



# Women, men and working conditions in Europe

A report based on the fifth  
European Working Conditions Survey

**5<sup>th</sup>**  
**European  
Working  
Conditions  
Survey**



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**Authors:** Mark Smith (Grenoble École de Management), Agnieszka Piasna (University of Cambridge), Brendan Burchell (University of Cambridge), Jill Rubery (University of Manchester), Anthony Rafferty (University of Manchester), Janna Rose (Grenoble École de Management) and Laura Carter (University of Cambridge)

**Research managers:** Isabella Biletta, Agnès Parent-Thirion, Greet Vermeylen and Gijs van Houten

**Eurofound project:** European Working Conditions Survey

**Project team for the fifth EWCS:** Agnès Parent-Thirion, Greet Vermeylen, Maija Lyly-Yrjänäinen, Gijs van Houten, Isabella Biletta and Sophia MacGoris

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Telephone: (+353 1) 204 31 00

Email: [information@eurofound.europa.eu](mailto:information@eurofound.europa.eu)

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## Country codes

### EU27

AT	Austria
BE	Belgium
BG	Bulgaria
CY	Cyprus
CZ	Czech Republic
DE	Germany
DK	Denmark
EE	Estonia
EL	Greece
ES	Spain
FI	Finland
FR	France
HU	Hungary
IE	Ireland
IT	Italy
LT	Lithuania
LU	Luxembourg
LV	Latvia
MT	Malta
NL	Netherlands
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SE	Sweden
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia
UK	United Kingdom

### Candidate countries

HR	Croatia <sup>1</sup>
MK	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia <sup>2</sup>
MO	Montenegro
TR	Turkey

### Potential candidates

AL	Albania
XK	Kosovo <sup>3</sup>

### Other

NO	Norway
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### Country groups

EU15	15 EU Member States prior to enlargement in 2004
EU12	12 EU Member States that joined in 2004 and 2007
EU27	The 27 EU Member States at the time of the survey in 2011

<sup>1</sup> At the time of carrying out the fifth EWCS and of writing this report, Croatia's status was that of a candidate country for membership to the European Union. It became the 28th EU Member State on 1 July 2013.

<sup>2</sup> MK corresponds to ISO code 3166. This is a provisional code that does not prejudice in any way the definitive nomenclature for this country, which will be agreed following the conclusion of negotiations taking place under the auspices of the United Nations ([http://www.iso.org/iso.country\\_codes/iso\\_3166\\_code\\_lists.htm](http://www.iso.org/iso.country_codes/iso_3166_code_lists.htm)).

<sup>3</sup> This code is used for practical purposes and is not an official ISO code.

## Sectors of economic activity used in the fifth EWCS

The fifth EWCS carried out its sectoral analysis based on the NACE Rev. 2 classification; however, for simplicity, the 21 NACE sectors were condensed into 10 categories, as detailed in the following table.

Sector	Corresponding NACE Rev. 2 sectors
Agriculture	A Agriculture, forestry and fishing 01–03
Industry	B Mining and quarrying 05–09 C Manufacturing 10–33 D Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply 35 E Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities 36–39
Construction	F Construction 41–43
Wholesale, retail, food and accommodation	G Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles 45–47 I Accommodation and food service activities 55–56
Transport	H Transportation and storage 49–53
Financial services	K Financial and insurance activities 64–66 L Real estate activities 68
Public administration and defence	O Public administration and defence; compulsory social security 84
Education	P Education 85
Health	Q Human health and social work activities 86–88
Other services	J Information and communication 58–63 M Professional, scientific and technical activities 69–75 N Administrative and support service activities 77–82 R Arts, entertainment and recreation 90–93 S Other service activities 94–96 T Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use 97–98 U Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies 99

## Occupational groups used in the report

The occupational analysis in the report uses the following categories based on the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO).

Short name	Long name
Building workers	Building and related trades workers, excluding electricians
Metal workers	Metal, machinery and related trades workers
Drivers and operators	Drivers and mobile plant operators
Science associate professionals	Science and engineering associate professionals
Mining and construction workers	Labourers in mining, construction, manufacturing and transport
Production managers	Production and specialised services managers
Hospitality and retail managers	Hospitality, retail and other services managers
Skilled agricultural workers	Market-oriented skilled agricultural workers
Food, wood and garment workers	Food processing, wood working, garment and other craft and related trades workers
Numerical clerks	Numerical and material recording clerks
Legal, social and cultural professionals	Legal, social and cultural professionals
Business associate professionals	Business and administration associate professionals
Personal service workers	Personal service workers
Health professionals	Health professionals
Teaching professionals	Teaching professionals
Sales workers	Sales workers
General clerks	General and keyboard clerks
Cleaners	Cleaners and helpers
Health associate professionals	Health associate professionals
Personal care workers	Personal care workers

## Abbreviations used in the report

EQLS	European Quality of Life Survey
EU LFS	European Union Labour Force Survey
EWCS	European Working Conditions Survey
IJQ	Intrinsic job quality
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
pp	Percentage points
PPP	Purchasing power parity
WTQ	Working time quality



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# Executive summary

## Introduction

This report underlines the case for a gender-sensitive analysis of employment patterns and trends on European labour markets. Despite many years of legislation, gender gaps still persist across many aspects of the labour market: women and men are employed in different occupations and industries, and under different contracts, their pay is often different and they spend different amounts of time on paid work. Furthermore, in the context of the economic crisis, gender differences are evident in both the initial impact of the downturn and the unfolding austerity measures, putting at risk the progress so far made in closing gender gaps. This study is based on findings from the fifth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), conducted in 2010. Its rich set of data – encompassing some 44,000 workers across 34 European countries – was used to explore gender differences across several dimensions of working conditions, and to look at relevant country differences.

## Policy context

Clearly, a major increase in both women's and men's employment rates is needed if the EU is to achieve the 75% employment rate target set out in the Europe 2020 strategy. The closing of gender gaps in labour market variables, such as employment and unemployment rates and pay levels, has been one of the main objectives of EU policy. However, discrimination by gender is still evident in the differences in access to the labour market and varied employment patterns and associated working conditions, reflective of persistent gender segregation. In relation to the current crisis, it is clear that pressures on jobs and pay are very much concentrated on the public sector, where many women are employed.

## Key findings

Just five of the 20 occupational groups employing the highest number of workers can be considered to have a balanced gender mix: food, wood and garment workers; numerical clerks; legal, social and cultural professionals; business professionals; and personal service workers (groups based on the International Standard Classification of Occupations).

The public sector is important for female-dominated occupations – within male-dominated occupations, female employees are more likely to work in the public sector than their male counterparts. Workplaces provide another layer of segregation, with employees often working in same-sex environments, particularly women. Even when women and men are employed in mixed occupations, they are often working in same-sex workplaces.

Gender differences in time spent in paid and unpaid work are important in shaping working conditions for women and men. When paid working hours, hours spent in commuting to and from work and unpaid work time are all combined, the EWCS data found that women work, on average, 64 hours a week compared to the 53 hours worked by men. This can be explained by the fact that women spend 26 hours, on average, on caring activities, compared with the 9 hours spent by men, even though men devote more time to paid work (41 hours, compared with 34 hours spent by women).

One of the main issues related to gender and paid work involves the prevalence of part-time work, which can be viewed both positively and negatively. Certain female-dominated occupations like personal care, cleaning and personal services have particularly high shares of

part-time work. However, part-time work is often found at the lower end of the occupational distribution, with employees often excluded from benefits and disadvantaged in terms of access to promotion.

Men are much more likely than women to work longer than the 48 hours set out by the EU Working Time Directive, with the exception of those in teaching and clerical jobs. However, there are also many women who work long hours – for example, in sales, hospitality management, agriculture and the service industry. Men in the public sector are around half as likely to work long hours as their counterparts in the private sector and for women the effect is even stronger. Most people in full-time work would like to work less, with men declaring a preference for a 38-hour week, and women a 33-hour week.

Men's monthly earnings are higher in every occupation but gaps are wider in white-collar male-dominated occupations. In contrast, gender differences in intrinsic job quality across occupations are relatively small when compared to other job quality dimensions. Women tend to report higher satisfaction in terms of job quality than men. Interestingly, working time quality for men is particularly poor for those who have a male boss, while for women it remains almost exactly the same regardless of the sex of their boss. In some countries, women's working time quality improves when they have children but this is at the cost of a lifelong penalty in monthly earnings.

Well-being is, on average, significantly higher for men than for women. This gender gap exists across sectors and in the majority of occupational groups. Only in the service sector and shop and sales work is the well-being of women at a similar level to that of men. However, both women and men in mixed workplaces report higher well-being, with both men and women reporting this when they work for a boss of the opposite sex. The study also provides clear evidence that the well-being of women who have exited the labour market is lower than that of those remaining in employment.

## Policy pointers

The findings underline the importance of a coordinated and comprehensive policy approach to gender equality, both on and off the labour market. This approach would include the following concerns.

- Measures to address desegregation should consider the undervaluation of women's work and the processes by which stereotyping channels both girls and boys into certain types of work.

- Measures to address working time inequalities need to take into account the job quality effects of long hours and part-time hours, as well as inequalities around unpaid work in the home.
- Measures to improve job quality are needed for both women and men – and particular attention needs to be paid to the risks of low-quality job creation for new entrants to the labour market.
- Measures to improve well-being should recognise the benefits for mothers of integration into rather than exit from the labour market, as well as recognising the positive well-being effects from limiting desegregation and long hours of work.

Overall, the report points to the on-going relevance of gender-sensitive monitoring of the labour market, in particular at a time of significant change. The findings presented capture the initial impact of the crisis and point to the medium and long-term risks for gender inequalities. In particular, austerity measures may be clawing back advances achieved through social policies or services that support higher levels of participation or longer hours for women. For men, a key issue is whether, at least for the lower skilled, some potential convergence with women's employment experiences can be expected, with more men engaged in temporary or part-time employment and receiving pay at lower wage rates.

CHAPTER 1

# Introduction

# Introduction

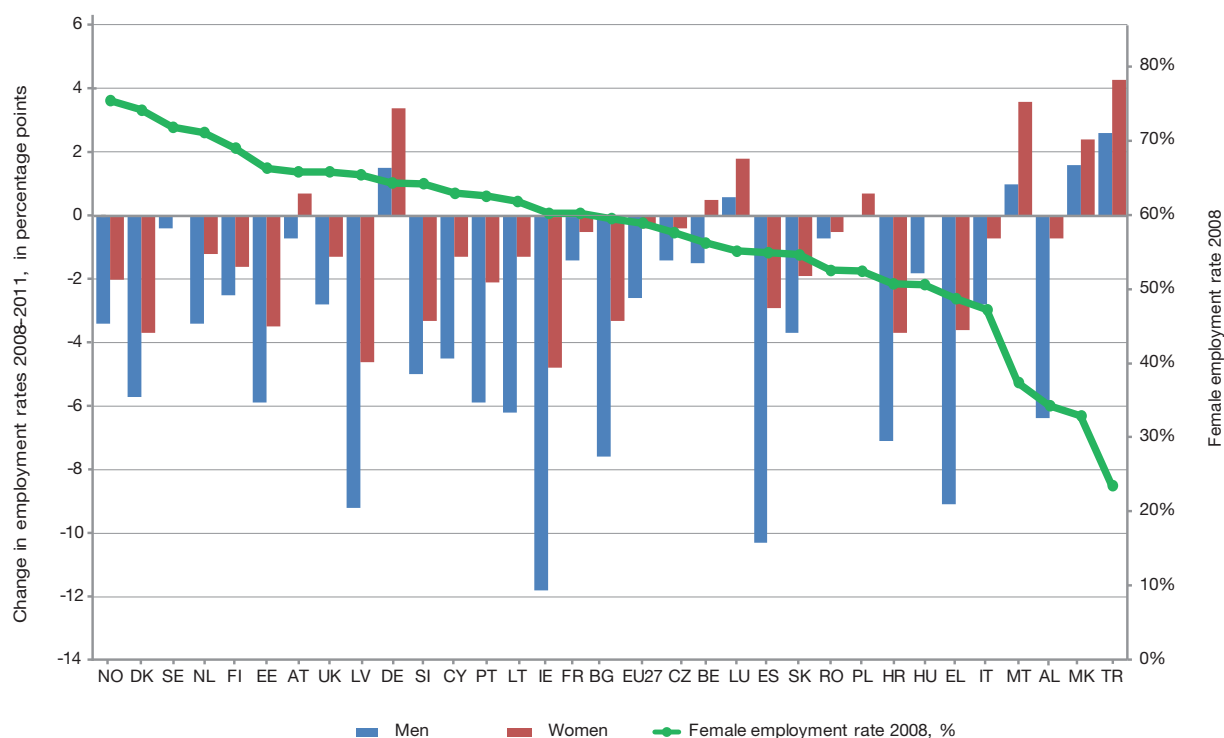
This report offers an analysis of the fifth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) carried out in 2010, from the perspective of gender equality. Despite more than 35 years of legislation against sex discrimination in the EU, men and women are still working in different occupations, workplaces, and industries, are employed on different employment contracts, and are still rewarded differently even after adjusting for skills and education. The impact of key life stages on gender inequalities and the evidence of differences in gender effects between advantaged and disadvantaged men and women are of particular interest. Differences in welfare and labour market policies, and associated variations in gender relations, may modify or exacerbate the impact of life stages or gender segregation on gender inequality. In recognition of the large number of countries involved in the EWCS, and the varieties of both policy and gender regimes (O'Reilly, 2006), this analysis is done by country and by policy area on a topic-by-topic basis, reflecting the important differences across EU countries.

## Recent trends in gender equality policy

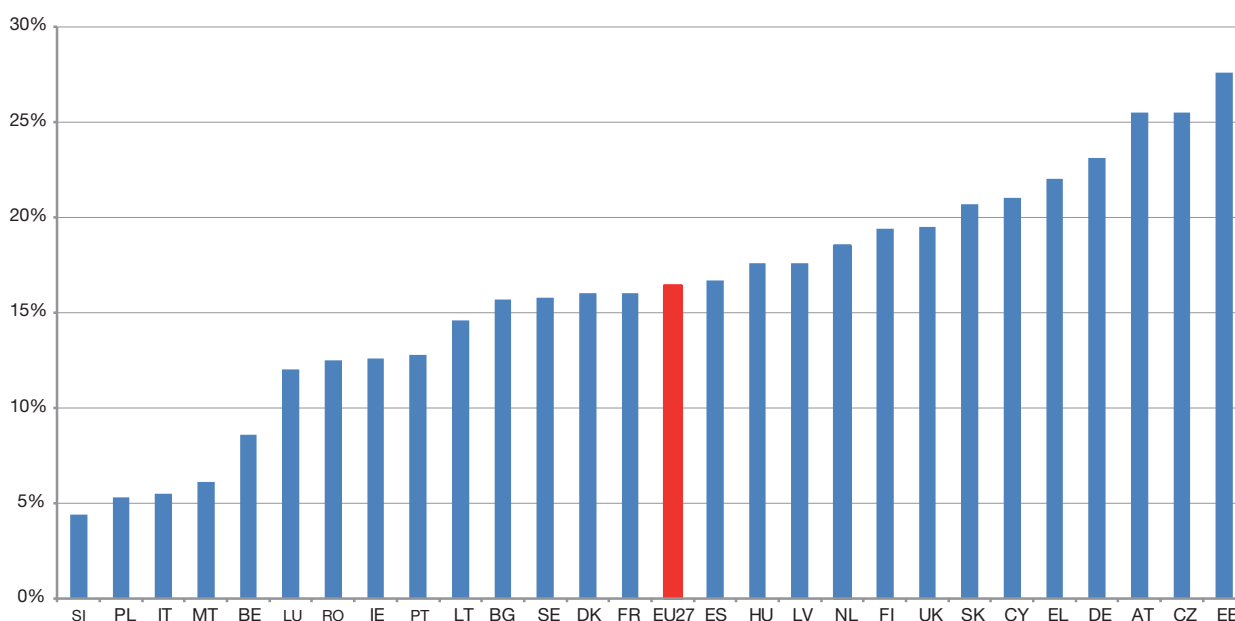
The goal of gender equality, now long established in the treaties and policy objectives of the EU, continues to prove elusive. Gender difference is still evident in patterns of access to the labour market, in employment patterns and working conditions, all reflective of persistent gender segregation. The closing of gender gaps in labour market variables, such as employment and unemployment rates and pay levels, has been one of the main objectives of EU policy. In recent times, under the impact of the crisis, these gaps have, in some countries, appeared to close; however, instead of this reflecting improvements in the position of women, it has merely been the expression of deteriorating conditions for men (see Figure 1).

In the medium to long term, it is clear that the Europe 2020 goals of a 75% employment rate for both women and men cannot be achieved without both major increases in female employment and a reinstatement of the jobs lost for men. A key issue for the future will be whether current female-dominated jobs remain the exclusive sphere of women. The employment crisis in Europe has the potential to disrupt traditional expectations of gender divisions in waged work. This could conceivably lead to men competing for traditional female roles, and to women, once more, being unable to access higher level jobs.

The gender pay gap in Europe remains significant and slow to change (Figure 2). Any recent improvements in this area have largely been attributed to the loss of middle-level jobs for men and the impact of polarisation of opportunities (European Commission, 2012; Eurofound, 2012a; Bettio and Verashchagina, 2013). Most politicians and analysts talk about the slow progress in closing the gender pay gap but the current crisis may herald widening gaps, particularly if the public sector cutbacks negatively affect highly educated women's wages, and high unemployment leads to pressure to cut or freeze legal or collectively agreed minimum wages – which will primarily affect women (Rubery and Grimshaw, 2011).

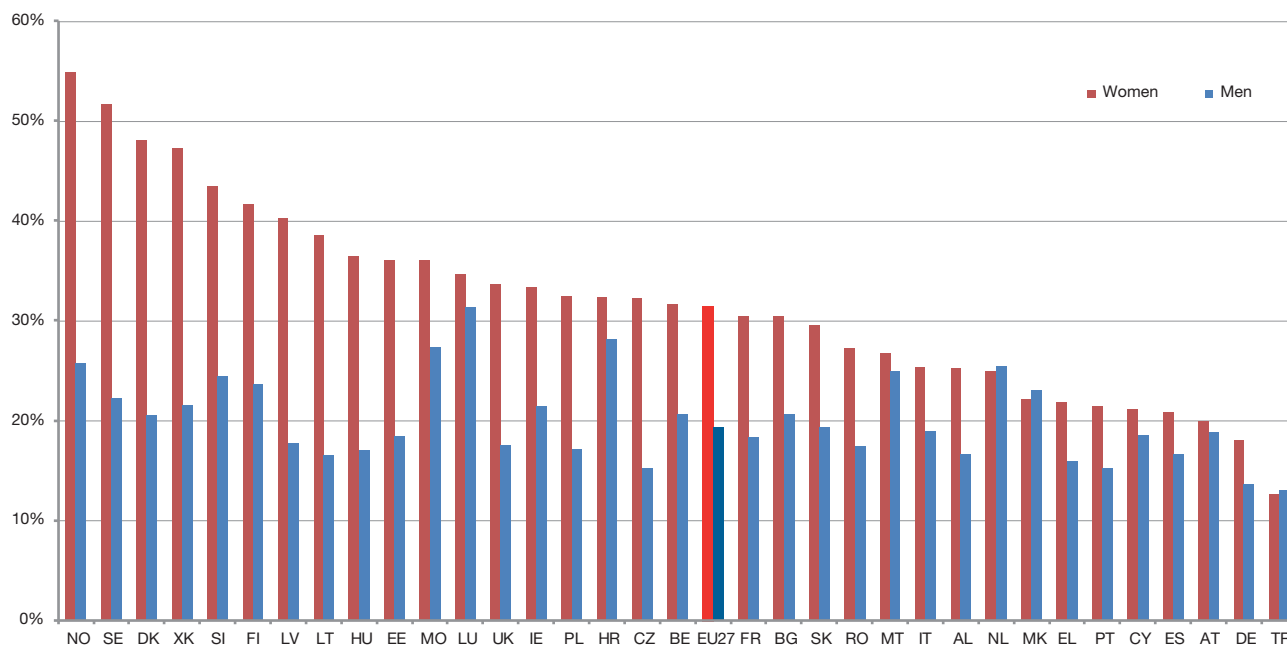
**Figure 1:** Change in employment rates in Europe, 2008–2011

Source: EU LFS 2008–2011, except for Albania where the source is the Albanian Institute of Statistics 2008–2010. No figures available for Kosovo and Montenegro.

**Figure 2:** Gender pay gap in the EU, 2010

Source: Eurostat, Structure of Earnings Survey 2010; data for Italy, Ireland, France, Spain, Cyprus, Austria and EU27 are provisional; data for Greece and Estonia are from 2009.

Notes: The unadjusted gender pay gap represents the difference between average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees and of female paid employees, as a percentage of the average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees. The population consists of all paid employees in enterprises with 10 employees or more in NACE Rev. 2 aggregate B to S (excluding O).

**Figure 3:** Concentration of workers in the public sector

Source: Same as for Figure 1.

Gender issues are central to Europe's current crisis, and to its medium and longer-term goals and challenges. In relation to the current crisis, now more associated with problems of public expenditure and sovereign debt, it is clear that pressures on jobs and pay are very much concentrated on the public sector, where many women are employed (Figure 3).

## Analytical framework

To understand gender differences in working conditions, it is necessary to develop a conceptual framework that both accounts for gender differences and allows for variations in these differences among countries, over time and over an individual's life course. Gender relations are socially constructed within different institutional, economic and cultural environments (Rubery, 2011; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). This study aims to avoid the pitfalls of many standard economic analyses where the female gender variable is effectively treated as a universal indicator of a group with low commitment to employment, characterised by contingent employment patterns and part-time working (Rubery, 2011). The analysis of gender difference and equality issues, using the EWCS, is focused on workers and the workplace, as those not engaged in paid work are not included in the survey.

An important development in recent analyses, from a gender perspective, has been to recognise that gender effects may differ between particular groups of men and women; this

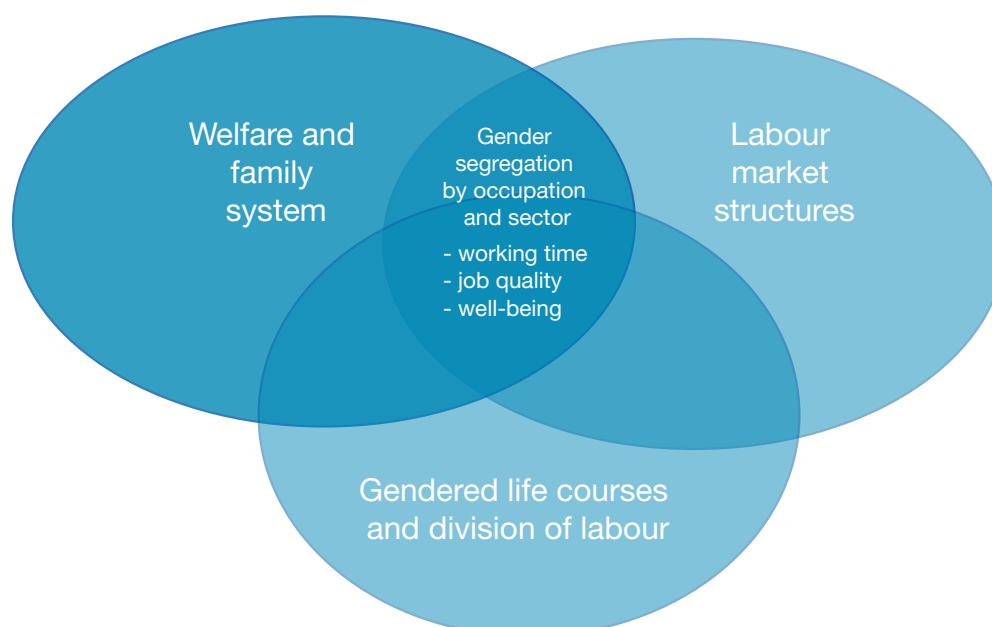
means that it is not always possible to say that there are common gender patterns in a certain country or group of countries, but instead that there may be domestic differences as well as international ones. It is already well established that there are significant differences between countries in both labour market organisation and welfare, and that these are likely to result in variations in gender relations and in gendered labour market outcomes (Lewis, 1992; Rubery et al, 1999; Crompton et al, 2007). These complexities suggest that, although it is important to look for variations among institutional forms for the impact on gender differences, it would be inappropriate to use only one country-level typology, as different institutional forms may have divergent effects (for example, on education or key life stages).

This study's analysis focuses on the interactions between three different elements, as illustrated in the conceptual framework (Figure 4). These are:

- the welfare and family system;
- labour market structures;
- gendered life courses and division of domestic and paid labour.

The report first explores the distribution of men and women by type of employment (the patterns of gender segregation) and then analyses the effects of gender on working conditions – specifically the areas of working time, job quality and well-being.



**Figure 4:** The conceptual framework

Conventional analysis of gender disparities in labour market outcomes tends to assume that they can be explained mainly by differences in the life stages of men and women, and by the influence of the life course on both initial job choices and on constraining people's employment choices and options. This life-course approach is closely tied to the gendered division of domestic labour and recognises that differences in unpaid work have an impact on the nature of paid work. Although the life stages have considerable relevance across countries and for most groups of women, it is evident that the extent of divergence in life stages between men and women, as measured by employment participation and working time, is generally diminishing (Bettio and Verashchagina, 2013). The impact of life stages on men and women nevertheless remains important for work-related choices and behaviours and continues to vary across countries.

This study recognises that the welfare system influences gender differences through its importance in:

- ✎ determining the availability of public services as alternatives to domestic labour;

- ✎ shaping (through the tax and benefits system) the incentives to work according to life stage and household position;
- ✎ influencing tendencies among women to be continuous or discontinuous participants through its provisions for leave, flexible working opportunities and childcare.

Furthermore, life stages are also tempered by societal norms and opportunities with respect to work and alternative working time arrangements. Variations in part-time work among women across different societies reflect differences in the availability of part-time work and not simply differences in attitudes to women's role in the home and on the labour market (O'Reilly and Fagan, 1998). Therefore, this study considers the labour market context as another set of institutional factors which influence life course options and the impact of life course decisions on actual employment outcomes.

## Methodological issues

The application of this framework to the EWCS dataset raises some methodological issues. First, although gender effects are clearly influenced by key life stages and these are particularly important in understanding the relationship between employment, working conditions and aspects of well-being, the dataset is strictly cross-sectional. Thus, while people's experiences are captured by the survey at specific life stages, the impact of these life stages on past or subsequent cohorts may vary. Any proxies used to capture differences in life stages will necessarily distort life stages and cohort effects. In some regimes, women are more likely to leave the labour market permanently at a key parental life stage; they are therefore not captured by the sample. A related theme is the propensity of women to work in the informal economy, which may be poorly represented in survey data.

Another problem is that the different general experience of women and men within the labour market may influence the measurement of working conditions variables, thereby potentially reducing or increasing gender gaps.

For example, it is highly likely that questions relating to issues such as prospects within a job will be answered in relation to the different expectations of career prospects in men and women's work in general: what is a good prospect for a woman is not necessarily a good prospect for a man. These differences may also be found within as well as between genders.

A third complexity arises out of the differences in gender relations and gender regimes across countries. While it is feasible to explore and categorise gender regimes for all 34 countries considered here, a pragmatic approach had to be adopted of providing country groupings according to the specific issue under investigation. However, the range of variations in variables is often quite large among countries, so countries do not easily fit into common classifications or groupings, for example by welfare state.

In addition to these general methodological issues, some pragmatic decisions needed to be taken on how to analyse the survey sample. Details of the EWCS survey and the application of appropriate weightings are presented in the box below.

### EWCS – Methodology, scope and weighting

The European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) sample is representative of people in employment, who worked for at least one hour during the week that preceded the interview (employees and self-employed), aged 15 and over (16 and over in Spain, the UK and Norway) and resident in each of the surveyed countries on the day of the survey. The survey sample followed a multi-stage, stratified and clustered design with a 'random walk' procedure for the selection of the respondents. In the fifth wave of the survey, carried out between January and June 2010, almost 44,000 workers from 34 countries were interviewed in their homes. The minimum number of interviews was 1,000 per country, with several larger national samples (for example, 4,001 interviews in Belgium; 3,046 in France and 1,404 in Slovenia), but weighting is applied to ensure representativeness at the country or EU27 level.

Countries covered by the fifth EWCS include all EU27 Member States, plus Norway, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Albania, Montenegro and Kosovo. The report covers all 34 countries when country breakdowns are shown. In providing aggregate gender analyses as a benchmark to understand patterns of variation, the study uses the EU27 rather than the total sample of 34 countries because the EU27 can be more readily compared with other statistical sources or surveys, and it represents a current political union. Several innovative country classifications are derived from the data for all 34 countries where distinct patterns of gender differences are noted.

The self-employed often have different characteristics to employees when it comes to working hours or their distribution across sectors and occupations. Thus, in several analyses, this study provides separate information for the self-employed and employees.

For all analyses, the data are weighted to take account of sampling probabilities. When a group of countries is considered jointly, for example the EU27, cross-national weights are applied to account for the relative size of the national populations. For some analyses, however, where the aim is to establish patterns of certain characteristics in groups of countries, all countries are given equal weight so that results for groups of countries are not dominated by larger countries.

(see Annex for more information)

## Structure of the report

This report is organised into five main analytical chapters based on themes that illustrate enduring and emerging gender inequalities such as life stages, labour markets, and welfare and family systems. In addition, the study draws out differences by country and provides input for current debates on austerity policies. It also explores the impact of the public/private sector division throughout the analysis.

Chapter 2 addresses the pattern of gender segregation in labour markets. The pattern of gender segregation is clearly a very important factor in shaping men's and women's different experiences of working conditions. However, gender segregation may itself be influenced by working conditions – for example, the types of jobs which are more easily combined with care responsibilities. Both the causes and outcomes of gender segregation are explored in this chapter. Gender segregation is then used as a common thread in chapters 3 to 6 for exploring:

- time differences in paid work;
- differences in the quality of work;
- differences in well-being and satisfaction with work;
- trends in working conditions by gender.

Each of these factors may be influenced by gendered life stages, and by institutional and social arrangements with respect to welfare, family and gender relations, and labour market organisation.

In chapters 2–6 the analysis of inter-country differences is developed using the specific aspects of working conditions under consideration. The dataset in most cases does not allow for detailed analyses of the underlying factors leading to these patterns of inter-country variations which are, in any case, likely to be caused by many things. These revealed patterns may, however, stimulate further research. Women have become more committed to continuous labour market participation in many countries and one might therefore expect more convergence among women and between women and men if one looks at the younger age cohorts by country. However, convergence in employment patterns does not guarantee convergence in working conditions by gender, due to gender segregation and differential treatment by gender.

Chapter 7 explores the combined results of the analytical chapters to underline the continued importance of a gendered analysis of working conditions in Europe, both to achieve equality goals and to encourage wider strategies for enhanced competitiveness.



## CHAPTER 2

# Gender segregation

# Gender segregation

Segregation of the labour market reflects the complex links between welfare systems, labour market organisations and gender relations. Any successful analysis of gender differences in working conditions must examine the backdrop of jobs and workplaces, which are often segregated into:

- ✎ highly female-dominated;
- ✎ mixed;
- ✎ highly male-dominated.

Likewise, differences between the involvement of men and women in public and private sectors help shape gender differences in aggregate working conditions. However, since working conditions may influence job choice and recruitment, gendered preferences and patterns in working conditions also help explain current and changing patterns of gender segregation.

## Gender segregation at different levels

In line with previous working conditions surveys, the results from the fifth EWCS overview report (Eurofound, 2012a) demonstrate that gender segregation in Europe remains high, with 60% of women and 64% of men working in occupations predominantly made up of their own sex, based on the ISCO 2-digit code. Fewer than 20% of men and women worked in occupations that were predominantly composed of the other sex. Within sectors, gender segregation for men is reported to be highest in:

- ✎ construction (91% male);

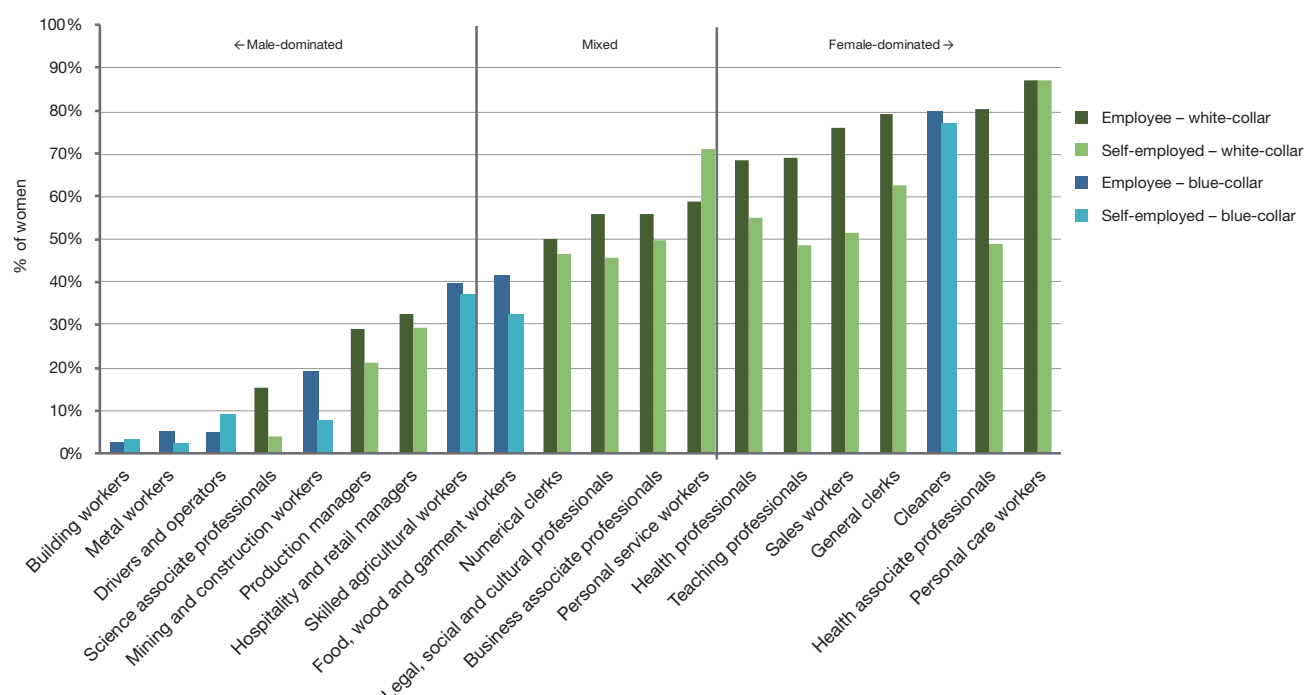
- ✎ transport (80%);
- ✎ industry (69%);
- ✎ agriculture (65%).

For women, health (77%) and education (67%) are the most female-dominated sectors. Gender segregation at occupational level highlights how technical and elementary occupations have a mixed distribution of workers, but that women make up 66% of clerical support, service workers and sales workers. Men comprise:

- ✎ 88% of craft workers;
- ✎ 85% of plant workers and machine operators;
- ✎ 69% of managers;
- ✎ 65% of skilled agricultural workers.

This study focuses on gender segregation in the 20 most populated occupations, encompassing 76% of all workers.<sup>4</sup> Slight differences in gender distributions occur within occupations when only employees (as opposed to those who are self-employed) are included for analysis (Figure 5). Self-employed workers tend to have greater proportions in certain occupational categories (see box below), so this report separates self-employed workers from those employed directly by organisations. However, it is understood that, within the ISCO-2 categories, there is still considerable heterogeneity.

<sup>4</sup> Of the remaining 24% of the survey participants, only small net samples are available within each additional occupation

**Figure 5:** Proportion of women in the 20 largest occupations

Source: Unless otherwise indicated, the source for all figures in the report is the fifth EWCS.

Figure 5 shows the proportion of female employees within each occupation, ranked from the most female-dominated occupations to the least. At each end of the spectrum are occupations that are almost exclusively populated by one sex: 78% or more of general clerks, personal care workers, health associate professionals, and cleaners are female, while 95% or more of drivers and operators, metal workers and building workers are male. This focus shows that only five of the largest occupational categories – food, wood, and garment workers; numerical clerks; legal, social and cultural professionals; business professionals, and personal service workers– can be considered mixed.

A relatively large proportion of people working in female-dominated occupations work in the public sector (Figure 6). Indeed, the gendered nature of employment in the public sector is particularly important, given the impact of the economic crisis and the austerity measures which are leading to cuts in many countries, affecting female workers most. Teachers account for most employees in the public sector (27%), followed by:

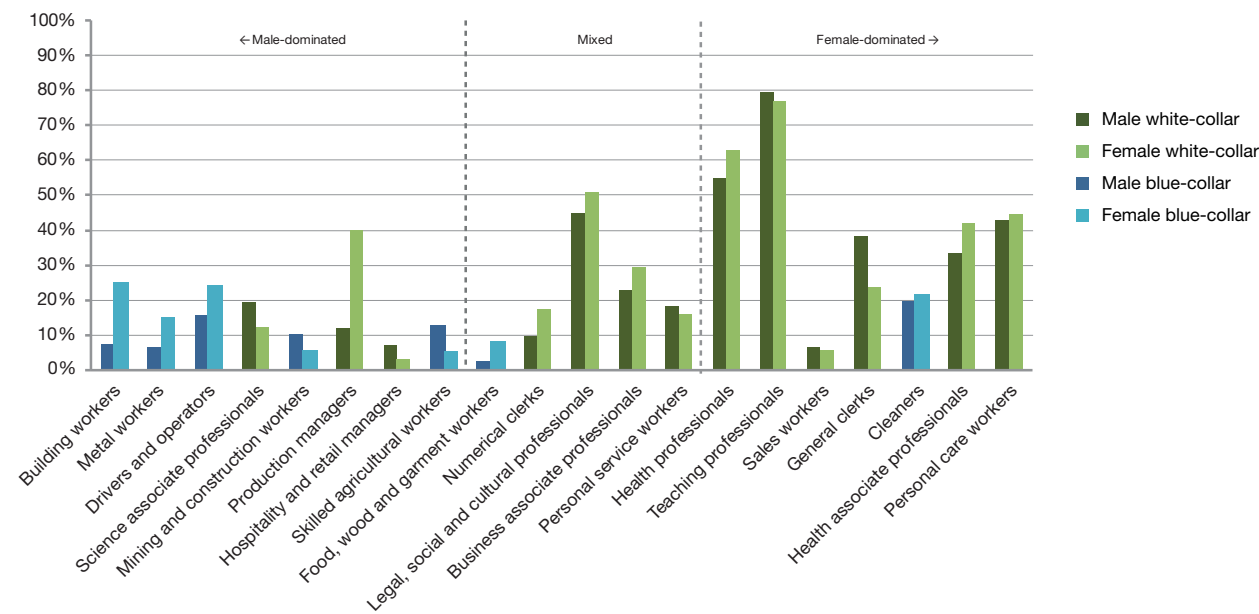
- business professionals (11%);
- personal care workers (8%);
- health professionals/associate professionals (7%).

By contrast, sales workers make up much of the private sector (13%), along with:

- business professionals (10%);
- building and related trades workers (8%);
- drivers (7%);
- personal service workers (7%).

Even within male-dominated occupations, such as production managers, building workers and drivers and operators, female employees are more likely to work in the public sector than their male counterparts. Traditionally, the public sector has led the way in employee-friendly flexibility and providing benefits and services to employees, including good quality jobs for women (Rubery, 2013).

**Figure 6:** Proportion of workers in the public sector by gender and occupation



Although gender segregation of the workforce is a common pattern across countries covered by the EWCS, there are still national variations in its extent. The structure of the labour market is significant in this respect, as different sectors of the economy shape the types of jobs on offer. For example, while the EU has an average of 5%

of workers in agriculture (65% male), almost a quarter of Romania's total workforce (24%) are employed in agriculture, of whom 49% are female. In other Member States, the public sector reinforces segregation because of the many women working in it.



### Segregation among the self-employed

Most workers are employed by a company, but some occupational fields attract more workers into self-employment than others. For example, the occupational categories of skilled agricultural workers, hospitality and retail workers, and production managers are more likely to comprise self-employed workers than other occupations.

Men are more likely to be self-employed than women across occupational fields. Male health professionals are twice as likely to be self-employed (36.2%) than their female counterparts (18.0%). The same occurs for sales workers (30.5% men and 15.8% women). Exceptions where more women are self-employed in an occupation than men include:

- ✎ agricultural professionals (81.4% women and 79.8% men);
- ✎ drivers and mobile plant operators (18.7% women, 10.5% men);
- ✎ personal service workers (21.2% women, 14.6% men).

In building and related trades, 25.6% of men and 14.7% of women are self-employed. A similar situation arises in food processing, wood-working, and garment and other craft and related trades, where 16.2% of women and 25.8% of men are self-employed.

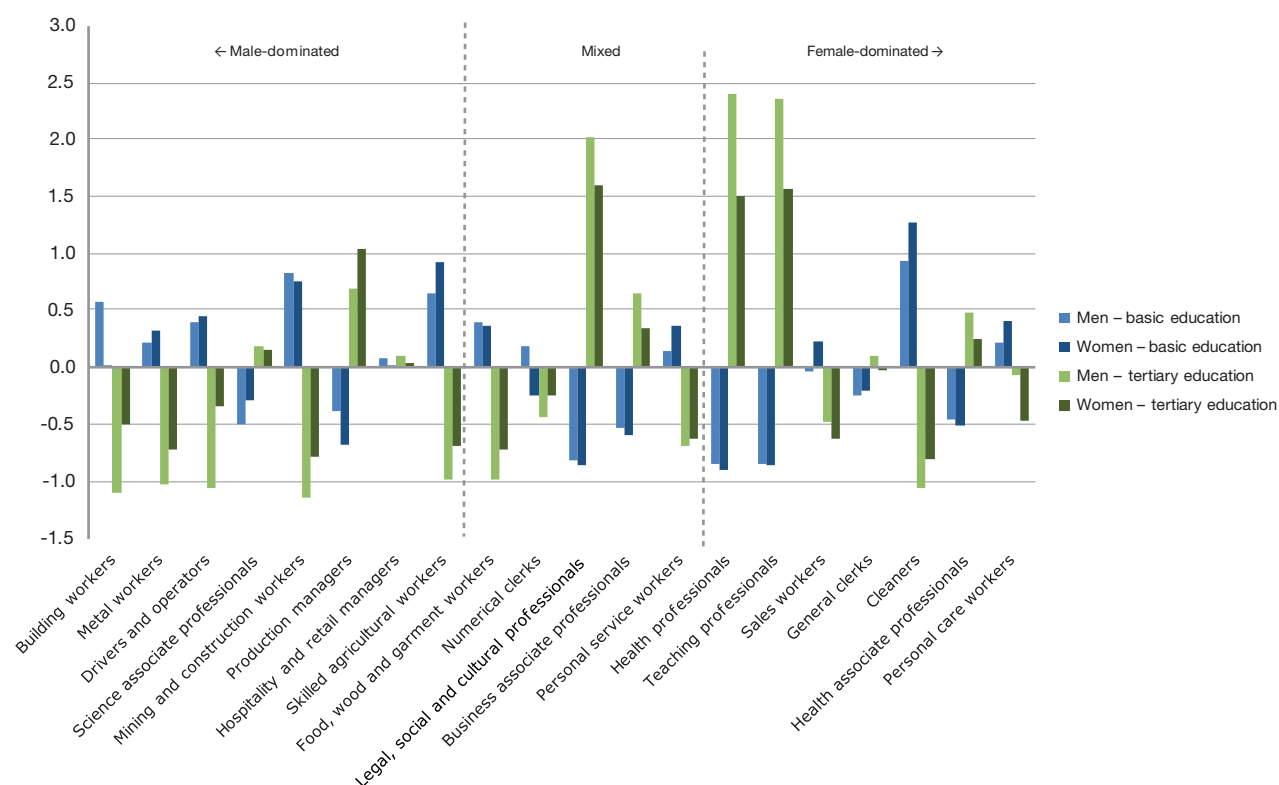
Although self-employment might be perceived as a free choice – for both men and women – it is still true that a combination of sector imperatives and gender segregation shape the distribution of self-employed women and men across occupations.

## Reasons for occupational segregation

The segregation of women and men into different occupations is the outcome of a variety of processes inside and outside the labour market. Some individuals may be more likely to be found in segregated occupations than others. Here, the study explores how educational levels and stages within the life course may be associated with employment in highly gender-segregated occupations.

### Education

Overall, women on the labour market have a higher level of education than men, based on the five categories in the EWCS. This is partly explained by women working in particular fields that require higher education, such as teaching and healthcare. Again, using the largest occupations, Figure 7 shows the over- and under-representation of employees with the lowest (basic) or highest (tertiary) education. A particularly polarised pattern among female-dominated occupations can be found, with high levels of tertiary education for the female-dominated occupations of health professionals and teaching. By contrast, the female-dominated occupation of cleaners has high proportions of male and female employees with a basic education, although there are more male workers with tertiary levels of education in this occupation.

**Figure 7:** Over- and under-representation of men and women in the largest occupations

Note: The figure was created by dividing the percentage of male or female employees in each occupation with the basic or tertiary education respectively by the overall percentage of male or female employees with the corresponding level of education. The average for each group was calculated and subtracted to equalise all groups to a standard of zero difference (the norm for both basic educated and tertiary educated employees)

Male-dominated occupations appear not to have the same over-representation of people with tertiary education, as seen in some female-dominated occupations. Employees with basic education levels are, in fact, over-represented in male-dominated and highly male-dominated occupations. However, this is only one measure of the status of an occupation and it is known from other research that on other measures, such as wages, female-dominated occupations tend to be undervalued (see Chapter 4). Employees in female-dominated occupations such as cleaners, sales workers and care workers have an above-average risk of being in the lowest third of incomes – this risk is also higher for women than men within these occupations. Furthermore, when it comes to educational attainment, women may also over-achieve in education as a signal in the labour market that they have appropriate skills and wish to comply with the linear participation patterns traditionally associated with men, further boosting the level of education in female-dominated occupations.

### Life stages

Stages of life can also play an important role in shaping individual working hours, job categories, and places of work for individual male and female workers. For example, workers with responsibilities for young children may seek employment with shorter or more regular hours than those with no children, or with grown children. Some women may ‘choose’ employment in perceived family-friendly sectors and organisations, anticipating the impact of fertility decisions and reinforcing the gender-segregated nature of some occupations (Amuedo-Dorantes and Kimmel, 2005). Using the categorisation of different life stages developed by Dominique Anxo, Christine Franz and Angelika Kümmerling (Eurofound, 2012a), a series of stylised life stages in the EWCS can be identified:

- young single workers;
- young couples;

➤ couples with children at various stages;

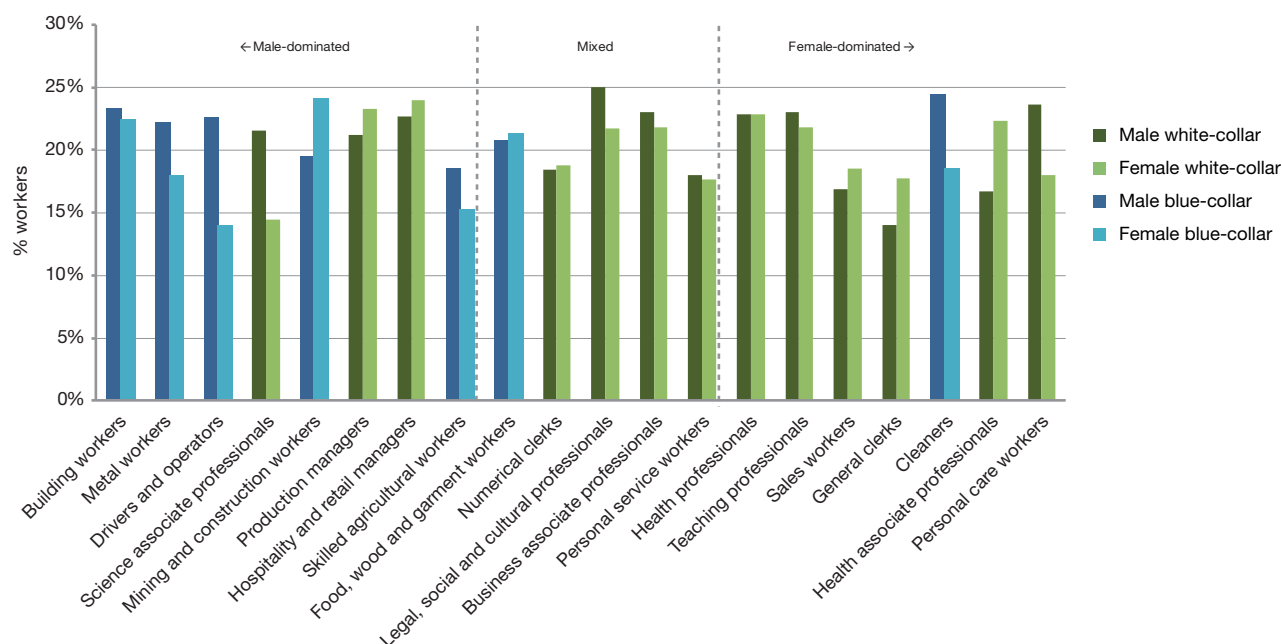
➤ mature couples with no children.<sup>5</sup>

Anxo, Franz and Kümmerling divide the sample into these sequential groups that chart many of the typical life stages (without claiming that this is universal) although, as the data are cross-sectional this does not, of course, capture actual individual life stages. The research is cautious in interpreting this variable as simply reflecting life stage effects; it may be confused with cohort effects, for instance, with younger workers being better educated than older workers, and with a smaller gender gap in qualifications than for older workers. Cohort effects can be particularly important for the interpretation of results for the transition economies where, under socialism, older cohorts' experience of education and labour market entry were characterised by very different labour market institutions. The subsequent transformation of these countries had many negative career effects on these cohorts, such as unemployment and labour market integration. Moreover, in comparative analysis, it is important to bear in mind the cross-country variation in social norms, expectations and constraints attached to gender roles and life stages.

The stages represent a cross-section of society in the EWCS rather than stages through which each survey respondent has passed or will pass.

Across the study's 20 occupational categories, there is a significant difference in the distribution of women and men from households with children under seven years of age<sup>6</sup> – a stage of life with particularly high demands for work–life balance (Figure 8). The occupational breakdown shows that mothers of young children tend to be over-represented, compared with their share for the whole labour market, in certain female-dominated occupations of health professionals, health associate professionals and teaching professionals. However, in other female-dominated occupations, the proportions are below the norm – personal care workers and cleaners for example. For men, whose careers are not affected in the same way by life stages, the under- and over-representation of fathers of children aged under seven is somewhat less marked compared with all men, although the opposite pattern is found to that of women among the female-dominated occupations of personal care workers and cleaners.

**Figure 8:** Distribution of female and male workers living together with a child under 7 years, by occupation



<sup>5</sup> The life stages approach based on these categories is used throughout this report.

<sup>6</sup> Chi Square tests on occupation distribution of male and female workers.

## Single Parents

Single parents, workers with a son or daughter in the household and no partner, account for just 2.1% of all male employees but for 12.8% of all female employees. As a result, the vast majority (87.1%) of all single parents who work are women, although men remain an important group of single parents, particularly in countries such as Sweden and Norway. Single parents are a critical factor in understanding the relationship between employment and gender relations, as they lack the support of a partner and take on most or all responsibility for childcare.

The greatest proportions of single mothers are employed as:

- ✎ sales workers (14.5%);
- ✎ cleaners (13.8%);
- ✎ teaching professionals (11.6%);
- ✎ business professionals (10.6%);
- ✎ personal care workers (10.0%).

All of these jobs are female-dominated, and the first two occupations consist of generally lower-paid, lower quality work. Single fathers are over-represented among some typically female-dominated occupations such as cleaners (4.7% of men are single fathers) and numerical and material recording clerks (3.3%). On the other hand, there are negligible proportions of single fathers among skilled agricultural workers.

Single parents face particular challenges on the labour market since the pressures of balancing work and family life fall on only one earner. For both single mothers and fathers, there is an over-representation in occupations at the lower end of the distribution, which may exacerbate these challenges.

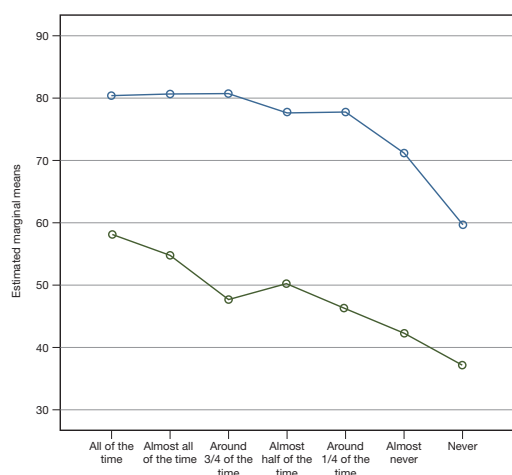
## Extent of occupational segregation

The presence of mostly men or mostly women in a work setting may have different effects on the experience of work and the way work is done. As mentioned earlier, it is the norm to work in same-sex jobs, accounting for 60% of both men and women in employment. However, when women work in male-dominated jobs, or men work in female-dominated jobs, most characteristics of work life remain about the same, contrary to expectations. Indeed, instead of individuals who work in opposite-sexed occupations experiencing uncomfortable work situations, the results from the EWCS show that it is both men and women working in female-dominated job categories who experience the most negative working conditions. There is a pattern for certain working conditions to be associated with female-dominated occupations, regardless of whether women or men hold the positions, for example working with customers or patients and the related potential risks (see Chapter 4). This may be influenced by people's perceptions of female-dominated occupations and how workers are treated by people with whom they interact – such as consumers, patients and students.

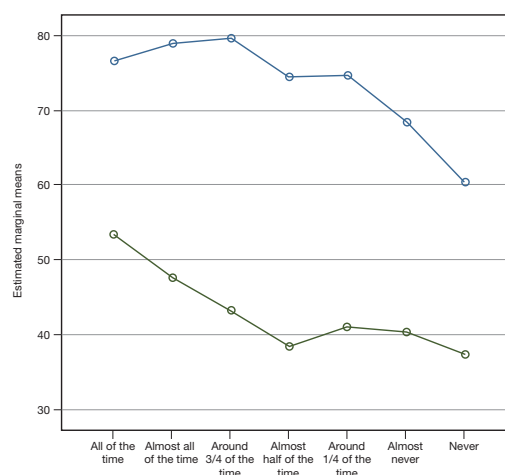
The interaction between gender segregation and working conditions is unlikely to be the result of a single process. Indeed, jobs may become more male- or female-dominated as they reflect the nature of the available labour supply and also certain characteristics of the work. Figure 9 presents a series of analyses where the relationship between selected working conditions and the gender composition of the occupation is explored. For this analysis, each of the 45 ISCO 2-digit occupations is scored with its corresponding male share, in order to provide a numerical measure of segregation. This measure is used to explore the impact of the regularity with which employees are exposed to certain conditions. For example, in the case of exposure to vibrations from tools and machinery, around 80% of men and almost 60% of women who are exposed to vibrations all of the time work in male-dominated occupations. The downward trajectory of the lines in figure 9a illustrate that workers that are less exposed to vibrations are also less likely to be in a male-dominated occupation. There are similar patterns in exposure to loud noises, and jobs that involve carrying or moving heavy loads (figures 9b and 9c). In contrast, although this is a slightly weaker relationship, jobs involving work with infectious materials, or customers/passengers/pupils/patients and angry clients/patients – all become less male dominated as the risk rises of exposure to them (figures 9d, 9e and 9f).

**Figure 9:** Proportion of workers working in a male-dominated occupation, by exposure to risks (%)

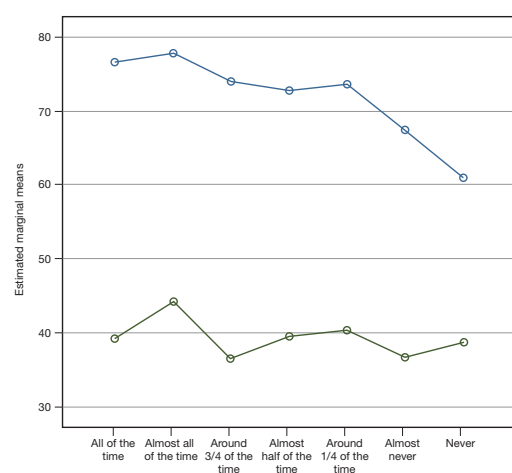
## a) Vibrations



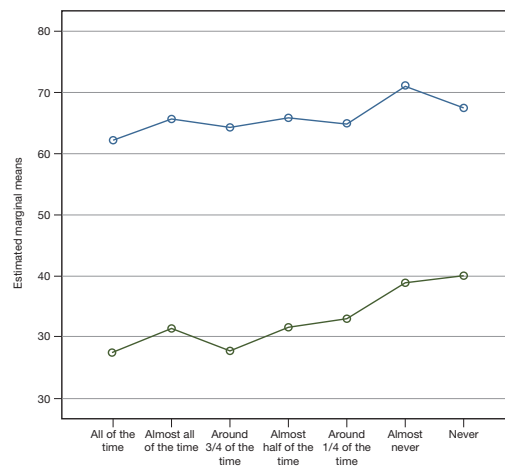
## b) Noise



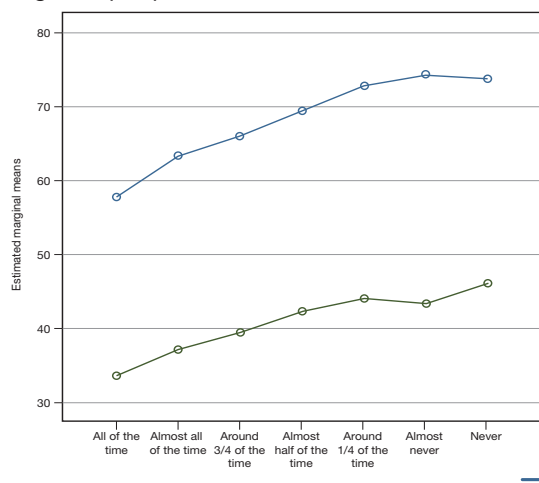
## c) Heavy loads



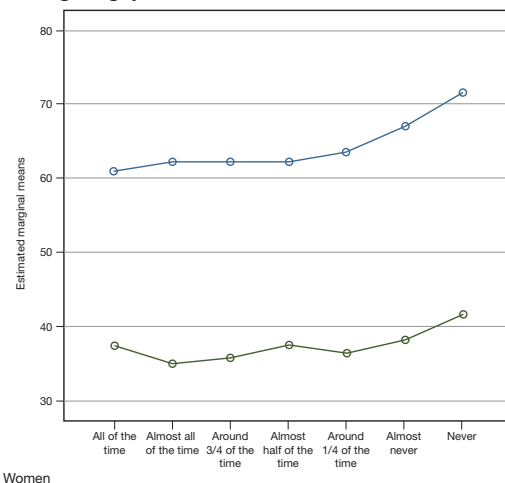
## d) Handling infectious materials



## e) Dealing with people



## f) Handling angry clients



Note: marginal means are for % of men within each occupation

Analysis based on 2-way ANOVAs using male proportion of ISCO 2-digit occupations (a)  $F = 141,607$  ( $p < .000$ ) (b)  $F = 1298,467$  ( $P < .000$ ) (c)  $F = 1203,068$  ( $p < .000$ ) (d)  $F = 1077,303$  ( $p < .000$ ) (e)  $F = 1322,811$  ( $p < .000$ ) (f)  $F = 1022,472$  ( $p < .000$ )

Across the EU, there has been increasing emphasis on the effective use of available human resources as a source of competitiveness, and policies to promote gender equality have frequently been driven by this motivation. At the organisational level, human resource management places a similar emphasis on deriving competitive advantages from employees through the adoption of new management techniques, functional flexibility and the reorganisation or redesign of jobs to empower workers and to devolve responsibility (Eurofound, 2009). Using several measures from the EWCS, the research explores the incidence of some of these managerial practices – which have the potential to empower employees.

Table 1 shows the proportion of employees working in teams with some, or high levels of, autonomy and also the proportion of those with some level of rotation and autonomy, using the 20 occupations discussed above.

Perhaps surprisingly, this study finds very little difference in the incidence of these working arrangements for female and male employees in the EU. However, across occupations, there are greater gender differences. Men working as health professionals and health associate professionals experience lower levels of autonomy in terms of tasks and teamwork than their female counterparts. On the other hand, men working in two other female-dominated occupations – cleaning and personal care – seem to experience a particular advantage in terms of autonomy and teamwork compared with women. Among male-dominated occupations, female employees are not seen as having the same advantages over their male counterparts, although women in science and engineering occupations report higher levels of task rotation and autonomy and, among production managers, women seem to have an advantage in terms of teamwork.

**Table 1:** Levels of autonomy among men and women working in teams (%)

	Some task rotation and autonomy		Some or high autonomy	
	men	women	men	women
Building workers	54	-	48	-
Metal workers	56	60	35	20
Drivers and operators	34	37	18	19
Science associate professionals	48	56	43	31
Mining and construction workers	54	55	36	30
Production managers	44	41	42	49
Hospitality and retail managers	49	46	37	34
Skilled agricultural workers	39	32	51	28
Food, wood and garment workers	50	50	37	20
Numerical clerks	48	34	33	33
Legal, social and cultural professionals	52	43	51	48
Business associate professionals	40	38	36	36
Personal service workers	54	53	32	37
Health professionals	60	74	41	55
Teaching professionals	40	43	46	53
Sales workers	50	49	36	32
General clerks	45	36	42	35
Cleaners	53	30	30	21
Health associate professionals	57	70	44	53
Personal care workers	72	51	52	44
Total	48	46	37	39

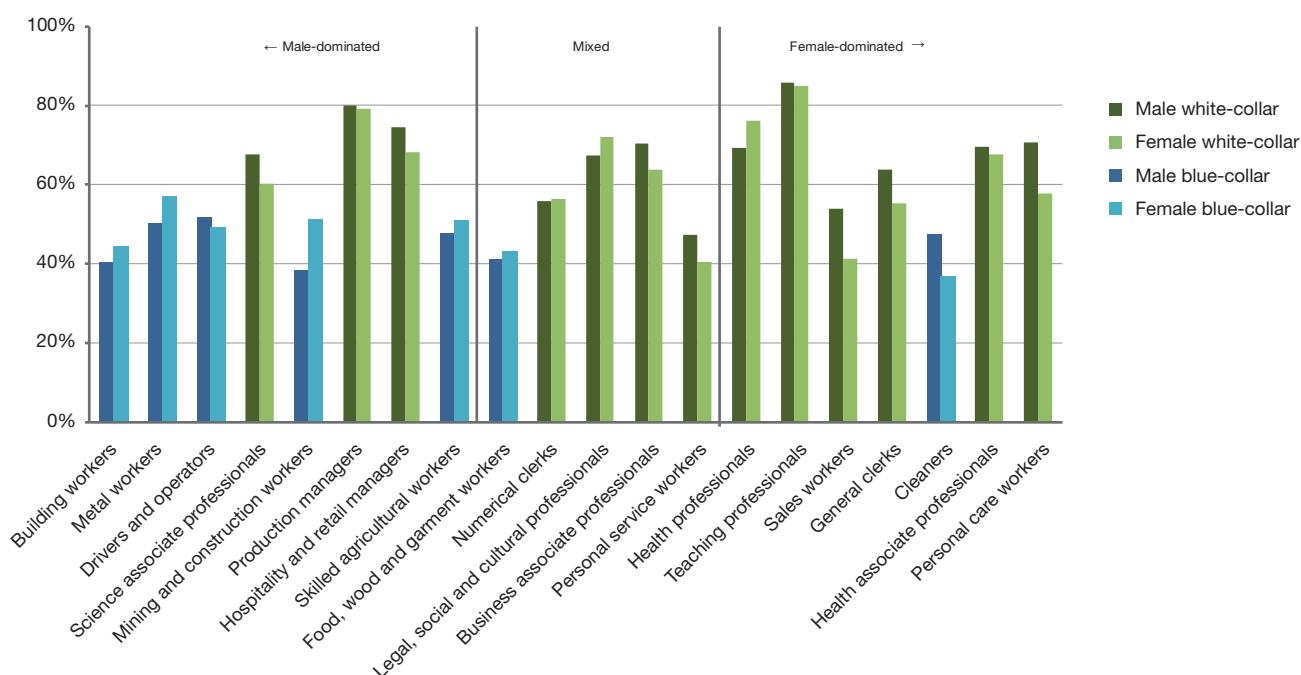
Providing employees with 'voice' is another important HRM practice which promotes:

- ✎ participation in organisational life;
- ✎ retention;
- ✎ identification with organisational goals (Batt et al, 2002; Wilkinson et al, 2004).

The EWCS asked respondents whether they were able to voice their opinions about their employer organisation at meetings. In occupations requiring higher levels of

education – for example, teaching professionals, health associate professionals, science and engineering associate professionals, and business and administration associate professionals– employees reported more opportunities to voice their concerns or opinions in meetings (Figure 10). However, the largest gender differences seem to occur at the extremes of male- and female-dominance of the occupation. Men in female-dominated occupations such as sales workers, keyboard clerks, cleaners, and personal care workers reported more opportunities to voice their opinions about the organisation at meetings than women, even if these occupations seem to provide fewer overall opportunities for employees to express personal views.

**Figure 10:** Extent to which employees can voice their opinions about the organisation at meetings



Many employees work in gender-segregated workplaces. This enterprise-level segregation means that male (64.7%) and female (62.7%) employees often work with colleagues who are of the same sex. It is, in fact, much rarer for women to work in an exclusively male environment (7.3%) and men to work in a female environment (9.5%). This segregation can be overlaid with segregation by occupations.

Women who work mostly with men are found in the male-dominated occupations (Table 2). For instance, more than half of the women (57.4%) working as drivers and mobile plant operators work in male workplaces. Correspondingly, men who work in a workplace mostly with women are found in female-dominated occupations.

**Table 2:** Proportion of women and men in workplaces (%)

Largest occupational groups	Same-sex workplace		Mixed-sex workplace		Opposite-sex workplace	
	men	women	men	women	men	women
Building workers	95.1	-	1.6	-	<1	-
Metal workers	91.8	35.0	3.8	20.0	<1	41.7
Drivers and operators	88.6	23.0	6.6	18.0	1.9	57.4
Science associate professionals	78.5	42.3	13.1	28.9	1.9	20.8
Mining and construction workers	81.9	53.0	11.7	31.1	4.6	14.6
Production managers	56.6	42.0	14.8	14.0	4.7	18.5
Hospitality and retail managers	34.4	37.8	22.0	19.7	9.7	9.4
Skilled agricultural workers	65.0	35.5	21.4	33.9	3.9	22.6
Food, wood and garment workers	75.2	68.7	15.4	18.8	5.0	8.8
Numerical clerks	60.7	47.7	24.1	23.3	7.7	13.3
Legal, social and cultural professionals	26.9	54.6	40.7	25.8	17.6	8.2
Business associate professionals	46.7	46.7	31.5	24.0	11.0	12.2
Personal service workers	44.1	62.4	31.1	22.4	13.0	7.2
Health professionals	25.3	72.8	35.5	21.5	32.5	2.8
Teaching professionals	16.2	76.1	37.6	17.8	41.2	2.7
Sales workers	46.4	69.2	35.4	19.4	13.2	5.1
General clerks	34.0	45.0	42.5	24.0	16.5	13.6
Cleaners	50.7	63.6	25.1	12.6	15.6	4.0
Health associate professionals	38.4	77.4	26.0	13.2	30.1	2.2
Personal care workers	10.8	73.5	36.0	8.9	43.9	1.5
Total	64.7	62.7	18.8	19.0	9.5	7.3

Those working in the evenly mixed occupation types – with around 50% men and women – still work in quite segregated workplaces. Workers in food processing, wood working, garment and other crafts tend to work in

same-sex places (75% for men, 69% for women). This provides a glimpse of an additional dimension of segregation within and between firms.



### Employees with sole job titles

The European Working Conditions Survey also identifies respondents who are the only one in their workplace with a particular job title. This may be because that person has a particular expertise or performs a particular function to support the main activity of the workplace. Compared with men, women in female-dominated occupations are more often the only individuals in their workplaces with their job title. This might be because they are working in smaller organisations, where fewer job titles exist, but it may also reflect gender segregation in these jobs.

The segregation of employees with sole job titles along gender lines highlights two types of workers:

- production and specialised service managers without colleagues of the same job title for both sexes (24% of men and 26% of women respectively);
- hospitality and retail managers likely to be working alone (34% of men and 33% of women).

However, female employees in female-dominated occupations such as cleaners (20%) and general and keyboard clerks (17%) are more often alone in their job titles than men (9% and 7% respectively).

## Gender of boss or supervisor

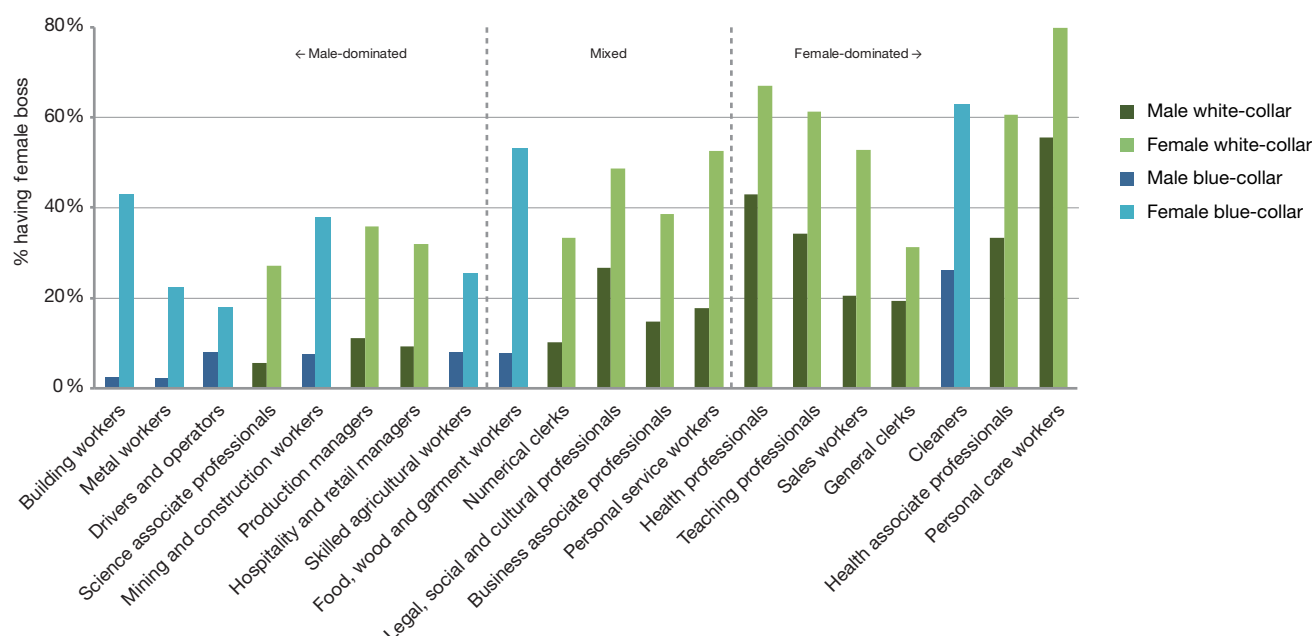
The EWCS data show that 20% of men have supervisory positions, compared with 12% of women. Moreover, among those employees with supervisory roles, women have, on average, fewer direct employees for whom they are responsible (nine employees for women and 31 for men). Women are much less likely to be in managerial positions in the EWCS data, but female employees are much more likely to have female supervisors than male employees (44.2% compared with 18.1%).

The proportion of employees with a female boss is one area where there are stark differences across countries: just over 40% of employees have a female boss in Estonia, compared with 11% in Kosovo. Countries such as Greece, Kosovo and Turkey have low proportions of both female and male employees with a female boss although Malta (fourth lowest proportion of employees with a female boss) has almost the EU average proportion of female employees with a female boss (44% compared with 47%) but a low proportion of male employees working under female supervisors.

Across occupations, men predominantly have male bosses except in female-dominated occupations such as health, personal care or services, and teaching. For example, men are more likely to have female supervisors in the occupations of:

- personal care workers (55.6%);
- health professionals (42.9%);
- teaching professionals (34.3%);
- health professionals (33.3%) (Figure 11).

Women are also most likely to have a female supervisor in these same occupations. There are similarly high numbers of women who have female supervisors in the highly female-dominated occupation of cleaners (62.9%). Even in male-dominated occupations such as building and related trades, 20 times as many women have female supervisors (42.9%) than men who have female supervisors (2.3%). Even in the more mixed occupations, women are, again, more likely to have female supervisors.

**Figure 11:** Proportion of male and female employees having a woman supervisor

A likely explanation for this is that these relatively broad occupational categories do not capture the finer nuances of occupational segregation, akin to the workplace segregation observed above.

Regardless of the proportions of female and male managers, a perennial question is whether women and men make equally good bosses. Supervisors hold a great deal of responsibility for determining whether the workplace environment is good or bad. To assess this, this report used a range of questions in the EWCS to measure employee perceptions of the performance of their supervisor. For an overall supervisor performance rating, six different questions were combined about whether supervisors:

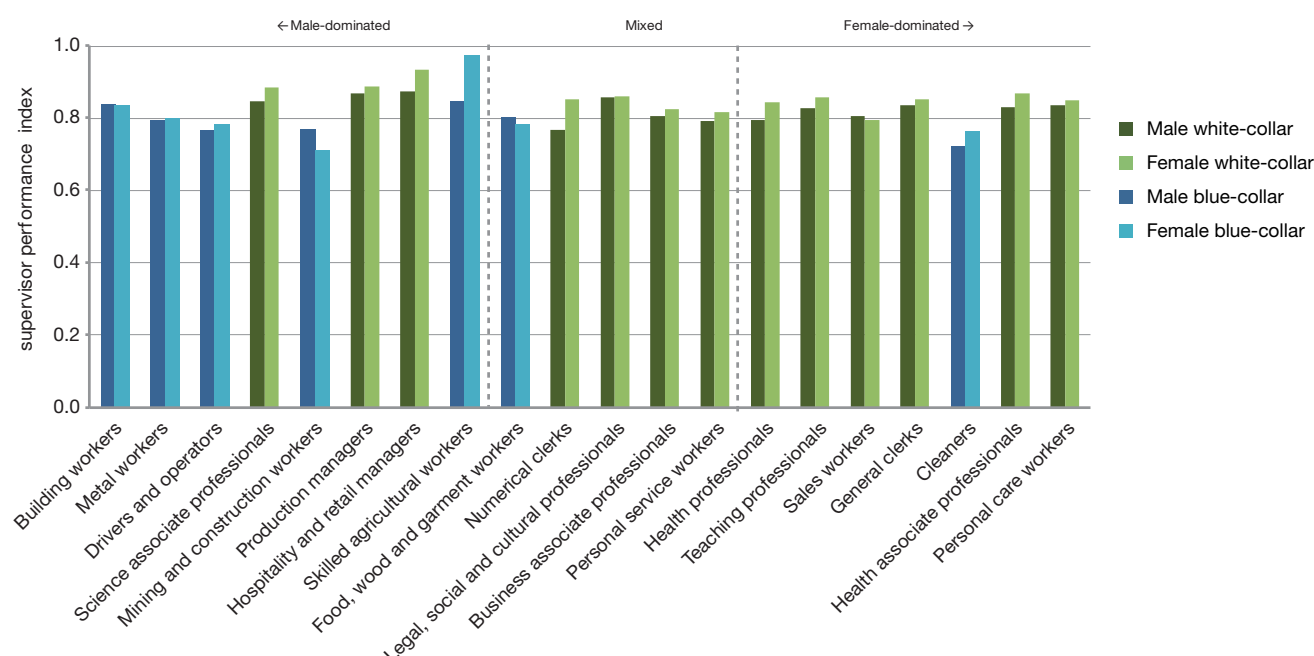
- provide feedback on work;
- respect their workers;
- are good at resolving conflicts;
- are good at planning and organising work;
- encourage participation in important decisions;
- help and support their workers (Cronbach's alpha 0.77).

Among the largest occupations in Figure 12, there is relatively little difference between the performance of female and male supervisors although women do tend to outperform men across most of the 20 occupations.

When considering the performance of male and female bosses using these performance scores, it can be seen that female bosses are regarded as better performers than their male counterparts by employees among the EU survey participants. Both male and female employees rate female supervisors significantly higher than male supervisors, although the score difference is small.<sup>8</sup> However, when analysing countries individually, the majority of men and women within the participating countries generally ranked their male and female supervisors about equally, showing no significant preference for one gender of supervisor over another. This suggests that, in performance terms, there is no reason for women not to be better integrated into supervisory roles.

<sup>7</sup> Cronbach's alpha is a coefficient, commonly used in statistics to estimate the reliability of a psychometric test for a sample of examinees.

<sup>8</sup> Results based on analysis of variance of supervisor performance measure by gender and gender of boss ( $F=15308$ ,  $p<0,000$ , sample size 29078). The overall significant result that disappears when one controls for country is most likely related to the composition of countries in the EU average and the fact that employees in some larger countries reported significantly positive feedback for female bosses.

**Figure 12:** Rating of supervisor's performance by male and female workers

## Conclusions

Women and men are segregated at different levels of the workforce by sector, occupation, and workplace. Countries also differ in their experience of segregation within these levels, illustrating complex interrelationships between levels of analysis and gender segregation.

In using the EWCS, this study explores these layers of segregation and their interaction with men's and women's working conditions in the largest occupational groups. The report's approach of using these largest occupations to illustrate segregation patterns has the advantages of providing example occupations that are more intuitive and also avoids the aggregation of quite different occupational groupings.

The public sector provides an additional layer of segregation for women's and men's employment as there is an over-representation of female-dominated occupations among public employers. This public sector effect is important both for gender differences in job quality (see Chapter 4) and the impact of the crisis and austerity measures across the EU (see Chapter 6).

The interaction of occupational groups with the propensity to work alongside other employees of the same sex or to have a boss of the same sex illustrates how segregation of an occupational group helps reinforce vertical segregation, or segregation by workplace. However, the research finding that across countries female and male managers are regarded equally in terms of performance by their employees suggests that such vertical segregation is not based on differences in the efficacy of women and men in managerial roles.



## CHAPTER 3

# Time at work

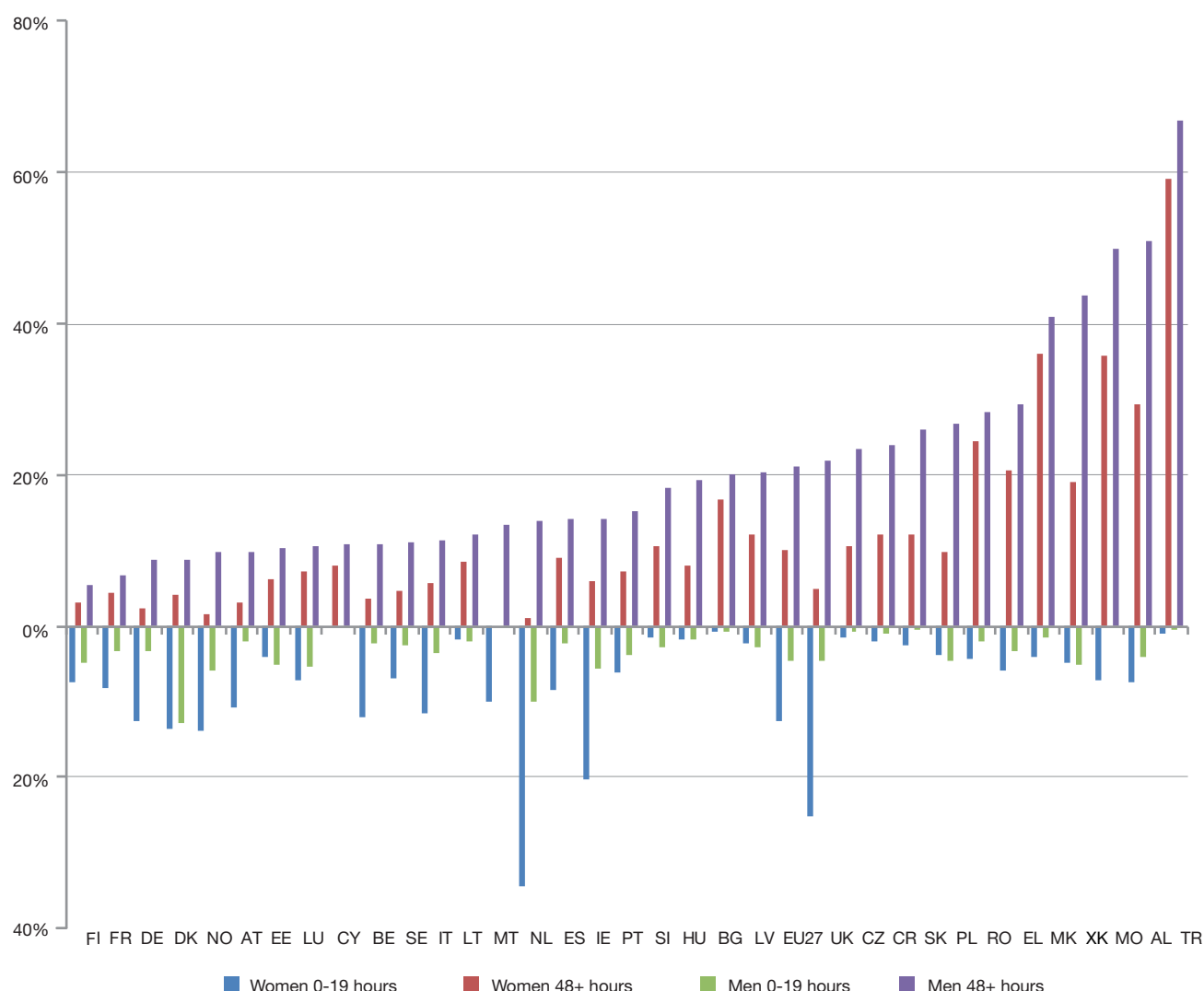
# Time at work

Since many workers spend about a third or more of their time at work, the quality, quantity and distribution of these hours is important for their working conditions. Working hours vary for workers in different occupations or at different life stages, and gender is particularly important in determining these differences (Eurofound, 2012a). Fundamental to these gender disparities is the impact of the uneven division of domestic work at home on working time outcomes on the labour market (Gash, 2008). While the uneven division of unpaid domestic work often leads to mothers working shorter hours or seeking jobs that ‘fit’ with non-work commitments, there is also another group of workers, mostly men, who have long or very long hours. These workers are unlikely to have schedules that fit with their family life and are also at risk of many other negative consequences (Fagan et al, 2011; Eurofound, 2012a).

## Time spent in paid work

The gender disparities in time spent at work are particularly marked, with employed men working an average of

40.6 hours per week compared with 33.9 hours for women. This gap widens among the self-employed (with or without employees), with men working five to six hours longer than women (45.6 hours for self-employed men without employees compared with 39.5 hours for self-employed women, and 49 hours compared with 45.1 hours, respectively, for those with employees). These gender gaps in working time are striking in countries with high levels of part-time work, such as Austria, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway and the UK. The gap is also wide in countries with lower rates of part-time working, such as Italy and Malta, where relatively low proportions of women are in employment. Around 10% of women in the EU27 work short part-time hours (less than 20 hours a week) and a further 25% work long part-time hours (between 20 and 34 hours) compared with just 5% and 8% respectively for men. In contrast, at the other end of the distribution, the picture is reversed, with just over 20% of men and 10% of women working more than the 48 hours limit of the EU Working Time Directive (Directive 2003/88/EC). However, long hours’ working is not the exclusive domain of men and not all countries rely on short part-time working for women (Figure 13).

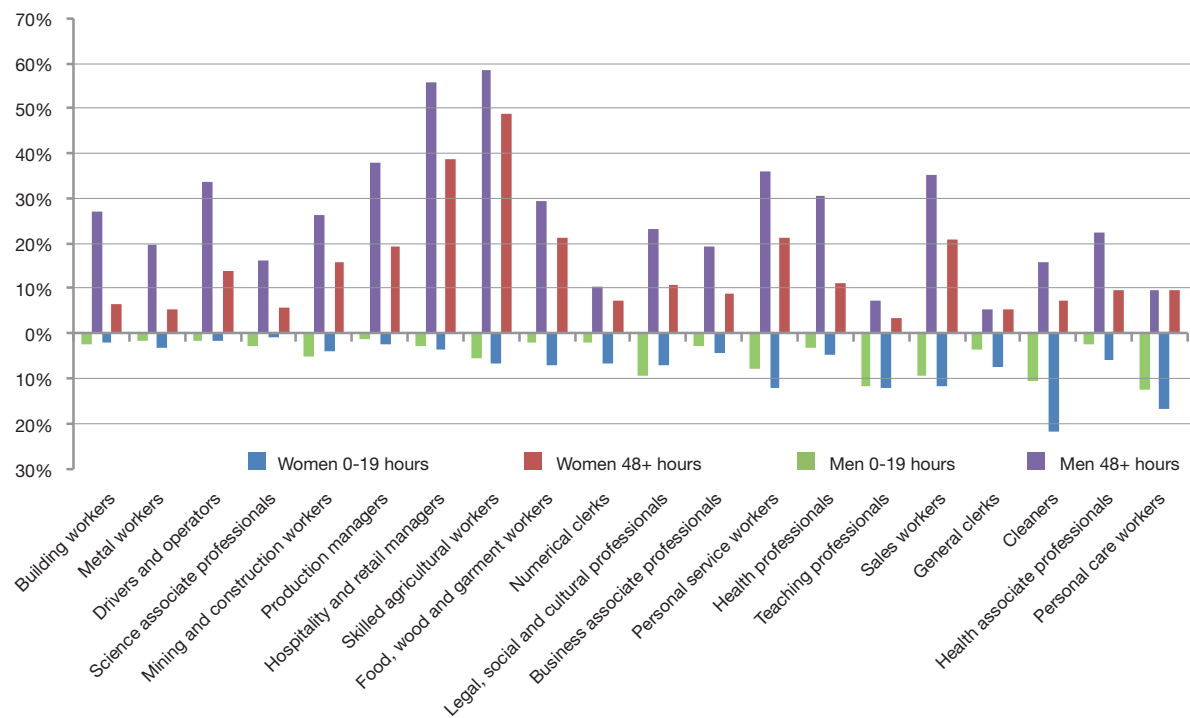
**Figure 13:** Long and short working hours among women and men

Note: Countries are ranked by proportion of men working more than 48 hours. The results for long hours are shown above the bar, the results for short hours shown under the bar.

The ranking of countries in Figure 13 is based on the proportion of men working long hours. Although it was found that men are more likely to work longer hours in all countries, the extent of working long hours is strikingly different. In Albania, Greece, Kosovo, Montenegro, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, for example, there are clear country factors determining the likelihood of working more than 48 hours a week – for both women and men. At the other end of the distribution, there are countries where working-time extremes, either short or long hours, are less prevalent for men and women (Denmark, Finland, France and Norway).

The analysis also examines the extent of long and short working times across the 20 largest occupations identified in Chapter 2 (Figure 14). Occupations where there are high proportions of people working less than 20 hours a week include teaching, cleaners, sales workers and personal care workers – all jobs at the female-dominated end of the occupational distribution. However, among these female-dominated occupations, there are also relatively high proportions of workers with quite long hours, such as cleaners, sales workers and personal care workers.

**Figure 14:** Long and short working hours among the largest occupations



Note: The results for long hours are shown above the bar, the results for short hours shown under the bar.

In Chapter 2, the public sector was identified as important for the distribution of female-dominated and male-dominated occupations. The public sector impact on working hours can also be observed, since men in the public sector are around half as likely to work very long hours as their counterparts in the private sector (12% compared with 23%). For women, the effect is even stronger (5% compared with 13%). However, a huge difference is not seen in shorter hours working between public and private sectors.

One of the main issues related to gender and time at work involves the prevalence of part-time work,<sup>9</sup> which can be viewed both positively and negatively. Some workers prefer to work part time so that they can spend more time caring for their children or other family members, studying, or volunteering. However, part-time work is often found at the lower end of the occupational distribution and part-time workers may be excluded from benefits, social protection and be disadvantaged in terms of access to promotion. Part-time work has not only been encouraged in association with child-rearing but also as a way to ease the transition towards retirement for older men and women, and is used by young men and women who wish to pursue their studies on a part-time basis. Consequently, a life stage perspective of this is particularly useful.

Looking across countries, a number of clusters can be identified around part-time working:

- countries where less than 10% of the workforce is engaged in part-time work;
- countries having a medium to high level of part-time work (10%–15%);
- countries with at least 15% of the workforce in part-time work.

Table 3 highlights the strong impact of life course effects on the propensity of women to work part time, relative to full-time employment, across all three clusters of countries. However, the effects of child-related life course stages are non-existent for men or, conversely, tend to increase the paid working hours of fathers. Moreover, it is only among men older than 60 that there is a marked increase in part-time working. For women in particular, the country clusters reflect the effects of the availability of part-time work on the labour market as well as the life stage effects.

<sup>9</sup> Defined in the EWCS as working 34 hours per week or less



**Table 3:** Part-time working over the life course stages

		Women working part time	Men working part time
<b>Low part-time countries (up to 10%)</b>	Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Croatia, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	20% of mothers in employment with children under seven years 10% of mothers in employment with children aged 7–12 53% of women in employment in older couples	7% of fathers with children under seven years 6% of fathers in employment with children aged 7–12 44% of men in employment in older couples
<b>Medium part-time countries (10%–15%)</b>	Estonia, Spain, Italy Malta, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Finland, Turkey	38% of mothers in employment with children under seven years 31% of mothers in employment with children aged 7–12 81% of women in employment in older couples	8% of fathers in employment with children under seven years 10% of fathers in employment with children aged 7–12 33% of men in employment in older couples
<b>High part-time countries (&gt;15%)</b>	Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria, Sweden, United Kingdom, Norway	40% of mothers in employment with children under seven years 54% of mothers in employment with children aged 7–12 49% of women in employment in older couples	8% of fathers in employment with children under seven years 7% of fathers in employment with children aged 7–12 44% of men in employment in older couples

### Self-employed workers and long hours

Women and men who are self-employed are more likely to work over 48 hours a week than their counterparts in dependent employment – more than 50% of self-employed men work these long hours and 36% of self-employed women (compared with 15% and 7% of employees, respectively). These long hours are particularly prevalent in agricultural occupations where there are high proportions of self-employment.

While long working hours are often associated with increased health risks and poor job quality, self-employed workers also have a high degree of autonomy. The choice of working long hours can be made for various reasons, particularly financial ones. Self-employed people report high levels of autonomy:

- 89% of self-employed women make the most important decisions on how to run their business (compared with 93% of self-employed men);
- 77% of self-employed women control their speed of work and breaks (86% of self-employed men).

In terms of perceptions of satisfaction and work–life balance:

- 85% of self-employed women report high levels of general satisfaction in their work (84% of men):
- 81% of self-employed women (74% of men) report that their hours fit ‘well’ or ‘very well’ with external commitments (these proportions are slightly lower than for employees at 85% and 80% respectively).

Nevertheless, self-employed women and men in hospitality and retail are less likely to report high satisfaction with their work–life balance, as are self-employed men in driving occupations.

## Working time preferences

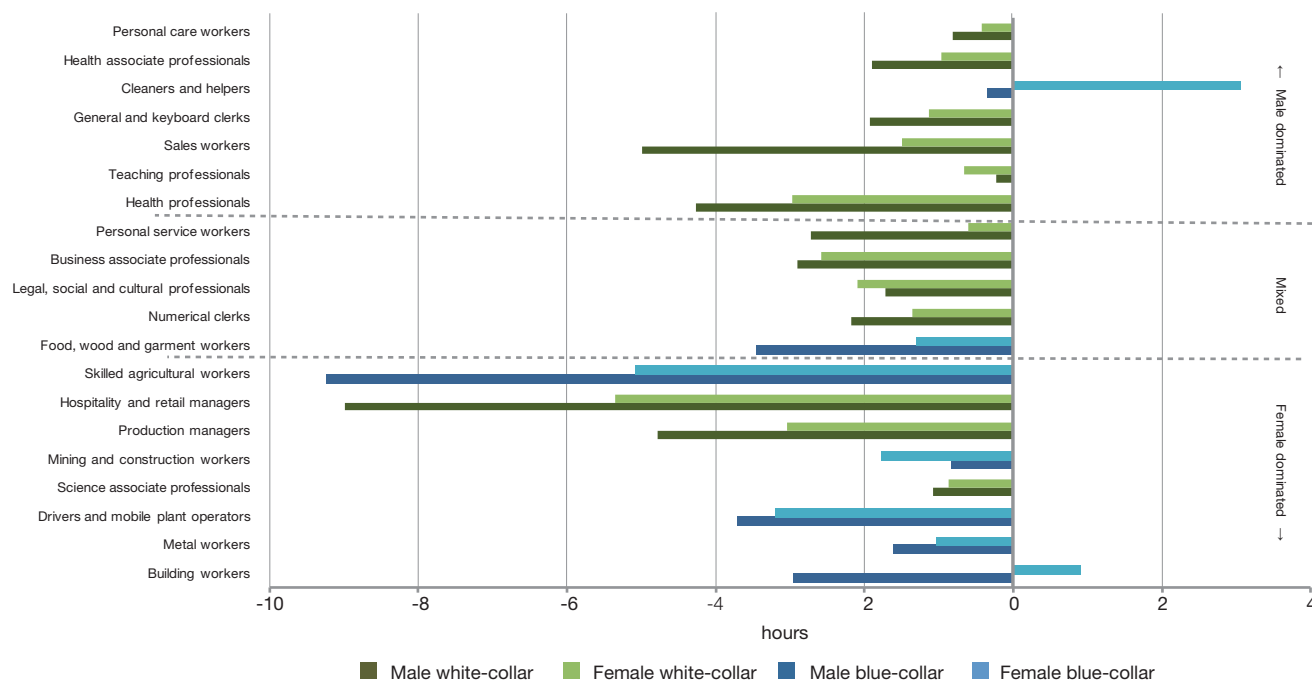
One controversial area is the extent to which women and men choose their paid working times or are constrained by their environments and options available to them on the labour market (Fagan, 2004). These preferences are perhaps more accurately described as ‘adaptive preferences’ (Goldman and Altman, 2008) and are shaped by the stage of the life course (Eurofound, 2012a). However, there is also a role for differences in welfare provisions and gender norms in shaping what is perceived as a feasible working week for employees who have significant demands on their private life. Overall, 35.6 hours is the preferred number of hours for all employees, with men stating that they would prefer 37.9 hours and women wanting 32.6 hours. The 2010 results are consistent with those from Bielenski et al (2002), based on a 1998 survey of 16 countries.

For the EU27, women were more likely than men to say that they would like to work more hours (16% compared with 11%) but women and men seem equally content with the hours they currently work (around 55% are happy). Women are slightly less likely to want to work fewer hours. On average, men would prefer to work around two fewer hours, while women would prefer to reduce their working time by about an hour. However, this varies across working time groups: men working fewer than 20 hours would like to work around nine hours more, and those working more than 48 hours would like their time cut by around 11 hours. For women, those working for only a few hours would like to work seven more on average, and those working long hours would like a cut of around 11 hours. Within the total 34 countries surveyed, workers varied in their preferences for more or fewer working hours. In Ireland, Italy and the Netherlands high proportions of women would like to work more; while in Turkey, female workers would be keen to work much less.

When the occupational patterns are examined at EU27 level, some strong differences among the largest occupational groups can be noted (Figure 15). Although male and female workers would prefer to work fewer hours, there are exceptions among cleaners, with female employees preferring, on average, to work about three hours more (male employees would prefer to work 0.4 hours less), and female employees in the building occupation, who would prefer 0.9 more hours (men would prefer 3 hours less). Male agricultural workers and hospitality and retail managers are particularly likely to express a preference for working around nine hours less (5.1 and 5.4 for women). Male and female teaching professionals appear to be the most pleased with their working hours with a very small difference between actual and preferred hours.<sup>10</sup>

Once again, there is a public–private sector effect on working times for women and men. However this time the effect is stronger for men, with those working in the private sector wishing to work, on average, 2.5 fewer hours, compared with just one hour less for men in the public sector. For women, the effect is less marked and it is public sector workers who would like to work one hour less, compared with 0.8 fewer hours in the private sector. Looking across occupations, the private sector effects for men are consistent in 17 of the 20 occupations, with the gap between usual and preferred hours greater for private sector workers than those in the public sector. For women, the gap is largest for private sector workers in fewer than half of the 20 occupations. In most cases it is public sector workers who experience a bigger gap between usual and preferred hours (note the gap reflects a desire for more hours in two private and five public sector occupations and for reduced hours in the rest).

<sup>10</sup> Again this may reflect another type of ‘adaptive preference’ as teachers are limited by school opening hours.

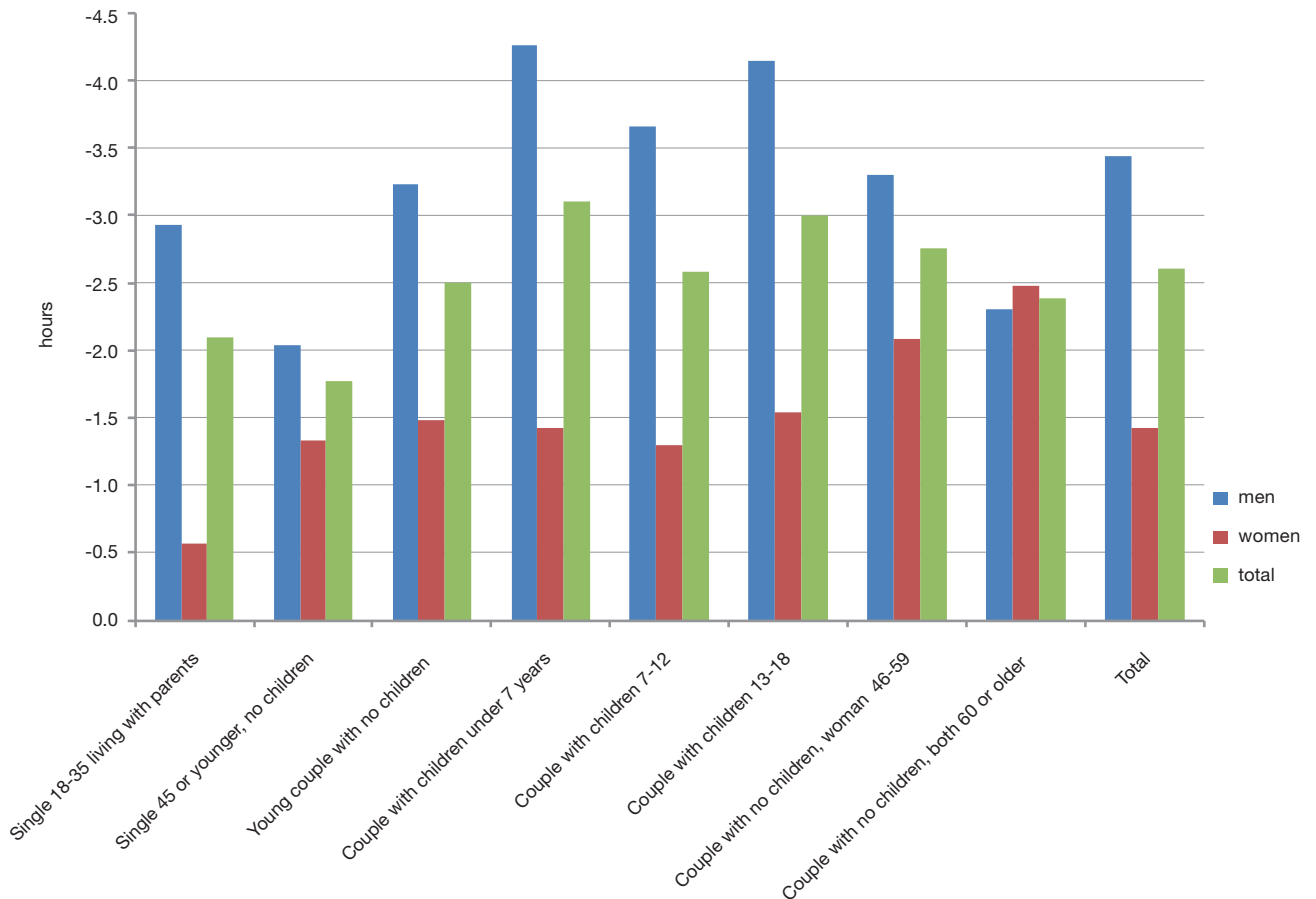
**Figure 15:** Differences between employees' actual working hours and preferred working hours

Note: Differences were calculated by subtracting the average preferred working hours for men or women in an occupation from the average reported working hours in that occupation

The pattern of preferring fewer hours also carries over to workers in all the life stages. Male employees would most prefer to cut their hours during two life stages: when in a couple, either with children younger than seven or with children aged 13–18 years. However, women may have already made a decision to work fewer hours while at the stage of having children younger than seven, therefore their requests for fewer working hours appear at other stages. Women in the older life stage of being in a couple where both partners are over 60, would prefer to work less, followed by women who are at the stage of being in an older couple without children.

When looking across the country clusters of part-time working identified above, the interaction can be seen between life-course stages and the available jobs in the labour market which affect the preferred hours of mothers with children under seven. In the low part-time cluster the preferred hours of part-time workers are around 28 hours per week, but this falls to 25.6 in the medium cluster and to just 23.7 in the high cluster.

**Figure 16:** Differences between employees' actual working hours and preferred working hours by life course stage



Note: Differences were calculated by subtracting the average preferred working hours for men or women in an occupation, from the average reported working hours in that occupation.

## Balancing paid and unpaid working time

The duration of working hours and preferences for longer and shorter hours are only part of the picture when the impact of time spent at work and in other spheres of life is considered. A fundamental element of the inequalities between women and men on the labour market is the uneven division of time outside work, particularly on care, impacting on time at work (Gash, 2008).

The EWCS collects data on unpaid activities, such as volunteering, studying and caring for adults and young children. Previous analysis of these data has shown that, when all the working hours are totalled, women work longer hours each week than men (Eurofound, 2007). In the 2010 survey it was also found that, when paid working hours, commuting hours and unpaid working time were combined, women work, on average, 64 hours a week compared with 53.4 for men. Most of this difference arises from women's longer hours in caring (26.4 hours compared with 8.8) rather than men's longer hours in paid work in first and second jobs (40.9 compared with 33.9 hours) or gaps in commuting and other unpaid activities (Table 4).

**Table 4:** Average hours of women and men in paid work and unpaid work

		Unpaid work	Unpaid care	Commuting time	Paid work (main/ second job)	Total working hours
Building workers	M	0.3	7.6	3.4	41.5	52.8
	W	-	-	-	-	-
Metal workers	M	0.2	8.2	3.3	40.7	52.4
	W	0.2	27.4	3.1	39.2	70.0
Drivers and operators	M	0.2	8.0	2.8	43.5	54.5
	W	0.1	24.7	2.8	39.0	66.5
Science associate professionals	M	0.4	9.3	3.9	39.5	53.1
	W	0.1	18.4	3.7	38.7	61.0
Mining and construction workers	M	0.7	7.5	3.3	37.8	49.4
	W	0.1	29.4	3.0	34.8	67.3
Production managers	M	0.3	9.3	3.6	45.9	59.2
	W	0.3	25.2	3.7	38.6	67.9
Hospitality and retail managers	M	0.5	9.3	2.7	46.6	59.2
	W	0.3	23.6	2.3	43.3	69.5
Skilled agricultural workers	M	0.6	5.9	1.1	49.8	57.4
	W	0.3	27.4	0.8	46.1	74.6
Food, wood and garment workers	M	0.4	6.7	2.8	41.1	51.0
	W	0.7	25.6	2.4	37.8	66.4
Numerical clerks	M	0.3	8.4	3.7	38.9	51.3
	W	0.6	27.7	3.6	34.6	66.5
Legal, social and cultural professionals	M	0.8	12.0	3.4	39.9	56.1
	W	0.9	23.6	4.1	37.7	66.2
Business associate professionals	M	0.6	7.9	3.5	40.3	52.3
	W	0.5	24.5	3.8	35.5	64.2
Personal service workers	M	1.2	8.8	2.8	37.0	49.9
	W	1.5	23.5	2.9	33.7	61.6
Health professionals	M	0.3	12.4	3.8	42.2	58.6
	W	0.3	28.0	3.6	36.9	68.8
Teaching professionals	M	1.3	14.6	3.7	32.5	52.0
	W	0.8	29.4	3.3	30.2	63.7
Sales workers	M	1.7	7.9	2.7	38.9	51.2
	W	0.8	25.0	2.6	33.4	61.8
General clerks	M	1.2	12.0	3.6	37.5	54.3
	W	0.4	24.4	3.6	33.2	61.6
Cleaners	M	1.1	12.0	3.1	34.1	50.4
	W	1.0	30.9	2.6	25.7	60.2
Health associate professionals	M	0.5	10.4	3.4	39.7	54.0
	W	0.8	26.8	3.6	33.6	64.9

		Unpaid work	Unpaid care	Commuting time	Paid work (main/second job)	Total working hours
Personal care workers	M	1.6	17.1	2.7	37.7	59.1
	W	1.1	28.7	2.5	32.6	64.8
Total	M	0.6	8.9	3.1	40.9	53.5
	W	0.7	26.4	3.1	33.9	64.0

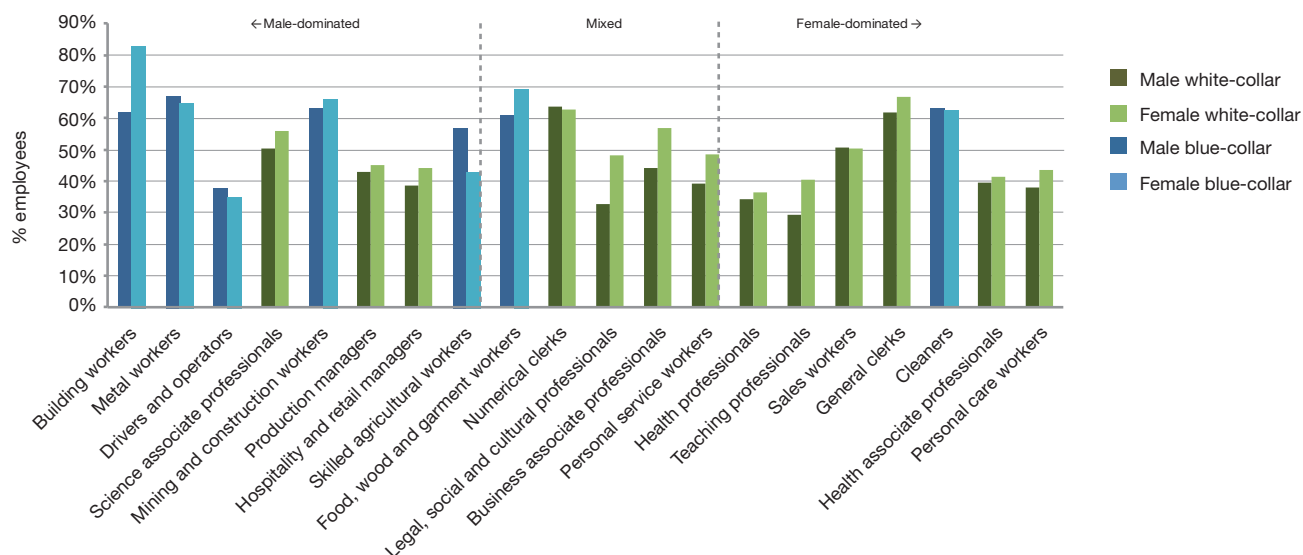
The EWCS data show that this pattern is replicated across occupations. This study finds that among cleaners, women work much shorter hours than their male counterparts in the same occupations while, among science and engineering professionals, there is the smallest gap in paid hours. The ratio of caring hours is much greater, with women spending between twice and four times the number of hours on caring than that done by men. This gap is lowest among science and engineering professionals, legal and social culture professionals and teaching professionals (although still much higher for women). Among these professional occupations higher rates of full-time work could be expected, with better access to paid care and, to some extent, weaker gender norms all reducing the gender gap in care time. Women working in more male-dominated occupations spend around three to four times as many hours caring as men in similar occupations.

The quality and scheduling of time are also important, since many non-work activities, involving, for example,

children, have fixed schedules and timings. The quality dimensions include:

- ✎ working-time organisation;
- ✎ predictability;
- ✎ variability of hours.

When employees whose working time was set by their employer or in conjunction with their employer, were asked whether changes to their schedules occurred regularly it was found that the opportunity to work regular hours was remarkably similar for men and women (67% of women had fixed working schedules compared with 64% of men). These similarities extended across different stages of the life course. More marked differences for men and women were found when considering regularity of working hours in a more global sense and across life course stages and different occupations (Figure 17).

**Figure 17:** Regular working hours, by occupation

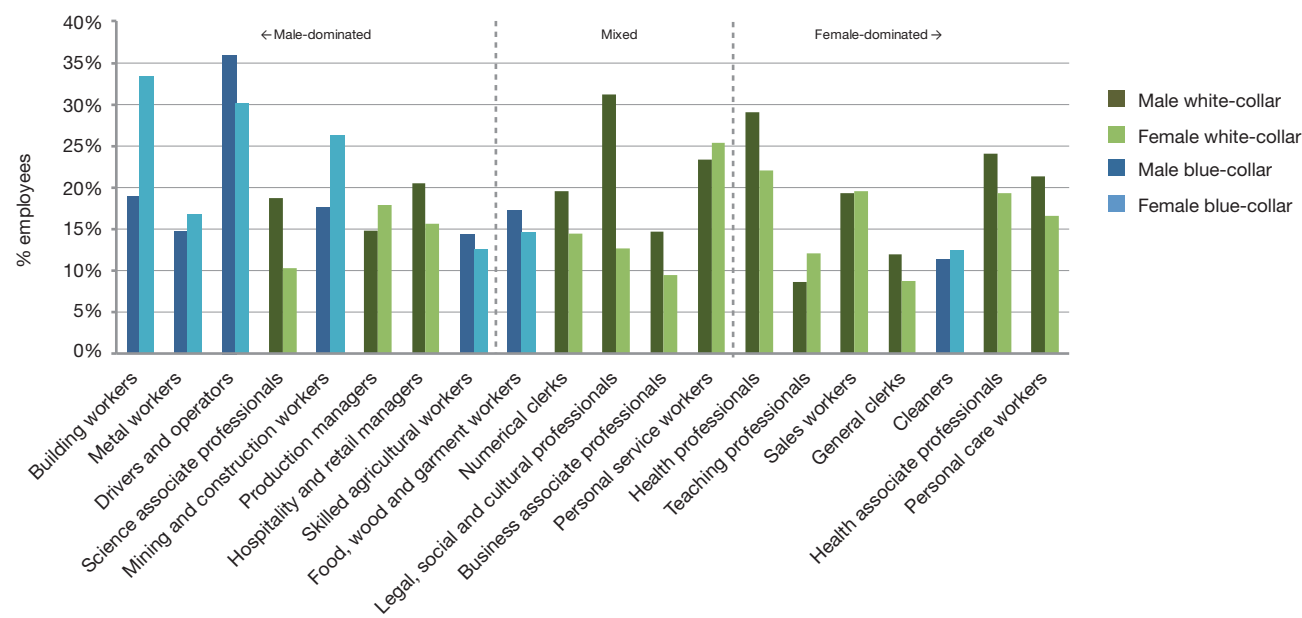
An additional dimension to integrating work and family life is the capacity for short-term flexibility to meet family demands, for example the ease with which one can arrange a few hours off work. Here, women found it slightly more difficult to ask for time off than men (40% compared with 37%), a pattern repeated within most occupations. Differences in the nature of male- and female-dominated jobs may play a role here since employees who deal with customers, patients or pupils are likely to experience lower levels of autonomy in short-notice working time flexibility.

The EWCS overall measure of 'fit' between working hours and non-work activities can also be used.<sup>11</sup> Around 80%

of men and women said their hours did not fit well or not at all well (17% and 19%) but, within most individual occupations, men experienced a poorer fit than women (Figure 17). For men, drivers and mobile plant operators experienced the least fit between working hours and social obligations (33.6%), with health professionals (29.3%) also experiencing high levels of misfit between hours at work and social commitments. Similarly, women in sales work (24.4%) and personal service work (23.7%) felt that their hours did not fit well with their external commitments. On the other hand, teaching professionals and general and keyboard clerks of both sexes all reported a good fit.

<sup>11</sup> EWCS 2010: Question 41 In general, do your working hours fit in with your family or social commitments outside work very well, well, not very well or not at all well?

**Figure 18:** Working hours that do not fit well with non-working life, by occupation



## Conclusions

The analysis of gender imbalances of time at work illustrates the greater risk among men of working extremely long hours and women's concentration among short-hour jobs. Although this pattern is replicated across countries, the extent of these imbalances varies. Furthermore, occupational and sector effects again play an important role in shaping gender differences by time: both short hours work and a desire for longer hours are greater in female-dominated occupations, while the incidence of working long hours is greater in male-dominated occupations. Men in the private sector are much more likely to work long hours while, for women, the likelihood of short hours

working is rather similar between private and public sector workers.

While gender differences in time spent in waged work are large, when the time spent in unpaid care work is taken into account, women in fact have longer working weeks than their male counterparts. Thus, even where women have similar hours to men in paid work in the same occupations, they also do between twice and four times as much unpaid work as men. Although there has been some convergence in paid working hours, it is this work-family interface that lies at the heart of many inequalities.



CHAPTER 4

# Job quality

# Job quality

In analysing the relationship between working conditions and gender, this chapter draws extensively on the scheme for measuring job quality developed from the fifth EWCS by Green and Mostafa (Eurofound, 2012b). This study examines how the relationship between gender and job quality is modulated by the different experiences of women and men overall and at different life stages and by variable household composition, along with a number of labour market characteristics.

## Four dimensions of quality

Green and Mostafa’s job quality scheme uses self-reports of job characteristics (rather than satisfaction measures, or a worker-job match) to develop continuous measures of the four main features of job quality, informed by the literature on job quality (Muñoz de Bustillo et al, 2011; Leschke et al, 2008), as well as epidemiological studies pointing to a relationship between job quality and well-being. These four main dimensions of job quality are:

- earnings (monthly income adjusted for purchasing power parity at country level);

- job prospects;
- working time quality (WTQ);
- intrinsic job quality (IJQ).

Intrinsic job quality is measured by combining four components:

- skills and discretion;
- social environment;
- physical environment;
- work intensity.

For all items, with scores ranging from 0 to 100, high values indicate better job quality.

**Table 5:** Structure of the job quality indices

Index	Brief description of content
Income	Net monthly earnings
Prospects	Job security, career progression, contract quality
Intrinsic job quality	Skills and discretion (0.25): skills and autonomy
	Good social environment (0.25): social support, absence of abuse
	Good physical environment (0.25): low level of physical and posture-related hazards
	Work intensity (0.25): pace of work, work pressures, and emotional/value conflict demands
Working time quality	Duration, scheduling, discretion, and short-term flexibility over working time

Source: Eurofound 2012b.

In their report (Eurofound, 2012b) Green and Mostafa perform simple breakdowns on their measures of job quality by gender.<sup>12</sup> The box below provides an overview of the key differences by gender. However, this chapter goes

further than these analyses by looking at the combined effects of gender with other demographic and labour market variables, and also by considering critiques of this approach to job quality from a gender perspective.

### Gender differences in job quality

Monthly income is, on average, higher for men (X 1485, SD 938) than for women (X 1079, SD 699). The difference narrows to some extent for respondents working 35+ hours per week, with men earning, on average, an equivalent of €1,564 and women €1,200 per month. (Note that data on monthly income are only available for 83% of respondents from the EU27.)

Job prospects for men (X 66.8, SD 20.7) are slightly higher than for women (X 65, SD 20.9).

Women report somewhat better intrinsic job quality (X 68.7, SD 11.1) than men (X 67, SD 11.7). Dividing the measure into four sub-indices reveals that, on average, women report working in better physical environments and with lower intensity. Men, on the other hand, assess their social environment at work, as well as use of skills and scope for exercising discretion, more favourably. Because of this gendered disparity, the four sub-indices are also, at times, used in this chapter to complement the overall measure of intrinsic job quality.

Working time quality is higher for women (X 60.9, SD 17.1) than men (X 57.8, SD 17.3). Women's higher score is largely due to their schedules involving shorter and fewer unsocial hours. Men, however, report higher discretion over their schedules. The gender difference in working time quality narrows considerably for respondents working 35+ hours per week, with women achieving similar score (X 55.9, SD 15.6) to men (X 55.4, SD 16).

X = mean, SD = Standard Deviation

Perhaps the most controversial of all of the measures of job quality is monthly pay. As Green and Mostafa argue, there are cases to be made for measuring pay per hour rather than per month (Eurofound, 2012b). Their final decision was to take monthly pay as the measure, as it more closely corresponds to the objectives of their job quality indices in detecting the extent to which the job is meeting the needs for income to support a particular standard of living. Consequently, the authors make a clear break from most of the literature on the gender pay gap, which focuses on hourly pay. Moreover, the measure of income does not take into account fringe benefits such as health insurance or company cars (from which it has previously been argued that men more often benefit than women). Pensions are also ignored (where women working part time are particularly disadvantaged). For the analysis of gender

differences in pay, the perceived fairness in the setting of pay levels is of particular importance. This is acknowledged by Green and Mostafa, but unfortunately the EWCS does not provide good measures of perceived fairness. This chapter brings together these diverse perspectives and methodological considerations, and discusses the ability of job quality indices to reflect the nature of gender differences in pay.

It should be noted that this chapter considers working time quality in the narrow sense, taking account only of paid work. As mentioned in the previous chapter, women tend to do far more unpaid work (such as cooking, caring and cleaning) than men, and a full appreciation of men and women's quality of life cannot be gained from their paid working time only.

<sup>12</sup> These analyses in the fifth EWCS report on job quality for all 34 countries; the analysis for the EU27 is very similar.

## Workplace size

Men are somewhat more likely than women to work alone. Very small workplaces (2–4 people) employ a similar proportion of men and women, but the proportion of men in the workforce increases along with the size of an establishment, reaching around 60% in workplaces with 250 or more workers.

For men, there is a strong positive relationship between workplace size and monthly earnings. For women, earnings increase up to medium-sized workplaces with 50–99 people, show a small decline for big workplaces (100–499 people), and then rise again for the largest workplaces with more than 500 workers. The gender difference in monthly earnings is the lowest in medium-sized companies (50–99 people). When hourly earnings (also adjusted for PPP<sup>13</sup>) are compared, establishments with 50–99 people show a rare reversal in the gender pay gap with women reporting slightly higher earnings than men.

As with earnings, better job prospects are reported in larger workplaces, and the effect is stronger for women. However, on average, women in all sizes of workplaces report poorer job prospects than men. The gender gap is the widest for respondents working alone, with women reporting much lower prospects than in any other size of workplace.

Women report higher intrinsic job quality than men in small, medium and large (up to 249 people) companies. However, men working in the largest workplaces with more than 250 people report better intrinsic job quality than women.

Working alone is associated with the highest reported working time quality (WTQ) for both men and women. This category of workers also shows the smallest difference between genders, with women scoring only slightly better than men. However, the overall score conceals some important gender differences in trade-offs between the length and scheduling of working hours, on the one hand, and control over the scheduling, on the other. Men working alone work much longer and more unsocial hours than women, and also than other men who work with more people. At the same time, they report very high discretion over their work hours – much higher than in any other size of workplace, and higher than women working alone. This finding partly explains the relatively wide gender gap in monthly earnings for respondents working alone and poor job prospects for women in this group. The most favourable working time for women, compared with men, is found in small, medium-sized and large workplaces (between 10 and 249 people). Women working in such workplaces report levels of discretion over working time that are relatively similar to men, but they work fewer unsocial hours.

**Table 6:** Relationship between size of workplace and gender differences in job quality

	Monthly income (€)			Job prospects (0-100)			Intrinsic job quality (0-100)			Working time quality (0-100)		
	Men	Women	Gap	Men	Women	Gap	Men	Women	Gap	Men	Women	Gap
Working alone	1,323	915	-408	58.8	54.4	-4.5	67.1	68.6	1.6	69.0	69.7	0.6
2–4	1,347	927	-420	62.5	61.5	-0.9	68.7	70.0	1.3	59.7	61.0	1.3
5–9	1,399	1,009	-390	66.5	64.7	-1.8	67.0	68.9	1.9	56.2	59.0	2.9
10–49	1,437	1,089	-348	67.4	67.2	-0.2	66.4	68.6	2.2	55.2	59.7	4.5
50–99	1,512	1,245	-267	69.6	68.5	-1.1	66.2	68.2	2.0	55.8	58.8	3.0
100–249	1,620	1,205	-415	70.0	69.8	-0.2	66.8	68.9	2.0	55.1	60.0	4.9
250–499	1,754	1,122	-632	72.0	70.9	-1.1	68.4	67.0	-1.3	57.8	59.8	2.0
500+	1,947	1,502	-445	73.9	72.4	-1.5	68.6	68.4	-0.3	56.6	58.9	2.3

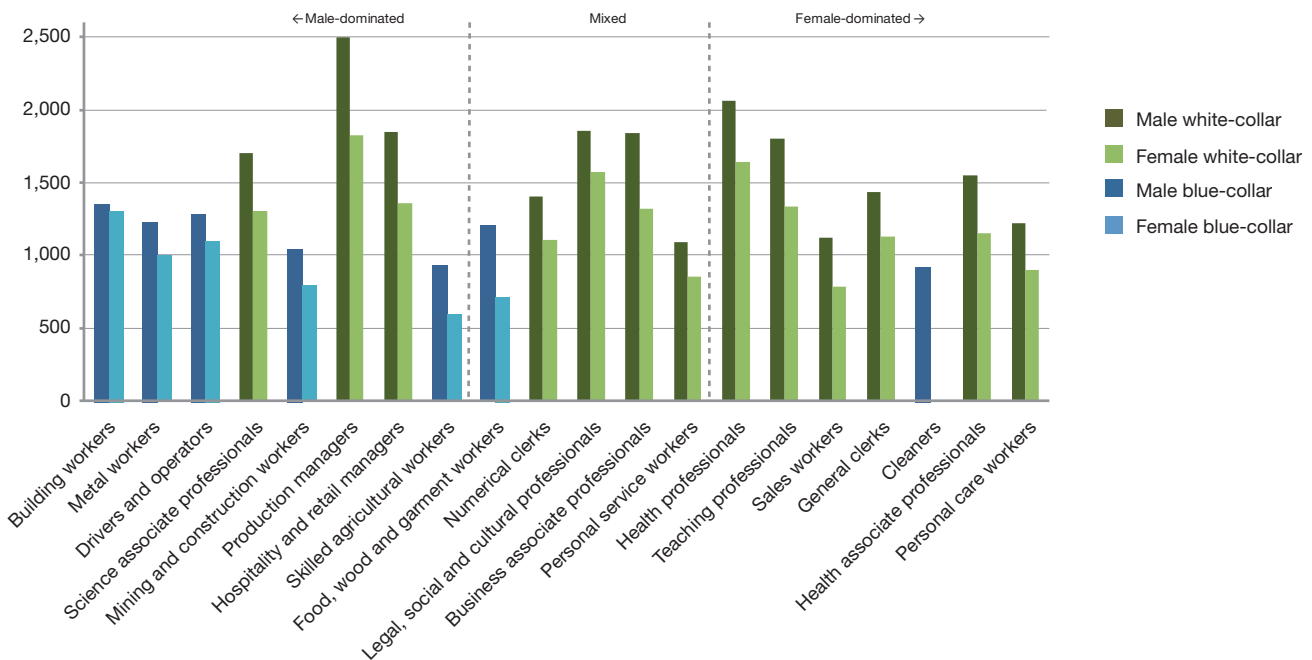
<sup>13</sup> Purchasing power parity (PPP) is a method used to determine the relative value of currencies, estimating the amount of adjustment needed on the exchange rate between countries in order for the exchange to be equivalent to (or on par with) each currency's purchasing power.

## Gender segregation

Gender differences in job quality vary considerably between occupational groups. This report considers the

effects of both occupational group and gender segregation in occupations on job quality outcomes for men and women.

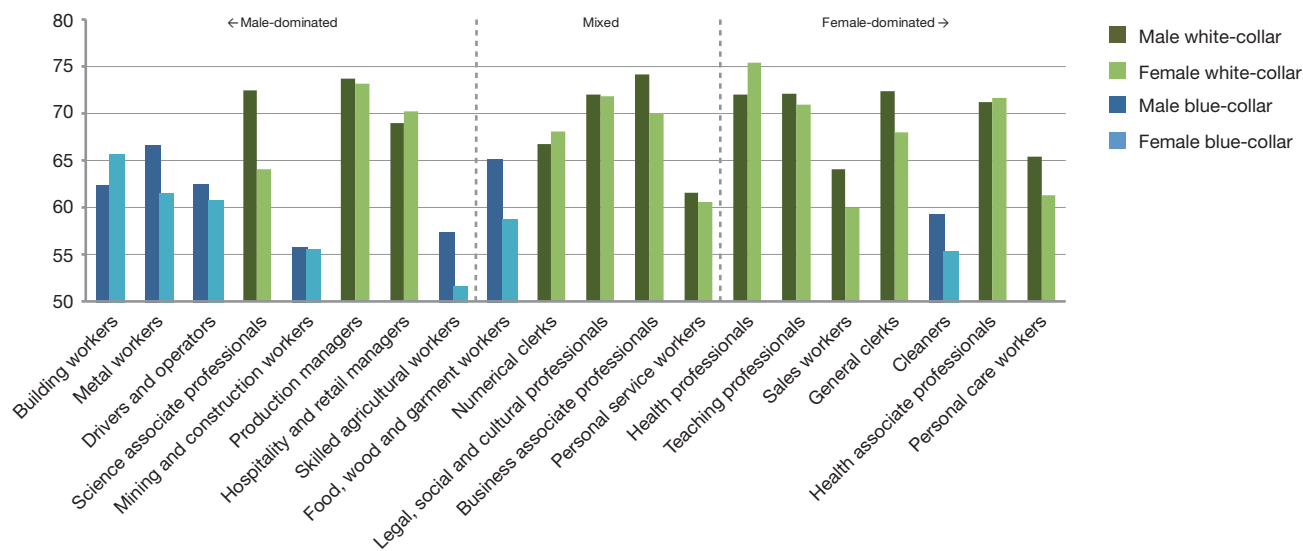
**Figure 19:** Monthly earnings by gender and occupational segregation (€)



Men's monthly earnings are higher in every occupation (Figure 19). Moreover, earnings in male-dominated occupations tend to be higher than in female-dominated, and especially so for men in white-collar jobs. Thus, the gap in monthly income for non-manual workers is slightly wider in male-dominated occupations, including managerial

positions in production, hospitality and retail, as well as scientists and engineers. For blue-collar workers, the gender gap in monthly earnings is narrower in male-dominated occupations (such as drivers, building and metal workers) than in more gender balanced ones.

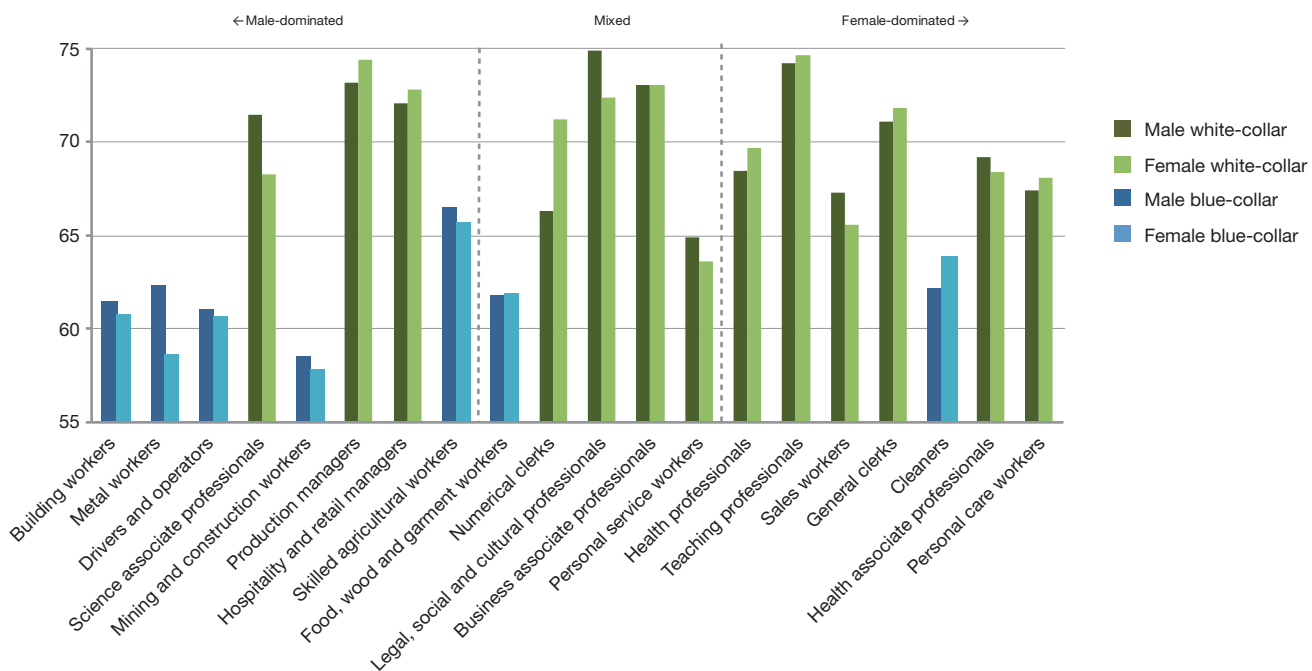
**Figure 20:** Job prospects and occupational gender segregation (%)



Among manual workers, women report better job prospects only in the most male-dominated group of building workers (Figure 20). Such a gender gap reversal is somewhat more common among white-collar occupations.

Women report the poorest prospects relative to men among scientists, skilled farmers, food, wood and garment workers.

**Figure 21:** Intrinsic job quality and occupational gender segregation (%)

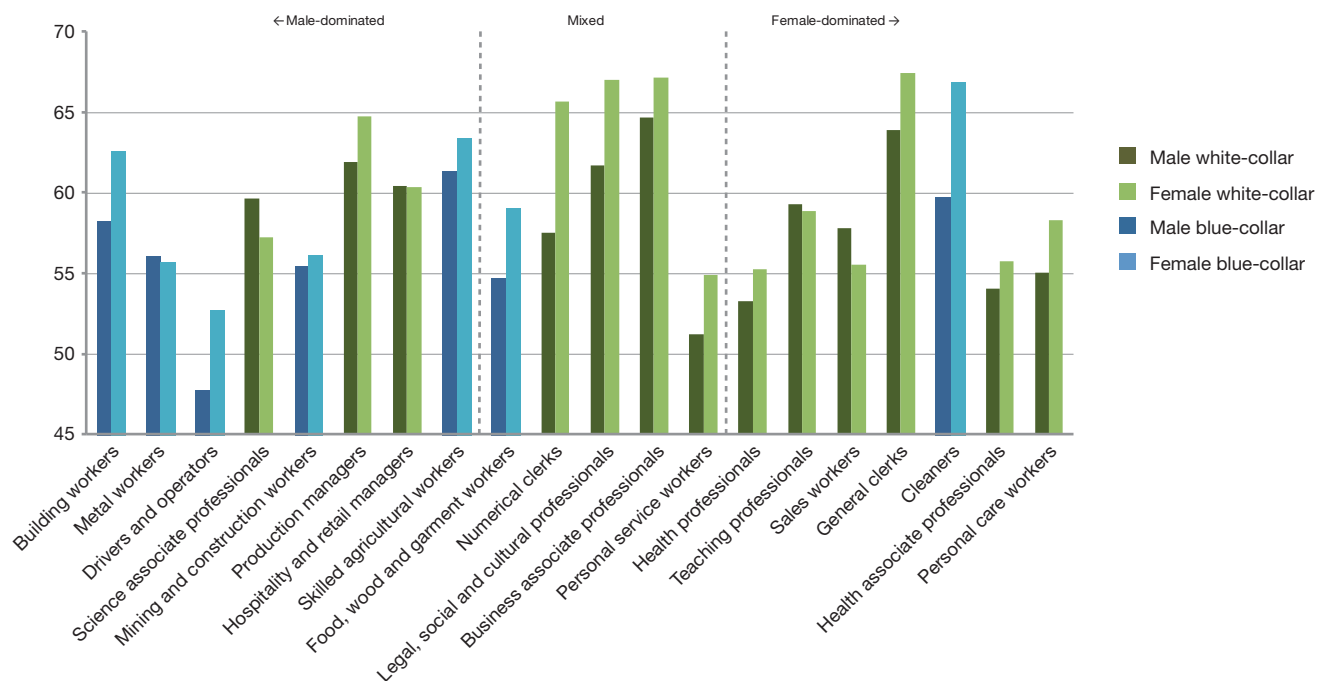


Among blue-collar workers, men report slightly higher intrinsic job quality than women in male-dominated occupations (Figure 21). The gap disappears for a more gender-balanced category (food, wood and garment workers), and finally reverses for the female-dominated occupation of cleaners, with women reporting somewhat higher intrinsic job quality than men. There is no such effect for white-collar occupations. Overall, however, gender differences

in IJQ across occupations are relatively small when compared with other job quality dimensions.

When it comes to working time quality (Figure 22), women employed as numerical clerks and cleaners report the largest intra-occupational gap with men. Women working as numerical clerks also report the greatest superiority advantage over men in intrinsic job quality and, albeit much less so, in job prospects.

**Figure 22:** Working time quality and occupational gender segregation (%)

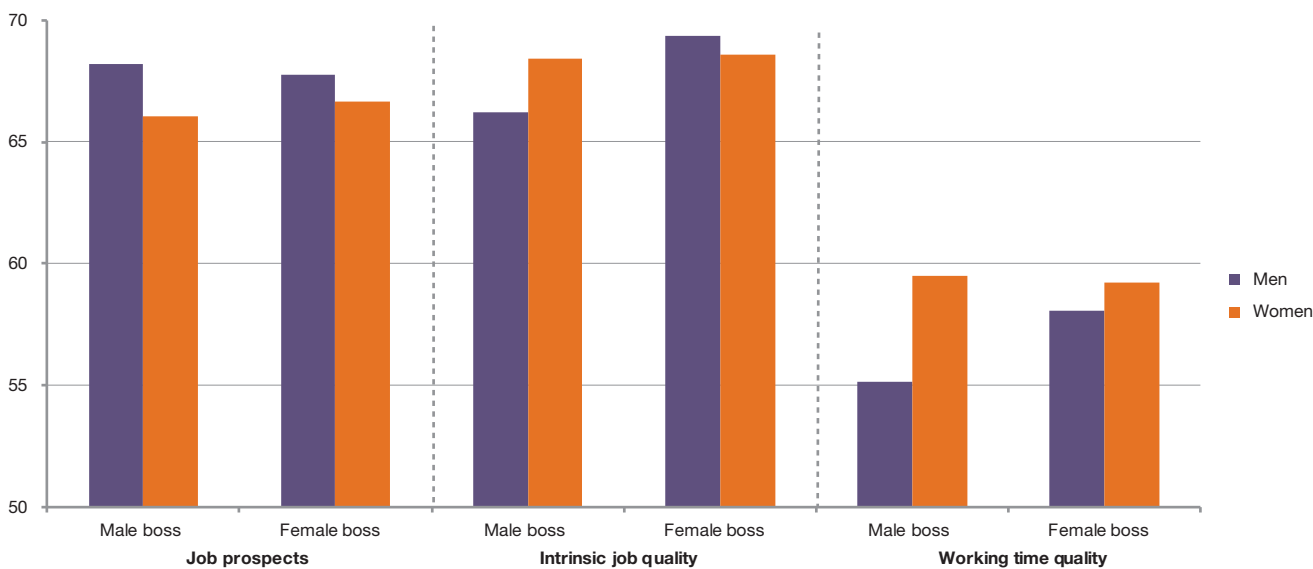


## Gender of boss

The gender of the boss is another feature that differentiates working conditions. Monthly income is higher for men and women who have a male boss. Job prospects are, on average, higher for men and women who have a

same sex boss. Intrinsic job quality is better for those who have a female boss and worst of all for men who have a male boss (Figure 23). For men WTQ is particularly poor for those who have a male boss, while for women WTQ remains almost exactly the same regardless of the gender of their boss.

**Figure 23:** Job prospects, intrinsic job quality and working time quality (%)



## Public and private sector

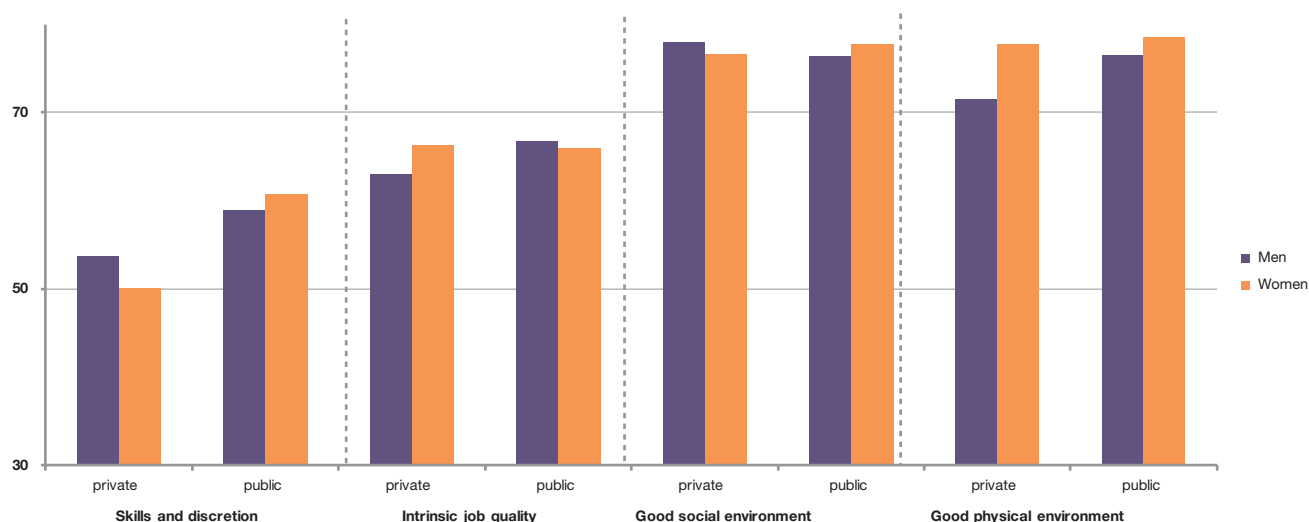
Some 28% of women in paid employment in the EU27 work in the public sector, compared with 18% of men (the rest work in the private sector, except for about 7% in ambiguous public–private or NGO arrangements). Thus women are more dependent on the quality of jobs in the public sector than men.

At the aggregate level, the average monthly income, job prospects and intrinsic job quality are considerably higher in the public sector across the EU27 than in the private sector, but there is little difference in WTQ. These advantages of working in the public sector are broadly similar for both sexes. However, women’s monthly income does seem to benefit more from working in the public sector than that of men: the monthly advantage for women (adjusted for PPP) is €208, compared with just €114 for men. Thus,

the gap in monthly earnings is wider in the private sector, where women’s earnings represent, on average, 70% of men’s earnings, and narrower in the public sector, with women receiving, on average, 78% of men’s monthly pay.

Dividing the intrinsic job quality into its four components, the public–private differences become a little more complex (Figure 24). Men experience lower intensity of work and a better physical environment in the public sector. For women, the biggest advantage of public sector work is related to the greater use of skill and scope for discretion. Their involvement in jobs with higher skills than those in the private sector could, at least partly, explain the higher monthly income. There is little difference in the overall quality of the social environment between the public and private sectors, but this hides two opposing effects. Men have better social environments in the private sector, but for women, the social environment is slightly better in the public sector.



**Figure 24:** Intrinsic job quality by private and public sector and by gender (%)

Overall, there are bigger gender differences in intrinsic job quality in the private sector. However, there is no clear advantage for either gender – rather a trade-off between various aspects of IJQ. Men may accept higher work intensity and worse physical environments (for example in construction) along with higher skilled jobs, but women are more confined to lower skilled yet less intense and less physically demanding work. In the public sector, gender differences are smaller and therefore public–private gaps mainly reflect the different positions of men and women in the private sector.

## Gender differences across life stages

The impact of key life stages by gender provides a crucial perspective for understanding gender inequality in the labour market. Many differences in job quality between men and women emerge in close relationship with life-stage transitions and gender-related changes in preferences, constraints and opportunities over key life stages. While a cross-sectional survey such as the EWCS is not designed, as such, for the life-stage analysis, a Eurofound study proposes a ‘stylised life stages’ measure based on

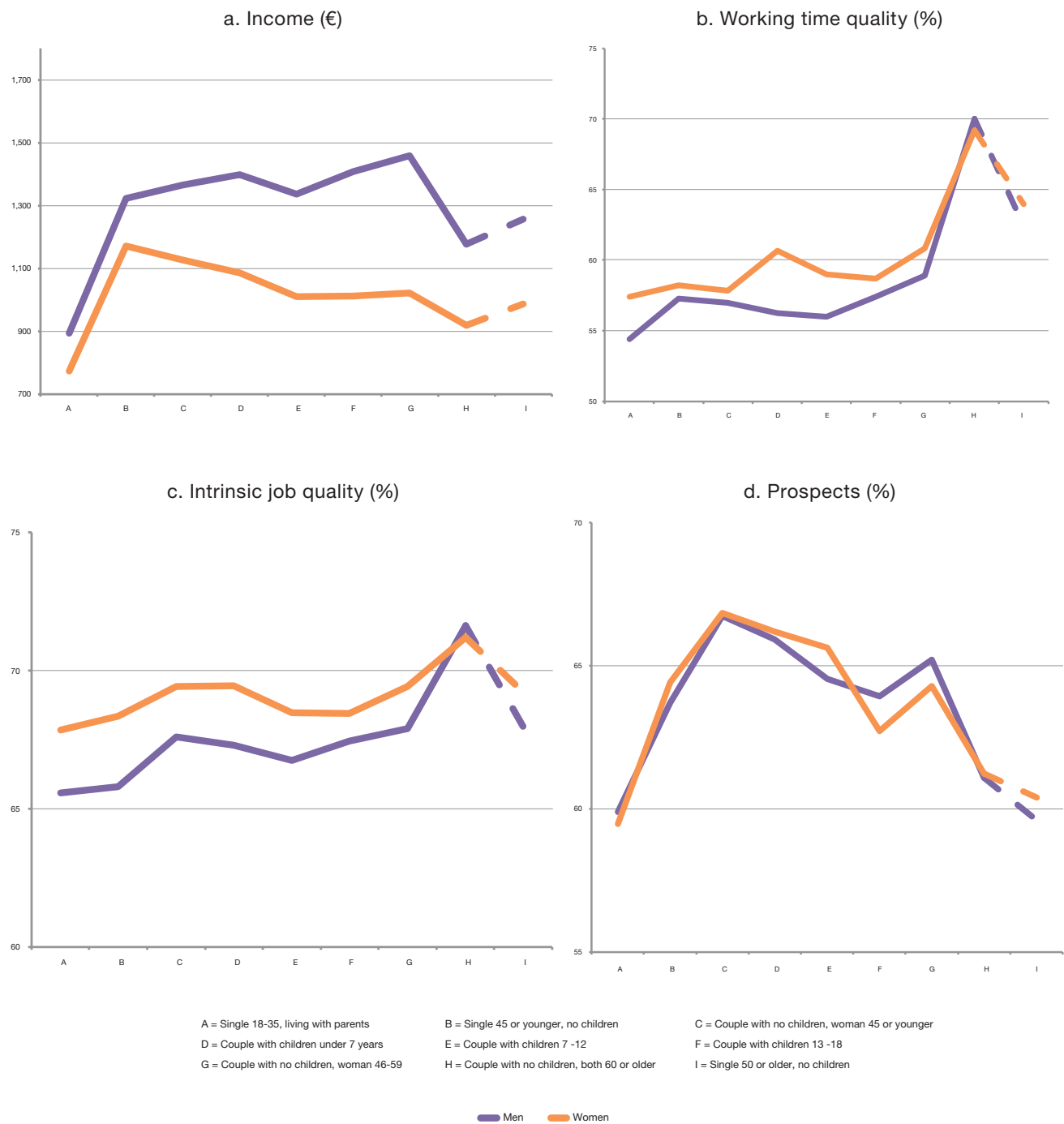
the EWCS questionnaire (Eurofound, 2012c, see Chapter 2 for a more detailed description).

By looking broadly across all 34 countries<sup>14</sup> covered by the EWCS, it can be seen that job quality does change across the life stages and differentially for men and women. The gender difference in monthly income increases from a small gap at the first life stages up to what is termed the ‘empty nest’ stage (Figure 25a). Conversely, women at early life stages report better intrinsic job quality, but this positive gap fades, falling particularly at the stage when they become parents, and then disappearing or even reversing for older couples (Figure 25c).

The way working time quality changes across life stages, often differently for men and women, is particularly interesting and foreshadows changes in other aspects of job quality. Overall, the youngest men have the poorest quality of working time but there is then little gender difference up until couple formation (Figure 25d). The gender gap in working time quality (referring only to paid work) widens after childbirth, caused by an improvement in WTQ for women and a small drop for men. This gap then closes slowly, finally disappearing for pre-retirement couples. This effect largely persists if the ‘part time’ component is removed from the working time quality measure.

<sup>14</sup> Throughout this section weights have been applied to ensure that each country has equal influence on the analysis.

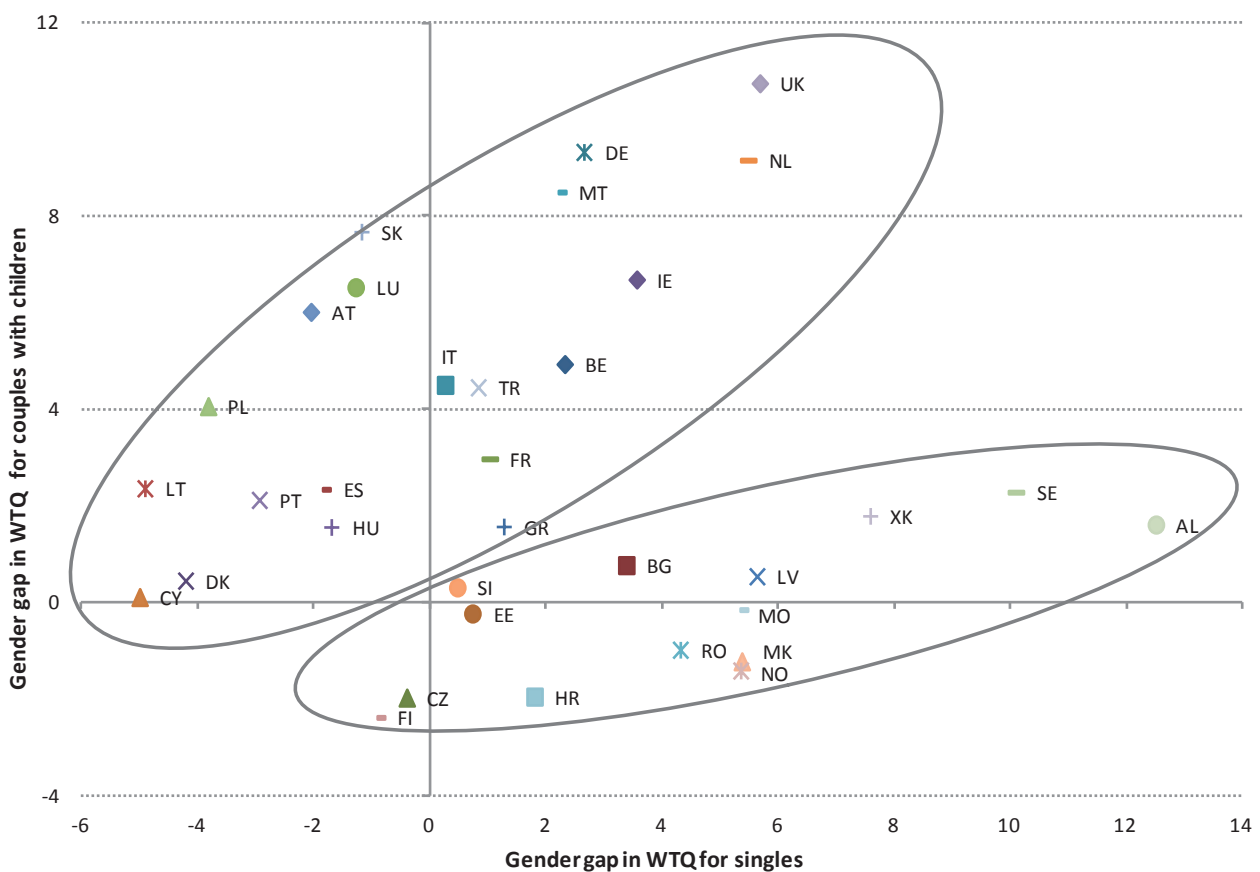
**Figure 25:** Job quality across life stages



In order to examine whether this pattern of gender differences in WTQ varies between countries the study focuses on the life stages where the gender gap in WTQ

emerges, by comparing single people (aged below 46) without children and all couples with children up to the age of 18 (Figure 26).

**Figure 26:** Gender gaps in working time quality across life stages



Note: Positive values represent the advantage of women.

Gender differences in WTQ show considerable cross-country variation. Overall, single women without children report better quality of working time than single men in 22 out of 34 countries. This female advantage is found in 26 countries for respondents with young children and those living with a partner. From the complex pattern of changes in WTQ, one aspect emerges as particularly important: the manner in which women's working conditions change in a different way to that of men in any given country. Thus, two country-level patterns can be identified:

- countries where women's WTQ improves in comparison to men's after couple formation and childbirth;
- countries where women's relative WTQ deteriorates, resulting in a considerable narrowing of the gender gap in most cases (Table 7 and Figure 27).

The first pattern is found in most of the EU15, the five new Member States (which joined in 2004) and Turkey. The second pattern is found in three Nordic countries, several ex-transition new Member States (2004 and 2007) and several non-EU countries. It should be noted that fewer mothers of very young children are likely to be included in the sample for many central and eastern European (CEE) countries, because women there tend

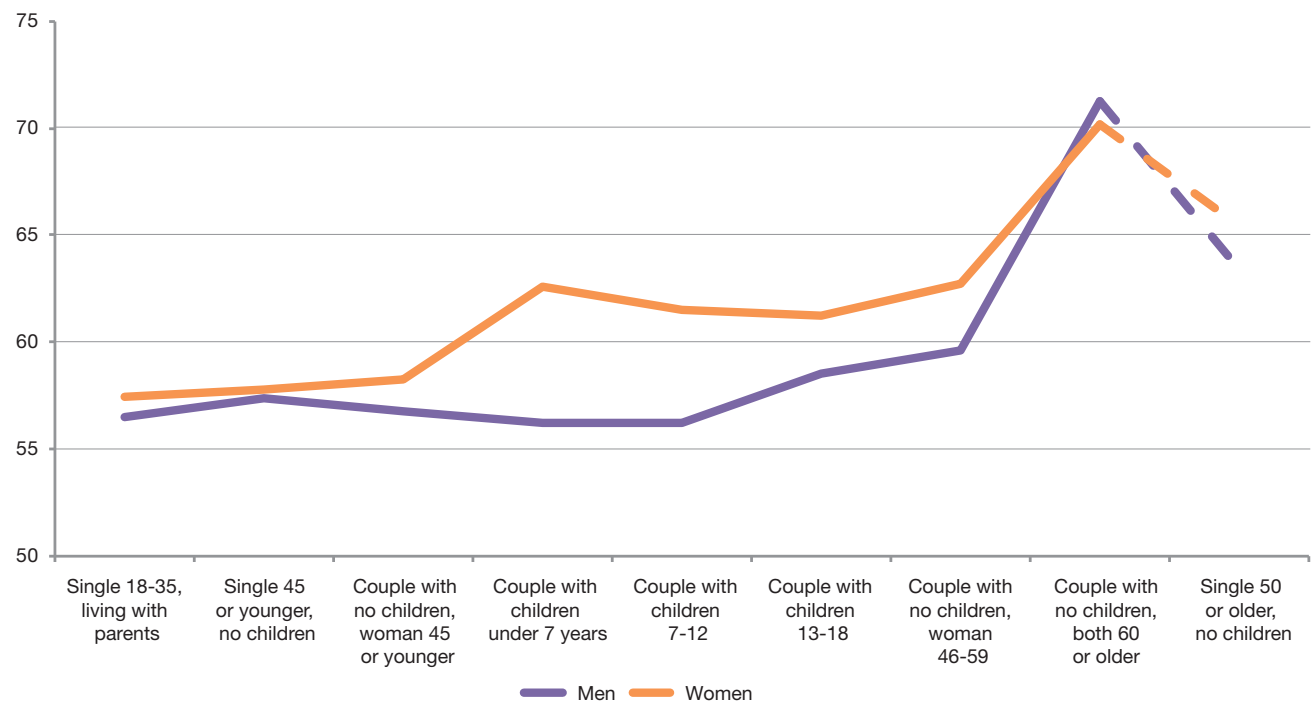
to leave the labour market for extended periods following childbirth. This is due, among other reasons, to the low availability of part-time work and employee-oriented working time flexibility, as well as traditionally longer paid maternity leave. In such contexts, mothers who remain in the labour market, for instance due to better access to childcare, are likely to have similar working time arrangements to men.

**Table 7:** Changes in women’s working time quality over the parenting life stage, relative to men

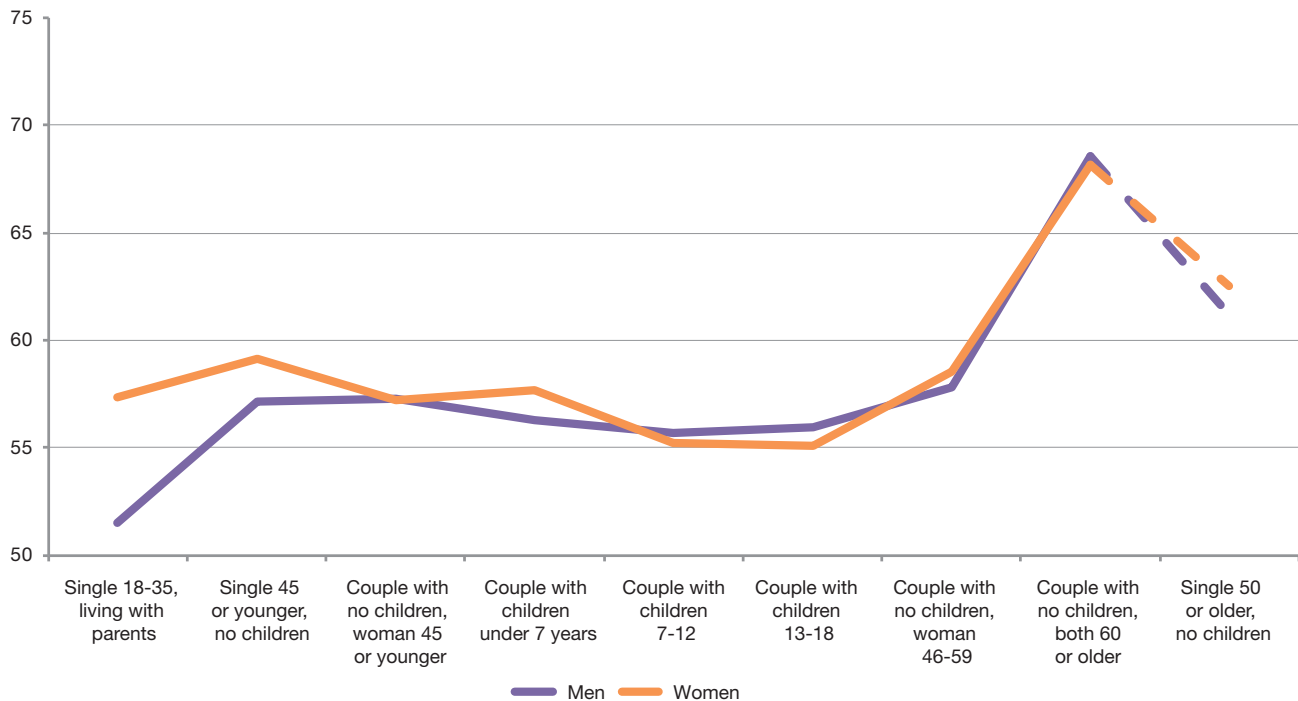
Countries showing a relative improvement in women’s WTQ		Countries showing a relative deterioration of women’s WTQ	
Austria	Lithuania	Albania	Kosovo
Belgium	Luxembourg	Bulgaria	Latvia
Cyprus	Malta	Croatia	Montenegro
Denmark	Netherlands	Czech Republic	Norway
France	Poland	Estonia	Romania
Germany	Portugal	Finland	Slovenia
Greece	Slovakia	former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Sweden
Hungary	Spain		
Ireland	Turkey		
Italy	UK		

**Figure 27:** Different patterns of gender gap in working time quality across life stages

a. Countries with a relative improvement in women’s WTQ (%)



b. Countries with a relative deterioration of women's WTQ (%)

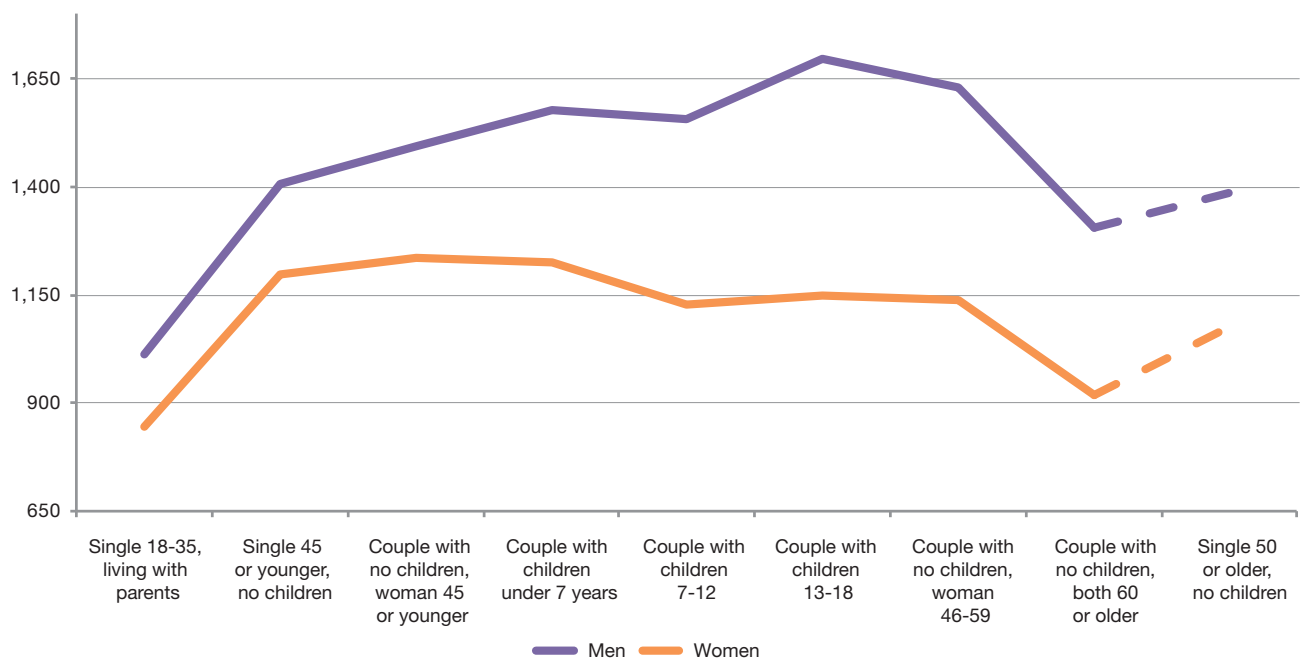


Using the same country groupings developed from the working time quality analysis, the research investigated whether there are other differences in components of job quality across life stages. Figure 28 shows the considerable gender monthly pay gap in both country groups. But the most important difference is the way that the pay gap widens over the child-rearing life stages. For the first group of countries, where women's WTQ increases relative to that of men, the gap in pay increases by 65% when

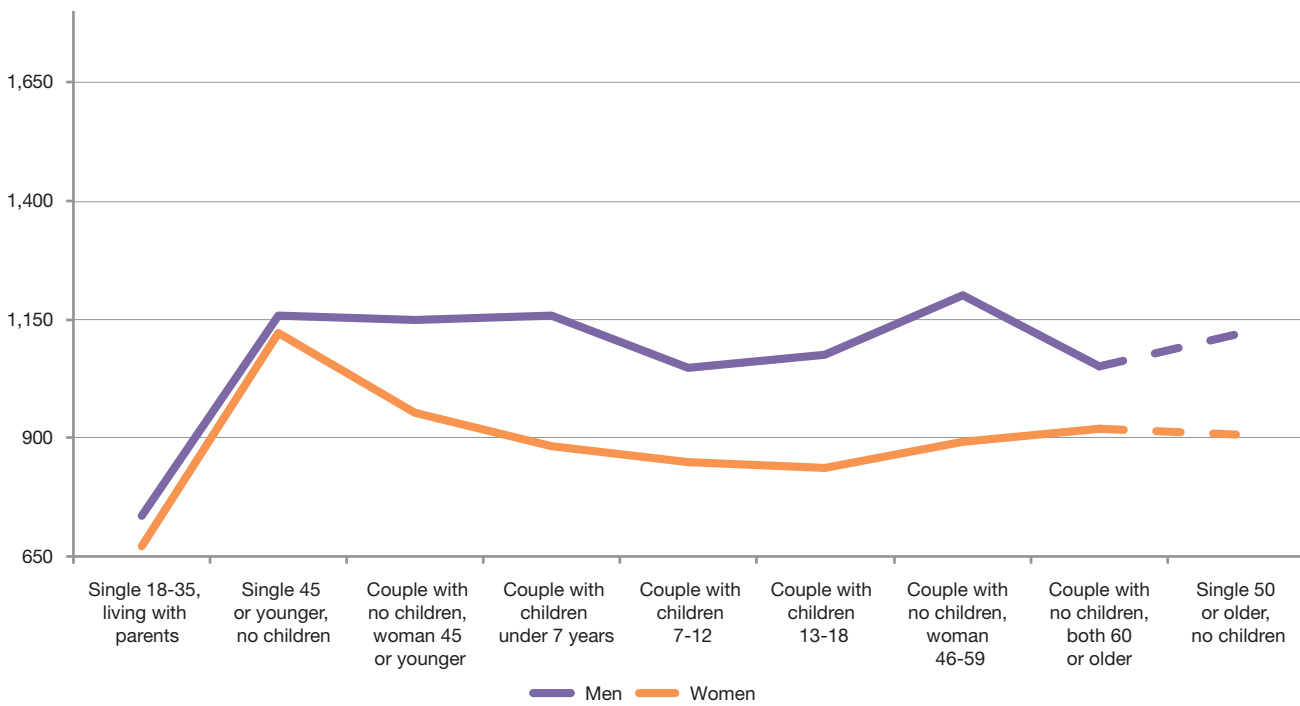
couples without children are compared with couples with children aged 13–18. For the second group of countries, the pay gap increases only by 6.1%. As already noted, more women with young children will be excluded from the sample in the second group of countries so that the gender gap in income from paid work will be wider than captured by this sample of employed parents, due to more women being on leave (although normally paid leave) or out of the labour market.

**Figure 28:** Monthly income across life stages

a. Countries with a relative improvement in women's WTQ (€)

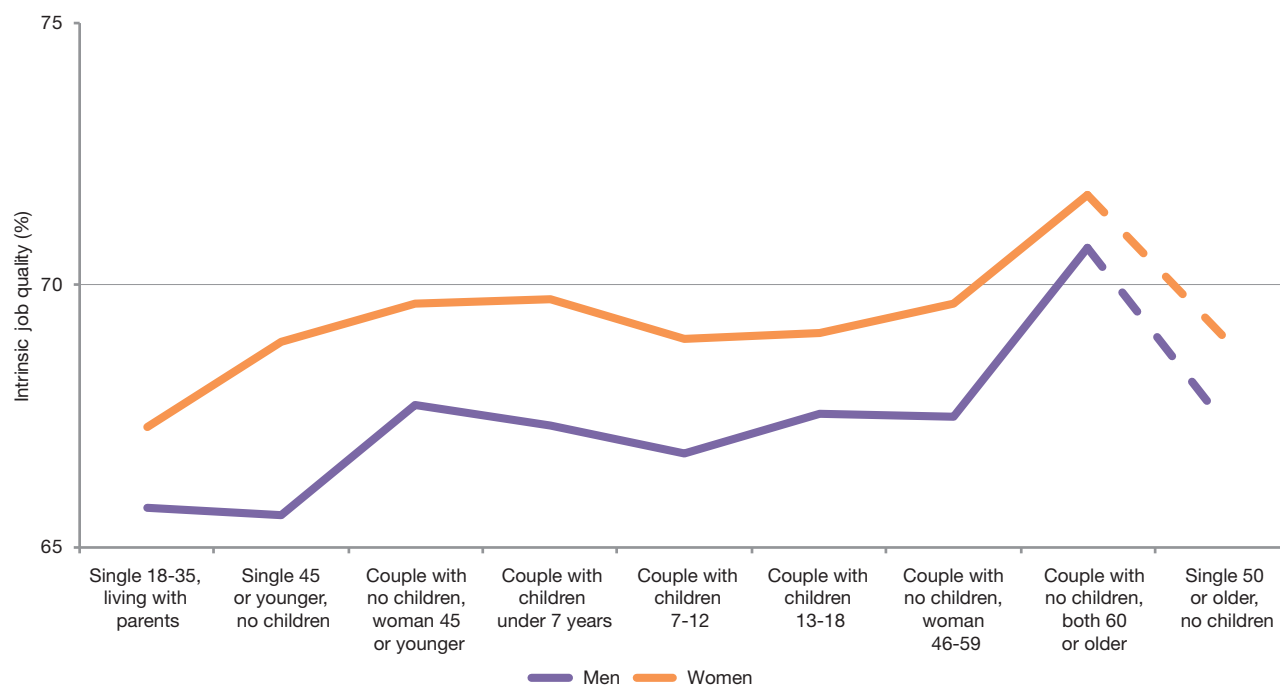


b. Countries with a relative deterioration in women's WTQ (€)

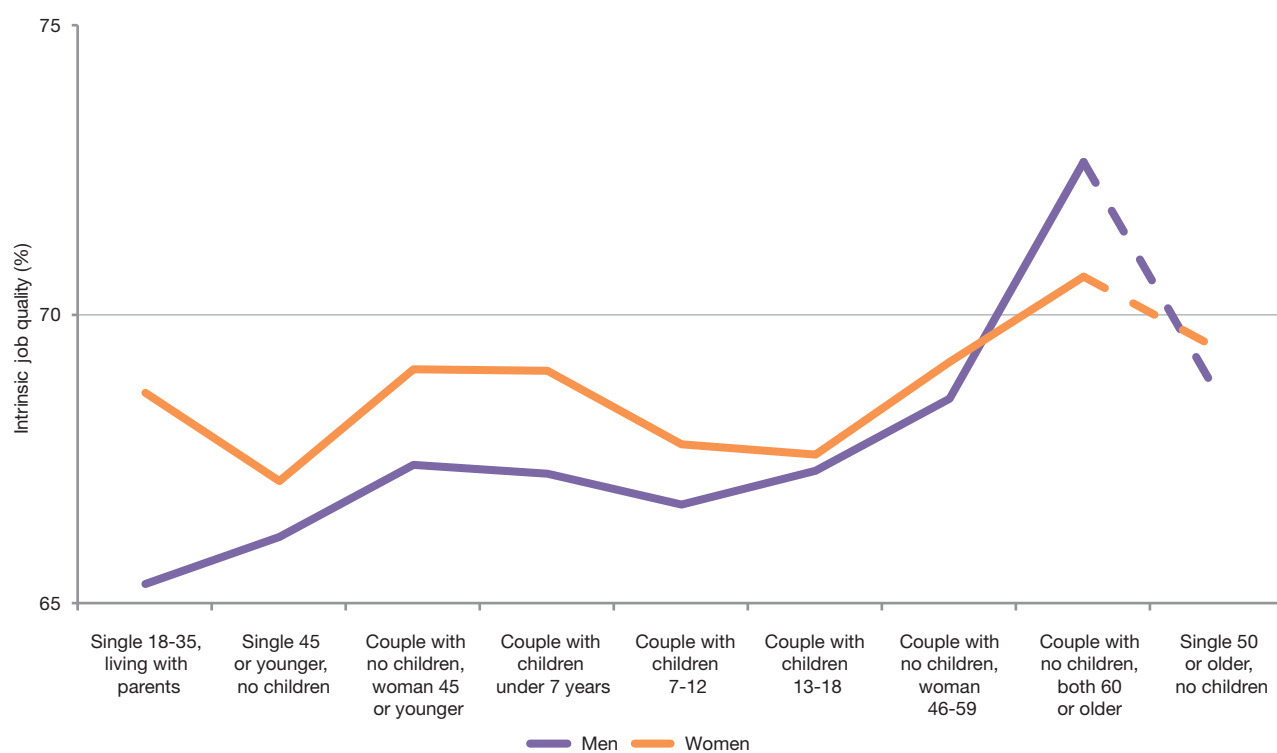


**Figure 29:** Intrinsic job quality across life stages

a. Countries with a relative improvement in women's WTQ



b. Countries with a relative deterioration in women's WTQ



Intrinsic job quality is higher for women than for men in the pre-children life course stages for both groups of countries (Figure 29) but takes a very different course afterwards. In countries demonstrating a relative improvement in women's working time quality, women's intrinsic job quality continues to be higher than that of men for the rest of their working life. Yet for women reporting a relative deterioration in WTQ, intrinsic job quality drops, reaching a low point for those in the stage where a couple has children aged 13–18. Even in the pre-retirement stage, the intrinsic job quality for this group of women remains comparatively low. In considering the components of intrinsic job quality, it is clear that these results largely reflect lower use of skills and scope for discretion, as well as a poorer quality of social environment for women with older children, which may be in part explained by a cohort effect in central and eastern Europe. The trends for physical environment and work intensity are largely the same across life stages for men and women among both groups of countries.

Two clearly gendered patterns for job quality can thus be clearly identified across the life stages. In those countries where women carry out domestic roles but still participate in employment (often resulting in an increasing gender gap in WTQ), their preferences or restrictions drive them towards jobs with better working time quality, but this also appears to drive down their monthly wages. In the second group of countries, where such gaps in working time quality do not emerge, there is also little change in income, but there is a sharp drop in intrinsic job quality. Interpreting these findings is complicated by the tendency for longer paid parental leave in central and eastern Europe, and by the greater impact of the transition on employment prospects for older cohorts in these countries. Thus, as the group of countries with more gender equality in WTQ comprises mostly CEE and non-EU members, the changes in other aspects of job quality could be a cohort effect with older women having lower job quality but similar working time to men.

### Gender critique of the job quality indices

This chapter has used the job quality measures available within the EWCS and analysed in previous reports (particularly by Green and Mostafa for Eurofound, 2012b). The limitations of these measures for capturing gender equality issues are evident.

The monthly income is a mix of three influences:

- hours of work;
- relative pay;
- access to independent earned income.

The differences between men and women in what they consider to be 'good prospects' in a particular occupation, or pay and career progression within female-dominated workplaces, may be a great deal less.

There is a complexity of gendered trade-offs glossed over when looking solely at composite indicators for the whole population; disaggregation by gender shows the importance of the public sector in narrowing the gender gap. The working time quality indicator takes longer hours as an indicator of poorer job quality, yet short hours may also indicate poor job quality if the outcome is lack of assimilation in the workplace and marginalisation.

## Conclusions

This chapter has examined the differences in job quality for women and men. Men's monthly income is considerably higher than women's, with relatively smaller gender differences on other job quality dimensions. In particular, men report better job prospects, whereas women have better intrinsic job quality and working time quality. The analysis demonstrates that the job quality indices are

not necessarily ideal for capturing gendered gaps and practices both in and outside the labour market.

These differences show a considerable degree of continuity across various demographic and labour market characteristics, such as sector, occupation, or workplace features. Gender segregation in the workplace has a complex effect on job quality, as does the gender of one's boss; male bosses are associated with higher income,



female bosses with better IJQ, and a same-sex boss with better prospects.

Occupational gender segregation has an effect over and above gender and the white- versus blue-collar divide. Men experience better IJQ in occupations dominated by women, and income improves for women in male-dominated occupations. Furthermore, differences in job quality vary over key life stages. Men and women's income starts at similar levels, but the gap widens, to the advantage of men, in the later life stages. Women have better IJQ at the early life stages, but this gap slowly disappears after subsequent life stage transitions.

Examining country differences in the quality of working time over key life stages gives some insight into the changes that characterise the differences in men and women's working life courses. In some countries, women's WTQ improves when they work fewer hours due to childcare responsibilities, but this comes at the cost of a life-long penalty in monthly earnings. However, due to the sample consisting only of people in employment, the comparisons between gender regimes are limited.



CHAPTER 5

# Gender and well-being

# Gender and well-being

Well-being is particularly important from a gender perspective, especially since much of women's unpaid and domestic work is not measured in most economic indicators. Women and men may react differently to labour terms and conditions and therefore gender differences regarding well-being need to be analysed. By examining the effects of labour market variables separately on men and women, the causes of the gaps in well-being between them can be better understood, and also whether the determinants of well-being are similar for them in European societies.

## Measuring well-being

The concept of well-being is a notion central to the study of 'positive psychology' which focuses on promoting:

- ✎ human 'flourishing';
- ✎ optimal functioning;
- ✎ thriving;
- ✎ the prevention of illness (Seligman, 2011).

Yet the importance of well-being is only gradually being realised as economists and policymakers have been slower to acknowledge that economic growth alone is not a guarantee of social progress (Kumar, 2011).

Nevertheless, this concept should increasingly be taken into account for several reasons. Research suggests that happy people:

- ✎ work harder;
- ✎ identify problems faster;
- ✎ take less time off;

- ✎ are more supportive of other workers (Warr and Clapperton, 2010).

Hence, in order to improve the mental health of workers and the productivity of a labour market, it is important to inform policy with the determinants of well-being.

Studying these determinants can contribute to a better understanding of the mental health of a population, beyond the absence of psychological distress. Ryder (2011) suggests that there are seven main factors affecting well-being: family relationships; financial security; work; friendships; health; freedom; and personal values.

All of these are directly or indirectly influenced by employment. Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind that the nature and strength of the relationships are likely to be different for men and women.

The World Health Organization's measure of well-being is a five-item scale (WHO-5) and an effective tool for measuring good mental health. Various definitions have been given for well-being; in this context the WHO's definition is useful:

*Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.*

(WHO, 2010)

Henkel et al (2003) also found the measure to be a good screening instrument for the detection of depression in the general population.

The WHO-5 asks respondents to state the frequency of the following five attitudes:

- 'I have felt cheerful and in good spirits'
- 'I have felt calm and relaxed'
- 'I have felt active and vigorous'
- 'I woke up feeling fresh and rested'
- 'My daily life has been filled with things that interest me'

Respondents chose one of the following answers: 'all of the time'; 'most of the time'; 'more than half of the time'; 'less than half of the time'; 'some of the time'; 'at no time'. The answers were scored on a scale of 1 to 5 and averaged, with higher scores denoting better well-being.<sup>15</sup>

These data can be complemented with the same scale of well-being from the 2007 European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS), so comparison with non-employed samples is also possible. Similarly, the EWCS dataset contains responses to five questions which can be combined to form the World Health Organization's measure of well-being.

## Well-being of men and women across the EU27

Well-being of workers is, on average, significantly higher for men (4.36) than for women (4.24), and this difference is consistent with the literature on the subject. Explanations

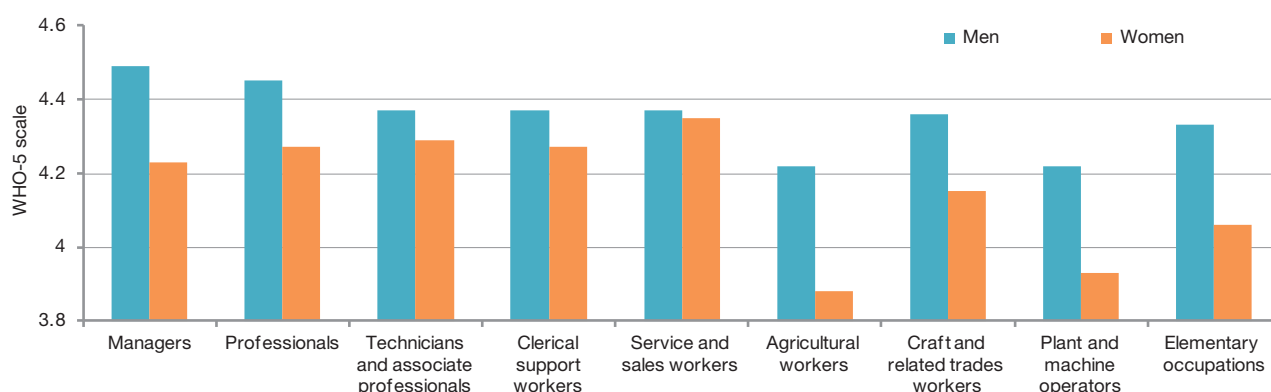
for this gender difference include women's greater pre-disposition to depression (Weissman et al, 1996) and women's lower status in society (Tesch-Romer et al, 2008), but this discussion is beyond the scope of this report. This chapter, which focuses on well-being at work, underlines that the gender difference in well-being generally remains stable even when accounting for other working and labour market conditions.

### Sector and occupation

The gender gap is generally maintained over industrial sectors, with the lowest levels of well-being in farming and mining, and the highest levels in tertiary sectors, in particular finance, hotels, restaurants and other services. The sectors where the gender gap disappears are 'transport, storage and communication' and 'electricity, gas and water supply', where men and women are doing very different jobs and the actual job done by a worker has a more important influence on their well-being than the sector of activity. There is no difference in well-being between public and private sector workers.

Similarly, as Figure 30 shows, the gender gap in well-being exists in the majority of occupational groups. The higher skilled and white-collar occupations have the highest rates of average well-being for both sexes, and the skilled agricultural and fishery workers have the lowest rates of well-being for women. The one group where women approach the well-being of men is the 'service workers and shop and market sales workers' which has the highest level of well-being for women.

**Figure 30:** Well-being across occupations



Note: High = 5 Low = 1 (WHO-5 scale). Occupations are based on ISCO-08 categories.

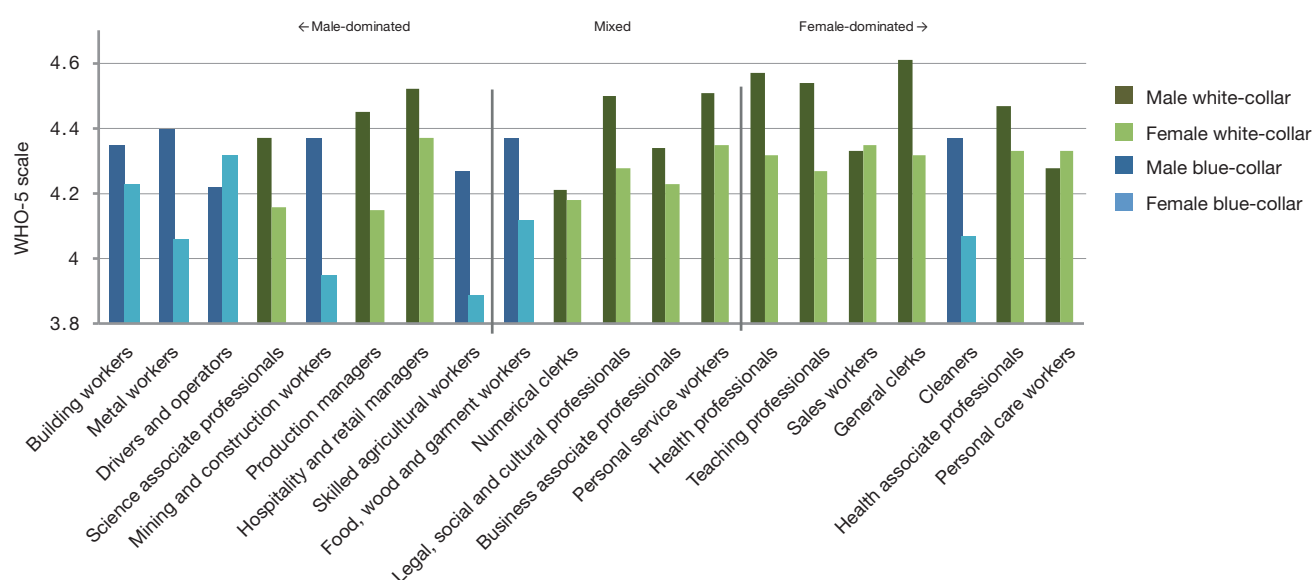
<sup>15</sup> The Cronbach's Alpha for this scale is very high (0.88) for the whole sample, and also individually within each country or language, suggesting that it is a valid measure, and better than a single-item 'life satisfaction' or 'happiness' scale that is also commonly used. Confusingly, these other measures are also often referred to as well-being, although their relationship to other variables is often different to the WHO5-scale.

Here, again, the same variable is used that ranks large 2-digit ISCO occupational groups by gender dominance; a full description of this variable is given in Chapter 2.

Many of the patterns that have already been discussed in this chapter can be seen from Figure 30. It can be seen very clearly that people in white-collar occupations have a greater well-being than those in blue-collar jobs,

as well as men's higher well-being in most occupational groups. There are additional effects for specific occupations too, such as the relatively high well-being for men in female-dominated health work, general clerk and teaching occupations, and the low well-being for female skilled agricultural workers. But, apart from these specific occupations, there is little evidence of any additional effect for the overall gender dominance within an occupation.

**Figure 31:** Well-being and occupational gender segregation



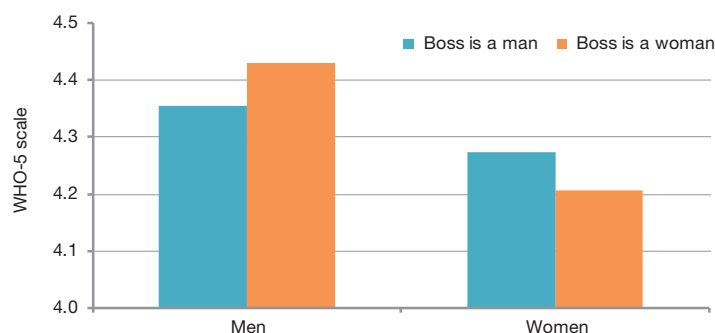
## Workplace segregation

There is little difference in well-being between part-time and full-time workers, but there is clear evidence that working more than 40 hours per week is associated with reduced well-being. The deterioration in well-being with working over 48 hours is particularly marked for women.

Two features concerning the gendering of the workplace are particularly interesting in their relationship to well-being. All respondents were asked about the gender of workers with the same job title as theirs. Women with a job title shared by similar numbers of male and female workers in their workplace declare the highest well-being. Men's well-being was also high in gender-mixed occupations, but even higher when they work in occupations performed

mainly by women in their workplace. Working mainly with members of the same sex seems to be less satisfactory for both men and women, and for both sexes the worst well-being occurs where they are the only person in their job title in the workplace.

Employees were also asked about the gender of their immediate boss. Overall there was little difference in well-being in the subordinates of men or women bosses, but a gender breakdown of the subordinates revealed that both men and women had higher well-being when they worked for a boss of the opposite sex. This finding proved stable across all other demographic variables, and is consistent with the finding above that well-being is higher in gender-mixed working groups.

**Figure 32:** Well-being and gender, by gender of boss

## Job quality and well-being by gender

One way to summarise the relationship between employment and well-being for both men and women is to examine the correlations between the four job quality indices as developed by Green and Mostafa (Eurofound, 2012) and the well-being measure (see Chapter 4). This study found that all four dimensions of job quality are associated with higher well-being. The relationship is stronger for intrinsic job quality and prospects, and weaker yet still statistically significant for income and working time quality. This pattern is remarkably similar for men and women. The only suggestion of a gender difference in the determinants of well-being is that when all dimensions of job quality are taken into account, for women intrinsic job quality has a relatively greater effect on well-being than for men, while for men prospects are more important.

### *Well-being of men and women within countries*

There are unsystematic differences in well-being between the 34 countries in the fifth EWCS, with Kosovo having the highest average level, followed by Ireland then Denmark. This ranking of countries is almost certainly caused by different nuances in the translation of the subjective items

used to measure well-being, and also different cultural norms in responding optimistically or negatively to such questions. While direct comparisons cannot be made between countries for this reason, this does not invalidate the other ways in which this measure is used in this chapter: the same thing is being measured in each country by this WHO-5 scale, but calibrated differently.

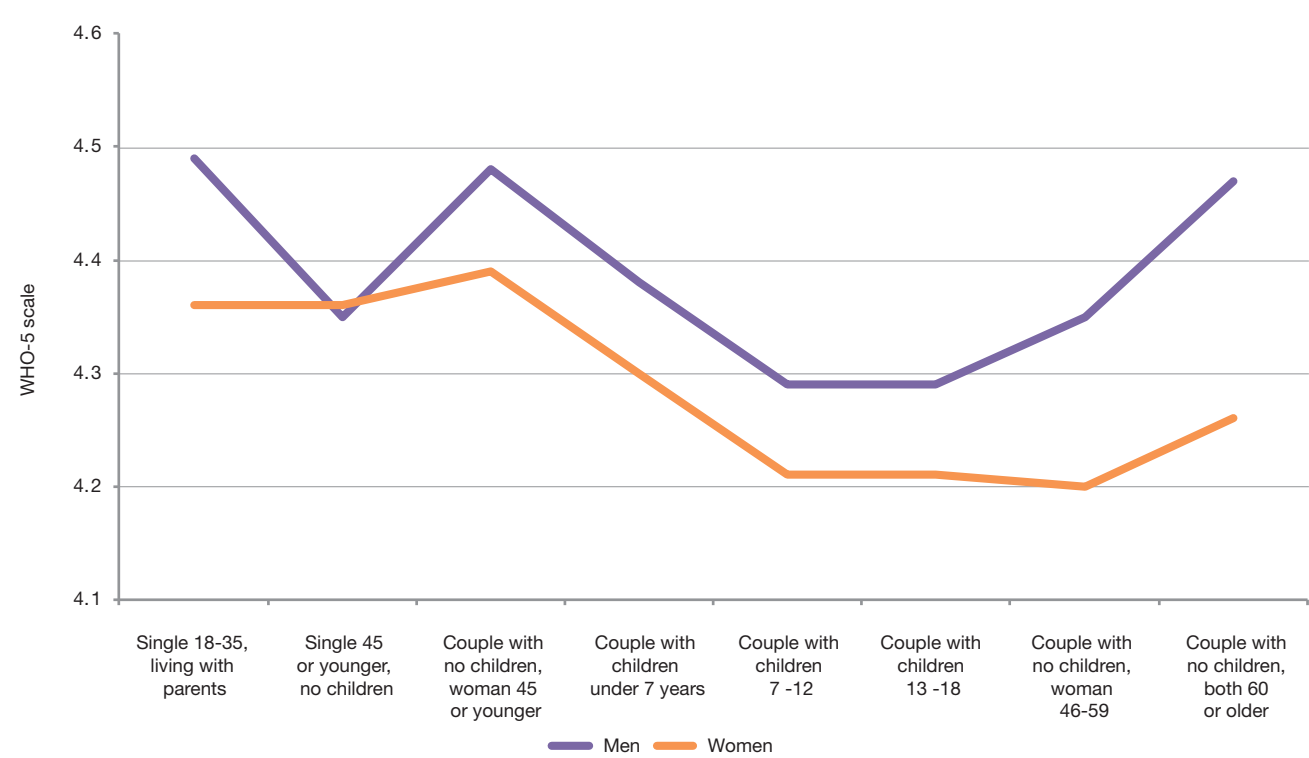
If one looks at the more reliable gender gap in well-being within each country, the largest difference between men and women appears in Portugal, and there are four countries where women's well-being is in fact slightly higher than men's: Turkey, Slovakia, Finland and Montenegro.

### *Well-being across life stages*

In this section, the stylised life stages variable, introduced in Chapter 2, is used. This shows that well-being decreases with age for both males and females, so that women over 50 have the lowest well-being.

However, the gender gap in well-being is not consistent over key life stages, as can be seen in Figure 33. There is almost no gender gap in well-being for singles under 45 and without children, but the 'male advantage' in well-being is found for young couples and continues when a couple has young children. Women's well-being remains lower than men's for the rest of the life stages, with the gap further widening when the children have left home.

**Figure 33:** Well-being across life stages, by gender



However, examining these life stage data separately for each one of the 34 countries in the sample demonstrates that while this increasing gender gap was particularly marked in some countries, it was reversed in others. To explore this further, a new measure was created for each country: the mean well-being for all respondents with children in their households up to the age of 18 was computed, and the difference in well-being of male and female respondents was used to categorise each country. The countries were then split into three groups according to a gender gap in well-being among working

parents, as depicted in Table 8. The first group includes countries where the male advantage in well-being at the child-rearing stage is greatest (called the F--group), the second group with a smaller male advantage (F-) and a third group where the gap was either close to zero, or favoured women (F+). As was argued earlier in this chapter, the differences between countries in the well-being scores used here is perhaps more a function of cultural norms or translation, so cannot be interpreted with any confidence, but the direction and size of the difference in well-being of parent-workers is more reliable.



**Table 8:** Relative well-being of working parents

Men's well-being much higher than women's (F-- group)	Men's well-being slightly higher than women's (F- group)	No difference or women's well-being higher than men's (F+ group)
Croatia	Belgium	Albania
Cyprus	Bulgaria	Austria
France	Czech Republic	Estonia
former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Denmark	Finland
Ireland	Germany	Greece
Italy	Kosovo	Hungary
Latvia	Netherlands	Malta
Lithuania	Norway	Montenegro
Luxembourg	Poland	Slovakia
Netherlands	Sweden	Slovenia
Portugal	Turkey	Spain
Romania		
UK		

The selection of countries appearing within each of these three columns shows little regularity and perhaps even some surprising results. The group with the lowest levels of women's relative well-being in couples with children contains the UK and Ireland and some countries from southern, central and eastern Europe. This deficit in female well-being at this point in the life course might have arisen for a number of different reasons and the specific factors causing the large gender gap may vary among those countries listed. Possible explanations include differences in state-provided affordable childcare, differences between couples in norms around the division of domestic labour and responsibility for children differences in norms of inter-generational childcare assistance, quality and availability of part-time work, different participation rates and differential provision of maternity and paternity leave. Boye (2011), for instance, shows that some of the gender difference in well-being between countries is attributable to differences in the burden of domestic work that employed women undertake.

A defining gender difference in labour market participation patterns is the rate of labour market withdrawal following childbirth. Rates of withdrawal vary between countries and occupations for women, but voluntary exit from employment for domestic reasons is quite common for them, while for men it is still very rare in all countries.

In order to examine the well-being of the non-employed groups, one must turn to the EQLS (2007), where non-employed individuals are separated into those who are:

- unable to work due to long-term illness or disability;
- unemployed;
- full-time homemakers.

There are large differences in well-being between these three non-employed groups, with the illness and disability group having the poorest well-being, and the homemakers the best well-being. Rates of full-time homemakers are very low before the birth of the first child. In effect, the cohort of women split at the point of first birth into those who continue with uninterrupted employment and those who exit employment into homemaking. The EQLS allows us to examine the well-being of the women who exit employment at this stage in the life course<sup>16</sup> (this flow of women from employment to non-employment is shown schematically in Figures 34a, b & c by the green line).

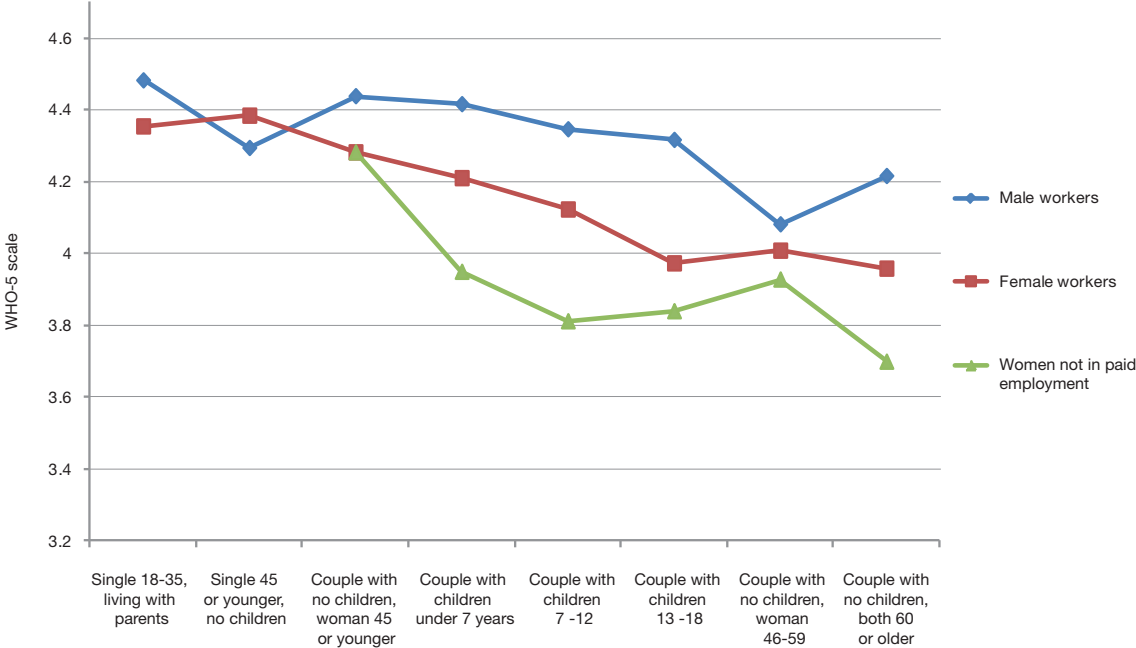
The data provide clear evidence that the women who have exited the labour market have poorer well-being than those who remained in employment (figure 34a, b, and c); this is particularly marked for the group of countries 'F-'. So, regardless of whether countries are

<sup>16</sup> The EQLS (2007) data also enable analysis of men and women in employment. The patterns of results from these two surveys, the EWCS and EQLS, are reassuringly similar.

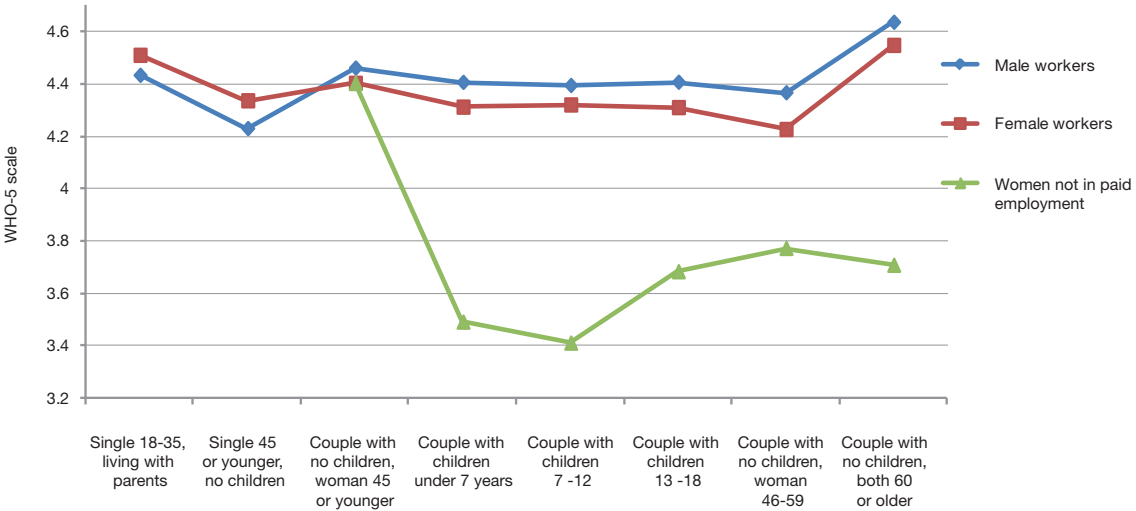
‘working mother well-being friendly’ or not, it seems as if the well-being of women is protected by remaining in employment rather than by becoming full-time domestic carers.<sup>17</sup>

**Figure 34:** Well-being across the life stages

a. Men’s well-being much higher than women’s (F- group)

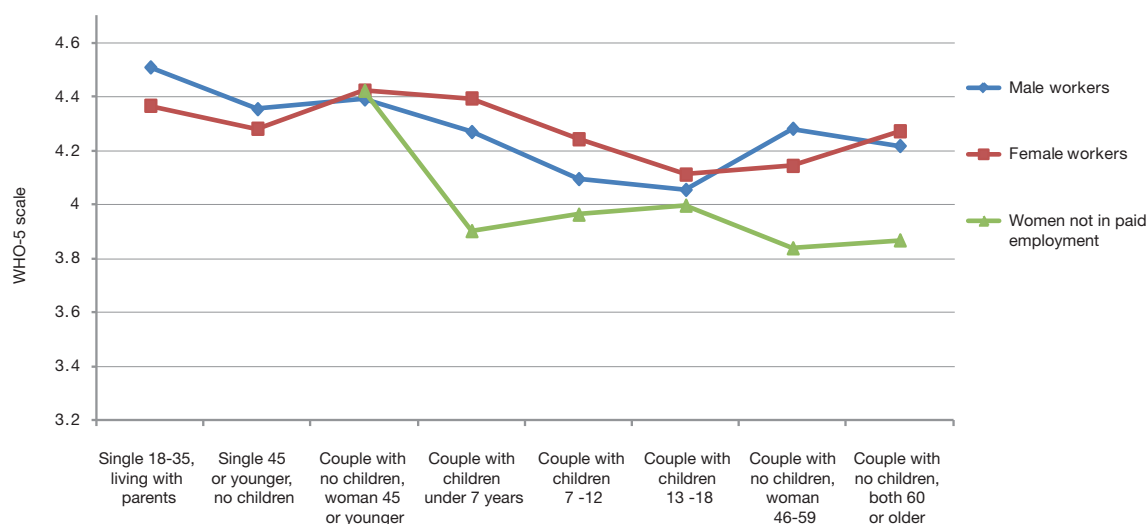


b. Men’s well-being slightly higher than women’s (F-- group)



<sup>17</sup> Other explanations for these findings are plausible, such as an ‘unhealthy selection’ effect out of the labour market for women. This cross-sectional data cannot investigate such competing hypotheses.

c. No difference or women's well-being higher than men's (F+ group)



## Conclusions

According to the World Health Organization's measure of well-being, men on average have higher levels of well-being than women. This study suggests that working conditions and labour market position are central to understanding well-being for both men and women. At the EU level, it was found that men and women's patterns of well-being are very similar, such that the same features of a job that are good for a woman's well-being are also good for men, for instance regarding occupation, industry, age and hours as well as the measures of job quality that were used in Chapter 4.

In examining the effects of gender segregation, or more specifically gender domination of an occupation, there was little evidence of any additional effect of a dominant gender over and above the effects of occupation – in other words the occupations associated with high well-being had this effect equally for men and for women, regardless of the proportion of men and women in that occupation.

There were more interesting effects when looking at the gendering of job categories within the workplace. Men's well-being seems to benefit from being in a more female environment, but for women they have lower well-being in more female environments and higher well-being in male environments. Similarly mixed-gender pairings of bosses and subordinates are associated with higher well-being than same-sex pairings. These results provide support for reducing gender segregation at the workplace level.

A stylised life stages perspective showed that, across Europe, women's well-being deficit is particularly concentrated in the life stages where couples have children living with them. Yet this is not a universal finding: in some countries this deficit is particularly high; in others it is even reversed. There is no obvious or simple explanation for the differential performance on this particular measure for specific countries. However, it is clear that women who exit the labour market to become full-time homemakers have poorer well-being on average than women who are employed, whether full or part time.



## CHAPTER 6

# Trends over time

# Trends over time

This chapter explores changes over time in gender differences in job quality and working conditions, providing an exploration of the potential underlying causes of trends in gender differences. Specific attention is paid to outlining potential linkages between the labour market impacts of recession and government austerity and trends in gender differences in job quality and working conditions. Although these linkages cannot be definitely established, an examination of trends in job quality can help highlight some of the mechanisms by which such factors may influence recent and on-going developments, including changes to the industrial composition or shifting patterns of gender segregation.

Due to the timing of the 2010 EWCS, the main effects captured will be those from the initial economic crisis, as the survey was conducted at too early a time to pick up the full effects of the implementation of on-going austerity measures to address public expenditure deficits on job quality and working conditions. Although many of the effects of the economic crisis on the sectoral and gender composition of the labour market may be short-term or 'cyclical', recession and austerity may produce longer-term or structural changes in the composition of the labour market and working conditions – for example in relation to job quality.

In this chapter, trends in three specific dimensions of job quality are explored: skills and discretion, work intensity, and working hours mismatch (a dimension of work–life balance). The first two indicators used here are identical

to those constructed by Green and Mostafa (Eurofound, 2012b) in their analysis of 'trends in job quality' and also used in Chapter 4 of this report. The third indicator – working hours mismatch – was selected in order to underline trends in work–life challenges posed by the changing working times of women and men (see Chapter 3).

## Relationship between recession and job quality

Recent employment trends must be looked at in order to facilitate a discussion of how changes in employment participation may affect working conditions and job quality. Between 2007 and 2010, all the EU27 experienced a fall in their employment rates, except for Austria, Germany, Luxembourg, Malta and Poland. Countries can be divided, for descriptive purposes, into three broad groups based on the degree of employment rate change (Table 9). The 'high employment rate impact group' experienced an employment rate drop of over 2 percentage points between 2007 and 2010, although within this group Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Ireland all experienced a drop of over -8 percentage points and Spain a drop of -6 percentage points. The 'medium' impact group experienced an employment rate drop of less than -2 percentage points (for example, the Czech Republic and the UK) whereas the 'low impact' group experienced no drop in their employment rate, with some reporting an increase (for example, Germany and Poland).

**Table 9:** Impact of recession on gender employment gap 2007-2010 (EU27)

	High (-2 pp* or below)	Medium (minus 2 to zero pp* change)	Low (0 or above pp* change)
<b>Decreased inequality (Positive &gt;+1pp* change in gender gap)</b>	Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain	Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Italy, United Kingdom	Austria, Belgium, Germany, Malta, Poland
<b>No Change (Less than 1pp +/- change in gender gap)</b>		Netherlands, Sweden	Luxembourg
<b>Increased inequality (Negative &gt; -1 pp change in gender gap)</b>		Romania	

\*pp = percentage point(s)

Notes: EU LFS, Eurostat. Employment gap is female minus male employment rate (F-M). Increased and decreased inequality categorisation is based on whether there was an increase or decrease in gender employment gap. With the exception of Lithuania, female employment rates are lower than male rates.

In terms of gender differences, although the employment gender gap remained overwhelmingly negative (meaning women had a lower employment rate than that of men) this gap narrowed across most countries. The difference over time between the change in male and female employment rates (female change minus male change) can be used to highlight trends in gender inequalities. A negative figure reflects a fall in the employment rate of women, relative to that of men, whereas a positive figure indicates that it increased in relative terms (Table 9). From this, it can be seen that several of the countries that experienced the greatest drop in overall employment rates (top left quadrant) also saw a narrowing of the gender employment gap. In gender equality terms this, however, does not necessarily reflect a positive outcome, but instead, the 'levelling down' of male employment rates due to higher rates of job loss in more cyclically exposed male-dominated industrial sectors during the initial phase of recession.

Within specific countries, a variety of longer-term social, cultural, or economic changes may be leading to changes in job quality and working conditions so that recently

recorded changes in job quality are also likely to reflect longer-term factors, such as the widespread trend for continuous labour market participation of women. It nonetheless remains likely that the recession and continuing austerity will influence gender differences in working conditions and job quality, although the full magnitude of this impact remains unknown. The EWCS can be used to show that, between 2005 and 2010, there was an overall decline in the proportion of EU27 employment concentrated in male-dominated 'cyclical' sectors such as manufacturing and construction (Table 10). Again, using the classification of countries into 'high' 'medium' and 'low' impacts on the employment rate, it can be seen that the compositional shift away from construction was greatest in the country group with the highest overall drop in employment rate. In the public sector and female-dominated sectors (public administration, education, and health) the impact of austerity and public sector cuts on aggregate was still largely undetectable in 2010. The shift in industrial composition away from public administration was actually highest in the countries where the recession had a low impact.

**Table 10:** Percentage change in industrial composition (2005-2010) by country group (EU27)

	Low	Medium	High	All	Female share of sector (2010)
Agriculture/fishing/ hunting/utilities (A,B,C,E)*	-19.2	-5.4	-15.8	-12.1	28.2%
Manufacturing (D)	-9.1	-27.9	-14.3	-19.0	29.3%
Construction (F)	-0.8	26.2	-22.0	2.8	9.4%
Wholesale and retail (G,H)	-14.9	-0.9	3.7	-4.1	49.7%
Transport and storage (I)	11.6	13.3	5.8	11.1	22.5%
Finance and real estate (J,K)	44.0	8.7	24.9	19.4	44.1%
Public administration (L)	-34.9	3.3	-4.4	-10.4	44.5%
Education (M)	36.8	4.8	14.3	14.3	65.2%
Health (N)	98.1	36.3	30.4	50.1	76.5%
Other services (O)	-26.7	-17.5	18.1	-16.7	59.0%

Notes: See Table 9. \* NACE Rev 1

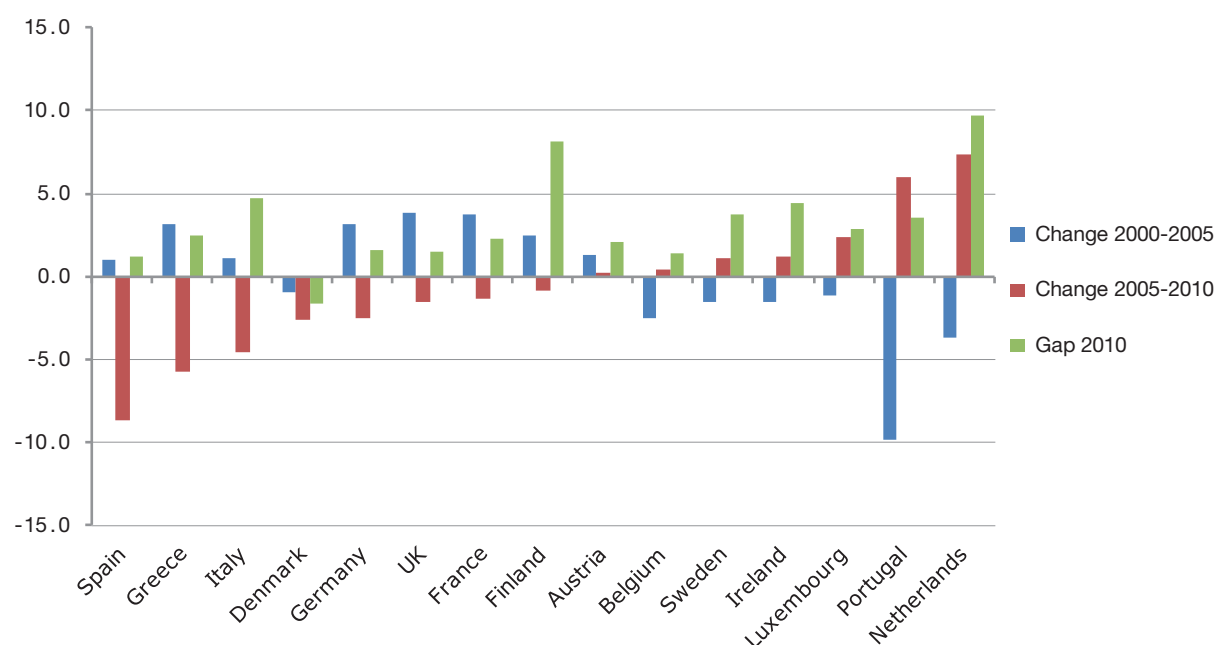
Aggregate changes in relative job quality and working conditions between men and women may reflect not only actual changes in men and women's working conditions, but also the changing composition of the labour market due to 'selection effects' that result from the pattern of job destruction (and creation). Consequently, while downturns in demand may appear to be associated with improvements in job quality, closer examination may reveal that this is due, for example, to the higher rate of destruction of poorer quality jobs in male or female-dominated sectors, so that the 'surviving' jobs are of higher quality. For example, overall trends in temporary employment

show that some of the countries with the highest drops in overall employment rates also saw a drop in temporary employment (such as Spain). Such effects, however, are not necessarily uniform across countries. Other countries that experienced some of the largest drops in employment saw an increase in temporary employment (such as Ireland). In terms of gender differences, although men overall experienced a greater drop in employment, the relative representation of women among temporary workers increased in a number of countries between 2005 and 2010, most notably in Bulgaria, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal and Romania (Figure 35).

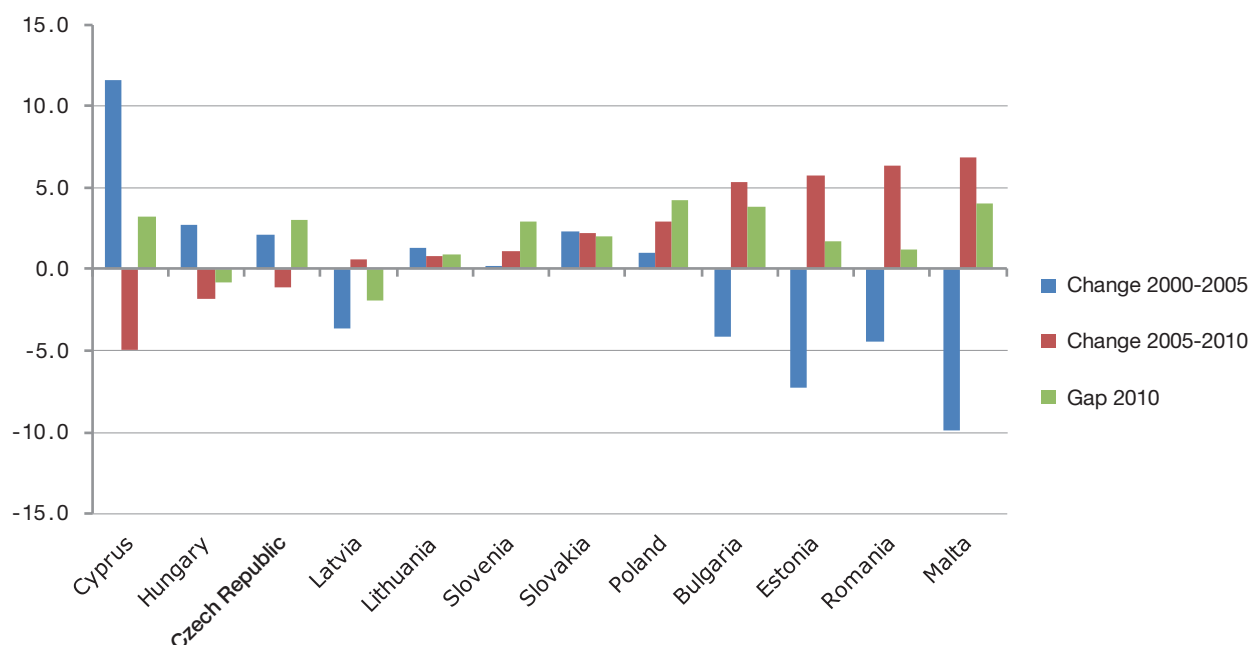


**Figure 35:** Temporary employment; change in gender gaps

EU15 2000–2005 and 2005–2010



EU12 2000–2005 and 2005–2010

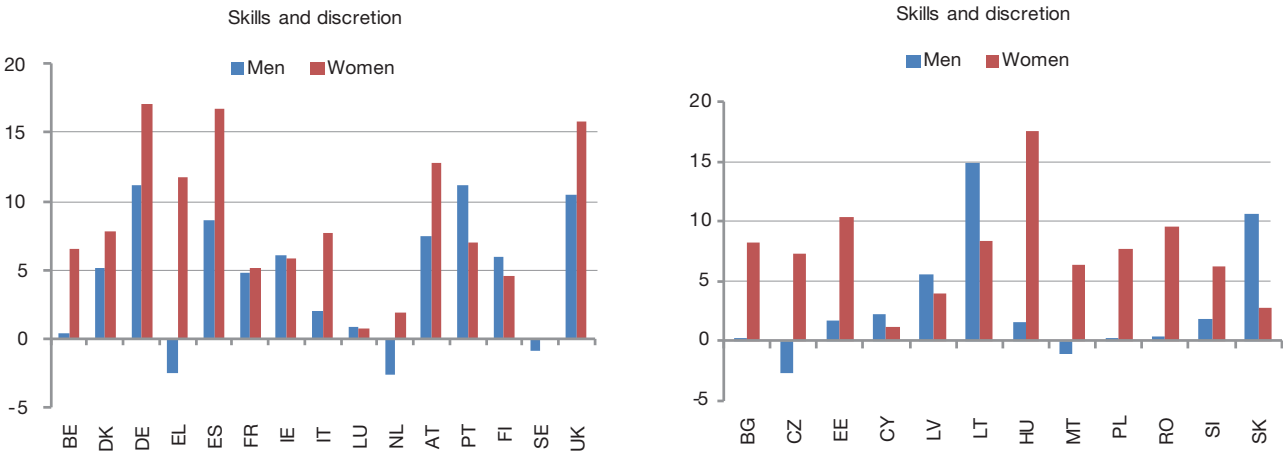


Note: Change is pp change in gender gap (women–men) between specified years.

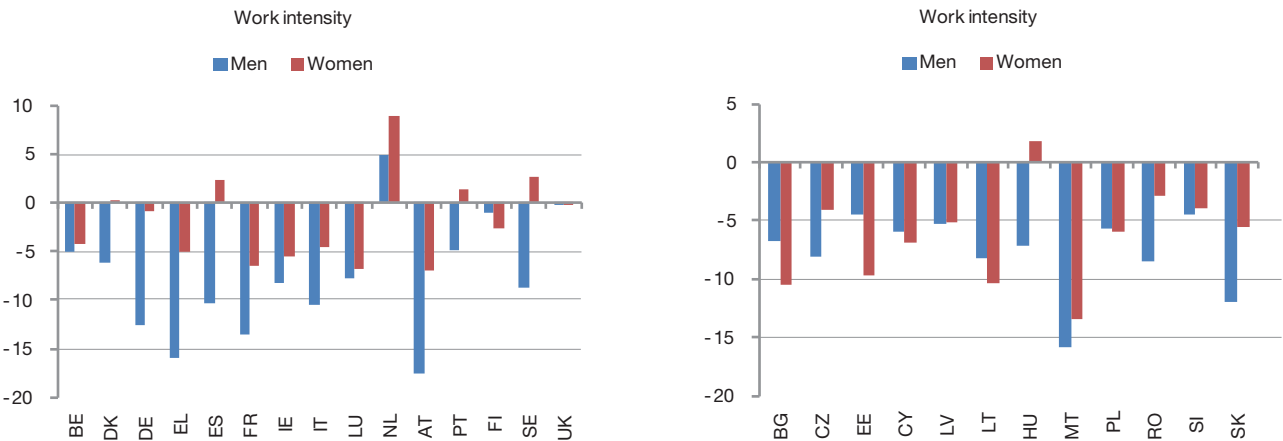
A major risk to job quality and working conditions in Europe concerns the potential effects of austerity measures and public sector cuts. Figure 36 indicates the importance of the public sector in providing higher quality jobs. Austerity could lead to changes both in the relative proportions of the private, public, and third/other sectors in total employment, and also to the degradation of job quality because of labour

management strategies. Although the public sector remains a source of good-quality employment for both men and women, the higher representation of women in the public sector makes this a particular issue for women. Given the continuing nature of austerity programmes and the timing of the 2010 EWCS survey, it is likely, though, that these impacts will not be fully observable in the 2010 EWCS data.

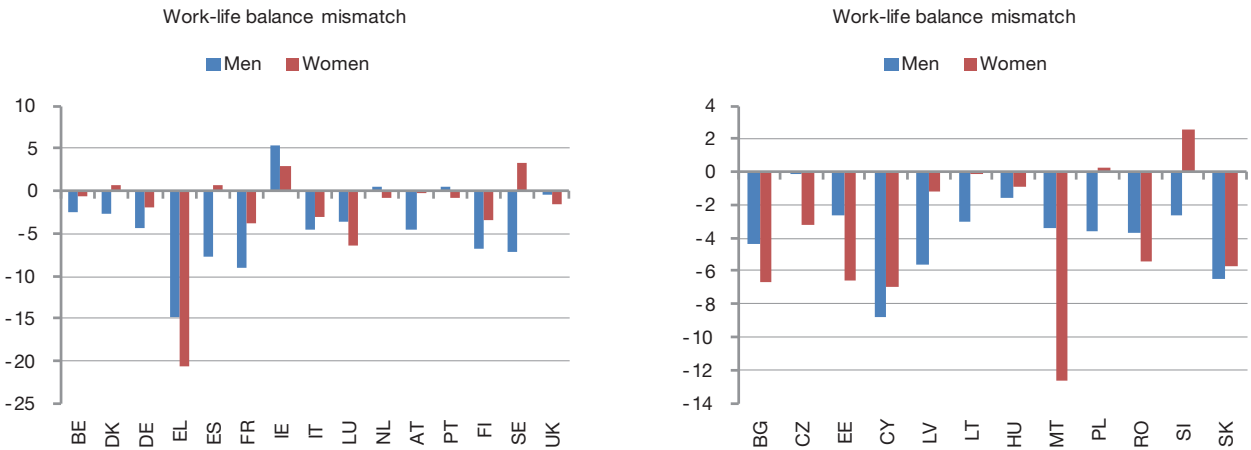
**Figure 36:** Public–private job quality gap by gender in the EU27 (%)



Note: For women, skills and discretion is clearly better in the public sector.



Note: Except for the Netherlands, where both men and women report having greater work intensity in the public sector, work intensity is clearly higher in the private sector.



Note: Except for Ireland and for women in Slovenia, the mismatch on work-life balance is higher in the private than the public sector.

## Change in job quality

This discussion highlights how caution is necessary when interpreting aggregate trends in job quality or attributing changes to the impact of the 2008 economic crisis and the consequent austerity measures. Any such interpretation should be made provisionally, given that the full impact of the recession and austerity programmes was unlikely to have been fully apparent at the time of the 2010 EWCS survey. The following sections examine changes in job quality across countries and public and private sectors in order to identify more closely whether changes in job quality across sectors have influenced patterns of job quality among men and women.

### Skills and discretion

This dimension of job quality seeks to measure, as in the Green and Mostafa study (Eurofound, 2012b), the extent to which skills are exercised within jobs and the degree of autonomy and control workers have over their jobs. Table 11 summarises the findings on changes to the measure of skills and discretion between 2005 and 2010, classifying

countries into three broad groups based on whether relative levels of job quality:

- improved in favour of women ('women relative improvement group');
- changed to the detriment of women ('women relative deterioration group');
- remained stable.

Overall, around half of the EU27 countries saw a relative improvement in job quality among women, whereas the majority of the remaining countries saw a relative deterioration among women, meaning an improvement in relative terms for men. These changes in gender gaps alone, however, conceal considerable differences between countries. For example, in France, both men and women saw a reduction in levels of skill and discretion (*M-F-*), although this deterioration was higher for women than men, thus accounting for an increase in the gender gap. In the UK, in contrast, although both men and women saw an increase in levels of skills and discretion (*M+F+*), the increase was larger among men, thus causing an increase in the gender gap.

**Table 11:** Change in skill and discretion gender gap (2005-2010)

Women relative deterioration group (DiD -ve Change > -1 pp)	Pattern	Stable gender gap group (DiD change < 1 pp)	Pattern	Women relative improvement group (DiD +ve Change > +1 pp)	Pattern
Austria	M=F-	Belgium	M=F=-	Bulgaria	M=F+
Cyprus	M+F-	Ireland	M=F=	Estonia	M+F+
Czech Republic	M+F+	Poland	M+F+	Germany	M+F+
Denmark	M+F=	Portugal	M+F+	Greece	M-F+
Finland	M+F+			Italy	M=F=
France	M-F-			Latvia	M+F+
Hungary	M+F+			Lithuania	M+F+
Slovenia	M+F+			Luxembourg	M=F+
Spain	M+F+			Malta	M=F+
United Kingdom	M+F+			Netherlands	M=F+
				Romania	M=F+
				Slovakia	M=F+
				Sweden	M-F-

Notes: DiD = difference in difference (female change minus male change 2005-10). Pattern column '=' means less than 1 pp change. Stable group is countries where less than +/- 1 pp change or no change in job quality gender gap.

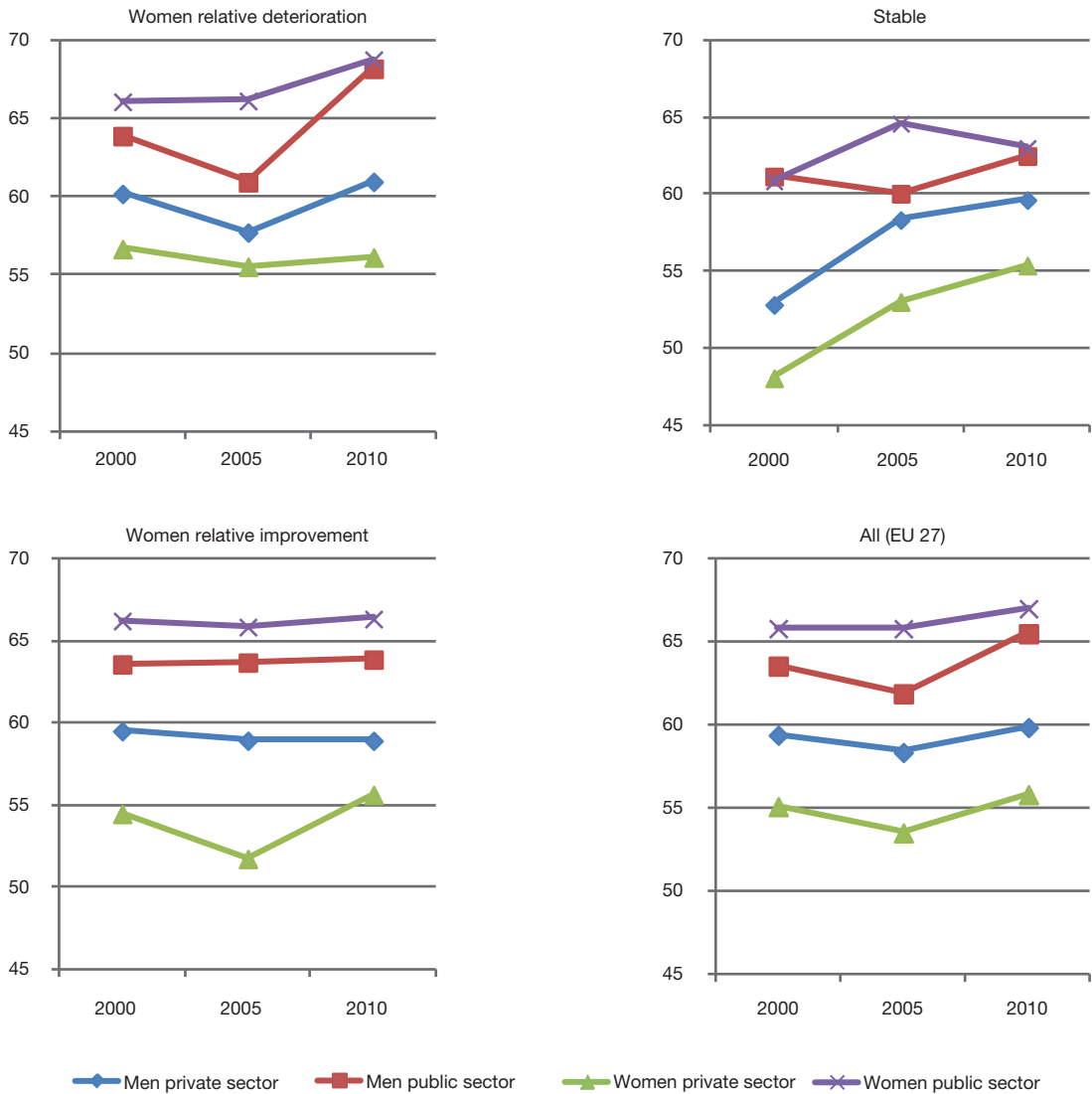
Figure 37 examines trends in the skills and discretion measure broken down by public and private sector. The graphs report overall findings for the complete EU27 and separated by the three groups identified in Table 11:

- ✎ women’s relative improvement in job quality group;
- ✎ stable group;
- ✎ women’s relative deterioration in job quality group.

Between 2005 and 2010, although women in the public sector reported the highest levels of skills and discretion

of the considered groups, men overall witnessed a relative increase in their levels of job quality in the public sector. This trend was most pronounced in the group of countries where women had experienced a deterioration in their job quality, relative to men. The findings thus confirm the importance of the public sector in providing higher quality employment for both men and women. At the same time, in the group of countries where levels of skills and discretion reported among women improved, compared with men, there was an improvement in levels of skills and discretion among female private sector workers between 2005 and 2010.

**Figure 37:** Skills and discretion in public–private sector by change in gender gap



Notes: See table 11 for definitions.

Higher levels of skills or discretion may reflect a variety of factors. These may include changes in the structure of the economy which create an increase in new, higher skilled jobs, thus facilitating the usage of greater levels of skills and discretion, or changes to the nature of work organisation or managerial practices within existing jobs, such as the greater use of job enrichment, ‘empowerment’, or high involvement management practices. Such changes may further reflect increases in skill levels with the workforce, although the occurrence of over-education, where people hold qualifications in excess of the requirements for their job, may illustrate that an increase in the skills set does not necessarily (fully) translate into the greater exercise of skills or skill utilisation in the workplace (Rafferty, 2012). An aggregate increase in skills and discretion may also partly reflect compositional changes due to greater levels

of job destruction in lower skilled occupations, rather than an increase in the number of higher quality jobs.

### Work intensity

The ‘work intensity’ job quality indicator seeks to capture negative aspects of intensive labour effort in terms of the physical, cognitive and emotional impacts of a job. A higher score on this measure indicates negatively evaluated work intensity and therefore a lower level of intrinsic job quality. In most countries, women reported lower levels of work intensity than men. Approximately half of the EU27 countries reported a deterioration in the relative position of women to men on this job quality measure (Table 12). In the remaining countries, the relative levels of work intensity of women either improved or remained stable.

**Table 12:** Relative change in work intensity gender gap (2005-2010)

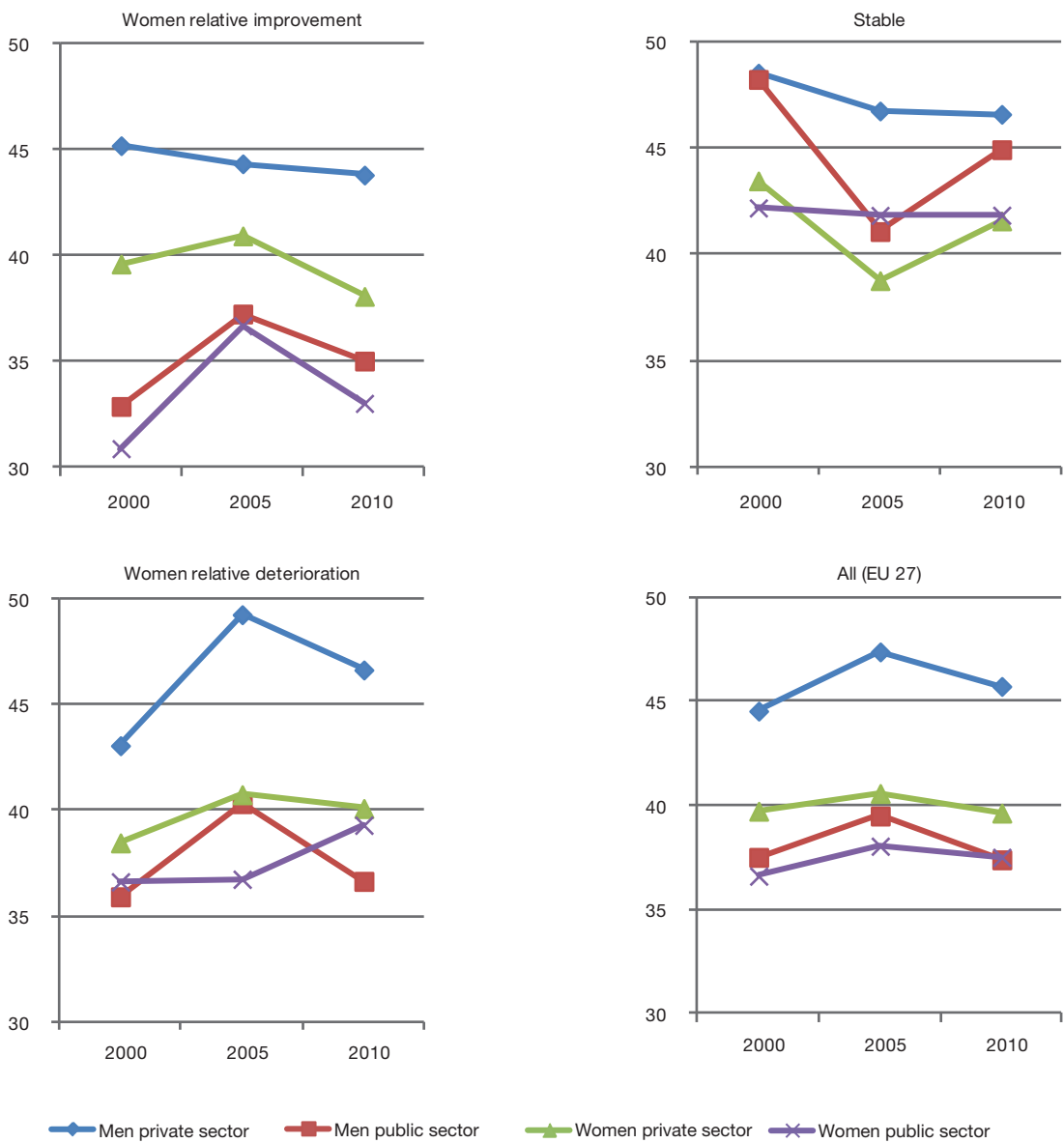
Women relative improvement group (DiD -ve Change > -1 pp)	Pattern	Stable gender gap group (DiD +ve/-ve change less than 1 pp)	Pattern	Women relative deterioration group (DiD +ve Change > +1 pp)	Pattern
Austria	M-F-	Latvia	M-F-	Cyprus	M=F+
Belgium	M-F-	Sweden	M-F-	Czech Republic	M-F-
Bulgaria	M-F-	United Kingdom	M=F+	Denmark	M-F-
Estonia	M+F=			Germany	M-F=
Finland	M-F-			Greece	M-F-
France	M+F=			Hungary	M=F+
Lithuania	M-F-			Ireland	M+F+
Poland	M-F-			Italy	M-F=
Portugal	M-F-			Luxembourg	M-F+
Romania	M-F-			Malta	M-F-
Slovenia	M+F-			Netherlands	M-F=
				Slovakia	M-F=
				Spain	M-F=

Notes: Same as for Table 11. A minus symbol in the ‘Pattern’ column indicates a reduction in work intensity while a plus symbol indicates an increase.

Although the drop in work intensity might be perceived as a positive development in terms of an improvement in job quality, against the backdrop of economic crisis this is not necessarily the case. A drop in work intensity could reflect reductions in economic demand following recession. For example, in some cases, a drop in work intensity could be associated with negative outcomes, such as involuntary reductions in working hours, or the reduced availability of work within organisations and the increased risk of redundancy.

Figure 38 explores public–private sector differences. Overall, levels of male and female work intensity in the public sector remained relatively stable between 2005 and 2010. However, in the group of countries where job quality for women had deteriorated relative to men, men in both public and private sectors experienced a relative improvement, largely due to a reduction in their work intensity.

**Figure 38:** Work intensity in public and private sectors and change in gender gap (EU27)



Notes: See Table 11 for definitions.

*Working hours quality  
(working hours mismatch)*

The EWCS asks respondents about how well working hours fit with non-paid work commitments (see Chapter 3). Men generally report greater mismatch of their private commitments with their working hours than women. This gender gap in working hours mismatch is particularly pronounced

in the UK and Ireland. Between 2005 and 2010, a similar number of countries saw a relative reduction in men's working hours mismatch compared with women, to the number of countries that experienced an opposite trend. Table 13 shows that, between 2005 and 2010 in several countries, particularly some hit most by the economic crisis (for example, Greece, Spain, and Denmark, see Table 9), there was a reduction in the mismatch of men's working

hours compared with that reported by women. This was mainly due to a greater drop in working hours mismatch among men. Again, it is unclear whether this reflects actual improvements in job quality or other factors, such as greater losses of lower quality jobs or reductions in the number of

hours of regular work or overtime offered by employers. In other countries, where women saw a relative improvement compared with men, for example, Austria, Luxembourg, and Slovenia, this generally meant an improvement on already better levels of working hours match for women.

**Table 13:** Relative change in working hours mismatch gender gap (2005–2010)

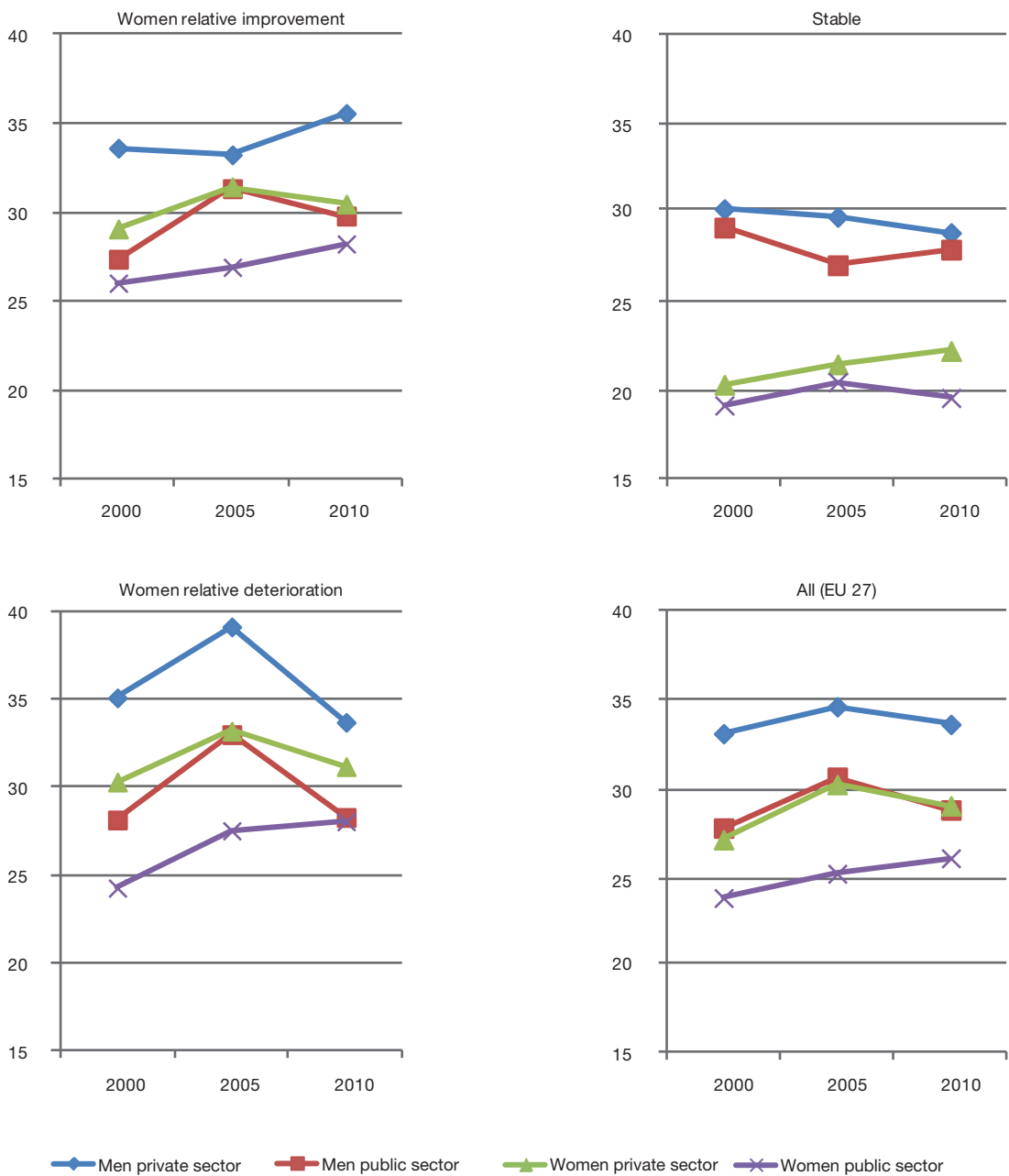
Women relative improvement group (DiD -ve Change > -1 pp)	Pattern	Stable gender gap group (DiD +ve/-ve change less than 1 pp)	Pattern	Women relative deterioration group (DiD +ve Change > +1 pp)	Pattern
Austria	M+F-	Cyprus	M-F-	Belgium	M-F=
Bulgaria	M-F-	France	M+F+	Czech Republic	M=F-
Germany	M+F+	Ireland	M-F-	Denmark	M-F=
Italy	M=F-	Portugal	M+F+	Estonia	M-F-
Latvia	M-F-	Slovakia	M-F-	Finland	M=F+
Luxembourg	M+F-	United Kingdom	M=F=	Greece	M-F-
Malta	M=F-			Hungary	M-F=
Slovenia	M+F-			Lithuania	M+F+
Sweden	M-F-			Netherlands	M-F-
				Poland	M-F-
				Romania	M-F-
				Spain	M-F+

Notes: See Table 11 for definitions.

Figure 39 confirms there was some evidence for a drop in working time quality among men and an increase among women in the public sector between 2005 and 2010. However, in the sub-group of countries where the working hours quality for women improved relative to men, men's mismatch improved in the private sector, but was

countered by an increase in mismatch in the public sector. In the countries where women experienced a relative decline in their reported work-life balance, compared with men, this was due to a reduction in male working hours mismatch in both the private and public sector, as well as an increase in mismatch for women in the public sector.

**Figure 39:** Change in working time quality in public and private sector by relative change in gender gap



Notes: See Table 11 for definitions.



## Conclusions

Aggregate changes in employment and job quality may reflect both underlying structural changes and the early impacts of the recession and austerity measures. While the EWCS data do not allow for the unscrambling of these effects, they do shed light on the possible mechanisms that may be affecting changes in job quality for women and men.

Changes in job quality that result from the recession or government austerity will not necessarily be cyclical or temporary: once economic recovery begins, longer-term structural changes may persist, and patterns of job quality will not necessarily return to those witnessed prior to the economic crisis. Changes in gender gaps, in this study's analysis of varying dimensions of job quality, demonstrate the shifting patterns of inequality within countries, and show that patterns of change are not uniform across countries. For example, in some countries a decline in the gender gap was observed based on men's positions, on aggregate, deteriorating and/or women's positions improving (for example changes in skills and discretion in Greece) or remaining stable, whereas in other countries this was due to a greater level of improvement in job quality among women compared with men. In other countries, widening gender gaps were primarily driven by deteriorating aggregate levels of job quality among women (for example changes in working hours intensity in Finland) or occurred where both male and female job quality deteriorated but the extent of this was greater among women than men.

Given the higher levels of job quality and working conditions in the public sector for both men and women, austerity programmes which aim to reduce labour costs and levels of public sector employment may have profound implications for job quality and working conditions in Europe. This may occur through shifts in the composition of the labour market between sectors, or through a deterioration of working conditions and job quality in the public sector. Although this is of significance for both men and women, the higher representation of women in the public sector increases the likelihood of a relative deterioration in job quality for women.

The evidence presented suggests that, between 2005 and 2010, women in the public sector overall experienced a moderate deterioration in their work-life balance whereas men experienced an improvement. Over the same period, men also saw an improvement in their levels of skills and discretion in the public sector, which by 2010 were similar to female public sector levels, and a reduction in work intensity. These latter findings highlight the importance of public sector employment for higher quality work for both men and women, although again it is unclear the extent to which apparent improvements in job quality reflect genuine gains or selection effects due to greater levels of destruction in lower quality jobs.



## CHAPTER 7

# Conclusions

# Conclusions

Using the data on gender differences in employment and working conditions from the fifth EWCS survey, analysis reveals the continuing importance of gender for understanding labour market and working conditions. This is evidenced in the:

- persistently high level of sectoral, occupational and workplace segregation;
- complex links between horizontal and vertical segregation (including gender of supervisors);
- patterns of association between gender segregation and dimensions of working conditions revealed in the analysis.

Equally importantly, the research has also revealed the complexities of studying these effects on working conditions by gender due to three main factors.

First, the evidence supports the notion that gender effects vary across life stages so that disaggregation by life stages provides more insights into how and why gender gaps emerge and how the relationships can be addressed between employment, working conditions and aspects of well-being.

Second, gender differences in aggregate indices of working conditions or job quality conceal variations in the individual components of the indices. For example, men often experience poor working conditions particularly related to working time and poor intrinsic job quality, even though workers might consider the higher pay and better prospects that are associated with negative aspects of male-dominated work as compensatory.

Third, the results confirm the expectation that there are many differences between countries in the pattern of gender relations overall and across key life stages. For instance, working time patterns across life stages change more in some countries than others, as do the relative levels of segregation within occupations and the gender gaps in well-being across the life stages. The various effects by gender mean that countries do not easily fit

into common classifications or groupings when all the dimensions of working conditions measured in the EWCS are considered.

Another finding of importance is the role of the public sector in enhancing overall job quality, particularly for women due to their over-representation in that sector. Men also experience higher job quality in the public sector, although this affects a smaller proportion of the male workforce. Moreover, men benefit from lower work intensity and better working time in the public compared with the private sector. For women, the public sector displays greater access to jobs, offering higher intrinsic job quality, including more skills and discretion. These findings again illustrate the complexity of making gendered comparisons.

## Key findings

### *Segregation*

The analysis of segregation in the EWCS demonstrates how subtle processes in and outside the labour market reinforce gender differences, especially in the type of work performed by women and men. This study highlights segregated outcomes at different levels in the labour market, and shows cross-national differences in the way jobs are socially constructed.

The effects of the public sector on gender segregation also vary within and between countries, but overall, this report finds that female-dominated occupations are more concentrated in the public sector. Moreover, when considering jobs within occupational categories, women are more likely to be in jobs in the public sector within any occupational group, be it predominantly public or private.

The analysis of vertical segregation shows that women are under-represented among managerial positions but their performance as supervisors, as rated by employees, tends to be at least as good as that of men. That is, employees tend to judge male and female supervisors equally and do not note significant differences in their performance.

## Time

The analysis of gender imbalances of time illustrates the greater risk among men of working extremely long hours and the concentration of women among short-hour jobs. Occupational and public sector effects again play an important role in shaping gender differences by time. Men in the private sector are at a much greater risk of working long hours while, for women, the risk of short hours is rather similar between private and public sectors. While gender differences in time spent in waged work are large, there is some convergence in preferences, in that women tend to express a desire for longer hours and men a desire for shorter hours.

## Job quality

The analysis of job quality builds on the previous work of Eurofound on measuring job quality (Eurofound, 2012b). The job quality index provided a valuable conceptual tool for exploring the relationship between gender and working conditions. The current analysis, however, suggests that some further disaggregation and refinements might be helpful for developing a full picture of gender differences. The study reveals gendered ‘trade-offs’. Women, particularly mothers, work shorter and less unsocial hours, presumably to provide time for caring, but men have greater control over their schedules. Supervision by a female boss has a positive association with enhanced job quality for all, and also with better prospects for women. Again this study finds that the public sector offers better quality jobs for both sexes, particularly higher level positions for women. Harassment at work is higher when men or women are employed in occupations dominated by the opposite sex but women face a greater risk overall, possibly linked to their more frequent contact with customers and patients in female-dominated occupations. The complex cross-national patterns of changes in job quality over life stages also reveal how conventional classifications of countries do not always apply when working conditions are examined in a comparative context.

## Well-being

On average, men have significantly higher well-being than women, but the reasons for well-being seem to be generally similar for men and women. For both men and women, well-being is found to be higher for white-collar workers and younger workers. Greater well-being is also associated with working in mixed gender occupations and with those who reported being in jobs with high intrinsic job quality or with good job prospects. Working for a boss of the opposite sex also improved well-being.

In contrast, well-being is low for those working more than 40 hours per week, with a particularly strong negative effect for women working more than 48 hours per week. It is also low for those who are working alone. For women there is an important role for life stages in shaping well-being; women who exited from paid work completely during child-rearing have lower well-being than women who remained in the workforce.

## Trends

Trends in gender differences in job quality are likely to be affected by longer-term changes on the demand and supply sides of the labour market, and by the immediate impact of the crisis which caused changes in:

- the types of jobs available;
- the composition of the employed labour force;
- working conditions.

From the EWCS data, it is not possible to establish with certainty the extent to which changes in job quality and working conditions over this period reflect the impact of recession and government austerity programmes, rather than longer-term trends.

The impacts of both recession and government austerity are unlikely to be fully included yet in the latest EWCS data. However, changes in gender gaps in the analysis of varying dimensions of job quality demonstrate the shifting patterns of inequality within countries and that patterns of change are not uniform across countries or between public and private sectors. These patterns highlight the pressing need for the continued monitoring of gender differences in job quality and working conditions in future rounds of the EWCS.

## Methodological implications

One of the difficulties in comparing working conditions by gender is that the EWCS includes only people who are employed or who are paid for work, and this excludes more women than men. From this, the problem arises that women outside the labour market, who may have distinctive employment characteristics, are not covered by the survey. This is likely to vary considerably from one country to another.

This research underlines the need for more in-depth exploration of gender differences, taking into account people outside, as well as inside, the labour force. Making samples with data from other surveys complementary

should be pursued when developing the EWCS. There is a need to develop tools to capture job quality and working conditions while investigating gender differences. Gender differences arise out of differences in gender relations and in nationally specific labour markets, welfare and family arrangements. This points to the risks of treating the sex variable as a proxy for engagement in the labour market and allows for different gendered outcomes by country. This study underlines the importance of developing a critical perspective on various self-reported measures of job quality, satisfaction or well-being and how these may be shaped by gender norms and institutional and social arrangements in a specific national context.

## Policy implications

The analysis of the gendered outcomes in relation to working conditions across the 34 countries in the EWCS touches on the full range of policy domains related to the labour market. The persistent and pervasive nature of gender inequalities in working conditions means that no single policy, or even group of policies, is likely to address the disparities highlighted here. Furthermore, the country differences demonstrate the need for country-specific responses to address particular problems and challenges. The policy pointers are considered across the four areas selected for analysis of working conditions.

### *Addressing segregation*

Measures are required to:

- ✎ open up jobs for women in male-dominated areas and for men in female-dominated occupations. Particular attention should be paid to working conditions, low paid and long or unsocial hours.
- ✎ address the undervaluation of occupations that tend to be female-dominated, reduce the penalties associated with gender segregation as well as stimulate processes of desegregation.
- ✎ address vertical segregation and similar barriers to women's progression in occupational hierarchies. The analysis demonstrates that women have a better chance of promotion in female-dominated occupations, but also that women's and men's performances in managerial positions are assessed as roughly equal.

However, a focus on the labour market alone will not reduce segregation and thus policy implications need to be conceptualised broadly, including strategies to shape girls' and boys' potential in future professional careers.

### *Addressing working time inequalities*

Measures are required to:

- ✎ limit gender inequalities on the labour market across the stages of the life course.
- ✎ promote a more even balance of time on the labour market and in the home.
- ✎ promote a change in men's behaviour in the home in order to avoid women working 'double shifts' of paid work on the labour market and unpaid work at home.
- ✎ limit women's involvement in very short-hour jobs, as these reinforce gender divisions in job quality, restrict promotion opportunities and reinforce the gender division of labour in the home.
- ✎ reduce exposure to long hours of work, particularly for men and in male-dominated jobs.

Opportunities for reconciling paid and unpaid work are clearly beneficial at particular life stages, but to avoid lifelong penalties, adjustments to working time should be preferably short term and reversible.

### *Addressing gender gaps in job quality*

Measures are required to:

- ✎ open up supervisory positions for women across the workplace, sector and occupation hierarchies.
- ✎ more closely monitor and assess poor physical environments in order to prevent poor job quality and increase well-being in male-dominated sectors and occupations, particularly in terms of work intensity, and long hours.
- ✎ promote job creation at the lower end of the job market to boost employment opportunities, while taking into account working conditions and intrinsic job quality.

### *Addressing gender gaps in well-being*

Measures are required to:

- ✎ address wider inequalities, particularly gender differences in terms of well-being.
- ✎ have wider knock-on effects in promoting well-being, including desegregation and limits to long working hours.

Some existing policies to promote equality are likely to have positive well-being effects since this research identifies improved well-being outcomes among women in work compared with those adopting a more traditional stay-at-home carer lifestyle.

## Key issues for the future

The timing of the 2010 EWCS has allowed us to capture only the beginnings of the impact of the economic crisis and austerity measures on employment and working conditions in general and in relation to changing gender positions in the labour market. Policy needs to be sensitive to the impact of the economic crisis and the public expenditure-related austerity measures on labour markets and gender relations, if better quality jobs for women decline within the public sector. Austerity may be clawing back advances achieved through social policies or services that have supported higher levels of participation or longer hours of employment for women, such as childcare support. This may act to limit the choice of jobs available to working mothers.

For men, a key issue is whether, at least for the lower skilled, some potential convergence with women's employment experiences can be expected, with more men engaged in temporary or part-time employment and receiving pay at lower rates. Social partners may wish to monitor whether any convergence between men and women or reductions in gender gaps come about through 'positive and voluntary' convergences in lifestyles and life courses. Positive convergence implies wider opportunities for women in the labour market and greater opportunities for men to pursue different mixes of work and non-wage work activities. Negative convergence implies a levelling down of the opportunities for men, particularly those who are less skilled.

However, these changes are not easily captured simply by looking at trends in gender gaps as the position of women may also be deteriorating if public sector employment shrinks or if working conditions deteriorate in female-dominated jobs in both the public and private sector. Another issue for women will be whether the prolonged crisis will lead to a reversal in the patterns of increasing integration in employment due to reduced employment opportunities and reduced childcare support or whether the squeeze on family budgets may lead to women offering more labour market time even when support for care decreases. These labour supply effects are not, however, easily monitored through the EWCS, due to its focus on workers.

Overall, the current changes in the labour market and in gender relations associated with Europe's prolonged crisis, that were only partially captured in the 2010 EWCS, will provide the backdrop for the next EWCS. The next survey will be particularly important for monitoring the extended impact of this crisis on what have been relatively well established trajectories of modest but steady convergence in men's and women's working conditions and labour market experiences in Europe. It should be stressed, therefore, that the need for monitoring and exploring gender gaps has intensified with the current crisis and austerity measures, as it is certainly no longer reasonable to assume a smooth upward transition to gender equality.

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# Annex: The European Working Conditions Survey series

The European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) is one of the few sources of information providing an overview of working conditions in Europe for the purposes of:

- assessing and quantifying working conditions of both employees and the self-employed across Europe on a harmonised basis;
- analysing relationships between different aspects of working conditions;
- identifying groups at risk and issues of concern, as well as progress made;
- monitoring trends by providing homogeneous indicators on these issues;
- contributing to European policy development on quality of work and employment issues.

The EWCS was carried out in 1991, 1995, 2000 (with an extension to the then-candidate countries in 2001 and 2002), 2005 and 2010. The growing range of countries covered by each wave reflects the expansion of the European Union. The first wave in 1991 covered only 12 countries,

the second wave in 1995 covered 15 countries, and from the third wave in 2000–2002 onwards, all 27 current EU Member States were included. Other countries covered by the survey include Turkey (in 2002, 2005 and 2010), Croatia and Norway (in 2005 and 2010), Switzerland (in 2005), and Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (in 2010).

## The fifth EWCS

The fieldwork for the fifth EWCS was carried out between January and June of 2010.<sup>18</sup> In total, 43,816 face-to-face interviews were carried out, with workers in 34 European countries answering questions on a wide range of issues regarding their employment situation and working conditions.

The target population consisted of all residents in the 34 countries aged 15 or older (aged 16 or older in Norway, Spain and the UK) and in employment at the time of the survey. People were considered to be in employment if they had worked for pay or profit for at least one hour in the week preceding the interview (ILO definition).

<sup>18</sup> Fieldwork continued until 17 July 2010 in Belgium, due to the extended sample size, and until 29 August 2010 in Norway, due to organisational issues.

The scope of the survey questionnaire has widened substantially since the first wave, aiming to provide a comprehensive picture of the everyday reality of men and women at work. Consequently, the number of questions and issues covered in the survey has expanded in each subsequent wave. By retaining a core of key questions, the survey allows for comparison over time. By using the same questionnaire in all countries, the survey allows for comparison across countries.

The main topics covered in the questionnaire for the fifth EWCS were job context, working time, work intensity, physical factors, cognitive factors, psychosocial factors, violence, harassment and discrimination, work organisation, skills, training and career prospects, social relationships, work–life balance and financial security, job fulfilment, and health and well-being.

New questions were introduced in the fifth wave to enable more in-depth analysis of psychosocial risks, workplace social innovation, precarious employment and job security, place of work, work–life balance, leadership styles, health, and the respondent's household situation. The questionnaire also included new questions addressed specifically to self-employed workers (such as financial security). Gender mainstreaming has been an important concern when designing the questionnaire. Attention has been paid to the development of gender-sensitive indicators as well as to ensuring that the questions capture the work of both men and women. Revisions to the questionnaire are developed in cooperation with the tripartite stakeholders of Eurofound.

## Sample

In each country, a multistage, stratified random sampling design was used. In the first stage, primary sampling units (PSUs) were sampled, stratifying according to geographic region (NUTS 2 level or below) and level of urbanisation. Subsequently, households in each PSU were sampled. In countries where an updated, high-quality address or population register was available, this was used as the sampling frame. If such a register was not available, a random route procedure was applied. In the fifth EWCS, for the first time, the enumeration of addresses through this random route procedure was separated from the interviewing stage. Finally, a screening procedure was applied to select the eligible respondent within each household.

The target number of interviews was 1,000 in all countries, except Slovenia (1,400), Italy, Poland and the UK (1,500), Germany and Turkey (2,000), France (3,000) and Belgium (4,000). The Belgian, French and Slovenian governments made use of the possibility offered by Eurofound to fund an addition to the initial sample size.

## Fieldwork outcome and response rates

The interviews were carried out face to face in the respondents' homes. The average duration of the interviews was 44 minutes. The overall response rate for the fifth wave was 44%, but there is considerable variation in response rates between countries, varying between 31% in Spain and 74% in Latvia.

## Weighting

Weighting was applied to ensure that results based on the fifth EWCS data could be considered representative for workers in Europe.

- **Selection probability weights (or design weights):** To correct for the different probabilities of being selected for the survey associated with household size. People in households with fewer workers have a greater chance of being selected into the sample than people in households with more workers.
- **Post-stratification weights:** To correct for the differences in the willingness and availability to participate in the survey between different groups of the population. These weights ensure that the results accurately reflect the population of workers in each country.
- **Supra-national weights:** To correct for the differences between countries in the size of their workforce. These weights ensure that larger countries weigh heavier in the EU-level results.

## Quality assurance

Each stage of the fifth EWCS was carefully planned, closely monitored and documented, and specific controls were put in place. For instance, the design phase paid close attention to information gathered in a data user survey on satisfaction with the previous wave and on future needs, and an assessment was made of how the survey could better address the topics that are central to European policymaking.

In order to ensure that the questions were relevant and meaningful for stakeholders as well as respondents in all European countries, the questionnaire was developed by Eurofound in close cooperation with a questionnaire development expert group. The expert group included members of the Foundation's Governing Board, representatives of the European Social Partners, other EU bodies (the European Commission, Eurostat and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work), international organisations (the OECD and the ILO), national statistical institutes, as well as leading European experts in the field.

## Access to survey datasets

The Eurofound datasets and accompanying materials are stored with the UK Data Archive (UKDA) in Essex, UK and promoted online via the *Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS) International*.

The data is available free of charge to all those who intend to use it for non-commercial purposes. Requests for use for commercial purposes will be forwarded to Eurofound for authorisation.

In order to download the data, you must register with the ESDS if you are not from a UK university or college. For more information, please consult the ESDS page on *how to access data*.

Once you are registered, the quickest way to find Eurofound data is open the *Catalogue search* page, select *Data Creator/Funder from the first drop-down* list and enter in the words '*European Foundation*' in the adjacent search box. Once Eurofound's surveys are listed, you can click on the name of the relevant survey for more information and download it using your user name and password.

## For more information

The overview report as well as detailed information and analysis from the EWCS are available on the Eurofound website at [www.eurofound.europa.eu](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu). This information is updated regularly.

For further queries, please contact:

Sophia MacGoris, Survey Officer, Working Conditions and Industrial Relations unit,

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound),

Wyattville Road, Loughlinstown, Dublin 18, Ireland.

Email: [smg@eurofound.europa.eu](mailto:smg@eurofound.europa.eu)

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

**Women, men and working conditions in Europe –  
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Despite much legislative progress in gender equality over the past 40 years, there are still gender gaps across many aspects of the labour market. Inequalities are still evident in areas such as access to the labour market, employment patterns and associated working conditions. This report explores gender differences across several dimensions of working conditions, examining relevant country differences, analysing the different occupational groups of both men and women, and comparing the public and private sectors. It also looks at the impact of the crisis on gender segregation in employment. Based on findings from the fifth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), conducted in 2010, the analysis offers a striking picture of women and men at work across 34 European countries today.



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