

# Working-time capabilities during economic austerity across Europe

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***ESRC Seminar Series: Work-Life Balance in the Recession  
and Beyond***

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## Presentation draws on:

- ❑ Fagan, C. and P. Walthery (2011) *Individual working-time adjustments between full-time and part-time working in European firms* Social Politics, v18(2) Summer 2011
- ❑ Fagan, C.; Lyonette, C.; Smith, M.; Saldaña-Tejeda, A. (2012) *The influence of working time arrangements on work-life integration or 'balance': A review of the international evidence'* ILO Conditions of Work and employment series no 32 (Geneva, International Labour Office)  
<http://www.ilo.org/travail/info/working/lang-en/index.htm>
- ❑ Fagan, C.; Norman, H.; Smith, M. and M. C. González Menéndez, M.C. (2013) *In search of good quality part-time employment*, ILO Conditions of Work and Employment series no 43 (Geneva, International Labour Office), forthcoming on the ILO web site

# Presentation Outline

- ❑ **Working-time Capabilities & Working-time arrangements**
- ❑ **Gender & occupational differences in working-time arrangements**
- ❑ **Impact on family & personal time - 'Work Life Balance'**
- ❑ **The 2008 recession - working-time under austerity**
- ❑ **Conclusions: Future scenarios**

# Working-time Capabilities & Working-time arrangements

- ❑ **Application of Sen's capability framework: Individual's capacity/freedom/ability to change their working time patterns**
- ❑ **Conversion factors: public policies, social norms, workplace practices, personal socio-economic situation...**
  - Foregrounds options from which the choice is made
  - Capabilities vary between individuals & as circumstances change
  - Can be used to embed a life course perspective in working-time debates
- ❑ **Individual capability emerges through articulation of organizational setting with their household-level circumstances**

**Example: The 'right to request' policy** is a social conversion factor which create options for individual WT adjustments with current employer in same/similar job

- Superior (more secure) than job search on open market
- Women...men as carers...older workers...youth transitions into employment...

# Working-time arrangements - dimensions

## Volume of hours worked

- Long full-time (over 48 hours)
- Standard full-time (36-48 hours)
- Reduced full-time (30-35 hours)
- Standard part-time (20-30 hours)
- Marginal part-time (below 20 hours)

## Schedule: When?

- Largely within daytime, weekdays?
- Exposure to non-standard work rhythms (evenings, nights, weekends, rotating shifts...)?

## Schedule: Type of flexibility?

- *Fixed hours*
- *Employer-led flexibility* (employer can and does vary hours, e.g. changes to rotas, extra hours)
- *Worker-led flexibility* (flexitime, discretion to vary start/finish times, options to work from home, etc)

# Working-time Arrangements – causes

## **Employers' requirements for operational flexibility**

- Extended operating hours of the 24/7 global economy
- Regular and irregular peaks in labour demand over day, week, season
- Work intensification /productivity gains/removing 'unproductive' time

## **Workers collective & individual negotiations for flexibility to meet their needs**

- To better integrate employment with other parts of life
- Increased employment of women and pressures of the 'double shift' of a job and domestic work
- Also students, older workers...eldercare as well as childcare

## **Technology eroding the boundary between 'work time' and 'free time', especially for information roles (managers, professionals, clerical)**

# Working-time Arrangements – trends

## ❑ Erosion of ‘standard’ working hours

- Dispersal into evenings & week-ends (‘unsocial’)
- Increases in part-time employment
- Increases in variable and unpredictable schedules e.g. annualised hours
- Unpaid overtime in white collar work
- Some positive innovations e.g. ‘flexitime’, some types of part-time work, some types of remote working/working from home

## ❑ Rise in insecure contracts – temporary, agency work, ‘zero hours’ contracts, self-employment

## ❑ Standard work hours for some workers but others have extended full-time hours...or fragmented schedules...or unpredictable and insecure arrangements

# Gender & occupational differences

- ❑ **Gender segregation – different jobs, different types of schedules**
  - Women in 'social care', service & clerical jobs – health, education, personal services. Often part-time, fragmented schedules
  - Men prevail in industry, construction & management. Often long full-time, shifts etc.
  
- ❑ **Men do more paid work hours, women do more work hours in total when add domestic work**
  
- ❑ **Rapid increase in women's employment & 'dual-earner' couples across EU27....also 'no-earner' couples**

# Occupational differences in working-time

## **'Top jobs' - managers & some professionals**

- Long hours common but in conjunction with autonomy, discretion and self-determination (and higher pay)
- Part-time employment is better quality than at lower occupational levels
- Technological 'spillover' of job (e.g. smart phone) – autonomy but also difficult to maintain boundary to work day ('downtime')

## **Manual jobs**

- Long hours in some jobs...others short part-time underemployment
- Rotating shifts, short notice variation to meet employers' demands...
- Less autonomy and lower pay

# Impact on family & personal time – ‘Work Life Balance’

- ❑ **Time squeezed ‘dual earner’ households raising children**
  
- ❑ **Socio-economic inequalities among ‘dual earners’**
  - Affluent ‘dual earner’ managerial/professional couples
  - Time squeezed & low income of couples in intermediate/manual jobs
  
- ❑ **Long and unsocial hours are bad for health (physical effects as well as stress)**
  
- ❑ **Those who work long or unsocial hours are least satisfied with the quality of their family time & ‘work-life balance’**

# Working-time under austerity

- ❑ **2008 economic crisis → job losses & increased insecurity, reduced mobility, pay cuts, growth in involuntary part-time jobs, in temporary work, informal work...**
  
  - ❑ **Some decline in average working hours (reduced paid overtime, short-time working schemes)....but also increases in unpaid overtime & in work intensity...**
  
  - ❑ **Country variations in trends**
    - ❑ E.g. The gap between collective agreements working week & average actual working hours diverged less in some countries (eg Poland) than others (eg UK, DE)
- ⇒ **More acute in some countries than others – role of collective bargaining, policy & social actors**

# The UK – indicators from Workplace Employment Relations Survey 2004-11

- ❑ **Employees - heavier workloads and reduced pay**
  - ❑ 33% report wage cut, 19% paid overtime limited
  - ❑ 29% workload ↑
  - ❑ 19% work reorganised
  - ❑ 40% felt job insecure (33% in 2004)
  
- ❑ **Employers have introduced the following changes:**
  - ❑ 76% made at least 1 change in response to recession
  - ❑ 42% introduced wage freeze/cuts
  - ❑ 28% frozen vacant posts, 21% postponed workforce expansion plans
  - ❑ 24% introduced changes in work organisation
  - ❑ 15% ↓ basic hours, Shift work ↑ (32%), Annual hours ↑ (7%) , Zero hours ↑ (8%)

# Conclusions: Future scenarios

- ❑ **What we can be confident about over next 15 to 35 years (to 2050)**
  - Children and a growing number of older persons to care for
  - Living longer, working to a later age
  - More diverse workforce – women, migrants, young people, older workers
  - Continued technological erosion of the work day boundary
  
- ❑ **What is likely – widening inequalities in WLB and capabilities**
  - Reducing high levels of unemployment will be difficult
  - Income inequalities widen
  - Persistent socio-economic inequalities in working-time arrangements esp. between managerial/professional strata and manual jobs
  
- ❑ **What is contingent – policy interventions and bargaining outcomes?**
  - To regulate working hours, to reduce working-time inequalities, to promote work/family reconciliation

## **'Work Life Balance' fairness and social justice during recession and economic austerity**

**The University of Manchester, April 11<sup>th</sup> 2013, 10-4**

- Recession, work-time and Work Life Balance: class inequalities in the UK**  
*Tracey Warren, University of Nottingham*
  
- Work Life Balance and Diversity**  
*Mustafa Ozbilgin, University of Brunel*
  
- Work Life Balance policies and the increase in precarious work arrangements**  
*Jeanne Fagnani, CNRS, Paris*
  
- Austerity measures and access to justice following pregnancy/parenting**  
*Grace James, University of Reading*
  
- Discussants**
  - A European policy perspective** - *Greet Vermeylen, EuroFound*
  - A workplace policy perspective** – *speaker to be confirmed*