

GM4WOMEN2028

EMPLOYMENT GROUP BRIEFING NOTE 2020

GM4Women has an Employment Action Group and this is our first briefing note. Women have traditionally been disadvantaged in the workplace and, although there has been major progress, stubborn inequalities remain. Paid work helps women to be financially independent now and in retirement, to pursue their potential and escape poverty. Obviously, these benefits depend on the quality of work. Here, we explore women's paid work in Greater Manchester and identify some key signs of inequality that we hope will focus the minds of our employers, policy makers and Good Employment Charter partners.

Good employment for women must involve both good access to employment opportunities and good quality employment. A few headline statistics underline the fact that - while the situation in Greater Manchester is improving in some respects - there are some worrying trends in others.

Women in Paid Work?

↓ Fewer Women Doing Paid Work in Greater Manchester

In 2019 the share of women in employment in Greater Manchester actually fell. This decline followed increases in women's rate of employment from 2012 to 2018. After peaking at 68.4% in 2018 (see figure 1), the share fell to 66.8% in 2019.

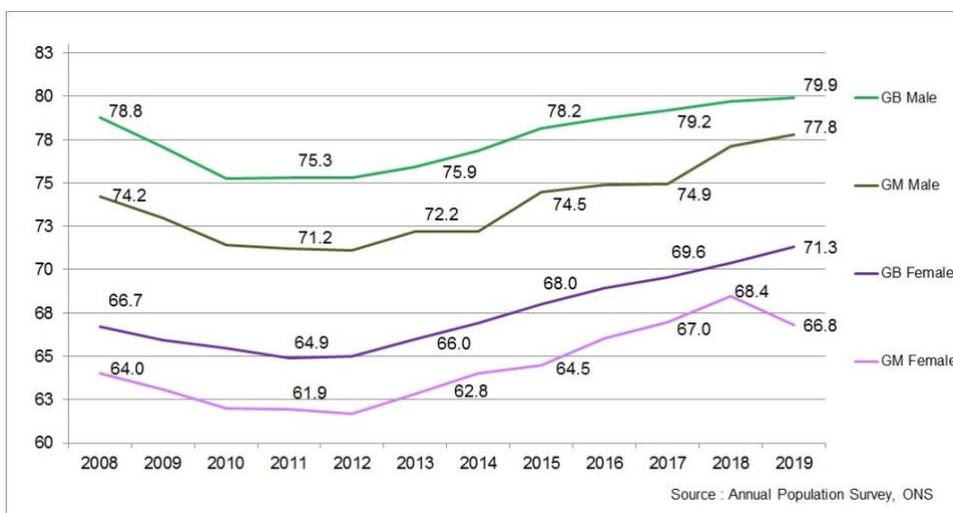


Figure 1. Employment rates by gender in Greater Manchester and Great Britain, 2008 – 2019.



A Widening Gap in Women Doing Paid Work in Greater Manchester vs Great Britain

There is a widening gap between women doing paid work in Greater Manchester compared with Great Britain (GB) as a whole – this gap now stands at 4.5 percentage points.

The employment rate gap between men and women doing paid work in Greater Manchester in 2019 is now 11 percentage points, compared to 8.6 percentage points for GB as a whole.

GM4WOMEN
2028

www.gm4women2028.org

@GM4Women2028



Worryingly Low Rates of Paid Work among Black and Minority Ethnic Women in Greater Manchester

White women have a higher rate of paid work than all other Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) women in Greater Manchester. In fact, white women’s employment rate in Greater Manchester is similar to the rate for women in Great Britain.

However, BAME women in every group in Greater Manchester have lower rates of employment than in Great Britain. For example, the Greater Manchester Indian women’s employment rate is only 58.3%, some 10 percentage points below that for Indian women in Great Britain as a whole. Perhaps even more shocking is the 34% employment rate for women from Pakistan and Bangladeshi residents in Greater Manchester, some 4 percentage points below the already very low Great British rate of 38.2%.

It seems that a key cause of the employment gap between women in Greater Manchester and Great Britain is caused by BAME women’s exclusion from paid work.

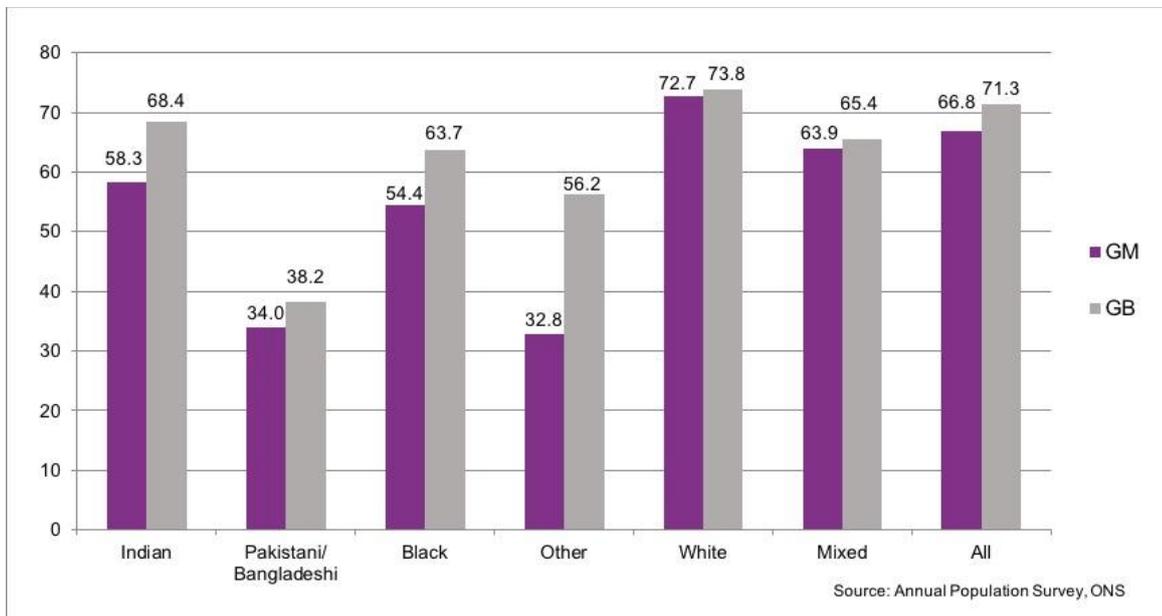


Figure 2. Women’s employment rates by ethnic group in Greater Manchester and Great Britain in 2019.



Only a Minority of Disabled Women in Greater Manchester are in Paid Work

Less than half - 47.4% - of women with a disability in Greater Manchester are in paid work. This is even worse than the rate in Greater Britain which is 53.6%.



Mind the Fairness Gap:

Minoritized women – from minority ethnic groups or who are disabled – have relatively poorer chances of being in paid work in Great Britain and *even worse chances in Greater Manchester.*



www.gm4women2028.org

@GM4Women2028

Large Variations in Women's Employment Across Greater Manchester

Only two local authorities in GM - Stockport and Trafford have above the national average employment rates for women (71.3% for GB as a whole). In contrast in Bury, Manchester, Oldham and Salford, employment rates are at least five percentage points below the national average and over 10 percentage points in the case of Manchester, though employment rates here are pulled down by the high share of students living in Manchester.

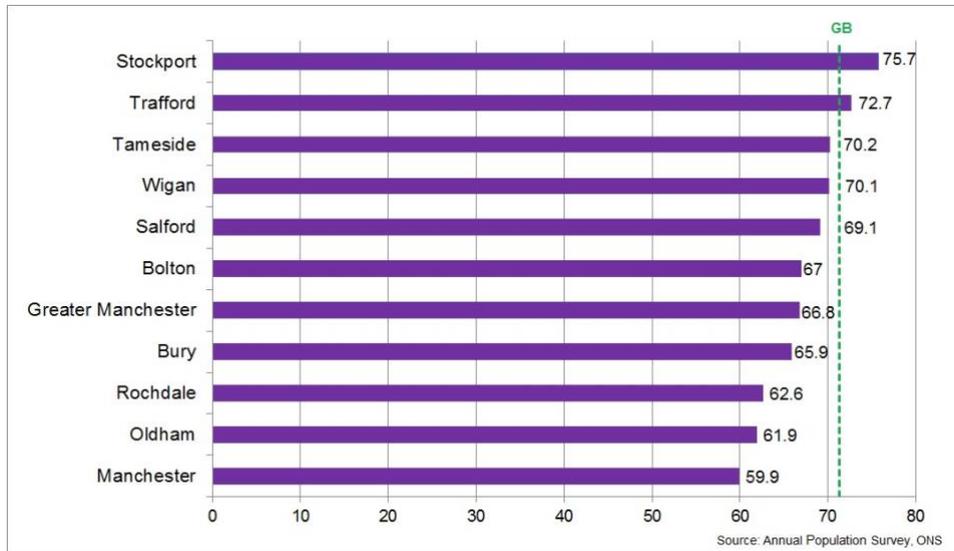


Figure 3. Women's employment rates by Local Authority in Greater Manchester in 2019.

Fair Pay for Women?

A Declining Gender Pay Gap

On a more positive note, the gender pay gap in Greater Manchester has fallen for all employed women to 12.6 percentage points. This is well below the gap for Great Britain as a whole at 17.9 percentage points in 2019.

Our relatively low Gender Pay Gap is due to women's wages in Greater Manchester being only 2% below those for women in Great Britain as a whole. Men in Greater Manchester earn 8% less than men in Great Britain as a whole (using median wages as the unit of comparison).

Ongoing Problem of Low Pay

While women's pay in Greater Manchester is doing relatively well compared to British norms, women still earn less than men and many are on low pay. For example, 29.4% of women were paid below the voluntary living wage in 2018, compared to 20.2% of men in Greater Manchester.

In 2018, 29.4% of women in Greater Manchester earned less than the voluntary living wage.



Relatively Low Rates of Women's Self-Employment in Greater Manchester

In the UK, 7.2% of women are self-employed (as their main job) but in Greater Manchester this figure is much lower at 5.3%. The gap in self-employment rates for men is much smaller.

While 14.2% of men in the UK are self-employed, the figure for Greater Manchester is 13.4%.

GM4WOMEN
2028

www.gm4women2028.org

@GM4Women2028

↔ Larger Gender Gap in Self-Employment Rates in Greater Manchester

Women are much less likely to be self-employed than men. For the UK there is a 7 percentage point difference in self-employment between men and the women, but in Greater Manchester the gap is even larger at 8.1 percentage points.

↑ Rapid Growth in Women's Self-Employment

Over the last ten years, Greater Manchester women's involvement in self-employment has risen by 59% compared to a 25% rise for men. There are 17,600 more self-employed women in Greater Manchester than 10 years ago. This compares with 24,000 more self-employed men.

There are 17,600 more self-employed women in Greater Manchester than 10 years ago.

★ Variation in Women's Self-Employment across Greater Manchester

The lowest rate of women's self-employment is in Salford (4.0%) and the highest rates are in Trafford (9.7%), Bury (7.6%) and Wigan (7.3%). Bolton, Bury and Trafford have seen rises of 122-132% in rates of women's self-employment over 10 years. Curiously, in Stockport, women's self-employment has *declined* by 11%.

In Bolton, Bury and Trafford, growth in the number of self-employed workers has been higher for women than men over the last ten years. In Oldham, Rochdale and Stockport, the gap in the self-employment rate between men and women is over 9.5 percentage points. This is because men's self-employment is particularly high and women's self-employment is below average.

Is Self-Employment Good Work?

Self-employment can lead to successful business ownership and provide satisfying and flexible work. But it can also be low-paid and precarious work. The Office for National Statistics reports a very large gender pay gap among the self-employed. Pay for the self-employed is often very low and it has declined in recent years. This raises serious concerns about the quality of work created by growth in women's self-employment in Greater Manchester.

Join Us! If you care about shaping better work for women in Greater Manchester, join us and we will let you know about forthcoming events!

Hold the Date - June 10th 2020 10-1. Our next event will bring together everyone involved in raising the skills and career pathways of women in Greater Manchester at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Key Data Sources

Annual Population Survey (employment and self-employment rates data, 2019 and earlier, people aged 16-64).

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (Gender Pay Gap data, 2019).

Office for National Statistics (reports on self-employment).

Authors

Professor Jill Rubery, Caitlin Schmid, Eva Herman, Abbie Winton (University of Manchester)

Professor Julia Rouse (Manchester Metropolitan University)



GM4WOMEN
2028

www.gm4women2028.org

@GM4Women2028