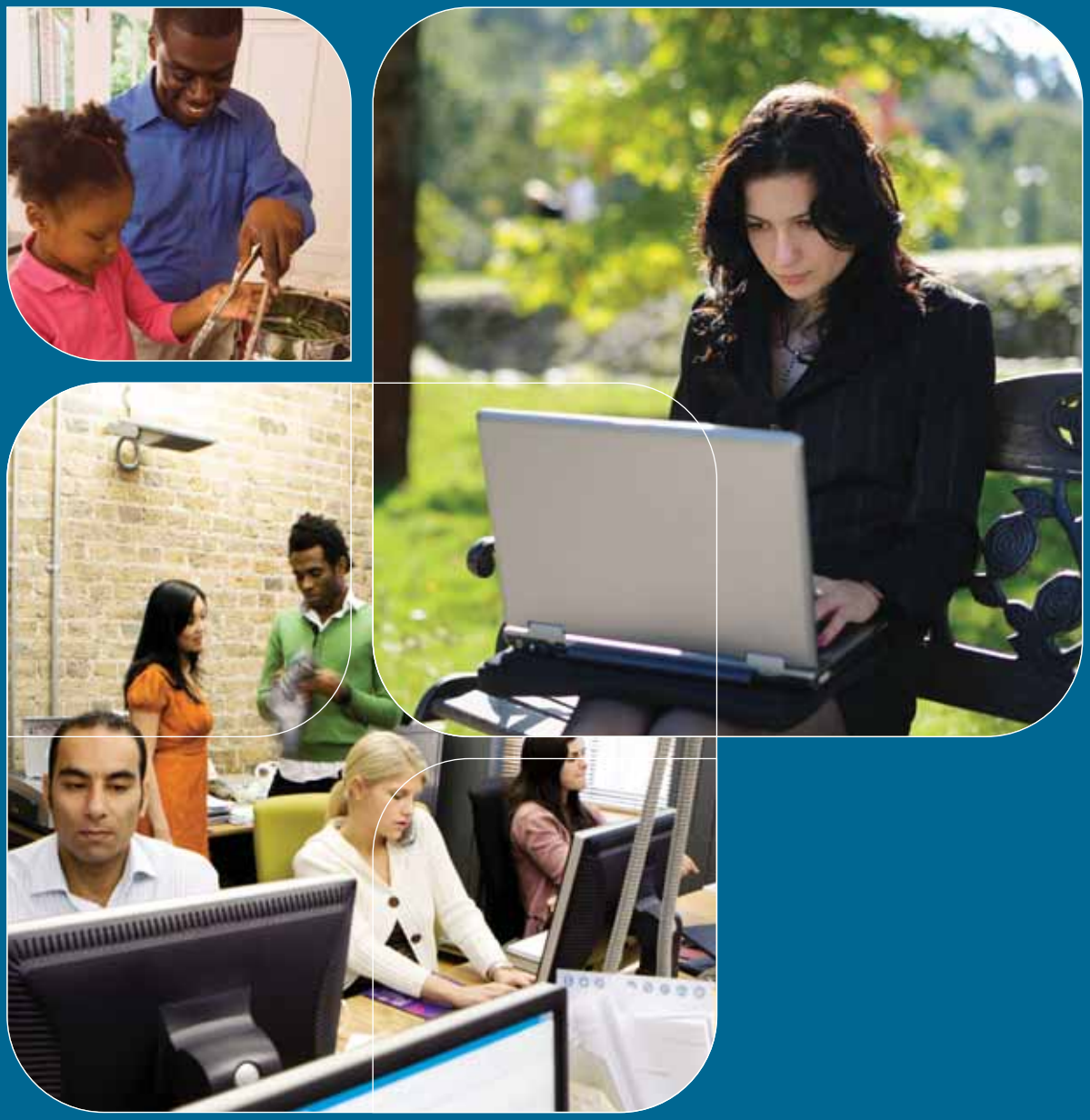
Flexible working time arrangements and gender equality

A comparative review of 30 European countries



European Commission

This publication is commissioned under the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (2007-2013). This programme is managed by the Directorate-General for Employment, social affairs and equal opportunities of the European Commission. It was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment and social affairs area, as set out in the Social Agenda, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the EUROPE 2020 goals in these fields.

The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA-EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

PROGRESS mission is to strengthen the EU contribution in support of Member States' commitments and efforts to create more and better jobs and to build a more cohesive society. To that effect, PROGRESS is instrumental in

— providing analysis and policy advice on PROGRESS policy areas;
— monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in PROGRESS policy areas;
— promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and
— relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large

For more information see:
http://ec.europa.eu/progress

Flexible working time arrangements and gender equality

A comparative review of 30 European countries

Janneke Plantenga and Chantal Remery

EU Expert Group on Gender and Employment (EGGE)

The national experts (* indicates non-EU countries)

Ingrid Mairhuber, Austria
Danièle Meulders, Belgium
Iskra Beleva, Bulgaria
Chrystalla Ellina, Cyprus
Alena Křížková, Czech Republic
Ruth Emerek, Denmark
Friederike Maier and Andrea Hilla-Carl, Germany
Reelika Leetmaa, Estonia
Maria Karamessini, Greece
Elvira González Gago, Spain
Hanna Sutela, Finland
Rachel Silvera, France
Mária Frey, Hungary
Ursula Barry, Ireland
Annamaria Simonazzi, Italy
Ruta Braziene, Lithuania
Robert Plasman, Luxembourg
Ilze Trapenciere, Latvia
Frances Camilleri-Cassar, Malta
Janneke Plantenga and Chantal Remery, the Netherlands
Ania Plomien, Poland
Virgínia Ferreira, Portugal
Elena Zamfir, Romania
Anita Nyberg, Sweden
Aleksandra Kanjuo Mrčela, Slovenia
Magdalena Piscová, Slovakia
Colette Fagan, United Kingdom
Lilja Mósesdóttir, Iceland*
Ulrike Papouschek, Liechtenstein*
Anne Lise Ellingsæter, Norway*

*See page 81 for the list of national reports

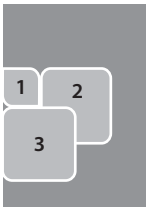
European Commission

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
Unit G1

Manuscript completed in November 2009

This report was financed by and prepared for the use of the European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities in the framework of a contract managed by the Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini. It does not necessarily reflect the opinion or position of the European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on behalf of the Commission may be held responsible for the use that may be made of the information contained in this publication.

Fondazione Brodolini
Viale di Villa Massimo 21
00161 Rome RM
ITALY
Tel. +39 0644249625
info@fondazionebrodolini.it
http://www.fondazionebrodolini.it/



Cataloguing data as well as an abstract can be found at the end of this publication.

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2010

ISBN 978-92-79-15545-1

doi:10.2767/29844

Printed in Belgium

PRINTED ON WHITE CHLORINE-FREE PAPER

CONTENTS

COUNTRY ABBREVIATIONS

BE	Belgium
BG	Bulgaria
CZ	Czech Republic
DK	Denmark
DE	Germany
EE	Estonia
IE	Ireland
EL	Greece
ES	Spain
FR	France
IT	Italy
CY	Cyprus
LV	Latvia
LT	Lithuania
LU	Luxembourg
HU	Hungary
MT	Malta
NL	Netherlands
AT	Austria
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia
FI	Finland
SE	Sweden
UK	United Kingdom
IS	Iceland
LI	Liechtenstein
NO	Norway

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Increasing the flexibility of working time is an important element of the European employment strategy (Employment Guideline 21). Enterprises should become more flexible in order to respond to sudden changes in demand, adapt to new technologies and be in a position to innovate constantly in order to remain competitive. Flexibility, however, is not only identified as an important ingredient in the quest for competitiveness by employers. Also on the supply side, contemporary employees demand non-full-time working hours and/or flexible working time schedules in order to suit their preferred lifestyles and to reconcile work and family life. However, employer-friendly and employee-friendly flexibility do not necessarily converge, creating new tensions between employers and employees and between men and women. This report provides an overview on flexible working time arrangements and gender equality in the 27 EU Member States and the three EEA–EFTA countries. The focus is on internal quantitative flexibility. On the one hand, this refers to flexibility in the length of working time, such as part-time work, overtime work and long hours and, on the other hand, to flexible organisation of working time, such as flexible working time schedules, homeworking and work at atypical hours.

The length of the working week is an important element of the employment contract. For a long time, the trend has been towards a progressive regulation and a shortening of the full-time working week. Yet, at the end of the 20th century, the emphasis has shifted in favour of more flexible and individualised working hours. In order to accommodate these developments, the regulatory framework has become more focused on allowing tailor-made solutions within the boundaries of a commonly agreed framework. The result may depend on the system of industrial relations and the strength of the different parties involved, with different roles for legislation measures, collective bargaining and bilateral negotiations between the employer and the employee. In this respect, it should be noted that legislation does not necessarily result in a better position for employees. In some countries the strengths and coverage of collective agreements may be comparable or even better than national legislation in other countries.

Differences in the length of working time between the European Member States are still very large. For example, individualised working hours appear to be relatively widespread in the northern and western EU Member States, whereas, especially in the new Member States, the traditional 40-hour working week is still very much intact. In regard to the life course perspective, part-time work is least common for male employees in the prime age group, suggesting that part-time work facilitates a combination of work with education for the young age group and phased retirement in the old age group (although the levels remain low compared to female employees). Working overtime and long hours is more common in the prime age group and the older age group. In some countries, however, long hours are more common among young employees. The main form of flexibility in working time among female employees is part-time work. Although having children is an important reason to work part-time, part-time rates in the prime age group are not consistently the highest.

When looking at the overall pattern of flexibility in the length of working time, it appears that Austria and the United Kingdom have a high ranking on all three indicators. The Netherlands has a high score on part-time employment and working overtime, whereas Iceland and the Czech Republic have high scores on working overtime and working long hours. At the other end, four countries are the least flexible and score low on all three indicators: Portugal, Lithuania, Cyprus and Hungary. This implies that the majority of countries have some level of flexibility in the length of working hours.

From a gender equality point of view, the increased flexibility in working hours should be rated positively inasmuch as more individualised working hours can help employees to reconcile their work obligations and personal life. It is therefore likely that more individualised working hours have a positive effect on the female participation rate. Greater flexibility in the length of working time, however, also seems to have some adverse effects on gender equality, taking into account that the main form of flexibility among female employees is part-time work. In most countries, part-time work is still concentrated in low-paid sectors with low career and training opportunities. It is thus difficult to claim that greater flexibility — in terms of the length of the working time — will have the desired effect of greater gender equality.

Whereas increased flexibility in the length of working time can be relatively easily documented from labour

force survey data, the increased flexibility in the organisation of working time is much more difficult to ascertain. This is partly attributable to the fact that the flexible organisation of working time is often negotiated at the level of the firm, independently from statutory regulation and/or the system of collective bargaining. As a result, the statistical processing of these developments is far from complete. Nevertheless, despite the statistical deficiencies, it can be concluded that also on this dimension Europe displays large differences, particularly with regard to flexible working time schedules. Flexible working time schedules refer to arrangements such as staggered working hours, flexitime arrangement and working time banking. Flexible working time schedules are rather widespread in Denmark and Sweden with at least 60 % of men and women having access to flexible working time schedules. Also Germany, Finland and Norway score relatively high with a little more than half of all employees working with some kind of flexibility in their working hours. Low scores are concentrated in the southern EU Member States and in the new Member States of eastern Europe.

Furthermore, the mix of flexible working time schedules is different across countries. In Denmark flexitime arrangements and (to a lesser extent) working time banking are common, whereas in Sweden staggered hours are an important form of flexible working time schedules. In Germany working time banking is the main form and it is also the country with the highest share of employees having access to this schedule. In the southern and eastern European Member States, working time banking is still an unfamiliar phenomenon. The limited flexibility mainly refers to staggered hours and flexibility in starting and ending the working day or determining personal working schedules. The available information with regard to homeworking suggests that the incidence of, for example, telework has increased significantly over the past decade as a result of new technologies. At the same time, however, the number of full-time teleworkers remains relatively small as a proportion of the overall workforce. Finally, information on atypical hours indicates that the (male and female) share of persons working on Saturday and/or at night has remained relatively stable. There is a slight increase in the share of employees working in the evening, on Sunday and in shifts, but the developments do not seem to indicate a trend towards a '24-hour' economy.

From a gender perspective, it is generally assumed that a flexible organisation of working time supports the reconciliation of work and private life and as such should favour gender equality. Yet, flexible working time schedules should be carefully designed in order to take the preferences of the employees into account. In addition, the organisational culture has a large impact on the actual use of these schedules. As long as flexibility is still considered a 'female' way of organising working time, flexible working time schedules are more likely to confirm gender differences than to change them. A flexible organisation of working time may also contribute to the blurring of boundaries between work and leisure/private time. Flexibility in this respect demands a certain level of self discipline. If there are no strict boundaries between paid work and leisure, there is a danger that evening or weekend work becomes normalised, which may put a strain on private and/or family life.

It is possible to categorise the different realities of the EU Member States and classify the different Member States in terms of gender equality working time regimes by combining the national scores on working time flexibility and on gender equality in employment. Gender equality is measured by the standardised gender gap in employment, the gender pay gap and the working time dissimilarity index. Working time flexibility is charted using the shape of the working time distribution (kurtosis) of all employees; the percentage of employees usually working at home and the percentage of employees making use of flexible working time schedules. On the basis of this categorisation, Denmark, Finland, France, Slovenia and Sweden are placed in the upper right quadrant; they score above average in terms of both gender equality and flexibility. A number of countries, most notably Spain and Greece, perform poorly in both gender equality and flexibility and are placed in the lower left quadrant. Both countries combine a relatively large gender employment gap with relatively little flexible working time schedules and homeworking. The Netherlands, Austria, the United Kingdom and to a lesser extent Germany and Luxembourg combine flexibility with relatively low gender equality. Especially for the Netherlands and Austria, the poor rating in gender equality is to a large extent due to the larger share of women working part-time compared to men. Finally, Lithuania, Portugal, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Bulgaria and Romania combine low flexibility with high levels of

gender equality and are therefore placed in the lower right quadrant.

The relatively diverse positions of EU Member States within the flexibility/equality spectrum indicate the importance of policy measures. In fact, working time flexibility is on the policy agenda in several countries, although the specific topics vary, as does the focus on gender equality. Some countries focus on flexibility as an instrument to increase the participation rate (both in persons and in hours). An innovative element in this respect is that part-time working hours no longer refer almost exclusively to women, but also become a policy instrument within the context of active ageing. Especially in the Nordic countries, involuntary part-time work is an important issue, leading to policy measures, which try to create a new balance between flexibility and security. Time banking and annualised hours are also part of the current policy agenda in some countries connected with the debate on lowering the prevalence of overtime. In addition, there is a clear effect from the current financial and economic crisis. Within this context, flexibility is seen as an important policy instrument in order to allow employers to adjust to changing economic circumstances. In the current debate, however, the gender dimension does not figure prominently. As such it is important that, despite the recent economic developments, the progress made in family-friendly labour market structures will be maintained. This implies that both flexibility in working time arrangements and gender equality are identified as important preconditions of economic recovery.

RÉSUMÉ

L'accroissement de la flexibilité du temps de travail est un élément important de la stratégie européenne de l'emploi (ligne directrice de l'emploi n° 21). Les entreprises doivent pouvoir se montrer plus flexibles afin de répondre aux changements soudains de la demande, s'adapter aux nouvelles technologies et être en position d'innover constamment pour rester compétitives. Cependant, la flexibilité n'est pas uniquement un ingrédient important de la recherche de compétitivité des employeurs. Du côté de l'offre également, les salariés recherchent dorénavant des horaires de travail autres qu'à temps plein et/ou des horaires de travail flexibles adaptés à leurs styles de vie préférés et permettant de concilier travail et famille. Toutefois, la flexibilité convenant à l'employeur ne s'accorde pas nécessairement avec celle convenant à l'employé, ce qui crée de nouvelles tensions entre employeurs et employés et entre hommes et femmes. Ce rapport donne un aperçu général sur les aménagements de temps de travail flexibles et l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes dans les 27 États membres de l'Union européenne (UE) et les trois pays de l'EEE-AELE (Espace économique européen - Association européenne de libre-échange). Il est focalisé sur la flexibilité «quantitative interne». Il se réfère, d'une part, à une flexibilité dans la durée du temps de travail, comme le travail à temps partiel, les heures supplémentaires et les longues journées de travail, et, d'autre part, à l'organisation flexible du temps de travail, comme les horaires flexibles, le travail à domicile et le travail à des heures atypiques.

La durée de la semaine de travail est un élément important du contrat de travail. Pendant de nombreuses années, la tendance est allée à la régulation progressive et à la réduction de la durée de la semaine de travail à temps plein. Cependant, à la fin du XX^{e} siècle, l'accent a plus particulièrement été mis sur une plus grande flexibilité et individualisation du temps de travail. Afin d'introduire ces changements, le cadre législatif s'est davantage concentré sur l'offre de solutions sur mesure dans les limites d'un cadre communément accepté. Le résultat dépend du système des rapports sociaux et de la force des différentes parties impliquées, avec des rôles différents pour les mesures législatives, les conventions collectives et les négociations bilatérales entre l'employeur et le salarié. À cet égard, il faut noter que la législation ne met pas nécessairement les salariés dans une position plus favorable: dans certains pays, la force et la couverture des conventions collectives peuvent être comparables à la législation nationale d'autres pays, voire meilleures.

Les différences en matière de durée du temps de travail entre les États membres de l'UE sont encore très importantes. Par exemple, l'individualisation des heures de travail semble relativement répandue dans les États membres du nord et de l'ouest de l'UE, alors que, spécialement dans les nouveaux États membres, la semaine traditionnelle de 40 heures de travail est encore de mise. En ce qui concerne la perspective du cycle de vie, le travail à temps partiel est le moins fréquent parmi les salariés masculins dans la force de l'âge (25-49 ans), ce qui laisse à penser que le travail à temps partiel facilite la combinaison travail et formation chez les jeunes et l'étape vers la retraite chez les seniors (bien que les niveaux restent faibles comparés aux femmes). Les heures supplémentaires et les longues journées de travail sont plus répandues chez les salariés dans la force de l'âge et chez les seniors. Dans certains pays, cependant, les longues journées de travail sont plus répandues chez les jeunes. Chez les femmes, le temps partiel constitue la principale forme de flexibilité du temps de travail. Bien que le fait d'avoir des enfants soit une raison importante de travailler à temps partiel, les taux de temps partiel des salariés dans la force de l'âge ne sont pas toujours les plus élevés.

Lorsqu'on observe le modèle général de flexibilité dans la durée du temps de travail, on constate que l'Autriche et le Royaume-Uni affichent un score élevé pour les trois indicateurs. Les Pays-Bas présentent un taux élevé d'emploi à temps partiel et d'heures supplémentaires, alors que l'Islande et la République tchèque atteignent des niveaux élevés d'heures supplémentaires et de longues journées de travail. À l'inverse, quatre pays sont moins flexibles et obtiennent un faible résultat pour les trois indicateurs: le Portugal, la Lituanie, Chypre et la Hongrie. Au final, la plupart des pays pratiquent un certain niveau de flexibilité dans la durée du temps de travail.

Du point de vue de l'égalité entre hommes et femmes, la flexibilité accrue en matière de temps de travail devrait être évaluée de manière positive, dans le sens où des heures de travail plus individualisées peuvent aider les employés à concilier leurs obligations professionnelles et leur vie personnelle. Il est donc vraisemblable qu'une plus grande individualisation du temps de travail aura un effet positif sur le

taux d'activité féminin. Néanmoins, une plus grande flexibilité dans la durée du temps de travail semble avoir également quelques effets négatifs sur l'égalité entre hommes et femmes, si l'on tient compte du fait que le travail à temps partiel constitue la principale forme de flexibilité parmi les femmes salariées. Dans la plupart des pays, le travail à temps partiel reste concentré dans les secteurs faiblement rémunérés, avec peu d'opportunités de carrière et de formation. Il est donc difficile de prétendre qu'une plus grande flexibilité — en termes de durée du temps de travail — aura l'effet désiré d'une plus grande égalité entre hommes et femmes.

Si la flexibilité accrue dans la durée du temps de travail est relativement aisée à mesurer sur la base des chiffres des enquêtes sur les forces de travail, la flexibilité accrue dans l'organisation du temps de travail est elle beaucoup plus difficile à appréhender. Cela tient en partie au fait que l'organisation flexible du temps de travail est souvent négociée au niveau de l'entreprise, indépendamment de la réglementation officielle et/ou du système de convention collective. C'est pourquoi la mesure statistique de l'évolution de la flexibilité dans l'organisation du temps de travail n'est pas idéale. Néanmoins, malgré les lacunes des statistiques, on peut conclure que l'Europe affiche de grandes différences dans ce domaine, en particulier en matière de gestion flexible du temps de travail. La gestion flexible du temps de travail se réfère à des aménagements tels que les heures de travail décalées, les horaires à la carte et la capitalisation du temps de travail. La gestion flexible du temps de travail est plutôt répandue au Danemark et en Suède, où 60 % au moins des hommes et des femmes ont accès à ce type d'aménagement. L'Allemagne, la Finlande et la Norvège atteignent également des scores relativement élevés puisqu'un peu plus de la moitié des employés bénéficient d'une certaine flexibilité dans leur temps de travail. Les faibles scores sont concentrés dans les États membres du sud de l'Union européenne et dans les nouveaux États membres d'Europe de l'Est.

De surcroît, le mélange composant la gestion flexible du temps de travail diffère selon les pays. Au Danemark, les horaires à la carte et (dans une moindre mesure) la capitalisation du temps de travail sont fréquents, alors qu'en Suède, les heures décalées constituent une forme significative de gestion flexible du temps de travail. En Allemagne, la capitalisation du temps de travail représente la forme la plus fréquente, et ce pays compte également la plus grande proportion de salariés ayant accès à cette gestion. Dans les États membres du sud et de l'est de l'Europe, le cumul du temps de travail est encore un phénomène exceptionnel et la flexibilité se réfère principalement aux heures décalées et à une flexibilité dans le commencement et la fin de la journée de travail ou la fixation individuelle des horaires de travail. Les informations disponibles concernant le travail à domicile suggèrent que l'incidence du télétravail, par exemple, a augmenté de manière significative durant la dernière décennie, grâce aux nouvelles technologies. Néanmoins, le nombre de télétravailleurs à temps plein reste relativement faible par rapport à la main-d'œuvre globale. Enfin, les informations sur les horaires atypiques indiquent que le pourcentage de personnes (hommes et femmes confondus) travaillant le samedi et/ou la nuit est resté relativement stable. On constate une faible augmentation de la proportion d'employés travaillant le soir, le dimanche et la nuit, mais l'évolution ne semble pas indiquer une tendance vers une économie basée sur un travail 24 heures sur 24.

Du point de vue du genre, on estime généralement qu'une organisation flexible du temps de travail favorise la conciliation entre le travail et la vie privée et devrait de ce fait favoriser une égalité entre hommes et femmes. Toutefois, la gestion flexible du temps de travail devrait être conçue avec soin afin de tenir compte des préférences des employés. En outre, la culture organisationnelle exerce une forte incidence sur l'utilisation réelle de cette gestion. Aussi longtemps que la flexibilité sera considérée comme une manière «féminine» d'organiser le temps de travail, la gestion flexible du temps de travail sera plus susceptible de conforter les différences entre les hommes et les femmes que de les réduire. Une organisation flexible du temps de travail peut également amener à une réduction des frontières entre le temps passé à travailler et celui consacré à ses loisirs/à soi-même. De ce point de vue, la flexibilité exige un certain niveau d'autodiscipline. Sans frontières strictes entre le travail rémunéré et les loisirs, le danger existe de voir se normaliser le travail le soir ou le week-end, ce qui risquerait d'empiéter sur la vie privée et/ou la vie de famille.

Il est possible de catégoriser les différentes réalités des États membres de l'UE et de classer ces États

membres en fonction des régimes de temps de travail en matière d'égalité des sexes en combinant les scores nationaux sur la flexibilité et sur l'égalité entre hommes et femmes. L'égalité entre hommes et femmes se mesure sur la base des écarts entre hommes et femmes en termes d'emploi, de rémunération et de temps de travail (indice de dissimilarité). La flexibilité, quant à elle, est mesurée par la forme (coefficient d'aplatissement ou *kurtosis*) de la distribution du temps de travail de l'ensemble des employés, le pourcentage d'employés travaillant habituellement à domicile et le pourcentage ayant recours à la gestion flexible du temps de travail. D'après cette catégorisation, le Danemark, la France, la Slovénie, la Finlande et la Suède sont placés dans le quadrant en haut à droite. Ils obtiennent des scores au-dessus de la moyenne en termes d'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes et de flexibilité. Un certain nombre de pays, principalement l'Espagne et la Grèce, atteignent un faible score dans ces deux domaines et sont placés dans le quadrant en bas à gauche. Les deux pays allient une disparité relativement élevée entre les hommes et les femmes en matière d'emploi à une proportion relativement faible de gestion flexible du temps de travail et de travail à domicile. Les Pays-Bas, l'Autriche, le Royaume-Uni et, dans une moindre mesure, l'Allemagne et le Luxembourg allient la flexibilité à un niveau d'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes relativement faible. Spécialement pour les Pays-Bas et l'Autriche, le faible score en matière d'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes est dû, dans une large mesure, à la plus grande proportion de femmes travaillant à temps partiel par rapport aux hommes. Enfin, la Lituanie, le Portugal, la Hongrie, la Lettonie, la Pologne, la Bulgarie et la Roumanie associent une faible flexibilité à des niveaux élevés d'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes et sont donc classés dans le quadrant en bas à droite.

Les positions relativement différentes des États membres dans le graphique de flexibilité/d'égalité révèlent l'importance des mesures politiques. En effet, la flexibilité du temps de travail est à l'ordre du jour politique dans plusieurs pays, bien que les sujets spécifiques varient, comme c'est le cas pour l'attention portée à l'égalité entre hommes et femmes. Certains pays se focalisent sur la flexibilité en guise d'instrument permettant d'augmenter le taux de participation à l'emploi (à la fois du nombre de personnes et d'heures). À cet égard, la nouveauté est que les heures de travail à temps partiel ne visent plus exclusivement les femmes, mais deviennent également un instrument politique dans le contexte du vieillissement actif. Spécialement dans les pays du Nord, le travail à temps partiel involontaire représente une question importante, menant à des mesures politiques qui tentent de trouver un nouvel équilibre entre la flexibilité et la sécurité. La capitalisation du temps de travail et l'annualisation des heures font également partie de l'agenda politique actuel dans plusieurs pays et sont liées au débat sur la diminution de la fréquence des heures supplémentaires. En outre, la crise économique et financière actuelle a un effet sur la situation de la flexibilité du temps de travail. Dans le contexte de crise, la flexibilité est perçue comme une mesure politique importante afin de permettre aux employeurs de s'adapter au changement de situation économique. Cependant, dans le débat actuel, la dimension du genre ne semble pas jouer un rôle prépondérant. Il est important, en dépit de l'évolution économique récente, de conforter les progrès accomplis dans des structures du marché du travail favorables à la famille. Cela implique que la flexibilité des accords sur le temps de travail ainsi que l'égalité entre hommes et femmes soient identifiées comme des préconditions importantes à une reprise économique.

KURZFASSUNG

Die flexiblere Einteilung der Arbeitszeit ist ein wichtiger Bestandteil der Europäischen Beschäftigungsstrategie (Beschäftigungspolitische Leitlinie 21). Unternehmen sollten flexibler werden, um kurzfristigen Nachfrageänderungen begegnen zu können, sich neuen Technologien anzupassen und in der Lage zu sein, mit kontinuierlicher Innovation die eigene Wettbewerbsfähigkeit zu erhalten. Doch Flexibilität ist nicht nur ein wichtiges Element im Streben der Arbeitgeber nach einer günstigen Wettbewerbsposition: Auch Arbeitnehmer/-innen erwarten heute das Angebot einer möglichen Teilzeitbeschäftigung und/oder flexibler Arbeitszeiten, die sich ihrem individuellen Lebensstil anpassen lassen und helfen, Arbeit und Familie zu vereinen. Arbeitgeber- und arbeitnehmerfreundliche Flexibilität sind jedoch nicht zwangsläufig deckungsgleich, so dass es zwischen Arbeitgebern und Arbeitnehmern/-innen und auch zwischen Frauen und Männern zu immer neuen Spannungen kommt. Dieser Bericht bietet einen Überblick über flexible Arbeitszeitmodelle und die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter in den 27 Mitgliedstaaten der EU und den drei EWR-EFTA-Staaten. Der Schwerpunkt liegt auf dem Umfang der internen Flexibilität. Zum einen bezieht sich dies auf eine flexible Gestaltung der Arbeitsdauer, dazu gehören Teilzeitarbeit oder (teilweise vertraglich geregelte) Überstunden, zum anderen auf die flexible Einteilung der Arbeitszeit, so z. B. flexible Arbeitsstunden, Heimarbeit und andernfalls atypische Arbeitszeiten.

Die Dauer der Arbeitswoche ist ein wichtiger Bestandteil des Arbeitsvertrages. Lange ging der Trend hin zu einer zunehmenden Regulierung und Verkürzung der Vollzeitwoche. Zum Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts hat sich der Schwerpunkt jedoch zugunsten einer flexibleren und individuelleren Einteilung der Arbeitszeit verschoben. Um diese Entwicklung zu ermöglichen, wurden die Rahmenbestimmungen zunehmend auf das Angebot individuell angepasster Lösungen innerhalb eines gemeinsam festgelegten Rahmens ausgerichtet. Das Ergebnis hängt vielleicht auch vom System der wirtschaftlichen Beziehungen und der Durchsetzungsfähigkeit der beteiligten Interessengruppen mit unterschiedlichen Legislativbefugnissen ab, von gewerkschaftlichen Tarifverhandlungen und bilateralen Gesprächen zwischen Arbeitgebern und Arbeitnehmern/-innen. In diesem Zusammenhang sollte auch angemerkt werden, dass legislative Maßnahmen nicht zwingend die Rolle der Arbeitnehmer/-innen verbessern. In einigen Ländern kann die Situation vorliegen, dass Stärken und Tragweite von Tarifabschlüssen mit der nationalen Gesetzgebung in anderen Ländern vergleichbar oder gar besser als diese sind.

Die Arbeitsdauer ist in den einzelnen Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union nach wie vor sehr unterschiedlich. So ist eine individualisierte Arbeitszeit in den Ländern Nord- und Westeuropas verhältnismäßig weit verbreitet. Vor allem in den neuen Mitgliedstaaten ist hingegen die traditionelle 40-Stunden-Woche nach wie vor bestimmend. Bei Betrachtung der gesamten beruflichen Laufbahn zeigt sich, dass eine Teilzeitbeschäftigung unter der männlichen Bevölkerung im Alter zwischen 25 und 49 Jahren am wenigsten verbreitet ist, was die Vermutung nahelegt, dass die Teilzeitarbeit die Kombination von Arbeit und Ausbildung in jüngeren Altersgruppen und den Übergang in den Ruhestand unter der älteren Bevölkerung erleichtert (obgleich die entsprechenden Zahlen, verglichen mit denen der weiblichen Beschäftigten, durchaus niedrig ausfallen). Überstunden und Nachtarbeit sind in der mittleren Altersgruppe (25 bis 49 Jahre) sowie unter älteren Arbeitnehmer/-innen weiter verbreitet. In einigen Ländern verteilen sich lange Arbeitszeiten jedoch vorrangig auf die jungen Arbeitnehmer/-innen. Die häufigste Form der flexiblen Gestaltung der Arbeitszeit unter der weiblichen Bevölkerung ist die Teilzeitbeschäftigung. Und obwohl die Kindererziehung ein unabweisbarer Grund zur Ausübung einer Teilzeitarbeit ist, ist der Anteil an Teilzeitbeschäftigten in der mittleren Altersgruppe nicht grundsätzlich auch am höchsten.

Ein Überblick über die Situation der flexiblen Arbeitszeitgestaltung zeigt, dass Österreich und Großbritannien mit allen drei Indikatoren in den oberen Bereichen liegen. Die Niederlande schneiden bei der Teilzeitarbeit wie auch bei der Absolvierung von Überstunden weit oben ab, Island und die Tschechische Republik verzeichnen hingegen bei Überstunden und langen Arbeitszeiten hohe Werte. Am unteren Ende der Skala finden sich vier Länder, deren niedrige Ergebnisse für alle drei Indikatoren von einer überaus geringen Flexibilität zeugen: Portugal, Litauen, Zypern und Ungarn. Letztlich folgt daraus die Feststellung, dass die Mehrzahl der Länder einen bestimmten Grad an Flexibilität der Arbeitszeitgestaltung vorweisen kann.

Aus Sicht der Gleichstellung der Geschlechter sollte die Flexibilisierung positiv bewertet werden, da individualisierte Arbeitszeiten im Sinne des Arbeitnehmers die Vereinbarung von beruflichen Pflichten und Privatleben erleichtern. Es ist daher wahrscheinlich, dass sich individualisierte Arbeitszeiten positiv auf die Entwicklung des Frauenanteils im Arbeitsleben auswirken. In Anbetracht der Tatsache, dass die wichtigste Art der Flexibilität unter den Arbeitnehmerinnen die Teilzeitarbeit ist, scheint sich jedoch eine größere Flexibilität in der Dauer der Arbeitszeit in einigen Situationen trotz allem negativ auf die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter auszuwirken. In der Mehrzahl der Länder konzentriert sich die Teilzeitarbeit nach wie vor in schlechtbezahlten Berufssegmenten mit geringen Karriere- und Fortbildungsaussichten. Daher lässt sich die Behauptung, größere Flexibilität bei der Dauer der Arbeitszeit würde zum gewünschten Effekt einer umfassenderen Gleichstellung der Geschlechter führen, nur schwer halten.

Während eine Flexibilisierung in der Dauer der Arbeitszeit anhand von EU-Arbeitskräfteerhebungen leicht dokumentiert werden kann, lässt sich eine Flexibilisierung bei der Organisation der Arbeitszeit schwerer bestimmen. Teilweise beruht dies auf der Tatsache, dass die flexible Organisation der Arbeitszeit häufig auf Unternehmensebene und somit unabhängig von gesetzlichen Regelungen und/oder dem Tarifsystem ausgehandelt wird. Statistische Erhebungen zu diesen Vorgängen sind letztlich äußerst unvollständig. Flexible Regelungen der Arbeitszeit beruhen häufig auf gestaffelten Arbeitszeiten, Gleitzeitmodellen und Arbeitszeitkonten. In Dänemark und Schweden sind flexible Arbeitszeiten mit einem Anteil von nahezu 60 % unter Männern und Frauen verhältnismäßig weit verbreitet. Auch Deutschland, Finnland und Norwegen schneiden mit knapp über 50 % der Arbeitnehmer/-innen in flexiblen Arbeitsstellungen vergleichsweise gut ab. Geringe Werte werden hingegen für die Länder Südeuropas und die neuen Mitgliedstaaten in Osteuropa ausgewiesen.

Die Kombination der flexiblen Arbeitszeitmodelle ist zudem in den einzelnen Ländern nicht einheitlich. Flexitime-Modelle und in geringerem Umfang auch Arbeitszeitkonten sind in Dänemark durchaus üblich, wohingegen in Schweden die gestaffelte Arbeitszeit eine bedeutende Form der flexiblen Arbeitszeitgestaltung ist. In Deutschland ist das Arbeitszeit-Banking die meistgenutzte Form, und hier findet sich auch der höchste Anteil an Arbeitnehmern/-innen, denen dieses Modell zur Verfügung steht. In den südlichen und östlichen Mitgliedstaaten konnten sich Arbeitszeitkonten bisher nicht etablieren. Die gering entwickelte Flexibilität beschränkt sich hauptsächlich auf gestaffelte Arbeitszeiten sowie Beginn und Ende des Arbeitstages bzw. eine individuelle Ablaufplanung. Die Daten, die zur Heimarbeit vorliegen, zeigen, dass im Laufe der letzten zehn Jahre aufgrund der Entwicklung neuer Technologien beispielsweise die Telearbeit deutlich zugenommen hat. Der Anteil an Heimarbeitern in Vollzeit an der gesamten arbeitstätigen Bevölkerung bleibt jedoch dessen ungeachtet vergleichsweise gering. Angaben zu atypischen Arbeitszeiten deuten darauf hin, dass der Anteil (männlicher wie weiblicher) Berufstätiger, die samstags oder nachts arbeiten, vergleichsweise stabil geblieben ist. Ein leichter Zuwachs zeigt sich bei den Arbeitnehmern/-innen, die in den Abendstunden, sonntags und nachts arbeiten. Die Entwicklungen lassen jedoch nicht auf einen Trend hin zu einer „24-Stunden-Wirtschaft" schließen.

Unter dem Aspekt der Gleichstellung geht man grundsätzlich davon aus, dass eine flexible Organisation der Arbeitszeit die Vereinbarkeit von Beruf und Privatleben begünstigt und dementsprechend der Gleichstellung der Geschlechter Vorschub leisten müsse. Flexible Ablaufplanungen der Arbeitszeit sollten jedoch mit Bedacht zusammengestellt werden, um die Vorlieben der Arbeitnehmer/-innen zu berücksichtigen. Die Art der Einteilung hat darüber hinaus großen Einfluss auf die tatsächliche Umsetzung und Einhaltung dieser Pläne. Solange Flexibilität als eine „typisch weibliche" Art der Arbeitsorganisation gilt, ist es umso wahrscheinlicher, dass entsprechende Arbeitszeitmodelle die unterschiedliche Position der Geschlechter bestätigen, anstatt sie zu ändern. Eine flexible Organisation der Arbeitszeit kann gleichfalls zum Verschwimmen der Grenzen zwischen Arbeit und Freizeit/Privatleben beitragen. In diesem Zusammenhang verlangt die Flexibilität nach einem gewissen Maß an Selbstdisziplin. Sind keine klaren Grenzen zwischen bezahlter Arbeit und Freizeit gesetzt, besteht die Gefahr, dass das Arbeiten in den späten Abend hinein oder am Wochenende zum Normalfall wird und letztlich das Privat- und Familienleben belastet.

Durch das Zusammenführen der nationalen Indizes zur Flexibilität und zur Gleichstellung der

Geschlechter können die unterschiedliche Situation in den Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union kategorisiert und die Mitgliedstaaten selbst entsprechend dem Umfang, in dem sich die Gleichstellungsfrage in den Arbeitszeitmodellen widerspiegelt, klassifiziert werden. Die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter wird anhand des geschlechtsspezifischen Beschäftigungs- und Lohngefälles sowie des Unähnlichkeitsindexes bestimmt. Die Flexibilität lässt sich graphisch als Form (Kurtosis) der statistischen Verteilung der Arbeitszeit sämtlicher Arbeitnehmer/-innen darstellen; dem Anteil der Arbeitnehmer/-innen, die gewöhnlich zu Hause arbeiten und dem Anteil derjenigen, die flexible Arbeitsablaufpläne haben. Ausgehend von dieser Einteilung finden sich Dänemark, Frankreich, Slowenien, Finnland und Schweden im oberen rechten Quadranten: Sie schneiden sowohl bei der Gleichstellungsfrage als auch im Hinblick auf die Flexibilität überdurchschnittlich gut ab. Eine Reihe von Ländern, am eindeutigsten Spanien und Griechenland, können in beiden Bereichen nur schwache Ergebnisse erzielen und finden sich im unteren linken Quadranten. In beiden Ländern trifft ein verhältnismäßig stark ausgeprägtes geschlechtsspezifisches Beschäftigungsgefälle auf vergleichsweise unflexible Arbeitszeitmodelle und Heimarbeit. In den Niederlanden, Österreich, Großbritannien und in geringerem Ausmaß in Deutschland und Luxemburg findet sich Flexibilität in Kombination mit einer relativ geringen Gleichstellung der Geschlechter. Vor allem in den Niederlanden und Österreich beruht das schlechte Abschneiden beim Gleichstellungsindex in hohem Maße auf dem, verglichen mit der männlichen Bevölkerung, hohen Anteil an Frauen in Teilzeitarbeit. In Litauen, Portugal, Ungarn, Lettland, Polen, Bulgarien und Rumänien ist die Situation hingegen von einer geringen Flexibilität bei weitgehender Gleichstellung der Geschlechter gekennzeichnet, so dass sie im unteren rechten Quadranten dargestellt sind.

Die relativ unterschiedliche Positionierung der Mitgliedstaaten innerhalb des Flexibilitäts-/Gleichstellungs-Spektrums verweist auf die Bedeutung politischer Maßnahmen. Die flexible Gestaltung der Arbeitszeit steht in vielen Ländern auf der politischen Agenda, wird jedoch im Einzelnen in unterschiedlichen Fragestellungen behandelt. Auch die Betonung der Gleichstellungsfrage ist in den einzelnen Ländern wenig einheitlich. Einige Länder legen ihr Hauptaugenmerk auf die Flexibilität als ein Instrument zur Steigerung der Integrationsrate (sowohl von Arbeitskräften als auch von Arbeitszeit) in den Arbeitsmarkt. Eine Neuerung ist in diesem Zusammenhang, dass die Teilzeitarbeit nicht mehr nahezu ausschließlich den Frauen zufällt, sondern ein politisches Mittel im Kontext des aktiven Alterns wird. Vor allem in den Ländern Nordeuropas stellt die unfreiwillige Teilzeitarbeit ein bedeutendes Problem dar, das politische Maßnahmen nach sich zieht, die auf die Schaffung eines neuen Ausgleichs zwischen Flexibilität und Sicherheit ausgerichtet sind. Arbeitszeitkonten und auf Jahresbasis verrechnete Arbeitsstunden sind im Zusammenhang mit der Debatte um eine Senkung der Überstundenzahl in einigen Ländern ebenfalls Teil der aktuellen Politagenda. Zudem zeigen sich die Auswirkungen der gegenwärtigen Wirtschaftskrise sehr deutlich. In diesem Zusammenhang gilt Flexibilität als ein wichtiges politisches Instrument, um Arbeitgebern die Anpassung an sich ändernde Wirtschaftsverhältnisse zu ermöglichen. In der derzeitigen Diskussion werden die Aspekte der Gleichstellungsfrage jedoch nicht vorrangig behandelt. Daher ist es wichtig, dass trotz der jüngsten wirtschaftlichen Entwicklungen die Fortschritte in der Gestaltung familienfreundlicher Arbeitsmarktstrukturen aufrechterhalten und weitergeführt werden. Dies setzt die Erkenntnis voraus, dass sowohl flexible Arbeitszeitmodelle als auch die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter für die Erholung der wirtschaftlichen Lage unabdingbar sind.

1 INTRODUCTION

Increasing the flexibility of working time is an important element of the European employment strategy (Employment Guideline 'Promote flexibility with employment security and reduce labour market segmentation'). Enterprises should become more flexible in order to respond to sudden changes in demand, adapt to new technologies and be in a position to innovate constantly in order to remain competitive. Flexibility, however, is not only an important ingredient in the quest for competitiveness by employers. Employees also express a growing need for more flexibility in the time allocation over the life course in order to respond to changing needs and/or responsibilities in regard to care, learning and leisure (Messenger 2004). At a more empirical level, these trends are visible in the growth of part-time working hours, career break systems, the 'annualisation' of working hours and, in general, more diverse working time arrangements. However, employer-friendly and employee-friendly flexibility do not always converge, which can create new tensions between employers and employees and between men and women. As stated in the Commission's current policy framework for gender equality, *A roadmap for equality between women and men 2006–2010*: 'Flexible working arrangements boost productivity, enhance employee satisfaction and employers' reputations. However, the fact that far more women than men make use of such arrangements creates a gender imbalance which has a negative impact on women's position in the workplace and their economic independence' (CEC 2006: 5).

It is important to balance the various interests. Working time policy, which places emphasis on the importance of labour market flexibility, may be a vital element in businesses' competitive strategies. Working time flexibility may also complement the growing diversity in lifestyles and the rise of dual-earner families. Increasingly more employees seem interested in tailor-made hours matching their personal needs for flexibility. The importance to create a win-win situation and find mutually beneficial solutions is underlined by the Commission's 2007 communication 'Towards common principles of flexicurity'. This policy communication emphasises that modern work organisation should promote work satisfaction and, at the same time, make enterprises more competitive (CEC 2007). Similarly, the European social partners' progress report on reconciliation of professional, private and family life underlines that social partners have a common interest to explore and promote forms of working time arrangements that benefit both employers and workers (ETUC/CES et al. 2008).

The aim of this study is to provide an analysis of flexible working time arrangements in the 27 EU Member States and in the three EEA–EFTA countries. As such the report contributes to a better understanding of how working time flexibility may contribute to solving important economic and social challenges both from an employer and employee perspective. A life course perspective adds an extra dimension to the analysis. Therefore developments from the perspective of young people, prime age workers/working parents and older workers are discussed. An important issue in this respect is the extent of gender differences. Are they most pronounced in the parental phase or already emerging in the working time patterns of young people? And do older workers continue along the patterns developed during the period in which care responsibilities were most intense, or does this phase indicate new patterns and perhaps new inequalities between men and women?

The term flexibility may refer to different concepts, such as contracts and working hours, but also to employability issues. From an analytical point of view, it is useful to make a distinction between external and internal flexibility on the one hand, and quantitative (or numerical) and qualitative (or functional) flexibility on the other (Atkinson and Meager 1986). External flexibility is flexibility between firms, whereas internal flexibility refers to flexibility within the firm. External quantitative flexibility includes using non-open-ended employment contracts such as fixed-term contracts, temporary work agencies, on-call work etc. External functional flexibility implies the use of external knowledge and includes, for example, posting of employees and freelance work. Internal quantitative flexibility refers to flexibility in working time arrangements, such as overtime, part-time work and working irregular hours. Finally, internal qualitative flexibility refers to the adoption of work organisation methods that enhance the adaptability to change, such as job rotation and multitasking (see also EC 2007: 125–126). This report focuses on internal quantitative flexibility. The reason is twofold. Firstly, gender differences seem most pronounced in this area. Secondly, flexibility in working time arrangements affects the total workforce and is therefore an important issue.

Although the trend towards diversification and individualisation of working time is visible in most European Member States, there are still large differences in the extent and actual shape of working time flexibility. This is illustrated in Chapter 2, which provides a preliminary overview of working time flexibility in the 30 European countries. The differences between European Member States and the actual options and trends within European Member States can be traced back by the different legislative and regulatory measures, which make specific options more or less attractive and/or provide restrictions on others. Chapter 3 summarises these regulatory frameworks. Chapter 4 documents the prevalence of less standard and flexible working time patterns by focusing on part-time work, overtime and long hours of work. Chapter 5 concentrates on the flexible organisation of work and provides details on flexible working time schedules, homeworking and working atypical hours. Chapter 6 tries to categorise the European Member States in terms of working time flexibility and gender equality in employment. In Chapter 7 the focus is on recent policy developments. Finally, Chapter 8 provides a summary of the main findings.

2 WORKING TIME FLEXIBILITY IN EUROPE: AN OVERVIEW

The growth in the interest and use of flexibility can be tied to several developments both on the demand and on the supply side of the labour market. On the demand side, the need for flexibility has increased because of more volatile market conditions, increased competition and the need to have a labour force that can adapt easily to technological developments. On the supply side there is a large demand for a better balance of work and family life, which may also translate into a higher demand for working time flexibility. As a result of these developments, there is a growing flexibility in the length of working hours; jobs are no longer organised on a strict 40-hour week for 48 weeks per year, but have become more diverse. This is most easily illustrated by the rise of part-time work especially among women: the average share of female employees working part-time (aged 15+) among the EU-27 is more than 30 %. In addition to the growth in part-time work there is also a trend towards greater flexibility in the allocation of working time over the working week and working year; the full-time worker is therefore not excluded in the trend towards a growing flexibility in the allocation of working times. The boundaries of the normal working day have expanded and work on Saturday and Sunday is becoming more frequent. Annualised hours schemes and staggered working hours are perhaps the most illustrative examples of a trend towards a more flexible scheduling of standard full-time hours (Bettio et al. 1998).

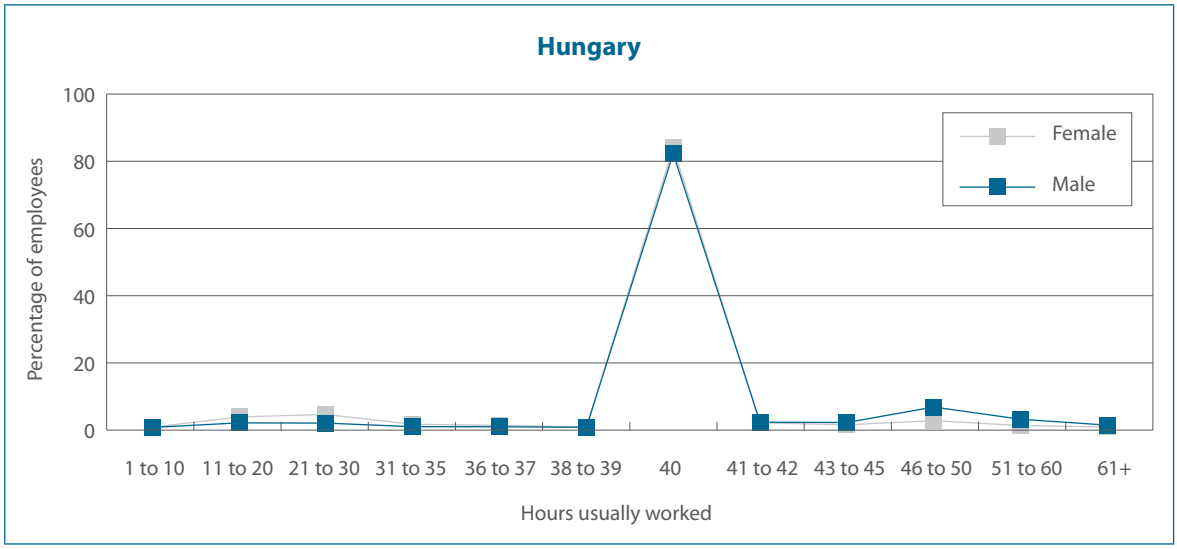
Before providing a more in-depth analysis of the different dimensions, the prevalence of new working time arrangements within the EU Member States and the three EEA–EFTA countries are discussed with particular emphasis on differences between countries and between genders. Within the context of internal quantitative flexibility, the data will be organised along two dimensions. First, information will be provided on the flexibility in the length of working time; that is the spread in actual working hours. Secondly, data on flexibility in the organisation of working time, referring to flexible working time schedules, such as staggered hours and time banks, will be presented. The focus is on employees only. Self-employed persons are not included in this analysis as their working time patterns are likely to diverge considerably from the patterns of employees (e.g. Parent-Thirion 2007). For the empirical part the European labour force surveys are used. The figures refer to 2007 as far as possible. With respect to flexibility in the organisation of working time, however, part of the data refer to 2004, as more recent data are not available.

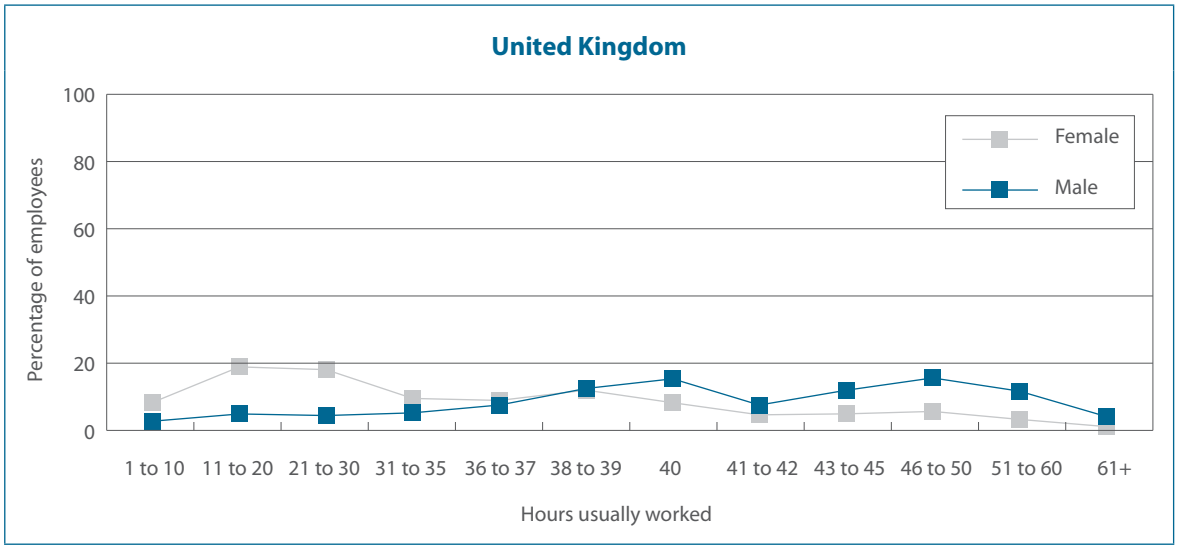
Flexibility in the length of working time

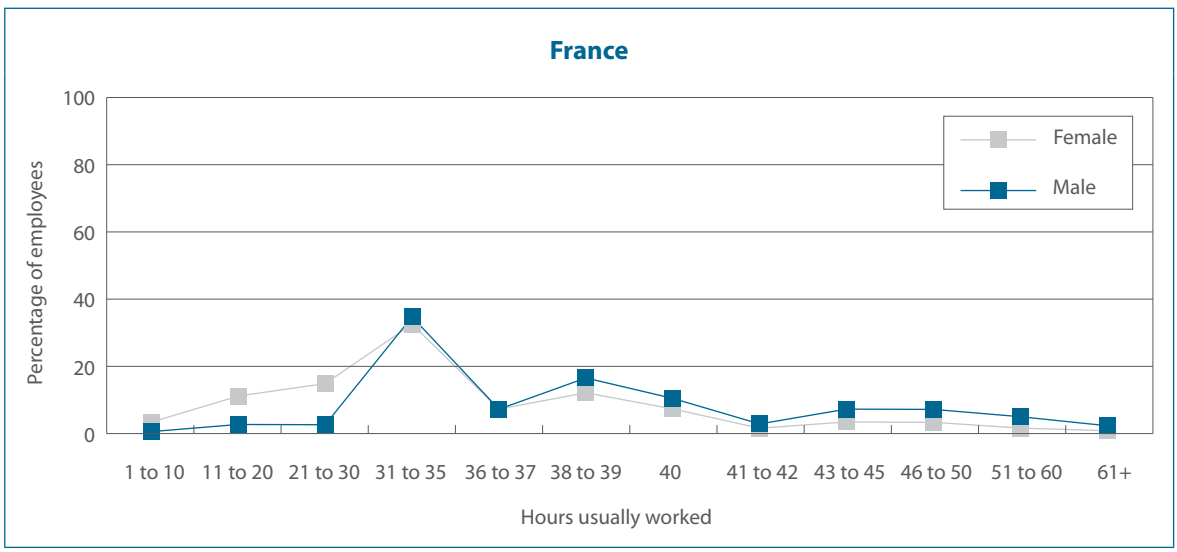
Working hours in the Western world as they are today have been shaped to a large extent by the 40-hour weeks that gained prominence over the 20th century (Bosch et al. 1994). The 40-hour week has remained prevalent in many countries within Europe today. At the same time, however, countries show large differences in the actual distribution of working hours. Graph 1 illustrates the actual variety in working time profiles throughout Europe, comparing the working time profiles for 2004 for male and female employees for six EU Member States. Within this subsample, Hungary clearly demonstrates the high prevalence of the 40-hour norm; more than 80 % of all employees in Hungary usually work 40-hour weeks. As the additional graphs in the appendices indicate, also in Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Romania and Slovenia the 40-hour norm is still fairly dominant with over 60 % of employees working 40 hours per week.

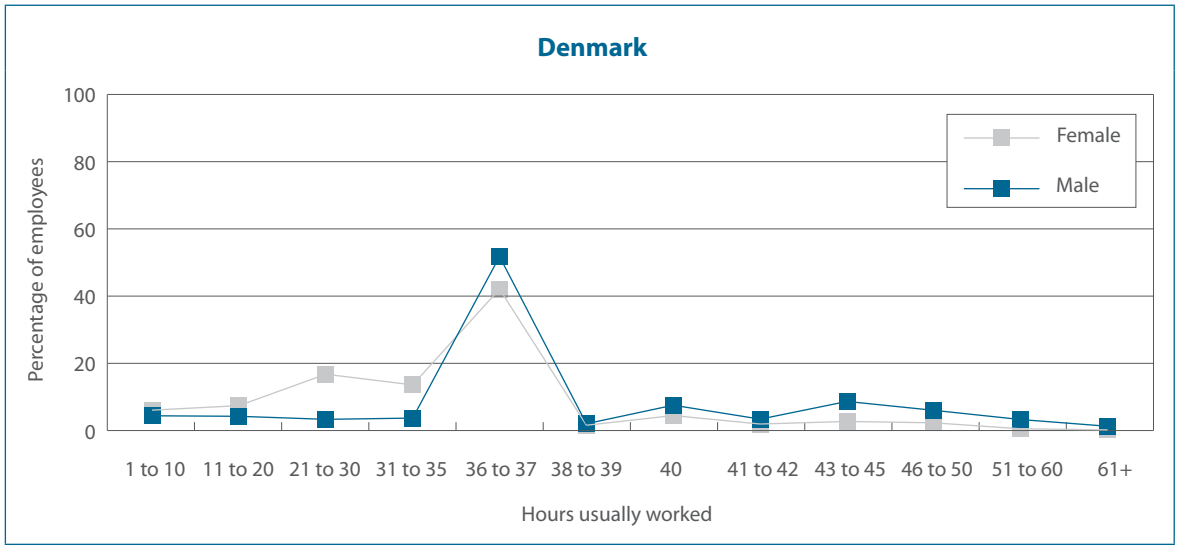
On the other side of the spectrum is the United Kingdom, in which any collective norm seems to have disappeared; the concept of standard working time does not appear to exist in this country anymore. The rest of the EU countries fall somewhere in between these two extremes; in most instances it is still possible to identify a peak or two in terms of hours worked. These peaks usually coincide with the standard working hours of their respective countries and/or with the prevalence of part-time working hours. In France, for example, many employees work 31 to 35 hours as the standard working week is 35 hours, although quite a number of employees seem to work longer hours; see the second peak at 38/39 hours and the relatively high percentage of especially men indicating a usual working week of 46–50 hours. Denmark also deviates from the 40-hour week as many employees end up working the current standard of 37 hours. The Netherlands demonstrates two peaks given the large number of employees working 20 hours a week (especially women). Other countries, such as Germany, Portugal and Sweden, also have what may be called secondary peaks around the 20-hour level.

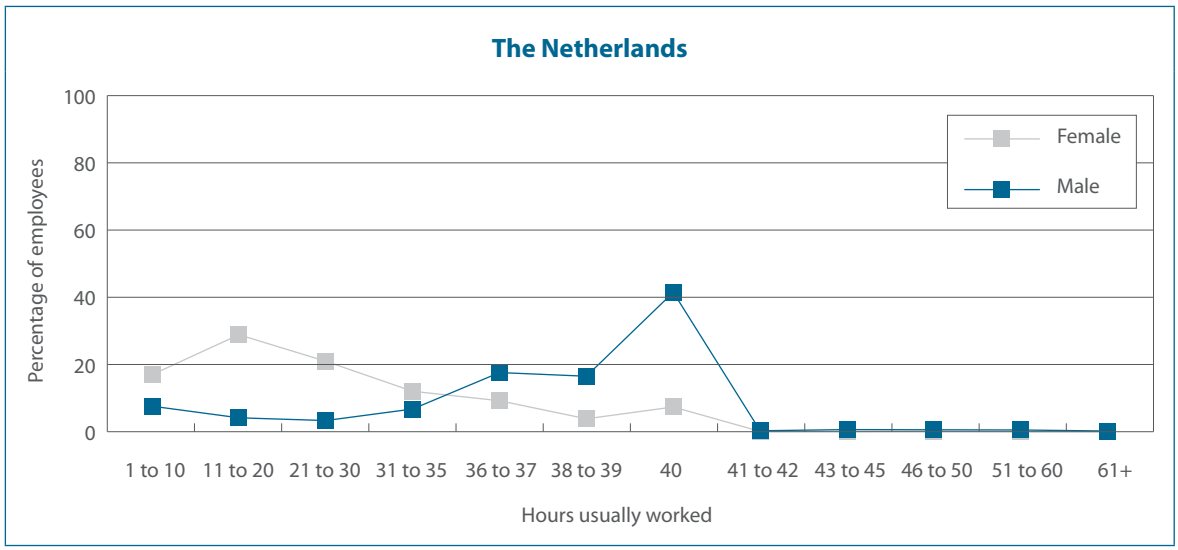
Graph 1 Working time distribution of employees by gender in Hungary, United Kingdom, France, Denmark, Netherlands and Germany

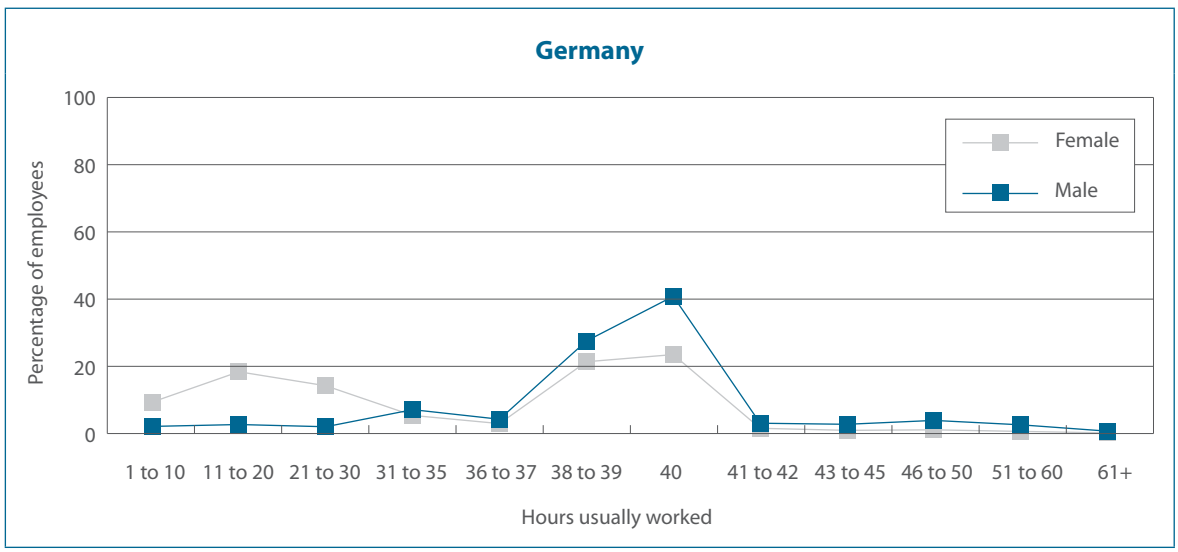












NB: Figures are based on hours usually worked in the main job, overtime not included.
Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2004 (own calculations; no data available for Malta and Liechtenstein)

Graph 1 also illustrates that both male and female working hour profiles show large similarities; therefore a typical 'national' pattern can be established for both men and women. In Hungary, for example, the distribution of both the male and female working hours is heavily concentrated at 40 hours, while also in France the differences seem relatively small with both men and women following the typical three-peak pattern. Even in the United Kingdom, de-standardisation seems to have affected both the male and female patterns of working hours. Yet, the United Kingdom also illustrates a common difference within Europe as the working time distribution of women is more concentrated in the shorter working hours, while men work the longer hours. The largest gender differences are displayed by the Netherlands, where women peak at the 11–20 hours category and men still largely work on a full-time basis. Other countries showing gender differences are Finland and Norway. While both genders tend to work full-time in these countries, full-time work for women is a few hours less than the 40-hour week that men work. This type of difference in full-time work between genders can also be seen in Cyprus and Germany, where women tend to work at a low 30-hour level and men tend to work a 40-hour working week.

A simple index of working hours segregation confirms the gender differences in working hours. The 's-index', also called the index of dissimilarity, is often applied in research on occupational segregation (Rubery and Fagan 1993), but can also be used to illustrate the extent of working hours segregation. The index can be interpreted as the percentage of the male and/or female labour force that would have to change their job (or — in this case — working hours) in order to eliminate all segregation. It appears that there are large differences in this respect (see Chapter 6 for full details). Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia perform best with scores below 10 %, whereas Luxembourg and the Netherlands perform the worst with scores higher than 40 %. In fact, the Netherlands scores highest with 57 %; this means that 57 % of the male and/or female population would need to change their working hours to reach an equal distribution. Overall the differences between men's and women's working hours seem universal. Men simply work more hours than women. Even in countries such as Sweden, where full-time work is common among women, more women than men opt for part-time work. These differences in working hours illustrate that there is not an easy relationship between gender equality and flexible working hours. Short working hours may be seen as a factor which contributes to a differentiated economy thereby stimulating women to engage in paid work. Yet if women engage disproportionately in part-time work (or other non-standard working time arrangements), the result might be enduring gender inequality in terms of income and responsibility.

Flexibility in the organisation of working time

A flexible organisation of working time refers to a flexible matching of labour inputs over the day, week and year. A well-known example is the annualisation of working time, in which actual working times are averaged over a specified sub-period of the year such as 6 or 12 months. Annualised hour schemes can be combined with other non-standard working time schedules and are often introduced in tandem with working time accounts or time banks (EIRO 2003a). Other examples include the compressed, four-day working week, and 'swing time' arrangements in which employees are able to work a few hours a day less, as long as they catch up on these hours within the same week. Working time practices which provide employees with real autonomy over their working times (variable start and finishing hours) are still infrequent (see Burchell et al. 2007) but may increase due to the introduction of new information technology and the concomitant move towards more output-oriented management styles.

Whereas the increased flexibility in the length of working time can be easily documented on the basis of labour force survey data, the rise in flexible organisation of working time is much more difficult to ascertain. This is partly due to the tendency of the firm negotiating the flexible organisation of working time independently from statutory regulation and/or the system of collective bargaining (see also Chapter 3). As a result, the statistical processing of these developments is far from complete. Eurostat, for example, gives information about the share of employees having annualised working hours, but the quality of the data is questioned for several countries. Furthermore, some respondents had

difficulties with the question (EC 2006). Other indicators such as 'the share of people usually (or sometimes) working in the evening, night, Saturday, Sunday or at home' may be less useful because high percentages of persons working at the weekend, for instance, might just as easily indicate the rise of the 24-hour economy as a rather traditional economy in which agriculture and retail are still important sources of employment. Given these difficulties, Table 1 only gives information about the percentage of employees having access to flexible working time schedules and the percentage of employees usually working at home.

Flexible working time schedules refer to a variety of working time arrangements that enable employees to vary their working hours, in order to adapt these to their personal needs and preferences (see also Riedman et al. 2006: 3). Table 1 summarises data on flexible working time schedules which have been collected in the LFS ad hoc module 2004 (under the heading 'variable working hours'). This module provides information on the following categories: (1) staggered working hours (employees start and finish work at slightly different times, fixed by the worker or the employer; this implies that the employee has some opportunity to fix the hours, but they remain unchanged); (2) flexitime (which allows workers to vary their starting and ending times and the number of hours that they work in a particular week, in general with 'core' hours established; and (3) working time banking (which involves keeping track of hours in order to build up 'credits' or accumulate 'deficits' in hours worked over longer periods than in the case of flexitime, with the rules how the excess hours accumulated in the time banking account can be spent) (EC 2006: 37). In addition, there is a category 'other' which 'includes the frequent case of a fixed start of the day until the work is finished' (EC 2006: 23). It appears that flexible working time schedules are rather widespread in Denmark and Sweden with at least 60 % of men and women having access to flexible working time schedules. Also Germany, Finland and Norway score relatively highly with a little more than half of all employees working with some kind of flexibility in their working hours. Low scores are concentrated in the southern EU Member States and in the new Member States of eastern Europe. Table 1 also indicates that in most countries male employees are more likely to have flexible working time schedules than female employees, although the differences are small. The only countries where the share of female employees is higher are Sweden and Malta.

Homeworking applies to many self-employed persons pursuing, for example, an artistic or liberal profession, although this has also become an important working condition for employees (Eurofound 2007). Measuring the extent of homework is, however, rather complicated. In this report, data from the EU-LFS are used on the number of employees usually working from home. Eurostat uses a rather strict definition of working from home as employees must have reached a formal agreement with the employer, in which both parties — employees and employers — agree that part of the work is to be done at home. In addition, a person is considered usually working from home if, for a reference period of four weeks before the interview, the hours worked at home amount to at least half of the total hours worked during the period (Eurostat 2007: 48). This implies that homeworking is a rather imperfect indicator of flexibility in the organisation of working time as it may cover rather different categories of employees ranging from the professional 'multilocational' employee to teleworkers and (poorly paid) manual homeworkers (viz. Stile 2004; Eurofound 2007). Moreover, in the Eurostat definition of work at home 'anyone whose place of work comprises a separate unit such as a doctor's surgery or tax accountants' office with separate entrance' is not included (Stile 2004: 2). Yet, given that the data in Table 1 refer to employees, it is assumed that these figures indicate the prevalence of a modern working time arrangement in which employees, with or without the help of new information technologies, work from home. Table 1 shows that France shows the highest percentage with 4.8 % of all male employees and 10.5 % of all female employees usually working from home. Working from home seems to be rather infrequent in Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal and Spain. Yet the north-west/south-east divide seems less clear than in the case of flexible working time schedules. With regard to gender, it appears that the percentage of female employees working from home in most countries is higher than the percentage of male employees; the only exceptions are Norway and Ireland. The gender differences are relatively large in Austria, France, Luxembourg and Slovenia.

Table 1 Share of employees aged 15+ having access to flexible working time schedules and usually working from home by gender, 2004

	Flexible working time schedules		Usually working from home	
Country	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
Denmark	62.7	61.3	2.5	2.9
Sweden	60.0	62.6	1.6	2.4
Germany	54.7	49.6	2.1	2.9
Finland	53.7	47.0	5.3	6.9
Norway	53.5	47.2	4.9	3.6
Luxembourg	38.8	34.5	3.8	7.6
Austria	37.6	36.3	2.7	5.7
United Kingdom	36.1	30.5	0.7	1.7
Netherlands	35.2	26.9	1.1	1.1
Italy	34.2	29.7	0.8	1.3
Belgium	30.5	28.2	4.5	5.7
France	29.8	28.5	4.8	10.5
Slovenia	29.0	28.4	4.3	7.7
Iceland	26.9	21.3	4.4	4.8
Czech Republic	23.4	18.4	0.5	1.6
Portugal	22.5	17.2	n.r.	0.5
Estonia	21.1	12.4	n.r.	3.0
Slovakia	20.8	18.2	1.1	2.2
Ireland	20.6	16.4	2.1	1.7
Poland	20.6	14.0	1.1	2.0
Latvia	20.1	17.2	n.r.	1.1
Hungary	17.8	13.5	0.9	1.6
Malta	16.9	17.0		
Lithuania	16.8	12.0	n.r.	1.2
Spain	15.5	15.0	0.2	0.5
Greece	14.9	15.3	1.1	1.4
Cyprus	11.6	8.9		
Romania	10.9	7.9	1.0	2.4
Bulgaria	10.0	7.5		

n.r.: not reliable
Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2004 and LFS ad hoc module 2004 (no data available for Liechtenstein on flexible working time schedules; no data available for Bulgaria, Cyprus, Malta and Liechtenstein on working from home)

Summary

It can be concluded that the individualisation in working hours is relatively widespread in the northern and western EU Member States. In contrast, the traditional 40-hour week has remained prevalent, particularly in the new Member States. Gender differences appear to be large in the United Kingdom and especially so in the Netherlands. There is only limited statistical evidence about the extent to which a flexible organisation of working time has been developing over recent years. Yet the available data seems to suggest the same north-west/south-east divide. Flexible working time schedules are, for example, rather widespread in Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Finland and Norway, whereas Greece, Cyprus, Romania and Bulgaria score lowly. The data also indicate that in most countries male employees more often have access to flexible working time schedules than female employees, yet the differences are relatively small. Working from home does not seem to be evenly spread among the EU Member States, although the north-west/south-east divide seems less clear than in the case of flexible working time schedules. In most countries the share of female employees usually working from home is higher than the share of male employees working from home.

3 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The rise of flexible and individualised working times is a matter of supply and demand. Employers attempt to cut back on labour costs to cope with seasonal and other fluctuations in demand, or to extend operating hours. Employees want choices other than the all-or-nothing option on the labour market and are experimenting with more tailored working-time patterns. The adjustment process of supply and demand, however, does not occur in a vacuum. The matching of preferences takes place against a backdrop of legislative and regulatory measures, which make specific options more or less attractive and/or provide restrictions on others. This chapter provides an overview of the regulatory framework. As an in-depth analysis is beyond the scope of this report, the EU working time directive will be taken as a point of reference. Where relevant, however, reference will be made towards the national situation, particularly when aspects of gender seem important. In addition, some evidence will be provided on the importance of more decentralised regulatory systems, like collective and company agreements. The focus on regulation implies that this overview will be biased towards (flexibility in) the length of working time. New innovative ways in the organisation of working time may be supported by national legislation; however, the prevalence of annualised hour schemes and/or flexible starting times may be more influenced by company practices than by national regulations (see also Riedman et al. (2006) for an overview of European company practices).

3.1 Regulations on the length of working time

Length of working week and working day

The EU provides a basic legal framework concerning the length of working time in Directive 2003/88/EC. This directive 'lays down minimum safety and health requirements for the organisation of working time, in respect of periods of daily rest, maximum weekly working time, annual leave and aspects of night work, shift work and patterns of work' (OJEC 2003). According to this directive, the average working time for each seven-day period, including overtime, should not exceed 48 hours. All Member States have to transpose this framework into national legislation, leaving some degree of autonomy. In practice, the maximum weekly working time is set at 48 hours in 16 EU Member States: Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovenia and the United Kingdom. Most other countries have set the upper limit for weekly working time at 40 hours: Austria, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden. The only exception is Belgium which has set the upper limit for weekly working time at 38 hours (Eurofound 2008: 25).

With regard to daily working time, the EU directive includes a daily rest period of at least 11 consecutive hours over a 24-hour period (Article 3) and a rest break if the working day is longer than six hours (Article 4). In addition, for each seven-day period every worker is entitled to a minimum uninterrupted rest period of 24 hours plus the 11 hours daily rest referred to in Article 3 (Article 5). Most EU Member States have set a statutory maximum for a working day, which varies from eight hours (in Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Sweden) to 12.5 hours in Malta. Only five countries — Cyprus, Denmark, Ireland, Italy and the United Kingdom — do not have a statutory limit. In these cases the maximum daily working hours can be derived from the legal regulations on minimum rest periods (Eurofound 2008: 25).

Part-time work

At the EU level, Directive 97/81/EC deals with the prevention of less favourable treatment in part-time work. The directive was based on a framework agreement negotiated by the European level social partners under the terms of the Maastricht Treaty's social protocol and agreement. The directive calls upon the Member States to ensure equal treatment of full-timers and part-timers unless there are objective reasons to treat them differently. This was in place to increase the quality of part-time jobs and to facilitate access to part-time work for men and women in order to prepare for retirement, reconcile professional and family life and take up education and training opportunities to improve skills and career opportunities (OJEC 1998). The implementation of this directive implied an improvement of the position of part-time workers in several EU Member States.

To give a few examples: in Germany the transposition of the EU directive on part-time work in 2001 resulted in the introduction of a right for workers in companies with more than 15 employees to reduce their working time. In Cyprus the 2002 Law on Part-time Work (N.76 (I)/2002) entitles part-time employees to equal employment terms and conditions as full-time employees, specifically equal treatment regarding salaries and benefits, social insurance, maternity protection, annual paid leave and paid public holidays, parental leave, sick leave, termination of employment, the right to unionisation and to collective bargaining, occupational health and safety, and protection from unfavourable discrimination in employment and occupation. In addition, employees may request a part-time job. In Liechtenstein the revision of the General Civil Code (Labour Contract Act) to implement the directive entered into force on 14 December 2005. The most important new provisions include eliminating discrimination against part-time workers, the promotion of part-time work, the guarantee of protection from termination of employment upon switching from full to part-time work or vice-versa, allowing part-time workers access to promotion measures relating to occupational training and to management positions, and providing information to workers on part-time and full-time positions in their place of work.

Legal right to part-time working hours

In addition to equal treatment legislation, several countries have introduced by law the right to work on a part-time basis. Generally, there are two forms: legislation that applies to all employees and legislation that focuses on employees with care responsibilities. Countries in the first group are Denmark, Germany, Spain, France, Cyprus, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland and Portugal. Denmark has had legislation on reducing the number of working hours since 2001/02. According to this law, the employer and employee must decide the working time of the employee, and an individual employee can change from full-time to part-time. This law intended to remove the barriers laid down in collective agreements for part-time work in areas where only full-time employment was agreed. Furthermore, it is intended to give better possibilities for promoting a more family-friendly and inclusive labour market and to promote equal opportunities. As stated above, in Germany since 2001 employees working in a company with more than 15 employees can ask their employer for part-time work. In Lithuania part-time work may be established by agreement between the employee and the employer by decreasing the number of working days per week or by shortening a working day or by doing both. Dutch employees have been able to ask for an adjustment of their working hours since 2001. This adjustment can be from full-time to part-time or from part-time to full-time. The Working Hours Adjustment Act only applies to firms with at least 10 employees and employers may only refuse for reasons of severe business interest. The act should (among other things) offer employees more opportunities to combine work and care tasks. In Spain, France, Cyprus and Portugal employees are entitled to submit a request to reduce the number of working hours, but employers may refuse such requests. In Poland the regulation is also rather limited, but employers have to inform employees about the possibility of part-time work. Moreover, employees may ask to work part-time as an alternative to taking parental leave.

Eleven countries have legal regulations on part-time work in order to support employees with care responsibilities: Estonia, Spain, Latvia, Lithuania, Austria, Portugal, Slovenia, Finland, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Norway. The target group and the relevant period vary per country. In Estonia employers are required to grant part-time work to pregnant women or women raising a disabled child or a child under 14. A similar regulation applies in Latvia and Lithuania. Austrian parents can switch from full-time to part-time work until the child's seventh birthday if they work for a company with at least 20 employees and if they have been employed with the firm for at least three years. In Portugal the regulation applies to parents of children who are under 12, disabled or chronically ill. The part-time period is, however, limited to two years. In Slovenia the options for the employee depend on the number of children. Parents with one child can work part-time until the child is three or, in case of more children, until the youngest child is six. In Finland parents can work part-time until the child has finished the second year of school. This is in fact a partially paid care leave as the parent receives a flat-rate compensation. In addition, employees may ask to work part-time for a limited period of time (maximum of 26 weeks) based on social or health reasons. In Sweden parents have a right to shorten the normal working time by up to

a fourth until the child is eight years old or has not finished the first year in school. In Spain employees with children below the age of six or with relatives who need care have the right to reduce the working day as long as it is taken with a proportionally lower wage. The reduction has to be at least a third, with a maximum of half the working time. Though this is considered an individual right of men and women, if two or more employees in the same company are entitled to this right, the employer can limit this right based on the correct functioning of the enterprise.

In the United Kingdom the right to request reduced or flexible working hours was initially limited to parents of children under the age of six but has been extended to employees caring for an adult in need of care. Moreover, as of April 2009 the legislation has been extended to parents of all children up to the age of 16. Employers may refuse on grounds of specified business reasons. Finally, Norwegian employees with special needs, such as care responsibilities, are entitled to reduced working hours, unless it causes major inconvenience to the company.

Box 1 Legal entitlements to part-time work

Legal entitlements to part-time work for all employees	
DK	A new Part-Time Law was passed by the government in 2001/02. According to this law it is up to the employer and the employee to decide the working time, and an individual employee can change from full-time to part-time. If an employee is dismissed due to the rejection of a request to go on part-time or due to his or her own request to change to part-time, the employer has to pay compensation. In addition, the law includes the principle of equal treatment of full-timers and part-timers.
DE	In November 2000, a new Act on Part-Time Work (and fixed-term employment relationships) was passed which came into force in 2001. Among other provisions, the law introduced a right for workers in companies with more than 15 employees to reduce their working time, as long as no internal company reasons prevent such a reduction. The act transposes the EU directives on part-time (97/81/EC).
ES	Employees are entitled to submit a request to switch from full-time to part-time work, but the employer may deny such requests.
FR	Employees are entitled to submit a request to switch from full-time to part-time work, but the employer may deny such requests on economic or technical grounds.
CY	According to the 2002 Law on Part-time Work (No 76 (I)/2002) employers must consider employees' requests to transfer from full to part-time status (and vice-versa), to increase their working time, to inform on part-time or full-time vacancies, to facilitate access to part-time employment at all levels, to take measures to enable access to vocational training of part-time employees and to provide information to employee unions about part-time employees.
LT	Part-time work may be agreed between the employee and the employer by decreasing the number of working days per week or shortening a working day or doing both. Part-time work does not lead to restricted social benefits, reduced job security or fewer career opportunities than full-time work, and the hourly rate is not lower for part-time employees than for full-time employees.
NL	On 1 July 2001, the Working Hours Adjustment Act (WAA) came into force. This act gives every employee who has worked at the same company for at least a year the statutory right to adjust working hours; a part-timer may increase working hours and a full-timer may reduce them. Non-compliance by the employer is only allowed for reasons of severe business interest. Small businesses (less than 10 employees) are exempted from the WAA but are required to make their own arrangements regarding the adjustment of working hours.

Legal entitlements to part-time work for all employees	
PL	According to the Labour Code a part-time worker may request to change the contractual number of hours worked, and an employer should consider this request. Also, an employer is obliged to inform workers of the possibility of changing between part-time and full-time status. Employees entitled to parental leave may request shortening their working time to no less than half time as an alternative to parental leave and the employer is obliged to consider this request.
PT	Employees are entitled to submit a request to switch from full-time to part-time work and vice-versa. Employers have to consider requests from employees but may deny them. A 30-day notice is obligatory for requests to change working time patterns.

Legal entitlements to part-time work for employees with care responsibilities	
EE	Employers are required to grant part-time work when requested by a pregnant woman or a woman raising a disabled child or child under 14 years of age.
ES	According to Article 37.5 of the Workers' Statute, employees with children below the age of six or with relatives who need care (up to second sanguinity degree) have the right to reduce the working day as long as it is taken with a proportionally lower wage. The reduction has to be at least a third and a maximum of half the working time. Though this is considered an individual right of men and women, if two or more employees in the same company are entitled to this right, the employer can limit this right based on the correct functioning of the enterprise.
LV	Pregnant women and employees with a child under 14 years of age or a disabled child under 16 years of age are entitled to part-time work.
LT	Pregnant employees, employees who have recently given birth, employees who breastfeed, employees with children under the age of three, as well as lone parent employees with children below the age of 14 or disabled children below the age of 16 are entitled to part-time work (either daily or weekly).
AT	In 2004 the right to part-time work for parents (Elternteilzeit) was introduced. Parents can switch from full-time to part-time work until the child's seventh birthday if they work for a company with at least 20 employees and if they have been employed with the firm for at least three years. During the period they work part-time, these employees are entitled to the usual protection against dismissal and the right to return to full-time work.
PT	Parents of children who are under 12 or disabled or chronically ill are entitled to work part-time (usually 50 % of normal hours unless otherwise agreed), working either in the morning, the afternoon or on three days per week or to work flexible hours, for up to two years (three years if more than two children). This applies to only one parent — the mother or the father. The employer may refuse on business grounds or hard-to-fill vacancy but this requires support from the tripartite Commission for Equality at Work and Employment.
SI	The Parenthood and Family Income Act (PFIA, 2001) stipulates (besides four types of paid parental leave) the possibility for parents to work part-time until a child is aged three and part-time until the youngest child is six years old for parents of two or more children.
FI	The Employment Contracts Act contains provisions related to the right of the parents of young children to reduce their working hours to take partial care leave. Parents taking a part-time childcare leave can reduce their working hours until the child has finished his/her second year of school. There is a financial compensation of EUR 70 when the child is under three years old or in the first or second year of school. The sum will be increased to EUR 90 in 2010. According to the Working Hours Act, if an employee wishes, for social or health reasons, to work less than the regular working hours, the employer should try to arrange for the employee to work part-time. This can be implemented as shortened daily or weekly working time. The procedure requires an agreement and it can be established for a maximum of 26 weeks.

Legal entitlements to part-time work for employees with care responsibilities	
SE	Parents have a right to shorten the normal working time by up to a fourth until the child is eight years old or has not finished the first year in school. This means, for example, that a parent can work six hours a day instead of eight hours a day.
UK	The Employment Act (2003) introduced the right for employees to request reduced or flexible working hours if they were parents of a child under the age of six years, or a disabled child under 18 years. From April 2007 this right was extended under the Work and Families Act (2006) to employees caring for an adult in need of care which encompasses most relatives or someone else living at the same address as the employee. As of April 2009 the legislation has been extended to parents of all children up to the age of 16. Employers must consider the request seriously, and without regard to the employee's personal circumstances, but can refuse on the grounds of one or more specified 'business reasons'.
NO	According to the Work Environment Act, workers with special needs (health, care responsibilities) have the right to reduced working hours if it can be arranged without major inconvenience to the firm.

Source: national reports

Part-time retirement

In addition to granting rights to young parents, it might be useful to allow older workers part-time retirement. This, however, does not seem to be a common practice yet. Only a few countries (i.e. Germany, Slovenia, Finland and Sweden) provide examples of regulation referring to part-time retirement. In July 1996, the German government replaced the existing early retirement practice with the adoption of the Partial Retirement Law. The Partial Retirement Law was created amongst others in order to promote the gradual transition of older employees into retirement. Under this legislation, the Federal Employment Service (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) financially supports the gradual transition of employees aged 55 and over to retirement, if the employee voluntarily reduces his or her working time by 50 % and the resulting vacancy is filled by an unemployed person or a trainee. The distribution of working time over the years until retirement is up to the parties of the employment contract. Possible working time schemes are part-time work, full-time work and leave of absence alternating daily, weekly or monthly, and the so-called Blockmodell (a phase of full-time working is followed by a total leave of absence), which is the most preferred working time scheme. In November 2006, the German government decided to increase the retirement age stepwise from 65 to 67 years, which also influences the provisions of partial retirement. The financial support of partial retirement by the Federal Employment Service expired at the end of 2009.

In Slovenia workers older than 55 years have the statutory right to part-time work. According to the Working Hours Act in Finland, part-time retirement combined with part-time work can be granted to an employee aged 58 or over who makes a transition from full-time to part-time employment by reducing his/her working hours to 16–28 per week (maximum 70 % of full-time working hours). The part-time pension is 50 % of the income loss. The employer shall seek to organise the work so that the employee may do part-time work if he/she wishes to retire on a part-time pension. The Swedish pension system does not contain a fixed retirement age, but pensions cannot be drawn before the age of 61 and there is no legal right for employees to work after the age of 67. But the system is flexible in that pensions can be claimed partially or fully at age 61 with or without leaving the labour force. If the individual decides to continue to work while claiming a partial or full pension, the benefits will be recalculated given the additional contribution from work.

Overtime

Overtime is often seen as an important element of flexibility by employers as well as an important source of income by employees. As a general working definition, 'overtime hours are those worked above a certain threshold of working time, which attract enhanced compensation for the worker, either in the form of an increased rate of pay or time off in lieu' (EIRO 2003b:1). In most cases, the legislator sets two thresholds.

The first threshold marks the point at which overtime begins, with the legislator setting the minimum pay rate to compensate the hours worked beyond this threshold. The second threshold sets a maximum of allowable overtime or a maximum daily or weekly limit for working hours that cannot be exceeded. Within this regulatory framework, negotiators decide on the actual working time scheme and payment system. In some cases, negotiators also have the authority to move the thresholds. It should be noted, however, that regulation within Europe is rather diverse and differs according to the type of threshold used (daily or weekly) and whether regulation is shaped in legislative or collectively agreed terms. In addition, in the United Kingdom for example, overtime arrangements are, within the statutory framework, largely left to individual bargaining or unilateral employer initiatives (see EIRO 2003b for more details).

Additional regulation with regard to overtime may apply in certain circumstances. Working at atypical hours may be problematic particularly for employees with (young) children and, to a lesser extent, older employees. A few countries, mainly the new Member States, have national regulations in this respect. The most extensive regulation can be found in Estonia where employees with children under 12 can only be assigned to overtime, working at nights and weekends with the consent of the employee. In Hungary employees with a child up to one (or lone parents with a child up to four) can only be assigned to work performed outside the scheduled working hours with their consent. In Portugal and Poland the regulation covers both overtime and night work, whereas in Latvia the regulation only covers night work and in Lithuania and Slovenia overtime. Italy provides an interesting example regarding employees taking study leave: they are not obliged to work overtime during the leave period on the condition that they are taking courses in public or legally recognised educational institutions.

Box 2 Regulations on overtime and working on atypical hours regarding parents with (young) children

EE	Employees with children under 12 can be assigned to overtime, working at nights and weekends with the consent of the employee only.
LV	An employee with a child below the age of three may be employed at night only with his or her consent.
LT	According to Labour Code Article 150 overtime work cannot be assigned to pregnant women, women who have recently given birth, women who breastfeed, employees who are taking care of children under three years of age, lone parent employees raising a child under 14 years of age or a disabled child under 16 years of age.
HU	Special work duty is work performed outside the scheduled working hours or on-call duty. According to Section 127 of the Labour Code, employees may be required to work in special duty only under justified and exceptional circumstances. However, pregnant women, women with a child up to one year old and lone fathers who have a child under one year old are exempted from this duty. In addition, lone parent employees having a child aged one to four years may be required to work in special work duty only with their consent.
PL	A working day cannot exceed eight hours for (among others) parents with children under four years of age without their consent. Parents with children below four years of age can be employed at night only with consent.
PT	Employers cannot impose overtime or night work on certain groups of workers such as pregnant and breastfeeding workers, parents with children up to one year, handicapped workers, and student-workers (only overtime). Moreover, overtime and night work can only be done by young workers under very restrictive conditions defined by law and requires extra resting periods.
SI	Employers cannot impose overtime work on certain groups of workers such as parents with children under one year old, elderly workers and workers younger than 18 years.

Source: national reports

Overtime payment and part-time contracts

Overtime payments for part-time work remain a complicated issue because in most countries the overtime regime is still orientated towards a full-time working day or week. This means that in most countries the threshold where overtime begins for part-timers is identical to that for full-time work. In the case of part-time work, it is therefore necessary to distinguish between 'extra time' (hours worked beyond usual working time but below the threshold at which enhanced compensation commences) and 'overtime' (hours worked over a certain threshold that attract enhanced compensation). There are a few exceptions to this general rule. In Belgium and Luxembourg, part-timers may be paid higher wages for hours beyond their normal contract but below the full-time work threshold. In Germany and the Netherlands, collective agreements may provide for increased rates of pay for hours worked beyond those agreed in the individual employment contract. In France, part-timers are allowed to work 'additional hours' equivalent to 10 % of their normal hours, to be paid at the normal rate. However 'excess hours' should be paid at a higher rate with excess hours being defined beyond the 10 % threshold and up to 33 % of the usual hours (EIRO 2003b).

3.2 Regulations on the organisation of working time

The organisation of working time refers to the organisation of the production process, which may involve flexible working time schedules, the use of shift and night work, and annualised hour schemes. Within the limits defined by mandatory rules, flexibility in the organisation of working time is generally settled by means of collective agreements or at the level of the firm, as a result of which the actual regulation may be rather limited. There are, however, a few exceptions. In Poland the Labour Code contains regulations on 'task based work', where organisation of working time is determined by an employee as long as specific tasks or jobs are completed. In addition, since 2007 the Labour Code regulates telework, defining it as work performed regularly outside of the workplace (where the work would conventionally have been done) with the use of information and communication technologies. Telework must be agreed between the employee and the employer. Regulations specify the rights and obligations of the parties involved, where employers have the right to exercise control over the work, while teleworkers have the right to privacy. The rules stipulate that a teleworker cannot be treated less favourably than a standard worker in a similar job and position.

In February 2009 a new labour law reform was introduced in Portugal in order to establish greater flexibility in the organisation of working time. Included in this reform are legal provisions on 'group adaptability', the 'hours bank' (annual 'working time accounts' of 200 hours) and 'concentrated work schedules'. Group adaptability allows the employer to establish flexible work schedules for all employees of a team, section or economic unit once it has been approved by the majority of the employees in question (at least 75 %). The 'hours bank' is a new measure whereby the working day can be increased by up to four hours subject to a weekly limit of 60 hours and a yearly limit of 200 hours. Overtime may be compensated by time off, remuneration or a mixture of both, according to the collective agreements. The compressed working week involves the working day being increased by up to a maximum of 12 hours in order to condense the entire working week into fewer weekdays (up to a maximum of four days a week) (48 hours as average of 12 months according to collective agreement or four or six months in its absence). The Finnish Working Hours Act contains provisions on flexitime, which means an arrangement of regular working hours where the employee, within certain limits, can decide himself/herself when to come to the workplace and when to leave.

Night work

Night work is regulated by the EU working time directive, stating that 'Member States shall take the measures necessary to ensure that normal hours of work for night workers do not exceed an average of eight hours in any 24 hour period'. In addition, 'night workers whose work involves special hazards or heavy physical mental strain do not work more than eight hours in any period of 24 hours during which they perform night work' (Article 8). From a gender perspective it is important to mention that the regulations on night-time employment should be gender

neutral, in accordance with Directive 76/207/EEC, which enforces equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions. As a result, any traditional bans on women's night work have in principle to be abolished.

Annualised hours

Article 18 of the EU working time directive creates scope for derogations within the general provisions by means of collective agreements. This includes the length of the reference period which may be extended by up to 12 months (EIRO 2003a). This opens up the opportunity to implement annualised hour schemes in order to adapt to changes in demand. According to an EIRO overview from 2003 'none of the countries examined have specific legislation providing in explicit terms for the annualisation of working time, or providing a definition of such annualisation. However, almost all have a legislative framework for working time that allows limits — usually daily and/or weekly — on normal working time (set by law or collective agreement) to be exceeded (usually with further upper daily and/or weekly limit), as long as the normal limits are maintained on average over a certain reference period' (EIRO 2003a:2). Within this legislative framework, the details are usually set at company level. It is, however, important to recall that Article 23 of the EU directive on working time prevents any regression of the labour law which would be justified by implementing the directive.

3.3 Decentralised arrangements

Collective agreements

In addition to the (inter)national regulations, collective agreements may play an important role in the regulation of working time. Directive 2003/88/EC provides substantial scope for collective bargaining by stating (in Article 18) that derogations from the regulation are possible 'by means of collective agreements or agreements concluded between the two sides of industry at national or regional level or, in conformity with the rules laid down by them, by means of collective agreements or agreements concluded between the two sides of industry at a lower level'. Such a possibility concerns daily and weekly rest periods, rest breaks, the length of night work and the length of reference periods, which only by means of collective agreements, may be extended by up to 12 months (Eurofound 2008: 25). The actual impact of collective bargaining in EU Member States depends on the scope and strength of national regulations as well as on the system of industrial relations. A limited involvement of collective agreements may be the result of strong national regulation or rather limited trade union involvement as a result of which the actual working time is settled at the level of the firm by bilateral negotiations between the employer and the employee.

In most of the Nordic countries for example, collective agreements are very important when it comes to regulating working hours. Also in Germany, where in 2007 around 63 % of the employees in western Germany and 54 % in eastern Germany were covered, collective agreements are an important instrument in shaping working hours in general and working time arrangements in detail. In Estonia, on the other hand, collective agreements play a limited role in shaping working time arrangements and most of the bargaining is done individually between employers and employees. This is also the case in Spain, as salary and employment are the priority issues in collective agreements. As a result, flexible working arrangements receive little attention, although attention seems to have increased lately. Collective agreements regulating working time do not play a large role in Poland either; sectoral collective agreements are rare and, if they occur, are concluded at a high level of generality. Collective agreements may also cover only a limited number of employees and therefore be of less importance. An example is Slovakia, where collective agreements cover only about 30 % of the employees, of which the majority are working in the public sector. In the United Kingdom, only one third of employees are covered by a collective agreement, with coverage in the public sector being much higher than in the private sector. In Latvia only about 20 % of employees, mainly in the private sector, are covered by collective agreements.

Company level

In addition to collective bargaining, the company may be an important third level on which to agree actual working hours. In Ireland, for example, due to limited

state regulation regarding flexible work organisation, individual arrangements by firms constitute the main framework for work–life balance provisions, including working time arrangements. Also in France, the company level is important. In 2007, 20 170 agreements were signed at the company level and 24.5 % were related to working time (4 933). This is significantly more than the proportion of sectoral agreements on this topic. However, since 2005 the proportion of company agreements on working time seems to have declined. The company level seems particularly interesting when it comes to more innovative forms of working time flexibility. In Norway, time banking arrangements are quite common at the company level. In addition, informal company level arrangements are rather common, such as individual agreements about starting and ending the working day for workers with special needs (e.g. parents).

3.4 Summary

The length of the working week is an important element of the employment contract. For a long time, the trend has been towards a progressive regulation and a shortening of the full-time working week. Yet, at the end of the 20th century the emphasis seems to have shifted. For employers the more dynamic and uncertain economic environment has increased the demand for more flexibility in order to adjust production times to business cycle fluctuations. On the supply side, contemporary employees demand greater flexibility to suit their lifestyles and fulfil their responsibilities outside work. In order to accommodate these developments, the regulatory framework becomes more focused on allowing tailor-made solutions within the boundaries of a commonly agreed framework. The actual result may depend on the system of industrial relations and the strength of the different parties involved, with different roles for legislative measures, collective bargaining and bilateral negotiations between the employer and the employee. In this respect it should be taken into account that national legislation does not necessarily result in a better position for employees. In some countries the strengths and coverage of collective agreements may be comparable or even better than legislation in other countries.

4 FLEXIBILITY IN THE LENGTH OF WORKING TIME

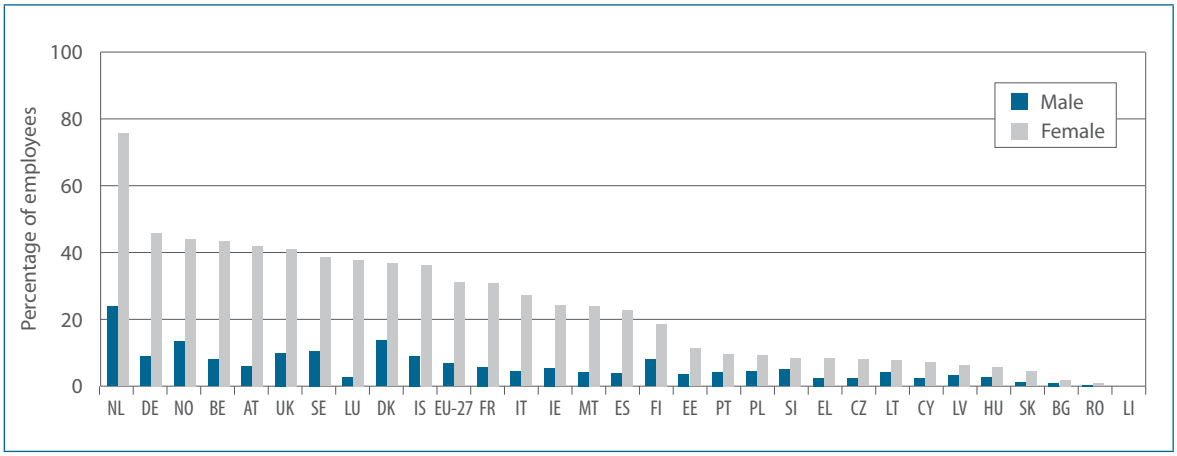
Chapter 2 provided an overview of the variety in working time arrangements throughout Europe. In some countries employees have a considerable level of flexibility in the length of the working week, whereas in other countries the large majority still have a traditional 40-hour working week. In addition, there appear to be substantial differences in the organisation of working time. This chapter provides a more detailed picture of the diversity in the length of working time in 30 European countries, using harmonised data from Eurostat. The chapter is organised along three dimensions: part-time work, long hours and overtime. Given the need to examine working time using a life course approach, the diversity of time needs over a person's lifetime will be addressed. The data will therefore be differentiated by age group: young persons entering the labour force (age group 15–24), prime age workers (age group 25–49) and older workers (age group 50+). In addition, data on gender gaps across the age groups will be presented. Although this cross-sectional design provides only limited information on changes in working time over the life course, it is the only feasible approach given the absence of longitudinal data. Flexibility in the organisation of working time, referring to flexible working time schedules such as working time banking, working from home and working at atypical hours, will be discussed in the next chapter.

4.1 Part-time work

An important indicator of flexibility in the length of working time is the proportion of employees working part-time. This is illustrated by the inclusion of the share of part-time employees as one of the indicators (21.M2) for monitoring Guideline 21 of the Employment Guidelines 2008–10 ('Promote flexibility combined with employment security and reduce labour market segmentation, having due regard to the role of the social partners'). Graph 2 shows the part-time rate among employees in the European countries by gender. When interpreting the data it should be noted that the distinction between full-time and part-time work is made on the basis of a spontaneous answer given by the respondent; a more exact differentiation is impossible due to variations in working hours between Member States and branches of industry (Eurostat 2007). The data indicate that the proportion of part-time employees varies considerably throughout Europe, but in all Member States women are considerably more likely to work part-time than men.

The highest part-time rate is found in the Netherlands, both for men and for women (24 % and 76 % respectively). Germany, Norway, Belgium, Austria, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Luxembourg, Denmark and Iceland also have relatively high female part-time rates, with Norway, the United Kingdom, Sweden and Denmark also indicating relatively high rates for men (above 10 %). The lowest rates are found in the east European countries, particularly in Bulgaria and Romania; Portugal, Greece and Cyprus also have relatively low part-time rates. The gender gap (measured in percentage points) seems most pronounced in the Netherlands with a score of almost 52. In Bulgaria and Romania where part-time work is practically nonexistent, the gender gap is very low at less than one percentage point.

Graph 2 Part-time rate among employees, aged 15+, by gender, 2007



Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2007 (no data available for Liechtenstein)

A survey among companies in 21 European countries shows that part-time work is more common in larger establishments (Anxo et al. 2007). Nearly half of the small establishments (with less than 50 employees) have part-time employees, whereas this is about 80 % in medium-sized (50–199 employees) and large establishments (200 and more). Moreover, there appear to be clear sector differences as part-time work is more common in services: 68 % of the managers of establishments in services report that there are part-time employees compared to 51 % of managers in industry. Part-time work is particularly common in health and social work, education, other community, social and personal services, and hotels and restaurants. In addition, there appears to be an inverse (but weak) relationship between the share of skilled jobs and the incidence of part-time work. This implies that the higher the proportion of skilled employees the lower the likelihood that establishments will employ a large proportion of part-time employees. Another interesting finding is connected to the primary rationale for introducing part-time work. Just over a third of employers claimed the main reason was to meet the needs/wishes of employees, whereas about a third stated that the main reason was economic or organisational needs. The rest of the employers stated it was a combination of both reasons.

Development over time

Countries that have an above average share of part-timers have had no common trend in the rate of part-time work over the last 15 years and there are no signs of a convergence to a single level. Moreover, there is no evidence that gender gaps are narrowing due to increasing part-time rates among men. In the Netherlands, the share of female employees working part-time was already high in 1992 (63 %) and increased further to 75.7 % in 2007. Within the same time frame, the share of male employees working part-time increased from 15 to 23.8 %. In Germany, Belgium, Austria and Luxembourg, the part-time rate has steadily increased among female employees. An increase is also visible among male employees, particularly in Belgium and Germany, but the overall share is still considerably lower than among female employees. In the United Kingdom, the female part-time rate has hovered around 42 %, whereas the male part-time rate has shown a slow increase. A similar pattern is found in Norway, where the share of female part-timers has fluctuated around 44 %, whereas among male employees the part-time rate has increased from 9.5 to 13.4 %. Denmark, on the other hand, indicates a decrease of the (female) part-time rate between 1992 and 2002 (from 37 % to 32 %), whereas in 2007 the part-time rate is back to the level in 1992 (37 %). This particular pattern may be related to the introduction of the Part-Time Law which focused on removing barriers laid down in collective agreements for part-time work. In Sweden, the female part-time rate has also fluctuated: in 1997 it was about 40 %, in 2002 it had decreased to 31 %, whereas in 2007 it was 38 %. Iceland, however, shows a steady decrease; the (female) part-time rate decreased from almost 50 % in 1997 to 36 % in 2007.

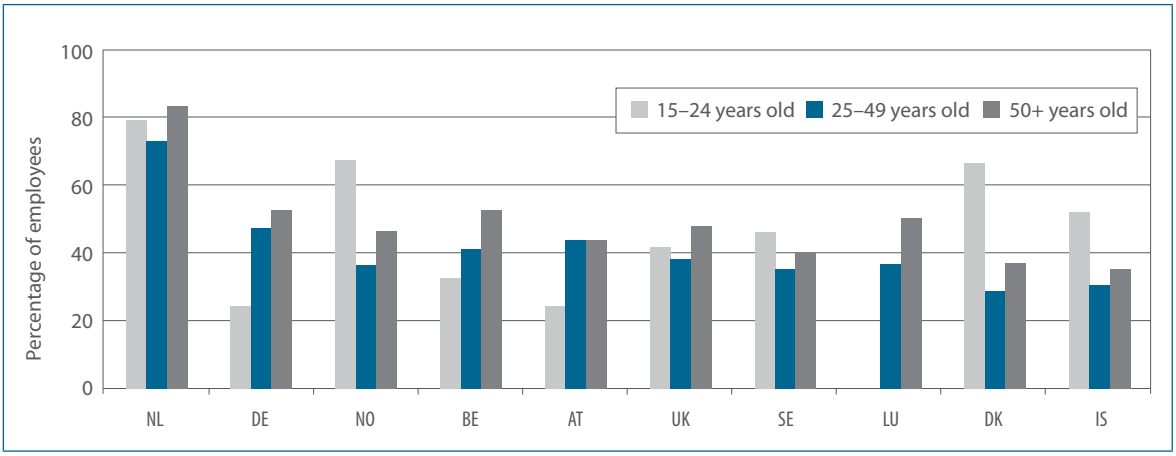
The pattern in the countries with a 'medium' level of part-time employment is also not very consistent. Italy shows a steady increase from 11 % in 1992 to 27 % in 2007, whereas in France the part-time rate increased between 1992 and 1997, but has been fairly stable since then. Spain shows a slow increase in the share of female employees working part-time, whereas in Ireland the part-time rate among employees increased between 1992 and 2002, but decreased between 2002 and 2007. For the countries with a low share of part-time employees, notably the new Member States, an assessment is hampered by a lack of data for 1992 and 1997. The available data, however, suggest little pressure to increase flexibility in the form of part-time employment. The part-time rate among men and women decreased or remained stable between 2002 and 2007 in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania. In Cyprus, Malta, Poland and Slovakia the share of part-timers among female employees increased slightly. Yet, the share of male part-time employees decreased or remained stable, implying an increase in the gender gap. Cyprus and Hungary show a slight increase among both male and female employees. An important reason for the low part-time rate in the new Member States is the low level of earnings. Many households need two full-time incomes in order to have a decent standard of living. Furthermore, employers may also consider part-time work as less cost efficient. To conclude, there is no sign of convergence in Europe regarding part-time employment.

Part-time work over the life course

Part-time hours enable employees to participate in additional learning, caring and leisure activities. From a life course perspective, part-time working hours may therefore be important for young persons, parents and older workers, depending on the exact profile of the part-time jobs and the accessibility of part-time jobs over the life course. Graphs 3 and 4 present part-time rates by age group for female and male employees in countries with a relatively high rate of part-time employment. It should be acknowledged that these are cross-sectional data, covering one moment in time; from a life course perspective it would have been more ideal to study the working time profile of different cohorts over time but, unfortunately, long-term data are not available. Graph 3 indicates that in Norway, Denmark and Iceland, female part-time rates are clearly higher in the younger age category. Apparently, a large proportion of this group are women who combine study with a (part-time) job. This implies that part-time work is generally a temporary situation. In Belgium, Germany and — to a lesser extent — Austria, female part-time rates increase with age. In these countries part-time work is an important facility for women to reconcile work and private life as a result of which the part-time rate increases between the youngest and the medium age category. After having become accustomed to part-time working hours, this pattern may also be followed by the highest age category, either by choice or because no alternatives are available. For example, in Austria, the second explanation for older employees to work part-time is that it was not possible to get a full-time job (the first is 'I do not want to work full-time'). In the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom the differences between age categories are rather small. In the Netherlands, part-time work has become so widespread that the actual part-time rate no longer differs by age group. National research on the reasons for working part-time indicates that most women like to have some time available for doing their household chores. In addition, the young age group likes to have some extra leisure time. Women with older children are often used to working part-time and do not want to change their actual working hours. For older women without children, health is an important reason for working part-time (Portegijs et al. 2008).

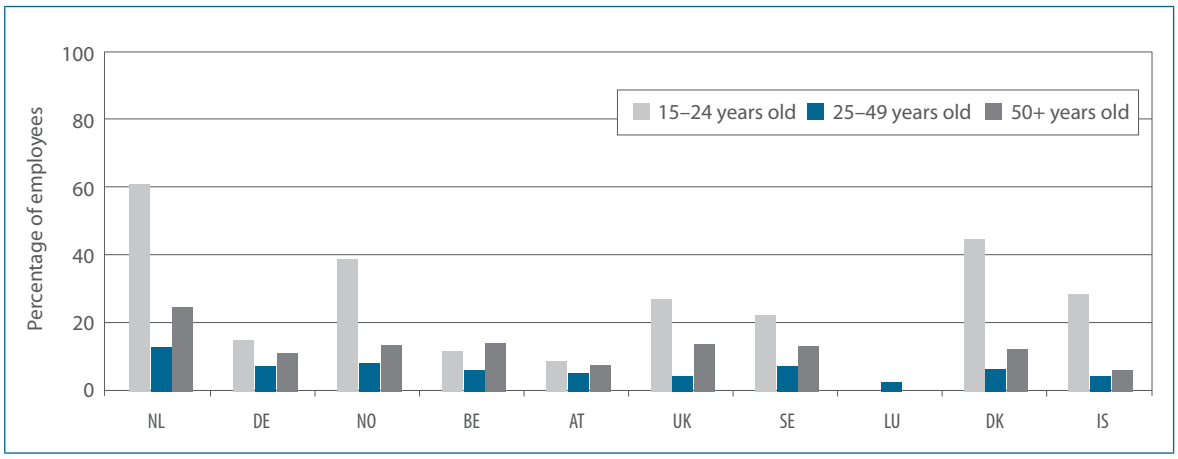
Among the male employees high part-time rates seem most common among young employees (15–24 year olds). An important reason is being able to combine work with education. In the prime age category, part-time work is least common, but in several countries the part-time rate increases again among older workers. Working part-time, for example, within a phased retirement scheme might be an attractive option in order to remain active on the labour market. In Belgium, for example, measures have been adopted to encourage older workers (aged 50+) to retire gradually by offering them a different form of working time reduction. These are covered by the so-called time credit system which was introduced in 2002 and extended considerably in 2007. At the same time, the higher part-time rate among older male workers may also indicate the effects of active labour market policies in which older unemployed persons are obliged to take part-time employment if there are no suitable full-time vacancies. At least in the United Kingdom, part of the increase of part-time working hours seems to be the result of a more strict definition of a suitable job for benefit purposes.

Graph 3 Part-time rate among female employees in European countries with a high part-time rate, by age group, 2007



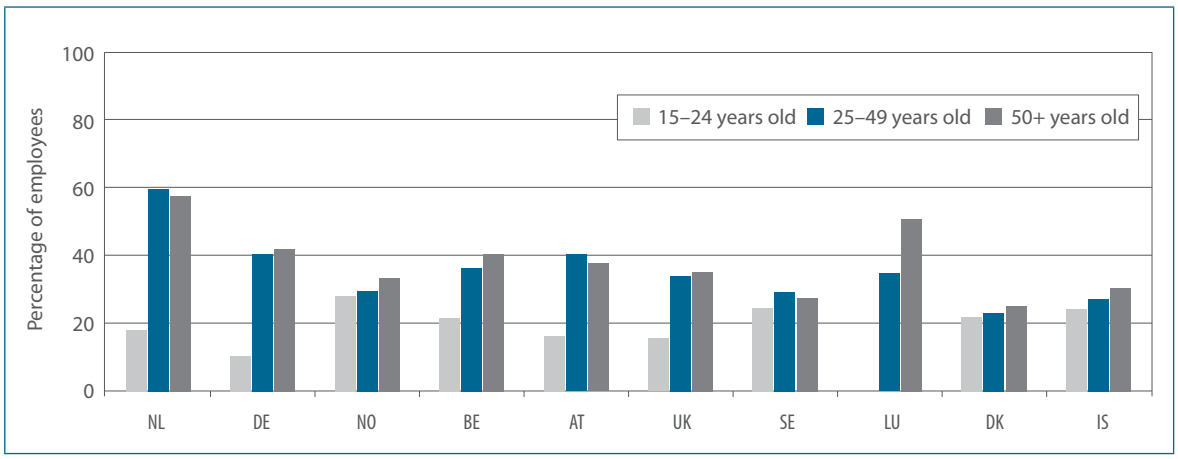
Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2007

Graph 4 Part-time rate among male employees in European countries with a high part-time rate, by age group, 2007



Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2007

Graph 5 Gender gap in part-time rate among employees by age groups in European countries with a high part-time rate, by age group, 2007



Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2007

There is no consistent pattern in countries with a medium to low level of part-time work. In Spain, Finland, Greece and Latvia, for example, part-time work among male and female employees is most common among young persons entering the labour market, whereas in Lithuania, Poland and Slovenia part-time employees are most common in both the youngest and oldest age group. In the Czech Republic, Estonia, Ireland and Malta part-time employment is most common among older female employees. This suggests that part-time work is less important as a facility to combine work and family life in these countries. The availability of childcare facilities is an important factor in this respect. For example, in Slovenia, the availability of childcare enables working parents to work full-time, lowering the need for part-time hours. In other countries, however, such as Ireland and Malta, childcare facilities are not as prevalent.

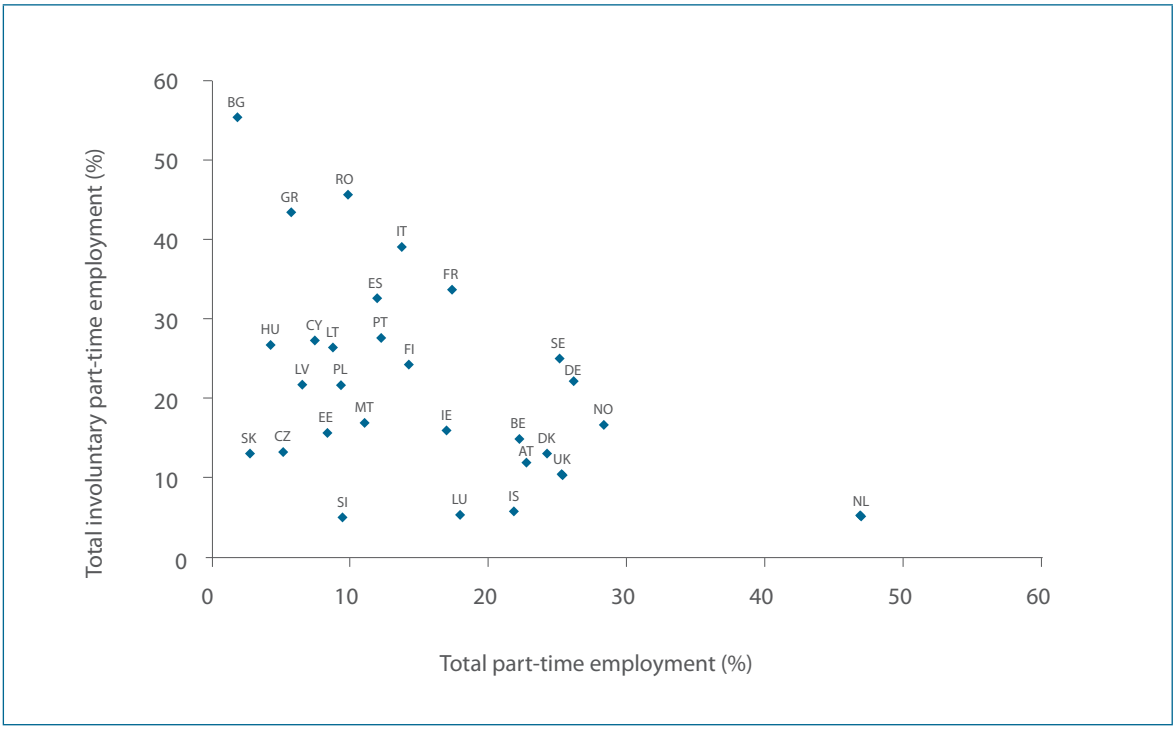
Graph 5 summarises the gender gap in the share of part-time employees across age in countries with a high share of part-time employees. The gender gap is defined as the share of female employees working part-time minus the share of male employees working part-time. In most countries with a high

part-time rate the gender gap among employees is rather small in the youngest age group and considerably higher in the older age groups. Particularly in the Netherlands the difference in gender gaps over the life course is large. This is mainly due to a drop in the share of male part-time employees in the prime age and older age group. In the Nordic countries the gender gaps across age groups are more or less similar due to comparable working time patterns of men and women over the age groups.

Involuntary part-time work

Part-time working hours may offer labour market opportunities in periods of care and/or educational responsibilities and as such may be seen as a positive choice. Persons may, however, also work part-time involuntarily. Graph 6 provides information on involuntary part-time work among the employed labour force as well as the total part-time rate in employment. According to Eurostat persons are working part-time involuntarily when they are unable to find full-time work. Obviously, these data should be treated with caution as this is a rather limited interpretation of part-time. For example, citing care-giving as the reason for working part-time does not qualify as involuntary part-time work; however, part-time work may well be an involuntary option given the lack of childcare places in several European Member States (see Plantenga and Remery 2009). Nevertheless, on the basis of these data, it appears that especially in Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, Italy, France and Spain the share of involuntary part-time work is quite high. The combination of this result with information on the total amount of part-time work seems to indicate a negative relationship: the higher the level of part-time employment, the lower the share of involuntary part-time employment. The most clear-cut examples are the Netherlands with the highest part-time level and among the lowest share of involuntary part-time employment, and Bulgaria with one of the lowest levels of part-time employment but most of it being involuntary. Presumably the institutional context of part-time work plays an important role in this respect. In countries with a relatively high part-time rate, part-time work is more likely to be well regulated and well accepted. A more detailed analysis of involuntary part-time work by gender indicates rather limited gender differences with no consistent pattern. In a few countries, such as Germany, the United Kingdom, Romania and Italy the involuntary part-time rate is clearly higher among men, whereas in the Czech Republic, Norway and Portugal the rate is relatively higher for women.

Graph 6 Involuntary part-time work and total part-time employment rate, 2007



Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2007

Part-time work as precarious work

Another important issue in regard to part-time work is the combination of part-time working hours with other forms of flexibility, such as fixed-term contracts and/or a low number of working hours. Examples of precarious part-time work are the so-called mini- jobs and midi-jobs in Germany. Mini-jobs and midi-jobs are jobs in which the wage does not exceed EUR 400 (mini-jobs) or is between EUR 400 and EUR 800 (midi-jobs). As working time is no longer regulated in these jobs (which was the case prior to 2002), the mini-jobbers may work a relatively high number of hours with a very low wage per hour. In spring 2009 around 6.8 million employees had been registered as mini-jobbers, of which two thirds were women. The overall number of mini-jobbers accounts for 17 % of overall employment in Germany and the average wage was EUR 263 per month. As these mini-jobs are excluded from social security regulations (payments and benefits), the status of the persons is precarious, although some of them might be covered by other regulations as co-insured by married spouse status or as students or pensioners. The latter cover seems to be more relevant concerning younger and older men whereas the former is more relevant for women in the core age groups (DRV Minijobzentrale 2009).

Another example is provided by Austria, where part-time jobs are often 'short-hour', marginal jobs with a low income. Moreover, part-time work often entails further disadvantages: employment instability, jobs below the qualification level and limited career prospects. In Austria the risk of losing a job within a year of starting it is much higher for part-time workers than for those working full-time. Moreover, one in three female part-timers is working in an unskilled or manual job, compared to only one in four women in full-time employment. And while only one in 10 women working part-time is employed in middle to senior management, it is one in four amongst full-timers (Bergmann et al. 2004). Similar results are found in Norway where the highest shares of part-time work are found in unskilled jobs, in small companies and among temporary workers. This is especially true for involuntary part-time workers (Kjeldstad & Nymoen 2004). In the United Kingdom, part-timers tend to be concentrated in a small number of service and manual occupations, many of which are low paid; furthermore, women employed part-time are often working below their skills potential (EOC 2005). In Greece, part-time work is often also fixed-term employment, whereas in France part-time jobs are often fixed-term and have atypical, late schedules. Moreover, employment conditions of employees in part-time jobs are often insecure. In Sweden a considerable proportion of part-time workers work 'on call' when the need arises (Riedman et al. 2006). This form of employment often implies a temporary contract and is involuntary most of the time.

Part-time work and careers

Part-time working hours may also have a negative impact on career prospects. In a survey among companies in 21 European countries on part-time work, managers and employee representatives were asked about the prospects for promotion for part-time workers in their establishments. According to 61 % of the managers, promotion prospects were about the same for part-time and full-time employees with comparable qualifications. Among employee representatives the share was considerably lower however (49 %). A relatively substantial proportion of managers and employee representatives reported that the promotion prospects were (slightly or significantly) worse. There seems to be a relationship between promotion prospects and the share of part-time employees in the companies; in establishments with a low part-time rate, the managers and employee representatives seem more negative than in establishments where the part-time rate is higher. The responses also seem to be related to particular sectors. In sectors like electricity, gas and water supply (NACE E) and financial intermediation (NACE J), managers were rather negative on the promotion prospects of part-time employees. Managers in sectors of public administration (NACE L), education (NACE M), health and social work (NACE N) and other community, social and personal services (NACE O) seem slightly more positive (Anxo et al. 2007).

Despite the overall high part-time rate, also in the Netherlands part-time working hours have a negative effect on a worker's career and, related to this, on wages. Russo and Hassink (2008) argue that firms may use promotions to stimulate human capital accumulation and skill acquisition. Human capital accumulation is, however, slow in part-time jobs and therefore the incidence of promotion

will be low among part-time workers. In addition, promotion rates may be low among part-time workers when firms use the number of hours worked as a screening device or to measure effort. The authors expect that the part-time wage gap will not increase among young workers but will rather develop over time, as the effects of forgone promotions during spells of part-time work accumulate. The empirical results from their study shows that the part-time wage gap is not found among school-leavers. In the course of their careers, however, part-timers forgo promotion possibilities and, as a result, have less wage growth. Similarly, in a qualitative study in Germany, 20 human resource managers (12 men and 8 women) were interviewed to find out how they assess part-time work in leading positions (Koch 2008). The results of the interviews show that human resource managers reject part-time work in leading positions in general. Furthermore, advancement opportunities for highly qualified part-time employees are refused. The managers argue that leading positions and working part-time are not compatible. This implies that the legal claim for part-time promotion in leading positions is also counteracted (Koch 2008). A final example refers to the United Kingdom as there is a clear wage penalty for working part-time. Women working part-time generally earn 40 % less per hour than men working full-time. This pay penalty associated with part-time employment is a key component of why the gender pay gap in the United Kingdom is one of the largest in Europe (Rubery and Smith 2006). It is connected to the highly segregated nature of part-time employment in the United Kingdom (see also above).

Impact of working part-time on work–life balance

From the perspective of work–life balance part-time working hours should be rated positively inasmuch as more individualised working hours can help employees to reconcile their work obligations and personal life. It is therefore likely that the availability of part-time working hours has a positive effect on the female participation rate (Jaumotte 2003). More specifically, Burchell et al. (2007) have investigated the impact of working hours on (amongst others) work–life balance, based on data from the European working conditions survey (EWCS). In this survey respondents are asked how well their work fits in with their non-working life, based on a four-point scale ranging from 'very well' to 'not well at all'. On a general level part-time workers, both male and female, are more satisfied with their work–life balance than full-time employees. Particularly high levels of satisfaction are found among male part-time workers with a partner who is a homemaker and among female part-timers with an unemployed or non-employed partner. Based on a multivariate analysis the authors conclude that the volume of working hours is the main dimension of working time which determines work–life balance. That is, 'the higher the number of hours worked, the more likely men and women are to report that their working hours are incompatible with family and other commitments' (ibid: 49). This seems a strong argument in favour of part-time working hours or rather short full-time working hours.

4.2 Working overtime

A second indicator of flexibility in the length of working hours is the share of employees working overtime. Overtime is a rather easy, albeit costly, solution for employers facing a (short-term) increase in output demand. From the employee point of view overtime may be attractive because of the pay premium involved. At the same time employees may feel obliged to work overtime because of career considerations or because they are replacing colleagues. Graph 7 summarises data on overtime, where overtime 'includes all hours worked, paid or unpaid, in excess of normal hours, which are the number of hours fixed in each country by or in pursuance of laws, regulations, collective agreements or employment contract or where not so fixed, the number of hours in excess of which any time worked is remunerated at overtime rates or forms an exception to the recognised rules or custom of the establishment or the process concerned' (EC 2006, based on ILO recommendation). It appears that the variation within Europe is large, with the highest share of employees working overtime found in Iceland (49.1 % of the male employees and 23.8 % of the female employees) and the lowest in Bulgaria (2.6 % of both the male and female employees). Other countries with a relatively high level of overtime are the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Austria. Presumably the high scores are related to the prevailing favourable economic situation at

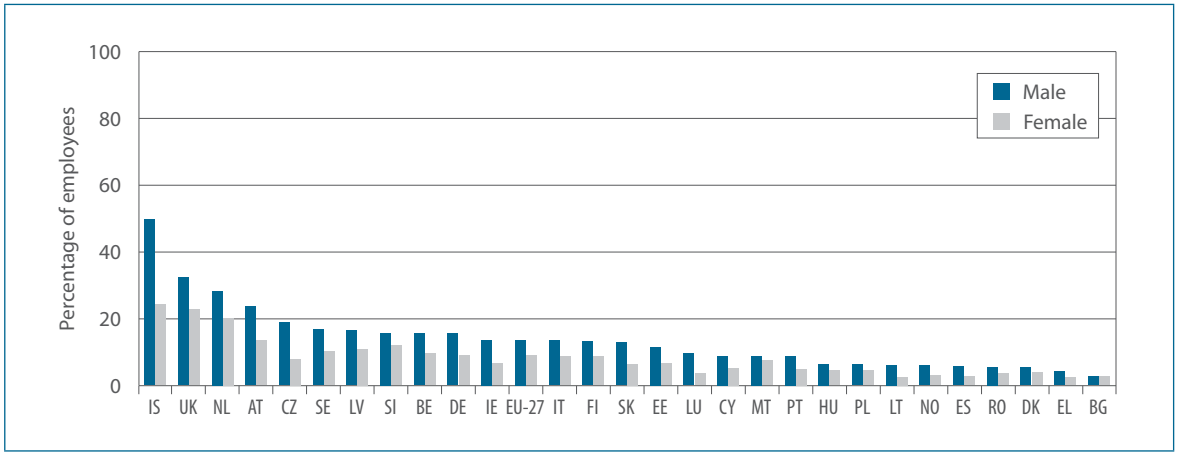
the time of data collection. On average across Europe the proportion of employees working overtime seems fairly limited (13.4 % of the male and 8.7 % of the female employees in the EU-27). This may be related to the fact that overtime is rather expensive, which would render this particular working time arrangement unpopular amongst employers in case of sudden changes in demand. At the same time it seems that the Netherlands, Austria and the United Kingdom have fairly high rates of unpaid overtime (e.g. Statistics in Focus 2004).

A second feature following from Graph 7 is the gender difference in working overtime. With the exception of Bulgaria, in all countries the proportion of male employees working overtime is higher than the proportion of female employees. The gender gap in the percentage of employees working overtime varies and is rather large in Iceland (25.3 percentage points), followed by the Czech Republic (10.9 percentage points) and Austria (10 percentage points). The gender gap is low (2 percentage points or less) in the countries with the lowest level of overtime (Malta, Denmark, Greece, Poland, Romania and Hungary).

Paid and unpaid overtime

Data from 2001 show that the overtime hours of men with a full-time job are more likely to be paid than the overtime hours of women with a full-time job. In 2001, women with a full-time job worked three hours of paid overtime out of seven hours of all overtime per week (about 40 %), whereas men with a full-time job worked five hours of paid overtime out of nine hours of all overtime per week (60 %). Although part-timers worked fewer overtime hours, relatively more overtime hours were paid, at least for women. In Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy and Finland, the proportion of paid overtime hours of full-time employees or part-time employees was much higher (at least 70 %) than the EU average. In Germany, Italy and Finland, part-time employees were reimbursed for almost all overtime hours. In the United Kingdom, the rate of paid overtime hours was high for part-time employees only (who were likely to be part-timers working extra hours and paid at the same hourly rate and not with overtime premium); for full-time employees, less than a half of overtime hours were paid (Statistics in Focus 2004).

Graph 7 Share of employees working overtime, by gender, 2004



Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, ad hoc module 2004 (no data available for France and Liechtenstein)

Development over time

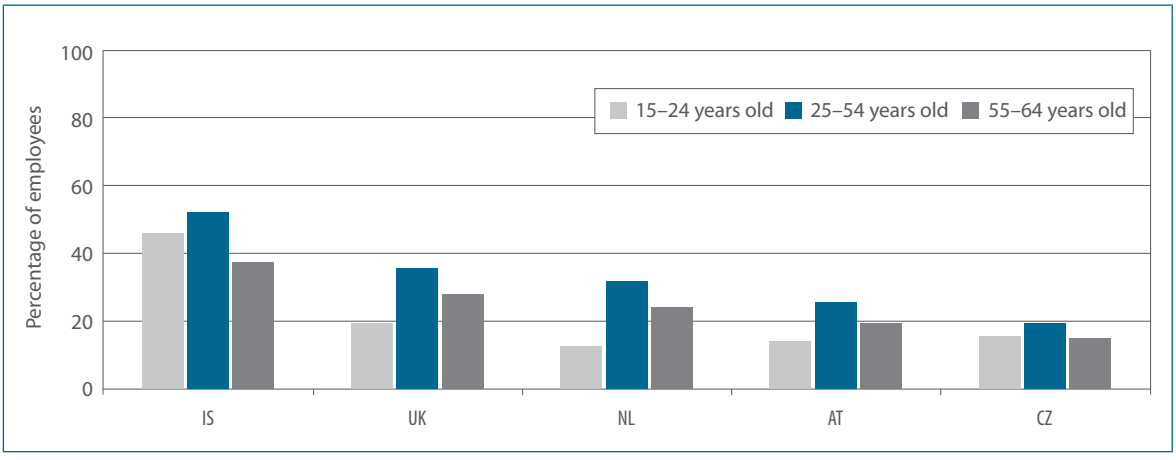
There is very limited information on the development of working overtime due to the lack of harmonised data. National data for Finland show that the share of salary and wage earners sometimes working 'overtime for which they receive compensation' has been slowly increasing in the past few decades, from the total of 62 % in 1984 to 71 % in 2008. There is practically no gender difference (women 70 %, men 71 % in 2008). Over time, it has become more common that the compensation is given in time off instead of through wages. Interestingly, men receive the compensation typically through wages, women in time off, which presumably has an impact on the gender pay gap. In addition, the share of salary and

wage earners 'sometimes working overtime without compensation' strongly increased in the 1980s and 1990s — from 20 % in 1984 to 34 % in 1997 — but decreased at the onset of the 2000s to some extent. In 2008, 29 % of Finnish wage and salary earners report that they sometimes work overtime without compensation. This is slightly more typical for women (30 %) than men (28 %). In this sense, the situation has been reversed compared to the early 1980s (women 18 % versus men 22 %). It seems likely that the increase in unpaid overtime is related to the shift towards a service economy, as unpaid overtime work is strongly related to socioeconomic position. Half of the upper white-collar employees compared to 27 % of lower white-collar employees and 11 % of blue-collar employees, do overtime work without compensation. These developments would also imply that it becomes more difficult to measure the extent of overtime work: on one hand, working time accounts frequently define overtime work not until the end of the reference period. On the other hand, overtime seems increasingly not compensated by money but by time off (Fischer et al. 2007).

Overtime over the life course

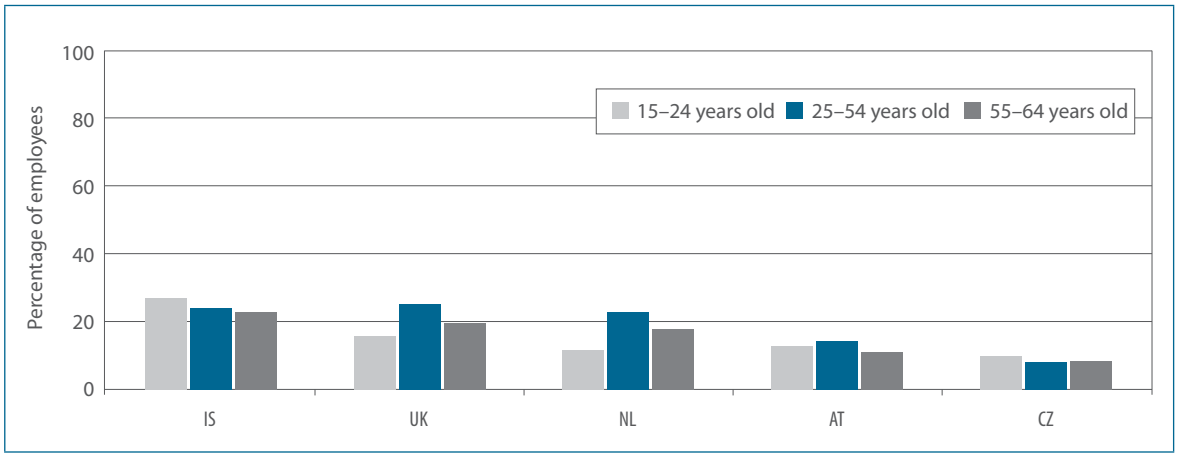
From an employees' point of view, working overtime might be an attractive option because of the extra payment involved. This may seem particularly relevant for young persons entering the labour market, but also for prime age workers who may have a family to support. One might also argue that overtime will occur more in higher-level jobs as a result of which overtime may be concentrated among the higher age groups. Graph 8 illustrates the share of male employees by age groups in the five countries with the highest rates of overtime. In these countries the proportion of male employees working overtime appears to be highest among the prime age employees. In Austria, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom this group is followed by the older workers. In Iceland, however, the overtime rate is higher among young male employees, whereas in the Czech Republic hardly any difference exists between the youngest and oldest age group. Among female employees the patterns seem slightly different (Graph 9). In Iceland, of all female employees, the young age group has the highest overtime rate. In the Netherlands and the United Kingdom the female pattern is similar to the male pattern, with higher levels of overtime in the two older age groups. In Austria and the Czech Republic the differences between the female age groups appear rather small. In the countries with average or low levels of overtime among employees, similar variation occurs. With respect to male employees, in most countries overtime is more common in the prime age category. Among female employees more variation is found, though the general level is low and (as a result) the differences are small.

Graph 8 Share of male employees working overtime by age group in Iceland, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Austria and the Czech Republic, 2004



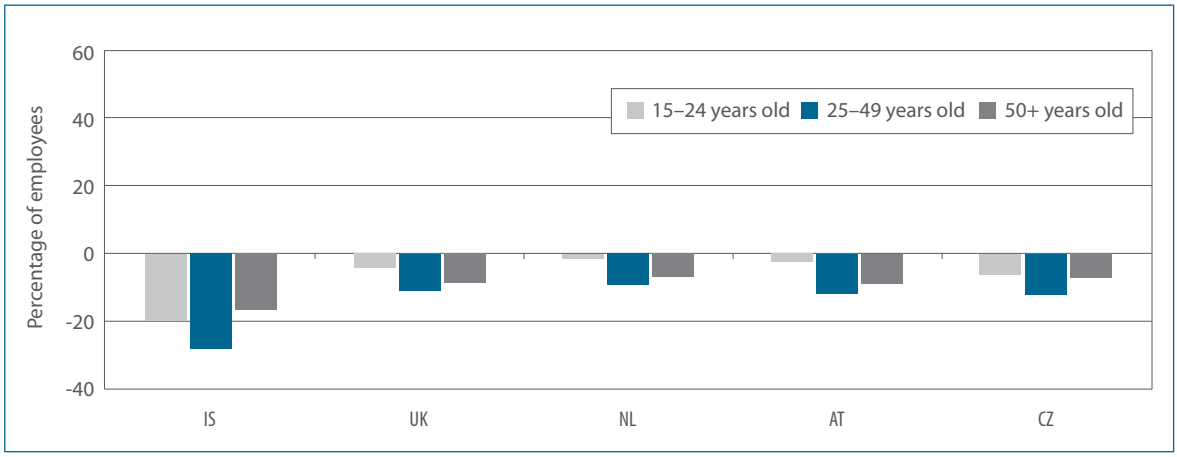
Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, ad hoc module 2004

Graph 9 Share of female employees working overtime by age group in Iceland, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Austria and the Czech Republic, 2004



Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, ad hoc module 2004

Graph 10 Gender gaps in working overtime by age group in Iceland, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Austria and the Czech Republic, 2004



Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, ad hoc module 2004

Graph 10 presents the gender gaps in working overtime in countries with the highest share of employees working overtime. The gender gap is defined as the share of female employees working overtime minus the share of male employees working overtime. Given the prevalence of working overtime among male employees, the gender gaps are negative in all cases. The graph shows that the gender gaps across the life course are highest in Iceland, whereas in the other countries these are rather small. In all countries, though, the gap is highest among prime age employees. In four of the five countries the gap is smallest among young employees. In Iceland, however, the gender gap is smallest among the employees aged 50+.

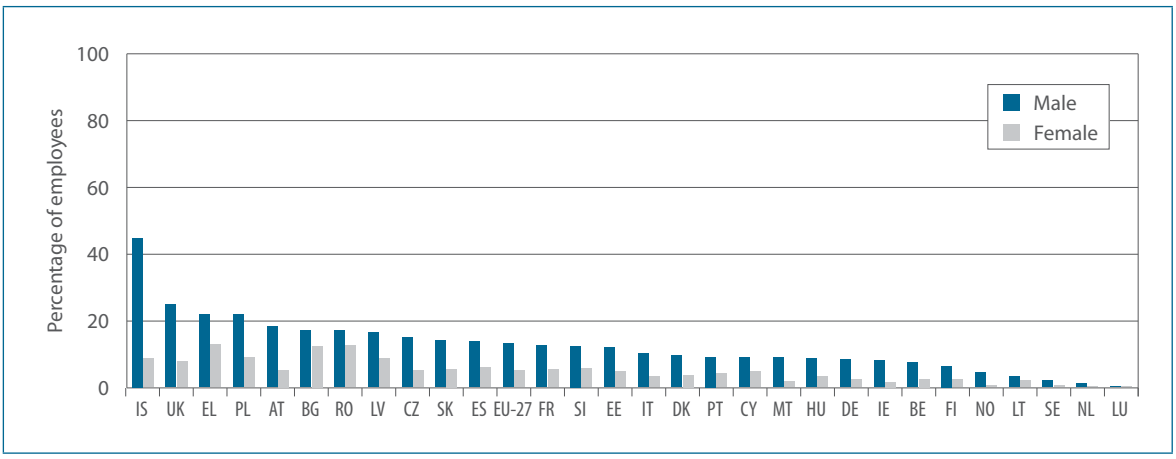
4.3 Long hours

A third indicator of flexibility in the length of working time is the percentage of employees working long hours. In line with other studies, such as those from Eurofound (e.g. Parent-Thirion 2007), long hours are defined as working 48 hours or more per week. Again there is some variation throughout

Europe; among male employees the highest rate of long hours working is found in Iceland followed by the United Kingdom, Greece and Poland (Graph 11). An important characteristic of the Icelandic economy is its large degree of labour market flexibility involving numerical flexibility. Since Iceland's membership of the European Economic Area in 1994, working time has become more regulated. The regulations concerning working hours, part-time work, temporary work and employment termination are, however, very relaxed within the scope of EU directives in these areas. This means that flexibility in regard to working time arrangements is to a large extent determined by employers. The United Kingdom initially opposed the EU directive on working time, but incorporated it into the Working Time Regulation Act in 1998. The government, however, secured a voluntary 'opt out clause' which permitted individual employees to voluntarily work hours in excess of the 48-hour average weekly limit established by the EU directive. The high share of employees working long hours in Greece and Poland is confirmed in other studies on working time (e.g. Parent-Thirion et al. 2007). It appears that at sector level, working long hours is most common among agricultural and fishery workers (Parent-Thirion et al. 2007). This implies that working long hours is not a recent development but more a 'traditional' method of organising flexibility. However, managers make up another occupational group with long hours. In the United Kingdom it is also common for men in skilled trade occupations, such as construction, and some lower paid male-dominated jobs, such as private security firms and transport, to work long hours.

On the other end of the scale are Norway, Lithuania, Sweden, the Netherlands and Luxembourg where the share of male employees working long hours is less than 5 %. In regard to gender differences, relatively high rates of female employees working long hours (i.e. more than 10 %) are found in Greece, Bulgaria and Romania. In the majority of countries the share of female employees working long hours is around or less than 5 %. Again in all countries the share of male employees working long hours is (considerably) higher than the rate of female employees, with the highest gender gap found in Iceland (37 percentage points) and the smallest gap in the Netherlands (1 percentage point).

Graph 11 Share of employees working long hours (48 or more), by gender, 2007



Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2007 (no data available for Liechtenstein)

Development over time

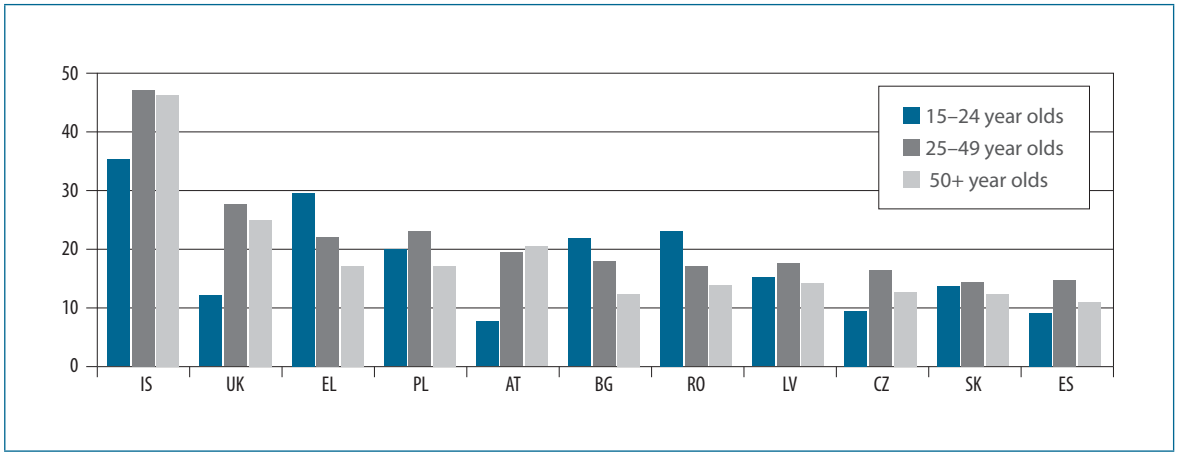
The development of working long hours between 1992 and 2007 shows no clear trend. In most of the older EU Member States the share of employees working long hours is rather stable or fluctuates slightly (e.g. Denmark, Germany, Greece, France, Italy and the Netherlands). In a few countries, such as Belgium and Spain, the share seems to increase. For some countries, particularly the new Member States, data are not available for the full period. In Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia, the share of employees seems

to increase, but the figures for the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary and Malta suggest a decrease. In Poland the figure seems stable, whereas in Slovenia the figures fluctuate.

Long hours over the life course

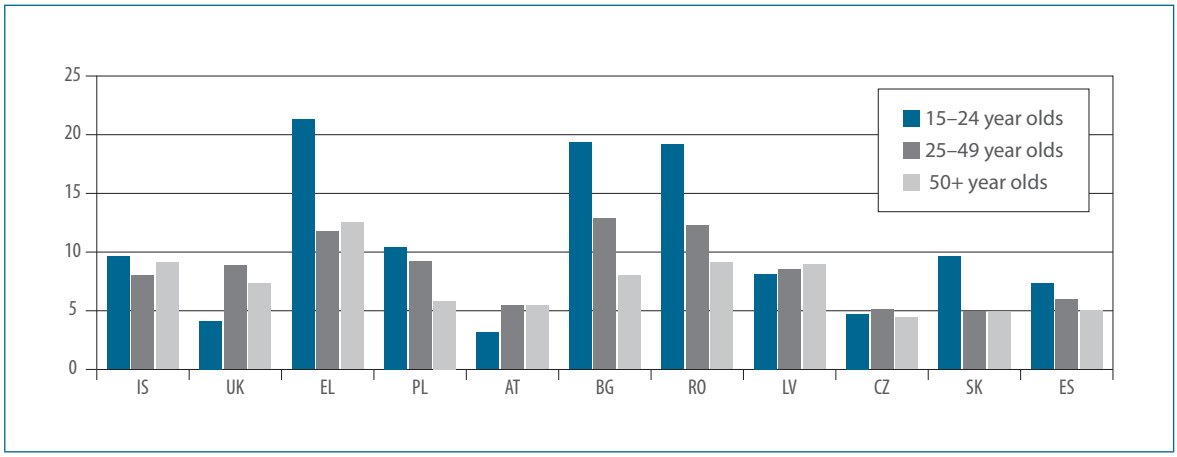
Long hours are generally considered as employer driven, having a negative impact on the work–life balance. Yet, for particular groups, notably male employees, working long hours might be attractive because of the payment involved. Graphs 12 and 13 summarise the share of male and female employees working long hours by age group, for countries with an above average level of long hours. Male employees in the youngest age group in Greece, Bulgaria and Romania have the highest rates of working long hours; this proportion decreases over the age groups. In most of the other countries the proportion is highest in the prime age group and then slightly lower in the older age group. In Austria there is hardly a difference between the prime age and the older age group. Among women, similar patterns are found: in Greece, Bulgaria and Romania the rate of working long hours is highest among the young employees. In the other countries the age differences are rather small.

Graph 12 Share of male employees working long hours, by age group, 2004



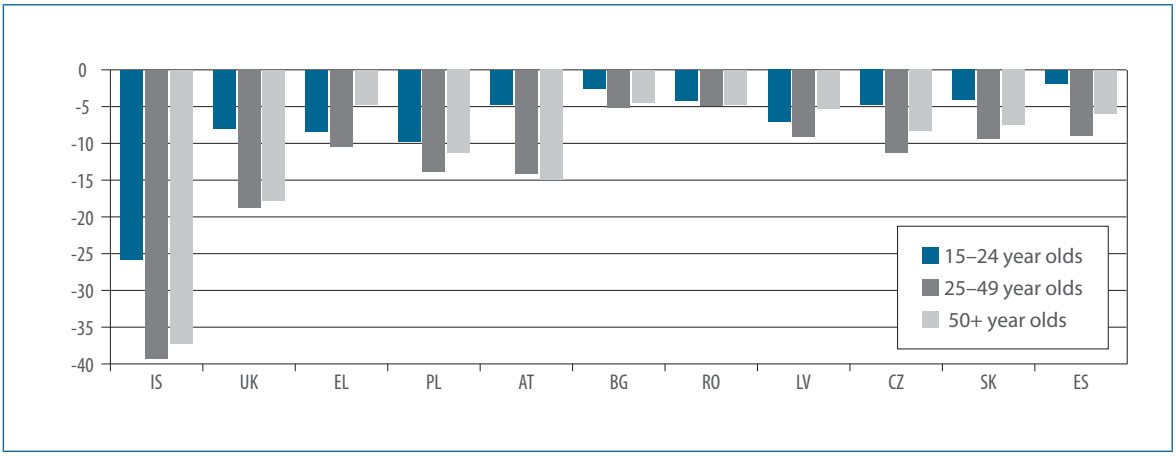
Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2007

Graph 13 Share of female employees working long hours, by age group, 2004



Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2007

Graph 14 Gender gap in long hours, by age group, 2004



Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2007

Graph 14 presents the gender gap in working long hours in countries with the highest share of employees working long hours. The gender gap is defined as the share of female employees working long hours minus the share of male employees working long hours. The gender gap in long hours working is negative in all cases, which is the result of the prevalence of long hours working among male employees in all age groups. Again, the gender gap in working long hours across the life course is highest in Iceland. In most countries the gap is highest among prime age employees and smallest among young employees. In Austria, however, the gender gap is highest in the oldest age group, whereas in Greece and Latvia the gap is smallest among the older workers.

Impact of working long hours on work–life balance

Working long hours appears to have a negative impact on work–life balance. According to Parent-Thirion et al. (2007), three times as many workers working long hours compared to other workers feel that their working hours do not fit in with their social and family commitments. Studies from the United Kingdom show that reasons for working long hours vary; for manual employees, financial reasons seem most important while managers and professionals state it is mainly due to job commitment and workload. Those with the most autonomy over how they organise their work are the most likely to attribute long working hours to their job commitment, even after taking into account their occupational level (Culley et al. 1999). This connection of long hours with high levels of autonomy represents a 'double-edged' situation where flexibility and discretion come alongside an obligation to work long hours, particularly when workloads are heavy and variable (Fagan 2009). Working long hours may also be a competitive tactic for promotion in flatter and more individualised organisational structures (Crompton and Brockmann 2006) and is a way to avoid redundancy in the current deteriorating economic climate. It seems that many full-timers would like to reduce their hours and would be willing to do so with a cut in earnings (TUC 2002). This desire is particularly pronounced among those working the longest hours (Fagan 2001).

As discussed above, the volume of working hours is the main dimension of working time which determines work–life balance. According to a study by Burchell et al. (2007), dissatisfaction with work–life balance is more pronounced among workers who regularly work long hours. Employees' dissatisfaction with working long hours is even higher when the work schedule becomes more 'unsociable'. This applies to both male and female employees, although the dissatisfaction is highest among men with long and very unsociable work schedules. Having the autonomy to vary working hours seems to improve the work–life balance somehow but is not enough to offset the large negative impact of long and unsocial hours.

4.4 Summary and conclusions

Box 3 summarises the countries in regard to the three indicators of flexibility in the length of working hours. For each indicator three groups are distinguished: a group ranking below EU-27 average, a group with scores around the EU-27 average and a group with shares clearly above the EU-27 average. There does not appear to be a clear pattern regarding the flexibility in the length of working hours in terms of these indicators. The most flexible countries seem to be Austria and the United Kingdom, which have a high ranking on all three indicators. The Netherlands has a high score on part-time employment and working overtime, whereas Iceland and the Czech Republic have high scores on working overtime and working long hours. At the other end, four countries appear to be the least flexible and score low on all three indicators: Portugal, Lithuania, Cyprus and Hungary. This implies that the majority of countries have some level of flexibility in the length of working hours.

With regard to the life course perspective, there appear to be some patterns. For male employees, working part-time is least common in the prime age group, suggesting that part-time hours facilitate a combination of work with education for the young age group and phased retirement for the old age group (although the levels remain low compared to female employees). Working overtime and long hours is more common in the prime age group and the older age group. However, in some countries long hours are more common among young employees. The main form of flexibility among female employees is part-time work. Although having children is an important reason to work part-time, part-time rates in the prime age group are not consistently the highest. When the focus is on gender gaps by age groups, it appears that the gender gap is generally the highest among the prime age employees. Though in most countries the gender gaps are rather small, they are consistent in the sense that women work the shorter hours. Moreover, the gaps are not substantially lower in the older age group.

From a gender equality point of view, the increased flexibility in working hours should be rated positively as more individualised working hours can help employees to reconcile their work obligations and personal life. Therefore, it is likely that more individualised working hours have a positive effect on the female participation rate. Greater flexibility, however, may also have adverse effects on gender equality. In most countries, part-time work is still concentrated in low-paid sectors with low career and training opportunities. The concentration of women in part-time jobs may thus undermine gender equality in terms of income, responsibilities and power. It is therefore difficult to claim that greater flexibility — in terms of the length of working time — will have the desired effect of greater gender equality.

Box 3 Summary of countries regarding flexibility in the length of working hours

	Below EU-27 average	Around EU-27 average	Above EU-27 average
Part-time work	Portugal, Poland, Slovenia, Greece, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Cyprus, Latvia, Hungary, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania	Luxembourg, Denmark, Iceland, France, Italy, Ireland, Malta, Spain, Finland, Estonia	Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Belgium, Austria United Kingdom, Sweden
Working overtime	Luxembourg, Cyprus, Malta, Portugal, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania, Norway, Spain, Romania, Denmark, Greece, Bulgaria	Sweden, Latvia, Slovenia, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Finland, Slovakia, Estonia	Iceland, United Kingdom, Austria, Netherlands, Czech Republic
Working long hours	Italy, Denmark, Portugal, Cyprus, Malta, Hungary, Germany, Ireland, Belgium, Finland, Norway, Lithuania, Sweden, Netherlands, Luxembourg	Slovakia, Spain, France, Slovenia, Estonia	Iceland, United Kingdom, Greece, Poland, Austria, Bulgaria, Romania, Latvia, Czech Republic

5 FLEXIBILITY IN THE ORGANISATION OF WORKING TIME

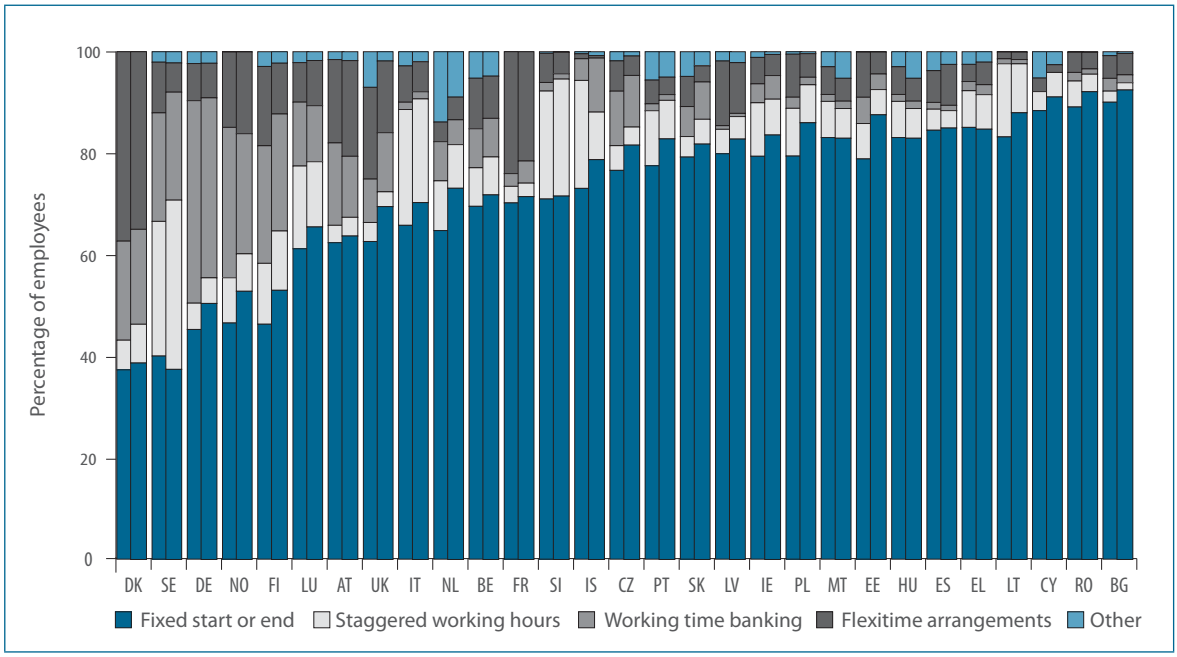
The uneasy relationship between flexibility in the length of working time and gender equality has already been discussed and documented in many studies. From an equality perspective, flexibility in the *organisation* of working time seems to offer more opportunities as this strategy may in principle be based on full-time working hours of both men and women. Yet, as illustrated in Chapter 2, the majority of employees still have fixed working time schedules. The only countries where the majority of employees have flexible working time schedules are Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Finland and Norway. Flexibility in the form of homeworking also appeared rather limited, with the highest share of employees usually working from home found among women in France and Luxembourg. This chapter will provide more details on flexibility in the organisation of working time and the effects this has on gender equality. First the focus will be on more recent forms of flexibility, namely flexible working time schedules, using harmonised data from the 2004 LFS ad hoc module on work organisation and working time, followed by working from home (using LFS 2004). In addition, flexibility in terms of working atypical hours will be described (using more recent figures from LFS 2007).

5.1 Flexible working time schedules

An important indicator for flexibility in the organisation of working time is access to flexible working time schedules; namely the share of employees who have other working time arrangements than a fixed start and end of a working day. Access to flexible working time schedules is one of the indicators for analysis under Guideline 21 of the Employment Guidelines 2008–10 ('Promote flexibility combined with employment security and reduce labour market segmentation, having due regard to the role of the social partners'). As already explained in Chapter 2, the LFS ad hoc module 2004 contains information on flexible working time schedules (or in LFS terms 'variable working hours') including: (1) staggered working hours; (2) flexitime arrangements; and (3) working time banking. With staggered hours employees have the opportunity to start and finish work at slightly different times, fixed by the employee or the employer; this implies that the employee has some opportunity to fix the hours, but the total number remains unchanged. Flexitime arrangements include the option of a flexible start and end of a working day and the possibility to fully determine personal working schedules. Working time banking refers to a system of accumulation and settlement of debit and credit hours around the standard number of weekly or monthly hours, i.e. an employee can work more hours in exchange for taking the equivalent time off at some time in the future. Over a longer period the average number of working hours is equal to the number contractually agreed for working time. Two options are distinguished: working time banking with the opportunity to only take hours off, and working time banking with the possibility to take full days off. In addition, there is a category 'other' (EC 2006).

Graph 15 summarises the share of male and female employees by working time schedules. It appears that the mix of flexible working time schedules is rather different across countries. In Denmark flexitime arrangements and (to a lesser extent) working time banking are rather common, whereas in Sweden staggered hours are an important form of flexible working time schedules. In Germany working time banking is the main form and it is also the country with the highest share of employees having access to this schedule. In the countries with the lowest levels of flexibility in working time, notably the new Member States and some south European countries, working time banking is a less well known concept. The limited flexibility mainly refers to staggered hours and flexibility in start and end times or determining personal working schedules. In line with the general figures presented in Chapter 2, the more detailed figures show that gender differences in different forms of working time flexibility are rather small.

Graph 15 Working time schedules of men and women employees, 2004



Left bar: male employees; right bar: female employees

Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, ad hoc module 2004 (no data available for Liechtenstein)

Flexible working time schedules are more common in relatively highly skilled jobs (i.e. managers, professionals and technicians). This is even more marked for men then for women (Statistics in Focus 2007; Burchell et al. 2007). In addition, flexibility seems to be concentrated in certain branches, notably public administration and business activities (Statistics in Focus 2007). A company survey in 21 European countries shows that flexible working time schedules are more common in larger establishments, although the differences are not very large: in a little less than half of small companies (less than 50 employees) such arrangements are offered compared to 62 % of companies with more than 500 employees. In addition, there are differences by size in the type of arrangements offered. The possibility to use accumulated hours for a longer period of leave (in this study considered as the most advanced type of flexibility) is about twice as common in large companies as in the smaller ones (12 % in the companies with 10–49 employees versus 24 % in the companies with more than 500 employees). A possible explanation is that schemes that allow accumulation over a longer period usually require a certain degree of formalisation. The administrative costs may be too high for smaller companies. Moreover, it is easier for larger companies to cope with absences of employees on leave through their accumulated hours (Riedman et al. 2006). The study of Riedman et al. (2006) also provides information on the reasons for introducing flexible working time arrangements. The most common reason was to enable employees to reconcile work and family/personal life: 68 % of the interviewed managers reported this as one of the reasons, or the only reason, for the introduction. Secondly, almost half of the managers stated that a better adaptation of working hours to the establishment's workload was a reason for introducing flexible working time schedules. In this last group, about two thirds also indicated the importance of enabling employees to improve their work–life balance. As many managers give both reasons, the authors conclude that it is not possible to say which reason was decisive.

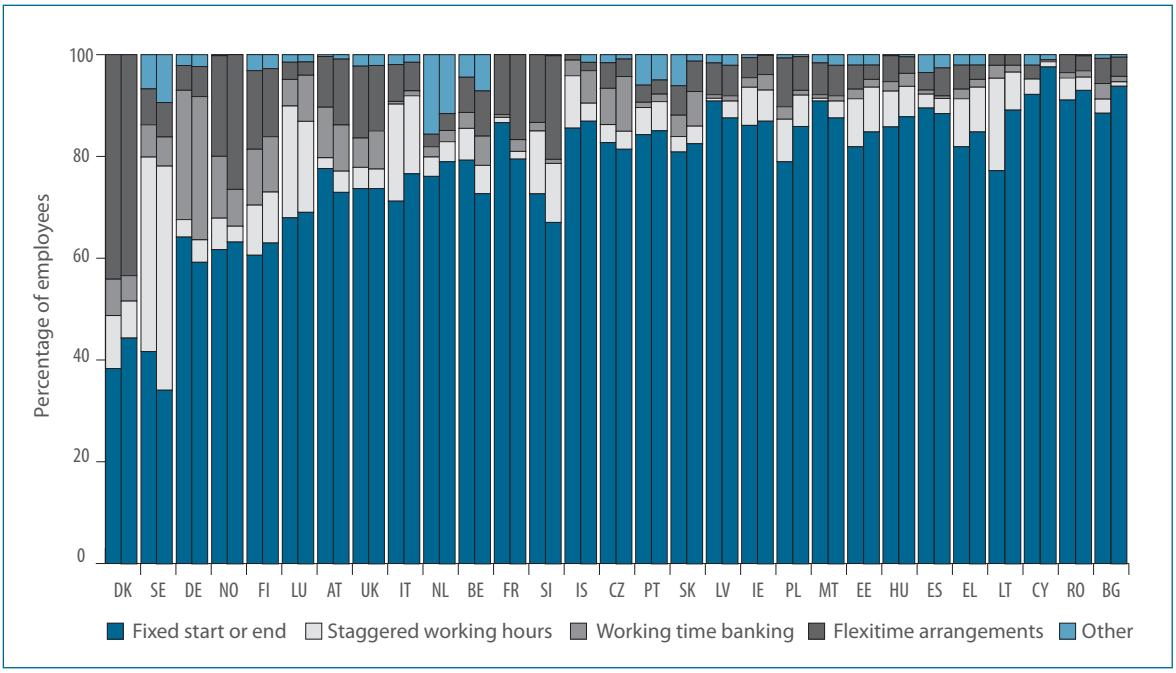
Development over time

Due to the lack of longitudinal data, it is not possible to evaluate the trend in flexible working hours. In the United Kingdom several sources indicate a clear increase in the availability of flexible working time schedules. The majority of employers now offer some flexible options to at least part of their workforce. German research also shows a clear increase in flexible working time schedules. In the Netherlands, however, there are no indications that the number of employees with flexible working time schedules is increasing.

Flexible working time over the life course

Regarding differences in age, the group aged 25–49 are most likely to have flexible working time schedules, followed by the older age group. The youngest age group has the lowest level of flexibility in working time (see Graphs 16–18). This age pattern is consistent with the fact that flexible working time schedules are more common in relatively highly skilled jobs, i.e. managers and professionals. The differences between the age groups are rather small though. In the countries with the highest levels of flexibility, working time banking is particularly less common among the younger employees.

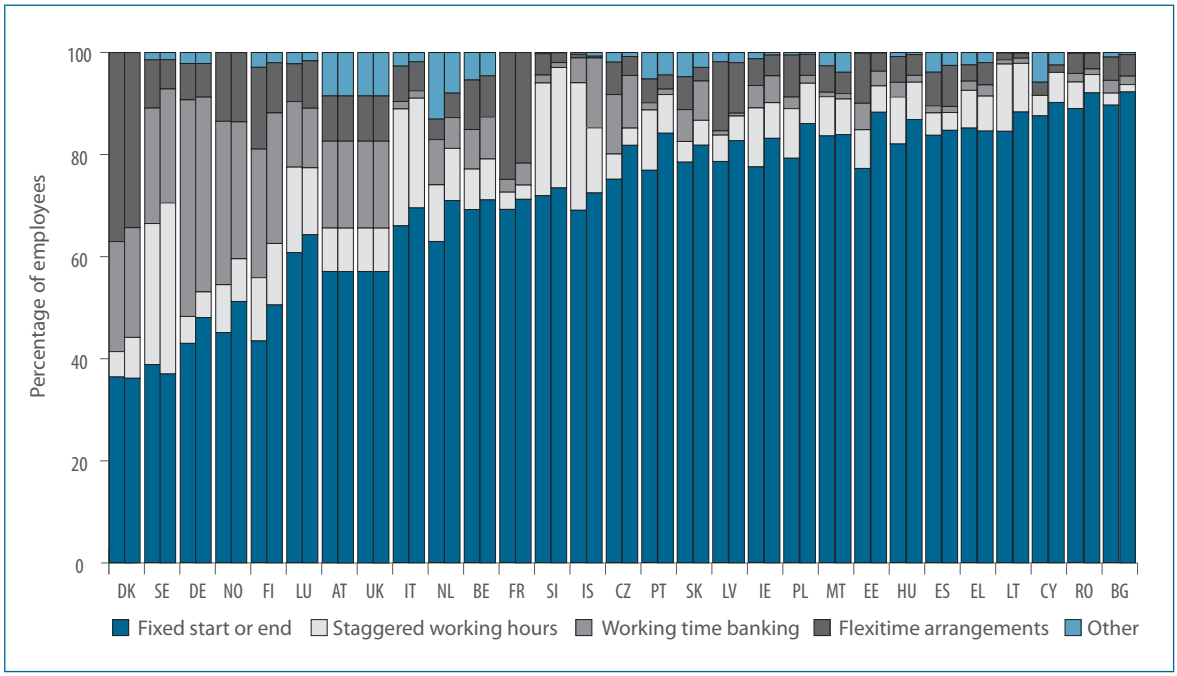
Graph 16 Working time schedules of men and women employees aged 15–24, 2004



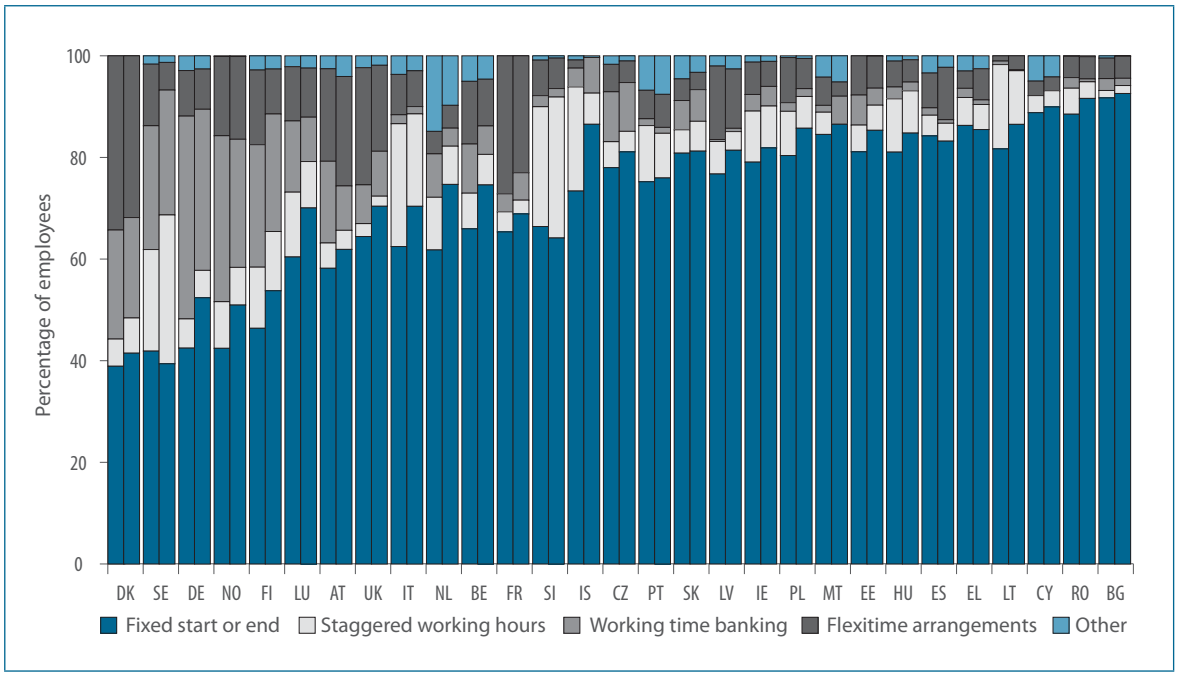
Left bar: male employees; right bar: female employees

Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, ad hoc module 2004 (no data available for Liechtenstein)

Graph 17 Working time schedules of men and women employees aged 25-49, 2004



Graph 18 Working time schedules of men and women employees aged 50+, 2004



NB: Figures for the United Kingdom refer to the age groups 25–54 and 55+
Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, ad hoc module 2004 (no data available for Liechtenstein)

Use/availability of flexible working time schedules

Flexible working time schedules are often considered as a reconciliation facility, supporting working parents to combine work and family life. Household analysis on the 2004 ad hoc module shows, however, that at the EU level employees aged 25–49 with children are less likely to have jobs with flexible working time schedules than those without children. This is the case for both for men and women and the pattern is also found in countries with a high level of flexible working time schedules (Statistics in Focus 2007). Apparently flexible working time schedules do not provide much support for working parents.

Another important issue refers to the possibility of making actual use of flexible working time schedules. This presupposes a careful design which takes into account the preferences of the employees, in addition to a favourable organisational culture. In the United Kingdom a number of organisational case studies have revealed how the ability of employees to take-up options to work flexibly are heavily contingent on the attitudes of line managers, the actual working arrangements and expectations of co-workers, and more broadly on whether the 'organisational culture' accommodates or penalises those who seek to deviate from full-time working hours (e.g. Smithson et al. 2004; Fagan et al. 2008). There tend to be gendered expectations about flexibility which shape the behaviour and expectations of line managers and employees. The work–life balance employer survey (2007) showed that take-up of all flexible working time arrangements was higher in workplaces with more female than male employees (Hayward et al. 2007) suggesting 'flexibility' is still largely considered a 'female' way of organising working time. It also showed that women were more likely to have some form of flexible working time arrangement in place (30 % compared to 20 % of men); among parents, just under a third of mothers used some flexible arrangements compared with one fifth of fathers. These findings are supported by results from the workplace employee relations survey (2004), which showed that men were more likely to perceive particular flexible working schedules i.e. flexitime or compressed working weeks as options that were simply not available to them (Nadeem and Metcalf 2007). Finnish research on working time banking also indicated that the use of flexible time schedules was rather problematic. Many employees do not have the opportunity to take all the 'plus-hours' off. In addition, employees seem to appreciate longer periods of days-off, but only some working time banking systems allowed longer periods than hours or a few days (Anttila 2005).

In contrast, German research showed that the usage of long-term working accounts is concentrated in large companies with a high share of male employees. In this respect, there is a fair degree of evidence that long-term working time accounts are an instrument that particularly suits the typical 'male' working time arrangement over the life course in terms of full income, continuous full-time employment (with overtime hours) and early exit. By using long-term working time accounts, large firms can increase the scope of flexibility for their (mostly) full-time employed male workforce without changing the remuneration or the type of employment relationship. A high share of female employees in large-size companies does not lead to usages that would accommodate the interests of female employees (such as family leave). Interestingly, such options are more often found among small and medium-sized firms, particularly when these do not have a works or staff council. Moreover, in contrast to large-sized firms, the likelihood of having a long-term working time account increases in small and medium-sized companies when the share of female employees is high (Wotschack and Hildebrandt 2007).

Impact of flexible working time schedules on work–life balance

Generally it is assumed that flexible working time schedules have a positive impact on the work–life balance and should therefore improve quality of life. However, this does not seem to be supported by empirical evidence. Research shows that employees (and self-employed) working fixed starting and finishing times are more satisfied on their work–life balance than employees with variable working times (Parent-Thirion et al. 2007). This suggests that predictability is more important than flexibility. This study also shows that the workers with the greatest autonomy on how their working time is organised ('working time is determined entirely by myself') have the highest level of dissatisfaction regarding how their working hours fit in with their family and social life. A relevant factor in this respect is presumably the number of working hours. Self-employed persons make up a large part of the group workers with the most autonomy on their working time and this group tends to work longer hours than employees. Another important issue

relates to the fact that flexibility needs to be controlled by discipline. If there are no strict boundaries between paid work and leisure, there is a danger that evening or weekend work becomes 'normal', which may put a strain on private and/or family life.

Effects of flexible working time schedules for companies

Riedman et al. (2006) have investigated the effects of introducing flexible working time schedules from the employers' point of view. Higher job satisfaction is the effect most frequently mentioned (61 %), followed by a better adaptation of working hours to workload (54 %). Other positive effects are lower absenteeism (27 %) and a reduction of paid overtime (22 %). Managers seem rather positive in this respect as negative effects are rarely mentioned. Communication problems occur according to 10 % of the managers, increased costs according to 5 % and 'other negative effects' according to 4 %. In regard to establishment size, managers of larger companies report both positive and negative effects of flexible working time schedules more frequently than managers from smaller establishments. The differences are small though. Overall, the firms with the flexible working time schedules that allow most flexibility are the most positive.

5.2 Working from home

Another indicator of flexibility in the organisation of working time is working from home. In Chapter 2 it was illustrated that the share of employees usually working from home — with 'usually' defined as more than 50 % of the working time — is rather low. A more common arrangement is to work one day per week at home. A distinction can also be made between workers who work at home with a PC all or almost all of the time (teleworkers) and homework excluding telework. There is only limited systematic information on working from home for the European countries, partly because the statistical processing of this organisational form is rather complicated (Stile 2004). The European working conditions survey (EWCS), covering 21 European countries, provides some information, but this survey includes employees and the self-employed. According to this survey, the country with the highest number of respondents teleworking all or almost all of the time from home with a PC was the Czech Republic at 9.1 %, followed by Austria at 5.1 % and Slovakia at 5.0 %. Countries with the lowest number were Bulgaria at 0.2 %, Romania at 0.5 % and Portugal at 0.6 %. If teleworking was excluded, the country with the highest number of respondents who stated that they worked at home all or almost all of the time was Ireland, at 5.2 %, followed by Belgium at 5.1 % and Finland at 4.8 %. Countries with the lowest scores were Portugal, Malta and Latvia at around 1 % (Eurofound 2007).

When looking at personal characteristics, such as gender and education, the countries show a mixed picture. In most countries the share of men working from home is slightly higher than the share of women. Exceptions are the Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Italy, Romania, Slovenia and Spain. A more consistent characteristic is educational level as the majority of teleworkers and workers from home generally have a high level of education. Moreover, teleworking and homeworking is more common amongst managers and professionals (Eurofound 2007). Research from the United Kingdom also indicates a clear gender division, with men mostly teleworking in managerial occupations or skilled trades and women in administrative and secretarial occupations (Hotopp 2002). In addition, part of the homeworking done by women refers to manual work, which is low paid and often insecure.

Developments over time

The limited availability of harmonised data hampers an assessment of the developments over time. According to Eurofound (2007) there is evidence (based on national sources) that the share of homeworkers (including telework) is increasing. The national reports provide very limited information on trends with respect to working from home. In the United Kingdom the general availability of homeworking has increased: in 1998 16 % of the workplaces offered their non-managerial staff the option to work at home, whereas in 2004 this was over a quarter of workplaces. Moreover, there is potential for further expansion in homeworking as a survey of employers showed that at least 16 % had plans to extend the opportunity to work from home to all staff in the future (Smeaton et al. 2007). Norwegian research also suggests an increase in working at home: the share of employees who report that they have a 'home office' grew from 14 % in 2001 to 28 % in 2007 (Bråten et al. 2008). Futhermore, the EWCS claims that in some countries the incidence of telework has increased significantly over the past decade as a result

of new technologies. At the same time however, the survey states 'that the number of full-time teleworkers remains relatively small as a proportion of the overall workforce' (Eurofound 2007: 2).

Working from home over the life course

Regarding age the data from the EWCS show that in some countries, such as Austria, Slovakia, Finland and the Netherlands, most homeworkers are in the middle age groups. However, in others, such as Bulgaria, homeworkers are common in the young age group. In a few countries, including the Czech Republic, Estonia and the United Kingdom, working from home among older workers seems to be on the rise. This rise could be related to specific initiatives to increase the participation rate of older workers (Eurofound 2007).

Impact of working from home on work–life balance

The EWC Survey shows that working from home increases flexibility as generally workers can determine their own start and end time of the working day and have more options to organise working time around other tasks. According to the EWCS, 64 % of people who work at home (including teleworkers) do not have set start and finish times. Moreover, almost 54 % of the employees working at home claim that they determine their own working hours (Eurofound 2007). Working at home also seems to have a positive impact on work–life balance. According to the EWCS data, the share of employees who claim their working hours fit (very) well around their family or social commitments outside work is slightly higher amongst employees working at home compared to those working on the premises of the company (85.6 versus 81.2 %). However, working from home can also be problematic. The concept of overwork, for example, is not always recognised. In addition, working from home may easily result in 'blurred boundaries' between work and non-work, as a result of which homeworkers seem to work more atypical hours. Another issue that may arise is constant 'contactability'. From the EWCS it appeared that employees working from home are more likely to report that they had been contacted — for instance by e-mail or telephone — about matters concerning their job outside their normal working hours (Eurofound 2007).

5.3 Atypical hours

As a result of the greater tendency to have less rigid norms in regard to the (full-time) working day and week, it is probable that working at atypical times increases. Furthermore, as more people can influence the start and finish times of the working day, the evening may become a more normal part of the everyday working week for example. Yet over the last couple of years, developments in this respect seem to have been rather modest: some of the available data (covering both employees and the self-employed) are summarised in Table 2. It appears that the (male and female) share of persons working on Saturday and/or at night has remained relatively stable. Of course individual countries might show a different picture. For example, working on Saturday shows an increase among both male and female employees in countries such as Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany, France, Austria, and Slovakia. Other countries, however, such as Denmark, Estonia, Spain, Hungary and Romania, show a decrease (see the appendices for more details). Generally, and in line with findings from other studies such as from Parent-Thirion et al. (2007), the developments do not seem to indicate a trend towards a '24-hour' society.

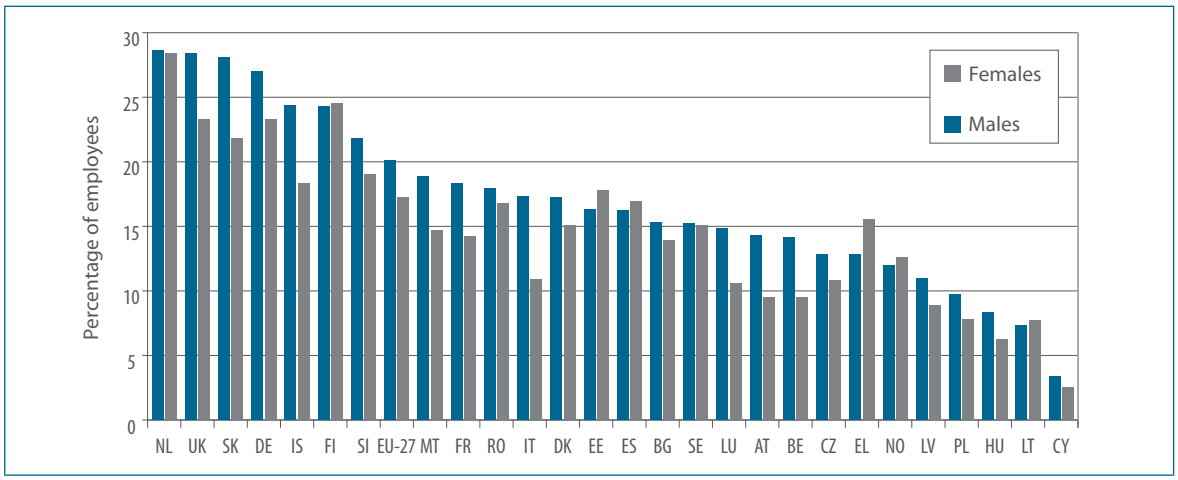
Table 2 Share of persons working atypical hours in the EU-27

	2000		2007	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Shift	16.3	13.2	19.0	16.2
Saturday	27.6	27.1	27.3	27.2
Sunday	11.3	11.5	13.2	13.3
Night	9.3	5.3	9.4	5.3
Evening	19.3	15.6	21.5	18.0

Source: Statistics in Focus (2008)

Graph 19 provides some further details in regard to evening work. The four countries with the highest share of (male) employees usually working in the evening are the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Slovakia and Germany. In all four countries more than a quarter of male employees usually work in the evening. This could be related to the expansion of the service sector and the extension of (legal) regulation of shop opening hours. At the other end are Cyprus, Lithuania and Hungary, where less than 10 % of the male and female employees usually work in the evening. In terms of gender differences, the graph shows that in most countries men are more likely to work in the evening than women. In Estonia, Greece, Spain, Norway and Lithuania, however, (slightly) more women than men usually work in the evening, whereas in the Netherlands and Finland the share is almost equal.

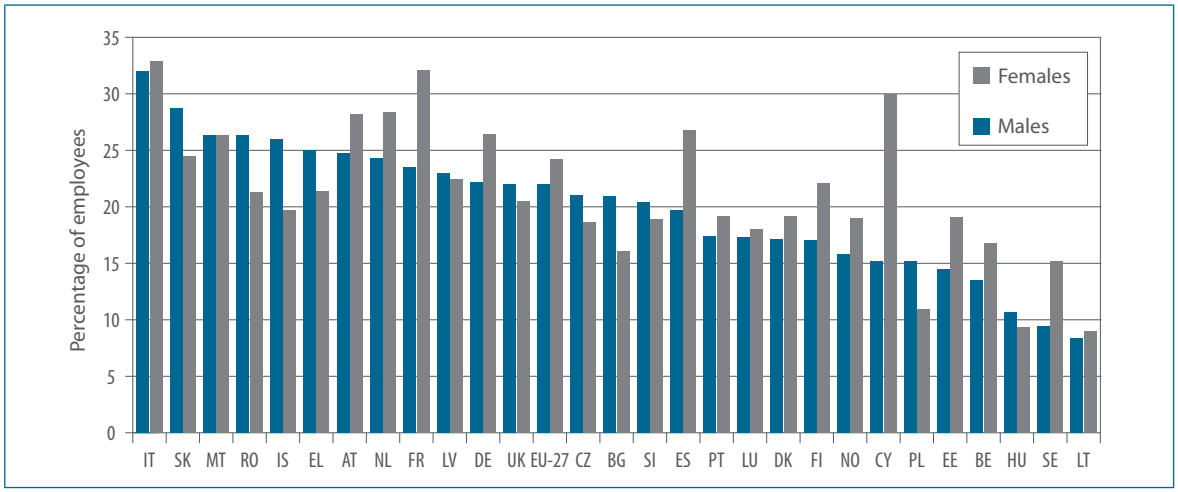
Graph 19 Share of employees usually working in the evening, by gender, 2007



Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2007 (no data available for Ireland, Portugal and Liechtenstein)

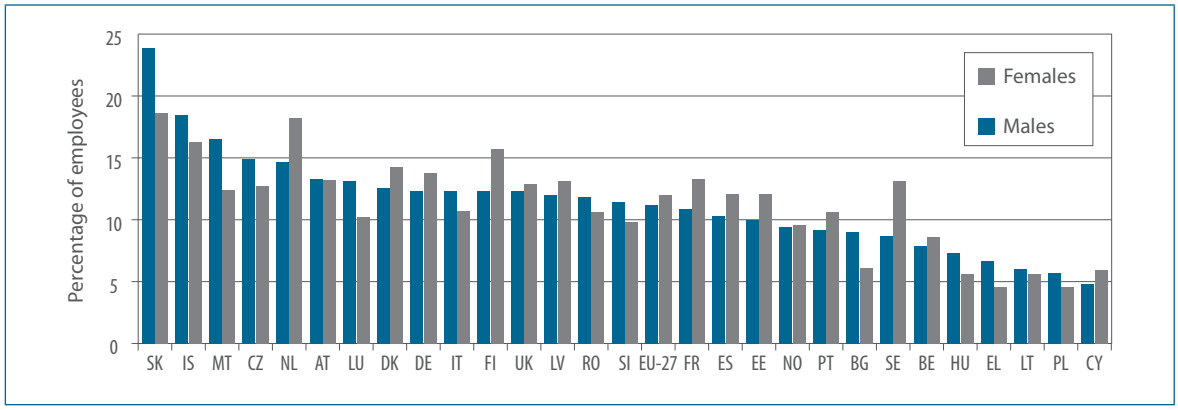
Regarding working at the weekends, the share of employees usually working on Saturday is higher than the share working on Sunday (see Graphs 20 and 21). Presumably shop opening hours are an important factor in this respect, with more limited regulations regarding Sunday openings. Italy has the highest rate of employees usually working on Saturday followed by Slovakia, which is the country that ranks highest with respect to the (male) share usually working on Sunday. Working on Saturday and Sunday is least common in Lithuania. The share of employees usually working on Sunday is also low in Poland and Cyprus. In regard to gender differences no clear pattern is visible. In the majority (17) of the 30 European countries, the share of female employees usually working on Saturday is higher than the share of male employees. This gender difference is particularly high in France, Spain and Cyprus. Gender differences seem somewhat lower regarding working on Sunday.

Graph 20 Share of employees usually working on Saturday, by gender, 2007



Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2007 (no data available for Ireland and Liechtenstein)

Graph 21 Share of employees usually working on Sunday, by gender, 2007



Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2007 (no data available for Ireland and Liechtenstein)

Atypical hours over the life course

When age is taken into account, it appears that working atypical hours is most common amongst young employees. For example, focusing on the share of employees usually working on Saturday, in Italy almost half of the female employees between 15 and 24 usually work on Saturday in comparison to only a third in the older age groups. In France almost 43 % of the younger women usually work on Saturday, compared to 32 % in the age group 25–49 and 28 % in the age group 50+. In Greece almost 40 % of the young male employees usually work on Saturday compared to a quarter of those aged 25–49 and 18 % of employees aged 50+. The higher shares among the young employees might not be surprising as working atypical hours is presumably less inconvenient for the younger age groups. Moreover, working at atypical hours might be a good strategy to combine education with a job. See the appendices for more details on atypical hours in different age groups.

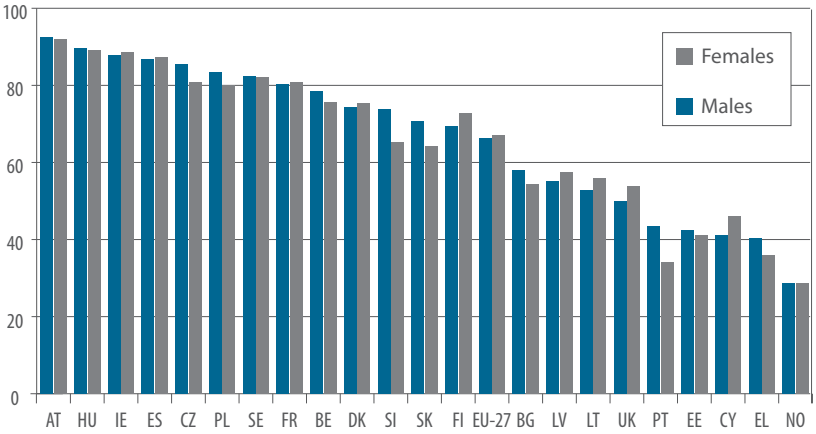
Impact of atypical hours on work–life balance

Working at atypical times is often considered as employer-driven and inconvenient for the personal lives of employees. This might particularly be the case for families as evenings and weekends may be particularly important for families to get together. This is illustrated in Finnish research that showed that married or cohabiting employees working in shifts more often experienced a lack of common time with their spouse (77 %) than their peers with other working time arrangements (68 %). This applies especially to fathers in shift work (88 %) (Salmi and Lammi-Taskula 2004). Working atypical hours might, however, offer flexibility for students as illustrated above. For employees having children, working atypical hours might be an alternative to using a childcare facility. This may also be financially advantageous. Moreover, in the families (with both parents working) where one of the spouses did shift work or period work, household chores and childcare were shared more equally than in the families where the spouses both worked during the day (Suhonen & Salmi 2004). At the European level, Burchell et al. (2007) conclude that working unsocial hours has a negative impact on the work–life balance. According to Riedman et al. (2006) from a work–life balance perspective one of the most important aspects of work at unusual hours is the possibility of planning these hours well in advance and being able to have some influence on the structure of the time schedule. Their study on companies in 21 European countries shows that employees in larger establishments tend to be in a better position than those in smaller establishments in this respect.

Graph 22 summarises data on those employees aged 24–54 who find it convenient for their personal life to work in the evening, the night or during the weekend. In most countries this share appears to be rather high, with a majority of employees in this age group finding it convenient to work in the evening, the night or during the weekend, with the highest rate found in Austria, followed by Hungary, Ireland and Spain. In Norway, Greece, Cyprus, Estonia and Portugal, however, the share of employees is considerably lower. The figures should be treated with caution, however, as 'the perception of "convenience"

is not only subjective, but also relative, e.g. if the life situation were changed to fit work, the answer can be "convenient". In some jobs, certain working time arrangements are (virtually) the only arrangements that are available (e.g. many nursing jobs). The "convenience threshold" of such jobs could be different from other occupations' (EC 2006: 11). Moreover, interpretation of the figures is also difficult because the survey question includes different forms of atypical hours. Employees might find it convenient to work during the weekend, but not during the night for example (ibid.).

Graph 22 Share of employees 25–54 finding it convenient for personal life to work in the evening, the night or during the weekend, 2004



Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey, ad hoc module 2004 (no data available for Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania, Iceland and Liechtenstein)

5.4 Summary and conclusions

It is likely that the move towards increased flexibility also has an impact on the organisation of working time. Until now, however, the statistical processing of these developments is far from complete partly due to the flexible organisation of working time usually being negotiated at the level of the firm. Yet, the available data on flexible working time schedules, homeworking and atypical hours suggest that the differences within Europe are rather large especially in regard to flexible working time schedules. Only in five countries — Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Norway and Finland — are flexible working time schedules common, although the form differs. In Denmark flexitime arrangements and (to a lesser extent) working time banking are rather common, whereas in Sweden staggered hours are an important form of flexible working time schedules. In Germany working time banking is the main form and it is also the country with the highest share of employees having access to this schedule. In the countries with the lowest levels of flexibility in working time, notably the new Member States and south European countries, working time banking is still an unfamiliar concept. Flexible working time schedules are often considered as a reconciliation facility, supporting working parents to combine work and family life. Yet it appears that there are certain limits in the actual use of flexible working time schedules. The organisational culture seems to be a particularly important factor in this respect. As long as 'flexibility' continues to be considered as mainly a 'female' way of organising working time, the use of these schemes may offer limited choice. Flexible working time schedules may also easily translate into blurring boundaries between paid work and leisure, which may have a negative impact on private and/or family life.

The available information in regard to homeworking suggests that the incidence of, for example, telework has increased significantly over the past decade as a result of new technologies. At the same time, however, the number of full-time teleworkers remains relatively small as a proportion of the overall workforce. Finally, information on atypical hours indicates that the (male

and female) share of persons working on Saturday and/or at night has remained relatively stable. There is a slight increase of the share of employees working in the evening and on Sunday, but the developments do not seem to indicate a trend towards a '24-hour' economy. Gender differences in regard to working from home and/or working at atypical hours seem to be relatively minor. An important issue in regard to the reconciliation of work and family life is the feasibility of planning atypical hours well in advance as well as being able to exert some influence on the actual time schedule.

6 CATEGORISING WORKING TIME FLEXIBILITY AND GENDER EQUALITY IN EMPLOYMENT

As illustrated in the preceding chapters, the relationship between working time flexibility and gender inequality is not very straightforward. On the one hand, many industrialised countries have promoted part-time work and/or other forms of tailored working time arrangements as a strategy for reconciling paid and unpaid work, therefore promoting female labour force participation. Furthermore, the ability to distribute time optimally over the working week seems an important element of a more female-friendly working time regime (Rubery et al. 1998). On the other hand, unequal working times are an important indication of labour market inequality between men and women, with women concentrated in low-paid, part-time jobs. Working time flexibility thus implies both threats and opportunities for a more equal distribution of paid and unpaid work, depending on the specific form of the innovation and the economic and societal environment in which this flexibility occurs. Drawing on comparative data, this chapter focuses on the interrelations between flexibility and gender equality in employment by categorising the different realities of the EU Member States both in terms of flexibility and in terms of gender equality. Malta and the three EEA–EFTA countries (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) are excluded due to a lack of comparable data.

Modelling gender equality and working time flexibility

Mutari and Figart (2001) have identified four distinct work time regimes in the Member States of the European Union, by developing measures for gender equity and working time flexibility. Gender equity is measured by the gender pay gap and the married women's labour force participation rate. Six indicators are used for flexibility; the full-time modes of working hours of both men and women; the kurtosis (based on the modes) that provides information about the distribution of average weekly working hours of both men and women; and the percentages of married women working part-time and men working overtime. Given the country scores on these indicators, the Member States are categorised as (1) male breadwinner work time regime with low scores on both gender equity as flexibility; (2) liberal flexibilisation work time regime, with high scores on flexibility and low scores on gender equity; (3) solidaristic gender equity work time regime, with high scores on gender equity but low scores on flexibility; and finally (4) high road flexibilisation work time regime, with high scores on both flexibility and gender equity.

In their categorisation, no country is yet classified as a high road flexibilisation work time regime, described by Mutari and Figart (2001: 41) as 'providing the institutional basis for a restructuring of gender relations by utilising a variety of approaches to working hours and the work week in order to balance paid and unpaid work'. The United Kingdom and, to a lesser extent, Ireland emerge as the prime examples of the liberal flexibilisation work time regime. In this case a relatively self-regulated or laissez-faire market economy relying heavily on overtime and part-time work seems to pose severe difficulties for gender equity: even among full-timers women's hours are substantially lower than men's. Denmark, France, Belgium and Finland are classified as examples of solidaristic gender equity work time regimes. These countries have made progress towards gender equity by changing social norms concerning work time; policies focusing on a shorter full-time working week have changed the male model of full-time employment, enabling men and women to participate in the labour market on an equal basis. At the same time, these countries do not rank highly in terms of flexibility (as measured along the line of Mutari and Figart). Finally, Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal are examples of a male breadwinner work time regime, as the female participation rate is low and full-time work is structured on the male model of long hours.

While the Mutari and Figart model provides a strong argument, they do not provide a real comparison of the EU Member States on the basis of the two dimensions; their categorisation is largely based on a descriptive analysis. In addition, there are a few issues in regard to the equality and flexibility indicators (see also Plantenga 2004). One problem is that their approach seems rather unbalanced as gender equity is measured by two indicators whereas flexibility is measured by six. A second problem is the overlap between the flexibility indicators of kurtosis and men's overtime; a high percentage of male overtime work automatically leads to a low kurtosis. In addition, the flexibility indicators seem to also measure gender (in)equality; married women's part-time rate and men's overtime are used to measure flexibility of work time, but also indicate gendered working time patterns.

As an alternative approach, we have categorised the EU Member States by using three indicators for each of the two dimensions. Gender equality in employment is founded on: (1) the standardised gender gap in employment; (2) the gender pay gap; and (3) the working time dissimilarity index. Working time flexibility is charted using: (4) the shape of the working time distribution (kurtosis) of all employees; (5) the percentage of employees usually working at home; and (6) the percentage of employees making use of flexible working time schedules.

Equality indicators

The standardised gender gap in employment is defined as the difference between male and female participation rates (in head count) divided by the male participation rate. It is perhaps the most basic sign of inequality in the labour market. A low gender gap in employment has been recognised by the Lisbon strategy of the European Union as the prime target for decreasing gender inequality. In order to calculate the gender gap in employment, data from the labour force surveys of 2004 for the age group 15–64 have been used, because the flexibility indicators are only available with the 2004 data. The standardised gender pay gap is a natural extension of the gender gap in employment and represents the difference between average gross hourly earnings of male employees and of female employees as a percentage of average gross hourly earnings of male employees. It can be considered as an indicator of whether the participation of men and women yield the same monetary benefits. Beyond differences in participation, it measures the potentially subordinate position of female employees within the labour market itself. Data used to calculate the gender pay gap are from the structure of earnings survey (SES) 2006 and refer to the age group 15–64. The population consists of all paid employees in enterprises with 10 employees or more (NACE Rev. 1.1 aggregate C to O (excluding L)). The data refer to 2006 as this is the first year on which harmonised data are available for all Member States. The dissimilarity index applied to the segregation in working hours is the third and final gender equality indicator. As already explained in Chapter 2, it measures the proportion of the male and/or female labour force that would have to change their working hours in order to have no segregation in working hours. The calculation is based on the categorisation of weekly working hours in six groups: 1–10 hours, 11–20 hours, 21–30 hours, 31–35 hours, 36–40 hours and 41 hours or more. As with the other two indicators, a higher score implies greater gender inequality.

Flexibility indicators

Kurtosis measures the peakedness of a given distribution. A normal distribution (in statistical terms) would yield a kurtosis value of 0. It is used for working hours in this case to determine whether or not there is a large concentration of employees at a certain number of weekly working hours. A country with a large share of its employees working 40-hour weeks would end up with a high value of kurtosis. The presence of alternative working hours, part-time or overtime, would lead to a low kurtosis value. The second measure of flexibility is the use of flexible working time schedules. The share of employees making use of flexible working time schedules is calculated by taking the sum of (1) employees having staggered hours, (2) employees whose contracts allow them to bank working hours, (3) employees who are able to vary start and end times, (4) employees who are able to determine their own working schedule and (5) employees having other non-fixed working hours (see also Chapters 2 and 5). The final measure of flexibility is homeworking. Working from home is often seen as an important and innovative strategy with regard to the organisation of work and working times in which distance and place no longer constitute restrictions. Working from home is measured as the share of employees usually working from home (more than 50 % of their working time).

Categorisation

The process of calculating the ranking of the countries on the gender equality and flexibility dimensions is twofold. First the z-scores of the individual indicators are taken (that is the value of each country minus the average value of all countries, divided by the standard deviation). This normalises the data and transforms them into a new set with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. Negative z-scores imply that the observed country scores are below the sample average, positive z-scores imply that the countries perform above the sample average. Afterwards an average gender equality score is calculated per country by adding the three z-scores and dividing them by three. Similarly, an average z-score for flexibility is calculated based on the z-scores of the kurtosis, flexible working time schedules and

homeworking. However, given the limitations of the data (see Chapter 2), in this calculation the scores on the indicator of homeworking have received only half the weight of the scores on the indicators kurtosis and flexible working time schedules. Tables 3 and 4 show the country scores on each of the indicators and the average z-scores (see the appendices for the z-scores of the individual indicators).

Table 3 Country scores on three equality indicators

	Standardised gender employment gap 2004	Standardised gender pay gap 2006	Dissimilarity index 2004	Average z-score
Austria	17.7	25.5	39.0	–0.78
Belgium	21.9	9.5	39.1	–0.17
Bulgaria	12.1	12.4	2.9	0.91
Cyprus	25.3	21.8	12.9	–0.28
Czech Republic	22.2	23.4	11.9	–0.22
Denmark	9.9	17.6	28.3	0.15
Estonia	8.4	30.3	10.0	0.02
Finland	5.8	21.3	12.8	0.49
France	16.6	15.4	23.6	0.11
Germany	16.6	22.7	35.7	–0.53
Greece	38.5	20.7	12.2	–0.72
Hungary	20.0	14.4	7.4	0.41
Ireland	25.8	17.2	35.2	–0.60
Italy	35.7	4.4	31.8	–0.28
Latvia	14.8	15.1	10.1	0.51
Lithuania	11.3	17.1	11.8	0.50
Luxembourg	28.7	10.7	40.4	–0.51
Netherlands	18.1	23.6	57.2	–1.13
Poland	18.8	7.5	13.4	0.65
Portugal	17.1	8.4	19.4	0.53
Romania	16.5	7.8	4.3	0.93
Slovakia	19.6	25.8	6.8	–0.12
Slovenia	12.3	8.0	6.4	1.03
Spain	34.9	17.9	24.4	–0.73
Sweden	4.3	16.5	27.0	0.45
United Kingdom	15.6	24.3	38.0	–0.62

Source: Eurostat, EU labour force surveys (gender employment gap and dissimilarity index) and structure of earnings surveys (gender pay gap; data for the United Kingdom provisional)

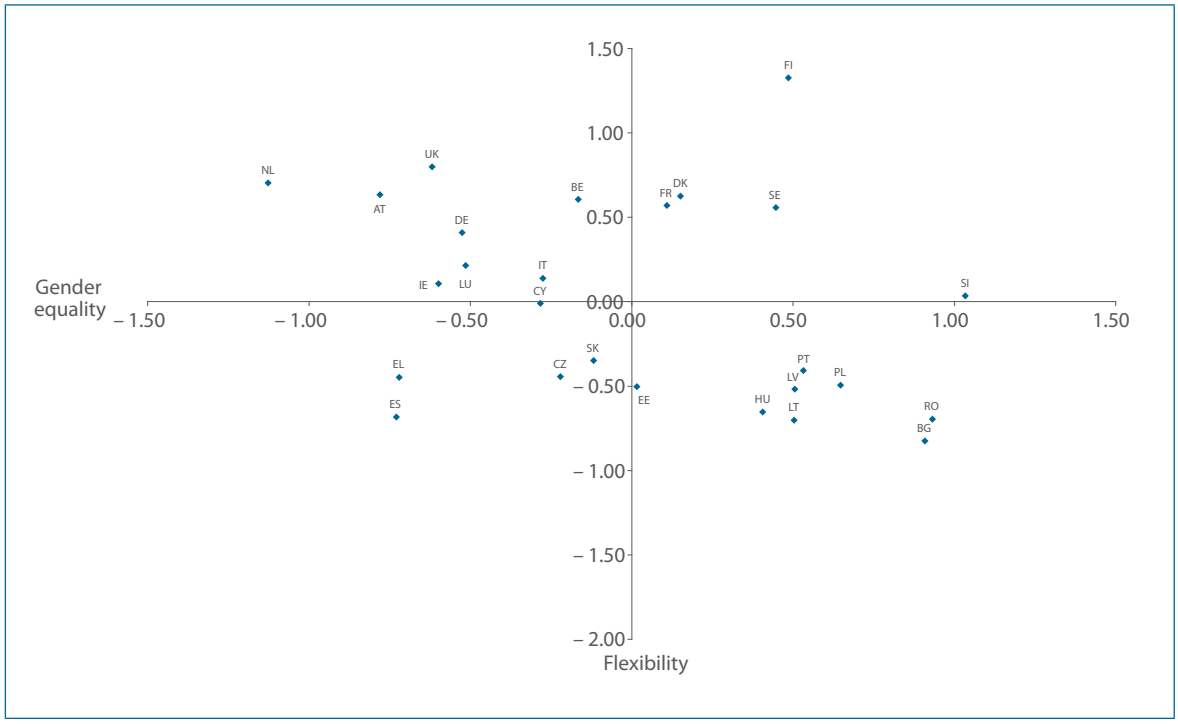
Table 4 Country scores on three flexibility indicators

	Kurtosis 2004	Flexible working time schedules 2004	Homework 2004 (1)	Average z-score (2)
Austria	5.2	37.0	4.1	0.63
Belgium	4.4	29.4	5.0	0.61
Bulgaria	11.5	8.8	0.3	–0.82
Cyprus	2.3	10.3	0.3	–0.01
Czech Republic	10.8	21.1	1.0	–0.44
Denmark	10.3	62.0	2.7	0.63
Estonia	11.7	16.6	2.4	–0.50
Finland	2.4	50.3	6.1	1.33
France	7.2	29.2	7.5	0.57
Germany	10.2	52.3	2.5	0.41
Greece	9.5	15.1	1.2	–0.45
Hungary	11.9	15.1	1.2	–0.65
Ireland	4.6	18.6	1.9	0.11
Italy	6.8	32.3	1.0	0.14
Latvia	10.8	18.7	0.7	–0.52
Lithuania	11.9	14.3	0.7	– 0.70
Luxembourg	11.4	37.0	5.4	0.21
Netherlands	0.10	31.4	1.1	0.70
Poland	10.9	17.5	1.5	–0.49
Portugal	9.4	20.0	0.3	–0.41
Romania	11.5	9.5	1.7	–0.70
Slovakia	9.9	19.6	1.6	–0.35
Slovenia	11.8	28.8	5.9	0.04
Spain	11.5	15.3	0.3	–0.68
Sweden	10.3	61.3	2.0	0.56
United Kingdom	–0.4	33.4	1.2	0.80

(1) No data available on homeworking for Bulgaria and Cyprus, therefore the lowest value has been imputed
(2) Average z-score based on 50 % weighting of the homeworking indicator

Source: Eurostat, EU labour force surveys and LFS ad hoc module 2004

Graph 23 Country scores on equality and flexibility (average z-scores)



Graph 23 provides the categorisation of the Member States in terms of working time flexibility and gender equality in employment. Finland, France, Denmark, Sweden, and Slovenia are placed in the upper right quadrant; they score above average both in terms of gender equality and flexibility. Slovenia has the highest overall score on gender equality by combining relatively favourable scores on all three equality indicators. France scores slightly above average on gender equality and combines this with a favourable score on flexibility mainly because of the high score on homeworking. Within the group of Scandinavian countries, Finland scores best with regard to flexibility, due to high scores on all three indicators. A number of countries, most notably Spain and Greece, perform poorly in both gender equality and flexibility and are placed in the lower left quadrant. Both countries combine a relatively large gender employment gap with relatively little flexible working time schedules and home-working. In addition, Italy scores more positively on flexibility, due to a high score regarding flexible working time schedules, and on equality, due to a smaller gender pay gap.

The Netherlands, Austria, the United Kingdom and, to a lesser extent, Germany and Luxembourg combine flexibility with relatively low gender equality. In the Dutch case, the poor rating in gender equality is primarily caused by the high value on the dissimilarity index. Also in Austria the relatively high score on flexibility is combined with a below average score on gender equality, which is to a large extent due to the differences in the working hours between men and women. The placement of Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Portugal, Poland, Bulgaria and Romania is perhaps the most interesting. These mostly east European countries combine low flexibility with high levels of gender equality and are placed in the lower right quadrant. Of all EU Member States, Bulgaria scores lowest in terms of flexibility, combining a high kurtosis with a low score on flexible working time schedules and no homeworking. At the same time this country scores rather positively on gender equality, due to the small gaps in the labour market position of men and women.

Of course the categorisation is a direct result of the indicators used for the dimension of 'flexibility'

and 'equality', and the operationalisation of gender equality as the absence of gaps. In this respect it should be noted that the positive gender equality scores of most east European countries are to a large extent due to the low rates of both female and male employment. Hence, the relatively low gender gap in employment is not the result of a high (formal) female participation rate but also of a low male participation rate. Furthermore, the low score on the index of working hour segregation may not be the result of men and women voluntarily working similar weekly hours, but rather the impossibility of opting for any individualised solution. Coupled with the low rate of male employment, the single peaked working hour distribution leads to a high score on the measure of gender equality used here.

It is tempting to give normative labels to the quadrants that the countries are grouped in, but given the limited nature of this exercise and the difficulties in regard to the statistical data (especially the flexibility indicators), it is important to be rather cautious in this respect. Presumably the most important message of Graph 23 is that there are large differences between European Member States with regard to the correlation between the dimensions of gender equality in employment and working time flexibility. Apparently, a relatively high score on flexibility is not automatically connected with a low score on gender equality. At the same time, a relatively high score on gender equality may be combined with a more or less flexible working time regime. The bottom line is that there is no fixed relation between the two dimensions. This is an important message from a policy point of view as it indicates that countries still have a certain degree of choice.

Summary

Improving the participation rate is the main goal of the European employment strategy. An important milestone in this respect is the agreement on quantitative targets at the Lisbon summit in March 2000. It was agreed that the employment rate in the EU should be raised from an average of 61 % at that point of time to as close as possible to 70 % by 2010. Additionally the percentage of women in employment should increase from 51 % to more than 60 % in 2010. The European employment strategy also favours more flexible working time patterns, particularly under Employment Guideline 21 ('Promote flexibility combined with employment security and reduce labour market segmentation, having due regard to the role of the social partners'). At the moment it is not yet clear whether the combined result of these two strategies (raising employment and increasing flexibility) favours gender equality or undermines it. In general, it seems likely that the lives of men and women will become less linear, and will be more oriented towards combining work, care and education during the lifetime. This lifetime approach emphasises the importance of new solutions such as part-time working hours and flexible working time schedules to facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life. At the same time there is a real risk that the EU Member States follow the 'low road' or 'mean' version of flexibilisation, which relies heavily on cheap and disposable labour in a deregulated environment with employees having little control over their time schedules. Given this situation, actual policies are extremely important because they influence the actual position taken within the flexibility/equality spectrum.

7 POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

For the European Union, increasing flexible working time arrangements is an important policy issue. One of the latest developments in this respect is the revised directive on maternity leave as proposed by the European Commission in October 2008. A new element in this revision is that an employee having maternity leave or when returning from maternity leave has a right to ask the employer to adapt her working patterns and hours to the new family situation. Employers are obliged to consider such a request (CEC 2008:9). At the level of individual countries, however, policy attention varies (see Box 4 for more details). With respect to flexibility in the length of working time, part-time work receives considerable attention, although from different angles. Regarding the organisation of working time, working time credits have become an issue in several countries. In more general terms, some attention to flexible working time arrangements is induced by legal developments in some countries, notably the opening hours in the retail sector. Another relevant development is the ageing of society and, related to this, the aim to increase the labour participation rate of older workers. In a number of countries, however, flexible working time arrangements hardly receive any attention. This seems particularly the case in new Member States, where the level of flexibility is generally low. Due to the financial and economic crisis, however, attention to flexible working time arrangements seems to be on the increase.

7.1 Policies with regard to the flexibilisation of working time

Increasing the participation rate in the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands

Increasing the level of flexibility is an important aim for the government of the Czech Republic. The new Labour Code of 2006 introduced several measures in this respect. At the political level there has been debate on the need to increase the amount of part-time work. The objective is to achieve a level of part-time employment of at least 10 %. It is planned that employers who provide part-time employment to a parent following maternity or parental leave will receive a reduction of social insurance payments by CZK 1 500 (about EUR 60) per month. Similarly, this also applies if employers hire disabled people or people over the age of 55. As the implicit message is 'part-time employment for mothers with small children', the policy seems rather problematic from an equal opportunities point of view. In Lithuania, where the regulations in part-time work are rather strict, employers call for a more liberal regime in order to make more use of part-time employment.

Within the context of an ageing society and the low general participation rates of older employees several countries aim to increase the part-time rate of older employees. In Denmark, for example, the Minister of Employment has launched a campaign for senior arrangements to retain people for longer on the labour market. Seniors (persons of 60+) may work shorter hours by increasing the flexibility of working hours, part-time jobs or job sharing without implications for the pension. However, the possibility of women taking early retirement one year earlier than men has not been discussed. In Norway the need to increase working time flexibility especially among senior workers, in order to retain competent worker in a future labour market with predicted labour shortages, has been the focus over recent years. The right to get reduced working hours for workers aged 62 and older has recently been enhanced in the Working Environment Act.

The ageing of society has also had an impact on Dutch policies. As indicated in Chapters 2 and 4 the Dutch are the frontrunners when it comes to part-time work. Yet, the low average working hours and the expected labour shortages, inspired Dutch policy-makers to a slight change in perspective inasmuch as an increase in the female participation rate in hours has been advocated. Therefore, on 1 April 2008 the taskforce 'Part-time Plus' was established for a period of two years. The target of the taskforce is to encourage women to work more hours. The taskforce emphasises that full-time employment of all women is not their ultimate goal; freedom of choice is essential. Moreover, the flexibility offered by part-time work is considered an important asset of the Dutch labour market. An increase in the size of the average part-time job is therefore a more realistic goal for the taskforce. The taskforce wants to provide more insight into the possibilities and restrictions regarding the female

participation rate in order to contribute to a cultural change. The activity plan includes research, debates, pilots, information on the Internet and communication. The plan focuses not only on women, but also on men, employers and other relevant actors (politicians, media, social partners, etc.) (Taskforce Deeltijd + 2008).

Denmark has stricter policy measures targeted towards increasing the average working hours. Here, the government has altered the rules regarding supplementary unemployment benefit in the effort to turn part-time employees into full-time employees in 2008 — i.e. before the financial crisis reached Denmark. Until then it was possible for employees holding a part-time job with a maximum of 29.6 hours a week to have a supplementary unemployment benefit for the remaining hours of a full-time week of 37 hours, if they can leave their work without notice or be dismissed without notice. By the agreement of 5 March 2008, the supplementary unemployment benefit has been limited to 30 weeks within a period of two years. It is possible to regain the right to a new period of supplementary benefit after 26 weeks with at least 30 hours work within 52 weeks (Ministry of Employment's homepage). Trade unions have protested against this agreement, as it is mainly women who are affected. The Danish Employees' association states that many of the employees will have no possibility of getting a full-time job.

Diminishing involuntary part-time work in Norway, Sweden and Finland

Part-time work is not always the preferred option, as was illustrated in Chapter 4. In Norway, Sweden and Finland reducing the level of involuntary part-time work is an important policy issue. In Norway involuntary part-time work is regarded as a serious problem, not least in relation to women's opportunity to earn a living wage. Particularly in the health sector, many jobs are organised to have very short part-time hours. Part-time workers have recently been granted the right to preferential treatment if a relevant full-time job becomes vacant in their work place. In Sweden the right to longer working hours is seen as an important gender equality measure. In the mid-2000s, two governmental inquiries were taking place, one concerning the right to work part-time and the other the right to work full-time. However, no political measures were introduced as a result of the inquiries. On a more practical level, between 2002 and 2005 the so-called HELA-project, financed by the central government, was carried through (Arbetsmiljöverket 2006). The main aim of the project was to develop new ways of reducing involuntary part-time employment. This was done through flexibility in different forms. Around 20 000 persons were involved in different projects, 8 000 of them participated in experiments with new working time models. For example in Piteå municipality, a project succeeded in giving 36 % of those employed within social services the working time they wanted without extra costs. Evaluations of the project show that almost 400 part-time employed people were given full-time jobs, with the result that the number of part-time jobs declined by 83 %. In Finland involuntary part-time work and 'mini-hours' were a major issue on the agenda of many trade unions in the 2000s. In 2004, the Service Union United PAM succeeded to include a notion in its collective agreements that the minimum length of a work shift is four hours — previously, an employee could work e.g. two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening. The unions emphasise that part-time working is acceptable as long as it is the preference of an employee.

7.2 Policies with regard to the flexible organisation of working time

Reconciliation issues in the Netherlands, Italy and Slovenia

In several countries, developments in flexible working time arrangements are influenced by the issue of reconciling work and private life. In the Netherlands, for example, the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment has been exploring options in working time flexibility, in order to improve the work–life balance and actively stimulate flexible working times and working places, such as self-rostering and working from home (SZW 2008). In Italy reforms regarding working time arrangements have been oriented towards a reconciliation framework. An example in this respect is Law 53, issued in 2000. This law reformed the maternity leave according to the EU Directive 2000/78/CE. It also promoted the

introduction of new forms of working time arrangements (part-time working, teleworking, job-sharing, and hours savings, home working, flexible start and end of working time, and flexibility for shift working) to support reconciliation of work and private life. Because the initiative remains at the discretion of the employer, the actual implications of the law seem, however, limited, particularly in the private sector. Slovenia has also developed measures to support the reconciliation of work and private life by promotion of shorter working hours, part-time work (paying for contributions, partial reimbursement of lost income), work from home and distance work for parents, and adjustment of kindergartens' working time to parental need.

Working time credits in Finland, Germany and Luxembourg

More specifically, working time accounts have become an issue in Finland, Germany and Luxembourg. In the 2000s, working time banking has been a central issue in collective bargaining in Finland. The central confederations have agreed to inform their member organisations about the possibility of using working time banks. They have recommended that in sectoral agreements, working time banks should be promoted when applicable. It has been stressed that there is not a single universal model of working hours banking, but that these systems should be tailored to suit individual companies. In Germany one of the important topics of recent years has been the insolvency insurance of long-term accounts. A new law, the so-called Flexi Law II, came into force in January 2009 (= *Gesetz zur Verbesserung der Rahmenbedingungen für die Absicherung flexibler Arbeiszeitregelungen, Flexi-Gesetz II*). This brought about a complete realignment of time and long-term accounts with respect to legal terms of social insurances. Based on the concept of long-life working time, in Luxembourg the intention is to adopt a law on working time accounts in firms (project of 'loi-cadre' on working time credits). Though the general guidelines have been discussed within the Economic and Social Committee, a joint agreement has not yet been reached.

Overtime

In several countries overtime is a topic of debate, particularly in relation to the introduction of flexible working time schedules. In general, the concept of overtime becomes debatable because of a less strict scheduling of the regular working hours. Within that context, introducing flexible working time schedules might be an attractive strategy for employers to save high costs of overtime. In Poland, for example, employers advocate the possibility of introducing individual working time accounts or annualised hours schemes and longer reference periods for calculating average working time, which would fix the average hours employees are expected to work at normal pay over the period of a year. These would facilitate reductions in working time during slower periods and longer working hours during high demand for products or services without extra compensation for overtime work. Trade unions are willing to discuss these proposals but also argue that individual time accounts may lead to high fluctuations in individual working hours. A similar discussion takes place in Portugal. Here policy debates focus on the changes introduced by the new labour code concerning working time, namely the introduction of flexitime, and compressed working week and annualised hours schemes. Unions expressed their concern that employers will perceive new flexible working time arrangements as a means to avoid payment of overtime. In Portugal, working overtime is an important means to supplement the generally low wages for many employees. Moreover, overtime is paid at a relatively high rate compared to other European countries.

7.3 Policy developments as a result of the economic crises

A relatively recent development, which has had a clear impact on flexible working time in several countries, is the financial and economic crisis. In several countries this has induced a discussion of the need to increase the level of flexibility. In Poland, for example, the current global economic crisis features as a prominent backdrop for labour market policy debates among government officials and social partners' representatives. Increasing labour market flexibility through further liberalisation of working time regulations is considered an important way in which employers are able to adjust to changing economic conditions,

and it also prevents job losses. The Polish government presented a policy proposal in this area in June 2009. Similarly, in Slovakia the economic developments have significantly stimulated the discussion as well as the application of more flexible work arrangements in practice. Flexible or reduced working time is perceived (and also introduced) in response to the worsening economic situation. Many employers in industry (predominantly in the car industry, which dominates in Slovakia) decided to impose 'work banking time' (not possible before), enabling employees to stay at home (while being fully or reduced paid) in the situation of work shortage.

Also in Austria, 'short-time work' (*Kurzarbeit*) is on the daily political agenda. Short term work refers to the introduction of an arrangement for working less than normal hours when business is scarce. In return for public subsidies employers agree to avoid impeding redundancies. Employees are paid a 'short-time working allowance' (*Kurzarbeitsbeihilfe*) to partly compensate for their loss of earnings resulting from such a temporary reduction in working hours. By the end of January 2009, about 20 000 employees were affected by 'short-time work' in Austria. A similar short-time working arrangement is available in Germany where companies can flexibly reduce the working time — and the salary — of their employees. Unemployment insurance contributes two thirds of the employees' wage losses. The programme is run and financed by the Federal Agency for Labour. Yet another example is provided by Liechtenstein where short-time work has been introduced in about 70 enterprises. This primarily affects enterprises in the auto supplier industry (sector manufacture of motor vehicles) and enterprises in machinery and manufacture of fabricated metallic products. A slightly different approach is used in Hungary where in reaction to the economic crisis a '4 days work + 1 day training' programme has recently been introduced. The aim is to use work shortage for human resources development inside the enterprises. Eighty per cent of the costs of training courses are covered by the Labour Market Fund.

These examples of temporary short-time working arrangements clearly illustrate how flexibility measures may be beneficial for both the employees and the employers. Employees have a lower risk of losing their jobs and employers can save considerable dismissal costs and costs of losing firm-specific human capital. At the level of the EU short-time working arrangements are therefore considered an important part of the EU flexicurity principles and the national flexicurity pathways as emphasised in 'A shared commitment for employment' (CEC 2009). It is, however, also emphasised that the focus should remain on the long-term reform strategy 'to transform the Union into a low carbon, more competitive, innovative economy with open markets, offering a more inclusive society with better workplaces' (ibid: 12). Although these policy measures are important and topical it seems that the gender dimension is almost completely lost in the current debate. For example, the high profile job losses in automobiles and manufacturing seem to overshadow female job losses in other parts of the economy (Smith 2009). It is therefore important that, despite the recent economic developments, the progress made in family-friendly labour market structures will be maintained. This implies that both flexibility in working time arrangements and gender equality are identified as important preconditions of economic recovery.

Box 4 Recent policy developments on working time flexibility

BE	Working time flexibility seems more important than working time duration, with agreements focusing on topics such as 'time savings accounts' or 'banks'. In addition, overtime is an important issue. In 2007 several sectoral agreements adopted new regulations on overtime. There are no policies at the national level to reduce gender gaps in flexible working time arrangements.
BG	In view of the anti-crisis governmental plan, the working time regime has become a topic of discussion. The reduction of working time as prevention against dismissal is one of the measures included in this plan. However, there are no specific gender policies on this exact topic. There is a debate at trade union level and between trade unions and employers' organisations regarding the length of over-working time.
CZ	At the political level the objective is to achieve a rate of part-time employment of at least 10 %. As the discussions send out a clear message regarding the gender division of roles, this will presumably have a negative impact on developments in the area of gender equality.
DK	Flexibility is on the political agenda in relation to reconciliation. However, recommendations of the Family and Working Life Commission (appointed by the Prime Minister in 2005) on this issue have still not been followed. In order to postpone retirement the government stimulates arrangements such as shorter working hours of seniors. In addition, several measures have been taken to make full-time work more attractive.
DE	An important topic in recent years has been the insolvency insurance of long-term accounts. A new law, the so-called Flexi Law II, came into force in January 2009 (*Gesetz zur Verbesserung der Rahmenbedingungen für die Absicherung flexibler Arbeiszeitregelungen, Flexi-Gesetz II*). It brought about a complete realignment of time- and long-term accounts with respect to legal terms of social insurances. Other subjects playing a role in the political discussion on internal working time flexibility at present are age-based working times; family-friendly working times (work–life balance measures), time accounts for further education and health-friendly working times. Working time from a life course perspective is discussed, but is mainly considered from an academic perspective.
EE	The most recent national level policy debates over flexible working time arrangements have been in relation to the modernisation of labour law. The new Employment Contracts Act took effect from 1 July 2009. There are no significant changes introduced to the new legislation compared to the previous situation. Still, the law defines the minimum conditions of flexible working time arrangements while the rest is left for individual or collective negotiations. The few changes that were made regarding working time include losing the definition of working in evenings as non-standard working time.
IE	Ireland operates largely under an informal system of flexible work organisation initiatives. Statutory systems are weak. Government, employer's organisations, trade unions and others all express support for work–life balance initiatives but there is little evidence that the necessary resources are being put in place to achieve a greater level of available quality working arrangements.
EL	Flexible working time arrangements are quasi-inexistent and the main form of working time flexibility is overtime. Consequently, the number of overtime hours allowed per week without approval from labour market authorities and the wage premiums for overtime hours were more important policy issues than flexible working time arrangements in the public debate of the first half of the 2000s.
ES	The need for flexible working time arrangements has not been an issue until quite recently and thanks to the push provided by European Union policies. A few steps have been taken in the last few years to adopt more flexible working time arrangements, and most of them are aimed at improving the reconciliation of professional and personal life.

FR	Recently debates on flexible working time such as those regarding the 35-hour week, working on Sunday and on the traditional way of regulating time have taken place. Due to the developments in flexible working time schedules, the concept of overtime seems to have disappeared. Gender is not directly referred to in these debates, but is nevertheless an underlying issue given the different working time patterns of men and women.
IT	Working time arrangements have been oriented towards a reconciliation framework. These policies have favoured female participation rates, though the actual level of flexibility is rather limited.
CY	Given the widespread adoption of collective agreements at both sectoral and company levels, and the tradition of tripartite cooperation, the debate on flexibilisation involves the position of the social partners. The three main trade unions have strong reservations against flexibilisation or refuse to take an active role in promoting such forms of employment, fearing that such efforts may have a negative impact on the terms and conditions of employment.
LV	There is no policy debate on general flexible working time arrangements or in relation to gender equality. There are very few sources that include issues of flexible working time.
LT	From a strict state regulation employment issues are now more regulated between employers and employees. There is discussion on creating a more flexible labour framework and more flexible labour relations.
LU	The policy debate is currently concentrated on the adoption of a law organising the system of time credits in firms. Social partners and the government are not in favour of radical changes in the organisation of the labour market, including the regulation of working time.
HU	Hungary has liberal regulations about working hours, which provide relatively little protection for employees and guarantee flexibility primarily for employers. After a revision of the Labour Code in 2002, some of the protective measures were reinstated (e.g. an 8-hour working day in a 40-hour working week). Specifically, part-time work regulations were amended and the EU directives concerning working hours and fixed-term contracts were transposed in 2003, guaranteeing pro rated wages for part-time work and prohibiting discrimination.
MT	Regarding the EU directive on working hours, particularly the 48-hour rule, the government and social partners strongly support the opt-out clause.
NL	The regulatory framework supports flexible, non-full-time working hours. Although several issues are regulated in national legislation, there is a clear emphasis on decentralisation. Despite the importance of part-time jobs there is growing emphasis on increasing the average working hours. In this respect the terminology of part-time plus (or full-time minus) is introduced
AT	In the context of the economic crisis the use and extension of 'short-time work' (Kurzarbeit) is on the daily political agenda, referring to the introduction of an arrangement for working less than normal hours when business is scarce. In return for public subsidies employers agree to avoid impending redundancies.
PL	Increasing labour market flexibility through further liberalisation of working time regulations is considered an important factor for employers' ability to better adjust to the changing conditions, and it also prevents job losses. The role of gender in shaping flexible patterns of work and reinforcing inequalities is not sufficiently recognised.
PT	Recently, policy debates centred on the changes introduced by the new Labour Code concerning working time, namely the introduction of flexitime and compressed working week and annualised hours schemes.
RO	All principles for legislative regulation of work flexibility by collective agreements were achieved within the process of EU harmonisation of national legislation.

SI	During recent debates over working time arrangements (especially in negotiations over amendments to the Law on Labour Relations), employers were arguing for prolonging working hours while trade unions defended existing statutory regulations. Debates over the compromise proposal of the European Commission (EC), to revise the Working Time Directive in 2008, have taken place.
SK	The latest economic development has stimulated the discussion and more flexible work arrangements have been established.
FI	Involuntary part-time work and 'mini-hours' have been a major issue on the agenda of many trade unions in the 2000s. In 2004, the Service Union United PAM succeeded to include a notion in its collective agreements that the minimum length of a work shift is four hours. Another central issue in recent collective bargaining has been working hours banking. At the political level in autumn 2008, the government proposed that the restrictions on Sunday opening hours should be eliminated for all shops, arousing a vivid debate where the stakeholders have quite a strong disagreement on the issue.
SE	Before the financial and economic crisis, the policy debate over the last five years or so has mainly been about involuntary part-time employment rather than long hours, overtime, flexible working time, etc. In the mid-2000s two governmental inquiries were taking place, one concerning the right to work part-time and the other concerning the right to work full-time. However, no political measures were introduced as a result of the inquiries.
UK	The policy development of prolonging the working life of older workers, in combination with the recent developments in work–family measures for adults with children or elder care responsibilities, suggests a life course perspective is gradually being implemented in working time policy.
IS	The Icelandic labour market is regarded as being very flexible and past governments have pursued a policy of 'hands-off' the labour market. Hence, policy-makers have not been concerned about measures to increase, for example, flexible working time. In November 2008, the Act on Unemployment Insurance (54/2006) was changed in order to allow employees, who had been asked by their employer to work shorter hours to obtain unemployment benefits, to obtain some compensation for the fall in earnings due to shorter working hours.
LI	Flexible working time arrangements are not a topic in the political debate. Due to the financial and economic crisis short-time work is in discussion and has been introduced in about 70 enterprises in Liechtenstein.
NO	Increasing the availability of flexible working hours is seen as necessary, due to the demands arising from new types of jobs and markets, and from changing preferences among employees; this also needs to accommodate different needs over the life course. There have been interventions to regulate aspects of working time, some with a clear gender equality perspective. Involuntary part-time work is seen as a serious problem, particularly in relation to women's opportunity to earn a living wage. In addition, the need to increase working time flexibility, especially among senior workers, and retain competent workers in a future labour market with predicted labour shortages has been a prevalent focus in recent years.

Source: national reports

Summary

Working time flexibility is on the political agenda in several countries, though the specific topics may vary. Some countries focus on flexibility as an instrument to increase the participation rate (both in persons and in hours). Interestingly, part-time working hours no longer refer exclusively to women, but also become a policy instrument within the context of active ageing. Especially in the Nordic countries, involuntary part-time work is an important issue, leading to policy measures which try to create a new balance between flexibility and security. Time banking and annualised hours are also part of the current policy agenda, in some countries connected with the debate on lowering the extent of overtime. In addition, there is a clear effect from the current financial and economic crisis. Within this context, flexibility is seen as an important policy instrument in order to increase the ability of employers to adjust to changing economic circumstances. In the current debate, however, the gender dimension does not figure prominently. Therefore it is important that, despite the recent economic developments, the progress made in family-friendly labour market structures is maintained. This implies that both flexibility in working time arrangements and gender equality are identified as important preconditions of economic recovery.

8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this report, an overview of flexible working time arrangements and gender equality has been provided with a particular focus on internal quantitative flexibility. Data have been organised along two dimensions. Firstly, information has been presented on the flexibility in the length of working time, referring to part-time work, overtime work and long hours. Secondly information on flexibility in the organisation of working time have been provided, referring to flexible working time schedules, working from home and working atypical hours. An important conclusion in this respect is that the differences between the European Member States are still very large. Flexibility in the length of working time, for example, appears to be relatively widespread in the northern and western EU Member States, whereas especially in the new Member States the traditional 40-hour working week is still very much intact. Also with regard to the flexible organisation of working time, the differences within Europe are relatively large. Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Finland and Norway score relatively highly with a little more than half of all employees working with some kind of flexibility in their working hours. Especially in the new Member States and the south European countries flexible working time schedules are still a rather unfamiliar phenomenon.

From a gender equality point of view the increased flexibility in working time arrangements should be rated positively inasmuch as more individualised working hours or schedules can help employees to reconcile their work obligations and personal life. It is therefore likely that more individualised working hours have a positive effect on the female participation rate. Greater flexibility, however, also seems to have some adverse effects on gender equality. In most countries, part-time work is still concentrated in low-paid sectors with low career and training opportunities. It is thus difficult to claim that greater flexibility — in terms of the length of working time — will have the desired effect of greater gender equality. In that respect a flexible scheduling of (full-time) working hours seems more promising. Yet, in order to be instrumental in this respect, flexible working time schedules should be carefully designed, so that the preferences of the employees are taken into account. In addition, the organisational culture plays an important role. As long as flexibility is still considered a 'female' way of organising working time, flexible working time schedules are more likely to confirm gender differences than to change them. A flexible organisation of working time may also translate into blurring boundaries between work and leisure/private time. Flexibility in this respect demands a certain level of self-discipline. If there are no strict boundaries anymore between paid work and leisure, there is a danger that evening or weekend work becomes normalised, which may put a strain on private and/or family live.

The national scores on working time flexibility and on gender equality in employment can be combined in order to categorise the different realities of the EU Member States, and to classify the different Member States in terms of gender equality working time regimes. In this report, gender equality is measured by the standardised gender gap in employment, the gender pay gap and the working time dissimilarity index. Flexibility is charted using the shape of the working time distribution (kurtosis) of all employees; the percentage of employees usually working at home and the percentage of employees making use of flexible working time schedules. On the basis of this categorisation, Denmark, Finland, France, Sweden and Slovenia are placed in the upper right quadrant; they score above average in terms of both gender equality and flexibility. A number of countries, most notably Spain and Greece, perform poorly in both gender equality and flexibility and are placed in the lower left quadrant. Both countries combine a relatively large gender employment gap with relatively little flexible working time schedules and homeworking. The Netherlands, Austria, the United Kingdom and to a lesser extent Germany and Luxembourg combine flexibility with relatively low gender equality. Especially for the Netherlands and Austria, the poor rating in gender equality is to a large extent due to the larger share of women working part-time compared to men. Finally, Lithuania, Portugal, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Bulgaria and Romania combine low flexibility with high levels of gender equality and are therefore placed in the lower right quadrant.

The categorisation indicates that a relatively high score on flexibility is not automatically connected with a low score on gender equality. At the same time a relatively high score on gender equality may be combined with a more or less flexible working time regime. The main message seems to be that there is no fixed relationship between

the two dimensions; apparently policy matters. In this respect it is tempting to speculate about the effects of the current financial and economic crisis. Although flexibility is seen as an important policy instrument in order to increase the ability of employers to adjust to changing economic circumstances, gender equality does not figure prominently in the policy measures. Therefore it is important that, despite the recent economic developments, the progress made towards family-friendly labour market structures is maintained. This implies that both flexibility in working time arrangements and gender equality are identified as important preconditions of economic recovery.

REFERENCES

A. The national expert reports

Barry, U. (Ernesto Vasquez del Aguila, research assistance) (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Ireland,* External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Beleva, I. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Bulgaria*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Braziene, R. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Lithuania*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Camilleri-Cassar, F. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Malta*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Ellina, C. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Cyprus*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Emerek, R. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Denmark*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Fagan, C. (H. Norman, research assistance for Sections 4 and 5) (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in the United Kingdom*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Ferreira, V. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Portugal*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Frey, M. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Hungary*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

González Gago, E. (María Calvo Moreno, research assistance) (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Spain*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Kanjuo Mrčela, A. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Slovenia*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Karamessini, M. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Greece*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Křížková, A. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in the Czech Republic*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Leetmaa, R. (M. Karu, research assistance) (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Estonia*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Maier, F. (A.-H. Carl, research assistance) (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Germany*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Mairhuber, I. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Austria*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Meulders, D. (S. O'Dorchai, research assistance) (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Employment. Report on Belgium*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Nyberg, A. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Sweden*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Piscová, M. (2009) (M. Bahna research assistance), *Flexible working time arrangements in Slovakia*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Plantenga, J. and C. Remery (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in the Netherlands*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Plasman, R. (Thu Tuyen Pham Nhu, research assistance) (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Luxembourg*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Plomien, A. (2009), *Gender assessment of the national reform programme on employment. Report on Poland*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Silvera, R. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in France*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Simonazzi, A. (S. Sansonetti and A. Verashchagina research assistance) (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in employment*. Report on Italy, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Sutela, H. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Finland*. External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Trapenciere, I. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Latvia*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

Zamfir, E. (2009), *Flexible working time arrangements in Romania*, External report commissioned by and presented to the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Unit G1 'Equality between women and men'.

B. Additional references

Anttila, T. (2005). *Reduced working hours. Reshaping the duration, timing and tempo of work.* Jyväskylä studies in education, psychology and social research 258. University of Jyväskylä.

Anxo, D., C. Fagan, M. Smith, M. Letablier and C. Perraudin (2007). *Part-time work in European countries*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Arbetsmiljöverket (2006). *HelaProjectet Slutredovisning av HelaProjektet*. Stockholm: Arbetsmiljöverket.

Atkinson, J. and N. Meager. 1986. *Changing work patterns: How companies achieve flexibility to meet new needs.* London: National Economic Development Office.

Bergmann, N., M. Fink, N. Graf, C. Hermann, I. Mairhuber, C. Sorger and B. Willsberger (2004). *Qualifizierte Teilzeitbeschäftigung in Österreich. Bestandaufnahme und Potentiale.* Forschungsbericht des Bundesministeriums für Gesundheit und Frauen, Wien.

Bettio, F., E. Del Bono and M. Smith (1998). *Working time patterns in the European Union, policies and innovations from a gender perspective*. Report of the European Commission's Group of Experts on Gender and Employment, Employment and Social Affairs.

Bosch G., P. Dawkins and F. Michon (1994). *Times are changing: working time in 14 industrialised countries*. Geneva: Institute for International Labour Studies (ILO).

Bråten, M., R. K. Andersen and J. Svalund (2008). *HMS-tilstanden i Norge*. Oslo: Fafo.

Burchell, B., C. Fagan, C. O'Brien and M. Smith (2007). *Working conditions in the European Union: The gender perspective*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

CEC (Commission of the European Communities) (2006). *A roadmap for equality between women and men 2006–2010*. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.

CEC (Commission of the European Communities) (2007). *Towards common principles of flexicurity: More and better jobs through flexibility and security*. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.

CEC (Commission of the European Communities) (2008). *Proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Directive 92/85/EEC on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding.* Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.

CEC (2009). *A shared commitment for employment*. Brussels: Commission of the European Communities.

Crompton, R. and M. Brockmann (2006). 'Class, gender and work–life balance'. In: D. Perrons, C. Fagan, L. McDowell, K. Ray and K. Ward (eds). *Gender divisions of working time in the new economy: changing patterns of work, care and public policy in Europe and North America.* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Cully, M., S. Woodland, A. O'Reilly and G. Dix (1999). *Britain at work — as depicted by the 1998 workplace employee relations survey.* London: Routledge.

DRV-Minijobzentrale (2009). *Aktuelle Entwicklungen im Bereich der geringfügigen Beschäftigung*, 1. Quartal 2009. Essen: DRV-Minijobzentrale.

EC (European Communities) (2006). *Final report of the task force for evaluating the 2004 LFS ad hoc module on work organisation and working time arrangements*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

EC (European Commission) (2007). Employment in Europe 2007. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

EIRO (European Industrial Relations Observatory) (2003a). *Annualised hours in Europe*. Dublin: Eurofound. Report available in electronic formal only: http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2003/08/study/tn0308101s.htm (document accessed in May 2009).

EIRO (European Industrial Relations Observatory) (2003b). *Overtime in Europe*. Dublin: Eurofound. Report available in electronic formal only: http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2003/02/study/tn0302101s.htm (document accessed in May 2009).

EOC (Equal Opportunities Commission) (2005): *Part time is not a crime so why the penalty?* The interim report of the EOC's investigation into flexible and part-time working, and questions for consultation. Available at: http://83.137.212.42/sitearchive/eoc/PDF/flexible_working_interim_summary.pdf?page=16854

ETUC/CES et al. (2008). Progress report 'Reconciliation of professional, private and family life'. Downloadable from: http://www.etuc.org/IMG/pdf_2008-00393-E.pdf (document accessed in April 2009).

Eurofound (2007). *Place of work and working conditions*. Dublin: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. Report available in electronic formal only: http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/docs/ewco/tn0701029s/tn0701029s.pdf (accessed in May 2009).

Eurofound (2008). *Working time in the EU and other global economies — Industrial relations in the EU and other global economies 2006–7.* Dublin: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. Report available in electronic formal only: http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/docs/eiro/tn0804058s/tn0804058s.pdf (accessed in May 2009).

Eurostat (2007). EU labour force survey database user guide. EC/Eurostat.

Fagan, C. (2001). 'Time, money and the gender order: work orientations and working-time preferences in Britain'. In: *Gender, Work and Organization*, 8, 3, July pp. 239–266.

Fagan, C. (2009). 'Working time in the UK — developments and debates', Paper presented to the Japanese Institute for Labour Policy and Training International Seminar on Working Time, 21–23 January 2009, Tokyo, Japan.

Fagan, C., L. MacDowell, D. Perrons, K. Ray and K. Ward. (2008). 'Class differences in mothers' work schedules and assessments of their "work–life balance" in dual-earner couples in Britain', in J. Scott, S. Dex and H. Joshi (eds). *Women and employment: changing lives and new challenges*. Gloucestershire: Edward Elgar.

Fischer, G. et al. (2007). 'Standortbedingungen und Beschäftigung in den Regionen West- und Ostdeutschlands'. Ergebnisse des IAB-Betriebspanels 2006. *IAB Forschungsbericht* No 5, Nuremberg.

Hayward, B., B. Fong and A. Thornton, (2007). 'The third work–life balance employer survey: main findings'. *Employment Relations Research Series* No 86. London: Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform.

Hotopp, U. (2002). 'Teleworking in the UK'. DTI special feature, *Labour Market Trends*. Available at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/articles/labour_market_trends/Teleworking_jun2002.pdf (accessed in June 2009)

Jaumotte, F. (2003). Female labour force participation: past trends and main determinants in OECD countries. Paris: OECD.

Kjeldstad, R. and Nymoen, E. H. (2004) Kvinner og men i deltidsarbeid. Fordelinger og forklaringer. Oslo: Statistisk sentralbyrå.

Koch, A. (2008). 'Elternzeit — Teilzeit — Auszeit'. In: *WSI Mitteilungen* 11+12, pp. 612–618.

Messenger, J. (2004) (ed.). *Finding the balance: Working-time and workers' needs and preferences in industrialized countries*. London: Routledge.

Mutari, E. and D. Figart (2001). 'Europe at a crossroads: harmonization, liberalization, and the gender of work time'. In: *Social Politics*, 8 (1), pp. 36–64.

Nadeem, S. and H. Metcalf (2007). 'Work–life policies in Great Britain: What works, where and how?' *Employment Relations Research Series* No 77. London: Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform.

OJEC (1998). Council Directive 97/81/EC of 15 December 1997 concerning the framework agreement on part-time work concluded by UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC. *Official Journal of the European Communities*, L 14, 20.1.1998, pp. 9–14.

OJEC (2003). Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November concerning certain aspects of the organisation of

working time. *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 299, 18.11.2003, pp. 9–17.

Parent-Thirion, A., E. Fernández, J. Hurley and G. Vermeylen (2007). *Fourth European working conditions survey.* Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Plantenga, J. (2004). 'Changing work and life patterns: examples of the new working time arrangements in the European Member States'. In: J. Zollinger Giele and E. Holst, *Changing life patterns in Western industrial societies*, pp. 119–35. Oxford: Elsevier.

Plantenga, J. and C. Remery (2005). *Reconciliation of work and private life. A comparative review of 30 European countries*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Plantenga, J. and C. Remery (2009). *The provision of childcare services. A comparative review of 30 European countries*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Portegijs et al. (2008). Verdeelde tijd. Waarom vrouwen in deeltijd werken. Den Haag: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.

Riedman, A., H. Lielenski, T. Szczurowska and A. Wagner (2006). *Working time and work–life balance in European companies*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities. Downloadable from: http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/htmlfiles/ef0627.htm

Rubery, J. and C. Fagan (1993). 'Occupational segregation of women and men in the European community'. *Social Europe*, supplement 3/93. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Rubery, J., M. Smith and C. Fagan (1998). 'National working time regimes and equal opportunities'. In: *Feminist Economics*, 4 (1), pp. 71–101.

Rubery, J. and M. Smith (2006). 'The gender pay gap: recent developments'. European Work and Employment Research Centre: University of Manchester.

Russo, G. and W. Hassink (2008). 'The part-time wage gap: a career perspective'. In: *De Economist*, 156, No 2, pp. 145–174.

Salmi, M. and J. Lammi-Taskula (eds) (2004). *Puhelin, mummo vai joustava työaika? Työn ja perheen yhdistämisen arkea.* (Phone, granny or flexible working time? Everyday life in reconciliation of work and family). Stakes.

Smeaton, D., V. Young and S. Spencer (2007). 'The future of work: employers and workplace transformation'. *Working paper series* No 56. Manchester: EOC.

Smith, M. (2009). 'Analysis note: Gender equality and recession'. Note prepared for the European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Grenoble: Grenoble École de Management.

Smithson, J., S. Lewis, C. Cooper and J. Dyer (2004). 'Flexible working and the gender pay gap in the accountancy profession'. In: *Work, Employment and Society*, 18 (1), pp. 115–135.

Statistics in Focus (2004). 'Working overtime'. *Statistics in Focus. Population and social conditions* 11/2004. European Communities.

Statistics in Focus (2007). 'The flexibility of working time arrangements for women and men'. *Statistics in Focus. Population and social conditions*, 96/2007. Eurostat/European Communities.

Statistics in Focus (2008). 'Employment gender gap in EU is narrowing. Labour market trends 2000–2007'. *Statistics in Focus* 99/2008. Eurostat/European Commission.

STILE (2004). *The STILE project: developing a methodology for measuring teleworking.* Downloadable from: http://www.stile.be/papers%20and%presentations/Paper_NESIS_conference.pdf (accessed in May 2009)

Suhonen A.-S. and M. Salmi (2004). 'Kahden kauppa: puolison merkitys' (Bilateral pact: the impact of the spouse). In Salmi, M. and J. Lammi-Taskula, (eds) *Puhelin, mummo vai joustava työaika? Työn ja perheen yhdistämisen arkea*. (Phone, granny or flexible working time? Everyday life in reconciliation of work and family). Stakes.

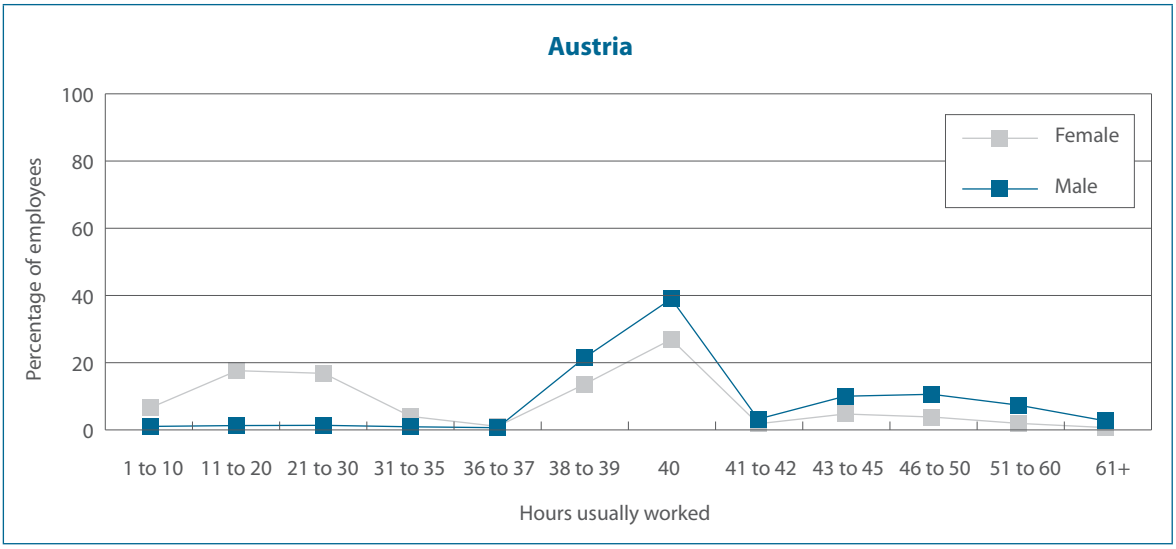
SZW (2008). *Beleidsverkenning modernisering regelingen voor verlof en arbeidstijden*. Den Haag: Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid.

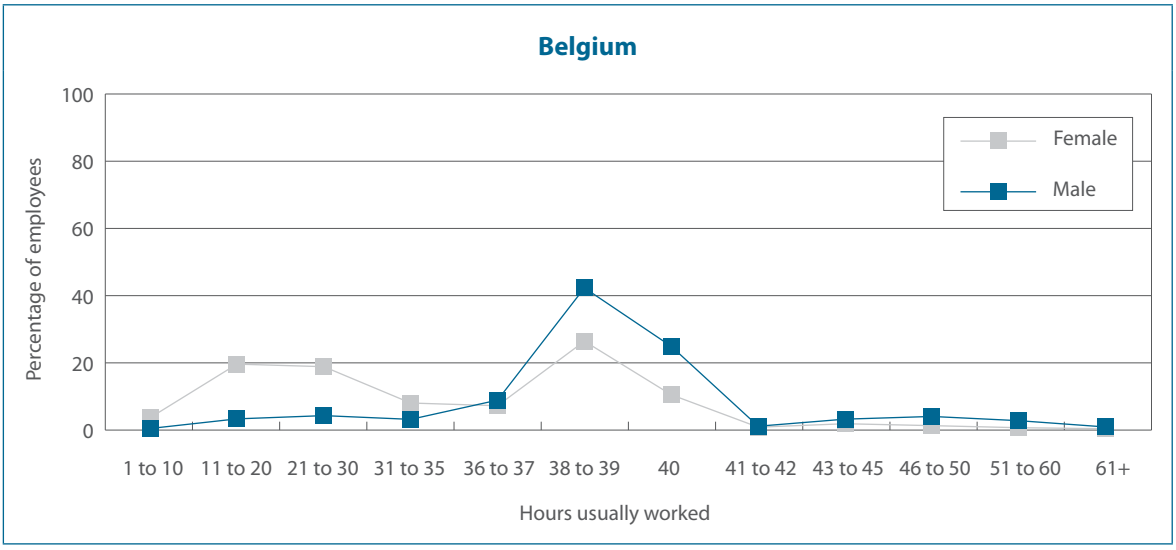
Taskforce Deeltijd + (2008). *Een plus een is drie.* Werkplan Taskforce DeeltijdPlus. Publisher unknown.

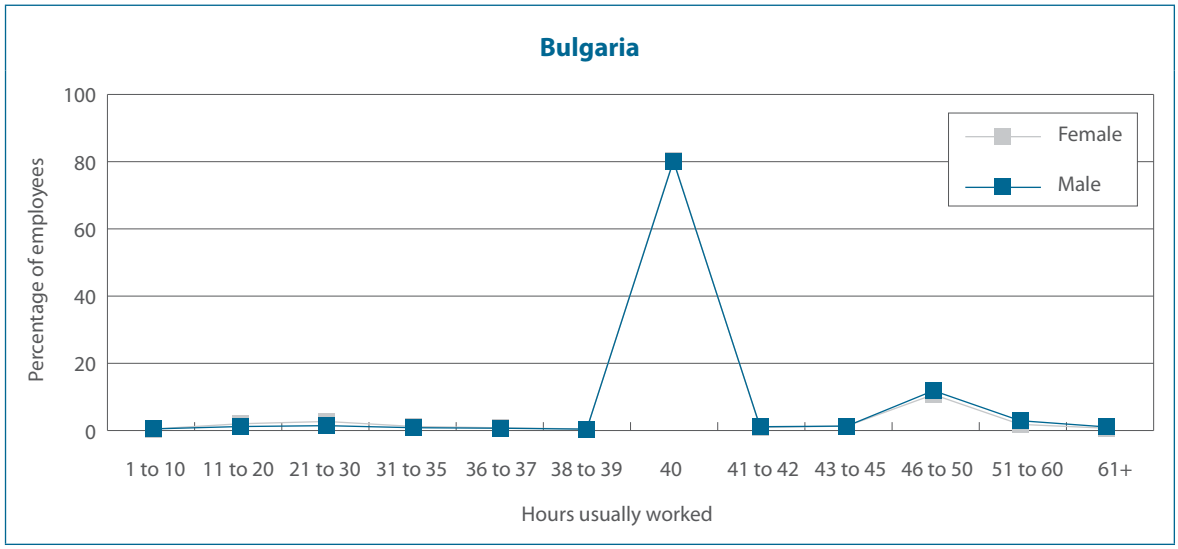
TUC (2002). *About time: a new agenda for shaping working hours.* Available at http://www.tuc.org.uk

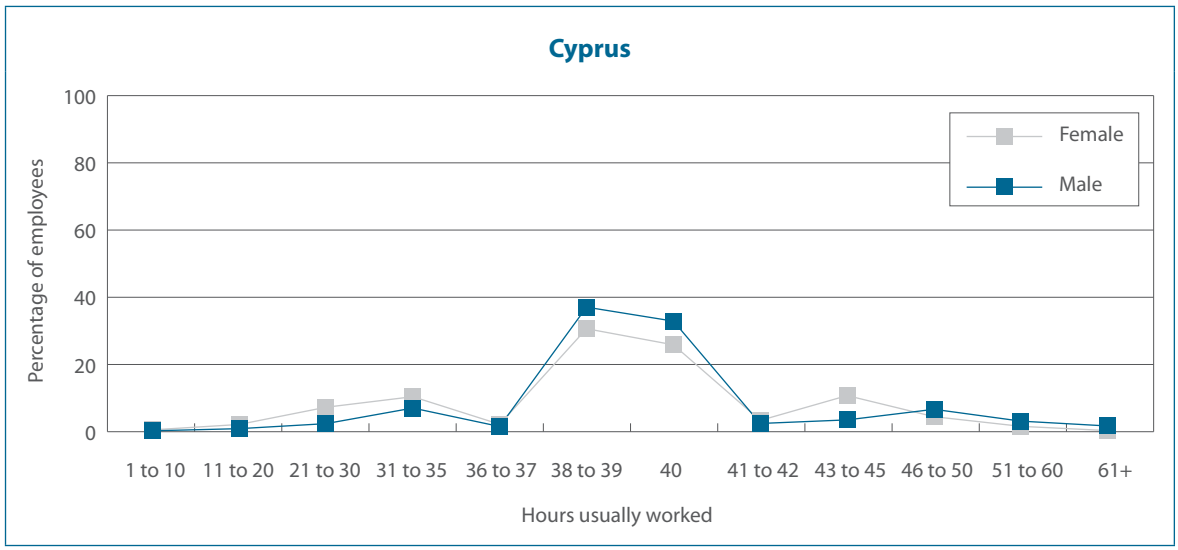
Wotschack, P. and E. Hildebrandt (2007). 'Long-term working-time accounts and life-course policies. Preliminary results of a representative company survey'. *WZB Discussion Paper* SP 2007-109. Berlin: WZB.

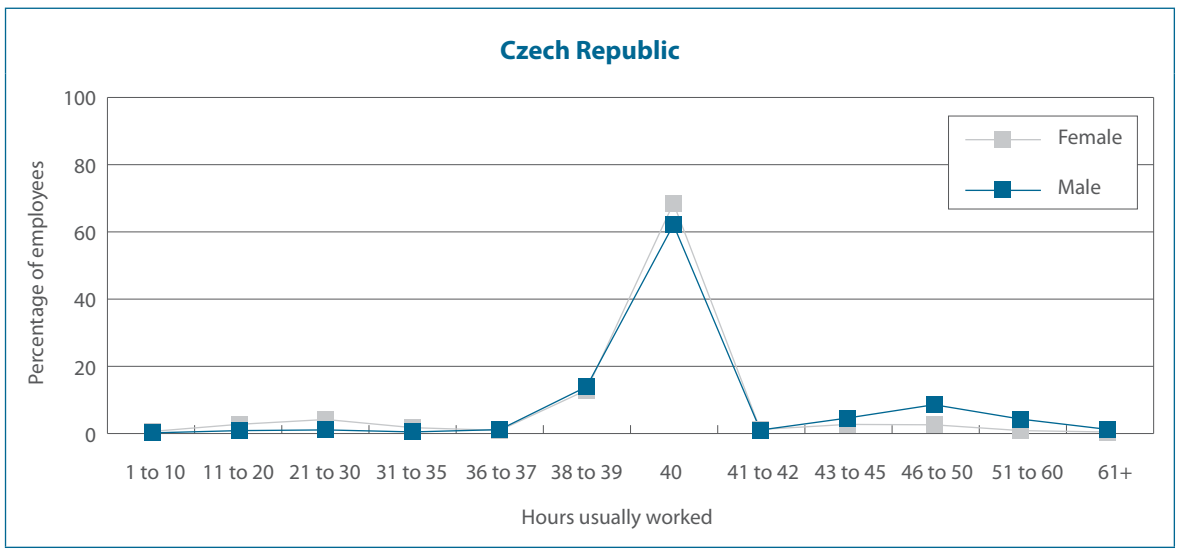
A.1 Working time distribution of employees, by gender, in 30 European countries

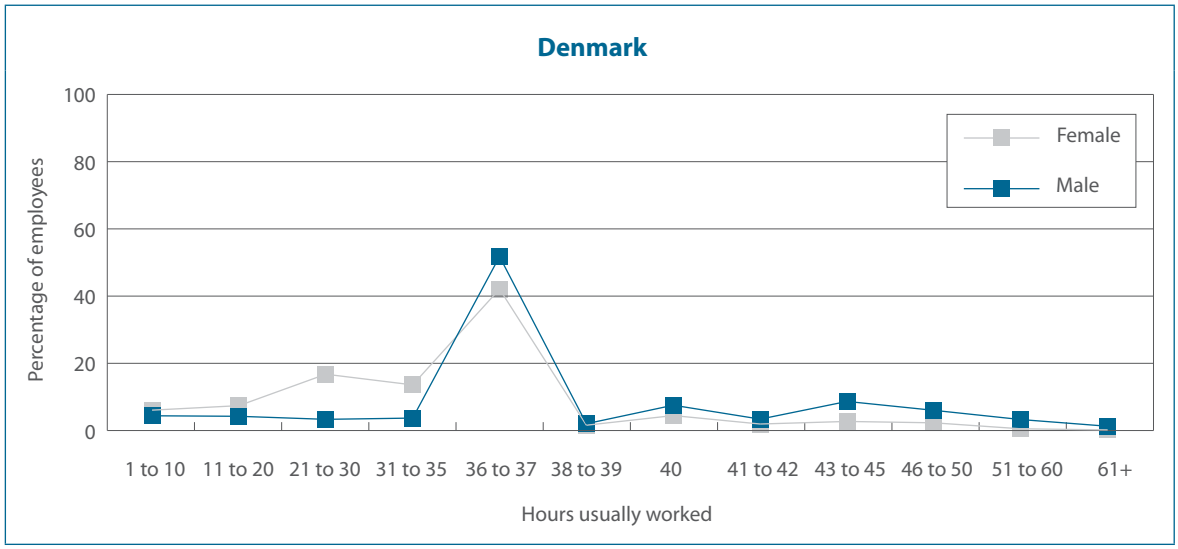


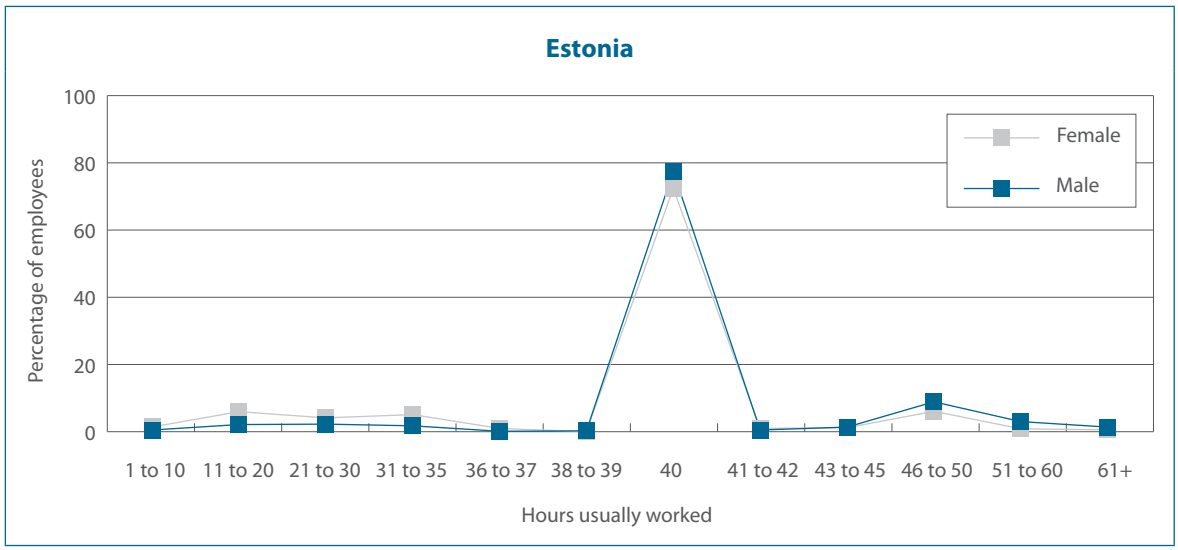


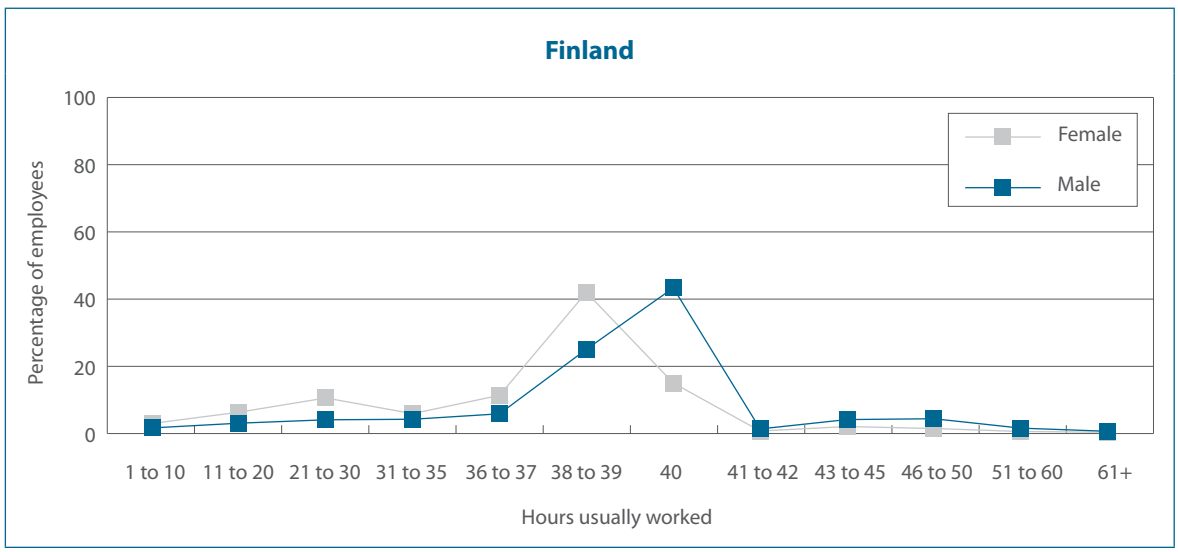

Bulgaria
Percentage of employees
100
80
60
40
20
0
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked

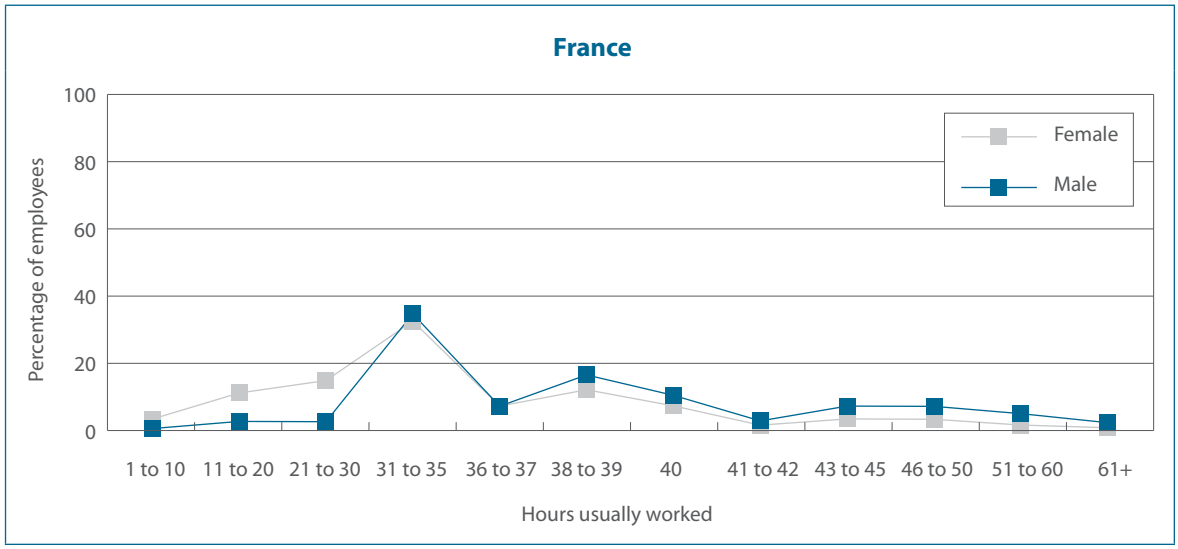

Cyprus
Percentage of employees
100
80
60
40
20
0
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked

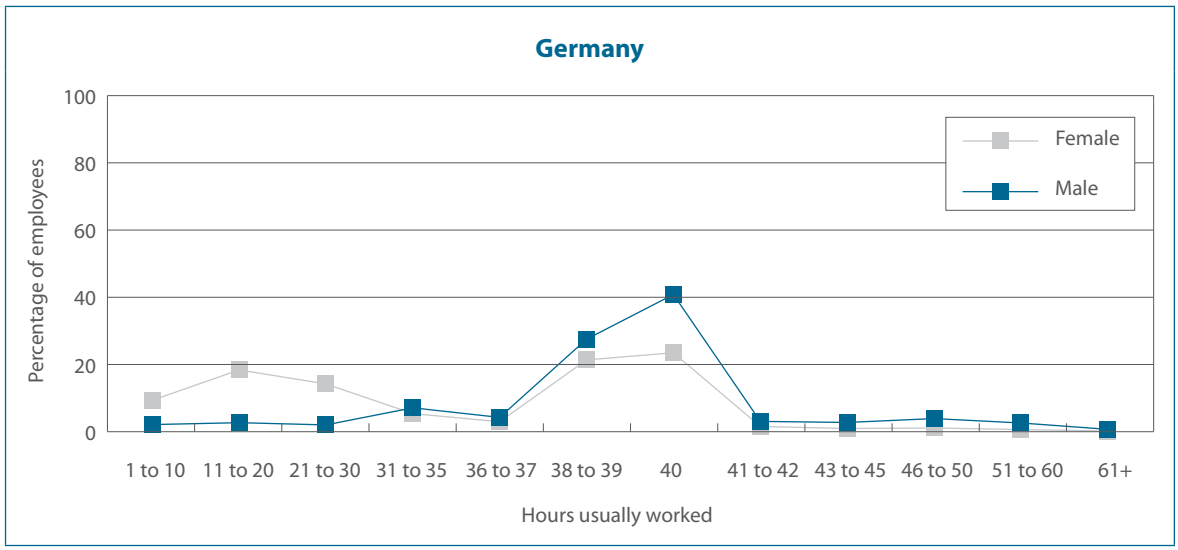

Czech Republic
Percentage of employees
100
80
60
40
20
0
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked

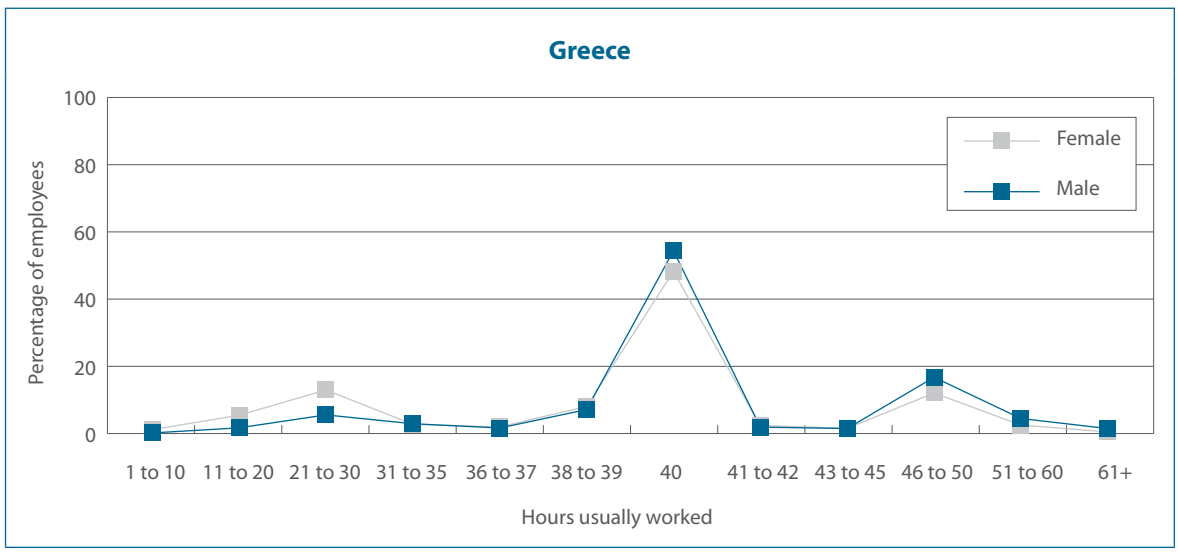

Denmark
100
80
60
40
20
0
Percentage of employees
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked

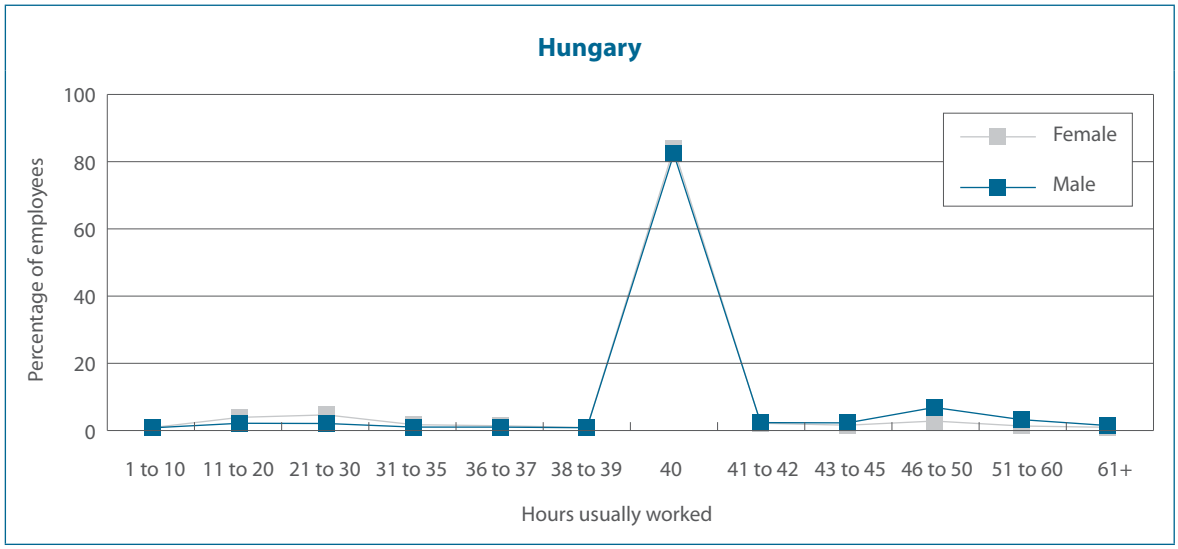

Estonia
100
80
60
40
20
0
Percentage of employees
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked

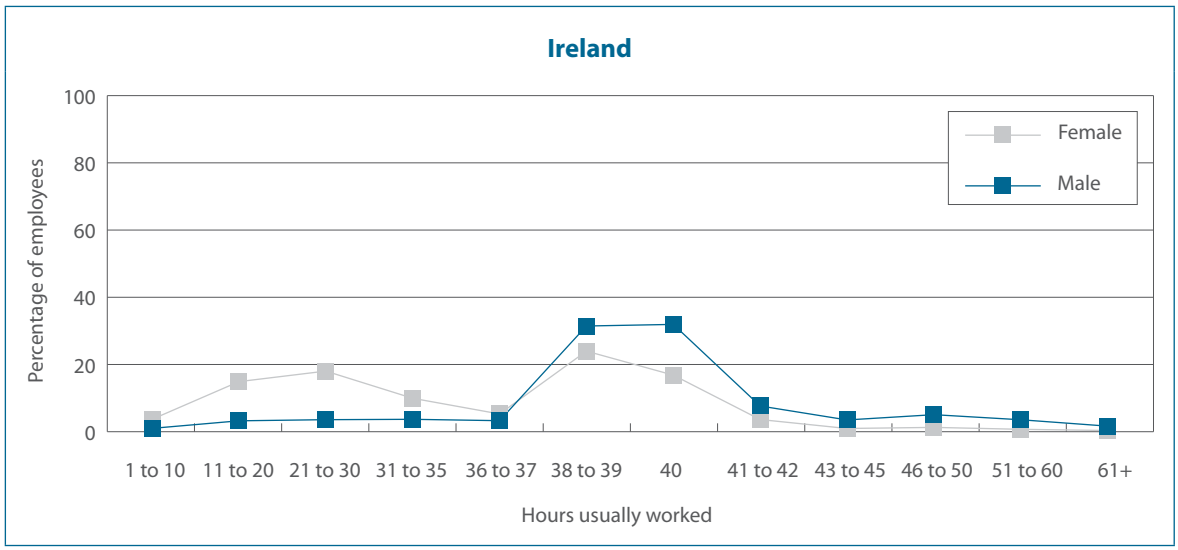

Finland
100
80
60
40
20
0
Percentage of employees
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked

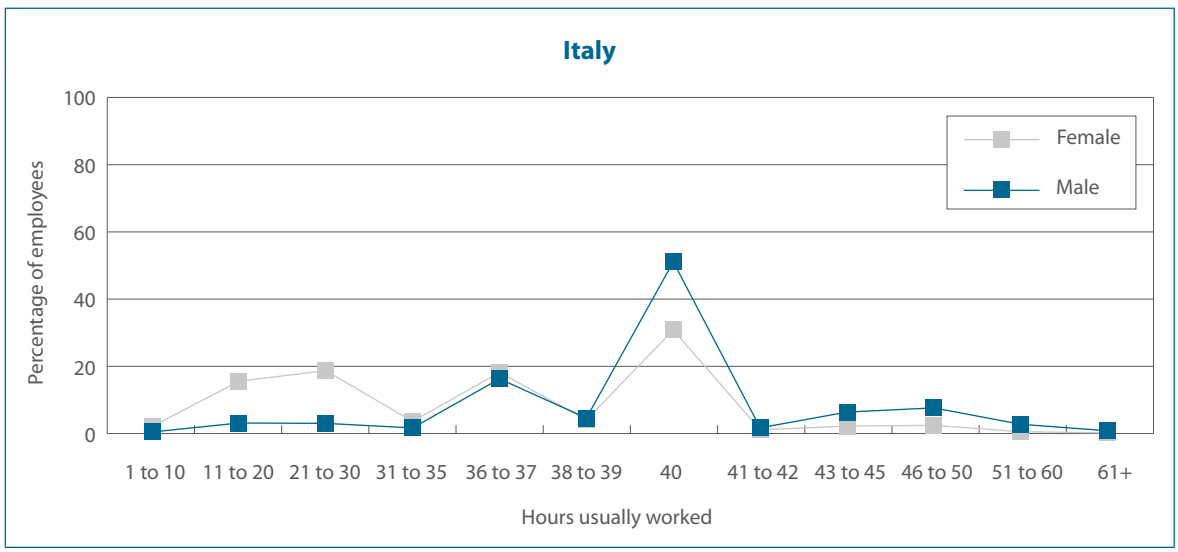

France
Percentage of employees
100
80
60
40
20
0
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked

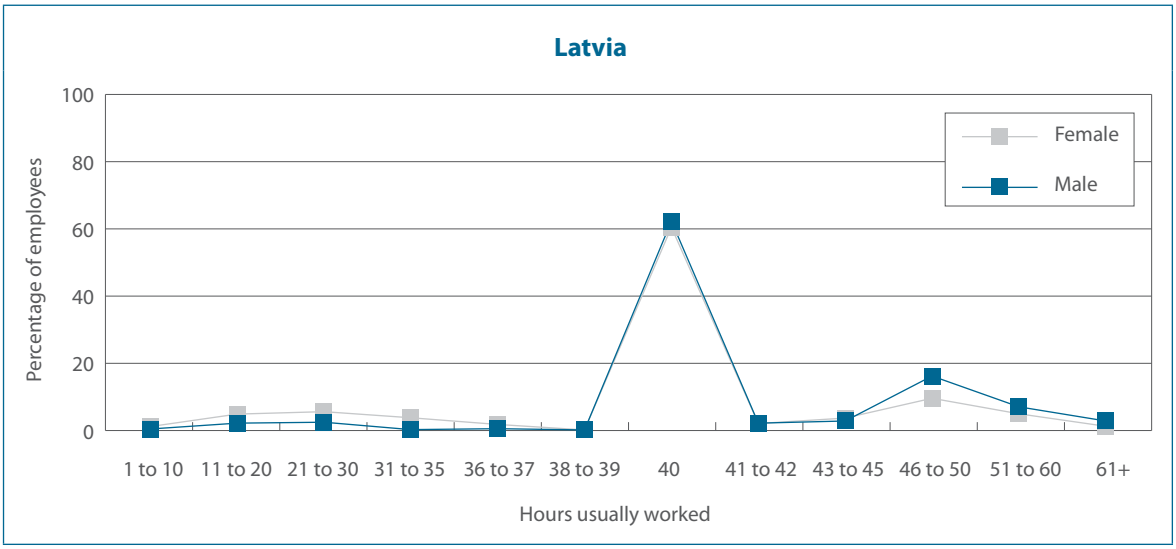

Germany
Percentage of employees
100
80
60
40
20
0
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked

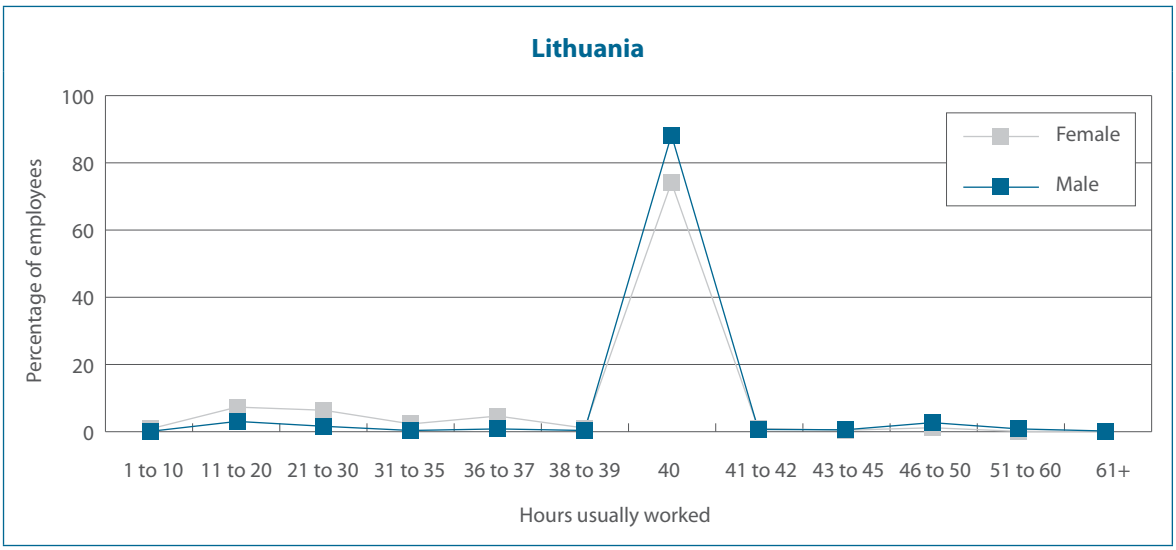

Greece
Percentage of employees
100
80
60
40
20
0
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked

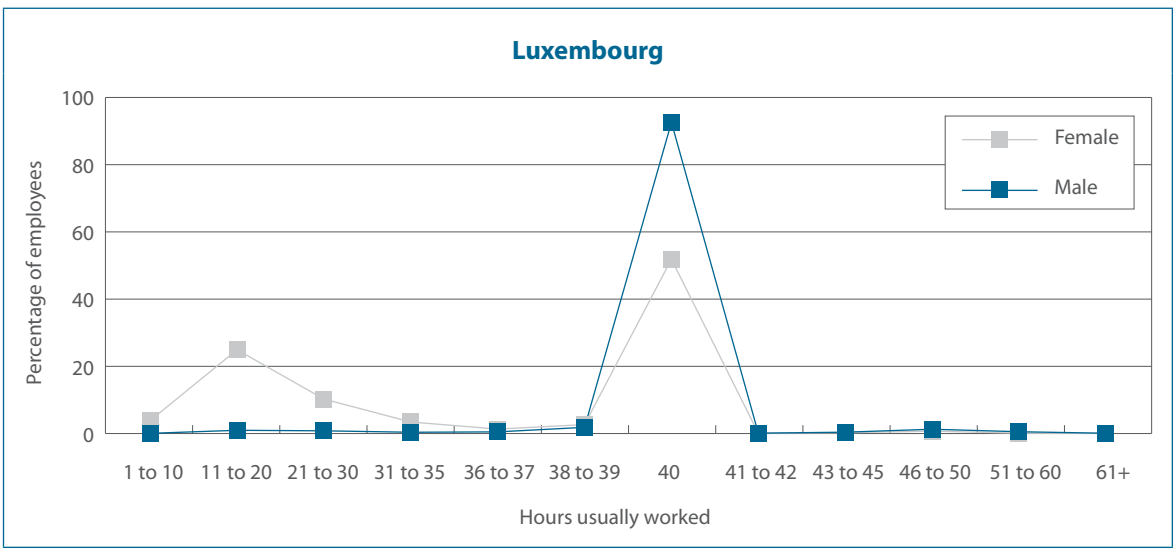

Hungary
100
80
60
40
20
0
Percentage of employees
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked


Ireland
100
80
60
40
20
0
Percentage of employees
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked

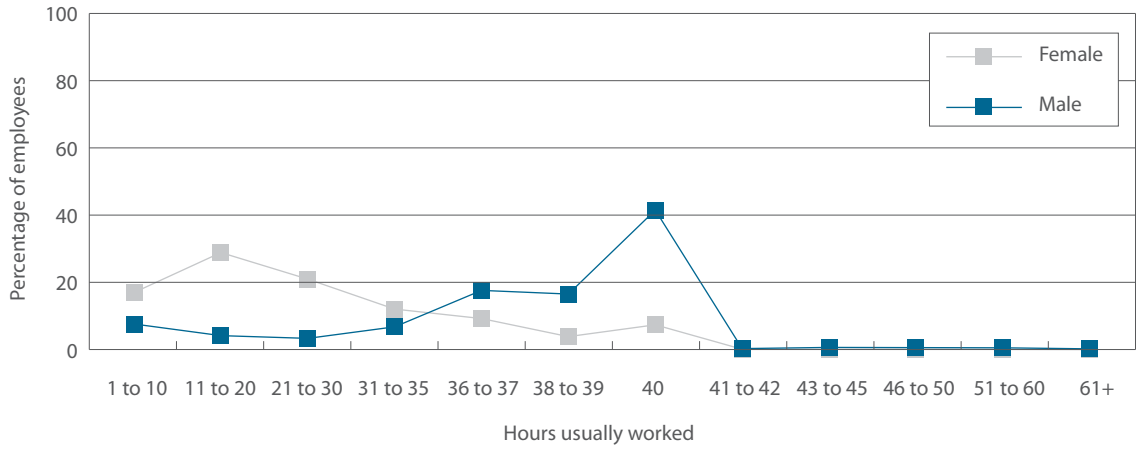

Italy
100
80
60
40
20
0
Percentage of employees
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked


Latvia
Percentage of employees
100
80
60
40
20
0
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked

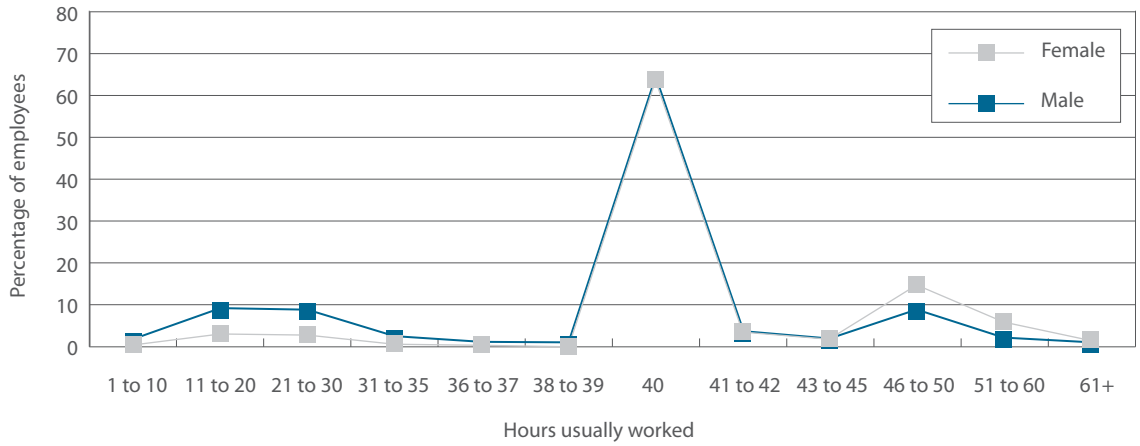

Lithuania
Percentage of employees
100
80
60
40
20
0
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked


Luxembourg
Percentage of employees
100
80
60
40
20
0
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked

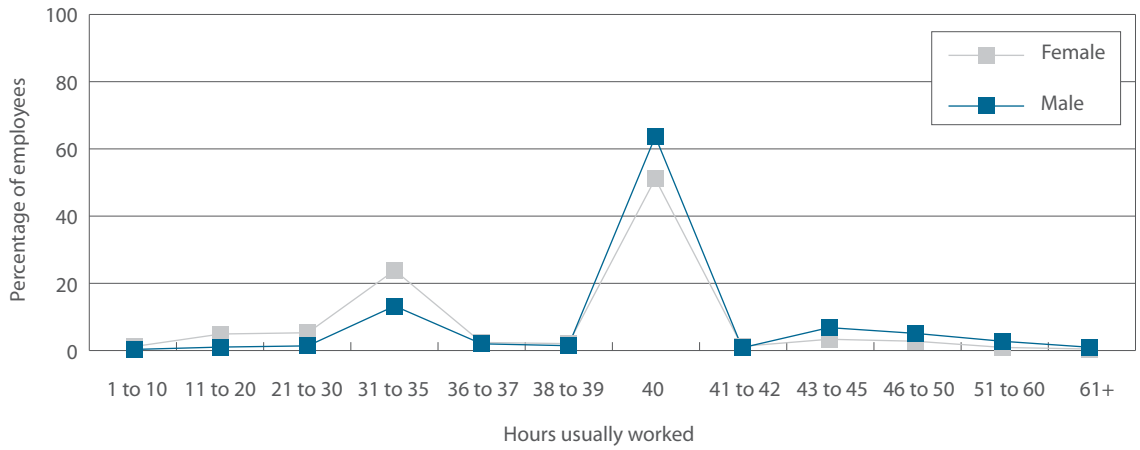
The Netherlands

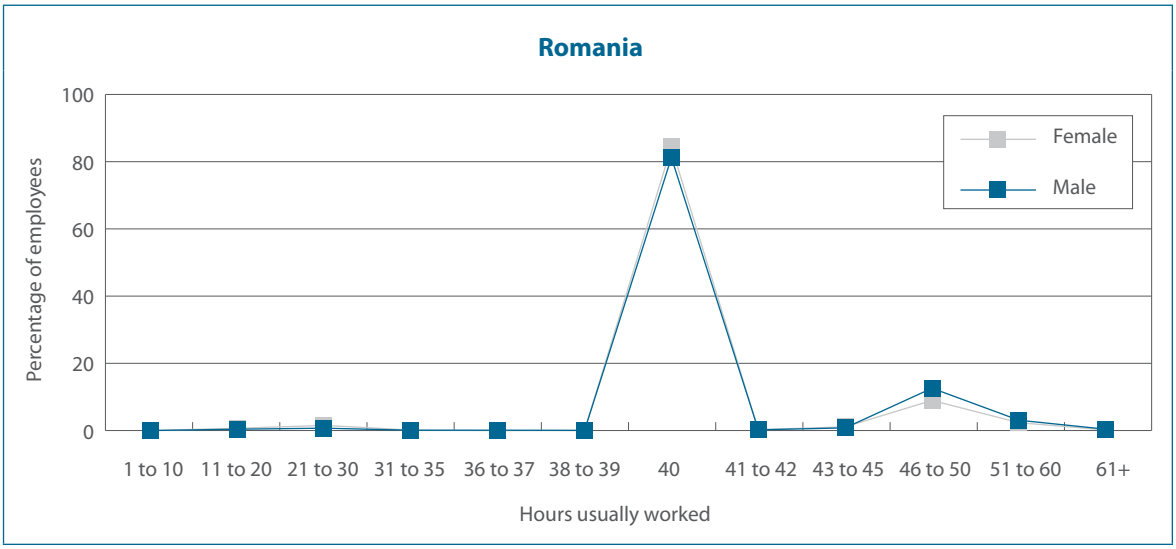


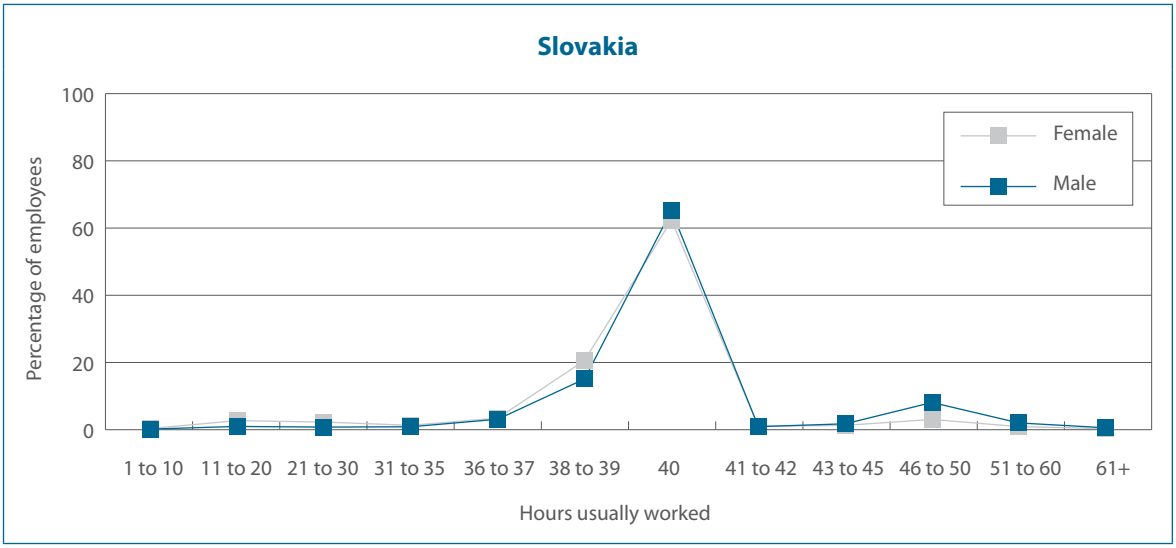
Poland

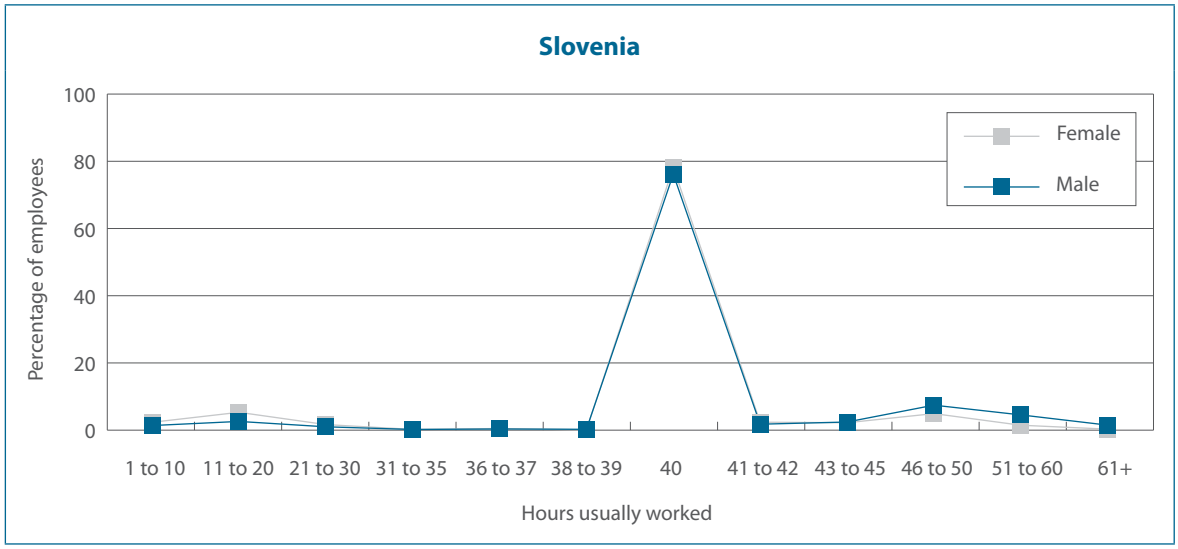


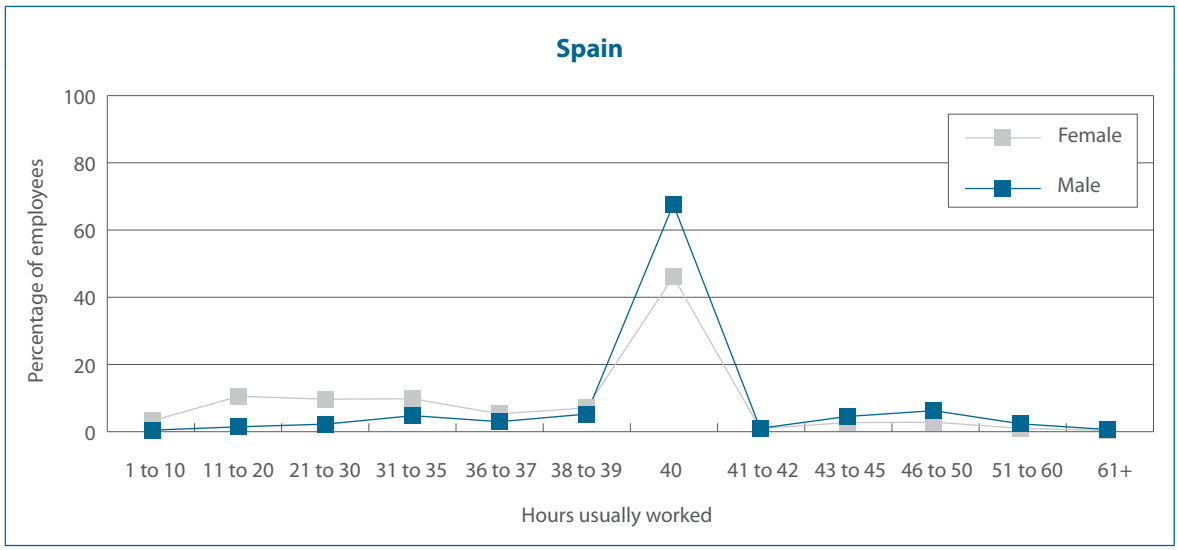
Portugal

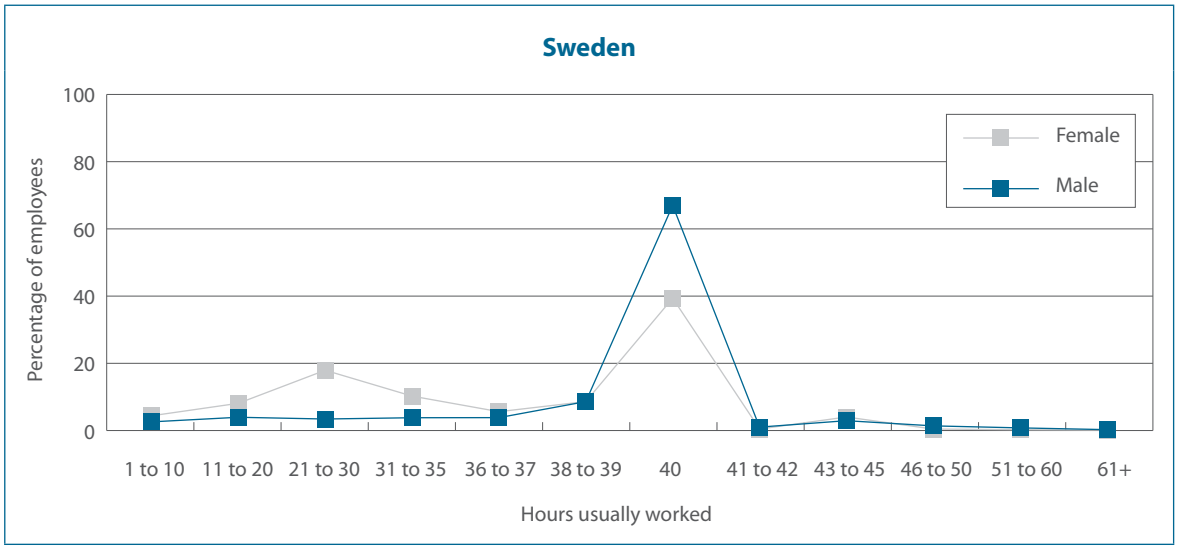


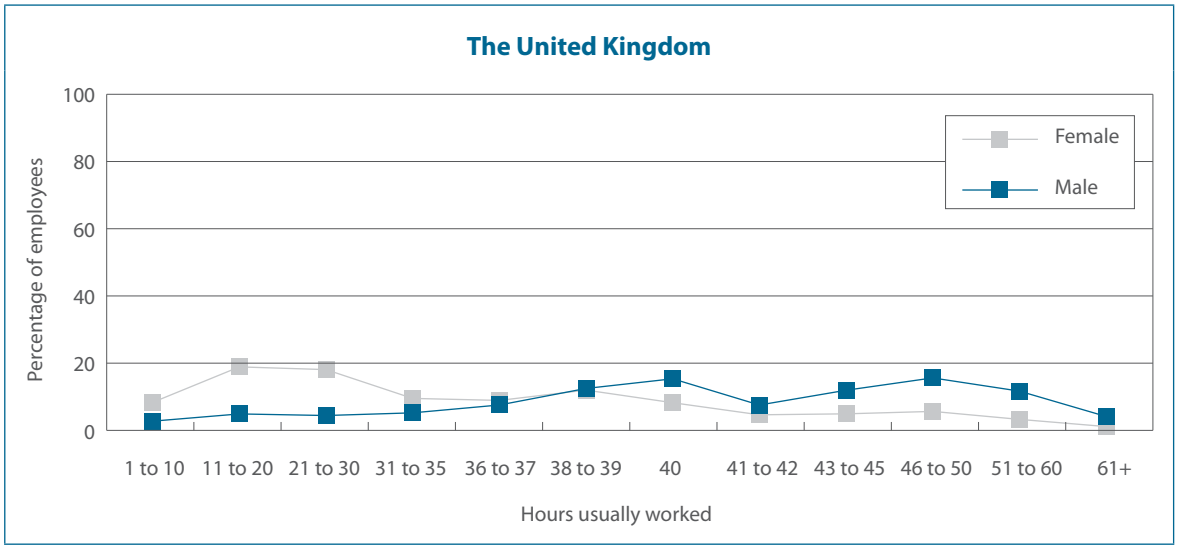

Romania
Percentage of employees
100
80
60
40
20
0
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked

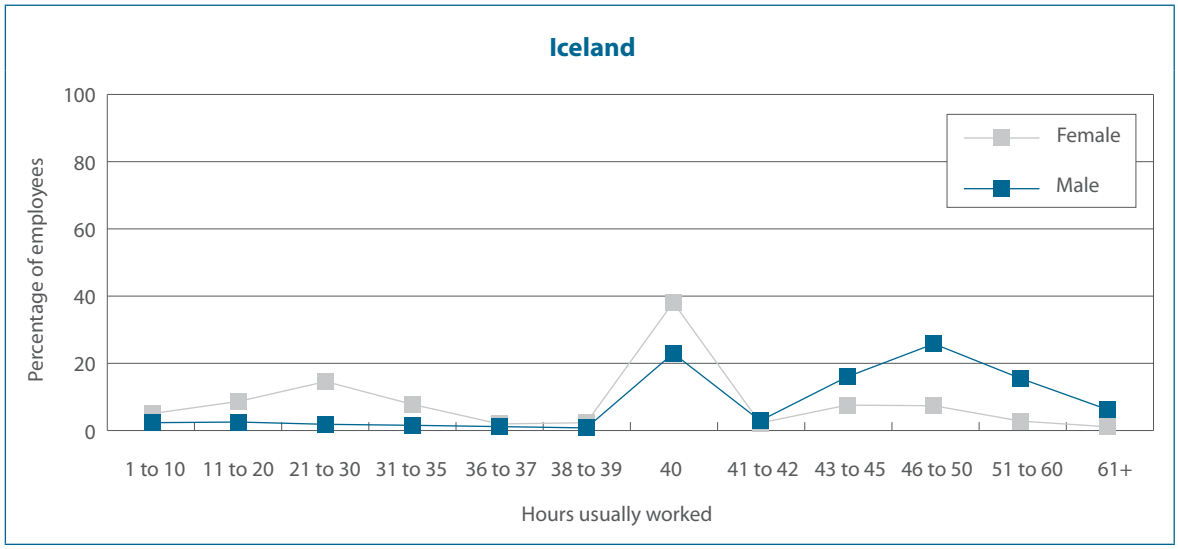

Slovakia
Percentage of employees
100
80
60
40
20
0
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked

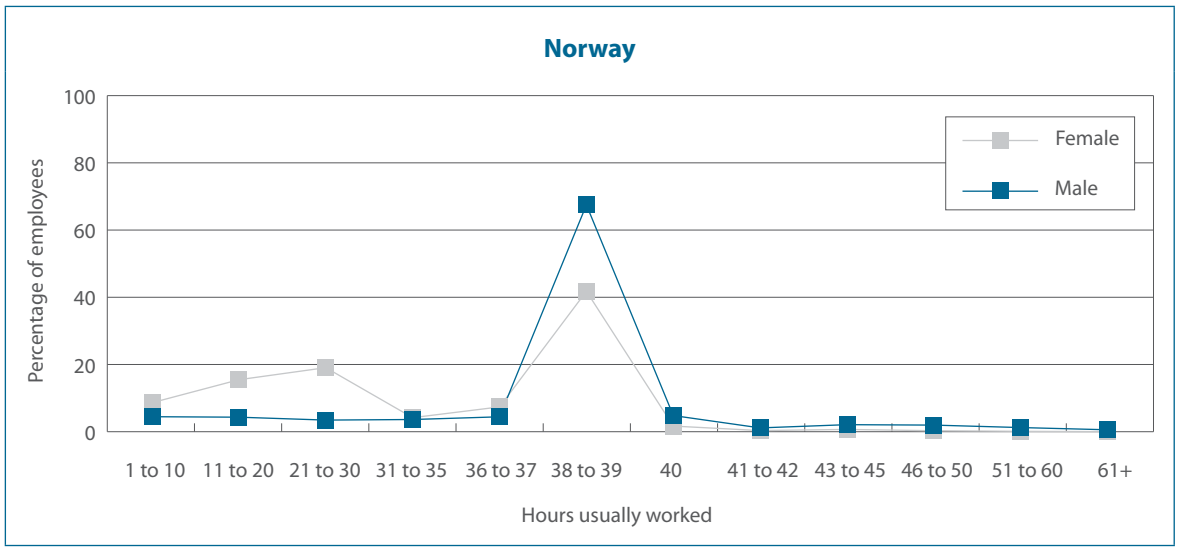

Slovenia
100
80
60
40
20
0
Percentage of employees
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked


Spain
100
80
60
40
20
0
Percentage of employees
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked


Sweden
Percentage of employees
100
80
60
40
20
0
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked


The United Kingdom
Percentage of employees
100
80
60
40
20
0
Female
Male
1 to 10
11 to 20
21 to 30
31 to 35
36 to 37
38 to 39
40
41 to 42
43 to 45
46 to 50
51 to 60
61+
Hours usually worked





NB: Figures are based on hours usually worked in the main job, overtime not included.
Source: Eurostat, EU labour force survey 2004 (own calculations; no data available for Malta and Liechtenstein)

Table A.2 Share of employees working part-time by gender, 1992–2007, and age, 2007

		Year				Age, 2007		
Country	Employees	1992	1997	2002	2007	15–24	25–49	50+
BE	Male	2.3	3.6	6.2	8.1	11.4	5.8	13.7
	Female	31.5	35.2	41.0	43.4	32.8	42.0	54.0
BG	Male			1.2	0.9		0.6	
	Female			2.6	1.9		1.2	3.4
CZ	Male		3.0	2.1	2.2	3.7	0.8	5.0
	Female		10.1	7.9	8.0	6.5	6.7	11.5
DK	Male	10.5	13.0	11.2	13.7	45.0	6.2	11.9
	Female	37.3	35.4	31.8	36.7	66.5	29.0	36.8
DE	Male	2.1	3.7	5.5	8.9	14.8	7.0	10.7
	Female	30.5	35.2	39.9	45.9	24.8	47.5	52.6
EE	Male		6.9	3.6	3.6			
	Female		12.0	9.4	11.3		7.8	14.5
IE	Male	4.1	6.1	6.7	5.5	13.0	2.8	7.5
	Female	18.2	23.2	30.4	24.2	25.2	21.4	33.4
EL	Male	2.4	1.8	2.0	2.4	8.2	2.1	1.7
	Female	5.7	5.8	6.9	8.3	16.2	7.8	7.2
ES	Male	1.3	2.9	2.6	3.8	13.2	2.6	2.6
	Female	12.2	17.1	17.4	22.9	30.3	21.7	23.5
FR	Male	3.4	5.6	5.1	5.8	12.9	4.1	7.3
	Female	24.5	31.5	30.2	30.9	34.5	29.7	32.9
IT	Male	2.3	2.9	3.6	4.4	10.1	3.9	3.7
	Female	11.0	13.6	17.2	27.2	28.9	29.4	18.7
CY	Male			2.0	2.3	5.2	1.4	3.7
	Female			5.8	7.2	11.4	5.9	9.6
LV	Male			4.4	3.2	7.7	1.7	4.2
	Female			8.3	6.4	15.8	3.7	8.6
LT	Male			6.5	4.1	6.7	2.7	6.6
	Female			9.4	7.8	10.2	6.3	11.0

		Year				Age, 2007		
Country	Employees	1992	1997	2002	2007	15–24	25–49	50+
LU	Male	1.1	1.1	1.4	2.6		2.2	
	Female	16.5	20.8	26.6	37.8		36.7	50.7
HU	Male		1.7	1.9	2.6	4.4	1.7	4.9
	Female		5.1	4.7	5.6	6.1	4.6	8.1
MT	Male			4.3	4.2	12.5		
	Female			18.3	24.1	18.6	25.7	29.0
NL	Male	15.0	16.7	21.3	23.8	61.1	12.8	24.6
	Female	63.0	67.8	73.2	75.7	78.9	72.5	82.3
AT	Male		3.2	4.3	5.9	8.4	4.9	7.4
	Female		29.5	36.9	41.9	24.4	45.1	44.9
PL	Male		5.6	5.8	4.3	9.6	2.2	8.6
	Female		8.4	9.2	9.2	15.6	7.0	14.7
PT	Male	1.7	1.8	2.0	2.4	4.9	1.9	3.0
	Female	7.5	9.5	8.5	9.7	11.8	7.6	16.4
RO	Male		1.3	0.5	0.4		0.3	
	Female		1.9	0.8	0.8		0.7	
SI	Male		4.3	3.7	5.0	18.3	2.2	7.3
	Female		7.1	6.4	8.5	33.2	4.9	11.6
SK	Male			1.2	1.2		0.7	2.2
	Female			2.8	4.5	4.6	3.4	7.9
FI	Male		6.1	7.4	8.0	24.2	3.8	10.2
	Female		15.5	16.8	18.6	49.3	12.9	16.5
SE	Male		8.5	9.7	10.5	22.2	6.9	12.9
	Female		40.5	31.1	38.6	46.4	36.1	40.3
UK	Male	5.7	8.2	8.8	9.9	26.9	4.1	13.4
	Female	42.9	44.1	43.1	41.2	42.1	38.0	48.3
NO	Male		9.5	10.2	13.4	39.0	7.9	13.1
	Female		45.8	43.2	44.0	66.9	37.1	46.4
IS	Male		10.3	12.4	9.0	28.3	3.9	5.6
	Female		49.4	45.6	36.3	52.2	30.8	36.0

Source: EU labour force survey (no data available for Liechtenstein).

Table A.3 Share of employees working overtime, by gender and age, 2004

			Age		
Country	Employees		15–24	25–49	50+
BE	Male	15.2	11.3	15.5	16.3
	Female	9.4	10.5	9.3	9.3
BG	Male	2.6		2.8	
	Female	2.6		2.6	
CZ	Male	18.6	15.4	19.6	15.0
	Female	7.7	9.2	7.5	7.7
DK	Male	5.3	5.8	5.6	3.4
	Female	3.7	5.1	3.6	3.2
DE	Male	15.2	6.0	17.0	12.7
	Female	8.7	5.9	9.3	7.1
EE	Male	11.3		12.0	
	Female	6.4		6.2	
IE	Male	13.4	8.2	15.2	10.7
	Female	6.5	5.1	6.9	5.4
EL	Male	4.1	2.9	4.3	3.9
	Female	2.2	0	2.2	0
ES	Male	5.6	4.5	6.0	3.9
	Female	2.5	2.4	2.6	1.4
FR	Male				
	Female				
IT	Male	13.2	8.2	14.2	9.0
	Female	8.5	6.9	8.7	7.0
CY	Male	8.6	7.9	9.3	4.5
	Female	5.1	7.9	5.0	0
LV	Male	16.2	15.6	16.6	14.5
	Female	10.7	9.8	11.1	8.5
LT	Male	6.0		6.1	
	Female	2.4		2.7	

			Age		
Country	Employees		15–24	25–49	50+
LU	Male	9.3	8.8	9.4	8.7
	Female	3.5	0	3.7	0
HU	Male	6.3	6.4	6.4	5.3
	Female	4.3	5.0	4.3	4.0
MT	Male	8.6		8.9	
	Female	7.4		7.7	
NL	Male	27.9	12.5	31.8	24.2
	Female	19.9	11.1	22.4	17.2
AT	Male	23.3	14.1	25.5	19.3
	Female	13.3	12.1	13.6	10.4
PL	Male	6.2	5.8	6.5	3.9
	Female	4.3	3.9	4.4	3.2
PT	Male	8.6	6.5	9.3	5.5
	Female	4.8	6.3	4.8	0
RO	Male	5.4	7.1	5.4	3.7
	Female	3.5	4.0	3.5	0
SI	Male	15.4	10.9	16.6	8.9
	Female	11.8	6.9	12.5	0
SK	Male	12.7	12.1	12.7	13.4
	Female	6.3	6.9	6.3	0
FI	Male	12.9	10.4	13.8	9.9
	Female	8.5	4.8	9.5	7.0
SE	Male	16.4	11.1	17.7	14.2
	Female	10.0	5.8	10.7	9.9
UK	Male	31.9	19.2	35.5	27.8
	Female	22.4	15.0	24.6	19.1
NO	Male	5.8	4.1	6.3	5.0
	Female	2.8	2.7	2.8	3.3
IS	Male	49.1	46.0	52.0	37.4
	Female	23.8	26.5	23.6	20.6

Source: EU labour force survey, ad hoc module 2004 (no data available for Liechtenstein).

Table A.4 Share of employees working long hours, by gender, 1992–2007, and age, 2007

		Year				Age, 2007		
Country	Employees	1992	1997	2002	2007	15–24	25–49	50–64
BE	Male	3.8	4.3	6.8	7.3	2.9	7.5	8.6
	Female	0.9	1.6	2.7	2.4	2.0	2.3	2.9
BG	Male			11.7	16.9	21.8	17.9	12.4
	Female			8.6	12.2	19.3	12.8	8.0
CZ	Male		20.9	13.4	14.8	9.5	16.4	12.7
	Female		6.8	4.0	4.8	4.7	5.1	4.4
DK	Male	8.4	7.0	9.9	9.4	3.4	11.0	9.4
	Female	3.2	3.3	3.7	3.6	0.7	3.9	4.7
DE	Male	6.4	8.4	7.7	8.1	1.9	8.9	9.2
	Female	2.2	3.0	2.2	2.3	1.2	2.6	2.0
EE	Male		17.1	14.0	11.6	9.4	11.7	13.4
	Female		8.4	5.7	4.6	3.2	4.4	6.0
IE	Male	15.9	15.5	10.0	8.0	3.4	9.2	7.9
	Female	3.2	3.7	2.2	1.5	0.8	1.8	1.1
EL	Male	18.0	20.4	23.5	21.6	29.7	22.1	17.2
	Female	10.9	12.8	14.2	12.5	21.3	11.7	12.5
ES	Male	8.0	9.7	9.2	13.4	9.1	14.8	10.9
	Female	4.0	4.5	4.5	5.9	7.3	5.9	5.0
FR	Male	8.9	9.5	7.7	12.2	4.3	12.8	14.1
	Female	3.1	3.3	3.4	5.1	2.7	5.1	6.2
IT	Male	11.2	12.0	11.9	10.0	8.1	10.4	9.5
	Female	5.0	4.6	4.7	3.2	4.8	3.1	3.0
CY	Male			10.6	8.8	6.0	8.7	9.8
	Female			5.5	4.7	3.8	4.2	6.6
LV	Male			29.7	16.2	15.2	17.6	14.2
	Female			19.5	8.5	8.1	8.5	8.9
LT	Male			5.0	3.1	2.4	3.3	3.1
	Female			2.3	2.0	3.1	2.1	1.8

		Year				Age, 2007		
Country	Employees	1992	1997	2002	2007	15–24	25–49	50–64
LU	Male	5.5	4.7	4.1	0.1		0.2	
	Female	2.5	2.1	1.1	0.1		0.1	
HU	Male		13.8	10.3	8.4	7.1	8.9	7.1
	Female		5.2	3.8	3.2	3.8	3.2	2.8
MT	Male			9.2	8.8	5.0	9.3	10.2
	Female			2.6	1.7	1.2	2.2	0.7
NL	Male	1.6	1.6	1.8	1.1	0.9	1.2	1.1
	Female	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2
AT	Male		4.4	4.4	17.9	7.7	19.5	20.4
	Female		1.5	1.7	5.0	3.0	5.4	5.4
PL	Male			21.2	21.5	20.0	23.1	17.2
	Female			9.8	8.7	10.4	9.2	5.8
PT	Male	12.6	13.2	9.9	8.9	6.9	9.4	8.0
	Female	6.1	6.3	4.9	4.1	7.0	4.1	2.6
RO	Male		13.1	19.7	16.8	23.2	17.1	13.8
	Female		10.5	15.7	12.2	19.1	12.2	9.1
SI	Male		13.1	11.5	12.2	9.1	12.9	11.4
	Female		6.1	5.8	5.5	5.1	5.7	4.9
SK	Male			11.0	13.8	13.7	14.4	12.3
	Female			5.2	5.4	9.5	4.9	4.8
FI	Male		5.9	6.6	6.2	4.0	6.6	6.4
	Female		2.1	2.5	2.3	1.2	2.5	2.3
SE	Male		2.6	2.5	1.9	1.3	1.7	2.3
	Female		1.2	0.8	0.5	1.0	0.4	0.6
UK	Male	28.7	31.8	28.2	24.4	12.1	27.7	25.0
	Female	6.0	7.8	8.1	7.7	4.1	8.8	7.3
NO	Male		5.3	4.4	4.3	2.4	4.5	4.6
	Female		0.7	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.8	0.2
IS	Male		51.4	49.7	44.2	35.4	47.3	46.4
	Female		8.7	8.7	8.5	9.6	8.0	9.1

Source: EU labour force survey (no data available for Liechtenstein).

Table A.5 Share of employees (15+) having access to flexible working time schedules, by gender, 2004

Country	15+	Staggered working hours	Working time banking	Flexitime arrangements	Other
BE	Male	69.5	7.6	7.7	10.0
	Female	7.5	7.6	8.3	4.8
BG	Male	2.2	2.5	4.5	0.8
	Female	1.4	1.6	4.2	0.3
CZ	Male	4.9	10.7	6.0	1.8
	Female	3.6	10.2	3.8	0.8
DK	Male	5.8	19.5	37.3	0.0
	Female	7.6	18.7	35.0	0.0
DE	Male	5.2	39.9	7.3	2.3
	Female	5.0	35.4	6.8	2.3
EE	Male	7.0	5.2	8.9	0.1
	Female	5.0	3.1	4.3	0.1
IE	Male	10.5	3.7	5.2	1.1
	Female	7.1	4.7	4.2	0.5
EL	Male	7.2	1.8	3.4	2.5
	Female	6.8	2.0	4.4	2.1
ES	Male	4.1	1.3	6.3	3.7
	Female	3.4	1.0	8.1	2.5
FR	Male	3.3	2.5	24.0	0.0
	Female	2.7	4.4	21.5	0.0
IT	Male	22.8	1.4	7.2	2.8
	Female	20.4	1.4	5.9	2.0
CY	Male	3.8	0.0	2.7	5.2
	Female	4.8	0.0	1.5	2.6
LV	Male	4.8	0.7	12.7	1.8
	Female	4.4	0.6	10.0	2.1
LT	Male	14.4	1.0	1.3	0.1
	Female	9.6	0.8	1.5	0.1

Country	15+	Staggered working hours	Working time banking	Flexitime arrangements	Other
LU	Male	16.3	12.6	7.8	2.1
	Female	12.8	11.0	8.9	1.7
HU	Male	9.3	2.7	5.1	0.8
	Female	7.4	1.5	4.1	0.5
MT	Male	7.1	1.4	5.5	3.0
	Female	5.9	1.4	4.5	5.2
NL	Male	9.8	7.7	3.9	13.9
	Female	8.6	4.9	4.5	8.9
AT	Male	3.4	16.2	16.4	1.6
	Female	3.7	12.0	18.8	1.8
PL	Male	9.4	2.2	8.5	0.5
	Female	7.5	1.5	4.6	0.4
PT	Male	10.8	1.4	4.7	5.6
	Female	7.6	1.1	3.4	5.0
RO	Male	5.1	1.7	4.0	0.1
	Female	3.4	1.0	3.3	0.1
SI	Male	21.3	1.7	5.7	0.3
	Female	23.0	1.0	4.2	0.1
SK	Male	4.0	5.9	5.9	4.9
	Female	4.9	7.4	3.2	2.8
FI	Male	12.0	23.2	15.6	2.9
	Female	11.7	23.0	10.0	2.3
SE	Male	26.5	21.4	10.0	2.1
	Female	33.3	21.3	5.8	2.2
UK	Male	3.8	8.7	21.0	2.6
	Female	2.9	11.6	14.1	1.8
NO	Male	8.9	29.6	14.9	0.1
	Female	7.4	23.7	16.1	0.0
IS	Male	21.3	4.3	1.0	0.4
	Female	9.4	10.6	0.5	0.8

Source: EU labour force survey, ad hoc module 2004 (no data available for Liechtenstein).

Table A.6 Share of employees (15–24) having access to flexible working time schedules, by gender, 2004

Country	15–24	Staggered working hours	Working time banking	Flexitime arrangements	Other
BE	Male	6.3	3.1	6.9	4.4
	Female	5.5	5.7	8.9	7.1
BG	Male	2.8	3.1	4.9	0.7
	Female	0.9	1.1	3.8	0.5
CZ	Male	3.5	7.1	5.0	1.6
	Female	3.5	10.7	3.4	0.9
DK	Male	10.4	7.1	44.1	0.0
	Female	7.3	5.0	43.4	0.0
DE	Male	3.4	25.4	4.9	2.1
	Female	4.4	28.1	5.9	2.3
EE	Male	7.6	3.6	6.8	0.0
	Female	3.4	3.5	2.3	0.0
IE	Male	7.5	1.9	3.9	0.6
	Female	6.1	3.1	3.8	0.1
EL	Male	9.4	1.9	4.7	2.1
	Female	8.8	1.5	2.8	2.1
ES	Male	2.7	0.8	3.4	3.5
	Female	3.0	0.5	5.5	2.6
FR	Male	1.0	0.6	11.8	0.0
	Female	1.5	2.3	16.7	0.0
IT	Male	19.1	0.5	7.2	1.9
	Female	15.3	1.0	5.6	1.5
CY	Male	3.0	0.0	2.7	2.1
	Female	1.0	0.0	0.4	1.0
LV	Male	0.5	0.7	6.2	1.6
	Female	3.3	1.0	6.0	2.1
LT	Male	18.2	2.5	2.1	0.0
	Female	7.5	1.3	2.1	0.0

Country	15–24	Staggered working hours	Working time banking	Flexitime arrangements	Other
LU	Male	22.0	5.2	3.4	1.5
	Female	17.9	9.1	2.6	1.4
HU	Male	7.0	1.9	5.1	0.2
	Female	6.0	2.5	3.3	0.4
MT	Male	8.9	3.1	6.3	2.5
	Female	6.8	0.0	6.1	8.0
NL	Male	3.8	2.0	2.4	15.6
	Female	3.9	2.2	3.3	11.6
AT	Male	2.1	9.9	10.0	0.4
	Female	3.9	2.2	3.3	11.6
PL	Male	8.4	2.5	9.6	0.7
	Female	6.2	0.9	6.6	0.4
PT	Male	5.3	1.0	3.4	6.0
	Female	5.7	1.5	2.8	5.0
RO	Male	4.3	1.0	3.5	0.0
	Female	2.6	1.3	2.9	0.2
SI	Male	12.3	1.7	13.3	0.0
	Female	11.6	0.8	20.4	0.2
SK	Male	3.0	4.2	5.8	6.1
	Female	3.4	6.8	6.0	1.3
FI	Male	9.8	11.0	15.4	3.2
	Female	10.0	10.9	13.4	2.8
SE	Male	38.2	6.3	7.0	6.7
	Female	44.0	5.7	6.8	9.4
UK	Male	4.2	5.8	14.1	2.3
	Female	3.8	7.5	12.8	2.1
NO	Male	6.2	12.2	19.8	0.2
	Female	3.1	7.2	26.5	0.0
IS	Male	10.3	3.1	1.1	0.0
	Female	3.5	6.4	1.6	1.5

Source: EU labour force survey, ad hoc module 2004 (no data available for Liechtenstein).

Table A.7 Share of employees (25–49) having access to flexible working time schedules, by gender, 2004

Country	25–49	Staggered working hours	Working time banking	Flexitime arrangements	Other
BE	Male	7.9	7.8	9.7	5.4
	Female	8.0	8.2	8.1	4.6
BG	Male	2.4	2.5	4.6	0.9
	Female	1.4	1.7	4.2	0.4
CZ	Male	5.0	11.6	6.3	1.9
	Female	3.4	10.3	3.7	0.8
DK	Male	5.0	21.6	37.1	0.0
	Female	8.0	21.5	34.3	0.0
DE	Male	5.3	42.5	7.1	2.2
	Female	5.0	38.2	6.6	2.1
EE	Male	7.6	5.2	9.8	0.1
	Female	5.2	2.9	3.6	0.1
IE	Male	11.6	4.4	5.2	1.2
	Female	7.0	5.3	4.1	0.5
EL	Male	7.4	1.8	3.2	2.4
	Female	6.9	2.2	4.4	2.0
ES	Male	4.4	1.4	6.6	3.9
	Female	3.5	1.2	8.0	2.5
FR	Male	3.4	2.5	24.9	0.0
	Female	2.8	4.3	21.7	0.0
IT	Male	22.9	1.5	6.9	2.7
	Female	21.5	1.5	5.7	1.8
CY	Male	4.0	0.0	2.6	5.8
	Female	5.9	0.0	1.4	2.5
LV	Male	5.2	0.8	13.5	1.8
	Female	4.9	0.6	9.9	2.0
LT	Male	13.2	0.8	1.3	0.1
	Female	9.5	1.0	1.0	0.1

Country	25–49	Staggered working hours	Working time banking	Flexitime arrangements	Other
LU	Male	16.7	12.8	7.4	2.2
	Female	13.1	11.7	9.3	1.6
HU	Male	9.2	2.9	5.1	0.8
	Female	7.3	1.3	4.1	0.4
MT	Male	7.7	0.9	5.2	2.6
	Female	7.0	1.1	4.2	3.9
NL	Male	11.1	8.9	4.0	13.1
	Female	10.2	6.0	4.8	8.0
AT	Male	3.3	17.6	17.3	1.5
	Female	3.6	13.3	19.6	1.5
PL	Male	9.7	2.3	8.2	0.5
	Female	7.9	1.5	4.1	0.4
PT	Male	11.8	1.4	4.7	5.2
	Female	7.6	1.1	2.8	4.4
RO	Male	5.2	1.7	4.0	0.1
	Female	3.6	1.1	3.1	0.1
SI	Male	22.1	1.6	4.2	0.2
	Female	23.6	1.0	1.9	0.0
SK	Male	4.1	6.2	6.4	4.8
	Female	4.9	7.7	2.7	2.9
FI	Male	12.4	25.2	16.0	2.9
	Female	12.1	25.6	9.8	2.0
SE	Male	27.7	22.6	9.5	1.4
	Female	33.5	22.3	5.7	1.4
UK	Male	4.0	9.6	22.1	2.7
	Female	2.9	13.1	13.8	1.8
NO	Male	9.4	32.0	13.5	0.0
	Female	8.4	26.8	13.6	0.0
IS	Male	25.0	4.9	0.7	0.4
	Female	12.8	13.7	0.4	0.7

NB: Data for the United Kingdom refer to age group 24–54.
Source: EU labour force survey, ad hoc module 2004 (no data available for Liechtenstein).

Table A.8 Share of employees (50+) having access to flexible working time schedules, by gender, 2004

Country	50+	Staggered working hours	Working time banking	Flexitime arrangements	Other
BE	Male	7.0	9.7	12.3	5.0
	Female	6.0	5.6	9.2	4.6
BG	Male	1.5	2.3	4.0	0.5
	Female	1.6	1.4	4.3	0.1
CZ	Male	5.1	9.8	5.4	1.7
	Female	4.0	9.6	4.2	1.0
DK	Male	5.4	21.5	34.3	0.0
	Female	6.9	19.8	31.8	0.0
DE	Male	5.8	39.9	9.0	2.9
	Female	5.4	31.7	7.9	2.6
EE	Male	5.3	5.9	7.7	0.0
	Female	4.9	3.3	6.3	0.1
IE	Male	10.0	3.3	6.4	1.2
	Female	8.2	3.9	4.9	1.1
EL	Male	5.5	1.8	3.4	3.0
	Female	4.9	0.9	6.1	2.6
ES	Male	4.1	1.5	6.8	3.4
	Female	3.5	0.7	10.3	2.3
FR	Male	3.9	3.5	27.2	0.0
	Female	2.7	5.4	23.0	0.0
IT	Male	24.2	1.8	7.9	3.7
	Female	18.2	1.4	7.0	2.9
CY	Male	3.4	0.0	2.9	5.0
	Female	3.2	0.0	2.7	4.2
LV	Male	6.4	0.4	14.5	2.0
	Female	3.7	0.6	11.7	2.6
LT	Male	16.6	0.7	1.0	0.0
	Female	10.6	0.2	2.8	0.0

Country	50+	Staggered working hours	Working time banking	Flexitime arrangements	Other
LU	Male	12.8	14.0	10.7	2.1
	Female	9.1	8.7	9.7	2.4
HU	Male	10.5	2.3	5.1	1.0
	Female	8.3	1.7	4.4	0.8
MT	Male	4.4	1.3	5.5	4.2
	Female	0.0	5.5	2.8	5.2
NL	Male	10.4	8.6	4.4	14.9
	Female	7.5	3.6	4.5	9.7
AT	Male	5.0	16.1	18.2	2.6
	Female	3.8	8.7	21.5	4.1
PL	Male	8.7	1.7	8.9	0.3
	Female	6.3	1.5	5.9	0.5
PT	Male	11.1	1.3	5.6	6.8
	Female	8.8	1.2	6.5	7.6
RO	Male	5.1	2.1	4.2	0.1
	Female	3.3	0.6	4.4	0.2
SI	Male	23.6	2.2	7.0	0.9
	Female	27.7	1.7	6.0	0.5
SK	Male	4.6	5.8	4.3	4.5
	Female	5.9	6.2	3.4	3.3
FI	Male	12.0	24.1	14.7	2.8
	Female	11.7	23.1	8.8	2.6
SE	Male	20.0	24.4	12.1	1.6
	Female	29.3	24.6	5.4	1.3
UK	Male	3.8	8.7	21.0	2.6
	Female	0.0	0.0	20.7	0.0
NO	Male	9.2	32.7	15.6	0.1
	Female	7.4	25.2	16.3	0.1
IS	Male	20.5	3.7	1.6	0.8
	Female	6.1	7.0	0.0	0.3

NB: Data for the United Kingdom refer to age group 55+.
Source: EU labour force survey, ad hoc module 2004 (no data available for Liechtenstein).

Table A.9 Share of employees usually working in the evening, by gender, 1992–2007, and age, 2007

		Year				Age, 2007		
Country	Employees	1992	1997	2002	2007	15–24	25–49	50+
BE	Male	10.3	11.2	11.6	14.1	15.3	14.5	12.0
	Female	8.1	8.5	8.5	9.5	12.6	9.2	9.4
BG	Male				15.3	18.4	15.3	14.2
	Female				13.9	20.6	13.7	12.4
CZ	Male			9.0	12.8	16.6	13.2	10.6
	Female			6.9	10.8	16.7	10.6	9.4
DK	Male	17.5	19.4	21.5	17.2	23.4	17.2	13.6
	Female	16.2	18.4	20.5	15.1	29.5	12.4	12.8
DE	Male	15.2	17.6		27.0	20.7	30.0	22.8
	Female	11.3	15.1		23.3	27.0	24.0	19.5
EE	Male		24.5	21.6	16.3		15.3	19.0
	Female		21.3	20.2	17.8	23.7	16.3	18.8
IE	Male	11.0	11.7	10.1				
	Female	7.9	9.0	7.9				
EL	Male	16.5	13.6	14.0	12.8	19.2	13.1	9.7
	Female	16.7	15.1	15.9	15.5	25.5	15.0	13.6
ES	Male				16.2	16.4	17.0	13.6
	Female				16.9	26.9	16.0	13.8
FR	Male	7.6	9.0	12.0	18.3	16.6	19.1	16.6
	Female	5.3	6.0	8.6	14.2	17.6	14.6	11.6
IT	Male	10.7	13.9	13.0	17.3	16.1	18.4	14.4
	Female	6.8	8.5	9.0	10.9	16.3	11.0	9.0
CY	Male			4.7	3.4	4.8	3.1	3.6
	Female			3.9	2.5	4.3	2.1	3.1
LV	Male			15.9	11.0	12.4	10.5	11.3
	Female			15.2	8.9	11.2	7.9	10.1
LT	Male			8.5	7.3	7.3	7.1	8.1
	Female			6.5	7.7	13.5	7.8	5.8

		Year				Age, 2007		
Country	Employees	1992	1997	2002	2007	15–24	25–49	50+
LU	Male	7.6	6.6	7.4	14.8		15.6	13.1
	Female	7.9	8.7	8.0	10.6		11.2	
HU	Male		20.2	14.5	8.3	10.9	8.3	7.50
	Female		12.6	9.1	6.2	8.4	6.0	6.0
MT	Male			15.4	18.9	16.3	18.8	20.6
	Female			10.8	14.7	18.9	13.9	
NL	Male	6.5	14.7		28.6	38.2	27.8	24.3
	Female	6.2	15.6		28.4	44.3	25.2	24.0
AT	Male		15.1	15.6	14.3	13.4	14.8	13.3
	Female		9.6	11.0	9.5	9.4	9.5	9.7
PL	Male			11.3	9.7	10.1	9.9	9.0
	Female			8.5	7.8	8.8	8.0	6.7
PT	Male	0.9	1.0					
	Female	1.0	0.9					
RO	Male			16.6	17.9	20.1	18.8	14.1
	Female			14.2	16.8	20.7	17.1	13.7
SI	Male		17.6	15.7	21.8	28.0	22.3	16.5
	Female		14.3	13.4	19.0	28.0	18.7	15.0
SK	Male			18.5	28.1	31.5	28.7	24.8
	Female			13.6	21.8	33.6	21.9	15.9
FI	Male		24.5	21.7	24.3	32.8	25.0	18.8
	Female		22.4	23.3	24.5	40.2	22.7	21.3
SE	Male		17.7	19.4	15.2	26.3	15.2	11.0
	Female		21.4	24.0	15.1	33.8	14.1	11.0
UK	Male	15.1	17.9	32.3	28.4	32.8	28.2	26.3
	Female	14.1	16.2	25.4	23.3	34.3	22.2	19.8
NO	Male		15.6	14.6	12.0	23.2	11.1	8.5
	Female		16.2	15.6	12.6	28.9	10.7	8.7
IS	Male		19.5	18.3	24.4	32.4	24.5	18.3
	Female		17.8	13.4	18.3	39.2	12.8	15.0

Source: EU abour force survey (no data available for Liechtenstein).

Table A.10 Share of employees usually working on Saturday, by gender, 1992–2007, and age, 2007

		Year				Age, 2007		
Country	Employees	1992	1997	2002	2007	15–24	25–49	50+
BE	Male	8.3	9.9	10.7	13.5	17.3	13.4	12.0
	Female	12.8	13.0	13.8	16.8	29.1	16.1	13.6
BG	Male				20.9	26.4	21.3	18.0
	Female				16.1	26.2	16.2	12.5
CZ	Male			6.1	21.0	22.3	21.6	19.1
	Female			6.0	18.6	28.0	18.6	16.2
DK	Male	19.9	20.4	17.9	17.1	25.6	16.5	13.6
	Female	26.8	27.3	21.9	19.2	36.8	15.8	16.2
DE	Male	15.1	16.6		22.2	22.7	23.2	19.2
	Female	19.8	21.9		26.4	32.3	26.2	24.0
EE	Male		31.3	23.0	14.5		14.3	15.6
	Female		27.3	20.4	19.1	24.7	17.8	19.8
IE	Male	21.7	22.4	19.9				
	Female	19.3	19.9	17.8				
EL	Male	23.3	23.6	27.0	25.0	39.6	25.4	18.3
	Female	18.4	20.3	24.3	21.4	42.4	20.3	16.5
ES	Male	29.6	29.0		19.7	23.1	19.9	17.2
	Female	31.8	30.1		26.8	41.3	25.9	21.5
FR	Male	16.4	16.2	18.2	23.5	27.3	23.7	21.1
	Female	24.3	22.4	24.1	32.1	42.8	32.0	27.9
IT	Male	30.6	31.6	28.4	32.0	33.3	32.2	30.8
	Female	36.9	36.4	31.0	32.9	46.4	31.7	32.9
CY	Male			18.5	15.2	25.7	14.1	13.8
	Female			29.0	30.0	33.7	30.4	26.30
LV	Male			26.8	23.0	26.7	23.0	20.9
	Female			27.1	22.4	26.7	21.7	22.3
LT	Male			8.3	8.4	9.9	7.9	8.8
	Female			8.6	9.0	13.0	9.0	7.8

		Year				Age, 2007		
Country	Employees	1992	1997	2002	2007	15–24	25–49	50+
LU	Male	12.9	12.6	12.6	17.3	19.5	17.8	14.5
	Female	18.1	21.8	17.8	18.0	34.2	17.7	13.8
HU	Male		17.6	13.6	10.7	13.3	11.0	8.8
	Female		13.2	10.1	9.3	13.1	9.5	7.8
MT	Male			25.4	26.3	26.6	26.5	25.5
	Female			23.5	26.3	34.9	24.3	
NL	Male	20.9	21.9		24.3	44.4	21.5	17.6
	Female	25.1	26.7		28.4	54.5	23.1	21.2
AT	Male		17.4	17.0	24.7	23.3	25.4	23.6
	Female		23.4	24.6	28.2	37.0	26.8	26.0
PL	Male			14.5	15.2	16.1	15.7	13.2
	Female			12.0	10.9	15.8	11.2	7.1
PT	Male	20.0	22.1	18.8	17.4	20.1	17.6	15.4
	Female	17.9	20.8	17.6	19.2	38.1	17.6	15.7
RO	Male			31.7	26.3	33.8	27.2	20.3
	Female			26.6	21.3	28.4	21.2	18.4
SI	Male		19.7	18.1	20.4	26.2	20.9	15.4
	Female		19.3	17.2	18.9	30.6	18.3	15.3
SK	Male			21.4	28.7	29.4	29.2	27.2
	Female			18.0	24.5	37.4	24.0	20.1
FI	Male		18.7	17.4	17.0	25.5	16.9	13.1
	Female		20.9	21.5	22.1	41.6	20.2	17.5
SE	Male		12.6	13.3	9.4	18.6	8.8	7.1
	Female		21.2	23.0	15.2	37.2	13.6	10.8
UK	Male	24.2	25.8	23.9	22.0	35.6	20.3	18.1
	Female	21.3	21.5	22.0	20.5	44.3	16.4	16.8
NO	Male		19.5	17.8	15.8	29.5	14.7	11.5
	Female		22.6	21.1	19.0	50.7	14.9	12.1
IS	Male		26.7	21.3	26.0	36.5	25.5	19.5
	Female		19.2	14.3	19.7	41.9	13.4	16.8

Source: EU labour force survey (no data available for Liechtenstein).

Table A.11 Share of employees usually working on Sunday, by gender, 1992–2007, and age, 2007

		Year				Age, 2007		
Country	Employees	1992	1997	2002	2007	15–24	25–49	50+
BE	Male	5.3	6.0	5.7	7.9	9.6	7.7	7.7
	Female	5.7	6.0	7.1	8.6	12.4	8.4	7.3
BG	Male				9.0	10.3	8.7	9.4
	Female				6.1	9.1	6.0	5.5
CZ	Male			5.0	14.9	15.8	15.1	13.9
	Female			4.4	12.7	20.1	12.4	11.6
DK	Male	14.3	15.4	13.3	12.6	14.8	12.8	10.9
	Female	20.1	21.1	16.5	14.3	21.8	12.7	13.6
DE	Male	8.3	9.1		12.3	10.5	13.0	11.5
	Female	8.3	10.0		13.8	15.0	14.1	12.2
EE	Male		21.5	15.8	10.0		9.2	12.3
	Female		18.5	13.8	12.1		10.5	14.3
IE	Male	10.4	10.9	10.4				
	Female	8.3	9.9	10.0				
EL	Male	9.5	8.2	8.4	6.7	10.5	6.5	5.8
	Female	4.7	4.7	6.5	4.6	8.0	4.1	5.3
ES	Male	10.8	13.1		10.3	11.8	10.0	10.4
	Female	9.5	11.4		12.1	15.5	11.6	12.3
FR	Male	4.9	5.7	7.3	10.9	12.5	10.8	10.3
	Female	5.1	5.7	7.7	13.3	17.3	13.9	9.8
IT	Male	6.7	7.5	7.4	12.3	13.8	12.5	10.9
	Female	4.5	5.4	5.8	10.7	17.2	10.7	8.6
CY	Male			4.9	4.8	7.9	4.3	4.9
	Female			4.6	5.9	9.0	4.9	7.6
LV	Male			17.1	12.0	11.3	11.6	13.2
	Female			17.6	13.1	18.8	12.2	12.8
LT	Male			5.4	6.0		5.6	7.3
	Female			4.8	5.6	10.1	5.3	5.1

		Year				Age, 2007		
Country	Employees	1992	1997	2002	2007	15–24	25–49	50+
LU	Male	6.0	5.1	6.7	13.1		13.7	11.2
	Female	4.9	5.4	6.2	10.2		10.5	
HU	Male		11.1	9.5	7.3	8.9	7.4	6.3
	Female		5.8	5.8	5.6	7.3	5.6	5.4
MT	Male			16.0	16.5	14.2	16.5	18.1
	Female			11.8	12.4	15.8	11.3	
NL	Male	11.6	12.1		14.7	17.8	14.6	12.7
	Female	13.9	15.4		18.2	23.5	17.4	16.0
AT	Male		10.6	10.1	13.3	10.7	13.5	14.4
	Female		9.9	11.2	13.2	12.0	13.4	13.2
PL	Male			6.6	5.7	4.9	5.5	6.8
	Female			5.6	4.6	6.5	4.6	3.3
PT	Male	13.0	12.2	9.1	9.2	11.9	9.0	8.5
	Female	9.2	9.8	8.2	10.6	23.3	9.7	7.8
RO	Male			14.4	11.8	13.3	12.3	9.5
	Female			12.2	10.6	12.5	10.7	9.5
SI	Male		11.8	9.8	11.4	12.9	11.8	9.5
	Female		7.6	7.5	9.8	18.8	9.1	8.3
SK	Male			18.3	23.9	22.6	24.4	23.1
	Female			13.1	18.6	29.1	18.1	15.0
FI	Male		13.9	12.4	12.3	13.7	12.8	10.3
	Female		14.2	15.2	15.7	24.5	14.8	13.7
SE	Male		11.4	12.6	8.7	17.1	8.1	6.8
	Female		19.3	20.7	13.1	30.6	11.9	9.8
UK	Male	11.0	12.8	12.7	12.3	21.2	11.4	9.6
	Female	10.0	12.3	13.3	12.9	26.4	10.7	10.3
NO	Male		12.0	11.2	9.4	13.2	9.3	7.8
	Female		10.8	11.0	9.6	19.9	8.1	7.9
IS	Male		17.1	15.7	18.5	26.7	17.9	13.8
	Female		15.1	11.6	16.3	35.3	10.8	14.4

Source: EU labour force survey (no data available for Liechtenstein).

Table A.12 Country z-scores for indicators of gender equality

	Gender employment gap z-score	Gender pay gap z-score	Dissimilarity index z-score	Average z-score
Austria	0.13	−1.26	−1.21	−0.78
Belgium	−0.36	1.08	−1.22	−0.17
Bulgaria	0.77	0.66	1.30	0.91
Cyprus	−0.74	−0.72	0.61	−0.28
Czech Republic	−0.39	−0.95	0.68	−0.22
Denmark	1.02	−0.10	−0.46	0.15
Estonia	1.20	−1.96	0.81	0.02
Finland	1.49	−0.64	0.61	0.49
France	0.25	0.22	−0.14	0.11
Germany	0.25	−0.85	−0.98	−0.53
Greece	−2.26	−0.56	0.66	−0.72
Hungary	−0.14	0.36	0.99	0.41
Ireland	−0.80	−0.04	−0.95	−0.60
Italy	−1.94	1.83	−0.71	−0.28
Latvia	0.45	0.26	0.80	0.51
Lithuania	0.85	−0.03	0.69	0.50
Luxembourg	−1.14	0.90	−1.31	−0.51
Netherlands	0.08	−0.98	−2.48	−1.13
Poland	−0.01	1.37	0.57	0.65
Portugal	0.20	1.24	0.16	0.53
Romania	0.26	1.33	1.21	0.93
Slovakia	−0.09	−1.30	1.03	−0.12
Slovenia	0.74	1.30	1.06	1.03
Spain	−1.85	−0.15	−0.19	−0.73
Sweden	1.66	0.06	−0.38	0.45
United Kingdom	0.37	−1.08	−1.14	−0.62

Source: EU labour force survey.

Table A.13 Country z-scores for indicators of flexibility

	Kurtosis z-score	Homework z-score	Flexitime z-score	Average z-score
Austria	0.82	0.88	0.65	0.63
Belgium	1.01	1.31	0.15	0.61
Bulgaria	−0.79	−0.97	−1.2	−0.82
Cyprus	1.55	−0.97	−1.1	−0.01
Czech Republic	−0.62	−0.63	−0.4	−0.44
Denmark	−0.5	0.20	2.28	0.63
Estonia	−0.85	0.05	−0.68	−0.50
Finland	1.54	1.85	1.51	1.33
France	0.31	2.53	0.14	0.57
Germany	−0.47	0.10	1.65	0.41
Greece	−0.29	−0.53	−0.79	−0.45
Hungary	−0.91	−0.53	−0.79	−0.65
Ireland	0.98	−0.19	−0.56	0.11
Italy	0.39	−0.63	0.34	0.14
Latvia	−0.62	−0.77	−0.55	−0.52
Lithuania	−0.89	−0.77	−0.83	−0.70
Luxembourg	−0.76	1.51	0.65	0.21
Netherlands	2.12	−0.58	0.28	0.70
Poland	−0.66	−0.38	−0.63	−0.49
Portugal	−0.27	−0.97	−0.47	−0.41
Romania	−0.79	−0.29	−1.15	−0.70
Slovakia	−0.38	−0.34	−0.49	−0.35
Slovenia	−0.88	1.75	0.11	0.04
Spain	−0.8	−0.97	−0.77	−0.68
Sweden	−0.48	−0.14	2.23	0.56
United Kingdom	2.25	−0.53	0.41	0.80

Source: EU labour force survey.

European Commission

Flexible working time arrangements and gender equality — A comparative review of 30 European countries

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union

2010 — 119 pp. — 21 × 29.7 cm

ISBN 978-92-79-15545-1
doi:10.2767/29844

Increased flexibility of working time arrangements and promotion of gender equality are two important elements in the EU's employment policy. In many instances, increased flexibility has a positive effect on gender equality, although this is not always the case. This review from the EU Expert Group on Gender and Employment sets out the relationship between working time flexibility and gender equality and compares the state of play in 30 European countries (EU-27 and EEA/EFTA). It gives an overview of working time flexibility throughout Europe as well as in-depth analysis of flexibility in terms of length and organisation of working time. Information is also provided on the regulatory framework and recent policy developments in the field. In addition, the review comprises a detailed statistical annex.

This publication is available in English only, with French and German summaries.

HOW TO OBTAIN EU PUBLICATIONS

Free publications:

- via EU Bookshop (http://bookshop.europa.eu);
- at the European Union's representations or delegations. You can obtain their contact details on the Internet (http://ec.europa.eu) or by sending a fax to +352 2929-42758.

Priced publications:

- via EU Bookshop (http://bookshop.europa.eu).

Priced subscriptions (e.g. annual series of the *Official Journal of the European Union* and reports of cases before the Court of Justice of the European Union):

- via one of the sales agents of the Publications Office of the European Union (http://publications.europa.eu/others/agents/index_en.htm).

2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion

www.2010againstpoverty.eu

KE-31-10-378-EN-C

Are you interested in the publications of the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities?

If so, you can download them or take out a free subscription at
http://ec.europa.eu/social/publications

You are also welcome to sign up to receive
the European Commission's free Social Europe e-newsletter at
http://ec.europa.eu/social/e-newsletter

http://ec.europa.eu/social

www.facebook.com/socialeurope

Publications Office

ISBN 978-92-79-15545-1