



Gender, employment and working time preferences in Europe



EUROPEAN FOUNDATION
for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

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Colette Fagan

(with Tracey Warren and Iain McAllister)



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Foreword

While raising employment performance is a major challenge for the European Union, 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 the key to achieving an inclusive European society for all.

This report seeks to analyse the role gender plays in determining labour market participation and preferences within the 15 European Union Member States and Norway. While it is recognised that there are also external indicators which influence people's decisions and are beyond their control (overall labour market demand, availability of adequate daycare facilities, lack of access to training for older workers, etc.), it is also important to attempt to analyse internal indicators which influence people's decisions whether or not to participate in the labour market. The hypothesis here is that gender is one of the key indicators (if not the key indicator) that strongly influence women's and men's realities and choices with regard to employment.

We hope that readers will find this report informative and useful.

Raymond-Pierre Bodin
Director

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Deputy Director



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Chapter 1

Introduction

What types of work arrangements do women and men prefer? To what extent do current work patterns diverge from these preferences? These questions are relevant to European employment policy. To achieve a higher European employment rate, it is necessary both to increase the number of jobs and to encourage work arrangements that accommodate labour supply preferences. This will enable women and men to maintain high rates of labour market participation throughout their working lives. An improved match between current and preferred working arrangements will also contribute to the broader goal of improving living and working conditions in Europe.

The Foundation's 1998 Employment Options Survey¹ is an important resource for these debates, it is one of the few sources of information on some important aspects of employment preferences that covers all 15 member states of the European Union and Norway. It is a representative sample of the working age population (16 to 64 years) which explores a number of issues including:

- What are the job-seeking plans of the employed?
- How many hours would job seekers prefer to work?
- Would the employed prefer to work more or less hours?
- How many would like to be self-employed?
- Would they like to take sabbaticals or to work from home?
- Why would they prefer to change their working arrangements in these ways?

¹ The survey was commissioned by the European Foundation for Living and Working Conditions and the Norwegian Royal Ministry of Labour and Government Administration. It is a large-scale representative survey of 30,000 people aged 16 to 64 in all 15 EU member states and Norway. The fieldwork was carried out in 1998, co-ordinated by Infratest Burke Sozialforschung (1998), which also prepared the technical reports and first analyses of the findings.

The survey is a rich source of information, although there are some limitations to take into account for the purpose of this analysis. Firstly, the survey asked about the current and preferred number of working hours, but did not collect information on work schedules. However, the preferred number of working hours is likely to be influenced by when these hours are worked (At night? At weekends? On rotating shifts?) and by the degree of autonomy the person has to vary their working hours to accommodate domestic and other activities. Secondly, the analysis could be strengthened if the survey had collected more detail about people's current wage levels and the income adjustments they would be willing to exchange for working time adjustments. Thirdly, only limited information was collected from people who were not employed and said they did not want a job within the next five years. For this part of the population – which amounts to 10% of men and 20% of women of working age – the only information collected was age, gender and whether they were in education, retired, or 'looking after their family'. Yet information about why this part of the population was not looking for work, the nature of their domestic responsibilities and their work preferences are also important for policy debates. Fourthly, it would have been helpful to include an explicit question to identify those on maternity or parental leave to permit a distinction between 'at-work' and employment rates. Finally the sample size is sufficiently large for basic comparisons to be drawn between countries, but precludes more detailed analyses of sub-groups, such as national comparisons of employed mothers (see Appendix A.1).

Preferences and expectations do not provide a 'hard' or perfect measure of future behaviour, for constraints and other priorities also affect outcomes. For example, not everyone who says they would like to work part-time would do so immediately if this option were offered to them.

However, women and men's preferences and evaluations of their options do influence their plans, decisions and behaviour. Thus, information about preferences and the reasons for these preferences throws light on the kind of policy developments that the population would like to see and use. There is also a feedback from policy interventions and other changes in circumstances that causes adaptations to preferences. For example, more people might prefer to become self-employed if they had the knowledge, resources or are simply familiar with this way of life. This is indicated by the way that the children of the self-employed often follow this route as well. Similarly, as we shall see later in this report, mothers tend to prefer shorter hours of work in countries where public childcare services are limited, and longer hours when there are more extensive childcare services. By analysing these variations in preferences associated with peoples' different employment and domestic circumstances, it is possible to reflect on the conditions and policy environment under which preferences for certain types of work arrangements might increase or diminish.

This report compares the employment situation and preferences of women and men as a contribution to the 'gender mainstreaming' approach required in European employment policy as adopted in the Treaty of Amsterdam. Gender mainstreaming accepts that the analysis of gender relations must be integrated into analyses of labour market conditions and processes so that appropriate and effective policy interventions can be made. This is relevant for the efficacy of all



employment policy, not just issues related to equal opportunities (Rubery, 1995; Rubery and Maier, 1995; Rubery et al. 1998a, 1999). This report shows that in the current situation of clear gender differences in the level and form of employment, there are gender similarities as well as differences in employment preferences. The analysis shows how men and women's employment preferences are related to the kinds of jobs they do as well as to their domestic circumstances, and also compares the preferences of those who are currently employed with those who are job seekers.

Definition and classification of weekly hours used in the report

The measure of hours used in the analysis are average current weekly hours, including overtime.

The following categories are used:

- 'Short part-time': less than twenty hours
- 'Substantial part-time': 20-34 hours
- 'Moderate full-time': 35-39 hours
- 'Long full-time': 40-49 hours

Chapter 2

Who is employed and who wants to work?

Most people of working age (16-64 years) are in employment or want to be (Table 1). In 1998, 61% were currently employed, 2% had been employed in the previous week and another 21% were ‘job seekers’ who wanted to start work now or within five years (see Appendix A.2 for a description of people employed in the previous week but not in the survey reference week). The remaining 15% were neither employed nor job seekers, which we refer to as labour market ‘non-participants’.

Table 1 The labour market status of the working-age population by age and gender

						%
	Age and gender differences between those who are...					
All persons	Employed	Employed last week	Job seekers	Non-participants	(Number)	
16-19	28	8	52	12	2,540	
20-29	60	4	33	4	6,576	
30-39	77	1	17	5	7,112	
40-49	77	1	14	8	6,283	
50-59	59	2	13	26	5,392	
60-64	18	2	10	70	2,531	
All	61	2	21	15	30,434	
<i>Women</i>						
16-19	25	8	54	13	1,259	
20-29	54	3	37	6	3,193	
30-39	64	2	26	9	3,571	
40-49	65	1	20	14	3,109	
50-59	47	2	17	34	2,712	
60-64	10	2	10	78	1,314	
All	51	3	26	20	15,158	

Table 1 (continued)

					%
	Age and gender differences between those who are...				
All persons	Employed	Employed last week	Job seekers	Non-participants	(Number)
<i>Men</i>					
16-19	31	8	50	11	1,280
20-29	65	4	29	3	3,386
30-39	90	1	8	1	3,540
40-49	89	1	7	3	3,173
50-59	71	1	11	17	2,678
60-64	26	2	9	63	1,217
All	71	2	17	10	15,274

Note: Those currently employed are identified at question 1 of the questionnaire, those employed last week at question 4. ‘Job seekers’ are all those who want a job now or within five years. In the survey people who were employed last week are presumed to be job seekers but there is no information on their present job-seeking intentions. ‘Non-participants’ are those who are not employed and do not want a job now or within five years. The row percentages may not total 100 precisely due to decimal rounding.

There is a familiar age and gender profile to labour market participation. Employment and job seeking increases for both sexes as they enter their twenties and then start to decline around the age of fifty, reflecting age-related patterns of education and retirement (the age dimension to employment preferences is addressed in Lilja and Hämäläinen, 2001). The gender differences are most pronounced between these two stages in life. Men have higher rates of employment than women (71% compared to 51%). Conversely, women are more likely to be job seekers and non-participants. Just over a quarter of women and 17% of men are job seekers. One fifth of women are not employed and not planning to work within the next five years, which is twice the rate for men. Women are also more uncertain about whether they will seek employment in this period, indicating that their labour market entry is more contingent on employment opportunities and domestic circumstances than that of mens (see Appendix A.2).

The gender differences in employment rates are because work and family life are still shaped by a ‘male breadwinner’ division of responsibilities in most European societies. Women’s domestic responsibilities (care for children, elders and other adults needing nursing or assistance with managing their lives, housework) make more demands on their time than on men’s time and reduces women’s availability for paid work. Domestic responsibilities are not the only reason why women have lower employment rates. Labour market conditions are the other part of the story: gender inequality and discrimination results in women experiencing higher unemployment rates in most countries, as well as poorer employment conditions (Rubery et al., 1998a, 1999).

Figure 1 shows the reasons for non-employment by gender and age. Most of the young people without jobs are in education or training or are job seekers, while at the other end of the age spectrum most are retired. Between these two stages in life, most of the non-employed men are unemployed. Unemployment is also common for women, but domestic responsibilities figure highly in women’s accounts of why they are not presently employed. This is explored further in Table 2 for the population aged 20-49 years. Just over one third of women in this age group are



not employed, and 70% of these are looking after their family and home. Of the 11% of men in this age group who are not employed, over half are unemployed and only 6% are looking after the home.

Figure 1 The status of the non-employed (job seekers and non-participants)

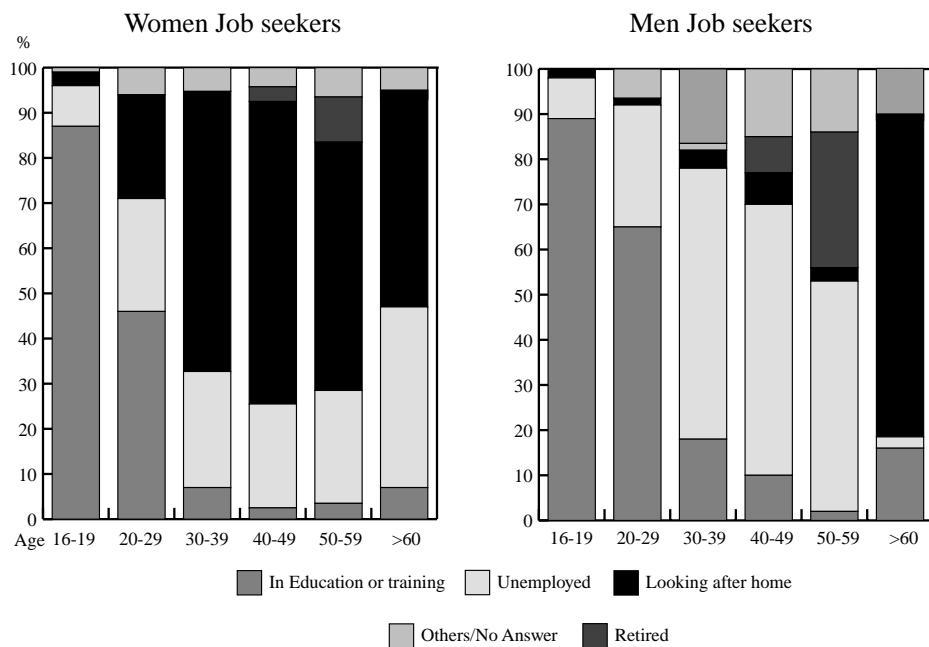


Table 2 The current status of non-employed women and men aged 20-49 years

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Non-employed	11	36
Non-employed who are:		
• in education or training	13	4
• unemployed	54	19
• looking after family or home	6	70
• retired	10	2
• other / no answer	17	6
Total non-employed	100	100

The boundary between being ‘unemployed’ and not seeking employment due to ‘domestic responsibilities’ is blurred for women. Many women in the latter category are the ‘hidden unemployed’, who have domestic responsibilities but also want employment when it is available. This was vividly illustrated during the 1980s in the European Union when employment growth triggered an expansion in the number of job seekers as ‘women returners’ entered the labour market alongside school leavers, and these women filled a large proportion of the vacancies (Rubery et al., 1998a). Thus many women classified as non-participants might be drawn into the labour market if the types of jobs on offer, or an expansion of childcare and other services, enabled them to balance employment with family responsibilities. Furthermore, it is likely that

many will become job seekers later in their lives as their domestic circumstances change, for example when their children are older.

Table 3 The employment intentions of the non-employed

Current status	Those who intend to start or resume employment....			Total
	...within a year or sooner	...within 2-5 years	...later or don't know	
	Those who intend to start or resume employment....			
In education or training	50	32	18	100
Unemployed	81	3	15	100
Domestic responsibilities	23	12	65	100
Retired	3	<0.5	97	100

Employment intentions were closely related to current circumstances. Some 80% of the unemployed and half of those in education intend to start work within the next year or sooner, and another 32% of students want to start within two to five years (Table 3). Few of the retired intended to resume employment. The intentions of those (mainly women) with domestic responsibilities was more diverse; 23% intended to find employment within a year, while 65% did not intend to resume employment within the next five years. This diversity will reflect the different care responsibilities they have – such as the age of their children, and whether they are caring for older relatives – as well as their own age. The availability of childcare services and working time arrangements that are compatible with their care responsibilities will also influence their employment plans.

Employment plans, expectations and orientations

Social, economic and political pressures are modifying the ‘male breadwinner’ arrangement. Women’s labour market participation rates have risen consistently over several decades, with every generation of women having fewer and shorter interruptions to employment than their predecessors (Rubery et al., 1999). This long-term rise, combined with declining male participation rates, means that the gender difference in participation rates is predicted to witter away in the next few decades (Rubery and Smith, 1999). Gender role attitudes are also changing, particularly among younger generations. A growing proportion of the population support more egalitarian arrangements where both women and men are involved in both employment and domestic work (European Commission 1998a). However, men’s involvement in domestic work is increasing much more slowly than women’s increased involvement in employment (Gershuny et al., 1994).



Table 4 Women's employment expectations related to their fertility plans

In the next five years they...	% who expect to be employed in five years time
<i>Employed women</i>	
• think they will have their first child	91
• think they will have another child	88
• don't think they will have their first child	84
<i>Job seeking women</i>	
• think they will have their first child	88
• think they will have another child	78
• don't think they will have their first child	74
• don't think they will have another child and expect their youngest child will have left home	33

Most women these days expect to combine employment with child raising (Table 4). Some 90% of employed women who expect that they will have had their first child within the next five years also expect to be still in employment. The proportion is similarly high for those who are already combining employment with raising children and who expect to have another child during this period. The majority of childless job seekers, or those who think they will have another child in the next five years, also expect to be employed at the end of this period. It is women job seekers who expect that their children will have left home who have the lowest expectations about employment in five years time. These women are older on average than those who are starting or still completing their families, and their lower expectation will be associated with both their age and their generation. Older generations of women had a lower degree of labour market attachment in their younger years than more recent generations. In addition, they may be deterred from seeking employment due to ageism and a lack of recent employment experience.

Women and men think employment is important for broadly similar reasons. Earning a living is obviously a major reason. Over 80% of employed and job-seeking men and women fully agree or agree with the statement 'I work mainly to earn money' (Table 5). Employed men were more likely to fully agree with this statement than employed women or job seekers of either sex. This is associated with men being the main wage earner in most households due to their higher average wages and because of the influence of traditional social norms which endorse the 'male breadwinner' gender division of labour.

Across Europe, similarly large proportions of employed men and women have a strong work commitment because of the other benefits that they gain from having a job (European Commission 1998, Table 19)². This is because employment also provides social and psychological benefits for most people, particularly in well-designed working conditions (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 1998). In this

² It should be remembered that a smaller proportion of women than men is in employment , and less is known about the employment commitment of the non-employed, particularly those who are not looking for employment.

survey, the majority of employed men and women said that they like their job and see employment as a source of social networks and interaction. Job seekers were even more likely to value these two dimensions of employment.

Table 5 Work orientations by gender and employment

Those who agree that they work mainly¹...	The employed			The job seekers			%
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All	
<i>...to earn money</i>							
Fully agree	61	51	57	52	51	51	
Total who fully or partly agree	87	84	86	85	86	86	
<i>...because 'I like my job'</i>							
Fully agree	46	52	48	55	56	56	
Total who fully or partly agree	82	86	84	90	88	89	
<i>...because of the opportunity to meet people</i>							
Fully agree	33	47	39	38	50	45	
Total who fully or partly agree	69	82	75	79	87	84	

¹ People were asked whether they agreed with each of the statements, so they were able to say that they worked 'mainly' for each of the above reasons if they wanted to do so.

Overall, women are more likely to fully agree that they like their job and to value employment as a means of meeting people, in other words, to be motivated by the intrinsic returns from having a job rather than simply extrinsic financial reasons. One part of the explanation is that many women may have a 'qualitatively different' work orientation because of their domestic responsibilities (Hakim, 1996). However, men and women's work motivations are likely to be affected by the types of jobs that they do and not just their family roles and domestic circumstances. For example, previous research has revealed that when occupational position is taken into account, then gender differences in job satisfaction and work motivations remain, but are reduced. Paradoxically, it is men and women with the highest qualifications and better jobs who are the least satisfied with their jobs. This reflects the juxtaposition of higher expectations with relatively better employment conditions (Gallie et al., 1998).

Women are even more likely than men to think that it is difficult to find employment and to be pessimistic about the current economic conditions (Table 6). Of those in employment or seeking employment, two thirds of men think that it is difficult or impossible for people to find suitable employment in the current labour market conditions, rising to 75% of women. Only one in five of the workforce expected the situation to ease within the next five years, and one third thought it would get more difficult. More generally, in 1998, the workforce was broadly divided in half in their assessment of whether the general economic situation in their country was good or bad, and around one in five persons thought that their own personal economic situation was bad or very bad. There were few gender differences in the assessment of the future, but if anything women were less optimistic that either the general or their personal economic situation would improve within five years.



Table 6 Perception of economic and labour market conditions by gender

Employed and job seekers who think that...	Men	Women	All	%
• it is difficult or impossible for someone to find an acceptable job at present	68	75	71	
• in five years time conditions will be such that finding an acceptable job will be...				
...easier	20	17	19	
...more difficult	37	35	36	
...no different	34	37	35	
...don't know/no answer	10	12	11	
• the current economic situation in their country is bad or very bad	43	57	49	
• in 5 years time the economic situation will be				
...worse	25	26	26	
... the same	35	37	36	
... better	30	25	27	
• their current personal economic situation is bad or very bad	21	25	23	
• in 5 years time their personal economic situation will be				
...better	51	48	50	
...worse	11	10	11	

This chapter has shown that women's expectations and plans indicate a commitment to labour market participation, and that they value employment for reasons similar to those expressed by men. However, a smaller proportion of women are employed than men. One reason is that in most households women still retain primary responsibility for childcare and other domestic tasks, and this limits their employment if they are unable to reconcile the demands of their paid and unpaid work. Jobs that offer working time arrangements that fit in with their domestic schedules is one part of the solution. More public funding of care services is another. The third part of the jigsaw is to increase men's involvement in the domestic sphere.

It is important that employment preferences are drawn into the formulation of European employment policy. Women and men's working time preferences and their attitudes towards other changes in their employment, such as the merits of self-employment or working at home, are important to inform projections about labour market trends and for developing policy to accommodate the needs and preferences of employees as well as employers. These issues are addressed in the following chapters.

Chapter 3

Home and employment

The structure and organisation of employment in Europe has been changing in a number of ways in recent decades. Employment is increasingly concentrated in service activities and part-time work has increased, largely concentrated in the lower occupational positions within the service sectors (Smith et al., 1998; Walwei, 1998). In comparison with the current rates of part-time work, self-employment and fixed-term contracts remain less common, with the exception of widespread use of fixed-term contracts in Spain. There are signs, however, of a new change in the employment relationship with temporary employment agencies becoming an intermediary between employers and their workforce in some parts of the European economy. This form of contract is still rare, but appears to be spreading (Michon, 2000). A growing minority of the employed does some or all of their work from home, facilitated by innovations in information and communication technologies. Many of these are ‘white collar’ employees, or people in new forms of self-employment and professional freelancing, alongside more traditional forms of self-employment and homeworking. Straddling all these trends is a widespread and ongoing diversification of working time arrangements for both full-timers and part-timers. ‘Annualised hours’ contracts, new shift patterns, and the incidence of ‘unsocial hours’, working in the evening, at night and at weekends have all increased (Bosch et al., 1994; Rubery et al., 1995; Fagan 1999). These working time developments are part of the growing workplace pressures on employees to be ‘flexible’ in the sense of working extra or variable hours in response to the demands of their employers and customers. These new time-demands are accompanied by a faster, more intense pace of work for much of the European workforce (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 1997a).

The other major change is that women constitute an increasing proportion of the workforce. The growth of dual-earner arrangements for couples and the increase in single-parent households

means that the issue of how to combine employment and family responsibilities is a concern for most of the population at some stage in their working lives. The expansion of part-time work has provided one type of solution for some women, but the cost of this solution is often high in terms of reduced income and social protection coverage, limited job opportunities and poor promotion prospects (O'Reilly and Fagan, 1998). Childcare services, parental leave, flexitime systems and so forth are other measures which make it easier to combine employment with family responsibilities, but the extent of these provisions varies markedly between countries and workplaces.

Alongside all these changes, employment remains highly segregated by gender (Rubery and Fagan, 1993; Rubery et al., 1999). In this chapter we start by examining the relationship between women and men's domestic responsibilities and the volume of hours that they work. Sections 3.2 and 3.3 compare women and men's employment situations. It is in this domestic and labour market context that we must locate and interpret their employment preferences. We then explore preferences for two different ways of undertaking employment in section 3.4: whether self-employment is preferable to being an employee, and whether more people would prefer to work from home than currently do so.

Care responsibilities and the gender division of labour

At any point in time, a large proportion of the workforce have children or other care responsibilities, and most people will take on these commitments at some stage in their lives. Thus, policies to improve the 'work-family' balance are relevant to most of the working-age population, and certainly to their children and other relatives in need of care. Unfortunately, in this we cannot in any detail explore the domestic situation of the 20% of working age women and 10% of working age men who are neither employed nor job seekers. But it is important to remember that the non-participation of many of these women – and some of these men – is associated with the constraints of care responsibilities on their labour supply, as discussed in the previous chapter.

One third of the employed and job-seeking population have a child at home who is aged under 15, and 9% of them have a child aged under 3 years (Table 7). A smaller proportion of male job seekers than employed men are fathers, largely because most of them are young labour market entrants (see Chapter 2)³. Women who are job seekers are more likely to have young children compared to employed women and men. The ability of many of these women to enter employment would increase with improved childcare services or working arrangements that accommodated their childcare responsibilities.

³ Nearly two thirds of male job seekers (64%) and one half of female job seekers (49%) are aged under 30, compared with one quarter of employed men and women.



Table 7 The proportion of the employed and job seekers with responsibilities for young children by gender

	Those with a child in their household¹ aged...				%
	Under 3	Under 6	Under 10	Under 15	
<i>Men</i>					
Employed	10	18	26	35	
Job seekers	3	5	8	11	
All	8	15	23	31	
<i>Women</i>					
Employed	8	15	24	35	
Job seekers	14	22	30	37	
All	10	17	26	35	
<i>All</i>					
Employed	9	17	25	35	
Job seekers	10	16	22	27	
All	9	16	24	33	

¹ Care responsibilities for young children being raised in another home are not included, nor are responsibilities for older children who are at home or have left home.

Women and men are most likely to have young children to look after when they are in their twenties and thirties (Appendix A.2). As their children grow older and childcare responsibilities become less time-intensive, they enter the life stage in which other care responsibilities for elderly or incapacitated parents start to increase (Table 8). Among the older workforce aged 50 or more, 20% of women and 15% of men have eldercare responsibilities. A slightly higher proportion of women than men combines eldercare responsibilities with employment or job seeking. A sizeable proportion of this group providing eldercare – 25% of the women and 15% of the men – said that these responsibilities limited their employment opportunities. Others may have already left the labour market because of eldercare constraints on their time, and this is one of the reasons for the higher rates of non-participation for women from their forties onwards (see Table 1 above). The issue of how to combine employment with eldercare responsibilities can be expected to become a growing policy concern with the ageing of the population. One indication is that roughly half of this sample of the employed and job seekers expected to take on eldercare responsibilities in five years time, which is much higher than the current proportion with such responsibilities.

Lone parent families, mostly headed by women, are becoming more common in many European countries, and they face particular problems combining the responsibilities of earning a living and child raising without a resident partner to assist. Unemployment rates are frequently higher for lone mothers than for those living in couples, and in some countries lone mothers are less likely to be employed or looking for work. Overall, lone parents account for a small proportion of the workforce, but this situation is much more common for employed and job-seeking women (5%) than for men (1%) (Table 9). Put another way, 14% of all mothers with a child aged under 15 years who are employed or job seeking are lone parents. The comparable figure for fathers is 3%.

Table 8 The proportion of the employed and job seekers with eldercare responsibilities¹ by gender and age

Age group	Women	Men	All	%
16-19	11	8	9	
20-29	10	6	8	
30-39	10	9	10	
40-49	16	12	14	
50-59	21	15	17	
60-64	20	15	17	
All	13	10	11	

¹ Includes care for elder relatives and other adults who need nursing or assistance due to ill health or incapacity. See appendix Table A.2.1. for the base number for each category.

Table 9 The proportion of the employed and job seekers living in different types of household, by gender

Household composition	Women	Men	All	%
Single, no young child at home	31	37	34	
Lone parents + child aged under 15 years at home	5	1	3	
Couple, no young child at home	33	33	33	
Couple + a child under 15 years at home	31	30	30	
Total %	100	100	100	

Note: Couples include married and cohabiting persons.

Nearly two thirds of the workforce live with a spouse or cohabiting partner (63%), of which roughly half also have young children (Table 9). The combined employment patterns of these couples⁴ are explored in Table 10. The first thing to note is that the variation in the percentage distribution of women and men between the different categories is because of the sample design. Twice as many women as men are non-participants (see Table 1) and were excluded from the survey as individual respondents, but information is collected for the employed and job seekers about whether their partner is employed or not, thus including non-participating as well as job-seeking partners.

⁴ Most of the couples will be heterosexual rather than same-sex partnerships.



Table 10 The employment patterns of couples according to the age of their youngest resident child

Men – employed or job seeking

Employment pattern	No child ¹ under 15 years	Child under 15 years	Child under 6 years	All %
Both employed full-time (35+ hours)	37	29	24	33
Man full-time, woman part-time 20-34 hours	11	15	14	13
Man full-time, woman part-time under 20 hours	3	7	7.5	
Man part-time or less, woman employed ²	10	6	6	8
Man employed, woman is a job seeker/non-participant ³	30	37	44	34
Man is a job seeker, woman is a job seeker/ non-participant	8	5	6	7
Total	100	100	100	100

Women – employed or job seeking

Employment pattern	No child ¹ under 15 years	Child under 15 years	Child under 6 years	All %
Both employed full-time (35+ hours)	33	28	23	30
Man full-time, woman part-time 20-34 hours	13	18	15	15
Man full-time, woman part-time under 20 hours	5	10	10	7
Man part-time or less, woman employed ²	19	9	8	14
Man employed, women is a job seeker ³	19	30	37	24
Woman is a job seeker, man is a job seeker/ non-participant	12	5	5	9
Total	100	100	100	100

¹ Children who are not resident in the household are discounted.

² There is an asymmetry in the sample design, which includes persons who are employed or job seeking but excludes non-participants (those who are not active in the labour market). However, the information about their partners simply distinguishes whether or not they are employed and so includes non-participants. Thus the category ‘male working part-time or less’ for male respondents includes those men who work part-time or job seekers but for women respondents it also includes employed women with a partner who is a non-participant (a student, retired or other reasons).

³ For the same reasons as explained in note 2 above, for male respondents this category includes employed men with partners who are job seekers or non-participants (neither employed nor job seeking), while for female respondents it includes female job seekers but excludes non-participants.

Most of the couple households had one of three employment situations: either they were both employed full-time, or only the man was employed, or the man was employed and the woman worked part-time. Only a minority of couples had a non-traditional gender arrangement whereby the woman was employed and the man was either employed part-time or not employed. In a small percentage of couples, neither was employed.

The relationship with childcare responsibilities is clear: when couples have dependent children the woman is less likely to work full-time. When there are dependent children the man is more likely to be the sole earner – particularly when there is a very young child – or the woman works part-time. Couples without dependent children include both the young childless and older couples with grown up children. At these stages in life, couples were more likely to either both work full-time or have a ‘gender role reversal’ arrangement whereby the woman was employed

and the man was employed part-time or less. Not surprisingly, couples with more than one earner felt financially better off than other couples (Table 11).

Table 11 Subjective financial circumstances by couple's employment pattern

Couples' employment pattern	Those who consider themselves to be financially...	
	...well-off (%)	...in difficulties (%)
Both employed full-time	52	5
Man full-time, woman part-time (under 20 hours)	50	4
Man full-time, woman part-time (20-34 hours)	53	2
Man employed, women not employed	37	10
Man employed part-time or less, woman employed	39	12
Both not employed	16	32

Note: Based on all employed and job seekers (who want to work within five years), excludes labour market 'non-participants', see text for full explanation. The remaining % of respondents who are not shown considered themselves to be 'just managing' financially.

Most working-age men – 90% – are either employed or job seeking (see Table 1 above). Men's employment rates are highest when they are fathers with resident children, for this family formation period coincides with their core working years (Table 12). Conversely, many of the childless men and fathers whose children have left home will be young job seekers or older men approaching retirement. Men's employment rates are slightly lower if they have eldercare responsibilities, which again coincides with them being older themselves on average (see Table 8). The number of hours worked by fathers varies little according to their care responsibilities, if anything they work longer hours than childless men do. Few of them work part-time, 22% work moderate full-time hours (35-39), 44% work 40-49 hours and 25% work 50 or more hours a week.

Table 12 Men's employment rates and hours of work by care responsibilities %

Fatherhood and other care responsibilities	Employed men whose weekly working hours are... (and their average hours) ¹						
	Employed	Under 35	35-39	40-49	50+	Total	Average hours
Childless	69	15	21	43	22	100	42.0
Child not living at home	81	11	21	38	30	100	44.2
Age of youngest resident child							
Under 3 years	93	5	25	42	28	100	44.5
3-5 years	93	5	21	45	28	100	44.7
6-9 years	93	3	26	45	26	100	44.2
10-14 years	92	5	26	44	25	100	44.3
15 years or older	91	7	20	47	26	100	44.3
Eldercare responsibilities ²	73	11	23	44	22	100	43.1
No eldercare responsibilities	80	10	22	43	25	100	43.5
All men ³	71	9	22	44	25	100	43.0

¹ Hours refer to total current average hours, so includes overtime and multiple jobs (no. 55 of the questionnaire).

² Includes care for elder relatives and other adults who need nursing or assistance due to ill-health or incapacity.

³ 10% of working age men are not included in this table because they are neither employed nor job seeking (see Table 1), most of whom are aged under 20 years or over 50 and so few will have resident children.



Women are less likely to be employed compared to men when they have young children (see Chapter 1). Employed women work shorter hours if they have children, and the range of hours worked is presented in Table 13. Employed mothers are more likely to work in short (under 20 hours) or substantial part-time (20-34 hours) than women who have not had children, and they are less likely to work 40 or more hours a week. This clustering in part-time jobs applies particularly to employed mothers with a young child under the age of 6. The proportion of employed women who work moderate full-time hours (35-39) barely varies according to their childcare responsibilities. Women who are employed and have eldercare responsibilities work very similar hours to employed women without these responsibilities.

Table 13 Employed women's weekly hours of work by care responsibilities

	Employed women whose weekly working hours are... (and their average hours)¹					%	
	Under 20	20-34	35-39	40-49	50+	Total	Average hours
Childless	8	17	29	39	7	100	36.4
Child not living at home	14	26	27	26	8	100	34.0
Age of youngest resident child							
Under 3 years	20	29	26	20	5	100	30.5
3-5 years	19	34	23	19	4	100	30.3
6-9 years	14	33	23	22	8	100	32.2
10-14 years	13	32	26	22	7	100	32.9
15 years or older	11	29	27	25	8	100	33.9
Eldercare responsibilities ²	12	29	25	27	8	100	33.7
No eldercare responsibilities	12	25	27	29	7	100	34.1
All employed women	14	25	26	28	7	100	33.5

¹ Hours refer to total current average hours, so includes overtime and multiple jobs (no. 55 of the questionnaire).

² Includes care for elder relatives and other adults who need nursing or assistance due to ill-health or incapacity.

Within this overall European picture, there are national differences in the extent to which mothers are employed, and their involvement in part-time and full-time employment (Rubery et al., 1999), which we address in Chapter 6. There are differences in maternal employment patterns between different groups of women within countries, and one major line of differentiation is qualification level. Across Europe, qualifications increase women's rates of labour market participation and their chances of being in employment. Women with high qualification levels have the highest labour market participation rates, the highest employment rates and the most continuous involvement in the labour market across their working life (Rubery et al. 1999). Among those who are employed or seeking employment, the chances of being in employment increase with qualification level for women even more so than for men (Table 14). This influence of qualifications on employment rates applies for women with young children as well. Most of the increased employment rates for women associated with higher qualification levels is because the proportion who are in full-time employment increases, while the proportion who hold a part-time job declines slightly. However, mothers with high qualification levels – who have better job prospects and higher earnings – have a higher involvement in both full-time and part-time

employment compared to mothers with fewer qualifications. Other research has shown that this relationship between education and mothers' employment is found in every country, although at each qualification level there are still national differences in mothers' employment rates and hours worked (Rubery et al., 1999).

Table 14 Employment rates by education for those in employment or job seeking

Qualification level¹	Employed and job seekers who are...			%
	Full-time employed	Part-time employed²	Total employed	
<i>Men aged 30-59</i>				
• No qualifications	75	5	80	
• Basic	83	5	87	
• Intermediate	86	5	91	
• Advanced	85	9	94	
<i>Women aged 30-59</i>				
• No qualifications	30	37	67	
• Basic	36	26	62	
• Intermediate	44	29	73	
• Advanced	53	31	84	
<i>Women + child under 6 years</i>				
• No qualifications	15	20	35	
• Basic	22	23	45	
• Intermediate	27	30	57	
• Advanced	34	33	67	

¹ Basic education = compulsory level, intermediate = advanced secondary level, tertiary = further or higher education;

² Part-time work is based on self-assessment question in this table.

Employment status

Most of the employed are employees (Table 15). A larger proportion of men (16%) are self-employed than women (9%). Only a minority of women (3%) and men (2%) are unpaid family workers. Self-employment increases with age, as does family work for women (see Appendix A.3). This is partly because older generations are more likely to have family farms in the shrinking agricultural sector. It is also because the resources (skills and finances) needed to set up businesses are generally acquired with age and experience. While there has been some speculation about whether recent labour market restructuring will lead to an increase in multiple job holding, as yet only 6% of employed men and 7% of employed women have more than one job. However, this is slightly higher than at the beginning of the 1990s, and as part-timers are more likely to hold second jobs than full-timers, further expansion of part-time work might fuel an increase in multiple job holding. The rest of the analysis in this section relates to the main job of employed or self-employed persons.⁵

⁵ No other information was collected about family workers or the characteristics of second jobs in the survey.



Part-time employment is much more common for women (Table 16). In this sample, 37% of employed women and 9% of employed men worked part-time.⁶ Some 17% of employees said that they held a temporary contract, which includes employees on fixed-term contracts as well as people employed through a temporary agency⁷. Temporary contracts were slightly more common for women (19%) than men (16%). For women, the proportion that had a temporary contract was similar whether they worked full-time or part-time. Male part-timers were much more likely to have a temporary contract (41%) compared with full-timers (14%), which is probably due to the young age profile of male part-timers. Putting it the other way round, men in temporary jobs were more likely to be working part-time than men with open-ended contracts, while women in temporary jobs were no more nor less likely to work part-time than women with open-ended contracts (see Chapter 4).

Table 15 Employment status by gender and age group

Employed in each age group who are...				
	Employees	Self-employed	Family worker	Total
<i>Women</i>				
16-29	92	6	2	100
30-49	88	9	3	100
50-64	85	10	4	100
All women	88	9	3	100
<i>Men</i>				
16-29	89	7	3	100
30-49	82	17	1	100
50-64	72	25	2	100
All men	82	16	2	100
<i>All</i>				
16-29	91	7	2	100
30-49	85	14	2	100
50-64	77	20	3	100
All persons	84	13	2	100

Table 16 The rates of part-time employment, temporary employment and working from home

Employment pattern	Employed persons		
	Men	Women	All
Employed who work part-time	9	37	21
Employed who work mainly at home	8	10	9
Employed who work sometimes at home	25	22	24
Employees with a temporary contract	16	19	17
Number	9,150	7,168	116,318

Note: Family workers are excluded and information relates to the main job only. Part-time status is based on self-assessment. The categories are not mutually exclusive (e.g. those who are part-time may also be working from home and hold a temporary contract)

⁶ This is based on the self-assessment question. This is similar to the levels of part-time employment recorded for the EU15 in the 1998 European Labour Force Survey for women (33%) and men (6%). In other parts of the analysis, a distinction is drawn based on current hours between short part-time jobs (under 20 hours per week), long part-time jobs (20-34 hours) and full-time jobs (35 hours or more). Overall, one third of people who said they worked part-time were in short part-time jobs, 52% were in long part-time jobs, and another 15% worked full-time hours. European Labour Force Survey data shows that the hours worked by part-timers varies across countries, and within countries by occupation and other job characteristics. The hours distinction is clearer for full-timers: only 5% worked less than a 35-hour week.

⁷ This is slightly higher than that recorded in the European Labour Force Survey using a slightly different question wording which explicitly asks about fixed-term contracts. In the EU15 in 1998, 13% of all employees (14% of female employees and 12% of male employees) had fixed-term contracts.

Part-time employment is particularly common for young people, who are often combining this form of work with education or training (see Appendix A.3). After the age of 20 rates of part-time work are much lower for men, subsequently rising for those aged 60-64. For women, part-time employment is lowest in the 20-29 year age group and then rises with age as they take on care responsibilities. Young labour market entrants in the twenties age group are also more likely to have a temporary contract than are older, more established workers.

Only 9% of the employed worked mainly from home, but another quarter sometimes work from home. For both men and women, working from home rose steadily with age (see Appendix A.3), probably associated with self-employment and senior positions being more common for older persons. Part-timers were slightly more likely to work mainly from home than full-timers (11% of part-timers compared with 8% of full-timers) while full-timers were more likely to sometimes work from home (25% of full-timers compared with 18% of part-timers).

Type of job

A minority of men and women are employed in agriculture (4%) (Table 17). Approximately one third of men are employed in manufacturing jobs, another third in private services and one quarter in the public sector. Fewer women employed are in manufacturing (16%), 38% in private services and 40% in the public sector⁸. Part-timers are more concentrated in the private and public services than full-timers. The self-employed are more heavily concentrated in agriculture and private sector services than employees: 16% are in agriculture and 59% are in private services whereas these two sectors only account for one third of employees.

The size of the organisation that men and women work in also varies, associated with their segregation by sector and occupation (Table 18). Men are more likely to be employed in large private firms employing 50 or more persons, while women are more likely to work in the public sector. Similar proportions are found in small private firms: overall 39% of men, 34% of women and 40% of all part-timers are employed in small private sector companies employing fewer than 50 people. It is these employees who are the most vulnerable to job loss due to the business ceasing trading (European Commission, 1998b), and employment conditions in this part of the economy are generally less well regulated than elsewhere (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 1997b).

⁸ This degree of concentration in the public sector is similar to that recorded in the European Labour Force Survey (Rubery and Fagan 1998, Table 2.7).



Table 17 The distribution of employment across sectors by gender and full-time/part-time status

Men		Employment status			%
Those who are employed in...		Full-time	Part-time	All	
Agriculture		5	5	5	
Manufacturing		36	22	35	
Private services		32	45	33	
Public services		25	26	25	
Don't know/no answer		2	3	2	
Total		100	100	100	

Women		Employment status			%
Those who are employed in...		Full-time	Part-time	All	
Agriculture		3	3	3	
Manufacturing		18	12	16	
Private services		35	43	38	
Public services		42	39	40	
Don't know/no answer		2	3	2	
Total		100	100	100	

All persons		Employment status			%
Those who are employed in...		Full-time	Part-time	All	
Agriculture		4	3	4	
Manufacturing		30	14	27	
Private services		33	44	35	
Public services		30	36	31	
Don't know/no answer		2	3	2	
Total		100	100	100	

Note: Family workers are excluded and information relates to the main job only. Part-time status is based on self-assessment.

Table 18 The distribution of employment by workplace size, by gender and full/part-time status

By gender		% Distribution of employment by workplace size		
		Men	Women	All
Private sector:				
1- 9 employed		24	20	22
10-49 employed		15	14	15
50-499 employed		17	13	16
500 or more		17	9	14
Public sector		25	40	31
Total		100	100	100

By full-time/part-time status		% Distribution of employment by workplace size		
		Full-time	Part-time	All
Private sector:				
1- 9 employed		21	26	22
10-49 employed		15	14	15
50-499 employed		17	11	16
500 or more		15	8	14
Public sector		30	36	31
Total		100	100	100

Note: Family workers are excluded and information relates to the main job only. Part-time status is based on self-assessment.

Table 19 compares the occupational level of male and female employees, according to whether they are in manual or non-manual (blue- or white-collar) jobs and whether they have managerial or supervisory responsibilities. This broad measure of occupational position shows the familiar picture whereby more men are managers (31% compared with 25% of women) or are manual supervisors (31% compared with 14% of women). More detailed occupational analysis in previous research shows that most of the jobs that women do involve care, nurturing or support roles, such as in health, education, clerical and administrative, cleaning and other personal service jobs. In contrast, men are more often found in managerial jobs, craft and technical posts or working with ‘heavy’ machinery. Women are increasing their presence in managerial and senior professional positions, but they are still under-represented in this part of the employment hierarchy and face many discriminatory hurdles associated with the ‘glass ceiling’ when trying to enter more senior grades (Rubery and Fagan, 1993; Rubery et al., 1999). The table also shows that part-timers are much less likely to be in managerial jobs and more likely to be in manual jobs than full-timers. This underscores the fact that, if women opt for part-time work in order to combine work and family responsibilities then, in the current labour market conditions, this will usually mean switching to, or remaining in, the lower level, lower paid jobs (Rubery and Fagan, 1993; Rubery et al., 1999).



Table 19 The occupational distribution of employees by gender and full-time/part-time status

Men		% Employees who are in each occupational category		
Occupational category		Full-time	Part-time	All
Managerial non-manual		33	13	31
Other non-manual		24	38	25
Manual supervisor		32	22	31
Other manual		11	27	13
Total		100	100	100

Women		% Employees who are in each occupational category		
Occupational category		Full-time	Part-time	All
Managerial non-manual		30	17	25
Other non-manual		44	48	46
Manual supervisor		14	15	14
Other manual		13	20	15
Total		100	100	100

All persons		% Employees who are in each occupational category		
Occupational category		Full-time	Part-time	All
Managerial non-manual		32	16	28
Other non-manual		31	45	34
Manual supervisor		26	17	24
Other manual		12	22	14
Total		100	100	100

Note: Part-time status is based on self-assessment. Occupational level is derived from questions 25a and 25c in the survey.

Some one third of the employed were worried about the security of their job (Table 20). The proportion was similar for women and men and for full-timers and part-timers. More than half of the employed men (57%) and nearly two thirds of employed women (65%) thought that it would be difficult or practically impossible for them to find an acceptable new job if they were looking to move. Many more of those on temporary contracts were worried about their job security (42%) than employees who had open-ended contracts ('permanent' jobs) (29%), but they were no more likely to think that it would be difficult or impossible to find a suitable alternative job. Slightly fewer of the highly educated (degree or equivalent) were worried about their job security (28%) compared with those with fewer (35%) or no qualifications (36%), but again there was little difference according to qualification level in the perceived degree of difficulty of finding a suitable alternative job. Worries about insecurity were highest and of a similar order for those aged 30-59, and fears about the difficulty of finding suitable alternative employment increased with age (see Appendix A.3).

Table 20 Perception of job security and the ease of finding a new job

Men		% Employed persons		
		Full-time	Part-time	All
Those who were worried about the security of their job		35	31	34
Those who thought that finding a new job would be...				
Easy		38	37	38
Difficult or practically impossible		57	58	57
Don't know/no answer		5	5	5

Women		% Employed persons		
		Full-time	Part-time	All
Those who were worried about the security of their job		33	30	34
Those who thought that finding a new job would be...				
Easy		29	32	30
Difficult or practically impossible		66	63	65
Don't know/no answer		4	5	5

All		% Employed persons		
		Full-time	Part-time	All
Those who were worried about the security of their job		34	30	33
Those who thought that finding a new job would be...				
Easy		35	33	35
Difficult or practically impossible		60	62	60
Don't know/no answer		5	5	5

Note: Family workers are excluded and information relates to the main job only. Part-time status is based on self-assessment.

Preferences for self-employment and working from home

We have already seen that 16% of employed men and 9% of employed women are self-employed. How attractive is self-employment perceived to be, particularly since many people are concerned about job insecurity and the difficulties of finding suitable alternative employment? The opinions of those who are currently self-employed are mixed. Roughly one in three of them have a strong commitment to this way of earning a living, in the sense that they say that being an employee would be an unacceptable alternative. A slightly higher proportion think that it would be acceptable to be an employee instead (Table 21). A minority would prefer to be employees,



which may indicate that they are self-employed due to limited job opportunities rather than any preference for this form of work. This more negative assessment of self-employment is slightly more common among women who are self-employed than among men.

There are a substantial minority of employees that say they would prefer to be self-employed – just over 20% of male employees and 14% of female employees. However, only around a third of those who would prefer to be self-employed planned to start their own business in the immediate future (35% of male employees and 29% of female employees).

A higher proportion of young employees thought that self-employment would be preferable or acceptable (see Appendix A.3). This may indicate a greater ‘entrepreneurial spirit’ among the young. At the same time, it may be because older people who want to be self-employed have already made this move, for the rate of self-employment does increase with age (see Table 15). Self-employment was more acceptable or preferable at higher qualification levels than for male and female employees with few qualifications (Appendix A.3).

Table 21 Preferences for self-employment

Those self-employed who consider becoming an employee to be...					%
	Preferable	Acceptable	Unacceptable	No answer	Total
Men	16	44	36	4	100
Women	22	39	32	7	100

Those employees who consider becoming self-employed to be...					
	Preferable	Acceptable	Unacceptable	No answer	Total
Men	21	40	33	6	100
Women	14	36	45	5	100

Preferences for self-employment were only slightly higher among job seekers, and again it is the younger job seekers that are more likely to have this preference. Overall, 26% of male job seekers and 17% of female job seekers would prefer to be self-employed. Nearly all of them would also consider becoming an employee if they don’t manage to start their own business (90% of each sex). Most job seekers want to be employees, but 49% of these men and 36% of these women would consider setting up their own business if they do not find a suitable job. This willingness to consider self-employment as an alternative was highest for young men under the age of 30 and women under 40, while fewer older people saw it as a feasible alternative.

The main reasons why employees wanted to become self-employed were opportunities to fully apply their skills and to gain more autonomy in their work, although income was also a consideration for 30% of the employees who would prefer to be self-employed (Table 22). Men and women gave similar responses, except that men mentioned income-related reasons more often.

Table 22 Reasons why employees would prefer to be self-employed %

	Those who said self-employment would be preferable because...(multiple responses permitted)		
	Men	Women	All
Income-related reasons	34	21	30
Professional reasons (make better use of one's skills)	60	65	62
Personal reasons (more freedom, less dependence on others)	60	65	62
Labour market reasons (avoid unemployment, better prospects)	8	9	8

In sum, a substantial minority of the adult workforce would prefer, or are willing to consider, self-employment. The younger, more qualified men are most open to this form of labour market engagement.

Would more of the workforce prefer to work from home than be self-employed? Some 10% of employed women and men work mainly at home, which is less than the proportion which is currently self-employed. However when those who sometimes work from home are included then one third of the workforce have some experience of working from home (Table 15 above). Another 11% of men and 13% of women said that they never did any paid work from home but that in principle it would be possible to do some of their paid work at home. What they mean by 'possible' would be influenced by a number of considerations. These issues include the content of their job, whether their employer would accept this arrangement, and how this arrangement could be accommodated in their home in terms of space, equipment and coordination with the needs and routines of other household members. Overall, this means that 44% of employed men and 45% of employed women had some experience of working at home or thought that this would be possible to do in their current circumstances. A slightly higher proportion of job seekers (51% of men and 48% of women) thought that the type of job they were looking for could also be done at least partly at home.

Only 7% of the employed that do not currently do any work at home and 16% of the job seekers would prefer to do all their work from home (Table 23). Working from home for part of the time is much more popular, for a quarter of the employed and 43% of job seekers would like this arrangement. To put this in some context, this indicates that preferences for working from home part of the time are slightly more widespread than preferences for becoming self-employed. In particular, more women would prefer to be able to work from home part of the time than to become self-employed. Women were also more likely than men to say that the reason why working from home would be attractive would be to make it easier to combine their work and family responsibilities, although it should also be noted that a large proportion of men also gave this reason. Saving on commuting time was another common reason, which may also make it easier to mesh work and family life.



Table 23 Preferences for working at home among those who currently do not do any of their paid work at home

	Employed			Job seekers			%
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All	
Prefer to work at home...							
Yes, wholly	8	5	7	14	17	16	
Yes, partly	24	24	24	44	42	43	
Total	32	29	31	58	59	59	
Those who said this would... (multiple response)							
Help to combine work and family duties	42	59	49	40	71	59	
Save commuting time	44	36	41	41	25	31	
Other reasons	33	25	30	34	18	24	

In the next two chapters we consider the weekly volume of work and address men and women's current and preferred working hours.

Chapter 4

Weekly working hours

As we discussed in the previous chapter, one aspect of the current process of employment restructuring in Europe is the re-organisation of working time. Working time is being diversified: part-time employment is becoming more common, and a growing proportion of both full-timers and part-timers are working evenings, nights and weekends. Many of these schedules involve irregular or variable hours or scheduled shift rotations driven by the demands of their workplace (Bosch et al., 1994; Rubery et al., 1995; European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and working Conditions, 1997b).

The Employment Options for the Future Survey focused on the weekly number of hours that women and men work, which has always been an important issue for employment policy. Historically, the number of weekly hours worked by full-timers has been steadily reduced through collective bargaining and the introduction of statutory regulations. However, this process slowed down in the 1980s, and average full-time hours have even begun to increase in some countries (European Commission, 1996:77). Long hours of work are associated with health problems (the Foundation, 1997a), and also make the meshing of employment and domestic responsibilities more difficult to achieve. Part-time work is often presented as a suitable alternative to full-time work for those with domestic responsibilities and as a means of promoting women's employment, yet as we have already argued this option has particular disadvantages in terms of reduced income. Furthermore, the current opportunities for part-time work largely mean that opting for this form of employment usually means inferior employment conditions and reduced promotion opportunities in most countries.

Who works long and short hours?

Self-employed men work the longest average hours (Table 24). The hours worked by self-employed women are shorter, but still exceed those worked by women employees, and a larger proportion of self-employed women than male employees (31% compared to 19%) are involved in working 50 or more hours a week. More detailed previous analysis has shown that it is particularly the self-employed with a small workforce that work the longest hours (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and working Conditions, 1999). The self-employed are not covered by collective agreements or legal regulations on working time, unlike most employees. The self-employed have more control over the number of hours that they work in the sense that their working time is not set by an employer, but the degree of choice may be notional for many if long hours are necessary for their business to remain viable.

Among employees, men in temporary contracts worked shorter hours than those with open-ended contracts. For women there was little difference in hours worked in this contractual dimension. There is no simple relationship between the number of hours worked and multiple job holding; those with more than one job were more likely to be working less than 35 hours or more than 50. In other words, multiple job holding is largely found among those with more than one part-time job where the aggregate hours worked still fall below 35 hours, or among those with a total working week of very long full-time hours.

It is a truism to say that full-timers work longer hours than part-timers, but among full-timers there is also variation in the number of hours worked, and similarly for part-timers. The first point to note is that there is no tidy coincidence between people's self-assessment of whether they have full-time or part-time jobs and the average number of hours that they currently work. A 35-hour division coincides with the full-time/part-time division in most cases, but among full-timers, 4% of men and 10% of women worked less than 35 hours per week. Conversely, 12% of female part-timers and 25% of the minority of men working part-time currently worked, on average, 35 or more hours per week. Some of these full-timers may be working short hours due to factors such as short-time working in response to limited production demands, or simply have short hours around the 30-hour threshold. Similarly, people may hold part-time contracts but work longer, full-time hours due to regular overtime or seasonal fluctuations in labour demand, or because they hold more than one job (see section 3.2 above). The second point to note is that while a large proportion of full-timers work between 40-49 hours a week, substantial proportions also work moderate full-time hours (35-39) or very long hours totalling 50 or more. Part-timers are spread between marginal jobs of 20 hours or less and more substantial part-time arrangements of 20-34 hours.

Hours vary by sector and occupation, mainly as a result of differences in the collective agreements on working time regulations. There are also national differences in the hours worked in similar sectors and occupations (Bosch et al., 1994; Rubery et al., 1999) associated with different collective and legal regulations on working time as well as other variations in influential social institutions. National comparisons are made in Chapter 6. A small and declining



proportion of people are employed in agriculture, but this is the sector where the longest average hours are worked (Table 25). A number of factors are the cause of long working hours in agriculture, including production demands, high rates of self-employment and the limited working time regulations and generally low wages for employees in this sector. After agriculture, men's hours are longest in the private service sector, while the public sector offers the shortest hours for men. This is because short full-time hours (35-39) are more common for men in the public sector than elsewhere. A key factor here is that in most countries the collective agreements in the public sector set shorter working hours than in most of the private sectors (see Chapter 6). In the private sector, men's hours are particularly long in small companies. Women's hours are shortest in the public sector and private services, due to the large proportion working part-time (under 35 hours). In the private sector, women's working hours are very polarised in small companies: here the incidence of very short part-time and very long full-time hours is more widespread than for women employed in larger firms.

Table 24 Weekly hours worked by employment status and gender

	Distribution of current weekly working hours					Average hours	%
	Under 20	20-34	35-39	40-49	50+	Total	
<i>Men</i>							
Self-employed	2	6	4	28	60	100	51.6
Employee	4	6	25	46	19	100	41.4
Employees: temporary job	7	14	20	49	11	100	38.0
Employees: open-ended job	3	5	26	46	20	100	42.1
Has one job	3	6	23	44	25	100	43.1
Has more than one job	12	16	12	31	30	100	40.4
Full-time	1	3	23	47	27	100	44.7
Part-time	31	44	8	13	5	100	25.5
All men	3	6	22	44	25	100	43.0
<i>Women</i>							
Self-employed	10	27	7	25	31	100	39.4
Employee	14	25	28	28	5	100	33.0
Employees: temporary job	15	23	28	30	4	100	32.8
Employees: open-ended job	13	25	29	28	5	100	33.2
Has one job	13	25	27	28	7	100	33.5
Has more than one job	17	28	16	27	12	100	33.2
Full-time	2	8	39	42	10	100	40.0
Part-time	34	54	6	5	1	100	22.5
All women	14	25	26	28	7	100	33.5

Note: Family workers are excluded and information relates to the main job only. Part-time status is based on self-assessment. Hours refer to total current average hours, so includes overtime and multiple jobs (no. 55 of the questionnaire).

Table 25 Weekly hours worked by sector and workplace size by gender

	Distribution of current average weekly working hours					% Average hours	
	Under 20	20-34	35-39	40-49	50+	Total	
<i>Men</i>							
Agriculture	4	5	10	34	46	100	49.6
Manufacturing	1	5	21	51	22	100	43.3
Private services	4	7	15	40	33	100	44.2
Public services	5	8	35	38	14	100	39.6
Private sector company :							
1-9 employees	4	8	9	35	45	100	47.3
10-49	4	7	15	52	22	100	42.3
50-499	2	5	25	48	22	100	42.9
500+	1	4	22	49	23	100	43.3
<i>Women</i>							
Agriculture	11	22	16	23	29	100	38.9
Manufacturing	7	20	28	40	6	100	35.7
Private services	15	26	22	28	8	100	33.2
Public services	14	26	31	24	5	100	32.8
Private sector company :							
1-9 employees	19	28	13	26	14	100	33.4
10-49	10	25	26	34	6	100	34.3
50-499	8	20	33	32	6	100	35.4
500+	9	22	29	35	6	100	35.1

Note: Family workers are excluded and information relates to the main job only. Hours refer to total current average hours, so includes overtime and multiple jobs (no. 55 of the questionnaire).

Among employees, it is men and women in non-manual (white collar) jobs with managerial responsibilities who work the longest average hours, followed by manual supervisors (Table 26). It is in these types of jobs that the employee is least likely to have their hours specified in their employment contract on the basis that they are deemed to be responsible for determining their own work patterns. Few managers are protected by collective agreements or legal regulations on working time, including the exemption from the EU Working Time Directive. Short part-time hours of 20 or less become more common for women at the lower occupational levels, particularly in non-supervisory manual jobs.

Occupational level is closely related to qualification level, and when examined from this vantage point the incidence of very long hours of work for full-timers is most prevalent among highly qualified men, at 35% (Table 27). Looking at average full-time hours reveals a slightly different picture, on average men with either high or no qualifications work the longest hours. Highly qualified women in full-time jobs also have longer average hours and the highest incidence of very long hours than other women.

Weekly working hours



Table 26 Weekly hours worked by employees by occupational level and gender

	Distribution of current average weekly working hours					Average hours	
	Under 20	20-34	35-39	40-49	50 +	Total	
<i>Men</i>							
Managerial non-manual	1	4	21	44	31	100	44.6
Other non-manual	6	10	31	42	11	100	38.7
Manual supervisor	2	4	26	51	17	100	42.0
Other manual	7	12	23	48	10	100	37.8
All employees	4	6	25	46	19	100	41.5
<i>Women</i>							
Managerial non-manual	7	18	30	34	10	100	37.2
Other non-manual	14	28	31	25	3	100	32.1
Manual supervisor	15	24	26	31	3	100	32.3
Other manual	23	26	20	28	3	100	29.5
All employees	14	25	28	28	5	100	33.0

Note: Occupational level is derived from questions 25a and 25c in the survey and relates to the main job only. Hours refer to total current average hours, so include overtime and multiple jobs (no. 55 of the questionnaire).

Table 27 Weekly hours worked by full-timers by qualification level and gender

	work very long weekly hours (50 +)	Average hours
<i>Men</i>		
No qualifications	27	46.2
Basic qualification	26	45.0
Intermediate qualification	25	44.8
Advanced qualification	35	46.2
All	28	45.2
<i>Women</i>		
No qualifications	10	40.6
Basic or no qualification	10	41.3
Intermediate qualification	9	40.9
Advanced qualification	16	42.2
All	11	41.4

Note: Family workers are excluded and information relates to the main job only. Hours refer to total current average hours, so include overtime and multiple jobs (no. 55 of the questionnaire).

Overtime working is widespread for employees in Europe. In this survey, 63% of employees said that they worked overtime, including 18% who worked overtime every day and 19% who did it at least once a week. With the increased demand from employers for employees to be flexible and work extra or variable hours, there are signs that overtime has increased alongside the expansion of part-time work, including unpaid overtime for salaried white collar workers (TUC, 1999; EUROCADRES, 1999). A large proportion of those working long hours are doing regular overtime (Table 28). Around half of the men and women working more than 50 hours a week

work overtime nearly every day, and over 40% of those working 40-49 hours do overtime on a daily or weekly basis. Overtime is less common for part-timers, but is still quite extensive, indicating that part-timers also provide this form of flexibility for employers.

Table 28 Overtime work by employees' total hours of work and gender

Current average hours (includes all overtime)	Employees who work overtime...			%
	Almost every day	At least once a week	Total who work overtime¹	
<i>Men</i>				
Under 20 hours	4	11	30	
20-34	9	11	47	
35-39	5	18	60	
40-49	16	26	68	
50 plus	55	15	79	
All male employees	22	20	67	
<i>Women</i>				
Under 20 hours	2	11	36	
20-34	5	16	53	
35-39	5	15	66	
40-49	19	26	69	
50 plus	51	18	78	
All female employees	12	18	58	

¹ Includes those who work overtime less frequently.

Note: Family workers are excluded and information relates to the main job only for employees. Total hours refer to total current average hours, so include overtime and multiple jobs (no. 55 of the questionnaire).

Just over half of those employees who work overtime are able to take time off in compensation at another time (57% of men and 60% of women). Such arrangements are least common for those working very long hours: only 37% of those working 50 or more hours a week have time-compensated overtime (TCO), compared to 63% of those working 20-49 hours and 54% of those working 20 hours or less. Table 29 shows that time-compensated overtime is most common for those working overtime who are in non-manual positions, with the exception of male managers. It is also most common in the public sector and in large private sector companies.

Over half of those employees who work overtime but do not have this compensated by time off would like to have this arrangement. Managers and other non-manual employees are most in favour of time-compensated overtime. A large proportion of manual employees would also like this form of flexibility, but roughly half would not. It is likely that many of the latter receive overtime pay that they cannot afford to forgo for time off instead. There are few gender differences in this preference, even when comparisons are made by occupational position, sector or company size, except that more women than men who work overtime in 'other manual' jobs would like time-compensated overtime in this situation.



Table 29 The extent of time-compensated overtime (TCO)¹ and preferences for this arrangement %

Employees who work overtime	Men who work overtime		Women who work overtime	
	with TCO	who would like TCO	with TCO	who would like TCO
Managers	54	68	61	69
Other non-manual	63	55	63	61
Manual supervisors	59	50	58	46
Other manual	48	41	51	51
Agriculture	47	61	36	44
Manufacturing	55	56	58	61
Private services	51	61	59	64
Public services	60	55	59	58
Private sector company size				
1-9	49	60	54	58
10-49	50	54	58	60
50-499	56	55	56	65
500+	60	65	65	65
All employees	57	57	60	60

¹ TCO refers to time-compensated overtime (when time can be taken off later in compensation for overtime working)

Main characteristics associated with long working hours

In this and the previous chapters we have seen that women are less likely to be in employment and, when employed, work shorter hours than men. Responsibilities for childcare – and to a lesser extent eldercare – have a major influence on women's labour supply. In contrast, care responsibilities have little influence on men's employment patterns. If anything, fathers have higher employment rates and are more likely to work full-time than other men. This overarching gender difference embraces variations among women and among men according to the type of employment contract and jobs that they hold.

In this section, we are concerned with disentangling the relative importance of a number of different personal, domestic and labour market influences on long hours of work. To do this we have used logistic regression to explore which employed men are the most likely to work very long full-time weekly hours of 50 or more. A similar analysis has been carried out for employed women, but we have used a 40-hour threshold because the proportion working 50 or more hours per week is smaller. The purpose of this exercise is to see which of these selected characteristics have the most significant influence on the probability of working long hours when variation in the other characteristics is taken into account or 'controlled' (see Appendix A.4 for a discussion on logistic regression)⁹. We also wanted to see whether the probability of long hours of work was

⁹ For example, those who are highly educated work long hours, as do those in managerial jobs, yet it is also the case that the highly educated are also the most likely to be in these managerial jobs. In multivariate analysis it is possible to separate the effect of these two variables from each other, as well as from other characteristics entered into the model. Thus, it is possible to establish whether education still has a significant relationship with long hours of work once variation in occupational position and other characteristics entered into the model are taken into account or 'controlled for' (similarly, to see how much effect occupational position has once differences in education and other specified characteristics are controlled for).

greater in some countries than in others once these individual, domestic and labour market characteristics are controlled for, in other words whether national practices also vary (a ‘societal’ effect). The variables included are summarised in the box on p. 39. The analysis was done separately for men and women looking, first, at all employment, and then repeated to exclude the self-employed.

The results of the analysis are presented in full in Appendix A4, Table A.4.1. The results reported here are statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval. Age is a significant factor associated with long hours of work for employed men. As we expected, the young men who are teenagers (16-19 years) and older men close to retirement (60-64 years) who are employed are much less likely to work 50 or more hours a week compared to men in their thirties. The risk of long hours of work is similar for men in their twenties and thirties, falls somewhat in their forties but then is as high for employed men in their fifties as in their thirties. Education is a very important influence, the higher their qualification level the more likely men are to work long hours, and the difference is such that those with a degree are twice as likely to work very long hours as those employed men with no qualifications. Having children, no matter what their age, has no independent impact on whether or not men work very long hours. However, the minority of men who have adult care responsibilities are significantly less likely to work long hours than men without these other care responsibilities.

While the probability of working very long hours is unaffected by fatherhood, it is influenced by marriage or cohabitation. Men are more likely to work very long hours if they live with a partner than if they are single, with one exception to this ‘male breadwinner’ effect: this being that men with a partner working substantial part-time hours (20-34) are no more likely to work 50 hours or more than are single men. Put another way, the incidence of working long hours is greatest for men if their partner is either not employed or has a small part-time job, or if she also works long full-time hours. So in some households there is a ‘breadwinner’ division of men working longer hours and women working shorter hours, but in others there is a ‘dual long hour’ pattern. Long hours are also associated with household financial circumstances; in households that are well off the men are more likely to be working very long hours.

Once age, education and domestic circumstances are controlled for, the employment situation of men also affects their propensity to be working long full-time hours. The self-employed are more likely to work long hours of work than male employees. Once self-employment is controlled for, the impact of sector is also important and men who are employed outside of the public sector, and particularly in agriculture or large private service companies, are the most likely to work more than 50 hours.

Is the risk of working long hours greater in some countries than others, once men’s personal, domestic and job circumstances are controlled for? Taking Germany as the base comparison shows that employed men in Austria and the United Kingdom are more likely to be working long hours when matched with men in similar circumstances living in Germany. Conversely, men in Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, France, Italy and Spain are significantly less likely to work long full-time hours than comparable men living in Germany. Employed men in the other remaining



Characteristics included in the logistic regression to explore who works long hours

Dependent variable

For men: which employed men have current weekly hours of 50 or more against those who work less than 50 hours?

For women: which employed women have current weekly hours of 40 or more against those who work less than 40 hours?

The following set of variables were used as explanatory (independent) variables:

Individual characteristics

- *Age group*: 16-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59 and 60-64 (reference group is 30-39)
- *Education level*: no qualifications, primary or secondary I, secondary II and tertiary (reference group is tertiary)

Household circumstances

- *Children*: no child in household, child under 3, child 3-5, child 6-9, child 10-14 and child 15 or over (reference group is no child)
- *Other care responsibilities*: yes or no (reference group is those with other care responsibilities)
- *Partners' hours*:

Men's partners: no partner (reference group), partner not working, partner works under 20 hours, partner works 20-34.9 partner works 35-49.9 hours, partner works 50+ hours

Women's partners: no partner (reference group), partner not working, partner works under 35 hours, partner works 35-49.9 hours, partner works 50+ hours

- *Financial situation*: Well off versus just managing or having difficulties (reference group is well off)

Labour market circumstances

- *Sector of employment*: public sector, agriculture, small manufacturing, large manufacturing, small public services and large private services (reference group is public sector)
- *Professional status*: employees or self-employed (reference group is employees)
- *Occupation level*: manual, manual with supervisory responsibilities, non-manual and non-manual with managerial qualifications (reference group is routine manual)

National institutional context

- *Country*: all 16 countries entered individually (reference category is Germany)

countries are no more nor less likely to be at risk of working long hours than men in Germany (Finland, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway) when they are matched on their personal, domestic and job characteristics. Whether the overall rate of long hours worked for employed men is greater in some countries than others is a different question, which is addressed in Chapter 6.

The analysis was re-run for employees only, which permitted data on occupational position to be entered. This confirmed that managers in particular, but also manual supervisors, are significantly more likely to be working long full-time hours than other male employees. The rest of the picture remains broadly similar, except that once occupational position is taken into account, then differences according to qualification levels disappear. Some of the country differences also disappear or become weaker when the model is specified just for employees. Now it is only in the UK, and not Austria, that men are more likely to work long full-time hours when matched with comparable men in Germany. The individual risk of long hours of work is still less for male employees in Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy and Spain, but male employees in Sweden are no less at risk of working long hours than comparable employees in Germany.

Turning to employed women, we see many similarities with the picture for men. Like men, age and qualifications are important. The probability of employed women working 40 or more hours is lower for teenagers (16-19 years) and those aged forty or over compared to those in their twenties and thirties. The higher their qualification level, the more likely they are to work long hours. A major, expected difference is that employed women with children in their home are much less likely to work long full-time hours than other women, although the effect declines as their youngest child grows up. Unlike men, the probability of working long hours is not lower for employed women with other care responsibilities (although women with such responsibilities may be less likely to be employed in the first place, see Chapter 3). Also unlike men, the minority of employed women with a non-employed male partner, who in this sense have the main breadwinning role, are no more likely to work long hours than single women. Women with a partner working less than 50 hours a week are less likely to be working 40 or more hours compared to single women. But, similar to the picture for men, if they have a partner working fifty or more hours a week then they are also more likely to work long hours. Also like men, long full-time hours are significantly associated with their household being well-off.

Once age, qualifications and domestic circumstances are taken into account, the labour market circumstances also effect the probability of women working long full-time hours. Self-employed women are more likely to work long full-time hours compared to employees. Long hours are also more probable for women if they work outside the public sector, particularly in manufacturing or agriculture.

Taking Germany as the base comparison shows that employed women are more likely to work long full-time hours in Austria, Finland, Greece, Portugal, Spain and Sweden when matched with women with similar personal, domestic and employment circumstances living in Germany. There is no significant difference between comparable employed women in Germany and Denmark,



Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg or Norway in the incidence of long full-time working hours. Employed women in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and the UK are less likely to work full-time hours of 40 or more than similar women living in Germany (the overall national rates of long hours worked and average hours for women are compared in Chapter 6).

When the analysis was re-run for female employees, the broad picture remains the same. Women who have managerial or supervisory responsibilities are the most likely to work long full-time hours. The highly qualified remain more likely to work long hours even when this occupational information is taken into account, which was not the case for men. Among female employees there is no significant association between household financial circumstances and long hours of work and those with a partner working 50+ hours are no more likely to work long hours themselves than single women. There is also a slight change to the effect of country, for female employees in Italy are more likely to work long full-time hours than similar women living in Germany, and those in Norway are less so.

Thus, to sum up, the following characteristics are associated with a greater probability of working long full-time hours for employed women and men:

- being in the middle years of the working life (20-39 years, and 50-59 years for men as well);
- qualifications (particularly for women);
- employed men with a partner who either has few or no hours of paid employment or who also works long full-time hours;
- employed women who are single or whose partner is not employed;
- employed women who have dependent children and the minority of men with other care responsibilities for adults are less likely to work long full-time hours;
- men and women in financially well-off households;
- being self-employed or an employee with managerial or supervisory responsibilities;
- working outside of the public sector, particularly in agriculture for men and manufacturing for women;
- when matched on personal, domestic and job circumstances, employed men and women are more likely to work long hours when they live in certain countries than in others, shown in Table 30.

Table 30 The relative probability of working long hours in the different countries for individuals with similar personal, domestic and job circumstances

	Men: all employed	Men: employees	Women: all employed	Women: employees
More likely to work longer hours than in Germany ¹	UK Austria	UK	Austria Finland Greece Portugal Spain Sweden	Austria Finland Greece Italy Spain Sweden Portugal
The base category for the comparison			Germany	
Similar probability to the base category	Greece Finland Ireland Luxembourg Netherlands Norway Portugal	Austria Greece Finland Ireland Luxembourg Netherlands Norway Sweden Portugal	Denmark Ireland Italy Luxembourg Norway	Denmark Ireland Luxembourg Norway
Less likely to work longer hours than in Germany	Belgium Denmark France Italy Spain Sweden	Belgium Denmark France Italy Spain	Belgium France Netherlands UK	Belgium France Netherlands Norway UK

¹ Some 50 hours or more per week for men, forty or more for women. Extract based on a logistic regression, see text for explanation. Countries that move relative position according to whether or not the analysis includes the self-employed are shown in italics.

Chapter 5

Changing the working week

A large percentage of employed people want to reduce their weekly hours of work, whether traded for lower current earnings or against future pay rises¹⁰ (Table 30). About half of all employed persons (51%) want to work fewer hours (including only 2% who would prefer to stop work), just over a third (37%) want to keep the same hours and 12% would prefer to work longer hours. Thus, nearly two in three employed persons would prefer to change the number of hours that they work per week.

Employed men are even more likely to want to reduce their hours than employed women (57% compared to 44%). Conversely, women are more likely to be under-employed, for 16% of employed women would prefer to work longer hours, as would 9% of employed men. Overall, employed men are slightly more likely to have a preference to adjust their hours than employed women. In other words, they are less able to achieve their preferred volume of working hours – which for most is shorter hours – in a gender-segregated labour market where ‘men’s jobs’ are constructed as full-time. However, another part of the explanation is that women are more likely than men to exit the labour market to manage care responsibilities if they require less time-consuming jobs but are unable to secure this preferred arrangement.

Preferences for adjustments to hours are clearly related to current hours of work for both women and men. Very few full-timers want to work longer hours, and the proportion who want to reduce their hours rises with the number of hours that they currently work. This fits with the results

¹⁰ This variable was derived from two questions which ask about current hours, followed immediately by preferred hours: no. 55, ‘In total, how many hours per week do you work at present - on average?’; and no. 56, ‘Providing 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 a living, how many hours per week would you prefer to work at present?’.

from research for Britain that has shown that those who work long hours are the least satisfied with the amount of time that they have for family and leisure pursuits (Fagan, 1996), and that preferences for hours reductions are highest in couples with the longest combined hours of work (Dex et al., 1995). Part-timers, particularly those in 'short hours' (20 or less) are the most likely to want to work more hours. The under-employment of people with short part-time hours indicates that many of these jobs are designed to meet employers' requirements rather than labour supply preferences.

Table 31 Preferences for working time adjustments by gender and current hours

Men							%
<i>Those who want to adjust their hours by...</i>		Current average weekly working hours are...					All
		Under 20	20-34	35-39	40-49	50 plus	
Reduce hours by 15 or more	1	1	6	8	55	19	
Reduce hours by 5-15	3	9	16	43	25	29	
Reduce hours by less than 5	1	5	19	10	<0.5	9	
Keep same hours	34	48	49	36	18	34	
Increase hours by less than 5	8	2	5	1	<0.5	2	
Increase hours by 5-15	12	21	5	3	1	4	
Increase hours by 15 or more	41	15	1	1	<0.5	3	
Increase hours by 15 or more	41	15	1	1	<0.5	3	
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	
Women							%
<i>Those who want to adjust their hours by...</i>		Current average weekly working hours are...					All
		Under 20	20-34	35-39	40-49	50 plus	
Reduce hours by 15 or more	1	3	12	15	60	12	
Reduce hours by 5-15	5	10	30	45	23	25	
Reduce hours by less than 5	2	4	11	9	<0.5	7	
Keep same hours	42	56	42	30	17	40	
Increase hours by less than 5	6	3	3	<0.5	<0.5	3	
Increase hours by 5-15	23	16	2	1	<0.5	8	
Increase hours by 15 or more	21	8	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5	5	
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	
All employed persons							%
<i>Those who want to adjust their hours by...</i>		Current average weekly working hours are...					All
		Under 20	20-34	35-39	40-49	50 plus	
Reduce hours by 15 or more	1	2	9	10	56	16	
Reduce hours by 5-15	5	10	22	43	25	27	
Reduce hours by less than 5	1	4	15	9	<0.5	8	
Keep same hours	40	54	46	34	18	37	
Increase hours by less than 5	7	3	4	1	<0.5	2	
Increase hours by 5-15	20	17	4	3	1	6	
Increase hours by 15 or more	26	10	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5	4	
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	



Put another way, it is those women and men with moderate working hours that are the most likely to prefer to keep their current arrangement, or to make smaller adjustments. Thus, just under half of employed men currently working between 20-39 hours would prefer the same hours and another one in five (19%) of those in the 35-39 hours category would prefer a reduction of up to five hours. For women, the spread of preferences is wider, over half who work 20-34 hours do not want to adjust their hours, but neither do 42% of those who work under 20 hours or 35-39 hours. However, there are large proportions of women working under 20 hours or about 35-39 hours that want to make adjustments towards long part-time hours.

Overall, more men want to reduce their hours than women, and more women want to work longer hours. This partly reflects existing gender differences in current working hours. However, when comparisons are drawn according to current working hours we see that the minority of men who work part-time are even more likely to want to work longer hours than women part-timers, while women full-timers are even more likely to want to reduce their hours than men full-timers.

The amount of adjustment that most people want to make is substantial, particularly when considered as a proportion of their current volume of work. Over half of the employed who work 40-49 hours want a reduction of at least five hours, while a reduction of at least 15 hours is preferred by over half of those working 50 or more hours. Some 46% of the employed who work under 20 hours want to increase their hours by at least five. These preferences for adjustments indicate an overall general tendency to leave the extremes of very short or very long hours of work and enter into the middle ground of long part-time/short full-time hours in the 20-39 hour range. However, there are some employed men and women who currently occupy this middle ground who also want to move, mainly switching between short full-time and part-time hours. Large proportions of employed men and women who work short full-time hours (35-39) would prefer to reduce their hours, mainly to move into the long part-time hour range (a reduction of 5-15 hours). Of those working long part-time hours, at present around 15% of men and 17% of women would prefer to work shorter part-time hours, while 36% of men and 24% of women would prefer to work at least another five hours.

Overall, only 9% of men and 16% of women wanted to work longer hours, but they wanted to work an extra 12 hours a week on average (Table 32). It is those who currently work less than 35 hours who are the most inclined to work longer hours, and it is particularly those working shorter hours who want a substantial increase in their hours. Larger proportions of employed women and men wanted to reduce their hours. For those working between 20 and 49 hours a week, the average reduction wanted was between 7 and 10 hours, rising to 20 hours for those currently working 50 plus hours.

The net picture is that, on average, employed men would prefer a 37-hour week and employed women a 30-hour week (Table 33). This translates as an average reduction of six hours a week for employed men and three-and-a-half hours for women. The standard deviation indicates that the spread of preferences around this average is wide for both sexes¹¹, indicating diversity in the precise number of hours that they would prefer to work. However, it is clear from Table 34 that

¹¹ The standard deviation indicates that approximately two thirds of both groups fall within the range of plus or minus 10 hours, that is 27-47 hours for employed men and 20-40 hours for employed women.

the general picture is that more employed women and men would prefer to work shorter full-time (35-39 hours) or long part-time (20-34 hours) hours compared to the current situation. If this adjustment took place, then one result would be a smaller gender difference in the volume of waged working time than exists currently. On average, job seekers have working time preferences similar to the employed.

Table 32 Average preferred adjustments to hours by gender and current hours of work

	Those who want to increase their hours...			Those who want to reduce their hours...			%
	Average addition	Standard deviation	Base number	Average reduction	Standard deviation	Base number	
<i>Men</i>							
Under 20 hours	19	10.7	208	–	–	–	
20-34 hours	12.2	5.9	251	6.7	5.3	97	
35-49 hours	7.7	6.2	417	7.8	5.2	3,540	
50+ hours	–	–	–	19.6	10.3	2,029	
All men	11.7	8.6	905	12	9.4	5,674	
<i>Women</i>							
Under 20 hours	14.6	9.4	509	–	–	–	
20-34 hours	10.8	6.0	498	7.2	4.2	289	
35-49 hours	5	3.4	148	9.8	5.9	2,444	
50+ hours	–	–	–	20.4	9.3	415	
All women	11.8	8.1	1 156	10.9	7.3	3,193	

Table 33 Employed persons' preferred average number of weekly working hours

	Average	Standard deviation	Base number	%
<i>Men</i>				
Employed men's current hours	43.0	11.7	10,682	
Employed men's preferred hours	36.7	9.9	10,484	
Job-seeking men's preferred hours	35.3	9.9	2,365	
<i>Women</i>				
Employed women's current hours	33.5	12.2	7,702	
Employed women's preferred hours	30.2	10.0	7,604	
Job-seeking women's preferred hours	30.4	9.6	3,668	
<i>All persons</i>				
Employed persons' current hours	39.0	12.8	18,388	
Employed persons' preferred hours	34.0	10.4	18,089	
Job seekers' preferred hours	32.0	10.5	6,097	



Table 34 The distribution of current and preferred number of weekly working hours

Weekly hours	Employed men		Job-seeking men prefer...		Employed Women		Job-seeking women prefer...		%
	Current	Preferred	Current	Preferred	Current	Preferred	Current	Preferred	
Under 20 hours	3	4	5	14	11	9			
20-34	6	19	21	25	44	44			
35-39	22	34	26	26	26	19			
40-49	44	34	43	28	17	27			
50 plus	25	9	5	7	2	1			
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100			

The number of hours that people currently work clearly has a strong influence on their preferences for working time adjustments. Earlier on, in Chapter 3, we saw that women and men's working hours vary according to their age and a number of other domestic and job characteristics. So, leaving their current volume of working hours to one side, can we identify whether there are particular domestic or employment situations that are associated with particular preferences for adjustments? Overall, men and women's domestic and job characteristics provide fewer insights into whether they want to adjust their current hours than simply analysing the number of hours they currently work, but some differences emerge.

Considering individual and domestic circumstances first, we see that men are generally more likely to want to reduce their hours of work as they get older, if they have higher qualifications, if they have children and if they are financially well-off (Table 35). Among employed women, preferences for working time reductions are higher for those aged 20-59 than those in the youngest and oldest age group. It seems paradoxical that employed women with children are no more likely to want reduced hours than other employed women, and are much less likely to want a reduction in hours than fathers of similarly aged children. However, we know that many women work shorter hours when they have children, or leave employment, so the more appropriate interpretation is that many have already adjusted their hours and they are no more likely to want (further) reductions than other women and men.

For both women and men it is employed teenagers, and those in financial difficulties – who by implication do not want to trade reduced income for fewer hours – who are the most likely to want to want longer hours of work. Eldercare responsibilities have little influence on whether women or men want to adjust their hours.

Turning to job characteristics, we see that men and women who are self-employed or are employees with managerial responsibilities are the most likely to want working time reductions (Table 36). Both the self-employed and many employees with managerial responsibilities largely determine their own working hours, although this self-determination may be notional if they are obliged to complete heavy workloads. Thus any policy intervention to regulate hours in these

types of jobs will have to be designed differently to the regulations developed for employees who do not have to determine their own working hours.

Table 35 The individual and domestic characteristics of employed men and women who want to adjust their current working hours

Employed men					%
		Those who would prefer to work...			
		...fewer hours	...the same hours	...more hours	Total
<i>Age</i>					
16-19	37	37	27		100
20-29	49	39	12		100
30-39	61	32	7		100
40-49	61	34	6		100
50-59	58	36	7		100
60-64	51	38	11		100
<i>Qualification level</i>					
Basic or none	51	40	9		100
Intermediate	57	35	8		100
Degree or equivalent	63	28	9		100
<i>With care responsibilities</i>					
Childless	50	37	12		100
Child aged under 3	62	31	7		100
Child aged 3-5 years	63	31	6		100
Child aged 6-9 years	62	32	6		100
Child aged 10-14 years	63	30	7		100
Has other care responsibilities	55	35	10		100
No other care responsibilities	57	35	9		100
<i>Household finances</i>					
Well off	58	34	8		100
Just managing	56	36	9		100
In difficulties	46	37	17		100

Employed women					%
		Those who would prefer to work...			
		...fewer hours	...the same hours	...more hours	Total
<i>Age</i>					
16-19	29	42	29		100
20-29	48	36	16		100
30-39	45	39	15		100
40-49	44	42	14		100
50-59	43	42	14		100
60-64	26	66	8		100



Table 35 (continued)

	Those who would prefer to work...			%
	...fewer hours	...the same hours	...more hours	Total
<i>Qualification level</i>				
Basic or none	37	46	17	100
Intermediate	45	38	17	100
Degree or equivalent	52	37	11	100
<i>With care responsibilities</i>				
Childless	47	38	15	100
Child aged under 3	43	40	17	100
Child aged 3-5 years	38	46	16	100
Child aged 6-9 years	39	42	19	100
Child aged 10-14 years	45	39	16	100
Has other care responsibilities	45	40	15	100
No other care responsibilities	44	40	16	100
<i>Household finances</i>				
Well off	46	41	13	100
Just managing	42	41	17	100
In difficulties	43	30	27	100

Many employees with managerial duties are in the higher-level, better paid strata of the occupational hierarchy, and in this sense are better placed to be able to afford a salary reduction in exchange for reduced hours than are many manual employees. Conversely, preferences for increased hours of work are more widespread among the lower-paid manual employees, particularly in the case of women. There is little difference for either men or women according to which sector they work in, or the size of the private company.

Based on the analysis so far we have seen that:

- gender, life stage, domestic and job characteristics influence current working hours;
- the hours that women and men work have a strong influence on their preferences for working time adjustments: those working in short part-time jobs are the most likely to want to increase their hours and those working long full-time hours are the most likely to want to reduce their hours.

To gain a more detailed understanding of which women and men wanted to adjust their working hours, we used logistic regression (see Appendix A.4) to explore the following questions:

- Which full-time employees want to reduce their weekly hours by five or more (i.e. a substantial reduction)?
- Which part-time employees want to increase their weekly hours by five or more (i.e. a substantial increase)?
- Which employees have current hours that are closest to their preferences? (i.e. do not want to make a substantial increase or reduction of five hours or more)?

Table 36 Job characteristics of employed men and women who want to adjust their current working hours

Employed men					%
		Those who would prefer to work...			
		...fewer hours	...the same hours	...more hours	Total
Self-employed	67	26	8		100
Employees	55	36	9		100
<i>Sector</i>					
Agriculture	63	28	9		100
Manufacturing	56	37	8		100
Private services	60	30	10		100
Public services	52	39	9		100
<i>Private sector workforce size</i>					
1-9	57	33	10		100
10-49	56	34	10		100
50-499	61	31	8		100
500+	60	34	7		100
<i>Occupational level</i>					
Manual	42	43	15		100
Manual supervisors	50	40	10		100
Non-manual	49	40	11		100
Non-manual managers	69	27	4		100
Employed women					%
		Those who would prefer to work...			
		...fewer hours	...the same hours	...more hours	Total
Self-employed	50	36	14		100
Employees	44	41	16		100
<i>Sector</i>					
Agriculture	55	33	12		100
Manufacturing	48	41	11		100
Private services	43	40	18		100
Public services	45	40	15		100
<i>Private sector workforce size</i>					
1-9	42	40	18		100
10-49	43	42	15		100
50-499	49	38	13		100
500+	50	40	10		100
<i>Occupational level</i>					
Manual	31	45	25		100
Manual supervisors	40	43	17		100
Non-manual	43	42	16		100
Non-manual managers	56	34	10		100



The characteristics explored in relation to these questions are the same as those used in Chapter 4 to predict which full-timers currently work long full-time hours, summarised in the box on p. 39. The only addition is that current weekly hours were included as a continuous variable. To simplify the analysis we focus on employees.

Preferences for a substantial reduction in weekly hours

The first analysis explores which full-time employees would prefer to reduce their weekly hours by five hours or more, which we refer to as a ‘substantial reduction’. The results of the logistic regression are presented in Appendix A4, Table A.4.2. The results reported here are statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

As expected, we see that the number of hours currently worked has a significant influence on full-time employees’ preferences for a substantial reduction in hours and that remains when personal, domestic and job characteristics are controlled for. The longer their current hours, the more likely they are to want a substantial reduction, and this applies for women and men. However, there are additional, independent effects of a number of other characteristics that increase the probability of full-timers having a preference for a substantial reduction in their hours.

There are some age-related differences among full-timers. Women and men at the start of their careers (aged 20-29) are less likely to want an hours reduction than full-timers in their thirties. Among male full-timers, the oldest ones (60-64) are more likely to want this hours reduction than men in the middle years of their employment career (30-39). For both women or men, there is no significant difference between those in their twenties, thirties and forties .

The higher their qualification level, the more male full-timers are more likely to want a substantial reduction in their hours. It is this characteristic that has the strongest effect on their probability of wanting reduced hours than any other domestic or labour market characteristic entered into the model. For women full-timers, the relationship with qualifications is more limited, the only significant effect is that that those with basic qualifications are less likely to want a reduction in hours than women with no or higher qualifications.

Women who are employed full-time and have young children (aged under 6 years) are significantly more likely to want substantially shorter full-time hours than women full-timers without children. It is this responsibility for young children that makes women more likely to want reduced hours than any other characteristic entered into the model. There is no significant difference between women full-timers with older children and those with no children. Preferences for substantial reductions in full-time hours do not vary among male employees according to their parental roles, except that those with a child aged 10-14 are slightly more likely to want reduced hours compared to their childless counterparts. The model controls for men’s ages, and their partner’s hours of work, so this suggests that men are more inclined towards reducing their hours, or this route is more feasible, when their youngest child reaches this age. Other care responsibilities had no independent effect on preferences for a substantial reduction in hours for either men or women employed full-time.

Men and women in full-time jobs who have a non-employed partner are more likely to want a reduction in hours than those without a partner. Women whose partner worked between 35-49 hours were more likely to want a reduction in hours compared to other women, but this relationship disappears for women who are employed full-time when their partner works very long hours of 50 or more. For men, the hours worked by their partners had no influence on men's probability of wanting a substantial reduction in their own hours, with one exception. Those men whose partner worked very long hours were less likely to want an hours reduction for themselves. Women full-timers in households that are financially well-off are more likely to want an hours reduction than other women full-timers.

Job characteristics also have an influence, even when the hours of work are already taken into account. Male employees in large private service sector companies are more likely to want a substantial reduction in their full-time hours compared to men that are employed elsewhere. Male manual supervisors and non-manual employees are less likely to want to reduce their hours than managers and other manual employees. For women the sector is irrelevant, it is women employed full-time in managerial positions who are the most likely to prefer a substantial reduction in hours.

Finally, there are also some country differences that remain once personal, domestic and labour market characteristics are taken into account. Male full-time employees in France, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom are more likely to prefer a substantial reduction than equivalent men living in Germany, while those in Italy are less likely to prefer this reduction. There is no significant difference between Germany and the other remaining countries. Among women employees working full-time, those in Denmark, France, Italy, Sweden and the UK are more likely to prefer a substantial reduction compared to equivalent women living in Germany. There is no significant difference between women full-time employees in Germany and the other remaining countries.

Preference for a substantial increase in weekly hours of work

This analysis identifies which part-timers' want to substantially increase their hours of work. There are insufficient part-time male employees to present the analysis separately by gender, so gender is incorporated as a dummy variable in the model. For the same reason of sample size limitations, it is not possible to include the countries separately. The results of the logistic regression are presented in Appendix A4, Table A.4.3. The results reported here are statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

The number of hours currently worked has a significant influence on part-time employees' preferences for a substantial increase in hours that remains when personal, domestic and job characteristics are controlled for. Part-timers are more likely to want a large increase in their hours if they work in short part-time jobs, and the probability falls for those working 20-25 hours and falls again for those working 26 or more hours.

There are additional, independent effects of a number of other characteristics that influence part-time employees' preferences for adjustments to their hours of work. Young part-time employees



(under 20 years), and those aged 40 or older, are less likely to want a substantial increase in their hours compared to those who are working part-time in their twenties and thirties. Women are less likely to want this increase compared to the minority of men who are employed part-time.

Part-timers are also less likely to want to increase their hours if they have young children compared to those without children. The difference in preferences reduces as the youngest child becomes older, and there is no significant difference between part-timers with older children aged ten or older living at home and those without children, or between those with and without eldercare responsibilities.

Part-timers are more likely to want a substantial increase in their hours if they have a non-employed partner compared to those without a partner to support, and if their household is in financial difficulties or just managing. Having an employed partner reduces the probability that they want to substantially increase their hours compared to those without a partner, particularly if their partner works very long hours (50 or more). Education, sector and occupational position have little effect, except that part-timers in agriculture are less likely to want to increase their hours than those employed in other sectors.

Preference for the smallest adjustment (current hours or an adjustment of less than five hours)

The final regression analysis explores the characteristics of those employees who have the closest alignment between their preferences and their behaviour, in the sense that they would prefer to keep their current number of hours or make an adjustment – a reduction or an increase – of less than five hours. In this model we compare the effect of current hours by using 35-39 hours as the base category. The results of the logistic regression are presented in Appendix A4, Table A.4.4. The results reported here are statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval.

There is a clear relationship to current hours. Compared to the base category of moderate full-time hours (35-39), male employees working other hours are significantly less likely to have their preferred hours, particularly if they work very long full-time hours. Women employed 20-34 hours per week are more likely to be working their preferred hours than those working 35-39 hours, but those working 40 or more or in short part-time jobs (under 20 hours) are significantly less likely to be working their preferred hours.

It appears that women are more likely to be working their preferred hours at the start and end of their working lives than in the middle period. Those who are employees in their twenties or aged 50 or more are more likely to be working their preferred hours than those in their thirties, and there is no significant difference between women in their thirties and forties. In contrast, men who are employed yet close to retirement (60-64 years), or are in their forties, are less likely to have their preferred hours than other men.

Men with high qualification levels are less likely to be working their preferred hours than men with lower qualifications. There is no significant difference among women employees by qualification.

The probability of having a close alignment between current and preferred hours hardly varies according to parental or other care responsibilities. The surprise finding is that for women there is no significant difference: many will have reduced their hours to combine employment with raising children but they are no more nor less likely to have achieved a close match between current and preferred hours than women without children. It should be remembered, though, that mothers who have left employment because they could not reconcile their working time with their domestic commitments are not considered in this analysis. For men the relationship is less easy to interpret: those with a child aged 10-14 years are less likely to have a close match between their current and preferred hours than men without children. To be more precise, the previous analysis for full-timers showed that these fathers were also more likely to want a substantial reduction in their hours than other men. Otherwise, there is no significant difference among men according to their parental role. However, men with other adult care responsibilities are less likely to have a close match between their current and preferred hours compared to men without these responsibilities. This suggests that further research focusing on the working time preferences of men with teenage children or adult care responsibilities would be a fruitful line of investigation.

Both men and women with a non-employed partner have a lower probability of having current hours close to their preferred hours compared with their single counterparts. There is no significant difference between single men and women and those with employed partners, with the exception that men with partners working very long full-time hours are significantly more likely to have a closer match between their current and preferred hours compared to single men. Women in financially well-off households are the most likely to be working their preferred hours.

Turning to job characteristics, there are no additional differences between sectors for women once their hours of work are taken into account. In contrast, men in large manufacturing or private service companies are less likely to be working their preferred hours than men employed in the public sector. Women in managerial positions are less likely to be working their preferred hours than women at other occupational levels. For men, there is no significant difference according to broad occupational level.

There are also some country differences that remain when personal, domestic and job characteristics are held constant. Men in Denmark, France, Ireland, and the UK are less likely to be working hours close to their preferences than are men with similar characteristics but living in Germany. In contrast, men in Portugal and Italy are more likely to have hours close to their preferences than men in Germany. Women in Denmark, France and Sweden are less likely to have current hours close to their preferred hours compared with similar employed women in Germany, while employed women in the Netherlands are more likely to be working their preferred hours.



In summary, the results of the analysis are that:

Full-time employees are more likely to want a substantial reduction in their working hours if they are:

- working long hours
- older men approaching retirement (men and women at the start of their careers are less likely to want a reduction)
- men with high qualification levels (women with basic qualifications are less likely to want a reduction than women with fewer or more qualifications)
- women with young children, men with a youngest child aged 10-14 years
- living with a non-employed partner rather than no partner
- women with a full-time employed partner (men are less likely to want a reduction if their partner works long hours)
- women living in financially well-off households
- men who work in large private sector companies
- men and women who are managers, and men who are supervisors
- living in certain countries rather than others (matched on personal, domestic and job circumstances).

Part-time employees are more likely to want a substantial increase in their hours if they are:

- working short hours
- aged in their twenties and thirties
- men
- have no children aged under ten
- living with a non-employed partner rather than no partner (less likely if they have a partner who is employed, particularly if the partner works long hours)
- living in households which are not well-off financially
- work outside of agriculture

Employees are more likely to want the smallest adjustment (that is, want their current hours or an adjustment of less than five hours) if they are:

- men working moderate full-time hours (35-39)
- women working substantial part-time (20-34) or moderate full-time hours (35-39)
Note: once hours are taken into account there is no difference between women with and without children: mothers are no more nor less likely to work hours close to their preferences than other women (but mothers who are not employed are not considered in this analysis)
- women who are not in their middle years of their working life (aged under 30 or 50 plus, rather than in their thirties and forties).
- men who are not in their forties or approaching retirement (aged under 40, or in their fifties)
- men with fewer qualifications
- have no partner rather than a non-employed partner
- men with a partner who works very long hours compared to men without a partner (no other significant difference between single people and those with an employed partner)

- men who do not have a child aged 10-14 years at home or eldercare responsibilities
- women living in financially well-off households
- men who do not work in large manufacturing or private service companies
- women in non-managerial jobs
- living in certain countries rather than others (matched on personal, domestic and job circumstances), shown in Table 30.

Table 37 The relative probability of preferring reduced or current hours in the different countries for individuals with similar personal, domestic and job circumstances

	Full-time employees: prefer a reduction of five or more hours	Employees: prefer the smallest adjustment to their hours¹
More likely to be in this situation than similar people in Germany ²	Denmark – women France Italy – women Spain – men Sweden UK	Italy – men Netherlands – women Portugal – men
The base category for the comparison		Germany
Similar probability to the base category	Austria Denmark – men Belgium Greece Finland Ireland Luxembourg Netherlands Norway Portugal Spain – women	Austria Belgium Greece Finland Ireland – women Italy – women Luxembourg Netherlands – men Norway Portugal – women Spain Sweden – men UK – women
Less likely to be in this situation than similar people in Germany	Italy – men	Denmark France Ireland – men Sweden – women UK – men

¹ The difference between their current and preferred hours is a gap of less than five hours.

² Extract based on a series of logistic regressions (see text for explanation).



Preferences for part-time work and sabbaticals

So far, we have examined preferences for reduced and increased hours of work and shown that many full-timers want shorter hours of work. Full-timers were also specifically asked if they would prefer to work part-time. Preferences for part-time work exceeded current availability. Over one third of women employed full-time would prefer to work part-time. Given the currently low rates of part-time work for men it is perhaps more surprising that 22% of male full-timers would also prefer this arrangement. For both sexes, just over one third of those who would prefer part-time work wanted this for a fixed period of five years or less (Table 38), most of whom wanted to work part-time for one or two years.

Table 38 Preferences for part-time work among full-time employed women and men and the reasons for these preferences

	Men	Women	All	%
Those full-timers who would prefer to work part-time...				
...for five years or less	8	14	10	
...longer term or period not specified	14	23	17	
Total	22	37	27	
Those who gave the following reasons (multiple response)				
More time for self and own activities (leisure, politics, etc.)	79	75	77	
Reduce strains of working	48	59	53	
More time for children	42	54	47	
More time to care for elderly, ill or disabled family members	16	18	17	
Other domestic commitments	30	38	34	
Other reasons	18	14	16	
Base number (average)	2,103	1,756	3,859	

Men and women who said they would prefer to work part-time gave a similar range of reasons, although a larger proportion of the women mentioned activities connected with caring for other people. Three quarters of those who would prefer to work part-time mentioned that they wanted time for themselves. Just over half said they wanted to reduce the strains of working, and 47% mentioned that they would have more time for their children. Other domestic commitments were mentioned by a third of those who wanted part-time work, and adult care by nearly one in five. All of these reasons are interrelated and concern the balance of life. The reasons for wanting part-time work varied by life stage. Children and other domestic commitments were mentioned most by those in the 20-50 year age group, peaking at two thirds of full-timers aged 30-39 who wanted part-time work. Eldercare responsibilities became a more common reason with age, mentioned by 25% of all full-timers aged 50-59, as did a desire to reduce the strains of working. Wanting more time for oneself was widely mentioned by all age groups.

Among those who currently work part-time, for men the main reason is because they are students or because they could not find full-time work (Table 39). These two reasons also accounted for

28% of women part-timers. Over half of women part-timers and 22% of male part-timers said they did not want full-time work (although many wanted longer part-time hours as shown earlier in this chapter). Like the full-timers who would prefer to work part-time, those part-timers who did not want full-time work said they wanted time for their own activities and to meet care commitments. A total of three quarters of the women part-timers said they wanted or needed time for their children, and 40% mentioned other domestic commitments. Fewer men work part-time, and fewer male part-timers mentioned care responsibilities than women; nonetheless 30% of male part-timers said they wanted time for their children, and just under one in five mentioned other forms of domestic or care responsibilities. Around half of part-timers said they did not want full-time work because they were financially secure or they earned enough from working part-time (which means of course that the other half were under some degree of financial pressure).

Table 39 Part-timers' reasons for working part-time

	Men	Women	All	%
<i>Those who were working part-time because they</i>				
Are a pupil/student	37	10	17	
Could not find full-time work	24	18	19	
Ill or disabled	3	2	2	
No answer	14	10	11	
Did not want full-time work	22	60	51	
Base number	928	2 921	3 849	
<i>Part-timers who did not want full-time work who gave the following reasons (multiple response)</i>				
Financially secure – only work because I want to	48	47	47	
I earn enough working part-time	68	52	54	
I want or need time for...				
...children	30	75	70	
...other care	14	14	14	
...other domestic commitments	17	40	38	
...my own activities	69	51	52	
...another reason	24	12	13	
Average base number	205	1,746	1,951	

Only 10% of men and 20% of women in full-time jobs who would prefer to work part-time had tried to change to this arrangement. The loss of income, limited opportunities at the workplace and the negative effect on career prospects and social protection create obstacles which deter those employees who would prefer to work part-time from doing so (Table 40). These negative perceptions of part-time work were even higher among the full-time employees that did not want to work part-time. Financial considerations are a big constraint, but were perceived to be less of an obstacle than the difficulties of doing their current job part-time or their employers' resistance



to part-time work. This suggests two issues if an aim of European employment policy is to encourage a further expansion of part-time work. Firstly, employers need to be persuaded of the merits of part-time work, and secondly the social partners need to consider how jobs can be re-organised to enable employees to do their job if they switch to part-time hours.

Table 40 Full-time employees' perceptions of the problems and disadvantages of working part-time

Those who thought that the disadvantages of part-time work are...(multiple response)	Would prefer to work part-time	Do not want to work part-time	All full-timers	%
Wages: could not afford to work part-time	30	50	44	
Current employer wouldn't accept it	54	61	59	
Not possible to do current job part-time	47	63	58	
Damages career prospects	42	49	48	
Inferior treatment in social protection and labour law	41	43	43	
Average base number (multiple response)	3,860	10,397	14,827	

Of those full-timers that would prefer to work part-time, the most popular arrangement was fewer days per week (38%) followed by reduced daily hours (26%). Less popular were flexible hours (hours determined at short notice according to personal preferences and the demands of the job) or longer periods of full-time work interspersed with longer periods off, but more men preferred these arrangements than women. These differences in the type of reduction of hours preferred are probably related to women being more likely to want to work part-time for their day-to-day responsibilities of looking after children and other family members.

The idea of sabbaticals (extended leave with the right to return to the current job) was popular among employees and job seekers, and there were few differences by gender (Table 41). Around six in ten employees (58%) and a similar proportion of job seekers (62%) thought that sabbaticals would be useful. Of these employees, 39% would take unpaid leave if it was available and 52% would take leave compensated at 50% of their net income. Expressed as a proportion of all employees, this means that 23% of employees would take unpaid sabbaticals, rising to 30% if compensated on a 50% basis. Over 70% would prefer a leave period of three months or less and over 90% wanted 12 months or less. Most of those who said they would take sabbaticals on half their income or no income said that the best time to take this leave would be in the short to medium term: within two years for 65% of them and within five years for 82% of them. Furthermore, 38% of the employees who wanted a sabbatical said that they thought that in principle it would be possible to take such a break from their present job¹².

When those who wanted a sabbatical were asked what they would do during this period, the most common response by far by both women and men was travel, leisure or rest. One in five also

¹² It is not clear from the question asked whether respondents meant that it was possible because of the nature of the job or whether they were also making an assessment of whether or not their employer would allow them to take a sabbatical.

thought they would use it for further education. Some 11% of employees and 15% of job seekers mentioned childcare, and women were more likely to mention this than men. A similar proportion mentioned domestic renovation or other forms of ‘self-servicing’, which men mentioned more frequently than childcare.

Table 41 Preferences and reasons for taking sabbaticals, by gender

	Employees			Job seekers			%
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All	
<i>Those who think a sabbatical would be useful</i>	58	57	58	62	62	62	
<i>Those who think it would be useful...</i>							
who would take unpaid leave ¹	36	42	39	–	–	–	
who would take leave at 50% net income ¹	50	56	52	–	–	–	
<i>Preferred duration of sabbatical</i>							
who would like 3 months or less	74	71	73	77	75	75	
who would like 3-12 months	20	24	22	18	18	18	
<i>Those who would use it for...(multiple response possible)</i>							
Further education	22	25	24	25	21	22	
Honorary, charitable or political work	4	4	4	4	4	4	
Do-it-yourself work	16	10	13	11	9	10	
Take care of children	7	15	11	5	21	15	
Other adult care responsibilities	2	4	3	3	5	4	
Travel, leisure or rest	65	64	65	64	57	60	
Other reasons	10	9	9	10	6	8	
Base number	9,150	7,168	16,322	2,524	4,022	6,549	

¹ The question asked ‘whether you would take extended leave if your employer offered it on an unpaid basis/ if your employer or another institution paid you half of your present net income for this period?’ Job seekers were not asked this question.

Among those who wanted a sabbatical and currently had children this reason was mentioned more often: 27% of those with a child under 6 years and 20% of those with a child aged 6-9 would use a sabbatical to spend with their children. And it should be noted that fathers of young children were as likely or more likely to mention this than employed mothers. Similarly, those who currently had other adult care responsibilities were more likely to mention this as one use for sabbaticals: 11% thought they would use a sabbatical in this way compared with 3% of all people in favour of sabbaticals.

In this and the previous chapters we have analysed the current and preferred working hours of women and men according to their domestic and employment circumstances. The next chapter provides a national level comparison.

Chapter 6

Working time preferences: national comparisons

The analysis in the preceding chapters focused on the 15 European Union Member States and Norway as a whole, comparing the preferences of women and men according to different personal, domestic and job circumstances. The national dimension was introduced into the regression models, and this showed that when people were matched on similar individual-level characteristics their probability of working very long hours was higher in certain countries, as was their probability of wanting large working time adjustments (see Chapters 4 and 5). In this chapter, we focus on a national comparison of the current and preferred hours of work of women and men in the different countries in the survey. The chapter starts with a comparison of the employment and job-seeking rates for women and men in the different countries. This chapter compares national differences in the current and preferred volume of working hours, and examines which proportion of the workforce would like to move into, or out of, part-time work.

Employment and job-seeking rates for women and men in different countries

One of the targets of European employment policy is to raise the employment rate. The problem is particularly pronounced for women, for their employment rates are lower than those of men (see Chapter 1). Table 40 sets the overall context for this chapter by comparing the rates of employment and job seeking (those who want a job now or within five years) for women and men in the different member states¹³. The countries have been ranked by the employment rate for

¹³ The employment rates recorded in this survey for men, women and all persons are compared with those from the European Labour Force Survey for the EU15 countries and the national Labour Force Survey for Norway in Appendix A.1. This comparison shows that both surveys produce similar male, female and total employment rates at the EU15 overall level. The picture is broadly comparable at the national level as well, but there are some discrepancies (+/- three percentage points). This survey records slightly higher employment rates in four countries for both men and women (Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg, Norway); for one sex in four countries (men in Austria, France and Sweden; women in Finland) and lower employment rates for one sex in three countries (men in Italy, women in Greece and Spain). When the comparison is made for the narrower core working years (25-49 years), the match is even closer.

women. It shows that women's participation in the labour market – either in employment or as job seekers – varies between countries. In contrast, there is more homogeneity across countries for men. At least 70% of men of working age are in employment in most countries, although the rate falls below 70% in Finland, Italy and Spain. Most of the non-employed men are job seekers who are either unemployed or students. There are age-related national differences in patterns of job seeking and non-participation for young and older men, associated with differences in education and retirement systems (Lilja and Hämäläinen, 2001)

Women's employment rates are lower than men's in every country except Finland. The highest female employment rates are in the Nordic countries, where at least two thirds of working age women are employed. In contrast, women's employment rates fall below 40% in Greece, Italy and Spain, and in the other nine countries the rates range between 51% and 61%. Most of this national difference in employment rates for women results from variation in the level and form of employment for women with dependent children. Nearly all women are employed or job seeking in the Nordic countries, where motherhood is not associated with labour market exits. In contrast, rates of non-participation are higher in the other countries, even though each new generation of women is retaining a higher pattern of labour-market participation during the childraising years compared to their predecessors (Rubery et al., 1999). Non-participation rates exceed one in five women of working age in seven countries, ranging from 22% in Portugal through to 31% of women in Spain. Most of these non-participants say that they are looking after the home (see Figure 1 in Chapter 2). Some of these women might move into the 'job seeking' category if there were more opportunities to find jobs with working time patterns that fitted in with these domestic responsibilities, such as shorter full-time or part-time hours.

Table 42 The labour market status of women and men by country

	Women who are...				% of men who are...				%	
	Employed	Job seeking	Non-participants	Total	Employed	Job seeking	Non-participants	Total		
Norway	75	20	5	100	83	14	3	100		
Denmark	72	20	8	100	81	14	5	100		
Finland	68	21	11	100	65	23	12	100		
Sweden	67	29	4	100	79	17	4	100		
UK	61	20	19	100	76	14	10	100		
Germany	59	27	14	100	72	20	8	100		
Luxembourg	59	12	29	100	83	6	11	100		
Austria	57	26	17	100	80	12	8	100		
Netherlands	57	20	23	100	80	15	5	100		
Portugal	55	23	22	100	76	15	9	100		
Ireland	54	35	11	100	81	22	8	100		
France	53	29	18	100	71	18	11	100		
Belgium	51	22	27	100	73	13	14	100		
Greece	37	37	25	100	70	22	8	100		
Italy	36	36	28	100	61	24	15	100		
Spain	28	41	31	100	64	22	15	100		
EU15+Norway	51	29	20	100	71	19	10	100		

Note: Countries are ranked by women's employment rates. Job seekers are those who are not employed but would like a job now or within five years. Non-participants are not employed and are not job seekers. The column percent may not total to 100 precisely due to rounding of fractions.



Maternal employment patterns vary between countries because of a combination of factors that create incentives or deterrents to participation, and affect the number (and schedule) of hours worked. The main types of factors are listed in Figure 3. State policies play a major role in explaining international differences in women's employment patterns. Public funding or provision of childcare and other 'work-family' measures to help employed parents are particularly influential for the labour supply of mothers. The working time options mothers face in the labour market – the number and schedule of working hours – vary between countries because of differences in working time regulations and employers' working time policies. There are also financial considerations. In some countries, the state provides financial transfers through fiscal policy and social protection systems to support non-employed women, based on their status as either the partners of male breadwinners or as mothers. These systems of taxation and transfers can create disincentives for women to enter employment or to increase their hours if they face high marginal tax rates as a result. Whether or not it is financially feasible or unavoidable for women to remain non-employed will also depend on the earnings of their partner if they are in a couple, their own earning potential and whether or not they can find a job. Finally, social norms defining acceptable economic behaviour for mothers will also affect their labour supply decisions.

State policies play a key role in shaping women's employment patterns. There is a lively debate about how to classify the different national 'state regimes' according to the impact of policy on gender relations (e.g. Lewis 1992, 1993; Orloff, 1993; Sainsbury, 1994; Duncan, 1995; Mósesdóttir, 1995; Kofman and Sales, 1996). This is not surprising given the complexity of the task. For example, some parts of the social protection system or taxation system may create incentives for mothers to work, while other parts may be neutral or create disincentives. The complexity increases if national differences in working time regimes are also considered (Rubery et al., 1998b). Furthermore, with any attempt to develop typologies, some countries clearly fall into particular categories while the placement of others is less self-evident. Nevertheless, the common point of reference in these debates is that differences between state policies play a major part in explaining international differences in women's availability for waged work, and that the form of childcare support is a particularly important component of the 'state gender regime'.

A useful conceptual distinction can be drawn between 'strong', 'modified' and 'weak' male breadwinner states to highlight the extent to which state policies inhibit or encourage women to undertake employment or to seek work when they have either a male partner or children (Lewis 1992, 1993). The 'male breadwinner' presumption about family life is being dismantled in a number of policy reforms in many countries, but it is in the Nordic countries where this is most evident and a 'universal breadwinner' arrangement has developed. These countries have the most comprehensive public childcare services and statutory family leave provisions that enable employment to be more readily combined with care responsibilities than in other countries (Barth and Torp, 2000; Blumensaadt and Moller, 2000; Nyberg, 2000; Salmi et al., 2000). This goes hand in hand with the general treatment of women in state policies, viewing them as individual labour market participants rather than dependents of male breadwinners. A 'modified

male breadwinner' arrangement characterises the situation in France and Belgium, due to the extensive childcare and family policy entitlements in both countries which facilitate the labour market involvement of mothers, although some other policies are still influenced by a 'male breadwinner' presumption (Rubery et al., 1998a, 1999).

Main factors that influence societal differences in the labour supply of mothers

Childcare availability as an alternative to mothers providing childcare

- The extent of state provision or subsidies
- The availability and price of childcare services in the market
- The availability of family members and informal networks to help with childcare.

The compatibility of the organisation of working time with care responsibilities

- Regulations on the length of full-time hours (statutory and collective agreements)
- Entitlements to work reduced full-time or part-time hours (statutory and collective agreements)
- The amount and type of part-time jobs in the economy (regulations and employers' policies)
- The amount and type of other working time patterns (regulations and employers' policies)

The financial feasibility (or necessity) of a 'male breadwinner' arrangement

- Financial transfers through state fiscal policies and social protection systems to 'male breadwinners' to support non-employed partners, and/or to non-employed mothers (including lone parents)
- Marginal tax rates on earnings (including earning-related loss of social benefits)
- Men's wage levels in the case of couple households
- Women's wage levels
- Unemployment levels

Social norms concerning maternal employment

- Whether or not it is common practice for women with young children to be employed, and whether full-time or part-time employment is acceptable.

In the rest of the EU15, the state provides less childcare or other support for women to combine employment with care responsibilities, although state provision has expanded in some of these countries in recent years (Bettio and Prechal, 1998). Here, mothers who are employed obtain assistance with childcare from family members or by purchasing private sector services. In these 'male breadwinner' countries, employment rates for mothers are increasing, particularly among the most highly qualified women in young cohorts, but the rates are still generally lower than those of mothers in the 'universal breadwinner' and 'modified male breadwinner' countries. Portugal is a notable exception, with high employment rates for mothers despite limited state



support, which mothers manage by a heavy reliance on childcare provided by grandmothers or privately purchased (Perista, 2000). Employment rates are also much higher in northern Italy than in the south (Biagi et al., 2000).

There are a number of important national differences among the ‘male breadwinner’ countries, in the extent and form of social protection and fiscal transfers for families, that shape women’s labour supply (Lewis 1993, Sainsbury 1994). There are also country differences in the working time options open to women due to variations in the number of hours involved in working full-time, the extent to which part-time work has grown in the economy, and the quality of part-time work (O’Reilly and Fagan, 1998; Rubery et al., 1998a; 1999). For the purposes of this analysis of employment preferences, we shall focus on the different levels of part-time work that have emerged in these countries since this is frequently proposed as an employment solution for women with family responsibilities.

Thus we group Portugal with Greece, Italy and Spain together as the ‘male breadwinner – limited part-time’ countries on two criteria. Firstly, they have more limited welfare states and more extensive reliance on family systems for mutual support. Consequently, state provisions to support maternal employment are more limited than those provided in the ‘universal breadwinner’ and ‘modified male breadwinner’ country groups. Secondly, there are some distinctive features of these economies compared to those in the rest of the EU, including larger informal economies, more agricultural employment (particularly Greece and Portugal), more self-employment and family-run businesses, and limited rates of part-time employment. It is only recently that regulations limiting the use of part-time employment have been relaxed or promoted in these countries (Katsimi and Tsakloglou, 2000; Villagómez, 2000; Biagi et al., 2000; Perista, 2000). In this societal context, mothers largely opt between full-time employment or non-employment.

We call the remaining countries (Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, Ireland and Luxembourg) the ‘male breadwinner + part-time’ group. Here, state policies to facilitate maternal employment are limited compared to those in the ‘universal’ and ‘modified’ breadwinner countries. There is more part-time employment in the economy than in the ‘male breadwinner-limited part-time’ countries, and large proportions of employed mothers work part-time. Situating Ireland in this latter group is tentative, for the current economic boom in this country is producing rapid increases in both full-time and part-time employment rates for all women, including those with dependent children (Wickham, 2000). And if the sample size were large enough, then the Dutch case would merit a category of its own given its very high rates of part-time work and the comparatively good quality of these part-time jobs (Visser and Hemerijck, 1997; Plantenga, 1997; Fagan et al., 1998; Tijdens, 2000). Furthermore, there is a large regional difference in women’s employment profiles within Germany, which developed under different state policy regimes prior to German re-unification. Women in the east *Länder* of Germany had a high and largely full-time employment profile prior to unification, underwritten by state policies that endorsed women’s employment, including extensive childcare services. In contrast, the typical profile for women in the west *Länder* is to leave employment or move into

part-time work upon motherhood. These regional differences remain despite the assimilation of the east *Länder* into the state polices of the west *Länder* (Garhammer, 2000). Nonetheless, this classification of countries into four groups delineates significant national differences in the context of women's employment patterns.

The employment patterns for women in their core working years associated with this country typology are shown in Table 43. There are some features that are shared in common by countries in each group, but there are also some features that cut across the country groups. In the 'universal breadwinner' Nordic countries, nearly all women aged 20-49 are in the labour market. Nearly 80% are employed full-time or in substantial part-time jobs (20-34 hours per week) and only 2%-3% are not participating in the labour market¹⁴. The situation in Finland differs from the other Nordic countries in that part-time employment is rare. Moderate full-time hours are less common in Sweden than the other Nordic countries, and the proportion of employed women who work long full-time hours (40+) is higher in Sweden and Finland than in Denmark and Norway.

Larger proportions of women are without jobs in the other country groups. Employed women in the 'modified breadwinner' countries are concentrated in substantial part-time or moderate full-time jobs, with relatively few in either long full-time or short part-time jobs. In the 'male breadwinner - limited part-time' countries, less than one quarter of women are employed in jobs with moderate full-time or substantial part-time hours. Women in Greece, Italy and Spain have much lower employment rates than exist in the other country groups, as do men in these countries (see Table 42 above) as widespread unemployment makes it difficult for them to find jobs (Katsimi and Tsakloglou, 2000; Villagómez, 2000; Biagi et al., 2000). In all four countries, part-time hours are rare. Much of the employment for women in Greece and Portugal is in jobs with long full-time hours, while these hours are less prevalent for women in Spain and Italy.

In the 'male breadwinner + part-time' countries, around one fifth of women are employed in part-time jobs, and moderate full-time hours are less extensive than in most of the 'universal' and 'modified' breadwinner countries. Within this category, larger proportions of women work long full-time hours in Austria and Germany than in Ireland, the UK and the Netherlands. Indeed, the profile of employment and working hours for women in Austria is similar to that for women in Sweden. Short part-time hours are more widespread in the Netherlands and the UK, but a similar proportion of women in Norway are also working these hours.

Thus, the type of gender relations endorsed by the welfare state regime does seem to be associated with broad differences in women's employment patterns, but there are also some cross-cutting similarities between countries in women's employment patterns, despite differences in the national policy context.

¹⁴ Some of the women classified as employed will be absent due to parental leave entitlements. For example, in 1992, 4% of all employed women in Denmark were on maternity or parental leave, rising to 18% of employed women with children under 5 years old (Rubery et al, 1998: table 6.4). In Sweden the labour force participation rate for women with a child under 7 years old was 86% in 1988, but their at-work rate was 55% (Jonung and Perrson, 1993). The discrepancy in employment and at-work status is smaller in countries with less generous parental leave systems.



Table 43 Women's employment patterns in their core working years (20-49 years) by country

Typology of gender regime	Those who are employed (and the number of hours they work), job seeking or non-participants							%
	Long full-time (40+ hours)	Moderate full-time (35-39 hours)	Substantial part-time (20-34 hours) hours)	Short part-time (under 20 hours)	Employed, hours data missing	Job seeker	Non- participant	
<i>'Universal breadwinner'</i>								
Sweden	33	12	23	2	1	27	2	
Finland	32	30	7	3	3	22	3	
Denmark	20	36	20	1	1	19	3	
Norway	20	28	20	11	4	17	2	
All	28	25	18	4	2	22	2	
<i>'Modified breadwinner'</i>								
France	15	24	15	5	4	29	7	
Belgium	17	22	19	5	2	23	12	
All	15	24	16	5	4	28	8	
<i>'Male breadwinner – limited part-time'</i>								
Portugal	39	16	9	3	2	23	9	
Greece	30	3	9	3	6	42	9	
Italy	18	13	10	3	2	40	14	
Spain	18	6	6	2	3	44	20	
All	21	10	9	2	3	40	15	
<i>'Male breadwinner + part-time'</i>								
Austria	34	11	17	3	3	23	8	
Germany	26	14	17	9	3	26	5	
Ireland	20	21	13	6	–	33	8	
UK	19	18	19	11	2	21	9	
Netherlands	14	8	21	16	2	22	16	
All	23	15	18	10	3	24	8	
EU15+Norway ¹	21	16	15	6	3	30	10	

¹ Luxembourg is not shown separately due to sample size limits, but is included in the aggregate results.

The national pattern of current and preferred volume of working hours of women and men

There is now a large body of research that has documented how the number and schedule of hours worked by full-timers and part-timers vary markedly between countries (e.g. Bosch et al., 1994, 1997; Rubery et al., 1998a, 1999; Boulin and Hoffman, 1999; Anxo and O'Reilly, 2000). A key influence is the statutory regulations and collective agreements on working time, for it is within these frameworks that employers develop their firms' working time practices. The structure of employers' non-wage labour costs also has a bearing. For example, hours or earning thresholds in the structure of employers' social security contributions can encourage employers to create 'short hour' part-time jobs or 'marginal' jobs to reduce these costs. Other social

institutions also play a role through their influence on men and women's labour supply, including the fiscal system and the availability and opening hours of childcare services.

The regulatory limits set by legislation or collective bargaining vary between countries (see Appendix A.5). In most countries, the average hours worked by full-time employees are closely aligned with these regulated norms. The UK is a notable exception, where the history of weak and uneven regulation of working time has produced a wide diversity in the range of full-time hours worked. In 1993, the EU Working Time Directive set a uniform upper limit of a maximum 48-hour week across the EU, but within this parameter developments between countries in working time policy continue to diverge. For example, in France, legislation was passed in 1998 to reduce working time to a 35-hour week, and full-time hours have also been reduced progressively in the Netherlands and Belgium (EIRO, 2000; Boulin, 2000; Tijdens, 2000; Léonard and Delbar, 2000). While the range of collectively agreed norms is now quite narrow across the EU and Norway, with only three hours separating the minimum (37 hours) from the maximum (40 hours), current hours diverge more, particularly when overtime and second jobs are included. Analysis of the European Labour Force Survey shows that when the proportion of full-time employees that work very long hours (45 or more) is considered, then 'overworking' is more common for men in the UK, Ireland, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Austria and Finland than elsewhere (Rubery et al. 1999).

Table 44 compares the total weekly working hours of employed men – all the hours worked in their main and any other jobs – by country, ranking the countries by average hours. The average hours recorded are similar or marginally higher than the usual hours recorded for main jobs in the European Labour Force Survey (see Appendix A.1), which will be partly because of the inclusion of hours worked in all jobs, and other differences in the wording of the questions. However, it should be noted that this survey records markedly higher average hours for men in Austria (+5.5), the Netherlands (+ 3.8), Sweden (+3.1), Greece (+2.6), Germany (+2.6), Finland (+2.1), Ireland (+2) when compared to the results for the main job from the European Labour Force Survey.

There are several differences between countries in men's hours of work. The longest average hours are worked by employed men in Greece and Austria, who work roughly five hours a week more than men in six countries where average total hours fall below 42 per week: Italy, Norway, Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Denmark. These averages span a wide range of hours worked by men in each country, for hours of work vary between sectors, occupations, and between employees and the self-employed. For example, in a number of countries, the working time limits set by collective agreements are lower in the public sector than the private sector (see Appendix A.5). One indication of this range is the standard deviation, which estimates the range of hours worked by just over two thirds of the employed men.¹⁵ On this measure there is a large degree of overlap between countries in the range of hours worked by men. For example, Spain has the smallest standard deviation and here approximately two thirds of employed men work between 33.6 and 50.8 hours per week, which is not very different from the spread for Denmark

¹⁵ The standard deviation indicates that in a normal distribution around 68% of the distribution will lie within one standard deviation above or below the arithmetic mean (average). For example, the standard deviation of men's weekly hours is 8.6 hours in Spain, and the average is 42.2 hours, so an estimated 68% work between 33.6 and 50.8 hours per week.



(29.2-50.4 hours), where men's average hours are the shortest, or Austria (34.9-58.3 hours), where average hours are longer. However, an examination of the proportion of employed men who work the longest and shortest hours exposes more of the variation between countries. More than 30% of employed men work very long hours of 50 or more in Greece, Austria, Ireland and the UK, compared to less than 20% of employed men in France, Belgium and Denmark. In contrast, nearly one fifth of employed men work less than 35 hours a week in the Netherlands. Between 30%-40% of employed men work short full-time (35-39 hours) in Norway, Belgium, France and Denmark, but this hour range is much less common in the other countries.

Table 44 Current weekly working hours for employed men by country

	Distribution of current weekly working hours in each country				Average (mean)	Standard deviation	
	<35	35-39	40-49	50+	Total %		
						%	
Greece	9	6	44	42	100	47.6	14.3
Austria	6	11	47	36	100	46.6	11.7
Ireland	11	17	39	33	100	45.1	12.9
Portugal	5	16	52	27	100	44.4	11.5
UK	12	19	37	32	100	44.3	13.5
Germany	9	18	44	29	100	43.7	12.4
Finland	4	20	55	21	100	43.1	10.4
Sweden	10	8	59	23	100	42.4	11.5
Spain	8	17	55	20	100	42.2	8.6
Italy	10	21	47	22	100	41.8	10.6
Norway	9	33	38	20	100	41.8	9.8
Belgium	9	33	41	17	100	41.6	10.4
France	8	41	36	15	100	41.5	9.6
Netherlands	18	17	39	26	100	41.1	14.2
Denmark	11	39	32	18	100	39.8	10.6
EU15+Norway	9	22	44	25	100	43.0	11.7

Note: The countries are ranked by average hours. Luxembourg is not shown due to sample size limits, but it is included in the overall figure for all countries (EU15+N).

To what extent do these national differences in working hours reflect national differences in preferences? The overarching finding is that there is less national variation in men's preferences than in their current working time arrangements. Across Europe – within countries and between countries – the general trend is that men would prefer to work shorter hours. Table 45 presents the preferred hours of employed and job-seeking men.¹⁶ In each country, the average hours preferred by men is less than average current arrangements. The standard deviation is also a little narrower, indicating less diversity within in each country in men's preferred number of hours than in their current practices. The average preferred hours cluster between 35-37 hours in 11 of the 15 countries, and between 34-38 in all of the countries. The preferred average is at least five

¹⁶ Chapter 5 showed that job-seeking men prefer slightly shorter hours than employed men, but this has very little effect on the aggregate picture for men since many more men are employed than job seeking.

hours shorter than the current average in each country, and the gap widens to eight hours or more in Greece and Austria (see Table 48 below).

However, national differences do exist. The largest proportion of men who would prefer to work part-time (less than 35 hours) or short full-time (35-39 hours) are found in Norway, Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Denmark: in these countries, 60% or more of men prefer a working week of less than 40 hours. In these countries, men's hours are already shorter on average than elsewhere. One of the reasons may be that there is a widely established preference for working time reductions in these countries which has been sustained and developed through a successful history of working time reductions in previous collective agreements and legislation. The political context of the survey, which took place in 1998, is also important. This was the same year that the French Aubry Law was passed and introduced a reduction to a 35-hour week, to be implemented from the year 2000. It was also in 1998 that there was a widespread strike in the Danish private sector for shorter hours via extended holidays. In this period, working time reductions were also a topic of public debate in Belgium and the Netherlands, although this was not a particular focus in Norway (Barth and Torp, 2000; Boulin, 2000; Blumensaadt and Moller, 2000; Leónard and Delbar, 2000; Tijdens, 2000; and see Appendix A.5.).

Table 45 Preferred weekly working hours for employed and job-seeking men by country

	Distribution of preferred weekly working hours in each country				Average (mean)	Standard deviation
	<35	35-39	40-49	50+	Total %	
Greece	24	13	51	12	100	36.7
Austria	22	22	43	14	100	38.4
Ireland	24	25	42	9	100	37.4
Portugal	18	24	48	10	100	38.2
UK	28	28	33	12	100	36.6
Germany	24	27	41	8	100	36.6
Finland	29	26	39	6	100	35.6
Sweden	32	16	45	7	100	36.2
Spain	16	35	45	4	100	37.0
Italy	21	30	40	9	100	36.9
Norway	34	40	21	6	100	35.0
Belgium	30	33	30	7	100	35.8
France	25	55	16	4	100	35.6
Netherlands	42	18	31	9	100	35.5
Denmark	33	48	16	3	100	34.3
EU15+						
Norway	25	32	35	8	100	36.5

Note: The countries are ranked by average current hours, as in the preceding table. Luxembourg is not shown due to sample size limits, but it is included in the overall figure for all countries (EU15+N).

Another reason why preferences for the shortest working time are less widely expressed in countries where longer hours are currently worked is probably because of the size of the adjustment to their hours and income that this shift into short full-time hours would involve.



Thus, their starting point affects their assessment of the feasibility of the alternatives. This suggests a ‘stepping-ladder’ process of adaptation in working time preferences, shaped by past reforms, public debates, wage settlements and current working experiences. This may, of course, mean that employed people will always express a preference for shorter hours than current arrangements, in the same way that wage negotiation never stops. However, there are two signs that the downward ‘stepping-ladder’ adjustment loses momentum once moderate hours are achieved. Firstly, short part-time hours are generally unpopular among men (see Chapter 5). Secondly, the average gap between men’s current and preferred hours tends to be slightly lower in countries where hours are already comparatively short, suggesting that a greater degree of reconciliation between current and preferred hours has been reached, at least for the present (see Table 48 below).

The weekly hours worked by employed women also vary nationally (Table 46). Average weekly hours for employed women fall between 34-37 hours in eight countries. The average rises to 38 hours in Portugal and Finland and 41 hours in Greece. In contrast, average hours are between 31-33 hours in Germany, Norway and the UK, and 26 hours in the Netherlands. The standard deviation indicates a wide dispersal of hours around these averages within each country, which we have already seen applies to the distribution of men’s weekly working hours as well. However, when the distribution is examined several national differences are evident. More than 50% of employed women work at least 40 hours a week in Greece, Portugal, Austria, and Spain compared to less than a quarter in France, Denmark and the Netherlands. Short full-time hours (35-39 hours) are most common in Finland, France and Denmark. Short hours (less than 20) are particularly common in the Netherlands, and also in Germany, Norway and the UK, and overall at least 40% of employed women in these four countries work less than 35 hours a week.

Table 46 Current weekly working hours for employed women by country

	Distribution of current weekly working hours					Average (mean)	Standard deviation	%
	<20	20-34	35-39	40-49	50+			
Greece	7	19	5	41	28	100	40.5	15.1
Portugal	6	14	24	46	10	100	37.7	10.9
Finland	5	10	41	39	5	100	37.5	8.5
Austria	8	22	17	43	10	100	36.5	12.4
Spain	6	20	21	46	6	100	36.1	11.3
Sweden	6	32	16	39	7	100	35.0	10.0
Ireland	10	24	31	27	8	100	34.9	11.7
France	8	25	41	21	5	100	34.9	10.0
Italy	8	24	27	35	6	100	34.7	10.3
Denmark	8	26	42	20	4	100	34.2	10.3
Belgium	11	28	34	20	7	100	34.0	11.7
Germany	17	25	22	29	7	100	32.6	13.2
Norway	16	25	32	20	7	100	32.5	12.6
UK	20	28	26	19	7	100	31.3	13.0
Netherlands	34	32	14	18	2	100	26.0	12.5
EU15+Norway	14	25	26	28	7	100	33.5	12.2

Note: The countries are ranked by average hours. Luxembourg is not shown due to sample size limits, but it is included in the overall figure for all countries (EU15+N).

In each country the preferred hours of employed and job-seeking women are lower than current arrangements¹⁷ (Table 47). Average preferred hours are shortest in the Netherlands, at 24.9 hours, between 28-30 in five countries (Ireland, Italy, Denmark, Germany, Norway and the UK) and 31-35 elsewhere. In each country, large proportions of women have preferences that cluster into the long part-time hour band (20-34 hours): over 40% of employed and job-seeking women in most countries, with slightly lower proportions in Greece, Portugal, Finland and Spain. In contrast, the proportion who prefer short part-time jobs (less than 20 hours) is no larger than the proportion of jobs currently organised in this way in each country, suggesting that there is little aggregate pressure from women for these types of jobs to be created. Women's working time preferences are not homogenous, however, and large proportions want full-time jobs, although most want to escape from, or avoid, very long hours (more than 50). There are marked national differences in the proportion of women who prefer full-time rather than part-time work. Two thirds of women in Greece, Portugal and Spain would prefer to work at least 35 hours a week; so would just over half of women in Finland (56%). The level falls to between 40%-50% of women in most of the other countries, but is lower still in Denmark, the UK and the Netherlands. Even in these last three countries, between a third and a quarter of women would prefer to work at least 35 hours a week.

Table 47 Preferred weekly working hours for employed and job-seeking women by country

	Distribution of preferred weekly working hours					Average (mean)	Standard deviation
	<20	20-34	35-39	40-49	50+		
Greece	6	30	9	49	6	100	34.9
Portugal	4	32	24	39	1	100	33.9
Finland	9	35	28	27	1	100	32.1
Austria	9	43	19	26	3	100	30.9
Spain	10	28	16	45	1	100	34.1
Sweden	5	51	14	27	3	100	32.5
Ireland	12	46	20	21	1	100	29.6
France	11	40	42	6	1	100	31.5
Italy	11	45	21	22	1	100	30.1
Denmark	9	56	28	6	1	100	29.5
Belgium	11	45	28	13	3	100	30.6
Germany	14	45	20	19	2	100	29.1
Norway	15	46	30	8	1	100	29.1
UK	20	45	21	13	1	100	27.7
Netherlands	27	49	12	12	0	100	24.9
EU15+Norway	13	42	23	20	1	100	30.1

Note: The countries are ranked by average hours, as in the preceding table. Luxembourg is not shown due to sample size limits, but it is included in the overall figure for all countries (EU15+N).

The difference between current and preferred hours is smaller for women than for men in most countries (Table 48). The average discrepancy for women is less than three hours in the

¹⁷ Chapter 5 showed that job-seeking women prefer shorter average hours than employed women, but this makes little difference to the national averages for all employed and job-seeking women.



Netherlands, Sweden and Spain. In contrast, it exceeds five hours for women in Austria, Finland, Greece and Ireland. If men and women were able to achieve their preferred number of working hours, then the gender gap in the number of hours worked by women and men would be smaller than is presently the case, particularly in those countries where the current gap is most pronounced (Table 46). This reduced gender difference in the volume of paid work may make some contribution to a renegotiation of the gender division of unpaid work. This redistribution would make it more difficult to try and justify men's lower involvement in housework and childcare on the basis that they worked longer hours in their jobs. Men do more domestic work as women's involvement in waged work increases, however the evidence suggests that this adaptation of gender roles in the home is a very gradual process across generations (Gershuny et al., 1994; Van der Lippe and Roelofs, 1995). Public policy to encourage men to be more involved in the domestic sphere – such as the 'daddy leave' quotas in the Swedish and Norwegian parental leave scheme – can help to speed the adjustment, but even here the increased involvement of men has been slow (Leira, 1998).

Table 48 The average hours gap between current and preferred hours for women and men by country

	The hours gap between current and preferred working hours for the workforce¹		The average gender gap in employment hours²	
	Men	Women	Current	Preferred
Greece	11.0	5.6	7.1	1.8
Austria	8.3	5.6	10.1	7.5
Finland	7.5	5.4	5.6	3.5
Ireland	7.7	5.3	10.2	7.8
Denmark	5.4	4.7	5.6	4.8
Italy	4.9	4.6	7.1	6.8
Portugal	6.1	3.7	6.7	4.3
UK	7.7	3.6	13	8.9
Germany	7.2	3.5	11.1	7.5
Norway	6.8	3.5	9.3	5.9
Belgium	5.8	3.4	7.6	5.2
France	5.9	3.4	6.1	4.1
Sweden	6.2	2.5	7.4	3.7
Spain	5.3	2.0	6.1	2.9
Netherlands	5.7	1.1	15.1	10.6

¹ Average hours gap = average hours worked by the employed minus the average preferred hours of the workforce. The workforce includes the employed plus job seekers.

² Current gap: men's average hours minus women's average hours. Preferred gap: men's average preferred hours minus women's average preferred hours. Luxembourg is not shown due to sample size limits.

Do the preferred working hours of mothers vary according to the societal setting? The sample size is insufficient to focus only on mothers at the individual country level (see Appendix A.1), but we gain some insight by comparing the country 'gender regime' groups developed earlier in this chapter. Table 49 compares the current and preferred hours of work for mothers with a child aged 14 years or younger. For employed mothers, there are marked differences in the number of hours worked.

In the ‘universal breadwinner countries’, most women of childbearing age are employed (see Table 43 above). This table shows that one third of employed mothers with young children in these countries work full-time (35+ hours), another 30% have substantial part-time hours, and 31% work 40 or more hours a week (although some will be absent from their jobs due to parental leave arrangements, see footnote 14). Moderate full-time (35-39 hours) or substantial part-time hours predominate for employed mothers in the ‘modified breadwinner’ countries, for 70% of employed mothers have these hours of work, and fewer mothers are working 40 or more hours a week than in the ‘universal breadwinner’ group. A smaller proportion of mothers are employed in the ‘male breadwinner/dual full-time’ countries, but when employed nearly half (47%) work 40 plus hours a week. Short full-time hours (35-39) are worked by 27% of employed mothers in this country group, and substantial part-time hours by one in five of them. Substantial or short part-time hours are the norm for mothers in the ‘male breadwinner/woman part-time’ countries. Most of these short part-time hours are worked by mothers in the UK, the Netherlands and the west *Länder* of Germany (Fagan et al., 1998).

Table 49 Current and preferred number of weekly working hours for mothers with a child aged under 15 years, by country group

Mothers' current and preferred hours ¹	Distribution of weekly hours:					Total	Average (mean)	Standard deviation	%
	<20	20-34	35-39	40-49	50+				
<i>Universal breadwinner</i>									
Current hours	6	30	33	26	5	100	35.2	9.6	
Preferred hours	4	63	22	10	1	100	30.4	7.3	
<i>Modified breadwinner</i>									
Current hours	8	32	38	16	6	100	34.2	10.3	
Preferred hours	9	50	34	6	1	100	30.3	8.7	
<i>Male breadwinner - limited part-time</i>									
Current hours	6	20	27	40	7	100	36.2	10.6	
Preferred hours	8	42	27	21	2	100	31.3	9.4	
<i>Male breadwinner + part-time</i>									
Current hours	28	36	16	14	6	100	27.4	12.8	
Preferred hours	20	54	14	10	1	100	25.6	9.8	

¹ Current hours are for all employed mothers, preferred hours are for employed and job seeking mothers.

Key

Universal breadwinner	= Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden
Modified breadwinner	= France, Belgium
Male breadwinner/ dual full-time	= Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal
Male breadwinner/ woman works part-time	= Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, Ireland, Luxembourg

(See table 43 and this chapter for explanation of typology.)

In each country group, mothers preferred hours of work are concentrated in either short full-time or substantial part-time arrangements. This is particularly so for the ‘universal’ and ‘modified’



groups. The proportion who want to work 40 or more hours is much lower than the present proportion of jobs organised in this way in the ‘male breadwinner - limited part-time’ group, but one in five mothers would prefer this arrangement. Similarly the proportion who want short part-time hours is less than the proportion of women’s jobs currently organised this way in the ‘male breadwinner+part-time’ group, but one in five mothers would still prefer this arrangement. In this latter category, mothers have the shortest average hours, at 27.4 per week, and also the shortest average preferred hours, at nearly two hours less (25.6 hours). In the other three country categories, employed mothers have longer hours of work and on average would prefer a reduction of four or five hours to around 30 or 31 hours a week.

The differences in working time preferences are more pronounced for mothers who are not in employment (Table 50). The lower employment rates for mothers in the male breadwinner countries coexist with high preferences for part-time work among non-employed mothers. Larger proportions of women in their childraising years were non-participants in these ‘male breadwinner’ countries (see Chapter 1). This group of women were not included in this survey and they may be even more likely to prefer part-time rather than full-time work if contemplating employment.

Table 50 Preferences for part-time work among women job seekers¹ with a child aged under 15 years, by country group

	Those who would prefer a part-time job	Base number	%
Universal breadwinner	52	(65)	
Modified breadwinner	65	(282)	
Male breadwinner /woman part-time	78	(686)	
Male breadwinner/dual full-time	77	(436)	

¹ Job seekers were defined in the survey as those who are not employed but who want to work now or within the next five years.

These country group differences in current and preferred hours among employed and job-seeking women with young children are associated with the differences in public childcare services and other policies to support employment for those with care responsibilities, such as extended parental leave or rights to reduced working hours. Where full-time hours have been reduced through collective regulations, this provides an additional mechanism to ease the reconciliation between employment and care responsibilities. Such combinations of policies are more extensive, and have been established for a longer period in the ‘universal’ and ‘modified’ breadwinner country groups than in the ‘male breadwinner’ countries. These policies facilitate high labour market participation rates for women, as well as longer part-time or full-time hours once in employment.

Preferences for full-time and part-time employment

We have already seen that a large proportion of the workforce would like part-time work (Chapter 5). Over one third of employed women working full-time and 22% of male full-timers

said that they would prefer to work part-time. Most part-timers wanted to remain in part-time work for a variety of reasons, although here too a substantial proportion wanted full-time work: 19% of all part-timers said that they had been unable to find a full-time job. We take a close look at these preferences from a national perspective.

Among employed men, just under three quarters are either in full-time work and do not want part-time work (72%) or are in the rare situation of being involuntarily employed part-time (2%) (Table 51). Nearly one in five are in full-time work but would prefer to switch to part-time jobs. When added together with the minority of men who are in part-time jobs and either do not want a full-time job (2%) or work part-time for other reasons (5%), the result is that over a quarter of employed men would prefer to be in part-time work. Comparing the situation in the different countries shows the distinctive position of the Netherlands as the ‘part-time capital of Europe’ (Visser and Hemerijck, 1997; Tijdens, 2000). A larger proportion of employed men work part-time in this country than elsewhere in Europe, and a further substantial proportion who are employed full-time would prefer to work part-time hours, so that 42% of employed men in the Netherlands prefer part-time work. However, a substantial proportion of employed men in Sweden, France and Norway aspire to the ‘Dutch model’, for around one in three employed men in these countries want part-time work. Part-time work is less popular among men in the other member states, particularly in Portugal and Austria, but even in these two countries 15%-20% of employed men would prefer part-time work.

Part-time work is more popular among the employed women than the men in each country (Table 51). At the same time, a larger proportion of women than men are employed part-time because they could not find full-time work; this is particularly so in Greece, France and Sweden. Part-time work is by far the majority preference in the Netherlands, for only a quarter of employed women want to work full-time in this country. Over half of the employed women in the UK, Norway, Sweden, France, Germany and Ireland also prefer part-time work. In Germany, women in the west *Länder* have a stronger preference for part-time work than those in the east *Länder* (Garhammer 2000). The proportion of employed women who prefer part-time work is lower but still high in most of the other countries. Part-time employment is least popular in Spain, Finland, Portugal and particularly Greece, but even in Greece 22% of employed women work full-time and would prefer to be in part-time jobs. Adding together the proportion of women who want to move from full-time into part-time work and from part-time into full-time provides a measure of the mismatch between women’s jobs and their preferences in the different countries. This shows that the proportion of employed women who would prefer to move is particularly high in France (43%), Italy (38%), Sweden (37%), Finland (35%) and Greece (33%). In contrast, less than 20% of employed women in the UK and the Netherlands would prefer to change their status. However, it should be remembered that many of the part-timers in the UK and the Netherlands work short hours and it is this group who are the most likely to want longer, but still part-time, hours (see Chapter 5, also Fagan, 1996; Plantenga, 1997).



Table 51 Preferences for full-time and part-time employment among the employed, by country

Employed men	Distribution of the employed by their preferences for full-time or part-time hours					%
	Full-time + do not want part-time hours	Part-time + would prefer full-time hours	Full-time + would prefer part-time hours	Part-time + do not want full-time hours	Part-time for other reasons¹	
Austria	83	2	11	2	3	
Portugal	79	1	15	1	4	
Finland	78	1	19	0	2	
Belgium	76	2	19	2	1	
Germany	75	2	18	1	4	
Italy	75	3	17	1	4	
Denmark	74	0	19	2	5	
Spain	73	2	18	3	4	
UK	72	2	17	3	6	
Ireland	71	3	19	1	6	
Greece	70	4	20	2	4	
Norway	68	0	24	2	6	
France	67	2	26	2	3	
Sweden	62	3	26	2	7	
Netherlands	57	1	28	4	10	
EU15+Norway	72	2	19	2	5	

Employed women	Distribution of the employed by their preferences for full-time or part-time hours				
	Full-time + do not want part-time hours	Part-time + would prefer full-time hours	Full-time + would prefer part-time hours	Part-time + do not want full-time hours	Part-time for other reasons¹
Portugal	61	3	25	5	6
Greece	59	11	22	2	6
Finland	55	4	31	6	4
Spain	52	9	21	8	10
Austria	50	2	18	23	7
Belgium	50	5	18	22	5
Italy	46	6	32	11	5
Ireland	45	3	26	17	9
Denmark	42	4	24	18	12
Germany	38	9	17	28	8
France	34	11	33	16	6
UK	38	3	17	31	11
Norway	36	5	21	23	15
Sweden	31	13	24	21	11
Netherlands	23	1	16	46	13
EU15+Norway	40	7	23	22	8

¹ Most of the members of this group are employed part-time because they are students or have ill-health/disabilities. Luxembourg is not shown due to sample size limits, but it is included in the overall figure for all countries (EU15+N). The rate of part-time work differs from the results shown in the European Labour Force Survey for some countries, which may be due to differences in question wording.

Part-time employment is also the preferred option of large percentages of job seekers in each country, particularly among women (Table 52). In most countries the preference for part-time employment is higher than the incidence of part-time employment in the economy. The exception is the Netherlands, where two thirds of women job seekers would prefer a part-time job and this is the same rate as currently exists in the economy. The proportion of women job seekers who would prefer a part-time job is also broadly similar to the current rate of part-time work in Denmark, Belgium and the United Kingdom. In Sweden, the preference for part-time work among women who are job seeking is lower than the rate of part-time work, but overall there is a broad match for all job seekers.

Table 52 Proportion of job seekers that would prefer part-time work and part-time rates of employment by country

	Those who would prefer to find a part-time job (%)		Percentage of employment which is part-time¹	
	Women job seekers (%)	All job seekers (%)	Women's employment (%)	% oAll employment (%)
Netherlands	68	50	68	39
Ireland	64	52	30	17
Austria	62	52	30	16
Germany	61	44	36	18
Norway	54	43	45	n.a.
Italy	52	41	14	7
UK	51	40	45	25
Spain	38	34	17	8
France	43	32	32	17
Portugal	30	32	17	11
Denmark	39	30	36	22
Belgium	38	29	33	16
Greece	24	25	11	6
Finland	30	24	17	12
Sweden	30	24	39	23
EU15+Norway ²	48	38	33	17

¹ Taken from the European Labour Force Survey, 1998 results, Table 34. The data for Norway is from Barth and Torp, and is not available (n.a.) for all employment (2000).

² Luxembourg is not shown due to sample size limits, but it is included in the overall figure for all countries (EU15+N). The data for the percentage of employment that is part-time excludes Norway.

There are a number of disadvantages associated with working part-time in most countries. The obvious one is the lower income gained from working less than full-time. Another is that part-time jobs are concentrated in lower occupational positions and certain parts of the service sector (O'Reilly and Fagan 1998, and see Chapter 3 above). A third is that the principle of equal treatment between full-timers and part-timers in labour law and social security provision has developed slowly and unevenly in most countries. In recognition of the continuing problem of widespread unequal treatment, the Atypical Work Directive was introduced to provide a legal framework of equal treatment for part-timers in the European Union. The most concerted attempt to develop equal treatment of part-timers in all regulations and to promote part-time employment



in all areas of the economy has taken place in the Netherlands (see Tjidens (2000) for a summary of recent developments).

Full-timers' perceptions of the disadvantages of working part-time did not vary that much between countries (Table 53). The countries have been ranked in order from the Netherlands, with the highest incidence of part-time work in the economy, down to Greece, with the lowest. Full-timers have broadly similar perceptions of the disadvantages of working part-time in countries where this form of employment is more widely established as in countries where part-time employment is rare. No one country scored consistently better than the others in terms of full-timers' perceptions of the disadvantages of part-time work.

More than half of full-time employees said that they did not think it would be possible to do their current jobs part-time; it fell to less than half of full-timers only in the Netherlands and Finland. Full-timers in the Netherlands might be more likely to think that their job could be done on a part-time basis in the context of widespread part-time employment existing in the economy. However, a similar perception exists in Finland, where part-time work is more unusual. In most countries the proportion of full-time employees who thought their employer would not accept them working part-time was similar or even higher than the proportion that thought their job could not be done on a part-time basis. Around half or more thought that part-time work would damage their career prospects, and it was only in Italy and Finland that this fear was less widespread.

Full-timers were less likely to mention inferior employment rights as a disadvantage associated with part-time work in the Netherlands, Italy, Belgium and France. These are four of the countries where the principle of equal treatment was established relatively early in national labour law (Maier, 1994), and has been extensively developed in the Netherlands since the early 1980s. Some 40% or more thought part-timers had unequal treatment in the other member states, a figure rising to over 60% in the UK, Ireland and Greece. Financial constraints were another barrier. This applied for over half the full-timers in the UK, France and Ireland. In contrast, this was less of an issue for full-timers in Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands and Spain.

In contrast to the lack of a clear national distinction among full-timers, there is a clear gender differentiation. Women employed full-time perceive fewer barriers to part-time work than do men. Women are particularly more likely to think that it would be possible to do their job on a part-time basis or that their employer would accept this arrangement. This is indicative of the gender segregation of employment, where part-time work is highly concentrated in female-dominated job areas.

Table 53 Perceived barriers to part-time working: all full-time employees %

	Percentage of those who mentioned one or more of the following (multiple responses)...				
	It would not be possible to do my current job part-time	My employer would not accept it	It would damage my career prospects	Part-timers have worse employment rights	Could not afford to work part- time
Netherlands	47	55	51	25	32
UK	63	60	53	66	61
Sweden	64	55	49	47	36
Denmark	52	59	45	50	28
Norway	53	53	44	48	30
Germany	53	60	56	43	43
France	61	54	46	35	54
Ireland	59	61	55	63	53
Austria	55	71	53	43	34
Belgium	55	50	50	29	37
Finland	42	45	32	40	35
Portugal	62	62	41	52	47
Spain	56	65	44	54	29
Italy	60	64	32	20	44
Greece	82	56	53	68	49
Women	47	48	42	39	40
Men	63	66	51	45	48
EU15+Norway	58	59	48	43	44

Note: Countries are ranked by the existing rate of part-time employment, which is most widespread in the Netherlands.
 Luxembourg is not shown due to sample size limits, but it is included in the overall figure for all countries (EU15+N).

Chapter 7

Conclusions

An understanding of women and men's preferences and expectations concerning their working life is important in relation to the four pillars of European employment policy and the overall objective of raising the employment rate. Preferences and expectations do not provide a 'hard' or perfect measure of behaviour, not least because constraints and other considerations also shape plans, decisions and behaviour. But preferences and expectations do influence behaviour, and information on these attitudes shed light on the kind of policy developments that would be popular among specific parts of the population. Policy interventions and other changes in the economic and social environment influence the extent to which women and men can follow their preferred options, as well as influencing individual's preferences by opening up new alternatives for them to consider. In turn, changes in behaviour provide new experiences that also shape future preferences. For example, once someone has had the experience of self-employment this may increase or decrease their preference for this form of economic activity. Similarly, public debates about working time reductions can raise expectations and political demands for this reform.

This study provided information on employment and job-seeking plans, and preferences for self-employment, working from home and a number of aspects of working time for employed and job-seeking women and men in the European Union member states and Norway. This covers 80% of women of working age and 90% of men of working age.

The 'male breadwinner' division of employment and domestic responsibility structures women's employment, particularly for mothers of young children. As a result, women have a lower employment rate and when employed generally work shorter hours than men, particularly in countries with limited public childcare and other measures to facilitate the combination of

employment and parenting. Yet as we saw in Chapter 1, most women these days expect to combine employment with childraising, particularly as the younger generations start their families. Whether their expectations are realised will depend on the kind of employment available to them and how this fits with childcare responsibilities.

Domestic responsibilities are not the only reason for women's lower employment rates. Women have higher unemployment rates than men in many countries, and segregated employment patterns and lack of equal treatment means that once employed they have lower earnings, inferior employment conditions and poorer promotion prospects. The difficulties that people face in the labour market were evident in this survey. Worries about job insecurity were widespread for both women and men, but women were even more pessimistic about the difficulties of finding employment.

Despite differences in the level and type of employment, there were few gender differences in the preferences of the employed and job seekers for the issues explored in this survey (Table 54). There were also few differences between job seekers and the employed on most items, although job seekers tended to be slightly more likely to express a preference for all of the suggested arrangements and their preferred number of working hours was slightly lower than that for the employed.

It is on the issue of working time preferences that the gender difference is most pronounced. This survey asked men and women how many hours they would prefer to work, taking into account their need to earn a living. The results show that a large proportion of women and men in full-time jobs would prefer shorter working hours. This was particularly the case for men, associated with their greater likelihood of working long hours. Preferences for part-time work are widespread, particularly among women, and on average women prefer shorter working hours than men. Another gender difference is that many more women than men mentioned family-related reasons to account for their preferences. However, this should not be allowed to overshadow the fact that a reasonably large proportion of men also mentioned family-related reasons, particularly when considering working from home or when they had young children and were considering the attractiveness of sabbaticals or part-time work.

There are pronounced differences between countries in current working hours arrangements, but the national differences are less pronounced when working time preferences are examined. The overall picture is that across Europe there is a preference to leave, or avoid the extremes of very long or very short hours of work. This coexists with two lines of differentiation between countries. Firstly, the proportion of men who would prefer short full-time or part-time hours is much greater in Norway, Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Denmark than in other countries. These countries have already achieved shorter full-time norms than in most other countries through a more concerted programme of regulated reductions in recent years, and in most cases further reductions are a topic of widespread current political debate. Secondly, women's preferences for part-time hours are more pronounced in some countries than in others. More precisely, it is mothers in countries with a 'male breadwinner' gender regime and where part-



time work is widespread practice for mothers – notably the UK, the Netherlands and in the west *Länder* of Germany – which tend to prefer shorter part-time hours than mothers in other countries. While short part-time and long full-time hours are unpopular for both sexes in each country, there is still a wide variation in the number of hours that women and men want to work within the middle range of hours in most countries, rather than one unified preference.

As well as widespread preferences for working time adjustments, the survey revealed that sabbatical entitlements would be popular, as would time-compensated overtime arrangements for many of those working overtime. A smaller proportion of women and men would prefer working from home or would prefer self-employment, but this still amounted to a substantial proportion of the workforce.

Table 54 Summary of women and men's preferences

	Men	Women
<i>Self-employment</i>		
% of the self-employed who prefer this form of activity	36	32
% of the self-employed who would prefer to be employees	16	22
% of employees who would prefer to be self-employed	21	14
% of job seekers who would prefer to be self-employed	26	27
<i>Percentage who would prefer to work at home</i>		
Employees – work wholly at home	8	5
Employees – work partly at home	24	24
Job seekers – work wholly at home	14	17
Job seekers – work partly at home	44	42
<i>Percentage of those working overtime without time-compensation who would prefer to have time-compensated overtime</i>		
	55	58
<i>Percentage who would find sabbaticals useful</i>		
Employees	58	57
Job seekers	62	62
<i>Percentage who would prefer part-time work</i>		
Full-time employees	22	37
Job seekers	31	57
<i>Working time adjustments</i>		
% who would prefer a reduction of five or more hours	48	37
% who would prefer an increase of five or more hours	7	13
Average preferred number of hours: employed	37	30
Average preferred number of hours: job seekers	35	30

There are a number of issues raised by this study in relation to employment policy. The first is collective working time reductions for full-timers. The employers' confederations are generally resistant to working time reductions on the grounds of cost associated with inflexibility and

additional wage costs. Compromises between employers' and employees' working time needs have to be sought, drawing on the lessons from evaluations of initiatives across sectors and countries. Where working-time reductions are successfully negotiated in collective agreements, this has frequently been in conjunction with the reorganisation of work and the introduction of more flexibility (Taddie, 1998; Boulin and Hoffman, 1999; Peltola, 2000; Bosch, 2000). A particular problem for policy is that many of those who work the longest hours, and have the strongest preference for reductions in hours, are the self-employed and employees with managerial duties who largely fall beyond the safety net of working time regulations. Different forms of policy intervention and negotiated agreements may be needed for these workers who have more responsibility for determining their own hours in order to manage their workloads, compared to the more established forms of collective regulations developed for employees with specified working hours. Furthermore, this form of 'unspecified' working time may be spreading to other groups of workers as employers seek more flexibility from their workforce to respond to market demands.

A number of policy issues are also raised in relation to part-time work. One is that short part-time jobs (under 20 hours) are less popular than more substantial ones (20-34 hours). The other is that large proportions of full-timers would prefer to work part-time. However, many full-timers – even those who would prefer part-time work – perceive a number of obstacles and disadvantages which deter them from seeking this form of employment. These disadvantages include employers' reluctance to allow this form of work, loss of career advancement, reduced social protection, loss of salary and so forth. This suggests that the quality of part-time work needs to be enhanced if one of the aims of employment policy is to encourage the expansion of part-time work. Regulations and fiscal incentives to promote substantial rather than short hour part-time jobs might overcome some of these disadvantages. This is because substantial part-time jobs result in a smaller loss of income and part-timers are generally more integrated alongside full-timers in the workplace and the wider employment hierarchy than those in marginal part-time jobs (O'Reilly and Fagan, 1998).

The expansion of good quality part-time work and reduced full-time hours will make it easier for many women to combine employment with raising children. However, women's working time preferences are also shaped by the extent of childcare services, flexitime systems and family-oriented working time policies, such as parental leave and entitlements to reduced hours of work. Rather than focusing only on part-time work, a range of policies are needed to enable parents to find their preferred way of combining employment and family responsibilities. Sabbaticals and opportunities to work from home were popular because they offered to relieve the time pressures of work, rest, time for family and other activities, which indicates how working time has a major influence on the broader quality of life for all the population, including children. More broadly, the work-life balance for the workforce in general would be enhanced by a combination of measures to provide scope for people to obtain their preferred working time arrangements over their lifetime. This includes measures to curtail very long and very short hours of work in conjunction with the creation of more opportunities for individuals to adjust the number and schedule of their working hours, to take periods of leave or to work from home.



Finally the survey also showed that more people are interested in self-employment than are currently involved in this form of activity, particularly among the young. This suggests that measures to promote self-employment might be helpful for some people. However, the high failure rate of many small businesses, combined with the fact that some of the self-employed are in this situation reluctantly and would prefer to be employees, indicates that self-employment can never be a blanket solution to the problems of job creation.

A number of issues can also be identified for future research on the issue of preferences. Firstly, this survey did not collect information on the preferences and expectations of the 20% of women and 10% of men of working age who were neither employed nor planning to look for a job within the next five years. Such information is important in relation to debates about social exclusion as well as employment policy. Secondly, while this survey provides useful information, a more precise set of questions are required about the priority that people attach to working time reductions, and the trade-offs they are prepared to make. The issues include whether people's preferences for working time reductions vary according to whether they are considering an individual or collective adjustment; whether they would prioritise reduced hours over higher wages in the next bargaining round; and which forms of work reorganisation they would find acceptable in exchange for shorter working hours. It is very likely that the kind of trade-offs that full-timers are willing to make will vary by sector and income level; and the trade-offs can be expected to vary between countries as well, not least because of differences in their histories of working time regulations and current political debates. Thirdly, more information is required about working time preferences other than just the volume of hours in order to contribute to debates about working time reorganisation and 'flexibility' in firms and the 'work-life balance' for the workforce. Finally, this study has indicated that men are concerned about reconciling the time demands of their jobs with their domestic responsibilities, although their work patterns are largely unaffected by their responsibilities in the majority of cases. More research is needed to improve our understanding of men's expectations and plans in this area and the conditions under which men do get more involved in looking after their children and undertaking a more equal share of domestic work in their homes.

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Statistical Appendix

Appendix A.1

The sample design and reliability of the 1998 Employment Options of the Future Survey

The data collection involved a two-stage sample design (Infratest Burke Sozialforschung, 1998). The basic sample was taken from the residential population aged 16 to 64. A boost sample of the non-employed population in this age band was also taken to ensure that there was a sufficiently large number of cases to permit analysis of three core sub-groups of the non-employed: young entrants, women returners and the unemployed. The sample sizes in the different countries are set out in Table A.1.

The fieldwork was carried out by computer-assisted telephone interviews in each of the 16 countries using standardised questionnaires. Translation was carried out by translators whose mother language was the target language, and then checked by the national institute responsible for the fieldwork in that country.

The sample was drawn by random dialling methods to contact households and within households by random selection of eligible persons. To enhance the representativeness of the sample, it was weighted in several steps (Infratest Burke Sozialforschung 1998). Firstly, it was weighted to produce an individual level sample representative of the residential structure of the population aged 16-64 by age gender and region in each country using national official statistics. Then it was weighted to adjust the boost sample so that the national sample reflected the actual ratio of currently active and non-active persons. Finally, the national sample sizes were adjusted to conform to the current national share of the total population aged 16-64 year in the 15 EU member states plus Norway.

The results from all sample surveys are subject to a margin of error relative to the true result for the population. The size of the standard error depends on the unweighted sample size, on the

percentage share of the item under examination, and the variance in responses for the item. For example, if a certain item has a percentage p= of 30% in a sample (or subgroup) size of (unweighted) n= 2000 cases then the standard error is +/- 2.9%. In this example there is a 95% chance that the ‘true’ percentage lies between 27.1% and 32.9%. In any sample size the standard error is greatest when the percentage p=50% of the sample, in this case for a sample of 2000 cases if the percentage value p=50% then the standard error would increase to 3.2. If the sample size is smaller then the standard error increases, illustrated below:

Table A.1.1 Unweighted sample size in each country

Country	Sample sizes in each country prior to weighting		
	Basic sample	Boost sample	Total
Austria	1,000	501	1,501
Belgium	1,000	510	1,510
Denmark	1,001	484	1,485
Finland	1,000	504	1,504
France	2,000	1,026	3,026
Germany	2,000	998	2,998
Greece	1,042	464	1,506
Ireland	900	500	1,400
Italy	1,978	1014	2,992
Luxembourg	520	302	822
Netherlands	1,001	499	1,500
Portugal	1,000	501	1,501
Spain	2,000	1,000	3,000
Sweden	900	412	1,312
UK	2,000	1,000	3,000
Norway	800	700	1,500
EU15	19,342	9,715	29,057
EU15 + Norway	20,142	10,415	30,557

Source: Infratest Burke Sozialforschung (1998)

Illustration of the level of confidence according to sample size

Sample size	Standard error for a p= 50% percentage value
100	14.1
200	10.0
500	6.3
1,000	4.5
1,500	3.7
2,000	3.2
10,000	1.4
20,000	1.0

(Comparison with the employment rates and average weekly hours recorded in the European Labour Force Survey)

As a basic check on the reliability of the data collected in the Employment Options for the Future Survey, a number of comparisons were made with the larger European Labour Force Survey on a number of indicators that had not been used in the weighting exercise. These include the employment rate, rates of part-time employment, temporary and self-employment, and average hours. Both surveys show broadly similar results, and where relevant these checks are discussed in the main body of the text. The tables showing the employment rate and average hours comparison at the national level are included here. Where there is a discrepancy of three percentage points in the employment rate or two or more hours in working time, this is highlighted in the tables. These comparisons are discussed in Chapters 1 and 6 of the main body of the report.

Table A.1.2 Employment Rates, 1998 – comparison of the results from the European Labour Force Survey (ELFS) and the Employment Options for the Future (EOF) Survey

		Employment rates for the working age population			Employment rates for those aged 25-49 years		
		Men	Women	All	Women	Men	All
Austria	ELFS	75.9	59.0	67.4	90.2	73.5	81.9
	EOF	79.9	57.6	68.8	93.3	69.4	81.7
Belgium	ELFS	67.0	47.5	57.3	87.0	66.4	76.8
	EOF	72.9	50.6	61.7	92.4	69.9	81.1
Denmark	ELFS	80.2	70.3	75.3	89.6	79.2	84.4
	EOF	80.8	71.6	76.3	88.1	84.8	86.6
Finland	ELFS	66.2	60.5	63.4	81.7	75.6	78.7
	EOF	65.2	67.6	66.6	82.7	77.2	79.6
France	ELFS	67.2	52.9	59.9	86.6	68.6	77.5
	EOF	70.6	52.6	61.6	90.2	64.7	77.5
Germany	ELFS	71.7	55.6	63.7	86.2	69.1	77.8
	EOF	72.4	58.5	65.5	86.4	69.5	78.0
Greece	ELFS	71.6	40.3	55.6	90.2	54.2	71.8
	EOF	70.0	37.4	53.6	85.0	52.3	68.6
Ireland	ELFS	68.0	44.7	56.4	85.5	59.6	72.5
	EOF	80.5	54.1	67.4	91.3	56.0	71.4
Italy	ELFS	65.1	36.7	50.8	85.1	50.6	67.9
	EOF	60.9	36.3	48.5	82.0	51.0	66.4
Luxembourg	ELFS	74.6	45.6	60.2	94.0	58.0	76.3
	EOF	79.2	61.4	71.4	100	72.7	86.4
Netherlands	ELFS	79.6	58.9	69.4	91.7	69.8	81.0
	EOF	79.9	56.5	68.2	91.5	61.7	76.3
Portugal	ELFS	75.8	58.1	66.8	90.9	73.5	82.0
	EOF	75.9	55.1	65.5	92.9	73.3	82.8
Spain	ELFS	64.9	34.8	49.7	82.0	46.7	64.2
	EOF	63.8	27.6	46.6	82.2	38.3	62.0
Sweden	ELFS	70.8	66.4	68.6	81.8	76.7	79.3
	EOF	79.2	67.4	73.3	90.7	75.9	83.4
UK	ELFS	77.0	63.2	70.2	87.2	72.1	79.7
	EOF	75.9	61.3	68.6	88.7	70.0	79.3
EU15 – ELFS		70.5	51.1	61.0	86.3	64.4	75.4
EU15+Norway – EOF		70.8	51.1	61.0	87	63.1	75.1
Norway – LFS	EOF	80	71	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		83	75				

Note: ELFS data is for the population aged 15-64 years, European Commission (1998), European Labour Force Survey results, Table 13. Data for Norway is from the Norwegian Labour Force Survey, provided by Barth and Torp (2000). The results from the Employment Options of the Future Survey are highlighted where these differ from those of the European Labour Force Survey by three percentage points or more.

Table A.1.3 Average weekly working hours, 1998 – comparison of the results from the European Labour Force Survey (ELFS) and the Employment Options for the Future (EOF) Survey

		Men	Women	All
Austria	ELFS – actual	42.6	35.7	39.7
	ELFS – usual	41.1	35.5	38.7
	EOF	46.6	36.5	42.4
Belgium	ELFS – actual	41.7	33.9	38.5
	ELFS – usual	41.2	33.6	38.0
	EOF	40.6	34.0	38.4
Denmark	ELFS – actual	36.5	30.6	33.8
	ELFS – usual	38.2	32.1	35.4
	EOF	39.8	34.2	37.2
Finland	ELFS – actual	40.3	34.8	37.7
	ELFS – usual	41.0	36.4	38.8
	EOF	43.1	37.5	40.0
France	ELFS – actual	42.7	35.0	39.3
	ELFS – usual	40.9	34.3	37.8
	EOF	41.5	34.9	38.7
Germany	ELFS – actual	42.3	32.7	38.2
	ELFS – usual	41.1	32.3	37.3
	EOF	43.7	32.6	38.8
Greece	ELFS – actual	43.5	38.5	41.7
	ELFS – usual	45.0	39.9	43.1
	EOF	47.6	40.5	44.9
Ireland	ELFS – actual	43.9	32.7	39.5
	ELFS – usual	43.1	33.1	38.8
	EOF	45.1	34.9	41.0
Italy	ELFS – actual	41.4	35.3	39.2
	ELFS – usual	41.4	35.7	39.4
	EOF	41.8	34.7	39.1
Luxembourg	ELFS – actual	42	34	39.0
	ELFS – usual	41.2	33.8	38.4
	EOF	39.2
Netherlands	ELFS – actual	36.9	24.5	31.8
	ELFS – usual	37.3	25.2	32.3
	EOF	41.1	26.0	35.0
Portugal	ELFS – actual	41.5	36.7	39.4
	ELFS – usual	42.7	37.9	40.5
	EOF	44.4	37.7	41.5
Spain	ELFS – actual	40.2	35.2	38.4
	ELFS – usual	42.3	36.9	40.4
	EOF	42.2	36.1	40.5
Sweden	ELFS – actual	37.0	31.3	34.4
	ELFS – usual	39.3	33.9	36.7
	EOF	42.4	35.0	38.9
UK	ELFS – actual	41.7	29.3	36.3
	ELFS – usual	44.0	30.8	38.1
	EOF	44.3	31.3	38.5
EU15 – ELFS – actual		41.4	32.9	37.9
EU15 – ELFS – usual		41.6	33.3	38.1
EU15 + Norway – EOF		43.0	33.5	39.0
Norway -LFS		40	30	
EOF		41.8	32.5	

¹ Data for Norway is from the Norwegian Labour Force Survey, provided by Barth and Torp (2000).

Note: ELFS data relates to main job while EOF data relates to all jobs, so this may account for some of the discrepancy.

Average hours worked are not shown separately by sex for Luxembourg due to the small size. The results from the Employment Options of the Future Survey are highlighted where these differ from those of the European Labour Force Survey by two or more hours.

Source: European Commission (1998), Labour Force Survey Results, Tables 44 and 45.

Appendix A.2

Additional information about labour market participation

Who was employed in the previous week but not in the survey reference week?

Compared with employees and the self-employed, a higher proportion of family workers were currently not employed but had been in the previous week (Table A.2.1). Part-timers were more likely to have left employment, as were employees on temporary contracts, and those in manual jobs.

Table A.2.1 Proportion of employment exits from different job categories

Job category of people currently employed or employed last week	Those who are no longer employed this week (%)	Number
Employee	3.4	16,322
Self-employed	2.2	2,488
Family worker	14.8	458
Full-time employed	1.1	14,826
Part-time employed	10.5	3,849
Employee: permanent job	2	13,224
Employee: temporary job	8.9	2,839
Manual job	4.7	6,005
Non-manual job	2.5	10,048

Of those who had recently been employed, 14.8% were family workers, and two thirds had been employed part-time. Of those who had been employees, over half had been in manual jobs and

just under half of the employees had held temporary contracts. These job characteristics were less common for those in employment. Those who no longer had a job were more likely to have been employed in agriculture or in private services, and among those employed in the private sector, were more likely to have been working in small firms (Table A.2.2.).

Table A.2.2 Job characteristics of the currently and recently employed

Those who are/were employed...	Currently employed	Not employed but employed in previous week	%
...as family workers	2.1	14.8	
...on part-time contracts	18.9	67.3	
...on temporary contract (employees)	16.4	46.1	
...in manual jobs (employees)	36.3	51.6	
...in agriculture	4.1	8.5	
...in manufacturing	27.2	16.4	
...in private services	35	50.1	
...in public services	31.7	21.7	
Size of firm for private sector employees:			
...1-9 employees	33.5	43.0	
...10-49 employees	21.9	22.3	
...50+ employees	43.9	34.3	
Average base number	18 664	712	

Uncertainty about job seeking among non-participants

Table A.2.3 shows that among non-participants women are more uncertain than men about whether they will seek employment within the next five years, particularly when those in their core working years are compared (20-49 years). This indicates that women's labour market entry is more contingent on employment opportunities and domestic circumstances than men's.

Table A.2.3 Job-seeking uncertainty among non-participants by age and gender

	Those who do not want to work (%)	Those who do not know/declined to answer (%)	Total who are non-participants (%)	Number
<i>Women</i>				
16-19	9.4	3.5	12.9	1,259
20-29	3.3	2.4	5.7	3,193
30-39	5.8	3.1	8.9	3,571
40-49	10.6	3.5	14.1	3,109
50-59	30.2	3.9	34.1	2,712
60-64	74.3	3.3	77.6	1,314
All	16.8	3.2	20.0	15,158



Table A.2.3 (continued)

	Those who do not want to work (%)	Those who do not know/declined to answer (%)	Total who are non-participants (%)	Number
<i>Men</i>				
16-19	7.7	3.4	11.4	1,280
20-29	1.8	0.9	2.7	3,386
30-39	0.8	0.6	1.4	3,540
40-49	2.0	1.0	3.0	3,173
50-59	14.8	2.3	17.1	2,678
60-64	60.1	2.5	62.6	1,217
All	9.0	1.4	10.4	15,274

Note: 'Non-participants' are those who do not want or intend to work now or within five years.

Childcare responsibilities over the span of the working life

Table A.2.4 Childcare responsibilities of the employed and job seekers

	% of each age group with a child aged...		
	... under 6 in household	... under 15 in household	Base number
<i>Women</i>			
16-19	2	2	980
20-29	23	25	2,880
30-39	39	71	3,169
40-49	5	39	2,611
50-59	<0.5	6	1,706
60-64	<0.5	1	258
<i>Men</i>			
16-19	<0.5	<0.5	1,026
20-29	10	11	3,132
30-39	38	58	3,445
40-49	12	48	3,040
50-59	2	13	2,163
60-64	<0.5	1	430

Appendix A.3

Job characteristics

Table A.3.1 Employment status by gender and age group

Percentage who are...	Employees	Self- employed	Family Worker	No answer	Base number
<i>Women</i>					
16-19	91	3	4	2	414
20-29	91	7	2	1	1,834
30-39	88	10	2	1	2,328
40-49	88	8	3	1	2,039
50-59	86	10	4	1	1,336
60-64	71	15	14	1	163
All women	88	9	3	1	8,114
<i>Men</i>					
16-19	92	1	5	1	495
20-29	88	8	3	1	2,335
30-39	82	16	1	<0.5	3,194
40-49	82	17	1	<0.5	2,858
50-59	73	24	2	1	1,941
60-64	66	31	2	1	341
All men	82	16	2	<0.5	11,164

Table A.3.2 Contractual status by gender (excludes family workers) and age group

	Employed part-time (%)	Who work mainly at home (%)	Employees: those with temporary contract (%)	Base number (employees)
<i>Women</i>				
16-19	44	3	68	388 (375)
20-29	28	6	30	1,786 (1,664)
30-39	40	11	12	2,261 (2,039)
40-49	39	12	12	1,957 (1,785)
50-59	40	14	10	1,276 (1,142)
60-64	53	17	13	139 (116)
All women	37	10	19	7,807 (7,121)
<i>Men</i>				
16-19	42	5	52	463 (457)
20-29	13	5	30	2,246 (2,060)
30-39	5	7	12	3,155 (2,630)
40-49	4	9	9	2,824 (2,334)
50-59	7	12	8	1,889 (1,422)
60-64	19	16	7	330 (226)
All men	9	8	16	10,907 (9,129)

Note: excludes family workers. Part-time work is based on self-assessment question in this table. Average base number is for those employed part-time and mainly working at home, temporary contract base is employees only.

Table A.3.3 Job insecurity and ease of job search by age group and education

	Those employed who ...		
	...are worried about the security of their job (%)	... think they would find it difficult or impossible to find an acceptable new job (%)	Number
16-29	18.8	49	682
20-29	31.5	49	3,826
30-39	36.2	56	5,347
40-49	37.3	67	4,747
50-59	30.4	72	3,089
60+	19.2	73	426
No qualifications	31	59	882
Basic qualifications	36	62	5,452
Intermediate qualifications	34	61	7,642
Advanced qualifications	28	58	4,771

Note: includes dependent employees and the self-employed, excludes family workers



Table A.3.4 Preferences for self-employment among employees

Employees who consider self- employment to be...					Row %
	Preferable (%)	Acceptable (%)	Unacceptable (%)	No answer (%)	Number
<i>Men</i>					
16-19	33	25	31	11	457
20-29	26	39	30	4	2,059
30-39	23	43	28	6	2,631
40-49	18	42	36	5	2,333
50-59	12	38	43	7	1,422
60-64	23	21	52	4	226
All men	21	40	33	6	9,128
<i>Women</i>					
16-19	26	31	35	9	375
20-29	18	39	38	6	1,664
30-39	15	39	41	5	2,039
40-49	11	37	47	5	1,786
50-59	10	26	59	4	1,143
60-64	5	20	71	4	115
All women	14	36	45	5	7,122
By occupational position and education					
	Employees who consider self- employment to be...				
	Preferable (%)	Acceptable (%)	Unacceptable (%)	No answer (%)	Number
<i>Men</i>					
Non-manual managers	20	44	30	6	2,781
Other non-manual	25	39	30	6	2,260
Manual supervisors	19	39	38	5	2,758
Other manual	24	32	39	6	1,127
Degree level qualifications	21	47	26	6	2,271
Intermediate qualifications	22	40	32	6	3,725
Basic qualifications	20	34	40	6	2,759
No qualifications	19	37	38	7	370
<i>Women</i>					
Non-manual managers	14	38	43	5	1,752
Other non-manual	14	38	45	4	3,206
Manual supervisors	17	33	45	5	997
Other manual	15	29	50	7	1,077
Degree level qualifications	15	43	37	5	1,848
Intermediate qualifications	16	37	43	4	3,001
Basic qualifications	14	30	51	5	1,939
No qualifications	9	20	62	9	359



Appendix A.4

Logistic regression results

Logistic regression is useful when you want to be able to predict the presence or absence of a characteristic or outcome (in this instance whether or not employed people work long hours of work) based on values of a set of predictor variables (in this instance, various domestic and labour market characteristics). It is similar to a linear regression model but is suited to models where the dependent variable is dichotomous. Independent variables can be categorical or continuous (if categorical the reference group must be indicated). The exponent of the regression coefficients can be used to estimate odds ratios for each of the independent variables in the model, this is a major advantage of this procedure.

The results are interpreted in the following way. For each variable which is categorised a comparison is drawn with a base category. Where there is a significant difference in the probability of working long hours between the category and the base category, the beta coefficient and the level of significance is shown. The larger the coefficient the larger the difference from the base category, with a negative coefficient indicating that the category is significantly less likely to work long hours than the base category, and a positive score indicating that they are significantly more likely to do so. The ‘exponent’ score indicates the probability.

For example, Table A.4.1 shows that employed men aged 16-19 are significantly less likely to work fifty or more hours compared with men aged 30-39 (beta coefficient = -.70***), in fact they are nearly half as less likely to do so (.49 or 49%).

Table A.4.1 Characteristics associated with working long full-time hours (50+ for men, 40+ for women).

	Men				Women			
	All employed		Employees		All employed		Employees	
	Beta	Exp	Beta	Exp	Beta	Exp	Beta	Exp
<i>Age (Base: age 30-39)</i>								
Age 16-19	-	0.49	-.62***	0.54	-.35**	0.71		
		.70***						
Age 20-29								
Age 40-49	-	0.80	-.35***	0.71	-.26***	0.77	-.29***	0.75
		.22***						
Age 50-59							-.47***	0.63
Age 60-64	-	0.55	-.69***	0.50	-	0.23	-	0.26
		.60***					1.47***	1.35***
<i>Education (Base: no qualifications)</i>								
Basic/secondary I		.40***	1.50			.35**	1.42	
Secondary II		.37**	1.45			.43**	1.54	.42**
Tertiary		.71***	2.04			.78***	2.18	.79***
								0.47
<i>Age of youngest child (Base: no child)</i>								
Child under 3 in home					-	0.36	-	0.36
					1.01***		1.01***	
Child 3-5 in home					-	0.32	-	0.30
					1.14***		1.21***	
Child 6-9 in home						-.70***	0.50	-.66***
Child 10-14 in home						-.64***	0.53	-.64***
Child 15 and over in home						-.27**	0.77	-.24***
								0.79
<i>Other care duties (Base: none)</i>								
Partner (Base: No partner)	-	0.76		-.32**	0.73			
		.28***						
Partner not working		.58***	1.79		.51***	1.66		
Female partner works under 20 hours		.40***	1.49		.46***	1.59	NA	
Female partner works 20-34.9 hours							NA	
Male partner works under 35 hours	NA		NA				NA	
Partner works 35-49.9 hours		.39***	1.48		.30***	1.35	-.23***	0.79
Partner works 50+ hours		1.48***	4.40		1.46***	4.30	.20**	1.23
<i>Household well-off financially (Base: just managing/in difficulties)</i>								
		.38***	1.46		.38***	1.47	.15**	1.16
<i>Employee (Base: self-employed)</i>								
	-	0.23	NA				-.68***	0.51
		1.49***						NA



Table A.4.1 (continued)

	Men				Women			
	All employed		Employees		All employed		Employees	
	Beta	Exp	Beta	Exp	Beta	Exp	Beta	Exp
<i>Sector (Base: public sector)</i>								
Agriculture	.93***	2.54	.66***	1.93	.67***	1.96	.67***	1.95
Small manufacturing	.44***	1.55	.64***	1.89	.69***	2.00	.77***	2.16
Large manufacturing	.44***	1.56	.50***	1.64	.78***	2.17	.84***	2.32
Small private services	.65***	1.92	.75***	2.11	.14***	1.15		
Large private services	.73***	2.07	.74***	2.09	.25***	1.28	.27***	1.31
<i>Occupation level (Base: manual)</i>								
Manual supervisors	NA		.58***	1.79	NA		.29**	1.34
Non-manual	NA				NA			
Non-manual with managerial duties	NA		1.31***	3.72	NA		.64***	1.90
<i>Country (Base: Germany)</i>								
Austria	.30**	1.35			.64***	1.90	.69***	1.98
Belgium	-	0.47	-.78***	0.46	-.42**	0.66	-.46**	0.63
		.76***						
Denmark	-.58**	0.56	-.63**	0.53				
Finland					.52***	1.68	.55***	1.73
France	-.74**	0.48	-.76***	0.47	-.43***	0.65	-	0.58
							0.54***	
Greece					1.00***	2.73	1.07***	2.93
Ireland								
Italy	-	.43***	0.65	-.45***	0.64		.24**	1.27
Luxembourg								
The Netherlands					-.78***	0.46	-.69***	0.50
Portugal					1.01***	2.74	.91***	2.48
Spain	-	0.65	-.29**	0.78	.64***	1.89	.59***	1.81
		.47***						
Sweden	-.41**	0.67			.52***	1.68	.55***	1.73
United Kingdom	.22**	1.25	.47***	1.60	-.25**	0.78	-.32***	0.73
Norway							-.49**	0.61
Constant	-.91**		-		-.62***		-.87***	
					1.80***			

*** Significant at 1% level (<0.01).

** significant at 5% level (<0.05).

Table A.4.2 Characteristics associated with full-time employees' preferences for a substantial reduction (five or more hours) in their working hours.

	Men		Women	
	Beta	Exp	Beta	Exp
<i>Age (Base: age 30-39)</i>				
Age 16-19				
Age 20-29	-.36***	0.69	-.43***	0.65
Age 40-49				
Age 50-59				
Age 60-64	.57***	1.76		
<i>Education (Base: no qualifications)</i>				
Basic/secondary I	.37**	1.45	-.41**	0.66
Secondary II	.70***	2.01		
Tertiary	.88***	2.40		
<i>Age of youngest child (Base: no child)</i>				
Child under 3 in home			.74***	2.09
Child 3-5 in home			.59***	1.81
Child 6-9 in home				
Child 10-14 in home	0.27**	1.31		
Child 15 and over in home				
<i>Other care duties (Base: none)</i>				
<i>Partner (Base: no partner)</i>				
Partner not working	0.19**	1.21	.43***	1.54
Female partner works under 20 hours			NA	
Female partner works 20-34.9 hours			NA	
Male partner works under 35 hours	NA			
Partner works 35-49.9 hours			.26***	1.30
Partner works 50+ hours	-.84***	0.43		
<i>Household well-off financially (Base: just managing/in difficulties)</i>				
<i>Sector (Base: Public sector)</i>				
Agriculture				
Small manufacturing				
Large manufacturing				
Small private services				
Large private services	.31***	1.36		
<i>Current weekly hours</i>				
	.14***	1.15	.13***	1.13
<i>Occupation level (Base: manual)</i>				
Manual supervisors	-.2**	0.82		
Non-manual	-.21**	0.81		
Non-manual with managerial duties			.35**	1.41



Table A.4.2 Characteristics associated with full-time employees' preferences for a substantial reduction (five or more hours) in their working hours.

	Men		Women	
	Beta	Exp	Beta	Exp
Country (Base: Germany)				
Austria				
Belgium				
Denmark			.49**	1.63
Finland				
France	.18**	1.19	.25**	1.29
Greece				
Ireland				
Italy	-.31***	0.73	.34**	1.40
Luxembourg				
The Netherlands				
Portugal				
Spain	.44***	1.56		
Sweden	.35**	1.42	.49**	1.63
United Kingdom	0.55***	1.73	.33**	1.39
Norway				
Constant	-	-		
	6.24***	4.92***		

*** Significant at 1% level (<0.01).

** significant at 5% level (<0.05).

Table A.4.3 Characteristics associated with part-time employees' preferences for a substantial increase (five or more) in their working hours.

	All employees	
	Beta	Exp
<i>Age (Base: age 30-39)</i>		
Age 16-19	-.42**	0.66
Age 20-29		
Age 40-49	-.60***	0.55
Age 50-59	-.76***	0.47
Age 60-64	-2.09***	0.12
<i>Men (Base: women)</i>	.31**	1.36
Education (Base: no qualifications)		
Basic/secondary I		
Secondary II		
Tertiary		
<i>Age of youngest child (Base: no child)</i>		
Child under 3 in home	-.77***	.46
Child 3-5 in home	-.59***	.56
Child 6-9 in home	-.39**	.67
Child 10-14 in home		
Child 15 and over in home		
<i>Other care duties (Base: none)</i>		
<i>Partner (Base: no partner)</i>		
Partner not working	.61***	1.84
Partner works under 35 hours		
Partner works 35-49.9 hours	-.47***	0.63
Partner works 50+ hours	-.89***	0.41
<i>Household well-off financially (Base: just managing/in difficulties)</i>	-.55***	0.58
Current weekly hours (base: works less than 20 hours)		
20-25 hours	-.39***	0.68
26+ hours	-1.59***	0.20
<i>Sector (Base: Public sector)</i>		
Agriculture	-1.20***	0.30
Small manufacturing		
Large manufacturing		
Small private services		
Large private services		
<i>Occupation level (Base: manual)</i>		
Manual supervisors		
Non-manual		
Non-manual with managerial duties		
Constant	-1.48***	

*** Significant at 1% level (<0.01).,
** significant at 5% level (<0.05)



Table A.4.4 Characteristics associated with employees preferring current hours or only moderate adjustments (+/- less than five hours).

	Men		Women	
	Beta	Exp	Beta	Exp
<i>Age (Base: age 30-39)</i>				
Age 16-19				
Age 20-29			0.16**	1.18
Age 40-49	-.019**	1.21		
Age 50-59			.31***	1.36
Age 60-64	-.50***	0.61	1.31***	3.70
<i>Education (Base: no qualifications)</i>				
Basic/secondary I				
Secondary II	-.28***	0.76		
Tertiary	-.56***	0.57		
<i>Age of youngest child (Base: no child)</i>				
Child under 3 in home				
Child 3-5 in home				
Child 6-9 in home				
Child 10-14 in home	-.35***	0.70		
Child 15 and over in home				
<i>Other care duties (Base: none)</i>	-.24**	1.27		
<i>Partner (Base: no partner)</i>				
Partner not working	-.22**	0.80	-.67***	0.51
Female partner works under 20 hours			NA	
Female partner works 20-34.9 hours			NA	
Male partner works under 35 hours	NA			
Partner works 35-49.9 hours				
Partner works 50+ hours	.51***	1.67		
<i>Household well-off financially (Base: just managing/in difficulties)</i>				
			0.16**	1.17
<i>Sector (Base: public sector)</i>				
Agriculture				
Small manufacturing				
Large manufacturing	-.15**	0.86		
Small private services				
Large private services	-.25***	0.78		
<i>Current weekly hours (Base: 35-39)</i>				
Under 20	-1.17***	0.31	-.23**	0.80
20-34	-.70***	0.50	.27***	1.31
40-49	-1.29***	0.28	-.74***	0.48
50 and over	-2.51***	0.08	-1.79***	0.17

Table A.4.4 (continued)

	Men		Women	
	Beta	Exp	Beta	Exp
<i>Occupation level (Base: manual)</i>				
Manual supervisors				
Non-manual .				
Non-manual with managerial duties			-.27***	0.76
<i>Country (Base: Germany)</i>				
Austria				
Belgium				
Denmark	-.43**	0.65	-.38**	0.68
Finland				
France	-.32***	0.72	-.25***	0.78
Greece				
Ireland	-.59**	0.55		
Italy	.37***	1.45		
Luxembourg				
The Netherlands			.47***	1.60
Portugal	.55***	1.74		
Spain				
Sweden			-.63***	0.53
United Kingdom	-.62***	0.54		
Norway				
Constant	.08		-.07	

*** Significant at 1% level (<0.01).

** significant at 5% level (<0.05)

Appendix A.5

Summary of the main regulations on the number of weekly hours worked by full-time employees

Country	Legislation on weekly hours ¹	Additional detail about collective agreements
Austria	40 hour week/8 hour day Overtime up to 5 hours/week	Collective agreements establish additional limits in many sectors
Belgium	Reduced from 40 to 39 hours from 1st January 1999. Minister for Employment and Labour has proposed a reduction to a 38-hour week to be achieved in stages.	Sector agreements establish a lower limit for over 90% of employees. For example, a 35 hour week is established in the banking, finance and commerce sectors.
Denmark	37 hours (established via collective agreements, which have the force by collective agreements of law).	Some 80% of the workforce is covered White collar employees can work up to 45 hours per week, compensated by time off in a different week.
Germany	48 hour/week	Collective agreements cover the majority of the workforce. 35-40 hours widely established in collective agreements.
Greece	48 hour/week for manufacturing. 40 hour/week is legally binding in the General Collective Agreement for other sectors.	A number of collective agreements set a limit of less than 40/hour week. The lowest limit is in the public sector (37.5 hour/week)
Spain	40 hour/week	35 hour/week in many collective agreements. Regulations on overtime are limited or poorly enforced.

Country	Legislation on weekly hours¹	Additional detail about collective agreements
France	1982-2000: seven laws dealing with working time passed. Including Robien law (June 1996) to encourage working time reduction in companies. In June 1998 the Aubry law was passed, which reduced the statutory limit from 39 hour/week to 35 hour/week from January 2000, to be introduced in 2002 for small firms with twenty employees or less.	Legislation sets framework to encourage collective bargaining on working time at sector and company level. Bargaining is increasingly decentralised to the company level.
Ireland	48 hour/week introduced (national law incorporates the EU Working Time Directive)	Fewer derogations permitted than allowed in the EU Directive. Some unions using the introduction of the new 48 hour regulatory limit as a lever for further negotiated reductions
Italy	40 hour week/8 hour day (the 1997 law does not specify the daily limit anymore, so there is some debate about whether or not this implies it has been revoked). Overtime maximum is two hours per day and 12 hours per week.	Lower limits set in some collective agreements, including public sector=36 hours, banking and finance=38 hours.
Luxembourg	40 hour week/ 8 hour day	Companies may opt for a four week reference period under the National Action Plan for Employment (POT scheme)
Netherlands	40 hour/week over a 13-week period (maximum 9 hour day and 45 hour week). From July 1st 2000 the Adjustment of Working Hours Act gives employees the right to request an individual reduction to part-time hours or an increase to full-time hours	Ninety per cent of employees are covered by collective agreements. Over half of the collective agreements have a 36 hour week, including the public sector. The right to request part-time hours is widely established in collective agreements
Portugal	Progressive reduction from 44 hour/week to 40 hour/week introduced in 1996	Public sector = 35 hour week. Many collective agreements set a limit below 40 hours/week but the effectiveness of regulations is limited in some parts of the private sector. 40 hour week has not been established in the textile industry, for example.
Finland	40 hour week/8 hour day, annualised settlement	Collective agreements cover over 80% of the workforce. 36.25 hours in public sector and white collar agreements

Country	Legislation on weekly hours ¹	Additional detail about collective agreements
Sweden	40 hour week. Overtime limited to 48 hours during a four week period (50 hours per calendar month)	Collective agreements cover the majority of the workforce. Deviations are possible in collective agreements, but 75% of collective agreements have 40 hour/week limits and longer hours are rare.
The UK	48 hours/week introduced (national law incorporates the EU Working Time Directive)	<p>Less than half of the workforce is covered by collective agreements.</p> <p>Lower limits established by collective agreements in some sectors, notably:</p> <p>Public sector 37 hour/week, Engineering 37.5 hour/week Banking/finance 35 hour week.</p>
Norway	40 hour week/9 hour day	Collective agreements cover about 75% of the workforce. 37.5 hour week is standard in most sector collective agreement.

¹ There are a number of derogations and additional details in the different countries for certain sectors and occupations, notably managers; and different settlement periods for the averaging of weekly hours. Annual hours vary according to leave entitlements. See the national reports for additional information.

Source: Barth and Torp (2000), Biagi et al. (2000), Borsenberger (2000), Boulin (2000), Blumensaadt and Moller (2000), Fagan (2000), Garhammer (2000), Katsimi and Tsakloglou (2000), Tijdens (2000), Leónard and Delbar (2000), Nyberg (2000), ÖBIG (2000), Perista (2000), Salmi et al. (2000) Villagómez (2000), Wickham (2000).

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Gender, employment and working time preferences in Europe

What types of work arrangements do women and men prefer? To what extent do current work patterns diverge from these preferences? These questions are of vital importance for European employment policy. To achieve a higher employment rate, it is necessary both to increase the number of jobs and to encourage work arrangements that accommodate individual preferences. In this way, women and men will be able to participate actively in the labour market throughout their working lives.

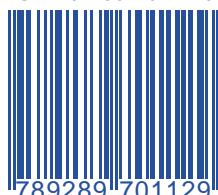
This report looks at the role played by gender in determining labour market participation. It draws on findings from a major survey on employment options carried out by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions across all 15 EU Member States and Norway. It shows how women's and men's employment preferences are related to the kinds of jobs they do, as well as to their domestic circumstances, and compares the wishes of those who are currently employed with those of job-seekers. The study covers a range of aspects including self-employment, working from home, childcare, and working time arrangements.

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