

Industrial relations
Working time in 2017–2018



Working time in 2017–2018



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Introduction

This review (published every two years) covers the most important developments resulting from legislative reforms or changes and from collective bargaining at national or sectoral level in the EU and Norway in the years 2017 and 2018. It also explores the average weekly working hours set by collective agreements, both across the economy and for five specific sectors of activity: metalworking, chemicals, banking, retail trade and public administration. It examines in particular the following issues:

- statutory limits on weekly and daily working time
- average actual weekly working hours
- annual leave entitlements, as set by collective agreements and law
- estimates of average collectively agreed annual working time

After a brief overview of the major developments that took place in 2017 and 2018, the report looks at the present status of the duration of working time as a result of collective bargaining. The report complements EurWORK's database of wages, working time and collective disputes, which provides information covering the year 2000 onwards about the systems in place defining working time, as well as some of the other main outcomes of these systems.¹ In addition, the present report updates and complements the reports on developments in working time in 2015–2016 (Eurofound, 2017) and in the 21st century (Eurofound 2016), which cover data on some aspects of working time, including collectively agreed working hours.

The report is essentially based on contributions from the Network of Eurofound Correspondents. The figures provided in this review should be interpreted with caution, and the various notes and explanations should be taken into account. Making international comparisons regarding the length of collectively agreed working time is problematic. This is because not all countries collect data and, even if available, data from different sources may not be strictly comparable.

Additional factors that prevent such direct comparison include:

- different reference periods (annual, monthly, weekly) for calculating working time
- the reduction of working time in some countries due to extra days off or cuts in annual hours, leaving the normal working week relatively unchanged
- the increasing use of schemes whereby weekly hours may vary considerably but an average is maintained over different reference periods
- the treatment of part-time workers
- the differing roles of collective bargaining and legislation, with legislation having an impact on actual hours in some countries but setting only a maximum 'safety net' in others

It is also challenging to compare working time in different countries, as the figures for normal weekly working hours do not consider factors such as overtime, the length of annual leave (and other forms of leave), or the use of flexible forms of working time organisation.

This review follows the previous editions of the annual reviews of working time for calculating averages for the groups of EU Member States. Three groups are used:

- **EU28:** current 28 EU Member States
- **EU15:** Group of 15 Member States prior to 2004 enlargement (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK)
- **EU13:** Group of 13 Member States that joined in 2004 (Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia), 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania) and 2013 (Croatia).

The average figures provided for these country groupings are weighted in order to reflect the relative country sizes in terms of people aged 15–64 years who are employed full time, according to Eurostat's Labour Force Survey (EU LFS).

¹ Available at <http://eurofound.link/wagedatabase>

1 Developments in working time regulation

This chapter presents some of the most relevant developments across the EU in terms of how working time is regulated. Some of the most important changes relate to the introduction of the possibility for employees to request more (or fewer) hours of work under certain circumstances, as in Finland, Germany and Ireland. Meanwhile, many countries have introduced legislative changes related to increases in annual paid leave or the concession of special leave to caregivers. There have also been a few interesting sectoral developments, such as the possibility for workers covered by the wage agreement on Germany's metal and electrical industries to ask for a reduction of their working time to as little as 28 hours per week for up to 24 months. Also, in Greece, a 32-hour working week has been introduced for local government employees who work in some specific areas, such as waste management. It is worth noting the debates around shortening the working week that have been taking place in Belgium and Czechia, as well as those highlighting unpaid overtime as an emerging concern in Spain.

Legislative developments

General legislative developments

Since 1 January 2019, employees in Germany have had the legal right to reduce their working time for between one and five years and return to their previous working hours after that period (known as *Brückenteilzeit*). The new law provides that employees can file a request for a reduction in working time without being obliged to provide a justification. The new law is only applicable in companies with more than 45 employees, and medium-sized companies (46 to 200 employees) may only grant such a request to 1 in 15 employees. Employers can deny the request if it means that production will be seriously affected or safety at work jeopardised. In addition, the law seeks to support part-time workers who want to take on more hours in their companies, stipulating that employers must treat such requests preferentially.

In July 2018, the Austrian government introduced a far-reaching amendment to the Working Time Act. This amendment increased the maximum daily hours

including overtime from 10 to 12 hours, and the weekly maximum hours including overtime from 50 to 60 hours.

In Ireland, the Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2018 introduced the legal right for employees to request more working hours, provided they can demonstrate they have worked more than their contractual hours over a 12-month reference period. If successful, they can be moved on to a higher band of weekly working hours.² For example, if an employee has 14 hours of work per week written into their contract but has been regularly working 20 hours, that person can ask to work between 16 and 21 hours. This is applicable to all employment contracts.

Leave

The Belgian Workable Work Law, which was agreed in 2017, provides a framework for so-called 'career saving', a system that allows employees to save annual leave days to be used later in their career. Since the law's entry into force on 1 February 2018, all sectors have been able to implement it through collective agreements. If no agreement can be reached at sectoral level, negotiations may take place at company level. Employees are only able to benefit from the system if it has been concluded in a collective agreement at either of these two levels.

The government of Luxembourg announced a supplementary paid leave day in its coalition agreement for the period 2018–2023, increasing the number of paid leave days from 25 to 26. However, this increase does not automatically increase the number of paid leave days per year in the framework of collective agreements. In addition, the coalition introduced a supplementary annual public holiday on 9 May, known as Europe Day. This increased the number of public holidays from 10 to 11.

Following the amendments introduced by Legal Notice 367 of the Organisation of Working Time Regulations in Malta, which entered into force on 1 January 2018, an additional eight hours of leave were added to the statutory annual amount of paid leave. This now stands at 200 hours, or the equivalent of 25 working days, for individuals working 40 hours per week.

² Bands of weekly working hours: A – 3 to 6 hours, B – 6 to 11, C – 11 to 16, D – 16 to 21, E – 21 to 26, F – 26 to 31, G – 31 to 36, and H – 36 hours and over.

In Czechia, two new measures came into force in 2018. First, as of 1 February 2018, fathers of newborn children have the option to take paternity leave after the birth of their child, receiving the so-called paternal post-natal care allowance. Provided they are covered by a sickness insurance scheme, fathers are eligible to receive 70% of their base wage for a period of seven days. This leave may be taken at any time within six weeks from the date of birth of the child and cannot be interrupted. The aim of the paternity leave is to allow fathers to take part in the care of their newborn child, while helping the mother of the child in the period shortly after giving birth.

Second, since 1 June 2018, it is possible for employees to claim paid leave for up to 90 days in situations in which they are required to provide all-day long-term care (lasting at least 30 days) for a family member. Compensation for the loss of income from gainful activity during the leave is awarded to caregivers through their sickness insurance scheme, in the amount of 60% of their base daily wage. During the period of care, it is not possible for the employer to dismiss the employee. This means that, following the conclusion of the care period, the employee is entitled to return to their original employment position. The employer may refuse the granting of such a care period only due to serious operational reasons and following communication in writing. In all other cases, the employer is obliged to provide the leave, during which the employee is not entitled to perform any other gainful activity.

Similarly, changes to the Estonian Employment Contracts Act were introduced in July 2018 to support employees who take care of a family member with a disability. The changes granted such employees additional leave of five working days per calendar year, paid at the level of the national minimum pay, and financed from the state budget. This type of leave did not previously exist in the Estonian labour legislation.

Increase of wage supplements for atypical working hours

Another important development, although not strictly related to duration or organisation of working time, occurred in Slovakia, where amendments to the Labour Code increased wage supplements. As a result of changes introduced on 1 May 2018, minimum wage supplements increased from 20% to 30% of the hourly rate of the minimum wage for night work and to 35% for work considered 'risky'. Supplements for working during a public holiday were increased from 50% to 100% of the average wage of the employee, although exceptions may be agreed in collective agreements at company level. New wage supplements were introduced for working on Saturdays and Sundays (at least 25% and 50% respectively of the hourly minimum wage), although exceptions are again possible at company level. After employers criticised the

introduction of these new wage supplements, the government responded by implementing the new supplements on a step-by-step basis. For instance, supplements for working on Saturdays increased to 50% and on Sundays to 100% only from the 1 May 2019.

Ongoing and upcoming changes

In late September 2018, following a lengthy preparation process and disagreement between the social partners while drafting legislation, the Finnish government presented its proposal for a new Working Hours Act. The changes are designed to update and modernise the current Working Hours Act which dates back to 1996. The proposition includes two main revisions that should come into force from 1 January 2020. The first major revision includes provisions for a working time model that allows employees to choose the number of hours they work, when they work and where they work. Such flexible working arrangements would primarily be based on mutual trust between the employer and employee. The second major revision involves the introduction of a 'working hours bank' that enables a more flexible use of working hours over time.

The Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK) has stated that it considers the proposition to be a step in the wrong direction, as it imposes tighter regulation on more industries. Both the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK) and the Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland (Akava) are in favour of increased flexibility of working hours, although Akava's position is that flexible working hours should be more of an exception than the norm. Both Akava and SAK have criticised the government for not involving the social partners in the final stage of the drafting of the proposal.

Another recent change took place in Hungary, where the regulation of working time changed considerably from 1 January 2019. In December 2018, the Labour Code (Act I of 2012) was amended by Act CXVI of 2018, increasing the maximum duration of the period for working time banking fixed in collective agreements from 12 to 36 months. At the same time, the maximum of 250 hours of overtime that can be requested in a given calendar year was increased to a limit of 400 hours.

Sector-related legislative developments

A new law in Belgium, introduced on 15 January 2018, modified the regulations for overtime within the hotels, restaurants and catering sector. The law builds upon proposals from the Workable Work Law of 2017 (see section on leave above) and allows for 360 voluntary hours of overtime – a substantial increase on the previous limit of 100 hours. These hours are not eligible for overtime pay but are exempt from taxes and social benefits, so the employee is able to keep the entirety of their gross wage.

A very important change took place in Hungary, where a new law regulating public administration came into force in 2019. According to Act CXXV of 2018 on Government Administration, an employer may legally require an employee to work 12 hours in a working day and a maximum of 48 hours in a working week. In addition, the act abolishes special leave for government officials, excludes lunch breaks from working time, and requires that government officials be available on request during breaks.

Collective bargaining developments

Peak-level developments

One of the most important developments in the EU in terms of working time was the tripartite Competitiveness Pact signed in Finland, which came into force in 2017. The Competitiveness Pact aims to improve the competitiveness of labour and businesses in Finland, boost economic growth, create new jobs, support fiscal adjustment, and promote local collective bargaining through national collective agreements. One of the most important changes introduced by the Competitiveness Pact was the extension of the annual working time by an average of 24 hours for those in full-time work – an average of 30 minutes per week – without a corresponding adjustment of earnings. This meant that the collectively agreed average weekly working hours, which had previously stood at 37.5 hours, were increased to 38. The working time extension was implemented through agreement between trade unions and employers' federations in each sector.

Sectoral-level developments

In Germany, the year 2018 saw new agreements concluded in the metal and electrical sector, as well as in the rail sector. These agreements opened up the possibility for employees to exchange a lump-sum payment for additional days of leave. The agreement in the metal and electrical sector also introduced collective rules allowing full-time employees to reduce their working time to a minimum of 28 hours per week for a period of up to 24 months. To exercise this right, employees need to have worked for their employer for at least two years. The employer has the right to deny such a request on the following grounds:

- 10% of its workforce has already been granted the claim
- 18% of its workforce works reduced hours in comparison to the collectively agreed standards
- no suitable candidate is available to cover the employee's position

A new two-year collective agreement was concluded in 2018 in the Estonian healthcare sector. The agreement

increases the minimum pay of healthcare workers, while also introducing higher pay for work carried out at night (5% higher, as of 2019) and on weekends (10% higher, as of 2020). The agreement also granted two additional days of paid leave to healthcare workers, increasing the additional leave allowance from between three and seven days to between five and seven days (depending on the post occupied by the employee).

In Greece, a collective agreement was signed in 2018 between the Panhellenic Federation of Local Government Employees (POE-OTA) and the Ministries of the Interior and Finance on the pay and working conditions of those employed in a private employment relationship. The agreement provides for specific working time arrangements, such as:

- a working week of 32 hours for some categories of work, such as waste management, inspection and transportation, drainage and water supply, maintenance and construction
- an additional five days of annual leave for waste management employees

Also in Greece, the National General Collective Labour Agreement for 2018, which regulates the employment terms and conditions of workers in a public employment relationship with second-tier local authorities, laid down a working week of 35 hours for some categories of workers. These include areas of work such as road surfacing, park maintenance and street cleaning. The agreement also provided two additional days of annual leave per year to the same workers.

In Slovenia, a new collective agreement for the hospitality sector established working hours of 40 hours per week, which may be shortened to a minimum of 36 hours at company level. It also states that any education and training in the interest of the employer must normally be organised within the employee's working time. An annex to the collective agreement for human health and social work activities was also negotiated. Among other points, it established that, in principle, work must be organised in such a way that workers are not required to work on public holidays (except in certain exceptional situations) or on more than 28 Sundays per year.

Although not a sectoral development, it is important to note a new collective agreement recently adopted at a previously non-unionised courier company in Ireland. The agreement states that new hires will be on contracts of between 30 and 35 hours per week, and that their shift start times will vary from day to day due to fluctuations in the volume of work. According to the agreement, warehouse operatives will on average work a 40-hour week, which means that they will always be paid the equivalent of 40 hours of work, although their actual hours may vary on a weekly basis.

Major debates concerning working time duration

A possible shortening of the working week was the subject of significant debate in Belgium and Czechia. In Belgium, discussions around a shorter working week of 30 hours took place mostly in the media, although the trade unions have at times entered the debate. Employers' associations also occasionally shared their view that the current economic context makes the system unfeasible.

In Czechia, the main debate focused on a new appeal by trade unions for a shorter working week – without a reduction in wages. According to the Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions (ČMKOS), the working week should be reduced from 40 to 37.5 hours. Trade unions argued that working hours have already been reduced in over three-quarters (77%) of companies with operating trade unions. They also noted that such a policy would support employment after the arrival of Industry 4.0, the next phase in the digitalisation of the manufacturing sector. Employers' representatives opposed this proposal, citing labour shortages and the unpreparedness of domestic firms with respect to technology as arguments against the policy. They emphasised that working hours can be shortened only after an increase in labour productivity. Prime Minister Andrej Babiš stated that shorter working hours are not yet on the agenda due to the reasons outlined by employers, although he did not exclude this possibility in the future.

In addition, the Czech trade unions renewed a previous request for an increase in the statutory annual leave allowance from four to five weeks. The request received support from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and from the Czech Social Democratic Party, but other governmental bodies, as well as employers' representatives, opposed the proposal. In view of the conflicting opinions among stakeholders, the government took a neutral position towards the suggestion. The issue is, however, expected to be further discussed and negotiated in 2019.

In Spain, many workers have experienced a systematic increase in overtime work that is not appropriately remunerated, leading trade unions to denounce this trend and request stricter regulation on the issue. In 2019, the government responded by introducing an obligation upon workers to record their exact working hours, in order to tackle the abuse of unpaid overtime by employers. A second major debate surrounded the rationalisation of working days. For example, many workers finish the working day as late as 19:00, but the justification given for this is that the workers take a long lunch break in the middle of the day. It has often been argued that such work schedules represent an obstacle to work–life balance. Despite calls to change the current

situation, there has not yet been any legal change or agreement on the issue.

In Bulgaria, night work was the main topic of debate relating to working time during 2018. A key initiative was led by the Confederation of Labour, Podkrepa, which launched a campaign for decent working conditions and remuneration for night work. According to the confederation, there are over 400,000 workers in Bulgaria performing night work while not receiving appropriate wages. These workers also face various health and social problems. Among other issues, night work is associated with fatigue, deterioration in health, higher rates of work-related accidents and injuries, social isolation and higher divorce rates. The confederation claimed that there are still gaps in the legislation regulating night work, pointing specifically to the fact that the ordinance that determines additional remuneration for night work has not been updated since 2007. The Bulgarian Industrial Capital Association (BICA), on the contrary, argued that the ordinance only defines the minimum rate of remuneration for night work, and that collective agreements that can provide higher rates for workers. In October 2018, Podkrepa's proposal to update the minimum rate of additional remuneration for night work was tabled in the National Council for Tripartite Cooperation (NCTC) but was rejected by employers and the government. The subject of night work is to be revisited during 2019, with wider discussions taking place regarding additional remuneration and possible amendments to the Labour Code.

The Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs proposed changes to the Employment Contracts Act, which would, among other things, provide more flexibility regarding the organisation of working time. The main proposal involved the possibility for the employer and employee to agree on a range of working hours (e.g. 25–35 hours per week), instead of a specific number of hours per time period (e.g. 40 hours per week). Trade unions expressed their concern that such flexibility could put some groups in the labour market in a difficult situation, and proposed instead that sectoral-level collective agreements be used for such arrangements. Employers, on the other hand, welcomed such flexibility, noting that these arrangements already exist and that the country's labour law should reflect this.

In the United Kingdom, the trade union movement continued to raise concerns over the possible scrapping of the Working Time Regulations – and other EU-derived employment protections – as a result of the implementation of the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

2 Weekly working time

Statutory maximum working time

Collective bargaining on the length of working time in the EU and Norway takes place within the framework of statutory rules on maximum working hours. These must respect the provisions of the EU Working Time Directive, which includes an average maximum 48-hour working week (over a reference period not exceeding four

months), a minimum daily rest period of 11 hours and a minimum uninterrupted weekly rest of 35 hours.

As Table 1 shows, in terms of maximum duration of work, most countries fall into one of two main groups: those that set their maximum weekly hours at the 48 hours specified by the Working Time Directive, and those that operate a lower limit of 40 hours (which may be extended up to 48 hours or more under certain conditions). Belgium and France continue to be the

Table 1: Main statutory provisions regarding maximum weekly and daily working hours, 2018

Country	Maximum weekly working hours	Maximum weekly working hours, including overtime	Maximum daily working hours	Maximum daily working hours, including overtime
Austria	40	60	8	12
Belgium	38	50	8	9–12
Bulgaria	40	48	8	10
Croatia	40	50	8	12
Cyprus	Not specified	48	Not specified	Not specified
Czechia	40	48	12	Not specified
Denmark	48	48	Not specified	13
Estonia	40	48	8	13
Finland	40	Not specified	8	Not specified
France	35	48	7	10–12
Germany	48	60	8	10
Greece	40	48	8	12
Hungary	40	48	8	12
Ireland	48	48	Not specified	13
Italy	40	48	Not specified	Not specified
Latvia	40	48	8	Not specified
Lithuania	40	48	Not specified	12
Luxembourg	40	48	8	10
Malta	Not specified	48	Not specified	12.5
Netherlands	48	60	Not specified	12
Norway	40	48	9	13
Poland	40	48	8	Not specified
Portugal	40	48	8	10
Romania	40	48	8	12
Slovakia	40	48	8	9–12
Slovenia	40	48	8	10
Spain	40	Not specified	9	Not specified
Sweden	40	48	8	13
United Kingdom	Not specified	48	Not specified	Not specified

Source: Network of Eurofound Correspondents, <http://eurofound.link/wagedatabase>

most notable exceptions, with maximum weekly hours of 38 and 35 hours respectively. If overtime is considered, then most countries set the weekly maximum at 48 hours. The exceptions are Belgium and Croatia, at 50 hours, and Austria, Germany and the Netherlands, at 60 hours..

Many Member States also have restrictions in terms of maximum daily working hours. For most countries, 8 hours is the maximum, but this figure ranges from 7 hours in France to 12 in Czechia. When overtime is considered, the daily maximum may increase from 9 hours to 12 or even 13 hours. In many countries, this limit is not specified in legislation. However, in practice, the maximum in these cases is also 13 hours, given that the minimum period of rest between two working days is 11 hours.

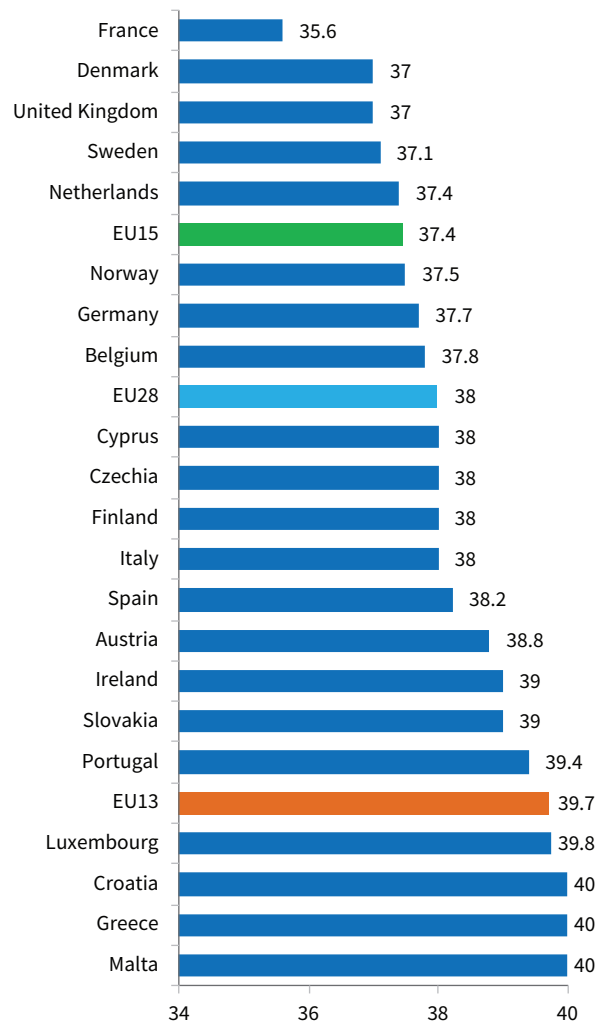
Weekly working hours – collectively agreed

As Eurofound research has shown, collective bargaining plays an important role in determining the duration of working time in many of the EU28 Member States, though to a lesser or sometimes negligible extent in some of the Member States that have joined the EU since 2004 (the EU13). The nature and extent of this role also differs widely across countries, with bargaining at different levels (intersectoral, sectoral and company level) playing more or less important roles. Bargaining coverage also varies considerably, although it is generally higher in the EU15 than in the EU13. The importance of bargaining may also differ greatly across sectors of economic activity and groups of workers. The relationship between bargaining and legislative provisions on working time also varies considerably between countries (Eurofound, 2016).

Figure 1 shows the average collectively agreed normal weekly hours – meaning the weekly working time agreed via collective bargaining at sectoral or company level for full-time workers – in the countries where such data exist. The estimates provided for Croatia, Greece and Malta assume that most collective agreements reflect the statutory maximum working week of 40 hours. In some Member States – Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovenia – working time is generally not defined through collective bargaining; therefore, these countries are not represented in the chart (Eurofound, 2016).

For the majority of countries, however, it is possible to present average agreed hours in 2018. With very few exceptions, there have been no major changes since 2016 (Eurofound, 2017). Slovakia and Spain were the only Member States to register changes in average collectively agreed weekly hours in between 2017 and 2018: in Slovakia they decreased by 0.4 hours, while in

Figure 1: Average collectively agreed normal weekly working hours, 2018

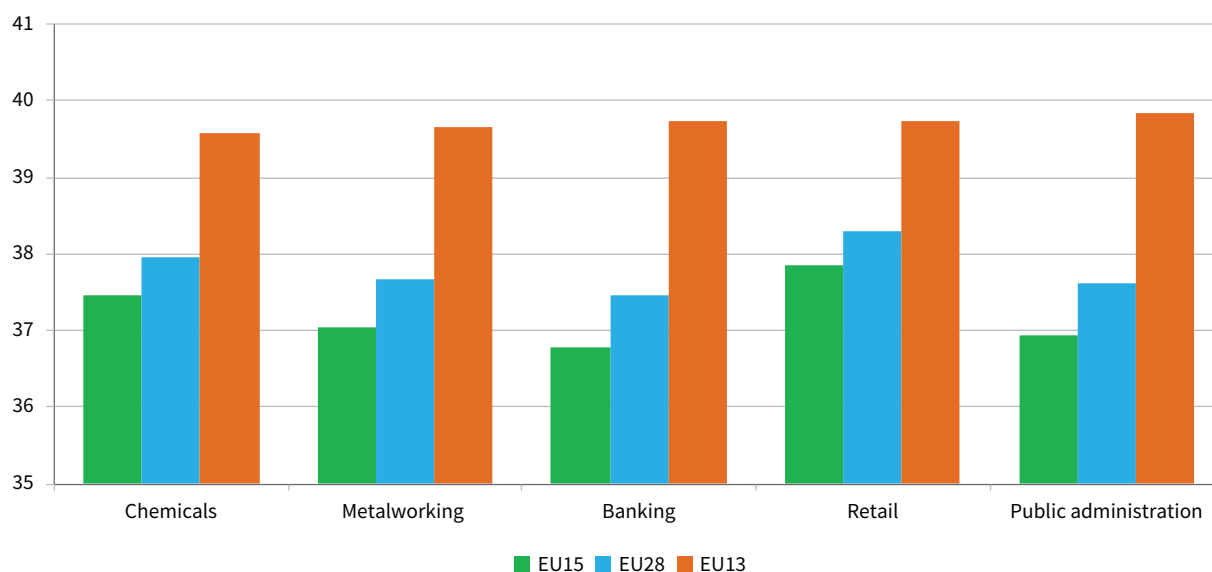


Note: The data should be interpreted in conjunction with the notes in Annex 2A; figures for the EU28, EU15 and EU13 are the author's calculations of weighted averages based on relative country sizes in terms of employment (Eurostat's Labour Force Survey (EU LFS), 2018).
Source: Network of Eurofound Correspondents, <http://eurofound.link/wagedatabase>

Spain they increased by 0.1 hours. These changes, however, were not large enough to affect the overall average of the EU28, which has remained at 38 hours per week since 2016.

France remains the country with the shortest collectively agreed working week in the EU, with an average of 35.6 hours. This reflects the ongoing impact of the so-called 'Aubry' law, which established a statutory working week of 35 hours in 2000. Apart from France, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK are the other countries registering an average agreed working week at or below the EU15 average of 37.4 hours in 2018. Finland used to be part of this group, but now sits at the EU28 average following the recent introduction of its Competitiveness Pact (see 'Peak-level developments' in Chapter 1).

Figure 2: Average collectively agreed normal weekly hours in selected sectors, 2018



Note: Figures for the EU28, EU15 and EU13 are the author's own calculations of weighted averages based on relative country sizes in terms of employment (Eurostat, EU LFS, 2018).

Source: Network of Eurofound Correspondents, <http://eurofound.link/wagedatabase>

Weekly working hours in selected sectors

This subchapter looks at the average agreed weekly working hours for full-time workers, as set by collective bargaining, in five broad sectors of activity: chemicals, metalworking, banking, retail and public administration (Figure 2). The more specific sectoral figures presented here tend to be more accurate than the overall average data provided in the previous subchapter, as they show the specificities of the sectors analysed.

Of the sectors considered here, the shortest average collectively agreed working week in the EU is in the banking sector, at 37.5 hours. This has remained the same since 2016. The longest collectively agreed working week is in the retail sector. This averaged 38.3 hours in 2018 – the same as in 2017 but 0.2 hours shorter than in 2016. The agreed weekly working hours in all five sectors are higher in the EU13 than in the EU15. The largest difference can be found in the banking sector, in which the average agreed working week in the EU13 is almost three hours longer than in the EU15 – a difference equivalent to around four weeks of work over a full year. In the chemicals sector, the agreed working week in the EU13 is 2.1 hours longer than in the EU15, meaning the difference between the two has increased by 0.1 hours since 2016. In public administration the gap is 2.9 hours, 0.2 hours greater than in 2016. In metalworking, the difference between the two country groupings is 2.6 hours (0.2 hours greater than in 2016), whereas retail shows the smallest

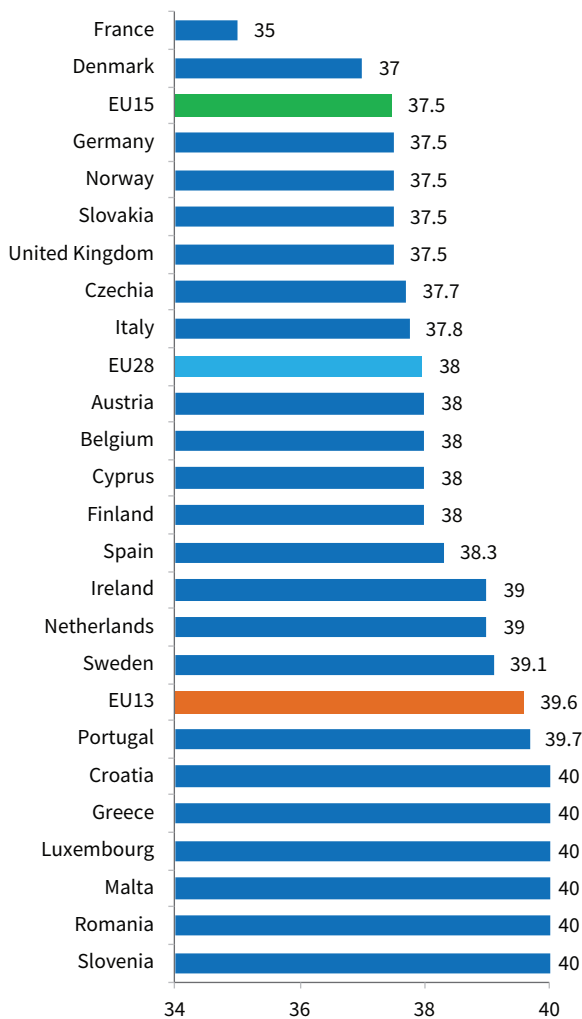
difference, at 1.9 hours (also 0.2 hours greater than in 2016). This means the difference between the ‘older’ and ‘newer’ Member States is increasing in all the analysed sectors, except banking. In this sector, the average is decreasing in the Member States that have joined since 2004, while remaining stable among the EU15.

A uniform 40-hour working week was used in Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovenia to calculate the averages for the EU28 and EU13, corresponding to the statutory normal week in those countries. The majority of Member States display relatively little difference between sectors. Wider differences of more than two hours (and in some cases up to four hours) between sectors were evident in Belgium, Czechia, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK. In Portugal, the main difference was identified between public administration and banking (each 35 hours) and the other sectors, all of which have an average working week of close to 40 hours.

Chemicals

Figure 3 shows the average collectively agreed normal weekly hours in the chemicals sector in 2018, according to the relevant sectoral collective agreements, except where specified in the notes relating to the figure (see Annex 2B). The averages for the EU28, EU15 and EU13 did not change between 2017 and 2018. There was no change between 2017 and 2018 in the length of the working week in most countries. Czechia and Sweden registered an increase of 0.1 hours, bringing the working

Figure 3: Average collectively agreed normal weekly hours in the chemicals sector, 2018



Note: The data should be interpreted in conjunction with the notes in Annex 2B; figures for the EU28, EU15 and EU13 are the author's calculations of weighted averages based on relative country sizes in terms of employment (Eurostat, EU LFS, 2018).

Source: Network of Eurofound Correspondents, <http://eurofound.link/wagedatabase>

week to 37.7 hours in Czechia and to 39.1 hours in Sweden. In the EU28, the average agreed weekly working time in the chemicals sector was in line with the overall, economy-wide average of 38 hours.

In 2018, the average agreed working week in the chemicals sector in the EU28 was 0.5 hours higher than the average of 37.5 hours for the EU15, which is still much lower than the average of 39.6 hours for the EU13.

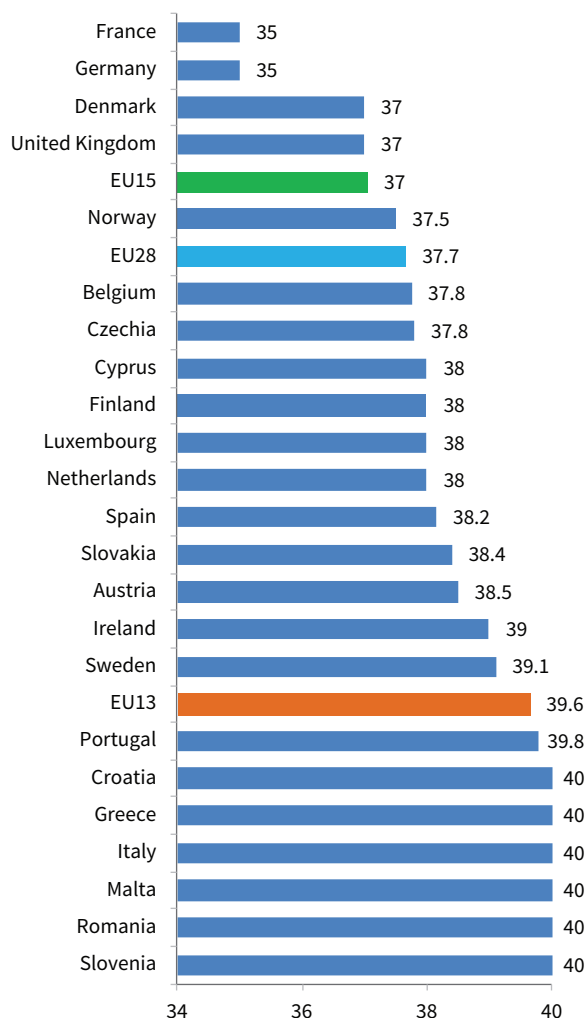
Within the EU15, the longest agreed weekly hours in the chemicals sector were registered in Greece and Luxembourg (40 hours) and the shortest in France (35 hours) and Denmark (37 hours). Working hours in the chemicals sector are notably longer than the national economy-wide averages in Luxembourg (0.25 hours longer), the Netherlands (1.6 hours longer), Portugal (0.3 hours longer), Sweden (2 hours longer) and the UK (0.5 hours longer). However, working hours in the chemicals sector are shorter in Austria (0.8 hours shorter than the economy-wide average), as well as in France (0.6 hours shorter) and Italy (0.25 hours shorter). Overall, the average agreed working week in the chemicals sector in the EU15 was slightly longer (by 0.1 hours) than the average across those countries for all sectors of economic activity.

In the EU13, the average weekly hours in the chemicals sector were 39.6 in 2018 – exactly the same as in 2017 and 2016. In the countries not shown in Figure 3 – Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland – working time in the chemicals sector is generally not defined by collective agreements, but rather by legislation (Eurofound, 2016). Within the EU13, Czechia and Slovakia have an average agreed weekly working time below the EU28 average, while most of the other EU13 Member States stand at 40 hours. The average agreed working week in the chemicals sector in the EU13 was shorter (by 0.1 hours) than the average across all sectors in this set of countries.

Metalworking

Figure 4 shows the average collectively agreed normal weekly hours in the metalworking sector in 2018, according to the relevant sectoral collective agreements, except where specified in the notes relating to the figure (see Annex 2C). The averages for the EU28, EU15 and EU13 did not change between 2017 and 2018. In fact, Sweden was the only country to register a change, with an increase of 0.1 hours in 2018. Important changes took place between 2016 and 2017, however: the average agreed weekly hours decreased by 0.3 hours in the EU15 and by 0.1 hours in the EU28, although they remained the same in the EU13. Between 2016 and 2017, the average agreed working hours decreased in Sweden (by 0.4 hours), in Spain (by 0.25 hours) and in Portugal (by 0.2 hours). In 2018, the average agreed weekly working time in the metalworking sector in the EU28 (37.7 hours) was shorter than the economy-wide average of 38 hours.

Figure 4: Average collectively agreed normal weekly hours in the metalworking sector, 2018



Note: The data should be interpreted in conjunction with the notes in Annex 2C; figures for the EU28, EU15 and EU13 are the author's calculations of weighted averages based on relative country sizes in terms of employment (Eurostat, EU LFS, 2018).

Source: Network of Eurofound Correspondents, <http://eurofound.link/wagedatabase>

In 2018, the average agreed working week in the metalworking sector in the EU28 was 0.7 hours higher than the average of 37.7 hours for the EU15, which was much lower than the average for the EU13 of 39.6 hours.

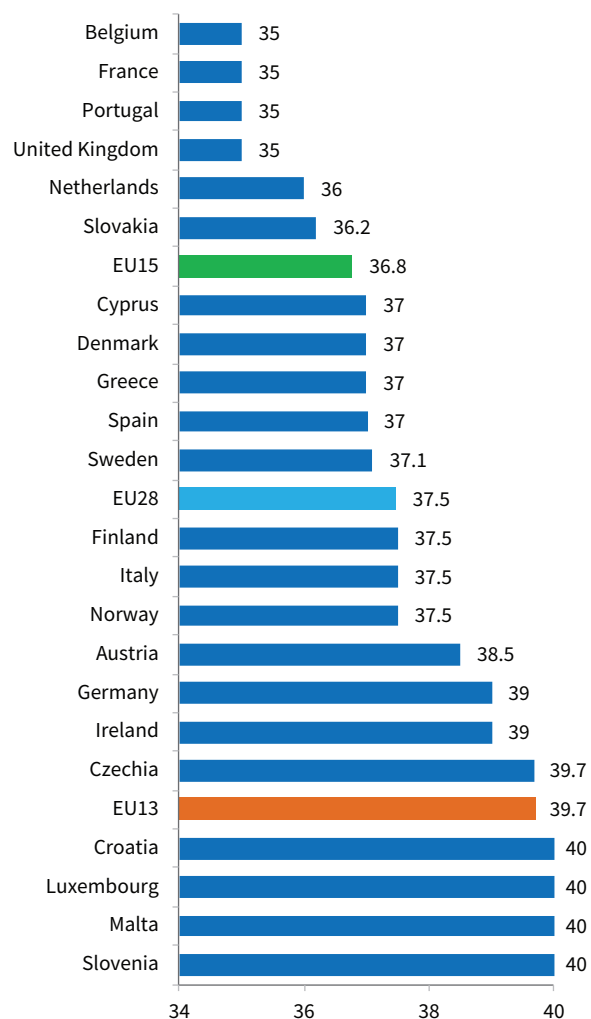
Within the EU15 in 2018, the longest average agreed weekly hours in the metalworking sector were registered in Italy and Greece (40 hours) and Portugal (39.8 hours) and the shortest in France and Germany (35 hours). Working hours in the metalworking sector are longer than the national economy-wide average in Italy and Sweden (each by 2 hours). They are notably shorter in Germany (by 2.7 hours) and in Luxembourg (by 1.8 hours). Across the EU15, the average agreed working week in the metalworking sector was shorter (by 0.4 hours) than the average across all sectors of economic activity.

In the EU13, the average weekly hours in the metalworking sector were 39.6 in 2018 – the same as in 2016 and 2017. In the countries not shown in Figure 4 – Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland – working time in the metalworking sector is generally not defined by collective agreements, but rather is based on national legislation (Eurofound, 2016). Within the EU13, Czechia (37.8 hours) and Cyprus (38 hours) are closest to the EU28 average of 37.7 hours in terms of their average agreed weekly working time in the metalworking sector.

Banking

Figure 5 shows the average collectively agreed normal weekly hours in the banking sector in 2018, according to the relevant sectoral collective agreements, except where specified in the notes relating to the figure

Figure 5: Average collectively agreed normal weekly hours in the banking sector, 2018



Note: The data should be interpreted in conjunction with the notes in Annex 2D; figures for the EU28, EU15 and EU13 are the author's calculations of weighted averages based on relative country sizes in terms of employment (Eurostat, EU LFS, 2018).

Source: Network of Eurofound Correspondents, <http://eurofound.link/wagedatabase>

(see Annex 2D). The averages for the EU28 and EU15 did not change between 2017 and 2018, reflecting the lack of change in most countries. The average in the EU13 decreased from 39.9 hours in 2016 to 39.8 hours in 2017 and 39.7 hours in 2018. The only country registering a notable change between 2017 and 2018 was Slovakia, where the average weekly working hours in the banking sector decreased significantly, from 38.2 hours to 36.2 hours. At 37.5 hours, the average agreed weekly working time in banking in the EU28 was half an hour shorter than the economy-wide average of 38 hours.

In the EU15, the average agreed working week in the banking sector stood at 36.8 hours in 2018, the same as in 2016 and 2017. The longest agreed weekly hours in the sector are in Luxembourg (40 hours) and Ireland and Germany (39 hours). The shortest working weeks are in Belgium, France, Portugal and the UK, with 35 hours. Working hours in banking are longer than the national economy-wide average in Germany (1.3 hours longer), but much shorter in Portugal (4.4 hours shorter), Greece (3 hours shorter) and Belgium (2.8 hours shorter). Across the EU15, the average agreed working week in the banking sector is 0.6 hours shorter than the economy-wide average.

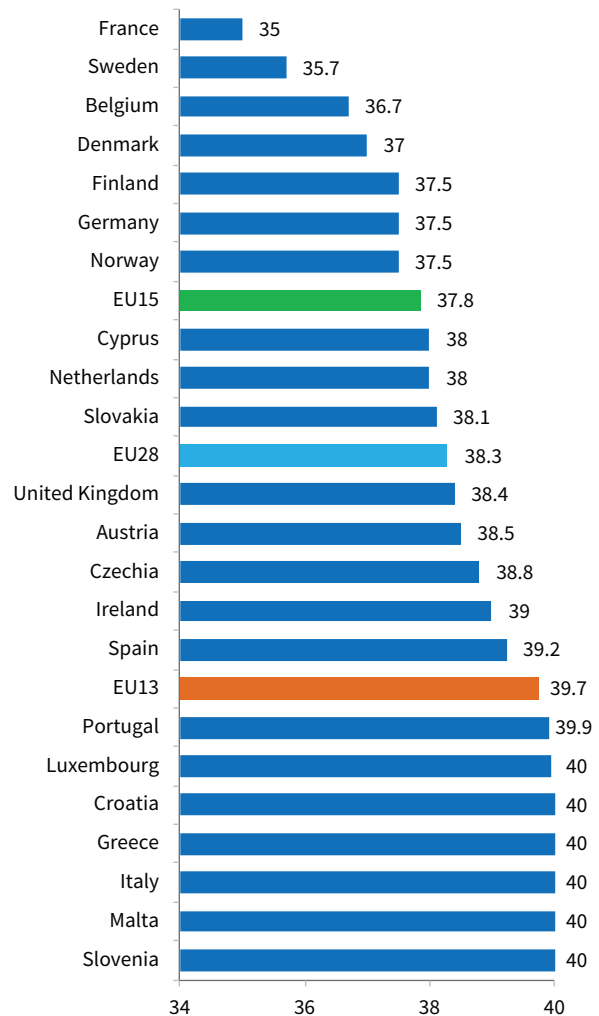
In the EU13, the average weekly hours in banking were 39.7 hours in 2018 – 0.2 hours less than in 2016 and 0.1 less than in 2017. In the countries not shown in Figure 5 – Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania – working time in the banking sector is generally not collectively agreed, but rather is based on national legislation (Eurofound, 2016). In 2018, the weekly average for the banking sector in the EU13 was nearly 3 hours longer than the EU15 average for the sector and the same as the economy-wide average. Slovakia, with an average collectively agreed weekly working time for the sector of 36.2 hours, is the only country in the EU13 in which the figure is below the average figure for the EU15. In Czechia, the agreed weekly hours in the banking sector are 1.7 hours longer than the economy-wide national average.

Retail

In 2018, the average collectively agreed normal working week for the retail sector was 38.3 hours in the EU28 (Figure 6). This was the same as in 2017, but 0.2 hours shorter than in 2016. Czechia and Sweden registered decreases of 0.2 hours, while in Slovakia the length of the working week decreased by 0.4 hours. In the EU28, the average agreed weekly working time in retail was 0.3 hours longer than the economy-wide average.

In the EU15, the average weekly hours for retail workers stood at 37.8 hours in 2018, the same as in 2017 and 0.3 hours shorter than in 2016. The longest agreed weekly hours in the retail sector were found in Italy and Greece (each 40 hours per week) and in Luxembourg (almost 40 hours). The shortest working weeks are in

Figure 6: Average collectively agreed normal weekly working hours in the retail sector, 2018



Note: The data should be interpreted in conjunction with the notes in Annex 2E; figures for the EU28, EU15 and EU13 are the author's calculations of weighted averages based on relative country sizes in terms of employment (Eurostat, EU LFS, 2018).

Source: Network of Eurofound Correspondents, <http://eurofound.link/wagedatabase>

France (35 hours) and Sweden (35.7 hours). Working hours in retail are longer than the economy-wide national average in Italy (by 2 hours), the UK (by 1.4 hours) and Spain (by 1 hour). The working week in retail is shorter than the national average in Sweden (by 1.4 hours) and Belgium (by 1.1 hours). Overall, the average agreed working week in the retail sector is 0.4 hours longer than the economy-wide average for the EU15.

In the EU13, the average working week in retail was 39.7 hours in 2018 – 0.1 hours shorter than in 2017. In the countries not shown in Figure 6 – Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania – working time in the retail sector is generally not defined by collective agreements, but rather is

based on national legislation (Eurofound, 2016). In 2018, the weekly average for the retail sector in the EU13 was nearly two hours longer than in the EU15, and equal to the EU13's economy-wide average. Cyprus and Slovakia, with average collectively agreed working weeks of 38 and 38.1 hours respectively, are the only countries in the EU13 below the average figure for the EU28. In Czechia, the agreed weekly hours in the retail sector are 0.8 hours longer than the economy-wide national average.

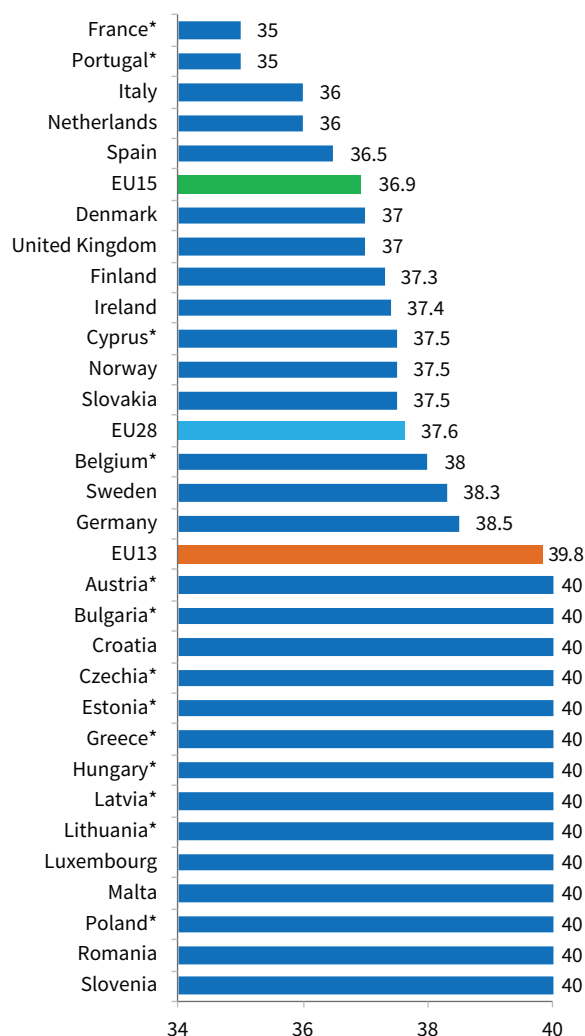
Public administration

Public administration is distinct from the other sectors discussed above in that the state and public institutions are the main employers. In the majority of Member States, working time is unilaterally defined by the state and hence regulated by legislation (Eurofound, 2016). There were almost no changes between 2017 and 2018 in the collectively agreed normal weekly hours in this sector in the EU28. Data from Sweden show that the average agreed hours in public administration decreased by 0.1 hours between 2017 and 2018, from 38.4 to 38.3 hours. Across the EU28, the average agreed weekly working time in public administration was 37.6 hours in 2018 (Figure 7), the same as in 2017 and 0.2 hours shorter than in 2016. This figure is 0.4 hours lower than the economy-wide average across the EU28.

In the EU15, the average weekly working hours in public administration decreased from 37.1 hours in 2016 to 36.9 in 2017 and 2018. The longest weekly hours in the sector were recorded in Austria, Greece and Luxembourg (40 hours), while the shortest were recorded in France and Portugal (35 hours), followed by Italy and the Netherlands (36 hours). Working hours in public administration are markedly longer than the economy-wide national average in Austria, Germany, Luxembourg and Sweden, but shorter in Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia and Spain. Overall, the average agreed working week in public administration is 0.5 hours shorter than the economy-wide average.

In the EU13, the average working week in public administration was 39.8 hours in 2018 – 2.9 hours longer than the EU15 average. Cyprus and Slovakia were the only countries below the EU28 average in 2018. In these

Figure 7: Average collectively agreed normal weekly working hours in public administration, 2018



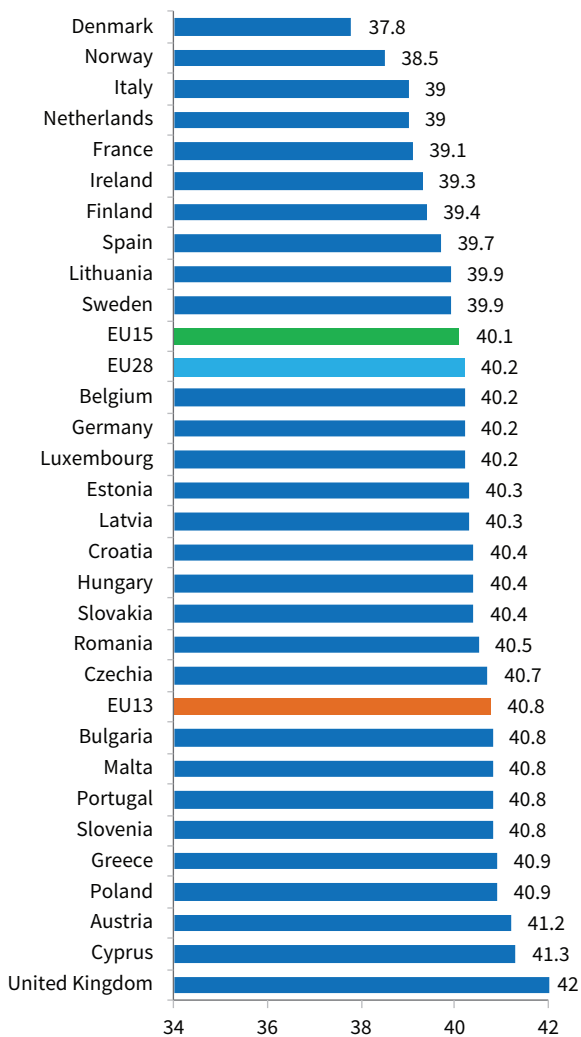
Note: * as per legislation. The data should be interpreted in conjunction with the notes in Annex 2F; figures for the EU28, EU15 and EU13 are the author's calculations of weighted averages based on relative country sizes in terms of employment (Eurostat, EU LFS, 2018).
Source: Network of Eurofound Correspondents, <http://eurofound.link/wagedatabase>

two countries, weekly working hours in public administration were even below the respective economy-wide national averages. Overall, the average agreed working hours for public administration in the EU13 were 0.1 hours above the economy-wide average.

Weekly working hours – usual

In order to see how many hours workers actually work in a given week, it is necessary to turn to data on usual weekly hours worked, which take into account factors such as overtime and absence. These data are typically measured in labour force surveys. Eurostat defines ‘usual hours worked’ as the modal value of the actual hours worked per week over a long reference period (at least four weeks), excluding weeks when an absence from work occurs (for example, due to holidays, leave or strikes). The ‘actual hours worked’ are the hours that individuals spend on work activities, including production, ancillary activities, short breaks, and education and training necessary for successfully carrying out the tasks required in their job. This figure does not include the employee’s travel time between home and their place of work, main meal breaks and absences due to personal reasons. Any time spent on

Figure 8: Average number of usual weekly hours of work in main job, full-time employees, 2018



Note: The EU13 average was calculated by the author.

Source: Eurostat, EU LFS, 2018

education and training that is not necessary for carrying out the tasks of the employee’s job is also excluded from this calculation. Figure 8 provides harmonised EU LFS data on the average number of usual weekly hours of work in the main job of full-time employees in 2018.

Full-time employees in the UK reported the longest usual weekly working hours in their main jobs in 2018, at 42 hours. This figure was 0.1 hours lower than in 2017 and 0.3 hours lower than in 2016. After the UK, the longest hours are reported by employees in Cyprus (41.3 hours), Austria (41.2 hours), Greece and Poland (each 40.9 hours). Employees in Denmark report the shortest weekly hours (37.8 hours, the same as in 2016 and 2017). This means that employees in Denmark report working 4.2 fewer hours per week than their counterparts in the UK – the equivalent of nearly five working weeks per year in the UK.

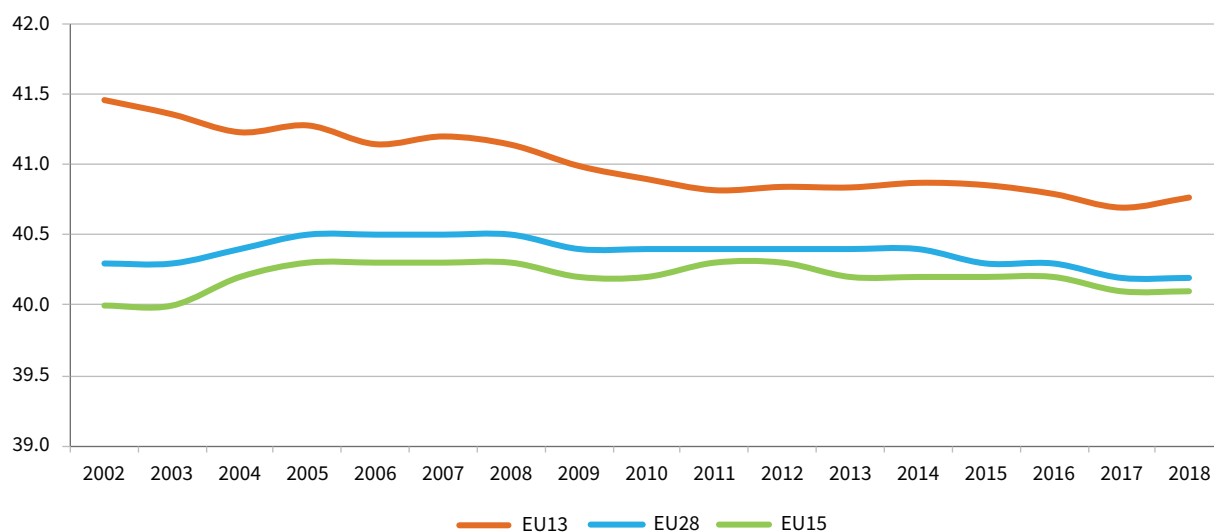
All but one of the EU13 countries registered usual weekly working hours at or above the EU28 average. Only Lithuania has a shorter usual working week, at 39.9 hours. In the EU15, the longest actual hours worked by full-time employees were in the UK (42 hours, as stated above), Austria (41.2 hours), Greece (40.9 hours) and Portugal (40.8 hours).

Usual weekly hours worked by full-time employees were longer than the average normal collectively agreed working week in all the countries analysed, with the exception of Lithuania (see Figure 1 for comparison). The extent to which the average actual working week exceeds the agreed normal working week varies across the EU, as follows:

- by less than an hour in Croatia, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg and Malta
- by between one and two hours in Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Slovakia, as well as in the only non-EU country analysed, Norway
- by more than two hours in Austria, Belgium, Czechia and Germany
- by more than three hours in Cyprus, France and the UK

In the EU28, the usual working week was 40.2 hours in 2018, the same as in 2017 and 0.1 hours shorter than in 2016; this was 2.2 hours longer than the average agreed working hours. In the EU15, the working week was 40.1 hours, 2.7 hours longer than the average agreed hours in the same group of countries. In the EU13, the working week was 40.8 hours, 0.1 hours longer than in 2017 and 1.1 hours longer than the average agreed working hours.

Figure 9: Average number of usual weekly hours of work in main job, full-time employees, EU, 2002–2018



Note: The EU13 average was calculated by the author.

Source: Eurostat, EU LFS, 2002–2018

Between 2017 and 2018, the annual figures for usual weekly working hours remained stable in the EU15 but increased slightly in the EU13, somewhat reversing the

process of convergence that had been seen since 2015. Overall, however, this did not affect the EU28 average in 2018, which remained the same (Figure 9).

3 Annual working time

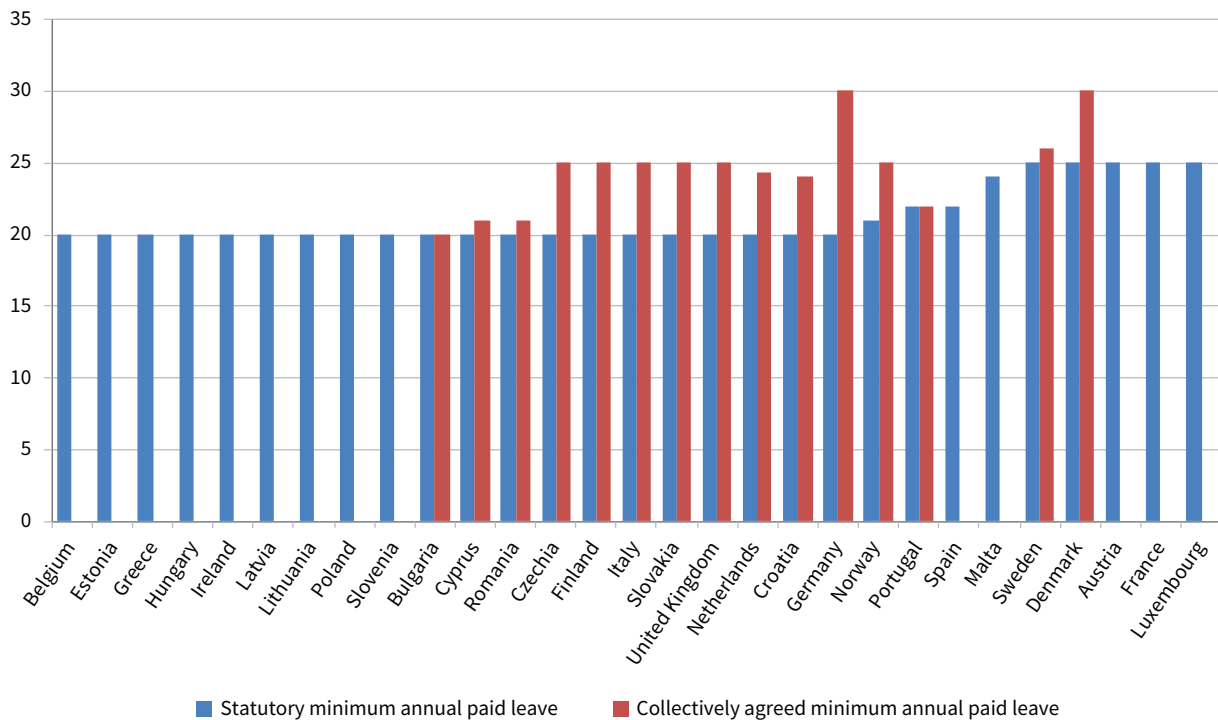
Annual leave

Workers are generally entitled to paid annual leave – an important factor in the overall length of working time each year. The Working Time Directive establishes that ‘Member States shall take the measures necessary to ensure that every worker is entitled to paid annual leave of at least four weeks’, which ‘may not be replaced by an allowance in lieu’. All the EU Member States and Norway have a statutory minimum period of paid annual leave, as set out in Figure 10. Here, leave is expressed in days and harmonised on the basis of a five-day working week. The majority of countries – 20 out of the 29 – have a 20-day minimum entitlement, as laid down in the Working Time Directive. This group includes Belgium, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands and the UK, as well as all the EU13 (except for Malta, with 24 days). In Austria, Denmark, France, Luxembourg and Sweden, the statutory minimum paid leave is 25 days, while in Portugal and Spain it is 22 days.

The statutory annual paid leave is, in many cases, the basis upon which workers’ actual leave entitlement is defined, with the exception of national public holidays. The total number of annual leave days may, however, depend on a number of factors, such as the type of occupation, years of service, or sector of economic activity. In many cases, it is defined in collective agreements. However, data on annual leave as set in collective agreements can be difficult, or even impossible, to find. While in some countries no data are available, in others, collectively agreed rules on leave entitlements are too complex to enable even a rough estimate to be produced. Figure 10 includes estimates of collectively agreed minimum annual paid leave, where these are available.

In Bulgaria, collective agreements may provide for longer annual leave than the 20 days set by law. Miners with more than 15 years of service, for example, are entitled to 23 days of leave.

Figure 10: Minimum annual paid leave, 2018 (days)



Note: The data should be interpreted in conjunction with the notes in Annex 2G.
 Source: Network of Eurofound Correspondents, <http://eurofound.link/wagedatabase>

In Cyprus, most of the sectoral and company-level collective agreements provide for additional paid leave proportionate to years of service. The average of 21 days is estimated based on the most relevant sectoral and company-level collective agreements.

In Romania, collective agreements usually provide for longer annual paid leave than the 20 statutory days. Depending on the employee's seniority, annual paid leave varies between 20 and 30 days. In Greece, the length of annual paid leave also depends on seniority.

In Czechia, Finland, Italy, Slovakia and the UK, the available data show that, on average, collective agreements provide five further days of leave per year in addition to the 20 days set by law. In the Netherlands, the data are a little more precise: on average, workers in the country who are covered by collective agreements have an annual paid leave allowance of 25.6 days. In Sweden, agreed annual paid leave was, on average, 27.3 days in 2018. At 30 days on average, Denmark and Germany have the longest collectively agreed paid leave allowances – well above their respective amounts of statutory leave.

Annual working hours

The duration of working time is often determined and discussed in terms of weekly working hours. However, moving the scale of reference to annual working hours and including other important elements, such as leave and public holidays, provides a more complete picture.

To calculate this, the figure for average collectively agreed normal weekly hours (presented in Figure 1) is first multiplied by 52 to give a total for the whole year. From this total annual figure, the average collectively agreed annual paid leave is subtracted. Where no such figure on collectively agreed leave is available, the minimum statutory annual leave (see Figure 10) is subtracted instead. Given that this is only a minimum, when calculated in this way, the estimated figure for annual working hours may be higher than the actual figure.

The number of annual public holidays is also subtracted, excluding those falling on Sundays. Where there are varying numbers of regional public holidays (as in Germany), an attempt has been made to use a median figure. It should also be noted that additional holidays may be observed locally (based on collective agreements or custom), while the number of public holidays may vary from year to year (especially in countries that do not award a replacement holiday when a public holiday falls at the weekend). It should be noted that these variations are the main cause of year-on-year changes in annual hours in many countries. For example, in 2016, two additional public holidays were introduced in Article 139 of the Romanian Labour Code, on 24 January and 1 June (International Children's Day). Meanwhile, in Portugal, four public holidays that had previously been abolished in 2012 were reintroduced through Law 8/2016, the 10th amendment of the country's Labour Code.

The resulting annual figures do not consider factors such as overtime work, other forms of time off and leave (such as sick leave or parental/maternity leave), or exceptional reductions to normal working time, such as short-time working. The results are only estimates, but they allow some general observations to be made.

Table 2 shows details of the calculation of the average collectively agreed normal annual working time. It shows that the number of public holidays in 2018 (excluding those falling on Sundays) varied significantly, from just 8 days in the UK to as many as 16 in Slovakia. In 2018, the average number of public holidays in the EU28 was 10.5, with the EU13 having more days on average (11.7 days) than the EU15 (10.1 days).

The combined total of agreed annual leave and public holidays varies greatly across the EU. In 2018, it ranged from 28 days in the UK and 29 in Belgium, Estonia and Ireland, to 39 days in Denmark and Germany and 41 days in Slovakia. This means the difference between the smallest and largest figures is equivalent to nearly three working weeks. Two other countries with notably high levels of leave in 2018 were Austria and Malta, with 38 days each. Other countries with particularly low levels of leave included Greece and Lithuania, with 30 days. The average figure for the EU28 was 34.3 days (34.7 days in the EU15 and 32.9 days in the EU13).

Table 2: Average collectively agreed normal annual working time, 2018

Country	A	B	C	D	E	F
	Weekly hours	Gross annual hours (A x 52)	Annual leave (days)	Public holidays (days)**	All leave (C + D) expressed in hours	Annual hours (B – E)
Estonia	40	2,080	20*	9	232	1,848
Greece	40	2,080	20*	10	240	1,840
Lithuania	40	2,080	20*	10	240	1,840
Hungary	40	2,080	20*	11	248	1,832
Poland	40	2,080	20*	11	248	1,832
Bulgaria	40	2,080	20	12	256	1,824
Latvia	40	2,080	20*	13	264	1,816
Romania	40	2,080	21	12	264	1,816
Slovenia	40	2,080	20*	13	264	1,816
Ireland	39	2,028	20*	9	226.2	1,801.8
Croatia	40	2,080	24	12	288	1,792
Luxembourg	39.8	2,067	25*	10	278.3	1,788.8
Portugal	39.4	2,048.8	22	12	267.9	1,780.9
Malta	40	2,080	24	14	304	1,776
Belgium	38	1,976	20*	9	220.4	1,755.6
Cyprus	38	1,976	21	11	243.2	1,732.8
Austria	38.8	2,017.6	25*	13	294.9	1,722.7
United Kingdom	37	1,924	20	8	207.2	1,716.8
Spain	38.22	1,987.44	22*	14	275.2	1,712.3
Slovakia	39	2,028	25.1	16	320.3	1,707.7
Finland	38	1,976	25	11	273.6	1,702.4
Italy	38	1,976	25	11	273.6	1,702.4
Netherlands	37.4	1,944.8	24.4	9	249.8	1,695
Czechia	38	1,976	25	12	281.2	1,694.8
Norway	37.5	1,950	25	10	262.5	1,687.5
Germany	37.7	1,960.4	30	9	294.1	1,666.3
Sweden	37.1	1,929.2	26	11	275	1,654.7
Denmark	37	1,924	30	9	288.6	1,635.4
France	35.6	1,851.2	25*	10	249.2	1,602
EU13	39.7	2,064.6	21.2	11.7	261.4	1,803.1
EU28	38.0	1,974.7	23.8	10.5	260.6	1,714.1
EU15	37.4	1,947.1	24.6	10.1	260.2	1,687

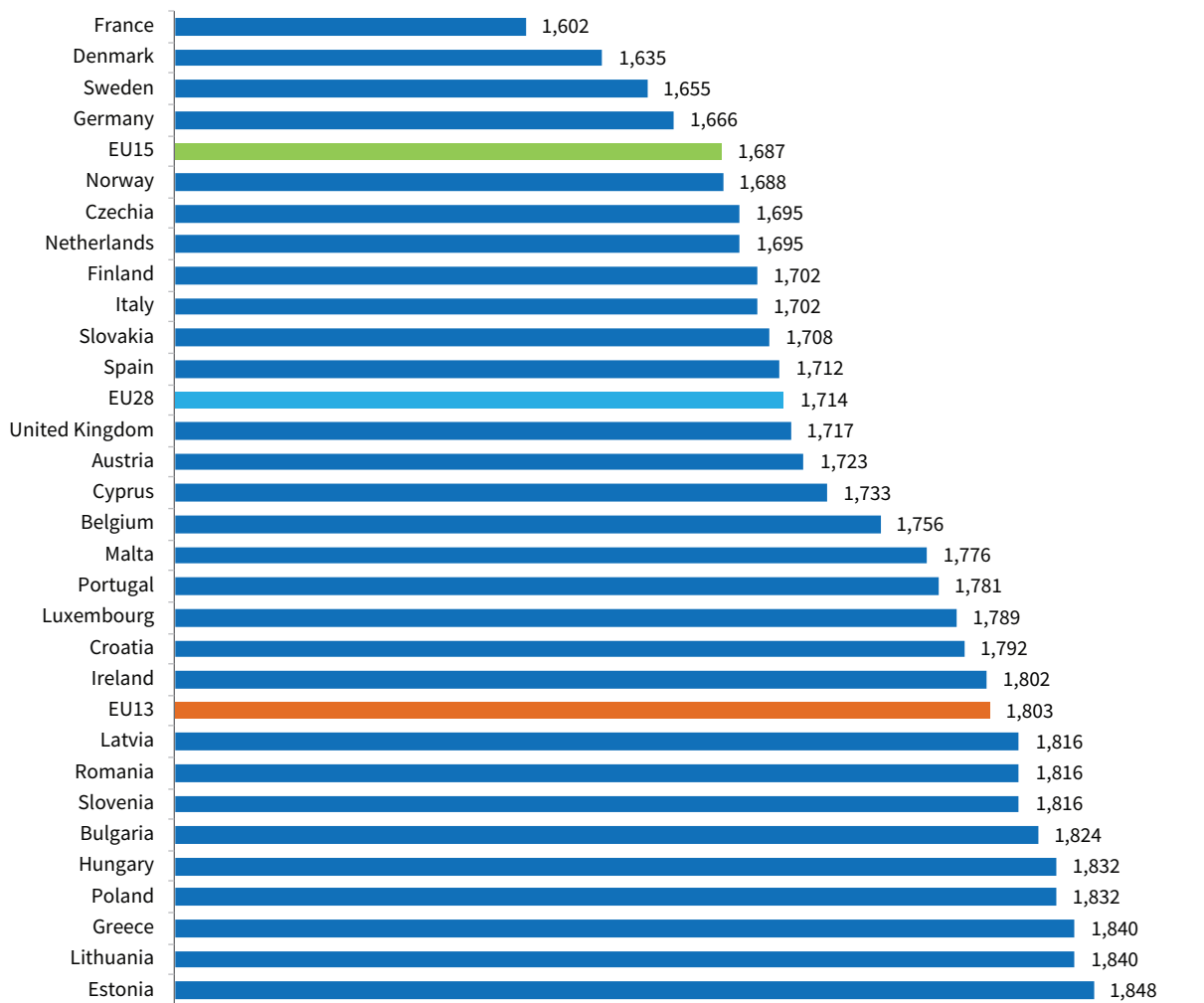
Notes: * statutory minimum paid annual leave; ** except public holidays falling on Sundays.

Source: Network of Eurofound Correspondents, <http://eurofound.link/wagedatabase>, author's calculations

Looking at the ranking of the 29 countries in terms of the length of their agreed working hours, the countries with the longest and shortest weekly hours are – in very broad terms – also those with the longest and shortest annual hours. However, there are some variations (see Figure 11). For example, Croatia, Czechia, Germany, Luxembourg, Malta and Spain find themselves in lower positions in the ranking of annual hours, as compared to the ranking for normal weekly hours. In other words,

their working hours are comparatively shorter if counted annually, as this takes into account their higher numbers of annual leave days and/or public holidays. Conversely, other countries, such as Belgium, the Netherlands and the UK, find themselves higher in the table for annual hours than in the table for weekly hours, due to their relatively low numbers of public holidays and/or annual leave days.

Figure 11: Average collectively agreed normal annual working hours, 2018



Source: Network of Eurofound Correspondents, <http://eurofound.link/wagedatabase> and author's calculations

In 2018, the average collectively agreed normal annual working time was approximately 1,714 hours in the EU28, 1,687 hours in the EU15, and 1,803 hours in the EU13. This means that workers in the EU13 were expected to work, on average, 116 hours longer than their counterparts in the EU15 – the equivalent of nearly three working weeks in the EU13. Overall, the EU's longest annual working hours (1,848 hours) are found in Estonia, where collective bargaining does not play a

significant role in defining working time standards. The shortest annual working hours are found in France (1,602 hours), Denmark, Sweden and Germany. This means that in 2018, according to the collectively agreed hours, workers in Estonia were supposed to work approximately 246 hours more than their counterparts in France. This is equivalent to more than six additional weeks of work in Estonia.

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Eurofound publications are available at www.eurofound.europa.eu

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Annexes

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Annex 2: Notes to figures

Annex 2A: Notes to Figure 1

Figure 1: Average collectively agreed normal weekly working hours, 2018

Austria: Estimate based on the most important collective agreements, which in general provide for 38.5 to 39 hours a week.

Belgium: The figure is an estimate calculated by the Federal Public Service for Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue for 2016 and there are no indications of a change. The calculation takes into account (only) the provisions of sectoral collective agreements in the private sector, which cover a very high proportion, but not all, of the employees in the private sector. For example, company agreements of state enterprises, such as railways or postal services, are not included. These sector agreements can furthermore be amended by company agreements (such as working time reduction or alternative working time regimes). It is also important to note that managerial staff (*kaderleden/cadres*) generally are not bound by Belgian working time rules and legislation. The Federal Public Service normally does not publish the exact figure, but rather publishes separate indices for blue-collar and white-collar workers. For both categories, this index has remained unchanged since the beginning of 2003.

Croatia: Estimate based on database of collective agreements established by the Union of Autonomous Trade Unions of Croatia (SSSH), which contains 187 collective agreements in force, as well as the collective agreement for state officials (OG 104/13) and collective agreement for public servants (OG 24/17).
<http://www.kolektivni-ugovori.info/baza-kolektivnih-ugovora/>

Cyprus: Estimate based on sectoral and company-level collective agreements. All collective agreements provide for weekly working hours of around 38 hours.

Czechia: Estimate based on a regular annual survey of wages and working conditions negotiated in collective agreements by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The information is based on a sample survey. The figure expresses the average weekly working hours agreed in collective agreements in the private sector.
http://www.kolektivnismilouvy.cz/downloadEN/2017/IP_P_2017.pdf

Denmark: Estimate based on weekly working hours provided by various collective agreements.

Finland: The figure is an estimate, based on typical provisions of sectoral agreements.

France: The figure for average collective weekly working hours is the 2015 figure from the Ministry of Labour's Directorate for Research, Studies and Statistics (DARES).

Germany: The source for the 2017 figure is the Collective Bargaining Archive of the Economic and Social Research Institute (WSI); for the 2018 figure, the source is IG Metall.

https://www.boeckler.de/index_wsi_tarifarchiv.htm

Greece: Under the National General Collective Employment Agreement (EGSSE) of the Greek General Confederation of Labour (GSEE) of 14 February 1984, the 40-hour week became applicable as of 1 January 1984 for all workers employed by any employer in Greece under a private law employment agreement. Source: KEPEA.

Ireland: The figure is an estimate based on the Programme for National Recovery from 1987, which set a framework agreement on the shortening of the working week by one hour in cases where the normal working week was 40 hours or more; the implementation was to be negotiated locally, on an organisation-by-organisation basis.

Italy: The figure is an estimate based on the 36–40 hours per week provided for in national collective bargaining agreements.

Luxembourg: Estimate based on the National Archive of Collective Bargaining Agreements, under construction by LISER/STATEC.

Malta: While no statistical data exist, the figure is an estimate based on the fact that most collective agreements tend to specify a normal weekly working time of 40 hours.

Netherlands: The figure is an estimate based on the figures for chemicals, metalworking, retail, banking and public administration.

Norway: Estimate from 2016. Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (NOU 2016:1 – Regulation of working hours).
<https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/nou-2016-1/id2467468/>

Portugal: The figure is from 2016 and estimated based on the fact that the 14 largest valid collective agreements, covering 720,187 workers (32% of all workers covered), did not introduce any changes in the agreed normal working time. Source: Ministry of Economy and Employment, Quadros de Pessoal, 2015.

Slovakia: Source: Information system on working conditions (Informacny system o pracovnych podmienkach, ISPP) 2017, TRIXIMA and MPSVR SR – a representative sample survey in companies.

Spain: Estimation calculated from annual figure (1,745.4 hours) for weekly working time, based on the assumption of a six-day week and 274 working days. Source: Boletín de Estadísticas Laborales.
<http://www.mitramiss.gob.es/estadisticas/bel/welcome.htm>

Sweden: Data cover employed people in the 15–74 age range. Source: Labour Market Survey, Statistics Sweden.

UK: Estimation calculated based on the Labour Research Department's survey of the 2017–2018 pay round.
<http://www.lrd.org.uk/payline/supplement/LRDPaySurvey2018Printable.pdf>.

Annex 2B: Notes to Figure 3

Figure 3: Average collectively agreed normal weekly hours in the chemicals sector, 2018

Austria: Source: Kollektivvertrag (compilation of all collective agreements in Austria).
www.kollektivvertrag.at

Belgium: Source: Confédération des Syndicats Chrétiens/Algemeen Christelijk Vakverbond (CSC/ACV, the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions).

Croatia: Estimate based on collective agreements for NEVA and PHOENIX Farmacija (2016–2020).

NEVA: <http://www.nsp.hr/doc/NEVAKolektivni-ugovor2016.2017.pdf>

PHOENIX Farmacija: https://mojaplaca.org/zakon-oradu/baza-podataka-o-kolektivnim-ugovorima/kolektivni-ugovor-phoenix-farmacija-d-o-o-2016---2020#XIII._RADNO_VRIJEME

Cyprus: This figure is the average collectively agreed working time. Source: INEK (the Cyprus Labour Institute). <https://www.inek.org.cy/>

Czechia: The figure represents an average based on the collective agreements concluded in the private sector by members of the trade union ECHO, which represents workers in industries such as electricity and heat supply, and the chemical, pharmaceutical and oil industry. Source: IPP, 2018 (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) – 2018 Results of ISPP in Enterprises – <http://www.kolektivnismlouvy.cz/vysledky2018EN.html>

Denmark: As per the industrial agreement between CO-industri and the Confederation of Danish Industry.

Finland: Estimate based on the main collective agreements in the sector.

France: Source: Acemo survey on labour activity and employment conditions by DARES, the Research, Studies and Statistics Department of the Ministry for Labour, 2019.

Germany: Employees can work between 35 and 40 hours per week. Source: BAVC (the German Chemical Employers Association).

Greece: Source: OEXBE (the Federation of Chemical Industry Workers of Greece).

Ireland: Based on the Programme for National Recovery from 1987.

Italy: Source: CCNL (national collective agreement), Federchimica, 15 October 2015.

Luxembourg: Figure is an estimate based on data from the LISER/STATEC database on collective agreements (under construction).

Malta: Estimate by national correspondent. In the case of shift workers, the figure includes weekly paid breaks of 2.5 hours.

Netherlands: Estimate based on agreement in the plastic and rubber industry (38 hours) and agreement in the paint and printing ink industry (40 hours).

Norway: Source: NHO (the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise), Avtale No. 106, Kjemisk teknisk industri.

Portugal: Estimate based on collective agreements in the chemical industry.

Slovakia: Chemical multi-employer collective agreement for 2018–2020.

Slovenia: As set by the collective agreement for the chemical, rubber and non-metal industries of Slovenia (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 37).

Spain: Calculated based on data for 2017 provided by the Ministry of Employment, on the assumption of a six-day week and 274 working days per year.

Sweden: Source: Statistics Sweden, Labour Market Survey (NACE sectors B to E).

<https://www.scb.se/en/finding-statistics/statistics-by-subject-area/labour-market/>

UK: The figure from 2016 is the median of 15 single-employer agreements reported in the Labour Research Department's review of the 2015–2016 bargaining round.

Annex 2C: Notes to Figure 4

Figure 4: Average collectively agreed normal weekly hours in the metalworking sector, 2018

Austria: Source: Kollektivvertrag (compilation of all collective agreements in Austria).
www.kollektivvertrag.at

Belgium: Source: Confédération des Syndicats Chrétiens/Algemeen Christelijk Vakverbond (CSC/ACV, the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions).

Croatia: Estimate based on collective agreements of ULJANIK Group and Đuro Đaković Elektromont.

ULJANIK Group: https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2015_05_52_1023.html

Đuro Đaković Elektromont: https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2009_02_23_518.html

Cyprus: Sectoral agreement in metalworking concluded between the Federation of Industrial Workers of Cyprus (OBIEK), affiliated to the Cyprus Workers' Confederation (SEK), the Cyprus Metalworkers, Mechanics and Electricians Trade Union (SEMMHK), affiliated to the Pancyprrian Federation of Labour (PEO), and the Cyprus Metalworking Industry Employers' Association (SYMEBIK).

Czechia: The figure represents an average based on the collective agreements concluded in the private sector by members of the trade union KOVO. The union represents primarily workers in the metalworking industry. Source: IPP, 2018 (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) – *2018 Results of ISPP in Enterprises* – <http://www.kolektivnislouvy.cz/vysledky2018EN.html>

Denmark: As per industrial agreement between CO-industri and the Confederation of Danish Industry.

Finland: Estimate based on the main collective agreements in the sector.

France: Collective agreement in the sector.

Germany: western Germany: 35 hours; eastern Germany: 38 hours. Source: IG Metall.

Greece: Source: POEM, the Hellenic Federation of Metalworkers.

Ireland: Based on the Programme for National Recovery from 1987.

Italy: Maximum weekly hours. Source: CCNL (national collective agreement), Federmeccanica, 26 November 2016.

Luxembourg: Estimation based on the collective agreement 2012–2014 that was extended to 2017 and rescinded in 2018, and on the number of negotiated rest days per year in the steel sector. New collective agreement negotiations are ongoing.

Malta: Figure is an estimate based on the Transport Equipment, Metal and Allied Industries Wages Council Wage Regulation Order (1977) and confirmed by the General Workers' Union (GWU).

Netherlands: Source: FNV Metaal. *Populaire versie CAO metaal & techniek 2017/2019* – https://www.fnv.nl/getmedia/1948578d-ab96-477a-9082-2e082561ec3b/Metaal_en_Techniek_cao.pdf

Norway: Source: NHO (the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise), Industrioverenskomsten, 2016–2018.

Portugal: Figure based on the main collective agreements in metal industries.

Romania: As set by collective agreement conducted at group level for the machine-building and metal-building sector, 2016–2017.

Slovakia: Source: Information system on working conditions (Informacny system o pracovnych podmienkach, ISPP), 2017–2018 data for trade union OZ Kovo, which covers metalworking.

Slovenia: As set by the collective agreement for the metal products and foundry industry (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 78).

Spain: Calculated based on data for 2017 provided by the Ministry of Employment, on the assumption of a six-day week and 274 working days per year.

Sweden: Source: Labour Market Survey, Statistics Sweden. <https://www.scb.se/en/finding-statistics/statistics-by-subject-area/labour-market/>

UK: The figure from 2016 is the median of 47 single-employer agreements reported in the Labour Research Department's review of the 2015–2016 bargaining round.

Annex 2D: Notes to Figure 5

Figure 5: Average collectively agreed normal weekly hours in the banking sector, 2018

Austria: Source: Kollektivvertrag (compilation of all collective agreements in Austria). www.kollektivvertrag.at

Belgium: Source: Confédération des Syndicats Chrétiens/Algemeen Christelijk Vakverbond (CSC/ACV, the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions).

Croatia: Estimate based on previous collective agreements for Hrvatska poštanska banka d.d., Societe generale – Splitska banka d.d., Erste & Steiermärkische bank d.d., Podravska banka d.d. and Zagrebačka banka d.d., which contained the same provision as the Labour Act.

Cyprus: Collective agreements in the sector (uniform application).

Czechia: This figure is an average based on the collective agreements concluded in the private sector by members of the Trade Union of Banking and Insurance Workers (OSPPP). Source: IPP, 2018 (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) – *2018 Results of ISPP in Enterprises* – <http://www.kolektivnislouvy.cz/vysledky2018EN.html>

Denmark: As per standard agreement in the financial sector for 2017–2020.

Finland: Estimate from the Confederation of Finnish Industries.

France: Collective agreement in the sector.

Germany: Source: Federal Statistical Office.

Greece: As per the sectoral collective agreement. Source: Banking Union (OTOE).

Ireland: Programme for National Recovery from 1987.

Italy: CCNL (national collective agreement), ABI, 31 March 2015.

Luxembourg: Collective agreement in the banking sector for 2018–2020.

Malta: Estimate by national correspondent.

Netherlands: Collective agreement in the banking sector – CAO Banken. *Collectieve arbeidsovereenkomst voor de periode van 1 juli 2014 tot 1 januari 2017* – https://www.caobanken.nl/images/archief/CAO_Banken_072014-012017.pdf

Norway: Source: Finance Norway (Finans Norge), Sentralavtalen.

Portugal: Figure based on the main collective agreements in the banking sector.

Slovakia: Source: Information system on working conditions (Informacny system o pracovnych podmienkach, ISPP), 2018 for NACE – K: Financial service and insurance activities.

Slovenia: As set by the collective agreement for the Slovenian banking sector (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 5).

Spain: Calculated based on data for 2017 provided by the Ministry of Employment, on the assumption of a six-day week and 274 working days per year.

Sweden: Source: Statistics Sweden, Labour Market Survey (NACE K-N). <https://www.scb.se/en/finding-statistics/statistics-by-subject-area/labour-market/>

UK: The figure from 2016 is the median of 13 single-employer agreements reported in the Labour Research Department's review of the 2015–2016 bargaining round.

Annex 2E: Notes to Figure 6

Figure 6: Average collectively agreed normal weekly working hours in the retail sector, 2018

Austria: Source: Kollektivvertrag (compilation of all collective agreements in Austria). www.kollektivvertrag.at

Belgium: Source: Confédération des Syndicats Chrétiens/Algemeen Christelijk Vakverbond (CSC/ACV, the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions).

Croatia: The sectoral collective agreement for retail was cancelled in 2013; therefore, the source for setting out working hours is the Labour Act, unless there is a company level collective agreement in place.

Cyprus: Normal weekly working hours in retail are fixed at 38 hours per week, according to the provisions of Law 155(I)/2006 on the operation of retail shops and the terms of employment of retail workers. There are only two single-company collective agreements covering no more than 200 employees. Both provide for 38 weekly working hours.

Czechia: The figure represents an average based on the collective agreements concluded in the private sector by members of the Trade Union of Workers in Commerce (OSPO). Source: IPP, 2018 (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) – *2018 Results of ISPP in Enterprises* –

<http://www.kolektivnismlouvy.cz/vysledky2018EN.html>

Denmark: As per agreement in the retail sector for 2017–2020.

Finland: Estimate from the Confederation of Finnish Industries.

France: Collective agreement in the sector.

Germany: Source: Federal Statistical Office.

Greece: Source: Greek Federation of Private Employees.

Ireland: Based on the Programme for National Recovery from 1987.

Italy: CCNL (national collective agreement), Confcommercio, 31 March 2015.

Luxembourg: Figure is an estimate based on data from the LISER/STATEC database on collective agreements (under construction).

Malta: Figure is an estimate based on the Wholesale and Retail Trades Wages Council Wage Regulation Order (1989).

Netherlands: Figure is an estimate calculated based on a sample of the major sectoral agreements (non-food retail: 38 hours; living retail: 37 hours; and supermarket retail: 40 hours).

Norway: Source: Vikre, Landsoverenskomsten, 2018–2020.

Portugal: Collective agreements in the retail sector.

Slovakia: Source: Information system on working conditions (Informacny system o pracovnych podmienkach, ISPP), 2018 data for NACE G (wholesale, retail trade).

Slovenia: As set by the collective agreement for the trade sector (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 52).

Spain: Calculated based on data for 2017 provided by the Ministry of Employment, on the assumption of a six-day week and 274 working days per year.

Sweden: Source: Statistics Sweden, Labour Market Survey (NACE G45–47). <https://www.scb.se/en/finding-statistics/statistics-by-subject-area/labour-market>

UK: The figure from 2016 is the median of 16 single-employer agreements reported in the Labour Research Department's review of the 2015–2016 bargaining round.

Annex 2F: Notes to Figure 7

Figure 7: Average collectively agreed normal weekly working hours in public administration, 2018

Austria: As laid down in the public sector service statute.

Belgium: Figure corresponds to the general, statutory rule in the public sector.

Croatia: Collective agreement for state officials and public servants, OG 112/17 and OG 128/17.

Cyprus: As provided by Law 1(l)1990 on Public Service and the Regulation 395/1990 (including their successive amendments).

Denmark: As per agreement between the Ministry for Public Innovation and the Central Federation of State Employees' Organisations (CFU) for 2018–2021.

Finland: Estimate based on collective agreements in the local government sector.

France: Decree No. 200–815 on the organisation and reduction of working time in the public service of the state (*Décret n° 200-815 du 25 août 2000 relatif à l'aménagement et à la réduction du temps de travail dans la fonction publique de l'Etat*).
<https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/eli/decret/2000/8/25/2000-815/jo/texte>

Germany: Collective agreement on public service; hours may vary depending on the state.

Greece: Weekly working hours of civil servants, as set by law.

Hungary: As set by law on public service officials.

Ireland: Public Service Stability Agreement 2013–2016. There are no collectively agreed normal weekly working hours for this sector. However, the average weekly working hours for 'public administration and defence' were 36.8. Source: Central Statistics Office, Earnings and Labour Costs Quarterly.

Italy: CCNL (national collective agreement), Central administration, 12 February 2018.

Luxembourg: As set in the Administrative Code and Grand-ducal Regulation. *Code Administratif. Fonction Publique – Législation : Mémorial A - 264 du 21 décembre 2016* http://data.legilux.public.lu/file/eli-etat-leg-code-fonction_publique-20161225-fr-pdf.pdf

Règlement grand-ducal du 12 novembre 2011 portant fixation de la durée normale de travail et des modalités de l'horaire de travail mobile dans les administrations de l'Etat.

<http://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/rgd/2011/11/12/n5/jo>

Malta: Figure taken from the collective agreement for employees in public services for 2011–2016. Estimate by author.

Netherlands: Source: Inspectie SZW, based on all major collective agreements. *Arbeidsvoorwaardenovereenkomst sector Rijk (2018 – 2020)*
<https://ambtenarensalaris.nl/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Scan-ArbeidsvoorwaardenovksectorRijk2018-2020-geheleakkoord.pdf>

Norway: Source: Fafó's collective agreement archive and Hovedtariffavtalen i staten (the main tariff agreement in the state).

Portugal: As set by the General Labour Law in Public Functions (Law 18/2016), Article 105.

Romania: Estimate based on five collective agreements concluded in the public administration sector and the Labour Code.

Slovakia: Multi-employer collective agreements for civil service for 2017–2018.

Slovenia: As set by the collective agreement for the public sector (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 57).

Spain: Calculated based on data for 2017 provided by the Ministry of Employment, on the assumption of a six-day week and 274 working days per year.

Sweden: Source: Statistics Sweden, Labour Market Survey (NACE O and U). <https://www.scb.se/en/finding-statistics/statistics-by-subject-area/labour-market/>

UK: Median of 47 single- and multi-employer agreements reported in the Labour Research Department's review of the 2015–2016 bargaining round (no information given).

Annex 2G: Notes to Figure 10

Figure 10: Minimum annual paid leave, 2018 (days)

Austria: 30 calendar days (including five Saturdays), as per the Paid Leave Act (Urlaubsgesetz).

Belgium: Four weeks – this figure refers to the private sector and differs between white and blue collar workers, younger workers and artists; the minimum statutory entitlement in the public sector is 24 days.
https://www.belgium.be/nl/werk/verlof_en_loopbaanonderbrekingen/jaarlijkse_vakantie

Bulgaria: Higher statutory entitlements apply to groups such as young workers (under 18 years old), workers with reduced work capacity, and workers in hazardous work or working irregular hours, all of whom receive at least five more paid leave days, as per the Labour Code, Article 155.

Croatia: Expressed as four weeks, i.e. 20 working days for workers working a five-day week and 24 working days for workers on a six-day week, as per the Labour Act, Articles 55 and 56.

Cyprus: 24 days for those working a six-day week.

Czechia: Expressed as four weeks in the Labour Code.

Denmark: As per the Danish Holiday Act.

Estonia: As per the Employment Contracts Act.

Finland: As per the Annual Holidays Act (162/2005).

France: Expressed as 30 working days for full-time workers, including Saturdays, as per the Labour Code, Article L3141-3.

Germany: Expressed as 24 working days in the Federal Holiday Act (Bundesurlaubsgesetz).

<http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/burlg/index.html>

Greece: 24 working days for those working a six-day week; entitlement increases after one year's service.

Hungary: According to the Labour Code, a minimum of 20 days complemented by additional days according to age and number of dependent children.

Ireland: Expressed as 20 working days in the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.

Italy: Expressed as four weeks, as established by Section 10 of Legislative Decree of 8 April 2003, No. 66.

Latvia: Expressed as four calendar weeks, as per Section 149 on annual paid leave of the Labour Law (adopted on 20 June 2001).

Lithuania: Expressed as 28 calendar days; certain groups, such as lone parents and people with disabilities, have an entitlement of 35 calendar days, according to Article 166(1) of the Labour Code. According to Article 126 of the Labour Code, employees must be granted an annual leave allowance no shorter than 20 working days when the employee works five days per week or no shorter than 24 days when an employee works six days per week. One instalment of annual leave may not be shorter than 10 business days (or 12 business days if the employee works six days per week).

Luxembourg: As per the Labour Code, L232-2.

Malta: Expressed as 24 working days. Source: Legal Notice 247 of 2003 – Organisation of Working Time.

Netherlands: Expressed as four times the number of weekly working days or hours, as per the Civil Code, Article 7:634.

Norway: 21 days, as in the Annual Holiday Act of 1988, Section 5.

Poland: Entitlement increases from 20 to 26 days after 10 years of employment, as per the Act of 26 June 1974, Labour Code, Article 154.

Portugal: As per the Labour Code, Article 238.

Romania: As per the Labour Code, which allows three additional days for some categories of employees, such as those working in extremely heavy, hazardous or harmful conditions, those with disabilities, and those below 18 years of age.

Slovakia: Expressed as 20 working days or four weeks, as per the Labour Code, Section 103 (Act No. 311/2002, as amended).

Slovenia: Employment Relationships Act (2013).

Spain: Workers' Statute (Royal Decree Act 2/2015).

Sweden: Expressed as 25 working days in the Annual Leave Act (Semesterlag).

UK: Working Time Regulations 1998; entitlement expressed as four weeks.

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This biennial review charts developments in a range of working time issues in the EU and Norway in 2017–2018. It finds that while the average collectively agreed working week across the EU remains unchanged since 2016 – at 38 hours – there was a slight decrease in the past two years in the 15 Member States that joined the EU before 2004 (the EU15). The banking sector continues to have the shortest average agreed normal working week, and the retail sector the longest. In 2018, collectively agreed paid annual leave entitlement stood at an average of 23.8 days across the EU – slightly higher in the EU15 and considerably lower in the rest of the EU. From an annual perspective, according to collectively agreed, normal annual working hours, full-time workers in the EU28 worked, on average, 1,714 hours in 2018: 1,687 hours in the EU15 and 1,803 hours in the other Member States.

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) is a tripartite European Union Agency established in 1975. Its role is to provide knowledge in the area of social, employment and work-related policies according to Regulation (EU) 2019/127.

