

MAGYAR GERONTOLÓGIA

VOL. 16. CONFERENCE SPECIAL ISSUE/ KONFERENCIA KÜLÖNSZÁM

2024. Vol. 16. Conference Special Issue/ Konferencia Különszám

ISSN 2062-3690

[www.https://ojs.lib.unideb.hu/gerontologia](https://ojs.lib.unideb.hu/gerontologia)

Women's career for a lifetime SESSION (NO. 5)

in partnership with

Association for Women's Career Development in Hungary (AWCDH)/4

Uncertain Futures: Understanding Work and Retirement Inequalities facing Women Over 50 in Manchester, UK

Sarah Campbell¹, Hayley James², Elaine Dewhurst³

¹Senior Lecturer Social Care and Social Work Department Faculty of Health and Education
Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

²Aston University, Birmingham, UK

³University of Manchester, Manchester, UK

Keywords: retirement, women over 50, UK

This paper will explore data generated through a coproduced art research project called Uncertain Futures. The project set out to explore the inequalities facing women over 50 in relation to work in Manchester, UK. 100 diverse women were interviewed about their experiences of accessing work, being in work and exiting work. The women ranged in age from 50 to 80+ and two-thirds of the women from minority ethnic backgrounds, with a small number

who were refugees. Hence the women in this study were voices that are often unheard. All the women were asked about their views on what made a comfortable retirement, whether they were retired or planning for retirement. In this paper we will explore the imagined futures and realities for 59 of the women over 50 in Manchester. This cohort is women who are currently in work or seeking work and their insights into planning for retirement. We discuss the often quite modest aspirations women had for their retirement. Alongside their fears for their retirement futures which often looked precarious due to the lack of pension provision, secure housing, or good health. This paper argues that the inequalities women have faced across their life-course, alongside intersectional disadvantage meant that for many women although they might have hopes for a 'comfortable retirement' there were many fears about achieving this, and hence their imagined futures and lived realities felt uncertain.