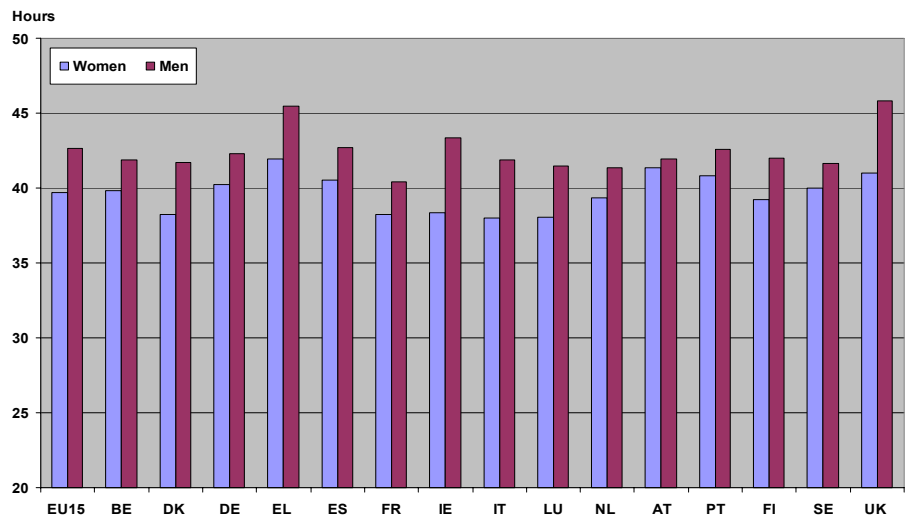


# Working times

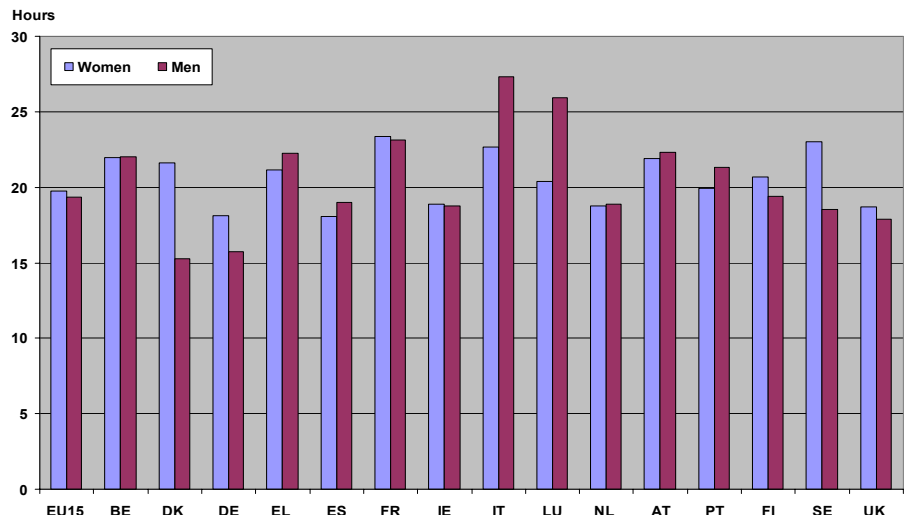
*Aloïs Van Bastelaer - Christine Vaguer*

**Full-time employed persons worked on average 41.6 hours per week in 2001 but part-time employed persons 19.7 hours**

In Spring 2001, full-time employed men in the EU usually worked more than 42 hours per week while full-time employed women generally worked slightly less than 40 hours per week. The number of hours worked by full-time employed men varied between a little over 40 hours in France and almost 46 hours in Greece and the United Kingdom. The gender differential was 2-3 hours in the Member States, except in Ireland and the United Kingdom, where it was 5 hours and more. Part-time employed persons worked nearly 20 hours per week. The similarity of the number of hours worked by male and female part-timers for the entire EU hides large differences within some Member States such as Denmark, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and Sweden. In three of these countries, Denmark, Germany and Sweden, male part-timers work fewer hours than female part-timers.



Graph 1: Average hours usually worked by full-time employed persons by sex, 2001



Graph 2: Average hours usually worked by part-time employed persons by sex, 2001

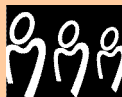
## Statistics in focus

### POPULATION AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

THEME 3 – 7/2004

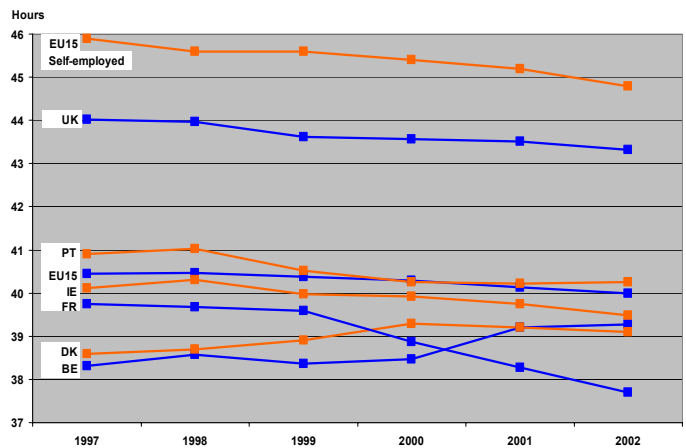
#### Contents

Full-time employed persons worked 41.6 hours per week...	1
Weekly hours of full-time employees decreased by half an hour.....	2
Working week in France and the United Kingdom .....	2
Overtime .....	3
Work outside normal daytime hours during weekdays.....	4
Working time banking .....	5
On-call work .....	6
Shift work.....	6
Shift work pattern .....	7



## Weekly work hours of full-time employees decreased by half an hour since 1997

Looking at the trend since 1997, there are differences between full-time and part-time employees and the self-employed. The EU average number of hours usually worked by full-time employees decreased by half an hour whereas it remained unchanged for part-time employees (19.7 hours). In France, the reduction of the number of hours worked was most pronounced – mainly an effect of the first Aubry law that came into effect in 2000 for enterprises with more than 19 employees. It decreased also in Ireland, Portugal and the United Kingdom but in Belgium, Denmark and Greece, it increased. In the other Member States, it remained practically unchanged. EU wide, the number of hours worked by the self-employed has fallen by one hour. In 2001, full-time employees in the EU usually worked 40 hours per week while the self-employed usually worked almost 5 hours more.



Graph 3: Trend of average hours usually worked by full-time employees for selected Member States and by the self-employed EU-wide, '97-'02

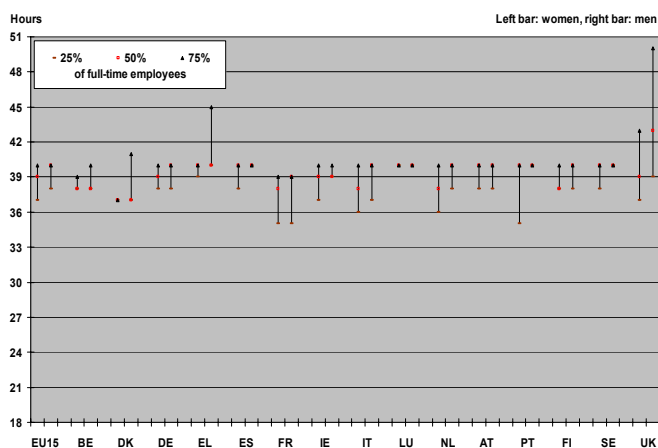
## A short full-time working week in France and a long working week in the United Kingdom

Different working time patterns reflect on the one hand the working conditions of employed persons and how these affect their wellbeing and on the other hand, the use of labour resources. The average number of hours worked does not indicate the common length of a working week according to legislation or collective agreements<sup>1</sup> nor does it show the heterogeneity of the duration and schedule of working hours.

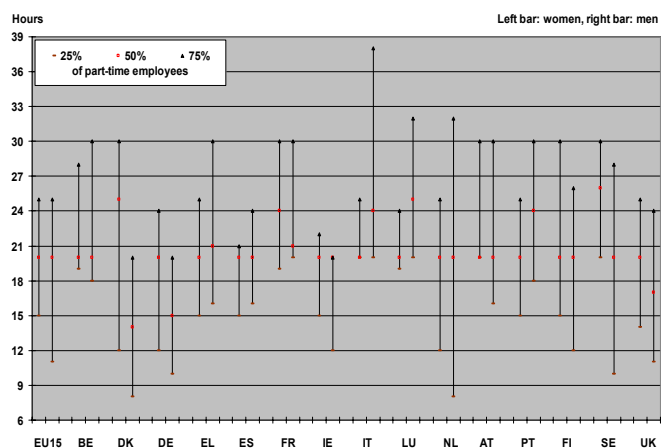
The effect of the reduction in working time is most marked in France. Not only do one in four full-time employees in France usually work 35 hours or less (lower quartile), but three in four full-time employees work a maximum of 39 hours (upper quartile) compared

to a 40-hour week in the other Member States. Although most full-time employees in the United Kingdom work 40 hours, the range of the distribution of usual working hours is wider. A quarter of full-time employees usually work 38 hours or less (lower quartile), but another quarter usually work 48 hours and over (upper quartile).

A quarter of part-time employees in the EU usually work at least 25 hours per week (upper quartile) but another quarter usually work 14 hours or less (lower quartile). In Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, these small jobs are even more frequent, as a quarter of part-time employees, men in particular, work 11 hours or less.



Graph 4: Quartiles of average hours usually worked by full-time employees by sex, 2001



Graph 5: Quartiles of average hours usually worked by part-time employees by sex, 2001

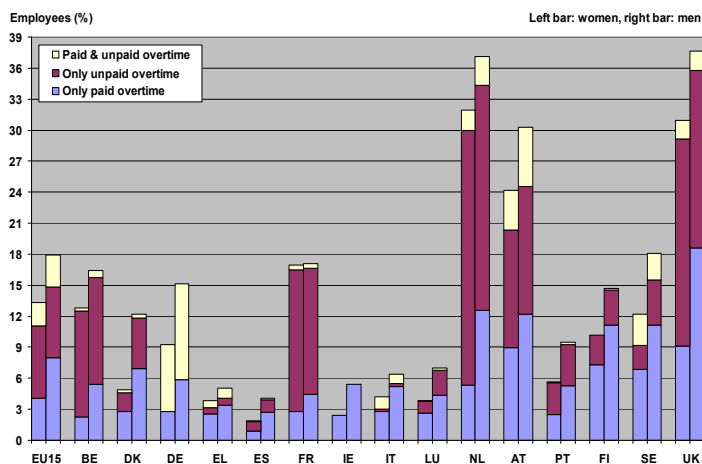
<sup>1</sup> European Commission (2003), *Employment in Europe 2003*, chapter 4

## 13% of women with a full-time job but 18% of men work overtime

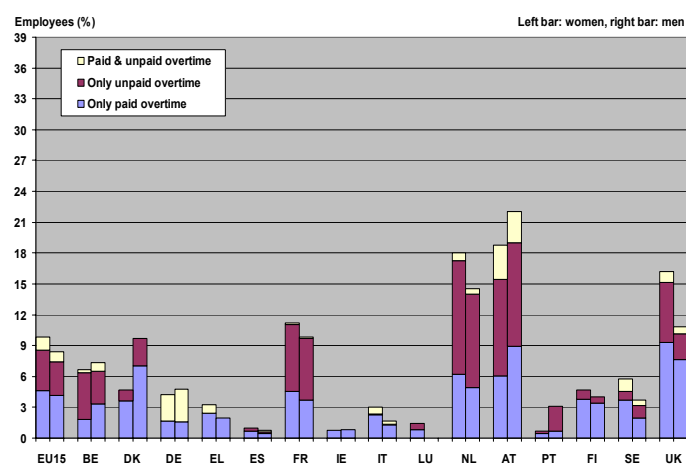
In the EU, 13% of female full-time employees work overtime compared with almost 18% of male full-time employees. There is a considerable variation in the proportion of full-time employees working overtime across the Member States. In France (for women only), the Netherlands, Austria and the United Kingdom, this proportion is larger than the EU average. On the other

hand, in Greece, Spain, Ireland and Italy (women only), it is far below the EU average (only 5% or less).

In contrast with full-time employees, relatively more female part-time employees work overtime than male part-time employees (resp. 10 and 8%).

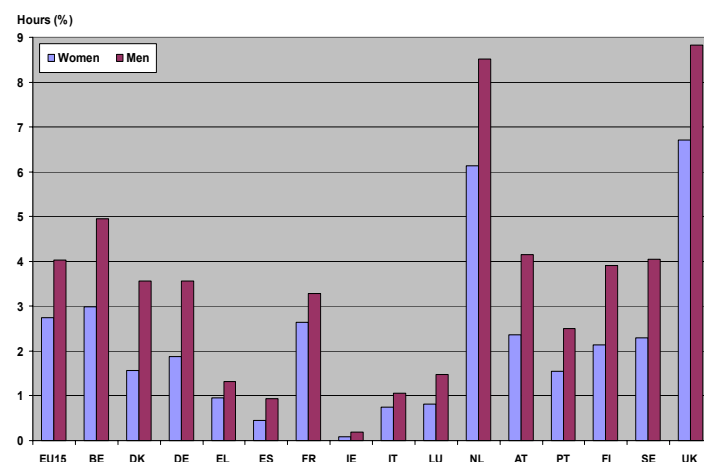


Graph 6: Full-time employees working overtime (%) by paid or unpaid overtime and sex, 2001



Graph 7: Part-time employees working overtime (%) by paid or unpaid overtime and sex, 2001

The total amount of overtime is equivalent to almost 3% of total hours actually worked by female employees and 4% of male employees. In the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, this relative amount is 6% and more.



Graph 8: Volume of overtime hours as % of total hours actually worked by sex, 2001

## Less than half the employees working overtime are being paid for overtime hours

Men are more likely to be paid for their overtime. In the EU, 4.5% of women with a full-time job are paid for their overtime hours (on average 3 hours per week), whereas almost 9% of men employed full-time are paid for their overtime hours (on average 5 hours per week). In other words, just one third of female full-time employees but half of male full-time employees receive pay for

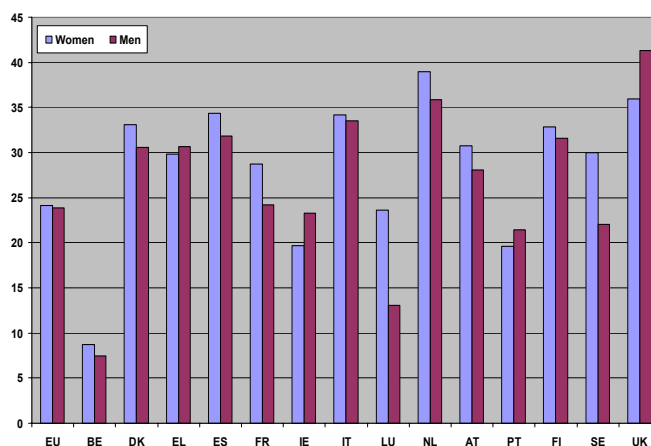
overtime. In Germany, Greece, Spain, Italy, Luxembourg, Finland, and Sweden, paid overtime is prevalent with more than two thirds of full-time employees working overtime receiving payment for it. In the EU, the relative frequency of paid overtime of part-time employees is very similar for women and men.

## A quarter of employees work outside normal daytime hours during weekdays

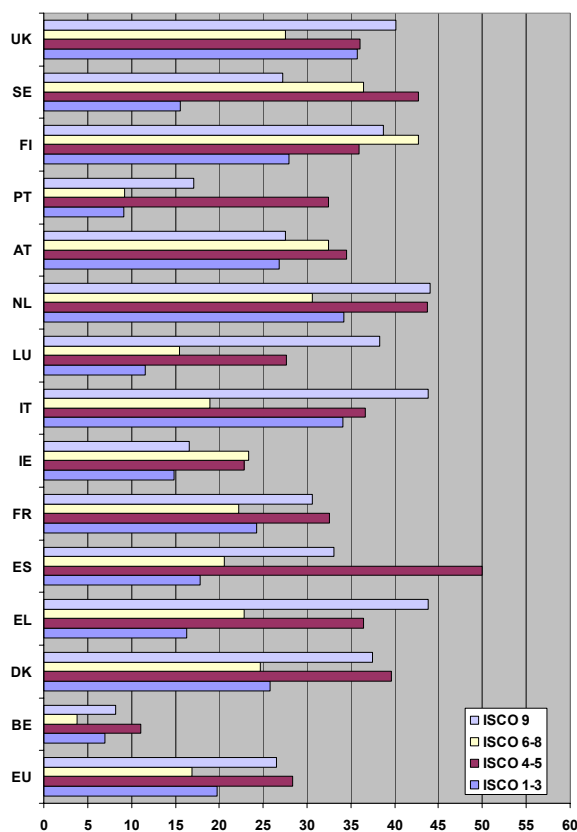
The length of the working week is just one characteristic of working conditions, but working time schedules also explain how the workforce is organised to cover extended operating or opening hours or to meet peaks in output demand and how employees have some control over their working hours. In the EU, 24% of employees work outside normal daytime hours during weekdays: this means that they work at least two Saturdays or Sundays per month or at least for half the period in the evening or during the night. This schedule of working times varies across the Member States. In Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, at least one third of employees work outside normal daytime hours on weekdays, but in Luxembourg, less than one in five employees. Although there are no differences between women and men at the level of the EU, differences exist within Member States. In most Member States, more women work outside these normal hours on weekdays, but in Greece, Ireland, Portugal and the United Kingdom, more men do so.

Looking at occupations, low-skilled, non-manual employees (ISCO major groups 4 and 5) and

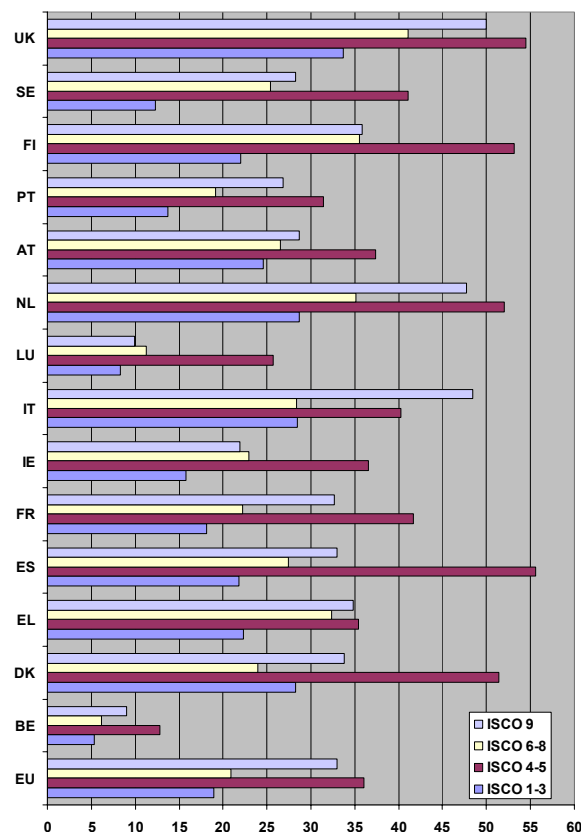
employees in elementary occupations (ISCO major group 9), particularly men, mostly work outside normal daytime hours during weekdays. In several Member States, Denmark, Spain, the Netherlands, Finland and the United Kingdom, at least half of low-skilled, non-manual employees work outside these normal hours.



Graph 9: Employees working outside normal daytime hours during weekdays (%) by sex, 2001



Graph 10: Women employees working outside normal daytime hours during weekdays by occupational category, 2001



Graph 11: Men employees working outside normal daytime hours during weekdays by occupational category, 2001

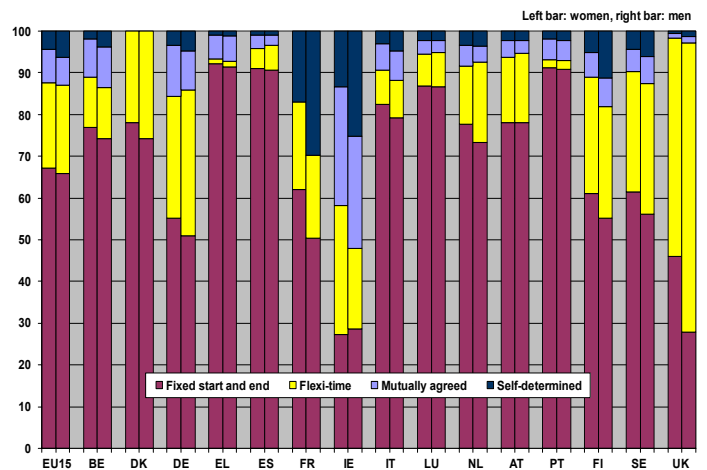
## One in five employees have flexitime

In the EU, one in five employees have flexitime. They can schedule their daily working hours beyond (or below) their contractual number of hours within certain limits. The credit hours can be accumulated (a working time banking account) and can be taken off as days of leave. The incidence of flexible working time arrangements varies across the Member States. In Denmark, Germany, France, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom, over 20% of employees work under some form of flexitime. In Greece, Spain, Italy, Luxembourg and Portugal on the other hand, less than 10% do so. In most Member States, men more frequently use flexitime, but in France, Ireland and Finland, women are more likely to use flexitime.

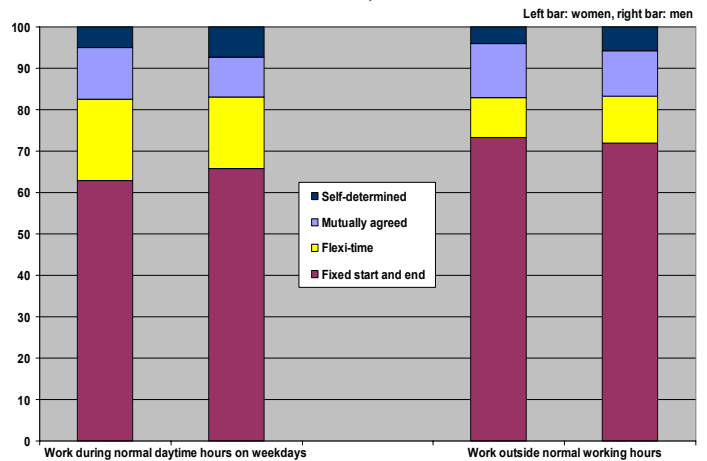
Flexitime is relatively more frequent when employees work during normal daytime hours on weekdays than outside these core hours (18% compared with 11%).

From an occupational point of view, flexitime banking is prevalent among highly skilled, non-manual employees (ISCO major groups 1-3) but relatively rare among employees in elementary occupations (ISCO major group 9).

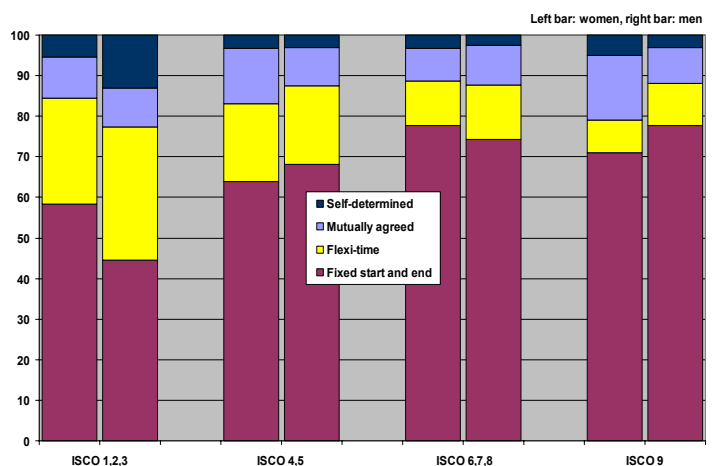
It is relatively uncommon to find other working time arrangements where working times vary daily and weekly according to individual discretion or mutual agreement or where working times are determined neither by collective agreement nor by the employment contract.



Graph 12<sup>2</sup>: Employees by working time arrangement (%) and sex, 2001



Graph 13: Employees [EU15] by working time arrangement and normal daytime hours during weekdays/outside normal working hours and sex, 2001

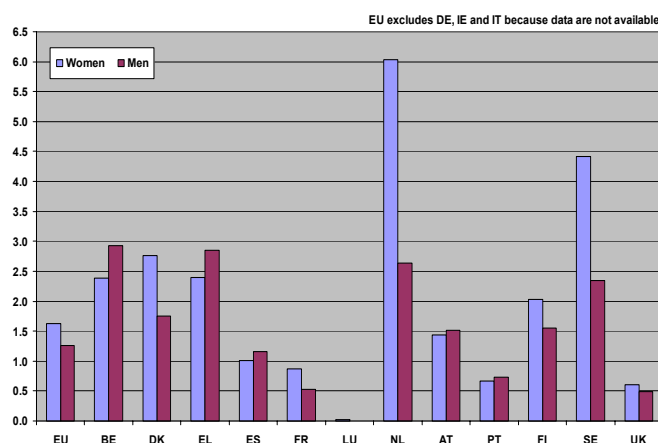


Graph 14: Employees [EU15] by working time arrangement, occupational category and sex, 2001

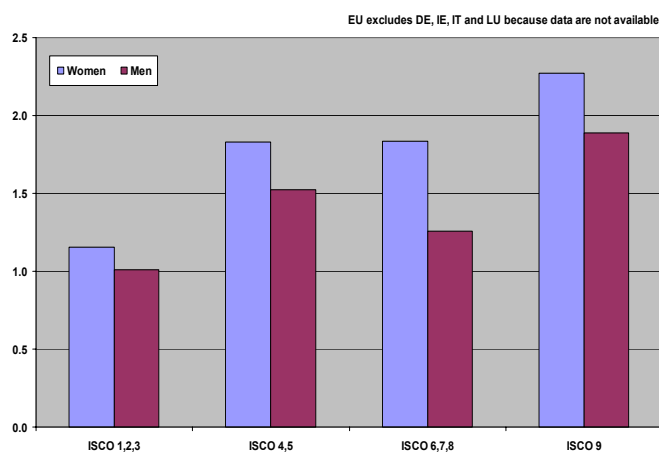
<sup>2</sup> Graph 12: FR - fixed start and end of working days and mutually agreed working times are combined

## Slightly more than 1% of employees work on-call

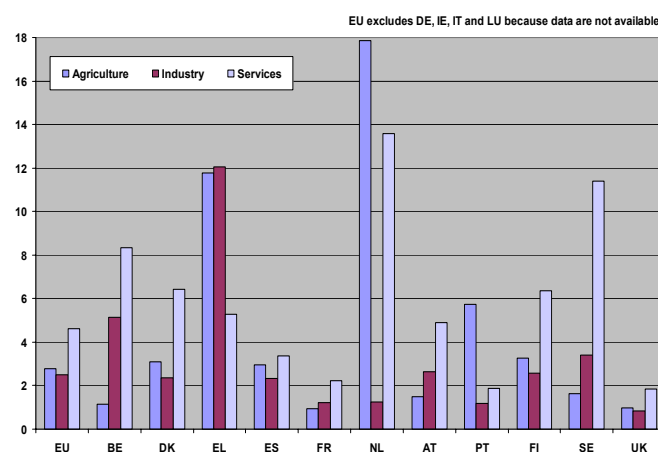
In the EU, 1.4% of employees work on-call. This means that they have no guarantee of work for a fixed number of hours, but that they may be called into work by the employer and must report to work at short notice. In Belgium, Denmark, Greece, the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden, their proportion is above the EU average. In all these countries except Belgium and Greece, relatively more women than men work on-call. Women with elementary occupations (ISCO major group 9) in particular work on-call. Looking at the economic activity, on-call work prevails in services, particularly in the trade, transport, hotels and restaurant sector. In the Netherlands and Portugal, however, on-call work is more common in agriculture whereas in Greece, it is more common in agriculture and industry.



Graph 15: Employees working on-call (%) by sex, 2001



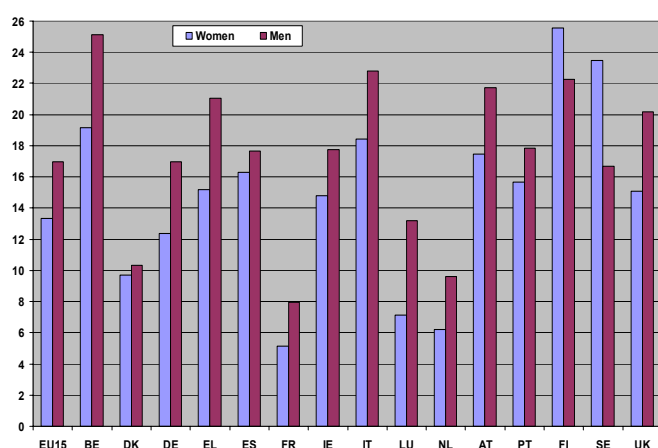
Graph 16: Employees working on-call [EU 15] by occupational category and sex, 2001



Graph 17: Employees working on-call [EU 15] by economic activity, 2001

## 15% of employees work shifts

In the EU, 15% of employees work shifts, men relatively more than women. Shift work means a work schedule where different groups of workers succeed each other according to a certain rotation pattern at the same work site to perform the same operations. In Belgium, Italy, Austria, Finland and Sweden, the proportion of shift work exceeds 20%. In Denmark, France and the Netherlands, on the contrary, it is 10% or less. In Finland and Sweden, unlike the other countries, there are relatively more women working shifts.

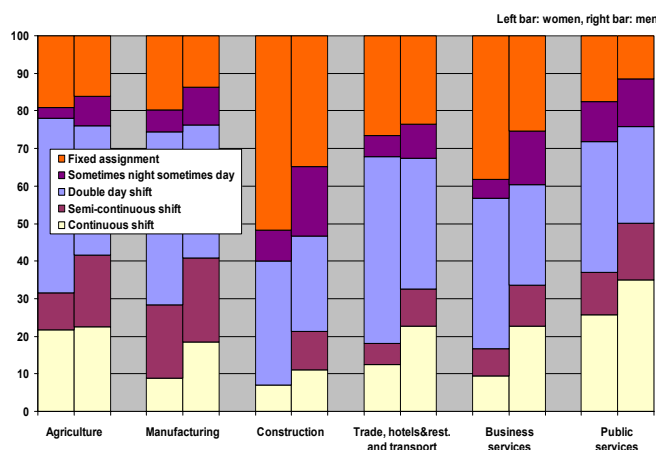


Graph 18: Employees working shifts (%) by sex, 2001

## A double day shift is the most common shift work pattern

In the entire EU, a double day shift is the most common pattern. In a double day shift, the employee performs shift work on a rotating basis in the early morning and the late afternoon. In a continuous shift, employees work shift 24 hours a day and seven days a week with usually four crews for the continuity of the work. This means, for example, that the weekly rest day cannot always be a Saturday or Sunday. In France, the night and day shift, well separated from each other, is the most common pattern.

Looking at the economic activity, a double day shift is prevalent in the services sector of trade, hotels and restaurants and transport. Continuous shift work is prevalent in the public services (administration, education and health). A night and day shift, particularly by men, is prevalent in construction.



Graph 19: shift work patterns (%) of employees [EU15] by sex and economic activity, 2001

### ➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Source: the labour force survey is a large sample survey among non-institutional households in the EU. The above results on the basis of an ad hoc survey in addition to the regular survey, refer to Spring 2001. This year, a similar ad hoc survey will be repeated to analyse changes over time. The sample rate varies between 0.3% and 3.3% (5% in Luxembourg). It provides results not only on the labour participation of people aged 15 and over but also on persons outside the labour force.

Definitions: Employed persons are those who during the reference week performed work, even for just one hour per week, for pay, profit or family gain or were not at work but had a job or business from which they were temporarily absent.

Employees have explicit or implicit employment contracts that give them a basic remuneration that is not directly dependent on the revenue of the unit for which they work. Self-employed persons have a job where the remuneration depends directly upon the profits derived from the goods and services produced (International Classification of Status in Employment, 1993).

Four occupational categories are distinguished on the basis of aggregations of major groups of the International Standard Classification of Occupations 1988 (ISCO 1988):

- highly skilled non-manual workers: legislators, senior officials and managers (ISCO major group 1), professionals (2), technicians (3)
- low-skilled non-manual workers: clerks (major group 4), service workers and shop and market sales workers (5)
- skilled manual workers: skilled agricultural and fishery workers (major group 6), craft and related trade workers (7), plant and machine operators and assemblers (8)
- unskilled manual workers (major group 9).

The number of hours usually worked per week refers to a modal value of weekly hours over a long period; the number of hours actually worked refers to a specific reference week and may deviate from the number of hours usually worked because of absences, holidays or overtime. Overtime are all hours worked in excess of the normal hours, which are the hours fixed in each country by or in pursuance of laws, regulations or collective agreements or, where not so fixed, the number of hours in excess of which any time worked is remunerated at overtime rates or forms an exception to the recognised rules or custom of the establishment or the process concerned (Reduction of hours of work recommendation (n° 116), ILO, 1962).

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