

The Institute of Economic Affairs exist in their own bu...

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The FT has reported this morning that the Institute for Economic Affairs, which is a hard right think tank, has criticised the new compulsory gender pay gap data that the government is requiring that about 9,000 companies employing 250 or more people in the UK now have to produce (although with a week to go half have yet to do so).

I read the report almost hoping that for once the IEA would not shoot themselves in the foot. But they did, [saying this](#):

Julian Jessop, chief economist at the IEA, said the data were “frequently misunderstood and misrepresented”.

“Variations in hourly wages or bonuses between men and women are often interpreted as evidence of different pay for the same work,” he said.

“In reality, the main reasons why women earn less in some cases, and more in others, are differences in the type of job being done.”

I wanted to cringe, the comment is so desperate. Doesn't he realise that this is the whole issue the data is meant to reveal? The debate about equal pay for equal work was meant to be have been resolved in [1970](#). We all know it has not been, but highlighting data on that issue was not the purpose of this new data. The issue now is about precisely why women are not offered the same job opportunities as men, and so are paid less as a result.

But the Institute for Economic Affairs, existing in their own little bubble, have obviously failed to notice this.

In a sense we should be grateful to the FT. They show just how out of touch with reality right-wing thinkers really are. I should, however, add that this does not make them any less dangerous to well-being.