Combining family and full-time work: Portugal

This is the Portuguese contribution to the topic report on combining family and full-time work, coordinated via questionnaire by Statistics Finland and Oxford Research, Denmark, for the European Working Conditions Observatory.

1. Methodological part

Please describe briefly the surveys – dates, coverage, size and response rates – used in answering the questions. By national surveys is meant nationally representative surveys.

The Portuguese Inquérito de Avaliação das Condições de Trabalho dos Trabalhadores (Survey on workers’ working conditions) was conducted for the first time between 1999 and 2000 by the Departamento de Estatística do Trabalho, Emprego e Formação Profissional (DETEFP – Statistics Department) of the Ministério do Trabalho e da Solidariedade (MTS – Labour Ministry).

It was based on a sample of 5,000 workers from a population of 2,346,031 workers (all economic activities except sections L, P and Q of NACE: public administration and defence; compulsory social security; other services); 4,252 employees were included in the data (85% response rate). The interviews were carried out in the workplace, face to face.

The survey questionnaire considered several subjects, such as: occupational safety and health (OSH) management, exposure to physical agents (noise, radiation, vibration, etc), exposure to chemical agents, exposure to biological agents, safety in the workplace, occupational and health outcomes.

A new survey on workers’ working conditions is currently being prepared, to be launched in 2005.

Q1. In this part, the aim is to show how national surveys cover work–life balance of working parents in full-time work, from the aspect of certain working time arrangements. Thus, the national correspondents are asked to describe what questions are included in the national working conditions surveys on the following themes.

a) Family situation/Household

What kind of information is available about the family situation/household: civil status of the respondent (whether the employee is living alone or with the partner); labour market status of the spouse/partner (employed/unemployed/student…work full time/part time…in permanent/fixed-term employment/self-employed); number and age of children living at home (is it possible to break down age groups by the age of the youngest child, e.g. 0-2 yrs, 3-5 yrs, 6-14)?

The Portuguese Survey on Workers’ Working Conditions does not have any question covering this theme.

b) Work–life balance / reconciliation of work and family life

As an example of this kind of question, see Q20 of the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS): ‘In general, do your working hours fit in with your family or social commitments outside work very well, fairly well, not very well or not at all?’ – Do you have similar question(s) in your national survey?
The Portuguese Survey on Workers’ Working Conditions does not have any question covering this theme.

c) Overtime (paid, unpaid)

Do you have question(s) about overtime work (paid or unpaid) in your national survey? Frequency? How many hours a week or month? For example, in the Finnish Quality of Working Life Survey, there are questions like: ‘Do you sometimes work overtime for which you receive compensation: a) In money b) In time off c) In both d) In neither.’

If a, b or c: ‘How often do you do such overtime: a) Almost every day b) Every week c) Every second week d) At least once a month e) or less frequently?’

‘Do you sometimes do overtime for which you receive no compensation: a) Yes b) No.’

If yes: ‘How often do you do such overtime: a) Almost every day b) Every week c) Every second week d) At least once a month e) or less frequently?’

In the Portuguese Survey on Workers’ Working Conditions, there are two questions about overtime. The questions are:

‘Do you usually work overtime? (Yes/No)’ and ‘Do you receive any compensation for the extra hours or days? (Yes/No)’

Overtime is defined as the hours worked in addition to those worked during normal working hours. Additional payment is due for extra working hours, and these hours are counted with reference to actual working hours rather than to the amount of compensation paid. Extra hours worked outside of normal working hours by workers who do not have fixed working hours are excluded.

However, this definition is not included in the question. It is presented in the chapter Conceitos (‘Definitions’) of ‘Condições de Trabalho em Portugal – Continente – 2000’ (Working Conditions in Portugal – Mainland – 2000), the publication based on the results of the Portuguese Survey on Workers’ Working Conditions.

d) Possibility of influencing start and finish times

For example, in the EWCS, Q 18a_3 asks: ‘Do you work fixing starting and finishing times?’ – Do you have similar question(s) in your national survey? How have the questions been formulated? If definitions are used in questions, give them.

The Portuguese Survey on Workers’ Working Conditions does not have any question covering this theme.

e) Positive flexibility of working time

For example, in the Finnish Quality of Working Life Survey, there are questions that indicate positive flexibility: ‘I can use flexible working hours sufficiently for my own needs.’ – Do you have similar question(s) in your national survey?

The Portuguese Survey on Workers’ Working Conditions does not have a specific question related to flexibility of working times.

Nevertheless, the survey includes a question about the working time schedule that considers flexible working hours as an option. Flexible working hours are defined as working time ‘with limits to the start and finish times of work, establishing the compulsory period of permanence for the workers, including, or not, the possibility of choice of working hours in each day’.
However, this definition is not included in the question. It is presented in the chapter Conceitos ('Definitions') of ‘Condições de Trabalho em Portugal – Continente – 2000’ (Working Conditions in Portugal – Mainland – 2000), the publication based on the results of the Portuguese Survey on Workers’ Working Conditions.

One can consider this ‘working time flexibility’ as a positive one, as the definition includes the notion of workers having some autonomy in their start and finish times, and includes the possibility of choice of working hours in each day.

The question is: ‘What kind of working schedule do you have: a) Fixed working hours; b) Flexible working hours c) Shift working hours d) Night working hours?’

f) Negative flexibility of working time

For example, in the Finnish Quality of Work Life Survey, there are questions indicating negative flexibility: ‘How often do you have to be flexible in your working hours, dictated by your tasks or your superior?’ ’I have to do more overtime work than I would like to.’ – Do you have similar question(s) in your national survey? How have the questions been formulated? If definitions are used in questions, give them.

The Portuguese Survey on Workers’ Working Conditions does not have any question covering this theme.

g) Predictability of working times

As an example of this kind of question, see Q19a and Q18a_1 in the EWCS: ‘Usually, how many times a month do your schedule working times change?’ ‘Do you work the same number of hours every day?’ – Do you have similar question(s) in your national survey? How have the questions been formulated? If definitions are used in questions, give them.

The Portuguese Survey on Workers’ Working Conditions does not have any question covering this theme.

2. National context

The focus group is working parents working full-time with children under 15 years old. Please give figures concerning working parents with children under 15 years old, in line with Q1 and the LFS convention. If this information is not available, please describe what kind of age limits in children’s ages have been used while answering the questions.

Q2. Please give the proportions of full-time workers in the following categories (you can use the Labour Force Survey):

a) all wage and salary earners (NOTE: no self-employed people);

b) men;

b) women;

d) fathers (with children under 15 years old);

(If possible, break down in age groups 0–2 yrs, 3–5 yrs, 6–14 yrs by the age of youngest child)

e) mothers (with children under 15 years old).

(If possible, break down in age groups 0–2 yrs, 3–5 yrs, 6–14 yrs by the age of youngest child)

Proportions of full-time workers:
Q3. Give figures for Q1b–Q1g in your country according to what is available in national working conditions surveys.

a) all wage and salary earners working full time (NOTE: no self-employed people);
b) men working full time;
c) women working full time;
d) fathers (with children under 15 years old) working full time;
   (If possible, break down in age groups 0–2 yrs, 3–5 yrs, 6–14 yrs by the age of youngest child)
e) mothers (with children under 15 years old) working full time.
   (If possible, break down in age groups 0–2 yrs, 3–5 yrs, 6–14 yrs by the age of youngest child)

Is it possible to provide information on trends? (For each question: Yes/No)
Is it possible to link this information with the family situation/household? (For each question: Yes/No)

The available data from the Portuguese Survey on Workers’ Working Conditions makes it impossible to present figures regarding only full-time workers. The table below shows the available figures for each question.

Those reporting part-time occupations represent 3.5% of all workers: 3.1% of male workers and 3.8% of female workers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Trends</th>
<th>Link with family situation/household</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All wage and salary earners</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fathers</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mothers</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All wage and salary earners</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>62.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Overtime and flexible working hours, by sex, 2000


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>workers with flexible working hours</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>n.a.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mothers</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All wage and salary earners</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


For each question: Can you highlight the main sectoral/occupational differences about mentioned working time issues. Please summarise as briefly as possible.

A sectoral analysis shows that the proportion of workers reporting that they usually do overtime is higher in the textiles, clothing and footwear sector (48.8%) and in the manufacture of electrical equipment sector (47.7%). According to the Survey on Workers’ Working Conditions (1999–2000), the proportions of workers usually working overtime in the following sectors are also above 40%: agriculture and fishing, food and beverage, manufacture of transport equipment and post and telecommunications.

An occupational analysis on the overtime issue also shows some interesting findings. Occupations with higher proportions of workers reporting overtime than average are skilled agricultural and fishery workers (52.3%), plant and machine operators and assemblers (44.2%), and craft and related trades workers (39.9%). In these occupational groups too, one can find the highest proportion of female workers reporting overtime work: 57.4% among skilled agricultural and fishery workers, 45.8% among plant and machine operators and assemblers, and 45.7% among craft and related trades workers.

It is not possible to make a sectoral or occupational analysis on compensation for overtime.

The proportion of workers reporting flexible working hours is higher than average in the electricity, gas and water supply sector (55.6%), and in computing, R&D and related services (45.4%). Manufacture of basic metals (3.3%), manufacture of other non-metallic mineral products (8.1%) and manufacture of transport equipment (9.9%) reported the lowest proportions of workers with working time flexibility.

The survey results show that flexible working hours, besides agricultural and fishery workers where these reach 100%, are more common in the most qualified occupations, such as company managers (64.8%) and science professionals (83.8%).

Q4. Give a short description about what issues seem to be the most relevant and/or problematic concerning work–life balance and working times among working parents currently in your country, according to major national surveys or qualitative research.

In Portugal, both men and women present high rates of participation in paid employment – the activity rate of men is 58.1% and the female rate is 46.7% (INE, Inquérito ao Emprego (Employment Survey), 2004). Employment rates are particularly high among women who are more likely to have small children – 85.7% in the 25–34 year old age group, and 82.9% in the 35–44 year old age group (INE, Inquérito ao Emprego (Employment Survey), 2004).
A European comparative analysis (Rubery et al, 2002) has shown that marriage and motherhood has a rather low impact on the female employment rate in Portugal, much lower than in other European countries.

Table 2: Employment rate for women 20-49 years old, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All women</th>
<th>Married women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No child</td>
<td>76.17</td>
<td>74.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of a young child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child 0-6 years</td>
<td>75.03</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolute 'young motherhood' gap</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>-0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of an older child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child 7-14 years</td>
<td>76.70</td>
<td>75.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolute 'older motherhood' gap</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>-1.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: Employment rates for women with children 0-6 and 7-14 are for 1999.

Full-time work is predominant among men and women – 98% and 91.1%, respectively (INE, Inquérito ao Emprego (Employment Survey), 2004). This corresponds with long working times: 71.1% of male workers and 61.3% of female workers have a weekly working time longer than 40 hours (INE, Recenseamento Geral da População e da Habitação (Population and Housing Census), 2001).

The results of the Inquérito à Ocupação do Tempo (Time Use Survey) 1999 show that the number of hours allocated to paid work by employed men and women is not very different: 9 hours 11 minutes compared with 8 hours 4 minutes, respectively, on an average day. However, there is still a large gender imbalance in terms of the time allocated to household and family care work: on average, employed men spend 1 hour 38 minutes per day in unpaid work compared with the 4 hours 7 minutes per day spent by employed women (Perista, 2003).

This overload in terms of working time for women is also highlighted by a recent study (Torres et al, 2004). Portuguese women tend to have to manage full-time paid work and unpaid work, including care (for children and for dependent older people).

Families, female relatives in particular, still represent a significant solidarity network regarding the provision of care to dependent adults. However, this does not seem to be the case insofar as children are concerned. The traditional role of grandmothers in the provision of care to their grandchildren is increasingly compromised, especially in large urban areas, due to the current participation of these grandmothers in the labour market (Torres et al, 2004).

At the same time, childcare facilities are clearly insufficient to cope with the needs of working parents, within and beyond school hours. The occupation rates of childcare facilities are very high in Portugal (over 90%); most facilities are full, especially those for children up to three years old (OECD, 2004). Moreover, the official statistics regarding childcare provision show that coverage rates are still very low: in 2001, the crèche and nannies net covered only 15.4% of children aged up to three years old; and freetime activity centres had a coverage rate of 12.4% in 1998. The preschool education net coverage rate did not extend beyond 76% in 2002–2003 (estimate) (Ramalho and Perista, 2004).

A further difficulty is that most childcare services are run by private companies, with fees often too high for many Portuguese families.
According to OECD (2004), there is evidence that many Portuguese mothers consider their working schedule as one of the main reasons why they do not spend as much time as they wish with their children. As a consequence, children often stay at home alone or have to stay with their mothers in the workplace. The development of the childcare network and the broadening of parents’ choices regarding childcare services are considered as priority issues in the Portuguese case.

Another political priority should aim at the development of positive actions encouraging men, fathers in particular, to participate in unpaid family and care work, in order to promote work–life balance for women and men.

3. Best practices

Q5. Give an example of best practice of good working time arrangements from the aspect of work–life balance among working parents, preferably in small and medium-sized companies in your country. Are best practices collected as part of a governmental policy programme?

From a recent study on policies and good practices regarding work–family reconciliation (Guerreiro et al), the following example can be given. A large Portuguese telecommunications company has concluded a collective agreement offering part-time working arrangements for employees in the following situations:

- employees with children aged up to 12 years;
- employees caring for incapacitated relatives;
- student employees;
- employees with reduced work capacity.

According to the company’s human resources manager, the part-time work option ‘is often required by employees who give as the main reasons the need to fulfil family commitments or childcare responsibilities’.

There is no governmental policy programme featuring specific measures to collect companies’ good practices. Nonetheless, mention should be made of the Prémio ‘Igualdade é Qualidade’ (‘Equality is Quality’ Prize), awarded since 1999 by the Comissão para a Igualdade no Trabalho e no Emprego (Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment), a national tripartite body. The ‘Equality is Quality’ Prize is awarded to businesses and employers that pursue exemplary policies regarding equality between men and women, particularly in terms of reconciling work and family.

References


