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Women, Work, and Leadership:
One-on-One Conversation with
Kristalina Georgieva

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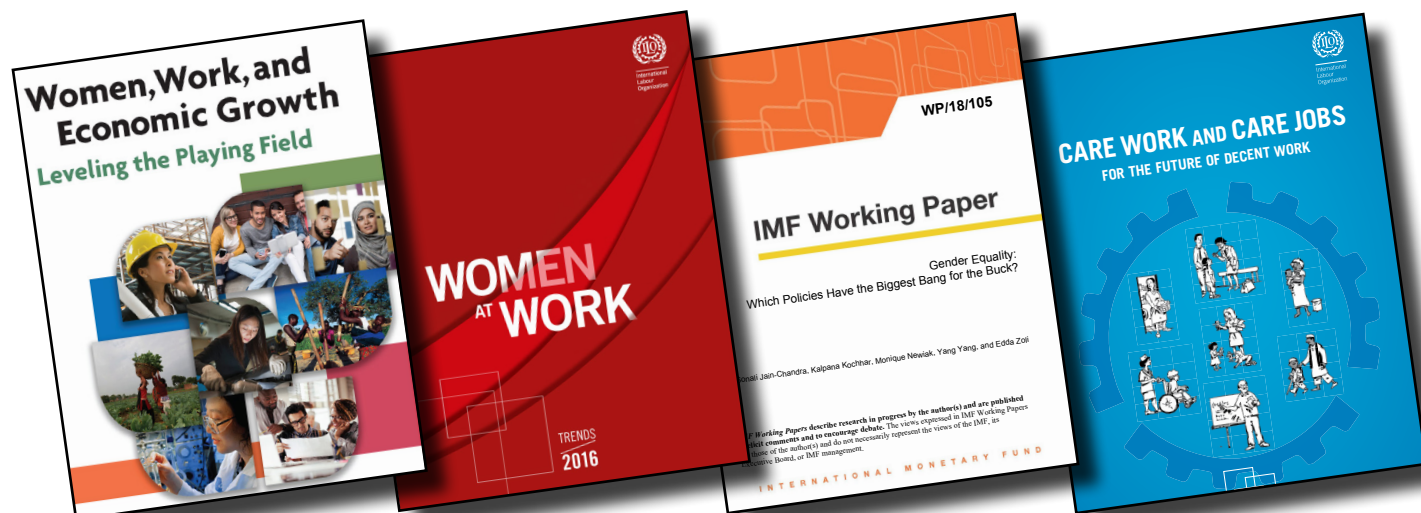
TUESDAY, October 15, 2019

3:00 PM - 3:45 PM, IMF HQ1, Meetings Halls A&B (HQ1-3-430 A&B)

Women, Work, and Leadership: One-on-One Conversation with Kristalina Georgieva

Sponsored by the IMF's Communication Department and Gender Group

This one-on-one conversation will focus on the macro-criticality of gender equality, including the need to increase the presence of women at the highest levels of decision-making, and how to address barriers to women's career growth, such as unpaid work and how it influences women's decisions to enter the labor market.



Alonso, Cristian, Mariya Brussevich, Era Dabla-Norris, Yuko Kinoshita, and Kalpana Kochhar. Forthcoming, Tuesday October 15, 2019.

[“Reducing and Redistributing Unpaid Work: Stronger Policies to Support Gender Equality.” Working Paper, International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC.](#)

Unpaid work, such as caring for children, the elderly, and household chores represents a significant share of economic activity but is not counted as part of GDP. Women disproportionately shoulder the burden of unpaid work: on average, women do more than two more hours of unpaid work per day than men, with large differences across countries. While much unpaid care work is done entirely by choice, constraints imposed by cultural norms, labor market features or lack of public services, infrastructure, and family-friendly policies matter. This undermines female labor force participation and lowers economy-wide productivity. In this paper, we examine recent trends in unpaid work around the world using aggregate and individual-level data, explore potential drivers, and identify policies that can help reduce and redistribute unpaid work across genders. Conservative model-based estimates suggest that the gains from these policies could amount to up to 4 percent of GDP.

Blau, Francine D. and Lawrence M. Kahn. 2017.

[“The Gender Wage Gap: Extent, Trends, and Sources.” Journal of Economic Literature 55 \(3\), 789–865.](#)

Using Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) microdata over the 1980–2010 period, we provide new empirical evidence on the extent of and trends in the gender wage gap, which declined considerably during this time. By 2010, conventional human capital variables taken together explained little of the gender wage gap, while gender differences in occupation and industry continued to be important. Moreover, the gender pay gap declined much more slowly at the top of the wage distribution than at the middle or bottom and by 2010 was noticeably higher at the top. We then survey the literature to identify what has been learned about the explanations for the gap. We conclude that many of the traditional explanations continue to have salience. Although human-capital factors are now relatively unimportant in the aggregate, women’s work force interruptions and shorter hours remain significant in high-skilled occupations, possibly due to compensating differentials. Gender differences in occupations and industries, as well as differences in gender roles and the gender division of labor remain important, and research

based on experimental evidence strongly suggests that discrimination cannot be discounted. Psychological attributes or noncognitive skills comprise one of the newer explanations for gender differences in outcomes. Our effort to assess the quantitative evidence on the importance of these factors suggests that they account for a small to moderate portion of the gender pay gap, considerably smaller than, say, occupation and industry effects, though they appear to modestly contribute to these differences.

Bridgman, Benjamin, Georg Duernecker, and Berthold Herrendorf. 2018.

[“Structural Transformation, Marketization, and Household Production Around the World.” Journal of Development Economics 133: 102–126.](#)

We provide evidence on the patterns of household production in 43 developing and developed countries. Household hours account on average for nearly half of the total hours worked in the household and the market. The vast majority of household hours produce services. As GDP per capita increases, average total hours worked and average household hours per working-age population decrease while average market hours increase (“marketization”); hours producing services increase their share in total hours (“structural transformation”). The decrease in household hours is mostly due to changes in housework (cleaning, cooking etc.) and marketization is mostly due to changes in women’s hours. Within countries, more educated people work more in the market and less in the household. We also impute the labor productivity of household production for 34 countries of our sample. We find that it is positively correlated with and much lower than that in the market.

Cubas, German. 2016.

[“Distortions, Infrastructure, and Female Labor Supply in Developing Countries.” European Economic Review 87: 194–215.](#)

In this paper I document cross-country gaps between gross domestic product (GDP) per capita and GDP per worker. The gaps are driven mostly by a lower female labor force participation (LFP) in developing countries. Females began to participate more in the labor markets of these countries when more households acquired access to basic infrastructure and when distortive policies affecting the prices of household appliances were partially removed. I use a model of home production with endogenous labor force participation to account for these facts. I find that the prices of

household appliances and access to infrastructure are quantitatively important in explaining cross-country labor supply differences.

Dabla-Norris, Era and Kalpana Kochhar. 2019.

[“Closing the Gender Gap.” Finance & Development 56 \(1\): 6–11.](#)

Women make up almost half of the world’s working-age population of nearly 5 billion people. But only about 50 percent of those women participate in the labor force, compared with 80 percent of men. Not only is female labor force participation lower, but women who are paid for their work are disproportionately employed in the informal sector—especially in developing economies—where employers are subject to fewer regulations, leaving workers more vulnerable to lower wages and job losses.

Gammage, Sarah, Naziha Sultana, and Manon Mouron. 2019.

[“The Hidden Costs of Unpaid Caregiving.” Finance & Development 56 \(1\): 20–23.](#)

The responsibility for unpaid care work worldwide falls disproportionately on women and girls, leaving them less time for education, leisure, political participation, paid work, and other economic activities. Much of this work is devoted to caring for household members and doing domestic chores. The burden of care work is particularly acute in rural settings and in aging societies. This burden can limit women’s engagement in market activities and lead them to concentrate in low-paid, informal, or home-based work as a means of balancing unpaid care work and paid employment.

International Labour Organization. 2018.

[Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work. Geneva: International Labour Office.](#)

The report analyses the ways in which unpaid care work is recognized and organized, the extent and quality of care jobs and their impact on the well-being of individuals and society. A key focus of this report is the persistent gender inequalities in households and the labour market, which are inextricably linked with care work. The report contains a wealth of original data drawn from over 90 countries and details transformative policy measures in five main areas: care, macroeconomics, labour, social protection and migration.

International Labour Organization. 2016.

[Women at Work Trends 2016. Geneva: International Labour Office.](#)

Throughout their working lives, women continue to face significant obstacles in gaining access to decent work. Only marginal improvements have been achieved since the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, leaving large gaps to be covered in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the United Nations in 2015. Inequality between women and men persists in global labour markets, in respect of opportunities, treatment and outcomes. Over the last two decades, women’s significant progress in educational achievements has not translated into a comparable improvement in their position at work. In many regions in the world, in comparison to men, women are more likely to become and remain unemployed, have fewer chances to participate in the labour force and – when they do – often have to accept lower quality jobs. Progress in surmounting these obstacles has been slow and is limited to a few regions across the world.

Jain-Chandra, Sonali, Kalpana Kochhar, Monique Newiak, Yang Yang, and Edda Zoli. 2018.

[“Gender Equality: Which Policies Have the Biggest Bang for the Buck?” Working Paper 18/105, International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC.](#)

This paper analyzes the relationship between fiscal and structural policies and gender inequality in education and labor force participation for countries at different stages of development. Due to the substantial number of possible factors that link with gender inequality previously highlighted in the literature, we pay particular attention to addressing model uncertainty and using various statistical methods to find the variables with the strongest links to gender gaps. We find that higher public spending on education, better sanitation facilities, low adolescent fertility, and narrower marriage age gaps are significantly related to narrower gender gaps in education. We also find that better infrastructure, a stronger institutional environment, more equal legal rights, and low adolescent fertility rates are strongly associated with higher female labor force participation. When labor market protection is low, an increase in protection is associated with a narrowing of labor force participation gaps between men and women. But when labor market

protection levels are high, an increase in protection is associated with a widening in labor force participation gaps.

Kochhar, Kalpana, Sonali Jain-Chandra, and Monique Newiak. 2017.

[Women, Work, and Economic Growth: Leveling the Playing Field.](#) Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund.

Women make up a little over half of the world's population, but their contribution to measured economic activity and growth is far below its potential. Despite significant progress in recent decades, labor markets across the world remain divided along gender lines, and progress toward gender equality seems to have stalled. The challenges of growth, job creation, and inclusion are closely intertwined. This volume brings together key research by IMF economists on issues related to gender and macroeconomics. In addition to providing policy prescriptions and case studies from IMF member countries, the chapters also look at the gender gap from an economic point of view.

Ngai, L. Rachel and Barbara Petrongolo. 2017.

["Gender Gaps and the Rise of the Service Economy."](#) *American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics* 9 (4): 1–44.

This paper investigates the role of the rise in services in the narrowing of gender gaps in hours and wages in recent decades. We highlight the between-industry component of differential gender trends for the United States and propose a model economy with goods, services, and home production, in which women have a comparative advantage in producing services. The rise of services, driven by structural transformation and marketization of home production, raises women's relative wages and market hours. Quantitatively, the model accounts for an important share of the observed trends in women's hours and relative wages.

Olivetti, Claudia and Barbara Petrongolo. 2017.

["The Economic Consequences of Family Policies: Lessons from a Century of Legislation in High-Income Countries."](#) *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 31 (1): 205–230.

We draw lessons from existing work and our own analysis on the effects of parental leave and other interventions aimed at aiding families. The outcomes

of interest are female employment, gender gaps in earnings and fertility. We begin with a discussion of the historical introduction of family policies ever since the end of the nineteenth century and then turn to the details regarding family policies currently in effect across high-income nations. We sketch a framework concerning the effects of family policy to motivate our country- and micro-level evidence on the impact of family policies on gender outcomes. Most estimates of the impact of parental leave entitlement on female labor market outcomes range from negligible to weakly positive. There is stronger evidence that spending on early education and childcare increases labor force participation of women and reduces gender gaps.

Ostry, J.D., J. Alvarez, R.A. Espinoza, and C. Papageorgiou. 2018.

["Economic Gains from Gender Inclusion: New Mechanisms, New Evidence."](#) *Staff Discussion Notes* 18/06, International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC.

While progress has been made in increasing female labor force participation (FLFP) in the last 20 years, large gaps remain. The latest Fund research shows that improving gender diversity can result in larger economic gains than previously thought. Indeed, gender diversity brings benefits all its own. Women bring new skills to the workplace. This may reflect social norms and their impact on upbringing and social interactions, or underlying differences in risk preference and response to incentives for example. As such, there is an economic benefit from diversity, that is from bringing women into the labor force, over and above the benefit resulting from more (male) workers. The study finds that male and female labor are imperfect substitutes in production, and therefore gender differences in the labor force matter. The results also imply that standard models, which ignore such differences, understate the favorable impact of gender inclusion on growth, and misattribute to technology a part of growth that is actually caused by women's participation. The study further suggests that narrowing gender gaps benefits both men and women, because of a boost to male wages from higher FLFP. The paper also examines the role of women in the process of sectoral reallocation from traditional agriculture to services and the resulting effect on productivity and growth. Because FLFP is relatively high in services, sectoral reallocation along development paths serves to boost gender parity and productivity.

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