

**WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT AND
MULTINATIONALS IN EUROPE**

Also edited by Diane Elson

VALUE

MALE BIAS IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Women's Employment and Multinationals in Europe

Edited by

Diane Elson

*Lecturer in Economics
University of Manchester*

and

Ruth Pearson

*Research Fellow
School of Development Studies, University of East Anglia*

M
MACMILLAN
PRESS

© Diane Elson and Ruth Pearson 1989

All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.

No paragraph of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted save with written permission or in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright Act 1956 (as amended), or under the terms of any licence permitting limited copying issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency, 33 – 4 Alfred Place, London WC1E 7DP.

Any person who does any unauthorised act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

First published 1989

Published by
THE MACMILLAN PRESS LTD
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 2XS
and London
Companies and representatives
throughout the world

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Women's employment and multinationals in Europe.

1. Western Europe. Multinational companies. Women personnel

I. Elson, Diane, 1946– II. Pearson, Ruth–1945

331.4'813388884

ISBN 978-0-333-46706-0 ISBN 978-1-349-19908-2 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-19908-2

Contents

List of Tables

Preface

Notes on the Contributors

xiii

- | | | |
|---|--|-----|
| 1 | Introduction: Nimble Fingers and Foreign Investments
<i>Diane Elson and Ruth Pearson</i> | 1 |
| 2 | Women's Employment and Multinationals in the UK: Restructuring and Flexibility
<i>Ruth Pearson</i> | 12 |
| 3 | Women's Employment and Multinationals in the Republic of Ireland: The Creation of a New Female Labour Force
<i>Pauline Jackson and Ursula Barry</i> | 38 |
| 4 | Women's Employment and Multinationals in the Federal Republic of Germany: The Job-Export Question
<i>Sabine Gensior and Bärbel Schöler</i> | 60 |
| 5 | The Cutting Edge: Multinationals in the EEC Textiles and Clothing Industry
<i>Diane Elson</i> | 80 |
| 6 | Silicon Glen: Women and Semiconductor Multinationals
<i>Nance Goldstein</i> | 111 |
| 7 | Production Relocation: An Electronics Multinational in France and Brazil
<i>Helena Hirata</i> | 129 |
| 8 | Women's Response to Multinationals in County Mayo
<i>Lorelei Harris</i> | 144 |

9	Fighting Plant Closure: Women in the Strike at Videocolor <i>Shahizer Aydin and Ilse Lenz</i>	165
10	Fighting Plant Closure: Women in the Plessey Occupation <i>Patricia Findlay</i>	183
11	Restructuring Women's Employment in British Petroleum <i>Marilyn Davidson</i>	206
	<i>Index</i>	222

List of Tables

2.1	Changes in UK sectoral distribution of labour, 1951–81	13
2.2	Changes in UK manufacturing employment, 1971–81	14
2.3	Women's total employment and share of employment in UK manufacturing, 1971–81	15
2.4	Women's part-time employment as a proportion of total women's employment in UK manufacturing, 1971–81	17
2.5	Analysis of changes in women's employment in UK manufacturing, 1971–81	18
2.6	Foreign-owned establishments' share of UK manufacturing employment	22
2.7	Women's share of employment in a sample of UK- and foreign-owned enterprises in UK manufacturing, 1980	24
2.8	Manual workers' share of employment in a sample of UK- and foreign-owned enterprises in UK manufacturing, 1980	26
3.1	Multinational companies in the Republic of Ireland by country of origin, 1983	40
3.2	Average rate of profit on US capital investment in Europe and Japan	43
3.3	Irish labour force participation rates by age and sex, 1981	44
3.4	Job creation and job loss in Irish manufacturing	46
3.5	Employment in multinational companies by industrial sector, Republic of Ireland, 1982	47
3.6	Composition of labour force in textiles and clothing, Republic of Ireland	52
3.7	Women as a percentage of the labour force in the electronics and electrical industry, Republic of Ireland, 1973–83	52
3.8	Distribution of Irish women electronics workers by country of origin of employer	54

3.9	Occupational segregation in the Irish electronics industry, 1981	55
4.1	Share of developing countries in West German direct foreign investment	64
4.2	Overseas employment of West German multinationals, 1982	65
4.3	Employment of foreign multinationals in West Germany, 1982	67
4.4	Sectoral distribution of women's employment in West Germany	68
4.5	Women's employment in manufacturing, West Germany, 1980	69
4.6	Employment trends in selected industries, West Germany, 1976-82	71
4.7	Employment trends of foreign multinationals, West Germany, 1976-82	72
4.8	Employment trends of selected West German multinationals, 1974-82	72
4.9	Overseas employment of West German multinationals selected manufacturing industries, 1976-82	74
5.1	Average annual growth rates of output and employment, textile and clothing industries, 1973-80	82
5.2	Labour costs in the textile industry, 1980	83
5.3	Average hourly earnings in the clothing industry	84
5.4	Employment in artificial fibre production in selected EEC countries	88
5.5	Concentration characteristics of selected European textile industries	89
5.6	Distribution of textile and clothing employment by type of firm, UK 1975	89
5.7	Major textile and clothing multinationals in the EEC	90
5.8	Tootal's employment, 1973-84	97
6.1	Leading firms in the semiconductor industry	114
6.2	Overseas locations of fabrication and assembly of some major semiconductor producers, 1980	115
6.3	Leading semiconductor multinationals in Scotland	116

6.4	Employment in the Scottish electrical and electronics industry	117
6.5	Women's wages in selected industries in Scotland and Great Britain, early 1980s	122
6.6	Ratio of operators and assemblers to technicians and engineers in semiconductor production in Scotland	123
6.7	Women in technician level employment, 1984	125
7.1	Distribution of production workers by gender and skill classification, 1981	136
7.2	Percentage of men and women in each grade, 1981	137
7.3	Average monthly wages in the two plants, 1981 (in French Francs)	138
7.4	Wages in the Brazilian plant as a percentage of wages in the French plant	138
9.1	Structure of Videocolor workforce in Ulm, November 1981	168
11.1	Women's share of employment in the UK oil industry	207
11.2	OTS graduate intake, 1976–83	216

Preface

This book grew out of a Workshop on Women's Employment and Multinationals in Europe held at the University of East Anglia in September 1984. The contributors to this book, together with Stephen Wood of the London School of Economics and Sally Wyatt of the Science Policy Research Unit, University of Sussex, generously applied their energies to a subject which had previously received no coherent attention. While considerable research had been carried out on the implications of multinationals for women's employment in the Third World, and some attention had been paid to the implication for women's employment in the USA, nothing had been done on Europe.

Our appreciation is due to the conference participants who agreed that this lack should be remedied; to Valerie Striker of the University of East Anglia who organised the workshop; and to Jean Ashton, Linda Cooper and Charmaine Arnold-Reed who produced the final typescript.

Diane Elson
Ruth Pearson

Notes on the Contributors

Shahizer Aydin was formerly at the Institute of Sociology, University of Münster. Her research interests are women and industrial relations, and she is currently living and working in Turkey.

Ursula Barry is Lecturer in Sociology and Economics at Dublin College of Technology. She has written a number of papers on women and the Irish economy, and is co-editor of *Information Technology — Impact on the Way of Life* and the author of *Lifting the Lid — Facts and Information on Ireland*.

Marilyn Davidson is Lecturer in Organisational Psychology in the Department of Management Science, University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology. She has written extensively on the problems faced by women at work. The most recent of her five books is *Reach for the Top — A Women's Guide to Success in Business and Management*.

Diane Elson is Lecturer in Development Economics in the Department of Economics, University of Manchester. She has written widely on women, multinationals and development and is editor of *Male Bias in the Development Process*.

Patricia Findlay is researching industrial relations in the Scottish electronics industry at Nuffield College, University of Oxford.

Sabine Gensior is a Lecturer at the Free University of Berlin and a member of the executive committee of the Berlin Institute for Social Research and Sociological Practice. She has published widely on women in the labour market and is co-author of *Arbeitsmarkt und Frauenerwerbsarbeit*.

Nance Goldstein is an industry analyst for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and was formerly a Lecturer in economics at Thames Polytechnic, London.

Lorelei Harris is an anthropologist living in Dublin. She has published articles on women and industrialisation in the west of Ireland and has taught Women's Studies and Sociology. She is currently a Researcher for Radio Telefis Eireann.

Helena Hirata is *chargée de recherche* at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris and member of Groupe d'Etude sur la Division Sociale et Sexuelle du Travail. She has written extensively on the international and sexual division of labour and published articles in French, English, Spanish, Portuguese and Japanese.

Pauline Jackson is researching sex segregation in the Irish workforce at Trinity College, Dublin. She has previously worked for the Women's Bureau of the European Commission. She has published several papers on women workers in Ireland and is co-editor of *Gender in Irish Society*.

Ilse Lenz teaches at the Institute of Sociology, University of Münster. She has written widely on women's employment and the new international division of labour, with a particular focus on Japan and Southeast Asia.

Ruth Pearson is an economist who has written widely on women's employment issues in the Third World and the UK. She is currently a Research Fellow at the School of Development Studies, University of East Anglia, where she teaches on gender and development.

Bärbel Schöler has carried out research on the impact of technological change on women's work at the Berlin Institute for Social Research and Sociological Practice. She is currently working on a project on women and politics.