

# Statistics in focus

## POPULATION AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

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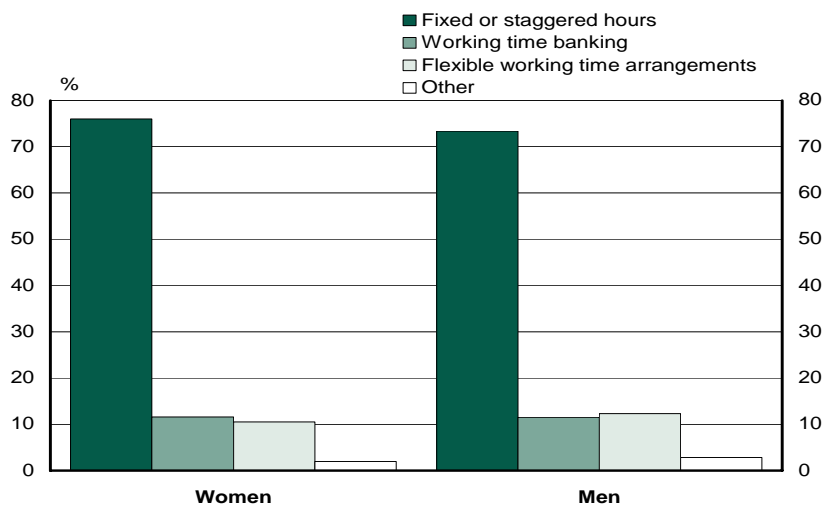
# The flexibility of working time arrangements for women and men

A key part of the European Employment Strategy is to achieve a high level of employment across the European Union while ensuring equal access to jobs for both women and men. This means making sure that it is possible for women as well as men to pursue working careers irrespective of their family circumstances and responsibilities. Along with family-friendly policies, such as the provision of affordable childcare or parental leave entitlement, flexible working arrangements have a potentially important role to play in helping to attain this objective.

The aim of this Statistics in Focus is to examine the extent to which women and men in employment across Europe have variable as opposed to fixed working hours. This study is based on data collected for a special *ad hoc* module of the EU Labour Force Survey on work organisation and working-time arrangements conducted in 2004. The focus is on persons aged 25-49, i.e. the age group most likely to have to reconcile work with having children.

These data indicate that around three-quarters of employees aged 25-49 in the EU (or more precisely in the 20 Member States for which data were obtained) worked fixed or staggered hours each week (Figure 1). Only around a quarter had some flexibility in the hours they worked, i.e. could 'bank' working time in order to take time off later (12%) or could vary their working schedule (10-12%). The data also indicate that a slightly smaller proportion of women than men enjoyed such flexible arrangements. These findings are examined in more detail below.

**Figure 1: Working time arrangements of women and men employees aged 25-49 in the EU-25, 2004**



Source: Eurostat, LFS Ad-Hoc module on work organisation and working time arrangements EU-25 does not include CZ, LV, LT, PL and SE

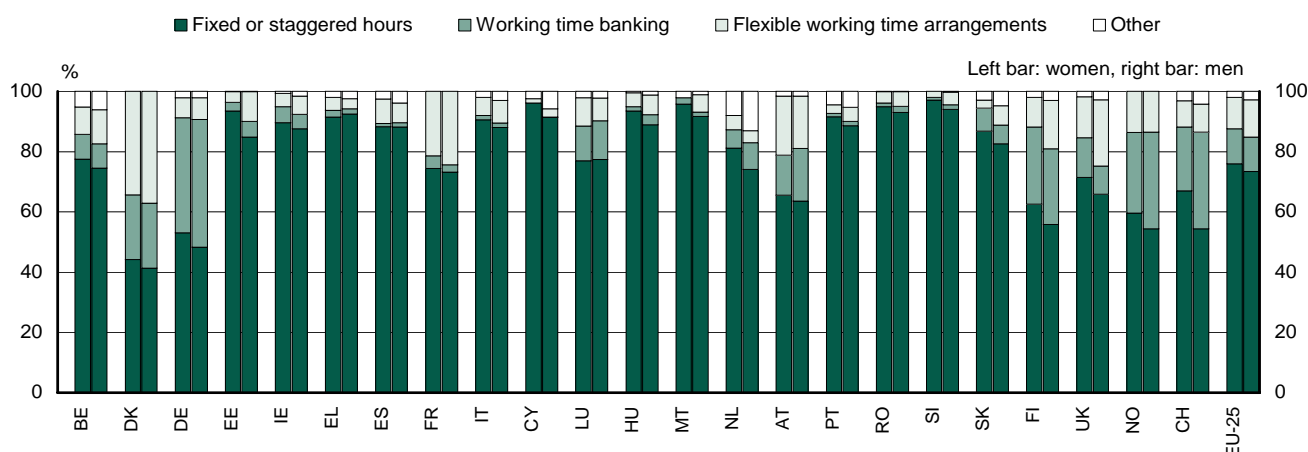


## Most employees have fixed working time schedule

The extent to which employees have some flexibility over their working hours, defined as being able to 'bank' working time, decide when they begin or finish working or determine their own working schedule, varies markedly across countries. According to the data collected, over 90% of employees aged 25-49 had either fixed or

staggered hours of work in Greece, Cyprus, Malta, Slovenia and Romania in 2004 (Figure 2 and Table 1). In a further three Member States, Estonia, Italy and Portugal, over 90% of women employees worked fixed or staggered hours and just under 90% of men.

**Figure 2: Working time arrangements of women and men employees aged 25-49, 2004**



Source: Eurostat, LFS Ad-Hoc module on work organisation and working time arrangements  
BG, CZ, LV, LT, PL, SE and IS: no data; EU-25 not incl. CZ, LV, LT, PL and SE

It should be noted that although staggered hours mean that people have different times for starting and ending work each week, they are likely to have little say over the times in question. In the 8 countries listed above, therefore, very few women or men had some flexibility over their working time in the sense defined above. This was also the case in Spain and Ireland, where around 88-89% of women and men had fixed or staggered working hours, as well as Slovakia, where the figure was well over 80%.

Only in Denmark was the proportion of both men and women with fixed or staggered hours of work less than half (just over 45% in both cases). In Germany, under half of male employees worked under such arrangements but 53% of women. Elsewhere in the EU, the proportion of men and women with fixed or staggered hours of work was under two-thirds in just two Member States — Austria and Finland. In the UK, this was true only for men. Outside the EU, under 60% of men and women in Norway had fixed or staggered working hours, while this was true for only 55% of men in Switzerland but 67% of women.

**Table 1: Working time arrangements for women and men employees aged 25-49, 2004**  
(% of female/male employees)

	BE	DK	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	IT	CY	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	UK	NO	CH	EU-25
<b>Women</b>																								
Fixed or staggered hours	77.6	44.2	53.1	93.5	89.5	91.5	88.2	74.4	90.6	96.1	76.9	93.4	95.7	81.2	65.6	91.6	94.9	97.1	86.8	62.6	71.5	59.5	67.0	76.0
Fixed	69.4	36.2	48.1	88.3	82.2	84.5	84.7	71.7	69.2	90.2	63.8	86.1	83.0	71.0	62.1	84.0	91.2	73.5	82.0	50.6	68.4	51.2	63.1	69.2
Staggered	8.1	8.0	5.0	5.2	7.3	6.9	3.5	2.8	21.4	5.9	13.1	7.3	12.7	10.2	3.5	7.6	3.7	23.6	4.8	12.0	3.0	8.4	3.9	6.8
Working time banking	8.2	21.6	38.2	2.9	5.3	2.2	1.2	4.2	1.4	0.0	11.6	1.5	2.1	6.0	13.2	1.1	1.3	1.0	7.7	25.5	13.1	26.8	21.2	11.6
Possible only to take hours off	4.3	0.8	19.0	1.2	2.8	1.1	1.1	1.2	0.5	:	10.3	0.6	2.1	1.5	5.7	0.6	0.7	0.5	6.4	7.8	2.9	2.5	3.2	4.8
Possible to take hours and full days off	3.9	20.7	19.2	1.7	2.6	1.1	0.1	3.0	1.0	:	1.3	0.9	:	4.5	7.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.3	17.7	10.2	24.3	18.0	6.8
Flexible working time arrangements	9.0	34.3	6.6	3.6	4.5	4.4	8.0	21.3	6.0	1.4	9.4	4.6	0.0	4.8	19.7	2.9	3.7	1.9	2.6	9.9	13.7	13.7	8.7	10.5
Start and end of working day variable	6.8	26.5	4.9	1.5	3.0	3.3	6.7	14.5	4.6	0.7	6.7	1.6	:	2.6	11.5	1.8	2.5	1.3	1.6	5.9	7.2	11.1	:	7.0
Own working schedule	2.2	7.7	1.7	2.1	1.5	1.1	1.3	6.8	1.4	0.7	2.7	3.0	:	2.2	8.1	1.1	1.2	0.7	1.1	4.0	6.4	2.6	8.7	3.5
Other	5.2	:	2.1	0.1	0.7	2.0	2.5	:	2.0	2.5	2.1	0.5	2.1	8.0	1.5	4.4	0.1	0.0	2.9	2.0	1.8	:	3.1	2.0
<b>Men</b>																								
Fixed or staggered hours	74.6	41.3	48.2	84.9	87.6	92.5	88.2	73.2	88.1	91.4	77.4	88.9	91.7	74.1	63.5	88.6	93.1	94.0	82.6	55.8	65.9	54.4	54.4	73.4
Fixed	66.6	36.3	43.0	77.3	75.2	85.1	83.8	70.0	65.3	87.3	60.4	79.6	79.9	62.9	60.3	76.7	87.2	71.9	78.5	43.5	61.8	45.1	50.8	65.5
Staggered	8.0	5.0	5.3	7.6	12.4	7.4	4.4	3.2	22.8	4.1	17.0	9.3	11.8	11.1	3.3	11.9	5.8	22.1	4.0	12.4	4.1	9.4	3.5	7.9
Working time banking	8.0	21.5	42.5	5.2	4.7	1.8	1.4	2.4	1.4	0.1	12.8	3.4	1.4	8.9	17.6	1.4	1.9	1.6	6.2	25.2	9.3	32.1	32.1	11.5
Possible only to take hours off	3.8	1.5	19.5	1.4	2.7	1.0	1.1	0.6	0.4	:	11.7	1.6	1.4	3.2	5.8	0.8	1.3	0.8	4.6	6.3	2.6	1.9	3.4	4.8
Possible to take hours and full days off	4.2	20.1	23.0	3.8	2.0	0.8	0.3	1.9	1.1	0.1	1.1	1.8	:	5.6	11.8	0.6	0.6	0.7	1.6	18.9	6.7	30.2	28.7	6.7
Flexible working time arrangements	11.3	37.2	7.1	9.8	6.1	3.2	6.6	24.4	7.5	2.7	7.6	6.5	5.8	4.0	17.3	4.7	4.9	4.2	6.4	16.0	22.0	13.5	9.4	12.3
Start and end of working day variable	6.4	21.2	4.8	5.4	3.8	2.4	5.3	13.2	5.5	1.7	4.3	2.8	5.8	1.7	9.9	2.5	4.2	2.7	5.7	6.3	9.3	9.4	:	7.0
Own working schedule	4.9	15.9	2.4	4.4	2.4	0.8	1.3	11.2	2.0	1.0	3.3	3.7	:	2.3	7.4	2.3	0.7	1.5	0.8	9.7	12.7	4.0	9.4	5.4
Other	6.1	:	2.2	0.1	1.6	2.5	3.9	:	3.0	5.8	2.2	1.3	1.1	13.1	1.6	5.3	0.1	0.2	4.8	3.0	2.8	:	4.2	2.8

Source: Eurostat LFS Ad-Hoc module on work organisation and working time arrangements.

BG, CZ, LV, LT, PL and SE: no data

As the above figures suggest, a larger proportion of women than men had fixed or staggered hours of work in nearly all the countries covered by the survey. In only two Member States — Greece and Luxembourg, and in both cases marginally — was the relative number of women working fixed or staggered hours less than that of men, though in a third, Spain, the proportion was the same.

Of those not working fixed or staggered hours in the EU, around half — some 12% of total employees — had jobs where they could 'bank' hours or days of work against future time off (i.e. where they could work more hours or days in exchange for taking the equivalent time off at some time in the future). The other half — just under 11% of women employees and just under 13% of men — were able to decide the time when they started and finished work or were able to determine their own work schedules. These two categories of arrangements are referred to here as working time banking and flexible working time arrangements (in addition, some 2% of women and 3% of men are also recorded as having 'other' working time arrangements).

The distribution of these two categories of working time arrangements varies greatly between countries. In

Germany, Finland, Norway and Switzerland, most of those with some flexibility over their hours of work had jobs where they could bank additional work now against time off in the future. In Denmark, France and for men in the UK, most employees with some flexibility over working hours were able to choose their starting or finishing times or their work schedule as a whole. These latter three countries were the only ones covered by the survey in which over 20% of men had some flexibility over working arrangements, as defined above, while Denmark and France were the only ones where over 20% of women worked in jobs with such arrangements (the figure being under 14% in the UK), though the proportion was only just under 20% in Austria.

Of course, the above figures are only indicative of the extent of flexible working time arrangements, in the sense that they do not reveal the extent to which people can vary the hours they start and finish work — whether, for example, by half an hour or three hours. Conversely, neither do they reveal how easy it is for those working fixed hours to obtain time off. Nevertheless, those who have some choice over working hours are generally likely to have more flexibility than those who do not.

**Table 2: Working time arrangements for women and men employees aged 25-49 by household circumstances, 2004 (% of women/men employees in each household type)**

		BE	DE	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	IT	CY	LU	HU	MT	NL	AT	PT	RO	SI	SK	UK	EU-25
<b>Women</b>																					
Single HH	Fixed or staggered hours	75.2	45.5	97.4	85.0	89.4	82.7	70.3	89.2	100.0	67.2	93.8	100.0	79.7	63.4	86.6	96.5	100.0	77.7	68.5	66.4
	Working time banking	12.4	44.8	2.0	7.6	2.6	3.3	5.0	2.0	:	20.1	1.4	:	8.8	15.0	1.7	1.2	:	17.8	14.5	19.1
	Flexible working time arrangements	8.5	7.1	0.6	6.8	6.4	10.7	24.7	6.2	:	10.8	4.3	:	3.5	18.8	4.9	2.3	:	3.4	14.7	12.1
	Other	3.9	2.6	:	0.6	1.6	3.3	:	2.5	:	1.9	0.6	:	8.0	2.9	6.9	:	:	1.1	2.3	2.5
Single parent	Fixed or staggered hours	77.3	53.7	95.9	90.9	91.7	84.7	75.0	90.9	93.2	79.1	93.8	100.0	83.4	63.1	88.2	96.1	100.0	84.4	74.6	73.5
	Working time banking	7.5	38.9	2.6	4.4	2.0	0.7	3.7	1.7	:	7.2	2.8	:	5.4	14.7	1.3	0.2	:	12.1	11.5	13.4
	Flexible working time arrangements	12.2	5.9	1.3	4.7	5.0	12.0	21.3	5.3	3.6	13.1	3.4	:	4.5	20.1	4.0	3.6	:	1.5	12.4	11.6
	Other	3.0	1.5	0.2	:	1.3	2.6	:	2.0	3.2	0.6	:	:	6.7	2.1	6.6	:	:	2.0	1.6	1.6
Couple HH	Fixed or staggered hours	76.8	49.2	91.7	87.8	90.7	87.6	75.5	89.8	93.6	76.0	93.8	100.0	81.8	59.9	91.5	94.3	94.1	89.4	69.3	72.8
	Working time banking	7.7	43.1	3.7	7.1	2.1	1.5	3.3	1.6	:	15.7	1.2	:	7.1	17.9	1.0	1.5	1.8	4.2	14.9	14.7
	Flexible working time arrangements	10.1	5.7	4.6	4.4	5.0	7.9	21.2	6.4	1.8	6.9	4.1	:	3.8	20.2	3.0	4.1	4.1	2.6	13.8	10.2
	Other	5.3	1.9	:	0.7	2.3	2.9	:	2.2	4.6	1.4	0.9	:	7.3	2.0	4.5	0.1	:	3.8	2.1	2.3
Couple HH with children	Fixed or staggered hours	78.1	55.2	92.7	90.0	92.3	87.6	73.9	91.3	97.2	77.7	93.1	94.6	80.7	65.7	92.1	95.1	97.3	86.1	71.1	76.4
	Working time banking	8.0	35.0	3.1	4.5	2.4	1.2	4.7	1.5	:	9.3	1.4	:	5.2	12.9	1.1	1.2	0.9	9.4	12.9	10.5
	Flexible working time arrangements	8.6	7.3	4.2	4.9	3.2	9.0	21.4	5.4	1.3	10.6	4.9	:	5.7	20.3	2.5	3.5	1.8	1.9	14.4	11.1
	Other	5.3	2.4	0.1	0.6	2.1	2.3	:	1.8	1.5	2.3	0.5	5.4	8.4	1.1	4.3	0.2	:	2.7	1.5	2.1
Other HH	Fixed or staggered hours	78.3	60.2	94.2	90.7	91.3	90.2	78.3	90.4	95.5	85.3	93.5	95.0	83.3	72.4	91.8	94.6	97.2	87.8	75.0	82.0
	Working time banking	7.1	32.1	2.2	4.8	1.9	0.8	3.2	1.1	:	5.6	1.5	5.0	3.8	8.3	0.9	1.4	0.9	5.7	11.2	7.8
	Flexible working time arrangements	7.9	6.0	3.5	3.8	5.1	6.4	18.5	6.5	1.3	6.0	4.6	:	4.8	18.4	3.1	3.9	1.8	3.4	11.9	8.2
	Other	6.7	1.7	0.1	0.8	1.8	2.5	:	2.0	3.2	3.1	0.4	:	8.1	0.8	4.1	0.1	0.1	3.1	1.8	2.0
<b>Men</b>																					
Single HH	Fixed or staggered hours	72.7	44.3	88.6	80.9	90.3	83.2	71.6	86.3	86.2	67.9	88.8	100.0	74.2	52.3	89.1	93.6	95.6	80.4	63.3	64.3
	Working time banking	9.2	45.8	3.7	7.5	3.2	1.4	2.4	2.1	:	18.4	6.7	:	10.0	21.6	1.1	2.6	:	7.8	12.1	18.6
	Flexible working time arrangements	11.7	7.6	7.6	8.0	3.2	9.2	26.0	8.6	6.9	11.1	3.1	:	4.5	23.7	6.3	3.4	4.4	7.6	21.9	14.2
	Other	6.4	2.3	:	3.6	3.3	6.2	:	3.1	7.0	2.5	1.4	:	11.3	2.4	3.5	0.5	:	4.2	2.7	3.0
Single parent	Fixed or staggered hours	78.4	49.7	67.1	94.3	88.8	91.5	75.4	82.1	:	58.9	92.3	100.0	64.0	42.0	90.3	89.2	58.0	89.9	72.2	69.7
	Working time banking	3.3	41.9	:	:	:	:	1.6	5.8	:	12.7	:	:	14.8	26.8	:	:	:	:	8.2	14.2
	Flexible working time arrangements	7.0	7.0	32.9	5.7	4.6	3.4	23.0	10.0	:	19.7	7.7	:	3.3	25.8	:	10.8	42.0	:	17.5	13.1
	Other	11.3	1.4	:	:	6.6	5.1	:	2.0	:	8.6	:	:	17.9	5.4	9.7	:	:	10.1	2.1	3.0
Couple HH	Fixed or staggered hours	73.3	47.1	84.5	85.7	92.4	87.1	73.3	89.3	89.6	74.7	88.3	100.0	74.8	61.5	89.9	93.4	92.1	78.9	66.7	71.5
	Working time banking	8.3	43.7	6.6	6.1	1.7	1.9	2.3	2.0	:	14.8	3.1	:	9.0	19.2	1.4	1.8	1.8	6.3	10.7	13.1
	Flexible working time arrangements	11.9	7.2	8.9	6.1	3.8	7.3	24.4	5.5	2.8	7.4	7.0	:	3.7	18.3	4.5	4.5	6.1	8.4	19.8	12.3
	Other	6.4	2.0	:	2.1	2.1	3.7	:	3.3	7.6	3.1	1.7	:	12.5	1.0	4.2	0.3	:	6.5	2.8	3.0
Couple HH with children	Fixed or staggered hours	75.2	48.1	84.9	87.3	92.2	86.9	70.8	87.7	91.4	78.2	88.6	90.4	72.1	64.1	87.3	93.4	94.5	81.2	63.7	72.1
	Working time banking	6.9	42.4	5.4	4.6	1.9	1.6	2.8	1.5	0.1	12.0	4.1	2.4	9.3	18.0	1.8	2.0	2.3	8.1	8.5	11.3
	Flexible working time arrangements	11.5	7.4	9.6	6.8	3.2	7.8	26.5	7.6	3.0	7.8	6.2	7.2	4.3	16.1	5.4	4.5	3.1	5.7	24.6	13.6
	Other	6.4	2.1	0.1	1.3	2.7	3.7	:	3.2	5.5	2.0	1.2	:	14.3	1.8	5.5	0.1	0.1	4.9	3.1	3.1
Other HH	Fixed or staggered hours	75.4	55.1	84.2	89.8	93.7	90.8	84.6	88.5	92.8	89.3	89.6	88.7	82.7	73.5	89.7	92.5	94.1	84.4	71.9	81.7
	Working time banking	10.5	36.8	4.5	3.7	1.3	0.9	1.4	0.8	:	6.8	2.0	:	3.6	12.2	1.0	1.8	1.0	4.5	6.9	7.2
	Flexible working time arrangements	9.7	5.8	10.9	5.3	2.9	4.5	14.0	8.2	1.7	2.5	7.2	6.4	2.8	13.6	3.7	5.6	4.5	6.7	19.0	8.4
	Other	4.5	2.2	0.4	1.2	2.0	3.8	:	2.5	5.5	1.3	1.2	4.9	10.9	0.8	5.6	0.1	0.4	4.4	2.3	2.7

Source: Eurostat LFS Ad-Hoc module on work organisation and working time arrangements.

BG, CZ, DK, LV, LT, PL, FI and SE: no data

## Flexibility over working time arrangements and children

Working time arrangements in most parts of Europe do not seem to provide much support for people with children. Indeed, employees with children seem to be less likely to work in jobs with flexible working arrangements than those without children, rather than the reverse. In the 18 EU-25 Member States covered by the survey for which there are household data, over 76% of married or cohabiting women aged 25-49 with children (under 12) had jobs with fixed or staggered hours of work (see Table 2). This is some 10 percentage points more than for women living alone without children and just under 4 percentage points more than for married or cohabiting women without children. Moreover, for women living alone with a child, for whom reconciling employment with caring

responsibilities is likely to pose especially acute problems, the proportion with fixed or staggered hours of work was also larger (at 74%) than for women without children. The same pattern is evident for men. In the EU-25 countries covered, some 72% of men with children living with a spouse or a partner had jobs with fixed or staggered hours of work as compared with 64% of men living alone without children.

The same pattern is also evident in Member States where a significant proportion of women and men have some flexibility over working time arrangements. In Germany in particular, only some 42% of married or cohabiting women with children had working time banking or flexible working time arrangements as against 52% of women living alone without children.

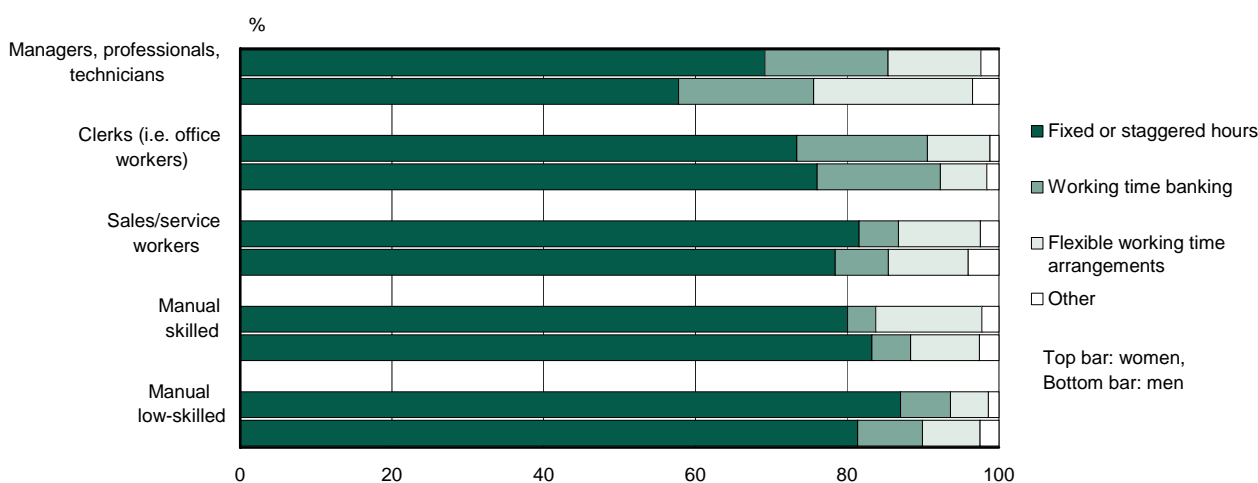
## Flexibility over working time arrangements more likely in high skilled and managerial occupations

As might be expected, men and women aged 25-49 in relatively high-skilled jobs are more likely to have some flexibility over working time arrangements than those in lower-skilled occupations. In the EU-25 Member States covered taken together, 69% of women employed as managers, professionals or technicians (i.e. in the ISCO 1, 2 and 3 broad occupational groups) had fixed or staggered hours of work in 2004, while just over 28% had working time banking or flexible working time arrangements. In comparison, the proportions for sales and service workers were 82% with fixed or staggered hours of work and 16% with some flexibility over working arrangements and for women in elementary occupations 80% and 18%, respectively. For women in

skilled manual occupations (in craft trades or working as machine operators), the proportion with some flexibility over working hours was under 12% (Figure 3).

For men, the difference between high-skilled and less skilled occupational groups is even more pronounced. In the EU-25 Member States covered, almost 39% of men employed as managers, professionals or technicians had working time banking or flexible working time arrangements — over 10 percentage points more than for women in the same occupational group — while 57% had fixed hours of work. This contrasts with only 16% of men in skilled manual jobs with some flexibility over working time arrangements and just 14% of those in elementary occupations.

**Figure 3: Working time arrangements of women and men employees aged 25-49 by broad occupational group in the EU-25, 2004**



Source: Eurostat, LFS Ad-Hoc module on work organisation and working time arrangements  
EU-25 not incl. CZ, LV, LT, PL and SE

This pattern is largely repeated in individual Member States. In the great majority of countries, the proportion of managers, professionals and technicians with some flexibility over working hours was significantly larger than the proportion among less skilled workers. The proportion of women in the former occupational group with some flexibility over hours of work was over 20 percentage points larger than for those employed as sales or service workers in Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg and the UK, while it was almost 40 percentage points larger in Finland. The differences were wider for men, with the proportion employed in managerial, professional and technical positions with some flexibility over working hours in these countries along with France and Austria being 30-40 percentage points larger than for men in elementary occupations.

The gender difference within the occupational groups of managers, professionals and technicians with regard to working time banking or flexible working time arrangements is also striking. In France, the

Netherlands, Austria and Finland, the proportion of women in these occupations with such arrangements was some 14-16 percentage points smaller than for men, and in Denmark, Germany, Estonia and Cyprus 11-12 percentage points smaller. Outside the EU, the difference was even greater in Switzerland, where the gap between men and women in managerial, professional and technical jobs was over 27 percentage points.

At the other end of scale, the difference between the relative number of men and women with some flexibility over working arrangements in elementary occupations is less systematic. In Greece, Spain, France, Luxembourg and Austria, as well as in Switzerland, the proportion of women with some flexibility was much larger than that of men — though in the first three cases it was still relatively small (under 20%). In Denmark, Estonia, Slovakia and Finland, on the other hand, the reverse was the case.

### Variability by economic activity

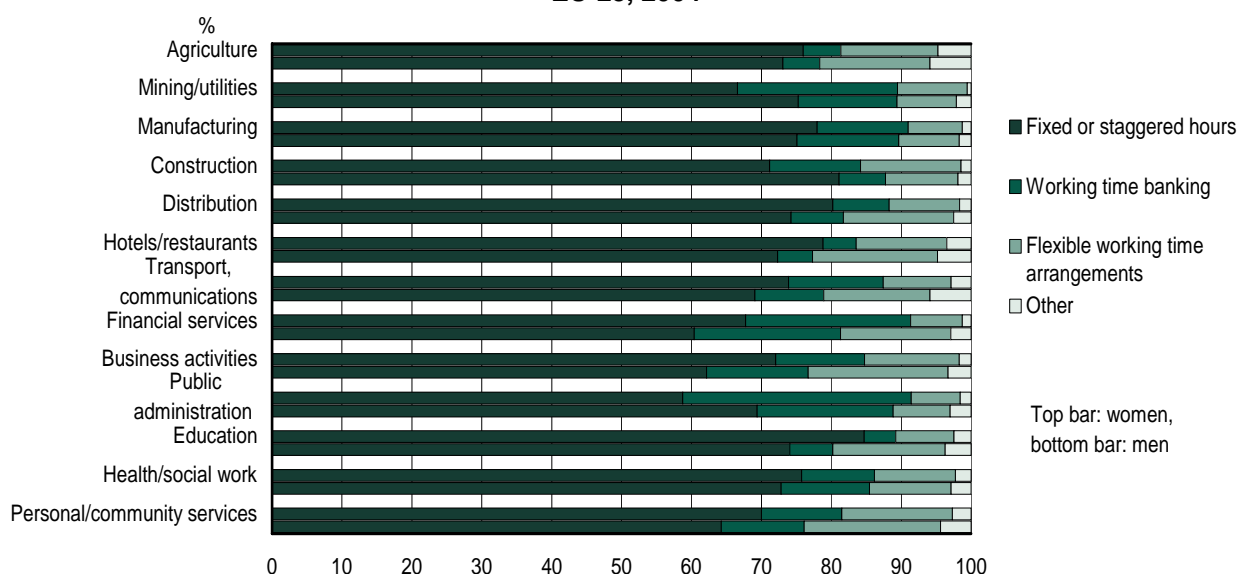
Women and men employed in certain branches of economic activity are more likely to have some flexibility over hours of work, though the industries concerned vary across Europe as well as between men and women. On average in the EU-25, the proportion of women employed in 'public administration' with some flexibility over working hours was larger — at almost 40% — than in other sectors of economic activity (Figure 4). It was especially large in Denmark, Germany and Finland, at around 75% or more. In many countries, however — Greece, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Hungary, Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta as well as Romania — very few women (under 5%) had flexibility over hours of work in this sector. Interestingly, in those countries where a relatively large number of women had some flexibility over working time arrangements, the proportion of men

with such working time arrangements was much smaller.

By contrast, the proportion of women with some flexibility over working hours in 'business activities' was significantly smaller.

There are also differences in 'education', with a smaller proportion of women having some flexibility over hours of work than men. This was the case in nearly all countries, though the numbers concerned were almost always relatively small. On the other hand, the relative numbers of men and women with some flexibility over working time arrangements were similar in 'health and social work, both proportions again being relatively small in the majority of countries.

**Figure 4: Working time arrangements of women and men employees aged 25-49 by economic activity in the EU-25, 2004**



Source: Eurostat, LFS Ad-Hoc module on work organisation and working time arrangements  
EU-25 not incl. CZ, LV, LT, PL and SE

## Many of those working 'unsocial' hours find this convenient for their personal life

A significant number of men and women across Europe at least occasionally work what are termed 'unsocial hours', in the sense of working at weekends or at night. In 2004, almost 41% of women and just over 48% of men in the EU worked at the weekend on at least some occasions, while around 11% of women and 22% of men worked at night either usually or sometimes. Although some of those concerned are reluctant to work at these times, a substantial proportion finds it convenient for their personal life to do so.

Of women aged 25-49 working at the weekend at least occasionally, over two-thirds (69%) in the EU-25 Member States covered reported that they found it convenient for their personal life situation to do so. This is slightly more than the proportion of men (67.4%) who reported the same (Table 3). There is, however, a marked variation across countries in the relative numbers finding such working time arrangements convenient.

**Table 3: Women and men employees aged 25-49 working weekends and convenience for personal life situation, 2004**

	BE	DK	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	IT	CY	LU	HU	MT	AT	PT	SI	SK	FI	UK	NO	CH	EU-25
	<i>% of employees working at weekends at least sometimes</i>																				
<b>Women</b>	33.4	37.6	36.5	34.1	40.8	34.0	47.4	38.8	45.1	27.9	28.0	43.7	41.6	32.9	51.3	37.9	32.4	45.0	39.5	40.2	40.5
<b>Men</b>	33.0	41.6	40.1	52.5	51.6	33.2	52.7	45.8	40.5	30.6	41.5	48.9	43.0	47.5	60.8	52.3	31.0	66.3	39.6	36.7	48.3
	<i>% of employees finding it convenient for personal life to work weekends</i>																				
<b>Women</b>	74.9	73.0	39.0	89.0	33.5	86.6	80.1	:	47.4	96.2	88.5	100.0	91.6	34.6	65.2	64.7	71.8	51.8	29.8	84.5	69.1
<b>Men</b>	78.1	71.9	42.2	88.5	39.9	85.9	80.4	:	40.4	95.0	89.6	95.8	92.8	43.3	73.4	69.4	67.5	48.4	28.4	86.7	67.4

Source: Eurostat LFS Ad-Hoc module on work organisation and working time arrangements. BG, CZ, DE, LV, LT, NL, PL, RO and SE: no data  
 ":" Data not comparable

In 12 of the 17 Member States for which data exist, more than 65% of women aged 25-49 found it convenient to work at weekends. The exceptions are the UK, Portugal, Estonia, Cyprus and Greece, in all of which, except the UK (52%), fewer than half found it convenient. The same was the case for men, except that under half in the UK found it convenient.

In three of the five Member States in which the proportion of women finding it convenient to work at weekends is largest — Hungary, Ireland and Luxembourg — the relative number working at weekends is well below average. Similarly, in four of the 6 Member States in which the proportion of men finding it convenient to work at weekends is largest — Spain,

Hungary, Austria and Luxembourg — the relative number working at weekends is also below average.

Much the same differences between countries are evident for women and men who work at night. In the 17 EU Member States for which comparable data are available, around 63-64% of both men and women working at night reported it was convenient for their personal life to do so. While the figure was over 90% in Luxembourg and Malta and around 90% in Austria, it was only around 30% in Cyprus and under 30% in Greece (Table 4). Again, there is some tendency, for women at least, for the proportion finding it convenient to work at nights to decline as the relative number working nights increases.

**Table 4: Women and men employees aged 25-49 working at night and convenience for personal life situation, 2004**

	BE	DK	EE	IE	EL	ES	FR	IT	CY	LU	HU	MT	AT	PT	SI	SK	FI	UK	NO	CH	EU-25
	<i>% of employees working at night at least sometimes</i>																				
<b>Women</b>	10.8	11.2	12.9	11.7	11.5	7.9	8.3	7.6	5.5	7.3	10.1	8.7	12.8	13.3	10.8	15.8	14.1	15.6	15.4	9.6	10.7
<b>Men</b>	18.5	17.1	16.3	21.3	23.0	13.5	24.2	17.3	14.6	14.0	20.0	24.4	27.5	24.8	23.8	28.3	20.5	30.8	22.2	17.0	21.9
	<i>% of employees finding it convenient for personal life to work at night</i>																				
<b>Women</b>	74.1	68.5	52.2	83.8	29.5	77.3	79.6	:	29.4	100.0	81.6	100.0	88.7	37.2	55.2	74.6	53.3	42.4	44.6	82.2	62.7
<b>Men</b>	83.4	69.3	41.7	82.9	26.9	74.2	76.8	:	31.1	92.9	84.5	100.0	91.0	42.6	77.2	71.3	58.0	41.6	29.7	83.6	64.1

Source: Eurostat LFS Ad-Hoc module on work organisation and working time arrangements. BG, CZ, DE, LV, LT, NL, PL, RO and SE: no data  
 ":" Data not comparable

## METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

### Data sources, classification and definitions

The data presented here are from the ad hoc module on work organisation and working time arrangements included in the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and carried out in 2004. For a detailed evaluation of the ad hoc module see the publication, Eurostat (2006):

"Final report of the task force for evaluating the 2004 LFS ad hoc module on work organisation and working time arrangements", available in electronic format at:

[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_OFFPUB/KS-CC-06-008/EN/KS-CC-06-008-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-CC-06-008/EN/KS-CC-06-008-EN.PDF).

The characteristic describing variable hours in the ad hoc module is grouped into 4 main categories according to the following correspondence table:

Variable 216 Variable working hours	Classification used in this publication
1 Fixed start and end of a working day	Fixed or staggered hours
2 Staggered working hours, banded start/end	
3 Working time banking with possibility only to take hours off	Working time banking
4 Working time banking with possibility to take full days off (besides taking hours off)	
5 Start and end of working day varying by individual agreement	Flexible working time arrangements
6 Determines own working schedule (no formal boundaries)	
7 Other	Other

### Data coverage

The data presented here cover all employees aged 25-49.

The totals for the EU-25 referred to in the text and included in the figures and tables exclude Bulgaria and Romania since the data relate to period before these two joined the EU.

There are no data for Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden, and Croatia. In addition, there are no data in the following cases:

- a) Working arrangements by household circumstances: Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway and Switzerland;
- b) Employees working weekends and at night and convenience for personal life situation: Germany, Netherlands, Romania, Sweden, Norway and Switzerland.

# Further information:


Data: [EUROSTAT Website/Theme: Population and social conditions/Data](#)

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## For further information and methodology

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