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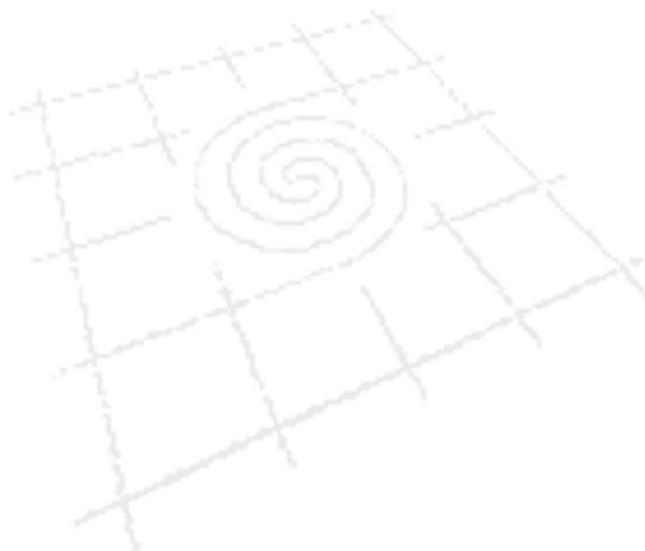
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR REGIONAL AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS  
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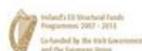


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# **Beyond the standard work model? Varieties of flexible working time organization in Europe**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Working time has been among the first aspect of the employment relation to be the object of intense regulation at the national and supra-national level. This standard regulation of working time comprised a number of elements: full-time hours, rigid working schedules, strong employers' control and clear boundaries around working time. In spite of general claims about the erosion of this model, few studies have investigated this process in a comparative and empirical perspective. The aim of this paper is to investigate the diversity of working time arrangements in European economies by applying latent class analysis to data from the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS). This analysis shows the existence of six different types of working time organization highlighting five cross-national patterns: multiple flexibilities, extended flexibility, standard, rigid and fragmented time.

## 1. Introduction

The regulation of working time has been at the centre of political and social debates since the Industrial Revolution. It has been the object of struggles and negotiations at the individual and collective levels aimed at reductions of working hours (Compson 2001; Hinrichs et al. 1985). Working time has also been subject to intensive regulation both at the national and supranational level. Nowadays, most European countries have legislations in place that limit the maximum weekly working hours and overtime (Messenger 2004). In addition, the European directive on working time sets the maximum number of normal working hours to 48 hours (although longer hours can be worked on a voluntary basis), together with regulations on paid holiday, rest periods and night work.

This has led to the emergence of a certain temporal organization of work embodied in the standard employment relation which takes place within clearly set boundaries of the 9 to 5, Monday to Friday working time. While this organisation of work was typically culturally and institutionally associated with a certain pattern of working hours, in the form of the '40 hour week', the forms in which working time is organised are conceptually distinct from the actual hours worked. In practice different working hours may be accommodated within similar organisations of time, just as similar hours may be organised differently. For instance, Rubery et al. (1998) observe that part-time work has been to a large extent integrated into the system of legal and collective regulation of standard working time in countries like the Netherlands where short hours work was developed on a large scale

Nowadays this kind of settlement appears to have been eroded by the growth of part-time work, flexible working hours, and increasingly porous boundaries between working and non-work time. In spite of this, working time remains a relatively neglected issue in that large body of comparative literature on political economy and comparative capitalism research. Few empirical studies have investigated these changes in comparative perspective, and those that do are often limited to some specific aspects of working time such as long hours (Frase and Gornick 2012), unusual hours and shift work (Richbell et al. 2011), part-time employment (O'Reilly and Fagan 1998; Smith et al. 1998), and workers' control over working time (Berg et al. 2003; Lyness et al. 2012).

Much of the broader literature comparing overall working time regimes have instead mainly focused on gender and work-life balance issues (Anxo et al. 2007; Fagan 2004; Horrell and Rubery 1991; Rubery et al. 1998). This literature also offers little theoretical clarity about the relationship between different aspects of working

time since regimes and practices, as reflected in the organisation of time, and outputs, such as number of working hours and sometimes even job tenure, are often conflated together (Chung and Tijdens 2012; Kerkhofs et al. 2008; Rubery et al. 1998).

This paper takes a different perspective which highlights the varying and contentious nature of working time and its organization at the workplace. Case study research conducted in industrial factories has shown that also within the standard paradigm, control over time needed always to be wrested from workers by employers (Heyes 1997; Rubery et al. 2006). At the same time, new research on workplaces in the high-tech sector (O'Carroll 2008; O'Riain 2001) shows that growing ability of employees to set their working hours combines with new forms of employers' control which brings about new tensions as the distinction between work and non-work, productive and unproductive time becomes unclear. In this view, the issue of who controls the working schedule is of central importance.

This paper contributes to the growing body of literature on the political economy of the workplace and workplace flexibility by analyzing the organization of working time in European economies. We examine the extent to which the standard model of working time (9 to 5, Monday to Friday) exists as the dominant forms of organisation of working time. We investigate the different models of flexible working time that have emerged at the individual and organisational levels, and whether these are controlled primarily by the individual (the employee) or the organisation (the employer). We then explore how these various forms of organisation of working time are combined within different countries into different mixes of culturally and institutionally available models of working time. Is it possible to identify cross-country patterns in the organization of working time?

## **2. The changing organization of working time and its dimensions**

Struggles around the organization and control of working time have been an essential feature of capitalism – indeed a crucial, perhaps even defining, element in the emergence of industrial capitalism was the dramatic shift from working time linked to seasonality to the time-work disciplines of the factory, the organisation and the clock (Thompson 1967). Equally striking was the settlement regarding control over time which was central within the standard employment relation that emerged as part of the process of mass industrialization and the postwar grand bargain between organized labour and capital. This relationship was defined by the agreement to work under the direction of an employer for a specified period of time. Working time was thus assumed to be fixed and continuous, while effort and wages

remained contentious (Rubery, Ward, and Grimshaw 2006). Time becomes an objective reference that could be used to regulate working relations; it is both the unit of measurement of workers' effort and of their reward.

To be sure, struggles and negotiations over the length of working time and how this time was been used remained central to the relationship between employers and employees (Compson 2001; Heyes 1997), but the duration and pace of work become increasingly subject to strict discipline imposed by employers. At the same time, the standard employment relation placed clear limits on the share of employees' life that was under the control of the employer. In this sense, the standardisation of working time in core economic sectors of advanced capitalist economies was a central dimension of a mid-century compromise based in large part on the bureaucratisation of the workplace and the growing importance of rule-based standardisation in all aspects of work (Jacoby 2004). Since standard working days were defined by hours and not output, employers could only set tasks to be performed within this time intervals. In sum, this model of working time was centred around a number of elements: formal standardization of working hours (8-hour day, 5 days week), employers' control over the amount and schedule of working hours, and clear boundaries between 'work' and 'free' time. A particular version of the 'individual unit' of working time – the 'full time employee' – was linked to a specific version of the 'collective unit' of working time – the 'working week' (Monday to Friday, 9 to 5). Even if never universal, this was a powerful organisational, cultural and legal construct. It was also significant beyond the workplace as the organisation of other spheres of life – schooling, family, civic life, leisure – was often structured around expectations as to what time was collectively available for non-work activities.

The development of this kind of settlement has always been uneven across societies (Messenger 2011), and more recently it has also been eroded by the growth of flexible work arrangements. Still, working time flexibility comprises a variety of elements from the use of variable schedules and shift systems to work on weekends and evenings/nights. Moreover, the way in which these elements are bundled together can be to varying degrees under the control of employers or employees. In spite of this, the organization of working time remains a rather unexplored topic in comparative political economy research. In the next paragraphs, we will review some of the literature on working time developments in order to shed some light on the ways in which these elements and combination of these elements are being reshaped in new forms of temporal organization of work.

According to Supiot (2001), in the last decades we have observed the emergence of two main types of working time principles in opposition to the standard time-centred employment relation: 1) the move away from the time-based relationship toward a

results-based system; 2) the tendency towards the fragmentation of working time within the time-based relationship.

The first principle refers to the shift in the regulation of the employment relation from a clear contract based on supply of a certain amount of time to a contract based on the production of a specific output. This move brings employees greater control over their working hours, but is also nevertheless driven by employers' desire to reduce the cost of on-the-job-inactivity by shifting the burden of time used inefficiently on workers (Rubery et al. 2005). Instead of focusing efforts to increase productivity on the intensification of work effort within a given set of working hours, this approach allows the worker significant autonomy over how and when the work is done. However, there are in principle no limits over the number of hours that can be worked or when they are worked in the effort to meet the deadline. Formally free time becomes now at the disposal of the employer, while for this category of workers, the demarcation between private and work life becomes increasingly blurred. Working time becomes thus potentially boundaryless, and involves the expansion of the amount of working time associated with each 'unit' of 'full-time employee' work. It also implies the externalization to employees of everyday control over the ways in which time is used. Nevertheless, employers' control over time is also intensified by the use of deadlines and other organizational devices that guarantee that output is delivered on time. If staff cannot always work on full productivity as envisioned by the deadline, then they might have to complete the task outside contractual hours without additional payment. Previous research highlights that this form of organization of working time is particularly widespread in high-tech and informational industries relying on more self-regulated labour organization, where the individual or the team are essentially responsible for managing workloads (O'Riain 2001)

The second trend refers to the fragmentation of working time in smaller and discontinuous units to be allocated to the discretion of the employer. If within the standard employment relation, employers were forced by the use of continuous working days to purchase labour in chunks of standard time regardless of production needs, fragmented time is explicitly directed at removing unproductive time (Rubery et al. 2006: 126). Accordingly, the standard units of 'full-time employee' work can now be composed of individuals working separate blocks of hours or multiple persons working different combinations of hours. A typical working time arrangement which falls within this category is the use of shift systems and the development of more complex systems of schedule rotation. In principle, this development appears to be linked to new methods of flexible production (just-in-

time, lean production) and relies on greater employers control over working schedules (Messenger 2011).

A third tendency can also be identified which intersects with the others previously mentioned. This is the tendency towards the extension of working time beyond the standard 8-hour, 5 days week time unit. This relates to the expansion of working hours into evenings, nights and weekends. Perhaps even more fundamentally, models of working time organisation also vary significantly in the degree to which the boundary between working time and private life is clearly defined and impermeable or is porous, with employees regularly contacted about work outside 'normal' working hours. The first dimension relates these changes to the definition of the individual unit of working time – the 'full time employee'. This third dimension relates instead to the unit of 'collective working time' – that is, the 'working week' which defined certain parts of the week as working time and others as non-working time for the society as a whole. Standard time was devised as to imply the synchronization of workers' life by leaving 'free' time for social life at night, on weekends and during paid holidays. In this view, this third tendency has the potential not only of restructuring the temporalities of work but also to bring about major changes in the organization of the wider society by bringing about the end of any distinction between social and unsociable hours (Supiot 2001).

In our analysis we examine the configuration of working time along these three dimensions, looking first at how they are re-organised into different models of working time for individuals, and then at how these individual level models combine together into national mixes or regimes of working time organisation.

### **3. Data and method**

The data used in this analysis is from the Fourth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) conducted by the European Foundation in 2005. The EWCS contains detailed information on a wide variety of aspects relating to the organization of working time for thirty European economies. This analysis focuses on sixteen European countries that are generally considered representative of the variety of European capitalisms (Esping-Andersen 1990; Hall and Soskice 2001): Finland, France, Denmark, Hungary, Ireland, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom<sup>1</sup>.

**Table 1 Dimensions and variables**

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Variables</b>
1. Standardization of working schedule (amount of work)	a. Work the same number of hours every day b. Work the same number of days every week c. Shift work	a. Sameh (yes/no) b. Samed (yes/no) c. Shifts (yes/no)
2. Extension of working time (amount of work and allocation of wh)	d. Work at night or evenings e. Work on weekends f. Overtime	d. Nightwork (yes/no) e. Weekend (yes/no) f. Overtime (yes/no)
3. Control over working time	g. Setting of working time arrangements h. Work fixed start and finishing times	g. Wtset (1=entirely determined by employer; 2=partly or entirely set by the employee) h. Fixtime (yes/no)
4. Porousness of working time	i. Contacted outside normal working hours	i. Contact (yes/no)

Table 1 reports the dimensions and indicators selected to develop the typology of working time arrangements. In order to develop a comprehensive typology, we exploit the full range of information on working time contained in the EWCS (working hours and days, shift work, overtime, unusual hours, etc). These indicators can be subsumed under four overarching dimensions representing elements of the regulation of working time: standardization of the working schedule, extension of working time, control over the ways in which working time is organized, and the porousness between work and non-work time. For ease of interpretation, each indicator has been transformed in a dichotomous variable (yes/no).

### *Latent class analysis*

In this paper, we use latent class analysis (LCA) to map the different types of working time arrangements existing in European economies. Latent class modelling

was originally introduced by Lazarsfeld and Henry (1968) as a way of formulating latent attitudinal variables from dichotomous survey items. The basic idea of the latent class model is that the observed association between a set of categorical variables, regarded as an indicator of an unobserved latent concept, are completely accounted for by a small number of categories or latent classes (local independence). (McCutcheon 1987).

The latent class model represents a typological rather than a dimensional approach. LCA enables the researcher to identify a set of mutually exclusive latent classes (types) that account for the distribution of cases that occur within a crosstabulation of discrete variables. Although LCA can be used in causal analysis (Hagenaars and McCutcheon 2002), the relationship between the manifest variables is normally interpreted as symmetrical (McCutcheon 1987). For instance, in our analysis the indicator variables are considered parts of a common system (e.g. workplace or working time regime) shaping the set of working time arrangements in use. Thus, for instance, in organizations with strong employers control on working hours, one is also likely to find large shares of employees working on fixed schedules. At the same time, the nature of the relationship between the latent and manifest variables is not deterministic, but probabilistic. In other words, the fact that an individual belongs to a certain latent class does not absolutely determine his response pattern but does enhance the probability of obtaining a certain score. Thus, for instance, if an individual works in an organization with strong employers' control, he will be more likely than not to work on a fixed schedule. This is what is meant when it is said that the latent classes making up the latent variable can be interpreted as pure or ideal types (Hagenaars and Halman 1989).

Given the paucity of the comparative studies on working time, we adopted an exploratory approach by progressively fitting models with an increasing number of classes. In fitting the models, we did not test a specific set of hypotheses regarding the structure of working time but did use our conceptualisation of the dimensions of working time (as outlined above) to define the variables included and to interpret the results. The number of latent classes was determined on the basis of a number of indices available to assess model fit in LCA (McCutcheon 1987). The most widely used approach resorts to the likelihood ratio chi-squared statistic ( $L^2$ ) to assess the extent to which the model's estimate for the expected frequencies differs from the corresponding observed frequencies. However, in situations involving sparse data, which are rather common even with relatively few items and large samples, the assumptions under which this test statistic follows a chi-squared distribution may be violated. For this reason, this information was supplemented by commonly used criteria in statistical decision theory as the Bayesian Information Criteria (BIC) and

the percent of correctly classified cases. Once identified an appropriate model, we proceeded to interpret the latent classes on the basis of the conditional probabilities. We used Latent Gold to estimate the parameters of the model we fit (Vermunt and Magidson 2005).

## **4. Results**

This section starts by describing the dominant models of working time at the individual/organisational level present in European economies according to the results of the latent class analysis. We then look at how these models combine in different structures of organization of working time at the country level. Countries vary in terms of both the particular working time models that exist within the economy and how widespread these models are.

### *Models of working time organization*

The results of this analysis show that in each country there are between four and six different classes of working time arrangements. Those different models can be subsumed under 6 broader types of working time: standard, extended standard, standard shifts, bounded flexibility, extended flexibility, and flexible shifts (table 2).

The three *standard* models of working time arrangements (S, SE, SS) share a number of characteristics: stable working schedules (work the same hours and days per week), clearly set boundaries between work and private time, and the prevalence of employer control over the way working time is set.

The main difference between these three models lies in the use of unusual hours and overtime. Employees within the standard model work according to rigid schedules which are unilaterally fixed by the employers with little space for negotiations. On the positive side, boundaries within work and private spheres are clearly set not only because workers are unlikely to be contacted outside working hours but also because work takes place within clearly set intervals of time.

**Table 2 Standard extended working time model**

Working time models	Latent classes	Variables								
		sameh	samed	shifts	night	weekend	overtime	fixtime	wtset	contact
Standard (S)	Standard	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	employer	no
	Standard	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	employee	no
Extended Standard (SE)	Standard extended	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	employer	no
	Standard extended	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	yes	employee	no
	Standard extended overtime	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	employer	yes/no
	Standard extended overtime	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	employee	yes
	Standard extended overtime	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no	employee	no
	Standard weekend	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes	employer	
Standard shifts (SS)	Standard extended shifts	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	employer	no
	Standard extended overtime shifts	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	employer	no
	Standard extended shifts	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	employer	no
Bounded Flexibility (FB)	Flexible	no	no/yes	no	no	no	no	no	employee	no
	Flexible	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	employer	yes
	Flexible weekend	no	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	employee	no
	Flexible weekend	no	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	employer	no
	Flexible overtime	no	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	employee	yes
Extended Flexibility (FE)	Flexible extended	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	no	employee	yes
	Flexible extended overtime	no	no/yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	employee	yes
	Flexible extended overtime	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	employer	no
Flexible shifts (FS)	Flexible extended shifts	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	employer	yes
	Flexible extended shifts	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	no	employer	yes
	Flexible extended overtime shifts	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	employer	yes
	Flexible extended overtime shifts	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	employer	yes

The extended version differs from this model in that working time is stretched beyond the traditional 8-hour per day, Monday to Friday, during daylight. Employees within this model are subject to different degrees of extension of the working schedule across countries, from working only on weekend (Hungary) to working overtime, on weekends and during evening/night hours (Finland, Greece, Ireland, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, the Netherlands and Switzerland) (Table 3). In four countries (Italy, Norway, Greece and the Netherlands), employees appear to retain a certain control over working hours. However, this is offset by the fact that they work on rigidly fixed schedules. Hence, the extended standard model of working time retains the traditional trade-offs around the scheduling of working time but represents a significant shift away from the restriction of collective working time to the ‘standard week’.

**Table 3 The standard extended working time model, 2005**

<b>Forms of extensions</b>	<b>Control</b>	
	<b>Employer</b>	<b>Employee</b>
Weekend work	HU	
Weekend and evening/night work	FR, UK, ES	IT
Weekend, evening/night, overtime	FI,DK,PT,IE, CH	NO,GR,NL

The flexible working hour models are characterised by variable working schedules, and are generally associated with greater control on the side of the employee over the way in which working time is organized.

In the bounded flexibility model, working schedules are subject to change, but working time is clearly delimited and normally takes place within the standard working week (8 hours, 5 days a week). Although some forms of extension of the working schedule can be encountered in few countries (Germany, Poland and Denmark), flexibility takes places between clearly set boundaries and concerns only the allocation of working time (Table 4). This model is most commonly associated with part-time work. This model ‘decomposes’ the individual unit of working time but, in most countries, contains those individual units within the ‘collective unit’ of the standard working week. Accordingly, this is not, in general, a model for delivering additional working time to employers beyond the limits of the standard week, but it does contribute to employers’ ability to relocate labour according to production needs

**Table 4 The bounded flexibility model, 2005**

<b>Forms of extensions</b>	<b>Control</b>	
	<b>Employer</b>	<b>Employee</b>
None	NO	FR, DE, FI, HU, IE, CH, IT, ES, NL, SE, UK
Weekend work	DE	PO
Overtime		DK

The extended flexibility models lies at the opposite end of the end of the continuum to the standard work model. Changing working schedule and the

extensive use of overtime and unusual hours characterize this model, which is generally associated with very long hours (>48h). Individuals within this working time arrangement are also most likely to be contacted outside of working hours, highlighting a high degree of porousness between work and non work time. However, particularly compared to the extended standard model, employees exercise a stronger control over their working hours. Still, this ability does not necessarily lead to positive workers' outcomes as workers within this model tend to work the longest working hours (>48h) and very de-standardized working schedules. All the countries analyzed show the presence of an extended flexibility class, although of very different size, generally small in Southern European and Scandinavian economies – with the exception of Denmark – and larger in Continental and liberal ones.

A distinct model of organization of shift work can be identified for the standard and flexible working time classes. Whereas the use of extended work schedules (weekend, night and evening work) and employer control over working hours are to some extent inherent to the nature itself of shift work, there are pronounced country differences with regard to the use of flexible or standard systems of shift work. The fixed and regular work patterns characterizing the standard shift model become more complicated within the flexible one, with individuals rotating according to varying and complex working schedules. This model appears to be predominant in Scandinavian and liberal economies, and is often accompanied by the use of overtime (Table 5).

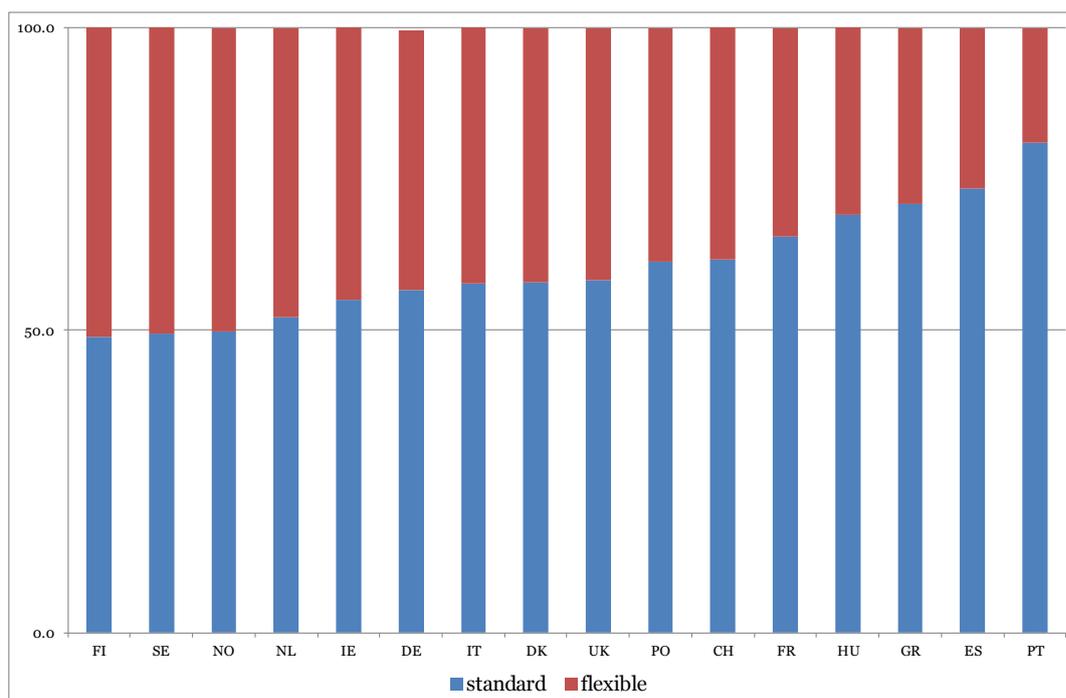
**Table 5 Shift work models, 2005**

<b>Forms of extensions</b>	<b>Working schedule</b>	
	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Flexible</b>
Weekend and evening/night work	CH, DE, HU, PO, PT, IT	NO, NL
Weekend, evening/night, overtime	HU	FI, UK, IE, SE

### Country comparison: flexibility, control and models

In almost all the countries analyzed the majority of employees work according to rigid working schedules (Figure 1). Standard working time arrangements are more likely to be encountered in Southern European (Greece, Portugal and Spain) and CEE countries. It is among the Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Finland and Norway) that we find the largest incidence of flexible working time, while the three liberal economies (Ireland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom) present a more balanced picture with flexible and standard working time classes of approximately the same size. Finally, continental economies are not easily grouped together as they position themselves along the whole flexibility spectrum, from more standard France to more flexible Germany.

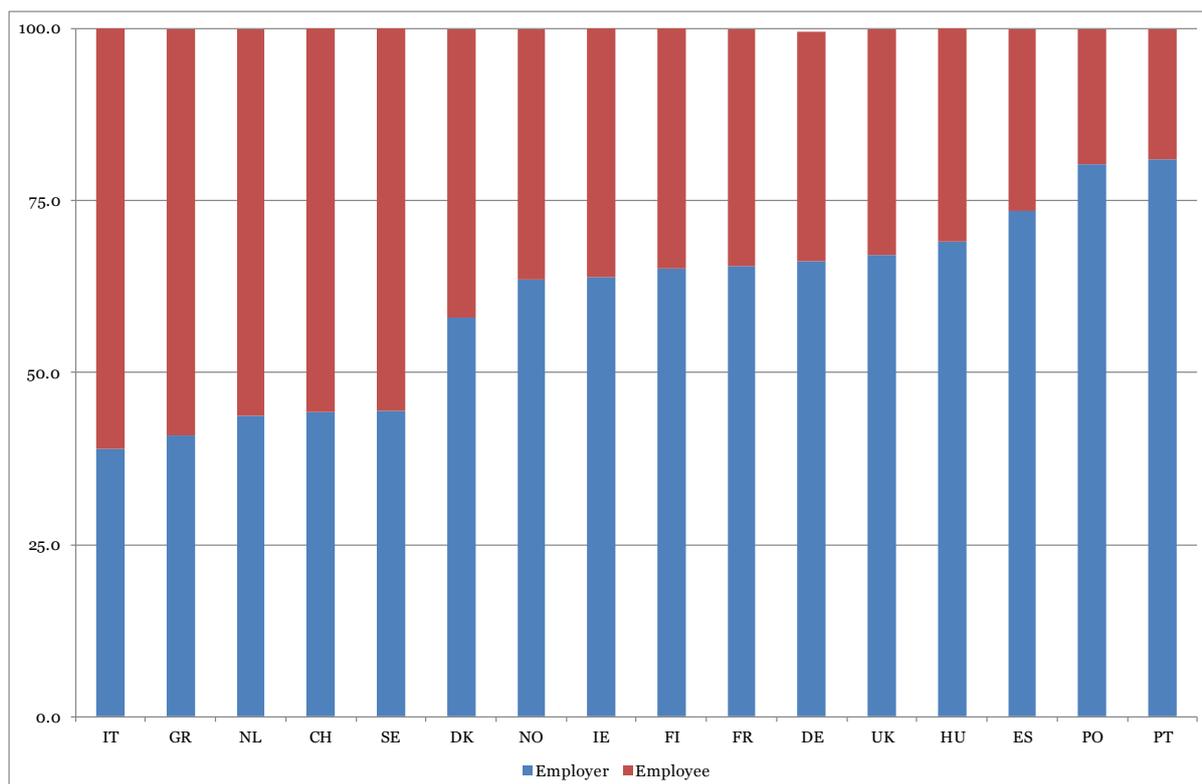
**Figure 1 Standard and flexible working time by country, 2005**



In most countries, the organization of working time remains firmly in the hands of employers (figure 2). In eleven of the sixteen countries analyzed, working hours are largely fixed by employers with little possibility for workers to alter their working schedule. This is especially the case of some Southern European (Portugal, Spain) and CEE countries (Poland, Hungary) where employer led models account for as much as 70-80% of all working time arrangements. Workers' ability to set their

working schedule is instead most extensive in five European economies: the Netherlands, Italy, Greece, Switzerland and Sweden. In Italy and Greece, and a certain extent in Switzerland, this is related to the presence of large shares of self-employment. Control over working time appears to have different meaning across countries due to the different institutional context in which they are used.

**Figure 2 Forms of control over working time by country, 2005**



Each working time model shows the prevalence of one form of control. In the standard (S) and the two shifts models (SS, FS), working hours are unilaterally set by the employers, while the flexible models (FB, FE) allow employees' greater ability to control their working hours. Only the extended standard model is organized around different forms of control across countries. National specificities and regulations may account for differences within these types with regard to the prevalence of one or the other form of control.

**Table 6 Working time models by country and form of control, 2005**

Working time model	control	countries
Standard	employer	FR,DE,FI,UK,IE, DK,PT,ES,CH,NO,NL, GR,ES,IT,PO,HU,SE
Extended Standard	employer	FR,UK,ES,FI,DK,PT,IE,HU
	employee	IT,NO,GR,NL,CH, SE
Standard shifts	employer	DE,PT,CH,PO,HU, IT
Bounded Flexibility	employer	NO, DE
	employee	FR,DE,FI,UK,IE, CH,IT,ES,HU,SE, PO, DK, NL
Extended Flexibility	employer	PO
	employee	FR,DE,NL,FI,UK,IE, DK,PT,ES,CH,NO,GR,ES, IT,PO,HU,SE, CH
Flexible shifts	employer	NO, NL, FI, UK, IE, SE

*The structure of working time: Varieties of flexibilities*

The structure of national working time arrangements doesn't seem to follow regional patterns or prevailing regime typologies (welfare, variety of capitalisms). However, looking at the distribution of working time models across countries, we can identify 5 different patterns in the structuring of working time: multiple flexibilities, extended flexibility, fragmented, rigid and standard working time (Table 7).

1. *Multiple flexibilities*: within this model, which is present in three Nordic countries (Finland, Norway and Sweden) only a minority of workers work standard working hours. Flexible working time comes in a variety of forms and splits almost evenly across the three flexible types enhancing individuals' choice over working time. Employees within this model also enjoy a higher freedom to determine the duration and timing of their work. However, this ability comes at a price as the previously clearly demarcated boundary between paid and free time wanes. Indeed, workers in these countries are most likely to be contacted outside normal working hours<sup>2</sup>.
2. *Extended flexibility*: working time within this model is structured similarly to the multiple flexibility one with a prevalence of flexible hours and employees' control. However, extended flexibility represents a higher portion of the overall flexible working time with many employees putting in extra hours and working overtime and evening hours. This system leads to intensive workers' effort over extended periods of time since workers are required to work until tasks are completed and

results accomplished (Jill Rubery et al. 2005). This model is present in the United Kingdom, Ireland and the Netherlands.

3. *Fragmented time*: in this model the de-standardization of working time moves in the direction of the fragmentation of working time. The structure of working time arrangements is characterized by the presence of large classes of bounded flexibility and/or shift work. Accordingly, labour is deployed in units of discontinuous time and employees work fragmented and variable schedules
4. *Rigid time*: in Switzerland, Portugal and Greece, working time is prevalently organized around rigid and regular schedules that are unilaterally set by the employer. Even though working time is highly predictable, it is also subject to employers' efforts to expand the period of the day/week when they can ask employees to work and schedule it when it is most productive for them. This model shows the presence of large classes of extended working time. In particular, flexibility within this model occurs only as extended flexibility.
5. *Standard working time*: large portions of standard working hours characterize the organization of working time in France, Denmark, Spain, Germany and Poland. In these countries, the demarcation between work and non-work time is clearly set, with work delimited within the normal working hours. However, also within this model we can observe tensions and pressures toward the de-standardization of working time which often move in the direction of the extension (France, Denmark and Spain) and fragmentation of working time (Germany and Poland). It is among these countries we find the largest share of employers' control over working hours.



**Table 7 The structure of working time by country, 2005**

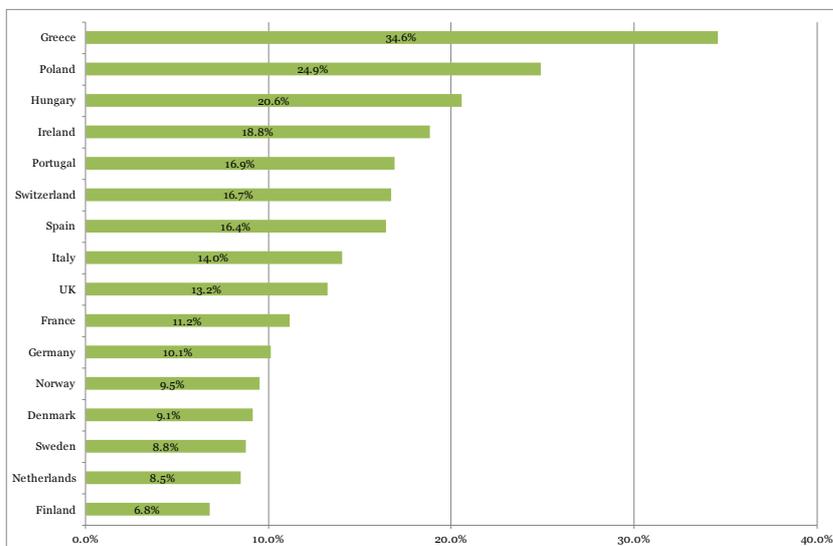
	Multiple flexibility			Extended flexibility			Fragmented		Rigid			Standard				
	FI	NO	SE	UK	IE	NL	IT	HU	CH	PT	GR	FR	DK	ES	DE	PO
Standard	27.7	26.8	25.2	37.4	35.4	31.8	32.3	35	26	54.8	31.5	44.6	40.3	39.9	41.7	43.5
Extended standard	21.2	23	24.2	20.9	19.7	20.4	18.7	13.6	17.5	20.5	30	20.9	17.7	33.6		
Standard shifts							6.7	20.5	18.3	5.7	9.4				15	17.9
Bounded flexibility	18.5	14.2	14.5	14.5	12.2	12.2	22.3	15.4				12.7	18.4	8.6	19.5	6.9
Extended flexibility	16.4	13.5	16.8	18.4	24	23.5	20.1	15.6	38.3	19.02	29.1	21.8	23.6	17.8	23.4	31.7
Flexible Shifts	16.3	22.5	19.3	8.8	8.8	12										

## 5. Conclusions

This paper contributes to the literature on the political economy of the workplace and workplace flexibility by developing a typology of working time arrangements in use in European economies. This research shows that the use of rigid schedules and employers control over working time remains, with few exceptions (Sweden and the Netherlands), the predominant form of organization of working time in European economies.

Flexibility is often equated with the ability of workers to influence choices determining when and for how long they engage in work-related tasks (Hill et al. 2008; Lyness et al. 2012). Indeed, this analysis has shown that working time flexibility is in most countries associated with greater employees' control over their working schedules. However, the presence in all the countries of an extended flexibility profile associated with very long hours and tenuous boundaries between work and free time shows that there might be hidden trade-offs in such an arrangement. Today in Europe, there seems to be two models of flexible working time. The Scandinavian model of multiple flexibilities which enhances choice but erodes private life, and the liberal model of extended flexibility which leads to many workers putting in a high number of hours and being overworked. Indeed, the portion of employees that work very long hours is relatively high in Ireland (18.8%) and the United Kingdom (13.2%), especially if compared to Scandinavian economies showing very small shares of between 7 and 9 percent (Figure 3). Accordingly, employees' control over working schedule cannot be automatically equated with greater choice or autonomy.

**Figure 3 Percentage of employees working long hours (> 48 hours)\***



\*Source: EWCS, 2005

Further investigation is necessary to assess the impact of these new forms of working time organization. In particular, future research should focus on the ways in which different working time arrangements are combined with other aspects of the employment relation and the workplace such as job security, pay and compensation, work organization and employee representation.

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## 6. References

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<sup>1</sup> Only individuals declaring that they were at the time of the survey in employment, on leave or working in a family business were included in the analysis.

<sup>2</sup> The percentage of workers who is never contacted outside working hours is among the lowest in Europe: 26.7% in Sweden, 33.6 in Norway and 34.6 in Finland, compared to figures of around 80% in countries such as France, Greece or Italy.