

HIGHLIGHTS

Job market still shut for Asian migrants

New tool for pay equity

The kids are all right – but how's mum?

Counting for something: the value of unpaid work

Less is more: the future of part time work and its impact on men, older workers, and work-life balance

Tapping into the disability talent pool: new research, new initiatives

Work in mind: new handbook for jobseekers affected by mental health issues

Blowing the EEO trumpet: extending the 'good employer' principle to Crown entities



Connecting the world of EEO

Welcome to the first newsletter of NEON, a new network of organisations with an interest in equal employment opportunities in New Zealand.

NEON is the National Equal Opportunities Network. The two founding partner organisations are the [Human Rights Commission](#) and the [EEO Trust](#), two groups with different strategic directions but the same EEO goals. Together we stand for the equality and social justice perspectives and the business case for EEO – the diversity in our approaches adds value and strength to our partnership. We hope others with similar aims will join as the network evolves.

The formation of the network and its newsletter follows the recommendation in the first [Framework for the Future](#) report written for the EEO Unit of the Human Rights Commission that identified that individuals and groups were often pursuing EEO initiatives in isolation. The establishment of a strong and diverse EEO coalition was recommended to coordinate research, policy debate and new thinking.

The regular newsletter will also feature overseas news and developments, mark the progress of current activities across the public and private sectors and provide commentary on topical EEO issues.



Dr Judy McGregor
EEO Commissioner



Dr Philippa Reed
Chief Executive, EEO Trust

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

Unless otherwise indicated, all stories written by the EEO Unit, Human Rights Commission. Send feedback to NEON - let us know about your new research and story ideas.

New research

New Asian migrants are at the very bottom of the ethnic pecking order in the job market, according to the results of a new study from the University of Auckland School of Business.

The study found that anti-Asian discrimination was a significant feature of Pakeha recruitment behaviour. Researcher Associate Professor Marie Wilson commented that "it's surprising how many people think that this issue (a) doesn't exist, or (b) is resolved by the low unemployment rate. Unemployment is NOT low for ethnic minorities, and under-employment is even more problematic."



It's the Year of the Rooster but Chinese jobseekers have little to crow about

Wilson's researchers set up several cross-cutting experiments where participants were asked to rank the suitability of a range of applicants for a job. All the applicants were fictional, equally overqualified, and fluent in English.

- When immigration status was included on the CVs given, not a single new Asian migrant was short listed for a job.
- When immigration status was left off, having a Chinese or Indian name significantly raised chances of being considered 'unsuitable'.
- Chinese names were more 'unsuitable' than Indian.
- Chinese applicants with Anglicised first names were considered slightly less 'unsuitable' than their more traditionally-named compatriots.

Despite the bias of Pakeha participants overall, the choices of the Asian participants came out colour blind (although the range of fictional applicants did not include Māori, Pacific Island or Muslim names). Wilson suggests that ethnic minorities in New Zealand are less likely to hold inaccurate stereotypes about other ethnic groups, because they have to interact with ethnicities other than their own on a daily basis.

The data will be no surprise to Asian migrants and their community support networks. President of the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils, Pancha Narayanan, stated that "the mechanisms are weak" for preventing direct racial discrimination in employment, during consultation by the Auckland Regional Resettlement Strategy last week.

This research has expanded on the themes of earlier New Zealand work by the [Centre for Applied Cross-Cultural Research](#) at Victoria University, which found last year that recruitment agencies discriminated markedly against qualified, English-speaking applicants with Chinese names. Wilson's final paper will be presented at the [Academy of Management conference in August](#).

A trial run of [The Diversity Game](#) in Auckland prepared the way for its national roll-out in May. Supported by the [EEO Trust](#), the game challenges businesses to consider how they could create discrimination-free workplaces, and to assess whether diversity is being accommodated adequately. The HRC and EEO Trust helped the designers adapt the Australian game to the New Zealand context.

Improved access to flexible and part-time work in higher-calibre jobs would help reduce the 'Part Time Pay Penalty' suffered by women who work part time due to family commitments, according to a new report from the [Women and Equality Unit](#) of the UK Department of Trade and Industry.

The Māori economic development conference, [Hui Taumata](#) met early in March in Wellington. The conference focused on further developing Māori enterprise, people and assets. [Independent papers and comment](#) on the conference's [stimulus papers](#) are available online.

The UK has had its first employee victory under new [religious discrimination legislation](#). Mohammed Sajwal Khan was awarded £10,000 last month in compensation for being fired for taking extended leave to go on the Hajj – the pilgrimage to Mecca. Khan’s annual wage in his former job as a bus cleaner was £8,000.

The UK’s Equal Opportunity Commission is framing [women workers](#) as the answer to the UK’s productivity woes, establishing a link between sectors with skill shortages and sectors where women are under-represented.

[Migrant taxi drivers](#) are calling for increased protection from racial harassment on the job. Pakistani cabbie Safiq Raja was viciously beaten in Christchurch this month in what he believed to be a racially motivated attack. Taxi driver Sadiq Al-Haidar, who has a PhD in Chemical Engineering from Waikato University, noted that taxi drivers had no practical protection from racial harassment while working.

How to prise open the door

“We need to make it as easy as possible for small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to employ migrants”, said Auckland Regional Resettlement Strategy Project Manager Alison Hudgell to ethnic community leaders last week. To overcome “employers’ perceptions about the risks associated with employing migrants” there needed to be more positive profiling of the many SMEs who had found employing migrants to be a good business decision, Ms Hudgell said.

Employers consulted by the Resettlement Strategy Project had stressed the importance of a credible, business-friendly body helping migrants connect with employers. Ms Hudgell highlighted the 68% success rate of ongoing job placement achieved by the Auckland Chamber of Commerce joint initiative with Work and Income, which funds and coordinates trial periods and comprehensive training support for long-term unemployed migrants. Of the migrants consulted who had got “a foot in the door”, most found their ‘Kiwi’ employers to be fair, Ms Hudgell reported. The Strategy is due for completion this July.

Dedicated work-brokers supporting employers and jobseekers, one-to-one support, close case management and guaranteed long-term funding were also key to the successes of the [J R McKenzie Trust](#) Refugee Employment Programmes, which were funded from 2001-2004. The January 2005 evaluation of the programmes showed increasing rates of refugees placed into full or part time work: 120 placements by April 2004 grew to 278 by December 2004.



New tool for pay equity

By Dr Judy McGregor

Why is a global remuneration consulting company interested in developing a gender neutral job evaluation tool in New Zealand?

“Because there is a clear need and we want to be part of its development,” says David Shannon, senior remuneration consultant with Watson Wyatt.



Gender neutral advocates: In the pink corner, Philippa Hall; in the blue, David Shannon.

The tool’s development is part of the work of the newly established [Pay and Employment Equity Unit](#), based in the Department of Labour, which is examining pay issues in the public service, including the health and education sectors.

The right to breastfeed anywhere, including at work, was supported by a New Zealand [Human Rights Commission](#) paper, *The Right to Breastfeed*, released late last month. The paper presents a set of principles that can be used when considering breastfeeding issues in New Zealand, as well as summaries of international legislation and case law. The paper is expected to add to the momentum towards legislative change, and will be profiled in our next newsletter.

The UK Government has beefed up planned enforcement powers, and strengthened protection from religious discrimination in the provision of goods, facilities and services for its planned [Commission for Equality and Human Rights](#). As this new body is set up, [The Equalities Review](#), to be completed by mid-2006, will investigate the causes of discrimination and inequality in British society.

Female workers at carmaker Toyota Australia are seeking 12 days [paid menstrual leave](#) each year. The claim is one of 600 improvements being sought by the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU) from Toyota.

“Two tools will be included. The first is an audit tool with a series of self-administered questions about any existing job evaluation system being used. The second is an alternative job sizing process based on the principle of gender neutrality,” says David.

Some major job evaluation systems currently used have been criticised for not fully reflecting the range of work done by employees. The visibility of all work, particularly women’s work, is not always explicit.



Is this tool gender neutral?

“A gender neutral system would consider four aspects of work - skill, effort, responsibilities and working conditions. Some systems don’t assess working conditions for example, and in some cases the systems are not well-adapted to be used for all workers.”

Mr Shannon hopes that in time a gender neutral job evaluation tool would provide a viable alternative to other systems used in the public and private sectors.

Philippa Hall, the Director of the Pay and Employment Equity Unit, said she was pleased with the combination of expertise behind the development of the tool. On the research agenda will be “ways of identifying, describing and sizing some of the skills often found in female-dominated jobs that have not always been dealt with well by job evaluation systems.” These professions include caring work, co-ordinating and integrating work across functional divisions, contingency management, and knowledge work.

The newly created Pay and Employment Equity Unit was developed out of a key recommendation of the 2004 Taskforce Report, [Pay and Employment Equity in the Public Service and the Public Health and Public Education Sectors](#). The Unit has been charged with the responsibility of overseeing the implementation of a five-year action plan to achieve greater pay equity in the public service.

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The kids are all right – but how’s mum?

Helen Clark’s recent pro-childcare direction comes on the heels of New Zealand and Australian research showing the amount a New Zealand mother works has [no significant impact on her child’s development](#) or on [the amount of quality time](#) spent with her child. Working mothers sacrifice personal and recreational time to spend the same amount of time playing with and reading to their children as non-employed mothers, though they spend less time feeding, bathing and clothing their children and themselves.

An increasing number of businesses are joining councils, schools, media, ethnic groups and community organisations to mark [Race Relations Day](#) on 21 March, according to Race Relations Commissioner Joris De Bres. Engaging business to sign up to the [New Zealand Diversity Action Programme](#) will be a key Race Relations Day focus.

The distinct perspectives and creative energies of professional disabled artists and performers is being showcased at [Giant Leap](#), New Zealand's first international disability arts festival. It runs from 28 February to 6 March at the Auckland Performing Arts Centre as part of AK05.

[Giant Leap's creative director Philip Patston](#)



This 'time-squeezing' pattern offsets popular claims that working mothers neglect their children's development, showing that working mothers wear themselves out to be attentive parents to their children. Strong development in children was actually associated slightly with increased tiredness in working mothers.

Counting for something



'That'll be fifty bucks, kid.'

Political focus on women in the workforce has sparked public discussion and defence of the economic value and rights of unpaid carers. A group of researchers based at Massey University has entered the debate. With Professor Marilyn Waring and Dr Janet Sayers among the academics on board, the Massey group is currently writing a book focusing on Work-Life Balance in the invisible economy of unpaid work. Vital questions raised in a recent research forum discussion were:

- what impact would labour participation policies have on the world of unpaid carers and voluntary workers?
- how might labour participation policies affect different ethnic groups, particularly Māori and Pacific people who are the highest contributors to the unpaid and voluntary sectors?

The Massey project has already caught the eye of the Department of Labour. Massey's Associate Professor Christa Fouche is optimistic about engaging with the DOL's major Work-Life Balance policy initiative, which had previously only "peripherally covered" the realm of unpaid work.

In her address to Parliament Helen Clark cited a Treasury report which calculated a [potential increase of 5.1% of GDP](#) by increasing labour participation to the average of the top five OECD countries, with a 1% increase riding on the backs of working mothers aged 25-34. Treasury is now undertaking a major research project on labour force participation which will include a closer look at the value of calculating this increase in GDP without taking unmeasured and unpaid household labour into account.

The Treasury research will focus on: who is not participating in the labour force and why, what works in increasing participation, and what are the effects of increasing participation.



A book profiling twelve working people aged 74-95 provisionally titled '[Lifeswork](#)' will be published shortly. Written by EEO Commissioner Judy McGregor, the book showcases older workers' economic, social and cultural contributions in New Zealand.

Monitoring is important for confirming whether an organisation's policies on race or gender equality are working. But unless there is a high level of confidence that an employer understands and is committed to equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender workers, the UK Trade Union Council has advised that there should be [no monitoring](#) of employees for sexual orientation or gender identity at work.

Women's Affairs Minister Ruth Dyson attended the 49th session of the [United Nations Commission on the Status of Women](#) from 28 February. This year marked the ten-year anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Platform of action for the global advancement of women, and the 30th anniversary of the first World Conference of Women in Mexico.

What's new

According to [Part-time work and productivity: Trends and Initiatives](#), a major report released last month by the EEO Trust, New Zealanders are lengthening their working lives but spreading their life's work more thinly. The report argues that accommodating this lengthening but lightening working life will potentially increase labour force participation and productivity.

This coincides with news that the main source of growth in New Zealand jobs in the last quarter was part-time work. Bank commentators believe that [employers are being forced to be more flexible](#) in the current tight labour market.

Rights debates around part-time work, flexible work hours, and work-life balance are likely to snowball as working part-time becomes more popular in New Zealand. [Most New Zealand women have spent most of their lives in part-time work](#) to accommodate their family responsibilities, and recent [UK](#) and [Australian cases](#) are strengthening the legal trend of protecting the rights of part-time workers with parenting responsibilities.

But youth, older workers, and people with disabilities are also groups that are less likely to work full-time.

The UK [Changing Demographics](#) report also discovered that men are more likely to prefer working part-time to care for elders rather than children. [Men are increasingly asserting their rights](#) to their flexible-working entitlements according to Australia's Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner Pru Goward stated: "Men need to be able to access family-friendly work arrangements or have time at home with the children if they like, just like women do."



Flexible work and older workers

Older workers may be the next group to assert their rights to quality flexible and part-time work. Older workers should be afforded as much flexibility as those caring for young children, UK academic Sarah Vickerstaff has commented in an article for the [Equal Opportunity Review](#) entitled 'Managing the Older Workforce'. Extending the length of the average working life, and looking at ways of managing the older workforce, has become a focus for the UK government, which is

Georgina Beyer's [Gender Identity Bill](#) was introduced to Parliament last month. The Bill proposes amending the Human Rights Act to include gender identity as a prohibited ground of discrimination.

The vast majority of UK workers support the idea of flexible working hours for all people, according to research released by The Work Foundation last month on [Changing Demographics](#) of the UK workforce. 43% of UK workers surveyed wanted to work fewer hours, and 20% of men and 70% of women with young children would prefer part time work over full time work.

The Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission has launched a Work-Life Balance project called [Striking the Balance: Women, Men, Work and Family](#). The project will focus on barriers to balance, access to family-friendly employment provisions, community attitudes and gender roles in unpaid caring work, and where the responsibility for achieving work-family balance lies.

planning to provide greater protections for workers approaching the new default retirement age of 65.

Supporting research on older workers in New Zealand is a key priority for the Ministry of Social Development, which hosted a multi-agency forum on ageing last week. By 2051 people over the age of 65 are projected to increase from 12% of the population to 25% of the population. The [Research on Ageing: Future Priorities and Capabilities](#) forum was an opportunity for government agencies and researchers to:

- establish a dialogue about key policy and priority areas
- discuss how best to build capacity amongst groups researching ageing
- ensure a coordinated, multidisciplinary approach.

Part time work and work-life balance

The [EEO Trust report](#) found that people generally choose rather than are forced to work part-time – for family or personal reasons – despite the comparably lower pay. Part-time work and increasingly, [temp work](#), are seen as better for Work-Life Balance, according to reports from recruitment agencies.

Despite these preferences, New Zealand is still one of the most overworked wealthy countries. 21.3% of New Zealand workers work in excess of 50 hours a week, second only to Japan (28.1%) in an ILO survey of five developed countries. [Working Time and Workers' Preferences in Industrialized Countries: Finding the Balance](#) associated longer working hours with limited government regulation of working time.



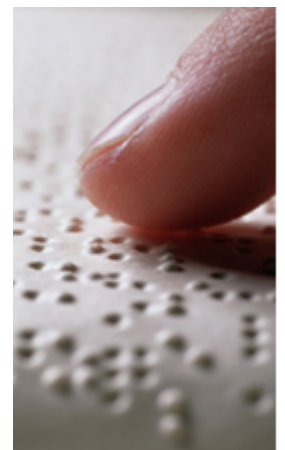
Tapping into the disability talent pool

The focus on getting more women into the workforce has been accompanied by government movement on employment for people with disabilities and chronic illnesses. But disability discrimination in hiring practices is still being freshly reported.

People with disabilities are bringing a wide range of skills and abilities to New Zealand workplaces, according to a survey of working disabled people conducted by the EEO Trust.

Respondents were most likely to be working in professional roles and most worked 30-40 hours per week. However:

- 61% of respondents had experienced problems trying to find a job
- the main problem they experienced was not getting an interview



Female National Health Service workers have won a historic [pay equity settlement](#) in the UK, which could reach up to 300 million pounds in compensation for up to 14 years of discrimination. A panel of experts agreed with the public service union Unison that a range of female-dominated occupations (eg. nurses and catering staff) should be paid the same as equivalent male-dominated jobs.

The UK Equal Opportunities Commission's major investigation into [flexible and part time working](#) has delivered its first [interim report](#). It calls on government to incorporate equality impact assessments before and during all major economic and labour policy design.

An Australian national report, [Creating Choice: Employment and the cost of caring](#), has found that more than one in four workers with caring responsibilities have already reduced their working hours due to the high cost of care, and 25 per cent have considered leaving the workforce altogether.

- three-quarters of respondents wanted employers recruiting people to focus on the abilities of applicants and the needs of the job rather than the disability.

"The main employment issue people with disabilities face relates to the attitudes of other people rather than access or technology issues," EEO Trust Chief Executive Philippa Reed said.

After building on new [health-support services and direct work-brokerage programmes](#) for people on the Sickness and Invalids Benefits last year, the Ministry of Social Development is now in the early stages of developing a support service that will encourage and help employers hire and retain staff with disabilities. MSD kicks off its consultations with an Employers' Summit on 15 March, hosted by Minister for Disability Issues Hon Ruth Dyson, who said the summit will focus on the business value of an equal opportunity environment:

"It is not that employers are doing a person with ill health or disability a favour ...these clients have a huge amount to offer, and employers stand to gain a great deal."

The business case for employing people with disabilities will be further explained this week by Australian consultant Margherita Coppolino, and CEO of Westpac New Zealand Ann Sherry. Ms Coppolino is one of Australia's best-known and most influential disability and diversity consultants, with an eye for the commercial benefits of diverse workplaces.

"Businesses need to realise that a change in attitude may make a huge difference to their organisation. The challenge is set for them to expand their labour force through employing people they might not have considered in the past," said Ms Coppolino.

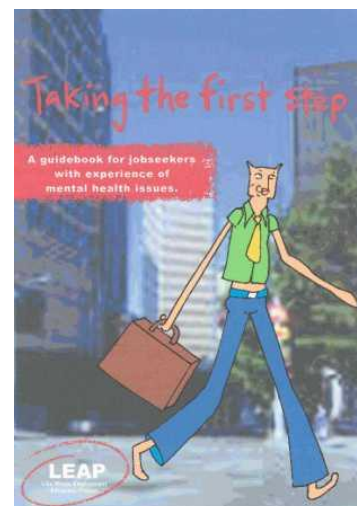
The lunch seminar will be hosted by the [EEO Trust](#) on 4 March in Auckland.



Work in mind

The first New Zealand guidebook for jobseekers affected by mental health issues was launched on 23 February. 'Taking the First Step' aims to raise these jobseekers' awareness of their rights, and of where to go for help and support.

The guidebook is being published by the Like Minds Employment Advocacy Project (LEAP), a Wellington-based employment rights initiative run with and for people who experience mental illness. It will be available online at www.likeminds.govt.nz.



Women's childcare responsibilities restrict them to part-time, flexible work that stops them from moving up the employment hierarchy. This 'sticky floor' is an even more pressing issue than the 'glass ceiling' according to Jo Morris, the Senior Equality and Employment Rights Officer at the UK Trades Union Congress. In a recent visit to New Zealand, Morris stressed that Trade Unions need to take a more proactive role in [facilitating work-life balance](#) solutions for employers and employees.

Enforcing minimum wage requirements for workers with disabilities [will cost jobs](#), claim families of disabled workers in Southland's Sheltered Workshops. A Southland group is petitioning the government to delay the repeal of the Disabled Persons Employment Promotion Act.

A landmark appeal on [unfair dismissal due to age](#) has progressed to the House of Lords in the UK. John Rutherford, 72, and Samuel Bentley, 76, won their test cases at an Employment Tribunal after being made to retire, but the decision was later overturned.

According to LEAP there has previously been little or no information available for people with experience of mental illness about their rights as jobseekers. Research has also revealed a huge gap between the number of people with mental illness who want to work, and the number actually seeking work. Discrimination, fear of discrimination, and lack of confidence are all major barriers to seeking and finding employment.



Blowing the EEO trumpet



Crown entities as different as the New Zealand Lotteries Commission, Sport and Recreation New Zealand and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra have new equal employment opportunities requirements.

The passage of the Crown entities Act 2004 in December means the "good employer" principle that covers the core public service now applies more widely to provide consistency across crown agencies, autonomous and independent Crown entities. The spread will include the 21 District

Health Boards, Crown Research Institutes and crown companies such as Radio New Zealand and Television New Zealand.

EEO Commissioner Dr Judy McGregor said many Crown entities currently had EEO programmes and followed the "good employer" principles. For some others the requirements would represent both "a challenge and an opportunity." It is hoped the EEO Unit of the Human Rights Commission will be funded to provide guidance for Crown entities in consultation with the State Services Commission.

Crown entities will have to:

- operate a personnel policy that complies with the principle of being a good employer
- make that policy, including the equal employment opportunities programme, available to its employees, and
- ensure compliance with that policy and the EEO programme and report in its annual report on the extent of its compliance.

The "good employer" principle covers good and safe working conditions, impartial recruitment, recognition of Māori, of cultural difference and of the employment requirements of women and of people with disabilities.

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