

# Chapter Nine

## ►► HOUSEHOLDS, WORK AND FLEXIBILITY Survey Comparative Report

### **Working Time, Flexibility and Family Life in the UK, the Netherlands and Sweden**

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## INTRODUCTION

The 'Households, Work and Flexibility' (HWF) project addresses several issues at the forefront of current policy and academic debate in Europe. The first of these concerns policies to promote flexible employment in Europe as a means to increase the competitiveness of national economies. Whilst the promotion of a flexible labour market has been an important part of the policy process for two decades in the UK, flexibility of work has now been incorporated into one of the pillars of the European employment strategy (1998-2002). That is, under the third pillar of encouraging adaptability, the social partners are invited to implement flexible working arrangements. However, in recognition that flexible employment may create ghettos of disadvantaged jobs (O'Reilly 1996) the employment guidelines also make reference to achieving the required balance between flexibility and security and increasing the quality of work (European Commission 2001).

A second issue, related to the increase in work flexibility, is the increased diversity of working time in the different member states (OECD 2001, Anxo and O'Reilly 2000, Mutari and Figart 2001). There is, for example, a greater dispersion of part-time working, unpredictable or irregular working and unsocial hours, with an associated decline of the full-time, standard working week. Nevertheless, national differences in working hours are still related to differences in national systems for regulating working hours either by legislation or through collective bargaining (*ibid.*).

A third issue, now the subject of extensive academic debate, concerns differences in gendered working time regimes across the member states (for example, Rubery et al. 1998, 1999, Fagan 2001, Mutari and Figart 2001, O'Reilly and Fagan 1998). Whilst gender time differences are found in all labour markets, reflecting divisions of labour in the domestic sphere, the extent of these differences also depend on national regulatory frameworks, as well as on the nature of the welfare state and the particular gender order underpinning it. Debate here has crystallised around the issue of part-time work for women and the extent to which this represents a means of integration into the labour market or rather contributes to the segregation of women into low waged parts of the economy with less entitlement to benefits, less possibility of promotion or training and wages which do not endow financial independence.

A fourth academic and policy concern which has developed is the impact of flexible working on family life. Research in both the USA and the UK has documented the stress imposed on family life by intensified workloads and long and unsocial hours, as well as the difficulties of parenting in the context of lack of child care and elderly care (for example, Hochschild 1997, Schor 1991, Sennett 1998, Burchell et al. 1999, Burghes 1997, Dex et al. 1999, DTI 2000, Ferri and Smith 1996, La Valle 2002). Whilst there has been recognition of the need to promote policies to reconcile paid work and family life in Sweden since the 1970s, only recently has this been a policy concern at EU

level and in the Netherlands and the UK. That is, such policies now form part of the fourth pillar of the European employment strategy and an important part of the policy agenda of the new Labour government in Britain. In the Netherlands public debate has centred on the Combination Scenario<sup>1</sup> which aims to promote the sharing of paid and unpaid work by men and women (Jager 2002).

This Chapter addresses a number of these academic and policy debates. The research findings are, therefore, highly relevant to a number of current issues, namely, working-time arrangements and preferences, the quality of part-time work, and work and family relations and conflicts.

While recognising the diverse meanings of the term flexibility, the project defined flexibility of work in terms of flexibility of time (for example, working hours), flexibility of place (for example, at home or various locations) and flexibility of contractual conditions of work (for example, different types of contract). However, in the west European surveys, flexibility of working time is far more important than flexibility of conditions, for example, temporary work. For instance, in the UK temporary fixed-term contract work constitutes only 5 per cent of the workforce, whilst other forms of temporary work such as agency work comprise less than 1 per cent. However, as we discuss below, one aspect of flexibility of conditions, namely whether respondents have a contract of employment or not, is salient.

In the Netherlands and Sweden fixed-term contract work is higher at 10 per cent and 7 per cent respectively, but part-time work for women is also the most important source of flexible work. Indeed, according to Eurostat data<sup>2</sup> these two

countries together with the UK have the highest part-time rates in the EU (Employment in Europe 2002). In contrast, in the central east European countries flexibility of working time and particularly part-time working is much less developed and is certainly not used as a means by which mothers can combine work and family life (see Chapter 7 in this Volume).

The nature of the HWF data, therefore, enables a comparison of working time arrangements and family life in the three west European societies, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK. These are particularly interesting countries to compare for the Netherlands and Sweden provide examples of working time regimes 'where part-time employment has been integrated into a regulated labour market environment in accordance with the principles of equal treatment in labour law and wage structures' (Fagan and Lallement 2000:45). In contrast, research in the UK has consistently demonstrated a greater polarisation between female full-time and part-time workers (for example, Breugel and Perrons 1996, Hakim 1996, 2000). The three countries also differ quite substantially in the extent to which welfare and social policies support the reconciliation of work and family life, leading to very different labour market outcomes for women.

The Chapter is organised as follows: first, there is consideration of working hours arrangements and working time preferences. Secondly, we focus on the conditions of work of the female part-time workforce in comparison with their full-time counterparts. In the third section of the Chapter we examine the extent to which work and family impinge on one another and the extent to which this generates conflict.

## 1. WORKING TIME ARRANGEMENTS

### 1.1. Working hours

The HWF survey confirms a highly gendered distribution of working hours in the UK and the Netherlands (see Figures 1 and 2 and Table 1). In

the UK there is a pronounced 'short hours for women' and 'long hours for men' pattern. Over two-thirds of men work more than 40 hours per

week and 29 per cent more than 50 hours (Table 1). At the other end of the spectrum, 44 per cent of women work less than 30 hours<sup>3</sup> and one quarter less than 20 hours per week. In the Netherlands too, women also work short hours with nearly three in five working less than 30 hours per week and more than one quarter under 20 hours.

However, it is noticeable from Figures 1 –3 that a higher proportion of men in the Netherlands and both men and women in Sweden report working exactly 40 hours per week than they do in the UK. These differences are interesting as they reflect variations in levels of working time regulation in each country. In the UK until the Working Time Regulations 1998 there was no statutory working time regulation, coupled with a relatively un-coordinated and decentralised collective bargaining system and/or the individualisation of working time through the employment contract (Anxo and O'Reilly 2000). As many studies have shown this has resulted in a greater dispersion of working hours in the UK, as well as an entrenched long-hours culture (for example, Anxo and O'Reilly 2000, OECD 2001). As Table 1 shows, despite the 1998 Regulations, over one third of British men work more than the 48 hours per week specified by the EU Working Time Directive compared with around one fifth of men in the Netherlands and Sweden.<sup>4</sup>

Sweden, on the other hand, shows a high concentration of working hours around the statutory or collectively agreed norm of 40 hours.<sup>5</sup> The Netherlands illustrates a 'double regulation' with statutory rules and strong regulation through collective bargaining, with a high dispersion of working time due to disparities between bargaining areas<sup>6</sup> (Anxo and O'Reilly 2000, OECD 2001).

Table 2 shows the working time of respondents with and without dependent children in the three countries. In all three countries fathers work longer hours than men without dependent children, although Swedish fathers are slightly less likely to work very long hours. It is also noticeable that two fifths of fathers in the UK work above the

48-hour threshold,<sup>7</sup> around twice as many in the Netherlands and SW.

In the Netherlands and the UK, the presence of 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 (compared to 39 per cent and 30 per cent respectively of women without children). Short part-time hours, that is, less than 20 hours per week, are also important for a significant minority of mothers in both countries, around two-fifths in the Netherlands and one third in the UK.<sup>8</sup>

In Sweden, however, the presence of dependent children does not have such a large impact on the proportions working less than 30 hours a week. Only a minority of mothers, 15 per cent, work less than 30 hours per week. Swedish mothers, therefore, work longer hours than their counterparts in the Netherlands and UK, for example, 85 per cent of mothers work over 30 hours compared to 21 per cent and 42 per cent in the Netherlands and the UK respectively. With respect to mothers of young children under the age of 6, the Netherlands and Sweden are mirror images of each other, in that 84 per cent of Swedish mothers with young children work full-time compared with 17 per cent in the Netherlands. In the UK the corresponding figure is one third of mothers with young children.

These differences reflect the well-known configuration of social policies in Sweden which support mothers in combining work and family life, namely, extensive and generous parental leave schemes when children are young and the provision of public childcare for those who demand it. Ellingsaeter (2000) notes that for Scandinavian countries generally there has been a marked decline of part-time hours among women, including mothers. This is due in part to increasing educational levels which are associated with higher rates of full-time employment and to women's increasingly continuous work patterns which are also linked with longer working hours.<sup>9</sup> In the UK and the Netherlands, on the other hand, paid parental leave and affordable childcare are much

less available, so that shortening the working week is one strategy available to mothers (see below and also Chapter 7 in this Volume).

These differences between the three countries are also reflected in how lone mothers fare in the

### 1.2. Unsocial hours

Consistent with other research (for example, La Valle et al. 2002), the HWF survey also showed that working overtime during 'unsocial' hours is fairly widespread among parents. As Table 3 and Figure 4 shows 40 per cent of fathers and nearly one third of full-time working mothers in the UK work overtime in the late afternoon and evenings at least once a week, and nearly one in five fathers worked overtime at night or at weekends. Similar proportions of fathers in the Netherlands and Sweden also worked overtime in the late afternoons/evenings, but they were less likely to work

### 1.3. Working time preferences

There is clearly a desire on the part of many parents in the UK to reduce their working hours in order to spend more time with their families. Around two-fifths of fathers and full-time working mothers wished to reduce their hours, although this rises to 55 per cent of fathers working more than 48 hours per week (Table 4). Two thirds of fathers who wished to reduce their hours gave as their reason the desire to spend more time with their families (Table 5). For full-time working mothers the corresponding proportion is 60 per cent. Quite high proportions of fathers in the Netherlands and Sweden also wished to reduce their working hours, although far fewer gave as their reason the desire to spend more time with their family. That is, half as many Swedish fathers than in the UK, and roughly one third as less Dutch fathers, gave family commitments as their reason for wishing to reduce their hours. Dutch and Swedish mothers too were also less likely to give family commitments as their reason for wanting to reduce their working hours.

labour market. Here we find very large differences, with at one extreme, nearly two-thirds of lone mothers in the UK working part-time compared with 5 per cent in Sweden. The corresponding figure for Dutch lone mothers is 57 per cent.<sup>10</sup>

at night and, in the case of Sweden, at the weekends. Similarly, full-time mothers in these two countries were less likely than their counterparts in the UK to work during these periods. In contrast, female part-timers in the UK are less likely than full-time men and women to work overtime during evenings, nights or weekends and this was also the case, in the main, in the Netherlands and Sweden. This supports the finding of Gallie et al. (1998) that part-timers, at least in the UK, are not particularly flexible with respect to their hours of work (see also Cully et al. 1999).

In contrast, the large majority of part-time mothers in the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK are content with the hours they work, 75 per cent, 68 per cent and 81 per cent respectively. With respect to the reasons given for their preference to work the same hours, again however, much higher proportions of part-timers in the UK gave as their reason 'the need to fulfil domestic commitments'. In Sweden, though, over one quarter (27 per cent) of female part-timers (with and without children) stated that they wished to work more hours per week (the majority in order to earn more money) indicating quite a high level of involuntary part-time working (see also Employment in Europe 2000:33).

In sum, parents' working time preferences in the UK are more closely related to family and domestic commitments than in either the Netherlands or Sweden. Many full-time British parents would like to reduce their hours to spend more time with their family, and part-time mothers demonstrate a preference for short hours because of their domestic commitments.

## 2. THE PART-TIME WORKFORCE

In this section of the Chapter we examine female part-time workers, their personal characteristics, job-related characteristics and aspects of their work history. Comparisons are made between female part-timers and both male and female full-time workers in each country. As the proportion of male part-timers is small in each country, analysis focuses on the female part-time workforce.

In all three countries higher proportions of part-timers have dependent children in comparison with full-time female workers, although part-timers in the UK have the highest proportion of children aged 7 to 15 years (Tables 5, 6 and 7). In the Netherlands very few full-timers (only 7 per cent) have children under age of 6. The modal age group is between 30-39 years in all three countries. However, with respect to education qualifications it is noticeable that female part-timers in the UK are much less well qualified than either the Netherlands or Sweden. Over half of part-timers in the UK have no or low qualifications (ISCED 1 and 2) compared to one quarter in Sweden and just 3 per cent in the Netherlands.

The average usual hours of work of part-timers in both the Netherlands and the UK are short at 17 hours per week. These short hours are associated with a high proportion of part-timers in receipt of a low personal income: that is, nearly three-quarters in both countries receive an income in the lowest quartile of the income distribution.<sup>11</sup> This compares with 30 per cent and 12 per cent of full-time British women and men respectively and 15 per cent of full-time Dutch women and just 4 per cent of Dutch men. In contrast, in Sweden only 13 per cent of part-timers earn a low income on this definition, reflecting the persistence of wage solidarity policies in this country despite changes to wages structures in recent years.

Quite high proportions of female part-timers in the Netherlands and the UK have some control over their hours (in that they can decide their own hours or decide together with their employer). This is particularly high in the Netherlands,

where over three quarters of both full-time and part-time female workers exercise control over their hours or negotiate with their employer.<sup>12</sup> In the UK, part-timers are more likely than full-timers to report some control over their working hours. However, this is much less the case for part-timers in Sweden. A higher proportion of female part-timers also show satisfaction with their job in general and as we saw earlier the large majority prefer to work their existing hours. In Sweden, however, slightly less part-timers are satisfied with their job than full-timers. It is also interesting that far fewer Swedish part-timers expressed satisfaction with their earnings than their counterparts in the other two countries. This is perhaps because of a conflict with prevailing norms of income equality both for individuals and within households as Strandh and Boje (2002) suggest.

In the UK an additional question enabled further analysis of respondents' work history (this question was not asked in the Netherlands and Sweden). As Table 5 shows British part-timers are particularly disadvantaged with respect to promotion, as male and female full-time workers are twice as likely as part-timers to have been promoted in the past 12 years.<sup>13</sup> However, there is little difference in the experience of unemployment in the past twelve years between part-timers and full-timers. Similar proportions of British part-timers and full-timers, around one third of all groups, had also attended a training or educational course in the past twelve months. More surprisingly, female part-timers in the Netherlands and Sweden fared less well in training or educational courses than full-time workers.

However, it is with respect to employment protection that we see the largest differences between the countries. Whilst the proportions with no contract of employment is negligible for all workers in Sweden and a small percentage of Dutch part-timers (6 per cent) as many as 27 per cent of female part-timers in the UK state that they have no contract of employment.<sup>14</sup> We can

also see substantial differences in job tenure of part-timers in the three countries. Over one quarter of the part-time workforce in the UK have been employed in their job for less than one year, and therefore do not qualify for employment protection.<sup>15</sup> This is twice as many as full-timers workers in the UK and also twice as many as their part-time counterparts in the Netherlands and

Sweden. Conversely, fewer part-timers in the UK have been in their current job for more than five years, compared again to either full-time men or women in the UK, or part-timers in the Netherlands and Sweden. It is also noticeable that less female part-timers in the UK express satisfaction with the duration of their contract (Table 5).

### 3. PERCEPTIONS OF FAMILY/WORK ARRANGEMENTS

In this section of the Chapter we consider the extent to which work and family impinge on one another and the extent to which this generates conflict. Respondents were asked if they had experienced the following in the past three months:

- Work makes it difficult for me to do household tasks
- Work makes it difficult for me to fulfil family responsibilities
- Family responsibilities prevented me from working adequately

Table 8 shows, unsurprisingly, that higher proportions of parents compared to non-parents in all three countries experience a conflict between work and family life, although this is less pronounced for Dutch parents. However, it is striking that in the UK fathers are more likely than mothers to state that work makes it difficult to do household tasks or fulfil family responsibilities. This is a rather unexpected finding given that mothers bear the major responsibility for childcare and domestic task, as we discuss in Chapter 7 this Volume and in an earlier paper (Cousins and Tang 2002a).<sup>16</sup> However, as Table 9 shows British fathers' experience of conflict between work and family life does appear to be related to their long working hours.

In the Netherlands there is little difference between fathers and mothers in the extent to which they experience a conflict between work and family life and overall the proportions who

report difficulties in combining work and family are somewhat lower than Sweden or the UK.

In contrast much higher proportions of mothers in Sweden than in the other two countries state that work makes it difficult to do household tasks or fulfil family responsibilities. As discussed in other chapters of this Volume (Cousins and Tang, Jager and Strandh), it is surprising that the experience of work/family conflict should be so high for mothers in Sweden, given the nature and extent of 'women-friendly' policies in that country. Tyrkkö (2002) in her review of the literature on this topic states that although Sweden has a 'social/political ideology which stresses equality and that parenthood and paid work should be possible to combine' in practice 'women are more anxious than men to integrate paid work with the rest of their lives. It is women who discuss the conflict between demands and ambitions at work and demands and ambitions outside work (ibid. :116-7)'. Tyrkkö suggests that women employ more strategies than men to combine work and family life and that these depend, among other things, on the 'life mode (work or family orientation), gender contract and life cycle'.

The HWF data suggests as well that such strategies also depend on the social and institutional structures in each society as well as the social and domestic circumstances in which people live. Thus, in the absence of policy supports to combine work and family life the majority of mothers in the Netherlands and the UK shorten their working hours. As Table 9 shows



the large majority of women working short hours (under 20 hours per week) state that they do not experience difficulties between work and family life (although this is less the case for those mothers working between 20-29 hours per week – a finding which needs more research). It

can be suggested here that women working short hours have already accommodated the demands of family life by reducing their working hours and are therefore less likely to experience work and family conflict (see also Ginn and Sandell 1997).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

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This Chapter has demonstrated that working time patterns in the UK exhibit a much greater dispersion for both men and women than either the Netherlands or Sweden. In the latter two countries there is a concentration around a statutory norm of 40 hours per week for male workers (and also for female workers in Sweden). In the UK there is much less of a peak at 40 hours, rather the dominant pattern is that of 'short hours for women and long-hours for men'. Further, it is noticeable that one third of men and two-fifths of fathers in the UK work more than the threshold of 48 hours per week specified in the EU Working Time directive. This is twice as many as in the Netherlands and Sweden. Respondents in the UK, especially parents, are also more likely than their counterparts in the Netherlands and Sweden to work unsocial hours, especially at night or weekends

With respect to the quality of part-time work, the evidence discussed above demonstrates that part-time work in the UK is disadvantageous in relation to promotion opportunities, and pay in comparison with full-time workers. However, the most noticeable difference between the three countries concerns employment protection. Much higher proportions of part-timers in the UK have no contract of employment or have been employed for less than one year and thereby do not have employment protection.

In the Netherlands part-time workers also suffer a large pay penalty compared with full-time workers and less part-timers had experienced education or training in the past year. In both the Netherlands and the UK, however, part-timers express satisfaction with their job in gen-

eral as well as their earnings and the large majority are content with their working hours. In Sweden part-time work does not suffer a pay penalty in the same way as it does in the Netherlands and the UK. Part-timers (those working less than 30 hours per week) constitute only a minority of women, including mothers, and cannot be described as a marginalized form of work in comparison with full-time workers. Nevertheless, as Strandh and Boje (2002) note, this does not mean that there is no evidence of less advantageous employment conditions for part-timers. There is, for example, evidence in the HWF data that working less hours than the norm (between 30 and 40 hours) results in somewhat less satisfaction with the job and particularly earnings, there is less control over hours of work and less opportunity to engage in training and education than full-timers. As we have also seen there is evidence of involuntary part-time working for over one quarter of part-timers. In all three countries, therefore, the HWF data suggests that there are disadvantageous conditions associated with part-time working although far fewer women are affected in Sweden, compared with the Netherlands and the UK, where the large majority of mothers work part-time.

Finally, with respect to the possibility of combining work and family life the Netherlands and Sweden could be said to provide 'institutionalised' solutions, which nevertheless still result in a gendered distribution of working time. In the Netherlands regulated and negotiated hours of work have resulted in a high degree of control over hours of work for both full-time and part-time workers. There is little difference between

fathers and mothers in the extent to which they experience a conflict between work and family life and overall the proportions who report difficulties in combining work and family are somewhat lower than Sweden or the UK. The solution of part-time hours for mothers, therefore, suggests a strong 'gender compromise' (Fagan and O'Reilly 1998). We could even call this an 'unchallenged' gender solution to working time, in which it is the accepted norm that mothers work part-time, and such work is not seen as atypical or flexible. Whilst the balance between work and care is high on the political agenda, as Wallace has remarked 'a gender bias is built into the system of reform' (2002: 20).

In Sweden, as has been well documented, the configurations of Swedish employment and welfare state policies have enabled women to combine work and family, attain financial independence and continuous lifetime employment. As we have also seen these policies mean that most mothers work between 30 -40 hours per week, longer hours than their counterparts in the NL and the UK. Surprisingly however, we also found that more mothers than in the other two countries report a conflict between family and work life. It

was suggested that although there is a social/political ideology of gender equality and equal participation at work, in reality this is still hard to implement and parenthood still remains a female problem.

The UK is an example of a 'non-institutionalised' and de-regulated response to working time. Men, and fathers in particular, work the longest hours in the three countries and this is complimented by their partners' part-time working hours. Mother's part-time hours are a response to the expectation of long hours working for full-time workers, the long working hours of their partners, and a lack of institutional support for combining work and family. The UK is also distinctive in the extent to which working hours preferences are related to family reasons. That is, the high proportions of parents who wish to reduce their working hours in order to spend more time with their families, or conversely the high proportions of mothers who chose to work part-time hours in order to meet domestic commitments. The finding that more fathers than mothers experience a conflict between work and family suggests the difficulties of parenting in the long hours and unsocial hours culture of the UK.

## NOTES

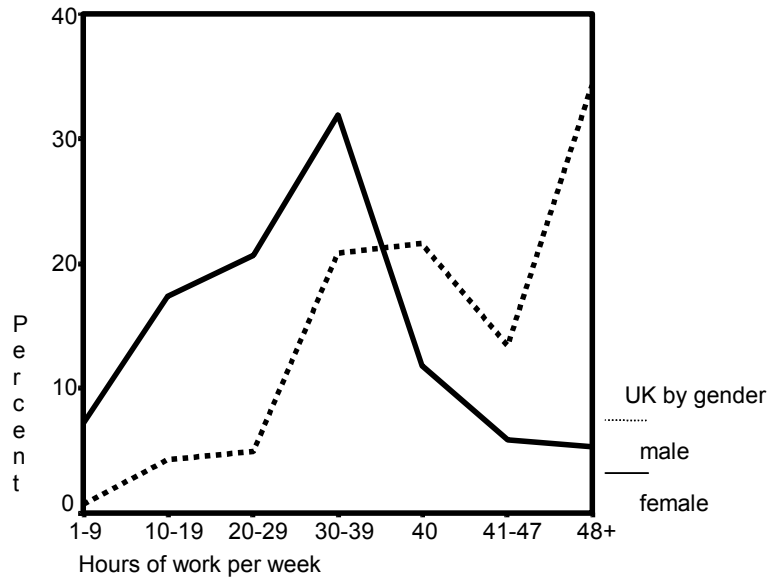
- 1 Recommended by The Task Force on Future Scenarios of the Redistribution of Unpaid Work 1997.
- 2 In 2001, female part-time employment in the Netherlands constituted 71 per cent of total female employment and the corresponding figures for Sweden and the UK were 36 per cent and 44 per cent respectively (Employment in Europe 2002).
- 3 We are defining working hours less than 30 per week as part-time work, in accordance with the OECD (1997) recommendation.
- 4 This is a higher proportion than that found among UK employees in the WERS 1998 by Cully *et al.* (1999). In this survey 22 per cent of employees worked more 48 hours per week.
- 5 The Working Hours Act (latest version 1982) laid down statutory weekly work hours at 40 hours in the 1970s. The collectively regulated working hours have followed that norm .
- 6 Maximum hours in the Netherlands are set down in the Working Hours Act 1996 and hours agreed are recorded in the Collective Labour Agreements for each industrial sector or company. The hours can then be specified in more detail for each company the working hours are fixed in the contract for each employee. The weekly and yearly working hours are the result of collective or individual agreements between employers and employees (Jager 2003). Grimshaw *et al.* 2000 describe the Netherlands as representative of 'negotiated flexibility' with respect to working time with a moderate

level of statutory regulation and a strong tradition of collective bargaining and other forms of negotiation between the social partners.

- 7 In the recent Joseph Rowntree Foundation study nearly one third of UK fathers worked over the 48 hours limit (La Valle *et al.* 2002)
- 8 In an earlier paper (Cousins and Tang 2002a) we were also interested in how different members of the family combine their working hours in the UK. . In the full-time/part-time earner family there is a tendency for the long working hours of fathers to be complemented by the short hours (under 20 per week) of their partners. Nearly one half of respondent fathers and their partners and two-fifths of respondent mothers and their partners have this working pattern. In families with two full-time working parents, we found that in a substantial minority of families both parents are working over 40 hours a week. That is, over one third of respondent fathers and their partners and one fifth of respondent mothers and their partners work more than 40 hours per week. Thus, while the 'short hours for women', 'long hours for men' pattern is common for many parents, a sizeable minority of parents in two full-timer earner households are working very long hours indeed.
- 9 Strandh and Boje (2002) also report that where working time flexibility models were introduced into the Swedish public sector this made it possible for part-time employees to increase the number of hours worked.
- 10 There are also large differences in the employment rates of lone mothers in the three countries, ranging from around three quarters of lone mothers in the Netherlands and Sweden to 50 per cent in the UK.
- 11 In the UK this was less than 1187 euros (£780) per month).
- 12 In their case study of working time in the health care organisations in the Netherlands Grimshaw *et al.* (2000) describe this as a true 'negotiated order' at a decentralised level' (page 341). Nurses and other staff discuss and negotiate their working time schedules with management staff. In other sectors annualised hours of work, working time accounts and time banks have also been introduced (Appelbaum 2002).
- 13 However, this also varies considerably between the sectors ranging from one in eight part-timers in the distribution and retail sector who had been promoted to one in three in the banking and finance sector.
- 14 Overall, the UK survey contained the highest proportion of respondents in the 8 partner countries who stated that they had no contract of employment. That is, 15 per cent of respondents in the UK stated that they had no employment contract. Elsewhere the proportions ranged from less than 1 per cent in Sweden to 10 per cent in Hungary. Furthermore, in the distribution, hotel and retail sector in the UK as high as 40 per cent of part-timers had no contract of employment.
- 15 Since 1999 workers who have worked for less than 12 months for their current employer do not qualify for protection against instant dismissal.
- 16 In an analysis of the HWF UK survey data presented in an earlier paper, we found that whilst there is evidence of a shift to more equal sharing of domestic tasks and childcare (especially in two full-time working parent families) the responsibility for childcare and domestic work was overwhelmingly taken by mothers (Cousins and Tang 2000a).

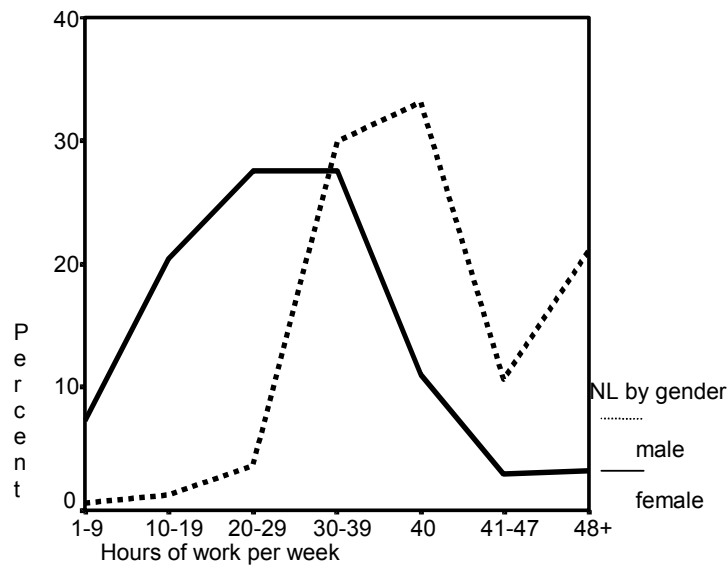
ANNEX

Figure 1. Hours of work per week by gender in the UK



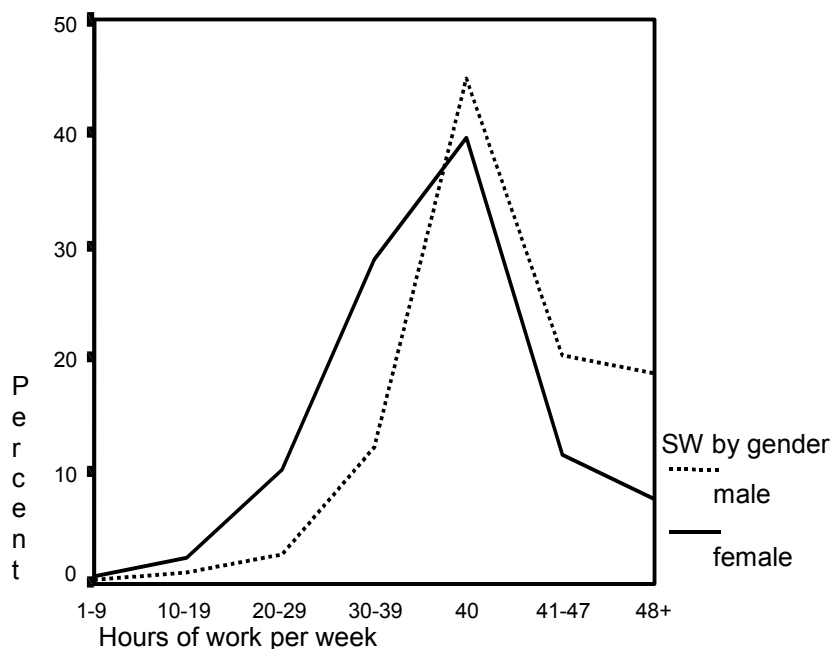
Source: HWF comparative data set

Figure 2. Hours of work per week by gender in the Netherlands



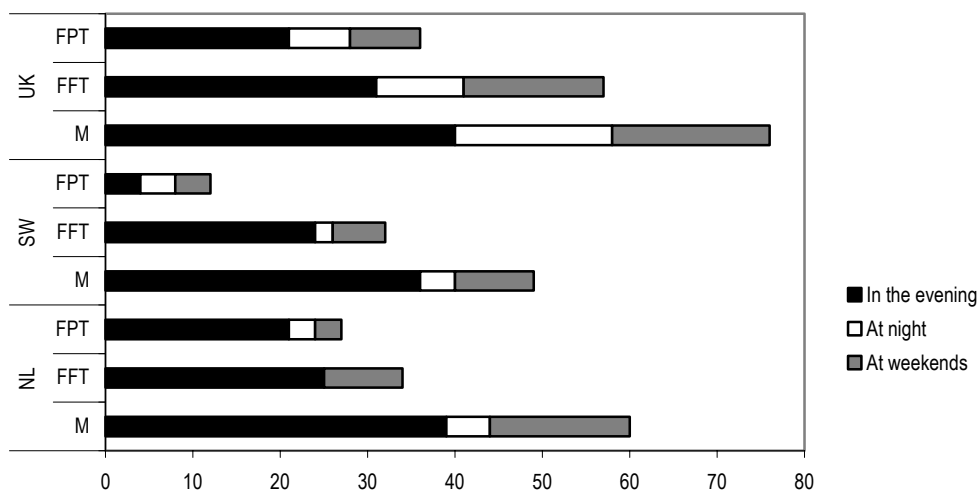
Source: HWF comparative data set

**Figure 3. Hours of work per week by gender in Sweden**



Source: HWF comparative data set

**Figure 4. Parents working 'unsocial' hours**



Source: HWF comparative data set

**Table 1. Usual weekly working hours of respondents in the UK, the Netherlands and Sweden (per cent of gender)**

Hours per week	UK		NL		SW	
	Male N=290	Female N=363	Male N=398	Female N=373	Male N=670	Female N=611
1 – 19	5	24	2	28	1.5	3
20 – 29	5	20	4	28	2.5	10
30 – 39	20	31	30	28	12	27
40 – 49	39	18	45	14	66	51
50 +	29	4	20	3	18	7
40 hours exactly	22	12	33	11	45	40
48 +	34	5	21	3	19	8

Source: HWF comparative data set

**Table 2. Working time of respondents with and without children in the Netherlands, Sweden and UK (per cent of gender)**

Country	Gender	Hours of work per week						
		1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	40 exactly	48+
NL	Fathers (N.=203)	1	1	26	50	22	40	23
	Men without children (N.=223)	2	6	33	41	17	28	20
	Mothers (N.=182)	39	41	15	5	1	3	1
	Women without children (N.=221)	20	19	36	20	4	17	4
SW	Fathers (N.=234)	1	1	13	69	17	44	17
	Men without children (N.=415)	2	3	12	63	19	46	20
	Mothers (N.=242)	4	11	34	47	5	38	5
	Women without children (N.=372)	2	9	26	54	9	41	9
UK	Fathers (N.=105)	2	4	18	43	32	20	40
	Men without children (N.=178)	7	5	22	36	27	23	31
	Mothers (N.=185)	31	27	29	9	4	7	4
	Women without children (N.=178)	17	13	33	26	5	17	7

Source: HWF comparative data set

**Table 3. Overtime work of respondents with and without children in the Netherlands, Sweden and UK (per cent of gender)**

Countries	Gender	Work hours	Works overtime at least once a week		
			In the evening	At night	At weekends
NL	Fathers (N.=203)	FT	39	5	16
	Men without children (N.=223)	FT	51	4	17
		PT			
	Mothers (N.=182)	FT	25	-	9
		PT	21	3	3
	Women without children (N.=221)	FT	40	5	14
PT		17	2	15	
SW	Fathers (N.=234)	FT	36	4	9
	Men without children (N.=415)	FT	30	4	7
		PT			
	Mothers (N.=242)	FT	24	2	6
		PT	4	4	4
	Women without children (N.=372)	FT	23	2	9
PT		17	4	11	
UK	Fathers (N.=105)	FT	40	18	18
	Men without children (N.=178)	FT	38	10	20
		PT			
	Mothers (N.=185)	FT	31	10	16
		PT	21	7	8
	Women without children (N.=178)	FT	36	15	17
PT		18	5	14	

Source: HWF comparative data set

**Table 4. Working hours preference of respondents with and without children in the UK, Netherlands and Sweden (per cent of gender)**

Country	Gender	Work hours	Working hours preference		Prefer same hours to fulfil domestic commitments	Prefer fewer hours to spend more time with family
			Same hours	Less hours		
NL	Fathers (N.=203)	FT	56	40	5	27
	Men without children (N.=223)	FT	55	43	1	14
	Mothers (N.=182)	FT	59	31	13	48
		PT	74	9	49	33
	Women without children (N.=221)	FT	59	34	13	26
		PT	67	16	27	15
SW	Fathers (N.=234)	FT	50	48	16	34
	Men without children (N.=415)	FT	59	37	9	15
	Mothers (N.=242)	FT	59	36	26	27
		PT	68	6	32	5
	Women without children (N.=372)	FT	59	35	7	10
		PT	58	8	10	3
UK	Fathers (N.=105)	FT	58	38	46	66
	Men without children (N.=178)	FT	68	26	14	40
	Mothers (N.=185)	FT	58	39	53	60
		PT	81	5	68	60
	Women without children (N.=178)	FT	65	31	24	30
		PT	79	5	29	67

Source: HWF comparative data set



**Table 5. Personal and work related characteristics of respondents in the UK (per cent of gender)**

Personal characteristics	Male FT	Female FT	Female PT
	>30 hrs N = 255	>30 hrs N = 199	<30 hrs N = 164
<i>Age</i>			
Av age (years)	39.2	39.6	40.2
Under 30	28	25	23
31-40	28	29	32
41-50	24	26	23
51-65	21	20	22
<i>Age of dependent children</i>			
Children under 6	21	16	33
Children aged 7-15	31	28	43
<i>Educational level</i>			
Higher (ISCED 5-6)	23	29	18
Middle (ISCED 3-4)	40	34	30
Low or no education (ISCED 1-2)	37	37	53
<i>Work related characteristics</i>			
No employment contract	9	6	27
Hours of work (mean)	46.3	39	17.2
Earning monthly income less than £780	12	30	72
Satisfied with job in general	80	82	88
Satisfied with duration of contract	68	74	65
Satisfied with earnings	60	59	65
Decides own hours or negotiates with employer	49	49	58
Additional education and training in past twelve months	32	34	31
<i>Work history</i>			
Duration of job less than one year	13	14	26
Duration of job between 1-5 years	31	39	37
Duration of job more than 5 years	56	47	38
Experience of promotion in past 12 years	35	33	17
Experience of unemployment at least once in past 12 years	18	12	11

Source: HWF comparative data set

**Table 6. Personal and work related characteristics of respondents in the Netherlands (per cent of gender)**

Personal characteristics	Male FT	Female FT	Female PT
	>30 hrs N = 377	>30 hrs N = 167	<30 hrs N = 206
<i>Age</i>			
Av age (years)	41.1	37.1	41.2
Under 30	16	34	16
31-40	35	30	32
41-50	27	22	31
51-65	22	14	21
<i>Age of dependent children</i>			
Children under 6	27	7	30
Children aged 7-14	23	16	34
<i>Educational level</i>			
Higher (ISCED 5-6)	45	54	31
Middle (ISCED 3-4)	52	46	67
Low or no education (ISCED 1-2)	3	0.6	3
<i>Work related characteristics</i>			
No employment contract	4	2	6
Hours of work (mean)	42	37	17
% in lowest income quartile	4	15	73
Satisfied with job in general	88	89	94
Satisfied with duration of contract	95	96	95
Satisfied with earnings	79	63	74
Decides own hours or negotiates with employer	72	75	78
Additional education and training in past twelve months	58	49	38
<i>Work history</i>			
Duration of job less than one year	9	14	12
Duration of job between 1-5 years	29	36	31
Duration of job more than 5 years	62	51	58

Source: HWF comparative data set

**Table 7. Personal and work related characteristics of respondents in Sweden (per cent of gender)**

Personal characteristics	Male FT >30 hrs N = 643	Female FT >30 hrs N = 532	Female PT <30 hrs N = 79
<i>Age</i>			
Av age (years)	40.5	40.4	41.5
Under 30	21	22	20
31-40	28	30	32
41-50	26	25	18
51-65	23	23	30
<i>Age of dependent children</i>			
Children under 6	20	18	23
Children aged 7-14	27	26	37
<i>Educational level</i>			
Higher (ISCED 5-6)	36	41	14
Middle (ISCED 3-4)	52	51	60
Low or no education (ISCED 1-2)	11	8	26
<i>Work related characteristics</i>			
No employment contract	.6	.2	1
Hours of work (mean)	43	40	21
% in lowest income quartile	24	17	13
Satisfied with job in general	87	88	84
Satisfied with duration of contract	77	81	74
Satisfied with earnings	62	53	41
Decides own hours or negotiates with employer	62	53	40
Additional education and training in past twelve months	38	45	27
<i>Work history</i>			
Duration of job less than one year	11	12	13
Duration of job between 1-5 years	33	33	29
Duration of job more than 5 years	56	56	60

Source: HWF comparative data set

**Table 8. Experience of work/family conflicts in the Netherlands, Sweden and UK (per cent of saying sometimes, often and always)**

Country	Work/family conflict	Working men without children	Working women without children	Working fathers	Working mothers
NL N=771	Work makes it difficult for me to do household tasks	39	42	44	45
	Work makes it difficult for me to fulfil family responsibilities	20	28	30	29
	Family responsibilities prevented me from working adequately	7	7	8	11
SW N=1281	Work makes it difficult for me to do household tasks	35	44	54	58
	Work makes it difficult for me to fulfil family responsibilities	29	38	48	50
	Family responsibilities prevented me from working adequately	7	8	14	13
UK N=646	Work makes it difficult for me to do household tasks	42	33	55	42
	Work makes it difficult for me to fulfil family responsibilities	24	22	45	38
	Family responsibilities prevented me from working adequately	15	8	25	12

Source: HWF comparative data set

**Table 9. Work/family conflicts experienced by parents in the UK, Netherlands and Sweden (per cent of saying sometimes, often and always)**

Hours of work per week	UK		NL		SW	
	Fathers N = 105	Mothers N = 185	Fathers N = 203	Mothers N = 182	Fathers N = 234	Mothers N = 242
Work makes it difficult for me to do some of household tasks that need to be done						
1-19	-	26	-	31	-	29
20-29	-	62	-	50	-	43
30-39	16	46	37	57	42	60
40-49	50	65	49	70	53	59
50+	85	57	51	-	78	93
Work makes it difficult to fulfil my responsibilities towards my family						
1-19	-	23	-	20	-	14
20-29	-	42	-	34	-	40
30-39	16	41	28	37	32	56
40-49	39	47	29	43	48	48
50+	68	57	41	80	68	85
My responsibilities towards my family prevented me from doing my work adequately						
1-19	-	11	-	10	-	14
20-29	-	22	-	12	-	3
30-39	11	15	5	13	19	15
40-49	20	12	10	-	13	9
50+	35	14	16	-	10	-

Source: HWF comparative data set

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