

Chapter Seven

► HOUSEHOLDS, WORK AND FLEXIBILITY Survey Comparative Report

Flexible work and young people's labour market integration in the process of globalisation

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INTRODUCTION:**GLOBALISATION AND THE TREND TOWARDS FLEXIBILISATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

The transformation of the world economy since the early 1970s has resulted in the emergence of global finance, global production, and an increasingly global labour market. The process of globalisation has affected working practices by involving a shift from the older standard employment types with regular working schedules and permanent employment to a new set of non-standard jobs facilitated by developments in information technology and stimulated by global competition. Writers have referred to a total transformation of work arrangements in advanced societies with an accompanying loss of the social relevance of the working place and of work-based social organisations (Castells 1996, Beck 1999). The process of global restructuring has also witnessed the collapse of stable social structures in the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe (Moghadam and Kuddo 1995, Genov 1998, Machonin 2002). The new phase of globalisation is associated with the rise of 'disorganised capitalism', 'post-industrialisation', 'risk' or 'network' society, all of which draw upon the changing nature of work toward greater diversity and insecurity (Lash and Urry 1987, Offe 1985, Castells 1996, Harvey 1989, Beck 2000).

Accompanying changes have been an acceleration of flexible employment. The trend toward flexibilisation of work, that is the flexibility of labour markets, working time and employment contracts, is a major process through which globalisation is carried out at the end of the 20th and

the beginning of the 21st century. In a broad sense more flexibility is required because of structural adjustment, technological breakthroughs, and quality-of-life considerations, and because of the new social issues societies are facing in the 1990s, as Moghadam and Kuddo (1995) summarise, both market 'pull' and technology 'push' factors force industries towards greater flexibility. De-industrialisation that is occurring in advanced Western societies and post-socialist East European countries alike, though for different reasons, sets new conditions for global competition. Flexible work is the major route through which businesses and employees are adapting to the changing circumstances.

The flexibilisation of work rises from traditional kinds of making a living such as self-employment, family business, subsistence production and various other forms of involvement in the informal economy, as well as from the spread of new ones such as free lancing, consultancy work, tele-working, hot-desking, temporary agency work, flexi-time, zero-hours or fixed-term contracts. The different patterns of flexible work concentrate both at the core and the margins of the global economy, providing more opportunities for autonomous and self-fulfilling life for some and precariousness and impoverishment for others.

Flexibility of work has become a hot topic in labour market and social policy research in Europe. In the UK for example the debate started with the flexible-firm thesis (Atkinson and Mea-

ger, 1986; Doeringer and Piore, 1971) according to which employers deliberately organised their workforce in two separate segments – a core and a periphery. Flexible workers are in the second group representing an easily disposable workforce on part-time, temporary or subcontracting basis. More recent research has focused on functional flexibility such as multi-skilling and multi-tasking, work-place flexibility and above all part-time work (Felstead et al, 2000, Heery and Salmon, 2000). In the Netherlands flexibility of work, most often understood as part-time work, is at the centre of public discussions as a policy solution to unemployment and a way for enabling the reconciliation of work and family life (Schmid, 1997). In Sweden, the debate was triggered by the increasing global competition, introduction of new technologies and changing consumer patterns (Boje and Gronlund, 2001). The focus is placed on temporary employment and the distinction between numeric and functional flexibility. The rising flexibility is widely seen as leading to a segmented labour market which undermines the solidaristic wage policy and work security for all.

In Central and East European countries the discussions on flexible work are more subdued but also present together with other issues such as entrepreneurship, middleclass formation, informal economy, poverty and unemployment. These deliberations have highlighted various aspects of flexibility in terms of working conditions, place and time variations, and adaptability of household strategies. 'Under-employment', 'inferior employment', 'part-time work', 'temporary work', 'self-employment', 'informal work regulations', 'de-standardisation of work', 'atypical employment', 'work in the informal economy', are all concepts used to study and explain the new processes comprising the growth of flexible labour under post-communism (Chavdarova, 2001; Stoilova,

2001; Vechernik, 2001; Tilkidziev, 1998; Vladimirov et al, 1998, Sik, 1994). This diversity of terms is not so much a lack of theoretical precision, as it is a reflection of the different meanings and perspectives of the authors - a situation similar to the debate in Western and (Far) Eastern literature, described by Felstead and Jenson (1999).

Besides the terminological multiplicity, studies of flexible labour have delineated a great variety of policy implications of flexible labour, ranging from the overtly optimistic evaluations as 'The solution' of European labour market problems to totally pessimistic interpretations. The discourse on flexibility and its social implications largely reflects the different welfare state models (Esping-Anderson, 1990; Ganssman, 2000). While in the USA the low unemployment rate has been achieved by high deregulation of the labour market, matched with low wages and flexible work, in many of the European Union countries the strategy is to combine flexible work with preserving social protection (European Commission, 2001).

The great variety of understandings and evaluations of flexible work is linked to the large variations between its different patterns. Under the same label come such diverging forms as on-call and agency work and expert subcontracting, casual and highly qualified work, self-employment and work without a written contract. However, a common characteristics emerging from the pluralism of forms is that they all represent a break with the standard full-time, regular-schedule, legally binding permanent employment in the formal economy. Flexibility signifies the changing patterns of work, shifting old boundaries in terms of time, place and conditions. That is, we are considering flexible hours of work, flexible place of work and various contractual conditions (Wallace 2001).

1. FLEXIBILISATION AND THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF YOUTH INTEGRATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Research evidence suggests that the rise of flexible employment affects various social groups in different ways (Cousins, 1999, Blossfeld and Hakim 1997, O'Reilly and Fagan, 1998, Fagan, 2001). Most of these studies highlight the dominant involvement of women in part-time, fixed-term jobs and discuss whether this is a life style choice or imposed decision upon the female workforce. Less attention is paid to the particular position of different age groups vis-à-vis various forms of non-standard employment.

When youth employment becomes a research target, the focus is usually placed upon young people's concentration in specific segments of the labour market. Thus labour market research analyses part-time work and temporary employment as typically youth forms of labour market entry (Gangle 2002) or as stepping stones out of unemployment (Russell and O'Connell 2001, Korpi and Levin, 2001). Another question drawing research attention is whether students are competing with and pushing out low qualified youth from the low-paid short-term jobs (Van Ours and Ridder 1995, Van der Meer and Wielers 2001).

From their perspective, youth studies have pointed at the growing flexibilisation of employment patterns among young people (EGRIS 2001, IARD 2001, Iacovou and Berthoud 2001, Kovatcheva 2000, Spanring and Reinprecht, 2002). Raffe et al (1998) and Bynner (2001) link the concept of flexibility to the institutional arrangements of the labour market entry of British school leavers in terms of outcomes, inputs, pathways, choices and combinations of school and work. This process is viewed more generally as part of the current social change transforming youth transitions from school to work towards their fragmentation, greater individualisation and insecurity (Cote 1995, Roberts 1996, Furlong and Cartmel 1997, Wallace and Kovatcheva 1998). Kovatcheva (2001) uses the term flexibilisation to describe the destandardisation and deregulation of

youth transitions in the waves of social transformation of societies in Central and Eastern Europe.

This paper focuses on flexible employment as a spreading experience of young people in their transition from education to employment and examines the conditions under which it serves as a way for their social integration or on the contrary, for their marginalisation and social exclusion. Whether flexible work acts as a stepping stone to more stable and rewarding jobs for youth or leads to a perpetual state of precariousness and social exclusion, depends largely on the economic conditions, labour market regulations, welfare regimes, and cultural norms in a given country.

Official statistics reveal that the flexibilisation of youth employment as one of the major consequences of globalisation affects all European countries although in different ways and for different reasons. In Western Europe access to employment has become more difficult for young people. By the beginning of the 21st century youth unemployment rates began to stabilise and decline in most countries, although it is still high in Southern Europe. At present European labour markets represent a different structure of opportunities for young people than they did for most part of the second half of the 20th century. Quite common are becoming the non-standard employment contracts and flexible working schedules. Iacovou and Berthoud (2001:23) estimate that half of employees aged 17 to 20 in EU countries are on fixed-term contracts or in casual work; the same is valid for a third of those aged 21 to 25 but only for a tenth of those aged 31 to 35. Working part-time (less than 30 hours per week) are 6 per cent of young men aged 17 to 25 and 26 per cent of young women in the same age group who live with a partner and have children (Iacovou and Berthoud 2001: 25). Another process leading to greater flexibilisation of employment is the spread of the practice to combine work and studies. A growing number of full-time students in EU countries hold part-time jobs (Hodgson and

Spours 2000, Allatt and Dixon 2002). The rising rate of combining earning and learning is based not only on economic need but also on the growing availability of part-time and flexible working-hour jobs (Chisholm and Kovacheva 2002). Both pressure and opportunities, coming from the prolongation of education and training, as well as the enlargement of the service sector work in this direction.

In Central and Eastern Europe young people have experienced a sharp destandardisation of youth transitions, manifested most strongly in the dramatic change in labour market access. The system of state allocation of graduates to jobs in the centrally planned economy and guaranteed employment for all collapsed to give way to radical liberalisation and high rates of unemployment (Kovacheva 2001). Youth are now facing a much greater variety of employment opportunities – in state and private, domestic and foreign companies or in self-employment with more flexible working schedules and non-standard contracts. Although official statistic data for youth employment in the region is scarce, social research suggests that young people are crowding into precarious employment, in informal work in particular (Ule et al 2000, Roberts et al 1999, Kovacheva 2000, Tivadar and Mrvar 2002). They must increasingly compete for more insecure jobs at a time when employers try to save on training costs by employing older and more experienced workers.

In this chapter we consider the different forms in which the trend toward flexibilisation of work affects youth in different social contexts. The analysis follows the patterns of flexible employment for young people in eight countries, involved in the project 'Households, Work and Flexibility' (HWF) funded by the Fifth Framework Programme of the European Commission. Three Western European countries, the Netherlands,

Sweden and UK, three Central European countries, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovenia, and two South-East countries, Bulgaria and Romania, participate in the project.

As seen from the statistical data above, the first three are relatively wealthy countries with GDP per capita higher than the average for the EU. The structural transformation of their economies is well advanced and employment in the service sector is about three quarters of total employment. Unemployment is relatively low with less than 3 per cent in the Netherlands and less than 6 per cent in Sweden and the UK. In all three countries youth unemployment rate is twice higher than the total. In terms of social policy they represent three types of welfare regimes and three types of youth policy models (Esping-Andersen 1990, Gallie and Paugnam 2000, IARD 2001). Sweden has a universal regime in which the welfare state acts on the principles of universalism and decommodification of social rights promoting equality of the highest standards. Its youth policy has a narrow definition of youth excluding children (below the teenage years) and pursues the expansion of youth social participation and autonomy (National Board for Youth Affairs, 1999). UK represents a liberal regime of social policy encouraging the market and minimising social benefits. The British youth policy follows a community-based model with a problem-solving approach and defines various subgroups of youth in risk as its main targets (Williamson, 2002). The Netherlands comes closer to the corporatist welfare regime with a protective model of youth policy (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport 1998). The Dutch concept of youth, including children, perceives young people as a vulnerable social group in need of protection and guidance. This is matched with a strongly institutionalised sector of youth policy (IARD 2001).

Table 1. Selected economic indicators in HWF countries

	Western			East Central			South East	
	NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
GDP per capita (EU-15 = 100)	117	102	104	57	51	69	28	25
employment in services*	76.7	73.2	73.5	54.8	59.8	52.7	54.0	29.0
employment in industry	20.0	24.1	25.0	39.9	33.8	37.7	32.8	25.8
employment in agriculture	3.4	2.7	1.5	5.2	6.5	9.6	13.2	45.2
unemployment rate**	2.7	5.9	5.5	8.5	6.6	6.9	16.2	7.0
youth unemployment rate***	5.1	11.3	12.8	16.6	12.3	16.4	33.3	17.8

Note: * % total employment, ** % labour force 15+, *** % labour force 15-24.

Source Eurostat 2002 Statistics in Focus. National Accounts. Economy and Finance. Theme 2 – 59; European Commission 2001 Employment in Europe 2001. Recent Trends and Prospects. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

The five transition countries manifest an even greater diversity, at least as far as their economic levels are concerned. Slovenia comes closer to the advanced Western economies with her GDP per capita equal to 60 per cent of the EU average. The economic achievements of the Czech Republic and Hungary have gained them an agreement to become members of the EU in 2004. These three countries are developing their service sector with employment in services reaching over fifty per cent of the total. Romania and Bulgaria lag behind Central Europe with about a quarter of the EU average of GDP per capita and have not yet reached their own 1989 economic level. De-industrialisation is characteristic for both countries accompanied by a growth of employment in agriculture which in 2000 was 13.2 per cent in Bulgaria and 45.2 per cent in Romania. The exceptionally high agricultural employment in Romania has been reached after a low share of 17 per cent in 1989. In the two South-East countries economic reforms have created insecure labour markets with most jobs concentrated in small and miniature private companies, offering low pay and poor career prospects. Bulgaria stands out with its high unemployment rate reaching one third for youth aged up to 24.

All five post-communist countries experienced a transition from a state regulated centralised regime of social policy into a complex mix with declining universal and growing liberal ele-

ments. The social policies of the three more successful economies can be described as reinstitutionalising welfare regimes with a strong Bismarckian base whereas the two Balkan countries are still de-institutionalising their welfare states (Wallace 2001). While there are no comparative studies of their youth policies, the three Central European countries have largely managed to preserve their institutionalised youth sector or have developed new agencies in the field. In Romania and particularly in Bulgaria the institutions for youth policy, youth work and youth research have suffered major blows with the withdrawal of state support. A common trend in the region, however, has been a shift of policies away from a concept of youth as a privileged target group of welfare measures to its perception as a group which needs protection in much lesser degree than pensioners, the disabled, children or other underprivileged categories. Currently the five countries exhibit a wide range of youth policy measures: from a relatively well developed youth programmes for support and research in Slovenia to a minimising youth policy in Bulgaria reducing it to the country's involvement in the EC programme 'Youth'.

In this paper we use survey data about the country differences in the levels and patterns of flexible work among young people, coming from a national survey of around 1000 households in each of the eight countries, using a standardised

questionnaire. Young people are defined as those aged 18-29, because the sample design of the HWF survey included individuals aged 18-65. Although the lower age limit of youth is now being pushed below in the teenage years, in the HWF survey we aimed at respondents in working age, after the age of obligatory schooling and when the normal employment regulation are applied. The youth sub-sample constructed in this way comprises of a total of 2136 respondents, which is a small size when we break it by countries and types of work. Rather than proving strong correlations and drawing firm inferences we are looking at some general patterns through which flexible work becomes a route for global integration of youth rather than for their marginalisation in the increasingly global world. Our main interest focuses on the question how flexible labour affects the prospects for young people's labour market integration. We do not have longi-

tudinal data to measure the rate of transition from flexible labour into more stable forms of employment. We have data about respondents' current employment status, former experience from standard and flexible employment and unemployment, as well as their subjective perceptions of the impact of flexible work on their integration into the labour market – young people's own assessment of work autonomy, satisfaction with current work arrangements and flexibilisation potential.

In our analysis we will first look at the forms of young people's integration in labour market in the eight HWF countries, then at the patterns of flexible labour spread among them, and after that at the subjective perspective on flexible work. We will then discuss the different effects of flexible labour upon young people's prospects for social integration or exclusion in different social contexts.

2. FORMS OF INTEGRATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

The HWF survey suggests divergence in the labour market activity of young people in different country contexts. As Table 2 shows, the Netherlands displays the highest youth employment rate, over 80 per cent, with about one third of young people in part-time and fixed contract employment. The UK and Sweden also show higher youth employment rates of over 70 per cent with more young people in part-time employment than east central and south east countries, 17 and 12 per cent respectively. Noticeably Sweden has more young casual workers than the other two western countries. While Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania demonstrate a lower rate of full-time employment, less than 40 per cent, there are higher shares of young people in casual work in Romania and Slovenia, around 10 per cent. In addition Slovenia follows the Netherlands in the amount of young people (14 per cent) employed on a fixed contract. The proportion of self-employed young people is very low, around or less than five per cent in all countries, particularly compared with that of older age groups. At the

other end of the spectrum of labour market activity is Bulgaria with one third of young people unemployed. It is followed by Romania, Slovenia and Hungary with unemployment rates of 16, 13 and 11 per cent respectively.

As with the gender segregation in the labour market in general, the HWF survey illustrates some basic gender differences in the employment status of young people. Table 3 suggests fewer gender differences in the extent of fixed contract workers in almost all countries except for Slovenia, where there are more young women than men with employment on fixed contract (18 per cent as compared with 11 per cent). The gender gap is not so remarkable either in self-employment of young people although in most countries there are more young men than women who are self employed. The reverse pattern can be found in casual employment with more young women than men, except for Romania where the shares of casual workers are twice as high for young men than for young women.

Table 2. Selected employment status of young people in HWF countries (per cent)

Employment status*	Western			East Central			South East	
	NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
Full time	45	55	49	51	44	33	35	38
Part time	18	12	17	1	4	-	4	5
Fixed contract	16	1	2	1	-	14	4	2
Self employed	3	2	3	5	3	2	4	1
Casual worker	-	7	2	-	1	9	-	11
Unemployed	6	6	7	6	11	13	33	16
N. =	186	327	222	459	256	242	454	397

Note: * The employment status is respondents' self-assessment. The answer to the question is multiple.

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

Table 3. Selected employment status of young people by gender (per cent)

Employment status*	Gender	Western			East Central			South East	
		NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
Full time	Male	62	64	66	55	50	46	34	38
	Female	34	46	34	47	39	20	36	38
Part time	Male	5	5	6	-	4	-	4	7
	Female	24	19	26	2	5	-	3	3
Fixed contract	Male	17	-	1	2	-	11	4	2
	Female	17	-	2	-	-	18	4	2
Self employed	Male	3	3	4	6	3	3	4	2
	Female	2	1	2	4	3	2	4	-
Casual worker	Male	-	6	1	-	-	8	2	15
	Female	-	7	3	-	2	9	-	7
Unemployed	Male	5	4	7	5	14	11	37	19
	Female	7	7	7	7	9	16	29	12
N. =		186	327	222	459	256	242	454	397

Note: * The employment status is respondents' self-assessment. The answer to the question is multiple.

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

Larger gender differences, however, are demonstrated in full-time and part-time employment as well as unemployment. As shown in Table 3, the full-time employment rate of young men is much higher than that of young women in the Western and East Central countries, though it is not prevalent in the South-East countries. Young women are more likely to be in part-time employment, particularly in western countries with about a

quarter of young women in the Netherlands and UK and nearly one fifth in Sweden as compared with only about five per cent of young men in these countries. This confirms that the increasing part-time work is largely associated with women's work in most EU countries (O'Reilly and Fagan 1998, Rubery et al 1999, Fagan and Burchell 2002), whereas part-time work is less frequent and the level of female part-time work is low in candi-

dates countries (Paoli et al 2002). In regard to the unemployment rate, the gender gap seems narrower in the Western and East Central countries, though there are still more young women than men unemployed with the exception of Hungary, which, together with the south east countries show a higher proportion of young men than women in unemployment. Nevertheless, the higher unemployment rate of young men in South-East countries, unsurprisingly, corresponds to their lower rate of full-time employment, as well as higher rates of part-time and casual employment.

Young people's participation in the labour market is undoubtedly affected by their educational level. Table 3 shows that over one third of young people in the Netherlands have received higher education and over a quarter in Sweden, with slightly over one fifth in the UK at the tertiary level. It is more likely for young people at a higher educational level to participate in full-time employment, as Table 3 suggests. Apart from Slovenia and the Netherlands over two thirds of young people at tertiary level are in full-time employment, which is much higher than those at secondary and primary levels.

On the other hand the countries where there were high shares of young people both in education and active in the labour market were also those where there was a good supply of part-time jobs (Rubery et al 1999). Table 4 confirms that in countries where there are more opportunities of flexible work for young people in education there is a lower unemployment rate among young people, as is the case of the three western countries. The Netherlands again has more students in part-time employment, nearly one fifth. Both Sweden and the UK have over 10 per cent of students participating in part-time work whereas all the central and south east countries provide much less opportunities of part-time employment for students. In the Czech Republic and Slovenia there is no record of students being part-time workers, although Slovenia displays more students (13 per cent) in casual work. However, whether part-time or casual employment acts more as a trap for the most disadvantaged young people or as a bridge for easing the transition from education to work remains a debate (Furlong and Cartmel 1997, Rubery et al 1999, Pollock 2002, Van der Meer and Wielers 2001).

Table 4. Education of young people and its impact on employment status (per cent)

Level of education	Western			East Central			South East	
	NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
Primary	2	9	16	22	18	-	9	3
Secondary	65	64	61	68	74	91	78	85
Tertiary	33	27	23	10	8	8	13	13
FT employment								
Primary	67*	23	25	18	28	50*	-	-
Secondary	41	50	46	59	45	33	34	33
Tertiary	55	78	72	66	74	33	65	77
Students in PT work	19	14	11	-	2	-	2	5
Students in casual work	-	13	6	-	4	13	-	5

Note: * Respondents with primary education in full-time employment in the Netherlands and Slovenia are less than 5.

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

The youth labour market activity is further related to career flexibility in the different country contexts. As it is shown in Table 5 over half of young people aged between 18 and 29 entered employment for the first time in all the countries with more than two thirds in the UK and Czech Republic. Due to the political and economic transition since 1989 which has brought about the closure of companies, cuts in production and redundancy in work force, many respondents of working age in central and south east countries experienced employment changes and unemployment (Kovacheva and Pancheva, 2002, Vecernik and Stepankova 2002, Stanculescu and Berevoescu 2002, Sicherl and Remec 2002). Table 5 indicates a diverse experience of young people in different transitional economies. Apart from the UK which has the highest share of young people who changed employment more than once (42 per cent) and promoted to a higher position (nearly a quarter) as compared with other countries, young people in the Czech Republic seem most flexible in employment changes. Thirty per cent of them changed employment once and 24 per cent changed more than once. Over one fifth young people lost employment once and slightly less

than 10 per cent lost more than once. One striking figure is that one fifth of young people in the Czech Republic started to work in a second job, which not only exceeds the amount of young people in other countries but also the older age groups in their own country. On the other hand, only three per cent of young people in Bulgaria started a second job and six per cent was promoted to a higher position. There seems a larger gap between young people who experienced unemployment and those who started a second job in Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia.

With respect to income activities, one third of young people in Sweden have two or more activities, showing a much higher share as compared with young people in other countries (Table 5). Slovenia and the Czech Republic witnessed nearly one fifth of young people participating in two or more income activities, followed by the Netherlands and UK, 14 and 13 per cent respectively. The lowest shares of young people in two or more income activities are in Bulgaria and Hungary, only three and four per cent respectively, which to some extent corresponds to the higher unemployment rate in the two countries.

Table 5. Employment changes of young people between 18-29 (per cent)

Employment changes since 1989*	Western			East Central			South East	
	NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
Entered employment for the first time			64	77		54	55	59
Changed employment only once			12	30		24	9	20
Changed employment more than once			42	24		11	19	10
Promoted to a higher position			24	17		15	6	7
Started to work in a second job			16	20		8	3	6
Lost employment only once			10	22		12	13	14
Lost employment more than once			8	9		2	13	3
Two or more income activities in last 12 months	14	33	13	18	4	19	3	11

Note: *No available data on NL, SW and HU as these three countries did not include the questions on employment changes since 1989 in their questionnaire.

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

To sum up, the HWF survey suggests diverse patterns of young people's integration into the labour market in different country contexts. The three western countries display higher employment rates of young people whilst the central and south east countries, with the exception of the Czech Republic, have a higher share of young people unemployed. The higher employment rates are related to the levels of education, demonstrated in particular in full-time employment, as well as flexible work, such as students in part-time and casual work, typically in the three western coun-

tries. A flexible labour market can provide more job opportunities for young people as in the cases of the UK and the Czech Republic, where over half of young people changed employment at least once since 1989. On the other hand south east countries, together with Slovenia show much less young people starting a second job. Bulgaria and Hungary present a particularly low share of young people participating in two or more income activities in last 12 months, which corresponds to their higher unemployment rates.

3. PATTERNS OF FLEXIBLE WORK AMONG YOUTH

In order to understand the impact of flexibility of work on young people's integration into the labour market, this section examines the patterns of flexible work among young people in terms of working time and legal conditions, namely, working contracts. The HWF survey measured less flexibility of young people in the work place. Flexibility of working place was the lowest among

youth and the highest among the oldest group of workers (Kovacheva and Tang 2002). Only five per cent of the youngest age group work at home totally or partially as compared with a quarter of those aged over 55. Therefore our focus is on the patterns of flexible working time and working contracts of young people in different country contexts.

3.1. The flexible working time

The most typical form of flexible working time is working less but also more than the standard working time. Flexibility of work is also created by a more changeable structure of the working time through a shift work, flexitime or other irregular schedules. In this chapter we use the OECD definition of part-time as working less than 30 hours a week and over-time as working more than 50 hours a week. To evaluate the consequences of part-time and over-time work among youth we examine in more detail the flexibility patterns spread among this age group.

We have expected that part-time work is most typical for the groups entering and leaving the labour market, thus easing their transitions in and out of the labour market. However, as seen from Table 6, this pattern is valid only for Sweden, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Romania. In the other three countries, in the Netherlands,

UK and Bulgaria the proportion of young people working less than 30 hours a week is smaller than that of the groups of prime age workers and those near retirement age. Yet, part-time work is a wide spread experience among youth. The young Dutch and British have the highest shares of part-time workers among young workforce – over a quarter, while the Czech and Bulgarian youth have the lowest shares. One country from each group, that is Sweden from the West, Slovenia from the East Central and Bulgaria from the South East Europe have the highest shares of young people working the standard number of hours – about three quarters of youth. Romania and the Czech Republic represent the trend toward another form of flexibility of work – working more than 50 hours a week. Almost a third of young Romanians and a quarter of young Czechs work over-time. This share is high in the other two East

European countries and in the UK, as well. Young people in the UK and Romania display the highest rate of flexibility both in terms of working part-time and over-time. The least flexible are young workers in Sweden and Bulgaria.

In all countries part-time work is more typical for young women whereas young men tend to work overtime. In Western countries it is more

often young men who have jobs with regular working time while in East Central and South East countries (with the exception of Bulgaria) it is more often young women who are found in the group with standard working hours. The gender differences between young people in connection with time flexibility are in the same direction but smaller than among working adults.

Table 6. Part-time and over-time work by age (per cent)

Working time**	Western			East Central*		South East	
	NL	S	UK	CZ	SL	BG	RO
Young people (18-29 years of age)							
Part-time	26.7	12.3	28.2	7.1	12.4	10.1	14.8
Full-time	65.8	79.5	57.6	69.4	73.3	76.8	56.2
Over-time	7.5	8.2	14.1	23.5	14.3	13.0	29.0
Adults (30-59 years of age)							
Part-time	29.4	7.5	29.1	4.4	4.2	11.8	7.9
Full-time	57.5	79.1	53.5	70.3	76.5	73.9	62.3
Over-time	13.1	13.4	17.4	25.3	19.2	14.3	29.8
People near retirement age (60+)							
Part-time	32.3	12.1	33.1	10.4	14.8	17.0	19.5
Full-time	55.1	74.3	54.4	64.4	61.7	68.2	41.5
Over-time	12.7	13.6	12.5	25.2	23.5	14.8	39.0

Note: * Hungary is not included as the Hungarian survey used a different definition of working time.
 ** Part-time = 1-29 hours a week, full-time = 30-49 hours a week, and over-time = 50+ hours a week.

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

Table 7. Working time by gender (per cent)

Working time	Gender	Western			East Central*		South East	
		NL	S	UK	CZ	SL	BG	RO
Part-time	Male	13.9	9.2	13.3	5.1	9.1	5.9	12.0
	Female	37.1	16.0	42.5	9.6	16.4	14.2	17.3
Regular time	Male	72.2	80.8	62.7	63.9	68.2	80.2	53.0
	Female	60.7	78.0	52.9	75.7	79.5	73.6	59.1
Over-time	Male	13.9	10.0	24.1	31.0	22.7	13.9	35.0
	Female	2.2	6.0	4.6	14.7	4.1	12.3	23.6

Note: * Hungary is not included as the Hungarian survey used a different definition of working time.

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

Students form the most prominent group among part-timers. Nearly all – over 90 per cent - of employed students work less than 30 hours a week, a share twice higher than that among young people out of education. While the sample of students is too small to be split among countries, we can accept that both the inadequacy of financial aid for studies (Moghadam and Kuddo 1995) and the growing opportunities for such work (Van de Meer and Wielers 2001) play a role here to make students the most flexible workforce.

The young self-employed, young farmers and even young casual workers also form a flexible workforce but following a different pattern. These groups tend to work overtime more often than part time. This is particularly true for the self-employed in the Czech Republic and the farmers in Romania. In total, half of the self-employed young people work over-time.

The level of completed education affects the chances of young people getting a full-time or part-time job. Most often it is those with lower education who work part time while with the rise of educational level the shares of part-time workers decline. The group who works longer hours than the standard is youth with completed secondary education. Clearly, lower-educated youth are over-represented among part-timers in all countries, according to our data, so we do not find enough grounds to accept the thesis that students have displaced them (See for example Van de Meer and Wielers, 2001). Lower-educated youth have greater demands than students towards their jobs but mostly concerning their pay and security rather than their time flexibility. Students might be less demanding as they look upon these jobs as temporary. It is rather the highest qualified young people – those with completed tertiary education, who have taken the better part of the full-time job sector of the labour market, pushing away the lower qualified. As Gangle (2002) suggests it is leavers with tertiary education who have been able to profit from the increasing availability of highly skilled professional occupations in the changing labour markets in Europe.

The other dimension of time flexibility is the flexible working schedule. This form of flexibility is more typical for younger and older workers than those in the prime age group (Kovacheva and Tang, 2002). However, different patterns of flexible working schedules are dominant among youth and those near retirement. While the group of those who are exiting the labour market do mostly shift work, in the group of youth irregular (varying) schedules are the most widespread patterns. With the exceptions of the Netherlands and UK, in all other countries young people's chances to get a job with a regular working schedule are much smaller than the adult age group.

Over half of young respondents in the three Western countries as well as Bulgaria have a regular working schedule from Monday morning to Friday afternoons. In Romania and Central European countries this is much rarer practice among working youth. In all Eastern European countries with the exception of Hungary shift work is more typical than among their counterparts in the West, which corresponds to their high shares of industrial employment. The irregular (varying) schedules are more common in Hungary, Romania and Slovenia, which can be explained by both the traditional flexibility of the agricultural employment, particularly high in Romania, and the late modern forms of working on call or for a fee in the service sector. Over a third of youth in Hungary have this type of irregular schedule. The prevailing types of shift work are rotating shifts, followed by daily shifts and night shifts. Other fixed schedules are commonly annualised hour contract, a four-day week and term-time working. One fifth of young people in Sweden and the UK who have a flexible work schedule, work varying hours each week. Additionally, another fifth work varying hours each week. For Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovenia the more typical pattern is seasonal variation. Bulgaria demonstrates the least variation in working hours of young people.

Students, the self-employed, farmers and casual workers have the lowest shares of those working regular working hours, thus being again

the most flexible workers in terms of working time. Less than a quarter of students work regular working hours while more than a half of all young people do so. In contrast over 40 per cent of students have irregular working schedules, which vary constantly. There is no difference in patterns of working schedule flexibility by gender. While more women than men among the total sample are part-time workers, equal shares of young men and women – over a half – work flexi-

ble schedules. However, educational level makes a difference. That is those with lower education are more 'flexible' in their working schedules than those with higher education. The proportion of non-flexible workers (having a regular standard schedule) rises from 40 per cent of those with primary education, through 45 per cent of those with secondary education and to 64 per cent of those with tertiary education.

Table 8. Work schedules by age (per cent)

Working schedules	Western Europe			East Central Europe			South East Europe	
	NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
Young people (18-29)								
Regular hours	57.1	59.5	51.5	41.1	49.7	38.8	55.5	37
Shift work	3.7	10.5	16.4	20.7	10.5	24.7	24.9	20.9
Flexitime	-	3.7	5.8	11.5	0.7	8.2	7.2	7.8
Other fixed schedule	19.3	12.0	11.7	11.4	2.5	6.5	6.7	11.7
Irregular schedule	19.9	14.3	14.6	15.3	36.6	21.8	5.7	22.6
Adults (30-59)								
Regular hours	53.6	63.1	51.3	51.5	52.1	48.2	59.4	46.1
Shift work	4.2	7.9	13.0	13.3	8.2	24.6	18.1	16.8
Flexitime	-	3.5	11.6	16.2	1.8	12.3	9.4	5.6
Other fixed schedule	23.0	11.5	11.3	8.5	4.2	3.6	3.8	7.3
Irregular schedule	19.3	14.0	12.8	8.1	33.7	11.3	9.2	24.3
People near retirement age (60+)								
Regular hours	52.8	71.8	53.9	56.0	42.9	53.0	61.3	23.2
Shift work	2.5	5.1	9.2	10.0	6.5	10.8	17.1	5.3
Flexitime	-	2.2	7.8	12.9	2.4	9.6	11.6	4.0
Other fixed schedule	26.4	8.4	10.6	8.1	4.7	6.0	5.0	11.9
Irregular schedule	18.4	12.5	18.4	12.9	43.5	20.5	5.0	55.6

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

3.2. The flexible work contract

The sort of contract an employee holds is an indicator for the flexibility of work, which is determined by the legal and institutional conditions of work in the country and the policies and practices of employment of the workforce. Young people and particularly first-time entrants in the labour market are the most prominent among flexible workers in terms of contractual arrangements.

The high incidence of temporary jobs has been underlined in various studies (Korpi and Levin 2001, Jarvinen and Vanttaja 2001, Russell and O'Connell 2001).

Young people are more flexible in terms of the legal conditions they have on their jobs. Only a half of young people aged till 24 have the standard permanent contract on their jobs as com-

pared with almost three quarters of the prime-aged workers. The oldest age group of over 55 also manifest a high level of flexibility. For this oldest working generation the most typical forms of flexible jobs are self-employment and twice more rarely – work without a contract. For the youngest generation entering the labour market the most typical patterns of flexible jobs are working on a fixed term contract, without a contract or other non-standard jobs. Among the non-standard jobs widespread are work 'on call' basis, or on a fee only basis, for a temporary work agency, zero-hour contracts or subject to performance.

Whereas the share of the self-employed rises with age, the share of workers with fixed-term contracts drops with age. All other types of flexible contracts follow a U-turn curve, that is, they are high in the youngest and the oldest age groups. The patterns of flexibility in terms of legal conditions are closely related to the flexibility of working time. They are more typical for the age groups who are in a process of transition, such as young people entering the labour market or workers older enough to be out of the sphere of work.

Table 9. Patterns of flexibility of contractual conditions in youth employment (per cent)

Type of Contract on the Main Job	Western Europe			East Central Europe			South East Europe	
	NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
Young people (18-29)								
Permanent	68.1	75.3	62.9	66.8	66.2	43.7	51.2	66.0
Fixed term	21.9	16.2	2.4	12.8	10.8	24.0	28.4	3.7
Self-employed	1.3	2.4	2.9	8.0	4.1	3.6	9.8	13.0
No contract	-	1.4	18.2	5.4	13.5	9.6	9.3	14.4
Other flexible	8.7	4.7	13.6	7.0	5.4	19.1	1.3	2.9
Adults (30-59)								
Permanent	74.9	82.8	71.5	69.4	75.9	78.1	58.3	71.1
Fixed term	7.1	5.2	1.2	8.7	5.3	7.7	18.6	2.7
Self-employed	9.2	10.7	9.6	14.1	9.6	8.1	13.4	16.9
No contract	4.6	0.6	11.6	5.0	7.0	2.3	7.6	6.5
Other flexible	4.2	0.7	6.1	2.8	2.2	3.8	2.1	2.8
People near retirement age (60+)								
Permanent	76.4	82.7	63.1	67.5	59.1	64.9	62.9	36.6
Fixed term	3.6	3.0	-	8.6	8.8	5.2	15.2	2.1
Self-employed	7.6	13.2	12.1	12.4	16.4	14.3	8.4	51.0
No contract	7.3	0.4	18.4	8.6	14.6	6.5	10.7	8.3
Other flexible	5.1	0.7	6.4	2.9	1.1	9.1	2.8	2.0

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

The country comparisons exhibit wide variations among youth in the legal terms of their employment. Flexible employment conditions are most typical for youth in Slovenia and Bulgaria – countries with lowest shares of youth employed on permanent contracts. Bulgaria, which exhibits the least flexibility in terms of working time and

schedules, manifests the greatest flexibility in terms of employment contracts. By contrast, Sweden and the Netherlands have the highest shares of young workers on permanent contracts. The different countries have different patterns of legal flexibility. Self-employment is most widespread among youth in Romania, followed by Bulgaria

and the Czech Republic. Fixed-term jobs are most popular in Bulgaria, then in Slovenia, Czech republic and the Netherlands. Work without a contract is most typical among youth in the UK, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria, the least in Sweden, but is also very low in the Netherlands, Slovenia and the Czech Republic. The least binding legal conditions of work are typical for youth in the transition countries. Working on a call basis, subject to performance, on a fee only basis are still rare practices among youth. These new forms are most typical for young people in Slovenia, where 10 per cent work for a temporary work agencies and additionally 5 per cent on a fee only basis.

Countries in Western Europe demonstrate significant differences in their youth labour markets. While negligible proportions of youth in the Netherlands and Sweden work without a contract, every one in fifth young Britons does so. For the Netherlands and Sweden fixed-term contracts are quite common among youth – 22 per cent and 16 per cent respectively. Their shares are three times higher than the corresponding shares among the prime age group while in the UK there is no such age difference. In the Netherlands respondents were given the opportunity to define whether their fixed-term contract is with a perspective to become permanent or not. The young Dutch considered in a ratio of 3 to 1 that their contract was leading to a better contractual arrangement.

We expected higher proportions of youth in Central and Eastern Europe to work without a written contract. Yet a significant group - from 10 to 15 per cent of young people work totally in the shadow economy in their countries – with the exception of the Czech Republic. More typical pattern for flexible work turns out to be the fixed-term contract. Such a contract holds a quarter of youth in Bulgaria and Slovenia each. Most often such contracts are for a period less than a year. Young people in Western countries have somewhat longer fixed-term contracts – 37 per cent of youth in the Netherlands and a quarter of those in the UK have contract for a period between 1 and 5

years. Almost a half of young people in Romania with a temporary contract has a job without a fixed period. The same is valid for a third of youth in the UK and Sweden and a fifth in Netherlands.

The flexibility of contractual conditions under which young people work is influenced by several factors. The chance of getting a permanent contract rises with the rise in the level of education achieved by the young person. Non-standard forms of employment are typical for only one fifth of working young people with completed tertiary education while almost a half of those with primary education hold such contracts. Those with primary education tend to work without a contract but also are self-employed more often than the other educational groups among youth. On its part, holding of a permanent contract raises the chances to get access to additional educational courses. Young people working without a contract or with other atypical contracts are much more rarely involved in educational or training courses.

The differences between young men and women in the legal conditions of their jobs do not follow a simple pattern. In the three Western countries and the three East Central countries young men tend to work on a permanent contract more often than young women. In the South-East countries and particularly in Romania young women hold permanent contracts more often than young men do. When we look at the flexible legal conditions, we see that young women in Western countries tend to concentrate in the sector of fixed-term employment more often than young men. In most countries self-employment is a male pattern with the exception of Hungary and less so in Bulgaria. Men in the five transition countries but women in the UK tend to work more often in the most precarious segment jobs without a contract.

Two other categories appear to be very flexible in the legal conditions of their work: students and farmers. Among young people in education, only a fifth have a permanent work contract. Most typical for them (43 per cent of the cases) are the

new non-standard forms such as work for a temporary agency, and on call. Also a high share, 28 per cent of students work without a contract. On their part, half of the farmers among youth are self-employed and additionally 15 per cent work without a contract. Of young farmers only a third are employed under the standard permanent contract.

Flexibility in terms of contract is linked to other types of flexibility – in terms of place and time. Associated with full-time work and regular working schedule is first of all the permanent contract, followed by the fixed-term contract. Those without contract most often work less than 30 hours a week, as those with all other non-standard contracts, such as ‘on call’ for a temporary work agency, on a fee only basis, etc. Two thirds of them work part-time. Self-employment is associated with another pattern of flexibility – working over time. Forty per cent of the self-employed work over time while only 14 per cent of those with permanent contracts do so. A fifth of those without contracts work over 50 hours a week, which is the second highest share after that of the self-employed.

To sum up, we found different types of flexibility spread among youth in the different social contexts of the HWF countries. Young people in the West are more flexible in the time conditions of their jobs whereas young people in the transition countries and particularly in the South-East are more flexible in the contractual conditions of their jobs. Among the three EU countries Sweden tends to allow the least flexibility in young people’s jobs while the UK labour market provides a high level of flexibility in working hours, schedules and contracts. In East Central and South East Europe less young people work part-time but much more work in a fixed-term jobs and these are usually for shorter periods than in the West. From this group young people in the Czech Republic seem to be better protected in the labour market. In the two Balkan countries very few young people have modern flexible jobs but high proportions work in self-employment or without a contract. These two least regulated types of employment provide opportunities for both very high and very low incomes but most of it is only a strategy for survival in the face of high unemployment rates (Roberts et al, 1999).

Table 10. Patterns of employment by gender (per cent)

Type of contract on the main job	Gender	Western			East Central			South East	
		NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
Permanent	Male	69.0	75.0	65.5	67.3	68.0	54.4	50.5	57.4
	Female	67.4	61.0	60.5	66.2	64.4	31.2	51.9	74.8
Fixed-term	Male	18.3	15.0	-	9.7	6.7	15.6	28.0	3.7
	Female	24.7	28.0	4.7	16.2	15.1	33.8	28.7	3.7
Self-employed	Male	1.4	4.2	4.8	9.1	2.7	5.6	9.3	16.7
	Female	1.1	2.0	1.2	6.8	5.5	1.3	10.2	9.3
No contract	Male	-	1.7	17.9	5.5	17.3	10.0	10.3	19.4
	Female	-	2.0	18.6	5.4	9.6	9.1	8.3	9.3
Other flexible	Male	11.3	4.1	17.8	8.4	5.3	14.4	1.9	2.8
	Female	6.8	7.0	5.0	5.4	5.4	24.6	0.9	2.9

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

4. YOUNG PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS OF FLEXIBILITY OF WORK

Given the country differences in young people's patterns of flexibility of work, the HWF survey explores young people's own perceptions of the impact of flexible work on their integration into the labour market. From young people's self as-

essment of work autonomy and potential flexibility to their levels of income and degrees of satisfaction, the HWF survey suggests that flexibility of work can have different meanings in young people's integration into the labour market.

4.1. Work autonomy

Generally speaking respondents in Western countries enjoy higher levels of work autonomy than those in Central and South-East countries, which is consistent with the findings of Paoli et al (2002). Correspondingly young people from the Netherlands, Sweden and UK report having more control over their work than their counterparts in central and south east countries in terms of working hours, working schedule and overtime work. Table 11 shows that the Netherlands demonstrates an even higher proportion of young people than Sweden and the UK who have control or partial control over their work, with two thirds or more having control over working hours in particular, although they have less control as compared with older age groups in their own country. Young people in Sweden have a higher share (80 per cent) in deciding overtime work than other countries as well as older generations in their own country. Less than half of young people in the UK have control or partial control over their work, except for overtime work.

In Central and South-East countries young people have achieved much less work autonomy as illustrated in Table 11. Bulgaria shows the lowest level of young people's control over work. Less than a quarter can have a say in deciding working hours and working schedule and a little higher proportion (30 per cent) have control or partial control over their overtime work, which is half of those in western countries. Comparatively speaking, Slovenia suggests a higher level of young people's work autonomy among central and south east countries with over 40 per cent having some power in deciding one's own working time and nearly 40 per cent in deciding working schedule.

It is suggested that respondents' control over work is related to their educational level (Jager 2002). To some extent Table 12 confirms this find-

ing. With the exception of South East countries young people at tertiary level of education seem to have a higher level of work autonomy in all the three aspects. From another angle, as discussed earlier there are much more young people in the three western countries who received higher education than those in central and south east countries, which is in line with the higher level of work autonomy of young people in western countries.

It is also suggested that there are few differences between full-timers and part-timers in job autonomy and control (Fagan and Burchell 2002). However the HWF survey provides diverse patterns from a comparative perspective in work autonomy as related to different employment status. Table 13 shows on the whole young full-timers in the three western countries have more control than part-timers over their work, with the exception of part-timers in the UK having greater autonomy over their working hours (63 per cent as compared with 45 per cent of full-timers). The Netherlands has slightly more young part-timers who said having control or partial control over working schedule and overtime work. In Hungary and south east countries, on the other hand, more young part-timers report having work autonomy than full-timers. In fact full-timers appear to have less control over their work than part-timers and casual workers in central and south east countries, although their numbers are small due to the fact that part-time working is not an important source of employment in these transitional economies as in western countries. Interestingly young casual workers generally report a higher level of work autonomy than full-timers and part-timers. This may indicate that flexible work can, to some extent, increase the level of work autonomy, in particular in transitional economies.

Table 11. Work autonomy by age (per cent of age saying 'I decide' and 'Employer and I decide')

Decision on:	Western			East Central			South East	
	NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
Number of hours you work								
18-29	66	54	49	32	29	42	20	28
30-49	79	61	54	31	36	34	26	31
50-65	69	50	53	29	46	49	21	74
General working schedule								
18-29	60	55	39	25	31	39	24	28
30-49	75	66	53	31	39	34	27	31
50-65	67	59	49	33	48	45	23	72
Overtime work								
18-29	79	80	58	47	43	48	30	39
30-49	84	79	65	48	44	43	31	41
50-65	84	75	64	50	50	49	28	77

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

Table 12. Work autonomy of young people with tertiary level of education (per cent of saying 'I decide' and 'Employer and I decide')

Decision on:	Western			East Central			South East	
	NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
Number of hours you work	71	68	44	44	63	63	12	28
General working schedule	71	67	51	41	69	54	12	26
Overtime work	81	85	62	59	69	47	41	49
N =	53	62	46	44	19	18	51	45

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

Table 13. Work autonomy of young people by employment (per cent of saying 'I decide' and 'Employer and I decide')

Decision making by employment	Western			East Central			South East	
	NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
Number of hours you work								
Full time employment	72	57	45	21	23	39	8	14
Part time employment	68	32	63	-	33	-	8	31
Casual work	-	63	*	*	*	74	-	47
General working schedule								
Full time employment	53	56	42	15	26	34	10	16
Part time employment	56	46	38	-	33	-	16	25
Casual work	-	56	-	-	*	78	*	44
Overtime work								
Full time employment	79	84	66	42	39	39	20	26
Part time employment	83	71	57	*	29	-	25	56
Casual work	-	77	*	-	*	63	*	50
<i>Full time employment N =</i>	89	143	96	217	101	74	138	135
<i>Part time employment N =</i>	38	43	33	6	10	1	14	17
<i>Casual work N =</i>	-	23	4	2	3	19	3	39

Note: * The data is not included as the number is too small to be representative.

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

4.2. Potential flexibility

As discussed elsewhere (Kovacheva and Tang 2002), young people show more willingness than older age groups to be flexible in work. The HWF survey asked questions to examine potential for flexibility. For example: imagine that you had no job and could get a new one only under certain conditions, or imagine that you were offered a new job with twice the salary you have now, would you be willing to work more than 40 hours per week, move to another settlement, accept less attractive work conditions, etc. Under both conditions a higher proportion of young people than older generations in western and

east central countries would be willing work more hours per week and to move to another place to work, as suggested in Table 14. Whilst more young people would accept less attractive work conditions if they were paid twice the salary as compared with older age groups in these countries, less young people would do so even if they had no job. However the age difference is not prominent with young people in Bulgaria, though there is a higher share of young people willing to accept all these working conditions if a new job offered twice the salary.

Table 14. Potential for flexibility by age (per cent of age saying 'maybe' and 'yes')

Under certain conditions	Western countries*		Central and South East countries*		
	NL N=1007	UK N=941	CZ N=1556	HU N=1166	BG N=1806
If no job and could get one					
<i>Willing to work more than 40 hours per week</i>					
18-29	52	79	74		87
30-49	40	64	72		89
50-65	28	53	62		71
<i>Move to another settlement</i>					
18-29	55	76	55	57	60
30-49	46	61	38	46	56
50-65	35	48	24	24	35
<i>Accept less attractive work conditions</i>					
18-29	38	55	52	57	61
30-49	43	51	57	61	67
50-65	28	45	52	39	56
If a new job offered twice the salary					
<i>Willing to work more than 40 hours per week</i>					
18-29	59	86	89		93
30-49	44	71	84		92
50-65	32	58	60		74
<i>Move to another settlement</i>					
18-29	55	83	69	69	68
30-49	47	68	60	50	62
50-65	30	49	36	26	38
<i>Accept less attractive work conditions</i>					
18-29	49	75	76	69	71
30-49	39	63	71	63	72
50-65	21	45	58	39	56

Note: *No available data on Sweden, Slovenia and Romania, and working hours in Hungary.

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

On the other hand there exists a larger gender gap in young people's potential for flexibility, in particular the potential for working more than 40 hours per week as illustrated in Table 15. Under both conditions young women appear less likely to work more hours and a remarkable gender gap can be found with the Netherlands, where nearly twice as many young men than young women would be willing to work more than 40 hours per week. It is followed by the UK and Czech Republic. One of the main reasons that young women are less willingly to work more hours is certainly related to women's care responsibilities, in particular childcare. As discussed elsewhere (Cousins and Tang 2002b), in the Netherlands and UK the presence of dependent children has a considerable impact on mothers' working hours. The proportions of part-timers rise to 80 per cent and 58 per cent of mothers respectively as compared to 39 per cent and 30 per cent respectively of women without children.

In Central and South East countries the low levels of wages meant that average living standards were premised on two full-time earner families (Pollert 1995) and part-time working has not been widely used by mothers as a way of combining work and family. In the Bulgarian context of a dramatic decline in living standards, there is a strong desire to work even longer hours because of the need to earn more money (Cousins and Tang 2002c). Therefore more young women in Bulgaria as compared with in other countries are willing to work more hours per week, though their share is not as high as young men in their own country. However young Bulgarian women, like their counterparts in the UK and east central countries, seem to be less flexible with respect to the change of settlement whereas young women in the Netherlands are as likely as their opposite sex to move to another settlement because of the change of workplace. Under both conditions young men are more willingly to accept less attractive work conditions in all countries.

Table 15. Potential for flexibility of young people by gender (per cent of age saying 'maybe' and 'yes')

Under certain conditions	Western countries*				Central and South East countries*						
	NL		UK		CZ		HU		BG		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
If no job and could get one											
Willing to work more than 40 hours per week	71	38	96	61	86	60			90	84	
Move to another settlement	55	55	85	66	59	50	62	52	70	50	
Accept less attractive work conditions	41	36	64	46	57	47	69	53	66	55	
If a new job offered twice the salary											
Willing to work more than 40 hours per week	83	42	94	77	93	84			95	91	
Move to another settlement	57	54	91	75	73	65	75	64	78	58	
Accept less attractive work conditions	51	48	85	64	81	71	76	63	76	65	
	N =	76	110	99	123	226	233	118	138	217	237

Note: *No available data on Sweden, Slovenia and Romania, and working hours in Hungary.

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

4.3. Income and income sources

In this section, we analyse the level and forms of income that young people make from flexible work and other sources. Generally speaking young people have lower income than older gen-

erations in all the eight countries except for the Czech Republic, as Table 5 suggests. Only 15 per cent of young people in the Czech Republic have a low income as compared with over half in the

UK and Hungary, around 40 per cent in the Netherlands, Sweden, Romania and Slovenia and nearly 30 per cent in Bulgaria. The Czech Republic also demonstrates that 37 per cent of young people have high income, not only more than respondents in older age groups of 30-49 (34 per cent) and 50-65 (23 per cent) in their own country but also much higher than young people in all the other countries. On the other hand the UK shows the least share of young people with high income, only 3 per cent. Sweden has slightly over 10 per cent, the Netherlands, Hungary and Slovenia around 15 per cent and Bulgaria and Romania over 20 per cent.

The examination of income sources helps with a better understanding of the income gap among young people in different countries. Ap-

parently more young people in the three Western countries have income from wage or salary with two thirds in the Netherlands and over half in both Sweden and the UK as indicated in Table 6. However the Czech Republic and Slovenia show about twice as many young people with income from self employment and additional jobs as well as other sources than in other countries. While around one third of young people in Sweden and the UK receive social benefits such as unemployment benefit, grant for education and other social transfers (child benefit, parental leave, etc.), only less than 15 per cent of young people in south east countries have income from social benefits. Furthermore, there is much higher share of young people with no income during the last month in all Central and South East countries.

Table 16. Income by age (per cent)

Income in quartiles	Western			East Central			South East	
	NL N=1007	S N=1284	UK N=941	CZ N=1556	HU N=1166	SL N=839	BG N=1806	RO N=1524
18-29								
Low	40	40	53	15	53	37	29	39
Mid-low	24	25	33	18	13	20	25	16
Mid-high	20	24	11	30	18	29	25	21
High	15	11	3	37	16	14	21	25
30-49								
Low	33	19	42	18	22	15	21	26
Mid-low	14	18	37	22	20	26	24	19
Mid-high	14	28	13	26	27	23	26	20
High	39	35	9	34	32	37	30	36
50-65								
Low	39	23	52	30	14	21	27	18
Mid-low	12	21	33	28	37	28	29	29
Mid-high	11	32	10	19	24	25	23	26
High	38	25	5	23	26	26	21	27

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

Table 17. Selected income sources of young people (per cent)

Income sources last month	Western			East Central			South East	
	NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
Wage or salary	67	51	53	33	43	37	38	36
Self employed earnings	4	2	4	5	3	-	3	-
Additional jobs	1	3	1	5	2	9	2	5
Unemployment benefit	1	4	4	4	4	4	6	7
Grant for education	11	18	7	-	7	9	-	1
Other social transfers	7	14	20	22	13	12	6	3
Private transfers	-	2	4	8	-	9	2	14
Other sources	3	4	4	7	4	8	2	2
No income	3	2	-	8	22	9	17	26

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

Given that there is larger proportion of young people with income from wage or salary in the three western countries, however, there are less of them participating in full-time employment as compared with those in central and south east countries. Table 7 suggests that the Czech Republic shows the highest share of young wage earners in full-time jobs (91 per cent), followed by Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria with over 80 per cent. Slovenia shows less than 1 per cent of young wage earners in part-time work whereas it has much higher share of them working on fixed contract (27 per cent). With respect to casual work, more young wage earners in Romania and Sweden with 6 and 5 per cent respectively, as compared with other countries, are actually employed casually.

On the other hand the UK is prominent in having slightly over one fifth of young wage earners in part-time jobs with the Netherlands and Sweden behind it, 17 and 16 per cent respectively. The trend of more young people being involved in part-time work indicates the increasing casualisation of the youth labour market in western countries, which has reduced the possibilities for young people to make an early transition to adult independence, as in the UK (Rubery 1996, Rubery et al. 1999). The fact that 86 per cent of young people in the UK have an income at low and mid-low levels confirms Rubery's (1999) argument that young people are only partially integrated into wage work.

Table 18. Young people's income from wage by selected types of employment (per cent)

Wage from	Western			East central			South East	
	NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
FT employment	57	79	69	91	89	64	83	87
PT employment	17	16	21	3	8	-1	8	5
Fixed contract work	*20	-	2	1	-	27	5	5
Casual work	-	5	2	-	-	2	-	6

Note: *Among 20 per cent of working on fixed contract in NL slightly over half are full-time workers.

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

4.4. Satisfaction with work

The HWF survey records high work satisfaction levels of respondents consistent with other research studies. However, young people feel less satisfied than older age groups with their work in general and their levels of satisfaction vary in different country contexts.

Young people in the Netherlands demonstrate the highest level of satisfaction (over 85 per cent) with all the listed aspects of work in Table 19, which is even higher than older age groups in

their own country, particularly in terms of duration of contract and hours of work. They are followed by young people in the UK with over 80 per cent satisfied with their main work, stability of work and location of work, a higher proportion than older age groups in their country as well. Sweden presents a lower level of satisfaction of young people with all aspects of work, around 60 per cent or less, which is also lower than their older generations.

Table 19. Subjective satisfaction by age (per cent of age saying 'very satisfied' and 'somewhat satisfied')

Satisfaction with	Age group	Western			East Central			South East	
		NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
Main work	18-29	89	59	83	62	60	73	63	45
	30-49	90	77	83	66	57	68	74	52
	50-65	91	71	78	61	68	74	74	27
Stability of work	18-29	85	60	83	60		68	54	42
	30-49	84	71	79	65		65	58	53
	50-65	85	64	82	67		70	64	29
Duration of contract	18-29	88	55	64	59	83	58	61	39
	30-49	81	67	70	65	80	73	59	51
	50-65	77	63	63	62	84	68	65	25
Hours of work	18-29	90	52	79	51	65	67	75	43
	30-49	88	59	79	62	62	68	75	52
	50-65	84	57	75	64	66	64	82	29
Location of work	18-29	88	60	87	68	75	83	76	48
	30-49	84	79	84	71	79	83	78	55
	50-65	87	70	84	77	80	86	85	32
Earnings	18-29	58	41	55	39	35	50	45	30
	30-49	78	49	62	37	23	35	39	28
	50-65	74	44	63	39	31	32	36	16
The way you live	18-29	87	85	86	80	54	85	35	45
	30-49	93	87	81	82	39	75	39	35
	50-65	96	90	86	92	36	77	36	32

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

Among Central and South East countries a higher share of young people in Slovenia have satisfaction with their work in general as compared with their counterparts in other countries, though less than 60 per cent are satisfied with their duration of work contract. Young people in Romania report the lowest level of satisfaction, less than 50 per cent in all aspects of work. The Czech Republic and Bulgaria suggest a similar pattern, that is, less young people than older people are satisfied with work in general whereas Hungary does not show much age difference with respect to levels of satisfaction with work.

Table 19 also illustrates the age difference in perception of satisfaction with earnings and the way people live. Although more young people in the Netherlands and UK, 58 and 55 per cent respectively, than in other countries are satisfied with their earnings, young people in Western countries have a lower level of satisfaction with earnings than old people. In contrast more young people in Central and South East countries feel satisfied with earnings than older age groups. A similar pattern is with the level of satisfaction with the way people live, though the share of young people is slightly less than older people in the Czech Republic and Bulgaria. If it is taken into account that flexibility of both working time and conditions is typical for young people in Central and South-East countries, as discussed earlier, it could be argued that young people in transition countries can benefit from flexible jobs by earning a higher income than their older generations.

From a gender perspective, the Netherlands shows the least gender gap in terms of levels of satisfaction apart from young women's less satisfied feelings with earnings, 53 per cent as compared with 65 per cent of young men. As can be expected, Table 20 displays a much higher share of young women (95 per cent) reporting satisfaction with hours of work in the Netherlands. The gender difference is not so pronounced in young people's satisfaction with work in the UK as well where more women than men are satisfied with location of work (89 per cent as compared with 74

per cent). Young women in Sweden appear to be less satisfied than their opposite sex with work in general. With the exception of Hungary, the gender difference is illustrated in all listed aspects of work in all the other Central and South East countries and the gap is larger in particular in south east countries. In Hungary young women seem to have a higher level of satisfaction than young men with duration and location of work, and earnings. It is also interesting to note more young women than young men in Sweden, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania feel satisfied with the way they live, although there remains larger gender gap in satisfaction with work in Sweden, Bulgaria and Romania.

To conclude, young people's perceptions of flexibility of work and levels of satisfaction with work vary in different country contexts. In general young people in Western countries report a higher level of work autonomy than their counterparts in central and South East countries. However in the western context young full-timers have more control over work than part-timers whilst in central and south east countries it is young people involved in part-time or casual work that report a higher level of work autonomy. This indicates that flexibility of work can increase the level of work autonomy, particularly in transition countries. Young people in most countries show more willingness than older generations to work flexibly with the exception of Bulgaria where there is not much age difference in potential for flexibility. On another hand, young men display greater potential for less attractive work conditions in all countries whereas young women appear less likely to work more hours than young men in all countries. The gender difference here reflects some key issues in young women's labour market integration. The fact that more young people in Central and South East countries have high income than their counterparts in western countries also suggests that young people in the western context have not been fully integrated into the wage work. This can be seen with young people in western countries having a lower level of satis-

faction with earnings than older people in their countries whereas more young people in Central and South East countries have satisfaction with earnings than older generations. Nevertheless, with the exception of Romania, around or over 60 per cent (with over 80 per cent in the Netherlands and UK) of young people in all the countries are satisfied with their main work. Apart from the

South East countries and Hungary, over 80 per cent of young people in all the rest countries report satisfaction with the way they live. Therefore flexible work can be seen as a way for labour market integration of young people, in particular in transition countries as young people in western countries may face the casualisation and low pay for a long run in a flexible labour market.

Table 20. Subjective satisfaction of young people by gender (per cent of age saying 'very satisfied' and 'somewhat satisfied')

Satisfaction with	Gender	Western			East central			South east	
		NL	S	UK	CZ	HU	SL	BG	RO
Main work	Male	89	62	83	64	59	75	65	51
	Female	89	56	84	60	60	72	61	39
Stability of work	Male	86	64	84	59	*	74	66	44
	Female	85	56	83	58	*	59	41	39
Duration of work	Male	87	58	68	61	80	65	66	44
	Female	89	51	61	56	85	50	55	35
Hours of work	Male	84	59	81	52	77	69	74	46
	Female	95	45	76	50	63	64	77	39
Location of work	Male	86	63	74	71	67	82	77	53
	Female	90	57	89	65	83	85	75	44
Earnings	Male	65	43	56	40	23	51	43	37
	Female	53	38	53	38	52	49	36	24
The way you live	Male	89	83	89	86	50	86	33	44
	Female	85	87	84	75	57	83	36	46

Note: *No available data on stability of work in Hungary.

Source: HWF Survey 2001 – Unified international data collection

5. CONCLUSIONS: THE PROSPECTS FOR YOUTH LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION THROUGH FLEXIBLE WORK

The current social change affects strongly the world of work which young people face. Our research shows that among young people in Europe there is a discernible trend toward a rise in labour flexibility. The most common patterns of such employment among young people are working part-time, with irregular schedules and on non-standard legal conditions – fixed-term, on a call or fee-only basis or without any contract. The youngest and the oldest age cohorts are the most flexible workers. However, the patterns of flexibility among the two transitional groups – in and out of the labour market – are not simple mirror images. For the oldest age group the dominant flexible forms are working at home, in self-employment, on a fee basis, aside with part-time work, which is usually with longer hours than among young people.

For younger people who are making the transition from school to work flexible employment has not only different forms but also different meanings. In modern societies this transition is no longer a linear one-dimensional track and young people combine work and studies when passing through the stages and forms of the education system. The demands for life long learning will prolong this sharing between education and employment to encompass young people's movement through the stages of their working career. When societies are moving towards a knowledge-based economy the flexible forms of fixed-term contracts and reduced working-hour jobs might be intermediary steps along the road to stable employment and full labour market integration.

Economic and cultural globalisation processes are changing established patterns of social inclusions and exclusions. Not all young people experience flexible work in similar patterns with similar consequences. The flexible working schedule and hours per week, and non-standard contracts are most typical for young people still in education, which suggests that such flexible jobs

are a transitory pattern of work, providing an additional and temporary source of income, as well as a way for accumulating skills and work experience. Among two other categories, that is young women and the low qualified, flexible working time is also widely spread. For young women the primary pattern is to work fewer hours, so that they can have time for their families whereas their schedule patterns and contractual conditions are the same as for young men. For the lowest qualified – with primary education – flexibility in terms of working time and work contract is high and looks as a permanent rather than a transient pattern of employment. This is the group, which bears the greatest risks of labour market failure and social exclusion. Young farmers are another highly flexible group among youth, experiencing traditional rather than modern patterns of non-standard employment. For them, even to a greater extent than for the other youth groups, the prospects for social integration depend upon the social context of their work – the economic development, welfare policies and cultural norms of their own countries.

Rather than eliminating economic and cultural differences, globalisation in European societies changes established patterns of social inequalities and creates new ones. Our research shows that the spread of work with reduced hours in Western countries has led to higher labour market participation of youth and lower levels of unemployment. In countries such as the Netherlands where part-time work is not very different from full-time work in terms of qualification level and social protection, though there is a big gap from the gender perspective, the concentration of young people in this form of flexible work is not more pronounced than that of other age groups. In Sweden where the universal social protection has permitted less flexibilisation of work in terms of reduced working time or non-standard contracts, the gathering of young people into such jobs is more manifested than that of

prime age workers. The level of flexibilisation of young people's employment is higher in countries with liberal welfare regimes such as the UK, where besides the part-time jobs the new flexible contracts and work without a contract are wide spread. On their part, youth in the countries with the lower living standards, which are liberalising their economies, have more flexible jobs in terms of working schedules and employment conditions, although less in terms of part-time jobs than in the advanced economies in Western Europe. Most often they work over time and without a legally binding contract. In Bulgaria where the spread of part-time work is very low, flexibilisation of employment conditions goes hand in hand with high levels of youth unemployment reaching a third of the age group. In Romania informalisation of work is greater as many young people are pushed away from urban areas with the collapse of industries and into traditional agricultural work.

While we know that greater flexibility in the labour market means greater opportunities for the young to avoid unemployment, we are sure that it does not unanimously raise the career prospects, social security and in general the chances for labour market integration for all. We do not have enough data to conclude categorically to what extent this flexibility is a chosen option by young people or due to labour market constraints. Young people in the three Western countries report higher levels of work autonomy, satisfaction with life in general and with their work and its stability. Yet in all those countries but particularly in Sweden they are dissatisfied with their earnings and high proportions (between 40 and 53 per cent) belong to the lowest income quartiles. The prevailing low incomes of young people in the UK suggest that staying in the flexible segments of the labour market for long periods does not make them fully integrated into the wage work. It seems that even in the Netherlands young people do not fully profit from the 'flexicurity' of the Polder model (Stauber et al, forthcoming). Young people tend to participate in the more precarious

types of flexible employment, particularly in jobs 'on-call' basis and with 'zero-hours' contracts. This situation underprivileges youth, as these jobs are with less career prospects and lower pay.

For Eastern European countries where part-time and over-time work is usually less protected and often unprotected at all, it seems a forced solution rather than individual choice of young people. The three East Central countries seem to offer greater autonomy to young people in their work than the two South East countries. Youth in Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Hungary express higher satisfaction with their main work, its stability, forms of contract, duration and life in general than youth in Bulgaria and Romania. While in all transition countries with the exception of the Czech Republic young people have lower income than the older generations and all have significant groups with 'no income' (in Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary reaching from a fifth to a quarter of youth), at the same time Bulgaria, Romania and the Czech Republic have high shares of young people belonging to the highest income quartile in their countries. It seems that particularly in the Czech Republic economic and welfare reforms work in the same direction opening up more resources for young people and their labour market integration. In other countries, most strongly in the two Balkan countries, the slow and inconsistent liberalisation of the labour market create greater inequalities. Thus in these countries for some young people flexible work serves as a way for earning higher incomes than the older generations while others are unable to profit from it and remain in greater poverty and insecurity.

In the transition countries as a whole those on flexible contracts have greater work autonomy and often higher satisfaction with working time and their incomes. The HWF survey, as well as previous studies (Roberts et al 1999) suggest that young people accept this type of work, preferring it both to unemployment and to low-paid and dead-end permanent jobs. Young people commonly look upon flexible work as a transitional

pattern in their career and hope for a better future when their country's economy will improve and create more demanding jobs with higher pay and higher qualifications. For many of them part-time jobs are a form of financial support during studies at time of a boom in higher education. It is difficult to say now whether this strategy is well grounded and beneficial in the long run as in countries with liberal welfare regimes such as the USA and Australia part-time work is predominantly low-grade, semi-skilled and unskilled. For casual employees in particular it acts as a trap rather than as a bridge to more secure employment (Burgess and Campbell, 1998, Campbell, 2000).

At present work flexibility is viewed by young people in Europe positively as a temporary solution during their life-stage transitions. Even

precarious jobs act as channels for social integration, providing experience, skills and social contacts for the young, when, however, they can rely on strong family support, both financially and emotionally. For others the prolonged stay in low paid insecure jobs might create feelings of isolation and marginalisation. The integrative potential of flexible jobs for young people depends strongly on the flexible but secure structures the state and society can provide for their education, employment and life transitions. In order these patterns of work to be real stepping stones to the desired more qualified, prestigious and secure jobs, social policy and youth work can assist youth in building their careers while recognising their subjective motivation in search of the desired work-life combinations.

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