA Scheme 14%
Māori aged 16-21 20%
Pacific in MA Scheme 2.3%
Pacific aged 16-21 8.6%

Pacific youth are under-represented in the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme by **370%** and Māori by a factor of **140%**. This is slightly less than the figures used in NEON 4 of 420% and 150% under-representation, which were based on data for people aged from 0-24.

Get them while they're young

What are the solutions to pay inequity and occupational segregation? Designing jobs to accommodate women's lives, particularly family needs, and changing gender-stereotyped attitudes as early as kindergarten, according to Darel Hall, Director of the [Industry Training Foundation](#) (ITF).



(photo courtesy Dunedin Kindergarten Association)

Very small girls can do anything.

The ITF's position is that the gender imbalance in the Modern Apprenticeship scheme is best rectified by introducing more **female-dominated professions into the scheme**.

Industry training and Modern Apprenticeships should reflect their industry labour market. But more industry training for women doesn't necessarily mean the distribution of wages will be more equal.

Do you need to attract more women into higher-paid occupations?

People even get out of nursing because of poor pay, shift work and the lack of ability to get childcare. It is the job design and work organisation, as well as pay that matter more than training issues to get and keep women in an industry. If you want to attract women into industries you have to think about those issues – childcare etcetera. Training is really not the most important issue ...It's about job design, work design, and it's about the decision-sets people form when they're really young and the possible futures they see for themselves – ie the societal norms.

Is there a need to promote skilled trades to high school girls?

ITOs are doing that – you just need to go to the Coke Careers Expos to see that. The question usually posed is “why aren't more girls getting into traditional trades such as building and plumbing” and you see people who are not well informed trying to devise policy on the basis that training arrangements will make great societal changes to labour market structure. That's quite dopey because it shows a lack of understanding about how people choose their work and how people choose their possible

[For American girls to choose IT, the less information they get from society the better.](#) New US research shows that young women choosing to study IT were more likely to have NOT sought information about studying IT from a variety of sources outside their family. IT-girls were also more likely to: have parents (particularly mothers) who were supportive of their educational pathway; to be ethnic minorities; be computer-users from early age (for communication purposes rather than games); and to not hold a negative 'geek' stereotype about IT professionals.

Two-thirds of local teachers at an Auckland primary school [failed a mock international English proficiency exam used by the Teachers' Council to register foreign teachers.](#) The Principal asked her staff to sit the test to illustrate how hard it was, after months of frustration at being unable to get a foreign teacher registered. The Spanish-trained teacher, a specialist with 10 years' experience in teaching autistic children and who worked as an English-to-Spanish European Union translator, had sat the International English Language Test System (IELTS) four times, falling just short each time.

careers. The decisions are being made a lot earlier than high school, in terms of the set of possible careers they might see for themselves. That's preference of a range of work, not necessarily specific jobs. So by the time of five, you'll find most boys playing with trucks and most girls playing with dolls. The socialisation processes are much earlier and much more embedded... if you get to the age of nineteen, it's a bit too late to make gross societal changes through training interventions – although for individuals we all know it is possible.

So you'd say forget about high school, get them at kindergarten?

The detail on how to effect societal change such as gendered role preference is not my area of expertise, but from what I have read it's definitely much younger than the late teens.

You often mention hairdressing. Why?

It's a proxy for a bunch of foundation learning. I think there is a section of young women in society in which the choices they see for themselves are quite limited, but hairdressing is one of them. If they are getting some literacy and some numeracy skills, customer service skills, it doesn't bother me if they don't want to be a hairdresser at the end of it, it's probably a good investment for society. I would much prefer if they saw a broader decision set for themselves, and most industries scrabbling to get women would also prefer that – for example the electricity industry which has a very strong interest in getting to women.

So how do you attract girls into these industries?

What you do see are female-only taster courses for industries, and female networking sessions. Having females in your promo material does have an effect. It sounds slightly trite but it remains true, and the ITOs believe it to be true.

Whatever happened to the 'Girls can do anything' campaign? I wonder whether the time for something like that might be coming around again. You've got engineering companies saying 'hey we're really interested in figuring out how to attract women into specific industries.' Many of them are suffering skill and labour shortages...they have an interest in attracting women and Māori and Pacific people, to the extent of going to Samoa and trying to source people. They're more interested in labour and skills and less in gender and ethnicity and so on, and are more interested in



sxc.hu: lukaszj

'No, I'm not a hairdresser, although yes, my hair *is* rather nice.'

A senior female partner has lodged a [\\$10 million sexual harassment suit in Australia against her employer Pricewaterhouse Coopers](#), the world's largest accounting firm. Christina Rich claims she was subjected to unwanted sexual advances and lewd comments by male staff and her boss over several years, and that she was suspended after lodging a complaint with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission. She is calling for institutional culture-change, and wants her job back.

A total of [22% of UK bosses admit to practising age discrimination](#) in weighing up job applicants, even as 59% of them say they have experienced age discrimination in recruitment and promotion themselves. 25% of managers said their job applications had suffered discrimination because they were too old, 23% said they thought it was because they were too young.

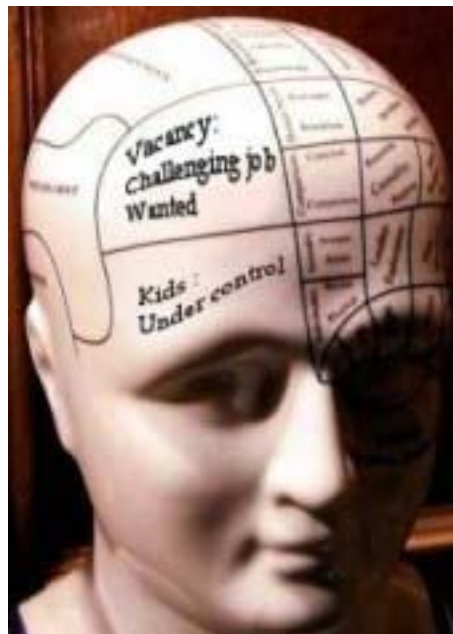
The US celebrated [National Disability Employment Awareness Month](#) last month, which included an Annual Disability Mentoring Day. Disability Mentoring Day is an opportunity for young people with disabilities to gain firsthand exposure to workplaces and career options.

what practical changes might have to be made to attract people to their industries.

The New Brain Drain: an internal leak?

Should New Zealand be taking a new look at the way it measures work? [A massive 'hidden brain drain' of part-time workers](#) who are working below their potential has been revealed in the UK by a different way of surveying labour market participation.

Half of all part-time workers surveyed by the UK Equal Opportunity Commission had previously held jobs with more management/supervision responsibilities, or in jobs using a higher level of qualifications and skills. Another chunk said they could 'easily work' at a higher level.



Is the whole thing being used?

A classic profile was that of a part-time worker choosing to reduce their hours because of family commitments or gradual retirement, but who could only find part-time jobs requiring less skill or responsibility than their previous job, wasting their skill-set and paying them less per hour. While part-time and flexible work is hailed as a liberator for family-life, there is a simultaneous concern that the ['part-time pay penalty'](#) will reinforce pay inequities and gender segregation in employment.

Statistics NZ currently measures under-employment by counting part-time workers who would like to work more hours. Julian Silver, Work, Knowledge and Skills Manager of Statistics NZ, describes the approach as asking "what is your level of participation in the labour market' rather than 'are you using your current skills in your job to the best that you can? That's obviously a really key question. We are hearing that, particularly from some of the education agencies that want to get more into that kind of skill-matching, and emerging skills-gaps."

Changing the 'under-employment' definition is unlikely, says Silver, although a new programme of Social Statistics is going to add "new surveys and possibly supplements to surveys such as the Household Labour Force Survey, for example on the quality of work." The programme is "in its fairly early days" according to

The US City of Philadelphia's police force is facing religious-discrimination legal challenges for [suspending Muslim officers who grew beards](#) longer than a quarter of an inch. Discrimination complaints from Muslim-Americans rose 70% to 1,019 in 2003, the latest year available, with 234 in the workplace, the Council on American-Islamic Relations said last year. Reported anti-Muslim discrimination in the US has risen sharply since 11 September 2001.

[Disability is coming last in company equality policies](#), compared with the funding and attention given to race and gender equity according to new UK research. Disability comes last even for organisations committed to all three diversity strands. Separate research warned that online advertising for jobs could discriminate against disabled people due to inaccessibility.

The Department of Labour is [evaluating the effects of parental leave](#), including how it is impacting on gender equity in the labour market and families, on health outcomes for mothers and babies, and income stability for families. The evaluation, to be completed in mid-2006 will draw on the experiences of mothers, their partners and employers.

Silver, and statistically measuring over-qualification, and under-utilisation of skills, can be subjective and contentious. But "there is the potential to dig a bit deeper into some of those issues around work and skills," he says. "We always have to think carefully about some of those questions, but I imagine there are other sorts of surveys like [the EOC survey], to use as models."

Measuring quality as well as quantity of work is of particular relevance to the labour force participation of women and older workers, who are more likely to work part-time. Women in New Zealand make up [71% of all part-time workers](#). People raising children, and older workers, may not want to work more hours even given the chance. However, they may currently be trading away suitable quality of work for suitable working hours.

The ultimate vision of both the UK EOC and New Zealand's EEO Trust is to have part-time and flexible work at all levels of the workplace, allowing people to advance their careers rather than veer off on the so-called 'mummy track' to career oblivion, or be 'down-shifted' as older workers into menial tasks. A shift in thinking to "quality part-time work" is key to the best use of the labour market, according to Philippa Reed, CEO of the EEO Trust. Evidence showed that "part-time work can be successfully undertaken by senior managers and professionals, if employers recognise the benefits and make changes to workplace culture and practices."

"But part-time work is often not offered at senior levels, or with pay and conditions equivalent to full-time pay and conditions," said Reed. She also highlighted the "limited opportunities to transition from full-time to part-time work and back again as life circumstances change."

It's show-time! **Culture: Peeling back the layers** is about dealing with the impact of cultural and linguistic diversity on public sector work. It features a series of video clips about cross-cultural misunderstandings:

ACCENTS - What's in an accent? A migrant speaks about the challenges of getting a job in New Zealand and tests our perceptions on how we think and feel about someone's accent.

DECISIONS - To sign or not to sign? A government official meets with a client, a new settler, to sign a form. However, problems arise when the official hands over the paperwork.

EXPECTATIONS - Asking or telling? A misunderstanding occurs when a manager and staff member confer about the delivery date for an important presentation.

INSTRUCTIONS - 'Straight to the point' or 'Instructions, what instructions?' Two vignettes that demonstrate how different managers, inspired by their own cultural backgrounds, interact with staff members.

The CD-Rom will shortly be distributed to government departments via [the Office of Ethnic Affairs](#). Contact craig.nicholson@dia.govt.nz for more information.