The why and how of working time reduction

Stan De Spiegelaere and Agnieszka Piasna
How many hours did we work in 1870

A. 81
B. 72
C. 66
D. 52
Working hours of a full-time worker

**Figure 2** Weekly working hours of full-time employees in the industrial sector: historic trend

Source: Huberman and Minns, 2007
Actual working hours

Average number of actual weekly hours of work

Source: Eurostat
What proportion employees works part-time in Europe?

A. 9%
B. 23%
C. 32%
D. 41%
E. 65%
The rise of part-time work

Growth in part-time work, EU15

Source: Eurostat
Trend in part-time employment

Figure 5  Part-time employment as a proportion of all employment, by gender, 2015

- Men
- Women

Countries listed from left to right: Netherlands, Austria, Germany, Belgium, UK, EU15, Sweden, Denmark, Luxembourg, Ireland, Italy, EU28, France, Malta, Spain, Finland, Cyprus, Slovenia, Estonia, Greece, Portugal, NMS, Latvia, Poland, Lithuania, Czechia, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria.
The downsides of part-time work: low pay and low hours

Figure 8
Proportion of part-time jobs by occupation and gender, 2015 Q2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service and sales</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural, forestry and fishery</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft and related trades</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant and machine operators</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary occupations</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Labour Force Survey
The downsides of part-time work: job prospects

Figure 9  Lack of career prospects in part-time and full-time jobs, EU 27

Note: Share of workers who responded that they strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement “My job offers good prospects for career advancement”.
Source: European Working Conditions Survey, 2015
Figure 10  Contract situation of part-time and full-time employees, EU 28

Source: European Working Conditions Survey, 2015
Why should we work shorter hours

Chapter 2
Why should we work shorter hours?

- Health and safety
- Gender equality
- Work-life balance
- Stress and burn-out
- Employment
- Sustainable economy
- Creativity and self-accomplishment
- Longer working lives
- Productivity
- Better society
- Conclusions
Working time: individual vs. family level
Cooking and caring: a unisex job

**Figure 15** Gender differences in time spent on childcare and household activities, employed people only with at least one child living in the household, EU 28, 2015

- % men involved daily
- % women involved daily

**Cooking and housework**
Weekly working hours

**Caring for and/or educating your children, grandchildren**
Weekly working hours

Source: European Working Conditions Survey
WTR & gender roles: uneasy fit
Chapter 3

How should we organise a reduction in working time?

How much of a reduction?
Reducing working time in one go, or step-by-step?
Shortening the working day, week, month, year or life?
Who should pay for this?
Reducing working time and extending operating hours?
Start with national legislation, or company deals?
Mandatory or free to participate?
Collective or individual reductions and the trouble with part-time work
Creating or saving jobs by reducing working time?
A reduction for some years, or forever?
Shorter work for all, or just for some?
Changing legal working hours, or the working hours culture?
Types of working time reduction

We Have Signed
The President’s
Re-employment
Agreement.

Stern Brothers
42ND STREET, WEST OF FIFTH AVENUE
Types of working time reduction
Types of working time reduction
Types of working time reduction
Structure vs. Culture

WARNING: OFFICE WILL SHUT DOWN IN 10:00 MINUTES PLEASE GO HOME NOW!
Conclusions

There is no one-size-fits-all solution for reducing working time, but an organised reduction is necessary. Doing nothing would only result in a socially unequal and gender-biased distribution of working time.