



Working time preferences in sixteen European countries



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Working time preferences in sixteen European countries

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Foreword

Raising employment performance is a major challenge for the European Union and providing jobs for all sections of the labour force is a fundamental policy objective. Social inclusion is an important European-level policy target and increased labour market participation is a key to achieving an inclusive European society for all.

The present report is based on a representative survey carried out in the 15 European Union Member States and Norway in 1998 on behalf of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions by Infratest Burke Sozialforschung and a consortium of national fieldwork institutes. In the course of the survey, a total of more than 30,000 people drawn from the economically active and inactive populations in the 16 countries were questioned about their employment preferences.

The report seeks to analyse the role national, institutional and economic settings plays in determining labour market participation and preferences within the 15 EU Member States and Norway. It provides explanations for differences in working times and working time preferences among the countries and gives some indication of both the potential and need for change.

The survey shows that there is a preference in the 15 EU Member States and Norway for an increase in employment rates: whereas the volume of work would evolve very differently in the various countries if preferences were realised, the employment rate would have to be increased in all of them. In the 15 EU Member States and Norway, the employment rate would have to rise by 11%, from 63% today to 74%. Thus the EU's strategy of bringing employment rates in Europe up to the United States level is consistent with people's preferences. The employment rate of women would have to increase by more than 24% (more than twice as much as the increase required in the male employment rate). However, since most employees also want shorter working hours, the preference in Europe is for a combination of high labour market participation rates and short individual working times rather than the American combination of high employment rates and long working times.

Analysis of current working times and – even more so – of employment and working time preferences at household level shows that the currently prevalent distinction between full-time and part-time work is being questioned. There is growing interest in a reformed or variable full-time norm located in the range of what actually constitutes 'short' full-time and 'long' part-time employment – i.e. around 30 hours.

Another of the survey's interesting findings coming from the survey is that working times and the distribution of working time at household level constitute an important adjustment variable in individual working time decisions. Short individual working times and a general working time reduction are more likely to be realised the higher the female employment rate is and the more equally working times are distributed between the partners in a household. Consequently, positive action policies aimed at a more equal distribution of paid and unpaid work between men and women are of direct relevance to working time policy.

The differences between current working times and working time preferences that emerge from the survey suggest there is a potential for change, and this should act as a clear incentive to policymakers to change the present situation.

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Introduction

The present report is based on a representative survey of future employment preferences conducted among the populations of the 15 EU Member States and Norway¹ in the summer of 1998.

The issue of working time played a central role in this survey. Those questioned were asked about their own and, where applicable, their partners' actual and preferred working times, about overtime and overtime payment, about whether they would accept certain forms of working-time arrangements (full-time/part-time, sabbaticals) and how they felt these should be structured. The survey sample included not only individuals in work but also people not in work at the time of the survey but who wanted to start or return to work within the following five years. In addition to information on actual working time arrangements and preferences, the survey also provides data on respondents' work expectations in five years' time. Thus the survey covers actual structures, preferences and expectations. The data were analysed in conjunction with a wide variety of other socio-demographic variables – age, gender, family context, qualifications, etc. – as well as with regard to the characteristics of respondents' occupations and work histories.

At the heart of the present report lies an analysis of actual and preferred working times and of the extent to which the two diverge from each other. Particular attention is paid to the differences between the countries. Our aim here is to identify those countries in which working times are particularly short, particularly long or particularly differentiated and those in which preferred working times diverge sharply, or less sharply, from actual working times. In each case, the analysis is carried out for particular groups of people – for men and women, manual and white-collar workers etc. Finally, we try to find explanations for the differences in working times and working time preferences between the countries. To this end, we use multivariate analytical methods. Virtually all the variables in the survey describe only the personal situation of respondents or of their households (age, gender, number of children in household, etc.). However, current and preferred working times (as is explained in Chapter 2) are also influenced by country-specific characteristics, such as working time regulation and the employment situation. In order to take account of this, we have also had recourse in our analysis to external variables that help to characterise the individual countries more precisely (e.g. economic development, productivity, employment growth). The existing literature and the studies compiled by the national experts provided information that proved important in interpreting the data at country level.

In several respects, the present analysis goes beyond what is already known about working time and working time structures in Europe. True, various data sources² provide information on the duration and scheduling of current working times in the individual countries and their evolution over time. To date, however, only selectively representative information (country-level analyses) on employees' preferred working times has been available. One novel feature of the present analysis is that it is not confined to actual working times but also provides information on respondents' employment preferences. The divergences between preferences and reality give some indications as to the possible potential for change. They show whether, and to what extent, the current working-time structures meet the wishes of employees.

Another feature of the survey that sets it apart from others is that those questioned on their working time preferences included not only individuals in gainful employment but also currently non-active

1 Hereafter, the term 'Europe' denotes these 16 countries.

2 The most important data source at European level is the European Labour Force Survey (ELFS), which each year provides comparable data on gainful employment, including working time, for the EU Member States. Other data sources include the Luxembourg Employment Study (LES), the European Community-Household Panel (EHCP), the PACO Data Archive and the PACO Database (longitudinal studies), the European Working Conditions Survey. However, these surveys cover considerably fewer countries than the ELFS, and some of them are conducted only at lengthy intervals.

people who would like to enter the labour market. This is one of the survey's great merits. Since most surveys are confined to individuals in gainful employment and therefore cover only a section of the labour force, they underestimate the desired volume of work and therefore the challenge to employment policy in many countries. Only by taking account of non-active individuals who would like to work is it possible to accurately gauge the desired volume of work and thus to get the measure of the demand for job creation that employment policy has to meet.

A further advantage of the survey is that it facilitates analysis of actual and preferred working times at household level, because questions on the partner's actual working time and/or the preferred working time for the partner were also asked. The results of the survey show that decisions on individual working times are taken not in isolation but in the context of the household as a whole. For this reason, the household is an important mediating stage in the planning and selection of men's and women's individual working times.

Finally, the survey offers an opportunity to interpret the findings in a more complex way than is possible with other data sources, because it makes available a multiplicity of other variables pertaining, for example, to personal and household situations and the subjective evaluation of various working time forms and of the institutional context.

In evaluating the surveys, we were concerned principally with the following questions:

1. Must the volume of work be redistributed or increased in order for employment and working time preferences to be realised?

Unrealised working time preferences may be attributable either to a general lack of employment opportunities or to the fact that the volume of work is not distributed in accordance with individual preferences. The demands on employment and working-time policy will differ, depending on whether or not the volume of work has to rise if employment preferences are to be realised.

2. How do actual working times and working time preferences differ in EU Member States?

Our aim here is to discover what differences exist between the countries or between particular groups within the individual countries. We seek to ascertain whether the differences in current working times between the countries also exist in respect of preferences or whether working time preferences might possibly be more 'similar' than current working times. We also investigate whether or not the working times of particular groups (men, women, manual workers, white-collar workers, households with and without children, etc.) display the same characteristics across countries.

3. How can the differences in working times and working time preferences between the countries be explained?

It is undeniable that national specificities in the regulation of employment and the national employment situation influence the current working time structures in the individual countries. This applies both to the duration of working time – even the so-called 'standard working time' differs from country to country, considerably so in some cases – and to the distribution of working time among different groups. Thus women's working times vary considerably from country to country, because the tax and social security systems reward or penalise women's work differently and the provision of childcare facilities differs markedly between countries.

With the aid of multivariate analyses and by drawing on the information provided in the country reports, we are able to explain many of the differences between the countries.

4. Which groups would like to see very considerable changes in their working times?
The need for change is particularly great when current and preferred working times diverge very considerably from each other. A wide gap between preferences and reality can be seen as an indication that existing arrangements and conditions or the economic situation of the household in question are particularly unfavourable to the realisation of individual working-time preferences, which suggests a need for specific action in the policy arena.
5. How do couples divide up paid work and what division would they prefer in future?
The employment and social security systems of the 16 European countries investigated here are influenced by very different social paradigms and institutions in respect of men's and women's employment. Some countries aspire to equal participation by men and women in the labour market, while others are still dominated by the single male breadwinner model, albeit increasingly in its 'modernised' form in which women work part-time. At the same time, we know that women – and men – are increasingly rejecting the traditional gender-specific division of labour. We have attempted to ascertain whether, and to what extent, there are differences between the countries with regard to the division of paid work between couples and whether or not the same or similar differences exist in respect of preferences.
6. What are the main obstacles to the realisation of working time preferences?
Particularly pronounced differences between current and preferred working times, whether at national level or among particular groups, point to the existence of obstacles to the realisation of working time preferences. Multivariate analyses enable us to identify those characteristics of individual situations that influence the discrepancy between actual and preferred working times. Furthermore, the answers to questions that seek individuals' opinions or assessments (for example of the possibility of realising a preference for part-time work) provide some clues as to the possible obstacles to the realisation of individual preferences in the individual countries. Identification of these obstacles plays an important role in formulating conclusions
7. Are the outlines of a new working time standard discernible behind the working time preferences expressed by Europeans?
One of the most important questions is whether the working time standard in each country corresponds to employees' preferences. If, for various reasons, the working time preferences of many workers no longer coincide with the currently prevailing norm, then the question is whether that standard should be changed or discarded. It is important for future working time regulation to identify the trends in preferences. The question is whether the differences in actual working times between the countries are duplicated when it comes to preferences or whether the preferences expressed give grounds for supposing that working times in Europe will tend to converge in future.
8. What conclusions can be drawn for labour market and employment policy in the EU?
The preferences expressed in respect of employment and working time are also direct indicators of what workers expect from working time and employment policy. Thus the survey results can be used as a basis for formulating challenges for EU working time and employment policy. This applies both to individual working times and preferences and to the differences between the current and preferred division of paid work between couples.

The report is structured around the eight questions outlined above.

In Chapter 1, some methodological issues raised by our study are explained.

Chapter 2 establishes the theoretical framework within which the issues dealt with in the report will be discussed. We show which factors influence current and preferred working times and identify the findings of an analysis of employment and working time preferences.

In Chapter 3, we address the first of the questions around which the report is structured, namely the extent to which the volume of work would have to be changed and/or redistributed if employment and working time preferences were to be realised.

In Chapter 4, current and preferred working times are analysed at individual level. In this section, the differences between the countries (question 2), explanations for the differences (question 3), the working time preferences of particular groups (question 4) and possible obstacles to the realisation of working time preferences (question 6) are discussed. With the aid of multivariate analyses, we will ascertain which employees have particularly long or short working times and among which groups the difference between current and preferred working times is particularly great.

In Chapter 5, we address the question of how couples divide up paid work between themselves or would like to do so. Here too, we will identify and seek to explain the differences between the countries (questions 2 and 3) and examine the obstacles to the realisation of preferences.

In Chapter 6, we address the question of whether the outlines of a new working time norm can be discerned from the working time preferences expressed by respondents (question 7). In doing so, we draw on the findings of the previous two chapters as to direction, extent and distribution of working time preferences. Finally, we set out the conclusions for labour market and employment policy in the EU that can be drawn from our analysis of the survey.

Employment Options of the Future Survey

Sample

Data are representative of the residential population aged 16 to 64 years in all 15 Member States of the EU and in Norway. Data collection was made on the basis of two separate samples in each of the 16 countries involved in the survey.

A basic sample comprised the residential population aged 16 to 64. From this sample a sufficiently high number of interviews was available for only one of the core target groups: employed persons. For the other three core target groups of persons presently not employed (young entrants, women returners, unemployed persons) the basic sample did not provide enough cases for analysis.

In order to get a sufficiently high number of cases for the target groups of young entrants, women returners and unemployed persons a special boost sample was designed. It concentrated on persons between 16 and 64 presently not employed.

Sample sizes in the different countries are set out in Table 1 below. Table 1 also shows how many cases in each of the target groups are available from each country.

Gross samples were drawn at random from the national telephone directories in each country. In order to cope with the problem of non-listed numbers in some countries artificial telephone number were created by substituting the last digits of existing telephone numbers by random figures (RLD-method). If there was more than one person belonging to the universe in one household (i.e. eligible for an interview), selection of the interviewee was also made at random (mainly by using the last birthday method).

Table 1 Sample Sizes in 15 Member States and Norway

Country	Basic Sample	Boost Sample	Total Sample	Among them: Employed Persons
Austria	1,000	501	1,501	707
Belgium	1,000	510	1,510	625
Denmark	1,001	484	1,485	825
Finland	1,000	504	1,504	673
France	2,000	1,026	3,026	1,259
Germany	2,000	998	2,998	1,394
Greece	1,042	464	1,506	517
Ireland	900	500	1,400	651
Italy	1,978	1,014	2,992	979
Luxembourg	520	302	822	290
Netherlands	1,001	499	1,500	734
Portugal	1,000	501	1,501	564
Spain	2,000	1,000	3,000	663
Sweden	900	412	1,312	731
UK	2,000	1,000	3,000	1,308
EUR 15	19,342	9,715	29,057	11,920
Norway	800	700	1,500	729
Total	20,142	10,415	30,557	12,649

Unweighted Numbers of Cases

Questionnaire

Interviewing was conducted on the basis of fully standardised questionnaires with identically structured in all countries. National versions of the questionnaire were produced on the basis of the master versions in English and in German. Translations were first made by translators whose mother tongue was the target language. Their translations were checked and fine-tuned by the national institutes which were responsible for fieldwork. This procedure made sure that all national versions of the questionnaire were correct in terms of substance and at the same time met the special requirements for telephone interviewing. For both the basic and the boost sample, practically identical questionnaires were used. Only questions 1, 2 and 4 were modified in order to fit the persons eligible for interview in the two samples. The English master versions of the questionnaires are set out in Annex 2 at the end of this report. All national versions of the questionnaires are printed in separate documentation.

Fieldwork was carried out between May and September 1998 by computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI) in all 16 countries involved in the survey. All institutes used the same CATI software for interviewing. In order to provide a strictly identical structure of the data sets, programming of the CATI questionnaire was made centrally by Infratest Burke Sozialforschung.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork was co-ordinated by Infratest Burke Sozialforschung. Interviews were conducted by the following national fieldwork agencies:

Austria:	Infratest Burke Sozialforschung, Munich (Germany)
Belgium:	Rogil Field Research, Linden
Denmark:	Vilstrup Research, Copenhagen
Finland:	Taloustutkimus Oy, Helsinki
France:	Infratest Burke France, Paris
Germany:	Infratest Burke Sozialforschung, Munich
Greece:	Prognosis, Athens
Ireland:	Irish Marketing Surveys, Dublin
Italy:	Infratest Burke Italy, Milan
Luxembourg:	Rogil Field Research, Linden (Belgium)
Netherlands:	TrendBox, Amsterdam
Portugal:	Intercampus, Lisbon
Spain:	Infratest Burke Spain, Madrid
Sweden:	Infratest Burke Sweden, Gothenburg
United Kingdom:	RSL, Harrow
Norway:	ScanFact, Oslo

Weighting

Due to the disproportional structure of the samples and the random selection method data had to be weighted for analysis. Weighting was carried out as follows:

Firstly, the household-representative samples were transformed into person-representative samples. In each household only one person was interviewed, even if there was more than one person eligible for interview. Therefore in the net sample each household has the same statistical

chance to be selected for interview, whereas this is not the case for single persons. Their chances of being selected for interview depend on the number of persons in the household who belong to the universe (i.e. the total of all persons eligible). If there is only one person the chance is 100%, if there are two persons the chance of each individual is 50% and so on. Therefore - strictly speaking - the net sample is a household-representative sample. In order to achieve a representative sample in which each individual has the same statistical chance of being selected for interview a mathematical transformation had to be made.

Secondly, the person-representative basic samples were re-adjusted to the structure of the residential population aged 16 to 64 as known from the official statistics in each country. Re-adjustments were made by taking into account gender, age and region in order to compensate for possible disproportional non-responses.

Thirdly, basic and boost samples were integrated so that one consistent data set was available for each country. To this end, weighting factors created as described above had to be lowered for all respondents from the basic and the boost sample who are not in paid employment by taking into account the relation of the unweighted number of these cases in both samples. This re-established the actual ratio of presently active and non-active persons in the integrated data set.

Finally, national sample sizes were adjusted so that the weighted sizes of the national samples correspond to the actual share of each single country among the total population aged 16 to 64 in all 16 countries. This international weighting factor is stored as 'wei_int' in the SPSS-file.

The following analyses are based on data weighted by the 'wei_int' factor.

Margin of error

All data from representative surveys based on samples are subject of a certain margin of error. The standard error depends on the unweighted sample size, on the percentage share of the item to be looked at and on the variance of the item. For example, if a certain item has a percentage of $p = 30\%$ in a sample (or subgroup) of (unweighted) $n = 2,000$ cases the standard error is $\pm 2.9\%$. In this example there is a 95% chance that the 'real' percentage share of the item is between 27.1% and 32.9%. We suggest particular caution when interpreting figures which are based on very small numbers of cases.

The level-of-confidence table makes it possible to estimate the margin of error of all those figures which are percentage shares. Many of the following analyses, however, refer to average numbers of weekly working hours. Here again it is helpful to have an idea of how 'accurate' the figures shown actually are when taking into account the laws of random sampling.

Even if average numbers of weekly working hours are generally shown with a decimal point generally the figure after the decimal point must not be taken as exact; in most cases even the figure before the decimal point is not statistically secured. The margin of error in average weekly working hours (e.g. in question 55) is approximately ± 0.2 hours (at the 95% security level) for the figures based on the answers of all 11,000 dependent employees in the total sample. Therefore if our survey results indicate that the average weekly working time of dependent employees in Europe is 37.7 hours, there is a 95% chance that the actual weekly working time is between 37.5 and 37.9

hours. At country level the margin of error is larger due to the smaller sample sizes. The weekly working hours average (e.g. in question 55) is subject to a margin of error of approximately ± 1.0 hours (at the 95% security level) for the figures referring to all dependent employees within the different countries (depending on the country, the margin of error varies between ± 0.7 hours and ± 1.2 hours). Average weekly working hours calculated for subgroups of the employed population (e.g. by gender, age, sector of activity) within each country are subject to larger margins of error because the number of cases is smaller. When comparing countries, therefore, only relatively large differences can be considered statistically significant.

Working hours: comparison with Labour Force Survey (LFS) data

On average the LFS (1997) reports slightly shorter weekly working hours than the Employment Options of the Future Survey. Since both sources are based on samples, a certain margin of error has to be taken into account. More important, however, is how the wording of the questions about weekly working hours in both surveys differs. This explains much of the differences.

In the Employment Options of the Future Survey question 55 asked: 'In total, how many hours per week do you work at present – on average?'. Question 55 was immediately preceded by a set of questions referring to overtime hours. We therefore assume that respondents mostly reported the actual average weekly working hours including overtime hours.

In the LFS respondents were asked for their 'normal' weekly working hours. The term 'normal' can be interpreted in different ways. It can be either taken as the actual weekly working time (and then should produce figures quite close to the figures drawn from the Employment Options of the Future Survey). However, 'normal' can be also taken as the norm, i.e. the agreed weekly working hours, and in this case overtime hours will not be included in the respondent's answer.

A look at the data supports the hypothesis that in the Employment Options of the Future Survey respondents tended to include overtime hours whereas in the LFS there seems to be a tendency to report the 'standard' weekly working hours. As can be seen in Table 2, in the LFS data the answers of employed persons who declare themselves full-timers report weekly working hours between 35 and 40 hours – which can be taken as the full-time standard in Europe – more so than the answers of the corresponding group in the Employment Options of the Future Survey.

Therefore the results from the LFS and the Employment Options of the Future Survey cannot be directly compared as far as weekly working hours are concerned. In both surveys different things were measured. Data from the Employment Options of the Future Survey refer to the actual weekly working time including overtime hours whereas the LFS data to a certain extent seem to refer to standard (i.e. agreed) weekly working hours rather than to actual hours worked.

Employment rates: Comparison with data from other sources

From the basic sample of the Employment Options Survey information about employment rates can be drawn, i.e. information about the number of persons who are employed as a percentage share of the residential population in working age. Survey results (taking into account the margin of error) and comparable data from other statistical sources are shown in Table 3.

Table 2 Actual weekly working hours (Q. 55) of full-timers in classes; comparison of the Employment Options survey and the LFS

Weekly working hours	EF ¹	LFS 97 ²
1-10 hours	0.4 %	0.2 %
11-20 hours	1.1 %	0.8 %
21-30 hours	3.0 %	2.5 %
31-35 hours	5.4 %	4.6 %
36-37 hours	7.1 %	8.4 %
38-39 hours	16.4 %	22.9 %
40 hours	26.6 %	32.2 %
41-42 hours	4.5 %	3.1 %
43-45 hours	10.6 %	5.8 %
46-50 hours	11.5 %	9.4 %
51-60 hours	8.8 %	6.4 %
61+ hours	4.6 %	3.6 %
Total	100.0 %	100.0 %

¹ EF = Employment Options Survey (Average current working hours according to Q55)

² LFS 97 = Labour Force Survey 1997, Table 084 (Average normal working hours)

Base: all full-time employed persons (acc. to Q. 41); EUR15 only

At EU level the Employment Options Survey provides exactly the same results as the Labour Force Survey or data published by the OECD. Also at country level the results of the Employment Options Survey in most cases are fully in line with the data published by the European Commission or the OECD. In some countries, however, there are differences which go beyond the margin of error. The employment rates for Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg and Sweden in the Employment Options Survey are higher than in the data of the European Commission or the OECD, while in Spain the employment rates are lower.

When comparing employment rates from the Employment Options Survey with Labour Force Survey results or OECD data one must bear in mind that the data bases differ methodologically.

Firstly, the Employment Options Survey is confined to the population aged 16 to 64 whereas the Labour Force Survey and most of the OECD data refer to the population aged 15 to 64, therefore including an age group in which there are very few if any employed persons. Inclusion of the 15-year-old population therefore reduces the employment rate by approximately one percentage point.

Secondly, official statistics often tend to underestimate marginal jobs (in cases where housewives or students work a few hours a week or only occasionally).³ Question 4, which is addressed to all persons who do not spontaneously declare themselves employed the Employment Options Survey, includes this group of marginal jobs.

³ In Germany recently the employment statistics were revised. Due to the inclusion of marginal jobs the total number of employed persons in 1998 was increased by two million (or 6%), from 36 million to 38 million, in the official statistics; cf. Statistisches Bundesamt, Neuberechnung ergibt höhere Erwerbstätigenzahlen, Press Release of 28 April 1999. This results in an increase of the calculated employment rate by as much as three percentage points.

Table 3 Employment Rates: comparison of the Employment Options Survey with data from other sources

Country	Employment Options Survey				LFS 1998 ⁴	OECD 1998 ⁵
	Survey Result ¹	Sampling Error ²	Range ³			
			From	To		
Austria	70 %	+/- 4 %	66 %	74 %	70.1 %	67.4 %
Belgium	63 %	+/- 4 %	59 %	67 %	57.5 %	57.3 %
Denmark	79 %	+/- 4 %	75 %	83 %	78.9 %	75.3 %
Finland	68 %	+/- 4 %	64 %	72 %	65.1 %	64.8 %
France	62 %	+/- 3 %	59 %	65 %	60.8 %	59.4 %
Germany	67 %	+/- 3 %	64 %	70 %	61.5 %	64.1 %
Greece	49 %	+/- 4 %	45 %	53 %	57.2 %	54.9 %
Ireland	69 %	+/- 4 %	65 %	73 %	60.5 %	59.8 %
Italy	48 %	+/- 3 %	45 %	51 %	51.7 %	50.8 %
Luxembourg	72 %	+/- 6 %	66 %	78 %	58.6 %	60.2 %
Netherlands	70 %	+/- 4 %	66 %	74 %	68.3 %	69.8 %
Portugal	66 %	+/- 4 %	62 %	70 %	68.9 %	66.8 %
Spain	45 %	+/- 3 %	42 %	48 %	50.2 %	51.2 %
Sweden	78 %	+/- 4 %	74 %	82 %	70.3 %	71.5 %
United Kingdom	69 %	+/- 3 %	66 %	72 %	71.4 %	71.2 %
Norway	80 %	+/- 4 %	76 %	84 %	-	78.2 %
EU15	61 %	+/- 1 %	60 %	62 %	61.1 %	61.1 %

¹ Persons who declare themselves employed in Q1 or who did any paid work in the last week acc. to Q4 (dependent employees and self-employed persons only acc. to Q21) - as a percentage share of the residential population aged 16 – 64

² The sampling error at the 95% significance level varies between 3% and 6% in the different countries depending on the sample size in the basic sample and the percentage share of the employed

³ With a probability of 95% the actual percentage share is within this range.

⁴ Results of the Labour Force Survey. Cf. European Commission, *Employment in Europe 1999* Luxembourg 1999, p. 127 ff. Note: Figures refer to the population aged 15 -64.

⁵ OECD. *Employment Outlook 1999*, p. 220. Note: Figures refer to the population aged 15 -64, figures for Spain, Sweden and the UK refer to the population aged 16 –64

Thirdly, official employment statistics in the same country may vary depending on which source the corresponding data are based (cf. the differences between the LFS results and the OECD data shown in Table 3).

Given these considerations almost all country data provided by the Employment Options Survey have a plausible order of magnitude. Only the employment rates for Ireland and Luxembourg seem to be somewhat overestimated in the survey data.

The main purpose of this report is the comparison of the actual situation with people's preferences as far as labour market participation and working hours are concerned. Comparison of actual and preferred employment rates can be made consistently only if we use data from one source. Therefore in this report we only use data from the Employment Options Survey – even though the actual level of the employment rates might be described more precisely by referring to the Labour Force Survey or OECD data. Mixing two data sources, Labour Force Survey or OECD data for the actual employment rates and the Employment Options Survey for the preferences, would cause inconsistencies.

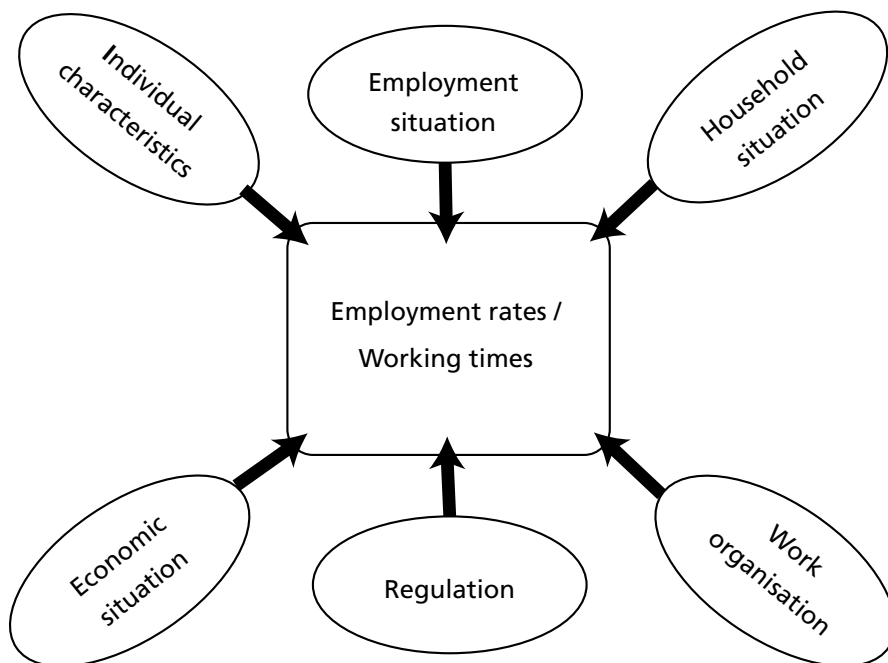
Analysis of employment rates and working time

Employment rates, working times and working time preferences: differences and causative factors

The results of this study, like those of earlier investigations of working time and working time preferences, reveal considerable differences in these areas between countries and between different groups. It is clear from the comprehensive literature on the subject that these differences are the consequence of a number of different factors. These factors are intertwined and therefore cannot be identified at first glance. In order to have at our disposal well-founded hypotheses for the data evaluations to be carried out in the course of our investigation, we have brought these causative factors together. The questions and hypotheses we have formulated will be scrutinised individually in the sections that follow, in conjunction with our presentation of the results. Here, however, the most important causal connections and basic considerations that we have taken as our starting points should be summarised. A distinction will be made between, on the one hand, the explanation of current employment rates and working times and, on the other, the preferences expressed.

Current employment rates and the duration of working time are determined by the following six factors.

Figure 1 Explanation of employment rates and working hours



The regulation of labour markets

Working times and the supply of and demand for jobs with particular working times are influenced by a diversity of regulations in the labour market. Statutory or collectively-agreed regulations can establish upper and lower limits for the hours to be worked by full-time employees, for example, or offer workers some leeway for individual choice in planning their own working hours. In addition to these direct regulations, many of the rules and regulations in national employment and social security systems impact on the supply and demand for labour. If marginal part-time jobs are exempted from tax or social security contributions, for example, then both employees and firms have greater incentives to choose those jobs in preference to others. It has been shown many times over that joint taxation in the form of the so-called spouse-based splitting system holds back the expansion of female labour market participation, while separate taxation creates incentives for women to increase their labour supply. Similarly, incentives to work overtime may exist if such additional hours are associated with reduced social security contributions or taxes. The regulations differ considerably from country to country. In the literature, the shaping of working time by such institutional structures is denoted by the term 'societal effects'. Many of these societal effects are included in the national reports mentioned in the introduction, and can be drawn on in interpreting the data. Some indicators of the degree of regulation, such as trade union density or coverage by collective agreements, which can usefully be deployed in statistical analyses, have been derived from other sources.

Household situation

Decisions on entering employment and on the hours that might be worked are not usually taken by individuals in isolation but rather in the context of households as a whole. Since households not only provide labour services for firms but also carry out reproduction work themselves, households' labour supply decisions depend above all on the volume of reproduction work⁴ to be performed (in particular housework, childcare and home care) and on its division among the members of the household. In the traditional family division of labour, the woman is responsible for reproduction work while the male breadwinner earns the money required to support the family. Because he is solely responsible for maintaining the family income, he usually has to work very long hours and is able to do so because there are virtually no restrictions on his labour market availability. If the family's financial needs increase, for example when children are born, the male breadwinner in this model increases his working time. In an egalitarian family model, labour force participation for both partners can be made easier, firstly, by reducing the volume of reproduction work carried out in the family. The most important factor here is the existence of a public supply of childcare facilities that can ease the burden on households. Secondly, given a certain level of prosperity, households can replace the domestic subsistence economy with externally purchased services (eating out rather than cooking, private childcare or nursing services, cleaning services). Thirdly, paid work and reproduction work can be redistributed between men and women; in this case, a reduction in men's working times will be accompanied by a rise in the employment rate and in women's working hours. Since the time demands on households with children are greater than those on households without children because of the greater volume of reproduction work required, even if there is a well-developed public childcare infrastructure, household working times

⁴ By 'reproduction work' as used in the context of the present report, we mean all those activities essential to a person's maintenance and well-being, such as buying and preparing food, laundry and housework.

continue to be influenced by children.⁵ The survey considerably facilitates examination of these interconnected factors, since questions were asked on the working time and working time preferences of both partners and on the number of children in the household, that is on the extent of reproduction work to be done. Data on the extent of the public childcare infrastructure had to be taken from other sources.

The household's economic situation

At low income levels, the utility of an additional unit of income is usually more highly valued than that of additional free time. As income rises, so does the relative utility of free time, bringing with it an increasing preference for working time reductions. This economic perspective concurs with the findings of sociological studies which show that preferences for working time reductions are interpreted as an indicator of prosperity, something that cannot be afforded until a certain level of income has been attained. The economic situation is, in the first instance, a distinctive characteristic of individuals and households. The absolute level of income is not the only factor to be taken into account. In developed industrial countries, such as the EU Member States, basic needs are met in most cases from earned income. Of greater importance are relative earnings; once basic needs are satisfied, then one's own prosperity is defined relative to that of others. Data on household incomes were not gathered during the survey. However, relative prosperity was investigated by means of a question on satisfaction with the household's material position. The economic situation is also a characteristic of countries, one that can be used to explain differences in working time from country to country. In highly developed countries with a high average standard of living, working times are usually lower than in less developed countries. However, a considerable difference in relative incomes, that is high income inequality tends to work in a different direction: poorer people seek to increase their working hours in order to increase their stake in the general prosperity. Richer people react in the same way in order to preserve the gap between themselves and the less well-off so that they can continue to afford the cheap labour they require to perform simple service tasks for them. Data on relative income levels (output per capita in purchasing power parity) and on income inequality were taken from other sources.

Work organisation

In many cases, working times are not chosen by employees but are determined by the mode of work organisation with which individuals have to comply. If the work organisation system is based on rigid working time patterns, then it is difficult for employees to work hours that differ from the established norms. Many firms with rigid working time systems of this kind insist that full-timers work an eight-hour day (possibly with overtime) and a 35- to 40-hour week, with part-timers allocated predefined time slots. In more flexible work organisation systems, the rigid distinction between full-time and part-time work becomes more fluid and there are more options for individuals to determine their own working times. A firm's work organisation system reflects its functional division of labour. Actual working times and the opportunities for realising working time preferences vary according to the tasks that the individual employee has to carry out. Managerial tasks are of crucial importance to the organisation of operational processes and are more difficult to divide up, so that longer working hours are expected and the resistance to working time reductions is greater. However, a work organisation system embodies not only functional aspects

⁵ The consequent reduction in earnings opportunities, as well as the greater financial burdens, justify financial transfers to families with children.

but also status hierarchies. In traditional companies, there were clear differences of status between manual and white-collar workers, The latter enjoying the privilege of shorter working hours. However, these differences in status have been abolished with the introduction of new forms of work organisation that rely more on internal cooperation between various groups of employees; in such systems, these differences in status are perceived as disruptive. No questions were asked during the survey on work organisation itself. The only information from which conclusions about work organisation can be drawn is that gathered on the working times of different workforce categories (manual, white-collar, employees with managerial duties) and on the distribution of working time between full-timers and part-timers. Some very tentative conclusions about certain aspects of work organisation can also be drawn from the information on the industry or sector in which respondents work, as well as from the respondents' answers when asked whether overtime could be offset by time off in lieu. Thus in interpreting the role of work organisation in the individual countries we will also have recourse to other sources (EPOC, 1997).

Employment situation

With sustained employment growth and low unemployment, employees' individual and collective bargaining power increases. This makes it easier for them to realise their preferences for employment and increased working time. The share of the involuntary non-employed or of involuntary part-timers will decline. However, the situation could also conceivably develop in the opposite direction. Because of the good economic situation, working times may increase beyond the desired level; as a result, employees become overburdened and their preferences for working time reductions will increase. The survey contains information on unemployment and on involuntary part-time work. Data on employment growth will be taken from other sources.

Individual characteristics

Finally, numerous individual characteristics influence working times. Thus it is well-known that workers with high qualifications are more strongly work-oriented and also have more employment opportunities than workers with low skill levels or qualifications. Working times also differ at different phases of life. At the beginning of the working life, there is frequently a gradual transition from education or training to work, while at the end of the working life there is often a similar transition to retirement from work (Lilja and Hämäläinen, 2000). Value systems also differ considerably. Workers with otherwise identical characteristics (income, education, domestic situation, etc.) can develop quite different ideas about the kind of life they wish to lead, which might range from strong career orientation to self-realisation outside the world of work. Some of these individual characteristics, such as age and education, were inquired into in the course of the survey. Employees' value systems were also touched on, at least indirectly, with a question about employment preferences.

Our investigation of working time preferences and of the discrepancies between preferences and current working time takes these same factors as its starting point. An additional factor in explaining working time preferences is the actual working time. Employees with very long working times would be expected to have a preference for a reduction, while those with short working times would be expected to prefer longer hours. All other factors can work in very different ways. They may give rise to preferences for shorter or longer working hours. Our starting hypothesis was that individual preferences for longer working hours and preferences for employment among the non-employed would be most likely to arise in the following sets of circumstances:

- a bad (absolute and relative) economic situation, which workers might seek to improve by increasing their working time;
- persistent under-employment and low rates of employment growth, which do not allow employment preferences to be realised and lead to a low employment rate;
- the rigid work organisation system, which makes it difficult to realise individual preferences;
- a regulatory framework that offers little scope for the realisation of working time and employment preferences. In particular, it is reasonable to assume that many women will have unfulfilled employment preferences if the public childcare infrastructure is inadequate;
- in traditional household structures with a single male breadwinner, or very long male working hours, in which women have been unable to realise their working time and employment preferences;
- individual career orientations that prioritise income maximisation.

We further hypothesise that individual preferences for working time reductions are most likely to arise under the following conditions:

- in a good (absolute and relative) economic situation, in which many material desires have already been fulfilled and working time reductions can be afforded;
- in a good employment situation, in which workers are likely to want to reduce the excessive strains built up during the boom period;
- following the widespread introduction of flexible forms of work organisation that allow preferences for working times below previous rigid standards to be realised and perhaps, by virtue of their very flexibility, even create such preferences because they are for the first time conceivable;
- individual career orientations that prioritise other values over income maximisation;
- in an institutional framework that opens up considerable scope for choice and possibly even creates preferences for working time reductions;
- in modern household structures in which women have been able to realise their working time employment preferences and the partners now wish to reduce the high demands paid work places on the household.

Working time preferences

In the European Foundation's 'Employment Options for the Future' study, questions were asked not only about actual working times but also, and in particular, about working time preferences. In investigating working time preferences, a more wide-ranging procedure was adopted than in many other studies, which tend to question only the currently employed about their working time preferences. Firstly, data were gathered not only on employees' working time preferences but also on the employment and working time preferences of household members of working age but not currently in employment. By extending the range of questioning in this way, the study takes account of the fact that working times will in future be influenced not only by the preferences of those currently in employment but also by the inflows of currently inactive people into the labour

market and, conversely, by the outflows of employed people into inactivity. Secondly, interviewees were asked not only about their own working time preferences but also about whether their partners worked and, where applicable, how many hours they worked. These questions enable us to identify the various combinations of employment and working time preferences at household level and to compare them with the situation that currently exists. Radical changes at household level are to be expected as increasing numbers of women enter the labour market.

The questions about working time and employment preferences make it possible to identify the actions that employers, the social partners, national governments and the EU will need to take in future. The EU, for example, is arguing for an increase in the employment rate in order to reduce unemployment; as we shall see, the results of this survey provide impressive support for this position. At the same time, the results also show that the EU's demand for equal employment opportunities for men and women accords with the preferences of most men and women in the EU (European Commission, 2000: 5).

It seems to us legitimate to draw conclusions about the need for action from the results of the study, provided that caution is exercised in so doing. This caution is necessary because conclusions about future behaviour cannot necessarily be drawn from preferences expressed today, as shown below.

On the one hand, preferences express individual desires for change; on the other hand, however, these desires are influenced by objective factors within which individuals plan their lives. Thus preferences are usually compromises between what is desirable and what is feasible. When the objective conditions change, preferences frequently change as well. If individuals' room for manoeuvre is extended, what was previously 'unthinkable' becomes desirable and possible; if, however, that room for manoeuvre is reduced, then preferences expressed earlier may be sacrificed to individual perceptions of what is feasible. Thus preferences are not static; rather, they evolve in close interaction with the actual circumstances of the individuals concerned. This interaction between preferences and individual circumstances can be truly understood only from a dynamic perspective, with employment policy conclusions being drawn accordingly. Thus it is now known that women's employment preferences are shaped to some extent by public childcare provision and are influenced by changes in such provision. Similarly, employment preferences are not formulated independently of the actual labour market situation in a given country. In a bad labour market situation, people wishing to work may well be discouraged from seeking employment. Conversely, in a favourable labour market situation, their latent employment preferences may be reawakened. It is precisely for this reason that the entire hidden labour force cannot be identified from questions about currently unrealised employment preferences.

Preferences can be expressed without any consideration of the monetary and non-monetary costs of realising them. However, if the time comes to take them seriously, then more careful consideration may be given to costs and, under certain circumstances, preferences may be sacrificed as a result. Reduced working time usually means a drop in income. However, it is uncertain whether respondents would actually be prepared to forego earnings if there was a serious possibility that their expressed preferences might be realised. Under such circumstances, it may well be important whether a second person in the household can offset the income foregone by increasing their working time. However, even preferences for longer working hours or, in the case of non-active workers, for labour market entry are not without their costs. Some of the benefits of longer working hours are higher earnings and greater financial independence. The costs include a

loss of free time, and possibly additional expenditure on childcare or the non-realisation of certain aspirations (children, further education/training etc.). These frequently very complex cost-benefit considerations that have to be carefully weighed in real-life situations are not fully taken into account when answering a survey questionnaire, but are only thought through when there is a serious possibility of realising the preferences. Moreover, it is only at this point that a realistic cost-benefit analysis can be carried out, since the balance of costs and benefits is dependent on the actual job offer, the promise of a nursery place and other similar considerations.

Only individuals are questioned about preferences, whereas actual behaviour has usually to be agreed with other people. The most important agreements are those in the workplace and in the household. If all working time preferences in a given workplace are to be realised, then there must be a highly flexible working time and work organisation system and a high level of functional flexibility in the workforce, since employees will have to cover for colleagues if working time is reduced; certain rules are also required (e.g. periods of notice for changes in working time, rights to return, etc.) and, finally, such preferences must also be economically feasible. An increase in working time, for example, is feasible only where there is sufficient demand for a firm's goods or services. Moreover, employees' individual working times are mutually dependent on each other. Teamwork in particular requires agreements on the duration and scheduling of working time. This increased need for agreement and harmonisation between employees is absolutely a distinguishing feature of flexible forms of work organisation. It is also useful to regard households as production units in which the partners divide up the tasks in various ways. In the past, this division of labour was largely prescribed by the traditional roles society ascribed to men and women, whereas today it is increasingly open to negotiation. The talk today is less of fixed roles than of a 'gender contract', which is negotiated very differently from couple to couple. Bargaining processes within families and the organisation of work are currently changing so quickly that it is impossible to assess the chances of preferences being realised unless these changes are taken into account.

Preferences are probably better indicators of actual behaviour if those surveyed have a very high degree of freedom in their employment and working times choices. In societies with high levels of freedom (high incomes, good social security, institutionalised rights to flexibility, such as parental leave schemes, flexible work organisation systems, high educational levels with correspondingly high employability, all-day schools and a highly developed childcare infrastructure) preferences can be more easily realised than in societies with little freedom in these respects. In such countries, however, differences between actual working times and working time preferences point to a high level of dissatisfaction, which could also be interpreted as an invitation to policymakers to act.

Thus working time preferences may go unrealised because of the costs likely to be incurred and the environment in which working and family life takes place; furthermore, they have to be negotiated with other employees and household members. To that extent, it cannot be expected that working time preferences will be realised in full. However, the cost calculations and the external conditions shaping working time decisions can be influenced. Similarly, rules can be established for bargaining processes in the workplace and household members can be given greater freedom when making their working time decisions, for example by improving the public provision of childcare. Changes in these areas will in turn influence working time preferences. We need to be conscious of the fact that, in investigating working time preferences, we are dealing to some extent with a moving target that is very much influenced by the economic and social conditions that are either

given or expected. For this reason, the observed discrepancy between current and preferred working times should be interpreted not simply as an individual desire for change but also as a challenge to policymakers, since the reasons for this discrepancy can, in part at least, be influenced by policy.

Implementation of employment and working time preferences: macroeconomic aspects

Growth or redistribution?

If employees' working time preferences and the employment and working-time preferences of the economically inactive were to be realised, the consequences for the economy in general and for employment policy in particular would be far-reaching. As we will see, it would not be sufficient to distribute a given volume of work differently by making a few organisational changes at the micro level, since important macroeconomic parameters, such as the volume of paid work and the number of jobs in the economy, would also be affected. In order to be able to determine these macroeconomic changes more precisely, the following two questions in particular must be answered:

1. If working-time preferences were to be realised, would the volume of work in the economy as a whole have to be reduced or increased or simply redistributed?
2. Would the number of jobs and the employment rate have to be increased or would it be only the working time of those already in employment that would have to change?

The demands on employment policy differ considerably depending on how these questions are answered. If the answer to the first question is that the volume of work would have to be increased, then working-time preferences cannot be realised without growth above the employment threshold. The employment threshold is the rate of growth in GNP from which employment begins to rise and hence exceeds the increase in productivity. The employment threshold varies considerably from country to country, depending on how fast the pace of innovation and rationalisation is.⁶ Particularly high rates of productivity increase can be achieved by countries seeking to catch up with those in a more advanced state of modernisation. If the desired volume of work equates to the actual volume of work, then a rate of growth equivalent to the employment threshold is sufficient. If the desired volume of work is lower than the actual volume, then it is even possible to remain below the employment threshold for a period without causing employment problems.

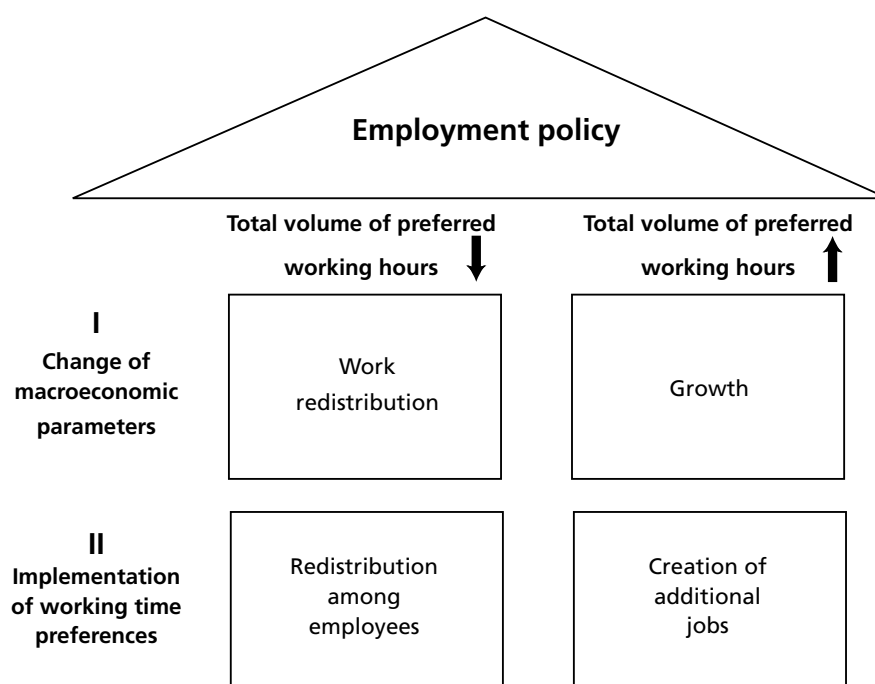
There are many examples to show that employment can be increased both by increasing the volume of work and by keeping the volume of work constant. The strong employment growth in the Netherlands in recent decades was achieved by redistributing work while keeping the overall volume of work more or less constant; in the USA, on the other hand, employment growth required a rapid expansion in the total volume of work in the economy (ILO, 1996: 16). The consequences of these different development paths for employment policy are obvious. In the Netherlands, growth and working time policy were linked and the result was a considerable reduction in individual working times. In the USA, individual working times have increased (OECD, 1998) and the growth in employment was achieved solely through economic growth. It is important at this point to stress that growth and working time policy do not have to be opposites - as the Dutch

⁶ The ILO has calculated the employment threshold for numerous countries. Between 1971 and 1995, the average rate of growth required for the economy to start creating jobs was 0.7% in the USA and 1.9% in the then EU 12. Within the EU, the rates fluctuated very sharply. Since they are still lagging behind somewhat in the modernisation process, the less developed EU Member States have a somewhat higher employment threshold than the more developed ones. Thus the employment threshold in Sweden is 1.4%, in Denmark 1.7% and in Germany 1.4%. In Ireland, on the other hand, it is 3.4% and in Spain 2.6% (ILO, 1996: 20).

example shows, they can also complement each other. And in a competitive economy in which firms attempt to create advantages for themselves through rationalisation, there is not doubt that the volume of work will decline permanently if there is no growth.

The answer to the second question also has far-reaching implications for employment policy. If all that has to be done in order to realise all preferences is to redistribute working time among employees, then priority must be given to increasing the opportunities for choice available to those already in employment and to making work organisation more flexible. The problem in this case is one of the reorganisation of the available work. On the other hand, if those not currently in employment are to be integrated into the labour market, then it will be necessary to create additional jobs and to put in place labour market policy measures to ensure that such integration is possible in the first place (e.g. training programmes). The two strategies will have to be combined if the dual objective of redistributing work within the employed population while simultaneously raising the employment rate is to be achieved and if the additional jobs are to be created by redistributing working time between the employed and the non-employed. Here too, it is important to stress that work reorganisation and job creation are complementary and not contradictory strategies. However, the two strategies must be weighted differently, depending on the initial situation and on working time preferences. The same is true of the relationship between work redistribution and growth policy. As a result, attempts to implement working time preferences in the individual countries will require different mixes of measures from the four policy spheres, which are summarised in Figure 2. It is clear from that diagram that the four spheres are located at very different levels. Level I (work redistribution and growth) is where the necessary changes in macroeconomic parameters take place. Level II is where employees' preferences are actually implemented, which may require a redistribution of working time between those already in employment or the creation of new jobs.

Figure 2 The policy spheres involved in the realisation of working time preferences



We are unable, on the basis of our investigation, to fully answer the question of how the volume of work and the number of jobs in the economy as a whole would have to change if all working time preferences were to be realised. Data were gathered on employees' current and preferred working times and on the employment and working time preferences of those not in employment, from which we calculated the current and preferred volume of work. However, the existing volume of work cannot be easily redistributed. It would not remain constant if redistributed, since firms react to a reorganisation of work by putting in place rationalisation measures. The volume of work and the number of jobs are not constant values (Bosch and Lehdorff, 2001). Moreover, even if the volume of work in the economy as a whole remains constant, new jobs are continuously being created while others disappear, so that any strategy aimed solely at achieving redistribution and ignoring the need to create jobs as well would be doomed to failure.

We are well aware that the volume of employment and work in the economy as a whole is an aggregation of very dynamic individual values. Furthermore, the desired volume of employment and work is also influenced by changes in the number of people of working age, which is not the subject of our investigation. To this extent, it is not possible with the data available to us to determine the finer points of the policy mix required (see Figure 2) in the individual countries. Nevertheless, the data do show pronounced differences between the countries in the macroeconomic challenges they will have to meet, which suggests that the appropriate policy mix will also turn out to differ very considerably from country to country.

Table 4 Actual and preferred volume of paid work per person of working age (average hours per week)

Country	Current	Preferred	Difference (col. 3 - col. 2 as % of col. 2)
Austria	29.7	28.1	-5.4%
Belgium	23.9	24.0	0.4%
Denmark	29.5	26.9	-8.8%
Finland	26.9	26.5	-1.5%
France	23.6	24.9	5.5%
Germany	26.0	26.4	1.5%
Greece	21.6	23.8	10.2%
Ireland	28.1	28.2	0.4%
Italy	18.6	22.2	19.4%
Luxembourg	28.1	26.6	-5.3%
Netherlands	24.4	24.1	-4.7%
Portugal	27.1	27.5	1.9%
Spain	17.7	23.4	32.2%
Sweden	30.2	29.6	-2.0%
United Kingdom	26.4	25.1	-4.9%
Norway	30.0	28.6	-4.7%
EUR15 + NOR	23.7	25.0	5.5%

Preferences concerning the volume of work

In order to make the volume of work, which is normally given in hours worked per country, comparable across countries, we relate it to the number of people of working age. In the 16

European countries, the average volume of paid work per person of working age is 23.7 hours per week (Table 4). This average figure conceals considerable differences between countries. In Spain, the volume of work is only 17.7 hours per week, while in Sweden it is 30.2 hours, that is 70% greater. It is noticeable that the southern European countries, with the exception of Portugal, have the lowest volume of paid work, while the Scandinavian countries lead the table by a considerable distance. The decisive factor influencing the actual volume of work in a country is the level of female labour market participation. Calculation of a simple bivariate correlation calculation confirms that the volume of paid work increases as the female employment rate rises. The Bravais/Pearson correlation coefficient R between the female employment rate and the volume of work is 0.913, which explains 83% of the variation between the countries (see Figure 19, Annex 3). The relative weight of the service sector also exerts a significant influence, which is hardly surprising, since most women are employed in the service sector.

Table 5 Volume of paid work and average working hours of dependent employees (average hours per week)

	Volume of paid work ¹	Average working hours of dependent employees
Sweden	30.2	38.1
Norway	30.0	36.7
Austria	29.7	41.1
Denmark	29.5	36.4
Ireland	28.2	38.9
Luxembourg	28.1	38.6
Portugal	27.1	39.7
Finland	26.9	39.1
United Kingdom	26.4	37.3
Germany	26.0	37.5
Netherlands	24.4	33.7
Belgium	23.9	37.5
France	23.6	38.0
Greece	21.6	39.8
Italy	18.6	37.4
Spain	17.7	39.3

¹ Average number of hours worked per person of working age
Correlation coefficient R=0.01

Contrary to what is generally assumed, however, the length of individual working times does not have any significant influence on the total volume of work in the economy as a whole (cf. Table 5). All combinations can be found here, as Figure 3 shows.

If all working time preferences were to be realised, then with the current potential labour force the volume of work in the 16 European countries would have to rise by 1.3 hours per week per person of working age, which equates to a 5% increase. The differences in the preferred volume of work between the countries are considerably less marked than those in the actual volume. The difference between the country with the highest preferred volume (Sweden) and the country with the lowest preferred volume (Italy) is only 7.4 hours, which is considerably lower than the widest gap in the actual volume of work (12.5 hours). This convergence comes about because in those countries with

high volumes of work there tends to be a preference for a reduction, while in those with lower volumes of work the reverse is the case. In this regard, the countries can be divided into the following three groups:

- in nine countries (Belgium, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, the UK, Norway, Portugal, Sweden), the volume of work would remain virtually unchanged (+/- 5%);
- in four countries (France, Greece, Italy, Spain) the volume of work would have to rise (by more than +5%);
- in three countries (Austria, Denmark, Luxembourg) the volume of work would decrease sharply (by more than -5%);

Figure 3 Combination volume of work/average working time

	Average working time high*	Average working time low*
High ^o volume of work	Austria Ireland Luxembourg Portugal	Norway Denmark Sweden
Low ^o volume of work	Finland Greece Spain	United Kingdom Germany Netherlands Belgium France Italy

^o Volume of work: high >27 hours, low <27 hours

* Working time: high >38.5 hours, low <38.5 hours

Once again, the female employment rate is the most important factor influencing the rate of change in the volume of work. In those countries in which the female employment rate is already very high, the preference tends to be for a reduction of the volume of work (but not of employment rates, as we will see below). In those countries where the female employment rate is low, the preference will be for a sharp increase in the volume of work. The Bravais/Pearson correlation coefficient between the two values is $R = -0.880$ (Table 6).

There are also significant correlations between the difference between the actual and preferred volume of work and other influencing factors. True, these correlations must be interpreted with some caution, since the various factors are also correlated with each other. Nevertheless, the following observations statements can be reasonably made.

In countries with a bad employment situation, a greater increase in the volume of work is desired than in countries with a more favourable labour market situation. There is a strong negative correlation between the desired change in the volume of work and declarations by employees that it is easy to find a job. This suggests that many working time and employment preferences have

already been realised because of the favourable labour market situation and accordingly there is no desire for any major changes. On the other hand, there is a positive correlation between the unemployment rate and the desired change in the volume of work. When unemployment is high, many preferences cannot be realised and therefore there will be a desire for considerable increases in the volume of work in the economy as a whole. When the hourly wage rate is high, the general preference will be for smaller increases in the volume of work than in countries with a lower hourly rate, or even for a reduction. This negative correlation between the desired change in the volume of work and the level of the hourly wage rate suggests that as incomes rise free time becomes more attractive than additional earnings.

Table 6 Factors determining possible change in the working hours

	Change in the preferred volume of work
Female employment rate	-0.880
Ease in finding a job	-0.725
Unemployment rate	0.699
Average hourly wage*	-0.535
Share of the service sector*	-0.645
Trade union density*	-0.520
Income inequality*	0.458

NB: based on the difference between preferred and current working hours

Significance > 0.5

*These data were taken from other sources.

In countries where income inequalities are high, there will be a preference for an increase in the volume of work. In these countries, many low earners will seek to boost their earnings by working longer hours.

In countries where the service sector has a high share of total employment, the general preference will be for a reduction in the volume of work. One possible reason for this is that many women are employed in the service sector. Another is that there are more opportunities in the service sector for those seeking jobs with working times below the full-time norm, so that many working time and employment preferences are likely to have been realised already.

In countries with a high trade union density there tends to be a preference for a reduction in the volume of work. We know from OECD studies (OECD, 1996) that there is a strong correlation between income inequality and trade union density. The stronger trade unions are the greater income equality is. Thus in countries with strong trade unions there are fewer low earners seeking to extend their working hours. Moreover, strong trade union representation may also ensure that working time preferences are realised, since those preferences will not even be expressed unless workers see some likelihood of them being implemented. And trade unions in those countries with a high trade union density have a more positive attitude than those in countries with a lower trade union density towards flexible forms of working time, which offer many women their only realistic employment opportunities.

It has become clear that growth policy and working time policy must be differently weighted in the various countries if working time preferences are to be realised. In those countries in which the

general preference is for no change or even a reduction in the actual volume of work, the realisation of working time preferences will be dependent on the existence of an active working time policy to lay the foundations for the desired redistribution of the available work. In those countries in which the preferred volume of work is significantly greater than the actual volume (France, Greece, Italy and Spain), the volume of work must be increased by means of an active growth policy. Otherwise, it will prove impossible to realise preferences. Thus countries in the latter group need higher growth rates than those in the former group. In part, this is a question of catching up with other countries, since particular preferences for a sharp increase in the volume of work were expressed in countries such as Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal, where *per capita* incomes are relatively low. However, it is also clear that there would be greater scope for working time policy if incomes were more evenly distributed. Furthermore, it can be seen from our figures that tensions can develop between growth and working time policy. Thus the sharp reduction in the desired volume of work in Austria, Denmark, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom and Norway, all of which currently have low unemployment rates, could lead to labour shortages and declining growth rates.

Preferences concerning the employment rates

Whereas the volume of work would evolve very differently in the various countries, the employment rate would have to be increased in all of them if the working time preferences of those surveyed were to be realised. In the 16 European countries, the employment rate would have to rise by 11 percentage points, from 63% to 74% (Table 7).

This would bring the EU employment rate to the US level, which in 1997 was also 74% (European Commission, 1998). The employment rate among women would have to rise more sharply than that among men, by 13 and 8 percentage points respectively. The difference becomes even clearer when measured in terms of the rate of change rather than absolute percentage points. The 24.1% increase required in the female employment rate is more than twice as high as that required in the male employment rate. Women in Greece, Italy and Spain prefer an employment rate that is 20 or more percentage points higher than it is at present. Measured in terms of the rate of change, the differences become even greater. In Spain, for example, the desired increase in the employment rate among women is no less than 103%, while in Denmark it is only 4%.

The preferred increase in the employment rate turns out to be all the higher, the lower the actual rate is ($R = 0.863$). In countries that already have very high employment rates (notably Denmark, Sweden and Norway), only a slight increase is desired. Here, working time preferences would be realised largely by redistributing working time among employees, that is by reorganising work. In those countries where the employment rate is very low (notably Spain, Greece and Italy), a considerable increase is required. Here, the creation of additional jobs, particularly for women, and the development of the service sector are of greater importance than in the first-named group. At the same time, however, those already in employment in these countries also express a clear preference for a reduction in working time, which means that the reorganisation of work should not be ignored if working time preferences are to be realised. An exclusive focus on working time policy in these countries would give rise to significant gender bias. The preferences being realised would be largely those of men, while the preferences of women not yet in employment would be ignored. In other countries, however, the balance of policy measures between additional job creation and work redistribution would be broadly gender-neutral, since men's and women's preferences in respect of the desired increase in employment rate are fairly similar. In Denmark, for example, men would like to see the employment rate rise by 4.8% and women by 3.9%.

Table 7 Actual and preferred employment rates

Country	Employment rate at present ¹ 1	Preferred employment rate at present 2	Difference 3 (= Col. 2 - Col. 1)	Growth rate 4 (= Col. 2/Col. 1*100)
Men and Women				
Austria	72	78	6	8.3%
Belgium	64	70	6	9.4%
Denmark	80	83	3	3.8%
Finland	69	77	8	11.6%
France	63	74	11	17.5%
Germany	69	79	10	14.5%
Greece	56	65	9	16.1%
Ireland	70	81	11	15.7%
Italy	50	65	15	30.0%
Luxembourg	72	75	3	4.2%
Netherlands	71	77	6	8.5%
Portugal	67	75	8	11.9%
Spain	48	68	20	41.7%
Sweden	80	86	6	7.5%
United Kingdom	70	76	6	8.6%
Norway	82	88	6	7.3%
EU15 + NOR	63	74	11	17.5%
Men				
Austria	83	87	4	4.8%
Belgium	74	78	4	5.4%
Denmark	84	88	4	4.8%
Finland	69	78	9	13.0%
France	72	81	9	12.5%
Germany	76	85	9	11.8%
Greece	72	69	-3	-4.2%
Ireland	84	91	7	8.3%
Italy	62	73	11	17.7%
Luxembourg	81	82	1	1.2%
Netherlands	84	89	5	6.0%
Portugal	77	83	6	7.8%
Spain	65	76	11	16.9%
Sweden	84	89	5	6.0%
United Kingdom	78	83	5	6.4%
Norway	85	90	5	5.9%
EU15 + NOR	73	81	8	11.0%
Women				
Austria	61	70	9	14.8%
Belgium	53	62	9	17.0%
Denmark	76	79	3	3.9%
Finland	69	76	7	10.1%
France	55	68	13	23.6%

Table 7 (continued)

Country	Employment rate at present ¹ 1	Preferred employment rate at present 2	Difference 3 (= Col. 2 - Col. 1)	Growth rate 4 (= Col. 2/Col. 1*100)
Germany	63	72	9	14.3%
Greece	40	60	20	50.0%
Ireland	56	72	16	28.6%
Italy	37	59	22	59.5%
Luxembourg	62	66	4	6.5%
Netherlands	59	65	6	10.2%
Portugal	56	68	12	21.4%
Spain	29	59	30	103.4%
Sweden	75	84	9	12.0%
United Kingdom	63	69	6	9.5%
Norway	79	86	7	8.9%
EU15 + NOR	54	67	13	24.1%

¹ includes family workers and NA in Q21 – therefore figures are slightly higher than in Table 3

As we have already seen, respondents in countries with a low employment rate would like to see a greater increase in the employment rate than their counterparts in countries with a high employment rate. Nevertheless, the absolute level of the preferred employment rate is very clearly determined by the existing employment rate ($R = 0.908$). This suggests that experience of employment gives rise to increase demand for employment, and that expressed preferences can therefore change with actual experience of employment. Preferences are also influenced by the existence of an environment favourable to their realisation (Table 8). In those countries in which the chance of finding a job is good and where the childcare infrastructure is well developed, the preferred employment rate is higher than in countries in which these conditions are not met. The preferred employment rate is also high in those countries with a high trade union density, possibly because the unions are seen as a powerful actor campaigning for the realisation of employees' preferences. Finally, the higher the level of human capital is, the higher the preferred employment rate is. This correlation is hardly surprising, since there is adequate evidence from other sources (European Commission, 1998) that both male and female employment rates increase as educational levels rise. There are two reasons why this should be so. Firstly, the 'knowledge economy' is creating an increased demand for skilled workers, with the result that employment opportunities increase as educational levels rise. Secondly, individuals who have invested heavily in their education and training have a considerably stronger desire to put that investment to use in a job than those with less advanced skills and qualifications.

Summary

It has been shown that there is a preference in the 16 European countries for an increase in employment rates. The EU is able to use employees' preferences as a basis for implementing its strategy of bringing employment rates in Europe up to the US level⁷. However, since most

⁷ At the Lisbon summit, the European Council formally declared its objective of raising the EU employment rate to 70% (European Commission, 2000: 5).

employees also want shorter working hours, the preference in Europe is for a combination of high labour market participation and short individual working times rather than the American combination of high employment rates and long working times.

Table 8 Factors determining the level of the preferred employment rate

	Change in the preferred employment rate
Existing employment rate	0.908
Ease in finding a job	0.655
Childcare*	0.615
Trade union density*	0.62
Human capital per 25-65 year-old in purchasing power parities	0.607

Significance > 0.5 *These data were taken from other sources; cf. Annex B 1
Bravais/Pearson correlation coefficient R

Furthermore, by recording the employment and working time preferences of those currently not in employment, the survey shows that working time policy cannot focus solely on the redistribution of working time among those already in employment. Working time also has to be redistributed from the employed to the non-employed, which in turn requires the creation of additional jobs. The gender bias inherent in merely redistributing working time among those already in employment is obvious, particularly in those countries in which female employment rates are very low. The creation of more jobs for women requires measures extending far beyond the scope of traditional working time policy.

The working time preferences expressed by employed and non-employed persons surveyed cannot be realised in all 16 countries with the same mix of macroeconomic measures, since the effects of these preferences on the volume of employment and work are very different. It has already been noted that the volume of work always changes when working time is redistributed. We should consequently avoid a mechanistic approach to the redistribution process.

Nevertheless, the differences between the countries are striking and serve as a starting point for determining the main focal points of an employment policy designed to aid realisation of employee preferences. The following differences can be noted (see Figure 4 on facing page):

- In France, Greece, Italy and Spain, a large increase in both the volume of work and the employment rate is desired. In these countries, therefore, it is not sufficient simply to redistribute the existing volume of work; it must also be considerably increased through economic growth if employees' preferences are to be realised.
- In Denmark, Finland and Ireland, a sharp increase in the employment rate is desired without any increase in the volume of work. Consequently, there has to be a major redistribution of working time from the employed to those not yet in employment.
- In Austria, Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway and the UK (countries with a declining volume of work) and Belgium, the Netherlands, Portugal and Sweden (with a stagnating volume of work), the primary objective must be to redistribute working time among those already in work.

Possible conflicts between different employment policy strategies should also be noted. This applies in particular to Austria, Denmark, Luxembourg, the UK and Norway. The preferences in those countries for working time reduction would considerably reduce the total volume of work in the economy. This would lead in turn to a decline in growth that could be avoided only through an increase in the size of the economically active population (e.g. through migration).

Figure 4 Preferred change in the volume of work and the employment rate

	Volume of work ^o		
	decreases	stagnates	grows
Employment rate: slight increase*	Austria Denmark Luxembourg Norway UK	Belgium Netherlands Portugal Sweden	
Employment rate: significant increase*		Germany Finland Ireland	France Greece Italy Spain

^o volume of work: decrease of more than 5%; stagnation, +/-5%; increase more than +5%

* Employment rate: low increase < +9%, significant increase > +9%

Current and preferred working times at individual level

Having investigated employment and working time preferences at the macroeconomic level in Chapter 3, we turn in this section to the structure of actual and preferred working times in the various countries at individual level.⁸ Our objective here is to answer the following questions posed in the Introduction:

- How do current working times and working time preferences differ between the 16 countries (our second structuring question)?
- How can these differences between the countries be explained (our third structuring question)?
- Which groups of individuals wish to see particularly significant changes in their working times (our fourth structuring question)?
- What are the major obstacles to the realisation of working time preferences (our sixth structuring question)?

In order to answer these questions, we must first draw up a differentiated picture of actual and preferred working times. In doing so, we will also cover those factors in the external environment that shape actual and preferred working times in order to be able to draw some conclusions in Chapter 6 as to the extent to which the institutional context and opportunities for choice in the determination of working time will have to be changed.

Both average working times and the distribution of working time will be examined in this section. Average working times can be used to make direct comparisons at aggregated level (countries, labour force categories etc.). However, the average figures conceal very different patterns of working time distribution. If the comparison were confined solely to average working times, it would risk to overlook the fact that apparently unambiguous trends often conceal a multiplicity of individual preferences pointing in different directions.

Average figures and data on the distribution of working time and of working time preferences are considered at European and country level by reference to the following three parameters:

1. current working time;
2. preferred working time;
3. the difference between current and preferred working time.

These indicators are used as a basis for analysing the working times of all gainfully employed people, both self-employed and dependent employees, men and women and full-timers and part-timers with the data also being analysed by age, skill, occupational category (manual/white-collar), sector (manufacturing/services), the existence of management responsibilities, etc. By introducing age, gender, skill level, sectoral affiliation and occupational status into the equation, we are able to identify the influence on the duration and distribution of working time of the important individual

⁸ Individual working times at household level are dealt with in Chapter 5.

characteristics referred to in Chapter 2. We will also seek to analyse the influence of household situation.⁹ This will be introduced into the multivariate analyses, in addition to individual characteristics, as a further explanatory variable for current and preferred working times. Multivariate analyses supplement the descriptive analysis undertaken above; they make it possible to investigate the interaction between the individual factors and to determine the extent of their influence. Other data relating indirectly to the employment situation¹⁰ and to regulation¹¹ are used as further explanatory variables. The other causative factors mentioned in Chapter 2 cannot be described with variables from our survey.

In addition to information on actual and preferred working times, the survey also provides data on the reasons for part-time employment and on assessments of part-time work, which are analysed below, together with data on opportunities and preferences for taking time off in lieu when overtime is worked and on preferences in respect of sabbaticals, which are dealt with below. These data allow us to describe the changes workers would like to see in the conditions that shape their working time and in the opportunities they have for choice, thereby supplementing the findings gained from the comparison of actual and preferred working times.

Working time for all workers across Europe

The average actual weekly working time of the gainfully employed population in Europe is 39 hours. The self-employed say that they work on average 48.2 hours per week, over 10 hours more than dependent employees, who work 37.7 hours on average.

Table 9 shows, at national level, the working times of the gainfully employed population as a whole¹² and of dependent employees in particular¹³. The range¹⁴ of working times at national level is greater in each case in the gainfully employed population as a whole than among dependent employees. This means that the average working times of dependent employees vary less across the various countries, i.e. are more 'similar', than when the working times of the self-employed are included. The greater homogeneity of the working times of dependent employees is presumably a consequence of greater regulation, whether through collective agreement or statute.

The difference between the working times of the gainfully employed population as a whole and those of dependent employees is attributable to the working times of the self-employed. Since the working times of the gainfully employed population as a whole are longer in all 16 countries than those of dependent employees, it can be assumed that the current working times of the self-employed are longer in all countries than those of dependent employees. In some countries (France, Norway, Sweden and the UK), the differences are slight, while in others (Greece) they are relatively large. In many cases, the working time of self-employed workers is a flexible resource that can be expanded, particularly in difficult economic situations. Among the self-employed, there are

9 Partner economically active or not, existence of children, household's financial situation.

10 Subjective assessment of whether it is easy or difficult to find a job.

11 Opportunities for taking time off in lieu when overtime is worked, assessment of opportunities for part-time working and/or sabbaticals in the current workplace.

12 Dependent employees and the self-employed.

13 The working time of the self-employed could not be given at national level, since the number of cases was too small.

14 The range is taken here to be the difference between the highest and the lowest value.

many owners of small and very small, economically weak service-sector enterprises¹⁵; they often work alone, have to be open or available for long periods of time and cannot be replaced by anyone else.

Hujigen (1999) shows that women are under-represented among the self-employed, with a share of only 28%. As Table 9 shows, the differences between the working times of the gainfully employed population as a whole and those of dependent employees are less among women than those between self-employed and dependently employed men. Women have shorter working hours, since they usually have primary responsibility for domestic and family work. Thus it is above all the longer hours worked by self-employed men that are crucial here.

Table 9 Average current working hours per week by country

Country	Average current working times					
	Gainfully employed population as a whole			All dependent employees		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Austria	46.6	36.5	42.4	45.2	35.7	41.1
Belgium	41.6	34.0	38.4	40.4	33.5	37.5
Denmark	39.8	34.2	37.2	38.8	33.8	36.4
Finland	43.1	37.5	40.0	41.5	37.3	39.1
France	41.5	34.9	38.7	40.7	34.4	38.0
Germany	43.7	32.6	38.8	42.1	32.2	37.5
Greece	47.6	40.5	44.9	42.4	35.7	39.8
Ireland	45.1	34.9	41.0	42.3	34.4	38.9
Italy	41.8	34.7	39.1	39.5	34.2	37.4
Luxembourg	42.6	34.0	39.2	41.4	34.3	38.6
Netherlands	41.1	26.0	35.0	39.3	25.9	33.7
Norway	41.8	32.5	37.4	40.9	32.1	36.7
Portugal	44.4	37.7	41.5	42.5	36.1	39.7
Spain	42.2	36.1	40.5	41.1	34.9	39.3
Sweden	42.4	35.0	38.9	41.1	34.9	38.1
UK	44.3	31.3	38.5	43.1	31.1	37.3
EU15 + NOR	43.0	33.5	39.0	41.4	32.9	37.7
Difference between lowest and highest value (range)	7.8	14.5	9.9	6.4	11.4	7.4

The average *preferred working time of the self-employed* in Europe as a whole is 38.4 hours, a reduction of 10 hours over the present reported level. *Dependent employees*, on the other hand, would prefer a considerably smaller reduction in their working time of around 3.7 hours to an average of 34 hours, albeit from a lower starting level (Table 10). Thus as far as preferences are concerned, the differences between the self-employed and dependent employees are less than in the case of current working times. If preferences were realised, the differences in the hours worked by these two groups of gainfully employed people would fall from 10.5 hours at present to only 4.4 hours. As the figures suggest, the self-employed are in no way masters of their own working time. The opportunities they enjoy for determining their own working time are very severely restricted by the pressures of competition. In fact, the self-employed are much further from realising their preferences than dependent employees.

¹⁵ Sixty per cent of the self-employed work in private services and 16% in agriculture; sixty-three per cent are sole traders (Hujigen, 1999).

Table 10 Current and preferred working times of self-employed and dependent employees

	Self-employed	Dependent employees	Difference
Actual working time	48.2	37.7	10.5
Preferred working time	38.4	34.0	4.4
Difference	9.8	3.7	–

Below, we concentrate on analysing the working time of dependent employees who, with a share of 87% (Huijgen, 1999), constitute the overwhelming majority of the gainfully employed population. Moreover, the available data on dependent employees are of better quality and therefore any observations based on them are likely to be more accurate.

Agreed working times

In most countries, the length of weekly working time, as well as upper or lower limits on working time, are laid down in legislation or collective agreements. While the statutory maximum working week in Germany, Ireland, Sweden and the UK, at 48 hours, bears little relation to collectively agreed working times and therefore has little bearing on actual working times, the statutory norm in France, which until recently was 39 hours and is now 35 hours¹⁶, lays down a considerably tighter framework for full-timers' working time.¹⁷ Contractually agreed working times fluctuate between 35 and 40 hours, depending on the country and industry in question, and are lower than the statutory maximum working times, in some cases considerably so (Table 11).

Comparison of the collectively agreed and actual working times of full-time employees shows that, in all countries, the average actual working times of full-timers are longer than the collectively agreed times (Table 11 and Figure 20, Annex B). The reason is to be found in overtime. On average, 65% of gainfully employed men and 57% of gainfully employed women in Europe say they work paid or unpaid overtime. No fewer than 18% of gainfully employed people work overtime every day, while a further 18% work overtime at least once a week. In some industries and among certain occupational groups at least, regular overtime seems to be the norm.

Differences are greatest in Austria, Germany and the UK (5.9, 5.7 and 5.1 hours respectively), and minimal in Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and Portugal (1.3 hours per week). In Portugal, where those in the lower income groups would be expected to be eager to increase their earnings by working overtime, the volume of overtime is restricted by monetary disincentives.¹⁸

Working time of men and women in dependent employment

The average working time of dependent employees varies between 33.7 hours in the Netherlands and 41.1 hours in Austria. These average values conceal differences between the working time of men and that of women. Gender differences in working time are attributable primarily to the fact that women in all countries still shoulder the main burden of unpaid domestic and family work and for this reason tend to devote fewer hours to paid work than men. Many women work part-time,

¹⁶ From 1 January 2000 onwards and initially only for companies with more than 20 employees.

¹⁷ France is an example of how the legislature can exert direct influence on actual working times (cf. Lehdorff, 2001).

¹⁸ In Portugal, both employers and employees had to pay 25% of any additional pay for overtime into the unemployment fund. This article was recently revoked.

that is for fewer hours than the regular working time standard. Men, on the other hand, work more overtime than women, for two reasons. Firstly, they bear less of the burden of unpaid reproduction work and are therefore able to devote more time to paid work. Secondly, they still tend to be the main breadwinner in the family. Men's and women's working time varies from country to country depending on the extent to which conditions in the institutional and social environment (e.g. the quality of childcare provision) facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life and on whether the tax and social security system rewards marginal part-time work or overtime.

Table 11 Collectively agreed statutory maximum working times and current working times

Country	Statutory maximum working time ¹	Collectively agreed working time ¹	Average actual weekly working time of full-time employees (our survey)
Austria	40	37-40	44.4
Belgium	39	36-38	40.3
Denmark	- ²	37	40.1
Finland	40	38.5	40.6
France	39-35*	35-39	40.5
Germany	48	37.5	43.1
Greece	40	37.5-40	41.7
Ireland	48	39	42.2
Italy	40	36-40	39.3
Luxembourg	40	36-40	41.3
Netherlands	40	37.5	41.5
Norway	40	37.5	41.4
Portugal	40	35-40	40.7
Spain	40	37-40	41.1
Sweden	48	40	42.4
UK	48	35-40	43.5

¹ Sources: Mermet (1999) and country reports

² only collectively agreed arrangements

* For enterprises with more than 20 employees since 1 January 2000

Fagan and Warren (2001) have already evaluated the survey on which the present report is based from the perspective of men's and women's employment and working time preferences. Their analysis concentrated on groups of countries identified on the basis of the dominant model of the gender division of labour. Four such groups were identified: universal breadwinner, modified breadwinner, male breadwinner/woman part-time and male breadwinner/dual full-time. In contrast to that of Fagan and Warren, our analysis focuses not on groups of countries but on the individual countries themselves.

The actual working times of men and women in dependent employment

In all 16 of the countries under investigation here, the average working times for men are longer than those for women (Table 12). Across Europe as a whole, the average difference between men's and women's weekly working time is 8.5 hours. Men's actual working times are more homogeneous at country level than those of women; at 6.4 hours, the range of male working times is significantly smaller than that of female working times. When men's working times diverge from the collectively agreed norm, this is seldom attributable to part-time working, which usually involves working times well below the norm, but rather to overtime, which in most cases only slightly exceeds the working

time norm. For this reason, men's actual working times tend to be fairly close to the collectively agreed norm.¹⁹ This applies equally to all countries, the only exception being the Netherlands, where the share of part-time work among men, at 16%, is very much higher than the European average.

In contrast, when women's working times diverge from the norm, this is due overwhelmingly to part-time work, and in many cases even to short-hours jobs. The proportion of female part-timers and their working times differ very considerably from country to country, depending on how good the provision of childcare facilities is and on whether or not the tax and social security system rewards (very) short working times. In consequence, the differences between the countries are determined more by female than by male working times.

The smallest difference in the working times of men and women in dependent employment, 4.2 hours, is found in Finland, a country where women, who have a long tradition of full-time employment, work the longest hours in Europe (37.3 hours per week) and where only 13% of them are employed part-time. Finnish men, on the other hand, have working times close to the European average. It is in the Netherlands that the difference, at 13.4 hours, is greatest: this country combines above-average male working times (39.3 hours) with extremely short average working times for women (25.9 hours). Furthermore, women in the Netherlands have the highest (60%) part-time rate.

Table 12 Actual weekly working times of men and women in dependent employment by country (hours per week)

	Men and women	Men	Women	Difference between men and women in hours	Female part-time rate (%)
Austria	41.1	45.2	35.7	9.5	32
Belgium	37.5	40.4	33.5	6.9	32
Denmark	36.4	38.8	33.8	5.0	36
Finland	39.1	41.5	37.3	4.2	13
France	38.0	40.7	34.4	6.3	33
Germany	37.5	42.1	32.2	9.9	45
Greece	39.8	42.4	35.7	6.7	19
Ireland	38.9	42.3	34.4	7.9	28
Italy	37.4	39.5	34.2	5.3	20
Luxembourg	38.6	41.4	34.3	6.8	28
Netherlands	33.7	39.3	25.9	13.4	60
Portugal	39.7	42.5	36.1	6.4	11
Spain	39.3	41.1	34.9	6.2	28
Sweden	38.1	41.1	34.9	6.2	45
UK	37.3	43.1	31.1	12.0	44
Norway	36.7	40.9	32.1	8.8	44
EU15+NOR	37.7	41.4	32.9	8.5	37
Range	7.4	6.4	11.7		

¹⁹ Where working time is below the norm as a result of part-time work this is more or less offset by overtime.

The difference between men's and women's working times is the result of very different combinations of male and female working times. The gender difference in working time is determined above all by the (short) hours worked by women rather than the (long) hours worked by men. True, considerable differences between the average working times of men and women can be caused both by men's working time exceeding the norm as a result of overtime and by women's working time being below the norm as a result of part-time work. However, Table 13 shows that long male working times do not in themselves always lead to a large gender difference in working times, whereas short female working times are always associated with considerable working-time differences between the sexes. The table presenting all the various combinations of male and female working times in the 16 countries shows that the differences in men's and women's working times are particularly marked in those countries in which women work short hours (Germany, the UK, Norway and the Netherlands). Long male working hours, on the other hand, are associated with both short (Germany and the UK) and long (Austria, Greece, Ireland and Portugal) female working times.

Table 13 Typology of countries by weekly working times of men and women

of women	of men		
	Above-average	average	below-average
Above-average	Austria * Greece Ireland Portugal	Sweden # Spain Finland	Belgium Italy Denmark France
Average		Luxembourg	
Below-average	Germany * # UK * #	Norway * #	Netherlands * #

Men: Average = 40.9 to 41.9 hours

Women: Average = 32.4 to 33.4 hours

* Above-average difference between male and female working times (average = 8.5 hours)

Above-average female part-time rate (average = 37%)

Table 13 also shows that considerable differences in men's and women's working times occur in all those countries in which the female part-time rate is above average. As can be seen from Figure 5, there is a link between the difference in the working times of men and women in dependent employment and the female part-time rate. Voluntary or involuntary part-time working²⁰ among women is an important if not the decisive reason for the differences in working times between men and women. The one exception here is Sweden, where an above-average female part-time rate does not lead to below-average female working times. Female part-timers in Sweden tend to work fairly long hours.

In order to fully detail the differences in working times between men and women, it is necessary to take account of employment rates. If women are unable to reconcile responsibility for reproduction work in the home with employment outside the home, then they may have to abandon the idea of paid work altogether. The figures on working time we have used up to now do not include this 'zero' variant of working time (i.e. economic inactivity). Table 14 shows the connection between the

²⁰ We will investigate the difference between the two in detail below (pp. 52-6).

difference in men’s and women’s working times and female employment rates. It is clear from this that in those countries where the female employment rate is low (Belgium, Greece, Italy and Spain), the differences between male and female working times are also low; there is no country in which a low female employment rate is combined with large differences in working time between men and women. In countries with low female employment rates, therefore, the choice facing women clearly tends to be one between economic inactivity and gainful employment with relatively long working hours; since part-time work tends not to be customary, it becomes particularly difficult for women to gain access to the labour market.

Figure 5 Gender differences in current weekly working times and female part-time rates

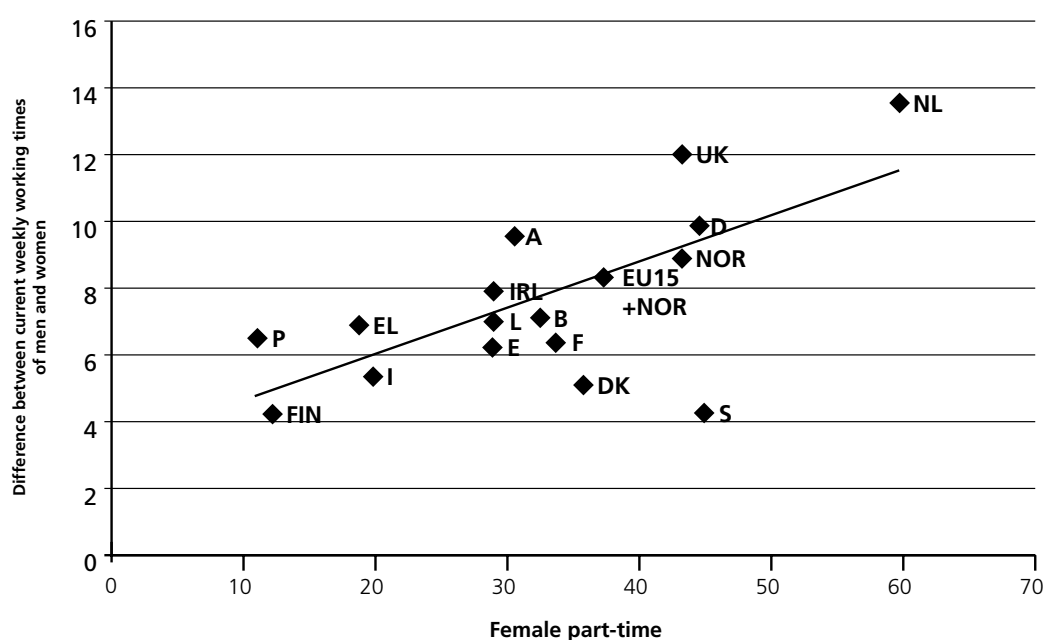


Table 14 Typology of countries by the difference in men’s and women’s working times and female employment rates

Gender difference in actual working times	Female employment rate		
	Low	Medium	High
Large		Austria German Netherlands	UK Norway
Small	Belgium Greece Italy Spain	Portugal France Ireland	Denmark Finland Luxembourg Sweden

Female employment rate: low if < 55 %; medium if 55 to 60 %; high if > 60 %
 Gender difference: small if < 8.5 hours; large if > 8.5 hours

On the other hand, in Austria, Germany and the Netherlands, and even more so in the UK and Norway, high female employment rates are combined with short female working times (and high part-time rates). In the first four countries (Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands and the UK), part-

time work has facilitated the labour market entry of women with children. Because of the patchy childcare provision²¹, they are usually able to work part-time only. In Norway, on the other hand, childcare facilities are very good²². The considerable difference in working time between men and women has nothing to do with a reduction in working time among today's mothers, but is primarily the result of the high part-time rate among older women.²³

In Denmark, Finland and Sweden, gender differences in working time are low and female employment rates are high. In these countries, women (together with those in Norway) enjoy relatively favourable employment opportunities compared with those in other countries, which can, in the main, be attributed to the availability of good childcare facilities.²⁴ In Denmark and Sweden, where the childcare infrastructure has been expanded and educational levels among women are rising, the female part-time rate is now declining, particularly among young women.²⁵ In Finland, full-time work has long been the dominant employment form for both men and women, irrespective of the age of the youngest child. Although in many countries short working times (female part-time work) constitute a form of labour market entry for women,²⁶ this does not apply to Sweden. When women in countries that facilitate the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities reduce their working times, this tends to reflect the fact that parents actually have real choices. In the Scandinavian countries, there are frequently additional concessions for parents of young children seeking to reconcile paid work and family life, including an entitlement to work part-time, flexible parental leave, etc.

Thus the differences between the working times of men and women in dependent employment vary considerably from country to country. It is true that they are considerably lower if women have to choose between economic inactivity and full-time employment or if conditions in the institutional and social environment are sufficiently favourable to allow them to combine full-time working with raising a family and other reproduction work. Nevertheless, the gender gap in working times in all countries continues to be the most striking difference between groups. This will be investigated further below.

Men's and women's preferred working times at European level

Let us turn now to men's and women's working time *preferences*. Our examination of preferred working times will take account not only of the preferences of those currently in employment but also of the preferences of those who are currently economically inactive but who would like to enter gainful employment.

In addition to the above-average level of preference for a reduction in working time among the self-employed, already mentioned above, the following trends are evident at European level (Table 15).

21 According to our indicators, childcare provision in each of these countries is ranked 1.7 on a scale from 0 to 3 (see p. 156).

22 According to our indicators, an overall index of 3 on a scale of 0 to 3.

23 The part-time rate among Norwegian women has fallen in recent years. Longitudinal analyses show that the female part-time rate rises with age, while it is scarcely affected by the presence of young children in the household. Economically active mothers aged between 20 and 34 actually work longer hours than women between the ages of 35 and 55 (national report, cf. Jensen, 2000).

24 According to our indicators, Denmark, Finland and Sweden have an overall index of 3 on a scale of 0 to 3, while the index for Luxembourg is 2 (see p. 156).

25 In Denmark, from 43.9% in 1985 to 33.9% in 1999 and in Sweden from 46.6% in 1985 to 40.0% in 1999 (*Employment in Europe 2000*).

26 This is demonstrated by the concurrent increase in the female employment rate and the part-time rate in many countries (*Employment in Europe 2000*).

On average, men would like to reduce their working time by about twice as much as women. Nevertheless, men's preferred working times are still around 6.5 hours longer than those of women. As a result, the working time differences between men and women would remain, albeit at a significantly lower level than today, even if working time preferences were realised.

Table 15 Current and preferred working hours for different groups

	Current working hours	Preferred working hours	Difference	Range (in hours) between countries for actual working hours	Range (in hours) between countries for preferred working hours
All persons in employment	39.0	34.5	-4.5	9.9	6.2
Men	43.0	37.3	-5.7	5.5	5.0
Women	33.5	30.7	-2.8	14.5	9.9
Dependent employees	37.7	34.0	-3.7	7.4	5.1
Men	41.4	36.8	-4.6	6.4	4.7
Women	32.9	30.4	-2.5	11.4	9.6
Self-employed persons	48.2	38.4	-9.8	.*	.*
Currently not employed but seeking employment	-	33.1	-	-	7.5
All persons seeking employment (currently employed or not)	-	34.0	-	-	6

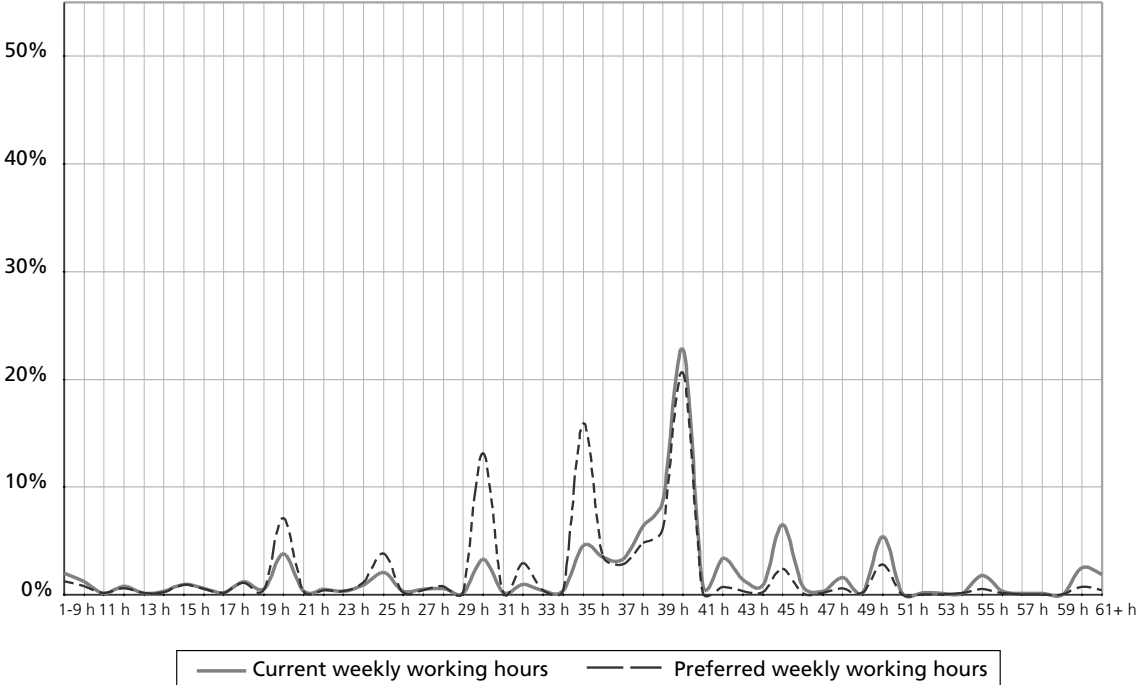
* Figures not shown due to low numbers of cases per country

The range of working times at country level (difference between the countries with the shortest and the longest working times) is consistently smaller with regard to preferences than to actual working times. The working time preferences of dependent employees, with a range of 5.1 hours per week, are less divergent than actual working times, where the range is 7.4 hours per week.

At 33.1 hours per week, the working time preference of those not in employment but seeking employment at the time of the survey is more than an hour less than the preference expressed by those in employment at the time of the survey.

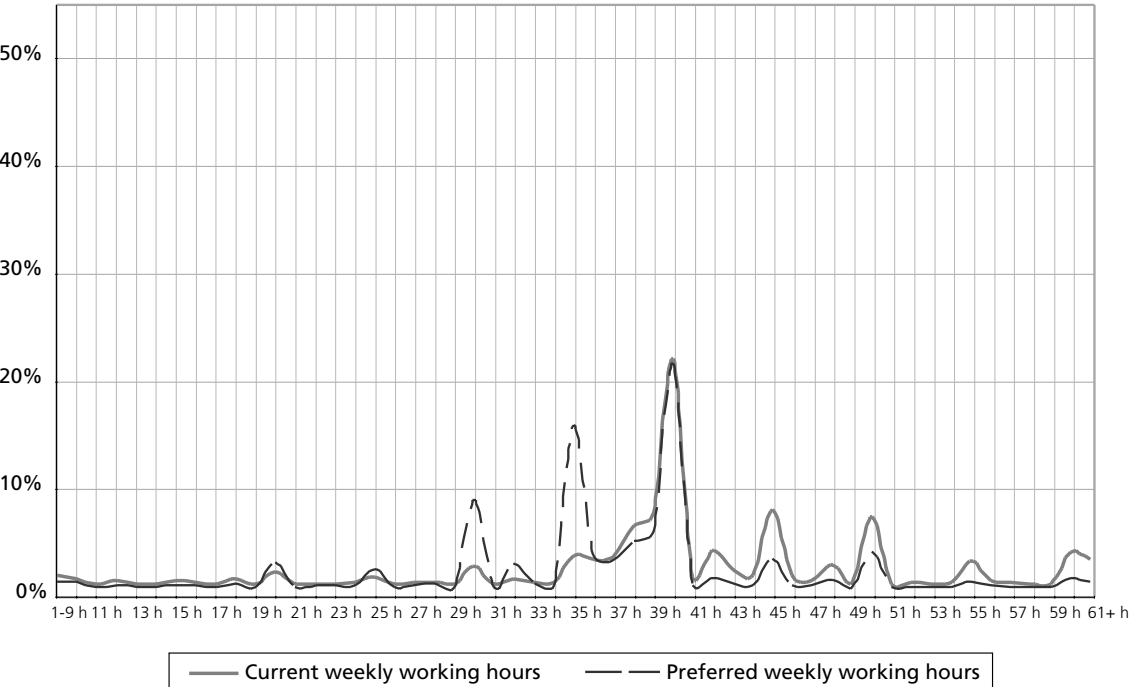
These trends are unanimous in revealing a convergence of working time preferences at European level. Figure 6, which shows the distribution of the average values for actual and preferred working times of dependent employees across Europe as a whole, clearly depicts this convergence. Preferred working times are concentrated more strongly than actual working times within the 30 to 40 hour range. On the other hand, there is considerably less preference for current very short working times and working times in excess of 40 hours. If employment and working time preferences were realised, fewer people would have working times at the upper and lower limits, while a greater share of the workforce would be concentrated in the core area marked out by 'long' part-time and 'short' full-time working hours.

Figure 6 Distribution of current and preferred weekly working times of dependent employees in EU15 + NOR



(questions 55 and 56) Dependent employees with current/preferred working times > 0

Figure 7 Distribution of current and preferred weekly working times of men in dependent employment in EU15 + NOR



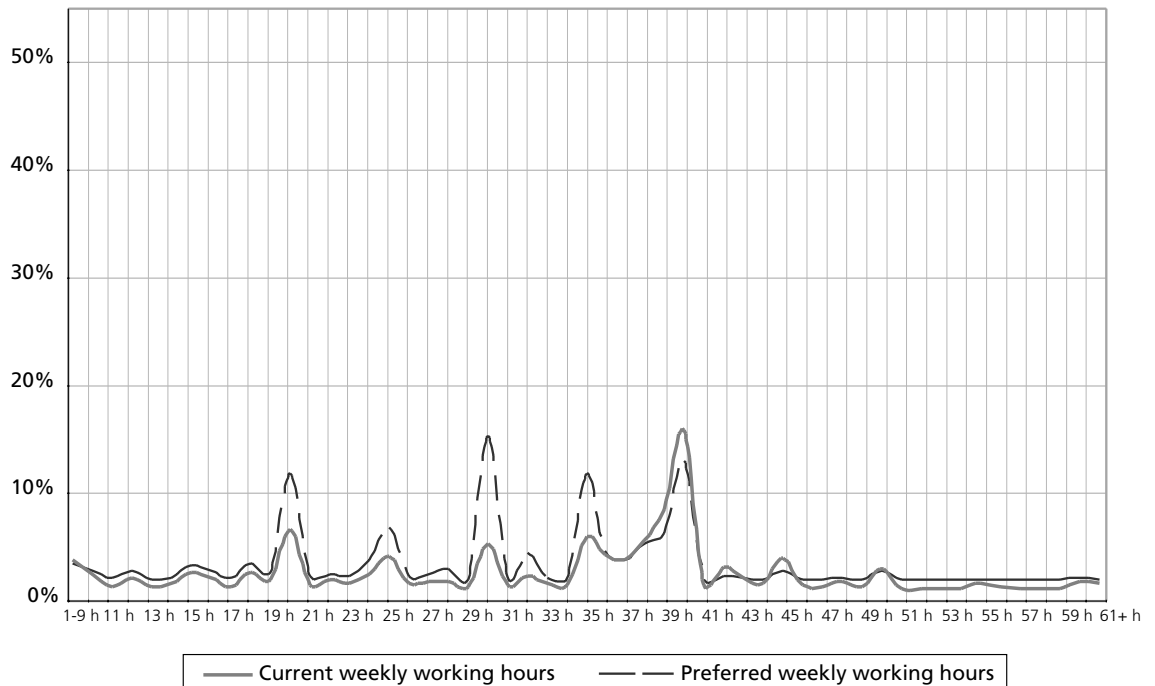
(questions 55 and 56) Dependent employees with current/preferred working times > 0

This overall distribution conceals the differing working time preferences of men and women in dependent employment.

The working time preferences of men in dependent employment (Figure 7) are clustered around the 40-, 35- and 30-hour marks. Preferences for a reduction are most pronounced among men working more than 40 hours per week. Very few men expressed a desire to work fewer than 30 hours per week. Thus the vast majority of men would prefer a ‘short’ full-time job. In many cases, these preferences could be realised by reducing overtime, as the concentration around the 40-hour mark shows.

Women’s preferences (Figure 8) are more widely dispersed than those of men. They are clustered around the 20-, 25-, 30- (highest concentration of preferences), 35- and 40-hour marks. As is the case for men, the greatest desire for change relates to very short part-time and excessively long full-time hours; nevertheless, the scope of preferences expressed by women is twice as great (at 20 hours) as those expressed by men. Whereas the majority of men in dependent employment would prefer a ‘short’ full-time job, women expressed a preference for both ‘short’ full-time jobs and ‘long’ part-time jobs.

Figure 8 Distribution of current and preferred weekly working times of women in dependent employment in EU15 + NOR



(questions 55 and 56) Dependent employees with current/preferred working times > 0

27 An identical distribution of current and preferred working times would not necessarily mean that all preferences had already been realised. In an extreme case, workers with long working times might want short working times and vice versa, meaning that all employees are dissatisfied with their current working times.

The distribution of working times at aggregated level depicted in Figures 6, 7 and 8 shows that preferences are for fewer very long and very short working times. In such an aggregated depiction, the differences in individual preferences cancel each other out; as a consequence, it is impossible to identify how many people actually want longer or shorter working hours.²⁷ The diversity and, in particular, the differing trends and magnitudes can be seen from Table 16. Barely two fifths of employees – somewhat more men than women – would like to keep approximately the same hours and more than three fifths would like to change their working times. The most frequent preference is for a reduction in working time, while a preference for an increase is much less frequently expressed. More than half of all men and 42% of women in dependent employment would like to work fewer hours. Fifteen per cent of women and 9% of men in dependent employment would like to work longer hours. People with very short working times tend to express a preference for an increase, while people with very long working times are more likely to express a preference for a reduction.

It is true that working-time preferences are converging. Nevertheless, significant minorities would prefer to work either 45 hours per week and more or fewer than 20 hours per week. One fifth of those working over 45 hours per week and as many as half of those working up to 20 hours per week would like to retain their current working hours, while a small proportion would like to work even longer or shorter hours. There is a number of reasons for both very long and very short hours. For low earners whose partners have few labour market opportunities, long working times may still seem necessary. A high-earning partner and inadequate public childcare provision may make short working times seem just as desirable as the preference for combining work with training or further training. Overall, analysis of individual preferences shows a considerable desire for change that is not evident in the aggregated figures.

Table 16 Difference between actual and preferred working time at individual level

	Respondent prefers to work ...					Total
	more than 5 hours less	1-5 hours less	approx. same hours	1-5 hours more	more than 5 hours more	
All persons in employment	35 %	15 %	38 %	3 %	8 %	100 %
Dependent employees	33 %	16 %	39 %	4 %	8 %	100 %
Women	30 %	12 %	42 %	4 %	11 %	100 %
Men	34 %	20 %	37 %	3 %	6 %	100 %
Dependent employees who currently work 45 hours or more	69 %	9 %	19 %	1 %	2 %	100 %
Dependent employees who currently work up to 20 hours	2 %	3 %	48 %	7 %	41 %	100 %

The preferred working times of men and women in dependent employment at national level

The European average figures on the working time preferences of men and women in dependent employment may conceal very different trends in the 16 countries. Accordingly, we now examine working-time preferences at national level (Table 17).

The first thing to be noted is that men and women in all 16 countries would like to work shorter hours. Even Dutch women, whose average weekly working time of 25.9 hours is already very low,

would like to work fewer hours than they currently do. The preferred working times for both men and women in the various countries are closer together than the actual working times. The range of preferred working times is narrower than that of actual working times; among women in the 16 European countries, the range falls from 11.4 to 8.6 hours per week, while among men it drops from 6.4 to 4.7 hours. This convergence is attributable to the fact that in countries with longer actual working times, there is a preference for a significantly greater reduction in working hours.

Table 17 Average current and preferred working times for men and women in dependent employment at country level (hours per week)

Country	All			Men			Women		
	Actual	Preferred	Difference	Actual	Preferred	Difference	Actual	Preferred	Difference
A	41.1	36.3	-4.8	45.2	39.6	-5.6	35.7	32.1	-3.6
B	37.5	34.3	-3.2	40.4	36.8	-3.1	33.5	31.1	-2.4
DK	36.4	32.4	-4.0	38.8	34.9	-4.0	33.8	29.7	-4.1
FIN	39.1	34.2	-4.9	41.5	35.9	-5.6	37.3	33.0	-4.3
F	38.0	34.3	-3.7	40.7	35.9	-4.8	34.4	32.1	-2.3
D	37.5	33.7	-3.8	42.1	36.8	-5.3	32.2	30.1	-2.1
EL	39.8	36.6	-3.2	42.4	38.6	-3.8	35.7	33.7	-2.0
IRL	38.9	34.5	-4.4	42.3	37.4	-4.9	34.4	30.6	-3.8
I	37.4	34.4	-3.0	39.5	36.8	-2.7	34.2	30.5	-3.7
L	38.6	35.1	-3.5	41.4	38.2	-3.2	34.3	30.5	-3.8
NL	33.7	31.5	-2.2	39.3	35.7	-3.5	25.9	25.6	-0.3
P	39.7	36.4	-3.3	42.5	38.4	-4.1	36.1	33.6	-2.5
E	39.3	36.1	-3.2	41.1	36.9	-4.2	34.9	34.2	-0.7
S	38.1	34.4	-3.7	41.1	36.4	-4.7	34.9	32.4	-2.5
UK	37.3	32.9	-4.4	43.1	37.3	-5.8	31.1	28.2	-2.9
NOR	36.7	32.6	-4.1	40.9	35.3	-5.6	32.1	29.7	-2.4
EU15+NOR	37.7	34.0	-3.7	41.4	36.8	-4.6	32.9	30.4	-2.5
Range	7.4	5.1		6.4	4.7		11.4	8.6	

With some exceptions (Denmark, Italy and Luxembourg), men would like a greater reduction in their working time than women. Thus the working times of men and women are also converging in most countries (Table 18). Men's and women's working time preferences are converging particularly rapidly in Germany which, if preferences were realised, would change from a country with an above-average difference between the sexes into one with a below-average gender gap.

The least significant differences in men's and women's preferred working time are found in Spain and Finland, since few women in either country work short hours, albeit for very different reasons.²⁸ The greatest differences between men's and women's preferred working times are found in the Netherlands and the UK. In the Netherlands, the extent of the difference is attributable to the marked tendency among women to work part-time, while in the UK it is attributable additionally to men's preference for longer than average working times.

²⁸ In Finland women tend to work full-time in an institutional environment that offers good opportunities for reconciling paid work and domestic responsibilities, while in Spain the employment rate is low and part-time jobs are in short supply.

Table 18 The gender gap: difference between average working times of men and women by country

	Difference based on actual working hours 1	Difference based on preferred working hours 2	Difference 3 (= Col. 2 – Col. 1)
Austria	9.5	7.5	-2.0
Belgium	6.9	5.7	-1.2
Denmark	5.0	5.2	0.2
Finland	4.2	2.9	-1.3
France	6.3	3.8	-2.5
Germany	9.9	5.7	-4.2
Greece	6.7	4.9	-1.8
Ireland	7.9	6.8	-1.1
Italy	5.3	6.3	1.0
Luxembourg	6.8	7.7	0.9
Netherlands	13.4	10.1	-3.3
Portugal	6.4	4.8	-1.6
Spain	6.2	2.7	-3.5
Sweden	6.2	4.0	-2.2
United Kingdom	12.0	9.1	-2.9
Norway	8.8	5.6	-3.2
EU15 + NOR	8.5	6.4	-2.1

Base: dependent employees (hours per week)

In Denmark, the difference in men's and women's working times remains roughly the same, since both men and women would like to see a sharp reduction in their working times. In Italy men's preference is for a smaller reduction in working time than in most other countries, whereas women in those countries would like to see a greater than average reduction in their working time, leading to a slight increase in the gender gap in terms of preferences.

We have shown in this section that, if working time preferences were to be realised, the differences between men's and women's working times not only across all the countries in our sample but also within most of the individual countries would be considerably reduced. This convergence of the working time preferences of men and women in dependent employment both across the 16 European countries and within the individual countries is one of the most important findings of our study.

The working time preferences of men and women in dependent employment: direction and extent of the desire for change

The average figures on preferred working times in the individual countries include a number of different – and even contradictory – national profiles of individual working time preferences. In all the countries, men's and women's preferences for shorter working hours are more marked than those for longer working hours, although there are considerable differences between the various countries. Whereas only 28% of men in France want their working time to remain unchanged, more than twice as many men, 58%, express the same preference in Portugal (see Figure 21, Annex B). Men in Ireland, the UK and the Netherlands express particularly strong preferences for change. A

higher than average share of men in Belgium, Greece, Italy and Luxembourg wish to retain their existing working hours. The differences between women in the various countries are quite similar, if not so pronounced. More than 50% of women in the Netherlands and Belgium would like to retain their existing working times, while the corresponding figures for Sweden and France are only 29 and 32% respectively (see Figure 22, Annex 3).

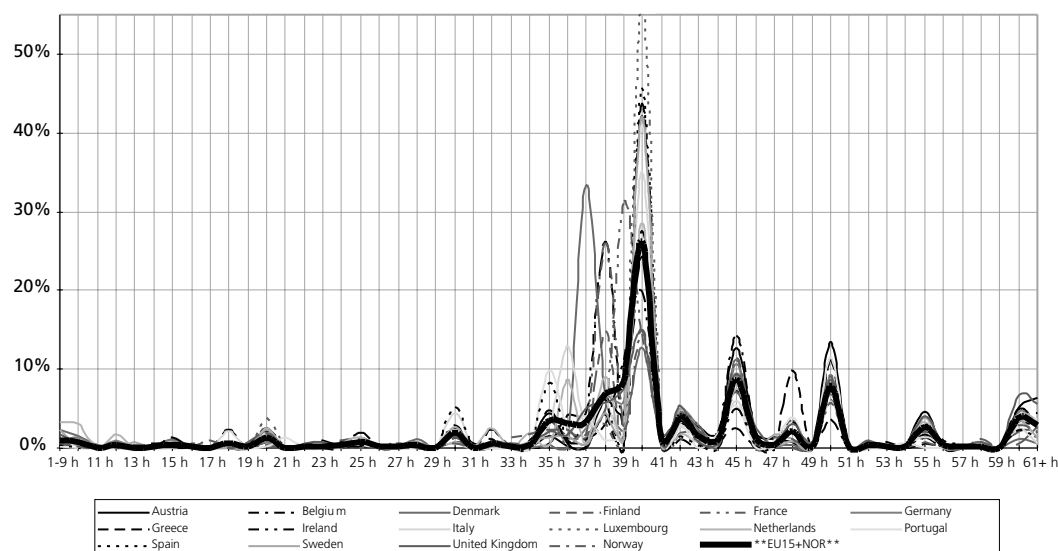
The extent of the desired changes also differs very significantly from country to country. In Norway, 46% of men would like to reduce their working hours by more than five hours, compared with 19% of men in Italy. In Ireland, 12% of men would like to reduce their working time by more than five hours, compared with only 2% of men in Portugal (see Figure 21, Annex 3). In Luxembourg, 40% of women expressed a preference for reducing their working time by more than five hours, a wish echoed by fewer than half as many of their counterparts in the Netherlands (16%). In Finland and Denmark, only 5% of women would like to extend their working time by more than five hours, compared with 16% of women in Spain.

The differences between the countries in terms of the preferences expressed are so great that working time policy must also vary considerably from country to country as well.

Country profiles: the distribution of actual and preferred working times of men and women in dependent employment

The distribution of the actual and preferred weekly working times of men and women in dependent employment, which was considered at European level above, is now examined at country level.²⁹ Figures 9, 10, 11 and 12 below show that the preferred working times tend to move away from the extremes, being less widely dispersed than the actual working times. The now more densely packed centre field is no longer dominated by a single peak; rather, working times are distributed over several peaks.

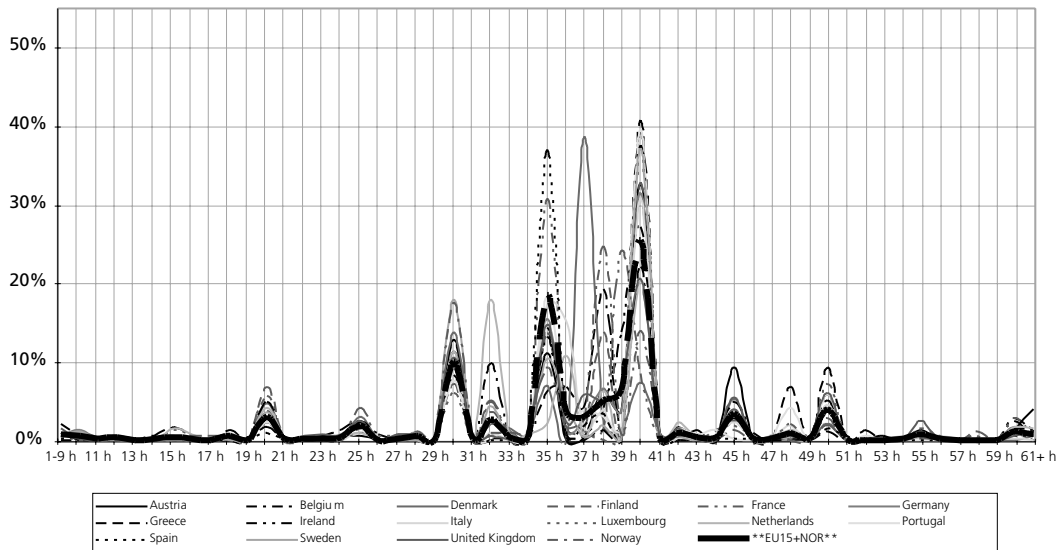
Figure 9 Distribution of the current weekly working times of men in dependent employment



Current weekly working hours (smoothed curves)

²⁹ The country profiles (distribution of actual and preferred working time of men and women in dependent employment in each of the 16 countries) are to be found in the annex.

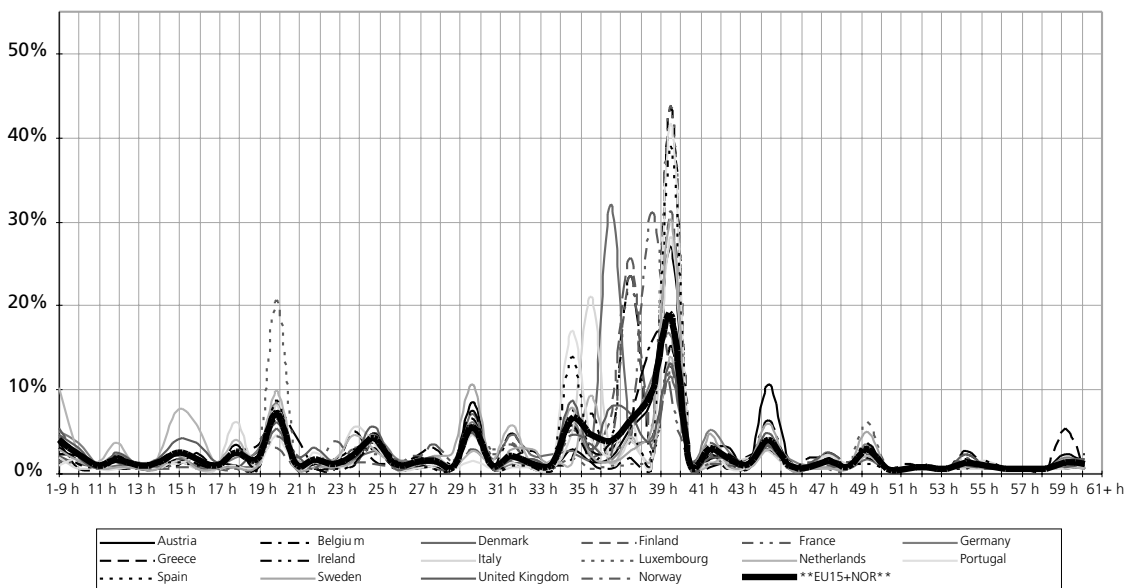
Figure 10 Distribution of the preferred weekly working times of men in dependent employment



Preferred weekly working hours (smoothed curves)

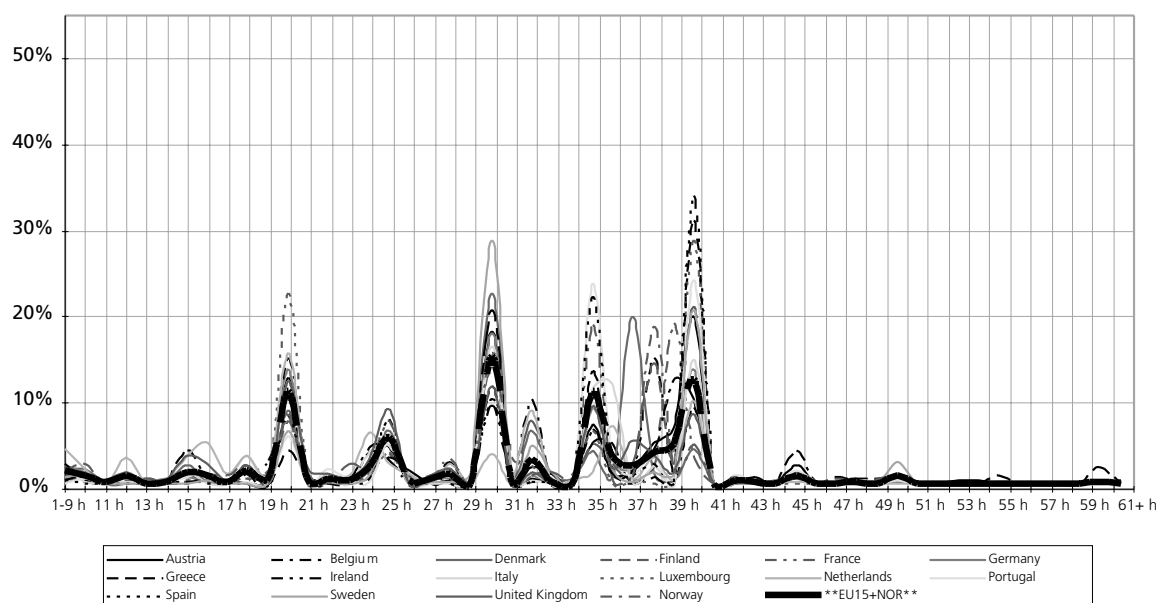
While men’s current working times are heavily concentrated around the current full-time standard (38 to 40 hours), their preferences are clearly concentrated around the 40-, 35- and 30-hour marks. Much the same applies to women: while current working times are for the most part between 35 and 40 hours per week, preferences are clustered in more or less equal proportions around the 20-, 30-, 35- and 40-hour marks.

Figure 11 Distribution of the current weekly working times of women in dependent employment



Current weekly working hours (smoothed curves)

Figure 12 Distribution of the preferred weekly working times of women in dependent employment



Preferred weekly working hours (smoothed curves)

The greater heterogeneity of working time preferences in the mid-range is not so surprising since, in contrast to actual working times, for which there are agreed full-time standards, there are at best only ‘soft’ guidelines for preferences. It may be that in future a new working time standard of between 30 and 35 hours will emerge. At any rate, working time preferences would not appear to be an obstacle to the emergence of such a standard. However, the relatively heterogeneous working time preferences in the mid-range can also be explained by the fact that the choices to be made lie between what are currently considered ‘long-hours’ part-time and ‘short-hours’ full-time jobs.

Tables 19 and 20 show how the actual and preferred working times of men and women in dependent employment at country level are distributed among three categories: up to 29 hours, 30 to 40 hours and 41 and more hours. Among men, preferences in all 16 countries are concentrated in the intermediate 30 to 40 hours range. Across Europe as a whole, 77% of men on average would prefer working hours in this range. This amounts to an increase of 22 percentage points over those who report actually working such hours. In the case of women, 62% of those in dependent employment would prefer working hours in the intermediate 30-40 hours range, an increase of seven percentage points over those who actually work such hours. Overall, working time preferences would seem to be converging strongly towards the 30-40 hour range, since the preferences expressed by men in all the countries and by women in virtually all the countries are more tightly clustered in this range than actual working times are. The exceptions are women in Denmark, Finland, Ireland and the UK, whose preferences tend to be focused more strongly on working times below this range.

Table 19 Distribution of current and preferred weekly working times for men in dependent employment

Men	Up to 29 hours		30 to 40 hours		41 hours and over	
	Current	Preferred	Current	Preferred	Current	Preferred
Austria	3 %	5 %	39 %	69 %	58 %	25 %
Belgium	6 %	8 %	69 %	80 %	26 %	13 %
Denmark	9 %	13 %	58 %	76 %	33 %	11 %
Finland	3 %	12 %	66 %	80 %	31 %	7 %
France	7 %	9 %	59 %	81 %	34 %	10 %
Germany	8 %	11 %	47 %	75 %	46 %	14 %
Greece	7 %	10 %	56 %	67 %	37 %	24 %
Ireland	7 %	11 %	45 %	73 %	48 %	16 %
Italy	7 %	7 %	66 %	81 %	27 %	12 %
Luxembourg	5 %	11 %	66 %	70 %	29 %	19 %
Netherlands	14 %	12 %	54 %	73 %	32 %	16 %
Portugal	3 %	6 %	63 %	78 %	34 %	17 %
Spain	2 %	4 %	71 %	92 %	27 %	4 %
Sweden	7 %	8 %	55 %	79 %	39 %	13 %
United Kingdom	9 %	12 %	40 %	68 %	51 %	20 %
Norway	6 %	13 %	54 %	76 %	40 %	12 %
EU15+NOR	7 %	9 %	54 %	77 %	39 %	14 %

(in horizontal %)

Table 20 Distribution of current and preferred weekly working times for women in dependent employment

Women	Up to 29 hours		30 to 40 hours		41 hours and over	
	Actual	Preferred	Actual	Preferred	Actual	Preferred
Austria	22 %	28 %	54 %	66 %	25 %	6 %
Belgium	30 %	33 %	60 %	63 %	11 %	4 %
Denmark	20 %	31 %	68 %	68 %	12 %	1 %
Finland	10 %	23 %	78 %	75 %	13 %	3 %
France	23 %	23 %	63 %	74 %	14 %	3 %
Germany	35 %	36 %	46 %	60 %	19 %	5 %
Greece	24 %	18 %	58 %	76 %	18 %	6 %
Ireland	24 %	39 %	59 %	53 %	17 %	8 %
Italy	27 %	33 %	62 %	64 %	11 %	3 %
Luxembourg	30 %	36 %	57 %	63 %	13 %	1 %
Netherlands	56 %	60 %	37 %	39 %	7 %	1 %
Portugal	17 %	18 %	70 %	78 %	12 %	4 %
Spain	21 %	19 %	68 %	79 %	12 %	2 %
Sweden	22 %	19 %	61 %	77 %	17 %	4 %
United Kingdom	39 %	49 %	48 %	47 %	14 %	4 %
Norway	35 %	40 %	53 %	56 %	12 %	4 %
EU15+NOR	31 %	34 %	55 %	62 %	15 %	4 %

(in horizontal %)

Whereas only 9% of men would like working times below this range, equating to an increase of two percentage points over those reporting actual working times of up to 29 hours per week, a good third of women express such a preference, an increase of three percentage points over those reporting actual working times in this range. Here too, there are considerable differences between the countries: 60% of Dutch and 49% of British women would like a working week below the 30-hour mark, compared with only 18% or 19% of their counterparts in Greece, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. Just as with actual working hours, women's working time preferences are more strongly differentiated than those of men, since the institutional context within which women seeking paid work have to operate differs markedly from country to country.

The country profiles (Table 19) show that preferred working times are clustered around different ranges. Thus, for example, preferences in France are concentrated around the 35 to 39-hour range, in Sweden around the 30 to 40-hour range, in Denmark around the 30 to 37-hour range and in Spain around the 35-hour mark. This obviously reflects the influence of both traditional (statutory and/or collectively agreed) standards and those that are currently the object of debate (35-hour week). The profile of preferred working times in the Netherlands and the UK deviates somewhat from this pattern, since there is no discernible trend towards a particular range of preferred working times, especially among women.

Full-time and part-time employment: current situations and preferences

So far, our focus has been on the current and preferred working times of all dependent employees. Here, our analysis will distinguish between full-time and part-time work, with a particular focus on the various types of part-time employment. Since the distinction between full-time and part-time work runs along different boundaries in the 16 countries, it is difficult to compare the working hours of full-timers and part-timers. What is considered part-time employment in Sweden, for example, would be regarded in many other countries as full-time work. In order to resolve this problem, the 35-hour threshold is used in addition to the self-reported data in order to distinguish between full-time and part-time employment.³⁰

However, the distinction between full-time and part-time work is not sufficient. Part-time work is extremely heterogeneous. Since part-time work is less subject to norms than full-time work, the dispersion of average working times in and between the countries is also much greater than in the case of full-time work. Thus part-time work is not homogeneous but encompasses working times close to the full-time standard and others that are extremely low. In order to take account of this heterogeneity, we divide the part-time category into marginal (up to 19 hours per week) and substantial (20 to 34 hours per week) part-time work.

We begin by ascertaining how varied the distribution of part-time work is. The working time preferences will then be broken down into the three categories already defined above. Before addressing the issue of how feasible it would be to realise working time preferences, we investigate the reasons why people declare a preference for part-time working and consider statements on the practicability of those preferences.

³⁰ This means that the definition of part-time work here is not based on the responses of those questioned as to whether they work full-time or part-time. As a result, a certain proportion of those in part-time work - those with long working times - probably do not fall into the categories of substantial or marginal part-time that are used here, but rather into the group of those working 35 or more hours per week. Similarly, full-time employees who actually work fewer hours (e.g. where various forms of (temporary) working time reductions are introduced to protect jobs) will be included in the part-time category.

Current and preferred distribution of part-time work by country

The average working time of part-time employees across Europe is 23 hours, the range being greater than in the case of full-timers.³¹ In all the countries, the familiar gender bias in part-time employment is evident. The female part-time rate in the 16 European countries is 37%, while among men it is only 9%. We know from our investigations that part-time work among men is almost exclusively the province of young men, many of them still in education or training (European Commission, 1997). The female part-time population includes many mothers and housewives who are seeking to combine part-time employment (sometimes only marginal part-time work) with domestic obligations.

Despite the clear gender bias in all countries, there is, nevertheless, a link between the male and female rates. In those countries where the female part-time rate is high, the male rate is also higher than average (albeit at a lower level) and vice versa (see Figure 23, Annex B). We suspect these figures may be concealing supply and demand effects. In countries where female part-time work is widespread, increasing numbers of men are also seeking part-time employment, since it has become a more accepted employment form than in countries with a low female part-time rate. At the same time, firms are changing their personnel strategies; they recognise the advantages for certain activities and are therefore increasingly making part-time jobs available to men, particularly young men still in education or training, whom they wish to use as an additional reserve of labour.

Table 21 Part-time workers as a proportion of all dependent employees by gender and country

Country	Total 1	Men 2	Women 3	Difference in percentage points 4 (= Col. 3- Col. 2)	Column 2 as percentage of column 3 5
Austria	16	4	32	28	12
Belgium	17	5	32	27	16
Denmark	21	8	36	28	22
Finland	9	3	13	10	23
France	19	8	33	25	24
Germany	25	8	45	37	18
Greece	13	8	19	11	42
Ireland	18	11	28	17	39
Italy	13	7	20	13	35
Luxembourg	15	6	28	22	21
Netherlands	34	16	60	44	27
Portugal	7	5	11	6	45
Spain	15	10	28	18	36
Sweden	27	11	45	34	24
United Kingdom	27	11	44	33	25
Norway	26	9	44	35	20
EU15 + NOR	21	9	37	28	24

(self-assessment Q 41, horizontal %)

We now look more closely at working times and working time preferences in our three groups. On average across Europe as a whole, more than 90% of men in dependent employment but

³¹ Because of the small numbers of cases in some instances, it is not possible to give working times for part-timers at national level. For the same reason, we are unable to list any ranges.

only 60% of women in dependent employment are employed full-time according to the definition given above. Within the part-time population, substantial part-time work (≥ 20 hours per week) predominates in all the countries, with the exception of the Netherlands. Marginal part-time work (less than 20 hours per week) is widespread among Dutch male (9%) and female dependent employees (35%), as well as among women in the UK and in Germany (21% and 18% respectively)³². In these three countries the tax and/or social security systems offer incentives for short working times (see national reports) which, because of the high marginal tax rates that take effect when certain hourly thresholds are exceeded, prevent many workers from increasing their working time and taking on substantial part-time jobs. In Sweden, Luxembourg and Denmark, on the other hand, the majority of female part-timers are in substantial part-time jobs, many of which involve working times very close to the full-time norm. As result, the difference between full-time and part-time employment becomes blurred (Table 22).

In all the countries, both men and women expressed a preference for less full-time work and more substantial part-time employment. If these preferences were realised, the share of employees working full-time across Europe as a whole would decline from 91% to 76% among men and from 60% to 45% among women, while the share of those in substantial part-time employment would rise from 6% to 21% among men and from 25% to 46% among women.³³ The desire for change in this respect is least pronounced in Spain, which has the highest share of people declaring a preference for full-time working. The preference for a shift towards substantial part-time working is particularly marked in the Scandinavian countries. If working time preferences in the Netherlands were realised, then the hours worked by those in substantial part-time employment could become the 'standard' working time. Only 58% of Dutch men expressed a preference for full-time employment, while the figure among Dutch women is as low as 26%.

Very few people in the 16 European countries express a preference for marginal part-time employment. If working time preferences were realised, the shares of employees in marginal part-time jobs would fall in all countries. Nevertheless, even if preferences were realised, working times of 19 hours and below would still be relatively widespread among women in the Netherlands (26%) and in the UK (16%). Thus there are still large groups of employees who prefer short working hours. These certainly include many high school and university students, for whom studying is the main activity, and many women who are able or willing to work only a relatively small number of hours per week because of domestic responsibilities.

The reasons and preferences for part-time work

In the survey, part-timers were questioned about the reasons why they work part-time³⁴ and full-timers were asked about any possible preferences for part-time work.³⁵

The following were the main reasons given for part-time working: I couldn't find a full-time job; I am a student; I would like/need time for my children; I have other domestic obligations that

32 Approximately 40% of female part-timers in these countries work 19 hours per week or less.

33 Whether such working times would be designated full-time or part-time would depend on whether and how a working time standard is fixed in future (cf. Chapter 6).

34 The questions asked were: 'I would like to ask you why you work part-time rather than full-time. Is it because you are a student or at school/ you are ill or disabled/ you could not find a full-time job/ you do not want to work full-time? Why don't you want a full-time job? Is it because you are financially secure and work only because you want to/ or because you earn enough working part-time/ or because you want or need enough time to care for elderly, ill or persons with disability in your family/ or do you have other domestic commitments which prevent you from working full-time? Are you working part-time because you want to have enough time for yourself and your own activities, e.g. hobbies, cultural or political activities?/ Or do you have another reason?'

35 The question asked was: 'Would you currently prefer to be working part-time – either on a permanent basis, or for a given period only with the possibility of returning to full-time work afterwards?'

Current and preferred working times at individual level

prevent me from working full-time. The number of respondents who declared that they worked part-time in order to have more time for themselves is very small. Taken as a whole, the answers given by part-timers show that the overwhelming majority of those working part-time do so, voluntarily or involuntarily, because of external circumstances.

Table 22 Proportion of full-time (FT), substantial part-time (SPT) and marginal part-time (MPT) work – current and preferred

Country	Men								
	Current working hours			Preferred working hours			Difference (Preferred –Current)		
	FT	SPT	MPT	FT	SPT	MPT	FT	SPT	MPT
Austria	95	3	1	82	18	1	-13	15	0
Belgium	91	8	2	73	24	4	-18	16	2
Denmark	89	6	5	69	28	3	-20	22	-2
Finland	96	4	1	73	26	1	-23	22	0
France	91	8	1	79	19	2	-12	11	1
Germany	92	4	6	77	20	3	-15	16	-3
Greece	90	6	3	82	14	6	-8	8	3
Ireland	88	9	3	77	23	0	-11	14	-3
Italy	88	9	3	81	16	3	-7	7	0
Luxembourg	94	7	1	79	20	2	-15	13	1
Netherlands	82	10	9	58	38	5	-24	28	-4
Portugal	93	4	1	88	13	1	-5	9	0
Spain	91	9	0	87	14	0	-4	5	0
Sweden	90	7	3	69	30	2	-21	23	-1
United Kingdom	89	7	4	77	21	3	-12	14	-1
Norway	91	7	3	66	30	3	-25	23	0
EU15 + NOR	91	6	3	76	21	2	-15	15	-1

(dependent employees, horizontal %)

Country	Women								
	Current working hours			Preferred working hours			Difference (Preferred –Current)		
	FT	SPT	MPT	FT	SPT	MPT	FT	SPT	MPT
Austria	70	24	8	52	45	5	-18	21	-3
Belgium	61	28	13	43	47	9	-18	19	-4
Denmark	65	27	9	36	58	8	-29	29	-1
Finland	86	9	6	60	35	6	-26	26	0
France	66	25	9	51	43	7	-15	18	-2
Germany	59	25	18	43	47	11	-16	22	-7
Greece	68	23	9	57	36	6	-11	13	-3
Ireland	65	24	10	46	43	10	-19	19	0
Italy	70	23	8	46	44	8	-24	21	0
Luxembourg	61	37	4	41	56	4	-20	19	0
Netherlands	36	31	35	26	48	26	-10	17	-9
Portugal	81	13	6	66	31	3	-15	18	-3
Spain	75	21	6	71	30	1	-4	9	-5
Sweden	63	31	6	42	55	3	-21	24	-3
United Kingdom	54	27	21	36	48	16	-18	21	-5
Norway	59	26	16	40	48	11	-19	22	-5
EU15 + NOR	60	25	14	45	46	11	-15	21	-3

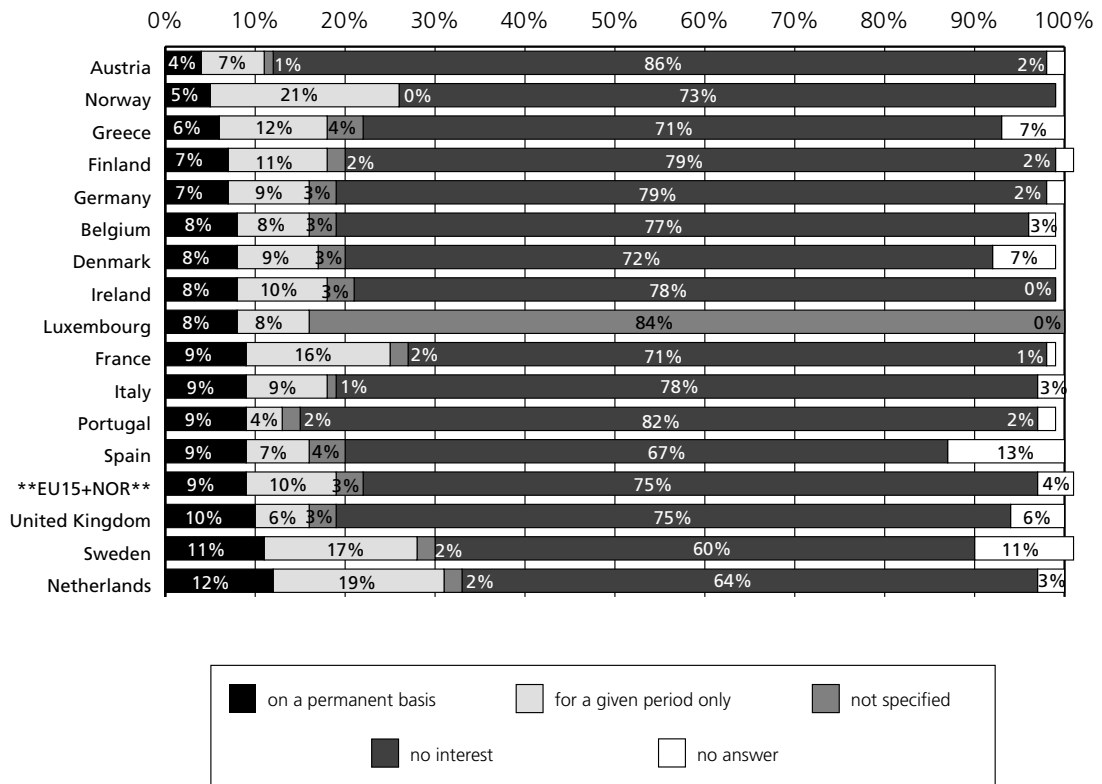
FT = 35 hours or more, SPT = 20-34 hours, MPT = 19 hours or less

Variations in totals due to rounding

The most frequently cited reasons for part-time working (41% of part-timers on average across Europe as a whole) are that it allows those needing or wanting it (more) time to look after children, to care for other family members or to fulfil other domestic obligations. The shares of part-timers citing these reasons are particularly high (around 50%) in Austria, the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium. The high share of those citing childcare responsibilities as a reason for working part-time in Germany and the Netherlands (44 and 43% respectively) must be largely attributable to inadequate childcare facilities. The high share of part-timers citing these reasons in Sweden and Norway (27 and 30% respectively) may well be a reaction to the generally high volume of paid work in households in these countries (see next chapter). Women in particular try to reduce the volume of paid work they do in order to have more time for their children. Thus even though the reasons for the average number of hours worked and the scope for individual choices vary from country to country, part-time employment in all countries is one way of reconciling paid work and family responsibilities.

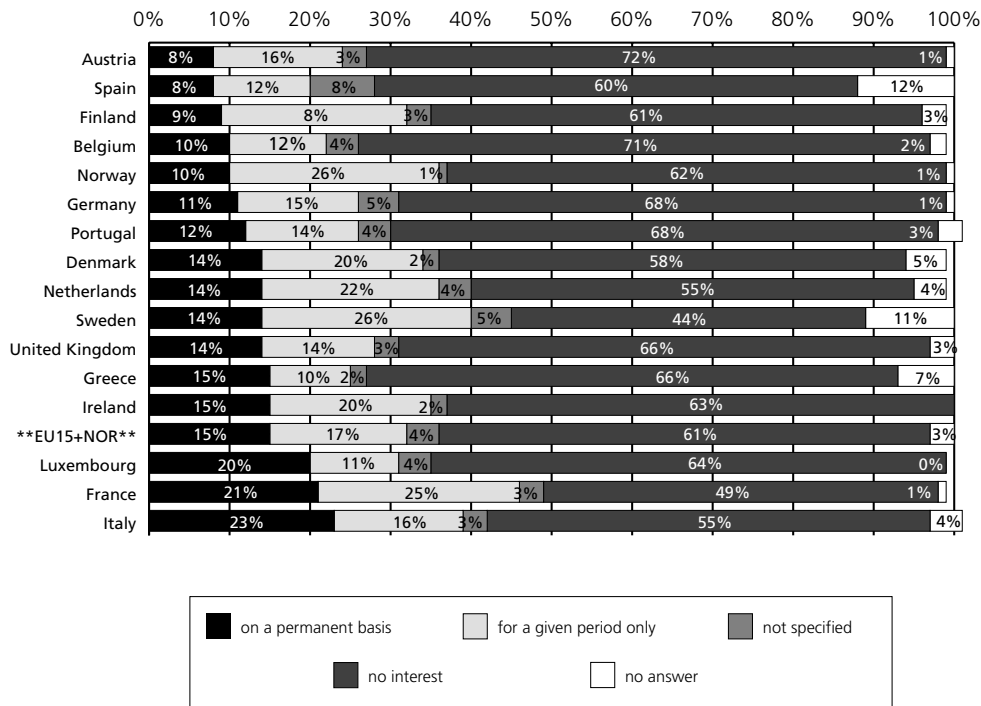
The second most important reason cited for part-time working is the difficulty of finding a full-time job. Across Europe as a whole, an average of 19% of all part-timers declare themselves to have been unable to find a full-time job and are therefore working part-time involuntarily. The share of ‘involuntary’ part-time working attributed to labour market conditions is above average in France and Sweden (32% and 27% respectively), while in the Netherlands and Norway this reason is cited by a lower than average share of part-timers (3% and 11% respectively). In countries such as Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands and Ireland part-time working is widespread among students, and the fact of being a student is the third most important reason cited for working part-time.

Figure 13 Interest in part-time work among male full-timers



The different reasons cited for part-time working show that it is frequently the only possible form of paid work and is by no means always freely chosen by those concerned. In fact, it is mainly external circumstances that make part-time working necessary, at least temporarily, for lack of any real alternatives. Nevertheless, it has to be acknowledged that for a certain share of the part-timers this working time arrangement is the preferred way of reconciling participation in paid work with other activities.

Figure 14 Interest in part-time work among female full-timers



Full-timers were questioned about any possible preferences for part-time employment with a view to ascertaining whether they would like to work part-time, either permanently or, if there was a possibility of going back full-time, temporarily. The majority – 75% of male and 63% of female full-timers – declared that they had no desire to work part-time, whether permanently or temporarily. However, 9% of men and 15% of women currently working full-time would prefer to work part-time on a permanent basis.

Those full-time employees who expressed a preference for part-time work were asked about the reasons for their preference. The possible answers (more than one could be given) were:

- because I want/need more time for my children;
- because I want/need more time to look after elderly, sick or handicapped family members;
- because other household responsibilities get in the way of my full-time job;
- because I would like more time for myself and my own activities (hobbies, cultural or political activities);
- because I would like to reduce the stresses and strains of full-time employment.

In all 16 countries, 'more time for myself and my own activities' is the most frequently cited reason. Across Europe as a whole, this is the answer given by 77% of full-timers expressing a preference for part-time work. The second most frequently cited reason is the desire to reduce the stresses and strains of full-time employment. This reason is cited particularly frequently in Portugal (73%), which presumably reflects the heavy demands on women who work full-time. The list also includes more time for children (47%), for other household duties (34%) and for the care of family members (34%) and 'other reasons'.

The reasons given by full-timers who would prefer to work part-time are significantly different from those given by part-timers who would prefer to work full-time. Since a large share of the individuals involved in the care of children or other relatives and in other household duties are already either working part-time or not participating in the labour market at all, these reasons tend to play a less decisive role in determining full-timers' preference for part-time work. This is why 'soft' reasons, such as having more time for oneself and reducing workloads, are more important than 'hard', incontrovertible obligations. These 'soft' reasons become increasingly important as prosperity grows, people can afford short working hours and they become an indicator of well-being. It is when the demands of work increase³⁶ and the 'disutility of work', as economists put it, rises that free time becomes more valuable.

Asked about the preferred form of part-time work, those full-timers who expressed a preference for part-time work gave the following responses:

- 38% favoured some days per week full-time and some days off;
- 26% favoured reduced hours every working day;
- 20% favoured flexible working-time arrangements with actual working hours being fixed at short notice according to the needs of the jobs and personal preferences;
- 12% favoured longer periods of full-time work followed by longer periods off.

If the traditional form of part-time work with shorter daily working times is favoured by only a quarter of full-timers wishing to work part-time, one likely reason is that for these individuals part-time work does permit a better balance between paid work and family life. Free time is obviously more valuable if there are whole days off work or if free time can be planned in a flexible way. Another factor may also be that it is very difficult to effect a reduction in daily working time for certain groups of employees because of their skill levels and responsibilities.³⁷

The feasibility of part-time work

Those seeking to work part-time must be able to afford it, since it is usually associated with reduced earnings relative to full-time work. Across Europe as a whole, an average of only 18% of full-timers stated that they (and their families) could afford to work part-time without problems.³⁸ The share

36 Cf. Damien Merllié and Pascal Paoli: *Ten Years of Working Conditions in the European Union*, Summary, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2001.

37 Cf. the debates in France on the working time of managerial and professional staff (*cadres*), which is to be reduced not through shorter weekly times but through a reduction in the number of working days per year.

38 The question asked was: 'In financial terms, would you say that you could afford to work part-time?'

of respondents declaring they could afford to work part-time is relatively high in Finland and the Netherlands (33%) and in Denmark (30%), that is in countries with relatively high hourly rates of pay. It is very low in Greece and France (10% and 11% respectively). The decisive factor in Greece is very likely to be low rates of pay, while in France it is probably the wide earnings inequality gap, which means that very many workers' earnings are close to the minimum wage. Forty-four per cent of all full-timers stated they would not be able to afford to work part-time at all, while 32% said it would be feasible but require them to reduce their expenditure.

A further obstacle to the realisation of preferences for part-time work lies in the low level of acceptance among employers and in the view that such preferences are impossible to realise in the workplace. An average of almost two thirds of full-timers (59% - ranging from 71% in Austria to 44% in Finland) assume that their current employers would not agree to them working part-time.³⁹ Fifty-eight per cent (ranging from 79% in Greece to 49% in the Netherlands) consider it impossible to do their jobs on a part-time basis.⁴⁰ Forty-seven per cent (ranging from 55% in Germany to 31% in Denmark) say that part-time work would harm their career prospects.⁴¹ Forty-three per cent (ranging from 67% in Greece to 19% in Italy) consider that part-timers enjoy less social protection than full-timers.⁴²

The pattern of responses reveals a perception that there are limits to the feasibility of part-time work. These perceived limits are summarised below.

- Part-time work provides an inadequate level of income for many people. Only a small proportion of full-timers could afford to reduce their working hours by the amount required to go part-time.
- It is still perceived by many people to be 'non-standard'; they assume that part-time work will not be readily accepted by their employers.
- Increased part-time work would in many cases have to go hand in hand with changes in work organisation. Work organisation still seems to be geared to full-timers, which makes it more difficult to switch from full-time to part-time work.
- It is still not fully accepted in the workplace. Many workers fear that part-timers are regarded as less motivated⁴³ and that their career prospects are damaged as a result.
- It is perceived as an employment form associated with low levels of social protection. However, the reasons for this perception do not arise from any formal discrimination against part-timers⁴⁴ but rather in the lower earnings levels and the consequent reduction in transfer payments or on prejudices based on a former legal situation which no longer exists.

39 The question asked was: 'Do you think that your present employer would accept you working part-time?'

40 The question asked was: 'In principle, do you think that it would be possible to carry out your current job while working part-time?'

41 The question asked was: 'Do you think that working part-time would damage your career prospects?'

42 The question asked was: 'Do you think that in general part-timers are worse off than full-timers so far as protection by employment law and social security is concerned?'

43 Although there is empirical evidence that most employers with part-time staff say that they are not less productive or motivated than full-timers in comparable position; cf. Bielenski (1994), p.85ff.

44 The legal discrimination that used to exist against part-time work has been eliminated in all the countries. Part-timers now have the same legal status as full-timers. In a few countries (e.g. Germany, the UK and the Netherlands) there are still special arrangements for marginal part-time jobs.

If preferences for part-time work are to be realised, there needs to be a concomitant change in the institutional and social environment. If their effectiveness is to be increased, policy strategies intended to promote part-time work as a means of improving the work/family balance must be combined with schemes for (partial) wage compensation – as already happens to some extent in Finland.⁴⁵ In the workplace, flexible forms of work organisation must be introduced in order to facilitate the switch from full-time to part-time work. In the workplace and in the wider society beyond, there will have to be a cultural change: long working hours and single-minded dedication to paid work, to the virtual exclusion of all else and with the consequent disparagement of family and domestic work and personal hobbies, should no longer be used as the sole criterion for assessing motivation and commitment. Workers will be more likely to avail themselves of the existing opportunities for temporary part-time work if they are associated with good levels of social protection, for example by giving employees a guaranteed right to return to full-time work, a right now enshrined in new legislation recently introduced in the Netherlands and in Germany. Hourly rates of pay must be the same for full-timers and part-timers and part-timers, must enjoy the same pro rata entitlements to social security benefits so that there are no incentives for exceeding certain working time thresholds.

Further individual characteristics

We have thus far analysed individual working times by gender and full-time/part-time status. We now investigate current and preferred working times in accordance with the following characteristics: manual/white-collar status, sectoral affiliation, standard of education and the existence of children in the household.

Across Europe as a whole, the average difference between the working times of manual and white-collar workers is relatively insignificant, the former working on average 37.3 hours per week and the latter 38 hours. Within individual countries, however, there are significant differences in hours worked by the two groups. In Greece, Portugal and Spain, manual workers have longer working times than white-collar workers. These longer hours reflect the lower status traditionally given to manual workers in these countries; white-collar workers had the privilege of working shorter hours (in both the public and the private sectors). In Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands and, to a lesser extent, in Belgium, Germany and Austria, on the other hand, white-collar workers have longer working times than manual workers.

Both manual and white-collar workers would prefer shorter working times, with the preferences for working time reductions being stronger among white-collar workers than among manual workers. One reason for this is probably the higher share of women in the white-collar category, while another would be the high share of male white-collar workers with management responsibilities, who tend to work (excessively) long hours. The preferred length of the working week among manual workers is 34.8 hours, compared with 33.6 hours among white-collar workers. In both groups, the range of preferred working times is smaller than that of actual working times. In these two occupational categories, therefore, working time preferences are converging.

⁴⁵ Parents have a right to reduce their working hours by taking subsidised partial childcare leave until the end of the child's first term at school, by which time the child is aged seven. Thus parents can, if they wish, work part-time after parental and/or childcare leave (national report).

An analysis by sector shows that in all countries, with the exception of Portugal, where the part-time rate is low, working times in the service sector are shorter than in manufacturing, although in all countries employees in private services work longer hours than those in public services. As far as preferences are concerned, the differences between the two sectors are considerably smaller (Table 23).

Table 23 Actual and preferred working times by sector

	Manufacturing industry	Private services	Public services
Current working hours	41.5	39.2	35.9
Preferred working hours	36.4	34.4	32.7
Difference: preferred – current working hours	-5.1	-4.8	-3.2
Range* on basis of current working hours	7.5	9.8	7.2
Range* on basis of preferred working hours	4.6	6.2	5.0

* Difference between the country with the longest and the country with the shortest average weekly hours

Base: all economically active individuals and individuals who would like to work – hours per week

As individual educational levels rise, so too does the average length of the actual working week across Europe. This is hardly surprising. Workers with higher qualifications and skill levels want to use the skills and qualifications they have acquired and the demands on skilled employees are rising; many less skilled workers, on the other hand, have to be content at best with part-time employment. Nevertheless, the structure of working time by skill levels does differ from country to country. In Portugal, Greece, Spain and Italy, low-skill workers have longer working times. Because of the low female employment rates in the last three countries, these workers are mainly men. And because of the low rates of pay and the high earnings inequalities, they have to work particularly long hours in order to make ends meet. The reason for this is to be found in the poverty of low-skill workers and, in the case of the last three countries listed above, also in the low female employment rates. In all the other countries, working time rises with the level of general education. As far as preferences are concerned, the converse is true: the more highly skilled workers favour shorter working times than the less highly skilled (Table 24). This is probably because they are the group best able to afford a significant reduction in working time due to their higher earnings. Furthermore, the accelerating pace of economic activity has led to a particularly sharp rise in their workloads and, consequently, to an increase in the value of free time.

Table 24 Current and preferred working hours by standard of general education

	Primary or secondary I	Secondary II	Third level
Current working hours	37.3	37.5	38.7
Preferred working hours	34.5	33.8	33.6
Difference: preferred – current working hours	-2.8	-3.7	-5.1
Range* on basis of current working hours	(9.2)	9.1	7.8
Range* on basis of preferred working hours	(7.5)	6.1	3.8

* Difference between the country with the longest and the country with the shortest average weekly hours

Base: dependent employees, hours per week

Individual working times differ according to whether or not employees have children in the household. The effects of the presence of children in the household on the working times of men and women are completely different. When there are children in the household, men in Europe work on average around two hours longer than men in households without children.⁴⁶ Indeed, the worse the provision of childcare facilities is, the longer they work.⁴⁷ In countries with a poor childcare infrastructure, the gender division of labour is clearly determined by structural conditions. Women bear the full responsibility for childcare and are not able to work at all outside the home, or at best only part-time. Men, on the other hand, shoulder the entire responsibility for earning the family income. Since any earnings the women may have had before the children arrived are foregone or reduced and expenditure rises because of the children, men have to increase their working times.

The losses of earnings caused by women reducing their working times, which would be even higher if we were also to take into account the drop in employment rates following the birth of children, are evident from the shorter working times of women with children. In the 16 European countries, such women work on average 3.5 hours per week less than women without children. The differences between the working times of women with and without children are particularly pronounced in the Netherlands, the UK, Germany, Luxembourg, Austria and Ireland, since it is difficult in these countries to combine paid work with raising a family. On the other hand, women with children in Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway work even longer hours than women without children. In these countries, mothers and indeed all parents enjoy conditions that make it possible to combine paid work and childcare responsibilities. The greater volume of hours worked by women with children is very likely attributable to a cohort effect. Younger women work longer hours than older women because women's attitude to paid work and the conditions of women's employment have changed considerably in recent years. The small difference between the working times of women with and without children in Italy and Spain is very probably attributable to the fact that women with children are more likely to withdraw from the labour market altogether, with a resultant decline in employment rates.

The pronounced divergence between the working times of men and women with children does not reflect their preferences. Both men and women with children in the same household would prefer shorter working hours. Men with children would like to reduce their working time by 5.4 hours per week; nevertheless, on average across the 16 European countries, their preferred working time (37.1 hours) is somewhat longer than that of men without children in the same household (36.5 hours). Although women with children would like to reduce their weekly working time by about 2.5 hours, their preferred working time is 3.3 hours shorter than that of women without children. The presence of children is an important factor in determining women's actual and preferred working times. Country differences in this respect are considerable. In Denmark, Finland and Portugal, the difference between the preferred working times of women with and without children is less than one hour; in the Netherlands it is 7.4 hours and as high as 9.3 hours in Ireland (Table 25). This shows that the currently available opportunities for combining paid work and childcare also influence working time preferences.

⁴⁶ For detailed analyses of the link between men's and women's working time by type of household see Fagan and McAllister, 2000.

⁴⁷ There is a negative correlation between the length of men's working times and the level of childcare provision (significance level, 0.05, $R=-0.441$).

Table 25 Actual and preferred hours of men and women with and without children in the same household

	With children in the same household			Without children in the same household		
	Current hours	Preferred hours	Difference	Current hours	Preferred hours	Difference
Men						
Austria	45.7	39.9	-6.5	44.6	39.3	-5.4
Belgium	40.7	35.9	-3.9	40.1	38.1	-1.9
Denmark	40.6	35.1	-5.4	36.9	34.6	-2.3
Finland	42.3	36.4	-6.0	40.3	35.2	-4.5
France	40.8	36.1	-4.6	40.5	35.7	-4.6
Germany	43.4	37.4	-6.1	40.8	36.2	-4.7
Greece						
Ireland	42.7	37.1	-5.7	41.9	37.7	-4.2
Italy	39.9	36.9	-3.0	39.3	36.9	-2.3
Luxembourg						
Netherlands	43.2	37.6	-5.7	36.4	34.2	-1.9
Portugal	43.3					
Spain	40.8	36.2	-4.6	41.6	37.7	-3.8
Sweden	42.9	36.2	-6.5	39.6	36.6	-3.1
UK	46.9	38.3	-8.5	40.6	36.6	-4.1
Norway	41.9	34.9	-7.0	39.9	35.8	-4.1
EU15 + NOR	42.5	37.1	-5.4	40.3	36.5	-3.8
Range	9.0	5.0		8.2	5.1	
Women						
Austria	32.2	29.3	-3.1	39.2	34.8	-4.4
Belgium	32.9	29.8	-3.0	34.5	32.9	-1.7
Denmark	35.8	29.5	-6.3	31.8	30.1	-1.8
Finland	37.8	33.0	-4.8	36.7	33.2	-2.9
France	34.0	31.1	-2.8	35.0	33.4	-1.5
Germany	28.9	27.8	-1.2	35.4	32.2	-3.3
Greece						
Ireland	31.6	26.0	-5.7	37.1	35.3	-1.8
Italy	34.2	29.6	-4.5	34.2	31.3	-3.0
Luxembourg						
Netherlands	21.2	21.3	0.1	29.3	28.7	-0.8
Portugal	35.8	33.4	-2.1	36.6	33.9	-2.7
Spain	34.4	33.1	-0.9	35.4	35.3	0.1
Sweden	35.0	31.5	-3.3	34.9	33.5	-1.3
UK	28.3	25.8	-2.7	34.3	30.8	-4.2
Norway	32.4	28.5	-1.3	31.7	31.0	-1.3
EU15 + NOR	31.3	28.8	-2.5	34.7	32.1	-2.7
Range	16.6	12.1		9.9	6.6	

Base: dependent employees

Multivariate analyses

We have so far conducted a descriptive analysis of the actual and preferred working times of various groups of people in the individual countries. This has revealed general links but not the quantitative aspects of those links. Furthermore, it should be noted that characteristics correlate with each other; for example, there is a link between educational standard and the assumption of management responsibilities, between age and the presence of young children, etc. Our aim now is to use multivariate analyses in order to describe the extent to which selected, interacting characteristics influence actual and preferred working times at both European and national level.

The multivariate analyses are based on the individual data, that is on the information provided by the 30,000 individuals surveyed. The explanatory variables used are selected individual characteristics from the data set. This will enable us to describe the link between working times and some of the determining factors (cf. Chapter 2), namely certain individual and household characteristics. We estimated Ordinary Least Square (OLS) Regressions. Part of the variance that is not explained in our models can be attributed to the effects of factors that cannot be captured with our variables, such as work organisation, the economic situation, regulation and the employment situation.

Factors determining the actual working times of dependent employees

European level: We begin by explaining the average current working time of dependent employees. The explanatory variables are the various individual characteristics, household characteristics and characteristics associated with type of activity.

In the regression model, coefficients with a positive sign (standardized beta) show that the independent (explanatory) variable has the effect of increasing the variable to be explained, while negative coefficients show that the independent variable has the effect of reducing the variable to be explained. The level of the coefficients (standardized beta) indicates the strength of the influence of explanatory variables in question and hence also the possibility of comparing the individual variables with each other.

The results are presented in full in the Annex B 5. Only those results most relevant to the task of interpretation are shown here (Table 26). The first observation to be made is that the mere fact of living in a particular country has a significant influence on current working time in most cases. This means that the different economic and social conditions in the individual countries, which cannot be compared in any great detail here, influence actual working times. We have attempted to quantify more precisely the influence of individual country variables. In this model, however, this did not produce any useful results.⁴⁸

Apart from the dummy-variables for most of the countries⁴⁹ the following individual characteristics have a significant influence on the actual working times of dependent employees:

- men tend to have longer working times than women;
- individuals with managerial duties have longer working times than those without such responsibilities;

⁴⁸ The addition of externally derived variables led to a problem of multi-colinearity, i.e. some of the variables could be explained by all other variables.

⁴⁹ Country-specific results are set-out below.

- older people tend to work longer;
- individuals who assess their chances of being able to find a new job positively tend to have longer working times than those who view their prospects more pessimistically;
- individuals who say that the main reason for working is because they like the job tend to have longer working times than those to whom this does not apply;
- individuals who say that their main reason for working is to meet people tend to have shorter working times than those for whom this is less important;
- workers in manufacturing tend to work longer hours than those in the service sector;
- manual workers tend to work shorter hours than white-collar workers;
- individuals with children tend to have shorter working times than those without children.

Table 26 Factors influencing the actual working time of dependent employees

	Standardised beta coefficient	T significance
Gender (male = 1)	.270986	.0000
Managerial duties (Question 25c)	.177296	.0000
Age	.043339	.0000
Ease in finding a job (Question 40, 1)	.057205	.0000
Good household financial situation (Question 122)	.034207	.0004
Reason for working is job satisfaction (Question 71 b)	.031294	.0009
Reason for working is opportunity to meet people (Question 71 c)	-.035624	.0002
Agriculture (Qestion 22)	.056015	.0000
Manufacturing sector (Question 22)	.218548	.0000
Service sector (Question 22)	.101094	.0005
Manual worker (Question 25 a)	-.090003	.0000
With children in same household (Questions 99 and 100)	-.030701	.0015
Adjusted R Square: .18454		
Constant: 26.201238		

Having an economically active partner has no significant influence on actual working times. And individuals who state that main reason for working hours is the need or desire to earn money do not work significantly longer or shorter hours.

Of all the significant influencing factors, gender is the most influential by a considerable margin followed, in this model, by managerial duties and sectoral affiliation. All the other characteristics exert a much weaker influence on actual working times. If the presence of children in the household, with a coefficient of -0.03, exerts relatively little influence in this model, this is because the influence of this variable has opposite effects on men and women.⁵⁰ In a different model, which included only men or only women, this influence would probably be greater.

⁵⁰ This gender-specific difference is contained in the 'gender' variable.

The variables contained in this model are capable of explaining only part of the variance (18%). The greatest part of the variance must therefore be attributed to other factors. This confirms the argument advanced in section 3, namely that other factors are at work in addition to individual characteristics which are integrated in the regression model, and underscores the need to complete the picture by combining quantitative with qualitative studies.

Country level: The cross-national multivariate analysis showed that individual working times are influenced by factors relating to each particular country. In order to capture the differences between countries more precisely, we estimated OLS-regressions at country level in order to explain the actual working times of dependent employees.

Table 27 Factors influencing the actual working time of dependent employees at country level

	A		B		DK		FIN	
	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance
Gender male	4.59	***	5.50	***	3.73	***	3.22	***
Age	0.22		0.49	**	1.56	***	0.32	**
Age ² /100	-0.26		-0.72	**	-1.86	***	-0.30	
Good financial situation of the household	1.99	**	1.03		1.81	**	0.85	
Household situation (living with working partner)	-0.01		0.87		-0.22		-0.31	
Youngest child up until the age of 5	0.68		-0.51		1.87		1.64	
Youngest child up until the age of 5 and wife	-10.87	***	-1.77		-0.58		-0.93	
Youngest child between 6 and 14 years	-0.65		-1.37		-0.78		0.69	
Youngest child between 6 and 14 years and wife	-5.72	***	-0.59		-0.36		0.51	
Youngest child 15 years and older	4.16	**	0.35		-0.53		0.69	
Youngest child 15 years and older and wife	-8.50	***	-0.81		-2.21		0.70	
Job prospects good	1.74	**	0.74		0.78		0.20	
Working to earn money	-0.22		0.41		-0.95		-0.79	
Working because of job satisfaction	1.60	*	1.86	*	1.57	**	-0.38	
Opportunities to meet people at work	0.56		-1.67	*	0.36		0.64	
Sector production	0.70		3.29	***	4.92	***	2.15	***
Manual worker	-0.62		-4.47	***	-3.79	***	0.25	
Executive duties	3.12	***	4.31	***	1.81	**	2.51	***
Constant	30.16	***	24.52	***	2.66		27.83	***
Adjusted R ²	0.24		0.19		0.28		0.09	
Number of cases	618		544		772		603	

Current and preferred working times at individual level

Table 27 (continued)

	F		D		EL		UK	
	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance
Gender male	3.91	***	4.00	***	2.20		5.31	***
Age	0.10		0.57	***	1.12	**	0.49	***
Age ² /100	-0.16		-0.70	***	-1.24	*	-0.67	***
Good financial situation of the household	0.65		0.53		1.38		1.43	*
Household situation (living with working partner)	-0.28		0.39		-3.33	*	0.71	
Youngest child up until the age of 5	-0.27		2.31		4.91	*	3.17	**
Youngest child up until the age of 5 and wife	-0.94		-12.19	***	-4.63		-13.57	***
Youngest child between 6 and 14 years	0.72		2.95	**	0.57		4.53	***
Youngest child between 6 and 14 years and wife	-2.06		-7.93	***	0.16		-13.30	***
Youngest child 15 years and older	-0.11		0.01		-2.83		4.13	*
Youngest child 15 years and older and wife	-0.27		-3.14		-0.51		-8.28	***
Job prospects good	2.10	***	-0.46		2.50		1.41	*
Working to earn money	0.26		-0.76		0.82		1.62	**
Working because of job satisfaction	-0.93		1.52	**	0.88		0.30	
Working because of opportunities to meet people	0.25		-0.91		-2.52	*	-2.91	***
Sector production	2.73	***	2.95	***	5.40	***	1.71	*
Manual worker	-0.38		-2.34	***	3.20	**	-1.79	**
Executive duties	3.32	***	6.85	***	1.85		4.37	***
Constant	32.13	***	21.85	***	12.79		25.10	***
Adjusted R ²	0.12		0.25		0.12		0.30	
Number of cases	1152		1250		300		1119	
	IRL		I		L		NL	
	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance
Gender male	3.32	***	3.85	***	3.01	*	4.88	***
Age	0.25	**	0.06		0.22		1.12	***
Age ² /100	-0.39	**	-0.17		-0.35		-1.58	***
Good financial situation of the household	1.55	*	-1.63	**	-1.38		1.64	
Household situation (living with working partner)	-1.68	*	-0.33		-0.57		-0.47	
Youngest child up until the age of 5	1.00		1.07		1.25		4.42	***
Youngest child up until the age of 5 and wife	-6.13	***	-1.49		-7.49	**	-17.05	***
Youngest child between 6 and 14 years	1.94		2.08	*	1.91		0.53	
Youngest child between 6 and 14 years and wife	-6.72	***	-2.17		-11.99	***	-11.31	***
Youngest child 15 years and older	1.57		1.14		1.45		3.54	
Youngest child 15 years and older and wife	-3.11		0.47		-5.61		-12.45	***
Job prospects good	1.27		2.40	***	0.75		1.00	
Working to earn money	0.53		-0.17		-0.64		-0.28	
Working because of job satisfaction	2.25	**	0.24		0.64		2.94	***
Working because of opportunities to meet people	-2.74	***	0.40		-0.13		0.08	
Sector production	4.44	***	3.07	***	1.00		4.03	***
Manual worker	0.18		0.37		-0.77		-4.90	***
Executive duties	5.19	***	3.32	***	3.55	***	4.66	***
Constant	29.51	***	33.02	***	34.50	***	11.14	***
Adjusted R ²	0.27		0.15		0.18		0.38	
Number of cases	543		776		260		657	

Table 27 (continued)

	P		E		S		NOR	
	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance
Gender male	2.19		5.41	***	3.15	***	4.96	***
Age	0.74	**	0.15		1.09		1.61	***
Age ² /100	-0.91	**	-0.20		-1.26		-1.98	***
Good financial situation of the household	-2.45	**	0.45		0.87		0.76	
Household situation (living with working partner)	0.07		0.89		0.24		-1.21	
Youngest child up until the age of 5	4.45	**	-0.44		-0.02		-0.64	
Youngest child up until the age of 5 and wife	-4.93	**	-1.57		-2.90		-2.47	
Youngest child between 6 and 14 years	-0.03		0.31		-0.19		-1.31	
Youngest child between 6 and 14 years and wife	-2.16		0.57		-3.76		-3.81	
Youngest child 15 years and older	1.05		-1.89		-2.38		-1.05	
Youngest child 15 years and older and wife	-5.85	**	-0.17		1.21		0.16	
Job prospects good	1.59		0.47		2.84		1.59	*
Working to earn money	1.60	*	-0.08		0.11		0.80	
Working because of job satisfaction	-0.95		0.60		1.40		0.95	
Working because of opportunities to meet people	0.80		0.98		-0.35		-0.69	
Sector production	1.25		1.88	**	4.02		3.06	***
Manual worker	0.16		1.57	*	-4.47		-4.67	***
Executive duties	2.02	*	2.60	***	2.46		3.39	***
Constant	22.25	***	30.67	***	14.32		4.55	
Adjusted R ²	0.12		0.14		0.25		0.28	
Number of cases	465		532		671		656	

*** P < 0.01; ** < 0.05; * P < 0,1

Base: All dependent employees

Explanatory notes

The constants indicate how many hours are worked if all the values fed into the regressions are zero. In the UK the figure is 25.1 hours. If all other variables are identical, men work 5.3 more hours than women. Age plays a significant role in the UK. Because the quadratic term is negative, the curve of actual working time over age is an inverted parabola. This means that actual working time is greatest in the middle years. (Note: the models were estimated for age with interaction terms for gender, but no gender influence was established.) In general in the UK, the presence in the household of children of different ages leads to an increase in current working hours. Among women, however, working time falls, and the net effect for all child age groups is negative. The net effect can be calculated as follows (using the example of children up to and including age 5): total effect 3.17 plus the effect of women with the youngest child up to and including age 5 of 13.57 gives: 3.17 – 13.57 = -10.4. Thus the isolated effect for women with the youngest child up to and including age 5 is that current working time falls by more than 10 hours. The other children variables and interaction terms are to be interpreted in the same way. So how many hours are worked by a man in the UK, who is 25 years of age, whose youngest child is up to and including age 5 and who has managerial duties?

$$WT=25.1+5.31+(0.49*25-0.67(25^2/100)) +3.17+4.37= 46.01 \text{ hours}$$

A woman in the UK with the same characteristics works:

$$WT=25.1+(0.49*25-0.67(25^2/100)) +3.17-13.57+4.37=27.13 \text{ hours.}$$

The results of the regression show, firstly, that the influence of gender on actual working times is significant and positive in all countries except for Portugal and Greece. Men work longer hours than women. If the influence of the other characteristics included in the model is disregarded,⁵¹ men in Luxembourg work three hours more and men in Belgium 5.5 hours more than women. The

51 Gender-specific differences may also be included in the other characteristics; for example, men are more likely than women to have managerial duties, to be manual workers, etc.

longer hours worked by men reflect the fact that they are usually the sole or at least the main family breadwinner, particularly when there are young children in the household (gender division of labour plus, in some countries, inadequate childcare facilities). They also reflect the fact that men generally have higher hourly rates of pay and that it is therefore of greater value to the household for the man to work. The explanation for the non-significance of the difference in working time between men and women in Portugal is presumably to be found in the fact that hourly rates of pay are so low that women simply have to work outside the home in order to ensure the family's economic survival. This is also demonstrated by the fact that in Portugal a good household financial situation has a negative effect on actual working time (reduces working time by 2.45 hours). The female employment rate in Greece is very low, so the question of combining domestic responsibilities and paid work does not generally arise.

The influence of age is very significant in Denmark, Germany, the UK, the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway and less so in Belgium, Ireland and Portugal. The curve takes the shape of an inverted parabola; in other words, the longest working times occur in the middle years, while younger and older individuals tend to have shorter working times.

Thus in Denmark for example

an 18-year-old man works $2.66 + 3.73 + 18 * 1.56 - 1.86 * (18 * 18 / 100) = 28.4$ hours;
 a 38-year-old man works $2.66 + 3.73 + 38 * 1.56 - 1.86 * (38 * 38 / 100) = 38.8$ hours
 a 60-year-old man works $2.66 + 3.73 + 60 * 1.56 - 1.86 * (60 * 60 / 100) = 33.0$ hours.⁵²

There is a variety of possible reasons for this uneven distribution of working time over the life course: individuals may tend to work part-time at the beginning and end of their working lives, with full-time employment and overtime being concentrated in the middle years. In any event, it is clear that in the nine countries listed above the time devoted to paid work is greatest in the middle years, which is usually the period when childcare also makes the greatest demands on people's time.

It is surprising that the presence of children in the household influences actual working times in only a few countries. When this variable does affect actual working times, it does so in a gender-specific way: women with children work shorter hours, while men with children work longer hours. In those countries in which the institutional and social context does not favour the reconciliation of paid work and family life, the traditional gender division of labour is still very stable.

In Germany for example

a 35-year-old woman with one child up to and including age 5 works
 $21.85 + 0.57 * 35 - 0.70 (35 * 35/100) + 2.31 - 12.19 = 23.3$ hours,
 while a 35-year-old man in Germany with one child up to and including age 5 works
 $21.85 + 4.0 + 0.57 * 35 - 0.70 (35 * 35/100) + 2.31 = 39.5$ hours.
 A 35-year-old woman without children in Germany works
 $21.85 + 0.57 * 35 - 0.70 (35 * 35/100) = 33.2$ hours,

⁵² It is assumed in the calculation that none of the other characteristics included in the model applies (so there are no children, no managerial duties, etc.).

while a 35-year-old man without children in Germany works
 $21.85 + 4.0 + 0.57 * 35 - 0.70 (35 * 35/100) = 37.2$ hours.

In Germany, the gender difference in working time of four hours that occurs where there are children up to and including age 5 in the household is further compounded by a reduction in women's working time of 10 hours and an increase in men's working time of more than two hours, with the result that the difference in working time between the mothers and fathers of young children increases to more than 16 hours.

Such an increase in the difference in working time between the genders does not occur in Denmark when young children are present in the household. In Denmark

a 35-year-old woman with one child up to and including age 5 works
 $2.66 + 1.56 * 35 - 1.86 (35 * 35/100) + 1.87 - 0.58 + 35.8$ hours,
while a 35-year-old man with one child up to and including age 5 in Denmark works
 $2.66 + 3.73 + 1.56 * 35 - 1.86 (35 * 35 / 100) + 1.87 + 40.1$ hours.
A 35-year-old woman without children in Denmark works
 $2.66 + 1.56 * 35 - 1.86 (35 * 35 / 100) = 34.5$ hours,
while a 35-year-old man without children in Denmark works
 $2.66 + 3.73 + 1.56 * 35 - 1.86 (35 * 35/100) = 38.2$ hours.

The difference in working time between men and women with children up to and including age 5 is more or less exactly the same as that between men and women without children (just one hour greater).

Overall, the results of the regressions at country level are as follows.

In Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Spain and Norway, the presence of children in the household has no significant influence on working time. In the Scandinavian countries⁵³, as well as in Belgium and France, good childcare provision makes it easier for parents to reconcile paid work with their family responsibilities. In the Scandinavian countries, there is the additional influence of the predominant individual breadwinner model, that is an incentive structure contained within the tax and social security system that favours equal participation by women in the labour market. In Spain and Italy, where the influence of children on working time is also very low, low wages and a family-based system of childcare work together to encourage women to work the same volume of hours after the birth of children, unless they withdraw from economic activity altogether. In these countries, it is primarily those women who find individual solutions to the childcare problem who continue to be economically active.

In Austria, the UK and the Netherlands, the presence of children of any age has a significant influence on the actual working hours of women in dependent employment, who work fewer hours than women without children (by around nine hours in the UK, by up to 13 hours in the Netherlands and by up to 10 hours in Austria). In the UK, furthermore, the hours worked by men when children of any age are present in the same household are significantly longer than those worked by men without children. In these countries, the traditional gender division of labour

⁵³ Children have virtually no influence on current working times in Sweden either.

prevails, since even children no longer in need of care (those aged 15 and over) influence women's working times. However, this could also be due to a cohort effect. Younger women will probably be more likely to return to full-time employment when their children are older.

In Germany, Ireland and Luxembourg, the presence of children up to the age of 14 affects the actual working time of women in dependent employment. In these countries, it is clearly the modified three-phase model that exerts the dominant influence (reduction of economic activity in the child-raising phase followed by an increase when the children are older).

In the Netherlands, Portugal, Greece, Italy, Germany, Austria and the UK, men with children of different ages tend to have longer working times than men without children. The family breadwinner effect is still relatively strong in these countries. In the other countries, on the other hand, there is no significant difference between the hours worked by fathers and those worked by men without children.

In most of the countries, working hours in the manufacturing sector tend to be longer than in the service sector. The significant differences range from 5.4 hours in Greece to 1.7 hours in the UK. This can be explained largely by the fact that the part-time rate is lower in manufacturing than in the service sector. In Austria and Portugal, on the other hand, where the overall part-time rate is low, there is no significant difference between working times in the two sectors.

In Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway, manual workers have significantly shorter working times than white-collar workers. The explanation here lies in the fact that the collectively agreed working times for manual workers are relatively short and are adhered to. At the same time, there are many white-collar workers, particularly the more highly qualified, who work very long hours.

In Greece and Spain, on the other hand, manual workers have longer working times than white-collar workers. This is attributable to differences in contractual working times. At 36 hours, the contractual working time in the public services in Greece is considerably shorter than in private business, and in some regions of Spain there are arrangements in the public sector that permit significantly shorter working times.

In virtually all the countries, individuals with managerial duties work significantly longer hours. In Germany, the gap between this category and other categories of workers is particularly wide at seven hours. There is a simple explanation for the longer hours worked by employees with managerial duties. On the one hand, managerial staff tend not to be clock-watchers, on the other hand, they are more difficult to replace (or at least they consider themselves indispensable).

Only in a few countries does the household's financial situation have a significant effect on current working times. In Italy and Portugal, a household financial situation subjectively perceived as good tends to be associated with shorter working times (reduction of 1.6 and 2.5 hours respectively). Because hourly rates of pay are lower in these countries than in most other European countries, many workers seek, unsuccessfully, to improve their household's poor financial situation by working longer hours. Only those with really high earnings can afford to work fewer hours. In Austria, Denmark, the UK and Ireland, the influence works in the opposite direction. When the household's financial situation is judged to be good, individual working times are longer by

between 1.5 and two hours. In these countries, a good household financial situation clearly tends to be a consequence of longer working hours.

Living with an economically active partner has no significant influence on working time in virtually all the countries. This is plausible, since working times in households where both partners are economically active tend to complement each other. Both women in 'short-hours' part-time jobs and men in 'long-hours' full-time jobs state that they live with an economically active partner.

Factors determining the preferred working times of dependent employees

We used the same model to carry out the multivariate analysis of preferred working times as that used for actual working times, with the actual working time serving as an additional explanatory variable. The results are presented in Table 28. The main finding is that preferred working times are very strongly influenced by actual working times. Since actual working times are themselves influenced by individual, household and employment characteristics, as explained in detail above, only the additional influence of these characteristics is measured in the following model. The results show that gender, the presence of children, the household financial situation and job satisfaction influence preferred working times in many countries.

Table 28 Factors influencing the preferred working time of dependent employees at country level

	A		B		DK		FIN	
	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance
Gender male	2.54	***	1.83	*	2.07	***	1.12	
Age	-0.16		-0.05		-0.08		-0.11	
Age ² /100	0.21		-0.03		0.07		0.02	
Actual working time	0.48	***	0.58	***	0.47	***	0.45	***
Good financial situation of the household	-0.84		-0.47		-0.48		-0.50	
Household situation (living with working partner)	0.26		-0.50		0.05		-1.93	***
Youngest child up until the age of 5	0.82		-1.78		-0.76		0.03	
Youngest child up until the age of 5 and wife	-3.09		-0.90		-3.04	**	-0.69	
Youngest child between the age of 6 and 14 years	-1.67		-1.62		-0.28		0.35	
Youngest child between the age of 6 and 14 years and wife	-0.19		1.01		-0.56		-0.77	
Youngest child 15 years and older	1.34		-0.53		-0.82		-0.25	
Youngest child 15 years and older and wife	-4.88	**	-1.78		-0.55		0.77	
Job prospects good	-1.15	*	-1.32	*	-0.09		-0.03	
Working to earn money	0.95		0.37		-1.45	***	0.49	
Working because of job satisfaction	0.13		0.21		1.83	***	0.78	
Working because of opportunities to meet people	2.92	***	1.31	*	0.19		1.57	**
Sector production	-0.10		2.39	***	1.05	*	1.04	
Manual worker	1.66	**	0.73		0.79		0.77	
Executive duties	0.35		-0.62		-0.38		0.46	
Constant	16.87	***	14.74	***	16.72	***	20.60	***
Adjusted R ²	0.41		0.47		0.40		0.26	
Number of cases	602		528		757		584	

Table 28 (continued)

	F		D		EL		UK	
	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance
Gender male	0.68		1.65	***	1.93		2.49	***
Age	-0.15		0.13		-0.77	*	0.21	**
Age ² /100	0.15		-0.22	*	1.06	*	-0.39	***
Actual working time	0.37	***	0.47	***	0.38	***	0.39	***
Good financial situation of the household	-1.25	***	-1.02	**	0.17		-0.53	
Household situation (living with working partner)	-0.59		-0.27		0.80		-0.95	*
Youngest child up until the age of 5	-0.46		-0.56		1.77		-0.46	
Youngest child up until the age of 5 and wife	-1.22		-1.39		-1.99		-4.24	***
Youngest child between the age of 6 and 14 years	0.45		-0.18		-2.43		-0.46	
Youngest child between the age of 6 and 14 years and wife	-2.08	*	-1.18		0.01		-2.32	
Youngest child 15 years and older	1.36		-0.90		-1.19		1.54	
Youngest child 15 years and older and wife	-2.27	*	-0.41		1.55		-3.02	*
Job prospects good	-0.55		-0.24		-0.89		-0.42	
Working to earn money	0.69	*	0.66		-1.73		0.44	
Working because of job satisfaction	1.30	***	2.14	***	2.99	**	1.76	***
Working because of opportunities to meet people	0.46		0.22		-0.59		0.30	
Sector production	0.90	*	0.61		-1.90		-0.05	
Manual worker	0.81		0.64		1.63		1.60	***
Executive duties	-0.13		-0.77		3.16	***	-0.39	
Constant	22.84	***	13.26	***	30.76	***	14.82	***
Adjusted R ²	0.28		0.45		0.25		0.49	
Number of cases	1088		1226		286		1063	

Table 28 (continued)

	IRL		I		L		NL	
	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance
Gender male	1.33		2.64	***	1.34		1.10	
Age	0.00		0.27	**	-0.58		0.07	
Age ² /100	-0.09		-0.39	**	0.65		-0.21	
Actual working time	0.45	***	0.41	***	0.56	***	0.51	***
Good financial situation of the household	-0.05		-0.40		0.00		0.28	
Household situation (living with working partner)	-1.81	**	-1.39	**	-1.90		-1.56	**
Youngest child up until the age of 5	-1.31		0.20		2.35		-0.27	
Youngest child up until the age of 5 and wife	-3.52	**	-1.70		-0.29		-3.12	**
Youngest child between the age of 6 and 14 years	0.35		0.03		3.93	*	2.45	**
Youngest child between the age of 6 and 14 years and wife	-3.81	**	-2.75	**	-3.74		-4.06	**
Youngest child 15 years and older	1.54		2.40	*	1.97		1.68	
Youngest child 15 years and older and wife	-6.28	***	-0.50		-5.26		-2.98	
Job prospects good	0.52		0.61		-0.02		-1.06	*
Working to earn money	-0.71		0.10		0.85		-0.30	
Working because of job satisfaction	2.06	***	-0.53		1.59		1.42	**
Working because of opportunities to meet people	-0.48		-0.11		-0.08		-0.80	
Sector production	-1.58	**	0.62		-1.80		0.96	
Manual worker	1.79	***	0.85		1.03		0.56	
Executive duties	-0.75		-0.08		0.22		-0.75	
Constant	18.38	***	13.66	***	23.28	***	14.76	***
Adjusted R ²	0.49		0.36		0.44		0.58	
Number of cases	537		755		253		640	

Table 28 (continued)

	P		E		S		NOR	
	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance	Beta-coefficient	Significance
Gender male	0.91		0.66		1.45	*	0.06	
Age	-0.37	*	-0.13		0.21		0.31	*
Age ² /100	0.46	*	0.18		-0.34		-0.44	*
Actual working time	0.44	***	0.23	***	0.33	***	0.52	***
Good financial situation of the household	-1.79	**	-1.48	**	-2.71	***	-0.26	
Household situation (living with working partner)	-0.55		-0.62		-0.71		0.38	
Youngest child up until the age of 5	0.40		-0.67		-1.49		-3.12	***
Youngest child up until the age of 5 and wife	-0.90		-0.94		-1.54		-2.71	*
Youngest child between the age of 6 and 14 years	2.74	*	-0.78		-1.28		-0.19	
Youngest child between the age of 6 and 14 years and wife	-1.27		-0.51		-0.84		-2.73	*
Youngest child 15 years and older	-1.33		-0.53		-0.94		-1.41	
Youngest child 15 years and older and wife	2.25		-1.17		-1.06		1.24	
Job prospects good	0.19		0.53		0.13		-0.34	
Working to earn money	-0.01		-0.26		-0.72		-0.44	
Working because of job satisfaction	0.96		0.74		0.49		1.05	*
Working because of opportunities to meet people	-0.57		0.02		-0.47		0.68	
Sector production	-0.02		-0.60		0.47		0.35	
Manual worker	2.27	***	1.39	**	0.72		-0.25	
Executive duties	3.09	***	0.19		-0.16		0.21	
Constant	22.33	***	29.01	***	22.06	***	9.32	***
Adjusted R ²	0.35		0.15		0.24		0.47	
Number of cases	442		470		651		643	

*** P < 0.01; ** < 0,05; * P < 0,1

Base: All dependent employees

As can be seen, the influence of actual working time on working time preferences is highly significant in all the countries. In other words, preferred working times in all the countries are heavily influenced by actual working times. The longer current working time is, the longer preferred working time is as well. In Belgium, for example, the preferred working time is 0.58 times the actual working time; the corresponding figure for Spain is 0.23. This relatively close connection between current and preferred working times is explained by the fact that current working times are already in part 'chosen'. Moreover, preferences are expressed by reference to the current situation: workers tend to want longer or (more usually) shorter rather than completely different working times.

In some countries, gender has a significant influence on preferred working times. Men want to work longer working times than women. Gender seems to exert less of an influence on preferences than on current working times. However, it should be noted that current working times, which exert a significant influence on working time preferences, are themselves influenced by gender.

For example:

A 35-year-old woman in the UK (without any further characteristics included in the model) works $25.10 + 0.49 * 35 - 0.67 (35 * 35 / 100) = 34.0$ hours and would prefer to work $14.82 + 0.21 * 35 - 0.39 (35 * 35 / 100) + 0.39 * 34.0 = 30.7$ hours

A 35-year-old man in the UK works

$25.10 + 5.31 + 0.49 * 35 - 0.67 (35 * 35 / 100) = 39.4$ hours and would prefer to work

$14.82 + 2.49 + 0.21 * 35 - 0.39 (35 * 35 / 100) + 0.39 * 39.4 = 35.2$ hours.

The man's longer preferred working time is made up as follows: $0.39 * (39.4 - 34.0) = 2.1$ hours, which are attributable to the man's longer actual working time, and a further **2.49** hours, which are attributable to the influence of gender on preferred working times.

As Table 29 shows, men's current and preferred working times are longer than those of women in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the UK, Italy and Sweden. In Finland, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain and Norway, current but not preferred working times are influenced by gender. In these countries, gender differences in preferences can be explained by differences in current working times. In Greece and Portugal, no gender influence on actual or preferred working times could be detected.⁵⁴

Table 29 Gender influence on current and preferred working time

Gender hasa significant influence on actual WT and hence indirectly on preferred working times	...and an additional significant influence on preferred WT.
Austria	4.59	2.54
Belgium	5.50	1.83
Denmark	3.73	2.07
Finland	3.22	-
France	3.91	-
Germany	4.00	1.65
Greece	-	-
UK	5.31	2.49
Ireland	3.32	-
Italy	3.85	2.64
Luxembourg	3.01	-
Netherlands	4.88	-
Portugal	-	-
Spain	5.41	-
Sweden	3.15	1.45
Norway	4.96	-

Base: dependent employees - Standardised beta coefficients

The presence of children in the household has relatively less influence on working time preferences than on current working times.⁵⁵ In those countries where some degree of influence can be identified, it tends to lead to a reduction in preferred working times among women and to an increase among men – with the exception of those in Norway.

⁵⁴ Part of the gender influence is also contained in other explanatory variables e.g. the presence of children.

⁵⁵ The characteristic 'children' already influences preferences through the explanatory variable 'actual working time', since in many countries people with children have significantly longer or shorter actual working hours.

Table 30 depicts the influence that the presence of children in the household has on men's and women's actual and preferred working times in the individual countries.

Table 30 The influence of the presence of children on current and preferred working time of men and women

The presence of children has a significant influence on the actual working times of women (shorter)	...and an additional significant influence on the preferred working times of women (shorter)	... a significant influence on the actual working times of men (longer)	...and an additional significant influence on the preferred working times of men (longer)
Austria	with children of any age	with children aged 15 and over	with children aged 15 and over	-
Belgium	-	-	-	-
Denmark	-	with children up to age 5	-	-
Finland	-	-	-	-
France	-	with children aged 6 and over	-	-
Germany	with children up to age 14	-	with children aged 6-14	-
Greece	-	-	with children up to age 5	-
UK	with children of any age	with children up to age 5 and aged 15 and over	with children of any age	-
Ireland	with children up to age 14	with children of any age	-	-
Italy	-	with children aged 6-14	with children aged 6-14	-
Luxembourg	with children up to age 14	-	-	with children up to age 14
Netherlands	with children of any age	-	with children up to age 5	-
Portugal	with children up to age 5 and aged 15 and over	-	with children up to age 5	with children aged 6-14
Spain	-	-	-	-
Sweden	with children aged 6-14	-	-	-
Norway	-	with children up to age 14	-	with children up to age 5 (shorter)

Base: dependent employees

Four groups of countries can be identified.

1. Belgium, Finland and Spain: Children have no significant influence on either the current or the preferred working times of dependent employees. In these countries, parents – if they work at all - do not have and do not want working times that differ significantly from those of people without any responsibility for bringing up children. In Belgium and Finland, this can be explained by the ready availability of childcare facilities; similarly favourable conditions for reconciling paid work and bringing up children do not exist in Spain, where the female employment rate and the part-time rate are both low. The 'adjustment' of economic activity to reproductive requirements (bringing up children) seldom takes place by means of changes to working time but rather through the withdrawal of women from the labour market.

2. Germany, the Netherlands and, to a lesser extent, Sweden and Greece: Children have a significant influence on current working times but no additional significant influence on preferred working times. In Germany and the Netherlands, the difference in current working time between those people with and those without children is so great that it also, through this explanatory variable, determines the differences in preferred working times as well.

For example, a woman aged 30 and with at least one child aged up to and including age 5 in Germany currently works:

$21.85 + (0.57 * 30 - 0.7 * 30 * 30 / 100) + 2.31 - 12.19 = 22.7$ hours and would prefer a working time of $13.26 + (0.13 * 30 - 0.22 * 30 * 30 / 100) + 0.47 * 22.7 - 0.56 - 1.39 = 23.9$ hours.

A 30-year-old woman without children works $21.85 + (0.57 * 30 - 0.7 * 30 * 30 / 100) = 32.65$ hours and would prefer to work $13.26 + (0.13 * 30 - 0.22 * 30 * 30 / 100) + 0.47 * 32.65 = 30.52$ hours.

The difference between the preferred working times of women with and without children is 6.6 hours. Of these 6.6 hours, $0.47 * (32.65 - 22.7) = 4.7$ hours are accounted for by the different current working times and only 1.95 hours by additional differences in working time preferences.

3. Denmark, France and Norway: Children have no significant influence on actual working times but a significant influence on preferred working times. In these countries, the extensive provision of childcare facilities creates favourable conditions for those seeking a reasonable work/life balance. However, some parents would prefer shorter working times and are therefore currently working longer hours than they would ideally like. In Denmark, for example,

a woman aged 30 with at least one child up to and including age 5 currently works: $2.66 + (1.56 * 30 - 1.86 * 30 * 30 / 100) + 1.87 - 0.58 = 34.01$ hours and would prefer to work: $16.72 + (-0.08 * 30 + 0.07 * 30 * 30 / 100) + 0.47 * 34.01 - 0.76 - 3.04 = 28.17$ hours.

There is no difference linked to these characteristics between those with older children and any other group. In France, children have no detectable influence on actual working times, although women with children aged 6 and over (not those with children up to and including age 5) tend to prefer shorter working times than women without children of that age. In Norway, the presence of children up to and including age 5 influences the preferred working times (but not the current working times) of both sexes, with the influence on women being stronger than that on men.

These examples clearly show that good childcare facilities are not in themselves sufficient to give parents the best possible opportunities to combine paid work and raising a family. Preferences for shorter working hours are expressed in those countries where women work longer than average hours and, despite good childcare facilities, feel themselves to be overburdened or would simply like to have more time for their children.

4. The UK in particular and, to some extent also, Austria, Ireland, Luxembourg, Italy and Portugal: Children have a significant influence on current working times as well as an additional significant influence on preferred working times. Differences in actual working times between people with and without children in these countries are upheld and possibly even reinforced by analogous differences in preferred working times. In the UK, for example,

a 30-year-old woman aged 30 with at least one child up to and including age 5 currently works $25.1 + (0.49 * 30 - 0.67 * 30 / 100) + 3.17 - 13.57 = 23.37$ hours but would prefer to work $14.82 + (0.21 * 30 - 0.39 * 30 * 30 / 100) + 0.39 * 23.37 - 0.46 - 4.24 = 22.02$ hours.

A 30-year-old woman without children works $25.1 + (0.49 * 30 - 0.67 * 30 * 30 / 100) = 33.77$ hours but would prefer to work $14.82 + (0.21 * 30 - 0.39 * 30 * 30 / 100) + 0.39 * 33.77 = 30.78$ hours.

The 8.8 hour difference between the preferred working times can be broken down as follows: $0.39 * (33.77 - 23.37) = 4.1$ hours attributable to the different actual working times and 4.7 hours attributable to additional differences in working time preferences.

In France, Germany, Portugal, Spain and Sweden, a good household financial situation tends to shift preferences towards shorter working times. In these countries, shorter working times are obviously perceived subjectively as an indicator of prosperity and well-being. Shorter working times are more readily affordable in Germany and Sweden than in the other countries because of higher average incomes. France, Portugal and Spain are countries with relatively high earnings inequalities and it is not surprising that it is the higher earners in these countries who express a preference for reductions in working time. In other countries, a good household financial situation does not influence preferred working times. In these countries, respondents are obviously assuming that their good financial situation can be sustained only if their long working times remained relatively unchanged.

Those people in Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands and Norway who declare that they work primarily because they like their jobs have a preference for significantly longer working times. This supports the argument that a high level of intrinsic motivation is associated with greater commitment to the job and also with longer working hours. However, such a correlation is not inevitable, as is shown by those countries in which this characteristic has no significant influence.

Factors determining the difference between the current and preferred working times of dependent employees

Here, we use a regression model in order to explain the difference between preferred actual working times on the basis of individual data from the data set. The variable to be explained (DIFF) is the difference between preferred and actual working time. DIFF has a negative value when the preferred working time is less than the actual working time and it is positive when the preferred working time is greater than the actual working time.

In the regression model (Table 31),⁵⁶ which we have estimated for men and women separately, positive coefficients indicate that the independent explanatory variable has the effect of increasing the variable to be explained. In the present case, this means that DIFF is less negative or even positive. It does not necessarily mean that the preferred working time is greater than the actual working time but may merely indicate less strong preferences for a reduction (since e.g. $-2 > -5$).

⁵⁶ In Table 31 only variables which have a significant influence are listed. However, dummy variables for the countries are not listed here, even if they have a significant influence; cf. Annex 3.

Current working time has a highly significant influence. The longer current working time is, the more strongly negative DIFF is, i.e. the stronger the preference for shorter hours is. Consequently, individuals with longer working hours would like to reduce their working times by a greater amount than those with shorter working times. At the same time, current working time has by far the greatest influence on the difference, while other significant explanatory variables influence the difference to a lesser extent.

Age is highly significant. The older a person is, the smaller DIFF is, that is the greater the reduction in working time that is desired.

Table 31 Factors significantly influencing the difference between the current and preferred working times of dependent employees

	Men		Women	
	Standardised beta coefficient	T significance	Standardised beta coefficient	T significance
Current working time	-.579599	.0000	-.614810	.0000
Age	-.050531	.0001	-.050358	.0000
Household financial situation (Question 122) is good		-	-.055062	.0000
Main reason for working is job satisfaction (Question 71 b)	.089508	.0000	.035770	.0016
Main reason for working is to meet people (Question 71c)		-	.039280	.0005
Manual worker (Question 25a)	.040795	.0018	.039035	.0007
Partner is also economically active (Questions 12, 13)			-.056969	.0000
With children in the household (Questions 99 and 100)		-	-.079332	.0000
Constant	14.852	.0000	18.551	.0000
Adjusted R Square:	.34908		.38980	

For complete results cf. Annex B 6

Only in the case of women does the household financial situation affect the difference between preferred and actual working time. Women living in an economically secure household tend to want a reduction in their working time, while the influence on men is not statistically significant. In other words, when the household's economic situation is good, the option exists for the woman to work shorter hours.

When people state that their main reason for working is that they like their jobs, both men and women express much less pronounced preferences for shorter working times or even to prefer longer working times.

When women state that their main reason for working is to meet people, this has a significant influence, reducing preferences for shorter working times or even producing a preference for longer working times. This characteristic has no significant influence on men.

Manual workers express no great preference for reduced working hours and may even want to extend them.

The presence of children in the household and the fact that the partner is economically active have a highly significant influence among women on the difference between preferred actual working times. The effect of both characteristics is to increase the preference for shorter working times. Among men, on the other hand, neither of these factors has a significant influence.

Managerial duties, sectoral affiliation and the chances of finding a new job have no significant influence on the difference between preferred and current working times. Among men, the country they live in (see detailed results in Annex 3) has no significant influence and thus the characteristics included in the model fully explain the differences. For women, however, this is not the case. In Denmark, the Netherlands, Ireland and the UK, there are other country specific explanatory factors that are not included in the regression.

In summary, we can say that, for men, current working time exerts the greatest influence on the preferences for change, while for women additional, household-related factors come into play, albeit to a lesser extent. When there are children in the household, when the partner is also economically active and when the household's economic situation is good, then women would prefer to reduce their working times.

Furthermore, correlation calculations show that, at country level, the share of individuals with a preference for shorter working hours is positively correlated with human capital in purchasing power parities (cf. Annexe 3). The higher the average level of human capital is, the greater the share of employees with a preference for shorter working hours is ($R = 0.557$) and the lower the share is of those preferring to retain their current working times ($R = - 0.572$). Dissatisfaction with (long) working times obviously increases as the average standard of education rises. It can reasonably be assumed that this is connected with the working conditions and new performance requirements in knowledge-intensive industries and services and with the higher incomes that tend to be associated with these sectors of the economy.

Particular forms of working time reduction

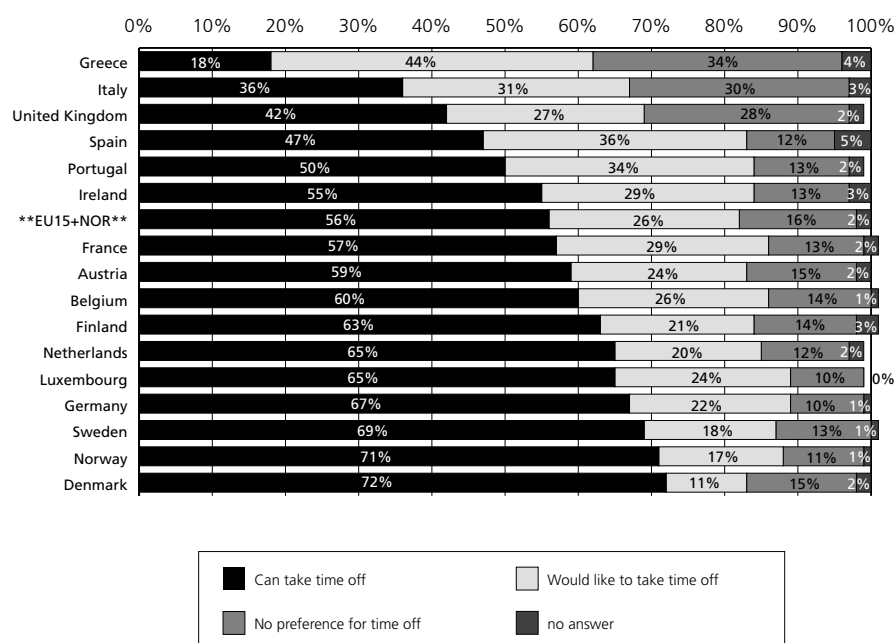
Time off in lieu of overtime

Working time preferences may be targeted at an increase or reduction in contractual working times or at compliance with contractual working time and the reduction of overtime. Since current working times are generally longer than contractual working times, current working time can be reduced simply by reducing overtime or offering workers time off in lieu. Sixty-two per cent of all employed persons in the 16 countries answered that they did any paid or unpaid overtime. This share is the highest in Denmark (97%) and the lowest in Spain (43%).

The opportunities for taking time off in lieu of overtime vary enormously across the 16 countries (Figure 15).⁵⁷ On average across Europe, 56% of those in gainful employment and working overtime already take time off in lieu. Far more employees in the Scandinavian countries, Germany, the Netherlands and Luxembourg are able to take time off in compensation for overtime than in the countries of southern Europe. Only 18% of those in gainful employment and working overtime in Greece and 36% in Italy enjoy such opportunities, compared with around 70% in Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

⁵⁷ The question asked was: 'Are you able to take time off as compensation for this overtime?' and (if the response was negative) 'Would you like to do so?''.

Figure 15 Preferences for time off in lieu of overtime



(Questions 53 and 54) Base: Individuals in gainful employment and working overtime (Question 51)

Across Europe as a whole, an average of 26% of employees express a preference for time off in lieu. The preference is relatively widespread and particularly great in those countries where there have hitherto been few opportunities to do so. Thus 44% of those working overtime in Greece and 11% in Denmark express a preference for time off in lieu.

On the other hand, 16% of those working overtime across Europe and around one third of those working overtime in Greece, Italy and the UK do not want to take time off in lieu (and currently have no opportunity to do so). These individuals prefer additional income to a working time reduction. These three countries have relatively low hourly rates of pay and high earnings inequalities. The interest in longer working times as a means of increasing earnings can be explained by these factors.

In general, it can be said that the preference for time off in lieu of overtime is very widespread. With the exception of Greece, Italy and Spain, more than 80% of those working overtime do or would like to take time off in lieu of overtime. Thus the reduction of overtime is regarded by employees as one of the basic instruments for realising their preferences for shorter working times. In order to make it possible for employees to take time off in lieu of overtime, working times and work organisation have to be made more flexible. If longer working times (including additional hours) are to be concentrated in periods of peak activity and time off or shorter working times are to be concentrated in slacker periods, then employers need to move away from rigid working time patterns (8-hour day or 40-hour week). Working time will have to be unequally distributed between the various periods.

For some respondents, namely those who currently work unpaid overtime, time off in lieu would mean more free time without any reduction in earnings. In these cases, the introduction of time off

in lieu would lead to increased costs for the employer. This increase in costs could be mitigated to some extent by changes in work organisation, productivity increases as a result of shorter working times etc. For other respondents, those receiving extra pay for the overtime they work, time off in lieu would mean exchanging time for money. In both cases, employment effects could be achieved simply by reducing overtime.

Sabbaticals

Another form of working time reduction and, at the same time, a way of extending individual choice, is the sabbatical. This is a period of leave from work, of variable length, which may be taken once or even several times in the course of the working life. It represents, therefore, a reduction in working time over the working life. Extensive practical experience with this form of working time reduction has already been acquired in Denmark,⁵⁸ and Finland is currently taking the first steps down this route;⁵⁹ in the other countries, however, very little use has yet been made of sabbaticals as a means of labour market policy. Nevertheless, they are the subject of debate among those engaged in working time policy in many countries.

There is considerable interest in sabbaticals in Europe. On average in the 16 countries, more than half of dependent employees (57%) said they were interested in principle in sabbaticals, with the figures for the individual countries ranging from 38% in Spain to 79% in Ireland and Norway.⁶⁰ In all countries, the majority of those expressing an interest in sabbaticals (64% across Europe as a whole) would use the time for travelling, for relaxation or for other leisure activities.⁶¹ The second most popular use of such time would be further education (24%), while 13% would use sabbaticals for do-it-yourself work and 11% for looking after children. Thus most people view sabbaticals as an opportunity for increasing the free time available to them to use as they see fit; nevertheless, they could also provide a temporary respite from the pressures of work, thereby allowing employees to undertake necessary activities, such as further education, childcare or do-it-yourself activities, that compete with time for paid work.

The overwhelming preference is for relatively short sabbaticals. Three-quarters of all those declaring an interest in sabbaticals would prefer to take up to three months off, while only 10% (ranging from 3% in Italy and the Netherlands to 24% in France) would be interested in taking more than six months off. Furthermore, some of those interested regard the appropriate time for a sabbatical as some point in the distant future.

Whether sabbaticals would actually be taken or not obviously depends very much on the level of income compensation that might be available as is shown by the practical experience in Denmark

58 A wide range of leave schemes (parental, training, sabbaticals and early retirement) were introduced in the first half of the 1990s. In the late 1990s, however, the allowances paid to those participating in these schemes were severely reduced, and this was followed by a decline in interest (country report).

59 Job alternation leave was introduced in Finland in 1996. The programme was inspired by the Danish sabbatical leave scheme. The scheme gives employees an opportunity to take a three to 12 month sabbatical while an unemployed person substitutes for him or her (country report).

60 The question asked was: 'Apart from your regular holidays, do you think that from time to time it would be useful to have a longer break of several weeks or months from your paid work in order to do other things? Afterwards you would have the right to return to your job.'

61 The question asked was: 'What you think you would like to do during such a break? - Further education, honorary, charitable or political activities; do-it-yourself work (repair car, renovate house etc.); take care of children; take care of elderly, guilt or persons the disability in my family; travel, relax or other leisure activities; others.'

and Finland. Nevertheless, 38% of dependent employees expressing an interest in sabbaticals (22% of all dependent employees) would take a sabbatical without any income compensation, 33% (19% of all dependent employees) would take one on half pay and 29% (17% of all dependent employees) would take one only if the compensation was more than 50% of their earnings. Thus the extent to which employees would take advantage of sabbatical programmes, and thus the extent to which they really broaden individual choice, depends very much on whether and how the consequent loss of income is compensated for.

At the same time, the conditions required for the introduction of sabbaticals would have to be introduced in the workplace. These include flexible forms of work and working time organisation, which make it possible to plan the phased departure of employees. At the moment, workers in the various countries assess their chances of being able to take an extended period of time off from their current jobs very differently. In Finland, Norway and Denmark, more than half of the dependent employees interested in sabbaticals say it would be possible, while fewer than one third of those interested in sabbaticals in the southern European countries share this opinion.

Summary

Our aim in this section has been to ascertain how employees' actual working time and working time preferences vary from country to country and how these differences might be explained and to identify the general trends of working-time preferences and the extent to which they differ from actual working times. The findings show that there are both similarities and, in some cases, considerable differences between the 16 countries in terms of working time structures and the preferences expressed by respondents.

Europe-wide profiles

Current working times: In all countries, the self-employed say that they work considerably longer hours than dependent employees. The figures suggest that self-employed workers are far from being in control of their own working times. The opportunities that exist in theory for working time sovereignty are severely restricted or even eliminated altogether by competitive pressures. In reality, the self-employed are very much further - 10 hours on average - from realising their preferences than dependent employees (3.7 hours).

In all countries, the current working times of dependent full-time employees are longer than their collectively agreed working times. This is because of overtime, which for one third of the workforce on average contributes regularly to the extension of contractual working times, whether on a daily or weekly basis. Across Europe as a whole, 65 per cent of economically active men and 57 per cent of economically active women state that they work paid or unpaid overtime at least from time to time.

Men work longer hours than women in all countries. Across Europe as a whole, the difference between men's and women's working time is 8.5 hours. The longer hours worked by men are connected to the fact that they are frequently the main or even the only breadwinner in their families, particularly when there are children in the household. Moreover, men generally have higher hourly rates of pay than women and for this reason the paid work done by men is economically more important to their families than that done by women. Men's actual working times are more homogeneous than those of women; the differences between the countries are more

strongly affected by differences in women's working times than by men's working times. The reason for this is that, in all countries, men's average working times are determined primarily by the length of working time at full-time level,⁶² since male part-time rates are very low, whereas women's working times vary considerably depending on the part-time rate in the various countries. Voluntary or enforced part-time work by women is an important, if not the main reason for the differences in working time between the sexes.

In virtually all the countries, individuals with managerial duties work longer hours than those without such responsibilities. The reason for this, firstly, is that their jobs are defined in terms of results rather than working time. Secondly, the working times of high-skill workers in many countries are not regulated by the general collectively agreed norms. A certain amount of overtime is required and is included in the wage. Moreover, some at least of those with managerial duties are not easily replaceable, so it is less likely that colleagues will be able to provide cover.

Preferred working times: Working time preferences are influenced to a considerable extent by current working times. In general, the longer (or shorter) actual working time is, the longer (or shorter) preferred working time tends to be. Thus people tend to want somewhat longer or (more usually) somewhat shorter working hours rather than a complete change in their working time. Men's preferences are influenced primarily by their current working time, while for women household-related factors also play a role, albeit to a lesser extent. When there are children in the household, when the partner is economically active and the household financial situation is good, women tend to want to reduce their working times.

In all the countries, people tend on average to express a preference for shorter individual working times than those they currently have. Individuals with long working hours would like to reduce their working time by a greater amount than those with short working times. Across Europe as a whole, dependent employees would like to see a reduction in their working time of 3.7 hours per week. While about half of dependent employees want to reduce their working time, only 12% want to work longer hours. Thirty-nine per cent of dependent employees would like to retain their current working times.

Closer examination reveals dissatisfaction in all the countries with current practices of both very long and very short working times are preferred less frequently. Employees with very long working times tend to want to reduce their working hours and those with very short working times tend to want to work longer hours. However, many employees with working times in the middle of the range – long part-time and short full-time – would also like to work fewer hours.

In sum, it is clear in all the countries that working time preferences are more alike than actual working times. Extreme – that is especially long and especially short – working times are preferred less frequently. On the other hand, preferences in the middle of the range are more widely dispersed. It is possible to speak of a convergence of preferences towards working times of between 30 and 40 hours per week: 77% of male and 62% of female dependent employees would prefer working times within this range.

⁶² In some cases, they slightly exceed it because of overtime.

In all the countries, there are differences between men's and women's working times preferences, although the differences are smaller. Although men want to reduce their working time by about twice as many hours as women, men's preferred working times are still around seven hours longer than those of women. The preferences of men in dependent employment are concentrated strongly around the 40-, 35- and 30-hour marks, while those of women in dependent employment cluster around the 20-, 30-, 35- and 40-hour marks. Thus the majority of men would prefer full-time employment with shorter hours. A large part of these preferences for shorter hours could be realised by reducing overtime, as the concentration of working-time preferences around the 40-hour mark shows. On the other hand, women prefer both (short) full-time employment as well as substantial part-time work, with very few expressing a preference for marginal part-time work. Like their actual working times, women's preferences are more strongly differentiated than those of men, both within and between the various countries.

In all the countries, both men and women express preferences are for lower shares of full-time employment (35 hours and over) and higher shares of substantial part-time employment (20 to 34 hours). If these preferences were realised, the share of employees working full-time across Europe as a whole would decline from 91% to 76% among men and from 60% to 45% among women, while the share of those in substantial part-time employment would rise from 6% to 21% among men and from 25% to 46% among women.

The convergence of the working time preferences of men and women in dependent employment both across and within countries is one of the most important findings of this report.

Profiles of countries and groups of countries

Current working times: The differences in dependent employees' working times across the countries can be attributed to differences in average collectively agreed working times, in part-time rates, in part-timers' working hours (shares of substantial and marginal part-time employment) and in overtime volumes.

Full-timers' contractual and actual working times differ from country to country. Contractual working time for full-timers fluctuates between 35 and 40 hours, while actual working times for full-timers are around four hours longer, at between 39 and 44 hours.

Overtime has a particular influence on working time structures in those countries in which there are monetary incentives for long working hours, considerable gender differences in working time because of a traditional division of labour between men and women and/or low hourly rates of pay. The difference between full-timers' contractual and actual working times, which is due largely to overtime, is greatest in Austria, Germany and the UK, at between five and six hours, while it is only one hour in Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg and Portugal.

The share of female part-time employees and their working time differ considerably from country to country. In two cases, the differences between men's and women's working times are slight, albeit for very different reasons. This is the case, firstly, when both sexes enjoy favourable conditions for reconciling paid work and family responsibilities, and in particular good child care facilities, as in Finland, Denmark and Sweden. In these countries, women often work full-time or, as in Sweden, where the female part-time rate is higher than average, in jobs offering hours close

to the full-time norm rather than in 'short-hours' jobs. Gender differences in working time are also small in those countries such as Spain, Italy and Greece where female employment rates are low and women either work full-time or do not participate in the labour market at all. The difference between the working times of men and women in dependent employment is particularly great in those countries in which women do participate in the labour market but are more likely to work part-time because of inadequate childcare facilities and and/or tax incentives in favour of the (modernised) male breadwinner family model.

The national working time profiles suggest that women's labour market participation can take a variety of forms. At the same time, they reveal why the presence of children in the household influences actual working times in different ways from country to country.

As far as these various forms of labour market participation are concerned, the 16 countries can be divided into two contrasting types. The first, best typified by the Scandinavian countries, is characterised by high female employment rates (and even higher participation rates) with relatively high but declining part-time rates (except in Finland). In these countries, an incentive structure rooted in the tax and social security system encourages women to participate in the labour market on an equal footing, and there are good childcare facilities. The presence of children in the household does not have a significant effect on individual working times. The second type, best typified by the southern European countries (excluding Portugal), is characterised by low female participation rates, and even lower employment rates, and a low but rising share of part-time employment. The single male breadwinner model is still dominant in these countries, and the women with children who do work (mainly full-time) are principally those who have been able to find individual solutions to the childcare problem. This is why the influence of children on working time is very slight in these countries as well.

Within these contrasting types there are exceptions, Finland among the Nordic countries and Portugal among the southern European countries, although they are countries with very different levels of prosperity. In both countries, female participation rates are very high and the dominant form of participation is full-time employment. Finland combines the Scandinavian model of female labour market participation with its long tradition of full-time employment for women. Portugal, in contrast, combines the southern European model of the family with full-time employment for both partners, because wages are too low to sustain the single breadwinner model. Additional explanations are the massive emigration to other European countries (especially during the 1960s) and a long period of colonial war (1961-1974) which led to a shortage of male labour as well as the early and fast access of Portuguese women to higher education.⁶³

Set alongside these contrasting types, the other countries are best described as intermediate types.

In some countries (e.g. Belgium and France), female participation rates approximate to the European average and are supported by social policy measures, notably the provision of good childcare facilities, which makes it easier to reconcile paid work and family responsibilities. In these countries, women's employment is more or less synonymous with virtually uninterrupted full-

⁶³ The female activity rate in Portugal increased from 13% in 1960 to 45% in 2000.

time employment. The so-called 'child breaks' are very short and the presence of children in the household has no discernible impact on individual working times.

The UK is an example of a country with a high female participation rate and a high part-time rate. Here, part-time work among women is strongly market-driven, that is by the gender segmentation of the labour market. The relatively large differences between men's and women's hourly pay rates (women earn only three-quarters of men's hourly earnings) and what, by European standards, is an extremely low rate of coverage by collective agreement (47% of employees) force long male working times on families. The (excessively) long hours worked by their male partners further reduce women's availability for work, with the result that part-time employment is the option that best suits their situation.

Another trend in women's labour market participation is exemplified by Austria, Germany and Luxembourg, where women are entering employment in increasing numbers despite the traditional institutional barriers that are still in place. Although childcare facilities in these countries are relatively underdeveloped and the tax and social security systems still tend to favour the male breadwinner model (with the women working part-time if the need arises), there are considerable shares of women in full-time employment (36% to 25%). In other words, there are significant proportions of (married) women who disregard the institutional barriers. However, this becomes more difficult when there are young children to be cared for. In these countries, the presence of children in the household has a strong influence on the actual working times of women in dependent employment and, in some cases, on those of men as well. Women with children work shorter hours, while men with children work longer hours. Under these circumstances, women work full-time mainly when there are (as yet) no children in the household. In these countries, the modified three-phase model exerts the dominant influence (reduction of female labour supply during the child-raising phase and an increase when the children are older). However, a growing share of women are foregoing having children altogether.

As a result of a sharp increase in part-time employment in the 1980s, the female participation rate in the Netherlands rose very quickly from one of the lowest in Europe to the European average. However, since a large share of women in dependent employment (34%) are in marginal part-time jobs (the overall part-time rate among women is 66%), the traditional gender division of labour remains largely untouched. The rapid expansion of part-time working has had the effect of making relatively short working times widely acceptable among both men and women and even more popular at the level of preferences.

These different modes of female labour market participation show that part-time work (by women) can have very different meanings. True, it is generally a way of combining work in the labour market with child raising. However, it may either be the only feasible option for women with children wishing to work outside the home, as it is in Germany, or, as in Sweden and Norway, a temporary choice encouraged by the fact that the transition between full-time and part-time employment is facilitated by statutory and collectively agreed arrangements (Anxo et al. 1999). In the first case, women are 'choosing' between part-time work and economic inactivity, while in the second they are choosing between full-time and part-time employment.

Preferred working times: Working times regulated by statute or collective agreement, as well as norms under discussion (e.g. 35-hour week), are the reference points for working-time preferences

and hence one reason for the differences in the preferences expressed in the various countries. Thus working time preferences in France are clustered around the 35- and 39-hour marks, in Sweden around the 30- and 40-hour marks, in Denmark around the 30- and 37-hour marks and in Spain around the 35- and 40-hour marks. Preferences in the Netherlands and the UK have a somewhat different profile, since they are more widely dispersed and, among women in particular, there is no discernible trend towards a preferred working-time range.

The differences in the preferences expressed in the various countries are closely connected to the differences in actual working times. They are attributable primarily to the different institutional environments within which women participate in the labour market, which influence not only their actual working times but also their working time preferences. The wider range of women's working time preferences is also connected to the fact that differences in family circumstances (existence of children, people in need of care etc.) tend to have a greater effect on women's working time preferences than on men's.

The various modes of female labour market participation outlined above are also evident in the preferences expressed in the various countries.

Working times close to the full-time norm are preferred mainly by women in dependent employment in countries where favourable conditions exist for the reconciliation of paid work and family responsibilities, in countries with established traditions of full-time employment for women and in countries with low female employment rates. While the preferred reductions in the last-named countries (Greece and Spain) and in Portugal tend to be slight, those in Denmark and Sweden suggest that women may be aspiring to a new working time standard of around 30 hours per week, significantly below the current one. The same is true for France, where the preferences of women in dependent employment are concentrated between the 30- and 35-hour marks.

Part-time employment involving somewhat shorter hours, between 20 and 25 hours per week, is preferred primarily by women in those countries such as Germany, Luxembourg and Austria in which the traditional family models are still dominant and opportunities for combining paid work and family life continue to be inadequate. To a large extent, such preferences are expressed by those currently in marginal part-time jobs who would like to work more hours.

There are no distinctive profiles of working time preferences in the United Kingdom or the Netherlands. The 'light-touch' regulatory framework in the UK and greater freedom of choice in the Netherlands are the main reasons for this.

France is the only one of the 16 countries in which the working time preferences of both men and women in dependent employment point to a potential for change towards a new general working time standard of around 35 hours. In Denmark and Sweden, on the other hand, it is only women's preferences that point in this direction, while men tend to express a preference for maintaining the current standard with a reduction in overtime (and in some instances a slight reduction in working time).

The Danish and Swedish examples point to a problem. On the one hand, good childcare facilities make it easier for both men and women to take jobs with hours at or close to the full-time norm.

On the other hand, good childcare facilities are not in themselves sufficient to create the optimal conditions for combining working in the labour market with bringing up a family. Unless working times are reduced and the unpaid domestic and family work is redistributed between the partners, women entering full-time employment will in effect be doing two jobs. Thus preferences for a reduction in working time are expressed when women work longer-than-average hours and feel themselves to be very overworked, despite good childcare facilities, or when parents simply want to have more time for their children.

The survey results confirm the expected link between (household) income and preferences for reduced working times. Families must be able to afford to work fewer hours. The higher average incomes in Germany and Sweden make it easier than in other countries for people to afford shorter working hours. In France, Portugal and Spain, countries where earnings inequalities are relatively high, it is mainly the higher earners who express a preference for shorter working hours. Decisions in favour of part-time work or sabbaticals are also strongly influenced by the extent to which families feel able to cope with any resultant loss of income.

We have already seen in this section that current and preferred working times are determined not only by individuals but also by household characteristics. This will be investigated in greater detail in the next chapter, in which we consider the distribution of working time at household level.

Sharing of paid work and working time

Of the approximately 150 million individuals in gainful employment in Europe (self-employed persons and employees, excluding family workers), 31% live alone and 69% share their lives with either a male or female partner (Bielenski/Hartmann 1999, 12). Since their decisions on paid work and working time are taken not only on an individual basis but also in the context of households, we turn in this section to the question of how couples divide paid work and working time between themselves and what distribution thereof they prefer. In contrast to the previous chapter, in which our analysis of working times was confined to employed individuals, that is those with a working time greater than zero, the analysis of working times in two-adult households presented in this section will also include economically inactive individuals. We are no longer focusing solely on the hours worked by the gainfully employed but also on those of their economically inactive partners.⁶⁴ Their working time is entered as zero; in other words, in a two-adult household in which one partner works 38 hours and the other is economically inactive, the difference in working time between the two is $38-0=38$ hours.

The decisions taken and the employment and working time preferences expressed at household level relate to various issues. On the one hand, there is the question of how much paid work both partners do and whether the couple would like to change the total number of hours worked by the household or leave it unaltered. The choice facing couples is that between increasing or reducing household income and increasing or reducing the non-working time available for household and family.

On the other hand, there is the question of how the volume of paid work considered necessary for each household is distributed between the two partners and of the preferences expressed in respect of this distribution. The decisions that couples make in this respect are likely to reflect individual and societal values and attitudes to gender roles as well as the opportunities that exist in the various countries for combining parenthood and paid work. It is known that men's and women's working times are strongly influenced by societal differences in public childcare, parental leave provisions, fiscal policies, social protection systems and working time regulations, particularly when there are children in the household. Fagan and Warren (2001) have analysed the differences in these areas between groups of countries with a strong, moderate and weak attachment to the single male breadwinner model and found significant differences between the groups of countries. However, it is also known that many couples do not behave in accordance with the existing incentive structures and if necessary accept stresses and strains and financial disadvantages in order to realise their employment and working time aspirations (Dingeldey, 1999).

By comparing actual structures and preferences⁶⁵ as to the volume and distribution of total household working time, we can show whether and to what extent couples' working time preferences are currently being realised in individual countries. Here too, a large gap between preferences and reality is an indication that potential for change exists. What interests us is the direction of any desire for change that might emerge from respondents' statements.

⁶⁴ Only two-person households with at least one economically active individual are included in the analysis.

⁶⁵ Those surveyed stated their own preferred working times and the working times they would prefer for their partner. The question asked was: 'Provided that you (and your partner) could make a free choice so far as working hours are concerned and taking into account of the need to earn your living: How many hours per week would you prefer to work at present? And in this case how many hours per week would you prefer your partner to work?'

Current and preferred working times of couples across Europe

The first matter of concern to us here is the volume of paid work done by two-adult households – viewed as single units – in the various countries. In order to ascertain the total volume of paid work done by two-adult-households and to compare the volumes across countries, we use as our indicator ‘total working time at household level’, which is the sum of the partners’ individual working times. In this initial stage, no account is taken of how in the household working time is distributed between the partners or whether only one of the two may be economically active. Our only concern in this initial stage is how two-adult households differ as units in respect of working times.

Table 32 Individual working times and working times of both partners at household level

Country	Average current weekly working hours			
	Of all employed persons (hours) 1	Ranking Column 1 2	Of both partners in a household ¹ (hours) 3	Ranking Column 3 4
Austria	42.4	15	66.6	12
Belgium	38.4	4	65.4	9
Denmark	37.2	2	68.5	14
Finland	40.0	11	67.7	13
France	38.7	6	62.4	7
Germany	38.8	7	60.8	5
Greece	44.9	16	65.1	8
Ireland	41.0	13	61.8	6
Italy	39.1	9	58.0	2
Luxembourg	39.2	10	58.0	2
Netherlands	35.0	1	58.3	4
Portugal	41.5	14	69.1	15
Spain	40.5	12	54.4	1
Sweden	38.9	8	69.3	16
United Kingdom	38.5	5	66.4	10
Norway	37.4	3	66.4	10
EU15+NOR	39.0	-	62.0	-
Range*	9.9		14.9	

¹ households with at least one of the partners in paid work

*Difference between the highest and the lowest number of hours

As Table 32 shows, average total working time in two-adult households is 62 hours. The longest times, between 69.3 and 68.5 hours, are found in households in Sweden, Portugal and Denmark, while the shortest, 54.4 hours, are found in Spain. At 14.9 hours, the range of household working times is considerably greater than that for individual working times (9.9 hours); in other words, average working times at household level vary more between the countries than individual working times.

Examination of the link between individual and household working times reveals the existence of two contrasting types of country, which suggests there is a significant connection between individual working times and total working times at household level. The first group of countries

has short individual and long household working times (Denmark and Sweden), while the second has exactly the reverse combination of long individual working times and short household working times (Spain).

In the first group, high employment rates and the relatively long hours worked by women make it possible to have both long household working times and short individual working times, and in particular short individual working times for men. To put it another way, short individual working times are possible in these countries because both partners are contributing to household incomes by working approximately the same number of hours. In the second group, long individual working times (among men) are required in order to ensure an adequate household income because female employment rates are low.⁶⁶ The reduction of individual working times in these countries is made more difficult by the fact that households' needs have to be met out of a single income.

The link between individual and household working times revealed by the contrasting country types is of immense significance for working time policy. It can be inferred from it that short individual working times are all the more feasible the higher the female employment rate is and the more evenly working times are distributed between the partners in a household. When a high share of women is in employment and the total volume of hours worked is more or less evenly shared out between partners, then each partner has to work only those hours required to earn approximately half of the household's needs. Conversely, low female employment rates and/or very low working times among women tend to stand in the way of a reduction in individual working times because men have to work long hours in order to meet all, or at least most of their households' needs.

Besides these contrasting country types, there are countries where the differences are less pronounced because female employment rates tend to be in the middle of the range and the high female part-time rate means that women's working times contribute both to the reduction of average individual working time and to the (albeit slight) increase in household working times.

Additionally, there are two extreme cases in which the combination of individual and household working times diverges from the patterns described above. One of these extreme cases is Portugal, where individual working times are higher than average and household working times are also high. This reflects the high rate of full-time employment among women in a context in which individual working times are long and hourly wage rates are, by a wide margin, the lowest in Europe. The deviation from the patterns described above is due to the fact that the low hourly rates of pay in Portugal mean that two full-time incomes are generally required if households' material needs are to be met. The other extreme case is the Netherlands, where very short individual working times go hand in hand with short household working times. This is explained mainly by the fact that the high share of marginal part-time employment among Dutch women only very slightly increases household working times. At the same time, the short hours worked by women contribute greatly to the reduction of average individual working times.⁶⁷ Overall, working times at

⁶⁶ Although this survey does not provide hard statistical evidence to corroborate this hypothesis, it is likely that women in Spain do more unpaid reproduction work than in Denmark, where families are not only able to buy in more services, because household income is higher as a result of the higher female participation rates, but also have to do so because they have less free time.

⁶⁷ Average individual working times (of those in employment) remain unaffected if women are economically inactive. On the other hand, the 'short part-time' jobs held by many Dutch women do contribute to the reduction of average individual working times.

both individual and household level are considerably shorter in the Netherlands than in most other European countries.

Respondents' declared working time preferences at household level (Table 33), show that there is only a slight reduction at European level from 62 to 61 hours and the range of differences between the countries is virtually the same. At country level, however, there are some distinct differences between preferences and reality, not all of which point in the same direction, suggesting that the preferences for change differ considerably from country to country.

Table 33 Actual and preferred working hours of both partners in a couple with at least one of the partners in paid employment

	Average current weekly hours	Average preferred weekly hours	Difference
Austria	66.6	62.1	-4.5
Belgium	65.4	62.0	-3.4
Denmark	68.5	61.8	-6.7
Finland	67.7	66.3	-1.4
France	62.4	62.2	-0.2
Germany	60.8	59.6	-0.8
Greece	65.1	67.3	2.2
Ireland	61.8	58.3	-3.5
Italy	58.0	58.9	0.9
Luxembourg	58.0	55.8	-2.2
Netherlands	58.3	55.9	-2.4
Portugal	69.1	70.8	1.7
Spain	54.4	66.0	11.6
Sweden	69.3	65.9	-3.4
United Kingdom	66.4	58.8	-7.6
Norway	66.4	63.4	-3.0
EU15 + NOR	62.0	61.0	-1.0
Range*	14.9	15.0	-

Average weekly working hours of both partners together (not employed = 0 h)

*Difference between the highest and the lowest number of hours

As Table 33 shows, there is a preference in Spain for a marked increase in household working times (by almost 12 hours). This is attributable to currently unrealised employment preferences, particularly among Spanish women, and the strong attachment to full-time work.⁶⁸

In Portugal, couples would like to increase their already very long household working times further, which is probably attributable to the extremely low hourly rates of pay in that country. Couples in Portugal cannot afford to reduce either partner's working hours and hence the overall household income.

⁶⁸ At 30%, the share of currently inactive individuals who would like to work is highest in Spain; at the same time their preferred working time of 35.1 hours is second only to Greece (35.9 hours) among the.

In 12 of the 16 countries, couples would like to reduce household working times, albeit by very different amounts. In these countries, non-realised employment preferences, which from this point of view are preferences for longer working hours, are being overcompensated by preferences for reductions in employees' individual working times. It is not surprising, therefore, that in Denmark and the UK, for example, which are both countries with high employment rates, the preferences for reductions of 6.7 and 7.6 hours respectively are stronger than in Germany and France, for example, where the share of individuals with unrealised employment preferences is higher.

In the Netherlands (and in Luxembourg as well), couples express a preference for a further reduction in their already short working times at household level. This is primarily attributable to Dutch men's preferences for working-time reductions, which are not offset by any preference on the part of women for longer working hours.

In general, it is clear from the survey results that, unlike dependent employees' preferences for working time changes analysed in Chapter 4, the expressed desires for change at household level do not point in the same direction in the various countries and also vary considerably in scale. As with the analysis of work volumes the inclusion of currently unrealised employment preferences reveals the dynamic for change to be greater than it seems to be if account is taken only of the working time preferences of individuals currently in gainful employment.

Table 34 Working hours of both partners and financial situation of the household

	Actual Situation	Preference
All couples	62 hours	61 hours
Financial situation:		
• comfortable	66 hours	61 hours
• adequate	59 hours	61 hours
• difficult	53 hours	64 hours

Base: Couples with at least one of the partners in paid work

Source: Bielenki/Hartmann (2000)

The household financial situation has a decisive influence on employment and working time preferences. Bielenki and Hartmann (2000) showed on the basis of the same survey that preferences for an increase or reduction in working times at household level are closely linked to household financial situation: 'Couples who consider themselves "well-off" on average have a family time budget for paid work of 66 hours per week [Table 34]. This is 7 hours more than the working time budget of couples who say that they 'just manage' (59 hours) and as much as 13 hours more than that of those who have financial difficulties (53 hours). Couples who are "well-off" tend to prefer shorter weekly family time budgets for paid work (on average 5 hours less). Couples in financial difficulties, on the contrary, want to increase the time they spend in paid work (on average 11 hours more).'

Current and preferred distribution of paid work between men and women

In the second stage of our analysis, we focus on the question of how the total household volume of working time is distributed between the partners and of how respondents would like their preferred working time to be distributed. In what follows, we will examine the distribution of

Working time preferences in sixteen European countries

working time in two-adult households, firstly in terms of the difference in hours worked between the partners and then relative to typical combinations of full-time and part-time employment and economic inactivity.

Actual and preferred differences in working time between the partners

One indicator that can be used to describe the household distribution of paid work is the difference in hours between the partners' working time.⁶⁹ When working time is evenly distributed between the partners, the difference is zero. The greater the difference is, the more unevenly working time is distributed within the household. As Table 35 shows, the working time difference at household level varies between 13.7 hours on average in Denmark and 30.8 hours on average in Ireland.

Table 35 Difference between the weekly working hours of both partners (couples with at least one of the partners in paid employment)

	Difference*) In current working hours	Difference*) In preferred working hours	Difference**) Preferred - current
Austria	26.1	16.3	-9.8
Belgium	18.8	12.5	-6.3
Denmark	13.7	6.6	-7.1
Finland	18.8	6.7	-12.1
France	21.5	9.4	-12.1
Germany	27.7	15.0	-13.7
Greece	30.6	12.1	-18.5
Ireland	30.8	18.3	-12.5
Italy	27.9	16.1	-11.8
Luxembourg	29.2	20.4	-8.8
Netherlands	28.3	17.0	-11.3
Portugal	19.5	5.2	-14.3
Spain	30.5	9.3	-21.2
Sweden	17.9	6.2	-11.7
United Kingdom	24.7	15.0	-9.7
Norway	18.0	8.6	-9.4
EU15 + NOR	25.4	13.1	-12.3
Range***	17.1	15.2	

* Average positive difference of respondent's working time and his/her partner's working time (not employed = 0)

** Difference between column 3 and column 2

*** Difference between the highest and the lowest average number of hours per country

These differences are attributable to a wide range of causes. They may reflect differences in actual working time, when one partner works full-time and the other part-time, for example, or one of them regularly works overtime. However, they may also be due to the fact that one of the partners is not in employment. Again, there may be various reasons for this, including unemployment,

⁶⁹ The difference between the partners was calculated by subtracting the shorter working time from the longer working time; the 'working time' of economically inactive partners was entered as zero.

education/training, retirement, parental leave, voluntary inactivity etc. A large part of the working time differences is probably attributable to the gender division of labour. Evidence for this interpretation is to be found in the relatively small working time differences between partners in the Scandinavian countries (universal breadwinner model) and Portugal and the relatively large differences in those countries with a strong attachment to the male breadwinner model (Greece, Ireland, Spain and the Netherlands).

Table 36 Typology of countries by the length and the distribution of working times at household level

Total working times at household level	Distribution of paid work between the partners in two-adult households	
	Large working time differences (≥ 25 hours)	Small working time differences (< 25 hours)
Long (> 62 hours)	Austria Greece	Belgium Denmark Finland France Portugal Sweden UK Norway
Short (≤ 62 hours)	Germany Ireland Italy Luxembourg Netherlands Spain	

As Table 36 shows, there is a link between the length of working times at household level and their distribution between the partners. When there are large differences in working time between the partners, household working times tend to be shorter, and when the distribution is relatively equal then household working times tend to be longer. In other words, the more women contribute to household income by engaging in (full-time) paid work, the longer the total volume of hours worked by the household tend to be. Conversely, when few women are gainfully employed or work only part-time, this is reflected in shorter household working times. There is no example of a combination of short household working times and small differences in working time between partners (see empty field in Table 36). Such a combination would be possible if both partners worked part-time – still a very unusual situation.

However, comparison with the preferred household distribution of working times is of greater significance than interpretation of the differences in actual working time between the partners.⁷⁰ The result is clear. In all 16 countries, the preference is for a less unequal distribution of working time between the partners. It is true that, even if households' working time preferences were realised, working time would still be unequally distributed between the partners; however, the average working time difference in Europe would fall by almost half from its current level of 25.4 hours to 13.1 hours. This shows that, in all countries, there is a desire for greater equivalence in men's and women's participation in the labour market.

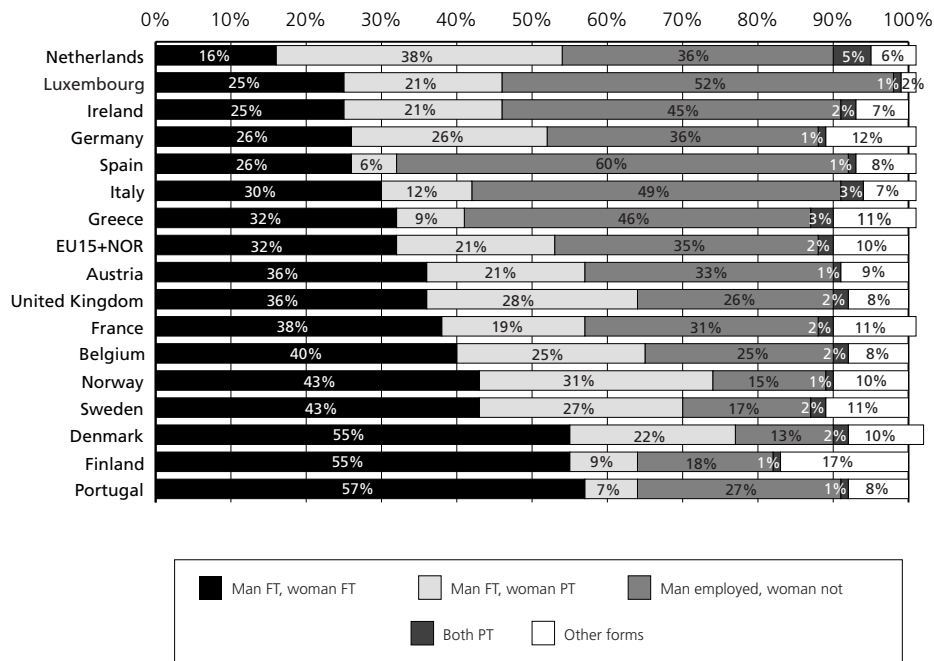
⁷⁰ We were unable to undertake a more precise analysis of this question, since the number of cases in some countries was too small.

It is in Portugal and the Scandinavian countries that working time preferences point most strongly in the direction of an equal division of paid work between the partners. In these countries, the preferred differences in working time range from five to eight hours. On the other hand, the desire for change is strongest in those countries that still have a very unequal distribution of working time between the partners (Spain and Greece). This means that, if working time preferences were to be realised, the division of paid work between men and women in two-adult households would become more similar in the 16 countries. The range of working time differences would fall from 17 hours at present to 15 hours. The desire for greater equivalence in men's and women's participation in paid work is evident in all the countries in our sample.

Actual and preferred modes of the distribution of paid work in two-adult households

The differences in working time between partners described above are attributable to a large extent to differing modes of the distribution of paid work between partners. Figure 16 depicts these differing modes of distribution at country level.

Figure 16 Modes of distribution of paid work between partners (couples with at least one of the partners in paid employment)

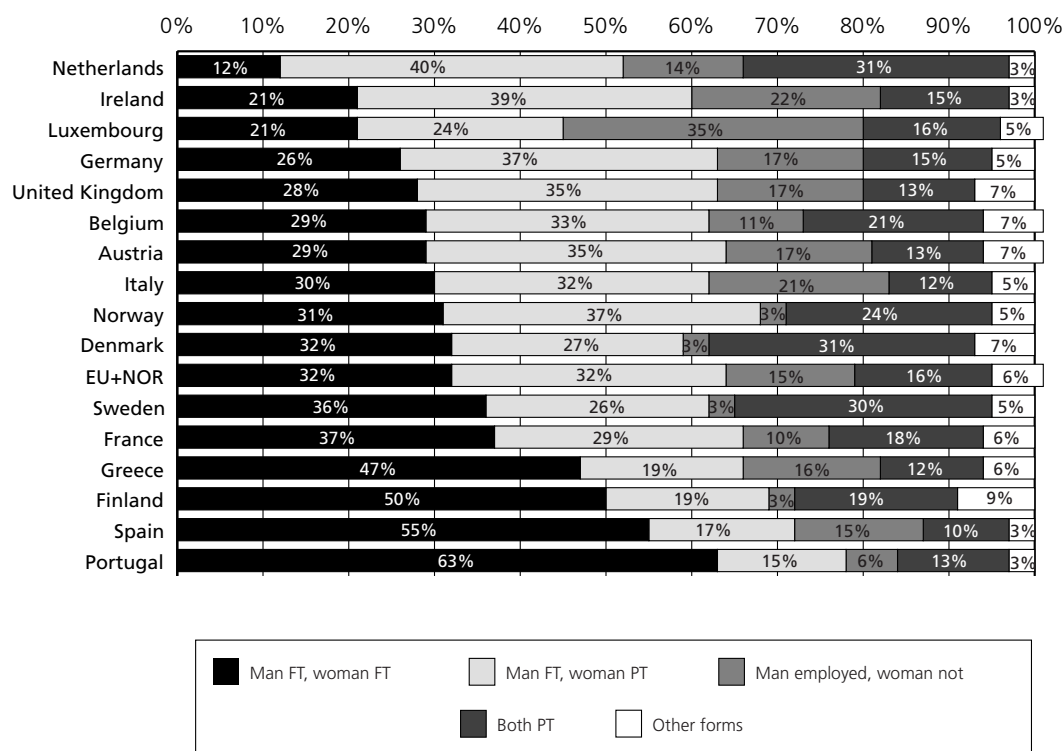


In Spain, Luxembourg, Italy, Greece, Ireland and, to a lesser extent, in Germany, the traditional male breadwinner mode of distribution (man in full-time employment, women economically inactive) is still the most widespread form of the gender division of participation in the labour market. In Luxembourg, Ireland and Germany the modernised form of the single breadwinner model, in which the woman works part-time, also plays a quantitatively significant role.

In the Scandinavian countries and in Portugal, Belgium, France, the UK and Austria, the dominant mode of distribution is full-time employment for both partners; in Portugal, Finland and Denmark, this form of the division of paid work is dominant not only in relative but also in absolute terms, since it applies to more than 55% of couples.

Only in the Netherlands is the male full-time/female part-time combination the most widespread mode of distribution. On the other hand, the combination of two full-time jobs is an extremely rare form of the gender division of paid work, accounting for only 16% of couples.

Figure 17 Preferred modes of distribution of paid work between partners (couples with at least one of the partners in paid employment)



The preferred modes of distribution (Figure 17) confirm the trend identified above, whereby couples express a preference for a more equal distribution of paid work. Attachment to the single breadwinner model is weak: it is preferred by an average of only 15% of couples in Europe as a whole (but is the practice among 35%). While the share of households with two full-time workers would remain unchanged if preferences were realised (32% actual and preferred), a new ‘standard’ mode of distribution could emerge out of the combination of two part-time jobs. Although only 2% of two-adult households in Europe currently practise this mode of distribution, 16% declare a preference for it. This form of the division of paid work is particularly attractive in the Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands.

If it is assumed that the combination of two full-time jobs and that of two part-time jobs are both ‘egalitarian’ forms of the division of paid work, then the share of egalitarian forms of the gender division of paid work at household level rises from its actual level of 34% to 48% at the level of preferences. And conversely, whereas the ‘traditional’ forms of the gender division of paid work are currently dominated by the single breadwinner model rather than its modernised form (women in part-time employment) (35% and 21% respectively), the ratio is reversed at the level of preferences. The modernised form is preferred by 32%, twice the share of those preferring the pure single breadwinner model (15%).

Table 37 Balanced and traditional modes of the distribution of paid work between the partner (couples with at least one of the partners in paid work - horizontal %)

	Current WT		Preferred WT	
	Balanced WT*	Traditional WT**	Balanced WT*	Traditional WT**
Austria	37 %	54 %	42 %	52 %
Belgium	42 %	50 %	50 %	44 %
Denmark	57 %	35 %	64 %	30 %
Finland	56 %	27 %	69 %	22 %
France	40 %	50 %	55 %	39 %
Germany	27 %	62 %	41 %	54 %
Greece	35 %	55 %	59 %	35 %
Ireland	27 %	66 %	36 %	61 %
Italy	33 %	61 %	42 %	53 %
Luxembourg	26 %	73 %	37 %	59 %
Netherlands	21 %	74 %	43 %	54 %
Portugal	58 %	34 %	76 %	21 %
Spain	27 %	66 %	65 %	32 %
Sweden	45 %	44 %	66 %	29 %
United Kingdom	38 %	54 %	41 %	52 %
Norway	44 %	46 %	55 %	40 %
EU15 + NOR	34 %	56 %	48 %	47 %

* both partners in full-time employment or in part-time employment

** man employed and woman not employed or man working full-time and woman working part-time

Totals do not come to 100 per cent because other forms of work distribution (woman employed / man not in paid work; woman FT / man PT etc.) were not considered here.

Table 37 depicts the general trend towards egalitarian forms of the gender division of paid work in all 16 countries. However, this general trend takes different forms depending on the country in question.

In countries that currently have high proportions of single breadwinner marriages (Spain, Greece, Italy), preferences incline more towards the modernised family breadwinner model or (particularly in Spain, two full-time jobs).

In countries that currently have high shares of the two full-time jobs mode of distribution, it is less popular, with preference expressed for a combination of two part-time jobs (Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Belgium). One exception in this regard is Portugal, where the two full-time jobs mode dominates absolutely, accounting for 63% of preferences.

Interestingly, the modernised family breadwinner model is preferred relatively frequently in both types of country. However, the reasons for this are completely different. In one group of countries (Spain, Greece and Italy), the objective really is to modernise the single breadwinner model. In these countries, the male full-time/female part-time combination is a form of transition from non-participation for women to a higher rate of female labour market participation. In the other group, made up of countries that currently have high shares of the two full-time jobs combination, the male full-time/female part-time mode of distribution can hardly be described as a 'modernisation'

of the single breadwinner model. In these countries, this mode of distribution is much more an expression of a desire for shorter individual and household working times. In this case, what may seem at first sight to be a modernised form of the single breadwinner model in fact represents the transition from the two full-time jobs mode of distribution to the two part-time jobs mode and is not, as it might first appear, a retrograde step.

The fact that there are strong preferences for a reduction in working time, primarily for women, in countries with high shares of households in which both partners work full-time shows that, even in these countries, the traditional gender division of labour is by no means a thing of the past. Here, high female participation rates and the more or less equal distribution of paid work between the partners go hand in hand with an unequal division of unpaid reproduction work, with women continuing to do most of the domestic and family work. For this reason, it is understandable, when a household feels able to afford shorter overall working times, that the initial preference is for a reduction in the woman's working time in order to reduce her heavy burden of paid and unpaid (reproduction) work. Or, to put it another way, when couples are in a good financial position, they are likely first to grant themselves the 'luxury' of a reduction in the woman's working time. In some cases, they are supported in this by social or family policy measures that subsidise a temporary reduction in parents' working time; the vast majority of those taking advantage of these measures are women.

To this extent, the male full-time/female part-time combination can be seen as a transitional form of the distribution of paid work, both from the single breadwinner to the modernised family breadwinner model and from the two full-time jobs to the two part-time jobs mode.

The division of paid (and unpaid) work in households is strongly influenced by the presence or absence of young children (see Fagan and Warren, 2001). It was shown in Chapter 4 that, in some countries, the presence of children in the household influences the length of men's and women's individual working times. Our aim here is to examine how couples with children divide up the paid work between themselves. It is not only working times (full-time/part-time) that play a role here, but also the question of whether the female partners are economically active at all.

Table 38 shows that in 47% of households with a child under 6 years of age, women are not in paid work. The female non-earner status can be observed much more often in this type of household than in households with or without older children. At the preference level, however, these differences tend to vanish. Only 14% to 15% of couples wish the woman not to be gainfully employed at all. Thus not only is this form of the division of paid work preferred much less frequently than it is practised but it also shows that the preference for such a division of paid work does not depend on whether or not there are young children in the household. This preference is no more popular in households with children than in those without children.

Furthermore, couples with and those without children are more or less equally likely to express a preference for a combination of two part-time jobs. This mode of the household distribution of paid work is currently very rare but would become considerably more widespread if preferences were realised.

Table 38 The sharing of paid work and working time among men and women (present situation and preferences by children in the household)

	Current Situation			Preferences		
	Age of youngest child in the household			Age of youngest child in the household		
	Youngest child < 6 years	Youngest child >= 6 years	No children	Youngest child < 6 years	Youngest child >= 6 years	No children
Both partners in full-time employment	24 %	32 %	40 %	26 %	33 %	38 %
Man full-time/Woman part-time	24 %	23 %	15 %	39 %	34 %	21 %
Man employed/ woman not employed	47 %	35 %	27 %	15 %	14 %	14 %
Both partners in part-time employment	1 %	2 %	2 %	18 %	14 %	17 %
Other models	4 %	8 %	4 %	2 %	4 %	9 %
Total	100 %	100 %	100 %s	100 %	100 %	100 %

Base: Couples with at least one of the partners in paid work – vertical %

Source: Bielenski and Hartmann, 2000, p.6

The presence of children and the age of the youngest child, however, exerts an influence on whether the male full-time worker wishes his female partner to work full-time or part-time. A combination of two full-time occupations is desired by a mere 26% of couples with children under six years of age, yet by 38% of couples without children. Couples with children below the age of six prefer a combination of male full-time job and female part-time occupation more frequently (39%) than couples without children (21%).

These observations might lead to the qualified conclusion that the presence of children, especially of young children, increases the probability of women not working in full-time positions, but rather in part-time occupations. By contrast, the vote in favour of the non-earning status of women seems to be less strongly influenced by the presence of children. However, it would appear that very different country-specific structures underlie these average figures.⁷¹

Bielenski and Hartmann (1999) found a clear relation between the economic situation of the household and the sharing of paid work between partners.

It seems that labour market participation by both partners is often closely related to a good household financial position. Men in ‘well-off’ households can afford a preference for more part-time work – be it for their wives/partners or for themselves. On the other hand, in families that have financial difficulties, the man is very often the only breadwinner; they would prefer their wives/partners to earn some money by working part-time or full-time. Couples who are ‘well off’ tend rather to prefer less time in paid work (on average 8 hours less), whereas couples experiencing financial difficulties would like to spend more time in paid work (3 to 4 hours on average).

Thus there might be very different reasons for the increased interest in part-time work. On the one hand, it may be prosperity that enables people to reduce working hours. On the other hand, it may be financial problems that force women to join the workforce, at least on a part-time basis, in order to earn some extra money (Bielenski and Hartmann, 1999: 33).

⁷¹ Analysis at country level is not possible because the number of cases is too low.

Table 39 The sharing of paid work and working time between men and women (present situation and preferences by economic situation of the household)

Type	Current Situation			Preferences		
	Well-off	Just manage	Difficulties	Well-off	Just manage	Difficulties
Both partners in full-time employment	41 %	34 %	31 %	28 %	32 %	36 %
Man full-time/ woman part-time	23 %	19 %	7 %	28 %	24 %	23 %
Man employed/ woman not employed	31 %	42 %	56 %	15 %	18 %	16 %
Both partners in part-time employment	2 %	2 %	0 %	18 %	12 %	10 %
Other models	3 %	3 %	6 %	11 %	14 %	15 %
Total	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %

Source: Bielenski and Hartmann, 1999

Base: employed men – vertical %

Summary

Working times and working time preferences at household level vary more from country to country than the individual working times and working time preferences of dependent employees analysed in Chapter 4. This is because the analysis at household level took account not only of individual working times but also of unrealised employment preferences. As was shown in Chapter 3, the potential for change is greater and more differentiated than a narrow focus on the employment time preferences of the economically active population alone would suggest.

The volume of work at household level differs more from country to country than individual working times. The reason is that, at household level, men's individual working times, which differ only slightly from country to country, are combined not only with those of economically active women, which differ considerably from country to country, but also with the 'zero hours' working time of economically inactive partners. Thus the existing differences between the countries in individual working times are compounded by the different modes of the household distribution of paid.

Individual working times and total working times at household level are linked in a way that can be described by reference to two contrasting types. On the one hand, there are countries such as Sweden and Denmark with high female employment rates and a combination of short individual and long household working times; on the other hand, there are countries like Spain with low female employment rates and precisely the opposite combination of long individual working times and short household working times. Most countries are positioned somewhere between these two types, with short working times for women – in part-time jobs if necessary – contributing both to the increase of household working times and to the reduction of average individual working times. The exceptions are Portugal and the Netherlands: the former has longer than average individual and long household working times, while the latter has very short individual and short household working times.

Although the preference in most countries is for a reduction in the volume of paid work at household level, the contrary preference for a greater volume of paid work is expressed in some countries, especially in those where female employment rates are low and the share of involuntary economic inactivity is high (Spain). This finding is consistent with the connection between the

preferred changes in the volume of work in the economy as a whole and the employment rate revealed in Chapter 3.

The preferences for an increase or reduction in household working times are closely linked to the household financial situation. Preferences for reductions predominate when the household financial situation is judged to be good, while couples who regard themselves as having financial difficulties would prefer to increase the volume of paid work in the household.

The household distribution of working time differs considerably from country to country (or between groups of countries). In the Scandinavian countries (universal breadwinner model) and Portugal, the differences in working time between the partners are relatively small and the distribution therefore fairly equal, whereas in countries with a stronger attachment to the male breadwinner model (Greece, Ireland, Spain, the Netherlands) the differences are considerable, since in many cases only one of the partners is economically active or, as in the case of the Netherlands, very large numbers of women are in marginal part-time employment.

However, such a mode of distribution does not reflect the partners' employment and working time preferences. In all countries, there is a preference for a less unequal distribution of working time between the partners. It is true that, even if these preferences were realised, there would still be an unequal distribution of working time between the partners, but the average difference in Europe as a whole would fall by almost half from its current level of 25.4 hours to 13.1 hours. Preferences for change are expressed most strongly in countries that still have a very unequal distribution of working time between the partners (Spain and Greece); consequently, if preferences were realised, the division of paid work between men and women in two-adult households would become 'more similar' across the 16 countries.

What the preferences reveal

Attachment to the male breadwinner model is weak, since it is preferred by an average of only 15% of people in the 16 countries (although it is currently practised by 35%). Not only is this form of the distribution of paid work preferred much less frequently than it is practised, but it is also clear that, contrary to a widely held view, the preference for such a division of paid work is not dependent on whether or not there are young children in the household. In countries that currently have high shares of sole breadwinners (Spain, Greece, Italy), there tends to be a preference for the modernised family breadwinner model or, particularly in Spain, for two full-time jobs.

The share of couples with two full-time jobs would remain unchanged if preferences were realised (32% actual and preferred). It is more frequently preferred than currently practised in countries where the male breadwinner model is presently dominant but less frequently preferred than currently practised in countries with high shares of couples with two full-time jobs (Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Belgium). Clearly, therefore, when both partners are already in full-time employment, the preference is for a reduction in working times. This finding would suggest there is a need for reform of the full-time norm (see Chapter 6).

A new 'standard' mode of the distribution of paid work could emerge in future out of the combination of two part-time jobs. Particularly in countries with currently high shares of couples with two full-time jobs, respondents expressed a preference for a combination of two part-time jobs.

Again, Portugal is an exception, since an absolute majority of respondents (63 per cent) expressed a preference for the two full-time jobs combination. This preference for a combination of two part-time jobs is also expressed by more or less equal shares of couples with and without children.

The male full-time/female part-time combination – often described as the ‘modern family breadwinner model’ – is above all an historical transitional form from the single male breadwinner model to more egalitarian modes of the household distribution of paid work. At the same time, the data show that this mode of distribution also seems to be a transitional mode between the couple with two full-time jobs and the couple with two part-time jobs, since it is preferred more frequently not only in countries where the traditional division of labour still predominates but also in those where the combination of two full-time jobs prevails. In these cases, however, it reflects a preference for part-time jobs with relatively long hours – in some cases around the 30-hour mark. If the full-time norm were to be reduced, such working times would no longer fall within the standard part-time range.

The fact that, in countries with high shares of households in which both partners work full-time, a reduction in working time is desired (in the first instance primarily for the women) shows that, even in these countries, the gender division of labour is far from being a thing of the past. Rather, high female participation rates and the more or less equal distribution of paid work between the partners go hand in hand with an unequal distribution of unpaid reproduction work between the partners. This is particularly so when the volume of reproduction work is particularly high because of responsibility for child raising. To that extent, it is hardly surprising that the probability of women preferring part-time to full-time employment rises when there are children in the household.

Analysis of actual working times and – even more so – of employment and working time preferences at household level shows that the currently prevalent distinction between full-time and part-time work is being questioned in many respects. There is growing interest in a reformed or variable full-time norm located in the range of what currently constitutes ‘short’ full-time and ‘long’ part-time employment. This question is examined in greater detail in the next chapter.

Implications for working time policy

6

Having described, in Chapter 3, the various mixes of growth and redistribution policies the survey results suggest would be suitable for the different countries, in this concluding chapter we discuss the implications of the survey findings for working time policy. The convergence of working time preferences both across and within countries gives good grounds for focusing primarily on (new) working time standards. This question is discussed below as are some of the implications for working time policy.

Function of the working time standards

In the past, the dominant working time norm for most dependent employees was the standard full-time working week, which was defined very differently from country to country and from industry to industry. In the immediate post-war period, however, standard working time in most Western European countries was still 8 hours per day and 48 hours per week, distributed over a six-day (Monday to Saturday) working week. Over time, this norm has evolved at very differing rates in the various countries in our sample to produce the shorter working week we know today. The average length of the contractual working week is now between 35 and 40 hours. However, this weekly working time is increasingly being distributed flexibly over the (usually five or fewer) days of the working week and in some circumstances may even be attained only as an average value calculated over a longer period.

Full-time employment regulated by contract has always been the norm only for dependent employees. In the post-war period, such employees were predominantly male. Female employment rates, particularly among women with children, were still low in most EU Member States. In many countries, the traditional sole breadwinner model was the precondition for full-time work, becoming the dominant working-time form for dependent employees. However, the standard working time has never applied either to the self-employed or to workers with family responsibilities. The self-employed usually worked considerably longer hours, while family workers – mostly women – worked significantly shorter hours, because they had to combine economic activity with family responsibilities. To some extent, family work was the functional equivalent of part-time work today for married women in the pre-industrial phase of agriculture and in small craft-based and commercial undertakings. Thus in the EU, the part-time rate is still particularly low in those countries in which there are still very high shares of self-employed and family workers (Spain, Portugal, Greece and Italy) (Table 40).

The working times of dependent employees have now become increasingly differentiated. Many employees work part-time, which is still usually described in academic debate as atypical, despite the fact that in many countries and industries it has already become the standard employment form for women and for young people of both sexes. In some countries, some employees (mainly women) alternate between full-time and part-time employment over the course of their working lives, particularly when they wish to temporarily reduce the time devoted to paid work in order to raise children and the necessary social arrangements exist for the realisation of such wishes. In cases where 'short' full-time jobs and 'long' part-time jobs involve very similar working hours distinctions between the two are becoming blurred.⁷²

⁷² Under certain circumstances, full-time work in industries with short full-time norms and part-time work in industries with long full-time norms may involve the same number of hours' work; part-time employment in countries with longer working times may in many cases involve the same number of hours as full-time employment in countries with short working time norms.

Table 40 Selected employment forms in Europe 1988 and 1998

	Total economically active population, millions (=100%)	Self-employed and family workers (%)	All dependent employees (%)	Dependent part-time employees		Dependent full-time employees (%)
				Standard permanent employment relationships (%)	Fixed-term employment contracts (%)	
Belgium						
1988	3.48	18.0	82.0	70.1	2.9	9.0
1998	3.86	17.4	82.6	63.5	4.3	14.7
Denmark						
1988	2.68	11.0	89.0	59.2	7.8	22.1
1998	2.68	9.7	90.3	62.3	6.7	21.1
Western Germany*						
1988	27.00	11.5	88.5	67.4	8.9	11.3
1998	29.07	11.5	88.5	62.1	8.3	17.8
Eastern Germany*						
1998	6.46	8.5	91.5	65.3	14.3	11.0
France						
1988	21.50	16.2	83.8	68.4	4.9	10.0
1998	22.47	12.5	87.5	63.2	8.1	15.8
Greece						
1988	3.65	49.5	50.5	40.9	7.6	2.0
1998	3.97	43.4	56.6	48.2	5.9	2.5
Ireland						
1988	1.09	25.3	74.7	64.6	3.8	6.1
1998	1.50	20.2	79.8	60.6	2.9	14.2
Italy						
1988	21.09	29.5	70.5	64.9	2.1	3.5
1998	20.36	28.7	71.3	61.9	4.0	5.4
Luxembourg						
1988	0.15	11.2	88.8	81.6	1.3	5.9
1998	0.17	9.4	90.6	80.6	1.8	8.8
Netherlands						
1988	5.90	12.1	87.9	58.2	3.5	25.8
1998	7.40	11.6	88.4	50.2	3.3	34.5
Portugal						
1988	4.43	30.9	69.1	54.3	11.6	3.1
1998	4.76	27.9	71.2	56.2	11.1	3.9
Spain						
1988	11.71	29.0	70.8	53.1	14.2	3.3
1998	13.16	23.0	76.9	48.7	21.9	6.2
United Kingdom						
1988	25.66	12.6	87.0	64.0	1.9	19.8
1998	26.88	12.5	87.3	61.3	3.3	21.9
Finland						
1998	2.18	14.6	85.4	64.3	11.3	9.7
Austria						
1998	3.63	13.8	86.2	66.8	5.9	13.5
Sweden						
1998	3.95	11.4	88.6	58.9	5.6	21.1

Western Germany includes West Berlin; Eastern Germany includes East Berlin.

Source: Hoffmann and Walwei, 1998.

Our aim in what follows is to ascertain whether actual working times and, particularly, employees' working time preferences now point to the emergence of a new working time norm in Europe that might, over time, become a reference point for statutory and contractual arrangements, just as the 40-hour week or eight-hour day were in the past. In view of the diversity of working time arrangements in the 16 countries investigated here and the strong evidence in support of the argument that working times and employment forms are becoming increasingly differentiated (e.g. OECD, 1988), posing this question is not without its risks. However, we have been encouraged to pursue the question by the convergence of working time preferences in Europe in spite of very different working time realities, economic situations and institutional environments.

In order to establish whether a new working time standard is emerging, mention must be made about the function of such standards. The reason for the inflexibility shown by many academics in defining typical and atypical working times is that working times are defined only in terms of their duration and not in terms of their social functions. The most important social functions of the classic full-time norm, which was developed primarily to protect employees, can be summarised as follows (Wagner, 2000; Bosch, 2001).

- It was intended to ensure a living wage for families; the only way of doing this was to guarantee a minimum working time;
- An adequate level of social security transfers (health, old age or unemployment insurance) was linked to a full-time employment relationship;
- The establishment of norms for the scheduling of working time (8-hour day, 40-hour week, scheduled between about 6.00 am and 8.00 pm, Monday to Friday) led to a clear distinction between private and working time, making it possible to plan work-free time (deviations from these norms were recompensed with premium payments);
- A time frame was laid down within which firms could plan personnel deployment.

The safeguards for employees and firms were closely interwoven. For firms, the standard working time for employees was an external regulatory mechanism that also found its counterpart in work organisation. It formed the 'natural' framework within which work was organised and was usually simply taken for granted. This is the main reason why traditional forms of working time and work organisation became second nature to both employees and firms.

Thus discussion of a possible new working time standard should not start simply from the notion of a weekly working time of fixed length. Rather, we ask whether the social functions of the traditional standard working time will continue to be important in future or whether they may have to be replaced by different ones. Secondly, we express a view as to whether these functions can be fulfilled with the same mechanisms as in the past (e.g. the establishment of a rigid weekly working time) or whether new mechanisms are required. We will once again consider current actual and preferred working times in order to ascertain what significance still attaches to the classic full-time norm, how full-time and part-time employment relate to each other and what the dynamic of evolution is likely to be. As we pursue our argument, it should be noted that in the absence of any information on the scheduling of working time or social protection we focus primarily on the duration of working time.

Deviations from standard working time

For more than half of all the dependent employees surveyed, working time is still determined by reference to the classic full-time norm (Table 41), which is taken here to be a working time of between 35 and 45 hours per week. It should be noted that most of those working more than 40 hours per week have working times just over the 40-hour threshold. Since it is normal practice to work small amounts of overtime, we did not want to define slight deviations from contractual working time (Table 9) straight away as work over and above the full-time norm, at least as far as the current standards are concerned. Nevertheless, more than half of dependent employees have working times of between 35 and 42 hours per week. The majority of employees with very long working hours work more than 45 hours per week.

Table 41 Share of dependent employees working 35-45 and 25-34 hours per week by gender (in horizontal %)

	25 to 34 hours			35 to 45 hours		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Austria	2	15	8	61	60	60
Belgium	4	17	10	77	54	67
Denmark	5	20	12	75	61	68
Finland	3	5	4	79	81	80
France	4	17	10	76	62	70
Germany	3	14	8	67	50	59
Greece	5	11	7	58	56	57
Ireland	5	14	9	61	59	61
Italy	6	9	7	73	63	69
Luxembourg	3	14	7	74	51	65
Netherlands	7	14	10	59	32	48
Portugal	3	6	4	71	75	73
Spain	7	11	9	72	70	71
Sweden	5	24	14	69	57	63
United Kingdom	4	15	9	54	46	50
Norway	5	16	10	69	51	61
EU15+NOR	5	14	9	68	55	62
For comparison: share of dependent employees working 35 to 42 hours						
	Men		Women		Total	
EU15+NOR	56		49		53	

Sixty-eight per cent of European men work between 35 and 45 hours per week, although the figure varies considerably from country to country. The range is from 54% in the UK to 79% in Finland. The share of men whose working time falls within the range of the full-time norm as defined above is low in those countries where excessively long working times are widespread. In Austria and the UK, 34% of men work more than 45 hours per week, in Greece 33%, in Ireland 27% and in Germany 25%, compared with the European average of 23%. In some countries, therefore, deviations from the full-time norm are due primarily to the excessively long hours worked by men. In these cases, it is true, that norm no longer determines actual working time. However, it continues to have effects. For manual workers in particular, but also for many white-collar workers, it determines the payment they receive, since any hours worked in excess of the agreed standard

working time attract premia. The share of men in part-time work is very low. In the 16 European countries, only 10% of men work fewer than 35 hours. Of these, 3% have working times just below the 35-hour mark and are probably full-time employees with very short working hours. The rest are predominantly young men who are working as they complete their education or training.

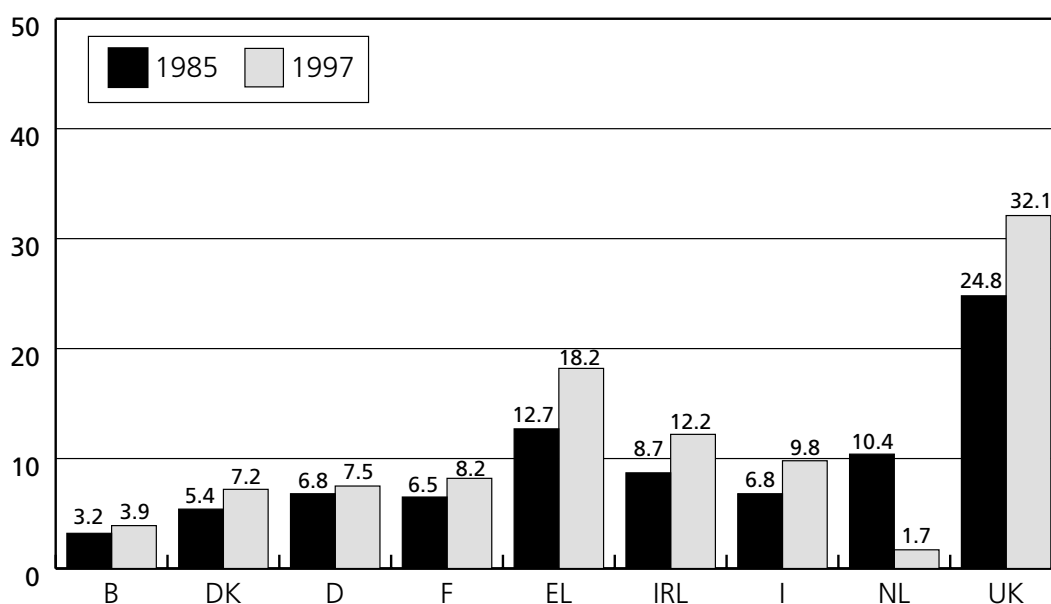
Only a small majority of the women surveyed (55%) work between 35 and 45 hours per week, although the spread is twice as great as that among men, ranging from 32% in the Netherlands to 81% in Finland. Among women, deviations from the full-time norm are due primarily to part-time work, although in some countries the share of women working very long hours (more than 45 per week) is relatively high (Greece 12%, 16 countries 7%). The share of female full-timers working between 35 and 45 hours per week is particularly high in three completely different sets of circumstances. It is high in those countries where the female employment rate is low and, as shown in Chapter 4, there is only a small difference between men's and women's working times (Italy 63%, Spain 70%), where the employment rate is very high and there is a highly developed public childcare infrastructure (Finland 81%, Denmark 61%) and where incomes are particularly low (Portugal 75%). However, a high employment rate and good childcare facilities can also be associated with a broad range of working times, as in Norway and Sweden, since workers in these countries avail themselves of the opportunities that exist to realise individual preferences.

Our data on the current working time of dependent employees show a high degree of variation in current working time and suggest there may be very different reasons for the deviations from standard working time. The following reasons can be identified.

1. Increasing labour market participation among women: A growing proportion of the labour supply is no longer available to employers without restrictions in the same way as male sole breadwinners are. These workers are attempting to combine paid work with unpaid reproduction work. Forty-one per cent of part-timers work part-time because of childcare responsibilities or other domestic obligations. The figures range from around 50% in Austria, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands to 13% in Spain. In countries with very low employment rates (e.g. Spain) and highly developed childcare facilities (e.g. Denmark), fewer people work part-time because of domestic obligations.
2. The increase in excessively long working times, especially among men: The Eurostat time series shows that the share of employees working than 45 hours per week has increased in many European countries (Figure 18). In some countries, such as the UK, overtime 'cultures' are firmly entrenched. There are two reasons why the share of employees working very long hours is increasing again, both in the UK and in most other EU Member States. Firstly, coverage by collective agreements is declining, and with it the opportunities for trade unions to influence current working time. Secondly, the share of workers with higher-level skills and managerial duties is rising, and working times in these categories tend to be longer.
3. The increasing numbers of people, especially young people, combining work and education: The share of young people who are studying and working at the same time, mostly part-time, is increasing. Seventeen per cent of the part-timers in our survey stated that they were working part-time because they were studying as well. The relevant share ranges from 11% in Belgium to 34% in Ireland. We know from other sources that this is a growing trend. The share of 15-29 year-olds in the EU working part-time because they are in education or training rose from 22%

in 1985 to 33% in 1995 (European Commission 1997).⁷³ The different part-time rates among students and trainees indicate that the systems for unding education and training differ widely from country to country within Europe.

Figure 18 Share of full-time employees who worked more than 45 hours per week 1985-1997



4. Phased transitions into retirement: Our study reveals a slight decrease in the older people's average working times. The average weekly working time for employees aged between 50 and 64 is 37.2 hours, compared with 38.2 for those aged between 30 and 49. This suggests there is a slightly higher share of part-timers among older workers and that older workers tend to work somewhat less overtime. A shift to part-time work prior to retirement is still the exception in Europe because of the widespread practice of early retirement; in future, however, such shifts may very well become more frequent because of the ending of early retirement programmes and new part-time opportunities for older workers (e.g. in Germany and Belgium).
5. High unemployment: Nineteen per cent of part-timers work part-time because they have been unable to find full-time employment. The share of involuntary part-time work rises steeply where unemployment is particularly high. The shares range from 32% in France and 28% in Italy to 3% in the Netherlands. The increase in excessively long working times may also have something to do with increasing job insecurity, although little research has been done on this to date. There are two reasons why this might be so. Firstly, employees may be more reluctant than previously to decline management requests for overtime, in order to make themselves indispensable. Secondly, if they have experienced or expect to experience repeated spells of unemployment, they might try to maximise their earnings in the short term by working long hours rather than seeking a longer-term, more stable employment relationship.

⁷³ In the 30- 59 age group, on the other hand, the share fell from 5% to 4%.

6. New forms of work organisation: Employers, particularly in labour-intensive service firms, which have to deal with considerable fluctuations in demand, try to adjust staffing levels to customer flows by breaking working time down into small units. Work organisation in many such firms is based less and less on full-time employment but rather on a combination of different forms of part-time work. In some sectors, such as the retail trade, part-time work has now become the dominant working time form in many European countries (Jany-Catrice and Lehndorff, 2001).
7. Greater opportunities for choice: In Scandinavia, a wide range of options for career breaks and part-time work has been made available, particularly for the parents of young children. In many countries, individual groups of employees are able to temporarily work part-time and then return to full-time work. Since the survey was conducted, the range of options has been considerably extended in some countries; in the Netherlands and in Germany, new legislation has been passed that allows employees to choose between part-time and full-time work. In Belgium, under the provisions of the draft bill of December 2000 (Ministère de l'Emploi et du Travail, 2000) such changes in working time will in certain circumstances be subsidised by the state. Thus the greater differentiation of working time is also a consequence of new 'citizens' rights' for men and women at work that are underwritten by the welfare state and is not simply being forced on workers by firms or high unemployment.

These factors are making their effects felt in all the countries in our sample, albeit to varying degrees. However, the differences between the countries show that, although there are indeed transnational trends, they do not affect working time in the same way in all countries. The variations are a consequence of different patterns of labour market behaviour and of different national institutional structures and economic conditions. In countries where the female labour supply tends to be 'channelled' towards (marginal) part-time work, firms tend also to develop forms of work organisation based on small time units and variable rostering (Lehndorff, 2001).

It is not yet entirely clear whether these country differences exist in isolation or whether they are part of a pattern for change. As far as the influence of women's employment on the differentiation of working times is concerned, developments in the Western European welfare states over the last 40 years can be summarised as follows.

1. The starting point in most countries was the traditional sole breadwinner model, in which full-time employment for (mainly male) dependent employees was the norm. This model is still widespread in Spain, Greece and Italy. It had not succeeded in establishing itself in Portugal because of the considerably lower wage levels in that country. The Portuguese example shows that one of the preconditions for the sole breadwinner model was a certain level of prosperity that made it possible for families to have only one breadwinner.
2. As women's educational and qualificational levels rose, so too did the female employment rate. Since the institutional framework, and particularly inadequate childcare facilities, made it difficult for the mothers of young children to work full-time, a modified family breadwinner model emerged in some countries, in which the man works full-time and the woman part-time. Many women who have been in full-time employment switch to part-time work after the birth of children. Today, this model is found mainly in Germany, Austria and the Netherlands. The sharp increase in part-time work following the entry into the labour market of hitherto

economically inactive women is leading to a decline in the share of full-time workers, but not to the replacement of full-time by part-time work.

3. In a more modern model of the family, both partners enter the labour market under improved conditions, so that the share of full-time workers rises again. This is why, as more childcare facilities have been made available, the part-time rate has been declining again in recent years, e.g. in Denmark. Because of the greater opportunities for switching between economic inactivity, part-time and full-time employment, part-time work becomes a normal part of the working life, in the same way as career breaks. This model is found in Finland, Denmark and Sweden. When a largely egalitarian distribution of paid work is achieved, both partners tend to develop preferences for shorter working times below the current full-time norm.

Clearly, each of these models requires a particular institutional and economic framework. If the new model of the family is to become established, the traditional institutional and economic environment, which is tailored to the sole breadwinner model, has to be changed. In countries where this does not happen, the intermediate model, which also has high female employment rates, can remain in place, as it does in the UK.

Working time preferences and the emergence of a new standard

Given the strong evolutionary dynamic in Europe, any analysis of current actual working time will provide only a 'snapshot' of a constantly moving target. Questions about working time preferences provide information on the dynamic preferred by employees. Their declared preferences can be summarised as follows:

- many currently inactive individuals want to enter the labour market, although with somewhat shorter working hours than those currently in employment;
- in a departure from the practices of the past, many employees now want to vary their working time over the course of their working lives; thus, 12% of full-time employees would like to be able to work part-time temporarily; the shares in the individual countries range from 8% in Spain, Portugal and the UK to 23% in Norway;
- the idea of sabbaticals attracts considerable support; fifty-seven per cent of those surveyed would like to take a sabbatical and figures range from 38% in Spain to 79% in Norway;
- men's and women's preferred working times differ less than their current working times, both within and between the countries in our sample;
- the working time preferences expressed by full-timers and part-timers are moving closer together; the difference between full-timers' and part-timers' actual working hours is 18.8 hours; at the level of preferences, this gap is reduced by more than half to 9.2 hours;
- some full-timers and many marginal part-timers would like a 'substantial' part-time job;
- employees working long hours in excess of the standard working time are most likely to prefer shorter hours;
- many of those surveyed would prefer a new, shorter working time norm; seventy-one per cent of respondents would like to work between 30 and 40 hours per week; the values range from 58% in the UK to 88% in Spain;

- preferences are dependent on personal circumstances; admittedly, we have no time series at our disposal; however, the differing working time preferences of people with and without young children in the household show that working time preferences changes as personal circumstances change.

There is no single trend in employees' preferences. Some workers who have previously not worked within the framework of the traditional full-time norm would like to do so in future. This applies particularly to men who currently work excessively long hours and to women who are seeking full-time employment. Other workers would like to opt out of continuous full-time employment in favour of career breaks or jobs requiring fewer hours than the full-time norm.

Table 42 Share of dependent employees expressing a preference for working times between 20 and 29 and between 30 and 40 hours, by gender
(horizontal %)

	20 to 29 hours			30 to 40 hours		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Austria	3	23	12	69	66	68
Belgium	5	23	13	80	63	72
Denmark	9	23	16	76	68	72
Finland	11	18	15	80	75	77
France	7	18	11	81	74	78
Germany	7	25	16	75	60	68
Greece	4	12	8	67	76	71
Ireland	11	30	19	73	53	65
Italy	5	26	13	81	64	74
Luxembourg	9	32	18	70	63	67
Netherlands	7	34	18	73	39	59
Portugal	5	14	9	78	78	78
Spain	3	18	8	92	79	88
Sweden	6	17	11	79	77	78
United Kingdom	9	33	21	68	47	58
Norway	9	28	18	76	56	67
EU15+NOR	7	25	15	77	62	71

The full-time norm is not set in stone and is subject to change. General working time reductions have reduced the working time standard. These reductions are being implemented in the individual countries at varying rates. The full-time standard (average contractual working time) currently varies between 35 and 40 hours per week, but is frequently exceeded because of overtime. The outlines of a new working time standard below the current level can be discerned in respondents' working time preferences. The overwhelming majority of men (77%) and women (62%) in dependent employment would like to work between 30 and 40 hours. Among both men and women, the shares of preferences for such working times are considerably higher than the shares of those actually working such hours. This can be interpreted as a desire for shorter full-time hours, and hence as potential support for demands for a general reduction in working time. Thus the full-time standard retains its significance at the level of preferences as well and if those preferences were realised it would become even more important than previously. Moreover, its function would

change. Whereas it has hitherto served mainly as a means of distinguishing standard working time from overtime, it would increasingly become an upper limit for more variable working times below the full-time norm. In a way, it is from employees' aspirations for working times between 30 and 40 hours that the contours of a 'new full-time norm' are emerging.

A considerable proportion of women would like substantial part-time jobs involving between 20 and 29 hours' work per week (25%, as against 17% working such hours or 14% working between 25 and 34 hours per week). Among men, the share of those declaring a preference for substantial part-time work is 7%, as against the 3% actually working such hours or the 5% working between 25 and 34 hours.

Among women, the combination of a weaker preference for full-time employment and a desire to work longer hours than those offered by marginal part-time jobs is leading to a relatively dense clustering of working time preferences between 20 and 29 hours. In some countries (Netherlands, Ireland, UK and Luxembourg), approximately one third of women's working time preferences fall within this range. It is also clear that working times are no longer regarded as fixed for the entire working life but are viewed rather as temporary arrangements that workers would like to renegotiate from time to time.

Implications for working time policy

Our analysis of employment and working time preferences has revealed the following points:

- working times preferences in the 16 European countries are converging as can be observed at individual, household and country level;
- the outlines of a new working time standard below the current norm can be discerned in employees' working time preferences;
- employees' working time preferences are not static; rather they evolve over time in accordance with personal and family circumstances.

Since differences in working time preferences remain, despite this convergence, because of differences in individual circumstances and values and since they change over the course of the working life, any new working time standard must allow scope for individual divergences from the full-time norm (elective working times). True, it must contain a measure, expressed in hours, that can serve both as a criterion for the volume of paid work required to earn a living wage and as an upper limit on working time; at the same time, however, it must also provide scope for working times of flexible duration by offering workers a range of options from which to choose. If we take employee preferences as a starting point, then a standard that would allow preferences to be realised would have the following characteristics:

- weekly working times would be 40 hours per week at most; the 40-hour level would become a sort of upper limit on weekly working time;
- The hours worked by full-timers (the statutory or collectively agreed full-time norm) would be further reduced to different levels depending on the country;
- There would be opportunities for workers to choose between full-time and substantial part-time employment and to opt for periods of withdrawal from the labour market with a guaranteed right

to return and income substitution benefits for those engaged in socially useful activities (bringing up children up to a certain age, further training, care of relatives etc.); even those not engaged in such activities would have opportunities to choose working times below the full-time norm, although they would not be subsidised out of the public purse;

- Conditions would be created for the promotion of substantial part-time employment; the incentives for women to work in marginal part-time jobs that still exist in some countries would be eliminated and to this end, there would be a lower limit on working time.

If employees are to be able to choose between various working times, several conditions must be met. A system of childcare must be put in place so that parents can achieve a reasonable balance between paid work and child raising. Hourly wage rates and social security benefits must not only be the same *pro rata* (OECD, 1998) but there should also be financial support for those engaged in socially accepted activities, in order to ensure that it is not only higher earners who avail themselves of these opportunities. Furthermore, the difference between men's and women's hourly wage rates must be reduced, in order that both partners can make decisions freed from the economic constraints produced by the gender pay gap. Finally, the organisation of work and working time must be made more flexible so that workers are able to vary their individual working time in accordance with their personal interests and requirements.

The functions of the old full-time norm outlined above could then be fulfilled in a different way.

If both partners are economically active, a single breadwinner no longer has to earn a family wage. Ensuring the family's subsistence could become a joint effort which would make it possible to reduce individual (standard) working times. Shorter individual working times for both partners would then also be the basis for individual social security entitlement. The derived entitlements for economically inactive spouses that still exist in many countries would then be unnecessary.

Protection is required against excessively long working hours, as well as greater freedom to choose shorter hours. If such options are available to employees and it becomes the recognised and protected norm to take advantage of them, then employees themselves will be determining the limits. However, employees will have to be in a position to ensure that the contractual working time is observed. If the ultimate criterion is output, as is currently the case in many jobs, and working time therefore becomes a variable quantity, not only is there a danger that (unpaid) overtime will be worked but employees will also be less likely to opt for part-time work. One indicator of this is that almost 60% of full-time employees say they do not think it is possible to do their job on a part-time basis.

Firms must develop their work organisation systems around a range of different working times. Flexible forms of work organisation are essential for the implementation of the new working time norm. Research has shown that those countries with the most flexible working times also have the most modern forms of work organisation (Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and Norway) (Epoc, 1997; Bosch, 1997).

Working time standards make their effects felt not only through labour market regulations but also through their wider social context (Bosch, 2001). Substantial part-time work could be encouraged by abolishing many of the incentives for marginal part-time work that still exist in many countries. However, it also requires the support of other institutions, such as a better public childcare system.

Short individual working times for parents are particularly feasible if the income required to maintain a family and pay for childcare can be earned with such working times and the need for earned income does not rise proportionally to the increase in the number of children. Transfer payments of a level sufficient to provide a living wage for those rearing children would create the most favourable conditions for this.

Elective working times will be accepted all the more readily the more 'normal' it seems to change working times. The survey results show that almost half of full-timers regard part-time work as damaging to their careers, and 43% say that employment and social security law affords part-timers less protection than full-timers. Fewer than one-third believe that their employer would accept a request to work part-time. These are serious obstacles which, under certain circumstances, may cause desires for individual and/or temporary working time reductions to go unrealised. Only in the Netherlands has part-time work become a widely accepted employment form. Under such circumstances, workers will also be considerably more likely to aspire to working times below the full-time norm, as the working time preferences show.

Thus the strict division between full-time and part-time work that still persists in most countries is an obstacle to the realisation of working time preferences. Currently, the choice is between working a prescribed number of hours as a full-timer or reducing working time and ending up in a form of employment – part-time work – that still has little recognition or acceptance. Moreover, it usually turns out to be difficult to return to full-time work, and in fact many workers find it impossible to work part-time in the first place because employers are not interested in employing part-timers. If elective working times below the full-time norm are to become commonplace, it may be necessary initially to put in place statutory arrangements to counter the widespread view that part-time work is an 'incomplete' or even an inferior employment form.

Finally, the general labour market situation is one of the factors in the external environment that influence decisions for or against individual working time reductions. When the labour market situation is unfavourable and those in employment are concerned primarily to retain their jobs while job seekers are looking to make good the earnings lost during their spell of unemployment by finding jobs offering longer hours, then individual working time reductions will tend to be scarce. And when one partner is unemployed, the partner in employment will be likely to try to boost the household income by working longer hours.

Conclusion

The results of the survey point to the challenges facing employment and working time policy in the 16 European countries. Although some of the differences between the countries are very considerable, there are also findings that are common to all 16 countries, particularly as regards the working time preferences of the economically active population, the vast majority of whom would like working times below the current full-time norm. However, if currently unrealised employment preferences are also taken into account, then the dynamic of change is more powerful than it may seem only of the working time preferences of the current economically active population is considered. This shows that surveys of working time preferences are of only limited significance if, as is often the case, they are confined to the economically active.

The EU can draw support from employees' preferences for its strategy of bringing employment rates in the Member States up to the US level. However, since most employees would also like to work

fewer hours, the preference is not for the combination of high employment rates with long working hours that characterises the USA but rather for a European combination of high participation rates with short individual working times.

The differences between actual working times and working time preferences that emerge clearly from the survey suggest there is a potential for change, and possibly also for dissatisfaction, that can be interpreted as an invitation to policymakers to act. Against the background of a consistent trend in declared preferences towards shorter working times and a concentration of preferences in the short full-time/long part-time range, the diversity of individual working time preferences raises the question of whether working times should be clearly standardised at a lower level and whether individual preferences for working times that deviate from the norm should be protected.

Overtime, and in particular the high share of regular overtime, constitutes a considerable resource for policymakers. It is no accident that the question of reducing overtime in order to combat unemployment is a significant element in the debate on working time policy in most countries. Policy initiatives in this direction can draw support from the fact that there is a widespread preference for overtime to be compensated with time off in lieu. In all the countries except Greece, Italy and Spain, more than 80% of those working overtime are able or would like to be able to take time off in lieu of overtime worked.

The survey results show clearly that working times and the distribution of working time at household level constitute an important adjustment variable in individual working time decisions, since these decisions are generally taken in the context of the household as a whole. This is a factor that is currently underestimated by policymakers. Short individual working times and a general working time reduction are more likely to be possible the higher the female employment rates is and the more equally working times are distributed between the partners in a household. Consequently, gender mainstreaming policy, which seeks to give equal rights to both sexes, is of direct relevance to working time policy.

Finally, income and distribution policies are required if working time preferences are to be realised. Only with a certain (minimum) level of income will choices between higher earnings and shorter working times be made in favour of reduced working time.

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Annexes

Annex 1

National experts

This report drew extensively on the sixteen national studies compiled on behalf of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. The authors of the national reports are listed below.

Alexandra Bautzmann (Austria)
Marco Biagi and his team (Italy)
Charlotte Blumensaadt and Kim Møller (Denmark)
Monique Borsenberger (Luxembourg)
Jean-Yves Boulin (France)
Colette Fagan (United Kingdom)
Manfred Garhammer (Germany)
Margarita Katsimi and Panos Tsakloglou (Greece)
Evelyne Léonard and Catherine Delbar (Belgium)
Anita Nyberg (Sweden)
Heloisa Perista (Portugal)
Minna Salmi and Johanna Lammi-Taskula (Finland)
Kea Tijdens (Netherlands)
Hege Torp (Norway)
Elisabeth Villagómez (Spain)
James Wickham (Ireland)

Annex 2

Questionnaires

A Basic questionnaire for the resident population aged 16 to 64 years

Introduction:

Good afternoon / evening. My name is <NAME> of <INSTITUTE>. We are conducting a survey on behalf of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, who undertakes research for the European Union. The survey is to find out more about people's choices and opportunities in the labour market today and in the future. We are interested in the views of all kinds of people who are now in work or not.

- Interviewer, stress as necessary
- confidentiality of responses
 - 15 minute interview
 - telephone number was selected randomly
 - We are very keen to hear YOUR views.

0.1 May I first of all check how many people aged 16 to 64 are there in your household?

Write in number: _____

0.2 Of these people aged 16 to 64, who has the next birthday?

Write in name: _____

0.3 If person is someone else:

Could I speak to _____ please?

Interviewer: If correct interview partner according to q 0.2 is not available at present please make an appointment and note appropriate time to call again. Start interview with correct respondent acc. to q 0.2 only.

Please note the questions in blue are taken from the boost questionnaire. This was used for the presently not employed residential population aged 16-64 years.

A Identification of Target Groups

Present Status and Intentions to Take up Paid Work

1. Are you currently in paid work?

Interviewer: Apprentices are in gainful employment. Persons in (unpaid) long-term education leave are not.

Yes → 12

No → 2

N.A.*) → 2

**) Translators: N.A. = No answer*

1. *deleted*

**) Translators: N.A. = No answer*

2. (if not in gainful employment:)

Are you currently ...

(Read out and code first to apply.)

– a pupil or full-time student at school? → 3a

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- in further education or a special training scheme? → 4
- unemployed? → 3b
- looking after the family or home? → 4
- retired? → 4
- or doing something else? → 4
- N.A. → 4

2. (if not in gainful employment:
Can I just check, are you currently ...
(Read out and code first to apply.)

- a pupil or full-time student? → 3a
- in further education or a special training scheme? → 4
- unemployed? → 3b
- looking after the family or home? → 4
- retired? → 4
- or otherwise not in paid employment? → 4
- N.A. → 4
- Respondent is in paid work → END

- 3.a (if pupil or full-time student acc. to q2:)
When do you think you will have finished your studies?
(Read out.)

- within the next year → 4
- within the next 2 years → 4
- within the next 5 years → 4
- or later? → 4
- Don't know → 4
- N.A. → 4

Translators: Make sure that having 'finished your studies' relates to the end of school and - if applicable - of university studies.

- 3.b (if unemployed:)
Are you receiving <UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS>*)?

- Yes
- No
- N.A.

*) Translators: Insert official term for your country.

4. Did you do any paid work last week?

- Yes → 12 or
..... END*)
- No → 5
- N.A. → 5

*) if 'pupil or full-time student' acc. to q2 : go to q12

otherwise : go to END

5. Can I just check, have you ever had any paid work?

- Yes
- No
- N.A.

6. Do you INTEND to take up paid work (again) in the next 5 years?

- Yes, now or in the next five years → 7
 No → 8
 N.A. → 8

7. (if yes:)

When do you intend to take up paid work? ...
 (Read out)

- As soon as possible → 12
 - Within the next year → 12
 - Within the next 2 years → 12
 - Within the next 5 years → 12
 - Later → 125
 Don't know. → 125
 N.A. → 125

8. (if 'no' in q6:)

Would you LIKE to be in paid work at present?

- Yes → 12
 No → 10
 N.A. → 10

9. *deleted*

10. (if no wish to be in paid employment now acc. to q8)

Would you like to take up paid work later on?

- Yes → 11
 No → 125
 Don't know. → 125
 N.A. → 125

11. (if yes:)

When would you like to take up paid work? ...
 (Read out)

- Within the next year → 12
 - Within the next 2 years → 12
 - Within the next 5 years → 12
 - Later → 125
 Don't know. → 125
 N.A. → 125

Marital Status

The following questions 12 - 124 are to be asked only if the respondent

- is presently in gainful employment
 ('yes' in q1 or in q4)
- is presently not employed but plans / wishes to take up paid employment within the next 5 years
 (('yes' in q6 and d 5 years in q7) or ('yes' in q8) or ('yes' in q10 and d 5 years in q11))

All other respondents (not employed and not wishing to have paid work within the next 5 years) directly go to the last two questions (q125 and 126) about age and sex (for weighting of the whole sample).

Working time preferences in sixteen European countries

12. Are you married or living with a partner, or are you single?

- Married or living with a partner → 13
- Single (not living with a partner). → FILT15*)
- N.A. → FILT15*)

*) *Hint for programming: Questions named 'FILTxy' are technical filters. FILTxy is located just before question xy.*

13. (if married / with partner)
Is your partner currently in paid work?

- Yes → 14
- No → FILT15
- N.A. → FILT15

14. (if yes:)
How many hours per week does your partner work on average?
Interviewer: Please enter number of hours with a DECIMAL POINT. E.g. if the answer is '38 hours 30 minutes' enter '38.5'.

- _____, ____ hours per week
- N.A.

Work History (persons presently not employed)

FILT15: Technical Filter:

- (1) *If 'not employed, but previous work experience' ('yes' in q 5) AND wish to take up paid employment within the next 5 years ('yes' in q6 and d 5 years in q7) or ('yes' in q8) or ('yes' in q10 and d 5 years in q11))* → 15
- (2) *If 'not employed and no previous work experience' ('no' or 'N.A.' in q 5) AND wish to take up employment (('yes' in q6 and d 5 years in q7) or ('yes' in q8) or ('yes' in q10 and d 5 years in q11))* → FILT72
- (3) *If 'employed' ('yes' in q 1 or 4).* → 19

(15 - 18: if previous work experience acc. to q 5 and presently not employed but plans / wishes to take up gainful work acc. to q6, q8 or q10:)

15. I'd now like to ask you some questions about your work experience in the past.
In total, for how many years have you been in paid work? ...
(Read out)

- less than 1 year
- less than 2 years
- less than 5 years
- less than 10 years.
- 10 years or more
- N.A.

16. When did your last paid job end? ...
(Read out)

- less than 1 month ago
- less than 6 months ago.
- less than 1 year ago
- less than 2 years ago

- less than 5 years ago
- less than 10 years ago
- 10 years or more ago
- N.A.

17. And why did this job end?

(Prompt if necessary)

- Personal reasons (family care, domestic commitments, further education,
compulsory military service etc.) → 18
- Reached normal retirement age → FILT72
- Early retirement → FILT72
- Dismissal / termination of a fixed-term-contract / redundancy → FILT72
- Other reasons → FILT72
- N.A. → FILT72

18. (if personal reasons:)

Can you say what were the personal reasons for giving up your last job?

(Prompt if necessary)

- Marriage. → FILT72
- Birth of child, need to care for children. → FILT72
- Care of elderly, ill, or persons with disability. → FILT72
- Further education. → FILT72
- Own illness → FILT72
- Did not want to work any longer → FILT72
- Moving to another locality → FILT72
- Other reasons → FILT72
- N.A. → FILT72

All respondents who are presently not in paid employment (acc. to q1 or 4) and who plan or wish to take up paid employment go to FILT72.

B Present Working Conditions and Options of Employed / Self-employed Persons**Type of Contract (How?) and Statistical Background Information**

(19 - 71: if employed acc. to q1 or q4, cf. FILT15:)

19. Now thinking about the paid work that you currently do. Do you have just ONE paid job at present, or more than one job?

- One job only → 21
- More than one job → 20
- N.A. → 20

20. (if more than one job:)

Please answer the following questions for your MAIN job only.

21. In this (main) job, are you currently ...

(Read out)

- an employee. → 22
- self-employed (with/without employees) → 31
- family worker → 125
- N.A. → 125

Working time preferences in sixteen European countries

(22 - 30: if dependent employee)

22. Does the company in which you are working belong to ...
(Read out)

- the agricultural sector → 24
- the manufacturing industry (including mining and construction) → 24
- the services → 23
- Don't know. → 24
- N.A. → 24

23. (if services)

Do you work in the public sector?

- Yes → 25A
- No → 24
- N.A. → 24

24. How many employees work in this company?

- 1 - 9
- 10 - 49
- 50 - 499
- 500 or more
- Don't know.
- N.A.

Mainly manual ('blue' collar)

25a Is your job mainly a manual or mainly a non-manual job?

-
- Mainly non-manual ('white' collar).
- N.A.

25b Does this job require special professional training?

- Yes
- No
- N.A.

25c In your job, do you have any managerial duties, or are you supervising any other employees?

- Yes, managerial duties / supervising
- No, neither - nor.
- N.A.

26. Is your present job a permanent job or do you hold a temporary contract?

- Permanent job
- Temporary contract.
- N.A.

27. What would you think of being self-employed at present? Would you prefer this to working as an employee?
Would you accept this if there was no other choice? Or would self-employment be unacceptable for you?

Interviewer: Questions refer to the main job of the respondent.

- Would prefer → 28
 Would accept → 35b
 Is unacceptable → 35b
 N.A. → 35b

(28 - 30: if prefer:)

28. Why would you prefer being self-employed to working as an employee?
 (Do not prompt)

- Income-related reasons (earn more money etc.)
 Professional reasons (make better use of one's skills)
 Personal reasons (more freedom, don't want to depend on other persons)
 Labour market related reasons
 (avoid unemployment, better chances for promotion)
 N.A.

29. Do you PLAN to start your own business?

- Yes → 30
 No → 35b
 N.A. → 35b

30. (if yes)

When do you expect to start your own business? ...
 (Read out)

- within the next year → 35b
 - within the next 2 years → 35b
 - within the next 5 years → 35b
 - or later? → 35b
 Don't know yet → 35b
 N.A. → 35b

(all dependent employees acc. to q21 go to q35b)

(31 - 34: if employer / self-employed acc. to q21)

31. Does your business belong to ...
 (Read out)

- the agricultural sector
 - the manufacturing industry (including mining and construction)
 - the services
 Don't know
 N.A.

32. Are you working on your own or do you have employees?

- On my own / with partners, but no employees → 34
 With employees → 33
 N.A. → 34

33. (if with employees)

How many people do you employ?

- 1 - 9
- 10 - 49
- 50 - 499
- 500 or more
- N.A.

34. What would you think of working as an employee at present? Would you prefer this to being self-employed? Would you accept this, if there was no other choice? Or would this be unacceptable for you?

- Would prefer
- Would accept
- Is unacceptable
- N.A.

Work History and Job Security (presently employed persons)

35a (if self-employed acc. to q 21)

For how many years have you run your own business? ...
(Read out)

- less than 1 year → 36
- less than 2 years → 36
- less than 5 years → 36
- less than 10 years → 36
- 10 years or more → 36
- N.A. → 36

35b (if dependent employee acc. to q 21)

For how many years have you worked for your current employer? ...
(Read out)

- less than 1 year
- less than 2 years
- less than 5 years
- less than 10 years
- 10 years or more
- N.A.

(36 - 71: all dependent employees or self-employed acc. to q 21)

36. In total, for how many years have you been in paid work? ...

(Read out)

- less than 1 year
- less than 2 years
- less than 5 years
- less than 10 years
- 10 years or more
- N.A.

37. Have you ever been unemployed in the last 5 years?

- Yes → 38
- No → 39
- N.A. → 39

38. (if yes)

For how long have you been unemployed during the last 5 years? ...
(Read out)

- less than 1 month.
- less than 6 months.
- less than 1 year
- 1 year or more
- N.A.

39. Do you worry about the security of your present job?*)

- Yes
- No
- N.A.

*) Translator: Hint for translation: 'security' in the sense of 'stability'.

40. If you were looking for a new job now:

Would it be easy, difficult or practically impossible for you to get a job you would find acceptable?

- Easy
- Difficult
- Practically impossible.
- Don't know.
- N.A.

Translators: The term 'you would find acceptable' shall clarify that the judgement whether a job is acceptable or not is the personal decision of the respondent.

Working Time (When?)

41. Do you currently work full-time or part-time?

- Full-time. → 43
- Part-time → 49
- N.A. → 51

(42 - 48: if full-time):

42. *deleted*

43. Would you currently prefer to be working part-time - either on a permanent basis, or for a given period only with the possibility of returning to full-time afterwards?

- Would prefer to work part-time on a permanent basis → 45
- Would prefer to work part-time for a given period only and then return to full-time → 44
- Preference for part-time without specification → 45

Working time preferences in sixteen European countries

- Neither - nor. → 48
- N.A. → 48

44. (if part-time for a given period)
For how many years would you like to work part-time? ...
(Read out)

- less than 1 year
- less than 2 years
- less than 5 years
- less than 10 years.
- 10 years or more
- Don't know.
- N.A.

(45 - 47: if preference for part-time acc to q43)

45. What kind of part-time work would you prefer? ...
(Read out)

- reduced hours every working day.
- some days per week in full-time, some days off
- longer periods of full-time work followed by longer periods off
- or a flexible working time arrangement with your actual working hours being fixed at short notice according to the needs of your job and your personal preferences?
- Others
- N.A.

46. Why do you want to work part-time instead of full-time? Is it ...

	Yes	No	N.A.
a) because you want or need more time for your children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) because you want or need more time to care for elderly, ill or persons with disability in your family?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) because OTHER domestic commitments come in conflict with your present full-time job?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) because you want to have more time for yourself and your own activities (e.g. hobbies, cultural or political activities)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) because you want to reduce the strains resulting from working full-time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Or are there other reasons?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

47. Have you ever tried to change to part-time work?

- Yes
- No
- N.A.

48. (all full-timers acc. to q41, regardless whether they prefer part-time or not)
I'd now like to ask you some questions about possible problems or disadvantages of part-time work.

- a) In financial terms, would you say that you could afford to work part-time? Would it ...
 - be no problem for you and your family.

- require you to cut down on expenses
- or would it not be possible at all?
- (Do not read out:) Would be affordable only if other household members work more hours*
- N.A.

b) (only if dependent employee acc. to q21)

Do you think that your current employer would accept you working part-time?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- N.A.

c) In principle, do you think that it would be possible to carry out your current job while working part-time?

- Yes
- No
- N.A.

d) Do you think that working part-time would damage your career prospects?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- N.A.

e) Do you think that in general part-timers are worse off than full-timers so far as protection by employment law and social security is concerned?

- Yes → 51
- No → 51
- Don't know → 51
- N.A. → 51

(all full-timers acc. to q41 go to q51)

(49 - 50: if part-time acc. to q41):

49. I would like to ask you why you work part-time rather than full-time. Is it because ...

(Read out and code first that applies)

- you are a student / at school → 51
- you are ill or disabled. → 51
- you could not find a full-time job → 51
- you do not want to work full-time. → 50
- N.A. → 51

50. Why don't you want a full-time job? It is because...

- | | Yes | No | N.A. |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) you are financially secure and work only because you want to | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) or because you earn enough working part-time | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) or because you want or need enough time for your children | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) or because you want or need enough time to care for elderly, ill or persons with disability in your family? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Or do you have other domestic commitments which prevent you from working full-time | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Are you working part-time because you want to have enough time | | | |

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- for yourself and your own activities, e.g. hobbies, cultural or political activities?
- g) Or do you have another reason?

(51 - 63: all dependent employees and self-employed acc. to q21)

51. Do you ever do any paid or unpaid overtime?

- Yes → 52
- No → 55
- N.A. → 55

(52 - 54: if yes)

52. How often do you work such overtime? Is it ...
(Read out)

- (almost) every working day
- at least once a week
- at least once a month
- or less often?
- Depends (e.g. seasonal peaks)
- N.A.

53. Are you able to take time off as compensation for this overtime?

- Yes → 55
- No → 54
- N.A. → 54

54. Would you like to do so?

- Yes
- No
- N.A.

55. In total, how many hours per week do you work at present - on average?

Interviewer: Please enter number of hours with a DECIMAL POINT. E.g. if the answer is '38 hours 30 minutes' enter '38.5'.

- _____, ____ hours per week
- N.A.

56. Provided that you (and your partner) could make a free choice so far as working hours are concerned and taking into account the need to earn your living:

How many hours per week would YOU prefer to work at present?

Interviewer: Please enter number of hours with a DECIMAL POINT. E.g. if the answer is '38 hours 30 minutes' enter '38.5'.

- _____, ____ hours per week
- Would prefer not to work at all
- N.A.

57. (if with partner acc. to q12)

And in this case how many hours per week would you prefer your PARTNER to work?

Interviewer: Please enter number of hours with a DECIMAL POINT. E.g. if the answer is '38 hours 30 minutes' enter '38.5'.

_____, ____ hours per week

Would not work

N.A.

Work at Home (Where?)

58a (if more than one job acc. to q 19)

In your main job: Do you work mainly at home?

Interviewer: 'At home' means 'in your private residence'.

Yes → FILT64

No → 59

N.A. → FILT64

58b (if not more than one job acc. to q 19)

Do you work mainly at home?

Interviewer: 'At home' means 'in your private residence'.

Yes → FILT64

No → 59

N.A. → FILT64

59. (if no)

Although you do not work mainly at home, do you ever do any paid or unpaid work there for your (main) job?

Yes → 63

No → 60

N.A. → 60

60. (if no)

In principle, would it be possible for you to carry out at least some of your paid work at home?

Yes

No

N.A.

61. Would you prefer to carry out your paid work - wholly or in part - at home?

Yes, wholly → 62

Yes, partially. → 62

No → 63

N.A. → 63

62. (if yes)

Why would you prefer to work at home? Would it ...

(Read out)

- help in combining paid work and family duties

- save commuting time

- Or are there other reasons?

N.A.

63. (if not mainly work at home acc. to q58)
How long does it usually take you to travel from home to work?...
(Read out)

- less than 15 minutes
- less than 30 minutes
- less than 45 minutes
- less than 1 hour
- 1 hour or more
- Not applicable, works in different places
- N.A.

Sabbaticals

FILT64: Technical Filter

- (1) if 'dependent employee' acc. to q21 → 64
- (2) if 'employer / self-employed' acc. to q21 → 71

(64 - 70 only dependent employees acc. to q21)

64. Apart from your regular holidays - do you think that from time to time it would be useful to have a longer break of several weeks or months from your paid work in order to do other things? Afterwards you would have the right to return to your job.

- Yes → 65
- No → 71
- N.A. → 71

(65 - 70: if yes)

65. What do you think you would like to do during such a break?
(Do not prompt)

- Further education
- Voluntary, charitable or political activities
- Do-it-yourself work (repair car, renovate house etc.)
- Take care of children
- Take care of elderly, ill or persons with disability in my family
- Travel, relax or other leisure activities
- Others
- N.A.

66. What would be a reasonable length of time for such a break? ...
(Read out)

- up to 3 months
- up to 6 months
- up to 12 months
- longer than 12 months?
- N.A.

67. Do you think that in principle it would be possible to take such a break from your present job?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know.....
- N.A.....

68. Provided that your employer would offer you such a break, would you make use of it if you were to receive NO PAY for this period, i.e. it would be unpaid leave?

- Yes → 70
- No → 69
- Not sure..... → 69
- N.A..... → 69

69. And if your employer or another institution would pay you HALF OF YOUR PRESENT NET INCOME during such a break - would you then make use of it?

- Yes → 70
- No → 71
- Not sure..... → 71
- N.A..... → 71

70. (if: 'yes' in q68 or q69)
And when would it suit you best to take such a break? ...
(Read out)

- within the next year
- within the next 2 years.....
- within the next 5 years.....
- or later?
- Don't know.....
- N.A.....

Reasons for Working (Why?)

71. There are many different reasons for paid work, such as earning money or having the opportunity to meet other people. I am going to read some statements to you. Please tell me whether you fully agree or rather agree, or whether you rather disagree or fully disagree.

- a) 'I work mainly to EARN MONEY.'
 - Fully agree.....
 - Rather agree
 - Rather disagree
 - Fully disagree
 - N.A.
- b) 'I work mainly because I LIKE MY JOB.'
 - Fully agree.....
 - Rather agree
 - Rather disagree
 - Fully disagree
 - N.A.
- c) 'I work mainly because this gives me the opportunity TO MEET OTHER PEOPLE.'
 - Fully agree..... → 91

- Rather agree → 91
- Rather disagree → 91
- Fully disagree → 91
- N.A. → 91

(all employees and self employed acc. to q21 go to q91)

C Present Options of Unemployed / Inactive Persons

FILT72: Technical Filter:

- (1) *If respondent intends or wishes to take up paid employment in five years at the latest (i.e. - answer 1, 2, 3, 4 in q 7 or - answer 'yes' in q8 or - answer 1, 2, 3 in q11)* → 72
- (2) *Employed or self-employed acc. to q21* → 76

Type of Contract (How?)

- 72. You told me that you intend or wish to take up paid work:
Would you prefer to work as an employee or be self-employed?

 - Employee → 73
 - Self-employed → 74
 - No preference → 76
 - N.A. → 76

- 73. (if dependent employee)
If you could not find a suitable job, would you consider setting up your own business?

 - Yes → 76
 - No → 76
 - Don't know → 76
 - N.A. → 76

- 74. (if self-employed acc. to q72)
If you don't manage to start your own business, would you consider working for someone else?

 - Yes
 - No
 - Don't know
 - N.A.

Working Time (When?)

- 75. *deleted*
- 76. Would you prefer a full-time or a part-time job?

 - Full-time → 79
 - Part-time → 77
 - No preference → 80
 - N.A. → 80

(77 - 78: if part-time)

77. What kind of part-time work would you prefer?

(Read out)

- Reduced hours every working day
- Some days per week in full-time, some days off
- Longer periods of full-time work followed by longer periods off
- Or a flexible working time arrangement with your actual working hours being fixed
at short notice according to the needs of your job and your personal preferences?
- Others
- N.A.

78. If a suitable part-time job was not available, would you accept a full-time job?

- Yes → 80
- No → 80
- Don't know. → 80
- N.A. → 80

79. (if full-time acc. to q76)

If a suitable full-time job was not available, would you accept a part-time job?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know.
- N.A.

80. Provided that you (and your partner) could make a free choice so far as working hours are concerned and taking into account the need to earn your living:

How many hours per week would YOU prefer to work?

Interviewer: Please enter number of hours with a DECIMAL POINT. E.g. if the answer is '38 hours 30 minutes' enter '38.5'.

- _____, ____ hours per week
- Would prefer not to work at all.
 - N.A.

81. (if with partner acc. to q12)

And in this case how many hours per week would you prefer your PARTNER to work?

Interviewer: Please enter number of hours with a DECIMAL POINT. E.g. if the answer is '38 hours 30 minutes' enter '38.5'.

- _____, ____ hours per week
- Would prefer not to work at all.
 - N.A.

Work at Home (Where?)

82. Do you think, that in the type of job you are looking for it would be possible for you to carry out at least some of the work at home?

Interviewer: 'At home' means 'in your private residence'.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know.
- Don't look for a specific type of job
- N.A.

83. Would you prefer to carry out your paid work - wholly or in part - at home?

- Yes, wholly..... → 84
- Yes, in part..... → 84
- No..... → 85
- N.A..... → 85

84. (if yes)

Why would you prefer to work at home? Would it ...
(Read out)

- help in combining paid work and family duties
- save commuting time
- Or are there other reasons?
- N.A.....

Job Search

85. Would it be easy, difficult or practically impossible for you to get a job you would find acceptable, at present?

- Easy
- Difficult
- Practically impossible.....
- Don't know.....
- N.A.....

86a Are you presently looking for any kind of paid work?

- Yes..... → 86b
- No..... → 87
- N.A..... → 87

86b Are you looking for a permanent job or for a temporary job?

- Permanent
- Temporary
- Doesn't matter
- N.A.....

Sabbaticals

87. Apart from your regular holidays - do you think that from time to time it would be useful to have a longer break of several weeks or months from your paid work in order to do other things? Afterwards you would have the right to return to your job.

- Yes..... → 88
- No..... → 90
- N.A..... → 90

88. What do you think you would like to do during such a break?

(Do not prompt)

- Further education.....
- Voluntary, charitable or political activities
- Do-it-yourself work (repair car, renovate house etc.).....

- Take care of children
- Take care of elderly, ill or persons with disability in my family
- Travel, relax or other leisure activities
- Others
- N.A.

89. What would be a reasonable length of time for such a break? ...

(Read out)

- up to 3 months
- up to 6 months
- up to 12 months
- longer than 12 months?
- N.A.

Reasons for Working (Why?)

90. There are many different reasons for paid work, such as earning money or having the opportunity to meet other people. I am going to read some statements to you.

Please tell me whether you fully agree or rather agree, or whether you rather disagree or fully disagree.

a) 'I want to work mainly in order to EARN MONEY.'

- Fully agree
- Rather agree
- Rather disagree
- Fully disagree
- N.A.

b) 'I want to work mainly because I LIKE MY JOB.*)

- Fully agree
- Rather agree
- Rather disagree
- Fully disagree
- N.A.

*) *Translators: 'Job' may be substituted by 'profession' if this makes more sense for presently not employed persons*

c) 'I want to work mainly because this gives me the opportunity TO MEET OTHER PEOPLE.'

- Fully agree
- Rather agree
- Rather disagree
- Fully disagree
- N.A.

D Now and in Five Years

Labour Market and Economic Situation

91. Now I would like to ask for your views about the economic situation. Would you say that the GENERAL economic situation in <COUNTRY>*) is currently

(Read out and code first to apply.)

- very good
- fairly good
- rather bad
- very bad
- N.A.

*) *Translators: Insert name of your country*

92. Do you think that IN FIVE YEARS TIME the general economic situation will be better or worse than now? Or won't there be much difference?

- Better
- Worse.
- No difference
- Don't know.
- N.A.

93. How would you describe your present PERSONAL economic situation? ...
(Read out)

- very good
- fairly good
- rather bad
- very bad
- N.A.

94. IN FIVE YEARS TIME, do you expect that your personal economic situation will be better or worse than now? Or won't there be much difference?

- Better
- Worse.
- No difference
- Don't know.
- N.A.

95. What do you think about the general situation on the labour market AT PRESENT?
If someone is actively looking for a job now: Do you think it is easy, difficult or practically impossible for them to get a job he or she would find acceptable?

- Easy.
- Difficult
- Practically impossible.
- It depends
- Don't know.
- N.A.

96. In five years time will the situation be easier or more difficult to get a job one would find acceptable than now?
Or will there be no difference?

- Easier.
- More difficult
- No difference
- Don't know.
- N.A.

Personal Situation

97. *deleted*

98. (if single acc. to q12)
You told me that you are single at present. Do you think that in five years you will be married or living with a partner?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- N.A.
99. Do you have children?
- Yes → 100
- No → 103
- N.A. → 103
100. How many of your children live together with you in the same household?
- 1 → 101
- 2 → 101
- 3 or more → 101
- None → 103
- N.A. → 105
101. (if yes)
- How old is the YOUNGEST child which lives together with you?
- Below 3 years → 102
- 3 to 5 years → 102
- 6 to 9 years → 102
- 10 to 14 years → 102
- 15 years and older → 103
- N.A. → 103
102. (if youngest child is not older than 14 years)
- To what extent are you personally looking after your youngest child during daytime?
- Usually, sometimes or hardly ever?
- Usually / always
- Sometimes
- Hardly ever / never
- N.A.
103. Do you think that you will have (a / another) child in the next five years?
- Yes → 105
- No → 104/105
- Don't know → 104/105
- N.A. → 104/105
104. (if youngest child is 10 years or older acc. to q101 and if no further children expected acc. to q103)
- Do you think that your youngest child will have left home five years from now?
- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- N.A.
105. Apart from children: Are you personally looking after any person during daytime because they are ill, disabled or elderly?
- Yes → 106
- No → 108
- N.A. → 108

(106 - 107 if yes:)

106. Does or did this care giving reduce your employment opportunities?

- Yes
- No
- N.A.

107. Do you think that in five years time you will be responsible for looking after someone during daytime?

- Yes → FILT109
- No → FILT109
- Don't know. → FILT109
- N.A. → FILT109

108. (if no care acc. to q105)

Still leaving children aside, do you think that in five years time you will be responsible for looking after any person during daytime because they are ill, disabled or elderly?

- Yes → FILT109
- No → FILT109
- Don't know. → FILT109
- N.A. → FILT109

E Work Options in Five Years

FILT109: Technical Filter:

- (1) If respondent is presently employee or self-employed acc. to q21 → 109a
- (2) If respondent wants to take up paid employment 'as soon as possible' or 'within the next year' or 'within next 2 years' acc. to q7 → 109b
- (3) If respondent would like to be in paid employment at present ('yes') acc. to q8 → 109b
- (4) If respondent would like to be in paid employment 'within the next year' or 'within next 2 years' acc. to q11 → 109b
- (5) If respondent wants to take up paid employment 'within the next 5 years' acc. to q7 OR acc. to q11 → 119*)
- *) If respondent plans / wishes to take up paid employment „within the next five years“ (i.e. answer 4 in q7 or answer 3 in q11) we assume that answers in q109 - 118 will not be different from the answers in the corresponding questions 72 - 90. Therefore these respondents directly proceed to q119.

109a (if employee or self-employed acc. to q21, cf. FILT109)

We have already talked about your PRESENT work options. Now we would like to know something about your work options for the time FIVE YEARS FROM NOW. Do you think that in 5 years time you will probably still be in paid work?

- Yes → 112a
- No → 110
- Don't know. → 111
- N.A. → 111

109b (if presently not employed and wish / plan to take up paid employment, cf. FILT109)

We have already talked about your PRESENT work options. Now we would like to know something about your work options for the time FIVE YEARS FROM NOW. Do you think that in five years time you will probably be in paid work?

- Yes → 112a
- No → 110

- Don't know → 111
 N.A. → 111
110. (if no in q109a or q109b)
 What do you think you will be doing in five years? Will you probably be ...
 (Read out)
- retired → 112b
 - unemployed. → 112b
 - in education → 112b
 other. → 112b
 N.A. → 112b
111. (if don't know acc. to q109a or 109b)
 Would you like to be in paid work in five years time?
- Yes → 114
 No → 119
 Don't know → 119
 N.A. → 119
- 112a (if yes in q109a or 109b)
 Taking into account the probable developments within the next five years we just talked about:
 Will you be happy with being in paid work then? Or would you prefer NOT to be in paid work in five years time?
- Will be happy to be in paid work → 114
 Would prefer NOT to be in paid work → 119
 Don't know → 119
 N.A. → 119
- 112b (if 'no' in q109a or q109b)
 Taking into account the probable developments within the next five years we just talked about:
 Will you be happy with NOT being in paid work then? Or would you prefer to be in paid work
 in five years time?
- Will be happy NOT to be in paid work → 119
 Would prefer to be in paid work → 114
 Don't know → 119
 N.A. → 119
- 113a *deleted*
- 113b *deleted*
- (114 - 118: if preference for 'paid employment' in q111 or in q112a/b)
114. Would you prefer to be working as an employee or to be self-employed in five years time?
- Dependent employee
 Self-employed.
 No preference
 N.A.
115. Would you prefer a full or a part-time job?
- Full-time
 Part-time.
 No preference
 N.A.

116. Provided that you (and your partner) could make a free choice so far as working hours are concerned and taking into account the need to earn your living:
 How many hours per week would YOU prefer to work in five years from now?
Interviewer: Please enter number of hours with a DECIMAL POINT. E.g. if the answer is '38 hours 30 minutes' enter '38.5'.
- _____, _____ hours per week
 Would prefer not to work at all.
 N.A.
117. (if with partner now acc. to q12 or in 5 years acc. to q98)
 And in this case how many hours per week would you prefer your PARTNER to work?
Interviewer: Please enter number of hours with a DECIMAL POINT. E.g. if the answer is '38 hours 30 minutes' enter '38.5'.
- _____, _____ hours per week
 Would prefer not to work at all.
 Not applicable, will probably have no partner in 5 years.
 N.A.
118. Would you prefer to carry out your paid work - wholly or in part - at home?
- Yes, wholly
 Yes, partially.
 No
 N.A.

F Employment Counselling Services

119. Now thinking about the last 12 months, have you ever sought or received information or advice about the following issues:
- | | Yes | No | N.A. |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Changing your job or taking up new employment | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Working full-time instead of part-time or vice versa | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) The possibilities of working at home or of teleworking | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Any training or education opportunities. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
120. (if at least one question in q119 is answered by 'yes')
 Where did you receive this information or advice?
(Read out)
- In the <PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT OFFICE>*)
 - In a <PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT OFFICE>*)
 - In the <SOCIAL BENEFITS OFFICE>*)
 - From employers
 - From trade unions
 - From the media (newspapers, internet etc.).
 - From other institutions (private or public).
 - Informal from friends / family etc.
 N.A.

*) *Translator: Insert official name in your country. If an institution does not exist, please enter 'not applicable' in English. Do not add categories.*

G Standard Demography

121. What is the highest (academic) qualification that you have?

(Read out)

- <PRIMARY / SECONDARY I (i.e. completion of compulsory schooling)>*)
- <SECONDARY II>*)
- <TERTIARY (i.e. university degree or comparable level)>*)
- no qualifications
- N.A.

*) *Translator: Insert official names in your country.*

122. Taking into account all the income that the members of your household receive from different sources:
Would you say that your household is financially well off, that you just manage or that you have difficulties?

- Well off
- Just manage
- Difficulties
- N.A.

123. Would you describe your health for your age as ...

(Read out)

- excellent
- good
- fair
- poor...
- N.A.

124. Are you living ...

(Read out)

- in or close to a large city with more than 100,000 inhabitants.
- in or close to a small city with 10,000 to 100,000 inhabitants.
- in a rural area?
- N.A.

(Q. 125 and 126 to be answered by ALL respondents)

125. Sex of respondent:

- Male
- Female
- N.A.

126. Age of respondent:

_____ years

- N.A.

127. Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Good bye.

Working time preferences in sixteen European countries

The following information has to be added automatically to each data set:

128. *Country*

- 01 = Austria
- 02 = Belgium
- 03 = Denmark
- 04 = Finland
- 05 = France
- 06 = Germany
- 07 = Greece
- 08 = Ireland
- 09 = Italy
- 10 = Luxembourg
- 11 = Netherlands
- 12 = Portugal
- 13 = Spain
- 14 = Sweden
- 15 = United Kingdom
- 16 = Norway

129. *(if Country = 05, 06, 09, 13, 15:)*

Additional regional information for further breakdown of the 5 largest countries

130. *Date of interview:*

YY / MM / DD
Year / Month / Day

B Boost questionnaire for the population aged 16 to 64 years presently not employed

The boost questionnaire is broadly identical to the basic questionnaire. The only differences relate to questions 0 - 4. These differences are printed in bold in this document.

Introduction:

Good afternoon / evening. My name is <NAME> of <INSTITUTE>. We are conducting a survey on behalf of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, who undertakes research for the European Union. The survey is to find out more about people's choices and opportunities in the labour market today and in the future. **We are especially interested in the views of people who are presently not in paid work for whatever reason.**

Interviewer, stress as necessary

- confidentiality of responses
- 15 minute interview
- telephone number was selected randomly
- We are very keen to hear your views.

0.1a May I first of all check how many people aged 16 to 64 are there in your household?

Write in number: _____

0.1b Of these people aged 16 to 64, how many of them are presently not in paid work, i.e. pupils or students, unemployed, housewives, retired or otherwise not in paid employment?

Write in number: _____
(if 'none': go to END)

0.2 Of these PRESENTLY NOT EMPLOYED PEOPLE aged 16 to 64, who has the next birthday?

Write in name: _____

0.3 If person is someone else:

Could I speak to _____ please?

Interviewer: If correct interview partner according to q 0.2 is not available at present please make an appointment and note appropriate time to call again. Start interview with correct respondent acc. to q 0.2 only.

A Identification of Target Groups

Present Status and Intentions to Take up Paid Work

1. *deleted*

*) Translators: N.A. = No answer

2. (if not in gainful employment:)

Can I just check, are you currently ...
(Read out and code first to apply.)

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-------|
| - a pupil or full-time student? | <input type="checkbox"/> | → 3a |
| - in further education or a special training scheme? | <input type="checkbox"/> | → 4 |
| - unemployed? | <input type="checkbox"/> | → 3b |
| - looking after the family or home? | <input type="checkbox"/> | → 4 |
| - retired? | <input type="checkbox"/> | → 4 |
| - or otherwise not in paid employment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | → 4 |
| N.A. | <input type="checkbox"/> | → 4 |
| Respondent is in paid work. | <input type="checkbox"/> | → END |

Working time preferences in sixteen European countries

- 3.a (if pupil or full-time student acc. to q2:
When do you think you will have finished your studies?
(Read out.)
- within the next year → 4
 - within the next 2 years → 4
 - within the next 5 years → 4
 - or later? → 4
 - Don't know. → 4
 - N.A. → 4

Translators: Make sure that having 'finished your studies' relates to the end of school and - if applicable - of university studies.

- 3.b (if unemployed:
Are you receiving <UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS>*)?
- Yes
 - No
 - N.A.

**) Translators: Insert official term for your country.*

4. Did you do any paid work last week?
- Yes → 12 or
END*)
 - No → 5
 - N.A. → 5

**) if 'pupil or full-time student' acc. to q2 : go to q12
otherwise : go to END*

5. Can I just check, have you ever had any paid work?
- Yes
 - No
 - N.A.

(Questions 6 - 130 are the same as in the Basic Questionnaire)

Annex 3

Survey data

A. Variables used in the country comparisons: comparative tables

1. Unemployment rates 1987-97

	%
Austria	4.8
Belgium	8.6
Denmark	9.7
Finland	9.9
France	10.8
Germany	7.6
Greece	8.6
Ireland	14.5
Italy	10.4
Luxembourg	2.1
Netherlands	6.6
Norway	4.7
Portugal	6.0
Spain	19.7
Sweden	5.0
United Kingdom	8.3
EU	9.7

Source: OECD, *Employment Outlook 2000*.

2. Share of service sector

	%
Austria	63.9
Belgium	71.9
Denmark	70.8
Finland	64.0
France	70.7
Germany	62.1
Greece	56.4
Ireland	61.5
Italy	64.1
Luxembourg	72.7
Netherlands	71.6
Norway	72.9
Portugal	55.3
Spain	63.2
Sweden	72.9
United Kingdom	71.0

Source: OECD, *Employment Outlook 2000*.

Working time preferences in sixteen European countries

3. Average number of years' education and human capital in purchasing power parities among 25-64 year olds

	Average no. of years' education *	Human capital in PPP-\$ **
Austria	12.1	72600
Belgium	10.2	45800
Denmark	11.4	65800
Finland	11.4	53200
France	10.3	53100
Germany	13.2	74200
Greece	8	20300
Ireland	9.6	30000
Italy	8.4	48200
Netherlands	11.3	46100
Norway	12.1	67600
Portugal	7.3	24000
Spain	8.4	29900
Sweden	11.8	67600
United Kingdom	11.7	51500

Note: Conversion into US \$ on the basis of 1993 purchasing power parities according to OECD figures (PPP-\$)

*1992 according to OECD estimates

** 'Replacement value, calculated from OECD data on the average cost per person and per year in the various educational levels (primary and lower secondary, upper secondary, tertiary sector) in 1993, the number of years typically spent in these levels and the breakdown of the 25-64 age group by highest level of education in 1994.

Source: D. Schumacher, 'Immaterielle Investitionen in Deutschland und im internationalen Vergleich', Vierteljahrshefte zur Wirtschaftsforschung DIW 66/ 2, 1997

4. Childcare and schooling

	Childcare coverage (%)		Compulsory schooling			
	0 to 3 (1)	3 to 6 (2)	School age (3)	Age on starting school	Hours of schooling	Overall index
Austria	2	75	6	6	4 to 5	1.7
Belgium	27	95	n.a.	6	7	2.7
Denmark	48	82	6	7	3 to 5.5	3
Finland	21	53	5	7	4 to 5	3
France	23	99	30	6	8	2.7
Germany	6	91	12	6	4 to 5	1.7
Greece	3	64	<5	6	4 to 5	1.3
Ireland	2	55	<5	6	4.4 to 5.4	1.7
Italy	6	91	n.a.	6	5.5 to 6	1.7
Luxembourg	6	91	n.a.	6	8	2
Netherlands	8	71	<5	5	7	1.7
Norway						3
Portugal	12	48	10	6	6	1
Spain	2	84	n.a.	6	5	1.7
Sweden	33	72	64	7	2.5 to 6	3
United Kingdom	2	60	<5	5	6.5	1.7

(1) 0-10 = 1; 11-25 = 2; 26+ = 3. (2) 0-50 = 1; 51-70 = 2; 70+ = 3. (3) 1-12 = 1; 13-25 = 2; 26+ = 3.

Source: European Centre (1998:55/56); European Commission (1997:62)

5. Hourly compensation costs in US Dollars, 1997

Austria	21.9
Belgium	22.8
Denmark	22.0
Finland	21.4
France	17.9
Germany	28.2
Greece	9.5
Ireland	13.5
Italy	16.7
Luxembourg	22.5
Netherlands	20.6
Norway	23.7
Portugal	5.2
Spain	12.1
Sweden	22.2
United Kingdom	14.1

Source: ILO *Key Indicators of the Labour Market*, 1999

6. Ratio of highest income quintile to lowest income quintile,* 1994

Austria	4.7
Belgium	4.6
Denmark	3.2
Finland	3.1
France	4.5
Germany	4.9
Greece	6.2
Ireland	6.0
Italy	5.3
Luxembourg	4.8
Netherlands	3.9
Norway	4.5
Portugal	7.2
Spain	5.4
Sweden	4.5
United Kingdom	5.5
EU15	5.0

* The share of the richest 20% of the population in total national income relative to that of the poorest 20%
Source: EUROSTAT- EC Household Panel; FIN, national sources

**7. Employment and labour force growth in OECD countries, 1987-97
Annual percentage change**

	Employment Average
Austria	0.7
Belgium	0.4
Denmark	-0.1
Finland	-1.1
France	0.3
Germany *	2.9
Greece	0.5
Ireland	2.4
Italy	-0.3
Luxembourg	3.0
Netherlands	2.0
Norway	0.3
Portugal	1.1
Spain	0.8
Sweden	-1.0
United Kingdom	0.6

* Average growth rate has been calculated by combining data for the whole of Germany with the corresponding data for western Germany prior to 1992.

Source: OECD *Employment Outlook 2000*

8. Collective Bargaining Coverage*, 1994

	1994
Austria	98
Belgium	90
Denmark	69
Finland	95 **
France	95
Germany	92
Greece	77
Ireland	47
Italy	82 ***
Luxembourg	92
Netherlands	81
Norway	74
Portugal	71 ***
Spain	78
Sweden	89
United Kingdom	47

* Number of employees covered by a collective agreement divided

by corresponding total number of wage and salary earners.

1995. *1993.

Source: OECD *Employment Outlook 1997*.

B. Variables constructed for the multivariate analyses

DIFF	Difference preferred working time minus actual working time, constructed from variable Q55, Q56
MANAGE	Managerial duties, constructed from question Q25c, Coding 1 = has managerial duties
HH_FIN	Household financial situation, constructed from question Q122, 1 = good, 0 = rest
JOBAUS	Job prospects from question Q40, 1 = easy to find a job, 0 = rest
GELD	Main reason for working is to earn money, constructed from question Q71a, 1 = complete agreement, 0 = rest
JOBGUT	Main reason for working is that I like the job, constructed from Q71b, 1 = complete agreement, 0 = rest
LEUTE	Main reason for working is to meet people, constructed from Q71c, 1 = complete agreement, 0 = rest
LAND	Agricultural sector, constructed from Q22
PRODUKT	Manufacturing sector, constructed from Q22
DIENST	Service sector, constructed Q22
BLUE	Blue-collar or white-collar workers, constructed from Q25a, 1 = blue-collar, 0 = white-collar or no information
KIND	Children living in the household, constructed from Q99 und Q100, 1 = yes, 0 = no or no information
VERH_ARB	Household situation, constructed from Q12, Q13, 1 = lives with partner in work, 0 = rest
GESCHL	Sex, constructed from sex variable, recoded 1 = male, 0 = female
OESI	Country dummy for Austria
BELGIEN	Country dummy for Belgium
DAENEMA	Country dummy for Denmark
FINLAND	Country dummy for Finland
FRANK	Country dummy for France
DEUTSCH	Country dummy for Germany
GRIECH	Country dummy for Greece
IRLAND	Country dummy for Ireland
ITALIEN	Country dummy for Italy
LUXEM	Country dummy for Luxembourg
NIEDER	Country dummy for the Netherlands
PORT	Country dummy for Portugal
SPANIEN	Country dummy for Spain
SCHWEDEN	Country dummy for Sweden
UK	Country dummy for Great Britain
NOR	Country dummy for Norway

The country dummies were constructed from the COUNTRY variable

C. Regression results

Regression: Actual working time for all dependent employees

Multiple R ,43210
 R Square ,18671
 Adjusted R Square ,18454
 Standard Error 10,36025

Analysis of Variance

	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square
Regression	29	268292,83870	9251,47720
Residual	10888	1168660,35857	107,33471

F = 86,19278 Signif F = ,0000

Variables in the Equation

Variable	B	SE B	Beta	T	Sig T
GESCHL	6,232060	,213855	,270986	29,141	,0000
MANAGE	4,231518	,218582	,177296	19,359	,0000
Q126	,042806	,009147	,043339	4,680	,0000
JOBAUS	1,342719	,220521	,057205	6,089	,0000
HH_FIN	,786197	,221919	,034207	3,543	,0004
GELD	,091552	,209222	,003986	,438	,6617
JOBGUT	,722500	,218548	,031294	3,306	,0009
LEUTE	-,841657	,222891	-,035624	-3,776	,0002
LAND	4,093843	,966961	,056015	4,234	,0000
PRODUKT	5,890201	,766374	,218548	7,686	,0000
DIENST	2,579444	,745276	,101094	3,461	,0005
BLUE	-2,129448	,228938	-,090003	-9,301	,0000
KIND	-,705899	,222341	-,030701	-3,175	,0015
VERH_ARB	,082150	,222729	,003579	,369	,7123
OESI	3,362781	,592423	,067736	5,676	,0000
BELGIEN	1,073492	,610787	,020360	1,758	,0789
DAENEMAR	,721923	,556311	,016131	1,298	,1944
FINLAND	3,715876	,595534	,073988	6,240	,0000
FRANK	1,918403	,531958	,051373	3,606	,0003
DEUTSCH	,217288	,516718	,006031	,421	,6741
GRIECH	4,176417	,740756	,059510	5,638	,0000
IRLAND	1,699088	,609112	,032197	2,789	,0053
ITALIEN	1,727731	,565093	,038697	3,057	,0022
LUXEM	1,992638	,771142	,026483	2,584	,0098
NIEDER	-2,558090	,578299	-,053027	-4,423	,0000
PORT	4,216717	,642579	,074221	6,562	,0000
SPANIEN	2,960988	,623865	,055568	4,746	,0000
SCHWEDEN	2,171093	,573086	,045451	3,788	,0002
UK	1,251887	,524269	,033096	2,388	,0170
(Constant)	26,201238	,954401		27,453	,0000

Working time preferences in sixteen European countries

Regression: Difference between preferred and actual working time

Regression results for men

Multiple R ,59405
 R Square ,35289
 Adjusted R Square ,34908
 Standard Error 8,32969

Analysis of Variance

	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square
Regression	29	186201,10479	6420,72775
Residual	4921	341437,74923	69,38381

F = 92,53927 Signif F = ,0000

*** MULTIPLE REGRESSION ***

Equation Number 1 Dependent Variable.. DIFF

Variables in the Equation

Variable	B	SE B	Beta	T	Sig T
Q55	-,570125	,012010	-,579599	-47,472	,0000
MANAGE	-,188433	,259493	-,009053	-,726	,4678
Q126	-,045488	,011539	-,050531	-3,942	,0001
JOB AUS	-,135883	,259379	-,006553	-,524	,6004
HH_FIN	,007834	,265973	3,772E-04	,029	,9765
GELD	-,364587	,252921	-,017470	-1,442	,1495
JOB GUT	1,884196	,265337	,089508	7,101	,0000
LEUTE	-,193649	,278422	-,008632	-,696	,4868
LAND	-,161693	1,173507	-,002786	-,138	,8904
PRODUKT	,180607	,994152	,008307	,182	,8558
DIENST	-,329398	,986552	-,015571	-,334	,7385
BLUE	,848687	,271501	,040795	3,126	,0018
KIND	,279722	,268214	,013474	1,043	,2970
VERH_ARB	-,492147	,267601	-,023537	-1,839	,0660
OESI	-,178241	,824741	-,004035	-,216	,8289
BELGIEN	-,193860	,846248	-,004104	-,229	,8188
DAENEMAR	-,924326	,806676	-,023070	-1,146	,2519
FINLAND	-,157962	,861123	-,003247	-,183	,8545
FRANK	-,419596	,751747	-,012269	-,558	,5768
DEUTSCH	-,576630	,742194	-,018294	-,777	,4372
GRIECH	-1,296768	,998728	-,019474	-1,298	,1942
IRLAND	-,023253	,830301	-5,079E-04	-,028	,9777
ITALIEN	,584626	,781160	,015057	,748	,4543
LUXEM	,600873	,989903	,009307	,607	,5439
NIEDER	-,658930	,815600	-,015920	-,808	,4192
SPANIEN	-,254112	,845939	-,005287	-,300	,7639
SCHWEDEN	-,080309	,809071	-,001913	-,099	,9209
UK	-,912536	,760203	-,025762	-1,200	,2300
NOR	-1,834463	,819112	-,042528	-2,240	,0252
(Constant)	20,158570	1,357317		14,852	,0000

End Block Number 1 All requested variables entered.

Regression results for women

Multiple R	,62682
R Square	,39291
Adjusted R Square	,38980
Standard Error	7,65440

Analysis of Variance

	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square
Regression	29	214698,89005	7403,41000
Residual	5662	331735,9000	58,58988

F = 126,35988 Signif F = ,0000

* * * * MULTIPLE REGRESSION * * * *

Equation Number 1 Dependent Variable.. DIFF

Variables in the Equation

Variable	B	SE B	Beta	T	Sig T
Q55	-,542882	,009773	-,614810	-55,548	,0000
MANAGE	,392961	,233977	,018340	1,679	,0931
Q126	-,042489	,009161	-,050358	-4,638	,0000
JOBAUS	-,430637	,231821	-,020970	-1,858	,0633
HH_FIN	-1,079439	,227587	-,055062	-4,743	,0000
GELD	,213362	,213226	,010877	1,001	,3170
JOBGUT	,701506	,222159	,035770	3,158	,0016
LEUTE	,773988	,221734	,039280	3,491	,0005
LAND	,967624	1,031544	,013351	,938	,3483
PRODUKT	,802117	,762964	,028907	1,051	,2932
DIENST	,504995	,719469	,020028	,702	,4828
BLUE	,816101	,241358	,039035	3,381	,0007
KIND	-1,555399	,229594	-,079332	-6,775	,0000
VERH_ARB	-1,121955	,229821	-,056969	-4,882	,0000
OESI	-1,509530	,639077	-,035799	-2,362	,0182
BELGIEN	-,626167	,655844	-,014030	-,955	,3397
DAENEMAR	-2,127603	,619637	-,056518	-3,434	,0006
FINLAND	,299650	,626491	,007376	,478	,6325
FRANK	-,421379	,569695	-,013148	-,740	,4595
DEUTSCH	-1,191215	,568265	-,038117	-2,096	,0361
GRIECH	-1,306101	,753373	-,022755	-1,734	,0830
IRLAND	-2,302858	,662904	-,050311	-3,474	,0005
ITALIEN	-1,855672	,609334	-,047389	-3,045	,0023
LUXEM	-,701973	,840491	-,010541	-,835	,4036
NIEDER	-2,471887	,658461	-,057597	-3,754	,0002
SPANIEN	1,016325	,684914	,020595	1,484	,1379
SCHWEDEN	,451890	,634188	,010900	,713	,4762
UK	-3,469770	,565472	-,110717	-6,136	,0000
NOR	-1,492649	,638461	-,036302	-2,338	,0194
(Constant)	18,345181	,988913		18,551	,0000

D. Additional figures

Figure 19 Regression diagram: volume of paid work / female employment rate

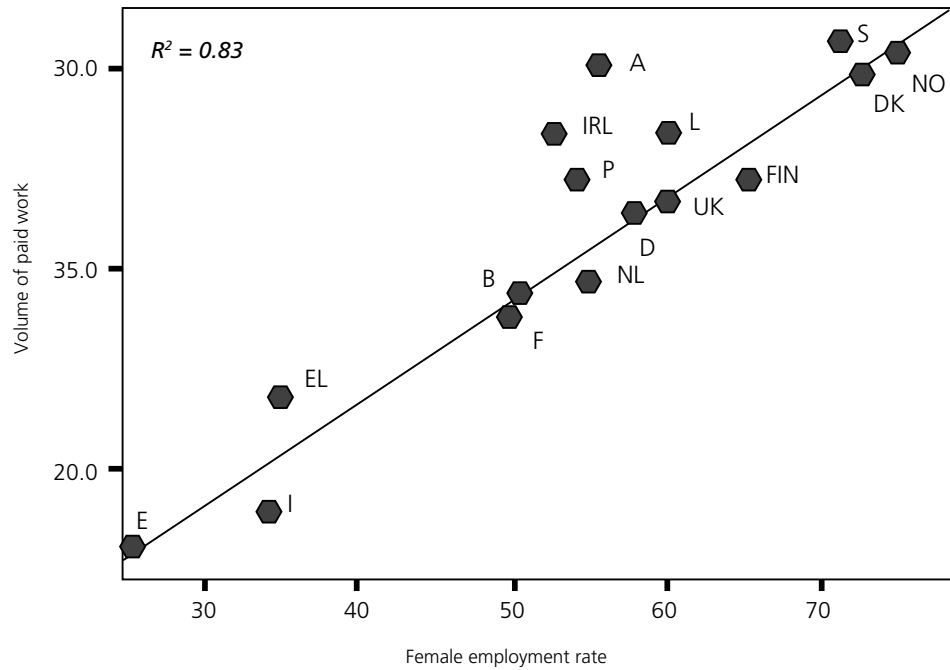
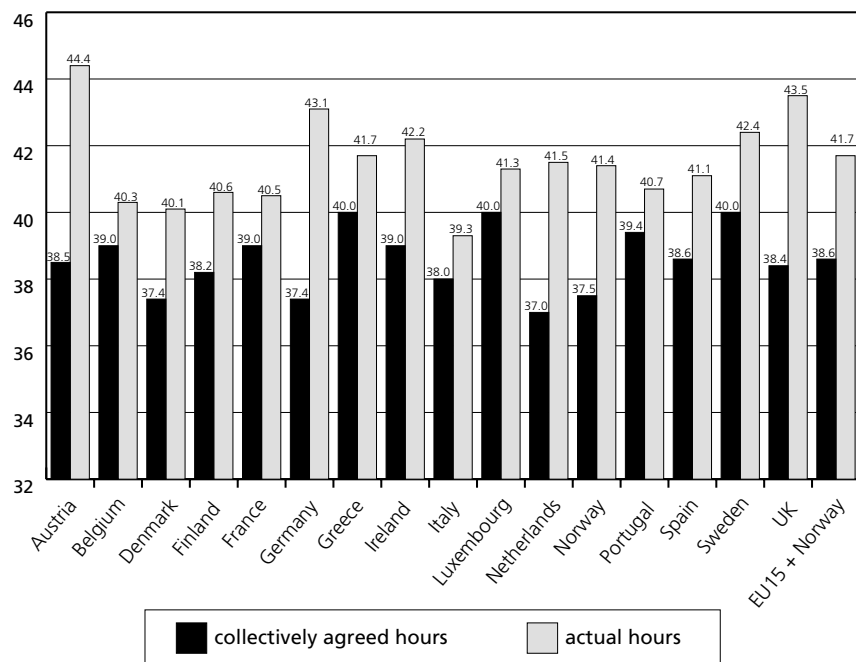


Figure 20 Collectively agreed and current weekly working time of full-time employees



Source: Collectively agreed working time from: Working time developments – annual update 1999, EIROnline, February 2000 (Data for 1999, Portugal, Spain, Finland 1998, Germany only Western Germany, actual working time from our survey).

Figure 21 Difference between the current and preferred working time of men in dependent employment (more-equal-less)

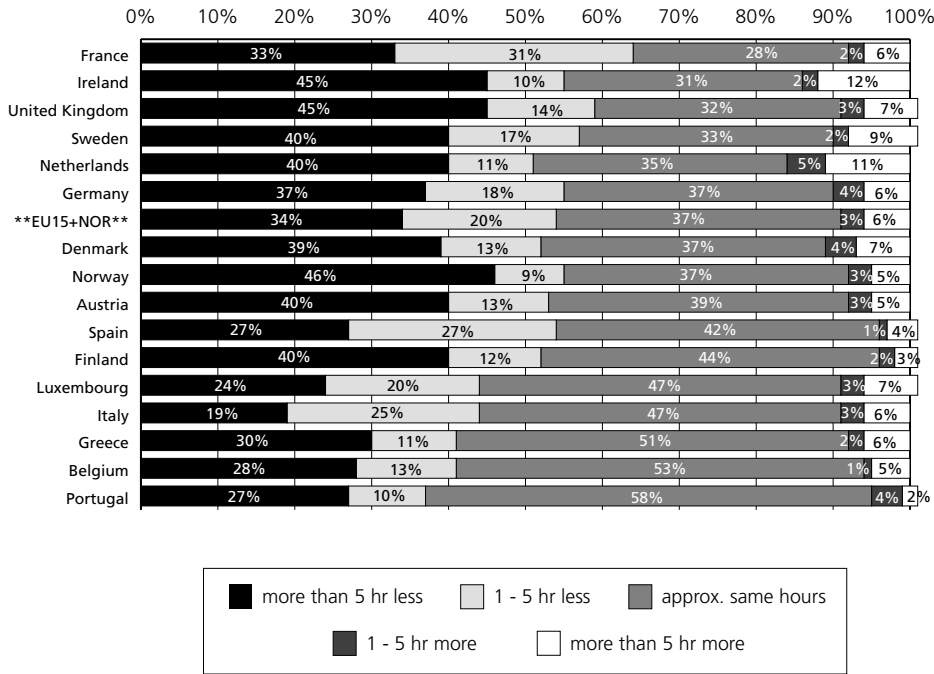


Figure 22 Difference between the current and preferred working time of women in dependent employment (more-equal-less)

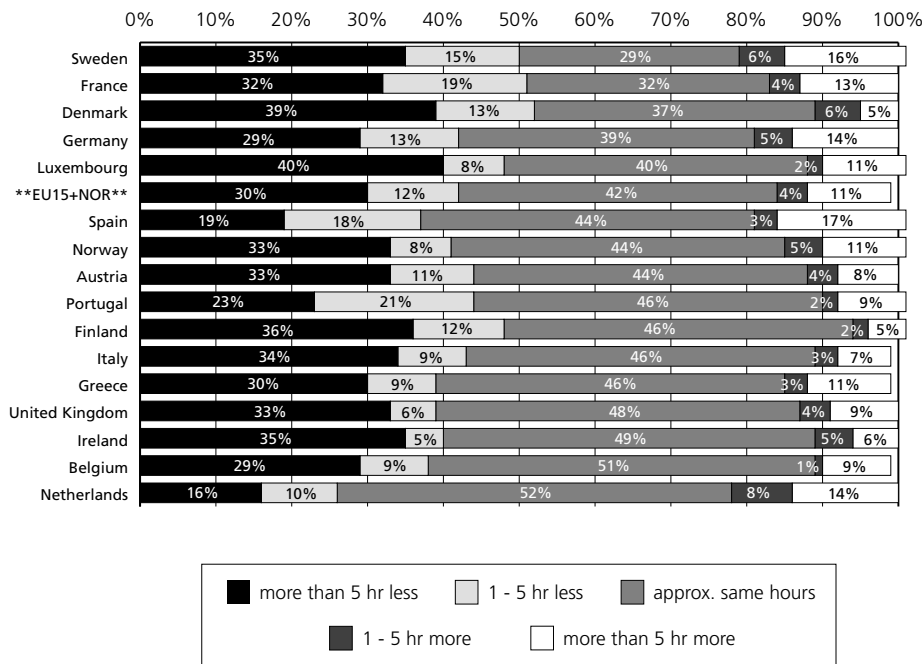
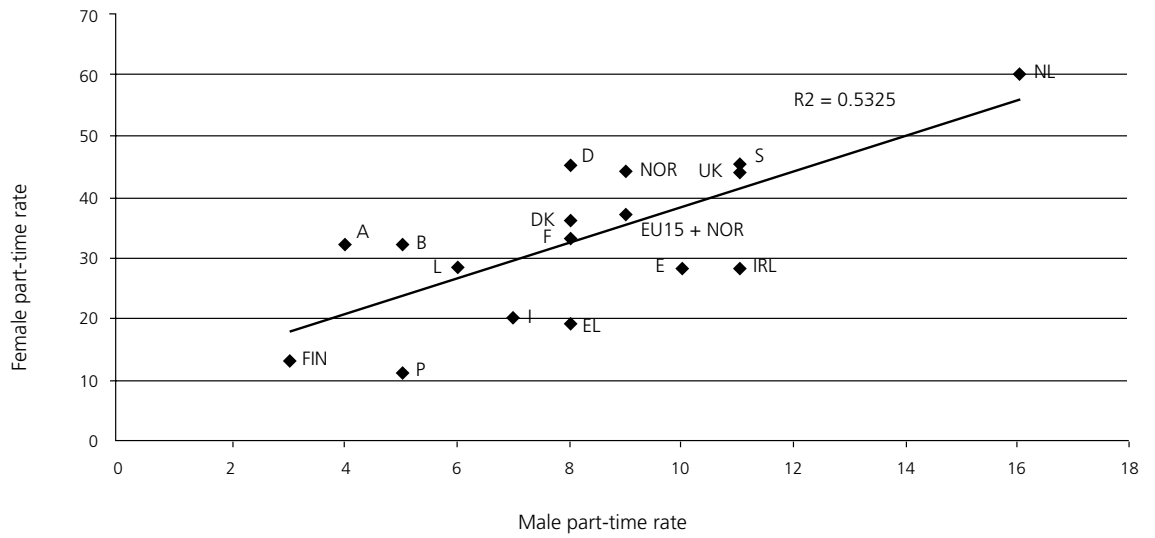


Figure 23 Regression diagram: female part-time rate / male part-time rate



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Working time preferences in sixteen European countries

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Increased labour market participation is the key to achieving an inclusive European society for all. This report focuses on the issue of working time in the context of present employment policy priorities. It analyses findings from a survey carried out by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions into working time across the 15 EU Member States and Norway. It compares the hours currently worked by people to the hours they say they would like to work in the future. It looks at aspects such as age and gender differences, income levels, professional status and domestic responsibilities to form a comprehensive portrait of the working population in Europe today. The report concludes that there is a definite wish to change the present situation and this could act as a clear incentive to policymakers in their shaping of labour market policy.

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions is a tripartite EU body, whose role is to provide key actors in social policy making with findings, knowledge and advice drawn from comparative research. The Foundation was established in 1975 by Council Regulation EEC No 1365/75 of 26 May 1975.

