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Joint UNECE-Eurostat-ILO Seminar
on Measurement of the Quality of Employment
(Geneva, 27-29 May 2002)

**Work organisation, a dimension of job quality:
Data from the ad hoc module of the 2001 labour force survey in the EU**

Invited paper submitted by Eurostat¹

I. More and better jobs

1. Quality of employment to promote rising standards and ensure a more equitable sharing of progress became a focus of social policy in the EU since 2000. The Lisbon Council in March 2000 set the strategic goal to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. A few months later, the social policy agenda as a result of a wide-scale consultation of social partners, NGOs and committees determines a set of objectives and actions. Quality of work includes better jobs and a balance between working life and personal life. It implies better policies, fair remuneration, a work organisation adapted to the needs of both businesses and individuals. It is based on high skills, fair labour standards and decent levels of occupational health and safety and includes facilitating occupational and geographical mobility. Quality of social policy implies a high level of social protection, real opportunities for all and the guarantee of fundamental and social rights. This social agenda was adopted by the Nice Council in December 2000. Later, quality in work was recognised by the Stockholm Council in March 2001 as a multidimensional target and it was introduced as a general objective of the employment guidelines (European employment strategy launched by the Luxembourg Council in '97).

¹ Paper written by Aloïs Van Bastelaer, Directorate E: Social and regional statistics and geographical information system, Unit E-1: Labour market.

2. The following dimensions of job quality are identified ²:
- (1) Intrinsic job quality characteristics or the transitions between temporary and permanent employment and the earnings progression;
 - (2) skills, life-long learning (participation in training) and career development
 - (3) gender equality: to eliminate of discriminatory pay differentials between men and women and to promote a more balanced representation of men and women in occupations and sectors
 - (4) health and safety at work (the 3rd topic of this seminar)
 - (5) flexibility and security: the relative frequency of non-standard forms of employment and an effective coverage and equivalent entitlements of persons in part-time or temporary employment to unemployment benefits, retirement pension and health insurance as full-time and permanent workers
 - (6) inclusion and access to the labour market: employment rates by age and educational level
 - (7) work organisation and the balance between work and family life: quality in employment requires an adaptation of the work organisation to meet the needs of workers and employers. This includes the introduction of new technologies, new forms of work, the availability of support services and working time arrangements - data about the patterns of working times are presented below
 - (8) social dialogue and worker involvement, e.g., worker representation and industrial disputes
 - (9) non-discrimination, employment rates of older people, non-nationals, ethnic minorities and disabled people
 - (10) overall economic performance and productivity.

II. Data source

3. The data source is a special ad hoc module of the labour force survey in Spring 2001 on working time patterns. At the time of the analysis, data from the ad hoc module in 2001 were available for seven Member states: Spain, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Finland and the United Kingdom ³ and in addition Switzerland.

III. Results

III.I. Employees by working times during or outside core hours and their working hours schedule

4. The results in this paper describe the patterns of working times ⁴. The length ⁵, another important characteristic of working time (number of hours worked per week or per year and full-time/part-time) is beyond the scope of this paper. A first distinction concerns when work is performed. Most employees are working during core hours (or normal daytime hours on weekdays). In the EU, on average more than 30% is working outside the core hours (so-called un-social hours; defined as working at least two Saturdays or Sundays per month or at least half of the days in the evening or at night; night time covers in any case the period between midnight and 5 am ⁶). Spain, Italy and Finland are around the EU average, the United

2 Communication from the Commission to the Council, European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (COM(2001) 313): Employment and social policies: a framework for investing in quality [adopted by the Council in December 2001]

3 Data will also be available for the Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia and the Slovak Republic

4 only aggregates; breakdowns by sex, age and job characteristics, e.g., occupation and economic activity will be available later

5 Hoffmann E. and A. Mata Greenwood. 2001. Statistics on working time arrangements: an overview of issues and some experiences. *Statistical Journal of the UN ECE*, volume 18, p. 51-63

6 Council directive 93/104/EC of 23 November 1993 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time, OJ L104

Kingdom is above the EU average while Ireland and Portugal are below the EU average.

5. In Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Portugal, more than two thirds of the employees whether working during or outside core hours, have a fixed start and end of the working day. In Finland and Switzerland, the proportion of employees having a fixed start and end of the working day depends on when they are working. The proportion of employees having a fixed start and end of the working is larger among employees working outside core hours.

6. Working time banking is an arrangement of flexible daily working hours. In Finland, it is relatively more frequent than in Spain, Italy or Portugal. In Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, relatively more employees can use their credit hours to take days off instead of only hours. [Working time banking is defined as a system of accumulation and settlement of credit and debit hours around the standard number of daily working hours.]

7. Annualised working hours and on-call work are more irregular working time patterns. The number of weekly working hours - as well as the number of working days - may change considerably throughout the year or even from week to week. In Spain, Portugal, Finland and the United Kingdom, annualised hours and on-call work are relatively more frequent among employees working outside core hours than during core hours. [An annualised hours contract only specifies the annual number of hours, for example, 1600 hours, but the (unequal) distribution over the days and the weeks is determined by the employer. In general, on-call work does not guarantee a fixed number of hours, workers are called into work only when needed.]

8. Shift work by employees working outside core hours varies between 20% in the United Kingdom and Switzerland and 60% in Finland. Shift by employees working during core hours is maximum 14% in Italy. [Shift work is defined as a work organisation under which different groups of workers succeed each other at the same work site to perform the same activities.]

Table 1. Employees by working times during or outside core hours and flexible working times, 2001 [preliminary data]

	E	IRL	I	NL(*)	P	FIN	UK	CH
total employees (x 1000)	11.696	1.406	15.411	7.024	3.625	2.091	24.680	3.262
working core hours (x 1000)	7.864	1.103	10.208		2.876	1.417	15.116	2.413
working core hours (%)	67,2	78,4	66,2	100,0	79,3	67,8	61,2	74,0
<i>of which:</i>								
- fixed start/end	87,4		71,9	67,1	88,9	40,1	7,4	55,4
- shift work	10,7	9,6	14,4		11,7	5,9	1,8	6,9
- working time banking (hours off)	4,4		3,4	5,8	1,3	17,9	2,2	
- working time banking (days off)	0,2		5,0	8,6	0,6	10,7	9,3	
- overtime	2,2		5,6	28,1	6,6	11,0	28,4	39,2
- annualised hours	0,9		6,1	8,6	3,6	3,5	3,6	5,9
- on-call	7,3			4,7	.	4,4	5,5	4,1
- by mutual agreement	2,1		5,6	3,8	1,9	5,1	0,1	2,2
working non-core hours (x 1000)	3.832	304	5.203		749	674	9.564	849
<i>of which:</i>								
- fixed start/end	83,0		73,6		76,3	61,7	4,1	75,4
- shift work	30,4	41,0	33,9		37,1	61,9	23,4	22,5
- overtime	4,8		4,7		11,2	12,8	33,1	36,6
- annualised hours	2,2		5,9		10,6	8,4	5,5	1,8
- on-call	8,9				.	8,9	11,9	7,3
- by mutual agreement	3,8		6,7		5,1	5,4	0,4	2,7

(*) no distinction between core and other hours

III.II. Employees with flexible working time arrangements for personal reasons

9. In the case of a highly variable working time pattern, i.e., shift work, annualised hours and on-call work, information is available whether this working time pattern corresponds the personal choice of the employee or on the contrary, no similar job was available that did not require shift work or had a standard working times arrangement. The percentage of employees who were specifically looking for these working time patterns varies considerably across the Member states. In Italy, Finland and the United Kingdom, an annualised hours contract is relatively more frequently the type of job somebody was looking for than shift work; in Spain however, shift work corresponds relatively more frequently with the personal choice. Difference between men and women are small except in the United Kingdom, where women are performing shift work or have an annualised hours contract relative more frequently for personal reasons than men.

Table 2. Employees on shift work, with annualised hours and on-call work for personal reasons (%), by sex, 2001 [preliminary data]

	E	IRL	I	NL	P	FIN	UK	CH
shift work:								
for personal reasons (%)	47,9		21,2		11,4	21,4	11,2	78,1
men	1.260	135	2.077		347	233	1.568	195
for personal reasons (%)	51,4		20,9		12,7	25,0	19,5	75,5
women	745	96	1.161		266	267	946	164
for personal reasons (%)	49,2		21,1		12,0	23,3	14,3	76,9
total	2.005	230	3.238		613	500	2.514	359
annualised hours:								
for personal reasons (%)	36,3		77,3	91,0	5,3	72,0	31,1	93,7
men	95		627	425	108	53	587	108
for personal reasons (%)	37,0		74,7	92,9	12,6	67,2	38,1	83,6
women	59		305	181	75	54	483	49
for personal reasons (%)	36,6		76,4	91,5	8,3	69,6	34,2	90,5
total	154		931	606	183	107	1070	157
on-call work								
for personal reasons (%)	63,8			91,8	5,7	70,5	2,6	84,8
men	540			124	608	39	890	55
for personal reasons (%)	60,5			87,6	6,9	62,9	5,8	86,2
women	375			204	503	83	1.084	106
for personal reasons (%)	62,5			89,2	6,2	65,3	4,3	85,7
total	914			327	1.111	122	1.974	161

III.III. Overtime

10. Overtime (table 1) as well as unpaid overtime (table 3) varies considerably across the Member states. Overtime includes all hours worked, paid or unpaid, in excess of normal hours, which are the number of hours fixed in each country by or in pursuance of laws, regulations, collective agreements... or where not so fixed, the number of hours in excess of which any time worked is remunerated at overtime rates or forms an exception to the recognised rules or custom of the establishment or of the process concerned⁷.

⁷ Reduction of hours of work recommendation (n°116), ILO, 1962

Table 3. Unpaid overtime of employees by occupation (%), 2001 [preliminary data]

	E	I	NL	P	FIN	UK	CH
<u>all employees (x 1000)</u>	131	192	1.355	129	62	4.077	457
legislators, senior officials and managers	6,5	6,4	22,2	4,8	29,9	31,2	10,7
professionals	14,5	19,0	32,3	19,1	38,3	29,5	25,3
technicians	16,5	29,0	17,7	12,5	16,3	15,7	25,1
clerks	9,5	17,6	8,5	13,7	4,6	10,8	10,8
service and sales workers	21,6	9,1	6,6	17,2	.	6,5	12,1
skilled farmers and fishermen	.	.	0,8	.	.	.	1,5
craft workers	11,8	6,5	4,8	12,4	.	2,7	6,9
operators and assemblers	9,7	5,4	3,2	10,9	.	.	2,8
elementary occupations	7,4	5,0	1,8	6,4	.	.	3,6
<u>male (x 1000)</u>	93	111	856	82	35	2.297	267
legislators, senior officials and managers	8,4	9,7	27,5	.	34,7	40,3	15,4
professionals	11,9	13,5	29,3	16,2	31,4	27,5	30,6
technicians	15,5	30,1	15,3	10,8	18,9	13,8	23,7
clerks	7,8	14,1	4,9	12,4	.	5,4	6,0
service and sales workers	16,3	7,0	5,4	13,0	.	.	6,7
skilled farmers and fishermen	.	.	0,7	.	.	.	1,9
craft workers	16,1	8,1	7,2	15,6	.	4,7	9,0
operators and assemblers	13,2	7,7	4,8	16,5	.	.	3,9
elementary occupations	7,3	6,2	2,1	.	.	.	1,5
<u>female (x 1000)</u>	38	81	499	47	27	1.780	190
legislators, senior officials and managers	.	.	13,0	.	23,6	19,4	4,2
professionals	21,0	26,6	37,6	24,2	47,0	32,2	17,8
technicians	18,8	27,4	21,7	15,5	12,8	18,2	27,1
clerks	13,6	22,3	14,6	16,0	10,0	17,9	17,7
service and sales workers	34,8	11,9	8,6	24,6	.	10,5	19,8
skilled farmers and fishermen	.	.	1,0	.	.	.	.
craft workers	.	4,3	0,7	.	.	.	4,1
operators and assemblers	.	.	.	.	.	.	1,2
elementary occupations	7,7	.	1,1	.	.	.	6,4

Actual overtime compared with overtime as main reason why number of hours actually worked is more than usual (%) (*)

	E	I	NL	P	FIN	UK	CH
	47	98	78	30	65		

(*) Overtime as a main reason why the number of hours actually worked exceeds the number of hours usually worked per week is an underestimate of the actual overtime

11. Unpaid overtime is mainly done by non-manual workers, although in Spain and Portugal unpaid overtime is also done by (male) manual workers and (female) service and sales workers. In the Netherlands, Finland and the United Kingdom, unpaid overtime is performed in particular by legislators, senior officials, managers and professionals. In Italy and Switzerland, overtime is mainly performed by professional and technicians instead of legislators, senior officials and managers.

IV. Conclusions

- In the EU, more than 30% is working outside core hours, i.e., during other hours than normal day-time hours on weekdays.
- In several Member states, about 10% of the employees can take days off in the case of working time banking.
- More than 5% of the employees are on-call workers and have an irregular working time pattern.
- Overtime as well as unpaid overtime varies considerably across the Member states.