



## Working time developments – 2007

Average collectively agreed weekly working hours  
Sectoral differences  
Statutory maximum working week and day  
Actual weekly working hours  
Annual leave  
Annual working time  
Appendices

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*In 2007, average collectively agreed weekly working time in the European Union was 38.6 hours, while agreed normal annual working time averaged about 1,740 hours. Of the three economic sectors examined in this study, agreed weekly working hours are highest in retail (38.8), followed by the chemicals industry (38.6) and the civil service (38.3). Average collectively agreed paid annual leave entitlement stood at 25.2 days across the EU in 2007, although the total varied significantly between the 'old' and new Member States. This report also examines statutory working time and leave limits, and actual working hours.*

This annual update provides an overview of the duration of **working time** in the European Union and Norway in 2007, based on contributions from the [European Industrial Relations Observatory \(EIRO\) national centres](#). The study considers the following issues: average weekly working hours as set by **collective agreements** – both at national level and for three specific economic sectors; statutory limits on weekly and daily working time; average actual weekly working hours; annual leave entitlement, as set by collective agreements and law; and estimates of average collectively agreed annual working time.

It should be noted that a number of problems arise when making international comparisons of the length of working time. Comparable data are not collected in all countries, while particular difficulties include the following:

- the existence of different ways of calculating working time, with annual rather than weekly calculation increasingly common in some countries ([TN0308101S](#));
- the fact that working time reductions in some countries have been introduced through extra days off or cuts in annual working hours, leaving the normal working week relatively unchanged;
- the increasing use of schemes whereby weekly working hours may vary considerably, with an average being maintained over a reference period;
- the treatment of part-time workers;
- the differing roles of **collective bargaining** and legislation, with the latter having an impact on actual working hours in some countries, but acting only as a maximum 'safety net' in others.

Figures for normal weekly working hours are also problematic when comparing working time between countries, as they do not take into account factors such as **overtime** or the length of annual and other forms of leave.

This report offers general data on the current situation and developments, while pointing out the pitfalls involved in comparisons. The figures provided should be treated with caution, and the various notes and explanations should be read with care.

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## **Average collectively agreed weekly working hours**

Collective bargaining plays an important role in determining the duration of working time in most of the countries considered in this study, albeit to a lesser extent in some of the new Member States (NMS) that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007. However, the nature and extent of this role differs widely between countries, with various bargaining levels – intersectoral, sectoral or company – playing different parts, and bargaining coverage varying considerably. This coverage averages around three quarters of the workforce in the 15 EU Member States before 1 May 2004 (EU15), and about four out of 10 workers in the NMS. Moreover, the importance of bargaining differs greatly between sectors of the economy and among groups of workers. The relationship between bargaining and legislative provisions on working time also varies between countries.

Figure 1 outlines the average normal weekly working hours in 2007 for full-time workers, as set by collective bargaining at national level for the 28 countries examined.

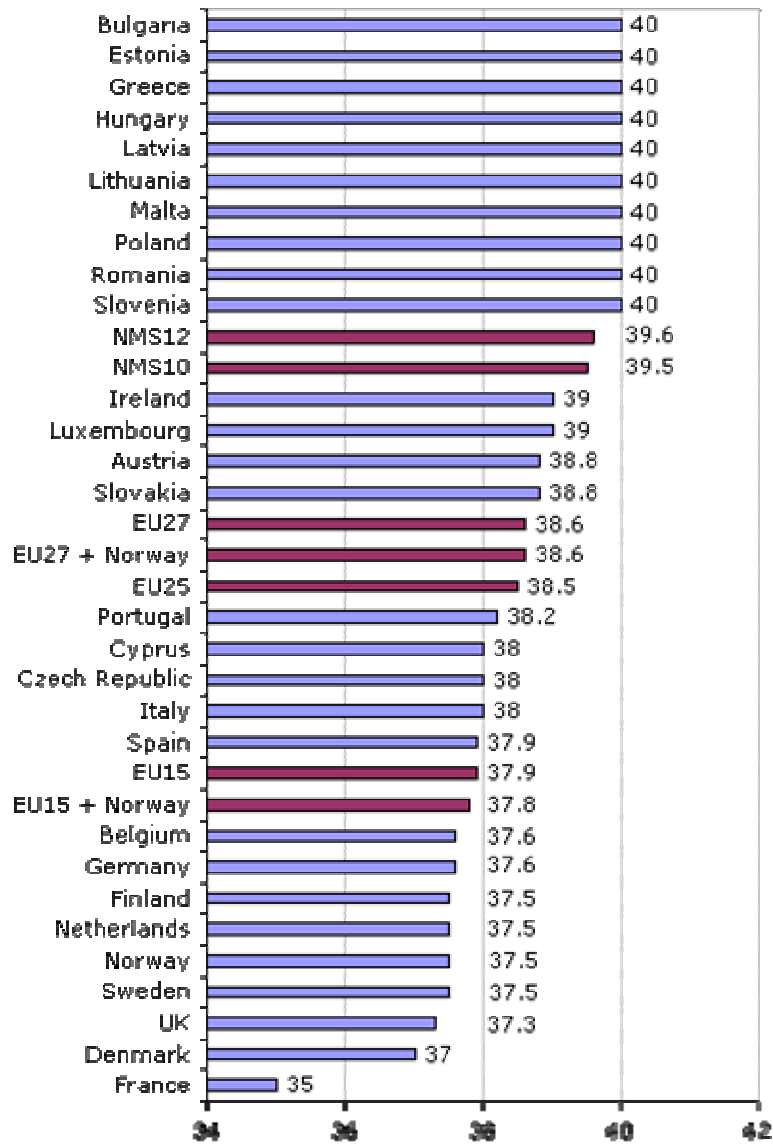
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Figure 1: Average collectively agreed normal weekly working hours, 2007



**Average collectively agreed normal weekly working hours, 2007**

Note: The data in Figure 1 should be read in conjunction with the notes in Appendix 1. See Appendix 8 for a breakdown of country groupings.

Source: EIRO national centres

The figure gives information for 2007; in almost all cases, agreed working hours were identical to those in 2006 (**TN0705019S**). The only exceptions are Spain and Sweden, where average agreed hours decreased by 0.3 hours, and Germany, where a 0.1-hour decline was recorded due to shorter agreed hours in eastern Germany.

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Across the 27 EU Member States (EU27), the overall average for weekly working hours fell slightly from 38.7 hours in 2006 to 38.6 hours in 2007. A substantial gap still emerges between the EU15 and NMS: the average in the EU15 stands at 37.9 hours in 2007, the same as in 2006, compared with 39.6 hours – also unchanged from 2006 – in the 12 NMS. This disparity represents a difference of 1.7 hours or 4.5% between the two country groups.

In the EU15 and Norway, over the nine-year period 1999–2007, average agreed normal weekly working hours decreased slightly from 38.6 hours to 37.8 hours – a decline of about 2.1%. However, the trend shows relatively little change since 2003. Average collectively agreed normal working time has remained static overall in five of the 16 countries, although exceptions have arisen in specific sectors and companies, and this average has decreased by less than an hour a week in three countries. Reductions of an hour or more have been recorded in Luxembourg (one hour), the United Kingdom (UK) (1.1 hours), Portugal (1.2 hours), Sweden (2.5 hours) and, most notably – driven by legislation – France (four hours). Slight increases in the average collectively agreed normal working time appear in Austria and the Netherlands. However, it should be noted that changes in calculation methods may have occurred in some countries.

The stability in collectively agreed hours in western Europe reflects the fact that working time reductions have not been a prominent bargaining theme in recent years. This was again the case in 2007, when significant reductions in the duration of working time were not reported anywhere in the EU15, and did not appear as a priority among trade unions' bargaining demands ([TN0803029S](#)). Furthermore, compared with previous years, working time flexibility appeared to be a less important bargaining issue in 2007.

In the NMS, working time reductions have been even less of a bargaining issue in recent years. Since EIRO started collecting data for these countries, in 2003 in most cases, the majority of the NMS – Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania and Slovenia – have had a 40-hour normal working week. Collective bargaining plays a relatively minor role in setting normal weekly working hours in most of these countries, and collective agreements either do not tend to deviate from the statutory norm of 40 hours or do not deal with the issue at all. The exceptions to the 40-hour rule are Cyprus, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, where agreed working hours are not far from the EU15 average. Slovakia remains the only NMS where appreciable reductions in working hours have been recorded over the past few years.

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## Sectoral differences

Figures 2–4 below show average normal weekly working hours for full-time workers as set by collective bargaining in three economic sectors selected to represent the manufacturing industry, services and the public sector. Thus, the three sectors featured in this study are manufacture of chemicals, retail trade and the central civil service. While the more specific sectoral figures below are probably more accurate than the overall average data given in the previous section, caution is again advised in their use, and the notes related to each figure should be taken into account – all of the caveats noted above also apply to the sectoral statistics.

Comparing the three sectors, in 2007 the highest average collectively agreed normal weekly working hours in the EU27 were found in retail, at 38.8 hours, followed by chemicals, at 38.6 hours, and the civil service, at 38.3 hours. Retail was 0.2 hours above the average for all sectors, chemicals was identical with the average, and the civil service was 0.3 hours below.

Looking solely at the EU15 and Norway, the ranking was the same, with the longest working hours in retail (38.3 hours), followed by chemicals (38.2 hours) and the civil service (37.3 hours). In the NMS too, working hours were longest in retail (39.7 hours), but the civil service (39.6 hours) was in second place and chemicals (39.3 hours) in third.

In the NMS, average agreed weekly working hours are above the EU15 and Norway average in all three sectors, although the weekly figures in a number of individual NMS are lower than those found in some of the EU15 with longer hours. The difference between the average figures for the EU15 and Norway and the NMS is narrowest in chemicals (1.1 hours) and widest in the civil service (2.3 hours).

For the EU15 and Norway, the data series going back to 2000 allows a longer-term view of developments although it should be noted that the data sources used for the EIRO figures have changed in some countries over the years. In 2007, average weekly working hours had decreased over this eight-year period by 0.4 hours in the civil service (a decline of 1.1%) and 0.2 hours in chemicals (a reduction of 0.5%), but had remained stable in retail. Data collection for the NMS started in most cases in 2003; since then, relatively little change in the sectoral averages has been recorded.

In some countries, average agreed weekly working hours vary little across the sectors examined or indeed, it appears, most of the economy. A uniform 40-hour working week applies in many of the NMS. This usually also amounts to the statutory normal working week (see next section). The 40-hour working week is found in Estonia, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Romania and Slovenia, and probably also in Bulgaria, Latvia and Lithuania, although fewer data are available in these cases. This 40-hour norm is also true of the three sectors considered in Greece, Luxembourg and – with a minor variation in the civil service – in Sweden. A similar uniformity in terms of sector applies, albeit at a lower level, in Denmark (37 hours), France (35 hours) and Norway (37.5 hours). Relatively little variation emerges in Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Slovakia and Spain; none of the three sectors examined differs by more than two hours in these countries. However, wider sectoral differences exist in the Czech Republic, Italy, Portugal and the UK.

## Chemicals

Figure 2 below shows collectively agreed normal weekly working hours in the chemicals industry, based on relevant sectoral collective agreements, except where specified otherwise in

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the notes relating to the figure. No data are available for Bulgaria, Latvia and Lithuania; collective bargaining generally plays little or no role in setting normal working hours in the chemicals manufacturing sector in these countries. Figure 2 provides data only for 2007, and virtually no change was reported from the 2006 figure in most countries, with the exception of a slight increase in Slovakia. The change in the figures for Spain compared with those given for 2006 in the EIRO 2006 report (**TN0705019S**) is, it seems, the result of a different data source being used.

Across the 24 countries of the EU27 for which data are available, the average agreed weekly working time in the manufacture of chemicals stood at 38.6 hours in 2007, compared with 38.7 hours in 2006. The 2007 figure is the same as the overall average for the whole economy in the EU27.

In the EU15 and Norway, average weekly working hours in chemicals stood at 38.2 hours in 2007 – a decline of 0.2 hours or about 0.5% since 2000, the first year for which EIRO collected data on this sector. A significant reduction is evident in Finland, Spain and the Netherlands over the eight-year period and some relatively minor upward and downward movement in a few other cases, although the data sources used for the EIRO figures have changed in some countries over the years.

In the EU15 and Norway, in 2007 the longest weekly working hours in chemicals (40 hours) were found in Greece, Luxembourg, Portugal and Sweden. However, the Swedish figure – and to some extent that for Luxembourg – is likely to be lower in practice, due to various working time reduction methods. Meanwhile, the shortest weekly working hours were in France (35 hours). Working hours in chemicals are markedly higher than the national average for the whole economy in Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal and Sweden, and are notably lower than the national average in Austria, Belgium and Finland. Overall, the average agreed working week in chemicals, at 38.2 hours, is 0.4 hours or 1.1% above the average for the whole economy.

In the nine NMS for which data are available, average weekly working hours in chemicals stood at 39.3 hours in 2007 – 1.1 hours (2.9%) above the EU15 and Norway average and 0.3 hours (0.8%) below the NMS average for the whole economy; however, the latter average is for a larger number of countries. Average weekly working hours in Cyprus, the Czech Republic and Slovakia are below the average figure for the EU15 and Norway, while they stand at 40 hours in the other NMS – that is, 1.8 hours higher than the EU15 and Norway average. In the Czech Republic and Slovakia, weekly working hours in chemicals are somewhat below the average for the whole economy, while in the other countries they are the same as this average.

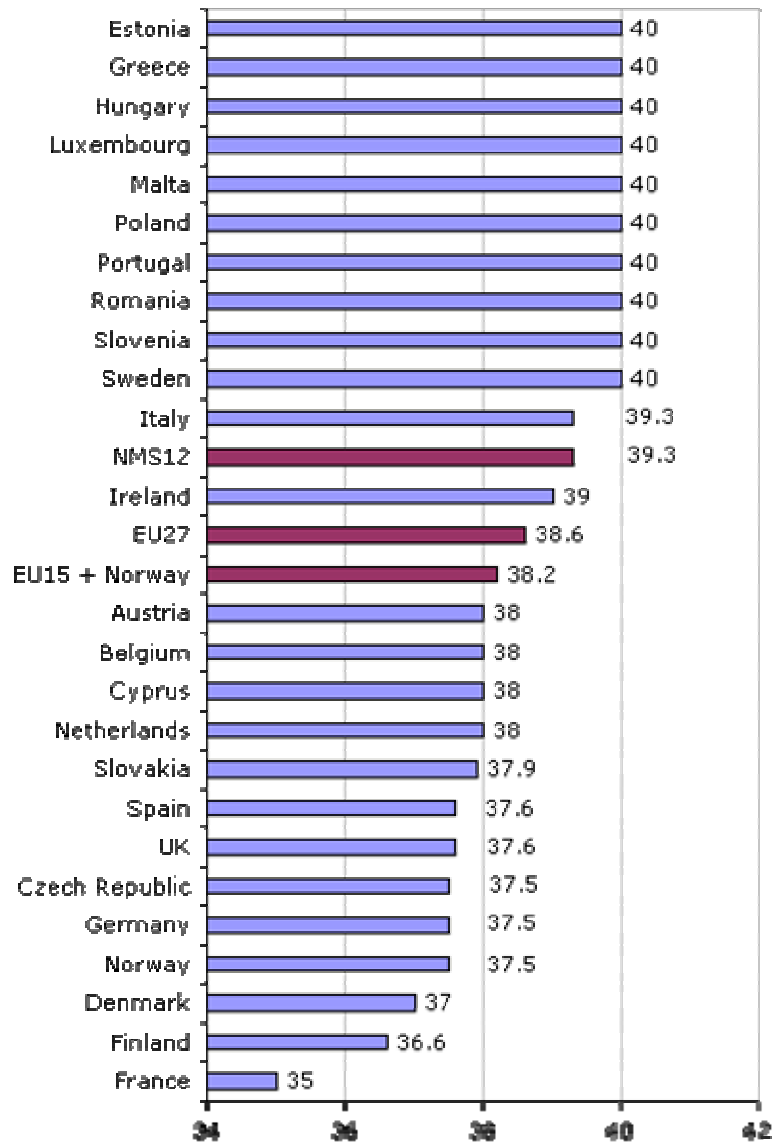
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Figure 2: Collectively agreed normal weekly working hours in chemicals, 2007



**Collectively agreed normal weekly working hours in chemicals, 2007**

Notes: Due to limited data availability, the ‘EU27’ average includes only 24 countries and ‘NMS12’ only nine countries. The data in Figure 2 should be read in conjunction with the notes in Appendix 2.

Source: EIRO national centres

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## Retail

Figure 3 below sets out collectively agreed normal weekly working hours in retail trade, based on relevant sectoral collective agreements, except where specified otherwise in the notes relating to the figure. No data are available for Bulgaria, Latvia and Lithuania as collective bargaining generally plays little or no role in setting normal working hours in the retail sector in these countries. The figure provides data only for 2007; while agreed working hours remained static in most countries, slight decreases from 2006 were reported in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and a slight increase in the UK. The changes in the figures for Belgium and Spain compared with those given for 2006 in the EIRO 2006 report ([TN0705019S](#)) appear to be the result of different data sources being used.

In the 24 EU Member States for which data are available, the average agreed weekly working time in retail stood at 38.8 hours in 2007, compared with 38.9 hours in 2006; this is 0.2 hours (0.5%) higher than the overall average for the whole economy for the EU27.

Since 2000, average weekly working hours in retail in the EU15 and Norway have remained static at 38.3 hours, although the figures in some countries have to some extent varied upwards, as in the UK, or downwards, as in Italy and Spain. It should be noted that the data sources used for the EIRO figures have changed in some countries over the years.

In 2007, in the EU15 and Norway, the longest weekly working hours in the retail sector (40 hours) were found in Greece, Luxembourg, Portugal and Sweden, while the shortest working hours were reported in France (35 hours). Working hours in retail are often higher than the national average for the whole economy, as in Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK. Retail working hours are lower than the national average only in Austria, Belgium and Germany. Overall, in the EU15 and Norway, the average agreed working week in retail, at 38.3 hours, is 0.5 hours (1.3%) above the average for the whole economy (37.8 hours).

Data are available for nine of the 12 NMS, with average weekly working hours in retail standing at 39.7 hours in 2007, as in 2006. This total amounts to 1.4 hours (3.7%) above the EU15 and Norway average, and 0.1 hours (0.3%) above the NMS average for the whole economy; however, the latter average is for a larger number of countries. Average weekly working hours in Cyprus are just below the average for the EU15 and Norway, while in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the figure stands at between 39 and 40 hours. The other NMS have a 40-hour week in retail, that is, 1.7 hours higher than the EU15 and Norway average. In the Czech Republic and Slovakia, weekly working hours in retail are above the average for the whole economy, while in the other countries they are the same as this average.

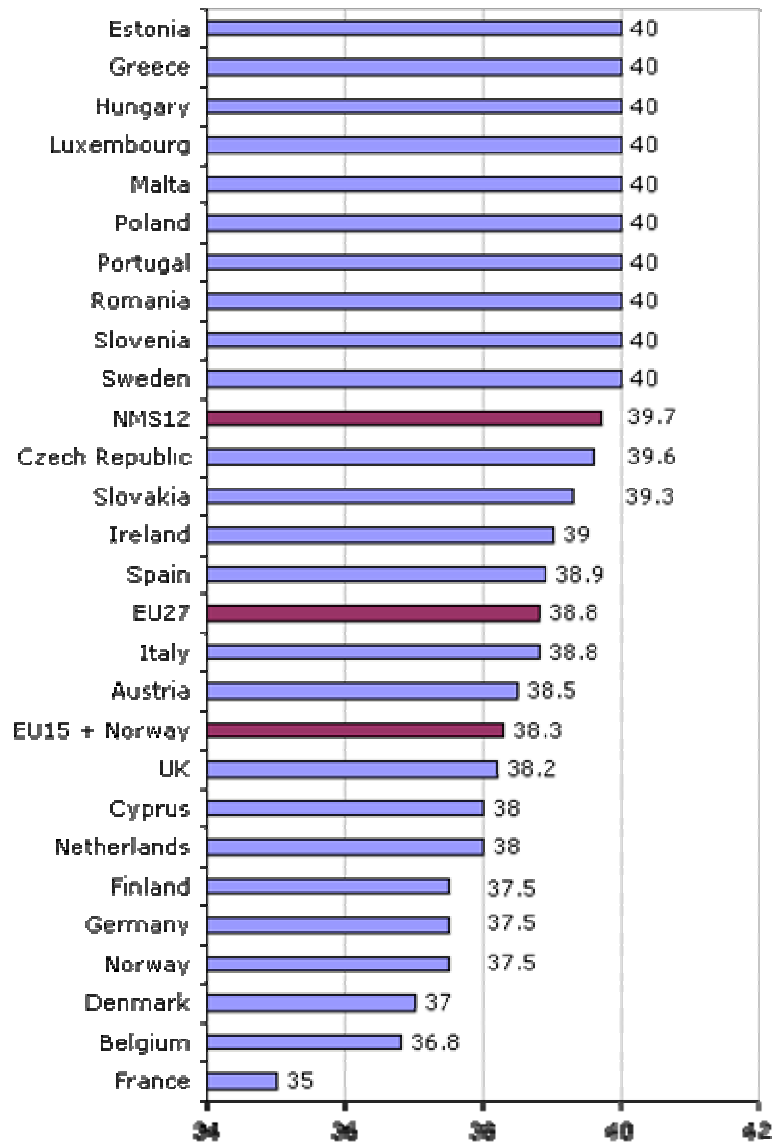
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Figure 3: Collectively agreed normal weekly working hours in retail, 2007



**Collectively agreed normal weekly working hours in retail, 2007**

Notes: Due to limited data availability, the ‘EU27’ average includes only 24 countries and ‘NMS12’ only nine countries. The data in Figure 3 should be read in conjunction with the notes in Appendix 3.

Source: EIRO national centres

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## Civil service

Figure 4 below shows collectively agreed normal weekly working hours in the central civil service in 2007. While many of the data refer to collective agreements, it should be noted that in some countries the working time of civil servants is set by law – this is particularly the case in many of the NMS. From 2006 to 2007, the most significant change was in Finland, where the agreed working week in the central civil service increased from 36.3 hours to 36.6 hours. Otherwise, changes in the figure for Spain compared with those given for 2006 in the EIRO 2006 report ([TN0705019S](#)) result from a different data source being used.

Across the EU, the average agreed weekly working time in the civil service stood at 38.3 hours in 2007, compared with 38.2 hours in 2006; the 2007 figure is 0.3 hours (0.8%) lower than the overall average for the whole economy in the EU27.

Since 2000, average agreed weekly working hours in the civil service in the EU15 and Norway have fallen from 37.7 hours to 37.3 hours (down 1.1%), mainly owing to reductions in France, Ireland, Italy and the UK. These reductions more than offset the increases in countries such as Finland and Germany, although the data sources used for the EIRO figures have changed in some countries over the years.

In the EU15 and Norway, in 2007 the longest weekly working hours in the civil service (40 hours) were found in Austria, Greece and Luxembourg and the shortest in Italy (32.9 hours). Working hours in the civil service are significantly lower than the national average for the whole economy in Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and the UK, and to a lesser extent in Finland and Spain. Working hours in the civil service are higher than the national average in Austria, Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg and Sweden. Overall, the average agreed working week in the civil service in the EU15 and Norway, at 37.3 hours, is 0.5 hours (1.3%) below the average for the whole economy (37.8 hours).

In the NMS, average weekly working hours in the civil service stood at 39.6 hours in 2007, the same as in 2006. The 2007 total is 2.3 hours (5.8%) above the EU15 and Norway average, and is the same as the NMS average for the whole economy. Average weekly working hours in the civil service in Cyprus and Slovakia are slightly above the average for the EU15 and Norway (37.5 hours compared with 37.3), while a 40-hour working week is the norm in the other NMS, that is, 2.7 hours higher than in the EU15 and Norway. In Cyprus and Slovakia, weekly working hours in the civil service are below the national average for the whole economy and in the Czech Republic they are above the national average; in the other countries they are at the average.

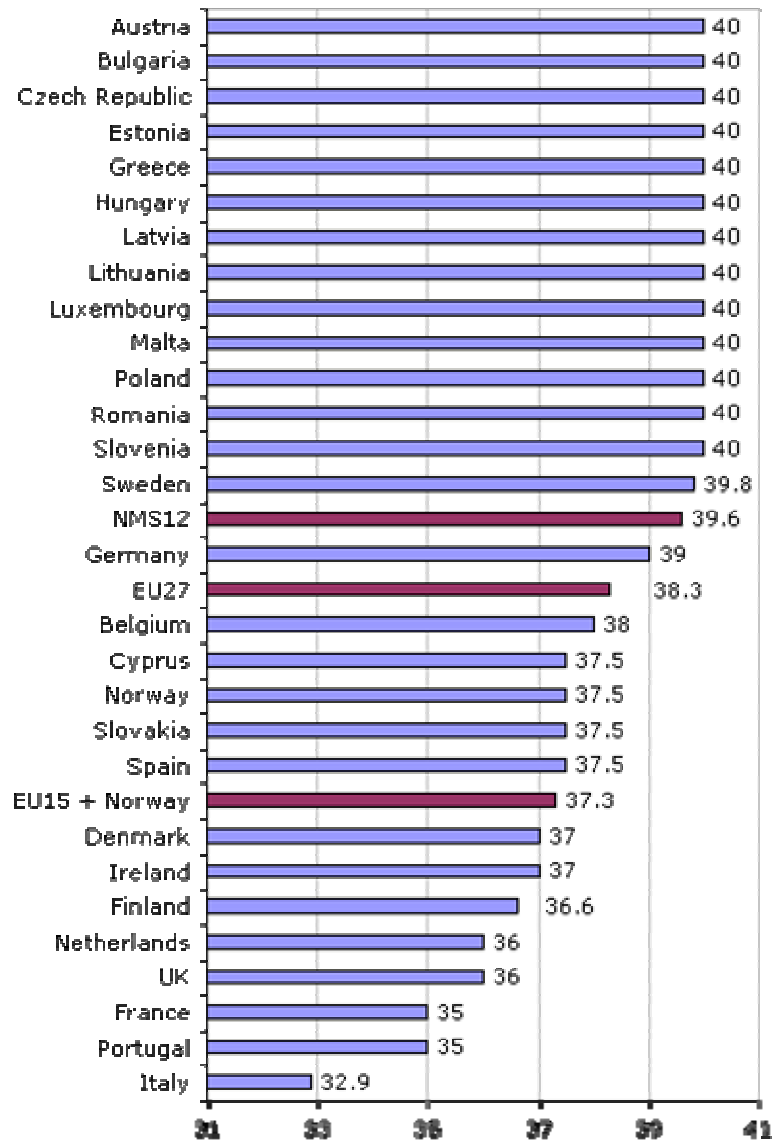
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Figure 4: Collectively agreed normal weekly working hours in civil service, 2007



**Collectively agreed normal weekly working hours in civil service, 2007**

The data in Figure 4 should be read in conjunction with the notes in Appendix 4.

Source: EIRO national centres

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## Statutory maximum working week and day

In all 28 countries – EU27 and Norway – collective bargaining on the length of working time takes place within the framework of statutory rules on maximum working hours. These should, at the least, respect the provisions of EU [Directive 2003/88/EC](#) concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time. Among the directive’s provisions are a 48-hour maximum working week on average over a reference period not exceeding four months, a minimum daily rest period of 11 hours and a daily working hours limit of eight hours for night workers.

As Table 1 shows, the countries form two groups – those that set their maximum weekly working hours at the 48 hours specified in the EU working time directive, and those that operate a rather lower limit of 40 hours, or 38 hours in the case of Belgium.

**Table 1: Statutory maximum working week, 2007**

Country	Maximum hours a week
Cyprus	48
Czech Republic	48
Denmark	48
France	48
Germany*	48
Greece	48
Hungary	48
Ireland	48
Italy	48
Lithuania	48
Luxembourg	48
Malta	48
Netherlands	48
Poland	48
Romania	48
Slovenia	48
UK	48
Austria	40
Bulgaria	40
Estonia	40
Finland	40

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<b>Latvia</b>	40
<b>Norway</b>	40
<b>Portugal</b>	40
<b>Slovakia</b>	40
<b>Spain</b>	40
<b>Sweden</b>	40
<b>Belgium</b>	38

*Note: \* No explicit weekly maximum is set in Germany; the 48-hour figure represents an average based on daily maximum rules.*

*Source: EIRO national centres*

In the first, larger group of 17 countries, the statutory 48-hour maximum is in excess of average collectively agreed weekly working hours (see Figure 1 above), and of average actual weekly working hours (see Figure 5 below). The maximum appears to operate essentially as a safety net, although the 48-hour figure often includes overtime (**TN0302101S**). In the second group of 11 countries, the statutory maximum is much closer to average agreed or actual/usual weekly working hours and is identical to agreed working hours in some cases. This indicates a more active role for the law in governing working time although overtime may not be included in this figure. Little change was found in this area between 2006 and 2007, apart from a simplification of the Dutch rules on maximum working hours.

The statutory maximum figures outlined in Table 1 may be exceeded in many countries, in the context of working time flexibility schemes allowing weekly working hours to be varied around an average over a reference period, as permitted by the EU directive (**TN0308101S**). The following examples represent a range of possible variations:

- in Austria, weekly working hours may be varied up to 50 hours over a reference period, by agreement, if an average 40-hour working week is maintained;
- in Bulgaria, the working week may be extended to 48 hours and the working day to 10 hours, but only involving a total of 60 working days a year and not for more than 20 consecutive working days;
- in Denmark, the 48-hour maximum must be observed on average within a period of four months;
- in Estonia and Slovakia, the average working week may extend up to 48 hours over a four-month period, if overtime is included;
- in Finland, weekly working hours may be varied up to 45 hours over a 52-week reference period, if an average 40-hour week is maintained;
- in Luxembourg, weekly working hours may be increased by collective agreement to a maximum of 60 hours during six weeks a year in specific sectors characterised by workload peaks;
- in Malta, weekly working hours may be exceeded if the worker agrees to work longer and his or her health and safety are not put at risk;

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- in the Netherlands, the 48-hour maximum must be maintained on average over a 16-week reference period, while a 55-hour average must not be exceeded over four weeks, unless otherwise agreed by the employer and trade union or works council. The absolute weekly limit is 60 working hours;
- in Norway, average weekly working hours may vary and be as high as 48 hours, as long as the 40-hour maximum is maintained over a reference period of up to one year. In some specific circumstances, the reference period may be extended;
- in Poland, weekly working time, including overtime, may not exceed 48 hours over a four-month reference period;
- in Portugal, weekly working hours may be increased to 60 hours by agreement, if the statutory maximum is maintained on average over a reference period;
- in Romania, weekly working time may exceed 48 hours, but this average must be maintained over a three-month reference period except in 11 specified sectors;
- in Slovenia, where working hours are unevenly distributed, the working week may be extended temporarily to 56 hours;
- in Spain, weekly working hours may be higher if a 40-hour average is maintained over a reference period;
- in Sweden, collective bargaining can set a different maximum, while employees may also work 200 hours of overtime a year with a maximum of 50 hours in any month;
- in the UK, weekly working hours may exceed 48 hours as long as this average is maintained over a 17-week reference period.

The complexity of most countries' rules relating to overtime and variable working time means that the maximum working hours set out in Table 1 cannot be compared directly, and that the differences between the groups of countries with maximum weeks of 40 hours and 48 hours may not be great in practice.

All of the countries examined also have a form of statutory maximum working day, as set out in Table 2 below. In Cyprus, Denmark, Ireland, Italy and the UK, no explicit maximum working day pertains except for night workers, but a 13-hour maximum in most circumstances can be derived from the application of the working time directive's minimum 11-hour daily rest period. Once again, whether overtime is included differs between countries, and daily working hours may often be higher in the context of working time flexibility schemes. The following examples show a range of possible variations:

- in Bulgaria, the working day may be extended to 10 hours, but only involving a total of 60 working days a year and not for more than 20 consecutive working days;
- in the Czech Republic, daily working hours may be extended to 12 hours, under working time flexibility schemes within a reference period;
- in Estonia, the working day may be up to 12 hours, including overtime;
- in Finland, an employer and employee can agree to extend regular daily working hours by up to one hour. When working hours are flexible, regular daily working hours can be extended by up to three hours;

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- in Germany, daily working hours may be extended to 10 hours, if an eight-hour average is maintained over a 24-week or six-month reference period;
- in Luxembourg, daily hours may be increased by collective agreement to a maximum of 12 hours during six weeks a year in specific sectors characterised by workload peaks;
- in Poland, in specific cases the working time during a 24-hour period may be extended to 12, 16 or 24 hours, on condition that an employee's excess hours may not be more than four hours in a 24-hour period or 150 hours in the calendar year;
- in Portugal, daily working hours may be increased to 13 hours under hours-averaging schemes;
- in Spain, daily working hours may be higher, by agreement, for specific jobs if the nine-hour average is maintained over a reference period.

**Table 2: Statutory maximum working day, 2007**

Country	Maximum hours a day
Cyprus	13
Denmark	13
Ireland	13
Italy	13
Sweden	13
UK	13
Malta	12.5
Greece	12
Hungary	12
Netherlands	12
Austria	10
France	10
Luxembourg	10
Romania	10
Slovenia	10
Czech Republic	9
Norway	9
Slovakia	9
Spain	9
Belgium	8

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<b>Bulgaria</b>	8
<b>Estonia</b>	8
<b>Finland</b>	8
<b>Germany</b>	8
<b>Latvia</b>	8
<b>Lithuania</b>	8
<b>Poland</b>	8
<b>Portugal</b>	8

*Source: EIRO national centres*

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## **Actual weekly working hours**

Compared with the data presented above on collectively agreed normal weekly working hours, statistics on actual weekly hours worked – typically measured in labour force surveys – give a more accurate impression of how many hours workers really work in a given week, as they include factors such as overtime and absence. However, the national data on average actual weekly working hours are often problematic for purposes of comparison, given differing definitions. Notably, some national surveys do not distinguish between full-time and part-time workers. Therefore, Figure 5 gives harmonised [Eurostat](#) data for the average number of actual weekly hours of work in the main job of full-time employees, based on its labour force survey for the fourth quarter of 2007. These hours include all working hours, including extra hours, whether paid or not.

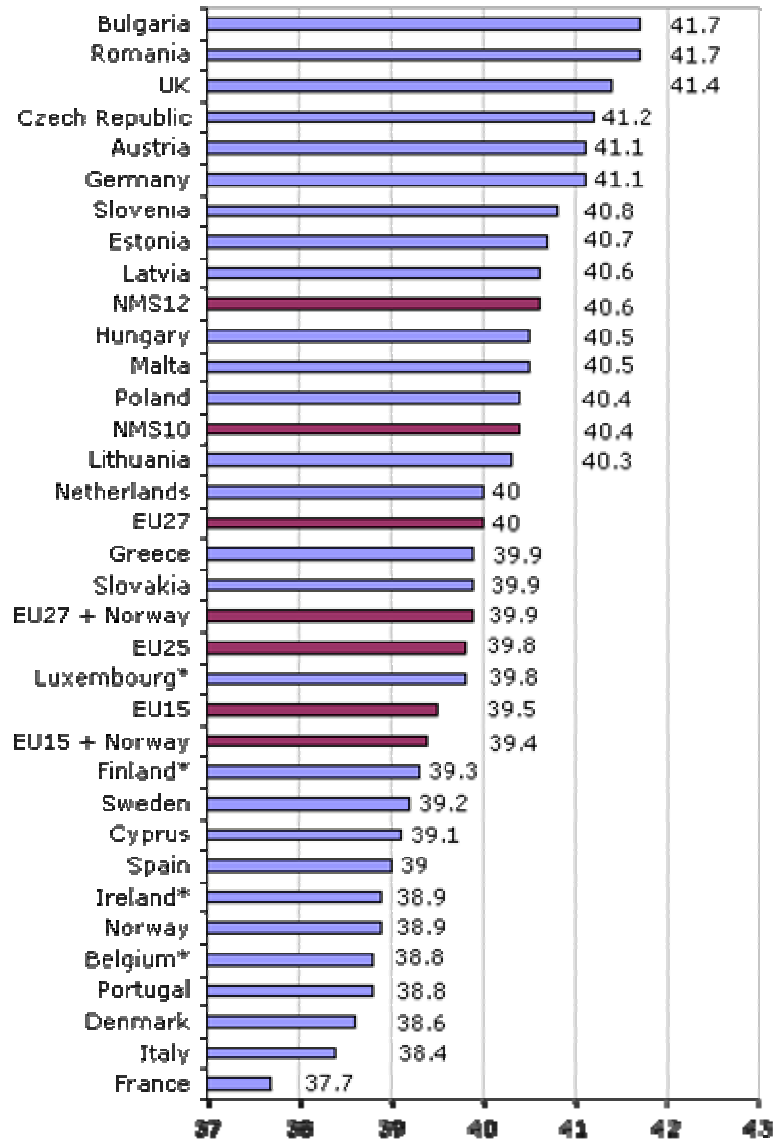
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Figure 5: Average number of actual weekly hours of work in main job, full-time employees, fourth quarter 2007



**Average number of actual weekly hours of work in main job, full-time employees, fourth quarter, 2007**

Note: \* Third quarter figure.

Source: Eurostat, with averages calculated by EIRO

In the EU, the highest levels of actual weekly hours worked by full-time employees in their main jobs are found in Bulgaria, Romania and the UK, while the lowest levels are reported in France, Italy and Denmark. The range between the lowest (France) and the highest (Bulgaria) is four hours. Overall, 10 of the 12 NMS have actual working hours above the EU27 average of 40

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hours, compared with only three of the EU15. Of the NMS, only Cyprus and Slovakia have below-average actual working hours. In the EU15, the longest actual full-time hours are worked in Austria, Germany and the UK, while the shortest are found in Denmark, France and Italy.

Actual weekly hours worked by full-time employees are higher than the average normal collectively agreed working week in all countries apart from Greece and Ireland, where actual working hours are 0.1 hours lower. In the EU27, average actual weekly working hours stood at 40 hours in 2007, compared with average collectively agreed weekly working time of 38.6 hours; the gap between the two rates amounts to 1.4 hours. The respective figures for the EU15 were 39.5 hours and 37.9 hours (a slightly wider gap, of 1.6 hours), and for the 12 NMS 40.6 and 39.6 (a slightly narrower gap, of one hour). The average actual working week exceeds the agreed normal week by less than an hour in Estonia, Italy, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal and Slovenia. Actual working hours exceed agreed working hours by one to two hours in Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden. Hours actually worked are two to three hours higher than agreed working hours in Austria, France and the Netherlands, while this difference is over three hours in the Czech Republic, Germany and the UK. The gap between agreed and actual working hours is widest, at 4.1 hours, in the UK.

Actual weekly hours worked by male full-time employees in their main jobs exceed those of their female counterparts in all countries considered, according to the Eurostat data, by an average of some 2.3 hours across the EU27; the differential is slightly wider in the EU15 than in the NMS. Men's actual weekly working hours exceed women's by over three hours in Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland and the UK, and by less than an hour in Lithuania and Romania.

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## Annual leave

The yearly duration of working time is strongly influenced by the amount of paid annual leave to which workers are entitled. Figure 6 below shows the average number of days of collectively agreed annual leave for the 19 countries where data are available, harmonised on the basis of a five-day working week. The figures generally apply to 2007.

No information can be provided for the other countries because the matter does not appear to have been researched or is not dealt with by collective agreements, or because the collectively agreed rules on leave entitlement are too complex to enable even a rough estimate to be produced. To take the example of Belgium, sectoral agreements may provide for a general addition of up to five days to the statutory minimum annual paid leave of 20 days. They may also provide for additional days of leave after a certain period of service, for example, one extra day after 10 years of service. Further additional days of leave may be given as compensation for workers with a normal weekly working time above the sectoral norm. Slovenia is another country where seniority and other criteria add to the minimum entitlement of 20 days in ways that make an average impossible to estimate.

The average entitlement across the EU27 Member States for which data are available is 25.2 days. The average in the EU15 and Norway stands at 26.7 days, and has increased slightly from 25.6 days in 2000, although the number of countries included and the calculation methods have not been uniform over this period. Agreed annual leave entitlement within the EU15 varies considerably, from 33 days in Sweden to 23 days in Greece. Among the EU15 and Norway, figures are not available for Belgium, Ireland and Spain. In the latter country, few agreements exist on annual leave and Ireland has none at all. Meanwhile, as noted above, in Belgium seniority and additional annual leave entitlement set in sectoral agreements make an average difficult to estimate.

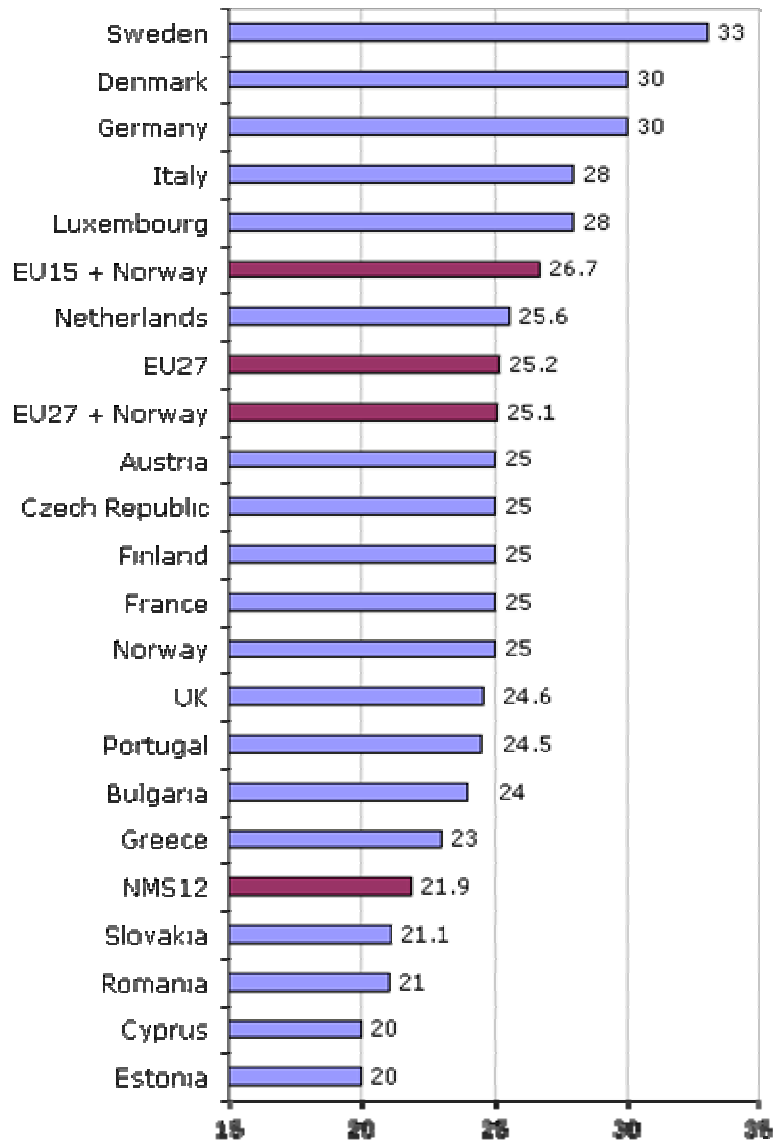
Among the NMS, figures are available only for Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Romania and Slovakia, where the average is 21.9 days. Among these Member States, agreed leave is highest, at 25 days, in the Czech Republic. In most other NMS, apart from Slovenia, annual leave is probably at the statutory level (see below), as it is in Cyprus and Estonia.

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*Figure 6: Average collectively agreed annual paid leave (in days), 2007*

#### **Average collectively agreed annual paid leave (in days), 2007**

Notes: Due to limited data availability, 'EU27 + Norway' includes only 19 countries, 'EU27' includes only 18 countries, 'EU15 + Norway' only 13 countries and 'NMS12' only six countries. The data in Figure 6 should be read in conjunction with the notes in Appendix 5.

Source: EIRO national centres

All of the 28 countries under study have a statutory minimum period of paid annual leave, as set out in Table 3 below. In the table, the leave is expressed in days and harmonised on the basis of a five-day working week, and the data given are the basic entitlement; entitlement increases with

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length of service in some countries. The majority of countries (18 out of 28) have a 20-day minimum entitlement, as laid down in the EU working time directive – this group includes all of the NMS except Malta. Five countries have a 25-day minimum: Austria, Denmark, France, Luxembourg and Sweden. Meanwhile, the entitlement is 24 days in Malta and the UK, 22 days in Portugal and Spain, and 21 days in Norway. The only significant change from 2006 to 2007 was an increase in the UK statutory minimum from 20 days to 24 days (**UK07070591**).

Average collectively agreed annual leave exceeds the statutory minimum by four or more days in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden – suggesting that the law acts essentially as a safety net in these countries. Average collectively agreed annual leave and the statutory minimum are close or the same in Austria, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Romania, Slovakia and the UK – and also probably in most other NMS – indicating a more active role for the law.

**Table 3: Statutory minimum paid leave (in days), 2007**

Country	Minimum paid leave (in days)
Austria	25.0
Denmark	25.0
France	25.0
Luxembourg	25.0
Sweden	25.0
Malta	24.0
UK	24.0
Portugal	22.0
Spain	22.0
Norway	21.0
Belgium	20.0
Bulgaria	20.0
Cyprus	20.0
Czech Republic	20.0
Estonia	20.0
Finland	20.0
Germany	20.0
Greece	20.0
Hungary	20.0
Ireland	20.0
Italy	20.0

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<b>Latvia</b>	20.0
<b>Lithuania</b>	20.0
<b>Netherlands</b>	20.0
<b>Poland</b>	20.0
<b>Romania</b>	20.0
<b>Slovakia</b>	20.0
<b>Slovenia</b>	20.0
<b>EU27 + Norway</b>	21.4
<b>EU27</b>	21.4
<b>EU15 + Norway</b>	22.1
<b>NMS12</b>	20.3

*Note: The data in Table 3 should be read in conjunction with the notes in Appendix 6.*

*Source: EIRO national centres*

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## Annual working time

Collectively agreed annual working time figures are available from national sources for a few countries, and are listed in Table 4 below. These figures may provide a more accurate measure of the duration of working time as they take into account factors such as leave, holidays and flexibility arrangements.

**Table 4: Average collectively agreed annual working hours, 2006–2007**

Country	2006	2007
Denmark	1,658	1,658
Finland	1,708	1,715
France	1,607	1,607
Germany	1,657	1,657
Greece	1,840	1,840
Ireland	1,809	n.d.
Italy	1,646	n.d.
Malta	1,988	1,970
Netherlands	1,720	n.d.
Romania	1,840	1,840
Spain	1,759	1,744

*Notes: n.d. = no data. The data in Table 4 should be read in conjunction with the notes in Appendix 7.*

*Source: EIRO national centres*

In order to arrive at an approximate annual estimate for collectively agreed annual normal working time in all countries for 2007, this review has taken the figures for average collectively agreed normal weekly working hours (see Figure 1 above) and assumed a five-day working week and a 52-week year.

From this total annual figure, the next step was to subtract the average collectively annual paid leave (see Figure 6 above) or, where no data are available on this point, the minimum statutory annual leave (see Table 3 above). It should be noted that, for several countries – notably Belgium and Slovenia – average agreed leave, while impossible to calculate owing to the complexity of the rules, is undoubtedly considerably higher than the statutory minimum. The use of the latter in calculating collectively agreed annual normal working time thus makes the total figure rather higher than is in fact the case, rendering the estimates for these countries particularly crude.

The number of annual public holidays was also subtracted, excluding those falling on Sundays. Where varying numbers of regional public holidays arise, as in Germany, an attempt has been made to give a mid-range figure. It should be noted that additional holidays may be observed locally or on the basis of collective agreements or custom, while the number of public holidays may vary from year to year, particularly in countries that do not award a substitute holiday when

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a public holiday falls at the weekend. These variations are the main source of year-on-year changes in annual working hours in many countries.

The resulting annual figures do not, of course, take into account factors such as overtime work, or other forms of time off and leave. In short, they are only very rough estimates, but they allow some broad observations to be made – see Table 5 below.

In the EU27, average collectively agreed annual normal working time in 2007 stood at 1,743.1 hours (column F, Table 5). In the EU15, the figure was 1,695.7 hours, compared with 1,802.4 hours in the 12 NMS. Workers in the latter countries thus work, on average, 106.7 hours a year (about 6.3%) longer than their counterparts in the EU15 – the equivalent of over two and a half working weeks a year more. However, in some NMS, namely Cyprus (1,732.8 hours), the Czech Republic (1,710) and Slovakia (1,737.5), annual working time is not much higher than the average for the EU15. Conversely, annual working time in Greece (1,816 hours) and Ireland (1,801.8) is around or above the NMS average. Overall, the EU's longest working hours are in Estonia (1,856), Romania (1,856), Poland (1,848) and Hungary (1,840), while the shortest working hours are in France (1,568), Sweden (1,620), Denmark (1,635.4) and Germany (1,650.6). Average annual working hours in Estonia are 288 hours higher (over 18% more) than those in France – the equivalent of about 7.2 working weeks in Estonia.

Looking at the ranking of the 28 countries in terms of the length of their agreed working hours, the countries with the longest weekly working hours are generally also those with the longest annual working hours, while countries with the shortest weekly working hours tend to report the shortest annual working hours. Nevertheless, the annual perspective results in rather different rankings for some countries than provided by the data for weekly working hours. Some Member States have a lower position in the 'league table' (that is, their working hours are shorter) for normal annual working hours (column F, Table 5) than that for normal weekly working hours (column A, Table 5 or see also Figure 1). In the examples of Germany and Luxembourg, this disparity is due to the effects of relatively long annual leave (column C, Table 5). In the cases of Austria, Italy and Sweden, this dichotomy in the ranking for weekly and annual working hours arises due to a combination of relatively long leave and a high number of public holidays (columns C + D, Table 5).

On the other hand, some Member States have a higher position in the table for normal annual working hours than that for normal weekly working hours because of: the effects of relatively low annual leave, for example, Cyprus; a relatively low number of public holidays, such as the Netherlands and the UK; both short annual leave and few public holidays, for instance, Belgium. In the latter case, however, the annual leave data used are for minimum statutory leave, due to an absence of figures on agreed leave.

The total of agreed annual leave and public holidays (columns C + D, Table 5) varies in the EU from 44 days in Sweden to 28 days in Estonia and Romania – a difference of almost 60% or more than three working weeks. Other countries with notably high leave include Germany (40.5 days), Italy (40 days) and Denmark (39 days), while countries with notably low leave encompass Ireland (29 days), Poland (29 days) and Hungary (30 days). The average figure for the EU27 is 34.4 days – 36.1 days in the EU15 and 32.3 days in the NMS.

**Table 5: Average collectively agreed normal annual working time, 2007**

Country	A. Weekly working	B. Gross annual	C. Annual leave	D. Public holidays	E. All leave	F. Annual working
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	hours	working hours (Ax52)	(days)	(days)	(C+D), expressed in hours	hours (B-E)
<b>Estonia</b>	40.0	2,080.0	20.0*	8.0	224.0	1,856.0
<b>Romania</b>	40.0	2,080.0	21.0	7.0	224.0	1,856.0
<b>Poland</b>	40.0	2,080.0	20.0*	9.0	232.0	1,848.0
<b>Hungary</b>	40.0	2,080.0	20.0*	10.0	240.0	1,840.0
<b>Latvia</b>	40.0	2,080.0	20.0*	11.0	248.0	1,832.0
<b>Greece</b>	40.0	2,080.0	23.0	10.0	264.0	1,816.0
<b>Lithuania</b>	40.0	2,080.0	20.0*	13.0	264.0	1,816.0
<b>Slovenia</b>	40.0	2,080.0	20.0*	13.0	264.0	1,816.0
<b>Bulgaria</b>	40.0	2,080.0	24.0	10.0	272.0	1,808.0
<b>Ireland</b>	39.0	2,028.0	20.0*	9.0	226.2	1,801.8
<b>Malta</b>	40.0	2,080.0	24.0*	14.0	304.0	1,776.0
<b>Slovakia</b>	38.8	2,017.6	21.1	15.0	280.1	1,737.5
<b>Cyprus</b>	38.0	1,976.0	20.0*	12.0	243.2	1,732.8
<b>Luxembourg</b>	39.0	2,028.0	28.0	10.0	296.4	1,731.6
<b>Belgium</b>	37.6	1,955.2	20.0*	10.0	225.6	1,729.6
<b>Austria</b>	38.8	2,017.6	25.0	13.0	294.9	1,722.7
<b>Czech Republic</b>	38.0	1,976.0	25.0	10.0	266.0	1,710.0
<b>Portugal</b>	38.2	1,986.4	24.5	12.0	278.9	1,707.5
<b>Netherlands</b>	37.5	1,950.0	25.6	7.0	244.5	1,705.5
<b>Spain</b>	37.9	1,970.8	22.0*	14.0	272.9	1,697.9
<b>UK</b>	37.3	1,939.6	24.6	8.0	243.2	1,696.4
<b>Norway</b>	37.5	1,950.0	25.0	9.0	255.0	1,695.0
<b>Finland</b>	37.5	1,950.0	25.0	11.0	270.0	1,680.0
<b>Italy</b>	38.0	1,976.0	28.0	12.0	304.0	1,672.0
<b>Germany</b>	37.6	1,955.2	30.0	10.5	304.6	1,650.6
<b>Denmark</b>	37.0	1,924.0	30.0	9.0	288.6	1,635.4
<b>Sweden</b>	37.5	1,950.0	33.0	11.0	330.0	1,620.0
<b>France</b>	35.0	1,820.0	25.0	11.0	252.0	1,568.0
<b>EU27 + Norway</b>	38.6	2,006.1	23.7	10.7	264.7	1,741.4

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<b>EU27</b>	38.6	2,008.2	23.7	10.7	265.1	1,743.1
<b>EU25</b>	38.5	2,002.4	23.8	10.9	266.4	1,736.0
<b>EU15</b>	37.9	1,968.7	25.6	10.5	273.1	1,695.7
<b>EU15 + Norway</b>	37.8	1,967.6	25.5	10.4	271.9	1,695.6
<b>NMS10</b>	39.5	2,053.0	21.0	11.5	256.5	1,796.4
<b>NMS12</b>	39.6	2,057.5	21.3	11.0	255.1	1,802.4

*Note: \* Statutory annual leave figure.*

*Source: EIRO national centres*

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1

Back to Figure 1

The data in Figure 1 should be read in conjunction with the following notes:

- **Austria:** figure is an estimate based on the most important collective agreements, which generally provide for a 38.5-hour to 39-hour week.
- **Belgium:** figure is an estimate calculated by the Federal Public Service for Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue ([SPF Emploi, Travail et Concertation sociale/FOD Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Sociaal Overleg](#)) on the basis of sectoral collective agreements in the private sector; this excludes the effects of company agreements.
- **Bulgaria:** figure refers to the normal week – which is also the statutory figure – set in the great majority of agreements.
- **Cyprus:** figure is from the Cyprus Labour Institute ([Ινστιτούτο Εργασίας Κύπρου](#), [INEK-PEO](#)).
- **Czech Republic:** figure is from the Information System on Working Conditions ([ISWC](#)) and Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions ([Českomoravská konfederace odborových svazů](#), [ČMKOS](#)). It refers to hours set by company-level collective agreements, the more prevalent bargaining level. According to ČMKOS, about 56% of higher-level collective agreements signed by its affiliates in 2007 set normal weekly working hours at 37.5 hours.
- **Denmark:** figure refers to almost all collective agreements.
- **Estonia:** as set by law; according to the Confederation of Estonian Trade Unions ([Eesti Ametiühingute Keskliit](#), [EAKL](#)), few cases arise of collective agreements reducing normal hours below the statutory figure.
- **Finland:** figure is an estimate, based on typical provisions of sectoral agreements.
- **France:** since 1 January 2002, normal weekly working hours must, by law, be set at 35 hours in all companies; those with fewer than 10 employees have an exemption scheme relating to overtime.
- **Germany:** data are from the collective agreement archive of the Institute for Economics and Social Science ([Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaftliches Institut](#), [WSI](#)). The data cover the whole of Germany; the figure for western Germany was 37.4 hours in both 2006 and 2007 and the figures for eastern Germany were 38.9 hours in 2006 and 38.8 hours in 2007.
- **Greece:** figure refers to most collective agreements.
- **Hungary:** collective agreements usually lay down the statutory working week of 40 hours. Although the Labour Code allows collective agreements to stipulate a shorter period, in practice deviations from the statutory hours are relatively rare.
- **Ireland:** figure refers to most collective agreements.
- **Italy:** figure represents the mid-range of agreements, which provide for 36–40 hours a week.

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- **Latvia:** as set by law.
- **Lithuania:** as set by law.
- **Luxembourg:** figure is an estimate.
- **Malta:** while no statistical data exist, most collective agreements specify a normal weekly working time of 40 hours.
- **Netherlands:** figure is an estimate, based on a sample of collective agreements.
- **Norway:** figure represents normal working hours for employees covered by collective agreements; employees working shifts or at night work fewer weekly hours.
- **Poland:** as set by law.
- **Portugal:** figure is for 2006 from the employment survey of the Office of Strategy and Planning ([Gabinete de Estratégia e Planeamento, GEP](#)) within the Ministry of Labour and Solidarity ([Ministério do Trabalho e da Solidariedade Social, MTSS](#)); refers to ‘normal average working time’.
- **Romania:** as set by the tripartite national collective agreement, which provides a minimum basic framework for employment conditions, and by sectoral agreements; the same figure is set by law.
- **Slovakia:** figure refers to workers in single-shift systems – in 2007, the equivalent figure for workers in two-shift systems was 37.7 hours, while it was 36.9 hours for those in three-shift systems and 37.3 hours for those in continuous shifts; data are from the Information System on Working Conditions (ISWC), Trexima Bratislava.
- **Slovenia:** figure is based on the standard in sectoral collective agreements; the same figure is set by law.
- **Spain:** figure is from labour statistics publications of the Ministry of Labour and Immigration ([Ministerio de Trabajo e Inmigración, MTIN](#) – formerly MTAS).
- **Sweden:** figure is from Statistics Sweden ([Statistiska Centralbyrån, SCB](#)).
- **UK:** figure is from [Incomes Data Services \(IDS\)](#) ‘Hours and holidays’, September 2007, based on a study of about 440 organisational and industry agreements.

## Appendix 2

Back to Figure 2

The data in Figure 2 should be read in conjunction with the following notes:

- **Belgium:** figure is for blue-collar workers in the chemicals industry (joint committee 116) and white-collar workers in the chemicals industry (joint committee 207) – the plastics industry has a separate agreement. The sectoral agreements are amended by company-level accords on working time, [shift work](#), night work and other factors.
- **Cyprus:** figure is from INEK-PEO.

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- **Czech Republic:** figure is from ISWC and refers to hours set by company-level collective agreements, the more prevalent bargaining level. The figure for higher-level collective agreements was also 37.5 weekly working hours.
- **Estonia:** as set by law; few cases arise of collective agreements reducing normal working hours below the statutory figure.
- **Germany:** figure is from the WSI collective agreement archive (*WSI-Tarifarchiv*) and applies to western Germany; the figure for eastern Germany is 40 hours.
- **Hungary:** hours are lower, typically 36 weekly working hours, in hazardous jobs.
- **Italy:** estimate is based on an annual figure from the Bank of Italy (*Banca d'Italia*) of 1,727 working hours in 2006, assuming 28 days of annual leave and 12 public holidays.
- **Luxembourg:** figure is from the Luxembourg Confederation of Independent Trade Unions (*Onofhängege Gewerkschaftsbond Lëtzebuerg, OGB-L*).
- **Malta:** figure is from the chemical, energy and printing section of the *General Workers' Union (GWU)* and applies to those working regular hours; the figure is 37.5 hours for shift workers.
- **Netherlands:** figure is based on a sample of company agreements; for shift workers, the figure is 33.6 hours.
- **Norway:** night and shift workers – who are a common feature of the chemicals industry – work fewer hours. For example, the agreed weekly working hours for those in continuous three-shift work are 33.6 hours, increasing to 36.5 hours for those in two-shift work on weekdays.
- **Portugal:** as set by law and sectoral agreement.
- **Slovakia:** figure refers to the sectoral agreement signed by the Chemicals Trade Union (*Odborový zväz chémia, OZ Chémia*) and to workers in single-shift systems.
- **Spain:** figure is from the 15th General Collective Agreement of the Chemicals Industry of 29 August 2007.
- **Sweden:** figure is from the Industrial and Chemical Employers' Association (*Industri- och kemiGruppen*) and refers to blue-collar and white-collar workers working during the day. The corresponding figure for temporary shift work is 38 hours and is 36 hours for regular shift work and work underground.
- **UK:** figure is from IDS (see note to Figure 1 above) and refers to the oil, chemicals and pharmaceuticals industries.

### Appendix 3

Back to Figure 3

The data in Figure 3 should be read in conjunction with the following notes:

- **Belgium:** figure is an average, weighted for employment levels, of the 35 working hours laid down in the agreement for large-scale retail (joint committees 202, 311 and 312) and 38 working hours in the agreement for small-scale retail (joint committees 119, 149.4 and 201).

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- **Cyprus:** the weekly working hours of shop workers are governed by Law 155(I)/2006 ([CY0612019I](#)).
- **Czech Republic:** figure is from ISWC and refers to working hours set by company-level collective agreements, the more prevalent bargaining level. The figure for higher-level collective agreements was 37.5–40 hours in 2006.
- **Estonia:** as set by law; few cases arise of collective agreements reducing normal hours below the statutory figure.
- **Germany:** figure is from the WSI collective agreement archive and applies to western Germany; the figure for eastern Germany is 38.1 hours.
- **Italy:** estimate is based on an annual figure for 2006 from the Bank of Italy of 1,708 working hours, assuming 28 days of annual leave and 12 public holidays.
- **Luxembourg:** figure is from OGB-L; while a 40-hour figure is generally the case, some companies may have an agreed working week of 39.5 hours or lower.
- **Malta:** figure is an estimate.
- **Netherlands:** figure is based on a sample of company agreements.
- **Portugal:** as set by law and/or collective agreements.
- **Romania:** as set by tripartite national collective agreement; no sectoral agreement exists.
- **Slovakia:** figure refers to the sectoral agreement signed by the Commerce and Tourism Workers Trade Union Association ([OZ pracovníkov obchodu a cestovného ruchu](#)) and to workers in single-shift systems.
- **Slovenia:** figure is for the collective agreement for the retail sector that came into force on 16 July 2007. According to Article 29 of the agreement, normal weekly working time cannot exceed 40 hours.
- **Sweden:** figure is from the Swedish Trade Federation ([Svensk Handel](#)).
- **UK:** figure is from IDS (see note to Figure 1 above).

## Appendix 4

Back to Figure 4

The data in Figure 4 should be read in conjunction with the following notes:

- **Austria:** usual figure for civil servants; working time is fixed by law or decrees.
- **Belgium:** as set by law.
- **Bulgaria:** as set by law.
- **Cyprus:** data are from the Pancyprian Union of Public Servants ([Παγκύπρια Συντεχνία Δημοσίων Υπαλλήλων, PASYDY](#)).
- **Czech Republic:** as set by law.
- **Estonia:** as set by law.

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- **Germany:** figure is from the WSI collective agreement archive and applies to the whole of Germany.
- **Greece:** 40 working hours is the general rule, but certain exceptions allow for a 37.5-hour working week.
- **Italy:** estimate is based on an annual figure for 2006 from the Bank of Italy of 1,448 hours, assuming 28 days of annual leave and 12 public holidays.
- **Latvia:** as set by law.
- **Lithuania:** as set by law.
- **Luxembourg:** as set by law.
- **Malta:** figure is an estimate.
- **Poland:** as stipulated by law.
- **Portugal:** as set by law.
- **Romania:** as set by law.
- **Slovakia:** figure is from the civil service sectoral collective agreement for 2007.
- **Slovenia:** as set by law and the Collective Agreement for the Public Sector in the Republic of Slovenia, amended on 1 January 2007.
- **Sweden:** figure is from the Swedish Agency for Government Employers ([Arbetsgivarverket](#)).
- **UK:** civil service arrangements are decentralised; the figure is an average of a range of 35–37 working hours reported by IDS (see note to Figure 1 above), although longer hours (41–42) are found in parts of revenue and customs departments.

## Appendix 5

Back to Figure 6

The data in Figure 6 should be read in conjunction with the following notes:

- **Austria:** as set by law, expressed as 30 working days, including Saturdays.
- **Bulgaria:** estimate is based on a general provision of 20–28 days in collective agreements.
- **Czech Republic:** figure, from ISWC and ČMKOS, refers to leave (expressed as five weeks) set by 66.7% of higher-level collective agreements signed by ČMKOS affiliates and 76.3% of company-level collective agreements in 2007.
- **Denmark:** comprising five weeks of annual leave, plus five days to be taken at employees' own choice or paid instead.
- **Estonia:** as set by law, expressed as 28 calendar days; according to EAKL, provisions on annual paid leave above the statutory level are rarely included in collective agreements, with two exceptions in the transport sector, which provide for five weeks (35 calendar days) of leave. The latter is also the level set by law for central and local government staff.

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- **Finland:** 25 days (or 30 days including Saturdays) applies after one year of service, while 20 days (or 24 days including Saturdays) applies for employees with less service; some agreements provide for longer leave.
- **France:** as set by law, expressed as 30 working days, including Saturdays; the number of days increases with service.
- **Germany:** data are from the WSI collective agreement archive, constituting 30.1 days in western Germany and 29.5 days in eastern Germany.
- **Greece:** mid-range of entitlements which vary from 20 to 25 days, depending on service.
- **Italy:** figure is calculated as four weeks of leave, plus the mid-range of between five and 10 days awarded as a form of working time reduction.
- **Luxembourg:** figure is an estimate.
- **Netherlands:** figure, from Statistics Netherlands ([Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, CBS](#)), is for 2005.
- **Portugal:** 24 or 25 days is the agreed norm, with the 25th day sometimes dependent on factors such as age and attendance.
- **Romania:** figure is the minimum laid down in the national collective agreement.
- **Slovakia:** figure is an estimate, based on the fact that – according to ISWC, Trexima Bratislava – 22.1% of sectoral collective agreements signed for 2007 provided for one week of leave above the statutory minimum.
- **Sweden:** figure is calculated as the statutory 25 days, plus the mid-range of between five and 10 days of additional leave awarded in most collective agreements.
- **UK:** figure is from IDS ‘Hours and holidays’, September 2007.

## Appendix 6

Back to Table 3

The data in Table 3 should be read in conjunction with the following notes:

- **Austria:** entitlement is expressed as 30 working days, including Saturdays; it increases by five days after 25 years of service.
- **Belgium:** figure refers to the private sector; the minimum statutory entitlement in the public sector is 24 days.
- **Bulgaria:** higher statutory entitlements apply to groups such as teachers and staff of scientific institutes, and to workers in hazardous work or working irregular hours.
- **Cyprus:** 20 days for those working a five-day week and 25 days for those working a six-day week.
- **Czech Republic:** entitlement is expressed as four weeks.
- **Estonia:** expressed as 28 calendar days; the statutory entitlement is five weeks (35 calendar days) for state and local government officials, and eight weeks (56 calendar days) for education sector employees.

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- **Finland:** entitlement is two days of leave, including Saturdays, per calendar month worked in the first year of the [employment relationship](#), and 2.5 days a month thereafter.
- **France:** entitlement is expressed as 30 working days or five weeks.
- **Germany:** expressed as four weeks or 24 working days, that is, Monday to Saturday.
- **Greece:** two additional days after three years of service.
- **Italy:** expressed as four weeks.
- **Latvia:** expressed as four calendar weeks.
- **Lithuania:** expressed as 28 calendar days; certain groups such as people with disabilities and lone parents have an entitlement of 35 calendar days.
- **Malta:** expressed as four working weeks and four working days.
- **Poland:** entitlement rises from 20 days to 26 days after 10 years of employment.
- **Slovakia:** entitlement is expressed as four weeks.
- **Slovenia:** expressed as four weeks; older workers, workers with disabilities and those taking care of disabled children are entitled to at least three additional days, and workers under the age of 18 years are entitled to seven additional working days. Leave entitlement increases for parents by one day a year for each child under the age of 15 years.
- **Spain:** entitlement is expressed as 30 calendar days.
- **UK:** the statutory entitlement increased from 20 days to 24 days from October 2007 and will rise to 28 days from April 2009.

## Appendix 7

Back to Table 4

The data in Table 4 should be read in conjunction with the following notes:

- **France:** data are from the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies ([Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques, INSEE](#)); 2007 figure is for the first three quarters of the year only.
- **Germany:** data are from the WSI collective agreement archive and cover the whole of Germany; the figure for western Germany was 1,645 working hours in 2006 and 1,645 hours in 2007, while the figure for eastern Germany was 1,720 working hours in 2006 and 1,716 hours in 2007.
- **Italy:** data are from the Bank of Italy.
- **Malta:** data are from the [National Statistics Office \(NSO\)](#).
- **Netherlands:** figure, from CBS, is for full-time employees; the total decreases to 1,299 hours for all employees in 2006.
- **Portugal:** no whole-year statistics are available, but the figure was 467 hours for the first quarter of 2006, based on law, collective agreement, individual employment contract or internal company rules, according to a GEP employment survey.

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- **Romania:** figures, which exclude overtime, are estimates based on provisions of national and sectoral agreements.
- **Spain:** figures are from MTIN labour statistics.

## Appendix 8

### Country codes

Country grouping	List of countries
EU27	EU15 and NMS12
EU25	EU15 and NMS10
EU15	Member States before EU enlargement in 2004: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom (UK)
NMS10	10 new Member States that joined the EU on 1 May 2004: the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia
NMS12	NMS10, plus Bulgaria and Romania which joined the EU on 1 January 2007

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