

IDS Diversity at Work aims to provide timely, accurate and high quality information on workplace diversity, equal opportunities and discrimination law. It will help increase your understanding of and compliance with the law, and supply the information and the tools you need to realise the benefits of good practice.

## News

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- £50k NI racial harassment awards
- Fall in FTSE female directorships
- New flexible working right covers 'near relatives'
- NHS redundancy changes to avoid age bias
- Masonic membership is a 'religious belief'
- UK workplace discrimination low by global standards

**Plus news in brief:** *Equality trumps religion – Gay-friendly SMEs – Sex equality law limits – Mental health problems – CEHR warning – End of CRE in 10.07? – Sexual orientation regs – Bullying findings – Acas e-learning*

## Survey

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### Diversity at work survey 2006

In summer 2006, over 200 UK employers responded to our questionnaire on workplace diversity and equal opportunities practice. Their replies reveal that while almost all organisations have now adopted formal policies on diversity and equal opportunities, there remains a substantial gap between public and private sectors in terms of action to implement those policies and thus create a fair and inclusive working environment. Other key findings include:

- Legal compliance remains the overriding motivation for having a policy
- Less than a quarter of organisations have measures in place to assess their managers' effectiveness in dealing with diversity issues
- Diversity awareness training is provided to employees in three quarters of organisations
- Over 75% of respondents monitor their workforce by gender, age, ethnicity or disability, while monitoring by religion is undertaken by only a quarter of respondents and sexual orientation by less than a fifth
- Flexible working is restricted to those with a statutory right to request it in only 12% of organisations, but take-up is not widespread
- Two fifths of respondents have carried out at least one equal pay review within the last five years, with most saying they have encountered difficulties
- More organisations report no change in business or organisational performance as a result of their diversity policies and actions than report an improvement

## Case Watch – Tribunals

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### Religious discrimination:

Instruction not to cover face justified

## Q&A

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### The Disability Equality Duty

The Disability Equality Duty, which was introduced by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, comes into operation on 4 December 2006. Similar to the race duty, which came into operation in 2001, and the gender duty, which takes effect from April 2007, it is aimed at tackling systemic institutionalised discrimination by public authorities against disabled people in a broad range of areas including employment. We answer some of your key questions about the new duty.

## Statistics

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### No improvement in gender pay gap

Progress in closing the gender pay gap stalled this year as higher pay rises for men at the top of the earnings distribution led to higher growth in men's average pay. Women working full time earned an average 17.2% less per hour than men in 2006, compared to 17.1% in 2005. This very slight increase is against the long-term trend of a steady narrowing of the gender pay gap as women's participation in the labour market has increased. There was no improvement in the part-time gender pay gap in 2006 – it remained at 37.6%. However, revised figures for 2005 show that there was a significant narrowing last year as a result of high earnings growth for female part-timers in the public sector.

## Diversity at Work

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