

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Professor Jill Rubery

Tuesday 6 September, 15:00-16:00
The Great Hall

‘Challenges and contradictions in the ‘normalisation’ of flexible labour markets’

Flexible labour markets involving non-standard forms of employment (nsfe), have become the new standard in Europe. Although employment remains mainly open-ended and full-time, there has been a process of normalisation of flexibility, through extending employment rights and social protection, increased pressure on the unemployed to take up nsfe and state compensation for low wages. Drawing on examples from six EU countries, this paper identifies the extent and form of normalisation, remaining and new protective gaps and the resulting impact on inclusivity of labour markets. Normalisation gives rise to three types of contradictions, in the role of welfare systems in both subsidising and promoting nsfe, in the generation of new rigidities and in extending evasion of regulations. These problems call for a more holistic approach to re-regulation to generate more inclusive systems that also re-establish employer responsibilities.

Jill Rubery is Professor of Comparative Employment Systems at the Alliance Manchester Business School, University of Manchester. She is the founder and co-director of the European Work and Employment Research Centre at Manchester and a fellow of the British Academy. Her research focuses on the inter-disciplinary comparative analysis of employment systems, including internal labour markets, wage structures, employment regulation, working time arrangements and welfare systems. She is an international expert on issues relating to gender and employment. Recent European comparative research includes projects on national socio-economic models, on social dialogue and minimum wage systems, on public sector pay and procurement, on women and austerity and on reducing precarious work. Recent books include: G. Bosch, S. Lehndorff and J. Rubery eds.(2009) *European Employment Models in Flux* Palgrave; D. Anxo, G. Bosch and J. Rubery eds. (2010) *The Welfare State and Life Transitions* Edward Elgar; and M. Karamessini and J. Rubery ed. (2013) *Women and Austerity: The Economic Crisis and the Future for Gender Equality* Routledge



Chair: Jennifer Tomlinson, University of Leeds