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Women and part-time work in Europe

Frédéric SALLADARRÉ* and Stéphane HLAIMI**

Abstract. *This article examines female part-time employment in 23 European countries, distinguishing between “short” and “long” part-time employment. The short form, defined as less than 20 hours per week, is associated with the youngest and oldest age groups, slight disability, a higher number of children, lower skill levels, and employment in community, social and personal services. Although the incidence of part-time employment varies considerably across countries, long part-time employment is generally more widespread than short part-time employment, albeit with matching cross-country variations in the incidence of the two types. This suggests that they are complementary, rather than substitutes for one another.*

In most European countries, the share of part-time employment has been growing for several decades.¹ On average, it increased from about 13 per cent of total employment in 1985 to nearly 17 per cent in 2011 (OECD, 2012). Despite wide variations in its incidence across countries, part-time employment appears to have been the main source of job creation since the early 1990s (Garibaldi and Mauro, 2002).

Part-time employment can be a means of promoting labour market flexibility (Bollé, 1997). The adjustment variable is then working time. On the one hand, it can help employers to introduce new forms of work organization and respond to market demands, say, by lengthening the span of opening or operating hours (Corral and Isusi, 2004). On the other hand, part-time employment can help workers re-enter – or progressively exit – the labour market in times of high unemployment (O’Reilly and Bothfeld, 2002). Lastly, it can also make it easier for them to reconcile paid employment and family responsibilities (Laurijssen and Glorieux, 2012).

* IUT-University of Rennes 1, CREM-CNRS, LEMNA, Rennes, France, email: frederic.salladarre@univ-rennes1.fr. ** School of Social Sciences, University of Manchester, email: hlaimi@gmail.com. The authors wish to thank the two anonymous reviewers who commented on the original draft of this article and Patrick Bollé for his helpful contribution to its finalization.

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¹ This article uses the OECD’s (2012) definition of part-time employment, i.e. less than 30 hours per week.

The characteristics and determinants of part-time employment have been investigated in numerous studies, based on a variety of approaches.² Part-time workers are predominantly women, who accounted for some 80 per cent of such employment in Europe in 2011 (OECD, 2012); they are also comparatively young and typically concentrated in service industries with conditions of employment and work organization that differ from those typical of full-time employment. With the exception of Blank's (1990) findings on the United States, the hourly pay of workers in part-time employment is consistently found to be lower than that of their full-time counterparts.³ Indeed, part-time workers typically enjoy less favourable conditions of employment, not only in regard to pay, but also in terms of training opportunities and career prospects, especially for promotion to senior positions (OECD, 2010; Anxo et al., 2007).⁴ Part-time employment can also translate into reduced social protection entitlements in regard to unemployment, pension, health-care and family benefits. Even when they enjoy employment stability, part-time workers covered by contributory social protection systems contribute less on account of their shorter hours and may therefore have to depend on benefits provided under social assistance schemes (Vielle and Walthery, 2003). Some studies have also investigated whether part-time employment acts as a stepping stone to full-time employment, but they generally find that few part-time workers actually transit to full-time employment.⁵

Although part-time workers make up a heterogeneous category, a broad distinction has been drawn between voluntary and involuntary part-time employment. Workers who voluntarily choose part-time employment tend to enjoy better terms of employment and working conditions than those who work part-time for want of alternative employment.⁶ Yet this distinction suffers from several limitations. First, differences in country-level definitions of voluntary versus involuntary part-time employment tend to limit its value for international comparative analysis (OECD, 2010).⁷ Moreover, a worker's clas-

² See, for example, OECD (2010 and 2012), Buddelmeyer, Mourre and Ward (2008) and Jaumotte (2003), on the OECD countries; Anxo et al. (2007), on 21 European countries; Bielinski, Bosch and Wagner (2002), on 16 European countries; Rosenfeld and Birkelund (1995), on nine OECD countries; Benoit-Guilbot and Cléménçon (2001), on nine European countries; Yerkes and Visser (2006), on the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Germany; Booth and Van Ours (2010), on the Netherlands; Kjeldstad and Nymoen (2012), on Norway; Fagan (2001), and Connolly and Gregory (2008), on the United Kingdom; Bourreau-Dubois, Guillot and Jankeliowitch-Laval (2001), on France.

³ See, for example, Wolf (2002), on Germany; Hu and Tjens (2003), on the Netherlands; Manning and Petrongolo (2008) and Connolly and Gregory (2008), on the United Kingdom; and Bardasi and Gornick (2008), on the OECD countries.

⁴ Part-time workers are also less likely to have an open-ended contract of employment than are full-time workers (OECD, 2010).

⁵ See, for example, OECD (2010), on the OECD countries; Blank (1990), on the United States; O'Reilly and Bothfeld (2002), on the United Kingdom and Germany.

⁶ See OECD (2010), on the OECD countries; Galtier (1999), on France; Kjeldstad and Nymoen (2012), on Norway; Fagan (2001), on the United Kingdom; Stratton (1996), on the United States; and Gash (2008), on France, Denmark and the United Kingdom.

⁷ For further elaboration, see "Some caveats on the definition of 'voluntary' part-time work" in OECD (2010, p. 216, box 4.1).

sification in the category of voluntary part-time employment does not necessarily signal a *preference* for part-time work and can even be dictated by the absence of alternative opportunities where the worker needs to combine family responsibilities with paid employment (Burchell, Dale and Joshi, 1997; Rosenfeld and Birkelund, 1995). Lastly, the distinction between voluntary and involuntary part-time employment assumes that preferences are stable over time, which is not necessarily the case. For example, workers who stand little chance of transiting from part-time to full-time employment display a higher propensity to change their stated reasons for working part time and, in particular, to report that they do so voluntarily (Galtier, 1999).

The literature tenders a variety of explanations for women's concentration in part-time employment. First, female labour force participation is influenced by country-level institutions and policies, including the size of the public sector, family policy, taxation, maternity entitlements and childcare availability (Esping-Andersen, 2002; Jaumotte, 2003; Rosenfeld and Birkelund, 1995). Second, women's working time preferences are characterized by weaker labour market attachment than men's (Fortin, 2005; Hakim, 2002). And third, women with family responsibilities appear to face greater difficulty than men when it comes to negotiating their terms and conditions of employment.

Using data from Round 5 of the European Social Survey (ESS), we also analyse the determinants of female part-time employment, in 23 European countries in 2010–11.⁸ However, our analysis goes beyond most earlier research by distinguishing between long and short part-time work.⁹ Following the OECD's 30-hour cut-off point between part-time and full-time employment, we further differentiate part-time employment between 20 and 29 hours per week from part-time employment for less than 20 hours per week. This distinction yields deeper insights and a better understanding when conducting international comparisons. In particular, while part-time work accounts for widely varying shares of female employment across countries (OECD, 2012), we will be investigating whether the variations are more or less pronounced in regard to short part-time employment. We will also be looking at the relationship between short and long part-time employment: does a high proportion of women in long part-time employment imply a small proportion of those in short part-time employment? Or is the relationship positive? In other words, do short and long part-time employment complement each other or are they substitutes for one another? Lastly, since Tilly (1996) found short part-time employment in the United States to be characterized by unfavourable socio-demographic features and conditions of work, we will be looking for socio-demographic characteristics that might explain a higher probability of working

⁸ Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

⁹ Notable exceptions are Hu and Tjeldens (2003), on the United Kingdom and the Netherlands; Tilly (1996), on the United States; Kjeldstad and Nymoene (2012), on Norway; Tjeldens (1997) and Dekker, Muffels and Stancanelli (2000), on the Netherlands; and Galtier (1999), on France.

full time or in long or short part-time employment across Europe. As far as we know, no study has so far attempted to compare these two categories of part-time employment in Europe.

The remainder of this article is organized into four sections. The first reviews a number of factors that may explain the growth of part-time employment, both short and long. The second section presents the data we use and the main descriptive statistics, while the third analyses the socio-demographic determinants of female part-time employment. The fourth section presents our conclusions.

The drivers of short and long part-time employment

Since the early 1980s, part-time employment has witnessed strong growth across many European countries. This trend can be attributed to a number of factors pertaining to the workings of the labour market (e.g. Cohen and Stier, 2006), including both demand-side and supply-side factors, but also to country-level institutional arrangements such as employment policies or family policies, which account for the wide inter-country variations in part-time employment rates.

The labour market

On the demand side, the development of the service sector contributed to the growth of part-time employment over the 1980s and 1990s (Buddelmeyer, Mourre and Ward, 2008; Blossfeld, 1997). Indeed, part-time workers give employers greater flexibility in responding to the variability of demand (Reilly, 1998). In some service industries characterized by specific hours of work, such as the retail trade, catering or personal services, part-time employment – especially of the “short” variety – can facilitate adjustment. Moreover, in times of economic uncertainty and heightened international competition, part-time employment can help to cut costs and boost productivity (Tilly, 1996; Cassirer, 2004). From the employer’s perspective, however, the hiring of any employee carries quasi-fixed costs regardless of the number of hours she or he works. Obviously, such costs are proportionately higher when hiring a part-time worker, particularly in short part-time employment. In other words, recruitment, training and administrative costs can be disincentives to the hiring of part-time workers (Gaston and Kishi, 2007). Employer sensitivity to such costs can vary according to firm size or industry.

On the supply side, the growth of part-time employment has been largely driven by women’s growing labour force participation since the early 1980s (Buddelmeyer, Mourre and Ward, 2008). Moreover, some groups of women are characterized by a higher propensity to work part time, namely, those in the youngest and oldest age groups and the mothers of young children (Corral and Isusi, 2004). McRae (2003) argues that women’s labour supply behaviour has also changed as a result of new lifestyles, shifts in the intra-household

division of labour and institutional factors, such as the availability of childcare facilities (Fagan, 2003; O'Reilly and Fagan, 1998). Part-time employment is considered to offer better opportunities for balancing paid employment with family responsibilities or other pursuits, including leisure, training, community service or public office (Bourreau-Dubois, Guillot and Jankeliowitch-Laval, 2001; Cohen and Stier, 2006; and Fagan, 2003). According to the surveys conducted in 2005–07 for the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC),¹⁰ the main motivation of women aged between 25 and 54 years for working part time was family responsibilities, whereas younger women (20–24 years) tended to cite education and the oldest (over 54 years) reported a preference for part-time work. For women in the youngest and oldest age groups, short part-time work may thus offer advantages over long part-time employment (OECD, 2010, p. 239).

Institutional and regulatory factors

Country variations in the incidence and general growth of part-time employment since the early 1980s may be explained by a variety of institutional and regulatory factors, including not only statutory and/or collectively agreed provisions governing part-time employment, but also family policies. Some countries, like Belgium or France, have indeed introduced measures that tend to promote part-time employment by providing firms with financial and tax incentives. Others, such as Portugal and Spain, have reduced their shares of part-time employment by lowering the costs of standard employment (OECD, 2010).

In the face of persistent and high unemployment, several countries have introduced new regulatory frameworks pertaining to working time and other conditions of work (Bönker and Wollmann, 2001; Fagan, 2003; CERC, 2005). Such initiatives have targeted the cost of part-time employment, either generally or as a means of facilitating labour market entry or re-entry (ILO, 1992). In Belgium, France, Germany and the United Kingdom, for example, part-time employment has been subsidized by means of reduced social security contributions or through tax incentives. Such measures can indeed strengthen the incentive for firms to hire part-time workers, particularly if their hourly labour costs are below those of full-time employment. Similarly, incentives aimed at promoting “gradual retirement” through part-time employment have also been introduced in Austria, Belgium, France, Portugal and Spain (Bollé, 1997). These initiatives may well have contributed to the growth of short part-time employment.

Cross-country differences may also reflect the variety of provisions that are made for looking after dependents, especially children (Gash, 2008; Jau-motte, 2003). Analysing OECD data, Booth and Coles (2010) find a positive correlation between public spending on childcare and women's labour force participation. Public policies aimed at developing part-time employment,

¹⁰ For further information, see http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/microdata/eu_silc [accessed 9 April 2014].

particularly in the northern European countries, could thus also be grounded in the objective of enhancing family welfare through the reconciliation of work and family (Thurman and Trah, 1990).

Data and descriptive statistics

Data

The data used in this study are from Round 5 of the ESS, a survey financed by the European Commission and the European Science Foundation with the aim of gathering information on the values, attitudes and behaviour patterns of the populations of European countries. The survey is administered by each participating country within its own territory in accordance with common methodological guidelines set by the central ESS team so as to ensure international data comparability. The national samples are checked by an expert group in order to ensure that each sample is as representative as possible of the population. The sampling plan is based on strict random probability methods, and all respondents are interviewed face to face in their homes and in the national language.

The ESS questionnaire comprises two main parts, namely: a core module administered in every round of the survey and a second part made up of two “rotating” thematic modules that vary with each round of the ESS. The core module covers a wide range of socio-demographic characteristics of individual respondents and, in a “supplementary questionnaire”, also collects information on their behaviour and beliefs, such as their use of the media, their attitude to politics, their subjective well-being, or sense of national identity. Several questions relate to their labour force participation.

Among the 50,781 respondents who were interviewed across the 23 countries surveyed in ESS Round 5 between 2010 and 2011, 18,463 respondents reported being engaged in paid work, including 8,989 women aged 16–65. For the purposes of our analysis, part-time workers are those who reported working less than 30 hours per week; and those working less than 20 hours per week are classified as being in short part-time employment. The variables we consider are the respondent’s nationality, age (four categories), physical disability (three categories), marital status (four categories), presence of children in the household (six categories), level of education or training (four categories) and industry classification (eight categories). Based on the data from the ESS, we now proceed with an overview of the main descriptive statistics pertaining to female part-time employment, followed by an econometric analysis of its determinants, comparing the individual data internationally.

Descriptive statistics

As mentioned above, comparative studies on part-time employment have highlighted wide variations between countries in the incidence of female part-time employment, particularly on account of differing policies and institutional

arrangements at country level.¹¹ Figure 1 shows the proportions of part-time employment in total female employment across the 23 countries examined here, while figure 2 plots the variations in its distribution between short and long part-time employment. In the Netherlands, for example, a very high proportion of women work part time (50.8 per cent), whereas in Croatia the proportion is very small (3 per cent). Except in Poland and Estonia, female part-time employment is fairly marginal in the countries of central and eastern Europe, which have historically been characterized by low rates of part-time employment (Blossfeld, 1997). In the countries of southern Europe, where employed women typically held full-time jobs in the past, female part-time employment has grown to proportions between 15 and 16 per cent in Greece, Spain and Portugal. While the Nordic countries are broadly in an intermediate position between these two groups, the highest incidence of female part-time employment occurs in the other countries of western continental Europe and in Ireland and the United Kingdom (41.1 and 40.9 per cent, respectively).

Figure 2 highlights the positive relationship between the two categories of part-time employment. Thus, while long and short part-time employment respectively account for 32.8 and 18 per cent of female employment in the Netherlands, their respective proportions are 1.7 and 1.3 per cent in Croatia. The strong complementarity of the two categories is reflected in their correlation coefficient of nearly 85 per cent.

Figure 2 also shows that long part-time employment is more common than short part-time employment in all of the countries except the Czech Republic and Portugal. While the incidence differential between the two types of part-time employment is relatively small in Croatia and Norway, it is wider in Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland. Countries with a large share of long part-time employment tend to exhibit a larger differential: the correlation coefficient between these two variables is close to 78 per cent.

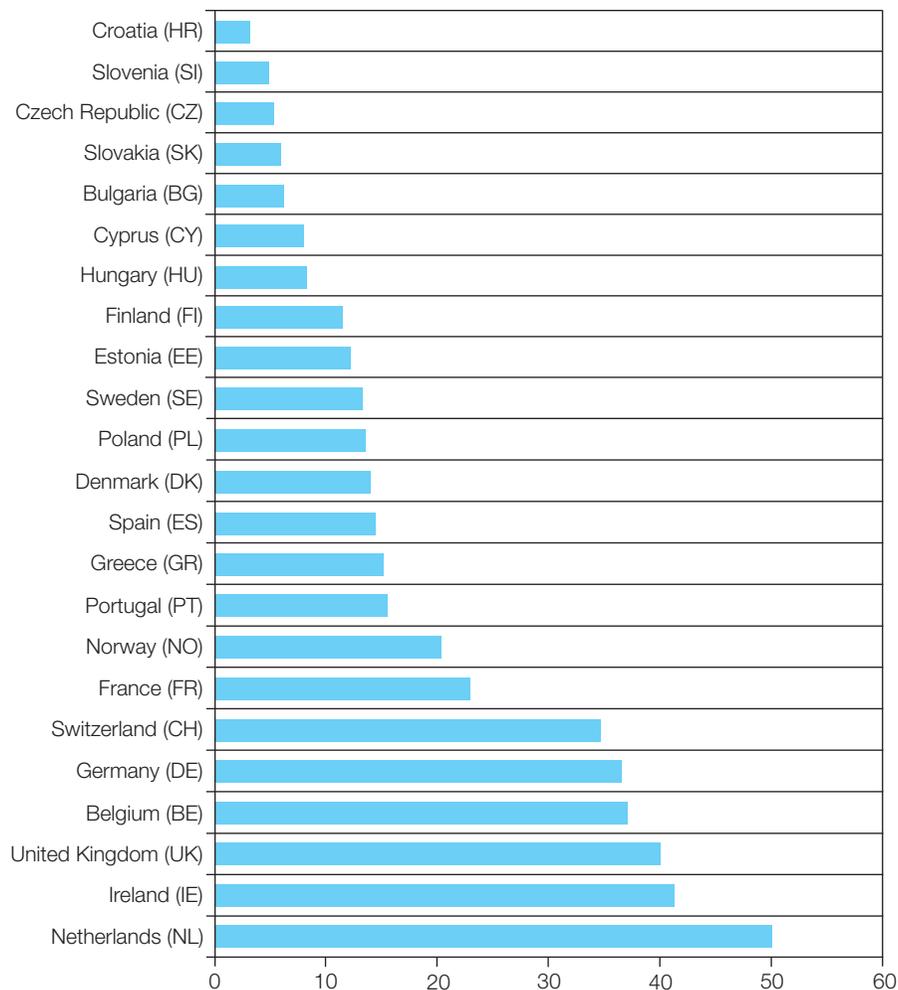
Table 1 shows the distributional characteristics of the 8,989 women who reported being engaged in paid work: 20.4 per cent of them were in part-time employment, accounting for nearly 80 per cent of total part-time employment.¹² The average working time of female part-timers was about 19 hours per week, with a standard deviation of 6.4 hours. Some 36 per cent of them worked less than 20 hours per week (i.e. in short part-time employment), with an average of 12 hours, a median close to 13 hours and a standard deviation of 5 hours. Those in long part-time employment averaged 22 hours per week, with a median close to 23 hours and a standard deviation of 2.8 hours.

Beyond working time, descriptive analysis of the socio-economic characteristics of the women working full time or in long or short part-time employment highlights a number of differences relating to nationality, age and

¹¹ For further details, see, for example, OECD (2010 and 2012), Gash (2008), Yerkes and Visser (2006), O'Reilly and Fagan (1998), Blossfeld (1997), Benoit-Guilbot and Cl  men  on (2001), Jaumotte (2003) and Booth and Coles (2010).

¹² This proportion is close to that reported by the OECD (2012).

Figure 1. Part-time work as a percentage of total female employment in 23 European countries, 2010–11

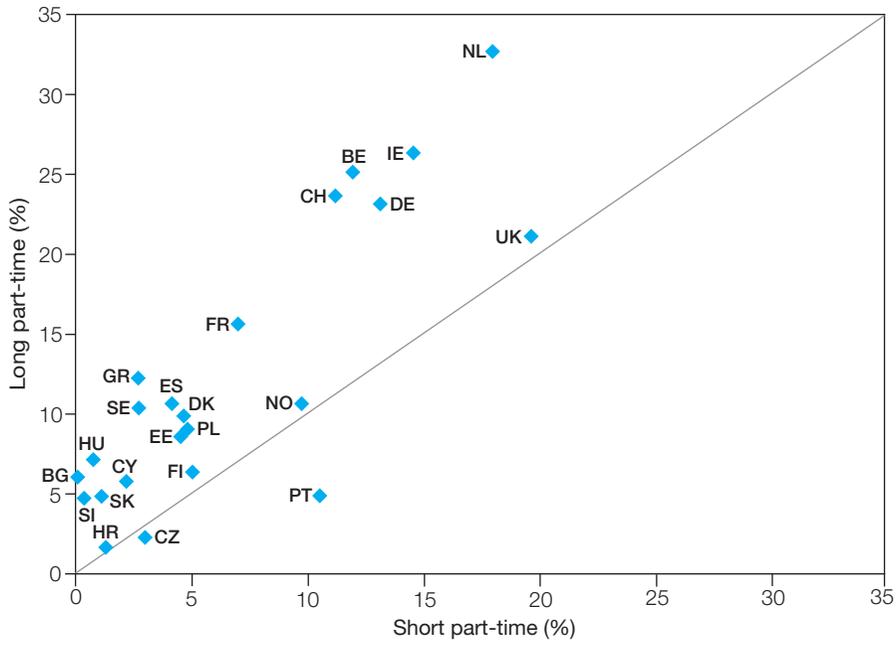


Source: ESS 2010–2011.

physical disability (table 1). First, the incidence of short part-time employment is higher among women who do not have the nationality of the country in which they work. This characteristic applies to some 6.3 per cent of the women in short part-time employment as against 4.9 per cent of those in long part-time employment and 4.4 per cent of those in full-time employment.

Second, younger women appear to be over-represented in short part-time employment. Those under 25 years of age account for about 8.8 per cent of the women in short part-time employment, as against 5.3 per cent of those in long part-time employment and 5.7 per cent of those in full-time employment.

Figure 2. Women’s short and long part-time employment in 23 European countries (percentages)



Whereas the incidence of part-time employment – particularly short part-time employment – is lower between the ages of 25 and 54, the proportion of female part-timers in the age group of 55 and older is much higher than that of their full-time counterparts. Lastly, the descriptive analysis shows that (severe) disability displays a strong association with part-time work, particularly short part-time work. Roughly 17.2 per cent of the women in short part-time employment and 16.3 per cent of those in long part-time employment reported a severe physical disability, whereas the proportion was only 12.3 per cent among those in full-time employment.

Examination of household characteristics brings out further differences between women working full time and those in short or long part-time employment. Women in part-time employment are more likely to live with a partner and more likely to have children than those in full-time employment. Mothers in short part-time employment are more likely to have several children, whereas those in long part-time employment are more likely to have just one or two children, including at least one below five years of age.

Differences can also be observed in regard to education and training levels and occupation. While women working full time are seen to have higher attainment than their part-time counterparts, this difference is even more pronounced between the two categories of part-timers: nearly 10 per cent of those in short part-time employment had only primary education, as compared with

Table 1. Socio-demographics of employed women aged 16–65 years in 23 European countries, by working time category (percentages)

	Overall	Full-time	Long part-time	Short part-time
Citizenship				
National	95.4	95.6	95.1	93.7
Foreign	4.6	4.4	4.9	6.3
Age				
Under 25 years	5.8	5.7	5.3	8.8
25–39 years	34.9	36.1	31.3	28.7
40–54 years	42.6	42.5	44.3	40.7
55 years or older	16.7	15.7	19.1	21.8
Physical disability				
None	85.1	86.2	81.8	79.6
Slight	1.7	1.5	1.9	3.2
Severe	13.2	12.3	16.3	17.2
Marital status				
In partnership	55.8	53.8	63.9	63
Separated/divorced	14.2	14.5	13.7	11.8
Widowed	3.1	3.2	2.4	2.9
Never married	26.9	28.5	20	22.3
Children				
No children	46.1	47.8	39.3	39.8
One child under five years of age	5.2	5.0	6.5	5.3
One child aged five or older	18.3	18.7	17.6	15.3
Two children at least one of whom is under five	5.4	5.1	7.0	4.8
Two children aged five or older	17.8	17	20.1	23
Three or more children	7.2	6.4	9.5	11.8
Education and training				
Primary	4.7	4.1	5.4	9.8
Upper secondary	63.6	63.2	64.8	65.4
Short tertiary	15.9	16.2	15.8	13.5
Long tertiary	15.8	16.5	14	11.3
Occupational classification				
Managers	7.1	7.9	3.8	3.7
Professionals	21.2	20.5	25.3	20.7
Technicians and associate professionals	19.4	20.1	20	11.9
Clerical support workers	14.5	14.8	13.7	12.9
Services and sales workers	21.4	20.5	22.8	28.7
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	1.1	1.1	0.9	1.7
Craft and related trades workers	2.7	3.0	1.5	1.7
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	3.1	3.6	0.9	1.2
Elementary occupations	9.5	8.5	11.1	17.5

Table 1. Socio-demographics of employed women aged 16–65 years in 23 European countries, by working time category (percentages) (*concl.*)

	Overall	Full-time	Long part-time	Short part-time
Industry classification				
Agriculture, hunting, fishing and mining/quarrying	1.9	2.0	1.1	1.8
Manufacturing	9.6	11.3	3.7	3.6
Construction and electricity supply	3.4	3.6	2.6	2.4
Wholesale/retail trade, hotels and restaurants	21.6	21.8	20.4	20.7
Communications and financial intermediation	5.6	6.2	3.4	3.0
Real estate, business support activities and public administration	18.5	19.2	16.3	14.8
Education, health and social work	32.2	29.2	44.4	42.6
Other community, social and personal services	7.2	6.7	8.1	11.1
Number of respondents	8,989	7,153	1,174	662

Source: European Social Survey 2010.

5.4 per cent of those in long part-time employment and 4.1 per cent of those in full-time employment. While nearly one-third of the women in full-time employment had post-secondary education, this applied to only one quarter of those in short part-time employment. As regards respondents' industry distribution, those in full-time employment were over-represented in manufacturing, communications and financial intermediation, real estate, business support services and public administration. By contrast, the part-timers were more likely to be employed in education, health care and social work, and other community, social and personal services. Whereas the proportion of long part-time employment outweighs that of short part-time employment in education, health care and social work, the opposite holds true of other community, social and personal services.

The regression analysis presented in the next section examines the effects of individual socio-demographic characteristics on the probability of being in part-time employment rather than in full-time employment.

The determinants of female part-time employment in Europe

In order to identify the personal and family characteristics that determine whether individuals work full time or in short or long part-time employment, we have specified an econometric model in which the dependant variable is categorical and can take five values. Specifically, in addition to full-time employment and short and long part-time employment we also include the categories of job search (i.e. unemployment) and inactivity – i.e. not in the labour

force – so as to compare the socio-economic characteristics of the women in these two additional categories with those of women in employment. The probabilities of being in any of these five categories are analysed by means of a multinomial logistic model. This type of specification enables us to explain the probability that a woman will be in one category rather than another depending on the explanatory variables considered.¹³ Our explanatory variables are nationality, age, disability, marital status, presence of children, level of education or training, occupational category and country. The results of our estimation of the model are reported in table 2.¹⁴

Our results show that women who are not nationals of the country in which they work are not more likely to be in part-time employment than those who are nationals. There is no significant difference in the incidence of short versus long part-time employment in this respect either.¹⁵

The incidence of part-time employment is higher in the youngest and oldest age groups. As far as the younger workers are concerned, this confirms the findings of most earlier studies (Cassirer, 2004; Cottrell et al., 2002; Corral and Isusi, 2004). Part-time employment may thus help young women to enter the labour market for the first time. Among those in the oldest age group, part-time employment may reflect gradual withdrawal from the labour market (Cassirer, 2004; Corral and Isusi, 2004). A number of countries, including Belgium, Finland, France, Norway and Slovenia, have indeed introduced special schemes that enable older workers to reduce their working time (see OECD, 2010). This age-group effect is even more pronounced when comparing long and short part-time employment: women working less than 20 hours per week are more likely to be the youngest (16–24 years) and the oldest (55–65 years). Kjeldstad and Nymoén (2012) have published similar findings on Norway, where women in part-time employment are more likely to be young.

Furthermore, part-time employment seems to provide workers suffering from a disability or chronic health condition with an opportunity for labour market attachment. Workers with a disability, whether slight or severe, are indeed more likely to work part time (for earlier evidence of this pattern, see Anxo et al., 2007). Within the regulatory frameworks of most European countries, workers with disabilities are entitled to work shorter hours and enjoy specific rights (OECD, 2010, p. 218, table 4.1). While women in short part-time

¹³ Multinomial logistic regressions assume the independence of alternatives that are not applicable. The probability ratio of any given pair of alternatives must not be affected by the introduction of any other alternative. We conducted the Hausman test and the Hausman-McFadden test to verify the independence of the alternatives in our specification and confirm the appropriateness of a multinomial logistic model.

¹⁴ In order to compare all of the women in part-time employment with those working full time, we actually specified two models, namely, one in which the discrete dependent variable has four categories (i.e. full-time, part-time, job search and inactivity) and another in which it has five categories (full-time, long part-time, short part-time, job search and inactivity).

¹⁵ Beyond a 16 per cent threshold, however, the probability of short part-time employment is higher than that of long part-time employment among women who are not nationals of the country in which they work.

Table 2. Estimation results: Female short/long part-time and full-time employment

	Part-time vs full-time		Short part-time vs long part-time	
	Coefficient	t-test	Coefficient	t-test
Constant	0.791***	3.09	-0.181	-0.42
Citizenship				
Foreign	-0.0142	-0.11	0.302	1.40
Age (16–24 years)				
25–39 years	-0.632***	-4.82	-0.566**	-2.53
40–54 years	-0.626***	-4.53	-0.658***	-2.78
55–65 years	-0.187	-1.26	-0.340	-1.35
Physical disability (none)				
Slight	0.518***	2.64	0.597*	1.90
Severe	0.327***	4.11	0.058	0.43
Marital status (in partnership)				
Separated/divorced	-0.370***	-4.28	-0.252	-1.63
Widowed	-0.406**	-2.27	0.098	0.31
Never married	-0.513***	-6.11	0.099	0.66
Children (no children)				
One child under five years of age	0.690***	5.28	-0.203	-0.87
One child aged five or older	0.269***	3.12	0.020	0.13
Two children at least one of whom is under five	0.587***	4.45	-0.23	-0.97
Two children aged five or older	0.648***	7.43	0.391***	2.60
Three or more children	0.842***	7.61	0.484***	2.61
Education (primary)				
Upper secondary	-0.578***	-4.48	-0.279	-1.33
Short tertiary	-0.730***	-4.95	-0.393	-1.60
Long tertiary	-0.895***	-5.98	-0.416*	-1.65
Industry classification (education, health and social work)				
Agriculture, hunting, fishing and mining/quarrying	-0.782***	-3.33	0.559	1.33
Manufacturing	-1.237***	-8.85	0.0111	0.04
Construction and electricity supply	-0.626***	-3.62	-0.0133	-0.04
Wholesale/retail trade, hotels and restaurants	-0.365***	-4.60	0.0152	0.11
Communications and financial intermediation	-0.931***	-6.18	0.0173	0.06
Real estate, business support activities and public administration	-0.463***	-5.59	0.0254	0.17
Other community, social and personal services	-0.00535	-0.05	0.356**	2.01
Number in full-time employment		7,153		7,153
Number in part-time employment		1,836		
Number in long part-time employment				1.74
Number in short part-time employment				662
Log likelihood		-11,182.52		-12,304.55

Note: ***, ** and * indicate significance at the 1, 5 and 10 per cent levels, respectively.

Source: European Social Survey 2010.

employment are more likely to suffer from some slight disability, there is no difference between the two groups as to the incidence of severe disability. This finding suggests that adjustments to work stations may enable those with severe disabilities to work longer hours.

Women who work part time are more likely to live with a partner than their full-time counterparts: the probability of engaging in paid work on a part-time basis is reduced by divorce, separation, the partner's death or unmarried status. According to Thurman and Trah (1990), female part-timers are more likely to be married. This may reflect a deliberate choice: a spouse in paid employment enables the household to make up for the shortfall in income caused by part-time employment, whereas a household headed by a single adult may require full-time employment to make ends meet. Our results do not highlight any differences in marital status as between women in short versus long part-time employment.

The presence of children in the household increases the probability of part-time employment. This effect is stronger when one of the children is in infancy or when there are two or more children in the household. The incidence of part-time employment is particularly high among young mothers (Anxo et al., 2007). Indeed, in most European countries, the parents of young children are eligible for reduced working time. In households with three or more children, the mother is more likely to work in short part-time employment than in long part-time employment. While this finding may reflect a voluntary choice to balance work and family, a larger number of children may generate "pressures" that make it more difficult to work full time (Paull, 2008).

The probability of part-time employment is also influenced by educational attainment and training: women in part-time employment display lower attainment than their full-time counterparts. Also, our findings show that women in long part-time employment are more likely to have a long tertiary education than are those in short part-time employment. Moreover, in terms of occupational distribution, female part-timers are primarily concentrated in service industries, particularly education, health care and social work, and community, social and personal services. Examining 21 European countries, Anxo et al. (2007) found that part-time workers generally tended to be concentrated in health-care services, social work, education and personal services. Although we find negative coefficients in regard to education, health care and social work, the incidence of part-time work is higher among women who are employed in other community, social and personal services, the retail trade, the hotel industry, catering, and in real estate, business services and administration. In her case study of France, Galtier (1999) shows the incidence of part-time employment to be higher among younger women (typically graduates) in sales occupations. Lastly, we find hardly any occupational difference between short and long part-time employment except in regard to community, social and personal services, in which the probability of short part-time employment is higher. Galtier (1999) finds that women in short part-time employment are more likely to be cleaners or domestic employees.

Conclusions

Based on data from the European Social Survey, this article has examined the determinants of female part-time employment in 23 European countries by distinguishing between full-time employment, long part-time employment and short part-time employment. Although the distribution of part-time employment exhibits wide variations from one country to another, our distinction between short and long part-time employment has yielded a number of results. First, in most of the countries under study, long part-time employment outweighs short part-time employment as a proportion of total female employment. Second, the two types of part-time employment tend to be complementary: a high proportion of female long part-time employment generally tends to go together with a relatively high proportion of female short part-time employment. Lastly, countries featuring a higher overall incidence of part-time employment tend to display a wider gap between the shares of short and long part-time employment.

Beyond such country differences, our results have highlighted the effects of socio-demographic characteristics on the probability of working in full-time employment or in long or short part-time employment. Short part-time employment appears to be associated with less favourable socio-economic conditions than long part-time employment. Its incidence is indeed higher among women in the youngest and oldest age groups, among those suffering from a slight disability, those with a larger number of children, those with less education or training, and those employed in community, social and personal services.

The OECD (2010) had already found that average poverty rates were higher among part-time workers than among full-time workers in most countries, but it turns out that women in short part-time employment may well be experiencing even more difficult economic conditions than other part-timers. Our analysis could thus usefully be followed up by a study that would include income in the comparison between the two types of part-time employment.¹⁶ The analysis should then be refocused on the household so as to take account of any other sources of family income. For women living with a partner, the latter's role and income are indeed likely to be strong determinants of household living standards and trade-offs.

Another interesting possibility would be to use time series data to study the career paths of women in part-time employment, also distinguishing the long and short types, in order to shed light on their labour market transitions. It would indeed be interesting to find out how short part-time employment compares with long part-time employment as a means of entering or re-entering employment, say, after a spell of unemployment. Is short part-time

¹⁶ Given the paucity of income data in the European Social Survey, we decided not to include this variable in order to ensure that we were left with a sufficiently large number of observations. However, such work as has been done on this variable shows that households in which women work in short part-time employment have lower income levels than the others.

employment just as likely to lead to longer hours of work eventually? Or is it just a dead end, without any prospect of longer hours?

The insights from such research could usefully inform public policy. For example, while EU regulatory action to encourage women to work in long (rather than short) part-time employment may be desirable, such action would address only a relatively small proportion of female part-timers and would therefore need to focus on those countries where part-time work accounts for a significant share of total employment. It would also need to target specific age groups and occupational categories such as community, social and personal services.

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